

Application 06-12-005 *et al.*

Exhibit \_\_\_\_\_

Date: August \_\_, 2008

**PREPARED TESTIMONY  
OF  
LEE LISECKI**

**Q. Please state your name, professional position, and business address.**

A. My name is Lee Lisecki. I am a principal and project director at ICF Jones & Stokes. My business address is 811 West 7th St., Suite 800, Los Angeles, CA 90017.

**Q. Please describe your educational background and your professional qualifications.**

A. I have more than 23 years of experience in preparing and managing CEQA and NEPA environmental documents, including Initial Studies/ Environmental Assessments, Negative Declarations/Finding of No Significant Impact (“FONSIs”), and Environmental Impact Reports (“EIRs”) / Environmental Impact Statements (“EISs”) for development projects, specific and master plans, highway projects, and transit projects for federal, state and local agencies.

I received a Bachelor Degree in Civil Engineering from Brown University and a Masters Degree in Transportation Planning from Cornell University Graduate School of

Engineering. I am a member of the Association of Environmental Professionals, the Urban Land Institute, and WTS (Women's Transportation Seminar).

**Q. Please describe your relevant employment history.**

A. In November 1984 I was hired as an environmental planner by Myra L. Frank & Associates, Inc. ("MFA"). I worked as an employee of MFA for 19 years until the acquisition of the firm by Jones & Stokes Associates, Inc. in November of 2003. At that time, I was promoted to Branch Leader of the Los Angeles office of Jones & Stokes (formerly MFA), was elected a Principal of Jones & Stokes, and continued to serve as a Project Manager and Project Director for the preparation of CEQA and NEPA documents for various projects. In February of 2008, Jones & Stokes was acquired by ICF International ("ICFI") and now is a wholly owned subsidiary of ICFI. My title, position, and responsibilities have not changed with the recent acquisition.

**Q. Please describe your relevant experience with environmental work on transportation construction projects.**

A. I am the project director for environmental services that Jones & Stokes is currently providing to the Exposition Construction Authority ("Expo Authority"). I generally serve as project director at ICF Jones & Stokes (hereinafter, "Jones & Stokes") for a variety of projects which involve Jones & Stokes providing evaluation and analysis of the environmental impacts of projects on behalf of public agencies.

In addition to my current work for the Expo Authority, I serve as the project director for environmental services that Jones & Stokes provides to the Los Angeles

County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (“Metro”) for construction projects that are underway throughout the Metro Rail system. This work has included archaeological and paleontological monitoring; noise studies, noise monitoring, and acoustical engineering; traffic studies and transportation engineering; public outreach; air quality monitoring; renovation and rehabilitation of historic resources; and overall project mitigation monitoring in addition to preparation of CEQA and NEPA documents. Services have and are being performed for Metro’s Gold, Red, Orange, and Mid-City Exposition lines.

My experience includes other rail projects as well. I was the project manager for the Baldwin Park Commuter Rail Station Noise Study. I assisted in the analysis of noise impacts for the Metro Blue Line. I performed technical reviews for a preliminary environmental analysis of possible High Speed Ground Transportation corridors between Los Angeles and Bakersfield.

I have also worked on other transportation projects for local agencies and Caltrans, including Metro’s Multi-county Goods Movement Action Plan, the SR 2 Freeway Terminus Improvement Project, the California Incline in Santa Monica, the La Loma Bridge in Pasadena, and the Valley Boulevard-Alhambra Avenue Connector Project, which was formerly the 710 connector project.

In addition to transportation projects, my experience has included environmental services for many other types of public and private development projects.

**Q. On whose behalf are you providing the present testimony?**

A. I am providing this testimony on behalf of the Exposition Metro Line Construction Authority (“Expo Authority”).

**Q. Why was Jones & Stokes retained by the Expo Authority?**

A. In November 2007, the Expo Authority Board directed Expo Authority staff to evaluate grade separated options in addition to the proposed at-grade crossing at the intersection of Farmdale Avenue and Exposition Boulevard. Following that staff review, the Expo Authority retained Jones & Stokes to provide additional environmental analysis of certain options.

I understand that this additional analysis is being prepared so that, if the California Public Utilities Commission (“CPUC”) approves an option other than the at-grade crossing, some or all of the additional environmental analysis for that option will have been completed. This will help to minimize any delay in the construction schedule if the CPUC approves an option other than the proposed at-grade crossing. Also, at the pre-hearing conference on May 9, 2008, the administrative law judge directed that the Expo Authority present information on two additional options at Farmdale, in addition to information on the proposed at-grade crossing that is the subject of the Expo Authority’s current application. My testimony is part of the Expo Authority’s response to that direction.

**Q. What is the purpose of your testimony?**

A. The purpose of my testimony is to summarize Jones & Stokes’ analysis comparing the environmental impacts of the proposed at-grade crossing at Farmdale

Avenue with the environmental impacts of certain additional options for the Farmdale crossing.

**Q. What are the options that you analyzed?**

A. Option 1 (Proposed Project) is the proposed at-grade crossing. This option is the subject of the existing Expo Authority application to the CPUC. It was designed as an at-grade crossing with quad gates, flashers, bells and traffic signals to control vehicle traffic. The design also includes two pedestrian plazas, swing gates, pedestrian gates and traffic signals to control pedestrian traffic. At the corner of Dorsey High School, at the intersection of Exposition Boulevard and Farmdale Avenue, the existing school driveway will be relocated to re-route school traffic around the proposed pedestrian plaza. The at-grade crossing was evaluated as part of the project in the prior certified EIR/EIS.

Option 2A is the pedestrian overcrossing option with Farmdale Avenue closed to vehicular traffic. Option 2A includes a pedestrian bridge structure from the south side of Exposition Boulevard, across the Expo Authority light rail transit (“LRT”) right of way, to the north side of Exposition Boulevard. The overcrossing would be an enclosed structure constructed of materials to be determined, approximately 150 feet in length between two 2-story shafts with stairs and a 2-story elevator shaft for the disabled at each end of the crossing.

Option 2B is the pedestrian overcrossing option with Farmdale Avenue left open to vehicular traffic. This option was added when our preliminary analysis indicated that

it may not prove feasible to mitigate traffic impacts of closing Farmdale Avenue to vehicular traffic sufficiently to avoid the possibility of significant environmental impacts.

Option 3 is the LRT overcrossing option. Option 3 retains the current vehicle and pedestrian crossing at Farmdale Avenue, while grade separating the Expo Authority LRT with a train overcrossing structure. The structure would begin 700 feet east of Farmdale Avenue, gradually reaching a height of 22 feet and ascend back to grade 700 feet west of Farmdale Avenue. The existing configuration of vehicle and pedestrian traffic on Farmdale at Exposition would remain the same.

Option 4 is the LRT undercrossing option. This option retains the current vehicle and pedestrian crossing at Farmdale Avenue, while grade-separating the Expo Authority LRT, with an excavated undercrossing. The train would begin descending approximately 1,600 feet to the east of Farmdale Avenue, reaching a depth of 50 feet in order to avoid existing major storm drain structures running along Farmdale Avenue. The train would ascend to at-grade approximately 1,600 feet west of Farmdale Avenue. All passing trains would travel under the current intersection, which would eliminate the direct interaction of trains with both pedestrians and vehicles. Thus, the existing configuration of vehicle and pedestrian traffic on Farmdale and Exposition would remain the same.

**Q. Please describe how Jones & Stokes evaluated the environmental impacts of these options.**

A. Jones & Stokes is currently preparing several technical studies to analyze whether the options would have environmental impacts beyond the impacts of the at-

grade crossing that were analyzed in the certified EIR. These studies are evaluating topics such as traffic, visual, historic, air quality and noise impacts. We anticipate that these studies will be available in early summer. I have been advised by the Expo Authority that, upon completion, these studies will be submitted to the CPUC on behalf of the Expo Authority, and will also be available for review by the parties to this proceeding.

The purpose of the studies is to compare the effects of the various options to the environmental impact analysis of the at-grade crossing set forth in the previously certified EIR, so that we can determine whether any further environmental review would be required under CEQA, depending on whether the CPUC approves the at-grade crossing as proposed by Expo Authority or one of the other options.

These studies are being prepared pursuant to the provisions of CEQA which govern the evaluation of changes to a project for which an EIR has already been certified. CEQA provides, in Public Resources Code §21166, that, once an EIR has been prepared and certified for a project, no subsequent or supplemental EIR is to be prepared unless one of the following circumstances occurs:

- a. Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the environmental impact report.
- b. Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is being undertaken which will require major revisions in the environmental impact report.

c. New information, which was not known and could not have been known at the time of environmental impact report was certified as complete, but becomes available.

CEQA Guidelines §15162 further clarifies the requirements for evaluating proposed changes to a project. Generally, this guideline indicates that, once an EIR has been certified, no further EIR is required unless there are substantial changes in the project, substantial changes in circumstances or new information of substantial importance, any of which shows that there will either be a new significant adverse environmental impact or a substantially more severe adverse environmental impact. Pursuant to Public Resources Code §21166 and CEQA Guidelines §15162, the purpose of our analysis is to evaluate whether the potential changes, which are represented by the project options set forth above, would result in new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant environmental effects.

**Q. Now, I would like to go through what Jones & Stokes' analysis concluded with respect to each option, starting with Option 1, the proposed at-grade crossing. This option is the existing Expo Authority application to the CPUC. Are there any circumstances which would require further environmental review for this option?**

A. No. The proposed at-grade crossing is the same as the crossing analyzed as part of the project in the prior EIR and, based on my review, there are no circumstances under CEQA that would require any further environmental review. There have been



some minor refinements to the design of the crossing, including a realignment of the Dorsey High School driveway to accommodate a pedestrian plaza for students crossing Exposition Boulevard. However, these minor design refinements do not create any additional significant impacts and, therefore, are not substantial changes or new information not analyzed in the EIR/EIS. Thus the proposed at-grade crossing can be approved based on the previously certified EIR.

**Q. Let's turn to the other three options and I will ask you about the potential impacts that Jones & Stokes identified with respect to each. Option 2A is the pedestrian overcrossing with the closure of the Farmdale Avenue. Let's start with traffic. Is Option 2A anticipated to cause any additional significant traffic impacts beyond those analyzed in the prior EIS/EIR?**

A. Yes. It is anticipated that there likely will be significant impacts at several intersections in the area, and it may not be feasible to mitigate those impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Because Option 2A includes the closure of Farmdale Avenue to traffic, the potential impacts of the closure on intersections in the area due to the redistribution of traffic are being evaluated. This evaluation is being prepared by our traffic subconsultant, Fehr & Peers/Kaku Associates, in consultation with the Los Angeles Department of Transportation ("LADOT"). This evaluation incorporates LADOT's methodology and thresholds of significance for evaluating traffic impacts.

Sixteen intersections were evaluated. Preliminary traffic results have indicated that the closure of Farmdale Avenue would create significant and unavoidable adverse

impacts at a number of these intersections. It appears likely that these are new impacts, which were not identified in the prior certified EIR. These impacts cannot be mitigated without street widening, which would eliminate existing sidewalks and require, in some cases, a significant taking of private property. Therefore, such mitigation may be infeasible.

**Q. Is Option 2A anticipated to cause any additional significant visual impacts beyond those analyzed in the prior EIS/EIR?**

A. No. The potential visual effects of the overcrossing structure would be less than significant.

There are two aspects of Option 2A that have the potential to cause visual impacts. First, Option 2A includes the construction of a 30-foot high concrete and steel pedestrian overpass. Second, Option 2A includes constructing a wall across Farmdale Avenue, (unlike Option 1, the current at-grade proposal, where a wall does not go across Farmdale). This wall segment would span approximately 100 feet across both sides of the LRT right-of-way at Farmdale Avenue. This segment of wall could have new visual impacts, but those impacts are anticipated to be less than significant. Those impacts can also be further reduced by constructing the wall with transparent structural materials.

We have evaluated the impact that the overpass and wall segment would have on views of the Hollywood Hills, Baldwin Hills, and of Dorsey High School. We concluded that the orientation of the overcrossing would minimize obstruction to views and the overcrossing could be designed to match the coloring and exterior treatment of Dorsey High School. Furthermore, the visual impacts of the wall would be less than

significant. Therefore, Option 2A would not create any significant impacts to visual resources.

**Q. Is Option 2A anticipated to cause any additional significant impacts to historic resources beyond those analyzed in the prior EIS/EIR?**

A. No. The potential impacts would be less than significant.

Option 2A's potential impacts to historic and cultural resources, including Dorsey High School, are being analyzed. Our analysis concluded that the pedestrian overcrossing and 100 foot-long wall segment across Farmdale would not create a significant impact on any known historic resources. Although the pedestrian overcrossing and 100-foot wall segment would affect Dorsey High School by (1) diminishing public views of the school from Exposition Boulevard and Farmdale to the north and (2) compromising the feeling and association of the school in the context of the surrounding urban fabric, the impact would be less than significant because these changes would not result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

**Q. Is Option 2A anticipated to cause any additional significant air quality impacts beyond those analyzed in the prior EIS/EIR?**

A. No. We have determined that there are no new significant or substantially more severe construction or operational air quality impacts from Option 2A.

**Q. Is Option 2A anticipated to cause any additional significant noise impacts beyond those analyzed in the prior EIS/EIR?**

A. No. We have determined that there are no new or substantially more severe noise impacts from Option 2A. The noise impacts of this option are similar to those for Option 1, the current at-grade proposal. While there was a potential for increased traffic noise due to the closure of Farmdale Avenue, the traffic changes would result in an insignificant change in noise levels along Exposition Boulevard South and would not significantly impact any sensitive receptors. The noise mitigation for Option 2A would be similar to that for Option 1.

**Q. Let's move on to Option 2B, the pedestrian overcrossing option with Farmdale Avenue left open to traffic. Is Option 2B anticipated to cause any additional significant traffic impacts beyond those analyzed in the prior EIS/EIR?**

A. No. Since Option 2B would not include closing the Farmdale intersection, there are no new significant or substantially more severe traffic impacts from Option 2B.

**Q. Are the visual, historic, air quality and noise impacts of Option 2B the same as Option 2A?**

A. Yes. The visual and historic impacts of both Option 2A and 2B are insignificant, however, Option 2B's impacts to visual and historic resources are less than that of Option 2A because there is no wall or fence across Farmdale Avenue. The air quality and noise impacts of Option 2B are the same as those of Option 2A, which, as I discussed previously, would not have significant impacts in these areas.

**Q. Let's move on to Option 3, the LRT overcrossing option. Is Option 3 anticipated to cause any additional significant traffic impacts beyond those analyzed in the prior EIS/EIR?**

A. No. There are no new significant or substantially more severe traffic impacts from Option 3. Option 3 will not change the current stop sign controlled intersection configuration that is in place today.

**Q. Is Option 3 anticipated to cause any additional significant visual impacts beyond those analyzed in the prior EIS/EIR?**

A. Yes. The overcrossing would create new significant visual impacts. The visual scale of the overcrossing, which is approximately 1,400 feet in length and over 20 feet in height, would be substantial in comparison to surrounding buildings and residences, most of which are one or two stories. The overcrossing would obstruct views of the Hollywood Hills to the north and the Baldwin Hills and Dorsey High School to the south. The scale and design of the train overcrossing would be incompatible with the overall visual character of the school and the neighborhood in general. Therefore, a new significant impact would result from the overcrossing.

**Q. Is Option 3 anticipated to cause any additional significant impacts to historic resources beyond those analyzed in the prior EIS/EIR?**

A. Yes. The overcrossing would have a significant adverse historical resources impact on Dorsey High School. The visual quality of the overcrossing would be

incompatible in scale and mass with the setting of Dorsey High School. This would be a significant and unavoidable adverse impact.

**Q. Is Option 3 anticipated to cause any additional significant air quality impacts beyond those analyzed in the prior EIS/EIR?**

A. Yes. Although Option 3 would not create any new operational air quality impacts, it would create new air quality impacts during construction because of the additional duration and increased construction necessary to build the LRT overcrossing. The construction emissions would exceed the South Coast Air Quality Management District's thresholds for particulate matter (both PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) after implementation of all feasible mitigation measures. Therefore, the construction air quality impacts would be significant and unavoidable.

**Q. Is Option 3 anticipated to cause any additional significant noise impacts beyond those analyzed in the prior EIS/EIR?**

A. No. Any potentially significant impacts can be reduced to a less than significant level by the mitigation measures recommended in the prior EIR and in the noise analysis being prepared by Jones & Stokes subconsultant, ATS Consulting.

For this option, the light rail trains would operate on an aerial structure. Because of the reflections off of the concrete deck of the aerial structure, the sound levels would be several decibels higher than for at-grade operations. Because of the higher noise levels, substantially more noise impact is predicted for this option. However, all of the

additional noise impacts can be mitigated through the use of sound walls on the edges of the aerial structure.

**Q. Let's move on to Option 4 – the LRT undercrossing. Is Option 4 anticipated to cause any additional significant traffic impacts beyond those analyzed in the prior EIS/EIR?**

A. No. There are no new significant or substantially more severe traffic impacts from Option 4. Option 4 will not change the current stop sign controlled intersection configuration that is in place today.

**Q. Is Option 4 anticipated to cause any additional significant visual impacts beyond those analyzed in the prior EIS/EIR?**

A. No. No above-grade structures are proposed as part of this option, other than security fencing around both entrances of the undercrossing. However, these fences would not be visually intrusive or incompatible with the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood and would not result in a significant impact on key views.

**Q. Is Option 4 anticipated to cause any additional significant impacts to historic resources beyond those analyzed in the prior EIS/EIR?**

A. No. Because the undercrossing would not be visible at the Farmdale Avenue intersection, it would not affect Dorsey High School and is compatible with the school and does not compromise its integrity.

**Q. Is Option 4 anticipated to cause any additional significant air quality impacts beyond those analyzed in the prior EIS/EIR?**

A. Yes. Although Option 4 would not create any new operational air quality impacts, it would create new air quality impacts during construction, because of the substantial additional site work, excavation and other construction necessary to build the undercrossing. The construction emissions would exceed the South Coast Air Quality Management District's thresholds for particulate matter (both PM10 and PM2.5) after implementation of all feasible mitigation measures. Thus, the construction air quality impact would be significant and unavoidable.

**Q. Is Option 4 anticipated to cause any additional significant noise impacts beyond those analyzed in the prior EIS/EIR?**

A. No. Any potentially significant impacts can be reduced to a less than significant level by the application of the same mitigation measures that were recommended in the prior EIR for the at-grade crossing.

The light rail trains would operate in a trench or underground through most of the study area. Because the walls of the trench would act as sound walls, no noise impacts are predicted where the light rail would operate below grade. In areas where the trains would operate at-grade, the noise impacts are similar to Option 1, the at-grade crossing, and Option 2, the pedestrian overcrossing. These potential impacts can be mitigated by a sound wall. The sound wall would extend to the point where the trench is approximately 8 feet deep.



**Q. Do you have any concluding remarks?**

A. I would like to quickly recap the new significant impacts identified with respect to each option:

Option 1, the at-grade crossing, was thoroughly studied in the original EIS/EIR and no new impacts were identified during Jones & Stokes' analysis.

Option 2A, the pedestrian overcrossing and Farmdale Avenue street closure, appears likely to have significant traffic impacts at several intersections for which mitigation may not be feasible.

Option 2B, the pedestrian overcrossing with Farmdale Avenue left open to traffic, appears to have no significant new impacts.

Option 3, the LRT overcrossing, has new significant and unavoidable visual and historic impacts and has new significant and unavoidable localized air quality impacts during construction.

Option 4, the LRT undercrossing, has new significant and unavoidable localized air quality impacts during construction.

**Q. Does this complete your testimony?**

A. Yes, it does.