

# West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor

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



Metro®



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



---

## **Final Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report**

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

**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NO.: 2017061007**

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

**Additional written comments and/or questions concerning this document should be directed  
to the following:**

Meghna Khanna  
Project Manager  
Los Angeles County Metropolitan  
Transportation Authority  
One Gateway Plaza, M/S 99-22-7  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Phone: (213) 922-6262  
[SGL@metro.net](mailto:SGL@metro.net)

Charlene Lee Lorenzo  
Senior Director  
Federal Transit Administration  
Region 9  
Los Angeles Office  
888 S. Figueroa Street,  
Suite 440  
Los Angeles, CA 90017  
Phone: (213) 202-3952

Rusty Whisman  
Senior Transportation  
Program Specialist  
Federal Transit  
Administration Region 9  
888 S. Figueroa Street,  
Suite 440  
Los Angeles, CA 90017  
Phone: (213) 202-3956

---



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>7</b>	<b>PUBLIC OUTREACH, AGENCY CONSULTATION, AND COORDINATION .....</b>	<b>7-1</b>
7.1	Introduction.....	7-1
7.2	Regulatory Context .....	7-2
7.2.1	Public Outreach Work Plans .....	7-2
7.2.2	Outreach Compliance with FAST Act.....	7-2
7.2.3	Accommodations for Minority, Low Income, and Persons with Disabilities .....	7-3
7.3	Public Outreach Prior to Scoping .....	7-4
7.4	Scoping .....	7-5
7.5	Agency and Corridor City Outreach during Preparation of the Draft EIS/EIR .....	7-7
7.5.1	Federal Agencies.....	7-7
7.5.2	State Agencies .....	7-8
7.5.3	Regional/Local Agencies.....	7-8
7.5.4	Meetings with Corridor Cities .....	7-10
7.6	Draft EIS/EIR Comment Period .....	7-12
7.7	Summary of Comments Received on the Draft EIS/EIR .....	7-15
7.8	Coordination since Close of the Draft EIS/EIR Comment Period .....	7-15
7.8.1	Briefings with Elected Officials .....	7-15
7.8.2	Agency and Corridor City Outreach.....	7-16
7.8.3	Community Meetings .....	7-22
7.9	Tribal Coordination .....	7-23
7.10	Section 106 Consultation.....	7-25
7.10.1	In Support of the Draft EIS/EIR .....	7-25
7.10.2	Subsequent to Draft EIS/EIR.....	7-27
7.11	Other Supporting Public Outreach.....	7-35
7.11.1	Stakeholder Organization Outreach .....	7-35
7.11.2	Ongoing Public Outreach .....	7-36
7.12	Release of Final EIS/EIR .....	7-39

### Tables

Table 7-1.	Public Scoping Meeting Dates and Locations.....	7-6
Table 7-2.	Public Hearings and Community Information Sessions – Dates and Locations .....	7-14
Table 7-3.	Community Update Meetings.....	7-22
Table 7-4.	Summary of Public Participation During Community Update Meetings.....	7-23

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Definition
AB	Assembly Bill
ACTA	Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority
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
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
LAUSD	Los Angeles Unified School District
LAUSHS	Los Angeles Union Station Historical Society
LPA	Locally Preferred Alternative
LRT	light rail transit
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act
Metro	Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
MSF	maintenance and storage facility
MWD	Metropolitan Water District
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOA	Notice of Availability
NOC	Notice of Completion
NOI	Notice of Intent
NOP	Notice of Preparation



Acronym	Definition
PE	Preliminary Engineering
PQS	Professionally Qualified Staff
PSR/PR	Project Study Reports/Project Reports
ROW	right-of-way
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCCIC	South Central Coastal Information Center
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SLF	Sacred Lands File
SWG	Stakeholder Working Group
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.<sup>1</sup> 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.

On July 30, 2021, a Notice of Completion (NOC) for the Draft EIS/EIR and supporting reports for the Project was filed with the California State Clearinghouse pursuant to CEQA. The Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Draft EIS/EIR appeared in the *Federal Register*<sup>2</sup> on July 30, 2021, pursuant to NEPA. The public comment period was extended from September 13, 2021 to September 28, 2021. The Draft EIS/EIR public review period included eight virtual (via Zoom) public engagements, including four public hearings and four virtual community information sessions.

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, X [the platform formerly known as Twitter], and YouTube).

---

<sup>1</sup> *Federal Register*. Vol. 82, No. 121, June 26, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> *Federal Register*. Vol. 86, No. 144, July 30, 2021.

## 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, through release of the Draft EIS/EIR, and in support of this Final 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:

- NOI 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 the California High-Speed Rail Authority. As such, FRA withdrew from cooperating agency and participating agency status)
- City of Vernon

As part of NEPA scoping, 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. After release of the Draft EIS/EIR in July 2021, Caltrans and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) submitted letters requesting to serve as cooperating agencies.

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 2-11 in Chapter 2, Project Description/Alternatives Considered, of this Final EIS/EIR, a Title V permit may be required from the South Coast Air Quality Management District for construction. After release of the Draft EIS/EIR, the letter submitted by Caltrans also requested identification as a responsible agency.

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
- Eight public forums during the Draft EIS/EIR public review period, including four public hearings and four community information sessions
- Twenty-two community meetings/community-specific meetings/workshops
- Seven live webinars or video recordings of public meeting presentations
- Seven SWG meetings, including meetings for stakeholder representatives for communities south of the I-10 corridor and downtown Los Angeles
- 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. 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. 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*. Quadilingual 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 and extended outreach communication via agencies, organizations, and other key stakeholders.
- During the Draft EIS/EIR public review period, Metro hosted three viewing locations to provide the community an in-person opportunity to view the presentation and provide official oral comment.

### 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).

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 to 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

Description	Meeting	Date	Location	Additional Features
<b>Original Scoping (June 2017)</b>	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"> <li>Offered to elected offices and public agencies to preview the public scoping meeting</li> </ul>
	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"> <li>Court reporter</li> <li>Spanish interpreter</li> </ul>
	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"> <li>Live webcast</li> <li>Court reporter</li> <li>Spanish interpreter</li> </ul>
	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"> <li>Court reporter</li> <li>Japanese and Spanish interpreters</li> </ul>
	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"> <li>Court reporter</li> <li>Japanese and Spanish interpreters</li> </ul>
	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"> <li>Court reporter</li> <li>Spanish interpreter</li> </ul>
<b>Updated Scoping (July 2018)</b>	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"> <li>Offered to elected offices and public agencies to preview the public scoping meeting</li> </ul>
	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"> <li>Court reporter</li> <li>Japanese and Spanish interpreters</li> </ul>
	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"> <li>Court reporter</li> <li>Spanish interpreter</li> </ul>
	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"> <li>Live webcast</li> <li>Court reporter</li> <li>Spanish interpreter</li> </ul>

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 **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 2024q).*

### 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 Final 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 LA 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 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, 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, and 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 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 modified the alignment to extend the bridge span south to reduce retaining wall length and height, 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 the 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, for each of the 14 cities: Artesia, Bell, Bell Gardens, Bellflower, Cerritos, Cudahy, Downey, Huntington Park, Lakewood, Paramount, South Gate, Vernon, and Maywood, as well as 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 Draft EIS/EIR Comment Period

On July 30, 2021, a NOC for the Draft EIS/EIR and supporting reports for the Project was filed with the California State Clearinghouse as well as distributed via USB drives mailed to 261 agencies, organizations, elected officials, and other interested parties. The NOA was published in the Federal Register on July 30, 2021. Metro conducted a comprehensive public outreach program that focused on maximizing public awareness and access to review and comment on the Draft EIS/EIR.

Public noticing was done in accordance with CEQA and NEPA regulations and included two rounds of notices to announce details of the release of the Draft EIS/EIR, as well as to provide information on the public hearings and comment methods. An initial notification campaign was executed in support of the release of the Draft EIS/EIR on July 30, 2021, and a second major notification campaign was conducted to announce the extension of the original 45-day comment period to 61 days, or until September 28, 2021.

A variety of public noticing methods were employed to reach the public and encourage access to the Draft EIS/EIR, participation at the public hearings, and submittal of formal comments. Efforts included direct mail (approximately 60,000 stakeholders), door-to-door drop-offs (approximately 50,000 properties), legal notices, social media posts and ads, eblasts, SMS text messages (over 450 cellphone numbers), press releases, notices on the project website, information booths at local events, pop-ups at Metro rail stations, and other methods.

The Draft EIS/EIR was available on Metro's website ([www.metro.net/wsab](http://www.metro.net/wsab)), and paper copies were 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

The Draft EIS/EIR public review period also included eight virtual (via Zoom) public engagements, including four public hearings and four virtual community information sessions (Table 7-2). The public hearings were held to receive public comments in writing and orally (via a court reporter).

During this period, Metro also hosted four virtual community information sessions to provide an opportunity for focused dialogue with the project team regarding specific topics, including the use of Zoom breakout rooms to provide for smaller group and one-on-one discussions. While formal comments were not accepted at these information sessions, participants were encouraged to submit their formal comments through other methods, such as an online form, postal mail, by attending a virtual public hearing or tech booth and providing oral comment, or by completing a printed comment card.

As noted previously, public hearings were conducted via Zoom due to health and safety advisories during the COVID-19 pandemic. To enhance equitable access, remote viewing locations with a livestream of the Zoom transmission for a public hearing and a community information session were offered along the project corridor for those with limited internet access or technical capabilities. 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 7-2. Public Hearings and Community Information Sessions – Dates and Locations

Description	Meeting	Date	Location	Additional Features
<b>Community Information Sessions</b> <i>Aug. to Sept. 2021</i>	CIS #1: Property Acquisitions, Relocation Process and Timing	Monday, August 16, 2021 5-7pm	Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spanish interpreter</li> </ul>
	CIS #2: Traffic, Noise and Safety & Security	Saturday, August 21, 2021 10am-12pm	Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spanish interpreter</li> </ul>
	CIS #3: Property Acquisitions, Relocation Process and Timing	Thursday, August 26, 2021 10am-12pm	Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spanish interpreter</li> </ul>
	CIS #4: Property Acquisitions, Relocation Process and Timing and Traffic, Noise and Safety & Security	Wednesday, Sept. 15, 2021 12pm-1:30pm	Zoom & Remote Viewing Locations in Huntington Park and downtown LA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spanish interpreter</li> <li>Remote Zoom access / viewing locations</li> </ul>
<b>Public Hearings</b> <i>Aug. to Sept. 2021</i>	Public Hearing #1	Thursday, August 19, 2021 6:00pm–8:00pm	Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spanish interpreter</li> <li>Court reporter</li> </ul>
	Public Hearing #2	Tuesday, August 24, 2021 12:00pm–2:00pm	Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spanish interpreter</li> <li>Court reporter</li> </ul>
	Public Hearing #3	Saturday, August 28, 2021 10:00am–12:00pm	Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spanish interpreter</li> <li>Court reporter</li> </ul>
	Public Hearing #4	Monday, Sept. 20, 2021 12:00pm–1:30pm	Zoom & Remote Viewing Locations in Huntington Park and downtown LA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spanish interpreter</li> <li>Court reporter</li> <li>Remote Zoom access / viewing locations</li> </ul>

Source: Arellano Associates 2023

Note: CIS = Community Information Session

Simultaneous interpretation was available in Spanish for all meetings and hearings. Japanese and Korean interpretation was available for all hearings and available for request at the community information sessions.

Stakeholders were able to submit written comments via mail, an online comment form, and in-person at information booths. Oral comments were also received via the project helpline and at the four public hearings conducted during this period. In addition, although it was not offered as an official commenting portal, comments received via email were accepted as formal comments.



During the 60-day public review period, Metro hosted four virtual public hearings, four virtual community information sessions, and over 19 pop-up booths for in-person engagement at locations throughout the project corridor. In addition, Metro held approximately 20 briefings to key stakeholders, elected officials, corridor cities, and other agencies.

## 7.7 Summary of Comments Received on the Draft EIS/EIR

In total, 452 formal comments submissions (e.g., comment cards, emails, and letters) were received containing approximately 2,255 individual comments during the public review period. Submissions received on the Draft EIS/EIR were organized and grouped into categories based on the affiliation of the commenter (e.g., state agency, business, corridor city). Some commenters or affiliations submitted more than one submission during the comment period, in which case these were counted as separate submissions. The comments received on the Draft EIS/EIR addressed a variety of topics. Some included general statements of support or opposition to the Project, or the four Build Alternatives evaluated in the Draft EIS/EIR. Other comments offered suggestions on how to modify the Project through refinements, as well as requests for changes, clarification, and/or new or additional analysis and mitigation to the Draft EIS/EIR. Additionally, other comments expressed concern over environmental impacts and funding/cost.

Common themes of comments received were as follows:

- Project alternatives or features (e.g., alignment, stations, TPSSs, construction staging areas)
- Comments requesting grade separation of the alignment
- Comments regarding mitigation measures
- Comments regarding operation and construction activities in the Little Tokyo Community
- Impacts related to displacements and acquisitions
- Impacts related to noise during operation and construction
- Impacts related to visual changes, including screening of project components on aerial structures
- Safety and security along the alignment and at stations
- Impacts related to air quality, including dust and emissions during operation and construction
- Impacts related to traffic and parking, including the provision of dedicated transit parking

Common responses were prepared for select, reoccurring comments and are included in Appendix D, Responses to Comments Received on the Draft EIS/EIR, of this Final EIS/EIR.

## 7.8 Coordination since Close of the Draft EIS/EIR Comment Period

### 7.8.1 Briefings with Elected Officials

Metro met with the following state and federal elected officials in 2022 to provide updates on the identified LPA and comments received on the Draft EIS/EIR:

- 1/12/22 – Project briefing for state and federal elected offices
- 6/16/22 – Briefing for Assembly Budget Committee
- 8/30/22 – Offices of Senators Padilla and Feinstein

- 10/3/22 – Office of Congresswoman Linda Sanchez
- 12/21/22 – Office of State Senator Lena Gonzalez

Additionally, Metro met with the following state and federal elected officials in 2023 to provide updates on project refinements:

- 1/25/23 – Office of Congressman Robert Garcia
- 2/21/23 – Office of State Senator Lena Gonzalez
- 4/20/23 – Directors Hahn and Mitchell briefing with U.S. Department of Transportation
- 5/19/23 – Subregional briefing with state and federal elected offices in the corridor

### 7.8.2 Agency and Corridor City Outreach

Coordination continued after circulation of the Draft EIS/EIR, and a series of meetings was held with cities, agencies, and stakeholders. Meetings included discussions related to comments received on the Draft EIS/EIR as well as project updates, including design refinements and updated analysis. The following is a summary of meetings held.

**City of Artesia** – Meetings were held with the City of Artesia in April, June, September, October, and November 2022 to discuss project updates, refinements, and comments received from the City of Artesia on the Draft EIS/EIR. Coordination with the city prior to circulation of the Draft EIS/EIR regarding the Pioneer Station parking structure design continued at these meetings. Based on this coordination after circulation of the Draft EIS/EIR, the parking structure was further refined, including aligning the driveway to the parking structure along Pioneer Boulevard with Solana Place and signaling the intersection. Additionally, the parking structure was shifted north to provide alley egress to Corby Avenue and an additional floor was added to maintain the supply identified in the Draft EIS/EIR.

Additionally, Metro met with city staff on September 29, 2022, to discuss results of the Cut-and-Cover Study. In October 2022, the City of Artesia and City of Cerritos submitted a letter to Metro opposing the at-grade alignment. On October 10, 2022, the City of Artesia provided a letter to Metro withdrawing the request that the Final EIS/EIR evaluate a below-grade cut-and-cover alignment at the intersection of Gridley Road and 183rd Street as an alternative to the closure of 187th Street. Metro staff also met with the City of Artesia and CPUC in November 2022 regarding the closure of 186th or 187th Street. The city stated that both streets should remain open and provide at-grade crossings to avoid disruptions to the neighborhood that would occur with closure of either street. CPUC stated that the agency seeks to minimize the number of new at-grade crossings to limit conflicts with pedestrians, rail vehicles, and automobiles. Given the traffic network in this location, alternative routes would be available with the closure of one street. Therefore, in coordination with the city, the Final EIS/EIR includes a design option that evaluates closure of 186th Street with 187th Street open. Metro also met with city staff on October 17 and 24, 2023, to discuss the traffic analysis within the City of Artesia for the LPA with and without the design option. Additional information on traffic conditions with and without the design option was provided to city staff in January 2024. In January 2024, city staff informed Metro that the city preferred the LPA with the design option, which would close 186th Street but keep 187th Street open.

**City of Bellflower** – Meetings were held with the City of Bellflower in April, June, and October 2022 to discuss project updates, refinements, and comments received from the city on the Draft EIS/EIR. Specifically, Metro coordinated with the City of Bellflower regarding High-Capacity Well Number 1 to determine if there would be effects to the well that were not identified in the Draft EIS/EIR. Based on this coordination, an additional groundborne vibration assessment was completed at the high-capacity well and an additional project measure was included in the Final EIS/EIR (VIB PM-1: City of Bellflower Vibration Sensitive Facilities) limiting high-vibration construction activities near the wellhead.

Metro also coordinated with the City of Bellflower regarding the maintenance and storage facility (MSF) site entrance and closures of left turns from Alondra Boulevard to Pacific Avenue. As a result of this coordination, the MSF site entrance on Somerset Boulevard was shifted to align with Bayou Avenue to allow for a signalized pedestrian crossing of Somerset Boulevard. The project design was also refined to add a protected southbound left-turn lane and a traffic signal on Clark Avenue at Los Angeles Street to accommodate access to the community.

**City of Cerritos** – Meetings were held with the City of Cerritos in April, June, and September 2022 and in January, February, and March 2023. On April 26, 2022, Metro received feedback from city staff on the scope of Metro’s cut-and-cover study, and the project team discussed comments from the city submitted on the Draft EIS/EIR. Coordination related to the cut-and-cover study, and comments on the Draft EIS/EIR continued in June 2022. Metro met with staff from the Cities of Artesia and Cerritos on September 29, 2022, and discussed the height and location of the retaining walls near 183rd Street and Gridley Road. The design of the aerial structure has been revised since circulation of the Draft EIS/EIR as a result of coordination with the City of Cerritos and now includes additional columns in place of a retaining wall along the southeast corner of the intersection. The City of Cerritos also submitted a letter opposing the at-grade alignment. At the meeting on February 21, 2023, Metro informed representatives of the City of Cerritos of coordination with CPUC regarding the closure of 186th or 187th Street and the inclusion of a design option in the Final EIS/EIR.

Meetings with the City of Cerritos in 2023 included discussions regarding updates to the analysis, including the addition of seven intersections to the traffic analysis at the request of the City of Cerritos (included in the evaluation in Chapter 3, Transportation, of this Final EIS/EIR) and preparation of new visual renderings for 183rd Street and Gridley Road (one of which is included as Figure 4.4-9 in Section 4.4.3.2 of this Final EIS/EIR). Additionally, the visual analysis includes the change from a retaining wall to columns near 183rd Street and Gridley Road and the consideration of soundwalls. The Metro team also noted that the design of the alignment in the City of Cerritos will not preclude the addition of a station at 183rd Street and Gridley Road if a station were to be added in the future. Additionally, a TPSS was relocated at the city’s request. Modifications to the design of the parking structure at the Pioneer Station were also discussed. Additionally, Metro stated that a new project measure (Project Measure VA PM-8 (Residential Screening for Aerial Structures, described in Section 4.4.4.1 of this Final EIS/EIR) consisting of a vertical screening element was added to the project design at locations where the light rail transit (LRT) aerial structure will be situated adjacent to the rear of residential properties, and the height of the soundwalls (Mitigation Measure NOI-1 [Soundwalls] in Section 4.7.4.2 of this Final EIS/EIR) on top of the aerial structures will be less than eight feet. The vertical screening element will block the line-of-sight between LRT vehicles on the aerial structures and the rear yards of adjacent residential properties.

**City of Cudahy** – Meetings were held with the City of Cudahy in April and May 2022 and in April 2023. During the 2022 meetings, the project team discussed comments from the city on the Draft EIS/EIR. At the meeting on April 5, 2023, the project team presented the latest design plans for the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). City staff also noted plans for a project in the vicinity of the Firestone Station parking facility, and attendees discussed the potential for a joint use of the park-and-ride lot during nights and/or weekends.

**City of Downey** – A meeting was held with the City of Downey in April 2022 to discuss comments received on the Draft EIS/EIR. Specifically, attendees discussed parking effects and mitigation, traffic impacts, and security at stations. An additional meeting with Metro and city staff occurred in May 2022.

**City of Huntington Park** – Meetings were held with the City of Huntington Park in April, June, July, and September 2022 and in March, June, and August 2023. At the meetings in April and June 2022, the project team discussed comments from the city on the Draft EIS/EIR. At the June 2022 meeting, Metro provided an overview of coordination with UPRR regarding design of the LPA, which included switching the location of the freight and LRT tracks within the La Habra Branch ROW compared to the Draft EIS/EIR design. The relocation and removal of TPSS sites was also discussed in response to comments from the City of Huntington Park on the Draft EIS/EIR. On July 19, 2022, the project team and city staff conducted a field visit in the City of Huntington Park. The field visit followed the LPA alignment along Randolph Street, noting existing conditions at intersections and potential TPSS locations. Coordination regarding TPSS locations continued in September 2022. Coordination also occurred related to closure of, or restricting left turns at, at-grade crossings. Staff from the City of Huntington Park provided a list of locations for closures or left-turn restrictions to Metro in October 2022. The City of Huntington Park also requested closure of the Otis Avenue at-grade crossing. However, as discussed with Huntington Park in a subsequent meeting in 2023, the closure of Otis Avenue would result in substantial delays and queues along Salt Lake Avenue and side streets, and therefore, closure was not recommended or included in the Final EIS/EIR.

During the March and June 2023 meetings, coordination continued regarding modifications to at-grade crossings and left-turn restrictions. Discussions also included the addition of soundwalls along Randolph Street, including placement, material, and height (added since the Draft EIS/EIR to further minimize noise impacts; refer to Mitigation Measure NOI-1 [Soundwalls] in Section 4.7.4.2 of this Final EIS/EIR); the width of the sidewalk at San Antonio Elementary School and Magnet Center; and property acquisitions identified as part of the Project. The June and August 2023 meetings also discussed the loss of on-street parking that will result within the city. Following coordination with the city, TPSS Site 14 was relocated and optional TPSS Sites 16E and 12E within the city were eliminated. A construction laydown area was also relocated. Additionally, as a result of coordination with the city, design refinements to the LPA included changes to open or closed at-grade crossings and left-turn restrictions within the city. The locations of closures and turn restrictions are included in Section 3.5.1 of Chapter 3, Transportation, of this Final EIS/EIR. Metro also held a series of meetings with representatives of City of Huntington Park, UPRR, Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, and/or CPUC in August and September 2023 related to design at two at-grade crossings in the City of Huntington Park. Design was updated at these crossings based on the meetings.

**City of Paramount** – Meetings were held with the City of Paramount in May, July, and September 2022 and in January 2023. At a meeting on May 4, 2022, the project team discussed comments from the city on the Draft EIS/EIR. As the Bellflower MSF site was identified as part of the LPA, discussions focused on other comments received from the City of Paramount unrelated to the Paramount MSF site option. Coordination regarding city comments continued at meetings in July and September 2022. At these meetings, the project team also presented and discussed replacing the Paramount High School pedestrian bridge with a new pedestrian bridge rather than the pedestrian undercrossing that was included in the Draft EIS/EIR. The concept presented was developed in coordination with UPRR. Metro also presented updated design information on access to the I-105/C Line infill station. In coordination with the City of Paramount, Façade Avenue was modified to an emergency exit only from the I-105/C Line infill station. This change was to address city concerns about the potential for informal kiss-and-ride and parking along city streets south of I-105. At a meeting on January 4, 2023, the project team presented in-progress, updated plans for installation of soundwalls along the rear of properties along Façade Avenue that reflect changes in design to address stakeholder comments.

**City of South Gate** – Meetings were held with the City of South Gate in April, June, and October 2022 and in April 2023. During the April and June 2022 meetings, the project team discussed comments from the city on the Draft EIS/EIR. At the meeting on October 17, 2022, the project team presented a concept that modified the footprint of the I-105/C Line Station parking facility. In coordination with UPRR, the parking facility was reconfigured to expand to the north, with the portion of the park-and-ride proposed west of the tracks removed to avoid passengers crossing the freight tracks. At the city's request, a new driveway entrance to the park-and-ride facility was added along Century Boulevard. Additionally, a construction laydown site was relocated near Imperial Highway as a result of a comment from the city. At a meeting on April 13, 2023, the project team provided a project update on the 15 percent design as well as updates to the environmental analyses based on design updates.

**Eco-Rapid** – A meeting with Eco-Rapid was held on August 22, 2022, to discuss comments received on the Draft EIS/EIR. Specifically, attendees discussed impacts during construction, including Mitigation Measure COM-1 (Construction Outreach Plan), construction means and methods, and the potential for a Business Interruption Fund.

**WSAB City Managers TAC** – The Metro team continued to attend monthly meetings to provide regular project updates. A meeting was held on October 3, 2022, to provide an update on the cut-and-cover study efforts. The project team presented the design for the six segments studied as part of these efforts and discussed constructability considerations and cost. At this meeting, Metro staff noted that a cut-and-cover segment would be more expensive than an aerial configuration at each location studied and was not recommended.

**Caltrans** – Metro staff routinely met with Caltrans after circulation of the Draft EIS/EIR. Meeting discussions included work within Caltrans facilities and preparation of the PSR-PR. Additionally, discussions focused on project elements located within the Century Freeway-Transitway Historic District and updated project details, as well as Section 106 and CEQA analyses related to proposed project activities within the district. Section 7.10.2.2 details coordination with Caltrans related to Section 106 consultation.

**CPUC** – At a meeting on May 17, 2022, Metro provided an overview of project updates. CPUC staff provided clarification on a comment letter submitted on the Draft EIS/EIR

related to at-grade crossings where there would be adjacent unmitigated noise, vibration, and/or traffic impacts from the Project. Metro discussed a potential design option to keep 187th Street open, and CPUC staff suggested the closure of 186th Street in order to minimize the number of new at-grade crossings. During a meeting on August 15, 2022, Metro and CPUC continued coordination related to the design option, including discussion of potential refinements. At CPUC's request, a proposed raised median north of the Pioneer Boulevard at-grade crossing was extended to prevent left turns out of a commercial property on the east side of the street to minimize conflicts at the crossing. CPUC also attended the meeting described previously with the City of Artesia regarding closure of 187th or 186th Street. Metro staff also provided an update on refinements to the Pioneer Station parking structure in coordination with the City of Artesia. At a meeting on March 7, 2023, the project team summarized updates to the noise analysis made in consideration of CPUC comments on the Draft EIS/EIR, including the addition of two new project measures (NOI PM-1 [Crossing Signal Bells] and NOI PM-2 [Gate-Down-Bell-Stop Variance] described in Section 4.7.4.1 of this Final EIS/EIR), placing soundwalls closer to at-grade crossings, and the addition of soundwalls on Randolph Street. The two new project measures were previously proposed as mitigation measures in the Draft EIS/EIR (Mitigation Measures NOI-4 and NOI-5, respectively) but were not assumed as part of the mitigated noise levels presented in the Draft EIS/EIR because these measures are subject to CPUC approval. On April 4, 2023, CPUC notified Metro via email that it did not have comments on the updates to the noise methodology or project measures that were presented during the March 7, 2023, meeting. Metro also held a series of meetings with representatives of CPUC, UPRR, Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, and/or City of Huntington Park in August and September 2023 related to design at two at-grade crossings in the City of Huntington Park. Design was updated at these crossings based on the meetings.

**USACE** – Meetings were held with representatives of USACE in September 2021 and October 2022. During the September 2021 meeting, which occurred during the public review period for the Draft EIS/EIR, FTA and Metro met with USACE regarding the change in USACE's role from a Participating Agency to a Cooperating Agency under NEPA. The Section 404(b)(1) analysis was also discussed during the meeting. During the October 2022 meeting, Metro and USACE discussed the scope of the hydraulic modeling that was conducted for the Final EIS/EIR. Subsequent to the meeting, attendees agreed 1D modeling, consistent with that completed for the Draft EIS/EIR, was sufficient for the Final EIS/EIR, and 2D modeling could occur in support of the Section 408 permit. Metro also provided drafts of documents, including sections and technical reports, to USACE for review and comment. Refer to Section 7.10.2.1 regarding consultation in support of Section 106.

**UPRR/Port of Los Angeles/Port of Long Beach** – Metro held monthly and individual technical meetings with UPRR, the Port of Los Angeles, and the Port of Long Beach. Based on coordination from these meetings, a virtual diagnostic meeting was held on July 19, 2023, with UPRR, CPUC, and the City of Huntington Park to discuss the Santa Fe Avenue and Alameda Street at-grade crossings along the La Habra Subdivision. As noted above, representatives of UPRR and the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach also participated in a series of meetings with Metro, CPUC, and City of Huntington Park related to design at two at-grade crossings in August and September 2023.

As a result of the meetings and subsequent coordination, the following refinements were made to the LPA design to minimize effects on freight operation:

- Swap the location of the freight and LRT tracks within the La Habra Branch right-of-way compared to the Draft EIS/EIR design. Freight tracks will be relocated to the north side of the railroad ROW along Randolph Street, and LRT tracks will be constructed along the southern portion of the railroad ROW
- Redesign a freight spur track connection north of Rayo Avenue on the west side of the freight tracks to avoid impacts to a spur track
- Extend the LRT viaduct north of Imperial Highway to avoid impacts to a spur track and full acquisition of a property
- Reconfigure the I-105/C Line Station parking facility by removing dedicated transit parking on the west side of the freight tracks and expanding the parking facility on the east side of the freight tracks to the north
- Modify the replacement freight bridge at I-105 to a four-span structure, consistent with the current bridge, rather than the previously proposed two-span structure
- Replace the proposed pedestrian undercrossing with a pedestrian bridge at Paramount High School that will span the entire rail ROW

Refinements made to the LPA design are summarized in Section 2.4.3.2 of Chapter 2, Project Description/Alternatives Considered, and Appendix E of this Final EIS/EIR.

**Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority (ACTA)** – A meeting with ACTA was held on April 27, 2023. During the meeting, the project team presented design of the Project. Metro stated that meetings with ACTA will continue as needed as design advances.

**Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)** – The project team met with LAUSD on September 19, 2022. During the meeting, the project team stated that a TPSS in the Draft EIS/EIR was proposed at State Street and Randolph Street, but an alternate site is needed due to redevelopment proposed by the City of Huntington Park. The project team presented a concept for a TPSS site on LAUSD property (San Antonio Elementary School and Magnet Center). Based on coordination with LAUSD, the alternate TPSS site on LAUSD property was eliminated from further consideration. During the meeting, LAUSD also inquired regarding property acquisitions and parking impacts at San Antonio Elementary School and Magnet Center and stated that a loss of parking would not be desirable. A meeting with LAUSD was also held on March 29, 2023, to discuss the width of the sidewalk on Randolph Street and the acquisition process. Revised design was also presented showing the elimination of parking impacts. The project team presented a proposed concept for the sidewalk that meets LAUSD requirements for 8-foot sidewalks at schools.

**Dante Valve Company** – In response to a comment letter received from Dante Valve Company on the Draft EIS/EIR, Metro coordinated with the company to understand operational requirements and determine if there would be effects on operations that were not identified in the Draft EIS/EIR. Coordination included two site visits to the Dante Valve Company in support of completing an additional groundborne vibration assessment. The vibration assessment considered vibration during operation and construction of the LPA. Based on the analysis, which is presented in Section 4.7 and 4.19.3.7 of this Final EIS/EIR, operation and construction of the LPA will not affect operations at the Dante Valve Company.

Project Measure VIB PM-1 (City of Bellflower Vibration Sensitive Facilities) will also apply during construction near the Dante Valve Company.

**World Energy** – Metro met with representatives of World Energy and the City of Paramount on January 19, 2023. The project team presented the design and location of soundwalls along the rear of properties along Façade Avenue. Additionally, the timeline for the Project was discussed. Attendees also discussed the timing of construction activities associated with the separate World Energy expansion project.

### 7.8.3 Community Meetings

Metro hosted a total of four community update meetings (Table 7-3) in June 2023, including three in-person and one virtual. The meetings were held to share Project refinements to the LPA, and next steps for the Project. The in-person community update meetings were structured in an open house format followed by a formal presentation and question and answer segment. The virtual meeting included a presentation and question and answer segment.

**Table 7-3. Community Update Meetings**

Meetings	Date	Location	Additional Features
Community Update Meeting #1	Monday, June 5, 2023 6pm-8pm	City of Paramount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Spanish interpreter</li> <li>▪ ASL interpreter</li> <li>▪ Kid’s activities</li> </ul>
Community Update Meeting #2	Monday, June 12, 2023 6pm-8pm	City of Bell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Spanish interpreter</li> <li>▪ Kid’s activities</li> </ul>
Community Update Meeting #3	Wednesday, June 14, 2023 6pm-7:30pm	Virtual (Zoom)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Spanish interpreter</li> <li>▪ English/Spanish call-in options</li> </ul>
Community Update Meeting #4	Thursday, June 15, 2023 6pm-8pm	City of Artesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Spanish interpreter</li> <li>▪ Kid’s activities</li> </ul>

Source: Arellano Associates, 2023

Over 290 community members attended the four meetings combined and generated 77 inquiries during the questions and answers segment. In addition, a video recording of the presentation was distributed to the project database and made available on the project website. Simultaneous Spanish interpretation was available at all meetings and American Sign Language interpretation was provided at the June 5, 2023, meeting in the City of Paramount following an advance request from a member of the public requiring these services. A summary of inquiries is provided in Table 7-4. Input was also requested on preferences regarding the design option to close 186th Street and keep 187th Street open to traffic. Participants were asked to indicate their preference on which street to keep open to traffic, which would result in the other street being closed to traffic. Of the 31 votes received, 9 were in favor of keeping 186th Street open and 22 were in favor of the design option to keep 187th Street open.



**Table 7-4. Summary of Public Participation During Community Update Meetings**

General Theme	Description of Questions/Comments
Transportation	General comments on the existing and future connectivity opportunities, transportation modifications needs and priorities. Impacts to traffic and existing transit service during construction and operations.
Schedule	Project schedule and schedule for start of revenue service.
Safety	Riders' safety at stations and along the alignment. Safety and security during construction.
Station Access	Wheelchair accessibility, consideration of walking distance, cross platform transfer between buses and trains.
Real Estate	Impacts to residents along the corridor, displacement of renters, and property values.
Bicycle Facilities	Impacts to existing facilities during construction and operations.
Hazardous Materials	Residents and community protection from hazardous materials during construction.
Noise and Vibration	Mitigation of rail noise and vibration during construction and operations.
Project Funding	Impacts of federal funding on project timeline and additional federal funding.
Workforce	Employment opportunities and local hires on the Project
Other	Input on existing Metro services, suggested future modifications.

Source: Arellano Associates, 2023

## 7.9 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, Gabrieliño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation
- Anthony Morales, Chairperson, Gabrieliño/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 Gabrieliño 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 it 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 7.10 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 2* (Metro 2023b).

## 7.10 Section 106 Consultation

### 7.10.1 In Support of the Draft EIS/EIR

On December 21, 2018, FTA sent Section 106 consultation letters to the Native American individuals identified in Section 7.8.3.

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 2.

- 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 is 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 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, 2020, 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 it 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 2.

The Final Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 1 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.

### 7.10.2 Subsequent to Draft EIS/EIR

In addition to the consultation summarized above, all parties were provided the opportunity to comment on the Project through circulation of the Draft EIS/EIR between July and September 2021. Although the APE was expanded since the Draft EIS/EIR, the geographic area and cultural context associated with the expansion are consistent with that of the originally delineated APE. Therefore, additional Section 106 local interested party consultation was not conducted.

#### 7.10.2.1 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

As the Project crosses three river channels under the jurisdiction of the USACE, the USACE provided feedback on the Draft EIS/EIR in a letter dated October 6, 2021, and submitted to FTA and Metro during the circulation period for the Draft EIS/EIR (the letter is included in the Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 2 in Appendix C). In the letter, USACE designated FTA the lead federal agency under Section 106 [36 CFR 800.2(a)(2)], delegating its Section 106 responsibilities to FTA. Additionally, the USACE provided comments related to the three river channels within the APE—the LA River Channel (portion), the Rio Hondo River Channel (portion), and the San Gabriel River Channel (portion), stating that their NRHP eligibility should be considered by the Project, and effects assessed as appropriate. The USACE additionally requested clarification related to the eligibility of the Union Pacific Railroad Bridge (MRN 17-006) and Southern California Edison’s Long Beach-Laguna Bell 66kV and 220 kV transmission lines (MRN 18-016). Continued communication and coordination with the USACE since submission of its comment letter indicated that these river channels were determined eligible for listing in the NRHP and received State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurrence in 2022; they are therefore considered historic properties for the purposes of Section 106 and historical resources per CEQA. The rivers were also evaluated in the *West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor Project Final Cultural Resources Effects Report* (Metro 2023a) and the *West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor Project Revised Final Cultural Resources Effects Report* (Metro 2024u).

### 7.10.2.2 Caltrans

Caltrans also provided feedback on the Draft EIS/EIR in a letter dated September 28, 2021, and submitted to FTA and Metro during the circulation period for the Draft EIS/EIR (the letter is included in the Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 2 in Appendix C). As part of the letter, Caltrans requested consulting party status for the Project under Section 106, pursuant to 36 CFR Section 800.2(a)(2), 800.2(c)(5), and 800.3(f)(3) based on consideration of the Century Freeway-Transitway Historic District (MRN 21-027). In a letter dated October 26, 2021, FTA responded to Caltrans' letter, acknowledging Caltrans as a Section 106 consulting party (also included in Appendix C of the Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 2). The comment letter also included several detailed comments related to the Project's potential to affect/impact the Century Freeway-Transitway Historic District. In response to the above-noted comments, meetings among Caltrans, FTA, and/or Metro were held on December 7, 2021, April 21, 2022, February 9, 2023, March 2, 2023, and September 27, 2023, to discuss Caltrans' comments related to the Project's potential to impact/effect the historic district. These meetings and correspondence between Metro and Caltrans are summarized below; meeting summaries are included in Appendix B of the Revised Final Cultural Resources Effects Report.

#### December 7, 2021 Meeting

The December 7, 2021, meeting was attended by representatives from Caltrans, including a Professionally Qualified Staff (PQS) Architectural Historian, FTA, and Metro, including Metro's PQS Architectural Historians. The purpose of the meeting was to provide Caltrans with an overview of the Project and discuss its comments related to the historic district. In the meeting, Caltrans staff stated that the comments in the letter they sent to FTA and Metro were related to CEQA and not directed at Section 106 compliance. Additionally, the following are the primary comments raised by Caltrans in the meeting:

- Potential for a substantial adverse change and material impairment to occur as a result of bridge demolition proposed by the Project
- Lack of information in analysis related to the design of the new bridges proposed by the Project
- Lack of Secretary of the Interior qualified design review
- Lack of discussion of landscaping
- Potential for cumulative impacts to occur as a result of the Project and future projects combined

Caltrans provided the following recommendations aimed at addressing their comments:

- Use the CEQA checklist as a guideline
- Address potential impacts to landscaping
- Integrate the Project's alternative analysis into the cultural resources assessment
- Further consider substantial adverse change
- Review the finding of effect for the I-105 ExpressLanes project for guidance

#### April 21, 2022 Meeting

The April 21, 2022, meeting was attended by representatives from Caltrans, including a PQS Architectural Historian, FTA, and Metro, including Metro's PQS Architectural Historians. The purpose of the meeting was to provide Caltrans an overview of the Project and an update

of the analysis that had occurred since the December 7, 2021, meeting. Metro and FTA gave a PowerPoint presentation that described the Project, in particular as it relates to the historic district, and presented the WSAB project team's preliminary impact assessment, noting that the team's preliminary findings were that the Project would not result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of the Century Freeway-Transitway Historic District or in its material impairment. Following the presentation, several topics, most notable the following, were discussed by the team.

- The proposed station's design
- Details of the 1:1 replacement ratio (for trees and shrubs) that will be implemented by the Project
- The potential applicability of PRC 5024 due to the fact that the district is a state-owned resource
- The status of the Project's design, including details relating to the proposed replacement freight bridge and involvement of UPRR in the design

### January 24, 2023 Memorandum and February 9, 2023 Meeting

Caltrans provided Metro with a memorandum on January 24, 2023, following review of an updated, draft CEQA evaluation for the Century Freeway-Transitway Historic District. Metro held a meeting with Caltrans on February 9, 2023, to discuss the memorandum and its contents and discuss a path forward with Caltrans. The meeting included discussion of the CEQA Guidelines and their interpretation. Caltrans cultural resources staff provided hypotheticals and examples to illustrate application of the CEQA Guidelines; however, interpretation of the CEQA Guidelines differed between Metro and Caltrans.

Caltrans requested:

- Details on alternatives that would avoid demolition of the freight bridge
- Metro change its findings to note that the Project would have a significant impact under CEQA
- Changes to the design to consider the number of bent piers and bridge spans, glare of soundwalls, overall aesthetics, and freight bridge design
- Improved landscaping analysis to provide the specific number of trees and species to be impacted

### March 2, 2023

A follow-up meeting with Caltrans and Metro, which included Metro outside legal counsel, was held on March 2, 2023. The purpose of the meeting was to have Metro counsel respond to Caltrans' comments regarding its interpretation of the CEQA Guidelines. Caltrans cultural resources staff disagreed with Metro's attorneys' interpretation of the law and restated its position from the February 9, 2023, meeting. Metro agreed to add additional detail to the CEQA analysis previously requested by Caltrans; however, parties still differed on CEQA interpretation.

### Communication Related to 12508 Center Street (MRN 21-008)

Following the March 2, 2023, meeting, a representative from Caltrans contacted Metro via email to request an updated version of the Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 2. In the email, the Caltrans representative additionally stated "In reviewing the June 2023 project Cultural Resources Effects report, it was noted that the property at 12508 Center Street, in

South Gate which is proposed for demolition for the new Park and Ride station was not evaluated for historic significance in our previous editions of the WSAB survey.” In response, Metro sent Caltrans an email on July 18, 2023, explaining that 12508 Center Street in South Gate (MRN 21-008) was recorded, evaluated, and determined ineligible for listing in the NRHP with SHPO concurrence in 2006. Metro then explained that in accordance with the WSAB methods for the assessment of previously recorded properties, the property was field checked during the built environment survey completed for the Project in 2018 and an updated DPR form was prepared. Metro included a summary of the information included on the DPR form and attached a copy of the DPR update prepared for the Project, along with the 2006 DPR form, which are also included in Appendix F of the Cultural Resources Survey Reports Rev 1 and Rev 2.

Caltrans responded via email on July 18, 2023, stating that the versions of the Cultural Resources Survey Report they were provided did not include an MRN associated with 12508 Center Street. The email noted the property’s location “immediately adjacent” to the Century Freeway-Transitway and expressed that the property is part of the historic district’s larger setting. Metro responded via email on July 20, 2023, stating that the property at 12508 Center Street was identified and referred to in all reports and correspondence prepared in support of the Project as MRN 21-008 and provided a Dropbox link that included the following documents for Caltrans: Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 1, Preliminary Effects Report, Survey Report—Rev 2, letter from FTA to SHPO seeking concurrence on Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 2, and the concurrence letter received from SHPO on the Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 2. The email additionally provided several bullet points related to the larger setting of the Century Freeway-Transitway Historic District, including information summarized from the DPR form prepared for the Century Freeway-Transitway regarding the setting and viewsheds.

### Updates Based on Consultation

In response to the above-noted comments and meetings, the Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 2 was updated to provide a more thorough description of the historic district, relying on information and previous documentation compiled by Caltrans. Additionally, the Final and Revised Final Cultural Resources Effects Reports include a more robust effects/impacts assessment of the LPA on the Century Freeway-Transitway Historic District, integrating the recommendations of Caltrans. Based on Caltrans’s input, the following revisions were made to the analysis included in the report:

- The replacement freight bridge will be four spans and concrete, consistent with the current bridge (previously, a two-span bridge was proposed).
- The potential effects of the LPA on the I-105 are more thoroughly analyzed.
- The term “reconstruction” has been removed from the analysis.
- The design of proposed bridges is described in further detail.
- The analysis now indicates that designs for the proposed new LRT bridge and Metro C Line station will undergo Secretary of Interior (SOI) Standards design review in accordance with Project Measure CR PM-1 (SOI Standards Design Review).
- The analysis now indicates that landscaping removed by the LPA will be replaced at a 1:1 ratio and the number of trees potentially effected has been quantified.
- Potential cumulative impacts of the LPA and future projects are more thoroughly discussed.



- The potential for substantial adverse change on the district as a result of the LPA has been more thoroughly considered, relying on the CEQA Guidelines and several documents compiled by Caltrans, including the ExpressLanes Finding of Effect, for guidance.

#### August 24, 2023 Letter

On August 2, 2023, Metro provided Caltrans a copy of the draft Cultural Resources Effects Report for review. Caltrans provided comments to Metro in a letter dated August 24, 2023; a representative from SHPO was copied on the letter. In the letter, Caltrans stated that it is the opinion of Caltrans District 7 that the Project does not meet the SOI Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and will therefore cause an adverse effect under Section 106 and a significant impact under CEQA. Additionally, Caltrans noted that the boundaries of the district were not accurately depicted.

In response to the letter, the boundaries of the historic district were revised to encompass the character-defining North Somerset Ranch Road and South Somerset Ranch Road ramps, as well as bridge approaches and abutments, landscaping, and graded slopes. While these areas were not previously depicted as within the boundaries of the historic district due to a discrepancy in aerial imagery overlay, all portions of the historic district where potential effects/impacts could occur were included in the APE delineated for the Project and were accounted for in the analysis in the Effects Report.

#### September 27, 2023 Meeting

Metro met with representatives of Caltrans on September 27, 2023, to discuss the August 2023 letter. Metro provided a presentation and summarized changes made to the Project and cultural resources analysis as a result of consultation with Caltrans. Notable changes included: avoiding the demolition of two bridges within the historic district, review for the LRT bridge and infill station to SOI standards, modifying the design of the replacement freight bridge from two spans to four spans consistent with the existing bridge, replacing trees removed during construction at a 1:1 ratio, and providing a more robust analysis including for cumulative impacts. Metro also summarized consultation with SHPO. The presentation also compared effects of the WSAB Project and ExpressLanes Project and highlighted that the WSAB conclusions were consistent with those for the ExpressLanes Project. The presentation slides were provided to Caltrans following the meeting.

#### October 6, 2023 Letter

On October 6, 2023, Metro received a letter from Caltrans, with a representative from SHPO copied. The letter stated that “based on conversations between the project team and Caltrans, Metro has incorporated design changes that we feel meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.” It enumerated the following changes:

- The demolition of only one bridge versus three as earlier proposed.
- The replacement Century Boulevard freight bridge will be four spans instead of two spans. Its overall design, massing, scale, color, and materials will approximate the features of the original bridge by integrating a relief consistent with that present on character-defining bridges throughout the district.
- The new LRT bridge will be designed in conformance with the SOI Standards.

- The design of the infill station in the median of the I-105 design will be approved by a SOI qualified professional as design advances.
- Trees removed as a result of the Project will be replaced at a 1:1 ratio.

Further, the letter stated the following: “Caltrans appreciates the collaboration with Metro and does not object to your Finding of No Adverse Effect for the project, particularly with regard the Century Freeway-Transitway Historic District. As Caltrans has responsibilities for historical resources in their right of way under PRC 5024, we do request review of a Secretary of the Interior’s Standards (SOIS) Action Plan as design of the project advances. A copy of the final Plan will be required before Caltrans can approve an encroachment permit for the project. In addition, Caltrans does not object to the conclusion in the Updated Report’s CEQA section that the proposed project would not alter the historic district such that it would be materially impaired.”

### 7.10.2.3 California Office of Historic Preservation

On May 22, 2023, representatives from FTA and Metro met with representatives from the SHPO’s office to provide updates on the Project. A PowerPoint presentation by FTA and Metro provided updates related to the following: identification of the LPA; updates to the Cultural Resources Survey Report since circulation of the Draft EIS/EIR, including expansion of the APE; and the cultural resources effects assessment with a focus on the anticipated findings for the Century Freeway-Transitway Historic District. During the meeting, it was noted that the assessment presented to representatives from the SHPO’s office during a consultation meeting on September 9, 2020, and summarized in the Draft EIS/EIR preliminarily determined that the Project would have an adverse effect related to archaeological resources. The Metro team then summarized the updated effects assessment for the Century Freeway-Transitway Historic District, noting that since Metro last met with representatives from the SHPO’s office in September 2020, project effects in the district have been minimized. Specifically, in September 2020, the Project proposed demolition and reconstruction of three bridges within the historic district, whereas now, only one bridge requires demolition and reconstruction. The Metro team also summarized refinements made to project design and the effects assessment resulting from coordination with Caltrans. These changes include the following:

- Modification to the design of the replacement freight bridge from two spans to four spans, consistent with existing appearance
- Secretary of Interior Standards design review of the LRT bridge and infill C Line station
- Evaluation of landscaping that will temporarily be removed during construction with a commitment to replace trees at a 1:1 ratio
- Addition of a more robust cumulative impacts assessment

The presentation also summarized consultation with Caltrans that occurred for the Project, which began in December 2021 and remained ongoing as of the date of the meeting, and noted the project benefits. The Metro team summarized the conclusion of the updated effects assessment for the Century Freeway-Transitway Historic District, stating that FTA intends to make a finding of no adverse effects to historic properties, and indicated that a Memorandum of Agreement will not be required as previously anticipated.

Following the presentation, attendees generally discussed the no adverse effects finding for the Century Freeway-Transitway Historic District. Representatives from the SHPO's office indicated that the effects analysis should focus on why the district was determined eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criteria A and C and additionally noted the following:

- Based on the rationale for eligibility, there should be flexibility regarding what can occur within the district without resulting in an adverse effect determination.
- The Metro C Line in the median of I-105 is important to the district and the modifications to the station proposed are not of concern because the connectivity and presence of transit would be maintained.
- The proposed modifications would add to the functionality of the district and the proposed station modifications are complementary with the context of the district rather than detracting from it.
- Proposed modifications are in keeping with the spirit of why the freeway was developed as it was.

Meeting attendees additionally discussed that one archaeological resource was identified in the Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 1, but following circulation of the Draft EIS/EIR was determined to no longer be extant, as documented in the Survey Report—Rev 2. Representatives from Metro noted that more than one federal agency is involved in the Project and that FTA is coordinating with USACE for Section 106 and NEPA. It was further noted that FTA is the lead agency for Section 106, and USACE will rely on the FTA process to fulfill the collective responsibilities under Section 106 and support the USACE permits related to this Project.

The Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 2 was submitted to SHPO on May 11, 2023. On June 14, 2023, representatives from the SHPO's office reached out to FTA via email stating that its review was in process and that clarification was needed regarding the addresses of four properties that were recommended ineligible for listing in the NRHP. FTA provided clarification as requested by representatives from the SHPO's office via email on June 23, 2023. In a letter to FTA dated June 29, 2023, SHPO provided concurrence with FTA's documentation and delineation of the APE and on FTA's determination of NRHP eligibility of 3 properties and NRHP ineligibility of 27 properties not included in the Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 1 but included in the Cultural Resources Survey Report—Rev 2 due to the previously described APE expansion. The June 29, 2023, letter is included in Appendix B of the Revised Final Cultural Resources Effects Report.

The Final Cultural Resources Effects Report was sent to SHPO on November 17, 2023, along with a request for concurrence on a revised APE (the vertical APE was expanded from 115 to 150 feet below grade) and finding of no adverse effect for the Project per 36 CFR 800.4 and 36 CFR 800.5. On December 14, 2023, FTA was notified by a representative from the SHPO's office that review of the Project was underway and that a response letter could be expected by December 21, 2023. On December 28, 2023, a representative from the SHPO's office requested a meeting with FTA to discuss the Project. The email request indicated that the project reviewer had comments and requests regarding documentation for visual effects that may be helpful to discuss with the FTA/Metro team.

On January 3, 2024, representatives from FTA and Metro met with a representative from the SHPO's office. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the reviewers' questions related to the potential visual effects of the LPA, as expressed in the above-described email sent on

December 28, 2023. The primary focus of the meeting was the potential effect of the LPA on the Union Pacific LA River Bridge (MRN 17-006). During the meeting, the FTA/Metro team shared images of the existing conditions of the bridge and its setting in addition to engineering drawings depicting changes to the debris walls associated with the bridge as a result of implementation of the LPA. Along with the images, the team discussed the bridge's existing conditions, current setting, and developmental history.

The SHPO representative asked whether the bridge's existing debris walls were original to its construction; additional research completed following the meeting indicates that they are not original and were added in circa 1951 as part of the USACE's Los Angeles River Improvement Project (USACE 1951; USACE 1992). During the meeting, participants additionally discussed the SHPO representative's request for a visual aid to depict the existing bridge and the new LRT bridge to compare their scale, mass, and proximity. The potential effects of the LPA on the Rio Hondo Bridge (MRN 18-015) and the San Gabriel River Bridge (MRN 29-022) were also briefly discussed; the FTA/Metro team clarified that neither of these bridges is historic.

The FTA/Metro team also briefly discussed potential visual effects to Pueblo Del Rio (MRN 8-013). After the FTA/Metro team shared photographs of the existing setting surrounding Pueblo Del Rio, the SHPO representative stated that there were no concerns regarding potential visual impacts to the historic property/historical resource and that visual aids were not necessary.

On January 4, 2024, FTA received a letter from the SHPO via email. The letter provided a summary of consultation that had occurred between FTA and SHPO in support of the WSAB Project and the FTA's findings as presented in the Final Cultural Resources Effects Report. The letter requested that FTA submit a revised APE map that denotes APE revisions, in particular those related to the depth of the geotechnical borings, and additionally made the following comments on the Final Cultural Resources Effects Report:

- “Section 5.2.2.12 Union Pacific Los Angeles River Rail Bridge, South Gate. It is requested that the FTA provide a photo simulation or artistic rendering that illustrates what the new light rail bridge will look like next to the existing historic bridge.
- Section 6.2.1 Development of Cultural Resources Mitigation and Monitoring Program. Because the FTA has presented a finding of no adverse effect for the undertaking, it is recommended that the term mitigation be removed from the report title. Mitigation is more applicable to resolve adverse effects; thus, it may be more appropriate to rename the report to Cultural Resources Monitoring and Discovery Program or something similar.
- Section 6.2.4 Treatment of Unanticipated Discoveries. It appears that the FTA is proposing to develop and implement the Cultural Resources Mitigation and Monitoring Program in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.13(a)(2). As such, the SHPO requests the opportunity to review and comment on the draft Cultural Resources Mitigation and Monitoring Program prior to its implementation. This review would give the SHPO an opportunity to provide comment on FTA's proposed measures to identify and treat post-review discoveries should they occur during construction activities.”

In response to the January 4, 2023, letter, the following changes were made to the Revised Final Cultural Resources Effects Report:

- The APE map included in Appendix A of the Revised Final Cultural Resources Effects Report was updated to include the following footnote: “Note: The vertical extent of the APE for the LPA extends from 150 feet below grade to 90 feet above grade.”
- Several visual aids were added to Section 5.2.2.12 to illustrate the new LRT bridge adjacent to the existing historic bridge. Additionally, minor text clarifications were added to note that the current debris walls are not original to the bridge.
- The title of the program required by Mitigation Measure CR-1 was updated from Cultural Resources Mitigation and Monitoring Program to Cultural Resources Monitoring and Discovery Program and no longer includes the term “mitigation.”
- Mitigation Measure CR-4 was updated to indicate that, if the preparation of a treatment plan is required, it will be prepared in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.13(a)(2) in consultation with the SHPO.

The Revised Final Cultural Resources Effects Report and a letter responding to SHPO comments were submitted to SHPO on February 13, 2024. SHPO concurrence on the finding of effect and expansion of the vertical APE was received on March 12, 2024. Correspondence with SHPO in support of the finding of effect is included in Appendix G, Coordination, of this Final EIS/EIR.

## 7.11 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 EIS/EIR.

### 7.11.1 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 seven 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 the South Gate Chamber of Commerce, the South Gate Planning Commission, the Paramount Unified School District, SELA Collaborative, the Richard N. Slauson Southeast Occupational Center, the Trust for Public Land, the Florence-Firestone Merchants Association, the Paramount Planning Commission, Communities for a Better Environment, the Paramount Public Safety Commission, FastLink DTLA, YWCA Greater Los Angeles, We Like LA, the Little Tokyo Business Association, the Central City Association, Fisch Properties, the Industrial District Business Improvement District, the 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, the El Pueblo/Olivera Street Historic Society, Para Los Ninos, and Little Tokyo Service Center representatives.

### 7.11.2 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.

#### 7.11.2.1 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 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 within a 500-foot buffer from the project corridor.

#### 7.11.2.2 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 were 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 was developed to offer a simulated rendering of the station platforms and general path of the proposed WSAB Transit Corridor. In addition, an Esri StoryMap was developed to offer an interactive web platform serving as an additional educational tool that featured project information, maps, and other multimedia

that expands on the details offered on the project website. Both of these new educational pieces were 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 increases 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.

### 7.11.2.3 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, and Paramount, and a workshop in Cerritos. Project materials were also featured at three Metro NextGen Bus Study<sup>3</sup> public meetings in Bell, Compton, and Los Angeles. Metro also hosted 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.

### 7.11.2.4 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 7.11.2.1), 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
- 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

<sup>3</sup> 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.

- 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.

### 7.11.2.5 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.

### 7.11.2.6 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
  - 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 X, the platform formerly known as 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 meeting 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.

## 7.12 Release of Final EIS/EIR

In support of the Final EIS/EIR release, public engagement will be conducted to announce this important milestone and provide updates on the anticipated next steps for the Metro Board certification of the EIR and the FTA’s issuance of the Record of Decision for the EIS.

Leading up to that milestone, ongoing public engagement activities and project updates will continue to be broadly available to project stakeholders. As part of the Project’s expansive public involvement efforts, partnerships with community-based organizations will be arranged to execute further outreach to targeted audiences, including the youth and future transit riders of the Project.