

**Regional Connector Transit Corridor  
Draft Environmental Impact Statement/  
Draft Environmental Impact Report**

**APPENDIX M**



**LAND USE IMPACTS**



**Regional Connector Transit Corridor  
Land Use Impacts  
Technical Memorandum**

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**Prepared for**

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## ACRONYMS

BID	Business Improvement District
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CRA	Community Redevelopment Agency
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
LRT	Light Rail Transit
LRTP	Long Range Transportation Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
TBM	Tunnel boring machine
TSM	Transportation Management System



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## 1.0 SUMMARY

The Regional Connector Transit Corridor project area is one of Los Angeles County's major employment centers and encompasses retail, entertainment, and residential districts. Income levels of residents vary greatly, and residential units vary widely in cost from new luxury condominium developments in the western half of the project area to single-room occupancy hotels and homeless shelters in the eastern portion.

The land use patterns in the project area consist of mostly commercial office buildings in the southwestern portion, public office buildings in the northern portion, and commercial manufacturing buildings in the southeast. There are pockets of residential uses, including adaptive reuse of older non-residential buildings, scattered through the project area.

The No Build and Transportation System Management (TSM) Alternatives would result in no direct or indirect impacts to land use in the project area. Nor would they result in any cumulative impacts to land use in the project area. However, these two alternatives would not provide new opportunities for transit hub and land use connections, transit-oriented development, compact development patterns, progress toward more walkable communities, and compliance with the federal mandate for transportation investments that have important economic development, environmental and social benefits. Both of these alternatives would be inconsistent with local land use plans that promote sustainable travel patterns.

Construction and operation of any one of the four build alternatives would result in no significant direct or indirect impacts to land use in the project area. Construction of any one of the build alternatives could generate pedestrian and vehicle detours that may inhibit, but would not prevent, access to existing land uses along the alignment.

Construction of the Underground Emphasis Light Rail Transit (LRT) Alternative, Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1, and Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would result in the taking of several existing commercial parcels and, in some cases, the permanent conversion of this land use. These takings would require compensation for the displaced land and business owners at fair market value, but would not be considered a significant land use impact given that the new land use would not conflict with existing adjacent land uses or result in any conflicts or inconsistencies with any existing land use plan, policy, or regulation of any agency with jurisdiction over the project area.

Overall, implementation of any of the build alternatives would not result in significant impacts to land use, nor would any require implementation of mitigation measures to reduce any impacts to a less than significant level. However, the beneficial land use effects of this transit investment have the potential to be significant.



## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

This technical memorandum discusses the Regional Connector Transit Corridor project area setting in relation to land use. The memo describes existing conditions for these resources, current applicable regulatory setting, and potential impacts from construction and operation of the proposed alternatives.

As the second largest metropolitan region in the United States, Los Angeles is home to approximately 15 million people and contains a variety of diverse cultures, world-renowned entertainment venues, and unique industries. At the heart of Los Angeles is the central downtown, considered the industrial, governmental, and financial core of the City.

The downtown Los Angeles financial district is one of the most job-dense areas in the City. Downtown Los Angeles also encompasses several retail, entertainment, and residential districts. Potential changes to existing land uses with construction of new transit stations or introduction of at-grade transit alignments could affect adjacent land uses. This technical memorandum evaluates the potential for impacts from construction and operation of the proposed Regional Connector project on land uses in the project area.



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## 3.0 METHODOLOGY FOR IMPACT EVALUATION

### 3.1 Standards of Significance

The standards of significance presented below were developed to gauge potential project effects relative to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The standards were formulated using impact assessment guidance prepared by the Federal Transit Administration, the Federal Highway Administration, similar analyses presented in other transit project Environmental Impact Statements (EIS)/Environmental Impact Reports (EIR), and the significance thresholds within the *Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide* (Section H). Based on these guidance documents, a significant adverse impact on land use would occur if an alternative would:

- Conflict or be incompatible with adjacent and surrounding land uses caused by degradation or disturbances that diminish the quality of a particular land use; or
- Result in conflict or inconsistency with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project.

### 3.2 Area of Potential Impact

From a land use perspective, the area of potential impact for this project includes current land use designations for parcels directly adjacent to the build alternatives for the full length of the alignments and the parcels within a one-block radius of any new at-grade or underground transit stations proposed. It also includes the areas that would be crossed by the TSM Alternative. The proposed project was analyzed for potential direct and indirect effects on land use type, density, and character resulting from project construction and operation.

### 3.3 Analysis Methodology

Potential land use impacts associated with each alternative were analyzed within the components outlined below and structured around the standards of significance identified above:

- Analysis of the potential for short- and long-term conflicts with, or disruption of access to, land uses adjacent to the alternative alignments
- Identification of potential conflicts with applicable local land use plans, policies, or regulations
- Identification of potential land use benefits of the proposed alternatives, such as opportunities for transit-oriented developments and land uses

### 3.3.1 Land Use Incompatibility and Conflicts

The analysis of potential short- and long-term conflicts with and potential disruption of access to land uses adjacent to the alternative alignments began with an inventory of the existing land uses adjacent to each alternative alignment. The inventory helped characterize land uses along the full length of each alignment for the TSM Alternative and aboveground sections of the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative. The analysis describes qualitative, and where possible, quantitative impacts associated with the project.

Cataloguing land uses along the underground sections of the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative, Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1, and Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 focused on the land uses surrounding new underground stations and other aboveground construction locations with the potential to generate land use conflicts. Cataloguing use relied on General Plan land use designations, Zoning Ordinance designations, and observations made during site reconnaissance.

This land use catalogue is discussed in more detail in Section 4. Section 4 also compares existing and expected land uses of the TSM Alternative and each build alternative to identify potential incompatibility or disruption of existing land uses. Potential for incompatibility could include, but is not limited to, noise, security, lighting, traffic, and pedestrian safety. These are discussed further in other technical memoranda.

### 3.3.2 Policy Consistency

This technical memorandum focuses on the proposed project's consistency with the goals and policies presented in local land use plans, policies, and regulations. The analysis is to determine if different alternatives have different levels of policy consistency. The land use plans, policies, and regulations that were reviewed include: the City of Los Angeles' General Plan (including the transportation element), the City of Los Angeles Planning and Zoning Code, the Central City Community Plan, the Civic Center Shared Facilities and Enhancement Plan, the Downtown Adaptive Reuse Incentive Ordinance, the Greater Downtown Housing Incentive Ordinance, the Central City North Community Plan, and the redevelopment plans established by the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) of the City of Los Angeles.



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## 4.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

### 4.1 Existing Conditions

The project area is one of Los Angeles County's major employment centers and encompasses several retail, entertainment, and residential districts. Income levels of the residents vary greatly, and the residential units vary widely in cost from new luxury condominium developments in the western half of the project area to single-room occupancy hotels and homeless shelters in the eastern portion.

Land use patterns in the project area consist mostly of commercial office buildings in the southwestern portion, public office buildings in the northern portion, and commercial manufacturing buildings in the southeast. There are pockets of residential uses, including adaptive reuse of older non-residential buildings, scattered through the project area. The project area falls within the Central City Community Area as indicated in Figure 4-1, which shows the General Plan Land Use Designations along the alternative alignments. Figure 4-2, shows the zoning designations.

The highest floor-area ratios, about 6.0, can be found in the westernmost part of the project area, which is roughly bounded by 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Hill Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Street, and the SR 110 freeway. These boundaries are approximately similar to those of the Bunker Hill Urban Renewal Project Area. An older office district dating from the early part of the twentieth century is found to the east of the Bunker Hill Urban Renewal Project Area.

Nearly all of the businesses in this district contain ground-floor retail establishments, resulting in a busy streetscape. The buildings in this area are substantially shorter than those on Bunker Hill due to the City's 12-story height limit at the time of their construction.

Land use patterns in the eastern portion of the project area have been shifting from commercial and manufacturing toward residential over the past several years. New multi-family residential developments have recently opened along 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets in Little Tokyo and the Arts District, stretching from approximately Los Angeles Street to Santa Fe Avenue. Most of these developments are comprised of four to six stories of apartments or condominiums. Some parcels in this area have been cleared for construction including residential buildings up to 20 stories in height.

As such, a large influx of new residents is expected in this area. In a dense area like downtown Los Angeles, this new residential population will likely increase pedestrian activity and spur demand for transit service outside of traditional commute hours, especially if development continues.

One of the oldest industrial areas in the region is in the easternmost part of the project area. The buildings are much lower than buildings elsewhere in the project area, usually only one to

three stories, and vacant lots are more prevalent. Many of the empty lots are used as storage yards or surface parking lots.

Though zoned for industrial manufacturing, some of the buildings have recently been reused as loft condominiums and rental housing units, particularly in the area north of 7<sup>th</sup> Street between Alameda Street and the Los Angeles River. Other new multi-family residential developments have recently been completed in the area, reflecting a changing trend in downtown land uses. These new residential developments may help to create nodes where transit demand would be higher than the past.

The project area is currently served by four rail lines and over 100 bus lines.

## 4.2 Regulatory Framework

The following are the land use plans, community plans, and redevelopment plans and projects affecting the project area, as well as brief assessments of their compatibility with the Regional Connector Transit Corridor alternatives.

### 4.2.1 General Plan Framework

The Los Angeles General Plan Framework, adopted in December 1996, is the Citywide portion of the City's General Plan, which is intended to guide the City's long-range growth and development. The General Plan Framework anticipates fast-paced population growth and outlines methods for directing growth toward selected high-density areas where infrastructure is readily available, rather than allow all areas of the City to grow in an uncontrolled fashion. The study identifies downtown as one of the key growth areas, and calls for enhancements to Los Angeles County's rail system, including extensions and feeder bus service.

### 4.2.2 Central City Community Plan

The Land Use Element of the General Plan splits the City into 35 community plan areas, each with detailed programs targeted at local growth and neighborhood improvements. All of the alternative alignments lie entirely within the Central City Community Plan area and the Central City North Community Plan area (City of Los Angeles 2003).

The Central City Community Plan calls for creating dense residential neighborhoods with a variety of housing types, improving the functionality of the area's commercial districts, encouraging the development of additional rail transit, retaining the scale and appearance of existing areas, and encouraging job-rich land uses. The Central City Community Plan area is bounded by Cesar Chavez Avenue on the north, the Santa Monica Freeway (I-10) on the south, the Harbor Freeway (SR 110) on the west, and Alameda Street on the east. More detailed land use maps are provided in Appendix A.

In response to the recent increase in housing units downtown, the plan seeks to develop neighborhood-supporting businesses and enhance the safety and cleanliness of the area. The plan heavily promotes transit-supportive land uses such as high-density residential developments, regional entertainment and cultural centers, space for small start-up businesses, retail plazas, nighttime entertainment venues, hotels, and dense industrial and wholesale districts. Of particular importance to the project, the plan notes that most of the traffic in the area is generated by pass-through travel between areas outside of downtown.

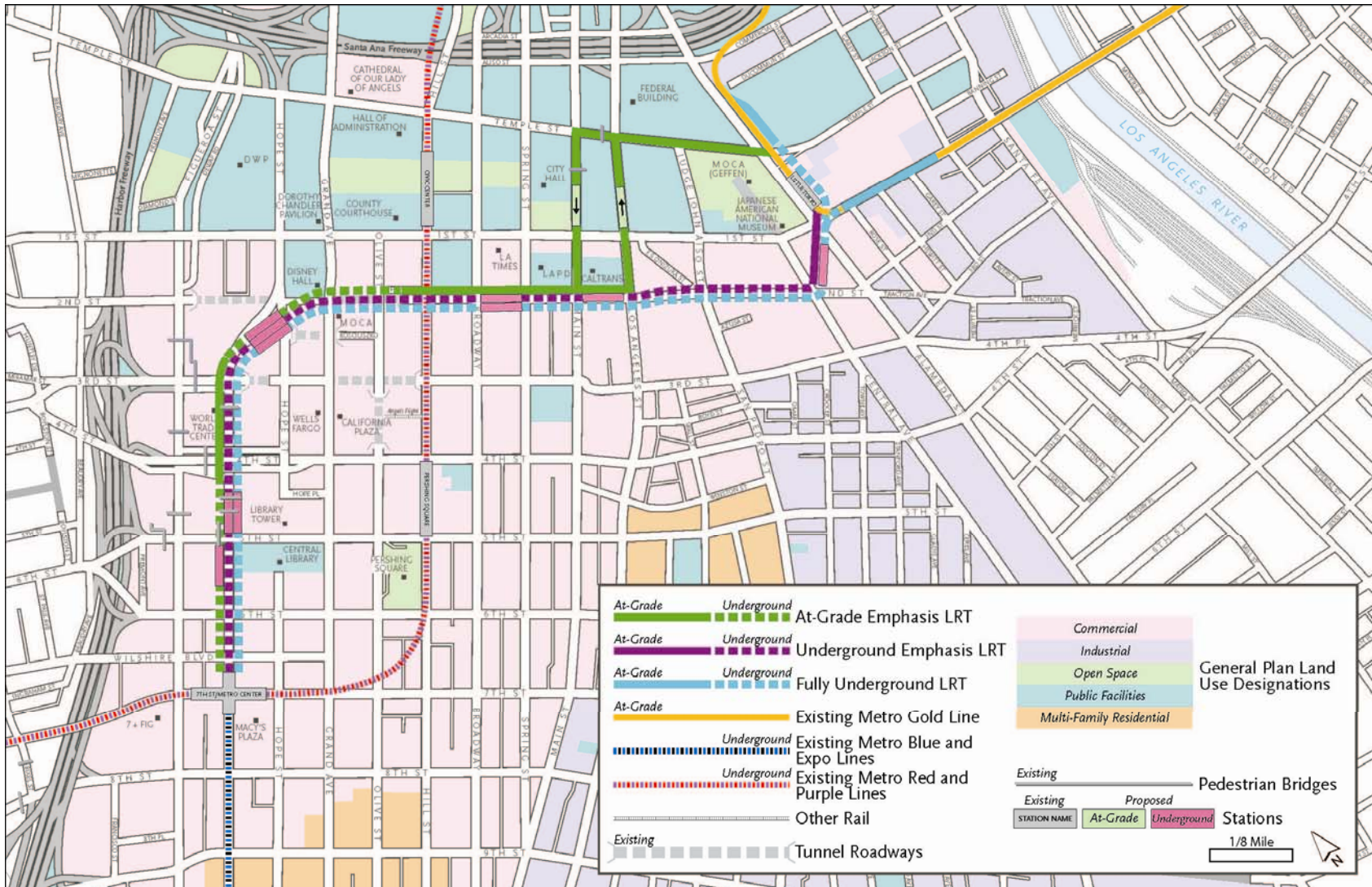


Figure 4-1 General Plan Land Use Designations

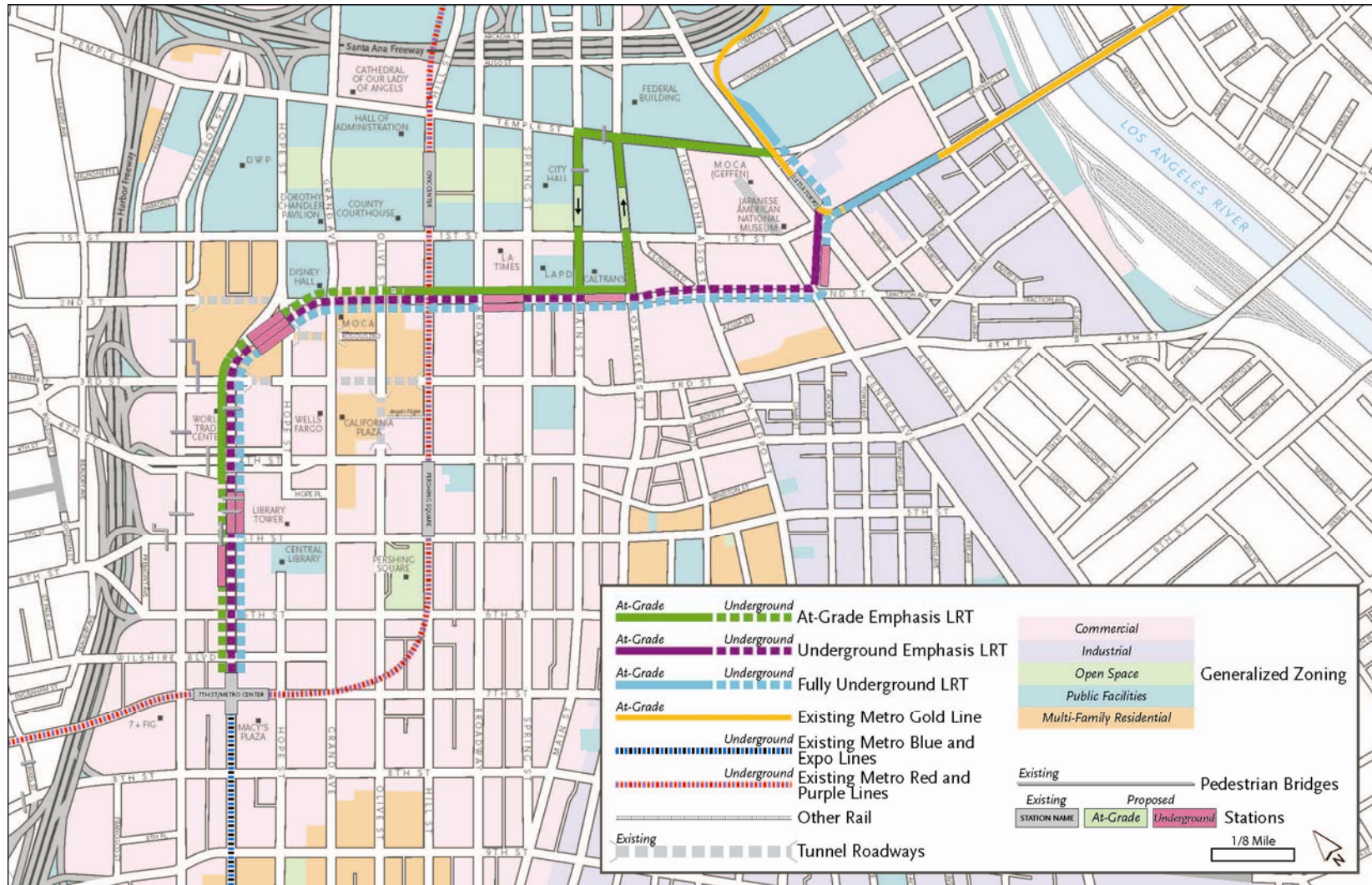


Figure 4-2. Zoning Designations

As such, the plan expressly recommends providing better connections through downtown from the SR 110 corridor, including a light rail extension from 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station to Union Station via Flower Street, Bunker Hill, and Little Tokyo.

### **4.2.3 Transportation Element**

The Transportation Element of the General Plan lists objectives and programs aimed at improving accessibility and long-term mobility within the City (City of Los Angeles 1999). In the document, the City encourages development of high-capacity transit service along several corridors, including a "Downtown Connector" from either the San Pedro or Washington Stations to Union Station.

### **4.2.4 Zoning Code Provisions Encouraging Density Around Transit Stations**

The City of Los Angeles Planning and Zoning Code includes provisions for development incentives within 1,500 feet of transit station entrances. For example, the City may permit developments in these areas to include more square footage and fewer off-street parking spaces than the zoning would otherwise allow (Los Angeles, California, Planning and Zoning Code art. II, § 12-24 (2000)).

By adding new rail stations to downtown Los Angeles, the Regional Connector would expand the number of parcels eligible for density and parking incentives. This could enhance economic activity in the downtown area, encourage growth in locations served by the rail system, and provide new opportunities for increased transit use.

### **4.2.5 Downtown Adaptive Reuse Incentive Area**

The Regional Connector build alternative alignments are located in the Downtown Adaptive Reuse Incentive Area. Non-residential buildings in this area may be converted to residential dwelling units, contingent upon limited zoning restrictions. The stated goals of the incentive area are to rehabilitate economically distressed and historic buildings, improve the balance between jobs and housing in the downtown area, and encourage mixed use projects.

Developers of adaptive reuse projects within the incentive area may expand converted residential units with additional mezzanine loft space, which does not count toward floor area limits. Developers may also exceed the maximum number of residential units allowed by the existing zoning. In addition, no new off-street parking spaces are required, though existing spaces must be maintained (Los Angeles, California, Planning and Zoning Code, art. II, §12.22 (2001)). Transit improvements like the Regional Connector provide additional transportation capacity and alternatives to automobile use, and are thus compatible with increased densities and reduced off-street parking requirements.

#### **4.2.6 Greater Downtown Housing Incentive Area**

Regional Connector build alternatives are entirely located within the Greater Downtown Housing Incentive Area. The enabling zoning ordinance allows density and parking incentives for residential project developers who reserve a portion of their units for low-income residents. Depending on how many units are reserved, incentives can include up to 35 percent more floor area and up to 50 percent fewer required off-street parking spaces than zoning currently specifies (Los Angeles, California, Planning and Zoning Code, art. II, §12.22 (2007)). By improving transit service in the downtown area, the Regional Connector would support the housing incentive program, especially because low-income people are less likely to have automobile access and more likely to rely on transit.

#### **4.2.7 Central City North Community Plan**

Almost all of the new trackwork required for the Regional Connector build alternatives would be located within the Central City Community Plan area. However, the eastern boundary of the Central City Community Plan area is Alameda Street, so a small portion of each build alternative's trackwork and construction staging areas near the existing Metro Gold Line's Little Tokyo/Arts District Station would be located in the adjacent Central City North Community Plan area. The two community plans are consistent in their treatment of this location as a commercial area. As such, any land use impacts to the Central City North Community Plan area would be similar to those described for the Central City Community Plan area.

#### **4.2.8 Civic Center Shared Facilities and Enhancement Plan**

In 1997, the Civic Center Shared Facilities and Enhancement Plan established goals for creating a cohesive concentration of public office buildings linked by visually enhanced streets (Los Angeles Civic Center Authority 1997). The plan outlines a public services and business district that pedestrians could traverse in ten minutes or less. Central to the plan are linkages to other parts of downtown, including Union Station, the Historic Core, and the Music Center.

#### **4.2.9 Feasibility Study for the Resurrection of the Red Car Trolley Services**

The Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles published the Feasibility Study for the Resurrection of the Red Car Trolley Services in the Los Angeles Downtown Area in July 2006. This study examines the agency's proposal to introduce a historic streetcar line running in a northeast-southwest direction from Chinatown to the Fashion District. The study indicates the usefulness of additional rail transit coverage within downtown, and emphasizes the importance of connectivity with other Metro rail lines.

#### **4.2.10 Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)**

The project area contains portions of six BIDs: Fashion BID, Downtown Industrial BID, Toytown BID, Historic Downtown BID, Downtown Center BID, and Little Tokyo BID. These

organizations are funded by property assessments and seek to improve commerce in their areas by providing services such as security patrols, street and sidewalk cleaning, and promotional advertising.

Stimulating business growth increases the number of jobs and shopping opportunities, which translates to higher volumes of trips to the district. As such, BIDs are generally supportive of better transit connections to their areas because high quality transit service makes it easier for potential customers to travel to the area.

#### **4.2.11 Bunker Hill Urban Renewal Project**

The Bunker Hill Urban Renewal Project was initiated by the CRA in 1959 and has undergone several amendments since. Key elements of the project include re-subdivision of existing residential parcels into 25 large development sites for high-rise buildings, a new network of tunnels and viaducts to allow smooth traffic flow despite the area's steep terrain, and development incentives for new commercial and residential developments. CRA's plans for the area include open space and pedestrian linkage improvements near Metro Rail stations. All of the build alternative alignments travel through the Bunker Hill Urban Renewal Project area from 5<sup>th</sup> Street and Hill Street. The project is currently projected to end in 2012.

#### **4.2.12 Central Business District Redevelopment Project**

The Central Business District Redevelopment Project was adopted by the CRA in 1975. Project activities include providing decent housing for the Skid Row homeless population in Central City East, spurring development in the Financial District to match the level of development occurring in the Bunker Hill Urban Renewal Project area, revitalizing the Broadway retail district in the Historic Core, and providing crime reduction and rehabilitation of South Park.

Major projects completed in the area include Staples Center, the Los Angeles Convention Center, Cathedral of Our Lady of Angels, new parking structures, and multiple residential buildings. The redevelopment project is set to expire in 2010, though the tax increment revenue cap has already been reached.

The entire At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative alignment is located within the Central Business District Redevelopment Project area except the portion from 5<sup>th</sup> Street to Hill Street. The Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative and Fully Underground LRT Alternatives include Flower Street between 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station and 5<sup>th</sup> Street, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street between Hill and Los Angeles Streets.

#### **4.2.13 City Center Redevelopment Project**

The City Center Redevelopment Project was established in 2002 by the CRA. It includes much of the area covered by the Central Business District Redevelopment Project, though parts of



the Civic Center are excluded. The key goal of the project is to allow the CRA to continue to generate tax increment revenue and address blight in the area despite the revenue limits placed on the Central Business District Redevelopment Project. The City Center Redevelopment Project is set to expire in 2032. All of the Regional Connector build alternative alignments pass along the northern edge of the City Center Redevelopment Project area on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street between Hill and Los Angeles Streets.

#### **4.2.14 Little Tokyo Redevelopment Project**

The Little Tokyo Redevelopment Project was adopted by the CRA in 1970. Key project activities include removing or rehabilitating substandard buildings, reconfiguring obsolete street and railroad patterns to remove irregularly shaped parcels and improve mobility, providing security improvements, encouraging residential development, and alleviating conflicts between adjoining residential and industrial land uses.

Project developments include the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, the Japan America Theater, the Japanese American National Museum, the Union Center for the Arts, adaptive reuse of a former church, luxury hotels, specialty shopping centers, and several residential buildings. The redevelopment project is presently set to expire in 2013.

The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative traverses the western edge of the Little Tokyo Redevelopment Project area on Los Angeles Street between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> Streets. The alignments of the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative and Fully Underground LRT Alternative Variations 1 and 2 travel in the redevelopment area from Los Angeles Street to the junction with the Metro Gold Line to East Los Angeles at 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets.



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## 5.0 IMPACTS

### 5.1 No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative is focused on preserving existing transit services and projects currently in use or planned for completion by 2035. The No Build Alternative does not include any major service improvements or new transportation infrastructure beyond what is presented in the 2009 Metro Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The potential land use impacts associated with projects as outlined in the 2009 LRTP would be reviewed as a part of environmental analyses specific to those projects.

The No Build Alternative would not provide the land use benefits typical of high-capacity transit projects, including encouragement of compact development. Because the LRTP predicts that traffic will continually worsen in the absence of additional capacity, the No Build Alternative would contribute to deteriorating access and mobility within the Los Angeles region.

The No Build Alternative is also inconsistent with the goals of the Central City Community Plan, which call for a light rail connector between 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station and Union Station. Overall, the No Build Alternative is expected to generate less than significant direct and indirect impacts to land uses in the project area and would generate a less than significant contribution to cumulative direct land use impacts. This alternative would conflict with the FTA guidance (January 13, 2010) that directs consideration of the benefits of transit investments that encourage and support land uses that are environmentally sustainable, and foster livable communities including economic vitality.

### 5.2 Transportation System Management (TSM) Alternative

The TSM Alternative includes all of the provisions of the No Build Alternative, plus two new express shuttle bus lines linking 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station and Union Station. Two potential bus routes are under consideration in the TSM Alternative – an Upper and a Lower Grand Route.

Peak hour bus-only lanes would be created on the routes where they do not currently exist. Any new peak hour bus-only lanes would be placed in lanes that are currently closed to parking during peak hours. The TSM Alternative would develop enhanced bus stops every two to three blocks along the route to maximize coverage of the area surrounding the routes. On 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, where bus stops do not currently exist, six new stops (three in each direction) would need to be added, necessitating the removal of up to 24 curb parking spaces. This could cause increased parking demand on surrounding streets.

Like the No Build Alternative, the TSM Alternative would not provide any new transit-related land use benefits, nor would it preserve regional access and mobility in light of continually

worsening traffic congestion. It is also inconsistent with the Central City Community Plan's goal of building a light rail connector between 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station and Union Station. This alternative would conflict with the FTA guidance (January 13, 2010) that directs consideration of the benefits of transit investments that encourage and support land uses that are environmentally sustainable, and foster livable communities including economic vitality.

The TSM alternative would generate less than significant direct and indirect impacts than the build alternatives. The TSM Alternative would displace fewer existing on-street parking spaces, and development of the alternative's enhanced bus stops on sidewalks adjacent to the bus lanes would not disrupt access to existing land uses along the alignment.

The TSM Alternative is consistent with existing and planned projects within the project area. Potential construction impacts would be less than significant and this alternative would generate a less than significant contribution to cumulative land use impacts. However, this alternative would not contribute to the land use benefits that the build alternatives would, including encouragement of compact development.

### **5.3 At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative**

The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative develops a connection between the underground 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station and the Metro Gold Line at Temple and Alameda Streets with a mix of at-grade and underground sections. This alternative would develop a mix of at-grade and underground transit stations. The alignment and station locations are shown in Figure 4-1.

#### **5.3.1 Potential Land Use Conflicts**

As shown in Figure 4-1, the General Plan land use designations of the parcels adjacent to the at-grade sections of the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative's proposed route include public facilities, open space, and commercial. The zoning designations indicated in Figure 4-2 for at-grade sections of the alternative include public facilities, commercial, and residential. The at-grade sections of the alignment run adjacent to public facility and commercial parcels.

##### **5.3.1.1 General Potential Construction Effects**

Construction of the tunnels and underground stations for the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would rely on the cut-and-cover method. Excavation would occur beneath a temporary roadway deck. The bulk of surface impacts would be limited to the beginning and end of the tunneling process, when temporary roadway and decking removal would be necessary.

The at-grade portions of the alignment would be constructed in existing roadways. Lane closures and temporary detours would be required for the entire time the trackway is being

constructed. Shorter-term intersection closures would be needed after the trackway is complete so that overhead wires could be installed. Construction activities would be intensified in the vicinity of at-grade stations.

### 5.3.1.2 Financial District

The alignment would begin at the northern end of the existing light rail tracks at 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station. The tracks would extend northward beneath Flower Street to a new underground station between 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets. The alignment would then continue north under Flower Street and rise to the surface through a new portal between 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets. The tracks would then cross 3<sup>rd</sup> Street at grade and enter a new portal into the hillside just northeast of the intersection of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Flower Streets.

The existing land uses along the underground portion of the alignment through the Financial District include office towers, public open space, hotels, and other commercial and retail establishments. Notable buildings include the Citigroup Center, Paul Hastings Tower, Maguire Gardens public open space, City National Plaza and Tower, the California Club, the Standard Hotel, the Pegasus apartment building, and Macy's Plaza.

Construction of this underground portion of the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative alignment would use cut-and-cover techniques for the tunnel and new station at Flower and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets. This construction technique could generate temporary pedestrian and vehicle detours that may inhibit, but not prevent, access to existing land uses along this section of the alignment.

A traffic lane and 12 on-street parking spaces would need to be removed permanently to accommodate the portal, at-grade tracks, and underground station entrances. This could potentially shift parking and traffic demand to nearby streets.

The portal and at-grade portion of this section of the alignment would run adjacent to the World Trade Center, Bank of America Plaza, the Westin Bonaventure Hotel, and a parking structure underneath the Ketchum YMCA. Constructing the at-grade tracks in this section of the alignment could generate temporary pedestrian and vehicle detours that may inhibit, but not prevent, access to existing land uses along this section of the alignment. As such, the proposed alignment through the Financial District is not expected to generate any instances of land use incompatibility, given its routing in and below a major existing roadway.

### 5.3.1.3 Bunker Hill

From the new portal into the hillside just northeast of the intersection of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Flower Streets, the alignment would proceed into a new underground station just southwest of 2<sup>nd</sup> and Hope Streets. The alignment would then pass through new entrances into the middle section of the existing 2<sup>nd</sup> Street tunnel and turn east to run inside the tunnel toward its eastern portal near Hill Street.

Existing land uses that this alignment would travel near include education buildings, parking lots, large auditoriums, and large residential developments. Notable sites include the Colburn School of Performing Arts, parcels currently used as parking lots that are proposed for redevelopment as a part of the Grand Avenue Redevelopment Project, the Walt Disney Concert Hall, and high-rise residential developments.

The proposed 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street station construction would be focused in an existing landscaped traffic control median and on streets closed during construction. Construction and operation of the proposed 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street station could potentially require some reconfiguration of the surrounding roadways, though this would not limit access to surrounding land uses. If an underground passageway were constructed from the station box to an entrance on the west side of Flower Streets, one or both of the existing private tennis courts may be displaced. However, a midblock crosswalk would be a potential at-grade solution that could create the same pedestrian connection.

Construction and operation of tracks in the existing 2<sup>nd</sup> Street tunnel and the proposed new rail portals into the tunnel from the 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street station would not be incompatible with existing land use or affect land uses above the alignment.

#### 5.3.1.4 Historic Core

The proposed At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative at-grade alignment would travel through the Historic Core along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street from the eastern portal of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street tunnel near Hill Street to Los Angeles Street. At Main Street, the southbound track would branch off and head north into the Civic Center, while the northbound track would continue eastward on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and turn north on Los Angeles Street. As such, the portion of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street between Main and Los Angeles Streets would have only one track, while the rest of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street tunnel to Main Street would have two tracks. A traction power substation would be constructed on a portion of the parking lot on the south side of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street between Broadway and Spring Street.

Existing land uses adjacent to this section of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street include public buildings, offices, parking, and retail. Buildings along the alignment include the Little Tokyo Library, the old Saint Vibiana Cathedral and site of the proposed Vibiana Place Mixed Use Project, the Higgins Building, the Los Angeles Times Building, office buildings with ground floor retail establishments, the Los Angeles Law Center, the City of Los Angeles Parking Violations Bureau, and the Kawada Hotel. Construction of the alignment on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street could generate temporary pedestrian and vehicle detours that may inhibit, but not prevent, access to existing land uses along the alignment. Some turning movements may be restricted permanently, and sections of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street along the alignment may be converted to one-way vehicle traffic only, but vehicular access to all properties would be maintained. As indicated by the Noise and Vibration Technical Memorandum, noise impacts at the residential Higgins Building and Kawada Hotel would not be significant.

Development of at-grade tracks along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and the need for adequate street widths to provide local access lanes would require that on-street parking and loading zones along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street be eliminated. Approximately 23 on-street parking spaces, including five loading spaces, would be removed from 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, which could potentially shift parking demand to other nearby streets. Operation of the alignment after construction would not generate any permanent access disruptions to existing land uses on either side of the right-of-way.

Temporary interruptions to traffic flow as trains pass would be similar to existing interruptions by red lights at intersections. The proposed alignment through the Historic Core would be compatible with existing land use along this segment given its development as an existing roadway.

### 5.3.1.5 Civic Center

The proposed alignment would enter the Civic Center at grade from the south along Main and Los Angeles Streets. The southbound track would run along the east side of Main Street and the northbound track would run along the east side of Los Angeles Street. Each track would serve a one-way station just north of 1<sup>st</sup> Street before continuing north to Temple Street. Both tracks would turn east on Temple Street and rejoin just east of the intersection of Temple and Los Angeles Streets.

Most of the buildings along the Civic Center portion of the alignment are occupied by public offices. There are also hotel, restaurant, and other commercial uses along the alignment. Notable buildings include City Hall, City Hall East, Caltrans District 7 Headquarters, and the new LAPD Administration Building scheduled for completion in the fall of 2009. The Kyoto Grand Hotel is also located adjacent to the alignment at 1<sup>st</sup> and Los Angeles Streets.

The proposed at-grade stations near City Hall along Main and Los Angeles Streets would be constructed along the existing roadway lanes and widened sidewalks. Construction of the at-grade alignment along Temple Street could generate temporary pedestrian and vehicle detours that may inhibit, but not prevent, access to existing land uses along the alignment.

Operation of the alignment after construction is not expected to generate any permanent access disruptions to existing land uses on either side of the alignment. The proposed at-grade stations on Los Angeles and Main Streets would be developed in existing traffic lanes away from the intersections at Temple and 1<sup>st</sup> Streets. The proposed at-grade stations are not expected to impede access to existing land uses on either side of the alignment given their placement away from the intersections and crosswalks.

The proposed alignment would be compatible with existing land use along this segment given its development as an existing roadway.

### 5.3.1.6 Little Tokyo

The at-grade alignment would enter Little Tokyo from the Civic Center traveling east along Temple Street from Los Angeles Street. The tracks would reduce the existing automobile lanes on Temple Street from two lanes in each direction to one lane in either direction. At Alameda Street, the alignment would connect to the Metro Gold Line to East Los Angeles in a three-way junction at the intersection of Temple and Alameda Streets.

A new auto underpass and pedestrian overpass would be constructed at the intersection of Alameda and Temple Streets. The existing land uses along this section of Temple Street include a Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic and hospital, a federal building, the Los Angeles Mall public open space, and City Hall East.

Construction along Temple Street could generate temporary pedestrian and vehicle detours that may inhibit, but not prevent, access to existing land uses along the alignment. Operation of the alignment would create permanent access to the Go 4 Broke development site on the south side of Temple Street.

Temporary interruptions as trains pass would be similar to existing interruptions to vehicle traffic on the roadway. The alignment would be compatible with existing land use along this segment given its development as an existing roadway. This section of the proposed alignment could shift traffic and parking demand to other streets near the alignment caused by the reduction of automobile lanes on Temple Street and elimination of 12 parking spaces on the south side of Temple Street west of Alameda Street due to the proposed underpass.

### 5.3.1.7 Potential Land Use Conflict Conclusions

Land use conflicts caused by construction and operation of the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would be less than significant. The alternative would not introduce new land uses that are inconsistent with existing land uses.

Construction of the alternative could generate temporary pedestrian and vehicle detours that inhibit, but not prevent, access to existing land uses along the alignment. The Transportation Technical Memorandum traffic section analyzes this potential effect on circulation in the project area and concludes it would be a less than significant effect on land use.

## 5.3.2 Policy Consistency

The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative is proposed within the Central City Community Plan area and would be subject to numerous plans and development regulations. The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative is consistent with the stated General Plan goal of focusing growth toward existing high density areas, including downtown Los Angeles, by enhancing the County's rail system. It is also consistent with the Transportation Element's support of high-capacity transit service between Union Station and the Metro Blue Line.



The Central City Community Plan encourages high-density transit-oriented land uses and recommends improvements to transit connections through downtown from the 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station to Union Station to address pass-through traffic congestion. The Civic Center Shared Facilities and Enhancement Plan and Feasibility Study for the Resurrection of the Red Car Trolley Services in the Los Angeles Area identified goals of improving transit connectivity between other existing and planned Metro rail lines, and the value of better linkages between Union Station and downtown.

Redevelopment projects along the proposed At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative alignment stress density and pedestrian activity, both of which would be encouraged by the addition of new rail service to the area. The density and parking bonuses created by the City to encourage growth would also support new transit service by expanding the base of potential riders and adding less parking than would normally be required. Because these bonuses are contingent upon proximity to transit stations, the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would make more parcels eligible by adding new stations to the area. Transit service improvements complement relaxed parking requirements by providing alternate means of access.

The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative is consistent with the goals and policies of local land use plans, policies, and regulations. This alternative would not convert any existing land uses from construction and operation of the alignment and stations, which are primarily in and below existing roadways. In addition, implementation of the alternative could potentially generate land use benefits by supporting high-density, transit-oriented developments identified in the goals and policies of multiple local land use plans, policies, and regulations. These benefits would result from improved transit connections through downtown and increased accessibility for local residents to the Metro service area.

### 5.3.3 Cumulative Impacts

Implementation of the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would not contribute to any adverse cumulative land use effects within the project area<sup>1</sup>. The alternative would not convert any existing land uses or create any new land uses that could, in combination with any current and reasonably foreseeable related actions, generate conflicts with land uses adjacent to the alignment, or result in inconsistency or conflict with local land use plans, policies, and regulations. Therefore, the alternative's contribution to cumulative land use impacts would be less than significant.

It is anticipated that the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative and other transit projects currently underway or planned in the future would support increases in transit ridership, which would be a beneficial effect. The improved regional accessibility created by the proposed Regional Connector project and other transit projects currently underway or

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<sup>1</sup> Based on the list of anticipated developments provided in the Cumulative Impacts Methodology Memorandum

planned in the future could also support increased residential development within the project area, which would be a beneficial effect.

There are numerous commercial and residential developments planned and underway in the vicinity of the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative alignment, many of which are being built on sites currently occupied by surface parking lots. The new transit service would help offset the impacts of these land use changes by providing alternatives to driving. However, with a substantial portion of the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative alignment running in former traffic lanes on city streets, the transportation benefits to the surrounding developments may be tempered by impaired automobile and pedestrian access.

## 5.4 Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative

The Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would provide a connection between the underground 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station and the Metro Gold Line at 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets with a predominantly underground alignment. The alternative would develop multiple underground transit stations. The alignment and station locations are shown in Figure 4-1.

### 5.4.1 Potential Land Use Conflicts

As shown in Figure 4-1, the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would develop a twin tunnel underground alignment from 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station to a new tunnel portal southwest of the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets. The route mirrors the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative with the exception of the segment along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street between Main Street and the Metro Gold Line at 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets.

The General Plan land use designations of the parcels adjacent to the underground sections of this alternative's proposed route include public facilities, open space, and commercial. The zoning designations shown in Figure 4-2 for the underground sections of the alternative include public facilities, commercial, and residential.

#### 5.4.1.1 General Potential Construction Effects

Construction of the tunnels beneath Flower Street would be performed using the cut-and-cover method, where excavation would be carried out beneath a temporary roadway deck. The bulk of surface impacts would be limited to the beginning and end of the tunneling process, when temporary roadway and decking removal would be necessary. All stations would be constructed using this method except possibly the 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street station, which may be constructed using the Sequential Excavation Method (mining).

The twin tunnels under 2<sup>nd</sup> Street would be constructed using the Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) method. They would be bored from east to west from an access point excavated along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street between Central Avenue and Alameda Street to a mined or cut-and-cover section west of Bunker Hill, where the TBMs would be removed. Alternatively, the twin tunnels could

be bored in the opposite direction with the TBMs inserted near Bunker Hill and removed from 2<sup>nd</sup> between Central and Alameda.

Tunnel boring operations would not directly affect land uses that overlay the alignment, but could potentially generate ground surface settlement and indirectly affect the overlying land uses. Construction techniques minimizing the potential for ground settlement would be incorporated during operation of the TBMs. Shoring measures would be applied to foundations of structures susceptible to damage from land settlement to prevent impacts on existing land uses.

Construction techniques that could potentially be implemented to limit ground settlement include, but are not limited to, the use of pressure face TBMs. These machines maintain pressure on the new tunnel wall behind the cutting face, prior to injecting grout into the new tunnel wall, which is immediately followed by installation of concrete liners (tunnel rings). These measures limit the time that any portion of the newly cut tunnel is left unsupported and would help to prevent surface settlement. Additional grouting and foundation underpinning techniques could also be used where the alignment travels beneath or adjacent to sensitive structures and the tunnels would be close to the ground surface.

#### **5.4.1.2 Financial District**

The Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative alignment begins at the northern end of the existing light rail tracks at 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station. The alignment would proceed northward beneath Flower Street to a new station between 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets, adjacent to Citigroup Center and Paul Hastings Tower.

The existing land uses along the underground portion of the alignment through the Financial District include office towers, public open space, hotels, and other commercial and retail establishments. Notable buildings include Citigroup Center, Paul Hastings Tower, World Trade Center, Bank of America Plaza, Maguire Gardens public open space, City National Plaza and Tower, the California Club, the Standard Hotel, the Westin Bonaventure Hotel, the Pegasus apartment building, Macy's Plaza, and the parking structure beneath the Ketchum YMCA.

Construction of this underground portion of the alignment would use cut-and-cover techniques for the tunnel and new station at Flower and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets. This construction technique could generate temporary pedestrian and vehicle detours that may inhibit, but not prevent, access to existing land uses along this section of the alignment.

Station entrances would be located within widened sidewalks, necessitating removal of seven curb parking spaces and a lane of traffic. This could shift parking and traffic demand to nearby streets. There would be no significant land use impacts to the Financial District

because the alignment would be entirely underground within the right-of-way along this portion of the alignment and would not pass directly beneath any existing buildings.

#### 5.4.1.3 Bunker Hill

From the Financial District, the underground alignment would extend into the Bunker Hill area along Flower Street from the Flower/5<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Street station to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. The tunnels would then curve northeast into the proposed 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street station. From the station, the tunnels would turn eastward underneath the existing 2<sup>nd</sup> Street tunnel.

Existing land uses that this alignment would travel near include education buildings, parking lots, large auditoriums, and large residential developments. Notable sites include the Colburn School of Performing Arts, parcels currently used as parking lots that are proposed for redevelopment as a part of the Grand Avenue Redevelopment Project, the Walt Disney Concert Hall, and high-rise residential developments. It would, therefore, generate the same potential effects as construction and operation of the 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street station described for the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative.

Construction and operation of the proposed 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street station could potentially require some reconfiguration of the surrounding roadways, though this would not limit access to surrounding land uses. If an underground passageway were to be constructed from the station box to an entrance on the west side of Flower Streets, one or both of the existing private tennis courts may be displaced. However, a midblock crosswalk would be a potential at-grade solution that could create the same pedestrian connection.

The tunnels in this area would be constructed using the cut-and-cover method, thus necessitating temporary pedestrian and vehicle detours. The 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street station may alternatively be constructed using the sequential excavation method, thereby reducing surface disruption. There would be no significant land use impacts to Bunker Hill because the alignment would be entirely underground along this portion of the alignment and would not pass directly beneath any existing buildings.

#### 5.4.1.4 Historic Core

From the Bunker Hill area, the underground alignment would continue east beneath the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street tunnel and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street through the Historic Core community. A new underground station would be constructed beneath 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, either between Broadway and Spring Street or between Main and Los Angeles Streets.

Existing land uses adjacent to the Historic Core section of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street include public buildings, offices, parking, and retail. Buildings along the alignment include the Little Tokyo Library, the old Saint Vibiana Cathedral and site of the proposed Vibiana Place Mixed Use Project, the Los Angeles Times Building, the Los Angeles Law Center, the City of Los Angeles Parking Violations Bureau, and the Kawada Hotel.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Street station - Broadway Option would be adjacent to the Los Angeles Times Building. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Street station - Los Angeles Option would be developed adjacent to the “Block 8” residential and retail development currently under construction and the Kyoto Grand Hotel. Construction of a new station on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in either location is expected to use cut-and-cover techniques. This construction technique could generate temporary pedestrian and vehicle detours that may inhibit, but not prevent, access to existing land uses along this section of the alignment.

The tunnels in the Historic Core area would be constructed using the TBM method, which would result in few noticeable surface impacts aside from those associated with the cut-and-cover station. There would be no significant land use impacts to the Historic Core because the alignment would be entirely underground along this portion and would not pass directly beneath any existing buildings.

#### 5.4.1.5 Little Tokyo

From the Historic Core, the tunnels would continue east under 2<sup>nd</sup> Street into Little Tokyo. Upon reaching Central Avenue, the tunnels would curve to the northeast into the parcel bounded by 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Alameda Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, and Central Avenue. The tracks would then rise to the surface through a new portal constructed on this parcel. The alignment would then enter the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets at grade, where it would connect to the existing Metro Gold Line in a three-way junction.

The parcels where the portal would be located have commercial land use and zoning designations, as shown in Figures 4-1 and 4-2. Existing land uses on these parcels include a large warehouse-style retail establishment (Office Depot) and associated parking lot, multiple other retail establishments and restaurants, and a large parking lot at the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Central Avenue. Only the Office Depot, Starbucks, and Senor Fish businesses would need to be removed. All other businesses on the block would remain.

Ten street parking spaces would also need to be removed to accommodate the new three-way junction, which could potentially shift parking demand to nearby streets.

Construction of the portal and at-grade facilities across the parcels bounded by 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Alameda Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, and Central Avenue would require the taking of multiple retail establishments for both development of the alignment and construction staging. As required by law, affected land and business owners would be compensated for this taking with a fair market value for their land and establishments.

These commercial land uses serve adjacent residential developments and commercial developments in the neighborhood, but other existing commercial businesses in the neighborhood and available commercial space are expected to offset this loss. Permanent conversion of the Office Depot parcel to public use would be needed to accommodate the

portal. Portions of the parcels taken to support construction staging but not utilized as a part of the final alignment for operation could potentially be redeveloped after construction is completed. The tunnel portal would be considered a change in land use type, but would not conflict with adjacent land uses given the urbanized nature of the project area.

Construction of this section of the alignment would require the temporary closure of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street from Alameda Street to Central Avenue. Here, the street would be excavated in order to insert TBMs. The tunnel portal and Alameda Street underpass would be constructed using methods similar to cut-and-cover techniques.

Construction could generate temporary pedestrian and vehicle detours that may inhibit, but not prevent, access to existing land uses along this section of the alignment. The remainder of the tunnel alignment in Little Tokyo would be constructed using the TBM method, which would cause few noticeable surface impacts. Alternatively, TBMs could be inserted at the 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street station site, thus reducing construction-related impacts on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street between Alameda Street and Central Avenue.

#### **5.4.2. Potential Land Use Conflict Conclusions**

Potential land use conflicts generated by construction and operation of the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would be less than significant. As indicated by the noise analysis, there would be no significant noise impact associated with this alternative at the Savoy residential property near 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda.

The alternative would not introduce new land uses that are inconsistent with existing land uses. Construction of the tunnel portal on the parcels between the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets and the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Central Avenue would result in a few partial and full takings. Not all of the block would be acquired. With just compensation to affected landowners and business owners, the direct effect of development of the portal on land use would be less than significant. The indirect effect of these land use conversions would be less than significant given the presence of other similar commercial establishments in and around the neighborhood, and the availability of local commercial real estate for these establishments to potentially relocate.

Construction of the alternative could generate temporary pedestrian and vehicle detours that inhibit, but not prevent, access to existing land uses along the alignment. The Transportation Technical Memorandum traffic section analyzes this potential effect on circulation in the project area and concludes it would be a less than significant effect on land use.

#### **5.4.3 Policy Consistency**

The Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative is proposed within the Central City Community Plan area and would be subject to numerous plans and development regulations. The

Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative is consistent with the stated General Plan goal of focusing growth toward existing high density areas, including downtown Los Angeles, by enhancing Los Angeles County's rail system. It is also consistent with the Transportation Element's support of high-capacity transit service between Union Station and the Metro Blue Line.

The Central City Community Plan encourages high-density, transit-oriented land uses and recommends improvements to transit connections through downtown from the 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station to Union Station to address pass-through traffic congestion. The Civic Center Shared Facilities and Enhancement Plan and the Feasibility Study for the Resurrection of the Red Car Trolley Services in the Los Angeles Area identified goals of improving transit connectivity between other existing and planned Metro Rail lines and the value of better linkages between Union Station and downtown. Additionally, the redevelopment projects along the proposed alignment stress density and pedestrian activity, both of which would be encouraged by the addition of new rail service to the area.

The density and parking bonuses created by the City to encourage growth would also be supportive of new transit service by expanding the base of potential riders while adding less parking than would normally be required. Because these bonuses are contingent upon proximity to transit stations, the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would make more parcels eligible by adding new stations to the area. Transit service improvements complement relaxed parking requirements by providing alternative means of access.

The Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative is not inconsistent with the goals and policies of local land use plans, policies, and regulations. The alternative would result in the conversion of existing land uses at the new tunnel portal on parcels between the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets and the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Central Avenue.

Some of the parcels will be utilized for construction staging and could potentially, after completion of the alignment, be redeveloped with the same land use types as the establishments being displaced. Land uses permanently converted during the development of the alignment could be offset by the abundance of underutilized similar land uses in the neighborhood adjacent to the tunnel portal and throughout the project area.

Implementation of the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative has the potential to generate land use benefits by supporting high-density, transit-oriented development as identified in the goals and policies of multiple local land use plans, policies, and regulations. These benefits could occur by improved transit connections through downtown and increased accessibility for local residents to the Metro service area. As a result, land use impacts associated with this alternative would be less than significant.

#### 5.4.4 Cumulative Impacts

Implementation of the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would not contribute to any adverse cumulative land use effects within the project area. The alternative would not create any new land uses that could, in combination with any current and reasonably foreseeable related actions, generate conflicts with land uses adjacent to the alignment, or result in inconsistency or conflict with local land use plans, policies, and regulations.

Some land uses would be converted, but not in ways that are inconsistent with current land use plans or incompatible with the surrounding areas. Future developments on these parcels could also integrate with nearby rail stations to encourage transit supportive land uses, community growth, and increased transit ridership. Therefore, the alternative's contribution to cumulative land use impacts would be less than significant.

It is anticipated that the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative and other transit projects currently underway or planned in the future would support increases in transit ridership, which would be a beneficial effect. The alignment passes near several potential development sites, and plans for these sites include high-density employment and residential facilities. The Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative—combined with other projects—could also support increases in residential development within the project area, which would also be a beneficial effect.

There are numerous commercial and residential developments planned and underway in the vicinity of the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative alignment, many of which are being built on sites currently occupied by surface parking lots. The new transit service would help to offset the impacts of these land use changes by providing alternatives to driving to access these sites.

### 5.5 Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1

Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would provide a connection between the underground 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station and the Metro Gold Line at 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets with an all-underground alignment. West of Central Avenue, the alternative would be identical to the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative – 2<sup>nd</sup> Street station - Broadway Option (The 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Station - Los Angeles Street option is not included in Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1). The alignment and station locations of Fully Underground LRT Alternative - Little Tokyo Variation 1 are shown in Figure 4-1.

#### 5.5.1 Potential Land Use Conflicts

As shown in Figure 4-1, Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would develop a twin tunnel underground alignment from 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station to two new tunnel portals: one northeast of the intersection of Temple and Alameda Streets, and one on 1<sup>st</sup> Street between Alameda and Garey Streets. The route differs from the Underground



Emphasis LRT Alternative at 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets, where a junction would be built underground instead of at grade. An additional underground station on the block bounded by 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Central Avenue, 1<sup>st</sup> Street, and Alameda Street would also be added with Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1.

The General Plan land use designations of the parcels adjacent to the underground sections of this alternative's proposed route include public facilities, open space, industrial manufacturing, and commercial. The zoning designations shown in Figure 4-2 for the underground sections of the alternative include public facilities, industrial manufacturing, commercial, and residential.

#### **5.5.1.1 General Potential Construction Effects**

The tunnels beneath Flower Street would be constructed using the cut-and-cover method, where excavation would occur beneath a temporary roadway deck. The bulk of surface impacts would be limited to the beginning and end of the tunneling process, when temporary roadway and decking removal would be necessary. All stations would be constructed using this method except possibly the 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street station, which may be constructed using the Sequential Excavation Method (mining).

Construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would generally be the same as the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative, with the following exceptions. The 2<sup>nd</sup>/Central Avenue Station, due to its off-street location, would be constructed using the open-cut method, which is similar to cut-and-cover, but does not include the temporary roadway deck.

The junction beneath the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets, as well as the tunnels beneath 1<sup>st</sup> and Temple Streets, would be constructed using the cut-and-cover method. The tunnel on the Nikkei parcel northeast of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets, as well as the portal near Temple and Alameda Streets, would be constructed using the open-cut method. The portal in the median of 1<sup>st</sup> Street would be constructed using either the open-cut or cut-and-cover method.

#### **5.5.1.2 Financial District**

The effects and alignment of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 in the Financial District would be identical to those for the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative.

#### **5.5.1.3 Bunker Hill**

The effects and alignment of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 in the Bunker Hill area would be identical to those for the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative.

#### 5.5.1.4 Historic Core

The effects and alignment of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 in the Historic Core area would be identical to those for the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street station - Broadway Station Option. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Street station - Los Angeles Street Station Option is not part of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1.

#### 5.5.1.5 Little Tokyo and Arts District

From the Historic Core, the alignment tunnels would continue east under 2<sup>nd</sup> Street into Little Tokyo. Upon reaching Central Avenue, the alignment tunnels would curve to the northeast, with tracks arriving at a new underground station located beneath the block bounded by 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Alameda Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, and Central Avenue. The alignment would then continue into a new underground junction beneath the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets. The alignment would then split and trains would rise to the surface through one of two portals:

1. A portal northeast of Temple and Alameda Streets connecting to the existing LRT bridge over US 101, which would allow trains to continue along the Metro Gold Line tracks to Azusa via Pasadena
2. A portal in the median of 1<sup>st</sup> Street between Alameda and Garey Streets, which would connect to the existing Metro Gold Line tracks heading east over the 1<sup>st</sup> Street Bridge.

A small structure on the southwest corner of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets may need to be constructed to house station ventilation equipment. However, this structure could potentially be incorporated into a future development and would not be large enough to disrupt the surrounding land uses.

The existing land uses where the 2<sup>nd</sup>/Central Avenue station would be located include a large warehouse-style retail establishment (Office Depot) and associated parking lot, multiple other retail establishments and restaurants, and a large parking lot at the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Central Avenue. Metro has identified the entire block for acquisition to stage construction and build a new underground station, station entrances, and ancillary facilities, and could potentially utilize the site for launching tunnel boring machines and transporting material from the tunnels.

Metro intends to maintain some of the existing business acquired on Central Avenue between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Streets that are not directly impacted by construction activities. Acquisition of the entire block would represent a worst-case scenario. Potential reductions in acquisition may occur based on further engineering analysis during the preliminary engineering and final design stages. Because these acquisitions are primarily for construction staging purposes, some of the displaced land uses may potentially be returned after construction is finished.

This alternative would not necessarily cause permanent conversion of all of the land uses on this block.

Construction of the portal on 1<sup>st</sup> Street would require a portion of the vacant Nikkei parcel, located on the northeast corner of the intersection, to be acquired for street widening. Construction of the portal near Temple and Alameda Streets would require part of the Department of Water and Power facility located east of and adjacent to Alameda Street between Temple and Commercial Streets. However, these acquisitions would not affect enough of either parcel to alter or diminish the quality of the current and planned land uses. Sidewalks in the area may be narrowed slightly, but not enough to affect pedestrian access to any of the surrounding parcels.

As required by law and discussed in the Displacement and Relocation Technical Memorandum, affected land and business owners would be compensated for this taking with a fair market value for their land and establishments. These commercial land uses serve adjacent residential developments and commercial developments in the neighborhood, but other existing commercial businesses in the neighborhood and available commercial space are expected to offset this loss.

Permanent conversion of the Office Depot parcel to public transit use would be needed to accommodate the new 2<sup>nd</sup>/Central Avenue station. Portions of the parcels taken to support construction staging but not utilized as a part of the final alignment for operation could potentially be redeveloped after completion of construction. The tunnel portals and underground stations would be considered a change in land use type, but would not conflict with adjacent land uses given the urbanized nature of the project area.

Construction of this section of the alignment would require temporary closure of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street from Alameda Street to Central Avenue, where the street would be excavated to insert TBMs. The rail junction beneath Alameda Street would be constructed using the cut-and-cover method. The tunnel crossing beneath Temple Street just east of Alameda Street would also be constructed using the cut-and-cover method.

These construction actions could generate temporary pedestrian and vehicle detours that may inhibit, but not prevent, access to existing land uses along this section of the alignment. The tunnel alignment beneath the Nikkei parcel would be constructed using the open-cut method because it is in an off-street location where a temporary deck is not needed to maintain street traffic flow. The remainder of the tunnel alignment in Little Tokyo would be constructed using the TBM method, which would cause few noticeable surface impacts. Alternatively, the TBMs could be inserted at the 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street station site, thus reducing construction-related impacts on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street between Alameda Street and Central Avenue.

### 5.5.2. Potential Land Use Conflict Conclusions

Potential land use conflicts generated by construction and operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 are expected to be less than significant. As indicated by the noise analysis, there would be no noticeable noise impact associated with this alternative at the Savoy residential property near 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda. The alternative would not introduce new land uses that are inconsistent with existing land uses.

Attempts will be made to reduce the number of acquisitions. The entire block between the intersections of 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Alameda Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, and Central Avenue would be acquired, though Metro intends to maintain some of the existing business acquired on Central Avenue between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Streets. Portions of the Nikkei and Department of Water and Power sites would need to be acquired to accommodate new portals and tunnels.

With just compensation to affected landowners and business owners, the direct effect of development of the new portals and stations on land use would be less than significant. The indirect effect of these land use conversions would also be less than significant given the presence of other similar commercial establishments in and around the neighborhood and the availability of local commercial real estate for these establishments to potentially relocate.

Land use conversion may not be permanent because portions of the acquired land would be available for development after underground construction is complete, and existing land uses could potentially be restored. Construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 could generate temporary pedestrian and vehicle detours that inhibit, but not prevent, access to existing land uses along the alignment. The Transportation Technical Memorandum traffic section analyzes this potential effect on circulation in the project area and concludes it would be a less than significant effect on land use.

The portal in the widened median of 1<sup>st</sup> Street would be near several parcels with sensitive land uses, including multi-unit residential buildings and the Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple. However, there are already at-grade light rail tracks in the median of 1<sup>st</sup> Street, and reconfiguration of these tracks into a portal would not introduce any new inconsistency or incompatibility with the surrounding land uses.

### 5.5.3 Policy Consistency

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 is proposed within the Central City Community Plan area and the Central City North Community Plan Area, and would be subject to numerous plans and development regulations. This alternative is consistent with the stated General Plan goal of focusing growth toward existing high density areas, including downtown Los Angeles, by enhancing Los Angeles County's rail system.

Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 is also consistent with the Transportation Element's support of high-capacity transit service between Union Station and the Metro Blue Line. The Central City Community Plan encourages high-density, transit-oriented land uses and recommends improvements to transit connections through downtown from the 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station to Union Station to address pass-through traffic congestion.

The Civic Center Shared Facilities and Enhancement Plan and Feasibility Study for the Resurrection of the Red Car Trolley Services in the Los Angeles Area identified goals of improving transit connectivity between other existing and planned Metro Rail lines and the value of better linkages between Union Station and downtown. Additionally, the redevelopment projects along the proposed alignment stress density and pedestrian activity, both of which would be encouraged by the addition of new rail service to the area.

The density and parking bonuses created by the City to encourage growth would also be supportive of new transit service by expanding the base of potential riders while adding less parking than would normally be required. Because these bonuses are contingent upon proximity to transit stations, Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would make more parcels eligible by adding new stations to the area. Transit service improvements complement relaxed parking requirements by providing alternate means of access.

Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 is not inconsistent with goals and policies of local land use plans, policies, and regulations. The alternative would convert existing land uses at the new underground station on the parcels between the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets and the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Central Avenue, as well as the new portals and tunnels on and around the Nikkei site and the Department of Water and Power facility. Some of the parcels will be utilized for construction staging and could potentially, after completion of the alignment, be redeveloped with the same land use types as the establishments being displaced.

Land uses permanently converted during construction of the alignment could be offset by the abundance of underutilized similar land uses in the neighborhood adjacent to the tunnel portal and throughout the project area. In addition, implementing this alternative has the potential to generate land use benefits by supporting high-density, transit-oriented development as identified in goals and policies of multiple local land use plans, policies, and regulations. These benefits would occur by improved transit connections through downtown and increased accessibility for local residents to the Metro service area.

The 2<sup>nd</sup>/Central Avenue station would be located across from the proposed Nikkei development, a multi-story project that will potentially include retail stores, offices, community services, and residential units. The collocation of the station and the Nikkei

development around the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets creates the potential for a transit-oriented development that would enhance pedestrian activity in the neighborhood and foster transit ridership. This effect is strengthened by the possibility of placing a station entrance on the Nikkei property.

The 2<sup>nd</sup>/Central Avenue station would also enhance the connection between both sides of Alameda Street, where the wide roadway and heavy traffic currently impedes pedestrian connectivity. This is consistent with the goals of the Little Tokyo Redevelopment Plan, the Central City Community Plan, and the Central City North Community Plan, all of which encourage greater transit and pedestrian use of the neighborhood, as well as economic growth.

The 2<sup>nd</sup>/Central Avenue station would also support the Community Redevelopment Agency (goal of increasing pedestrian use of Alameda Street, which was expressed during the project scoping period. Given the above, this alternative would not result in a significant effect to land uses.

#### **5.5.4 Cumulative Impacts**

Implementation of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would not contribute to any adverse cumulative land use effects within the project area. The alternative would not create any new land uses that could, in combination with any current and reasonably foreseeable related actions, generate conflicts with land uses adjacent to the alignment, or result in inconsistency or conflict with local land use plans, policies, and regulations.

Some land uses would be converted, but not in ways that are inconsistent with current land use plans or incompatible with the surrounding areas. Future developments on these parcels could also integrate with nearby rail stations to encourage transit supportive land uses, transit-oriented development, community growth, and increased transit ridership. Therefore, the alternative's contribution to cumulative land use impacts would be less than significant.

It is anticipated that the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 and other transit projects currently underway or planned in the future would support increases in transit ridership, which is considered a beneficial effect. The alignment passes near several potential development sites, and plans for these sites include high-density employment and residential facilities. The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1—combined with other projects—could also support increases in residential development within the project area, which would also be a beneficial effect.

There are numerous commercial and residential developments planned and underway in the vicinity of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 alignment, many of which are being built on sites currently occupied by surface parking lots. The new transit

service would help offset the impacts of these land use changes by providing alternatives to driving to access these sites.

## 5.6 Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would provide a connection between the underground 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station and the Metro Gold Line at 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets with an all-underground alignment. West of Central Avenue, this alternative would be identical to the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative 2nd Street station – Broadway Station Option (The 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Station - Los Angeles Option is not included in the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2). The alignment and station locations of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 are shown in Figure 4-1.

### 5.6.1 Potential Land Use Conflicts

As indicated in Figure 4-1, the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would develop a twin tunnel underground alignment from 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station to three new tunnel portals: one double-track portal northeast of the intersection of Temple and Alameda Streets, and two narrower single-track portals on 1<sup>st</sup> Street between Alameda and Vignes Streets.

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 alignment differs from the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative at 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets, where a two-level junction would be built entirely underground instead of a single-level junction at-grade. An additional two-level underground station on the block bounded by 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Central Avenue, 1<sup>st</sup> Street, and Alameda Street would also be added.

The General Plan land use designations of the parcels adjacent to the underground sections of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 proposed route include public facilities, open space, industrial manufacturing, and commercial. The zoning designations shown in Figure 4-2 for the underground sections of the alternative include public facilities, industrial manufacturing, commercial, and residential.

#### 5.6.1.1 General Potential Construction Effects

The tunnels beneath Flower Street would be constructed using the cut-and-cover method, where excavation would occur beneath a temporary roadway deck. The bulk of surface impacts would be limited to the beginning and end of the tunneling process, when temporary roadway and decking removal would be necessary.

All stations would be constructed using the cut-and-cover method except possibly the 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street station, which may be constructed using the Sequential Excavation Method (mining). Construction of this alternative would generally be the same as the Underground

Emphasis LRT Alternative, with the following exceptions. The two-level underground 2<sup>nd</sup> Street/Central Avenue station, due to its off-street location, would be constructed using the open-cut method, which is similar to cut-and-cover but does not include the temporary roadway deck.

The two-level junction beneath the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets, as well as the tunnels beneath 1<sup>st</sup> and Temple Streets, would be constructed using the cut-and-cover method. The tunnel on the parcel northeast of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets, as well as the portal near Temple and Alameda Streets, would be constructed using the open-cut method. The two single-track portals in the median of 1<sup>st</sup> Street would be constructed using either the open-cut or cut-and-cover method.

#### **5.6.1.2 Financial District**

Effects and alignment of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 in the Financial District would be identical to those for the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative.

#### **5.6.1.3 Bunker Hill**

Effects and alignment of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 in the Bunker Hill area would be identical to those for the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative.

#### **5.6.1.4 Historic Core**

Effects and alignment of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 in the Historic Core area would be identical to those for the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative with the Broadway Station Option selected. The Los Angeles Street Station Option is not part of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2.

#### **5.6.1.5 Little Tokyo and Arts District**

From the Historic Core, the alignment tunnels would continue east under 2<sup>nd</sup> Street into Little Tokyo. Upon reaching Central Avenue, the alignment tunnels would curve, with tracks arriving at a new station to the northeast into the parcel bounded by 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Alameda Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, and Central Avenue. The tracks would then enter a new two-level 2<sup>nd</sup>/Central Avenue underground station located beneath this parcel. The alignment would then continue into a new two-level underground junction beneath the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets. The alignment would then split and trains would rise to the surface through one of three portals:

1. A double-track portal northeast of Temple and Alameda Streets connecting to the existing LRT bridge over US 101 to allow trains to continue along the Metro Gold Line tracks to Azusa via Pasadena



2. Narrower single-track portals in the median of 1<sup>st</sup> Street between Alameda and Vignes Streets connecting to the existing Metro Gold Line tracks heading east over the 1<sup>st</sup> Street Bridge toward I-605 via East Los Angeles

A small structure on the southwest corner of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets intersection may need to be constructed for station ventilation equipment. However, this structure could potentially be incorporated into a future development and would not be large enough to disrupt the surrounding land uses.

Figures 4-1 and 4-2 show commercial land use and zoning designations for the parcels where the 2<sup>nd</sup>/Central Avenue station would be located. Existing land uses on these parcels include a large warehouse-style retail establishment (Office Depot) and associated parking lot, multiple other retail establishments and restaurants, and a large parking lot at the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Central Avenue.

Metro has identified the entire block for acquisition to stage construction and build a new underground station, station entrances, and ancillary facilities, and may potentially utilize the site for launching tunnel boring machines and transporting material from the tunnels. Metro intends to maintain some of the existing businesses acquired on Central Avenue between 1st and 2nd that are not directly impacted by construction activities. Acquiring the entire block would represent a worst-case scenario.

Potential reductions in acquisition may occur based on further engineering analysis during preliminary engineering and final design stages. Some of the displaced land uses may potentially be returned after construction is finished because they would be primarily for construction staging purposes. Thus, this alternative would not necessarily cause permanent conversion of all of the land uses on this block.

Construction of the portal on 1<sup>st</sup> Street would require a portion of the vacant Nikkei parcel located on the northeast corner of the intersection to be acquired for street widening. Construction of the portal near Temple and Alameda Streets would require a partial take of the Department of Water and Power facility located east of Alameda Street between Temple and Commercial Streets. However, these acquisitions would not affect either parcel enough to alter or diminish the quality of the current and planned land uses. Sidewalks in the area may be narrowed slightly, but not enough to affect pedestrian access to any of the surrounding parcels.

As required by law and discussed in the Displacement and Relocation Technical Memorandum, affected land and business owners would be compensated for this taking with a fair market value for their land and establishments. These commercial land uses serve adjacent residential developments and commercial developments in the neighborhood, but

other existing commercial businesses and available local commercial space are expected to offset this loss.

Permanent conversion of the Office Depot parcel to public transit use would be needed to accommodate the new 2<sup>nd</sup>/Central Avenue station. Portions of the parcels taken to support construction staging, but not utilized as a part of the final alignment for operation, could potentially be redeveloped after construction is completed. The tunnel portals and underground stations would be considered a change in land use type, but would not conflict with adjacent land uses given the urbanized nature of the project area. Therefore, land use impacts with respect to this alternative would be less than significant.

Construction of this section of the alignment would require temporary closure of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street from Alameda Street to Central Avenue, where the street would be excavated to insert TBMs. The rail junction beneath Alameda Street would be constructed using the cut-and-cover method. The tunnel crossing beneath Temple Street just east of Alameda Street would also be constructed using the cut-and-cover method. This construction could generate temporary pedestrian and vehicle detours that may inhibit, but not prevent, access to existing land uses along this section of the alignment.

Tunnel alignment beneath the Nikkei parcel would be constructed using the open-cut method because it is in an off-street location where a temporary deck is not needed to maintain street traffic flow. The remainder of the tunnel alignment in Little Tokyo would be constructed using the TBM method, which would cause few noticeable surface impacts. Alternately, the TBMs could be inserted at the proposed 2<sup>nd</sup>/Hope Street station site, thus reducing construction-related impacts on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street between Alameda Street and Central Avenue.

### 5.6.2. Potential Land Use Conflict Conclusions

Potential land use conflicts generated by construction and operation of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would be less than significant. As indicated by the noise analysis, there would be no noticeable noise impact associated with this alternative at the Savoy residential property near 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda.

This alternative would not introduce new land uses that are inconsistent with existing land uses. Attempts would be made to reduce the number of acquisitions during design stages of the project.

The entire block between the intersections of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda and 2<sup>nd</sup> and Central Avenue could be acquired, though not all businesses would be displaced. Metro intends to maintain some of the existing businesses acquired on Central Avenue between 1st and 2nd that are not directly impacted by construction activities. Acquisition of the entire block would represent a worst-case scenario.

Portions of the Nikkei and Department of Water and Power sites would need to be acquired to accommodate new portals and tunnels. With just compensation to affected landowners and business owners, the direct effect of developing new portals and stations on land use would be less than significant.

The indirect effect of these land use conversions would also be less than significant given the presence of other similar commercial establishments in and around the neighborhood and the availability of local commercial real estate for these establishments to potentially relocate. Land use conversion may not be permanent because portions of the acquired land would be available for development after underground construction is complete, and existing land uses could potentially be restored.

Construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 could generate temporary pedestrian and vehicle detours that inhibit, but not prevent, access to existing land uses along the alignment. The Transportation Technical Memorandum traffic section analyzes this potential effect on circulation in the project area and concludes it would be a less than significant effect on land use.

The portal in the widened median of 1<sup>st</sup> Street would be near several parcels with sensitive land uses, including multi-unit residential buildings and the Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple. However, there are already at-grade light rail tracks in the median of 1<sup>st</sup> Street, and reconfiguration of these tracks into a portal would not introduce any inconsistency or incompatibility with the surrounding land uses.

Portions of two privately owned parcels on the south side of 1<sup>st</sup> Street between Hewitt and Garey Streets would need to be acquired to accommodate roadway relocation. These parcels are developed, but the area to be acquired is currently used for parking or vacant space. Therefore, no significant land use change or incompatibility would occur.

### 5.6.3 Policy Consistency

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 is proposed within the Central City Community Plan area and Central City North Community Plan Area, and would be subject to numerous plans and development regulations. This alternative is consistent with the stated General Plan goal of focusing growth toward existing high density areas, including downtown Los Angeles, by enhancing Los Angeles County's rail system. It is also consistent with the Transportation Element's support of high-capacity transit service between Union Station and the Metro Blue Line.

The Central City Community Plan encourages high-density, transit-oriented land uses and recommends improvements to transit connections through downtown from the 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Metro Center Station to Union Station to address pass-through traffic congestion. The Civic Center Shared Facilities and Enhancement Plan and Feasibility Study for the

Resurrection of the Red Car Trolley Services in the Los Angeles Area identified goals of improving transit connectivity between other existing and planned Metro Rail lines and the value of better linkages between Union Station and downtown. Additionally, the redevelopment projects along the proposed alignment stress density and pedestrian activity, both of which would be encouraged by the addition of new rail service to the area.

The density and parking bonuses created by the City to encourage growth would also be supportive of new transit service by expanding the base of potential riders while adding less parking than would normally be required. Because these bonuses are contingent upon proximity to transit stations, the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would make more parcels eligible by adding new stations to the area. Transit service improvements complement relaxed parking requirements by providing alternative means of access.

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 is not inconsistent with the goals and policies of local land use plans, policies, and regulations. This alternative would convert existing land uses at the new underground station on the parcels between the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets and the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Central Avenue, as well as the new portals and tunnels on and around the Nikkei site and the Department of Water and Power facility.

Some of the parcels will be utilized for construction staging and could potentially, after completion of the alignment, be redeveloped with the same land use types as the establishments being displaced. Land uses permanently converted during the development of the alignment could be offset by the abundance of underutilized similar land uses in the neighborhood adjacent to the tunnel portal and throughout the project area.

Implementation of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 has the potential to generate beneficial land use impacts by supporting the high-density, transit-oriented development identified in the goals and policies of multiple local land use plans, policies, and regulations. These benefits would occur by improved transit connections through downtown and increased accessibility for local residents to the Metro service area.

The 2<sup>nd</sup>/Central Avenue station would be located across from the proposed Nikkei development, a multi-story project that will potentially include retail stores, offices, community services, and residential units. The collocation of the station and the Nikkei development around the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and Alameda Streets creates the potential for a transit-oriented development that would enhance pedestrian activity in the neighborhood and foster transit ridership. This effect is strengthened by the possibility of placing a station entrance on the Nikkei property. This would enhance the connection between both sides of Alameda Street, where the wide roadway and heavy traffic currently impede pedestrian activity.

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 is consistent with the goals of the Little Tokyo Redevelopment Plan, the Central City Community Plan, and the Central City North Community Plan, all of which encourage greater transit and pedestrian use of the neighborhood, as well as economic growth. This alternative is also consistent with the CRA goal expressed during scoping to increase pedestrian use of Alameda Street.

#### 5.6.4 Cumulative Impacts

Implementation of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would not contribute to any adverse cumulative land use effects within the project area. This alternative would not create any new land uses that could, in combination with any current and reasonably foreseeable related actions, generate conflicts with land uses adjacent to the alignment, or result in inconsistency or conflict with local land use plans, policies, and regulations.

Some land uses would be converted, but not in ways that are inconsistent with current land use plans or incompatible with the surrounding areas. Future developments on these parcels could also integrate with nearby rail stations to encourage transit-supportive land uses, transit-oriented development, community growth, and increased transit ridership. Therefore, the alternative's contribution to cumulative land use impacts would be less than significant.

It is anticipated that the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 and other transit projects currently underway or planned in the future would support increases in transit ridership, which is considered a beneficial effect. The alignment passes near several potential development sites, and plans for these sites include high-density employment and residential facilities.

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 combined with other projects could also support increases in residential development within the project area, which would also be a beneficial effect.

There are numerous commercial and residential developments planned and underway in the vicinity of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2, many of which are being built on sites currently occupied by surface parking lots. The new transit service would help offset the impacts of these land use changes by providing alternatives to driving to access these sites.



## 6.0 POTENTIAL MITIGATION MEASURES

No significant land use impacts in the project vicinity would occur from implementing any of the six Regional Connector Transit Corridor project alternatives. As such, mitigation measures are not required.

The only mitigation available for the adverse land use impacts associated with the No Build and TSM alternatives is construction of one of the build alternatives.

Any property acquired during the course of the Regional Connector Transit Corridor project that is retained after completion of construction would be developed in accordance with Metro's joint development program and consistent with community input.





## **7.0 CONCLUSIONS**

### **7.1 No Build Alternative**

There would be no potential adverse impacts to land use in the project area from the No Build Alternative.

### **7.2 TSM Alternative**

There would be no potential adverse impacts to land use in the project area from the TSM Alternative.

### **7.3 At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative**

There would be no potential adverse impacts to land use in the project area from the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative.

### **7.4 Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative**

There would be no potential adverse impacts to land use in the project area from the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative.

### **7.5 Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1**

There would be no potential adverse impacts to land use in the project area from the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1.

### **7.4 Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2**

There would be no potential adverse impacts to land use in the project area from the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2.



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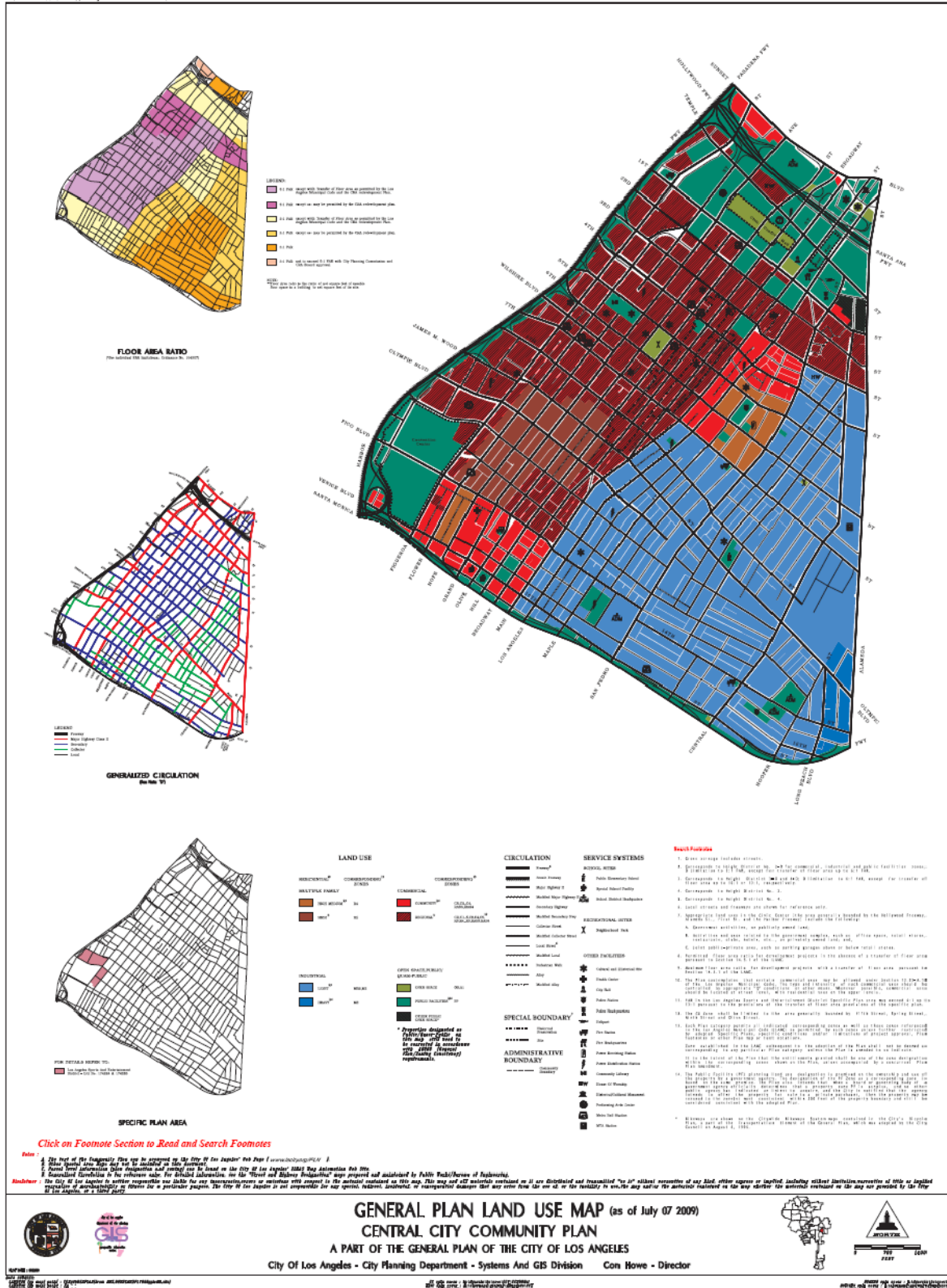
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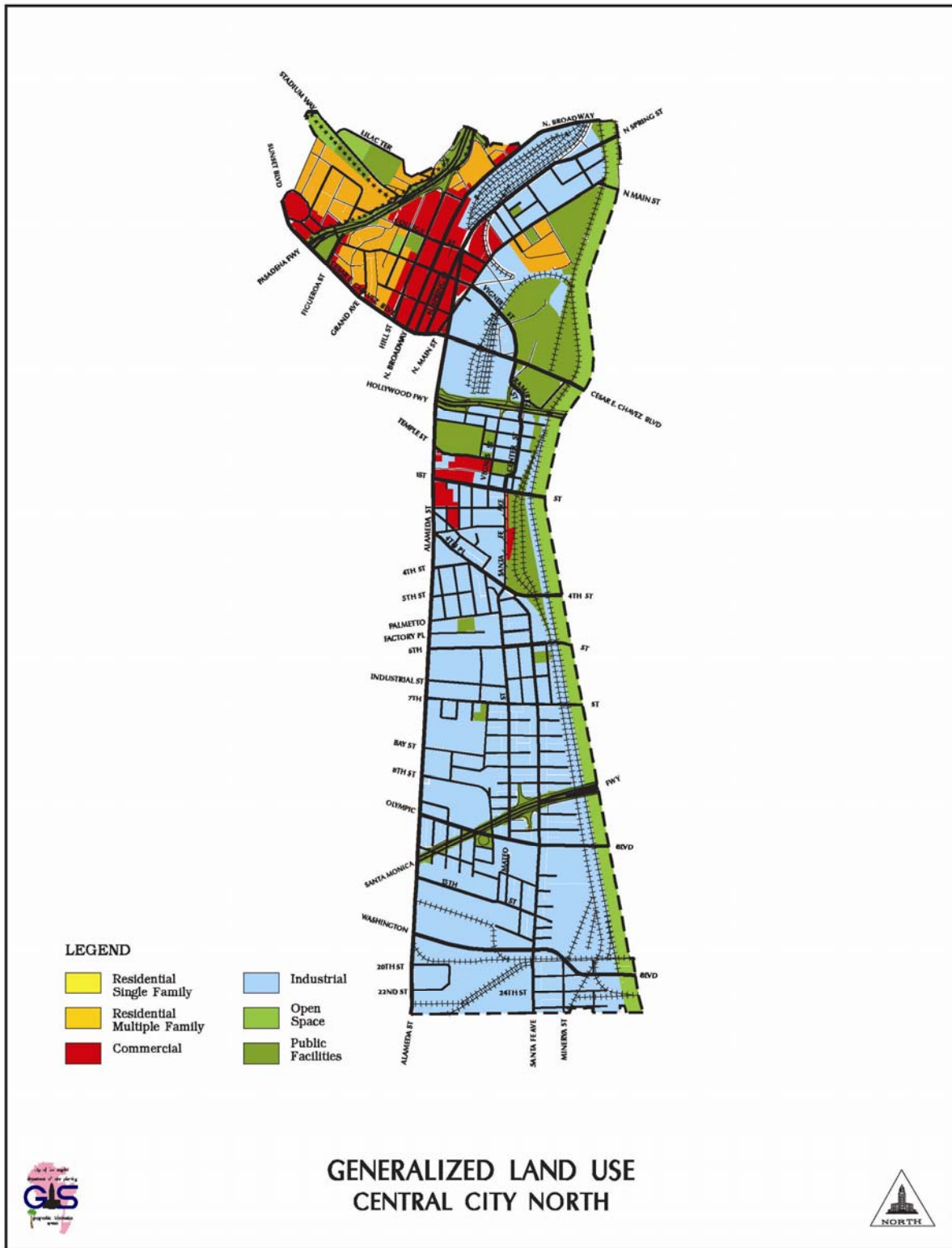


# APPENDIX A GENERAL PLAN LAND USE MAPS



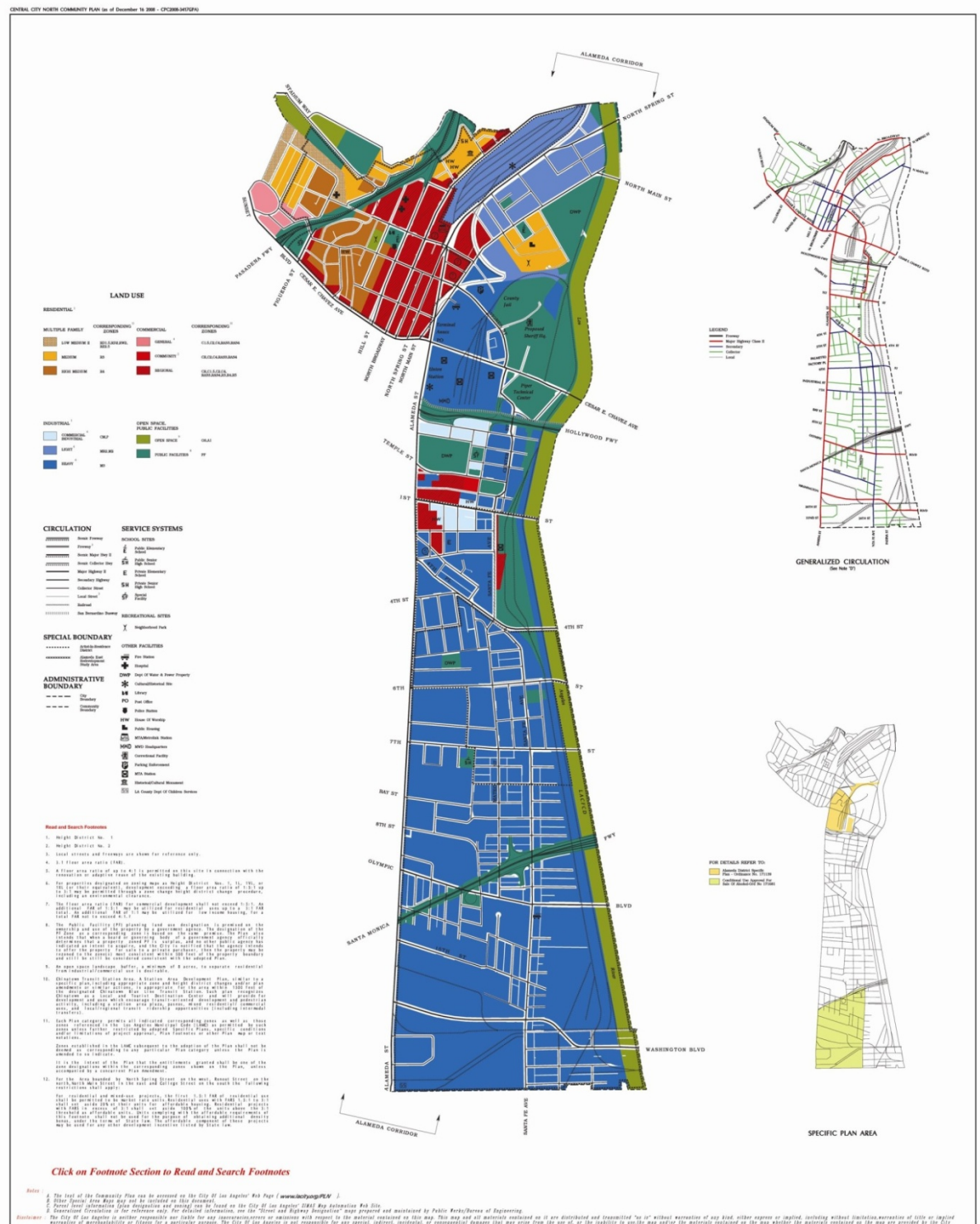
CENTRAL CITY COMMUNITY PLAN (as of July 07 2009) - COMMERCIAL





as of December 16 2008-CRC2008-0417/GFA PLT/02/12/09





**GENERAL PLAN LAND USE MAP** (as of December 16 2008)  
**CENTRAL CITY NORTH COMMUNITY PLAN**  
 A PART OF THE GENERAL PLAN OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
 City of Los Angeles - City Planning Department - Systems And GIS Division     Con Howe - Director

