



In the Matter Of:

Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2

PUBLIC HEARING

August 17, 2022

Case No:

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Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2
Public Hearing

Wednesday, August 17, 2022

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

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Reported by:

Stephanie Leslie
CSR No. 12893

PARTICIPANTS

MOHAMMED ABASS

VIRGINIA BALL

ESTHER CELIZ

KEVIN COCA

TITO CORONA

JENNY CRISTALES-CEVALLOS

FERNANDO DUTRA

JESSE GARCIA

DIANA GOMEZ

EDGAR GUTIERREZ

JAIME GUZMAN

DANNY HOM

MIKE MARTINEZ

R.D. MCDONALD

MAGGIE MO

MIGUEL PERLA

TOM ROBLINO

EUGENIA REYES

MARIA REYES

BRIAN SAEKI

REUBEN VALDEZ

EDMOND VELOZ

Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2

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6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

(Video played.)

MR. CORONA: Again, thank you for joining us tonight, City of Whittier. We are here to talk about the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 project, pretty much the extension of the Gold Line, where it ends right now in East L.A. down to Whittier. So, again, thank you for being here tonight.

Thank you to those from the City of Whittier for helping to put this together and for hosting us tonight. I want to make sure that people understand that this is a hearing that we have tonight, and we will be taking your formal comments later on in this presentation.

Before we get started, I wanted to make an introduction with some opening remarks. I wanted to introduce council member from the City of Whittier and Metro board director, Fernando Dutra. And as he's coming down here, I want to make a

1 quick announcement in Spanish.

2 (Speaking in Spanish.)

3 MR. CORONA: And with that, we'll hand the
4 mic over to council member Fernando Dutra.

5 MR. DUTRA: Thank you, Tito. I appreciate
6 that. And let me just start by saying how much I
7 appreciate everybody being here this evening.

8 Whittier has a reputation for turning out
9 for important meetings, and you guys are certainly
10 supporting that reputation, so thank you very much.

11 And we also have a reputation for having
12 well thought-out and thought-through comments. And
13 I know we'll get a bunch of those this evening,
14 both positive and certainly concerns as well. I
15 know there always is and we understand that.

16 This project has a little bit of history.
17 It's been around for 12 years, and I became first
18 involved in the project about 12 years ago, from
19 the beginning.

20 And at the time, we were really in
21 competition -- I think it was -- Jenny, correct me
22 if I'm wrong, but I think it was about 40 projects
23 or so that were all being considered, and through,
24 you know, a lot of hard work, a lot of dedication
25 from several, several team members all the way

1 through for the last 12 years, we were chosen as
2 one of the four last projects.

3 So imagine that; right? We knocked out
4 40 other -- or 32 -- I think it was probably 37
5 projects, if I recall. So we knocked out a bunch
6 of other projects, and we did that because of the
7 value and because this project meets all of the
8 criteria relative to what "light rail" really
9 means; right? This is a project that's going to
10 connect communities.

11 Now, having said that, there are concerns;
12 right? There are always going to be concerns, and
13 in terms right now -- a lot of them are relative to
14 traffic conditions or relative to -- you know, to
15 retail leakage. They're relative to safety.

16 Safety has become one of the major issues
17 at Metro, and we take that seriously.

18 I can tell you, before I forget, that we
19 have a dedicated staff that's professional. They
20 are all the best at their particular jobs.

21 I'd like to introduce Jenny here, who is a
22 project leader, and the entire Metro staff. Please
23 give them a hand. They're here this evening at
24 6:00 o'clock and making sure we understand the
25 project.

1 And we also have the city manager at the
2 back. Our city manager Brian Saeki is here as
3 well, working overtime as usual.

4 And Rafael.

5 MR. SAEKI: RJ.

6 MR. DUTRA: And RJ from our engineering
7 department. So the City of Whittier is very
8 dedicated to the light rail.

9 And I want you to imagine when thinking
10 through -- clearly there are concerns also about
11 this project, but think about being able to catch a
12 train from Whittier to L.A. in about 17 minutes,
13 not having to deal with traffic; right?

14 So if you're a student, if you're somebody
15 who works in downtown L.A., if you're somebody who
16 wants to connect with the rest of Southern
17 California, this project will allow you to do so;
18 right? This light-rail system will allow you to do
19 that.

20 So imagine if you're in East L.A. and you
21 want to come to Whittier, or wherever you are in
22 L.A. You catch a train at the station at the
23 corner of Garfield and Atlantic, you come down
24 Atlantic Boulevard, you hit Citadel; right?

25 By the way, did you know that the Citadel

1 gets -- 17 million people per year shop at the
2 Citadel? That's the same number of people that go
3 to Disneyland.

4 So they'll catch the Citadel, a major
5 shopping attraction. That will go right in front
6 of the casino -- that will make my wife happy, not
7 me -- then it will go through Montebello, through
8 the City of Commerce, where you have all of those
9 great jobs.

10 So now you'll be able to connect people in
11 housing to great jobs throughout the region, and
12 this is also going to bring not just a \$10 billion
13 project, but it's typically an influx of over
14 \$50 billion that Metro invests back into
15 communities.

16 So this is a huge investment, not just in
17 the City of Whittier, but the entire region. And
18 so for that, I hope that you see the value in the
19 light-rail system coming to Whittier.

20 Once again, there are issues relative to
21 security, but I can tell you that Metro just
22 invested \$138 million into our ambassador program,
23 and we had -- we are going -- we are augmenting our
24 security systems. We're putting not just armed
25 officers, but also unarmed officers and ambassadors

1 on our trains and our buses so we can make them
2 safe.

3 And that's a huge investment from a public
4 agency. That's really all your money. We are
5 investing your money into our public transportation
6 system.

7 So I can speak on it forever, but I'll let
8 the professionals do their job. So thank you very
9 much, and I hope you find value in tonight's
10 meeting.

11 MR. CORONA: Thank you. Thank you,
12 Council Member Dutra. And thank you for joining us
13 tonight. Again, we have representation from the
14 City of Whittier. City manager and staff is here.

15 But in addition to the City of Whittier,
16 we also want to acknowledge the office of Janice
17 Hahn is here representing us as well. I wanted to
18 acknowledge Ivan Solis -- Ivan, thank you for
19 joining us -- also from the office of Janice Hahn.
20 And Viviano Gomez is over here to my left, your
21 right. Thank you again for joining us tonight.

22 Additionally, let's go on to the next
23 slide. Does this work?

24 So let's go over the agenda first. So
25 tonight we had the open house, which you saw at the

1 beginning, which was your opportunity to ask your
2 questions.

3 Again, this is a formal hearing, so when
4 we start the hearing process, when you make your
5 comments or ask your questions, they will not be
6 responded to here. They will be responded to in
7 the following environmental document, as governed
8 by the California Environmental Quality Act in the
9 state of California.

10 The environmental project that we're going
11 through here has a formal process in which we must
12 take your comments. That's why we have, as well,
13 comments being transcribed to my right, your left.
14 A court reporter will be capturing everything that
15 you are saying.

16 We also have comment cards in the back
17 should you not be comfortable speaking in front of
18 folks. You have an opportunity to do so back
19 there.

20 You will have 90 seconds to make your
21 comments. And once your time is up, we ask you to
22 wrap it up. And we will go on to the next person.
23 And we will go over that a little bit more later.

24 So when we start with the presentations
25 right now, we will have our project manager,

1 introduced by counsel member Dutra -- Jenny
2 Cristales-Cevallos will go over the project
3 overview.

4 And then once Jenny is done, Jaime Guzman
5 will come over, who is our technical consultant,
6 our expert in the environmental project process,
7 and he will give you some highlights of the draft
8 Environmental Impact Report, and will share what
9 kind of questions or whatever, which are very
10 important questions that we would love to hear from
11 you when we take your comments.

12 And once we're done with that, I will
13 introduce Edgar Gutierrez, who will also be our
14 hearing officer, and he will go through the rest of
15 the presentation and take your comments formally.

16 So with that, I think it's time that I
17 introduce our project manager, Jenny
18 Cristales-Cevallos, who will take us through the
19 rest of this presentation. We'll go over the next
20 step.

21 MS. CRISTALES-CEVALLOS: Hi. Good
22 afternoon -- or good evening. Thank you,
23 everybody, for coming out and being part of the
24 process.

25 This is an ongoing public participation

1 process. As you can see here on our timeline at
2 the bottom, throughout the entire course until
3 opening day, this will be -- this will continue to
4 be a public process.

5 This is our project overview. I'm going
6 to talk about it very briefly so that we can get
7 into the oral comment and hear from you.

8 This is a Measure M project timeline
9 project, so essentially we are following what is
10 identified in our measure ordinance.

11 I want to point out that construction
12 begins in 2029, so things aren't necessarily going
13 to happen overnight. What we're doing right now is
14 the environmental clearance, which we're looking to
15 complete in 2023.

16 And then -- so basically almost from -- a
17 year from now, we'll be doing environmental
18 clearance for this project. Then we'll be looking
19 at final design between that and then aim for 2035
20 in terms of our opening for service.

21 As our board director, Fernando Dutra,
22 mentioned, Eastside is one of those four-pillar
23 projects, which is a priority for the board, and we
24 are trying to do everything we can at this point to
25 see what are the opportunities to accelerate the

1 project.

2 But it takes quite a bit to do that. We
3 have to have all the technical work in place,
4 funding. And then ultimately the board will give
5 us direction to move the project in that timeline
6 and be open by 2028.

7 So as you heard in the video, the
8 project -- or at least Alternative 1, which is --
9 these are the alternatives that are being studied
10 in the environmental document -- Alternative 1 is
11 the full nine miles of the project, which has --
12 begins at the terminus of Atlantic and Pomona
13 station, and that station is looking to be
14 relocated in order for us to be able to go
15 underground through East L.A.

16 The Atlantic and Pomona station has design
17 options, which is a fully covered underground
18 station, and then also an open underground station.

19 From there we go to Atlantic to Whittier,
20 underground as well, and then Commerce Citadel
21 station.

22 After we pass through the underground
23 station at Commerce and Citadel, we then go into an
24 aerial configuration. What that means is that the
25 guideway for the project, the train itself, is

1 elevated on columns, and that's going through the
2 city of Montebello Greenway station, so we're
3 looking at an aerial configuration there.

4 From there it would continue in an aerial
5 configuration to the City of Whittier, with three
6 stations along the way, which is Rosemead, Norwalk,
7 and Lambert, so serving the cities of Montebello,
8 Pico Rivera, Santa Fe Springs, and Whittier.

9 The other alternatives, as mentioned, that
10 are being studied as well -- this gives Metro an
11 opportunity to build a project in a phased
12 approach, which is what's typically done.

13 So Alternative 2 is the IOS to Commerce,
14 which is approximately 3.2 miles, which
15 incorporates the three stations: Atlantic Pomona,
16 Atlantic Whittier, and then also Commerce and
17 Citadel.

18 Alternative 3 is IOS initial operating
19 segment to Greenwood, which is 4.6 miles. And,
20 again, that incorporates the three underground
21 stations as well as with the option to either be at
22 grade or aerial.

23 So once again, these are the alternatives
24 that are currently being studied in the
25 environmental document.

1 As part of the project and all projects,
2 in terms of Metro and all the extension projects,
3 we have to identify a maintenance storage facility
4 site to basically help with the operations,
5 meaning, this is where we will store the light-rail
6 vehicles, also do maintenance, repairs, washing,
7 overall maintenance.

8 And so we would have -- we identified,
9 essentially, two option sites, one in the City of
10 Commerce, which is approximately 25 acres. This
11 has a capacity of about 100 LRVs.

12 Also, in the city of Montebello, there's a
13 maintenance storage facility site option, which is
14 approximately about 30 acres. And this one has a
15 capacity of about 120 light-rail vehicle storage.

16 So these maintenance storage facility
17 sites service some of these alternatives.

18 So you can see here, for Alternative 1,
19 Commerce or Montebello could service either one,
20 because that's the full length of the proposed
21 project.

22 Commerce would serve the Alternative 2,
23 which is a Commerce -- up to Commerce IOS.

24 And then Alternative 3 could be serviced
25 by either Commerce or Montebello.

1 So geographically, the Montebello station
2 could serve both Alternatives 1 and 3, and so this
3 is what's also being studied in the environmental
4 document to understand the impacts.

5 And, again, in the area, there's a lot of
6 industrial uses, which we look to figure out ways
7 to best fit this in with the community so that it
8 doesn't, again, create any impacts.

9 So now I'm going to talk a little bit more
10 about the draft Environmental Impact Report.
11 Essentially what we are doing right now, working
12 with our consultant teams, is environmental
13 clearance through the California Environmental
14 Quality Act.

15 And you'll hear me say "CEQA" quite a bit,
16 and that's essentially referring to the law. And
17 so through CEQA, we look at construction impacts,
18 which are short-term impacts; right? They are
19 temporary.

20 And then we also look at operational
21 impacts, which are more of the long-term ones, the
22 train is in operation. What are those impacts and
23 what are those mitigation efforts we need to look
24 at to minimize those impacts?

25 We also look at cumulative impacts, which

1 is to look at all the projects within the
2 surrounding area to understand cumulatively what
3 those impacts are.

4 A couple things to keep in mind in terms
5 of the Environmental Impact Report is that it's
6 evaluated against existing conditions.

7 In this case, we use 2019 because moving
8 forward into 2020, the information might be a
9 little skewed because of the pandemic. So we
10 wanted to look at more normal conditions.

11 This also gave us an opportunity to
12 look -- analyze our grade-crossing policy.

13 Our grade-crossing policy -- what that
14 does, it allows us and tells us exactly how the
15 project could traverse through some of our major
16 intersections, meaning can go at grade, street
17 level, or do we need to then grade separately. So
18 we did that analysis through the environmental
19 document as well.

20 We also incorporated all the public
21 comment that we heard, including for scoping that
22 we did in 2019.

23 And what's also included -- and we'll talk
24 a little bit about that -- are best management
25 practices and lessons learned, since Metro has been

1 building several light-rail projects throughout the
2 years. And then we'll get a little bit more into
3 the mitigation measures as well.

4 So through the community outreach that
5 we've been doing, we've been hearing a lot from the
6 public that the EIR -- it's a pretty big document,
7 so we wanted to provide a quick overview of what is
8 in that document.

9 So it's set up in two different volumes,
10 and I'm just going to point out some of the key
11 items that might be of interest.

12 So the Executive Summary, for example --
13 again, that's a great overview. It also has
14 several tables, which I will show in the next
15 slide, that summarizes the impacts and some of the
16 either -- it's a less than significant or no
17 impact. So basically we'll get into that table,
18 and that's included in the executive summary.

19 I want to draw your attention to
20 Chapter 2. There you'll learn more about the
21 project and the project description, meaning all
22 the different elements that are included in the
23 project.

24 And then Chapter 3 is the environmental
25 evaluation. As you can see, that branches out to

1 all the topics that are included in the
2 environmental document.

3 Essentially, if you have a specific
4 interest in air quality, noise, transportation and
5 traffic, that is where you would find the analysis.

6 We also have Chapter 5. That's another
7 topic, how do we compare all the alternatives?

8 We also have Chapter 6, which summarizes
9 the public outreach that we've been doing so far --
10 thus far.

11 Then Volume II -- that's where you will
12 find the advanced conceptual engineering that's
13 been done to date, which is close to about
14 15 percent.

15 So there you can see what the project is
16 going to look like through the street, what the
17 stations may look like. So that's also available
18 in Volume II of the environmental document.

19 And once again, just to break down the
20 document a bit further, Section 3 -- this is an
21 example, and this is from the Transportation and
22 Traffic section. So this is where we list out how
23 we do the analysis.

24 So we always have to look at a regulatory
25 framework: What's the laws, what's our local

1 jurisdictions, ordinances that apply to the
2 project. Also the methodology of how the data was
3 gathered and how impacts are evaluated.

4 Threshold of Significance -- and that
5 comes directly from CEQA. CEQA lays out what are
6 these thresholds of significance, meaning we have
7 to evaluate, and if we hit those thresholds, that's
8 when we have to look at potential mitigation
9 measures.

10 And once again, we look at the existing
11 setting, as mentioned before. We analyze this
12 based on existing conditions in 2019. And then as
13 we start to look at impact evaluation, that's where
14 you want to go to see exactly how the project is
15 impacting the environmental -- per topic that is
16 listed out in the document.

17 From there, we identify the project
18 measures and mitigation measures as well. And I'll
19 go on to the next slide because we'll talk a little
20 bit about mitigation measures and project measures
21 in the next slide, I believe.

22 So here's an example of one of the summary
23 tables that's included in the Executive Summary.
24 What this does is that as you see to your left
25 here, you have what are called the CEQA thresholds

1 and then also what's applicable to each of the
2 alternative.

3 So what this does -- and I hope this helps
4 you to look at what are some of the impacts and
5 what are -- you know, how does that affect each of
6 the alternatives with the different either design
7 options or if a maintenance storage facility site
8 is included in that alternative.

9 So as mentioned, we have to follow
10 specific project regulations and standards. In
11 particular, we have the Metro rail design criteria
12 that we follow. So all of our designers and
13 engineers follow all the criteria. They are
14 primarily for design and meeting that design and
15 safety.

16 In addition to that, for safety
17 regulations, we also work with the California
18 Public Utilities Commission, CPUC, which -- they
19 look at every intersection crossing and ensure that
20 it's safe for crossing.

21 We work with Caltrans as well and the Army
22 Corps of Engineers. So there are several
23 regulatory agencies that guide this process and
24 also evaluate and comment on our environmental
25 document. But again, these are also regulations

1 that we've included that are appropriate to the
2 project.

3 Again, mitigation measures are ways for us
4 to be able to reduce if there is an impact.

5 Jaime's going to talk a little bit about
6 that with some of the slides that we have specific
7 to a topic. So if we're applying all these
8 regulations and all of these standards and there's
9 an impact and we can't reduce that impact -- say,
10 for example, a noise impact, we then introduce a
11 mitigation measure to hopefully reduce that.

12 And so with that, mitigation measures are
13 listed that you also have an opportunity to comment
14 on. So just because it's listed there, that
15 doesn't mean that it's set in stone. There's an
16 opportunity for comment from the community.

17 So I want to pull up the table again
18 because this is the table that's in the Executive
19 Summary. Once again, we have the alternatives
20 listed here on the left, and also each alternative
21 by each maintenance storage facility site.

22 We have Alternative 1, Commerce and
23 Montebello; Alternative 2, Commerce and Montebello;
24 and also Alternative 3.

25 I really want to highlight those dark blue

1 boxes. Those dark blue boxes are what is
2 significant and unavoidable impacts.

3 But what you see here is very typical of a
4 light-rail project in terms of -- when we build
5 projects, this is very typical in terms of the
6 significant and unavoidable impacts or some of the
7 level of impacts that we see.

8 But in particular, where you see some of
9 the impacts is under Cultural Resources. And once
10 again, Jaime's going to get into why we see an
11 impact to cultural resources more specifically
12 linked to the Commerce maintenance storage facility
13 site.

14 And then also you'll see that there's blue
15 coloring along Geology and Soils, and that's
16 primarily because all of these alternatives include
17 the three-mile tunnel that we have that begins at
18 the start of the project; right?

19 So we -- from an -- East L.A. to the
20 Citadel, we're going to be using a tunnel-boring
21 machine, essentially, a very large drill that
22 drills through to build -- to basically develop
23 these -- the tunnels.

24 And essentially with the drill, it's very
25 hard to monitor what's in the soils, and therefore,

1 some of the paleontological resources could be --
2 could probably not be protected during that period,
3 so we do the best that we can.

4 But again, that's why we have a
5 significant unavoidable impact specifically under
6 Geological and Soils.

7 So with that, again, I just want to remind
8 folks that if -- the document is a bit large. We
9 have the Executive Summary, and this is one of the
10 ways that we summarize some of those impacts.

11 So if there's something specific that
12 you're looking for, I advise you to go here so you
13 can look up and see what that potential impact may
14 be.

15 So we have, again, those categories -- we
16 have no impact, less than significant impact, and
17 less than significant impact with mitigation
18 measure, as mentioned before. And then there are
19 some that are significant and unavoidable impacts.

20 So with that, I am going to turn it over
21 to Jaime Guzman. Again, he's our environmental
22 consultant. With his team, they put together the
23 environmental document and are the experts within
24 the environmental document.

25 MR. GUZMAN: Thank you, Jenny, and good

1 evening, everybody. Thank you for coming out here
2 and for staying for the presentation.

3 So as Jenny mentioned, we evaluated
4 several topics that are required under the
5 California Environmental Quality Act, and what we
6 try to do, and where I'm going with this
7 preparation, is to give you an overview of some of
8 the impacts that either have significant
9 unavoidable impacts that are -- we are ordered to
10 disclose to the public, and then also some other
11 impacts from other meetings that we've had that
12 people have had some concerns about. They're not
13 necessarily significant impacts, but they are
14 things that communities are concerned about.

15 But we'll start with Cultural Resources,
16 and what I'm hoping to also give you in this
17 presentation is just an overview of how to find the
18 information in the document.

19 So, for example, we have Cultural
20 Resources, which is in Chapter three-point --
21 Section 3.4. And what that has -- what we
22 evaluated there is: Are there any cultural
23 resources that are either currently known or that
24 we found through our research that are affected by
25 this project?

1 And we did. We found a resource that is
2 not a currently designated district, but it is an
3 industrial historic district that exists in the
4 City of Commerce. And this particular impact is
5 due to some property acquisitions that are part of
6 the maintenance facility that would be located in
7 Commerce.

8 So most of these properties that we have
9 looked at here that are in blue themselves may not
10 be historic, but they contribute to the overall
11 historic aspect of this district.

12 And so what we found was that the removal
13 of some of these parcels due to property
14 acquisitions would have an impact. This is the
15 maintenance storage tracks, and any buildings that
16 are in there along with any of the tracks leading
17 into the area.

18 The alternatives that affect this would be
19 all the alternatives that have an option of the
20 Commerce maintenance facility, which is all three
21 of them.

22 And we have included some mitigation, and
23 some of the mitigation for these types of impacts
24 include potential signage that records this
25 district and some of the buildings that may be

1 historic, or documenting it and putting it in a
2 local historic society.

3 But regardless of this, the fact that the
4 district would not exist is a significant and
5 unavoidable impact, and so that is the
6 determination.

7 Another impact that is important to a lot
8 of the alignment is the crossings of the rivers.
9 Under the Alternative 1, both the Rio Hondo and the
10 San Gabriel bridges would be replaced, so there is
11 potential for impact on the flow during
12 construction as well as operations and any
13 potential detours that may occur during
14 construction for traffic.

15 What we've included here, which is found
16 in Section 3.9, which is Hydrology and Water
17 Quality, is to provide some standard measures for
18 restricting the area that the construction is being
19 done in so it doesn't affect the rest of the flow
20 of the river when it is flowing, when they're
21 flowing; and also some hazardous material
22 mitigation to ensure that any storage of materials
23 or any soil erosion or things like that don't
24 affect the river.

25 In terms of traffic -- and we'll talk a

1 little bit about that in another impact -- one of
2 the things that we have in terms of mitigation is a
3 traffic management plan. And those are required
4 for not just this type of construction, but
5 generally the construction of the whole project.

6 A lot of those are required to be reviewed
7 by local jurisdictions, by police, by fire, and
8 making sure that all different needs of the
9 community are taken into consideration before they
10 are implemented.

11 A very important impact that a lot of
12 people have concerns about is the noise, in
13 particular, noises around residential areas.

14 Now, a lot of the corridor through
15 Montebello, Commerce, all of those areas are going
16 to be primarily commercial or industrial, but there
17 are some, starting with Pico Rivera, coming down
18 through here that maybe have some residential
19 areas, and so it's important that we look at what
20 the impacts could be at those residences.

21 We do look at just the overall noise, and
22 for that, we look at existing conditions, existing
23 noise levels.

24 But one of the things that tends to affect
25 residences for noise a little bit more is where

1 tracks cross. So around stations, the engineers
2 require crossings so that we can switch from one
3 track to the other -- one set of tracks to the
4 other, and it's that gap that causes a lot of the
5 noise and some vibration impacts.

6 So what we've been doing is to propose
7 moving those where possible away from residences,
8 and wherever that's not possible, to provide some
9 technology which exists that can buffer that and
10 reduce the amount of impacts that -- or the
11 vibration that people feel. And with that, we have
12 determined that the impacts would be less than
13 significant.

14 Another comment -- another topic that
15 we've heard in many communities is the access for
16 emergency services. We understand that, you know,
17 during any construction, there will be some lane
18 reductions and detours, and what we -- as I
19 mentioned before, something that has to happen,
20 what we have as a mitigation in this project is the
21 preparation of the traffic management plan.

22 That management plan, which is -- this is
23 a sample of one that was done for the Crenshaw
24 project -- includes the detour routes. It includes
25 where there are really options for detour routes.

1 And for that to become public, which was
2 available on their website, it had to have been
3 approved by local jurisdictions and by fire,
4 police, and then some stakeholders as necessary.

5 So that is the kind of mitigation that
6 we're looking at. In this particular case, we have
7 it in the traffic section. And with this
8 mitigation, we believe it will be a less than
9 significant impact.

10 In addition to that, some coordination
11 with public services has already started, with the
12 fire department, and that will continue through the
13 process.

14 Traffic impacts are something that we also
15 evaluate here. We have a traffic impact report.
16 We also have a section that summarizes those
17 impacts.

18 All three alternatives, obviously, have a
19 potential to impact traffic because even if there's
20 undergrounds, at the stations there will be what is
21 called cut and cover, or meaning that there will be
22 going from the top down, so there won't be tunnels
23 necessarily there.

24 So we have project measures, as Jenny
25 mentioned. Metro has been doing these projects for

1 a long time. They have lessons learned. They have
2 a lot of project measures that can be implemented.
3 In addition, like I said, the traffic management
4 plan is a big part of that.

5 One of the sections in Chapter 5 of the
6 document is we have what is called the
7 environmentally superior alternative. This is a
8 required determination by the California
9 Environmental Quality Act, and it's strictly based
10 on the conclusions for comparing the different
11 alternatives.

12 So we look at the different impact
13 determinations, and we look at the different
14 mitigations or project measures that are required
15 for those.

16 At the end, we go through the process of
17 comparing them. What we found for this particular
18 project was that the environmentally superior
19 alternative was Alternative 3, which is the
20 Greenwood initial operating segment, the one that
21 stops in Montebello, with the Montebello yard
22 maintenance facility.

23 This does not mean that this is the
24 alternative that Metro has chosen. That has
25 strictly been done in the environmental document.

1 It is not the same thing as the locally preferred
2 alternative, which is the next step for this
3 project.

4 And that locally preferred alternative is
5 the one that the Metro board will consider for
6 moving forward for the next evaluation in the final
7 document.

8 That one will take into consideration the
9 conclusion that we have in the document, the
10 environmentally superior alternative, but it will
11 also take into consideration the public comments
12 that are heard in this process, also looking at
13 project benefits overall.

14 And so all of those will be taken into
15 consideration when the board looks at and approves
16 the locally preferred alternative later this year.

17 You can comment on the selection of the
18 environmentally superior alternative, if you want.
19 It is not something, again, that has been decided
20 by the board or is -- necessarily has -- it means
21 that it's moving forward as the preferred
22 alternative.

23 So please, if you have any comments on it,
24 if you have any comments on how it was developed,
25 please make comments on that.

1 So before we get to the public hearing
2 part, something that I just wanted to talk with you
3 about is how, you know, we can benefit from hearing
4 from you, what kind of comments we can hopefully
5 get so that the environmental document is impacted
6 by it, and that way you can feel that your comment
7 is making an impact.

8 Please provide the comments. We are
9 always looking for comments. It doesn't have to be
10 positive comments. It can be, you know, negative
11 or it can be just of concerns that you have.

12 It would be preferable if they are on
13 environmental issues, as that is what is being
14 considered here, but definitely anything that you
15 are concerned about.

16 And also, as Jenny mentioned, we have
17 mitigation measures that are being proposed here
18 for reducing the impacts. Those mitigation
19 measures are being proposed based on typical
20 professional, you know -- how it's done in the
21 past. That doesn't mean that it's got to be done
22 this way for this project.

23 So please look at those mitigation
24 measures. If you have any concerns about them, if
25 they're not clear, ask comments, and we can provide

1 clarification.

2 Once the public periods end -- that's at
3 the end of this month -- your comments will be
4 compiled, and we will respond to every single
5 comment. Those comments will be reviewed by all
6 the environmental leads and will be considered when
7 we look at the -- any further environmental work.

8 Those comments will also be provided to
9 the board for their review and for their -- to
10 inform their decision, and then they will be
11 available for you to review when the final document
12 comes out later next year.

13 Okay. So I think with that, I will give
14 it over to Tito. Thank you.

15 MR. CORONA: Thanks, Jaime.

16 So I will briefly go over the next steps,
17 and then we will get started with the hearing.

18 So pretty much, as we wrap up all the
19 comments that are being received, the information
20 will be incorporated into public record, and then
21 the responses will be in the next environmental
22 document, which is considered the final
23 Environmental Impact Report. Right now we have the
24 draft Environmental Impact Report, and that's what
25 we are commenting on now.

1 Again, the comments that are received
2 tonight and received through August 29th -- that's
3 when the close is of comment period -- that all
4 those comments will be, again, evaluated and
5 incorporated into public record.

6 So once that is done, we can go back and
7 go before the Metro board late -- later this year
8 to select the locally preferred alternative. And
9 then once that is -- every time we do -- we get a
10 board decision, should that pass, the next will be
11 another board action, which will be the release of
12 the final Environmental Impact Report, which would,
13 again, be released for public review before we go
14 to the Metro board for the approval of the
15 Environmental Impact Report and certification for
16 the project to become an official project, and that
17 is anticipated in mid next year of 2023.

18 Again, all these dates and times are
19 subject to change. That's why we encourage you
20 when you get here to sign in. Provide your e-mail
21 and your information to best contact you so you
22 stay involved in the project and get the latest of
23 what's going on with this project.

24 We send you information regarding this
25 project as the updates occur, which is a great

1 opportunity for you to stay involved with this
2 project.

3 Additionally, as I was saying earlier, you
4 don't just have until today to provide comments.
5 You have until August 29th. You still have time.

6 So in the event that something didn't --
7 you were thinking about something or maybe
8 didn't -- it doesn't come until tomorrow or
9 sometime later, you still have time to provide
10 comments.

11 And you can do so in writing. You can
12 write us, send a letter in, attention to Jenny
13 Cristales-Cevallos. Her contact information to
14 mail is right up here.

15 You can also go, if you would prefer to do
16 it online, and fill out your comment
17 electronically. You can do so through our
18 electronic portal to send your comments through
19 metro.net/eastside comments. Once again, that's
20 metro.net/eastside comments.

21 You can also call our project hotline. So
22 if you don't feel like writing any comments down,
23 and you do want to say them verbally, this is an
24 opportunity to do so as well by calling our project
25 hotline at (213) 922-3012. Once again, that's

1 (213) 922-3012, and then you'll provide your
2 comments there, and we will transcribe the comments
3 that are received. Again, those are through
4 August 29th.

5 And, again, as you were walking through
6 the open house area and speaking with staff and
7 seeing these different displays that we have, we
8 also have an online interactive tool that we have
9 up here where someone can show you as well. And
10 you can also view the online interactive tool at
11 metro.net/eastside 2022.

12 Again, this is the final of four hearings
13 that we're having. We started out at East L.A.,
14 then we went to in Montebello. And then we had an
15 online call or Zoom call that we were also
16 broadcasting live in Pico Rivera. And then tonight
17 is our final night, in Whittier, but we will,
18 again, keep our portals open for you to provide
19 comment as well.

20 So with that, I'm going to introduce
21 Edgar Gutierrez, our hearing officer, who will go
22 over the hearing process. And he will call your
23 names, and we will be taking comments over here.

24 So with that, I will be handing the
25 microphone over to Edgar.

1 MR. GUTIERREZ: Thank you, Tito.

2 Again, I'm Edgar Gutierrez with Arellano
3 Associates, outreach consultants to the project. I
4 am the hearing officer, so it's my job to make sure
5 that everyone has a fair and equal opportunity to
6 go ahead and comment.

7 So there's just very basic rules, ground
8 rules that we like to have. Essentially, starting
9 off, just respecting each other right here. It's a
10 public facility. It's a public meeting. We may
11 have differences of opinion, but we have a process
12 that has been defined.

13 And we have a court reporter that will be
14 documenting your comments, so that includes, you
15 know, holding back from cheering or making any
16 sounds either in support or in opposition from
17 anyone's comments. We want to be able to capture
18 those comments as clearly as possible.

19 And tonight you'll have, like somebody
20 mentioned, a minute and a half per speaker.
21 90 seconds is not enough for most people to get
22 their full comment. We recognize that. But as
23 mentioned, Tito and others have been describing
24 various ways that you can submit comments.

25 Also, we have the court reporter

1 available. Any time remaining until 8:00 p.m., you
2 can sit down and provide additional comments. And
3 there's staff that can help you write your comments
4 down, too, if you need any assistance.

5 Now, as has been said, we're not going to
6 provide any comments. We're here just to hear you.
7 This is the part of the meeting where the attention
8 is turned over to the public.

9 So if you have any questions, you know,
10 that's why we had the open house format. If
11 there's anything else that you want to ask for
12 clarification, any time remaining after the public
13 comments, you're welcome to go back to the open
14 house. We'll be there until 8:00 p.m.

15 Now, to start things off, I've been handed
16 a set of speaker cards that have been submitted so
17 far. If you're interested in speaking but have not
18 submitted a card, now is the time.

19 So start filling it out. If you have a
20 card or need a pen, just raise your hand. We have
21 some staff that are going to be walking around
22 assisting you.

23 I'm going to be naming the cards in order
24 that have been handed to me.

25 And once you're called -- so there will be

1 three speakers at a time -- you're going to be
2 asked to line up right here to your left. Edna's
3 going to be holding the microphone for you. And we
4 just ask that you could take some of these seats if
5 your name has been called. So the first group will
6 go ahead and start, and we will have the other two
7 speakers that we called waiting. So that way we
8 can move much more efficiently.

9 And now for the court reporter, it's
10 important for you to speak your name clearly into
11 the record, first and last name. And it would also
12 be helpful if you say the city or zip code that
13 would be associated with where you live or work,
14 that's based on interest for this project.

15 Now, without further ado, I'm going to
16 start calling the names. And let's see.

17 First name -- first person up is Maggie
18 Mo, then Virginia Ball, and Mohammed Abass.

19 So Maggie Mo?

20 MS. MO: Hi. Good afternoon. Thank you,
21 everybody, for coming. This is so important.

22 MR. GUTIERREZ: Excuse me. Can you state
23 your name?

24 MS. MO: My name is Maggie Mo. I have
25 mixed feelings about this Gold Line. I'm very

1 concerned that it's going to come -- this Gold Line
2 is going to come down to Lambert.

3 And so my question is -- I see all these
4 beautiful plans, but I don't see any plans for a
5 parking lot. Where are the people going to park?
6 Do you really think that people are going to leave
7 their cars and they're going to come down to
8 Lambert and then get on the Gold Line?

9 I don't see any plans for any parking at
10 all, and we don't have any parking in District 1.

11 This is going to create a big change in
12 our -- in the City of Whittier. We already are
13 gridlocked with traffic. Where is all the traffic
14 going to be going to? There will be traffic
15 gridlocked on Washington, then Whittier Boulevard,
16 and then a lot of people in the City of Whittier,
17 like off Beverly Boulevard -- they -- people are
18 already gridlocked, and they're going through their
19 communities to avoid traffic. So I'm very
20 concerned about the traffic.

21 I'm concerned about our environment. I'm
22 concerned about the noise. And I'm concerned about
23 all of the crime and homelessness that will be
24 coming to Whittier.

25 Sheriff Villanueva already said that there

1 is a lot of crime, and I don't see any kind of
2 security or police on any of these trains.

3 MR. GUTIERREZ: Thank you for your
4 comments. Your 90 seconds are up.

5 And we'd like to ask for Virginia Ball.

6 MS. BALL: Most of my questions were
7 answered by what you did, so I'd just like to
8 postpone.

9 MR. GUTIERREZ: Okay. Great. So Virginia
10 has elected to pass on our comments for now.

11 So I'm going to ask Mohammed Abass. And
12 when he's getting started, I'm going to call on
13 Edmond Veloz followed by Jorge Martinez.

14 MR. ABASS: Hello. My name is Mohammed
15 Abass. I live on Sunset and Whittier at 90602.
16 I'm very excited about this project and bringing
17 the train as soon as possible.

18 Back in 1923, when my house was built,
19 there was the red car that came back to Whittier.
20 So I'm very excited to bring the trains back to
21 Whittier, the public transit back to Whittier.

22 My only question or comment is asking
23 whether there's a potential to study an alternative
24 that brings the train from the PIH where the
25 current stop is proposed to uptown and closer to

1 all the businesses. There's a lot of jobs out
2 there.

3 I was just walking around uptown today.
4 We have such a beautiful uptown, such a beautiful
5 place with stores and whatnot, and places where
6 people work. It would be great if we could connect
7 that to the Metro as well.

8 So thank you to the Metro staff and to the
9 council members who all put this together and to
10 the supervisors who helped support this, and I hope
11 this comes to Whittier as soon as possible.

12 You know, I work in downtown. My wife
13 works at UCLA. It would make our commute and our
14 lives a lot better and easier. Thank you very
15 much.

16 MR. GUTIERREZ: Okay. Thank you.

17 Up next is Edmond Veloz, followed by Jorge
18 Martinez. Then it will be Mike Martinez.

19 MR. VELOZ: Okay. My name is Edgar Edmond
20 Veloz. I live in Montebello. At the last Whittier
21 meeting of August 17th, of June 13th, 2019, 30
22 people testified. 20 were for the Gold Line; 18
23 were residents. Ten were against the Gold Line;
24 seven were residents.

25 Tonight we have 147 signatures against the

1 Gold Line and 147 signatures in favor of the MTA's
2 own transportation system management, an
3 alternative using electric buses, which will be
4 much more efficient than the Gold Line light rail
5 at 1/100th of the cost.

6 These signatures came from residents
7 living in the Whittier neighborhood on Washington
8 Boulevard near Sorenson and the hospital.

9 Tonight we represent those people because
10 in 2019, Whittier officials would not.

11 Overall, we have over 1800 signatures
12 against the Gold Line and the same amount in favor
13 of the TSM alternative. Metro has nothing like
14 this in their support.

15 The TSM alternative is absolutely the
16 locally preferred alternative and the
17 environmentally superior alternative, which is what
18 the MTA claims they are trying to achieve.

19 I believe that we are proving that if the
20 MTA Gold Line is built, it will be as a result of
21 blatant corruption.

22 MR. GUTIERREZ: Thank you for your
23 comment.

24 Up next is Jorge Martinez, followed by
25 Mike Martinez. Then I'm going to call on Diana

1 Guzman.

2 And just a reminder, please hold from
3 clapping and making noises and be respectful of
4 others.

5 Please go ahead, sir.

6 MR. MARTINEZ: I'm Jorge Martinez,
7 Montebello, 90640.

8 This distance -- MTA has lost its way
9 because it has lost sight of who is its customer.
10 Is it the MTA board of directors? No.

11 Is it the L.A. county board of
12 supervisors? No.

13 Is it the Washington Boulevard coalition?
14 No.

15 So who is their customer? We, the people.
16 If we, the people, want electric buses, give us
17 electric buses, not trains.

18 MTA's own ridership statistic show a
19 distinct preference for buses, so why do they want
20 to ram trains down our throats? If you want to
21 build light rail systems with higher ridership,
22 place them down the middle or alongside the
23 freeways like the Gold Line down the 210 Freeway,
24 or the, what is it, the 91?

25 Say no to the Gold Line.com. Thank you

1 very much.

2 MR. GUTIERREZ: Thank you.

3 Next comment is Mike Martinez, who will be
4 followed by Diana Gomez. Then after Diana, it will
5 be Eugenia Reyes.

6 MR. MARTINEZ: Mike Martinez, resident
7 from East L.A., zip code 9022 [verbatim].

8 First of all, I do not need to be here.
9 I'm here to protect your city. I live right in
10 front of the existing Gold Line on Third Street.
11 It's horrible. There's so much traffic, so much
12 smudge on my house -- my home walls.

13 It's not your typical dust. It's black
14 smudge. And it's from possibly all the traffic,
15 including the train that's running in front of my
16 house.

17 Number 1, Chapter 6 of the environmental
18 report, Section 6.9.2.3, it says "Public Outreach."
19 They were supposed to put banners and electric --
20 electronic signs along the corridor that they were
21 going to build it.

22 I literally just drove over here from East
23 L.A. for you guys, and I did not see one sign, not
24 one billboard. I have never seen it. Check it
25 out. Drive for yourself. If you don't believe me

1 in East L.A., go take a drive. Go take a weekend
2 out of your drive and test it out. See how you're
3 going to like it.

4 There's a lot of delays, especially the
5 center divider. It's going to block a lot of
6 residential streets. That means emergency vehicles
7 are going to take longer because they're going to
8 have to take a U-turn.

9 The riders are 135. I had said 75. But
10 the maximum occupancy is 135. There's literally
11 six people riding per cabin. I've seen it because
12 I see it from my window. I've seen it. Are they
13 going to build it underground? More stations,
14 12 stations versus six. Push it.

15 MR. GUTIERREZ: Thank you. And I'd like
16 to call on Diana Gomez, who will be followed by
17 Eugenia Reyes and then Jesse Garcia.

18 MS. GOMEZ: Hello. Good afternoon. My
19 name is Diana Gomez, a current resident of Pico
20 Rivera, concerned parent, also, of growing
21 children.

22 So one of my comments. I really wanted to
23 go really briefly, really quickly.

24 So traffic congestion, community delays,
25 besides the environmental components, delay in

1 first responders, pollution emissions from stalled
2 traffic, unsafe train crossing for pedestrians and
3 for our growing children, train crossings that
4 impact not only on community, but also our children
5 from going to school.

6 And then also the increase of homelessness
7 these train stations are going to bring. For
8 example, in L.A., we see the issues with
9 homelessness.

10 And then also just to inform some
11 residents in order -- there is two train -- train
12 underpasses in the city of Pico Rivera to avoid all
13 these issues and they cost -- they cost the City
14 \$43 million for the underpass that was created in
15 Passons.

16 And on Durfee that was just opened, that
17 cost taxpayers \$107 million. And that was only --
18 that underpass was built only to prevent all these
19 congestion issues.

20 So now my problem is building another
21 train that's going to be preventing the beauty of
22 our city.

23 Our city should be beautiful, and in order
24 for us to do that, we need to stop this train from
25 Metro building. Thank you.

1 MR. GUTIERREZ: Okay. Thank you.

2 We have Eugenia Reyes, followed by Jesse
3 Garcia and Maria Reyes.

4 MS. REYES: Yes. My name is Eugenia
5 Reyes. I am from Montebello, south side, off of
6 Washington Boulevard. And I really do not want
7 this Gold Line on my block because I'm literally
8 off Washington Boulevard.

9 I already deal with trucks. I don't need
10 to deal with trains. I have homeless people
11 walking up and down my block. It's going to bring
12 more homeless people.

13 I work at John Adams Middle School. There
14 is a Metro that comes in from Long Beach and
15 connects to Washington Boulevard. There are also
16 homeless people around that block.

17 So I can just imagine that all these
18 homeless people that are stuck in L.A. -- and now
19 when the East L.A. bridge opens, now you have more
20 homeless people crossing that bridge. Those
21 homeless are going to start coming, going to start
22 getting to Commerce and to Montebello and Whittier.

23 I don't want the Gold Line. If you guys
24 want to build this, then wait about 30 years and
25 see if the mind and mentality changes, but not now.

1 That's all I have to say.

2 MR. GUTIERREZ: Okay. Thank you.

3 Then we have Jesse Garcia, who will be
4 followed by Maria Reyes. And now I'd like to call
5 on Jesus Reyes.

6 MR. GARCIA: Hi. I'm Jesse Garcia. I
7 live in south Montebello. In the real world, if I
8 were to go in front of my boss and present this
9 project and have him cut a check for \$3 billion and
10 tell them, "By the way, it's going to take 53 years
11 for you to get your principal back," two things are
12 going to happen: He's going to laugh at me and
13 then I'm going to get fired. Okay?

14 It's going to cost 300 million per mile to
15 build this train. It's 9.4. I've rounded it to
16 ten, because it's going to be costing over. Metro
17 is already aware that it's going to cost
18 6 billion -- 3 billion. 3 billion in 2029 won't
19 buy you two-and-a-half billion, so I don't know
20 where the money is coming from.

21 And this is all based on my management
22 skills, all data that is available off the website.

23 As far as what the councilman says, it's
24 going to take you 16 minutes from Whittier to
25 downtown? It's not going to happen. It takes 16

1 minutes from Atlantic to Union Station, and that's
2 9.1 miles. This is 9.7? You're looking at a
3 half-hour. So it's a pipe dream.

4 I'm glad you guys brought it out here
5 because I took Washington from my house all the way
6 to here. You're going to ruin the neighborhood.
7 Del Rey? Good luck. If you like going there -- I
8 do it once a year. That's all I can afford. That
9 place is gone. All the beautiful houses and
10 everything down that block, forget it. It's not
11 going to happen.

12 I mean, the best thing, it's an election
13 year. All council people know they're going to get
14 fired if they go for it.

15 MR. GUTIERREZ: Thank you. And I'm going
16 to call on Maria Reyes, followed by Jesus Reyes.
17 And I would like to call on Kevin Coca.

18 And just a reminder to hold back on your
19 applause as much as possible and be respectful of
20 everyone's comments. They're going to speak
21 Spanish, so we're going to go ahead and give them
22 more time.

23 Just so everyone is aware, as a protocol,
24 when we have a Spanish speaker, they're going to
25 say a comment in Spanish, and then the interpreter

1 is going to translate for them. So we're going to
2 accommodate additional time for them in this
3 situation.

4 So go ahead, Maria.

5 MS. REYES: (Through a Spanish
6 interpreter.)

7 My name is Maria Reyes, and I live here in
8 Montebello. Yes, Maple Avenue. So Metrolink is
9 south of where I live right now. So this is going
10 to be another block south of Washington there, and
11 we really don't need that service. There's quite a
12 bit of traffic.

13 There are cars and a lot of trucks going
14 through there, so -- there's an elementary school
15 there on Greenwood Street.

16 And so at the other side of Washington,
17 there's also the library there, so we really don't
18 need that. We don't need that service.

19 So there's a lot of homeless there on
20 Washington Street, so I wonder: What are you going
21 to do with all the things that I've said about
22 that? We need more buses. We don't live in
23 Whittier; okay?

24 MR. GUTIERREZ: Thank you. Please hold
25 back from your applause.

1 I'd like to call on Jesus Reyes, followed
2 by Kevin Coca and then R.D. McDonald.

3 MR. REYES: (Through a Spanish
4 interpreter.)

5 Okay. My name is Jesus Reyes. What
6 happens out in East L.A. -- I don't know why you
7 would want to do that. They can get parking out of
8 us if there are other companies. My name is Jesus
9 Manuel Reyes.

10 And the second point is that there are so
11 many other truck companies, at least five of them
12 that -- we can call upon them. They're not small
13 pickup trucks or anything. They're big semi
14 trucks.

15 So if you're going to do this project,
16 you're going to take those tracks -- remove those
17 tracks in order for the traffic to go through them.
18 It's very difficult for us who live there. What do
19 you want us to do? Just to hop on a plane or a
20 helicopter?

21 So for the persons out of East L.A. --
22 just let me very briefly -- that traffic of the
23 train is only from 7:00 to 8:00, and after that,
24 there's nothing.

25 MR. GUTIERREZ: Thank you. And I would

1 like to call on Kevin Coca, who will be followed by
2 R.D. McDonald, and then Reuben Valdez.

3 Reuben is our current last speaker who
4 submitted a speaker card. So if you've been
5 holding it and there's something burning on your
6 mind, go ahead and submit your card.

7 Go ahead.

8 MR. COCA: Good evening. My name is Kevin
9 Coca. I'm representing PIH Health. We support the
10 Metro extension to Whittier because we believe it
11 will enhance the access to health care services,
12 especially to transients and indigent.

13 We ask that noise vibrations as well as
14 vehicle and pedestrian access to the campus be
15 considered and addressed during construction, but
16 we're looking forward to the completion of the
17 project. Thank you.

18 MR. GUTIERREZ: Thank you. Up next is
19 R.D. McDonald, followed by Reuben Valdez, who is
20 currently our last speaker.

21 MR. MCDONALD: Good evening. My name is
22 R.D. McDonald, 90605. I am here speaking on behalf
23 of the Whittier Area Chamber of Commerce,
24 representing over 500 businesses in the Whittier
25 area.

1 Dating back to 2010, when this project was
2 first proposed, the Whittier chamber along with the
3 Chamber Alliance, which represents seven chambers
4 throughout the region that's affected by the
5 proposed line -- we support the Alternative 1, the
6 Washington Boulevard extension all the way to the
7 Lambert and Washington Boulevard intersection.

8 I'd like to thank the project team for a
9 very thorough presentation and having reviewed
10 portions of the draft EIR -- I haven't gotten
11 through all of it just yet, but the depth of
12 experience and the expertise of the team members
13 not only has been reflected in your thorough
14 presentation this evening, but also through the
15 EIR.

16 We feel that the environmental --
17 following the CEQA regulations, the significant and
18 unavoidable impacts, that appropriate mitigation
19 measures are being considered, both the short-term
20 impacts during the construction phase, as well as
21 the long-term impacts during operations -- that
22 appropriate mitigation measures are being
23 considered. And thank you.

24 MR. GUTIERREZ: Thank you.

25 Our last speaker is Reuben Valdez. You

1 still have time to submit a speaker card if you
2 have an interest in speaking tonight.

3 Go ahead, Reuben.

4 MR. VALDEZ: Hello. My name is Reuben
5 Valdez. I live in Whittier, California, 90606. I
6 just want to come out and say I'm in favor of this
7 project. I've been in favor of it since 2017, when
8 it first started.

9 And it's forward thinking is what I think
10 because eventually we're going to probably be
11 getting out of our cars. We see how much it is
12 right now for gas, \$6 a gallon; right? That's a
13 reality. And the more and more as we age as a
14 population, we're not going to be able to drive
15 those cars.

16 So we'll have an alternative to get to
17 East L.A., to Whittier, all the way to downtown
18 L.A., to the airport, to a variety of places.

19 A lot of people don't want this to come
20 down their street, down their neighborhood. This
21 has been an argument all along, and, you know, it's
22 something to think about.

23 Yes, there will be impacts, but there's a
24 bigger trade-off for the worldwide community in the
25 end, and we all like the Pacific -- well, for those

1 of us around -- we all like the Red Line and the
2 electric cars, the Greenway trail. It's that kind
3 of thing that we're looking at, something going for
4 the future of the next evolution of our lives, and
5 that's why I'm in favor of the project.

6 And also, you know, it's going to be long
7 term, and I think it's a big thing to think about.
8 Thank you.

9 MR. GUTIERREZ: Thank you.

10 So with Reuben being our last speaker
11 tonight, that concludes the formal oral comment
12 section for tonight's hearing, but as has been
13 mentioned, you still have time, until 8:00 o'clock
14 tonight, to take advantage of all the resources we
15 have. Tito will be going over that.

16 But I just want to thank you for
17 respecting the process of the public hearing and
18 the oral comments, and I appreciate your
19 participations.

20 So now, Tito.

21 MR. CORONA: Thank you, Edgar.

22 So let's wrap up the presentation, give
23 you more time if you would like to go speak with
24 staff and get your -- get some questions answered.

25 Can you go to the next slide, Jesse? It's

1 not working.

2 Okay. Thank you.

3 So as I said earlier, you do have other
4 opportunities to provide comment. It wasn't just
5 right now where you provided your comments.

6 Formally, you can still do so in writing. Back
7 here we have a table to receive your comments. You
8 can write your comments down.

9 You can also call us on our project help
10 line to provide your comments there, at
11 (213) 922-3012. You can mail them, if you would
12 prefer to write a letter and send it over to Jenny
13 via mail. That's at 1 Gateway Plaza. The
14 information is right up here on the screen.

15 And we also have an electronic comment
16 form, should you like to do so online. It's
17 metro.net/eastsidecomments.

18 Again, this is the fourth of four
19 meetings. So tonight is our final in-person
20 hearing.

21 We are taking comments through
22 August 29th, so you still have time. You have
23 opportunities to speak with staff. We're going to
24 be going back to our stations to answer your
25 questions.

1 If you would like to verbally provide
2 additional comments, you may do so to my right,
3 your left here at the comment table with our --
4 with our very helpful stenographers. And I'm going
5 to try to speak slower. I know you were taking
6 some quick comments.

7 But we prefer that you speak slowly so we
8 can capture what you're saying. You won't have a
9 timer if you go speak over here like you did over
10 here. So if you have more to say, please do so
11 again. But please provide the information and
12 respect each other's comments.

13 So I think that is it. Is there another
14 slide?

15 No, that is it.

16 So right now I'm going to wrap this up.
17 It is 7:30 on August 17th. I'm going to conclude
18 the presentation. It does not mean the meeting is
19 over. It does not mean you have to leave right
20 now. We have staff standing by the screen, so this
21 is your chance to go and talk with them. Thank you
22 for coming and have a good night.

23
24 * * *

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So I have a couple

1 of thoughts. And the first one is: The proposal
2 is for six stations at \$6 billion; is that correct?
3 Anyway, that's what I gather here, \$6 billion for
4 six stations.

5 And here's -- and here's what I want to
6 say: That's a lot of money for six stations that
7 goes nowhere. Lambert and Washington, there's
8 nothing there, and I never could understand this
9 about Metro. They've always built these railroads
10 that go nowhere at a considerable cost. That's one
11 comment.

12 And the other one is: If we were to get
13 back on to provide bus service at a more rapid
14 headway, I think the people in the communities
15 would utilize that more, and I think it would be
16 cheaper, electric buses, instead of this electric
17 railroad.

18 And my second thought is we already have
19 the freeways there. From East L.A., we have the
20 60 Freeway. And this has always been a thought in
21 my mind: Why not build a rail system right
22 alongside that freeway where you don't interrupt
23 all these other communities? The freeway's already
24 existing.

25 And if we could build some kind of

1 construction, a monorail that would go into
2 downtown Los Angeles and out into the suburbs, I
3 think that would be something to consider.

4 And that concludes my comment or my
5 thoughts. Thank you.

6
7 * * *

8 MR. ROBLINO: My name is Tom Roblino. I
9 live right off of Washington Boulevard up by
10 Rosemead, and I understand that there -- the train
11 proposal -- of the track is going to go down the
12 center of Washington Boulevard. It's going to
13 eliminate one lane on each side. There's too much
14 traffic there now. I don't know how -- what's
15 going to happen then. That's number 1.

16 Number 2 is I heard one other gentleman
17 say today about safety, that they're going to
18 guarantee safety on the train.

19 They can't do it now. What makes them
20 think they're going to be able to do it then? I
21 understand the homelessness is rising, a terrible
22 epidemic that's happening now. It's going to get
23 worse if a train comes down from L.A. down to where
24 we live now.

25 I've seen what happened. Look at the

1 community, what happened that the gentleman was
2 saying on First Street, how terrible it's gotten
3 around the area.

4 I don't want that to happen in my area.
5 And for those gentlemen, whoever proposed to say
6 that they're for it, I want them to ask me: How
7 close do they live to the route? Thank you.

8
9 * * *

10 MS. REYES: Maria Reyes (through a Spanish
11 interpreter.)

12 As I said in the beginning, the street
13 where I live, there's quite a bit of traffic, a lot
14 of trucks. In the south where I live, the south
15 going towards north -- so about -- north of that
16 about a block away from there, there is Metrolink.
17 So the line -- the Metro line is going to go
18 about -- pretty close to where I live, right in the
19 middle of it.

20 On top of that, there's quite a bit of
21 traffic; and besides that, we don't have any
22 parking facility, either. We have a lot of
23 factories all around where I live. So the school
24 is pretty close to there, close to Washington
25 Street. And the library is across the street on

1 Greenwood Street.

2 So you're really presenting a very
3 good-looking package, nothing really worth for us
4 at all. On Washington Street, we have quite a bit
5 of homeless people. On the weekends, on Sundays,
6 there is a church near Washington Street. There's
7 quite a bit of traffic, a lot of traffic. So we
8 have to put up with that all the time, a lot of
9 traffic.

10 That's it.

11
12 * * *

13 MS. REYES: E-U-G-E-N-I-A, R-E-Y-E-S.

14 Another concern is that -- what are they
15 going to do when they dig up everything? Where are
16 they going to dump the -- you know, the pavement?
17 Because I'm pretty sure they're going to take some
18 old pavement out, put some new one, fix the street.
19 And even when they go underneath, where are they
20 going to dump all of that? That's a very big
21 concern.

22 I don't see that working for our city. I
23 think they need to go somewhere else. I am -- like
24 I said before, I am very concerned about homeless
25 people being able to have access to move around and

1 start building more cabinets, like -- cabinets? --
2 around our block. It's very busy.

3 And just as my mother said, we also deal
4 with the church of the Ark that's right there, a
5 Christian church right on the corner, and these
6 semi trucks -- they were not notified about the
7 meetings.

8 I went to the one in Montebello. The next
9 day of the Montebello meeting -- not the next day,
10 sorry, because that was a Sunday. So on Monday, I
11 went around my block asking those companies if they
12 were aware of the Metrolink. They said, no, they
13 weren't.

14 I have a feeling -- well, my thoughts and
15 feelings is that they should have also notified
16 them to see what is their point of view if they
17 would like a Metro in the middle of our block, but
18 they didn't. So I think that's very disappointing.

19 And that's it.

20
21 * * *

22 MR. VELOZ: Edmond Veloz. I have a little
23 more to talk to you about.

24 Let's see. One of the things that I've
25 found as I'm doing this -- and this is why I talked

1 about the Whittier city council not supporting
2 their own people. But it wasn't just them.

3 As I've been doing this -- I come from
4 Montebello; okay? Now, in Montebello, there's a
5 section between Vail Avenue and Bluff Road on
6 Washington Boulevard. It's all businesses there,
7 about maybe 70-some-odd businesses.

8 When I first started this -- this was back
9 in the fall -- I got a petition just for the
10 businesses. I visited every single business there.
11 Not a single one of them knew about this project.

12 And this goes back to, like, 2007, when it
13 was first starting to be talked about. Not a
14 single business was told by our city council that
15 this was coming.

16 What's bad about that is that some of
17 those businesses are the biggest contributors of
18 tax income and revenues to the City, so how could
19 it be that the City wouldn't tell them that this
20 thing was coming? How could it be that they -- and
21 our city is in such bad shape. They desperately
22 need that money. How could they tell the people
23 who were helping them and then tell them -- because
24 they know it's going to be bad. It had to be the
25 MTA got to them.

1 But it's not just them. The same thing
2 happened with Pico Rivera. I started circulating a
3 petition letting them know. Nobody knew. They
4 could hold meetings down there. We could have done
5 that in south Montebello. They wouldn't hold a
6 meeting down there because we had them a long time
7 ago. People in Montebello -- they've got venues to
8 hold them in south Pico Rivera, south of Washington
9 Boulevard. They didn't do it. So they didn't
10 know.

11 I come up to Whittier. This one section
12 between Sorenson Avenue and the Presbyterian
13 hospital, the north side of Washington, there's a
14 whole neighborhood, a residential neighborhood.
15 None of them knew. The City didn't tell them.

16 It was collusion, collusion between -- it
17 had to be collusion between -- in my opinion,
18 collusion between all of the cities not to tell the
19 people because you can see it in the Environmental
20 Impact Report that there's going to be bad things
21 happening, and there's no way away from it.

22 It's going to happen. Certain things are
23 going to be permanent. Well, they didn't want them
24 to know that. Okay. That's one thing.

25 The last thing is the Whittier thing, it's

1 not going to do Whittier any good anyway. It's
2 going to end at Lambert Road. There's no real
3 commercial area there other than maybe the
4 Presbyterian hospital. That's not going to be that
5 much.

6 People from the Chamber of Commerce
7 appeared here, from the uptown association. They
8 appeared before the Whittier uptown.

9 Whittier uptown is a mile and a half away
10 from where the rail line is going to stop. How are
11 they going to get there? It is going to do uptown
12 Whittier absolutely no good. It's a mile and a
13 half. How are people going to get there? They are
14 either going to have to walk or Whittier is going
15 to have to provide them a bus, which is what I'm
16 suggesting.

17 The next one is the Whittier quad, another
18 mile and a half away. So the train ends in a place
19 where it does Whittier no good. It's just -- it
20 just is a vanity train for them. But in the
21 meantime, it comes through all of these
22 neighborhoods, Pico Rivera and Montebello, and
23 ruins our neighborhoods just so they can have a
24 vanity train for themselves.

25 And that's -- that's what they call

1 environmental racism, that, you know, we're not
2 going to -- this is going to ruin our
3 neighborhoods, and everybody is very, very upset
4 about it. Well, you saw them here tonight.

5 Anyway, I don't want to tell you that.
6 You can leave that part out. But they were here
7 tonight, and they showed their disgust. I was very
8 surprised at how many people were here against this
9 project in Whittier.

10 That's all I've got to say, I think.

11
12 * * *

13 MR. PERLA: Miguel P-E-R-L-A. I'm a
14 resident of Whittier, California, and I am here
15 because I wanted to hear the concerns by my fellow
16 community members and also hear about the plans.

17 I am in favor of the extension of the
18 Metro to Whittier, with some reservations, of
19 course. I would love for there to be parking for
20 all of that area that's going to be most impacted
21 at the end of the line at Lambert and Washington
22 Boulevard, which is a tough area as it is --
23 existing tough area.

24 But I am in favor of this project because
25 it's a forward-looking way to get people out of

1 their cars and onto public transportation that
2 doesn't pollute, that is safe. It can be
3 beautiful, and it can connect us to different parts
4 of Los Angeles County without having to hop in our
5 cars.

6 I think that's it. I think that's it.

7
8 * * *

9 MS. CELIZ: Esther Celiz. My real concern
10 is transportation for the pedestrians. So I don't
11 know what that goes under. I think that chart is
12 under Transportation. What does it go under?

13 I have concern for the traffic, which
14 isn't even on any of the charts. I am in
15 Pico Rivera. It's on Washington and Passons. The
16 stop is going to be on Washington and Rosemead.
17 That's the stop. And you come down -- because it's
18 all residential homes. They don't even talk about
19 it. They aren't even bringing up Pico Rivera.

20 So from -- I would say from Bluff, as you
21 come down, there's no homes, and then the homes and
22 the residential area hits on Washington and
23 Rosemead. So you have homes on both sides.

24 So there's a school, El Rancho High
25 School, Rivera Middle School that the kids on

1 Passons and Washington would be crossing, and
2 that's what's going to be my concern.

3 You're going to have between -- I would
4 say the high school has around 3,000 kids, so say
5 on average 1800 kids would be crossing Passons.
6 Another 1200 would be in Rivera Middle School at
7 3:00 o'clock every day. And there's no stop right
8 there for the train. The train is just going to be
9 going straight. That's a big concern.

10 In Pico Rivera, we've done two
11 underpasses, one on Durfee and Whittier and one on
12 Slauson and Passons, for the concern of the
13 children, and now we're having a train come
14 straight down Washington.

15 So that's my concern for the people of
16 Pico Rivera, is that that street -- they did a
17 study for the pedestrians. The young lady
18 explained it to me.

19 But I don't think anybody went down there
20 at 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon or at 7:30 in the
21 morning when you have gridlock, parents taking
22 their kids to school back and forth. So that's
23 going to be a big concern, stopping on that
24 intersection.

25 And that's not even on that -- Passons is

1 not even on the map, and that's a big street.
2 That's a very important street. That's one of the
3 main veins of Pico Rivera. That's one of our main
4 concerns.

5 Thank you.

6
7 * * *

8 MR. HOM: My name is Danny, D-A-N-N-Y. My
9 last name is Hom, H-O-M.

10 I'm supportive of Metro continuing
11 development of the project on the corridor, and I
12 want to urge Metro to really foreground
13 accessibility for people with disabilities who ride
14 the system, when holding this, as much as possible.

15 That's it.

16
17 (Meeting ended at 8:00 p.m.)
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

OF

CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER

* * * *

The undersigned Certified Shorthand Reporter of
the State of California does hereby certify:

That the foregoing Proceeding was taken before me
at the time and place therein set forth.

That the comments made at the time of the
Proceeding were recorded stenographically by me and were
thereafter transcribed, said transcript being a true and
correct copy of the proceedings thereof.

In witness whereof, I have subscribed my name,
this date: AUGUST 30, 2022.



STEPHANIE LESLIE, CSR No. 12893

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