

# Background Information – Motion to Oppose the Monorail Mode of Transportation and Support the Heavy Rail Underground Subway Mode of Transportation for the Metro Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project (STCP)

Proposed by WRAC MTC, June 18, 2025/Amended by Board member Steve Sann, July 7, 2025

## MOTION recommended to WRAC Member Councils (as amended by the WRAC Board on 7/7/25):

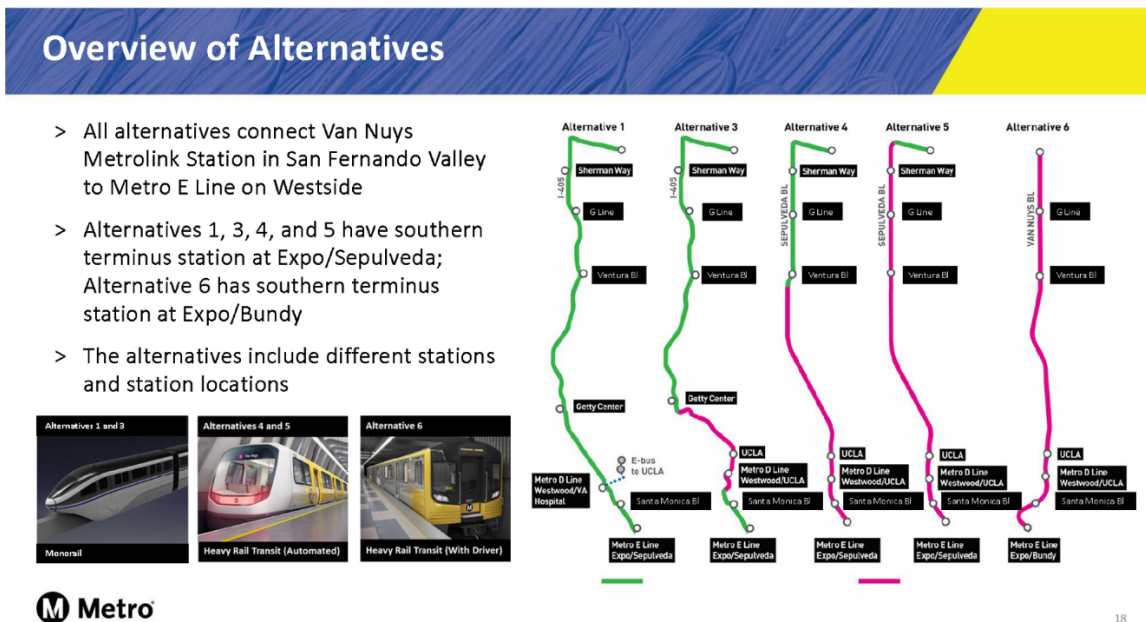
“ The \_\_\_\_\_ NC/CC, a member of the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC) opposes the two proposed Monorail Options (Alternative 1 and Alternative 3) due to their significantly lower ridership projections and lower capacities, and their significantly slower speeds and longer travel times, and supports the proposed underground Heavy Rail subway mode of transportation through the Sepulveda Pass because it will carry significantly more passengers than the proposed Monorail mode of transportation. The Heavy Rail mode of transportation is described in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project, released by Metro on June 2, 2025, in the discussion of Alternatives 4, 5 and 6.”

## BACKGROUND:

### Overview

Metro is currently conducting an environmental impact review for the Sepulveda Transit Corridor (STC) Project. The goal of the project is to create a high-quality, reliable rail transit service that connects the San Fernando Valley and the Westside. Another important part of the process is planning for and creating local and regional connections to existing and future Metro rail and bus networks, which will improve access to major employment, education, healthcare and cultural centers in Los Angeles.

The challenge for this project is surmounting the natural barrier between the San Fernando Valley and the Westside: the Santa Monica Mountains. It often makes traveling through the Sepulveda Pass difficult and slow. This is why this corridor is one of the most congested corridors in the United States. Solving this challenge requires innovation, which is why Metro is currently considering two modes of transportation, Monorail and Heavy Rail, and five different project Alternative routes.



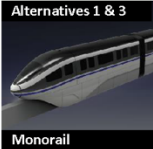


*The five Alternatives currently being considered by Metro for the STC Project – 2025.*

This project is currently in the planning phase. Metro has contracted with two private sector teams for four of the Alternatives. LA SkyRail Express (LASRE) has designed Alternatives 1 and 3, and Sepulveda Transit Corridor Partners (STCP) has designed Alternatives 4 and 5. In addition, Alternative 6 is being developed by Metro’s environmental consultant, HTA Partners. In terms of funding, the Measure M expenditure plan identified \$9.5 billion in funding for this project, with \$5.7 billion allocated for the Valley-Westside segment currently being studied, and \$3.8 billion for a future Westside-LAX segment.

### Comparing the Monorail and Heavy Rail Modes of Travel

The members of the WRAC Mobility and Transportation Committee (MTC) regularly discuss the STC Project at its monthly meetings. Upon the release of the DEIR on June 2, 2025, the MTC member from the South Robertson NC suggested a motion in regards to the modes/transit technologies being proposed for this project. After a preliminary review of the information released by Metro and its partners, it was felt that one mode provided more benefits to transit riders than the other.

Committee members as a whole felt that a discussion about choosing one of the five Alternatives was best left to the individual WRAC member Councils most affected by the construction of the project.

Comparison of Alternatives					
	 <p>Alternatives 1 &amp; 3 Monorail</p>		 <p>Alternatives 4 &amp; 5 Heavy Rail Transit</p>		 <p>Alternative 6 Heavy Rail Transit</p>
	Alt 1 *	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6
<b>Technology</b>	Automated Monorail	Automated Monorail	Automated Heavy Rail	Automated Heavy Rail	Driver-Operated Heavy Rail
<b>Alignment</b>	Aerial	Aerial Underground	Aerial (n. of Valley Vista) Underground	Aerial (n. of Raymer) Underground	Underground
<b>Length (miles)</b>	15.1	16.1	13.9	13.8	12.9
<b>Stations</b>	8	9	8	8	7
<b>Connection to UCLA</b>	Electric Bus	Station under campus	Station under campus	Station under campus	Station under campus

\*Alternative 1 also includes an E-bus between the Metro D Line Westwood/VA Hospital Station and UCLA Gateway Plaza.



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### Details for each transportation mode/transit technology - 2025

*Note that Alternative 1 has no direct connection to the UCLA Campus and is not supported by WRAC*

Metro uses various descriptors and metrics to explain the capabilities and performance of each proposed mode of transportation/transit technology for the STC Project. Below is a review of this information, broken down by each mode/technology.

The following documents were used in compiling this comparison:

STC Webpage: <https://www.metro.net/projects/sepulvedacorridor/>

FAQs: [https://cloud.sfmtc.metro.net/STC\\_FAQ\\_English](https://cloud.sfmtc.metro.net/STC_FAQ_English)

Project Hub: <https://stc-lametro.hub.arcgis.com/>

## Fact Sheet:

[https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/wby0593r33vdawk00wus1/Spring2025\\_SepulvedaTransitCorridorProject\\_ENG.pdf?rlkey=8qyi8ot6asrnhuwhwnaphk5y&e=2&st=ldi9q4yd&dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/wby0593r33vdawk00wus1/Spring2025_SepulvedaTransitCorridorProject_ENG.pdf?rlkey=8qyi8ot6asrnhuwhwnaphk5y&e=2&st=ldi9q4yd&dl=0)

Pre-DEIR Community Presentation May 2025:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/qmpy83zqr5m4gdayc7sfk/STC-Pre-DEIR-Mtg-Presentation-5.21.25.pdf?rlkey=64eo2eo4trtxo7mwcteqfbw16&e=2&st=ptclj3vk&dl=0>

2023 Ridership and Travel Time Community Meeting:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/zm8awf7ih4q77ogbr7vwn/Fall-2023-FINAL-Presentation-for-Upload.pdf?rlkey=r6hshd7ty16v0y105mti75bo1&e=1&st=u03lweoa&dl=0>

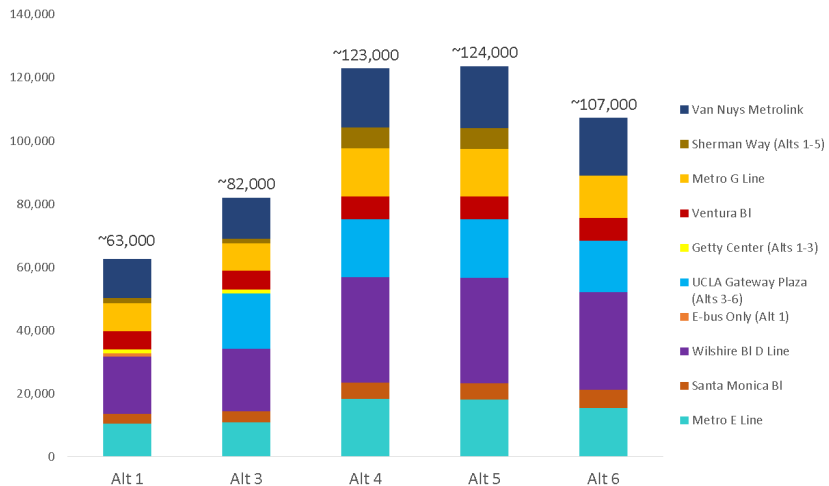
## Monorail

The Monorail is an automated train, with up to eight cars during peak period. Each car has a capacity of 90-97 passengers. At peak times, the frequency of the trains would be every 2.77 minutes.

The total forecasted boardings (the number of people using the train) at all of the stations, on an average weekday in 2045 are: 64,798 for Alternative 1 and 86,013 for Alternative 3.

## Project Benefits: Increase in Transit Ridership Results in Health & Environmental Benefits

- > Fewer people driving means improvements to:
  - Air quality
  - Health
  - Traffic
  - Traffic safety
- > All alternatives perform similar to or better than Metro's busiest rail lines today
- > Wilshire Blvd/D Line Station busier than today's 7<sup>th</sup> & Metro in DTLA
- > UCLA Station becomes Metro's busiest non-transfer station



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## Projected transit ridership per Alternative - 2025

Heavy Rail ridership (Alternatives 4, 5 & 6) is greater than Monorail ridership (Alternatives 1 & 3)

## Heavy Rail

Heavy Rail is split into two options.

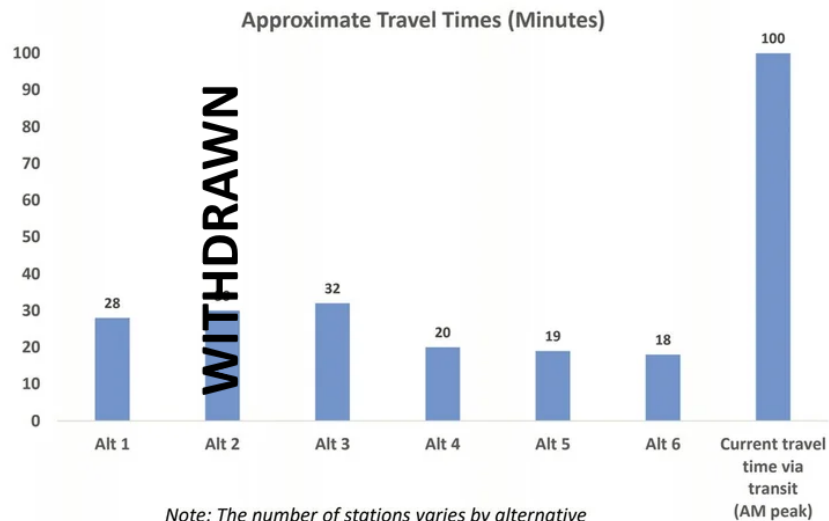
Heavy Rail Transit Automated uses driverless trains, with three or four cars during peak periods. Each car has a capacity of 170 passengers. At peak travel times, the frequency of the trains would be every 2.5 minutes.

Heavy Rail Transit With a Driver utilizes Driver-operated trains with six cars during peak periods. Each car has a capacity of 133 passengers. At peak travel times, the frequency of the trains would be every 4 minutes.

The total forecasted boardings (number of people using the train) at all of the stations, on an average weekday in 2045 are: 120,546 for Alternative 4 (automated), 121,624 for Alternative 5 (automated) and 107,096 for Alternative 6 (with driver).

## End-to-End (Van Nuys Metrolink to E Line) Travel Times

2023



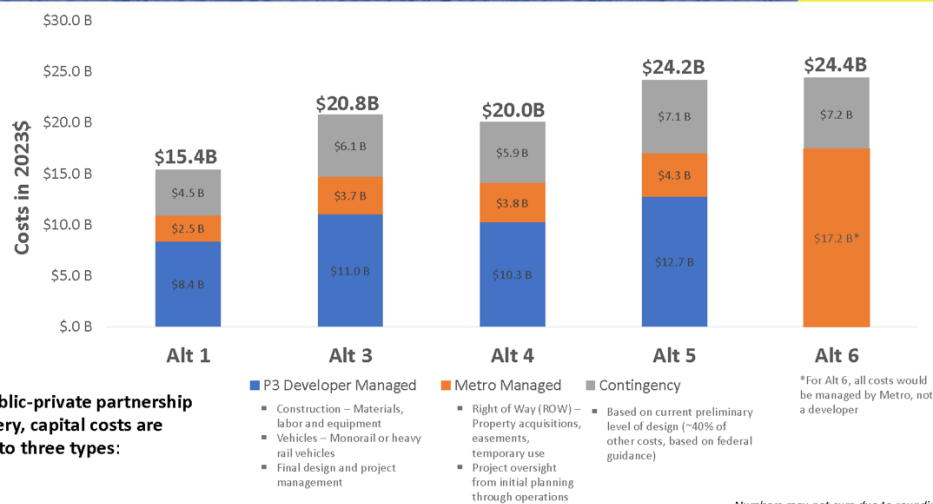
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Projected travel times per Alternative – 2023.

On average, travel by Heavy Rail is 11 minutes faster than travel by Monorail.

Note that Alternative 2 is no longer being considered - LA Skyrail Express requested removal.

## Preliminary Capital Cost Estimates (at 15% Design)



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Project costs based on Alternative – 2025. Alternatives 1 & 2 are Monorail mode/transit technology, Alternatives 4, 5 & 6 are Heavy Rail mode/transit technology.

## Summary

The table below summarizes the information the WRAC MTC reviewed and discussed about the STC Project at its June 18, 2025 meeting.

	Monorail	Heavy Rail (automated)	Heavy Rail (driver)
<b>Car capacity</b>	90 to 97	170	133
<b>Peak Hour Train Frequency</b>	2.77 minutes	2.5 minutes	4 minutes
<b>Boardings, all stations (2025)</b>	~63,000 to ~82,000	~123,000 to ~124,000	~107,000
<b>End-to-End Travel time (2023)</b>	28 to 32 minutes	19 to 20 minutes	18 minutes
<b>Project Cost (2025)</b>	15.4 to 20.8 billion	\$20.0 to 24.2 billion	\$24.4 billion

During the discussion at the MTC, it became clear that the Heavy Rail mode could carry more passengers and travel faster. The MTC members passed a motion with a recommendation that the WRAC Board to support the Heavy Rail mode/transit technology utilized by Alternatives 4, 5 and 6, with the intent on submitting the approved WRAC position as an official comment on the DEIR for the STC Project if eight WRAC member Councils passed the motion before August 30, 2025.

## Additional Considerations

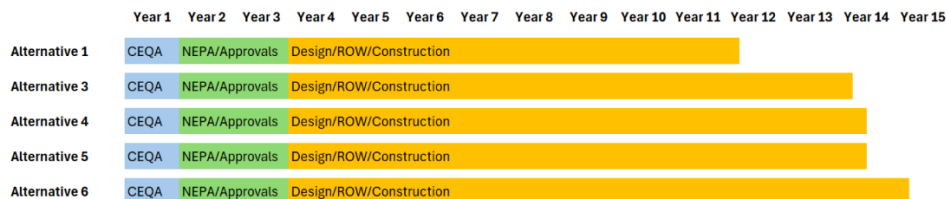
Average Weekday Boardings by Station						2023
	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6
Van Nuys Metrolink	12,583	WITHDRAWN	13,140	18,385	19,338	17,983
Sherman Way (Alts 1-5)	1,587		1,574	6,637	6,587	-
Metro G Line	9,172		9,021	15,026	14,900	13,568
Ventura Bl	5,837		6,090	7,176	7,206	7,163
Getty Center (Alts 1-3)	1,393		1,335	-	-	-
UCLA Gateway Plaza (Alts 3-6)	-		17,909	18,252	18,294	16,322
E-bus only (Alt 1)	900		-	-	-	-
	-		-	-	-	-
Wilshire Bl D Line	18,877		21,161	33,133	33,237	30,917
Santa Monica Bl	3,271		3,758	5,001	5,024	5,625
Metro E Line	11,179		12,025	16,936	17,038	15,518



Early projected boardings from 2023, broken down by Alternative and station.  
Note that Alternative 2 is no longer being considered - LA Skyrail Express requested removal.



## Preliminary Project Schedule



- > Funding plan and updated construction schedule will be prepared after Metro Board identifies a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)
- > Project schedule is not limited by project funding or approvals



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*Estimated project schedule based on Alternative – 2025*  
*The timeline for Heavy Rail construction is comparable to the timeline for Monorail construction*

## Preliminary Operations & Maintenance Costs

- > Operations and maintenance costs include:
  - **Staff** required to operate and maintain the line, including safety and security resources
  - **Energy** required to power the project in operation
  - **Materials** required for regular maintenance of all project elements, including stations, vehicles, systems and tracks
  - Vehicle and station **cleaning**
  - Does **NOT** include debt repayment costs if part of project funding and financing strategy

	Alternative 1	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Alternative 5	Alternative 6
Annual Operations and Maintenance Costs (2023\$)	\$131M	\$130M	\$147M	\$148M	\$157M



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*Preliminary Operations and Maintenance Costs by Alternative – 2025*  
*Alternatives 1 & 2 are Monorail mode/transit technology,*  
*Alternatives 4, 5 & 6 are Heavy Rail mode/transit technology.*

As noted, the motion proposed by the MTC was amended at the July 7, 2025 Board meeting per motion by Steve Sann (WRAC Board member and BCC Chair). The slides in this document were shown to the WRAC Board by member Sann at the meeting on 7/7/25.

*Selena Inouye*  
*Chair, WRAC MTC – July 8, 2025*