RTIP ID# *(required)* LAOD198

TCWG Consideration Date August 23, 2011

Project Description *(clearly describe project)*
The Crenshaw/LAX Transit Corridor Project is a proposed 8.5-mile light rail line that will extend from the intersection of Exposition and Crenshaw Boulevards to the Metro Green Line's Aviation/LAX Station. Travel conditions in the Crenshaw/LAX Transit Corridor are expected to worsen by 2030, and the current infrastructure will not be able to handle the area's transportation, mobility and accessibility needs. The Crenshaw/LAX Transit Corridor Project will offer improved travel times, reliable transit service and access to the regional transit system.

The Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) consists of the following elements:

Route. From a southern terminus at the Metro Green Line, the alignment would follow the Harbor Subdivision Railroad right-of-way, adjacent to Aviation Boulevard/Florence Avenue and continue northeast to Crenshaw Boulevard where it would travel north within the middle of the Crenshaw Boulevard right-of-way to the Exposition/Crenshaw Station, adjacent to the Metro Exposition Line currently under construction.

Stations. Stations are located at: Aviation/Century (aerial), Florence/La Brea (at grade), Florence/West (at grade), Crenshaw/Slauson (at grade), Crenshaw/Martin Luther King Jr. (below grade), and Crenshaw/Exposition (below grade).

Grade Separations. Grade separations include the following:

- Adjacent to the LAX south runways (1,600-foot fully covered below-grade trench)
- Aerial across Century Boulevard
- Aerial across Manchester Avenue
- Aerial across La Cienega Boulevard/I-405
- Below grade across La Brea Avenue
- Below grade Between Victoria Avenue and 60th Street
- Below grade between 48th Street and Exposition Boulevard

Park and Ride Facilities. Park-and-ride facilities would be located at the Florence/La Brea, Florence/West, and Crenshaw/Exposition Stations. There would be a maximum of approximately 120 vehicle spaces per station. Bus stalls would almost exclusively operated by Metro buses that are entirely powered with compressed natural gas.

Maintenance Facility. A maintenance facility would be located at Arbor Vitae/Bellanca (Site #14) – This 17.6-acre site is located in the City of Los Angeles.

In addition to the LPA, the following two shorter segment variations, called Minimum Operable Segments (MOSs) and five design options to the LPA are also being considered:

MOSs. The following shorter segment variations of the LPA are evaluated:

- MOS-King – 8-mile segment extending from the Metro Green Line in the south to the Crenshaw/King Station in the north
- MOS-Century - 7.4-mile segment extending from the Aviation/Century Station in the south to the Crenshaw/Exposition Station in the north
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Design Options. The following design options are evaluated in addition to the LPA:

- Partially-Covered LAX Trench Option - replaces fully covered trench adjacent to LAX south runways (temporary solution to address budget constraints - the full build-out of a fully covered trench will be deferred to a future date when funding is identified to support the additional covered segments.)

- Optional Aviation/Manchester Station -additional aerial or at-grade station
- Cut-and-cover crossing at Centinela - replaces at grade configuration
- Optional Below Grade Crenshaw/Vernon Station - additional station in Leimert Park
- Alternate Southwest

Type of Project *(use Table 1 on instruction sheet)*
Bus, rail, or inter-modal facility/terminal/transfer point

County	**Narrative Location/Route & Postmiles**
Los Angeles	From a southern terminus at the Metro Green Line (Milepost 13.20), the alignment would follow the Harbor Subdivision Railroad right-of-way, adjacent to Aviation Boulevard/Florence Avenue and continue northeast to Crenshaw Boulevard (Milepost 8.03) where it would travel north within the middle of the Crenshaw Boulevard right-of-way to the Exposition Boulevard, adjacent to the Metro Exposition Line currently under construction. **Caltrans Projects – EA#** Not Applicable

Lead Agency: Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Contact Person	**Phone#**	**Fax#**	**Email**
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Hot Spot Pollutant of Concern *(check one or both)* **PM2.5 X** **PM10 X**

Federal Action for which Project-Level PM Conformity is Needed *(check appropriate box)*

Categorical Exclusion (NEPA)	**EA or Draft EIS**	X **FONSI or Final EIS**	**PS&E or Construction**	**Other**

Scheduled Date of Federal Action:

NEPA Delegation – Project Type *(check appropriate box)*

Exempt	**Section 6004 – Categorical Exemption**	X **Section 6005 – Non-Categorical Exemption**

Current Programming Dates *(as appropriate)*

	PE/Environmental	**ENG**	**ROW**	**CON**
Start	October 2007	December 2011	December 2011	June 2012
End	November 2011	June 2013	December 2012	December 2018

Project Purpose and Need (Summary): *(attach additional sheets as necessary)*
Travel demand forecasts prepared by the SCAG and Metro over the past decade have identified the need for transit improvements throughout the Southern California region, especially in Los Angeles County, to meet the mandates of the federal Clean Air Act and address the increasing mobility needs of the region. The 2008 SCAG Regional Transportation Plan determined travel conditions in the study area will worsen by 2030 and the area will not meet regional objectives for mobility, accessibility, reliability, or safety without the implementation of additional transportation improvements. Subsequent travel demand forecasting conducted for the current update of the Metro Long Range Plan has confirmed the continuing need for improvements in mobility.

The existing population and employment density in the corridor is high and very transit supportive. The corridor population and employment densities are four times higher than Los Angeles County as a whole. The corridor has a high concentration of low-income, minority, transit-dependent residents. More than 49 percent of all corridor households are designated as low income. In addition, 16 percent of all households in the corridor do not have access to an automobile, compared to 8 percent in the county's urbanized area. Forecasts show a growing transit-dependent population, with a projected 55 percent increase in corridor residents that rely on or will rely on the study area's transit system.

The topography and street grid of the corridor present unique challenges to existing transportation facilities and services. There are few north-south arterials in the corridor which cross over the small hills located in the unincorporated Los Angeles County area in the western portion of the study area. This constrained arterial network restricts north/south movement within the corridor and places pressure on north-south arterials in or adjacent to the study area, such as La Cienega Boulevard and La Brea Avenue.

There is a strong connection between redevelopment and revitalization and transportation system improvements. Increased accessibility, mobility, and links to transit provide opportunity for increased development densities. All or portions of 11 redevelopment plan areas are located within the corridor. A majority of the corridor's key activity and employment destinations are currently preparing expansion, revitalization, or redevelopment plans (i.e., Hollywood Park). The success of these projects and the corridor's economic future are strongly dependent on improved local and regional accessibility.

The corridor is fully contained within the South Coast Air Basin, which has the worst air quality in the nation. Mobile source emissions from vehicles are the single largest contributor to air quality problems in the basin. The proposed project would provide transportation and transit improvements that would provide the area with an efficient way of reducing the number of vehicles on roadways and freeways. This would contribute to the improvement of the area's local air quality, and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

Without significant improvements and capacity enhancement, the corridor's transit system will be substantially overburdened, and mobility to and from the corridor will be significantly constrained. There is an urgent need to improve transportation mobility and reliability in the corridor and invest in a major capital transportation improvement project.

The purpose of the Crenshaw/LAX Transit Corridor Project is to provide for the implementation of transit improvements that addresses the identified transportation needs in the corridor. The proposed project would address the needs by expanding transit capacity in the corridor to accommodate existing and future travel demand and by providing a higher speed and reliable transit alternative that improves mobility in the corridor by connecting with or extending existing lines, such as the Metro Green Line, or transit lines under construction, such as the Exposition LRT line.

Surrounding Land Use/Traffic Generators *(especially effect on diesel traffic)* The northern portion of the alignment along Crenshaw Boulevard is bordered by residential, commercial, and institutional land uses. The Central portion of the alignment along Slauson Avenue is bordered by similar land uses. The southern portion of the alignment along Aviation Boulevard is mostly bordered by industrial and airport uses along with Los Angeles International Airport. Diesel emissions in the project area are mostly generated by airport activities and truck activity along the I-405. The majority of buses in the area are operated by Metro and are powered with compressed natural gas.
Opening Year: Build and No Build LOS, AADT, % and #trucks, truck AADT of proposed facility Not Applicable. The proposed project is not a roadway segment.
RTP Horizon Year / Design Year: Build and No Build LOS, AADT, % and # trucks, truck AADT of proposed facility Not Applicable. The proposed project is not a roadway segment. For informational purposes, the LPA would reduce study area VMT from 5,128,000 to 5,126,000. AM peak hour trips would be reduced from 153,400 to 152,900 and PM peak hour trips would be reduced from 263,600 to 263,100.

Opening Year: If facility is an interchange(s) or intersection(s), Build and No Build cross-street AADT, % and # trucks, truck AADT
See discussion below.

RTP Horizon Year / Design Year: If facility is an interchange (s) or intersection(s), Build and No Build cross-street AADT, % and # trucks, truck AADT
As shown below in **Table 1**, the proposed project would provide congestion relief by reducing AM and PM peak hour trips in the study area. The proposed project would not change delivery or freight-related diesel trucks on the local roadway but decreasing the AADT would lead to an increase in the roadway truck percentage. However, mass emissions of diesel particulate matter would be identical under the Build and No Build scenarios because truck volumes on the local roadway system would not change.

Describe potential traffic redistribution effects of congestion relief *(impact on other facilities)*
Table 1 illustrates the projected regional travel changes that would result from the LPA compared to the 2030 baseline condition both for Los Angeles County as a whole as well as for the study area. Compared to the No-Build Alternative, the LPA is not able to affect noticeable change on countywide or study area performance measures. The data suggest that the LPA has a beneficial effect on the regional transportation network by reducing VMT, VHT, and peak hour trips. Overall, there is little percentage change between the LPA when compared to the No-Build Alternative because total travel demand within the county and study area remains significantly greater than any reduction affected by a project alternative. Peak vehicle trips would be reduced by 0.3 percent in the AM peak and 0.2 percent in the PM peak compared to the No-Build Alternative. In the study area, additional improvements are seen in the performance measures such as the peak hour VMT, VHT and vehicle trips compared to the No-Build Alternative. Implementation of the LPA would have a more pronounced effect in the study area than countywide.

Table 1: Comparative Performance Measures for No-Build Alternative and LPA (2030)

	No-Build	LPA
Regional		
Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)	454,428,000	454,402,000
Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT)	20,189,000	20,192,000
Average Vehicle Speed (mph)	22.5	22.5
AM Peak Vehicle Trips	9,192,500	9,191,500
PM Peak Vehicle Trips	15,781,100	15,780,000
Study Area		
VMT	5,128,000	5,126,000
VHT	210,000	210,000
Average Speed (mph)	24.4	24.4
AM Peak VMT	1,147,000	1,147,000
AM Peak VHT	55,000	55,000
AM Peak Average Speed (mph)	20.8	20.8
AM Peak Vehicle Trips	153,400	152,900
PM Peak VMT	1,737,000	1,736,000
PM Peak VHT	92,400	92,300
PM Peak Average Speed (mph)	18.8	18.8
PM Peak Vehicle Trips	263,600	263,100

Comments/Explanation/Details *(attach additional sheets as necessary)*
According to the USEPA Transportation Conformity Guidance, the following types of projects are considered a Project of Air Quality Concern (POAQC):

- New or expanded highway projects that have a significant number of or significant increase in diesel vehicles (defined as greater than 125,000 Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) and eight percent or more of such AADT is diesel truck traffic);
- Projects affecting intersections that are at a Level of Service D, E, F, with a significant number of diesel vehicles, or that that will change to Level of Service D, E, or F because of increased traffic volumes from a significant number of diesel vehicles related to the project;
- New bus and rail terminals and transfer points that have a significant number of diesel vehicles congregating at a single location;
- Expanded bus and rail terminals and transfer points that significantly increase the number of diesel vehicles congregating at a single location; or
- Projects in or affecting locations, areas, or categories of sites which are identified in the PM2.5 or PM10 implementation plan or implementation plan submission, as appropriate, as sites of possible violation.

The LPA is not considered a POAQC because it does not meet the definition of a POAQC as defined in USEPA's Transportation Conformity Guidance. The proposed project would not increase the percentage of diesel vehicles on the roadway, does not involve a bus or rail terminal that significantly increases diesel vehicles, and is not identified in the SIP as a possible PM2.5 or PM10 violation site.

The proposed project is an electrically-powered mass transit system that will not increase diesel traffic on the local roadway system. It will increase regional transit ridership and decrease congestion on local roadways in the corridor. The proposed project will include small park-and-ride facilities. These facilities will mainly be utilized by passenger vehicles. Buses that stop at the facilities will almost exclusively be operated by Metro and powered with compressed natural gas. Therefore, the park-and-ride facilities will not increase local exposure to diesel particulate emissions.

Based on the above analysis, we are requesting that this project be found to not be a POAQC.