

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

320 W. 4TH STREET, SUITE 500
LOS ANGELES, CA 90013



March 25, 2021

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Mar 26 2021

Dolores Roybal-Saltarelli

Project Manager

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority **STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**

One Gateway Plaza

Los Angeles, California 90012

SUBJECT: SCH# 2021010269; LACMTA, Metro C Line (Green) Extension to Torrance Project Draft Environmental Impact Report, Notice of Preparation

Dear Ms. Roybal-Saltarelli,

The California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) has jurisdiction over the safety of highway-rail crossings (crossings) and rail transit projects in California. All rail fixed guideway systems are subject to the Commission's Safety Oversight Program requirements. Safety Certification Plan (SCP) approval and Safety Certification Verification Report (SCVR) approval from the Commission are required for rail transit projects to be placed in revenue service. In addition, the California Public Utilities Code requires Commission approval for construction or alteration of crossings and grants the Commission exclusive power on design, alteration, and/or closure of crossings in California. The Commission's Rail Transit Safety Branch (RTSB) will review rail transit project matters and the Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch (RCEB) will review crossing matters. The Commission has received a copy of the *Notice of Preparation (NOP)* from Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA or Metro), who is the lead agency for the proposed Metro C Line (Green) Extension to Torrance Project.

According to the NOP, Metro proposes to construct a light rail transit (LRT) line that would extend approximately 4.5 miles southeast from the end of the existing Metro C Line (Green) at the Redondo Beach (Marine) Station to the under-construction Torrance Transit Center. Two alternatives will be carried into the Draft Environmental Impact Report for further analysis: Alternative 1 along Metro Railroad Right of Way (ROW) and Alternative 2 along Hawthorne Blvd. The proposed project includes two rail stations along the LRT line and would connect the Metro system farther into the South Bay, serving the cities of Redondo Beach, Lawndale, and Torrance.

The C Line (Green) Extension to Torrance project described in the NOP will be subject to several rules and regulations involving the Commission. These may include, but are not limited to:

- California Public Utilities Code, Sections 1201 et al, which requires Commission authority to construct rail crossings
- California Public Utilities Code, Sections 2111, 2112, 99152; rail transit safety
- Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, which details the Formal Application process for construction or modification of a public crossing

The design criteria of the proposed project must comply with Commission General Orders (GOs), such as:

- GO 26-D, Clearances on railroads and street railroads as to side and overhead structures, parallel tracks and crossings,
- GO 72-B, Construction and maintenance of crossings – standard types of pavement construction at railroad grade crossings (if any),
- GO 75-D, Warning devices for at-grade railroad crossings (if any),
- GO 95, Overhead electric line construction (if catenary is used),
- GO 128, Construction or Underground and Electrical Supply and Communication,
- GO 143-B, Design, Construction and Operation Safety Rules and Regulations Governing Light-Rail Transit, and
- GO 164-E, Rules and Regulations Governing State Safety Oversight of Rail Fixed Guideway Systems

The project must ensure compliance with federal regulations including:

- 49 CFR Part 674, Rail Fixed Guideway Systems: State Safety Oversight

The following link provides resources on the Commission's rules and regulations regarding rail safety:

<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUC/safety/Rail/>

The proposed project will disrupt the heavily used roadway network in the surrounding communities of the South Bay. The potential impacts should be identified, discussed, and evaluated for necessary safety improvements and mitigations at each proposed construction stage. This includes considering traffic circulation and queuing, level of service, emergency service response, and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The two alternative alignments proposed for further analysis include both at grade and grade separated crossings. Metro will have to apply to the Commission for approval of its crossing designs and authorization to construct those crossings. Applications to the Commission must include a copy of the environmental analysis undertaken by the applicant.

Additionally, careful consideration should be given to station configurations, including pedestrian paths of travel through the stations as patrons move between LA Metro trains and the other modes of transportation at the station locations. Pedestrian paths of travel should avoid crossing the tracks at grade to access or depart from the station platforms, where feasible.

The Commission appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the project described in the NOP. Please feel free to contact me at (916) 928-6858 or daren.gilbert@cpuc.ca.gov or contact our lead staff on this project: Madeline Ocampo at (213) 503-5243 or

Dolores Roybal-Saltarelli
Metro C Line (Green) Extension to Torrance Project - NOP Comments
March 25, 2021
Page 3 of 3

madeline.ocampo@cpuc.ca.gov for transit safety matters and Jose Pereyra at (213) 576-7083 or jose.pereyra@cpuc.ca.gov for crossing matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daren Gilbert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "D".

Daren Gilbert, Manager
Rail Transit Safety Branch
Rail Safety Division

cc: State Clearinghouse
Roger Clugston, Director, Rail Safety Division, CPUC
Anton Garabetian, Manager, Rail Crossings Engineering Branch, CPUC