

## **APPENDIX B**

### **NOP and NOI**

**Section 6.0**  
**Attachment A**  
**NOI and NOP**



completed an EIR and "Subsequent EIR" for the study corridor. These studies and environmental documents led to the identification of a preferred rail alignment along the existing Southern Pacific Burbank/Chandler Branch, following Chandler Boulevard, Oxnard Street, Victory Boulevard, and Topham Street, which the MTA subsequently purchased in 1990. Environmental documents meeting California standards were certified in 1990 and 1992, addressing alternatives along both the SP Burbank/Chandler Branch and the Ventura Freeway median alignments. In 1994 the MTA Board of Directors endorsed the SP Burbank/Chandler Branch alignment.

An alternatives screening report and major investment study was prepared in 1995/96. The report evaluated the relative cost-effectiveness of a broad range of project alternatives, including all the previously studied rail transit options. In 1997 a Draft EIS was in preparation when the MTA began a financial and organizational restructuring which put several rail projects, including rail planning for the San Fernando Valley, on hold.

As part of the restructuring, the MTA and other regional agencies studied the feasibility of building non-rail (bus) transit enhancements in previous rail corridors. In addition, the MTA board directed staff to proceed with a Bus Rapid Transit demonstration project. One of the demonstration lines is on Ventura Boulevard in the San Fernando Valley.

**Description of the Study Area:** The study corridor extends from the North Hollywood Red Line station (currently under construction), located at Lankershim Boulevard and Chandler Boulevard, west across the entire San Fernando Valley to the vicinity of the Warner Center Transit Hub. The length of the corridor is approximately 14 miles.

**Alternatives:** A range of alternatives is being considered as part of the EIS/EIR. These include the following:

**No Build:** This alternative would include the transit system primarily as it exists today, augmented by those additional projects for which a funding commitment has been made or which are reasonably expected to be in place by 2020. The Red Line would terminate at the North Hollywood station. Highway and HOV projects would be provided on a number of freeways. Existing bus headways would be maintained and the Rapid Bus Demonstration project on Ventura Boulevard would be implemented.

**Transportation Systems Management/Best Bus:** This alternative would not

require major investment for capital cost items, but would rather focus its efforts on maximizing the efficiency of existing facilities and expanding and improving the existing bus system. Headways on routes covered by the TSM would be significantly reduced. TSM improvements would include various projects to enhance the performance of bus transit on major arterials where bus service frequencies would be increased.

**Bus Rapid Transit Alternatives:** Buses would run along an exclusive roadway built within the SP Burbank/Chandler ROW between the North Hollywood Metro Red Line Station on the east and the Transit Hub in Warner Center. Stations would be placed approximately every mile along the 14-mile route, at major cross streets and trip destinations. Buses would be given priority at signals. Headways within the busway would vary between five and two and one-half minutes during peak periods, and the existing Valley bus network would be integrated with the busway. In addition to the busway, enough space is available for a parallel bikeway along the corridor.

The corridor is being considered in two phases. If funding is limited, a segment of the full project busway between Woodman Avenue and Balboa Boulevard would be constructed as an initial phase, or Minimum Operable Segment. This first phase would include five stations. Buses would run on-street along Oxnard Street and Victory Boulevard to complete their runs from North Hollywood to Warner Center, and provide cross-Valley service.

**Probable Effects:** The FTA and MTA will evaluate all significant environmental, social and economic impacts of the alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS/EIR. Potential impact categories which will be evaluated include: Land Use and Development; Economic and Fiscal Impacts; Displacement and Relocation; Traffic Circulation and Parking; Community and Neighborhood Impacts; Environmental Justice; Visual and Aesthetic Impacts; Air Quality; Noise and Vibration; Geotechnical Considerations; Water Resources; Natural Resources; Energy; Safety and Security; Cultural Resources; Community Facilities and Parklands; and Construction Impacts. The impacts will be evaluated both for the construction period and the long-term period of operation. Measures to mitigate adverse impacts will also be addressed.

**FTA Procedures:** The EIS process will be performed in accordance with Federal Transit Laws and FTA's regulations and guidelines for preparing

an Environmental Impact Statement. The impacts of the project will be assessed, and, if necessary, the scope of the project will be revised or refined to minimize and mitigate any adverse impacts. After its publication, the draft EIS will be available for public review and comment. At least one public hearing will be held. On the basis of the draft EIS and comments received, the project will be revised or further refined as necessary and the final EIS prepared.

Date Issued: May 15, 2000.

Leslie Rogers,

Regional Administrator.

[FR Doc. 00-12639 Filed 5-18-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-57-P

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Transit Administration

#### Environmental Impact Statement on the Mid-City/Westside Transit Corridor in Los Angeles, CA

**AGENCY:** Federal Transit Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

**SUMMARY:** The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), as the Federal lead agency, and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), as the local lead agency, are issuing this notice to advise interested agencies and the public that a joint Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Environmental Impact Report (EIR), referred to as an EIS/EIR, is being prepared for transit improvements in the Mid-City/Westside Transit Corridor in Los Angeles, California in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The EIS/EIR replaces the previous NEPA reviews by FTA and MTA of transit improvements in the Mid-City corridor, the most recent being "Los Angeles Rail Rapid Transit Project—Metro Rail Final Supplemental EIS/EIR for the Mid-City Segment from Wilshire/Western to Pico/San Vicente," August, 1992. The Mid-City extension of Metro Rail was suspended by the MTA Board of Directors in January 1998. The present EIS/EIR will study alternatives and extensions to the suspended subway in the Mid-City corridor and beyond to Santa Monica. In the course of this study, FTA expects the MTA and the Southern California Association of Governments, which is responsible for transportation planning in metropolitan Los Angeles, to establish priorities for the proposed transit improvements in



the Mid-City corridor and the myriad of other competing projects and transit needs in the region. This prioritization of proposed projects and other transit needs will involve, among other considerations, the development of a financial plan that identifies for each capital need the non-Federal funds to be used along with the proposed Federal funding.

FTA and MTA seek comments by interested parties and agencies on the scope of the Mid-City/Westside EIS/EIR. The date and location of public scoping meetings are provided below. The closing date for receiving comments on the scope of the EIS/EIR, and the address to which written comments should be sent, are also provided herein.

**DATES: Comment Due Date:** Written comments on the scope of the study should be sent, by June 23, 2000, to Mr. David Mieger of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority at the address given below in ADDRESSES.

**Scoping Meeting Dates:** Please refer to ADDRESSES below for the dates, times, and locations of the public scoping meetings.

**ADDRESSES: For Written Comments:** Written comments on the scope of the EIS/EIR should be sent by June 23, 2000, to Mr. David Mieger, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop 99-22-5, Los Angeles, California 90012. Written comments may also be turned in at the scoping meetings.

**For Scoping Meetings:** Public scoping meetings for the EIS/EIR will be held at the following locations at the dates and times indicated:

- Tuesday, May 23, 2000, Peterson Automotive Museum, 6060 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90036 (5 p.m.–8 p.m.)
- Wednesday, May 31, 2000, Veteran's Administration Hospital of West Los Angeles, 11301 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90038 (5 p.m.–8 p.m.)
- Tuesday, June 6, 2000, Ken Edwards Center, 1527 4th Street, Santa Monica, CA (5 p.m.–8 p.m.)
- Wednesday, June 7, 2000, California African-American Museum, 600 State Drive, Exposition Park, Los Angeles, CA 90037 (5 p.m.–8 p.m.)
- Thursday, June 8, 2000, Veteran's Memorial Complex, 4117 Overland Avenue, Culver City, CA 90232 (5 p.m.–8 p.m.)

The scoping meetings will be held in an "open house" format with MTA representatives available to discuss the project alternatives throughout the time periods given. Informational displays

and written material will also be available. Comments may be submitted in writing at the public scoping meetings. All locations are accessible to persons with disabilities. Spanish-speaking MTA staff will be present. If hearing-impaired services will be needed, please notify Mr. David Mieger at the MTA address above, or call TTY (800) 252-9040. Other questions about the scoping workshops may be directed by voice telephone to Mr. Mieger at (213) 922-3040 or e-mail at miegerd@mta.net.

**For MIS Review:** A Major Investment Study (MIS) of the transportation needs in the Mid-City/Westside Corridor, dated February, 2000, and related environmental studies are available for review at the MTA Library at One Gateway Plaza, 15th Floor; Los Angeles, CA 90012 during normal business hours.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ervin Poka or Ray Tellis, Federal Transit Administration/Federal Highway Administration Los Angeles Metropolitan Office. Phone: (213) 202-3950.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The EIS/EIR will present a comparative analysis of the environmental impacts, transportation benefits, and costs of reasonable transit alternatives in the Mid-City/Westside Corridor and will determine the appropriate mitigation measures for adverse impacts.

**Scoping:** The initial set of alternatives for the Mid-City/Westside Corridor were defined through a Major Investment Study (MIS) completed in February 2000 by the MTA, in accordance with USDOT regulations. Additional alternatives that may emerge from the scoping process will be considered.

FTA and MTA invite interested individuals, organizations, and public agencies to attend the scoping meetings and participate in identifying the scope and content of the EIS/EIR, including any significant environmental, social, or economic issues associated with the alternatives. The public is invited to comment specifically on the alternatives to be addressed, the transit modes and technologies to be evaluated, the alignments and termination points to be considered, the environmental, social, and economic impacts to be analyzed, and the evaluation approach to be used to select a preferred alternative. During scoping, comments should focus on identifying specific social, economic, or environmental impacts to be evaluated and suggesting alternatives that are less costly or less environmentally damaging, while meeting the identified transportation and other needs in the

Mid-City/Westside Corridor. Scoping is not the appropriate time to indicate a preference for a particular alternative. Comments on preferences should be communicated after the Draft EIS/EIR has been issued for public review.

An information packet describing the purpose of the project, the location, the proposed alternatives, and the impact areas to be evaluated is being mailed to affected Federal, State, and local agencies. Others may request these scoping materials by contacting Mr. David Mieger at (213) 922-3040 or by writing to him at his address above. If you wish to be placed on the project mailing list, please call the Project Hotline at 310-366-6443.

**Description of Study Area and Project Need:** The Mid-City/Westside Corridor is approximately bounded on the north by Sunset Boulevard, on the east by Hill Street, on the south by Manchester Boulevard, and on the west by the Pacific Ocean. The projected trip-making increase and resulting congestion would occur because of expected population growth, from 1.5 million persons in 1994 to 1.9 million in 2020, and of expected employment growth, from one million jobs in 1994 to 1.2 million jobs in 2020. The purposes of the project are to improve east-west travel options in the Mid-City/Westside areas of Los Angeles and to provide a connection to the previously completed Metro Rail Red Line and other portions of the regional rail and bus network.

**Alternatives:** In order to address current and long-range traffic congestion in the Mid-City and Westside areas of the Los Angeles Basin, the MTA has examined a wide range of east-west transit alternatives, including Bus Rapid Transit, Light Rail Transit such as the Blue Line to Long Beach, and Heavy Rail Transit such as the Red Line to Hollywood. In accordance with the intent of the MIS process, the MIS, in conjunction with the guidance provided by the MTA Board of Directors, resulted in a set of refined alternatives to be evaluated in detail in the EIS/EIR. These alternatives are: (1) No Build; (2) Transportation System Management; (3) Wilshire Bus Rapid Transit (BRT); (4) Exposition BRT; (5) Exposition Light Rail Transit (LRT); (6) Phased length combinations of Wilshire BRT and Exposition BRT or LRT; (7) Any additional alternatives that may result from the scoping process. Alignments for BRT extend from the Metro Red Line in downtown Los Angeles to downtown Santa Monica and include Wilshire Boulevard and the former Exposition railroad right-of-way. An alignment for LRT extends from downtown Los



Angeles to downtown Santa Monica along the Exposition railroad right-of-way. The TSM Alternative is not specific to an alignment but would rather improve service levels of existing bus service in the general Westside Corridor. Additionally, a No Build Alternative will evaluate the impacts of doing nothing to improve transit service during the twenty year planning timeframe of the project, beyond those improvements already scheduled and funded.

**Probable Effects:** The FTA and MTA will evaluate all significant environmental, social and economic impacts of the alternatives in the Draft EIS/EIR. Potential impact categories which will be evaluated include: Land Use and Development; Economic Impacts; Displacement and Relocation; Traffic Circulation and Parking; Community and Neighborhood Impacts; Environmental Justice; Visual and Aesthetic Impacts; Air Quality; Noise and Vibration; Geotechnical Considerations; Water Resources; Natural Resources; Energy; Safety and Security; Cultural Resources; Community Facilities and Parklands; and Construction Impacts. The impacts will be evaluated both for the construction period and the long-term period of operation. Measures to mitigate adverse impacts will also be addressed.

**FTA Procedures:** After the scope of the EIS/EIR evaluation has been determined, FTA and MTA will conduct the analyses and interagency coordination necessary to prepare a Draft EIS/EIR. The Draft EIS/EIR will be made available for public and agency review and comment, and a public hearing will be held. On the basis of the Draft EIS/EIR and comments received, MTA will select a Locally Preferred Alternative. If FTA approves of advancing the Locally Preferred Alternative into Preliminary Engineering (PE), the Final EIS/EIR responding to comments received and incorporating the results of PE, would then be prepared and released.

Issued on: May 15, 2000.

Leslie T. Rogers,

Regional Administrator.

[FR Doc. 00-12638 Filed 5-18-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-57-P

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33870]

#### Eastern Alabama Railroad, Inc.— Acquisition Exemption—CSX Transportation, Inc.

Eastern Alabama Railroad, Inc. (EARY), a Class III rail carrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.41 to acquire and operate a rail line owned by CSX Transportation, Inc.<sup>1</sup> The rail line extends from milepost LAM 453.58, at Gannt's Junction, to milepost LAM 479.94, at Talladega, a distance of 26.36 miles in Talladega County, AL.

The transaction is expected to be consummated on or after May 17, 2000.

If the notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke does not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33870, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Fritz R. Kahn, Esq., 1920 N Street, NW, Eighth Floor, Washington, DC 20036-1601.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at "WWW.STB.DOT.GOV."

Decided: May 12, 2000.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik,  
Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 00-12566 Filed 5-18-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

## DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

### Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

May 8, 2000.

The Department of Treasury has submitted the following public information collection requirement(s) to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13. Copies of the

<sup>1</sup> EARY represents that it has operated the rail line, as the assignee of a lease with option to purchase, since 1992 following its acquisition of the Natchez Trace Railroad's properties. See *Eastern Alabama Railway, Inc.—Acquisition and Operation Exemption—Natchez Trace Railroad*, Finance Docket No. 32044 (ICC served Apr. 16, 1992).

submission(s) may be obtained by calling the Treasury Bureau Clearance Officer listed. Comments regarding this information collection should be addressed to the OMB reviewer listed and to the Treasury Department Clearance Officer, Department of the Treasury, Room 2110, 1425 New York Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20220.

**DATES:** Written comments should be received on or before June 19, 2000 to be assured of consideration.

#### Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

OMB Number: 1545-1251.

Regulation Project Number: PS-5-91 Final.

Type of Review: Extension.

Title: Limitations on Percentage Depletion in the Case of Oil and Gas Wells.

Description: Section 1.613A-3(e)(6)(I) of the regulations requires each partner to separately keep records of the partner's share of the adjusted basis of partnership oil and gas property.

Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Estimated Number of Recordkeepers: 1,500,000.

Estimated Burden Hours Per Recordkeeper: 2 minutes.

Estimated Total Recordkeeping Burden: 49,950 hours.

OMB Number: 1545-1545.

Regulation Project Number: REG-107644-97 Final.

Type of Review: Extension.

Title: Permitted Elimination of Preretirement Optional Forms of Benefits.

Description: The regulation permits an amendment to a qualified plan that eliminates certain Preretirement optional forms of benefit.

Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Estimated Number of Recordkeepers: 135,000.

Estimated Burden Hours Per Recordkeeper: 22 minutes.

Estimated Total Recordkeeping Burden: 48,800 hours.

OMB Number: 1545-1685.

Regulation Project Number: REG-103735-00 NPRM and Temporary.

Type of Review: Extension.

Title: Tax Shelter Disclosure Statements.

Description: The regulations provide guidance on the filing requirement under section 6011 for certain corporate taxpayers engaged in transactions producing tax savings in excess of certain dollar thresholds.

Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Estimated Number of Respondents/Recordkeepers: 50.





## Mid-City/Westside Transit Corridor

SCH Number: 2000051058

Type: NOP

### Project Description

The SEIS/SEIR will present a comparative analysis of the environmental impacts of proposed transit alternatives in the Mid-City/Westside Corridor, and will identify mitigation measures for potentially significant impacts. The purposes of the project are to improve east-west travel options in the Mid-City/Westside areas of Los Angeles and to provide a connection to the previously completed Metro Red Line and other portions of the regional rail and bus network. The options being considered include Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Light Rail Transit (LRT) and Transportation Systems Management (TSM). Alignments for BRT extend from the Metro Red Line in downtown Los Angeles to downtown Santa Monica and include Wilshire Boulevard and the former Exposition railroad right-of-way.

### Project Lead Agency

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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### Contact Information

#### Primary Contact:

David Mieger  
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
213 922-3040  
One Gateway Plaza  
MS 99-22-5  
Los Angeles  
CA, 90012-2952

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### Project Location

County: Los Angeles  
City: Los Angeles  
Region:  
Cross Streets: Sunset Boulevard/Hill Street/Manchester Boulevard  
Parcel No:  
Township:  
Range:  
Section:  
Base:

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### Proximity To

Highways:  
Airports:  
Railways:  
Waterways:  
Schools:

Land Use:

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Development Type

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Local Action

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Project Issues

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Reviewing Agencies:  
Agencies in **Bold Type** have commented.

California Coastal Commission ; California Highway Patrol ; Department of Housing and Community Development ; **Native American Heritage Commission** ; Department of Parks and Recreation ; Resources Agency ; State Lands Commission ; **Caltrans, District 7** ; Caltrans, Division of Aeronautics ; Department of Fish and Game, Region 5 ; Air Resources Board, Transportation Projects

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Date Received: 5/15/00    Start of Review: 5/15/00    End of Review: 6/13/00

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**LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

**Notice of Preparation (NOP)  
to Prepare a Draft  
Supplemental Environmental Impact Report  
and  
Notice of Public Scoping Meetings/Request for Comments  
on the Preparation of a  
Supplemental Environmental Impact Report  
for the Mid-City/Westside Corridor Transit Study  
SCH# 2000051058**

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**TO:**

All Interested Parties.

**SUBJECT:**

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), as the Federal lead agency, and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), as the local lead agency, are issuing this notice to advise interested agencies and the public that a joint Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS)/Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR), referred to as an SEIS/SEIR, is being prepared for transit improvements in the MTA's Mid-City/Westside Transit Corridor in Los Angeles, California in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

**SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT:**

The Mid-City/Westside Corridor comprises approximately 112 square miles, and is approximately bounded on the north by Sunset Boulevard, on the east by Hill Street, on the south by Manchester Boulevard, and on the west by the Pacific Ocean. The projected trip-making increase and resulting congestion would occur because of expected population growth, from 1.5 million persons in 1994 to 1.9 million in 2020, and of expected employment growth, from one million jobs in 1994 to 1.2 million jobs in 2020.

In order to address current and long-range traffic congestion in the Mid-City and Westside areas of the Los Angeles Basin, the MTA has examined a wide range of east-west transit alternatives, including Bus Rapid Transit, Light Rail Transit, and Heavy Rail Transit.

In recognition of the significant historical and current need for additional public transit in the corridor, MTA began a series of studies to examine possible alternative routes and



modes that could best alleviate the anticipated demand. The Major Investment Study (MIS) prepared by the MTA analyzed the following six alternatives, which were deemed the most feasible of the alternatives studied to date by the MTA:

1. Wilshire Boulevard Bus Rapid Transit (at-grade)
2. Exposition Right of Way Bus Rapid Transit (at-grade)
3. Exposition Right of Way Light Rail Transit (Blue Line Extension)
4. Wilshire Heavy Rail to Pico/San Vicente (former LPA, Red Line Extension subway)
5. Wilshire Heavy Rail (Red Line Extension subway)
6. Wilshire Boulevard Aerial (Elevated Red Line Extension)

In accordance with the intent of the MIS process, the MIS, in conjunction with the guidance provided by MTA's Board of Directors, resulted in a set of refined alternatives to be evaluated in detail in the SEIS/SEIR. These alternatives are listed below.

### **HISTORY:**

Providing high-capacity transit service improvements has been long recognized in the Mid-City/West Area. Since the 1970's, the MTA and its predecessors (SCRTD, LACTC) have conducted numerous transportation planning and environmental impact studies that established the need and feasible locations for improved east-west oriented transit service in various parts of the Study Area. The northeastern portion of the Study Area is currently served by the Metro Red Line Subway. The westward extensions of transit service have been the focus of a number of studies.

In November 1989, the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIS/SEIR) was certified for an 18-mile subway project between Union Station and North Hollywood. Several additional planning and environmental studies prepared in the late 1980's and early 1990's identified the potential for expansion of the Metro Red Line system in the Eastside and Mid-City/Westside Transit Study. These efforts led to the adoption (in 1994) of Locally Preferred Alternatives (LPA) for the Metro Red Line Segment 3 Eastside and Mid-City Study Areas. Full Funding Grant Agreements were executed with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the projects were transitioned into the construction phase.

In January 1998, however, the MTA suspended work on extensions of the Metro Red Line heavy rail subway project. Specifically, the suspended segments included the Eastside Extension from Union Station to 1<sup>st</sup>/Lorena (4 stations - 3.7 miles) and the Mid-City Extension from Wilshire/Western to Pico/San Vicente (2 stations - 2.3 miles).

The following summarizes the most significant recent actions that have driven the need for project suspension and redefinition:

**MTA Restructuring Plan.** Reasons for suspension of work on the Mid-City and Eastside extensions are documented in the MTA Restructuring Plan: Analysis and Documentation of the MTA's Financial and Managerial Ability to Complete North Hollywood Rail Construction and Meet the Terms of the Bus Consent Decree, adopted by the MTA Board of Directors on May 13, 1998 and subsequently approved by the FTA on July 2, 1998. The



Restructuring Plan documented that the MTA did not have sufficient local matching funds to finance heavy rail subway projects in the Eastside and Mid-City Study Areas as anticipated in the original Full Funding Grant Agreements for those projects. At the same time, the Restructuring Plan called for the MTA to study "viable and effective options" for all parts of Los Angeles County, with an emphasis on the Study Areas in which the rail lines had been suspended.

Within the Eastside and Mid-City Study Areas, this necessitated the examination of alternative fixed guideway options to heavy rail subway. It also committed the MTA to a re-evaluation of the financial capacities of the agency to undertake new start, fixed guideway projects. To that end, the Board authorized the Regional Transit Alternatives (RTAA Study) that commenced in July 1998 and was completed in November 1998.

**Regional Transit Alternatives Analysis (RTAA Study).** The RTAA Study accomplished several important objectives for the MTA. The study identified the amount of funding available for new projects between FY1999 and FY2004; it suggested possible funding allocations; it identified immediate bus transit improvements in Los Angeles County and established a framework for further fixed guideway project development in the Eastside, Mid-City, and San Fernando Valley Study Areas.

The study included a preliminary evaluation of fixed guideway alternatives in the Eastside, Mid-City, and San Fernando Valley Study Areas. The study did not make recommendations with regard to preferred fixed guideway transit modes or configurations, however, it recommended that a Major Investment Study level of analysis be conducted to provide more information regarding these choices.

Results of the RTAA Study were presented to the MTA Board on November 9, 1998. At that meeting, the Board approved the concept of a recommended rapid bus plan, under which the MTA will develop a demonstration project for three rapid bus lines serving the Eastside, Mid-City, and San Fernando Valley. The Board also reaffirmed its commitment to fund fixed guideway transit improvements beyond rapid bus in the suspended rail corridors. A priority funding commitment of \$220 million through FY2004 was made to the Eastside and Mid-City areas from remaining uncommitted funds.

**TEA-21 Redefinition of Metro Red Line.** Segment 3 - As a necessary parallel step in obtaining greater flexibility in project definition for the Eastside and Mid-City Study Areas, the MTA sought to expand the definition of Segment 3 of the Metro Red Line, which was defined in both Intermodal Surface Transportation & Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and the Segment 3 Full Funding Grant Agreement as "heavy rail subway." With the cooperation and assistance of the Los Angeles congressional delegation, the MTA obtained revised definitional language in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, which was signed into law by the President on June 9, 1998. This action was taken with the specific intent of being able to utilize the Segment 3 funding balance in the future for any type of fixed guideway project in the Eastside and Mid-City Study Areas. The TEA- 21 legislation expanded the definition of the Segment 3 project to include "any fixed guideway project" (not just heavy rail subway) in the transportation corridors to be served by the three extensions of Segment 3. It also authorized the start of final design and construction for the



Segment 3 project during the FY1998-2003 funding cycle under section 5309 (new starts funding).

**Proposition A Ballot Initiative (Subway Funding Prohibition).** A new County law, referred to as the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Reform and Accountability A of 1998, was a ballot initiative, which was approved by the voters (and became effective) on November 3, 1998. The key substantive provisions of this initiative prohibit the use of Proposition A County sales tax revenues and Proposition "C" County sales tax revenues to pay the cost of planning, design, construction or operation of any new subway. The term "new subway" is defined to mean any subway (a rail line which is in a tunnel below grade) other than the Metro Red Line Segments 1, 2 or 3 (North Hollywood). As a result, the initiative prohibits the use of these sales tax revenues to build a subway in the Eastside or Mid-City Study Areas.

The initiative does not prohibit the use of sales tax revenues to design and construct light rail, at-grade rail, elevated rail systems or busways in the Eastside, Mid-City or other areas of Los Angeles County. Nor does this initiative prevent the MTA from using State or Federal revenues or local revenues other than sales tax, to design and construct a new subway in the Eastside or Mid-City areas.

#### **PROJECT ALTERNATIVES:**

The SEIS/SEIR will present the analysis of the environmental impacts of the proposed transit improvements in the Mid-City/Westside Corridor, compare environmental effects of the alternatives, and identify mitigation measures for potentially significant impacts. The alternatives that will be evaluated in the joint SEIS/SEIR include:

- **No-Build Alternative** – Existing, planned/programmed, and approved transit services and transportation facilities would serve the corridor.
- **Transportation System Management (TSM)** – This alternative makes modifications to transit service intended to enhance the performance and increase efficiency of the transportation system. Other changes from the No Build Alternative are based on the MTA's Westside Bus Service Improvement Study, which include modifying some service frequencies to more closely match demand; route extensions to connect to major destinations and/or transit hubs; route truncations to eliminate unproductive service segments or duplication; consolidation of service to simplify route structure and use; replacement of unproductive routes; and creation of new routes.
- **Wilshire Boulevard Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) "Full Length"** – Buses would run in a dedicated lane adjacent to or within the center median of Wilshire Boulevard between the current Metro Red Line station at Wilshire/Vermont and downtown Santa Monica. Stations would be placed approximately every mile along the 14-mile route, at major cross streets and trip destinations. Buses would be given priority at signals. Headways within the busway would be approximately every 3 minutes during peak periods, and the existing Mid-City/Westside bus network would be integrated



with the busway. Existing local bus service along Wilshire Boulevard would be maintained with its existing stops.

- **Exposition Right-of-Way Bus Rapid Transit "Full Length"** – This alternative would connect downtown Los Angeles to downtown Santa Monica using a 16.8-mile BRT system along the Exposition Right of Way (ROW), currently owned by MTA. The BRT would operate on city streets, between downtown Los Angeles and Figueroa Street/Exposition Boulevard, following Flower Street (southbound) and Figueroa Street (northbound). The alignment would then turn west on Exposition Boulevard and proceed on the Exposition ROW to Robertson Boulevard where it would then go west on Venice Boulevard to Sepulveda Boulevard, at which point it would proceed north to return to the right-of-way. From Sepulveda Boulevard to Olympic Boulevard, the BRT would operate within the existing Exposition right-of-way. West of this point, the BRT alignment would operate on city streets. The route would terminate near the new transit mall in Santa Monica on both Broadway and Santa Monica Boulevards.
- **Exposition Right-of-Way Light Rail Transit "Full Length"** – This 16.3-mile alternative would connect downtown Los Angeles to downtown Santa Monica using the same route as the BRT along the Exposition ROW, currently owned by MTA. In downtown Los Angeles, the LRT would operate along the existing Metro Blue Line with existing stations at 7<sup>th</sup>/Flower and Pico/Staples Center. At Washington Boulevard, the Expo LRT would branch off of the Long Beach Blue Line and proceed south on either Hill Street or Flower Street to Exposition Boulevard, where it would enter the Exposition ROW. The line would then follow the same alignment as the BRT alternative to Olympic Boulevard in Santa Monica. Within Santa Monica, the alignment would follow either Olympic Boulevard or Colorado Boulevard to a terminal station near Ocean Avenue.

#### **AVAILABLE INFORMATION:**

The scope of the Mid-City/Westside Corridor transit alternatives was defined through the Major Investment Study (MIS) process, completed in January 2000 by the MTA, in accordance with USDOT regulations. An information packet describing the purpose of the project, the location, the proposed alternatives, and the impact areas to be evaluated is being mailed to affected Federal, State, and local agencies. Others may request the Scoping Meeting materials by contacting Mr. David Mieger, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop 99-22-5, Los Angeles, California 90012, (213-922-3040).

Because of the changes made to the project and its potential significant impacts on the environment, an initial study was not prepared. The MIS and previous environmental documentation were used to determine the need for the joint SEIS/SEIR. The MIS is available for review at the following location:



MTA Library  
One Gateway Plaza, 15<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Librarian; Dorothy Gray (213-922-4859)

For further information contact: Ervin Poka or Ray Tellis, Federal Transit Administration/Federal Highway Administration Los Angeles Metropolitan Office. Phone: (213) 202-3950.

### **THE SEIS/SEIR PROCESS:**

The Draft SEIS/SEIR will be prepared to evaluate bus and rail mode and alignment options. The Draft SEIS/SEIR will assess the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the proposed alternatives at a project level, while refining their design to minimize and mitigate any adverse impacts. After its publication, the Draft SEIS/SEIR will be available for public and agency review and comment, and a public hearing will be held. On the basis of the Draft SEIS/SEIR and comments received, MTA will select a Locally Preferred Alternative to carry forward into the Preliminary Engineering Final SEIS/SEIR. The Final SEIS/SEIR will be based on information resulting from Preliminary Engineering.

### **PROPOSED SCOPE OF THE SEIS/SEIR:**

The SEIS/SEIR will present the comparative analysis of the environmental, social, and economic impacts of the proposed transit improvements in the Mid-City/Westside Corridor, and will identify mitigation measures for potentially significant impacts. Issues and impacts to be considered during the study include potential changes to: 1) the physical environment (air quality, noise, water quality, aesthetics); 2) the social environment (land use, neighborhoods, parkland, historic resources, transportation); and 3) economic impacts resulting from project implementation. Among the primary transit issues to be evaluated are the expected increase in transit ridership, the expected increase in mobility for the corridor's transit dependent population (and transit-dependent populations in adjacent areas), the support of the region's air quality goals, the capital outlays needed to construct the project, the cost of operating and maintaining the facilities created by the project, and the financial impacts on the funding agencies. The SEIS/SEIR will address issue areas for which potentially significant impacts are anticipated including:

- Air Quality. Busway or light rail-related construction emissions in residential areas or adjacent to sensitive land uses. Operation emissions of criteria pollutants (carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, reactive organic gas, sulfur oxides and PM10) in or adjacent to proposed station areas or park and ride locations. Carbon monoxide "hot spots" in station areas or at intersections affected by transit vehicle signal preemptions. Operation emissions of Greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide.
- Cultural Resources. Construction effects on prehistoric sites, structures, regional districts or other physical evidence associated with human activity; impacts on the fossil evidence of inorganic plant and animal remains over 1000 years old (La Brea Tar Pits); construction equipment and encroachment in historic or archaeologically sensitive areas; and impacts on Native American resources.

- Geology and Soils. Effects of liquefaction and fault rupture on above ground structures and other elements of project design.
- Hydrology. Flood-related impacts due to construction, and alteration of existing drainage patterns.
- Land Use and Public Recreation. Changes in land use patterns; pre-emption of land use development plans or projects; disruption of established neighborhoods; construction effects on adjacent land uses; disruptions to public services and access roads in residential areas; and potential for long-term safety risks to existing or planned uses in project vicinity.
- Noise. Day and nighttime transit operational effects in residential areas or adjacent to sensitive locations.
- Public Services. Effects on service area boundaries, potential disruptions to the accessibility of community services and facilities.
- Public Utilities and Energy. Effects of project construction on utility relocation requirements.
- Population, Housing, and Employment. Construction disruption to residential and commercial sites; construction and operational effects on employment and population growth potential; and land acquisition, displacement, and relocation impacts.
- Transportation. Construction effects on project study area's transportation system. Long-term circulation impacts around station areas, loss of capacity and parking along affected roadways, and impacts on traffic congestion and delays on north-south roadways that may intersect the various corridor alignments.
- Visual Resources. Construction and operational effects on visual resources and the urban design character of local areas resulting from presence of equipment, materials, workers, transit modes, and above-ground facilities.
- Cumulative and Growth Inducing Impacts.

### **PROJECT SCOPING PROCESS:**

Written comments on the project scope should be sent, by June 23, 2000, to Mr. David Mieger, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop 99-22-5, Los Angeles, California 90012. Written comments may also be made at the scoping meetings.

Public Scoping meetings for the SEIS/SEIR will be held on the following dates and locations at the times indicated:



- Tuesday, May 23, 2000, Peterson Automotive Museum, 6060 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90036 (5:00-8:00 pm)
- Wednesday, May 24, 2000, Public Agency Scoping Meeting, MTA Headquarters, One Gateway Plaza, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90012 (10:00 am to 12:00 pm)
- Wednesday, May 31, 2000, Veteran's Administration Hospital of West Los Angeles, 11301 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90038 (5:00-8:00 pm)
- Tuesday, June 6, 2000, Ken Edwards Center, 1527 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Santa Monica, CA (5:00-8:00 pm)
- Wednesday, June 7, 2000, California African-American Museum, 600 State Drive, Exposition Park, Los Angeles, CA 90037 (5:00-8:00 pm)
- Thursday, June 8, 2000, Veteran's Memorial Complex, 4117 Overland Avenue, Culver City, CA 90232 (5:00-8:00 pm)

The scoping meetings will be held in an "open house" format and representatives will be available to discuss the project throughout the time periods given. Informational displays and written material will also be available.

FTA and MTA invite interested individuals, organizations, and public agencies to attend the scoping meeting and participate in identifying the scope and content of the SEIS/SEIR, including any significant environmental, social, or economic issues associated with the alternatives. The public is invited to specifically comment on the alternatives to be addressed, the modes and technologies to be evaluated, the alignments and termination points to be considered, the environmental, social, and economic impacts to be analyzed, and the evaluation approach to be used to select a Locally Preferred Alternative. The scoping meeting locations are wheelchair accessible. Comments may be given verbally or made in writing at the public scoping meeting. See dates above for meeting locations and times.

To ensure that a full range of issues is addressed and all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. During scoping, comments should focus on identifying specific social, economic, or environmental impacts to be evaluated and suggesting alternatives that are less costly or less environmentally damaging, while meeting the identified transportation and other needs in the Mid-City/Westside Corridor.

Scoping is not the appropriate time to indicate a preference for a particular alternative. Comments on preferences should be communicated after the Draft SEIS/SEIR has been issued for public review. If you wish to be placed on the project mailing list, please call the Project Hotline at 310-366-6443. To receive further information as the project develops contact: Mr. David Mieger, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, One Gateway Plaza, Los Angeles, California 90012 (213-922-3040).

#### **AGENCY COMMENTS:**

This NOP has been sent to State responsible and trustee agencies, cooperating Federal agencies, the State Clearinghouse, and a Notice of Intent (NOI) has been sent to the Federal Register. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the



environmental information, which reflects your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Once again, responses should identify the issues to be considered in the Draft SEIS/SEIR, including significant environmental issues, alternatives, mitigation measures, and whether the responding agency will be a responsible State or Federal agency or a state trustee agency. Due to the time limits mandated by State and Federal laws, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, but no later than 30 days after receipt of this notice. Please send your responses to:

Mr. David Mieger  
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
One Gateway Plaza, Los Angeles, California 90012

This NOP of an SEIS/SEIR is issued by the MTA and FTA. For further information write to:

Mr. Raymond Sukys, Program Development  
FTA Region IX  
201 Mission St., Suite 2210, San Francisco, CA 94105-1831

or

Mr. David Mieger  
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
One Gateway Plaza, Los Angeles, California 90012