

## Chapter 7 PUBLIC AND AGENCY OUTREACH

The Public and Agency Outreach chapter and appendices fully document the implementation of the Public Participation Plan for the Alternatives Analysis (AA) and Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (DEIS/DEIR) phases of the project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Outreach efforts during the AA and DEIS/DEIR process were performed in accordance with the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), and were inclusive and encouraging of community participation. Metro sought extensive coordination with other federal, state, local, and tribal entities during the scoping process and throughout the DEIS/DEIR phase of the project. This chapter provides summary highlights of the outreach efforts and specifically addresses the public participation process and activities from early scoping (October 31 to November 30, 2007) during the AA process through the formal scoping period (March 24 to May 11, 2009), and during preparation of the DEIS prior to submission of the Administrative DEIS/DEIR in May 2010 to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

### 7.1 Summary Highlights of Outreach Efforts

Downtown Los Angeles has undergone a dramatic transformation over the last decade from a predominantly daytime employment center to a dynamic 24-hour community with a burgeoning residential population, new commercial and residential construction, and significant investment in entertainment and cultural venues. The downtown residential community runs the gamut from urban professionals, to a thriving arts community, and a largely elderly and immigrant population. Downtown is characterized by distinct neighborhoods each with their own unique character, priorities and concerns; including Little Tokyo, the Arts District, Historic Downtown, Bunker Hill, and the Financial District.

The Regional Connector project garnered considerable stakeholder interest during both of the study phases. Recognizing the unique challenges and opportunities of the proposed project, as well as its potential benefits beyond the immediate downtown Los Angeles area, Metro developed a creative approach to ensuring an inclusive, engaging and transparent outreach process. The community outreach effort was designed to build awareness and understanding of the project, provide opportunities for ongoing stakeholder involvement, and assist in the identification of potential mitigation measures.

Over the course of the study, outreach included the engagement of a wide diversity of stakeholders and opinion leaders including business organizations, chambers of commerce, Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), Neighborhood Councils, Community Councils, arts organizations, and residents groups in downtown Los Angeles. With the promise of seamless light rail transit (LRT) lines spanning 50 miles from north to south and 25 miles from east to west, new population centers would enjoy regional connectivity. Regional commuters in Long Beach, the second largest city in Los Angeles County and in the San Gabriel Valley which claims over 20% of the County's population are poised to receive significant benefit as a result of the Regional Connector.

In November 2008, voters approved Measure R, a one-half-cent sales tax in Los Angeles County that would create a partial source of funding for transportation projects. The promise of

Measure R funding galvanized transit supporters throughout the County, including supporters of the Regional Connector. Stakeholders in the downtown area such as the Central City Association, the Downtown Center Business Improvement District, and the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council spoke publicly in favor of the project. At the same time, the project's perceived enhanced viability also instilled a more immediate sense of urgency among some downtown stakeholders who had not yet taken a position of either support or opposition to the project, most notably the historic community of Little Tokyo located at the eastern end of the alignment.

One of the communities in the project area, Little Tokyo, is one of only three remaining "Japantowns" in the United States. Over the years, Little Tokyo has experienced the loss of some significant portions of its community to the construction of several city, state, and federal buildings via eminent domain. Many community members saw the Regional Connector as one more attempt to encroach into Little Tokyo, further reducing its size and negatively impacting the community's cultural identity and economic viability. This unease peaked when the Little Tokyo community coalesced against both of the Build Alternatives proposed for study in the DEIS, the At-Grade Emphasis LRT and Underground Emphasis LRT Alternatives, at several Metro Board and community meetings in the Summer and Fall of 2009. The opposition was based on the impacts both of these alternatives could have on the community during and after construction.

At the same time, Metro recognized that the potential impacts of the Regional Connector on this important historical, cultural and ethnic community would raise environmental justice concerns and proactively engaged the Little Tokyo community in a focused and collaborative dialogue to address their concerns. This outreach culminated in the formation of the Little Tokyo Working Group (LTWG); comprised of Metro staff and leaders of the Little Tokyo Community Council (LTCC), which represents over 100 business and community organizations.

The LTWG worked collaboratively to develop an alternative acceptable to the community and discussed possible mitigation measures that could address the construction and operational impacts of the Regional Connector. The formation of the LTWG proved to be transformative for the project and served as a catalyst for dialogue and growing confidence between Metro and the community. This was solidified as Metro, at the LTWG's request, provided funding to hire a consultant to assist the community in acquiring an in-depth understanding of the environmental process and developing potential mitigation measures for documentation in the DEIS/DEIR.

The ongoing work with the LTWG led to the development of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative, an alternative that not only was acceptable to Little Tokyo stakeholders, but also generated widespread enthusiasm and support for the Regional Connector. In October 2009, the LTCC approved a motion from the LTWG to ask Metro to study the Fully Underground LRT Alternative and consider adding the alternative to the DEIS/DEIR. While there were continued concerns about potential construction impacts to the Little Tokyo community, the group was optimistic that the new build alternative would better fit the community's needs while achieving the project's purpose and need and regional goals. At its February 2010 meeting, the Metro Board approved the addition of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative to the DEIS/DEIR for a full environmental evaluation. Significant numbers of Little Tokyo community members attended the Board meeting to show their support for the new alternative and to commend Metro for addressing their concerns.

The outcomes of the LTWG were supported by other key constituencies in downtown Los Angeles including the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council, the Central City Association, the Higgins Building Homeowners Association, and Bringing Back Broadway. The formation of the LTWG, accompanied by Metro's willingness to implement a transparent and proactive process in engaging this community, collectively provided an extraordinary opportunity for stakeholder engagement to defuse potentially volatile environmental justice issues, and in the process build trust, widespread enthusiasm, and support for a critical transit project.

## 7.2 Background

The Regional Connector project would provide a connection between 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station and Union Station, linking the light rail transit (LRT) Metro Gold, Blue, and future Expo Lines through downtown Los Angeles. The Regional Connector would allow a seamless "one seat ride" through downtown, north-south between Pasadena (and Azusa in the future) and Long Beach, and east-west between East Los Angeles (and in the future, the vicinity of I-605) and Culver City (and eventually Santa Monica). This two-mile gap closure in the region's light rail system would provide continuous through-service spanning 50 miles north to south, and 25 miles east to west, improving access to both local and regional destinations and creating a well-connected transportation network for Los Angeles County.

In 2007, Metro initiated the AA study which identified and analyzed 36 alignments for the Regional Connector. After technical analysis and extensive community input, the study yielded two "build" alternatives that utilized LRT technology as well as the two required alternatives for comparison, the No Build and Transportation System Management (TSM). In early 2009, the Metro Board of Directors authorized further study of these four alternatives and preparation of a DEIS/DEIR. During the preparation of the DEIS/DEIR, Metro's Board of Directors added a fifth alternative in response to community input. The following alternatives are analyzed in this DEIS/DEIR:

- No-Build Alternative
- TSM Alternative
- At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative
- Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative
- Fully Underground LRT Alternative

## 7.3 Program Elements

The public outreach effort for the Regional Connector was designed to provide information and raise awareness about the study, engage stakeholders at important milestones, and develop feedback mechanisms. Elements of this outreach program included though were not limited to:

- Public meetings, including formal public and agency scoping meetings, public hearings, and a series of community update meetings held at key study milestones.

- Targeted stakeholder meetings that focused on specialized issues and localized concerns, including the following:
  - LTWG addressed concerns related to construction and operational impacts in Little Tokyo. Work with this group led Metro to reconsider a fully grade separated alternative which, in turn, generated considerable community support for this alternative and an appreciation of Metro's responsiveness.
  - Urban Design Working Group (UDWG) addressed overall urban design issues as well as focused station location and portal discussions for the Financial District, Bunker Hill, Little Tokyo, and Historic Downtown.
  - Residential groups such as the Savoy and Higgins Building Homeowners Associations addressed potential impacts to their properties.
  - Large property owners in the Financial District and on Grand Avenue discussed potential impacts during construction.
- Multi-lingual outreach to Japanese, Korean, and Spanish-speaking stakeholders including translation at community updates and formal scoping meetings, as well as most collateral materials
- Multi-tiered meeting notifications including direct mail, internet based distribution via e-mail, print and broadcast media, newspaper advertisements, and on-board Metro buses and trains
- Employment of “new” media such as blogs, social networks and other internet or web-based tools (including a live web-broadcast of an April 2010 Community Update Meeting) to provide regional notification and involve traditionally hard to reach audiences (such as youth and commuters) in the decision-making process

The Agency Coordination and Public Outreach Appendix (Appendix I) provides full details of all the public outreach conducted during the DEIR/DEIS phases of the Regional Connector study.

## 7.4 Public Participation Plan (PPP)

In order to ensure that the public was informed and had opportunities to comment at key milestones throughout the study, a detailed PPP was developed at the commencement of both the AA and DEIS/DEIR. The Plan included a detailed stakeholder database, communications protocols, public input tracking, a proposed schedule for interfacing with the public, and recommendations for how meetings should be conducted at various stages of the study. Additional recommendations for individual stakeholder interviews or briefings, inter-agency coordination and the formation of working groups were also described in the Plan. The full PPP plan can be referenced in the Scoping Report.

### 7.4.1. Public Outreach Tools and Mechanisms

#### 7.4.1.1 Stakeholder Identification and Project Database

A primary objective of the PPP for the Regional Connector is to identify, contact, inform, and gather public comment from Regional Connector stakeholders and the public about plans to improve transit by linking several LRT systems through downtown Los Angeles. The Regional Connector's stakeholders are not limited to those living and working in the project area. Stakeholders would include people from all over Los Angeles County who will ultimately benefit from improved regional mobility and linkages that connect one end of the county to another, including those using the Blue, Gold and Expo LRT lines, and their future extensions.

Stakeholders for this study include, but are not limited to: local, county, federal, and state elected and appointed officials; public agencies/officials; neighborhood councils, homeowners associations, and community councils; business, employer, and labor associations and groups; employments centers, retail and entertainment centers, and other key venues; education, cultural, religious, and health care institutions in or accessible to the study area; transit advocacy and environmental groups; and interested individuals.

An initial stakeholder list was developed and maintained during the AA phase. The stakeholder list was updated on a regular basis, following public meetings and as Metro received phone, email and written comments. The current stakeholder database for the Regional Connector Transit Corridor includes over 3,600 individuals, businesses, and organizations. An abridged list of key stakeholder groups and organizations that have been contacted during the Regional Connector study is provided below. The full stakeholder database is listed in the Agency Coordination and Public Involvement (Appendix I part 1).

Radius mail was not recommended and a comprehensive stakeholder database was used extensively for targeted email and direct mail.

#### 7.4.1.2 Collateral Materials

Various informational documents including project fact sheets, frequently asked questions (FAQs), meeting notices, electronic newsletters/e-bulletins, and other collateral materials provided the public with project information during the AA and DEIS/DEIR phases.

## List of Key Stakeholder Groups and Organizations

### Federal & State:

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	United States Veterans Affairs Department
Federal Aviation Administration	State of California, Office of the Governor
Federal Bureau of Investigation	State of California State Assembly Members
Federal Emergency Management Agency	State of California State Senators
Federal Highway Administration	State of California Air Resources Board
Federal Railroad Administration	State of California Board of Mining and Geology
Federal Transit Administration	State of California Coastal Commission
National Marine Fisheries Service	State of California Department of Fish and Game
National Parks Service	State of California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection
United States Army Corps of Engineers	State of California Department of Health and Human Services
United States Army Reserve	State of California Department of Housing and Community Development
United States Department of Defense	State of California Department of Parks and Recreation
United States Department of Homeland Security	State of California Department of Public Resources
United States Department of the Interior	State of California Department of Transportation
United States Department of Veterans Affairs	State of California Department of Toxic Substances Control
United States Fish and Wildlife Service	State of California Energy Commission
United States General Services Administration	State of California Environmental Protection Agency
United States House of Representatives	State of California Office of Historic Preservation
United States Senators	State of California Public Utilities Commission

### Regional:

Amtrak

### County of Los Angeles:

Board of Supervisors	Sheriff's Department
Chief Executive Office	Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
Department of Health Services	Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Department of Public Works	Southern California Regional Rail Authority
Department of Regional Planning	South Coast Air Quality Management District
Fire Department	Southern California Association of Governments

### City of Los Angeles:

Office of the Mayor	Department of Transportation
City Council members	Department of City Planning
Department of Building and Safety	Housing Authority

Community Redevelopment Agency  
 Convention and Visitors Bureau  
 Cultural Affairs Department  
 Los Angeles Library Commission

Office of Historic Resources  
 Office of Emergency Management  
 Public Works (multiple Bureaus)  
 Department of Recreation and Parks

**Other:**

San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments  
 Gateway Cities Council of Governments

Westside Cities Council of Governments

**Institutions:**

Los Angeles Public Library  
 Museum of Contemporary Art

Japanese American National Museum

**Schools, Colleges, and Universities:**

Coburn School of Performing Arts

University of Southern California

**Chambers of Commerce, Business Groups, and Developers:**

Central City Association  
 Central City East Association

Little Tokyo Business Association  
 Historic Downtown Business Improvement District

Related Incorporated  
 Thomas Properties Group  
 Maguire Properties Group

Downtown Center Business Improvement District  
 South Park Business Improvement District  
 Japanese Chamber of Commerce for Southern California

Fashion District Business Improvement District

**Community Organizations, Neighborhood Groups, and Homeowner Associations:**

Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council  
 Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council

Higgins Homeowners Association  
 Savoy Homeowners Association

**Religious Organizations:**

Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels  
 Centenary United Methodist Church  
 First United Methodist Church of Los Angeles  
 Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple

Kyasan Buddhist Temple  
 Maryknoll Catholic Church  
 Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple  
 Union Church of Los Angeles

**Transit Advocacy Groups:**

Southern California Transit Advocates

Transit Coalition

### 7.4.1.3 Project Fact Sheets and FAQs

A series of project fact sheets was developed and distributed at community meetings, stakeholder briefings, and public events, as well as electronically, as necessary. The fact sheets included illustrative maps and graphics, the project overview, purpose and need, alternatives under review, summaries of the environmental process and schedule, and highlights of the community involvement process. These fact sheets were updated throughout the project development process. A set of frequently asked questions (FAQs) was also developed and updated throughout the study to address key issues and questions about the project. Materials were provided in English, Spanish, Japanese, and Korean languages as appropriate. The fact sheets and FAQs were also made available on the project website at: <http://www.metro.net/regionalconnector>. Copies of materials from the AA study are located in the Alternatives Analysis Report (Appendix H), and materials for the DEIS/DEIR are included in the Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Appendix (Appendix I part 2).



### 7.4.1.4 Mailings, Flyers and Electronic Mailings

Notification of scoping and subsequent public meetings was sent via postal and electronic mail to the addresses on the stakeholder database. Additionally, notices were posted on Metro's website, and display advertisements were placed in multi-lingual publications (English, Spanish, Korean, and Japanese). "Take Ones" were placed on Metro buses and trains serving the project area. A press release was sent to 83 local, regional, ethnic and multi-lingual publications as well as blogs and distributed to downtown property owners and residential management companies. Noticing was conducted in English, Spanish, Japanese, and as appropriate, in Korean.

E-mail blasts and electronic mailings were disseminated to all stakeholders in the database with email addresses, including elected officials, neighborhood councils, and community-based organizations. These groups were encouraged to forward these e-mail blasts to their constituents and/or members. E-mail blasts were typically used to distribute all meeting announcements and other project information instantly to large numbers of people.

Copies of the mailers, Fact Sheets, FAQ's, "Take Ones", and e-bulletins from the AA study are located in the Alternatives Analysis Report (Appendix H), and materials for the DEIS/DEIR can be found in the Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Appendix (Appendix I parts 2, 3, and 4).

### 7.4.1.5 Website, Social Networking and Media Outreach

The project website (<http://www.metro.net/regionalconnector/>) serves as a central point where stakeholders can readily access current project related information. The project website was initially used for the AA phase and was updated regularly during the DEIS/DEIR phase, including

notices of all public meetings. Website content for the Regional Connector includes a project overview, schedule of upcoming meetings, summaries of past meetings and collateral materials including fact sheets, presentations materials and other information from both the current and previous project phases. The website is updated at key study milestones.

In addition to the project website, in the fall of 2008, Metro launched the “Regional Connector” group on the Facebook social networking site. The Regional Connector Transit Corridor Facebook group has become a valuable tool in educating the public about the project. To date, 298 people have joined the Regional Connector Transit Corridor Facebook Group. The Facebook group page can be viewed at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com), under Regional Connector Transit Corridor Study. A screenshot of the webpages taken from AA study are located in the Alternatives Analysis Report, and materials for the DEIS/DEIR are located in the Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Appendix (Appendix I part 2).

Metro has also taken a proactive role working with mainstream media outlets to publicize community meetings and to raise awareness of the Regional Connector Transit Corridor project. This includes the development of press releases and placement of display advertisements. This effort was complemented by outreach to grassroots, ethnic and niche print, broadcast and new media (such as Facebook, blogs, electronic news outlets, chat rooms, discussion boards, etc.), web-based press conferences, and Japanese, Spanish and Korean-language media.

Copies of the newspaper display advertisements from the AA study are located in the Alternatives Analysis Report, and materials for the DEIS/DEIR can be found in the Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Appendix (Appendix I part 2). The publications where display advertisements were placed include:

- Rafu Shimpo (bilingual Japanese Language)
- Pacific Citizen (serving the Asian and Pacific Islander Communities)
- Korean Times (Korean Language)
- Garment and Citizen (bilingual Spanish Language)
- Daily Trojan
- Pasadena Star News
- Downtown News

These publications were selected both on the basis of readership and demographics in the Regional Connector project area, as well as connectivity to future destinations.

During the DEIS/DEIR phase, Metro also launched “The Source,” a blog which is used to provide engaging and timely news about various Metro projects, including the Regional Connector, at key project milestones.

## 7.5 Government and Other Agency Consultation

### 7.5.1 Section 6002 of SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act- A Legacy for Users)

Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) is intended to promote efficient project management by lead agencies and enhanced opportunities for coordination with the public and with other Federal, State, local, and tribal government agencies during the project development process. As part of the environmental review process, the lead agency must identify as early as practicable, any other Federal or non-Federal agencies that may have an interest in the project, and invite such agencies to become participating agencies in the environmental review process.

Participating agency letters of invitation per Section 6002 of SAFETEA-LU were mailed to agencies at the onset of formal scoping in March 2009. Participating agency outreach efforts included an agency scoping meeting (described in Final Scoping Report, Appendix G), agency coordination meetings, and coordination meetings with individual agencies, including, but not limited to, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the California Department of Transportation. Coordination efforts will be on-going throughout the project development process.

SAFETEA-LU emphasizes public participation, requiring that the public participation plans of metropolitan planning processes “be developed in consultation with all interested parties and provide that all interested parties have reasonable opportunities to comment on the contents of the transportation plan.” SAFETEA-LU also expanded the definition of participation by “interested parties” to include partners, groups, and individuals who are affected by or involved with transportation in the appropriate County and the surrounding region. Examples stated include citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan. The Public Participation Plan for this project was developed cognizant of compliance with SAFETEA-LU and conforms to the public participation requirements of NEPA, CEQA, and the FTA New Starts program.

### 7.5.2 Section 106 Consultation

The extensive effort to contact, identify, and consult with various cultural groups and agencies to identify traditional cultural properties and cultural practices during the environmental planning process has been documented for the Section 106 consultation process. The purpose of consultation is to identify cultural resources and other concerns relating to the project’s potential effects on cultural resources. Information is sought from individuals and organizations likely to have knowledge of potential resources in the study area.

During the process of completing archival research and conducting field studies for historic resources, the team maintained communication with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and other jurisdictional agencies. The team conferred with the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) in Sacramento, local California Indian organizations, and interested public historical and cultural organizations.

A search of the sacred lands file of the NAHC was requested on June 3, 2009. As recommended by the NAHC, individuals who may have further knowledge on sacred or prehistoric cultural resources within the project area were contacted. These included individuals from the Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council, Gabrielino Tongva Nation, Gabrielino Tongva Territorial Tribal Nation, Los Angeles City/County Native American Heritage Commission, Ti'At Society, Gabrielino Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians, and the Gabrielino Tongva Tribe. Coordination with SHPO, interested parties of the Native American Heritage Commission, and Native American community is on-going.

Metro continues to consult with the SHPO regarding the project. The California SHPO concurred with the APE for historic and cultural resources and with the finding of an adverse effect on historical properties (Appendices X and Y). Coordination with the SHPO and tribes is on-going and will continue through preparation of a Memorandum of Agreement incorporating all relevant mitigation measures.

### 7.5.3 Community Outreach during the Alternatives Analysis Phase

The AA public participation process included early scoping meetings, community update meetings, key stakeholder meetings, and elected officials' briefings, as well as development and dissemination of informational materials, a project website, project information line, and media relations. The AA began in October 2007 and concluded in February 2009 when the Metro Board of Directors approved the AA and authorized the commencement of the DEIS/DEIR.

#### 7.5.3.1 Early Scoping Meetings

Metro utilized an early public scoping process that was consistent with FTA's requirements for an AA. This "early scoping" process was designed to solicit input from stakeholders regarding the range of possible modes of transportation, potential alignments, and station locations prior to their further analysis in the AA. The official notification for the Regional Connector Transit Corridor early scoping process began with a notice published in Federal Register Volume 72 No. 210 on October 31, 2007. The official early scoping comment period was initially scheduled to continue until November 21, 2007, but was extended until November 30, 2007 at the request of several stakeholders.

As shown in Table 7-1, the early scoping process included two public scoping meetings where the general public was given the opportunity to provide verbal and written comments.

Meeting notices were mailed to over 500 addresses in the initial stakeholder database, supported by emails to 383 individuals and organizations. Notices were mailed on September 27, 2007. Email notices were sent out on October 23, 2007, with follow-up reminders sent on November 5, 2007. An electronic reminder to the community to submit comments was sent on November 21, 2007. Comments were accepted until November 30, 2007 which represented an extension of the original date of November 21, 2007.

**Table 7-1: Regional Connector Transit Corridor Early Scoping Meetings**

Location	Date And Time	Number Of Attendees
Los Angeles Central Public Library, Meeting Room A 630 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street, Los Angeles, CA	Tuesday, November 6, 2007; 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.	68
Japanese American National Museum 369 E 1 <sup>st</sup> Street, Los Angeles, CA	Wednesday, November 7, 2007; 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.	49

A public scoping meeting invitation flyer for postal distribution within the study area was developed. Poster sized versions of the flyer were distributed to 43 locations throughout the study area, including at Metro Service Centers, offices of local elected officials, and at community, recreation and senior centers. Information was also posted on Metro’s website. Notices were also placed on Metro buses and trains serving the project area.

A media release was distributed to 83 local, regional, ethnic, and multi-lingual publications as well as broadcast media, blogs and other online news and information outlets. Noticing was conducted in English, Spanish, and Japanese. Display advertisements were published in the following: Los Angeles Downtown News, Los Angeles Garment and Citizen (Bi-lingual English/Spanish), and Rafu Shimpo (newspaper serving the Little Tokyo area and the Japanese community in Los Angeles).



Before the close of the comment period, 88 comments were received. The majority of comments expressed supported the need for a Regional Connector to enhance the efficiency of the current and future rail system by providing through service between the Metro Blue Line, Gold Line, Gold Line Eastside Extension, and Expo Line, and service to link these rail corridors directly to Union Station. Most supported either a Grand Avenue or a 1<sup>st</sup> Street alignment, below grade (i.e. subway), and utilizing LRT technology. Several potential stations generated broad support, including in order of preference: Little Tokyo, 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro, Bunker Hill, Union Station, Main/1<sup>st</sup>, and Civic Center (i.e., in the northern portion of the study area).

Throughout the Alternatives Analysis phase, there was widespread support for the Regional Connector moving forward into environmental review and clearance. This support was expressed not only by residents and business interests in downtown Los Angeles but also by transit riders and advocates from across the region.

Comments from these early scoping meetings indicate a nearly even split between supporters of a Grand Avenue alignment or a 1<sup>st</sup> Street alignment. Also receiving limited support was a 2<sup>nd</sup> Street alignment, as well as an extension of the Blue Line. Limited preference was expressed for other routes such as 3<sup>rd</sup> and Flower Streets. There was also a small, but vocal, minority concerned with the lack of alignment options to provide connectivity with the southern portion of the study area, and the lack of existing transit options serving Central City East and the Toy

District. Some felt that the alignment should move considerably south, using Alameda Street, to make a connection through these underserved areas directly to the 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station.

### 7.5.3.2 Agency Scoping Meeting

One agency scoping meeting was held during the early scoping period on October 30, 2007 at Metro Headquarters, located at One Gateway Plaza, Los Angeles and was attended by the following agencies:

- United States Transportation Security Administration
- Los Angeles County Community College District
- Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department – Transportation Security
- City of Los Angeles: Department of City Planning
- City of Los Angeles: Department of Public Works
- City of Los Angeles: Department of Cultural Affairs
- Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Southern California Regional Rail Authority

A summary of agency scoping comments and a full transcript of the agency scoping meeting are provided in the Alternatives Analysis Report, located in Appendix H.

### 7.5.3.3 Community Meetings

Subsequent to the close of the early scoping period, Metro hosted “Community Update” meetings in late February 2008 to present initial alternatives that reflected the public comments submitted during the early scoping period. The purpose of these meetings was to illustrate how public comment was incorporated into the decision-making process. Based on additional analysis and feedback, Metro identified eight alternatives for further study and presented these to the public in October 2008.

Metro held the final round of community meetings for the Alternatives Analysis phase of the Regional Connector study in October 2008 to provide stakeholders with preliminary recommendations based on public input and technical analysis.

More than 220 people attended the community meetings, and more than 100 comments were received in all forms. The public indicated significant support for transit improvements in the area, as well as for building the Regional Connector underground to the extent possible. Due to the heavy vehicular and pedestrian traffic in downtown Los Angeles, stakeholders believed that above ground rail would further congest this area. In addition, there are many festivals, films, and other events occurring in downtown Los Angeles and stakeholders did not want above ground rail to disrupt these activities.

Table 7-2: Regional Connector Transit Corridor Community Update Meetings

Location	Dates and Time	Number Of Attendees
Japanese American National Museum 369 E 1 <sup>st</sup> Street, Los Angeles, CA	Tuesday, February 26, 2008; 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.	59
Los Angeles Central Public Library 630 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street, Los Angeles, CA	Thursday, February 28, 2008: Noon to 1:30 p.m.	55
Los Angeles Central Public Library 630 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street, Los Angeles, CA	Thursday, October 16 <sup>th</sup> ; 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.	54
Japanese American National Museum 369 E 1 <sup>st</sup> Street, Los Angeles, CA	Tuesday, October 21 <sup>st</sup> ; 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.	52

#### 7.5.3.4 Stakeholder Briefings

A series of meetings with stakeholders were held prior to public scoping and agency meetings conducted in Fall 2007. The briefings involved the following stakeholders:

- Metro Westside Central Service Sector Governance Council
- City of Los Angeles Downtown Street Standards Committee
- Grand Avenue Committee
- Central City Association
- Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council
- Little Tokyo Service Center
- Little Tokyo Community Council
- Historic Downtown Business Improvement District
- Bringing Back Broadway
- South Park Stakeholders Group
- Central City East Association
- Higgins Building Homeowners Association
- Elected Officials Briefings

A briefing for local elected officials and their staff during the scoping period was hosted on November 4, 2008. This briefing provided the project team feedback about the presentation,

and provided the elected officials' offices notification about the upcoming meetings and preliminary information about the status of the project. The elected officials and agencies that participated in the briefings are detailed in the DEIS/DEIR Scoping Report located in Appendix G.

Elected officials continued to be supportive of the study, and were interested to learn about potential funding sources and phasing.

Additional briefings were held prior to the two rounds of community update meetings. The intent of the meetings was to provide elected officials an opportunity to preview the presentation and ask specific questions about the project. Briefings took place in February and October 2008.

A summary of outreach meetings conducted during the AA phase may be viewed in the Alternatives Analysis Report, located in Appendix H.

## 7.6 Community Outreach During the EIS/EIR Phase

### 7.6.1 Scoping Meetings

The DEIS/DEIR was initiated in March 2009 with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register and the Notice of Preparation (NOP) sent to the State Clearinghouse on March 24, 2009. The NOP was distributed to agencies and organizations within the study corridor and to jurisdictions with an interest in the proposed project on March 24, 2009. NOP packages were sent to: 25 Federal agencies, 48 state agencies, seven regional agencies (including utility providers), and 98 local agencies (including school districts and study area cities).

Four scoping meetings provided the public an opportunity to comment on the project purpose and need, the alternatives to be considered, and issues and areas of concern to be considered in the DEIS/DEIR. The locations, dates, and number of attendees at each of these meetings are shown below in Table 7-3.

**Table 7-3: Regional Connector Transit Corridor Scoping Meetings**

Location	Date and Time	Number Of Attendees
Alumni Room, Davidson Conference Center University of Southern California 3415 S. Figueroa St. Los Angeles, CA 90007	Monday, March 30, 2009, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.	24
Lake Avenue Church 393 N. Lake Ave. Pasadena, CA 91101	Tuesday, March 31, 2009, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.	29
Japanese American National Museum (JANM) 369 E. 1 <sup>st</sup> St. Los Angeles, CA 90012	Wednesday, April 1, 2009, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.	45
Los Angeles Central Library 630 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> St. Los Angeles, CA 90071	Thursday, April 2, 2009, 12 Noon – 1:30 p.m.	56

Prior to the public meetings, a media briefing was held at the initiation of scoping via a web-based conference system for newspapers, blogs, and local radio and television stations. At least five media groups participated in the media briefing. Other media groups who were unable to participate in the briefing and expressed interest were briefed individually.

The meetings were publicized via direct mail and email notices using the stakeholder database; postings on Metro’s website; display advertisements in multi-lingual publications (English, Spanish and Japanese); multi-lingual notices placed on Metro buses and trains serving the project area; a press release which was sent to 83 local, regional, ethnic, and multi-lingual publications as well as blogs; and through grassroots outreach to downtown property owners and residential management companies. Noticing was conducted in English, Spanish, and Japanese.

Display advertisements for the scoping meetings were placed in newspapers within the study area that were selected based on geographic focus, language needs, and audited circulation numbers. E-mail blasts, or electronic mailings, were disseminated to all stakeholders in the database with email addresses, including elected officials, neighborhood councils, and community-based organizations. These groups then were asked to forward these e-mail blasts to their constituents and/or members. E-mail blasts were utilized to distribute the scoping meeting announcements and other project information instantly and to large numbers of people.



**Table 7-4: Regional Connector Transit Corridor Study: Scoping Period Display Advertising**

Location	Publication Date
Garment and Citizen	3/13/09
Rafu Shimpo	3/13/09
Downtown News	3/13/09
Pasadena Star News	3/13/09
Daily Trojan	3/22/09

Electronic distribution of the meeting notice took place on March 16, 2009. Notices were sent to 721 email addresses within the updated project database. A copy of the email is included in the Appendix I. In addition, a second e-mail was sent to the database and Facebook group members on May 4, 2009 as a reminder for stakeholders to submit their comments before the comment deadline on May 11, 2009.

The scoping meetings began with an open house format to provide attendees an opportunity to review the project information before the start of the presentation and subsequent comment period. Project team members were present at the project display boards to answer questions related to the technical aspects of the project. A Spanish language interpreter was available at all meetings, with a Japanese language interpreter provided at the April 1, 2009, meeting in Little Tokyo.

A total of 126 comments were received before close of the public comment period. Comments showed a strong recognition of the purpose and need for the Regional Connector LRT and significant support for the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative. The comments received expressing concern about or opposition to the project largely focused on its potential impacts, during both construction and operation, on Little Tokyo. Generally, most of the comments received related to purpose and need included a clear understanding of both the ultimate regional and local benefits of this project. Comments focused on the potential for increased system connectivity, improvements to existing congestion (especially in downtown), and to address station crowding.

There was considerable support for the need for the Regional Connector project as a whole, and for the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative specifically. A total of 74 of the 126 comments expressed unequivocal support for the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative, with just 3 comments each supporting the Transportation System Management (TSM) and the No Build Alternatives, citing concerns regarding the potential loss of parking and construction impacts. In addition, 16 comments expressly stated opposition to the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative.

Comments opposing the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative focused mainly on potential construction impacts to businesses in Little Tokyo and especially to one property owner of a single story commercial property at 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets (Señor Fish). Additionally, there was tremendous concern regarding the loss of parking for the commercial/retail area located at 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets, as many of the businesses along 2<sup>nd</sup> street rely on this parking lot for their customers. The majority of the comments in opposition to the project were from the Little Tokyo area, including from members of the local leadership in this community.

Those weighing in were also concerned about the potential for the rail line to split the community geographically. The Little Tokyo Community Council and two local business owners cited their concern that the Little Tokyo neighborhood has shrunk over the years, as it has been replaced by other uses such as government buildings. The construction of the project was seen as having the potential to have a profound impact on the cultural identity of the neighborhood.

The majority of the comments Metro received about potential impacts of the Regional Connector related to traffic, transit, parking, and construction. While some of the comments reflected concerns about potential negative impacts and the need for related mitigation

measures, some comments also expressed the likely positive impacts of the project, such as jobs creation, reduced congestion, enhanced ridership, and air quality improvements.

### 7.6.2 Agency Scoping Meeting

The Agency Scoping Meeting was held on Monday, April 13, 2009 at 10:00 AM at Metro, One Gateway Plaza in Los Angeles. Local, state, and federal agencies and other organizations that participated in the scoping meeting included:

- FTA
- United States General Services Administration
- State of California Department of Transportation
- Southern California Association of Governments
- County of Los Angeles Planning Department
- County of Los Angeles Fire Department
- County of Los Angeles Community and Senior Services Department
- City of Los Angeles Planning Department
- City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department
- City of Los Angeles Police Department

The agency representatives engaged in the presentation and discussion related to the Regional Connector. The agencies discussed their support for grade-separation, addressing station capacity issues at 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center and Union Stations, and the need for system connectivity.

### 7.6.3 Community Update Meetings

The purpose of the community update meetings was to provide an update to the community regarding the Regional Connector Transit Corridor Study. The first round of update meetings was held in November 2009 after Metro began work on the technical studies, initiated work to develop the urban design “tool kit,” and conducted a number of individual stakeholder meetings. A subsequent round of community update meetings was held in April 2010 shortly after Metro added the Fully Underground LRT Alternative to the DEIS/DEIR for further study in the project. The



conceptual design of the fully grade separated alternative was not prepared in time for the initial round of community update meetings, so it was presented at the April 2010 community update meetings. There was door-to-door distribution of the meeting notice to the residents of the

Savoy, and to the Little Tokyo businesses located between Alameda, Los Angeles, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Streets. In addition to the distribution of the meeting notices, businesses were provided with contact information in case they had additional questions about the project. They were also asked how best to provide project information to them in the future. The majority of those who responded asked that information be emailed to them.

Metro used a multi-media approach to informing the community of the update meetings. In addition to the distribution of a media notice, Metro representatives engaged many of the neighborhood and transportation related blogs. A postal and electronic notice was distributed to the stakeholder database. For the first round of community update meetings, advertisements were placed in the Korean Times, Garment and Citizen, Rafu Shimpō, Downtown News, and Pasadena Star News. For the second round of community update meetings, advertisements were placed in the same papers, with the addition of the Pacific Citizen newspaper.

**Table 7-5: Regional Connector Transit Corridor Study: Community Update Meeting Display Advertising**

Location	Update #1	Update #2
Garment and Citizen	10/29/09	4/1/10
Rafu Shimpō	10/29/09	4/1/10
Downtown News	10/29/09	4/1/10
Pasadena Star News	10/29/09	4/1/10
Korean Times	10/29/09	4/1/10
Pacific Citizen		4/1/10

**Table 7-6. Community Update Meetings**

Location	Date and Time	Number Of Attendees
Lake Avenue Church 393 N. Lake Ave. Pasadena, CA 91101	Thursday, November 5, 2009; 6:30 p.m.– 8 p.m.	17
Japanese American National Museum (JANM) 369 E. 1 <sup>st</sup> St. Los Angeles, CA 90012	Thursday November 12, 2009; 2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	41
Japanese American National Museum (JANM) 369 E. 1 <sup>st</sup> St. Los Angeles, CA 90012	Thursday November 12, 2009; 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.	27
Los Angeles Central Library 630 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> St. Los Angeles, CA 90071	Tuesday, November 10, 2009; Noon – 1:30 p.m.	46

Table 7-6. Community Update Meetings (continued)

Location	Date and Time	Number Of Attendees
Wurlitzer Building 818 S Broadway Los Angeles, CA 90014	Saturday, November 7, 2009; 10 a.m. – Noon	27
Los Angeles Central Library 630 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> St. Los Angeles, CA 90071	Friday, April 9, 2010; 12 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	40
Lake Avenue Church 393 N. Lake Ave. Pasadena, CA 91101	Tuesday, April 13, 2010; 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.	17
Japanese American National Museum (JANM) 369 E. 1 <sup>st</sup> St. Los Angeles, CA 90012	Wednesday, April 14, 2010; 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	35
Japanese American National Museum (JANM) 369 E. 1 <sup>st</sup> St. Los Angeles, CA 90012	Wednesday, April 14, 2010; 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.	16
Los Angeles Theater 514 S Spring St Los Angeles, CA 90014	Saturday, April 17, 2010; 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	10

#### 7.6.4 Stakeholder Briefings

In addition to the community update meetings, Metro conducted community and stakeholder briefings to homeowners associations, neighborhood councils, local agencies, property owners, and others in the study area. This targeted outreach effort involved emails or meetings with project status updates and location-specific information. The briefings involved the following stakeholders (a complete list is included in Appendix I, part 7):

- Bringing Back Broadway
- Central City Association
- Central City East Association
- City of Los Angeles: Community Redevelopment Agency: Little Tokyo Community Advisory Committee
- City of Los Angeles: Councilman Jose Huizar
- City of Los Angeles: Cultural Affairs
- City of Los Angeles: Department of Transportation
- City of Los Angeles: Public Works: Bureau of Engineering

- City of Los Angeles: Transportation
- Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council
- Go For Broke
- Higgins Building Homeowners Association
- Japanese American National Museum
- Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Southern California
- Little Tokyo Business Association
- Little Tokyo Community Council
- Little Tokyo Community Council: Parking, Planning, and Cultural Preservation
- Little Tokyo Service Center
- Los Angeles Conservancy
- Los Angeles County: Flood Control
- Los Angeles County: Public Works
- Metropolitan News
- Museum of Contemporary Art
- Nikkei Development
- Nishi Temple
- Property Owner, Wilcox Building, 210 S. Spring Street
- Property Owner, 700 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street
- Savoy Homeowners Association
- Thomas Properties Group
- University of Southern California

As a result of this stakeholder outreach, Metro formed a Working Group with the Savoy Homeowners Association to address residents' specific issues. This group met on an as-needed basis during the DEIS/DEIR phase to address their concerns.

### 7.6.5 Elected Officials Briefings

Meetings were held with elected officials and/or their staff during and after the scoping. In general, the briefings provided the project team feedback about the presentation, and provided offices with notification about the upcoming meetings and preliminary information about the status of the project. Briefings took place in March 2009, November 2009, February 2010, and March 2010. The elected officials and agencies that participated in the briefings are detailed in Appendix I, Parts 3 and 4.

### 7.6.6 Urban Design Working Group

A key component of the station area planning process is urban design. The urban design process initiated in the AA phase was continued during the DEIS/DEIR phase with the formation of the UDWG. The UDWG is composed of key stakeholders from the downtown Los Angeles communities of Little Tokyo, Historic Downtown, Financial District, and Bunker Hill. The goal of the UDWG is to:

- Facilitate discussion about the vision and identity of the Regional Connector and how individual station areas could be designed to fit within this framework.
- Provide a forum for critical analysis of land use, design, and linkages between stations along the line and their urban neighborhoods.
- Propose design considerations for station areas so they will fit appropriately within the surrounding urban context.
- Involve stakeholders with the Regional Connector planning team in a comprehensive station planning process.
- Facilitate discussion about sensitive areas to assist in the station location decision-making process so that alternative station locations can be resolved.
- Help ensure that planning for the corridor considers and builds upon the needs, desires, and policies of the communities.
- Assist in establishing guidelines and standards that may be helpful for future Metro transit corridor initiatives.

The UDWG participated in an initial urban design workshop on May 28, 2009 with focused follow-up meetings on June 16, 17, and 18, 2009 to discuss urban design concepts and potential station locations at three distinct geographic



areas — the Financial District, Bunker Hill, and Little Tokyo/Historic Downtown. The UDWG examined localized issues, urban design guidelines, and specific geographic concerns regarding station locations and station design. The UDWG will be part of a continuing design process for the station area planning process in future phases of the project.

The UDWG met with the Little Tokyo stakeholders in early summer 2010 to address issues specific to the Fully Underground LRT Alternative. The full UDWG will meet one more time thereafter so that Metro could share the new alternative and further discuss the urban design process.

### 7.6.7 Little Tokyo Working Group Meetings

One of the highlights of the public outreach efforts during the DEIS/DEIR phase of the Regional Connector was the formation of the LTWG. The Little Tokyo community in Los Angeles is one of only three remaining historic “Japantowns” in the United States. At one time Little Tokyo covered approximately one square mile, but today Little Tokyo occupies four large city blocks. Little Tokyo has decreased in physical size throughout the decades, beginning with the internment of Japanese Americans after Pearl Harbor, the subsequent expansion of the Civic Center in the 1960’s, the construction of Parker Center and the Metropolitan Detention Center, and city redevelopment activities in the 1980’s.

Since then, the Little Tokyo community has experienced impacts from the three-year construction effort for the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension. This included the construction of a new Little Tokyo/Arts District Station, as well as construction along Alameda Street between US 101 and 1<sup>st</sup> Street. The Regional Connector study began just as construction of the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension was ending, and a number of community members were sensitive to construction beginning again in Little Tokyo. In addition to the Regional Connector, the California High Speed Rail project also initiated a DEIS/DEIR, which showed potential impacts to the Little Tokyo community.

Against this background, and accompanied by perceptions about potential further shrinkage of this neighborhood, many community members saw the Regional Connector as one more encroachment into Little Tokyo. While this unease was evident during the AA, it grew during the DEIS/DEIR phase and peaked when the Little Tokyo community coalesced against both proposed Build Alternatives, the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative and the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative, at several Metro Board and community meetings in the Summer and Fall of 2009. Both construction and operation of these build alternatives for the Regional Connector were perceived as negatively impacting the community’s cultural identity and economic viability because the proposed project could impact the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets, divide the community with a physical barrier and create new safety concerns. Metro proposed a variety of potential mitigations to address these concerns through design treatments, but support for the project continued to diminish.

At this critical juncture for the Regional Connector, Metro recognized that the potential impacts of the project on this important historical, cultural and ethnic community would raise environmental justice concerns. The agency responded by proactively engaging the Little Tokyo community in a focused and collaborative dialogue to address their concerns via the creation of the Little Tokyo Working Group (LTWG). The LTWG was formed collaboratively by Metro and the Little Tokyo Community Council (LTCC) as a direct response to serious concerns voiced by

Little Tokyo stakeholders about potential impact to this community from both construction and operation of the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative and At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternatives. (The LTCC is a non-profit membership-based organization whose mission is to ensure that Little Tokyo remains a viable center for the Japanese American community. The LTCC represents of over 100 organizations, including business, residential, social service, and religious organizations.)

The role of the LTWG was to represent the community as it worked with Metro to identify key concerns, and discuss proposed mitigation measures that could address the construction and operational impacts of the Regional Connector. Approximately 30 community representatives typically attended these meetings. The LTWG's first meeting convened in early Fall 2009 and the group continued to voice its concerns about the build alternatives. Concerns included impacts to businesses during construction and the long term cultural survival of this community as a whole, as well as significant concerns about the loss of parking and security.



The LTWG then met approximately bi-weekly through the development and submittal of the DEIS/DEIR in May 2010. At the LTWG's request, in early 2010, Metro provided funding for the LTWG to retain a consultant to assist the group with providing an in-depth understanding of the environmental process, and to identify and refine candidate mitigation measures to be included in the DEIS/DEIR. Hiring of this consultant further helped build confidence between Metro and the community.

The collaboration of this stakeholder group and Metro was instrumental in the development of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative, an alternative that would be more acceptable to Little Tokyo stakeholders. During the AA, the community has been generally supportive of a below grade alternative at 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda that had been dropped because necessary real estate was not available at the time. The property on the northeast corner of the intersection was involved in a City of Los Angeles procurement process and there was also a desire to avoid impacts to the Nishi Temple. However, with the selection of a developer for the Nikkei site at 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda eliminating the uncertainty at this location, and Metro's subsequent discussions with the Nishi Temple, this alternative found new life as a workable option.

In October 2009, the LTCC approved a motion from the LTWG asking Metro to study the Fully Underground LRT Alternative and consider adding this alternative to the DEIS/DEIR. While there were continued concerns about construction impacts to the Little Tokyo community, the group was optimistic that the new build alternative would better fit the community's needs. At its February 2010 meeting, the Metro Board authorized the addition of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative to the DEIS/DEIR for a full environmental evaluation.

Little Tokyo community members attended the meeting in significant numbers to show their support for the new alternative and to commend Metro for addressing their concerns. Other key constituencies in downtown Los Angeles, including the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council, Central City Association, Higgins Building Homeowners Association, and Bringing Back Broadway Coalition, also testified to show their support for the outcomes of the LTWG. The formation of the LTWG, accompanied by Metro's willingness to implement a transparent and

proactive process in engaging this community, collectively provided an extraordinary opportunity for stakeholder engagement to defuse potentially volatile environmental justice issues, and in the process build trust, widespread enthusiasm, and support for a critical transit initiative.

Each LTWG meeting was documented and summaries appear in the Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Appendix I Part 5.

## 7.7 Public Hearings

Following the release of the DEIS/DEIR, a public comment period will be held. The draft document will be placed in public libraries and other repository sites, and will also be available on the project website.

Public hearings will be held in Summer of 2010 to receive oral and written testimony on the DEIS/DEIR. Metro will provide a notice of these public involvement meetings in compliance with CEQA and NEPA.

## 7.8 Accommodations for Minority, Low-Income, and Persons with Disabilities

Metro made significant efforts to ensure minority, low-income and disabled persons were included in all outreach efforts. This has included sensitivity to multiple distribution channels and language needs, but also to selection of transit accessible venues in compliance with American with Disabilities Act 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101-12213. Simultaneous translations were available at each community meeting. Spanish translation was provided at every public meeting. Japanese simultaneous translation was provided at meetings taking place in Little Tokyo.



In addition to direct mail and electronic notifications of meetings, Metro provided 10-day advance notice on buses and trains serving the project area to ensure that transit users were aware of opportunities to attend the meetings. Furthermore, bi-lingual (Japanese/English, Spanish/English, Korean/English) meeting notices were placed in parks, libraries, community centers, and non-profits in the project area as appropriate. Multi-lingual informational “take-one” handouts were placed on buses and trains throughout the project study area.

As noted, federal requirements for public participation plans include a process for seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low income and/or minority groups. Metro actively worked with organized business and community groups in Little Tokyo and downtown Los Angeles, homeless and social service providers in the project area, and transit advocacy organizations to ensure project information and public meetings were adequately publicized.

