

West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor

Draft EIS/EIR Chapter 7: Public Outreach, Agency Consultation, and Coordination



Metro®

**Draft EIS/EIR Chapter 7:
Public Outreach, Agency Consultation, and
Coordination**

Draft Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report

**LEAD AGENCIES: Federal Transit Administration of the U.S. Department of
Transportation; Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority**

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TITLE OF PROPOSED ACTION: West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor Project

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Definition
AB	Assembly Bill
APE	Area of Potential Effect
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CPUC	California Public Utilities Commission
EIR	environmental impact report
EIS	environmental impact statement
FAST Act	Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
I-	Interstate
LA	Los Angeles
LADPW	Los Angeles Department of Public Works
LAUS	Los Angeles Union Station
LAUSHS	Los Angeles Union Station Historical Society
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act
Metro	Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
MWD	Metropolitan Water District
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOI	Notice of Intent
NOP	Notice of Preparation
PE	Preliminary Engineering
PSR/PR	Project Study Reports/Project Reports
ROW	right-of-way
SAFETA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCCIC	South Central Coastal Information Center
SLF	Sacred Lands File
SWG	Stakeholder Working Group

Acronym	Definition
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TCR	Tribal Cultural Resources
TOD SIP	Transit-Oriented Development Strategic Implementation Plan
TPSS	traction power substation
UPRR	Union Pacific Railroad
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USEPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
WSAB	West Santa Ana Branch

7. PUBLIC OUTREACH, AGENCY CONSULTATION, AND COORDINATION

7.1. Introduction

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) initiated a comprehensive outreach program for the West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor (WSAB) Project (Project) beginning in 2017. Metro has continued to keep elected officials, agency staff, community stakeholders, and the general public informed on the status of the Project as well as progress of the environmental review process.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) published the Notice of Intent (NOI) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in the *Federal Register* on June 26, 2017, to initiate the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process for the Project. The NOI provided project information, scoping meeting details, and contact information.¹ Prior to *Federal Register* publication, Metro issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) on May 25, 2017, informing the public of its intent to prepare a combined Draft EIS/Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Project and notify interested agencies and parties of public scoping meetings. A revised NOP was issued on June 14, 2017, to inform the public of the extension of the comment period from July 7, 2017, to August 4, 2017. A second revised NOP was issued on July 11, 2018, informing the public of the Metro Board decision to eliminate some of the northern alignment alternatives considered in the May 25, 2017 NOP and to carry forward two modified northern alignments, one to the Downtown Transit Core and the other to Los Angeles Union Station, into the Draft EIS/EIR process.

Project stakeholders have been involved in each phase of the Project through a variety of forums and platforms, including public meetings, community workshops, Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) meetings, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings, rail tours, information booths at community events, pop-up information tables at Metro C (Green) Line stations and popular destinations along the project corridor, and social media (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube).

Since the onset of the Project, Metro has presented to more than 100 stakeholder groups and agencies, hosted 26 public meetings², and drawn participation from over 1,500 stakeholders. In addition, public meetings have been held in each of the corridor communities adjacent to the alignment—including the Cities of Artesia, Cerritos, Bellflower, Paramount, Downey, South Gate, Cudahy, Bell, Huntington Park, and Los Angeles—on a rotating basis.

¹ *Federal Register*. Vol. 82, No. 121, June 26, 2017.

² Includes the following meeting series: EIS/EIR Scoping Meetings (five meetings, June 2017); Community Meetings (five meetings, March 2018); Community Meetings (four meetings, April-May 2018); Updated Scoping Meetings (three meetings, July 2018); Community Meetings (three meetings, October 2019); Community Update Meetings (three meetings, October 2019); Community-Specific Meetings — Paramount (two meetings, December 2017 and September 2019), and Downey (one meeting, July 2018)

7.2. Regulatory Context

This chapter summarizes how Metro engaged public agencies and the general public during the Project's environmental process, from the release of the NOI and NOP, including scoping, and up to the release of the Draft EIS/EIR.

7.2.1. Public Outreach Work Plans

Public outreach work plans have been developed to highlight opportunities for public involvement and comment at key project milestones throughout the environmental process. These work plans are intended to refine the outreach tactics to be reflective of stakeholder needs and the Project as it evolved. The work plans have served as guiding documents for outreach activities that are tailored for specific project needs at key milestones. These activities include public notification, targeted stakeholder outreach, large public forums and other outreach strategies, and development of public outreach schedules.

The public outreach work plans are developed in compliance with the requirements of federal and state statutes addressing public involvement for transportation projects, including NEPA, CEQA, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 United States Code § 2000d et seq.), and Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act.

7.2.2. Outreach Compliance with FAST Act

The FAST Act (Pub. L. No. 114-94) signed into law in 2015, provides guidance for establishing a Coordination Plan, such as for the following:

- Notice of Intent publication and scoping activities
- Development of Purpose and Need
- Identification of the range of alternatives
- Milestones for when public involvement and interagency coordination activities will occur
- Description of ways to provide the opportunities for input from the public and other agencies in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies
- Schedule for completion of the environmental review process

Coordination Plan requirements identified in the FAST ACT Section 1304 continue the requirements in the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) Section 6002.

In accordance with these requirements, Metro, in coordination with FTA, prepared and mailed participating and cooperating agencies invitation letters as part of the Project scoping period. Relevant state and federal agencies were sent invitations to accept or decline roles as a cooperating or participating agency for the Project. The following agencies accepted the invitation as a participating agency:

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)
- Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) – District 7
- California High-Speed Rail Authority

- Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) (on February 27, 2020, the FRA informed FTA that NEPA assignment was given to California High Speed Rail Authority. As such, FRA withdrew from cooperating agency and participating agency status.)
- City of Vernon

Additionally, in response to the NOP, the South Coast Air Quality Management District stated that the agency should be identified as a responsible agency if a permit from the agency is required. As shown in Table 2.8 in Chapter 2, a Title V permit may be required from South Coast Air Quality Management District for construction.

The South Coast Air Quality Management District requested to serve as a responsible agency in the event that the Project requires air quality permits.

No interested parties expressed interest in serving as a cooperating agency. The Project's Purpose and Need and a range of alternatives were explored and developed based on input for key stakeholders, the public, and agencies through continued collaboration.

Consistent with the guidance offered by the FAST Act, outreach included agency and public scoping meetings, participation in TAC meetings, and agency-specific briefings and presentations, as summarized below:

- Eight public scoping meetings and two agency scoping meetings
- Eighteen community meetings/community-specific meetings/workshops
- Four live webinars or video recording of public meeting presentations
- Five SWG meetings, including meetings for stakeholder representatives for communities south of the I-10 corridor and downtown Los Angeles stakeholders
- Stakeholder briefings with community/neighborhood groups, chambers, interested groups, business associations, schools, universities, churches, foundations, and hospitals
- Briefings with federal, state, regional, and local elected officials
- Meetings with city, county, and municipal agency staff
- Ongoing meetings with the Metro Board of Directors staff
- Updates to the Metro Board and pertinent committees at key project milestones
- Ongoing TAC meetings with agency and corridor city staff

As such, the Project is compliant with the FAST Act as it follows the federal (NEPA) and state (CEQA) requirements. Based on these efforts, the Project meets the 6002/1304 Coordination Plan requirements, and all related information is available on the project website.

7.2.3. Accommodations for Minority, Low Income, and Persons with Disabilities

Special outreach efforts were made to reach out to minority, low income, and limited English proficiency populations, and persons with disabilities. The communities along the project corridor are some of the most diverse communities in Los Angeles County. The racial makeup within 1 mile of the project alignments is predominately Hispanic (75.2 percent), followed by White (45.9 percent), Asian (10.6 percent), Native American (0.9 percent), Pacific Islander (0.3 percent), other race (33.7 percent), and two or more races (4.2 percent). Because of the large ethnically Hispanic population, Metro focused on providing Spanish-language materials at all public meetings and online. According to 2010 U.S. Census data, 67.8 percent of the population in the corridor identified as Spanish speaking and 21.2 percent indicated that they do not speak English "well" or "at all." Because of the Project's footprint in the Little

Tokyo neighborhood of downtown Los Angeles, Japanese-language materials were also produced at all phases of the Project.

Trilingual (English/Spanish/Japanese) meeting notices were produced for all meetings, in addition to project fact sheets, eblasts, and newspaper advertisements. Meeting announcement ads were also placed in the Spanish-language newspaper *La Opinión* and the Japanese-language newspaper *Rafu Shimpo*. Quadrilingual meeting notices and materials (English/Spanish/Japanese/Korean) were produced starting with the community meetings in 2019, as Korean materials were suggested by project stakeholders as a language need for the Little Tokyo community area.

The following provides an overview of outreach activities to engage with hard-to-reach audiences, including those with limited English proficiency, low income, and environmental justice communities:

- Meetings with elected officials, public agency staff, and community organizations helped identify additional stakeholder organizations that should be engaged, including those that represent limited English proficiency and other hard-to-reach communities.
- SWGs were formed to conduct meetings with key stakeholder representatives to share project updates at key milestones as well as garner feedback on outreach activities and accommodations that can be adapted to achieve broader public participation.
- Local churches, schools, and other institutions that serve environmental justice populations along the project corridor were added to the stakeholder database and representatives were contacted to promote project awareness.
- Information booths and pop-up tables were staffed by multilingual staff at local community events, popular destinations, and back-to-school-night events along the project corridor.
- Meeting and project information notices were published in local community newspapers, posted on social media, and included in print and display newspaper advertisements in multiple languages and on city cable channels and websites.
- Notification efforts were augmented via door-to-door notice distribution.

7.3. Public Outreach Prior to Scoping

In February 2010, SCAG initiated the preparation of the SCAG *Pacific Electric Right-of-Way/West Santa Ana Branch Corridor Alternatives Analysis* (SCAG 2013). The Alternatives Analysis was finalized in 2013 and included early public participation to communicate information about the Alternatives Analysis and seek input on key issues and project goals. Public participation efforts in this phase included six interactive community meetings held in June 2010. Further public and stakeholder input was solicited for the Initial Alternatives screening efforts through a series of six community meetings during October and November 2010; public presentations to community and stakeholder groups from September to November 2010; and public comments received through phone calls, emails, letters, and response cards. Following the approval of the final set of Build Alternatives, two community open houses were held in June 2011 where additional public comments were solicited.

7.4. Scoping

The scoping process for the Draft EIS/EIR is required by policies set forth in NEPA and CEQA. The scoping process inherently emphasizes early consultation with resource agencies, other state and local agencies, tribal governments, cooperating and responsible agencies, as well as any federal agency whose approval or funding will be required for completion of the Project. Metro uses this process to seek agency and public feedback on the scope of the Draft EIS/EIR. The purpose of scoping for this Project was as follows:

- Identify the purpose of the Project
- Define the alternatives under consideration
- Determine major issues for environmental analysis
- Identify project goals and evaluation criteria
- Obtain public and agency input

Following the release of the NOP on May 25, 2017, and the NOI on June 26, 2017, interested individuals and organizations, public agencies, and Native American tribes were invited to comment on the scope of the Draft EIS/EIR, including the Project's Purpose and Need, alternatives to be studied, impacts to be evaluated, and evaluation methods to be used. The original comment period deadline of July 7, 2017 was extended to August 4, 2017. NEPA has specific and limited scoping objectives, one of which is to identify the significant issues associated with alternatives that will be examined in detail in the document while simultaneously limiting consideration and development of issues that are not truly significant. Written comments received during the scoping process become part of the public record as documented in the scoping summary reports (Metro 2017k and Metro 2018g) (Appendix GG and Appendix HH).

Outreach activities supporting the scoping process were developed under the guidance of state and federal policies, including the FAST Act, MAP-21, SAFETEA-LU, CEQA, and NEPA. During the scoping period, Metro initiated a comprehensive outreach program that focused on maximizing public awareness and participation in the Project. In support of the scoping comment period, Metro hosted two agency scoping meetings and eight public scoping meetings with the option to join a live webcast or access the video recording on the Project's website. The original scoping process included one agency meeting and five public scoping meetings. Due to the scoping comments received in 2017, an additional round of scoping was conducted in 2018. A revised and recirculated NOP was released on July 11, 2018, with a public comment period extending from July 11, 2018 to August 24, 2018. This scoping period provided additional opportunities for public comment for the purposes of CEQA and NEPA and included one agency meeting and three scoping meetings. Collectively, the two rounds of scoping meetings encompassed the scoping process for this project. Table 7.1 presents information on the dates and locations of the scoping meetings.

Meeting locations and other considerations were applied so that the meetings were accessible and convenient to all stakeholders in the corridor. The meetings were also held on different days of the week (weekdays and Saturdays) and times of the day (morning, afternoon, and evening hours).

Table 7.1. Public Scoping Meeting Dates and Locations

	Meeting	Date	Location	Additional Features
Original Scoping (June 2017)	Agency Scoping Meeting	Monday, June 19, 2017 2:00pm	Metro HQ, 3rd Floor One Gateway Plaza Los Angeles, CA 90012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offered to elected offices and public agencies to preview the public scoping meeting
	Public Scoping Meeting #1	Thursday, June 15, 2017 6:00pm–8:00pm	T. Mayne Thompson Park 14001 S Bellflower Blvd Bellflower, CA 90706	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court reporter Spanish interpreter
	Public Scoping Meeting #2	Tuesday, June 20, 2017 6:00pm–8:00pm	South Gate Girls Club House 4940 Southern Ave South Gate, CA 90280	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Live webcast Court reporter Spanish interpreter
	Public Scoping Meeting #3	Wednesday, June 21, 2017 2:00pm–4:00pm	Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple 815 E 1st St Los Angeles, CA 90012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court reporter Japanese and Spanish interpreters
	Public Scoping Meeting #4	Wednesday, June 21, 2017 6:00pm–8:00pm	Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple 815 E 1st St Los Angeles, CA 90012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court reporter Japanese and Spanish interpreters
	Public Scoping Meeting #5	Saturday, June 24, 2017 10:00am–noon	Huntington Park Community Center 6925 Salt Lake Ave Huntington Park, CA 90255	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court reporter Spanish interpreter
Updated Scoping (July 2018)	TAC Meeting for Agencies	Monday, July 23, 2018 2:00pm	Metro HQ, 3rd Floor One Gateway Plaza Los Angeles, CA 90012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offered to elected offices and public agencies to preview the public scoping meeting
	Updated Scoping Meeting #1	Tuesday, July 24, 2018 4:00pm–7:00pm	The Los Angeles Athletic Club 431 W 7th St Los Angeles, CA 90014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court reporter Japanese and Spanish interpreters
	Public Scoping Meeting #2	Wednesday, July 25, 2018 6:00pm–8:00pm	Clara Park–Turner Hall 4835 Clara St Cudahy, CA 90201	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court reporter Spanish interpreter
	Public Scoping Meeting #3	Tuesday, July 31, 2018 6:00pm–8:00pm	The Mayne Events Center 16400 Bellflower Blvd, Bellflower, CA 90706	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Live webcast Court reporter Spanish interpreter

Source: Arellano Associates, 2017-2018

Note: TAC = Technical Advisory Committee

Notification for these meetings was published on the same day as the NOI and NOP, which was two weeks before the first meeting. The public notices were published as legal newspaper ads, online newspaper ads, mailed notices, door-to-door notices, social media posts, email blasts, earned media posts, on Metro’s “The Source” blog, and extended outreach to agencies and stakeholder groups.

At the public hearings, comments were received in written format on designated comment cards and oral comments were captured by a court reporter. During the comment period, the public was asked to mail their written comments or submit their comments electronically via the project website comment form and email. Approximately 532 stakeholders participated in the scoping meetings and approximately 2,000 people watched a live webcast or a recording of the scoping meetings. Stakeholders submitted approximately 1,380 scoping comments, which included 75 comments from public agencies and elected officials. The stakeholder comments reflected the following areas of concern: alternatives and stations, traffic and parking, safety and security, noise and vibration, property impacts, community and neighborhood impacts (including right-of-way), environmental impacts (noise, traffic, visual impediments, gentrification), and construction impacts. Specific project features were also discussed in the comments, including grade separations and alignment preferences, including specific northern alignment options and elevations (aerial, at-grade, and underground).

7.5. Agency and Corridor City Outreach during Preparation of the Draft EIS/EIR

As part of the public outreach process, Metro communicated project information to identified stakeholders and provided opportunities for public and agency input during the preparation of the Draft EIS/EIR. Meetings have been held with participating agencies and interested federal, state, regional, and local agencies in support of the Draft EIS/EIR. These meetings are summarized in the following sections. In addition to these meetings, Metro provided project information and responded to questions received from these stakeholders.

7.5.1. Federal Agencies

On September 12, 2018, a meeting was held with the **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** (USFWS) to evaluate the Special Status Species list and to discuss the process for a Streambed Alteration Agreement. The USFWS agreed with the findings in the species list and did not express concerns with the project alignment. The USFWS confirmed that coordination with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is required for a Streambed Alteration Agreement.

A coordination meeting was held on October 18, 2018, with the **FRA** to define roles, point of contacts, and required documentation by the FRA. After the meeting, FRA changed its role from cooperating to participating agency. The FRA confirmed key topics that need to be analyzed in the Draft EIS/EIR. These topics include safety, economics, and freight relocation.

A coordination meeting was held with the **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** (USACE) on August 4, 2020, to present the design of the Project where it crosses the Los Angeles (LA) River, Rio Hondo, and San Gabriel River. Attendees also discussed timing and requirements for the Section 404 and Section 408 permits. An additional meeting was held with USACE on August 31, 2020, to discuss the results of the jurisdictional delineation conducted for the three waterbodies. On November 5, 2020, Metro sent a preliminary jurisdictional delineation request to USACE staff for these three waterbodies. Information on coordination with

USACE is also included in the *West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor Project Final Biological Resources Impact Analysis Report* (Metro 2021q) (Appendix N).

7.5.2. State Agencies

Beginning in October 2018, a series of meetings was held with **Caltrans**. Traffic, noise, and visual impact methodologies, as well as the design for freeway crossings, were discussed at these meetings. Caltrans confirmed that Advanced Planning Studies and Project Study Reports/Project Reports (PSR/PR) will be needed for all freeway crossings. PSR/PR documents will be submitted to Caltrans around the time the Draft EIS/EIR is published. Continued coordination with Caltrans regarding the PSR/PR also occurred. Meetings also focused on coordination between the WSAB Project and the I-105 Express Lanes Project, which have concurrent construction activities. A meeting was also held with the Caltrans District 7 Director on March 12, 2020.

On February 26, 2019, a meeting was held with the **CDFW** to evaluate potential environmental impacts relating to the Los Angeles River, Rio Hondo, and San Gabriel River as a result of the Project. It was noted that the three rivers do not support sensitive resources but could result in some indirect, downstream impacts during construction. The need for a jurisdictional delineation was identified. During the meeting, it was suggested that a bat and nesting bird survey be conducted, and construction of bridges at the three river crossings occur during the “dry season” to avoid a Water Diversion Plan.

Several meetings were held with the **California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)** to review and receive preliminary comments on grade crossing evaluations and treatments. During the meeting held on February 6, 2020, all proposed at-grade crossings were discussed. CPUC provided preliminary comments regarding safety measures. Subsequent to the meeting, design plans were updated to reflect safety measures, with a focus on crossing gate locations, median heights and locations, and modifications to existing traffic signals. Attendees also discussed locations where the proposed project could affect freight at-grade crossings. Design plans were updated in consideration of comments received on pedestrian crossing safety and the location of columns for the aerial project alignment. Metro prepared a justification memorandum for the at-grade treatments in response to CPUC comments. The memorandum was discussed at the April 30, 2020 meeting. In response to the comments received from the CPUC, Metro prepared a memorandum summarizing the analysis at five at-grade crossings. The memorandum was discussed at the April 30, 2020 meeting where the CPUC requested additional design changes. Grade crossing designs may change based on ongoing coordination with the CPUC. During a meeting on October 21, 2020, crossings at Santa Ana, Pacific, and along Randolph Street were discussed. Pedestrian access at Gardendale, Bellflower, and Pioneer Stations may change based on ongoing coordination with CPUC, but changes would remain within the station footprint identified in this Draft EIS/EIR.

7.5.3. Regional/Local Agencies

Coordination meetings were held on July 12, 2018 and September 12, 2018, with the **Metropolitan Water District (MWD)** to review and discuss station options. MWD informed the design team of all MWD transmission waterlines. Impacts to MWD-owned pipelines and fee properties were considered in the different station options. Coordination to obtain rights to MWD-owned properties will continue into final design of the Project.

Railroad guidelines, requirements, and property ownership were discussed during the meeting held on August 28, 2017, with **BNSF Railway**. BNSF suggested the construction of crash barriers and did not recommend mechanically stabilizing earth retaining walls. Coordination with BNSF regarding easements and easement rights will continue into final design of the Project.

A meeting with the **Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach** was held on September 11, 2018, to discuss the Project's interface with freight tracks. During this meeting, design assumptions were noted and freight track relocation staging concepts were discussed. At this meeting, the Port of LA and Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) commented on a redesign of the WSAB tracks from the east to the west side of the right-of-way (ROW) because currently no freight customers use the west side of the ROW. The WSAB design was updated to address this Port of LA and UPRR comment, and the project tracks were relocated to the west side. The project team will continue coordination with the Port throughout project design.

As noted above, **UPRR** was also present at the meeting on September 11, 2018, with the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Six additional meetings between UPRR and Metro were held on August 28, 2017; April 4, 2019; June 11, 2019; June 25, 2019; July 16, 2019; and May 22, 2020 to provide project updates and share design. Coordination will continue with UPRR throughout the design period of the Project to address the technical challenges, during both construction and operation, of placing a new transit rail line along 10 miles of the freight corridor. Metro will also continue its coordination with the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. At the April 4, 2019 meeting, UPRR staff indicated a Preliminary Engineering (PE) Agreement was needed before UPRR can review design plans; a PE Agreement was executed on February 2, 2020.

On February 3, 2020, a meeting with the **Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LADPW)** was held to review and discuss the Project and its interaction with LADPW infrastructure. During the meeting, LADPW recommended that the top of the parapet wall be used as the water surface elevation. It was also recommended to meet with the USACE to obtain its approval prior to advancing design. In 2020, Metro provided project information to **USACE**; no comments were received. A jurisdictional delineation was completed for the LA River, Rio Hondo, and San Gabriel River in July 2020, and a preliminary jurisdictional delineation request was provided to USACE on November 5, 2020.

Metro staff presented to the **Eco-Rapid Transit Board** on the following dates: November 8, 2017; February 14, 2018; May 9, 2018; August 8, 2018; October 10, 2018; April 10, 2019; June 12, 2019; August 14, 2019; November 13, 2019; October 9, 2019; May 13, 2020; June 10, 2020; and September 9, 2020. Metro staff also attended additional Board meetings to field questions and provide information about the Project. In addition, coordination with Eco-Rapid staff occurred through project meetings and emails. The following topics were presented to the Eco-Rapid Transit Board during the meetings listed above:

- General project updates
- Update on the northern alignments under consideration
- Update and/or information on upcoming community and public meetings
- Overview of the WSAB Transit-Oriented Development Strategic Implementation Plan (TOD SIP) plan
- Discussion of potential funding opportunities to expand on the TOD SIP effort

- Information and recap of the rail tours for elected officials and the public
- Project funding and public-private partnership opportunities
- Discussion surrounding the Master Cooperative Agreements

Meetings were also held with elected officials and staff throughout 2020 and 2021. Metro met with 32nd Senate District staff, representing portions of Los Angeles County and Orange County, on February 18, 2020, May 20, 2020, and March 9, 2021. On December 8, 2020, a meeting was held with staff from Assembly District 56, which includes cities and unincorporated communities in eastern Riverside County and Imperial County. A meeting was held with State Senator Lena Gonzalez, representing Senate District 33, on January 7, 2021. Senate District 33 includes the Los Angeles County cities and communities of Cudahy, Bell, Bell Gardens, Lynwood, Maywood, Signal Hill, Paramount, South Gate, Vernon, Walnut Park, Huntington Park, and most of Long Beach with portions of the cities of Lakewood and Los Angeles. On February 19, 2021, meetings were held with staff from the 38th and 40th Congressional Districts. The 38th Congressional District represents the cities of Artesia, portions of Bellflower, Cerritos, Hawaiian Gardens, La Mirada, La Palma, portions of Lakewood, Montebello, Norwalk, Pico Rivera, Santa Fe Springs, South El Monte, Whittier, and the unincorporated communities of Los Nietos, East Whittier, East La Mirada, and South Whittier. The 40th Congressional District includes the communities of Bell, Bell Gardens, Commerce, Cudahy, Downey, Huntington Park, Maywood, Paramount, Vernon, and portions of Bellflower, East Los Angeles, Florence-Firestone, and South Los Angeles.

7.5.4. Meetings with Corridor Cities

Beginning in April 2017, a series of meetings was held with cities that would be affected by the Project. Meeting discussions included the project timeline, environmental approach, and preliminary project description, which included the alignment, grade crossings, and proposed stations. The project team has met with the Cities of Artesia, Bell, Bellflower, Cerritos, Cudahy, Downey, Huntington Park, Los Angeles, Paramount, South Gate, and Vernon. Below is a summary of meetings held with each city.

City of Artesia – In meetings with the City of Artesia, city staff indicated they would like traction power substation (TPSS) sites to be located north of the 183rd/Gridley intersection. The City of Artesia is planning a bike trail from 183rd/Gridley to South Street and will need approximately a 25 feet width from ROW on the north side of the ROW. The city also expressed concerns about large retaining walls at the 183rd/Gridley grade separation. In addition, the city has expressed concerns about parking capacity, the setback for the parking structure along Pioneer, and access to the plaza. In response, Metro has moved the proposed location of a TPSS, modified the alignment to slightly reduce the height of retaining walls, and modified design so as not to preclude a planned bike trail. Metro provided a response letter to the city on May 12, 2020, to provide additional information on the 183rd/Gridley grade separation, and the parking structure design was updated based on city's comments and other topics.

City of Bell – Metro met with the City of Bell on several occasions to discuss project design, specifically station location, grade crossings, sound walls and landscaping, and the city's concern for the mobile homes on the west side of Salt Lake Avenue. Metro confirmed a soundwall would be adjacent to the residential areas and presented technical reasons for the station location.

City of Bellflower – During coordination meetings held with the City of Bellflower, the city requested that the proposed soundwall that would end south of the Historic Depot be extended north to Bellflower Boulevard. Metro confirmed an additional soundwall would be placed adjacent to the senior citizen housing area, however, any additional soundwalls would be provided based on the noise analysis and as a mitigation to reduce noise impacts. Additionally, the city had questions and comments regarding the traffic analysis and requested additional information on methodology and results. A series of meetings was held to discuss the traffic analysis methodology. Metro also provided a response letter to the city on September 14, 2020, to provide additional information.

City of Cerritos – During meetings held with the City of Cerritos, staff informed the WSAB team that the city does not currently support the Project. The city identified its preferred options, which included: the alignment constructed completely underground, the alignment constructed at-grade but underground adjacent to residential areas, or constructing the alignment at-grade but in a trench adjacent to residential areas. The 183rd/Gridley intersection is the most important to the city, and the placement of an at-grade station and at-grade crossing was not considered acceptable. The city was not in support of a station and expressed concerns over station parking. As such, the 183rd/Gridley Station was removed based on input received at a focused community meeting held within the City of Cerritos on station location and the alignment was changed to aerial over the 183rd/Gridley intersection to address traffic and safety concerns. These changes were approved by the Metro Board in December 2018.

City of Cudahy – During meetings with the City of Cudahy to discuss project alignment and grade crossings, city staff suggested a grade separation at Florence Avenue and an alternative location for TPSS sites. Cudahy requested that the Salt Lake Avenue intersections with Elizabeth, Otis, and Santa Ana Streets be considered for traffic signals. Due to the at-grade crossings at Otis Avenue and Santa Ana Street, a signal is proposed as part of the Project at each intersection. Elizabeth Street would also benefit from the signal at Otis Avenue, resulting in improved service under the existing two-way stop. Metro determined that this improved service would result in no modifications to the Elizabeth Street intersection.

City of Downey – In meetings held with the City of Downey, city staff requested the Project provide precast concrete panels for tracks at Gardendale Street and extend the panels beyond the back of the sidewalk. The city does not prefer mid-block crossings; however, if they are required, the city proposed implementing signalized warning devices for pedestrian crossings. Several meetings with City of Downey staff, the county, and Metro were held to discuss the Rancho Los Amigos South Campus Project and Flores Street extension. Considering the county's project does not include extension of Flores Street, no further coordination on this issue is anticipated.

City of Huntington Park – During meetings held with the City of Huntington Park, city staff expressed their concerns for loss of parking, construction impacts, and pedestrian access at grade crossings, particularly near schools. Metro informed city staff that parking impacts will be evaluated in the Draft EIS/EIR and coordination with the city will continue as the project design advances. In addition, meetings were held to discuss the project alignment, station location, and traffic analysis. Lane reconfigurations in support of accommodating the project alignment were also discussed with city staff.

City of Los Angeles – During meetings held with the City of Los Angeles, staff suggested that a column on the corner of Washington Boulevard and Long Beach be relocated to reduce sidewalk impacts. The city provided a minimum clearance over the existing 53rd Street bridge. The design has been modified to reflect these comments.

City of Paramount – During meetings held with the City of Paramount, attendees discussed potential locations for the city’s proposed bike trail to avoid conflicts between the proposed trail and the Project. Metro and city staff met with representatives of World Energy regarding the storage capacity of the World Energy rail yard. Attendees agreed on a reconfiguration of the rail yard, which is the configuration evaluated in this Draft EIS/EIR. Metro and city staff also met with staff from the Paramount Unified School District. During this meeting, school staff said they were supportive of a pedestrian undercrossing to replace the existing pedestrian bridge over the project alignment. They also requested refinements to the undercrossing design. Metro has revised the design and will continue to work with school staff during future design development. City staff and Metro also met to discuss the project alignment and station locations. The discussion also focused on shifting the I-105/C Line Station north of the I-105 freeway to reduce impacts to residential properties.

City of South Gate – The City of South Gate requested the station location be shifted in regard to their Specific Plan. South Gate staff have been supportive of the proposed relocation of Firestone Station parking to the north side of the alignment. Access to driveways for businesses was updated based on the city’s input. Soundwalls along residential areas were discussed with the city, and landscaping and other treatments were highlighted by the city. The city also requested changing the slope elevation at stations in order to reduce the distance of the wing walls over Imperial Highway and Garfield Avenue.

City of Vernon – During meetings held with the City of Vernon, attendees discussed access to businesses, traffic, and configuration of the alignment.

WSAB City Managers TAC – In 2019, city managers from WSAB corridor cities approached the Gateway Cities Council of Governments about forming a TAC to provide a venue for key city staff to engage with project and corridor development. The TAC meetings are attended by the city manager, or his/her designated alternate, of each of the 14 cities including Artesia, Bell, Bell Gardens, Bellflower, Cerritos, Cudahy, Downey, Huntington Park, Lakewood, Paramount, South Gate and Vernon, and a representative of Los Angeles County, to be determined by the County. The Cities of Lakewood, Lynwood, and Maywood have had limited participation as they are not directly adjacent to the project alignment. The TAC city managers and representatives have met monthly since the TAC was established in January 2020 to discuss various topics, including regular environmental updates.

7.6. Tribal Coordination

Metro requested a Sacred Lands File (SLF) from the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on June 23, 2017, regarding information on sensitive Native American resources that may be present in the project area. Due to subsequent changes in the project alignment, a second request for a supplemental SLF search request was submitted to the NAHC on August 30, 2018. The NAHC responded to this supplemental SLF search request on September 11, 2018. In addition to providing the results of the SLF searches, responses from NAHC included Native American contacts with potential Native American cultural resources and information within the Study Area.

Metro conducted Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) compliant consultation with California tribes with traditional lands or cultural places in LA County after obtaining an initial consultation list from the NAHC on July 25, 2017, and a subsequent list on September 11, 2018. The tribes included on the NAHC lists are as follows:

- Andrew Salas, Chairperson, Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation
- Anthony Morales, Chairperson, Gabrieleño/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians
- Sandonne Goad, Chairperson, Gabrieliño/Tongva Nation
- Robert Dorame, Chairperson, Gabrieliño-Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
- Charles Alvarez, Gabrieliño-Tongva Tribe
- Matias Belardes, Chairperson, Juaneño Band of Mission Indians Acjachemen Nation – Belardes
- Linda Candelaria, Gabrieliño-Tongva Tribe
- Joyce Perry, Tribal Manager, Juaneño Band of Mission Indians Acjachemen Nation – Belardes

Pursuant to the requirements of AB 52, on October 16, 2018, Metro, acting as the lead CEQA agency, sent project notification letters to all eight of the above-listed Native American contacts (inclusive of those two not on the Los Angeles County consultation list but included on the list provided by the NAHC as part of the SLF search). The letters provided a description of the Project, the Project's location, and the lead agency contact information.

Metro received no requests for AB 52 consultation from seven of the eight Native American groups that were contacted via mail. In an email dated November 14, 2018, the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation (Kizh Nation) stated that if any ground disturbance was to occur for the Project, their tribal government would like to be consulted. The Kizh Nation also sent a letter to Metro personnel dated November 30, 2018, formally requesting AB 52 consultation for the Project. A summary of the consultation that occurred between Metro and the Kizh Nation is summarized below. No specific Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs) were identified during the consultation effort described below. However, it is assumed that P-19-1575 (CA-LAN-1575/H), located near Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) in Alternative 1, is a TCR for the purposes of this Project as it contains a Native American cemetery and is listed in the California Register of Historical Resources.

Metro initiated AB 52 consultation with the Kizh Nation via teleconference on November 16, 2018. During the meeting, Kizh Nation representatives discussed TCRs located within the vicinity of the project alignment. Following the teleconference, the Kizh Nation sent a follow-up email to Metro that included a historic map showing the general locations of some of the TCRs overlaid against a Google Earth map.

Metro and the Kizh Nation participated in a second teleconference meeting to discuss more specific information about TCRs along the alignment on January 24, 2019. During the meeting, Kizh Nation representatives (Andrew Salas and Matthew Teutimez) stated the area is culturally sensitive and noted that some of the project corridor follows or intersects major Native American trade routes. Tribal representatives referred to the Kirkman-Harriman Map (Kirkman 1937), which depicts the approximate location of these trade routes. Mr. Salas noted that human remains may be located along these trails. Because of the ancestral trade routes found in this area, the tribe considers the project corridor to be part of a cultural landscape. Given the length of the project corridor, Metro requested that the Kizh Nation

provide more specific information on those portions of the alignment that they consider to be particularly sensitive for TCRs. Metro also requested a copy of any mitigation language the tribe would like to provide to reduce project impacts.

Metro sent a follow-up email to the Kizh Nation on March 11, 2019, requesting that the tribe provide additional maps or mitigation language to be included in the environmental document. In this correspondence, Metro requested a response from the tribe by March 13, 2019. Metro also made follow-up calls to the Kizh Nation and left voicemail messages. No response was received from these outreach efforts.

On April 15, 2019, Metro sent a letter to the tribe again requesting additional maps and mitigation language. The letter stated that this information should be provided to Metro by May 16, 2019, to continue the AB 52 consultation process. The Kizh Nation emailed Metro with proposed mitigation language on April 22, 2019.

On July 19, 2019, Metro sent a letter to the tribe that summarized the project mitigation measures that were developed, taking into consideration the various aspects of the Kizh Nation's proposed mitigation measures that relate to TCRs. On August 8, 2019, the Kizh Nation replied via email that they had reviewed the proposed mitigation measures outlined in the letter sent July 19, 2019, and that the Kizh Nation concurred with the proposed measures and that the consultation process for the Project was formally concluded. These measures were later presented to Andrew Salas, Chairperson for the Kizh Nation, who agreed that they were acceptable for the purposes of Section 106 in addition to AB 52 (see Section 7.7 for additional information related to the Section 106 consultation process).

Correspondence is included in Appendix C of the *West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor Project Final Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 1* (Metro 2020d) (Appendix W).

7.7. Section 106 Consultation

On December 21, 2018, FTA sent Section 106 consultation letters to the Native American individuals identified in Section 7.6.

The letter invited the Native American groups to participate in the Section 106 consultation process and included information on the identification of prehistoric sites, and sacred and/or traditional cultural properties in the Area of Potential Effects (APE). FTA requested the tribes review the provided information and provide additional information or comments within 30 days of receiving the letter. Follow-up phone calls were conducted on January 29, 2019, for all contacts with phone numbers on file at the NAHC.

Responses were received from the Kizh Nation, Adrian Morales of the Gabrieleño/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians, and Robert Dorame, Chairperson for the Gabrieleño Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council. Details of consultation with each of these tribes thus far is summarized below and included in Appendix C of the Final Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 1 (Appendix W).

- On January 3, 2019, the Kizh Nation sent an email to the FTA requesting Section 106 consultation for the Project. On behalf of FTA, on March 11 and 12, 2020, telephone calls were placed and an email was sent to follow up on this request. Following telephone and email correspondence, on March 13, 2020, Andrew Salas, Chairperson for the Kizh Nation, agreed in an email that the mitigation developed for the

purposes of AB 52 would be acceptable for the purposes of Section 106. Consultation between the Kizh Nation and FTA was thus concluded.

- On February 11, 2019, Adrian Morales of the Gabrieleño/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians emailed a response also requesting Section 106 consultation. Mr. Morales requested that the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) record searches and all other informational data source be inclusive of a 1.0-mile radius search. In response to this request, the SCCIC record search was updated to 1.0 mile accordingly.
- Robert Dorame, Chairperson for the Gabrieleño Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council, discussed the Project with FTA staff on January 29, 2019. At that time, he stated he would respond to the request by email. Despite email follow-up by FTA, further response was not received and consultation between the Gabrieleño Tongva Indians of California and FTA was concluded.

This Section 106 consultation resulted in the identification of no Traditional Cultural Properties in the APE.

Local interested party consultation was initiated for the Project on September 20, 2017, when letters were sent on behalf of Metro via U.S. mail to 17 local government, local historic preservation advocacy, and history advocacy groups. Letters requested information regarding historic properties that may be located within the APE and described the original proposed Project and its related draft APE, including location maps. Due to changes to the project alignment, a second letter was sent to the same 17 contacts by Metro on March 18, 2019. Follow-up efforts with each group were conducted via telephone and/or email between May and June 2019, and subsequent follow-up efforts were conducted as necessary. Metro received 13 responses to the two rounds of contact efforts.

Responses were received from the following cities: Artesia, Bell, Bellflower, Cerritos, Cudahy, Downey, Los Angeles, Huntington Park, and Paramount, in addition to Los Angeles County, the City of Downey Historical Society, the Los Angeles Conservancy, and the Los Angeles Railroad Heritage Foundation. Representatives from the cities of Bell, Cerritos, Paramount, and Los Angeles County expressed no concerns regarding potential cultural resources within the vicinity of the APE. Representatives from the Cities of Artesia, Bellflower, Cudahy, Downey, and Huntington Park responded to consultation efforts by providing lists of known or potential cultural resources thought to be located in the vicinity of the APE. In most cases these lists were brief, including from one to six resources. A contact from the City of Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources indicated that the results of SurveyLA should be reviewed so that potential cultural resources in the area of the APE were accounted for.

To expand the reach of the consultation effort, consultation letters were sent by Metro via U.S. Mail to six additional historical societies and organizations to request information regarding historical resources that may be located within the APE. Letters were sent on February 4, 2020, to the following groups: Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, Los Angeles Union Station Historical Society (LAUSHS), Japanese American Cultural & Community Center, Little Tokyo Historical Society, La Plaza De Cultura y Artes, and Old Spanish Trail Association. Follow-up on the consultation letters sent on February 4 was completed on behalf of Metro on February 10 and February 19 and 20, 2020. Two responses to these efforts, from the LAUSHS and the Old Spanish Trail Association, were received and are summarized below. Section 106 local interested party consultation for the Project was concluded on March 10, 2020.

In an email dated February 4, 2020, a representative of the LAUSHS stated they would be interested in serving as a “Section 106 historic consultant” and also requested an exhibit of Alternative 1 at LAUS. As a result of this request, FTA considered the LAUSHS a consulting party. On behalf of Metro on March 10, 2020, Rincon spoke with Mr. Tom Savio, Executive Director of the LAUSHS, via telephone. Mr. Savio provided feedback regarding the design of potential station entrances in the vicinity Union Station. Mr. Savio commented that any new station entrances should complement the existing architecture of Union Station. No additional information regarding historic properties in the Project APE or its vicinity was provided.

In an email dated February 10, 2020, a representative of the Old Spanish Trail Association stated that the Old Spanish National Historic Trail does not include anything southeast of LAUS. Additionally, the email stated that the four alternatives would not affect the Old Spanish National Historic Trail historic sites. The email stated that the project crosses an alternative route of the Old Spanish Trail along Aliso Street, but that portion of the trail is not recognized by the Old Spanish National Historic Trail.

The Section 106 letters and any responses and follow-up are available in Appendix C of the Final Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 1 (Appendix W).

The Final Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 1 (Appendix W) was submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office on March 30, 2020. The office did not provide comments or objections on the revised APE or review of the eligibility determinations.

A meeting was held with the California Office of Historic Preservation on September 9, 2020. Metro provided an overview of the Project and the preliminary effects assessment for the project modifications to the I-105 as it relates to the I-105 Century Freeway Transitway Historic District. The Office of Historic Preservation staff did not object to the proposed effects assessment of No Adverse Effect. Information regarding Section 106 consultation is also provided in the Final Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 1 (Appendix W) and the *West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor Project Revised Preliminary Cultural Resources Effects Report* (Metro 2021u) (Appendix X).

7.8. Other Supporting Public Outreach

Public outreach activities took place outside of the scoping period summarized in Section 7.3. These activities were conducted to keep the public and key stakeholders apprised of project updates and milestones leading up to the release of the Draft EIR/EIS.

7.8.1. Stakeholder Organization Outreach

Two SWGs were formed to gather key stakeholders that best represent the interests of the WSAB Study Area communities. One SWG group focused on communities located south of the I-10 freeway and the other SWG group was comprised of stakeholders representing downtown LA communities. Outside of the scoping period, Metro conducted five SWG meetings. These meetings included stakeholders from organizations along the corridor that expressed interest in the Project after being contacted by the outreach team. The SWG meetings were targeted toward stakeholder organizations and not public agencies; however, if requested, public agency and elected official staff were able to participate in the SWG meetings. Organizations that participated in some or all the SWG meetings included South Gate Chamber of Commerce, South Gate Planning Commission, Paramount Unified School

District, SELA Collaborative, Richard N. Slauson Southeast Occupational Center, Trust for Public Land, Florence-Firestone Merchants Association, Paramount Planning Commission, Communities for a Better Environment, Paramount Public Safety Commission, FastLink DTLA, YWCA Greater Los Angeles, We Like LA, Little Tokyo Business Association, Central City Association, Fisch Properties, Industrial District BID, Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council, and Caltrans. The SWG meetings also served as a platform to share key updates on the Project. In addition, the meetings provided an opportunity for the SWG members to support outreach activities, including sending out project information via their own communication channels. Meetings have also been held with First 5, El Pueblo/Olivera Street Historic Society, Para Los Ninos and Little Tokyo Service Center representatives.

7.8.2. Ongoing Public Outreach

Following the scoping period, Metro continued to provide project updates and inform the community of the Project and hosted several rounds of community meetings and stakeholder and agency briefings. The following sections summarize the outreach activities that were conducted to keep the public informed and engaged throughout the planning process.

7.8.2.1. Stakeholder Database

An initial project database was created at the inception of the Environmental phase in the fall of 2016. Since then, the database has been maintained and expanded to include elected offices, including local, regional, state, and federal representatives; department executives of city and regional agencies; academic institutions and schools; community-based organizations; chambers of commerce; major employers; utility companies; and other key stakeholder representatives and residents of the corridor communities. The information collected in the database includes name, organization, email address, phone number, and mailing address.

The database has continued to expand as additional contacts were collected through stakeholder engagements. Maintenance of the database is ongoing to keep agency and organization contacts up-to-date prior to the start of notification for each meeting series or major announcement. New contacts are added when members of the public opt-in to receive project communications by providing their contact information at public meetings or pop-up events. Similarly, new agency contacts are added as they participate in project meetings or as they become directly involved. Contacts are also added as inquiries are received through the helpline, project email, and online submission form. This database will continue to be maintained and updated through the life of the project.

In addition, mailing lists were also generated for each major project announcement to reach occupants and owners of properties that are within one-quarter mile of a proposed station, as well as those who are within a 500-foot buffer from the project corridor.

7.8.2.2. Online Communication Tools

To keep stakeholders up-to-date, a project website was developed and updated at every major project milestone, including prior to public meeting series and as major project updates become available. The website features the latest project information, including fact sheets, project maps, other collateral materials, presentations, display materials, and video recordings of past meetings. A video of the Rail Tours conducted in 2019 is also available on the project website to offer stakeholders a guided virtual tour of two existing Metro light rail transit corridors – the Metro L Line (Gold) and E Line (Expo).

In support of the release of the Draft EIS/EIR, additional public engagement and educational materials will be made available to better inform stakeholders on the proposed improvements, including a new project video and an interactive web-based learning tool with interactive maps. The project alignment simulation video is being developed to offer a simulated rendering of the station platforms and general path of the proposed WSAB Transit Corridor. In addition, an Esri StoryMap is being developed to offer an interactive web platform serving as an additional educational tool that will feature project information, maps, and other multimedia that expands on the details offered on the project website. Both of these new educational pieces will be linked to the project website.

Project communication has also occurred through online social media. The project maintains Facebook and Twitter accounts to facilitate fast and easy information-sharing with interested stakeholders. The frequency of posts increase leading up to a public meeting, but these tools are used year-round to keep the community engaged. Social media is also used as an advertising tool for targeting ads to residents near the project alignment and stations. Lastly, email blasts (eblasts) are used as another tool to distribute information via email to the public at major milestones and leading up to a community meeting series.

7.8.2.3. Outreach Activities

Outside of the scoping period, Metro hosted community meetings in the communities of downtown Los Angeles, Little Tokyo, Artesia, Bell, Bellflower, Huntington Park, Downey, Paramount, and a workshop in Cerritos. Project materials were also featured at three Metro NextGen Bus Study³ public meetings in Bell, Compton, and Los Angeles. Metro also had pop-up information tables at community events throughout the corridor. Outside of the scoping period, comments have been received through the Project's email, website comment form, project helpline, on social media pages, and through the mail. The Project's outreach team has provided responses to comments and questions as they are received.

7.8.2.4. Rail Tours

Project staff provided rail tours to elected officials, agency and organization representatives, and the general public to highlight key light rail transit features that are similar to the features and elements proposed for the Project. Station design and connections, aerial and at-grade alignments and stations, soundwalls, and multi-modal access were highlighted. Rail tours of the Metro L Line and E Line were conducted between April 4, 2019 and June 8, 2019, including two agency tours and six public tours.

Notification for the rail tours included mailing flyer notices to all contacts in the project database (Section 7.8.2.1), eblast notices, extended outreach to stakeholder and agency representatives, social media, and promotion at 10 community events. Staff also made phone calls to contacts from the database that did not have a mailing address or email. A total of 118 participants took part in the tours—93 public participants and 25 agency and elected office representatives from 19 different agencies—and included the following:

- City of Artesia
- City of Bell
- City of Cudahy

³ The Metro NextGen Bus Study was a comprehensive study of all bus routes in Los Angeles County that was conducted by Metro between the winter of 2018 and the summer of 2019.

- City of Cerritos
- City of Los Angeles, Mayor’s Office
- City of Paramount
- City of South Gate
- Eco-Rapid Transit
- Gateway Service Council
- Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities
- Port of Long Beach
- Office of Assemblymember Cristina Garcia, District 58
- Office of Los Angeles County Board of Supervisor Janice Hahn, District 4
- Office of Orange County Supervisor Andrew Do, District 1
- Office of California Assemblymember Miguel Santiago, District 53
- Office of Los Angeles County Board of Supervisor Janice Hahn, District 4
- Office of Congresswoman Linda Sanchez, District 38
- Office of Metro Board Member Robert Garcia
- Office of Los Angeles County Board of Supervisor Janice Hahn, District 4

Metro also produced a virtual video version of the tour for stakeholders who were unable to participate in the live tours and has posted a link to the video on the project website. The virtual video tour was released on September 19, 2019, and as of October 1, 2020, had 5,750 views.

7.8.2.5. Downtown Los Angeles Survey

In 2019, Metro conducted an informal survey targeted at downtown Los Angeles stakeholders but it was also offered to stakeholders throughout the project area. The survey requested information on which neighborhoods the stakeholder visits, whether they had previously heard about the Project, whether there was a preference for Alternative 1 or 2 (referred to at that time as Alternative E and G), and whether the stakeholder felt that the Project would benefit them, their organization, and/or their community. Based on the responses, Alternative 1 was preferred over Alternative 2, and Union Station, Little Tokyo, and the Arts District were the most frequently visited neighborhoods in downtown Los Angeles. The survey itself was for informational purposes only and was not intended to inform decision-making on the Project.

7.8.2.6. Notification and Project Awareness Efforts

A variety of notification and informational tools were used for outreach to target audiences. Outreach methods included the following:

- Traditional methods
 - In-person meetings with cities, counties, chambers of commerce, councils of governments, educational institutions, community stakeholder groups, agency staff, and elected officials
 - Direct mail notification
 - Newspaper display ads (print and digital)
 - Placement of meeting notices in Metro light rail trains (Metro A [Blue] Line and C [Green] Line) as well as connecting Metro buses
 - Project awareness banners at highly visible locations along the project corridor
 - School outreach pop-up or information tables

- Public involvement opportunities
 - Public community meetings
 - The display of project materials at other Metro project community meetings (NextGen, I-105 ExpressLanes, Eastside Phase 2, WSAB TOD)
 - Metro L (Gold) and E (Expo) Line rail tours
 - Information booths and pop-ups at various community events and at Metro A (Blue) Line and C (Green) Line stations
- Project communication tools
 - Project website
 - Project helpline
 - Project overview survey
 - Email notification
 - Social media (i.e., Facebook and Twitter)
 - Project videos (video simulation, project overview, meeting webcasts, and recordings)
- Other targeted outreach
 - City and chamber of commerce newsletters
 - City cable channel displays
 - Electronic signs
 - Sharing of project information at key milestones with SWG members and their memberships
 - Text messages
 - *The Source*, Metro's online publication
 - Earned media (social media, blogs, newspapers, other media)

These notification tools and outreach efforts were customized based on the type of community meetings with a focus on maximizing cost-effectiveness and participation. A variety of informational documents were made available to the public, including project fact sheets, Metro systemwide fact sheets (i.e., Property Acquisition, Public-Private Partnership, Rail Transit Modes), frequently asked questions, meeting notices, electronic newsletters (eblasts), and other materials.

7.9. Public and Agency Comment Process

Throughout the project development process, public and agency comments have been collected through a variety of methods, including orally at in-person meetings, via the project helpline, through the mail, via online comment forms, and via project email. During the official scoping comment period, comments were accepted via comment cards submitted at meetings or mailed in, email, online comment form, or orally via a court reporter. Comments regarding the Project were also made through social media or other online platforms and, when possible, the outreach team provided stakeholders with the list of approved comment methods in case they wanted their comment on the official record. Comments submitted during official comment periods were incorporated into the Draft EIS/EIR and comments were addressed by the technical team.

7.10. Commenting on this Draft EIS/EIR

Following the release of this Draft EIS/EIR, a 45-day public comment period will be held to promote review of the Draft EIS/EIR and gather public comments. Metro will also host elected briefing, open houses, and public hearings to present findings of the Draft EIS/EIR and solicit public comments on the document. Metro provided notice of these public hearings in compliance with relevant NEPA and CEQA statutes and followed the same notification strategy and methods utilized during the scoping period (see Section 7.3). Information on the open houses and public hearings is available on the Metro website: metro.net/wsab.

During the 45-day comment period for the Draft EIS/EIR, agencies and the public may submit comments directly to Metro and FTA, and also at the public hearings through a court reporter. The Draft EIS/EIR will also be available on Metro’s website (metro.net/wsab), and paper copies will be available for public review upon request and at the following locations:

- Artesia Library, 18801 Elaine Ave, Artesia, CA 90701
- Clifton M. Brakensiek Library, 9945 Flower St, Bellflower, CA 90706
- Gateway Cities Council of Governments, 16401 Paramount Blvd, Paramount, CA 90723
- Hollydale Library, 12000 Garfield Ave, South Gate, CA 90280
- Huntington Park Library, 6518 Miles Ave, Huntington Park, CA 90255
- Little Tokyo Branch Library, 203 S Los Angeles St, Los Angeles, CA 90012
- Los Angeles Central Library, 630 W 5th St, Los Angeles, CA 90071
- Metro Dorothy Peyton Library, 15th Floor, 1 Gateway Plaza Los Angeles, CA 90012
- Paramount Park Community Center, 14400 Paramount Blvd, Paramount, CA 90723
- Salt Lake Park Recreation Center, 3401 Florence Ave, Huntington Park, CA 90255
South Park Business Improvement District, 1150-B S Hope St, Los Angeles, CA 90015

Comments on the Draft EIS/EIR will be solicited and collected following the release of the document and within the 45-day comment period. Comments will be collected at the public hearings as well as through the following methods:

- Mail: Ms. Meghna Khanna, Project Manager, Metro, One Gateway Plaza, M/S 99-22-7, Los Angeles, CA 90012
- Helpline: 213.922.6262
- Website: metro.net/wsab
- Email: wsab@metro.net

The project website provides information regarding comment submission methods. At a minimum, comments can be provided through conventional (mail and helpline) and electronic (website comment form and email) methods. Details on providing comments are also included in the public notices, notice of availability, legal newspaper advertisements (in English, Spanish, Japanese, and Korean) publications, as well as on digital platforms. These may include digital ads through newspapers, social media sites, and a geofencing ad campaign. Social media posts and eblasts to stakeholder database contacts will also be implemented. A printed notice will also be distributed via mail and door-to-door to the occupants and property owners within a 500-foot buffer of the corridor and a one-quarter-mile buffer of each station and other facilities. A copy-ready “toolkit” will also be developed to

provide to partner organizations for their assistance in sharing the project information and comment period details with their networks.

Note: if the COVID-19 pandemic persists into the comment period for the release of the Draft EIS/EIR, meetings will be hosted virtually and comments may also be collected through the chat function of the virtual meeting software or via telephone.