



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

May 19, 2021

Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Planning and Programming Committee
Board Secretary's Office
One Gateway Plaza
MS: 99-3-1
Los Angeles, CA 90012

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

**RE: City of Burbank Comments on May 19, 2021 Agenda Item #15
NoHo to Pasadena Bus Rapid Transit Corridor Project**

Dear Chair Dupont-Walker and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the City of Burbank, I wish to communicate the City's position on the Metro NoHo to Pasadena Bus Rapid Corridor Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project for the Committee's consideration as it potentially recommends a locally preferred project alternative. The City of Burbank has worked closely with Metro staff over the last decade or more in developing high-quality transportation alternatives to the congested State Route 134 corridor serving the cities of Burbank, Glendale, Pasadena, and the Eagle Rock community of Los Angeles. More recently, the City has been working with Metro to develop the BRT corridor project that is before you today, as the City collaborated with Metro and other stakeholders to evaluate different alignments and refine a single project alternative through the City. Throughout the process, Metro was respectful of the City's concerns about how different alignment alternatives would impact its existing transportation and land use patterns, and developed a project alignment along Olive Avenue that meets both regional and local needs.

The City continues to be committed to the project because of its value in enhancing regional transit options while providing additional choices for those who live and work in Burbank. Specifically, the project would:

- Support Burbank's goal to build 12,000 housing units over the next 15 years
- Relieves the City's existing Jobs-to-Housing imbalance of over three workers to one resident
- Connects Burbank's residents to regional transit while easing traffic impacts on neighborhood streets
- Integrates with Metro's goal to improve service frequency on the Antelope Valley Line to 15 minutes

While the Project supports many important City and regional goals, the City strongly believes that it must be constructed in a way that supports our existing land use patterns and is consistent with the transportation priorities identified in our General Plan. The City believes the project as proposed meets this goal if two important changes are made the preferred project identified by Metro staff:

1. Change the project configuration from side-running bus lane to mixed-flow operation on Olive Avenue between Buena Vista Street and Victory Boulevard, and over the Olive Avenue bridge at Interstate 5. The proposed bus lane configuration on this segment would require extensive parking removal on Olive Avenue and a 2-4 foot street widening of Olive Avenue. This configuration would eliminate parking for several small commercial businesses with little off-street parking and would push parking demand into adjoining residential neighborhoods. It would also create a seven-lane arterial street that is wider than is prescribed in our General Plan and would reduce sidewalk widths below the standards identified in our General Plan and Complete Streets Plan. Bus lanes would also create a traffic bottleneck on the Olive Avenue Bridge over Interstate 5 that is inconsistent with the City's General Plan circulation network. The tradeoffs needed to install bus lanes on this portion of the project would create unacceptable parking, congestion, and street widening impacts to the City.
2. Ensure that the proposed BRT station on Olive Avenue at the Downtown Burbank Metrolink Station be constructed as an elevated station on the Olive Avenue Bridge directly above the Metrolink Station. The proposed project identifies a station at Lake Street and Olive Avenue and would require Metrolink transfer passengers to walk 1/3 mile through a pedestrian-unfriendly route under a bridge and next to industrial uses and the City's power plant. The City believes that convenient Metrolink connectivity is critical to the success of the BRT project and Metro's complementary investments to the Metrolink Antelope Valley Line. If constructing a new Olive Bridge station is not compatible with the project's timeline, the City requests that Metro and the City collaborate to develop a separate regional project and funding plan to reconfigure the bridge to include a BRT station.

The City believes that changing these two key project elements are critical to its success, and would ensure that the project would provide an attractive, high-quality, reliable regional transit alternative to the SR-134 corridor, while integrating properly with the City's existing transportation systems, complementing its existing and future land use patterns, and supporting the City's General Plan goals and policies.

The City of Burbank respectfully requests the Committee's consideration for making the above modifications to staff's preferred project recommendation and looks forward to a continued partnership with Metro to develop a high-quality BRT project that meets the City and regional transportation goals.

Sincerely,



David Kriske
Assistant Community Development Director