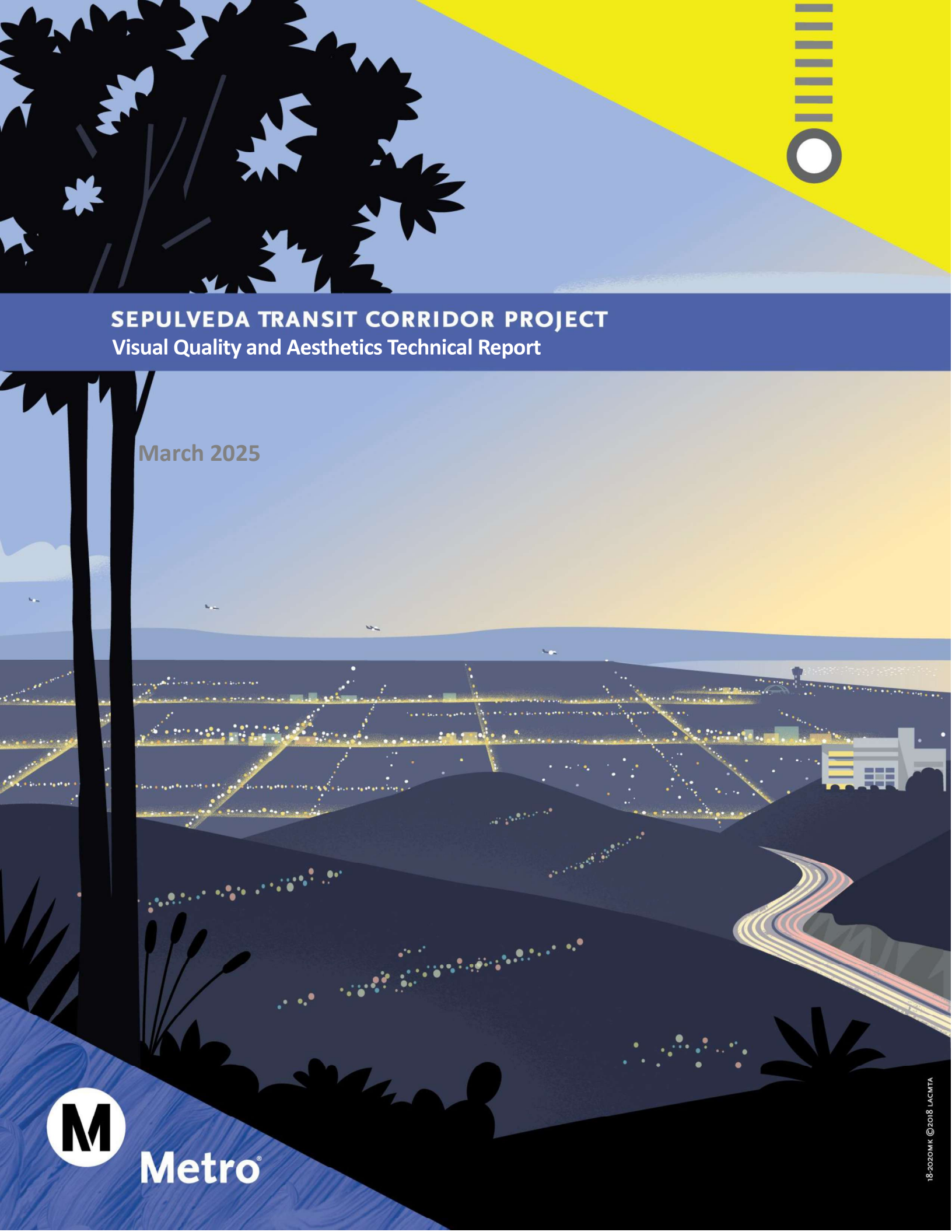
Appendix T. Visual Quality and Aesthetics Technical Report

SEPULVEDA TRANSIT CORRIDOR PROJECT

Visual Quality and Aesthetics Technical Report

March 2025



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SEPULVEDA TRANSIT CORRIDOR PROJECT

Contract No. AE67085000

Visual Quality and Aesthetics Technical Report

Task 5.24.11

Prepared for:

Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABC	Accelerated Bridge Construction
APM	automated people mover
BRT	bus rapid transit
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CIDH	cast-in-drilled-hole
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTIP	Federal Transportation Improvement Program
HRT	heavy rail transit
HTA	HTA Partners
I-10	Interstate 10
I-405	Interstate 405
KOP	key observation point
LA	Los Angeles
LADPW	Los Angeles Department of Public Works
LADWP	City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
LAMC	Los Angeles Municipal Code
LASRE	LA SkyRail Express
LAX	Los Angeles International Airport
LOSSAN	Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo
LRT	light rail transit
LU	landscape unit
Metro	Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
MM	mitigation measure
MOW	maintenance-of-way
MRCA	Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority
MRT	monorail transit
MSF	maintenance and storage facility
MSPSP	Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan
MVP	major vista points
NOP	Notice of Preparation
Project	Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project
ROW	right-of-way
RSA	Resource Study Area
RTP/SCS	Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCORE	Southern California Optimized Rail Expansion
SMMC	Santa Monica Municipal Code
SR-1	State Route 1
SR-27	State Route 27
STCP	Sepulveda Transit Corridor Partners
TBM	tunnel boring machine
TPSS	traction power substation
UCLA	University of California, Los Angeles
US	United States
US-101	U.S. Highway 101
VA	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Valley	San Fernando Valley

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

The Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project (Project) is intended to provide a high-capacity rail transit alternative to serve the large and growing travel market and transit needs currently channeled through the Sepulveda Pass and nearby canyon roads between the San Fernando Valley (Valley) and the Westside of Los Angeles. The Project would have a northern terminus with a connection to the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station and a southern terminus with a connection to the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (Metro) E Line. In addition to providing local and regional connections to the existing and future Metro rail and bus network, the Project is anticipated to improve access to major employment, educational, and cultural centers in the greater Los Angeles area.

In 2019, Metro completed the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Feasibility Study and released the Project's *Final Feasibility Report* (Metro, 2019), which documented the transportation conditions and travel patterns in the Sepulveda corridor; identified mobility problems affecting travel between the Valley and the Westside; and defined the Purpose and Need, goals, and objectives of the Project. Using an iterative evaluation process, the Feasibility Study identified feasible transit solutions that met the Purpose and Need, goals, and objectives of the Project. The Feasibility Study determined that a reliable, high-capacity, fixed guideway transit system connecting the Valley to the Westside could be constructed along several different alignments. Such a transit system, operated as either heavy rail transit (HRT) or monorail transit (MRT), would serve the major travel markets in the Sepulveda Transit corridor and would provide travel times competitive with the automobile.

1.2 Project Alternatives

In November 2021, Metro released a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, for the Project that included six alternatives (Metro, 2021a). Alternatives 1 through 5 included a southern terminus station at the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, and Alternative 6 included a southern terminus station at the Metro E Line Expo/Bundy Station. The alternatives were described in the NOP as follows:

- Alternative 1: Monorail with aerial alignment in the Interstate 405 (I-405) corridor and an electric bus connection to the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)
- Alternative 2: Monorail with aerial alignment in the I-405 corridor and an aerial automated people mover connection to UCLA
- Alternative 3: Monorail with aerial alignment in the I-405 corridor and underground alignment between the Getty Center and Wilshire Boulevard
- Alternative 4: Heavy rail with underground alignment south of Ventura Boulevard and aerial alignment generally along Sepulveda Boulevard in the San Fernando Valley
- Alternative 5: Heavy rail with underground alignment including along Sepulveda Boulevard in the San Fernando Valley
- Alternative 6: Heavy rail with underground alignment including along Van Nuys Boulevard in the San Fernando Valley and a southern terminus station on Bundy Drive

The NOP also stated that Metro is considering a No Project Alternative that would not include constructing a fixed guideway line. Metro established a public comment period of 74 days, extending from November 30, 2021, through February 11, 2022. Following the public comment period, refinements to the alternatives were made to address comments received. Further refinements to optimize the designs and address technical challenges of the alternatives were made in 2023 following two rounds of community open houses.

In July 2024, following community meetings held in May 2024, Alternative 2 was removed from further consideration in the environmental process because it did not provide advantages over the other alternatives, and the remaining alternatives represent a sufficient range of alternatives for environmental review, inclusive of modes and routes (Metro, 2024a). Detailed descriptions of the No Project Alternative and the five remaining "build" alternatives are presented in Sections 5 through 10.

1.3 Project Study Area

Figure 1-1 shows the Project Study Area. It generally includes Transportation Analysis Zones from Metro's travel demand model that are within 1 mile of the alignments of the four "Valley-Westside" alternatives from the *Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Final Feasibility Report* (Metro, 2019). The Project Study Area represents the area in which the transit concepts and ancillary facilities are expected to be located. The analysis of potential impacts encompasses all areas that could potentially be affected by the Project, and the EIR will disclose all potential impacts related to the Project.

1.4 Purpose of this Report and Structure

This technical report examines the environmental impacts of the Project as it relates to visual quality and aesthetics. It describes existing visual quality and aesthetics conditions in the Project Study Area, the regulatory setting, methodology for impact evaluation, and potential impacts from operation and construction of the project alternatives, including maintenance and storage facility site options.

The report is organized according to the following sections:

- Section 1 Introduction
- Section 2 Regulatory and Policy Framework
- Section 3 Methodology
- Section 4 Future Background Projects
- Section 5 No Project Alternative
- Section 6 Alternative 1
- Section 7 Alternative 3
- Section 8 Alternative 4
- Section 9 Alternative 5
- Section 10 Alternative 6
- Section 11 Preparers of the Technical Report
- Section 12 References

Figure 1-1. Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Study Area

Source: HTA, 2024

2 REGULATORY AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.1 Federal

No existing federal regulations pertaining to aesthetics and visual resources apply to the Project as a whole. However, the analysis methodology follows the Federal Highway Administration's guidelines for the preparation of Visual Impact Assessments, which is used by the State of California. Additionally, the National Park Service Organic Act may apply where the Project runs through the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area along the I-405 corridor.

2.2 State

2.2.1 California Department of Transportation Scenic Highway Program

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) manages California's Scenic Highway Program (Caltrans, 2024). The purpose of the program is to protect and enhance the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors through special conservation treatment. Caltrans provides guidance to local government agencies, community organizations, and citizens that are pursuing the official designation of a state scenic highway. In 1963, the state legislature established the California Scenic Highway Program through Senate Bill 1467. The bill declared:

> *"The development of scenic highways will not only add to the pleasure of the residents of this State but will also play an important role in encouraging the growth of the recreation and tourist industries upon which the economy of many areas of this State depend."*

Senate Bill 1467 added Sections 260 through 263 to the Streets and Highways Code. In these statutes the State proclaims intent to:

> *"Establish the State's responsibility for the protection and enhancement of California's natural scenic beauty by identifying those portions of the State highway system which, together with adjacent scenic corridors, require special conservation treatment."*

Scenic corridors consist of land that is visible from, adjacent to, and outside the highway right-of-way (ROW) and primarily comprises scenic and natural features. Topography, vegetation, viewing distance, and/or jurisdictional lines determine the corridor boundaries.

2.3 Regional

2.3.1 Southern California Association of Governments – Connect SoCal – The 2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) *Connect SoCal*, *2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (2024-2050 RTP/SCS) (SCAG, 2024) provides a vision of the future of Southern California, including policies, strategies, and projects for advancing the region's mobility, economy, and sustainability through 2045. One of the 2024-2050 RTP/SCS goals is to "Promote conservation of natural and agricultural lands and restoration of habitats."

The 2024-2050 RTP/SCS goals are to build and maintain an integrated multimodal transportation network; develop, connect, and sustain communities that are livable and thriving; create a healthy region for the people of today and tomorrow; and support a sustainable, efficient, and productive

regional economic environment that provides opportunities for all residents (SCAG, 2024). SCAG uses land use tools to direct new growth toward Priority Development Areas (PDAs), which include transit priority areas (TPA), neighborhood mobility areas (NMAs), Livable Corridors, and spheres of influence (SOIs) (SCAG, 2024).

2.3.2 Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

2.3.2.1 Metro Rail Design Criteria

The Metro Rail Design Criteria (MRDC) outline standards and guidelines for the construction and operation of a Metro rail project. This document ensures consistency and quality across rail projects by providing detailed specifications for various aspects of rail operation. The MRDC identifies Metro's recommended methods to construct, maintain, and monitor fixed-rail facilities. Alternative 6 would utilize the MRDC as the basis of design. Alternatives 1, 3, 4, and 5 would use equivalent criteria appropriate for the technological and operational differences of each alternative. Each alternative would adhere to the Adjacent Construction Design Manual component of the MRDC.

2.3.2.2 Metro Systemwide Station Design Standards

In January 2018, the Metro board adopted a policy requiring that all future Metro stations comply with the Metro Systemwide Station Design Standards (SWSD), as contained in the MRDC and Architectural Standard/Directive Drawings. These standards establish a consistent, streamlined architectural language for Metro stations. The SWSD Standards provide continuity, consistent visual character, and recognizable architecture throughout the expanded Metro Rail and BRT system. Station components include glass canopies for weather protection that allow for natural light to enter station interiors and provide for outdoor platforms; three-tone concrete paving patterns for station plazas; stainless steel finishes for station entrances, gates, fencing, furniture, and equipment; light emitting diode light fixtures; interior finishes including terrazzo flooring and porcelain enamel steel wall panels; standard integrated Metro wayfinding signage; glass and porcelain enamel steel art panels as well as glass tile and mosaic murals; and sustainable station landscaping.

2.3.2.3 Metro Art Program Policy

The Metro Art Program Policy (Metro, 2021b) allocates a minimum 0.5 percent of capital project construction costs for public art. The policy is built on three guiding principles: put people first, connect to creative communities throughout Los Angeles County, and champion innovation. The policy recognizes Los Angeles County as one of the world's most important creative capitals and home to a range of talented artists and provides guidelines for percent for art calculation and implementation. The policy is built on three guiding principles: put people first, connect to creative communities through Los Angeles County, and champion innovation.

The policy recognizes Los Angeles County as one of the world's most important creative capitals and home to a range of talented artists and provides guidelines for a percentage for art calculation and implementation. The inclusion of art creates a more inviting environment, enlivens a functional world, and contributes to a positive experience for the system's future riders. This policy's guidelines pertain to the following: community involvement, artist collaboration, and certain components of light rail, including station design, trees and other landscaping, signage, street and pedestrian lighting, and public art.

2.3.2.4 Metro Standard/Directive Drawings

Metro adopted architectural directive and standard drawings that are to be incorporated into all Metro transit projects based on lessons learned from past rail projects that Metro completed. Standard and directive drawings include designs for the following:

- Typical fencing
- Typical station platforms (underground, at grade, and aerial)
- Station entrances
- Canopies
- Station amenities
- Architectural finishes
- Furnishings
- Standard station identifier signs

process to improve adjacency conditions and avoid conflicts to transit services and operations.

2.3.2.5 Metro Tree Policy

In October 2022, the Metro Board adopted the Metro Tree Policy, which clarifies and standardizes Metro's practices for protecting the urban canopy throughout its construction program. The Metro Tree Policy recognizes the environmental benefits of trees and outlines Metro's commitment to a consistent and sustainable approach to mitigating the impacts of construction. The key elements of this approach include the following:

- Protecting trees through planning, design and construction, and maintenance.
- Replacing any trees removed (when necessary) at a 2:1 ratio, or at a 4:1 ratio in the case of heritage trees. This replacement ratio is in line with the requirements of other local jurisdictions.
- Adopting species, palette, and planting strategies that maximize opportunities for native species, carbon capture, mitigating urban heat effect, stormwater capture, and use of recycled water for irrigation while providing safe and efficient passenger movement.
- Committing to a 3-year establishment period for the new trees planted and encouraging creative approaches to tree replacement planting within the impacted area, including but not limited to first-last-mile pathways, parkway strips, parks, or schools; however, Metro will not support planting trees in parkway locations that have the potential to damage Metro buses or impede their operation.

The Metro Tree Policy also includes several other ways in which Metro will approach issues related to trees, including those trees that are planted at maintenance and office facilities and those that are at or near bus stops and train stations. In addition, the policy includes additional objectives for maintaining or planting trees on Metro properties or in conjunction with Metro-funded projects.

Metro Adjacent Development Review Handbook

The Metro *Adjacent Development Review Handbook* (Metro, 2021c), published in February 2021, guides developers, utility companies, and other third parties to consult with Metro for development, construction, and maintenance activities occurring within 100 feet from Metro ROWs and other real estate assets (Metro, 2021b). Metro encourages third parties to approach Metro early in the design and development process to improve adjacency conditions and avoid conflicts to transit services and operations.

2.3.3 Los Angeles County General Plan 2035

The *Los Angeles County General Plan 2035* (LA County Planning, 2024) provides the policy framework and establishes the long-range vision for how and where the unincorporated areas of the county will grow.

The *Los Angeles County General Plan 2035 Land Use Element* addresses land use compatibility by mapping and regulating uses and intensities, and by including policies and programs that mitigate land use conflicts through design, such as the use of landscaping, walls, building orientation, and performance standards. It also provides general community design policies that help create a "sense of place" and uniqueness within the diverse communities of the unincorporated areas.

The *Los Angeles County General Plan 2035 Mobility Element* assesses the challenges and constraints of the Los Angeles County transportation system and offers policy guidance to reach Los Angeles County's long-term mobility goals. The Mobility Element acknowledges that aesthetics and function are important considerations when creating comfortable places to walk, bicycle, and take transit. This can include landscaping, street furniture, and amenities, such as benches and shelters at transit stops.

The *Los Angeles County General Plan 2035 Conservation and Natural Resources Element* guides the long-term conservation of natural resources and preservation of available open space areas. It addresses the following:

- Open space resources
- Biological resources
- Local water resources
- Agricultural resources
- Mineral and energy resources
- Scenic resources
- Historic, cultural, and paleontological resources

The *Los Angeles County General Plan Land Use Element* includes the following goals and policies pertaining to changing character/quality within Los Angeles County:

- GOAL LU 10: Well designed and healthy places that support a diversity of built environments.
  - Policy LU 10.4. Promote environmentally sensitive and sustainable design.
  - Policy LU 10.5. Encourage the use of distinctive landscaping, signage, and other features to define the unique character of districts; neighborhoods; or communities; and engender community identity, pride, and interaction.
  - Policy LU 10.9. Encourage land uses and design that stimulate positive and productive human relations and foster the achievement of community goals.
  - Policy LU 11.2. Support the design of developments that provide substantial tree canopy cover and utilize light-colored paving materials and energy-efficient roofing materials to reduce the urban heat island effect.

The *Los Angeles County General Plan Mobility Element* includes the following policy which relates to changing character/quality within Los Angeles County:

- GOAL M 2: Interconnected and safe bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly streets, sidewalks, paths and trails that promote active transportation and transit use.

  - Policy M 2.9. Encourage the planting of trees along streets and the other forms of landscaping to enliven streetscapes by blending natural features with built features.

The *Los Angeles County General Plan Conservation and Natural Resources Element* includes the following goals and policies pertaining to changing character/quality within Los Angeles County:

- GOAL C/NR 13: Protect visual and scenic resources.
  - Policy C/NR 13.1. Protect scenic resources through land use regulations that mitigate development impacts.
  - Policy C/NR 13.3. Reduce light trespass, light pollution, and other threats to scenic resources.
  - Policy C/NR 13.4. Encourage developments to be designed to create a consistent visual relationship with the natural terrain and vegetation.
  - Policy C/NR 13.5. Encourage required grading to be compatible with the existing terrain.

2.3.4 Our County - Los Angeles Countywide Sustainability Plan

The *Our County – Los Angeles Countywide Sustainability Plan* (Los Angeles County, 2019) is a regional sustainability plan for Los Angeles County. The plan outlines goals and policies that local governments and stakeholders can implement to enhance the well-being of communities in the County while reducing damage to the natural environment and adapting to the changing climate, particularly focusing on communities disproportionately burdened by environmental pollution. The plan includes the following goals and policies pertaining to changing character/quality within Los Angeles County:

- GOAL 2: Buildings and infrastructure that support human health and resilience.
  - Strategy 2D: Ensure a climate-appropriate, healthy urban tree canopy that is equitably distributed.
    - Action 43: Create and implement a community-informed Urban Forest Management Plan that incorporates equitable urban forest practices, identifies County funding sources, and prioritizes:
      - Tree- and park-poor communities
      - Climate and watershed-appropriate and drought/pest-resistant vegetation
      - Appropriate watering, maintenance, and disposal practices
      - Shading, and
      - Biodiversity.
    - Action 45: Strengthen tree protections of native tree species, such as through development of an ordinance, based on findings from the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP).

2.4 Local

The Project Study Area lies within the Cities of Los Angeles and Santa Monica. These local jurisdictions have regulations and policies pertaining to visual quality and aesthetics as summarized in the following sections.

2.4.1 City of Los Angeles General Plan

The *City of Los Angeles General Plan* (General Plan) (DCP, 2021) contains goals and policies for future development in the City of Los Angeles. The Framework Element and the *Mobility Plan 2035* (an Element of the General Plan) were reviewed for goals, objectives, and policies that may be applicable to the

Project. Objectives, policies, and programs included in the General Plan Framework Element (DCP, 2001a) and *Mobility Plan 2035* (DCP, 2016) are intended to ensure the protection of natural terrain and landforms, unique site features, scenic highways, and panoramic public views as City of Los Angeles staff and decision-makers consider future land use development and infrastructure projects.

2.4.1.1 Framework Element

The Framework Element of the General Plan (DCP, 2001a) is a strategy for long-term growth that sets a citywide context to guide the update of the community plan and citywide elements. Chapter 5, Urban Form and Neighborhood Design, and Chapter 6, Open Space and Conservation, of the Framework Element include the following objectives and policies that pertain to visual and aesthetic resources:

Urban Form and Neighborhood Design

- Goal 5A: Livable city for existing and future residents and one that is attractive to future investment. A city of interconnected, diverse neighborhoods that builds on the strengths of those neighborhoods and functions at both the neighborhood and citywide scales.
  - Objective 5.4: Encourage the development of community facilities and improvements that are based on need within the centers and reinforce or define those centers and the neighborhoods they serve.
    - Policy 5.4.4: Encourage the use of community facilities for nighttime activity through the use of appropriate roadway and pedestrian area lighting.
  - Objective 5.5: Enhance the livability of all neighborhoods by upgrading the quality of development and improving the quality of the public realm.
    - Policy 5.5.4: Determine the appropriate urban design elements at the neighborhood level, such as sidewalk width and materials, streetlights and trees, bus shelters and benches, and other street furniture.
  - Objective 5.9: Encourage proper design and effective use of the built environment to help increase personal safety at all times of the day.
    - Policy 5.9.1: Facilitate observation and natural surveillance through improved development standards which provide for common areas, adequate lighting, clear definition of outdoor spaces, attractive fencing, use of landscaping as a natural barrier, secure storage areas, good visual connections between residential, commercial, or public environments and grouping activity functions such as child care or recreation areas.

Open Space and Conservation

- Goal 6A: An integrated citywide/regional public and private open space system that serves and is accessible by the city's population and is unthreatened by encroachment from other land uses.
  - Objective 6.1: Protect the city's natural settings from the encroachment of urban development, allowing for the development, use, management, and maintenance of each component of the city's natural resources to contribute to the sustainability of the region.
    - Policy 6.1.2: Coordinate city operations and development policies for the protection and conservation of open space resources, by:
      - Preserving natural viewsheds, whenever possible, in hillside and coastal areas.

2.4.1.2 Mobility Plan 2035

Mobility Plan 2035 (DCP, 2016) provides the policy foundation for achieving a transportation system that balances the needs of all road users. As an update to the City of Los Angeles' *General Plan Transportation Element* (last adopted in 1999), *Mobility Plan 2035* (DCP, 2016) incorporates "complete streets" principles and lays the policy foundation for how future generations of Angelenos interact with their streets.

Mobility Plan 2035 also provides an inventory of City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways. Scenic highways depicted within the City of Los Angeles have special controls for protection and enhancement of scenic resources. *Mobility Plan 2035* includes Scenic Highway Guidelines for those designated scenic highways for which there is no adopted scenic corridor plan.

Mobility Plan 2035 includes the following policies that pertain to visual and aesthetic resources:

- Policy 2.2 Complete Streets Design Guide: Establish the Complete Streets Design Guide as the City of Los Angeles' document to guide the operations and design of streets and other public rights-of-way.
- Policy 2.16 Scenic Highway: Ensure that future modifications to any scenic highway do not impact the unique identity or characteristic of that scenic highway.
- Policy 5.5 Green Streets: Maximize opportunities to capture and infiltrate stormwater within the City of Los Angeles' public right-of ways. One of the goals of the City of Los Angeles' Green Streets Initiative is "Enhancing aesthetics, which can increase pedestrian use of sidewalks and encourage the use of bicycles."

2.4.1.3 Community Plans

The City of Los Angeles also has various community plans, which describe local land use policy and collectively make up the Land Use Element of the General Plan (DCP, 2021). Ten community plans are applicable to the Project:

- *Encino-Tarzana Community Plan* (DCP, 1998a)
- *Reseda-West Van Nuys Community Plan* (DCP, 1999c)
- *Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan* (DCP, 1998b)
- *Brentwood-Pacific Palisades Community Plan* (DCP, 1998c)
- *Bel Air-Beverly Crest Community Plan* (DCP, 1996)
- *Westwood Community Plan* (DCP, 1999a)
- *West Los Angeles Community Plan* (DCP, 1999b)
- *Palms-Mar Vista-Del Rey Community Plan* (DCP, 1997)
- *Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks Community Plan* (DCP, 1998d)
- *Mission Hills-Panorama City-North Hills Community Plan* (DCP, 1999d)

The community plans contain similar goals, objectives, and policies. Therefore, the following objectives, policies, and goal related to visual quality and aesthetics are applicable to all of the community plans in the Project Study Area:

- Objective 1-3. To preserve and enhance the varied and distinct residential character and integrity in existing single and multi-family neighborhoods.
  - Policy 1-3.1. Seek a high degree of compatibility and landscaping for new infill development to protect the character and scale of existing residential neighborhoods.

  - Policy 1-3.3. Preserve existing views in hillside areas.
- Objective 2-4. To enhance the appearance of commercial districts.
  - Policy 2-4.3. Improve safety and aesthetics of parking areas in commercial areas.
  - Policy 2-4.4. Landscaped corridors should be created and enhanced through the planting of street trees along segments with no building setbacks and through median plantings.
- Goal 5: A community with sufficient open space in balance with development to serve the recreational, environmental, and health needs of the community and to protect environmental and aesthetic resources.
  - Policy 5-1.1. Encourage the retention of passive and visual open space which provides a balance to the urban development of the Plan Area.

2.4.2 Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan

The *Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan* (MSPSP) (DCP, 1992a) includes the Mulholland Drive ROW, Inner Corridor, Outer Corridor, and the Institutional Use Corridor. The MSPSP intends to preserve, protect, and enhance the unique natural resources in the plan area. To accomplish these goals, the plan promotes design and placement of buildings and other improvements that preserves, complements and/or enhances views; and minimizes grading and assures that graded slopes will have a natural appearance. Additionally, the MSPSP seeks to preserve the natural appearance compatible with the characteristics of the Santa Monica Mountains, and to protect prominent ridges, trees, and environmentally sensitive areas. The MSPSP contains design requirements and grading restrictions that are applicable to the Inner Corridor and that are subject to a mandated design review process.

The MSPSP includes the following goals relevant to visual and aesthetic resources:

- A. To assure maximum preservation and enhancement of the parkway's outstanding and unique scenic features and resources.
- D. To assure that land uses are compatible with the parkway environment.
- E. To assure that the design and placement of buildings and other improvements preserve, complement, and/or enhance views from Mulholland Drive.
- F. To preserve the existing residential character of areas along and adjoining the ROW.
- G. To minimize grading and assure that graded slopes have a natural appearance compatible with the characteristics of the Santa Monica Mountains.
- H. To preserve the natural topographic variation within the Inner and Outer Corridors.
- I. To reduce visual intrusion caused by excessive lighting.
- L. To protect prominent ridges, streams, and environmentally sensitive areas and the aquatic, biologic, geologic, and topographic features therein.
- N. To provide a review process of all projects which are visible from Mulholland Drive to assure their conformance to the purposes and development standards contained in the Specific Plan and the Landform Grading Manual.

2.4.3 Sepulveda Corridor Specific Plan

The *Sepulveda Corridor Specific Plan* (DCP, 1992b) includes the 40-foot railroad right-of-way (ROW) on the west side of Sepulveda Boulevard, south of Olympic Boulevard and north of Pico Boulevard. The purpose of the *Sepulveda Corridor Specific Plan* is to implement the provisions of the *West Los Angeles Community Plan*, which identifies the Sepulveda industrial area as an area where redevelopment should be enhanced to achieve street improvements, rehabilitation and reconstruction of older structures, and the provision of adequate off-street parking and freight loading facilities; and to enhance the future development of the area by prohibiting construction on the railroad ROW on the west side of Sepulveda Boulevard and by allowing a transfer of allowable floor area from the ROW to other property in the *Sepulveda Corridor Specific Plan* area.

2.4.4 Westwood Village Specific Plan

The *Westwood Village Specific Plan* (City of Los Angeles, 2022) includes approximately 50 acres located immediately south of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), bounded by Le Conte Avenue to the north, Tiverton and Hilgard Avenues to the east, Lindbrook Avenue to the south, and Gayley Avenue to the west.

The *Westwood Village Specific Plan* establishes detailed development regulations within the community plan area and limits new development to intensities and heights that:

- Are compatible with the predominant character and pedestrian scale of the village and the capacity of the street system.
- Encourage preservation of historically and architecturally significant buildings through the transfer of unused permitted floor areas to potential development sites.
- Encourage the provision of neighborhood-serving uses and additional public parking through a floor area bonus plan.
- Encourage the provision of streetscape improvements and additional public parking.

The *Westwood Village Specific Plan* also permits and encourages the preservation and ongoing maintenance of historically and architecturally significant buildings in Westwood Village.

2.4.5 Exposition Corridor Transit Neighborhood Plan

The *Exposition Corridor Transit Neighborhood Plan* (DCP, 2019a) includes the Metro Exposition Line Corridor for the portion of the City of Los Angeles between Culver City and the City of Santa Monica. The *Exposition Corridor Transit Neighborhood Plan* guides future development within the Metro Exposition Line Corridor. The *Exposition Corridor Transit Neighborhood Plan* also encourages infill development and a mix of uses within identified areas to promote transit ridership, reduce automobile dependence, and create vibrant neighborhoods around the transit stations.

2.4.6 City of Los Angeles Municipal Code

The City of Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Chapter 1 contains the Planning and Zoning Code, and Chapter 9 contains Building Regulations. The Planning and Zoning Code designates and regulates the location, use, height, and size of buildings. The Planning and Zoning Code regulates the aesthetics and visual quality of development projects. It includes development regulations specific to each zone and addresses parking, landscaping, lighting, and other topics that influence the aesthetics of a development

project. The Planning and Zoning Code also includes design regulations that seek to affect the physical alteration of streets, intersections, alleys, pedestrian walkways, and landscaping.

The following sections of the LAMC regulate lighting:

- Chapter 1, Article 2, Section 12.21 A5(k). All lights used to illuminate a parking area shall be designed, located, and arranged so as to reflect the light away from any streets and any adjacent premises.
- Chapter 1, Article 7, Section 17.08C. Plans for street lighting system shall be submitted to and approved by the Bureau of Street Lighting.
- Chapter 9, Article 3, Section 93.0117. No exterior light source may cause more than two foot-candles (21.5 lux) of lighting intensity or generate direct glare onto exterior glazed windows or glass doors; elevated habitable porch, deck, or balcony; or any ground surface intended for uses such as recreation, barbecue or lawn areas or any other property containing a residential unit or units.
- Chapter 9, Article 1, Section 91.6205 (K)4. Signs are prohibited if they contain flashing, mechanical and strobe lights in conflict with the provisions of Section 80.08.4 and 93.6215 of this code.
- Chapter 9, Article 1, Section 91.6205M. No sign shall be arranged and illuminated in such a manner as to produce a light intensity of greater than three foot-candles above ambient lighting, as measured at the property line of the nearest residentially zoned property.

2.4.7 City of Los Angeles Design Guidelines

The *Citywide Design Guidelines* (DCP, 2019b) serve to implement the Framework Element's urban design principles and are intended to be used by Los Angeles City Planning staff, developers, architects, engineers, and community members in evaluating project applications, along with relevant policies from the Framework Element and community plans. By offering more direction for proceeding with the design of a project, the *Citywide Design Guidelines* illustrate options, solutions, and techniques to achieve the goal of excellence in new design.

The *Citywide Design Guidelines*, which were adopted by the City Planning Commission in August 2019, establish 10 guidelines to carry out the common design objectives that maintain neighborhood form and character while promoting quality design and creative infill development solutions. Both as an organizational tool and as a means of communicating critical topics that are of specific value to the City of Los Angeles, the guidelines are organized around one of three design approaches:

- Pedestrian-First Design
- 360 Degree Design
- Climate-Adapted Design

The *Citywide Design Guidelines* apply to all new development and substantial building alterations that seek a discretionary action for which Los Angeles City Planning has design authority. The guidelines apply to all areas but apply particularly to those areas within the City of Los Angeles that do not have adopted design guidelines. In cases where the *Citywide Design Guidelines* conflict with a provision in a community plan's urban design chapter, specific plan, overlays, or other local design guidelines, the community-specific requirement prevails. The *Citywide Design Guidelines* include the following guidelines:

- Guideline 1: Promote a safe, comfortable, and accessible pedestrian experience for all.

- Guideline 2: Carefully incorporate vehicular access such that it does not degrade the pedestrian experience.
- Guideline 3: Design projects to actively engage with streets and public space and maintain human scale.
- Guideline 4: Organize and shape projects to recognize and respect surrounding context.
- Guideline 5: Express a clear and coherent architectural idea.
- Guideline 6: Provide amenities that support community building and provide an inviting, comfortable user experience.
- Guideline 7: Carefully arrange design elements and uses to protect site users.
- Guideline 8: Protect the site's natural resources and features.
- Guideline 9: Configure the site layout, building massing and orientation to lower energy demand and increase the comfort and well-being of users.
- Guideline 10: Enhance green features to increase opportunities to capture stormwater and promote habitat.

2.4.8 City of Los Angeles Livable Boulevards Streetscape Plan

The *Livable Boulevards Streetscape Plan* (DCP, 2018) includes five street segments within the western portion of the City of Los Angeles and would create new guidelines for streetscape improvements in the public ROW. The *Livable Boulevards Streetscape Plan* aims to:

- Reinforce neighborhood or district identity.
- Enhance walking, bicycling and transit experiences.
- Promote sustainable practices.
- Improve overall corridor aesthetics and livability.
- Create an attractive street for local businesses and their patrons.

2.4.9 City of Los Angeles Tree Preservation Ordinance

Protected trees are considered aesthetic resources. The City of Los Angeles passed an ordinance for the Preservation of Protected Trees (Ordinance No. 177,404; LAMC Chapter IV, Article 6), which became law on April 23, 2006. The ordinance applies to trees that are 4 inches or greater in diameter at 4.5 feet aboveground, and on any lot size. Protected tree removal requires a removal permit by the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works (LADPW). Any act that may cause the failure or death of a protected tree requires inspection by the LADPW Urban Forestry Division. In the event the LADPW approves a tree removal, replacement of the tree is required with at least two trees of a protected variety.

2.4.10 City of Los Angeles Bureau of Street Lighting

The purpose of the LA Lights Strategic Plan 2020-2025 developed by the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Street Lighting is to seek out and implement new technology, provide services that improve the conditions and maximize the future potential for all of residents and visitors. The Bureau's goal is to develop a fully adaptive Street Lighting Platform for all city lights and connected service solutions. The LA Lights: Smart City Strategic Plan 2025-2030, highlights the objectives and actions to expand the City's smart city capabilities, strengthen the digital infrastructure and facilitate community-driven solutions for

a better-connected Los Angeles now and in the future. The Plan concludes with a 5 year-roadmap for achieving the forthcoming Street Lighting Network.

2.4.11 City of Santa Monica General Plan

The *City of Santa Monica Land Use and Circulation Element of the General Plan* (City of Santa Monica, 2010) includes the following goals pertaining to changing character/quality within the City of Santa Monica:

- GOAL LU15: Enhance the City of Santa Monica's Urban Form – Encourage well-developed design that is compatible with the neighborhoods, responds to the surrounding context, and creates a comfortable pedestrian environment.
- GOAL LU19: Design "Complete" Streets – Design and manage complete streets and alleys to support adjacent land uses and human activity, keeping in mind the unique character of each area of the City of Santa Monica.

2.4.12 City of Santa Monica Municipal Code

The *City of Santa Monica Municipal Code* (SMMC) establishes land use regulations and standards for development in the City of Santa Monica, including specific design guidelines, height limits, building density, building design and landscaping standards, architectural features, sign regulations, and open space and setback requirements in the *City of Santa Monica's Zoning Ordinance* (Section 9.01 through 9.52 of the SMMC).

As required by Chapter 9.55, Architectural Review, design approval is required for a project's plans, elevations, and landscaping. (Some exemptions are available for building permits for minor or insignificant projects.) Plans or proposals that require a Development Review Permit (such as this Project) must first be considered by the Architectural Review Board for a recommendation to the Los Angeles Planning Commission on the appropriateness of proposed urban design elements, including, but not limited to, siting, massing, scale, circulation, and general relationship to adjacent structures and the adjacent street.

The following sections of the SMMC regulate lighting:

- Section 9.21.080(F). Parking Lot and Structure Lighting:
  - Public parking areas designed to accommodate 10 or more vehicles shall be provided with a minimum of 0.5 foot-candle and a maximum of 3.0 foot-candles of light over of the parking surface from one-half hour before dusk until one-half hour after dawn.
  - Lighting design shall be coordinated with the landscape plan to ensure that vegetation growth will not substantially impair the intended illumination.
  - All lighting used to illuminate a parking area for any number of automobiles in any District shall be arranged so that all direct rays from such lighting fall entirely within such parking lot and be consistent with this Section.
- Section 9.21.120. Reflective Materials.
  - Prohibits the use of highly reflective materials and limits glare effects. No more than 25 percent of the surface area of any façade on any new building contains black or mirrored glass or other mirror-like material that is highly reflective, and that materials for roofing should be of a non-reflective nature.

2.4.13 UCLA Physical Design Framework

The *UCLA Physical Design Framework* prepared in July 2009 (UCLA, 2009) describes the approach for development of buildings, infrastructure, and landscape on the campus within the context of the physical planning objectives. It also describes the physical design standards that guide new development to enhance the unique campus aesthetic within the constraints of a fully developed urban environment. The *UCLA Physical Design Framework* describes the design review process that ensures that the *Long Range Development Plan* objectives and Physical Design Standards are embodied in all new projects. The *UCLA Physical Design Framework* will be used to ensure compatibility of new development with the existing built environment while continuing to strengthen the vibrant identity and design vernacular of the UCLA Campus.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Operation and Construction

The methodology presented herein generally follows the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) guidance as outlined in the *Guidelines for the Visual Impact Assessment of Highway Projects* (FHWA, 2015). Despite assessment guidance, it is acknowledged that the findings of an analysis of existing visual or aesthetic resources and potential visual or aesthetic impacts can be highly subjective, depending on the background of the assessor and the opinions of viewers. The qualities that create an aesthetically pleasing setting or that result in the perception of a visual element as aesthetically positive or negative vary from person to person. Different viewers may consider a change in the visual environment as either beneficial or adverse.

Existing visual quality at each viewpoint is determined using the three criteria described in Section 3.1.4. These criteria provide a method for describing the form, line, color, and texture of the components found within a view. As outlined in the FHWA methods, the use of these descriptors allows a basis for understanding the evaluator's rationale behind a visual quality determination.

The analysis of aesthetics considers the visual quality of the area immediately surrounding the project alignment, and the impacts of the Project with respect to the existing aesthetic environment. The analysis considers the physical aspects of the Project and its associated design features, as well as an evaluation of visual simulations showing existing and future conditions at representative locations. The following steps were followed to assess the existing aesthetic setting and potential aesthetic impacts with implementation of the Project:

- Identify landscape units (LU).
- Identify the existing visual resources that could be noticeably obstructed by the Project.
- Assess the visual impacts associated with the Project.

This analysis identifies and objectively examines factors that contribute to the perception of aesthetic impacts. Potential aesthetic impacts of the Project can be evaluated by considering such factors as the scale, mass, proportion, orientation, landscaping, and construction materials associated with the design of a project.

In addition, under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), projects located in non-urbanized areas would result in an impact if the visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings are substantially degraded. If a project is located in an urbanized area (a central city or a group of contiguous cities with a population of 50,000 or more, together with adjacent densely populated areas having a population density of at least 1,000 persons per square mile) according to CEQA Guidelines Section 15387, an impact would result if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Metro projects are not required to adhere to local zoning ordinances. As stated in the impact evaluations, the Project is located in an urbanized area according to CEQA Guidelines Section 15387. Local policies that govern visual character and quality include the *Citywide Design Guidelines* (DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities."

3.1.1 Landscape Units and Key Observation Points

The immediate vicinity of the Project was subdivided into a series of LUs to distinguish the overall characteristics of different segments of the corridor. An LU is typically defined by the limits of a particular viewshed or the distinct transition in land uses. Views representative of the visual character of the area were identified within each LU.

Key observation points (also known as key views) that are critical or representative of the visual character of the area were also identified within each LU. These views may include the presence or absence of landscaping, the predominant land uses, the scale of buildings, or the scenic vistas, scenic resources, and substantive visual elements that are available, such as open space resources, street trees, and building frontages.

3.1.2 Visual Resources

As defined in the City of Los Angeles Municipal Code—which provides standards for the design, location, and arrangement of visual resources within a project area, including zoning and land uses, landscaping, street lighting systems, etc.—visual resources include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Structures of historic significance or visual prominence
- Open space and recreational areas
- Distant views of the horizon from public locations
- Landscaped areas

Visual or aesthetic resources are defined and identified by assessing visual character and visual quality. As described in the following sections, the assessment of visual resources was made based on the cohesion or variation in form, the level of up-keep or deterioration of the built environment, and the level of landscaping and visual attractiveness for each LU.

3.1.3 Visual Character

Visual character is used to describe, not evaluate, and may include the following defined attributes:

- Form: visual mass and shape
- Line: edges or linear definition
- Color: reflective brightness (i.e., light and dark) and hue (e.g., red, green)
- Texture: surface coarseness
- Dominance: position, size, or contrast
- Scale: apparent size as it relates to the surroundings
- Diversity: a variety of visual patterns
- Continuity: uninterrupted flow of form, line, color, or textural pattern

3.1.4 Visual Quality

Visual quality refers to the aesthetics of the landscape, which is based in part on a viewer's values and notions about what constitutes a quality setting. To establish an objective framework, FHWA concludes that vividness, intactness, and unity are valid and reliable criteria for evaluative appraisals of visual quality. Each criterion was assigned a qualitative ranking (low, moderate, and high) for each LU. The combined result of all three criteria indicates the degree of visual quality.

Vividness is the extent to which the landscape is memorable, and is associated with distinctive, contrasting, and diverse visual elements. For example, dramatic background views toward the San Gabriel Mountains would be ranked as high vividness.

Intactness is the integrity of visual features in the landscape and the extent to which the landscape is free from non-typical visual intrusions. For example, high intactness embodies a consistent image of well-maintained homes or multi-family structures and street edge treatment.

Unity is the extent to which visual elements combine to form a coherent, harmonious visual pattern. For example, high unity attests to the careful design and organization of buildings, structures, railroads, and streets.

3.1.5 Viewers and Viewer Response

Viewers are people whose views of the landscape may be altered by the Project—either because the landscape itself has changed or their perception of the landscape has changed. Viewer groups were identified by observing the land uses and circulation patterns throughout the Project Study Area.

Viewer response is a prediction of a viewer's reaction to changes in the visual or aesthetic environment and has two dimensions—viewer exposure and viewer sensitivity. As listed in Table 3-1, viewer sensitivity is strongly influenced by a viewer's activity, the amount of time spent looking at a view, and awareness of their surroundings. People who view a landscape infrequently, view it for short periods of time (such as motorists), or are not attentive to it due to focusing on other activities (such as commercial and office building tenants) are often less sensitive to changes, and are assumed to have low viewer sensitivity. Local values may confer visual significance on landscape components and areas.

Table 3-1. Viewer Groups

Viewers	Description	Viewer Response	
		Viewer Exposure	Viewer Sensitivity
Pedestrians	People walking to or from land uses (e.g., business patrons, employees, students, transit users, retail shoppers, restaurant-goers, and civic building users)	High due to long duration of views and walking at a leisurely pace	Moderate due to primary focus in other activities or engaged in observing their surroundings
Recreationalists (including tourists)	Users of parks, open space, and trails (e.g., bicyclists, hikers)	Moderate due to somewhat long duration of views and riding or generally traveling at a slower speed	High due to specifically seeking a pleasant visual setting or experience
Motorists	Commuters, local residents, bus drivers and commercial truck drivers traveling to and from land uses	Low due to short duration of views and high travel speeds	Low due to task or demand of paying careful attention to the road ahead

Source: FHWA, 2015

Moderate and highly sensitive viewers generally include pedestrians, tourists, and patrons of businesses and institutional facilities. Less-sensitive viewers include motorists or commuters.

Visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Public views are those from vantage points that are publicly accessible (such as streets, freeways, parks, and vista points). These views are generally available to a greater number of persons than are

private views. Private views are those that can be seen from vantage points located on private property. The CEQA does not protect views available from private vantage points (such as private offices or private homes). As such, commercial and office tenants are not considered a viewer group. Similarly, residents in residential buildings are not considered a viewer group in the analysis. Any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided for informational purposes only.

3.1.6 Visual or Aesthetic Impact

Aesthetics and visual impacts are determined by assessing the compatibility of a project's components (i.e., mass, scale, and lighting and glare) with the existing surrounding visual character and a viewer groups' sensitivity to the changes in the visual character or changes to their views of visual resources. Adverse visual impacts may include the following:

- Removal of visual resources
- Obstruction of scenic vistas
- Glare from reflective surfaces and light spill onto sensitive uses (including nighttime lighting)
- Introduction of new project components (including the following) that may detract from the visual character of a local area:
  - Modified medians
  - Tracks and at-grade crossings
  - Elevated guideways
  - Stations (including ramps, platforms, plazas, fare vending equipment, lighting, canopies, first/last mile drop-off locations, and bus stops)
  - Radio tower poles and equipment shelters
  - Traction power substations (TPSS)
  - Maintenance and storage facility
  - Barriers to restrict access to the guideway
  - Parking facilities

Architectural renderings and photo-realistic visual simulations were created and used to illustrate where visual changes would be most noticeable after implementation of the Project. These renderings are conceptual and do not represent the final design of the Project at this time.

Based on the assessment framework previously described, the overall visual impacts were qualitatively categorized or ranked as low, moderate, or high, as described in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2. Visual Impacts

Visual Impact	Change in Visual Resources	Change in Key Observation Points	Level of Viewer Response
Low	Slight change: new project features would be built in a manner generally compatible with the existing environment	No change	Little or no response to change because it is barely noticeable
Moderate	Moderate change	Moderate or negligible change	Moderate or sensible response
High	Extensive change: new visual elements would be incompatible with the existing environment	Prevalent change: new views would be incompatible with the existing environment	High due to visual dominance

Source: FHWA, 2015

3.2 CEQA Thresholds of Significance

For the purposes of the Environmental Impact Report, impacts are considered significant if the Project would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
- Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.
- In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the Project is in an urbanized area, would the Project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

4 FUTURE BACKGROUND PROJECTS

This section describes planned improvements to highway, transit, and regional rail facilities within the Project Study Area and the region that would occur whether or not the Project is constructed. These improvements are relevant to the analysis of the No Project Alternative and the project alternatives because they are part of the future regional transportation network within which the Project would be incorporated. These improvements would not be considered reasonably foreseeable consequences of not approving the Project as they would occur whether or not the Project is constructed.

The future background projects include all existing and under-construction highway and transit services and facilities, as well as the transit and highway projects scheduled to be operational by 2045 according to the *Measure R Expenditure Plan* (Metro, 2008), the *Measure M Expenditure Plan* (Metro, 2016), the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) *Connect SoCal, 2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (2024-2050 RTP/SCS) (SCAG, 2024), and the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP), with the exception of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project (Project). The year 2045 was selected as the analysis year for the Project because it was the horizon year of SCAG's adopted RTP/SCS at the time Metro released the NOP for the Project.

4.1 Highway Improvements

The only major highway improvement in the Project Study Area included in the future background projects is the Interstate 405 (I-405) Sepulveda Pass ExpressLanes project (ExpressLanes project). This would include the ExpressLanes project as defined in the *2021 FTIP Technical Appendix, Volume II of III* (SCAG, 2021a), which is expected to provide for the addition of one travel lane in each direction on I-405 between U.S. Highway 101 (US-101) and Interstate 10 (I-10). Metro is currently studying several operational and physical configurations of the ExpressLanes project, which may also be used by commuter or rapid bus services, as are other ExpressLanes in Los Angeles County.

4.2 Transit Improvements

Table 4-1 lists the transit improvements that would be included in the future background projects. This list includes projects scheduled to be operational by 2045 as listed in the *Measure R and Measure M Expenditure Plans* (with the exception of the Project) as well as the Inglewood Transit Connector and LAX APM. The Inglewood Transit Connector, a planned automated people mover (APM), which was added to the FTIP with *Consistency Amendment #21-05* in 2021, would also be included in the future background projects (SCAG, 2021b). These projects would also include the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) APM, currently under construction by Los Angeles World Airports. The APM will extend from a new Consolidated Rent-A-Car Center to the Central Terminal Area of LAX and will include four intermediate stations. In addition, the new Airport Metro Connector Transit Station at Aviation Boulevard and 96th Street will also serve as a direct connection from the Metro K Line and Metro C Line to LAX by connecting with one of the APM stations.

During peak hours, heavy rail transit (HRT) services would generally operate at 4-minute headways (i.e., the time interval between trains traveling in the same direction), and light rail transit (LRT) services would operate at 5- to 6-minute headways. During off-peak hours, HRT services would generally operate at 8-minute headways and LRT services at 10- to 12-minute headways. Bus rapid transit (BRT) services would generally operate at peak headways between 5 and 10 minutes and off-peak headways between 10 and 14 minutes. The Inglewood Transit Connector would operate at a headway of 6 minutes, with

more frequent service during major events. The LAX APM would operate at 2-minute headways during peak and off-peak periods.

Table 4-1. Fixed Guideway Transit System in 2045

Transit Line	Mode	Alignment Description[a]
Metro A Line	LRT	Claremont to downtown Long Beach via downtown Los Angeles
Metro B Line	HRT	Union Station to North Hollywood Station
Metro C Line	LRT	Norwalk to Torrance
Metro D Line	HRT	Union Station to Westwood/VA Hospital Station
Metro E Line	LRT	Downtown Santa Monica Station to Lambert Station (Whittier) via downtown Los Angeles
Metro G Line	BRT	Pasadena to Chatsworth[b]
Metro K Line	LRT	Norwalk to Expo/Crenshaw Station
East San Fernando Valley Light Rail Transit Line	LRT	Metrolink Sylmar/San Fernando Station to Metro G Line Van Nuys Station
Southeast Gateway Line	LRT	Union Station to Artesia
North San Fernando Valley Bus Rapid Transit Network Improvements	BRT	North Hollywood to Chatsworth[c]
Vermont Transit Corridor	BRT	Hollywood Boulevard to 120th Street
Inglewood Transit Connector	APM	Market Street/Florence Avenue to Prairie Avenue/Hardy Street
Los Angeles International Airport APM	APM	Aviation Boulevard/96th Street to LAX Central Terminal Area

Source: HTA, 2024

[a]Alignment descriptions reflect the project definition as of the date of the Project's Notice of Preparation (Metro, 2021a).

[b]As defined in Metro Board actions of July 2018 and May 2021, the Metro G Line will have an eastern terminus near Pasadena City College and will include aerial stations at Sepulveda Boulevard and Van Nuys Boulevard.

[c]The North San Fernando Valley network improvements are assumed to be as approved by the Metro Board in December 2022.

4.3 Regional Rail Projects

The future background projects would include the Southern California Optimized Rail Expansion (SCORE) program, which is Metrolink's Capital Improvement Program that will upgrade the regional rail system (including grade crossings, stations, and signals) and add tracks as necessary to be ready in time for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The SCORE program will also help Metrolink to move toward a zero emissions future. The following SCORE projects planned at Chatsworth and Burbank Stations will upgrade station facilities and allow 30-minute all-day service in each direction by 2045 on the Metrolink Ventura County Line:

1. Chatsworth Station: This SCORE project will include replacing an at-grade crossing and adding a new pedestrian bridge and several track improvements to enable more frequent and reliable service.
2. Burbank Station: This SCORE project will include replacing tracks, adding a new pedestrian crossing, and realigning tracks to achieve more frequency, efficiency, and shorter headways.

In addition, the Link Union Station project will provide improvements to Los Angeles Union Station that will transform the operations of the station by allowing trains to arrive and depart in both directions, rather than having to reverse direction to depart the station. Link Union Station will also prepare Union

Station for the arrival of California High-Speed Rail, which will connect Union Station to other regional multimodal transportation hubs such as Hollywood Burbank Airport and the Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center.

5 NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The only reasonably foreseeable transportation project under the No Project Alternative would be improvements to Metro Line 761, which would continue to serve as the primary transit option through the Sepulveda Pass with peak-period headways of 10 minutes in the peak direction and 15 minutes in the other direction. Metro Line 761 would operate between the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and the Metro G Line Van Nuys Station, in coordination with the opening of the East San Fernando Valley Light Rail Transit Line, rather than to its current northern terminus at the Sylmar Metrolink Station.

5.1 Existing Conditions

This section describes the existing visual and aesthetic conditions within the Resource Study Area (RSA), which is an area with a radius of 0.25 miles to 0.50 miles within the Project Study Area. The RSA for this analysis encompasses the existing aboveground landscapes within views from public vantage points.

Visual and aesthetics resources were identified, consistent with the methodology outlined in Section 3.1.2. These resources include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Structures of historic significance or visual prominence
- Open space and recreational areas
- Distant views of the horizon from public locations
- Landscaped areas

5.1.1 Regional Setting

The regional visual setting generally exhibits an urbanized character, with nearly all land in the RSA already developed, except for portions of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and Santa Monica Mountains. The urban landscape varies, and includes low-lying residential, industrial, and commercial buildings along with high-density, high-rise residential and commercial buildings in downtown areas.

Higher density development with a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures are generally found between Interstate 10 (I-10) and the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) campus at the southern portion of the RSA, and lower density development consisting of primarily low-rise structures and a few mid-rise structures are located north of the UCLA campus. The Santa Monica Mountains, located within the central portion of the Project Study Area, provides aesthetic, environmental, and recreational benefits to residents. The ridgelines or mountain edges within the Santa Monica Mountains provide dramatic views and are protected and preserved by individual communities. Lower density development within the Santa Monica Mountains consists primarily of low-rise structures and a few mid-rise structures, which are located south of US-101 within the community of Bel-Air.

North of the Santa Monica Mountains, within the San Fernando Valley (Valley), higher density development with a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures are generally found north of Ventura Boulevard at the northern portion of the RSA.

The major visual feature of the RSA is the built environment, which consists of a variety of commercial, industrial, public facility, institutional, and residential uses, in addition to transportation corridors. The transportation corridors within the RSA include roadways, freeways, and railroad rights-of-way (ROW), including the Metro E Line ROW and the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) rail corridor ROW. The Metro E Line ROW generally passes through the southern portion of the RSA in an east-west

direction adjacent to I-10. The LOSSAN rail corridor ROW generally passes through the northern portion of the RSA in an east–west direction.

Major freeways (i.e., U.S. Highway 101 [US-101], Interstate 10 [I-10], and Interstate 405 [I-405]) create well-defined visual boundaries and edges because the facilities are several hundred feet wide. Within the RSA, I-10, US-101, and I-405 are elevated on columns or engineered fill.

Flood control facilities also create visual boundaries within the RSA, which includes the concrete-banked channels of the Los Angeles River at the northern portion of the RSA. The river channels are visually distinct due to the width and limited number of crossing points.

The topography of the RSA is varied with relatively flat urbanized areas at the northern and southern portions of the RSA, with major changes in elevation through the central portion of the RSA. The southern portion of the RSA slopes downward in a south-southwesterly direction toward the Pacific Ocean. Elevations range from approximately 780 feet above mean sea level around the Van Nuys Metro Station, 650 feet above mean sea level around US-101, 1,300 feet above mean sea level at the Stone Canyon Overlook along Mulholland Drive, 375 feet above mean sea level around the UCLA campus, to 120 feet above mean sea level south of National Boulevard (DCP, 2021).

Within the Santa Monica Mountains, the RSA provides elevated vantage or vista points along Mulholland Drive. These vista points provide long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains. In contrast, the northern and southern portions of the RSA lack elevated vantage or vista points due to the relatively flat topography. As a result, views in the RSA, except Mulholland Drive in the Santa Monica Mountains, are generally limited to the foreground and middle ground. Although background views of mountains are available along some public ROWs within the RSA, portions of these background views are blocked by urban features, such as utility poles, urban landscaping, and intervening buildings.

5.1.2 Scenic Vistas

The term “scenic vista” generally refers to visual access to, or the visibility of, a particular sight from a given vantage point or corridor. The *LA CEQA Thresholds Guide* (DCP, 2006) notes the value of preserving sightlines to designated scenic resources or areas of visual interest from public vantage points. The subjects of valued or recognized views may be focal (meaning of specific individual resources) or panoramic (meaning broad geographic area). Panoramic views are typically associated with scenic vistas that provide a sweeping geographic orientation. Examples of panoramic views include urban skylines, valleys, mountain ranges, or large bodies of water. Examples of focal views include public art/signs and notable buildings and structures. The nature of a view may be unique, such as a view from an elevated vantage point or particular angle.

The Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* (DCP, 2001b) defines scenic views or vistas as the panoramic public view access to natural features, including views of the ocean, striking or unusual natural terrain, or unique urban or historic features. Scenic views from within the RSA include the Santa Monica Mountains, hillsides, and the Los Angeles River. The Los Angeles River and its associated tributaries and floodplains, and the Santa Monica Mountains are listed as scenic vistas in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan*. Sweeping views of the Santa Monica Mountains and hillsides are considered panoramic and can be seen from designated vantage points, public hiking trails, and public ROWs.

The Santa Monica Mountains rise to an elevation of approximately 3,100 feet from the base of the hills to their highest point at Sandstone Peak, which is located outside of the RSA. According to the

Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan*, the Santa Monica Mountains are the most visible scenic feature from many areas of the city, including the RSA.

Within the RSA, panoramic views from the "flatlands" are not readily available, due to the existing street grid pattern and built environment. Rather, panoramic vantage points are primarily located within hilly areas. The Stone Canyon Overlook is located on the south side of Mulholland Drive and provides panoramic south-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the Stone Canyon Reservoir. In addition, the Johnson Overlook is located north of the Stone Canyon Reservoir on the north side of Mulholland Drive. Visitors can take in north-facing views of the San Fernando Valley, and the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains. These views represent the scenic views available from various publicly accessible locations in the Santa Monica Mountains, and other hilly areas within the RSA. However, the perspective and visibility may change depending on various factors, such as the viewer location, elevation, bad air days, or weather.

In addition, limited focal views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the hillsides within the lower areas of the RSA are available along various north–south streets and I-405. However, intervening buildings, street trees and, on some streets, overhead utility lines block most of the views to the Santa Monica Mountains and the hillsides. In summary, public panoramic and focal scenic views are currently available in the RSA, but the quality of the views can vary significantly.

5.1.3 Scenic Resources

Scenic resources refer to natural or built features of high aesthetic quality. Scenic resources identified in the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* (DCP, 2021) include striking or unusual natural features, the Pacific Ocean, Santa Monica Mountains, Verdugo Mountains, and San Gabriel Mountains, and unique urban or historic features as seen from designated scenic highways. The striking or unusual natural features do not characterize the RSA, which is not visible from the ocean. Glimpses of the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains are available from intermittent viewpoints within the RSA

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Appendix G, scenic resources within this area of consideration include specific mention of such natural or built features that are within the view field of a state scenic highway. No California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the RSA. Additionally, no state-designated scenic highways in proximity to the RSA provide views of the RSA. The closest eligible state scenic highway is State Route 1 (the Pacific Coast Highway in Southern California), which is approximately 2 miles west of the RSA. The closest officially designated state scenic highway is State Route 27 (Topanga Canyon Boulevard), which is approximately 6 miles west of the RSA.

Six City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are within the RSA. City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways, according to the *City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan 2035*, are either:

1. Arterial streets or state highways that traverse areas of natural scenic quality in undeveloped or sparsely developed areas of the city; or
2. Arterial streets that traverse urban areas of cultural, historical, or aesthetic value which merit protection and enhancement.

Table 5-1 lists and describes the City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways that are within or along the boundaries of the RSA.

Table 5-1. No Project Alternative: Resource Study Area Scenic Highways

Scenic Highway	Location	Scenic Features, Resources, or City Comment
Beverly Glen Boulevard	Ventura Boulevard to Sunset Boulevard	Winding cross mountain road; valley views
Mulholland Drive	1. US-101 westerly to Mulholland Highway 2. Mulholland Highway to Valley Circle Boulevard	(Specific Plan Ordinance. No. 167,943) Panoramic views, "ribbon of park"
Santa Monica Boulevard	Sepulveda Boulevard to City of Beverly Hills boundary	Not Available
Sepulveda Boulevard	I-405 to Sunset Boulevard	Old cross mountain road with tunnel, views of mountains and Valley
Sherman Way	Variel Avenue to Kester Avenue	Wide street, landscaped median
Sunset Boulevard	Pacific Coast Highway to City of Beverly Hills boundary	Views of mountains, estates, UCLA campus

Source: DCP, 2016

The *City of Los Angeles in its Mobility Plan 2035* designates Mulholland Drive as a scenic highway. Mulholland Drive provides opportunities for multiple scenic vistas as it winds up and through the Santa Monica Mountains, including through the RSA. Development near Mulholland Drive is subject to design review guidelines pursuant to the *Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan* (MSPSP).

The MSPSP has designated 14 major vista points (MVPs) along Mulholland Drive that the Bureau of Street Maintenance of the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works maintains. The Inner Corridor of the MSPSP area is designated as part of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) also maintains seven scenic overlooks along Mulholland Drive (MRCA, 2023). The nearest MVP (also the nearest overlook) is the Stone Canyon Overlook, which is located approximately 1.3 miles east of I-405. The nearest MRCA-maintained scenic overlook is The Groves Overlook, which is located approximately 0.90 miles west of I-405.

The RSA traverses the Inner Corridor and Outer Corridor of the MSPSP area. The MSPSP contains density requirements, building standards and grading restrictions that are applicable to the Inner Corridor. In addition, the development is subject to the MSPSP's accompanying design guidelines and review by the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Design Review Board. The viewshed protection provisions of the MSPSP are directed at preserving, complementing, and/or enhancing the public views from Mulholland Drive. Therefore, although impacts on surrounding homes and land uses are discussed, the focus of this analysis is on impacts on public views, particularly those from Mulholland Drive.

5.1.4 Visual Character and Quality

As listed in Table 5-2, six generalized landscape units (LUs) were defined within the RSA. The location and the visual features are described in Table 5-2 for each LU, beginning in the southern portion of the RSA and ending in the north.

Table 5-2. No Project Alternative: Landscape Units

Landscape Unit	Extent	Key Views
1	National Boulevard to Ohio Avenue	Views of Century City, I-405
2	Ohio Avenue to Sunset Boulevard	Views of Century City, Santa Monica Mountains, Federal Building, Westwood Recreation Center, Bad News Bears Field, Los Angeles National Cemetery, buildings along Wilshire Boulevard, UCLA campus, I-405
3	Sunset Boulevard to Mulholland Drive	Views of Santa Monica Mountains, Getty Center, Scenic Mulholland Drive, Stone Canyon Reservoir, undeveloped land
4	Mulholland Drive to US-101	Views of Santa Monica Mountains, Scenic Mulholland Drive, Stone Canyon Reservoir, undeveloped land
5	US-101 to Victory Boulevard	Views of San Gabriel Mountains, Los Angeles River, I-405, US-101
6	Victory Boulevard to LOSSAN rail corridor right-of-way	Views of San Gabriel Mountains, Los Angeles River, I-405, LOSSAN rail corridor right-of-way

Source: HTA, 2024

Summaries of the visual character of the LUs in the Project Study Area are described in the following sections. The visual descriptions are based on public views, meaning what is visible from a sidewalk, roadway, or other public ROW.

Figure 5-1 illustrates the boundaries of the LUs and the locations of the existing conditions photographs (Visual Resource Points).

Figure 5-1. No Project Alternative: Visual Landscape Units

Source: HTA, 2024

5.1.4.1 Landscape Unit 1 – National Boulevard to Ohio Avenue

LU-1 begins at National Boulevard in the Westdale and Westside communities and continues north past I-10 to Ohio Avenue in Westwood. LU-1 is bordered on the west by Steward Street and on the east by Westwood Boulevard. LU-1 is highly urbanized, consisting of a mix of low-rise, mid-rise structures, and high-rise structures. Structures within this LU generally include a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial development. Commercial developments include a mix of small and mid-size commercial

structures, as well as high-rise and mid-rise office buildings. Residential uses consist of one- to two-story single-family homes, and mid-rise buildings, while institutional and industrial uses generally consist of low-rise structures. Within LU-1, the Metro E Line, and its associated aerial structure, crosses Sepulveda Boulevard at Exposition Boulevard and partially obscures views to the north. Views of the existing aerial Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and its associated ancillary structures are available at this location.

The primary viewers in LU-1 consist of motorists, pedestrians, residents, transit commuters, and patrons of commercial businesses. Visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views.

The level and types of ornamental landscaping in LU-1 varies, with light to moderate levels of landscaping throughout LU-1. Ornamental landscaping is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets. In addition, a mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided within LU-1.

Although residential areas surround the commercial corridor in LU-1, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. The most prominent views within LU-1 are of the elevated Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and guideway. Distant north-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains are from north–south oriented streets. As discussed in Section 5.1.2, the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* lists the Santa Monica Mountains as a designated scenic vista (DCP, 2001b). Figure 5-2 and Figure 5-3 show existing representative views of LU-1.

Figure 5-2. No Project Alternative: Existing View 1, Looking West Toward Metro E Line from Pico Boulevard, West of I-405

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 5-3. No Project Alternative: Existing View 2, Looking West Toward I-405 from Santa Monica Boulevard at Sepulveda Boulevard

Source: HTA, 2024

5.1.4.2 Landscape Unit 2 – Ohio Avenue to Sunset Boulevard

LU-2 begins directly north of Ohio Avenue and continues north to Sunset Boulevard in Westwood. LU-2 is bordered to the west by Sawtelle Boulevard (just west of I-405) in the Brentwood community, and to the east by South Beverly Glen Boulevard. LU-2 is highly urbanized, consisting of a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures, as well as the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Federal Building, and UCLA campus. The majority of residential uses in LU-2 are located within the northwest and southeast portions of the LU. Residential uses consist of one- to two-story single-family homes, and multi-family residential buildings. The residential neighborhoods surrounding the UCLA campus include Bel-Air to the north, Holmby-Westwood to the east, and Westwood Hills to the west, which primarily consist of one- to two-story single-family residences. Westwood Village and the Wilshire Corridor are located to the south.

The Wilshire Corridor primarily consists of commercial uses, including hotels and mid- to high-rise office buildings from I-405 to Beverly Glen Boulevard at the eastern boundary of LU-2. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are prominent visual elements along the Wilshire Corridor. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor.

Westwood Village is located north of the Wilshire Corridor and is pedestrian-oriented, with low- to mid-rise buildings containing retail, office, and mixed uses. This village character contrasts with the many multi-story residential towers, hotels, and office buildings that exist along Wilshire Boulevard. Southeast of Wilshire Boulevard, single-family residences and small multi-family buildings are prominent. The Los Angeles National Cemetery, located in the western portion of LU-2, provides open expanses and the opportunity for distant views of the Santa Monica Mountains.

The UCLA campus is located at the base of the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains, directly south of Sunset Boulevard. The main campus is bounded by Wilshire Boulevard and Le Conte Avenue to the south, Veteran Avenue to the west, Sunset Boulevard to the north, and Hilgard Avenue to the east. The main campus is visible from adjacent residential neighborhoods to the north, east, and west, as well as from several major roadways, including Sunset Boulevard. The northern portion of the UCLA campus mainly consists of academic buildings and landscaped open areas, and the southern portion of campus consists of science and medical buildings that are considerably more dense and more urban in appearance. A majority of the main campus is organized around a series of squares and courtyards linked by hardscape pedestrian walkways. The northwestern and southwestern portions of the main campus consist of student housing. These buildings are mainly modern mid- to high-rise structures with similar architectural styles.

The primary viewers in LU-2 consist of motorists, pedestrians, patrons of commercial businesses, and patrons of UCLA. Distant north-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains are from north–south oriented streets. UCLA patrons also have background views of Century City from certain areas of the main campus.

Landscaping on the main campus has both a formal and informal character, consisting of sports fields, tree clusters, shaded grassy areas, and flowering plants. Paved pedestrian connections, asphalt circulation hubs, and streetscape treatments emphasize the main campus' urban nature. Most of the campus edges are heavily landscaped with mature trees and shrubs. These landscaped buffers screen campus buildings from adjacent streets and complement the adjacent residential areas. The trees used for these landscaped buffers are visually prominent and define the boundaries of the UCLA campus. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-2. Figure 5-4, Figure 5-5, Figure 5-6, and Figure 5-7 show existing representative views of LU-2.

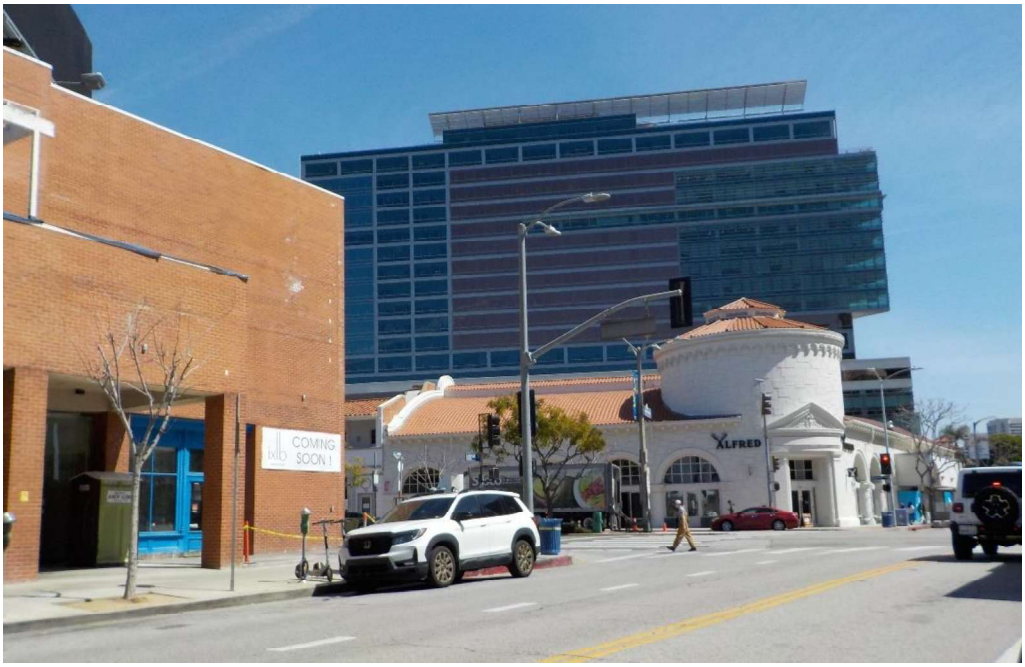
Figure 5-4. No Project Alternative: Existing View 3, Looking West Toward the Federal Building from Veteran Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 5-5. No Project Alternative: Existing View 4, Looking Northwest Toward Wilshire Boulevard and the National Cemetery from Veteran Avenue

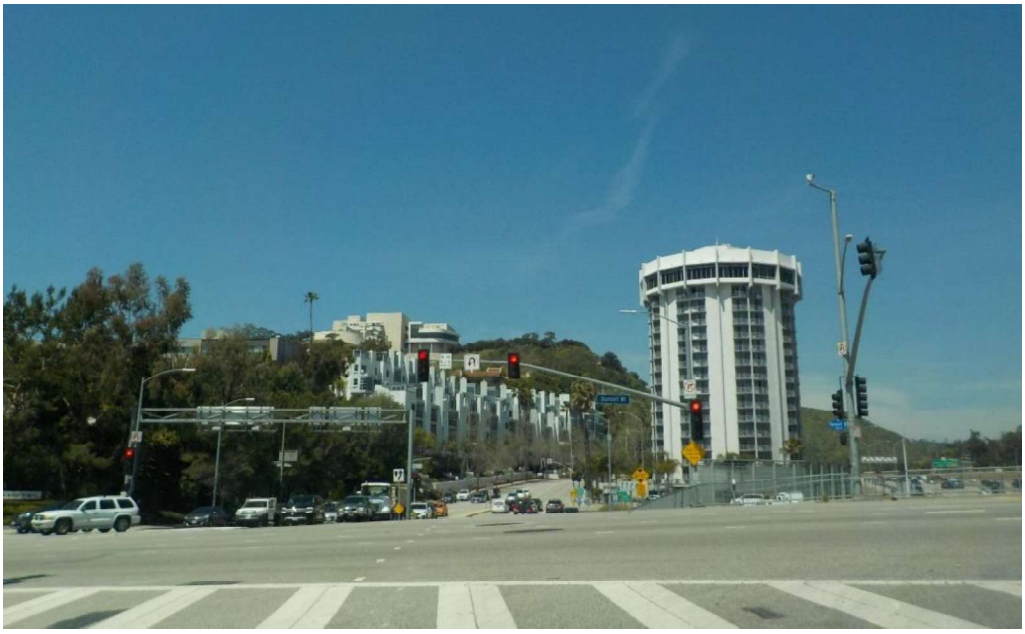
Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 5-6. No Project Alternative: Existing View 5, Looking East Toward Westwood Boulevard from Lindbrook Drive in Westwood



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 5-7. No Project Alternative: Existing View 6, Looking North Toward the Getty Center from Sunset Boulevard, West of I-405



Source: HTA, 2024

5.1.4.3 Landscape Unit 3 – Sunset Boulevard to Mulholland Drive

LU-3 begins directly north of Sunset Boulevard and continues north through the lower portion of the Santa Monica Mountains to Mulholland Drive. LU-3 is bordered on the west by I-405 and Sepulveda Boulevard, and on the east by Benedict Canyon Drive. LU-3 consists of mainly residential development in low-rise structures in the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains. A limited number of commercial and institutional uses are located within LU-3. The structures in LU-3 vary in building style, size, and color. The street network consists of many winding, local streets, but several collector roads are also within LU-3.

A portion of the scenic Mulholland Drive is located within LU-3. As discussed in Section 5.1.2, two designated vantage points are along Mulholland Drive. The Johnson Overlook and Stone Canyon Overlook are located along Mulholland Drive north of Stone Canyon Reservoir. Views consist of the Santa Monica Mountains, Century City, the Valley, and the Stone Canyon Reservoir. On clear days, it may be possible to see the Pacific Ocean.

The limited commercial uses within LU-3 consist of the Bel-Air Country Club, The Glen Centre, and Hotel Bel-Air. Bel-Air County Club is an 18-hole golf course with large, manicured lawn areas. The Glen Centre is a large shopping center with a park-like setting. Hotel Bel-Air is developed with Spanish-style architecture and houses multiple structures with driveways and a surface parking lot parallel to Stone Canyon Road. Institutional uses consist of Marymount High School, which also houses multiple structures with driveways and a surface parking lot that parallels Sunset Boulevard.

Undeveloped land includes open space, such as land preserved by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and vacant lots that can be developed with low-density, primarily single-family residences. Developed land predominantly consists of single-family residences on large lots, generally one to two stories, but some three-story and four-story residences are also built into the hillsides. These residences are developed in a variety of architectural styles, including bungalow, Spanish Eclectic, courtyard, Tudor, and Colonial styles. Due to their elevated locations on the hillside, many of the residences in the Santa Monica Mountains are afforded long-range private panoramic views across the RSA and much of the Los Angeles Basin. Beverly Hills, Bel-Air, and other single-family residential neighborhoods are located in this region.

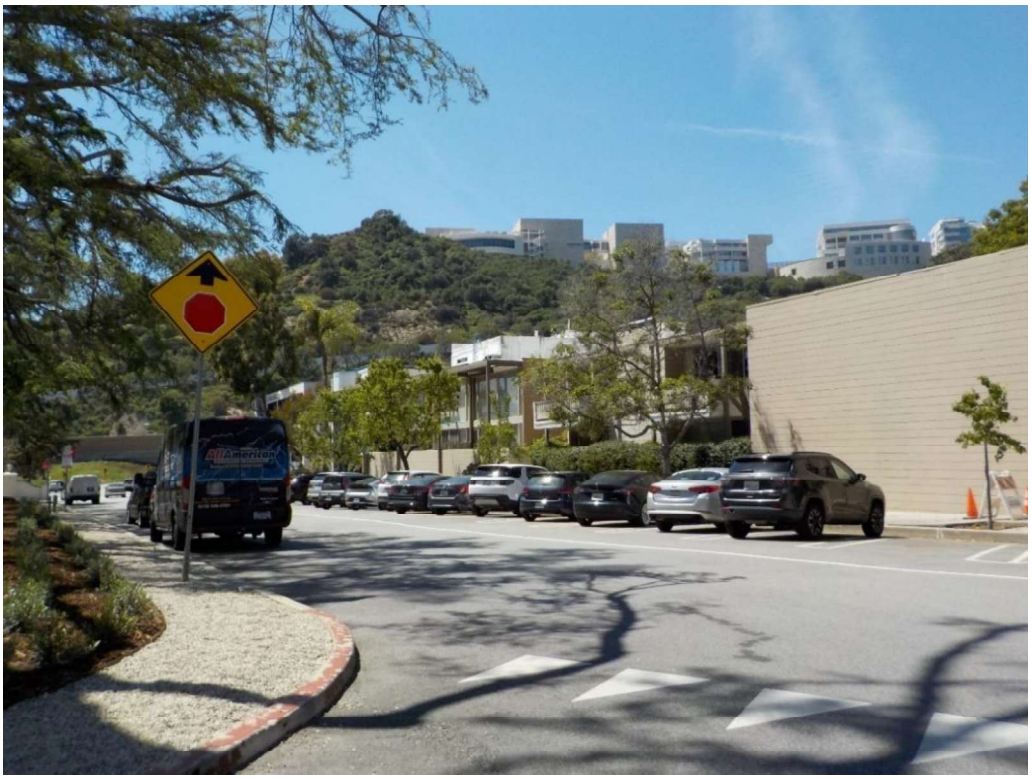
Primary viewer groups found within LU-3 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed in Section 3.1.5, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-3 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets within LU-3. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-3. Figure 5-8, Figure 5-9, Figure 5-10, and Figure 5-11 show existing representative views of LU-3.

Figure 5-8. No Project Alternative: Existing View 7, Looking West Toward I-405 from Residential Area along Ovada Place

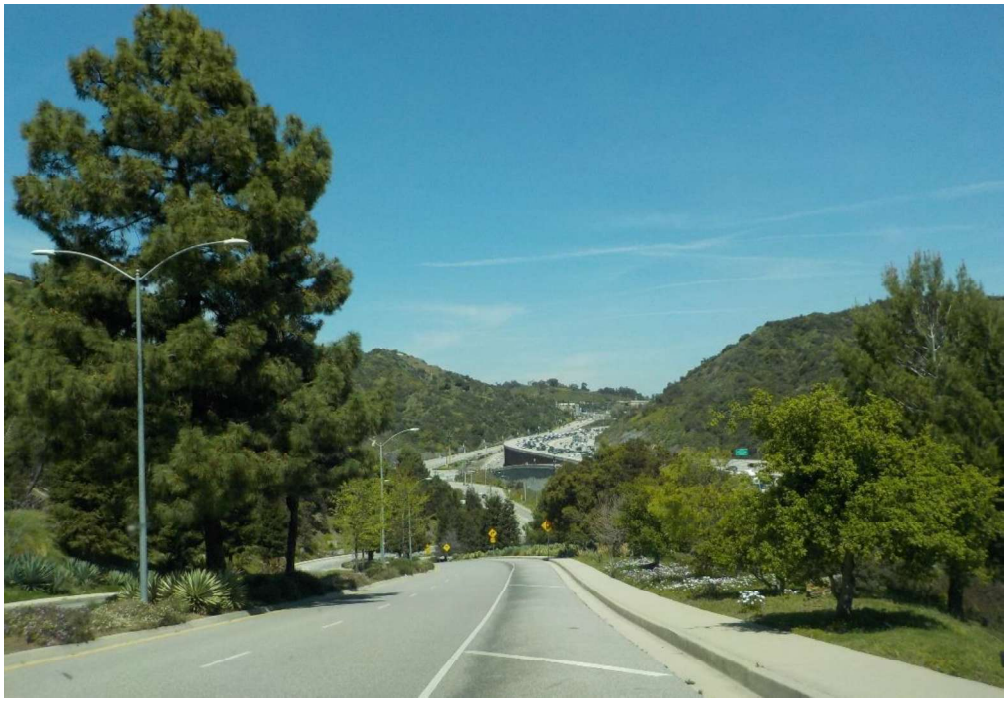
Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 5-9. No Project Alternative: Existing View 8, Looking Northwest Toward the Getty Center (and I-405) from Residential Area along Moraga Drive



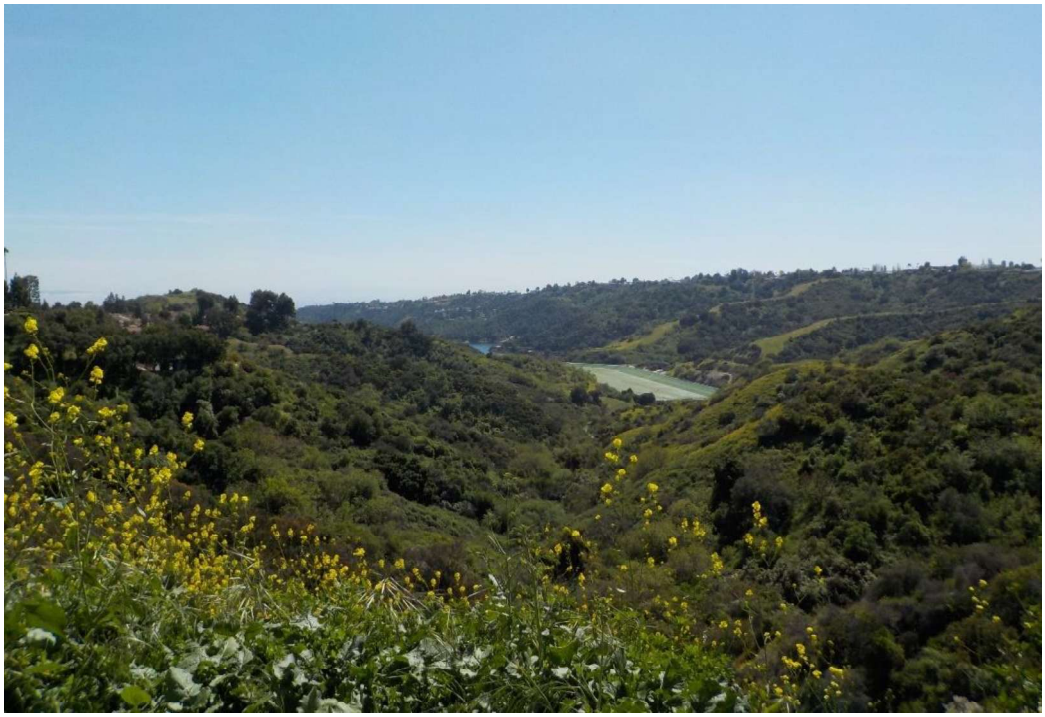
Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 5-10. No Project Alternative: Existing View 9, Looking North Toward I-405 from Mountaingate Drive



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 5-11. No Project Alternative: Existing View 10, Looking South Toward Covered Upper Stone Canyon Reservoir and Stone Canyon Reservoir from Overlook along Mulholland Drive



Source: HTA, 2024

5.1.4.4 Landscape Unit 4 – Mulholland Drive to US-101

LU-4 begins directly north of Mulholland Drive and continues north through the upper portion of the Santa Monica Mountains to US-101. LU-4 is bordered on the west by I-405 and Sepulveda Boulevard, and on the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-4 consists of mainly residential development within the Sherman Oaks neighborhood, and commercial development along the Ventura Boulevard corridor.

Similar to LU-3, a portion of the scenic Mulholland Drive is also located within LU-4. Looking north from Mulholland Drive, views consist of the Santa Monica Mountains in the foreground and middle ground and Van Nuys in the background. In addition, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north are also visible from certain portions of Mulholland Drive where there is limited vegetation.

The northern portion of the Santa Monica Mountains has both undeveloped and developed lots. As discussed in Section 5.1.4.3, undeveloped land includes open space, such as land preserved by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and vacant lots that can be developed with low-density, primarily single-family residences. Deervale-Stone Canyon Park, an 80-acre park consisting of open space and hiking trails for public use, is also located within LU-4. Views to the north from the top of the park overlook the Sherman Oaks neighborhood and the Ventura Boulevard commercial corridor. Long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north are also visible from this location.

Beyond the Santa Monica Mountains, LU-4 has a relatively flat topography and dense commercial and residential development. Views consist of low- and mid-rise buildings occupied primarily by retail, institutional, and office uses, and associated parking areas. As such, views from the northern portion of LU-4 are generally short in range and limited to the urban landscape within the immediate vicinity (i.e., buildings, roadways, utility poles, and street trees).

Primary viewer groups found within LU-4 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed in Section 3.1.5, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

Ventura Boulevard consists of primarily commercial uses, including retail businesses, restaurants, and mid- to high-rise office buildings from I-405 at the western boundary of LU-4 to the eastern boundary of LU-4 at Hazeltine Avenue. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are prominent visual elements along Ventura Boulevard. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. Overall, buildings in LU-4 are of all different sizes, styles, and colors, and are spaced at varying intervals, creating a high level of visual diversity in the landscape with no common theme. Long-range views of the Hollywood Hills are also visible traveling east along Ventura Boulevard.

Similar to LU-3, the single-family residences within the Santa Monica Mountains are developed on large lots and are generally one to two stories, but some three-story and four-story houses are visible. This development pattern transitions to low- and mid-rise single-family and multi-family residences north of Greenleaf Street within the Sherman Oaks neighborhood. Residential development is prevalent to the north and south of the Ventura Boulevard commercial corridor.

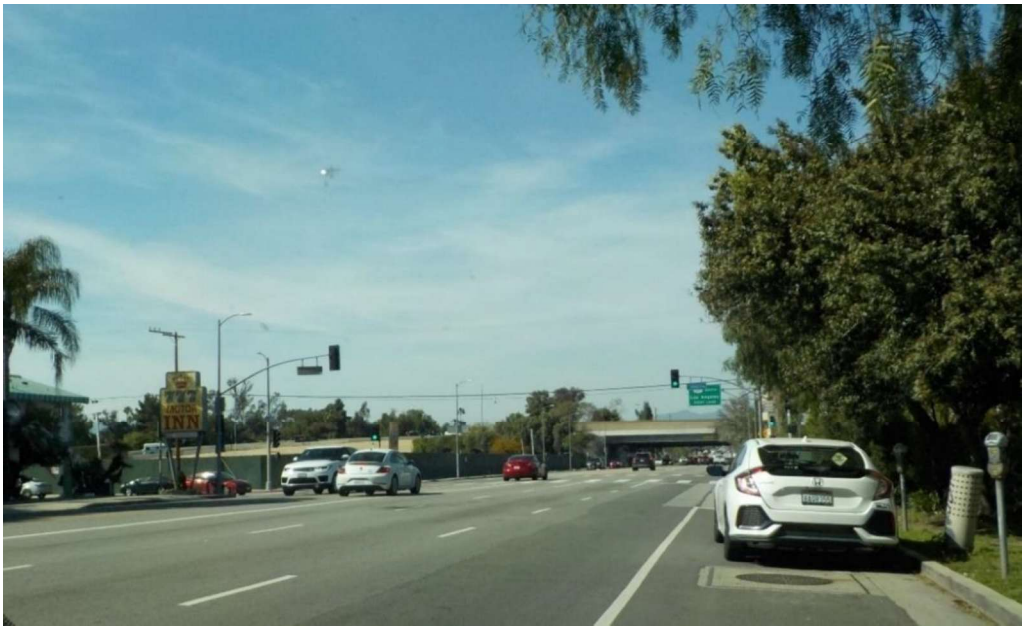
Ornamental landscaping in LU-4 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees are present along Ventura Boulevard and Willis Avenue, as well as other commercial areas for screening purposes. Street trees create definition within the dense commercial corridor; however, because they are planted intermittently, they blend into the overall

landscape. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets within the northern portion of LU-4. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-4. Figure 5-12 and Figure 5-13 show existing representative views of LU-4.

Figure 5-12. No Project Alternative: Existing View 11, Looking East Toward I-405 from Ventura Boulevard at Orion Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 5-13. No Project Alternative: Existing View 12, Looking North Toward US-101 from Sepulveda Boulevard at Camarillo Street



Source: HTA, 2024

5.1.4.5 Landscape Unit 5 – US-101 to Victory Boulevard

LU-5 begins directly north of US-101 and continues north through Van Nuys to Victory Boulevard. LU-5 is bordered to the west by Gloria Avenue and to the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-5 consists of mainly commercial and residential development within the Van Nuys neighborhood. The Metro G Line also travels east–west through the central portion of LU-5.

Views in the southern portion of LU-5 looking south are predominately of the elevated segment of US-101. Long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are also visible in some areas, but they are few because of the relatively flat topography and intervening urban development. The Los Angeles River is also located within the southern portion of LU-5, and mainly travels parallel to US-101; however, since the Los Angeles River is located below street level, public views of the Los Angeles River from the surrounding Project Study Area are obscured by existing development and are generally not available except on Hazeltine Avenue just south of the US-101 overpass. As discussed in Section 5.1.2, the Los Angeles River and its associated tributaries and floodplains are also listed as scenic vistas in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* (DCP, 2001b).

Typical views in LU-5 include the Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard commercial corridors, which are bordered by parking areas, sidewalks, street trees, commercial buildings, and additional buildings visible in the background. Views of I-405 are also visible from Sepulveda Boulevard. Traveling north along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains are visible. In addition, traveling south, long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are visible. Primary viewer groups found within LU-5 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed in Section 3.1.5, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

Commercial structures along Van Nuys Boulevard consist of low- to mid-rise retail businesses, restaurants, office uses, and parking areas. In addition, commercial structures along Sepulveda Boulevard consist of low- to high-rise office uses, residential uses, retail businesses, restaurants, and parking areas. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are also prominent visual elements on these roadways. Although residential areas surround commercial corridors, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-5 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees are present along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, as well as other commercial areas for screening purposes. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout the LU. Figure 5-14 and Figure 5-15 show existing representative views of LU-5.

Figure 5-14. No Project Alternative: Existing View 13, Looking North along Sepulveda Boulevard at Magnolia Boulevard

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 5-15. No Project Alternative: Existing View 14, Looking East along Victory Boulevard West of I-405 at Gloria Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

5.1.4.6 Landscape Unit 6 – Victory Boulevard to LOSSAN Rail Corridor ROW

Landscape Unit 6 (LU-6) begins directly north of Victory Boulevard and continues north through Van Nuys to the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW. LU-6 is bordered to the west by Gloria Avenue and to the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-6 consists of mainly commercial and residential development within the Van Nuys neighborhood, with residential development located primarily to the east and west of the Van Nuys Boulevard commercial corridor. The LOSSAN rail corridor ROW and existing Van Nuys/Metrolink Station border the northern boundary of LU-6.

Similar to LU-5, typical views in LU-6 include the Van Nuys Boulevard commercial corridor, which is bordered by parking areas, sidewalks, street trees, commercial buildings, and additional buildings visible in the background. Traveling north along Van Nuys Boulevard, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains are visible. Traveling south, long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are visible; however, views of the Santa Monica Mountains are dominated by other features in the landscape.

Primary viewer groups found within LU-6 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed in Section 3.1.5, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

The visual character of the portion of Van Nuys Boulevard within LU-6 consists of low- to mid-rise retail businesses, restaurants, office uses, and parking areas. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are also prominent visual elements along Van Nuys Boulevard. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. Similar to LU-5, buildings are of all different sizes, styles, and colors, and are spaced at different intervals, which creates a high level of visual diversity in the landscape with no common theme. Street trees soften the appearance of the dense commercial corridor; however, because they are planted intermittently, they blend into the overall landscape.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-6 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees are present along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, as well as other commercial areas for screening purposes. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-6. Figure 5-16 shows an existing representative view in LU-6.

Figure 5-16. No Project Alternative: Existing View 15, Looking East along Sherman Way Toward I-405 at Haskell Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

5.1.5 Light and Glare

North of US-101, the Project Study Area is generally located within the Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys neighborhoods of the City of Los Angeles, and encompasses commercial, industrial, and residential development with ambient nighttime lighting typical of urbanized settings. Common light sources include the streetlights, vehicle lights, building entrance lighting, parking structure lighting, illuminated signage/billboards, and general illumination from lights shining through windows of structures lining the corridor.

South of US-101, nighttime lighting is more limited in the Santa Monica Mountains. In the developed portions of the Santa Monica Mountains, lighting sources include pedestrian-scaled streetlights, security and decorative wall lighting at residential homes, vehicle headlights, and interior building illumination. By contrast, the undeveloped portions of the Santa Monica Mountains have little to no light or glare sources, other than vehicle headlights.

South of Sunset Boulevard, the Project Study Area is generally located within Westwood and West Los Angeles neighborhoods of the City of Los Angeles, as well as within the City of Santa Monica. The adjacent commercial, industrial, and residential development, as well as cultural and institutional facilities, such as the UCLA campus, contribute to ambient nighttime lighting typical of urbanized settings. As previously mentioned, light sources include the streetlights, vehicle lights, building entrance lighting, parking structure lighting, illuminated signage/billboards, and general illumination from lights shining through windows of structures lining the corridor.

5.2 Impact Evaluation

5.2.1 Impact AES-1: Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

5.2.1.1 Operational Impacts

Within the Project Study Area, the only reasonably foreseeable transit improvement under the No Project Alternative would include changes to the Metro Line 761. Changes to the bus route would have no potential to affect visual resources as the existing bus route would continue to operate along existing streets and highways. Additionally, because no new major transit infrastructure would be constructed and implemented, and the No Project Alternative would avoid all potential visual impacts associated with the build alternatives. The No Project Alternative would have no operational impacts on scenic vistas.

5.2.1.2 Construction Impacts

No new major transit infrastructure would be constructed and implemented, and the No Project Alternative would avoid all potential visual impacts associated with the build alternatives. Changes to the Metro Line 761 would require minimal or no construction activities, as the existing Metro bus line would simply be rerouted to between the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station. These potential termini already include transit infrastructure supporting bus feeder lines and would not require construction of new facilities to support the rerouted bus service. Minor bus stop modifications along the Metro Line 761 may be required; however, construction activities associated with these improvements would consist of minimal or no ground disturbance within existing sidewalks and street ROW. None of this construction equipment for the minor infrastructure work would be of any height that would block scenic vistas. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would have no construction impacts on scenic vistas.

5.2.2 Impact AES-2: Would the Project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

5.2.2.1 Operational Impacts

The No Project Alternative description takes into consideration several existing and under-construction highway and transit services and facilities, as well as the committed transit and highway projects scheduled to be operational by 2045. These projects are subject to the same regulatory requirements under CEQA as the current Project. Within the Project Study Area, the only reasonably foreseeable transit improvement under the No Project Alternative would include changes to the Metro Line 761. Changes to the bus route would have no potential to affect visual resources as the existing bus route would continue to operate along existing streets and highways. The No Project Alternative would have no operational impacts on scenic resources within a state scenic highway. Additionally, because no new major transit infrastructure would be constructed and implemented, and the No Project Alternative would avoid all potential visual impacts associated with the build alternatives.

5.2.2.2 Construction Impacts

No new major transit infrastructure would be constructed and implemented, and the No Project Alternative would avoid all potential visual impacts associated with the build alternatives. Changes to the Metro Line 761 would require minimal or no construction activities, as the existing Metro bus line would simply be rerouted to between the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station. These potential termini already include transit infrastructure supporting bus

feeder lines and would not require construction of new facilities to support the rerouted bus service. Minor bus stop modifications along the Metro Line 761 may be required; however, construction activities associated with these improvements would consist of minimal or no ground disturbance within existing sidewalks and street ROW. None of this construction disturbance would damage know scenic resources. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would have no construction impacts on scenic resources within a state scenic highway.

5.2.3 Impact AES-3: Would the project, in non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

5.2.3.1 Operational Impacts

The No Project Alternative description takes into consideration several existing and under-construction highway and transit services and facilities, as well as the committed transit and highway projects scheduled to be operational by 2045. These projects are subject to the same regulatory requirements under CEQA as the current Project. Within the Project Study Area, the only reasonably foreseeable transit improvement under the No Project Alternative would include changes to the Metro Line 761. Changes to the bus route would have no potential to affect visual resources as the existing bus route would continue to operate along existing streets and highways. Additionally, no new Project-related infrastructure would be constructed and implemented under the No Project Alternative. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would have no operational impacts regarding conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

5.2.3.2 Construction Impacts

No new major transit infrastructure would be constructed and implemented, and the No Project Alternative would avoid all potential visual impacts associated with the build alternatives. Changes to the Metro Line 761 would require minimal or no construction activities, as the existing Metro bus line would simply be rerouted to between the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station. These potential termini already include transit infrastructure supporting bus feeder lines and would not require construction of new facilities to support the rerouted bus service. Minor bus stop modifications along the Metro Line 761 may be required; however, construction activities associated with these improvements would consist of minimal or no ground disturbance within existing sidewalks and street ROW. None of this construction disturbance would change existing visual character. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would have no construction impacts regarding conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

5.2.4 Impact AES-4: Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

5.2.4.1 Operational Impacts

The No Project Alternative description takes into consideration several existing and under-construction highway and transit services and facilities, as well as the committed transit and highway projects scheduled to be operational by 2045. These projects are subject to the same regulatory requirements under CEQA as the current Project. Within the Project Study Area, the only reasonably foreseeable transit improvement under the No Project Alternative would include changes to the Metro Line 761.

Changes to the bus route would include new bus stops that will have nighttime security lighting. The nighttime security lighting would be similar to existing bus stop lighting around the City of Los Angeles and would not exceed existing lighting in an urbanized environment. Additionally, because no new major transit infrastructure would be constructed and implemented, and the No Project Alternative would avoid all potential visual impacts associated with the build alternatives. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would have less than significant operational impacts related to creation of a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views.

5.2.4.2 Construction Impacts

No new major transit infrastructure would be constructed and implemented, and the No Project Alternative would avoid all potential visual impacts associated with the build alternatives. Changes to the Metro Line 761 would require minimal or no construction activities, as the existing Metro bus line would simply be rerouted to between the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station. These potential termini already include transit infrastructure supporting bus feeder lines and would not require construction of new facilities to support the rerouted bus service. Minor bus stop modifications along the Metro Line 761 may be required; however, construction activities associated with these improvements would consist of minimal or no ground disturbance within existing sidewalks and street ROW. Some of this work may involve nighttime lighting, which would be consistent with other minor construction work in urbanized areas. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would have less than significant construction impacts related to creation of a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views.

5.3 Mitigation Measures

5.3.1 Operational Impacts

As discussed in Section 5.2, operation of the No Project Alternative would have less than significant impacts; therefore, no project measures or mitigation measures would be required.

5.3.2 Construction Impacts

As discussed in Section 5.2, construction of the No Project Alternative would have less than significant impacts; therefore, no project measures or mitigation measures would be required.

5.3.3 Impacts After Mitigation

No mitigation measures would be required; therefore, less than significant impacts related to visual resources would remain for the operation and construction of the No Project Alternative.

6 ALTERNATIVE 1

6.1 Alternative Description

Alternative 1 is an entirely aerial monorail alignment that would run along the Interstate 405 (I-405) corridor and would include eight aerial monorail transit (MRT) stations and a new electric bus route from the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (Metro) D Line Westwood/VA Hospital Station to the UCLA Gateway Plaza via Wilshire Boulevard and Westwood Boulevard. This alternative would provide transfers to five high-frequency fixed guideway transit and commuter rail lines, including the Metro E, Metro D, and Metro G Lines, the East San Fernando Valley Light Rail Transit Line, and the Metrolink Ventura County Line. The length of the alignment between the terminus stations would be approximately 15.1 miles. The length of the bus route would be 1.5 miles.

The eight aerial MRT stations and three bus stops would be as follows:

1. Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station (aerial)
2. Santa Monica Boulevard Station (aerial)
3. Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station (aerial)
    a. Wilshire Boulevard/VA Medical Center bus stop
    b. Westwood Village bus stop
    c. UCLA Gateway Plaza bus stop
4. Getty Center Station (aerial)
5. Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station (aerial)
6. Metro G Line Sepulveda Station (aerial)
7. Sherman Way Station (aerial)
8. Van Nuys Metrolink Station (aerial)

6.1.1 Operating Characteristics

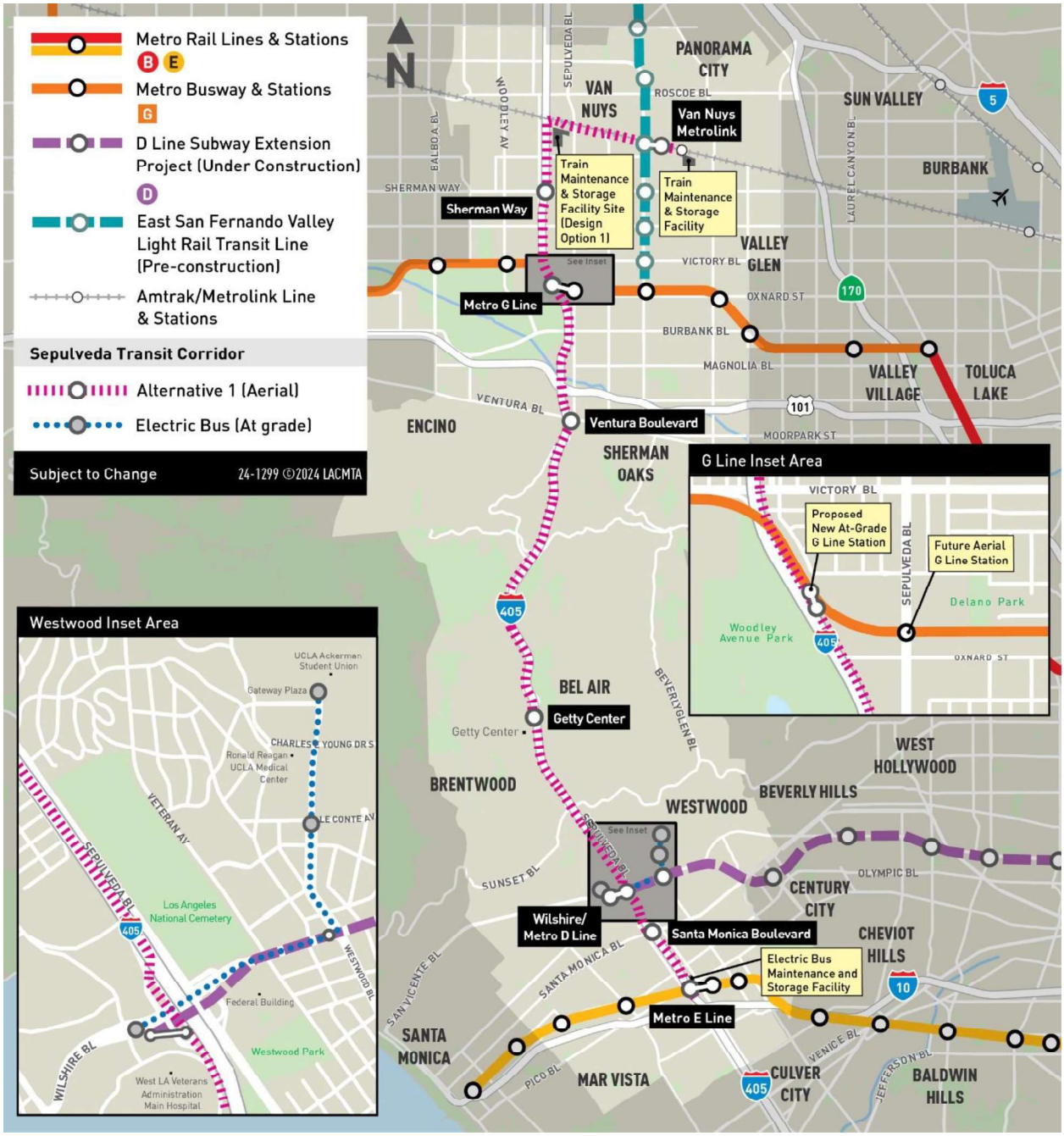
6.1.1.1 Alignment

As shown on Figure 6-1, from its southern terminus at the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, the alignment of Alternative 1 would generally follow I-405 to the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) rail corridor near the alignment's northern terminus at the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. At several points, the alignment would transition from one side of the freeway to the other or to the median. North of U.S. Highway 101 (US-101), the alignment would be on the east side of the I-405 right-of-way and would then curve eastward along the south side of the LOSSAN rail corridor to Van Nuys Boulevard.

The proposed southern terminus station would be located west of the existing Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and east of I-405 between Pico Boulevard and Exposition Boulevard. Tail tracks would extend just south of the station adjacent to the eastbound Interstate 10 (I-10) to northbound I-405 connector over Exposition Boulevard. North of the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, a storage track would be located off the main alignment north of Pico Boulevard between I-405 and Cotner Avenue. The alignment would continue north along the east side of I-405 until just south of Santa Monica Boulevard, where a proposed station would be located between the I-405 northbound travel lanes and Cotner Avenue. The alignment would cross over the northbound and southbound freeway lanes north of Santa Monica Boulevard and travel along the west side of I-405, before reaching a

proposed station within the I-405 southbound-to-eastbound loop off-ramp to Wilshire Boulevard, near the Metro D Line Westwood/VA Hospital Station.

Figure 6-1. Alternative 1: Alignment



Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

An electric bus would serve as a shuttle between the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station and UCLA Gateway Plaza. From the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station, the bus would travel east on Wilshire Boulevard and turn north on Westwood Boulevard to UCLA Gateway Plaza and make an intermediate stop in Westwood Village near the intersection of Le Conte Avenue and Westwood Boulevard.

North of Wilshire Boulevard, the monorail alignment would transition over the southbound I-405 freeway lanes to the freeway median, where it would continue north over the Sunset Boulevard overcrossing. The alignment would remain in the median to Getty Center Drive, where it would cross over the southbound freeway lanes to the west side of I-405, just north of the Getty Center Drive undercrossing, to the proposed Getty Center Station located north of the Getty Center tram station. The alignment would return to the median for a short distance before curving back to the west side of I-405, south of the Sepulveda Boulevard undercrossing north of the Getty Center Drive interchange. After crossing over Bel Air Crest Road and Skirball Center Drive, the alignment would return to the median and run under the Mulholland Drive Bridge, then continue north within the I-405 median to descend into the San Fernando Valley (Valley).

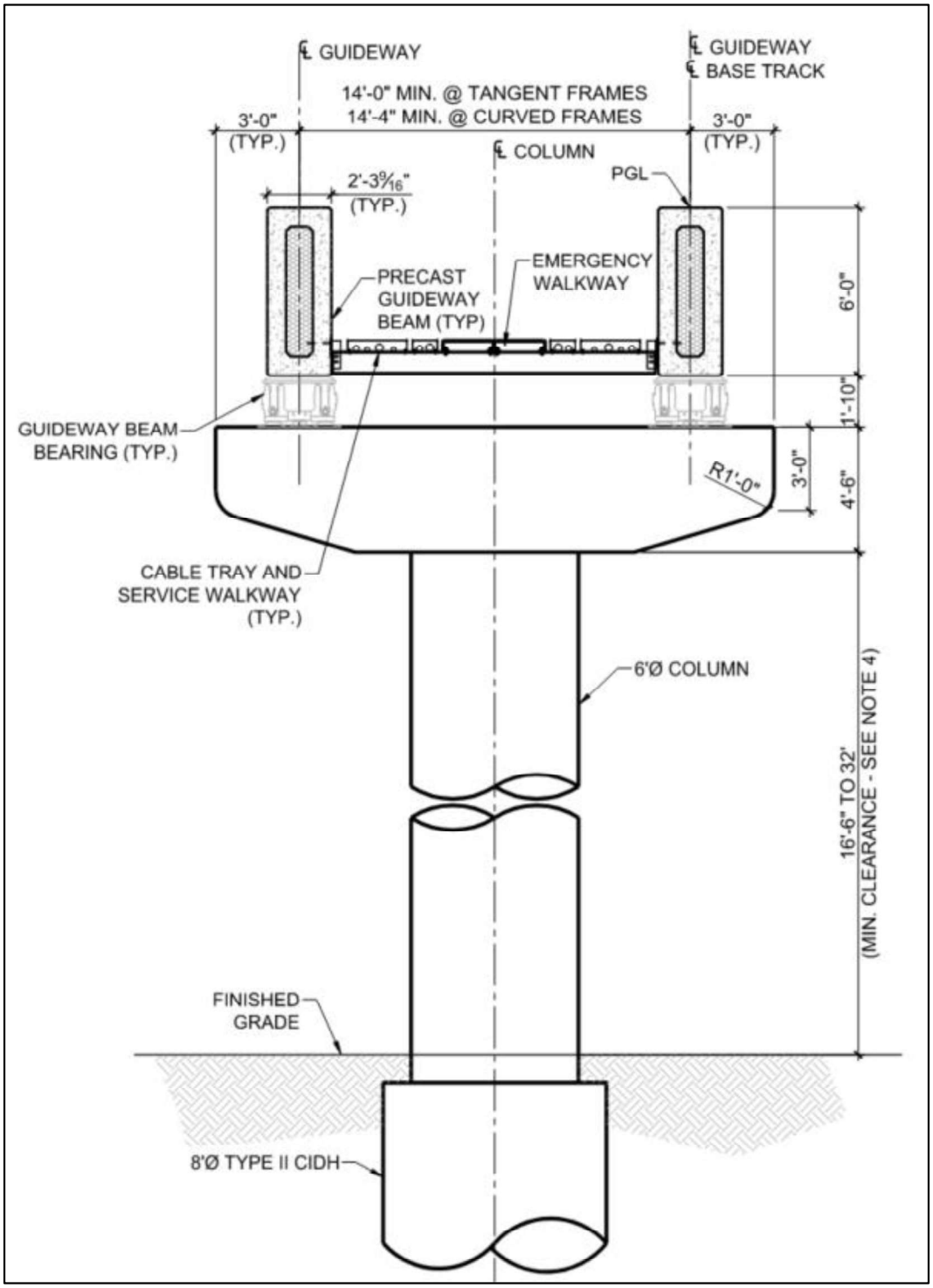
Near Greenleaf Street, the alignment would cross over the northbound freeway lanes and northbound on-ramps toward the proposed Ventura Boulevard Station on the east side of I-405. This station would be located above a transit plaza and would replace an existing segment of Dickens Street adjacent to I-405, just south of Ventura Boulevard. Immediately north of the Ventura Boulevard Station, the alignment would cross over northbound I-405 to the US-101 connector and continue north between the connector and the I-405 northbound travel lanes. The alignment would continue north along the east side of I-405—crossing over US-101 and the Los Angeles River—to a proposed station on the east side of I-405 near the Metro G Line Busway. A new at-grade station on the Metro G Line would be constructed for Alternative 1 adjacent to the proposed monorail station. These proposed stations are shown on the Metro G Line inset area on Figure 6-1.

The alignment would then continue north along the east side of I-405 to the proposed Sherman Way Station. The station would be located inside the I-405 northbound loop off-ramp to Sherman Way. North of the station, the alignment would continue along the eastern edge of I-405, then curve to the southeast parallel to the LOSSAN rail corridor. The alignment would remain aerial along Raymer Street east of Sepulveda Boulevard and cross over Van Nuys Boulevard to the proposed terminus station adjacent to the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station. Overhead utilities along Raymer Street would be undergrounded where they would conflict with the guideway or its supporting columns. Tail tracks would be located southeast of this terminus station.

6.1.1.2 Guideway Characteristics

The monorail alignment of Alternative 1 would be entirely aerial, utilizing straddle-beam monorail technology, which allows the monorail vehicle to straddle a guide beam that both supports and guides the vehicle. Northbound and southbound trains would travel on parallel beams supported by either a single-column or a straddle-bent structure. Figure 6-2 shows a typical cross-section of the aerial monorail guideway.

Figure 6-2. Typical Monorail Guideway Cross-Section



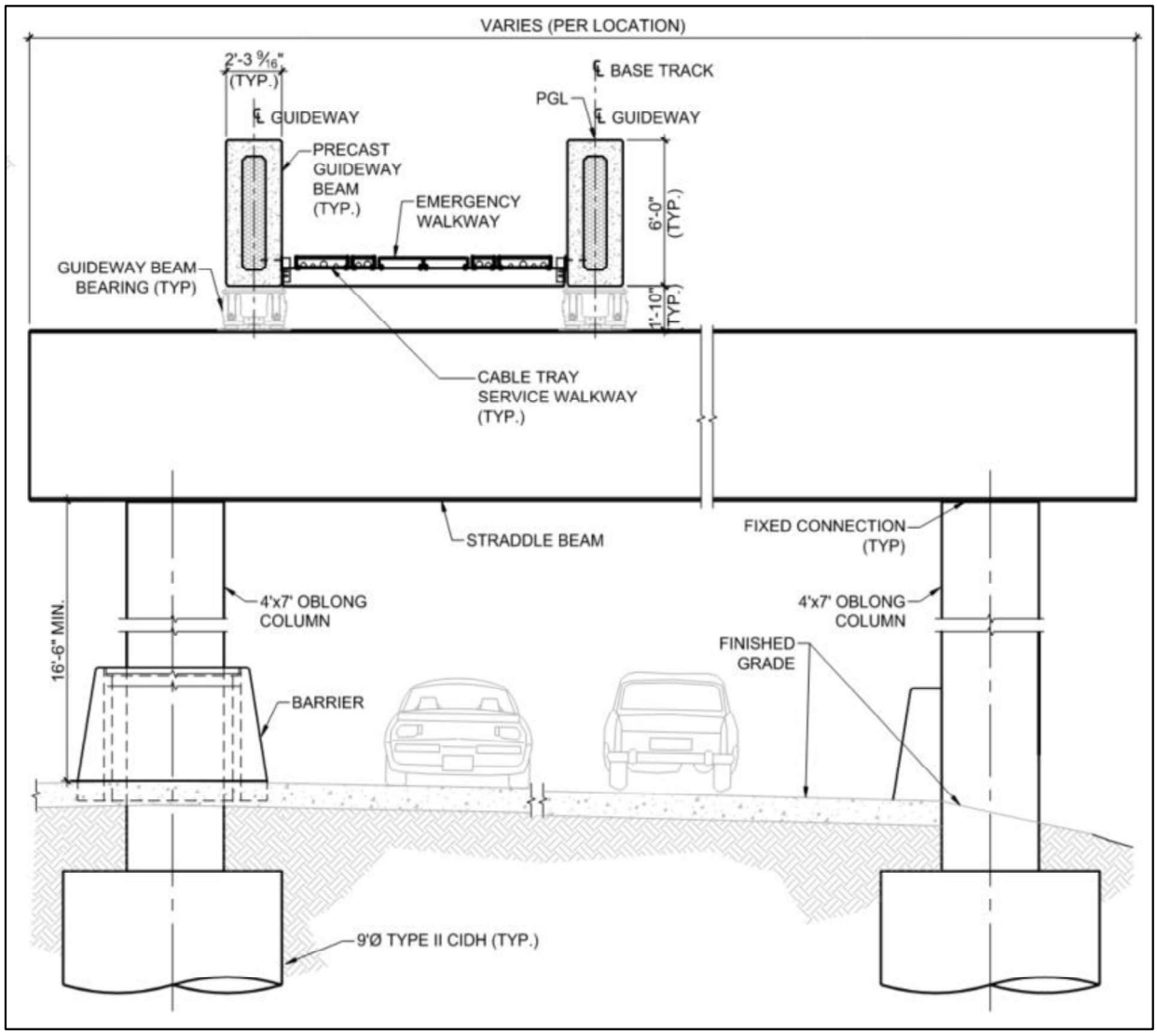
Source: LASRE, 2024

On a typical guideway section (i.e., not at a station), guide beams would rest on 20-foot-wide column caps (i.e., the structure connecting the columns and the guide beams), with typical spans (i.e., the

distance between columns) ranging from 70 to 190 feet. The bottom of the column caps would typically be between 16.5 feet and 32 feet above ground level.

Over certain segments of roadway and freeway facilities, a straddle-bent configuration, as shown on Figure 6-3, consisting of two concrete columns constructed outside of the underlying roadway would be used to support the guide beams and column cap. Typical spans for these structures would range between 65 and 70 feet. A minimum 16.5-foot clearance would be maintained between the underlying roadway and the bottom of the column caps.

Figure 6-3. Typical Monorail Straddle-Bent Cross-Section



Source: LASRE, 2024

Structural support columns would vary in size and arrangement by alignment location. Columns would be 6 feet in diameter along main alignment segments adjacent to I-405 and be 4 feet wide by 6 feet long in the I-405 median. Straddle-bent columns would be 4 feet wide by 7 feet long. At stations, six rows of dual 5-foot by- 8-foot columns would support the aerial guideway. Beam switch locations and long-span structures would also utilize different sized columns, with dual 5-foot columns supporting switch

locations and 9-foot- or 10-foot-diameter columns supporting long-span structures. Crash protection barriers would be used to protect the columns. Columns would have a cast-in-drilled-hole (CIDH) pile foundation extending 1 foot in diameter beyond the column width with varying depths for appropriate geotechnical considerations and structural support.

6.1.1.3 Vehicle Technology

Alternative 1 would utilize straddle-beam monorail technology, which allows the monorail vehicle to straddle a guide beam that both supports and guides the vehicle. Rubber tires would sit both atop and on each side of the guide beam to provide traction and guide the train. Trains would be automated and powered by power rails mounted to the guide beam, with planned peak-period headways of 166 seconds and off-peak-period headways of 5 minutes. Monorail trains could consist of up to eight cars. Alternative 1 would have a maximum operating speed of 56 miles per hour; actual operating speeds would depend on the design of the guideway and distance between stations.

Monorail train cars would be 10.5 feet wide, with two double doors on each side. End cars would be 46.1 feet long with a design capacity of 97 passengers, and intermediate cars would be 35.8 feet long and have a design capacity of 90 passengers.

The electric bus connecting the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station, Westwood Village, and UCLA Gateway Plaza would be a battery electric, low-floor transit bus, either 40 or 60 feet in length. The buses would run with headways of 2 minutes during peak periods. The electric bus service would operate in existing mixed-flow travel lanes.

6.1.1.4 Stations

Alternative 1 would include eight aerial MRT stations with platforms approximately 320 feet long, elevated 50 feet to 75 feet above the existing ground level. The Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda, Santa Monica Boulevard, Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard, Sherman Way, and Van Nuys Metrolink Stations would be center-platform stations where passengers would travel up to a shared platform that would serve both directions of travel. The Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line, Getty Center, and Metro G Line Sepulveda Stations would be side-platform stations where passengers would select and travel up to one of two station platforms, depending on their direction of travel. Each station, regardless of whether it has side or center platforms, would include a concourse level prior to reaching the train platforms. Each station would have a minimum of two elevators, two escalators, and one stairway from ground level to the concourse.

Station platforms would be approximately 320 feet long and would be supported by six rows of dual 5-foot by 8-foot columns. Station platforms would be covered, but not enclosed. Side-platform stations would be 61.5 feet wide to accommodate two 13-foot-wide station platforms with a 35.5-foot-wide intermediate gap for side-by-side trains. Center-platform stations would be 49 feet wide, with a 25-foot-wide center platform.

Monorail stations would include automatic, bi-parting fixed doors along the edges of station platforms. These doors would be integrated into the automatic train control system and would not open unless a train is stopped at the platform.

The following information describes each station, with relevant entrance, walkway, and transfer information. Bicycle parking would be provided at each station.

Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station

- This aerial station would be located near the existing Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, just east of I-405 between Pico Boulevard and Exposition Boulevard.
- A transit plaza and station entrance would be located on the east side of the station.
- An off-street passenger pick-up/drop-off loop would be located south of Pico Boulevard west of Cotner Avenue.
- An elevated pedestrian walkway would connect the concourse level of the proposed station to the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station within the fare paid zone.
- Passengers would be able to park at the existing Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station parking facility, which provides 260 parking spaces. No additional automobile parking would be provided at the proposed station.

Santa Monica Boulevard Station

- This aerial station would be located just south of Santa Monica Boulevard, between the I-405 northbound travel lanes and Cotner Avenue.
- Station entrances would be located on the southeast and southwest corners of Santa Monica Boulevard and Cotner Avenue. The entrance on the southeast corner of the intersection would be connected to the station concourse level via an elevated pedestrian walkway spanning Cotner Avenue.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station

- This aerial station would be located west of I-405 and south of Wilshire Boulevard within the southbound I-405 loop off-ramp to eastbound Wilshire Boulevard.
- An elevated pedestrian walkway spanning the adjacent I-405 ramps would connect the concourse level of the proposed station to a station plaza adjacent to the Metro D Line Westwood/VA Hospital Station within the fare paid zone. The station plaza would be the only entrance to the proposed station.
- The station plaza would include an electric bus stop and provide access to the Metro D Line Station via a new station entrance and concourse constructed using a knock-out panel provided in the Metro D Line Station.
- The passenger pick-up/drop-off facility at the Metro D Line Station would be reconfigured, maintaining the original capacity.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

Getty Center Station

- This aerial station would be located on the west side of I-405 near the Getty Center, approximately 1,000 feet north of the Getty Center tram station.
- An elevated pedestrian walkway would connect the concourse level of the proposed station to the Getty Center tram station. The proposed connection would occur outside the fare paid zone.
- The pedestrian walkway would provide the only entrance to the proposed station.

- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station

- This aerial station would be located east of I-405, just south of Ventura Boulevard.
- A transit plaza, including two station entrances, would be located on the east side of the station. The plaza would require the closure of a 0.1-mile segment of Dickens Street between Sepulveda Boulevard and Ventura Boulevard, with a passenger pick-up/drop-off loop and bus stops provided south of the station, off Sepulveda Boulevard.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

Metro G Line Sepulveda Station

- This aerial station would be located near the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station, between I-405 and the Metro G Line Busway.
- Entrances to the MRT station would be located on both sides of a proposed new Metro G Line bus rapid transit (BRT) station.
- An elevated pedestrian walkway would connect the concourse level of the proposed station to the proposed new Metro G Line BRT station outside of the fare paid zone.
- Passengers would be able to park at the existing Metro G Line Sepulveda Station parking facility, which has a capacity of 1,205 parking spaces. Currently, only 260 parking spaces are used for transit parking. No additional automobile parking would be provided at the proposed station.

Sherman Way Station

- This aerial station would be located inside the I-405 northbound loop off-ramp to Sherman Way.
- A station entrance would be located on the north side of Sherman Way.
- An on-street passenger pick-up/drop-off area would be provided on the north side of Sherman Way west of Firmament Avenue.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

Van Nuys Metrolink Station

- This aerial station would be located on the east side of Van Nuys Boulevard, just south of the LOSSAN rail corridor, incorporating the site of the current Amtrak ticket office.
- A station entrance would be located on the east side of Van Nuys Boulevard just south of the LOSSAN rail corridor. A second entrance would be located north of the LOSSAN rail corridor with an elevated pedestrian walkway connecting to both the concourse level of the proposed station and the platform of the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station.
- Existing Metrolink station parking would be reconfigured, maintaining approximately the same number of spaces, but 180 parking spaces would be relocated north of the LOSSAN rail corridor. Metrolink parking would not be available to Metro transit riders.

6.1.1.5 Station-to-Station Travel Times

Table 6-1 presents the station-to-station distance and travel times for Alternative 1. The travel times include both run time and dwell time. Dwell time is 30 seconds per station. Northbound and

southbound travel times vary slightly because of grade differentials and operational considerations at end-of-line stations.

Table 6-1. Alternative 1: Station-to-Station Travel Times and Station Dwell Times

From Station	To Station	Distance (miles)	Northbound Station-to-Station Travel Time (seconds)	Southbound Station-to-Station Travel Time (seconds)	Dwell Time (seconds)
Metro E Line Station					*30*
Metro E Line	Santa Monica Boulevard	0.9	122	98	—
Santa Monica Boulevard Station					*30*
Santa Monica Boulevard	Wilshire/Metro D Line	0.7	99	104	—
Wilshire/Metro D Line Station					*30*
Wilshire/Metro D Line	Getty Center	2.9	263	266	—
Getty Center Station					*30*
Getty Center	Ventura Boulevard	4.7	419	418	—
Ventura Boulevard Station					*30*
Ventura Boulevard	Metro G Line	2.0	177	184	—
Metro G Line Station					*30*
Metro G Line	Sherman Way	1.5	135	134	—
Sherman Way Station					*30*
Sherman Way	Van Nuys Metrolink	2.4	284	284	—
Van Nuys Metrolink Station					*30*

Source: LASRE, 2024

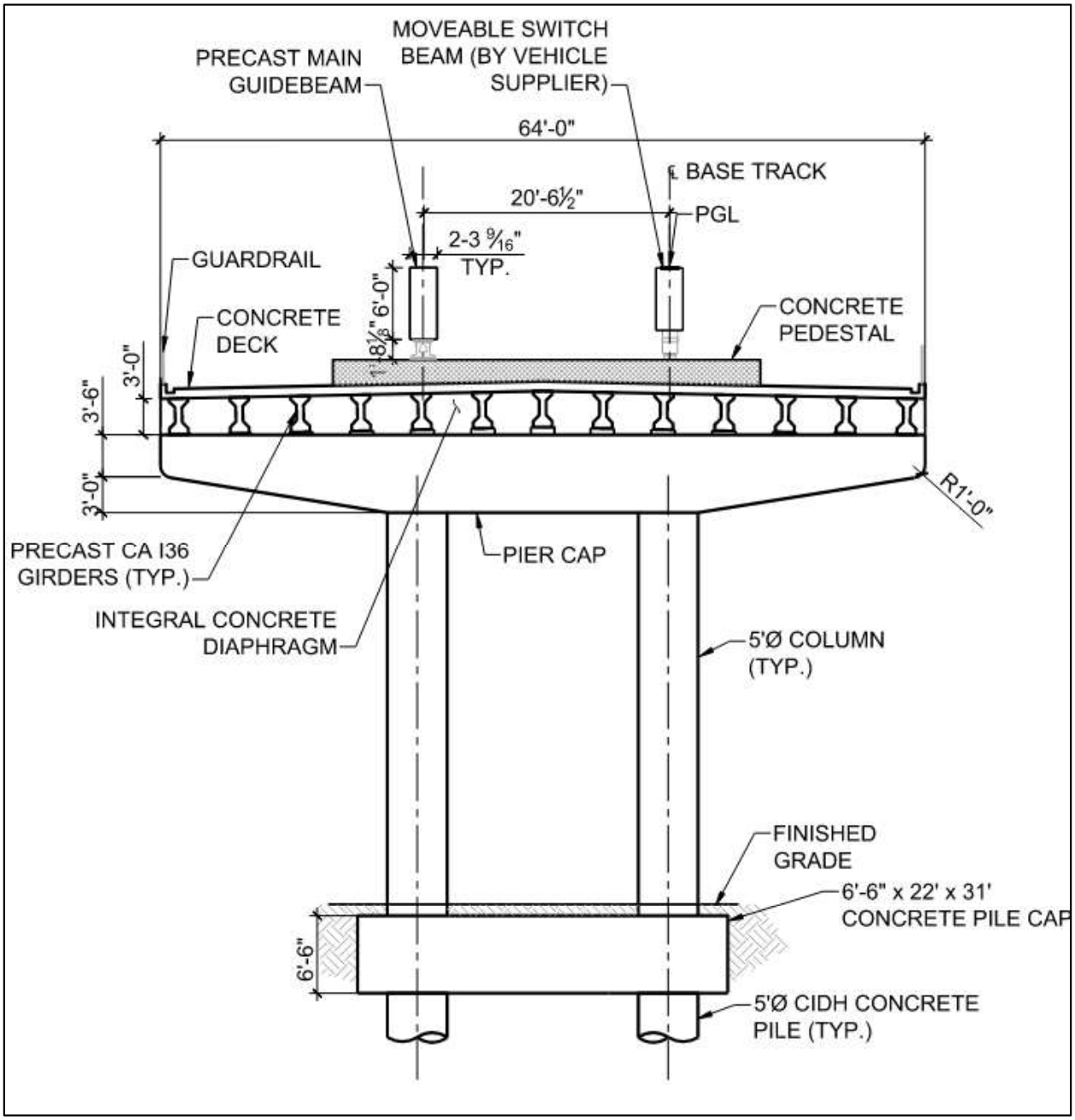
— = no data

6.1.1.6 Special Trackwork

Alternative 1 would include five pairs of beam switches to enable trains to cross over to the opposite beam. From south to north, the first pair of beam switches would be located just north of the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station. The second pair of beam switches would be located near the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station on the north side of Wilshire Boulevard, within the Wilshire Boulevard westbound to I-405 southbound loop on-ramp. A third pair of beam switches would be located in the Sepulveda Pass just south of Mountaingate Drive and Sepulveda Boulevard. A fourth pair of beam switches would be located south of the Metro G Line Station between the I-405 northbound lanes and the Metro G Line Busway. The final pair would be located near the Van Nuys Metrolink Station.

At beam switch locations, the typical cross-section of the guideway would increase in column and column cap width. The column cap at these locations would be 64 feet wide, with dual 5-foot-diameter columns. Underground pile caps for additional structural support would also be required at beam switch locations. Figure 6-4 shows a typical cross-section of the monorail beam switch.

Figure 6-4. Typical Monorail Beam Switch Cross-Section



Source: LASRE, 2024

6.1.1.7 Monorail Maintenance and Storage Facility

MSF Base Design

In the maintenance and storage facility (MSF) Base Design for Alternative 1, the MSF would be located on City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) property east of the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The MSF Base Design site would be approximately 18 acres and would be designed to accommodate a fleet of 208 monorail vehicles. The site would be bounded by the LOSSAN rail corridor

to the north, Saticoy Street to the south, and property lines extending north of Tyrone and Hazeltine Avenues to the east and west, respectively.

Monorail trains would access the site from the main alignment's northern tail tracks at the northwest corner of the site. Trains would travel parallel to the LOSSAN rail corridor before curving southeast to maintenance facilities and storage tracks. The guideway would remain in an aerial configuration within the MSF Base Design, including within maintenance facilities.

The site would include the following facilities:

- Primary entrance with guard shack
- Primary maintenance building that would include administrative offices, an operations control center, and a maintenance shop and office
- Train car wash building
- Emergency generator
- Traction power substation (TPSS)
- Maintenance-of-way (MOW) building
- Parking area for employees

MSF Design Option 1

In the MSF Design Option 1, the MSF would be located on industrial property, abutting Orion Avenue, south of the LOSSAN rail corridor. The MSF Design Option 1 site would be approximately 26 acres and would be designed to accommodate a fleet of 224 monorail vehicles. The site would be bounded by I-405 to the west, Stagg Street to the south, the LOSSAN rail corridor to the north, and Orion Avenue and Raymer Street to the east. The monorail guideway would travel along the northern edge of the site.

Monorail trains would access the site from the monorail guideway east of Sepulveda Boulevard, requiring additional property east of Sepulveda Boulevard and north of Raymer Street. From the northeast corner of the site, trains would travel parallel to the LOSSAN rail corridor before turning south to maintenance facilities and storage tracks parallel to I-405. The guideway would remain in an aerial configuration within the MSF Design Option 1, including within maintenance facilities.

The site would include the following facilities:

- Primary entrance with guard shack
- Primary maintenance building that would include administrative offices, an operations control center, and a maintenance shop and office
- Train car wash building
- Emergency generator
- TPSS
- MOW building
- Parking area for employees

Figure 6-5 shows the locations of the MSF Base Design and MSF Design Option 1 for Alternative 1.

Figure 6-5. Alternative 1: Maintenance and Storage Facility Options

Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

6.1.1.8 Electric Bus Maintenance and Storage Facility

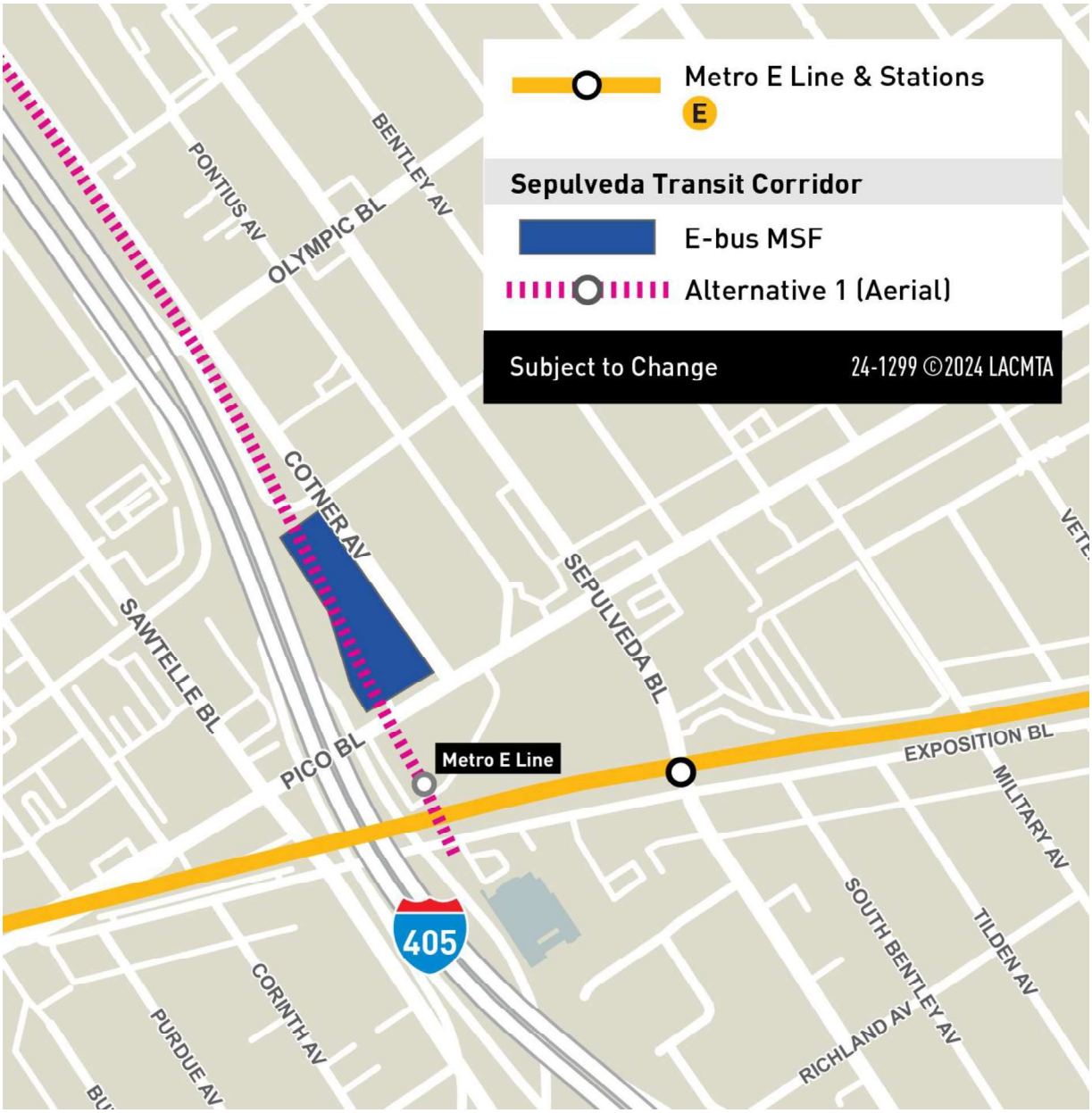
An electric bus MSF would be located on the northwest corner of Pico Boulevard and Cotner Avenue and would be designed to accommodate 14 electric buses. The site would be approximately 2 acres and would comprise six parcels bounded by Cotner Avenue to the east, I-405 to the west, Pico Boulevard to the south, and the I-405 northbound on-ramp to the north.

The site would include approximately 45,000 square feet of buildings and include the following facilities:

- Maintenance shop and bay
- Maintenance office
- Operations center
- Bus charging equipment
- Parts storeroom with service areas
- Parking area for employees

Figure 6-6 shows the location of the proposed electric bus MSF.

Figure 6-6. Alternative 1: Electric Bus Maintenance and Storage Facility



Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

6.1.1.9 Traction Power Substations

TPSSs transform and convert high voltage alternating current supplied from power utility feeders into direct current suitable for transit operation. A TPSS on a site of approximately 8,000 square feet would be located approximately every 1 mile along the alignment. Table 6-2 lists the TPSS locations proposed for Alternative 1.

Figure 6-7 shows the TPSS locations along the Alternative 1 alignment.

Table 6-2. Alternative 1: Traction Power Substation Locations

TPSS No.	TPSS Location Description	Configuration
1	TPSS 1 would be located east of I-405, just south of Exposition Boulevard and the monorail guideway tail tracks.	At-grade
2	TPSS 2 would be located west of I-405, just north of Wilshire Boulevard, inside the Westbound Wilshire Boulevard to I-405 Southbound Loop On-Ramp.	At-grade
3	TPSS 3 would be located west of I-405, just north of Sunset Boulevard, inside the Church Lane to I-405 Southbound Loop On-Ramp.	At-grade
4	TPSS 4 would be located east of I-405 and Sepulveda Boulevard, just north of the Getty Center Station.	At-grade
5	TPSS 5 would be located west of I-405, just east of the intersection between Promontory Road and Sepulveda Boulevard.	At-grade
6	TPSS 6 would be located between I-405 and Sepulveda Boulevard, just north of the Skirball Center Drive Overpass.	At-grade
7	TPSS 7 would be located east of I-405, just south of Ventura Boulevard Station, between Sepulveda Boulevard and Dickens Street.	At-grade
8	TPSS 8 would be located east of I-405, just south of the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station.	At-grade
9	TPSS 9 would be located east of I-405, just east of the Sherman Way Station, inside the I-405 Northbound Loop Off-Ramp to Sherman Way westbound.	At-grade
10	TPSS 10 would be located east of I-405, at the southeast quadrant of the I-405 overcrossing with the LOSSAN rail corridor.	At-grade
11	TPSS 11 would be located east of I-405, at the southeast quadrant of the I-405 overcrossing with the LOSSAN rail corridor.	At-grade (within MSF Design Option)
12	TPSS 12 would be located between Van Nuys Boulevard and Raymer Street, south of the LOSSAN rail corridor.	At-grade
13	TPSS 13 would be located south of the LOSSAN rail corridor, between Tyrone Avenue and Hazeltine Avenue.	At-grade (within MSF Base Design)

Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

Figure 6-7. Alternative 1: Traction Power Substation Locations

Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

6.1.1.10 Roadway Configuration Changes

Table 6-3 lists the roadway changes necessary to accommodate the guideway of Alternative 1. Figure 6-8 shows the location of these roadway changes in the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project (Project) Study Area, except for I-405 configuration changes, which would occur throughout the corridor.

Table 6-3. Alternative 1: Roadway Changes

Location	From	To	Description of Change
Cotner Avenue	Nebraska Avenue	Santa Monica Boulevard	Roadway realignment to accommodate aerial guideway columns and station access
Beloit Avenue	Massachusetts Avenue	Ohio Avenue	Roadway narrowing to accommodate aerial guideway columns
I-405 Southbound On-Ramp, Southbound Off-Ramp, and Northbound On-Ramp at Wilshire Boulevard	Wilshire Boulevard	I-405	Ramp realignment to accommodate aerial guideway columns and I-405 widening
Sunset Boulevard	Gunston Drive	I-405 Northbound Off-Ramp at Sunset Boulevard	Removal of direct eastbound to southbound on-ramp to accommodate aerial guideway columns and I-405 widening. Widening of Sunset Boulevard bridge with additional westbound lane
I-405 Southbound On-Ramp and Off-Ramp at Sunset Boulevard and North Church Lane	Sunset Boulevard	Not Applicable	Ramp realignment to accommodate aerial guideway columns and I-405 widening
I-405 Northbound On-Ramp and Off-Ramp at Sepulveda Boulevard near I-405 Exit 59	Sepulveda Boulevard near I-405 Northbound Exit 59	Sepulveda Boulevard / I-405 undercrossing (near Getty Center)	Ramp realignment to accommodate aerial guideway columns and I-405 widening
Sepulveda Boulevard	I-405 Southbound Skirball Center Drive Ramps (north of Mountaingate Drive)	Skirball Center Drive	Roadway realignment into existing hillside to accommodate aerial guideway columns and I-405 widening
I-405 Northbound On-Ramp at Mulholland Drive	Mulholland Drive	Not Applicable	Roadway realignment into the existing hillside between the Mulholland Drive Bridge pier and abutment to accommodate aerial guideway columns and I-405 widening
Dickens Street	Sepulveda Boulevard	Ventura Boulevard	Vacation and permanent removal of street for Ventura Boulevard Station construction. Pick-up/drop-off area would be provided along Sepulveda Boulevard at the truncated Dickens Street
Sherman Way	Haskell Avenue	Firmament Avenue	Median improvements, passenger drop-off and pick-up areas, and bus pads within existing travel lanes
Raymer Street	Sepulveda Boulevard	Van Nuys Boulevard	Curb extensions and narrowing of roadway width to accommodate aerial guideway columns
I-405	Sunset Boulevard	Bel Terrace	I-405 widening to accommodate aerial guideway columns in the median

Location	From	To	Description of Change
I-405	Sepulveda Boulevard Northbound Off-Ramp (Getty Center Drive interchange)	Sepulveda Boulevard Northbound On-Ramp (Getty Center Drive interchange)	I-405 widening to accommodate aerial guideway columns in the median
I-405	Skirball Center Drive	I-405 Northbound On-Ramp at Mulholland Drive	I-405 widening to accommodate aerial guideway columns in the median

Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

Figure 6-8. Alternative 1: Roadway Changes

Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

In addition to the changes made to accommodate the guideway, as listed in Table 6-3, roadways and sidewalks near stations would be reconstructed, which would result in modifications to curb ramps and driveways.

6.1.1.11 Fire/Life Safety – Emergency Egress

Continuous emergency evacuation walkways would be provided along the guideway. The walkways would typically consist of structural steel frames anchored to the guideway beams to support non-slip

walkway panels. The walkways would be located between the two guideway beams for most of the alignment; however, where the beams split apart, such as entering center-platform stations, short portions of the walkway would be located on the outside of the beams.

6.1.2 Construction Activities

Construction activities for Alternative 1 would include constructing the aerial guideway and stations, widening I-405, and constructing ancillary facilities. Construction of the transit through substantial completion is expected to have a duration of 6½ years. Early works, such as site preparation, demolition, and utility relocation, could start in advance of construction of the transit facilities.

Aerial guideway construction would begin at the southern and northern ends of the alignment and connect in the middle. Constructing the guideway would require a combination of freeway and local street lane closures throughout the work limits to provide sufficient work area. The first stage of I-405 widening would include a narrowing of adjacent freeway lanes to a minimum width of 11 feet (which would eliminate shoulders) and placing K-rail on the outside edge of the travel lanes to create outside work areas. Within these outside work zones, retaining walls, drainage infrastructure, and outer pavement widenings would be constructed to allow for I-405 widening. The reconstruction of on- and off-ramps would be the final stage of I-405 widening.

A median work zone along I-405 for the length of the alignment would be required for erection of the guideway structure. In the median work zone, demolition of the existing median and drainage infrastructure would be followed by the installation of new K-rail and installation of guideway structural components, which would include full directional freeway closures when guideway beams must be transported into the median work areas during late-night hours. Additional night and weekend directional closures would be required for installation of long-span structures over I-405 travel lanes where the guideway would transition from the median.

Aerial station construction is anticipated to last the duration of construction activities for Alternative 1 and would include the following general sequence of construction:

- Site clearing
- Utility relocation
- Construction fencing and rough grading
- CIDH pile drilling and installation
- Elevator pit excavation
- Soil and material removal
- Pile cap and pier column construction
- Concourse level and platform level falsework for cast-in-place structural concrete
- Guideway beam installation
- Elevator and escalator installation
- Completion of remaining concrete elements such as pedestrian bridges
- Architectural finishes and mechanical, electrical, and plumbing installation

Alternative 1 would require construction of a concrete casting facility for columns and beams associated with the elevated guideway. A specific site has not been identified; however, it is expected that the facility would be located on industrially zoned land adjacent to a truck route in either the Antelope Valley or Riverside County. When a site is identified, the contractor would obtain all permits and approvals necessary from the relevant jurisdiction, the appropriate air quality management entity, and other regulatory entities.

TPSS construction would require additional lane closures. Large equipment including transformers, rectifiers, and switchgears would be delivered and installed through prefabricated modules where possible in at-grade TPSSs. The installation of transformers would require temporary lane closures on Exposition Boulevard, Beloit Avenue, Sepulveda Boulevard just north of Cashmere Street, and the I-405 northbound on-ramp at Burbank Boulevard.

Table 6-4 and Figure 6-9 show the potential construction staging areas for Alternative 1. Staging areas would provide the necessary space for the following activities:

- Contractors' equipment
- Receiving deliveries
- Storing materials
- Site offices
- Work zone for excavation
- Other construction activities (including parking and change facilities for workers, location of construction office trailers, storage, staging and delivery of construction materials and permanent plant equipment, and maintenance of construction equipment)

Table 6-4. Alternative 1: Construction Staging Locations

No.	Location Description
1	Public Storage between Pico Boulevard and Exposition Boulevard, east of I-405
2	South of Dowlen Drive and east of Greater LA Fisher House
3	At 1400 N Sepulveda Boulevard
4	At 1760 N Sepulveda Boulevard
5	East of I-405 and north of Mulholland Drive Bridge
6	Inside of I-405 Northbound to US-101 Northbound Loop Connector, south of US-101
7	Electro Rent Building, south of Metro G Line Busway, east of I-405
8	Inside the I-405 Northbound Loop Off-Ramp at Victory Boulevard
9	Along Cabrito Road, east of Van Nuys Boulevard

Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

Figure 6-9. Alternative 1: Construction Staging Locations

Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

The following best management practices would be implemented during construction:

- Erosion-control devices, such as silt fences, would be removed as soon as the area is stabilized.
- Stockpile areas would be neatly organized and covered depending on weather events.
- Stockpiled areas would be located in less visibly sensitive areas.
- Construction lighting would be directed toward the construction areas and/or shielded with temporary screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto adjacent areas.

6.2 Existing Conditions

This section describes the existing visual and aesthetic conditions within the Resource Study Area (RSA), which is an area with a radius of 0.25 miles to 0.50 miles from the alignments, stations, and visible construction-related activities and staging, and MSF site options. The RSA for this analysis encompasses the existing aboveground landscapes within views from public vantage points that would be directly affected, temporarily and/or permanently, by the proposed facilities and components during both construction and operation.

Visual and aesthetics resources were identified consistent with the methodology outlined in Section 3. These resources include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Structures of historic significance or visual prominence
- Open space and recreational areas
- Distant views of the horizon from public locations
- Landscaped areas

6.2.1 Regional Setting

The regional visual setting generally exhibits an urbanized character, with nearly all land in the RSA already developed, except for portions of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and San Gabriel Mountains. The urban landscape varies, and includes low-lying residential, industrial, and commercial buildings along with high-density, high-rise residential and commercial buildings in downtown areas.

Higher density development with a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures are generally found between I-10 and the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) campus at the southern portion of the Alternative 1 alignment, and lower density development consisting of primarily low-rise structures and a few mid-rise structures are located north of the UCLA campus. The Santa Monica Mountains, located within the central portion of the RSA, provide aesthetic, environmental, and recreational benefits to residents. The ridgelines or mountain edges within the Santa Monica Mountains provide dramatic views and are protected and preserved by individual communities. Lower density development within the Santa Monica Mountains consists primarily of low-rise structures and a few mid-rise structures, which are located south of US-101 within the community of Bel-Air.

North of the Santa Monica Mountains, within the Valley, higher density development with a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures are generally found north of US-101 at the northern portion of the Alternative 1 alignment.

The major visual feature of the RSA is the built environment, which consists of a variety of commercial, industrial, public facility, institutional, and residential uses, in addition to transportation corridors. The transportation corridors within the RSA include roadways, freeways, as well as the Metro E Line right-of-way (ROW) and the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW. The Metro E Line ROW generally passes through the southern portion of the Alternative 1 alignment in an east-west direction along I-10. The LOSSAN rail corridor ROW generally passes through the northern portion of the RSA in an east-west direction.

Major freeways (i.e., US-101, I-10, and I-405) create well-defined visual boundaries and edges because the facilities are several hundred feet wide. Within the RSA, I-10 and I-405 are elevated on columns or engineered fill.

Flood control facilities also create visual boundaries within the RSA, which includes the concrete-banked channels of the Los Angeles River at the northern portion of the Alternative 1 alignment. The river channels are visually distinct due to the width and limited number of crossing points.

The topography of the RSA is varied with relatively flat urbanized areas at the northern and southern portions of the Alternative 1 alignment, with major changes in elevation through the central portion of the Alternative 1 alignment. The southern portion of the RSA slopes downward in a south-southwesterly direction toward the Pacific Ocean. Elevations range from approximately 780 feet above mean sea level around the Van Nuys Metro Station, 650 feet above mean sea level around US-101, 1,300 feet above mean sea level at the Stone Canyon Overlook along Mulholland Drive, 375 feet above mean sea level around the UCLA campus, to 120 feet above mean sea level south of National Boulevard (DCP, 2021).

Within the Santa Monica Mountains, the RSA provides elevated vantage or vista points along Mulholland Drive. These vista points provide long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains. In contrast, the northern and southern portions of the Alternative 1 alignment lack elevated vantage or vista points due to the relatively flat topography. As a result, views in the RSA are generally limited to the foreground and middle ground. Although background views of mountains are available along some public ROWs within the RSA, portions of these background views are blocked by urban features, such as utility poles, urban landscaping, and intervening buildings.

6.2.2 Scenic Vistas

The term “scenic vista” generally refers to visual access to, or the visibility of, a particular sight from a given vantage point or corridor. The *LA CEQA Thresholds Guide* (DCP, 2006) notes the value of preserving sightlines to designated scenic resources or areas of visual interest from public vantage points. The subjects of valued or recognized views may be focal (meaning of specific individual resources), or panoramic (meaning broad geographic area). Panoramic views are typically associated with scenic vistas that provide a sweeping geographic orientation. Examples of panoramic views include urban skylines, valleys, mountain ranges, or large bodies of water. Examples of focal views include public art/signs and notable buildings and structures. The nature of a view may be unique, such as a view from an elevated vantage point or particular angle.

The Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles’ General Plan* defines scenic views or vistas as the panoramic public view access to natural features, including views of the ocean, striking or unusual natural terrain, or unique urban or historic features (DCP, 2001b). Scenic views from within the RSA include the Santa Monica Mountains, hillsides, and the Los Angeles River. The Los Angeles River and its associated tributaries and floodplains, and the Santa Monica Mountains are listed as scenic vistas in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan*. Sweeping views of the Santa Monica Mountains, and hillsides are considered panoramic and can be seen from designated vantage points, public hiking trails, and public ROWs.

The Santa Monica Mountains rise to an elevation of approximately 3,100 feet from the base of the hills to their highest point at Sandstone Peak. According to the Conservation Element, the Santa Monica Mountains are the most visible scenic feature from many areas of the city, including the RSA (DCP, 2001b).

Within the RSA, panoramic views from the “flatlands” are not readily available, due to the existing street grid pattern and built environment. Rather, panoramic vantage points are primarily located within hilly areas. The Stone Canyon Overlook is located on the south side of Mulholland Drive and provides panoramic south-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the Stone Canyon Reservoir. In

addition, the Johnson Overlook is located north of the Stone Canyon Reservoir on the north side of Mulholland Drive. Visitors can take in north-facing views of the Valley, and the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains. These views represent the scenic views available from various publicly accessible locations in the Santa Monica Mountains, and other hilly areas within the RSA. However, the perspective and visibility may change depending on various factors, such as the viewer location, elevation, bad air days, or weather.

In addition, limited focal views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the hillsides within the lower areas of the RSA are available along various north-south streets and I-405. However, most of the views to the Santa Monica Mountains and the hillsides are blocked by intervening buildings, street trees and, on some streets, overhead utility lines. In summary, public panoramic and focal scenic views are currently available in the RSA, but the quality of the views can vary significantly.

6.2.3 Scenic Resources

Scenic resources refer to natural or built features of high aesthetic quality. Scenic resources identified in the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* (DCP, 2021) include striking or unusual natural features, the Pacific Ocean, Santa Monica Mountains, and San Gabriel Mountains, and unique urban or historic features as seen from designated scenic highways. The RSA is not characterized by striking or unusual natural features and is not visible from the ocean. Glimpses of the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains are available from intermittent viewpoints within the RSA.

In accordance with the CEQA Guidelines*,* Appendix G, scenic resources within this area of consideration include specific mention of such natural or built features that are within the view field of a state scenic highway. No California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the RSA. Additionally, no state-designated scenic highways in proximity to the RSA provide views of the RSA. The closest eligible state scenic highway is State Route 1 (SR-1, the Pacific Coast Highway in Southern California), which is approximately 3 miles west of the Alternative 1 alignment. The closest officially designated state scenic highway is State Route 27 (SR-27, Topanga Canyon Boulevard), which is approximately 8 miles west of the Alternative 1 alignment.

Six City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are within the RSA. City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways, according to the *City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan 2035*, are either 1) arterial streets or state highways that traverse areas of natural scenic quality in undeveloped or sparsely developed areas of the city or 2) Arterial streets that traverse urban areas of cultural, historical, or aesthetic value which merit protection and enhancement. Table 6-5 lists and describes the City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways that are within or along the boundaries of the RSA.

Table 6-5. Alternative 1: Resource Study Area Scenic Highways

Scenic Highway	Location	Scenic Features, Resources, or City Comment
Beverly Glen Boulevard	Ventura Boulevard to Sunset Boulevard	Winding cross mountain road; valley views
Mulholland Drive	1.US-101 westerly to Mulholland Highway; 2. Mulholland Highway to Valley Circle Boulevard	(Specific Plan Ordinance. No. 167,943) Panoramic views, "ribbon of park"
Santa Monica Boulevard	Sepulveda Boulevard to City of Beverly Hills boundary	Not Available
Sepulveda Boulevard	I-405 to Sunset Boulevard	Old cross mountain road with tunnel, views of mountains and Valley
Sherman Way	Variel Avenue to Kester Avenue	Wide street, landscaped median
Sunset Boulevard	Pacific Coast Highway to City of Beverly Hills boundary	Views of mountains, estates, UCLA campus

Source: DCP, 2016

The City of Los Angeles in its *Mobility Plan 2035* designates Mulholland Drive as a scenic highway. Mulholland Drive provides opportunities for multiple scenic vistas as it winds up and through the Santa Monica Mountains, including through the RSA. Development near Mulholland Drive is subject to design review guidelines pursuant to the *Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan* (MSPSP).

The MSPSP has designated 14 major vista points (MVPs) along Mulholland Drive that are maintained by the Bureau of Street Maintenance of the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. The Inner Corridor of the MSPSP area is designated as part of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) also maintains seven scenic overlooks along Mulholland Drive (MRCA, 2023). The nearest MVP (also the nearest overlook) is the Stone Canyon Overlook, which is located approximately 380 feet east of the Alternative 1 alignment. The nearest MRCA-maintained scenic overlook is The Groves Overlook, which is located approximately 1 mile west of the Alternative 1 alignment.

The Alternative 1 alignment travels through the Inner Corridor and Outer Corridor of the MSPSP area. The MSPSP contains density requirements, building standards and grading restrictions that are applicable to the Inner Corridor. In addition, the Alternative 1 alignment is subject to the MSPSP's accompanying design guidelines and review by the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Design Review Board. The viewshed protection provisions of the MSPSP are directed at preserving, complementing, and/or enhancing the public views from Mulholland Drive. Therefore, although impacts on surrounding homes and land uses are discussed, the focus of this analysis is on the impact of Alternative 1 on public views, particularly those from Mulholland Drive.

6.2.4 Visual Character and Quality

As listed in Table 6-6, six generalized landscape units (LUs) were defined along the Alternative 1 alignment. The LUs encompass the location of the Alternative 1 alignment and adjacent area. The location and the visual features are described for each LU, beginning in the southern portion of the Alternative 1 alignment and ending in the north.

Table 6-6. Alternative 1: Landscape Units

Landscape Unit	Extent	Key Views
1	National Boulevard to Ohio Avenue	Views of Century City, I-405
2	Ohio Avenue to Sunset Boulevard	Views of Century City, Santa Monica Mountains, Federal Building, Westwood Recreation Center, Bad News Beard Field, Los Angeles National Cemetery, buildings along Wilshire Boulevard, UCLA campus, I-405
3	Sunset Boulevard to Mulholland Drive	Views of Santa Monica Mountains, Getty Center, Scenic Mulholland Drive, Stone Canyon Reservoir, undeveloped land
4	Mulholland Drive to US-101	Views of Santa Monica Mountains, Scenic Mulholland Drive, Stone Canyon Reservoir, undeveloped land
5	US-101 to Victory Boulevard	Views of San Gabriel Mountains, Los Angeles River, I-405, US-101
6	Victory Boulevard to LOSSAN rail corridor ROW	Views of San Gabriel Mountains, Los Angeles River, I-405, LOSSAN rail corridor ROW

Source: HTA, 2024

ROW = right-of-way

Table 6-7 lists the six key observation points (KOPs) (or key views) and the viewer groups potentially affected by Alternative 1.

Table 6-7. Alternative 1: Key Observation Points

KOP No.	KOP Location	Photograph Direction	Primary Viewer
KOP 1	Waterford Street/Church Lane	East	Resident, Driver
KOP 4	Sepulveda Boulevard north of Getty Center Drive	South/Southwest	Tourist, Driver
KOP 7	Mulholland Drive Bridge at Skirball Center Drive, north side	North	Pedestrian, Driver, Tourist
KOP 8	Southwest corner of Mulholland Drive Bridge at Skirball Center Drive	Southwest	Pedestrian, Driver, Tourist
KOP 11	Southeast corner of Firmament Avenue and Valerio Street	West	Resident, Pedestrian, Driver
KOP 12	At pedestrian crossing into main entrance of VA Hospital on Dowlen Drive East	East	VA Hospital users, visitors

Source: HTA, 2024

KOP = key observation point

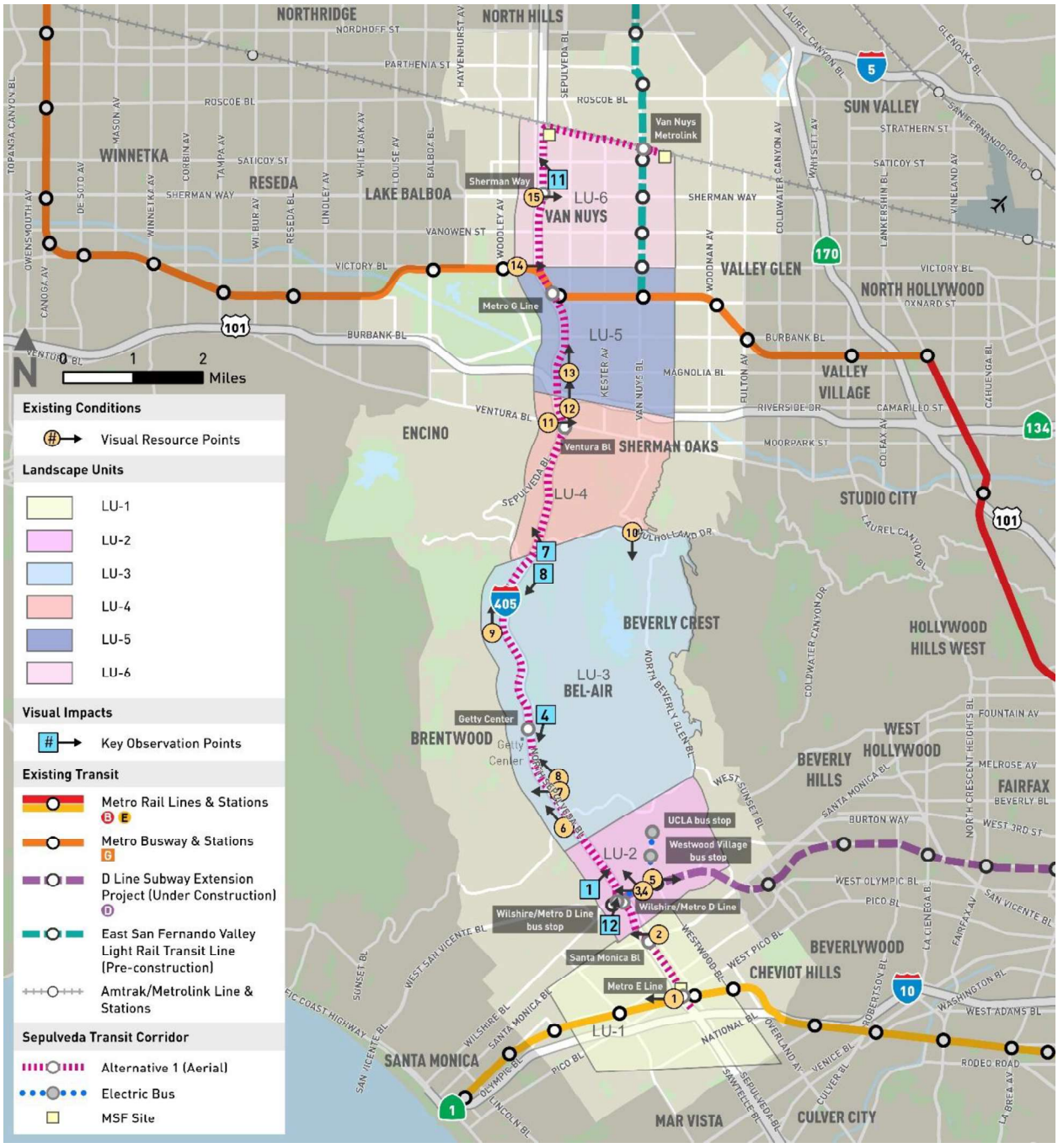
KOPs are used to evaluate existing landscapes and potential impacts on visual resources with various levels of sensitivity, in different landscape types and terrain, and from various vantage points. KOPs are generally selected to represent the most critical locations from which a project area may be seen. As such, the following KOP locations were selected to provide the best representation of visual changes caused by Alternative 1.

Summaries of the visual character of the LUs in the Project Study Area are described in the following sections. The visual descriptions are based on public views, meaning what is visible from a sidewalk, roadway, or other public ROW. Additional information regarding the potential impacts of Alternative 1

on historic resources is provided in the *Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources Technical Report* (Metro, 2025a).

Figure 6-10 illustrates the boundaries of the LUs, the locations of the existing conditions photographs, and locations of the KOPs.

Figure 6-10. Alternative 1: Visual Landscape Units



Source: HTA, 2024

6.2.4.1 Landscape Unit 1 – National Boulevard to Ohio Avenue

LU-1 begins at National Boulevard in the Westdale and West Los Angeles communities and continues north past I-10 to Ohio Avenue in Westwood. LU-1 is bordered on the west by Steward Street and on the east by Westwood Boulevard. LU-1 is highly urbanized, consisting of a mix of low-rise, mid-rise structures, and high-rise structures. Structures within this LU generally include a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial development. Commercial developments include a mix of small and mid-size commercial structures, as well as high-rise and mid-rise office buildings. Residential uses consist of one- to two-story single-family homes, and mid-rise buildings, while institutional and industrial uses generally consist of low-rise structures. Within LU-1, the Metro E Line and its associated aerial structure crosses Sepulveda Boulevard at Exposition Boulevard, and partially obscures views to the north. Views of the existing aerial Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and its associated ancillary structures are available at this location.

The primary viewers in LU-1 consist of motorists, pedestrians, residents, transit commuters, and patrons of commercial businesses. Visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views.

The level and types of ornamental landscaping in LU-1 vary, with light to moderate levels of landscaping throughout the LU. Ornamental landscaping is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets. In addition, a mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided within the LU.

Although residential areas surround the commercial corridor in LU-1, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. The most prominent views within LU-1 are of the elevated Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and guideway. There are distant north-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains from north-south oriented streets. As discussed in Section 6.2.2, the Santa Monica Mountains are listed as a designated scenic vista in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* (DCP, 2001b). Figure 6-11 and Figure 6-12 show existing representative views of LU-1.

Figure 6-11. Alternative 1: Existing View 1, Looking West Toward Metro E Line from Pico Boulevard, West of I-405

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 6-12. Alternative 1: Existing View 2, Looking West Toward I-405 from Santa Monica Boulevard, at Sepulveda Boulevard

Source: HTA, 2024

6.2.4.2 Landscape Unit 2 – Ohio Avenue to Sunset Boulevard

LU-2 begins directly north of Ohio Avenue and continues north to Sunset Boulevard in Westwood. LU-2 is bordered to the west by Sawtelle Boulevard (just west of I-405) in the Brentwood community, and to the east by South Beverly Glen Boulevard. LU-2 is also highly urbanized, consisting of a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures, as well as the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center, Federal Building, and UCLA campus. The majority of residential uses in LU-2 are located within the northwest and southeast portions of the LU. Residential uses consist of one- to two-story single-family homes, and multi-family residential buildings. The residential neighborhoods surrounding the UCLA campus include Bel-Air to the north, Holmby-Westwood to the east, and Westwood Hills to the west, which primarily consist of one- to two-story single-family residences. Westwood Village and the Wilshire Corridor are located to the south.

The Wilshire Corridor primarily consists of commercial uses, including hotels and mid- to high-rise office buildings from I-405 to Beverly Glen Boulevard at the eastern boundary of LU-2. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are prominent visual elements along the Wilshire Corridor. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor.

Westwood Village is located north of the Wilshire Corridor and is pedestrian-oriented, with low- to mid-rise buildings containing retail, office, and mixed uses. This village character contrasts with the many multi-story residential towers, hotels, and office buildings that exist along Wilshire Boulevard. Southeast of Wilshire Boulevard, single-family residences and small multi-family buildings are prominent. The Los Angeles National Cemetery, located in the western portion of LU-2, provides open expanses and the opportunity for distant views of the Santa Monica Mountains.

The UCLA campus is located at the base of the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains, directly south of Sunset Boulevard. The main campus is bounded by Wilshire Boulevard to the south, Veteran Avenue to the west, Sunset Boulevard to the north, and Hilgard Avenue to the east. The main campus is visible from adjacent residential neighborhoods to the north, east, and west, as well as from several major roadways, including I-405 and Sunset Boulevard. The northern portion of the UCLA campus mainly consists of academic buildings and landscaped open areas, and the southern portion of campus consists of science and medical buildings that are considerably more dense and more urban in appearance. A majority of the main campus is organized around a series of squares and courtyards linked by hardscape pedestrian walkways. The northwestern and southwestern portions of the main campus consist of student housing. These buildings are mainly modern mid- to high-rise structures with similar architectural styles.

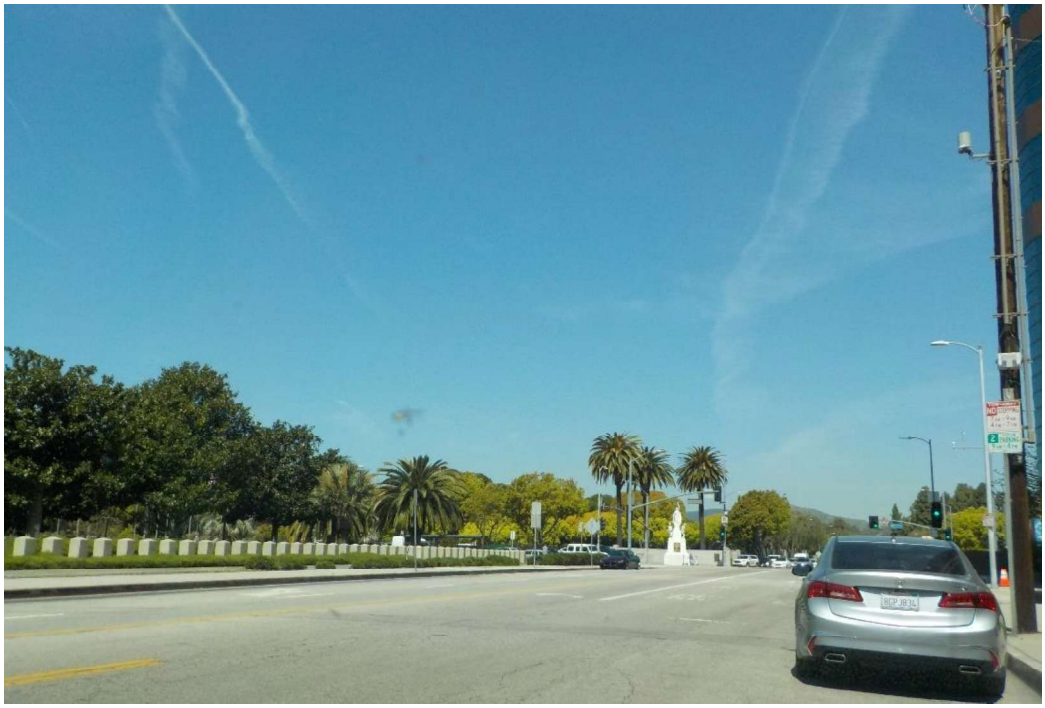
The primary viewers in LU-2 consist of motorists, pedestrians, patrons of commercial businesses, and patrons of UCLA. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout the LU. There are distant north-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains from north-south oriented streets. UCLA patrons also have background views of Century City from certain areas of the main campus.

Landscaping on the main campus has both a formal and informal character, consisting of tree clusters, shaded grassy areas, and flowering plants. Paved pedestrian connections, asphalt circulation hubs, and streetscape treatments emphasize the main campus' urban nature. Most of the campus edges are heavily landscaped with mature trees and shrubs. These landscaped buffers screen campus buildings from adjacent streets and complement the adjacent residential areas. The trees used for these landscaped buffers are visually prominent and define the boundaries of the UCLA campus. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-2. Figure 6-13, Figure 6-14, Figure 6-15, and Figure 6-16 show existing representative views of LU-2.

Figure 6-13. Alternative 1: Existing View 3, Looking West Toward the Federal Building from Veteran Avenue

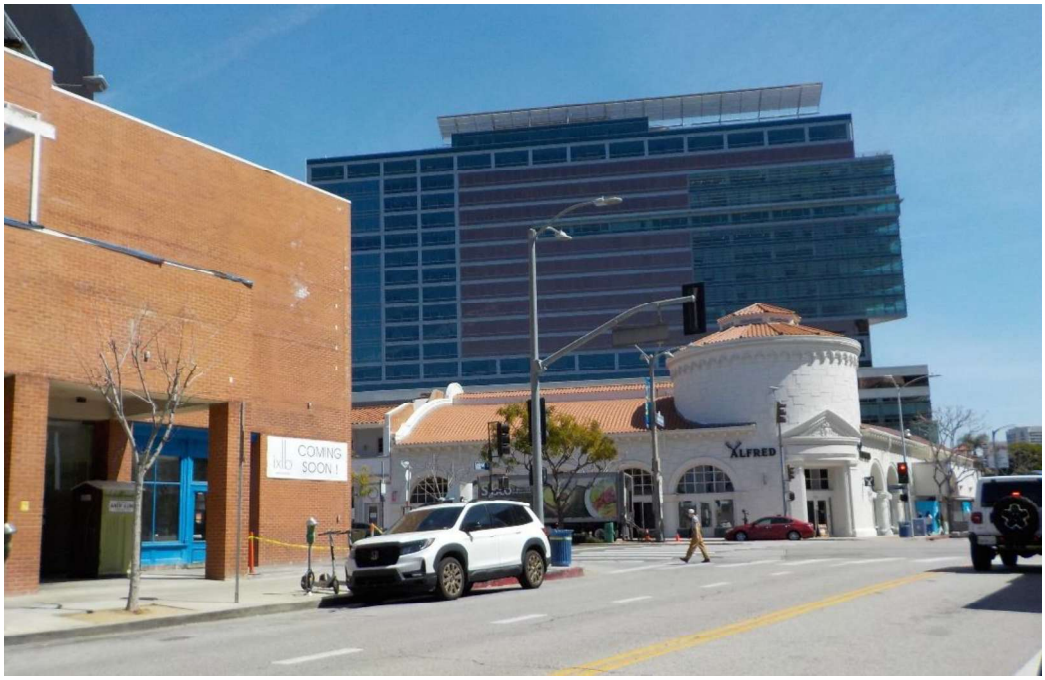
Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 6-14. Alternative 1: Existing View 4, Looking Northwest Toward Wilshire Boulevard and the National Cemetery from Veteran Avenue



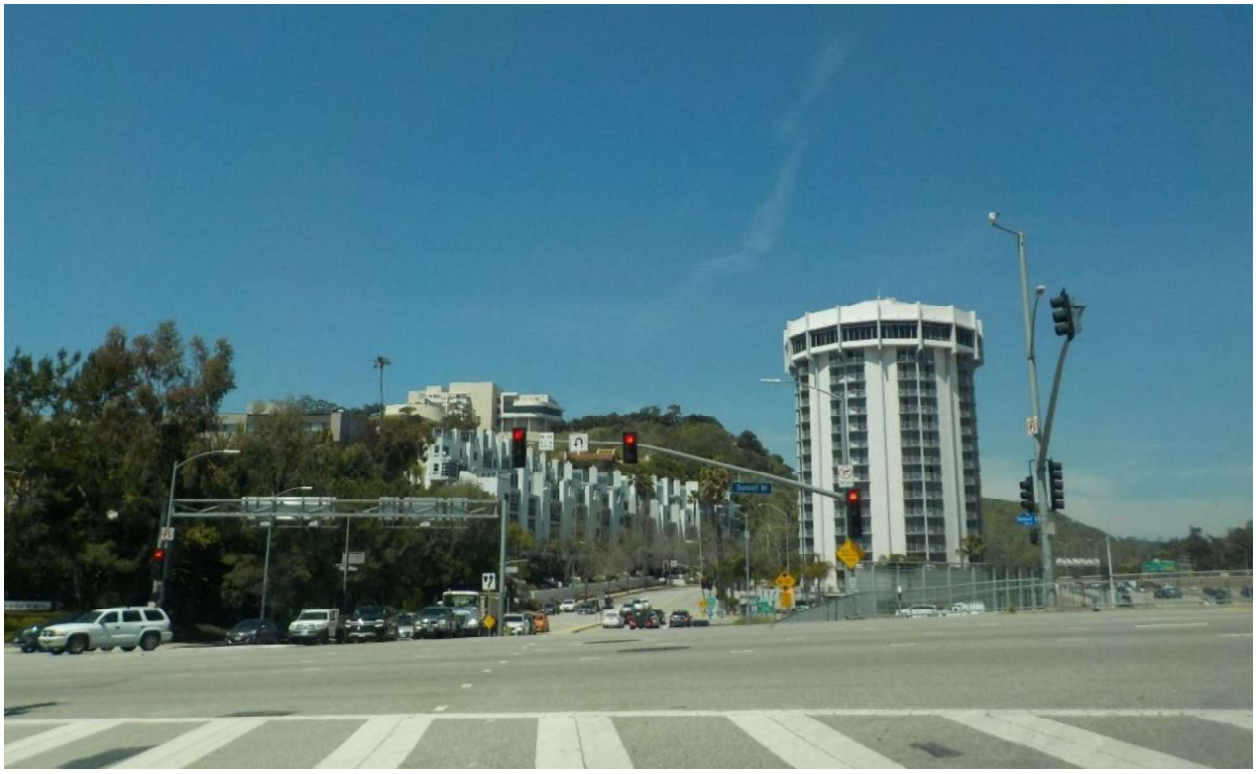
Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 6-15. Alternative 1: Existing View 5, Looking East Toward Westwood Boulevard from Lindbrook Drive in Westwood



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 6-16. Alternative 1: Existing View 6, Looking North Toward the Getty Center from Sunset Boulevard, West of I-405



Source: HTA, 2024

6.2.4.3 Landscape Unit 3 – Sunset Boulevard to Mulholland Drive

LU-3 begins directly north of Sunset Boulevard and continues north through the lower portion of the Santa Monica Mountains to Mulholland Drive. LU-3 is bordered on the west by I-405 and on the east by Benedict Canyon Drive. LU-3 consists of mainly residential development in low-rise structures in the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains. A limited number of commercial and institutional uses are located within LU-3. The structures in this LU vary in building style, size, and color. The street network consists of many winding, local streets, but there are also several collector roads within LU-3.

A portion of the scenic Mulholland Drive is located within LU-3. As discussed in Section 6.2.2, two designated vantage points are along Mulholland Drive. The Johnson Overlook and Stone Canyon Overlook are located along Mulholland Drive north of Stone Canyon Reservoir. Views consist of the Santa Monica Mountains, the Valley, and the Stone Canyon Reservoir. On clear days, it may be possible to see the Pacific Ocean.

The limited commercial uses within LU-3 consist of the Bel-Air Country Club, The Glen Centre, and Hotel Bel-Air. Bel-Air County Club is an 18-hole golf course with large, manicured lawn areas. The Glen Centre is a large shopping center with a park-like setting. Hotel Bel-Air is developed with Spanish style architecture and houses multiple structures with driveways and a surface parking lot parallel to Stone Canyon Road. Institutional uses consist of Marymount High School, which also houses multiple structures with driveways and a surface parking lot that parallels Sunset Boulevard.

Undeveloped land includes open space, such as land preserved by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and vacant lots that can be developed with low-density, primarily single-family residences.

Developed land predominantly consists of single-family residences on large lots, generally one to two stories, but some three-story and four-story residences are also built into the hillsides. These residences are developed in a variety of architectural styles, including bungalow, Spanish Eclectic, courtyard, Tudor, and Colonial styles. Due to their elevated locations on the hillside, many of the residences in the Santa Monica Mountains are afforded long-range private panoramic views across the Project Study Area and much of the Los Angeles Basin. Beverly Hills, Bel-Air, and other single-family residential neighborhoods are located in this region.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-3 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets within LU-3. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-3.

Primary viewer groups found within LU-3 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed in Section 6.2.4.1 under LU-1, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

Figure 6-17, Figure 6-18, Figure 6-19, and Figure 6-20 show existing representative views of LU-3.

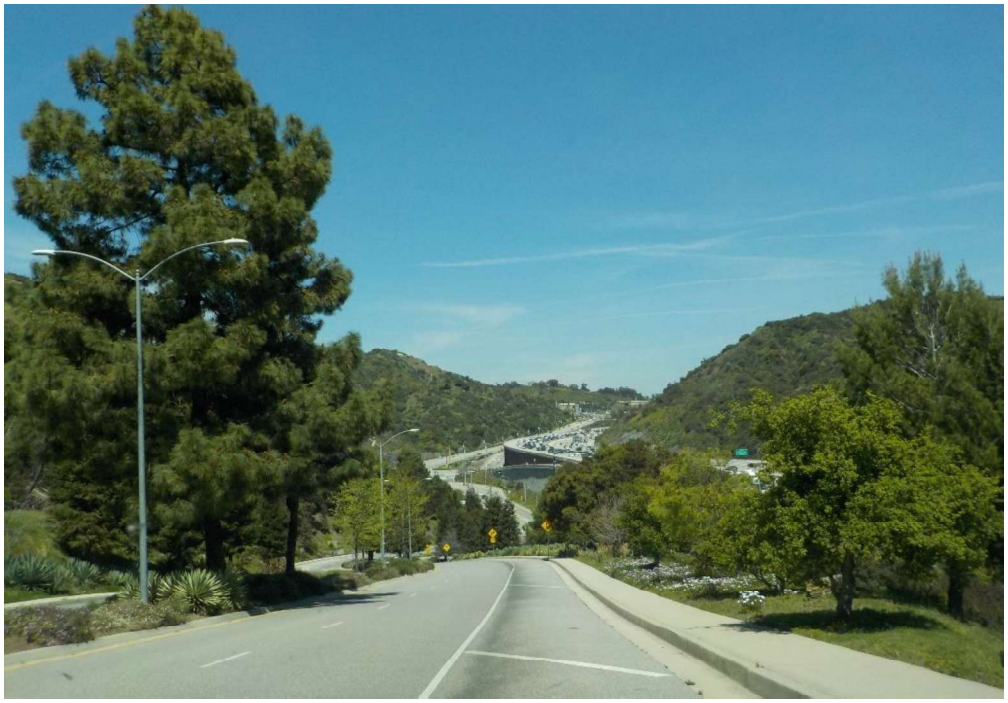
Figure 6-17. Alternative 1: Existing View 7, Looking West Toward I-405 from Residential Area along Ovada Place

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 6-18. Alternative 1: Existing View 8, Looking Northwest Toward the Getty Center (and I-405) from Residential Area along Moraga Drive

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 6-19. Alternative 1: Existing View 9, Looking North Toward I-405 from Mountaingate Drive



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 6-20. Alternative 1: Existing View 10, Looking South Toward Covered Upper Stone Canyon Reservoir and Stone Canyon Reservoir from Overlook along Mulholland Drive

Source: HTA, 2024

6.2.4.4 Landscape Unit 4 – Mulholland Drive to US-101

LU-4 begins directly north of Mulholland Drive and continues north through the upper portion of the Santa Monica Mountains to US-101. LU-4 is bordered on the west by I-405 and on the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-4 consists of mainly residential development within the Sherman Oaks neighborhood, and commercial development along the Ventura Boulevard corridor.

Similar to LU-3, a portion of the scenic Mulholland Drive is also located within LU-4. Looking north from Mulholland Drive, views consist of the Santa Monica Mountains in the foreground and middle ground and Van Nuys in the background. In addition, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north are also visible from certain portions of Mulholland Drive where there is limited vegetation.

The northern portion of the Santa Monica Mountains has both undeveloped and developed lots. As discussed in Section 6.2.4.3, undeveloped land includes open space, such as land preserved by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and vacant lots that can be developed with low-density housing, primarily single-family residences. Deervale-Stone Canyon Park, an 80-acre park consisting of open space and hiking trails for public use, is also located within LU-4. Views to the north from the top of the park overlook the Sherman Oaks neighborhood and the Ventura Boulevard commercial corridor. Long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north are also visible from this location.

Beyond the Santa Monica Mountains, LU-4 has a relatively flat topography and dense commercial and residential development. Views consist of low- and mid-rise buildings occupied primarily by retail, institutional, and office uses, and associated parking areas. As such, views from the northern portion of LU-4 are generally short in range and limited to the urban landscape within the immediate vicinity (i.e., buildings, roadways, utility poles, and street trees).

Primary viewer groups found within LU-4 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed in Section 6.2.4.1 under LU-1, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

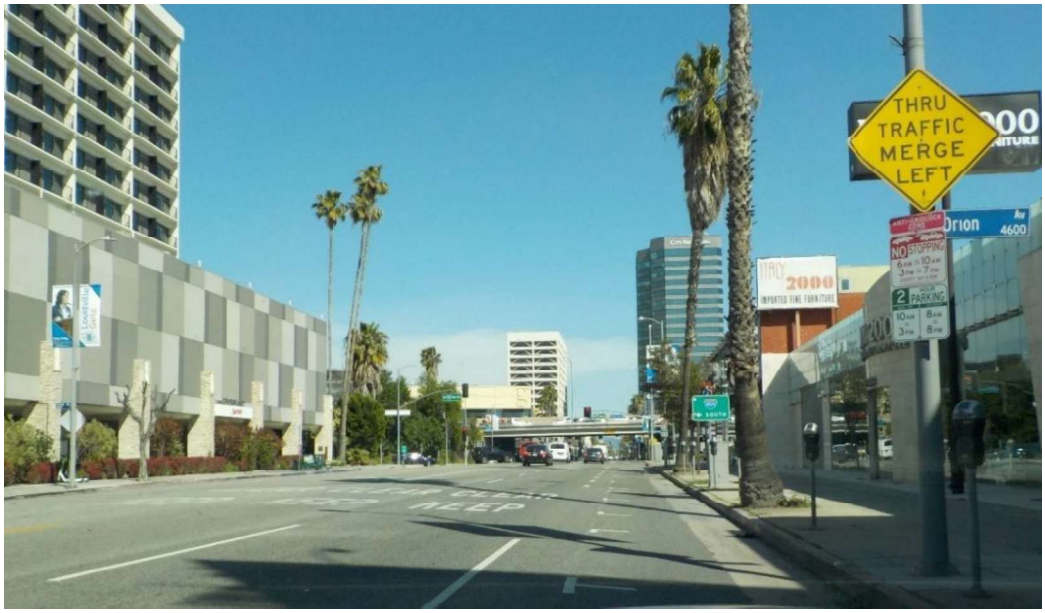
Ventura Boulevard consists of primarily commercial uses, including retail businesses, restaurants, and mid- to high-rise office buildings from I-405 at the western boundary of LU-4 to the eastern boundary of LU-4 at Hazeltine Avenue. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are prominent visual elements along Ventura Boulevard. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. Overall, buildings in LU-4 are of all different sizes, styles, and colors, and are spaced at varying intervals, creating a high level of visual diversity in the landscape with no common theme. Long-range views of the Hollywood Hills are also visible traveling east along Ventura Boulevard.

Similar to LU-3, the single-family residences within the Santa Monica Mountains are developed on large lots and are generally one to two stories, but some three-story and four-story houses are visible. This development pattern transitions to low- and mid-rise single-family and multi-family residences north of Greenleaf Street within the Sherman Oaks neighborhood. Residential development is prevalent to the north and south of the Ventura Boulevard commercial corridor.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-4 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees are present along Ventura Boulevard and Willis Avenue, as well as other commercial areas for screening purposes. Street trees create definition within the dense commercial corridor; however, because they are planted intermittently, they blend into the overall

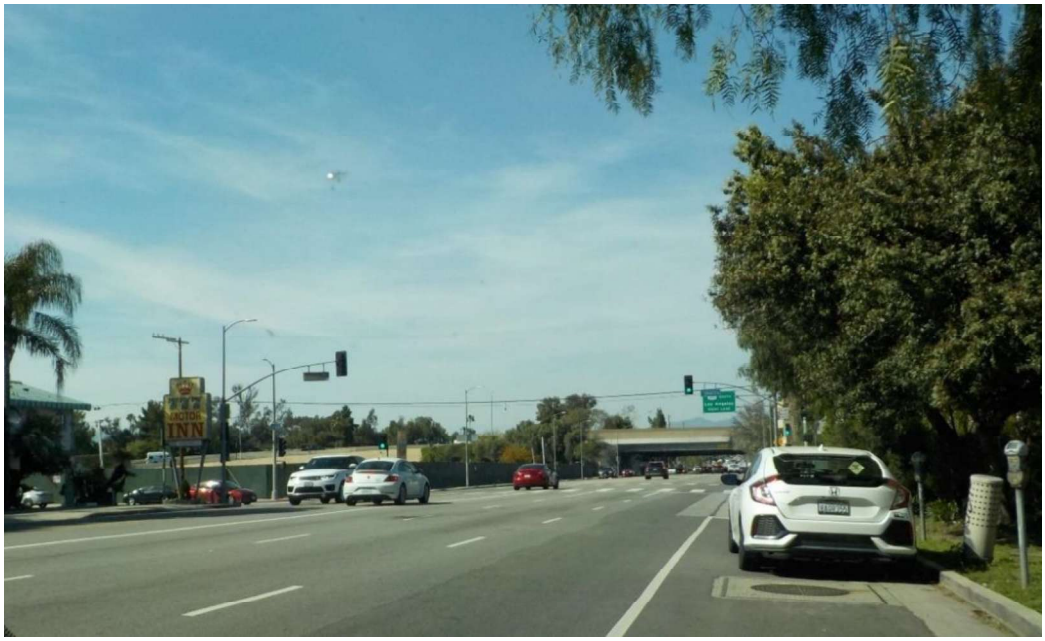
landscape. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets within the northern portion of LU-4. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-4. Figure 6-21 and Figure 6-22 show existing representative views of LU-4.

Figure 6-21. Alternative 1: Existing View 11, Looking East Toward I-405 from Ventura Boulevard at Orion Avenue



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 6-22. Alternative 1: Existing View 12, Looking North Toward US-101 from Sepulveda Boulevard at Camarillo Street



Source: HTA, 2024

6.2.4.5 Landscape Unit 5 – US-101 to Victory Boulevard

LU-5 begins directly north of US-101 and continues north through the Van Nuys community to Victory Boulevard. LU-5 is bordered to the west by Gloria Avenue and to the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-5 consists of mainly commercial and residential development within the Van Nuys neighborhood. The Metro G Line also travels east-west through the central portion of LU-5.

Views in the southern portion of LU-5 looking south are predominately of the elevated segment of US-101. Long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are also visible in some areas, but they are few because of the relatively flat topography and intervening urban development. The Los Angeles River is also located within the southern portion of LU-5, and mainly travels parallel to US-101; however, since the Los Angeles River is located below street level, public views of the Los Angeles River from the surrounding Project Study Area are obscured by existing development and generally not available except on Hazeltine Avenue just south of the US-101 overpass. As discussed in Section 6.2.2, the Los Angeles River and its associated tributaries and floodplains are also listed as scenic vistas in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* (DCP, 2001b).

Typical views in LU-5 include the Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard commercial corridors, which are bordered by parking areas, sidewalks, street trees, commercial buildings, and additional buildings visible in the background. Views of I-405 are also visible from Sepulveda Boulevard. Traveling north along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains are visible. In addition, traveling south, long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are visible. Primary viewer groups found within LU-5 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed in Section 6.2.4.1 under LU-1, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

Commercial structures along Van Nuys Boulevard consist of low- to mid-rise retail businesses, restaurants, office uses, and parking areas. In addition, commercial structures along Sepulveda Boulevard consist of low- to high-rise office uses, residential uses, retail businesses, restaurants, and parking areas. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are also prominent visual elements on these roadways. Although residential areas surround the commercial corridors, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-5 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees are present along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, as well as other commercial areas for screening purposes. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-5. Figure 6-23 and Figure 6-24 show existing representative views of LU-5.

Figure 6-23. Alternative 1: Existing View 13, Looking North along Sepulveda Boulevard at Magnolia Boulevard

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 6-24. Alternative 1: Existing View 14, Looking East along Victory Boulevard West of I-405 at Gloria Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

6.2.4.6 Landscape Unit 6 – Victory Boulevard to LOSSAN Rail Corridor ROW

LU-6 begins directly north of Victory Boulevard and continues north through Van Nuys to the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW. LU-6 is bordered to the west by Sepulveda Boulevard and to the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-6 consists of mainly commercial and residential development within the Van Nuys

neighborhood, with residential development located primarily to the east and west of the Van Nuys Boulevard commercial corridor. The LOSSAN rail corridor ROW and existing Van Nuys/Metrolink Station border the northern boundary of LU-6.

Similar to LU-5, typical views in LU-6 include the Van Nuys Boulevard commercial corridor, which is bordered by parking areas, sidewalks, street trees, commercial buildings, and additional buildings visible in the background. Traveling north along Van Nuys Boulevard, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains are visible. Traveling south, long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are visible; however, views of the Santa Monica Mountains are dominated by other features in the landscape. Primary viewer groups found within LU-6 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed in Section 6.2.4.1 under LU-1, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

The visual character of the portion of Van Nuys Boulevard within LU-6 consists of low- to mid-rise retail businesses, restaurants, office uses, and parking areas. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are also prominent visual elements along Van Nuys Boulevard. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. Similar to LU-5, buildings are of all different sizes, styles, and colors, and are spaced at different intervals, creating a high level of visual diversity in the landscape with no common theme. Street trees soften the appearance of the dense commercial corridor; however, because they are planted intermittently, they blend into the overall landscape.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-6 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees are present along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, as well as other commercial areas for screening purposes. Landscaping including trees are also present along I-405 in the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) ROW. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-6. Figure 6-25 shows an existing representative view in LU-6.

Figure 6-25. Alternative 1: Existing View 15, Looking East along Sherman Way Toward I-405 at Haskell Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

6.2.5 Light and Glare

North of US-101, the Project Study Area is generally located within the Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys neighborhoods of the City of Los Angeles, and encompasses commercial, industrial, and residential development with relatively ambient nighttime lighting typical of urbanized settings. Common light sources are the include the streetlights, vehicle lights, building entrance lighting, parking structure lighting, illuminated signage/billboards, and general illumination from lights shining through windows of structures lining the corridor.

South of US-101, nighttime lighting is more limited in the Santa Monica Mountains. In the developed portions of the Santa Monica Mountains, lighting sources include pedestrian-scaled streetlights, security and decorative wall lighting at residential homes, vehicle headlights, and interior building illumination. By contrast, the undeveloped portions of the Santa Monica Mountains have little to no light or glare sources, other than vehicle headlights.

South of Sunset Boulevard, the Project Study Area is generally located within Westwood and West Los Angeles neighborhoods of the City of Los Angeles, as well as within the City of Santa Monica. The adjacent commercial, industrial, and residential development, as well as cultural and institutional facilities, such as the UCLA campus, contribute to ambient nighttime lighting typical of urbanized settings. Light sources include the streetlights, vehicle lights, building entrance lighting, parking structure lighting, illuminated signage/billboards, and general illumination from lights shining through windows of structures lining the corridor.

6.3 Impact Evaluation

6.3.1 Impact AES-1: Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

6.3.1.1 Operational Impacts

As discussed in Section 6.1, Alternative 1 would utilize aerial monorail technology, and would include a connection to an electric bus system, which would be at grade. Alternative 1 would generally travel along the I-405 corridor and then adjacent to the LOSSAN rail corridor between I-405 and the Van Nuys Metrolink Station.

Scenic vistas in the Project Study Area include views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the San Gabriel Mountains. As discussed in Section 6.2.4, views of surrounding mountains are visible in all of the LUs. In some LUs, such as in LU-1, LU-5, and LU-6, the surrounding mountains are minimally visible; in some LUs, such as in LU-2, LU-3, and LU-4, the surrounding mountains are a visually dominant feature. Motorists and transit commuters would be expected to have more fleeting views of scenic vistas because they are moving along the Alternative 1 alignment, while pedestrians, patrons of commercial and institutional facilities, and tourists would be expected to have longer views.

Within LU-1, the aerial guideway would begin south of Exposition Boulevard adjacent to the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and continue parallel to the east of I-405 toward the Santa Monica Boulevard Station. North of the Santa Monica Boulevard Station, the aerial guideway would cross I-405 above Santa Monica Boulevard and continue parallel to the west of I-405. The primary visual elements of Alternative 1 would include the columns to support the aerial guideway, aerial MRT infrastructure, a pedestrian bridge, and the column bents to support the aerial Santa Monica Boulevard Station and aerial Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station. Aerial MRT station platforms would be elevated 45 feet to 55 feet above the existing ground level. While these features—particularly the aerial guideway, aerial MRT infrastructure, and aerial station—would be highly visible, they would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north because the existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405) and built-out urban landscape already prevent clear views of the mountains.

Within LU-2, the aerial guideway would continue parallel to the west of I-405 to the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station. At the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station, Alternative 1 would provide a connection to an electric bus shuttle that would be located at grade. From the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station, the aerial guideway would then continue north along or parallel to I-405. The primary visual elements of Alternative 1 would include the columns to support the aerial guideway, aerial MRT infrastructure, and column bents to support the aerial Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station, as well as the electric bus station platforms and canopies. While these features—particularly the aerial guideway, aerial MRT infrastructure, aerial station—and electric bus stations would be highly visible, they would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north because the existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405) and built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views. In addition, to construct the aerial guideway within LU-2, certain areas of I-405 would be widened, and the existing retaining walls would be relocated in certain locations to accommodate the freeway widening. However, the widening of I-405 and relocation of the existing retaining walls adjacent to the freeway would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north because the existing built-out urban landscape already prevent clear views of the mountains.

Within LU-3, the aerial guideway would continue within the median of I-405 to the Getty Center Station, which would be located directly north of the Getty Center. The primary visual elements of Alternative 1

would include the columns to support the aerial guideway, aerial MRT infrastructure, and column bents to support the aerial Getty Center Station. In addition, the aerial guideway would cross over the southbound I-405 to the Getty Center Station located on the west side of the freeway. While these features—particularly the aerial guideway, aerial MRT infrastructure, and aerial station—would be highly visible, they would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the east and west because views would be obstructed by existing transportation infrastructure, such as I-405. The aerial guideway and aerial Getty Center Station would not substantially obstruct views of the San Gabriel Mountains, which are limited from Sepulveda Boulevard and surrounding roadways. Existing views are currently limited by the flat topography of the roadway and existing development. In addition, to construct the aerial guideway within LU-3, certain areas of I-405 would be widened, and the existing retaining walls would be relocated in certain locations to accommodate the freeway widening. However, the widening of I-405 and relocation of the existing retaining walls adjacent to the freeway would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north because the existing built-out urban landscape already prevent clear views of the mountains.

Within LU-4, the aerial guideway would continue along I-405 to the Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station. The primary visual elements of Alternative 1 would include columns to support the aerial MRT guideway either parallel to or along I-405, aerial MRT infrastructure, and column bents to support the aerial Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station. While these features—particularly the aerial guideway, aerial MRT infrastructure, and aerial station—would be highly visible, they would not substantially obstruct views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north or the Santa Monica Mountains to the south because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains. In addition, to construct the aerial guideway within LU-4, certain areas of I-405 would be widened, and the existing retaining walls would be relocated in certain locations to accommodate the freeway widening. However, the widening of these specific areas of I-405 and relocation of the existing retaining walls adjacent to the freeway would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north because the existing built-out urban landscape already prevent clear views of the mountains.

Within LU-5, the aerial guideway would continue along I-405 to the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station. Primary visual elements of Alternative 1 would include columns to support the aerial MRT guideway either parallel to or along I-405, aerial MRT infrastructure, and column bents to support the aerial Metro G Line Sepulveda Station. While these features—particularly the aerial guideway, aerial MRT infrastructure, and aerial station—would be highly visible, they would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the south or the San Gabriel Mountains to the north because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains.

Within LU-6, the aerial guideway would continue north along the east side of I-405 to the proposed Sherman Way Station. North of the Sherman Way Station, the alignment would continue along the eastern edge of I-405 then curve to the southeast to the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The primary visual elements of Alternative 1 would include columns and straddle bents to support the aerial guideway either parallel to or along I-405 and Raymer Street, curb extensions, aerial MRT infrastructure, column bents to support the aerial Sherman Way Station and Van Nuys Metrolink Station, and the MSF structures.

Overall, the primary visual elements included as part of Alternative 1 would be the proposed aerial guideway, the aerial stations, freeway modifications, retaining wall relocations, and changes in parking, lanes, and sidewalks. The proposed aerial guideway, columns, straddle bents, and aerial stations would present new vertical features in the landscape that would be highly visible; however, views of the San

Gabriel Mountains and Santa Monica Mountains would not be substantially obscured and would continue to be limited by the surrounding urban development. In addition, the widening of I-405 and relocation of the existing retaining walls at certain locations of I-405 would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north because the existing built-out urban landscape already prevent clear views of the mountains.

Motorists driving northbound and southbound on I-405 would experience interruption in views while driving due to the presence of the aerial guideway; however, the interruption would be intermittent, because the aerial guideway would traverse the freeway from the east and west sides, and not remain in the same location from the vantage point of motorists. Pedestrians walking on nearby sidewalks would have views interrupted from certain locations, such as directly adjacent to one of the aerial stations, but would be able to easily walk away from that location. Recreationalists utilizing trails in the Santa Monica Mountains near I-405 would have the least interruption in views, because the aerial guideway would be located within I-405 corridor when viewing the Alternative 1 alignment from higher ground.

As such, views of scenic vistas as a whole would not be substantially affected. Therefore, the vertical elements proposed adjacent to the freeway under Alternative 1 would not substantially alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas, and operation of Alternative 1 would result in a less than significant impact to scenic vistas.

6.3.1.2 Construction Impacts

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. Although temporary in nature, construction activities may cause a visually unappealing quality in a community. Construction of Alternative 1 would introduce visually disruptive elements in each LU, including:

- Light excavation
- Roadway/bridge demolition and reconstruction
- Structural falsework
- Tree removal
- Soil removal/displacement
- Security fencing
- Stockpiled soil
- Stockpiled building materials
- Safety and directional signage
- Station platforms and plazas
- Ancillary facilities
- Large, heavy equipment (may include cranes, bulldozers, scrapers, and trucks)

These construction activities could be visible to pedestrians and motorists on adjacent streets, as well as to viewers within nearby buildings. However, construction activities—while a visual nuisance—would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains or San Gabriel Mountains because activities would be temporary and intermittent and limited to the immediate area. The implementation of best management practices discussed in Section 6.1.2 would also occur. Therefore, construction of Alternative 1 would not alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas, and impacts would be less than significant.

6.3.1.3 Maintenance and Storage Facilities

MSF Base Design

Maintenance of monorail vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF Base Design. Several buildings would be constructed, including a primary maintenance building, a maintenance-of-way building, track storage area, wash bays, ancillary storage buildings, a parking area for employees, and a TPSS structure. These structures would be the primary visual elements of the MSF Base Design. The MSF Base Design site would be located within a heavily industrialized area, and operation of this MSF would generally fit within the context of the existing industrial character. While the MSF Base Design site would be highly visible, it would not substantially obstruct views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains. As such, views of scenic vistas as a whole would not be substantially affected.

Construction activities could be visible to pedestrians and motorists on adjacent streets, as well as to viewers within nearby buildings. However, construction activities, while a visual nuisance, would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains or San Gabriel Mountains, because activities would be temporary and intermittent and limited to the immediate area. Therefore, the vertical elements proposed under the MSF Base Design would not substantially alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas and operation of MSF Base Design would result in a less than significant impact to scenic vistas.

MSF Design Option 1

As part of the MSF Design Option 1, several buildings would be constructed, including a primary maintenance building, a maintenance-of-way building, a train car washing building, a parking area for employees, and a TPSS structure. These structures would be the primary visual elements of the MSF Design Option 1. The MSF Design Option 1 would be constructed on an industrial property and would present new vertical features in the landscape that would be highly visible; however, views of the San Gabriel Mountains and Santa Monica Mountains from the residential area to the south would not be substantially obscured and would continue to be limited by the surrounding urban development. As such, views of scenic vistas as a whole would not be substantially affected.

Construction activities could be visible to pedestrians and motorists on adjacent streets, as well as to viewers within nearby buildings and the residential area to the south. However, construction activities, while a visual nuisance, would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains or San Gabriel Mountains, because activities would be temporary and intermittent and limited to the immediate area. Therefore, the vertical elements proposed under the MSF Design Option 1 would not substantially alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas, and operation of the MSF Design Option 1 would result in a less than significant impact to scenic vistas.

Electric Bus MSF

The Electric Bus MSF site would construct approximately 45,000 square feet of buildings, including a maintenance shop and bay, a maintenance office, an operations center, a parts storeroom, and service areas. The Electric Bus MSF, which would be located in LU-1, would represent a visual change; however, views of the San Gabriel Mountains and Santa Monica Mountains would not be substantially obscured and continue to be limited by the surrounding urban development. As such, views of scenic vistas as a whole would not be substantially affected.

Construction activities could be visible to pedestrians and motorists on adjacent streets, as well as to viewers within nearby buildings. However, construction activities—while a visual nuisance—would not

substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains or San Gabriel Mountains, because activities would be temporary and intermittent and limited to the immediate area. Therefore, the vertical elements proposed under Electric Bus MSF would not substantially alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas, and operation of Electric Bus MSF would result in a less than significant impact to scenic vistas.

6.3.2 Impact AES-2: Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

6.3.2.1 Operational Impacts

As discussed in Section 6.2.3, no California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the Project Study Area. Additionally, no state-designated scenic highways in proximity to the Project Study Area provide views of the Project Study Area. Historic structures within the alignment are discussed in the *Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources Technical Report* (Metro, 2025a). The closest eligible state scenic highway is SR-1, which is approximately 3 miles west of the Alternative 1 alignment. The closest officially designated state scenic highway is SR-27 (Topanga Canyon Boulevard), which is approximately 8 miles west of the Alternative 1 alignment.

As listed in Table 6-5 in Section 6.2.3, six City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are located within the Project Study Area:

- Beverly Glen Boulevard
- Mulholland Drive
- Santa Monica Boulevard
- Sepulveda Boulevard
- Sherman Way
- Sunset Boulevard

The aerial guideway for Alternative 1 would travel through designated scenic portions of Sepulveda Boulevard, Santa Monica Boulevard, Sherman Way, and Mulholland Drive. The aerial guideway for Alternative 1 would not travel through the designated scenic portion of Beverly Glen Boulevard or Sunset Boulevard. Sepulveda Boulevard would provide views of the old cross mountain road with a tunnel that would travel under Mulholland Drive, as well as views of mountains and the valley. Sherman Way would provide views of scenic resources, such as a wide street and landscaped median, as well as the Sherman Way Street Trees historical resource, which is located along Sherman Way between Woodley Avenue and Sherman Circle as discussed in the *Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources Technical Report* (Metro, 2025a). No specific scenic features or resources are listed for Santa Monica Boulevard. The proposed aerial guideway has been designed to travel along or parallel to I-405, and it is expected that visual change associated with the aerial guideway at these locations would not damage scenic resources given the existing structures associated with I-405 and background conditions.

In addition, along I-405, the aerial guideway for Alternative 1 would travel beneath the designated scenic Mulholland Drive bridge, which provide opportunities for multiple scenic views as it winds up and through the Santa Monica Mountains, including through the Project Study Area. Specifically, the *City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan 2035* states that Mulholland Drive provides panoramic views and a “ribbon of park.” Development near Mulholland Drive is also subject to design review guidelines pursuant to the MSPSP, as discussed in Section 6.2.3.

The MSPSP has designated 14 MVPs along Mulholland Drive that are maintained by the Bureau of Street Maintenance of the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. The Inner Corridor of the MSPSP area is designated as part of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and the MRCA also maintains seven scenic overlooks along Mulholland Drive (MRCA, 2023). The nearest MVP (also the nearest overlook) is the Johnson Overlook, which is located approximately 0.9 miles east of the Alternative 1 alignment. The nearest MRCA-maintained scenic overlook is The Groves Overlook, which is located approximately 1 mile west of the Alternative 1 alignment. The Alternative 1 alignment for Alternative 1 would not be visible from the Johnson Overlook or the Groves Overlook due to distance, vegetation, existing structures (i.e., I-405), and background conditions.

The proposed aerial guideway has been designed to travel along or parallel to I-405, and it is expected that visual change associated with the aerial guideway would not damage scenic resources given the existing structures associated with I-405 and background conditions. In addition, the aerial guideway would not be located on Mulholland Drive, which provides protection to potential views of scenic resources. Alternative 1 would also meet all of the requirements and obligations of the City of Los Angeles in ensuring preservation of a number of important values related to the Mulholland Drive.

As such, Alternative 1 would not impact views of scenic resources along Sepulveda Boulevard, Santa Monica Boulevard, Mulholland Drive, Beverly Glen Boulevard, and Sunset Boulevard. The location of the proposed aerial Sherman Way Station would potentially impact the historic Sherman Way Street Trees; however, this is not within a state scenic highway. Therefore, operation of Alternative 1 would not substantially damage any scenic resources within SR-1 or SR-27 (Topanga Canyon Boulevard), the nearest state scenic highways, neither of which is within the Project Study Area. Therefore, operation of Alternative 1 would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

6.3.2.2 Construction Impacts

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. Although temporary in nature, construction activities may cause a visually unappealing quality in a community. Construction of Alternative 1 would introduce visually disruptive elements in each LU, including the following:

- Light excavation
- Roadway/bridge demolition and reconstruction
- Building demolition
- Structural falsework
- Security fencing
- Soil removal/stockpile
- Stockpiled building materials
- Safety and directional signage
- Station platforms and plazas
- Ancillary facilities
- Large, heavy equipment may include cranes, bulldozers, scrapers, and trucks

As discussed in Section 6.2.3, no California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the Project Study Area. The Alternative 1 alignment would be located within both the Inner Corridor and Outer Corridor of the MSPSP, but this is not considered a state scenic highway. As discussed in Section 3.1, Metro projects are not required to

adhere to local zoning ordinances; however, any elements that would be located on properties outside of the public ROW (e.g., station plazas and TPSS) would comply with applicable zoning and design requirements, including undergoing mandated design review where applicable and coordinating with local jurisdictions and/or other public entities during preliminary and final designs. In addition, while Alternative 1 would add new visible structures, it is expected that visual change associated with the aerial guideway would not damage scenic resources given the existing structures associated with I-405 and background conditions. Additionally, tree removal during construction would create noticeable changes, exposing previously screened views of infrastructure and construction sites. However, these changes would be temporary and would not be located within a state scenic highway.

Construction of Alternative 1 would not substantially damage any scenic resources within SR-1 or SR-27, the nearest state scenic highways, neither of which is within the Project Study Area. Therefore, construction of Alternative 1 would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

6.3.2.3 Maintenance and Storage Facilities

MSF Base Design

No California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the MSF Base Design area. Additionally, no state-designated scenic highways or City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are located in proximity to the MSF Base Design. Therefore, operation of the MSF Base Design would not substantially damage any scenic resources within a state scenic highway. Additionally, none of the six scenic highways designated by the City of Los Angeles would be impacted by the MSF Base Design.

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. Although temporary in nature, construction activities may cause a visually unappealing quality in a community. However, as discussed in Section 3.1, Metro projects are not required to adhere to local zoning ordinances. Any elements that would be located on properties outside of the public ROW (e.g., station plazas and TPSS) would comply with applicable zoning and design requirements, including undergoing mandated design review where applicable and coordinating with local jurisdictions and/or other public entities during preliminary and final designs. In addition, while Alternative 1 would add new visible structures, it is expected that visual changes associated with the MSF Base Design would not be readily noticeable given the existing structures associated with I-405 and background conditions. Therefore, the MSF Base Design would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

MSF Design Option 1

Refer to Section 6.3.2.3 MSF Base Design, for impact evaluation. No California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the MSF Design Option 1 area. Additionally, no state-designated scenic highways or City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are located in proximity to the MSF Design Option 1. Therefore, operation of the MSF Design Option 1 would not substantially damage any scenic resources within a state scenic highway, and none of the six scenic highways designated by the City of Los Angeles would be impacted by the MSF Design Option 1.

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. However, as discussed, Metro projects are not required to adhere to local zoning ordinances. Any elements that would be located on properties outside of the public ROW (e.g., station

plazas and TPSS) would comply with applicable zoning and design requirements, including undergoing mandated design review where applicable and coordinating with local jurisdictions and/or other public entities during preliminary and final designs. In addition, while Alternative 1 would add new visible structures, it is expected that visual change associated with the MSF Design Option 1 would not damage scenic resources given the existing structures associated with I-405 and background conditions. Therefore, the MSF Design Option 1 would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

Electric Bus MSF

No California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the Electric Bus MSF area. Additionally, no state-designated scenic highways or City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are located in proximity to the Electric Bus MSF. Therefore, operation of the Electric Bus MSF would not substantially damage any scenic resources within a state scenic highway, and none of the six scenic highways designated by the City of Los Angeles would be impacted by the Electric Bus MSF.

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. Although temporary in nature, construction activities may cause a visually unappealing quality in a community. However, as discussed in Section 3.1, Metro projects are not required to adhere to local zoning ordinances. Any elements that would be located on properties outside of the public ROW (e.g., station plazas and TPSS) would comply with applicable zoning and design requirements, including undergoing mandated design review where applicable and coordinating with local jurisdictions and/or other public entities during preliminary and final designs. In addition, while Alternative 1 would add new visible structures, it is expected that visual change associated with the Electric Bus MSF would not damage scenic resources given the existing structures associated with I-405 and background conditions. Therefore, the Electric Bus MSF would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

6.3.3 Impact AES-3: Would the project, in non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Alternative 1 is in an urbanized area, as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15387; therefore, in accordance with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant impact would occur if Alternative 1 conflicts with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. The zoning ordinances of each jurisdiction in the Project Study Area do not directly regulate the design of transportation infrastructure elements. Additionally, the jurisdictions in the Project Study Area generally do not have policies or regulations that govern visual quality during construction activities for transportation-related projects. Alternative 1 would be designed to be consistent with all Metro policies related to visual resources, including Metro's Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy.

6.3.3.1 Operational Impacts

Operational components of Alternative 1—including but not limited to station design, aerial guideway, auxiliary facilities, sound walls and new landscaping—would follow the Metro Art Program Policy Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, Adjacent Development Review, and Tree Policy. Certain elements that would be located on properties

outside of the public ROW (e.g., station plazas and TPSS) would comply with applicable zoning and design requirements, including undergoing mandated design review where applicable and coordinating with local jurisdictions and/or other public entities during preliminary and final designs. While Metro projects are not required to adhere to local zoning ordinances, these project elements would comply with local zoning ordinances as they pertain to scenic quality based on the coordination process and agreements with affected jurisdiction or other public entities. Therefore, operation of Alternative 1 would not conflict with local zoning ordinances pertaining to scenic quality, and impacts would be less than significant.

Architectural renderings and photo-realistic visual simulations were created and used to illustrate where visual changes would be most noticeable after implementation of Alternative 1. These renderings are conceptual and do not represent the final design of Alternative 1 at this time.

Landscape Unit 1

Within LU-1, the aerial guideway for Alternative 1 would primarily operate parallel on the east of I-405 to the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and the Santa Monica Boulevard Station. At the Santa Monica Boulevard Station, the aerial guideway would shift to the west and continue across I-405. As such, operation of Alternative 1 within LU-1 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 1 within LU-1 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 1 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments or potentially from their private unit. The proposed aerial guideway and station would represent a large new element in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 1 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. For a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 1 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, as well as station entrances, TPSS, sound walls and plazas are proposed. In LU-1, the aerial guideway would cross from the eastern side of I-405 to the western side of I-405 beyond the Santa Monica Boulevard Station. Due to the aerial guideway's height and massing, the aerial guideway would result in a visual contrast in this portion of LU-1. However, the aerial guideway, TPSS, sound walls and stations would be relatively the same height as the existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405, elevated freeway ramps) and commercial structures, which these viewer groups already experience in existing conditions. Because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views.

Alternative 1 would follow the equivalent would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 1 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual

character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities." Alternative 1 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

Overall, Alternative 1 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 1 within LU-1 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 2

Within LU-2, the aerial guideway for Alternative 1 would primarily operate parallel to I-405 toward the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station. The aerial guideway would then continue from the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station north along or parallel to I-405. As such, operation of Alternative 1 within LU-2 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 1 within LU-2 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 1 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed aerial guideway and station would represent a new and large element in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 1 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. For a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if Alternative 1 would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 1 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, the Electric Bus MSF site, as well as station entrances, TPSS, sound walls and plazas are proposed. As shown on KOP 1 (Figure 6-26), located at the intersection of Church Lane and Waterford Street, the aerial guideway would be relatively the same height as the embankment of the existing I-405.

Figure 6-26. Alternative 1: KOP 1 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking Northeast From Residential Neighborhood Toward Aerial Alignment Above I-405

Source: HTA, 2024

The Federal Building, located east of the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station, would not be acquired, and it would not be physically demolished, destroyed, relocated, or altered. As shown on KOP 12 (Figure 6-27), located within the VA Hospital property on Dowlen Drive, the aerial structure on the eastern side of I-405 would not substantially limit views of the Federal Building. The new aerial structure would introduce a new visual element but would not change the visual character of the building or materially impair its ability to convey its historic significance. The alteration of the setting with the new visual element of the aerial structure would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings. However, the Electric Bus MSF, TPSS, and stations would be relatively the same height as the existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405, elevated freeway ramps) and commercial structures, which these viewer groups already experience in existing conditions. Because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views of the Federal Building, and they would not impair its historic significance. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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Figure 6-27. Alternative 1: KOP 12 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking East Toward I-405 From the Entrance of the VA Hospital

Source: HTA, 2024

Alternative 1 would follow Metro's Art Program Policy, the Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 1 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for

pedestrians and persons with disabilities." Alternative 1 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

Overall, Alternative 1 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, operation of Alternative 1 would alter, but not substantially degrade, the visual character and quality of its surroundings in LU-2, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 3

Within LU-3, Alternative 1 would primarily operate along or parallel to I-405 toward the aerial Getty Center Station. The aerial guideway would then continue north along I-405 where it would travel below Mulholland Drive. As such, operation of Alternative 1 within LU-3 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups including motorists and transit commuters would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 1 within LU-3 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations. Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change.

Viewer groups including tourists and residents would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, as tourists would have direct views of Alternative 1 from public areas and residents would have direct views of Alternative 1 from their private residences. The proposed aerial guideway and station would represent a large new element in the visual environment. In addition, certain views of the Santa Monica Mountains have the potential to be partially interrupted due to the elevated monorail guideway structures (columns, straddle bents, etc.).

Alternative 1 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, as well as the station entrances, TPSS, sound walls and plazas are proposed. Although the aerial guideway, TPSS, and station infrastructure would be relatively the same height as the existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405), it would be highly visible located near Mulholland Drive, as shown on KOP 7 (Figure 6-29).

Figure 6-28. Alternative 1: KOP 4 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking South From Sepulveda Boulevard Toward the Aerial Alignment Along I-405

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 6-29. Alternative 1: KOP 7 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking North Toward I-405 and the San Fernando Valley

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 6-30. Alternative 1: KOP 8 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking South Toward I-405 and the Skirball Center on the Right

Source: HTA, 2024

As shown on KOP 4 (Figure 6-28), traveling south on Sepulveda Boulevard just north of Getty Center Drive, the aerial guideway and related infrastructure would not block views of the Getty Center, which is a primary focal point of this area. In addition, the aerial guideway would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. The aerial guideway for Alternative 1 would traverse below Mulholland Drive, which provides opportunities for multiple scenic views as it winds up and through the Santa Monica Mountains, including through the Project Study Area. The aerial guideway within LU-3 would primarily travel along the public ROW; however, the aerial guideway would travel through the Inner Corridor and Outer Corridor of the MSPSP, which contains density requirements, building standards, and grading restrictions to protect scenic quality. The viewshed protection provisions of the MSPSP are directed at preserving, complementing, and/or enhancing the public views from Mulholland Drive.

As shown on KOP 8 (Figure 6-30) from Mulholland Drive, views of the aerial guideway would be available from only limited vantage points along Mulholland Drive. From these vantage points, a small portion of the aerial guideway would be visible, sitting below the ridgeline. However, the view from most locations would remain uninterrupted by the aerial guideway. In addition, the aerial guideway has been designed to travel along or parallel to I-405, and it is expected that visual change associated with the aerial guideway would not be readily noticeable given the existing structures associated with I-405, existing vegetation, and background conditions. Alternative 1 would also meet all of the requirements and obligations of the City of Los Angeles in ensuring preservation of a number of important values related to the Mulholland Drive. As such, these facilities would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views from Mulholland Drive.

Alternative 1 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages “transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.” Alternative 1 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

Overall, Alternative 1 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Additionally, with respect to Sepulveda Boulevard and Mulholland Drive, Alternative 1 would not conflict with applicable zoning or regulations governing scenic quality. Following the Systemwide Station Design Standards and Adjacent Development Review would help ensure the design is visually compatible with the surrounding environment, reducing the overall visual impact to viewer groups, including motorists and transit commuters, would have low to moderate sensitivity to the visual changes associated with Alternative 1. These individuals would primarily be passing through LU-3 on route to other destinations and are therefore less likely to have a personal investment in the area's visual appearance. Therefore, operation of Alternative 1 would alter, but not substantially degrade, the visual character and quality of its surroundings in LU-3, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 4

Within LU-4, the aerial guideway for Alternative 1 would primarily operate along or parallel to I-405 to the Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard intersection. As such, operation of Alternative 1 within LU-4 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 1 within LU-4 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 1 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments or potentially from their private unit. The proposed aerial guideway and station would represent a new and large element in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 1 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. As discussed in Section 6.3.3, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if Alternative 1 would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 1 would also result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, TPSS, sound walls station entries and plazas are proposed. The aerial guideway would travel through some residential areas within the Santa Monica Mountains. However, the aerial guideway would be relatively the same height as the existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405, elevated freeway ramps) and commercial structures, which these viewer groups already experience in existing conditions. Because of the urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. In addition, the proposed aerial guideway has been designed to travel along or parallel to I-405, and it is expected that visual changes associated with the aerial guideway would not be readily noticeable given the existing structures associated with I-405 and background conditions.

Alternative 1 would follow the Metro's Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 1 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities." Alternative 1 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

Overall, Alternative 1 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, operation of Alternative 1 within LU-4 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 5

Within LU-5, the aerial guideway for Alternative 1 would primarily operate along or parallel to I-405 to the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station. As such, operation of Alternative 1 within LU-5 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups including pedestrians and motorists would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 1 within LU-5 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 1 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments or potentially from their private unit. The proposed aerial guideway and station would represent a new and large element in the visual environment for residents.

As discussed in Section 6.3.3, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if Alternative 1 would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 1 would also result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, TPSS, station entries, sound walls and plazas are proposed. In LU-5, the aerial guideway would travel along I-405 median and would later transition to the eastern side of the freeway adjacent to the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station. Due to the aerial guideway's height and massing, the aerial guideway would result in a visual contrast in this portion of LU-5 where it would travel adjacent to the freeway. However, the aerial guideway, TPSS, and stations would be relatively the same height as the existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405, elevated freeway ramps) and commercial structures, which these viewer groups already experience in existing conditions. Because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views.

Alternative 1 would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 1 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities." Alternative 1 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

Overall, Alternative 1 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, operation of Alternative 1 within LU-5 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 6

Within LU-6, the aerial guideway for Alternative 1 would primarily operate along or parallel to I-405 to the Sherman Way Station and would continue to the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. As such, operation of Alternative 1 within LU-6 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians and motorists—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 1 within LU-6 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations. Within LU-6, the aerial guideway would be located outside of I-405 travel lanes and existing sounds walls, so motorists' views would be limited.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 1 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments or potentially from their private unit. The proposed aerial guideway and station would represent a new and large element in the visual environment for residents.

As discussed in Section 6.3.3, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if Alternative 1 would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 1 would also result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, TPSS, station entries and plazas are proposed. Within LU-6, a line of mature trees presently between I-405 and Firmament Avenue in LU-6, which acts as screening for residences along Firmament Avenue, would be removed to accommodate the placement of the proposed aerial guideway infrastructure, which would reduce the visual connectivity and change the visual character of this segment of Firmament Avenue, which is primarily a residential area.

The aerial guideway would represent a new element in the visual environment, and would be noticeable to residents, because I-405 and aerial guideway would be visible after the tree removal. The large scale of the proposed aerial guideway as compared to the adjacent small-scale residential uses on Firmament Avenue would result in a prominent intrusion to the visual setting from this view. However, as shown on KOP 11 (Figure 6-31), which is located along Firmament Avenue near Valerio Street, no new visible feature would be visually incompatible with the existing urban and transportation-oriented visual aesthetic of Firmament Avenue. However, this area along Firmament Avenue is an urbanized area, and there are no applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality in this area. Operation of Alternative 1, would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. As such, this impact would be less than significant.

The aerial guideway, TPSS, sound walls and stations would be relatively the same height as the existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405, elevated freeway ramps) and commercial structures, which these viewer groups already experience in existing conditions. Because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views.

In addition, Alternative 1 would follow Metro's Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 1 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages “transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.” Alternative 1 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

Figure 6-31. Alternative 1: KOP 11 – Before and After Simulation View: View Looking West Toward the Aerial Alignment Along I-405 and Firmament Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

Overall, Alternative 1 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, operation of Alternative 1 within LU-6 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Operation of Alternative 1 would represent an overall change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions. However, Alternative 1 is in an urban area that has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors. Although viewer groups may have varying sensitivities to the visual change associated with Alternative 1 for each of the LUs, they would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. As a result, the operation of Alternative 1 would have less than significant impacts related to visual character and quality.

6.3.3.2 Construction Impacts

The Alternative 1 alignment would consist of a portion of the public ROW, including roadway and sidewalks, as well as City-owned, state-owned, and private properties. During the construction phase, the visual character of the alignment would change temporarily from existing conditions. Construction of the aerial guideway, stations, and freeway modifications would require equipment such as construction barriers and sound walls, cranes, and other appurtenances that would be visible during much of the approximately 78-month construction period.

Construction of Alternative 1 would comply with applicable regulations governing scenic quality, including South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Rule 403, and would occur in an urbanized area. Rule 403 does not permit track-out dust to extend 25 feet or more beyond the active construction area and requires all track-out dirt to be removed at the end of each workday or evening shift. Construction activities would include similar equipment used for other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings and other aerial transportation infrastructure.

Although temporary and short-term in nature, construction activities would be a visual nuisance. However, certain areas may be fenced off with construction barriers and sound walls, resulting in a temporary change and contrast in visual character from the existing conditions. Mitigation Measure AES-1 would include temporary privacy screens to minimize impacts from construction barriers and sound walls. In addition, the designated construction areas along the alignment would experience additional truck traffic compared to existing conditions, with trucks moving materials on- and off-site, and work crews and construction equipment moving around the alignment and between Alternative 1 components.

As discussed in Section 6.3.3.1, within LU-6, a line of mature trees presently between I-405 and Firmament Avenue would be removed to accommodate the placement of the proposed aerial guideway infrastructure, which would result in a visual change.

Neither the Federal Building within LU-2, nor the Getty Center within LU-3 would be physically demolished, destroyed, relocated, or altered. The aerial structure would generally follow existing transportation corridors and would not limit views of these resources. The new aerial structure would introduce a new visual element but would not change the visual character of either of these buildings. The alteration of the setting with the new visual element of the aerial structure would not materially impair their significance.

Some residents may have private views of Alternative 1 construction from their windows. These residents would be highly sensitive to visual changes and would have a higher degree of personal investment in Alternative 1.

Motorists would primarily experience views of construction activities while driving the roadways along and adjacent to Alternative 1. In addition, drivers would have prolonged views while idling at the various traffic signals surrounding the proposed Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station area and aerial guideway. The change in the visual character during the construction phase would be noticeable by passing drivers. However, drivers are considered to have a low sensitivity to any visual changes because they would likely be passing through the Project Study Area to reach their destinations and would not necessarily have a personal investment in the visual character or quality of the Project Study Area.

In addition, pedestrians would primarily experience views of construction activities while walking along public sidewalks, within transit stations, and near businesses that are to the proposed station areas and aerial guideway. The change in the visual character of the alignment during the construction phase would be noticeable by these viewers. In addition, pedestrians are considered to have a moderate sensitivity to visual changes because they may be engaged in observing their surroundings.

Tourists would also potentially experience views of construction while visiting the Getty Center or one of the scenic overlooks along Mulholland Drive. Tourists are considered to have high sensitivity to visual changes. In addition, construction of the aerial guideway would represent new visual elements for tourists who seek to enjoy the views of the Getty Center.

Alternative 1 would include entitlements and approvals to establish land use regulations to ensure consistent implementation of development standards throughout the Alternative 1 alignment. The development standards would recognize the unique characteristics of Alternative 1, including unique opportunities for public benefits. The design standards included in the Alternative 1 entitlements and approvals would enhance the visual identity and character of
Alternative 1 and its surrounding communities, and would ensure visual compatibility with adjacent development, as well as the Project Study Area's overall community character. Overall, Alternative 1 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality.

Overall, construction would represent a temporary change in the visual quality and character. Alternative 1 components would potentially stand out as memorable or remarkable features in the landscape due to their scale, which would have a temporary impact on visual character and quality of the Project Study Area and its surroundings compared to existing conditions. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings in urbanized areas. Impacts from construction activities would be temporary and post-construction views of Alternative 1 -related construction activities, equipment, stockpiles, and fencing would be removed once construction is completed. Alternative 1 would be required to implement MM AES-1, which requires the use of temporary privacy screens to minimize visual disruption caused by construction barriers and sound walls. These screens would obscure construction elements from sensitive viewer groups, reducing the visual contrast and temporary changes to the landscape during construction. In addition, Alternative 1 would comply with the best management practices noted in Section 6.1.2, as well as the City of Los Angeles' development standards related to scenic quality during construction, which would be verified during the permitting process. With the implementation of MM AES-1, the significant impacts related to motorists' views would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

6.3.3.3 Maintenance and Storage Facilities

MSF Base Design

Maintenance of monorail vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF Base Design. Several buildings would be constructed, including a primary maintenance building, a maintenance-of-way building, track

storage area, wash bays, ancillary storage buildings, a parking area for employees, and a TPSS structure. These structures would be the primary visual elements of the MSF Base Design. The MSF Base Design site within the northern portion of LU-6 would be located within a heavily industrialized area, and operation of this MSF Base Design would generally fit within the context of the existing industrial character.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of the MSF Base Design within LU-6 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of the MSF Base Design either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments or potentially from their private unit. The proposed MSF Base Design would represent a new and large element in the visual environment for residents.

The MSF Base Design would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels. As discussed in Section 6.3.3, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if Alternative 1 would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

The MSF Base Design in LU-6 would be located on the LADWP property east of the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The MSF Base Design would be elevated consistent with the guideway height. The maintenance level for the train cars would be consistent with the guideway track elevation and would contain maintenance areas. The ground level would include multiple rows of columns and support beams for structural support, as well as an administrative building with parking areas.

The MSF Base Design would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. In addition, the MSF Base Design would be relatively the same height as the existing commercial structures. These railway structures are typically more visually tolerable in industrial and commercial areas. As such, these facilities would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views.

The MSF Base Design would also be consistent with the goals and objectives within the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b) and the *Mobility Plan 2035* DCP, 2016). With regard to the *Citywide Design Guidelines*, the MSF Base Design would improve the quality of the public realm through project design that would be appropriate to the scale and character of the existing buildings in the surrounding area.

During the construction phase, the visual character of the alignment would change temporarily from existing conditions. Construction of the MSF Base Design would require equipment—such as construction barriers and sound walls, cranes, and other appurtenances—that would be visible during much of the approximately 78-month construction period.

Construction of the MSF Base Design would comply with applicable regulations governing scenic quality, including SCAQMD Rule 403, and would occur in an urbanized area. Rule 403 does not permit track-out dust to extend 25 feet or more beyond the active construction area and requires all track-out dirt to be removed at the end of each workday or evening shift. Construction activities would include similar equipment used for other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings and other aerial transportation infrastructure.

Although temporary and short-term in nature, construction activities would be a visual nuisance. However, certain areas may be fenced off with construction barriers and sound walls, resulting in a temporary change and contrast in visual character from the existing conditions. In addition, the designated construction areas along the alignment would experience additional truck traffic compared to existing conditions, with trucks moving materials on- and off-site, and work crews and construction equipment moving around the alignment and between the project components.

Motorists would primarily experience views of construction activities while driving along the roadways along and adjacent to the MSF Base Design. In addition, drivers would have prolonged views while idling at the various traffic signals surrounding the proposed station areas and aerial guideway. The change in the visual character during the construction phase would be noticeable by passing drivers. However, drivers are considered to have a low sensitivity to any visual changes because they would likely be passing through the Project Study Area to reach their destinations and would not necessarily have a personal investment in the visual character or quality of the MSF Base Design area.

In addition, pedestrians would primarily experience views of construction activities while walking along public sidewalks, within transit stations, and near businesses that are to the proposed station areas and aerial guideway. The change in the visual character during the construction phase would be noticeable by these viewers. In addition, pedestrians are considered to have a moderate sensitivity to visual changes because they may be engaged in observing their surroundings.

The MSF Base Design would include entitlements and approvals to ensure consistent implementation of development standards. The development standards would recognize the MSF Base Design's unique characteristics, including unique opportunities for public benefits. The design standards included in the MSF Base Design's entitlements and approvals would ensure visual compatibility with adjacent development, as well as the MSF Base Design area's overall community character. The MSF Base Design would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. As such, the MSF Base Design would be consistent with applicable policies related to scenic quality during construction.

Overall, the MSF Base Design would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Construction would represent a temporary change in the visual quality and character. Alternative 1 components would potentially stand out as memorable or remarkable features in the landscape due to their scale, which would have a temporary impact on visual character and quality of the MSF Base Design area and its surroundings compared to existing conditions. Construction activities would include similar equipment used for other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings in urbanized areas. Impacts from construction activities would be temporary and post-construction views of Alternative 1-related construction activities, equipment, stockpiles, and fencing would be removed once construction is completed. In addition, the MSF Base Design would comply with the best management practices previously noted in Section 6.1.2, as well as the City of Los Angeles' development standards related to scenic quality during construction, which would be verified during the City of Los Angeles' permitting process. Therefore, the MSF Base Design within LU-6 would not conflict with applicable regulations governing scenic quality, or substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

MSF Design Option 1

As part of the MSF Design Option 1, several buildings would be constructed, including a primary maintenance building, a maintenance-of-way building, a train car washing building, parking area for employees and TPSS structure. These structures would be the primary visual elements of the MSF

Design Option 1. Overall, the MSF Design Option 1 would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. In addition, the MSF Design Option 1 would be relatively the same height as the existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405) and commercial structures. An existing residential area to the south may have somewhat distant views of the MSF Design Option 1, but these proposed facilities would be located in an industrial area. These railway facilities are typically more visually tolerable in industrial and commercial areas. As such, these facilities would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views.

The MSF Design Option 1 would also be consistent with the goals and objectives within the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b) and the *Mobility Plan 2035* DCP, 2016). With regard to the *Citywide Design Guidelines*, the MSF Design Option 1 would improve the quality of the public realm through project design that would be appropriate to the scale and character of the existing buildings in the surrounding area.

Overall, the MSF Design Option 1 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Construction would represent a temporary change in the visual quality and character. Alternative 1 components would potentially stand out as memorable or remarkable features in the landscape due to their scale, which would have a temporary impact on visual character and quality of the Project Study Area and its surroundings compared to existing conditions. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings in urbanized areas. Impacts from construction activities would be temporary and post-construction views of Alternative 1 -related construction activities, equipment, stockpiles, and fencing would be removed once construction is completed. In addition, the MSF Design Option 1 would comply with best management practices, as well as the city's development standards related to scenic quality during construction, which would be verified during the permitting process. Therefore, the MSF Design Option 1 within LU-6 would not conflict with applicable regulations governing scenic quality, or substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Electric Bus MSF

The Electric Bus MSF site would construct approximately 45,000 square feet of buildings, including a maintenance shop and bay, a maintenance office, an operations center, a parts storeroom, and service areas. The Electric Bus MSF, which would be located in LU-1, would be located within a heavily commercial area, and operation of this MSF would generally fit within the context of the existing commercial character.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of the Electric Bus MSF within LU-1 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change because they would have direct views of the Electric Bus MSF either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments or potentially from their private unit. The proposed Electric Bus MSF would represent a new and large element in the visual environment for residents. However, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to public views.

The Electric Bus MSF would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels. As discussed in Section 6.3.3, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

The Electric Bus MSF would be located on the northwest corner of Pico Boulevard and Cotner Avenue and would include approximately 45,000 square feet of buildings with a maintenance shop and bay, a maintenance office, an operations center, a parts storeroom, as well as fleet stabling, gantry charging and charging equipment, service areas, a bus wash, and a surface parking lot.

The Electric Bus MSF would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. In addition, the Electric Bus MSF would be relatively the same height as the existing commercial structures. These railway structures are typically more visually tolerable in industrial and commercial areas. As such, these facilities would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views.

The Electric Bus MSF would also be consistent with the goals and objectives within the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b) and the *Mobility Plan 2035* DCP, 2016). With regard to the *Citywide Design Guidelines*, the Electric Bus MSF would improve the quality of the public realm through project design that is appropriate to the scale and character of the existing buildings in the surrounding area.

During the construction phase, the visual character of the alignment would change temporarily from existing conditions. Construction of the Electric Bus MSF would require equipment such as construction barriers and sound walls, cranes, and other appurtenances that would be visible during the construction period.

Construction of Electric Bus MSF would comply with applicable regulations governing scenic quality, including SCAQMD Rule 403, and would occur in an urbanized area. Rule 403 does not permit track-out dust to extend 25 feet or more beyond the active construction area and requires all track-out dirt to be removed at the end of each workday or evening shift. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings and other aerial transportation infrastructure.

Although temporary and short-term in nature, construction activities would be a visual nuisance. However, certain areas may be fenced off with construction barriers and sound walls, resulting in a temporary change and contrast in visual character from the existing conditions. In addition, the designated construction areas along the alignment would experience additional truck traffic compared to existing conditions, with trucks moving materials on- and off-site, and work crews and construction equipment moving around the alignment and between the project components.

Some residents may have private views of the construction from their windows. Motorists would primarily experience views of construction activities while driving on the roadways along and adjacent to the Electric Bus MSF. In addition, drivers would have prolonged views while idling at the various traffic signals surrounding the proposed station areas and aerial guideway. The change in the visual character during the construction phase would be noticeable by passing drivers. However, drivers are considered to have a low sensitivity to any visual changes because they would likely be passing through the Project Study Area to reach their destinations and would not necessarily have a personal investment in the visual character or quality of the Electric Bus MSF area.

In addition, pedestrians would primarily experience views of construction activities while walking along public sidewalks, within transit stations, and near businesses that are to the Electric Bus MSF. The

change in the visual character of the alignment during the construction phase would be noticeable by these viewers. In addition, pedestrians are considered to have a moderate sensitivity to visual changes as they may be engaged in observing their surroundings.

The Electric Bus MSF would include entitlements and approvals to ensure consistent implementation of development standards. The development standards would recognize the Electric Bus MSF's distinctive characteristics, including unique opportunities for public benefits. The design standards included in the Electric Bus MSF's entitlements and approvals would ensure visual compatibility with adjacent development, as well as the Electric Bus MSF area's overall community character. The Electric Bus MSF would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. As such, the Electric Bus MSF would be consistent with applicable policies related to scenic quality during construction.

Overall, the Electric Bus MSF would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Construction would represent a temporary change in the visual quality and character. The Electric Bus MSF components would potentially stand out as memorable or remarkable features in the landscape due to their scale, which would have a temporary impact on visual character and quality of the Electric Bus MSF area and its surroundings compared to existing conditions. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings in urbanized areas. Impacts from construction activities would be temporary and post-construction views of Alternative 1 -related construction activities, equipment, stockpiles, and fencing would be removed once construction is completed. In addition, the Electric Bus MSF would comply with the best management practices previously noted in Section 6.1.2, as well as the City of Los Angeles' development standards related to scenic quality during construction, which would be verified during the City of Los Angeles' permitting process. Therefore, the Electric Bus MSF within LU-2 would not conflict with applicable regulations governing scenic quality, or substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

6.3.4 Impact AES-4: Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

6.3.4.1 Operational Impacts

Alternative 1 would be primarily located parallel to or along I-405, as well as within the public ROW. New nighttime light would primarily emanate from station areas (e.g., station plazas, entryways, and platforms), the MSF, and Electric Bus MSF, which would not substantially increase the amount of lighting in the immediate area because similar light sources and levels (e.g., buildings, streetlights, and parking lots) currently exist. Alternative 1 would follow Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy. Compliance with these requirements would ensure that permanent operations-related light sources at the proposed station areas would be directed downwards or feature directional shielding to minimize spillover onto adjacent properties, including residential uses and other light-sensitive uses.

Alternative 1-related sources of light and glare from the aerial guideway would primarily emanate from monorail vehicles and station areas, including the aerial guideway and station platforms. Lighting related to Alternative 1 would primarily occur at the stations and TPSS. Lighting from monorail vehicles on aerial structures is not expected to extend beyond the aerial guideway or roadway ROW. Per Metro's Rail Design Criteria or equivalent, all light sources at the surface parking lots and proposed stations would be

directed downwards to minimize potential spillover onto surrounding properties, including light-sensitive uses.

In addition, Alternative 1 would include several elements (e.g., glass or metal surfaces) that would create new sources of glare at proposed station areas during the day. However, per Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy, surfaces and architectural finishes would be used that reduce glare and reflection to reduce impacts. Overall, Alternative 1 would create a negligible addition to light and glare and would not constitute a substantial change in existing light and glare in the immediate area. Therefore, operation of Alternative 1 would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

6.3.4.2 Construction Impacts

Construction of Alternative 1 would primarily occur during daytime hours, with nighttime construction a possibility for I-405. Nighttime and weekend construction, if any, would comply with local ordinance restrictions. Such activities may include, but are not limited to, tunneling, columns and trackwork, and stockpiling materials. Construction lighting would be directed toward the construction areas and/or shielded with temporary screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto adjacent areas. In addition, construction-related illumination would be temporary and limited to safety and security purposes. Construction of the aerial guideway, freeway modifications, and aerial stations as part of Alternative 1 would not be a substantial source of light and glare as several nighttime lighting sources already exist around the construction areas (e.g., streetlights, building illumination). Therefore, construction of Alternative 1 would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

6.3.4.3 Maintenance and Storage Facilities

MSF Base Design

Maintenance of monorail vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF Base Design. Several buildings would be constructed, including a primary maintenance building, a maintenance-of-way building, track storage area, wash bays, ancillary storage buildings, parking area for employees, and TPSS structure. New nighttime light would primarily emanate from the MSF Base Design, which would be a visible source of light, but would not represent a substantial increase in the amount of lighting in the immediate area because similar light sources and levels (e.g., buildings, streetlights, and parking lots) currently exist. The MSF Base Design would follow Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy. Compliance with these requirements would ensure that permanent operations-related light sources at the MSF Base Design would be directed downwards or feature directional shielding to minimize spillover onto adjacent properties, including residential uses and other light-sensitive uses.

Sources of light related to Alternative 1 and glare from the MSF Base Design would primarily emanate from buildings and parking areas. Per Metro's Rail Design Criteria or equivalent, all light sources at the proposed surface parking lots and stations would be directed downwards to minimize potential spillover onto surrounding properties, including light-sensitive uses.

The MSF Base Design would include several elements (e.g., glass or metal surfaces) that would create new sources of glare during the day. However, per Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy, surfaces and architectural finishes would be used that reduce glare and reflection to reduce impacts. Overall, the MSF Base Design would create a negligible addition to light and glare and would not constitute a substantial change in existing light and glare in the immediate area.

In addition, construction of the MSF Base Design would primarily occur during daytime hours. Nighttime and weekend construction, if any, would comply with local ordinance restrictions. Construction lighting would be directed toward the construction areas and/or shielded with temporary screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto adjacent areas. In addition, construction-related illumination would be temporary and limited to safety and security purposes. Construction of the MSF Base Design would not be a substantial source of light and glare as several nighttime lighting sources already exist around the construction areas (e.g., streetlights, building illumination). Therefore, the MSF Base Design would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

MSF Design Option 1

Maintenance of monorail vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF Design Option 1. As part of the MSF Design Option 1, several buildings would be constructed, including a primary maintenance building, a maintenance-of-way building, a train car washing building, parking area for employees and TPSS structure. Overall, the MSF Design Option 1 would create a negligible addition to light and glare and would not constitute a substantial change in existing light and glare in the immediate area. In addition, construction of the MSF Design Option 1 would not be a substantial source of light and glare as several nighttime lighting sources already exist around the construction areas (e.g., streetlights, building illumination). Therefore, the MSF Design Option 1 would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

Electric Bus MSF

The Electric Bus MSF site would construct approximately 45,000 square feet of buildings, including a maintenance shop and bay, a maintenance office, an operations center, a parts storeroom, and service areas. New nighttime light would primarily emanate from the Electric Bus MSF, which would not substantially increase the amount of lighting in the immediate area because similar light sources and levels (e.g., buildings, streetlights, and parking lots) currently exist. The Electric Bus MSF would follow Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy. Compliance with these requirements would ensure that permanent operations-related light sources at the Electric Bus MSF would be directed downwards or feature directional shielding to minimize spillover onto adjacent properties, including residential uses and other light-sensitive uses.

Alternative 1 sources of light and glare from the Electric Bus MSF would primarily emanate from buildings and parking areas. Per Metro's Rail Design Criteria or equivalent, all light sources at the proposed surface parking lots and stations would be directed downwards to minimize potential spillover onto surrounding properties, including light-sensitive uses.

The Electric Bus MSF would include several elements (e.g., glass or metal surfaces) that would create new sources of glare during the day. However, per Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy, surfaces and architectural finishes would be used that reduce glare and reflection to reduce impacts. Overall, the Electric Bus MSF would create a negligible addition to light and glare and would not constitute a substantial change in existing light and glare in the immediate area.

In addition, construction of the Electric Bus MSF would primarily occur during daytime hours. Nighttime and weekend construction, if any, would comply with local ordinance restrictions. Construction lighting would be directed toward the construction areas and/or shielded with temporary screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto adjacent areas. In addition, construction-related illumination would be temporary and limited to safety and security purposes. Construction of the Electric Bus MSF would not be a substantial source of light and glare because several nighttime lighting sources already exist around

the construction areas (e.g., streetlights, building illumination). Therefore, the Electric Bus MSF would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

6.4 Mitigation Measures

6.4.1 Operational Impacts

As discussed in Section 6.3, operation of Alternative 1 would result in less than significant impacts related to scenic vistas, scenic resources, visual character, and light and glare; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

6.4.2 Construction Impacts

Construction activities would be a temporary and short-term visual nuisance. Temporary changes and contrast from the visual character from the existing conditions are impacted by construction activities such as site operations, tree removals, and construction traffic. Construction related structures such as barrier, sound walls, and fencing also impact visual resources.

As a result, the following mitigation measures would be implemented:

MM AES-1: *Privacy screens, as applicable and appropriate, shall be placed in high visibility areas that have construction related structures or activities. Privacy screens shall be used in areas requiring tree removal activities adjacent visually sensitive areas, including but not limited to residential areas.*

6.4.3 Impacts After Mitigation

During construction MM AES-1 would reduce the temporary visual nuisance of construction activities. Privacy screens would also minimize the visual impacts from tree removals at Firmament Avenue in LU-6. To the greatest extent practicable protected trees and shrubs would not be removed. When removal is unavoidable, such as along Firmament Avenue in LU-6, MM AES-1 would be implemented, including installing temporary privacy screens to limit direct residential views of tree removals directly adjacent east of I-405. The implementation of this mitigation measure would result in less than significant impacts related to construction.

7 ALTERNATIVE 3

7.1 Alternative Description

Alternative 3 is an aerial monorail alignment that would run along the Interstate 405 (I-405) corridor and would include seven aerial monorail transit (MRT) stations and an underground tunnel alignment between the Getty Center and Wilshire Boulevard with two underground stations. This alternative would provide transfers to five high-frequency fixed guideway transit and commuter rail lines, including the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (Metro) E, Metro D, and Metro G Lines, the East San Fernando Valley Light Rail Transit Line, and the Metrolink Ventura County Line. The length of the alignment between the terminus stations would be approximately 16.1 miles, with 12.5 miles of aerial guideway and 3.6 miles of underground configuration.

The seven aerial and two underground MRT stations would be as follows:

1. Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station (aerial)
2. Santa Monica Boulevard Station (aerial)
3. Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station (underground)
4. UCLA Gateway Plaza Station (underground)
5. Getty Center Station (aerial)
6. Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station (aerial)
7. Metro G Line Sepulveda Station (aerial)
8. Sherman Way Station (aerial)
9. Van Nuys Metrolink Station (aerial)

7.1.1 Operating Characteristics

7.1.1.1 Alignment

As shown on Figure 7-1, from its southern terminus at the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, the alignment of Alternative 3 would generally follow I-405 to the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) rail corridor, except for an underground segment between Wilshire Boulevard and the Getty Center.

The proposed southern terminus station would be located west of the existing Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, east of I-405 between Pico Boulevard and Exposition Boulevard. Tail tracks would extend just south of the station adjacent to the eastbound Interstate 10 (I-10) to northbound I-405 connector over Exposition Boulevard. North of the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, a storage track would be located off of the main alignment north of Pico Boulevard between I-405 and Cotner Avenue. The alignment would continue north along the east side of I-405 until just south of Santa Monica Boulevard, where a proposed station would be located between the I-405 northbound travel lanes and Cotner Avenue. The alignment would cross over the northbound and southbound freeway lanes north of Santa Monica Boulevard and travel along the west side of I-405. Once adjacent to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Hospital site, the alignment would cross back over the I-405 lanes and Sepulveda Boulevard, before entering an underground tunnel south of the Federal Building parking lot.

Figure 7-1. Alternative 3: Alignment

Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

The alignment would proceed east underground and turn north under Veteran Avenue toward the proposed Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station located under the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Lot 36 on the east side of Veteran Avenue north of Wilshire Boulevard. North of this station, the underground alignment would curve northeast parallel to Weyburn Avenue before curving north and traveling underneath Westwood Plaza at Le Conte Avenue. The alignment would follow Westwood Plaza until the underground UCLA Gateway Plaza Station in front of the Luskin Conference

Center. The alignment would then continue north under the UCLA campus until Sunset Boulevard, where the tunnel would curve northwest for approximately 2 miles to rejoin I-405.

The Alternative 3 alignment would transition from an underground configuration to an aerial guideway structure after exiting the tunnel portal located at the northern end of the Leo Baeck Temple parking lot. The alignment would cross over Sepulveda Boulevard and the I-405 lanes to the proposed Getty Center Station on the west side of I-405, just north of the Getty Center tram station. The alignment would return to the median for a short distance before curving back to the west side of I-405 south of the Sepulveda Boulevard undercrossing north of the Getty Center Drive interchange. After crossing over Bel Air Crest Road and Skirball Center Drive, the alignment would again return to the median and run under the Mulholland Drive Bridge, then continue north within the I-405 median to descend into the San Fernando Valley (Valley).

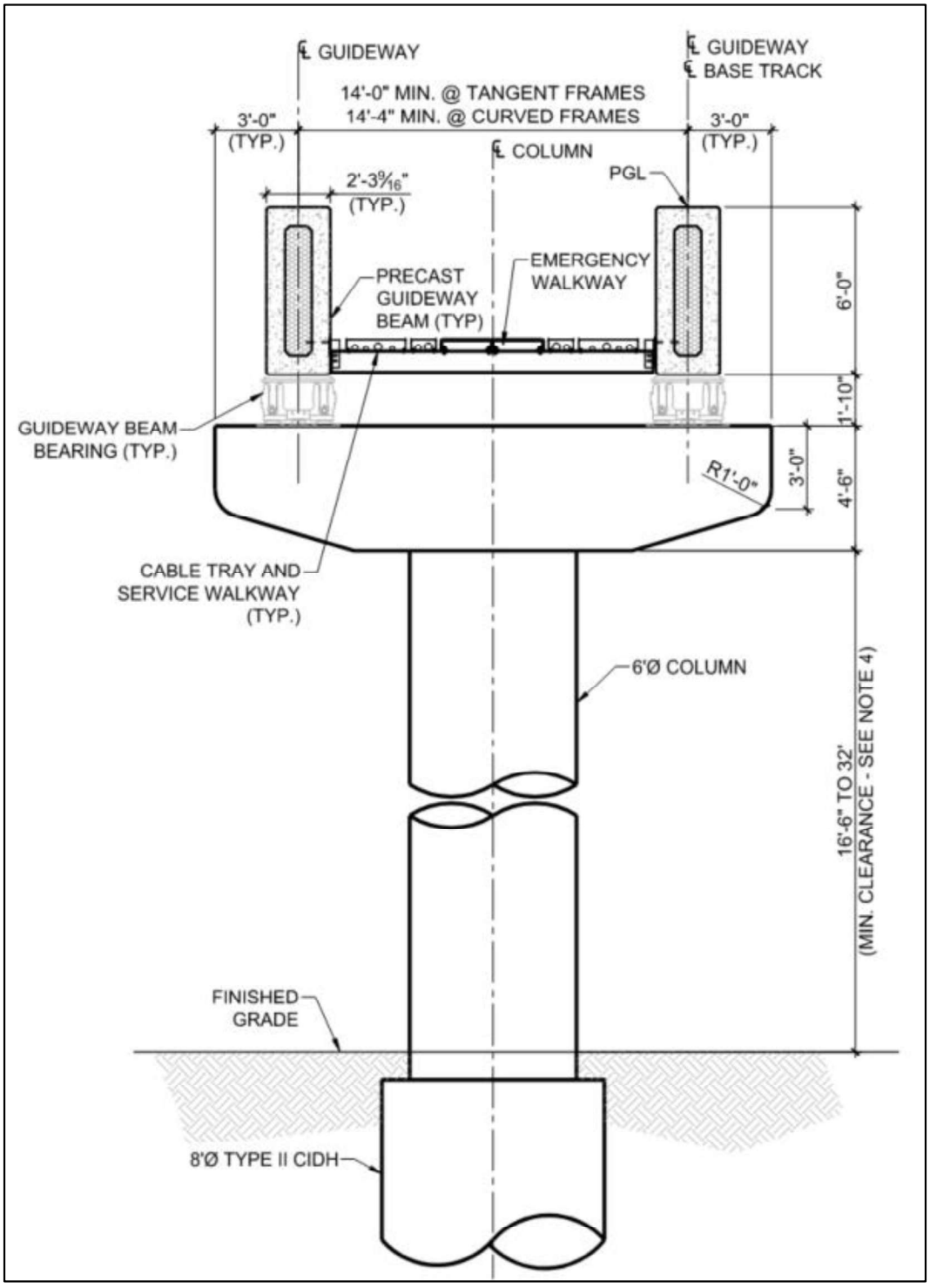
Near Greenleaf Street, the alignment would cross over the northbound freeway lanes and on-ramps toward the proposed Ventura Boulevard Station on the east side of I-405. This station would be located above a transit plaza and replace an existing segment of Dickens Street adjacent to I-405, just south of Ventura Boulevard. Immediately north of the Ventura Boulevard Station, the alignment would cross over the northbound I-405 to U.S. Highway 101 (US-101) connector and continue north between the connector and the I-405 northbound travel lanes. The alignment would continue north along the east side of I-405—crossing over US-101 and the Los Angeles River—to a proposed station on the east side of I-405 near the Metro G Line Busway. A new at-grade station on the Metro G Line would be constructed for Alternative 3 adjacent to the proposed station. These proposed stations are shown on the Metro G Line inset area on Figure 7-1.

The alignment would then continue north along the east side of I-405 to the proposed Sherman Way Station. The station would be located inside the I-405 northbound loop off-ramp to Sherman Way. North of the station, the alignment would continue along the eastern edge of I-405, then curve to the southeast parallel to the LOSSAN rail corridor. The alignment would run elevated along Raymer Street east of Sepulveda Boulevard and cross over Van Nuys Boulevard to the proposed terminus station adjacent to the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station. Overhead utilities along Raymer Street would be undergrounded where they would conflict with the guideway or its supporting columns. Tail tracks would be located southeast of this terminus station.

7.1.1.2 Guideway Characteristics

Alternative 3 would utilize straddle-beam monorail technology, which allows the monorail vehicle to straddle a guide beam that both supports and guides the vehicle. Alternative 3 would operate on aerial and underground guideways with dual-beam configurations. Northbound and southbound trains would travel on parallel beams either in the same tunnel or supported by a single-column or straddle-bent aerial structure. Figure 7-2 shows a typical cross-section of the aerial monorail guideway.

Figure 7-2. Typical Aerial Monorail Guideway Cross-Section



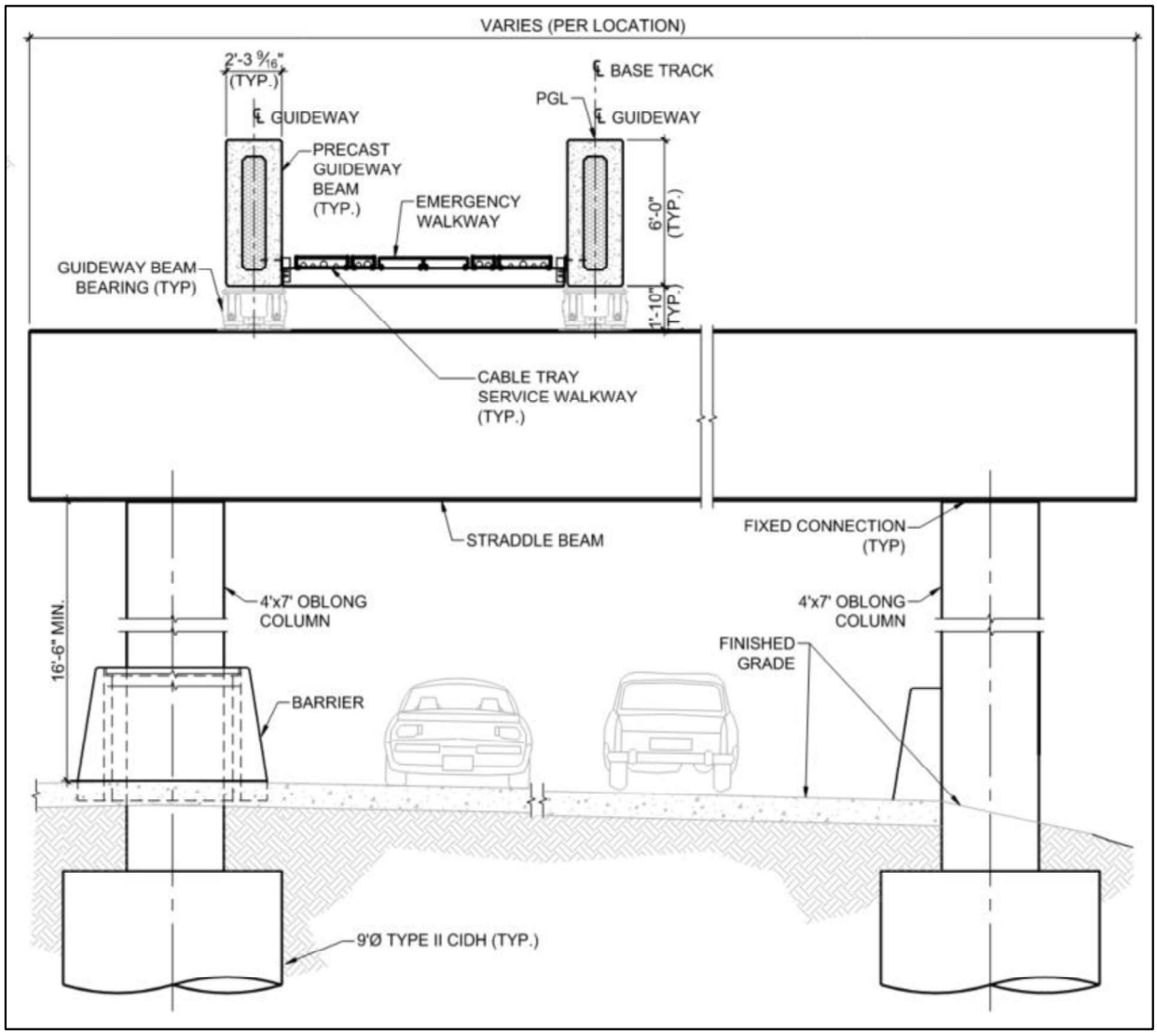
Source: LASRE, 2024

On a typical guideway section (i.e., not at a station), guide beams would rest on 20-foot-wide column caps (i.e., the structure connecting the columns and the guide beams), with typical spans (i.e., the

distance between columns) ranging from 70 to 190 feet. The bottom of the column caps would typically be between 16.5 feet and 32 feet above ground level.

Over certain segments of roadway and freeway facilities, a straddle-bent configuration, as shown on Figure 7-3, consisting of two concrete columns constructed outside of the underlying roadway would be used to support the guide beams and column cap. Typical spans for these structures would range between 65 and 70 feet. A minimum 16.5-foot clearance would be maintained between the underlying roadway and the bottom of the column caps.

Figure 7-3. Typical Monorail Straddle-Bent Cross-Section



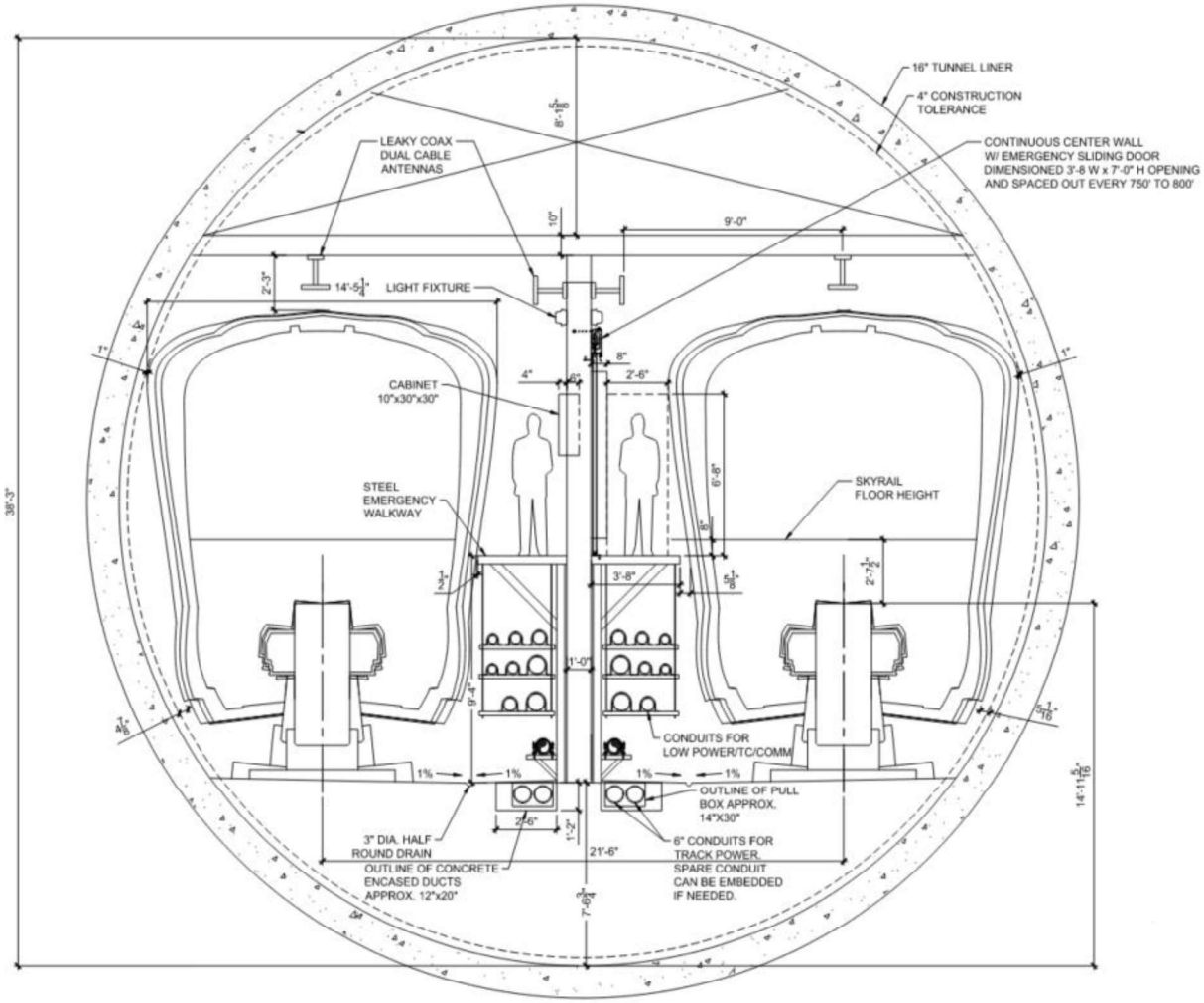
Source: LASRE, 2024

Structural support columns would vary in size and arrangement by alignment location. Columns would be 6 feet in diameter along main alignment segments adjacent to I-405 and be 4 feet wide by 6 feet long in the I-405 median. Straddle-bent columns would be 4 feet wide by 7 feet long. At stations, six rows of dual 5-foot by-8-foot columns would support the aerial guideway. Beam switch locations and long-span structures would also utilize different sized columns, with dual 5-foot columns supporting switch

locations and either 9-foot or 10-foot-diameter columns supporting long-span structures. Crash protection barriers would be used to protect the columns. All columns would have a cast-in-drilled-hole (CIDH) pile foundation extending 1 foot in diameter beyond the column width with varying depths for appropriate geotechnical considerations and structural support.

For underground sections, a single 40-foot-diameter tunnel would be needed to accommodate dual-beam configuration. The tunnel would be divided by a 1-foot-thick center wall dividing two compartments with a 14.5-foot-wide space for trains and a 4-foot-wide emergency evacuation walkway. The center wall would include emergency sliding doors placed every 750 to 800 feet. A plenum within the crown of the tunnel, measuring 8 feet tall from the top of the tunnel, would allow for air circulation and ventilation. Figure 7-4 illustrates these components at a typical cross-section of the underground monorail guideway.

Figure 7-4. Typical Underground Monorail Guideway Cross-Section



Source: LASRE, 2024

7.1.1.3 Vehicle Technology

Alternative 3 would utilize straddle-beam monorail technology, which allows the monorail vehicle to straddle a guide beam that both supports and guides the vehicle. Rubber tires would sit both atop and

on each side of the guide beam to provide traction and guide the train. Trains would be automated and powered by power rails mounted to the guide beam, with planned peak-period headways of 166 seconds and off-peak-period headways of 5 minutes. Monorail trains could consist of up to eight cars. Alternative 3 would have a maximum operating speed of 56 miles per hour; actual operating speeds would depend on the design of the guideway and distance between stations.

Monorail train cars would be 10.5 feet wide, with two double doors on each side. End cars would be 46.1 feet long with a design capacity of 97 passengers, and intermediate cars would be 35.8 feet long and have a design capacity of 90 passengers.

7.1.1.4 Stations

Alternative 3 would include seven aerial and two underground MRT stations with platforms approximately 320 feet long. Aerial stations would be elevated 50 feet to 75 feet above the ground level, and underground stations would be 80 feet to 110 feet underneath the existing ground level. The Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda, Santa Monica Boulevard, Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard, Sherman Way, and Van Nuys Metrolink Stations would be center-platform stations where passengers would travel up to a shared platform that would serve both directions of travel. The Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line, UCLA Gateway Plaza, Getty Center, and Metro G Line Sepulveda Stations would be side-platform stations where passengers would select and travel up or down to station platforms depending on their direction of travel. Each station, regardless of whether it has side or center platforms, would include a concourse level prior to reaching the train platforms. Each station would have a minimum of two elevators, two escalators, and one stairway from ground level to the concourse.

Aerial station platforms would be approximately 320 feet long and would be supported by six rows of dual 5-foot by- 8-foot columns. The platforms would be covered, but not enclosed. Side-platform stations would be 61.5 feet wide to accommodate two 13-foot-wide station platforms with a 35.5-foot-wide intermediate gap for side-by-side trains. Center-platform stations would be 49 feet wide, with a 25-foot-wide center platform.

Underground side platforms would be 320 feet long and 26 feet wide, separated by a distance of 31.5 feet for side-by-side trains.

Monorail stations would include automatic, bi-parting fixed doors along the edges of station platforms. These doors would be integrated into the automatic train control system and would not open unless a train is stopped at the platform.

The following information describes each station, with relevant entrance, walkway, and transfer information. Bicycle parking would be provided at each station.

Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station

- This aerial station would be located near the existing Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, just east of I-405 between Pico Boulevard and Exposition Boulevard.
- A transit plaza and station entrance would be located on the east side of the station.
- An off-street passenger pick-up/drop-off loop would be located south of Pico Boulevard west of Cotner Avenue.
- An elevated pedestrian walkway would connect the concourse level of the proposed station to the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station within the fare paid zone.

- Passengers would be able to park at the existing Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station parking facility, which provides 260 parking spaces. No additional automobile parking would be provided at the proposed station.

Santa Monica Boulevard Station

- This aerial station would be located just south of Santa Monica Boulevard, between the I-405 northbound travel lanes and Cotner Avenue.
- Station entrances would be located on the southeast and southwest corners of Santa Monica Boulevard and Cotner Avenue. The entrance on the southeast corner of the intersection would be connected to the station concourse level via an elevated pedestrian walkway spanning Cotner Avenue.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station

- This underground station would be located under UCLA Lot 36 on the east side of Veteran Avenue north of Wilshire Boulevard.
- A station entrance would be located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Veteran Avenue and Wilshire Boulevard.
- An underground pedestrian walkway would connect the concourse level of the proposed station to the Metro D Line Westwood/UCLA Station using a knock-out panel provided in the Metro D Line Station box. This connection would occur within the fare paid zone.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

UCLA Gateway Plaza Station

- This underground station would be located beneath Gateway Plaza.
- Station entrances would be located on the northern end and southeastern end of the plaza.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

Getty Center Station

- This aerial station would be located on the west side of I-405 near the Getty Center, approximately 1,000 feet north of the Getty Center tram station.
- An elevated pedestrian walkway would connect the proposed station's concourse level with the Getty Center tram station. The proposed connection would occur outside the fare paid zone.
- An entrance to the walkway above the Getty Center's parking lot would be the proposed station's only entrance.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station

- This aerial station would be located east of I-405, just south of Ventura Boulevard.
- A transit plaza, including two station entrances, would be located on the east side of the station. The plaza would require the closure of a 0.1-mile segment of Dickens Street between Sepulveda

Boulevard and Ventura Boulevard, with a passenger pick-up/drop-off loop and bus stops provided south of the station, off Sepulveda Boulevard.

- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

Metro G Line Sepulveda Station

- This aerial station would be located near the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station, between I-405 and the Metro G Line Busway.
- Entrances to the MRT station would be located on both sides of the new proposed Metro G Line bus rapid transit (BRT) station.
- An elevated pedestrian walkway would connect the concourse level of the proposed station to the proposed new Metro G Line BRT station outside of the fare paid zone.
- Passengers would be able to park at the existing Metro G Line Sepulveda Station parking facility, which has a capacity of 1,205 parking spaces. Currently, only 260 parking spaces are used for transit parking. No additional automobile parking would be provided at the proposed station.

Sherman Way Station

- This aerial station would be located inside the I-405 northbound loop off-ramp to Sherman Way.
- A station entrance would be located on the north side of Sherman Way, directly across the street from the I-405 northbound off-ramp to Sherman Way East.
- An on-street passenger pick-up/drop-off area would be provided on the north side of Sherman Way west of Firmament Avenue.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

Van Nuys Metrolink Station

- This aerial station would be located on the east side of Van Nuys Boulevard, just south of the LOSSAN rail corridor, incorporating the site of the current Amtrak ticket office.
- A station entrance would be located on the east side of Van Nuys Boulevard just south of the LOSSAN rail corridor. A second entrance would be located to the north of the LOSSAN rail corridor with an elevated pedestrian walkway connecting to both the concourse level of the proposed station and the platform of the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station.
- Existing Metrolink Station parking would be reconfigured, maintaining approximately the same number of spaces, but 180 parking spaces would be relocated north of the LOSSAN rail corridor. Metrolink parking would not be available to Metro transit riders.

7.1.1.5 Station-to-Station Travel Times

Table 7-1 presents the station-to-station distance and travel times for Alternative 3. The travel times includes both running time and dwelling time. The travel times differ between northbound and southbound trips because of grade differentials and operational considerations at end-of-line stations.

Table 7-1. Alternative 3: Station-to-Station Travel Times and Station Dwell Times

From Station	To Station	Distance (miles)	Northbound Station-to-Station Travel Time (seconds)	Southbound Station-to-Station Travel Time (seconds)	Dwell Time (seconds)
Metro E Line Station					*30*
Metro E Line	Santa Monica Boulevard	0.9	123	97	—
Santa Monica Boulevard Station					*30*
Santa Monica Boulevard	Wilshire/Metro D Line	1.1	192	194	—
Wilshire/Metro D Line Station					*30*
Wilshire/Metro D Line	UCLA Gateway Plaza	0.9	138	133	—
UCLA Gateway Plaza Station					*30*
UCLA Gateway Plaza	Getty Center	2.6	295	284	—
Getty Center Station					*30*
Getty Center	Ventura Boulevard	4.7	414	424	—
Ventura Boulevard Station					*30*
Ventura Boulevard	Metro G Line	2.0	179	187	—
Metro G Line Station					*30*
Metro G Line	Sherman Way	1.5	134	133	—
Sherman Way Station					*30*
Sherman Way	Van Nuys Metrolink	2.4	284	279	—
Van Nuys Metrolink Station					*30*

Source: LASRE, 2024

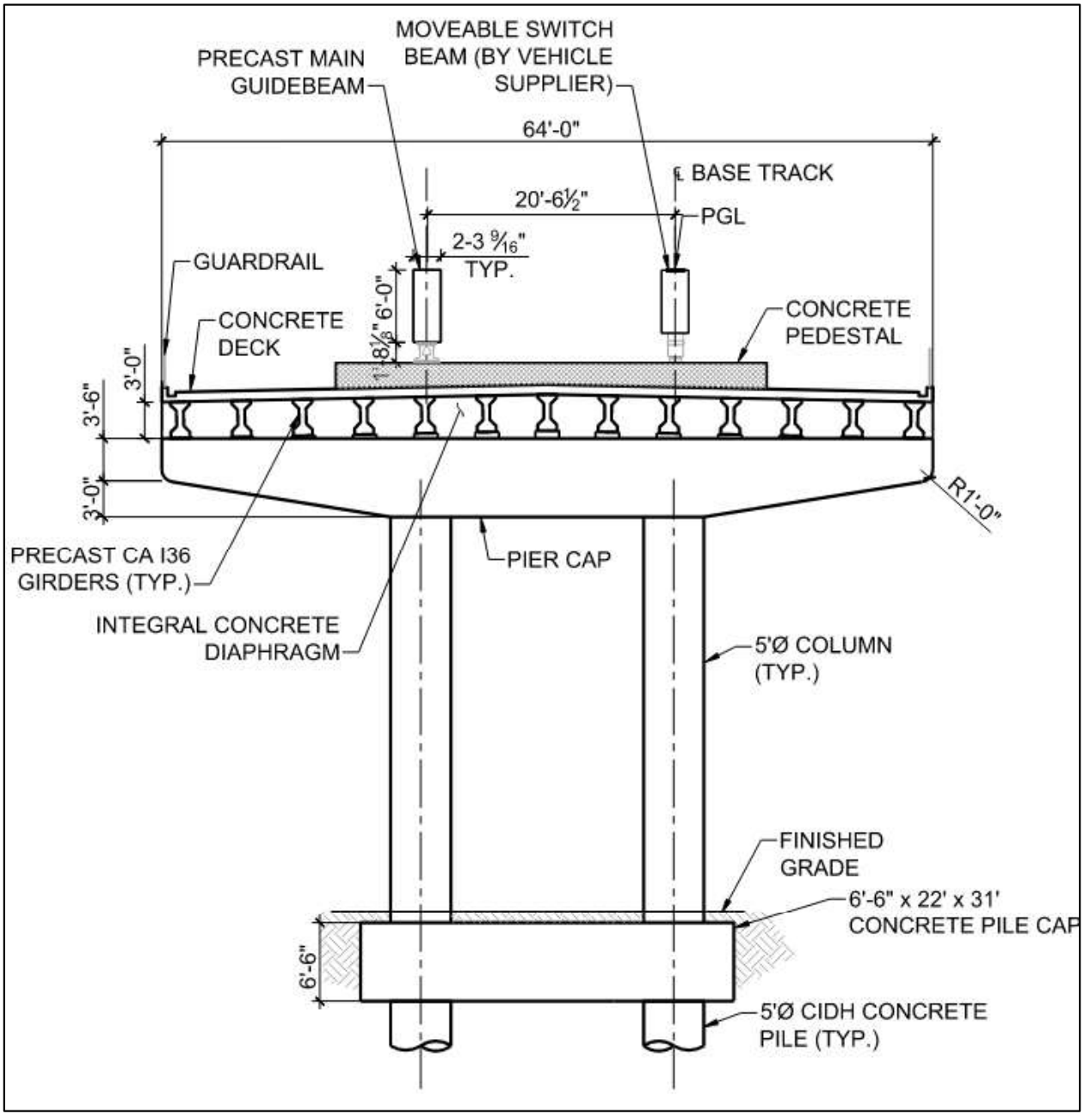
— = no data

7.1.1.6 Special Trackwork

Alternative 3 would include five pairs of beam switches to enable trains to cross over and reverse direction on the opposite beam. All beam switches would be located on aerial portions of the alignment of Alternative 3. From south to north, the first pair of beam switches would be located just north of the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station. A second pair of beam switches would be located on the west side of I-405, directly adjacent to the VA Hospital site, south of the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station. A third pair of beam switches would be located in the Sepulveda Pass just south of Mountaingate Drive and Sepulveda Boulevard. A fourth pair of beam switches would be located south of the Metro G Line Station between the I-405 northbound lanes and the Metro G Line Busway. The final pair would be located near the Van Nuys Metrolink Station.

At beam switch locations, the typical cross-section of the guideway would increase in column and column cap width. The column cap width at these locations would be 64 feet, with dual 5-foot-diameter columns. Underground pile caps for additional structural support would also be required at these locations. Figure 7-5 shows a typical cross-section of the monorail beam switch.

Figure 7-5. Typical Monorail Beam Switch Cross-Section



Source: LASRE, 2024

7.1.1.7 Maintenance and Storage Facility

MSF Base Design

In the maintenance and storage facility (MSF) Base Design for Alternative 3, the MSF would be located on City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) property east of the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The MSF Base Design site would be approximately 18 acres and would be designed to accommodate a fleet of 208 monorail vehicles. The site would be bounded by the LOSSAN rail corridor

to the north, Saticoy Street to the south, and property lines extending north of Tyrone and Hazeltine Avenues to the east and west, respectively.

Monorail trains would access the site from the main alignment's northern tail tracks at the northwest corner of the site. Trains would travel parallel to the LOSSAN rail corridor before curving southeast to maintenance facilities and storage tracks. The guideway would remain in an aerial configuration within the MSF Base Design, including within maintenance facilities.

The site would include the following facilities:

- Primary entrance with guard shack
- Primary maintenance building that would include administrative offices, an operations control center, and a maintenance shop and office
- Train car wash building
- Emergency generator
- Traction power substation (TPSS)
- Maintenance-of-way (MOW) building
- Parking area for employees

MSF Design Option 1

In the MSF Design Option 1, the MSF would be located on industrial property, abutting Orion Avenue, south of the LOSSAN rail corridor. The MSF Design Option 1 site would be approximately 26 acres and would be designed to accommodate a fleet of 224 monorail vehicles. The site would be bounded by I-405 to the west, Stagg Street to the south, the LOSSAN rail corridor to the north, and Orion Avenue and Raymer Street to the east. The monorail guideway would travel along the northern edge of the site.

Monorail trains would access the site from the monorail guideway east of Sepulveda Boulevard, requiring additional property east of Sepulveda Boulevard and north of Raymer Street. From the northeast corner of the site, trains would travel parallel to the LOSSAN rail corridor before turning south to maintenance facilities and storage tracks parallel to I-405. The guideway would remain in an aerial configuration within the MSF Design Option 1, including within maintenance facilities.

The site would include the following facilities:

- Primary entrance with guard shack
- Primary maintenance building that would include administrative offices, an operations control center, and a maintenance shop and office
- Train car wash building
- Emergency generator
- TPSS
- MOW building
- Parking area for employees

Figure 7-6 shows the locations of the MSF Base Design and MSF Design Option 1 for Alternative 3.

Figure 7-6. Alternative 3: Maintenance and Storage Facility Options

Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

7.1.1.8 Traction Power Substations

TPSSs transform and convert high voltage alternating current supplied from power utility feeders into direct current suitable for transit operation. A TPSS on a site of approximately 8,000 square feet would be located approximately every 1 mile along the alignment. Table 7-2 lists the TPSS locations proposed for Alternative 3.

Figure 7-7 shows the TPSS locations along the Alternative 3 alignment.

Table 7-2. Alternative 3: Traction Power Substation Locations

TPSS No.	TPSS Location Description	Configuration
1	TPSS 1 would be located east of I-405, just south of Exposition Boulevard and the monorail guideway tail tracks.	At-grade
2	TPSS 2 would be located east of I-405 and Sepulveda Boulevard, just north of the Getty Center Station.	At-grade
3	TPSS 3 would be located west of I-405, just east of the intersection between Promontory Road and Sepulveda Boulevard.	At-grade
4	TPSS 4 would be located between I-405 and Sepulveda Boulevard, just north of the Skirball Center Drive Overpass.	At-grade
5	TPSS 5 would be located east of I-405, just south of Ventura Boulevard Station, between Sepulveda Boulevard and Dickens Street.	At-grade
6	TPSS 6 would be located east of I-405, just south of the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station.	At-grade
7	TPSS 7 would be located east of I-405, just east of the Sherman Way Station, inside the I-405 Northbound Loop Off-Ramp to Sherman Way westbound.	At-grade
8	TPSS 8 would be located east of I-405, at the southeast quadrant of the I-405 overcrossing with the LOSSAN rail corridor.	At-grade
9	TPSS 9 would be located east of I-405, at the southeast quadrant of the I-405 overcrossing with the LOSSAN rail corridor.	At-grade (within MSF Design Option)
10	TPSS 10 would be located between Van Nuys Boulevard and Raymer Street, south of the LOSSAN rail corridor.	At-grade
11	TPSS 11 would be located south of the LOSSAN rail corridor, between Tyrone Avenue and Hazeltine Avenue.	At-grade (within MSF Base Design)
12	TPSS 12 would be located southwest of Veteran Avenue at Wellworth Avenue.	Underground
13	TPSS 13 would be located within the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station.	Underground (adjacent to station)
14	TPSS 14 would be located underneath UCLA Gateway Plaza.	Underground (adjacent to station)

Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

Figure 7-7. Alternative 3: Traction Power Substation Locations

Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

7.1.1.9 Roadway Configuration Changes

Table 7-3 lists the roadway changes necessary to accommodate the guideway of Alternative 3. Figure 7-8 shows the location of these roadway changes in the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project (Project) Study Area, except for the I-405 configuration changes, which occur throughout the corridor.

Table 7-3. Alternative 3: Roadway Changes

Location	From	To	Description of Change
Cotner Avenue	Nebraska Avenue	Santa Monica Boulevard	Roadway realignment to accommodate aerial guideway columns
Beloit Avenue	Massachusetts Avenue	Ohio Avenue	Roadway narrowing to accommodate aerial guideway columns
Sepulveda Boulevard	Getty Center Drive	Not Applicable	Southbound right turn lane to Getty Center Drive shortened to accommodate aerial guideway columns
I-405 Northbound On-Ramp and Off-Ramp at Sepulveda Boulevard near I-405 Exit 59	Sepulveda Boulevard near I-405 Northbound Exit 59	Sepulveda Boulevard/I-405 Undercrossing (near Getty Center)	Ramp realignment to accommodate aerial guideway columns and I-405 widening
Sepulveda Boulevard	I-405 Southbound Skirball Center Drive Ramps (north of Mountaingate Drive)	Skirball Center Drive	Roadway realignment into existing hillside to accommodate aerial guideway columns and I-405 widening
I-405 Northbound On-Ramp at Mulholland Drive	Mulholland Drive	Not Applicable	Roadway realignment into the existing hillside between the Mulholland Drive Bridge pier and abutment to accommodate aerial guideway columns and I-405 widening
Dickens Street	Sepulveda Boulevard	Ventura Boulevard	Permanent removal of street for Ventura Boulevard Station construction Pick-up/drop-off area would be provided along Sepulveda Boulevard at the truncated Dickens Street
Sherman Way	Haskell Avenue	Firmament Avenue	Median improvements, passenger drop-off and pick-up areas, and bus pads within existing travel lanes
Raymer Street	Sepulveda Boulevard	Van Nuys Boulevard	Curb extensions and narrowing of roadway width to accommodate aerial guideway columns
I-405	Sepulveda Boulevard Northbound Off-Ramp (Getty Center Drive interchange)	Sepulveda Boulevard Northbound On-Ramp (Getty Center Drive interchange)	I-405 widening to accommodate aerial guideway columns in the median
I-405	Skirball Center Drive	U.S. Highway 101	I-405 widening to accommodate aerial guideway columns in the median

Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

Figure 7-8. Alternative 3: Roadway Changes

Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

In addition to the changes made to accommodate the guideway, as listed in Table 7-3, roadways and sidewalks near stations would be reconstructed, which would result in modifications to curb ramps and driveways.

7.1.1.10 Ventilation Facilities

For ventilation of the monorail's underground portion, a plenum within the crown of the tunnel would provide a separate compartment for air circulation and allow multiple trains to operate between

stations. Vents would be located at the southern portal near the Federal Building parking lot, Wilshire/Metro D Line Station, UCLA Gateway Plaza Station, and at the northern portal near the Leo Baeck Temple parking lot. Emergency ventilation fans would be located at the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station and at the northern and southern tunnel portals.

7.1.1.11 Fire/Life Safety – Emergency Egress

Continuous emergency evacuation walkways would be provided along the guideway. Walkways along the alignment's aerial portions would typically consist of structural steel frames anchored to the guideway beams to support non-slip walkway panels. The walkways would be located between the two guideway beams for most of the aerial alignment; however, where the beams split apart, such as entering center-platform stations, short portions of the walkway would be located on the outside of the beams. For the underground portion of Alternative 3, 3.5-foot-wide emergency evacuation walkways would be located on both sides of the beams. Access to tunnel segments for first responders would be through stations.

7.1.2 Construction Activities

Construction activities for Alternative 3 would include constructing the aerial guideway and stations, underground tunnel and stations, and ancillary facilities, and widening I-405. Construction of the transit facilities through substantial completion is expected to have a duration of 8 ½ years. Early works, such as site preparation, demolition, and utility relocation, could start in advance of construction of the transit facilities.

Aerial guideway construction would begin at the southern and northern ends of the alignment and connect in the middle. Constructing the guideway would require a combination of freeway and local street lane closures throughout the working limits to provide sufficient work area. The first stage of I-405 widening would include a narrowing of adjacent freeway lanes to a minimum width of 11 feet (which would eliminate shoulders) and placing K-rail on the outside edge of the travel lanes to create outside work areas. Within these outside work zones, retaining walls, drainage, and outer pavement widenings would be constructed to allow for I-405 widening. The reconstruction of on- and off-ramps would be the final stage of I-405 widening.

A median work zone along I-405 for the length of the alignment would be required for erection of the guideway structure. In the median work zone, demolition of existing median and drainage infrastructure would be followed by the installation of new K-rails and installation of guideway structural components, which would include full directional freeway closures when guideway beams must be transported into the median work areas during late-night hours. Additional night and weekend directional closures would be required for installation of long-span structures over I-405 travel lanes where the guideway would transition from the median.

Aerial station construction is anticipated to last the duration of construction activities for Alternative 3 and would include the following general sequence of construction:

- Site clearing
- Utility relocation
- Construction fencing and rough grading
- CIDH pile drilling and installation
- Elevator pit excavation
- Soil and material removal

- Pile cap and pier column construction
- Concourse level and platform level falsework and cast-in-place structural concrete
- Guideway beam installation
- Elevator and escalator installation
- Completion of remaining concrete elements such as pedestrian bridges
- Architectural finishes and mechanical, electrical, and plumbing installation

Underground stations, including the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station and the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station, would use a "cut-and-cover" construction method whereby the station structure would be constructed within a trench excavated from the surface that is covered by a temporary deck and backfilled during the later stages of station construction. Traffic and pedestrian detours would be necessary during underground station excavation until decking is in place and the appropriate safety measures are taken to resume cross traffic.

A tunnel boring machine (TBM) would be used to construct the underground segment of the guideway. The TBM would be launched from a staging area on Veteran Avenue south of Wilshire Boulevard, and head north toward an exit portal location north of Leo Baeck Temple. The southern portion of the tunnel between Wilshire Boulevard and the Bel Air Country Club would be at a depth between 80 to 110 feet from the surface to the top of the tunnel. The UCLA Gateway Plaza Station would be constructed using cut-and-cover methods. Through the Santa Monica Mountains, the tunnel would range between 30 to 300 feet deep.

Alternative 3 would require construction of a concrete casting facility for columns and beams associated with the elevated guideway. A specific site has not been identified; however, it is expected that the facility would be located on industrially zoned land adjacent to a truck route in either the Antelope Valley or Riverside County. When a site is identified, the contractor would obtain all permits and approvals necessary from the relevant jurisdiction, the appropriate air quality management entity, and other regulatory entities.

TPSS construction would require additional lane closures. Large equipment, including transformers, rectifiers, and switchgears would be delivered and installed through prefabricated modules where possible in at-grade TPSSs. The installation of transformers would require temporary lane closures on Exposition Boulevard, Beloit Avenue, and the I-405 northbound on-ramp at Burbank Boulevard.

Table 7-4 and Figure 7-9 show the potential construction staging areas for Alternative 3. Staging areas would provide the necessary space for the following activities:

- Contractors' equipment
- Receiving deliveries
- Storing materials
- Site offices
- Work zone for excavation
- Other construction activities (including parking and change facilities for workers, location of construction office trailers, storage, staging and delivery of construction materials and permanent plant equipment, and maintenance of construction equipment)

Table 7-4. Alternative 3: Construction Staging Locations

No.	Location Description
1	Public Storage between Pico Boulevard and Exposition Boulevard, east of I-405
2	South of Dowlen Drive and east of Greater LA Fisher House
3	Federal Building Parking Lot
4	Kinross Recreation Center and UCLA Lot 36
5	North end of the Leo Baeck Temple Parking Lot (tunnel boring machine retrieval)
6	At 1400 N Sepulveda Boulevard
7	At 1760 N Sepulveda Boulevard
8	East of I-405 and north of Mulholland Drive Bridge
9	Inside of I-405 Northbound to US-101 Northbound Loop Connector, south of US-101
10	Electro Rent Building, south of Metro G Line Busway, east of I-405
11	Inside the I-405 Northbound Loop Off-Ramp at Victory Boulevard
12	Along Cabrito Road, east of Van Nuys Boulevard

Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

Figure 7-9. Alternative 3: Construction Staging Locations

Source: LASRE, 2024; HTA, 2024

The following best management practices would be implemented during construction:

- Erosion-control devices, such as silt fences, would be removed as soon as the area is stabilized.
- Stockpile areas would be neatly organized and covered depending on weather events.
- Stockpiled areas would be located in less visibly sensitive areas.
- Construction lighting would be directed toward the construction areas and/or shielded with temporary screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto adjacent areas.

7.2 Existing Conditions

This section describes the existing visual and aesthetic conditions within the Resource Study Area (RSA), which is an area with a radius of 0.25 miles to 0.50 miles from the alignments, stations, and visible construction-related activities and staging, and MSF site options. The RSA for this analysis encompasses the existing aboveground landscapes within views from public vantage points that would be directly affected, temporarily and/or permanently, by the proposed Alternative 3 facilities and components during both construction and operation.

Visual and aesthetics resources were identified, consistent with the methodology outlined in Section 3. These resources include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Structures of historic significance or visual prominence
- Open space and recreational areas
- Distant views of the horizon from public locations
- Landscaped areas

7.2.1 Regional Setting

The regional visual setting generally exhibits an urbanized character, with nearly all land in the RSA already developed, except for the undeveloped land and recreational areas within the Santa Monica Mountains. The urban landscape varies, and includes low-lying residential, industrial, and commercial buildings along with high-density, high-rise residential and commercial buildings in downtown areas.

Higher density development with a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures are generally found between I-10 and the UCLA campus at the southern portion of the Alternative 3 alignment, and lower density development consisting of primarily low-rise structures and a few mid-rise structures are located north of the UCLA campus. The Santa Monica Mountains, located within the central portion of the RSA, provide aesthetic, environmental, and recreational benefits to residents. The ridgelines or mountain edges within the Santa Monica Mountains provide dramatic views and are protected and preserved by individual communities. Lower density development within the Santa Monica Mountains consists primarily of low-rise structures and a few mid-rise structures, which are located south of US-101 within the community of Bel Air.

North of the Santa Monica Mountains, within the Valley, higher density development with a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures are generally found north of US-101 at the northern portion of the Alternative 3 alignment.

The major visual feature of the RSA is the built environment, which consists of a variety of commercial, industrial, public facility, institutional, and residential uses, in addition to transportation corridors. The transportation corridors within the RSA include roadways, freeways, as well as the Metro E Line right-of-way (ROW) and the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW. The Metro E Line ROW generally passes through the southern portion of the Alternative 3 alignment in an east-west direction along I-10. The LOSSAN rail corridor ROW generally passes through the northern portion of the RSA in an east-west direction.

Major freeways (i.e., US-101, I-10, and I-405) create well-defined visual boundaries and edges because the facilities are several hundred feet wide. Within the RSA, I-10 and I-405 are elevated on columns or engineered fill.

Flood control facilities also create visual boundaries within the RSA, which includes the concrete-banked channels of the Los Angeles River at the northern portion of the Alternative 3 alignment. The river channels are visually distinct due to the width and limited number of crossing points.

The topography of the RSA is varied with relatively flat urbanized areas at the northern and southern portions of the Alternative 3 alignment, with major changes in elevation through the central portion of the Alternative 3 alignment. The southern portion of the RSA slopes downward in a south-southwesterly direction toward the Pacific Ocean. Elevations range from approximately 780 feet above mean sea level around the Van Nuys Metro Station, 650 feet above mean sea level around US-101, 1,300 feet above mean sea level at the Stone Canyon Overlook along Mulholland Drive, 375 feet above mean sea level around the UCLA campus, to 120 feet above mean sea level south of National Boulevard DCP, 2021).

Within the Santa Monica Mountains, the RSA provides elevated vantage or vista points along Mulholland Drive. These vista points provide long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains. In contrast, the northern and southern portions of the Alternative 3 alignment lack elevated vantage or vista points due to the relatively flat topography. As a result, views in the RSA, except Mulholland Drive in the Santa Monica Mountains, are generally limited to the foreground and middle ground. Although background views of mountains are available along some public ROWs within the RSA, portions of these background views are blocked by urban features, such as utility poles, urban landscaping, and intervening buildings.

7.2.2 Scenic Vistas

The term “scenic vista” generally refers to visual access to, or the visibility of, a particular sight from a given vantage point or corridor. The *LA CEQA Thresholds Guide* DCP, 2006) notes the value of preserving sightlines to designated scenic resources or areas of visual interest from public vantage points. The subjects of valued or recognized views may be focal (meaning of specific individual resources), or panoramic (meaning broad geographic area). Panoramic views are typically associated with scenic vistas that provide a sweeping geographic orientation. Examples of panoramic views include urban skylines, valleys, mountain ranges, or large bodies of water. Examples of focal views include public art/signs and notable buildings and structures. The nature of a view may be unique, such as a view from an elevated vantage point or particular angle.

The Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles’ General Plan* defines scenic views or vistas as the panoramic public view access to natural features, including views of the ocean, striking or unusual natural terrain, or unique urban or historic features (DCP, 2001b). Scenic views from within the RSA include the Santa Monica Mountains, hillsides, and the Los Angeles River. The Los Angeles River and its associated tributaries and floodplains, and the Santa Monica Mountains are listed as scenic vistas in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan*. Sweeping views of the Santa Monica Mountains and hillsides are considered panoramic and can be seen from designated vantage points, public hiking trails, and public ROWs.

The Santa Monica Mountains rise to an elevation of approximately 3,100 feet from the base of the hills to their highest point at Sandstone Peak. According to the Conservation Element, the Santa Monica Mountains are the most visible scenic feature from many areas of the city, including the RSA (DCP, 2001b).

Within the RSA, panoramic views from the “flatlands” are not readily available, due to the existing street grid pattern and built environment. Rather, panoramic vantage points are primarily located within hilly areas. The Stone Canyon Overlook is located on the south side of Mulholland Drive and provides

panoramic south-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the Stone Canyon Reservoir. In addition, the Johnson Overlook is located north of the Stone Canyon Reservoir on the north side of Mulholland Drive. Visitors can take in north-facing views of the Valley, and the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains. These views represent the scenic views available from various publicly accessible locations in the Santa Monica Mountains, and other hilly areas within the RSA. However, the perspective and visibility may change depending on various factors, such as the viewer location, elevation, bad air days, or weather.

In addition, limited focal views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the hillsides within the lower areas of the RSA are available along various north-south streets and I-405. However, most of the views to the Santa Monica Mountains and the hillsides are blocked by intervening buildings, street trees and, on some streets, overhead utility lines. In summary, public panoramic and focal scenic views are currently available in the RSA, but the quality of the views can vary significantly.

7.2.3 Scenic Resources

Scenic resources refer to natural or built features of high aesthetic quality. Scenic resources identified in the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* include striking or unusual natural features, the Pacific Ocean, Santa Monica Mountains, and San Gabriel Mountains, and unique urban or historic features as seen from designated scenic highways. The RSA is not characterized by striking or unusual natural features and is not visible from the ocean. Glimpses of the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains are available from intermittent viewpoints within the RSA.

In accordance with the CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G, scenic resources within this area of consideration include specific mention of such natural or built features that are within the view field of a state scenic highway. No California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the RSA. Additionally, no state-designated scenic highways in proximity to the RSA provide views of the RSA. The closest eligible state scenic highway is State Route 1 (SR-1, the Pacific Coast Highway in Southern California), which is approximately 3 miles west of the Alternative 3 alignment. The closest officially designated state scenic highway is State Route 27 (SR-27, Topanga Canyon Boulevard), which is approximately 8 miles west of the Alternative 3 alignment.

Six City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are within the RSA. City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways, according to the *City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan 2035*, are either 1) arterial streets or state highways that traverse areas of natural scenic quality in undeveloped or sparsely developed areas of the city or 2) arterial streets that traverse urban areas of cultural, historical, or aesthetic value which merit protection and enhancement. Table 7-5 lists and describes the City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways that are within or along the boundaries of the RSA.

Table 7-5. Alternative 3: Resource Study Area Scenic Highways

Scenic Highway	Location	Scenic Features, Resources, or City Comment
Beverly Glen Boulevard	Ventura Boulevard to Sunset Boulevard	Winding cross mountain road; valley views
Mulholland Drive	1. US-101 westerly to Mulholland Highway; 2. Mulholland Highway to Valley Circle Boulevard	(Specific Plan Ordinance. No. 167,943) Panoramic views, "ribbon of park"
Santa Monica Boulevard	Sepulveda Boulevard to City of Beverly Hills boundary	Not Available
Sepulveda Boulevard	I-405 to Sunset Boulevard	Old cross mountain road with tunnel, views of mountains and Valley
Sherman Way	Variel Avenue to Kester Avenue	Wide street, landscaped median
Sunset Boulevard	Pacific Coast Highway to City of Beverly Hills boundary	Views of mountains, estates, UCLA campus

Source: DCP, 2016

The City of Los Angeles in its *Mobility Plan 2035* designates Mulholland Drive as a scenic highway. Mulholland Drive provides opportunities for multiple scenic vistas as it winds up and through the Santa Monica Mountains, including through the RSA. Development near Mulholland Drive is subject to design review guidelines pursuant to the *Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan* (MSPSP).

The MSPSP has designated 14 major vista points (MVP) along Mulholland Drive that are maintained by the Bureau of Street Maintenance of the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. The Inner Corridor of the MSPSP area is designated as part of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) also maintains seven scenic overlooks along Mulholland Drive (MRCA, 2023). The nearest MVP (also the nearest overlook) is the Stone Canyon Overlook, which is located approximately 380 feet east of the Alternative 3 alignment. The nearest MRCA-maintained scenic overlook is The Groves Overlook, which is located approximately 1 mile west of the Alternative 3 alignment.

The Alternative 3 alignment travels through the Inner Corridor and Outer Corridor of the MSPSP area. The MSPSP contains density requirements, building standards and grading restrictions that are applicable to the Inner Corridor. In addition, the Alternative 3 alignment is subject to the MSPSP's accompanying design guidelines and review by the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Design Review Board. The viewshed protection provisions of the MSPSP are directed at preserving, complementing, and/or enhancing the public views from Mulholland Drive. Therefore, although impacts on surrounding homes and land uses are discussed, the focus of this analysis is on the impact of Alternative 3 on public views, particularly those from Mulholland Drive.

7.2.4 Visual Character and Quality

As listed in Table 7-6, six generalized landscape units (LUs) were defined along the Alternative 3 alignment. The LUs encompass the location of the Alternative 3 alignment and adjacent area. The location and the visual features are described in this section for each LU, beginning in the southern portion of the Alternative 3 alignment and ending in the north.

Table 7-6. Alternative 3: Landscape Units

Landscape Unit	Extent	Key Views
1	National Boulevard to Ohio Avenue	Views of Century City, I-405
2	Ohio Avenue to Sunset Boulevard	Views of Century City, Santa Monica Mountains, Federal Building, Westwood Recreation Center, Bad News Beard Field, Los Angeles National Cemetery, buildings along Wilshire Boulevard, UCLA campus, I-405
3	Sunset Boulevard to Mulholland Drive	Views of Santa Monica Mountains, Getty Center, Scenic Mulholland Drive, Stone Canyon Reservoir, undeveloped land
4	Mulholland Drive to US-101	Views of Santa Monica Mountains, Scenic Mulholland Drive, Stone Canyon Reservoir, undeveloped land
5	US-101 to Victory Boulevard	Views of San Gabriel Mountains, Los Angeles River, I-405, US-101
6	Victory Boulevard to LOSSAN rail corridor right-of-way	Views of San Gabriel Mountains, Los Angeles River, I-405, LOSSAN rail corridor right-of-way

Source: HTA, 2024

Table 7-7 lists the seven key observation points (KOPs) (or key views) and the viewer groups potentially affected by Alternative 3.

Table 7-7. Alternative 3: Key Observation Points

KOP No.	KOP Location	Photograph Direction	Primary Viewer
KOP 4	Sepulveda Boulevard, north of Getty Center Drive	South/Southwest	Tourist, Driver
KOP 7	Mulholland Drive bridge at Skirball Center Drive, north side	North	Pedestrian, Driver, Tourist
KOP 8	Southwest corner of Mulholland Drive bridge at Skirball Center Drive	Southwest	Pedestrian, Driver, Tourist
KOP 9	Mountaingate Drive, just north of intersection with Ridge Drive	Northeast	Resident, Pedestrian, Driver
KOP 10	Getty Trail; east side of I-405	West/Southwest	Recreationalist
KOP 11	Southeast corner of Firmament Avenue and Valerio Street	West	Resident, Pedestrian, Driver
KOP 16	Northwest corner of Strathmore Place at Westwood Plaza	Southeast	Pedestrian, UCLA Patron

Source: HTA, 2024

KOP = key observation point

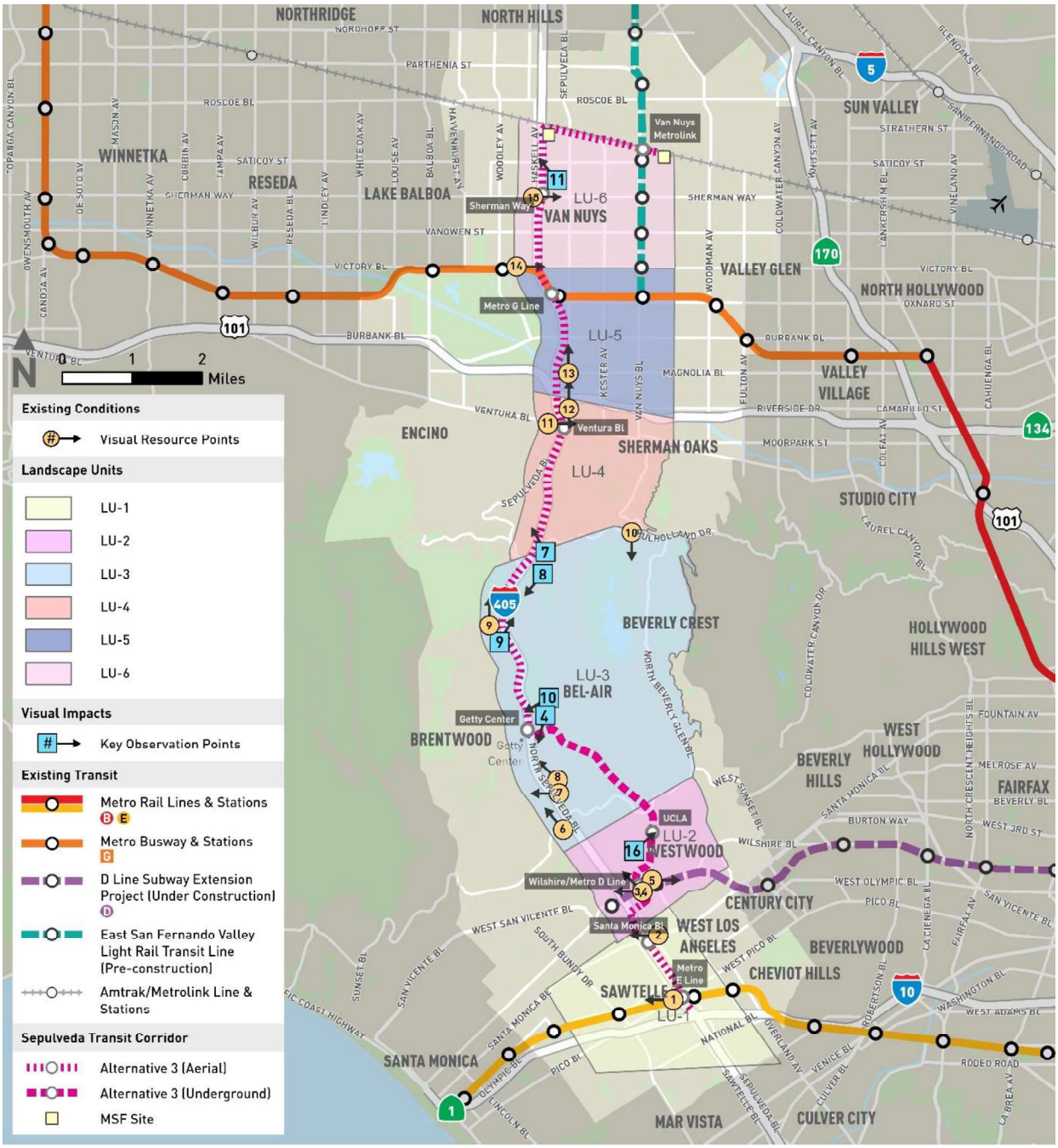
KOPs are used to evaluate existing landscapes and potential impacts on visual resources with various levels of sensitivity, in different landscape types and terrain, and from various vantage points. KOPs are generally selected to represent the most critical locations from which a project area may be seen. As such, the following KOP locations were selected to provide the best representation of visual changes caused by Alternative 3.

Summaries of the visual character of the LUs in the Project Study Area are generally described in the following sections. The visual descriptions are based on public views, meaning what is visible from a sidewalk, roadway, or other public ROW. Additional information regarding potential impacts of

Alternative 3 on historic resources is provided in the *Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources Technical Report* (Metro, 2025a).

Figure 7-10 illustrates the boundaries of the LUs, the locations of the existing conditions photographs, and locations of the KOPs.

Figure 7-10. Alternative 3: Visual Landscape Units



Source: HTA, 2024

7.2.4.1 Landscape Unit 1 – National Boulevard to Ohio Avenue

LU-1 begins at National Boulevard in the Westdale and West Los Angeles communities and continues north past I-10 to Ohio Avenue in Westwood. LU-1 is bordered on the west by Steward Street and on the east by Westwood Boulevard. LU-1 is highly urbanized, consisting of a mix of low-rise, mid-rise structures, and high-rise structures. Structures within this LU generally include a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial development. Commercial developments include a mix of small and mid-size commercial structures, as well as high-rise and mid-rise office buildings. Residential uses consist of one- to two-story single-family homes, and mid-rise buildings, while institutional and industrial uses generally consist of low-rise structures. Within LU-1, the Metro E Line and its associated aerial structure crosses Sepulveda Boulevard at Exposition Boulevard, and partially obscures views to the north. Views of the existing aerial Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and its associated ancillary structures are available at this location.

The primary viewers in LU-1 consist of motorists, pedestrians, residents, transit commuters, and patrons of commercial businesses. Visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views.

The level and types of ornamental landscaping in LU-1 vary, with light to moderate levels of landscaping throughout the LU. Ornamental landscaping is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets. In addition, a mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided within the LU.

Although residential areas surround the commercial corridor in LU-1, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. The most prominent views within LU-1 are of the elevated Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and guideway. There are distant north-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains from north-south oriented streets. As discussed in Section 7.2.2, the Santa Monica Mountains are listed as a designated scenic vista in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* (DCP, 2001b). Figure 7-11 and Figure 7-12 show existing representative views of LU-1.

Figure 7-11. Alternative 3: Existing View 1, Looking West Toward Metro E Line from Pico Boulevard, West of I-405

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 7-12. Alternative 3: Existing View 2, Looking West Toward I-405 from Santa Monica Boulevard at Sepulveda Boulevard

Source: HTA, 2024

7.2.4.2 Landscape Unit 2 – Ohio Avenue to Sunset Boulevard

LU-2 begins directly north of Ohio Avenue and continues north to Sunset Boulevard in Westwood. LU-2 is bordered to the west by Sawtelle Boulevard (just west of I-405) and the Brentwood neighborhood, and to the east by South Beverly Glen Boulevard. LU-2 is also highly urbanized, consisting of a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures, as well as the VA Medical Center, Federal Building, and UCLA campus. The majority of residential uses in LU-2 are located within the northwest and southeast portions of the LU. Residential uses consist of one- to two-story single-family homes, and multi-family residential buildings. The residential neighborhoods surrounding the UCLA campus include Bel Air to the north, Holmby-Westwood to the east, and Westwood Hills to the west, which primarily consist of one- to two-story single-family residences. Westwood Village and the Wilshire Corridor are located to the south.

The Wilshire Corridor primarily consists of commercial uses, including hotels and mid- to high-rise office buildings from I-405 to Beverly Glen Boulevard at the eastern boundary of LU-2. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are prominent visual elements along the Wilshire Corridor. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor.

Westwood Village is located north of the Wilshire Corridor and is pedestrian-oriented, with low- to mid-rise buildings containing retail, office, and mixed uses. This village character contrasts with the many multi-story residential towers, hotels, and office buildings that exist along Wilshire Boulevard. Southeast of Wilshire Boulevard, single-family residences and small multi-family buildings are prominent. The Los Angeles National Cemetery, located in the western portion of LU-2, provides open expanses and the opportunity for distant views of the Santa Monica Mountains.

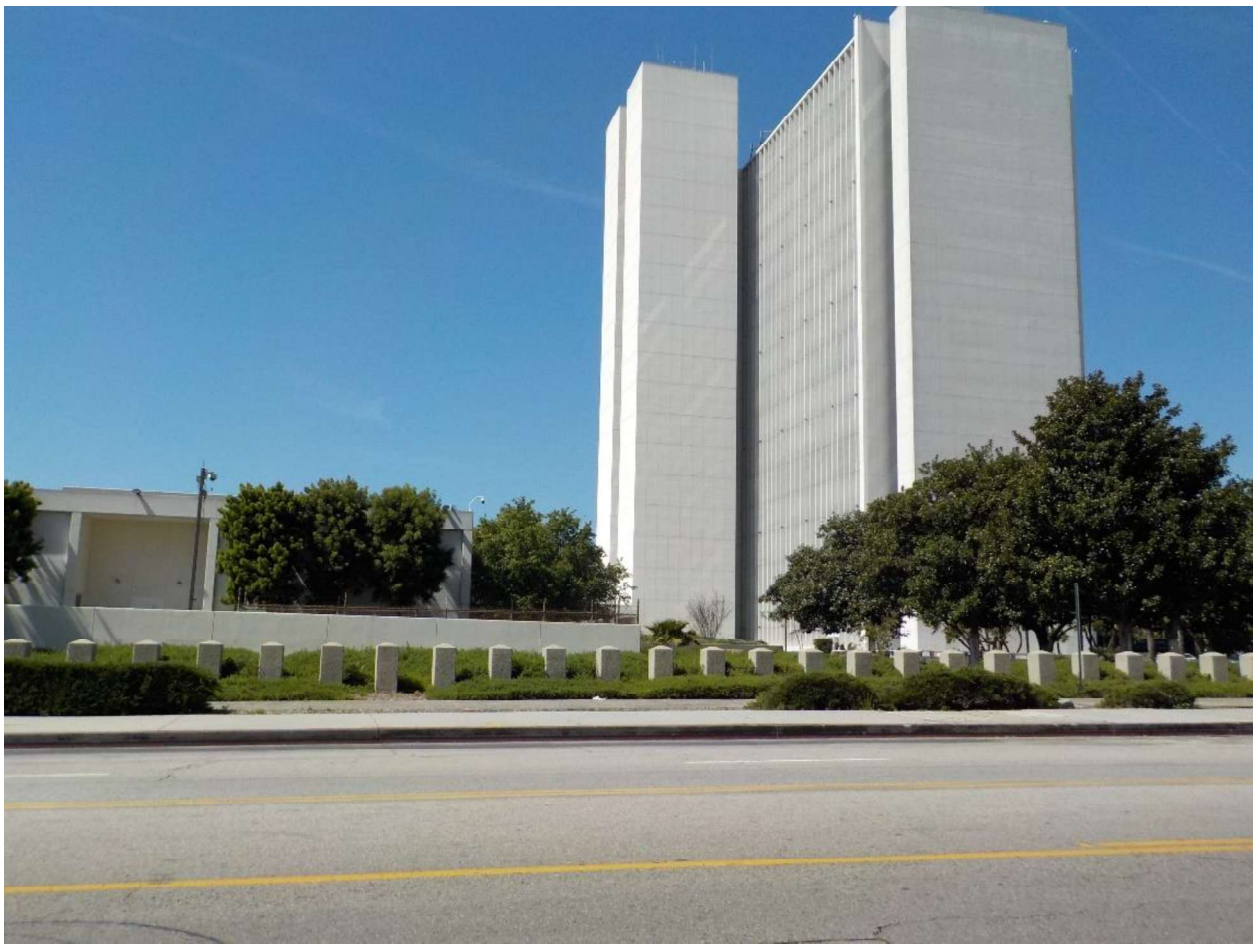
The UCLA campus is located at the base of the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains, directly south of Sunset Boulevard. The main campus is bounded by Wilshire Boulevard to the south, Veteran Avenue to the west, Sunset Boulevard to the north, and Hilgard Avenue to the east. The main campus is visible from adjacent residential neighborhoods to the north, east, and west, as well as from several major roadways, including I-405 and Sunset Boulevard. The northern portion of the UCLA campus mainly consists of academic buildings and landscaped open areas, and the southern portion of campus consists of science and medical buildings that are considerably more dense and more urban in appearance. A majority of the main campus is organized around a series of squares and courtyards linked by hardscape pedestrian walkways. The northwestern and southwestern portions of the main campus consist of student housing. These buildings are mainly modern mid- to high-rise structures with similar architectural styles.

The primary viewers in LU-2 consist of motorists, pedestrians, patrons of commercial businesses, and patrons of UCLA. There are distant north-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains from north-south oriented streets. UCLA patrons also have background views of Century City from certain areas of the main campus.

Landscaping on the main campus has both a formal and informal character, consisting of tree clusters, shaded grassy areas, and flowering plants. Paved pedestrian connections, asphalt circulation hubs, and streetscape treatments emphasize the main campus' urban nature. Most of the campus edges are heavily landscaped with mature trees and shrubs. These landscaped buffers screen campus buildings from adjacent streets and complement the adjacent residential areas. The trees used for these landscaped buffers are visually prominent and define the boundaries of the UCLA campus. A mix of

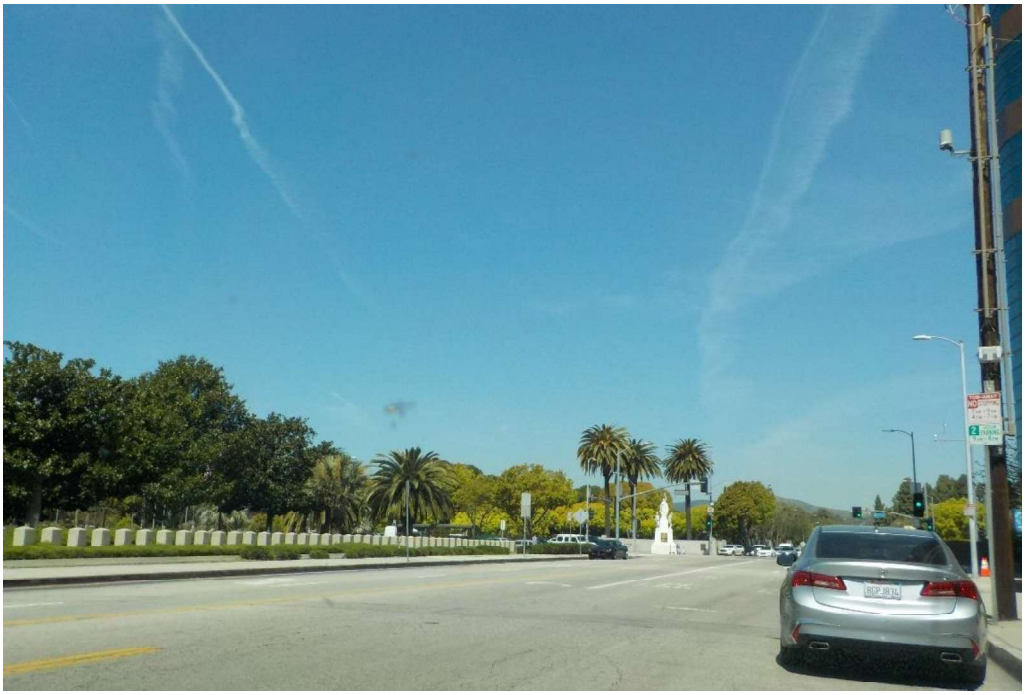
typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-2. Figure 7-13, Figure 7-14, Figure 7-15, and Figure 7-16 show existing representative views of LU-2.

Figure 7-13. Alternative 3: Existing View 3, Looking West Toward the Federal Building from Veteran Avenue



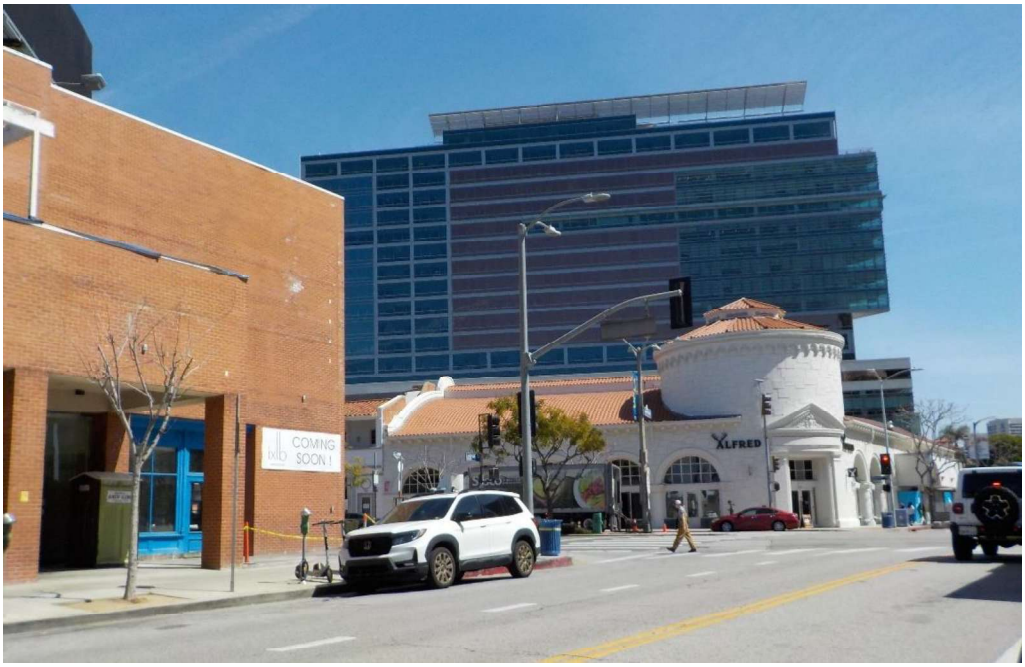
Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 7-14. Alternative 3: Existing View 4, Looking Northwest Toward Wilshire Boulevard and the National Cemetery, from Veteran Avenue



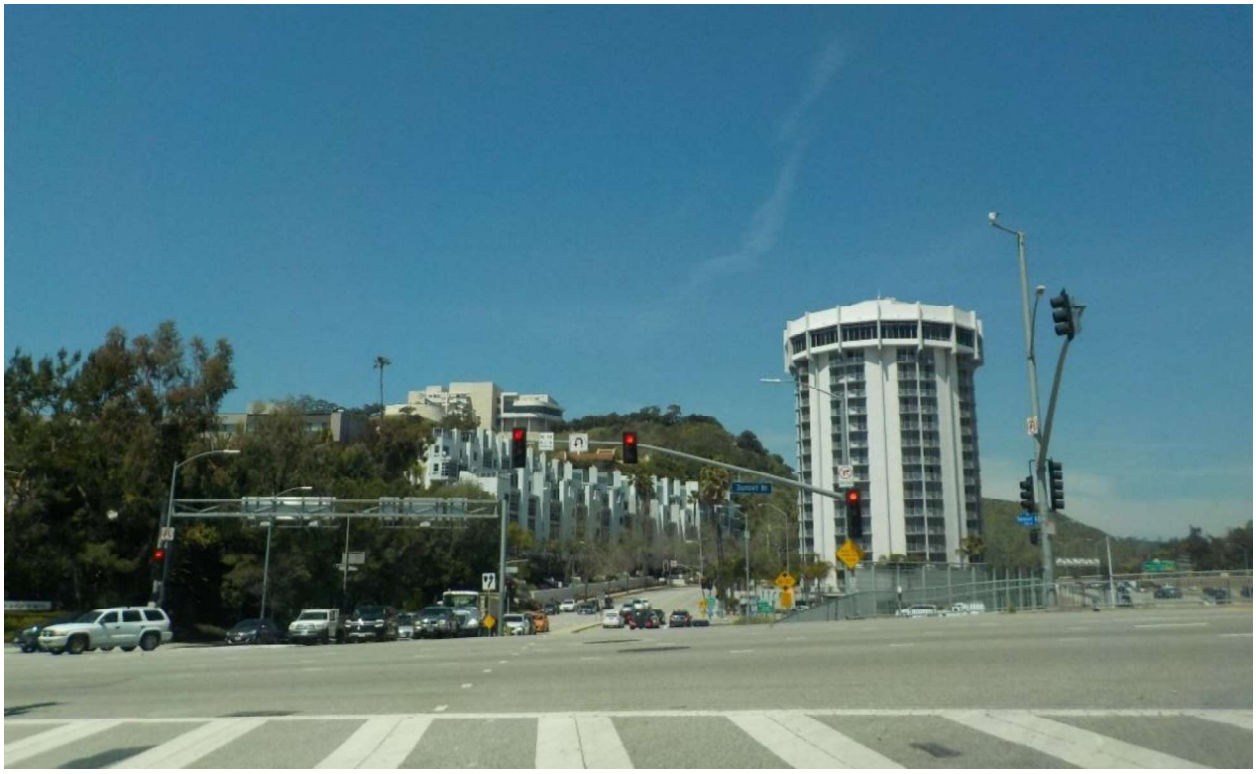
Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 7-15. Alternative 3: Existing View 5, Looking East Toward Westwood Boulevard from Lindbrook Drive in Westwood



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 7-16. Alternative 3: Existing View 6, Looking North Toward the Getty Center from Sunset Boulevard, West of I-405



Source: HTA, 2024

7.2.4.3 Landscape Unit 3 – Sunset Boulevard to Mulholland Drive

LU-3 begins directly north of Sunset Boulevard and continues north through the lower portion of the Santa Monica Mountains to Mulholland Drive. LU-3 is bordered on the west by I-405 and on the east by Benedict Canyon Drive. LU-3 consists of mainly residential development in low-rise structures in the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains. A limited number of commercial and institutional uses are located within LU-3. The structures in this LU vary in building style, size, and color. The street network consists of many winding, local streets, but there are also several collector roads within this LU. A portion of the scenic Mulholland Drive is located within LU-3. As discussed in Section 7.2.2, two designated vantage points are along Mulholland Drive. The Johnson Overlook and Stone Canyon Overlook are located along Mulholland Drive north of Stone Canyon Reservoir. Views consist of the Santa Monica Mountains, the Valley, and the Stone Canyon Reservoir. On clear days, it may be possible to see the Pacific Ocean.

The limited commercial uses within LU-3 consist of the Bel-Air Country Club, The Glen Centre, and Hotel Bel-Air. Bel-Air County Club is an 18-hole golf course with large, manicured lawn areas. The Glen Centre is a large shopping center with a park-like setting. Hotel Bel-Air is developed with Spanish style architecture and houses multiple structures with driveways and a surface parking lot parallel to Stone Canyon Road. Institutional uses consist of Marymount High School, which also houses multiple structures with driveways and a surface parking lot that parallels Sunset Boulevard.

Undeveloped land includes open space, such as land preserved by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and vacant lots that can be developed with low-density, primarily single-family residences.

Developed land predominantly consists of single-family residences on large lots, generally one to two stories, but some three-story and four-story residences are also built into the hillsides. These residences are developed in a variety of architectural styles, including bungalow, Spanish Eclectic, courtyard, Tudor, and Colonial styles, among others. Due to their elevated locations on the hillside, many of the residences in the Santa Monica Mountains are afforded long-range private panoramic views across the Project Study Area and much of the Los Angeles Basin. Beverly Hills, Bel-Air, and other single-family residential neighborhoods are located in this region.

Primary viewer groups found within LU-3 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed under LU-1 in Section 6.2.4.1 visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-3 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets within LU-3. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-3. Figure 7-17, Figure 7-18, Figure 7-19, and Figure 7-20 show existing representative views of LU-3.

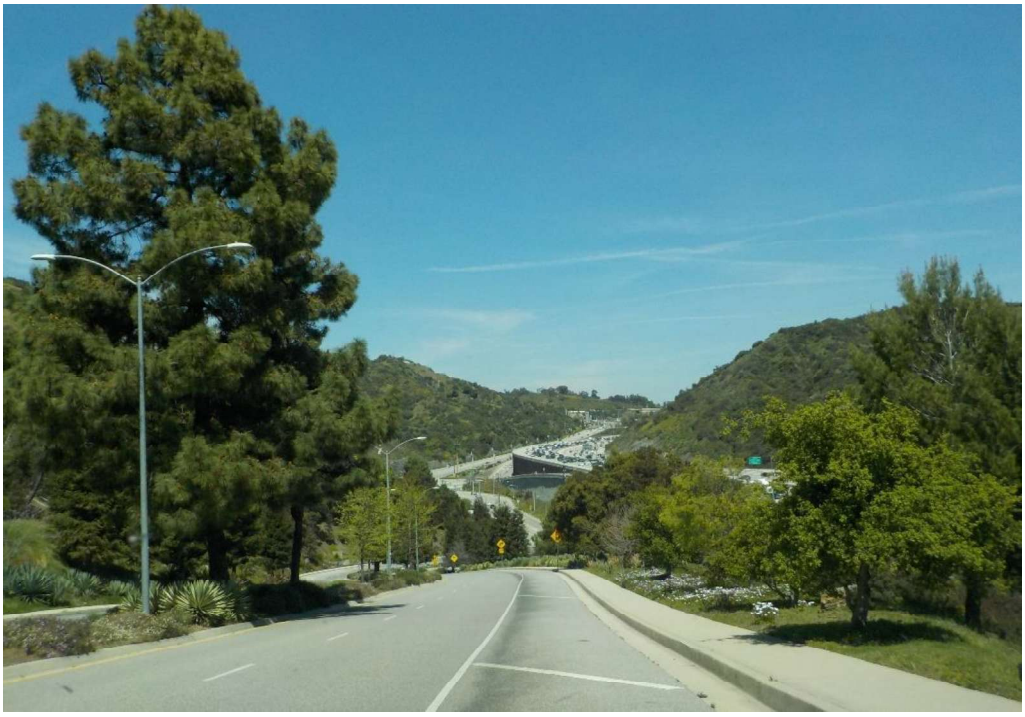
Figure 7-17. Alternative 3: Existing View 7, Looking West Toward I-405 from Residential Area along Ovada Place

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 7-18. Alternative 3: Existing View 8, Looking Northwest Toward the Getty Center (and I-405) from Residential Area along Moraga Drive

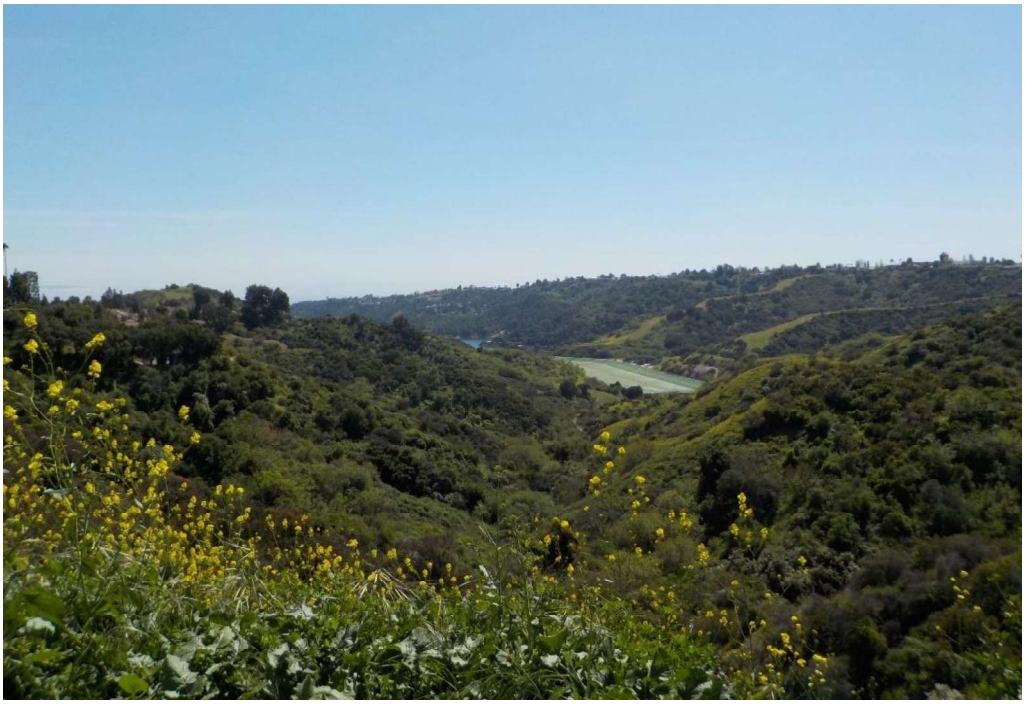
Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 7-19. Alternative 3: Existing View 9, Looking North Toward I-405 from Mountaingate Drive



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 7-20. Alternative 3: Existing View 10, Looking South Toward Covered Upper Stone Canyon Reservoir and Stone Canyon Reservoir, from Overlook along Mulholland Drive



Source: HTA, 2024

7.2.4.4 Landscape Unit 4 – Mulholland Drive to US-101

LU-4 begins directly north of Mulholland Drive and continues north through the upper portion of the Santa Monica Mountains to US-101. LU-4 is bordered on the west by I-405 and on the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-4 consists of mainly residential development within the Sherman Oaks neighborhood, and commercial development along the Ventura Boulevard corridor.

Similar to LU-3, a portion of the scenic Mulholland Drive is also located within LU-4. Looking north from Mulholland Drive, views consist of the Santa Monica Mountains in the foreground and middle ground and views of Van Nuys in the background. In addition, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north are also visible from certain portions of Mulholland Drive where there is limited vegetation.

The northern portion of the Santa Monica Mountains has both undeveloped and developed lots. As discussed in Section 7.2.4.3, undeveloped land includes open space, such as land preserved by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and vacant lots that can be developed with low-density housing, primarily single-family residences. Deervale-Stone Canyon Park, an 80-acre park consisting of open space and hiking trails for public use, is also located within LU-4. Views to the north from the top of the park overlook the Sherman Oaks neighborhood and the Ventura Boulevard commercial corridor. Long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north are also visible from this location.

Beyond the Santa Monica Mountains, LU-4 has a relatively flat topography and dense commercial and residential development. Views consist of low- and mid-rise buildings occupied primarily by retail, institutional, and office uses, and associated parking areas. As such, views from the northern portion of LU-4 are generally short in range and limited to the urban landscape within the immediate vicinity (i.e., buildings, roadways, utility poles, and street trees).

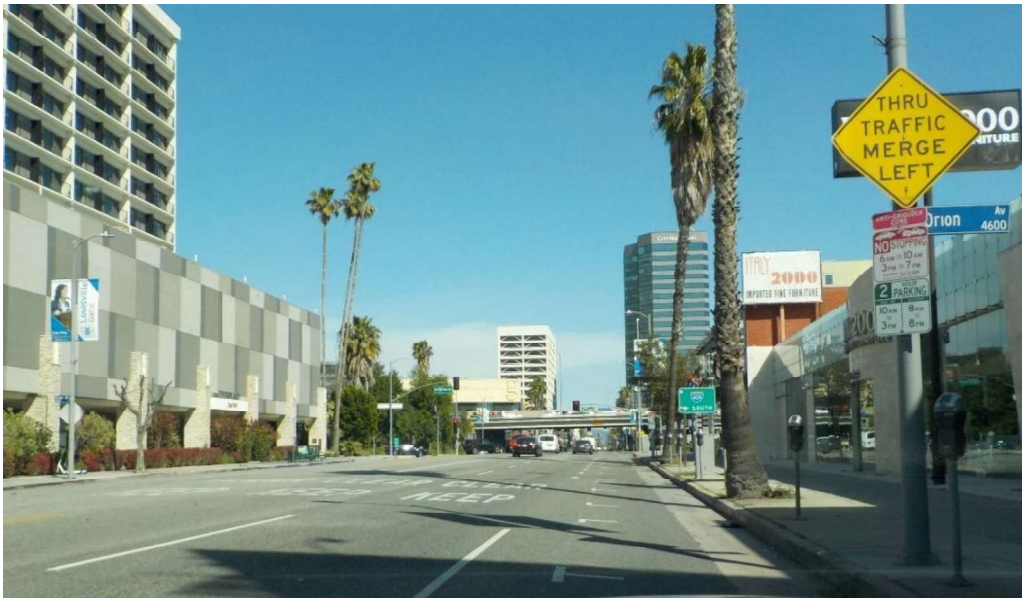
Primary viewer groups found within LU-4 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed under LU-1 previously in Section 6.2.4.1, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

Ventura Boulevard consists of primarily commercial uses, including retail businesses, restaurants, and mid- to high-rise office buildings from I-405 at the western boundary of LU-4 to the eastern boundary of LU-4 at Hazeltine Avenue. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are prominent visual elements along Ventura Boulevard. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. Overall, buildings in LU-4 are of all different sizes, styles, and colors, and are spaced at varying intervals, creating a high level of visual diversity in the landscape with no common theme. Long-range views of the Hollywood Hills are also visible traveling east along Ventura Boulevard.

Similar to LU-3, the single-family residences within the Santa Monica Mountains are developed on large lots and are generally one to two stories, but some three-story and four-story houses are visible. This development pattern transitions to low- and mid-rise single-family and multi-family residences north of Greenleaf Street within the Sherman Oaks neighborhood. Residential development is prevalent to the north and south of the Ventura Boulevard commercial corridor. Ornamental landscaping in LU-4 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees create definition within the dense commercial corridor; however, because they are planted intermittently, they blend into the overall landscape. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and

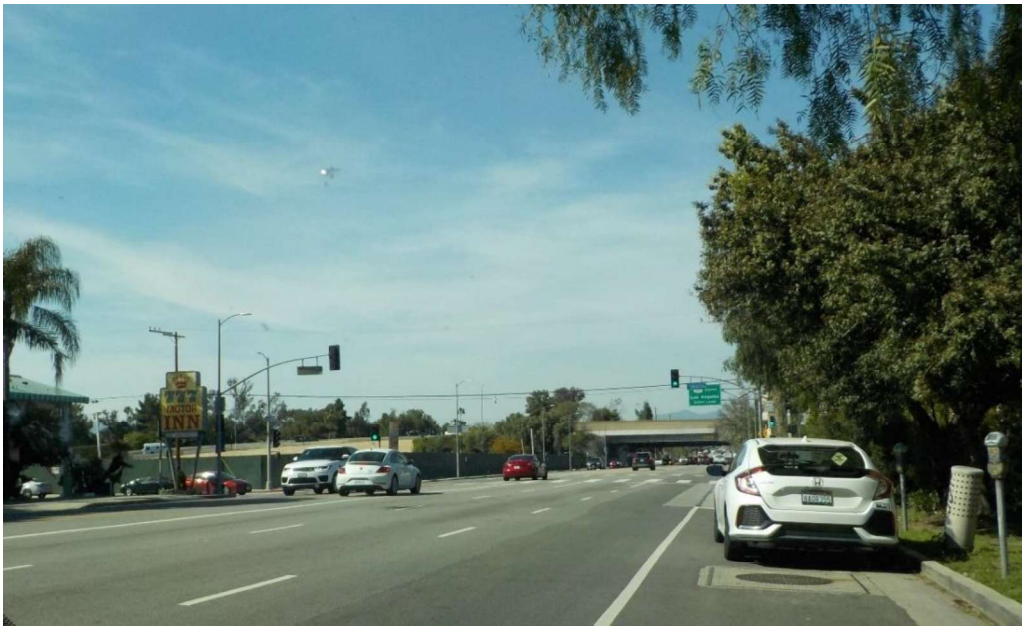
tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets within the northern portion of LU-4. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-4. Figure 7-21 and Figure 7-22 show existing representative views of LU-4.

Figure 7-21. Alternative 3: Existing View 11, Looking East Toward I-405 from Ventura Boulevard at Orion Avenue



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 7-22. Alternative 3: Existing View 12, Looking North Toward US-101 from Sepulveda Boulevard at Camarillo Street



Source: HTA, 2024

7.2.4.5 Landscape Unit 5 – US-101 to Victory Boulevard

LU-5 begins directly north of US-101 and continues north through the Van Nuys community to Victory Boulevard. LU-5 is bordered to the west by Gloria Avenue and to the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-5 consists of mainly commercial and residential development within the Van Nuys neighborhood. The Metro G Line also travels east-west through the central portion of LU-5.

Views in the southern portion of LU-5 looking south are predominately elevated segment of US-101. Long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are also visible in some areas, but they are few because of the relatively flat topography and intervening urban development. The Los Angeles River is also located within the southern portion of LU-5, and mainly travels parallel to US-101; however, since the Los Angeles River is located below street level, public views of the Los Angeles River from the surrounding Project Study Area are obscured by existing development and generally not available except on Hazeltine Avenue just south of the US-101 overpass. As discussed in Section 7.2.2, the Los Angeles River and its associated tributaries and floodplains are also listed as scenic vistas in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* (DCP, 2001b)

Typical views in LU-5 include the Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard commercial corridors, which are bordered by parking areas, sidewalks, street trees, commercial buildings, and additional buildings visible in the background. Views of I-405 are also visible from Sepulveda Boulevard. Traveling north along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains are visible. In addition, traveling south, long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are visible. Primary viewer groups found within LU-5 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed under LU-1 in Section 7.2.4.1 visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

Commercial structures along Van Nuys Boulevard consist of low- to mid-rise retail businesses, restaurants, office uses, and parking areas. In addition, commercial structures along Sepulveda Boulevard consist of low- to high-rise office uses, residential uses, retail businesses, restaurants, and parking areas. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are also prominent visual elements on these roadways. Although residential areas surround the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-5 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees are present along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, as well as other commercial areas for screening purposes. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-5. Figure 7-23 and Figure 7-24 show existing representative views of LU-5.

Figure 7-23. Alternative 3: Existing View 13, Looking North along Sepulveda Boulevard at Magnolia Boulevard

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 7-24. Alternative 3: Existing View 14, Looking East along Victory Boulevard West of I-405 at Gloria Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

7.2.4.6 Landscape Unit 6 – Victory Boulevard to LOSSAN Rail Corridor ROW

LU-6 begins directly north of Victory Boulevard and continues north through Van Nuys to the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW. LU-6 is bordered to the west by Gloria Avenue and to the east by Hazeltine Avenue.

LU-6 consists of mainly commercial and residential development within the Van Nuys neighborhood, with residential development located primarily to the east and west of the Van Nuys Boulevard commercial corridor. The LOSSAN rail corridor ROW and existing Van Nuys/Metrolink Station border the northern boundary of LU-6.

Similar to LU-5, typical views in LU-6 include the Van Nuys Boulevard commercial corridor, which is bordered by parking areas, sidewalks, street trees, commercial buildings, and additional buildings visible in the background. Traveling north along Van Nuys Boulevard, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains are visible. Traveling south, long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are visible; however, views of the Santa Monica Mountains are dominated by other features in the landscape.

Primary viewer groups found within LU-6 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed under LU-1 in Section 7.2.4.1, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

The visual character of the portion of Van Nuys Boulevard within LU-6 consists of low- to mid-rise retail businesses, restaurants, office uses, and parking areas. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are also prominent visual elements along Van Nuys Boulevard. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. Similar to LU-5, buildings are of all different sizes, styles, and colors, and are spaced at different intervals, creating a high level of visual diversity in the landscape with no common theme. Street trees soften the appearance of the dense commercial corridor; however, because they are planted intermittently, they blend into the overall landscape.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-6 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees are present along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, as well as other commercial areas for screening purposes. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-6. Figure 7-25 shows an existing representative view in LU-6.

Figure 7-25. Alternative 3: Existing View 15, Looking East along Sherman Way Toward I-405 at Haskell Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

7.2.5 Light and Glare

North of US-101, the Project Study Area is generally located within the Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys neighborhoods of the City of Los Angeles, and encompasses commercial, industrial, and residential development with relatively ambient nighttime lighting typical of urbanized settings. Common light sources are the include the streetlights, vehicle lights, building entrance lighting, parking structure lighting, illuminated signage/billboards, and general illumination from lights shining through windows of structures lining the corridor.

South of US-101, nighttime lighting is more limited in the Santa Monica Mountains. In the developed portions of the Santa Monica Mountains, lighting sources include pedestrian-scaled streetlights, security and decorative wall lighting at residential homes, vehicle headlights, and interior building illumination. By contrast, the undeveloped portions of the Santa Monica Mountains have little to no light or glare sources, other than vehicle headlights.

South of Sunset Boulevard, the Project Study Area is generally located within Westwood and West Los Angeles neighborhoods of the City of Los Angeles, as well as within the City of Santa Monica. The adjacent commercial, industrial, and residential development, as well as cultural and institutional facilities, such as the UCLA campus, contribute to ambient nighttime lighting typical of urbanized settings. Light sources include the streetlights, vehicle lights, building entrance lighting, parking structure lighting, illuminated signage/billboards, and general illumination from lights shining through windows of structures lining the corridor.

7.3 Impact Evaluation

7.3.1 Impact AES-1: Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

7.3.1.1 Operational Impacts

As discussed in Section 7.1, Alternative 3 would utilize monorail technology. Alternative 3 would be aerial for most of the alignment and would generally travel along the I-405 corridor with a 3.3-mile tunnel connection to UCLA Gateway Plaza, starting from just south of Wilshire Boulevard and continuing north along Veteran Avenue and Westwood Boulevard before continuing northwest from the UCLA campus toward I-405 and Getty Center.

Scenic vistas in the Project Study Area include views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the south and the San Gabriel Mountains to the north. As discussed in Section 7.2.4, views of surrounding mountains are visible in all of the LUs. In some LUs, such as in LU-1, LU-5, and LU-6, the surrounding mountains are minimally visible; in some LUs, such as in LU-2, LU-3, and LU-4, the surrounding mountains are a visually dominant feature. Motorists and transit commuters would be expected to have more fleeting views of scenic vistas because they are moving along the Alternative 3 alignment, while pedestrians, patrons of commercial and institutional facilities, and tourists would be expected to have longer views.

Within LU-1, the aerial guideway would begin south of Exposition Boulevard adjacent to the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and continues parallel to the eastern side of I-405 to the Santa Monica Boulevard Station. North of the Santa Monica Boulevard Station, the aerial guideway would cross I-405 above Santa Monica Boulevard and continues along parallel along the western side of I-405. The primary visual elements of Alternative 3 would include the columns to support the aerial MRT guideway, column bents to support the aerial Santa Monica Boulevard Station. While these features—particularly the aerial guideway, aerial MRT infrastructure, and aerial station—would be highly visible, they would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains.

Within LU-2, the Alternative 3 alignment would travel mainly underground throughout the LU. The primary visual elements of Alternative 3 would be the tunnel portal south of the Wilshire Federal Building, the station entrance for the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station, and the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station. The visibility of the tunnel portal would be limited to the Wilshire Federal Building campus directly in front of and facing the portal. The tunnel portal is anticipated to be a rectangular-shaped passageway structure without a dissipative design and would not be visually obtrusive. Additional visual elements in LU-2 would include the station entrances of the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station within the southwestern portion of LU-2, and the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station within the northern portion of LU-2. Views of the proposed stations would mainly be limited to the areas directly in front of and facing the station entrances. The stations would be low-rise structures and would not be visually obtrusive. In addition, while these features would be visible, they would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains.

Within LU-3, the Alternative 3 alignment would also travel primarily underground throughout the LU before transitioning back to an aerial configuration parallel to the Getty Center and I-405. The alignment would cross over Sepulveda Boulevard and I-405 to the proposed Getty Center Station on the west side of I-405, just north of the Getty tram station. The alignment would then continue along the west side of I-405, crossing over Sepulveda Boulevard, to remain between Sepulveda Boulevard and I-405. The primary visual elements of Alternative 3 would be the tunnel portal east of I-405 and Sepulveda

Boulevard, retaining walls to support the daylighting to an aerial configuration, columns to support the aerial MRT guideway either parallel to or along the center median of I-405, and column bents to support the aerial Getty Center Station. While these features—particularly the aerial guideway and aerial station—would be highly visible, they would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the east and west because views would be obstructed by existing structures, such as I-405.

Within LU-4, the aerial guideway would continue along I-405 to the Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station. Immediately north of the Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station, the alignment would cross over I-405 to the US-101 connector and continue north between the connector and I-405. The primary visual elements of Alternative 3 would include columns to support the aerial MRT guideway either parallel to or along the center median of I-405, and column bents to support the aerial Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station. While these features—particularly the aerial guideway, aerial MRT infrastructure, and aerial station—would be highly visible, they would not substantially obstruct views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north of the Santa Monica Mountains to the south because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains.

Within LU-5, the aerial guideway would continue north along the east side of I-405, crossing over US-101 and the Los Angeles River, to the Metro G Line Station. The primary visual elements of Alternative 3 would include columns to support the aerial MRT guideway either parallel to or along the center median of Sepulveda Boulevard and column bents to support the aerial Metro G Line Station. While these features—particularly the aerial guideway and aerial station—would be highly visible, they would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the south or the San Gabriel Mountains to the north because the surrounding industrial and commercial development already prevents clear views of the mountains, and views would be obstructed by existing structures.

Within LU-6, the aerial guideway would continue north along the east side of I-405 to the proposed Sherman Way Station. North of the Sherman Way Station, the alignment would continue along the eastern edge of I-405 then curve to the southeast to the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The primary visual elements of Alternative 3 would include columns and straddle bents to support the aerial MRT guideway either parallel to or along the center median of I-405 and Raymer Street, and column bents to support the aerial Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard. While these features—particularly the aerial guideway and aerial station—would be highly visible, they would not substantially obstruct views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north because the surrounding industrial and commercial development already prevents clear views of the mountains. Views of the proposed Sherman Way Station would be limited to motorists and pedestrians traveling along Sepulveda Boulevard, Sherman Way, and Gault Street, and would not be visually obtrusive.

Overall, the primary visual elements included as part of Alternative 3 would be the aerial guideway, the aerial stations, one at-grade station entrance portal, freeway modifications, retaining wall relocations, and changes lanes, and sidewalks. The new at-grade station entrance along the outside edge of the roadway would present new vertical features in the landscape and may limit views directly adjacent to or within the stations; however, views in the corridor as a whole would not be substantially affected by the proposed at-grade station entrance because the visual changes would be localized around station areas.

The proposed aerial guideway, columns, straddle bents, and aerial stations would present new vertical features in the landscape that would be highly visible; however, views of the San Gabriel Mountains, and Santa Monica Mountains would not be substantially obscured and would continue to be limited by the surrounding urban development.

Motorists driving northbound and southbound on I-405 would experience interruption in views while driving to due to the presence of the aerial guideway; however, the interruption would be intermittent because the aerial guideway would traverse the freeway from the east and west sides and not remain in the same location from the vantage point of motorists. Pedestrians walking on nearby sidewalks would have views interrupted from certain locations, such as directly adjacent to one of the aerial stations, but would be able to easily walk away from that location. Recreationalists utilizing trails in the Santa Monica Mountains near I-405 would have the least interruption in views because the aerial guideway would be located within the I-405 corridor when viewing the Alternative 3 alignment from higher ground.

As such, views of scenic vistas as a whole would not be substantially affected. Therefore, the vertical elements proposed under Alternative 3 would not substantially alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas, and operation of Alternative 3 would result in a less than significant impact to scenic vistas.

7.3.1.2 Construction Impacts

Overall, construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. Although temporary in nature, construction activities may cause a visually unappealing quality in a community. Construction of Alternative 3 would introduce visually disruptive elements in each LU, including:

- Light and heavy excavation
- Tunneling
- Roadway/bridge demolition and reconstruction
- Structural falsework
- Tree removal
- Soil removal/displacement
- Security fencing
- Stockpiled soil
- Stockpiled building materials
- Safety and directional signage
- Station platforms and plazas
- Ancillary facilities
- Large, heavy equipment may include cranes, bulldozers, scrapers, and trucks.

These construction activities could be visible to pedestrians and motorists on adjacent streets, as well as to viewers within nearby buildings. However, construction activities—while a visual nuisance—would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains or San Gabriel Mountains because activities would be temporary and intermittent and limited to the immediate area. The implementation of best management practices discussed in Section 7.1.2 would also occur. Therefore, construction of Alternative 3 would not alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas, and impacts would be less than significant.

7.3.1.3 Maintenance and Storage Facilities

MSF Base Design

Maintenance of monorail vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF Base Design. Several buildings would be constructed, including a primary maintenance building, a maintenance-of-way building, track storage area, wash bays, ancillary storage buildings, a parking area for employees, and TPSS structure. These structures would be the primary visual elements of the MSF Base Design. The MSF site would be

located within a heavily industrialized area, and operation of this MSF would generally fit within the context of the existing industrial character. While the MSF site would be highly visible, it would not substantially obstruct views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains. As such, views of scenic vistas as a whole would not be substantially affected.

Construction activities could be visible to pedestrians and motorists on adjacent streets, as well as to viewers within nearby buildings. However, construction activities, while a visual nuisance, would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains or San Gabriel Mountains, because activities would be temporary and intermittent and limited to the immediate area. Therefore, the vertical elements proposed under the MSF Base Design would not substantially alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas and operation of MSF Base Design would result in a less than significant impact to scenic vistas.

MSF Design Option 1

As part of the MSF Design Option 1, several buildings would be constructed, including a primary maintenance building, a maintenance-of-way building, a train car washing building, a parking area for employees, and a TPSS structure. These structures would be the primary visual elements of the MSF Design Option 1. The MSF Design Option 1 would be constructed on an industrial property and would present new vertical features in the landscape that would be highly visible; however, views of the San Gabriel Mountains and Santa Monica Mountains from the residential area to the south would not be substantially obscured and continue to be limited by the surrounding urban development. As such, views of scenic vistas as a whole would not be substantially affected.

Construction activities could be visible to pedestrians and motorists on adjacent streets, as well as to viewers within nearby buildings and the residential area to the south. However, construction activities, while a visual nuisance, would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains or San Gabriel Mountains, because activities would be temporary and intermittent and limited to the immediate area. Therefore, the vertical elements proposed under the MSF Design Option 1 would not substantially alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas, and operation of the MSF Design Option 1 would result in a less than significant impact to scenic vistas.

7.3.2 Impact AES-2: Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

7.3.2.1 Operational Impacts

As discussed in Section 7.2.3, no California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the Project Study Area. Additionally, no State-designated scenic highways in proximity to the Project Study Area would provide views of the Project Study Area. Historic structures within the alignment are discussed in the *Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources Technical Report* (Metro, 2025a). The closest eligible state scenic highway is SR-1, which is approximately 3 miles west of the Alternative 3 alignment. The closest officially designated state scenic highway is SR-27 (Topanga Canyon Boulevard), which is approximately 8 miles west of the Alternative 3 alignment.

As listed in Table 7-5 in Section 7.2.3, six City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are located within the Project Study Area:

- Beverly Glen Boulevard

- Mulholland Drive
- Santa Monica Boulevard
- Sepulveda Boulevard
- Sherman Way
- Sunset Boulevard

The aerial guideway for Alternative 3 would travel through designated scenic portions of Sepulveda Boulevard, Santa Monica Boulevard, Sherman Way, Sunset Boulevard, and Mulholland Drive. The aerial guideway for Alternative 3 would not travel through the designated scenic portion of Beverly Glen Boulevard. Sepulveda Boulevard provides views of the old cross mountain road with a tunnel that travels under Mulholland Drive, as well as views of mountains and the valley. Sherman Way provides views of scenic resources, such as a wide street and landscaped median, as well as the Sherman Way Street Trees historical resource, which is located along Sherman Way between Woodley Avenue and Sherman Circle as discussed in the *Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources Technical Report* (Metro, 2025a). No specific scenic features or resources are listed for Santa Monica Boulevard. However, the proposed aerial guideway has been designed to travel along or parallel to I-405, and it is expected that visual change associated with the aerial guideway at these locations would not be readily noticeable given the existing structures associated with I-405 and background conditions.

In addition, along I-405, the aerial guideway for Alternative 3 would travel beneath the designated scenic Mulholland Drive bridge, which provides opportunities for multiple scenic views as it winds up and through the Santa Monica Mountains, including through the Project Study Area. Specifically, the *City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan 2035* states that Mulholland Drive provides panoramic views and a "ribbon of park." Development near Mulholland Drive is also subject to design review guidelines pursuant to the MSPSP.

The MSPSP has designated 14 MVPs along Mulholland Drive that are maintained by the Bureau of Street Maintenance of the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. The Inner Corridor of the MSPSP area is designated as part of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and the MRCA also maintains seven scenic overlooks along Mulholland Drive (MRCA, 2023). The nearest MVP (also the nearest overlook) is the Johnson Overlook, which is located approximately 0.9 miles east of the Alternative 3 alignment. The nearest MRCA maintained scenic overlook is The Groves Overlook, which is located approximately 1 mile west of the Alternative 3 alignment.

The proposed aerial guideway has been designed to travel along or parallel to I-405, and it is expected that visual change associated with the aerial guideway would not be readily noticeable given the existing structures associated with I-405 and background conditions. In addition, the aerial guideway would not be located on Mulholland Drive, which provides protection to potential views of scenic resources. Alternative 3 would also meet all of the requirements and obligations of the City of Los Angeles in ensuring preservation of a number of important values related to the Mulholland Drive.

In addition, the aerial guideway would travel through the City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highway along Sunset Boulevard, which provides views of the mountains, estates, and the UCLA campus. However, this portion of the Alternative 3 alignment would be located underground and any potential views of the station entrance of the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station would be minimal from Sunset Boulevard. As such, Alternative 3 would not impact views of scenic resources along Sepulveda Boulevard, Santa Monica Boulevard, Mulholland Drive, Beverly Glen Boulevard, and Sunset Boulevard. The location of the proposed aerial Sherman Way Station would potentially impact the Sherman Way

Street Trees; however, this is not within a state scenic highway. Therefore, operation of Alternative 3 would not substantially damage any scenic resources within SR-1 or SR-27 (Topanga Canyon Boulevard), the nearest state scenic highways, neither of which is within the Project Study Area. Therefore, operation of Alternative 3 would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

7.3.2.2 Construction Impacts

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. Although temporary in nature, construction activities may cause a visually unappealing quality in a community. Construction of Alternative 3 would introduce visually disruptive elements in each LU, including the following:

- Light and heavy excavation
- Tunneling
- Roadway/bridge demolition and reconstruction
- Building demolition
- Structural falsework
- Security fencing
- Soil removal/stockpile
- Stockpiled building materials
- Safety and directional signage
- Station platforms and plazas
- Ancillary facilities
- Large, heavy equipment may include cranes, bulldozers, scrapers, and trucks

As discussed in Section 7.2.3, no California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the Project Study Area. The Alternative 3 alignment would be located within both the Inner Corridor and Outer Corridor of the MSPSP, but this is not considered a state scenic highway. As discussed in Section 3.1 Metro projects are not required to adhere to local zoning ordinances; however, any elements that would be located on properties outside of the public ROW (e.g., station plazas and TPSS) would comply with applicable zoning and design requirements, including undergoing mandated design review where applicable and coordinating with local jurisdictions and/or other public entities during preliminary and final designs. In addition, while Alternative 3 would add new visible structures, it is expected that visual change associated with the aerial guideway would not be readily noticeable given the existing structures associated with I-405 and background conditions. Additionally, tree removal during construction would create noticeable changes, exposing previously screened views of infrastructure and construction sites. However, these changes would be temporary and would not be located within a state scenic highway.

Construction of Alternative 3 would not substantially damage any scenic resources within SR-1 or SR-27, the nearest state scenic highways, neither of which is within the Project Study Area. Therefore, construction of Alternative 3 would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

7.3.2.3 Maintenance and Storage Facilities

MSF Base Design

No California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the MSF Base Design area. Additionally, no state-designated scenic highways or City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are located in proximity to the MSF Base Design. Therefore, operation of the MSF Base Design would not substantially damage any scenic resources within a state scenic highway, and none of the six scenic highways designated by the City of Los Angeles would be impacted by the MSF Base Design.

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. Although temporary in nature, construction activities may cause a visually unappealing quality in a community. However, as discussed in Section 3.1, Metro projects are not required to adhere to local zoning ordinances. Any elements that would be located on properties outside of the public ROW (e.g., station plazas and TPSS) would comply with applicable zoning and design requirements, including undergoing mandated design review where applicable and coordinating with and/or other public entities during preliminary and final designs. In addition, while Alternative 3 would add new visible structures, it is expected that visual changes associated with the MSF Base Design would not be readily noticeable given the existing structures associated with I-405 and background conditions. Therefore, the MSF Base Design would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

MSF Design Option 1

Refer to Section 7.3.2.3 MSF Base Design, for impact evaluation. No California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the MSF Design Option 1 area. Additionally, no state-designated scenic highways or City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are located in proximity to the MSF Design Option 1. Therefore, operation of MSF Design Option 1 would not substantially damage any scenic resources within a state scenic highway, and none of the six scenic highways designated by the City of Los Angeles would be impacted by the MSF Design Option 1.

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. However, as discussed previously, Metro projects are not required to adhere to local zoning ordinances; Any elements that would be located on properties outside of the public ROW (e.g., station plazas and TPSS) would comply with applicable zoning and design requirements, including undergoing mandated design review where applicable and coordinating with local jurisdictions and/or other public entities during preliminary and final designs. In addition, while Alternative 3would add new visible structures, it is expected that visual change associated with the MSF Design Option 1 would not be readily noticeable given the existing structures associated with I-405 and background conditions. Therefore, the MSF Design Option 1 would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

7.3.3 Impact AES-3: Would the project, in non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project

is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Alternative 3 is in an urbanized area, as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15387; therefore, in accordance with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant impact would occur if Alternative 3 conflicts with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. The zoning ordinances of each jurisdiction in the Project Study Area do not directly regulate the design of transportation infrastructure elements. Additionally, the jurisdictions in the Project Study Area generally do not have policies or regulations that govern visual quality during construction activities for transportation-related projects. Alternative 3 would be designed to be consistent with all Metro policies related to visual resources, including the Metro Art Program Policy.

7.3.3.1 Operational Impacts

As discussed in Section 7.1, Alternative 3 includes a new aerial guideway along the I-405 corridor and a 3.7-mile underground tunnel to the east of the freeway connecting the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station to the Getty Center Station.

Operational components of Alternative 3—including but not limited to station design, aerial guideway, auxiliary facilities, sound walls and new landscaping—would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, and Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, Adjacent Development Review, and Tree Policy. Certain elements that would be located on properties outside of the public ROW (e.g., station plazas and TPSS) would comply with applicable zoning and design requirements, including undergoing mandated design review where applicable and coordinating with local jurisdictions and/or other public entities during preliminary and final designs. While Metro projects are not required to adhere to local zoning ordinances, these project elements would comply with local zoning ordinances as they pertain to scenic quality.

Architectural renderings and photo-realistic visual simulations were created and used to illustrate where visual changes would be most noticeable after implementation of Alternative 3. These renderings are conceptual and do not represent the final design of Alternative 3 at this time.

Landscape Unit 1

Within LU-1, the aerial guideway for Alternative 3 would primarily operate parallel on the east of I-405 to the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and the Santa Monica Boulevard Station. At the Santa Monica Boulevard Station, the aerial guideway would shift to the west and continue across I-405. As such, operation of Alternative 3 within LU-1 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 3 within LU-1 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 3 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed aerial guideway and station would represent a new and large element in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 3 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. For a project in an urban area, a

significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 3 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, TPSS, as well as station entrances and plazas are proposed. Due to the aerial guideway's height and massing, the aerial guideway would result in a visual contrast in this portion of LU-1. However, the aerial guideway, TPSS, and stations would be relatively the same height as the existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405, elevated freeway ramps) and commercial structures, which these viewer groups already experience in existing conditions. Because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views. Alternative 3 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, TPSS, as well as station entrances and plazas are proposed.

Alternative 3 would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 3 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities." Alternative 3 would be accessible to the regional transit systems, and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

Overall, Alternative 3 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 3 within LU-1 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 2

Within LU-2, Alternative 3 would operate within an underground tunnel that would begin to the east of I-405 at Sepulveda Boulevard and would travel underground to the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station and the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station. Alternative 3 would transition from an aerial guideway to an underground configuration adjacent to the Wilshire Federal Building. The visibility of the entrance portal, which is anticipated to be a rectangular-shaped passageway structure, would be limited to the Wilshire Federal Building campus directly in front of and facing the portal. As such, operation of Alternative 3 within LU-2 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 3 within LU-2 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations. Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 3 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station and the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station would represent new elements in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 3 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. For a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 3 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the station entrances and plazas are proposed. Due to the aerial guideway's height and massing, the aerial guideway would result in a visual contrast in this portion of LU-2. However, the aerial guideway, TPSS, and stations would be relatively the same height as the existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405, elevated freeway ramps) and commercial structures, which these viewer groups already experience in existing conditions. Because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views.

As shown on KOP 16 (Figure 7-26) located on Westwood Plaza, the proposed UCLA Gateway Plaza Station would not be highly visible, and would be complementary and appropriate to the scale and character of the existing buildings on the UCLA campus. As such, the at-grade facilities would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible.

Alternative 3 would follow Metro's Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 3 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities." Alternative 3 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

Overall, Alternative 3 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 3 within LU-2 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Figure 7-26. Alternative 3: KOP 16 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking Southeast Toward the Primary Station Entrance of the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station

Source: HTA, 2024

Landscape Unit 3

Within LU-3, Alternative 3 would operate beneath the Santa Monica Mountains until the alignment daylights at the tunnel portal located east of I-405 at Sepulveda Boulevard, adjacent to the Leo Baeck Temple parking lot. At the tunnel portal, the Alternative 3 alignment would transition to an aerial guideway that continues across I-405 to the aerial Getty Center Station. From the northern portion of the Leo Baeck Temple parking lot, a small portion of the tunnel portal and aerial guideway would be visible. However, the visibility of the tunnel portal would be limited to directly in front of and facing the portal due to the topography of the hillside adjacent to the parking lot.

The tunnel portal is anticipated to be a rectangular-shaped passageway structure without a dissipative design that would blend into the natural topography of the hillside. The tunnel portal would not be visually obtrusive. The portal construction may leave the concrete structure surfaces, shotcrete surfaces, and freshly cut rock surfaces at the portal site permanently exposed. However, these exposed surfaces may be treated to appear naturally formed and weathered to help blend into the surrounding environment. In addition, the site configuration of the stations, portals, and MSF would be optimized for solar orientation and prevailing wind conditions.

Alternative 3 would then continue north parallel to or along I-405 where it would cross above Mulholland Drive. As such, operation of Alternative 3 within LU-3 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups, including motorists and transit commuters, would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 3 within LU-3 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations. Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change.

Viewer groups—including tourists and residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because tourists would have direct views of Alternative 3 from public areas and residents would have direct views of Alternative 3 from their private residences. The proposed aerial guideway, tunnel portal, and station would represent a new and large element in the visual environment. In addition, certain views of the Santa Monica Mountains have the potential to be partially interrupted due to Alternative 3.

Alternative 3 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, TPSS, station entries and plazas are proposed. Alternative 3 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. For a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Due to the aerial guideway's height and massing, the aerial guideway would result in a visual contrast in this portion of LU-3, as shown in KOP 7 (Figure 7-28) located on Mulholland Drive, and KOP 10 (Figure 7-31) located in the hills directly east of I-405. However, the aerial guideway, TPSS, and stations would be relatively the same height as the existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405, elevated freeway ramps) and commercial structures, which these viewer groups already experience in existing conditions. Because of the urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views. Alternative 3 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, TPSS, station entries and plazas are proposed.

Alternative 3 would transition from an underground configuration to an aerial guideway structure after exiting the tunnel portal located at the northern end of the Leo Baeck Temple Parking lot. The aerial guideway would cross over Sepulveda Boulevard and I-405 to the proposed Getty Center Station. Freeway modifications and retaining wall relocations would also occur within this portion of LU-3, which would represent a visual change. The aerial guideway, tunnel portal, freeway modifications, and retaining wall relocations would represent new visual elements. As shown in KOP 4 (Figure 7-27), traveling south on Sepulveda Boulevard just north of Getty Center Drive, the aerial guideway and related infrastructure would block views of the Getty Center, which is a primary focal point of this area. However, the aerial guideway would not be visually incompatible with the existing transportation-oriented visual aesthetic of I-405. Motorists would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 3 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

The aerial guideway would then continue along I-405, and would travel beneath Mulholland Drive, including the Inner Corridor and Outer Corridor of the MSPSP, which contains density requirements, building standards, and grading restrictions to protect scenic quality. The viewshed protection provisions of the MSPSP are directed at preserving, complementing, and/or enhancing the public views from Mulholland Drive.

As shown in KOP 8 (Figure 7-29) located on Mulholland Drive and KOP 9 (Figure 7-30) located on Mountaingate Drive, views of the aerial guideway would be available only from limited vantage points. From this vantage point, a small portion of the aerial guideway would be visible. However, the view from most locations would remain where the view would be uninterrupted by the aerial guideway. In addition, the proposed aerial guideway has been designed to travel along or parallel to I-405, and it is expected that visual change associated with the aerial guideway would not be readily noticeable given the existing structures associated with I-405 and background conditions. Alternative 3 would also meet all of the requirements and obligations of the City of Los Angeles in ensuring preservation of a number of important values related to the Mulholland Drive. As such, these facilities would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views from Mulholland Drive.

The aerial guideway and Getty Center Station would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 3 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages “transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.” Alternative 3 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

Overall, Alternative 3 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 3 within LU-3 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Figure 7-27. Alternative 3: KOP 4 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking South from Sepulveda Boulevard Toward the Aerial Alignment Along I-405

Source: HTA, 2024

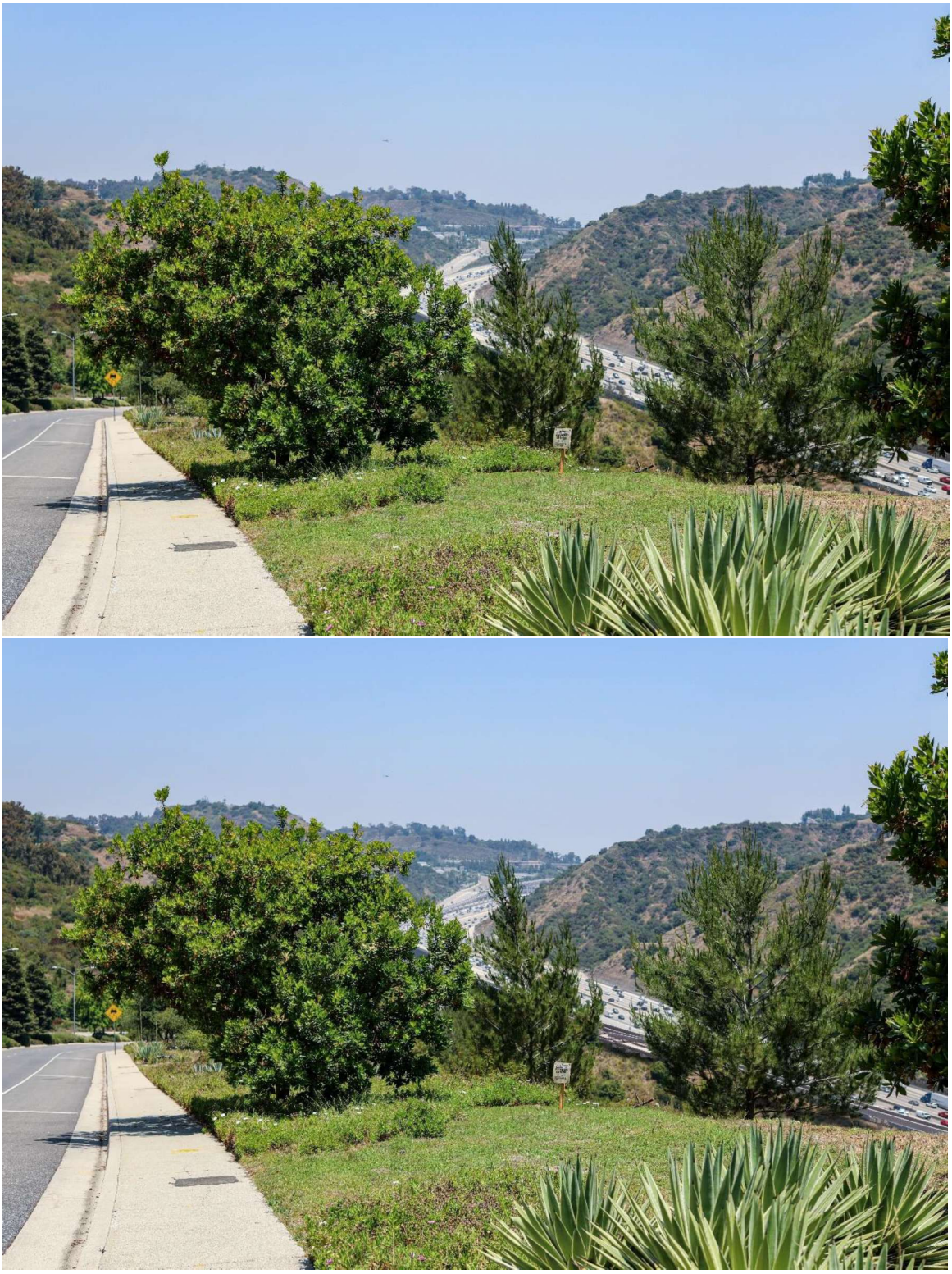
Figure 7-28. Alternative 3: KOP 7 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking North Toward I-405 and the San Fernando Valley

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 7-29. Alternative 3: KOP 8 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking South Toward I-405 and the Skirball Center

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 7-30. Alternative 3: KOP 9 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking Northeast at the Aerial Alignment Along I-405



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 7-31. Alternative 3: KOP 10 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking West/Southwest Toward I-405 and the Getty Center Museum

Source: HTA, 2024

Landscape Unit 4

Within LU-4, the aerial guideway for Alternative 3 would primarily operate along or parallel to I-405 to the Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station. As such, operation of Alternative 3 within LU-4 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 3 within LU-4 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, as they would have direct views of Alternative 3 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed aerial guideway and station would represent a new and large element in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 3 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. For a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 3 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, columns, station entries and plazas are proposed. Alternative 3 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, columns, station entries and plazas are proposed. The aerial guideway, TPSS, and station would be relatively the same height as the existing transportation Due to the aerial guideway's height and massing, the aerial guideway would result in a visual contrast in this portion of LU-4. However, the aerial guideway, TPSS, and stations would be relatively the same height as the existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405, elevated freeway ramps) and commercial structures, which these viewer groups already experience in existing conditions. Because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views.

Alternative 3 would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 3 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities." Alternative 3 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

As such, the aerial facilities would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible. Overall, Alternative 3 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 3 within LU-4 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 5

Within LU-5, the aerial guideway for Alternative 3 would primarily operate along or parallel to I-405 to the Metro G Line Station and would continue along or parallel to I-405. As such, operation of Alternative

3 within LU-5 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 3 within LU-5 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 3 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments or potentially from their private unit. The proposed aerial guideway and station would represent a new and large element in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 3 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. In addition, as discussed in Section 3.3.3, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if Alternative 3 would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 3 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, TPSS, station entries and plazas are proposed. Due to the aerial guideway's height and massing, the aerial guideway would result in a visual contrast in this portion of LU-5. However, the aerial guideway, TPSS, and stations would be relatively the same height as the existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405, elevated freeway ramps) and commercial structures, which these viewer groups already experience in existing conditions. Because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views. Alternative 3 would also result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, TPSS, station entries and plazas are proposed.

Alternative 3 would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 3 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities." Alternative 3 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

Overall, Alternative 3 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 3 within LU-5 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 6

Within LU-6, the aerial guideway for Alternative 3 would primarily operate along or parallel to I-405 to the Sherman Way Station and would continue to the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. As such, operation of Alternative 3 within LU-6 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual

appearance of Alternative 3 within LU-6 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, as they would have direct views of Alternative 3 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed aerial guideway and station would represent a new and large element in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 3 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. As discussed in Section 6.3.3, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Alternative 3 would also result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, TPSS, station entries and plazas are proposed.

Alternative 3 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, TPSS, station entries and plazas are proposed. The aerial guideway would represent a new element in the visual environment and would be noticeable to residents because I-405 and aerial guideway would be visible after tree removal on Firmament Avenue. However, this area along Firmament Avenue is an urbanized area, and there are no applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality in this area.

The large scale of the proposed aerial guideway, as compared to the adjacent small-scale residential uses on Firmament Avenue, would result in a prominent intrusion to the visual setting from this view. However, as shown in KOP 11 (Figure 7-32) located along Firmament Avenue near Valerio Street, no new visible feature would be visually incompatible with the existing urban and transportation-oriented visual aesthetic of Firmament Avenue.

Figure 7-32. Alternative 3: KOP 11 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking West Toward the Aerial Alignment Along I-405 and Firmament Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

Due to the aerial guideway's height and massing, the aerial guideway would result in a visual contrast in this portion of LU-6. However, the aerial guideway, TPSS, and stations would be relatively the same height as the existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405, elevated freeway ramps) and commercial structures, which these viewer groups already experience in existing conditions. Because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views.

Alternative 3 would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 3 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities." Alternative 3 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

Overall, Alternative 3 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 3 within LU-6 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Operation of Alternative 3 would represent an overall change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions. However, Alternative 3 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors. Although viewer groups may have varying sensitivities to the visual change associated with Alternative 3 for each of the LUs, Alternative 3 would be consistent with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. However, this area along Firmament Avenue is an urbanized area, and there are no applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality in this area. As a result, the operation of Alternative 3 would have less than significant impacts related to visual character and quality.

7.3.3.2 Construction Impacts

The Alternative 3 alignment consists of a portion of the public ROW, including roadway and sidewalks, as well as City-owned, state-owned, and private properties. During the construction phase, the visual character of the alignment would change temporarily from existing conditions. Construction of the aerial guideway, stations, and freeway modifications would require equipment such as construction barriers and sound walls, cranes, and other appurtenances that would be visible during much of the approximately 102-month construction period.

Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings and other aerial transportation infrastructure. Certain areas may be fenced off with construction barriers and sound walls, resulting in a contrast and change in visual character from the existing conditions. Mitigation Measure AES-1 would include temporary privacy screens to minimize impacts from construction barriers and sound walls. In addition, the designated construction areas along the alignment would experience additional truck traffic compared to existing conditions, with trucks moving materials on- and off-site, and work crews and construction equipment moving around the alignment and between Alternative 3 components.

As discussed in Section 7.3.3.1, within LU-6, a line of mature trees presently between I-405 and Firmament Avenue would be removed to accommodate the placement of the proposed aerial guideway infrastructure. However, this area along Firmament Avenue is an urbanized area, and there are no applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality in this area. Additionally, Mitigation Measure AES-1 would be implemented during tree removal and construction activities to minimize impacts along Firmament Avenue by using temporary screens.

Some residents may have private views of Alternative 3 construction from their windows. While residents would be highly sensitive to visual changes and would have a higher degree of personal investment in Alternative 3, as discussed in Section 7.2.4.1, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to public views.

Motorists would primarily experience views of construction activities while driving along the roadways along and adjacent to Alternative 3. In addition, drivers would have prolonged views while idling at the various traffic signals surrounding the proposed station areas and aerial guideway. Passing drivers would notice the change in the visual character during the construction phase. However, drivers are considered to have a low sensitivity to any visual changes because they would likely be passing through the Project Study Area to reach their destinations and would not necessarily have a personal investment in the visual character or quality of the Project Study Area.

In addition, pedestrians would primarily experience views of construction activities while walking along public sidewalks, within transit stations, and near businesses that are adjacent to the proposed station areas and aerial guideway. The change in the visual character of the alignment during the construction phase would be noticeable by these viewers. In addition, pedestrians are considered to have a moderate sensitivity to visual changes because they may be engaged in observing their surroundings.

Tourists would also potentially experience views of construction while visiting the Getty Center or visiting one of the scenic overlooks along Mulholland Drive. Tourists are considered to have high sensitivity to visual changes. In addition, construction of the aerial guideway would represent new visual elements for tourists who seek to enjoy the views of the Getty Center.

Recreationalists would similarly experience views of construction while visiting Westwood Park. Recreationalists are considered to have high sensitivity to visual changes. However, views of visual resources would not be interrupted during construction, because no visual resources are visible from Westwood Park. In addition, the aerial guideway and Wilshire Boulevard Station would have similar characteristics to existing transportation infrastructure, such as I-405, that is prevalent in views in this area. As such, the aerial guideway and Wilshire Boulevard Station would not significantly impact views in this area.

Alternative 3 includes entitlements and approvals to establish land use regulations for the Alternative 3 alignment to ensure consistent implementation of development standards throughout the Alternative 3 alignment. The development standards would recognize the unique characteristics of Alternative 3, including unique opportunities for public benefits. The design standards included in Alternative 3 entitlements and approvals would enhance the visual identity and character of Alternative 3 and its surrounding communities, and would ensure visual compatibility with adjacent development, as well as the Project Study Area's overall community character. Overall, Alternative 3 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality.

Overall, construction would represent a temporary change in the visual quality and character and a significant impact. Alternative 3 components would potentially stand out as memorable or remarkable

features in the landscape due to their scale, which would have a temporary impact on visual character and quality of the Project Study Area and its surroundings compared to existing conditions. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings in urbanized areas. Impacts from construction activities would be temporary, and post-construction views of Project-related construction activities, equipment, stockpiles, and fencing would be removed once construction is completed. In addition, Alternative 3 would comply with the best management practices noted in Section 7.1.2, as well as the city's development standards related to scenic quality during construction, which would be verified during the permitting process. The implementation of MM AES-1 would reduce significant impacts. Therefore, construction of Alternative 3 would not conflict with applicable regulations governing scenic quality and would result in less than significant impacts.

7.3.3.3 Maintenance and Storage Facilities

MSF Base Design

Maintenance of monorail vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF Base Design. Several buildings would be constructed, including a primary maintenance building, a maintenance-of-way building, track storage area, wash bays, ancillary storage buildings, parking area for employees and TPSS structure. These structures would be the primary visual elements of the MSF Base Design. The MSF Base Design site within the northern portion of LU-6 would be located within a heavily industrialized area, and operation of this MSF Base Design would generally fit within the context of the existing industrial character.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 3 within LU-6 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of the MSF Base Design either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed MSF Base Design would represent a new and large element in the visual environment for residents.

The MSF Base Design would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels. As discussed previously, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

The MSF Base Design in LU-6 would be located on the LADWP property east of the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The MSF Base Design would be elevated consistent with the guideway height. The maintenance level for the train cars would be consistent with the guideway track elevation and would contain maintenance areas. The ground level would include multiple rows of columns and support beams for structural support, as well as an administrative building with parking areas. The massing and height of the MSF Base Design would be similar to several existing industrial buildings located directly adjacent to the LOSSAN rail corridor. The visual character of the new surface parking lot would be similar to the existing parking lot at the proposed MSF Base Design site.

The MSF Base Design would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. In addition, the MSF Base Design would be relatively the same height as the existing commercial structures along Van Nuys Boulevard. These railway structures are typically more visually tolerable in

industrial and commercial areas. As such, these facilities would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views.

Alternative 3 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities." Alternative 3 would be accessible to the regional transit systems, and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

During the construction phase, the visual character of the alignment would change temporarily from existing conditions. Construction of the MSF Base Design would require equipment such as construction barriers and sound walls, cranes, and other appurtenances that would be visible during the construction period.

Construction of the MSF Base Design would comply with applicable regulations governing scenic quality, including South Coast Air Quality Management District Rule 403, and would occur in an urbanized area. Rule 403 does not permit track-out dust to extend 25 feet or more beyond the active construction area and requires all track-out dirt to be removed at the end of each workday or evening shift. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings and other aerial transportation infrastructure.

Although temporary and short-term in nature, construction activities would be a visual nuisance. However, certain areas may be fenced off with construction barriers and sound walls, resulting in a contrast and change in visual character from the existing conditions. Mitigation Measure AES-1 would include temporary privacy screens to minimize impacts from construction barriers and sound walls. In addition, the designated construction areas along the alignment would experience additional truck traffic compared to existing conditions, with trucks moving materials on- and off-site, and work crews and construction equipment moving around the alignment and between Alternative 3 components.

In addition, the designated construction areas along the alignment would experience additional truck traffic compared to existing conditions, with trucks moving materials on- and off-site, and work crews and construction equipment moving around the alignment and between Alternative 3 components.

Motorists would primarily experience views of construction activities while driving along the roadways along and adjacent to the MSF Base Design. In addition, drivers would have prolonged views while idling at the various traffic signals surrounding the proposed station areas and aerial guideway. Passing drivers would notice the change in the visual character during the construction phase. However, drivers are considered to have a low sensitivity to any visual changes because they would likely be passing through the Project Study Area to reach their destinations and would not necessarily have a personal investment in the visual character or quality of the MSF Base Design area.

In addition, pedestrians would primarily experience views of construction activities while walking along public sidewalks, within transit stations, and near businesses that are to the proposed station areas and aerial guideway. The change in the visual character during the construction phase would be noticeable by these viewers. In addition, pedestrians are considered to have a moderate sensitivity to visual changes because they may be engaged in observing their surroundings.

The MSF Base Design includes entitlements and approvals to ensure consistent implementation of development standards. The development standards would recognize the MSF Base Design's unique characteristics, including unique opportunities for public benefits. The design standards included in the

MSF Base Design's entitlements and approvals would ensure visual compatibility with adjacent development, as well as the MSF Base Design area's overall community character. The MSF Base Design would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. As such, the MSF Base Design would be consistent with applicable policies related to scenic quality during construction.

Overall, the MSF Base Design would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Construction would represent a temporary change in the visual quality and character. Alternative 3 components would potentially stand out as memorable or remarkable features in the landscape due to their scale, which would have a temporary impact on visual character and quality of the MSF Base Design area and its surroundings compared to existing conditions. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings in urbanized areas. Impacts from construction activities would be temporary, and post-construction views of Alternative 3 -related construction activities, equipment, stockpiles, and fencing would be removed once construction is completed. In addition, the MSF Base Design would comply with the best management practices noted in Section 7.1.2, as well as the city's development standards related to scenic quality during construction, which would be verified during the permitting process. Therefore, the MSF Base Design within LU-6 would not conflict with applicable regulations governing scenic quality, or substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

MSF Design Option 1

As part of the MSF Design Option 1, several buildings would be constructed, including a primary maintenance building, a maintenance-of-way building, a train car washing building, parking area for employees and TPSS structure. These structures would be the primary visual elements of the MSF Design Option 1. Overall, the MSF Design Option 1 would follow Metro's Art Program Policy, and Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. In addition, the MSF Design Option 1 would be relatively the same height as the existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405) and commercial structures. These railway structures are typically more visually tolerable in industrial and commercial areas. An existing residential area to the south may have somewhat distant views of the MSF Design Option 1, but the proposed MSF facilities would be located in an industrial area. As such, these facilities would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views.

The MSF Design Option 1 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities." Alternative 3 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

Overall, the MSF Design Option 1 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Construction would represent a temporary change in the visual quality and character. Alternative 3 components would potentially stand out as memorable or remarkable features in the landscape due to their scale, which would have a temporary impact on visual character and quality of the Project Study Area and its surroundings compared to existing conditions. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings in urbanized areas. Impacts from construction activities would be temporary and post-

construction views of Alternative 3 -related construction activities, equipment, stockpiles, and fencing would be removed once construction is completed. In addition, the MSF Design Option 1 would comply with the best management practices previously described, as well as the city's development standards related to scenic quality during construction, which would be verified during the permitting process. Therefore, the MSF Design Option 1 within LU-6 would not conflict with applicable regulations governing scenic quality, or substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

7.3.4 Impact AES-4: Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

7.3.4.1 Operational Impacts

Alternative 3 includes a new aerial guideway along the I-405 corridor and a 3.7-mile underground tunnel to the east of the freeway connecting the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station to the Getty Center Station. As such, new nighttime light would primarily emanate from station areas (e.g., station plazas, entryways, and platforms), which would not substantially increase the amount of lighting in the immediate area because similar light sources and levels (e.g., buildings, streetlights, and parking lots) currently exist. Alternative 3 would follow Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy. Compliance with these requirements would ensure that permanent operations-related light sources at the proposed station areas would be directed downwards or feature directional shielding to minimize spillover onto adjacent properties, including residential uses and other light-sensitive uses.

Alternative 3 -related sources of light and glare from the aerial component north of the Santa Monica Mountains to the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW in Van Nuys would primarily emanate from monorail vehicles and station areas, including the aerial guideway, and station platforms. Lighting related to Alternative 3 would primarily occur at the stations and TPSS. Lighting from monorail vehicles on aerial structures is not expected to extend beyond the aerial guideway or roadway ROW. Per Metro's Rail Design Criteria or equivalent, all light sources at the proposed stations would be directed downwards to minimize potential spillover onto surrounding properties, including light-sensitive uses.

Additionally, Alternative 3 would include several elements (e.g., glass or metal surfaces) that would create new sources of glare at proposed station areas during the day. However, per Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy, surfaces and architectural finishes would be used that reduce glare and reflection to reduce impacts. Overall, Alternative 3 would create a negligible addition to light and glare and would not constitute a substantial change in existing light and glare in the immediate area. Therefore, operation of Alternative 3 would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

7.3.4.2 Construction Impacts

Construction of Alternative 3 would primarily occur during daytime hours. Nighttime and weekend construction, if any, would comply with local ordinance restrictions. Such activities may include, but would not be limited to, tunneling, columns and trackwork, and stockpiling materials. As part of best management practices discussed in Section 7.1.2, construction lighting would be directed toward the construction areas and/or shielded with temporary screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto adjacent areas. In addition, construction-related illumination would be temporary and limited to safety and security purposes. Construction of the aerial guideway, freeway modifications, and aerial stations as part of Alternative 3 would not be a substantial source of light and glare because several nighttime

lighting sources (e.g., streetlights, building illumination) already exist around the proposed construction areas. Therefore, construction of Alternative 3 would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

7.3.4.3 Maintenance and Storage Facilities

MSF Base Design

Maintenance of monorail vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF Base Design. Several buildings would be constructed, including a primary maintenance building, a maintenance-of-way building, track storage area, wash bays, ancillary storage buildings, parking area for employees, and TPSS structure. New nighttime light would primarily emanate from the MSF Base Design, which would be a visible source of light, but would not represent a substantial increase in the amount of lighting in the immediate area because similar light sources and levels (e.g., buildings, streetlights, and parking lots) currently exist. The MSF Base Design would follow Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy. Compliance with these requirements would ensure that permanent operations-related light sources at the MSF Base Design would be directed downwards or feature directional shielding to minimize spillover onto adjacent properties, including residential uses and other light-sensitive uses.

Alternative 3-related sources of light and glare from the MSF Base Design would primarily emanate from buildings and parking areas. Per Metro's Rail Design Criteria or equivalent, all light sources at the proposed surface parking lots and stations would be directed downwards to minimize potential spillover onto surrounding properties, including light-sensitive uses.

The MSF Base Design would include several elements (e.g., glass or metal surfaces) that would create new sources of glare during the day. However, per Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy, surfaces and architectural finishes would be used that reduce glare and reflection. Overall, the MSF Base Design would create a negligible addition to light and glare and would not constitute a substantial change in existing light and glare in the immediate area.

In addition, construction of the MSF Base Design would primarily occur during daytime hours. Nighttime and weekend construction, if any, would comply with local ordinance restrictions. As part of best management practices discussed in Section 7.1.2, construction lighting would be directed toward the construction areas and/or shielded with temporary screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto adjacent areas. In addition, construction-related illumination would be temporary and limited to safety and security purposes. Construction of the MSF Base Design would not be a substantial source of light and glare as several nighttime lighting sources already exist around the construction areas (e.g., streetlights, building illumination). Therefore, the MSF Base Design would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

MSF Design Option 1

Maintenance of monorail vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF Design Option 1. As part of the MSF Design Option 1, several buildings would be constructed, including a primary maintenance building, a maintenance-of-way building, a train car washing building, parking area for employees, and a TPSS structure. Overall, the MSF Design Option 1 would create a negligible addition to light and glare and would not constitute a substantial change in existing light and glare in the immediate area. In addition, construction of the MSF Design Option 1 would not be a substantial source of light and glare as several nighttime lighting sources already exist around the construction areas (e.g., streetlights, building

illumination). Therefore, the MSF Design Option 1 would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

7.4 Mitigation Measures

7.4.1 Operational Impacts

As discussed in Section 7.38.3, operation of Alternative 3 would result in less than significant impacts related to scenic vistas, scenic resources, visual character, and light and glare; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

7.4.2 Construction Impacts

Construction activities would be a temporary and short-term visual nuisance. Temporary changes and contrast from the visual character from the existing conditions are impacted by construction activities such as site operations, tree removals, and construction traffic. Construction related structures such as barrier, sound walls, and fencing also impact visual resources.

As a result, the following mitigation measures would be implemented:

MM AES-1: *Privacy screens, as applicable and appropriate, shall be placed in high visibility areas that have construction related structures or activities. Privacy screens shall be used in areas requiring tree removal activities adjacent visually sensitive areas, including but not limited to residential areas.*

7.4.3 Impacts After Mitigation

During construction MM AES-1 would reduce the temporary visual nuisance of construction activities. Privacy screens would also minimize the visual impacts from tree removals at Firmament Avenue in LU-6. To the greatest extent practicable protected trees and shrubs would not be removed. When removal is unavoidable, such as along Firmament Avenue in LU-6, MM AES-1 would be implemented, including installing temporary privacy screens to limit direct residential views of tree removals directly adjacent east of I-405. The implementation of this mitigation measure would result in less than significant impacts related to construction.

8 ALTERNATIVE 4

8.1 Alternative Description

Alternative 4 is a heavy rail transit (HRT) system with a hybrid underground and aerial guideway track configuration that would include four underground stations and four aerial stations. This alternative would provide transfers to five high-frequency fixed guideway transit and commuter rail lines, including the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (Metro) E, Metro D, and Metro G Lines, the East San Fernando Valley Light Rail Transit Line, and the Metrolink Ventura County Line. The length of the alignment between the terminus stations would be approximately 13.9 miles, with 5.7 miles of aerial guideway and 8.2 miles of underground configuration.

The four underground and four aerial HRT stations would be as follows:

1. Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station (underground)
2. Santa Monica Boulevard Station (underground)
3. Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station (underground)
4. UCLA Gateway Plaza Station (underground)
5. Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station (aerial)
6. Metro G Line Sepulveda Station (aerial)
7. Sherman Way Station (aerial)
8. Van Nuys Metrolink Station (aerial)

8.1.1 Operating Characteristics

8.1.1.1 Alignment

As shown on Figure 8-1, from its southern terminus station at the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, the alignment of Alternative 4 would run underground north through the Westside of Los Angeles (Westside) and the Santa Monica Mountains to a tunnel portal south of Ventura Boulevard in the San Fernando Valley (Valley). At the tunnel portal, the alignment would transition to an aerial guideway that would generally run above Sepulveda Boulevard before curving eastward along the south side of the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) rail corridor to the northern terminus station adjacent to the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station.

The proposed southern terminus station would be located underground east of Sepulveda Boulevard between the existing elevated Metro E Line tracks and Pico Boulevard. Tail tracks for vehicle storage would extend underground south of National Boulevard east of Sepulveda Boulevard. The alignment would continue north beneath Bentley Avenue before curving northwest to an underground station at the southeast corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard. From the Santa Monica Boulevard Station, the alignment would continue and curve eastward toward the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station beneath the Metro D Line Westwood/UCLA Station, which is currently under construction as part of the Metro D Line Extension Project. From there, the underground alignment would curve slightly to the northeast and continue beneath Westwood Boulevard before reaching the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station.

Figure 8-1. Alternative 4: Alignment

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

From the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station, the alignment would turn to the northwest beneath the Santa Monica Mountains to the east of Interstate 405 (I-405). South of Mulholland Drive, the alignment would curve to the north to reach a tunnel portal at Del Gado Drive, just east of I-405 and south of Sepulveda Boulevard.

The alignment would transition from an underground configuration to an aerial guideway structure after exiting the tunnel portal and would continue northeast to the Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard

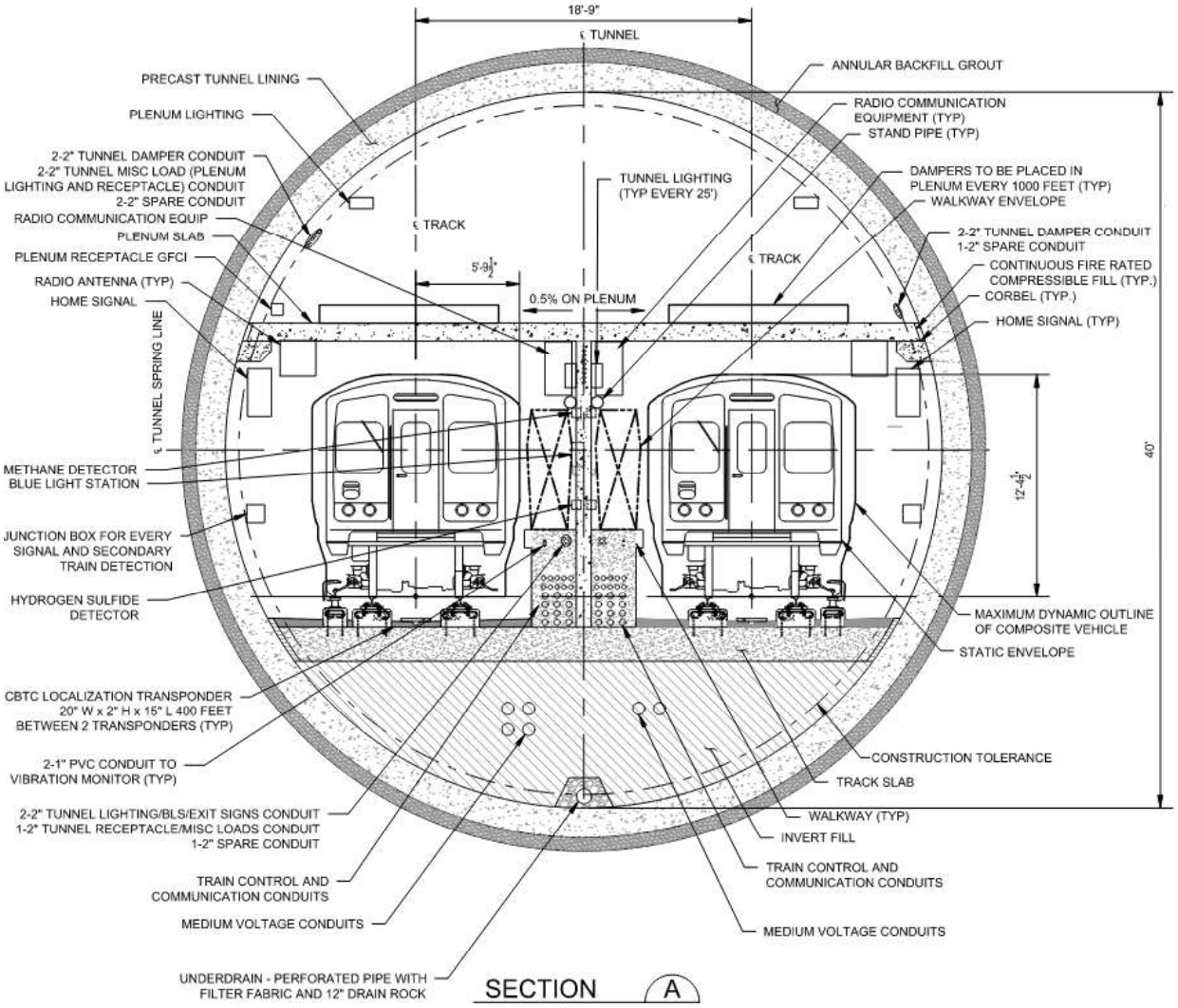
Station located over Dickens Street, immediately west of the Sepulveda Boulevard and Dickens Street intersection. North of the station, the aerial guideway would transition to the center median of Sepulveda Boulevard. The aerial guideway would continue north on Sepulveda Boulevard and cross over U.S. Highway 101 (US-101) and the Los Angeles River before continuing to the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station, immediately south of the Metro G Line Busway. Overhead utilities along Sepulveda Boulevard in the Valley would be undergrounded where they would conflict with the guideway or its supporting columns.

The aerial guideway would continue north above Sepulveda Boulevard where it would reach the Sherman Way Station just south of Sherman Way. After leaving the Sherman Way Station, the alignment would continue north before curving to the southeast to parallel the LOSSAN rail corridor on the south side of the existing tracks. Parallel to the LOSSAN rail corridor, the guideway would conflict with the existing Willis Avenue Pedestrian Bridge, which would be demolished. The alignment would follow the LOSSAN rail corridor before reaching the proposed northern terminus Van Nuys Metrolink Station located adjacent to the existing Metrolink/Amtrak Station. Tail tracks and yard lead tracks would descend to a proposed at-grade maintenance and storage facility (MSF) east of the northern terminus station. Modifications to the existing pedestrian underpass to the Metrolink platforms to accommodate these tracks would result in reconfiguration of an existing rail spur serving City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) property.

8.1.1.2 Guideway Characteristics

Alternative 4 would utilize a single-bore tunnel configuration for underground tunnel sections, with an outside diameter of approximately 43.5 feet. The tunnel would include two parallel tracks with 18.75-foot track spacing in tangent sections separated by a continuous central dividing wall throughout the tunnel. Inner walkways would be constructed adjacent to the two tracks. Inner and outer walkways would be constructed within tunnel sections near the track crossovers. At the crown of tunnel, a dedicated air plenum would be provided by constructing a concrete slab above the railway corridor. The air plenum would allow for ventilation throughout the underground portion of the alignment. Figure 8-2 illustrates these components at a typical cross-section of the underground guideway.

Figure 8-2. Typical Underground Guideway Cross-Section

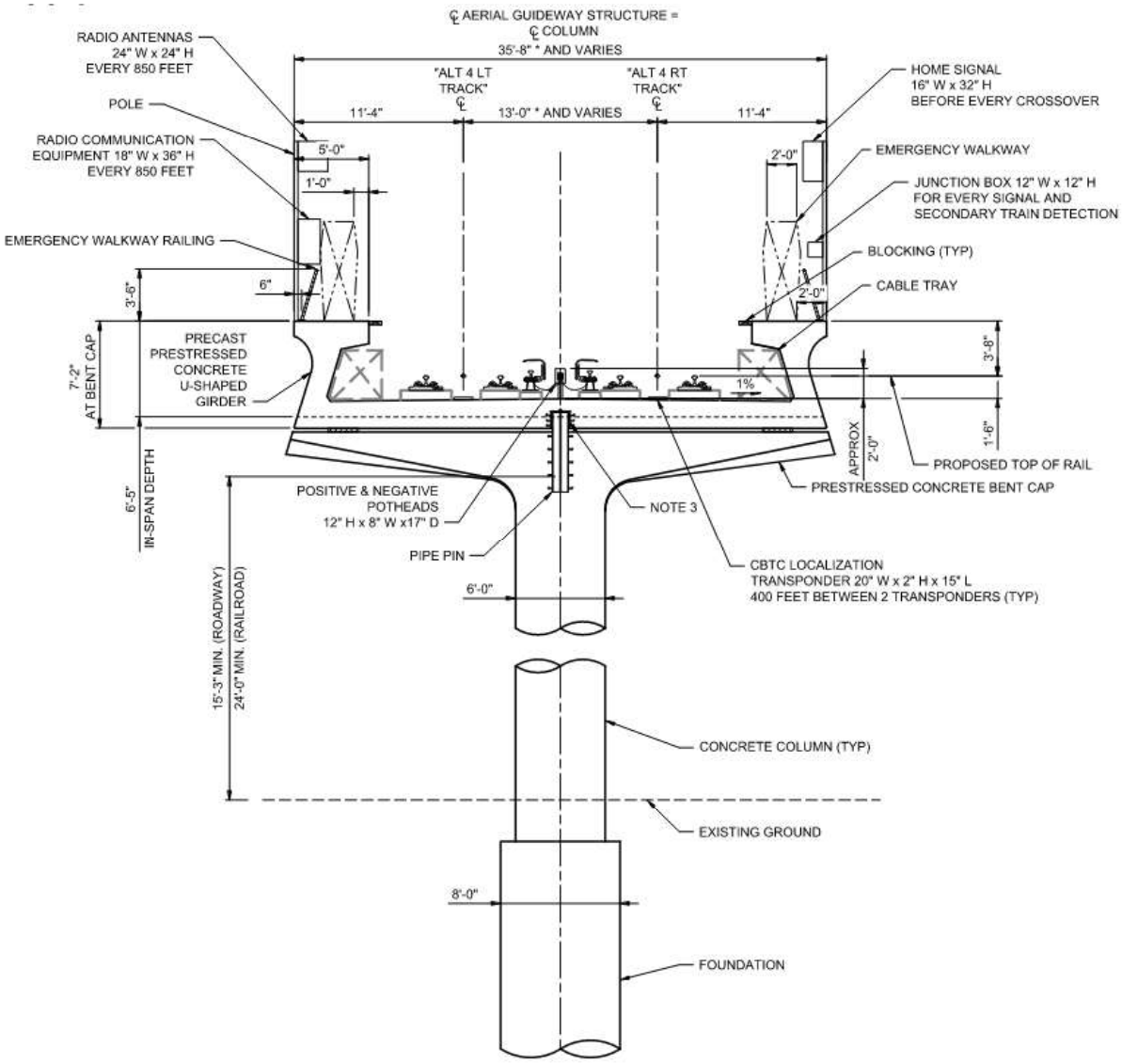


Source: STCP, 2024

In aerial sections, the guideway would be supported by either single columns or straddle-bents. Both types of structures would support a U-shaped concrete girder and the HRT track. The aerial guideway would be approximately 36 feet wide. The track would be constructed on the concrete girders with direct fixation and would maintain a minimum of 13 feet between the centerlines of the two tracks. On the outer side of the tracks, emergency walkways would be constructed with a minimum width of 2 feet.

The single-column pier would be the primary aerial structure throughout the aerial portion of the alignment. Crash protection barriers would be used to protect columns located in the median of Sepulveda Boulevard in the Valley. Figure 8-3 shows a typical cross-section of the single-column aerial guideway.

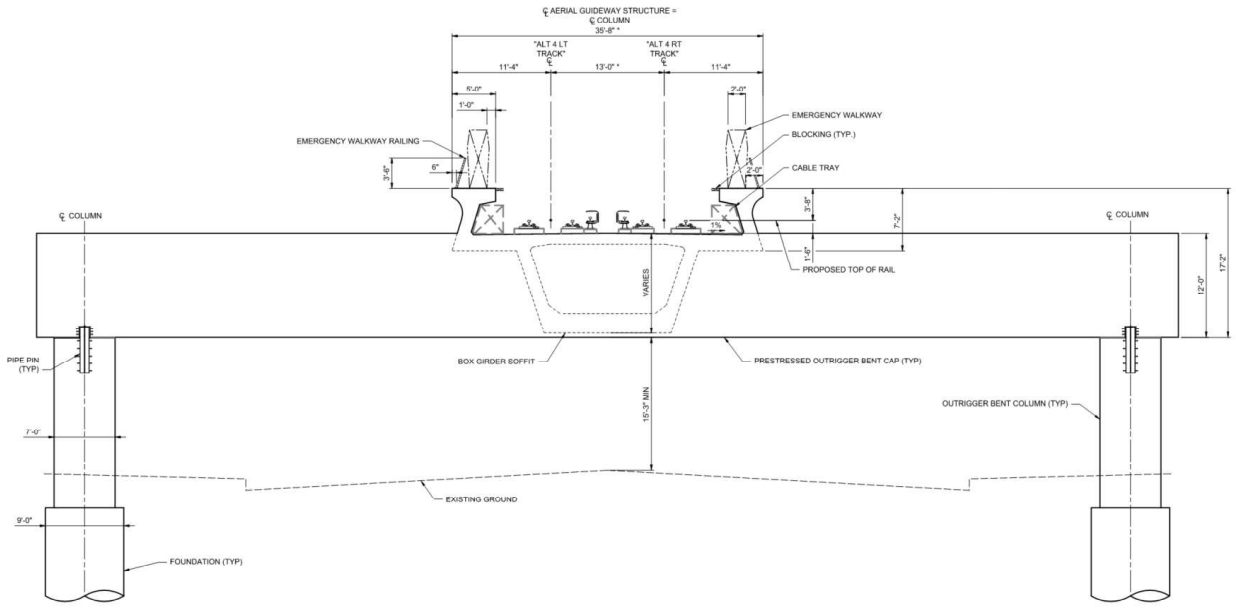
Figure 8-3. Typical Aerial Guideway Cross-Section



Source: STCP, 2024

In order to span intersections and maintain existing turn movements, sections of the aerial guideway would be supported by straddle bents, a concrete straddle-beam placed atop two concrete columns constructed outside of the underlying roadway. Figure 8-4 illustrates a typical straddle-bent configuration.

Figure 8-4. Typical Aerial Straddle-Bent Cross-Section



Source: STCP, 2024

8.1.1.3 Vehicle Technology

Alternative 4 would utilize steel-wheel HRT trains, with automated train operations and planned peak-period headways of 2.5 minutes and off-peak-period headways ranging from 4 to 6 minutes. Each train could consist of three or four cars with open gangways between cars. The HRT vehicle would have a maximum operating speed of 70 miles per hour; actual operating speeds would depend on the design of the guideway and distance between stations. Train cars would be approximately 10 feet wide with three double doors on each side. Each car would be approximately 72 feet long with capacity for 170 passengers. Trains would be powered by a third rail.

8.1.1.4 Stations

Alternative 4 would include four underground stations and four aerial stations with station platforms measuring 280 feet long for both station configurations. The aerial stations would be constructed a minimum of 15.25 feet above ground level, supported by rows of dual columns with 8-foot diameters. The southern terminus station would be adjacent to the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, and the northern terminus station would be adjacent to the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station.

All stations would be side-platform stations where passengers would select and travel to station platforms depending on their direction of travel. All stations would include 20-foot-wide side platforms separated by 30 feet for side-by-side trains. Aerial station platforms would be covered, but not enclosed. Each underground station would include an upper and lower concourse level prior to reaching the train platforms. Each aerial station, except for the Sherman Way Station, would include a mezzanine level prior to reaching the station platforms. At the Sherman Way Station, separate entrances on opposite sides of the street would provide access to either the northbound or southbound platform with an overhead pedestrian walkway providing additional connectivity across platforms. Each station would have a minimum of two elevators, two escalators, and one stairway from the ground level to the concourse or mezzanine.

Stations would include automatic, bi-parting fixed doors along the edges of station platforms. These platform screen doors would be integrated into the automatic train control system and would not open unless a train is stopped at the platform.

The following information describes each station, with relevant entrance, walkway, and transfer information. Bicycle parking would be provided at each station.

Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station

- This underground station would be located just north of the existing Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, on the east side of Sepulveda Boulevard.
- A station entrance would be located on the east side of Sepulveda Boulevard north of the Metro E Line.
- A walkway to transfer to the Metro E Line would be provided at street level within the fare paid zone.
- A 126-space parking lot would be located immediately north of the station entrance, east of Sepulveda Boulevard. Passengers would also be able to park at the existing Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station parking facility, which provides 260 parking spaces.

Santa Monica Boulevard Station

- This underground station would be located under the southeast corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard.
- The station entrance would be located on the south side of Santa Monica Boulevard between Sepulveda Boulevard and Bentley Avenue.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station

- This underground station would be located beneath the Metro D Line tracks and platform under Gayley Avenue between Wilshire Boulevard and Lindbrook Drive.
- Station entrances would be provided on the northeast corner of Wilshire Boulevard and Gayley Avenue and on the northeast corner of Lindbrook Drive and Gayley Avenue. Passengers would also be able to use the Metro D Line Westwood/UCLA Station entrances to access the station platform.
- A direct internal station transfer to the Metro D Line would be provided at the south end of the station.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

UCLA Gateway Plaza Station

- This underground station would be located underneath Gateway Plaza on the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) campus.
- Station entrances would be provided on the north side of Gateway Plaza and on the east side of Westwood Boulevard across from Strathmore Place.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station

- This aerial station would be located west of Sepulveda Boulevard spanning over Dickens Street.

- A station entrance would be provided on the west side of Sepulveda Boulevard south of Dickens Street.
- A 52-space parking lot would be located adjacent to the station entrance on the southwest corner of the Sepulveda Boulevard and Dickens Street intersection, and an additional 40-space parking lot would be located on the northwest corner of the same intersection.

Metro G Line Sepulveda Station

- This aerial station would be located over Sepulveda Boulevard immediately south of the Metro G Line Busway.
- A station entrance would be provided on the west side of Sepulveda Boulevard south of the Metro G Line Busway.
- An elevated pedestrian walkway would connect the platform level of the proposed station to the planned aerial Metro G Line Busway platforms within the fare paid zone.
- Passengers would be able to park at the existing Metro G Line Sepulveda Station parking facility, which has a capacity of 1,205 parking spaces. Currently, only 260 parking spaces are used for transit parking. No additional automobile parking would be provided at the proposed station.

Sherman Way Station

- This aerial station would be located over Sepulveda Boulevard between Sherman Way and Gault Street.
- Station entrances would be provided on either side of Sepulveda Boulevard south of Sherman Way.
- A 46-space parking lot would be located on the northwest corner of the Sepulveda Boulevard and Gault Street intersection, and an additional 76-space parking lot would be located west of the station along Sherman Way.

Van Nuys Metrolink Station

- This aerial station would span Van Nuys Boulevard, just south of the LOSSAN rail corridor.
- The primary station entrance would be located on the east side of Van Nuys Boulevard just south of the LOSSAN rail corridor. A secondary station entrance would be located between Raymer Street and Van Nuys Boulevard.
- An underground pedestrian walkway would connect the station plaza to the existing pedestrian underpass to the Metrolink/Amtrak platform outside the fare paid zone.
- Existing Metrolink Station parking would be reconfigured, maintaining approximately the same number of spaces, but 66 parking spaces would be relocated west of Van Nuys Boulevard. Metrolink parking would not be available to Metro transit riders.

8.1.1.5 Station-To-Station Travel Times

Table 8-1 presents the station-to-station distance and travel times at peak period for Alternative 4. The travel times include both run time and dwell time. Dwell time is 30 seconds for transfer stations and 20 seconds for other stations. Northbound and southbound travel times vary slightly because of grade differentials and operational considerations at end-of-line stations.

Table 8-1. Alternative 4: Station-to-Station Travel Times and Station Dwell Times

From Station	To Station	Distance (miles)	Northbound Station-to-Station Travel Time (seconds)	Southbound Station-to-Station Travel Time (seconds)	Dwell Time (seconds)
Metro E Line Station					*30*
Metro E Line	Santa Monica Boulevard	0.9	89	86	—
Santa Monica Boulevard Station					*20*
Santa Monica Boulevard	Wilshire/Metro D Line	0.9	91	92	—
Wilshire/Metro D Line Station					*30*
Wilshire/Metro D Line	UCLA Gateway Plaza	0.7	75	68	—
UCLA Gateway Plaza Station					*20*
UCLA Gateway Plaza	Ventura Boulevard	6.1	376	366	—
Ventura Boulevard Station					*20*
Ventura Boulevard	Metro G Line	1.9	149	149	—
Metro G Line Station					*30*
Metro G Line	Sherman Way	1.4	110	109	—
Sherman Way Station					*20*
Sherman Way	Van Nuys Metrolink	1.9	182	180	—
Van Nuys Metrolink Station					*30*

Source: STCP, 2024

— = no data

8.1.1.6 Special Trackwork

Alternative 4 would include 10 double crossovers throughout the alignment, enabling trains to cross over to the parallel track. Each terminus station would include a double crossover immediately north and south of the station. Except for the Santa Monica Boulevard Station, each station would have a double crossover immediately south of the station. The remaining crossovers would be located along the alignment midway between the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station and the Ventura Boulevard Station.

8.1.1.7 Maintenance and Storage Facility

The MSF for Alternative 4 would be located east of the Van Nuys Metrolink Station and would encompass approximately 46 acres. The MSF would be designed to accommodate 184 rail cars and would be bounded by single-family residences to the south, the LOSSAN rail corridor to the north, Woodman Avenue on the east, and Hazeltine Avenue and industrial manufacturing enterprises to the west. Trains would access the site from the fixed guideway's tail tracks at the northwest corner of the site. Trains would then travel southeast to maintenance facilities and storage tracks.

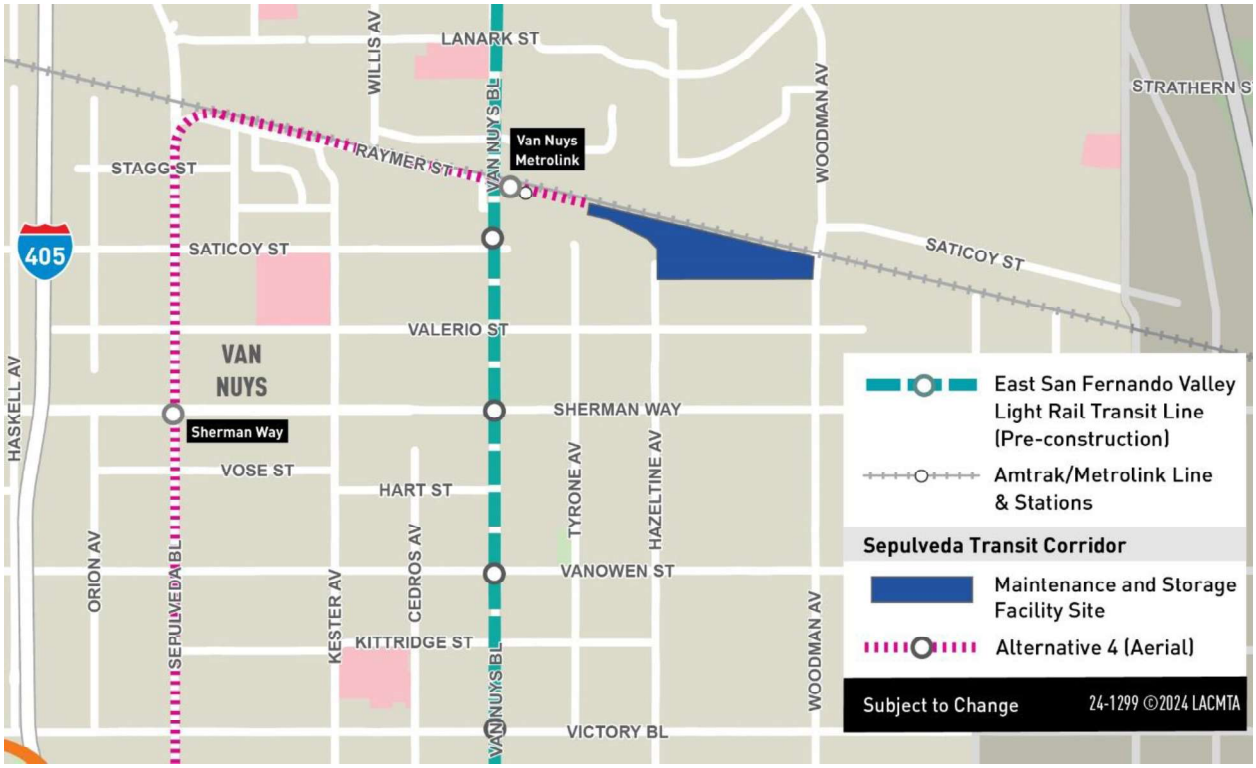
The site would include the following facilities:

- Two entrance gates with guard shacks
- Main shop building
- Maintenance-of-way building
- Storage tracks
- Carwash building
- Cleaning and inspections platforms
- Material storage building

- Hazmat storage locker
- Traction power substation (TPSS) located on the west end of the MSF to serve the mainline
- TPSS located on the east end of the MSF to serve the yard and shops
- Parking area for employees
- Grade separated access roadway (over the HRT tracks at the east end of the facility, and necessary drainage)

Figure 8-5 shows the location of the MSF site for Alternative 4.

Figure 8-5. Alternative 4: Maintenance and Storage Facility Site



Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

8.1.1.8 Traction Power Substations

TPSSs transform and convert high voltage alternating current supplied from power utility feeders into direct current suitable for transit operation. Twelve TPSS facilities would be located along the alignment and would be spaced approximately 0.5 to 2.5 miles apart. TPSS facilities would generally be located within the stations, adjacent to the tunnel through the Santa Monica Mountains, or within the MSF. TPSSs would be approximately 2,000 to 3,000 square feet. Table 8-2 lists the TPSS locations for Alternative 4.

Figure 8-6 shows the TPSS locations along the Alternative 4 alignment.

Table 8-2. Alternative 4: Traction Power Substation Locations

TPSS No.	Location Description	Configuration
1	TPSS 1 would be located east of Sepulveda Boulevard and north of the Metro E Line.	Underground (within station)
2	TPSS 2 would be located south of Santa Monica Boulevard between Sepulveda Boulevard and Bentley Avenue.	Underground (within station)
3	TPSS 3 would be located at the southeast corner of UCLA Gateway Plaza.	Underground (within station)
4	TPSS 4 would be located south of Bellagio Road and west of Stone Canyon Road.	Underground (adjacent to tunnel)
5	TPSS 5 would be located west of Roscomare Road between Donella Circle and Linda Flora Drive.	Underground (adjacent to tunnel)
6	TPSS 6 would be located east of Loom Place between Longbow Drive and Vista Haven Road.	Underground (adjacent to tunnel)
7	TPSS 7 would be located west of Sepulveda Boulevard between the I-405 Northbound On-Ramp and Dickens Street.	At-grade (within station)
8	TPSS 8 would be located west of Sepulveda Boulevard between the Metro G Line Busway and Oxnard Street.	At-grade (within station)
9	TPSS 9 would be located at the southwest corner of Sepulveda Boulevard and Sherman Way.	At-grade (within station)
10	TPSS 10 would be located south of the LOSSAN rail corridor and north of Raymer Street and Kester Avenue.	At-grade
11	TPSS 11 would be located south of the LOSSAN rail corridor and east of the Van Nuys Metrolink Station.	At-grade (within MSF)
12	TPSS 12 would be located south of the LOSSAN rail corridor and east of Hazeltine Avenue.	At-grade (within MSF)

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

Figure 8-6. Alternative 4: Traction Power Substation Locations

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

8.1.1.9 Roadway Configuration Changes

Table 8-3 lists the roadway changes necessary to accommodate the guideway of Alternative 4. Figure 8-7 shows the location of roadway changes in the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project (Project) Study Area, and Figure 8-8 shows detail of the street vacation at Del Gado Drive.

In addition to the changes made to accommodate the guideway, as listed in Table 8-3, roadways and sidewalks near stations would be reconstructed, resulting in modifications to curb ramps and driveways.

Table 8-3. Alternative 4: Roadway Changes

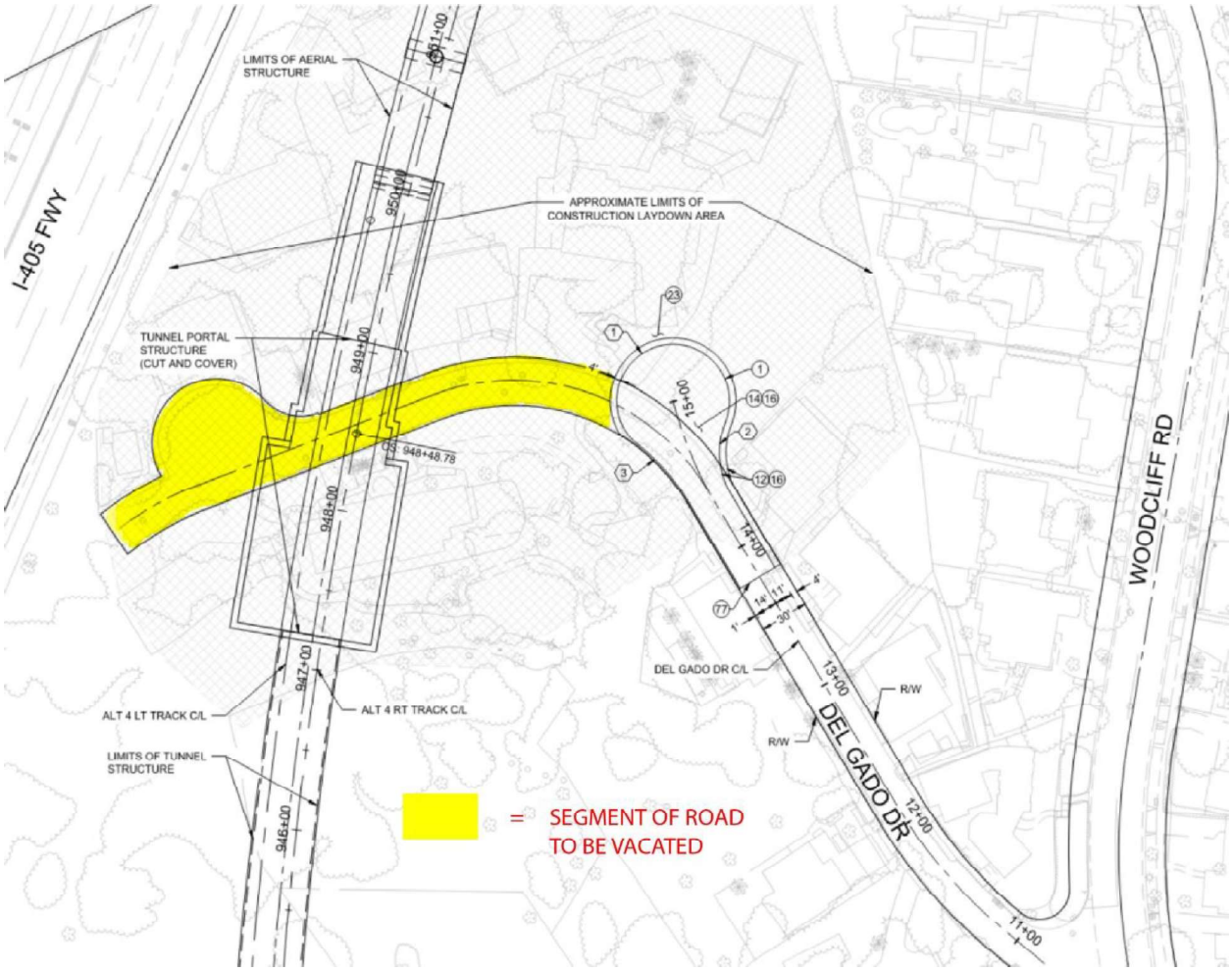
Location	From	To	Description of Change
Del Gado Drive	Woodcliff Road	Not Applicable	Vacation of approximately 325 feet of Del Gado Drive east of I-405 to accommodate tunnel portal
Sepulveda Boulevard	Ventura Boulevard	Raymer Street	Construction of raised median and removal of all on-street parking on the southbound side of the street and some on-street parking on the northbound side of the street to accommodate aerial guideway columns
Sepulveda Boulevard	La Maida Street	Not Applicable	Prohibition of left turns to accommodate aerial guideway columns
Sepulveda Boulevard	Valleyheart Drive South, Hesby Street, Hartsook Street, Archwood Street, Hart Street, Leadwell Street, Covello Street	Not Applicable	Prohibition of left turns to accommodate aerial guideway columns
Raymer Street	Kester Avenue	Keswick Street	Reconstruction resulting in narrowing of width and removal of parking on the westbound side of the street to accommodate aerial guideway columns

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

Figure 8-7. Alternative 4: Roadway Changes

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

Figure 8-8. Alternative 4: Street Vacation at Del Gado Drive



Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

8.1.1.10 Ventilation Facilities

For ventilation of the alignment's underground portion, a plenum within the crown of the tunnel would provide a separate compartment for air circulation and allow multiple trains to operate between stations. Each underground station would include a fan room with additional ventilation facilities. Alternative 4 would also include a stand-alone ventilation facility at the tunnel portal on the northern end of the tunnel segment, located east of I-405 and south of Del Gado Drive. Within this facility, ventilation fan rooms would provide both emergency ventilation, in case of a tunnel fire, and regular ventilation, during non-revenue hours. The facility would also house sump pump rooms to collect water from various sources, including storm water; wash water (from tunnel cleaning); and water from a fire-fighting incident, system testing, or pipe leaks.

8.1.1.11 Fire/Life Safety – Emergency Egress

Within the tunnel segment, emergency walkways would be provided between the center dividing wall and each track. Sliding doors would be located in the central dividing wall at required intervals to connect the two sides of the railway with a continuous walkway to allow for safe egress to a point of safety (typically at a station) during an emergency. Similarly, the aerial guideway would include two

emergency walkways with safety railing located on the outer side of the tracks. Access to tunnel segments for first responders would be through stations and the portal.

8.1.2 Construction Activities

Temporary construction activities for Alternative 4 would occur within project work zones at permanent facility locations, construction staging and laydown areas, and construction office areas. Construction of the transit facilities through substantial completion is expected to have a duration of 8 ¼ years. Early works, such as site preparation, demolition, and utility relocation, could start in advance of construction of the transit facilities.

For the guideway, Alternative 4 would consist of a single-bore tunnel through the Westside and Santa Monica Mountains. The tunnel would be comprised of two separate segments, one running north from the southern terminus to the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station (Westside segment), and the other running south from the portal in the San Fernando Valley to the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station (Santa Monica Mountains segment). Two tunnel boring machines (TBM) with approximately 45-foot-diameter cutting faces would be used to construct the two tunnel segments underground. For the Westside segment, the TBM would be launched from Staging Area No. 1 in Table 8-4 at Sepulveda Boulevard and National Boulevard. For the Santa Monica Mountains segment, the TBM would be launched from Staging Area No. 4 in the San Fernando Valley. Both TBMs would be extracted from the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station Staging Area No. 3 in Table 8-4. Figure 8-9 shows the location of construction staging locations along the Alternative 4 alignment.

Table 8-4. Alternative 4: On-Site Construction Staging Locations

No.	Location Description
1	Commercial properties on southeast corner of Sepulveda Boulevard and National Boulevard
2	North side of Wilshire Boulevard between Veteran Avenue and Gayley Avenue
3	UCLA Gateway Plaza
4	Residential properties on both sides of Del Gado Drive and south side of Sepulveda Boulevard adjacent to I-405
5	West of Sepulveda Boulevard between Valley Vista Boulevard and Sutton Street
6	West of Sepulveda Boulevard between US-101 and Sherman Oaks Castle Park
7	Lot behind Los Angeles Fire Department Station 88
8	Commercial property on southeast corner of Sepulveda Boulevard and Raymer Street
9	South of the LOSSAN rail corridor east of Van Nuys Metrolink Station, west of Woodman Avenue

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

Figure 8-9. Alternative 4: On-Site Construction Staging Locations

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

The distance from the surface to the top of the tunnel for the Westside tunnel segment would vary from approximately 40 feet to 90 feet depending on the depth needed to construct the underground stations. The depth of the Santa Monica Mountains tunnel segment would vary from approximately 470 feet as it passes under the Santa Monica Mountains to 50 feet near UCLA. The tunnel segment through the Westside would be excavated in soft ground, while the tunnel through the Santa Monica Mountains would be excavated primarily in hard ground or rock as geotechnical conditions transition from soft to hard ground near the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station.

The aerial guideway viaduct would be primarily situated in the center of Sepulveda Boulevard in the San Fernando Valley, with guideway columns located in both the center and outside of the right-of-way of Sepulveda Boulevard. This would result in a linear work zone spanning the full width of Sepulveda Boulevard along the length of the aerial guideway. Three to five main phases would be required to construct the aerial guideway. A phased approach would allow travel lanes along Sepulveda Boulevard to remain open as construction individually occupies either the center, left, or right side of the roadway via the use of lateral lane shifts. Additional lane closures on side streets may be required along with appropriate detour routing.

The aerial guideway would comprise a mix of simple spans and longer balanced cantilever spans ranging from 80 to 250 feet in length. The repetitive simple spans would be utilized when guideway bent is located within the center median of Sepulveda Boulevard and would be constructed using Accelerated Bridge Construction (ABC) segmental span-by-span technology. Longer balanced cantilever spans would be provided at locations such as freeways, arterials, or street crossings, and would be constructed using ABC segmental balance cantilever technology. Foundations would consist of cast-in-drilled-hole (CIDH) shafts with both precast and cast-in-place structural elements. During construction of the aerial guideway, multiple crews would work on components of the guideway simultaneously.

Construction work zones would also be co-located with future MSF and station locations. All work zones would comprise the permanent facility footprint with additional temporary construction easements from adjoining properties.

The Metro E Line, Santa Monica Boulevard, Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line, and UCLA Gateway Plaza Stations would be constructed using a “cut-and-cover” method whereby the station structure would be constructed within a trench excavated from the surface with a portion or all being covered by a temporary deck and backfilled during the later stages of station construction. Traffic and pedestrian detours would be necessary during underground station excavation until decking is in place and the appropriate safety measures are taken to resume cross traffic. Constructing the Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard, Metro G Line Sepulveda, Sherman Way, and Van Nuys Metrolink Stations would include construction of CIDH elevated viaduct with two parallel side platforms supported by outrigger bents.

In addition to work zones, Alternative 4 would require construction staging and laydown areas at multiple locations along the alignment as well as off-site staging areas. Construction staging areas would provide the necessary space for the following activities:

- Contractors’ equipment
- Receiving deliveries
- Testing of soils for minerals or hazards
- Storing materials
- Site offices
- Work zone for excavation
- Other construction activities (including parking and change facilities for workers, location of construction office trailers, storage, staging and delivery of construction materials and permanent plant equipment, and maintenance of construction equipment)

A larger, off-site staging area would be used for temporary storage of excavated material from both tunneling and station cut-and-cover excavation activities. Table 8-4 and Figure 8-9 present potential construction staging areas along the alignment for Alternative 4. Table 8-5 and Figure 8-10 present candidate sites for off-site staging and laydown areas.

Table 8-5. Alternative 4: Potential Off-Site Construction Staging Locations

No.	Location Description
S1	East of Santa Monica Airport Runway
S2	Ralph's Parking Lot in Westwood Village
N1	West of Sepulveda Basin Sports Complex, south of the Los Angeles River
N2	West of Sepulveda Basin Sports Complex, north of the Los Angeles River
N3	Metro G Line Sepulveda Station Park & Ride Lot
N4	North of Roscoe Boulevard and Hayvenhurst Avenue
N5	LADWP property south of the LOSSAN rail corridor, east of Van Nuys Metrolink Station

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

Figure 8-10. Alternative 4: Potential Off-Site Construction Staging Locations

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

Construction of the HRT guideway between the Van Nuys Metrolink Station and the MSF would require reconfiguration of an existing rail spur serving LADWP property. The new location of the rail spur would require modification to the existing pedestrian undercrossing at the Van Nuys Metrolink Station.

Alternative 4 would require construction of a concrete casting facility for tunnel lining segments because no existing commercial fabricator capable of producing tunnel lining segments for a large-diameter tunnel exists within a practical distance of the Project Study Area. The site of the MSF would initially be

used for this casting facility. The casting facility would include casting beds and associated casting equipment, storage areas for cement and aggregate, and a field quality control facility, which would need to be constructed on-site. When a more detailed design of the facility is completed, the contractor would obtain all permits and approvals necessary from the City of Los Angeles, the South Coast Air Quality Management District, and other regulatory entities.

As areas of the MSF site begin to become available following completion of pre-casting operations, construction of permanent facilities for the MSF would begin, including construction of surface buildings such as maintenance shops, administrative offices, train control, traction power and systems facilities. Some of the yard storage track would also be constructed at this time to allow delivery and inspection of passenger vehicles that would be fabricated elsewhere. Additional activities occurring at the MSF during the final phase of construction would include staging of trackwork and welding of guideway rail.

The following best management practices would be implemented during construction:

- Erosion-control devices, such as silt fences, would be removed as soon as the area is stabilized.
- Stockpile areas would be neatly organized and covered depending on weather events.
- Stockpiled areas would be located in less visibly sensitive areas.
- Construction lighting would be directed toward the construction areas and/or shielded with temporary screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto adjacent areas.

8.2 Existing Conditions

This section describes the existing visual and aesthetic conditions within the Resource Study Area (RSA), which is an area with a radius of 0.25 miles to 0.50 miles from the alignments, stations, and visible construction-related activities and staging, and MSF site options. The RSA for this analysis encompasses the existing aboveground landscapes within views from public vantage points that would be directly affected, temporarily and/or permanently, by the proposed facilities and components during both construction and operation.

Visual and aesthetics resources were identified, consistent with the methodology outlined in Section 3.1.6. These resources include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Structures of historic significance or visual prominence
- Open space and recreational areas
- Distant views of the horizon from public locations
- Landscaped areas

8.2.1 Regional Setting

The regional visual setting generally exhibits an urbanized character, with nearly all land in the RSA already developed. The urban landscape varies, and includes low-lying residential, industrial, and commercial buildings along with high-density, high-rise residential and commercial buildings in downtown areas.

Higher density development with a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures are generally found between the Interstate 10 (I-10) and the UCLA campus at the southern portion of the Alternative 4 alignment, and lower density development consisting of primarily low-rise structures and a few mid-rise structures are located north of the UCLA campus. The Santa Monica Mountains, located within the central portion of the RSA, provide aesthetic, environmental, and recreational benefits to residents. The ridgelines or mountain edges within the Santa Monica Mountains provide dramatic views and are

protected and preserved by individual communities. Lower density development within the Santa Monica Mountains consists primarily of low-rise structures and a few mid-rise structures, which are located south of US-101 within the community of Bel Air.

North of the Santa Monica Mountains, within the Valley, higher density development with a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures are generally found north of US-101 at the northern portion of the Alternative 4 alignment.

The major visual feature of the RSA is the built environment, which consists of a variety of commercial, industrial, public facility, institutional, and residential uses, in addition to transportation corridors. The transportation corridors within the RSA include roadways, freeways, and rail rights-of-way (ROW), including the Metro E Line ROW, Metro G Line ROW, and the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW. The Metro E Line ROW generally passes through the southern portion of the Alternative 4 alignment in an east-west direction along I-10. The LOSSAN rail corridor ROW generally passes through the northern portion of the RSA in an east-west direction.

Major freeways (i.e., US-101, I-10, and I-405) create well-defined visual boundaries and edges because the facilities are several hundred feet wide. Within the RSA, I-10, US-101, and I-405s are elevated on columns or engineered fill.

Flood control facilities also create visual boundaries within the RSA, which includes the concrete-banked channels of the Los Angeles River at the northern portion of the Alternative 4 alignment. The river channels are visually distinct due to the width and limited number of crossing points.

The topography of the RSA is varied with relatively flat urbanized areas at the northern and southern portions of the Alternative 4 alignment, with major changes in elevation through the central portion of the Alternative 4 alignment. The southern portion of the RSA slopes downward in a south-southwesterly direction toward the Pacific Ocean. Elevations range from approximately 780 feet above mean sea level around the Van Nuys Metro Station, 650 feet above mean sea level around US-101, 1,300 feet above mean sea level at the Stone Canyon Overlook along Mulholland Drive, 375 feet above mean sea level around the UCLA campus, to 120 feet above mean sea level south of National Boulevard DCP, 2021).

Within the Santa Monica Mountains, the RSA provides elevated vantage or vista points along Mulholland Drive. These vista points provide long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains. In contrast, the northern and southern portions of the Alternative 4 alignment lack elevated vantage or vista points due to the relatively flat topography. As a result, views in the RSA are generally limited to the foreground and middle ground. Although background views of mountains are available along some public street ROWs within the RSA, portions of these background views are blocked by urban features, such as utility poles, urban landscaping, and intervening buildings.

8.2.2 Scenic Vistas

The term “scenic vista” generally refers to visual access to, or the visibility of, a particular sight from a given vantage point or corridor. The *LA CEQA Thresholds Guide* DCP, 2006) notes the value of preserving sightlines to designated scenic resources or areas of visual interest from public vantage points. The subjects of valued or recognized views may be focal (meaning of specific individual resources), or panoramic (meaning broad geographic area). Panoramic views are typically associated with scenic vistas that provide a sweeping geographic orientation. Examples of panoramic views include urban skylines, valleys, mountain ranges, or large bodies of water. Examples of focal views include public art/signs and notable buildings and structures. The nature of a view may be unique, such as a view from an elevated vantage point or particular angle.

The Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles' General Plan* defines scenic views or vistas as the panoramic public view access to natural features, including views of the ocean, striking or unusual natural terrain, or unique urban or historic features (DCP, 2001b). Scenic views from within the RSA include the Santa Monica Mountains, hillsides, the Los Angeles River. The Los Angeles River and its associated tributaries and floodplains, and the Santa Monica Mountains are listed as scenic vistas in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan*. Sweeping views of the Santa Monica Mountains, hillsides, are considered panoramic and can be seen from designated vantage points, public hiking trails, and public ROWs.

The Santa Monica Mountains rise to an elevation of approximately 3,100 feet from the base of the hills to their highest point at Sandstone Peak. According to the Conservation Element, the Santa Monica Mountains are the most visible scenic feature from many areas of the city, including the RSA (DCP, 2001b).

Within the RSA, panoramic views from the "flatlands" are not readily available, due to the existing street grid pattern and built environment. Rather, panoramic vantage points are primarily located within hilly areas. The Stone Canyon Overlook is located on the south side of Mulholland Drive and provides panoramic south-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the Stone Canyon Reservoir. In addition, the Johnson Overlook is located north of the Stone Canyon Reservoir on the north side of Mulholland Drive. Visitors can take in north-facing views of the Valley, and the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains. These views represent the scenic views available from various publicly accessible locations in the Santa Monica Mountains, and other hilly areas within the RSA. However, the perspective and visibility may change depending on various factors, such as the viewer location, elevation, bad air days, or weather.

In addition, limited focal views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the hillsides within the lower areas of the RSA are available along various north-south streets and I-405. However, most of the views to the Santa Monica Mountains and the hillsides are blocked by intervening buildings, street trees and, on some streets, overhead utility lines. In summary, public panoramic and focal scenic views are currently available in the RSA, but the quality of the views can vary significantly.

8.2.3 Scenic Resources

Scenic resources refer to natural or built features of high aesthetic quality. Scenic resources identified in the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* include striking or unusual natural features, the Pacific Ocean, Santa Monica Mountains, and San Gabriel Mountains, and unique urban or historic features as seen from designated scenic highways. The RSA is not characterized by striking or unusual natural features and is not visible from the ocean. Glimpses of the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains are available from intermittent viewpoints within the RSA.

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Appendix G, scenic resources within this area of consideration include specific mention of such natural or built features that are within the view field of a state scenic highway. No California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the RSA. Additionally, no state-designated scenic highways in proximity to the RSA provide views of the RSA. The closest eligible state scenic highway is State Route 1 (SR-1, the Pacific Coast Highway in Southern California), which is approximately 3 miles west of the Alternative 4 alignment. The closest officially designated state scenic highway is State Route 27 (SR-27, Topanga Canyon Boulevard), which is approximately 8 miles west of the Alternative 4 alignment.

Six City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are within the RSA. City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways, according to the *City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan 2035*, are either 1) arterial streets or state highways that traverse areas of natural scenic quality in undeveloped or sparsely developed areas of the city or 2) arterial streets that traverse urban areas of cultural, historical, or aesthetic value which merit protection and enhancement. Table 8-6 lists and describes the City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways that are within or along the boundaries of the RSA.

Table 8-6. Alternative 4: Resource Study Area Scenic Highways

Scenic Highway	Location	Scenic Features, Resources, or City Comment
Beverly Glen Boulevard	Ventura Boulevard to Sunset Boulevard	Winding cross mountain road; valley views
Mulholland Drive	1. US-101 westerly to Mulholland Highway; 2. Mulholland Highway to Valley Circle Boulevard	(Specific Plan Ordinance. No. 167,943) Panoramic views, “ribbon of park”
Santa Monica Boulevard	Sepulveda Boulevard to City of Beverly Hills boundary	Not Available
Sepulveda Boulevard	I-405 to Sunset Boulevard	Old cross mountain road with tunnel, views of mountains and Valley
Sherman Way	Variel Avenue to Kester Avenue	Wide street, landscaped median
Sunset Boulevard	Pacific Coast Highway to City of Beverly Hills boundary	Views of mountains, estates, UCLA campus

Source: DCP, 2016

The City of Los Angeles in its *Mobility Plan 2035* designates Mulholland Drive as a scenic highway. Mulholland Drive provides opportunities for multiple scenic vistas as it winds up and through the Santa Monica Mountains, including through the RSA. Development near Mulholland Drive is subject to design review guidelines pursuant to the *Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan* (MSPSP).

The MSPSP has designated 14 major vista points (MVP) along Mulholland Drive that are maintained by the Bureau of Street Maintenance of the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. The Inner Corridor of the MSPSP area is designated as part of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) also maintains seven scenic overlooks along Mulholland Drive (MRCA, 2023). The nearest MVP (also the nearest overlook) is the Stone Canyon Overlook, which is located approximately 380 feet east of the Alternative 4 alignment. The nearest MRCA-maintained scenic overlook is The Groves Overlook, which is located approximately 1 mile west of the Alternative 4 alignment.

The Alternative 4 alignment travels through the Inner Corridor and Outer Corridor of the MSPSP area. The MSPSP contains density requirements, building standards and grading restrictions that are applicable to the Inner Corridor. In addition, the Alternative 4 alignment is subject to the MSPSP’s accompanying design guidelines and review by the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Design Review Board. The viewshed protection provisions of the MSPSP are directed at preserving, complementing, and/or enhancing the public views from Mulholland Drive. Therefore, although impacts on surrounding homes and land uses are discussed, the focus of this analysis is on the impact of Alternative 4 on public views, particularly those from Mulholland Drive.

8.2.4 Visual Character and Quality

As listed in Table 8-7, six generalized landscape units (LUs) were defined along the Alternative 4 alignment. The LUs encompass the location of the Alternative 4 alignment and adjacent area. The location and the visual features are described in the following tables for each LU, beginning in the southern portion of the Alternative 4 alignment and ending in the north.

Table 8-7. Alternative 4: Landscape Units

Landscape Unit	Extent	Key Views
1	National Boulevard to Ohio Avenue	Views of Century City, I-405
2	Ohio Avenue to Sunset Boulevard	Views of Century City, Santa Monica Mountains, Federal Building, Westwood Recreation Center, Bad News Beard Field, Los Angeles National Cemetery, buildings along Wilshire Boulevard, UCLA campus, I-405
3	Sunset Boulevard to Mulholland Drive	Views of Santa Monica Mountains, Getty Center, Scenic Mulholland Drive, Stone Canyon Reservoir, undeveloped land
4	Mulholland Drive to US-101	Views of Santa Monica Mountains, Scenic Mulholland Drive, Stone Canyon Reservoir, undeveloped land
5	US-101 to Victory Boulevard	Views of San Gabriel Mountains, Los Angeles River, I-405, US-101
6	Victory Boulevard to LOSSAN rail corridor right-of-way	Views of San Gabriel Mountains, Los Angeles River, I-405, LOSSAN rail corridor right-of-way

Source: HTA, 2024

Table 8-8 lists the five key observation points (KOPs) (or key views) and the viewer groups potentially affected by Alternative 4.

Table 8-8. Alternative 4: Key Observation Points

KOP No.	KOP Location	Photograph Direction	Primary Viewer
KOP 5	Northeast corner of Sepulveda Boulevard/ Morrison Street	South	Pedestrian, Vehicle Driver, Resident
KOP 13	Del Gado Cul-De-Sac	West	Resident
KOP 14	Northeast corner of Sepulveda Boulevard/Cantlay Street	South	Resident, Pedestrian, Vehicle Driver
KOP 16	Northwest Corner of Strathmore Place at Westwood Plaza	Southeast	Pedestrian, UCLA Patron
KOP 18	Northeast Corner of Sepulveda Boulevard/Camarillo Street	North	Pedestrian, Vehicle Driver, Resident

Source: HTA, 2024

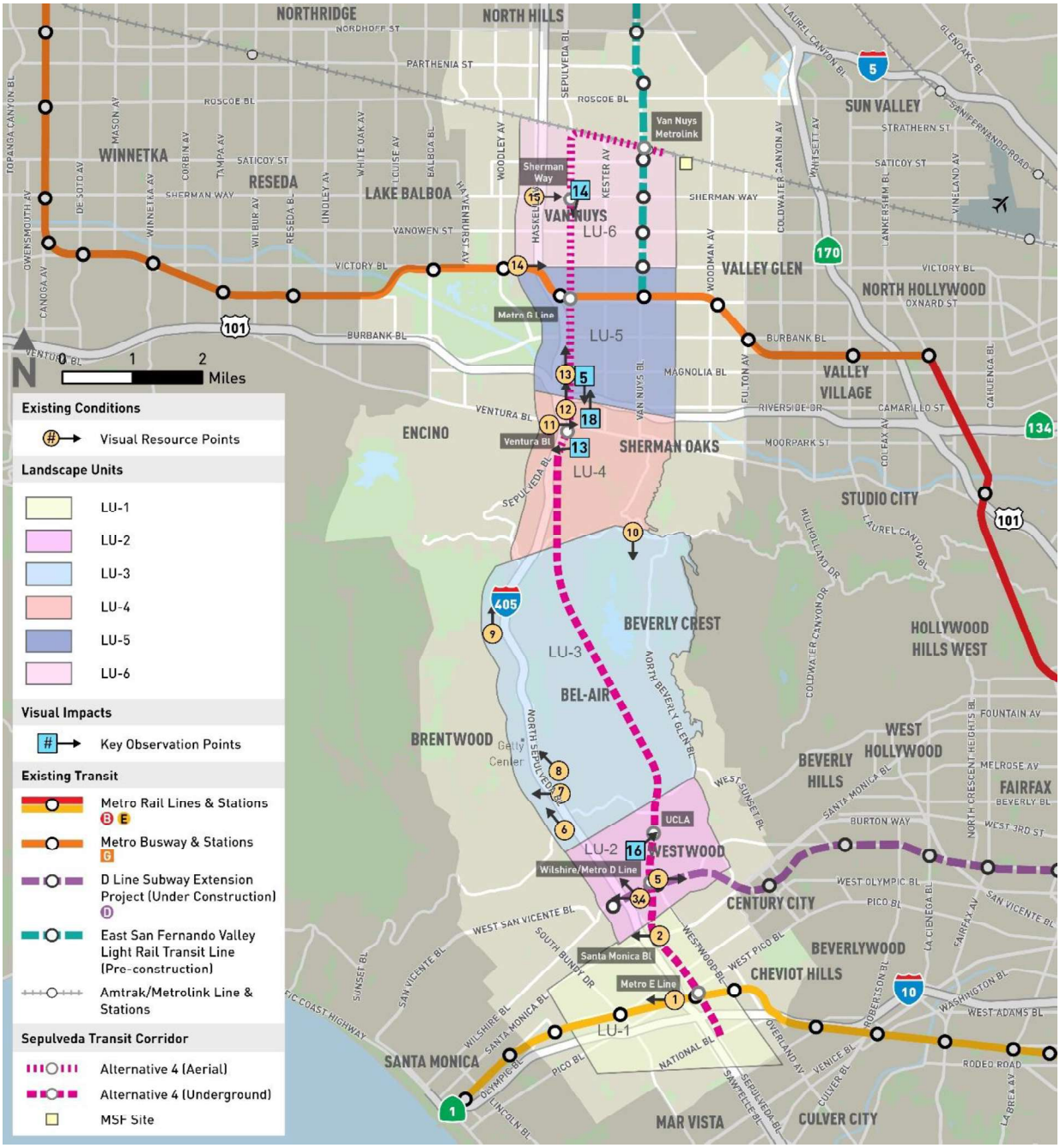
KOP = key observation point

KOPs are used to evaluate existing landscapes and potential impacts on visual resources with various levels of sensitivity, in different landscape types and terrain, and from various vantage points. KOPs are generally selected to represent the most critical locations from which a project area may be seen. As such, the following KOP locations were selected to provide the best representation of the Alternative 4's visual changes.

Summaries of the visual character of the LUs in the Project Study Area are generally described in the following sections. The visual descriptions are based on public views, meaning what is visible from a sidewalk, roadway, or other public ROW. Additional information regarding the potential impacts of Alternative 4 on historic resources is provided the *Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources Technical Report* (Metro, 2025a).

Figure 8-11 illustrates the boundaries of the LUs, the locations of the existing conditions photographs, and locations of the KOPs.

Figure 8-11. Alternative 4: Visual Landscape Units



Source: HTA, 2024

8.2.4.1 Landscape Unit 1 – National Boulevard to Ohio Avenue

LU-1 begins at National Boulevard in the Westdale and West Los Angeles communities and continues north past I-10 to Ohio Avenue in Westwood. LU-1 is bordered on the west by Steward Street and on the east by Westwood Boulevard. LU-1 is highly urbanized, consisting of a mix of low-rise, mid-rise structures, and high-rise structures. Structures within this LU generally include a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial development. Commercial developments include a mix of small and mid-size

commercial structures, as well as high-rise and mid-rise office buildings. Residential uses consist of one- to two-story single-family homes, and mid-rise buildings, while institutional and industrial uses generally consist of low-rise structures. Within LU-1, the Metro E Line and its associated aerial structure crosses Sepulveda Boulevard at Exposition Boulevard, and partially obscures views to the north. Views of the existing aerial Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and its associated ancillary structures are available at this location.

The primary viewers in LU-1 consist of motorists, pedestrians, residents, transit commuters, and patrons of commercial businesses. Visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views.

The level and types of ornamental landscaping in LU-1 vary, with light to moderate levels of landscaping throughout the LU. Ornamental landscaping is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets. In addition, a mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided within the LU.

Although residential areas surround the commercial corridor in LU-1, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. The most prominent views within LU-1 are of the elevated Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and guideway. There are distant north-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains from north-south oriented streets. As discussed in Section 8.2.2, the Santa Monica Mountains are listed as a designated scenic vista in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* (DCP, 2001b). Figure 8-12 and Figure 8-13 show existing representative views of LU-1.

Figure 8-12. Alternative 4: Existing View 1, Looking West Toward Metro E Line from Pico Boulevard, West of I-405

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 8-13. Alternative 4: Existing View 2, Looking West Toward I-405 from Santa Monica Boulevard at Sepulveda Boulevard

Source: HTA, 2024

8.2.4.2 Landscape Unit 2 – Ohio Avenue to Sunset Boulevard

LU-2 begins directly north of Ohio Avenue and continues north to Sunset Boulevard in Westwood. LU-2 is bordered to the west by Sawtelle Boulevard (just west of I-405) in the Brentwood community, and to the east by South Beverly Glen Boulevard. LU-2 is also highly urbanized, consisting of a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures, as well as the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Federal Building, and UCLA campus. The majority of residential uses in LU-2 are located within the northwest and southeast portions of the LU. Residential uses consist of one- to two-story single-family homes, and multi-family residential buildings. The residential neighborhoods surrounding the UCLA campus include Bel Air to the north, Holmby-Westwood to the east, and Westwood Hills to the west, which primarily consist of one- to two-story single-family residences. Westwood Village and the Wilshire Corridor are located to the south.

The Wilshire Corridor primarily consists of commercial uses, including hotels and mid- to high-rise office buildings from I-405 to Beverly Glen Boulevard at the eastern boundary of LU-2. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are prominent visual elements along the Wilshire Corridor. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor.

Westwood Village is located north of the Wilshire Corridor and is pedestrian-oriented, with low- to mid-rise buildings containing retail, office, and mixed uses. This village character contrasts with the many multi-story residential towers, hotels, and office buildings that exist along Wilshire Boulevard. Southeast of Wilshire Boulevard, single-family residences and small multi-family buildings are prominent. The Los

Angeles National Cemetery, located in the western portion of LU-2, provides open expanses and the opportunity for distant views of the Santa Monica Mountains.

The UCLA campus is located at the base of the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains, directly south of Sunset Boulevard. The main campus is bounded by Wilshire Boulevard to the south, Veteran Avenue to the west, Sunset Boulevard to the north, and Hilgard Avenue to the east. The main campus is visible from adjacent residential neighborhoods to the north, east, and west, as well as from several major roadways, including I-405 and Sunset Boulevard. The northern portion of the UCLA campus mainly consists of academic buildings and landscaped open areas, and the southern portion of campus consists of science and medical buildings that are considerably more dense and more urban in appearance. A majority of the main campus is organized around a series of squares and courtyards linked by hardscape pedestrian walkways. The northwestern and southwestern portions of the main campus consist of student housing. These buildings are mainly modern mid- to high-rise structures with similar architectural styles.

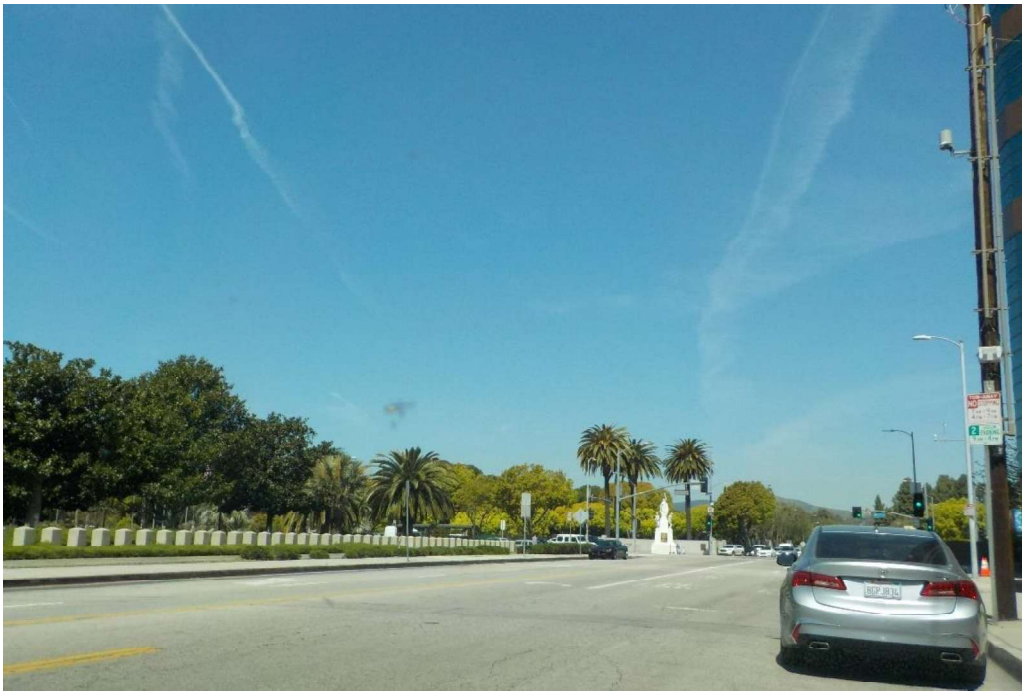
The primary viewers in LU-2 consist of motorists, pedestrians, patrons of commercial businesses, and patrons of UCLA. There are distant north-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains from north-south oriented streets. UCLA patrons also have background views of Century City from certain areas of the main campus.

Landscaping on the main campus has both a formal and informal character, consisting of tree clusters, shaded grassy areas, and flowering plants. Paved pedestrian connections, asphalt circulation hubs, and streetscape treatments emphasize the main campus' urban nature. Most of the campus edges are heavily landscaped with mature trees and shrubs. These landscaped buffers screen campus buildings from adjacent streets and complement the adjacent residential areas. The trees used for these landscaped buffers are visually prominent and define the boundaries of the UCLA campus. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-2. Figure 8-14, Figure 8-15, Figure 8-16, and Figure 8-17 show existing representative views of LU-2.

Figure 8-14. Alternative 4: Existing View 3, Looking West Toward the Federal Building from Veteran Avenue

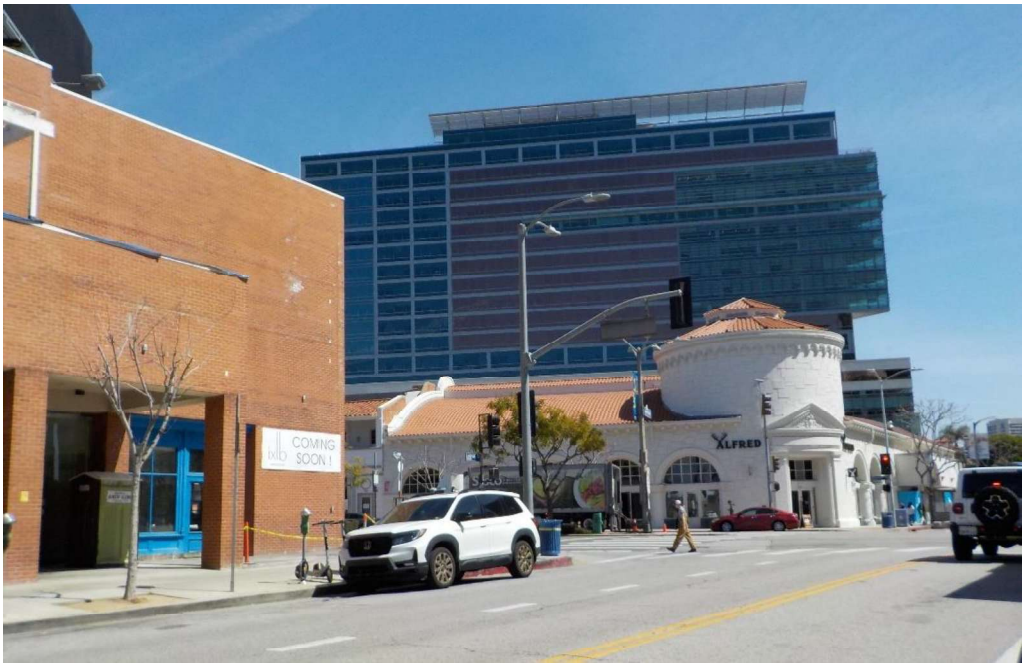
Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 8-15. Alternative 4: Existing View 4, Looking Northwest Toward Wilshire Boulevard and the National Cemetery from Veteran Avenue



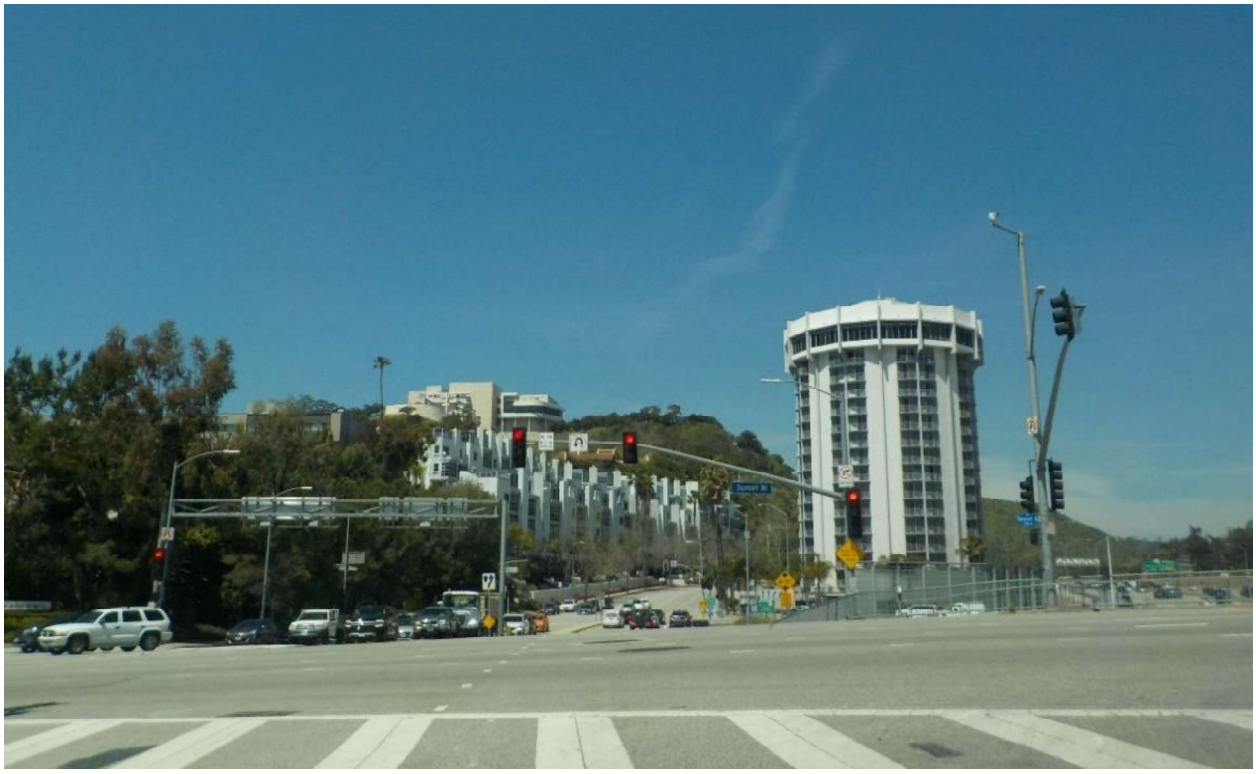
Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 8-16. Alternative 4: Existing View 5, Looking East Toward Westwood Boulevard from Lindbrook Drive in Westwood



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 8-17. Alternative 4: Existing View 6, Looking North Toward the Getty Center from Sunset Boulevard, West of I-405



Source: HTA, 2024

8.2.4.3 Landscape Unit 3 – Sunset Boulevard to Mulholland Drive

LU-3 begins directly north of Sunset Boulevard and continues north through the lower portion of the Santa Monica Mountains to Mulholland Drive. LU-3 is bordered on the west by I-405 and on the east by Benedict Canyon Drive. LU-3 consists of mainly residential development in low-rise structures in the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains. A limited number of commercial and institutional uses are located within LU-3. The structures in this LU vary in building style, size, and color. The street network consists of many winding, local streets, but there are also several collector roads within this LU. A portion of the scenic Mulholland Drive is located within LU-3. As discussed in Section 8.2.2, two designated vantage points are along Mulholland Drive. The Johnson Overlook and Stone Canyon Overlook are located along Mulholland Drive north of Stone Canyon Reservoir. Views consist of the Santa Monica Mountains, the Valley, and the Stone Canyon Reservoir. On clear days, it may be possible to see the Pacific Ocean.

The limited commercial uses within LU-3 consist of the Bel-Air Country Club, The Glen Centre, and Hotel Bel-Air. Bel-Air County Club is an 18-hole golf course with large, manicured lawn areas. The Glen Centre is a large shopping center with a park-like setting. Hotel Bel-Air is developed with Spanish style architecture and houses multiple structures with driveways and a surface parking lot parallel to Stone Canyon Road. Institutional uses consist of Marymount High School, which also houses multiple structures with driveways and a surface parking lot that parallels Sunset Boulevard.

Undeveloped land includes open space, such as land preserved by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and vacant lots that can be developed with low-density, primarily single-family residences.

Developed land predominantly consists of single-family residences on large lots, generally one to two stories, but some three-story and four-story residences are also built into the hillsides. These residences are developed in a variety of architectural styles, including bungalow, Spanish Eclectic, courtyard, Tudor, and Colonial styles. Due to their elevated locations on the hillside, many of the residences in the Santa Monica Mountains are afforded long-range private panoramic views across the Project Study Area and much of the Los Angeles Basin. Beverly Hills, Bel-Air, and other single-family residential neighborhoods are located in this region.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-3 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets within LU-3. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout the LU.

Primary viewer groups found within LU-3 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed under LU-1 in Section 7.2.4.1 visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

Figure 8-18, Figure 8-19, Figure 8-20, and Figure 8-21 show existing representative views of LU-3.

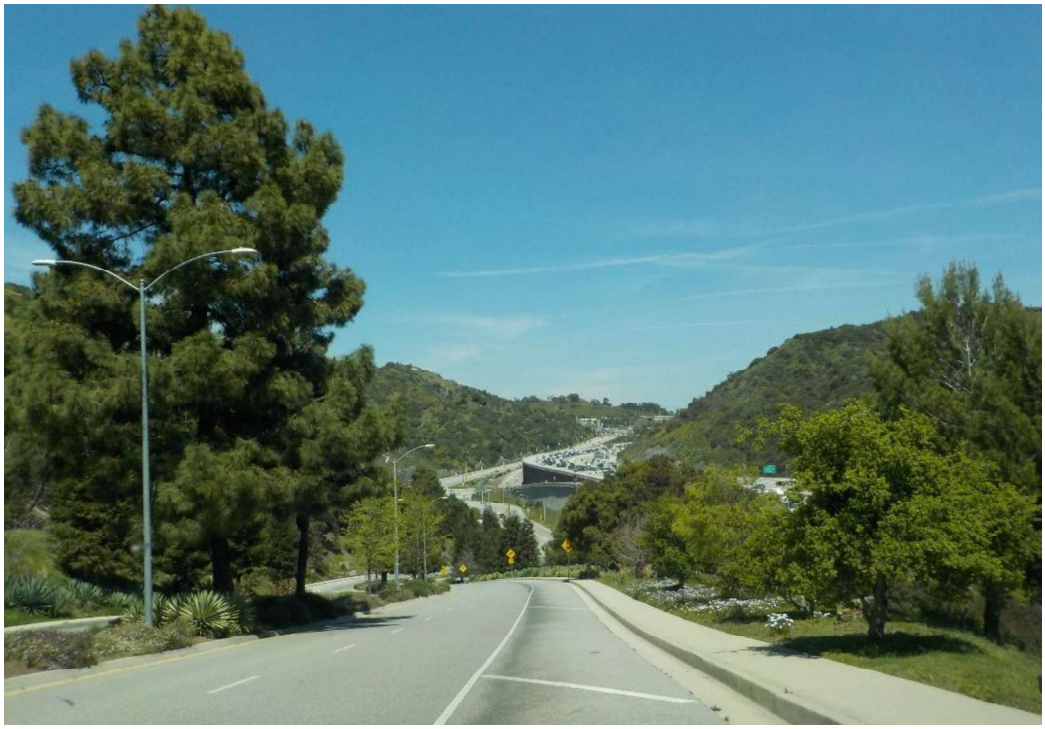
Figure 8-18. Alternative 4: Existing View 7, Looking West Toward I-405 from Residential Area along Ovada Place

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 8-19. Alternative 4: Existing View 8, Looking Northwest Toward the Getty Center (and I-405) from Residential Area along Moraga Drive

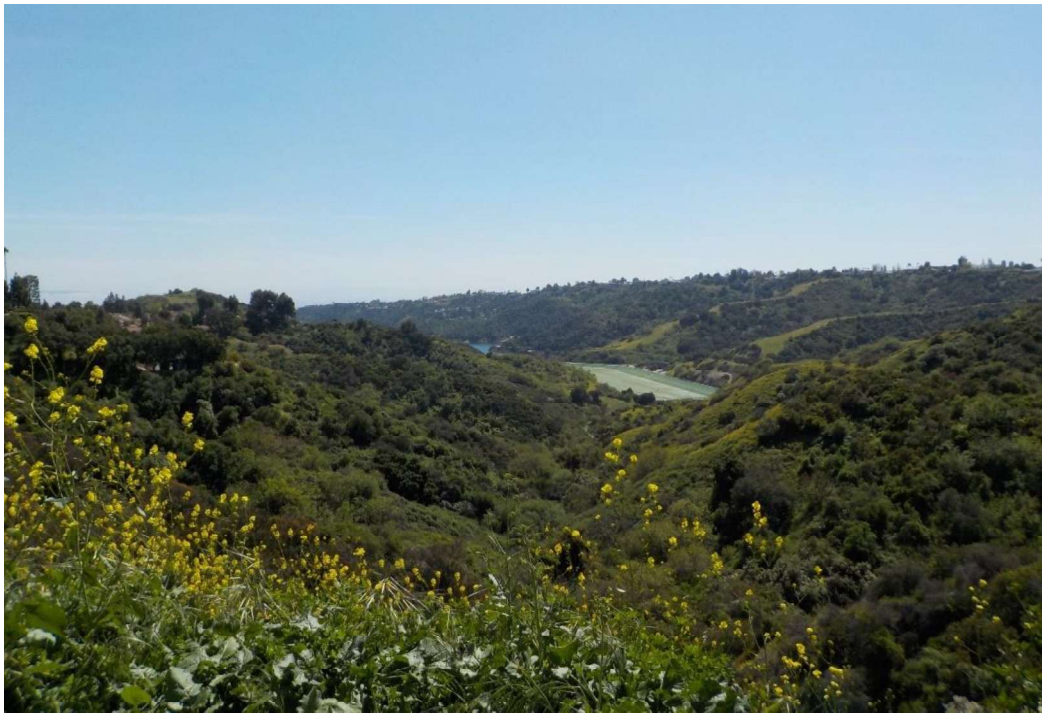
Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 8-20. Alternative 4: Existing View 9, Looking North Toward I-405 from Mountaingate Drive



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 8-21. Alternative 4: Existing View 10, Looking South Toward Covered Upper Stone Canyon Reservoir and Stone Canyon Reservoir from Overlook along Mulholland Drive



Source: HTA, 2024

8.2.4.4 Landscape Unit 4 – Mulholland Drive to US-101

LU-4 begins directly north of Mulholland Drive and continues north through the upper portion of the Santa Monica Mountains to US-101. LU-4 is bordered on the west by Haskell Avenue, and on the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-4 consists of mainly residential development within the Sherman Oaks neighborhood, and commercial development along the Ventura Boulevard corridor.

Similar to LU-3, a portion of the scenic Mulholland Drive is also located within LU-4. Looking north from Mulholland Drive, views consist of the Santa Monica Mountains in the foreground and middle ground and Van Nuys in the background. In addition, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north are also visible from certain portions of Mulholland Drive where there is limited vegetation.

The northern portion of the Santa Monica Mountains has both undeveloped and developed lots. As discussed in Section 8.2.4.3, undeveloped land includes open space, such as land preserved by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and vacant lots that can be developed with low-density housing, primarily single-family residences. Deervale-Stone Canyon Park, an 80-acre park consisting of open space and hiking trails for public use, is also located within LU-4. Views to the north from the top of the park overlook the Sherman Oaks neighborhood and the Ventura Boulevard commercial corridor. Long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north are also visible from this location.

Beyond the Santa Monica Mountains, LU-4 has a relatively flat topography and dense commercial and residential development. Views consist of low- and mid-rise buildings occupied primarily by retail, institutional, and office uses, and associated parking areas. As such, views from the northern portion of LU-4 are generally short in range and limited to the urban landscape within the immediate vicinity (i.e., buildings, roadways, utility poles, and street trees).

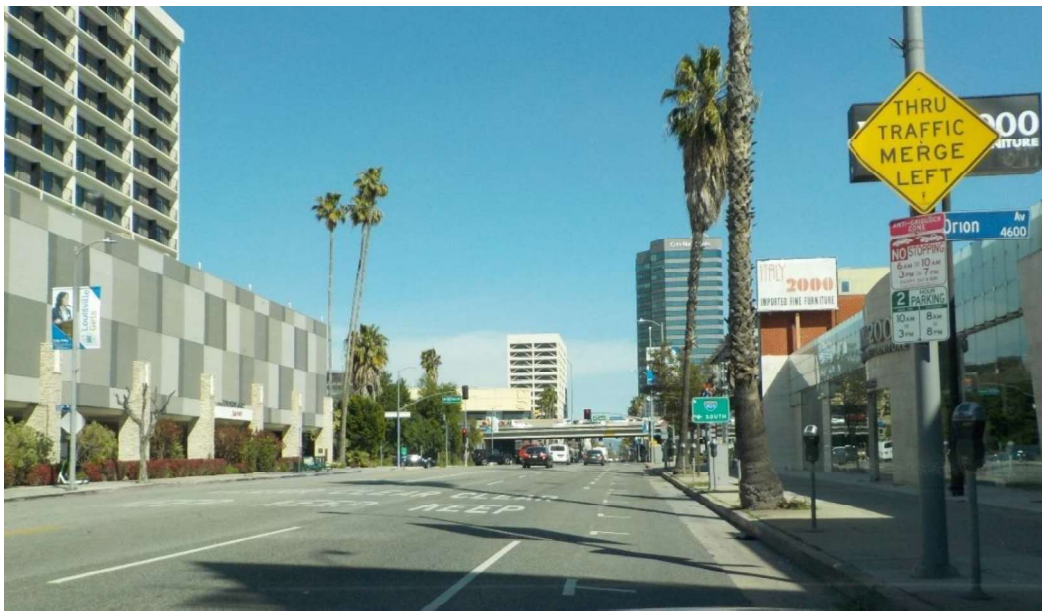
Primary viewer groups found within LU-4 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed under LU-1 in Section 8.2.4.1, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

Ventura Boulevard consists of primarily commercial uses, including retail businesses, restaurants, and mid- to high-rise office buildings from I-405 at the western boundary of LU-4 to the eastern boundary of LU-4 at Hazeltine Avenue. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are prominent visual elements along Ventura Boulevard. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. Overall, buildings in LU-4 are of all different sizes, styles, and colors, and are spaced at varying intervals, creating a high level of visual diversity in the landscape with no common theme. Long-range views of the Hollywood Hills are also visible traveling east along Ventura Boulevard.

Similar to LU-3, the single-family residences within the Santa Monica Mountains are developed on large lots and are generally one to two stories, but some three-story and four-story houses are visible. This development pattern transitions to low- and mid-rise single-family and multi-family residences north of Greenleaf Street within the Sherman Oaks neighborhood. Residential development is prevalent to the north and south of the Ventura Boulevard commercial corridor. Ornamental landscaping in LU-4 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees are present along Ventura Boulevard and Willis Avenue, as well as other commercial areas for screening purposes. Street trees create definition within the dense commercial corridor; however, because they are planted intermittently, they blend into the overall landscape. Low-rise and tall bushes,

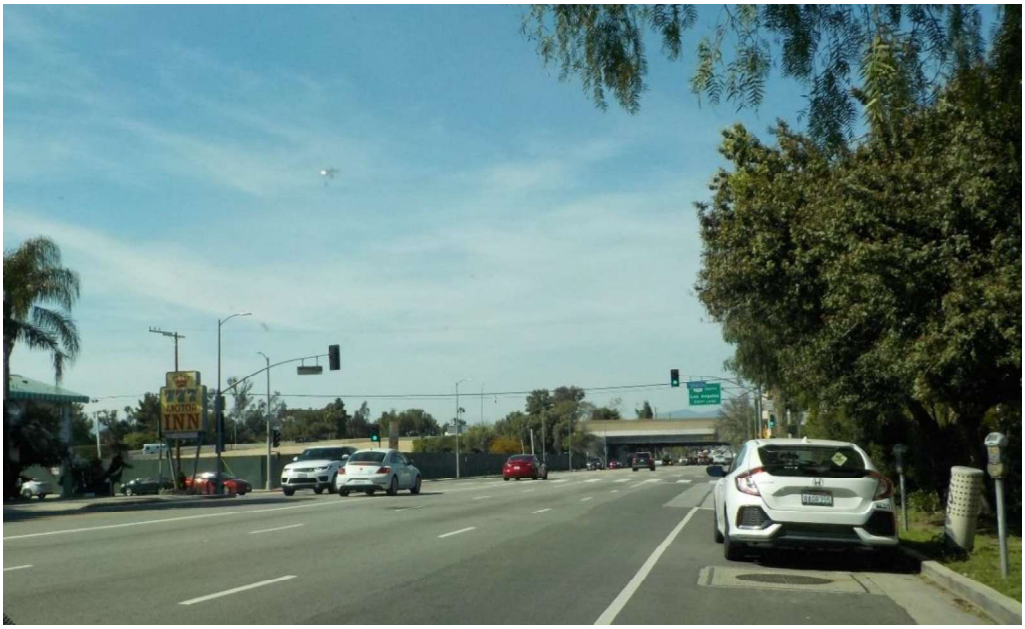
as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets within the northern portion of LU-4. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-4. Figure 8-22 and Figure 8-23 show existing representative views of LU-4.

Figure 8-22. Alternative 4: Existing View 11, Looking East Toward I-405 from Ventura Boulevard at Orion Avenue



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 8-23. Alternative 4: Existing View 12, Looking North Toward US-101 from Sepulveda Boulevard at Camarillo Street



Source: HTA, 2024

8.2.4.5 Landscape Unit 5 – US-101 to Victory Boulevard

LU-5 begins directly north of US-101 and continues north through the Van Nuys community to Victory Boulevard. LU-5 is bordered to the west by Gloria Avenue and to the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-5 consists of mainly commercial and residential development within the Van Nuys neighborhood. The Metro G Line also travels through the central portion of LU-5.

Views in the southern portion of LU-5 looking south are predominately of the elevated segment of US-101. Long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are also visible in some areas, but they are few because of the relatively flat topography and intervening urban development. The Los Angeles River is also located within the southern portion of LU-5, and mainly travels parallel to US-101; however, since the Los Angeles River is located below street level, public views of the Los Angeles River from the surrounding Project Study Area are obscured by existing development and generally not available except on Hazeltine Avenue just south of the US-101 overpass. As discussed in Section 8.2.2, the Los Angeles River and its associated tributaries and floodplains are also listed as scenic vistas in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* (DCP, 2001b).

Typical views in LU-5 include the Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard commercial corridors, which are bordered by parking areas, sidewalks, street trees, commercial buildings, and additional buildings visible in the background. Views of I-405 are also visible from Sepulveda Boulevard. Traveling north along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains are visible. In addition, traveling south, long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are visible. Primary viewer groups found within LU-5 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed under LU-1 previously, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

Commercial structures along Van Nuys Boulevard consist of low- to mid-rise retail businesses, restaurants, office uses, and parking areas. In addition, commercial structures along Sepulveda Boulevard consist of low- to high-rise office uses, residential uses, retail businesses, restaurants, and parking areas. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are also prominent visual elements on these roadways. Although residential areas surround the commercial corridors, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. Ornamental landscaping in LU-5 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees are present along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, as well as other commercial areas for screening purposes. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout the LU. Figure 8-24 and Figure 8-25 show existing representative views of LU-5.

Figure 8-24. Alternative 4: Existing View 13, Looking North along Sepulveda Boulevard at Magnolia Boulevard

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 8-25. Alternative 4: Existing View 14, Looking East along Victory Boulevard West of I-405 at Gloria Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

8.2.4.6 Landscape Unit 6 – Victory Boulevard to LOSSAN Rail Corridor ROW

LU-6 begins directly north of Victory Boulevard and continues north through Van Nuys to the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW. LU-6 is bordered to the west by Gloria Avenue and to the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-6 consists of mainly commercial and residential development within the Van Nuys neighborhood, with residential development located primarily to the east and west of the Van Nuys Boulevard commercial corridor. The LOSSAN rail corridor ROW and existing Van Nuys/Metrolink Station border the northern boundary of LU-6.

Similar to LU-5, typical views in LU-6 include the Van Nuys Boulevard commercial corridor, which is bordered by parking areas, sidewalks, street trees, commercial buildings, and additional buildings visible in the background. Traveling north along Van Nuys Boulevard, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains are visible. Traveling south, long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are visible; however, views of the Santa Monica Mountains are dominated by other features in the landscape.

Primary viewer groups found within LU-6 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed under LU-1 previously, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

The visual character of the portion of Van Nuys Boulevard within LU-6 consists of low- to mid-rise retail businesses, restaurants, office uses, and parking areas. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are also prominent visual elements along Van Nuys Boulevard. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. Similar to LU-5, buildings are of all different sizes, styles, and colors, and are spaced at different intervals, creating a high level of visual diversity in the landscape with no common theme. Street trees soften the appearance of the dense commercial corridor; however, because they are planted intermittently, they blend into the overall landscape.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-6 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees are present along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, as well as other commercial areas for screening purposes. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-6. Figure 8-26 shows an existing representative view in LU-6.

Figure 8-26. Alternative 4: Existing View 15, Looking East along Sherman Way Toward I-405 at Haskell Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

8.2.5 Light and Glare

North of US-101, the Project Study Area is generally located within the Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys neighborhoods of the City of Los Angeles, and encompasses commercial, industrial, and residential development with relatively ambient nighttime lighting typical of urbanized settings. Common light sources are the include the streetlights, vehicle lights, building entrance lighting, parking structure lighting, illuminated signage/billboards, and general illumination from lights shining through windows of structures lining the corridor.

South of US-101, nighttime lighting is more limited in the Santa Monica Mountains. In the developed portions of the Santa Monica Mountains, lighting sources include pedestrian-scaled streetlights, security and decorative wall lighting at residential homes, vehicle headlights, and interior building illumination. By contrast, the undeveloped portions of the Santa Monica Mountains have little to no light or glare sources, other than vehicle headlights.

South of Sunset Boulevard, the Project Study Area is generally located within Westwood and West Los Angeles neighborhoods of the City of Los Angeles, as well as within the City of Santa Monica. The adjacent commercial, industrial, and residential development, as well as cultural and institutional facilities, such as the UCLA campus, contribute to ambient nighttime lighting typical of urbanized settings. As discussed previously, light sources include the streetlights, vehicle lights, building entrance lighting, parking structure lighting, illuminated signage/billboards, and general illumination from lights shining through windows of structures lining the corridor.

8.3 Impact Evaluation

8.3.1 Impact AES-1: Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

8.3.1.1 Operational Impacts

Alternative 4 is a heavy rail project that would develop an underground tunnel, stations, and additional ancillary structures. In addition, a portion of Alternative 4 would have an aerial component that would travel along the east side of I-405 that would begin at the tunnel portal adjacent to Del Gado Drive to Ventura Boulevard. North of Ventura Boulevard, the guideway would generally be located above Sepulveda Boulevard until curving southeast to parallel the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW.

Scenic vistas in the Project Study Area include views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the south, and the San Gabriel Mountains to the north. As discussed in Section 8.2.4, views of surrounding mountains are visible in all of the LUs. In some LUs, such as in LU-1, LU-5, and LU-6, the surrounding mountains are minimally visible; in some LUs, such as in LU-2, LU-3, and LU-4, the surrounding mountains are a visually dominant feature. Motorists and transit commuters would be expected to have more fleeting views of scenic vistas because they are moving along the Alternative 4 alignment, while pedestrians, patrons of commercial and institutional facilities, and tourists would be expected to have longer views.

Within LU-1, the Alternative 4 alignment would begin underground, adjacent to the intersection of Sepulveda Boulevard and National Boulevard. The Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station would then be located just north of Exposition Boulevard. The primary visual elements of Alternative 4 in LU-1 would include the station entrance of the proposed at the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station within the southwestern portion of LU-1, and the Santa Monica Boulevard Station within the northern portion of LU-1. Views of the proposed stations would mainly be limited to the areas along Sepulveda Boulevard and Santa Monica Boulevard directly in front of and facing the station entrances. The stations would be low-rise structures and would not be visually obtrusive. In addition, the proposed stations in LU-1 would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains.

Within LU-2, the Alternative 4 alignment would travel underground throughout the LU. The primary visual elements would include the station entrances of the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station within the southwestern portion of LU-2, and the station entrance of the UCLA Station within the northern portion of LU-2. Views of the proposed stations would be limited to the areas along Wilshire Boulevard, Gayley Avenue, Lindbrook Drive, Westwood Boulevard, and Westwood Plaza directly in front of and facing the station entrances. The stations would be low-rise structures and would not be visually obtrusive. In addition, the proposed stations in LU-2 would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains.

Within LU-3, the Alternative 4 alignment would also travel underground throughout the LU, and no project features would be visible.

Within LU-4, the Alternative 4 alignment would travel underground to the tunnel portal adjacent to Del Gado Drive. At the tunnel portal, the Alternative 4 alignment would transition to an aerial guideway that would generally run above Sepulveda Boulevard to the Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station. The primary visual elements of Alternative 4 would include the tunnel portal adjacent to Del Gado Drive, retaining wall to support the daylighting to an aerial configuration, columns to support the aerial guideway either parallel to or along the center median of the Sepulveda Boulevard, and column bents to support the aerial Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station. While these features—particularly

the aerial guideway and aerial station—would be highly visible, the views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the south would not be substantially obstructed because the surrounding industrial and commercial development already prevents clear views of the mountains, and views would be obstructed by existing structures.

Within LU-5, the aerial guideway would continue north along Sepulveda Boulevard to the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station. The primary visual elements of Alternative 4 would include columns and straddle bents to support the aerial guideway either parallel to or along the center median of Sepulveda Boulevard and column bents to support the aerial Metro G Line Station. While these features—particularly the aerial guideway and aerial station—would be highly visible, they would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the south or the San Gabriel Mountains to the north because the surrounding industrial and commercial development already prevents clear views of the mountains, and views would be obstructed by existing structures.

Within LU-6, the aerial guideway would continue north along Sepulveda Boulevard to the proposed Sherman Way Station. North of the Sherman Way Station, the alignment would continue along Sepulveda Boulevard then curve to the southeast to the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The primary visual elements of Alternative 4 would include the Sherman Way Station and Van Nuys Station, columns and straddle bents to support the aerial guideway either parallel to or along the center median of Sepulveda Boulevard, and column bents to support the aerial Sherman Way Station and Van Nuys Station. While these features—particularly the aerial guideway and aerial station—would be highly visible, they would not substantially obstruct views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north because the surrounding industrial and commercial development already prevents clear views of the mountains. Views of the proposed Sherman Way Station would be limited to motorists and pedestrians traveling along Sepulveda Boulevard, Sherman Way, and Gault Street, and would not be visually obtrusive.

Overall, the primary visual elements included as part of Alternative 4 would be the proposed aerial guideway, four at-grade station entrances, four aerial stations, MSF site, and changes in parking, lanes, and sidewalks. The new at-grade station entrances along the outside edge of the roadway would present new vertical features in the landscape and may limit views directly adjacent to or within the stations; however, views in the corridor as a whole would not be substantially affected by the proposed at-grade station entrances because the visual changes would be localized around station areas. Sidewalks would be narrowed in some areas, but this would not be expected to substantially affect views along the corridor. The additional project components would primarily be located underground and would not block views of scenic vistas.

Motorists driving northbound and southbound on Sepulveda Boulevard would experience interruption in views while driving to due to the presence of the aerial guideway; however, the viewing duration would be intermittent because the aerial guideway would be located above the roadway and motorists would be focused on the road. Pedestrians walking on nearby sidewalks would have views interrupted from certain locations—such as Sepulveda Boulevard and directly adjacent to one of the aerial stations—but would be able to easily walk away from that location.

As discussed previously, the proposed aerial guideway, columns, straddle bents, and aerial stations would present new vertical features in the landscape that would be highly visible; however, views of the San Gabriel Mountains, Santa Monica Mountains, would not be substantially obscured and continue to be limited by the surrounding urban development. As such, views of scenic vistas as a whole would not be substantially affected. Therefore, the vertical elements proposed under Alternative 4 would not

substantially alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas, and operation of Alternative 4 would result in a less than significant impact to scenic vistas.

8.3.1.2 Construction Impacts

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. Although temporary in nature, construction activities may cause a visually unappealing quality in a community. Construction of Alternative 4 would introduce visually disruptive elements in each LU, including:

- Light and heavy excavation
- Tunneling
- Roadway/bridge demolition and reconstruction
- Structural falsework
- Tree removal
- Soil removal/displacement
- Security fencing
- Stockpiled soil
- Stockpiled building materials
- Safety and directional signage
- Station platforms and plazas
- Ancillary facilities
- Large, heavy equipment may include cranes, bulldozers, scrapers, and trucks

Construction activities could be visible to pedestrians and motorists on adjacent streets, as well as to viewers within nearby buildings. However, construction activities—while a visual nuisance—would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains or San Gabriel Mountains because activities would be temporary and intermittent and limited to the immediate area. Therefore, construction of Alternative 4 would not alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas, and impacts would be less than significant.

8.3.1.3 Maintenance and Storage Facility

Maintenance of HRT vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF. Several buildings would be constructed, including a maintenance-of-way building, track storage area, wash bays, ancillary storage buildings, and TPSS structures. A grade separated access road and a parking area for employees would also be included. These structures would be the primary visual elements of the MSF. The MSF site would be located within a heavily industrialized area bordered by a residential area, and operation of this MSF would generally fit within the context of the existing industrial character. While the MSF site would represent a visual change, it would not substantially obstruct views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains. As such, views of scenic vistas as a whole would not be substantially affected.

Construction activities could be visible to pedestrians and motorists on adjacent streets, as well as to viewers within nearby buildings. However, construction activities, while a visual nuisance, would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains or San Gabriel Mountains because activities would be temporary and intermittent and limited to the immediate area. Therefore, the vertical elements proposed under the MSF would not substantially alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas and operation of the MSF would result in a less than significant impact to scenic vistas.

8.3.2 Impact AES-2: Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

8.3.2.1 Operational Impacts

As discussed in Section 8.2.3, no California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the Project Study Area. Additionally, no State-designated scenic highways in proximity to the Project Study Area would provide views of the Project Study Area. Historic structures within the alignment are discussed in the *Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources Technical Report* (Metro, 2025a). The closest eligible state scenic highway is SR-1, which is approximately 3 miles west of the Alternative 4 alignment. The closest officially designated state scenic highway is SR-27 (Topanga Canyon Boulevard), which is approximately 8 miles west of the Alternative 4 alignment.

As listed in Table 8-6 in Section 8.2.3, six City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are located within the Project Study Area:

- Beverly Glen Boulevard
- Mulholland Drive
- Santa Monica Boulevard
- Sepulveda Boulevard
- Sherman Way
- Sunset Boulevard

Alternative 4 would travel beneath designated scenic portions of Sepulveda Boulevard, Santa Monica Boulevard, Sunset Boulevard, and Mulholland Drive. Alternative 4 would not travel through the designated scenic portion of Beverly Glen Boulevard. Sepulveda Boulevard provides views of the old cross mountain road with a tunnel that travels under Mulholland Drive, as well as views of mountains and the valley. Sunset Boulevard provides views of the mountains, estates, and the UCLA campus. No specific scenic features or resources are listed for Santa Monica Boulevard.

Mulholland Drive also provides opportunities for multiple scenic views as it winds up and through the Santa Monica Mountains, including through the Project Study Area. Specifically, the *City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan 2035* lists that Mulholland Drive provides panoramic views and a "ribbon of park." Development near Mulholland Drive is also subject to design review guidelines pursuant to the MSPSP. The MSPSP has designated 14 MVPs along Mulholland Drive that are maintained by the Bureau of Street Maintenance of the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. The Inner Corridor of the MSPSP area is designated as part of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and the MRCA also maintains seven scenic overlooks along Mulholland Drive (MRCA, 2023). The nearest MVP (also the nearest overlook) is the Johnson Overlook, which is located approximately 0.7 miles east of the Alternative 4 alignment. The nearest MRCA maintained scenic overlook is the Stone Canyon Overlook, which is located approximately 1 mile east of the Alternative 4 alignment.

In addition, the Alternative 4 alignment would also be located underground along Sepulveda Boulevard, Santa Monica Boulevard, Sunset Boulevard, and Mulholland Drive, as well as the Inner Corridor and Outer Corridor of the MSPSP. The Alternative 4 alignment would also not be visible from Johnson Overlook or Stone Canyon Overlook and would not impact views of scenic resources from these locations. As such, Alternative 4 would not impact views of scenic resources along Sepulveda Boulevard, Santa Monica Boulevard, Sunset Boulevard, and Mulholland Drive.

The aerial guideway would travel through the City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highway along Sherman Way, which provides views of scenic resources, such as a wide street and landscaped median, as well as the Sherman Way Street Trees historical resource located along Sherman Way between Woodley Avenue and Sherman Circle as discussed in the *Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources Technical Report* (Metro, 2025a). The proposed aerial guideway and aerial Sherman Way Station have been designed to travel along or parallel to Sepulveda Boulevard and would be highly visible. However, such elevated, bulky, concrete railway structures crossing commercial thoroughfares are typically more visually tolerable in industrial and commercial areas.

As such, Alternative 4 would not impact views of scenic resources along Sepulveda Boulevard, Santa Monica Boulevard, Mulholland Drive, Beverly Glen Boulevard, and Sunset Boulevard. The location of the proposed aerial Sherman Way Station would potentially impact the Sherman Way Street Trees; however, this is not within a state scenic highway. Therefore, operation of Alternative 4 would not substantially damage any scenic resources within SR-1 or SR-27 (Topanga Canyon Boulevard), the nearest state scenic highways, neither of which is within the Project Study Area. Additionally, none of the six scenic highways designated by the City of Los Angeles would be affected by Alternative 4. Therefore, operation of Alternative 4 would not substantially damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

8.3.2.2 Construction Impacts

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. Although temporary in nature, construction activities may cause a visually unappealing quality in a community. Construction of Alternative 4 would introduce visually disruptive elements in each LU, including the following:

- Light and heavy excavation
- Tunneling, roadway/bridge demolition and reconstruction
- Building demolition
- Structural falsework
- Security fencing
- Soil removal/stockpile
- Stockpiled building materials
- Safety and directional signage
- Station platforms and plazas
- Ancillary facilities
- Large, heavy equipment may include cranes, bulldozers, scrapers, and trucks

Furthermore, tree removal during construction would also create noticeable changes in certain areas, exposing previously screened views of infrastructure and construction activities. However, these changes would be temporary and would not be located within a state scenic highway.

As discussed in Section 8.2.3, no California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the Project Study Area. Construction of Alternative 4 would not substantially damage any scenic resources within SR-1 or SR-27, the nearest state scenic highways, neither of which is within the Project Study Area. Therefore, construction of Alternative 4 would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

8.3.2.3 Maintenance and Storage Facility

No California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the MSF area. Additionally, no State-designated scenic highways or City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are located in proximity to the MSF. Therefore, operation of the MSF would not substantially damage any scenic resources within a state scenic highway, and none of the six scenic highways designated by the City of Los Angeles would be impacted by the MSF.

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. Although temporary in nature, construction activities may cause a visually unappealing quality in a community. However, as discussed previously, Metro projects are not required to adhere to local zoning ordinances. Any elements that would be located on properties outside of the public ROW (e.g., station plazas and TPSS) would comply with applicable zoning and design requirements, including undergoing mandated design review where applicable and coordinating with local jurisdictions and/or other public entities during preliminary and final designs. In addition, while Alternative 4 would add new visible structures, it is expected that visual change associated with the MSF would not be readily noticeable given the existing structures associated with the LOSSAN rail corridor and background conditions. Therefore, the MSF would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

8.3.3 Impact AES-3: Would the project, in non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Alternative 4 is in an urbanized area, as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15387; therefore, in accordance with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant impact would occur if Alternative 4 conflicts with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. The zoning ordinances of each jurisdiction in the Project Study Area do not directly regulate the design of transportation infrastructure elements. Additionally, the jurisdictions in the Project Study Area generally do not have policies or regulations that govern visual quality during construction activities for transportation-related projects. Alternative 4 would be designed to maintain and/or enhance the visual character or public views of the alignment and its surrounding communities consistent with all Metro policies related to visual resources, including the Metro Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy.

8.3.3.1 Operational Impacts

As discussed in Section 8.1, Alternative 4 would have both an underground component from the southern terminus at Exposition Boulevard in the West Los Angeles community, and an aerial component from Del Gado Drive to the Van Nuys Metrolink Station along the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW in Van Nuys.

Operational components of Alternative 4, including but not limited to station design, guideway, auxiliary facilities, parking lots, and new landscaping would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, Adjacent Development Review, and Tree Policy. Certain elements that would be located on properties outside of the public ROW (e.g., station plazas and TPSS) would comply with applicable zoning and design requirements, including undergoing mandated design review where applicable and coordinating with

local jurisdictions and/or other public entities during preliminary and final designs. While Metro projects are not required to adhere to local zoning ordinances, these project elements would comply with local zoning ordinances as they pertain to scenic quality.

Architectural renderings and photo-realistic visual simulations were created and used to illustrate where visual changes would be most noticeable after implementation of Alternative 4. These renderings are conceptual and do not represent the final design of Alternative 4 at this time.

Landscape Unit 1

Within LU-1, Alternative 4 would operate underground; however, the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and Santa Monica Boulevard Station entrances would be located at grade. As such, operation of Alternative 4 within LU-1 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 4 within LU-1 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change because they would have direct views of Alternative 4 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed stations would represent new elements in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 4 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. In addition, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 4 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the station entries and plazas are proposed. These at-grade facilities would be visible by the public; however, because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not have a substantial adverse effect on prominent views of valued visual resources.

Alternative 4 would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 4 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages “transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.” Alternative 4 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

As such, Alternative 4 would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible. Overall, Alternative 4 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 4 within LU-1 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 2

Within LU-2, Alternative 4 would operate underground; however, the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station and UCLA Gateway Plaza Station entrances would be located at grade. As such, operation of Alternative 4 within LU-2 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, UCLA patrons, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 4 within LU-2 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 4 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed stations would represent new elements in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 4 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. In addition, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 4 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the TPSS sites, station entries, and plazas are proposed. As shown on KOP 16 (Figure 8-27) located on Westwood Plaza, the proposed UCLA Gateway Plaza Station would not be highly visible, and would be complementary and appropriate to the scale and character of the existing buildings on the UCLA campus. Because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, the at-grade facilities would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible.

Alternative would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 4 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages “transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.” Alternative 4 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

Overall, Alternative 4 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 4 within LU-2 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Figure 8-27. Alternative 4: KOP 16 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking Southeast Toward the Primary Station Entrance of the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station

Source: HTA, 2024

Landscape Unit 3

Within LU-3, Alternative 4 would operate underground and would not result in adverse visual impacts on any visual resource, including scenic resources along Mulholland Drive and within the MSPSP. No project components would be located aboveground in LU-3. As such, Alternative 4 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 4 within LU-3 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and no impact would occur.

Landscape Unit 4

Within LU-4, Alternative 4 would operate underground before transitioning to an aerial alignment at Del Gado Drive. A portal structure would be located on Del Gado Drive, where the underground tunnel would daylight to an aerial guideway, and the aerial guideway would continue north on Sepulveda Boulevard to the Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station. Within LU-4, the aerial guideway would also include both center columns and expansive straddle bents that would support the aerial guideway. As such, operation of Alternative 4 within LU-4 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 4 within LU-4 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 4 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed aerial guideway, center columns, straddle bents, and station would represent a new and large element in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 4 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. For a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 4 would result in permanent alterations to commercial and residential parcels where the tunnel portal, TPSS sites, aerial guideway, straddle bents/columns, station entries, and plazas are proposed. In addition, certain residences would be removed along Del Gado Drive to construct the proposed tunnel portal, which would represent a visual change.

The proposed aerial guideway within LU-4 has been designed to travel parallel to the elevated I-405 for a short distance. Due to the aerial guideway's height and massing, the aerial guideway would result in a visual contrast in this portion of LU-4. However, as shown on KOP 13 (Figure 8-28) located on Del Gado Drive, views of the tunnel portal and aerial guideway are available only from limited vantage points along Del Gado Drive. Specifically, KOP 13 (Figure 8-28) provides a sight line view from the Del Gado Drive, looking west. From this vantage point, a small portion of the tunnel portal and aerial guideway is visible. However, the visibility of the tunnel portal would be limited to the area along Del Gado Drive directly in front of and facing the portal. The tunnel portal is anticipated to be a rectangular-shaped passageway structure without a dissipative design and would not be visually obtrusive. As illustrated on the overlay view for KOP 13 (Figure 7-28), the proposed tunnel portal would also be located on private

properties. These private properties are currently zoned R1-1 (One-Family Zone), and there are no applicable zoning regulations governing scenic quality for these properties.

The portal construction may leave the concrete structure surfaces, shotcrete surfaces, and freshly cut rock surfaces at the portal site permanently exposed. However, these exposed surfaces may be treated to appear naturally formed and weathered to help blend into the surrounding environment. In addition, the site configuration of the stations, portals, and MSF would be optimized for solar orientation and prevailing wind conditions.

As shown on KOP 18 (Figure 8-30) located on Sepulveda Boulevard at Camarillo Street, the primary visual change would be the addition of the aerial guideway above Sepulveda Boulevard, including center columns. The rendering provided is only a graphical illustration of a typical viaduct and does not represent the proposed STCP design. Overhead power lines and poles would be undergrounded as part of Alternative 4. As illustrated, the aerial guideway would be oriented above the US-101 overpass. The addition of these features would affect the visual character of the Alternative 4 corridor by introducing new visible vertical features that would block views from motorists, pedestrians, and residents along Sepulveda Boulevard. Viewer groups—including residents in this area—would notice the visual changes associated with Alternative 4.

Overall, the aerial guideway and Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station within LU-4 would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. However, the height and mass of the aerial facilities would be larger than the infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape (e.g., US-101).

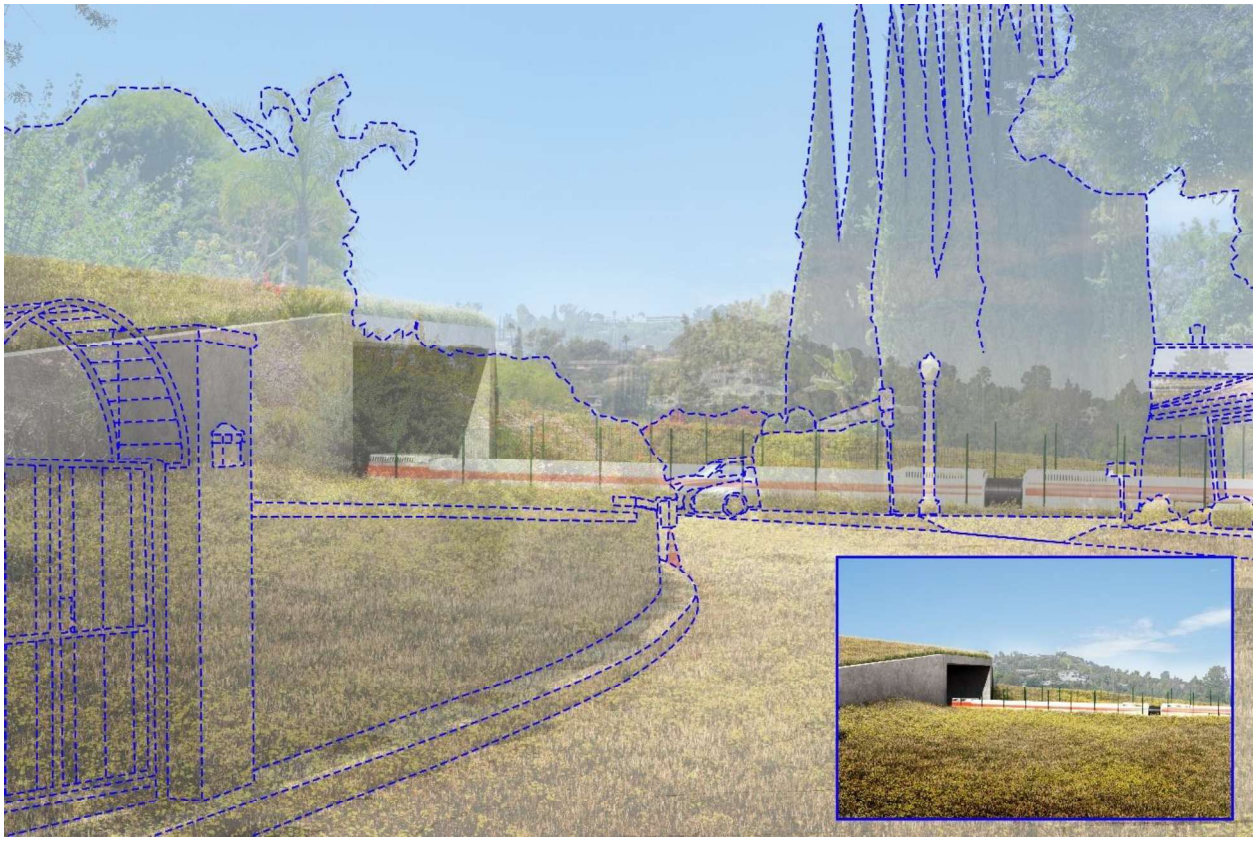
Alternative 4 would be partially consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages “transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.” Alternative 4 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

As such, the aerial facilities would not be visually similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape within LU-4. Overall, Alternative 4 would partially conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 4 within LU-4 would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings and would result in a significant impact. There are no feasible mitigation measures to reduce this impact, and as such, it is significant and unavoidable.

Figure 8-28. Alternative 4: KOP 13 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking West Toward the Tunnel Portal Structure South of the Del Gado Drive Cul-De-Sac

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 8-29. Alternative 4: KOP 13 – Before and After Overlay View, View Looking West Toward the Tunnel Portal Structure South of the Del Gado Drive Cul-De-Sac



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 8-30. Alternative 4: KOP 18 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking North from Sepulveda Boulevard at Camarillo Street Toward the Aerial Alignment as it Crosses US-101

Source: HTA, 2024

Landscape Unit 5

Within LU-5, the aerial guideway for Alternative 4 would primarily operate parallel to I-405 directly above Sepulveda Boulevard to the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station. The aerial guideway would operate farther to the east of I-405 as compared to within LU-4. Within LU-5, the aerial guideway would also include both center columns and expansive straddle bents that would support the aerial guideway. As such, operation of Alternative 4 within LU-5 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 4 within LU-5 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 4 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private units. The proposed aerial guideway and station would represent a new and large element in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 4 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. In addition, as discussed previously, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if Alternative 4 would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 4 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, straddle bents/columns, station entries and plazas are proposed. The aerial guideway and Metro G Line Station would be taller than existing transportation infrastructure (i.e., I-405 and US-101) and commercial structures.

As shown on KOP 5 (Figure 8-31) located on Sepulveda Boulevard at Morrison Street and KOP 14 (Figure 8-32) located on Sepulveda Boulevard at Cantlay Street just north of Sherman Way, the primary visual change would be the addition of the aerial guideway above Sepulveda Boulevard, expansive straddle bents and/or center columns, and associated columns that impact public sidewalks and the directly adjacent properties. The guideway rendering is only a graphical illustration of a typical viaduct and does not represent the proposed STCP design. Overhead power lines and poles would be undergrounded as part of Alternative 4. As illustrated, the aerial guideway would be oriented above the US-101 overpass. The addition of these features would affect the visual character of the Alternative 4 corridor by introducing new visible vertical features that would block views from motorists, pedestrians, and residents along Sepulveda Boulevard. Viewer groups—including residents in this area—would notice the visual changes associated with Alternative 4.

Alternative 4 would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. However, the height and mass of the aerial facilities would be larger than the infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape (e.g., US-101).

Alternative 4 would be partially consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages “transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.” Alternative 4 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

As such, the aerial facilities would not be visually similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape within LU-5. Due to the design of Alternative 4, it is unlikely that a reduction in the size of the infrastructure would reduce impacts as the height and mass of the aerial facilities, even if they were slightly reduced, would still be larger than the infrastructure that currently exists in the urban landscape. Overall, Alternative 4 would partially conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality while achieving the goal of providing attractive transit services. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 4 within LU-5 would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings and result in a significant impact. There are no feasible mitigation measures to reduce this impact, as such it is significant and unavoidable.

Figure 8-31. Alternative 4: KOP 5 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking South from Sepulveda Boulevard at Morrison Street Toward the Aerial Alignment as it Crosses US-101

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 8-32. Alternative 4: KOP 14 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking South from Sepulveda Boulevard at Cantlay Street Toward the Sherman Way Station

Source: HTA, 2024

Landscape Unit 6

Just as within LU-6, the aerial guideway for Alternative 4 would primarily operate directly above Sepulveda Boulevard to the Sherman Way Station and continue east adjacent to the LOSSAN corridor and Raymer Street to the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. From the Van Nuys Metrolink Station, the aerial guideway would travel east along the LOSSAN rail corridor to the MSF. Similar to LU-5, the aerial guideway would also include both center columns and expansive straddle bents that would support the aerial guideway. As such, operation of Alternative 4 within LU-6 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 4 within LU-6 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 4 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed aerial guideway and station would represent a new and large change in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 4 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. In addition, as discussed previously, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 4 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the aerial guideway, straddle bents/columns, station entries and plazas are proposed. The aerial guideway, Sherman Way Station, and Van Nuys Station would affect the visual character of Alternative 4 corridor by introducing new visible vertical features, such as columns and the overhead guideway, which would block views from motorists, pedestrians, and residents along Sepulveda Boulevard. Viewer groups—including residents in this area—would notice the visual changes associated with Alternative 4.

Alternative 4 would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. However, the height and mass of the aerial facilities would be larger than the infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape (e.g., US-101).

Alternative 4 would be consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages “transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.” Alternative 4 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

As such, the aerial facilities would not be visually similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape within LU-6. Overall, Alternative 4 would partially conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 4 within LU-6 would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings and result in a significant impact. There are no feasible mitigation measures to reduce this impact; therefore, it is significant and unavoidable.

Operation of Alternative 4 would represent an overall change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions. However, Alternative 4 is in an urban area that currently has a mix

of architectural styles and building materials and colors. Although viewer groups may have varying sensitivities to the visual change associated with Alternative 4 for each of the LUs, Alternative 4 would be consistent with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality within LU-1 through LU-4. However, LU-5 and LU-6 have specific conflicts with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality which may conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality, resulting in a significant impact. There are no feasible mitigation measures to reduce this impact; therefore, it is significant and unavoidable

8.3.3.2 Construction Impacts

The Alternative 4 alignment consists of a portion of the public ROW, including roadway and sidewalks, as well as City-owned, state-owned, and private properties. During the construction phase, the visual character of the alignment would change temporarily from existing conditions. Construction of the aerial guideway, underground tunnels, and stations would require equipment such as construction barriers and sound walls, cranes, and other appurtenances that would be visible during much of the approximately 99-month substantial completion construction period.

Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings and other aerial transportation infrastructure. Certain areas may be fenced off with construction barriers and sound walls, resulting in a temporary change and contrast in visual character from the existing conditions Although temporary and short-term in nature, construction activities would be a visual nuisance. Mitigation Measure AES-1 would include temporary privacy screens to minimize impacts from construction barriers and sound walls. In addition, the designated construction areas along the alignment would experience additional truck traffic compared to existing conditions, with trucks moving materials on- and off-site, and work crews and construction equipment moving around the alignment and between Alternative 4 components.

In addition, the designated construction areas along the alignment would experience additional truck traffic compared to existing conditions, with trucks moving materials on- and off-site, and work crews and construction equipment moving around the alignment and between the project components.

Some residents may have private views of Alternative 4 construction from their windows. While residents would be highly sensitive to visual changes and would have a higher degree of personal investment in Alternative 4, as discussed in Section 8.2.4.1 visual impacts are assessed based on changes to public views.

Motorists would primarily experience views of construction activities while driving along the roadways along and adjacent to Alternative 4. In addition, drivers would have prolonged views while idling at the various traffic signals surrounding the proposed station areas and aerial guideway. Passing drivers would notice the change in the visual character during the construction phase. However, drivers are considered to have a low sensitivity to any visual changes because they would likely be passing through the Project Study Area to reach their destinations and would not necessarily have a personal investment in the visual character or quality of the Project Study Area.

In addition, pedestrians would primarily experience views of construction activities while walking along public sidewalks, within transit stations, and near businesses that are to the proposed station areas and aerial guideway. The change in the visual character of the alignment during the construction phase would be noticeable by these viewers. In addition, pedestrians are considered to have a moderate sensitivity to visual changes because they may be engaged in observing their surroundings.

Alternative 4 includes entitlements and approvals to establish land use regulations for the Alternative 4 alignment to ensure consistent implementation of development standards throughout the Alternative 4 alignment. The development standards would recognize the unique characteristics of Alternative 4, including unique opportunities for public benefits. The design standards included in Alternative 4's entitlements and approvals would enhance the visual identity and character of Alternative 4 and its surrounding communities, and would ensure visual compatibility with adjacent development, as well as the Project Study Area's overall community character. Overall, Alternative 4 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality.

Overall, construction would represent a temporary change in the visual quality and character. Project components would potentially stand out as memorable or remarkable features in the landscape due to their scale, which would have a temporary impact on visual character and quality of the Project Study Area and its surroundings compared to existing conditions. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings in urbanized areas. Impacts from construction activities would be temporary and post-construction views of Alternative 4-related construction activities, equipment, stockpiles, and fencing would be removed once construction is completed. In addition, Alternative 4 would comply with the best management practices noted in Section 8.1.2, as well as the city's development standards related to scenic quality during construction, which would be verified during the permitting process. Therefore, construction of Alternative 4 would not conflict with applicable regulations governing scenic quality and would result in less than significant impacts.

8.3.3.3 Maintenance and Storage Facility

Maintenance of HRT vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF. Multiple buildings would be constructed, including a multi-level maintenance-of-way building, track storage area, wash bays, ancillary storage buildings, and a TPSS structure. A grade separated access road and a parking area for employees would also be included. These structures would be the primary visual elements of the MSF. The MSF site within the northern portion of LU-6 would be located within a heavily industrialized area, and operation of this MSF would generally fit within the context of the existing industrial character.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 4 within LU-6 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

The MSF would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels. As discussed previously, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

The MSF in LU-6 would be located at grade and would include a portion of the LADWP property east of the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. One-story, single-family residences are located directly south of the proposed MSF site. This residential area would not have direct north-facing public views of the proposed MSF, including the internal grade separated access road, because the properties front onto or face associated residential streets to the south, such as Cohasset Street. In addition, a two-story apartment building is located directly south of the proposed MSF site, and residents would have private north-facing views of the MSF. However, as discussed in Section 3.1.5, impacts are assessed related to changes to public views. The visual character of the new surface parking lot would be similar to the existing parking lot at the proposed MSF site.

The MSF would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. In addition, the MSF would be relatively the same height as the existing commercial structures. These railway structures are typically more visually tolerable in industrial and commercial areas. As such, these facilities would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views.

The MSF would also be consistent with the goals and objectives within the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b) and the *Mobility Plan 2035* DCP, 2016). With regard to the *Citywide Design Guidelines*, the MSF would improve the quality of the public realm through project design that is appropriate to the scale and character of the existing buildings in the surrounding area.

During the construction phase, the visual character of the alignment would change temporarily from existing conditions. Construction of the MSF would require equipment such as construction barriers and sound walls, cranes, and other appurtenances that would be visible during much of the construction period.

Construction of the MSF would comply with applicable regulations governing scenic quality, including South Coast Air Quality Management District Rule 403, and would occur in an urbanized area. Rule 403 does not permit track-out dust to extend 25 feet or more beyond the active construction area and requires all track-out dirt to be removed at the end of each workday or evening shift. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings and other aerial transportation infrastructure.

Although temporary and short-term in nature, construction activities would be a visual nuisance. However, certain areas may be fenced off with construction barriers and sound walls, resulting in a temporary change and contrast in visual character from the existing conditions. Mitigation Measure AES-1 would include temporary privacy screens to minimize impacts from construction barriers and sound walls. In addition, the designated construction areas along the alignment would experience additional truck traffic compared to existing conditions, with trucks moving materials on- and off-site, and work crews and construction equipment moving around the sites and between the project components.

Some residents may have private views of Alternative 4 construction from their windows. While residents would be highly sensitive to visual changes and would have a higher degree of personal investment in Alternative 4, as previously mentioned, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to public views.

Motorists would primarily experience views of construction activities while driving along the roadways along and adjacent to the MSF. In addition, drivers would have prolonged views while idling at the various traffic signals surrounding the proposed station areas and aerial guideway. Passing drivers would notice the change in the visual character during the construction phase. However, drivers are considered to have a low sensitivity to any visual changes because they would likely be passing through the Project Study Area to reach their destinations and would not necessarily have a personal investment in the visual character or quality of the MSF area.

In addition, pedestrians would primarily experience views of construction activities while walking along public sidewalks, within transit stations, and near businesses that are to the proposed station areas, aerial guideway, and MSF. The change in the visual character during the construction phase would be

noticeable by these viewers. In addition, pedestrians are considered to have a moderate sensitivity to visual changes because they may be engaged in observing their surroundings.

The MSF includes entitlements and approvals to ensure consistent implementation of development standards. The development standards would recognize the MSF's unique characteristics, including unique opportunities for public benefits. The design standards included in the MSF's entitlements and approvals would ensure visual compatibility with adjacent development, as well as the MSF area's overall community character. The MSF would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. As such, the MSF would be consistent with applicable policies related to scenic quality during construction.

Overall, the MSF would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Construction would represent a temporary change in the visual quality and character. Project components would potentially stand out as memorable or remarkable features in the landscape due to their scale, which would have a temporary impact on visual character and quality of the MSF area and its surroundings compared to existing conditions. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings in urbanized areas. Impacts from construction activities would be temporary and post-construction views of Alternative 4-related construction activities, equipment, stockpiles, and fencing would be removed once construction is completed. In addition, the MSF would comply with the best management practices noted in Section 8.1.2, as well as the city's development standards related to scenic quality during construction, which would be verified during the permitting process. Therefore, the MSF within LU-6 would not conflict with applicable regulations governing scenic quality, or substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

8.3.4 Impact AES-4: Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

8.3.4.1 Operational Impacts

Alternative 4 would be primarily located underground from the southern terminus at Exposition Boulevard in the West Los Angeles community through the Santa Monica Mountains. As such, new nighttime light would primarily emanate from station areas (e.g., station plazas, entryways, platforms and parking lots), which would not substantially increase the amount of lighting in the immediate area because similar light sources and levels (e.g., buildings, streetlights, and parking lots) currently exist. Alternative 4 would follow Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy. Compliance with these requirements would ensure that permanent operations-related light sources at the proposed station areas would be directed downwards or feature directional shielding to minimize spillover onto adjacent properties, including residential uses and other light-sensitive uses.

Alternative 4-related sources of light and glare from the aerial component north of the Santa Monica Mountains to the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW in Van Nuys would primarily emanate from trains and station areas, including the aerial guideway, station platforms, and parking lots. Alternative 4-related lighting would primarily occur at the stations, TPSS, and/or proposed parking lots. Lighting from trains on aerial structures is not expected to extend beyond the aerial guideway or roadway ROW. Per Metro's Rail Design Criteria or equivalent, all light sources at the proposed surface parking lots and stations would be directed downwards to minimize potential spillover onto surrounding properties, including light-sensitive uses.

Additionally, Alternative 4 would include several elements (e.g., glass or metal surfaces) that would create new sources of glare at proposed station areas during the day. However, per Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy, surfaces and architectural finishes would be used that reduce glare and reflection to reduce impacts. Overall, Alternative 4 would create a negligible addition to light and glare and would not constitute a substantial change in existing light and glare in the immediate area. Therefore, operation of Alternative 4 would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

8.3.4.2 Construction Impacts

Construction of Alternative 4 would occur during daytime hours. Additionally, some work would be conducted throughout 24-hour periods, seven days a week when appropriate, such as work within the tunnel station box. Nighttime and weekend construction, if any, would comply with local ordinance restrictions. Such activities may include, but would not be limited to, tunneling, columns and trackwork, and stockpiling materials. As part of best management practices described in Section 8.1.2, construction lighting would be directed toward the construction areas and/or shielded with temporary screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto adjacent areas. In addition, construction-related illumination would be temporary and limited to safety and security purposes. The implementation of best management practices would reduce temporary impacts to adjacent uses, such as the residential properties. Therefore, construction of Alternative 4 would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

8.3.4.3 Maintenance and Storage Facility

Maintenance of HRT vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF. Multiple buildings would be constructed, including a multi-level maintenance-of-way building, track storage area, wash bays, ancillary storage buildings, and a TPSS structure (Metro, 2024x). A grade separated access road and a parking area for employees would also be included. New nighttime light would primarily emanate from the MSF, which would be a visible source of light, but would not represent a substantial increase in the amount of lighting in the immediate area because similar light sources and levels (e.g., buildings, streetlights, and parking lots) currently exist. The MSF would follow Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy. Compliance with these requirements would ensure that permanent operations-related light sources at the MSF would be directed downwards or feature directional shielding to minimize spillover onto adjacent properties, including residential uses and other light-sensitive uses.

Alternative 4-related sources of light and glare from the MSF would primarily emanate from buildings and parking lots. Per Metro's Rail Design Criteria or equivalent, all light sources at the proposed surface parking lots and stations would be directed downwards to minimize potential spillover onto surrounding properties, including light-sensitive uses.

The MSF would include several elements (e.g., glass or metal surfaces) that would create new sources of glare during the day. However, per Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy, surfaces and architectural finishes would be used that reduce glare and reflection. Overall, the MSF would create a negligible addition to light and glare and would not constitute a substantial change in existing light and glare in the immediate area.

In addition, construction of the MSF would primarily occur during daytime hours. Nighttime and weekend construction, if any, would comply with local ordinance restrictions. Construction lighting would be directed toward the construction areas and/or shielded with temporary screening to minimize

light spillover and glare onto adjacent areas. In addition, construction-related illumination would be temporary and limited to safety and security purposes. Construction of the MSF would not be a substantial source of light and glare because several nighttime lighting sources already exist around the construction areas (e.g., streetlights, building illumination). Therefore, the MSF would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

8.4 Mitigation Measures

8.4.1 Operational Impacts

As discussed in Section 8.3, operation of Alternative 4 would result in less than significant impacts related to scenic vistas, scenic resources, and light and glare; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Alternative 4 would result in significant impacts related to visual quality and character within LU-5 and LU-6. It has been concluded that there are no feasible mitigation measures available to reduce impacts.

8.4.2 Construction Impacts

Construction activities would be a temporary and short-term visual nuisance. Temporary changes and contrast from the visual character from the existing conditions are impacted by construction activities such as site operations, tree removals, and construction traffic. Construction related structures such as barrier, sound walls, and fencing also impact visual resources.

As a result, the following mitigation measures would be implemented:

MM AES-1: *Privacy screens, as applicable and appropriate, shall be placed in high visibility areas that have construction related structures or activities. Privacy screens shall be used in areas requiring tree removal activities adjacent visually sensitive areas, including but not limited to residential areas.*

8.4.3 Impacts After Mitigation

It has been concluded that there are no feasible mitigation measures available to reduce impacts related to visual quality and character during operations. As such, a significant and unavoidable impact remains.

During construction, MM AES-1 would reduce the temporary visual nuisance of construction activities. The implementation of this mitigation measure would result in less than significant impacts related to construction.

9 ALTERNATIVE 5

9.1 Alternative Description

Alternative 5 consists of a heavy rail transit (HRT) system with a primarily underground guideway track configuration, including seven underground stations and one aerial station. This alternative would include five transfers to high-frequency fixed guideway transit and commuter rail lines, including the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (Metro) E, Metro D, and Metro G Lines, East San Fernando Valley Light Rail Transit Line, and the Metrolink Ventura County Line. The length of the alignment between the terminus stations would be approximately 13.8 miles, with 0.7 miles of aerial guideway and 13.1 miles of underground configuration.

The seven underground and one aerial HRT stations would be as follows:

1. Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station (underground)
2. Santa Monica Boulevard Station (underground)
3. Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station (underground)
4. UCLA Gateway Plaza Station (underground)
5. Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station (underground)
6. Metro G Line Sepulveda Station (underground)
7. Sherman Way Station (underground)
8. Van Nuys Metrolink Station (aerial)

9.1.1 Operating Characteristics

9.1.1.1 Alignment

As shown on Figure 9-1, from its southern terminus station at the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, the alignment of Alternative 5 would run underground north through the Westside of Los Angeles (Westside), the Santa Monica Mountains, and the San Fernando Valley (Valley) to a tunnel portal east of Sepulveda Boulevard and south of Raymer Street. As it approaches the tunnel portal, the alignment would curve eastward and begin to transition to an aerial guideway along the south side of the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) rail corridor that would continue to the northern terminus station adjacent to the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station.

The proposed southern terminus station would be located underground east of Sepulveda Boulevard between the existing elevated Metro E Line tracks and Pico Boulevard. Tail tracks for vehicle storage would extend underground south of National Boulevard east of Sepulveda Boulevard. The alignment would continue north beneath Bentley Avenue before curving northwest to an underground station at the southeast corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard. From the Santa Monica Boulevard Station, the alignment would continue and curve eastward to the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station beneath the Metro D Line Westwood/UCLA Station, which is currently under construction as part of the Metro D Line Extension Project. From there, the underground alignment would curve slightly to the northeast and continue beneath Westwood Boulevard before reaching the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station.

Figure 9-1. Alternative 5: Alignment

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

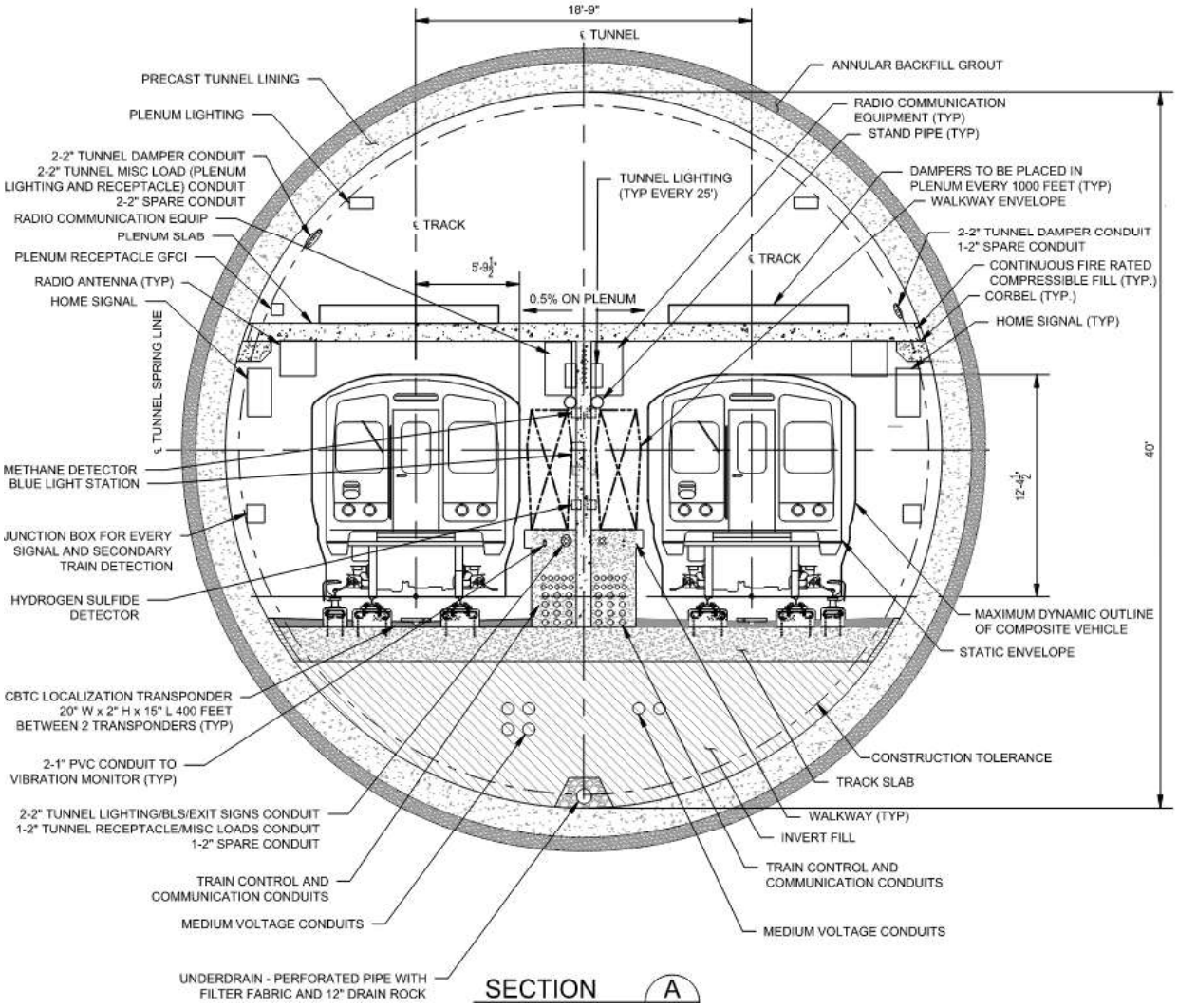
From the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station, the alignment would turn to the northwest beneath the Santa Monica Mountains to the east of Interstate 405 (I-405). South of Mulholland Drive, the alignment would curve to the north, aligning with Saugus Avenue south of Valley Vista Boulevard. The Ventura Boulevard Station would be located under Saugus Avenue between Greenleaf Street and Dickens Street. The alignment would then continue north beneath Sepulveda Boulevard to the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station immediately south of the Metro G Line Busway. After leaving the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station, the alignment would continue beneath Sepulveda Boulevard to reach the Sherman Way Station,

the final underground station along the alignment, immediately south of Sherman Way. From the Sherman Way Station, the alignment would continue north before curving slightly to the northeast to the tunnel portal south of Raymer Street. The alignment would then transition from an underground configuration to an aerial guideway structure after exiting the tunnel portal. East of the tunnel portal, the alignment would transition to a "cut-and-cover" U-structure segment followed by a trench segment before transitioning to an aerial guideway that would run east along the south side of the LOSSAN rail corridor. Parallel to the LOSSAN rail corridor, the guideway would conflict with the existing Willis Avenue Pedestrian Bridge which would be demolished. The alignment would follow the LOSSAN rail corridor before reaching the proposed northern terminus Van Nuys Metrolink Station located adjacent to the existing Metrolink/Amtrak Station. The tail tracks and yard lead tracks would descend to the proposed at-grade maintenance and storage facility (MSF) east of the proposed northern terminus station. Modifications to the existing pedestrian underpass to the Metrolink platforms to accommodate these tracks would result in reconfiguration of an existing rail spur serving City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) property.

9.1.1.2 Guideway Characteristics

For underground sections, Alternative 5 would utilize a single-bore tunnel configuration with an outside diameter of approximately 43.5 feet. The tunnel would include two parallel tracks at 18.75-foot spacing in tangent sections separated by a continuous central dividing wall throughout the tunnel. Inner walkways would be constructed adjacent to the two tracks. Inner and outer walkways would be constructed within tunnel sections near the track crossovers. At the crown of tunnel, a dedicated air plenum would be provided by constructing a concrete slab above the railway corridor. The air plenum would allow for ventilation throughout the underground portion of the alignment. Figure 9-2 illustrates these components at a typical cross-section of the underground guideway.

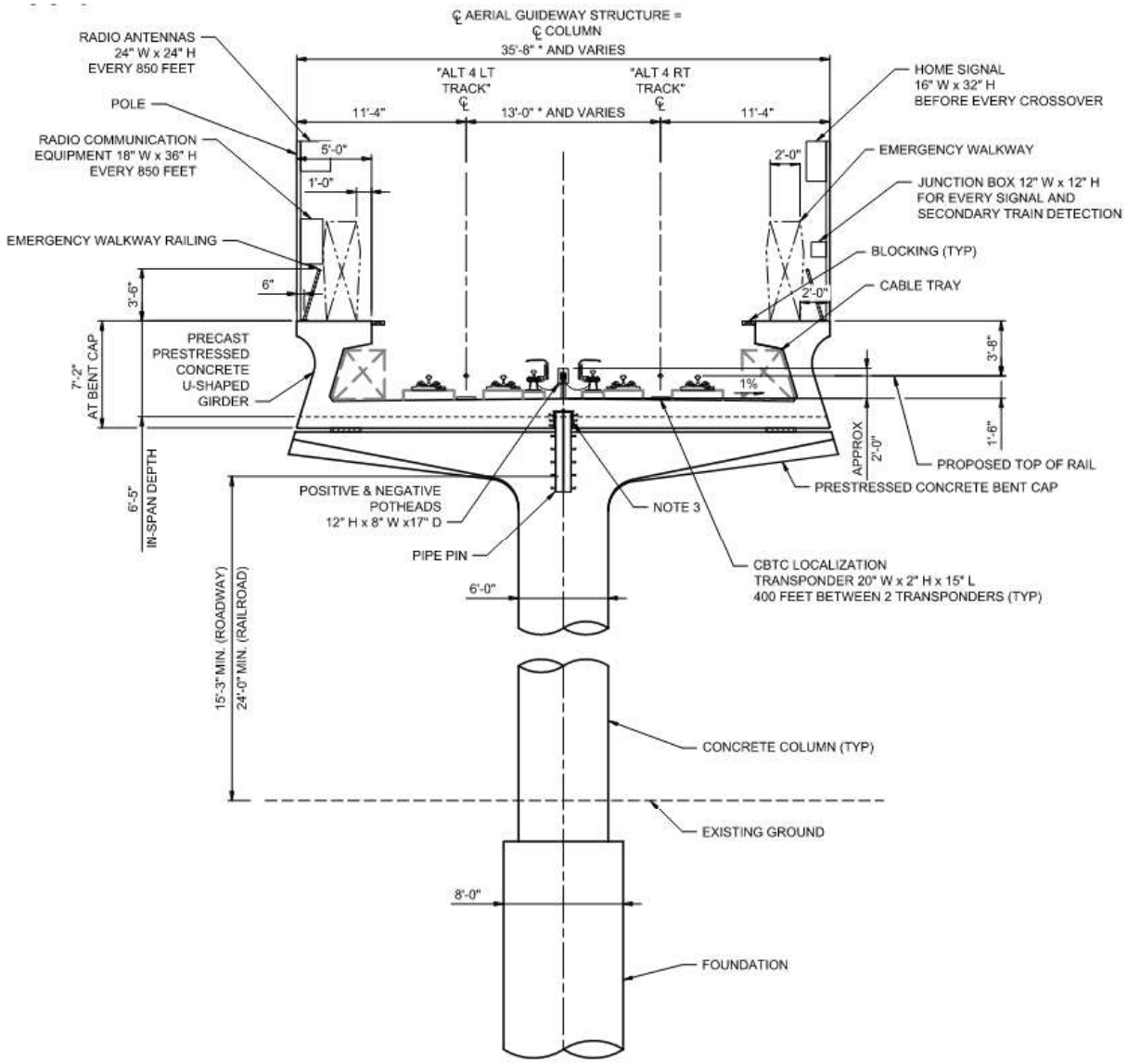
Figure 9-2. Typical Underground Guideway Cross-Section



Source: STCP, 2024

In aerial sections adjacent to Raymer Street and the LOSSAN rail corridor, the guideway would consist of single-column spans. The single-column spans would include a U-shaped concrete girder structure that supports the railway track atop a series of individual columns. The single-column aerial guideway would be approximately 36 feet wide. The track would be constructed on the concrete girders with direct fixation and would maintain a minimum of 13 feet between the two-track centerlines. On the outer side of the tracks, emergency walkways would be constructed with a minimum width of 2 feet. The single-column aerial guideway would be the primary aerial structure throughout the aerial portion of the alignment. Figure 9-3 shows a typical cross-section of the single-column aerial guideway.

Figure 9-3. Typical Aerial Guideway Cross-Section



Source: STCP, 2024

9.1.1.3 Vehicle Technology

Alternative 5 would utilize steel-wheel HRT trains, with automated train operations and planned peak-period headways of 2.5 minutes and off-peak-period headways ranging from 4 to 6 minutes. Each train could consist of three or four cars with open gangways between cars. The HRT vehicle would have a maximum operating speed of 70 miles per hour; actual operating speeds would depend on the design of the guideway and distance between stations. Train cars would be approximately 10 feet wide with three double doors on each side. Each car would be approximately 72 feet long with capacity for 170 passengers. Trains would be powered by a third rail.

9.1.1.4 Stations

Alternative 5 would include seven underground stations and one aerial station with station platforms measuring 280 feet long for both station configurations. The aerial station would be constructed a minimum of 15.25 feet above ground level, supported by rows of dual columns with 8-foot diameters. The southern terminus station would be adjacent to the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, and the northern terminus station would be adjacent to the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station.

All stations would be side-platform stations where passengers would select and travel up to station platforms depending on their direction of travel. All stations would include 20-foot-wide side platforms separated by 30 feet for side-by-side trains. Each underground station would include an upper and lower concourse level prior to reaching the train platforms. The Van Nuys Metrolink Station would include a mezzanine level prior to reaching the station platforms. Each station would have a minimum of two elevators, two escalators, and one stairway from ground level to the concourse or mezzanine.

Stations would include automatic, bi-parting fixed doors along the edges of station platforms. These platform screen doors would be integrated into the automatic train control system and would not open unless a train is stopped at the platform.

The following information describes each station, with relevant entrance, walkway, and transfer information. Bicycle parking would be provided at each station.

Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station

- This underground station would be located just north of the existing Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station, on the east side of Sepulveda Boulevard.
- A station entrance would be located on the east side of Sepulveda Boulevard north of the Metro E Line.
- A direct internal transfer to the Metro E Line would be provided at street level within the fare paid zone.
- A 126-space parking lot would be located immediately north of the station entrance, east of Sepulveda Boulevard. Passengers would also be able to park at the existing Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station parking facility, which provides 260 parking spaces.

Santa Monica Boulevard Station

- This underground station would be located under the southeast corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard.
- The station entrance would be located on the south side of Santa Monica Boulevard between Sepulveda Boulevard and Bentley Avenue.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station

- This underground station would be located beneath the Metro D Line tracks and platform under Gayley Avenue between Wilshire Boulevard and Lindbrook Drive.
- Station entrances would be provided on the northeast corner of Wilshire Boulevard and Gayley Avenue and on the northeast corner of Lindbrook Drive and Gayley Avenue. Passengers would also be able to use the Metro D Line Westwood/UCLA Station entrances to access the station platform.

- A direct internal station transfer to the Metro D Line would be provided at the south end of the station.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

UCLA Gateway Plaza Station

- This underground station would be located underneath Gateway Plaza on the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) campus.
- Station entrances would be provided on the north side of Gateway Plaza and on the east side of Westwood Boulevard across from Strathmore Place.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station

- This underground station would be located under Saugus Avenue between Greenleaf Street and Dickens Street.
- A station entrance would be located on the southeast corner of Saugus Avenue and Dickens Street.
- Approximately 92 parking spaces would be supplied at this station west of Sepulveda Boulevard between Dickens Street and the U.S. Highway 101 (US-101) On-Ramp.

Metro G Line Sepulveda Station

- This underground station would be located under Sepulveda Boulevard immediately south of the Metro G Line Busway.
- A station entrance would be provided on the west side of Sepulveda Boulevard south of the Metro G Line Busway.
- Passengers would be able to park at the existing Metro G Line Sepulveda Station parking facility, which has a capacity of 1,205 parking spaces. Currently, only 260 parking spaces are currently used for transit parking. No new parking would be constructed.

Sherman Way Station

- This underground station would be located below Sepulveda Boulevard between Sherman Way and Gault Street.
- The station entrance would be located near the southwest corner of Sepulveda Boulevard and Sherman Way.
- Approximately 122 parking spaces would be supplied at this station on the west side of Sepulveda Boulevard with vehicle access from Sherman Way.

Van Nuys Metrolink Station

- This aerial station would span Van Nuys Boulevard, just south of the LOSSAN rail corridor.
- The primary station entrance would be located on the east side of Van Nuys Boulevard just south of the LOSSAN rail corridor. A secondary station entrance would be located between Raymer Street and Van Nuys Boulevard.
- An underground pedestrian walkway would connect the station plaza to the existing pedestrian underpass to the Metrolink/Amtrak platform outside the fare paid zone.

- Existing Metrolink Station parking would be reconfigured, maintaining approximately the same number of spaces, but 66 parking spaces would be relocated west of Van Nuys Boulevard. Metrolink parking would not be available to Metro transit riders.

9.1.1.5 Station-to-Station Travel Times

Table 9-1 presents the station-to-station distance and travel times at peak period for Alternative 5. The travel times include both run time and dwell time. Dwell time is 30 seconds for transfer stations and 20 seconds for other stations. Northbound and southbound travel times vary slightly because of grade differentials and operational considerations at end-of-line stations.

Table 9-1. Alternative 5: Station-to-Station Travel Times and Station Dwell Times

From Station	To Station	Distance (miles)	Northbound Station-to-Station Travel Time (seconds)	Southbound Station-to-Station Travel Time (seconds)	Dwell Time (seconds)
Metro E Line Station					*30*
Metro E Line	Santa Monica Boulevard	0.9	89	86	—
Santa Monica Boulevard Station					*20*
Santa Monica Boulevard	Wilshire/Metro D Line	0.9	91	92	—
Wilshire/Metro D Line Station					*30*
Wilshire/Metro D Line	UCLA Gateway Plaza	0.7	75	69	—
UCLA Gateway Plaza Station					*20*
UCLA Gateway Plaza	Ventura Boulevard	6.0	368	359	—
Ventura Boulevard Station					*20*
Ventura Boulevard	Metro G Line	2.0	137	138	—
Metro G Line Station					*30*
Metro G Line	Sherman Way	1.4	113	109	—
Sherman Way Station					*20*
Sherman Way	Van Nuys Metrolink	1.9	166	162	—
Van Nuys Metrolink Station					*30*

Source: STCP, 2024

— = no data

9.1.1.6 Special Trackwork

Alternative 5 would include 10 double crossovers throughout the alignment enabling trains to cross over to the parallel track. Each terminus station would include a double crossover immediately north and south of the station. Except for the Santa Monica Boulevard Station, each station would have a double crossover immediately south of the station. The remaining crossover would be located along the alignment midway between the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station and the Ventura Boulevard Station.

9.1.1.7 Maintenance and Storage Facility

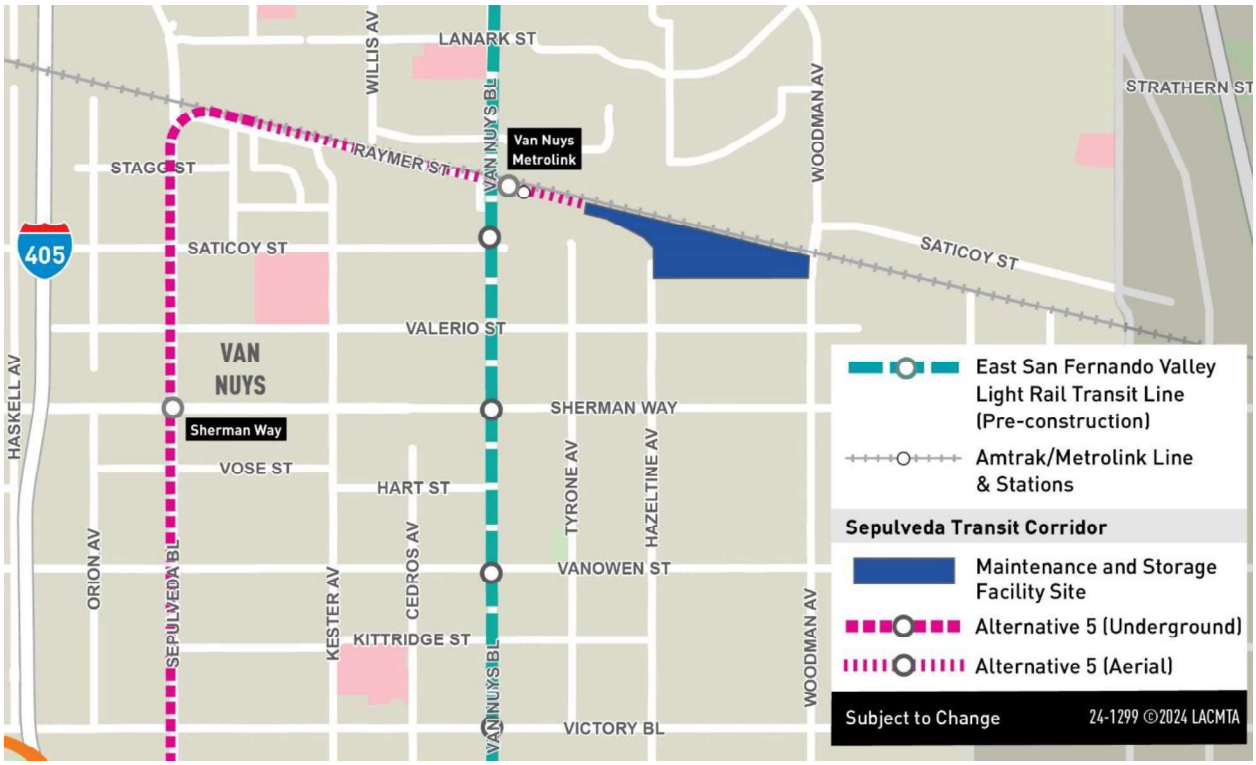
The MSF for Alternative 5 would be located east of the Van Nuys Metrolink Station and would encompass approximately 46 acres. The MSF would be designed to accommodate 184 rail cars and would be bounded by single-family residences to the south, the LOSSAN rail corridor to the north, Woodman Avenue on the east, and Hazeltine Avenue and industrial manufacturing enterprises to the west. Trains would access the site from the fixed guideway's tail tracks at the northwest corner of the site. Trains would then travel southeast to maintenance facilities and storage tracks.

The site would include the following facilities:

- Two entrance gates with guard shacks
- Main shop building
- Maintenance-of-way building
- Storage tracks
- Carwash building
- Cleaning and inspections platforms
- Material storage building
- Hazmat storage locker
- Traction power substation (TPSS) located on the west end of the MSF to serve the mainline
- TPSS located on the east end of the MSF to serve the yard and shops
- Parking area for employees
- Grade separated access roadway (over the HRT tracks at the east end of the facility) and necessary drainage

Figure 9-4 shows the location of the MSF site for Alternative 5.

Figure 9-4. Alternative 5: Maintenance and Storage Facility Site



Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

9.1.1.8 Traction Power Substations

TPSSs transform and convert high voltage alternating current supplied from power utility feeders into direct current suitable for transit operation. Twelve TPSS facilities would be located along the alignment and would be spaced approximately 0.5 to 2.5 miles apart. All TPSS facilities would be located within the

stations, adjacent to the tunnel through the Santa Monica Mountains, or within the MSF. Table 9-2 lists the TPSS locations for Alternative 5.

Figure 9-5 shows the TPSS locations along the Alternative 5 alignment.

Table 9-2. Alternative 5: Traction Power Substation Locations

TPSS No.	TPSS Location Description	Configuration
1	TPSS 1 would be located east of Sepulveda Boulevard and north of the Metro E Line.	Underground (within station)
2	TPSS 2 would be located south of Santa Monica Boulevard between Sepulveda Boulevard and Bentley Avenue.	Underground (within station)
3	TPSS 3 would be located at the southeast corner of UCLA Gateway Plaza.	Underground (within station)
4	TPSS 4 would be located south of Bellagio Road and west of Stone Canyon Road.	Underground (adjacent to tunnel)
5	TPSS 5 would be located west of Roscomare Road between Donella Circle and Linda Flora Drive.	Underground (adjacent to tunnel)
6	TPSS 6 would be located east of Loom Place between Longbow Drive and Vista Haven Road.	Underground (adjacent to tunnel)
7	TPSS 7 would be located west of Sepulveda Boulevard between the I-405 Northbound On-Ramp and Dickens Street.	Underground (within station)
8	TPSS 8 would be located west of Sepulveda Boulevard between the Metro G Line Busway and Oxnard Street.	Underground (within station)
9	TPSS 9 would be located at the southwest corner of Sepulveda Boulevard and Sherman Way.	Underground (within station)
10	TPSS 10 would be located south of the LOSSAN rail corridor and north of Raymer Street and Kester Avenue.	At-grade
11	TPSS 11 would be located south of the LOSSAN rail corridor and east of the Van Nuys Metrolink Station.	At-grade (within MSF)
12	TPSS 12 would be located south of the LOSSAN rail corridor and east of Hazeltine Avenue.	At-grade (within MSF)

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

Note: Sepulveda Transit Corridor Partners (STCP)has stated that Alternative 5 TPSS locations are derived from and assumed to be similar to the Alternative 4 TPSS locations.

Figure 9-5. Alternative 5: Traction Power Substation Locations

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

9.1.1.9 Roadway Configuration Changes

Table 9-3 lists the roadway changes necessary to accommodate the guideway of Alternative 5. Figure 9-6 shows the location of the roadway changes within the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project (Project) Study Area. In addition to the changes made to accommodate the guideway, as listed in Table 9-3, roadways and sidewalks near stations would be reconstructed, resulting in modifications to curb ramps and driveways.

Table 9-3. Alternative 5: Roadway Changes

Location	From	To	Description of Change
Raymer Street	Kester Avenue	Keswick Street	Reconstruction resulting in narrowing of width and removal of parking on the westbound side of the street to accommodate aerial guideway columns
Cabrito Road	Raymer Street	Marson Street	Closure of Cabrito Road at the LOSSAN rail corridor at-grade crossing. A new segment of Cabrito Road would be constructed from Noble Avenue and Marson Street to provide access to extra space storage from the north.

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

Figure 9-6. Alternative 5: Roadway Changes

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

9.1.1.10 Ventilation Facilities

For ventilation, a plenum within the crown of the tunnel would provide a separate compartment for air circulation and allow multiple trains to operate between stations. Each underground station would include a fan room with additional ventilation facilities. Alternative 5 would also include a stand-alone ventilation facility at the tunnel portal on the northern end of the tunnel segment, located east of Sepulveda Boulevard and south of Raymer Street. Within this facility, ventilation fan rooms would provide both emergency ventilation, in case of a tunnel fire, and regular ventilation, during non-revenue hours. The facility would also house sump pump rooms to collect water from various sources, including storm water; wash-water (from tunnel cleaning); and water from a fire-fighting incident, system testing, or pipe leaks.

9.1.1.11 Fire/Life Safety – Emergency Egress

Within the tunnel segment, emergency walkways would be provided between the center dividing wall and each track. Sliding doors would be located in the central dividing wall at required intervals to connect the two sides of the railway with a continuous walkway to allow for safe egress to a point of safety (typically at a station) during an emergency. Similarly, the aerial guideway near the LOSSAN rail corridor would include two emergency walkways with safety railing located on the outer side of the tracks. Access to tunnel segments for first responders would be through stations and the portal.

9.1.2 Construction Activities

Temporary construction activities for Alternative 5 would include project work zones at permanent facility locations, construction staging and laydown areas, and construction office areas. Construction of the transit facilities through substantial completion is expected to have a duration of 8 ¼ years. Early works, such as site preparation, demolition, and utility relocation, could start in advance of construction of the transit facilities.

For the guideway, Alternative 5 would consist of a single-bore tunnel through the Westside, Valley, and Santa Monica Mountains. The tunnel would comprise three separate segments, one running north from the southern terminus to the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station (Westside segment), one running south from the Ventura Boulevard Station to the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station (Santa Monica Mountains segment), and one running north from the Ventura Boulevard Station to the portal near Raymer Street (Valley segment). Tunnel boring machines (TBM) with approximately 45-foot-diameter cutting faces would be used to construct the tunnel segments underground. For the Westside segment, the TBM would be launched from Staging Area No. 1 in Table 9-4 at Sepulveda Boulevard and National Boulevard. For the Santa Monica Mountains segment, the TBM would be launched from the Ventura Boulevard Station. Both TBMs would be extracted from the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station Staging Area No. 3 in Table 9-4. For the Valley segment, the TBM would be launched from Staging Area No. 8 as shown in Table 9-4 and extracted from the Ventura Boulevard Station. Figure 9-7 shows the location of construction staging locations along the Alternative 5 alignment.

Table 9-4. Alternative 5: On-Site Construction Staging Locations

No.	Location Description
1	Commercial properties on southeast corner of Sepulveda Boulevard and National Boulevard
2	North side of Wilshire Boulevard between Veteran Avenue and Gayley Avenue
3	UCLA Gateway Plaza
4	Commercial property on southwest corner of Sepulveda Boulevard and Dickens Street
5	West of Sepulveda Boulevard between US-101 and Sherman Oaks Castle Park
6	Lot behind Los Angeles Fire Department Station 88
7	Property on the west side of Sepulveda Boulevard between Sherman Way and Gault Street
8	Industrial property on both sides of Raymer Street, west of Burnet Avenue
9	South of the LOSSAN rail corridor east of Van Nuys Metrolink Station, west of Woodman Avenue

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

Figure 9-7. Alternative 5: On-Site Construction Staging Locations

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

The distance from the surface to the top of the tunnel for the Westside tunnel would vary from approximately 40 feet to 90 feet depending on the depth needed to construct the underground stations. The depth of the Santa Monica Mountains tunnel segment varies greatly from approximately 470 feet as it passes under the Santa Monica Mountains to 50 feet near UCLA. The depth of the Valley segment would vary from approximately 40 feet near the Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Station and north of the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station to 150 feet near Weddington Street. The tunnel segments through the Westside and Valley would be excavated in soft ground while the tunnel through the Santa Monica Mountains would be excavated primarily in hard ground or rock as geotechnical conditions transition from soft to hard ground near the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station.

Construction work zones would also be co-located with future MSF and station locations. All work zones would comprise the permanent facility footprint with additional temporary construction easements from adjoining properties.

All underground stations would be constructed using a cut-and-cover method whereby the underground station structure would be constructed within a trench excavated from the surface with a portion or all being covered by a temporary deck and backfilled during the later stages of station construction. Traffic and pedestrian detours would be necessary during underground station excavation until decking is in place and the appropriate safety measures are taken to resume cross traffic.

In addition to work zones, Alternative 5 would include construction staging and laydown areas at multiple locations along the alignment as well as off-site staging areas. Construction staging areas would provide the necessary space for the following activities:

- Contractors' equipment
- Receiving deliveries
- Testing of soils for minerals or hazards
- Storing materials
- Site offices
- Work zone for excavation
- Other construction activities (including parking and change facilities for workers, location of construction office trailers, storage, staging and delivery of construction materials and permanent plant equipment, and maintenance of construction equipment).

A larger, off-site staging area would be used for temporary storage of excavated material from both tunneling and station cut-and-cover excavation activities. Table 9-4 and Figure 9-7 present the potential construction staging areas along the alignment for Alternative 5. Table 9-5 and Figure 9-8 present candidate sites for off-site staging and laydown areas.

Table 9-5. Alternative 5: Potential Off-Site Construction Staging Locations

No.	Location Description
S1	East of Santa Monica Airport Runway
S2	Ralph's Parking Lot in Westwood Village
N1	West of Sepulveda Basin Sports Complex, south of the Los Angeles River
N2	West of Sepulveda Basin Sports Complex, north of the Los Angeles River
N3	Metro G Line Sepulveda Station Park & Ride Lot
N4	North of Roscoe Boulevard and Hayvenhurst Avenue
N5	LADWP property south of the LOSSAN rail corridor, east of Van Nuys Metrolink Station

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

Figure 9-8. Alternative 5: Potential Off-Site Construction Staging Locations

Source: STCP, 2024; HTA, 2024

Construction of the HRT guideway between the Van Nuys Metrolink Station and the MSF would require reconfiguration of an existing rail spur serving LADWP property. The new location of the rail spur would require modification to the existing pedestrian undercrossing at the Van Nuys Metrolink Station.

Alternative 5 would require construction of a concrete casting facility for tunnel lining segments because no existing commercial fabricator capable of producing tunnel lining segments for a large-diameter tunnel exists within a practical distance of the Project Study Area. The site of the MSF would initially be

used for this casting facility. The casting facility would include casting beds and associated casting equipment, storage areas for cement and aggregate, and a field quality control facility, which would need to be constructed on-site. When a more detailed design of the facility is completed, the contractor would obtain all permits and approvals necessary from the City of Los Angeles, the South Coast Air Quality Management District, and other regulatory entities.

As areas of the MSF site begin to become available following completion of pre-casting operations, construction of permanent facilities for the MSF would begin, including construction of surface buildings such as maintenance shops, administrative offices, train control, traction power, and systems facilities. Some of the yard storage track would also be constructed at this time to allow delivery and inspection of passenger vehicles that would be fabricated elsewhere. Additional activities occurring at the MSF during the final phase of construction would include staging of trackwork and welding of guideway rail.

The following best management practices would be implemented during construction:

- Erosion-control devices, such as silt fences, would be removed as soon as the area is stabilized.
- Stockpile areas would be neatly organized and covered depending on weather events.
- Stockpiled areas would be located in less visibly sensitive areas.
- Construction lighting would be directed toward the construction areas and/or shielded with temporary screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto adjacent areas.

9.2 Existing Conditions

This section describes the existing visual and aesthetic conditions within the Resource Study Area (RSA), which is an area with a radius of 0.25 miles to 0.50 miles from the alignments, stations, and visible construction-related activities and staging, and MSF site options. The RSA for this analysis encompasses the existing aboveground landscapes within views from public vantage points that would be directly affected, temporarily and/or permanently, by the proposed facilities and components during both construction and operation.

Visual and aesthetics resources were identified, consistent with the methodology outlined in Section 3. These resources include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Structures of historic significance or visual prominence
- Open space and recreational areas
- Distant views of the horizon from public locations
- Landscaped areas

9.2.1 Regional Setting

The regional visual setting generally exhibits an urbanized character, with nearly all land in the RSA already developed. The urban landscape varies, and includes low-lying residential, industrial, and commercial buildings along with high-density, high-rise residential and commercial buildings in downtown areas.

Higher density development with a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures are generally found between the Interstate 10 (I-10) and the UCLA campus at the southern portion of the Alternative 5 alignment, and lower density development consisting of primarily low-rise structures and a few mid-rise structures are located north of the UCLA campus. The Santa Monica Mountains, located within the central portion of the RSA, provide aesthetic, environmental, and recreational benefits to residents. The ridgelines or mountain edges within the Santa Monica Mountains provide dramatic views and are

protected and preserved by individual communities. Lower density development within the Santa Monica Mountains consists primarily of low-rise structures and a few mid-rise structures, which are located south of US-101 within the community of Bel Air.

North of the Santa Monica Mountains, within the Valley, higher density development with a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures are generally found north of US-101 at the northern portion of the Alternative 5 alignment.

The major visual feature of the RSA is the built environment, which consists of a variety of commercial, industrial, public facility, institutional, and residential uses, in addition to transportation corridors. The transportation corridors within the RSA include roadways, freeways, and rail rights-of-way (ROW), including the Metro E Line ROW, Metro G Line ROW, and the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW. The Metro E Line ROW generally passes through the southern portion of the Alternative 5 alignment in an east-west direction along I-10. The LOSSAN rail corridor ROW generally passes through the northern portion of the RSA in an east-west direction.

Major freeways (i.e., US-101, I-10, and I-405) create well-defined visual boundaries and edges because the facilities are several hundred feet wide. Within the RSA, I-10, US-101, and I-405s are elevated on columns or engineered fill.

Flood control facilities also create visual boundaries within the RSA, which includes the concrete-banked channels of the Los Angeles River at the northern portion of the Alternative 5 alignment. The river channels are visually distinct due to the width and limited number of crossing points.

The topography of the RSA is varied with relatively flat urbanized areas at the northern and southern portions of the Alternative 5 alignment, with major changes in elevation through the central portion of the Alternative 5 alignment. The southern portion of the RSA slopes downward in a south-southwesterly direction toward the Pacific Ocean. Elevations range from approximately 780 feet above mean sea level around the Van Nuys Metro Station, 650 feet above mean sea level around US-101, 1,300 feet above mean sea level at the Stone Canyon Overlook along Mulholland Drive, 375 feet above mean sea level around the UCLA campus, to 120 feet above mean sea level south of National Boulevard.

Within the Santa Monica Mountains, the RSA provides elevated vantage or vista points along Mulholland Drive. These vista points provide long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains. In contrast, the northern and southern portions of the Alternative 5 alignment lack elevated vantage or vista points due to the relatively flat topography. As a result, views in the RSA are generally limited to the foreground and middle ground. Although background views of mountains are available along some public street ROWs within the RSA, portions of these background views are blocked by urban features, such as utility poles, urban landscaping, and intervening buildings.

9.2.2 Scenic Vistas

The term “scenic vista” generally refers to visual access to, or the visibility of, a particular sight from a given vantage point or corridor. The *LA CEQA Thresholds Guide* DCP, 2006) notes the value of preserving sightlines to designated scenic resources or areas of visual interest from public vantage points. The subjects of valued or recognized views may be focal (meaning of specific individual resources), or panoramic (meaning broad geographic area). Panoramic views are typically associated with scenic vistas that provide a sweeping geographic orientation. Examples of panoramic views include urban skylines, valleys, mountain ranges, or large bodies of water. Examples of focal views include public art/signs and notable buildings and structures. The nature of a view may be unique, such as a view from an elevated vantage point or particular angle.

The Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles' General Plan* defines scenic views or vistas as the panoramic public view access to natural features, including views of the ocean, striking or unusual natural terrain, or unique urban or historic features (DCP, 2001b). Scenic views from within the RSA include the Santa Monica Mountains, hillsides, and the Los Angeles River. The Los Angeles River and its associated tributaries and floodplains, and the Santa Monica Mountains are listed as scenic vistas in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan*. Sweeping views of the Santa Monica Mountains, hillsides, are considered panoramic and can be seen from designated vantage points, public hiking trails, and public ROWs.

The Santa Monica Mountains rise to an elevation of approximately 3,100 feet from the base of the hills to their highest point at Sandstone Peak. According to the Conservation Element, the Santa Monica Mountains are the most visible scenic feature from many areas of the city, including the RSA (DCP, 2001b).

Within the RSA, panoramic views from the "flatlands" are not readily available, due to the existing street grid pattern and built environment. Rather, panoramic vantage points are primarily located within hilly areas. The Stone Canyon Overlook is located on the south side of Mulholland Drive and provides panoramic south-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the Stone Canyon Reservoir. In addition, the Johnson Overlook is located north of the Stone Canyon Reservoir on the north side of Mulholland Drive. Visitors can take in north-facing views of the Valley, and the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains. These views represent the scenic views available from various publicly accessible locations in the Santa Monica Mountains and other hilly areas within the RSA. However, the perspective and visibility may change depending on various factors, such as the viewer location, elevation, bad air days, or weather.

In addition, limited focal views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the hillsides within the lower areas of the RSA are available along various north-south streets and I-405. However, most of the views to the Santa Monica Mountains and the hillsides are blocked by intervening buildings, street trees and, on some streets, overhead utility lines. In summary, public panoramic and focal scenic views are currently available in the RSA, but the quality of the views can vary significantly.

9.2.3 Scenic Resources

Scenic resources refer to natural or built features of high aesthetic quality. Scenic resources identified in the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* include striking or unusual natural features, the Pacific Ocean, Santa Monica Mountains, and San Gabriel Mountains, and unique urban or historic features as seen from designated scenic highways. The RSA is not characterized by striking or unusual natural features and is not visible from the ocean. Glimpses of the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains are available from intermittent viewpoints within the RSA.

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Appendix G, scenic resources within this area of consideration include specific mention of such natural or built features that are within the view field of a state scenic highway. No California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the RSA. Additionally, no State-designated scenic highways in proximity to the RSA provide views of the RSA. The closest eligible state scenic highway is State Route 1 (SR-1, the Pacific Coast Highway in Southern California), which is approximately 3 miles west of the Alternative 5 alignment. The closest officially designated state scenic highway is State Route 27 (SR-27, Topanga Canyon Boulevard), which is approximately 8 miles west of the Alternative 5 alignment.

Six City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are within the RSA. City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways, according to the *City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan 2035*, are either 1) arterial streets or state highways that traverse areas of natural scenic quality in undeveloped or sparsely developed areas of the city or 2) arterial streets that traverse urban areas of cultural, historical, or aesthetic value which merit protection and enhancement. Table 9-6 lists and describes the City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways that are within or along the boundaries of the Project Study Area.

Table 9-6. Alternative 5: Project Study Area Scenic Roadways

Scenic Highway	Location	Scenic Features, Resources, or City Comment
Beverly Glen Boulevard	Ventura Boulevard to Sunset Boulevard	Winding cross mountain road; valley views
Mulholland Drive	1. US-101 westerly to Mulholland Highway; 2. Mulholland Highway to Valley Circle Boulevard	(Specific Plan Ordinance. No. 167,943) Panoramic views, "ribbon of park"
Santa Monica Boulevard	Sepulveda Boulevard to City of Beverly Hills boundary	Not Available
Sepulveda Boulevard	I-405 to Sunset Boulevard	Old cross mountain road with tunnel, views of mountains and valley
Sherman Way	Variel Avenue to Kester Avenue	Wide street, landscaped median
Sunset Boulevard	Pacific Coast Highway to City of Beverly Hills boundary	Views of mountains, estates, UCLA campus

Source: DCP, 2016

The *City of Los Angeles in its Mobility Plan 2035* designates Mulholland Drive as a scenic highway. Mulholland Drive provides opportunities for multiple scenic vistas as it winds up and through the Santa Monica Mountains, including through the RSA. Development near Mulholland Drive is subject to design review guidelines pursuant to the *Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan* (MSPSP).

The MSPSP has designated 14 major vista points (MVP) along Mulholland Drive that are maintained by the Bureau of Street Maintenance of the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. The Inner Corridor of the MSPSP area is designated as part of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) also maintains seven scenic overlooks along Mulholland Drive (MRCA, 2023). The nearest MVP (also the nearest overlook) is the Stone Canyon Overlook, which is located approximately 380 feet east of the Alternative 5 alignment. The nearest MRCA-maintained scenic overlook is The Groves Overlook, which is located approximately 1 mile west of the Alternative 5 alignment.

The Alternative 5 alignment travels through the Inner Corridor and Outer Corridor of the MSPSP area. The MSPSP contains density requirements, building standards and grading restrictions that are applicable to the Inner Corridor. In addition, the Alternative 5 alignment is subject to the MSPSP's accompanying design guidelines and review by the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Design Review Board. The viewshed protection provisions of the MSPSP are directed at preserving, complementing, and/or enhancing the public views from Mulholland Drive. Therefore, although impacts on surrounding homes and land uses are discussed, the focus of this analysis is the impact of Alternative 5 on public views.

9.2.4 Visual Character and Quality

As listed in Table 9-7, six generalized landscape units (LUs) were defined along the Alternative 5 alignment. The LUs encompass the location of the Alternative 5 alignment and adjacent area. The existing visual character and quality, as well as the primary viewers, are described in the following tables for each LU, beginning in the southern portion of the Alternative 5 alignment and ending in the north.

Table 9-7. Alternative 5: Landscape Units

Landscape Unit	Extent	Key Views
1	National Boulevard to Ohio Avenue	Views of Century City, I-405
2	Ohio Avenue to Sunset Boulevard	Views of Century City, Santa Monica Mountains, Federal Building, Westwood Recreation Center, Bad News Beard Field, Los Angeles National Cemetery, buildings along Wilshire Boulevard, UCLA campus, I-405
3	Sunset Boulevard to Mulholland Drive	Views of Santa Monica Mountains, Getty Center, Scenic Mulholland Drive, Stone Canyon Reservoir, undeveloped land
4	Mulholland Drive to US-101	Views of Santa Monica Mountains, Scenic Mulholland Drive, Stone Canyon Reservoir, undeveloped land
5	US-101 to Victory Boulevard	Views of San Gabriel Mountains, Los Angeles River, I-405, US-101
6	Victory Boulevard to LOSSAN rail corridor right-of-way	Views of San Gabriel Mountains, Los Angeles River, I-405, LOSSAN rail corridor right-of-way

Source: HTA, 2024

Table 9-8 lists the two key observation points (KOPs) (or key views) and the viewer groups potentially affected by Alternative 5.

Table 9-8. Alternative 5: Key Observation Points

KOP No.	KOP Location	Photograph Direction	Primary Viewer
KOP 15	Northeast corner of Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard	South	Pedestrian, Vehicle Driver
KOP 16	Northwest Corner of Strathmore Place at Westwood Plaza	Southeast	Pedestrian, UCLA Patron

Source: HTA, 2024

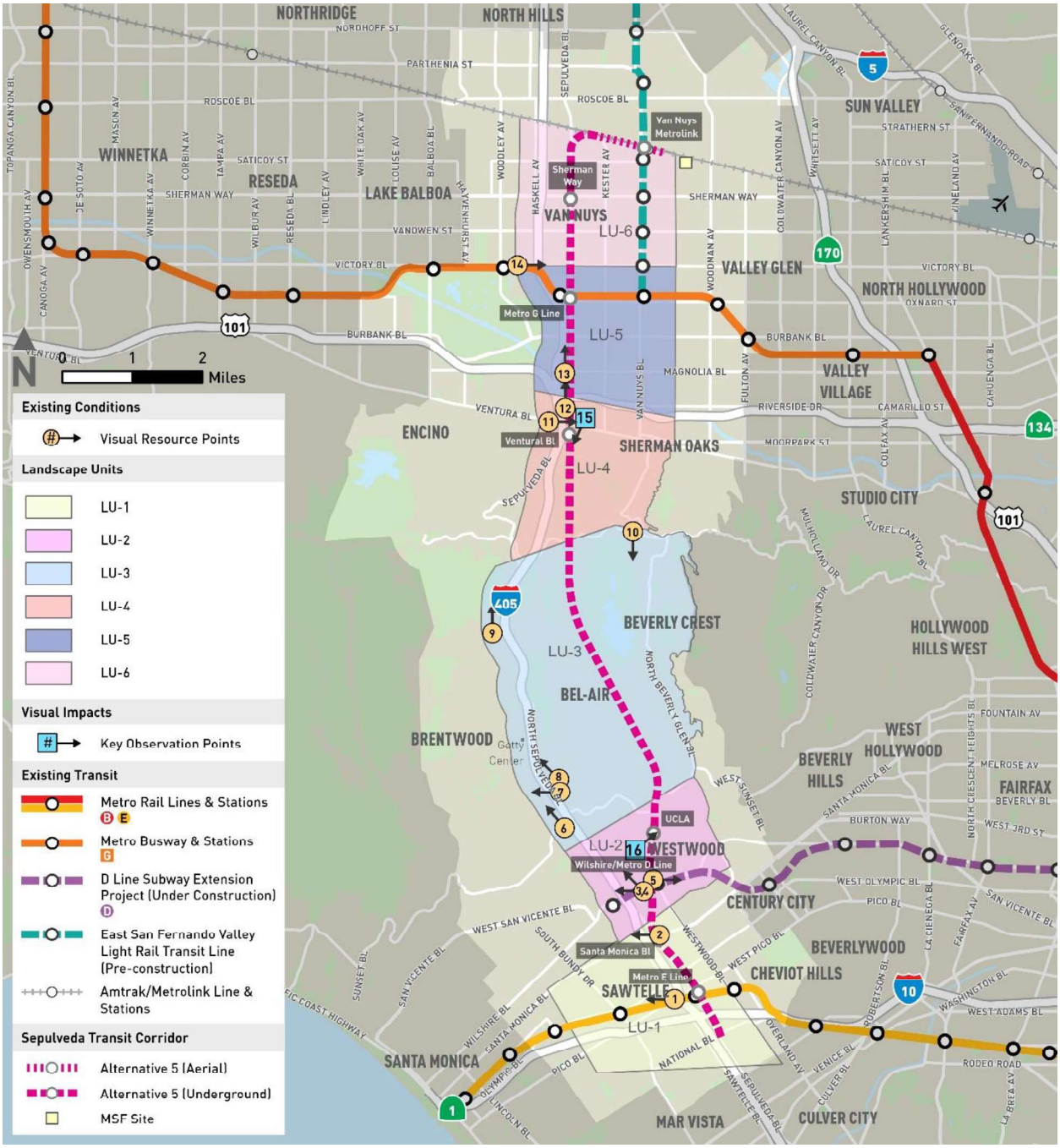
KOP= key observation points

KOPs are used to evaluate existing landscapes and potential impacts on visual resources with various levels of sensitivity, in different landscape types and terrain, and from various vantage points. KOPs are generally selected to represent the most critical locations from which a project area may be seen. As such, the following KOP locations were selected to provide the best representation of Alternative 5's visual changes.

Summaries of the visual character of the LUs in the RSA are generally described in the following sections. The visual descriptions are based on public views, meaning what is visible from a sidewalk, roadway, or other public ROW. Additional information regarding potential impacts of Alternative 5 on historic resources is provided in the *Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources Technical Report* (Metro, 2025a).

Figure 9-9 illustrates the boundaries of the LUs, the locations of the existing conditions photographs, and locations of the KOPs.

Figure 9-9. Alternative 5: Visual Landscape Units



Source: HTA, 2024

9.2.4.1 Landscape Unit 1 – National Boulevard to Ohio Avenue

LU-1 begins at National Boulevard in the Westdale and West Los Angeles communities and continues north past I-10 to Ohio Avenue in Westwood. LU-1 is bordered on the west by Steward Street and on

the east by Westwood Boulevard. LU-1 is highly urbanized, consisting of a mix of low-rise, mid-rise structures, and high-rise structures. Structures within this LU generally include a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial development. Commercial developments include a mix of small and mid-size commercial structures, as well as high-rise and mid-rise office buildings. Residential uses consist of one- to two-story single-family homes, and mid-rise buildings, while institutional and industrial uses generally consist of low-rise structures. Within LU-1, the Metro E Line and its associated aerial structure crosses Sepulveda Boulevard at Exposition Boulevard, and partially obscures views to the north. Views of the existing aerial Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and its associated ancillary structures are available at this location.

The primary viewers in LU-1 consist of motorists, pedestrians, residents, transit commuters, and patrons of commercial businesses. Visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views.

The level and types of ornamental landscaping in LU-1 vary, with light to moderate levels of landscaping throughout the LU. Ornamental landscaping is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets. In addition, a mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided within the LU.

Although residential areas surround the commercial corridor in LU-1, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. The most prominent views within LU-1 are of the elevated Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and guideway. There are distant north-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains from north-south oriented streets. As discussed in Section 9.2.2, the Santa Monica Mountains are listed as a designated scenic vista in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* (DCP, 2001b). Figure 9-10 and Figure 9-11 show existing representative views of LU-1.

Figure 9-10. Alternative 5: Existing View 1, Looking West Toward Metro E Line from Pico Boulevard, West of I-405

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 9-11. Alternative 5: Existing View 2, Looking West Toward I-405 from Santa Monica Boulevard at Sepulveda Boulevard

Source: HTA, 2024

9.2.4.2 Landscape Unit 2 – Ohio Avenue to Sunset Boulevard

LU-2 begins directly north of Ohio Avenue and continues north to Sunset Boulevard in Westwood. LU-2 is bordered to the west by Sawtelle Boulevard (just west of I-405) in the Brentwood community, and to the east by South Beverly Glen Boulevard. LU-2 is also highly urbanized, consisting of a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures, as well as the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Federal Building, and UCLA campus. The majority of residential uses in LU-2 are located within the northwest and southeast portions of the LU. Residential uses consist of one- to two-story single-family homes, and multi-family residential buildings. The residential neighborhoods surrounding the UCLA campus include Bel Air to the north, Holmby-Westwood to the east, and Westwood Hills to the west, which primarily consist of one- to two-story single-family residences. Westwood Village and the Wilshire Corridor are located to the south.

The Wilshire Corridor primarily consists of commercial uses, including hotels and mid- to high-rise office buildings from I-405 to Beverly Glen Boulevard at the eastern boundary of LU-2. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are prominent visual elements along the Wilshire Corridor. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor.

Westwood Village is located north of the Wilshire Corridor and is pedestrian-oriented, with low- to mid-rise buildings containing retail, office, and mixed uses. This village character contrasts with the many multi-story residential towers, hotels, and office buildings that exist along Wilshire Boulevard. Southeast of Wilshire Boulevard, single-family residences and small multi-family buildings are prominent. The Los Angeles National Cemetery, located in the western portion of LU-2, provides open expanses and the opportunity for distant views of the Santa Monica Mountains.

The UCLA campus is located at the base of the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains, directly south of Sunset Boulevard. The main campus is bounded by Wilshire Boulevard and Le Conte Avenue to the south, Veteran Avenue to the west, Sunset Boulevard to the north, and Hilgard Avenue to the east. The main campus is visible from adjacent residential neighborhoods to the north, east, and west, as well as from several major roadways, including Sunset Boulevard. The northern portion of the UCLA campus mainly consists of academic buildings and landscaped open areas, and the southern portion of campus consists of science and medical buildings that are considerably more dense and more urban in appearance. A majority of the main campus is organized around a series of squares and courtyards linked by hardscape pedestrian walkways. The northwestern and southwestern portions of the main campus consist of student housing. These buildings are mainly modern mid- to high-rise structures with similar architectural styles.

The primary viewers in LU-2 consist of motorists, pedestrians, patrons of commercial businesses, and patrons of UCLA. There are distant north-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains from north-south oriented streets. UCLA patrons also have background views of Century City from certain areas of the main campus.

Landscaping on the main campus has both a formal and informal character, consisting of tree clusters, shaded grassy areas, and flowering plants. Paved pedestrian connections, asphalt circulation hubs, and streetscape treatments emphasize the main campus' urban nature. Most of the campus edges are heavily landscaped with mature trees and shrubs. These landscaped buffers screen campus buildings from adjacent streets and complement the adjacent residential areas. The trees used for these landscaped buffers are visually prominent and define the boundaries of the UCLA campus. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout the LU. Figure 9-12, Figure 9-13, Figure 9-14, and Figure 9-15 show existing representative views of LU-2.

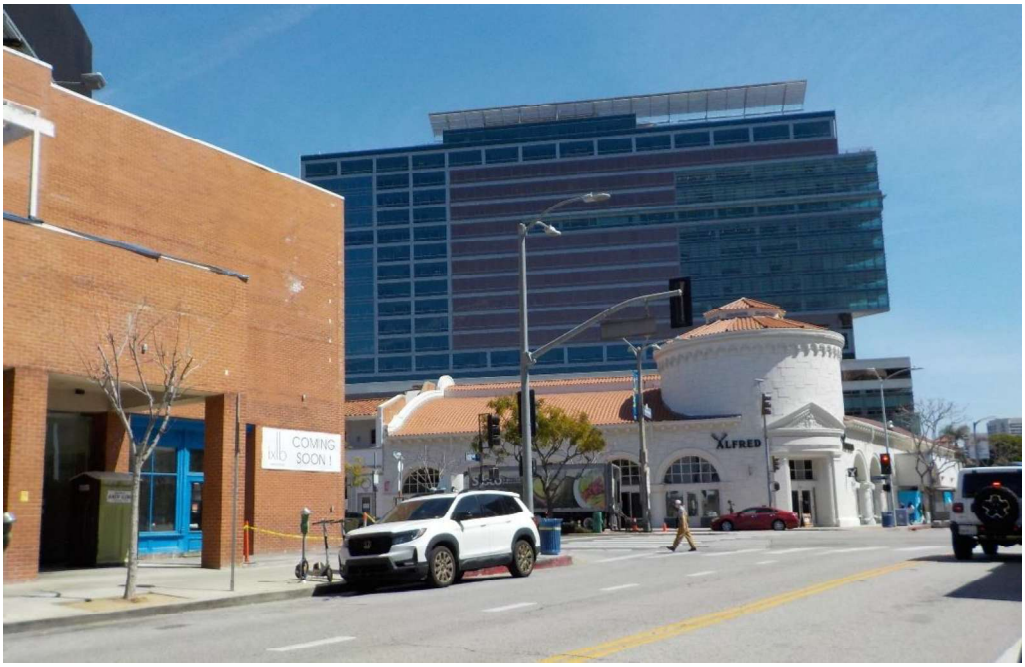
Figure 9-12. Alternative 5: Existing View 3, Looking West Toward the Federal Building from Veteran Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 9-13. Alternative 5: Existing View 4, Looking Northwest Toward Wilshire Boulevard and the National Cemetery from Veteran Avenue

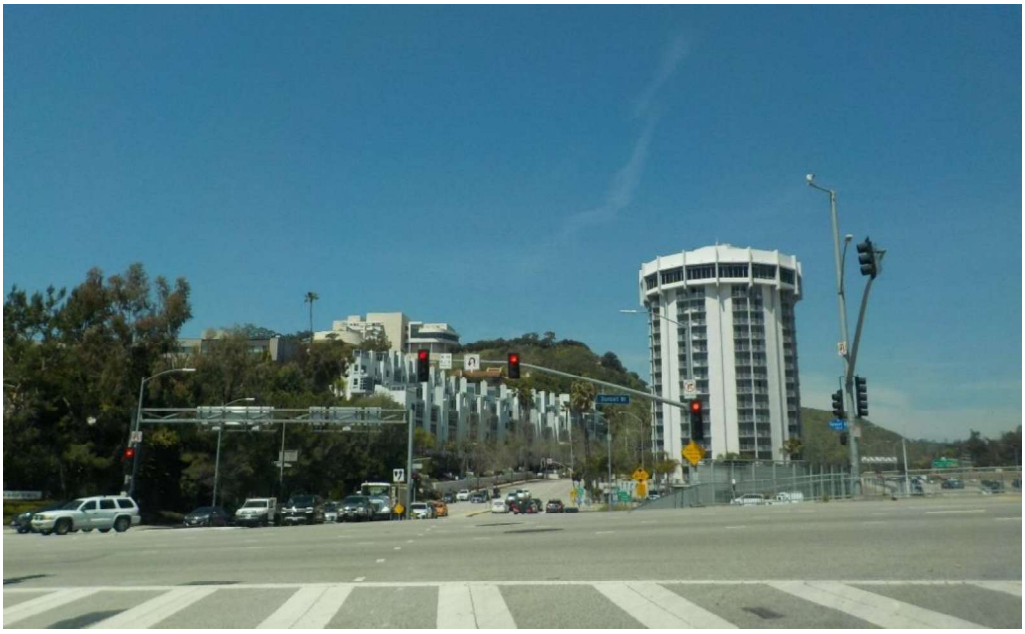
Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 9-14. Alternative 5: Existing View 5, Looking East Toward Westwood Boulevard from Lindbrook Drive in Westwood



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 9-15. Alternative 5: Existing View 6, Looking North Toward the Getty Center from Sunset Boulevard, West of I-405



Source: HTA, 2024

9.2.4.3 Landscape Unit 3 – Sunset Boulevard to Mulholland Drive

LU-3 begins directly north of Sunset Boulevard and continues north through the lower portion of the Santa Monica Mountains to Mulholland Drive. LU-3 is bordered on the west by I-405 and Sepulveda Boulevard, and on the east by Benedict Canyon Drive. LU-3 consists of mainly residential development in low-rise structures in the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains. A limited number of commercial and institutional uses are located within LU-3. The structures in this LU vary in building style, size, and color. The street network consists of many winding, local streets, but there are also several collector roads within this LU.

A portion of the scenic Mulholland Drive is located within LU-3. As discussed in Section 9.2.2, two designated vantage points are along Mulholland Drive. The Johnson Overlook and Stone Canyon Overlook are located along Mulholland Drive north of Stone Canyon Reservoir. Views consist of the Santa Monica Mountains, the Valley, and the Stone Canyon Reservoir. On clear days, it may be possible to see the Pacific Ocean.

The limited commercial uses within LU-3 consist of the Bel-Air Country Club, The Glen Centre, and Hotel Bel-Air. Bel-Air County Club is an 18-hole golf course with large, manicured lawn areas. The Glen Centre is a large shopping center with a park-like setting. Hotel Bel-Air is developed with Spanish style architecture and houses multiple structures with driveways and a surface parking lot parallel Stone Canyon Road. Institutional uses consist of Marymount High School, which also houses multiple structures with driveways and a surface parking lot that parallels Sunset Boulevard.

Undeveloped land includes open space, such as land preserved by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and vacant lots that can be developed with low-density, primarily single-family residences. Developed land predominantly consists of single-family residences on large lots, generally one to two stories, but some three-story and four-story residences are also built into the hillsides. These residences are developed in a variety of architectural styles, including bungalow, Spanish Eclectic, courtyard, Tudor, and Colonial styles. Due to their elevated locations on the hillside, many of the residences in the Santa Monica Mountains are afforded long-range private panoramic views across the Project Study Area and much of the Los Angeles Basin. Beverly Hills, Bel-Air, and other single-family residential neighborhoods are located in this region.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-3 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets within LU-3. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout the LU.

Primary viewer groups found within LU-3 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed under LU-1 in Section 9.2.4.1, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

Figure 9-16, Figure 9-17, Figure 9-18, and Figure 9-19 show existing representative views of LU-3.

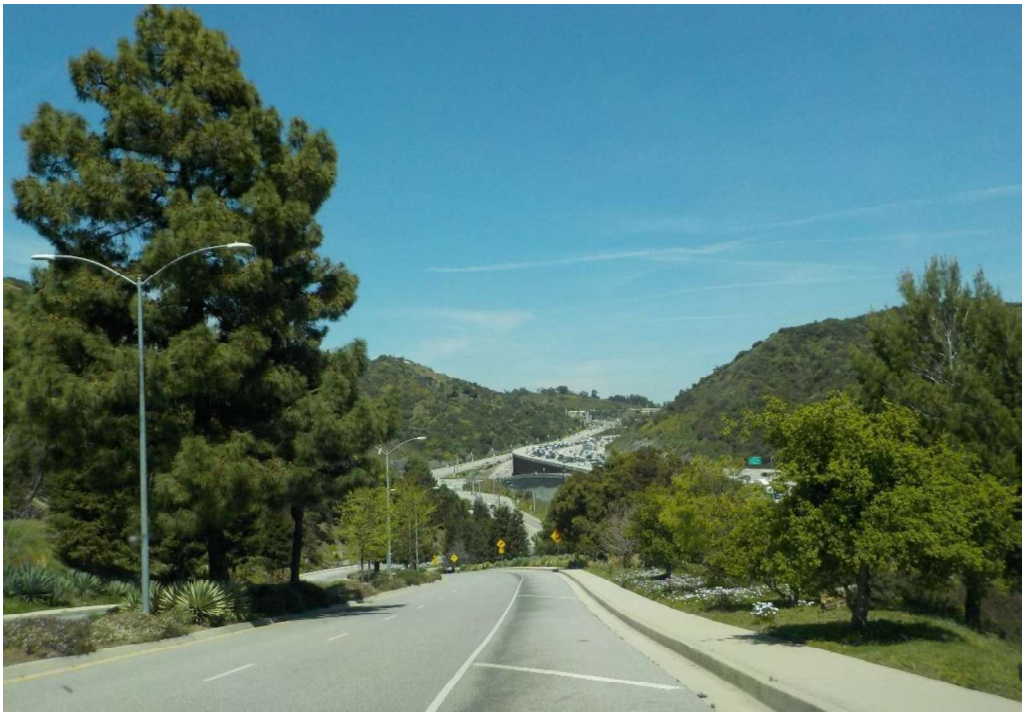
Figure 9-16. Alternative 5: Existing View 7, Looking West Toward I-405 from Residential Area along Ovada Place

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 9-17. Alternative 5: Existing View 8, Looking Northwest Toward the Getty Center (and I-405) from Residential Area along Moraga Drive

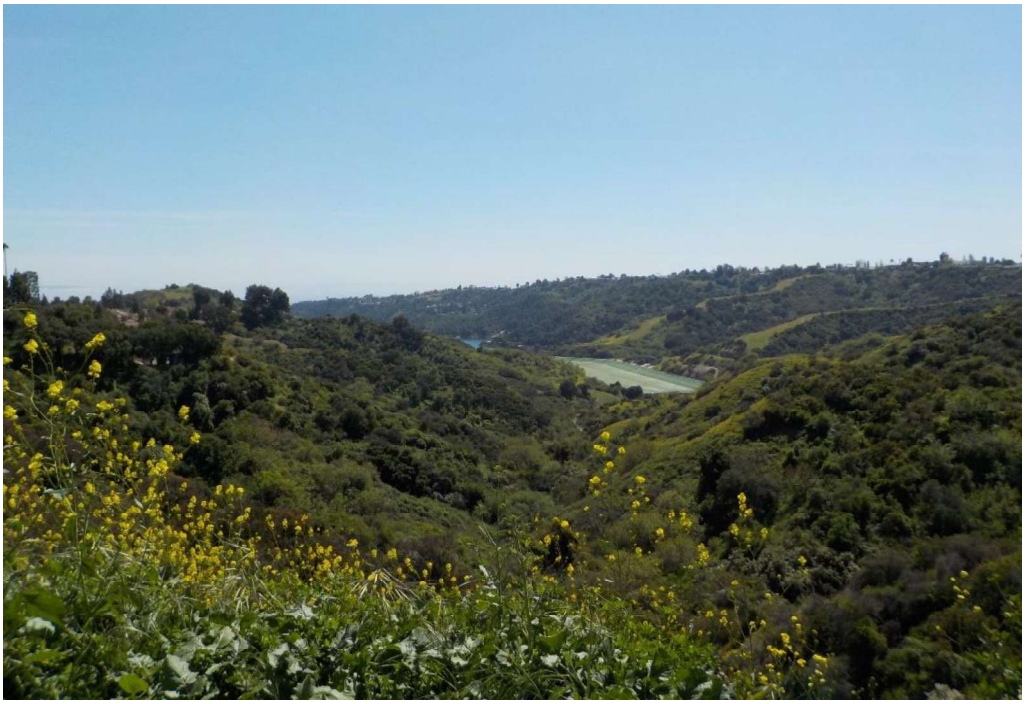
Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 9-18. Alternative 5: Existing View 9, Looking North Toward I-405 from Mountaingate Drive



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 9-19. Alternative 5: Existing View 10, Looking South Toward Covered Upper Stone Canyon Reservoir and Stone Canyon Reservoir from Overlook along Mulholland Drive



Source: HTA, 2024

9.2.4.4 Landscape Unit 4 – Mulholland Drive to US-101

LU-4 begins directly north of Mulholland Drive and continues north through the upper portion of the Santa Monica Mountains to US-101. LU-4 is bordered on the west by Haskell Avenue and on the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-4 consists of mainly residential development within the Sherman Oaks neighborhood, and commercial development along the Ventura Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard corridor.

Similar to LU-3, a portion of the scenic Mulholland Drive is also located within LU-4. Looking north from Mulholland Drive, views consist of the Santa Monica Mountains in the foreground and middle ground and Van Nuys in the background. In addition, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north are also visible from certain portions of Mulholland Drive where there is limited vegetation.

The northern portion of the Santa Monica Mountains has both undeveloped and developed lots. As discussed in Section 9.2.4.3, undeveloped land includes open space, such as land preserved by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and vacant lots that can be developed with low-density housing, primarily single-family residences. Deervale-Stone Canyon Park, an 80-acre park consisting of open space and hiking trails for public use, is also located within LU-4. Views to the north from the top of the park overlook the Sherman Oaks neighborhood and the Ventura Boulevard commercial corridor. Long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north are also visible from this location.

Beyond the Santa Monica Mountains, LU-4 has a relatively flat topography and dense commercial and residential development. Views consist of low- and mid-rise buildings occupied primarily by retail, institutional, and office uses, and associated parking areas. As such, views from the northern portion of LU-4 are generally short in range and limited to the urban landscape within the immediate vicinity (i.e., buildings, roadways, utility poles, and street trees).

Primary viewer groups found within LU-4 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed under LU-1, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

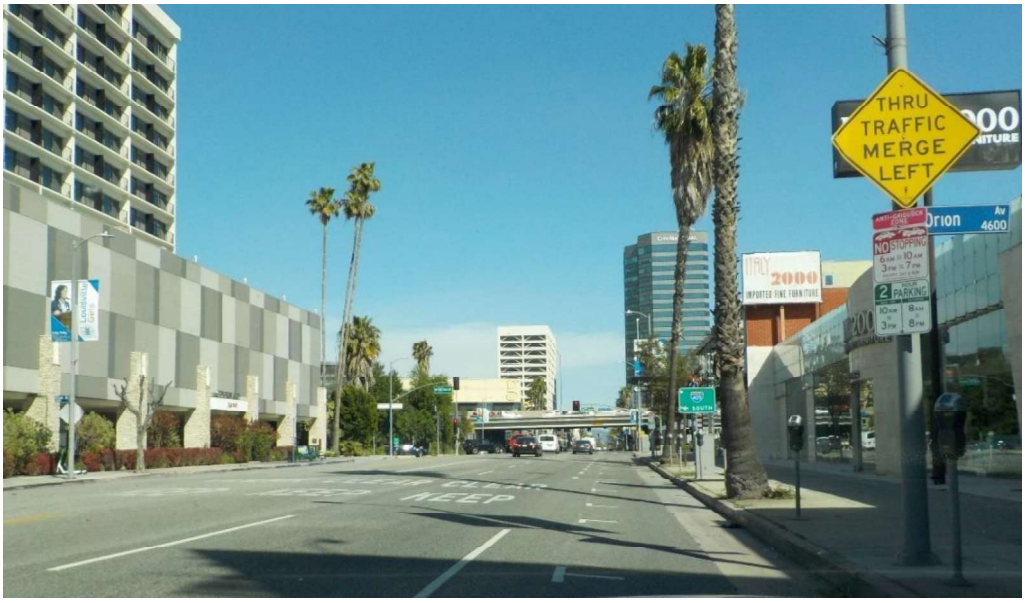
Ventura Boulevard consists of primarily commercial uses, including retail businesses, restaurants, and mid- to high-rise office buildings from Haskell Avenue at the western boundary of LU-4 to the eastern boundary of LU-4 at Hazeltine Avenue. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are prominent visual elements along Ventura Boulevard. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. Overall, buildings in LU-4 are of all different sizes, styles, and colors, and are spaced at varying intervals, creating a high level of visual diversity in the landscape with no common theme.

Similar to LU-3, the single-family residences within the Santa Monica Mountains are developed on large lots and are generally one to two stories, but some three-story and four-story houses are visible. This development pattern transitions to low- and mid-rise single-family and multi-family residences north of Greenleaf Street within the Sherman Oaks neighborhood. Residential development is prevalent to the north and south of the Ventura Boulevard commercial corridor.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-4 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees create definition within the dense commercial corridor; however, because they are planted intermittently, they blend into the overall landscape. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets within the

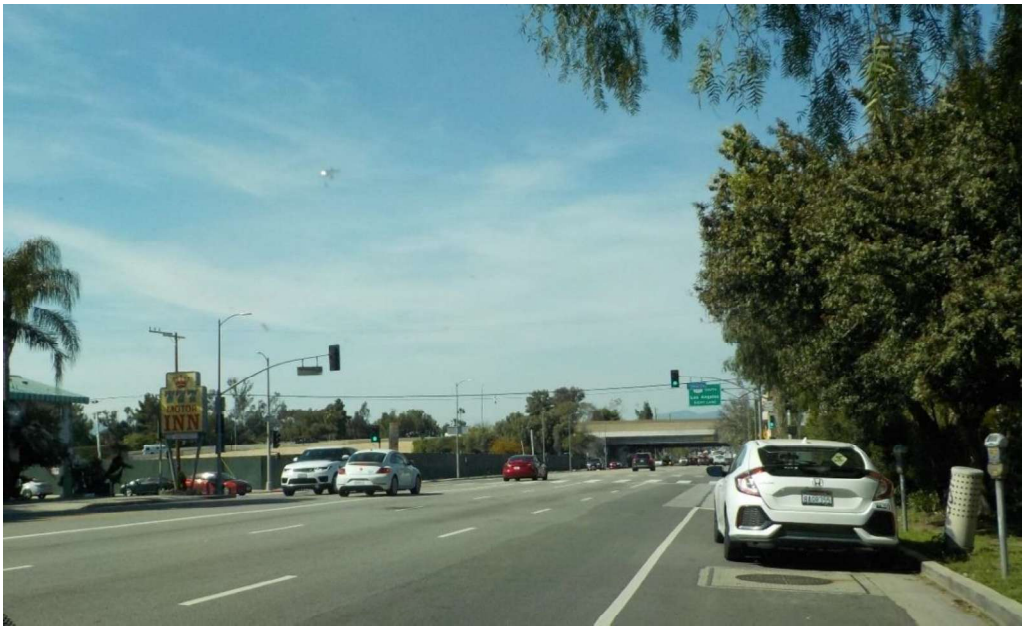
northern portion of LU-4. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-4. Figure 9-20 and Figure 9-21 show existing representative views of LU-4.

Figure 9-20. Alternative 5: Existing View 11, Looking East Toward I-405 from Ventura Boulevard at Orion Avenue



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 9-21. Alternative 5: Existing View 12, Looking North Toward US-101 from Sepulveda Boulevard at Camarillo Street



Source: HTA, 2024

9.2.4.5 Landscape Unit 5 – US-101 to Victory Boulevard

LU-5 begins directly north of US-101 and continues north through the Van Nuys community to Victory Boulevard. LU-5 is bordered to the west by Gloria Avenue and to the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-5 consists of mainly commercial and residential development within the Van Nuys neighborhood. The Metro G Line also travels east-west through the central portion of LU-5.

Views in the southern portion of LU-5 looking south are predominately of the elevated segment of US-101. Long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are also visible in some areas, but they are few because of the relatively flat topography and intervening urban development. The Los Angeles River is also located within the southern portion of LU-5, and mainly travels parallel to US-101; however, since the Los Angeles River is located below street level, public views of the Los Angeles River from the surrounding Project Study Area are obscured by existing development and generally not available except on Hazeltine Avenue just south of the US-101 overpass. As discussed in Section 9.2.2, the Los Angeles River and its associated tributaries and floodplains are also listed as scenic vistas in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* (DCP, 2001b).

Typical views in LU-5 include the Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard commercial corridors, which are bordered by parking areas, sidewalks, street trees, commercial buildings, and additional buildings visible in the background. Views of I-405 are also visible from Sepulveda Boulevard. Traveling north along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains are visible. In addition, traveling south, long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are visible. Primary viewer groups found within LU-5 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed under LU-1, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

Commercial structures along Van Nuys Boulevard consist of low- to mid-rise retail businesses, restaurants, office uses, and parking areas. In addition, commercial structures along Sepulveda Boulevard consist of low- to high-rise office uses, residential uses, retail businesses, restaurants, and parking areas. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are also prominent visual elements on these roadways. Although residential areas surround the commercial corridors, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-5 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees are present along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, as well as other commercial areas for screening purposes. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout the LU.

9.2.4.6 Landscape Unit 6 – Victory Boulevard to LOSSAN Rail Corridor ROW

LU-6 begins directly north of Victory Boulevard and continues north through Van Nuys to the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW. LU-6 is bordered to the west by Gloria Avenue and to the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-6 consists of mainly commercial and residential development within the Van Nuys neighborhood, with residential development located primarily to the east and west of the Van Nuys Boulevard commercial corridor. The LOSSAN rail corridor ROW and existing Van Nuys/Metrolink Station border the northern boundary of LU-6.

Similar to LU-5, typical views in LU-6 include the Van Nuys Boulevard commercial corridor, which is bordered by parking areas, sidewalks, street trees, commercial buildings, and additional buildings visible in the background. Traveling north along Van Nuys Boulevard, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains are visible. Traveling south, long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are visible; however, views of the Santa Monica Mountains are dominated by other features in the landscape.

An existing steel pedestrian bridge designated as Cabrito Road, which includes decorative panels, located adjacent to Raymer Street above the existing LOSSAN rail corridor ROW, just east of the Pacoima Wash and Kester Avenue.

Primary viewer groups found within LU-6 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed under LU-1 in Section 9.2.4.1, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

The visual character of the portion of Van Nuys Boulevard within LU-6 consists of low- to mid-rise retail businesses, restaurants, office uses, and parking areas. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are also prominent visual elements along Van Nuys Boulevard. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. Similar to LU-5, buildings are of all different sizes, styles, and colors, and are spaced at different intervals, creating a high level of visual diversity in the landscape with no common theme. Street trees soften the appearance of the dense commercial corridor; however, because they are planted intermittently, they blend into the overall landscape.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-6 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees are present along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, as well as other commercial areas for screening purposes. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-6. Figure 9-22 and Figure 9-23 show existing representative views of LU-6.

Figure 9-22. Alternative 5: Existing View 13, Looking North along Sepulveda Boulevard at Magnolia Boulevard

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 9-23. Alternative 5: Existing View 14, Looking East along Victory Boulevard West of I-405 at Gloria Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

9.2.5 Light and Glare

North of US-101, the Project Study Area is generally located within the Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys neighborhoods of the City of Los Angeles, and encompasses commercial, industrial, and residential

development with relatively ambient nighttime lighting typical of urbanized settings. Common light sources are the include the streetlights, vehicle lights, building entrance lighting, parking structure lighting, illuminated signage/billboards, and general illumination from lights shining through windows of structures lining the corridor.

South of US-101, nighttime lighting is more limited in the Santa Monica Mountains. In the developed portions of the Santa Monica Mountains, lighting sources include pedestrian-scaled streetlights, security and decorative wall lighting at residential homes, vehicle headlights, and interior building illumination. By contrast, the undeveloped portions of the Santa Monica Mountains have little to no light or glare sources, other than vehicle headlights.

South of Sunset Boulevard, the Project Study Area is generally located within Westwood and West Los Angeles neighborhoods of the City of Los Angeles, as well as within the City of Santa Monica. The adjacent commercial, industrial, and residential development, as well as cultural and institutional facilities, such as the UCLA campus, contribute to ambient nighttime lighting typical of urbanized settings. As discussed previously, light sources include the streetlights, vehicle lights, building entrance lighting, parking structure lighting, illuminated signage/billboards, and general illumination from lights shining through windows of structures lining the corridor.

9.3 Impact Evaluation

9.3.1 Impact AES-1: Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

9.3.1.1 Operational Impacts

Alternative 5 is a heavy rail project that would develop an underground tunnel, stations, and additional ancillary structures. In addition, a portion of Alternative 5 would have an aerial component that would travel along the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW beginning at the intersection of Kester Avenue and Raymer Street.

Scenic vistas in the Project Study Area include views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the south and the San Gabriel Mountains to the north. As discussed in Section 9.2.4, views of surrounding mountains are visible in all of the LUs. In some LUs, such as in LU-1, LU-5, and LU-6, the surrounding mountains are minimally visible; in some LUs, such as in LU-2, LU-3, and LU-4, the surrounding mountains are a visually dominant feature. Motorists and transit commuters would be expected to have more fleeting views of scenic vistas because they would be moving along the Alternative 5 alignment, while pedestrians, patrons of commercial and institutional facilities, and tourists would be expected to have longer views.

Within LU-1, the Alternative 5 alignment would begin underground, adjacent to the intersection of Sepulveda Boulevard and National Boulevard. The Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station would then be located just north of Exposition Boulevard. The primary visual elements of Alternative 5 in LU-1 would include the station entrance of the proposed Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station within the southwestern portion of LU-1, and the Santa Monica Station within the northern portion of LU-1. Views of the proposed stations would mainly be limited to the areas along Sepulveda Boulevard and Santa Monica Boulevard directly in front of and facing the station entrances. The stations would be low-rise structures and would not be visually obtrusive. In addition, the proposed stations in LU-1 would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains.

Within LU-2, the Alternative 5 alignment would continue underground to the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station and UCLA Gateway Plaza Station. The primary visual elements of Alternative 5 would

include the station entrances of the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station within the southwestern portion of LU-2, and the station entrance of the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station within the northeastern portion of LU-2. Views of the proposed stations would be limited to the areas along Wilshire Boulevard, Gayley Avenue, Lindbrook Drive, Westwood Boulevard, and Westwood Plaza directly in front of and facing the station entrances. The stations would be low-rise structures and would not be visually obtrusive. In addition, the proposed stations in LU-2 would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains.

Within LU-3, the Alternative 5 alignment would also travel underground throughout the LU, and no project features would be visible.

Within LU-4, the Alternative 5 alignment would continue underground to the Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station. The primary visual element of Alternative 5 would include the Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station entrance. Views of the proposed station would be limited to motorists and pedestrians traveling along Sepulveda Boulevard, Dickens Street, and Saugus Avenue directly in front of and facing the station entrance. The station would be a low-rise structure with an entrance to an underground station and would not be visually obtrusive. In addition, the proposed station would not substantially obstruct views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the south, as the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains, and views would be obstructed by existing structures.

Within LU-5, the Alternative 5 alignment would continue underground to the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station. The primary visual elements of Alternative 5 would include the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station entrance. Views of the proposed station would be limited to the areas along Sepulveda Boulevard and Oxnard Street directly in front of and facing the station entrance. The station would be low-rise structure with an entrance to an underground station and would not be visually obtrusive.

Within LU-6, north of the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station, the Alternative 5 alignment would continue underground to the Sherman Way Station. From the Sherman Way Station, the Alternative 5 alignment would continue north before curving slightly to the southeast to the tunnel portal south of Raymer Street. The alignment would then transition from an underground configuration to an aerial guideway structure, including center support columns, after exiting the tunnel portal. The aerial guideway would continue southeast to the Van Nuys Metrolink Station, which would also include column bents to support the aerial station. The primary visual elements of Alternative 5 would include the Sherman Way Station and Van Nuys Metrolink Station, retaining walls to support the daylighting to an aerial configuration, and columns to support the aerial guideway either parallel to or along the center median of Raymer Street. The stations would be low-rise structures, providing an entrance to the underground stations, and would not be visually obtrusive.

Overall, the primary visual elements included as part of Alternative 5 would be the seven at-grade entrances, the aerial guideway section from Raymer Street and Noble Avenue to the aerial Van Nuys Station, and changes in parking, lanes, and sidewalks. From the aerial station, the alignment would continue at grade to the MSF site. The new at-grade station entrances along the outside edge of the roadway would present new vertical features in the landscape and may limit views directly adjacent to or within the stations; however, views in the corridor as a whole would not be substantially affected by the proposed at-grade station entrances because the visual changes would be localized around station areas. Sidewalks would be narrowed in some areas, but this would not be expected to substantially

affect views along the corridor. The additional project components would primarily be located underground and would not block views of scenic vistas.

Motorists driving along Raymer Street beyond the tunnel portal, or northbound and southbound on Van Nuys Boulevard, would experience interruption in views while driving to due to the presence of the aerial guideway; however, the viewing duration would be intermittent because the aerial guideway would be located above the roadway and motorists would be focused on the road. In addition, the majority of the aerial guideway would be located along the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW, and visibility would be limited for motorists. Pedestrians walking on nearby sidewalks would have views interrupted from certain locations—such as Van Nuys Boulevard and directly adjacent to the aerial station—but would be able to easily walk away from that location.

As discussed previously, the proposed aerial guideway, aerial station, and columns would present new vertical features in the landscape that would be highly visible; however, views of the San Gabriel Mountains in LU-6 would not be substantially obscured and continue to be limited by the surrounding urban development. As such, views of scenic vistas as a whole would not be substantially affected. Therefore, the vertical elements proposed under Alternative 5 would not substantially alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas, and operation of Alternative 5 would result in a less than significant impact to scenic vistas.

9.3.1.2 Construction Impacts

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. Although temporary in nature, construction activities may cause a visually unappealing quality in a community. Construction of Alternative 5 would introduce visually disruptive elements in each LU, including the following:

- Light and heavy excavation
- Tunneling
- Roadway/bridge demolition and reconstruction
- Structural falsework
- Tree removal
- Soil removal/displacement
- Security fencing
- Stockpiled soil
- Stockpiled building materials
- Safety and directional signage
- Station platforms and plazas
- Ancillary facilities
- Large, heavy equipment may include cranes, bulldozers, scrapers, and trucks

Construction activities could be visible to pedestrians and motorists on adjacent streets, as well as to viewers within nearby buildings. However, construction activities—while a visual nuisance—would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains, San Gabriel Mountains, because activities would be temporary and intermittent and limited to the immediate area. Therefore, construction of Alternative 5 would not alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas, and impacts would be less than significant.

9.3.1.3 Maintenance and Storage Facility

Maintenance of HRT vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF. Multiple buildings would be constructed, including a multi-level maintenance-of-way building, track storage area, wash bays, ancillary storage buildings, and a TPSS structure (Metro, 2024x). A grade separated access road and a parking area for employees would also be included. These structures would be the primary visual elements of the MSF. The MSF site would be located within a heavily industrialized area, and operation of this MSF would generally fit within the context of the existing industrial character. While the MSF site would represent a visual change, it would not substantially obstruct views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains. As such, views of scenic vistas as a whole would not be substantially affected.

Construction activities could be visible to pedestrians and motorists on adjacent streets, as well as to viewers within nearby buildings. However, construction activities, while a visual nuisance, would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains or San Gabriel Mountains, because activities would be temporary and intermittent and limited to the immediate area. Therefore, the vertical elements proposed under the MSF would not substantially alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas, and operation of the MSF would result in a less than significant impact to scenic vistas.

9.3.2 Impact AES-2: Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

9.3.2.1 Operational Impacts

As discussed in Section 9.2.3, no California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the Project Study Area. Additionally, no State-designated scenic highways in proximity to the Project Study Area provide views of the Project Study Area. Historic structures within the alignment are discussed in the *Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources Technical Report* (Metro, 2025a). The closest eligible state scenic highway is SR-1, which is approximately 2 miles west of the Alternative 5 alignment. The closest officially designated state scenic highway is SR-27 (Topanga Canyon Boulevard), which is approximately 8 miles west of the Alternative 5 alignment.

As listed in Table 8-6 in Section 8.2.3, six City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are located within the Project Study Area:

- Beverly Glen Boulevard
- Mulholland Drive
- Santa Monica Boulevard
- Sepulveda Boulevard
- Sherman Way
- Sunset Boulevard

Beverly Glen Boulevard provides winding roads and valley views, Sepulveda Boulevard provides views of the mountains and the valley, Sherman Way provides a scenic landscaped median and the Sherman Way Street Trees historical resources as discussed in the *Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources Technical Report* (Metro, 2025a), and Sunset Boulevard provides views of mountains, scenic estates, and scenic views of the UCLA campus. A scenic portion of Santa Monica Boulevard is also within the Project Study Area; however, no notable scenic features or resources are listed within the *City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan 2035*.

Mulholland Drive also provides opportunities for multiple scenic views as it winds up and through the Santa Monica Mountains, including through the Project Study Area. Development near Mulholland Drive is subject to design review guidelines pursuant to the MSPSP. The MSPSP has designated 14 MVPs along Mulholland Drive that are maintained by the Bureau of Street Maintenance of the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. The Inner Corridor of the MSPSP area is designated as part of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and the MRCA also maintains seven scenic overlooks along Mulholland Drive (MRCA, 2023). The nearest MVP (also the nearest overlook) is the Johnson Overlook, which is located approximately 0.5 miles east of the Alternative 5 alignment. The nearest MRCA maintained scenic overlook is the Stone Canyon Overlook, which is located approximately 0.6 miles east of the Alternative 5 alignment.

The Alternative 5 alignment travels below the Inner Corridor and the Outer Corridor of the MSPSP. However, the entirety of the Alternative 5 alignment that travels through the Inner Corridor and Outer Corridor of the MSPSP would also be located underground. The location of the aboveground station portal associated with the proposed underground Sherman Way Station would potentially impact the Sherman Way Street Trees, however this is not within a state scenic highway. Therefore, operation of Alternative 5 would not damage any scenic resources within SR-1 or SR-27 (Topanga Canyon Boulevard), the nearest state scenic highways, neither of which is within the Project Study Area. Additionally, none of the six scenic highways designated by the City of Los Angeles would be affected by Alternative 5. Therefore, operation of Alternative 5 would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

9.3.2.2 Construction Impacts

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. Although temporary in nature, construction activities may cause a visually unappealing quality in a community. Construction of Alternative 5 would introduce visually disruptive elements in each LU, including the following:

- Light and heavy excavation
- Tunneling, roadway/bridge demolition and reconstruction
- Building demolition
- Structural falsework
- Security fencing
- Soil removal/stockpile
- Stockpiled building materials
- Safety and directional signage
- Station platforms and plazas
- Ancillary facilities
- Large, heavy equipment may include cranes, bulldozers, scrapers, and trucks.

Tree removal during construction would create noticeable changes in certain areas, exposing previously screened views of infrastructure and construction activities. However, these changes would be temporary and would not be located within a state scenic highway.

As discussed in Section 9.2.3, no California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the Project Study Area. Construction of Alternative 5 would not substantially damage any scenic resources within SR-1 or SR-27, the nearest state scenic highways, neither of which is within the Project Study Area. Therefore, construction of

Alternative 5 would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

9.3.2.3 Maintenance and Storage Facility

No California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the MSF area. Additionally, no state-designated scenic highways or City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are located in proximity to the MSF. Therefore, operation of the MSF would not substantially damage any scenic resources within a state scenic highway, and none of the six scenic highways designated by the City of Los Angeles would be impacted by the MSF.

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. Although temporary in nature, construction activities may cause a visually unappealing quality in a community. However, as discussed previously, Metro projects are not required to adhere to local zoning ordinances. Any elements that would be located on properties outside of the public ROW (e.g., station plazas and TPSS) would comply with applicable zoning and design requirements, including undergoing mandated design review where applicable and coordinating with local jurisdictions and/or other public entities during preliminary and final designs. In addition, while Alternative 5 would add new visible structures, it is expected that visual change associated with the MSF would not be readily noticeable given the existing structures associated with the LOSSAN rail corridor and background conditions. Therefore, the MSF would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

9.3.3 Impact AES-3: Would the project, in non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Alternative 5 is in an urbanized area, as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15387; therefore, in accordance with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant impact would occur if Alternative 5 conflicts with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. The zoning ordinances of each jurisdiction in the Project Study Area do not directly regulate the design of transportation infrastructure elements. Additionally, the jurisdictions in the Project Study Area generally do not have policies or regulations that govern visual quality during construction activities for transportation-related projects. Alternative 5 would be designed to be consistent with all Metro policies related to visual resources, including the Metro Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy.

9.3.3.1 Operational Impacts

Alternative 5 would mostly operate underground or within the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW. However, Alternative 5 would have an aerial component within the industrial and commercial area parallel to the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW.

Operational components of Alternative 5, including but not limited to station design, sound walls guideway, auxiliary facilities, parking lots, and landscaping new would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, Adjacent Development Review, and Tree Policy. Certain elements that would be located on properties outside of the public ROW (e.g., station plazas and TPSS), and would comply with applicable zoning and design requirements, including undergoing mandated design review where applicable and coordinating

with local jurisdictions and/or other public entities during preliminary and final designs. While Metro projects are not required to adhere to local zoning ordinances, these project elements would comply with local zoning ordinances as they pertain to scenic quality.

Architectural renderings and photo-realistic visual simulations were created and used to illustrate where visual changes would be most noticeable after implementation of Alternative 5. These renderings are conceptual and do not represent the final design of Alternative 5 at this time.

Landscape Unit 1

Within LU-1, Alternative 5 would operate underground; however, the Metro E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station and Santa Monica Station entrances would be located at grade. As such, operation of Alternative 5 within LU-1 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 5 within LU-1 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 5 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed station would represent a new element in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 5 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. For a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 5 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the station entries, and plazas are proposed. These at-grade facilities would be visible by the public; however, because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not have a substantial adverse effect on prominent views of valued visual resources.

These facilities would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 5 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages “transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.” Alternative 5 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

As such, Alternative 5 would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible. Overall, Alternative 5 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 5 within LU-1 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 2

Within LU-2, Alternative 5 would operate underground; however, the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station and UCLA Gateway Plaza Station entrances would be located at grade. As such, operation of Alternative 5 within LU-2 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, UCLA patrons, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 5 within LU-2 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 5 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed station and TPSS facilities would represent a new element in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 5 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. In addition, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 5 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the station entries and plazas are proposed. These at-grade facilities would be visible by the public; however, because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not have a substantial adverse effect on prominent views of valued visual resources.

As shown on KOP 16 (Figure 9-24) located on Westwood Plaza, the proposed UCLA Gateway Plaza Station would not be highly visible and would be complementary and appropriate to the scale and character of the existing buildings on the UCLA campus. As such, the at-grade facilities would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible. These facilities would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review.

Alternative 5 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages “transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.” Alternative 5 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

Overall, Alternative 5 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 5 within LU-2 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Figure 9-24. Alternative 5: KOP 16 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking Southeast Toward the Primary Station Entrance of the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station

Source: HTA, 2024

Landscape Unit 3

Within LU-3, Alternative 5 would operate underground and would not result in adverse visual impacts on any visual resource, including scenic resources along Mulholland Drive and within the MSPSP. No project components would be located aboveground in LU-3. As such, Alternative 5 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 5 within LU-3 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and no impact would occur.

Landscape Unit 4

Within LU-4, Alternative 5 would operate underground; however, the Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard Station entrance would be located at grade. As such, operation of Alternative 5 within LU-4 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 5 within LU-4 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 5 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed station would represent a new element in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 5 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. In addition, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 5 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the station entries, and plazas are proposed. As shown on KOP 15 (Figure 9-25), these at-grade facilities would be visible by the public; however, because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not have a substantial adverse effect on prominent views of valued visual resources.

Figure 9-25. Alternative 5: KOP 15 –Before and After Simulation View, View Looking South from Sepulveda Boulevard at Ventura Boulevard Toward the Ventura Boulevard Station

Source: HTA, 2024

These facilities would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 5 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities." Alternative 5 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

As such, Alternative 5 would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible. Overall, Alternative 5 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 5 within LU-4 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 5

Within LU-5, Alternative 5 would operate underground; however, the Metro G Line Sepulveda Station entrance would be located at grade. As such, operation of Alternative 5 within LU-5 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 5 within LU-5 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 5 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed station would represent a new element in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 5 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. In addition, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 5 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the station entries, and plazas are proposed. These facilities would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 5 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities." Alternative 5 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

As such, Alternative 5 would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible. Overall, Alternative 5 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 5 within LU-5 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 6

Within LU-6, Alternative 5 would operate underground along Sepulveda Boulevard to the Sherman Way Station before transitioning to an aerial alignment along or parallel to the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW to the Van Nuys Metrolink Station and the MSF at the end of the alignment. At-grade TPSS facilities would also be included. As such, operation of Alternative 5 within LU-6 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 5 within LU-6 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Alternative 5 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. In addition, as discussed previously, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

The proposed aerial guideway for Alternative 5 has been designed to travel along or parallel to LOSSAN rail corridor ROW, and it is expected that visual change associated with the aerial guideway would not be substantial given the existing structures along the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW, as well as background conditions. An existing steel pedestrian bridge designated as Cabrito Road, which includes decorative panels, located adjacent to Raymer Street above the existing LOSSAN rail corridor ROW, just east of the Pacoima Wash and Kester Avenue, would be removed as part of Alternative 5. However, the structure and adjacent walkway appears run down and is not considered a visual resource.

In addition, because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, the proposed railway structures included with Alternative 5 are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not have a substantial adverse effect on prominent views of valued visual resources.

In addition, aerial and at-grade facilities would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 5 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages “transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.” Alternative 5 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

As such, Alternative 5 would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible. Overall, Alternative 5 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 5 within LU-6 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Operation of Alternative 5 would represent an overall change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions. However, Alternative 5 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors. Although viewer groups may have varying sensitivities to the visual change associated with Alternative 5 for each of the LUs, Alternative 5 would be consistent with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. As a result, the

operation of Alternative 5 would have less than significant impacts related to visual character and quality.

9.3.3.2 Construction Impacts

The Alternative 5 alignment consists of a portion of the public ROW, including roadway and sidewalks, as well as city-owned, state-owned, and private properties. During the construction phase, the visual character of the alignment would change temporarily from existing conditions. Construction of primarily an underground tunnel, as well as aerial guideway and stations would require equipment such as construction barriers and sound walls, cranes, and other appurtenances that would be visible during much of the approximately 99-month substantial completion construction period.

Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings and other aerial transportation infrastructure. Certain areas may be fenced off with construction barriers and sound walls, resulting in a temporary change and contrast in visual character from the existing conditions Although temporary and short-term in nature, construction activities would be a visual nuisance. Mitigation Measure AES-1 would include temporary privacy screens to minimize impacts from construction barriers and sound walls. In addition, the designated construction areas along the alignment would experience additional truck traffic compared to existing conditions, with trucks moving materials on- and off-site, and work crews and construction equipment moving around the alignment and between Alternative 5 components.

Some residents may have private views of the project construction from their windows. While residents would be highly sensitive to visual changes and would have a higher degree of personal investment in Alternative 5, as previously mentioned, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to public views.

Motorists would primarily experience views of construction activities while driving along the roadways along and adjacent to Alternative 5. In addition, drivers would have prolonged views while idling at the various traffic signals surrounding the proposed station areas and aerial guideway. Passing drivers would notice the change in the visual character during the construction phase. However, drivers are considered to have a low sensitivity to any visual changes because they would likely be passing through the Project Study Area to reach their destinations and would not necessarily have a personal investment in the visual character or quality of the Project Study Area.

In addition, pedestrians would primarily experience views of construction activities while walking along public sidewalks, within transit stations, and near businesses that are adjacent to Alternative 5, and would have prolonged views while walking or standing near the proposed station areas and aerial guideway. The change in the visual character of the alignment during the construction phase would be noticeable by these viewers. In addition, pedestrians are considered to have a moderate sensitivity to visual changes because they may be engaged in observing their surroundings.

Alternative 5 includes entitlements and approvals to establish land use regulations for the Alternative 5 alignment to ensure consistent implementation of development standards throughout the Alternative 5 alignment. The development standards would recognize unique characteristics of Alternative 5, including unique opportunities for public benefits. The design standards included in Alternative 5's entitlements and approvals would enhance the visual identity and character of Alternative 5 and its surrounding communities, and would ensure visual compatibility with adjacent development, as well as the Project Study Area's overall community character. Overall, Alternative 5 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality.

Overall, construction would represent a temporary change in the visual quality and character. Project components would potentially stand out as memorable or remarkable features in the landscape due to their scale, which would have a temporary impact on visual character and quality of the Project Study Area and its surroundings compared to existing conditions. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings in urbanized areas. Impacts from construction activities would be temporary and post-construction views of Alternative 5-related construction activities, equipment, stockpiles, and fencing would be removed once construction is completed. In addition, Alternative 5 would comply with the best management practices noted previously in Section 9.1.2, as well as the city's development standards related to scenic quality during construction, which would be verified during the city's permitting process. Therefore, construction of Alternative 5 would not conflict with applicable regulations governing scenic quality and would result in less than significant impacts.

9.3.3.3 Maintenance and Storage Facility

Maintenance of HRT vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF. Multiple buildings would be constructed, including a multi-level maintenance-of-way building, track storage area, wash bays, ancillary storage buildings, and a TPSS structure (Metro, 2024x). A grade separated access road and a parking area for employees would also be included. These structures would be the primary visual elements of the MSF. The MSF site within the northern portion of LU-6 would be located within a heavily industrialized area, and operation of this MSF would generally fit within the context of the existing industrial character.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 5 within LU-6 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

The MSF would result in permanent alterations to industrial parcels. As discussed previously, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

The MSF in LU-6 would be located at grade and would include a portion of the LADWP property east of the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. One-story, single-family residences are located directly south of the proposed MSF site. This residential area would not have direct north-facing public views of the proposed MSF, including the internal grade separated access road, because the properties front onto or face associated residential streets to the south, such as Cohasset Street. In addition, a two-story apartment building is located directly south of the proposed MSF site, and residents would have private north-facing views of the MSF. However, as discussed in Section 3.1.5, impacts are assessed related to changes to public views. The visual character of the new surface parking lot would be similar to the existing parking lot at the proposed MSF site.

The MSF would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. In addition, the MSF would be relatively the same height as the existing commercial structures. These railway structures are typically more visually tolerable in industrial and commercial areas. As such, these facilities would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views.

The MSF would also be consistent with the goals and objectives within the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b) and the *Mobility Plan 2035* DCP, 2016). With regard to the *Citywide Design Guidelines*, the MSF would improve the quality of the public realm through project design that is appropriate to the scale and character of the existing buildings in the surrounding area.

During the construction phase, the visual character would change temporarily from existing conditions. Construction of the MSF would require equipment such as construction barriers and sound walls, cranes, and other appurtenances that would be visible during the construction period.

Construction of the MSF would comply with applicable regulations governing scenic quality, including South Coast Air Quality Management District Rule 403, and would occur in an urbanized area. Rule 403 does not permit track-out dust to extend 25 feet or more beyond the active construction area and requires all track-out dirt to be removed at the end of each workday or evening shift. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings and other aerial transportation infrastructure.

Although temporary and short-term in nature, construction activities would be a visual nuisance. However, certain areas may be fenced off with construction barriers and sound walls, resulting in a temporary change and contrast in visual character from the existing conditions. Mitigation Measure AES-1 would include temporary privacy screens to minimize impacts from construction barriers and sound walls. In addition, the designated construction areas along the alignment would experience additional truck traffic compared to existing conditions, with trucks moving materials on- and off-site, and work crews and construction equipment moving around the alignment and between the project components.

Some residents may have private views of the project construction from their windows. While residents would be highly sensitive to visual changes and would have a higher degree of personal investment in Alternative 5, as previously mentioned, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to public views.

Motorists would primarily experience views of construction activities while driving along the roadways along and adjacent to the MSF. In addition, drivers would have prolonged views while idling at the various traffic signals surrounding the proposed station areas and aerial guideway. Passing drivers would notice the change in the visual character during the construction phase. However, drivers are considered to have a low sensitivity to any visual changes because they would likely be passing through the Project Study Area to reach their destinations and would not necessarily have a personal investment in the visual character or quality of the MSF area.

In addition, pedestrians would primarily experience views of construction activities while walking along public sidewalks, within transit stations, and near businesses that are to the proposed station areas and aerial guideway. The change in the visual character during the construction phase would be noticeable by these viewers. In addition, pedestrians are considered to have a moderate sensitivity to visual changes because they may be engaged in observing their surroundings.

The MSF includes entitlements and approvals to ensure consistent implementation of development standards. The development standards would recognize the MSF's unique characteristics, including unique opportunities for public benefits. The design standards included in the MSF's entitlements and approvals would ensure visual compatibility with adjacent development, as well as the MSF area's overall community character. The MSF would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. As such, the MSF would be consistent with applicable policies related to scenic quality during construction.

Overall, the MSF would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Construction would represent a temporary change in the visual quality and character. Project components would potentially stand out as memorable or remarkable features in the landscape due to their scale, which would have a temporary impact on visual character and quality of the MSF area and its surroundings compared to existing conditions. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings in urbanized areas. Impacts from construction activities would be temporary and post-construction views of Alternative 5-related construction activities, equipment, stockpiles, and fencing would be removed once construction is completed. In addition, the MSF would comply with the best management practices noted in Section 9.1.2, as well as the city's development standards related to scenic quality during construction, which would be verified during the permitting process. Therefore, the MSF within LU-6 would not conflict with applicable regulations governing scenic quality, or substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

9.3.4 Impact AES-4: Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

9.3.4.1 Operational Impacts

Alternative 5 would operate almost entirely underground; however, its station entryways and plazas would be lit at night to ensure a safe environment. As such, new nighttime light would primarily emanate from station areas (e.g., station plazas, entryways, platforms and parking lots), which would not substantially increase the amount of lighting in the immediate area because similar light sources and levels (e.g., buildings, streetlights, and parking lots) currently exist. Alternative 5 would follow Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy. Compliance with these requirements would ensure that permanent operations-related light sources at the proposed station areas would be directed downwards or feature directional shielding to minimize spillover onto adjacent properties, including residential uses and other light-sensitive uses.

Alternative 5-related sources of light and glare from the aerial component of Alternative 5 adjacent to the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW would primarily emanate from aerial guideway, trains, and station areas, including the above-grade station platform and parking lot at the proposed Van Nuys Station. Alternative 5-related lighting would primarily occur at the stations, TPSS, and/or proposed parking lot. Lighting from trains on aerial structures is not expected to extend beyond the aerial guideway or roadway ROW. Per Metro's Rail Design Criteria or equivalent, all light sources at the proposed surface parking lots and stations would be directed downwards to minimize potential spillover onto surrounding properties, including light-sensitive uses.

Additionally, Alternative 5 would include several elements (e.g., glass or metal surfaces) that would create new sources of glare at proposed station areas during the day. However, per Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy, surfaces and architectural finishes would be used that reduce glare and reflection to reduce impacts. Overall, Alternative 5 would create a negligible addition to light and glare and would not constitute a substantial change in existing light and glare in the immediate area. Therefore, operation of Alternative 5 would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

9.3.4.2 Construction Impacts

Construction of Alternative 5 would occur during daytime hours. Additionally, some work would be conducted throughout 24-hour periods, seven days a week when appropriate, such as work within the

tunnel station box. Nighttime and weekend construction, if any, would comply with local ordinance restrictions. Such activities may include, but would not be limited to, tunneling, columns and trackwork, and stockpiling materials. As part of best management practiced discussed in Section 0, construction lighting would be directed toward the construction areas and/or shielded with temporary screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto adjacent areas. In addition, construction-related illumination would be temporary and limited to safety and security purposes. The implementation of best management practices would reduce temporary impacts to adjacent uses, such as the residential properties. Therefore, construction of Alternative 5 would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

9.3.4.3 Maintenance and Storage Facility

Maintenance of HRT vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF. Multiple buildings would be constructed, including a multi-level maintenance-of-way building, track storage area, wash bays, ancillary storage buildings, and a TPSS structure (Metro, 2024x). A parking area for employees would also be included. New nighttime light would primarily emanate from the MSF, which would be a visible source of light, but would not represent a substantial increase in the amount of lighting in the immediate area because similar light sources and levels (e.g., buildings, streetlights, and parking lots) currently exist. The MSF would follow Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy. Compliance with these requirements would ensure that permanent operations-related light sources at the MSF would be directed downwards or feature directional shielding to minimize spillover onto adjacent properties, including residential uses and other light-sensitive uses.

Alternative 5-related sources of light and glare from the MSF would primarily emanate from buildings and parking lots. Per Metro's Rail Design Criteria or equivalent, all light sources at the proposed surface parking lots and stations would be directed downwards to minimize potential spillover onto surrounding properties, including light-sensitive uses.

The MSF would include several elements (e.g., glass or metal surfaces) that would create new sources of glare during the day. However, per Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy, surfaces and architectural finishes would be used that reduce glare and reflection. Overall, the MSF would create a negligible addition to light and glare and would not constitute a substantial change in existing light and glare in the immediate area.

In addition, construction of the MSF would primarily occur during daytime hours. Nighttime and weekend construction, if any, would comply with local ordinance restrictions. As part of best management practices discussed in Section 9.1.2, construction lighting would be directed toward the construction areas and/or shielded with temporary screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto adjacent areas. In addition, construction-related illumination would be temporary and limited to safety and security purposes. The implementation of best management practices would reduce temporary impacts to adjacent uses, such as the residential properties. Therefore, the MSF would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

9.4 Mitigation Measures

9.4.1 Operational Impacts

As discussed in Section 9.3, operation of Alternative 5 would result in less than significant impacts related to scenic vistas, scenic resources, visual character, and light and glare; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

9.4.2 Construction Impacts

Construction activities would be a temporary and short-term visual nuisance. Temporary changes and contrast from the visual character from the existing conditions are impacted by construction activities such as site operations, tree removals, and construction traffic. Construction related structures such as barrier, sound walls, and fencing also impact visual resources.

As a result, the following mitigation measures would be implemented:

MM AES-1: *Privacy screens, as applicable and appropriate, shall be placed in high visibility areas that have construction related structures or activities. Privacy screens shall be used in areas requiring tree removal activities adjacent visually sensitive areas, including but not limited to residential areas.*

9.4.3 Impacts After Mitigation

No mitigation measures are required during operations; impacts are less than significant.

During construction, MM AES-1 would reduce the temporary visual nuisance of construction activities. The implementation of this mitigation measure would result in less than significant impacts related to construction.

10 ALTERNATIVE 6

10.1 Alternative Description

Alternative 6 is a heavy rail transit (HRT) system with an underground track configuration. This alternative would provide transfers to five high-frequency fixed guideway transit and commuter rail lines, including the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (Metro) E, Metro D, and Metro G Lines, East San Fernando Valley Light Rail Transit Line, and the Metrolink Ventura County Line. The length of the alignment between the terminus stations would be approximately 12.9 miles.

The seven underground HRT stations would be as follows:

1. Metro E Line Expo/Bundy Station (underground)
2. Santa Monica Boulevard Station (underground)
3. Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station (underground)
4. UCLA Gateway Plaza Station (underground)
5. Ventura Boulevard/Van Nuys Boulevard Station (underground)
6. Metro G Line Van Nuys Station (underground)
7. Van Nuys Metrolink Station (underground)

10.1.1 Operating Characteristics

10.1.1.1 Alignment

As shown on Figure 10-1, from its southern terminus station at the Metro E Line Expo/Bundy Station, the alignment of Alternative 6 would run underground through the Westside of Los Angeles (Westside), the Santa Monica Mountains, and the San Fernando Valley (Valley) to the alignment's northern terminus adjacent to the Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station.

The proposed southern terminus station would be located beneath the Bundy Drive and Olympic Boulevard intersection. Tail tracks for vehicle storage would extend underground south of the station along Bundy Drive for approximately 1,500 feet, terminating just north of Pearl Street. The alignment would continue north beneath Bundy Drive before turning to the east near Iowa Avenue to run beneath Santa Monica Boulevard. The Santa Monica Boulevard Station would be located between Barrington Avenue and Federal Avenue. After leaving the Santa Monica Boulevard Station, the alignment would turn to the northeast and pass under Interstate 405 (I-405) before reaching the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station beneath the Metro D Line Westwood/UCLA Station, which is currently under construction as part of the Metro D Line Extension Project. From there, the underground alignment would curve slightly to the northeast and continue beneath Westwood Boulevard before reaching the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station.

Figure 10-1. Alternative 6: Alignment

Source: HTA, 2024

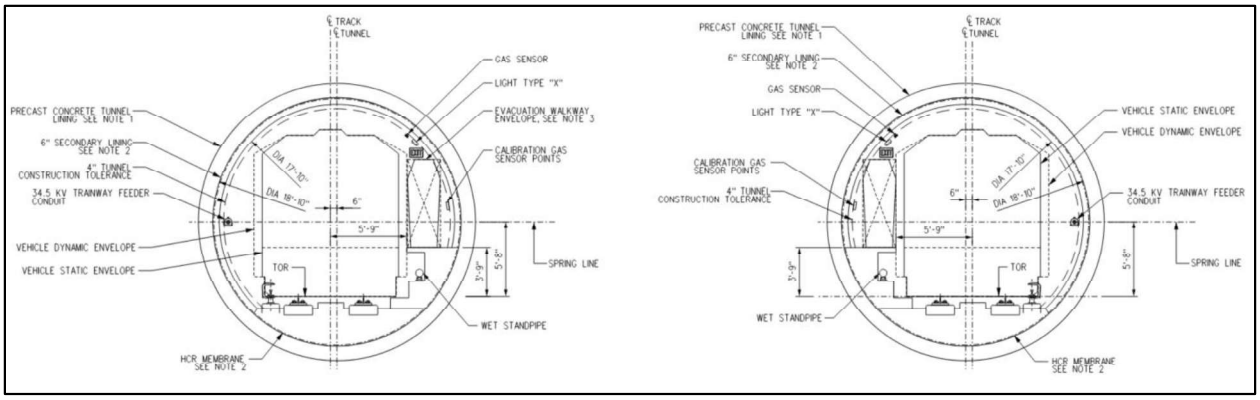
After leaving the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station, the alignment would continue to the north and travel under the Santa Monica Mountains. While still under the mountains, the alignment would shift slightly to the west to travel under the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) Stone Canyon Reservoir property to facilitate placement of a ventilation shaft on that property east of the reservoir. The alignment would then continue to the northeast to align with Van Nuys Boulevard at Ventura Boulevard as it enters the San Fernando Valley. The Ventura Boulevard Station would be beneath Van Nuys Boulevard at Moorpark Street. The alignment would then continue under Van Nuys

Boulevard before reaching the Metro G Line Van Nuys Station just south of Oxnard Street. North of the Metro G Line Van Nuys Station, the alignment would continue under Van Nuys Boulevard until reaching Sherman Way, where it would shift slightly to the east and run parallel to Van Nuys Boulevard before entering the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The Van Nuys Metrolink Station would serve as the northern terminus station and would be located between Saticoy Street and Keswick Street. North of the station, a yard lead would turn sharply to the southeast and transition to an at-grade configuration and continue to the proposed maintenance and storage facility (MSF) east of the Van Nuys Metrolink Station.

10.1.1.2 Guideway Characteristics

The alignment of Alternative 6 would be underground using Metro's standard twin-bore tunnel design. Figure 10-2 shows a typical cross-section of the underground guideway. Cross-passages would be constructed at regular intervals in accordance with Metro Rail Design Criteria. Each of the tunnels would have a diameter of 19 feet (not including the thickness of wall). Each tunnel would include an emergency walkway that measures a minimum of 2.5 feet wide for evacuation.

Figure 10-2. Typical Underground Guideway Cross-Section



Source: HTA, 2024

10.1.1.3 Vehicle Technology

Alternative 6 would utilize driver-operated steel-wheel HRT trains, as used on the Metro B and D Lines, with planned peak headways of 4 minutes and off-peak-period headways ranging from 8 to 20 minutes. Trains would consist of four or six cars and are expected to consist of six cars during the peak period. The HRT vehicle would have a maximum operating speed of 67 miles per hour; actual operating speeds would depend on the design of the guideway and distance between stations. Train cars would be 10.3 feet wide with three double doors on each side. Each car would be approximately 75 feet long with capacity for 133 passengers. Trains would be powered by a third rail.

10.1.1.4 Stations

Alternative 6 would include seven underground stations with station platforms measuring 450 feet long. The southern terminus underground station would be adjacent to the existing Metro E Line Expo/Bundy Station, and the northern terminus underground station would be located south of the existing Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station. Except for the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line, UCLA Gateway Plaza, and Metro G Line Van Nuys Stations, all stations would have a 30-foot-wide center platform. The Wilshire/Metro D Line Station would have a 32-foot-wide platform to accommodate the anticipated passenger transfer volumes, and the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station would have a 28-foot-wide platform because of the width constraint between the existing buildings. At the Metro G Line Van Nuys Station,

the track separation would increase significantly in order to straddle the future East San Fernando Valley Light Rail Transit Line Station piles. The platform width at this station would increase to 58 feet.

The following information describes each station, with relevant entrance, walkway, and transfer information. Bicycle parking would be provided at each station.

Metro E Line Expo/Bundy Station

- This underground station would be located under Bundy Drive at Olympic Boulevard.
- Station entrances would be located on either side of Bundy Drive between the Metro E Line and Olympic Boulevard, as well as on the northeast corner of Bundy Drive and Mississippi Avenue.
- At the existing Metro E Line Expo/Bundy Station, escalators from the plaza to the platform level would be added to improve inter-station transfers.
- An 80-space parking lot would be constructed east of Bundy Drive and north of Mississippi Avenue. Passengers would also be able to park at the existing Metro E Line Expo/Bundy Station parking facility, which provides 217 parking spaces.

Santa Monica Boulevard Station

- This underground station would be located under Santa Monica Boulevard between Barrington Avenue and Federal Avenue.
- Station entrances would be located on the southwest corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and Barrington Avenue and on the southeast corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and Federal Avenue.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station

- This underground station would be located under Gayley Avenue between Wilshire Boulevard and Lindbrook Drive.
- A station entrance would be provided on the northwest corner of Midvale Avenue and Ashton Avenue. Passengers would also be able to use the Metro D Line Westwood/UCLA Station entrances to access the station platform.
- Direct internal station transfers to the Metro D Line would be provided at the south end of the station.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

UCLA Gateway Plaza Station

- This underground station would be located underneath Gateway Plaza on the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) campus.
- Station entrances would be provided on the north side of Gateway Plaza, north of the Luskin Conference Center, and on the east side of Westwood Boulevard across from Strathmore Place.
- No dedicated station parking would be provided at this station.

Ventura Boulevard/Van Nuys Boulevard Station

- This underground station would be located under Van Nuys Boulevard at Moorpark Street.
- The station entrance would be located on the northwest corner of Van Nuys Boulevard and Ventura Boulevard.
- Two parking lots with a total of 185 parking spaces would be provided on the west side of Van Nuys Boulevard between Ventura Boulevard and Moorpark Street.

Metro G Line Van Nuys Station

- This underground station would be located under Van Nuys Boulevard south of Oxnard Street.
- The station entrance would be located on the southeast corner of Van Nuys Boulevard and Oxnard Street.
- Passengers would be able to park at the existing Metro G Line Van Nuys Station parking facility, which provides 307 parking spaces. No additional automobile parking would be provided at the proposed station.

Van Nuys Metrolink Station

- This underground station would be located immediately east of Van Nuys Boulevard between Saticoy Street and Keswick Street.
- Station entrances would be located on the northeast corner of Van Nuys Boulevard and Saticoy Street and on the east side of Van Nuys Boulevard just south of the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) rail corridor.
- Existing Metrolink Station parking would be reconfigured, maintaining approximately the same number of spaces. Metrolink parking would not be available to Metro transit riders.

10.1.1.5 Station-to-Station Travel Times

Table 10-1 presents the station-to-station distance and travel times for Alternative 6. The travel times include both run time and dwell time. Dwell time is 30 seconds for stations anticipated to have higher passenger volumes and 20 seconds for other stations. Northbound and southbound travel times vary slightly because of grade differentials and operational considerations at end-of-line stations.

Table 10-1 Alternative 6: Station-to-Station Travel Times and Station Dwell Times

From Station	To Station	Distance (miles)	Northbound Station-to-Station Travel Time (seconds)	Southbound Station-to-Station Travel Time (seconds)	Dwell Time (seconds)
Metro E Line Station					*20*
Metro E Line	Santa Monica Boulevard	1.1	111	121	—
Santa Monica Boulevard Station					*20*
Santa Monica Boulevard	Wilshire/Metro D Line	1.3	103	108	—
Wilshire/Metro D Line Station					*30*
Wilshire/Metro D Line	UCLA Gateway Plaza	0.7	69	71	—
UCLA Gateway Plaza Station					*30*
UCLA Gateway Plaza	Ventura Boulevard	5.9	358	358	—
Ventura Boulevard Station					*20*
Ventura Boulevard	Metro G Line	1.8	135	131	—
Metro G Line Station					*30*
Metro G Line	Van Nuys Metrolink	2.1	211	164	—
Van Nuys Metrolink Station					*30*

Source: HTA, 2024

— = no data

10.1.1.6 Special Trackwork

Alternative 6 would include seven double crossovers within the revenue service alignment, enabling trains to cross over to the parallel track with terminal stations having an additional double crossover beyond the end of the platform.

10.1.1.7 Maintenance and Storage Facility

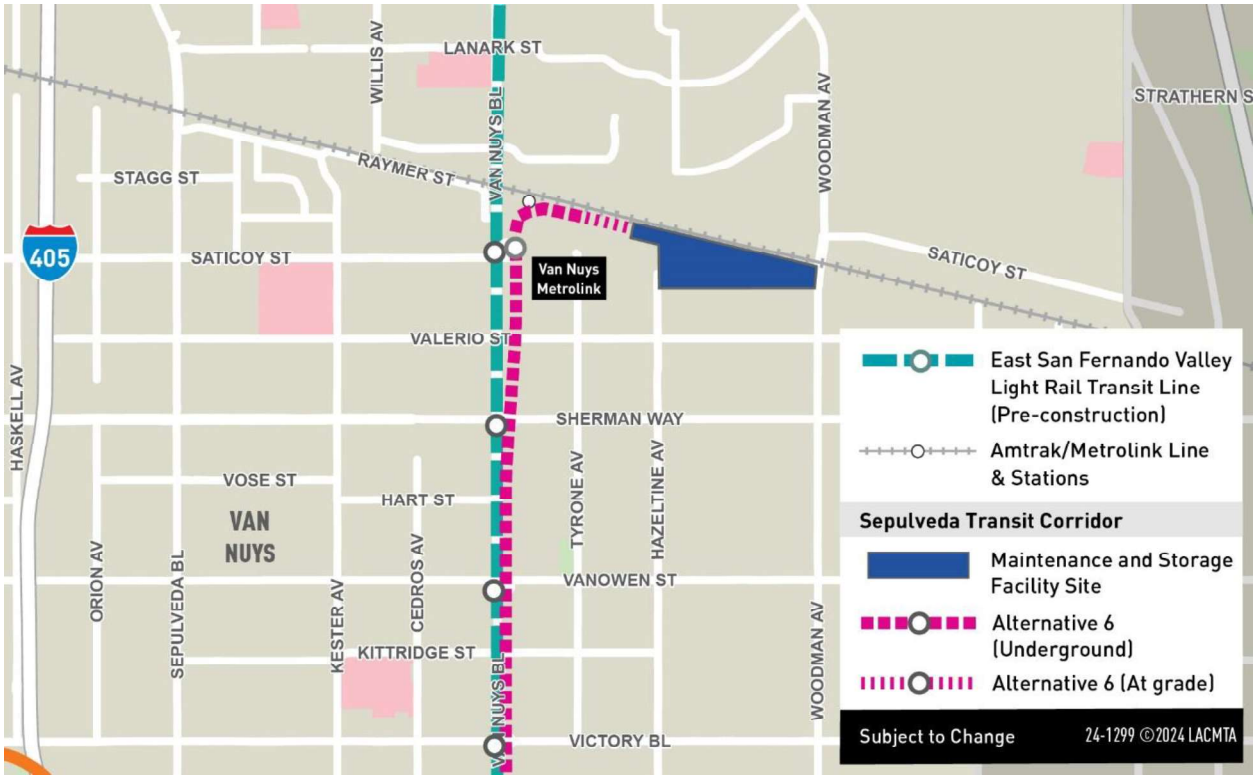
The MSF for Alternative 6 would be located east of the Van Nuys Metrolink Station and would encompass approximately 41 acres. The MSF would be designed to accommodate 94 vehicles and would be bounded by single-family residences to the south, the LOSSAN rail corridor to the north, Woodman Avenue to the east, and Hazeltine Avenue and industrial manufacturing enterprises to the west. Heavy rail trains would transition from underground to an at-grade configuration near the MSF, the northwest corner of the site. Trains would then travel southeast to maintenance facilities and storage tracks.

The site would include the following facilities:

- Two entrance gates with guard shacks
- Maintenance facility building
- Maintenance-of-way facility
- Storage tracks
- Carwash
- Cleaning platform
- Administrative offices
- Pedestrian bridge connecting the administrative offices to employee parking
- Two traction power substations (TPSS)

Figure 10-3 shows the location of the MSF for Alternative 6.

Figure 10-3. Alternative 6: Maintenance and Storage Facility Site



Source: HTA, 2024

10.1.1.8 Traction Power Substations

TPSSs transform and convert high voltage alternating current supplied from power utility feeders into direct current suitable for transit operation. Twenty-two TPSS facilities would be located along the alignment and would be spaced approximately 1 mile apart except within the Santa Monica Mountains. Each at-grade TPSS along the alignment would be approximately 5,000 square feet. Table 10-2 lists the TPSS locations for Alternative 6.

Figure 10-4 shows the TPSS locations along the Alternative 6 alignment.

Table 10-2. Alternative 6: Traction Power Substation Locations

TPSS No.	TPSS Location Description	Configuration
1 and 2	TPSSs 1 and 2 would be located immediately north of the Bundy Drive and Mississippi Avenue intersection.	Underground (within station)
3 and 4	TPSSs 3 and 4 would be located east of the Santa Monica Boulevard and Stoner Avenue intersection.	Underground (within station)
5 and 6	TPSSs 5 and 6 would be located southeast of the Kinross Avenue and Gayley Avenue intersection.	Underground (within station)
7 and 8	TPSSs 7 and 8 would be located at the north end of the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station.	Underground (within station)
9 and 10	TPSSs 9 and 10 would be located east of Stone Canyon Reservoir on LADWP property.	At-grade
11 and 12	TPSSs 11 and 12 would be located at the Van Nuys Boulevard and Ventura Boulevard intersection.	Underground (within station)
13 and 14	TPSSs 13 and 14 would be located immediately south of Magnolia Boulevard and west of Van Nuys Boulevard.	At-grade
15 and 16	TPSSs 15 and 16 would be located along Van Nuys Boulevard between Emelita Street and Califa Street.	Underground (within station)
17 and 18	TPSSs 17 and 18 would be located east of Van Nuys Boulevard and immediately north of Vanowen Street.	At-grade
19 and 20	TPSSs 19 and 20 would be located east of Van Nuys Boulevard between Saticoy Street and Keswick Street.	Underground (within station)
21 and 22	TPSSs 21 and 22 would be located south of the Metrolink tracks and east of Hazeltine Avenue.	At-grade (within MSF)

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 10-4. Alternative 6: Traction Power Substation Locations

Source: HTA, 2024

10.1.1.9 Roadway Configuration Changes

In addition to the access road described in the following section, Alternative 6 would require reconstruction of roadways and sidewalks near stations.

10.1.1.10 Ventilation Facilities

Tunnel ventilation for Alternative 6 would be similar to existing Metro ventilation systems for light and heavy rail underground subways. In case of emergency, smoke would be directed away from trains and extracted through the use of emergency ventilation fans installed at underground stations and crossover locations adjacent to the stations. In addition, a mid-mountain facility located on LADWP property east of Stone Canyon Reservoir in the Santa Monica Mountains would include a ventilation shaft for the extraction of air, along with two TPSSs. An access road from the Stone Canyon Reservoir access road would be constructed to the location of the shaft, requiring grading of the hillside along its route.

10.1.1.11 Fire/Life Safety – Emergency Egress

Each tunnel would include an emergency walkway that measures a minimum of 2.5 feet wide for evacuation. Cross-passages would be provided at regular intervals to connect the two tunnels to allow for safe egress to a point of safety (typically at a station) during an emergency. Access to tunnel segments for first responders would be through stations.

10.1.2 Construction Activities

Temporary construction activities for Alternative 6 would include construction of ancillary facilities, as well as guideway and station construction and construction staging and laydown areas, which would be co-located with future MSF and station locations. Construction of the transit facilities through substantial completion is expected to have a duration of 7½ years. Early works, such as site preparation, demolition, and utility relocation, could start in advance of construction of the transit facilities.

For the guideway, twin-bore tunnels would be constructed using two tunnel boring machines (TBM). The tunnel alignment would be constructed over three segments—including the Westside, Santa Monica Mountains, and Valley—using a different pair of TBMs for each segment. For the Westside segment, the TBMs would be launched from the Metro E Line Station and retrieved at the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station. For the Santa Monica Mountains segment, the TBMs would operate from the Ventura Boulevard Station in a southerly direction for retrieval from UCLA Gateway Plaza Station. In the Valley, TBMs would be launched from the Van Nuys Metrolink Station and retrieved at the Ventura Boulevard Station.

The distance from the surface to the top of the tunnels would vary from approximately 50 feet to 130 feet in the Westside, between 120 feet and 730 feet in the Santa Monica Mountains, and between 40 feet and 75 feet in the Valley.

Construction work zones would also be co-located with future MSF and station locations. All work zones would comprise the permanent facility footprint with additional temporary construction easements from adjoining properties. In addition to permanent facility locations, TBM launch at the Metro E Line Station would require the closure of Interstate 10 (I-10) westbound off-ramps at Bundy Drive for the duration of the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project (Project) construction.

Alternative 6 would include seven underground stations. All stations would be constructed using a “cut-and-cover” method whereby the station structure would be constructed within a trench excavated from the surface that is covered by a temporary deck and backfilled during the later stages of station construction. Traffic and pedestrian detours would be necessary during underground station excavation until decking is in place and the appropriate safety measures have been taken to resume cross traffic. In addition, portions of the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station crossing underneath the Metro D Line Westwood/UCLA Station and underneath a mixed-use building at the north end of the station would be

constructed using sequential excavation method as it would not be possible to excavate the station from the surface.

Construction of the MSF site would begin with demolition of existing structures, followed by earthwork and grading. Building foundations and structures would be constructed, followed by yard improvements and trackwork, including paving, parking lots, walkways, fencing, landscaping, lighting, and security systems. Finally, building mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, finishes, and equipment would be installed. The MSF site would also be used as a staging site.

Station and MSF sites would be used for construction staging areas. A construction staging area, shown in Figure 10-5, would also be located off Stone Canyon Road northeast of the Upper Stone Canyon Reservoir. In addition, temporary construction easements outside of the station and MSF footprints would be required along Bundy Drive, Santa Monica Boulevard, Wilshire Boulevard, and Van Nuys Boulevard. The westbound to southbound loop off-ramp of the I-10 interchange at Bundy Drive would also be used as a staging area and would require extended ramp closure. Construction staging areas would provide the necessary space for the following activities:

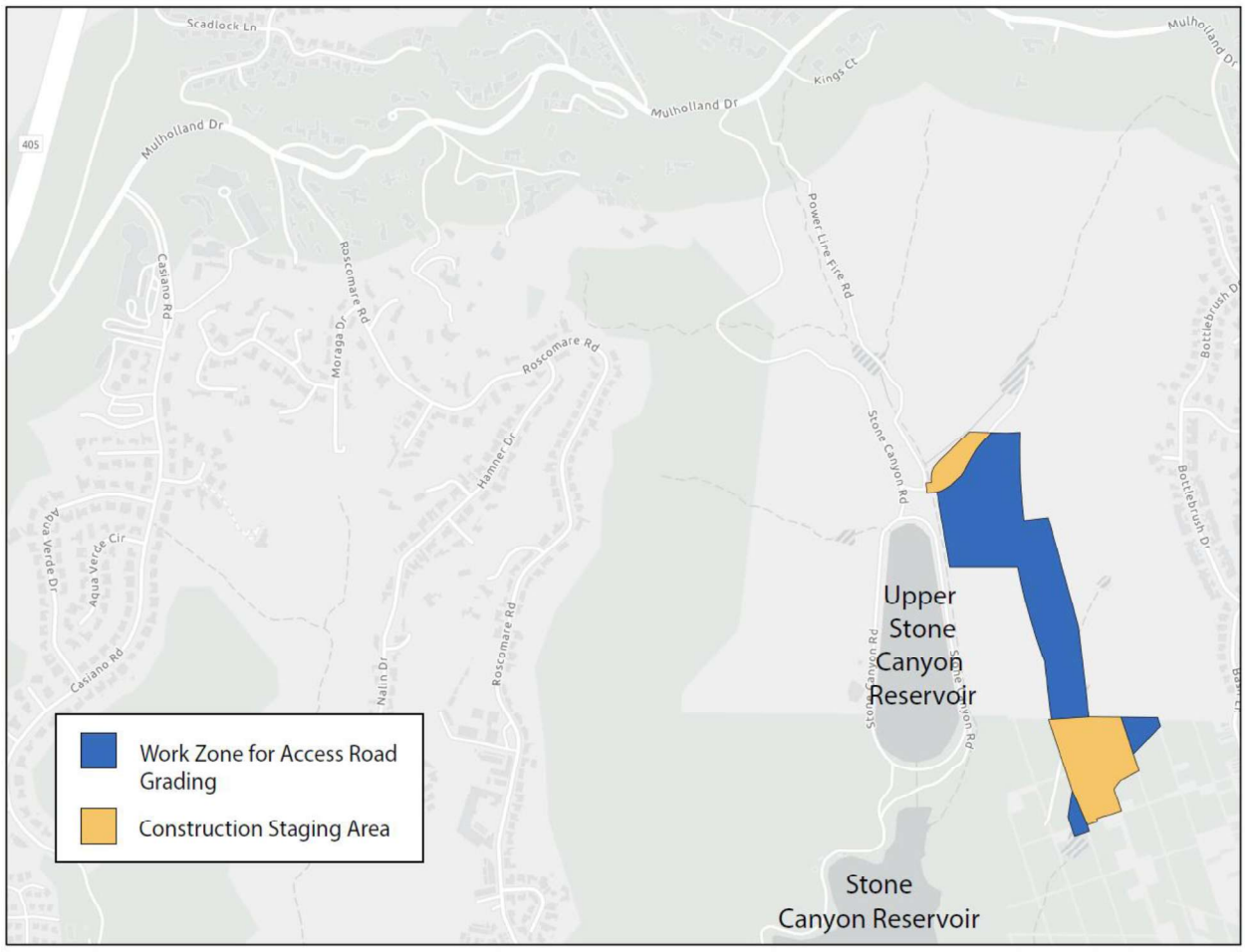
- Contractors' equipment
- Receiving deliveries
- Testing of soils for minerals or hazards
- Storing materials
- Site offices
- Work zone for excavation
- Other construction activities (including parking and change facilities for workers, location of construction office trailers, storage, staging and delivery of construction materials and permanent plant equipment, and maintenance of construction equipment)

The size of proposed construction staging areas for each station would depend on the level of work to be performed for a specific station and considerations for tunneling, such as TBM launch or extraction. Staging areas required for TBM launching would include areas for launch and access shafts, cranes, material and equipment, precast concrete segmental liner storage, truck wash areas, mechanical and electrical shops, temporary services, temporary power, ventilation, cooling tower, plants, temporary construction driveways, storage for spoils, and space for field offices.

Alternative 6 would also include several ancillary facilities and structures, including TPSS structures, a deep vent shaft structure at Stone Canyon Reservoir, as well as additional vent shafts at stations and crossovers. TPSSs would be co-located with MSF and station locations, except for two TPSSs at the Stone Canyon Reservoir vent shaft and four along Van Nuys Boulevard in the Valley. The Stone Canyon Reservoir vent shaft would be constructed using a vertical shaft sinking machine that uses mechanized shaft sinking equipment to bore a vertical hole down into the ground. Operation of the machine would be controlled and monitored from the surface. The ventilation shaft and two TPSSs in the Santa Monica Mountains would require an access road within the LADWP property at Stone Canyon Reservoir. Construction of the access road would require grading east of the reservoir. Construction of all mid-mountain facilities would take place within the footprint shown on Figure 10-5.

Additional vent shafts would be located at each station with one potential intermediate vent shaft where stations are spaced apart. These vent shafts would be constructed using the typical cut-and-cover method, with lateral bracing as the excavation proceeds. During station construction, the shafts would likely be used for construction crew, material, and equipment access.

Figure 10-5. Alternative 6: Mid-Mountain Construction Staging Site



Source: HTA, 2024

Alternative 6 would utilize precast tunnel lining segments in the construction of the transit tunnels. These tunnel lining segments would be similar to those used in recent Metro underground transit projects. Therefore, it is expected that the tunnel lining segments would be obtained from an existing casting facility in Los Angeles County and no additional permits or approvals would be necessary specific to the facility.

The following best management practices would be implemented during construction:

- Erosion-control devices, such as silt fences, would be removed as soon as the area is stabilized.
- Stockpile areas would be neatly organized and covered depending on weather events.
- Stockpiled areas would be located in less visibly sensitive areas.
- Construction lighting would be directed toward the construction areas and/or shielded with temporary screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto adjacent areas.

10.2 Existing Conditions

This section describes the existing visual and aesthetic conditions within the Resource Study Area (RSA), which is an area with a radius of 0.25 miles to 0.50 miles from the alignments, stations, and visible construction-related activities and staging, and MSF site options. The RSA for this analysis encompasses the existing aboveground landscapes within views from public vantage points that would be directly affected, temporarily and/or permanently, by the proposed facilities and components during both construction and operation.

Visual and aesthetics resources were identified, consistent with the methodology outlined in Section 3.1.2. These resources include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Structures of historic significance or visual prominence
- Open space and recreational areas
- Distant views of the horizon from public locations
- Landscaped areas

10.2.1 Regional Setting

The regional visual setting generally exhibits an urbanized character, with nearly all land in the RSA already developed. The urban landscape varies, and includes low-lying residential, industrial, and commercial buildings along with high-density, high-rise residential and commercial buildings in downtown areas.

Higher density development with a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures are generally found between I-10 and the UCLA campus at the southern portion of the Alternative 6 alignment, and lower density development consisting of primarily low-rise structures and a few mid-rise structures are located north of the UCLA campus. The Santa Monica Mountains, located within the central portion of the RSA, provide aesthetic, environmental, and recreational benefits to residents. The ridgelines or mountain edges within the Santa Monica Mountains provide dramatic views and are protected and preserved by individual communities. Lower density development within the Santa Monica Mountains consists primarily of low-rise structures and a few mid-rise structures, which are located south of US-101 within the community of Bel Air.

North of the Santa Monica Mountains, within the Valley, higher density development with a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures are generally found north of US-101 at the northern portion of the Alternative 6 alignment.

The major visual feature of the RSA is the built environment, which consists of a variety of commercial, industrial, public facility, institutional, and residential uses, in addition to transportation corridors. The transportation corridors within the RSA include roadways, freeways, and rail rights-of-way (ROW), including the Metro E Line ROW and the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW. The Metro E Line ROW generally passes through the southern portion of the Alternative 6 alignment in an east-west direction along I-10. The LOSSAN rail corridor ROW generally passes through the northern portion of the RSA in an east-west direction.

Major freeways (i.e., US-101, I-10, and I-405) create well-defined visual boundaries and edges because the facilities are several hundred feet wide. Within the RSA, I-10 and I-405 are elevated on columns or engineered fill.

Flood control facilities also create visual boundaries within the RSA, which includes the concrete-banked channels of the Los Angeles River at the northern portion of the Alternative 6 alignment. The river channels are visually distinct due to the width and limited number of crossing points.

The topography of the RSA is varied with relatively flat urbanized areas at the northern and southern portions of the Alternative 6 alignment, with major changes in elevation through the central portion of the Alternative 6 alignment. The southern portion of the RSA slopes downward in a south-southwesterly direction toward the Pacific Ocean. Elevations range from approximately 780 feet above mean sea level around the Van Nuys Metro Station, 650 feet above mean sea level around US-101, 1,300 feet above mean sea level at the Stone Canyon Overlook along Mulholland Drive, 375 feet above mean sea level around the UCLA campus DCP, 2021), to 146 feet above mean sea level around the Metro E Line Expo/Bundy Station (City of Santa Monica, 2010).

Within the Santa Monica Mountains, the RSA provides elevated vantage or vista points along Mulholland Drive. These vista points provide long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains. In contrast, the northern and southern portions of the Alternative 6 alignment lack elevated vantage or vista points due to the relatively flat topography at the northern and southern portion of the Alternative 6 alignment, the RSA lacks elevated vantage or vista points. As a result, views in the RSA are generally limited to the foreground and middle ground. Although background views of mountains are available along some public street ROWs within the RSA, portions of these background views are blocked by urban features, such as utility poles, urban landscaping, and intervening buildings.

10.2.2 Scenic Vistas

The term “scenic vista” generally refers to visual access to, or the visibility of, a particular sight from a given vantage point or corridor. The *LA CEQA Thresholds Guide* DCP, 2006) notes the value of preserving sightlines to designated scenic resources or areas of visual interest from public vantage points. The subjects of valued or recognized views may be focal (meaning of specific individual resources), or panoramic (meaning broad geographic area). Panoramic views are typically associated with scenic vistas that provide a sweeping geographic orientation. Examples of panoramic views include urban skylines, valleys, mountain ranges, or large bodies of water. Examples of focal views include public art/signs and notable buildings and structures. The nature of a view may be unique, such as a view from an elevated vantage point or particular angle.

The Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles’ General Plan* defines scenic views or vistas as the panoramic public view access to natural features, including views of the ocean, striking or unusual natural terrain, or unique urban or historic features (DCP, 2001b). Scenic views from within the RSA include the Santa Monica Mountains, hillsides, and the Los Angeles River. The Los Angeles River and its associated tributaries and floodplains, and the Santa Monica Mountains are listed as scenic vistas in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan*. Sweeping views of the Santa Monica Mountains, hillsides, are considered panoramic and can be seen from designated vantage points, public hiking trails, and public ROWs.

The Santa Monica Mountains rise to an elevation of approximately 3,100 feet from the base of the hills to their highest point at Sandstone Peak. According to the Conservation Element, the Santa Monica Mountains are the most visible scenic feature from many areas of the city, including the RSA (DCP, 2001b).

Within the RSA, panoramic views from the “flatlands” are not readily available, due to the existing street grid pattern and built environment. Rather, panoramic vantage points are primarily located within hilly

areas. The Stone Canyon Overlook is located on the south side of Mulholland Drive and provides panoramic south-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the Stone Canyon Reservoir. In addition, the Johnson Overlook is located north of the Stone Canyon Reservoir on the north side of Mulholland Drive. Visitors can take in north-facing views of the Valley, and the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains. These views represent the scenic views available from various publicly accessible locations in the Santa Monica Mountains, and other hilly areas within the RSA. However, the perspective and visibility may change depending on various factors, such as the viewer location, elevation, bad air days, or weather.

In addition, limited focal views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the hillsides within the lower areas of the RSA are available along various north-south streets and I-405. However, most of the views to the Santa Monica Mountains and the hillsides are blocked by intervening buildings, street trees and, on some streets, overhead utility lines. In summary, public panoramic and focal scenic views are currently available in the RSA, but the quality of the views can vary significantly.

10.2.3 Scenic Resources

Scenic resources refer to natural or built features of high aesthetic quality. Scenic resources identified in the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* include striking or unusual natural features, the Pacific Ocean, Santa Monica Mountains, and San Gabriel Mountains, and unique urban or historic features as seen from designated scenic highways. The RSA is not characterized by striking or unusual natural features and is not visible from the ocean. Glimpses of the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains are available from intermittent viewpoints within the RSA.

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Appendix G, scenic resources within this area of consideration include specific mention of such natural or built features that are within the view field of a state scenic highway. No California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the RSA. Additionally, no state-designated scenic highways in proximity to the RSA provide views of the RSA. The closest eligible state scenic highway is State Route 1 (SR-1, the Pacific Coast Highway in Southern California), which is approximately 2 miles west of the Alternative 6 alignment. The closest officially designated state scenic highway is State Route 27 (SR-27, Topanga Canyon Boulevard), which is approximately 8 miles west of the Alternative 6 alignment.

Six City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are within the Project Study Area. City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways, according to the *City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan 2035*, are either 1) arterial streets or state highways that traverse areas of natural scenic quality in undeveloped or sparsely developed areas of the city or 2) arterial streets that traverse urban areas of cultural, historical, or aesthetic value which merit protection and enhancement. Table 10-3 lists and describes the City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways that are within or along the boundaries of the Project Study Area.

Table 10-3. Alternative 6: Resource Study Area Scenic Highways

Scenic Highway	Location	Scenic Features, Resources, or City Comment
Beverly Glen Boulevard	Ventura Boulevard to Sunset Boulevard	Winding cross mountain road; valley views
Mulholland Drive	1.US-101 westerly to Mulholland Highway; 2. Mulholland Highway to Valley Circle Boulevard	(Specific Plan Ordinance. No. 167,943) Panoramic views, "ribbon of park"
Santa Monica Boulevard	Sepulveda Boulevard to City of Beverly Hills boundary	Not Available
Sepulveda Boulevard	I-405 to Sunset Boulevard	Old cross mountain road with tunnel, views of mountains and Valley
Sherman Way	Variel Avenue to Kester Avenue	Wide street, landscaped median
Sunset Boulevard	Pacific Coast Highway to City of Beverly Hills boundary	Views of mountains, estates, UCLA campus

Source: DCP, 2016

As listed in Table 10-3, the City of Los Angeles in its *Mobility Plan 2035* designates Mulholland Drive as a scenic highway. Mulholland Drive provides opportunities for multiple scenic vistas as it winds up and through the Santa Monica Mountains, including through the RSA. Development near Mulholland Drive is subject to design review guidelines pursuant to the *Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan* (MSPSP).

The MSPSP has designated 14 major vista points (MVP) along Mulholland Drive that are maintained by the Bureau of Street Maintenance of the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. The Inner Corridor of the MSPSP area is designated as part of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) also maintains seven scenic overlooks along Mulholland Drive (MRCA, 2023). The nearest MVP (also the nearest overlook) is the Stone Canyon Overlook, which is located approximately 380 feet east of the Alternative 6 alignment. The nearest MRCA-maintained scenic overlook is The Groves Overlook, which is located approximately 1 mile west of the Alternative 6 alignment.

The Alternative 6 alignment travels through the Inner Corridor and Outer Corridor of the MSPSP area. The MSPSP contains density requirements, building standards and grading restrictions that are applicable to the Inner Corridor. In addition, the Alternative 6 alignment is subject to the MSPSP's accompanying design guidelines and review by the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Design Review Board. The viewshed protection provisions of the MSPSP are directed at preserving, complementing, and/or enhancing the public views from Mulholland Drive. Therefore, although impacts on surrounding homes and land uses are discussed, the focus of this analysis is on Alternative 6's impact on public views, particularly those from Mulholland Drive.

10.2.4 Visual Character and Quality

As listed in Table 10-4, six generalized landscape units (LUs) were defined along the Alternative 6 alignment. The LUs encompass the location of the Alternative 6 alignment and adjacent area. The existing visual character and quality, as well as the primary viewers, are described in the following tables for each LU, beginning in the southern portion of the Alternative 6 alignment and ending in the north.

Table 10-4. Alternative 6: Landscape Units

Landscape Unit	Extent	Key Views
1	National Boulevard to Ohio Avenue	Views of Century City, I-405
2	Ohio Avenue to Sunset Boulevard	Views of Century City, Santa Monica Mountains, Federal Building, Westwood Recreation Center, Bad News Beard Field, Los Angeles National Cemetery, views of buildings along Wilshire Boulevard, UCLA campus, I-405
3	Sunset Boulevard to Mulholland Drive	Views of Santa Monica Mountains, Getty Center, Scenic Mulholland Drive, Stone Canyon Reservoir, undeveloped land
4	Mulholland Drive to US-101	Views of Santa Monica Mountains, Scenic Mulholland Drive, Stone Canyon Reservoir, undeveloped land
5	US-101 to Victory Boulevard	Views of San Gabriel Mountains, Los Angeles River, I-405, US-101
6	Victory Boulevard to LOSSAN rail corridor right-of-way	Views of San Gabriel Mountains, Los Angeles River, I-405, LOSSAN rail corridor right-of-way

Source: HTA, 2024

Table 10-5 lists the two key observation points (KOPs) (or key views) and the viewer groups potentially affected by Alternative 6.

Table 10-5. Alternative 6: Key Observation Points

KOP No.	KOP Location	Photograph Direction	Primary Viewer
KOP 16	Northwest Corner of Strathmore Place at Westwood Plaza	Southeast	Pedestrian, UCLA Patron
KOP 17	Stone Canyon Overlook	South	Tourist, Pedestrian

Source: HTA, 2024

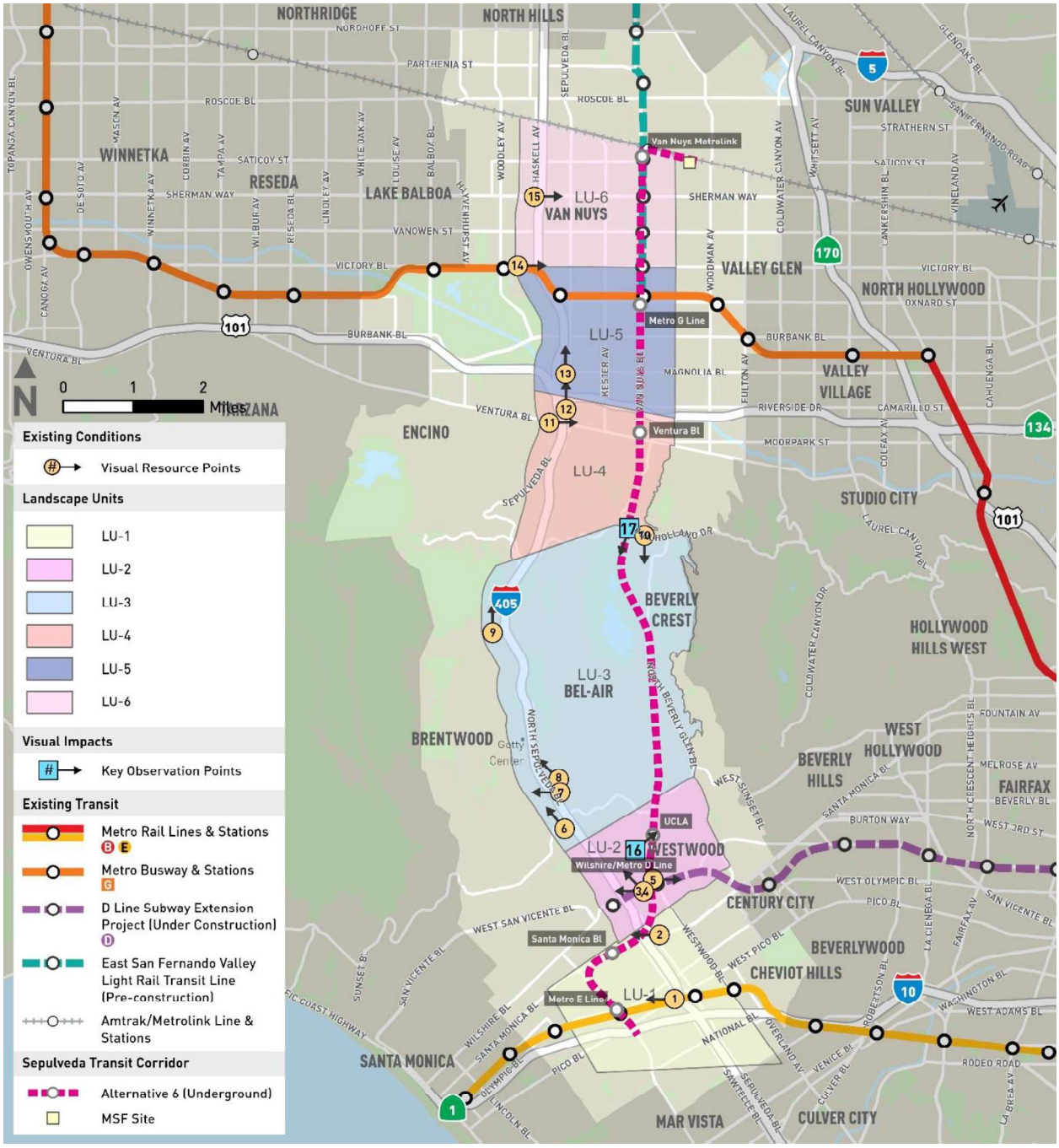
KOP = key observation point

KOPs are used to evaluate existing landscapes and potential impacts on visual resources with various levels of sensitivity, in different landscape types and terrain, and from various vantage points. KOPs are generally selected to represent the most critical locations from which a project area may be seen. As such, the following KOP locations were selected to provide the best representation of Alternative 6's visual changes.

Summaries of the visual character of the LUs in the Project Study Area are generally described in the following sections. The visual descriptions are based on public views, meaning what is visible from a sidewalk, roadway, or other public ROW. Additional information regarding potential impacts of Alternative 6 on historic resources is provided in the *Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources Technical Report* (Metro, 2025a).

Figure 10-6 illustrates the boundaries of the LUs, the locations of the existing conditions photographs, and locations of the KOPs.

Figure 10-6. Alternative 6: Visual Landscape Units



Source: HTA, 2024

10.2.4.1 Landscape Unit 1 – National Boulevard to Ohio Avenue

LU-1 begins at National Boulevard in the Westdale and West Los Angeles communities and continues north past I-10 to Ohio Avenue in Westwood. LU-1 is bordered on the west by Steward Street and on the east by Westwood Boulevard. LU-1 is bordered on the west by Steward Street and on the east by Westwood Boulevard. LU-1 is highly urbanized, consisting of a mix of low-rise, mid-rise structures, and high-rise structures. Structures within this LU generally include a mix of residential, commercial, and

industrial development. Commercial developments include a mix of small and mid-size commercial structures, as well as high-rise and mid-rise office buildings. Residential uses consist of one- to two-story single-family homes, and mid-rise buildings, while institutional and industrial uses generally consist of low-rise structures. The Metro E Line and its associated aerial structure crosses Bundy Drive at Exposition Boulevard, and partially obscures views to the north.

The primary viewers in LU-1 consist of motorists, pedestrians, residents, transit commuters, and patrons of commercial businesses. Visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views.

The level and types of ornamental landscaping in LU-1 vary, with light to moderate levels of landscaping throughout the LU. Ornamental landscaping is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets. In addition, a mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided within the LU.

Although residential areas surround the commercial corridor in LU-1, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. The most prominent views within LU-1 are of the elevated Metro E Line Expo/Bundy Station and guideway. There are distant north-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains from north-south oriented streets. As discussed in Section 10.2.2, the Santa Monica Mountains are listed as a designated scenic vista in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* (DCP, 2001b). Figure 10-7 and Figure 10-8 shows existing representative views of LU-1.

Figure 10-7. Alternative 6: Existing View 1, Looking West Toward Metro E Line from Pico Boulevard, West of I-405

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 10-8. Alternative 6: Existing View 2, Looking West Toward I-405 from Santa Monica Boulevard at Sepulveda Boulevard

Source: HTA, 2024

10.2.4.2 Landscape Unit 2 – Ohio Avenue to Sunset Boulevard

LU-2 begins directly north of Ohio Avenue and continues north to Sunset Boulevard in Westwood. LU-2 is bordered to the west by Sawtelle Boulevard (just west of I-405) in the Brentwood community, and to the east by South Beverly Glen Boulevard. LU-2 is also highly urbanized, consisting of a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise structures, as well as the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Federal Building, and UCLA campus. The majority of residential uses in LU-2 are located within the northwest and southeast portions of the LU. Residential uses consist of one- to two-story single-family homes, and multi-family residential buildings. The residential neighborhoods surrounding the UCLA campus include Bel Air to the north, Holmby-Westwood to the east, and Westwood Hills to the west, which primarily consist of one- to two-story single-family residences. Westwood Village and the Wilshire Corridor are located to the south.

The Wilshire Corridor primarily consists of commercial uses, including hotels and mid- to high-rise office buildings from I-405 to Beverly Glen Boulevard at the eastern boundary of LU-2. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are prominent visual elements along the Wilshire Corridor. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor.

Westwood Village is located north of the Wilshire Corridor and is pedestrian-oriented, with low- to mid-rise buildings containing retail, office, and mixed uses. This village character contrasts with the many multi-story residential towers, hotels, and office buildings that exist along Wilshire Boulevard. Southeast of Wilshire Boulevard, single-family residences and small multi-family buildings are prominent. The Los Angeles National Cemetery, located in the western portion of LU-2, provides open expanses and the opportunity for distant views of the Santa Monica Mountains.

The UCLA campus is located at the base of the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains, directly south of Sunset Boulevard. The main campus is bounded by Wilshire Boulevard to the south, Veteran Avenue to the west, Sunset Boulevard to the north, and Hilgard Avenue to the east. The main campus is visible from adjacent residential neighborhoods to the north, east, and west, as well as from several major roadways, including I-405 and Sunset Boulevard. The northern portion of the UCLA campus mainly consists of academic buildings and landscaped open areas, while the southern portion of campus consists of science and medical buildings that are considerably more dense and more urban in appearance. A majority of the main campus is organized around a series of squares and courtyards linked by hardscape pedestrian walkways. The northwestern and southwestern portions of the main campus consist of student housing. These buildings are mainly modern mid- to high-rise structures with similar architectural styles.

The primary viewers in LU-2 consist of motorists, pedestrians, patrons of commercial businesses, and patrons of UCLA. There are distant north-facing views of the Santa Monica Mountains from north-south oriented streets. UCLA patrons also have background views of Century City from certain areas of the main campus.

Landscaping on the main campus has both a formal and informal character, consisting of tree clusters, shaded grassy areas, and flowering plants. Paved pedestrian connections, asphalt circulation hubs, and streetscape treatments emphasize the main campus' urban nature. Most of the campus edges are heavily landscaped with mature trees and shrubs. These landscaped buffers are visually prominent and define the boundaries of the UCLA campus. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-2. Figure 10-9, Figure 10-10, Figure 10-11, and Figure 10-12 show existing representative views of LU-2.

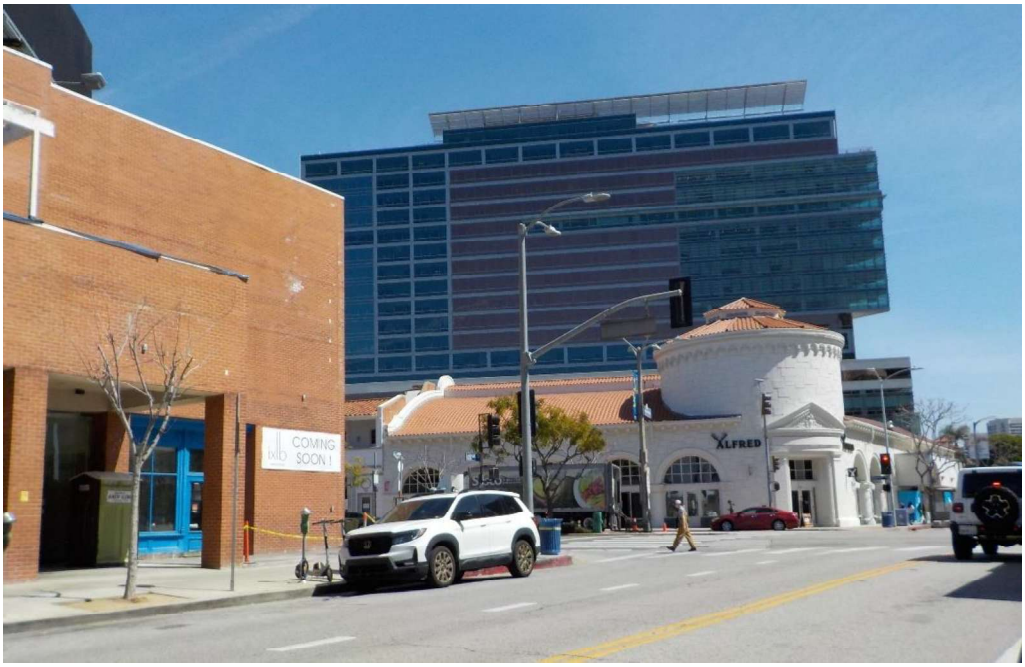
Figure 10-9. Alternative 6: Existing View 3, Looking West Toward the Federal Building from Veteran Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 10-10. Alternative 6: Existing View 4, Looking Northwest Toward Wilshire Boulevard and the National Cemetery from Veteran Avenue

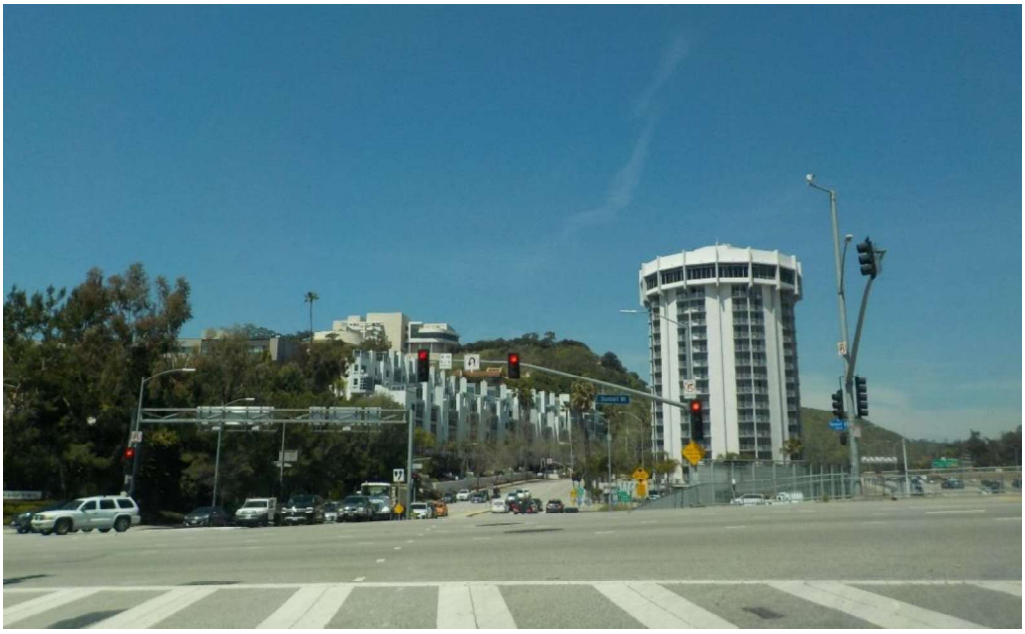
Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 10-11. Alternative 6: Existing View 5, Looking East Toward Westwood Boulevard from Lindbrook Drive in Westwood



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 10-12. Alternative 6: Existing View 6, Looking North Toward the Getty Center from Sunset Boulevard, West of I-405



Source: HTA, 2024

10.2.4.3 Landscape Unit 3 – Sunset Boulevard to Mulholland Drive

LU-3 begins directly north of Sunset Boulevard and continues north through the lower portion of the Santa Monica Mountains to Mulholland Drive. LU-3 is bordered on the west by I-405 and on the east by Benedict Canyon Drive. LU-3 consists of mainly residential development in low-rise structures in the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains. A limited number of commercial and institutional uses are located within LU-3. The structures in this LU vary in building style, size, and color. The street network consists of many winding, local streets, but there are also several collector roads within this LU.

A portion of the scenic Mulholland Drive is located within LU-3. As discussed in Section 10.2.2, two designated vantage points are along Mulholland Drive. The Johnson Overlook and Stone Canyon Overlook are located along Mulholland Drive north of Stone Canyon Reservoir. Views consist of the Santa Monica Mountains, the Valley, and the Stone Canyon Reservoir. On clear days, it may be possible to see the Pacific Ocean.

The limited commercial uses within LU-3 consist of the Bel-Air Country Club, The Glen Centre, and Hotel Bel-Air. Bel-Air County Club is an 18-hole golf course with large, manicured lawn areas that are typical of recreational uses. The Glen Centre is a large shopping center with a park-like setting. Hotel Bel-Air is developed with Spanish style architecture and houses multiple structures with driveways and a surface parking lot parallel Stone Canyon Road. Institutional uses consist of Marymount High School, which also houses multiple structures with driveways and a surface parking lot that parallels Sunset Boulevard.

Undeveloped land includes open space, such as land preserved by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and vacant lots that can be developed with low-density, primarily single-family residences. Developed land predominantly consists of single-family residences on large lots, generally one to two stories, but some three-story and four-story residences are also built into the hillsides. These residences are developed in a variety of architectural styles, including bungalow, Spanish Eclectic, courtyard, Tudor, and Colonial styles. Due to their elevated locations on the hillside, many of the residences in the Santa Monica Mountains are afforded long-range private panoramic views across the Project Study Area and much of the Los Angeles Basin. Beverly Hills, Bel-Air, and other single-family residential neighborhoods are located in this region.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-3 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets within LU-3. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout the LU.

Primary viewer groups found within LU-3 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed in Section 10.2.4.1, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

Figure 10-13, Figure 10-14, Figure 10-15, and Figure 10-16 show existing representative views of LU-3.

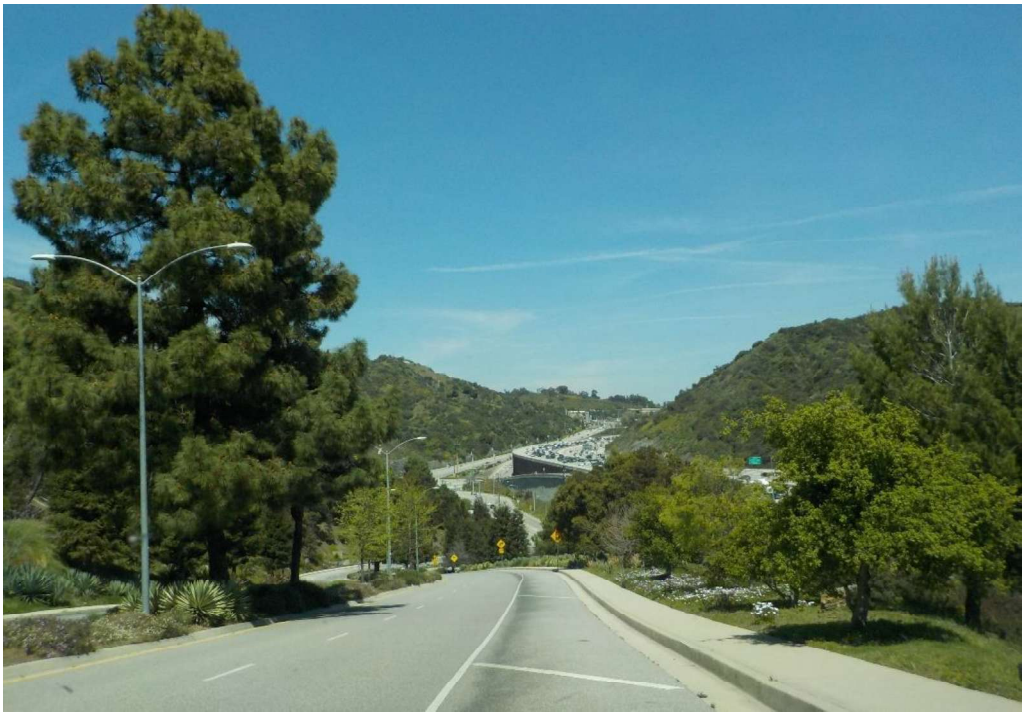
Figure 10-13. Alternative 6: Existing View 7, Looking West Toward I-405 from Residential Area along Ovada Place

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 10-14. Alternative 6: Existing View 8, Looking Northwest Toward the Getty Center (and I-405) from Residential Area along Moraga Drive

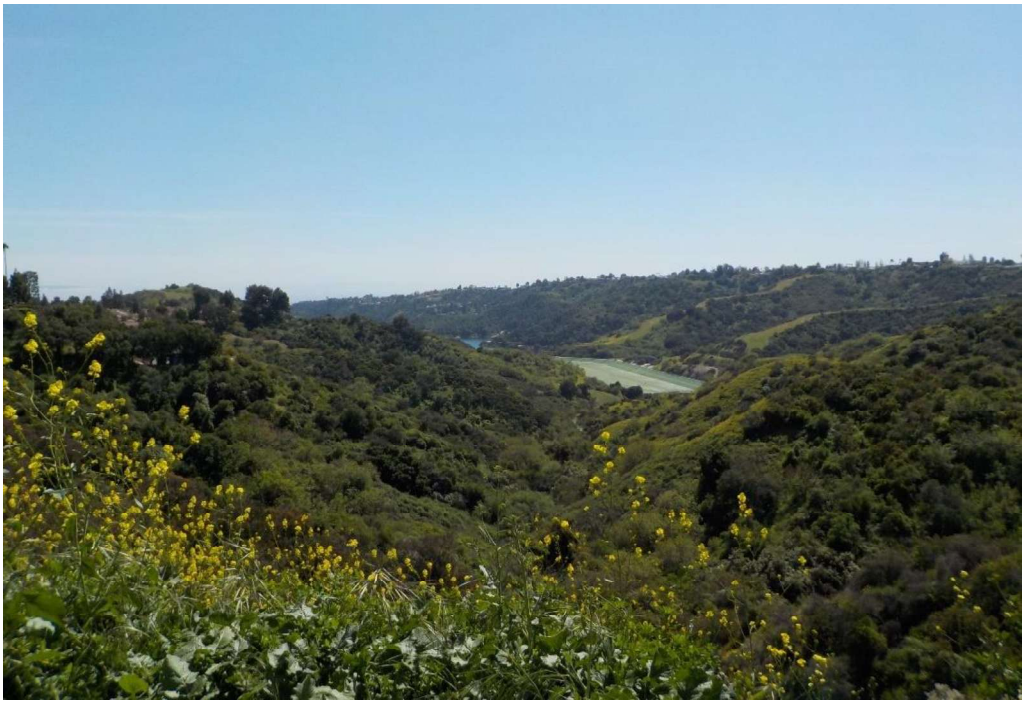
Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 10-15. Alternative 6: Existing View 9, Looking North Toward I-405 from Mountaingate Drive



Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 10-16. Alternative 6: Existing View 10, Looking South Toward Covered Upper Stone Canyon Reservoir and Stone Canyon Reservoir from Overlook along Mulholland Drive



Source: HTA, 2024

10.2.4.4 Landscape Unit 4 – Mulholland Drive to US-101

LU-4 begins directly north of Mulholland Drive and continues north through the upper portion of the Santa Monica Mountains to US-101. LU-4 is bordered on the west by I-405 and on the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-4 consists of mainly residential development within the Sherman Oaks neighborhood, and commercial development along the Ventura Boulevard corridor.

Similar to LU-3, a portion of the scenic Mulholland Drive is also located within LU-4. Looking north from Mulholland Drive, views consist of the Santa Monica Mountains in the foreground and middle ground and Van Nuys in the background. In addition, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north are also visible from certain portions of Mulholland Drive where there is limited vegetation.

The northern portion of the Santa Monica Mountains has both undeveloped and developed lots. As discussed in Section 10.2.4.3, undeveloped land includes open space, such as land preserved by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and vacant lots that can be developed with low-density housing, primarily single-family residences. Deervale-Stone Canyon Park, an 80-acre park consisting of open space and hiking trails for public use, is also located within LU-4. Views to the north from the top of the park overlook the Sherman Oaks neighborhood and the Ventura Boulevard commercial corridor. Long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north are also visible from this location.

Beyond the Santa Monica Mountains, LU-4 has a relatively flat topography and dense commercial and residential development. Views consist of low- and mid-rise buildings occupied primarily by retail, institutional, and office uses, and associated parking areas. As such, views from the northern portion of LU-4 are generally short in range and limited to the urban landscape within the immediate vicinity (i.e., buildings, roadways, utility poles, and street trees).

Primary viewer groups found within LU-4 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed in Section 10.2.4.1, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

Ventura Boulevard consists of primarily commercial uses, including retail businesses, restaurants, and mid- to high-rise office buildings from I-405 at the western boundary of LU-4 to the eastern boundary of LU-4 at Hazeltine Avenue. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are prominent visual elements along the Ventura Boulevard. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. Overall, buildings in LU-4 are of all different sizes, styles, and colors, and are spaced at varying intervals, creating a high level of visual diversity in the landscape with no common theme. Long-range views of the Hollywood Hills are also visible traveling east along Ventura Boulevard.

Similar to LU-3, the single-family residences within the Santa Monica Mountains are developed on large lots and are generally one to two stories, but some three-story and four-story houses are visible. This development pattern transitions to low- and mid-rise single-family and multi-family residences north of Greenleaf Street within the Sherman Oaks neighborhood. Residential development is prevalent to the north and south of the Ventura Boulevard commercial corridor.

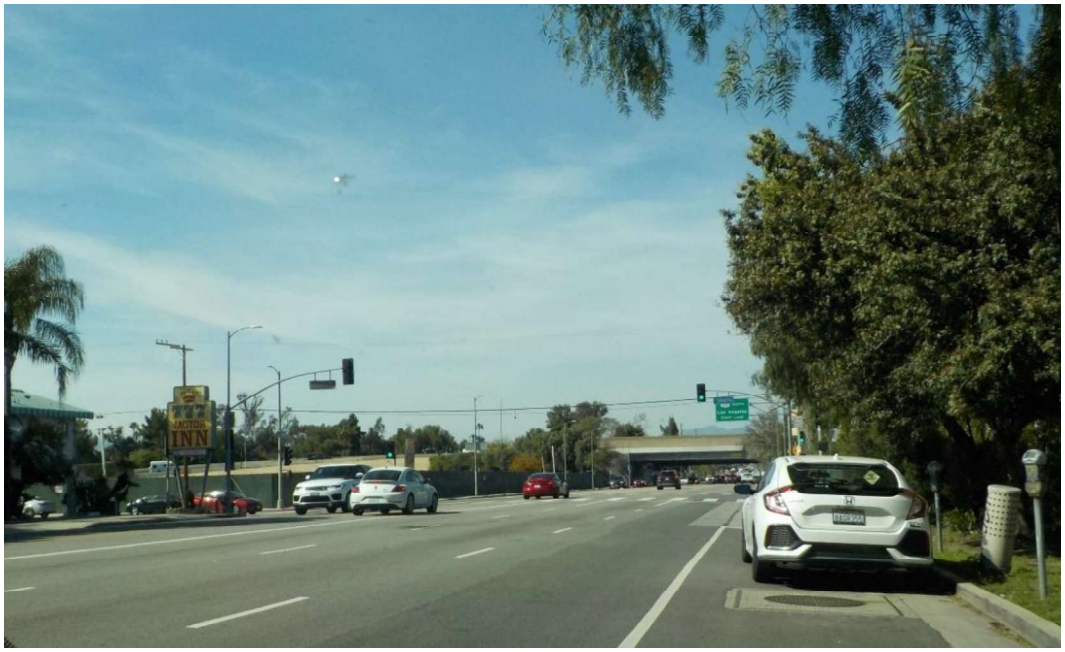
Ornamental landscaping in LU-4 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees create definition within the dense commercial corridor; however, because they are planted intermittently, they blend into the overall landscape. Low-rise and tall bushes, as well as mid-size and tall trees are located along the majority of the residential streets within the

northern portion of LU-4. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout the LU. Figure 10-17 and Figure 10-18 show existing representative views of LU-4.

Figure 10-17. Alternative 6: Existing View 11, Looking East Toward I-405 from Ventura Boulevard at Orion Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 10-18. Alternative 6: Existing View 12, Looking North Toward US-101 from Sepulveda Boulevard at Camarillo Street



Source: HTA, 2024

10.2.4.5 Landscape Unit 5 – US-101 to Victory Boulevard

LU-5 begins directly north of U.S. Highway (US-101) and continues north through the Van Nuys community to Victory Boulevard. LU-5 is bordered to the west by Gloria Avenue and to the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-5 consists of mainly commercial and residential development within the Van Nuys neighborhood. The Metro G Line also travels through the central portion of LU-5.

Views in the southern portion of LU-5 looking south are predominately of the elevated segment of US-101. Long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are also visible in some areas, but they are few because of the relatively flat topography and intervening urban development. The Los Angeles River is also located within the southern portion of LU-5, and mainly travels parallel to US-101; however, since the Los Angeles River is located below street level, public views of the Los Angeles River from the surrounding Project Study Area are obscured by existing development and generally not available except on Hazeltine Avenue just south of the US-101 overpass. As discussed in Section 10.2.2, the Los Angeles River and its associated tributaries and floodplains are also listed as scenic vistas in the Conservation Element of the *City of Los Angeles General Plan* (DCP, 2001b).

Typical views in LU-5 include the Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard commercial corridors, which are bordered by parking areas, sidewalks, street trees, commercial buildings, and additional buildings visible in the background. Views of I-405 are also visible from Sepulveda Boulevard. Traveling north along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains are visible. In addition, traveling south, long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are visible. Primary viewer groups found within LU-5 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed under LU-1, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

Commercial structures along Van Nuys Boulevard consist of low- to mid-rise retail businesses, restaurants, office uses, and parking areas. In addition, commercial structures along Sepulveda Boulevard consist of low- to high-rise office uses, residential uses, retail businesses, restaurants, and parking areas. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are also prominent visual elements on these roadways. Although residential areas surround the commercial corridors, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. Ornamental landscaping in LU-5 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees are present along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, as well as other commercial areas for screening purposes. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout the LU. Figure 10-19 and Figure 10-20 show existing representative views of LU-5.

Figure 10-19. Alternative 6: Existing View 13, Looking North along Sepulveda Boulevard at Magnolia Boulevard

Source: HTA, 2024

Figure 10-20. Alternative 6: Existing View 14, Looking East along Victory Boulevard West of I-405 at Gloria Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

10.2.4.6 Landscape Unit 6 – Victory Boulevard to LOSSAN Rail Corridor ROW

LU-6 begins directly north of Victory Boulevard and continues north through Van Nuys to the LOSSAN rail corridor ROW. LU-6 is bordered to the west by Gloria Avenue and to the east by Hazeltine Avenue. LU-6 consists of mainly commercial and residential development within the Van Nuys neighborhood, with residential development located primarily to the east and west of the Van Nuys Boulevard commercial corridor. The LOSSAN rail corridor ROW and existing Van Nuys/Metrolink Station border the northern boundary of LU-6.

Similar to LU-5, typical views in LU-6 include the Van Nuys Boulevard commercial corridor, which is bordered by parking areas, sidewalks, street trees, commercial buildings, and additional buildings visible in the background. Traveling north along Van Nuys Boulevard, long-range views of the San Gabriel Mountains are visible. Traveling south, long-range views of the Santa Monica Mountains are visible; however, views of the Santa Monica Mountains are dominated by other features in the landscape.

Primary viewer groups found within LU-6 generally include residents, employees and patrons of commercial uses, motorists, and pedestrians. As discussed in Section 10.2.4.1, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to views from publicly accessible locations or public views. Therefore, any references to and analysis of residential views and resident viewer groups, which are assumed to be associated with private residential properties, are provided only for informational purposes.

The visual character of the portion of Van Nuys Boulevard within LU-6 consists of low- to mid-rise retail businesses, restaurants, office uses, and parking areas. Commercial signage, overhead streetlights, and traffic signals are also prominent visual elements along Van Nuys Boulevard. Although a residential area surrounds the commercial corridor, neither single-family homes nor multi-family complexes are visible from most of this corridor. Similar to LU-5, buildings are of all different sizes, styles, and colors, and are spaced at different intervals, creating a high level of visual diversity in the landscape with no common theme. Street trees soften the appearance of the dense commercial corridor; however, because they are planted intermittently, they blend into the overall landscape.

Ornamental landscaping in LU-6 is primarily found on residential properties and surface parking lots of commercial development. Street trees are present along Van Nuys Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard, as well as other commercial areas for screening purposes. The ornamental landscaping acts as privacy screening for the residences. A mix of typical roadway lighting and decorative pedestrian-level lighting is provided throughout LU-6. Figure 10-21 shows an existing representative view in LU-6.

Figure 10-21. Alternative 6: Existing View 15, Looking East Along Sherman Way Toward I-405 at Haskell Avenue

Source: HTA, 2024

10.2.5 Light and Glare

North of US-101, the Project Study Area is generally located within the Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys neighborhoods of the City of Los Angeles, and encompasses commercial, industrial, and residential development with relatively ambient nighttime lighting typical of urbanized settings. Common light sources are the include the streetlights, vehicle lights, building entrance lighting, parking structure lighting, illuminated signage/billboards, and general illumination from lights shining through windows of structures lining the corridor.

South of US-101, nighttime lighting is more limited in the Santa Monica Mountains. In the developed portions of the Santa Monica Mountains, lighting sources include pedestrian-scaled streetlights, security and decorative wall lighting at residential homes, vehicle headlights, and interior building illumination. By contrast, the undeveloped portions of the Santa Monica Mountains have little to no light or glare sources, other than vehicle headlights.

South of Sunset Boulevard, the Project Study Area is generally located within Westwood and West Los Angeles neighborhoods of the City of Los Angeles, as well as within the City of Santa Monica. The adjacent commercial, industrial, and residential development, as well as cultural and institutional facilities, such as the UCLA campus, contribute to ambient nighttime lighting typical of urbanized settings. Light sources include the streetlights, vehicle lights, building entrance lighting, parking structure lighting, illuminated signage/billboards, and general illumination from lights shining through windows of structures lining the corridor.

10.3 Impact Evaluation

10.3.1 Impact AES-1: Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

10.3.1.1 Operational Impacts

Alternative 6 is a heavy rail project that would develop an underground tunnel, stations, a vent shaft, and additional ancillary structures. Scenic vistas in the Project Study Area include views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the south, and the San Gabriel Mountains to the north. As discussed in Section 10.2.2, views of surrounding mountains are visible in all of the LUs. In some LUs, such as in LU-1, LU-5, and LU-6, the surrounding mountains are minimally visible; in some LUs, such as in LU-2, LU-3, and LU-4, the surrounding mountains are a visually dominant feature. Motorists and transit commuters would be expected to have more fleeting views of scenic vistas because they would be moving along the Alternative 6 alignment, while pedestrians, patrons of commercial and institutional facilities, and tourists would be expected to have longer views.

Within LU-1, the guideway would begin underground adjacent to the Metro E Line Expo/Bundy Station. The primary visual elements of Alternative 6 in LU-1 would include the primary and secondary entrances of the proposed Metro E Line Expo/Bundy Station within the southwestern portion of LU-1, and the two station entrances at the proposed Santa Monica Boulevard Station within the northern portion of LU-1. Views of the proposed stations would mainly be limited to the areas along Bundy Drive and Santa Monica Boulevard directly in front of and facing the station entrances. The stations would be low-rise structures and would not be visually obtrusive. In addition, the proposed stations in LU-1 would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains.

Within LU-2, the Alternative 6 alignment would continue underground to the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station and UCLA Gateway Plaza Station. The primary visual elements of Alternative 6 would include the primary entrance, as well as the bike storage area of the proposed Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station within the southwestern portion of LU-2, and the primary and secondary station entrances at the proposed UCLA Gateway Plaza Station within the northeastern portion of LU-2. Views of the proposed stations would be limited to the areas along Wilshire Boulevard, Ashton Avenue, Westwood Boulevard, and Westwood Plaza directly in front of and facing the station entrances. These entrances would be low-rise structures and would not be visually obtrusive. In addition, the proposed stations in LU-2 would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains.

No proposed stations are within LU-3. The primary visual elements of Alternative 6 within LU-3 includes the mid-mountain facility, including a vent shaft, associated graded access road, and related infrastructure to the east of the Stone Canyon Reservoir. The vent shaft would be partially built into the mountainside with a small portion reaching a height no taller than 60 feet aboveground. The vent shaft consists of a contemporary design using modest materials of low reflectance so the facility blends into the surrounding context. The vent shaft would be constructed within the Santa Monica Mountains and would be visible from limited vantage points in the surrounding residential areas. Although the proposed vent shaft is a large structure that would be introduced into the visual environment, the vent shaft would not obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains as a whole. Further, the vent shaft would not substantially obstruct views from vantage points along Mulholland Drive because views of the vent shaft would be largely obstructed by existing trees and other dense vegetation within the Santa Monica

Mountains. An access road from the Stone Canyon Reservoir access road would be constructed to the location of the shaft, requiring grading of the hillside along its route. Similar to the vent shaft, views of this element would be largely obstructed by existing trees and other dense vegetation within the Santa Monica Mountains.

Within LU-4, the Alternative 6 alignment would continue underground to the Ventura Boulevard/Van Nuys Boulevard Station. The primary visual elements of Alternative 6 would include the primary station entrance of the Ventura Boulevard/Van Nuys Boulevard Station within the northern portion of LU-4. Views of the proposed station would be limited to the areas along Ventura Boulevard and Van Nuys Boulevard directly in front of and facing the station entrance. The station would be low-rise structure and would not be visually obtrusive. In addition, the proposed station would not substantially obstruct views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north, because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains, and views of the proposed station would be obstructed by existing structures on Ventura Boulevard.

Within LU-5, the Alternative 6 alignment would continue underground to the Metro G Line Van Nuys Station. The primary visual elements of Alternative 6 would include the primary station entrance of the Metro G Line Van Nuys Station. Views of the proposed station would be limited to the areas along Van Nuys Boulevard and Oxnard Street directly in front of and facing the station entrance. The station would be low-rise structure and would not be visually obtrusive.

Within LU-6, the Alternative 6 alignment would continue underground from the Metro G Line Van Nuys Station to the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. The primary visual elements of Alternative 6 would include the primary station entrance for the proposed Van Nuys Metrolink Station within the northern portion of LU-6. The Van Nuys Metrolink Station would include a transit plaza with primary and secondary station entrances, driveways, drop-off areas, and parking areas located adjacent to the existing Van Nuys Metrolink/Amtrak Station platform. Views of the proposed station entrance would be visible from areas of Van Nuys Boulevard and Saticoy Street directly in front of and adjacent to the transit station entrance. The proposed primary and secondary station entrances would be a low-rise structure and would not be visually obtrusive. In addition, the proposed station entrances would not substantially obstruct views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains.

Recreationalists (including tourists) utilizing trails in the Santa Monica Mountains or visiting scenic overlooks along Mulholland Drive would experience views of the mid-mountain facility, including the vent shaft; however, the interruption would be intermittent because views of the mid-mountain facility would be limited due to the varied topography of the Santa Monica Mountains.

Overall, the primary visual elements included as part of Alternative 6 would be the seven at-grade station entrances, the mid-mountain facility including the associated vent shaft and graded access road, as well as changes in parking, lanes, and sidewalks. The new at-grade station entrances along the outside edge of the roadway would present new vertical features in the landscape and may limit views directly adjacent to or within the stations; however, views in the corridor as a whole would not be substantially affected by the proposed at-grade station entrances and the mid-mountain facility including vent shaft because the visual changes would be localized around station areas. Sidewalks would be narrowed in some areas, but this would not be expected to substantially affect views along the corridor. The additional project components would primarily be located underground and would not block views of scenic vistas.

10.3.1.2 Construction Impacts

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. Although temporary in nature, construction activities may cause a visually unappealing quality in a community. Construction of Alternative 6 would introduce visually disruptive elements in each LU, including the following:

- Light and heavy excavation
- Tunneling
- Roadway/bridge demolition and reconstruction
- Structural falsework
- Tree removal
- Soil removal/displacement
- Security fencing
- Stockpiled soil
- Stockpiled building materials
- Safety and directional signage
- Station platforms and plazas
- Ancillary facilities
- Large, heavy equipment may include cranes, bulldozers, scrapers, and trucks

Construction activities could be visible to pedestrians and motorists on adjacent streets as well as to viewers within nearby buildings. However, construction activities—while a visual nuisance—would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains or San Gabriel Mountains because activities would be temporary and intermittent and limited to the immediate area. Therefore, construction of Alternative 6 would not alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas, and impacts would be less than significant.

Maintenance and Storage Facility

Maintenance of HRT vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF. Multiple buildings would be constructed, including a maintenance-of-way building, track storage area, wash bays, ancillary storage buildings, and TPSS structure (Metro, 2024x). These structures would be the primary visual elements of the MSF. The MSF site would be located within a heavily industrialized area, and operation of this MSF would generally fit within the context of the existing industrial character. While the MSF site would represent a visual change, it would not substantially obstruct views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north because the built-out urban landscape already prevents clear views of the mountains. As such, views of scenic vistas as a whole would not be substantially affected.

Construction activities could be visible to pedestrians and motorists on adjacent streets, as well as to viewers within nearby buildings. However, construction activities, while a visual nuisance, would not substantially obstruct views of the Santa Monica Mountains or San Gabriel Mountains, because activities would be temporary and intermittent and limited to the immediate area. Therefore, the vertical elements proposed under the MSF would not substantially alter views or sightlines from scenic vistas, and operation of the MSF would result in a less than significant impact to scenic vistas.

10.3.2 Impact AES-2: Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

10.3.2.1 Operational Impacts

As discussed in Section 10.2.3, no California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the Project Study Area. Additionally, no State-designated scenic highways in proximity to the Project Study Area provide views of the Project Study Area. Historic structures within the alignment are discussed in the *Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources Technical Report* (Metro, 2025a). The closest eligible state scenic highway is SR-1, which is approximately 3 miles west of the Alternative 6 alignment. The closest officially designated state scenic highway is SR-27 (Topanga Canyon Boulevard), which is approximately 8 miles west of the Alternative 6 alignment.

Six City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are located within the Project Study Area. A majority of the City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways provide views of scenic features or resources within the viewshed of these roadways. As listed in Table 10-3 in Section 10.2.3, Beverly Glen Boulevard, Mulholland Drive, Santa Monica Boulevard, Sepulveda Boulevard, Sherman Way, and Sunset Boulevard are all located within the Project Study Area. Beverly Glen Boulevard provides winding roads and valley views, Sepulveda Boulevard provides views of the mountains and the valley, Sherman Way provides a scenic landscaped median, and Sunset Boulevard provides views of mountains, scenic estates, and scenic views of the UCLA campus. A scenic portion of Santa Monica Boulevard is also within the Project Study Area; however, no notable scenic features or resources are listed in the *City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan 2035*.

Mulholland Drive also provides opportunities for multiple scenic views as it winds up and through the Santa Monica Mountains, including through the Project Study Area. Development near Mulholland Drive is subject to design review guidelines pursuant to the MSPSP. The MSPSP has designated 14 major vista points (MVP) along Mulholland Drive that are maintained by the Bureau of Street Maintenance of the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. The Inner Corridor of the MSPSP area is designated as part of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and the MRCA also maintains seven scenic overlooks along Mulholland Drive (MRCA, 2023). The nearest MVP (also the nearest overlook) is the Johnson Overlook, which is located approximately 0.7 miles east of the Alternative 6 alignment. The nearest MRCA maintained scenic overlook is the Stone Canyon Overlook, which is located approximately 1 mile east of the Alternative 6 alignment.

The Alternative 6 alignment travels through the Inner Corridor and the Outer Corridor of the MSPSP. However, the entirety of the Alternative 6 alignment that travels through the Inner Corridor would also be located underground. The closest aboveground project component to the MSPSP would be the mid-mountain facility, including associated vent shaft and graded access road; however, the mid-mountain facility would be located just outside of the Outer Corridor of the MSPSP. Therefore, operation of Alternative 6 would not damage any scenic resources within SR-1 or SR-27 (Topanga Canyon Boulevard), the nearest state scenic highways, neither of which is within the Project Study Area. Additionally, none of the six scenic highways designated by the City of Los Angeles would be affected by Alternative 6. Therefore, operation of Alternative 6 would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

10.3.2.2 Construction Impacts

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. Although temporary in nature, construction activities may cause a visually unappealing quality in a community. Construction of Alternative 6 would introduce visually disruptive elements in each LU, including the following:

- Light and heavy excavation
- Tunneling
- Roadway/bridge demolition and reconstruction
- Building demolition
- Structural falsework
- Security fencing
- Soil removal/stockpile
- Stockpiled building materials
- Safety and directional signage
- Station platforms and plazas
- Ancillary facilities
- Large, heavy equipment may include cranes, bulldozers, scrapers, and trucks

Tree removal during construction would create noticeable changes in certain areas, exposing previously screened views of infrastructure and construction activities. However, these changes would be temporary and would not be located within a state scenic highway.

As discussed in Section 10.3.2.1, no California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the Project Study Area. Construction of Alternative 6 would not substantially damage any scenic resources within SR-1 or SR-27, the nearest state scenic highways, neither of which is within the Project Study Area. Therefore, construction of Alternative 6 would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

10.3.2.3 Maintenance and Storage Facility

No California-designated scenic highways or scenic parkways (or proposed state scenic highways or parkways) are located within the MSF area. Additionally, no state-designated scenic highways or City of Los Angeles-designated scenic highways are located in proximity to the MSF. Therefore, operation of the MSF would not substantially damage any scenic resources within a state scenic highway, and none of the six scenic highways designated by the City of Los Angeles would be impacted by the MSF.

Construction activities generally cause a contrast to and disruption in the general order and aesthetic character of an area. Although temporary in nature, construction activities may cause a visually unappealing quality in a community. However, as discussed in Section 3.1, Metro projects are not required to adhere to local zoning ordinances. Any elements that would be located on properties outside of the public ROW (e.g., station plazas and TPSS) would comply with applicable zoning and design requirements, including undergoing mandated design review where applicable and coordinating with local jurisdictions and/or other public entities during preliminary and final designs. In addition, while Alternative 6 would add new visible structures, it is expected that visual change associated with the MSF would not be readily noticeable given the existing structures associated with I-405 and background conditions. Therefore, the MSF would not damage any scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway, and impacts would be less than significant.

10.3.3 Impact AES-3: Would the project, in non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Alternative 6 is in an urbanized area, as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15387; therefore, in accordance with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant impact would occur if Alternative 6 conflicts with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. The zoning ordinances of each jurisdiction in the Project Study Area do not directly regulate the design of transportation infrastructure elements. Additionally, the jurisdictions in the Project Study Area generally do not have policies or regulations that govern visual quality during construction activities for transportation-related projects. Alternative 6 would be designed to be consistent with all Metro policies related to visual resources, including the Metro Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy.

10.3.3.1 Operational Impacts

Alternative 6 would primarily operate underground. Operational components of Alternative 6, including but not limited to station design, sound walls, guideway, auxiliary facilities, parking lots, and new landscaping would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, Adjacent Development Review, and Tree Policy. and Tree Policy. Metro's Rail Design Criteria provides a uniform basis for the design of rail projects. The Metro Systemwide Station Design Standards identify policies, principles and requirements in the design or modification of the transit network. The Metro Art Program Policy mandates the inclusion of art in the design of its transit systems. Metro requires rail projects to incorporate architectural directive and standard drawings based on lessons learned from past, completed Metro rail projects. The Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy provides a consistent, streamlined systemwide design approach for Metro stations that includes sustainable design features and sustainable landscaping.

Certain elements that would be located on properties outside of the public ROW (e.g., station plazas and TPSS) would comply with applicable zoning and design requirements, including undergoing mandated design review where applicable and coordinating with local jurisdictions and/or other public entities during preliminary and final designs. While Metro projects are not required to adhere to local zoning ordinances, these project elements would comply with local zoning ordinances as they pertain to scenic quality.

Architectural renderings and photo-realistic visual simulations were created and used to illustrate where visual changes would be most noticeable after implementation of Alternative 6. These renderings are conceptual and do not represent the final design of Alternative 6 at this time.

Landscape Unit 1

Within LU-1, Alternative 6 would operate underground; however, the Metro E Line Expo/Bundy Station and Santa Monica Station entrances and plazas would be located at grade. As such, operation of Alternative 6 within LU-1 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual

appearance of Alternative 6 within LU-1 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 5 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed stations would represent new elements in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 6 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. In addition, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 6 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the station entries and plazas are proposed. These at-grade facilities would be visible by the public; however, because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not have a substantial adverse effect on prominent views of valued visual resources.

Alternative 6 would follow Metro's Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 6 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages “transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.” Alternative 6 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

As such, Alternative 6 would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible. Overall, Alternative 6 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 6 within LU-1 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 2

Within LU-2, Alternative 6 would operate underground; however, the Wilshire Boulevard/Metro D Line Station and UCLA Gateway Plaza Station entrances and plazas would be located at grade. As such, operation of Alternative 6 within LU-2 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 6 within LU-2 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 6 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed stations would represent new elements in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 6 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. In addition, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

As shown on KOP 16 (Figure 10-22) located on Westwood Plaza, the proposed UCLA Gateway Plaza Station would not be highly visible, and would be complementary and appropriate to the scale and character of the existing buildings on the UCLA campus. These at-grade facilities would be visible by the public; however, because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not have a substantial adverse effect on prominent views of valued visual resources.

Figure 10-22. Alternative 6: KOP 16 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking Southeast Toward the Primary Station Entrance of the UCLA Gateway Plaza Station

Source: HTA, 2024

These facilities would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 6 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities." Alternative 6 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

As such, Alternative 6 would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible. Overall, Alternative 6 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 6 within LU-2 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 3

Within LU-3, Alternative 6 would operate underground; however, the vent shaft associated with the mid-mountain facility would be a new visible aboveground structure within this LU. An access road from the Stone Canyon Reservoir access road would be constructed to the location of the shaft, requiring grading of the hillside along its route. As such, operation of Alternative 6 within LU-3 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including motorists, tourists, and residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change because tourists would have direct views of Alternative 6 from public areas and residents would have direct views of Alternative 6 from their private residences. In addition, certain views of the Santa Monica Mountains have the potential to be partially interrupted due to Alternative 6. The proposed vent shaft would represent a new and large element in the visual environment for residents. However, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to public views.

Alternative 6 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. In addition, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Views of the vent shaft would not be visually compatible with the surrounding residential area, and residents would be sensitive to the change in visual character. Although the proposed vent shaft is a large structure that would be introduced into the visual environment, the vent shaft would not substantially change the natural topography of the Project Study Area. The graded access road would be distantly visible. In addition, the mid-mountain facility including associated vent shaft and graded access road would not obstruct views of or alter the visual character and quality of the Santa Monica Mountains because the mid-mountain facility and the associated vent shaft and access road would be largely obstructed by existing trees and other dense vegetation within the Santa Monica Mountains.

As shown on KOP 17 (Figure 10-23) located along Mulholland Drive, views of the vent shaft and associated graded access road are available only from limited vantage points along Mulholland Drive. Views would remain mostly uninterrupted from Mulholland Drive. In addition, the vent shaft and associated access road would be located outside of the Inner Corridor and Outer Corridor of the MSPSP, which contains density requirements, building standards, and grading restrictions to protect scenic quality. As such, the vent shaft and associated graded access road would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views from Mulholland Drive.

Figure 10-23. Alternative 6: KOP 17 – Before and After Simulation View, View Looking South Toward the Vent Shaft and Stone Canyon Reservoir

Source: HTA, 2024

These facilities would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. Alternative 6 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality,

including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities." Alternative 6 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

As such, Alternative 6 would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible. Overall, Alternative 6 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 6 within LU-3 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 4

Within LU-4, Alternative 6 would operate underground; however, the Ventura Boulevard/Van Nuys Boulevard Station entrance and plaza would be located at grade. As such, operation of Alternative 5 within LU-4 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 6 within LU-4 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 6 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments or potentially from their private unit. The proposed stations would represent new elements in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 6 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. In addition, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 6 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the station entries and plazas are proposed. These at-grade facilities would be visible by the public; however, because of the highly urban characteristics of the area, these railway structures are typically more visually tolerable. As such, these facilities would be similar to existing transportation infrastructure and commercial structures that already exist in the urban landscape and would not have a substantial adverse effect on prominent views of valued visual resources.

These facilities would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. As discussed previously, Alternative 6 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. In addition, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 6 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages "transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities." Alternative 6 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

As such, Alternative 6 would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible. Overall, Alternative 6 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 6 within LU-4 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 5

Within LU-5, Alternative 6 would operate underground; however, Metro G Line Van Nuys Station entrance and plaza would be located at grade. As such, operation of Alternative 6 within LU-5 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 6 within LU-5 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 6 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed stations would represent new elements in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 6 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. In addition, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 6 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the station entry and plaza is proposed. This at-grade facility would be visible by the public; however, it would be located within a heavily urbanized area and would not have a substantial adverse effect on prominent views of valued visual resources. These facilities would follow the Metro Art Program Policy, Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review.

Alternative 6 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages “transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.” Alternative 6 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

As such, Alternative 6 would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible. Overall, Alternative 6 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 6 within LU-5 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Landscape Unit 6

Within LU-6, Alternative 6 would operate underground; however, the Van Nuys Metrolink Station entrance and plaza would be located at grade. As such, operation of Alternative 6 within LU-6 would represent a change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 6 within LU-6 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

Viewer groups—including residents—would have moderate to high sensitivity to the visual change, because they would have direct views of Alternative 6 either from the public sidewalk adjacent to their apartments, or potentially from their private unit. The proposed stations would represent new elements in the visual environment for residents.

Alternative 6 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors, as well as a mix of older and modern style buildings. In addition, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Alternative 6 would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels where the station entries and plazas are proposed. These at-grade facilities would be visible by the public; however, they lie within heavily urbanized areas and would not have a substantial adverse effect on prominent views of valued visual resources. These facilities would follow Metro's Art Program Policy, and Metro's Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review.

Alternative 6 would be generally consistent with the local policies regarding visual character and quality, including the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b), which encourages “transit-friendly design and building orientation that promotes pedestrian activity and provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.” Alternative 6 would be accessible to the regional transit systems and would provide convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities.

As such, Alternative 6 would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible. Overall, Alternative 6 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the operation of Alternative 6 within LU-6 would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the alignment and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

Based on the previous discussion, operation of Alternative 6 would represent an overall change in views and visual quality and character as compared to existing conditions. However, Alternative 6 is in an urban area that currently has a mix of architectural styles and building materials and colors. Although viewer groups may have varying sensitivities to the visual change associated with Alternative 6 for each of the LUs, Alternative 6 would be consistent with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. As a result, the operation of Alternative 6 would have less than significant impacts related to visual character and quality.

10.3.3.2 Construction Impacts

The Alternative 6 alignment consists of a portion of the public ROW, including roadway and sidewalks, as well as city-owned, state-owned, and private properties. During the construction phase, the visual character of the alignment would change temporarily from existing conditions. Construction of the stations would require equipment such as construction barriers and sound walls, cranes, and other appurtenances that would be visible during much of the approximately 90-month construction period, which could begin as early as 2026.

Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as high-rise buildings in urbanized areas. Certain areas may be fenced off with construction barriers and sound walls, resulting in a temporary change and contrast in visual character from the existing conditions. Mitigation Measure AES-1 would include temporary privacy screens to minimize impacts from construction barriers and sound walls. In addition, the designated construction areas along the alignment would experience additional truck traffic compared to existing conditions, with trucks moving materials on- and off-site, and work crews and construction equipment moving around the alignment and between the project components.

Some residents may have private views of the project construction from their windows. While residents would be highly sensitive to visual changes and would have a higher degree of personal investment in Alternative 6, as discussed in Section 3.1.5, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to public views.

Motorists would primarily experience views of construction activities while driving along the roadways along and adjacent to Alternative 6. In addition, drivers would have prolonged views while idling at the various traffic signals surrounding the proposed station areas. Passing drivers would notice the change in the visual character of the proposed station areas during the construction phase. However, drivers are considered to have a low sensitivity to any visual changes because they would likely be passing through the Project Study Area to reach their destinations and would not necessarily have a personal investment in the visual character or quality of the Project Study Area.

In addition, pedestrians would primarily experience views of construction activities while walking along public sidewalks, within transit stations, and near businesses that are to the proposed station areas. The change in the visual character of the alignment during the construction phase would be noticeable by these viewers. In addition, pedestrians are considered to have a moderate sensitivity to visual changes because they may be engaged in observing their surroundings.

Tourists would also potentially experience views of construction while traveling along Mulholland Drive or visiting one of the scenic overlooks along Mulholland Drive. Tourists are considered to have high sensitivity to visual changes.

Alternative 6 includes entitlements and approvals to establish land use regulations for the Alternative 6 alignment to ensure consistent implementation of development standards throughout the Alternative 6 alignment. The development standards would recognize the unique characteristics of Alternative 6, including unique opportunities for public benefits. The design standards included in Alternative 6's entitlements and approvals would enhance the visual identity and character of Alternative 6 and its surrounding communities, and would ensure visual compatibility with adjacent development, as well as the Project Study Area's overall community character. Overall, Alternative 6 would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality.

Furthermore, Alternative 6 would be consistent with the goals and objectives described in the *Citywide Design Guidelines* and *Mobility Plan 2035*. As such, Alternative 6 would be consistent with applicable policies related to scenic quality during construction.

Overall, construction would represent a temporary change in the visual quality and character. Project components would potentially stand out as memorable or remarkable features in the landscape due to their scale, which would have a temporary impact on visual character and quality of the Project Study Area and its surroundings compared to existing conditions. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city. Impacts from construction activities would be

temporary and post-construction views of Alternative 6-related construction activities, equipment, stockpiles, and fencing would be removed once construction is completed. In addition, Alternative 6 would comply with the best management practices noted previously in Section 10.1.2, as well as the City of Los Angeles' development standards related to scenic quality during construction, which would be verified during the City of Los Angeles' permitting process. Therefore, construction of Alternative 6 would not conflict with applicable regulations governing scenic quality and would result in less than significant impacts.

10.3.3.3 Maintenance and Storage Facility

Maintenance of HRT vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF. Multiple buildings would be constructed, including a maintenance-of-way building, track storage area, wash bays, ancillary storage buildings, and TPSS structure (Metro, 2024x). These structures would be the primary visual elements of the MSF. The MSF site within the northern portion of LU-6 would be located within a heavily industrialized area, and operation of this MSF would generally fit within the context of the existing industrial character.

Viewer groups—including pedestrians, motorists, and transit commuters—would have a low to moderate sensitivity to the visual change and may have less of a personal investment in the visual appearance of Alternative 6 within LU-6 because they would be primarily passing through en route to other destinations.

The MSF would result in permanent alterations to commercial parcels. As discussed previously, for a project in an urban area, a significant impact to visual character or quality would occur if a project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

The MSF in LU-6 would be located at grade and would include a portion of the LADWP property east of the Van Nuys Metrolink Station. One-story, single-family residences are located directly south of the proposed MSF site. This residential area would not have direct north-facing public views of the proposed MSF, because the properties front onto or face associated residential streets to the south, such as Cohasset Street. In addition, a two-story apartment building is located directly south of the proposed MSF site, and residents would have private north-facing views of the MSF. However, as discussed in Section 3.1.5, impacts are assessed related to changes to public views. The visual character of the new surface parking lot would be similar to the existing parking lot at the proposed MSF site.

The MSF would follow Metro's Art Program Policy, Rail Design Criteria, Standard/Directive Drawings, Systemwide Station Design Standards, and Adjacent Development Review. In addition, the MSF would be relatively the same height as the existing commercial structures. These railway structures are typically more visually tolerable in industrial and commercial areas. As such, these facilities would be similar to infrastructure that already exists in the urban landscape and would not be visually disruptive or incompatible with existing public views.

The MSF would also be consistent with the goals and objectives within the *Citywide Design Guidelines* DCP, 2019b) and the *Mobility Plan 2035* DCP, 2016). With regard to the *Citywide Design Guidelines*, the MSF would improve the quality of the public realm through project design that is appropriate to the scale and character of the existing buildings in the surrounding area.

During the construction phase, the visual character would change temporarily from existing conditions. Construction of the MSF would require equipment such as construction barriers and sound walls, cranes, and other appurtenances that would be visible during the construction period.

Construction of the MSF would comply with applicable regulations governing scenic quality, including South Coast Air Quality Management District Rule 403, and would occur in an urbanized area. Rule 403 does not permit track-out dust to extend 25 feet or more beyond the active construction area and requires all track-out dirt to be removed at the end of each workday or evening shift. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as high-rise buildings and other aerial transportation infrastructure.

Although temporary and short-term in nature, construction activities would be a visual nuisance. However, certain areas may be fenced off with construction barriers and sound walls, resulting in a temporary change and contrast in visual character from the existing conditions. Mitigation Measure AES-1 would include temporary privacy screens to minimize impacts from construction barriers and sound walls. In addition, the designated construction areas along the alignment would experience additional truck traffic compared to existing conditions, with trucks moving materials on- and off-site, and work crews and construction equipment moving around the alignment and between the project components.

Some residents may have private views of the project construction from their windows. While residents would be highly sensitive to visual changes and would have a higher degree of personal investment in Alternative 6, as discussed in Section 3.1.5, visual impacts are assessed based on changes to public views.

Motorists would primarily experience views of construction activities while driving along the roadways along and adjacent to the MSF. In addition, drivers would have prolonged views while idling at the various traffic signals surrounding the proposed station areas. Passing drivers would notice the change in the visual character during the construction phase. However, drivers are considered to have a low sensitivity to any visual changes because they would likely be passing through the Project Study Area to reach their destinations and would not necessarily have a personal investment in the visual character or quality of the MSF area.

In addition, pedestrians would primarily experience views of construction activities while walking along public sidewalks, within transit stations, and near businesses that are to the proposed station areas. The change in the visual character during the construction phase would be noticeable by these viewers. In addition, pedestrians are considered to have a moderate sensitivity to visual changes because they may be engaged in observing their surroundings.

The MSF includes entitlements and approvals to ensure consistent implementation of development standards. The development standards would recognize the MSF's unique characteristics, including unique opportunities for public benefits. The design standards included in the MSF's entitlements and approvals would ensure visual compatibility with adjacent development, as well as the MSF area's overall community character. The MSF would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. As such, the MSF would be consistent with applicable policies related to scenic quality during construction.

Overall, the MSF would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Construction would represent a temporary change in the visual quality and character. Project components would potentially stand out as memorable or remarkable features in the landscape due to their scale, which would have a temporary impact on visual character and quality of the MSF area and its surroundings compared to existing conditions. Construction activities would include similar equipment to other construction projects in the city, such as mid-rise buildings in urbanized areas. Impacts from construction activities would be temporary and post-construction views of Alternative 6-related

construction activities, equipment, stockpiles, and fencing would be removed once construction is completed. In addition, the MSF would comply with the best management practices noted previously in Section 10.1.2, as well as the city's development standards related to scenic quality during construction, which would be verified during the permitting process. Therefore, the MSF within LU-6 would not conflict with applicable regulations governing scenic quality, or substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant.

10.3.4 Impact AES-4: Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

10.3.4.1 Operational Impacts

Alternative 6 would operate almost entirely underground; however, its station entryways and plazas would be lit at night to ensure a safe environment. As such, new nighttime light would primarily emanate from station areas (e.g., station plazas, entryways, platforms and parking lots), which would not substantially increase the amount of lighting in the immediate area because similar light sources and levels (e.g., buildings, streetlights, and parking lots) currently exist. In addition, portions of the mid-mountain facility would also be illuminated. Alternative 6 would follow Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy. Compliance with these requirements would ensure that permanent operations-related light sources at the proposed station areas would be directed downwards or feature directional shielding to minimize spillover onto adjacent properties, including residential uses and other light-sensitive uses.

Additionally, Alternative 6 would include several elements (e.g., glass or metal surfaces) that would create new sources of glare at proposed station areas during the day. However, per Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy, surfaces and architectural finishes would be used that reduce glare and reflection to reduce impacts. Overall, Alternative 6 would create a negligible addition to light and glare and would not constitute a substantial change in existing light and glare in the immediate area. Therefore, operation of Alternative 6 would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

10.3.4.2 Construction Impacts

Construction of Alternative 6 would primarily occur during daytime hours. Nighttime and weekend construction, if any, would comply with local ordinance restrictions. Such activities may include, but are not limited to, tunneling, columns and trackwork, and stockpiling materials. Construction lighting would be directed toward the construction areas and/or shielded with temporary screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto adjacent areas. In addition, construction-related illumination would be temporary and limited to safety and security purposes. Construction of Alternative 6 would not be a substantial source of light and glare because several nighttime lighting sources already exist around the construction areas (e.g., streetlights, building illumination). Therefore, construction of Alternative 6 would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

10.3.4.3 Maintenance and Storage Facility

Maintenance of HRT vehicles and equipment would occur at the MSF. Multiple buildings would be constructed, including a maintenance-of-way building, track storage area, wash bays, ancillary storage buildings, and TPSS structure (Metro, 2024x). New nighttime light would primarily emanate from the MSF, which would be a visible source of light, but would not represent a substantial increase in the amount of lighting in the immediate area because similar light sources and levels (e.g., buildings,

streetlights, and parking lots) currently exist. The MSF would follow Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy. Compliance with these requirements would ensure that permanent operations-related light sources at the MSF would be directed downwards or feature directional shielding to minimize spillover onto adjacent properties, including residential uses and other light-sensitive uses.

Alternative 6-related sources of light and glare from the MSF would primarily emanate from buildings and parking lots. Per Metro's Rail Design Criteria or equivalent, all light sources at the proposed surface parking lots and stations would be directed downwards to minimize potential spillover onto surrounding properties, including light-sensitive uses.

The MSF would include several elements (e.g., glass or metal surfaces) that would create new sources of glare during the day. However, per Metro's Rail Design Criteria and the Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy, surfaces and architectural finishes would be used that reduce glare and reflection. Overall, the MSF would create a negligible addition to light and glare and would not constitute a substantial change in existing light and glare in the immediate area.

In addition, construction of the MSF would primarily occur during daytime hours. Nighttime and weekend construction, if any, would comply with local ordinance restrictions. As part of best management practices discussed in Section 10.1.2, construction lighting would be directed toward the construction areas and/or shielded with temporary screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto adjacent areas. In addition, construction-related illumination would be temporary and limited to safety and security purposes. The implementation of best management practices would reduce temporary impacts to adjacent uses, such as the residential properties. Therefore, the MSF would have less than significant impacts related to light and glare.

10.4 Mitigation Measures

10.4.1 Operational Impacts

As discussed in Section 10.3, operation of Alternative 6 would result in less than significant impacts related to scenic vistas, scenic resources, visual character, and light and glare; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

10.4.2 Construction Impacts

Construction activities would be a temporary and short-term visual nuisance. Temporary changes and contrast from the visual character from the existing conditions are impacted by construction activities such as site operations, tree removals, and construction traffic. Construction related structures such as barrier, sound walls, and fencing also impact visual resources.

As a result, the following mitigation measures would be implemented:

MM AES-1: *Privacy screens, as applicable and appropriate, shall be placed in high visibility areas that have construction related structures or activities. Privacy screens shall be used in areas requiring tree removal activities adjacent visually sensitive areas, including but not limited to residential areas.*

10.4.3 Impacts After Mitigation

No mitigation measures are required during operations; impacts are less than significant.

During construction, MM AES-1 would reduce the temporary visual nuisance of construction activities. The implementation of this mitigation measure would result in less than significant impacts related to construction.

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