

Chapter 4 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

4.1 Land Use

4.1.1 Regulatory Framework and Methodology

4.1.1.1 Regulatory Framework

The applicable local regulations that are relevant to an analysis of the proposed project's land use impacts are listed below (there are no federal or state land use regulations or plans that are directly applicable to the land use impact analysis). For additional information regarding these regulations, please see the *East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report Land Use Impacts Report*, prepared by GPA Consulting in December 2014 in Appendix H of this Draft EIS/EIR.

Local

The following local regulations and land use plans would be applicable to the proposed project:

- Southern California Association of Governments 2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy
- Southern California Association of Governments 2008 Regional Comprehensive Plan
- County of Los Angeles Pacoima Wash Vision Plan
- City of Los Angeles Land Use/Transportation Policy
- City of Los Angeles General Plan Framework Element
- City of Los Angeles Land Use Element
- City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan 2035
- City of Los Angeles Streetscape Plans
- City of Los Angeles Special Districts
- City of Los Angeles Van Nuys Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ)
- City of Los Angeles Whiteman Airport Zone
- City of Los Angeles Zoning Code
- City of San Fernando General Plan
- San Fernando Corridors Specific Plan
- City of San Fernando Zoning Code

4.1.1.2 Methodology

The following common terms are used in this section and are defined below for clarity:

- **Land Use:** Land use refers to the human use of land. There are several types of land uses, including residential, commercial, industrial, public facilities, and open space.
- **Study Area:** The study area for land use encompasses the area in which direct and/or indirect impacts associated with the project would likely result. The study area for this land use section extends one-half mile surrounding the East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor (project corridor) to incorporate potential impacts to surrounding neighborhoods and roadways (see Figures 4.1-1 and 4.1-2).
- **Direct Effects:** Direct effects are effects that would be caused by the project and would result at the same time and place as the project.
- **Indirect Effects:** Indirect effects are effects that would be caused by the project and would result later in time or would be farther removed in distance, but would still be reasonably foreseeable. Indirect effects would include growth-related effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects on air and water and other natural systems, including ecosystems.
- **Project Corridor:** The project corridor is defined as the area that could be directly and physically affected by at least one of the project alternatives (road widening, construction of a BRT, Low-Floor Tram/LRT, or LRT system). More specifically, the project corridor is limited to the properties abutting the following roadway/transit segments:
 - Van Nuys Boulevard, from the Metro Orange Line in the south to San Fernando Road in the north.
 - San Fernando Road, from Van Nuys Boulevard in the southeast to the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station in the northwest (at 12219 Frank Modugno Drive between Hubbard Avenue and Sayre Street).
 - Truman Street, from La Rue Street in the southeast to the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station in the northwest.
 - The Antelope Valley Metrolink railroad corridor, from Van Nuys Boulevard in the southeast to the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station in the northwest

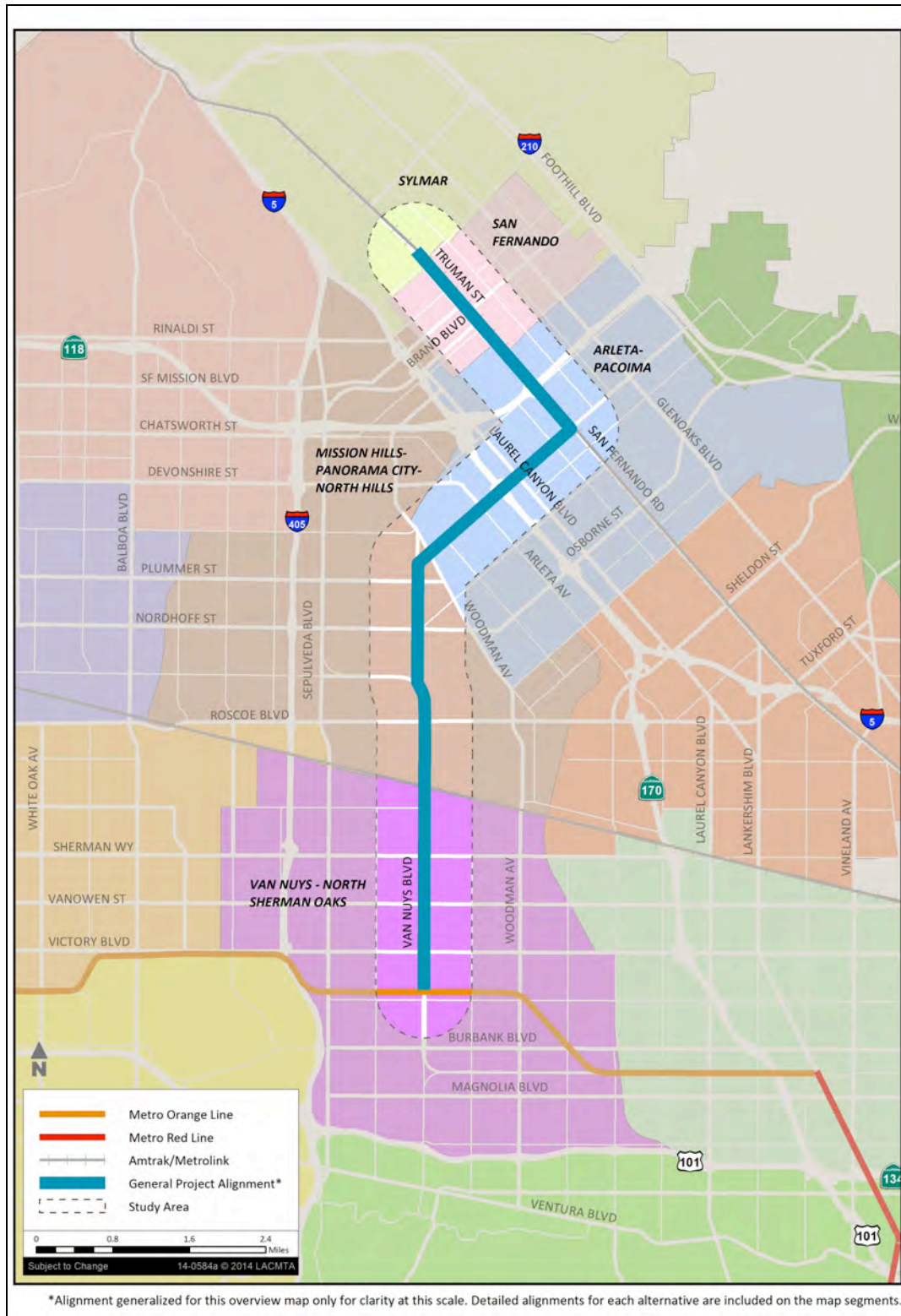
The following four steps were used to assess potential impacts from the project on existing land use in the study area:

- Maps were created to illustrate existing general plan land use in the study area;
- Existing land uses along the project corridor were described;
- Field surveys were conducted of the project corridor; and
- An assessment of the project's impacts on land use was conducted.

Land Use Maps

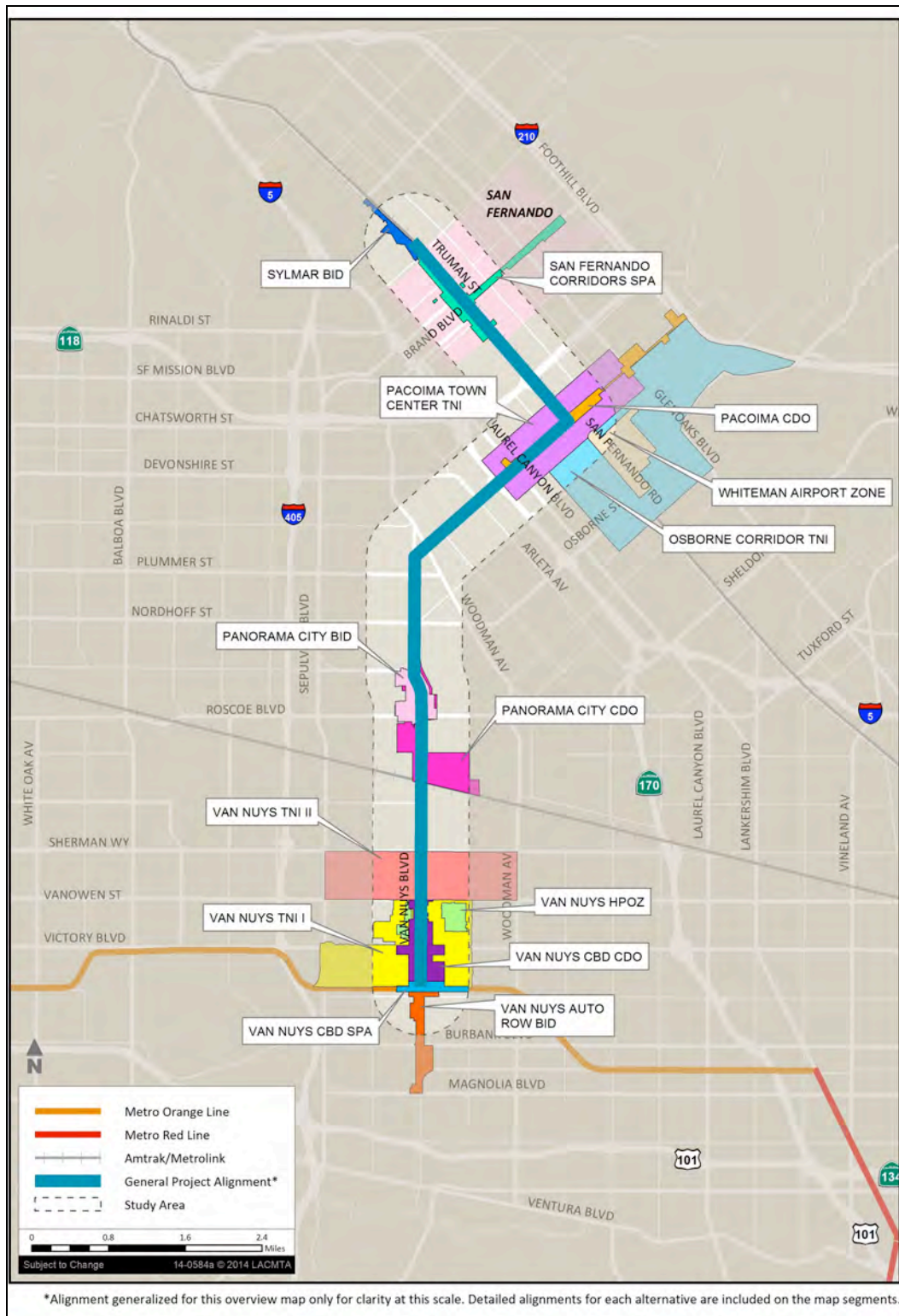
To illustrate existing land use, General Plan land use designations for the Cities of Los Angeles and San Fernando were overlain onto maps showing the boundaries of the project corridor and study area. To represent the length of the project corridor, the corridor was broken into six segments, as shown in Figure 4.1-3.

Figure 4.1-1: Community Plan Area Boundaries



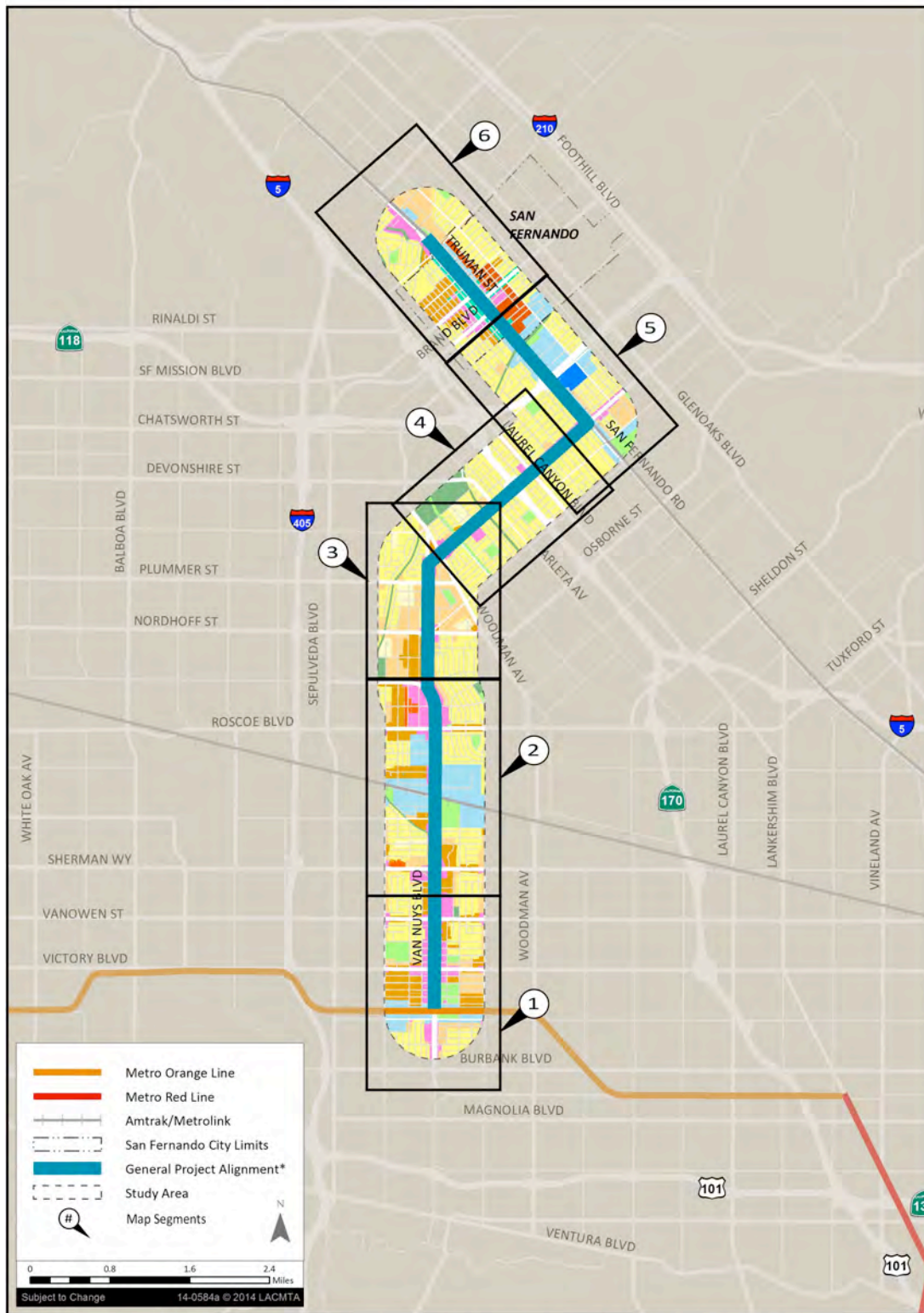
Source: ESRI, 2013.

Figure 4.1-2: Special Districts and Targeted Neighborhood Initiatives



Source: ESRI, 2013.

Figure 4.1-3: General Plan Land Use Designations (All Segments)



*Alignment generalized for this overview map only for clarity at this scale. Detailed alignments for each alternative are included on the map segments.

Source: Metro, 2012; ESRI, 2013; City of Los Angeles, 2013; City of San Fernando, 1987.

Land Use Descriptions

A textual description of existing land uses within the study area was developed. A general description of land uses along the project corridor is provided, as well as a more detailed description for each of the six segments of the project corridor.

Field Surveys

Field surveys were performed in October 2011 and February 2013 to identify specific land uses along the project corridor and study area. Adjacent property types and associated land uses were also observed. In addition to the observations made during field surveys, photographs were taken throughout the study area to assist with the identification of land use.

Land Use Impact Assessment

The project's impacts on land use were qualitatively assessed based on the information gathered on the existing land uses and whether the project would be compatible with those land uses. In addition, the project's impacts on land use were assessed by evaluating whether the project would be compatible with the land use plans, goals, and policies adopted by the regional and local jurisdictions within the study area.

4.1.1.3 CEQA Significance Thresholds

Significance thresholds are used to determine whether a project may have a significant environmental effect under CEQA.

CEQA requires state and local government agencies to identify the significant environmental effects of proposed actions; however, CEQA does not describe specific significance thresholds. State CEQA Guidelines

The State CEQA Guidelines define a significant effect on the environment as: "a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance" (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15382).

The State CEQA Guidelines do not describe specific significance thresholds. However, Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines lists a variety of potentially significant effects, which are often used as thresholds or guidance in developing thresholds for determining impact significance. Accordingly, for the purposes of this EIS/EIR, a project would normally have a significant land use impact, under CEQA, if it would:

- Physically divide an established community.
- Conflict with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purposes of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Conflict with an applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan (There is no habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan that is applicable to the study area).

L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide

The *L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide* for land use states that a determination of significance shall be made on a case-by-case basis, considering the following factors:¹

Land Use Consistency

- Whether the proposal is inconsistent with the adopted land use/density designation in the Community Plan, redevelopment plan, or specific plan for the site.
- Whether the proposal is inconsistent with the General Plan or adopted environmental goals or policies contained in other applicable plans.

Land Use Compatibility

- The extent of the area that would be impacted, the nature and degree of impacts, and the type of land uses within that area.
- The extent to which existing neighborhoods, communities, or land uses would be disrupted, divided, or isolated, and the duration of the disruptions.
- The number, degree, and type of secondary impacts to surrounding land uses that could result from implementation of the project.

4.1.2 Affected Environment/Existing Conditions

4.1.2.1 Study Area Setting

The study area is located in the San Fernando Valley area of Los Angeles. The San Fernando Valley is a flat area consisting of approximately 260 square miles, and is bounded by the Santa Susana Mountains to the northwest, the Simi Hills to the west, the Santa Monica Mountains and Chalk Hills to the south, the Verdugo Mountains to the east, and the San Gabriel Mountains to the northeast. The San Fernando Valley is an urbanized area that includes a variety of land uses, including residential, commercial, institutional, and light industrial development. The project corridor is approximately 9.2 miles in length, and runs nearly the entire north/south length of the valley floor.

The following overlay districts, special zones, and programs are located in the study area:

- **Business Improvement District:** A Business Improvement District (BID) is a geographically defined area within the City of Los Angeles, in which services, activities, and programs are paid for through a special assessment that is charged to all members within the district. The assessment money is collected by the city or by the county through a special contractual arrangement with the city.
- **Van Nuys Historic Preservation Overlay Zones:** Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZs), commonly known as historic districts, provide for review of proposed exterior alterations and additions to historic properties within designated districts. Recognizing the need to identify and protect neighborhoods with distinct architectural and cultural resources, the City of Los Angeles adopted the HPOZ ordinance in 1979. HPOZ areas range in size from neighborhoods of approximately 50 parcels to more than 4,000 properties. While most districts are primarily residential, many have a mix of single-family and multi-family housing, and some

¹ City of Los Angeles. 2006. *L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide, H. Land Use*. Available: <<http://www.environmentla.org/programs/Thresholds/Complete%20Threshold%20Guide%202006.pdf>>. Accessed: February 13, 2013.

include commercial and industrial properties. Van Nuys HPOZ is located in the center of the San Fernando Valley area of Los Angeles, and is the first HPOZ in the valley. Van Nuys includes some of the earliest residential development in the valley.

- **Van Nuys Central Business District Community Design Overlay District:** The Van Nuys Central Business District (CBD) Community Design Overlay District (CDO) establishes Design Guidelines and Standards for projects dealing with commercial properties. The district aims to guide development within a framework that is sensitive to the history of the Van Nuys CBD, while encouraging design creativity.
- **Targeted Neighborhood Initiative:** The Targeted Neighborhood Initiative (TNI) was proposed by Mayor Richard Riordan as a new way to revitalize the City of Los Angeles. The TNI would create the mechanisms and relationships necessary to implement a coordinated effort between City of Los Angeles Departments and area stakeholders. These mechanisms and relationships are created with the intent that duplicate efforts will be minimized, and that the supplemental Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars will be leveraged for greater impact.

4.1.2.2 Existing Land Uses

The project corridor is currently designated with the following transportation uses:

- Within the project corridor, Van Nuys Boulevard is designated as a Major Class II Highway.² This type of street is defined as having four full-time through lanes, as well as two lanes that are for parking on a part-time basis and for travel on a part-time basis. This class of street has a median/left-turn lane and 104 feet of right-of-way. Additionally, it has a 12-foot sidewalk/parkway with a 13-foot curb lane.³ It should be noted that the Draft Mobility Plan 2035 for the City of Los Angeles re-designates Major Class II Highways with a newly designated term of Boulevard II and Van Nuys Boulevard is also designated as a Comprehensive Transit Enhanced Street, and as part of the Bicycle Enhanced Network.⁴
- The Metro Orange Line is designated for public facilities on the City of Los Angeles General Plan Land Use Map.
- Within the project corridor, San Fernando Road is classified as a secondary arterial corridor.⁵ This type of roadway typically directs traffic through individual districts in the San Fernando Corridors Specific Plan area and typically has a right-of-way width of 80 feet and a curb-to-curb width of 60 feet. Parallel parking is typically provided on both sides of the street. This type of roadway generally provides four through travel lanes, with a dedicated left-turn lane at enhanced intersections. The Draft Mobility Plan 2035 designates San Fernando Road as a Moderate Transit Enhanced Street and as part of the Bicycle Enhanced Network.

² City of Los Angeles. 2002a. *City of Los Angeles General Plan Transportation Element, Highways and Freeways, North Valley Subarea, Map A2*. June. Available:

<<http://cityplanning.lacity.org/cwd/gnlpln/transelt/TEMaps/A2NVly.gif>>. Accessed: February 12, 2013.

³ City of Los Angeles. 1999a. *City of Los Angeles General Plan, Transportation Element*. Adopted September 8. Available: <<http://cityplanning.lacity.org/cwd/gnlpln/transelt/index.htm>>. Accessed: February 13, 2013.

⁴ City of Los Angeles. 2015. *City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan 2035, An Element of the General Plan*. May 28, 2015 Draft. Available:

<<https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&ncfms=&cfnumber=15-0719>>.

Accessed : September 30, 2015.

⁵ City of San Fernando. 2005. *The San Fernando Corridors Specific Plan*. Adopted January. Available:

<http://www.ci.san-fernando.ca.us/sfold/news/specific_plan/sf_corridors_sp_final.pdf>. Accessed: February 13, 2013.

- Truman Street is classified as a major arterial corridor for its entire length through San Fernando.⁶ This type of roadway serves both regional through-traffic and inter-city traffic, and generally provides four through travel lanes and a dedicated left-turn lane. This type of roadway will typically have a maximum right-of-way width of 80 feet and a curb-to-curb pavement width of 56 feet.
- The Antelope Valley Metrolink railroad corridor is shown as a railroad corridor in the San Fernando Corridors Specific Plan.

Land use varies along the six segments of the project corridor, and includes residential, commercial, industrial, recreation (parks), schools, community centers, and other urban uses.

Land uses to the east and west of the project corridor, but within the study area, are primarily designated as residential and parklands. The project corridor crosses under several roadways/highways and railroad tracks, and crosses over the Los Angeles River (LA River). Power lines, street lights, and other utilities are located along various portions of the project corridor.

At the southern end of the project corridor to just south of Calvert Street, land uses include car dealerships on Auto Row and other commercial uses. Moving further north until Vanowen Street, commercial, retail, banks, restaurants, medical offices, and other businesses occupy the corridor. A portion of this segment also includes local, state, and federal government buildings, including the Van Nuys Civic Center. South of Titus Street, a mixture of retail, restaurant, and other businesses interspersed with parking lots occupies the land adjacent to Van Nuys Boulevard.

South of Parthenia Street, small to large commercial businesses are located along Van Nuys Boulevard, as well as commercial centers and the Panorama Mall. South of the I-5 freeway, land uses include small to medium residential apartment complexes and single-family homes. At the north end of the project corridor, along San Fernando Road and Truman Street, the land uses are primarily commercial and industrial.

The following sections describe the project corridor by segments, starting from the southern limit (at the Metro Orange Line) and moving toward the northern limit (at the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station). Within each segment, a map is shown depicting the general plan land use designations within the study area, and the land use is described for the contiguous properties along the project corridor.

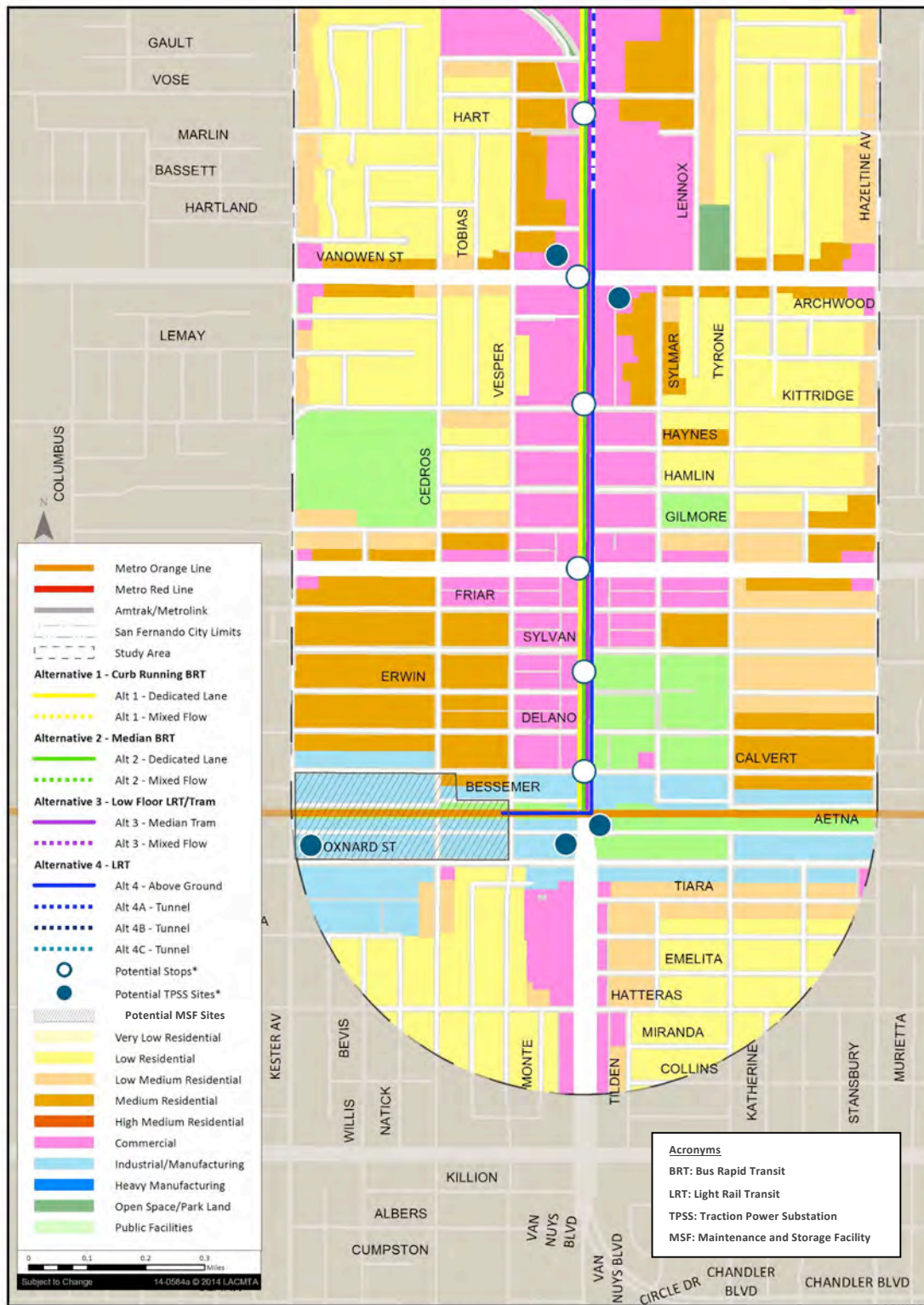
Map Segment 1 – Van Nuys Boulevard from the Metro Orange Line to Hart Street

Map Segment 1 consists of Van Nuys Boulevard, from the Metro Orange Line in the south to Hart Street in the north (see Figure 4.1-4). Portions of this segment are part of the Van Nuys Auto Row BID, Van Nuys CBD SPA, Van Nuys CBD CDO, Van Nuys TNI I, and Van Nuys HPOZ.

Land uses along this segment of Van Nuys Boulevard are primarily commercial. North of Oxnard Street, Van Nuys Boulevard passes through a segment designated for public facilities, which includes the Metro Orange Line, the Orange Line Busway Bike Path, and a power facility. Land uses along the Metro Orange Line are primarily industrial.

⁶ City of San Fernando. 2005. *The San Fernando Corridors Specific Plan*. Adopted January. Available: <http://www.ci.san-fernando.ca.us/sfold/news/specific_plan/sf_corridors_sp_final.pdf>. Accessed: February 13, 2013.

Figure 4.1-4: General Plan Land Use Designations - Segment 1



*Stop and TPSS locations are approximate. See plans for each alternative for exact locations.

Source: ESRI, 2013.

Land designated for public facilities is located between Calvert Street and Friar Street and occupied by the Van Nuys Civic Center, which includes the city hall, the County Registrar, the Los Angeles Superior Court, the County Probation Department, a U.S. post office, and other related facilities. The First Lutheran Church and Champs Charter High School are located at 6952 Van Nuys Boulevard, near the intersection of Hart Street and Van Nuys Boulevard.

Map Segment 2 – Van Nuys Boulevard from Hart Street to Parthenia Street

Map Segment 2 consists of Van Nuys Boulevard, from Hart Street in the south to Parthenia Street in the north (see Figure 4.1-5). Portions of this segment are part of the Van Nuys TNI II, the Panorama City CDO, and the Panorama City BID. This segment of the project corridor is designated primarily for commercial uses and includes the Panorama Mall (at Van Nuys Boulevard and Roscoe Boulevard). Clinica Latino Americana health clinic is located at 8727 Van Nuys Boulevard at Parthenia Street.

Just north of Raymer Street, Van Nuys Boulevard passes under a rail line owned by the Union Pacific Railroad. Two Amtrak lines run along this route, which are the Pacific Surfliner (service between San Diego and San Luis Obispo) and the Coast Starlight (service between Los Angeles and Seattle). The adjacent parcel is designated for public facilities and functions as the Van Nuys Transit Station (on Van Nuys Boulevard between Keswick Street and Cabrito Road). This station is serviced not only by the Amtrak trains described above, but also by Metrolink's commuter rail system and city buses.⁷ Metrolink's Ventura County line (with service between Union Station in Los Angeles and East Ventura) stops at this station. In addition, the LADOT DASH Panorama City/Van Nuys Route and Metro buses 156, 169, 233, and 761 Express also stop at this station.

Map Segment 3 – Van Nuys Boulevard from Parthenia Street to Woodman Avenue

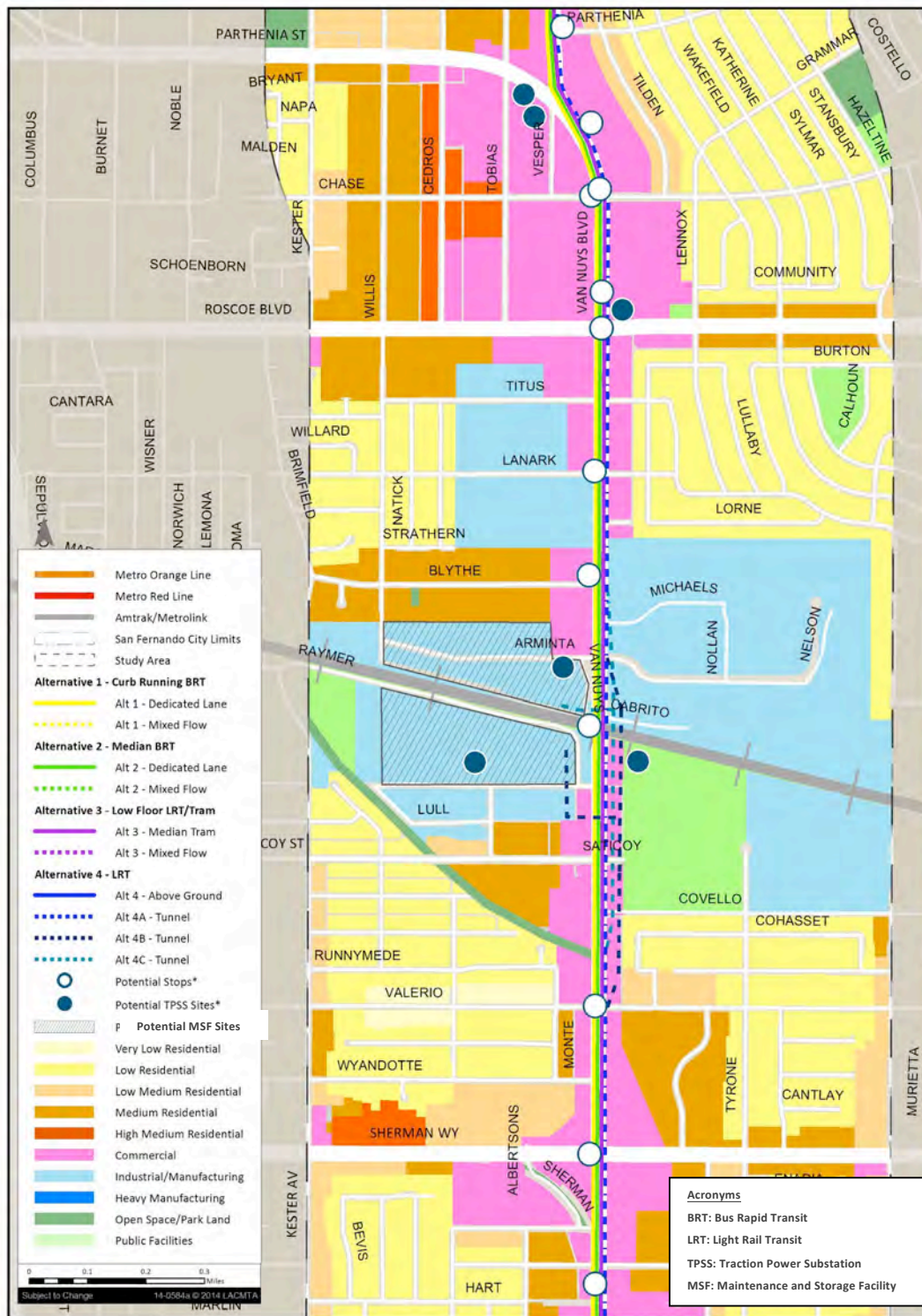
Map Segment 3 consists of Van Nuys Boulevard, from Parthenia Street in the south to Woodman Avenue in the north (see Figure 4.1-6). Portions of the segment are part of the Panorama City BID and Panorama City CDO. This segment of the project corridor is designated for various commercial land uses, but there are also some areas that are designated for medium and high/medium residential. Between Van Nuys Boulevard and Tobias Avenue (9122-9132 Tobias Avenue), there is a 1.6-acre park called Tobias Avenue Park.

Map Segment 4 – Van Nuys Boulevard from Woodman Avenue to Telfair Avenue

Map Segment 4 consists of Van Nuys Boulevard, from Woodman Avenue in the southwest to Telfair Avenue in the northeast (see Figure 4.1-7). Portions of this segment are within the Pacoima CDO, the Pacoima Town Center TNI, and the Osborne Corridor TNI. In this segment of the project corridor, most of the land is designated and used for residential or commercial properties, with some land designated for open space and public facilities. Just northeast of Canterbury Avenue, there is a strip of land designated for public facilities. This space is used for transmission power lines and a plant nursery.

⁷ Metrolink. n.d. *Van Nuys Station*. Available: <<http://www.metrolinktrains.com/>>. Accessed: November 8, 2011.

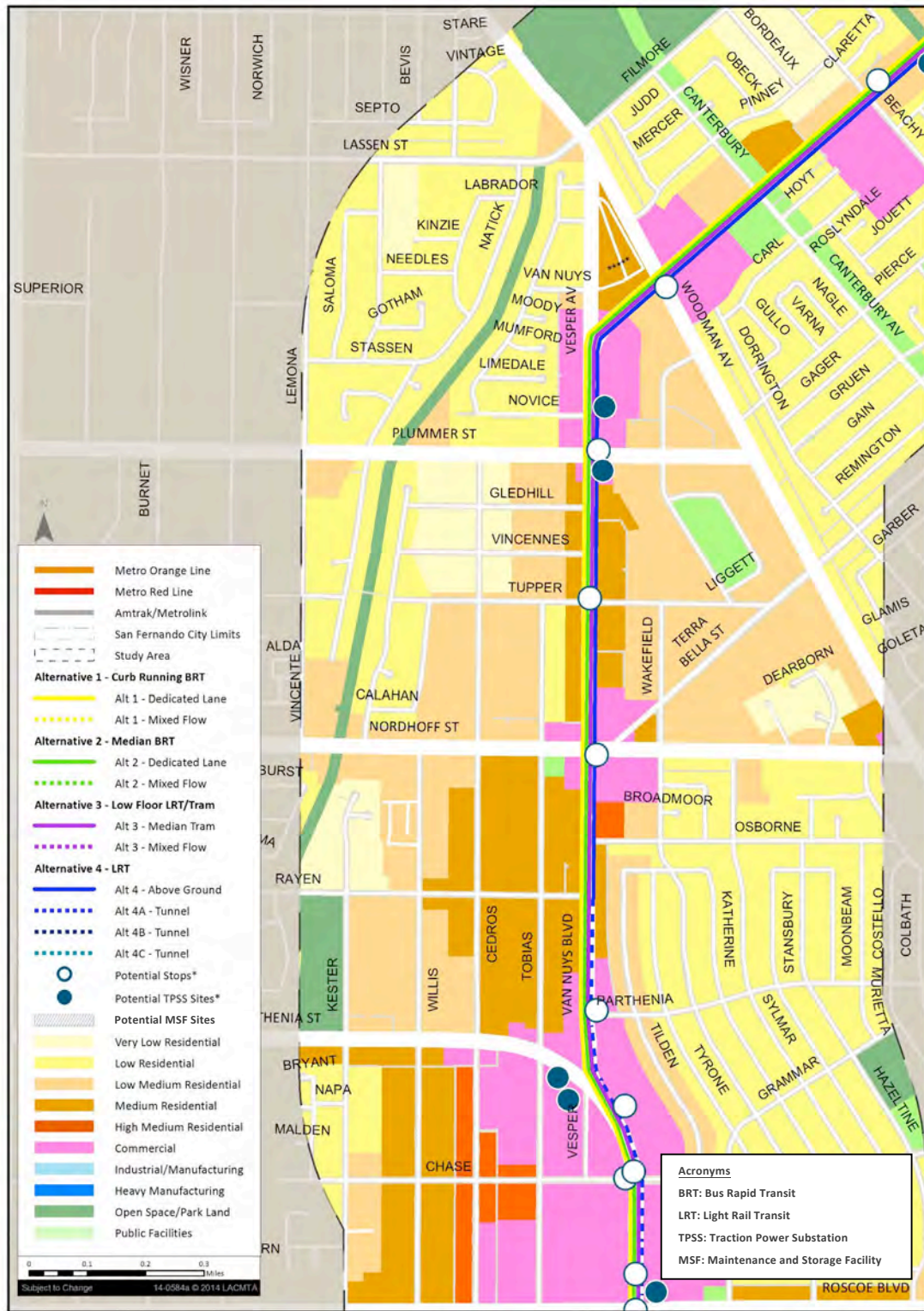
Figure 4.1-5: General Plan Land Use Designations - Segment 2



*Stop and TPSS locations are approximate. See plans for each alternative for exact locations.

Source: ESRI, 2013.

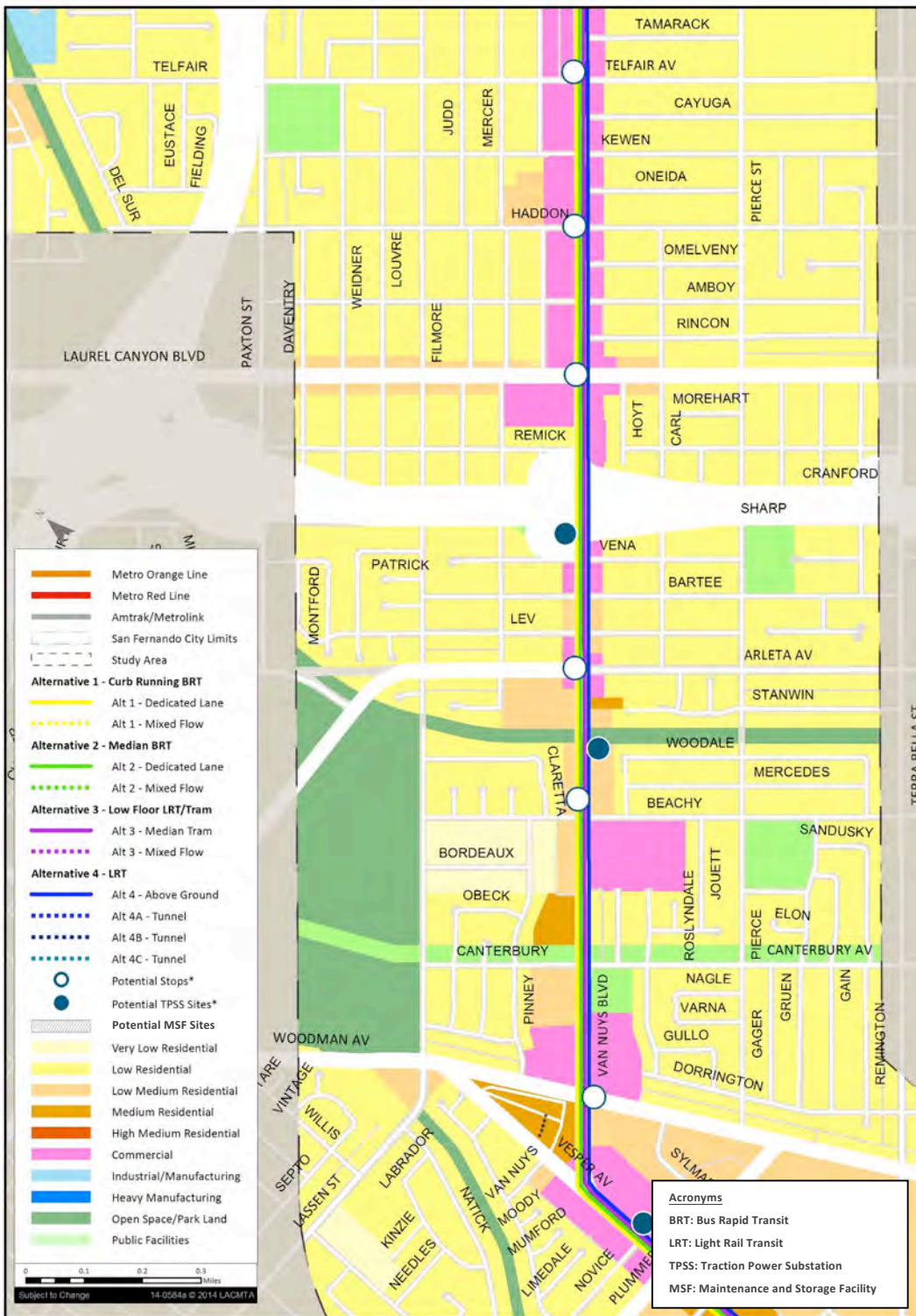
Figure 4.1-6: General Plan Land Use Designations - Segment 3



*Stop and TPSS locations are approximate. See plans for each alternative for exact locations.

Source: ESRI, 2013.

Figure 4.1-7: General Plan Land Use Designations - Segment 4



*Stop and TPSS locations are approximate. See plans for each alternative for exact locations.

Source: ESRI, 2013.

Arleta High School is located at the southeast corner of Van Nuys Boulevard and Beachy Avenue (14200 Van Nuys Boulevard). UCLA Early Head Start is located at 14423 Van Nuys Boulevard. There is a small strip of land northeast of Beachy Avenue designated for open space use. This area currently serves as an open-air water drainage system. Northeast of Vena Avenue, Van Nuys Boulevard passes underneath the I-5 freeway. North of the I-5 freeway, existing land uses include the Pacoima Branch library (13605 Van Nuys Boulevard), a Department of Water & Power distribution facility (13477 Van Nuys Boulevard), Soledad Enrichment School (13452 Van Nuys Boulevard), and Pacoima Skill Center Vocational School (13545 Van Nuys Blvd).

Map Segment 5 – Van Nuys Boulevard from Telfair Avenue to San Fernando Road; and San Fernando Road and the Antelope Valley Metrolink Corridor from Van Nuys Boulevard to La Rue Street

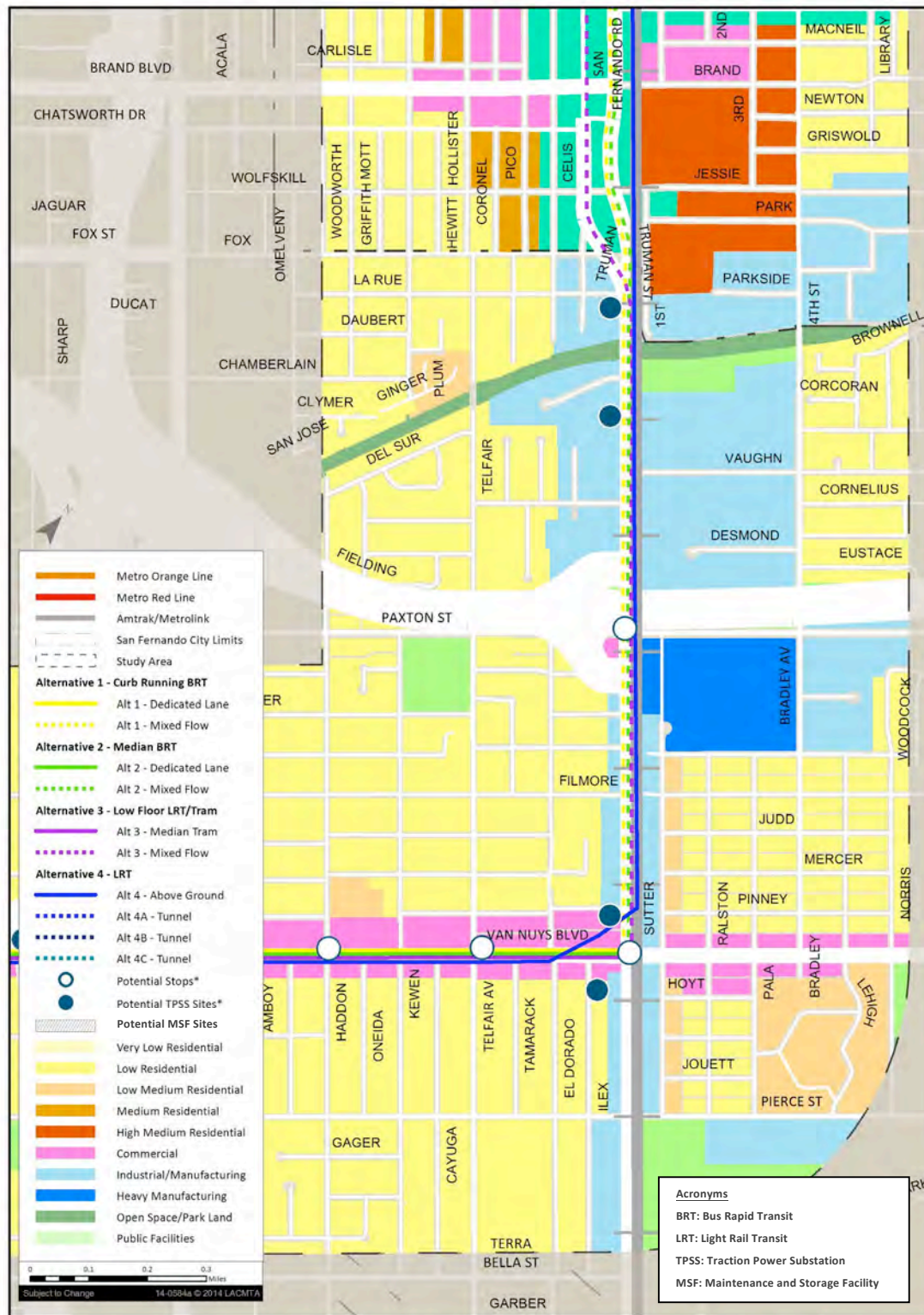
Map Segment 5 consists of Van Nuys Boulevard, from Telfair Avenue in the southwest to San Fernando Road in the northeast; and San Fernando Road and the Antelope Valley Metrolink Corridor, from Van Nuys Boulevard in the southeast to La Rue Street in the northwest (see Figure 4.1-8). Portions of this segment are within the Pacoima Town Center TNI, the Osborne Corridor TNI, the Whiteman Airport Zone, and the Pacoima CDO. Whiteman Airport is located at 12653 Osborne Street in the northeast corner of the Pierce Street and San Fernando Road intersection. Although the airport is outside of the project corridor, it is within the study area, just 0.5 mile southeast of the project corridor; therefore, many parcels within the study area fall within the Whiteman Airport Zone. A community health center run by the Los Angeles Department of Health Services is also located in this segment (13300 Van Nuys Boulevard).

The Metrolink railroad tracks are designated for public facilities. This Metrolink route is planned for future enhanced Metrolink service. Other land uses along this segment of the project corridor are primarily industrial and heavy manufacturing, with some commercial areas. The project corridor crosses under SR-118, which is designated for public facilities. The project corridor also crosses over the Pacoima Wash Diversion Channel, which is designated as open space/park land.

Map Segment 6 – San Fernando Road, Truman Street, and the Antelope Valley Metrolink Corridor from La Rue Street to the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station

Map Segment 6 consists of San Fernando Road, Truman Street, and the Antelope Valley Metrolink Corridor, from La Rue Street in the southwest to the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station in the northeast (see Figure 4.1-9). Portions of this segment are within the San Fernando Corridors SPA and the Sylmar BID. The Metrolink railroad tracks are designated for public facilities and are planned to accommodate future enhanced Metrolink service. Because there are railroad tracks in this area, other adjacent land uses along this segment of the project corridor are primarily industrial and manufacturing. Along Truman Street and San Fernando Street, land uses are specified in the San Fernando Corridors Specific Plan, which are designated as commercial. The Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station (on Frank Modugno Drive between Hubbard Street and Sayre Street) is designated as public facilities.

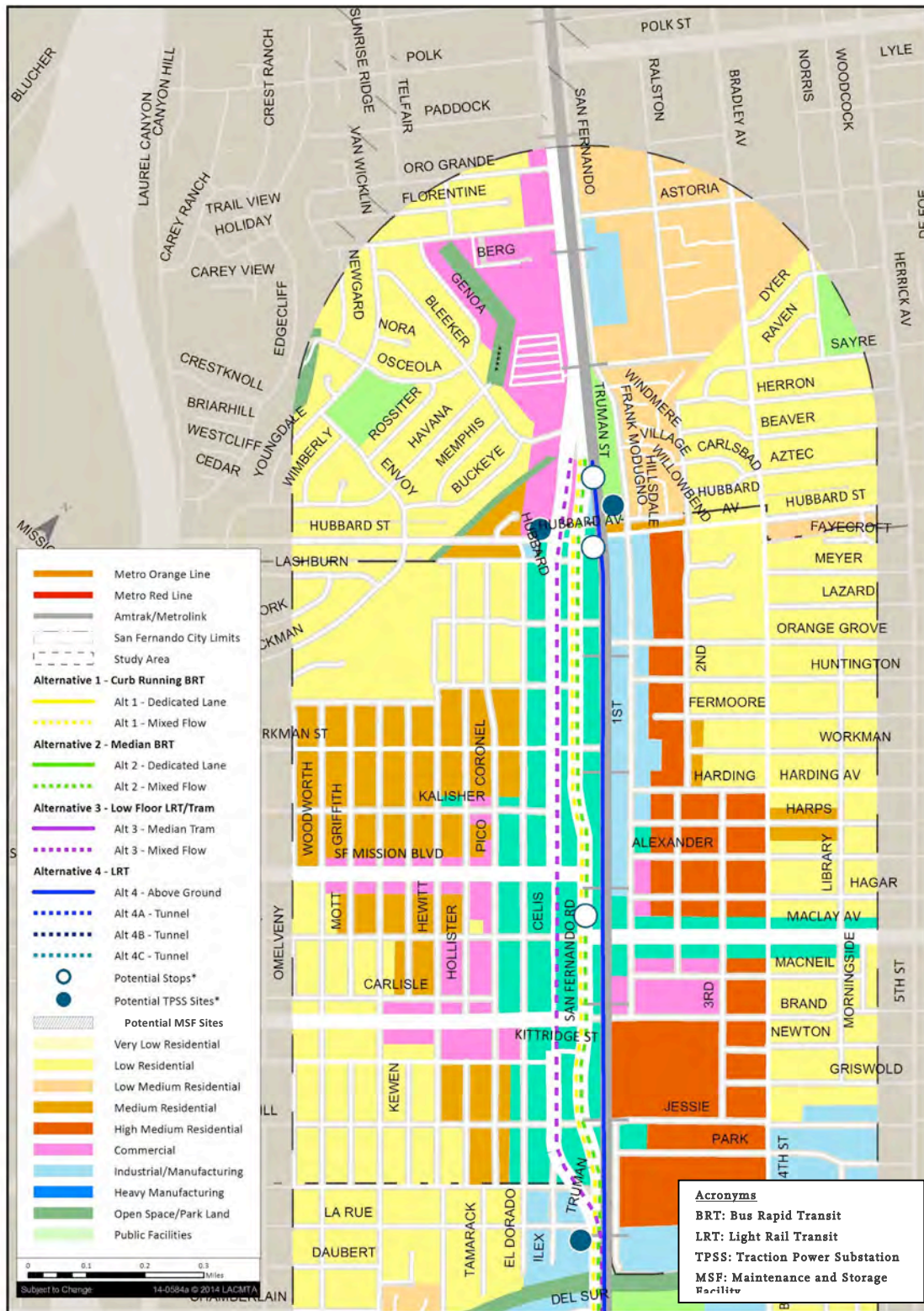
Figure 4.1-8: General Plan Land Use Designations - Segment 5



*Stop and TPSS locations are approximate. See plans for each alternative for exact locations.

Source: ESRI, 2013.

Figure 4.1-9: General Plan Land Use Designations - Segment 6



*Stop and TPSS locations are approximate. See plans for each alternative for exact locations.

Source: ESRI, 2013.

4.1.3 Environmental Consequences, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

4.1.3.1 No-Build Alternative

Construction Impacts

Under the No-Build Alternative, no new transportation or infrastructure improvements would be constructed other than those related projects currently under construction or funded for future construction. Therefore, the No-Build Alternative would have no impacts on land use during construction.

Operational Impacts

Regional Land Use and Development

No new transportation or infrastructure improvements would be constructed under the No-Build Alternative other than those related projects currently under construction or funded for future construction. The No-Build Alternative would not interfere with SCAG's regional goals of encouraging land use and growth patterns that facilitate transit and non-motorized transportation and focusing growth along major transportation corridors in the region but would also do nothing to further those goals.

Local Land Use and Development

Division of an Established Community

Since the No-Build Alternative proposes no new transportation or infrastructure improvements, it would not introduce physical barriers that would divide the existing communities surrounding the project corridor.

Conflicts with Local Land Use Plans

Relevant plans and policies are as follows:

- **City of Los Angeles 2010 Bicycle Plan:** The City of Los Angeles 2010 Bicycle Plan (City's Bicycle Plan) designates Van Nuys Boulevard as part of the "Backbone Bicycle Network," which is a 719-mile interconnected system facilitating mobility on key arterials.⁸ The network is comprised primarily of bicycle lanes, which will enable access to major employment centers, transit stations and stops, and educational, retail, entertainment, and other open space and recreational resources.
- **City of Los Angeles Land Use/Transportation Policy:** The objectives and guiding principles of the Land Use/Transportation Policy that may apply to the project are to increase land use intensity in transit station areas, where appropriate; reduce reliance on the automobile; and establish transit centers and station areas as places where future growth of Los Angeles is focused.
- **City of Los Angeles General Plan, Framework Element:** The goals that may apply to the project are Goal 3K. Transit stations to function as a primary focal point of the City's development; and Goal 3I. A network of boulevards that balance community needs and economic objectives with transportation functions and complement adjacent residential neighborhoods.

⁸ City. March 2011. 2010 Bicycle Plan.

- **City of Los Angeles General Plan, Transportation Element:** The objective and policies that may apply to the project are Objective 2. Mitigate the impacts of traffic growth, reduce congestion, and improve air quality by implementing a comprehensive program of multimodal strategies that encompass physical and operational improvements as well as demand management; Policy 2.14. Promote the increase of bus service along high-demand routes and corridors in order to reduce bus overcrowding; Policy 2.15. Promote the provision of additional express and local bus service in corridors to be served by the funded rail system, so as to increase transit ridership and prepare for future rail service; Policy 2.16. Promote the expansion of express and local bus service in priority corridors not served by the funded rail system, so as to reduce congestion along congested corridors; Policy 3.7. Promote the development of transit alignments and station locations which maximize transit service to activity centers and which permit the concentration of development around transit stations as illustrated [in the General Plan]; and Policy 3.12. Promote the enhancement of transit access to neighborhood districts, community and regional centers, and mixed-use boulevards.
- **City of Los Angeles General Plan, Noise Element:** The objective that may apply to the project is Objective 2: Reduce or eliminate nonairport-related intrusive noise, especially relative to noise sensitive uses.
- **City of Los Angeles General Plan, Air Quality Element:** The objective and policy that may apply to the project are Objective 3.2. It is the objective of the City of Los Angeles to reduce traffic during peak periods; and Policy 3.2.1. Manage traffic congestion during peak periods.
- **City of Los Angeles Community Plans:** The policies that may apply to the project are to develop a public transit system that improves mobility with convenient alternatives to automobile travel; encourage improved local and express bus service through the community and encourage bus routes to interface with freeways, high occupancy vehicle (HOV) facilities, and rail facilities; encourage the provision of safe, attractive, and clearly identifiable transit stops with user friendly design amenities; increase the work trips and non-work trips on public transit; develop an intermodal mass transportation plan to implement linkages to future mass transit service; and promote pedestrian-oriented mobility and utilization of the bicycle for commuter, school, recreation use, economic activity, and access to transit facilities.
- **The City of San Fernando Corridors Specific Plan:** The objective and policies that may apply to the project area to maintain and improve vehicular traffic circulation within the specific plan area and the adjacent community so as to safely and efficiently move both local and through traffic to its destination, while accommodating future demand for circulation by all modes of transportation; Circulation Policy 5. The City will continue to oversee the improvement of a circulation system within the specific plan area that is capable of adequately accommodating a reasonable increase in future traffic demands; and Circulation Policy 9. The City will ensure that there are clear rights-of-way for safe passage of pedestrians and bicyclists using Maclay Avenue and San Fernando Road.

As described above, the local land use plans for the jurisdictions along the project corridor include several goals and policies centered around establishing transit centers, maximizing transit service, accommodating future traffic demands, reducing reliance on the automobile, decreasing congestion, minimizing environmental impacts, increasing transit ridership, and developing compact pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use neighborhoods with accommodations for bicyclists. The No-Build Alternative proposes no changes to the existing transportation system, and would therefore not conflict with local land use plans. Local jurisdictions would continue to guide development according to the goals and

policies in their plans. However, this alternative would not help achieve the goals of increasing transit ridership or reducing reliance on the automobile.

Incompatibility with Adjacent or Surrounding Land Uses

The No-Build Alternative would not result in changes to existing land uses. Development patterns would not be affected, and incompatible land uses would not result from this alternative.

Cumulative Impacts

Per CEQA Section 15130 (b), the cumulative impacts analysis can consider either a “list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts” or “a summary of projections contained in an adopted local, regional, or statewide plan, or related planning document, that describes or evaluates conditions contributing to the cumulative effect.” The cumulative impacts analysis below is based on the approach that considers related projects listed in Table 2-3).

The study area for the cumulative impacts analyses encompasses the area in the immediate vicinity of the corridor as well as the local land use plan areas in which the project is located. Under the No-Build Alternative, there would be no construction or operational impacts on land use; therefore, this alternative would not contribute to cumulative impacts under CEQA and NEPA.

Mitigation Measures

Construction Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Operational Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Impacts Remaining After Mitigation

NEPA Finding

No adverse effects would occur.

CEQA Determination

No adverse impacts would occur.

4.1.3.2 TSM Alternative

Construction Impacts

Construction activities under the TSM Alternative would be minimal, limited to installation of new bus stops and signage and possibly minor roadway improvements. Typical construction methods would be used for the minor bus stop and roadway improvements. Bus stops and other minor roadway improvements would be constructed within the existing public street right-of-way; however, extended street or lane closures would be unnecessary, and mobility would not be substantially reduced during construction. Construction activities would not divide an established community. The minor construction activities that would occur under this alternative would not be inconsistent with local plans or incompatible with existing land uses.

Operational Impacts

Regional Land Use and Development

The TSM Alternative would include transportation system upgrades, such as increased bus efficiencies and service and minor modifications to the roadway network. The TSM Alternative would not interfere with SCAG's regional goals of encouraging land use and growth patterns that facilitate transit and non-motorized transportation and focusing growth along major transportation corridors in the region.

Local Land Use and Development

Division of an Established Community

The TSM Alternative would include transportation system upgrades and would operate entirely within existing transportation corridors. This alternative would not introduce physical barriers that would divide the existing communities surrounding the project corridor.

Conflicts with Local Land Use Plans

As described above under the No-Build Alternative, the local land use plans for the jurisdictions along the project corridor include several goals and policies centered around establishing transit centers, maximizing transit service, accommodating future traffic demands, reducing reliance on the automobile, decreasing congestion, minimizing environmental impacts, increasing transit ridership, and developing compact pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use neighborhoods with accommodations for bicyclists. The TSM Alternative would involve transportation system upgrades, and would therefore not conflict with these local land use plans goals and policies.

Incompatibility with Adjacent or Surrounding Land Uses

The project corridor has existing transit service, and therefore, bus operations would be compatible with existing land uses. Under the TSM Alternative, Metro Rapid Line 761 and Local Line 233 bus routes would retain existing stop locations, and the existing stops along San Fernando Road would remain unchanged. It should be noted that modifications were made in December 2014 to one of the primary Metro bus routes operating on Van Nuys Boulevard after this project analysis was already underway. Metro Rapid Line 744 was added connecting Pacoima in the east to Northridge in the west, and traveling for a large portion of the route (north-south) along Van Nuys Boulevard, and replacing the Metro Rapid Line 761. For the purposes of this study, the evaluation was based on the routes (Metro Rapid Line 761 and Metro Local Line 233) that were already in place in 2012 when the transportation modeling for this study began. In addition, this alternative would not require the construction or expansion of a maintenance and storage facility (MSF), as the existing Metro Division 15 facility would be able to accommodate the 20 additional buses needed for this alternative. Therefore, development patterns would not be affected, and incompatible land uses would not occur as a result of this alternative.

Cumulative Impacts

Per CEQA Section 15130 (b), the cumulative impacts analysis can consider either a "list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts" or "a summary of projections contained in an adopted local, regional, or statewide plan, or related planning document, that describes or evaluates conditions contributing to the cumulative effect." The cumulative impacts analysis below is based on the approach that considers related projects listed in Section 4.1.3.1 under the cumulative impact analysis for the No-Build Alternative.

The study area for the cumulative impacts analyses encompasses the area in the immediate vicinity of the corridor as well as the local land use plan areas in which the project is located. During construction and operation, the TSM Alternative would not conflict with land use plans or policies, would not divide an established community, and would not be incompatible with nearby land uses; therefore, the TSM Alternative would not contribute to any significant cumulative land use impacts.

Compliance Requirements and Design Features

Station areas for the TSM Alternative would be designed in accordance with local codes and ordinances.

Mitigation Measures

Construction Mitigation Measures

No construction mitigation measures are required.

Operational Mitigation Measures

No operational mitigation measures are required.

Impacts Remaining After Mitigation

NEPA Finding

No adverse effects would occur.

CEQA Determination

No adverse impacts would occur.

4.1.3.3 BRT Alternatives (Build Alternatives 1 and 2)

Alternative 1 – Curb-Running BRT

Construction Impacts

Division of an Established Community

Construction of Alternative 1 would require temporary road, lane, and sidewalk closures, which would reduce pedestrian and vehicle mobility and access within and between local communities throughout the study area. However, these closures would be temporary and are not expected to substantially divide or diminish access to existing communities or neighborhoods. Additionally, implementation of a Traffic Management Plan and a Construction Phasing and Staging Plan would further reduce the disruption caused by construction activities and access to businesses and residential areas would be maintained to the extent feasible. Therefore impacts/effects would be less than significant under CEQA and not adverse under NEPA.

Conflicts with Local Land Use Plans

Construction activities would be conducted in compliance with local land use plans and codes. Project construction would typically take place between the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. within the City of Los Angeles, in accordance with the Los Angeles Municipal Code and between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. within the City of San Fernando, in accordance with the San Fernando City Code. Municipal Code

requirements. However, some construction may be required during nighttime hours. If it is necessary for construction to occur outside of these hours, Metro may seek a variance from Municipal Code requirements. In accordance with San Fernando City Code Section 34-28(10), noise sources associated with construction, repair, remodeling or grading of any real property would be allowed up to 70 decibels (dB) measured at the property line, provided such activities do not take place between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on weekdays and 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. on Saturdays, or at any time on Sundays or on federal holidays. Construction activities would be minimized during weekday AM and PM peak traffic periods (typically 7 to 9 a.m. and 4 to 6 p.m.). Therefore, substantial conflicts with local land use plans during the construction period are not expected to occur and impacts/effects would be less than significant under CEQA and not adverse under NEPA.

Incompatibility with Adjacent and Surrounding Land Uses

Construction activities along the alignment would result in temporary nuisance impacts (e.g., noise, air quality impacts) on nearby land uses. Construction noise would result from the use of heavy equipment during construction activities, such as excavation, grading, ground clearing, and installing foundations and structures, as well as from trucks hauling materials to and from the construction areas. Air quality impacts would result from the generation of fugitive dust during ground disturbing activities, and from the operation of heavy-duty, diesel-fueled equipment, such as bulldozers, trucks, and scrapers. Additionally, construction staging areas would be established near the project alignment and used for equipment and material storage. The staging areas would be located within the right-of-way, parking lots, or on vacant land and would not require land from adjacent properties. No land acquisitions would be required for construction staging areas. Nonetheless, activities at the construction staging areas, similar to other construction activities along the alignment, would result in nuisance impacts on nearby sensitive land uses. Where temporary construction impacts on nearby land uses are determined to be significant (e.g., noise impacts), the land use incompatibility impacts would also be considered to be significant. Therefore, impacts/effects would be potentially significant under CEQA and adverse under NEPA.

Operational Impacts

Regional Land Use and Development

This alternative would be consistent with SCAG regional goals of encouraging land use and growth patterns that facilitate transit and non-motorized transportation and focusing growth along major transportation corridors in the region.

Alternative 1 could indirectly affect development in the study area by focusing growth in housing, employment, and commercial development within walking distance of the proposed transit stations along the project corridor. While this development pattern would be consistent with SCAG regional goals, Alternative 1 may attract businesses from other areas of the region to the immediate areas surrounding the proposed stations.

Local Land Use and Development

Division of an Established Community

Alternative 1 would operate entirely within existing transportation corridors, and would not introduce physical barriers that would divide the existing communities surrounding the project corridor. By providing improved bus transit service, this alternative would increase mobility and connectivity within the eastern San Fernando Valley area. No adverse impacts would occur.

Conflicts with Local Land Use Plans

As described above under the No-Build Alternative, the local land use plans for the jurisdictions along the project corridor include several goals and policies centered around establishing transit centers, maximizing transit service, accommodating future traffic demands, reducing reliance on the automobile, decreasing congestion, minimizing environmental impacts, increasing transit ridership, and developing compact pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use neighborhoods with accommodations for bicyclists. Alternative 1 would be consistent with or supportive of many of the goals and policies of the applicable jurisdictions along the project corridor. However, although Alternative 1 would result in regional transportation benefits due to projected increases in transit ridership, and reductions in overall vehicle miles and vehicle hours traveled compared to existing conditions, it could also result in significant adverse traffic impacts at some locations where a reduction in the number of mixed-flow travel lanes is necessary to accommodate a dedicated BRT lane. Specifically, Alternative 1 is projected to result in significant impacts (due to increases in vehicle delay) at 16 of 71 study intersections along the corridor (see Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of transportation impacts). Therefore, Alternative 1 would result in localized traffic impacts, and would not achieve the congestion reduction objective specified in the City of Los Angeles General Plan, Transportation Element (Objective 2: To mitigate the impacts of traffic growth, reduce congestion, and improve air quality by implementing a comprehensive program of multimodal strategies that encompass physical and operational improvements as well as demand management). Alternative 1 would conflict with an objective and policy in the City of Los Angeles General Plan, Air Quality Element (Objective 3.2. It is the objective of the City of Los Angeles to reduce traffic during peak periods; and Policy 3.2.1. Manage traffic congestion during peak periods).

Under Alternative 1 - Curb-Running BRT Alternative, the existing Class II bike lanes on Van Nuys Boulevard north of Parthenia Street would be removed to make room for the dedicated transit lanes. These changes would conflict with the City's Bicycle Plan because designated bicycle lanes on Van Nuys Boulevard, which are included as part of the Backbone Bicycle Network, would not be feasible with the implementation of this alternative. Although this conflict would occur, it should be noted that the Van Nuys Boulevard corridor is also designated a Transit Priority Segment within the City of Los Angeles General Plan Framework Element. Also, the City's proposed Mobility Element 2035 of the General Plan states in Section 2.9 that on a street that is designated as a Transit Enhanced Network, but is also intended to receive a bicycle lane, design elements for the transit can take precedence over the provision of a bicycle lane. Additionally, the City's Bicycle Plan includes planned bicycle lanes on Woodman Avenue (one-mile to the east of and parallel to Van Nuys Boulevard) between Ventura Boulevard and the Osborne Street and Nordhoff Street corridors. Bicycle lanes are also planned to connect the Osborne Street corridor to San Fernando Road. In addition, bicycle access would still be allowed in the curbside lanes along the project corridor after project implementation. Typical bicycle accommodations would also be provided at BRT stations and on buses, including bicycle racks to provide options for passengers to leave their bicycles at the stations or to bring them onto buses. Therefore, while Class II bicycle lanes along Van Nuys Boulevard would not be possible under this alternative, the ability for bicyclists to access areas in the project corridor would be retained, and the project would achieve other local planning goals of reducing reliance on the automobile and increasing transit ridership.

Alternative 1 could result in localized impacts on air quality and noise from the additional buses on local roadways, which would produce additional air emissions, noise, and vibration. Because the alignment would run in proximity to residential and recreation areas, sensitive receptors could be adversely affected by these impacts, which would conflict with an objective in the City of Los Angeles General Plan, Noise Element (Objective 2: Reduce or eliminate nonairport related intrusive noise, especially relative to noise sensitive uses). To the extent that Alternative 1 results in other significant adverse environmental impacts (see other impacts discussions in Chapter 4 [e.g., air quality, noise]), it would further conflict with local land use plan goals and policies intended to minimize those environmental impacts. Therefore, given those potential conflicts and those discussed above, the potential impacts under CEQA are considered to be significant. However, under NEPA, based on the context and intensity of impacts and overall regional benefits, the impacts due to conflicts with local land use plans would not be adverse.

Incompatibility with Adjacent and Surrounding Land Uses

Project Corridor

While there would be some modifications to the project corridor (e.g., changes in bicycle lanes and turning movements), the project corridor is an existing transportation route with ongoing bus transit service; therefore, the proposed BRT operations would be compatible with existing land uses. In addition, this alternative would not require the construction or expansion of an MSF, as the existing Metro Division 15 facility would be able to accommodate the 10 additional buses needed for this alternative. Furthermore, this alternative would not require right-of-way acquisition to implement the proposed transportation improvements. Impacts would be considered less than significant.

Stations

Under this alternative, 18 stations would be located in areas that contain primarily commercial and residential uses. Stations would include aesthetic enhancements, such as landscaping and canopies, which would be compatible with adjacent and surrounding land uses. All current Metro Rapid bus stops would be upgraded with design enhancements that would comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Impacts would be considered less than significant under CEQA and not adverse under NEPA.

Cumulative Impacts

Per CEQA Section 15130 (b), the cumulative impacts analysis can consider either a “list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts” or “a summary of projections contained in an adopted local, regional, or statewide plan, or related planning document, that describes or evaluates conditions contributing to the cumulative effect.” The cumulative impacts analysis below is based on the approach that considers related projects listed in Table 2-3 of this EIS/EIR.

The study area for the cumulative impacts analyses encompasses the area in the immediate vicinity of the corridor as well as the local land use plan areas in which the project is located. During construction, this alternative would result in no adverse effects under NEPA, and impacts that are less than significant under CEQA due to a temporary reduction in mobility from traffic detours and street, lane, and sidewalk closures. With the implementation of a Traffic Management Plan and a Construction Phasing and Staging Plan, these temporary effects and impacts would be further reduced. Other present and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the area could result in temporary mobility impacts from construction activities, and impacts from past projects may also

have resulted in temporary impacts. However, because these impacts are temporary, cumulative impacts would be less than significant. Because impacts under Alternative 1 would also be temporary, and impacts would be further reduced with the implementation of a Traffic Management Plan and a Construction Phasing and Staging Plan, the alternative's contribution to cumulative impacts during construction would not be cumulatively considerable.

Alternative 1 would result in operational beneficial effects by increasing connectivity within the eastern San Fernando Valley area, increasing transit ridership and mobility, and reducing overall vehicle miles and hours traveled. However, Alternative 1 would also result in localized traffic impacts at 16 of 73 study intersections due to increased congestion, and especially due to reduced mixed-flow roadway capacity along the corridor. Past projects have resulted in localized traffic impacts, and other present or reasonably foreseeable future projects in the area could further degrade traffic conditions in the area. However, since the related projects are either development projects or other projects which do not further reduce mixed-flow roadway capacity, the alternative's contribution to cumulative impacts during operation would not be cumulatively considerable.

Compliance Requirements and Design Features

Station areas for this alternative would be designed in accordance with local codes and ordinances.

Mitigation Measures

Construction Mitigation Measures

Please see other sections (e.g., 4.8 Noise and Vibration, 4.6 Air Quality) for measures to mitigate potentially significant adverse construction impacts on sensitive land uses near proposed construction. Specifically, Mitigation Measures MM-NOI-1a through MM-NOI-1d would require development of a Noise Control Plan, public notification of construction schedules, scheduling most construction activities during the daytime, as much as feasible, and use of methods and equipment that reduces noise, to the extent practicable. In addition, Mitigation Measure MM-VIB-1 also specifies use of equipment and methods to reduce vibration impacts. Mitigation Measures MM-AQ-1 through MM-AQ-6 would require that the construction contractor limit vehicle trips, idling of heavy equipment, and use of methods and equipment that reduces potential emissions and pollutants, to the extent feasible,

Operational Mitigation Measures

No feasible mitigation measures have been identified to mitigate the localized traffic impacts that would occur under this alternative.

Impacts Remaining After Mitigation

NEPA Finding

Construction impacts would be temporary and can be mitigated, so Alternative 1 would result in no adverse effects during construction. However, since there would be no feasible mitigation measures that could reduce the localized traffic impacts so they would not conflict with plans, polices, and goals to reduce congestion; Alternative 1 would result in adverse operational effects under NEPA.

CEQA Determination

Construction impacts would be less than significant after mitigation. Operational impacts would be significant and unavoidable due to operational localized traffic congestion.

Alternative 2 – Median-Running BRT

Construction Impacts

Division of an Established Community

Impacts would be to the same as impacts anticipated to occur under Alternative 1.

Conflicts with Local Land Use Plans

Impacts anticipated to occur under this alternative would be to the same as impacts described for Alternative 1.

Incompatibility with Adjacent and Surrounding Land Uses

Impacts would be the same as impacts described for Alternative 1.

Operational Impacts

Regional Land Use and Development

Impacts would be to the same as impacts anticipated to occur under Alternative 1.

Local Land Use and Development

Division of an Established Community

Impacts would be the same as impacts anticipated to occur under Alternative 1.

Conflicts with Local Land Use Plans

Impacts would be slightly greater in extent than the impacts anticipated to occur under Alternative 1. Under Alternative 2, significant traffic impacts would occur at 24 of the 73 study intersections versus 16 of 73 study intersections under Alternative 1. Therefore, Alternative 2 would also conflict with local land use plan policies or objectives to reduce congestion, which would be a significant impact under CEQA. Impacts under NEPA would be adverse.

Incompatibility with Adjacent and Surrounding Land Uses

Impacts would be to the same as impacts anticipated to occur under Alternative 1.

Cumulative Impacts

Impacts would be slightly greater (due to additional traffic impacts) than those described above for Alternative 1. Past projects have resulted in localized traffic impacts, and other present or reasonably foreseeable future projects in the area could further degrade traffic conditions in the area. However, since the related projects are either development projects or other projects which do not further reduce mixed-flow roadway capacity, the alternative's contribution to cumulative impacts during operation would not be cumulatively considerable.

Compliance Requirements and Design Features

Station areas for Alternative 2 would be designed in accordance with local codes and ordinances.

Mitigation Measures

Construction Mitigation Measures

See mitigation measures referenced under Alternative 1, as they would also be applicable to Alternative 2.

Operational Mitigation Measures

No feasible mitigation measures have been identified to mitigate the localized traffic impacts that would occur under this alternative, which would result in conflicts with land use plan policies and goals to reduce congestion.

Impacts Remaining After Mitigation

NEPA Finding

The effects of construction would not be adverse under NEPA, but operational effects of localized traffic congestion would remain adverse.

CEQA Determination

Construction impacts would be less than significant and operational impacts would be significant and unavoidable due to localized traffic congestion.

4.1.3.4 Rail Alternatives

Alternative 3 – Low-Floor LRT Tram

Construction Impacts

Division of an Established Community

Construction of the Low-Floor LRT/Tram stations would require temporary sidewalk, lane, and street closures, and traffic detours and designated truck routes. Lane and street closures for the Low-Floor LRT/Tram would be greater in number than both Alternatives 1 and 2, due to the construction of additional infrastructure (e.g., Overhead Contact System (OCS), dedicated guideway).

Street, lane, and sidewalk closures could reduce pedestrian and vehicle mobility between communities throughout the study area during construction. However, these closures would be temporary and are not expected to substantially divide existing communities or neighborhoods. Additionally, implementation of a Traffic Management Plan and Construction Phasing and Staging Plan would further reduce the disruption caused by construction activities and access to businesses and residential areas would be maintained to the extent feasible. Therefore, impacts/ effects would be less than significant under CEQA and not adverse under NEPA.

Conflicts with Local Land Use Plans

Impacts would be potentially greater in extent than the impacts described for Alternative 1 and 2 due to the more extensive construction under this alternative compared to Alternatives 1 and 2. However, construction activities would be conducted in compliance with local land use plans and codes. Therefore, substantial conflicts with local land use plans during the construction period are not expected to occur and impacts/effects would be less than significant under CEQA and not adverse under NEPA.

Incompatibility with Adjacent and Surrounding Land Uses

Impacts would be greater in extent than the impacts that would occur under Alternatives 1 and 2. Construction activities along the alignment would result in temporary nuisance impacts (e.g., noise, air quality impacts) on nearby land uses. Construction noise would result from the use of heavy equipment during construction activities, such as excavation, grading, ground clearing, and installing foundations and structures, as well as from trucks hauling materials to and from the construction areas. Air quality impacts would result from the generation of fugitive dust during ground disturbing activities, and from the operation of heavy-duty, diesel-fueled equipment, such as bulldozers, trucks, and scrapers. The construction impacts on nearby sensitive land uses would be potentially significant under CEQA and adverse under NEPA.

Operational Impacts

Regional Land Use and Development

Alternative 3 would be consistent with SCAG regional goals of encouraging land use and growth patterns that facilitate transit and non-motorized transportation and focusing growth along major transportation corridors in the region.

This alternative could indirectly affect development in the study area by focusing growth in housing, employment, and commercial development within walking distance of the proposed transit stations along the project corridor. While this development pattern would be consistent with SCAG regional goals, this alternative may attract businesses from other areas of the region to the immediate areas surrounding the proposed stations.

Local Land Use and Development

Division of an Established Community

Impacts would be slightly greater than those described for Alternatives 1 and 2. Under Alternative 3, to accommodate the Low-Floor LRT/Tram alignment in the median, additional turning restrictions would be implemented including prohibition of left turns from San Fernando Road through the City of San Fernando. Along Van Nuys Boulevard, left turns onto cross streets would be maintained at most of the currently signalized intersections where Alternative 3 would run in the median. However, all vehicle movements across the median at currently unsignalized intersections would be prohibited. Additionally, on all segments where the Low-Floor LRT/Tram operates in a semi-exclusive guideway, pedestrian crossings would be permitted only at signal-controlled intersections. Notwithstanding these turn and pedestrian crossing restrictions, given that the Alternative 3 alignment would be located along existing roadways and the fact that pedestrians and vehicles could still cross the alignment at specified locations throughout the corridor, this alternative would not divide an established community and impacts would be less than significant under CEQA and not adverse under NEPA.

Conflicts with Local Land Use Plans

Impacts would be slightly greater in magnitude than the impacts described for Alternatives 1 and 2. Under Alternative 3, significant traffic impacts would occur at 32 of 73 study intersections compared to 24 of the 73 study intersections under Alternative 2 and 16 of 73 study intersections under Alternative 1. Alternative 3 would result in localized traffic impacts, and would therefore not fully achieve the congestion reduction objective specified in the City of Los Angeles General Plan, Transportation Element (Objective 2: To mitigate the impacts of traffic growth, reduce congestion, and improve air quality by implementing a comprehensive program of multimodal strategies that

encompass physical and operational improvements as well as demand management). In addition, Alternative 3 would conflict with an objective and policy in the City of Los Angeles General Plan, Air Quality Element (Objective 3.2. It is the objective of the City of Los Angeles to reduce traffic during peak periods; and Policy 3.2.1. Manage traffic congestion during peak periods). Therefore, would conflict with local land use plan policies or objectives to reduce congestion, which would be a significant impact under CEQA. However, Alternative 3 would provide regional transportation benefits by increasing transit ridership and reducing vehicle miles and hours traveled; therefore, impacts under NEPA would not be considered adverse.

Alternative 3 could also result in localized impacts on noise from the additional tram vehicles on local roadways, which would produce additional noise and vibration. Because the alignment would run in proximity to residential and recreation areas, sensitive receptors could be adversely affected by these impacts, which would conflict with an objective in the City of Los Angeles General Plan, Noise Element (Objective 2: Reduce or eliminate nonairport related intrusive noise, especially relative to noise sensitive uses). To the extent that Alternative 3 results in other significant adverse environmental impacts (e.g., see Section 4.8 – Noise and Vibration and discussion below), it would further conflict with any local land use plan goals and policies intended to minimize those environmental impacts. Therefore, given those potential conflicts and those discussed above, the potential impacts under CEQA are considered to be significant. However, under NEPA, based on the context and intensity of impacts and overall regional benefits, the impacts due to conflicts with local land use plans would not be considered adverse.

Incompatibility with Adjacent and Surrounding Land Uses

Project Corridor

While there would be some modifications to the project corridor (e.g., changes in bicycle lanes and tuning movements), the project corridor is an existing transportation route with ongoing bus transit service, and therefore, the proposed Low-floor LRT/Tram operations would generally be compatible with existing land uses. However, it should also be noted that operation of the Low-Floor LRT/Tram vehicles would result in significant, but mitigable, adverse noise impacts on nearby noise-sensitive uses at some locations along the alignment (see Section 4.8 – Noise and Vibration).

Overhead Contact System

This alternative would require an OCS that would include approximately 30-foot-tall steel poles about every 90 to 170 feet along the length of the right-of-way to support an electrical power line, which would be suspended above the tram tracks. According to the City of Los Angeles Zoning Code, structures up to 33 feet in height are allowed in low and medium residential zones.⁹ In addition, because the project corridor is an existing transportation route in an urbanized area, the OCS would not conflict with adjacent and surrounding uses.

⁹ City of Los Angeles. n.d. *Municipal Code, Chapter I (Planning and Zoning Code), Chapter I, General Provisions and Zoning, Article 2, Specific Planning – Zoning Comprehensive Zoning Plan*. Available:

<[http://www.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/California/lapz/municipalcodechapteriplanningandzoningco/chapterigeneralprovisionsandzoning/article2specificplanning-zoningcomprehen?f=templates\\$fn=default.htm\\$3.0\\$vid=amlegal:lapz_ca\\$anc=>](http://www.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/California/lapz/municipalcodechapteriplanningandzoningco/chapterigeneralprovisionsandzoning/article2specificplanning-zoningcomprehen?f=templates$fn=default.htm$3.0$vid=amlegal:lapz_ca$anc=>)>. Accessed: February 13, 2013.

Stations

Under this alternative, 28 stations would be in areas that are primarily commercial and residential. Stations would include aesthetic enhancements, such as landscaping, canopies, and artwork, which would be compatible with adjacent and surrounding land uses.

Maintenance and Storage Facility

Under this alternative, construction of a new MSF would be required to accommodate both operational and administrative functions. The exact location of the proposed MSF has yet to be determined; however, three potential locations have been selected for consideration along Van Nuys Boulevard at Aetna, Keswick, and Arminta Streets. The selection of the candidate MSF locations were based on the following criteria to ensure compatibility with adjacent and surround land uses:

- Location within an industrialized area, to the extent feasible;
- Proximity to the alignment (Van Nuys Boulevard and San Fernando Road);
- Accessibility via rail tracks;
- Size of facility site; and
- Distance from noise-sensitive receptors, to the extent feasible.

The candidate MSF sites are located in commercial and industrial zones and are generally adjacent to existing transportation facilities. Therefore, the MSF sites would generally be compatible with adjacent and surrounding land uses; however, operational activities at the MSF sites including train movements into and out of the MSF would result in potentially significant noise impacts on some nearby sensitive uses. Additional details on the each of the candidate MSF sites and noise impacts are provided below (also see Section 4.8 – Noise and Vibration).

Option A – Aetna Street MSF Site

The candidate MSF site at Aetna Street is just south of the Metro Orange Line near the southern terminus of the proposed Low-floor LRT/Tram line. The site is comprised primarily of light and commercial manufacturing uses. Use of this site would require the acquisition of approximately 30 properties located in the Light Industrial (M2-1) and Commercial Manufacturing (CM-1) Zones. The lead tracks would be aligned south of the Metro Orange Line, which would require the acquisition of the adjacent auto dealership property that is used as parking. The proposed MSF is an allowed use in these zoning districts and would generally be compatible with adjacent and surrounding light industrial and manufacturing uses, as long as the MSF operations are conducted in compliance with the conditions in the City of Los Angeles Zoning Code for these districts. However, as discussed in the noise section of this EIS/EIR, significant noise impacts would occur at noise-sensitive uses near this MSF site.

Option B – Keswick Street MSF Site

The MSF site at Keswick Street is also just south of the Metrolink railroad tracks. The site is in a mainly industrial and commercial area, and has no adjacent residential properties. The site would require the acquisition of approximately 30 properties, the majority of which are located in the Light Industrial Zone (M2-1) with two properties in the Commercial Zone (C2-1). The proposed MSF is an allowed use in these zoning districts and would be compatible with adjacent and surrounding industrial and commercial uses, as long as the MSF operations are conducted in compliance with the conditions in the City of Los Angeles Zoning Code for these districts.

Option C – Arminta Street MSF Site

The MSF site at Arminta Street is just north of the Metrolink railroad tracks. The site is in a commercial area with residential properties to the north. The residential properties to the north would be buffered by a new 10-foot wide landscaping buffer inside the maintenance facility to reduce potential impacts. The site would require the acquisition of approximately 26 properties located in the Commercial Zone (C2-1). The proposed MSF is an allowed use in this zoning district and would be compatible with adjacent and surrounding commercial uses, as long as the MSF operations are conducted in compliance with the conditions in the City of Los Angeles Zoning Code for the C-2 district. However, as discussed in the noise section of this EIS/EIR, significant noise impacts would occur at noise-sensitive uses near this MSF site.

Traction Power Substations

This alternative would also require traction power substations (TPSS), which would be typically placed approximately every 0.8-mile. Eleven potential TPSS locations have been identified for this alternative based on initial examination of traction power needs. For each TPSS location, two options have been identified in case one is found infeasible. Existing Metro and City of Los Angeles properties are preferred TPSS locations to avoid property acquisitions. Car dealerships were specifically omitted from consideration because they are a major source of employment and tax revenue. Nonetheless, the potential exists that operation of some of the TPSS would result in significant noise impacts on nearby noise-sensitive land uses (see Section 4.8- Noise and Vibration).

To ensure compatibility with adjacent and surrounding land uses to the extent feasible, the majority of potential TPSS locations would be located near potential stations or the maintenance facility options. In addition, other proposed TPSS locations would be located in vacant lots, parking lots, commercial sites, and at roadway intersections to avoid conflicts with adjacent and surrounding land uses.

Cumulative Impacts

The cumulative impacts under Alternative 3 would be slightly greater than those described above for Alternatives 1 and 2. As discussed above, Alternative 3 would result in localized traffic impacts at 32 of 73 study intersections. Operation of the Low-Floor LRT/Tram facilities would also generate additional noise that could result in noise impacts on some nearby sensitive land uses.

Past projects have resulted in localized traffic and noise impacts, and other present or reasonably foreseeable future projects in the area could further degrade traffic and noise conditions in the area. Therefore, cumulative impacts from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects are significant. As a result, any adverse impacts from Alternative 3 would be considered cumulatively considerable.

However, since the related projects are either development projects or other projects which do not further reduce mixed-flow roadway capacity, the alternative's contribution to cumulative traffic impacts during operation would not be cumulatively considerable. In addition, because noise impacts resulting from Alternative 3 would be minimized or mitigated through mitigation measures, the alternative's contribution to cumulative noise impacts during operation would be reduced to less than cumulatively considerable after implementation of mitigation measures.

Compliance Requirements and Design Features

Station areas for this alternative would be designed in accordance with local codes and ordinances.

Mitigation Measures

Construction Mitigation Measures

See mitigation measures under Alternative 1.

Operational Mitigation Measures

No feasible mitigation measures have been identified to mitigate the localized traffic impacts that would occur under this alternative, which would conflict with land use plan policies and goals to reduce congestion. Please see Section 4.8 – Noise and Vibration for measures to mitigate potential noise and vibration impacts. Specifically, Mitigation Measures MM-NOI-2 through MM-NOI-4b include the construction of sound walls, the use of friction control (lubrication system), low-noise vehicles, track, TPSS equipment, and design and placement of the MSF site in consideration of sensitive receptors. In addition, Mitigation Measure MM-VIB-2 requires the installation of track and track equipment that reduces potential vibration due to operation of the rail vehicle near sensitive receptors.

Impacts Remaining After Mitigation

NEPA Finding

The effects of construction would not be adverse under NEPA, but operational effects of localized traffic congestion would remain adverse.

CEQA Determination

Construction impacts would be less than significant. Operational impacts would be significant and unavoidable due to localized traffic congestion.

Alternative 4 – LRT

Construction Impacts

Division of an Established Community

Impacts would be greater in extent than the impacts described for Alternative 3, due to the potentially greater construction impacts along the subway portion of the alignment. Street, lane, and sidewalk closures could reduce pedestrian and vehicle mobility between communities throughout the study area during construction. However, these closures would be temporary and are not expected to substantially divide existing communities or neighborhoods. Additionally, implementation of a Traffic Management Plan and Construction Phasing and Staging Plan would further reduce the disruption caused by construction activities and access to businesses and residential areas would be maintained to the extent feasible. Therefore, impacts/ effects would be less than significant under CEQA and not adverse under NEPA.

Conflicts with Local Land Use Plans

Impacts would be to the same as the impacts described above for Alternatives 1, 2, and 3. Substantial conflicts with local land use plans during the construction period are not expected to occur and impacts/effects would be less than significant under CEQA and not adverse under NEPA.

Incompatibility with Adjacent and Surrounding Land Uses

Impacts would be to the same as the impacts described above for Alternative 3. Construction activities along the alignment would result in temporary nuisance impacts (e.g., noise, air quality impacts) on nearby land uses. Construction noise would result from the use of heavy equipment during construction activities, such as excavation, grading, ground clearing, and installing foundations and structures, as well as from trucks hauling materials to and from the construction areas. Air quality impacts would result from the generation of fugitive dust during ground disturbing activities, and from the operation of heavy-duty, diesel-fueled equipment, such as bulldozers, trucks, and scrapers.

The construction impacts on nearby sensitive land uses would be potentially significant under CEQA, due to impacts exceeding the applicable CEQA thresholds, and therefore would be incompatible with existing land use plans and codes, before mitigation.

Construction noise impacts are temporary, and given the requirement under NEPA that the context and intensity of an effect be considered when determining if it is a significant or substantial adverse effect, the construction land use incompatibility effects are not considered to be adverse under NEPA.

Operational Impacts

Regional Land Use and Development

Impacts would be to the same as the impacts described for Alternative 3.

Local Land Use and Development

Division of an Established Community

Impacts would be the same as the impacts described for Alternative 3. This alternative would not divide an established community and impacts would be less than significant under CEQA and not adverse under NEPA.

Conflicts with Local Land Use Plans

Under Alternative 4, significant traffic impacts would occur at 20 of 73 study intersections, compared to 32 of 73 study intersections under Alternative 3; 24 of the 73 study intersections under Alternative 2; and 16 of 73 study intersections under Alternative 1. Given potential conflicts with local land use plans, as discussed under Alternative 3, the potential impacts under CEQA for Alternative 4 are considered to be significant. However, under NEPA, based on the context and intensity of impacts and overall regional benefits, the impacts due to conflicts with local land use plans would not be considered adverse.

Incompatibility with Adjacent and Surrounding Land Uses

Project Corridor

Impacts would be less than the impacts described under Alternative 3 above because LRT vehicles would be operating underground in the subway portion of the alignment; thus, air emissions, noise, and vibration from those vehicles would not affect sensitive receptors in residential or recreational

areas along that portion of the project corridor. Therefore, it should be noted that placing a portion of the alignment in a subway would eliminate the at-grade noise and other impacts on nearby sensitive uses that would occur under Alternative 3.

Overhead Contact System

Impacts would be the same as the impacts described under Alternative 3 with the exception of the subway portion of the Alternative 4 alignment.

Stations

This alternative would include 14 stations, three of which would be underground near Sherman Way, the Van Nuys Metrolink station, and Roscoe Boulevard, in primarily commercial and residential areas. Stations would include aesthetic enhancements, such as landscaping, canopies, and artwork, which would be compatible with adjacent and surrounding land uses.

This alternative would require right-of-way acquisition of commercial properties and some vacant land near the proposed stations at Sherman Way, Roscoe Boulevard, Pacoima, Maclay Avenue, and the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink station. While this alternative would result in the conversion of some properties from commercial use to transportation to allow construction of the proposed stations, this alternative would promote transit service to these areas and would enhance access to adjacent and surrounding businesses.

Maintenance and Storage Facility

The impacts would be to the same as those described above for Alternative 3.

Traction Power Substations

The impacts would be the same as those described above for Alternative 3.

Cumulative Impacts

The cumulative impacts would be to the same as those described above for Alternative 3.

Compliance Requirements and Design Features

Station areas for this alternative would be designed in accordance with local codes and ordinances.

Mitigation Measures

Construction Mitigation Measures

See mitigation measures under Alternative 1.

Operational Mitigation Measures

No feasible mitigation measures have been identified to mitigate the localized traffic impacts that would occur under this alternative, which would conflict with land use plan policies and goals to reduce congestion. Please see Section 4.8, Noise and Vibration, for measures to mitigate potential noise and vibration impacts. Specifically, Mitigation Measures MM-NOI-2 through MM-NOI-4b include the construction of sound walls, the use of friction control (lubrication system), low-noise vehicles, track, TPSS equipment, and design and placement of the MSF site in consideration of sensitive receptors. In addition, Mitigation Measure MM-VIB-2 requires the installation of track and track equipment that reduces potential vibration due to operation of the rail vehicle near sensitive receptors.

Impacts Remaining After Mitigation

NEPA Finding

The effects of construction would not be adverse under NEPA, but operational effects of localized traffic congestion would remain adverse.

CEQA Determination

Construction impacts would be less than significant. Operational impacts would be significant and unavoidable due to localized traffic congestion.