

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL

Burbank to Los Angeles Section 2014 Scoping Report

November 2014



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California High-Speed Rail Project



Burbank to Los Angeles Section

2014 SCOPING REPORT

November 2014

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S. Summary

The purpose of this report is to summarize the public scoping process and comments received during the public scoping period for the Burbank to Los Angeles Section of the proposed California High-Speed Rail (HSR) System. The report provides a brief Project background, a description of the public scoping process and meetings, a list of other outreach activities, and a summary of the public and agency comments received during scoping.

S.1 Overview of Public and Agency Outreach

On July 24, 2014, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) initiated public scoping for the Burbank to Los Angeles Section Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) with publication of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) that was distributed to the State Clearinghouse, elected officials, local, regional, and State agencies, and the interested public, as well as with the publication of a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register*. The FRA and the Authority encouraged broad participation in the Burbank to Los Angeles Section EIR/EIS scoping process. Comments and suggestions were invited from all interested agencies and the public at large to ensure that the full range of environmental issues related to the Project are identified. In the Burbank to Los Angeles Section NOP/NOI, public agencies with jurisdiction over the Project were requested to advise the Authority and the FRA of the applicable permit and environmental review requirements of each agency, and the scope and content of the environmental information germane to the agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the Project. Public scoping activities for the Burbank to Los Angeles Section EIR/EIS were conducted concurrently with the Palmdale to Burbank Section EIR/EIS between July 25 and September 12, 2014 (public scoping period). During the public scoping period, seven public scoping meetings were held between August 5, 2014, and August 19, 2014, with a cumulative 916 attendees. In addition, one federal agency scoping meeting was held on August 8, 2014, in downtown Los Angeles.

S.2 Relationship to Previous Scoping

In 2005, the Authority and the FRA completed the Statewide Program EIR/EIS for the proposed HSR System as the first phase of a tiered environmental review process. The Authority certified the Statewide Program EIR under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and approved the proposed HSR System. FRA issued a Record of Decision on the Statewide Program EIR/EIS as required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

In order to begin the second-tier environmental process, the Authority issued an NOP for a Palmdale to Los Angeles Section project-level EIR on March 12, 2007 (SCH No. 2007031066). The FRA published an NOI to prepare a project-level EIS for the Palmdale to Los Angeles Section in the *Federal Register* on March 9, 2007. Approximately 200 comment submissions were received during the 2007 scoping period. Since the 2007 NOP and NOI, several alternatives screening analyses have been completed for the Palmdale to Los Angeles Section to help refine proposed alternatives, including one Preliminary Alternatives Analysis (2010) and three Supplemental Alternative Analyses (SAA) (2011, 2012, and 2014). Each of these alternatives screening analyses evaluated potential alignment alternatives and station options based on public input and refined Project design.

The 2014 NOP/NOI requested comments on the proposal to divide the Palmdale to Los Angeles Section into two sections: Palmdale to Burbank and Burbank to Los Angeles. This proposal was based on factors including the Initial Operating Section (IOS) concept, with its interim terminus in the San Fernando Valley/Burbank, discussed in the Authority's 2012 and 2014 Business Plans. The Authority and the FRA also determined that it is beneficial to address the environmental effects of the Palmdale to Los Angeles Section in two separate environmental documents, to provide for more effective planning and public outreach in these highly populated areas. The Burbank to Los Angeles Section EIR/EIS will build upon all previous work prepared for, and

incorporated into the Statewide Program EIR/EIS, including the State planning process incorporated into the Authority's Business Plans. In addition, the identification of potential alternatives to be included in the Burbank to Los Angeles Section EIR/EIS will consider comments received from the agencies and the public during the public outreach process on the alternatives analyses conducted since the 2007 Palmdale to Los Angeles NOP/NOI.

S.3 Summary of Key Issues

The Authority and FRA received 81 comment submissions that included scoping meeting comment forms, letters, and emails from agencies, organizations, and individuals regarding the proposed Burbank to Los Angeles Section (Figure S.3-1). These 81 comment submissions contained over 600 individual comments.

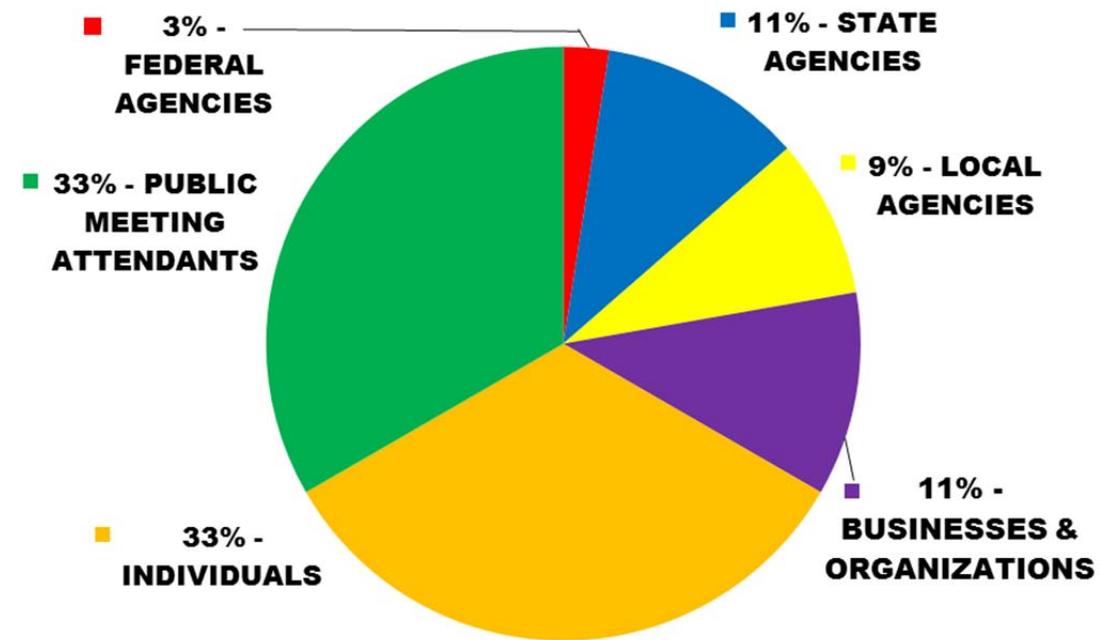


Figure S.3-1
Submissions Received During Scoping by Affiliation Type

1.0 Introduction

This report summarizes the public scoping process for the proposed Burbank to Los Angeles Section of the HSR Project. This report includes an introduction to the HSR System, explains the purpose of public scoping, and describes the previously proposed Palmdale to Los Angeles Section and proposed Burbank to Los Angeles Section. It also describes the public scoping notification process, summarizes the seven public scoping meetings, summarizes the comments received from the public and agencies, and describes the next steps in the environmental review process.

1.1 Introduction to the High-Speed Rail System

The Authority proposes to construct, operate, and maintain an electric-powered HSR System in California. When completed, the nearly 800-mile train system will provide new passenger rail service to more than 90% of the State's population. The planning, design, construction, and operation of the HSR System are the responsibility of the Authority. The Authority's statutory mandate is to develop an HSR system that is coordinated with the State's existing transportation network, which includes intercity rail and bus lines, regional commuter rail lines, urban rail and bus transit lines, highways, and airports. The Authority's plans call for high-speed intercity train service on more than 800 miles (1,287.5 kilometers) of tracks throughout California, connecting the major population centers of the City of Sacramento, the San Francisco Bay Area, the Central Valley, the Los Angeles Basin, the Inland Empire, Orange County, and the City of San Diego.

The HSR System implementation is planned in two phases. Phase 1 will connect the City of San Francisco to the Los Angeles Basin and City of Anaheim via the Pacheco Pass and the Central Valley. Phase 1 will be implemented in four stages. First, an IOS will be constructed and placed in operation between Merced and a station located in the San Fernando Valley. Second, the IOS would be expanded north on dedicated HSR infrastructure to San Jose (known as the Bay-to-Basin [BtoB] stage). Third, the system will be expanded north to San Francisco and south to Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) to complete the first phase of infrastructure construction for the HSR program. Lastly, fully built Phase 1 includes extending HSR service from San Jose to San Francisco's Transbay Transit Center and from LAUS to Anaheim.

Phase 2 will connect the Central Valley (Merced Station) to the State's capital, the City of Sacramento. Another extension in Phase 2 is planned to connect the City of Los Angeles to the City of San Diego. The HSR System will meet the provisions and requirements of the Safe, Reliable, High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act, adopted by California voters in November 2008 and Proposition 1A, including the requirement for a maximum nonstop service travel time between the City of San Francisco and the City of Los Angeles of 2 hours and 40 minutes. The Burbank to Los Angeles Section of the HSR System will be a critical link in the Phase 1 of the HSR System, connecting major population areas in southern California and providing connections to existing and proposed public transit.

The HSR System is envisioned as an electrically powered, high-speed, steel-wheel-on-steel-rail technology, which would employ the latest technology, safety, signaling, and automated train-control systems. The trains will be capable of operating at speeds of up to 220 miles per hour (mph) (354 kilometers per hour [kph]) over fully grade-separated, dedicated tracks. The proposed infrastructure and systems of each HSR alignment alternative are composed of trains (rolling stock), tracks, grade-separated rights-of-way (ROWs), stations, train control, power systems, and maintenance facilities. The design of each HSR alignment alternative includes a double-track ROW to accommodate operational needs for uninterrupted rail movement, as well as HSR stations configured with two platform tracks and two through service tracks for a total of four tracks, allowing for passing capability. Additionally, the HSR safety criteria recommend avoidance of at-grade intersections on dedicated HSR alignment alternatives and, therefore, the HSR System must be grade-separated from any other transportation system. This means that planning the HSR System also requires grade-separated overcrossings for roadways or roadway closures,

and modifications to existing systems that do not span planned ROWs. In some situations, elevating the HSR System over existing facilities would be more efficient than elevating roadways.

1.2 Purpose of Scoping

Scoping is an important element in the process of determining the focus and content of an EIR/EIS. Scoping helps to identify the range of alternatives, environmental effects, and mitigation measures to be analyzed in depth, and helps identify and eliminate from detailed study the issues which are not significant or which have been covered by prior environmental review. Scoping is also an effective way to bring together and address the concerns of the public, affected agencies, and other interested parties. Significant issues may be identified through public and agency comments. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations Section 1501.7 and CEQA Section 21083.9 describe scoping as required by NEPA and recommended by CEQA.

Scoping is not conducted to resolve differences concerning the merits of a project or to anticipate the ultimate decision on a project. Rather, the purpose of scoping is to help ensure the preparation of a comprehensive and focused EIR/EIS that provides a sound basis for the decision-making process.

The intent of the Burbank to Los Angeles Section scoping process is to:

- Inform public agencies and interested members of the public about the Project, including compliance with NEPA and CEQA requirements, and the FRA's and Authority's actions in relation to it.
- Assist with identifying a range of alignment and station alternatives along the Burbank to Los Angeles Section that will be considered in the EIR/EIS.
- Assist with identifying the range of environmental impacts and mitigation measures to be considered in the EIR/EIS.
- Develop an expanded mailing list of agencies and individuals interested in the future actions relative to the EIR/EIS.

1.3 Use of the EIR/EIS Scoping Report

FRA and the Authority will use this Scoping Report to help determine the impacts, mitigation measures, and alternatives that should be studied in the EIR/EIS for the Project.

1.4 Description of the Previously Proposed Palmdale to Los Angeles Project Section

In 2001, FRA and the Authority started a tiered environmental review process for the Statewide HSR System. In 2005, the Authority certified a Program EIR/EIS for the Statewide California HSR System (Figure 1.4-1) as the first-phase of a tiered environmental review process. The Statewide Program EIR/EIS analyzed an HSR System for intercity travel in California between the major metropolitan centers of Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area in the north, through the Central Valley, to the cities of Los Angeles and San Diego in the south. The 2005 first-tier EIR/EIS analyzed the impacts of implementing the 800-mile Statewide HSR System and compared those impacts with the impacts of a No Project alternative and an alternative of improving airports and freeways to meet the State's future transportation needs. The HSR alternative included consideration of different train technologies/vehicle types, as well as different broad alignment corridors and station locations.

In approving the HSR System at the Program level, the Authority and FRA selected corridors/general alignments and station location options throughout most of the System, including a corridor between Palmdale and Los Angeles (Figure 1.4-2). The Palmdale to Los

Angeles HSR Corridor that was identified in the Statewide Program EIR/EIS follows Soledad Canyon from the City of Palmdale to the community of Sylmar in the City of Los Angeles and then along the Metro/Metrolink Railroad line to LAUS. The corridor is relatively wide in the area that includes both the State Route (SR) 14 and Union Pacific Railroad alignments between the Antelope Valley and Santa Clarita. Station location options in Palmdale, Sylmar, Burbank, and Los Angeles were selected with the Statewide Program EIR/EIS based on travel time, train speed, cost, local access times, potential connections with other modes of transportation, ridership potential and the distribution of population and major destinations along the route, and local planning constraints and conditions. Based on the recent Authority proposal to locate HSR stations at the Palmdale Transportation Center and Burbank Bob Hope Airport, the Palmdale to Los Angeles Section was divided into two Sections with independent utility, for which separate NOP/NOIs were issued: Palmdale to Burbank and Burbank to Los Angeles. In order to facilitate delivery of the IOS with service to Bob Hope Airport, the Palmdale to Burbank Section will be advanced before the Burbank to Los Angeles Section.

1.5 Previous Scoping Efforts

In February 2007, the Authority and the FRA began a project-level environmental review of the Palmdale to Los Angeles Section per the requirements of CEQA and NEPA. The formal scoping meetings for the Palmdale to Los Angeles Section of the HSR Project-Level EIR/EIS were conducted between March 15, 2007, and April 1, 2007, to receive input on the scope of issues to be analyzed in the EIR/EIS. The public scoping period included five officially noticed agency and public scoping meetings held in Los Angeles, Glendale, Palmdale, and Sylmar. At each location, two sessions were held, the first from 3 – 5 p.m. and the second from 6 – 8 p.m. Each session included an open house followed by a presentation on the HSR Project.

Materials used during the scoping meetings included exhibits and handouts distributed at the meetings and through the Authority's internet website (www.hsr.ca.gov). These materials were in English and Spanish, and in Armenian at the Glendale scoping meeting. The materials included the following:

- Copies of the Palmdale to Los Angeles Section HSR Project NOP and NOI;
- Welcome sheet with meeting schedule and information stations;
- Explanation of a scoping meeting with instructions on how to make a comment at the scoping meeting;
- Speaker Request Card (Los Angeles River Center scoping meeting only);
- Palmdale to Los Angeles Section HSR Fact Sheet;
- Information sheet on all the scheduled scoping meetings on the Palmdale to Los Angeles Section HSR Project; and
- Two copies of the Statewide Program EIR/EIS prepared on the HSR Project.



Figure 1.4-1
Corridor Alignments and Stations Selected at Conclusion of the Statewide Program EIR/EIS

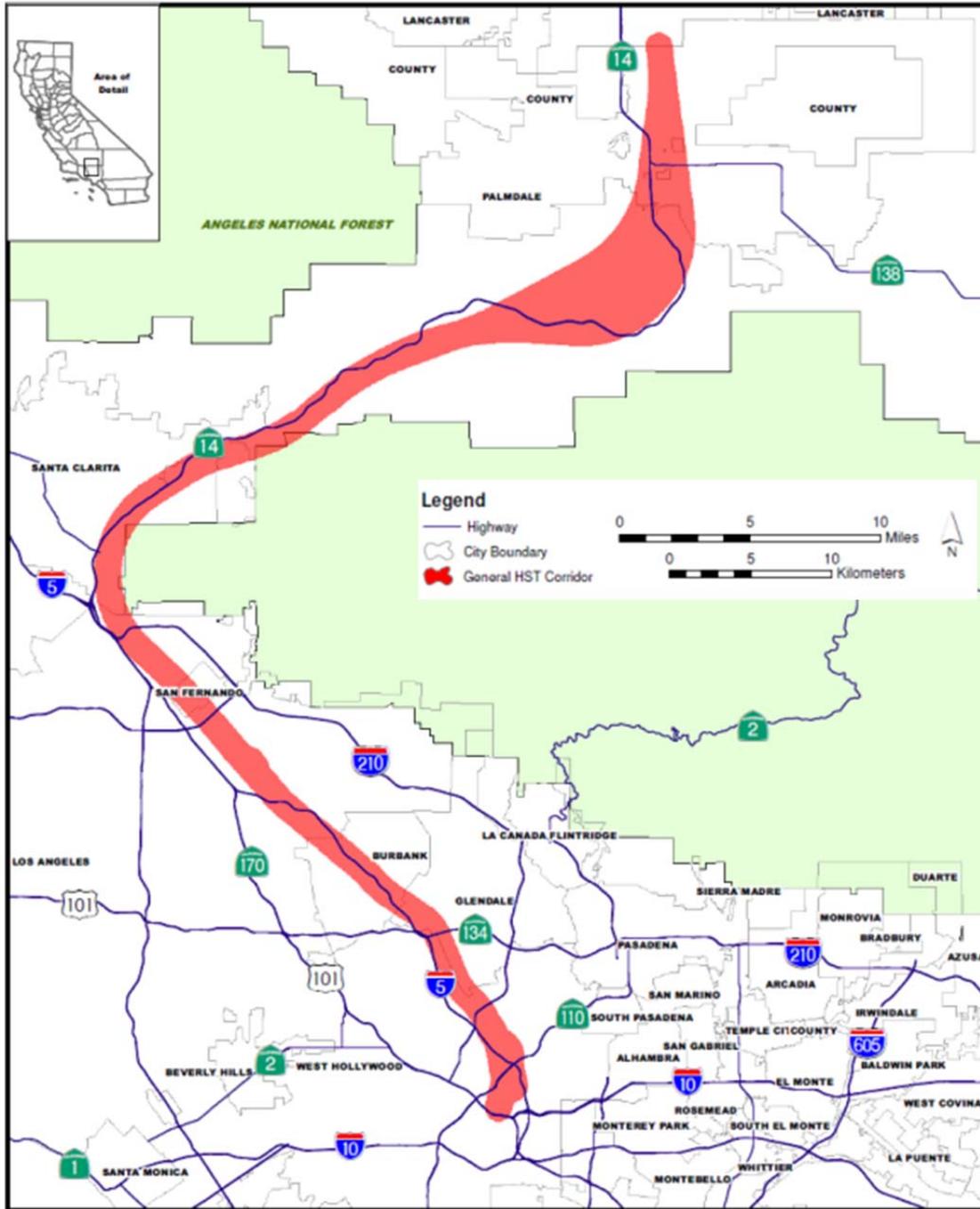


Figure 1.4-2
Previously Proposed Palmdale to Los Angeles Corridor

Other materials made available at the scoping meetings included: exhibit boards displaying typical HSRs currently operating in Europe and Asia; facts about the Palmdale to Los Angeles Section HSR Project; various typical cross sections of the HSR (at-grade, in a trench, elevated and in a tunnel); the EIR/EIS process to be followed on the HSR Project; next steps in the environmental review process; and the HSR Project schedule.

Before and after the formal presentation on the HSR Project, a video simulation was shown to identify where the HSR was proposed to be located, how it would look, and how it would be operated through the State. Interpreters were available at each scoping meeting. Spanish translation of the presentation on the HSR Project was made at each meeting. Translation of the presentation in Armenian was also provided at the Glendale scoping meeting because of the large Armenian population in this city.

At each meeting, attendees were asked to sign in and provide contact information to receive updates and future notices on the HSR Project. The Authority facilitated the scoping meeting and provided general information and instruction on how to provide public comment. The public was encouraged to submit written comments at the meeting or to mail them back to the Authority. A public comment area was provided at each scoping meeting where participants could sit down, complete, and submit a comment card regarding the Project. Completed comment cards were then placed in a box for collection by the Authority. A total of 28 letters and 26 written comment cards were received during the scoping period.

The meetings were summarized in the 2007 Palmdale to Los Angeles High-Speed Train Project EIR/EIS Draft Scoping Report (see Appendix I for the web location of the Draft Scoping Report).

1.6 Description of Burbank to Los Angeles Section and Purpose and Need

1.6.1 Description of Burbank to Los Angeles HSR Section

Since the 2007 NOP and NOI and scoping, several alternatives analyses have been conducted to refine Project-level alternatives. A Preliminary AA (July 2010) addressed potential alignment alternatives and station options throughout the Palmdale to Los Angeles Section. Three SAAs have also been prepared. The first SAA (March 2011) addressed potential supplemental alignment alternatives and station options for the Los Angeles to Sylmar subsection. The second SAA (April 2012) addressed potential supplemental alignment alternatives for the Sylmar to Palmdale subsection and redefined the subsection into two new subsections: the Santa Clarita subsection, extending from Sylmar to two miles east of Lang Station Road, and the Palmdale subsection, extending from two miles east of Lang Station Road to Palmdale.

The third SAA (May 2014) discussed the concept of evaluating Palmdale to Burbank and Burbank to Los Angeles as two sections in light of, among other factors, the IOS concept (with its interim terminus in the San Fernando Valley/Burbank) introduced in the 2012 and 2014 Business Plans. The May 2014 SAA refined the potential alignment alternatives and station options, including withdrawing one alignment alternative and three station options, and recommending the Palmdale Transportation Center Station and the Burbank Airport Station for further analysis.

Since the May 2014 SAA, the Authority has advanced the proposal of pursuing the Palmdale to Burbank Section before the Burbank to Los Angeles Section and conducted another scoping period to solicit input from the public, stakeholders, and agencies. As currently proposed, the Burbank to Los Angeles Section will extend approximately 12 miles (19 kilometers), starting in the vicinity of the Burbank Airport Station in the City of Burbank. The Project corridor would run south following the existing railroad ROW, through the cities of Burbank, Glendale, and Los Angeles. The Project corridor would terminate in the City of Los Angeles, where a station is proposed at LAUS.

The Preliminary AA and all SAAs included public outreach activities, including community meetings, stakeholder meetings, and public official outreach. The Preliminary AA and SAA documents include a description of public outreach activities conducted. All AA documents have been available for public review and comment as part of the alternatives analysis process. See http://www.hsr.ca.gov/Programs/Statewide_Rail_Modernization/Project_Sections/palmdale_losangeles.html for copies of these AA documents. The work and information contained in the Burbank to Los Angeles portions of those alternatives analyses documents will inform the Authority in developing, and inform the public in commenting on, the Burbank to Los Angeles Section EIR/EIS.

1.6.2 Purpose and Need of Burbank to Los Angeles HSR Section

The purpose of the Project is to implement the Burbank to Los Angeles HSR Project Section of the California HSR System; to provide the public with electric-powered high-speed rail service that provides predictable and consistent travel times between major urban centers, and connectivity to airports, mass transit systems, and the highway network in the San Fernando Valley and the Los Angeles Basin; and to connect the Northern and Southern portions of the Statewide HSR System, also allowing direct connectivity with existing regional rail networks in the Los Angeles area.

1.7 Project Alternatives

The Burbank to Los Angeles Section EIR/EIS will consider a No Project Alternative and HSR Alternatives for the Burbank to Los Angeles Section.

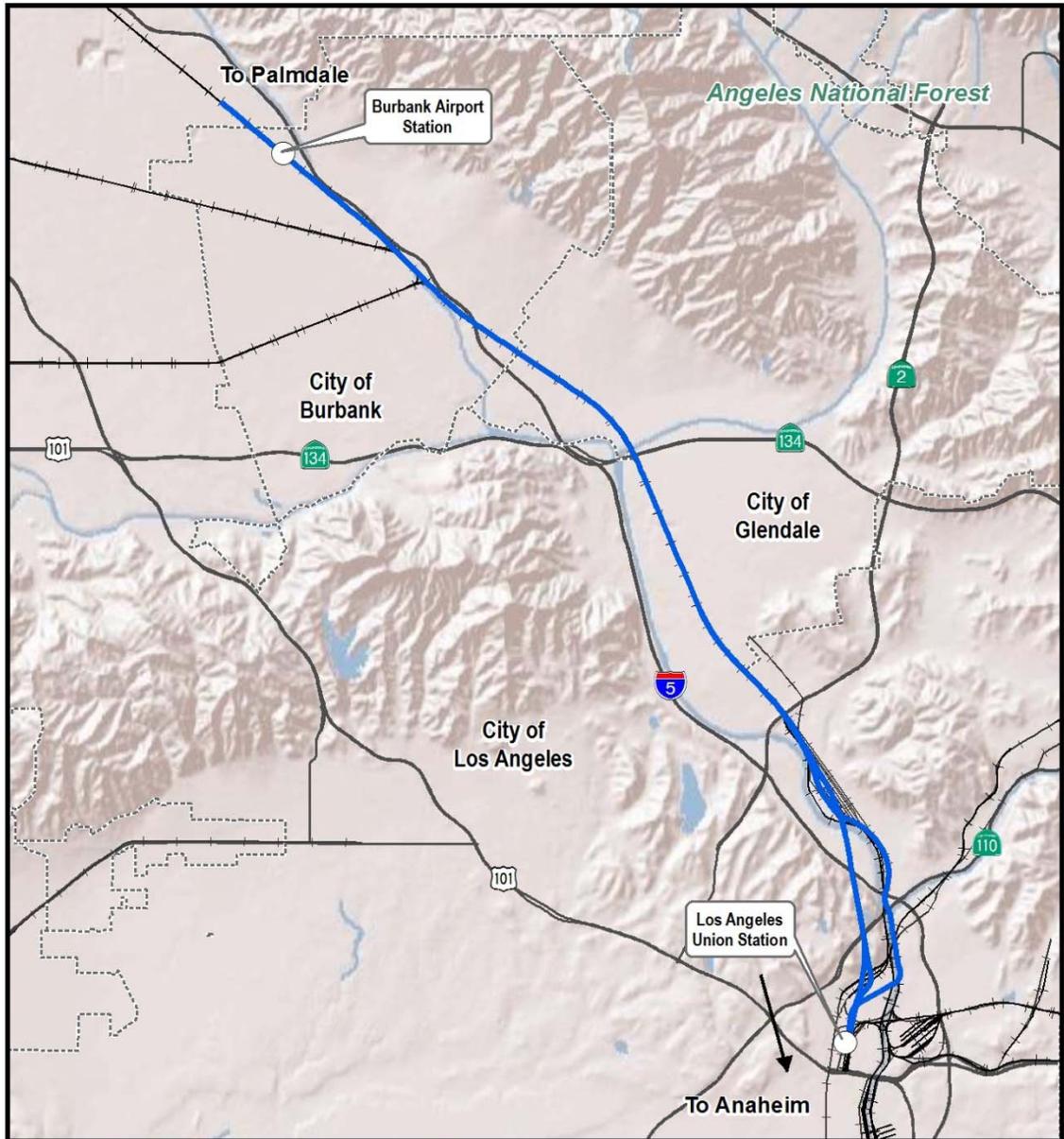
No Project Alternative: The No Project Alternative represents the conditions in the Burbank to Los Angeles Section as they exist in 2014, and as they would exist based on programmed and funded improvements to the intercity transportation system and other reasonably foreseeable Projects through 2040. The No Project Alternative takes into account the following sources of information: the State Transportation Improvement Program, Regional Transportation Plans for all modes of travel, airport plans, intercity passenger rail plans, and city and county plans.

HSR Alternatives: The HSR Alternatives will include the various potential horizontal and vertical alignments between Burbank and Los Angeles within the horizontal corridor identified in Figure 1.7-1, and various potential station configurations at the Bob Hope Airport and LAUS section terminus points.

As discussed in Section 1.1, the Authority will construct, operate, and maintain an electric-powered steel-wheel-on-steel-rail HSR System, about 800 miles long, capable of operating speeds of 220 mph on dedicated, fully grade-separated tracks, using the latest technology for safety, signaling, and automated train control systems. Work on this System is underway in the Central Valley. This Project will continue the effort between the cities of Burbank and Los Angeles.

Alternatives analyses conducted subsequent to the completion of the Statewide Program EIR/EIS have examined potential alignments within the programmatic corridor, including the San Fernando Valley and northeast and downtown Los Angeles. The May 2014 SAA concluded that Bob Hope Airport would provide the most benefits and fewest impacts of the station locations in the San Fernando Valley, because intermodal connectivity (rail, bus, air) is strongest and existing land uses (primarily industrial and commercial) would be most compatible with the development of transit oriented uses. The May 2014 SAA was available for public review and comment as part of the alternatives analysis process.

Engineering studies will continue as part of this EIR/EIS process and may examine potential new alignments and refine studied alignments in order to better meet purpose and need, respond to stakeholder comments and concerns, and reduce environmental impacts. All potential alignment alternatives would be grade separated from existing roadways.



Source: California High-Speed Rail Authority, 2014; ESRI Maps & Data, 2014; URS, 2014

LEGEND

- Proposed HSR Stations
- Proposed HSR Alignments
- Railroads
- - - Municipal Boundary

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

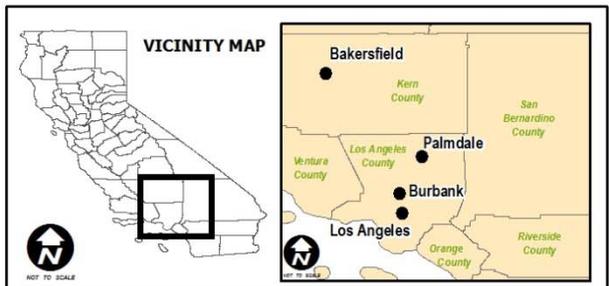


Figure 1.7-1
Burbank to Los Angeles Section

The identification of potential station sites and configurations will be further refined and evaluated in the Burbank to Los Angeles Section EIR/EIS to reflect the evolution of Statewide planning for HSR, as outlined in the 2014 Business Plan, as well as public and agency comments and concerns. Potential sites for terminal storage and maintenance facilities will also be evaluated in the Palmdale to Burbank Section EIR/EIS.

1.8 Notification of EIR/EIS Scoping

The public scoping process was initiated by the issuance of the NOP (Appendix A) and the NOI (Appendix B). The California environmental review process began with the submittal of the NOP to the State Clearinghouse on July 24, 2014. The federal process began with the publication of the NOI in the *Federal Register* on July 24, 2014.

Printed copies of the NOP were sent to previously identified and potential Responsible and Cooperating Agencies at the federal, State, and local levels requesting that they provide written comments about the applicable permit and environmental review requirements of the agency, and the scope and content of the environmental information germane to the agency's responsibilities in connection with the Project.

Public scoping activities for the Burbank to Los Angeles Project Section EIR/EIS were conducted between July 25, 2014, and September 12, 2014 (public scoping period). In response to a number of stakeholder requests, the original scoping comment submittal deadline was extended from August 31, 2014, to September 12, 2014. A notice of the scoping comment period extension (Appendix A) was distributed electronically to the Project stakeholder database.

Public scoping meetings were held between August 5, 2014, and August 19, 2014. Notification methods for the public scoping meetings included:

- **Mailing of Notices** (Appendix C.4) – Public scoping meeting notices were sent in English with a Spanish inset to approximately 80,768 property owners, residents, and business tenants within:
 - 500-foot buffer from the proposed alignments
 - Quarter-mile buffer around proposed stations
- **Legal and Display Advertisements** – Publication of legal notices and display advertisements in local newspapers (Table 1.8-1 and Appendices C.1 and C.2).
- **Electronic Distribution** – The electronic public scoping notice (Appendix C.5) was emailed to 5,373 contacts included in the Project stakeholder database. The electronic public scoping notice was also featured on the Authority's website and shared with local cities, agencies, elected officials, and key stakeholder groups for posting on their respective websites. As mentioned previously, the public scoping comment period extension notice was also distributed electronically to the Project stakeholder database.
- **Flyer Distribution** – Copies of the public scoping meeting flyers were distributed to offices of representative elected officials, libraries, community centers, city halls, and other civic centers.
- **Briefings** – Representative elected offices, cities, and town/neighborhood councils were notified of the upcoming public scoping meetings and a briefing was offered.
- **Press Release** – A press release was sent to local media at the start of the public scoping period.

Table 1.8-1
Published Notifications for the Public Scoping Period

Publication	Notice Date
Legal Section Notices	
Los Angeles Times	July 25, 2014
<i>La Opinión</i> (Spanish)	July 25, 2014
Daily News	July 25, 2014
Santa Clarita Valley Signal	July 25, 2014
Antelope Valley Press	July 25, 2014
Display Advertisement Notices	
Acton Agua Dulce Weekly News	July 28, 2014
The Signal Newspaper (Santa Clarita)	July 28, 2014
The Antelope Valley Times (online)	July 28, 2014
Antelope Valley Press	July 29, 2014
Asbarez News (Armenian)	July 29, 2014
The Burbank Leader	July 30, 2014
San Fernando Valley Sun	July 31, 2014
San Fernando Valley <i>El Sol</i> (Spanish)	July 31, 2014
Asian Journal (Filipino)	August 6, 2014
Korea Daily (Korean Paper)	August 6, 2014
Nguoi Viet-Daily (Vietnamese Paper)	August 8, 2014
World Journal Chinese Daily News (Chinese)	August 8, 2014
Siamtownus (Thai)	August 10, 2014
Source: HMM/URS/ARUP JV 2014; Arellano and Associates, 2014.	

In addition to the display advertisements and legal notices, there were also a number of articles and editorials published prior to and during the public scoping process covering the public scoping meetings (Table 1.8-2). Appendix C.3 includes copies of articles and editorials.

Table 1.8-2
Articles Covering the Project during the Public Scoping Process

Date	Publication	Article
July 24, 2014	<i>Santa Clarita Valley Signal</i>	"High-speed rail meetings coming to the Santa Clarita Valley"
July 24, 2014	SCVNews.com	"Formal High-Speed Rail Meetings Slated for August"
July 24, 2014	KHTS AM 1220 (http://hometownstation.com/)	"High-Speed Rail System Public Meetings To Be Held Near Santa Clarita"
July 29, 2014	<i>LA Daily News</i>	"California high-speed rail project considering tunnel under San Gabriel Mountains"
July 30, 2014	<i>Curbed LA</i>	"LA Bullet Train Could Run in Tunnel Under the San Gabriels"
July 30, 2014	Streetsblog Los Angeles	"California High Speed Rail to Present L.A.-area Options"
August 5, 2014	<i>The San Gabriel Valley Tribune</i>	"High-speed rail meeting draws concerned homeowners in Santa Clarita"

Table 1.8-2
Articles Covering the Project during the Public Scoping Process

Date	Publication	Article
August 6, 2014	<i>Santa Clarita Valley Signal</i>	"Local high-speed rail meeting series begins"
August 6, 2014	<i>The Antelope Valley Times</i>	"Public meeting this Thursday for California High-Speed Rail"
August 8, 2014	<i>Burbank Leader</i>	"Residents share ideas at meeting on high-speed rail"
August 8, 2014	<i>RailPAC</i>	"Pros and Cons of a Burbank-Palmdale Underground HSR Short Cut"
August 10, 2014	<i>Media City Groove</i>	"High speed rail meeting draws big crowd in Burbank"
August 11, 2014	<i>Burbank Leader</i>	"Residents share ideas at meeting on high-speed rail"
August 12, 2014	<i>Santa Clarita Valley Signal</i>	"Tempers high during Acton-Agua Dulce bullet train meeting"
August 18, 2014	<i>Los Angeles Register</i>	"Residents can weigh in on high-speed train through San Gabriel Mountains"
August 23, 2014	<i>Los Angeles Times</i>	"L.A. County Supervisor's alternate bullet-train route gaining traction"
August 24, 2014	California High Speed Rail Blog	"Is the CHSRA Really Considering the San Gabriel Tunnel?"
August 25, 2014	<i>L.A. Biz</i>	"Railroad officials serious about tunnel route"
August 27, 2014	<i>Santa Clarita Valley Signal</i>	"Scott Wilk: Be sure your voice is heard (Op-ed)"
August 30, 2014	<i>Los Angeles Times</i>	"Proposal for rail corridor through Angeles National Forest draws fire"
September 3, 2014	<i>Antelope Valley Press</i>	"Op Ed: Get on board with High-Speed Rail before train leaves station"
September 4, 2014	KHTS AM 1220 (http://hometownstation.com/)	"California High-Speed Rail Authority Extends Public Comment Period"
September 4, 2014	<i>Santa Clarita Valley Signal</i>	"Scoping comment period extended for high-speed rail segment"
September 5, 2014	<i>Burbank Leader</i>	"Burbank seeks answers on bullet train's impact"
September 7, 2014	<i>Santa Clarita Valley Signal</i>	"Op Ed: California's high-speed rail can and should be built"
September 7, 2014	<i>El País</i>	"The Odyssey of California's 'HSR'" (Published in Spanish; translated to English)
September 8, 2014	<i>San Fernando Business Journal</i>	"Business Groups All Aboard on Mountain Tunnel"
September 8, 2014	<i>Mass Transit</i>	"Burbank Seeks Answers on Bullet Train's Impact"
September 11, 2014	KHTS AM 1220 (http://hometownstation.com/)	"City Officials Discuss Upcoming High Speed Rail Authority Meeting"

Source: HMM/URS/ARUP JV 2014; Arellano and Associates, 2014.

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2.0 Public and Agency Involvement During Public Scoping

2.1 Summary of Public Scoping Meetings

Throughout the public scoping period, the Authority encouraged public and agency input through a variety of activities. Public scoping meetings were conducted in an open house format at the seven locations listed in Table 2.1-1. Public scoping comment cards and handouts were handed out at each of the meetings for attendees to provide comments on the materials and information. The public scoping comments and questions collected at the meetings, submitted via mail, and through the Authority’s website comment form are included in Appendix F. Approximately 916 people attended the seven public scoping meetings listed in Table 2.1-1, and 33 comment forms were collected for the Burbank to Los Angeles Project Section.

In addition, one federal agency scoping meeting was tailored for resource agencies, featuring a PowerPoint presentation of the Project, followed by a question and answer session. Please refer to Appendix H for the federal agency scoping meeting minutes.

Table 2.1-1
Summary of Public Scoping Meetings

Meeting Location & Date	Number of Participants	Number of Burbank to Los Angeles Comment Forms	Media Coverage	Elected Officials, Agencies, and other Stakeholder Representatives
Santa Clarita August 5, 2014	73	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Santa Clarita Valley Signal; San Gabriel Valley Tribune 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Santa Clarita, Mayor Pro Tem Marsha McLean Office of Supervisor Michael Antonovich Office of Assembly Member Scott Wilk
Burbank August 6, 2014	110	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burbank Leader; Mediacitynews.com 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of U.S. Congressman Brad Sherman Office of State Senator Carol Liu Mayor of Burbank, Dr. David Gordon Vice Mayor of Burbank, Bob Frutos City Council Member, Emily Gabel-Luddy City Council Member, Jess Talamantes
Palmdale August 7, 2014	80	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Antelope Valley Press; Building Trades Magazine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of Supervisor Antonovich City of Palmdale Mayor Jim Ledford

Table 2.1-1
Summary of Public Scoping Meetings

Meeting Location & Date	Number of Participants	Number of Burbank to Los Angeles Comment Forms	Media Coverage	Elected Officials, Agencies, and other Stakeholder Representatives
Acton/Agua Dulce August 11, 2014	300	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antelope Valley Press; • Santa Clarita Valley Signal; • Santa Clarita Now; • Agua Dulce/Acton Country Journal; • <i>El País América</i> (Madrid, Spain) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Supervisor Antonovich; • Office of Assembly Member Scott Wilk • Acton Town Council, President, Mike Hughes • Acton Town Council, Kathy Skye-Tucker
Sylmar August 12, 2014	68	1	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of LA City Council Member Felipe Fuentes • City of San Fernando Council Member Jesse Avila • Tataviam Band of Mission Indians • California State University Northridge Professor Dev Vrat & Planning Students • Sylmar Neighborhood Council • Oakridge Mobile Home Park
Lake View Terrace August 14, 2014	165	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Los Angeles Register; • Crescenta Valley Weekly; • Foothill Record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Assembly Member Raul Bocanegra • Office of LA City Council Member Nury Martinez • Office of LA City Council Member Felipe Fuentes • Former Speaker Assembly Member Bob Hertzberg • Transit Coalition, Bart Reed

Table 2.1-1
Summary of Public Scoping Meetings

Meeting Location & Date	Number of Participants	Number of Burbank to Los Angeles Comment Forms	Media Coverage	Elected Officials, Agencies, and other Stakeholder Representatives
Downtown Los Angeles August 19, 2014	120	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Los Angeles Times; China Press 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of LA City Council Member Nury Martinez Office of LA City Council Member Gilbert Cedillo Office of U.S. Representative Xavier Becerra
Total	916	33		

Source: HMM/URS/ARUP JV 2014; Arellano and Associates, 2014.

2.1.1 Public Scoping Meeting Format

The seven public scoping meetings were held between 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. and were set up in the same format. A series of information stations with electronic and static displays featuring PowerPoint slides and animated video facilitated the open house at each meeting, providing information on the following topics:

- Welcome
- Environmental
- Comments
- Palmdale to Burbank Project Section
- Burbank to Los Angeles Project Section
- High-Speed Rail Stations
- Benefits and Connectivity
- Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping
- Scoping Overview PowerPoint presentation

Project team members staffed the information stations w to respond to questions and to encourage participants to submit written comments. An overview of the stations is featured in Table 2.1-2. The content featured at the information stations can be found in Appendix D.

Table 2.1-2
Public Scoping Meeting Information stations

Station	Description
Registration	Participants were greeted and asked to register using the sign-in sheets. All meeting participants were given a scoping meeting packet; these materials were also available in Spanish and a translation request form was available for other languages. Title VI Program materials were displayed and made available to the public. A comment box was placed at the registration table for submittal of written comments.
Welcome	A flat screen television featured information welcoming participants, introduced the two independent Project sections, and encouraged comment submittal.
Environmental	A flat screen television provided a step-by-step overview of the environmental process as well as the range of environmental topics that will be studied, and encouraged participants to submit comments. Two environmental specialists staffed this station to answer questions.

Table 2.1-2
Public Scoping Meeting Information stations

Station	Description
Comments	A designated “comments station” was offered at each of the meeting locations to facilitate stakeholder submittal of comments. This station featured chairs and tables that were equipped with copies of the comment cards for both Project sections, comment submittal instructions, comment boxes for submittal of comment forms, and laptops for electronic submittal of comments. Participants were offered the opportunity to submit written comments via comment cards and/or laptops that were connected to the Authority’s website comment form. People were also informed that additional comments could be submitted for inclusion in the scoping report through the public scoping period. Stakeholder comments were also encouraged even if they were received past the end of the scoping period.
Palmdale to Burbank Project Section	Two flat screen televisions were featured at this station. One screen displayed a flyover video of the Project section and Alternative Corridor. The other screen provided an overview of the Project section, goals and objectives, and encouraged participants to submit comments. Copies of the NOP, NOI, and Initial Study (IS) were also featured on an iPad display kiosk.
Burbank to Los Angeles Project Section	Two flat screen televisions were featured at this station. One screen displayed a flyover video of the Project section. The other screen provided an overview of the Project section, goals and objectives, and encouraged participants to submit comments. Copies of the NOP, NOI, and IS were also featured on an iPad display kiosk.
Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping	A flat screen television provided an interactive mapping exercise that allowed stakeholders to view the proposed alignments and alternative corridor (new study area) in greater detail.
High-Speed Rail Stations	A flat screen television showcased the various station area planning opportunities, as well as the three High-Speed Rail stations being considered for both Project sections – Palmdale Transportation Center, Burbank Airport Station, and LAUS.
Benefits and Connectivity	A flat screen television displayed a range of local and Statewide benefits that will result from the development of the HSR System. At several of the meetings, this screen was also utilized to conduct a brief scoping overview presentation.
Presentation	A brief scoping presentation offered an overview of the two independent Project sections, scoping process, and comment submittal instructions. The presentation was conducted by Michelle Boehm, Southern California Regional Director for the Authority.
Source: HMM/URS/ARUP JV 2014; Arellano and Associates, 2014.	

Attendees were greeted at the entrance and asked to sign-in for the public record and for incorporation into the Project stakeholder database, which is used to disseminate Project updates and subsequent public involvement opportunities to the public and agencies. As part of the registration process, attendees received the following public scoping meeting materials (Appendix D.3):

- Scoping Fact Sheet for the Palmdale to Burbank and Burbank to Los Angeles Sections
- Public scoping comment card for Palmdale to Burbank Section
- Public scoping comment card for Burbank to Los Angeles Section
- Public scoping flyer with meeting details and comment submittal instructions

Title VI Program materials were also available at the registration table, which featured details regarding the Authority’s compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance.

Language interpreters were available at each meeting based on the language needs identified through Census 2010 data, including Spanish, Thai, Eastern Armenian, Korean, Mandarin

Chinese, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. Table 2.1-3 lists the interpreters available at each of the meetings, based on the identified language needs.

Table 2.1-3
Language Interpreters Available at Public Scoping Meetings

Meeting Date	Community	Interpreter Services Offered
August 5, 2014	Santa Clarita	Spanish Korean
August 6, 2014	Burbank	Spanish Eastern Armenian Tagalog
August 7, 2014	Palmdale	Spanish
August 11, 2014	Acton/Agua Dulce	Spanish
August 12, 2014	Sylmar	Spanish Thai
August 14, 2014	Lake View Terrace	Spanish Thai
August 19, 2014	Downtown Los Angeles	Spanish Mandarin Chinese Tagalog Vietnamese
Source: HMM/URS/ARUP JV 2014; Arellano and Associates, 2014.		

Information on the HSR Statewide Program was offered in English and Spanish at the seven scoping meetings, including:

- *California High-Speed Rail Big Picture*
- *Statewide Rail Modernization Plan*
- *Central Valley: “Backbone” of High-Speed Rail*
- *High-Speed Rail Connectivity and Bookends*
- *Good for the State, Good for the Environment*
- *High-Speed Rail: An International Success Story*
- *High-Speed Rail Funding & Finance*
- *Creating Jobs Through High-Speed Rail*
- *Investing in California Small Businesses*
- *Construction Package One: Work is Underway*

Copies of these materials are available on the Authority’s website (www.hsr.ca.gov).

2.2 Summary of Outreach Activities

The public scoping period officially began July 24, 2014, with the receipt of the NOP at the State Clearinghouse. However, outreach to stakeholders in the Burbank to Los Angeles Section began earlier with substantial stakeholder outreach conducted early in the planning process and as part of the public scoping and SAA efforts for the Palmdale to Los Angeles Project Section, prior to introducing this area as two independent Project sections. These efforts generated improved awareness of the Project that facilitated the outreach and notification efforts for the public scoping process. Activities included outreach to business and community groups, early agency coordination, and elected official briefings.

Since the SAA outreach in May 2014, the Authority continued conducting outreach to the communities along the Palmdale to Los Angeles Project Section, including those along the two independent Project sections. These outreach activities are listed in Table 2.2-1.

Table 2.2-1
Summary of Outreach Activities (June 1 to September 12, 2014)

Date	Organization / Individual
Briefing Prior To Public Scoping Period	
June 16, 2014	Los Angeles City Councilmember Felipe Fuentes
July 17, 2014	Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council
July 21, 2014	City of Burbank Transportation Committee
July 23, 2014	Walt Disney Studios
Briefing During Public Scoping Period	
July 30, 2014	Acton/Agua Dulce Town Council
August 5, 2014	Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) and Planning Department
August 12, 2014	Los Angeles River/Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) Working Group
August 13, 2014	Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council
August 20, 2014	Pacoima Neighborhood Council
August 26, 2014	City of San Fernando
	Shadow Hills Property Owners Association (SHPOA)
August 27, 2014	Little Tokyo Leadership
August 28, 2014	Sylmar Neighborhood Council
September 2, 2014	State Senator Fran Pavley's Office
	Los Angeles City Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell's Office
September 3, 2014	Gateway Cities Council of Governments, Board of Directors
September 4, 2014	Los Angeles City Councilmember Gilbert Cedillo's Office
September 8, 2014	U.S. Congressman Xavier Becerra's Office
September 9, 2014	Joint City of Burbank Council and Transportation Commission meeting
	Burbank Area Legislative Briefing
September 12, 2014	Northern Valley Legislative Briefing

Source: HMM/URS/ARUP JV 2014; Arellano and Associates, 2014.

3.0 Summary of Scoping Comments

Comments received during the Burbank to Los Angeles Section public scoping process identified and commented on potential environmental impacts, mitigation measures, and alternatives. The following is a summary of the comments received during the public scoping process.

The Authority received 81 comment submittals, which contained approximately 608 individual comments from agencies, organizations and individuals. These comment submittals included comment forms submitted at the scoping meetings, comment forms that were mailed in, as well as letters, emails, and telephone calls. All 81 comment submittals are presented in Appendix F by affiliation type.

The summary is divided into four major topic areas. Comments regarding proposed alternatives and station locations are summarized first, followed by a summary of comments related to community concerns, followed by a summary of comments related to other environmental concerns and, finally, a summary of comments related to technical or engineering concerns. Major environmental issues identified during public scoping included, but are not limited to, the topics summarized below. All of the substantive environmental comments will be considered in the preparation of the EIR/EIS and will be generally addressed within the pertinent resource area chapters of the EIR/EIS.

3.1 Summary of Comments on Alternative Alignments and Stations

3.1.1 Alternative Alignments

Commenters requested that proposed alignments route along existing transportation corridors and bypass residential areas to avoid temporary or permanent environmental and community impacts. Commenters requested consideration of tunneling and trench alternatives to avoid negative impacts that would require substantial mitigation.

3.1.2 Stations

It was recommended that the Burbank to Los Angeles Section should connect to LAUS in order to maximize connectivity to other transit providers. Some of the commenters suggested having the temporary IOS terminus at LAUS instead of the proposed Burbank Airport Station. Many comments were received supporting the proposed HSR station at the Bob Hope Airport.

3.2 Summary of Community Concerns

3.2.1 Environmental Justice

Many of the comments received inquired about impacts of proposed alternatives on the mobility of low-income or minority populations.

3.2.2 Growth and Socioeconomics

There were concerns over the potential impact on property value, including property damage that may result from construction. Multiple commenters requested a discussion over possible remedies, mitigation, and compensation measures. Commenters expressed concern over impacts of the Project on schools, churches, residences and jobs. Commenters inquired about the eminent domain process and expressed concern about decreased property values.

3.3 Summary of Environmental Concerns

3.3.1 Aesthetics and Visual Resources

Commenters suggested green screens near all residential buildings in proximity to proposed alignments. Commenters asked how aesthetics would be affected in residential and mountainous areas. There was concern regarding electrical wires affecting the landscape.

3.3.2 Air Quality and Global Climate Change

There were comments regarding the Project's compliance with local and federal air quality regulations. Commenters requested that air quality during construction and operation of the Project be identified, and pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions be minimized to the greatest extent possible.

3.3.3 Cultural Resources

Commenters expressed concern about potential negative effects on archaeological sites, particularly Native American sites, and requested that the Authority include mitigation provisions for the identification and evaluation of accidentally discovered archaeological resources, pursuant to CEQA. It was requested that in areas of identified archaeological sensitivity, a certified archaeologist and a culturally affiliated Native American, with knowledge in cultural resources, should monitor all ground-disturbing activities.

3.3.4 Biological Resources and Wetlands

Several commenters asked about the general impact on wildlife, wildlife habitats, and potential displacement, including the impact on flora and fauna in Angeles National Forest, near the Los Angeles River, and in Elysian Park. Commenters requested that all potentially significant effects on sensitive species and habitats in and around the Project area be analyzed, disclosed, and mitigated as needed. It was also requested that all wetlands and watercourses, whether intermittent or perennial, should be retained or provided with substantial setbacks.

3.3.5 Electromagnetic Interference/Fields (EMI/EMF)

Commenters recommended identification of any EMI/EMF impacts that could affect navigation equipment used at Bob Hope Airport, and requested a detailed analysis of impacts of EMFs generated from HSR on cardiac demand pacemakers, antennas, radio transmissions and police and fire transmissions.

3.3.6 Geology, Soils, Seismicity, and Paleontological Resources

Commenters requested a discussion of soils that addresses stability, erosion and/or sedimentation in streams and water bodies, and procedures for removal and placement of soils during construction.

3.3.7 Hydrology and Water Resources

Concerns over the impact on rivers, and specifically, the Los Angeles River and Arroyo Seco confluence, were expressed. Commenters suggested a discussion of the impact on storm drain systems, flood channels, and carrying capacity of systems be provided in the EIR/EIS. An assessment of the permanent and temporary impacts to all Waters of the U.S. from construction and operation, including mitigation measures, was requested.

3.3.8 Noise and Vibration

There were comments regarding noise during construction, increasing noise pollution, and noise abatement methods. Concerns over noise impacts for horse owners were expressed. Commenters requested analysis of noise and vibrations impacts on soil stability, building foundations, pipelines and wildlife during the construction and operation of the Project.

3.3.9 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Commenters requested an analysis of the impact of the Project on horse owners and equestrian properties near Shadow Hills, Hansen Dam, Griffith Park, and the surrounding Burbank area. Comments expressed concern over the impact on community parks, Angeles National Forest, and the Los Angeles River. Comments requested that the Project identify potential overlap with the planned Los Angeles River Revitalization Project and avoid negative impacts to this restoration effort.

3.3.10 Public Utilities and Energy

Commenters asked for details regarding how the Project would handle increased electrical demands. Many commenters advocated for the use of clean, renewable electricity for HSR.

3.3.11 Safety and Security

Commenters were concerned about the safety of the communities where HSR trains would operate. Concerns included: type and size of safety corridor near dwellings, rail crossing safety, and public and pedestrian safety on and near lines/stations. It was recommended that freeway crossings have screens so that the trains do not distract motorists.

3.3.12 Station Planning, Land Use, and Development

A description of the expected land use changes associated with station locations, including identification of supporting infrastructure, parking lot needs, and the environmental impacts of those changes was requested in the EIR/EIS. Commenters requested that the stations be designed for multi-modal use, accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists, and coordinated with local and regional transit providers. Inclusion of possible interference with existing or future development projects was also requested. A discussion of conflicts for zoning which may impact natural areas was also requested to be included in the EIR/EIS. Several commenters expressed compatibility concerns between the proposed Burbank Airport station and Bob Hope Airport.

3.3.13 Traffic and Transportation

Comments inquired about the impact to local and regional transit providers, pedestrian connectivity, and goods movement. It was recommended that a truck/traffic construction management plan be created and included in the EIR/EIS. Infrastructure upgrades to the existing railroad ROW in order to alleviate congestion from increased demand was also recommended near the Burbank terminus.

3.4 Summary of Technical/Engineering Concerns

There was concern about tunneling in mountainous regions. Other comments suggested using Maglev technology.

3.5 Summary of Project Cost and Operations Concerns

Commenters expressed concern regarding the cost of the Project and the use of tax dollars on this Project instead of using it for other benefits for the community.

3.6 Summary Agency Responses to NOP/NOI

In addition to the federal agency scoping meeting some agency and local jurisdiction representatives also attended the public scoping meetings. The Authority received numerous letters in response to the NOP/NOI. Table 3.6-1 lists the federal, State, regional, and local agencies that provided comments in response to the NOP/NOI and/or provided comments at the scoping meetings. Agency comments submittal are included in Appendix F.

Table 3.6-1
List of Public Agencies Responding to NOP/NOI

Agency	Name of Commenter	Title of Commenter
FEDERAL		
United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), Region 9	Connell Dunning	Transportation Team Lead, Environmental Review Section
United States Department of the Interior - Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Karen A. Goebel	Assistant Field Supervisor
STATE		
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)	Edmund Pert	Regional Manager, South Coast Region
California Department of Parks and Recreation	Sean Woods	Superintendent, Los Angeles Sector, California State Parks
California Department of Transportation (CalTrans), District 7	Dianna Watson	Branch Chief, Community Planning & LD IGR Review
California Department of Transportation (CalTrans), Division of Environmental Planning	Agustin Barajas	Associate Environmental Planner, Division of Environmental Planning
California State Land Commission (CSLC)	Cy R. Oggins	Chief, Division of Environmental Planning and Management
California State Water Resources Control Board	Clifford Harvey	Environmental Scientist, Division of Water Quality, 401 Certification and Wetlands Unit
Native American Heritage Committee (NAHC)	Gayle Totton	Program Analyst

Table 3.6-1
List of Public Agencies Responding to NOP/NOI

Agency	Name of Commenter	Title of Commenter
LOCAL AND REGIONAL		
City of Burbank	Dr. David Gordon	Mayor
	Bob Frutos	Mayor
	Gary Bric	Council Member
	Jess Talamantes	Council Member
	Emily Gabel-Luddy	Council Member
City of Los Angeles – Department of City Planning	Michael Logrande	Director of Planning
County of Los Angeles – Department of Parks and Recreation	Kathline J.King	Chief of Planning
County of Los Angeles -Department of Public Works	Gail Farber	Director of Public Works
	Anthony E. Nyivih	Assistant Deputy Director, Land Development Division
	Matthew Dubiel	Land Development Division, Subdivision Mapping Section, CUP/CEQA/B&T Planning Unit
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority	Don A. Sepulveda	Executive Officer, Regional Rail
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) Source: HMM/URS/ARUP JV 2014.	Deirdre West	Manager, Environmental Planning Team

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4.0 Next Steps

The information on impacts, mitigation measures, and proposed alternatives developed through the scoping process will inform the analysis that the Authority and FRA will conduct in the Draft EIR/EIS. The Authority and FRA will identify a reasonable range of alternatives for further evaluation following additional coordination with agencies and the public. The final range of alternatives will be determined through coordination with USACE and USEPA pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding integrating NEPA and Clean Water Act Sections 404 and 408. The Draft EIR/EIS will analyze existing conditions in the Project area and potential impacts of the Project alternatives. The Authority will also continue to conduct public outreach to ensure that the public is provided updates on the Project's progress through the environmental process and has the opportunity to provide additional input.

Once the analysis of existing conditions and potential impacts of proposed alternatives is complete, the FRA and the Authority will publish the Draft EIR/EIS, which will be followed by a public comment period that will begin following announcement in the *Federal Register*. The Authority and FRA will hold public hearings in the Project area to solicit comments on the Draft EIR/EIS. These public hearings will be advertised in local newspapers, including in the *Federal Register*, and posted on the Authority's website. Verbal and written comments provided at the public hearings will be recorded and formally documented in the Final EIR/EIS. The Authority and FRA will consider all substantive comments received on the Draft EIR/EIS and publish a Final EIR/EIS that will respond to those comments. Public comments as part of the Final EIR/EIS will be available for decision makers prior to approval of the Project.

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