



January 27, 2026

The Hon. Fernando Dutra
Chair, LA Metro Board
Office of Board Administration
1 Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop 99-3-1
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Statement on Metro Board Vote on the C/K Line Extension

Dear Chair Dutra and Members of the LA Metro Board:

Representing nearly 2,000 members and volunteers, Indivisible South Bay LA, Inc., strongly condemns the LA Metro Board's decision to abandon the staff-recommended and Board-approved Right-of-Way (ROW) / Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) alignment for the C/K Line Extension. This decision was not only wrong on the merits, but also it was made through a process that was deeply troubling, highly irregular, and fundamentally unfair to the public.

For years, Metro staff, technical experts, and the Board itself treated the ROW Hybrid as the preferred alignment. That decision was formalized in May, 2024, when the Board voted to adopt the ROW Hybrid as the Locally Preferred Alternative.

Last Thursday, January 22, 2026, the Board was expected to certify the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) based on that selection.

Instead, Supervisor Holly Mitchell introduced a last-minute amendment less than a week before the scheduled vote. That amendment revived the Hawthorne Boulevard option, an alignment Metro staff had already characterized as higher-cost and higher-risk. The amendment did not go through the public committee process and was not vetted through the same transparent review as the ROW/LPA. It blindsided advocates, community members, and, by all appearances, Metro staff themselves.

Despite clear warnings from Metro staff, the Board voted unanimously in favor of the amendment. Staff stated that this change would add more than \$700 million in costs, delay the project by six or more years, and introduce significant risks that could jeopardize the project altogether.

The way the meeting was structured only compounded these concerns. The amendment was introduced without advance public notice, after many members of the public had already prepared or

delivered comments, limiting the public's ability to meaningfully respond. During the meeting, multiple Board members acknowledged that their positions had changed weeks earlier, yet no new public technical analysis, environmental findings, or cost information were presented to explain that shift.

Taken together, these facts create the appearance that key decisions may have been made before the public had a meaningful opportunity to weigh in, raising serious questions about when decisions were made, what information drove them, and whether public input meaningfully shaped the outcome.

Equally troubling was the Board's discussion of selling portions of the publicly owned rail ROW. Public rail corridors are rare and difficult to replace. Selling the ROW would limit future transit options, make it impossible to return to the lower-risk alignment if Hawthorne approvals fail, and significantly increase the likelihood that this project is lost altogether.

This vote was taken without any new technical studies, no new environmental findings, and no new cost estimates. Even after Metro staff warned the Board about the added costs, delays, and approval risks, those warnings were not disputed, yet the Board moved forward anyway.

The consequences are severe. By Metro's own analysis, this decision places the project on a far more precarious path and one that faces a larger funding gap, additional approvals, longer delays, and a greater risk of stalling or cancellation. The South Bay has waited decades for rail. This decision did not bring that goal closer. It pushed it further away.

That leaves basic questions unanswered:

- Why was a Board-approved alignment overturned at the last minute?
- Why was staff analysis set aside without new public evidence?
- Why were cost, delay, and approval risks acknowledged but accepted without dispute?
- What information or considerations drove this change?

Indivisible South Bay LA supports transparency, evidence-based decision-making, and meaningful public participation. What happened at this Metro Board meeting violated all three.

We call for:

- Immediate transparency from Metro Board members about how and when this decision was made
- A public presentation outlining the obstacles this change creates, the steps Metro plans to take to address them, and a realistic timeline for doing so
- A public review and comment process following that presentation
- A commitment that the Board will take public action before any irreversible steps are taken, including any sale or disposition of the publicly owned right-of-way or major scope changes

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- Accountability from Board leadership for overriding staff analysis without presenting new public evidence
- A renewed commitment to preserving publicly owned rail right-of-way
- Serious reform of Metro's governance structure so decisions of this magnitude cannot be hijacked at the last minute by political pressure

The LA South Bay deserves rail that is real, deliverable, and worthy of public trust. What happened here undermined all three.

Sincerely yours,

Indivisible South Bay LA, Inc., Board of Directors

Kenneth Johnson, President
Constance Koehler, Secretary
Linda Suomi, Treasurer
Ellen Gorbunoff, Director
Virginia Jenkins, Director
Umesh Ketkar, Director
Ruth Presslaff, Director