



December 7, 2023

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Attn: Peter Carter, Project Manager
One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop 99-22-6
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Sepulveda Transit Corridor Alternatives 4, 5, & 6 - SUPPORT

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of the San Fernando Valley Young Democrats, we write to express our support for Metro's Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project. The proposed rail line will benefit young people residing in the San Fernando Valley by connecting the Valley to the Westside. As detailed in this letter, we urge Metro to adopt either Alternative 4, 5, or 6 to ensure a heavy rail option with a direct connection to the D Line (formerly the Purple Line) extension and a station at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) campus.

The San Fernando Valley Young Democrats (SFVYD) strives to engage young people in legislative affairs, increase efficiency in our government, maintain the viability of our free institutions, and contribute to the growth and influence of the Democratic Party's ideals and philosophy. Founded in 1994 by young activists including now U.S. Senator Alex Padilla and Representative Tony Cárdenas, SFVYD is the premiere Democratic organization for young people in the San Fernando Valley. Our club is made up of transit users, students, and young professionals who support an alternative to traffic congestion on the 405 freeway.

We would like to thank Metro for the opportunity to comment. Since the announcement of this project, the public has engaged in extensive feedback and debate since the start of the original Scoping Period which ended in February of last year. With the conclusion of the Fall 2023 community updates, SFVYD began discussion of the project's objectives and alternatives within our legislative committee. After deliberation, the SFVYD Board voted to support Alternatives 4 through 6 with the intent of prioritizing a heavy rail option, connection to other planned rail lines, as well as a UCLA station. These factors are crucial to SFVYD's support.

According to the Notice of Preparation, released in November 2021, it is our understanding that the following alternatives support a heavy rail option with alignments either underground or aerial. Each alternative, as described by Metro, differs in design within the San Fernando Valley.

- **Alternative 4:** Heavy rail with underground alignment south of Ventura Boulevard and aerial alignment generally along Sepulveda Boulevard in the San Fernando Valley
- **Alternative 5:** Heavy rail with underground alignment including along Sepulveda Boulevard in the San Fernando Valley
- **Alternative 6:** Heavy rail with entirely underground alignment including along Van Nuys Boulevard in the San Fernando Valley and southern terminus station on Bundy Drive

It is not our intent to limit our preference with one alternative. Instead, our preferred alternatives are revealing promising projections with reduced travel times as well as ridership levels higher than Alternatives 1 through 3. Metro's own data demonstrates the monorail alternatives are anticipated to serve fewer riders (approximately 86,000 average weekday boardings under Alternative 3) compared to the maximum heavy rail option (approximately 121,600 riders under Alternative 5).¹

Moreover, ridership from the Valley will help approximately 26% of all UCLA commuters, supporting approximately 7,500 employees and 2,350 students who travel almost daily. Of those students, almost one-third are first-generation college students. In addition, approximately 36% of students come from low-income families and 35% receive need-based financial assistance.² Designing a transportation system in which stations are adjacent to the 405 freeway (as proposed in Alternatives 1 through 3) would expose these riders to hazardous levels of pollution and noise from the freeway; thereby, presenting an alarming environmental justice concern.³

Additionally, SFVYD was compelled to take a position not only to voice the opinion of young people in the San Fernando Valley, but also in light of a small minority of wealthy voices who will likely not utilize this once-in-a-generation opportunity. Building a subway underneath the Hollywood Hills is not new to Metro. Riders use the B Line (formerly the Red Line) from North Hollywood to get to jobs and entertainment downtown today. Connecting the Valley to the Westside will do the same. This project is key to reducing greenhouse gas emissions generated by vehicles congested on the freeway, in which transportation accounts for 38% of the state's emissions, according to the California Air Resources Board.⁴ Thus, by providing reliable and efficient transportation alternatives to job centers like that of the Westside, the Sepulveda Transit Corridor would benefit the region as a whole.

¹ Metro. 2023. The Source. "We've got updates on the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project and we want your feedback (by December 8, please)!" India Mandelkern. November 27, 2023. Accessed December 7, 2023. <https://thesource.metro.net/2023/11/27/weve-got-updates-on-the-sepulveda-transit-corridor-project-and-we-want-your-feedback-by-december-8-please/>.

² STC4All. 2023. Access and Equity. Fighting for an Accessible and Equitable Sepulveda Transit Corridor. Accessed December 2023. <https://www.stc4all.org/access-and-equity1.html>.

³ StreetsBlog Los Angeles. 2021. "Ten Reasons to Ditch the Sepulveda Monorail Proposal Now." March 15, 2021. Accessed December 2023. <https://la.streetsblog.org/2021/03/15/ten-reasons-to-ditch-the-sepulveda-monorail-proposal-now>.

⁴ California Air Resources Board. 2023. Current California GHG Emissions Inventory Data. 2000-2020 GHG Inventory (2022 Edition). Accessed December 2023. <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/ghg-inventory-data>.

For these reasons, we urge the adoption of Alternative 4, 5, or 6 of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mayra Valadez". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Mayra Valadez
President
San Fernando Valley Young Democrats

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brandon Whalen-Castellanos". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Brandon Whalen-Castellanos
Legislative Director
San Fernando Valley Young Democrats

CC: Mayor Karen Bass, City of Los Angeles
Supervisor Lindsey Horvath, Third District
Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Fifth District
Councilmember Paul Krekorian, Second District