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NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A SUPPLEMENTAL/RECIRCULATED DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

DATE: MAY 31, 2019

TO: AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS AND INTERESTED PARTIES

SUBJECT: RECIRCULATED NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP) OF A SUPPLEMENTAL/RECIRCULATED DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

PROJECT TITLE: EASTSIDE TRANSIT CORRIDOR PHASE 2 PROJECT

FROM: LOS ANGELES COUNTY METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (METRO)

PROJECT LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING: The Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 (Project) would extend the Metro Gold Line, a light rail transit (LRT) line, from its current terminus at Atlantic Station in the unincorporated area of East Los Angeles to eastern Los Angeles County. The proposed Project would serve the cities and communities of Commerce, Montebello, Monterey Park, Pico Rivera, Rosemead, Santa Fe Springs, South El Monte and Whittier, and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County, which includes East Los Angeles and West Whittier-Los Nietos (see Figure 1). It would traverse densely populated, low-income, and heavily transit-dependent communities with major activity centers within the Gateway Cities and San Gabriel Valley subregions of Los Angeles County. A diverse mix of land uses are located within the project area, including single- and multi-family residences, commercial and retail uses, industrial development, parks and recreational uses including the Whittier Narrows Recreation Center, health and medical uses, educational institutions, flood control facilities, and vacant land.

PROJECT INITIATION: Metro is initiating a Supplemental/Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) for the proposed Project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Metro is the lead agency for the proposed Project for purposes of CEQA environmental clearance. The Recirculated Draft EIR will be prepared in accordance with Section 15170 of the CEQA Guidelines. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is the lead agency for the Supplemental Draft EIS.



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A Draft EIS/EIR was circulated for public review on August 22, 2014. Since that time, changes to the alternatives have occurred and additional studies have been conducted. Therefore, a Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR will be prepared in accordance the requirements of CEQA. Per Section 15088.5 of the CEQA Guidelines, a lead agency is required to recirculate an EIR when significant new information is added to the EIR after public notice is given of the availability of the draft EIR for public review under Section 15087 but before certification. The purpose of this recirculated NOP is to notify interested agencies and parties, local jurisdictions, community organizations, and interested residents (collectively, interested parties) to the preparation of the Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR for the proposed Project. This revised NOP is to solicit comments as to the scope and content of the Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR and potential environmental effects from the proposed Project; invite public participation in the Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR process; and announce the public scoping meetings.

PROJECT BACKGROUND: In January 2009, the Metro Board approved the Alternatives Analysis (AA) and identified two build alternatives to be carried forward for environmental review. The proposed Project is identified in Metro's 2009 Long-Range Transportation Plan, as amended, and is a transit project funded by local tax measures, Measure R (approved by voters in November 2008) and Measure M (approved by voters in November 2016).

A NOP to prepare a Draft EIS/EIR was issued in 2010. The Draft EIS/EIR analyzed two build alternatives—State Route 60 (SR 60) and Washington Boulevard—in addition to the No Build and Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Alternatives. To address technical issues regarding proximity to the Operating Industries, Inc. (OII) Superfund site and in close coordination with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the SR 60 North Side Design Variation (SR 60 NSDV) was added as a design variation. A total of 24 agencies accepted the invitation to become a Participating Agency and EPA, United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and Caltrans (as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration [FHWA]) requested to be Cooperating Agencies. Outreach efforts to agencies affiliated with the Project included agency scoping meetings, participation in the Technical Advisory Committee, and 37 individual agency coordination meetings with EPA, USACE, Caltrans, Southern California Edison (SCE), and Union Pacific Railroad. As part of the outreach program during the AA and Draft EIS/EIR phases, Metro also held over 300 meetings with a wide array of stakeholder groups.

The Draft EIS/EIR was released on August 22, 2014 for a public comment period of 60 days. In November 2014, the Metro Board approved carrying forward two build alternatives for further study: the SR 60 NSDV, referred to herein as the SR 60 Alternative, and the Washington Boulevard Alternative. Based on the volume and scope of comments received on the Draft EIS/EIR, the Metro Board deferred the selection of a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) and determined that additional technical investigation would be needed to address major areas of concern raised by Cooperating Agencies, corridor cities and stakeholders for both build alternatives. The Metro Board also eliminated the Garfield Avenue aerial segment

of the Washington Boulevard Alternative and directed staff to carry out additional technical work, including identifying a new north-south alignment to connect to the Washington Boulevard Alternative, and explore the feasibility of operating both the SR 60 and Washington Boulevard Alternatives.

There was extensive coordination with Caltrans, EPA, USACE, California Department of Fish and Wildlife and SCE on the design of the SR 60 Alternative to address these agencies' respective comments on the Draft EIS/EIR throughout the technical investigation process. Some of the issues that Metro discussed with resource agencies throughout the technical study included: addressing concerns related to the former OII Superfund site; minimizing impacts to adjacent developments such as the MarketPlace in Monterey Park; minimizing potential impacts to the ability to add high-occupancy vehicle lanes to the SR 60 Freeway; avoiding impacts to the on and off-ramps at Paramount Boulevard; mitigating conflicts with transmission lines; and preserving the ability to develop a station and park and ride structure on Santa Anita Avenue.

The route planning process for the Washington Boulevard Alternative started with 27 potential connection options to Washington Boulevard. These route options were evaluated based on several factors including physical constraints, ridership, cost, travel time, access to major activity centers, economic development opportunities, Transit-Oriented Communities potential, and consistency with community goals. Three north-south connection options were shared at community meetings held in March 2016, June 2016, and February 2017. The community provided extensive feedback on the Washington Boulevard Alternative north-south connection options. The feedback was instrumental in confirming Metro's understanding of key issues for each routing concept and in focusing the conceptual design studies. Based on the technical analysis, design refinements and feedback received from the community and key stakeholders, the Atlantic Boulevard below-grade option was recommended for Metro Board approval as part of the new Washington Boulevard Alternative.

In May 2017, the Metro Board received the findings of the Post Draft EIS/EIR Technical Study and decided to advance the No Build Alternative and the following build alternatives for environmental review:

- SR 60 Alternative (previously referred to as the SR 60 NSDV Alternative);
- Washington Boulevard Alternative with the Atlantic Boulevard below-grade option (referred to as the Washington Boulevard Alternative); and
- Combined Alternative, defined as full build out of the SR 60 and Washington Boulevard Alternatives.

The entire Draft EIS/EIR will be supplemented and recirculated, given the substantial revisions that will be made to the Draft EIS/EIR. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5(f)(1), Metro and FTA will accordingly request reviewers to submit new comments on the Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR. Responses to comments on the Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR will be provided for the Project as currently

proposed in the context of the Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR. Therefore, written responses will not be prepared for previous comments on the previous (2014) Draft EIS/EIR.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED: The Draft EIS/EIR indicated that the purpose of the proposed Project is to improve transit access and mobility by connecting communities of eastern Los Angeles County to Metro's regional transit system. The Draft EIS/EIR indicated that proposed Project would serve the large number of transit-dependent and low-income populations in the project area and increase access to major employment centers, activity centers, and destinations in the project area and Los Angeles County. The Draft EIS/EIR included that the proposed Project also aims to reduce travel times on local and regional transportation networks and offer a convenient and reliable transportation alternative to address increased travel demand and projected employment and population growth in eastern Los Angeles County. This information, in addition to the project Purpose and Need, will be updated as part of the Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR.

Mobility problems and potential improvements for this corridor have been well documented in many studies that are available from Metro's Records Management Department, including numerous Metro Red Line planning studies, *Eastside Transit Corridor Studies: Re-Evaluation Major Investment Study* (2000), the *Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Final Alternatives Analysis Report* (2009), the *Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Alternatives Analysis Addendum* (2009), *Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2, Draft EIS/EIR* (2014), *Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2, Technical Study* (2015), Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) planning studies, the Metro Rapid Demonstration Project (2000), and in SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan (2004).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Each build alternative proposes to develop an LRT facility with four to ten stations, depending on the alternative, and identify transit-oriented community land use concepts and first/last mile pedestrian/bicycle connectivity opportunities associated with the proposed stations. The proposed Project would also consider the development of minimal operable segments and ancillary facilities. A minimal operable segment is construction of a segment of the LRT route under a build alternative, which would be able to operate both as a stand-alone system and include a maintenance and storage facility. Stakeholder coordination, design refinement, and impact assessment of the proposed Project are ongoing. As a result, there continues to be Project design iterations. It is anticipated that the Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR document may include, but is not limited to, variations to station number and locations; options for vertical alignments; options for parking facilities; specific alignment refinements; ancillary improvements; and leveraged improvements in collaboration with Metro's local partners and betterments to address these issues. Therefore, interested parties are advised to stay informed and engaged with the numerous Project engagement and communication channels via the Project website below.

No-Build Alternative: The No-Build Alternative would maintain existing transit service through the year 2042. No new transportation infrastructure would be built within the project area aside from projects currently under construction or funded for construction and operation by 2042 by Measure R or the recently approved Measure M sales tax. This

alternative includes the highway and transit projects in the current Metro Long Range Transportation Plan and the 2035 SCAG Regional Transportation Plan. Potential modifications to the Metro bus network resulting from the Metro NextGen Bus Study and other transit planning efforts would be included.

SR 60 Alternative (previously known as the SR 60 NSDV Alternative): This build alternative would extend the existing Metro Gold Line from the Atlantic Station to the city of South El Monte. Primarily, it is an aerial alignment that includes four aerial stations (Garfield, the Shops at Montebello, Santa Anita, and Peck) as described in the Draft EIS/EIR and shown on Figure 2, below. The Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR may consider and evaluate refinements to station locations or new stations. The SR 60 Alternative alignment would be located primarily along the southern side of SR 60 Freeway right-of-way (ROW), with the exception of a segment that passes near the OII Superfund Site in Monterey Park. To avoid potential impacts to the OII Site, the SR 60 Alternative alignment would transition to the north side of the SR 60 Freeway, approximately west of Greenwood Avenue, continue east within the Caltrans ROW, and then return to the south side of SR 60 Freeway, near Paramount Boulevard, where it would continue for the remainder of the alignment until its terminus in the City of South El Monte.

Washington Boulevard Alternative: This build alternative would extend the Metro Gold Line from the existing Atlantic Station in East Los Angeles to the City of Whittier. This alternative includes six stations (Atlantic/Whittier, the Citadel, Greenwood, Rosemead, Norwalk, and Lambert), as shown on Figure 3, below. The Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR may consider and evaluate refinements to station locations or new stations. The configuration of this alternative would vary, as it is proposed to transition from underground to aerial to at-grade along various portions of the alignment. From the existing Atlantic Station, the alignment would transition from at-grade west of Woods Avenue to below-grade. The Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR may consider and evaluate a design option that would modify the existing Atlantic Station to a below-grade station. The alignment would continue below-grade roughly following Atlantic Boulevard to Washington Boulevard. The alignment would continue at-grade along Washington Boulevard until just west of Lambert Road. The Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR may also consider and evaluate design options for potential aerial configurations along Washington Boulevard.

Combined Alternative: The Combined Alternative (Figure 4, below) involves construction and operation of both the SR 60 and Washington Boulevard Alternatives and would require infrastructure and operational elements (such as a wye junction) that would otherwise not be required if only one of the alternatives was operated as a “stand alone” line.

Stations, parking, minimal operating segments, ancillary facilities such as a maintenance and storage facility/job training center, traction power substations, and grade separation structures, tail tracks and storage tracks, track sidings and crossovers, track signalization, and communication facilities along the proposed Project alignment would be part of each LRT alternative.

Figure 2. SR 60 Alternative



Figure 3. Washington Alternative

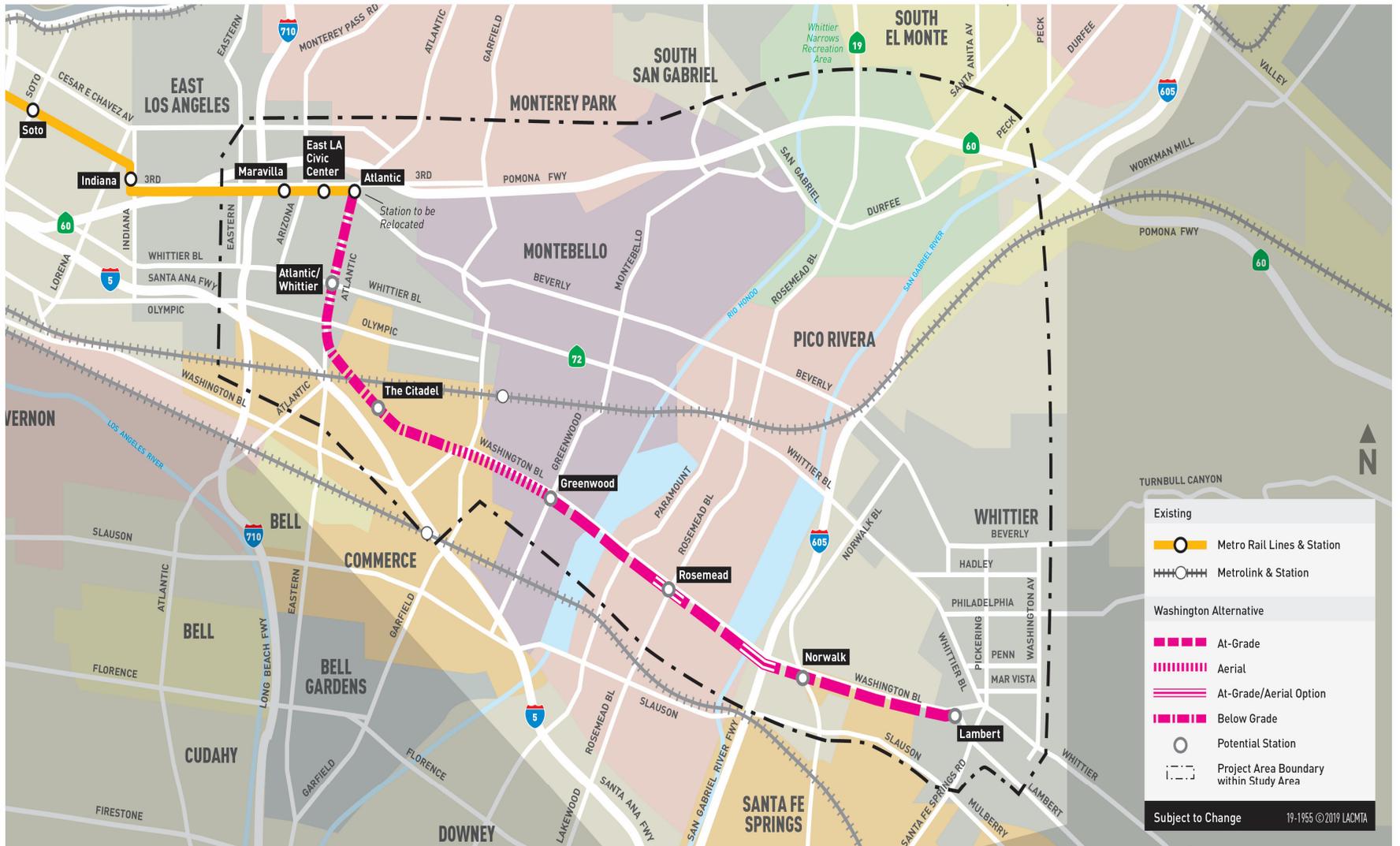
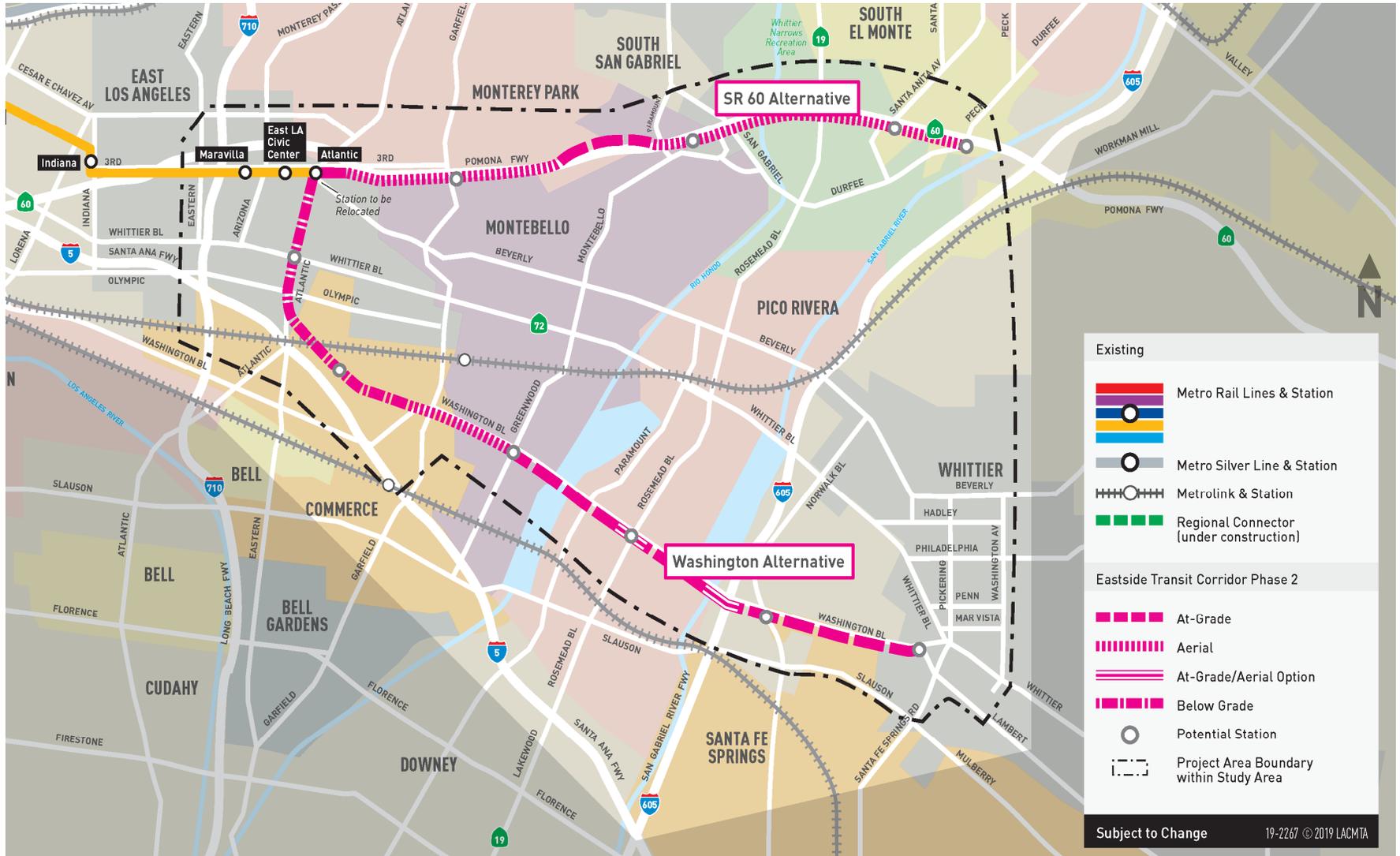


Figure 4. Combined Alternative



ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: The purpose of the Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR is to study, in a public setting, the effects of the proposed Project on the physical, human, and natural environment. The FTA and Metro will evaluate all significant environmental, social, and economic impacts of the construction and operation of the proposed Project. Unless further screening identifies other areas of possible impacts, the resource areas with potential for impacts would be determined as a part of project scoping. Measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts will also be identified and evaluated. Probable environmental effects and key environmental factors associated with the proposed Project, which will be addressed in the Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR, include:

- Air Quality;
- Climate Change and Greenhouse Gases;
- Community & Neighborhood Impacts;
- Construction Impacts;
- Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources
- Cumulative Impacts;
- Economic & Fiscal Impacts;
- Ecosystems/Biological Resources;
- Energy;
- Environmental Justice;
- Geotechnical/Subsurface/Seismic;
- Growth Inducing Impacts;
- Hazardous Materials;
- Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment;
- Land Use & Planning;
- Noise & Vibration;
- Parklands and Community Facilities;
- Real Estate & Acquisitions;
- Safety & Security;
- Transportation;
- Water Resources (Water Quality & Hydrology); and
- Visual & Aesthetics.

SCOPING MEETINGS: Public scoping meetings to accept comments on the scope of the Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR will be held on the following dates and times:

<p>Scoping Meeting # 1 – Whittier Thursday, June 13, 2019 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm</p> <p>Whittier Community Center 7630 Washington Ave, Whittier, CA 90602</p>	<p>Scoping Meeting # 2 – Commerce Monday, June 17, 2019 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm</p> <p>Commerce Senior Citizens Center 2555 Commerce Way, Commerce, CA 90040</p>
<p>Scoping Meeting # 3 – East Los Angeles Wednesday, June 19, 2019 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm</p> <p>4th Street New Primary Center 469 Amalia Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90022</p>	<p>Scoping Meeting # 4 – South El Monte Saturday, June 22, 2019 10:00 am - 12:00 pm</p> <p>South El Monte Community Center 1530 Central Ave, South El Monte, CA 91733</p>
<p>Scoping Meeting # 5 – Montebello (north) Monday, June 24, 2019 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm</p> <p>Quiet Cannon Banquet Center 901 Via San Clemente, Montebello, CA 90640</p>	<p>Scoping Meeting # 6 – Pico Rivera Wednesday, June 26, 2019 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm</p> <p>Pio Pico Woman's Club 9214 Mines Ave, Pico Rivera, CA 90660</p>

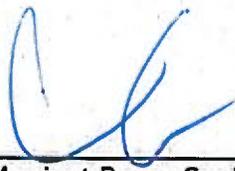
The scope of the Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR, including the goals and objectives, project area and description, and the environmental impacts to be evaluated will be presented at the public scoping meetings. All Metro meetings are held in Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant facilities. Spanish translation and Spanish-speaking staff will be provided at all scoping meetings. ADA accommodations and other translations are available by calling (323) 466-3876 or California Relay at 711 at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. Individuals who require special assistance, such as a sign language interpreter, to participate in the scoping meeting or scoping materials in alternate formats may contact Ms. Lillian De Loza Gutierrez, Community Relations Manager, Metro, at (213) 922-7479, or delozagutierrezl@Metro.net at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. Scoping materials will be available at the scoping meetings and on the Project website https://www.Metro.net/projects/eastside_phase2/. An interagency scoping meeting will be held on June 10, 2019 at 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm at Metro Headquarters One Gateway Plaza, Los Angeles, CA 90012, Gateway Plaza Conference Room, 3rd floor. Representatives of Native American tribal governments and of all Federal, State, regional and local agencies that may have an interest in any aspect of the Project will be invited to be participating or cooperating agencies, as appropriate.

COMMENT DUE DATE: Written comments on the scope of the Supplemental/Recirculated Draft EIS/EIR, including the goals and objectives, project area and description, impacts to be evaluated, and methodologies to be used in the evaluation, will be accepted during the comment period beginning on May 31, 2019 through July 15, 2019. Written comments should be sent to Metro on or before July 15, 2019 at the postal address or e-mail address below.

ADDRESS: Comments will be accepted at the public scoping meetings or they may be sent via mail to Ms. Jenny Cristales-Cevallos, Senior Manager, Metro, One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop: 99-22-6, Los Angeles, CA 90012, or via e-mail at cristalescevallosj@Metro.net. In

addition, for further information, please contact Ms. Mary Nguyen, Environmental Protection Specialist, FTA, 888 South Figueroa Street, Suite 440, Los Angeles, CA 90017, or via e-mail at Mary.Nguyen@dot.gov.

Date 5/28/19

Signature 
Title Manjeet Ranu, Senior Executive Officer