

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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September 4, 2024

Roger Martin
Project Manager
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, California 90012

SUBJECT: SCH# 2021040368; LACMTA, Metro K Line Northern Extension Transit Corridor Project - Draft Environmental Impact Report

Dear Mr. Martin,

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 Staff has reviewed a copy of the *Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)* from Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA or Metro), who is the lead agency for the proposed Metro K Line Northern Extension (KNE) Transit Corridor Project.

According to the DEIR, the KNE is a proposed northern extension of the K Line (formerly Crenshaw/LAX Line), from its current northern terminus at the Metro E Line (formerly Expo Line) Expo/Crenshaw Station to the Metro D Line (formerly Purple Line) at Wilshire Boulevard and the Metro B Line (formerly Red Line) at the Hollywood/Highland Station, with an optional terminus farther north at the Hollywood Bowl. Three alternatives are evaluated in the DEIR: the San Vicente-Fairfax, Fairfax, and La Brea Alignments. The alignments would be entirely underground except for the station entrances at the surface streets. To support the operation of the KNE, the existing Metro Division 16 maintenance and storage facility would be expanded. The proposed extension would improve connectivity, serving communities from the LAX area, South Los Angeles, Inglewood, and Crenshaw Corridor to Mid-City, Central Los Angeles, West Hollywood, and Hollywood.

The KNE light rail project described in the DEIR 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, and
- Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, which details the Formal Application process for construction or modification of public crossings.

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

- 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:

[Federal laws, State laws, and CPUC General Orders on Railroads \(ca.gov\)](#)

The three alternative alignments evaluated are proposed entirely as operating underground. Should any alignment, or portion thereof, change to a surface running configuration with the need to operate light rail vehicles at-grade across public roadways, Commission authorization for the creation of new at-grade crossings will be required. 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 DEIR. Please feel free to contact me at (916) 803-0736 or daren.gilbert@cpuc.ca.gov or contact our lead staff on this project: Madeline Ocampo at (213) 503-5243 or 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, prominent "D" and "G".

Daren Gilbert, Manager
Rail Transit Safety Branch
Rail Safety Division

cc: (all via e-mail)

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