



## Board Report

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**File #:** 2017-0576, **File Type:** Informational Report

**Agenda Number:** 18.

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**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE**  
**September 20, 2017**

**SUBJECT: EI MONTE, RIO HONDO, AND MONTEBELLO/COMMERCE METROLINK STATION  
LOCATION FEASIBILITY STUDIES FINAL REPORT**

**ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE**

**RECOMMENDATION**

RECEIVE AND FILE final report on the El Monte, Rio Hondo, and Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station Location Feasibility Studies

**ISSUE**

At the May 2016 Board meeting, the Metro Board of Directors approved funding for feasibility studies to evaluate:

1. Relocating the El Monte Metrolink station to be closer to the El Monte Bus Transit Station to consolidate transit services in one location and create a multimodal hub;
2. Creating a new Metrolink station at the base of Rio Hondo College to serve the Whittier Narrows area;
3. Relocating the Montebello/Commerce station to be closer to the Citadel Outlets area due to expected growth in the area.

The feasibility studies have been completed, and the results are herein presented (Attachment A - Feasibility Studies Executive Summaries).

**DISCUSSION**

Staff engaged a consultant, Mott MacDonald, to conduct the Station Location Feasibility studies. The goal of the feasibility studies was to identify and analyze:

1. Potential sites for relocating the El Monte and Montebello/Commerce station, and potential sites for a new Rio Hondo College station
2. Opportunities to maximize rail-to-bus connectivity and improve First/Last mile connectivity
3. Potential ridership gains and potential cost estimates

**El Monte Station**

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The existing El Monte Metrolink Station is located approximately one mile from the Metro El Monte Bus Transit Station with no direct connections between the rail and bus services. Improving connectivity between the Metrolink station and the El Monte Bus Transit Station could consolidate two major transit services and provide a multimodal transit station with connectivity to rail, bus, and bicycle facilities.

Two alternatives were analyzed for the El Monte Station as described below:

Alternative 1: Relocate the El Monte Metrolink Station to be closer to the El Monte Bus Transit Station

Several potential station sites were identified and screened down to two sites for further study

- a. Site 1A is located adjacent to the Rio Hondo Channel/Bikepath and the Gateway Development, and is a quarter mile northeast of the El Monte Bus Transit Station. Currently, the San Bernardino Metrolink line passes the El Monte Bus Transit Station on a single track aerial structure across the Rio Hondo Channel. Conversely, the current El Monte Metrolink station has two side platforms located in a double track segment which provides operational flexibility of bi-directional trains serving the station simultaneously. Relocating the station to Site 1A would require an elevated station with roughly a mile of double track, and a second aerial structure over the Rio Hondo Channel to maintain rail operational flexibility and travel times. Construction over the Rio Hondo Channel as a result of the second aerial structure would require coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

In addition, property acquisition may be required for parking; or opportunity for shared parking with the El Monte Bus Transit Station or future development could be explored. In August 2017, Metro began implementation of paid parking program at the El Monte Bus Transit Station which could increase availability of parking spaces for transit use by pricing and retaining parking resource for transit users. The cost estimate for this location and related improvements is approximately \$270 million.

- b. Site 1B, located a quarter mile west of the El Monte Bus Transit Station, is a single track segment constrained by the El Monte Busway and therefore, can accommodate a single side platform with surface parking. A single side platform with a single track would reduce rail operational flexibility on the San Bernardino line. Property acquisition may be required to provide access to the station. The cost estimate for this location and related improvements is approximately \$45 million.

The Metrolink tracks at the current El Monte Metrolink station run parallel to the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) Alhambra subdivision. The Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) seeks to obtain rights to operate on the Union Pacific subdivision to increase flexibility and avoid the I-10 single track bottleneck. If the El Monte Metrolink station is relocated, SCRRA could lose the flexibility to potentially operate on the Alhambra subdivision.

A passenger survey was conducted to obtain input from existing Metrolink riders; over 51% of respondents support relocating the station, stating that moving the Metrolink station closer to the El



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Monte Bus Transit Station would improve their commute. Metro's latest 2017 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Travel Demand Model (TDM) was used for the development of ridership forecasts for horizon year 2040. A relocated station showed a potential growth of 669 additional average daily Metrolink boardings over existing conditions in 2040. However, the model also showed a potential decline in boardings at Union Station and other Metrolink stations possibly due to improved transfers between the El Monte Metrolink station and bus services such as the Metro Silver Line.

#### Alternative 2: Create a multimodal transit hub at the existing El Monte Metrolink station location

The existing Metrolink station is located near the El Monte Trolley Station and in close proximity to the City's downtown district. Alternative 2 looked at opportunities to upgrade the El Monte Metrolink station and to improve connectivity to the Bus Transit Station. Potential improvements include:

- a. Shuttles to meet all trains and transport passengers directly to and from the Transit Station. This could decrease wait times as well as travel times
- b. Station platform upgrades with more shade and signage technology to provide real time information on bus arrival times
- c. Sidewalks and bicycle path connecting between the two stations
- d. Way-finding signage
- e. Bicycle share hubs at both the Metrolink Station and the Transit Station connected with bike lanes per the City's Specific plan

The total preliminary rough order of magnitude cost is approximately \$7 million. A third (33%) of survey respondents support keeping the station at its current location. Ridership modeling forecasted approximately 87 additional average daily boardings by year 2040.

#### Recommendation

The City of El Monte owns, operates, and maintains the existing El Monte Metrolink station. Since the City has not indicated a formal position on carrying either alternative forward, and no funding is available for either alternative, staff recommends that neither alternative moves forward at this time.

### **Rio Hondo College Station**

The stretch of the Metrolink Riverside Line in the Greater Whittier Narrows Area, through the Rio Hondo College is one of the longest stretches (nearly 20 miles) of Metrolink track without a station. The feasibility study looked at opportunities to improve transit connectivity to the Rio Hondo College area.

Two alternatives were analyzed as described below:

#### Alternative 1: Creation of a new Metrolink station

Several potential sites for a new station were identified and analyzed. Key findings include:

- a. The Rio Hondo College station would be located on the Riverside line, a major UPRR-owned and operated freight corridor in southern California. Metro's current shared-use agreement

with UPRR limits the number of stations on the Riverside line to five stations. UPRR may support the addition of this sixth station if another station were to be closed or if mitigations were provided to address potential delays to freight operations resulting from an additional station.

- b. The potential site identified for the station would require a license agreement with the property owner, Southern California Edison (SCE) to accommodate parking and transit/passenger drop-off areas. The SCE property is currently leased by the Los Angeles County Parks and Recreational Department for an equestrian trail and staging area. The equestrian trail and staging area, and SCE overhead lines would need to be relocated. SCE has indicated that the property would be subject to a 5-year, 30-day revocable lease limited to surface parking. Parking structures and overnight parking would be prohibited.

Rio Hondo College students, faculty, and staff as well as Metrolink Riverside Line riders, and residents and businesses within a half-mile radius of the College were surveyed to obtain public input related to the study. Fifty-three percent (53%) of respondents indicated they would very likely use a new station at Rio Hondo, if available. Ridership modeling forecasted approximately 609 average daily boardings by 2040. However, 90% indicated willingness to pay up to \$10 per round trip suggesting a preference for low-cost transit options.

The total preliminary rough order of magnitude cost is estimated \$125 million.

#### Alternative 2: Transit connectivity improvements to the Rio Hondo College Area

Alternative 2 identified transit connectivity improvements to the Rio Hondo College Area without addition of a new station. Potential improvements include the following with a total preliminary rough order of magnitude cost of approximately \$2 million:

- a. Currently, the Rio Hondo College area is served by bus routes that connect to other Metrolink stations: the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Metrolink Station on the Orange County Line and the Baldwin Park Metrolink Station on the San Bernardino Line. Improving headways of these bus services and introducing similar bus connections to the closest Riverside line stations (i.e. Industry and Montebello/Commerce) could improve transit connectivity and service to the Rio Hondo area.
- b. The Gold Line Eastside Phase 2 SR-60 alignment shows a potential station approximately a mile from the Rio Hondo College. Improving headways of existing bus services operating between the potential Gold Line station and the Rio Hondo College would provide more transit accessibility options to the College area.
- c. Rio Hondo College is currently developing a transit center, the Rio Plaza, to improve bus and active transportation amenities on Workman Mill Road. Sidewalks, bicycle

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lanes and paths, and bike share hubs could be provided to connect the potential Gold Line station with the Rio Plaza.

A passenger survey was conducted to obtain input from existing Metrolink riders and the results showed that 54% of respondents would like to see more bus service in the area.

#### Recommendation

In the absence of funding for either alternative and UPRR agreement for Alternative 1, staff recommends that neither alternative is carried forward at this time.

### **Montebello/Commerce Station**

The existing Montebello/Commerce station is on the UPRR-owned Riverside line, approximately 1.5 miles from the Citadel Outlets area or Commerce Resort. The Commerce Resort is comprised of the Citadel Outlets, the Commerce Casino, and surrounding hotels. Plans are under development to significantly expand the Commerce Resort and draw additional 40% more visitors per year. The feasibility study analyzed two alternatives to improve Metrolink connectivity to the Resort area as described below.

#### Alternative 1: Relocating the Montebello/Commerce Station to the Citadel area

The Gold Line Eastside Phase 2 Washington alignment shows a potential Citadel Gold Line station within a quarter mile of the potential relocated Metrolink station site. Providing a Metrolink station in close proximity to a light rail station creates an opportunity to provide a multimodal hub to serve the growing needs of the Citadel area. Approximately 50% of visits to the Citadel occur on weekends. However Metrolink currently does not operate weekend trains on the Riverside line. Metro's existing shared-use agreement with the UPRR for the Riverside line limits the number of trains to six round trips during weekdays. Any additional train service including weekend service would be subject to UPRR approval.

Relocation of the Montebello/Commerce station would require UPRR approval. UPRR has indicated that the potential station site is in close proximity to their intermodal terminal and impacting their operations. However, UPRR is open to evaluate the proposed station location to identify potential mitigations at the next phase. Additionally, UPRR noted that the relocated station would be subject to the hold-out rule where only one train can enter the station at a time. Additionally, more than likely pedestrian grade separated crossings may be required at the station.

The existing station has 411 average daily boardings per day. Metrolink riders were invited to participate in a survey to obtain feedback on the Study. Forty-seven percent (47%) of survey respondents said their commutes would not improve if the station was relocated closer to the Citadel area. Thirty-five percent (35%) of respondents said their commute would improve if the station was relocated closer to the Citadel area. Ridership modeling for a relocated station showed a potential growth of 129 additional average daily Metrolink boardings over existing conditions in horizon year 2040.

The existing Montebello/Commerce station serves as a multimodal station with a major bus layover facility for Metro and Montebello buses and shuttles. Relocating the Montebello/Commerce station to the Commerce Resort could impact bus operations due to traffic and right-of-way limitations in the Resort area that constraints the ability to accommodate a comparable bus facility. In addition, acquisition of AltaMed's overflow parking lot would be required to accommodate parking and bus/passenger drop -off areas for the station. AltaMed would require replacement in kind of parking spaces.

The preliminary rough order of magnitude cost for relocating the station is approximately \$80 million including repayment of approximately \$500,000 in grant funds obtained by the City of Montebello to upgrade the existing station in 2014.

#### Alternative 2: Improving connectivity to the existing Montebello/Commerce Station

Currently, there are no shuttle services that provide direct connection between the Montebello/Commerce station and the Commerce Resort. Providing a shuttle service to meet all trains could close the 1.5 mile distance between the existing station and the Resort. First/last mile connectivity improvements such as sidewalks, bicycle paths, and bike share hubs connecting to the Commerce Resort could be provided to improve active transportation connection between the two locations. Ridership modeling forecasted 47 additional daily boardings by year 2040. The preliminary rough order of magnitude cost for relocating the station is approximately cost estimate is \$5 million.

#### Recommendation

Since UPRR agreement has not been secured for Alternative 1 and funding is not available for either alternative, staff therefore recommends that neither alternative moves forward at this time.

#### Potential Funding Sources

Potential funding sources could include SB 821 Transportation Development Act funds, and SB 862 cap and trade and Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) funds. Metro-programmed funding sources are prioritized for implementation of Metro Board commitments which are adopted in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) or Measure M Expenditure Plan. Potential local funding sources could include Propositions A and C, Measure R and M local return and the following Measure M fund categories: Active Transportation Program (ATP), Transit Multi-year Subregional Programs, and first/last mile complete streets funds.

None of these station alternatives are included in the (LRTP) or Measure M Expenditure Plan. Additionally, Local Return funds and Measure M subregional funds would require agreement from local jurisdictions and subregions. Staff recommends that no further action is taken at this time due to lack of funding, and lack of UPRR agreement for the Montebello/Commerce and Rio Hondo stations.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There is no financial impact at this time.

**ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

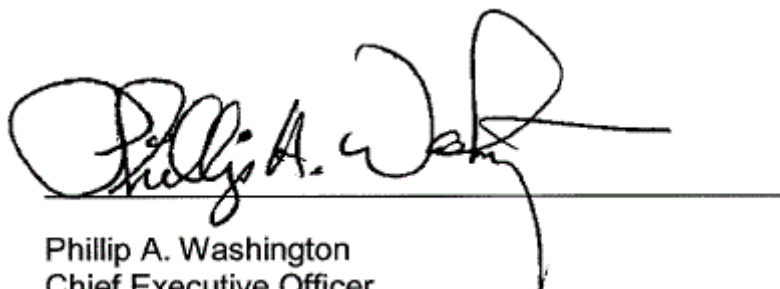
The alternative would be for the Board not to receive this report. This is not recommended as the feasibility studies were requested by the Board.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - Feasibility Study Executive Summary

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LOS ANGELES METRO  
STATION LOCATION FEASIBILITY STUDY

EL MONTE METROLINK STATION – FEASIBILITY STUDY  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PREPARED FOR  
**LA Metro Regional Rail**  
One Gateway Plaza  
Los Angeles, CA

August 25, 2017



**IN ASSOCIATION WITH:**

IBI Group  
AECOM  
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RSE  
Terry A. Hayes Associates  
Epic Land Solutions  
Engineering Solutions Services

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT PURPOSE

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is conducting the Station Location Feasibility Study (Study) for the El Monte Metrolink Station to examine the feasibility of relocating the station closer to the El Monte Bus Transit Center and to identify opportunities to make improvements to the existing station. The Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) operates Metrolink

**In October 2015, the Metro Board of Directors unanimously approved a motion to examine the feasibility of relocating the existing El Monte Metrolink Station closer to the El Monte Bus Station to consolidate transit services and enhance**

passenger rail service in six southern California counties, including Los Angeles County. Metrolink serves an average of nearly 40,000 riders each weekday<sup>1</sup>; however, opportunities exist to consolidate, develop, and enhance multi-modal transportation hubs in certain areas across the Metrolink system which could potentially improve regional mobility, attract ridership, and mitigate traffic-induced pollution. First/Last Mile analysis, multi-modal connectivity, and active transportation planning were all incorporated into the Study to support safe, secure, and easy rider experiences, which may encourage increased patronage.

The Study aims to identify:

- Potential relocation options for the El Monte Metrolink Station; and related benefits and challenges
- Opportunities to maximize rail-to-bus connectivity
- Opportunities to improve First/Last Mile connections to existing and planned developments
- Potential ridership gains and potential cost estimates
- Stakeholder and community feedback

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

The existing El Monte Metrolink Station is located near the El Monte Trolley Station in Downtown El Monte, shown in Figure 0-1. The El Monte Metrolink Station's close proximity to the City's downtown commercial core provide a unique opportunity to explore transit-oriented development and transit accessibility improvements. It is less than one mile away from the El Monte Bus Transit Center, and the Transit Oriented Communities (TOC) Demonstration Program at the Transit Center presents an opportunity to consolidate transit services to enhance mobility in the community.

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<sup>1</sup> SCRRA, 2017

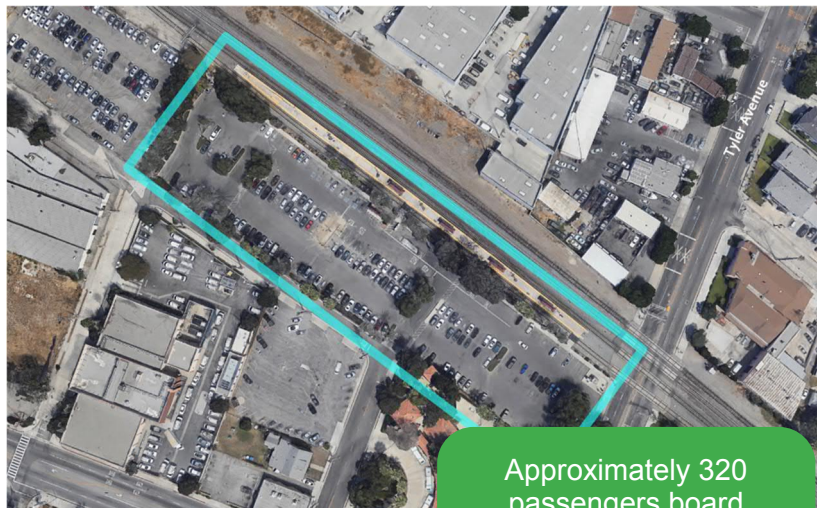


**Figure 0-1: Study Area**



The City of El Monte is home to over 115,000 residents, 72 percent of which drive alone as their primary means of commute<sup>2</sup>. The El Monte Metrolink Station, shown in Figure 0-2, is served by the Metrolink San Bernardino Line, which is the most heavily used Metrolink line in the system and carries over 9,000 passengers each weekday. The San Bernardino Line runs between Los Angeles Union Station and San Bernardino (see Figure

**Figure 0-2: Existing El Monte Metrolink Station**



Source: Google Earth 2016

Approximately 320 passengers board Metrolink at the El Monte Metrolink Station on an average weekday.

<sup>2</sup> US Census, ACS 5-year estimates 2010-2014



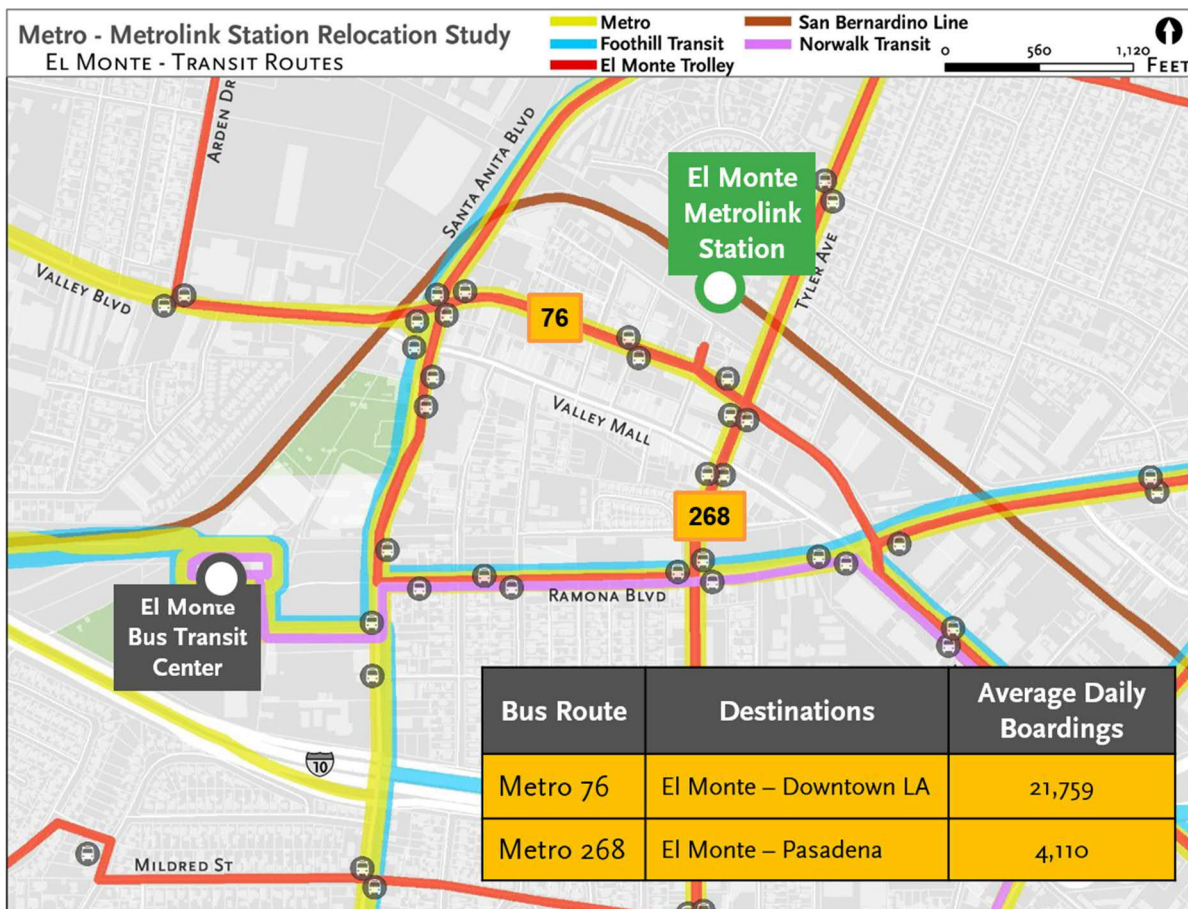
0-3) with 38 weekday trains, 20 Saturday trains, and 14 Sunday trains. Approximately 320 passengers board Metrolink at the El Monte Metrolink Station on an average weekday.

**Figure 0-3: Metrolink San Bernardino Line**



Bus transfers are supported at the El Monte Metrolink Station by the El Monte Transit Trolley system as well as El Monte’s Metrolink commuter shuttles. Connections to adjacent Metro bus routes are made outside of the Metrolink station area on Tyler Avenue and Valley Boulevard, as shown in Figure 0-4.

**Figure 0-4: El Monte Transit Service Map<sup>3</sup>**



<sup>3</sup> Metro, May 2016

The City of El Monte operates two Metrolink commuter shuttles to meet peak-hour Metrolink trains with limited mid-day service to the Civic Center and the Flair Business Park. On an average weekday, about 38 percent of Metrolink passengers transfer to one of the two commuter shuttles to complete their trips. Both shuttles allow connections to major employment destinations and the El Monte Bus Transit Center, but can take passengers between 5 to 20 minutes to make the transfer between the transit hubs based on their chosen commuter shuttle route. The commuter shuttles also do not directly serve the El Monte Bus Transit Center, but stop at the intersection of Santa Anita Boulevard and Ramona Boulevard.

### STUDY ALTERNATIVES

The Study considers two alternatives:

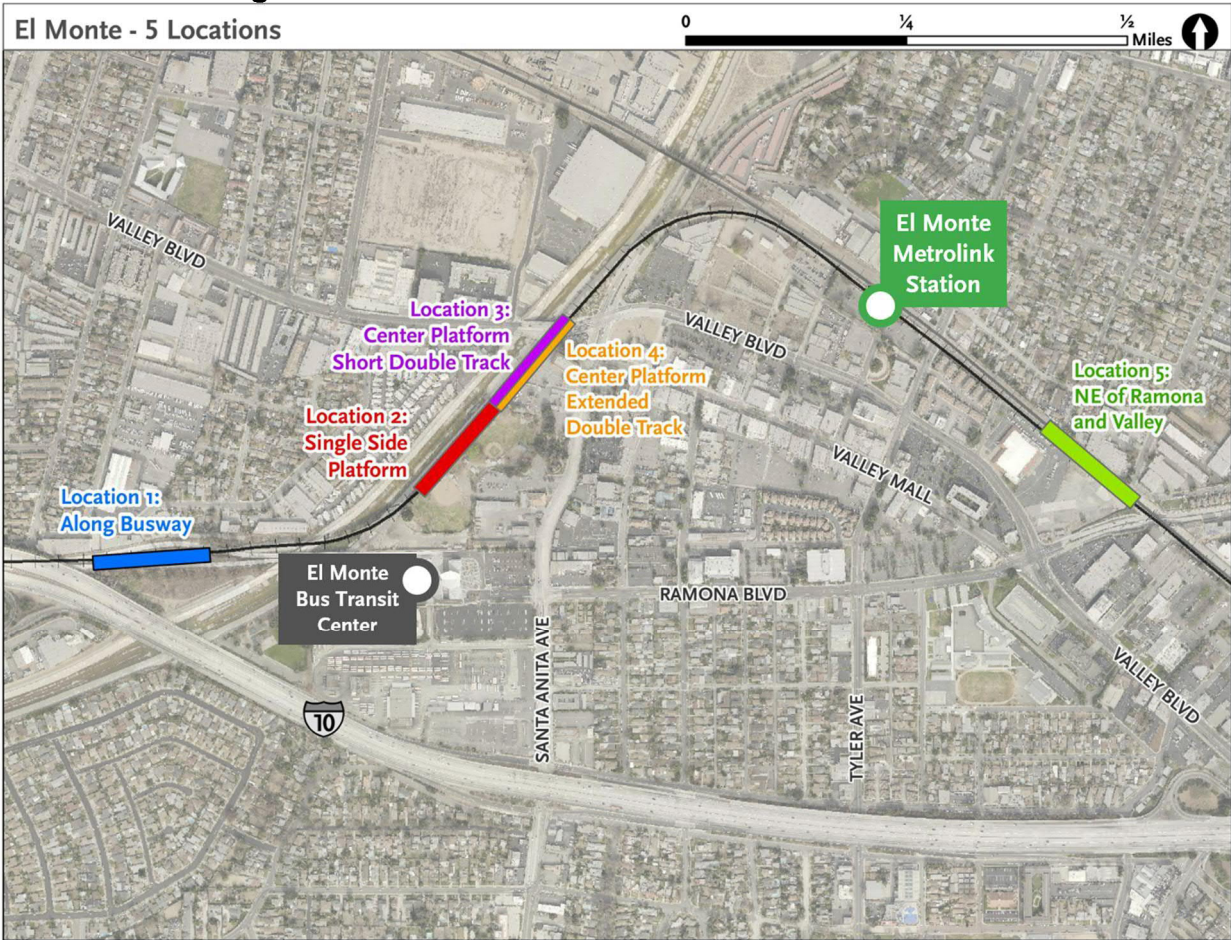
- **Alternative 1:** Station Relocation – Relocate the existing Metrolink station closer to the El Monte Bus Transit Center
  - Two relocation sites were studied under this alternative.
- **Alternative 2:** Existing Station Enhancements – Upgrade the existing Metrolink station into a multimodal transit station to encourage increased patronage, connectivity, and safety

The two alternatives considered are for evaluative and feasibility purposes only. If either alternative is carried forward for further study, the projects would be further refined and analyzed in the subsequent technical refinement studies and environmental clearance process.

### ALTERNATIVE 1: STATION RELOCATION

The Study identified five initial station locations for Alternative 1, shown in Figure 0-5. These five station location options were screened down to two locations for further and more detailed analysis. They were analyzed to determine which option could illustrate the best representation of a future location that may improve connections to the El Monte Bus Transit Center and allow for a more seamless multimodal connection for the community.

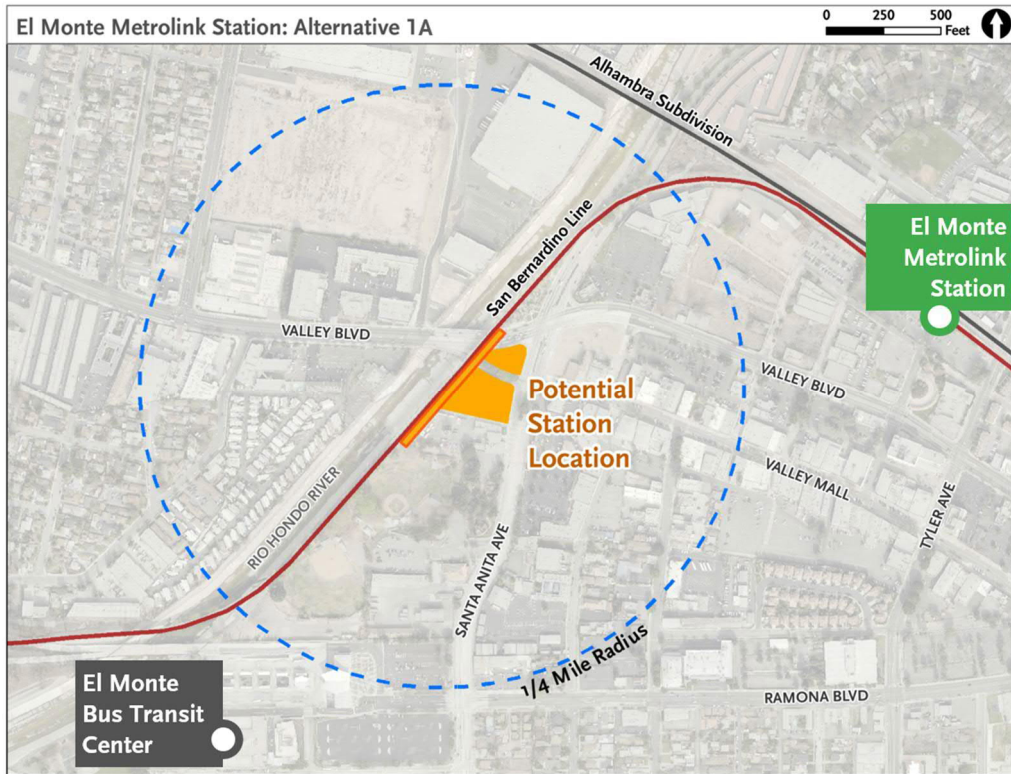
**Figure 0-5: Five Potential Locations for Alternative 1**



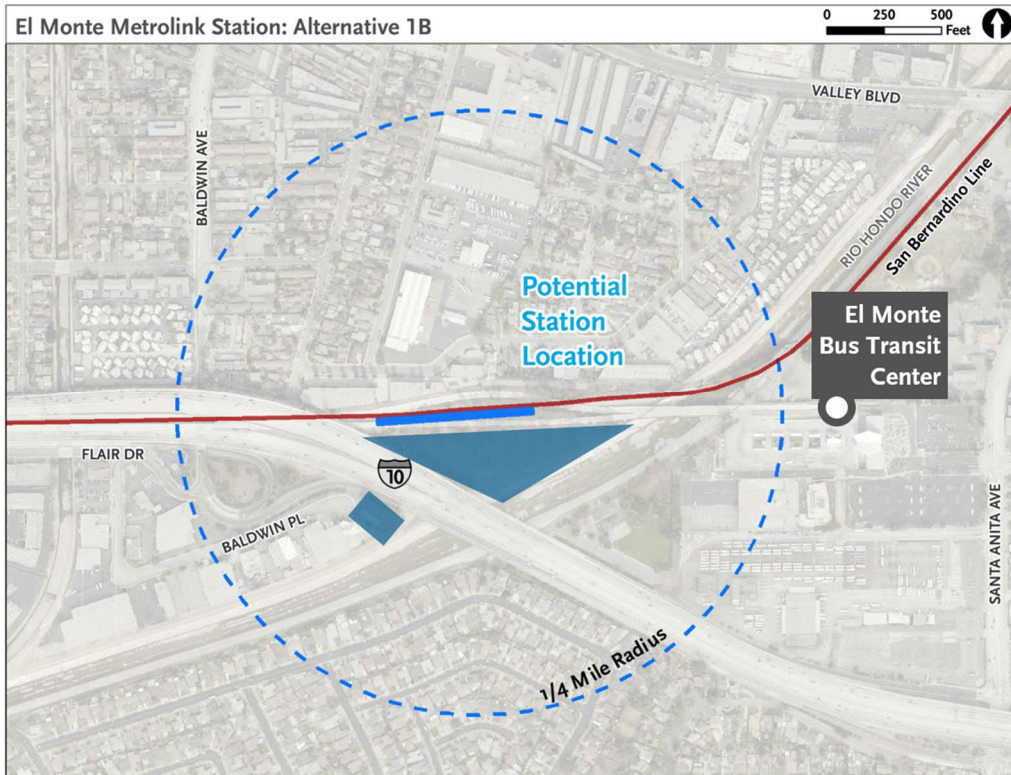
The five initial location options were analyzed based on accessibility, stakeholder preference, physical impacts, operational considerations and potential costs. Locations 1 and 4 were selected for further analysis in this Study primarily due to their proximity to the El Monte Bus Transit Center. Location 4 will be referred to as Alternative 1A, shown in Figure 0-6. The second location, Location 1, was identified through the stakeholder outreach process for a high-level analysis (shown in Figure 0-7), and is referred to as Alternative 1B.



**Figure 0-6: Station Alternative 1A**



**Figure 0-7: Station Alternative 1B**



**ALTERNATIVE 1A – ANALYSIS**

Each Alternative was analyzed for its feasibility in five (5) categories: transit accessibility, community and stakeholder preference, physical impacts, operations, and costs. Table 0-1 summarizes these analysis components and their qualitative characteristics.

**Table 0-1: Analysis Components**

Transit Accessibility	Regional Connectivity & Potential Ridership
	Accessibility and First/Last Mile
	Parking Considerations
	Land Use Considerations
Community and Stakeholder Preference	Community Preference
	Stakeholder Preference
Physical Impacts	Right-of-Way Impacts
	Environmental Impacts
	Utility Impacts
Operations	Rail Operational Considerations
	Bus Operational Considerations
Costs	Rough-Order-of-Magnitude Cost Estimates

**TRANSIT ACCESSIBILITY**

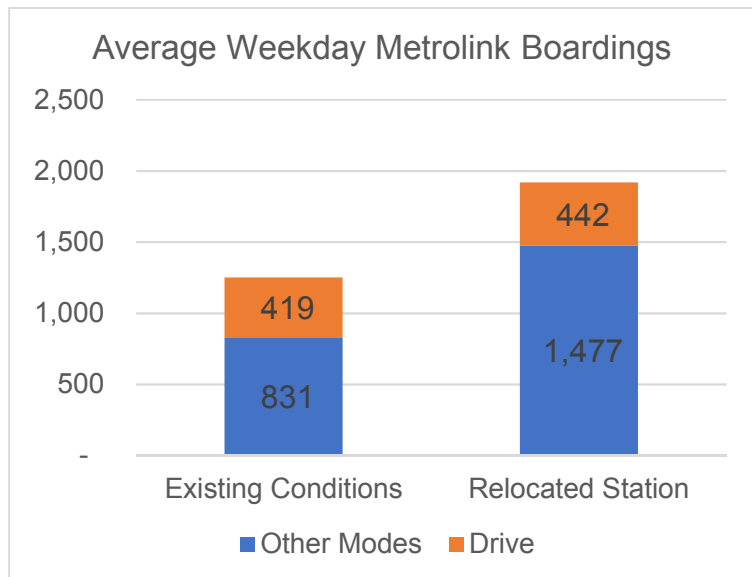
Alternative 1A is located at the intersection of Santa Anita Boulevard and Valley Boulevard, as shown in Figure 0-8. Its potential to serve as a “gateway” to the El Monte Downtown area while bringing rail, bus, and bicycle amenities all within a walkable distance can make this location an attractive option for transit users and visitors. The Gateway Development is located between Station Relocation A and the existing El Monte Bus Transit Center and has been constructed with landscaping and sidewalks. However, the pedestrian landscape at the current Santa Anita Boulevard and Valley Boulevard intersection could benefit from safety enhancements and placemaking strategies, due to fast-moving traffic and long crossing distances.

**Figure 0-8: Potential Station Layout for Alternative 1A**



Ridership forecasts developed from the Long Range Transportation Plan 2017 Metro Travel Demand model projected an estimated 1,919 Metrolink boardings per average weekday at a potential relocated Metrolink station in 2040, as shown in Figure 0-9. This represents a potential growth of over 50 percent over existing conditions in 2040. Only one-third of Metrolink riders are forecast to access the El Monte Metrolink Station by private automobile, suggesting that the station may be more of a destination-oriented station rather than a commuter or origin station. The remaining two-thirds of Metrolink boardings are forecast to access the station via transit, biking, walking, taxi, or ridesharing. The growth may be attributed to the decreased transfer time between existing bus services and Metrolink service, as the forecasts also reflect an increase in bus routes which serve the El Monte Bus Transit Center.

**Figure 0-9: El Monte Alternative 1A Ridership Forecasts 2040**





The potential site of Alternative 1A is closer to two of the main arterials in downtown El Monte. Streets and sidewalks are well-maintained; however, traffic moves fast on Valley Boulevard and Santa Anita Avenue and there are no pedestrian islands. The location offers direct access to the Rio Hondo Bike Path with the Metro Bike Hub located nearby at the El Monte Bus Transit Center. Pedestrian improvements and placemaking strategies may be implemented to support transfers between the potential Metrolink station and the existing El Monte Bus Transit Center along the Rio Hondo Bike Path under the elevated railroad. Figure 0-10 illustrates an example of what these types of improvements may look like to transferring transit users.

Current parking facilities at El Monte Bus Transit Center are at capacity. Metro is in the process of expanding its paid parking program to high-demand Metro transit hubs, including the El Monte Bus Transit Center, and future parking management programs could preserve parking for transit users. This could be done in coordination with nearby TOD communities and the Downtown El Monte district.

A relocated station could provide surface parking and share parking with the El Monte Bus Transit Center. Alternatively, 350-space parking structure could be provided under Alternative 1A.

**Figure 0-10: Example of Rio Hondo Bike Path Improvements**



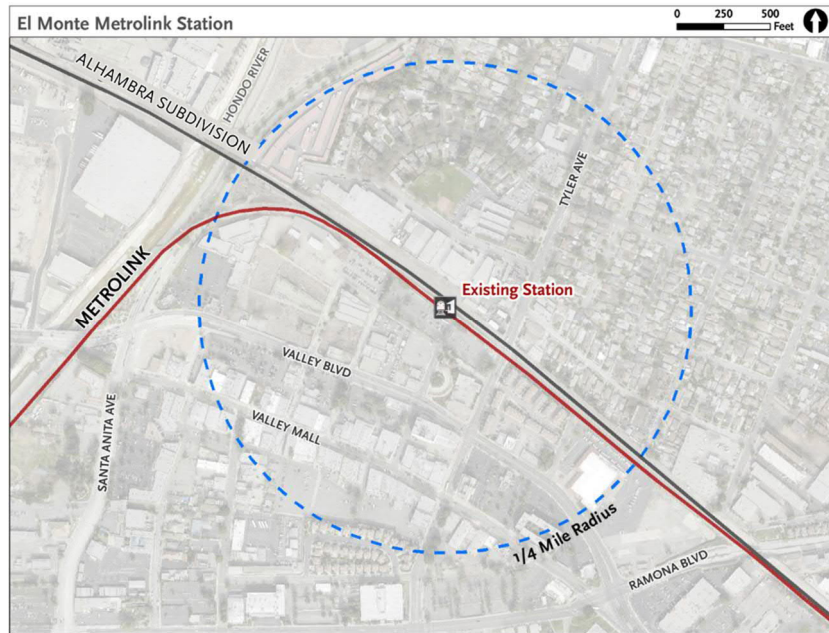
Source: The Underline

### COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER PREFERENCE

Stakeholders, including SCRRA and the City of El Monte, were able to provide their comments throughout the life of the study. With respect to Alternative 1A, SCRRA is concerned with the potential relocation of the El Monte Metrolink Station due to the possible operational constraints as a result of the construction of a station on an aerial structure, which would be the first in the Metrolink system. This option would also preclude the opportunity to utilize the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) Alhambra railroad subdivision that heads northwest from the current El Monte Metrolink station, as shown in Figure 0-11.

Out of the 1,500 survey responses gathered from the Metrolink rider survey, a total of 71 participants listed El Monte Metrolink Station as their origin or destination station. When asked if moving the Metrolink station within a five-to-ten-minute walk from the El Monte Bus Transit Center would improve their commute, 51 percent of respondents said that it would improve their commute. In addition, 13 percent of respondents indicated that they would like to see more bus service at the El Monte Metrolink Station.

**Figure 0-11: UPRR Alhambra Railroad Subdivision**



### PHYSICAL IMPACTS

The potential physical impacts analyzed as part of Alternative 1 in this Study include right-of-way, utility, and environmental impacts.

Alternative 1A would require an elevated Metrolink station platform to connect with existing elevated track. A potential second track may require a center platform configuration. Aerial easements would need to be obtained if this alternative were to move forward. Depending on the station area site plan, the relocation may impact the one-way Valley Mall thruway in order to maximize the station area footprint. Potential utility impacts may be present under existing commercial buildings and along the railroad right-of-way. The existing commercial and office buildings on the three parcels identified on this site would need to be acquired for station development. The southernmost property in the identified site is currently undergoing renovations to attract office tenants.

A preliminary analysis on environmental considerations was conducted to identify potential areas which may require further technical analysis should the alternative undergo future detailed studies and/or environmental processes. These areas include considerations for air quality, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise and vibration, parking and site access, and traffic and circulation. In addition, any construction in the Rio Hondo Channel would require coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers to assess impacts related to CEQA/NEPA compliance. The relocation of the Metrolink station may also require permitting with the City of El Monte to amend the El Monte Gateway Specific Plan.



## OPERATIONS

The relocation of the El Monte Metrolink Station as part of Alternative 1A would require constructing a new aerial platform, reconstruction of parts of the existing track, and construction of new second track that could result in delays on the busiest line in the Metrolink system, potentially impacting passenger rail operations during station construction.

Bus operations could be consolidated at the existing El Monte Bus Transit Center, which hosts stops for Metro, Foothill Transit, and Norwalk Transit. An improved pedestrian and bicyclist connection along the Rio Hondo bike path between the two hubs could allow for more seamless transfers.

Relocating the El Monte Metrolink Station to the elevated segment of the San Bernardino Line would require the reconstruction of the existing aerial guideway in order to allow for a platform on a flat grade as required by the Metrolink Design Standards. Special attention to structural column placement is essential to minimize potential right-of-way and traffic impacts.

## COST ESTIMATES

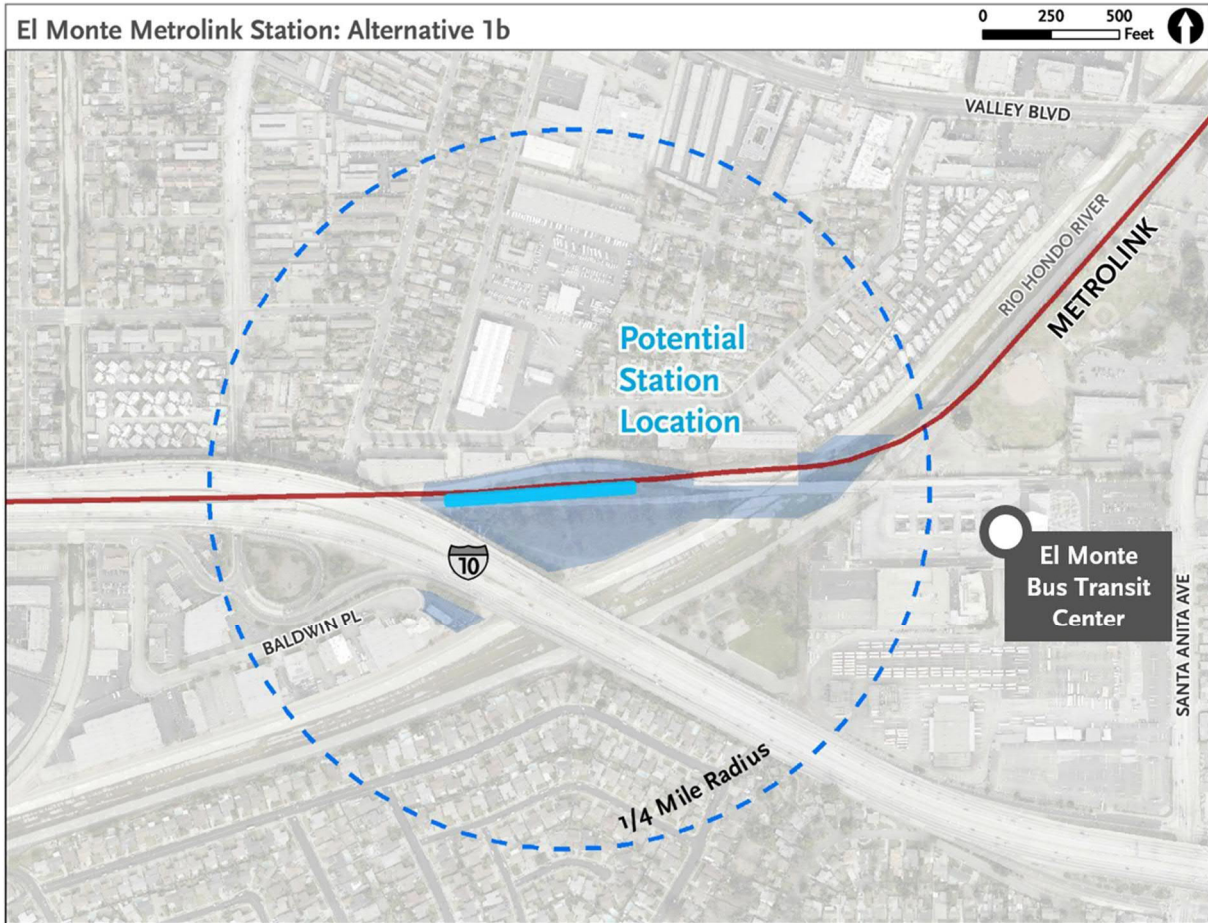
Rough order-of-magnitude (ROM) capital cost estimates were developed for Alternative 1A for feasibility purposes. With the goal of portraying the highest level of development for a station of this scale, the total estimated capital cost is approximately \$270 million. Preliminary high cost improvement items include a new aerial guideway structure and platform, reconstruction of the existing guideway, private land acquisition, pedestrian vertical circulation, parking structure, bike hub, first/last mile improvements, and contingencies.

**The total estimated ROM capital cost for Alternative 1A is approximately \$270 million.**

## ALTERNATIVE 1B – ANALYSIS

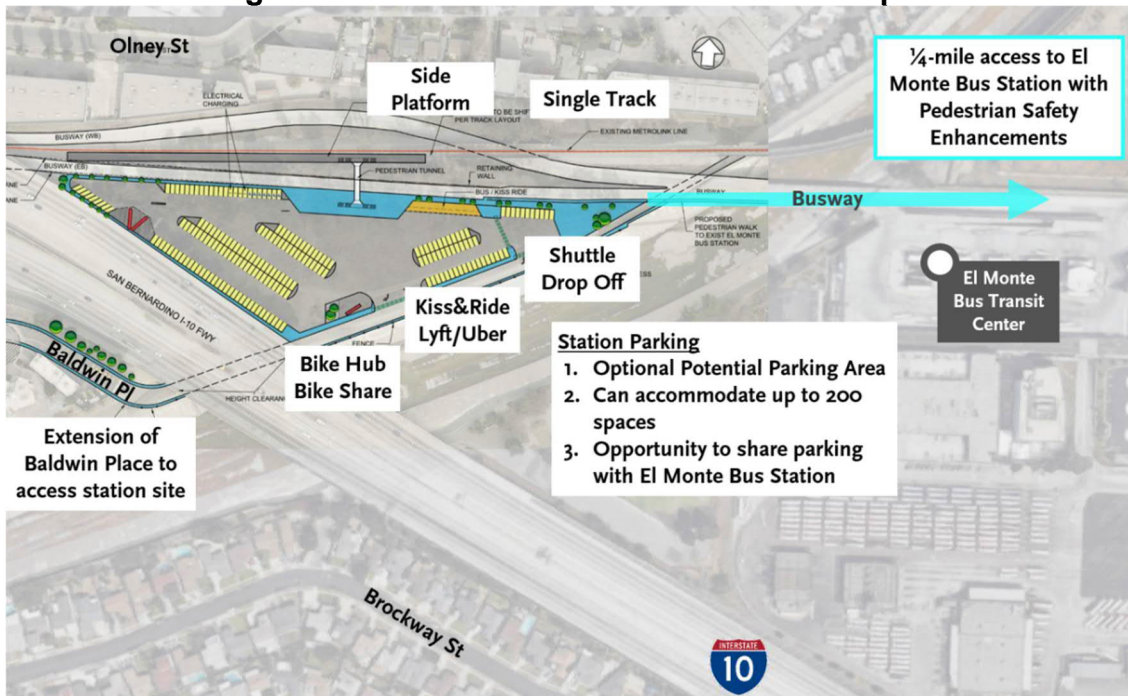
Alternative 1B (see Figure 0-12) was studied at the request of stakeholders through the stakeholder engagement process. This station relocation alternative involves adding a single side platform to a single-tracked segment of the San Bernardino Line. There is an approximate ¼-mile transfer to the El Monte Bus Transit Center, that can be feasible with appropriate safety and pedestrian improvements along the existing busway bridge across the Rio Hondo River channel.

**Figure 0-12: Alternative 1b Station Relocation**



Access to the station would need to be obtained via Baldwin Place and the existing maintenance road along the Rio Hondo Channel. There is currently an occupied commercial property that may need to be acquired to gain access to the site location. The plan for Alternative 1B includes 200+ parking spaces, a layover area for buses and shuttles, kiss-and-ride drop off, and a pedestrian overpass or underpass to provide access to the station platform (Figure 0-13). Metrolink does not permit-at-grade pedestrian crossings at new stations.

**Figure 0-13: Alternative 1B - Site Plan Example**



**PHYSICAL IMPACTS**

The site for Alternative 1B is currently privately owned and unoccupied with the exception of two existing billboard signs. In order to create public access to the site, the commercial property, occupied by Western Exterminator, at the end of Baldwin Place may need to be acquired to extend the road under Interstate Highway 10. Additionally, pedestrian/bicycle access would require a modification of the existing busway across Rio Hondo Channel in the form of striping and barriers to protect transferring passengers from fast-moving articulated buses. There are currently no pedestrian crossings at the El Monte Bus Transit Center, so this would need to be considered if pedestrians are to access the Transit Center from the west.

**OPERATIONS**

Moving the existing station from a scenario with two mainline tracks and a center platform to a single-tracked segment and a one side platform, as identified in Alternative 1B, could increase travel times and decrease operation flexibility along the San Bernardino Line. This area of the San Bernardino Line is currently a bottleneck, and this alternative would further limit operational flexibility along the corridor.

**COST ESTIMATES**

The total estimated ROM capital cost for Alternative 1B is approximately \$45 million. This includes a grade-separated pedestrian crossing, a transit drop-off area, private land acquisition, and busway realignment to accommodate the station platform.

**The total estimated ROM capital cost for Alternative 1B is approximately \$45 million.**



**ALTERNATIVE 2: EXISTING STATION ENHANCEMENTS**

The goal of Alternative 2 is to analyze the feasibility of adding improvements to the existing El Monte Metrolink station to create a multi-modal transit hub that could better serve the community and region. Major opportunities for the existing station, shown in Figure 0-14, include:

- Creating a possible direct shuttle route between the El Monte Metrolink Station and the El Monte Bus Transit Center to meet each Metrolink train;
- Creating a bike hub at the station to support bicycle commuters and to set the stage for a potential bikeshare opportunity in the future;
- Station area and platform upgrades to provide transit users with more shade, enhance safety at the at-grade crossings, and wayfinding information; and
- Added bike lanes and wayfinding signage throughout Downtown El Monte per the City’s specific plan.

**Figure 0-14: Existing El Monte Metrolink Station**



Source: Google Earth 2016

**ALTERNATIVE 2 – ANALYSIS**

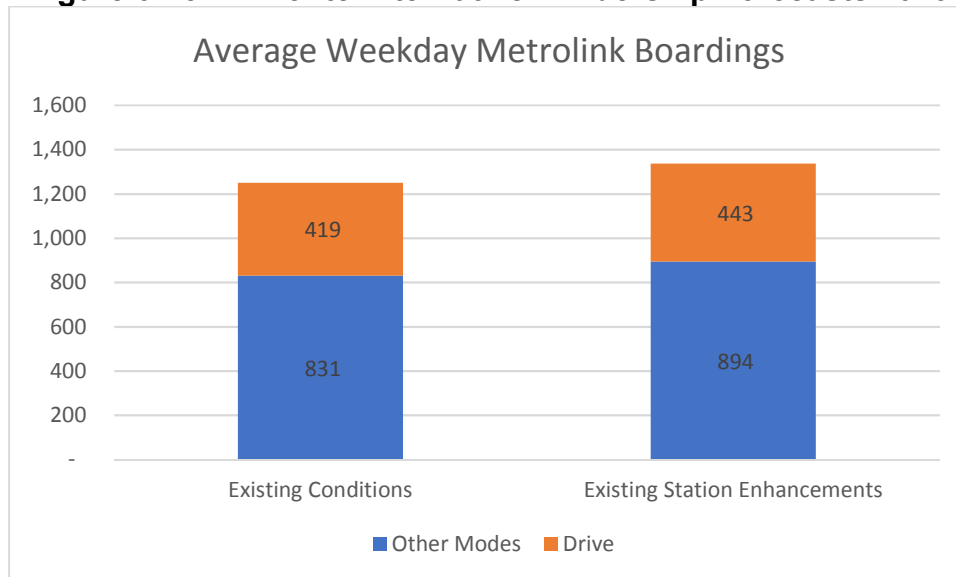
**TRANSIT ACCESSIBILITY**

Alternative 2 is well-positioned near future planned bicycle infrastructure and is located between the Downtown District and the residential communities to the north of the station. With the improvements identified in this Study, approximately 1,340 average weekday boardings were forecasted at the existing El Monte Metrolink Station.

This represents an increase of seven percent over existing conditions in 2040, as summarized in Figure 0-15. The potential for increased ridership is likely due to the prevalence of transit services in the area; nearly two-thirds of Metrolink riders are forecast to access the station via modes other than driving alone. On an average weekday, 142 parking spaces are utilized at the existing Metrolink station. As pedestrian and bicycle amenities become more prevalent in Downtown El Monte Downtown, parking sharing opportunities with potential TOD's may be viable. In terms of TOD potential, Alternative 2 showed the most potential in the areas of social factors. The immediate surrounding areas contain a diverse mix of uses within walking distance on quieter streets. The existing station is also supported by the El Monte Downtown Main Street Transit-Oriented District Specific Plan.

**Ridership forecasts show an increase of about 90 additional weekday boardings over existing conditions in 2040.**

**Figure 0-15: El Monte Alternative 2 Ridership Forecasts 2040**



**COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER PREFERENCE**

**Out of the El Monte survey respondents, 71% said they use Metrolink to commute to work and 69% reported that they were generally happy with the current station.**

Out of the El Monte survey respondents, 71 percent said they use Metrolink to commute to work and 69 percent of participants reported that they were generally happy with the current station. While respondents seemed generally satisfied with the condition of the El Monte Metrolink station, the most common suggestions made by survey participants included increasing bus and train services. More security, enhanced landscaping, and additional coverage from natural elements were other suggestions.

When asked if moving the Metrolink station within a five-to-ten-minute walk from the El Monte Bus Transit Center would improve their commute, 33 percent of respondents said that it would not improve their commute. In addition, 16 percent of respondents said they were unsure if the relocation would improve their commute.

During the stakeholder input process, SCRRA indicated that keeping the existing Metrolink station would potentially allow for operational flexibility on the Alhambra railroad subdivision in the future.

### PHYSICAL IMPACTS

There are limited right-of-way, environmental, and utility impacts as a result of the improvements identified in Alternative 2. Enhancing the existing El Monte Metrolink Station could result in increased pedestrian and bicycle presence throughout the Downtown district. Traffic and circulation may be considered in future environmental study as a result of increased pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. A potential new bike hub facility, similar to that of the El Monte Bus Transit Center would likely have minimal impacts on existing utilities at the current Metrolink station.

### OPERATIONS

No additional passenger rail service or rail infrastructure was identified as part of Alternative 2. By maintaining the Metrolink station where it is today, the opportunity to utilize the UPRR-owned Alhambra railroad subdivision still exists for potential express Metrolink service on the San Bernardino Line.

The El Monte Metrolink Station platform and El Monte Trolley Station (see Figure 0-16) are within a 5-minute walk of each other. Metro buses currently stop on Valley Boulevard and Tyler Avenue. Wayfinding signage and real-time bus arrival information could assist and benefit transferring riders. A direct shuttle to meet all Metrolink trains between the El Monte Metrolink Station and the El Monte Bus Transit Center is recommended to further enhance rail-to-bus connectivity in the area.

### COST ESTIMATES

The cost estimates developed for Alternative 2 reflect similar assumptions to those of Alternative 1. The preliminary cost items identified include a station amenities and upgrades, grade crossing safety improvements, First/Last Mile improvements, a new bike hub, and contingencies. The total estimated capital cost for Alternative 2 is approximately \$7 million.

**Figure 0-16: Existing Metrolink Station and Trolley Station**



Source: Google Earth 2016

### **COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH**

The Study and its alternatives were developed in coordination with key stakeholders including the City of El Monte, SCRRA, and the office of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors – District 1, to assess the nature of the community and its transit needs and desires. Three formal stakeholder meetings were held, with additional communications and feedback gathered through the life of the study.

The Study was presented at the San Gabriel Valley Service Council meeting to introduce the Study, engage the local community, and receive input on the Study. In addition, a survey campaign was launched which targeted existing Metrolink riders of the San Bernardino Line. As a result of these outreach efforts, over 1,500 responses were received and analyzed.



**CONCLUSIONS**

A snapshot summary of the two alternatives is shown in Table 0-2.

**Table 0-2: El Monte Alternatives Summary**

	Alternative 1A	Alternative 1B	Alternative 2
	Relocated Metrolink Station	Relocated Metrolink Station	Existing Station Enhancements
<b>Feasibility</b>	Relocated station would have construction impacts and preclude ability to utilize Alhambra railroad subdivision, and would require additional coordination for new track over Rio Hondo River	Relocated station would have operational challenges due to single track corridor and preclude ability to utilize Alhambra railroad subdivision	There are opportunities to enhance the station area as part of El Monte’s Downtown Specific Plan
<b>2040 Ridership Forecasts (Existing Conditions 2040: 1,250)</b>	1,919	Assumes 1,919 due to proximity to El Monte Bus Transit Center	1,337
<b>Estimated Costs</b>	\$270M	\$42M	\$7M
<b>Community Input</b>	51% of survey respondents said their commutes might improve if the Metrolink station was within a 5-10 minutes walk from the El Monte Bus Transit Center. 16% of respondents were unsure.		33% of survey respondents said their commutes might NOT improve if the Metrolink station was within a 5-10 minutes walk from the El Monte Bus Transit Center.
<b>Physical Impacts</b>	Impacts to existing office/commercial properties, construction impacts, Rio Hondo River Channel	Impacts to existing industrial/commercial business, rail operational constraints	None
<b>Environmental Considerations</b>	Air quality, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise and vibration, parking and site access, and traffic and circulation	Parking and site access, traffic and circulation	Traffic and circulation





LOS ANGELES METRO  
STATION LOCATION FEASIBILITY STUDY

RIO HONDO METROLINK STATION – FEASIBILITY STUDY  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PREPARED FOR  
**LA Metro Regional Rail**  
One Gateway Plaza  
Los Angeles, CA

August 25, 2017



**IN ASSOCIATION WITH:**

IBI Group  
AECOM  
MBI Media  
RSE  
Terry A. Hayes Associates  
Epic Land Solutions  
Engineering Solutions Services

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY****INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT PURPOSE**

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is conducting the Station Location Feasibility Study (Study) to examine the feasibility of creating a new Metrolink station at the base of Rio Hondo College and to identify opportunities to make improvements to the area utilizing existing and planned transit services. The Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) operates Metrolink passenger rail service in six southern California counties, including Los Angeles County. Metrolink serves an average of nearly 40,000 riders each weekday<sup>1</sup>; however, opportunities exist to consolidate, develop, and enhance multi-modal transportation hubs in certain areas across the Metrolink system that could potentially improve regional mobility, attract ridership, and mitigate traffic-induced pollution. First/Last Mile analysis, multi-modal connectivity, and active transportation planning were all incorporated into the Study to support safe, secure, and easy rider experiences, which may encourage increased patronage. Opportunities to improve transit connectivity to the Greater Whittier Narrows area by streamlining multiple transit-related projects and services was also explored in the Study.

**In March 2016, the Metro Board of Directors unanimously approved a motion to examine the feasibility of creating a new Metrolink station on the Riverside Line near Rio Hondo College.**

The Study aims to identify and analyze:

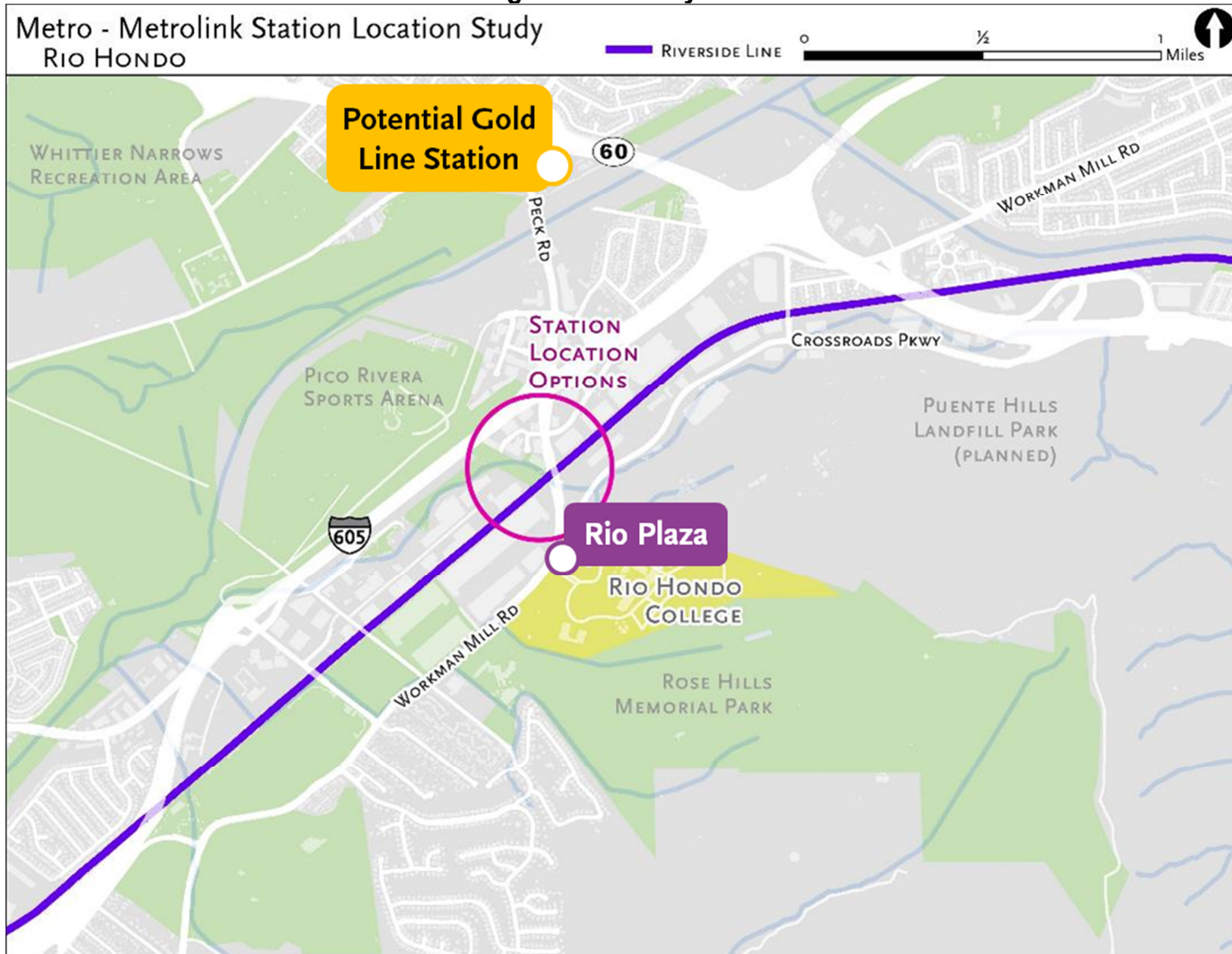
- Potential location option(s) for a new Rio Hondo Metrolink Station; and related benefits and challenges
- Opportunities to maximize rail-to-bus connectivity
- Opportunities to improve First/Last Mile connections to existing and planned developments
- Potential ridership gains and potential cost estimates
- Stakeholder and community feedback

The feasibility study area is shown in Figure 0-1.

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<sup>1</sup> SCRRA, 2017

Figure 0-1: Study Area



**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

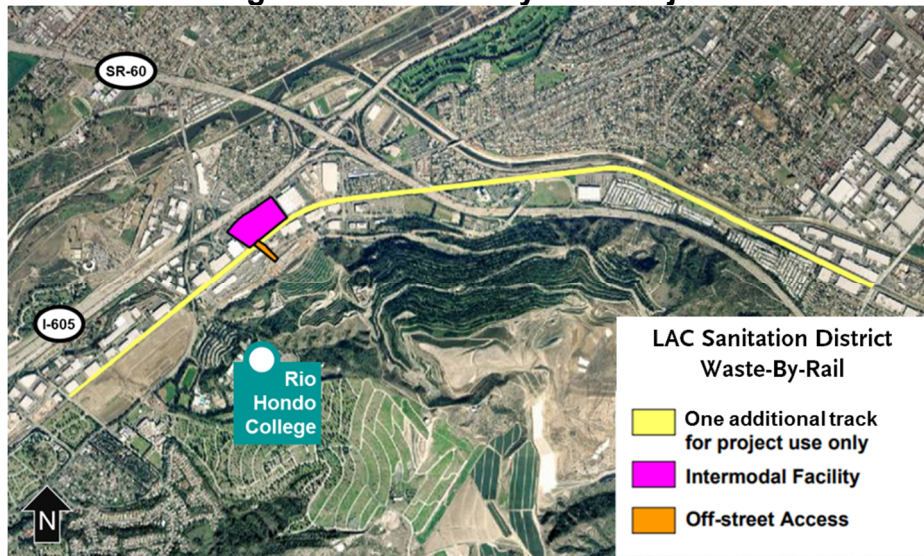
The Rio Hondo College area is surrounded by Peck Road, Workman Mill Road, Interstate 605, State Route 60, and the Riverside Line. The nearest Metrolink stations on the Riverside Line are the Montebello/Commerce and Industry Metrolink Stations, located 7-miles and 13-miles away along the corridor, respectively. The 20-mile gap between the existing Montebello/Commerce and Industry Metrolink Stations is the longest distance without a rail station on the Riverside Line corridor, shown in Figure 0-2.

**Figure 0-2: Riverside Line**



Metrolink service on the Riverside Line consists of six eastbound and six westbound Metrolink trains per weekday. There is currently no weekend service on the Riverside Line and approximately 4,500 passengers board the Riverside Line each weekday. The Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) is the owner and operator of this railroad corridor, and the Riverside Line serves as their backbone railroad for freight train operations in Southern California. Under current operational agreements, any additional passenger rail stations or service on this corridor is contingent upon UPRR agreement. Saturday-only Metrolink service was provided on the Riverside Line beginning in 2000, but was discontinued in 2002. The Los Angeles County Sanitation District (LACSD) also utilizes the railroad in this corridor, and they completed the construction of the new Waste-by-Rail track project within the corridor. The project added approximately 3.5-miles of railroad track for the exclusive use of LACSD, as shown in Figure 0-3.

**Figure 0-3: Waste-By-Rail Project**

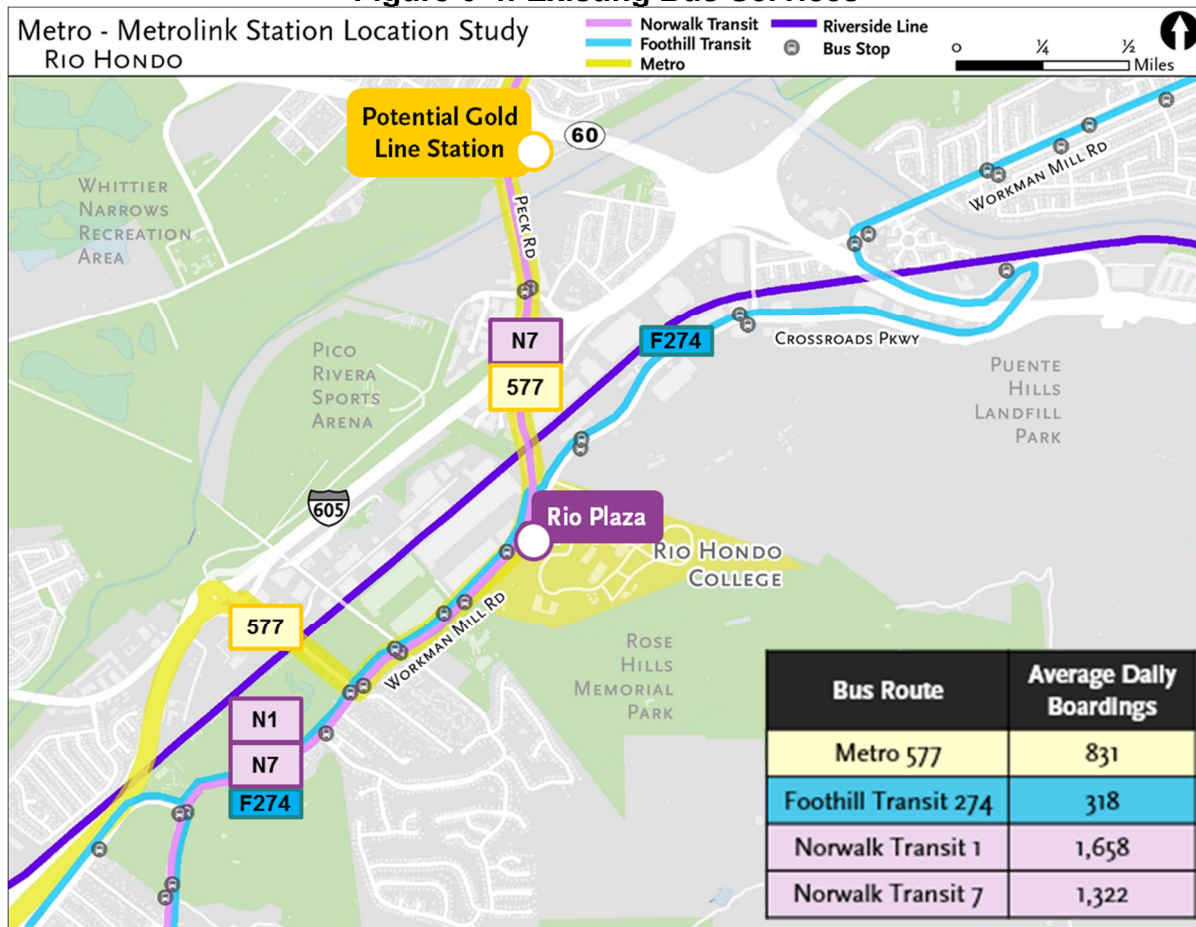


Source: LACSD



Transit service through the Rio Hondo District includes both local and express bus services (Figure 0-4) provided by three different municipal operators: Metro, Foothill Transit, and Norwalk Transit. Bus transfers are supported at the base of Rio Hondo College on Workman Mill Road at College Drive. The routes provide connections to and from the college, the City of Norwalk, the City of Long Beach, and other communities throughout San Gabriel Valley. Beginning in 2018, commuters will be able to utilize the new Rio Plaza, an intermodal transit hub that will be constructed at the foot of Rio Hondo College at College Drive and Workman Mill Road, to make their transit connections.

**Figure 0-4: Existing Bus Services**



Source: Metro, Foothill Transit, Norwalk Transit 2016

**RELATED PROJECTS**

The projects referenced in this Study include the following:

1. Rio Plaza: An intermodal transportation plaza that will be constructed at the foot of Rio Hondo College at College Drive and Workman Mill Road.
2. Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension Phase 2 – State Route-60 (SR-60) Alignment: A light rail transit (LRT) extension of the Gold Line from its current terminus at Atlantic Boulevard

in East Los Angeles to Peck Road at SR-60 in South El Monte. Potential groundbreaking of the LRT extension could begin in 2029 or 2053. A second LRT alignment along Washington Boulevard is also being considered for the Eastside Extension.

3. Gateway Cities Council of Governments Lakewood Avenue and Rosemead Boulevard Complete Streets Corridor Master Plan: The Gateway Cities Council of Governments is considering improving Rosemead Boulevard to transform it into a “Complete Street”, with bicycle and pedestrian infrastructural enhancements.
4. Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County Waste-by-Rail Project: The Los Angeles County Sanitation District has recently completed the construction of 3.5-miles of railroad track to improve waste processing through the region.
5. Metro & Caltrans I-605/SR-60 Interchange Capacity Improvement Project: Metro completed a feasibility study analyzing and identifying several “hot spots” along the corridors of State Route 91, Interstate 605, and Interstate 405. Metro and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) are proposing improvements in these corridors in collaboration with the Gateway Cities Council of Governments and the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments.
6. Puente Hills Landfill Park: The Los Angeles County Puente Hills Landfill Park transforms one of the nation’s former landfills into a regional park over the next 30 years in three phases.

### STUDY ALTERNATIVES

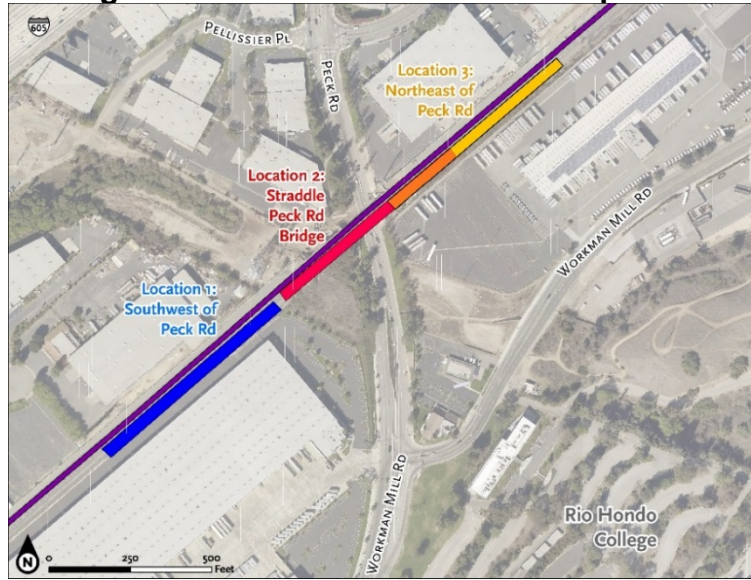
The feasibility Study considered two alternatives:

- **Alternative 1:** New Station – New Metrolink station at the base of Rio Hondo College on the Riverside Line
- **Alternative 2:** Transit Connectivity Improvements – Improves existing transit services and connections between Rio Hondo College, existing Metrolink stations, and active transportation infrastructure

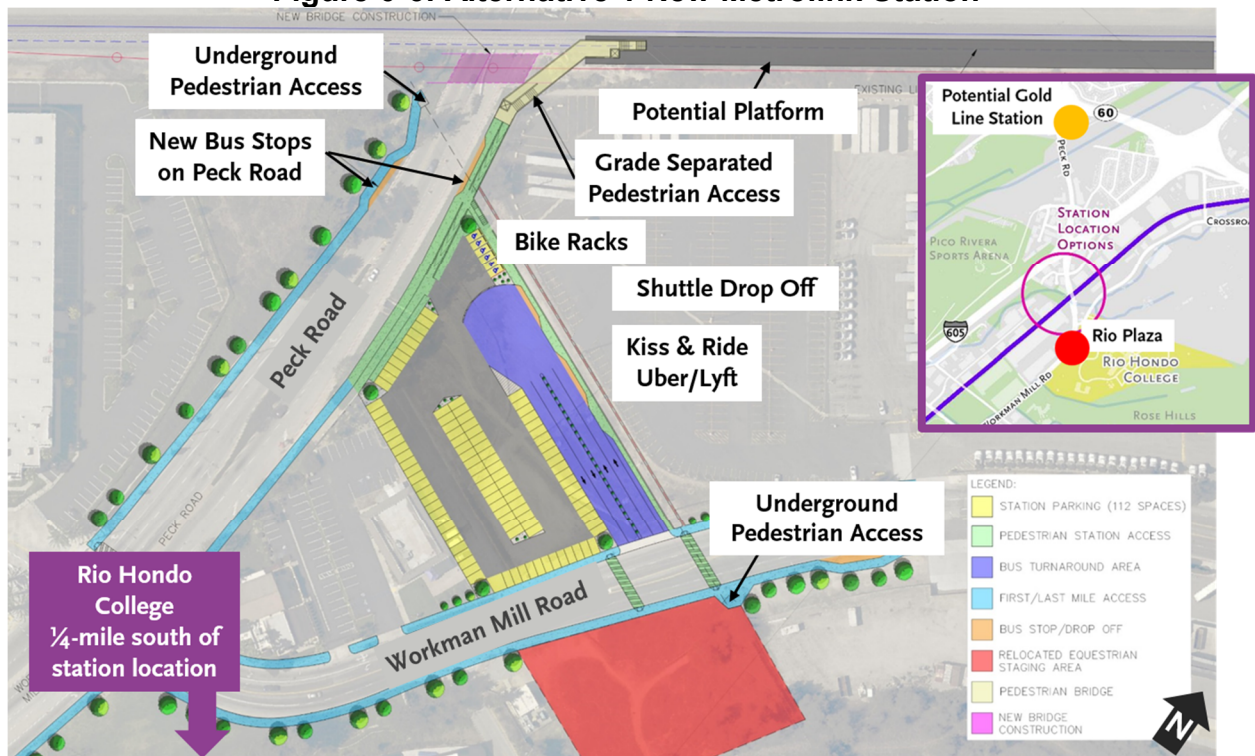
**ALTERNATIVE 1: NEW METROLINK STATION**

For Alternative 1, three station sites (Figure 0-5) were initially considered at this new location. The three locations were initially analyzed based on transit accessibility, stakeholder preference, physical impacts, and operational considerations. Based on the analysis components, a station location northwest of Peck Road on the Riverside Line was selected for further study (Figure 0-6). The other station locations were not selected for further study due to a combination of reasons related to access, overhead utilities, land use restrictions, and right-of-way. The selected station site has the most accessible properties adjacent to the potential station platform area and may support modest parking facilities and transit connections.

**Figure 0-5: Three Initial Location Options**



**Figure 0-6: Alternative 1 New Metrolink Station**



**ALTERNATIVE 1 – ANALYSIS**

Each alternative was analyzed for its feasibility in five (5) categories: transit accessibility, community and stakeholder preference, physical impacts, operations, and costs, summarized in Table 0-1.

**Table 0-1: Analysis Components**

Transit Accessibility	Regional Connectivity & Potential Ridership
	Accessibility & First/Last Mile
	Parking Considerations
	Land Use Considerations
Community & Stakeholder Preference	Community Preference
	Stakeholder Preference
Physical Impacts	Right-of-Way Impacts
	Environmental Impacts
	Utility Impacts
Operations	Rail Operational Considerations
	Bus Operational Considerations
Costs	Rough-Order-of-Magnitude Cost Estimates

**Transit Accessibility**

Alternative 1’s location is well placed for future planned bicycle infrastructure. The Los Angeles County Proposed Bicycle Network includes Class II Bike Lanes along Workman Mill Road adjacent to Rio Hondo College. The site is also near existing bus stops, providing passengers with transfer opportunities as service levels change to interface with new transportation improvements in the region. Additionally, the base of Rio Hondo College is within a five-minute walk from Alternative 1. While the identified station area has some well-maintained streets, it is lacking sidewalks in some areas. Safety improvements such as prominent crossings and wider sidewalks could be implemented to protect pedestrians and bicyclists.

**Ridership forecasts developed from the Metro transit network model indicate about 610 average weekday boardings at a potential Rio Hondo Metrolink Station.**

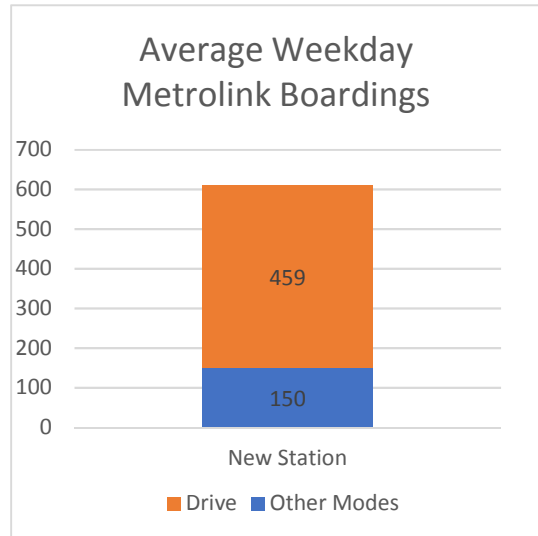
Peck Road is a fast-moving corridor through an industrial part of this community. In the future, it may be the linking arterial between the potential Gold Line Eastside Extension – SR-60 Alignment and Rio Hondo College. In conjunction with the College’s new Rio Plaza and expansion of nearby active transportation amenities and recreational destinations, the area could see an increase in activity.



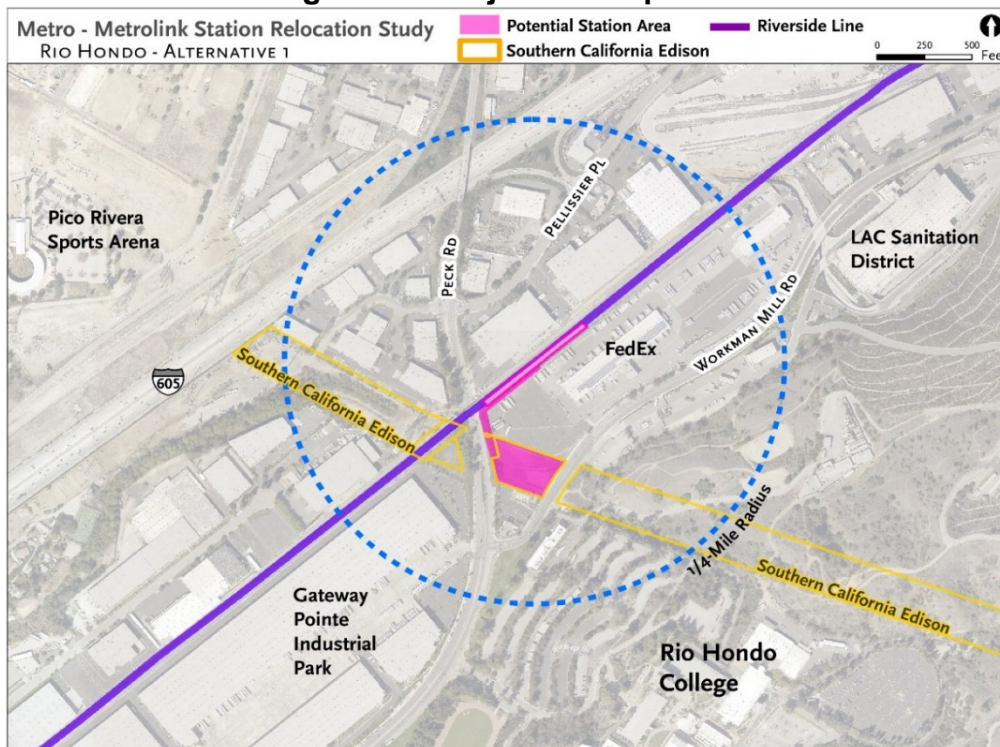
Ridership forecasts developed from the Metro transit network model indicate approximately 609 average weekday boardings at a potential Rio Hondo Metrolink Station, shown in Figure 0-7. Of these, 75 percent of riders would access a potential new station by private automobile, thus making the nature of the station a commuter-oriented origin station.

The parking may be restricted in capacity and time due to property ownership by the adjacent properties and by SCE (see Figure 0-8); no permanent structures could be constructed and no overnight parking would be permitted due to the presence of overhead transmission lines. A sample site plan, shown in Figure 0-9, illustrates that approximately 110 parking spaces may be located here.

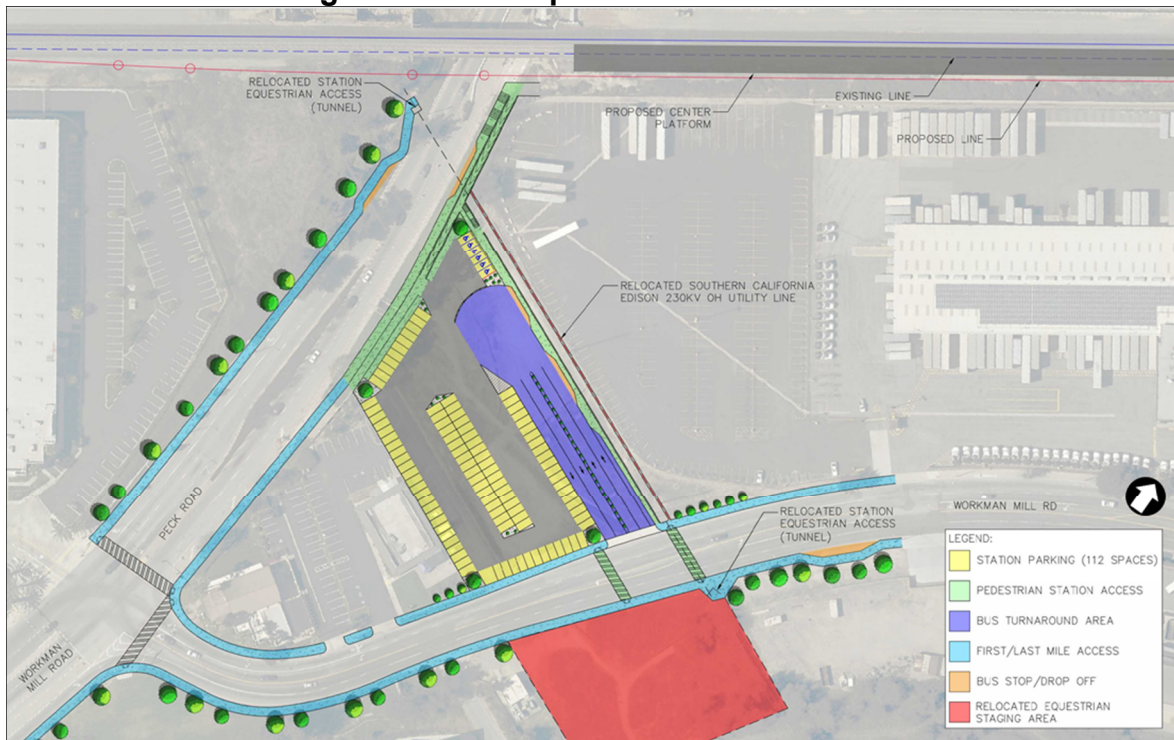
**Figure 0-7: Rio Hondo Ridership Forecast 2040**



**Figure 0-8: Adjacent Properties**



**Figure 0-9: Example of Station Site Plan**



**Stakeholder & Community Preference**

The public was invited to make comments about the potential new Metrolink station at the San Gabriel Valley and Gateway Cities Service Council meetings. The concerns expressed included the potential costs of a new station and potential timeline if a build alternative were to move on to further analysis and technical study. Three targeted surveys were distributed among:

- 1) Metrolink Riverside Line riders,
- 2) Rio Hondo College students and staff, and
- 3) Rio Hondo District residents and businesses.

Survey respondents were able to provide insight on community preferences. From the surveys, 53 percent of respondents said they would likely use the Metrolink station if it were built, but 90 percent said they would be only willing to pay up to \$10 for a round-trip Metrolink ticket.

**Physical Impacts**

The potential physical impacts analyzed as part of Alternative 1 in this Study include right-of-way, utilities, and environmental impacts.

The identified site currently serves as the Workman Mill Equestrian Staging Area with day use parking for cars, trucks, and horse trailers. This would need to be relocated and maintained for the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation. The site selected for Alternative 1 has potential for a multi-modal hub with the least potential impacts to surrounding businesses. If a new station were to be constructed, a lease agreement would need to be established with SCE upon approval with the California Public Utility Commission (CPUC) and the site would be

subject to limitations of use that would affect the way the station is used. The lease agreements granted by SCE are 5-year agreements, terminable within 30-days. SCE requires safe access to their utility system at all times, and as high-power transmission lines run directly over the site, permanent structures and 24-hour parking would not be permissible.

Additionally, use of the railroad right-of-way (ROW) would be contingent upon UPRR agreement. UPRR has stated that they are unable to support a potential new passenger rail station here as additional stops are viewed as having a negative impact on UPRR networks. Only if delays are fully mitigated and the potential station location does not impact the ability to serve UPRR customers will UPRR reconsider its position.

FedEx also shared their concerns for the potential station footprint. The FedEx facility located just east of the identified station location is a 24-hour freight facility and their existing surface parking lot is highly utilized by their employees and freight vehicles. As a result, impacts to the FedEx property have been minimized in this Study.

If a station were to be constructed, the two existing equestrian/multi-use trail tunnels crossing underneath Peck Road and Workman Mill Road may need to be relocated to accommodate transit users at the station, depending on the station site plan. Underground water utilities may be affected and there may be minimal impacts to above ground electrical utilities on the existing site.

A preliminary analysis on environmental considerations was conducted to identify potential areas which may require further technical analysis should the alternative undergo future detailed studies and/or environmental processes. These areas include considerations for air quality, biological resources, hazards and hazardous materials, noise and vibration, parking and site access, and traffic and circulation.

### Operations

The presence of a new Metrolink station on the Riverside Line could result in delays for both freight and passenger rail operations. Different rail platform configurations, whether it be a center platform or side platforms, have impacts on right-of-way, operations, and passenger access.

Existing bus services operate on the adjacent streets and may utilize existing bus stops for transferring passengers. A new bus stop could be added to Peck Road near the railroad bridge to provide a direct connection to Metro route 577 and Norwalk Transit route 7 on Peck Road, as route deviations into the station may not be conducive to bus headways and schedules. The existing trail tunnel under Peck Road could provide grade-separated access to a potential new bus stop on Peck Road for transferring riders from the station relocation site.

### Cost Estimates

Rough order-of-magnitude (ROM) capital cost estimates were developed for Alternative 1 for feasibility purposes. With the aim of portraying the highest level of development for a station of this scale, the total estimated capital cost is approximately \$125 million. This includes a pedestrian grade separation to access the platform, a bus turnaround and layover facility, demolition clearing and earthwork, right-of-way costs, passenger rail service improvements, and contingencies.

**The total estimated ROM capital cost is approximately \$125 million for Alternative 1.**

### **ALTERNATIVE 2: TRANSIT CONNECTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS**

Alternative 2 aims to improve transit connectivity throughout the Rio Hondo College area utilizing existing and planned transit services. Major opportunities for improvement include:

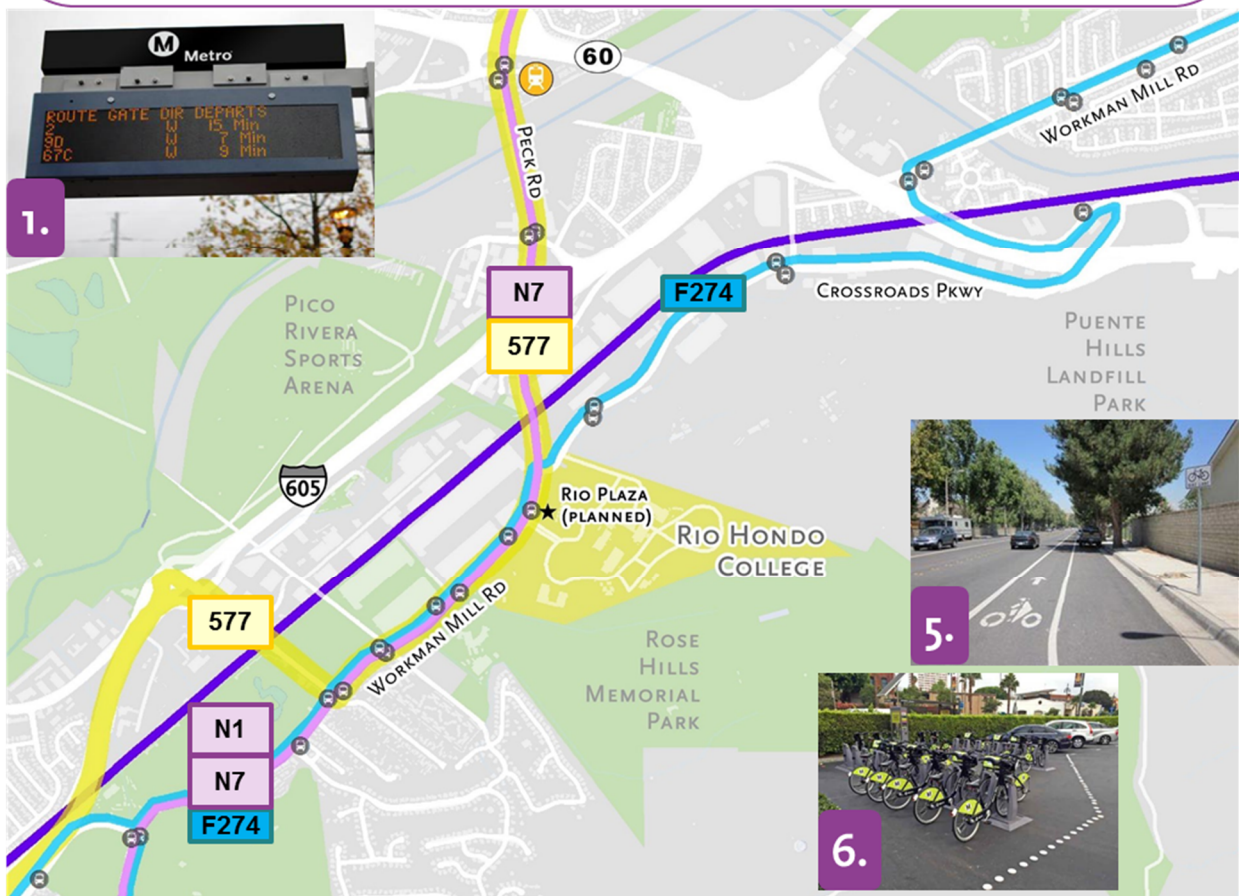
- Consolidating and streamlining multiple transit related projects and services in coordination with the Rio Plaza project
- Providing better connectivity between Rio Hondo College and existing Metrolink stations by improving local bus route and shuttle services
- Improving wayfinding signage and real-time bus arrival information
- Improving First/Last mile connections by implementing bike lanes, bicycle storage, and by extending sidewalks

The Greater Whittier Narrows Area has ample recreational destinations and bike paths, and there is an opportunity to provide a link between these areas and the residential, employment, and educational centers in Rio Hondo.



**Figure 0-10: Transit Connectivity Improvements**

1. NexTrip Bus Arrivals
2. Potential new bus route to Metrolink Riverside Line (Montebello/ Commerce or Industry Metrolink Stations) to meet trains
3. Evening service after 10PM
4. Improve bus headways
5. Bike Lanes
6. Bike Share Opportunities
7. Wayfinding signage around Rio Plaza and nearby destinations and transfer points



**ALTERNATIVE 2 – ANALYSIS**

**Transit Accessibility**

The Rio Hondo District is a rapidly growing region with ample recreational facilities and multiple transportation-related projects slated for development. The amount of investment going into this region demonstrates the need and opportunity to streamline transportation improvement projects to maximize accessibility potential throughout the region.

Though the study area generally has a well-maintained and easily navigable public realm, clear crossings, and potential for seamless transfers via Rio Plaza, existing sidewalks can be extended to better facilitate first/last mile connections. Immediate opportunities for improvement include extending the sidewalks along Peck Road from the Rio Hondo College bus stop, as shown in Figure 0-11 and Figure 0-12. Enhanced lighting, safety buffers for cyclists and pedestrians, a sense of place, and better placed pedestrian amenities could also facilitate better first/last mile connections.

**Figure 0-11: Missing Sidewalk at Rio Hondo College Bus Stop**



Source: Google 2017

**Community and Stakeholder Preference**

As a result of the community and stakeholder outreach efforts, the project team received much feedback regarding Alternative 2. Out of nearly 1,500 respondents from Rio Hondo College, 35 percent of students, faculty, and staff reported that they utilize transit to reach the campus. When asked which improvements are most desirable for the area, 54 percent of Rio Hondo area residents, students, and businesses reported that they would like to see more bus service in the area. As a stakeholder, Rio Hondo College expressed a desire to consider improving the surrounding pedestrian and bicycle facilities for the area to interface with the Rio Plaza.

**Figure 0-12: Facing South at Workman Mill Road and Peck Road Intersection**



Source: Google 2017

**Physical Impacts**

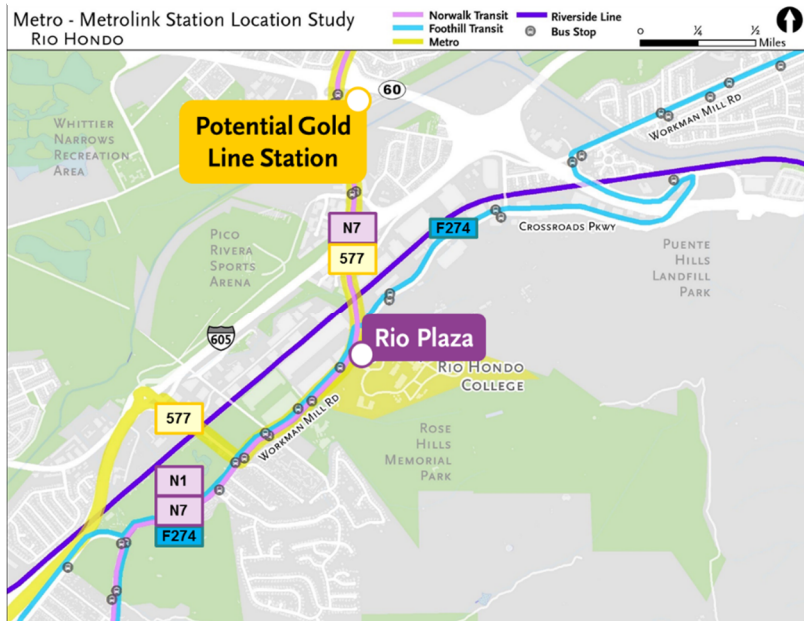
As a result of potential upgrades to the Rio Hondo College district, physical impacts may be limited traffic and circulation as a result of new bike lanes and improved pedestrian facilities in the area.

**Operational Considerations**

With regards to rail operations on the Riverside Line, no additional passenger rail service or rail infrastructure was included as part of Alternative 2.

Today, there are bus connections to both the Metrolink San Bernardino Line and the Orange County Line via Foothill Transit Route 274 and Norwalk Transit Route 7, respectively. The creation of a new bus route or the modification of an existing route could provide a third bus-to-rail connection to the Riverside Line via the Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station. Additionally, headways and operating times could be improved to accommodate off-peak travel times utilized by Rio Hondo College students and staff.

**Figure 0-13: Bus Operational Considerations**



While approximately 60 percent of Rio Hondo College survey respondents reported that they commute to the college before 9AM, more than 51 percent of these same respondents reported that they leave the college after 6PM.

Additionally, opportunities exist to increase bus service along Peck Road for the potential Gold Line station at Peck Road and State Route 60 (SR-60), shown in Figure 0-13. The LRT extension of the Gold Line to Peck Road could bring frequent and reliable transit service that may benefit from increased transit links throughout the Rio Hondo area. Any potential changes in bus transit services would require coordination between Metro, Foothill Transit, Norwalk Transit, and Rio Hondo College, among other stakeholders.

**Cost Estimates**

The capital costs associated with upgrading the surrounding pedestrian and bicycle facilities in Rio Hondo under Alternative 2 is approximately \$2 million. This includes extended and enhanced sidewalks and crosswalk improvements, Class II bike lanes, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) amenities, wayfinding signage, and contingencies.

**The total estimated ROM capital cost is approximately \$2 million for Alternative 2.**

### **STAKEHOLDER & COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

The Rio Hondo Metrolink Station Location Feasibility Study and its alternatives were developed in coordination with key stakeholders. These stakeholders included:

- SCRRRA
- Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR)
- Rio Hondo College
- FedEx
- Southern California Edison (SCE)
- Los Angeles County Sanitation District (LACSD)
- City of Whittier
- San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
- Alameda Corridor East Construction Authority
- City of South El Monte
- Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation

The Study was presented at the San Gabriel Valley Service Council and the Gateway Cities Service Council meetings. These meetings served as platforms to introduce the Study, to engage the local communities, and receive input regarding the Study and how it could impact the local public. In addition, a survey campaign was launched which targeted existing Metrolink riders of the Riverside Line, Rio Hondo College faculty and students, and employees and residents of the Rio Hondo District. As a result of these outreach efforts, nearly 1,500 completed survey responses were gathered and analyzed for the purposes of this Study.



**CONCLUSIONS**

A snapshot summary of the two alternatives is shown in Table 0-2.

**Table 0-2: Rio Hondo Alternatives Summary**

	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
	New Metrolink Station	Transit Connectivity Improvements
Feasibility	New station would require approvals from Union Pacific Railroad, California Public Utilities Commission, and Southern California Edison, and railroad operational enhancements.	Opportunities for improving transit and active transportation connectivity exist within the Rio Hondo area
2040 Ridership Forecasts	609	No Metrolink Station
Estimated Costs	\$125M	\$2M
Community Input	53% of survey respondents said they would likely use the Metrolink station if it were built, but 90% said they would only be willing to pay up to \$10 for a round-trip Metrolink ticket	When asked what improvements they would like to see around Rio Hondo, 54% of survey respondents said that they would like to see more bus service in the area
Physical Impacts	Impacts to Southern California Edison, relocation of existing LA County Parks amenities	None
Environmental Considerations	Air quality, biological resources, hazards and hazardous materials, noise and vibration, parking and site access, and traffic and circulation	Traffic and circulation



LOS ANGELES METRO  
STATION LOCATION FEASIBILITY STUDY

MONTEBELLO/COMMERCE METROLINK STATION –  
FEASIBILITY STUDY  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PREPARED FOR  
**LA Metro Regional Rail**  
One Gateway Plaza  
Los Angeles, CA

August 25, 2017



**IN ASSOCIATION WITH:**

IBI Group  
AECOM  
MBI Media  
RSE  
Terry A. Hayes Associates  
Epic Land Solutions  
Engineering Solutions Services

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT PURPOSE

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is conducting the Station Location Feasibility Study (Study) for the Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station to examine the feasibility of relocating the station closer to the Commerce Resort area and to identify opportunities to make improvements to the existing station. The Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) operates Metrolink passenger rail service in six southern California counties, including Los Angeles

**In May 2016, the Metro Board of Directors unanimously approved a motion to examine the feasibility of relocating the existing Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station to improve and facilitate access to regional commercial/retail centers.**

County. Metrolink serves an average of nearly 40,000 riders each weekday<sup>1</sup>; however, opportunities exist to consolidate, develop, and enhance multi-modal transportation hubs in certain areas across the Metrolink system which could potentially improve regional mobility, attract ridership, and mitigate traffic-induced pollution. First/Last Mile analysis, multi-modal connectivity, and active transportation planning were all incorporated into the Study to support safe, secure, and easy rider experiences, which may encourage increased patronage. The Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension – Washington Alignment also presents a unique opportunity to collaborate for future growth and transit connectivity strategies.

The Study aims to identify and analyze:

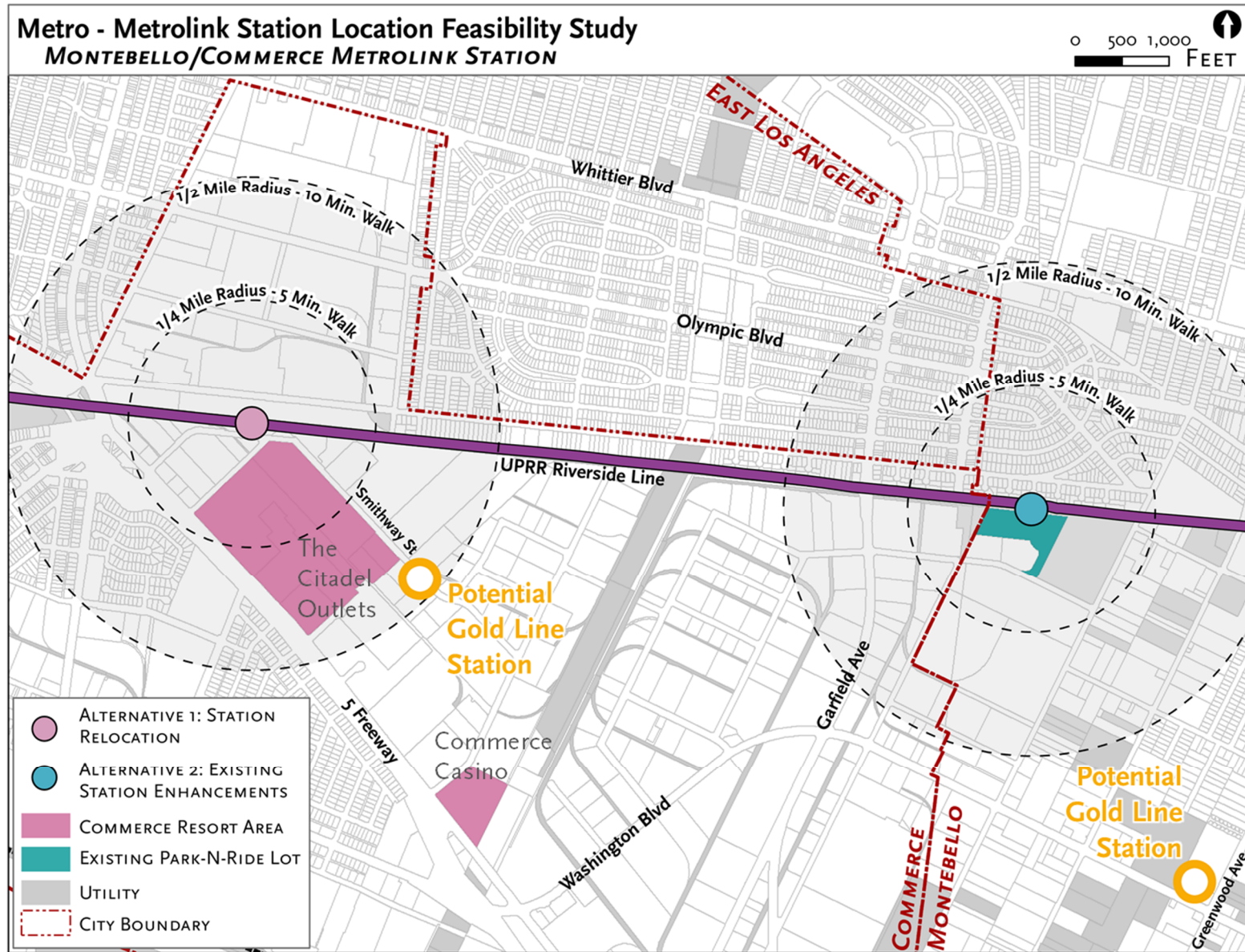
- Potential relocation option(s) for the Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station; and related benefits and challenges
- Opportunities to maximize rail-to-bus connectivity
- Opportunities to improve First/Last Mile connections to existing and planned developments
- Potential ridership gains and potential cost estimates
- Stakeholder and community feedback

The Study area is shown in Figure 0-1.

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<sup>1</sup> SCRRA, 2017

Figure 0-1: Study Area





**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The existing Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station is located along Flotilla Street between Garfield Avenue and Vail Avenue in the City of Montebello, just outside of Commerce city limits. The station covers nearly seven acres and provides 267 parking spaces, 17 percent of which are utilized on an average weekday. The station opened in 1997 and recently underwent a \$537,000 renovation effort in 2014 to upgrade American Disabilities Act (ADA) amenities, including sidewalk and pavement repairs, and install eco-friendly landscaping and lighting (see Figure 0-2).

**The future Gold Line Eastside Extension – Washington alignment presents an opportunity to study enhancements to existing transit services, as the extension could place light rail transit stations within one-to-two miles of the existing Metrolink station.**

**Figure 0-2: Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station**

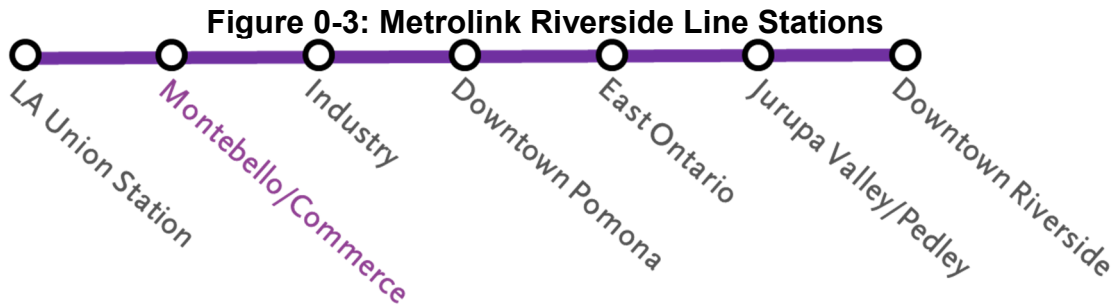


Source: Google 2017

Passenger rail service through the Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station consists of 12 Metrolink trains per weekday on the Riverside Line. There is currently no weekend service, and over 400 riders board Metrolink at the station on an average weekday. The Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) is the owner and operator of this railroad corridor, and the Riverside Line serves as their backbone railroad for freight train operations in Southern California. Under current operational agreements, any additional passenger rail stations or service on this corridor is contingent upon

**Under current operational agreements, any additional passenger rail stations or service on this corridor is contingent upon UPRR agreement.**

UPRR agreement. Saturday-only Metrolink service was provided on the Riverside Line beginning in 2000, but was discontinued in 2002. The Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station, located on the Riverside Line, provides commuter rail service between Los Angeles Union Station and Downtown Riverside, with the stations shown in Figure 0-3.



Bus service at the Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station is provided by Metro, Montebello Bus, and Montebello Link shuttles. The station serves as a successful bus terminal for Metro routes 18 and 66, and there is an average of over 870 boardings each weekday on these two bus routes combined<sup>2</sup>. The station is also critical to Metro bus operations as it provides bus operators with the necessary facilities and restrooms during layovers. The Montebello Link is comprised of five semi-fixed routes that meet every peak-hour Metrolink train. These are utilized by Metrolink passengers and provide a direct link to various employers and commercial businesses in the area. The City of Commerce operates bus circulator routes throughout both Commerce and Montebello, however there are no direct connections to Commerce Bus routes at the existing Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station. While the Citadel Outlets and the Commerce Casino are located just two miles away, there are no direct shuttles or bus services to connect the station with these destinations. The Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station bus services are summarized in Table 0-1 and illustrated in Figure 0-4.

**Table 0-1: Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station Bus Routes**

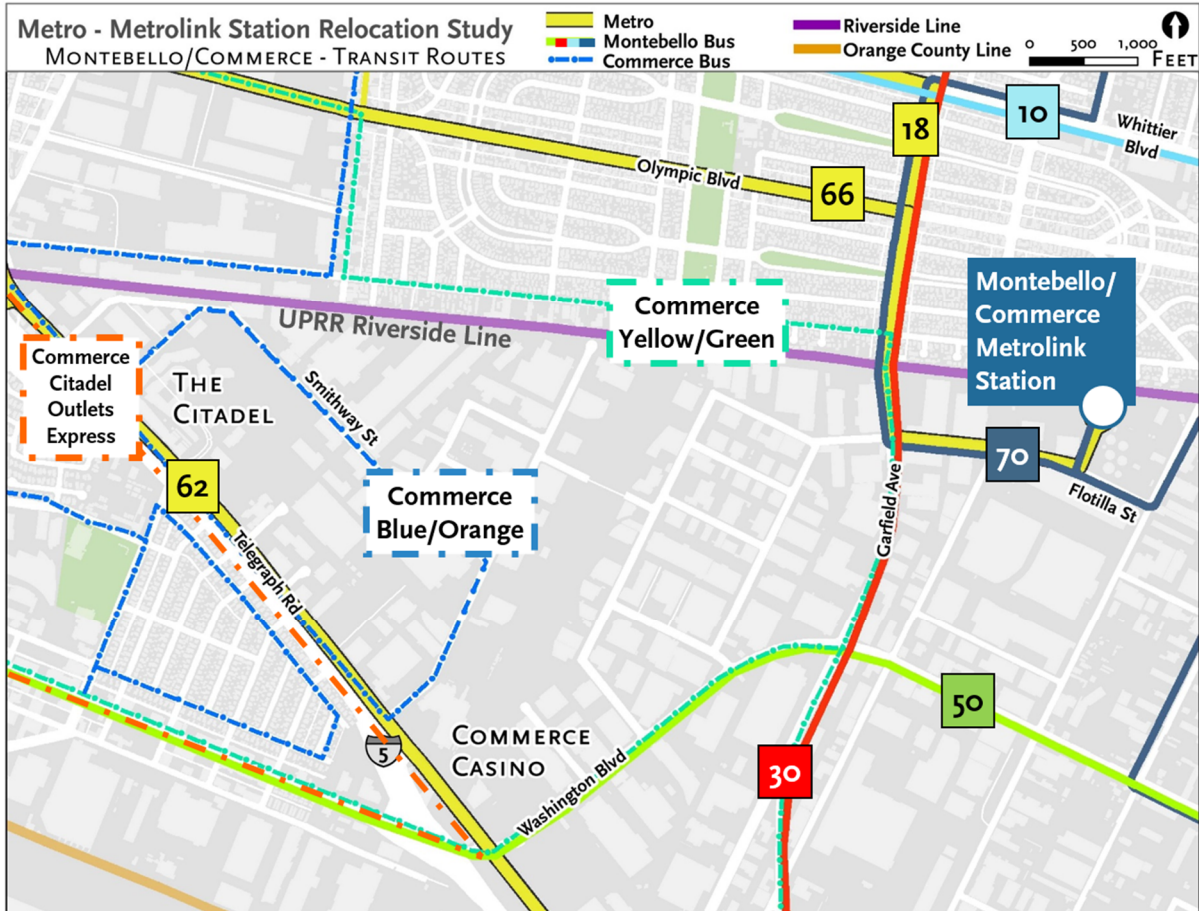
Operator	Route	Destinations	Average Weekday Boardings
Metro	18	Wilshire to Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station via Whittier	44,021
Metro	66	Wilshire to Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station via Olympic	30,788

<sup>2</sup> LACMTA, May 2016

Sources: Metro 2016, City of Montebello 2016

Montebello Bus	70	Montebello Shops to Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station	325
Montebello Link	5 Semi-Fixed Routes	Commuter service to nearby employers	N/A

**Figure 0-4: Montebello/Commerce Transit Routes**



The Citadel Outlets and the Commerce Casino, along with multiple hotels, are part of the Commerce Resort area (see Figure 0-5). Multiple tour buses visit the Citadel each day, carrying over 1,000 customers and visitors on a daily basis. The Commerce Resort area presents a unique opportunity to enhance transit connectivity and strengthen links between commercial and employment centers in the community. As the Commerce Resort area expands, they are expected to draw 40 percent more visitors each year. Currently, the Citadel Outlets provides complimentary round-trip shuttle services from downtown Los Angeles. Public transit service to the Commerce Resort is provided by Metro route 62 and Commerce routes blue and orange. Nevertheless, these routes do not serve the Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station, which provides an opportunity to identify and analyze potential connectivity improvements.



**Figure 0-5: The Citadel Outlets & Commerce Casino**

Sources: Craig Realty Group; IHG

### STUDY ALTERNATIVES

The Study considered two alternatives:

- **Alternative 1:** Station Relocation – Relocate the existing Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station closer to the Citadel Outlets within the Commerce Resort area.
- **Alternative 2:** Existing Station Enhancements – Upgrade the existing Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station into a multi-modal transit hub to encourage increased patronage, connectivity, and safety.

#### ALTERNATIVE 1: STATION RELOCATION

Alternative 1 identified one station location (Figure 0-6) near the intersection of Flotilla Street and Hoefner Avenue for further study. The potential station site includes two properties being currently utilized as overflow parking for a nearby business. While this Study analyzes this site (Figure 0-7) for a potential station relocation, a comprehensive environmental process would vet all possible locations in more detail if the project were to move forward.



Figure 0-6: Potential Station Location Site



Figure 0-7: Example of Potential Station Relocation Site Plan



**ALTERNATIVE 1 – ANALYSIS**

Each alternative was analyzed for its feasibility in five categories: transit accessibility, community and stakeholder preference, physical impacts, operations, and costs, summarized in Table 0-2.

**Table 0-2: Analysis Components**

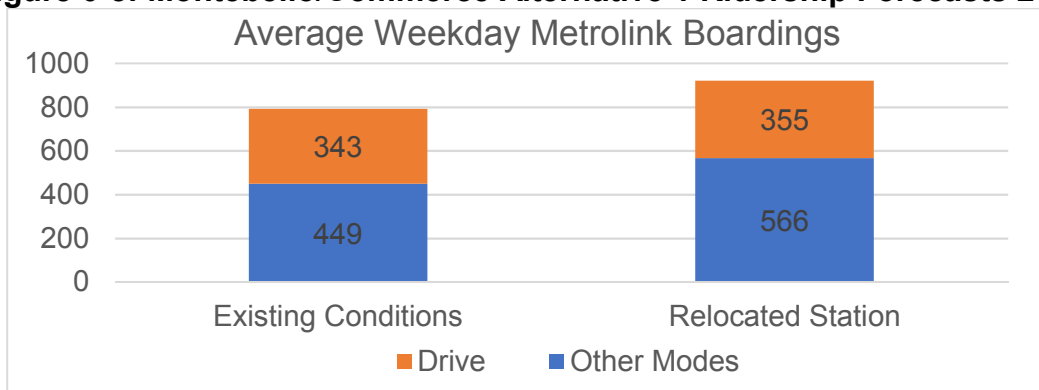
Transit Accessibility	Regional Connectivity & Potential Ridership
	Accessibility & First/Last Mile
	Parking Considerations
	Land Use Considerations
Community & Stakeholder Preference	Community Preference
	Stakeholder Preference
Physical Impacts	Right-of-Way Impacts
	Environmental Impacts
	Utility Impacts
Operations	Rail Operational Considerations
	Bus Operational Considerations
Costs	Cost Estimates

**Transit Accessibility**

The location is adjacent to both peak and off-peak trip generators such as industrial and commercial centers, including the Commerce Resort area. There are also bus and shuttle routes located within a five-minute walk of the potential station location. Opportunities to improve safety and accessibility in the area include adding bike lanes, improving pedestrian crossings and sidewalks, and implementing wayfinding signage to help patrons navigate the nearby destinations and transit services. The potential station location is also within a ¼-mile radius of the future Gold Line Eastside Extension station on Smithway Street, which could enhance regional connectivity by consolidating transit hubs.

Ridership forecasts developed from the Metro transit network model indicate approximately 921 average weekday Metrolink boardings at the potential relocated station in 2040, shown in Figure 0-8. Of these, about 61 percent of transit users are anticipated to access the station by foot, bicycle, transit, taxi, or ride-hailing services. This may imply that the potential relocated station may be a destination-oriented station rather than a commuter-oriented origin station.

**Figure 0-8: Montebello/Commerce Alternative 1 Ridership Forecasts 2040**



### Community and Stakeholder Preference

The stakeholders had the opportunity to provide their feedback and voice their concerns throughout the life of the Study. UPRR stated that they were unable to support the relocated station here as it would place passenger rail operations too close to their Intermodal Facility, causing potential delays and constraining freight capacity. UPRR would require any relocated stations on this corridor to be “hold out rule” compliant. Both UPRR and SCRRRA require new stations to be constructed without at-grade pedestrian crossings.

The public was invited to make comments about the potential relocated Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station at the San Gabriel Valley and Gateway Cities Service Council meetings. These concerns included pedestrian access and ADA accessibility and the potential timeline if a build alternative were to move on to further analysis and technical study. Based on the Metrolink rider survey distributed to riders along the Riverside Line, approximately 85 percent of the survey respondents reported that their trip purpose was for work. Of the existing Metrolink riders who responded to the survey, 35 percent of participants said their commutes would improve if the Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station was within a five-minute walk to the Citadel Outlets.

### Physical Impacts

The potential physical impacts analyzed as a part of Alternative 1 in this Study include right-of-way, utility, and environmental impacts.

The identified site currently serves as an overflow parking lot for AltaMed with 89 spaces. This parking is required by the business to meet the parking requirements outlined by the City of Commerce Development Code. AltaMed has voiced that any land acquisition of this parking area will require a one-for-one replacement of the parking spaces. Furthermore, AltaMed is planning to grow their company by 400 new employees and construct a new 600-space parking structure to meet the City’s parking requirements. If necessary, AltaMed would be able to accommodate the loss of 89-spaces in AltaMed’s new parking structure if a decision on the Study is determined by the end of 2017.

Additionally, the size of the parcels at this location are not large enough to meet any greater parking demand than there is today. An average of 49 transit riders utilize the existing station’s park-n-ride lot during weekdays and this location can accommodate approximately 50 spaces. The Citadel Outlets complex has a new, ten-story parking structure adjacent to the station location, which may provide an opportunity to explore parking sharing strategies.

A preliminary analysis on environmental impacts was conducted to identify potential areas which may require further technical analysis should the alternative undergo future detailed studies and/or environmental processes. These areas include considerations for air quality, hazards and hazardous materials, noise and vibration, parking and site access, and traffic and circulation.

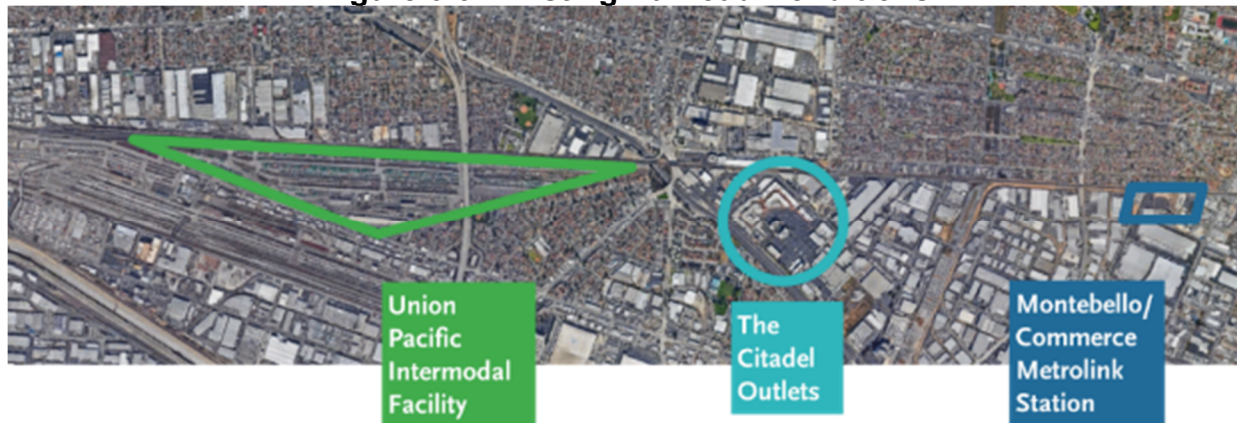
### Operations

The relocation of the existing Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station closer to The Citadel Outlets could place the passenger rail station closer to the Union Pacific Intermodal Facility,

shown in Figure 0-9. The Union Pacific Intermodal Facility is a 24/7 terminal facility for the Los Angeles/Long Beach area. The storage tracks and railroad sidings in this area are utilized to assemble UPRR trains and maintaining freight capacity in this area is a vital piece of UPRR's rail operations.

The station location is located closer to the Union Pacific Intermodal Facility, which may impact freight railroad operations. Any potential relocation of stations along the UPRR-owned Riverside Line would be contingent upon UPRR approval, and delays or impacts to UPRR freight operations would need to be fully mitigated.

**Figure 0-9: Existing Railroad Conditions**



The potential relocation of the Metrolink station could also impact existing bus operations. The existing Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station is a successful transit terminal, and Metro routes 18 and 66 carry over 44,000 and 30,000 passengers each weekday, respectively<sup>3</sup>. The relocation of the existing station may result in the closure of the bus terminal, which could impact the bus routes that currently layover at the facility. Additionally, existing bus routes may or may not be able to accommodate a relocated station option due to the constrained and congested arterials surrounding the potential station site.

#### Cost Estimates

Rough order-of-magnitude (ROM) capital cost estimates were developed for Alternative 1 for feasibility purposes. With the aim of portraying the highest level of development for a station of this scale, the total estimated capital cost is approximately \$80 million. This includes private land acquisition for the station area, a pedestrian bridge with elevators, capital railroad improvements, contingencies, and the repayment of existing grant funds that were used to renovate the existing station.

**The total estimated capital cost for Alternative 1 is approximately \$80 million.**

<sup>3</sup> LACMTA, May 2016



**ALTERNATIVE 2: EXISTING STATION ENHANCEMENTS**

Alternative 2 could elevate the existing station to a multi-modal hub to improve transit and non-motorized transit accessibility. With an existing large park-n-ride lot and a future Gold Line Station slated for the community as part of the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension-Washington Alignment, opportunities exist to enhance the station and surrounding area with improvements. The program may include enhanced pedestrian amenities, a new bike hub, bicycle lanes, wayfinding signage to direct patrons to nearby transit connections and retail centers, and enhanced bus-to-rail connections, as shown in Figure 0-10.

**Figure 0-10: Existing Station Enhancements**



**ALTERNATIVE 2 – ANALYSIS**

Transit Accessibility

**A total of 839 average weekday Metrolink boardings were forecasted at the existing Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station.**

**Figure 0-11: Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station Bus Connections**



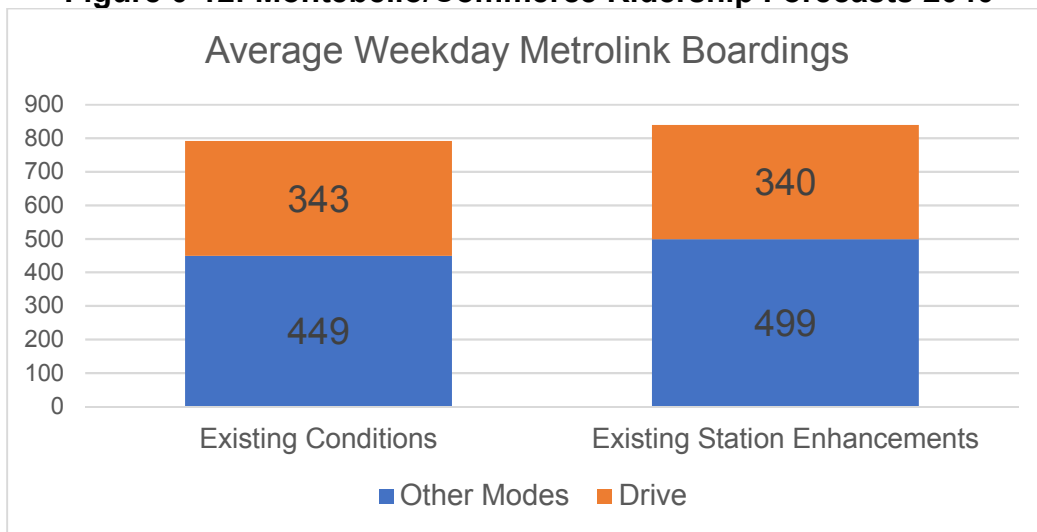
Source: The Solis Group

The existing Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station is a successful transfer point for many bus and rail commuters in the area (Figure 0-11).

The station is currently surrounded by industrial and employment centers to the south of the station and there are large residential communities north of the station. Improvements, such as wider sidewalks and wayfinding signage, could be made to the grade-separated railroad crossing on Garfield Avenue to enhance connectivity to the residential communities to the north. Overall, the Metrolink station is an already established transit hub that could benefit from enhanced pedestrian facilities, new bicycle lanes, and wayfinding signage improvements outside of the station area to facilitate better first/last mile connections.

With the improvements identified in this study, a total of 839 average weekday Metrolink boardings were forecasted at the existing Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station. This is an increase of 47 additional weekday boardings over existing conditions in 2040, as shown in Figure 0-12. The ridership model shows that 41 percent of overall boardings will access the station via driving under Alternative 2, compared to 43 percent of boardings under existing conditions.

**Figure 0-12: Montebello/Commerce Ridership Forecasts 2040**



Community and Stakeholder Preference

As a result of the outreach efforts, including a survey distributed to existing Metrolink riders, the project team was able to gather and analyze feedback regarding Alternative 2. When asked if relocating the Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station within a 5-to-10-minute walk from the Citadel would improve their commute, 47 percent of survey respondents reported that their commutes would not improve. Approximately 85 percent of respondents reported that their trip purpose was for work and 69 percent reported that they were happy with the current location. When asked which improvements would transit users most like to see at the existing Metrolink station, 20 percent of survey respondents said they would prefer to see food services such as vending machines or cafés. Respondents also expressed a desire to see more shade (19 percent) at the station, especially on the center platform where they must board and alight the trains.

Physical Impacts

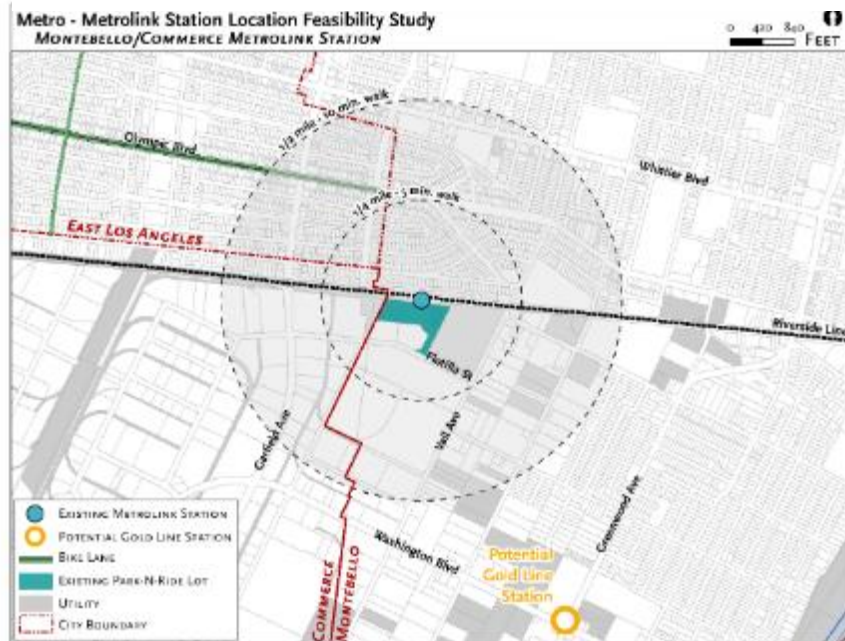
As a result of potential upgrades to the existing Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station, physical impacts may be limited to traffic and circulation as a result of new bike lanes and improved pedestrian facilities in the area.

Operations

There is currently no weekend passenger rail service on the UPRR Riverside Line, and no additional passenger rail service was included in Alternative 2 for this Study. Additional passenger rail service on both weekdays and weekends would be contingent upon UPRR agreement.

Bus operations could see potential synergies with the Gold Line Eastside Extension – Washington Boulevard Alignment. The potential future light rail transit station, shown in Figure 0-13, is located approximately one-mile away from the existing Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station. Existing bus services could be modified to potentially link the two transit hubs in the future. Additionally, transit connections to The Commerce Resort area could be improved by creating a direct shuttle to meet Metrolink passengers.

**Figure 0-13: Existing Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station**



### Cost Estimates

The preliminary cost items identified include station amenities and upgrades, grade crossing safety improvements, new bike lanes, First/Last Mile improvements, a new bike hub, and contingencies. The total estimated capital cost for Alternative 2 is approximately \$5 million.

**The total estimated capital cost for Alternative 2 is approximately \$5 million.**

### COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

The Montebello/Commerce Metrolink Station Location Feasibility Study alternatives were developed in coordination with key stakeholders and members of the community. These stakeholders included Metrolink, UPRR, the Cities of Montebello and Commerce, The Citadel Outlets, The Commerce Casino, AltaMed, and the Gold Line Extension Washington Coalition. The Gold Line Extension Washington Coalition includes representatives from the cities of Commerce, Pico Rivera, Santa Fe Springs, Norwalk, and Whittier. Each of these stakeholders were approached to provide feedback on the Study. Communication regarding the Study was also targeted to area stakeholders via social media, the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension mailing list, Metro's website, and The Source.

The Study was presented at the San Gabriel Valley Service Council and the Gateway Cities Service Council meetings. These meetings served as platforms to introduce the Study, to engage the local communities, and receive input regarding the Study and how it could impact the local public. In addition, a survey campaign was launched which targeted existing Metrolink riders of the Riverside Line. As a result of these outreach efforts, over 1,500 survey responses were gathered and analyzed for the Study.



**CONCLUSIONS**

A snapshot summary of the two alternatives is shown in Table 0-2.

**Table 0-3: Montebello/Commerce Alternatives Summary**

	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
	Station Relocation	Existing Station Enhancements
<b>Feasibility</b>	Relocation would require approval from Union Pacific Railroad and railroad operational enhancements. There is no weekend service and 50% of Citadel visits occur on weekends.	Opportunities for upgrades exist at the station and surrounding area
<b>2040 Forecasted Ridership</b> Existing Conditions 2040: 792	921	839
<b>Estimated Costs</b>	\$80M	\$5M
<b>Community Input</b>	35% of survey respondents said their commute would improve if the station was relocated closer to the Citadel Outlets	47% of survey respondents said their commute would NOT improve if the station was relocated closer to the Citadel Outlets
<b>Physical Impacts</b>	Existing bus layover facility would be impacted. Private land acquisition from medical company required for station area.	None
<b>Environmental Considerations</b>	Air quality, hazards and hazardous materials, noise and vibration, parking and site access, and traffic and circulation	Traffic and circulation