

PREFACE

The draft environmental document for the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor Project was written and circulated as a combined Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). At the time the draft document was circulated, it was intended that both the federal lead agency under NEPA (the Federal Transit Administration [FTA]) and the lead agency under CEQA (the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority [MTA]) would jointly complete the NEPA and CEQA environmental processes and jointly participate in implementing the proposed BRT project. It was understood at that time, however, that a specific funding commitment on the part of the FTA had not been identified and that therefore the joining of the two environmental processes was being done to qualify the BRT project for federal funding should a later commitment be made. Since completing the Preliminary Engineering process, and recognizing that a federal funding commitment has not been identified, the MTA has elected to pursue the two environmental processes independently of one another. To that end, this Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) is being processed by MTA (the CEQA lead agency) and a project will be identified for implementation at the completion of that process. MTA has identified sufficient funding under its direct control to permit the BRT project to be constructed, without the need for federal funding. However, MTA wishes to retain the option of seeking federal funding for a portion of the project cost, and therefore it may elect to complete the environmental document under NEPA (with FTA as the lead federal agency) as a separate process. A decision to move forward with the NEPA portion of the process may (or may not) be made subsequent to completion of the CEQA process.

In order to permit the environmental document to move forward under NEPA, some of the contents have been retained, such contents being responsive specifically to either NEPA requirements or FTA policy guidance. Specifically, the following portions of the document remain for that purpose:

Entries in Section S-5 (shown in Tables S-1, S-2, and S-3) indicate NEPA impact characterizations (“adverse” impacts, “potentially adverse” impacts, “minor adverse” impacts, and “not adverse” impacts). The reader should note that CEQA impact characterizations are also included (“significant” impacts, “potentially significant” impacts, “not significant” impacts).

Section S-6 (Financial Analysis and Comparison of the Alternatives)

NEPA impact characterizations in Chapter 4 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) and Chapter 5 (Construction Impacts) of the same nature as described above under Tables S-1, S-2, and S-3.

Analysis contained in sections 4-14 and 5-14 prepared pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Sections 4-3.1.d, 4-3.2.c, 4-3.3.3, and 4-3.4.3 - Environmental Justice considerations required pursuant to Executive Order 12898.

Section 4-15 (Section 4[f] Evaluation) - required under the Department of Transportation Act and not under CEQA.

Chapter 6 (Purpose and Need and Financial Comparison of Alternatives) – required by FTA guidance.

Chapter 7 (Comments and Coordination) – references to Final EIS/EIR mean Final EIR, for purposes of this environmental document, and remain in the Responses to Comments should the NEPA process be subsequently pursued.