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ARLETA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

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ARLETA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL Community Impact Statement

September 17, 2019

RE: The North San Fernando Valley Bus Rapid Transit Metro project ("NSFV BRT" or "project")

Background and Position:

NSFV BRT is in the Early Planning phase of the Metro's Project Development Process. The Metro Board will vote on its upcoming meeting on September 26, 2019, to move the project forward into the Environmental Review phase.

The *Alternatives Analysis Report*, published in June 2019, discusses various routes for the NSFV BRT, with Roscoe Blvd. and Nordhoff St. proposed as primary routes. Given these major thoroughfares, the *Alternatives Analysis Report* does not sufficiently detail the environmental impact on affected communities.¹

Should the Metro Board move the project forward into the Environment Review phase, this decision will allow affected communities to assess both the beneficial and adverse impacts that would result from constructing the project on the proposed thoroughfares. Therefore, the Arleta Neighborhood Council urges the Metro Board to move the project forward into the Environmental Review phase.

Findings and Justifications:

1. According to the *2018 Economic Report* sanctioned by the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce and published by Beacon Economics, Council District 6 (CD 6) has the 4th highest unemployment rate at 7.5% among all 15 Council Districts, and ranked 8th in household income. The NSFV BRT would allow constituents access to greater job opportunities thereby increasing the productivity of the labor force.²
2. CD 6 is ranked second to last in "educational attainment" with only 17% of the 270,000 residents attaining a Bachelor's degree.³ The NSFV BRT would allow CD 6 constituents greater mobility to universities with the closest and most direct access to CSUN.

¹ http://media.metro.net/projects_studies/sfv-405/images/report-nsfvbrt_aa-2019-06.pdf

² https://lchamber.com/clientuploads/pdf/2018/18_BeaconReport_LR.pdf

³ https://lchamber.com/clientuploads/pdf/2018/18_BeaconReport_LR.pdf

3. CD 6 is ranked last with the lowest vacancy rate at 3.2% among all 15 Council Districts. The second lowest vacancy rate is CD 7 at 4.5% - CD 7 is also directly impacted by the NSFV BRT. Low vacancy rates evidence the need for dense populations to have access to affordable transportation.
4. CD 6 has an average decline in wages of 0.3% year-over-year compared to the City of Los Angeles wage growth of 2.5%.⁴ As CD 6 constituents face declining wages, the NSFV BRT would mitigate an expensive cost of living.
5. According to the Cato Institute, despite public transportation ridership levels being low, demand for public transportation can increase when a greater concentration of job growth is present in downtown urban areas.⁵ With Downtown Los Angeles continuing to expand, greater connectivity to the regional Metro transit system can benefit CD 6 workers who seek employment in Downtown Los Angeles.⁶ Despite the decline in public transit ridership, the overwhelming passage of Measure M in 2016 evidences the public's desire for a greater public transportation presence.⁷
6. Final approval and future construction of the East San Fernando Valley Light Rail Transit project will enhance connectivity for the NSFV BRT project and to the greater regional Metro transit system.⁸

Arleta directly benefits from the NSFV BRT as follows:

1. Connectivity to the regional Metro transit system will encourage employment access and opportunities, improve educational access, and mitigate the increasing cost of living for constituents.
2. As City of Los Angeles residents have access to the San Fernando Valley via the regional Metro transit system, this can encourage economic development incentives in the Arleta community. Arleta constituents desire an economic revitalization and beautification of the commercial district, specifically on Woodman Ave. and Osborne Street. Arleta residents believe access to public transportation will allow traffic into the community and encourage landlords and commercial tenants to invest in the community's neglected public and commercial areas.
3. In order to meet the lack of public transportation in the North San Fernando Valley, it is imperative for Measure M funds apportioned to the community remain in the North San Fernando Valley. The passage of Measure M with an overwhelming majority vote of 71.15% evidences the public's support in favor for increased access to public transportation in the San Fernando Valley.⁹

⁴ https://lachamber.com/clientuploads/pdf/2018/18_BeaconReport_LR.pdf

⁵ <https://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/charting-public-transits-decline>

⁶ [https://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/ey-downtown-los-angeles-on-the-rise/\\$FILE/ey-downtown-los-angeles-on-the-rise.pdf](https://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/ey-downtown-los-angeles-on-the-rise/$FILE/ey-downtown-los-angeles-on-the-rise.pdf)

⁷ <https://la.curbed.com/2016/11/9/13573924/measure-m-los-angeles-public-transit-results>

⁸ <https://www.dailynews.com/2019/06/17/here-are-6-san-fernando-valley-transportation-projects-that-will-impact-the-area/>

⁹ <https://www.lavote.net/election-results#year=2016&election=3496>

Conclusion:

An Environmental Review enables the impacted communities of Council Districts 12 (Chatsworth, Northridge, North Hills West), 6 (Panorama City, Pacoima, Arleta, North Hills East, Sun Valley), 2 (North Hollywood) and 7 (Sylmar) to review in-depth details on economic and fiscal impact, real estate displacement, air quality, route logistics and engineering and energy resourcefulness. Access to hospitals in an aging populace, reliability of scheduled bus stops, and a design guideline for density and mixed-use zoning are particular points of interest for further study in the Environmental Review phase.

The Arleta Neighborhood Council encourages Councilwoman Nury Martinez to support the North San Fernando Valley BRT project and urges the Metro Board in its upcoming September 26th meeting to move the project forward into the Environmental Review phase.

APPROVED
September 17, 2019
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