



# Administrative Report

N.1., File # 23-5730

Meeting Date: 3/21/2023

**To:** MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
**From:** BRANDY FORBES, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR  
TED SEMAAN, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

## **TITLE**

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE SUBMITTAL OF OFFICIAL COMMENTS TO THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (METRO) REGARDING THE METRO C (GREEN) LINE EXTENSION TO TORRANCE PROJECT DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (DEIR)

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This item provides the City Council with an opportunity to discuss and prepare official comments on the Metro C (Green) Line Extension Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) issued on January 26, 2023. The Planning and Public Works & Sustainability Commissions discussed and provided comments on the DEIR at their February meetings. The commission discussions were robust and their comprehensive comments have been provided with this agenda item. The link to the DEIR, other project related materials and letters submitted by the public are also attached to the report.

The City Council discussed the DEIR at the March 14, 2023 meeting and provided comments to be assembled in a draft letter. The draft letter has been prepared and is ready for consideration of approval and submission to Metro. The deadline to submit comments to Metro is March 27, 2023.

## **BACKGROUND**

A Revised and Recirculated Notice of Preparation (RRNOP) was distributed by Metro in January 2021 to solicit written comments from Responsible and Trustee Agencies, interested public agencies and members of the public regarding the scope and content of the environmental analysis to be included in the forthcoming DEIR to assess the impacts pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). These impacts include significant environmental issues, reasonable alternatives, mitigation measures and other pertinent information. The original public review period outlined in the RRNOP required submission of all comments by March 15, 2021, however, the deadline was subsequently extended to March 29, 2021.

On March 16, 2021, the City Council authorized an official comment letter (attached) addressing community concerns with the alignment alternative along the existing rail right of way (ROW) and the recommendation of an elevated alignment along Hawthorne Boulevard. That letter was submitted to Metro before the March 29, 2021 deadline.

Metro is the public agency that will carry out the project, and therefore is the Lead Agency for the project charged with applying the appropriate CEQA process for completing and certifying the DEIR.

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Metro initially completed an Alternatives Analysis Study for this corridor in 2009, which studied transit alternatives along Metro-owned Harbor Subdivision right-of-way connecting downtown Los Angeles, LAX and the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. This study identified the C Line (Green) Extension from Redondo Beach to Torrance.

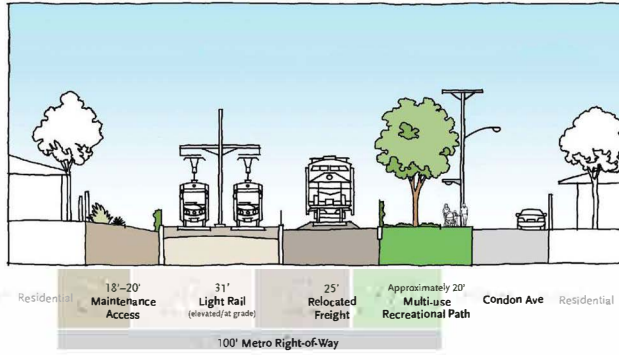
On April 12, 2010, as Lead Agency, Metro prepared the Notice of Preparation (NOP) and determined that the Metro C Line (Green) Extension to Torrance Project may result in potentially significant environmental impacts and required the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report. After the initial NOP, the project was stalled due to lack of an available funding plan. Once funding was identified through the passage of Measure M in 2016, the project was ready to move forward and Metro reinitiated the project in 2017. During the reinitiated process, the City of Redondo Beach issued a comment letter on July 18, 2018 regarding preferred alignment and elevation concerns (attached). On January 29, 2021, Metro issued the RRNOP of a DEIR.

The City of Redondo Beach is a Responsible Agency per CEQA, since the project may require approvals from the City, including Planning Commission Design Review, right-of-way permits, etc. As such, Redondo Beach City Council authorized an official comment letter on March 16, 2021 addressing community concerns with the possible alignment along the existing rail ROW, and the recommendation of an elevated alignment along Hawthorne Boulevard. These comments were to address the scope and content of the environmental analysis to be included in the DEIR. This was not a review of the project, but rather comments on the scope of the environmental analysis to be conducted.

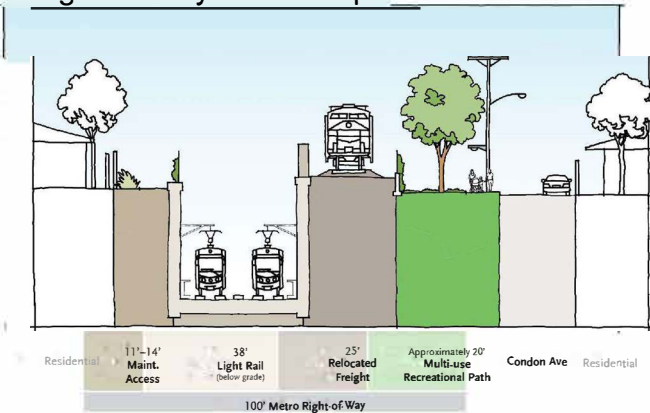
Since the submittal of the City's March 16, 2021 scoping comment letter, due to census redistricting, Supervisor Holly Mitchell became the new representative for the City of Redondo Beach. To update Supervisor Mitchell on the community concerns for the ROW alignment in Redondo Beach, the City Council approved a letter to Supervisor Mitchell conveying the City's perspective on the project and questions/concerns on May 17, 2022. In response, both Supervisor Mitchell and the Metro Senior Executive Officer responded noting that the DEIR is intended to investigate such issues and would be released in early 2023.

The DEIR was issued on January 26, 2023, and the project consists of the extending the Metro C Line approximately 4.5 miles. Two new stations are proposed: Redondo Beach Station (at either the Transit Center or the South Bay Galleria location depending on the option) and Torrance Transit Center Station. There were three options along two alignments studied (Note: Metro has not identified a recommended preference at this time):

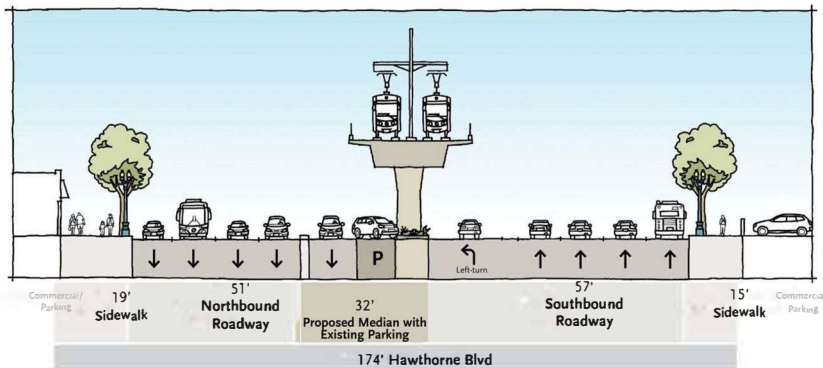
- Right of Way at Grade Option (this is referred to as the "Proposed Project" because it was the originally studied route, not due to preference)



• Right of Way Trench Option



• Hawthorne Elevated Option



In addition to the three options, the DEIR did study other alternatives:

- No Project Alternative
- High Frequency Bus (HFB) Alternative
- 170<sup>th</sup>/182<sup>nd</sup> Grade Separated Alternative

In reviewing the Environmental Impacts comparison of the options and alternatives for ongoing operation, the Right of Way at Grade Option does have significant unavoidable impacts under the noise category, which cannot be reduced to “Less Than Significant” with mitigation. Per the data provided, impacts that cannot be mitigated occur at two of the approximately 1,100 neighboring

properties analyzed. The Right of Way Trench Option will have significant unavoidable impacts under the noise category, but that can be mitigated through the implementation of a Quiet Zone. The DEIR lists implementation of a Quiet Zone for the ROA alignments, but not for the Hawthorne alignment.

Per the DEIR, the HFB alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, as it would avoid or reduce all impacts to less than significant level. However, this alternative would not realize the same level of benefits in trying to reach the project objectives. Bus travel time with the HFB Alternative would be 25 minutes along the extension compared to 7 minutes along light rail.

<b>Metro C Line Extension Options</b>	<b>Estimated Cost (includes escalation 3.5%)</b>	<b>Estimated Completion Date</b>
Proposed Project (ROW at Grade)	\$1.96 Billion	2033
ROW Trench	\$2.84 Billion	2036
Hawthorne Elevated	\$2.96 Billion	2035

The Planning Commission and Public Works & Sustainability Commission held discussions and accepted public comment on the DEIR. The commissions compiled comments for the City Council to consider as part of preparing the City of Redondo Beach’s official comments to Metro regarding the DEIR. Those compiled comments have been included as attachments with this agenda item.

Based on previous letters submitted to Metro on this project, and the comments from the commissions, a draft comment letter was prepared as a starting template and discussed at the March 14, 2023 City Council meeting. City Council discussed this item at the March 14, 2023 meeting and provided comments to be assembled into a final draft letter. That letter is included for Council consideration.

This agenda item facilitates the preparation of formal comments by the City Council on the DEIR for the Metro C Line Extension to Torrance Project. Official comments on the DEIR are due to Metro on March 27, 2023.

**COORDINATION**

The report and draft letter have been coordinated with the Community Development Department, the Public Works Department, and the City Manager’s Office. Input has also been provided by the Planning Commission and Public Works & Sustainability Commission.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The cost of preparing this report and draft letter is within the annual work program of the Public Works and Community Development Departments, and is included in those Departments’ portions of the adopted FY 2022-23 budget.

**APPROVED BY:**

*Mike Witzansky, City Manager*

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Draft Comment Letter from City of Redondo Beach on DEIR for Metro C Line Extension Project
- Public Works & Sustainability Commission Recommendations Metro C Line DEIR, February 27, 2023
- Admin Report - Public Works & Sustainability Commission, February 27, 2023
- Planning Commission Recommendations Metro C Line DEIR, February 16, 2023
- Admin Report -Planning Commission Comments on Metro C Line Extension DEIR, January 19, 2023
- Metro C Line Email Update, December 19, 2022
- Letter from City to Metro, May 17, 2022
- Letters from Metro & Supervisor Mitchell to City, August 18, 2022
- Letter from City to Metro Official Comments on Notice of Preparation, March 16, 2021
- Revised and Recirculated Notice of Preparation of a DEIR- Green Line Extension, January 29, 2021
- Letter from City to Metro Support Green Line Alternative 3, July 18, 2018
- Blue Folder Items - Public Works Commission Meeting, February 27, 2023
- Blue Folder Items - Planning Commission Meeting, January 19, 2023
- Blue Folder Items - Planning Commission Meeting, February 16, 2023

## **LINKS**

- The DEIR can be accessed via this link:  
<https://www.metro.net/projects/green-line-extension/>