

5.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

This chapter provides a summary of the outreach efforts for the Project. History of the Project and the selection process of the Build Alternative are detailed in **Appendix E** (Alternatives Considered and Project Description). Metro's public outreach are summarized in **Appendix Q** (Outreach Report).

5.1 Public Involvement from 2007 through 2024

Metro has implemented a comprehensive outreach program for the Project since 2007. Metro has conducted extensive public outreach for the Project, including community meetings, workshops, open houses, and public hearings throughout each phase of environmental review. A summary of key outreach milestones, agency consultation, public meetings, tribal coordination, and communication strategies during the CEQA process are summarized in **Appendix Q**.

5.2 NEPA Public Outreach

Table 5.1 summarizes Metro's comprehensive outreach program for the Project, starting in 2007 with outreach meetings for an Alternatives Analysis and continuing to the effects related to this EA. **Appendix Q** includes an outline of the objective of the meetings, the target audiences, tools to engage the community, and materials used to facilitate coordination and communication, and postings on Metro's Project website.

Table 5.1 Summary of Public Involvement from 2007-2024

Meeting Series	Meeting Details
2007 Alternative Analysis	▪ November 1 through November 30, 2007 - Public Comment Period ▪ Five early scoping meetings were held between November 8 and 15, 2007 ○ 224 attendees ○ 159 comments received
2008-2009	▪ 12 public meetings were held ○ 550 stakeholders
2010 Draft EIR (CEQA) /EIS (NEPA) Scoping	▪ Notice of Intent/Notice of Preparation was published on January 25, 2010 ▪ Agency and public scoping meetings held between February 18 and February 27, 2010 ○ 300 attendees ○ 527 comments received
2010-2011	▪ 12 community meetings between July 2010 and September 2011 ▪ Included: ○ 5 urban design community workshops ○ 2 community open houses ○ 2 tours of a similar rail transportation network in Portland ○ 1 webinar ○ 2 open houses
2014 Draft EIR (CEQA) /EIS (NEPA) Release and Public Hearings	▪ Notice of Availability was released on August 22, 2014 ▪ 60-day public comment period from August 22 through October 21, 2014 ○ 528 participants; 120 speakers ○ 148 written comments

Meeting Series	Meeting Details
2017 Post Draft EIR (CEQA)/EIS (NEPA) Technical Studies	▪ 5 community meetings held between March 28 and June 22, 2016 ○ 417 participants; generated 75 comments ▪ 5 community meetings held between February 6 and February 17, 2017 ○ 318 participants; generated 32 comments ▪ 110 briefings throughout the communities surrounding the Project ▪ Hosted 2 tours of Metro facilities and construction sites
2019 Recirculated Draft EIR (CEQA)/Draft Supplemental EIS (NEPA) Scoping	▪ FTA published a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register on May 29, 2019 ▪ Metro issued a Recirculated Notice of Preparation on May 31, 2019 ▪ 6 Public Scoping meetings held from June 13 through June 26, 2019 ○ 573 participants; 149 speakers ○ 54 written comments and 33 oral testimony comments
2020-2021 Community Update Meetings	▪ 3 meetings were held between February 3 and February 8, 2020 ○ 234 participants ○ 81 questions/comments ▪ 6 meetings were held between August 28 and November 21, 2021 ○ 440 participants ▪ 4 virtual meetings were conducted, including three presentations tailored to specific communities in November 2021 ○ 276 participants ○ 145 comments
CEQA EIR Certification	▪ The Metro Board certified the CEQA EIR and approved the Project on May 23, 2024
2025 NEPA Community Update	▪ Meetings were held to engage the community members along the Build Alternative's alignment to provide updates and encourage meeting participation. ▪ 7 meetings were held between January 17, 2025 to January 28, 2025 ○ 884 participants
2025 NEPA	▪ Although a formal scoping period is not required for an EA under NEPA, four community meetings took place to inform the public of the start of the NEPA process. ▪ 3 meetings were held between January 28, 2025 and February 1, 2025 ○ 139 participants ○ 49 comments ▪ 1 virtual meeting was conducted on February 3, 2025 ○ 77 participants ○ 36 comments

CDM Smith/AECOM JV 2025, **Appendix Q**.

Key: CEQA = California Environmental Quality Act, EA = Environmental Assessment, EIR = Environmental Impact Report, EIS = Environmental Impact Statement, NEPA = Nation Environmental Protection Act.

Following the community meetings in 2025, as part of the NEPA process, Metro has conducted additional public outreach efforts such as community pop-up events to keep the public informed and engaged. Comments related to NEPA that were received during the 2022 Recirculated Draft EIR (CEQA) and the 2024 Final EIR (CEQA) comment period were also reviewed and considered during the research and technical analysis during preparation of this EA.

5.3 Agency Consultation

Agency consultations with federal, state, regional and local government agencies with an interest in the Project are summarized in **Table 5.2**.

Table 5.2 Summary of Agency Consultation and Coordination

Agency	Summary of Agency Coordination
United States Environmental Protection Agency	The United States Environmental Protection Agency is a cooperating agency on the Project. Cooperating Agencies are those government and regulatory agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise, providing input in the areas that they oversee or by expertise.
California Department of Transportation	The California Department of Transportation is a participating agency for the Project. Participating agencies can be federal, state, tribal, regional, and local government agencies with an interest in the Project.
California State Historic Preservation Officer	As part of the NEPA and Section 106 processes, Metro and FTA are coordinating with the California State Historic Preservation Officer to ensure that potential effects on historic and cultural resources are appropriately identified, evaluated, and mitigated. Additional details are presented in Appendix K .
Local Jurisdictions: Los Angeles County, City of Montebello and City of Commerce	Continued coordination with local jurisdictions related to the development of the Build Alternative, as appropriate.
Regulatory Agencies: Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and United States Army Corps of Engineers	Continued coordination with regulatory agencies related to the development of the Build Alternative, as appropriate.
Interagency: Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Southern California Association of Governments, and Gateway Cities Council of Governments	Continued coordination to maintain interagency consistency and communication throughout the environmental review process.

Source: Metro; CDM Smith/AECOM JV 2026.

5.4 Tribal Coordination

FTA and Metro initiated consultation for the Project in 2019 to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. In July 2019, FTA and Metro contacted the Native American Heritage Commission via letter and provided a Project description and Study Area map, which included several jurisdictions in the San Gabriel Valley that are outside of the current study area. Coordination is ongoing through 2026. **Table 5.3** provides a chronological summary of the Project's consultation activities, including outreach to tribes identified by the Native American Heritage Commission and responses received during the period of 2019 through May 2026.

Table 5.3 Summary of Tribal Coordination Activities

Date	Consultation Activity	Tribes / Representative / Organization	Response / Outcome
November 22, 2019	Native American Heritage Commission responded and provided an Assembly Bill 52 Tribal contact list (five tribes) and Sacred Lands File search results (positive).	Native American Heritage Commission - Gabrielesño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation (Andrew Salas, Chairperson) - Gabrielesño/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians (Anthony Morales, Chairperson) - Gabrielesño/Tongva Nation (Sandonne Goad, Chairperson) - Gabrielesño Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council (Robert Dorame, Chairperson) - Gabrielesño-Tongva Tribe (Charles Alvarez, Chairperson)	Native American Heritage Commission acknowledged receipt. Native American Heritage Commission recommended direct consultation with Kizh Nation and San Gabriel Band. Initiated Assembly Bill 52/Section 106 outreach.
December 3, 2019	FTA issued letters to all five Native American Heritage Commission identified tribes initiating consultation under Assembly Bill 52 and Section 106.	- Gabrielesño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation (Andrew Salas, Chairperson) - Gabrielesño/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians (Anthony Morales, Chairperson) - Gabrielesño/Tongva Nation (Sandonne Goad, Chairperson) - Gabrielesño Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council (Robert Dorame, Chairperson) - Gabrielesño-Tongva Tribe (Charles Alvarez, Chairperson)	Initiated consultation under NEPA and CEQA.
December 10, 2019	Response from Andrew Salas (Kizh Nation) requesting formal consultation.	Gabrielesño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation (Andrew Salas, Chairperson)	Tribes requested consultation; meeting held March 25, 2020; provided lineage and cultural resource information incorporated into EA.
March 25, 2020	Consultation meeting held between Metro and Kizh Nation.	Andrew Salas (Chairperson)	Discussion of lineage ties and area of potential effects.
April 27, 2020	Follow-up correspondence providing additional cultural/lineage information.	Gabrielesño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation (Andrew Salas, Chairperson)	Additional documentation received. Incorporated into EA (Native American Heritage Commission).
July 12, 2024	Metro recontacted Native American Heritage Commission with updated Build Alternative description and map.	Native American Heritage Commission	Requested updated Sacred Lands File search and tribal contact list for revised area of potential effects.

Date	Consultation Activity	Tribe / Representative / Organization	Response / Outcome
July 30, 2024	Native American Heritage Commission responded with negative Sacred Lands File results and list of 16 contacts from eight tribes.	▪ Cahuilla Band of Indians (Erica Schenk – Chairperson; Anthony Madrigal – Tribal Historic Preservation Offer; Bobby Ray Esparza, Cultural Director) ▪ Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation (Christina Swindall Martinez, Secretary; Andrew Salas, Chairperson) ▪ Gabrieleño/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians (Anthony Morales, Chairperson) ▪ Gabrieleño Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council (Robert Dorame, Chairperson; Christina Conley, Cultural Resources Admin.) ▪ Gabrieleño/Tongva Nation (Sandonne Goad, Chairperson) ▪ Gabrieleño-Tongva Tribe (Charles Alvarez, Chairperson; Sam Dunlap, Cultural Resources Director) ▪ Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians (Vanessa Minott, Tribal Admin.; Steven Estrada, Chairman) ▪ Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians (Joseph Ontiveros, Tribal Historic Preservation Offer; Jessica Valdez, Cultural Specialist; Isaiah Vivanco, Chairperson) ▪ Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation (Raylene Borrego, Cultural Resources Technician)	Updated contacts identified for Section 106 consultation. Letters issued January 2025.
January 9, 2025	FTA issued Section 106 consultation letters to all Native American Heritage Commission identified tribes.	All 16 Tribal contacts above	Formal consultation invitations sent.
February 3, 2025	Follow-up emails issued by FTA.	All 16 Tribal contacts	Confirmed receipt.
February 13, 2025	Follow-up phone calls by FTA.	All 16 Tribal contacts	Two responses received requesting consultation. Ongoing coordination.
February 8, 2025	Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians deferred consultation to Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation.	▪ Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians (Vanessa Minott – Tribal Admin.; Steven Estrada – Tribal Chairman) ▪ Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation (Raylene Borrego, Cultural Resources Technician)	Deferral accepted. FTA initiated contact with Yuhaaviatam.
August 25, 2025	Response received from Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation declining to participate.	Raylene Borrego (Cultural Resources Technician)	Declined consultation. Consultation closed.

Source: CDM Smith/AECOM JV 2025, **Appendix K**.

Summaries of all responses received and follow up actions are described in greater detail in **Appendix K** of this EA. Records for the previous Native American outreach program from the Section 106 consultation in 2019-2020 and 2024-2025 are included in **Attachment B of Appendix K**. The Native American Heritage Commission also identified 16 tribal contacts from eight tribal groups listed in **Table 5.4**, that may have additional data and information regarding tribal cultural resources within or near the area of potential effects.

Table 5.4 Native American Representatives identified by Native American Heritage Commission in 2024

Name	Position	Native American Tribe
Erica Schenk	Chairperson	Cahuilla Band of Indians
Anthony Madrigal	Tribal Historic Preservation Officer	Cahuilla Band of Indians
Bobby Ray Esparza	Cultural Director	Cahuilla Band of Indians
Christina Swindall Martinez	Secretary	Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation
Andrew Salas	Chairperson	Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation
Anthony Morales	Chairperson	Gabrieleño/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians
Robert Dorame	Chairperson	Gabrieleño Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
Christina Conley	Cultural Resources Administrator	Gabrieleño Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
Sandonne Goad	Chairperson	Gabrieleño/Tongva Nation
Charles Alvarez	Chairperson	Gabrieleño-Tongva Tribe
Sam Dunlap	Cultural Resources Director	Gabrieleño-Tongva Tribe
Vanessa Minott	Tribal Administrator	Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians
Steven Estrada	Tribal Chairman	Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians
Joseph Ontiveros	Tribal Historic Preservation Officer	Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians
Jessica Valdez	Cultural Resource Specialist	Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians
Isaiah Vivanco	Chairperson	Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians
Raylene Borrego	Cultural Resources Technician	Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation

Source: CDM Smith/AECOM JV 2025, **Appendix K**.

5.5 Stakeholder Coordination

Metro implemented a robust and comprehensive outreach program to include partnerships with community-based organizations to establish communication and adapt to the communities' needs and participation preferences. More details on community-based organization engagement efforts can be found in the Public Outreach Report (**Appendix Q**).

5.6 NEPA Public Circulation

FTA will consider the comments received on the EA during the 30-day public comment period in its decision document and will provide responses to substantive comments. The EA will be available for review at the following locations:

- Federal Transit Administration, Region 9 Office, 888 South Figueroa Street, Suite 440, Los Angeles, CA 90017
- Metro Headquarters, Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library, One Gateway Plaza, Los Angeles, CA 90012
- East Los Angeles Library, 4837 E 3rd Street, East Los Angeles, CA 90022
- Rosewood Neighborhood Library, 5655 Jillson Street, Commerce, CA 90040
- Chet Holifield County Library, 1060 S Greenwood Avenue, Montebello, CA 90640
- Project Website: https://www.metro.net/projects/eastside_phase2/

Metro will host a round of public hearings including three in-person meetings in the community of East Los Angeles (unincorporated Los Angeles County) and the Cities of Commerce and Montebello, as well as one virtual meeting. Details regarding the public hearings will be available on Metro's Project website: https://www.metro.net/projects/eastside_phase2/. At these public hearings, Metro will provide information about the EA and its findings, as well as an opportunity for the public to provide comments on the EA.