



Board Report

File #: 2020-0503, File Type: Project

Agenda Number: 16.

**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 14, 2020****SUBJECT: LOS ANGELES UNION STATION FORECOURT AND ESPLANADE
IMPROVEMENTS****ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION****RECOMMENDATION**

APPROVE the Addendum No. 2 to the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Los Angeles Union Station Forecourt and Esplanade Improvements Project.

ISSUE

The Metro Board of Directors (Board) certified the Los Angeles Union Station Forecourt and Esplanade Improvements (Project) Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) in March 2018 and Addendum No. 1 in July 2018. Since then, the Project team has substantially completed design, stakeholder engagement and interagency coordination with the City of Los Angeles (City). Addendum No. 2 (Attachment A) memorializes design changes that occurred since the FEIR and Addendum No. 1 and requires consideration under the California Environmental Policy Act (CEQA). The proposed design changes will not result in new or significant impacts than those previously documented.

BACKGROUND

The Project will reconfigure the public right-of-way in front of Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) to expand safe and accessible pedestrian and bike facilities on Alameda and Los Angeles Streets and create a civic plaza in front of the station. Staff has secured approximately \$18M in Caltrans Active Transportation Program (ATP) grant funds to design and implement the project improvements, apart from construction funds for the forecourt.

The Project elements cleared in the FEIR and Addendum No. 1 include:

- Alameda Esplanade: Roadway configuration on Alameda Street between Arcadia Street and Cesar E. Chavez Avenue to narrow the roadway and widen pedestrian and bicyclist facilities with a shared pedestrian/bicyclist multi-use path on the eastern sidewalk.
- Los Angeles Crossing: Consolidated raised crossing at Alameda and Los Angeles Streets, closure of the northern Los Angeles Street travel lane and the northern LAUS driveway, and addition of a two-way bike path.

- LAUS Forecourt: Repurpose the existing surface parking lot as a new civic plaza with sustainable features.
- Arcadia Street: Repurpose the northern travel lane as a dedicated El Pueblo Plaza tour bus parking zone during off-peak hours.

The Project received NEPA clearance as a Categorical Exclusion in June 2020 and utility and geotechnical investigations and archeological testing will be performed August through October 2020.

DISCUSSION

Most Project elements are located on the City public right-of-way; as such the Project is required to comply with City standards. The Addendum No. 2 to the FEIR documents and evaluates Project element changes that result in a larger project footprint from what was already captured and cleared in the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1. It was determined that the Project changes considered in the Addendum No. 2 do not result in new or significant impacts.

The design modifications evaluated included:

1. Alameda Esplanade Realignment

The certified Project removed two vehicle lanes and allocated the gained right-of-way equally to both sides of the sidewalk, with a shared multi-use path for pedestrians and bicyclists on the eastern sidewalk. The City and stakeholders raised concerns about a shared multi-use bicycle and pedestrian path that would not offer separation between modes and the potential conflicts that could arise. In addition, staff learned of significant utilities under the roadway on the west side of Alameda. As a result, the Project will still remove two vehicle lanes, but will shift all gained right of way to the eastern sidewalk to allow for fully separated bicycle and pedestrian paths, with mixing zones at the intersections. The Alameda Esplanade realignment was approved by Caltrans as an ATP project scope change.

2. Intersection and roadway modifications: The Project changes related to this item includes the following three revisions:

- **Lane Striping.** The Project now includes additional vehicle lane striping north of Cesar E. Chavez to Alpine and south of Arcadia to Aliso to allow for a smoother transition for vehicles traveling to and along Alameda Street, between Arcadia Street and Cesar E. Chavez Avenue. As such, the Project boundary map (Attachment B) has been updated to reflect this change.
- **Left-hand turn.** The FEIR included removal of a left-hand turn vehicle movement from eastbound Los Angeles Street onto northbound Alameda Street to improve vehicle movement and allow for the possibility of a longer pedestrian crossing phase. The City will maintain the left-hand turn movement to avoid conflicts and pedestrian safety issues that could arise from motorist confusion and/or disregard for the left-hand turn removal. Pedestrians and bicyclist movement over the raised crossing will not run

concurrently with vehicle movement to avoid conflict.

- **Alameda Southern Crosswalk.** The original Project proposed removal of the existing southern crosswalk that connects Father Serra Park to Union Station at Alameda and Los Angeles Streets to consolidate all pedestrian and bicyclist movement on the new raised crossing. Due to City and stakeholder feedback, the Project will maintain the southern crosswalk to ensure that the Project maximizes safe pedestrian crossings in the Project area. Per the City's direction, this crossing will also have a protected pedestrian movement (no right turn on red).

3. Streetlight update:

There are currently 10 historic streetlights on the eastside of Alameda Street. The Project will remove and replace these historic lights with replica streetlights to match existing historic lights.

4. Utility relocations:

Since the Addendum No. 1 was approved, staff has gathered more information related to utility relocations that will be required. The Addendum No. 2 provides the related environmental analysis and clearance for additional utility relocations.

5. Los Angeles Street ADA accessible pathway:

Los Angeles Street is very steep with a slope that exceeds Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards in some areas. In response to feedback from the City and stakeholders, the Los Angeles Street pedestrian path will include an ADA-accessible path of travel to serve users of all abilities and ages. Inclusion of the ADA path of travel on Los Angeles Street was approved by Caltrans as an ATP project scope change.

Additional Design Changes

In addition to the design changes noted above, two additional Project design changes were not analyzed in detail in the Addendum No. 2 because they result in a smaller footprint than what was cleared in the FEIR. As such, the changes do not pose a potential to result in new or more severe impacts under CEQA.

Addendum #2 does not propose to reduce the Project footprint as the Project is still under design review with the City and does not yet have final plan approval. Clearing a reduced footprint and scope in these areas would limit the Project's ability to refine design as the City review progresses. The two additional changes include:

- **Raised Crossing.** The Project includes a raised crossing on Alameda Street at the northern

end of the intersection with Los Angeles Street. The raised crossing is a central element of the Project that was originally proposed at 50' wide (38' for pedestrians and 12' for bicyclists) with 12' slopes on either side for a total width of 74'. Additionally, the raised crossing was original proposed to be flush with the sidewalk at curb height (8" tall).

In April 2020, the City adopted a Supplemental Street Design Guide (Design Guide) that provides standards for raised crossings. Specifically, the parameters in the Design Guide establish a maximum width of 37' (25' for pedestrians and 12' feet for bicyclists) with 9' slopes on either side. Additionally, the height of the crossing was reduced to 3" to comply with the Design Guide. The height reduction will require ramps from the sidewalk down and up to the 3" raised crossing. The reduction in height accommodates the volume of heavy vehicles and emergency services on Alameda Street which serves as an arterial for bus service and as a truck and emergency response route. The reduction in width results from Design Guide guidance that raised crossings wider than 25' are likely to have diminished traffic-calming effectiveness.

- **Street trees.** The original project included new street trees on the western sidewalk with a double row of trees along Alameda Street. Per City standards, the Project cannot remove healthy existing trees on the west side of the street to accommodate new trees. On the eastern sidewalk, trees cannot be planted at the curb edge because of potential tree root impact to existing City storm drain (at a depth of 15'). Across the city, tree root intrusion into existing storm drains is a costly maintenance issue. Planting trees at the curb edge, including a double row of trees, would require that the Project encase the existing storm drain in concrete or to relocate the storm drains; both options are cost prohibitive. Therefore, the Project is planting a total of 17 trees on the eastern edge of the sidewalk, adjacent to the property line.

As previously noted, both the raised crossing and street tree design refinements reduce the project scope from what was previously cleared in the Final EIR and Addendum No. 1 and therefore do not pose any potential for new significant impacts under CEQA. The description of the current design regarding the raised crossing and street trees has been updated in Addendum No. 2 for clarity. The current design concept is included in Attachment C, Project Site Plan.

Stakeholder Engagement

The draft Addendum No. 2 was released for a 30-day public comment period between July 27 and August 26. E-blasts were sent July 27, August 3, August 11 and August 24 notifying stakeholders of the opportunity to comment on the Addendum No. 2 and of the August 13 public meeting that would cover the Addendum No. 2 and the upcoming utility and geotechnical investigations.

In addition, staff met with El Pueblo de Los Angeles management, El Pueblo Commission, Metropolitan Water District, First 5LA, Mozaic Apartments, LA Walks, Homeboy Industries, FilmLA and local elected offices. A virtual public meeting was held with 71 attendees on August 13 to provide a project update and brief stakeholders on the Addendum No. 2.

During the Draft Addendum No. 2 public comment period, a total of 28 comments were received and summarized (Attachments D1 & D2). With the exception of the left-hand turn movement, most public comments did not focus on the elements included in the Addendum. The overarching comments focused on the following four issues:

1. Reintroducing the left-turn movement from Los Angeles Street to northbound Alameda Street (in Addendum)

Several comments opposed the Project reintroducing the left-turn vehicle movement from eastbound Los Angeles Street to northbound Alameda. In addition, concerns were raised that reintroducing the left-turn vehicle movement would reduce the possibility of extending the duration beyond the minimum required time for the pedestrian/bicycle signal phase because the left turn would be taking away available time within the overall signal cycle to accommodate a dedicated left-turn phase for motorists.

As noted previously, motorists would have a dedicated left-turn phase to ensure that left turns do not conflict with pedestrians in the crossing and it is considered necessary to avoid motorist confusion and illegal left turns.

2. Raised crossing/pathway design from LAUS to El Pueblo (not analyzed in Addendum)

As previously noted, the proposed modifications to the raised crossing reduce the width and height. These design changes are opposed by many that provided comment. Stakeholders requested that the raised crossing maintain the original width and height to encourage slower vehicle speeds and to facilitate a more accessible path of travel by not requiring that pedestrians step down from the curb and instead, travel across the sidewalk to the raised crossing at the same grade.

As previously noted, in 2020 the City has developed a Design Guide that establishes standards for raised crossings and the revised width and height of the Project raised crossing complies with these standards.

3. Number of Trees (not in Addendum)

The Project currently proposes a total of 24 trees. Several comments included a request to increase the number of trees and more specifically, a double row on the eastside of Alameda Street, as was originally proposed. Concerns over a reduced tree canopy, the reduction in adequate shade cover, heat island impacts, and less comfortable and effective active transportation facility were raised.

As previously noted, the number and location of trees are due to compliance with City standards and the infeasibility of encasing or relocating the existing storm drain.

4. Design prioritizing pedestrians & bicyclists (not in Addendum)

Some provided feedback on the right-turn movement into LAUS from northbound Alameda Street be removed to allow for a longer bike path on Alameda Street.

The right-turn movement was part of the original FEIR approved Project and important to manage circulation in and out of Union Station since the Project will result in closing the northern driveways and shifting all vehicle access to the southern driveway. In addition, this intersection includes a right-turn arrow with no right turn on red to avoid pedestrian and bicyclist conflicts. Overall, the eastside of Alameda Street will be greatly improved as there will be a separated bicycle path, with mixing zones at the intersections. The original concept did not provide for any separation and a narrower sidewalk.

Overarching concerns over the design changes and compliance with the core Project objectives were raised. The Project will repurpose three vehicle lanes in the heart of downtown Los Angeles as new protected pedestrian and bicyclist facilities. While the four design changes that have been raised by stakeholders reduce scope in some areas, the Project will result in significantly safer and more accessible pedestrian and bicyclist facilities in the area.

Equity Platform

The Project is consistent with the following Equity Platform pillars:

- **Listen and Learn:** The Project is a result of deep stakeholder engagement. While there is opposition to four Project elements noted above, overall, the Project has been supported by stakeholders. In addition, staff has engaged stakeholders proactively and transparently throughout the process.
- **Focus and Deliver:** The Project is part of a larger active transportation program in and around Los Angeles Union Station that will create expanded pedestrian and bicyclist facilities. Over the last few years, staff has secured grant funding, environmental clearance and design to deliver this important transformative project.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

The Project will create safer connections for Metro transit patrons, including transit connections as well as connections to the surrounding neighborhood destinations and job centers.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The cost of preparing the Addendum is included in the FY21 budget. The recommended action will not change the Project cost or require a funding request. The funding for this year's project activity is Caltran's ATP grant and general fund. The general fund is eligible for Metro's bus and rail operation and capital project.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The recommendation supports:

- Strategic Plan Goal #1: The Project provides a high-quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling by expanding access for people who walk, bike or roll in and around LAUS. The Project adds bike paths, expands pedestrian access and builds an ADA accessible pathway to increase the connections for all users from LAUS to El Pueblo; and
- Strategic Plan Goal #2: The Project delivers outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system by increasing active transportation options for all users.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board may consider not approving the Addendum No. 2 to the FEIR. This is not recommended. The revisions, additions, and clarifications included in this Addendum No. 2 will ensure that the Project's design complies with City of Los Angeles requirements and that the Project can advance design and be implemented to meet Project grant deadlines.

NEXT STEPS

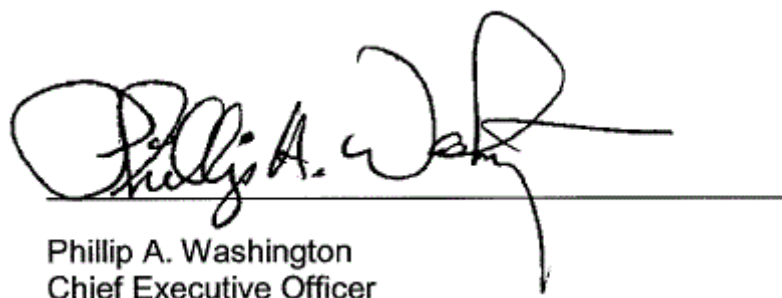
Upon Board approval, staff will continue to engage stakeholders and will coordinate with the City of Los Angeles to finalize design and receive final approvals and permits to construct the Project. The Project is funded by two Caltrans ATP Grants with a project deadline of completing final design by the end of the year to secure the approximately \$15M in construction allocation funding.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - FEIR Addendum No. 2
Attachment B - Project Map
Attachment C - Project Site Plan
Attachment D1 - Public Comments Summary
Attachment D2 - Public Comment Letters

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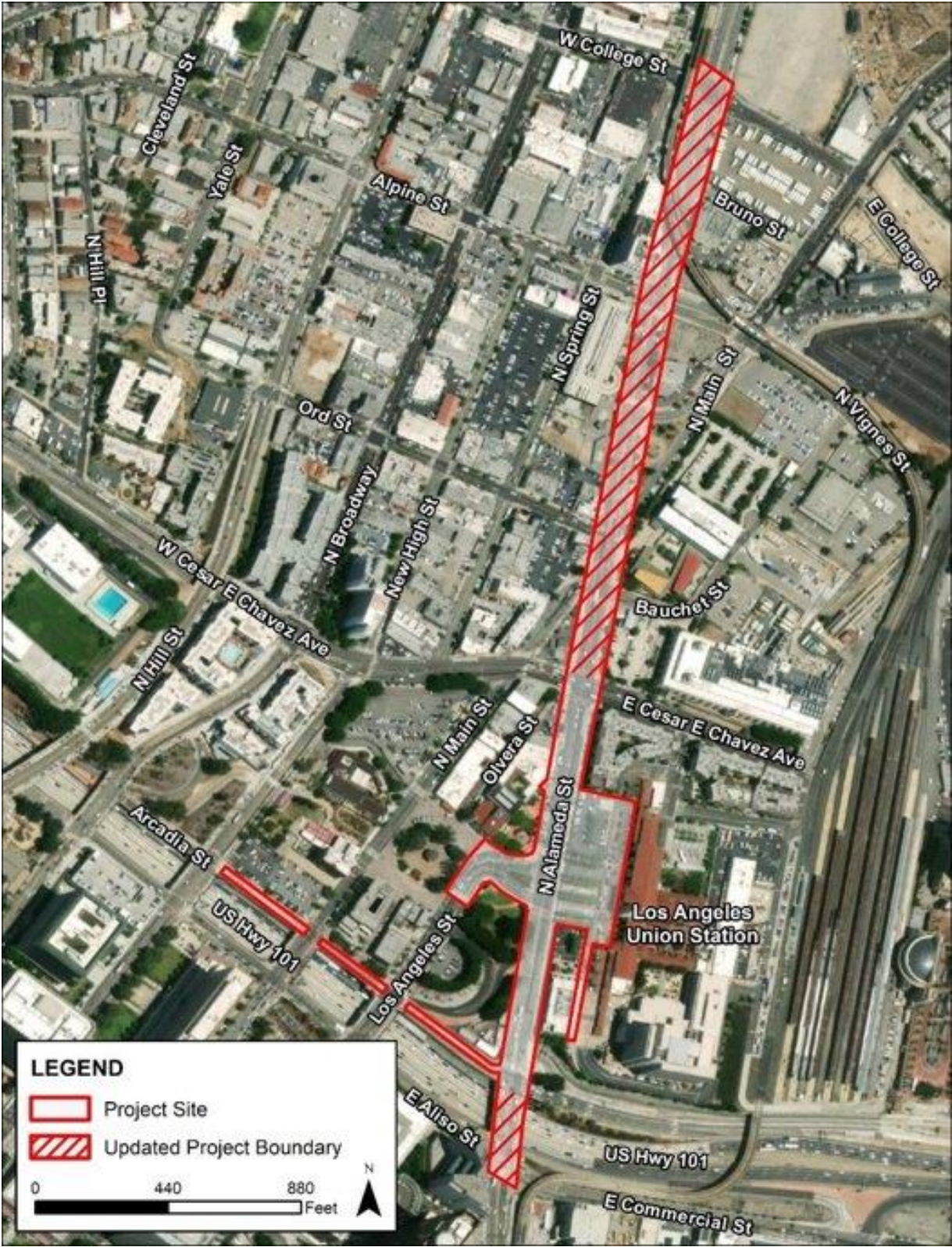
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Attachment A:

Los Angeles Union Station Forecourt and Esplanade
Improvements Project

Addendum No. 2 to the Final Environmental Impact
Report

Attachment B:
Project Map



Attachment C:
Project Site Plan



Attachment D1: Public Comments Summary

Comment No.	Name	Comment Summary	Response
1	Zaul Meza Santillanes	Close Los Angeles St. more pedestrian friendly connection between Union Station and plaza. 🙏👍	Full closure of Los Angeles was evaluated in the FEIR and was not selected due to public opposition.
2	Jess Gayer	To whom it may concern: I looked at the plans for the Union Station / Alameda Esplanade. I will not be commenting on what was in the report but what was not. I will ask this question. I noticed with consternation that a park near Union Station is named for Father Serra. It probably was named so previous to this project. This I have a question. How would a citizen of Los Angeles go about urging that the Father Serra Park to be renamed ? Father Serra was not a good and just man as he has been described in history books in the past. Maybe as a Priest he was a man of God, but his treatment of native peoples who had been living in Los Angeles for about 3,000 years, was a crime against human dignity and justice, as we perceive it today. I know he was working from his historical, religious time frame, and religious outlook, but to have a Park in a prestigious place, like Union Station still named for Father Serra in 2020 is disgusting. He was not an honorable man, he was cultural and humanitarian disaster for native peoples in his time. I guess I should reach out to my City Councilman and the Mayor's Office to address this issue. But I would still like a reply from Metro, as your maps of the Union Station area include the Father Serra Park in your plans. Thank you for your time	Father Serra Park is not included in this project scope and therefore not included in Addendum No. 2.
3	Aram Hacobian	Hi, I would have to say I don't see anything new significant changes other than some new greenery here & there. Still that's better than nothing. That area could use a facelift anyway. What I would really love to see changed is to have Los Angeles Street closed to vehicular traffic and have the land repurposed into more park space.	Full closure of Los Angeles Street was evaluated in the Draft EIR and was not selected as the preferred alternative.

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4	Carolyn Navarro	Please encourage LA lawmakers to fine more people walking around on public sidewalks or jogging near pedestrians without masks, just waiting for a bus is difficult when someone suddenly comes by unmasked, they are prolonging the virus , please fine them a \$1,000 , I don't care if that's a hardship , they are making it miserable for other people who are complying with mask mandates !	Comment does not pertain to project scope.
5	Anant Vasudevan	The new plans showcase that there is very little hope for bikers and pedestrians to get the infrastructure support they need to thrive in this city. What had initially been a project that focused on the pedestrian and bike aspect seems to have been trimmed down from its initial scope and now the pedestrian path suffers because of the road being widened, the bike lane is fragmented, and pedestrians have a more circuitous route. It's surprising given that Union Station is a pedestrian transit hub, and still the car is given priority. If this street won't stick to it's pedestrianization plans, what hope does LA have to transform away from the car. Truly disappointed.	The current Project will increase off-roadway pedestrian and bicyclist facilities on Alameda and Los Angeles Street. Previously, the project was not providing a separated pedestrian and bicycle path on Alameda Street. In both cases, mixing zones are required at intersections to avoid conflicts with pedestrians.
6	Alex Hager	Please include the pedestrian oriented raised platform and shade cover. Signed, a person who walks to Union Station.	As noted in the Board Report, the Project includes a raised crossing and new trees. The scope of both items have been reduced in current design. These changes were not analyzed in the Addendum No. 2 because the design refinements are smaller than what was analyzed and cleared in the FEIR and therefore do not pose any new impacts under CEQA.

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Comment No.	Name	Comment Summary	Response
7	Alexis Zhou	I'm just disappointed to find out that METRO and LADOT are not prioritizing pedestrian & cyclist access, given that it is an improvement project AT a train station. People ride trains, not cars. I understand that the city has concerns about "traffic backing up" and cars "need to make left turns or right turns" but this is a transit hub we're talking about, not some highway interchanges. Los Angeles has been a car-centric city for over a century, and this improvement project will be the first transportation project in the history of the city to truly put the interest of pedestrians front and center. Don't mess it up or it's going to be another century before the next generation will correct our mistake. The elevated pedestrian crossing should stay the way it was originally intended. The pedestrian path should also stay the way it was envisioned. Left-turning and right-turning lanes that block the free-flowing of cycling lanes or sidewalks need to be scratched. This is a project of historic magnitude. please do it right. The people of Los Angeles don't have the luxury to wait for another 100 years to see that the city finally treats pedestrians & cyclists with dignity and respect.	As noted in the Board Report, the raised crossing was redesigned to comply with the City's Supplemental Street Design Guide. However, because the south leg crosswalk is being retained, the overall crossing capacity for pedestrians is increased over the originally proposed project. The re-introduction of the left-hand turn movement will be maintained, per the City, to avoid the potential for motorists to turn illegally at the intersection and create a safety hazard for pedestrians. This is not intended for traffic capacity, as the removal of the left turn as originally proposed and redistribution of traffic through the network would lead to better traffic operations. The left turn will be controlled with a protected left turn arrow, meaning that it will not conflict with pedestrians crossing over the raised crossing. The northbound right turn only lane into Union Station is included as a safety measure. It will have a protected right turn arrow and no right turn on red so that vehicles will not conflict with pedestrians and cyclists in a crosswalk.
8	Kyle Jenkins	The scaling back of pedestrian features in the 2020 design of the L.A. Union Station Forecourt and Esplanade Improvements, including the reduction in the raised crosswalk, the introduction of a left-turn lane from Los Angeles onto Alameda, and the removal of trees (as documented in the Streetsblog LA article entitled "L.A. City Is Nixing Metro's Pedestrian-Priority Plans for Union Station") is extremely disappointing. If the City and Metro cannot work together to create a truly inviting pedestrian entrance to the centerpiece of regional transit, then it is clear we will never achieve a more walkable, multi-modal city. I urge everyone involved to re-evaluate these plans and revert back to the more pedestrian	As noted in the Board Report, the raised crossing was redesigned to comply with the City Supplemental Street Design Guide. The re-introduction of the left-hand turn movement will be maintained, per the City, to avoid the potential for motorists to turn illegally at the intersection and create a safety hazard for pedestrians. The tree planting scheme allows for trees to be planted along Alameda. Planting additional trees would require relocating or encasing the existing storm drain in concrete, which is infeasible.

Attachment D1: Public Comments Summary

Comment No.	Name	Comment Summary	Response
		friendly 2018 version.	
9	Tom Moline	<p>Hello Metro Team,</p> <p>I would like to comment on the recently released Addendum #2 of the Los Angeles Union Station Forecourt and Esplanade Improvements Project. Though some of the changes noted in the addendum are welcome (e.g., converting parking spaces to a pedestrian plaza and improving existing bike lane protections), others seem to be chipping away at some of the key objectives noted in the project report, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Prioritize[ing] connectivity, convenience, and safety for the most vulnerable users ... to safely navigate to and from the Project site. 2) Facilitate[ing] alternatives to driving by providing infrastructure that enables more walking and bicycling. 3) Enhance[ing] the safety and quality of pedestrian and bicycle connections ... [to] nearby business and neighborhoods. <p>I believe that the following changes detract from all of these stated goals, prioritizing driver convenience over pedestrian community, safety, and public transit access:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Reducing the height/width of the raised cross-walk below side-walk level will result in increased vehicle speeds through the area and pose navigation difficulties to those in wheel chairs or riding bicycles, with the former reducing pedestrian safety and the latter reducing access. 2) Allowing for left turns from Los Angeles to Alameda Street exacerbates the above issues by reducing pedestrian crossing times and increasing the likelihood of pedestrian/driver conflict, further reducing pedestrian safety and access. 3) Maintaining a dedicated right turn lane from Alameda Street to Union Station (which is not a change specific to the addendum, but is harmful nonetheless) disconnects the planned bike lane on the East side of Alameda street, reducing bicyclist safety and access. 	<p>1) The raised crossing was redesigned to comply with the City's Supplemental Street Design Guide.</p> <p>2)The re-introduction of the left-hand turn movement will be maintained, per the City, to avoid the potential for motorists to turn illegally at the intersection and create a safety hazard for pedestrians.</p> <p>3)The dedicated right turn lane into Union Station was cleared in the original project Final EIR. It is included as a safety measure with a protected right turn arrow and no right turn on red so that vehicles will not conflict with pedestrians and cyclists in a crosswalk. Regardless of sidewalk width, the off roadway bike lane would need to end before the intersection to accommodate a mixing zone where pedestrians would gather to cross the street (since both modes are on the sidewalk).</p> <p>The project will be closing the northern Union Station driveway and redirecting all vehicle and bus access on Alameda to the southern driveway. The right turn will also allow for movement in and out of Union Station. In addition, with the revised Alameda Esplanade design that shifts all gained right of way to the east, the Project now provides a separated bike path, with mixing zones, which was previously not a feature of the project.</p>

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Comment No.	Name	Comment Summary	Response
		<p>The report does not offer particularly compelling reasons for any of these changes, which seem to primarily be driven by LADOT desires/requirements (as opposed to expanding/improving on the stated project goals). I believe that these highlighted changes should revert to the 'Final' 2018 design, which did a much better job of both meeting the stated project goals and prioritizing pedestrian safety and access to Union Station and the heart of Los Angeles.</p> <p>Thanks Tom online</p>	
10	Matthew Stevens	<p>I just read this article on Streetsblog about Metro's plan to eliminate pedestrian improvements and I am really disappointed. This is not the direction Metro should be going. Union Station is the primary transit hub in Los Angeles. It should prioritize walking, biking, and public transit - not cars. https://la.streetsblog.org/2020/08/13/i-a-city-is-nixing-metros-pedestrian-priority-plans-for-union-station/ Please go back to the original plans that put pedestrians first.</p>	<p>The Project will repurpose three vehicle lanes on Alameda and Los Angeles Street as dedicated and protected pedestrian and bicyclist facilities. The project substantially improves pedestrian and bicycle facilities and completes gaps in the pedestrian and bicycle network to provide access directly to Union Station.</p>
11	Joe Pallon	<p>As a regular commuter from the Antelope Valley to the Los Angeles Basin, I was looking forward to the enhanced pedestrian-friendly features that the Union Station Forecourt and Esplanade Improvements were to have. In particular, the fifty-foot wide raised crosswalk is something very desirable considering the amount of foot traffic that goes through Alameda.</p> <p>I believe that such an improvement will encourage better pedestrian and biker flows while providing commuters, tourists, and locals more incentive to explore more of what the surrounding area, especially the Pueblo, has to offer. I certainly hope that the improvements that were proposed earlier on will stay with the plan.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>	<p>The raised crossing design was revised to be in compliance with the City's Supplemental Street Design Guide, which was recently published. However, because the south leg crosswalk is being retained, the overall crossing capacity for pedestrians is increased over the originally proposed project.</p>

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Comment No.	Name	Comment Summary	Response
12	Daniel Kopec	<p>Union Station sit in the heart of Los Angeles and in the most transit rich neighborhood. The station deserves a surrounding environment that will invite people to make use of the area. Currently the street configurations are unfriendly to pedestrians and promote dangerous driving that discourages walking and cycling. The 2018 concept for the station was great, the 50 foot wide and 8 inch tall cross walk was a perfect design to attract pedestrian use. The new 2020 concept shies too far from the needs of the people that will walk and bike to the station. I ask that LADOT and Metro revert back to the 2018 concept as it is the most appropriate for the world class station that Union station is set to become.</p>	<p>Overall, the core Project elements of repurposing three travel lanes, new street trees, a raised crossing, and off roadway facilities are intact and will improve safety and accessibility to and from Union Station.</p>
13	Sandra Au	<p>The L.A. Union Station Forecourt and Esplanade Improvements project includes upgrades on the Union Station grounds, which Metro owns, as well as upgrades to nearby streets, which are controlled by the city of Los Angeles. The latest version of the project plan removes and waters down some core pedestrian aspects of the project.</p> <p>Please please modernize LA and PRIORITIZE the safety of PEDESTRIANS AND BIKERS instead of continuing to be car-centric! Cars don't need safety measures as much as those of us on foot and bike.</p> <p>Other cities are modernizing...don't let LA fall behind.</p>	<p>Overall, the core Project elements of repurposing three travel lanes, new street trees, a raised crossing, and off roadway facilities are intact and will improve safety and accessibility to and from Union Station.</p>
14	Michael MacDonald	<p>Expressed concerns related to 1) Adjustments to Shade Cover, 2) Pedestrian Signal Cycle Duration, 3) Elimination of Flush Raised Crossing, 4) Elimination of Direct Path of Travel between Union Station and El Pueblo, 5) Stormwater Runoff, 6) Discontinuous Alameda Cycle Path (Comment Letter Attached)</p>	<p>1. Currently there are no existing street trees in the City ROW on the east side of Alameda between Cesar Chavez and Arcadia Street, or on the west side of Alameda south of Los Angeles Street. The project is adding 21 new trees on Alameda Street. and 3 new trees on Los Angeles Street. The trees provide shade on the west side of the trees in the morning, and on the east side in the afternoon.</p>

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Comment No.	Name	Comment Summary	Response
			<p>2. LADOT is ultimately responsible for timing the signal and its phasing. The re-introduction of the the left turn could reduce the overall available cycle length to allocate to the pedestrian phase. LADOT is required to comply with minimum crossing times per the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices.3. The raised crossing was redesigned to comply with the City's Supplemental Street Design Guide, which was recently published. Per the Design Guide, the reduction in height is intended to accommodate the volume of heavy vehicles (trucks and buses) and emergency services. Alameda Street serves as a designated truck and emergency response route.4. The front door to Union Station has never aligned with the proposed raised crossing. Due to Americans with Disabilities Act requirements the center median in between the existing inbound and outbound driveways cannot serve as an accessible path of travel due to the historic steps. 5. The analysis of impacts contained in Addendum #2 is intended to identify if design modifications have potential to result in new significant impacts relative to existing conditions, not relative to previous design of the project approved in the FEIR. While it is acknowledged that a reduction in landscaping would result in some additional accumulation of stormwater on the project site over what was assessed for the FEIR approved project, overall the Addendum No.2 Project will improve the Project site's drainage characteristics by implementing landscaping and porous paving materials that are currently not present on the existing site. Accordingly, no additional analysis of stormwater runoff is</p>

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Comment No.	Name	Comment Summary	Response
			<p>warranted as there is no potential for the Project to result in flooding or exceedance of stormwater drainage facility capacity beyond existing conditions. The modified project has been designed to convey stormwater and other runoff to existing and relocated stormwater collection systems and, as with the FEIR approved Project, will comply with the SUSMP and LID. Given the Project's overall benefit to the Project Site with regard to runoff and stormwater conveyance, Addendum #2 determined that there was no potential for new significant impacts posed by the Project Modifications. 6. The dedicated right turn lane into Union Station was cleared in the original project Final EIR. It is included as a safety measure with a protected right turn arrow and no right turn on red so that vehicles will not conflict with pedestrians and cyclists in a crosswalk. Regardless of sidewalk width, the off roadway bike lane would need to end before the intersection to accommodate a mixing zone where pedestrians would gather to cross the street (since both modes are on the sidewalk). The project will be closing the northern Union Station driveway and redirecting all vehicle and bus access on Alameda to the southern driveway. The right turn will also allow for movement in and out of Union Station. In addition, with the revised Alameda Esplanade design that shifts all gained right of way to the east, the Project now provides a separated bike path, with mixing zones, which was previously not a feature of the project.</p>

Attachment D1: Public Comments Summary

Comment No.	Name	Comment Summary	Response
15	Clara Karger (CCA)	Requests Los Angeles left-turn lane be eliminated, design crossing and tree canopy be unchanged (Comment Letter Attached)	<p>The re-introduction of the left-hand turn movement will be maintained, per the City, to avoid the potential for motorists to turn illegally at the intersection and create a safety hazard.</p> <p>The raised crossing was redesigned to comply with the City's Supplemental Street Design Guide, which was recently published.</p> <p>The tree planting scheme allows for trees to be planted along Alameda. Planting additional trees would require relocating or encasing the existing storm drain in concrete, which is infeasible.</p>
16	Jordan Wolder	<p>I would like to submit my public comment regarding the amendments to the Union Station entrance improvements project. See below.</p> <p>This project is literally and figuratively close to home for me. I live in downtown and use metro and metro bike share frequently. The first time I ever arrived in Los Angeles, I took the LAX flyaway bus direct to Union Station. I then exited the station to walk to LA's downtown core through a number of heavily car-oriented streets. The sidewalks were narrow, and some were even occupied by the tents of homeless encampments. It communicated that pedestrians were not welcome here.</p> <p>What a complete shock coming from the beautiful, historic Union Station building, bustling with people traveling and making connections to get around the city and the region. You would expect the area around the region's transportation hub to be more friendly to pedestrians and cyclists. Look at Denver's recently upgraded Union Station and Washington DC's Union Station. Both are surrounded by highly walkable and bikeable areas, each with a large pedestrian plaza in front</p>	<p>The re-introduction of the left-hand turn movement will be maintained, per the City, to avoid the potential for motorists to turn illegally at the intersection and create a safety hazard.</p> <p>The dedicated right turn lane into Union Station was cleared in the original project Final EIR. It is included as a safety measure with a protected right turn arrow and no right turn on red so that vehicles will not conflict with pedestrians and cyclists in a crosswalk. Regardless of sidewalk width, the off roadway bike lane would need to end before the intersection to accommodate a mixing zone where pedestrians would gather to cross the street (since both modes are on the sidewalk).</p> <p>The project will be closing the northern Union Station driveway and redirecting all vehicle and bus access on Alameda to the southern driveway. The right turn will also allow for movement in and out of</p>

Attachment D1: Public Comments Summary

Comment No.	Name	Comment Summary	Response
		<p>of the main entrance, clearly signifying which street users are being prioritized.</p> <p>The original plan for the upgrades to Union Station's entrance was promising. Finally, a seamless connection between the birthplace of LA at historic Olvera street and the intermodal transportation hub of the LA region we know today.</p> <p>I strongly disapprove of the amendments to the plan which favor cars making turns over the livelihood of pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users. The Streetsblog LA article I've linked below really says it all, but let me reiterate a few points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the left turn from Los Angeles onto Alameda is unnecessary and will be detrimental to the proposed pedestrian crossing almost rendering it useless. Drivers can very easily make their turn at Arcadia or César Chávez. The benefits of being in a downtown environment is the dense street grid that makes alternate routes of travel very simple. - the same goes for the insistence of a dedicated right turn lane from Alameda into Union Station, rendering a proposed bikeway useless. A discontinuous bikeway means cycle traffic and car traffic will be forced to mix. The whole point of a cycle track/bikeway is to separate cyclists from cars to keep them safe. - the reduced width and height of the raised crosswalk is also unacceptable. It shows a prioritization of dedicating street space to cars instead of to people. <p>What we really need to be asking ourselves is what do we want the future of LA to look like? And who do we want to be planning our future for? For cars or for people? Especially, in and around the heart of Los Angeles and its increasingly walkable, bikeable, and transit friendly core. Let's not make the mistakes of our past, resulting in the gridlocked, polluted mess we have today.</p>	<p>Union Station. In addition, with the revised Alameda Esplanade design that shifts all gained right of way to the east, the Project now provides a separated bike path, with mixing zones, which was previously not a feature of the project.</p> <p>The raised crossing was redesigned to comply with the City's Supplemental Street Design Guide, which was recently published.</p>

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Comment No.	Name	Comment Summary	Response
		<p>If you have not done so already, please read the Streetsblog LA article below. They are more familiar with the plans and addendums, and they do an excellent job of critiquing the project.</p> <p>https://la.streetsblog.org/2020/08/13/l-a-city-is-nixing-metros-pedestrian-priority-plans-for-union-station/</p> <p>Thanks, A proud DTLA resident</p>	
17	Ruth Lansford	<p>The current security lighting on the Los Angeles St. pole illuminates the flags at the Eugene Obregon Medal of Honor Wall Monument in Father Serra Park at night, as required by the U.S. Flag Code, Chapter 1, Section 6A. The new lights are also required to do the same. Can you confirm that they will?; I already submitted a comment. Where is it?; Don't understand. Didn't receive the response. Can you repeat?; The light is within the project; thanks.</p>	<p>The Project will not result in any improvements on Father Serra Park or the Obregon Monument. Street lights that are replaced will comply with City standards.</p>
18	Sam	<p>It looks like there has been a reduction of sidewalk trees, What percentage of the new sidewalk along Alameda will be shaded from midday sun?</p>	<p>Currently there are no existing street trees in the City ROW on the east side of Alameda between Cesar Chavez and Arcadia Street, or on the west side of Alameda south of Los Angeles Street. The project is adding 21 new trees on Alameda Street. The trees provide shade on the west side of the trees in the morning, and on the east side in the afternoon.</p>
19	Joe	<p>How wide is the raised crosswalk?; is there any way to revisit the driver left turn from L.A. St to Alameda? Will this impact signal phase timing - allowing less time for peds to cross?</p>	<p>The raised crossing is 37' wide (25' for pedestrians and 12' for bicyclists). The removal of the left-hand turn was discussed extensively and at this time, is not viable to reintroduce due to safety concerns raised by the City of Los Angeles, associated with the potential for motorists making illegal left turns and conflicting with pedestrians in the crosswalk.</p>

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Comment No.	Name	Comment Summary	Response
20	Tom Savio	please repeat email address slowly so I can make a comment.; Hello, I want to know why you are adding a water feature in front of LAUS when 1) it is NOT historic to the station; 2) I will use water in a desert-like climate when we have all been asked to conserve; 3)In a broader question, now that the Serra statue is gone can it be replace with an Tongva (Indian) monument?; Thank you, will you please contact Union Station His. Soc. at: laushs@earthlink.net , when you will discuss the water feature so we can comment as such as we are Sec.106 resource for Union Station? Thanks, Tom; Has Metro gotten input from the emergency services about the wisdom of "dieting" Alameda St. lanes?	1) The Forecourt design includes a water which was evaluated in the FEIR. 2) The interpretive water feature plans to use stormwater runoff water; the interactive water feature design is in progress, and will act as a misting cooling feature. 3) Father Serra Park is not included in the project scope.
21	Anonymous	Ahh I logged in at 6:37 did I miss the presentation?	The presentation is available on the project website: https://www.metro.net/about/lausfei/
22	Tim	Has a traffic study been thoroughly conducted for the raised crosswalk? Will it cause increased traffic and hazard?; Can you elaborate my traffic study question a bit more. I live in the apartments and I'm concerned that the lane reduction and raised crosswalk will just cause a bottle neck on Alameda and will increase air pollution. I'm just being logical	Yes, the raised crossing has been analyzed through a comprehensive traffic study in the FEIR. No, on its own, it was not found to increase traffic or pose as a hazard. The overall project is repurposing vehicle lanes as pedestrian and bicyclist areas. This will result in increased vehicle travel times and expanded pedestrian and bicyclist facilities to and from transit.
23	Matt Lansford	In addendum 2 Figure 4 on Los Angeles St. between the two crosswalks there is a rectangular deviation in the project boundary That abuts the existing olive tree. This rectangular area is not reflected in any of the other Plan view illustrations. What is this area for and does it enter the El Pueblo area as the ADA Compliance zone?; yes; Thank you Elizabeth	The Project does not include improvements at Father Serra Park, including adjacent to the olive trees.

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Comment No.	Name	Comment Summary	Response
24	Michael Banner	How much coordination has occurred with the LINK US destination after it passes through the low income community of Lincoln Heights? Do you have any concerns with the proposed bridge at North Main Street?	Link US is a Metro project that has independent utility from the Forecourt and Esplanade Improvements. The inquiry was passed on to the Link US project team.
25	Shawn Maxson	Hello, my name is Shawn Maxson. I'm a resident of the city [of] LA. I do not own a car and I rely extensively on the Metro bike infrastructure to get around the city. I am leaving a public comment to express my disappointment in the proposed addendum. The proposal significantly chooses to prioritize drivers over pedestrians and cyclists. For example, adding a right turn lane on the east side of Alameda to prioritize driver access to Union Station disconnects two segments of the two-way protected bikeway along Alameda rendering the bike lane nearly useless just so that more drivers can turn right. Also by allowing drivers to turn left from Los Angeles St onto Alameda St, pedestrians using the raised crosswalk will no longer have designated walk cycle free from turning sideways. Any driver who is turning left would also have to wait for pedestrians causing cars back up in that lane. This will force the city to shorten pedestrian crossing times and lengthen driver green signals, undermining the priority given to pedestrians. It would also make the experience of crossing Alameda much more stressful than it needs to be. Continuing to prioritize drivers over pedestrians compromises the [proposed or supposed] mission statement of the Union Station Improvement Project and exposes the continued hypocrisy of the LA Department of Transportation. Thank you.	The dedicated right turn lane into Union Station was cleared in the original project Final EIR. It is included as a safety measure with a protected right turn arrow and no right turn on red so that vehicles will not conflict with pedestrians and cyclists in a crosswalk. Regardless of sidewalk width, the off roadway bike lane would need to end before the intersection to accommodate a mixing zone where pedestrians would gather to cross the street (since both modes are on the sidewalk). The project will be closing the northern Union Station driveway and redirecting all vehicle and bus access on Alameda to the southern driveway. The right turn will also allow for movement in and out of Union Station. In addition, with the revised Alameda Esplanade design that shifts all gained right of way to the east, the Project now provides a separated bike path, with mixing zones, which was previously not a feature of the project. The re-introduction of the left-hand turn movement will be maintained, per the City, to avoid the potential for motorists to turn illegally at the intersection and create a safety hazard.

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Comment No.	Name	Comment Summary	Response
26	Bryn Lindblad	I just wanted to express some disappointment that the street trees have been scaled back to not include a double row on the sidewalk. Extreme heat days and smog are on the rise. These trees should be considered essential for making the main entrance to our region's main transit hub pedestrian friendly. Also, the protected bikeway shouldn't get compromised to create for easy car access. The priorities on that decision are backwards.	<p>The tree planting scheme allows for trees to be planted along Alameda. Planting additional trees would require relocating or encasing the existing storm drain in concrete, which is infeasible.</p> <p>The dedicated right turn lane into Union Station was cleared in the original project Final EIR. It is included as a safety measure with a protected right turn arrow and no right turn on red so that vehicles will not conflict with pedestrians and cyclists in a crosswalk. Regardless of sidewalk width, the off roadway bike lane would need to end before the intersection to accommodate a mixing zone where pedestrians would gather to cross the street (since both modes are on the sidewalk).</p> <p>The project will be closing the northern Union Station driveway and redirecting all vehicle and bus access on Alameda to the southern driveway. The right turn will also allow for movement in and out of Union Station. In addition, with the revised Alameda Esplanade design that shifts all gained right of way to the east, the Project now provides a separated bike path, with mixing zones, which was previously not a feature of the project.</p>

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Comment No.	Name	Comment Summary	Response
27	John Yi (LA WALKS)	<p>Modification #1: Incorporation of vehicular left turns across “Los Angeles Crossing” and related changes to pedestrian signal timing (Not fully documented in Addendum #2)</p> <p>Modification #2: Reduced raised crossing height from flush to non-flush at “Los Angeles Crossing” (Not documented in Addendum #2)</p> <p>Modification #3: Reduced width of “Los Angeles Crossing” and elimination of direct accessible path between Union Station and El Pueblo (Not documented in Addendum #2)</p> <p>Modification #4: Reduction of shade trees along “Alameda Esplanade” (Not documented in Addendum #2)</p>	<p>1) The re-introduction of the left-hand turn movement will be maintained, per the City, to avoid the potential for motorists to turn illegally at the intersection and create a safety hazard. This was fully documented in Addendum No. 2 and the Appendix.2) and 3) The raised crossing was redesigned to comply with the City's Supplemental Street Design Guide, which was recently published. The raised crossing design is reduced in scope from what was analyzed and cleared in the FEIR and therefore does not pose any new impacts under CEQA. 4) The tree planting scheme allows for trees to be planted along Alameda. Planting additional trees would require relocating or encasing the existing storm drain in concrete, which is infeasible. The street tree scheme is reduced in scope from what was analyzed and cleared in the FEIR and therefore does not pose any new impacts under CEQA.</p>

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Comment No.	Name	Comment Summary	Response
28	Kevin Shin (LACBC)	Issue 1: The new elevated street crossing serves no users, "This design flaw fails to serve the needs of every modality."; Issue 2: Understands tree shade was not possible for the project, but wanted to see another means providing shade i.e. "shade structures"; Issue 3: The right turn lane on the south side breaks up the "dedicated bi-directional bike lane on the East side of Alameda St...we ask that right turns on red not be allowed and that the signal timing be adjusted" (Comment letter attached)	<p>1) The raised crossing was redesigned to comply with the City's Supplemental Streets Design Guide, which was recently published.</p> <p>2) The tree planting scheme allows for trees to be planted along Alameda. Planting additional trees would require relocating or encasing the existing storm drain in concrete, which is infeasible.</p> <p>3) The dedicated right turn lane into Union Station was cleared in the original project Final EIR. It is included as a safety measure with a protected right turn arrow and no right turn on red so that vehicles will not conflict with pedestrians and cyclists in a crosswalk. Regardless of sidewalk width, the off roadway bike lane would need to end before the intersection to accommodate a mixing zone where pedestrians would gather to cross the street (since both modes are on the sidewalk).</p> <p>The project will be closing the northern Union Station driveway and redirecting all vehicle and bus access on Alameda to the southern driveway. The right turn will also allow for movement in and out of Union Station. In addition, with the revised Alameda Esplanade design that shifts all gained right of way to the east, the Project now provides a separated bike path, with mixing zones, which was previously not a feature of the project.</p>

Attachment D-2

Public Comment Letters

- Comment Number 14
- Comment Number 15
- Comment Number 28

Comment Number 14

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Elizabeth Carvajal, Senior Director
Countywide Planning & Development
One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop 99-23-4
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

BY EMAIL

September 18, 2020

**RE: SC# 2016121064 Los Angeles Union Station Forecourt & Esplanade
Improvements Project, EIR Addendum #2**

Ms. Carvajal,

Thank you and your team for your hard work over the years on the Union Station Forecourt & Esplanade Improvements project, and for your exemplary efforts at community outreach throughout the project and its design process.

I am disappointed that the most recent update, EIR Addendum #2, has provided adjustments to the project that cause it to fail to meet its project goals. After years of supporting this project, I write to note that I cannot support the project as presented in this addendum.

As noted in Metro documents, the adopted FEIR for this project includes the following objectives:

- “Prioritize connectivity, convenience, and safety for the most vulnerable users (pedestrians, bicyclists, transit patrons and community stakeholders) to safely navigate to and from the project site.”
- “Advance desirable and accessible public space at the LAUS forecourt that creates a visually porous and permeable connection between Union Station and the surrounding historic and cultural communities.”
- “Facilitate alternatives to driving by providing infrastructure that enables more walking and bicycling.”
- “Enhance the safety and quality of pedestrian and bicycle connections between the station and El Pueblo Historic Monument, Father Serra Park, Olvera Street, and nearby business and neighborhoods.”
- “Advance sustainability by providing for reduced consumptive water use in a cost-effective manner and improving multi-modal facilities that encourage active transportation and reduction in vehicle miles traveled.”

FEIR Addendum #2 proposes the following changes which would directly impact or negate stated project objectives:

- Elimination of 28 of 54 mature sidewalk sycamore trees providing shade canopy, and relocation of 17 remaining mature sidewalk sycamore trees from a central sidewalk location providing shade cover for pedestrian and bicycle facilities to a property-line adjacent location that significantly reduces shade provisions for pedestrian facilities, and eliminates shade for bicycle facilities (not documented as a proposed modification in FEIR Addendum #2 Section 4.2)
- Addition of provision for driver left turns from Los Angeles Street onto Alameda Street across the enhanced pedestrian/bicycle crossing ("Los Angeles Crossing") from a shared straight & left turn lane (summarized in FEIR Addendum #2 as "Intersection and Roadway Modifications")
- Adjustments to signal phasing to accommodate driver left turns from Los Angeles Street onto Alameda Street across the enhanced pedestrian/bicycle crossing ("Los Angeles Crossing") from a shared straight & left turn lane (summarized in FEIR Addendum #2 as "Intersection and Roadway Modifications")
- Elimination of a flush enhanced pedestrian/bicycle crossing in favor of a non-flush 3" high raised crosswalk (not documented as a proposed modification in FEIR Addendum #2 Section 4.2)
- Elimination of a direct path of travel between Union Station and El Pueblo in favor of a non-aligned 37' wide raised crosswalk (not documented as a proposed modification in FEIR Addendum #2 Section 4.2)

Only two of these modifications are summarized in Addendum #2 Section 4.2, and are attributed to direction imposed by the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT). The inclusion of these five modifications impacts the achievement of aforementioned project objectives, primarily by negatively impacting the resulting "connectivity," "convenience," "quality," "desirability," and "accessibility" of pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Metro should fully document proposed modifications, study their impact not only on environmental impacts but also project objectives upon which previous environmental review is based on, and offer alternatives that meet project objectives concerning quality pedestrian and bicycle access. Below are summaries of some impacts that have not been addressed in Addendum #2.

1. Adjustments to Shade Cover:

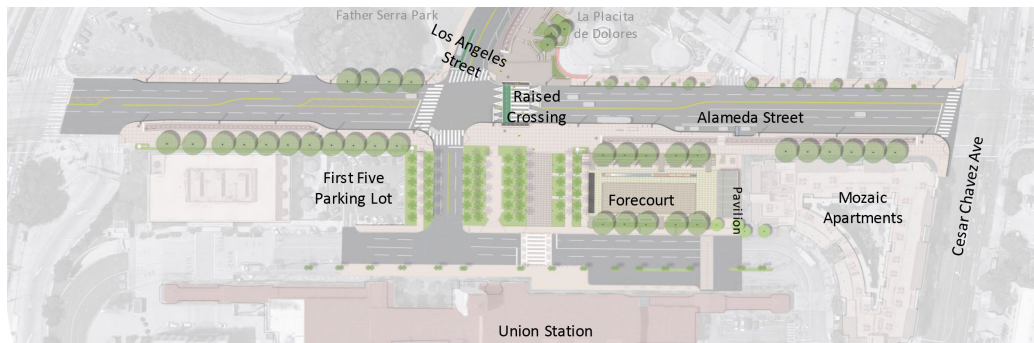
The 2015 Union Station Master Plan ("Transforming Union Station") presented a vision for the improved pedestrian experience in accessing Union Station from Alameda Street. This plan called for the installation of new double-rows of mature sidewalk trees providing shade cover from midday sun. The plan showed 76 mature sidewalk trees located in double-rows to enhance the pedestrian experience, aesthetics, and usability of these sidewalks on hot days.



Source: *Transforming Union Station*, 10/9/2015

As climate change continues to impact Southern California, Los Angeles residents and visitors are increasingly becoming familiar with 100°+ Fahrenheit days for longer periods and more regularly throughout the year. At these temperatures, it is absolutely critical to provide the relief of shade cover for people not enclosed in air-conditioned vehicles, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and people with disabilities on whom the project is focused.

With adjustments to the proposed roadway configuration of Alameda Street, Metro is now proposing to eliminate 50 of the originally planned 76 Alameda sycamore or similar shade trees (a reduction of 28 from the 54 trees on Alameda referenced in the adopted 2018 FEIR). Additionally, the revised plan shows 17 more trees relocated away from the center of the sidewalk to the edge of the Metro property line. These combined changes in reduction and relocation of shade trees result in a significant reduction in the amount of shade cover provided to pedestrians and bicyclists in accessing Union Station.



Source: *Metro LA Union Station Forecourt and Esplanade Improvements Project Updates*, 8/3/2020

Addendum #2 Section 5.1.1 states, "These elements would not result in any impacts to any trees along Alameda Street that were not already accounted for in the Approved Project. Therefore, the Alameda Esplanade revisions would result in no impacts to aesthetics." This statement is obviously false in review of Metro's design presentation, proposal to eliminate double-rows of trees, and provision of only 26 mature shade trees on Alameda in place of 76 as envisioned. Metro must study the aesthetic impact of this large reduction in mature sidewalk trees, study the resulting

changes in temperature along non-shaded areas during heat waves, and provide alternatives to improve aesthetics and sidewalk temperatures for non-vehicular users.

2. Pedestrian Signal Cycle Duration:

Under Addendum #2 Section 4.2.2, Metro states that signal phasing for the intersection would need to be revised to include the new provision for left turns from Los Angeles Street onto Alameda Street at the request of LADOT. LADOT’s explanation – stated as concern over “potential driver non-compliance with the left-turn restriction” – is wholly inadequate, defies logic, and fails to explain what alternatives in the form of signage, physical barriers, or enforcement were considered. Metro should not be designing around the accommodation of illegal driver actions.



Figure 4.1.3-2. Approved Project Plan

Source: Metro LA Union Station Forecourt and Esplanade Improvements Addendum #1, 7/2/2018

Metro does not provide analysis to see what the resulting signal cycles would be. The introduction of a new vehicle phase that accommodates turns from a shared straight & left turn lane across Los Angeles Crossing means that one of two options will be required:

1. The approximately 60 second east/west signal phase will need to be shared by separate vehicle & pedestrian phases; *or*
2. Turning vehicle drivers will be permitted to conflict with Los Angeles Crossing during a walk/bike phase (not permitted under California code)

In August 2020 community presentations, Metro’s project team has communicated that option #2 will not occur, and that vehicle and pedestrian phases will be separate. Considering that Alameda is a major transportation corridor that is unlikely to be prioritized with less than 60 seconds of an overall 120-second cycle, this will split the

duration of cross-traffic signals aligned with Los Angeles Street between two separate phases: a vehicle-only phase and a ped/bike phase, where the adopted FEIR design would allow vehicle and pedestrian/bicycle phases to be maximized and run contiguously.

The introduction of conflicting vehicle and pedestrian cycles will cause strain on the signal time provided for each mode. As a result, Metro can expect that LADOT will require the inclusion of pedestrian-activated signals (aka “beg buttons”) and/or ADA minimum crossing durations, which would negatively impact the pedestrian experience in order to minimize vehicle backups in the shared straight/left turn lane. For a location that connects Los Angeles’ primary transit hub with Los Angeles’ original walking street, both of these conditions are wholly unacceptable.

In order to incorporate separate vehicle and pedestrian east/west signals, Metro must provide a study of resulting Los Angeles Street traffic volumes, along according demand for signal duration by vehicles and pedestrians. Any study that shows pedestrian crossing at Los Angeles Crossing as less than 45 seconds, or requiring the use of a push button to activate should be deemed as infeasible and contradictory to the stated objectives of the project.

3. Elimination of Flush Raised Crossing:

Despite not being detailed in Addendum #2, Metro project staff has communicated that the proposed 8” tall flush enhanced sidewalk-like “Los Angeles Crossing” will now be limited to a 3” tall raised crosswalk to abide by standards that LADOT applies to typical projects across the entire city.

The Los Angeles Union Station Forecourt & Alameda Esplanade project was never presented to the public as a typical roadway project, but instead as a forward thinking and innovative approach to meet the unique needs of Los Angeles’ primary transit hub, at a time where determined action is needed to address climate change caused by vehicle uses. The project’s 2017 DEIR acknowledges the need for innovation in this project, stating that, “Achieving [aggressive reductions in greenhouse gas emissions by a] 2050 target will require innovation and unprecedented advancements in energy demand.”

The Los Angeles Union Station Forecourt & Alameda Esplanade project is to be Phase 1 in implementation of the 2015 Connect US Action Plan. This plan provides a rendering of the flush, enhanced pedestrian crossing to be provided at Alameda Street. Metro continuously used this rendering in 2017, 2018, and 2019 outreach efforts to the public.



EXISTING View from Union Station west up Los Angeles St. to El Pueblo



PROPOSED Los Angeles Crossing will have an enlarged/raised crosswalk and direct walk-bike path between Union Station and the Plaza at El Pueblo

Source: Connect US Action Plan, 10/5/2015

A 3" tall raised crosswalk does not meet the accessibility, aesthetic, or safety goals that are achieved by an 8" tall flush crossing. This feature represents a key element of the project. To eliminate it is a downgrade that has significant impacts on the achievement of project objectives. If non-innovative standards are to be applied to this feature within an innovative project, Metro must study and propose alternatives that will meet the accessibility, quality of pedestrian experience, desirability, and enhanced safety aspects of the project's stated objectives.

4. Elimination of Direct Path of Travel between Union Station and El Pueblo:

Providing a direct pedestrian connection between Union Station and El Pueblo was a primary goal documented in the Connect US Action Plan, which proposed a "direct walk-bike path between Union Station and the Plaza at El Pueblo." This proposal was incorporated into the Los Angeles Union Station Forecourt & Alameda Esplanade project through its objectives at providing direct pedestrian and visual connections between Union Station and El Pueblo. El Pueblo is one of Los Angeles' most important cultural monuments, and one of few focused on the indigenous and Latinx heritage of Los Angeles.

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1 Close part of Los Angeles St. to create an enlarged walkway to the Plaza

2 Provide wide crosswalk at sidewalk level

3 Retain two-way traffic on Los Angeles St.

4 Provide access to front door of Union Station per the Union Station Master Plan

5 Provide new crosswalk

6 See Alameda Esplanade

7 See Los Angeles Street Esplanade

8 Walk path to Paseo Luis Olivares and Chinatown from El Pueblo

9 See North Main Streetscape

10 Walk path to La Placita, Los Angeles Plaza de Cultura y Artes and Ft. Moore

11 Tour bus parking

12 Paseo Luis Olivares

13 Paseo de La Plaza

Note: Dashed purple lines denote paths that will require bicyclists to walk their bike due to a higher level of pedestrian activity.

Source: Connect US Action Plan, 10/5/2015

Despite not being detailed in Addendum #2, Metro project staff has communicated that the proposed Los Angeles Crossing will be reduced from 50 feet in width to 37 feet in width based on feedback from LADOT. A review of this reduction in pedestrian area is not provided, but it is clear from the revised design plan presented in August 2020 that the result is a misalignment off the intended direct connection. This causes a meandering path of travel for pedestrians, negatively impacting the achievement of objectives concerning accessibility, quality of pedestrian experience, and project aesthetics. The presented plan with a reduced crossing shows that the ADA-accessible ramp does not align with the raised crossing. This non-alignment with the accessible route would treat people with disabilities as separate and secondary; it does not abide by the provisions of Federal ADA or California Accessibility Code.



Source: Metro LA Union Station Forecourt and Esplanade Improvements Project Updates, 8/3/2020

No justification has been provided to merit this unnecessary reduction in quality of pedestrian access and in meeting project objectives for direct connection, but it presumably is being requested to increase vehicular capacity on Alameda Street. While vehicular capacity is not an objective of the project, a direct connection between Union Station and El Pueblo is. Metro should expand the width of the enhanced crossing to align with both the accessible route to El Pueblo and the entrance to Union Station.

5. Stormwater Runoff:

Addendum #2 Section 5.10 "Hydrology and Water Quality" provides no study to support its statement that a reduction in the number of mature trees and permeable surface area of landscaping has "No Impact" to stormwater runoff from the project scope adopted in the 2018 FEIR. If Metro seeks to eliminate 52% of mature sidewalk trees (28 of 54), Metro should provide a stormwater runoff study to justify that the

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elimination of trees from the adopted FEIR has no impact to water systems and/or quantify the adjustment for public review.

6. Discontinuous Alameda Cycle Path:

With the adoption of the FEIR for this project, Metro had accommodated an LADOT request for the addition of a right turn pocket on the east side of Alameda to improve vehicular level of service on Alameda and provide a dedicated turn signal for drivers turning right into Union Station. While it was not clear at that time, it is clear now from updated design documents that this accommodation results in discontinuous strips of bike facilities on Alameda. Without providing connection between these strips and to adjacent bicycle infrastructure, these cycle paths are functionally useless and wholly unattractive to people intending to navigate the area by bicycle. Metro should not prioritize driving access to Union Station over the inclusion of functional bicycle facilities. Now that design documents have shown these cycle paths as unworkable, Metro should provide redesign to meet project goals of improved and prioritized bicycle access and consider engagement with LADOT's Livable Streets team to ensure conformance with bicycle facility design best practices and continuity with a citywide bike network.



Source: Metro LA Union Station Forecourt and Esplanade Improvements Project Updates, 8/3/2020

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Conclusion:

As a user in the area who regularly relies on pedestrian and bicycle travel, I have followed this project closely, offering my formal support for the project to Caltrans Division of Local Assistance and District 7 in 2019. I unfortunately am not able to support the project as presented in Addendum #2 and as communicated by Metro staff in August 2020, and must oppose this addendum.

I thank you in advance for your consideration. I ask that Metro reconvene with city of Los Angeles department leadership and elected representatives of the public to work through concerns, study impacts and alternatives, and work to ensure that the project can be modified to meet its stated goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael MacDonald", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael MacDonald
Architect, NCARB, LEED AP BD+C

cc: Sharon Tso, Council District 14 caretaker
Katie Kiefer, Office of Council District 14
Sarah Flaherty, Office of Councilmember-elect Kevin de León
Jennifer Barraza, Office of Councilmember-elect Kevin de León
Dan Rodman, Office of Mayor Eric Garcetti
Julia Salinas, Office of Mayor Eric Garcetti
Nate Hayward, Los Angeles Department of Transportation
Megan Nangle, Metro Transportation Planning Manager



August 20, 2020

Via Email

Re: LA Union Station Forecourt and Esplanade Improvements - FEIR Addendum 2

Dear Chair Garcetti,

Central City Association represents a coalition of businesses, nonprofits and trade associations with a shared commitment to the vibrancy of Downtown Los Angeles (DTLA) and increasing investment in the region more broadly. A key component of this vision is an accessible, walkable and welcoming experience for residents, visitors and workers travelling from near and far.

As defined in the 2018 Final EIR (FEIR), the Metro LA Union Station (LAUS) Forecourt and Esplanade Improvements project will improve the DTLA experience by prioritizing connectivity, convenience and safety; increasing desirable public space; and facilitating alternatives to driving by providing infrastructure that enables more walking and bicycling. The project's identified priorities also advance economic development, public health and sustainability goals in the City of Los Angeles.

While the approved project advances these goals and priorities, we are concerned that certain proposed modifications run counter to the project's stated priorities as well as Metro's Vision 2028 and the City of Los Angeles' Vision Zero policy. We ask you to reconsider the following aspects of Addendum 2 and move forward with the existing provisions outlined in the Board approved 2018 FEIR.

Left-Turn Access to Alameda Street

Addendum 2 proposes keeping the existing eastbound Los Angeles Street left-turn lane to northbound Alameda Street out of concern that drivers would not comply with the no left-turn signaling and make illegal left turns at the intersection. The approved project proposed removing this lane to eliminate a movement that would conflict with the raised crosswalk and would create a traffic queue along Los Angeles Street for those waiting to turn left.

We cannot plan projects nor design streets around the possibility that drivers will not comply with the rules of the road. Drivers, like pedestrians and cyclists, must be responsible for following the City's rules and regulations. Keeping the existing left-turn lane puts people driving and people walking at odds. If this turn lane remains, pedestrians using the raised crossing would have a shortened amount of time to cross Alameda Street while navigating the threat of cars turning left into the crossing. This dynamic creates a dangerous and uncomfortable experience for pedestrians. This pathway is a direct connection between LAUS, the region's transportation hub, and the highly walkable El Pueblo District. Pedestrians should feel safe and welcomed as they move to and from these landmark locations without threat from drivers turning left. **We request that the existing eastbound Los Angeles Street left-turn lane be eliminated as designated in the approved project.**

Pedestrian-Supportive Infrastructure

As defined in the 2018 FEIR, the pedestrian and cyclist crossing on Alameda Street would be a 50-foot-wide raised crossing that connects the LAUS Forecourt and Esplanade to the Los Angeles Street pathway and the El Pueblo District. We are concerned that the modified project reduces the width of the crossing to 37 feet and lowers the platform height to three inches. These design changes again prioritize cars over

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other transportation modes by reducing crossing space for pedestrians and cyclists while expanding street space for cars to queue and move more quickly over the crossing.

Changes to the crossing combined with reduction in the number of mature trees that provide much-needed shade to those on foot, bikes and scooters would again erode the project's intent of providing a great public space and encouraging active transportation alternatives. **We request that the designs to the crossing remain consistent with the approved project and that every effort to provide additional tree canopy be made.**

The LAUS Forecourt and Esplanade Improvements project has undergone extensive study and community outreach. Successful implementation that reflects the priorities of this project will lead to a transformative public space that encourages active transportation and alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles while celebrating Los Angeles' surrounding historical landmarks. We thank you for your consideration and ask you not to accept modifications that fall short of meeting this project's intended outcomes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Lall", is positioned above the printed name.

Jessica Lall
President & CEO
Central City Association of Los Angeles

cc: Councilmember-elect Kevin de León
Supervisor Hilda Solis
Commissioner Teresa Villegas, Board of Public Works



Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition

213.629.2142
www.la-bike.org

August 25, 2020

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Elizabeth Carvajal, Senior Director
Countywide Planning & Development
One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop 99-23-4
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

SUBJECT: Union Station Forecourt and Alameda Esplanade Project Changes

Dear Ms. Carvajal,

The Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition (LACBC) is concerned by the latest design sketches proposed of the planned changes to the Union Station Forecourt and Alameda Esplanade project. The project itself is a tremendous opportunity for Metro and the City of Los Angeles to partner on their commitment to making a key transportation, cultural, and historical hub for the region more mobility and pedestrian friendly, but the most recent changes seem to be a step backwards from many of the stated goals laid out for the project.

LACBC is excited that a number of proposed changes, such as the dual-direction sidewalk- level bike lane along Los Angeles St, but these elements on their own do not create an inviting enough environment to encourage more people to consider alternative transportation options to and from Union Station. For example, the current design calls for the elevated crosswalk, which would have previously been a 50-foot wide speed mitigating 8-inch elevated table, to be reduced to an insufficient 37-foot wide, 3-inch grading that not only does little for speed reduction and pedestrian visibility, but also creates a nuisance to drivers. This design flaw fails to serve the needs of every modality. If the main interest is in slowing down traffic along Alameda to ensure a safe crossing at this critical intersection, then the original design meets the stated goals of "prioritiz[ing] connectivity, convenience, and safety for the most vulnerable users (pedestrians, bicyclists, transit patrons and community stakeholders) to safely navigate to and from the project site."

Another change in the recent design that is counter to the intent of the project is the reduction in shade trees along Alameda Street. It is our understanding that this decision was made due to cost constraints around reconfigurations to existing pipes. However, the new design does not address the impact that a lack of shade in the area poses to pedestrians and shared-mobility as well as personal mobility users navigating the area. If the city is unable to incorporate additional trees, then additional shade structures should be considered in order to increase the comfort for all community members using the space. The lack of shade in Southern California's average of 284 days of sunshine makes the latest changes less effective at meeting the stated goal of "Facilitat[ing] alternatives to driving by providing infrastructure that enables more walking and bicycling."

Finally, the proposed changes result in a disjointed and potentially unsafe bike path along the Alameda Esplanade that greatly increases the potentially dangerous mixing of pedestrians, cyclists, and cars at the intersection. The current design shows the dedicated bi-directional bike lane on the East side of Alameda St cutting off quite some distance from the intersection in order to accommodate a right turn late for motor vehicle traffic on the South side of the intersection. This design forces cyclists to intermingle with other traffic while still on the sidewalk, creating a dangerous mix of pedestrians and cyclists as well as creating

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opportunities for cars to fail to see cyclists on the sidewalk. This design fails to meet the stated goal of "Prioritiz[ing] connectivity, convenience, and safety for the most vulnerable users (pedestrians, bicyclists, transit patrons and community stakeholders) to safely navigate to and from the project site." We strongly encourage Metro and the City of LA to reexamine the design of this location in order to reduce the potential for dangerous collisions. If this intersection itself cannot be reconfigured, then we ask that right turns on red not be allowed and that the signal timing be adjusted to allow for safe bike/mobility/pedestrian crossing that does not create conflict with motor vehicle traffic.

LACBC raises these issues in an effort to encourage Metro to work with the City of Los Angeles to find more creative and innovative solutions to improve the conditions for walking and biking at the heart of one of the regions most historically and culturally significant sites. We understand that there are many considerations that go into these kinds of projects, but must stand by our conviction that if Metro and the City of Los Angeles prioritized the movement of people over the movement of cars, we could all work together to transform Los Angeles into a region that is celebrated as among the most livable and accessible in the world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eli Akira Kaufman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Eli Akira Kaufman
Executive Director
Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition

LA UNION STATION FORECOURT AND ESPLANADE IMPROVEMENTS

Addendum No. 2 to the
Final Environmental Impact Report

LEGISTAR 2020-0503

Planning & Programming Committee
October 14, 2020



Metro

Recommendation

Approve the Addendum No. 2 to the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) Forecourt and Esplanade Improvements project.

What Was Analyzed?

1. Alameda Esplanade realignment
2. Intersection & roadway modifications
 - a. Retain left turn on Los Angeles Street
 - b. Retain southern crosswalk at the Alameda/LA Street intersection
 - c. Transitions north and south of the project boundary
3. Historic light replacement
4. Utility relocations
5. ADA pathway on Los Angeles Street

Project Design



Metro



Findings & Next Steps

Findings

- Changes were analyzed against all CEQA topic areas and found that the changes did not result in any new significant impacts, so an Addendum was the appropriate level of CEQA documentation.
- The project does not result in any new significant and unavoidable impacts under CEQA.

Next Steps

- Upon Board approval, staff will continue to engage stakeholders and coordinate with the City of Los Angeles to finalize design and secure Caltrans ATP construction funding.