



WESTWOOD
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WESTWOOD COMMUNITY COUNCIL, INC.

C/O STEVEN D. SANN, CHAIR
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Via email – sepulvedatransit@metro.net

February 11, 2022

LA Metro Board of Directors
c/o Mr. Peter Carter, Project Manager
LA Metro
One Gateway Plaza, 99-22-6
Los Angeles, CA 90012

In Re: Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project – Scoping Public Comments

Dear LA Metro Board of Directors and Mr. Carter:

I am the Chair of the Westwood Community Council, Inc.* (WCC) writing in reference to the Metro proposal noted above, the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project (SCTP), currently being analyzed.

Our WCC has long been on record supporting the position adopted by the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC), of which we are a member, regarding the SCTP. We are also proud partners with the STCP4ALL Coalition. Specifically, our Council believes that a successful Sepulveda Transit Corridor alignment must include ALL of the following elements:

- An underground Station located directly on the main UCLA campus, at UCLA Gateway Plaza.
- A seamless connection to Westwood Village and the Westwood/UCLA Station of the Wilshire Purple “D” Line Subway currently under construction.
- A one-seat ride from the San Fernando Valley directly to UCLA and Westwood Village, continuing on to the Expo “E” Line Light Rail (and the same one-seat ride in reverse), thereby offering essential connectivity and continuity to major north-south and east-west transit lines.

Therefore, Alternatives 1 and 2 should be dismissed for, among other reasons, failing to provide an on-campus UCLA Station, and also failing to connect with the Wilshire Purple “D” Line Subway in Westwood. Similarly, Alternative 3 must be dismissed for failing to provide a direct connection with the Wilshire Purple “D” Line Westwood/UCLA Subway Station. All three of these monorail options also fail to provide adequate ridership capacity, are incompatible with Metro’s existing transit systems

and rolling stock, and also would force transit riders to wait to board the monorail at stations that are dangerously perched above the pollution-ridden 405 Freeway. All of those facts are disqualifying.

Alternative 4 also fails the test of acceptable design by having an elevated Station in the Sherman Oaks area, which would force riders to board the train in a very awkward and convoluted manner, and also would have very significant negative environmental impacts on nearby properties and neighbors, not the least of which include noise, pollution, blight, and other significant impacts.

As I have commented several times during public testimony, given the fact that both the Red and Purple lines are, end-to-end, a heavy rail subway, based on the transit and ridership demands, this STCP also must be a heavy rail subway, end-to-end, especially considering the ridership projections for this line greatly exceed the ridership of these two existing transit lines which qualified for underground heavy rail.

Thus, given Metro's goals of improving mobility, accessibility, equity, and sustainability, only the heavy-rail Alternatives 5 and 6 can provide a solution to the issues of projected ridership capacity, traffic, pollution, and lack of connectivity that plague those living, working, and visiting the Westside region.

Investing resources in a project as large as the Sepulveda Transit Corridor should result in a system that enhances connectivity by taking people directly to the places they want to go. By Metro's own estimates, a UCLA stop is projected to be the most trafficked non-transfer stop in the entire Metro system, with a daytime population of over 84,000, equivalent to that of a mid-sized city.

Alternatives 1 and 2's closest stops are 1.5 - 2 miles away from UCLA's campus, posing extreme first-last mile challenges for anyone trying to connect with UCLA and Westwood Village. This would dramatically decrease ridership to and from both UCLA and the Village as it could add upwards of 30 minutes of travel time, not to mention posing additional accessibility issues for pedestrians, wheelchair/assistive device users, and bikers. Alternatives 1 and 2 which rely on a shuttle transfer are destined to fail, and as noted above, they must be dismissed as entirely.

A Station on the UCLA campus and direct connection to Westwood Village and the Wilshire Purple "D" Line Subway is not just an issue of connectivity. It's an issue of equity and accessibility to jobs, healthcare, education, and services around Los Angeles. UCLA, including its hospital and medical center, is the third largest employer in Los Angeles County. The UCLA Ronald Reagan Hospital and Medical Center serves hundreds of thousands of patients each year. Some 47,000 undergraduate and graduate students attend UCLA, with over 20% of these students commuting each day from across Los Angeles. Due to extreme commutes including many along the Sepulveda Transit Corridor, up to 1 in 7 students experience housing and food insecurity. Westwood Village has more than 2,300 businesses. Providing a Station directly on the UCLA campus is an issue of equity in ensuring that all Angelenos have access to housing, employment, education, and healthcare in the Westside region.

As part of the environmental review process, it is important to consider impacts on traffic, emissions, and pollution. Not providing a Station located directly on the UCLA campus, as well as a direct connection to the Westwood/UCLA Station of the Purple “D” Line Subway will negatively impact Metro’s environmental goals by decreasing overall ridership, as multiple transfer points increase travel time, decreasing the benefit of using a Metro system over driving. This eliminates Alternatives 1 and 2. Alternative 3, while including a UCLA Station, lacks direct connectivity with a number of other Metro lines, including the Orange “G” Line, the Purple “D” Line, the Expo “E” Line, and the future East San Fernando Valley Light Rail, plus Metrolink lines that connect to these Metro lines. Alternative 4 suffers from a very poor above ground station in Sherman Oaks.

Therefore, only Alternatives 5, and 6 will ultimately contribute towards Metro’s sustainability and VMT reduction goals, not to mention the environmental justice and public health issues associated with the monorail alignments running along the polluted 405 freeway. While these monorail options might be less expensive, is it worth investing any money at all in a system that won’t achieve its goals?

The SCTP has the potential to dramatically change the way we view transit in the Westside. However, the monorail options without a UCLA Station, a direct connection to the Westwood Purple “D” Line, and direct connectivity to other Metro lines, will ultimately fail in achieving high ridership and access to key resources such as healthcare, employment, and education. Based on these criteria, as well as considerations of sustainability and environmental justice, I call upon the Metro board to eliminate Alternatives 1, 2, 3, and 4.

As part of your scoping process, I ask that the following elements also be thoroughly studied and analyzed:

- Please consider and analyze an alternative to the proposed terminus of Alternative 6 by an “Alternative 6-B” terminating at the Sepulveda & Exposition Expo Station, in addition to currently proposed terminus at Bundy & Exposition.
- Please consider and analyze the possibility of using longer trains, consistent with the rolling stock currently used by both the Red “B” Line and the Purple “D” Line. This will necessitate larger (longer) stations, and such construction and maintenance costs must be thoroughly analyzed.
- Please consider and analyze the option of having Alternatives 5 and 6 using both AUTOMATED trains, as well as HUMAN-DRIVEN trains.
- Perhaps most importantly, please fully study and analyze the following key question: Whether a tunnel can be safely constructed and operated through the Santa Monica Mountains, connecting the San Fernando Valley to Westwood and the Westside. Such analysis must include, at a

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minimum, considerations of Seismology, Geology, Hydrology, Biology, Ecology, Engineering, wildlife impacts, noise, vibration, erosion, pollution, and all other relevant environmental impacts.

If you have any questions about this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Steven D. Sann

Steven D. Sann
Chair

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**The Westwood Community Council, Inc. (WCC) is the oldest, largest, and most broadly-based Westwood community-wide organization that represents the more than 150,000 stakeholders who live, work, own property, own or operate businesses, attend school, or participate in a wide variety of organizations within the 90024 and 90095 communities. The WCC is the only Council that represents the entire Westwood Community Plan area as established by the City of Los Angeles. Founded in 2009 as a California non-profit public benefit corporation, the WCC includes representatives and members from business and commercial property owners, merchant and business organizations, Westwood's business improvement district, four major homeowner associations, apartment and condominium multi-family residential renters and owners, senior citizen residential organizations, K-12 public and private schools, non-profit organizations, religious institutions, volunteer service and civic groups, parks and recreation organizations, veterans and public safety groups, environmental and land use organizations, UCLA undergraduate and graduate students, UCLA faculty and staff, and major arts and cultural institutions. The boundaries of the WCC, which generally follow the boundaries of the Westwood Community Plan area for the City of Los Angeles, are: Sunset Boulevard on the north, Santa Monica Boulevard on the south, the Beverly Hills border on the east, and the 405 Freeway on the west.*