



**Metro**

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## **NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

**DATE:** November 30, 2021

**TO:** Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

**SUBJECT:** Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

**PROJECT TITLE:** Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project

**FROM:** Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

**PROJECT LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING:** The Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project (Proposed Project) would construct and provide a high-capacity fixed guideway transit option between the San Fernando Valley and the Westside of Los Angeles. The Proposed Project would have a northern terminus with a connection to the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak station and a southern terminus with a connection to the Metro E Line (Expo). In addition to providing local and regional connections to the existing and future Metro rail and bus network, the Proposed Project is anticipated to improve access to major employment, educational and cultural centers in the greater Los Angeles area. **Figure 1** shows the proposed Study Area.

**PROJECT INITIATION:** Metro has initiated a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Proposed Project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Metro is the lead agency for the EIR. The Draft EIR will be prepared in accordance with Sections 15120 through 15132 of the CEQA Guidelines. The purpose of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) is to notify interested agencies, organizations and individuals that Metro plans to prepare a Draft EIR, invite public participation in the EIR scoping process and announce the public scoping meetings.



Note: The Study Area includes all census tracts within one mile of the alternatives

**Figure 1: Proposed Study Area**

**PROJECT OBJECTIVES:** Consistent with Metro’s 2020 Long Range Transportation Plan, which states that “Metro has the unique opportunity and responsibility to evolve the LA County transportation system to better serve its residents and visitors, and to maximize economic, mobility, safety, environmental and quality of life benefits,” Metro has established the six goals and seventeen objectives for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project listed in Table 1.

**Table 1. Sepulveda Transit Corridor Goals and Objectives**

**Improve Mobility**

- Increase transit frequency and decrease travel time
- Increase transit ridership
- Prioritize connections to high-traffic points of interest
- Promote efficiency of transfer experience to fixed and non-fixed guideway systems
- Support non-automobile First/Last Mile connections

**Improve Accessibility and Promote Equity**

- Improve access for Equity Focus Communities<sup>1</sup>
- Target infrastructure and service investments towards those with the greatest mobility needs

**Support Community and Economic Development**

- Increase opportunity for economic growth around stations
- Minimize physical barriers to communities created by the Project
- Prioritize station placement and design that is consistent with community context

**Protect Environmental Resources and Support a Sustainable Transportation System**

- Reduce vehicle miles traveled
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Reduce air pollutant emissions
- Minimize impacts to environmental resources

**Provide a Cost-Effective Solution and Minimize Risk**

- Maximize benefits to the public relative to cost
- Maximize potential eligibility for state and federal funding opportunities

**Enhance Resiliency**

- Provide resilience to natural disasters and climate change

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<sup>1</sup> Communities in which more than 40% of households are low-income and either 80% of households are non-white or 10% have no access to a vehicle

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The Proposed Project would construct a fixed guideway public transportation line across the Santa Monica Mountains in the vicinity of the Sepulveda Pass. Metro staff is initiating environmental review of six build alternatives informed by both the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Feasibility Study and concepts developed by Pre-Development Agreement (PDA) contractors. All of the alternatives described below would have a northern terminus station near the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station and a southern terminus station near the Metro E Line (Expo) and include stations that provide connections to the Metrolink Ventura County Line, the East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor, the Metro G Line (Orange), D Line (Purple) and E Line. The alternatives may be modified as a result of comments received or technical analysis conducted during the preparation of the Draft EIR, including public comments received during scoping. The Draft EIR will also include consideration of a “No Build” alternative that does not include the construction of a fixed guideway line. **Figure 2** shows the general alignments of the proposed alternatives.

- **Alternative 1: Monorail with aerial alignment in Interstate 405 (I-405) corridor and electric bus connection to UCLA**

Alternative 1 would utilize monorail technology, with automated train operations and planned peak frequencies of 2 minutes. Trains would consist of two to eight cars and are expected to consist of six cars during peak periods, with each car having a capacity of 76 to 79 passengers. The southern terminus station would be adjacent to the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, and the northern terminus station would be adjacent to the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The length of the alignment between the terminus stations would be 15.3 miles. The monorail guideway would be entirely aerial and generally located within the Interstate I-405 right-of-way and then adjacent to the Metrolink Ventura County Line railroad tracks between I-405 and the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. In some areas, including all stations, the guideway and passenger platforms would be located on one side of the freeway. Alternative 1 would have eight aerial monorail stations: Exposition Bl (Metro E Line), Santa Monica Bl, Wilshire Bl (Metro D Line), the Getty Center, US-101, Metro G Line, Sherman Way and the Van Nuys Metrolink Station.

At Wilshire Bl, an aerial station would be located on the west side of I-405, and an electric bus shuttle would provide service along a 1.4-mile route between the Metro D Line Westwood/VA Station and UCLA Gateway Plaza, with intermediate stops at Wilshire Bl/Veteran Av and Westwood Bl/Le Conte Av. The electric bus shuttle would operate at the same frequency as the monorail. A maintenance and storage facility (MSF) for monorail vehicles would be located above the existing parking lot at the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station. Electric buses would be maintained within the existing UCLA BruinBus maintenance facility on Veteran Avenue north of Kinross Avenue.

- **Alternative 2: Monorail with aerial alignment in Interstate 405 (I-405) corridor and aerial automated people mover connection to UCLA**

Alternative 2 would utilize monorail technology, with automated train operations and planned peak frequencies of 2 minutes. Trains would consist of two to eight cars and are expected to consist of six cars during peak periods, with each car having a capacity of 76 to 79 passengers. The southern terminus station would be adjacent to the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, and the northern terminus station would be adjacent to the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The length of the alignment between the terminus stations would be 15.8 miles. The monorail guideway would be entirely aerial and generally located within the I-405 right-of-way and then adjacent to the Metrolink Ventura County Line railroad tracks between I-405 and the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. In some areas, including all stations, the guideway and passenger platforms would be located on one side of the freeway. Alternative 2 would have eight aerial monorail stations: Exposition BI (Metro E Line), Santa Monica BI, Wilshire BI (Metro D Line), the Getty Center, US-101, Metro G Line, Sherman Way and the Van Nuys Metrolink Station.

South of Santa Monica BI and north of Sunset BI, the alignment of Alternative 2 would be the same as that of Alternative 1. At Wilshire BI, an aerial station would be located on the south side of the street along Veteran Av. To provide a connection to the UCLA campus, a pedestrian bridge across Wilshire BI would connect to an aerial Automated People Mover (APM) station on the north side of the street. From there, the APM would travel on a 1.0-mile aerial guideway located primarily along Gayley Avenue to an aerial APM station near the west end of Bruin Walk on the UCLA campus. The APM would operate at the same frequency as the monorail. An MSF for monorail vehicles would be located above the existing parking lot at the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station, and an MSF for APM vehicles would be located above the existing UCLA BruinBus maintenance facility on Veteran Avenue north of Kinross Avenue.

- **Alternative 3: Monorail with aerial alignment in Interstate 405 (I-405) corridor and underground alignment between the Getty Center and Wilshire BI**

Alternative 3 would utilize monorail technology, with automated train operations and planned peak frequencies of 2 minutes. Trains would consist of two to eight cars and are expected to consist of six cars during peak periods, with each car having a capacity of 76 to 79 passengers. The southern terminus station would be adjacent to the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, and the northern terminus station would be adjacent to the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The length of the alignment between the terminus stations would be 16.2 miles. The monorail guideway would be aerial for most of the alignment, with a 3.3-mile tunnel segment between the Getty Center and Wilshire BI. The aerial alignment would generally be located within the I-405 right-of-way and then adjacent to the Metrolink Ventura County Line railroad tracks between I-405 and the Van Nuys Metrolink Station.

South of Santa Monica Bl and north of the Getty Center, the alignment of Alternative 3 would be the same as that of Alternatives 1 and 2. Just south of Wilshire Bl, the alignment would diverge from the I-405 median, transition to below grade north of Wilshire Bl, and travel underneath Westwood Village and UCLA, before returning to the I-405 corridor just south of the proposed Getty Center Station. In some areas, including all aerial stations, the guideway and passenger platforms would be located on one side of the freeway. Alternative 3 would have one underground monorail station at UCLA Gateway Plaza and eight aerial monorail stations: Exposition Bl (Metro E Line), Santa Monica Bl, Wilshire Bl (Metro D Line), the Getty Center, US-101, the Metro G Line, Sherman Way and the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. An MSF for monorail vehicles would be located above the existing parking lot at the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station.

- **Alternative 4: Heavy rail with underground alignment south of Ventura Bl and aerial alignment generally along Sepulveda Bl in the San Fernando Valley**

Alternative 4 would utilize steel-wheel heavy rail transit (HRT) trains, with automated train operations and planned peak frequencies of 2.5 minutes. Trains would typically consist of three cars, with each car having a capacity of 170 passengers, but could be increased to four cars. The southern terminus station would be adjacent to the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, and the northern terminus station would be adjacent to the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The length of the alignment between the terminus stations would be approximately 14 miles. The alignment would be underground between the southern terminus and a portal south of Ventura Bl in the San Fernando Valley. Between this portal and Ventura Bl, the guideway would be aerial on the east side of I-405. North of Ventura Bl, the guideway would generally be located above Sepulveda Bl until curving southeast to parallel the Metrolink Ventura County Line railroad tracks.

Alternative 4 would have four underground stations at Exposition Bl (Metro E Line), Santa Monica Bl, Wilshire Bl (Metro D Line) and UCLA Gateway Plaza, and four aerial stations at Ventura Bl, the Metro G Line, Sherman Way and the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. An MSF for HRT vehicles would be located west of Woodman Av south of the Metrolink Ventura County Line railroad tracks.

- **Alternative 5: Heavy rail with underground alignment including along Sepulveda Bl in the San Fernando Valley**

Alternative 5 would utilize steel-wheel HRT trains, with automated train operations and planned peak frequencies of 2.5 minutes. Trains would typically consist of three cars, with each car having a capacity of 170 passengers, but could be increased to four cars. The southern terminus station would be adjacent to the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, and the northern terminus station would be adjacent to the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The length of the alignment between the terminus stations would be approximately 14 miles. The alignment would be the same as that of Alternative 4, but it would be underground between the southern terminus and a portal

south of the Metrolink Ventura County Line railroad tracks. Near the northern terminus, the alignment would be aerial parallel to the Metrolink Ventura County Line railroad tracks.

Alternative 5 would have seven underground stations at Exposition BI (Metro E Line), Santa Monica BI, Wilshire BI (Metro D Line), UCLA Gateway Plaza, Ventura BI, the Metro G Line and Sherman Way, and one aerial station at the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. An MSF for HRT vehicles would be located west of Woodman Av south of the Metrolink Ventura County Line railroad tracks.

- **Alternative 6: Heavy rail with entirely underground alignment including along Van Nuys BI in the San Fernando Valley and southern terminus station on Bundy Dr**

Alternative 6 would utilize the same driver-operated steel-wheel HRT trains as used on the Metro B and D lines, with planned peak frequencies of 4 minutes. Trains would consist of two, four or six cars and are expected to consist of six cars during peak periods, with each car having a capacity of 133 passengers. The southern terminus station would be adjacent to the Metro E Line Expo/Bundy Station, and the northern terminus station would be adjacent to the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The length of the alignment between the terminus stations would be 12.6 miles.

The alignment would be entirely underground, with the segment on the Westside running generally northeast between the Metro E Line Expo/Bundy Station and the UCLA campus, and the segment in the San Fernando Valley located along Van Nuys BI. Alternative 6 would have seven underground stations at Olympic BI (Metro E Line), Santa Monica BI (West LA Civic Center), Wilshire BI (Metro D Line), UCLA Gateway Plaza, Ventura BI, the Metro G Line and the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. An MSF for HRT vehicles would be located east of Van Nuys BI north of the Van Nuys Metrolink Station.



Alternative 1 (Monorail)



Alternative 4 (Heavy Rail)



Figure 2: General Alignments of Proposed Alternatives

Alternative 2 (Monorail)



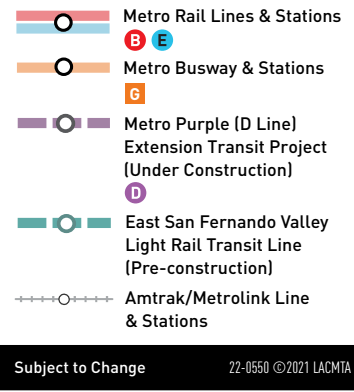
Alternative 5 (Heavy Rail)



Alternative 3 (Monorail)



Alternative 6 (Heavy Rail)





**POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:** The purpose of the Draft EIR is to disclose the impacts of the Proposed Project on the environment. The Draft EIR will address all topics listed in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. Key CEQA environmental factors to be addressed are shown below. Mitigation measures to reduce potentially significant impacts during construction and operation will be identified in the Draft EIR, as feasible.

- Transportation
- Land Use and Development
- Real Estate and Acquisition
- Community and Neighborhood
- Visual Quality and Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Noise and Vibration
- Ecosystems and Biological Resources
- Agricultural Resources
- Wildfire
- Mineral Resources
- Geotechnical, Subsurface, and Seismic Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Water Resources
- Energy
- Historic, Archeological, and Paleontological Resources
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Parklands and Community Facilities
- Safety and Security
- Utilities and Service Systems

**SCOPING MEETINGS:** Metro will conduct virtual scoping meetings to notify interested agencies, organizations, and individuals that Metro plans to prepare a Draft EIR, invite public participation in the EIR scoping process, and solicit feedback related to the contents of the Draft EIR and impact issues of concern to communities and stakeholders (public and private). Three public scoping meetings may be accessed as follows:

Date: December 7, 2021  
Time: 11:30am – 1:30pm  
Webinar ID: 919 0173 3110  
Passcode: 819995  
Webinar link: <https://bit.ly/SepulvedaDec7>  
Call in: 669.900.6833

Date: January 11, 2022  
Time: 6:00pm – 8:00pm  
Webinar ID: 964 8792 4301  
Passcode: 550195  
Webinar link: <https://bit.ly/SepulvedaJan11>  
Call in: 669.900.6833

Date: January 22, 2022  
Time: 10:00am – noon  
Webinar ID: 999 3010 8496  
Passcode: 270559  
Webinar link: <https://bit.ly/SepulvedaJan22>  
Call in: 669.900.6833

An agency scoping meeting will also be held:

Date: December 6, 2021  
Time: 10:00am – noon

All Metro meetings support needs associated with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). ADA accommodations and real-time translations are available by calling 213.922.7375 at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. Spanish translation will be provided at all public scoping meetings.

The link to the virtual public scoping meetings, as well as further information, can be found on the project website at <https://www.metro.net/projects/sepulvedacorridor>.

**HOW TO SUBMIT PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Scoping comments can be submitted via regular mail, email, online via comment form, or by phone. Mail comments to Peter Carter, Project Manager, Metro, One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop 99-22-6, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Email comments to [sepulvedatransit@metro.net](mailto:sepulvedatransit@metro.net). Submit comments online at [www.metro.net/sepulvedacorridor](http://www.metro.net/sepulvedacorridor). Submit comments via phone at 213.922.7375. Scoping comments must be submitted by February 11, 2022.