

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

**To:** Los Angeles Clerk/Recorder  
12400 Imperial Highway  
Norwalk, CA 90650

**From:** Westside Cities Council of  
Governments (WSCCOG)  
801 S. Grand Ave, Suite 200  
Los Angeles CA 90017

Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113  
Sacramento CA 95812-3044

### **Project Title:**

Westside Bus Connection

### **Project Location:**

The Project is located along portions of Santa Monica Boulevard, La Cienega Boulevard, Jefferson Boulevard, and Sepulveda Boulevard, with minor deviations onto other streets where needed in unincorporated Los Angeles County and the Cities of Los Angeles, Beverly Hills, Culver City, and West Hollywood. Specifically, following refinements to the scope of work in late 2025 and early 2026 (as shown via map in Attachment 1), the Project scope includes:

- Sepulveda Blvd. (Wilshire Blvd. to Venice Blvd. and Centinela Ave. to Westchester Parkway),
- Wilshire Blvd. (Sepulveda Blvd. to Veteran Ave.),
- Santa Monica Blvd. (Cotner Ave. to Moreno Dr.),
- Jefferson Blvd. (Holdredge Ave. to La Cienega Blvd.),
- La Cienega Blvd. (Holloway Dr. to Cadillac Ave. and Washington Blvd. to Obama Blvd.),
- Jefferson Blvd. (Cota St. to Sawtelle Blvd.),
- Fairfax Ave. (Venice Blvd. to Washington Blvd.),
- Cadillac Ave. (La Cienega Blvd. to Venice Blvd.), and
- Obama Blvd. (Jefferson Blvd. to La Cienega)

|                               |                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Project Location City:</b> | - Los Angeles, Beverly Hills, Culver City, Santa Monica, West Hollywood, Unincorporated Los Angeles County |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|                                 |               |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Project Location County:</b> | - Los Angeles |
|---------------------------------|---------------|

### **Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:**

#### ***Project Scope of Work***

The Westside Bus Connection Project (“Project”) contemplates the development of construction ready bus infrastructure designs on the following three Westside corridors: (1) Santa Monica Boulevard west of Beverly Hills; (2) Sepulveda Boulevard between UCLA and LAX, and (3) the combined north-south La Cienega Boulevard and Jefferson Boulevard corridor from West Hollywood to Westchester. The Project will be limited to gathering research, conducting community outreach, and developing final design plans for quick-build bus infrastructure along the foregoing corridors. The quick-build improvements will provide long-term benefits for riders while preparing the Westside for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The bus infrastructure designs shall include but are not limited to:

- The conversion of existing general purpose lanes and parking lanes into peak hour / dedicated bus lanes

and/or bicycle lanes.

- Transit queue-jumper lanes
- Transit signal upgrades
- Signing and striping modifications
- Quick-build improvements such as bollards to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety
- Incorporation of existing bus layover facilities within Santa Monica Boulevard (between Avenue of the Stars and Century Park East)
- Bus pads at a limited number of high-need bus stops

See Attachment 1 for a map visualizing the current scope of work for the project.

### ***Background***

In 2016, Metro established and programmed \$1.2 billion to the Measure M Subregional Equity Program (SEP) to provide equivalent funding to each subregion for projects related to transit or highway modes, including first/last mile, active transportation, and complete streets improvements. In 2022, the WSCCOG Board approved the allocation of SEP funding to advance several unfunded bus lane or bus rapid transit (BRT) projects included in the 2020 WSCCOG Mobility Study and 2021 WSCCOG Unfunded Strategic Project List. In December 2022, the WSCCOG Board allocated \$100 million in SEP funds to advance BRT and related bus infrastructure in the subregion, and the remaining funds towards the K Line (Crenshaw/LAX) Northern Extension project and the D Line (Purple) extension to Santa Monica.

In January 2024, the WSCCOG Transportation Working Group (TWG) met to determine how near-term SEP funding could support a car-free 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games and increase connectivity for Westside communities. Through these discussions, the TWG collaborated to prioritize regional bus infrastructure for near-term SEP funding. At a minimum, “bus infrastructure” would include, but not be limited to, peak-hour dedicated bus lanes with the expectation that additional transit enhancements could be made to each corridor where possible and over time. Designing bus infrastructure on the Westside aligns with the short and long-term goals of Metro and the WSCCOG member jurisdictions. In February 2025, the WSCCOG Board programmed \$2,675,586 in Metro Measure M SEP funds for bus infrastructure on the three of the Westside’s busiest corridors. In May 2025, Metro approved the WSCCOG programming request.

In June 2025, the WSCCOG Board authorized jurisdiction staff to draft and release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consultant to design bus infrastructure on (1) Santa Monica Boulevard west of Beverly Hills; (2) Sepulveda Boulevard between UCLA and LAX; and (3) the combined north-south La Cienega Boulevard and Jefferson Boulevard corridor from West Hollywood to Westchester (Westside Bus Connection Program). In August 2025, the WSCCOG Board selected STV, Inc. as the consultant team to perform the design work for the Westside Bus Connection Program. In December 2025, the WSCCOG Board off-ramped several segments along the three corridors due to existing or planned multimodal improvements in those areas. The proposed project consists of developing construction ready designs and plans, and potentially funding and overseeing the implementation of such plans if approved by WSCCOG’s member agencies having jurisdiction to authorize the implementation of the Westside Bus Connection Program. (Project)

During design, the WSCCOG serves as both the funding agency and the Project lead overseeing corridor-wide design across its member jurisdictions. Once design is complete, each member agency shall decide whether to proceed with the implementation of the Westside Bus Connection Program pursuant to said designs. If approved by the member jurisdiction, the WSCCOG’s anticipated role will shift to that of a funding pass-through agency during construction. The WSCCOG itself will not undertake any construction activities. Rather, the WSCCOG’s role will be limited to funding the construction of the designs for the Westside Bus Connection Program and

overseeing the foregoing. If each member jurisdiction authorizes the implementation of such plans, the WSCCOG will pass through funding to the local jurisdictions via Metro's SEP funds, which are allocated annually to the WSCCOG. Currently, the Project has just completed 10% design and is proceeding into 30% design for the remaining segments (see Attachment 1).

**Public Agency Approving Project:** Westside Cities Council of Governments (WSCCOG)

**Entity Carrying Out Project:** Westside Cities Council of Governments (WSCCOG)

---

**Exempt Status (check one):**

- ☐ Ministerial (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21080(b)(1); State CEQA Guidelines [Guidelines] Section 15268)
- ☐ Declared Emergency (PRC Section 21080(b)(3); Guidelines Section 15269(a))
- ☐ Emergency Project (PRC Section 21080(b)(4); Guidelines Section 15269(b)(c))
- ☒ X Categorical Exemption. Type and Section number: Class 1, CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(c), Existing Facilities; Class 4, CEQA Guidelines Section 15304(h), Minor Alterations to Land.
- ☒ X Statutory Exemptions, Code number: PRC Section 21080.25
- 

Reasons why project is exempt:

Public Resources Code Section 21080.25 (Statutory Exemption).

The Project meets the statutory exemption criteria under PRC Section 21080.25. Pursuant to PRC Section 21080.25(b)(9), exempt projects include those that consist “exclusively of a combination of any of the components of a project identified in paragraphs (1) to (8), inclusive.” This Project includes the design of new bus and/or bikes lanes within public right-of-way, including quick-build safety improvements such as bollards and bus pads. The Project is therefore exempt as PRC Section 21080.25(b)(1) exempts projects that include “pedestrian and bicycle facilities that improve safety, access, or mobility, including new facilities, within the public right-of-way.” Further, PRC Section 21080.25(b)(3) exempts “transit prioritization projects.” The Project’s design of and potential conversion of general purpose or parking lanes to bus and/or bike lanes qualifies it as a transit prioritization project. Finally, this Project is exempt under PRC Section 21080.25(b)(4) as it includes the potential conversion of general-purpose lanes to bus-only lanes.

CEQA Guidelines section 15301(c) (Class 1 categorical exemption).

Because the Project is limited to the design of and the potential installation of transit signal upgrades, the design and potential installation of bus and bike lanes, and does not involve an expansion of use, the Project meets the criteria under the existing facilities Categorical Exemption in CEQA Guidelines section 15301(c) (Class 1 categorical exemption). The Project meets the criteria of the Class 1 categorical exemption as it includes the design and potential installation of transportation improvements along existing roadways involving the conversion of existing general-purpose lanes and on-street parking to shared bus and/or bike lanes and does

not create additional automobile lanes. Further, the use of existing bus layover facilities for the same use constitutes an existing facility and does not involve an expansion of use.

CEQA Guidelines Section § 15304(h) (Class 4 categorical exemption).

The Class 4 CEQA exemption applies to minor public alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes. The State CEQA Guidelines provide non-exclusive examples of the types of projects that fall under this exemption. Some examples given include some grading activities outside of wetlands and waterways, new landscaping, filling of earth into previously excavated land with material compatible with the natural features of the site, minor alterations in land, water, and vegetation on existing officially designated wildlife management areas and which result in improvement of wildlife resources, fuel management activities, and minor trenching and backfilling where the surface is restored.

The Project, which consists of the development of bus infrastructure designs and the potential implementation of same, falls within this exemption. The designs themselves will not consist of any alteration of land. However, if implemented, it will result in minor alterations, including the conversion of general purpose or parking lanes to bus and/or bike lanes. The Project will not result in any grading, excavation, or removal of vegetation.

Public Resources Code section 15300.2.

Lastly, no exceptions to the exemption as set forth in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply. The Project will not result in any significant impacts on the environment because it is not located in a particularly sensitive environment nor are there any unusual circumstances. The development of bus infrastructure designs in itself will not result in any alteration in land, and if their implementation is approved, the work will be wholly located in a completely urbanized environment. There are no unusual circumstances in the location of the potential construction. The Project will not result in damage to any scenic resources within a state scenic highway, because if implemented, the construction work will be wholly located within existing streets of its member agencies and not a state scenic highway.

Further, the proposed construction work is not located on a hazardous waste site or any other site included on a list compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5. Lastly, the proposed construction work will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource because no historical resources exist within the proposed location.

.

---

**CEQA Contact Person:**

Riley O'Brien

**Telephone:**

(213) 612-4545

---

**If filed by applicant:**

1. Attach certified document of exemption findings.

2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? ☒ Yes ☐ No

---

Date Received for Filing at OPR \_\_\_\_\_

Signature 

Title WSCCOG Project Director

Attachment 1:

## Westside Bus Connection - April 2026

WESTSIDE CITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

