

**Metro**Los Angeles County
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metro.net**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE**
June 17, 2009**SUBJECT: HARBOR SUBDIVISION TRANSIT CORRIDOR****ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE****RECOMMENDATION**

Receive and file this status report on the Harbor Subdivision Alternatives Analysis (AA) Study and the alternatives screened for further analysis.

ISSUE

In April 2008, the Board approved a contract for the AA and Financial Feasibility Study, Conceptual Engineering and Facilitation of Community Participation for the Harbor Subdivision Transit Corridor. From previous work, the project team identified 23 Build alternatives plus the Transportation Systems Management (TSM) and No Build, of which four have been identified for further study: Local North, Local South, Regional and Express service options (Attachment B). The Northern Local alternatives extend between the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) area and Union Station (LAUS), and in the South between the LAX area and the Harbor (e.g., Long Beach or San Pedro). The Regional alternatives extend between LAUS and the Harbor area (Long Beach or San Pedro) via LAX. The Express alternative is a direct service between LAUS and LAX. We conducted the early scoping process during the Fall of 2008, which included four community meetings in addition to an agency meeting and a second round of five community meetings in the Spring, to solicit input on the range of alternatives to consider. The overwhelming majority of comments received from the public supported a variety of service types -- local, regional and express transit improvements for connections to Downtown Los Angeles, LAX, the South Bay and Harbor areas. The stakeholders also provided feedback on station locations and indicated concerns about environmental impacts and air quality issues.

The 25 alternatives and six modal options were screened in accordance with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) New Starts Program Guidelines. Based on the technical analysis and comments received, the initial alternatives and modal options (Light Rail Transit [LRT], Bus Rapid Transit [BRT], Self Propelled Vehicles [clean burning Diesel Multiple Units and

Electric Multiple Units], and Commuter Rail) were narrowed to four Build alternatives and five modal options for final screening and Conceptual Engineering. Preliminary analysis has eliminated the BRT mode due to Right-of-Way (ROW) constraints, operational conflicts, and slow travel speeds. Each Build alternative has various routing and termini options. This report updates the Board on the selected Build alternatives, in addition to the No Build and Transportation System Management alternatives and modal options for final screening and Conceptual Engineering.

DISCUSSION

The Harbor Subdivision Transit Corridor is approximately 35 miles in length and covers 12 jurisdictions between LAUS and the Port communities of Long Beach and San Pedro. The 35 miles includes approximately 26.4 miles of the Harbor Subdivision ROW that is owned by us and was purchased in the early 1990s from the predecessor of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway (Attachment A). The BNSF currently operates freight rail service along the Subdivision. The corridor runs from south of downtown Los Angeles at Redondo Junction southwest to LAX, then turns southeast through the South Bay area before ending at Watson Yard in Wilmington. The study also examines potential routing options that depart from the ROW to connect to existing activity centers such as LAUS, Downtown Los Angeles, LAX, Torrance, San Pedro and Long Beach.

Initial Screening

The alternatives identified from previous studies and the Early Scoping process was evaluated based on the following criteria: Travel Time, Transit Accessibility, Regional Connectivity, Environmental Effects/Safety, Physical Fit, and Community Acceptability. They were also evaluated for potential opportunities for economic development and redevelopment both regionally and along the corridor. The 25 alternatives were narrowed to four Build alternatives (Attachment B) that have various termini and modes that are being considered. The modes also were evaluated based on their compatibility with maintaining freight operation on the existing railroad ROW.

The following are the four Build alternatives (Attachment C):

- Local Service North – Metro Green Line to LAUS (Approximately 14 miles and 15 stations)
- Local Service South – Metro Green Line Extension to San Pedro or Long Beach (Approximately 14 miles and 21 stations)
- Regional Service – LAUS to San Pedro or Long Beach (Approximately 35 miles and 9 stations)
- Express Service – LAUS to LAX (approximately 15 miles and 3 stations)

The four selected alternatives have the following characteristics: operational flexibility, avoidance of freight and grade crossing conflicts, travel time savings, ability to utilize existing infrastructure, suitability for a range of service types i.e. local and regional/express and potential to create opportunities for redevelopment and economic development in the corridor which will benefit the region.

Modes

Originally, we considered BRT and several rail modes. The rail modes include Light Rail, self propelled vehicles including Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) and clean burning Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU), both Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) compliant and non-compliant vehicles and Commuter Rail (CR). Based on the results of the preliminary analysis, it was determined that all of the modes, except for BRT would be carried forward into the final alternatives screening process. A BRT running way would create safety, operational issues and conflicts with freight trains and their customers. The preliminary analysis also showed BRT would not offer transit benefits relative to the significant investment involved due to slow “at grade” speeds when crossing a number of the Corridor’s 96 grade separations and/or the narrow segments of the Corridor that cannot accommodate the width of BRT lanes, and required clearances between BRT lanes and freight tracks.

Alternatives Recommended

Attachment C describes the four Build alternatives being recommended to carry forward into more technical analysis and conceptual engineering. Each alternative represents a different type of service. The Local North and South options would use LRT or DMU between Downtown Los Angeles and LAX and between LAX and Long Beach or San Pedro via the South Bay cities. The Regional option could use any of the rail modes between Downtown Los Angeles and the Harbor area via LAX and the South Bay cities. The Express option also could use any of the rail modes to run direct service between Downtown Los Angeles and LAX. Depending on the level of infrastructure investment, any combination of one or more of these alternatives may be possible. These four alternatives together represent the most technically feasible and cost-effective transit investment options to serve the travel patterns in the corridor.

Coordination with Crenshaw Corridor

The Harbor Subdivision Transit Corridor and the Crenshaw Transit Corridor share a five mile segment of the Harbor Subdivision adjacent to LAX. The ultimate mode selected for the Crenshaw Corridor project will have implications for this study. Freight service is currently operating in the Corridor and in the section east of Crenshaw Boulevard; a BRT option would prohibit freight trains due to the narrow ROW. If the Crenshaw Corridor study recommends BRT, then the final AA study will only recommend those alternatives that would not be prohibited due to a BRT operating on the five mile shared segment.

Grade Crossing Analysis

Given the 96 at-grade crossings throughout the Corridor, an initial evaluation of grade crossings was determined necessary in order to better understand the impacts associated with the various alternatives. The assessment will utilize the Initial Screening process outlined in our Grade Crossing for Light Rail Transit policy (December 4, 2003). This preliminary assessment is needed to: (1) inform the operational parameters of the Build Alternatives; and (2) provide information to the public and corridor communities on the implications of the preliminary alternatives.

AA Scoping

An early scoping notice was published in the Federal Register on September 16, 2008. The scoping comment period extended until October 22, 2008. We conducted four Early Scoping meetings during September/October 2008 as well as a public agency scoping meeting to solicit input on the range of alternatives and modes to consider. The public and agency representatives were given opportunities to provide verbal plus written comments. In addition, project information could be viewed and comments could be submitted on the project's website.

Community Outreach

Due to the size of the Study Area and the number of jurisdictions involved, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was formed with representatives from local, state, and federal agencies. The primary role of the TAC is to provide technical feedback on the various alternatives under evaluation. To date, the TAC has met a total of seven times, with three regular meetings and 4 off-corridor workshops. The off-corridor workshops were specifically held to address potential connections between the ROW and the major activity centers located a short distance from it. The major activity centers include: LAUS, the City of Huntington Park's Central Business District, LAX, the Del Amo Fashion Center, San Pedro, and the City of Long Beach.

Upon completion of the initial evaluation of alternatives, we conducted five community meetings during the months of April and May 2009 to obtain feedback on the feasible Build alternatives and potential station locations. Generally, comments received indicated strong support for transit improvements along the corridor. In the south, there was a strong desire for a connection from the South Bay to LAX and Downtown Los Angeles and to the Port communities in Long Beach and San Pedro. In the northern part of the corridor, there was a desire for local access between Downtown Los Angeles and LAX as well as connections to the Westside and the South Bay areas. The public also provided feedback on station locations and indicated concerns about environmental impacts such as air quality issues.

NEXT STEPS

We will evaluate in more technical detail the four Build alternatives in the final screening process and complete Conceptual Engineering. It is anticipated that we will return to the Board in November/December 2009 to present the findings of the Alternatives Analysis Study.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Study Corridor Map
- B. Initial Alignment Options Map
- C. Description of Build Alternatives and Detail Maps

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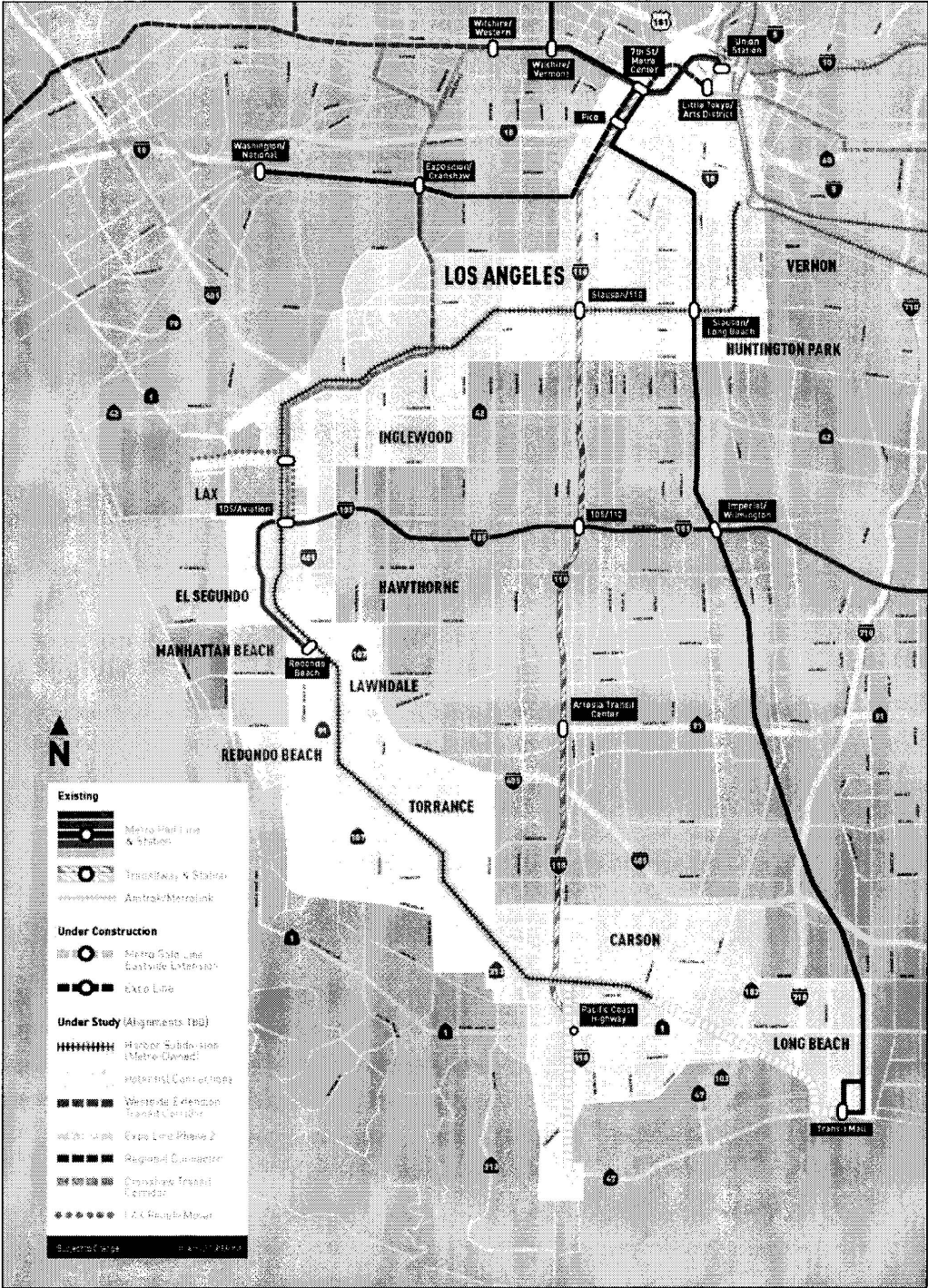
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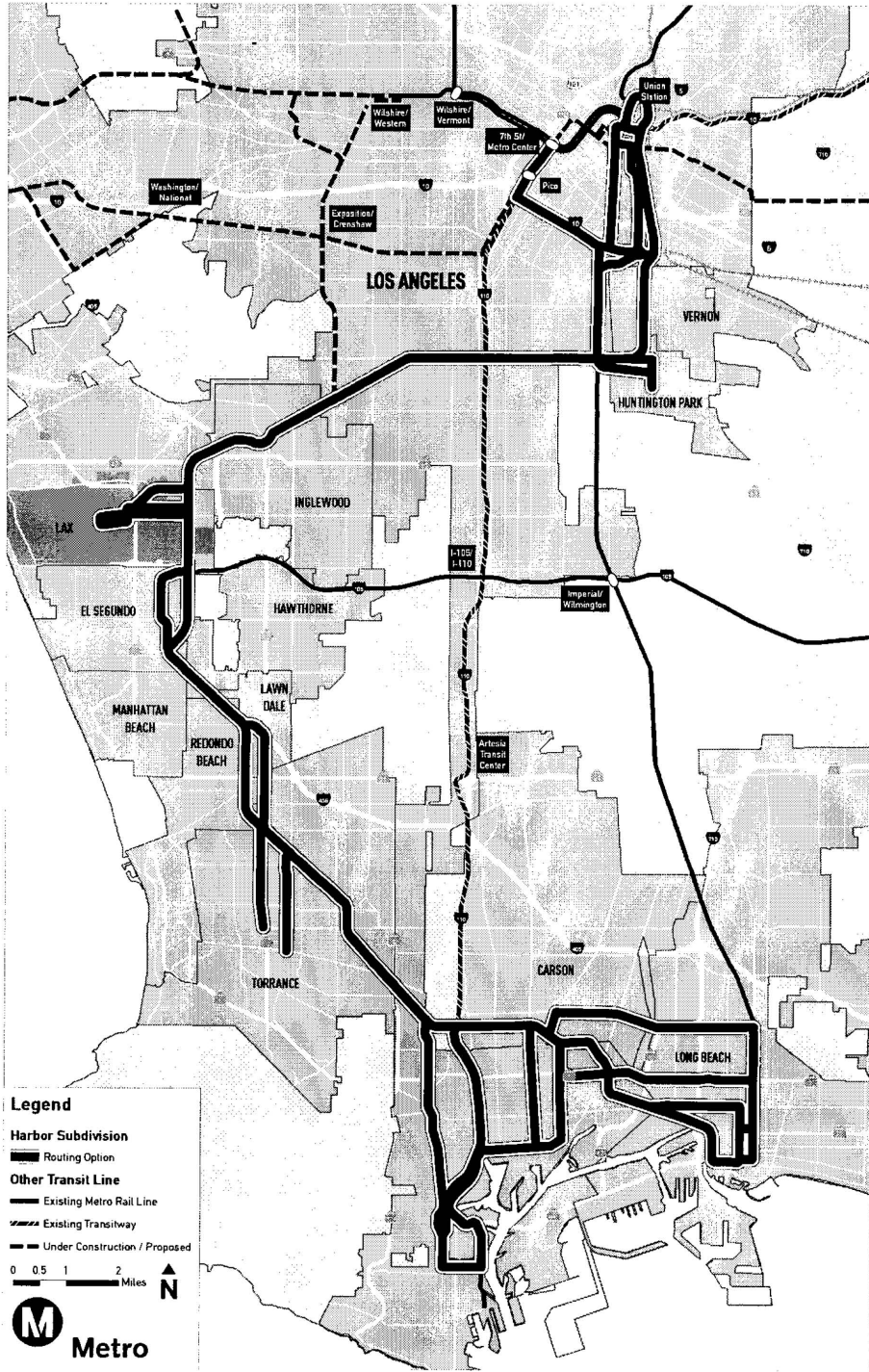
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Study Corridor Map



23 Initial Alignment Options Map



Harbor Subdivision Alternatives Analysis Study
Description of Alternatives

Figure C-1 : Local Service North – LAX to LAUS (LRT or DMU Modes)

Local service for the northern portion of the Corridor remains within the Harbor Subdivision ROW from the LAX area (Metro Green Line Station at Aviation Blvd) to the Metro Blue Line Station at Slauson Avenue. From this point, the service would leave the ROW and would either operate on the Metro Blue Line tracks or depending on operational capacity, would require adjacent tracks to be constructed to continue north along Long Beach Boulevard. From the Metro Blue Line, the service would turn east just before E. 24th Street to connect to Alameda Street where it would continue north to a connection with the Metro Gold Line Eastside tracks via the proposed Regional Connector. The eventual terminus is at LAUS.

See figure C-1

Figure C-2 : Local Service South – LAX to San Pedro or Long Beach (LRT or DMU Modes)

Local service for the southern portion of the corridor extends from the Metro Green Line Marine Ave Station southward to either San Pedro or Long Beach. For the San Pedro connection, service would leave the Harbor Subdivision ROW at Normandie Ave and proceed south to a point near the intersection of N. Gaffey St and W. Capitol Dr. From N. Gaffey St., the service would follow an existing railroad ROW (not owned by Metro) southeast before paralleling N. Harbor Boulevard to a terminus at or near the intersection of N. Harbor Blvd and W. 5th Street.

For the Long Beach connection, service would leave the Harbor Subdivision ROW at Wilmington Ave. and head north before turning east on Sepulveda Boulevard. The service would continue on Sepulveda Boulevard and terminate at the Metro Blue Line Willow Station or via the Metro Blue line continue service into downtown Long Beach.

See figure C-2

Figure C-3 : Regional Service – LAUS to San Pedro or Long Beach (all Rail Modes)

Regional service potentially spans the entire length of the Harbor Subdivision corridor providing high speed transit service to and from LAUS to either San Pedro or Long Beach and could use any of the rail modes. At the northern end of the corridor, only the west bank of the Los Angeles River was examined for connecting this regional service into LAUS. At the southern end, there are two options for either connecting to San Pedro or the City of Long Beach. For the San Pedro connection, service would leave the Harbor Subdivision ROW at the I-110 Freeway heading south to W. Channel Street. From W. Channel St., the

service would proceed southeast to N. Harbor Boulevard with a terminus at or near the intersection of N. Harbor Boulevard. and W. 5th Street.

For the Long Beach connection, service would continue to the end of our ROW where the alignment would turn southeast and travel along existing railroad (Alameda Corridor) ROWs to the Los Angeles River. At this point, the service would cross the river and head south along Shoreline Dr. before turning east onto Ocean Blvd. with a terminus at the Long Beach Transit Mall.

See figure C-3

Figure C-4 : Express Service – LAUS to LAX (all Rail Modes)

Express service connects LAX with LAUS. This high speed, grade separated, non-stop or limited-stop service connects directly into the LAX Central Terminal Area (CTA) and could use any of the rail modes. Similar to the regional service, the only routing options considered for connecting to LAUS are along the west bank of the Los Angeles River. At LAX, Century Boulevard is the primary alignment leading into the CTA.

See figure C-4

FIGURE C-1

Local Service – Metro Green Line to LAUS

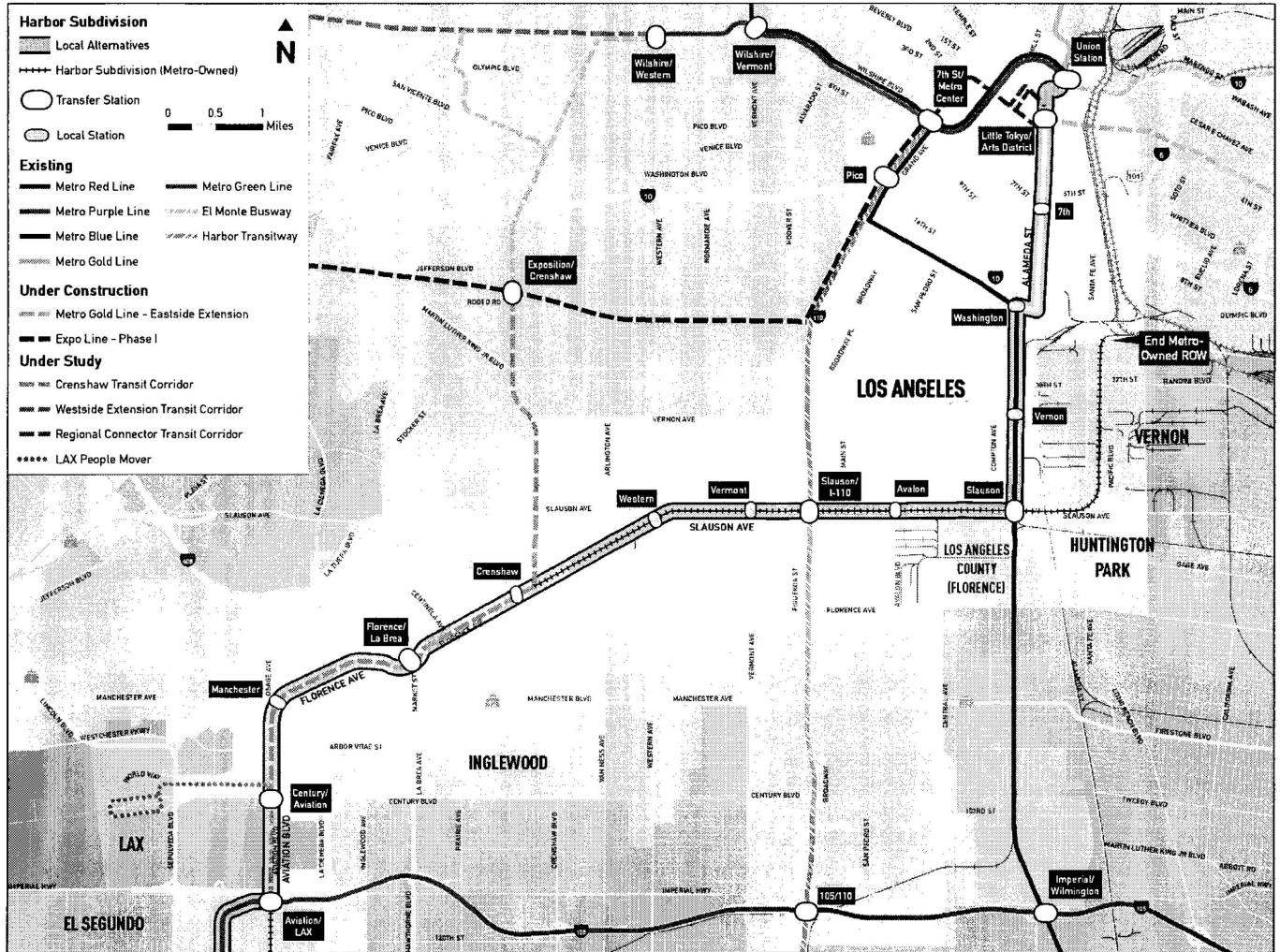


FIGURE C-2

Local Service – Metro Green Line Extension to San Pedro or Long Beach

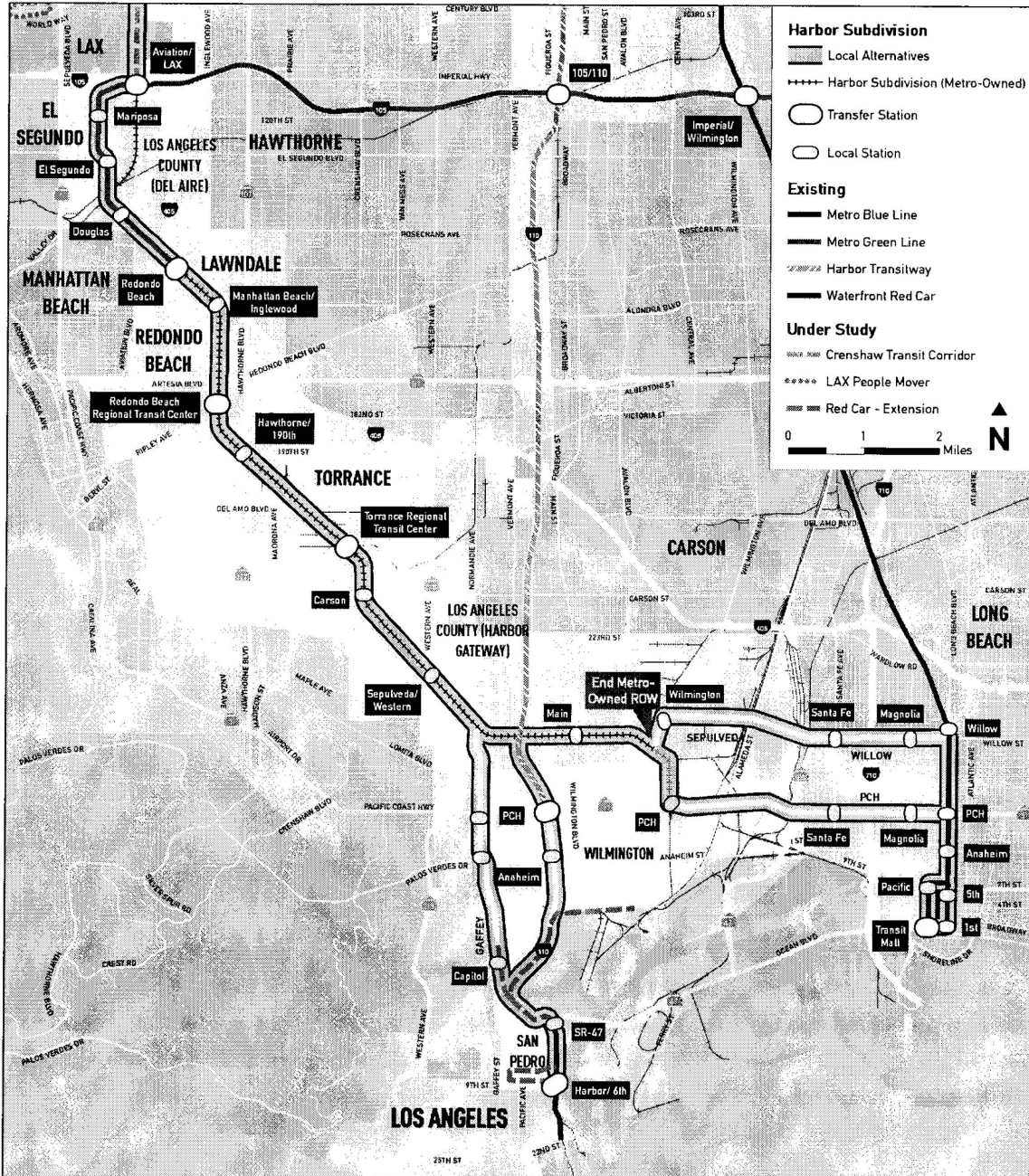


FIGURE C-3

Regional Service – LAUS to San Pedro or Long Beach

