



January 19, 2022

To the LA Metro Board of Directors with regards to the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project;

I am writing to you on behalf of the Westwood Village Improvement Association (WVIA). The WVIA is contracted by the City of Los Angeles to represent our community of over 2,300 unique businesses, and to administer benefits to the Westwood Business Improvement District.

After considerable review, the WVIA Board of Directors has determined that the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project be underground, include a stop at the UCLA campus and also include direct connectivity to the Purple Line Extension. The position of the WVIA aligns with heavy-rail alternatives 5 and 6 and we strongly encourage the LA Metro Board of Directors to approve only these solutions that can best address Metro's goals of improving mobility, accessibility, equity, and sustainability while providing the best solutions to the issues of traffic, pollution, and lack of connectivity that plague those living, working, and visiting the Westside region, and the Westwood Business Improvement District.

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 82,000 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. Any alternative (such as 1 or 2) that relies on a shuttle transfer is destined to fail.

A direct stop at UCLA and Westwood Village 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 largest employer west of Downtown Los Angeles. The UCLA Ronald Reagan Hospital and Medical Center serves hundreds of thousands of patients each year. Over 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, many along the Sepulveda Transit Corridor, up to 1 in 7 students experience housing and food insecurity. Westwood Village has over 2,300 businesses. Providing a direct stop at UCLA 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 direct stop in Westwood and UCLA 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 direct UCLA stop, 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. Therefore, only Alternatives 4, 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. Alternative 4 includes an aerial alignment that is not only aesthetically undesirable but will also significantly devalue adjacent properties. Alternatives 1, 2, 3, and 4 might be less expensive, but is it worth investing any money at all in a system that won't achieve its goals?

The Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project has the potential to dramatically change the way we view transit in the Westside of Los Angeles. However, the monorail options without a direct stop at UCLA, 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 or immediately adjust Alternatives 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Sincerely,



Andrew Thomas
Executive Director, WVIA