



Foothill Gold Line Phase 2B (Glendora to Montclair) artwork – note Montclair Transcenter art structure in background

Last Friday, Council Member Bill Ruh and I attended the “*State of the Project 2016*”, a conference organized to provide key stakeholders an opportunity to learn about the latest efforts underway to ready the next segment of the Foothill Gold Line (Phase 2B from Glendora to Montclair) for construction, and to hear from influential experts regarding some of the ways the Gold Line is reshaping its 38-mile corridor.

The Gold Line Construction Authority began its work in 1999, and has since added 24-miles of light rail track from Los Angeles’ Union Station to Azusa – a modern day transit system that, for much of its length, shares right-of-way with an historic freight corridor. The following link is a colorful, e-picture book history of Los Angeles County’s transit system and the Gold Line.

[https://issuu.com/foothillgoldline/docs/48402\\_railroadsofchange\\_090115?e=23869491/34251720](https://issuu.com/foothillgoldline/docs/48402_railroadsofchange_090115?e=23869491/34251720)

Nineteen light rail stations are currently positioned along the Foothill corridor, serving the transit needs of an ever-growing and dynamic region. The Gold Line is now considered a reliable and sustainable transportation option for workers, students, tourists, and residents requiring access to the region’s many employment, sports, cultural, entertainment, shopping, medical and educational services.

Following the completion of Phase 2A from Pasadena to Azusa, ridership on the line surged, exceeding expectations and imposing heavy demand for parking at each transit station. The Metropolitan Transit Authority (Metro), has observed that commuters residing east of Azusa and extending into the Inland Empire, rather than completing

drives to their respective destinations, are choosing to park at Gold Line transit stations to complete travels to destination points.

Even before Phase 2A ridership and parking demand became apparent, Phase 2B from Glendora to Montclair promises vastly more parking, with the Montclair Transcenter providing the largest parking field (1,600 spaces) along the entire length of the Gold Line route outside of Los Angeles' Union Station. Preservation of Montclair's parking capacity is central to the success of the Phase 2B extension.

The following link takes you to an interactive map, renderings and site plan of the Montclair Transcenter: <http://www.foothillgoldline.org/cities-stations/montclair/>. Upon reaching the site, click on "Montclair" on the right side of the banner bar to activate the Montclair features.

Perhaps, more than any other station outside of Pasadena, the extension of the Gold Line to the Montclair Transcenter appears to be integral to fulfilling the promise of the Gold Line. Without Montclair, any promise of extension of the Gold Line to Ontario International Airport (ONT) appears out of reach — a failure that would replicate the decision by Los Angeles County more than 30-years ago to not extend rail to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) — a much lamented failure that is finally being fixed by extension of Green Line light rail service to the Airport Metro Connector 96<sup>th</sup> Street Transit Station, which will connect to LAX's Central Terminal Area via an Automated People Mover operated by Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA).

Presenting at the Conference were several Members of Congress, including Congresswoman Norma Torres (35<sup>th</sup> Congressional District). During her comments, Congresswoman Torres boldly stated it is essential that San Bernardino County and San Bernardino Associated Governments (SanBAG) recognize the vital importance of bringing the Gold Line to the County, and ultimately to ONT. Congressmember Torres hammered home her point by stating, unequivocally, that she would not be a "rubber stamp" to SanBAG's federal funding requests for transportation-related projects unless and until the transportation agency demonstrates its full support and commitment to fund the Gold Line to San Bernardino County and on to ONT.

The thrust of Congressmember Torres' comments are significant when extension of the Gold Line from Claremont to Montclair (the Montclair Segment) requires SanBAG funding. SanBAG has indicated it has funding for operation and maintenance of the Gold Line **Montclair Segment**, but not for construction activities. The City, working with Metro, the Construction Authority and SanBAG sought to develop cap-and-trade funding for construction of the Montclair Segment. However, funding was not approved in the current round of projects announced this past August. The next cycle, which will include projects with a five-year funding cycle, offers more promise for the Montclair Segment application.

The last cap-and-trade auction conducted in early 2016 was, however, a disappointment to the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) — CalSTA administers disbursement of cap-and-trade funding and approval of eligible projects. If cap-and-trade funding for the Montclair Segment fails to materialize, Montclair and the Construction Authority would continue working with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to apply for funding through the Small Starts Grants program. To be eligible for FTA funding, Montclair would be required to develop a 50 percent local match, or approximately \$34 million.

During the opening session, Habib Balian, Chief Executive Officer, Foothill Gold Line Construction Authority, discussed the recent completion of Phase 2A from Pasadena to Azusa and current efforts to develop Phase 2B. The segment from Glendora to Montclair is a 12.3-mile extension that would include six stations (Glendora, San Dimas, La Verne, Pomona, Claremont and Montclair) built along the 100-foot wide former Atchinson, Topeka and Santa Fe (ATSF) right-of-way — the right-of-way was purchased by Metro in the early 1990s for the project. The Gold Line would also share right-of-way with Metrolink from Pomona east to Montclair. The different rail services would not, however share the same tracks or stations. The Gold Line will run on two separate tracks, one for eastbound and one for westbound trains, with overhead catenary wires to power the trains. Once completed, a trip from Montclair to downtown Pasadena would take approximately 40 minutes; to Los Angeles would take an estimated 75 minutes.

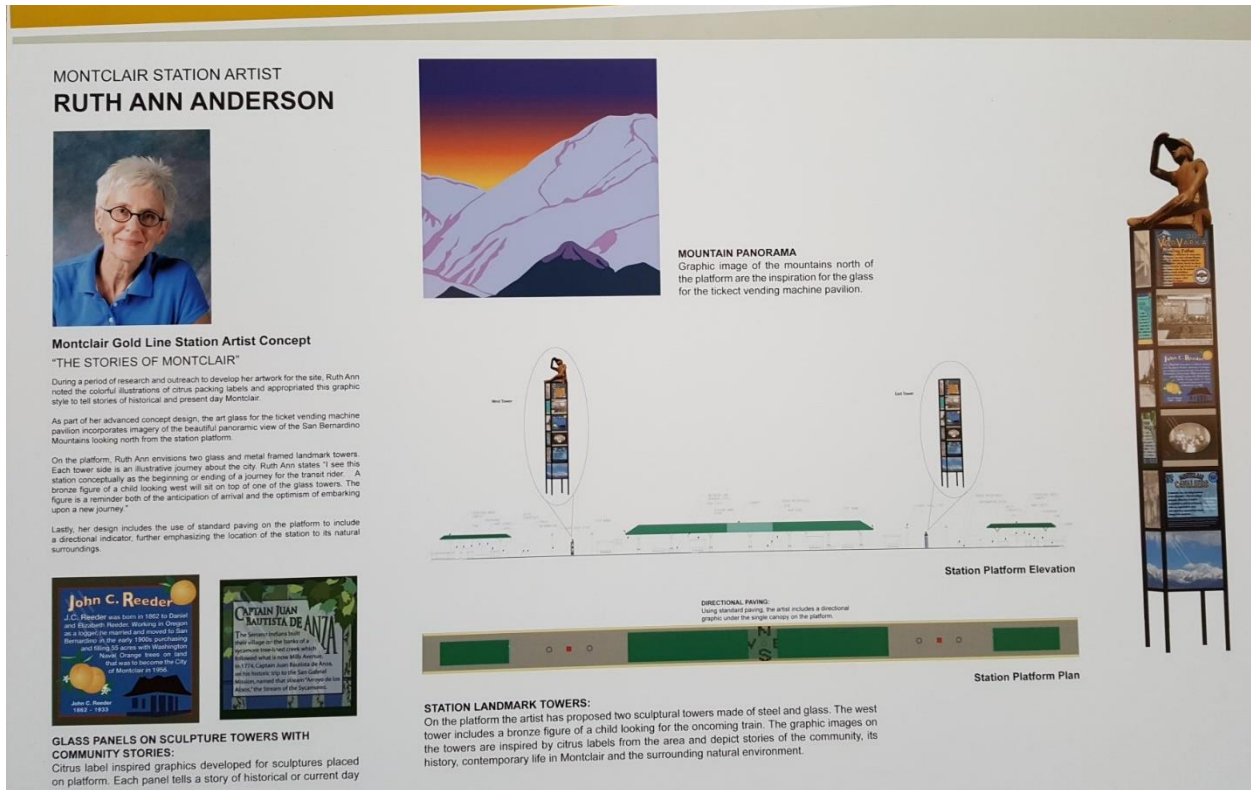
Two dozen at-grade crossings would be built along the Phase 2B corridor, and all at grade-crossings would be improved and reconstructed as part of the extension project. Additionally, at least three bridge structures are proposed for construction — one over Lone Hill Avenue in Glendora, one over Garey Avenue in Pomona and one over Towne Avenue, also in Pomona.

Phase 2B was environmentally cleared in March 2013 under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and advanced engineering was completed earlier this month — the six Phase 2B cities are currently reviewing the engineering documents. The Construction Authority is seeking \$1.2 billion through Measure M to build the project, with groundbreaking anticipated for 2017. Once funding is secured, final design and construction will take approximately 5 years to complete.

To maintain a unified look and rider experience, a standard station design and layout would be applied to all stations. However, each station will have unique art integrated into their design to create a unique and aesthetically pleasing identity. In 2005, artists for each city were selected through a competitive process using Station Design and Art Review (SDAR) committees appointed for each corridor city. Each of the corridor cities governing boards approved respective artist selections.

For Montclair, the station artist is Ruth Ann Anderson. Ms. Anderson selected “The Stories of Montclair” to demonstrate her art. During her research, she noted the colorful illustrations of citrus packing labels and appropriated this graphic style to tell stories of

historical and present-day Montclair. As part of her overall design, the art glass for the ticket vending machine pavilion incorporates imagery of the San Bernardino Mountains, looking north from the station platform. On the Gold Line platform, the artist envisions two glass and metal framed towers, with each tower providing an illustrated historical journey about Montclair, and denoting the City as the beginning or ending of a journey for the transit rider – this theme is in keeping with Montclair’s current designation as the terminus of the Gold Line in San Bernardino County. A bronze figure of a child will sit atop the westernmost tower. The child looks west – “a reminder both of the anticipation of arrival and the optimism of embarking upon a journey.”



Proposed Montclair Station Artwork by Artist Ruth Ann Anderson

The following link is a video of the station artwork along the Gold Line:

<https://www.facebook.com/iwillride/videos/vb.127986758337/10154293714943338/?type=2&theater>

Stephanie Wiggins, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Metro, discussed Measure M, the Los Angeles County Traffic Improvement Plan. Measure M proposes a one-half cent sales tax in Los Angeles County to fund transportation projects. The Measure also extends Measure R’s one-half cent sales tax when it expires in 2030. Unless otherwise terminated by voters, the transportation taxes would continue indefinitely to fund expansion, operation, and maintenance of transportation projects and services. If approved by voters on the November 8, 2016, General Election ballot, Measure M is expected to generate \$860 million annually in 2017 dollars and add 465,690 new jobs across the region. Proposed projects would be built over a 40-year period.



Area residents spend an average of 81 hours a year stuck in traffic. With 10.2 million people living in Los Angeles County, projected to grow by 2.3 million over the next 40 years, Measure M is designed to relieve traffic congestion and air pollution by improving *“freeway traffic flow/safety; repair potholes/sidewalks; repave local streets; earthquake-retrofit bridges; synchronize signals; keep senior/disabled/student fares affordable; expand rail/subway/bus systems; improve job/school/airport connections; and create jobs....”*

For a more detailed review of Measure M, go to: <http://theplan.metro.net/>.

Throughout the day, attendees heard presentations from regional leaders including Keynote Speaker Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, Metro Board Chairman and Duarte City Council Member John Fasana and Congressional Members Norma Torres, Grace Napolitano and Judy Chu – each regional leader discussed the vital importance of light rail to relieving congestion along the transportation corridors touching communities served by the Gold Line.

During the conference, attendees were afforded the opportunity to join one of three panels: “The Brain Train’s Influence on Higher Education”; “Designing for Placemaking and Pedestrian Activity – Station Area Success Stories”; and, “A Decade Later – How Transit Oriented Development are Reshaping the Gold Line Corridor and Providing Long-Term Local and Regional Benefits”.

- **The Brain Train.** The Gold Line is nicknamed “The Brain Train” because of its close proximity to dozens of colleges and universities – all within a short walk, bike or bus ride of a current or future station. The Foothill Gold Line offers a unique opportunity to serve tens of thousands of students, faculty, staff and visitors traveling to and from these campuses each day; and the institutions are embracing the tremendous resource the expanding rail line offers to support future growth, development and opportunity.

Through its extension along the Foothill corridor, the Gold Line is influencing the Master Plan for the renowned ArtCenter College of Design in Pasadena, development around Citrus College in Glendora following extension of the line to Azusa, and exciting tremendous interest at the Claremont Colleges and Cal Poly Pomona in anticipation of the Gold Line’s arrival by 2024.

- **Designing for Placemaking and Pedestrian Activity.** Designing to promote pedestrian activity and placemaking requires the concerted commitment of station cities. To achieve a welcoming feeling for arrivals, the Construction Authority opted for open and secure stations that are easy for riders to access and understand. Designers also opted to develop a new “place” in each community that fits seamlessly into a community’s fabric, even as an area evolves. Emblematic of this effort are the communities of Pasadena, Arcadia and Monrovia that created new community gathering spaces, parks, open spaces

and pedestrian/bicycle corridors in tandem with, and adjacent to, their respective Gold Line stations.

- **How Transit Oriented Developments are Reshaping the Gold Line Corridor.** *“Transit Oriented Developments (TODs) are communities where residents can live, work, play, shop and learn in a pedestrian- and cycle-friendly environment in close proximity to rapid public transit, where the automobile is an option, not a necessity.”* – Gary Andrishak, Director, IBI Group. Mr. Andrishak worked with Montclair officials in developing a simulated Master Plan for the Montclair Transcenter.

In the last 13 years since the Gold Line’s first segment opened and planning began on the Foothill segment from Pasadena to Montclair, 13,000 new residential units, 3.6 million square feet of commercial space and 1,400 hotel rooms have been built or are underway within half a mile of one of the current and future Gold Line stations, including in Montclair. Construction within these TODs generated an estimated \$7 billion in private investment along the corridor, creating tens of thousands of temporary jobs during construction and tens of thousands of permanent ones following construction completion.

Pasadena and Monrovia have seen much of this development in relation to existing stations. However, among the six future stations (Glendora, La Verne, San Dimas, Pomona, Claremont and Montclair) Montclair represents much of the existing TOD activity, as the City moves forward to implement its North Montclair Downtown Specific Plan (NMDSP) – the Plan is currently undergoing its first major revision since its adoption by the Montclair City Council in 2006, adding additional square footage for residential and office space, and a transition plan for properties on the NMDSP area’s eastern edge.

Within the confines of the NMDSP area, Montclair has already seen development of two major housing projects, with others currently under review. The City also anticipates major roadway improvements to promote pedestrian and bicycle activity within the area – master planning is currently underway. CIM Group, owner of Montclair Place, also anticipates a number of “reshaping” activities that will reposition Montclair Place to address migrating trends in the retail and entertainment industry.

Montclair, like its municipal partners in Los Angeles County, eagerly awaits the outcome of the November 8 vote on Measure M. The last polling on Measure M has it passing with approximately 70 percent of the vote. However, recent opposition has emerged from southbay and gateway cities in Los Angeles County – opposition that could pose a threat to its passing. If Measure M fails, focus for funding of the Phase 2B Gold Line extension will shift toward federal funding through available FTA grants, including the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) Program. Montclair leaders and our federal legislative advocate stand ready to assist the Gold Line Construction Authority should this effort become necessary.