

Supplemental Agenda Item No. 8

Transit Committee Meeting

December 12, 2024

9:00 a.m.

LOCATION

**San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
First Floor Lobby Board Room
1170 W. 3rd Street, San Bernardino, CA 92410**

DISCUSSION - TRANSIT

8. Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Link US Project Funding Update

Receive and file a funding update on Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Link Union Station Project, and provide direction as appropriate.

This item was received after publication of the meeting agenda.

Minute Action

AGENDA ITEM: 8

Date: December 12, 2024

Subject:

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Link US Project Funding Update

Recommendation:

Receive and file a funding update on Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Link Union Station Project, and provide direction as appropriate.

Background:

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is proposing the Link Union Station Project (Link US Project) to address existing capacity constraints at Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS). The Project consists of transforming LAUS from a stub end tracks station into a run-through tracks station by extending ten platform tracks south of LAUS Platforms 2 through 6 to merge into a minimum of four tracks onto a viaduct over U.S. Highway 101 (US-101). The new tracks will continue south and connect to mainline tracks along the west bank of the Los Angeles River. Additionally, the existing pedestrian passageway under the LAUS platforms and tracks will be replaced with a new expanded passageway. The Project effectively establishes 10 new run-through tracks for regional/intercity trains and future high-speed rail trains south of LAUS. The Project also includes off-site railroad improvements to BNSF Railway's Malabar Yard in the City of Vernon. The Malabar Yard railroad improvements consist of the closure of the 49th Street at-grade railroad crossing and a new track connection between two existing track segments along 46th Street in the City of Vernon. In May 2016, Metro and the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) entered into an agreement to complete the necessary Project-level environmental analysis and preliminary engineering to accommodate the planned High Speed Rail (HSR) system as part of the Link US Project. The CHSRA is the lead agency for complying with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other federal environmental laws for the Project. Metro is the joint lead agency under NEPA, project sponsor, and lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The final Environmental Impact Statement/ Supplemental Environmental Impact Report is expected in spring 2025.

Metro plans to deliver the Project in phases and the first phase, identified as Phase A, includes an interim two-track run-through configuration at LAUS, and common rail infrastructure from LAUS to the main line tracks along the Los Angeles River. Metro has secured \$950 million in funding for Phase A, including \$493 million in State Proposition 2A/HSR Bonds and \$398 million in Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Programs (TIRCP) Grants awarded by the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) in April 2018 as part of Metrolink's Southern California Optimized Rail Expansion (SCORE) program. However, the latest Phase A Project cost estimate is around \$1.6 billion, resulting in a funding gap of \$646 million. In order to close the funding gap, Metro and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) have submitted a joint application seeking \$105 million from the State Solutions for Congested Corridors Program (SCCP) and plan to submit an application seeking approximately \$200 million from the Federal Railroad Administration Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP) Grant Program by the December 16, 2024 deadline, leaving a funding gap of \$341 million for the Phase A Project. In order to close the \$341 million funding gap, Metro has requested that the

Entity: San Bernardino County Transportation Authority

Southern California Regional Railroad Authority (SCRRA) member agencies collaborate to develop an acceptable approach to funding the remaining \$341 million, meaning they want member agencies to cover the cost overrun. In the event the Phase A Project is not successful in securing the \$200 million uncommitted funds of the FSP grant before July 1st of the year in which the Project is programmed, the local contribution by SCRRA member agencies and Amtrak and/or LOSSAN will be increased by \$200 million to fully fund the Project. Since San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) is one of the SCRRA member agencies, Metro expects SBCTA to contribute to closing the gap and have an agreement in place by March 2025.

Financial Impact:

This item has no financial impact on the adopted Budget for Fiscal Year 2024/2025.

Reviewed By:

This item is not scheduled for review by any other policy committee or technical advisory committee.

Responsible Staff:

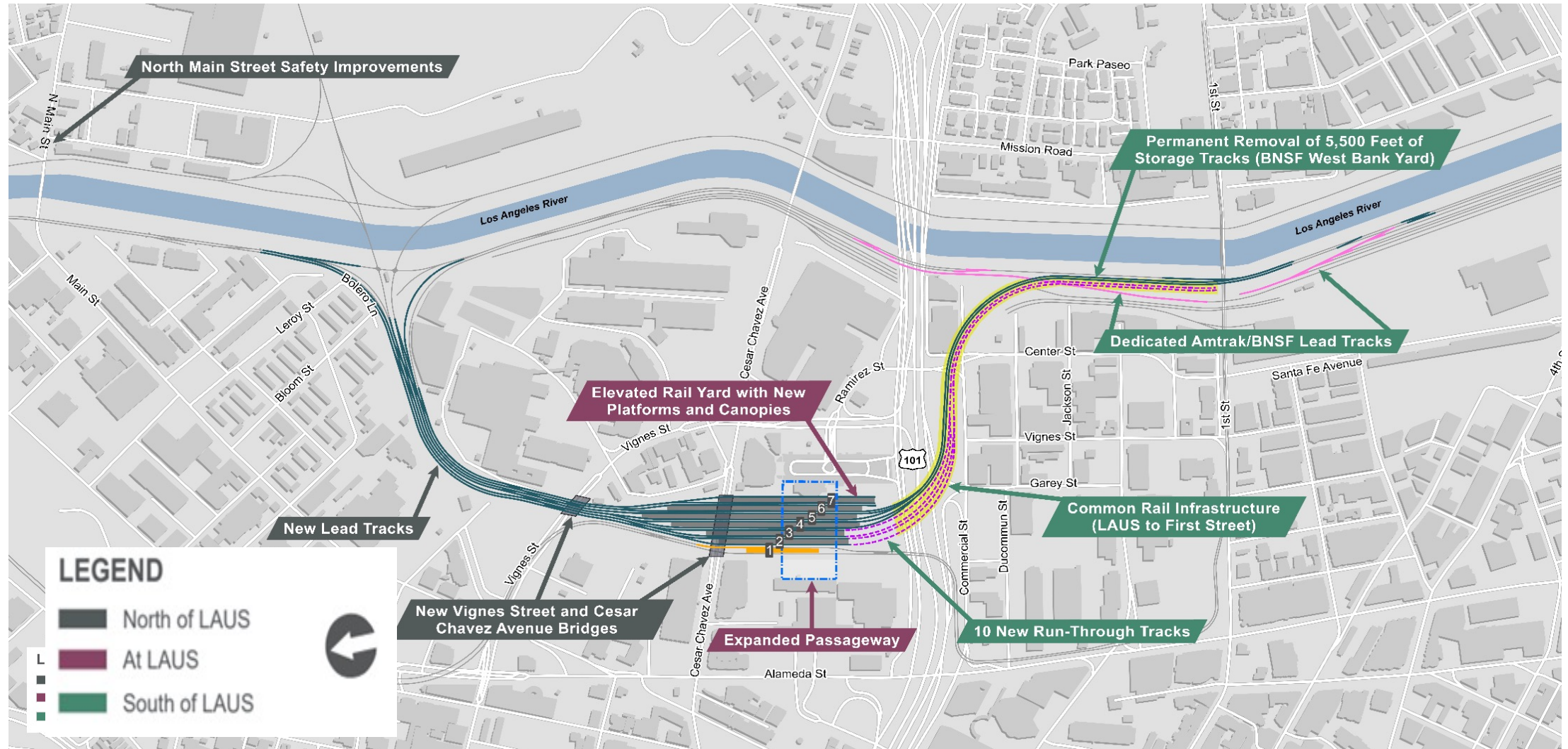
Victor Lopez, Director of Transit & Rail Programs

Approved
Transit Committee
Date: December 12, 2024

Witnessed By:

Project Overview

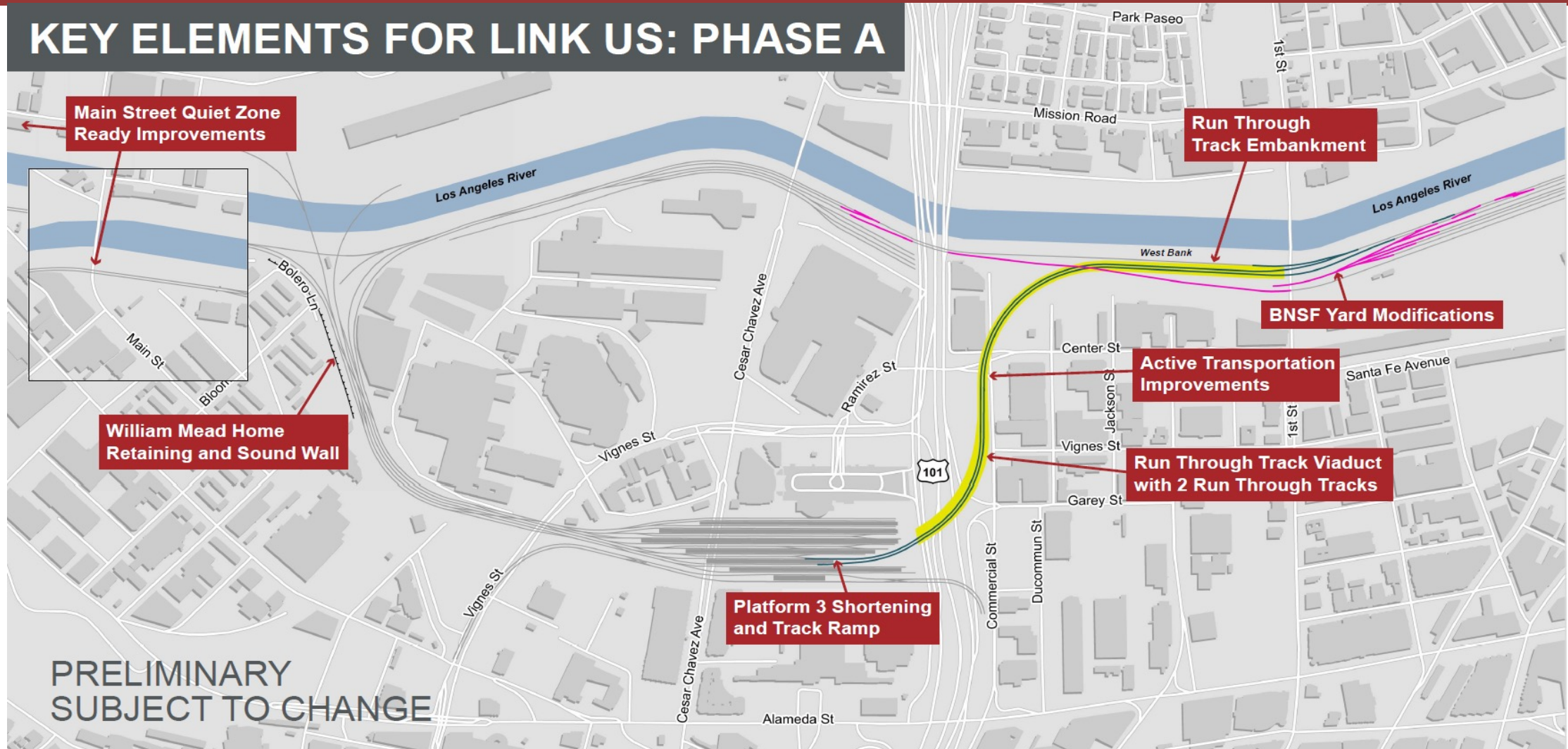
Major Project Components – Build Alternative



Link US – Phase A

Construction Management General Contractor Project Delivery

KEY ELEMENTS FOR LINK US: PHASE A



PRELIMINARY
SUBJECT TO CHANGE



Metro

Link US Project Full Buildout (Phases A and B)

New Run Through Tracks and New Platforms

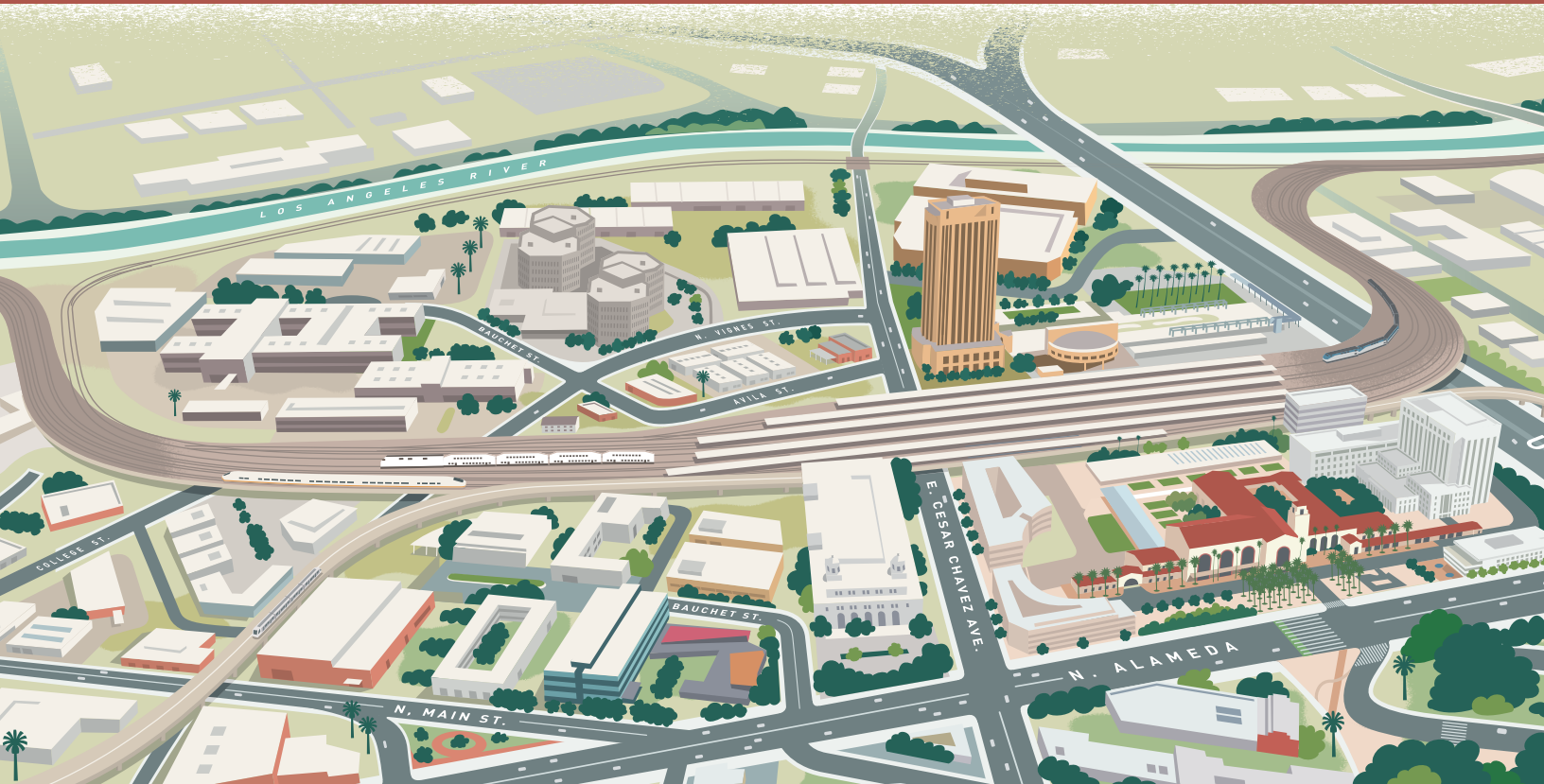


Metro

Conceptual rendering

Link Union Station (Link US)

Overview Fact Sheet



Conceptual artwork

Overview

Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) is Southern California's primary transportation hub, connecting multiple counties with a combined population exceeding 20 million people. LAUS is the largest multi-modal hub in Southern California with commuter and intercity rail services across all six counties in Southern California and intrastate rail service to Seattle, Chicago, New Orleans and beyond. By 2040, passenger trips through LAUS are forecasted to increase from approximately 110,000 passengers to more than 200,000 passengers each weekday. The Link Union Station Project (Link US Project or Project) is proposed to increase regional/intercity rail capacity, improve transit connectivity, enable one-seat rides on the regional/intercity rail systems across Southern California, accommodate the planned high-speed rail (HSR) system at LAUS, and create potential opportunities for transit-oriented development.

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is proposing Link US Project to address existing capacity constraints at LAUS. The Project consists of transforming LAUS from a stub end tracks station into a run-through tracks station by extending ten platform tracks south of LAUS Platforms 2 through 6 that would merge into a minimum of four tracks on the U.S. Highway 101 (US-101) viaduct and continue south to connect to mainline tracks along the west bank of the Los Angeles River, the replacement of the existing pedestrian passageway under the platforms and tracks with a new passenger concourse below an elevated rail yard, and 10 new run-through tracks for regional/intercity trains south of LAUS. The Run-Through Tracks Project or SCRIP did not accommodate the planned HSR system.

In January 2016, Metro rebranded the SCRIP as the Link US Project and initiated the process with the FRA (NEPA lead agency at the time) to define the purpose and need and consider a reasonable range of track alignment alternatives and concourse concepts to evaluate in the CEQA and NEPA process. In May 2016, Metro and the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) entered into an agreement to complete the necessary Project-level environmental analysis and preliminary engineering to accommodate the planned HSR system as part of the Link US Project.

Environmental Process and Project Background

In May 2016, pursuant to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and Metro issued a Notice of Intent/Notice of Preparation to prepare a joint Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) for the Link US Project.

In October 2018, Metro elected to prepare a standalone EIR in compliance with CEQA; and continue the NEPA process separate and independent of the CEQA process with the federal lead agency (FRA at the time). In November 2018, the Metro Board of Directors approved the designation of the CEQA Proposed Project prior to circulation of the Draft EIR for public review in January 2019. After circulation of the Draft EIR, Metro modified the CEQA Proposed Project and certified the Final EIR on June 27, 2019. The CEQA Final EIR Project included temporary impacts to the railroad improvements to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad Malabar Yard in the City of Vernon.

In October 2021, Metro approved CEQA Addendum No.1 to the Final EIR. Since certification of the Final EIR and approval of the CEQA Addendum, there have been minor additions or changes to the Project, which requires the preparation of a Supplemental EIR.

Therefore, in April 2023, CHSRA and Metro agreed to prepare a joint EIS/Supplemental EIR to complete the NEPA and CEQA process. The final EIS/SEIR is expected in Spring 2025.

Project Description

The major Project components from north to south of LAUS are summarized below:

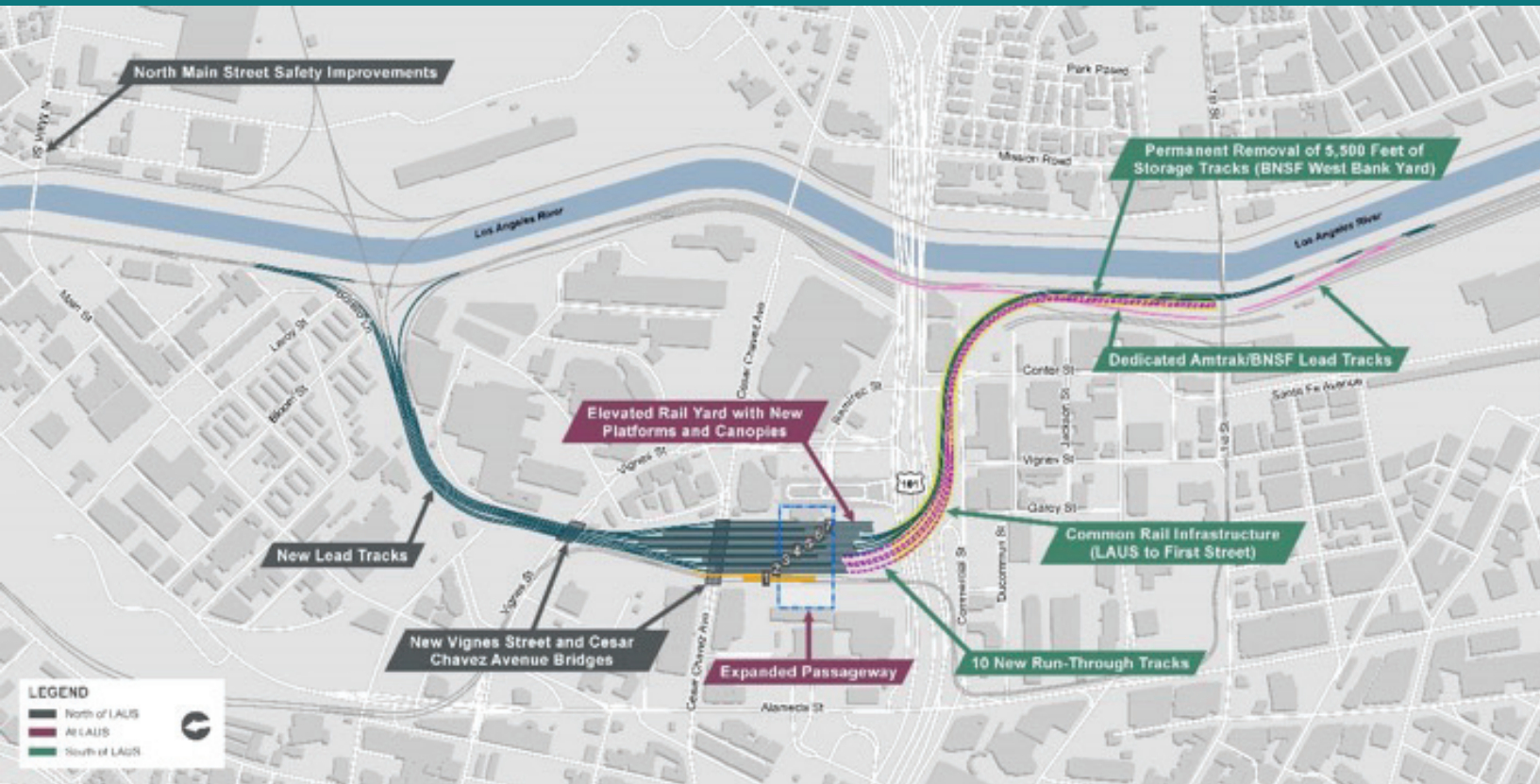
- > North of LAUS
 - Safety Improvements at North Main Street
 - 6 Lead Tracks
 - Vignes Street and Cesar Chavez Avenue Bridge Replacements
- > At LAUS
 - New Expanded Passageway
 - East and West Plazas
 - Elevated Rail Yard with 7 New Platforms and Canopies
- > South of LAUS
 - 10 New Run-Through Tracks (6 tracks for regional/intercity trains and 4 for HSR trains)
 - Common Bridges and Embankments from LAUS to First Street
 - BNSF West Bank Yard
- > Dedicated lead tracks for BNSF freight trains and Amtrak trains
- > Permanent removal of 5,500 feet of storage track capacity

Additional details of the Project components are provided below.

North of LAUS

The Project includes one new lead track, for a total of six lead tracks, to facilitate enhanced operations for regional/intercity rail trains (Metrolink/Amtrak) and future operations for HSR trains within a shared track alignment. Regional/intercity and HSR trains would share the two western lead tracks north of LAUS. The existing railroad bridges at Vignes Street and Cesar Chavez Avenue would also be reconstructed. The Project also includes

LINK UNION STATION (LINK US)



safety improvements at the Main Street public at grade railroad crossing to facilitate future implementation of a quiet zone by the City of Los Angeles.

New sound walls along the perimeter of William Mead Homes and Hilda L. Solis Care First Village are also required to minimize noise impacts.

At LAUS

The Project includes an elevated rail yard and expansion of the existing 28-foot-wide pedestrian passageway. New passenger platforms would be constructed on the elevated rail yard with associated pedestrian improvements (stairs, escalators, and elevators) to enhance safety and improve Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility. The new and improved 140-foot wide expanded passageway would accommodate a substantial increase in passenger capacity with new functionally modern passenger safety amenities. Amtrak ticketing and baggage check-in services would be enhanced, and new baggage carousels would be constructed in a centralized location under the rail yard. Other features include:

- > East and West Plazas (Canopy over West Plaza)
- > Transit serving Retail Uses (up to 160,000 square feet)
- > Office/Commercial Uses (up to 30,400 square feet)






The Project also includes new canopies extending up to 25 feet above each platform and that would be similar in form to the existing butterfly canopies but sized to fit the widened and lengthened platforms.

South of LAUS

The Project includes new run-through tracks on common rail infrastructure from LAUS to the west bank of the Los Angeles River (vicinity of First Street Bridge) to support regional intercity rail and future HSR run-through service. At the BNSF West Bank Yard, dedicated lead tracks for Amtrak trains and BNSF trains, in combination with implementation of common rail infrastructure would result in permanent loss of freight rail storage track capacity at the north end of BNSF West Bank Yard (5,500 track feet). As proposed mitigation to offset the permanent loss of freight rail storage tracks at the BNSF West Bank Yard, CHSRA and Metro would implement two railroad improvements at BNSF's Malabar Yard in the City of Vernon, as described below:

1. Closure of the at-grade railroad crossing at 49th Street (49th Street Closure); and
2. New 1,000-foot track connection along 46th Street between Pacific Boulevard and Seville Avenue (46th Street Connector).

Anticipated Project Benefits

IMPROVE INTRASTATE, INTERCITY & LOCAL TRANSIT CONNECTIVITY	IMPROVE REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY	INCREASE RAIL SERVICE CAPACITY	REDUCE TRAIN IDLING TIMES	FUTURE DEVELOPMENT
				
HSR; Metrolink, Amtrak, Metro Rail; Metro and municipal bus systems; ridesharing	One-seat rides to key destinations in Southern California	Accommodate future demand	Shorter wait times; fuel savings and emissions reductions per train	Opportunity for transit-oriented development

GENERATE NEW JOBS	IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN ACCESS	ENHANCE PASSENGER EXPERIENCE	IMPROVE US-101 & LOCAL ROADWAYS
			
Estimated 4,500 temporary jobs per year over 5-year period; 200+ permanent jobs	Enhanced accessibility and safety with new elevators, escalators, and stairways.	Expanded Passageway, new platforms, retail/office space, and other amenities	Updated design and enhanced safety

Link US CEQA and NEPA Process and Key Milestones

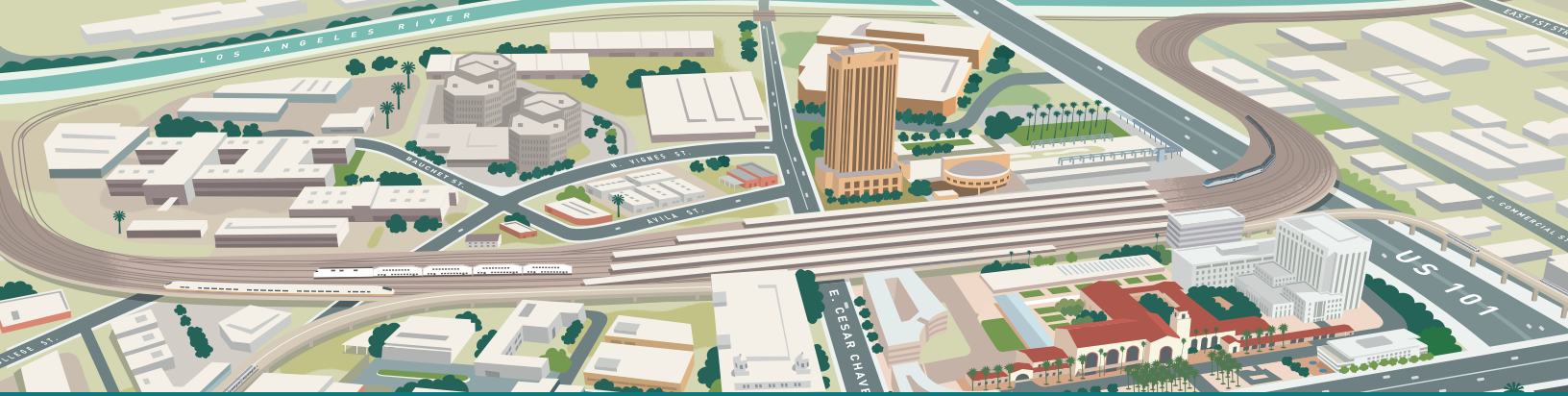


Contact Us

Please visit the Link US website for the latest information regarding project updates and meetings: metro.net/linkus

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-  linkunionstation@metro.net
-  metro.net/linkus
-  facebook.com/losangelesmetro





Conceptual artwork

Link Union Station (Link US)

Frequently Asked Questions

1 What is the Link US Project?

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is proposing the Link Union Station Project (Link US Project or Project) to address existing capacity constraints at Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS). The Link US Project comprises several key components:

1. New lead tracks with an elevated rail yard with new platforms and canopies
2. New concourse-related improvements, including a 140-foot-wide expanded passageway below the rail yard with new escalators and elevators
3. New run-through tracks south of the LAUS over US-101
4. Accommodation of California High-Speed Rail Authority's (CHSRA) planned high-speed rail (HSR) system on common rail infrastructure to support future HSR trains
5. New rail communications, signals, and safety improvements

of Understanding dated July 23, 2019, in which the State of California, acting through the California State Transportation Agency and CHSRA, assumed FRA's responsibilities under NEPA and other federal environmental laws for projects necessary for the design, construction, and operation of the California HSR system and for other railroad projects directly connected to stations on the California HSR system, including the Link US Project.

Other federal, state, regional, and local agencies that have a responsibility to advise and provide feedback throughout the project development and environmental processes include the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA, also known as Metrolink), Amtrak, Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor Agency, California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and the Cities of Los Angeles and Vernon.

2 Why is Link US needed and how is it valuable to the region?

By 2040, passenger trips through LAUS are expected to increase from 110,000 passengers per day to approximately 200,000 passengers per day. The anticipated Project benefits include: improved transit connectivity, improved regional connectivity, increased rail service capacity, reduced train idling times, opportunities for transit-oriented development, new jobs, improved pedestrian access, enhanced passenger experience, and improvements to US-01 and local roadways.

4 How are the tracks at LAUS currently configured?

LAUS is a terminal (stub-end or dead-end) station where all arriving and departing trains enter and exit through a five-track throat at the north end of the station. These stub-end tracks require trains to be pushed into and then pulled out of the station through a complex network of tracks, switches, and crossovers; thereby increasing travel times for passengers and limiting operational capacity at the station.

3 Who is working on the Project?

The Link US team comprises several agency partners working collaboratively to make the Project a success. Metro is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), local project sponsor, and joint-lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Pursuant to 23 United States Code (USC) Section 327, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the State of California executed a Memorandum

5 What type of concourse improvements are being proposed?

The existing 28-foot-wide pedestrian passageway would be replaced with a 140-foot-wide expanded passageway designed with sufficient space for passenger circulation, waiting areas, wayfinding and signage, transit-related retail, food and other amenities. Concourse-related improvements would enhance safety, passenger capacity, and ADA accessibility, while allowing for more efficient passenger egress movements to and from the various transit modes at LAUS.

6 What is the source of Project funding?

In addition to the Measure R funds, Metro has contributed through planning, environmental, and preliminary engineering work, Metro has received commitment from other state and regional funding partners for a total of \$950 million to date. The major funding sources include:

1. **\$423M** in State Proposition 1A/HSR Bonds – approved by the CHSRA Board in April 2020.
2. **\$398M** in Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) Grants – awarded by CalSTA in April 2018 as part of Metrolink's Southern California Optimized Rail Expansion (SCORE) program.
3. **\$129M** in funds from local, regional, and other sources.

Metro plans to deliver the first phase of the Link US Project with the available funding. The first phase (identified as the interim condition) would include an interim two-track, run-through configuration at LAUS, and common rail infrastructure from LAUS to the main line tracks along the Los Angeles River. The Link US team is pursuing additional funding for construction of the second phase (identified as the full build-out condition), to enable construction of the new lead tracks and elevated rail yard, platforms, and canopies in conjunction with new concourse-related improvements.

7 How will construction of the Project impact downtown Los Angeles?

Most of the construction would occur on the LAUS campus or properties owned by Metro. Construction would occur over the course of several phases, extending for a 6-year duration of time, and would consist of construction activities over and adjacent to the US-101 and Center and Commercial Streets for run-through track improvements. Roadway improvements would also occur on the North Main Street Bridge over the Los Angeles River. Metro will work closely with the affected local communities, City Council Districts 1 and 14 for the City of Los Angeles, and the rail and transit operators to avoid and minimize construction-related impacts on surrounding communities. Mitigation measures included in the final environmental documents will be implemented during construction.

8 What type of improvements are being proposed in the City of Vernon?

The Link US Project would result in the permanent loss of approximately 5,500 track-feet of freight rail storage capacity at BNSF's West Bank Yard near LAUS. As proposed mitigation to offset the permanent loss of freight rail storage tracks at the

BNSF West Bank Yard, two railroad improvements at BNSF's Malabar Yard in the City of Vernon are required, as described below:

1. Closure of the at-grade railroad crossing at 49th Street (49th Street Closure); and
2. New 1,000-foot track connection along 46th Street between Pacific Boulevard and Seville Avenue (46th Street Connector).

9 Why was the Malabar Yard selected as a proposed mitigation location to offset the permanent loss of freight rail storage at the BNSF West Bank Yard? Were other locations considered?

BNSF's operations require an intermodal storage yard to be readily available in close proximity to nearby ports in the region and the facility must be west of BNSF's Hobart and Commerce Intermodal Facilities (IMFs) to maximize efficient goods movement to and from the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles. Due to its location and with improvements, its ability to accommodate longer train car sets, Malabar Yard in the City of Vernon was selected as a location where freight rail impacts could be mitigated.

Multiple locations were considered to restore and offset the loss of freight rail storage tracks at the West Bank Yard. In addition to considering Malabar Yard, the following locations were considered:

- > Hobart IMF: This facility was deemed to have insufficient storage capacity.
- > Commerce IMF: This facility was deemed to have insufficient storage capacity.
- > Pico Rivera Yard: This facility was deemed to have insufficient storage capacity and distant proximity to regional ports and BNSF's Hobart/Commerce IMFs.
- > Buena Park/Fullerton Yard: This facility was deemed to have insufficient storage capacity and distant proximity to regional ports and BNSF's Hobart/Commerce IMFs.
- > New Yard Locations: No adequate commercially available properties are located on BNSF's rail line to offset the storage function that is currently utilized by BNSF at the West Bank Yard.

10 How can I get more information?

Please use the following contact tools to access more Project information, ask questions, or provide comments.

Contact Us



213.922.2524



linkunionstation@metro.net



metro.net/linkus



facebook.com/losangelesmetro