

Highland Avenue has limited shade trees and occasional palm trees planted along the sidewalk. Views to the north include the Hollywood Hills and the Hollywood United Methodist Church, located at Franklin Avenue, as shown in Figure 4-29. The gothic architectural style, tall spire, and location at a “T” of two streets make the church a prominent visual resource in the neighborhood. Views to the east and west include the historic Hollywood corridor with notable 1920s architecture and defining billboard signage. Views to the south are of the Mid-Wilshire corridor.



**Figure 4-29. View looking north on Highland Avenue, with Hollywood Hills and the United Methodist Church in the background**

The exaggerated billboards, tall thin palm trees, star-studded sidewalk, and historic buildings make the entire Hollywood/Highland area an important visual resource for the entire LA region. The Hollywood/Highland Station area’s existing visual quality is high due to its distinctive and unique architectural features. The area also contains several memorable and unique visual features.

#### **4.2.14 Santa Monica/La Brea Station Area**

The Santa Monica/La Brea Station area is at the eastern “gateway” to West Hollywood. The large two-story retail development on the southwest corner is a prominent visual resource. Figure 4-30 shows the West Hollywood Gateway Development at the southwest corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and N. La Brea Avenue. With a central courtyard/plaza, wide sidewalks, trees, planters, and landscaping along the southwest side of N. La Brea Avenue and the south side of Santa Monica Boulevard, the retail development makes for an inviting and pleasant pedestrian environment.



**Figure 4-30. West Hollywood Gateway Development at southwest corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and N. La Brea Avenue**

Figure 4-30 also shows the streetscape on the west side of N. La Brea Avenue with wide sidewalks, extensive plantings, and pedestrian amenities. Surface parking lots adjacent to strip malls and other commercial businesses occupy the northwest, northeast, and southwest corner lots of the intersection.

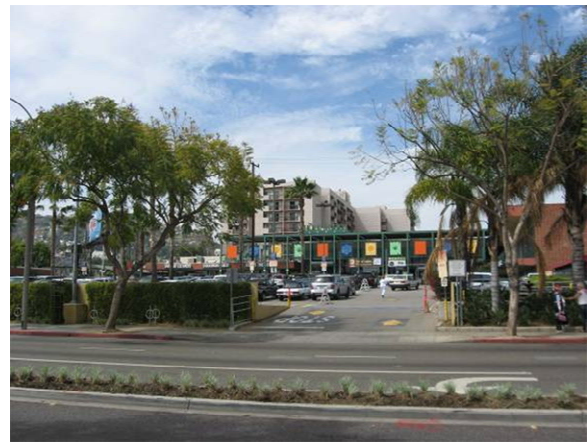
Buildings along Santa Monica Boulevard and N. La Brea Avenue, both major commercial corridors, range from one to two stories. Billboards are located along both of these streets, further defining them as commercial corridors. Strip malls and fast-food businesses are predominant on N. La Brea Avenue, whereas more aesthetically pleasing buildings oriented to the sidewalk are predominant along Santa Monica Boulevard. The north side of Santa Monica Boulevard includes some older, industrial buildings with few windows, signage, awnings, and other pedestrian-friendly amenities. The historic Formosa Café is one block west of the Santa Monica Boulevard/N. La Brea Avenue intersection. Nearby open landscaped spaces include the Poinsettia Recreation Center with a park, tennis courts, and playing fields; and Plummer Park. The Santa Monica/La Brea Station area's existing visual quality is moderate due to its general pleasant appearance, but lack of strong consistent architectural and urban design features.

#### **4.2.15 Santa Monica/Fairfax Station Area**

The Santa Monica/Fairfax Station area is at the western gateway to the “east” part of West Hollywood and the start of the Eastside Redevelopment Area. Santa Monica Boulevard and N. Fairfax Avenue are major commercial corridors that are characterized by a diverse mix of shops, restaurants, and bars. Behind the commercial corridors lie residential neighborhoods with small houses and bungalows, built up to the sidewalks, giving the area a tightly knit visual character. Most buildings are one to two stories with small-scale

signage, intermittent awnings, and large shop windows. Figure 4-31 shows the Whole Foods market at the northeast corner of the Santa Monica Boulevard/N. Fairfax Avenue intersection. A small, two-story strip mall with a tower and cupola is at the northwest corner. The tower is a visual landmark in the area (Figure 4-32).

The “Main Street” of West Hollywood, Santa Monica Boulevard, is the primary public open space with pedestrian-oriented amenities. It has an attractive streetscape with shade trees and flowering, ornamental trees



**Figure 4-31. View of Whole Foods market at the northeast corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and N. Fairfax Avenue**



**Figure 4-32. View of mall at northwest corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and N. Fairfax Avenue**



planted in a continuous pattern. Overhead street lights and commercial signage are common visual features in this area.

N. Fairfax Avenue is a busy north/south corridor that carries traffic from major attractions, such as the Farmer’s Market at the Grove, through a historic district (containing the famous Canter’s Deli) toward Sunset Boulevard at the foot of the Hollywood Hills. Views of the Hollywood Hills help orient the traveler and are a visual resource. In addition, views to the south on N. Fairfax Avenue include Baldwin Hills. Large billboards are located throughout West Hollywood on commercial corridors and are prominent features along Santa Monica Boulevard and N. Fairfax Avenue. The Santa Monica/Fairfax Station area’s existing visual quality is high due to its strong and consistent architectural and urban design features.

**4.2.16 Santa Monica/San Vicente Station Area**

The Santa Monica/San Vicente Station area is in a vibrant entertainment center with restaurants, bars, clubs, and shops. The visual character varies with similar-sized, street-facing buildings on small lots along Santa Monica Boulevard. More eclectic, varied buildings lie along San Vicente Boulevard, including the large, colorful, glass buildings that comprise the Pacific Design Center, as well as small community buildings. Large billboards along Santa Monica Boulevard are defining visual features that provide visitors with a sense of Hollywood glamour with their large film and fashion advertisements. Most buildings are one to three stories and face the street with parking in back. A parking structure, large parking lot, currently used for Metro employees and bus parking, occupies the south side of Santa Monica Boulevard.

Figure 4-33 shows Santa Monica Boulevard at Westmount looking west. This street is a major bus route and walking corridor with wide sidewalks and double rows of streets trees, café seating, and special mid-block pedestrian crossings. Overhead street lights and commercial signage are common visual features in this area.

With little open space in the area, wide sidewalks provide much of the area for public space. However, landscaped open space also exists in the Santa Monica Boulevard median, along with rotating public art.



**Figure 4-33. View looking west on Santa Monica Boulevard**

The residential neighborhood south of Santa Monica Boulevard has narrow streets with small bungalows and cottages, as well as small-scale multifamily buildings. The residential neighborhood to the north has larger single-family residences. The Hollywood Hills are a visual resource and orienting natural landmark in views to the north. Views to the east include the iconic Emser Tile building. The Metro property on the south side of Santa Monica Boulevard presents a large blank wall to the street. The Santa Monica/San



Vicente Station area’s existing visual quality is high due to its strong and consistent architectural and urban design features.

#### 4.2.17 Beverly Center Area Station

The Beverly Center Area Station is near the southern boundary of West Hollywood. The Beverly Center occupies an entire block and is a prominent visual feature of the area. The southwest face of the Beverly Center looking west along Beverly Boulevard is shown in Figure 4-34. Both the Beverly Center and the Cedars Sinai Hospital are large buildings that together create a canyon effect on the south side of Beverly Boulevard. Buildings on the north side of Beverly Boulevard are smaller and support a more pedestrian-scale environment.



Figure 4-34. View looking north on Beverly Boulevard toward the Beverly Center

Most of the commercial buildings in the area were built in the last 50 years and convey an eclectic architectural style. The surrounding neighborhoods have small California-style bungalows with well-landscaped yards.

La Cienega Boulevard slopes up to the north leading to captivating views of the Hollywood Hills. The hills run east to west and also orient the traveler visually. The Beverly Center, with the Hollywood Hills in the background, is shown in Figure 4-35.



Figure 4-35. View looking north on La Cienega Boulevard toward the Beverly Center and Hollywood Hills

Large parking lots occupy some key urban spaces (e.g., the southeast and northeast corners of Beverly and La Cienega Boulevards) as part of a gas station and strip mall. Street trees are planted irregularly with little continuity in the area. Overhead street lights and commercial signage are common visual features in this area. The existing visual quality in the area surrounding the Beverly Center Area Station is moderate due to its general pleasant appearance, but lack of strong consistent architectural and urban design features.



**4.2.18 Maintenance and Operations Facility Sites**

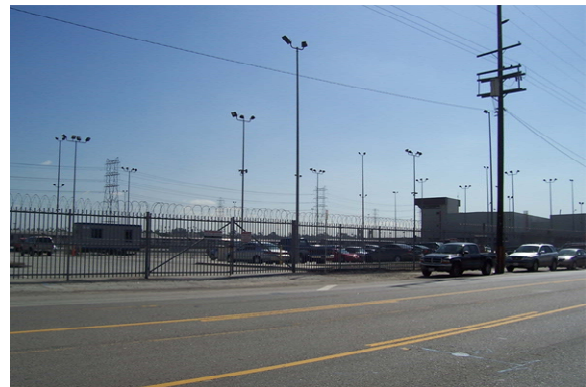
The proposed locations for future vehicle storage and maintenance are shown on Figure 2-48. Additional storage and maintenance capacity is proposed to be developed as an expansion of the existing Division 20 Maintenance and Storage Facility (see Figure 2-49) or as an alternate, at the Union Pacific Los Angeles Transportation Center Rail Yard (see Figure 2-50).

**4.2.18.1 Existing Division 20 Maintenance and Storage Facility Site and Proposed Expansion Area**

The existing Division 20 Maintenance and Storage Facility site contains several buildings, including a main building for major repair, an adjoining service and inspection building, and an open building for outside blow down next to the service and inspection building. The main building contains track bays for repair and bays for wheel truing. The rest of the site contains several rows of rail tracks.

The site is mostly paved and does not contain any landscaped areas. It is in a heavily industrial area, characterized by large blocks and large industrial buildings. The site sits between two bridges that pass over the LA River on First and Fourth Streets. These bridges were built in 1929 and 1930 and are prominent visual features in the area. They have concrete arches and are exemplary of the City Beautiful style.

The Southern California Institute of Architecture is located west of the site in a north-south oriented building along Santa Fe Avenue. The site is visible from this school. There are no notable views from the site and the area’s existing visual quality is low due to its lack of visual coherence and compositional harmony. In addition, the area also contains heavy industrial-type land uses that typically include elements that are considered visual eyesores such as overhead power lines and flood lights on tall standards (Figure 4-36).



**Figure 4-36. View looking north toward the existing Maintenance Facility**

The expansion area is adjacent to the southern boundary of the Division 20 Yard, between Fourth Street (on the north) and Sixth Street, and immediately adjacent to the LA River. It is configured in a narrow, funnel shape and was once used as a junction point for railway spur tracks serving nearby industries. The existing Metro rail tracks run east of the site.

There are no buildings on the site, which is entirely paved. Buildings east of the site consist of one- to three-story industrial-type buildings.

The Fourth and Sixth Street Bridges over the LA River frame each boundary of the site. These bridges were built in 1930 and 1932, respectively, and are prominent visual features in the area. The Fourth Street Bridge has concrete arches and is exemplary of the



City Beautiful style. The Sixth Street Bridge has concrete columns, bent caps, girders, and abutments.

Santa Fe Avenue, immediately west of the site, is a wide, two-lane road with informal parking areas along its sides, some of which are dirt. Views from the Fourth Street Bridge to the site are limited for passing motorists by the thick bridge walls, but pedestrians can see the site from the bridge that passes immediately over the site. The existing maintenance and storage facility site and the expansion area are of low visual quality due to a lack of visual coherence and compositional harmony. In addition, these areas also contain heavy industrial-type land uses with elements that are considered visual eyesores, such as tall overhead power lines and floodlights (Figure 4-37).



Figure 4-37. View looking north toward the Fourth Street Bridge from Santa Fe Avenue

#### 4.2.18.2 Union Pacific Railroad Los Angeles Transportation Center Rail Yard

This alternative site is a portion of the larger Union Pacific Railroad Los Angeles Transportation Center Rail Yard, which is over 120 acres. It is surrounded by the Union Pacific Railroad Los Angeles Transportation Center Rail Yard, the Los Angeles River, and I-5.

The site is mainly concrete open space parking and circulation areas for trucks; however, one main large rectangular warehouse-type building is located along the site’s western edge. The site contains and is surrounded by railroad tracks and heavy industrial uses. It is also adjacent to the LA River, which is channelized within a concrete waterway. While the LA River area is currently heavily industrialized, plans for revitalization through the recent LA River Revitalization Master Plan call for greening and open space improvements along the river and across the river to the west, toward the new State Historical Park at the Cornfields.

I-5, U.S. Highway 101, and the LA River visually isolate the site, but the grade increases to the east permitting views to and from the east side of the river (Figure 4-38). These views include the LA County Hospital; the USC Medical Center area; and commercial, industrial, and residential buildings.



Figure 4-38. View looking east toward the LA County Hospital and the USC Medical Center on the hill