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SHERMAN OAKS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

POST OFFICE BOX 5223
SHERMAN OAKS, CALIFORNIA 91413
Information: (818) 377-4590
www.shermanoaks914.com
SOHA914@gmail.com

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February 5, 2019

Mr. Cory Zelmer
Program Manager, Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project
LA Metro
One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop 99-22-5
Los Angeles, CA 90012
zelmerc@metro.net

Subject: SOHA Comments and Questions on the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Refined Concepts

Reference: LA Metro, *Next Stop: Exploring Alternatives to the 405 – Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project*, Community Meetings Presentation, January/February 2019

Dear Mr. Zelmer,

The Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association represents thousands of politically active families in a 70,000-person southeastern San Fernando Valley community that is home to much of the northern Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Study Area (see map). SOHA strongly supports effective high-capacity rapid transit in Sherman Oaks and the San Fernando Valley. Our mission is ensuring that Valley gets its fair share of this rapid transit. And because Sherman Oaks will experience much of the project’s construction impacts, a further goal is ensuring that these impacts are carefully considered and thoughtfully mitigated.

SOHA reviewed Metro’s referenced Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project presentation charts and participated in the February 2nd public meeting. We appreciate the depth and breadth of information that Metro presented, especially at this mid-stage of the Project Feasibility Study. We further appreciate the additional transparency of Metro having provided presentation materials before the meetings. SOHA feels that the four refined concepts were carefully selected and applaud Metro for eliminating the underperforming light rail options and cleverly extending the project’s northern terminus to the Van Nuys Metrolink station for improved ridership.

We submit the following 33 comments and questions concerning the project and may submit further questions or revise our comments prior to the summer 2019 public meetings.



Underground Versus Aerial Alignment

1. SOHA understands Metro’s continued evaluation of two fully underground heavy rail concepts (HRT 1 and HRT 2), one partially aerial heavy rail concept (HRT 3), and one partially aerial monorail concept (MRT 1) to fully understand their viability and, most importantly, to accurately estimate their costs. We also understand that HRT 1 and HRT 2 will cost much more than HRT 3 which will cost more than MRT 1 – fully underground will cost much more than partially aerial.

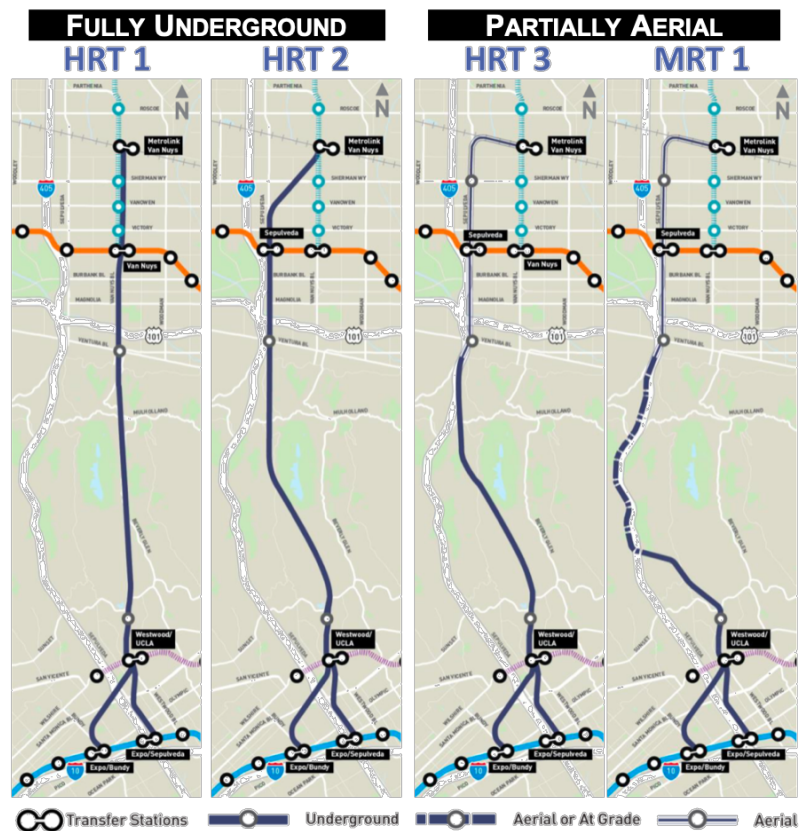
It is very possible that some fully underground concept cost estimates could exceed available Measure M funding. Metro once informed SOHA that a good rule-of-thumb for fully underground subway construction cost is one-half billion dollars per mile. The HRT 1 and HRT 2 concepts are about

15 miles long, so would each cost about \$7.5 billion to construct – maybe more. Measure M provides only \$5.67 billion for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project – almost \$2 billion less than needed. Importantly, 55 percent of Metro’s Measure M money is from federal, state, local, and other funding – and who knows the availability of that funding. Metro must select the best concept for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project and find the necessary additional funding sources, including public-private partnerships if necessary, to construct that concept. It would be worse than foolish to let funding drive concept selection decisions for a transit infrastructure project that will still be operating in 100+ years.

As we have stated many times, SOHA will strongly oppose any concept that is not fully underground in Sherman Oaks. We are home to one of the nation’s most congested intersections – Sepulveda Boulevard at Ventura Boulevard – and want nothing at grade or aerial that worsens our congestion. On the other hand, we cannot simply complain and demand – we have to help. To this end, SOHA commits to support Metro in any way necessary to secure the additional funding needed to make the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project fully underground in our community, the Valley, and the Westside. We have already put on our thinking caps, begun talking with our allies, and started engaging with political leaders and community members. We all want and need a win-win solution for this critical rapid transit project.

2. SOHA is very concerned that neither the HRT 3 or MRT 1 aerial concepts would provide an equitable and fair share of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project for the Valley – because the Valley gets all or most of the aerial routes while the Westside gets all or most of the underground routes. This was not what Metro promoted and not what the Valley was promised.

Measure M, Attachment A, *Los Angeles County Transit Expenditure Plan – Groundbreaking Sequence* provides Metro’s specific funding allocations and cost estimates (in 2015 dollars) by project and subregion. The San Fernando Valley portion of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project (north of Mulholland Drive) is allocated \$1.270 billion from Measure M funding and \$1.567 billion from local, state, federal, and other funding, and the estimated Valley project cost is \$2.837 billion. The Westside portion of the project has the exact same funding and exact same cost. So, the Valley and Westside subregions appear to be equal partners sharing equal financial participation in the project.



The Valley and Westside subregions also equally share the project’s route and stations. The route lengths are about 14.5 for HRT 3 and 15 miles for MRT 3, split very equally between the Valley and Westside subregions. In addition, the number of stations in each subregion is about the same – four in the Valley and three in the Westside. The Valley and Westside appear to be equal partners sharing equal route, station, and financial participation in the project.

Unfortunately, the partnership falters when considering how the Valley and Westside share the aerial portions of either the HRT 3 or MRT 1 routes. Why? Because for both aerial concepts the Valley is saddled with all or most of the aerial routes. This is not equitable and certainly not a fair share!

The 14.5-mile HRT 3 concept route has about 7 miles in the Valley (north of Mulholland) and 7.5 miles in the Westside (south of Mulholland). The Valley has about 1.3 miles of underground route and 5.7 miles of aerial route (elevated above ground) – or 20 percent underground route and 80 percent aerial route. The Westside has 100 percent underground route and zero percent aerial route. SOHA cannot understand why Metro would promote such inequity between two equal-partner subregions by proposing primarily aerial routes only in the Valley. The Valley and Westside equitably share the funding. Shouldn’t they also equitably split the negative impacts of the aerial routes?

A similar inequity exists for the monorail concept – and is even worse for the Valley. The 15-mile MRT 1 route has 7 miles in the Valley (north of Mulholland) and 8 miles on the Westside (south of Mulholland). The entire Valley 7-mile route is at-grade or aerial – zero percent underground and 100 percent at-grade or aerial. The Westside has about 5.6 miles of underground route and 2.4 miles of at-grade or aerial route – or about 70 percent underground and 30 percent at-grade or aerial.

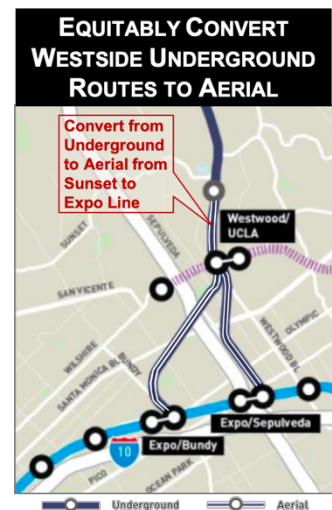
SOHA expects Metro to recognize and correct this inequitable aerial routing early in the Project Feasibility Study’s final phase. A simple and viable solution is equally allocating at-grade and aerial routes for the HRT 3 and MRT 1 concepts between the Valley and the Westside. We discuss one possible solution for each concept and note that there are many other solutions.

For the HRT 3 concept, the heavy rail route currently transitions from underground to aerial near Sepulveda and Valley Vista Boulevards. Metro could extend the underground route by instead transitioning to aerial at the Orange Line station. The Valley segment would then be about 3.5 miles underground and 3.5 miles aerial – or 50 percent underground and 50 percent aerial.

In parallel, Metro could modify the Westside HRT 3 route to match this 50-50 split. Relocating and converting the Westside underground route to aerial from the Sunset Boulevard station south to the Expo Line station (see figure at right) would result in about 4.5 miles underground and 3 miles aerial. This is about 60 percent underground and 40 percent aerial on the Westside – near enough to the Valley’s 50-50 split to be almost equitable.

For the MRT 1 concept, Metro could add a considerable length of underground route in the Valley between Valley Vista Boulevard and the Sherman Oaks station on Sepulveda Boulevard. This would result in about 3.5 miles of underground route through the most congested portion of Sherman Oaks – or 50 percent underground and 50 percent at-grade or aerial for the Valley. Relocating and converting the Westside underground route to aerial from the Sunset Boulevard station south to the Expo Line station (see figure at right) would result in about 5 miles underground and 3 miles aerial. This is a bit more than 60 percent underground and a bit less than 40 percent aerial – another almost equitable split for the Valley.

Such modifications are equitable and fair solutions to restore the Valley-Westside partnership. SOHA understands that the solutions are substantial and significant but are also critical to provide the Valley its fair share of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project. We are already discussing these potential solutions with our elected officials and the San Fernando Valley Council of Governments and would also like to discuss them with Metro as soon as possible.



HRT 1 Concept – Heavy Rail Under Van Nuys Boulevard

3. Concept HRT 1 is most likely SOHA’s preferred concept because it is fully underground, provides necessary excess capacity, has the straightest, shortest route from the Valley to Westside, offers the fastest end-to-end travel time of 15 minutes, and potentially brings less disruption during the years-long construction period. It is also one of the two most costly concepts and will probably require additional funding beyond Measure M. SOHA shares Metro’s concern about tunneling under the southernmost stations of the new East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor but feels this is solvable.

SOHA urges Metro to look into the possibility of locating a major parking structure near the northern terminus of the HRT 1 route, somewhere between Raymer Street and Sherman Way. The structure should have easy access to the I-405 freeway to help accommodate riders from the north Valley and other northern areas.

We also urge Metro to think about combining the Sepulveda and East SFV Corridors between the Orange Line and Van Nuys Metrolink station, but we understand that this is a difficult problem because one corridor supports regional travelers and the other local travelers. Still, it is worth looking into even though the ESFVTC EIR is complete and approved.



HRT 2 Concept – Heavy Rail Under Sepulveda Boulevard

4. Concept HRT 2 is SOHA’s close second to HRT 1 because it is fully underground, has the second shortest route, and offers a comparably fast 16-minute travel time. It is also one of the two most costly concepts and will probably require additional funding beyond Measure M. SOHA’s major concerns with HRT 2 are construction impacts and their effective mitigation, which will be very difficult and costly because Sepulveda Boulevard has the worst traffic in the nation and offers minimal alternate traffic routes toward the west.

We have further concerns about public perceptions against tunneling under a residential community and any resultant operational noise and vibration from heavy rail trains. Metro initially addressed these concerns at their recent public meetings but should provide additional information and proof at the summer 2019 meetings.

The HRT 2 route is close to Metro’s possible major parking structure location near Sherman Way at Sepulveda Boulevard. Such parking is critical for drivers from the north and the location offers a close connection to the I-405 freeway.



HRT 3 Concept – Heavy Rail Aerial Above Sepulveda Boulevard

- Concept HRT 3 is not desirable or viable as currently configured because it has a fully aerial route in Sherman Oaks and does not equitably share aerial routing with the Westside (see comment 2). HRT 3 is heavy rail with excess capacity and does offer a reasonable 18-minute travel time. Construction impacts may be somewhat less than those for concept HRT 2 but will still be significant. The concept is most likely the second least costly and its quality of performance reflects that lower cost.

The aerial route will be intrusive and will interfere with traffic. It will probably also be noisy. In addition, using a 35-foot-high elevated overpass to cross heavy rail trains above the I-101 freeway is not sensible, potentially unsafe from trains derailing during seismic events, and not sensitive to aesthetics or our residents. The concept will require purchase or condemnation of substantial amounts of private residential property. The aerial track and support structures will be located in single-family Sherman Oaks neighborhoods. We are also very concerned about the loss of parking along Sepulveda Boulevard – and also about possible lost traffic lanes.

We appreciate the additional station at Sherman Way and the proximity to a major parking structure near that station and the I-405.



MRT 1 Concept – Monorail At or Above Grade Through the Sepulveda Pass and Aerial Above Sepulveda Boulevard

- Concept MRT 1 is not desirable or viable as currently configured because it has a fully aerial route in Sherman Oaks and does not equitably share aerial routing with the Westside (see comment 2). MRT 1 employs slow rubber-tired monorail trains or trams with significantly lower capacity and the longest 26-minute travel time. It also adds yet another type of Metro transit technology. Construction impacts may be somewhat less than those for concept HRT 2 but will still be significant because there will be two monorail tracks – one in each direction – unlike the single-direction Disneyland track.

The aerial route will be intrusive and interfere with traffic. Using a 35-foot-high elevated overpass to cross monorail trains above the I-101 freeway is not sensible, potentially unsafe from trains derailing during seismic events, and not sensitive to aesthetics or our residents. The concept will require purchase or condemnation of substantial amounts of private residential property. The aerial track and support structures will be located in single-family Sherman Oaks neighborhoods. We are also very concerned about the loss of parking along Sepulveda Boulevard – and also about possible lost traffic lanes.

We appreciate the additional station at Sherman Way and the proximity to a major parking structure near that station and the I-405. MRT 1 might also offer possible additional stations in the Sepulveda Pass, but these would further increase the already long travel time.



Concept Evaluation

7. Chart 10 from Metro's referenced presentation highlights the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project's evaluation criteria. SOHA is concerned that the criteria do not specifically include construction impacts and construction mitigation impacts as these will be very significant in Sherman Oaks, will begin in the early 2020s, and will last for many years. Metro must provide additional details when and how these concerns will be included in the project evaluation at the summer 2019 public meetings. We understand that they will be fully addressed in the Environmental Impact Report, but this may occur too late to impact the evaluation and selection process.

System Ridership and Capacity

8. We appreciate that Metro conducted passenger demand analyses and determined that each of the four concepts can provide at least 100,000 daily project trips. We await the results of future capacity and ridership analyses to better predict the actual operating capabilities for each of the concepts and hope this information will be available to the public before the next summer 2019 public meetings. It is very important to help the public understand the capabilities of the various concepts.
9. Could Metro please clarify whether their 412,000-traveler aggregate number includes only I-405 travelers, or also includes travelers on Sepulveda Boulevard and other Sherman Oaks streets that feed the Westside (such as Woodcliff Road, Scadlock Lane, and Beverly Glen Boulevard)?

Aerial Routes

10. The HRT 3 heavy rail concept uses aerial routes from Valley Vista and Sepulveda Boulevards to the Van Nuys Metrolink station, including an overpass above the I-101 freeway that would be at least 35 feet high. Metro must perform early light and shadow studies to determine the environmental and community impacts from the aerial tracks and their supporting structures and present the results at the summer 2019 public meetings. Metro must also provide at least the following artist renderings for the HRT 3 concept at the summer 2019 public meetings so the public can easily visualize and understand the negative impacts on the Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys communities: (1) Valley Vista transition from underground to aerial route; (2) Sepulveda and Ventura Boulevards intersection; (3) Ventura Boulevard station; (4) overpass crossing above the I-101 freeway; (5) Sepulveda and Burbank Boulevards intersection; (6) Orange Line station; (7) Sherman Way station; (8) Sherman Way parking structure; (9) route turn from Sepulveda Boulevard onto Raymer Street; (10) Van Nuys Metrolink station; and (11) any other significant features, turns, or underground-to-aerial transitions along the route.
11. The MRT 1 monorail concept uses aerial routes from the Getty Center to the Van Nuys Metrolink station. The concept includes at-grade or aerial monorail running along the west shoulder of the I-405 freeway, two monorail crossovers of the I-405 freeway, aerial monorail tracks along Sepulveda Boulevard, and an overpass above the I-101 freeway that would be at least 35 feet high. Metro must perform early light and shadow studies to determine the environmental and community impacts from the aerial tracks and their supporting structures and present the results at the summer 2019 public meetings. Metro must also provide at least the following artist renderings for the MRT 1 concept at the summer 2019 public meetings so the public can easily visualize and understand the negative impacts on the Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys communities: (1) the Getty Center transition from underground to aerial route; (2) both overpass crossings above the I-405 freeway; (3) multiple views of operation at-grade or aerial along the I-405 freeway shoulder; (4) the transition to aerial on Sepulveda Boulevard; (5) Sepulveda and Ventura Boulevards intersection; (6) Ventura Boulevard station; (7) overpass crossing above the I-101 freeway; (8) Sepulveda and Burbank Boulevards intersection; (9) Orange Line station; (10) Sherman Way station; (11) Sherman Way parking structure; (12) route turn from Sepulveda Boulevard onto Raymer Street; (13) Van Nuys Metrolink station; and (14) any other significant features, turns, or underground-to-aerial transitions along the route.

Public-Private Partnership

12. For several years, Metro has continued mentioning the possibility of a public-private partnership for construction of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project. Metro has not yet provided any information, either speculative or definitive, about such a possibility. It is getting late in the Technical Feasibility Study and project evaluation cycles, and SOHA wonders how much longer Metro plans to pursue a PPP opportunity. Metro should present substantive information on the possibility and status of a public-private partnership at the summer 2019 public meetings.

Construction Cost and Schedule

13. SOHA understands that Metro's cost estimates will be critical in selecting the final concepts going forward. The cost estimates must be thorough and complete. Construction on either Sepulveda or Van Nuys Boulevards will be devilishly difficult, incurring major traffic challenges. Any re-routing of traffic will be almost impossible – the traffic levels are simply too great. Drivers will be late, angry, and even dangerous. We recommend that Metro's cost estimates include significant costs for construction mitigation, traffic mitigation, and especially on-site traffic control wardens during all construction hours and probably all hours (the City of Los Angeles should not be expected to pay for these wardens and probably won't anyhow). These costs will be significant and could impact concept evaluation and selection.
14. The two concepts using aerial routes – HRT 3 and MRT 1 – may be built more quickly because there will be less tunneling and fewer underground stations. This in turn may enable a shorter construction schedule – possible short enough to meet the 2028 Olympics schedule – although we have our doubts. SOHA's position is that this quicker schedule is irrelevant in the big picture for an infrastructure project that passengers will still be riding in 100+ years. Yes, it would be nice to have this transit corridor operational for the Olympics. But the Olympics is a one-time event and insignificant compared to selecting and constructing the best, highest-capacity, most-efficient transit system through the Sepulveda Pass. We urge Metro to build the best project as fast as possible without succumbing to the Olympics illusion.

Construction Impact Mitigation

15. Three of the refined concepts (HRT 2, HRT 3, and MRT 1) include an underground station at the Ventura-Sepulveda Boulevards intersection. SOHA feels that a station in this vicinity is mandatory for these concepts but is very concerned about negative impacts during construction – which will last many years. The Ventura-Sepulveda intersection is one of the busiest in the nation and is severely constricted by the I-405 and I-101 freeways, the Sepulveda Basin, the lack of freeway on- and off-ramps in the area, and minimal east-west alternate traffic route options. Construction of a large underground station at this location will be a traveler's worst nightmare and negatively impact drivers, bus riders, pedestrians, emergency vehicles, businesses, and the community at large for many years. If a Sepulveda-Ventura station becomes reality, we ask Metro to present and discuss their plans to mitigate construction impacts at the summer 2019 public meeting. Metro might alternately consider locating the station at the lot bounded by Sepulveda Boulevard, Camarillo Street, and the I-405/I-101 transition road.
16. SOHA has the same concerns and requests (as the prior comment) for Concept HRT 1 that would locate an underground station near the Ventura and Van Nuys Boulevards intersection, even though this intersection presents somewhat fewer traffic challenges. Such a station would again be mandatory, and the construction impacts would be severe. Metro might consider other locations slightly north of the intersection.

Safety

17. In traversing the Sepulveda Pass, either in tunnels, at grade, or on an aerial track, there will be significant grades and elevation changes. SOHA recommends that Metro present substantive information at the summer 2019 public meetings on how trains, monorails, or trams would be protected in runaway and other potential emergency situations.

Seismic

18. In talking with SOHA members and constituents, we have learned that many persons fear traveling in underground tunnels because of possible earthquake impacts. Metro has noted that properly located and constructed tunnels are actually safer than ground-level or aerial routes during earthquakes and SOHA agrees with this assessment. However, Metro has so far supported their seismic claims with only anecdotal information. The main danger due to earthquakes for an underground subway system is not protecting the cars and trains when they are enclosed in their reinforced tunnel, but instead protecting passengers when they are forced to evacuate a train or station and get to the surface, which may be covered with building debris and other rubble that makes it difficult or impossible to exit. Safe evacuation can be even more difficult if the tunnel section is very long between stations, such as the proposed tunnel through the Sepulveda Pass that is 5.5 miles long between the Sunset Boulevard and Ventura Boulevard stations. We recommend that Metro develop a substantive engineering-based explanation concerning tunnel and passenger safety during earthquakes and present it at the summer 2019 public meetings. It's never too early to discuss safety concerns.
19. The City of Los Angeles has implemented their *Shake Alert LA* early earthquake warning system. This system can provide several seconds of warning before a serious earthquake and would allow trains to slow down or stop to minimize chances of derailling. It would also allow station elevators to hold their doors open at a floor. We recommend that Metro present information at the summer 2019 public meetings on how they are implementing the *Shake Alert LA* system.
20. At its February 2, 2019 public meeting, Metro noted that they were evaluating the impacts of the Santa Monica earthquake fault and other faults near the Westside routes. As part of this evaluation, Metro should consider SOHA's recommendation to convert portions of the underground Westside routes into aerial routes (see comment 2 on the equitable division of aerial routes between the Valley and Westside).
21. Two of Metro's refined concepts (HRT 3 and MRT 1) include aerial segments and portions of these might be extremely elevated, such as the overpass above the I-101 freeway in Sherman Oaks which could easily more than 35 feet above street level. Such elevated structures are subject to high accelerations during seismic events, possibly significant enough to derail trains. Metro must present and discuss this at the summer 2019 public meetings, so the public fully understands any potential seismic safety concerns for aerial systems.

Tunneling

22. SOHA has begun to hear several concerns from the public about the detrimental impacts of tunneling on our community. These concerns range from vibrations that damage house foundations to the collapse of hillsides to widespread housing damage far from tunneling sites. SOHA understands that the tunnels will be deep, especially under the mountains in the Sepulveda Pass, and feels that current tunneling technology should result in few problems to our community. However, to alleviate tunneling concerns, we feel that Metro should include substantive information on tunneling at the summer 2019 public meetings.

Noise and Vibration

23. Concepts HRT 3 and MRT 1 include east-west routes along Raymer Street near some residential communities. Some residents may be concerned about potential noise and vibration impacts along these segments, even if trains are operating underground. We suggest that Metro present specific information at the summer 2019 public meetings on noise and vibration impacts for both concepts.

Stations

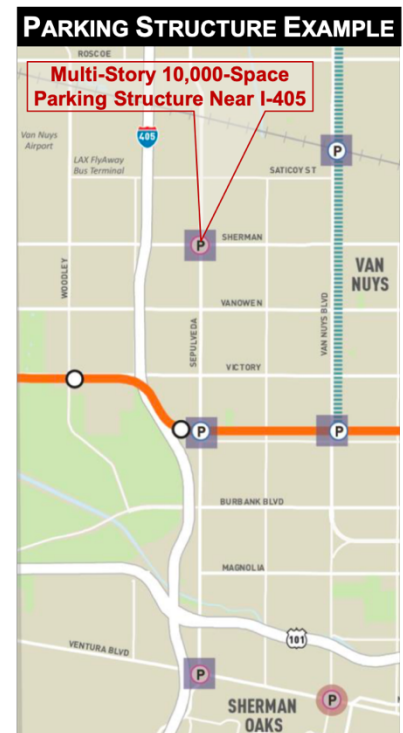
24. All four refined concepts have a station at Ventura Boulevard which is either underground or elevated. For decades the airports were used only to service passengers and load and unload aircraft. Now they have become shopping centers since there are many available customers sitting around waiting for a plane with needs for services such as food, entertainment, reading material, and other travel related accessories. In the future there will likely be, as there are now in Japan, London, Moscow, and other well-developed subway systems, shopping opportunities for passengers at underground stations where they can relax, rest, eat, use restrooms, and partake of whatever amenities are available. Metro might look ahead to those potential uses and think about providing areas where they might be integral with or adjacent to subway stations.
25. The HRT 1 and HRT 2 concepts each have three stations – at Ventura Boulevard, the Orange Line, and the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The HRT 3 and MRT 1 concepts each have four stations – at Ventura Boulevard, the Orange Line, Sherman Way, and the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. Station connectivity makes rapid transit efficient and effective. For people to give up their cars they have to be able to go door-to-door easily. We hope that Metro plans to increase regular bus service near stations. For example, if many people ride the Sepulveda Transit Corridor and exit at Ventura Boulevard, Metro should increase bus service on streets running both north-south and east-west to easily and quickly get people to their final destinations. Metro should present their plans for increased bus service at the summer 2019 public meetings.
26. When the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project is complete, travelers will easily travel from the Van Nuys Metrolink Station to LAX – a very long distance. Metro must build stations with restroom facilities if they want passengers to endure these long rides. One of our board members regularly rides the Orange Line, then Red Line, then Expo Line from Sherman Oaks to Exposition Park. Metro has zero restrooms in any of the stations, and the ride is often quite challenging.
27. The MRT 1 monorail concept operates above ground along the western shoulder of the I-405 freeway and offers the possibility of one or two additional stations near the Skirball Museum and/or Getty Center. These stations could serve not only museum visitors but also the Leo Baeck Temple and many other people who live or work in nearby neighborhoods. The downside of the stations would be additional end-to-end travel time along the route. We estimate at least two minutes additional travel time per station, which would increase the total route travel time from 26 minutes to at least 30 minutes. Metro should determine whether additional stations are desired and necessary at these locations and present their recommendations including artist renditions at the summer 2019 public meetings.

Parking

28. SOHA is very concerned that aerial concepts HRT 3 and MRT 1 will remove street parking from Sepulveda Boulevard along the entire route from Valley Vista Boulevard north to Raymer Street. There are multiple business and residential areas along the boulevard that rely on street parking. Metro should try to eliminate zero parking as it refines its two aerial concepts. One potential solution is converting Valley aerial routes to underground routes as SOHA recommended in comment 2.

29. As was apparent from multiple questions at the February 2nd public meeting, parking at stations is a critical concern and its presence or absence could make or break early ridership gains for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor. We have heard multiple complaints from our community members about how they would love to ride Metro but cannot park at stations. Riding a bike or walking may be difficult for elderly, disabled, or medically challenged persons, and these people will always comprise a significant sector of the population. SOHA also suggests that smaller distributed parking structures could be added along the Orange Line, so drivers could easily park and ride the Orange Line to a station and transfer to underground Sepulveda Transit Corridor trains (and also East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor ground-level LRT). Such a distribution of parking structures might provide for less station crowding and could complement a large central parking facility. These sites could be distributed along the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project or at other sites along the north-south I-405 freeway. SOHA recommends that Metro conduct a careful analysis of how best to disperse parking and develop effective regional parking solutions for both the Valley and Westside. Metro should present its results at the summer 2019 public meetings to help garner early support.

30. All four concepts need a multi-story parking structure near the I-405 and northern project terminus that would incentivize drivers to exit the freeway and use rapid transit. We understand Metro’s concerns with the effectiveness and high cost of parking; but if Metro’s goal is removing drivers from the I-405 and attracting drivers from the North Valley and North County, then massive parking is simply mandatory. An easily accessible, multi-story parking structure is needed as close as possible to both the I-405 and a Metro station, with rapid connections to both the freeway and station. Chart 17 from the referenced Metro presentation shows an excellent location for such a structure at Sepulveda Boulevard and Sherman Way (see figure at right). For cost effectiveness, such a large parking structure should be designed and constructed with the knowledge that one day it may not be needed for parking cars and instead could be easily retrofitted for another use, such as housing. For example, the initial design should use exterior ramps for accessing floors to ease conversion.



31. Metro’s Scott Page presented information about a potential major transit center at the northern terminus of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project during the June 21, 2018 San Fernando Valley Council of Governments Transportation Committee meeting as part of Metro’s NextGen Bus Study. This is a terrific idea and should also include a large parking structure. SOHA recommends that Metro pursue this concept and present possibilities at the summer 2019 public meetings.

Maintenance and Storage Facilities

32. The Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project will require maintenance and storage facilities. Providing sufficient future transit capacity to meet demand along the corridor will require large numbers of transit vehicles, and the storage facilities may be very large. The location of maintenance and storage facilities can displace local property owners and cause strong local opposition, as seen for the East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor project. In addition, there appear to be few viable sites available along the Valley-to-Westside Sepulveda Transit Corridor project route. One possibility might share maintenance and storage facilities for Sepulveda Corridor HRT and East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor LRT, since both would now have access to the planned ESFVTC facility. We understand that Metro will be studying maintenance as part of the final phase of their feasibility study and hope that Metro would provide early information (including locations) for potential maintenance and storage facilities for the final concepts before the summer 2019 public meetings. Addressing a controversial topic early is often the best path to reach public buy-in.

Progress Updates

33. The public is very interested in the Sepulveda Transit Corridor project, as shown by the large attendance at Metro's public meetings. They wait breathlessly for six or more months between meetings for the next update. SOHA recommends that Metro begin posting progress updates on its website and notifying interested people about the updates. These can be posted as available and only a few sentences highlighting any significant event or decision, such as a concept change or public-private partnership opportunity. We feel such progress updates would go a long way in garnering the public support for the project.

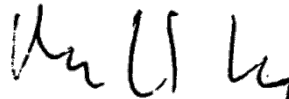
Thank you. We look forward to your speaking about the project at our SOHA meeting on Wednesday, March 20th.

If you have questions or would like to discuss our comments, please contact me at BobHillsideOrdinance@roadrunner.com or 213-364-7470.

Sincerely,



Bob Anderson, MS, PE (NU 474)
Chair, Transportation Committee
Board Member
Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association



Marshall Long, PhD, PE (M 18759)
Chair, Planning and Land Use Committee
Board Member
Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association

cc: Karen Swift (Metro), Frank Ching (Metro), Mayor Eric Garcetti, Councilmember David Ryu (CD4), Nick Greif (CD4 office), Adeena Bleich (CD4 office), Daniel Eyal (CD4 office), Councilmember Paul Krekorian (CD2), Doug Mensman (CD2 office), Councilmember Bob Blumenfield (CD3), John Popoch (CD3 office), Councilmember Paul Koretz (CD5), Joan Pelico (CD5 office), Jay Greenstein (CD5 office), Senator Bob Hertzberg (18th district), Raj Dhillon (district office), Steve Fukushima (district office), Assemblyman Adrin Nazarian (46th district), Emma Taylor (district office), Congressman Brad Sherman (30th district), John Alford (district office), Supervisor Sheila Kuehl (3rd district), Nicole Englund (district office), John Bwarie (SFVCOG), Stuart Waldman (VICA), Ron Ziff (SONC), Avo Babian (SONC), Jeff Kalban (SONC)