
Introduction

BACKGROUND

In 2003, the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority (the Construction Authority) prepared an Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) for the entire 24-mile Gold Line Foothill Extension system from the City of Pasadena in Los Angeles County to the City of Montclair in San Bernardino County. The Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension was divided into two phases: the first phase spanning the cities of Pasadena to Azusa (the Pasadena to Azusa Extension), and the second connecting the cities between Azusa and Montclair (Azusa to Montclair Extension). In February 2007, the Construction Authority certified the Final EIR for the Pasadena to Azusa Extension. Construction of the first phase from the Pasadena Sierra Madre Villa Station to the Azusa-Citrus Station began in late 2011, and construction is anticipated to be completed in late 2015.

PURPOSE OF THE EIR

This Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) has been prepared to evaluate the environmental effects of the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension from Azusa to Montclair (Azusa to Montclair Extension). The proposed extension of this Light Rail Transit (LRT) system constitutes a project for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Pursuant to CEQA requirements, the full extension to Montclair has been evaluated in order to address the potential effects of the entire project, from the City of Glendora in Los Angeles County to the City of Montclair in San Bernardino County.

According to the *Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act*, an “EIR is an informational document which will inform public agencies, decision makers, and the public generally of the significant environmental effects of a project on the environment, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe alternatives to the project.”

This Final EIR is an informational document to be used by decision makers, public agencies, and the general public. It is not a policy document of the Construction Authority.

The Final EIR will be used by the Construction Authority in assessing impacts of the proposed project. During the project implementation process, mitigation measures identified in the EIR will be applied to the project by the Construction Authority and other involved agencies.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

This Final EIR for the Gold Line Foothill Extension from Azusa to Montclair project has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.) and the *Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act* (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.).

DRAFT EIR

A Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Draft EIR was issued by the Construction Authority on December 27, 2010 in accordance with the requirements of the CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15082(a) and 15375. The NOP began the scoping process for the project that extended to February 2, 2011. During the scoping process, the public was encouraged to provide comments on potential environmental impacts that should be studied in the EIR. The scoping meetings for the project were conducted in January 2011. There were four noticed public scoping meetings and one interagency scoping meeting held in the Azusa to Montclair project corridor. The four public scoping meetings drew 229 participants; the interagency scoping meeting 18 participants. Chapter 4, Public and Agency Outreach, in this Final EIR provides information about the agency and public outreach process conducted by the Construction Authority, including the scoping process.

Following the NOP review, a Draft EIR was prepared addressing issues identified through the Initial Study, scoping, and the NOP review process. The Draft EIR was made available for a 45-day public review and comment period pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15087 and 15105, beginning on August 21, 2012 and ending on October 5, 2012. The public and interested agencies and organizations were invited to comment in writing on the information contained in the Draft EIR.

The Construction Authority filed the Notice of Completion of the Draft EIR with the State Clearinghouse, the Los Angeles County Clerk and the San Bernardino County Clerk, and published the Notice of Availability of the Draft EIR in a local newspaper on August 21, 2012. The Construction Authority also held public meetings to receive comments on the Draft EIR on September 20, 2011² at Montclair Senior Center, Montclair, CA 91763, and September 24, 2012 at Hillcrest Meeting House, La Verne, CA 91750.

FINAL EIR

All comments received on the Draft EIR and the responses to those comments are included in Section 7.0 of this Final EIR. Updated information provided in this Final EIR in response to comments is identified in underline, as illustrated in this sentence.

SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

The proposed project, known as the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension from Azusa to Montclair, would extend the Metro Gold Line alignment 12.3 miles east, from just east of the Azusa-Citrus Station to the City of Montclair Transcenter, and include six new stations in the cities of Glendora, San Dimas, La Verne, Pomona, Claremont, and Montclair.

SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS IN THE FINAL EIR

The Final EIR addresses the following environmental issue areas:

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources/Ecosystems
- Climate Change
- Communities, Population, and Housing, including acquisitions and displacements

- Community Facilities and Parklands
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geological Hazards
- Hazardous Materials
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise and Vibration
- Safety and Security
- Transportation, including public bus transit, streets and highways, parking pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and at-grade railroad crossings
- Visual Quality
- Water Resources
- Growth Inducing Impacts
- Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments
- Anticipated Permits and Approvals

INTENDED USES OF THE EIR

This EIR will be used by the Construction Authority and other responsible agencies to provide the information necessary for an environmental review of discretionary actions, including the issuance or granting of permits, related to the approval process with regards to the Metro Gold Line Extension from Azusa to Montclair project.

LEAD AGENCY

The Construction Authority is the Lead Agency for this EIR, as defined in Section 21067 of CEQA.

CONTACT PERSON

The primary contact person regarding information presented in this Final EIR is Ms. Lisa Levy Buch, the Construction Authority Director of Public Affairs.

Ms. Levy Buch can be reached by fax at (626) 471-9049, by e-mail at llevybuch@foothillextension.org, or by mail at:

Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority
406 E. Huntington Drive, Suite 202
Monrovia, CA 91016-3633

