Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation
Authority
One Gateway Plaza
3rd Floor Board Room
Los Angeles, CA

File #: 2021-0094, **File Type:** Informational Report **Agenda Number:** 14.

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
APRIL 14, 2021

SUBJECT: COUNTYWIDE PLANNING MAJOR PROJECT STATUS REPORT

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE monthly report on the Major Capital Projects in the environmental planning phase by the Chief Planning Officer.

DISCUSSION

- **West Santa Ana Branch Corridor**

  The West Santa Ana Branch (WSAB) project team submitted the second Administrative Draft of the Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIS/EIR) to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) on March 16, and March 30, 2021, in two batches. Following FTA's review, staff will incorporate responses to comments and submit one more time. FTA is currently expected to authorize public circulation of the Draft EIS/EIR in either June or July 2021.

  In the coming months, staff is planning to re-engage with key stakeholders while using this opportunity to introduce the project to new stakeholders in the 19-mile corridor. Staff will highlight the project purpose, alternatives, and environmental process, and provide opportunity for public involvement and participation. The following activities are proposed:

  - Phase 1 (Public Engagement, April - June 2021): Activities will ensure that stakeholders in the study area are well informed of the project and aware of the imminent release of the Draft EIS/EIR in June or July 2021. This phase will be crucial for stakeholders to understand the process and for staff to prepare for the comment period and public hearings. The team will reconvene the Stakeholder Working Groups (SWG) to continue providing a community-based perspective and to share challenges, opportunities, and best approaches to effective community outreach.

    The Metro team is working on the approach and timeline for a Community-Based Organization (CBO) Partnership Strategy that aims to leverage the local expertise and reach of organizations in traditionally hard-to-reach communities. This collaborative approach is more vital than ever as the evolving COVID-19 pandemic has made it more challenging to

meaningfully engage with the hard-to-reach audiences, including those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) as well as environmental justice (EJ) communities. The approach will be developed in spring and is slightly different than the current approach for SWG members. In this approach, CBOs will have a more direct role in the project with a compensation structure while also aligning with Metro's Equity Platform Framework.

- Phase 2 (Release of Draft EIS/EIR, June - August 2021): Focus and activities during this phase will be on the release of the Draft EIS/EIR, with a comment period of 45 days and public hearings.

- Phase 3 (Selection of LPA & First/Last Mile Workshops Fall 2021): Activities will focus on the selection of a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), anticipated in September or October 2021, and First/Last Mile Workshops.

In addition, the team will develop a story map to publish and promote a multi-media tool to inform the public of project updates, provide photography/videography, and interactive maps. The tool will be used beginning mid-April and will be promoted through a variety of ways to encourage stakeholders to seek project information (especially during the draft review period), to comment and to participate in public hearings.

The project team will seek Board approval this month for additional funding and a time extension to existing Funding Agreement (FA# 920000000FACGGC03) with the Gateway Cities Council of Governments (COG) for Third-Party Administration participation in the WSAB environmental clearance study

The project continues to advance field survey work and verification of existing utilities identified as part of the 15% design. Staff continues to coordinate with various third parties as necessary including Union Pacific Railroad, cities, Caltrans, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and various utility providers.

- **Green Line to Torrance LRT Extension**

The EIR scoping period, which started on January 29, concluded on March 29, 2021. Over 300 people attended the two virtual scoping meetings and over 700 comments have been received.

Comments received are being documented and evaluated as a part of the environmental process. Based on scoping comments, the project team will move forward with the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) and conceptual design of the alternatives under evaluation.

Community outreach will be ongoing and project updates will be shared as the environmental process progresses. Targeted stakeholder meetings will be scheduled to discuss community concerns and project opportunities throughout the study area. Coordination will continue, as well, with Caltrans and BNSF to understand current and future operational needs for both entities and alternatives under evaluation.

- **Eastside Corridor LRT Extension**

  The Eastside Corridor Phase 2 project team along with Community Relations and Race and Equity Departments are developing a Community Based Organization (CBO) strategy for the project in collaboration with LA County Board of Supervisors Hilda L. Solis (First District) and Janice Hahn (Fourth District), and key stakeholders.

  The Community Based Organization strategy will follow the guidance of the Equity Platform and the Draft CBO Partnering Strategy, as discussed earlier in this report. The CBO Strategy is anticipated to be complete in April, prior to commencing community engagement for the Eastside Corridor LRT Extension.

  The environmental and engineering consultant teams are advancing the project per the Board's decisions to focus on the Washington Alternative and CEQA only. The engineering consultants continue to refine the Draft Advanced Conceptual Engineering based on comments and enhancements along the alignment.

  The monthly meeting of the Washington Boulevard Coalition was held on April 1, 2021.

- **Sepulveda Transit Corridor**

  On March 25, 2021, the Metro Board authorized Pre-Development Agreement (PDA) awards to two teams: (1) LA SkyRail Express, proposing monorail technology in the I-405 right of way, and (2) Sepulveda Transit Corridor Partners, proposing heavy rail technology in subway and aerial configurations. Metro staff is working to execute the Notice to Proceed (NTP) with both contractors.

  Next actions include commencement of the environmental review process, which requires the consideration of a reasonable range of project alternatives that will be studied further for their environmental impacts. The alternatives will include those that were identified by the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Feasibility Study completed in 2019, and by the two concepts selected from the PDA teams. The alternatives will be analyzed for environmental impacts across their proposed modes, alignments, station locations, and above- or below-ground configurations. Through the course of the environmental process, these alternatives may be refined.

  Metro Communications staff continues to conduct outreach and communications activities, and at this juncture of finalizing the NTP, is preparing to update the community on next steps. Planning staff will commence preparation for the environmental scoping period, during which time staff will present the Project alternatives, environmental topics to be studied, and criteria for evaluating Project alternatives. Staff will also solicit public input regarding the environmental analyses to be conducted.

- **NoHo to Pasadena Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)**

The NoHo to Pasadena BRT Draft EIR comment period began on October 26 and concluded on December 28. Staff received nearly 500 comments, the majority of which expressed general support for the project. Currently the most challenging issues include community concerns over parking loss along Olive Avenue in Burbank and other comments pertaining to the Eagle Rock section of the project.

In Eagle Rock, most comments favor routing the BRT along Colorado Boulevard rather than on the SR-134 freeway. However, community members have expressed concerns over impacts to the existing buffered bike lanes, medians, traffic, and parking. Many comments also expressed support for a new BRT proposal on Colorado Boulevard that was developed by a local community group.

Staff examined this community-developed proposal and incorporated many of its feasible elements into a refined BRT concept, which was presented to key Eagle Rock stakeholders via two virtual roundtable meetings on March 16, 2021. A third virtual roundtable meeting was held on March 26, 2021, for all Eagle Rock businesses along the boulevard. A total of 80 people participated in these meetings and the refinements made to the Project were generally well received.

Staff has since developed a recommended Proposed Project that (at the time of this report writing) will be presented to the public at a community meeting on April 1, 2021. During the community meeting, the public will have the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback on the Proposed Project ahead of the Metro Board receiving the staff recommendation which is currently expected to be presented to the Metro Board in May 2021.

- **Countywide Planning Dashboard**

  While this report focuses on the four Major Capital (“Pillar” Projects), there also are six other Measure M projects, five non-Measure M projects, and four Strategy & Policy initiatives. To provide an update on these other 15 projects, Attachment A to this report provides a Countywide Planning Dashboard with a listing and status for each.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Countywide Planning Monthly Major Projects - March 2021

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David Mieger, SEO, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 922-3040

Reviewed by: James de la Loza, Chief Planning Officer, (213) 922-2920

Phillip A. Washington
Chief Executive Officer

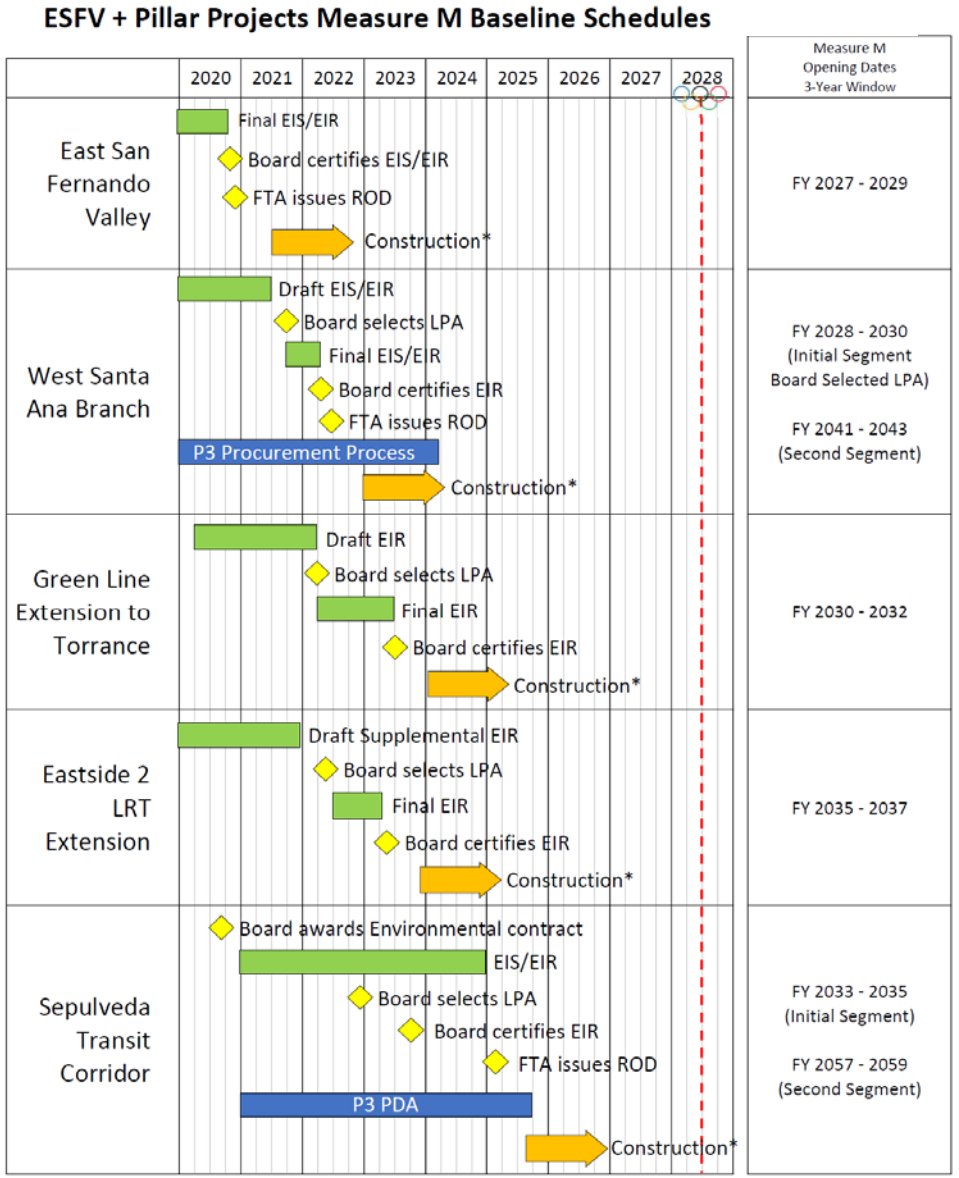
Countywide Planning Monthly Project Updates

April 2021 Monthly Update

> Monthly Status of Major Projects

- West Santa Ana Branch
- Green Line to Torrance
- Eastside 2 Extension
- Sepulveda Transit Corridor
- NoHo to Pasadena BRT

> Countywide Planning Dashboard



Metro

West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor

> Status

- Draft EIS/EIR
  - Anticipated Draft Release: June/July 2021
  - Anticipated LPA Selection: Fall 2021

> Key Activities

- March 2021- Submitted 2nd Administrative Draft to FTA
- April 2021- Board action to approve extension of existing Funding Agreement with the Gateway Cities COG for Third-Party Administration in the WSAB environmental clearance study

> Next Actions

- Address second round of comments
- Community engagement before release of Draft EIS/EIR

Green Line Extension to Torrance

> Status

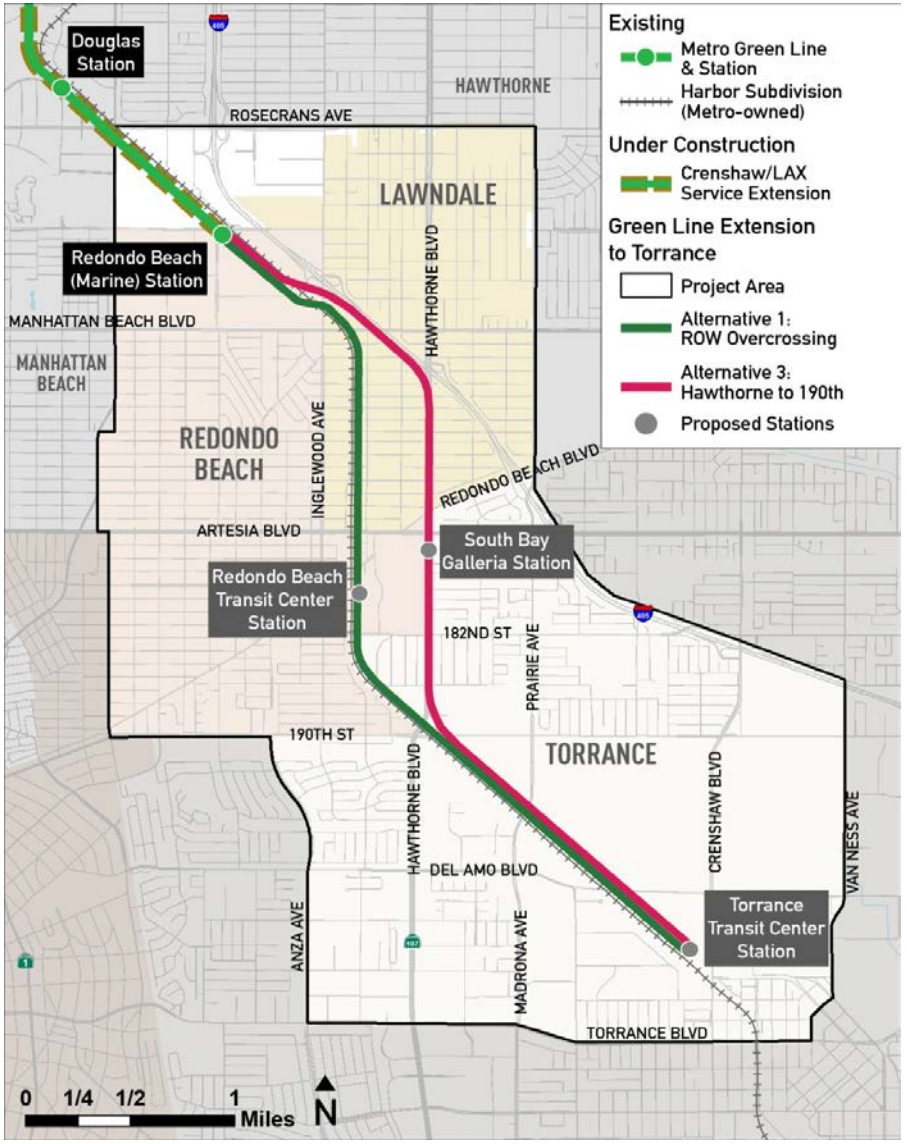
- Draft EIR + Advanced Conceptual Engineering tasks are proceeding (15% design)

> Key Activities

- Environmental Scoping 45-day Comment Period concluded on March 29, 2021
  - Over 300 attendees
  - Over 700 comments received
- Review and incorporate necessary public issues into environmental review
- Ongoing coordination meetings with BNSF on shared track segments
- Engineering analysis of Hawthorne versus ROW technical issues

> Next Actions

- Ongoing outreach:
  - Cities, BNSF, Caltrans
  - Communities



Metro

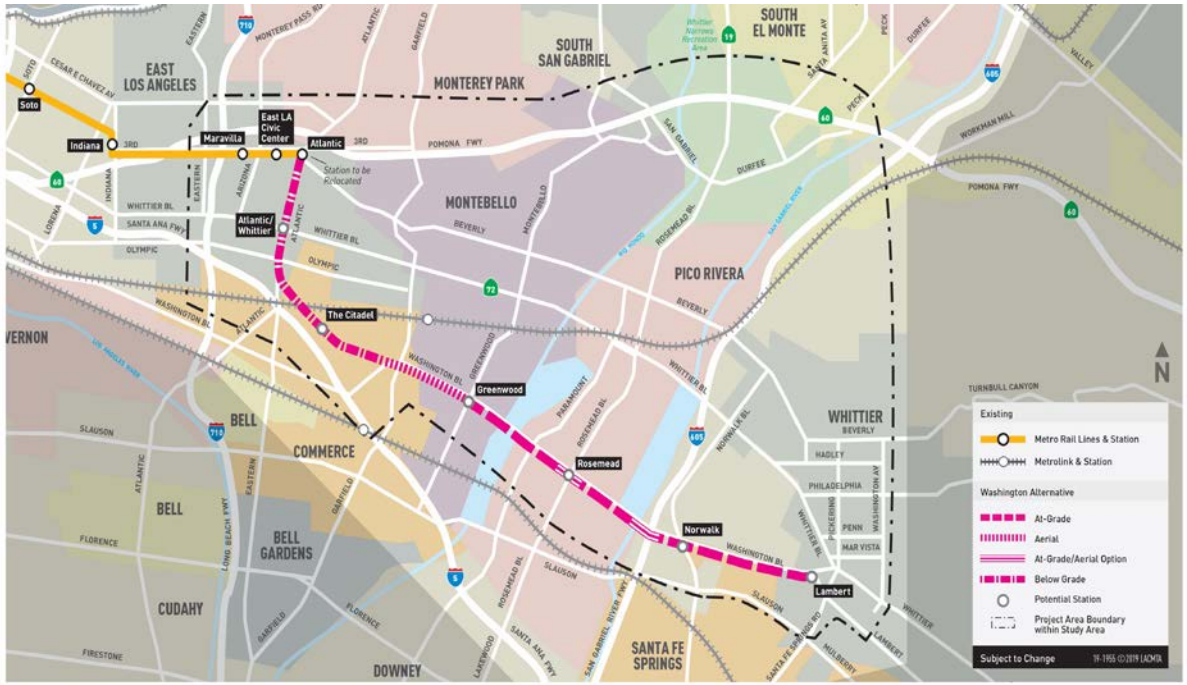
Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2

> Status

- Environmental Analysis, Systems Engineering and Advanced Conceptual Engineering (ACE)

> Key Activities

- Developing Community Based Organization approach
    - Collaborative effort with Community Relations and Race and Equity Departments
    - Guidance from Equity Platform and the Draft CBO Partnering Strategy
    - CBOs Strategy will serve as a platform to share local expertise, recommendations and methods for implementing public awareness and engagement opportunities
- Orientation meetings with new Board Director Fernando Dutra and staff



> Next Actions

- April 1, 2021 Meeting with Washington Blvd Coalition
- Design refinements of below ground segment, proposed Maintenance Yard sites and Washington Boulevard profile configurations

Metro

Sepulveda Transit Corridor

> Status

- Two PDA contracts authorized at March 2021 Board Meeting:
  - LA SkyRail Express
    - Monorail technology in I-405 Right of Way
    - John Laing Investments and BYD Transit Solutions
  - Sepulveda Transit Corridor Partners
    - Heavy Rail Technology in subway/aerial configurations
    - Bechtel Development, Meridiam Sepulveda and American Triple I Partners

> Key Activities

- Preparing Notice to Proceed (NTP) for both contractors

> Next Actions

- Preparation for Environmental Scoping Meetings and Comment Period
- Community Outreach on environmental process and schedule

Metro

NoHo to Pasadena BRT

> Status

- Staff is developing a recommended Proposed Project based on DEIR comments received and subsequent stakeholder feedback

> Key Activities

- Ongoing stakeholder outreach to inform Proposed Project
  - 3 meetings with Eagle Rock stakeholders and businesses (80 total participants) in March 2021
  - Corridor-wide community meeting scheduled for April 1, 2021 to present Proposed Project recommendation

> Next Actions

- April 2021 – Staff response to December Board motion on optional left-side boarding
- May 2021– Seek Metro Board approval of Proposed Project

Metro

Countywide Planning Dashboard

Pillar Projects

	Project Name	Env Completion (FY)	Measure M Opening (FY)	Project Phase				Date	Action/Status
				AA	Draft Env	Final Env	Construction		
1	West Santa Ana Branch LRT	2022	2028-2030		X			April 2021	Approve Gateway COG Funding Agreement Modification and Extension
								July 2021	Release of Draft EIS/EIR
2	Green Line Extension to Torrance LRT	2023	2030-2032		X			April 2021	Review of EIR Scoping comments
								March 2022	Receive Draft EIR and Select Locally Preferred Alternative
3	Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2	2024	2035-2037		X			Fall 2021	Select Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)
4	Sepulveda Transit Corridor	2025	2033-2035	X				Fall 2021	Environmental Scoping

Other Measure M Projects

	Project Name	Env Completion (FY)	Measure M Opening (FY)	Project Phase				Date	Action/Status
				AA	Draft Env	Final Env	Construction		
5	East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor LRT	2020	2027-2029				X	Summer 2021	Environmental Clearance completed; initiate Supplemental ROW Study.
6	North San Fernando Valley BRT	2021	2023-2025		X			Summer 2021	Approve Proposed Project
7	North Hollywood - Pasadena BRT	2021	2022-2024		X			May 2021	Receive Draft EIR Select Proposed Project and approve Title VI Service Equity Analysis
8	Crenshaw Northern Extension LRT	2023	2047-2049		X			April/May 2021	EIR Scoping Period
9	LA River Path (central gap)	2024	2025-2028		X			January 2022	Receive Draft EIR and Select Locally Preferred Alternative
10	Vermont Transit Corridor	2024	2028-2030	X				May 2021	Award Environmental Contract

Non-Measure M Projects

	Project Name	Env Completion (FY)	Opening/ Completion (FY)	Project Phase				Date	Action/Status
				AA	Draft Env	Final Env	Construction		
11	Centinela Grade Separation	2021	2025			X		Summer 2021	Approve funding and project delivery plan
12	LAUS Forecourt and Esplanade Improvements	2021	2023			X		June 2022	Life of Project Approval
13	Rio Hondo Confluence Station Feasibility Study	TBD. Feasibility Study anticipated to be completed in 2022	TBD	X				TBD	Receive Feasibility Study Report and determine next steps for the potential Rio Hondo Confluence Station
14	Rail-to-River ATC (Segment B)	TBD. Supplemental study anticipated	TBD	X				Fall 2021	Receive Supplemental Alternatives Analysis Select Revised Locally Preferred Alternative
15	Arts District/ 6th Street Station HRT	TBD	TBD		X			April 2021	Initiate EIR Scoping
16	First/Last Mile Implementation in Transit Corridor Projects (PLE 2 and forward)	varies by project	varies by project					Summer 2021	Approve FLM Plan for PLE 1; Other periodic project-specific actions in the future;

Strategies/ Policies

	Project Name	Groundbreaking/ Initiation (FY)	Opening/ Completion (FY)	Phase		Date	Action/Status
				Policies/ Strategic Plans	Implementation Plans		
17	Transit Oriented Communities (TOC) Implementation Plan:Semi-Annual Reports	Ongoing	Ongoing		X	Summer 2021	Report on TOC Implementation Plan Semi Annual Reports
18	BRT Vision and Principles Study	2019	2021	X		June 2021	Response to March 2021 Board Motion
19	First/Last Mile Guidelines	N/A	N/A	X		May/June 2021	Adopt Guidelines
20	Joint Development Policy	N/A	N/A	X		May 2021	Joint Development Policy Paper published and presented at January Board Adopt Revisions to Policy

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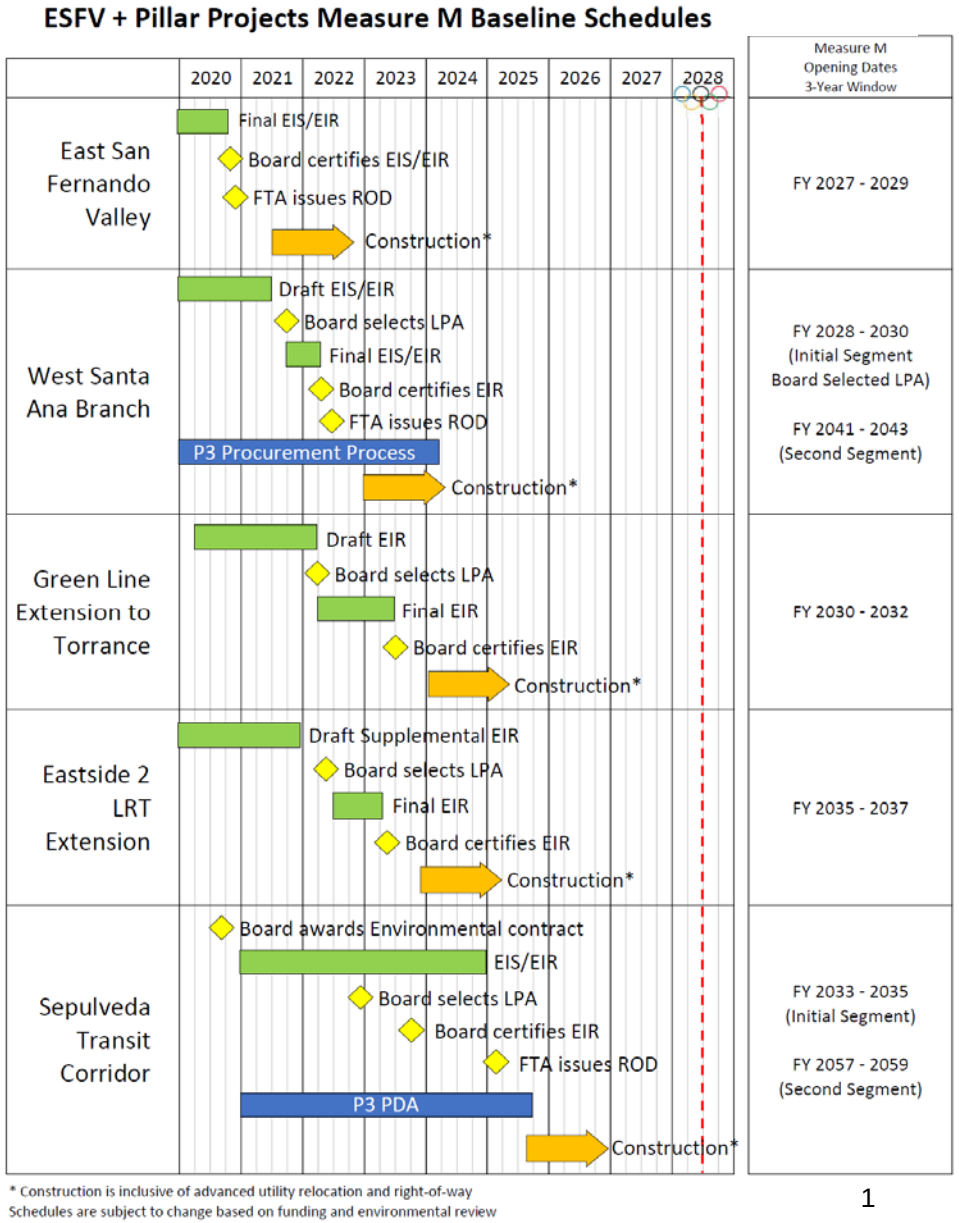

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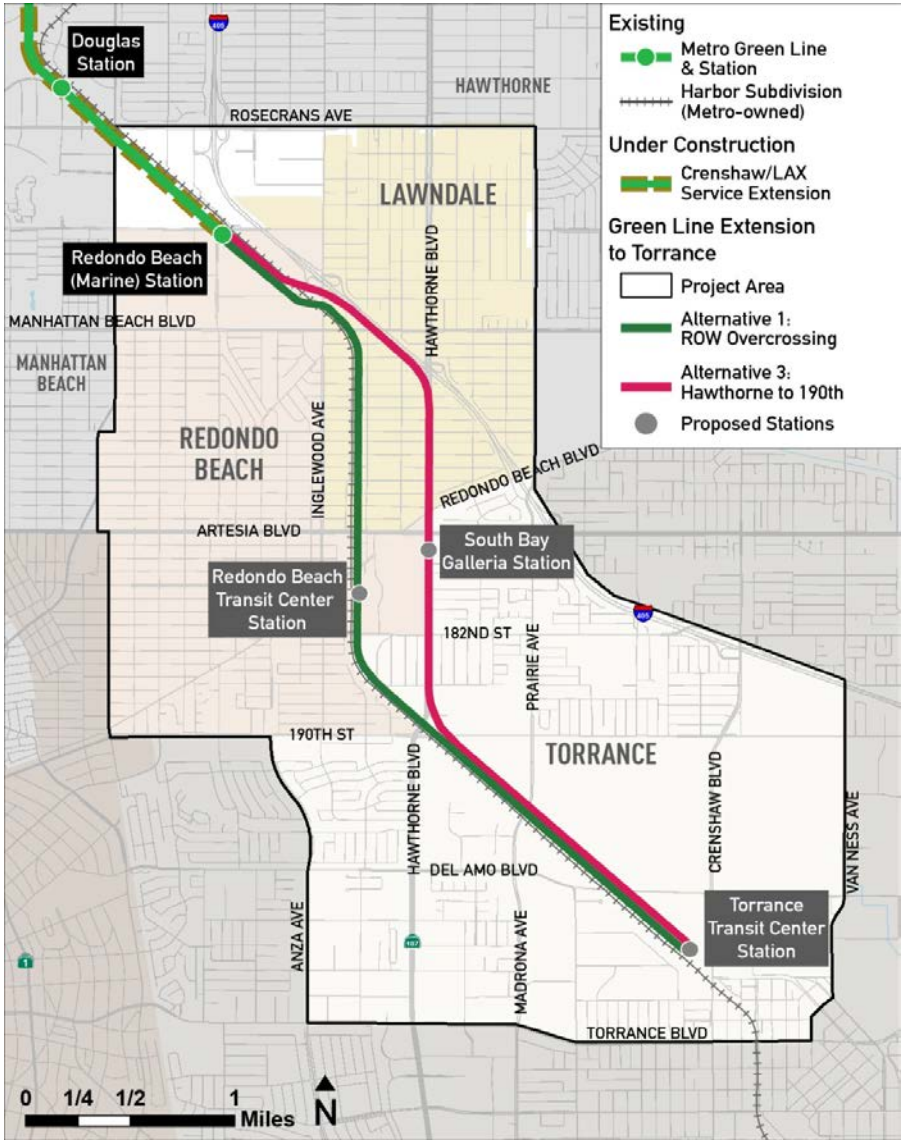

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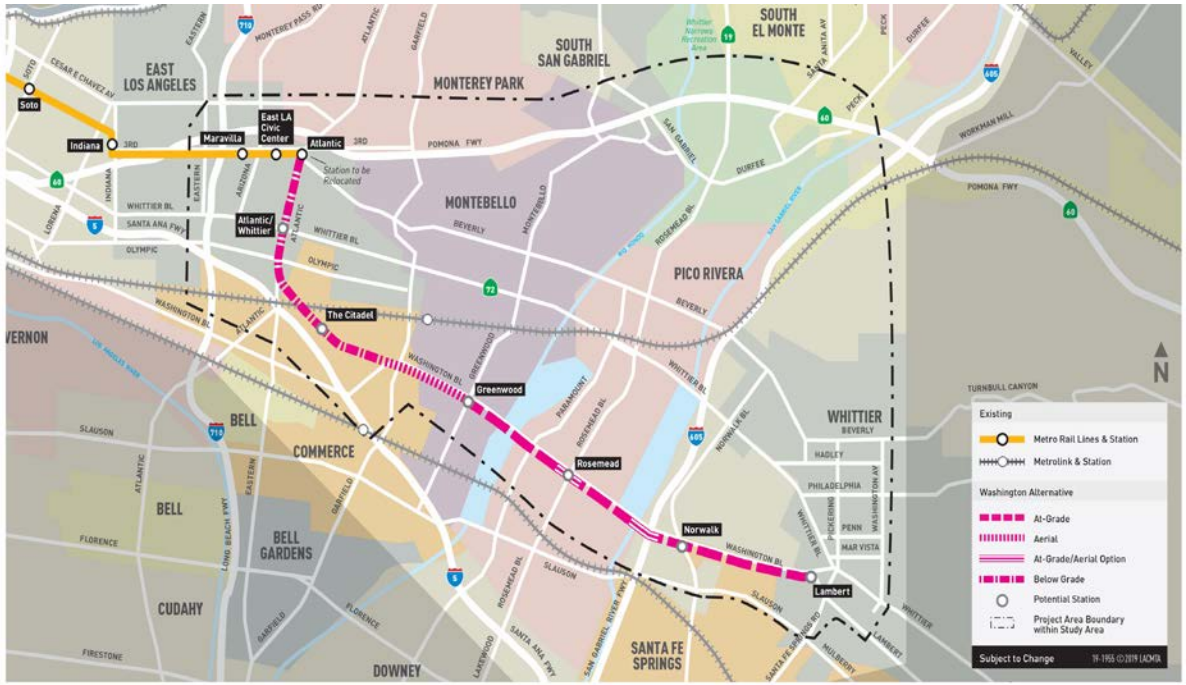

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