



**Community Impact Assessment
for the
Wilshire Bus Rapid Transit Project
Los Angeles, California**

Prepared for:

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Metropolitan Transportation Authority
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Acronyms and Abbreviations

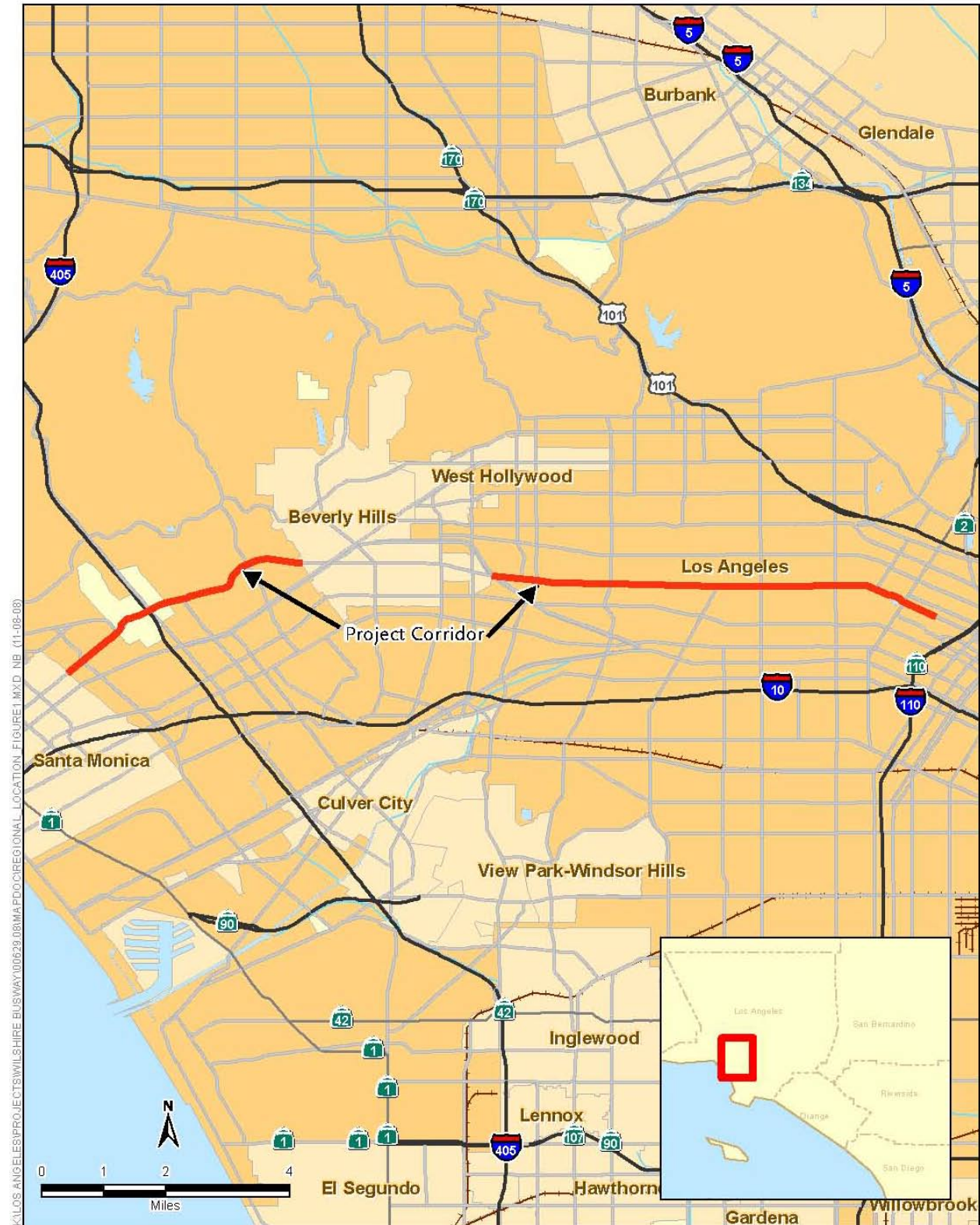
APE	area of potential effects
California Register	California Register of Historical Resources
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CIA	community impact assessment
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Authority
LACMTA	Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
National Register	National Register of Historic Places
proposed project	Wilshire Bus Rapid Transit Project
ROW	right-of-way
SF	Summary File
VA	Veterans Administration

Introduction

ICF International has prepared this community impact assessment (CIA) memorandum for the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) to evaluate community impacts as a result of the Wilshire Bus Rapid Transit Project (proposed project). The proposed project is to be located along Wilshire Boulevard between Valencia Street just west of downtown Los Angeles to Centinela Avenue immediately adjacent to the City of Santa Monica, excluding the portion of the corridor within the City of Beverly Hills (see Figures 1 and 2). The methodology used in this CIA is in accordance with the guidelines specified by the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) and LACMTA. This memorandum is intended to serve as a supporting technical memorandum for the environmental documentation for the proposed project.

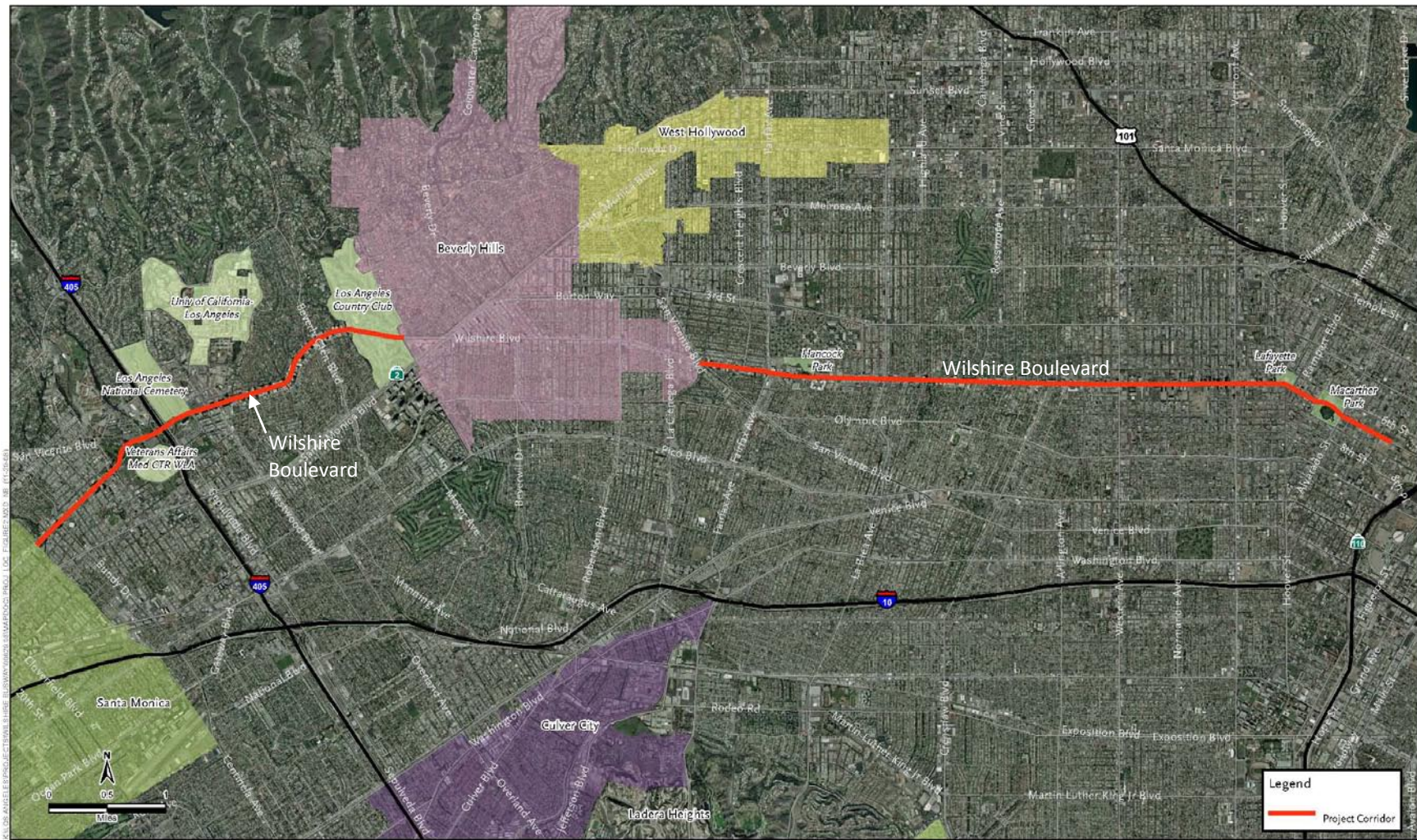
The analysis includes requirements of Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Lower-Income Populations (February 11, 1994). This requires environmental documentation to address “disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects” of federally funded projects “on minority populations and lower-income populations” and ensure that the project does not “have the effect of subjecting persons to discrimination because of their race, color, or national origin.”

Figure 1: Regional Location Map



SOURCE: ESRI Streetmap USA (2007)

Figure 2: Project Vicinity Map



SOURCE: ESRI Streetmap USA (2007), ESRI USA Imagery (2005)

Executive Summary

The Wilshire Bus Rapid Transit Project (proposed project) would not result in long-term, significant adverse impacts on population or housing in the proposed corridor. The construction and operation of the project would be carried out within the existing right-of-way (ROW). No acquisitions or displacements would be necessary for the proposed project. Businesses and residences in the project vicinity could experience temporary impacts from increased dust and noise, diminished access, and general inconveniences during the construction period; however, these impacts would be both temporary and minor. The project is consistent with the local plans and compatible with surrounding land uses. The proposed project would not result in an adverse impact on the public services and community facilities in the project area. The proposed project would result in a loss of 11 parking places between Western Avenue and Fairfax Avenue, loss of approximately 85 existing on-street parking spaces between Selby Avenue and Comstock Avenue during peak hours (53 on the north side of the street and 32 on the south side), and a number of mature trees along the proposed corridor. Appropriate avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures have been identified to minimize impacts, where feasible.

Project Overview

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) has initiated the Wilshire Bus Rapid Transit Project along a total of 9.9 miles of Wilshire Boulevard between downtown Los Angeles and the City of Santa Monica. The project corridor spans, but does not include the 2.6-mile portion of the corridor within the City of Beverly Hills. Most of the existing curb lanes on Wilshire Boulevard in the City of Los Angeles area would be “converted” to bus and right-turn only operation in the peak periods (7–9 a.m. & 4–7 p.m.) on weekdays. The curb lanes would be repaired or reconstructed, where necessary, and restriped and signed as peak period bus lanes. In other areas, curbside bus lanes would be added to Wilshire Boulevard as new lanes by widening or with the removal of jut-outs. Upgrades to the transit signal priority system include (1) the addition of bus signal priority at intersections with near-side bus stops (a recently developed and successfully tested concept), (2) increase in maximum available time for transit signal priority from 10% to 15% of the traffic signal cycle at minor intersections, and (3) reduction in the number of traffic signal recovery cycles from two to one at key intersections along the corridor. A portion of the proposed project is under County jurisdiction, between Veteran Avenue and Federal Avenue (approximately 0.8 mile) near the Veterans Administration facilities. Key elements of the County’s project scope include widening Wilshire Boulevard between Bonsall Avenue and Federal Avenue, reduction of adjacent sidewalks to a uniform width of 10 feet, traffic lane restriping, adjustments to geometrics and traffic signals, signage and markings, and a 470-foot extension of an eastbound left-turn pocket at Sepulveda Boulevard.

In addition to the proposed project, two project alternatives are proposed. A No Project Alternative is required by Section 15126.6(e) of the CEQA Guidelines and assumes that the proposed project would not occur. Under the No Project Alternative, proposed improvements to 9.9 miles of the Wilshire Corridor included under the proposed project would not be implemented. Specifically, the proposed restriping and widening of some existing portions of the Wilshire corridor would not occur. Existing conditions of the Wilshire Corridor would remain under this alternative.

Consequently, the No Project Alternative would not achieve or fulfill any of the goals and objectives of the proposed project.

Alternative A – Truncated Project Without Jut-Out Removal would include the development of an 8.7-mile bus lane from the Wilshire Boulevard/ S. Park View Street intersection to the Wilshire Boulevard/Centinel Avenue intersection. This alternative would eliminate the bus lane from mid-block Veteran Avenue/Gayley Avenue to Sepulveda Boulevard, totaling 0.31 mile. Additionally, this alternative would eliminate the jut-out removal between Comstock Avenue and Malcolm Avenue (1.0 mile). The existing traffic lane would be converted to a bus lane in each direction between Comstock Avenue and Malcolm Avenue. Under Alternative A, an additional 1.8 miles of curb lane reconstruction/resurfacing would occur between Fairfax Avenue and San Vicente Boulevard and between the City of Beverly Hills and Westholme Avenue. The key differences between this alternative and the proposed project include the following: elimination of the bus lane between Valencia Street and S. Park View Street; inclusion of an additional 1.8 miles of curb lane reconstruction/resurfacing between Fairfax Avenue and San Vicente Boulevard and between the City of Beverly Hills and Westholme Avenue; retention of the jut-outs between Comstock Avenue and Malcolm Avenue; and elimination of the bus lane from approximately 300 feet east of Veteran Avenue to the I-405 northbound ramps.

For the purposes of this analysis, the proposed project includes the largest geographic extent, and therefore serves as the basis of the study area.

Community Profile

Land Use. The proposed corridor is located across five different Community Plan Areas in the City of Los Angeles. The Community Plan Areas are Westlake, Wilshire, Westwood, West Los Angeles, and Brentwood–Pacific Palisades. Wilshire Boulevard is a densely developed corridor with commercial development along both sides.

Within the **Westlake Community Plan Area**, Wilshire Boulevard extends from Valencia Street to Lafayette Park Place. Within this Community Plan Area, land uses along Wilshire Boulevard are mainly commercial, including office and retail (small businesses and strip malls), interspersed with some residential uses, parking lots, and recreational facilities such as MacArthur Park and Lafayette Multipurpose Center. The area consists of a mix of mid-rise (8–10 stories) and low-rise buildings.

Within the **Wilshire Community Plan Area**, Wilshire Boulevard extends from Lafayette Park Place to San Vicente Boulevard (City of Beverly Hills boundary). Within this Community Plan Area, a long, narrow corridor of commercial activity exists along Wilshire Boulevard. The commercial activities along the corridor in the Wilshire Community Plan Area comprise professional offices and retail (strip mall and small businesses) interspersed with multi-family residential areas. Additionally, the corridor includes recreational facilities, such as the Museum Row, Hancock Park, and La Brea Tar Pits. The buildings fronting Wilshire Boulevard contain several high-rise (20 stories) and mid-rise (8–10 stories) office buildings.

Within the **Westwood Community Plan Area**, Wilshire Boulevard extends from City of Beverly Hills boundary to Veterans Avenue. Within this Community Plan Area, the proposed corridor consists of multi-family residential units. High-rise towers are located along Wilshire Boulevard between the Los Angeles Country Club and Malcolm Avenue. Near Westwood Boulevard, the high-rise office corridor serves as a regional business center with financial institutions and corporate headquarters. Both the Los Angeles Country Club and the Los Angeles National Cemetery are within the Westwood Community Plan Area. The buildings fronting Wilshire Boulevard are high-rise (20 stories) and mid-rise (8–10 stories) office buildings.

Within the **West Los Angeles Community Plan Area**, Wilshire Boulevard extends from Federal Avenue to Centinela Avenue (City of Santa Monica boundary). Within this Community Plan Area, the proposed corridor consists of commercial uses, primarily strip development. The majority of commercial facilities are either small-scale and freestanding or mini-mall buildings designed primarily to serve local neighborhoods. The Wilshire corridor in this Community Plan Area includes the Los Angeles Veterans Administration and Hospital Complex. The area consists of a mix of mid-rise (8–10 stories) and low-rise buildings.

The portion of Wilshire corridor in the **Brentwood–Pacific Palisades Community Plan Area** (north of Wilshire Avenue, between Federal Avenue on the east and Centinela Avenue on the west form the street limits for Community Plan Area along proposed corridor) is mainly comprised of commercial uses, such as offices and small-scale and freestanding or mini-mall commercial developments. The area consists of a mix of mid-rise (8–10 stories) and low-rise buildings.

Table 1 describes existing land uses, affected neighborhoods, and community facilities adjacent to corridor segments (corridor segments are defined as street segments between two sequential Rapid bus stops). Figures 3a–3c show the land use along with the Community Plan Area boundaries along the proposed corridor.

Table 1: Proposed Project Land Uses

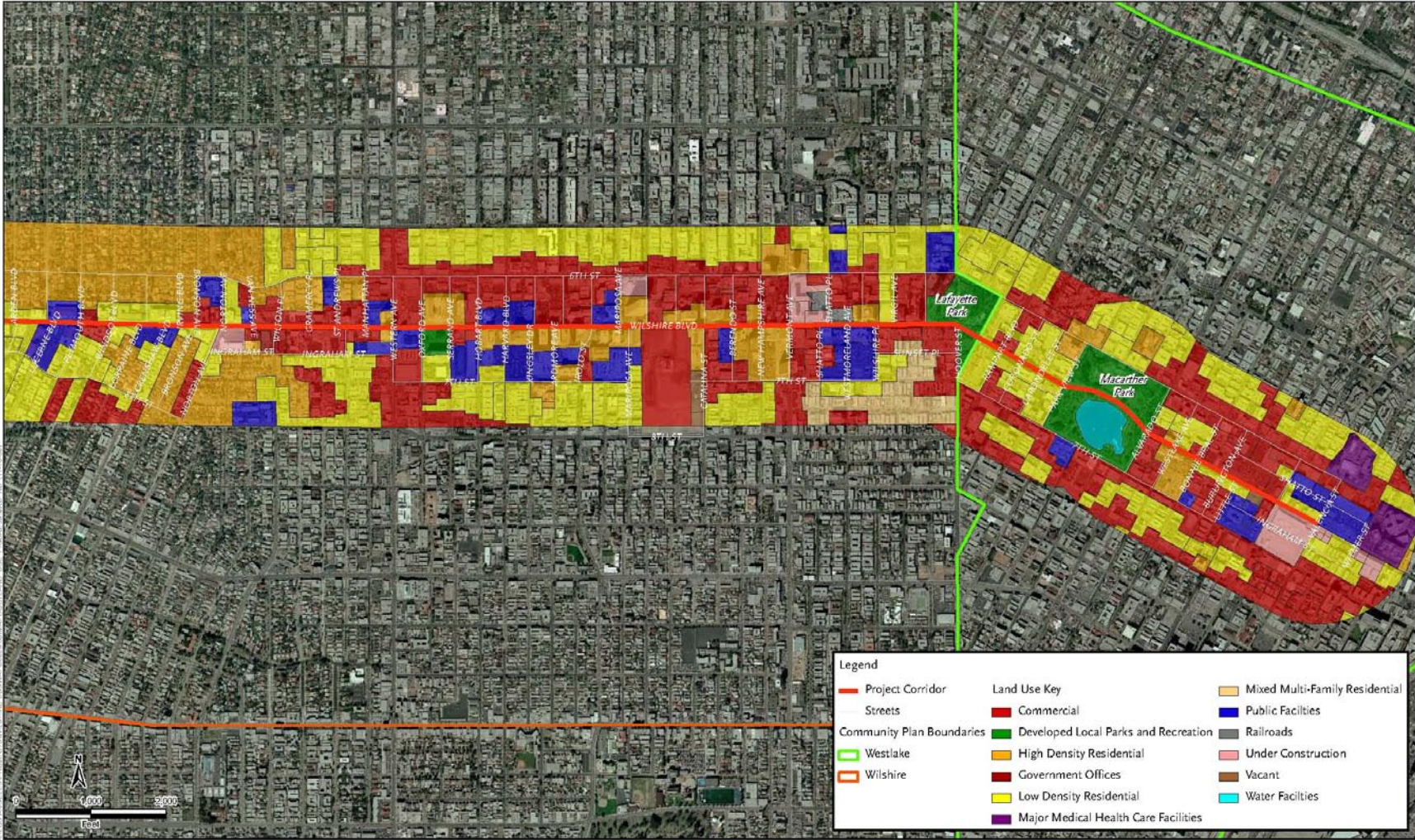
Corridor Segment	Land Uses along Corridor	Destination and Activity Centers	Community Facilities within 0.25 Mile	Neighborhoods
Valencia to Alvarado	Office, Retail (strip malls), Parking lots, Multi-Family Residential	Los Angeles Medical Center, Nuestra Alvarado Medical Center, MacArthur Park Redline/Purple Line Station	John H. Liechty Middle School, Esperanza Elementary, Mid-City Adult Learning Center, Los Angeles Early Intervention Center, LAFD Fire station No. 11, and Los Angeles Medical Center. More than ten churches, such as United Presbyterian Church, Harvest Church of Los Angeles, Council of Korean Unification, Harvest Church of Los Angeles, etc.	Westlake/MacArthur Park
Alvarado to Vermont	Office, Retail, Educational, Multi-Family Residential	MacArthur Park, Lafayette Multipurpose Community Center, Vermont Redline/Purple Line Station	College of Southern California, Southwestern Law School, Charles White Elementary School, Harold Mac Allister High School, Metropolitan Skills Center, Gabriella Charter School, Shriner’s Hospital for Children. More than ten churches, such as Cana Presbyterian Church, Miju Sungmoon Presbyterian Church, etc	Lafayette Park, Koreatown
Vermont to Normandie	Office, Retail, Multi-Family Residential	Former Ambassador Hotel Site, Normandie Redline/Purple Line Station, Koreatown, Wiltern Theatre	Los Angeles Leadership Academy, Cheerful Helpers Family and Study Center. More than ten churches, such as Wilshire Christian Church, American Baptist Church, Founders Church, Light of Glory Church, etc.	Koreatown
Normandie to Western	Office, Retail	Western Purple Line Station	Hobart Blvd Elementary, Camino Nuevo Charter School, Pio Pico Public Library, St. Basil’s Catholic Church, Korean Evangelical Church, International Presbyterian Church, Calvary Faith Church, Doulos Mission Church, Nasung Yang Moon Church, Mijoo Yang Kog Presbyterian Church, Wilshire Boulevard Temple	Koreatown

Corridor Segment	Land Uses along Corridor	Destination and Activity Centers	Community Facilities within 0.25 Mile	Neighborhoods
Western to Crenshaw	Office, Retail, Multi-Family Residential	Getty House	Wilton Place Elementary, Wilshire Park Elementary, Excel Education Academy LAFD Fire Station No. 29, St. James Episcopal School. More than ten churches, such as Christ Church, St. James Episcopal Church, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, California Calvary Church, etc.	Koreatown, Wilshire Center, Mid-Wilshire
Crenshaw to La Brea	Office, Retail, Multi-Family Residential		Burroughs Middle School, Wilshire Private School, Meridian Institute. More than ten churches, such as God's People Church, Hon-Michi Congregation of Los Angeles, Oasis Christian Center, Iglesia De Jesucristo, Guadalupe Missioners, Wilshire United Methodist Church etc.	Mid-Wilshire, Miracle Mile, Hancock Park
La Brea to Fairfax	Office Retail, Museum District	Museum Row, LACMA, Petersen Automotive Museum, Simon Wiesenthal Center Museum of Tolerance, George C. Page Museum of La Brea Discoveries, Museum of Television and Radio, Craft and Folk Art Museum, Hancock Park, Miracle Mile, La Brea Tar Pits	Cathedral Chapel School, Shalhavet School, Museums, West Bethel Presbyterian Church, Cathedral Chapel of St Vibiana, Jewish Historical Society of Southern California, Chabad Synagogue	Mid-Wilshire, Miracle Mile
Fairfax to La Cienega/ Los Angeles City Border	Retail, Office	Museum of Tolerance	La Cienega Park, Temple of the Arts, Congregation Torah V Chesed, Los Angeles Church-Religious, Scottish Rite Temple-LA, Christ Citadel International Church, Church of Religious Science, Ohev Shalom Congregation	Miracle Mile, Carthay Square South, Carthay Circle
Beverly Hills City Border to Westwood	Open Space, Office, High-Rise Residential	Westwood Village	Sinai Akiba Academy, Westwood United Methodist Pre-school, Los Angeles Country Club, Fairburn Avenue Elementary School, Westwood Presbyterian School, Sephardic Temple Tifereth, Westwood Presbyterian Church, University Bible Church, 28th	Westwood, Boulevard Heights

Corridor Segment	Land Uses along Corridor	Destination and Activity Centers	Community Facilities within 0.25 Mile	Neighborhoods
			Church-Christ Scientist, University Presbyterian Church, Westwood Hills Christian Church	
Westwood to Veteran	Institutional, Retail, Office	Westwood Village, UCLA and UCLA Medical Center, Veterans Administration and Hospital, Los Angeles National Cemetery	UCLA Medical Center, Westwood Charter Elementary, Los Angeles National Cemetery	Westwood, West Los Angeles
Veteran to Barrington	Institutional, Retail, Office	Veterans Administration and Hospital, Wadsworth Theatre, West Wilshire Medical Center	Westwood Park, Westside Shepherd of the Hills Church	West Los Angeles, Brentwood
Barrington to Centinela	Office , Retail	Bel Air Surgical Center	University High/ Indian Springs Continuation School, Brockton Avenue Elementary, Church of Jesus Christ of LDS, Christian Science Church,	West Los Angeles, Brentwood

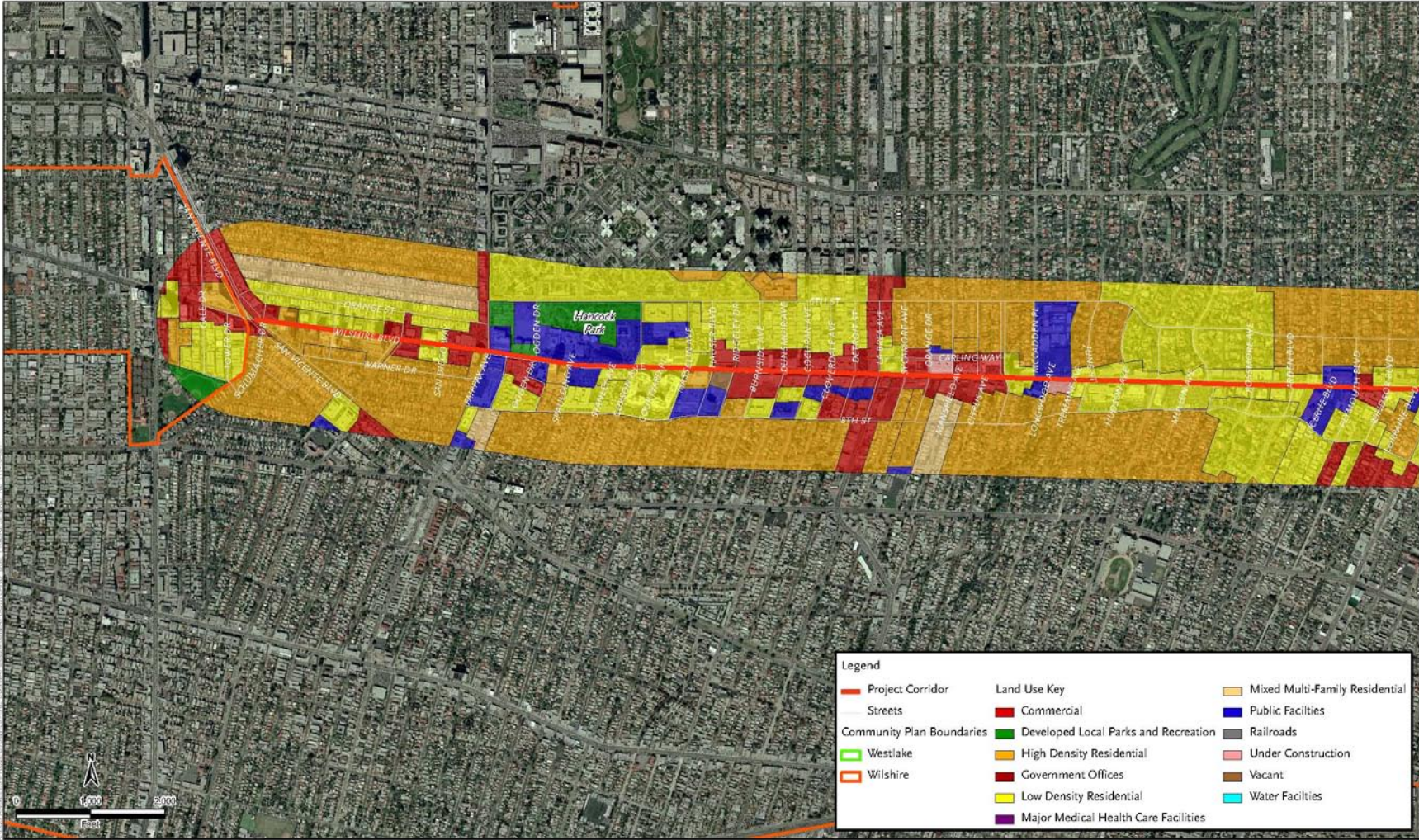
Source: Mid-City/Westside Transit Draft EIS/EIR, Google Earth 2008, Compiled by ICF Jones and Stokes 2008.

Figure 3a: Land Use



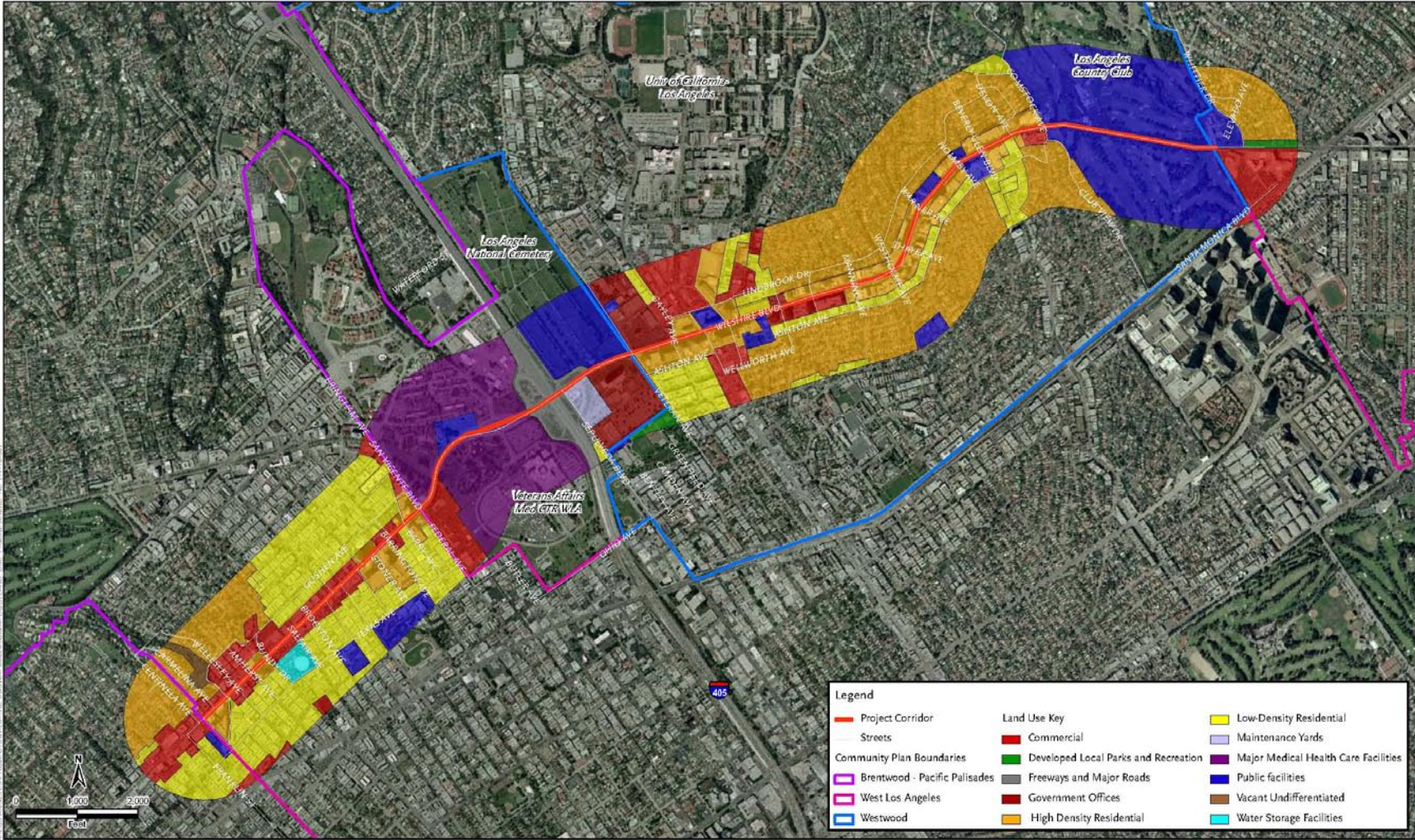
SOURCE: ESRI USA Imagery (2005), SCAG (2005)

Figure 3b: Land Use



SOURCE: ESRI USA Imagery (2005), SCAG (2005)

Figure 3c: Land Use



SOURCE: ESRI USA Imagery (2005), SCAG (2005)

Demographic Characteristics. Data for the Community Plan Areas and the county and City of Los Angeles were gathered to present a demographic profile of the communities. Table 2 presents the racial and ethnic details of the Community Plan Areas and the county and City of Los Angeles. Table 3 presents poverty levels of the Community Plan Areas and the County and City of Los Angeles.

According to the 2000 Census Data, the city as a whole has a population of 3,694,820 persons. Approximately 46.5% of the population is identified as Hispanic, 29.7% is identified as White, 10.9% is identified as African-American and approximately 12.9% is identified as other.¹ On the other hand, the County of Los Angeles has a total population of 9,519,338; approximately 44.6% of population was Hispanic, 31.1% population was identified as White, 9.5% as African-American, and the remaining population of approximately 14.8% belonged to other racial/ethnic groups.

In comparison to the city and county, three of the five Community Plan Areas along the proposed corridor are predominantly White. Brentwood–Pacific Palisades Community Plan Area has a majority White population, with about 87% of the population identifying themselves as White. In the Westwood Community Plan Area, about 63% of the population identified themselves as White, followed by about 23% Asian, and 7% Hispanic. In the West Los Angeles Community Plan Area, about 65% of the population identified themselves as White, followed by about 14% of population being Asian; about 14% population identified themselves as Hispanic, and the rest (7%) belonged to other racial/ethnic groups.

The Westlake and Wilshire Community Plan Areas are dominated by a non-White population. Only about 4% of the population in Westlake and about 24% of the population in the Wilshire Community Plan Area identified themselves as White. About 78% of population Westlake Community Plan Area and 41% in Wilshire Community Plan Area identified themselves as Hispanic. Population of Asian origin formed the next largest racial/ethnic group in both community plan areas.

In terms of low-income population, approximately 18% and 22% of the county and city populations, respectively, are below the poverty line. In comparison, the Brentwood–Pacific Palisades and West Los Angeles Community Plan Areas have a lower share of population below poverty line (see Table 3). In the Westlake and Wilshire Community Plan Areas, 53% and 32% of the population, respectively, live below poverty. Both the numbers are higher than county and city levels (see Table 3). The Westwood Community Plan Area has 22% of its population below poverty line, which is comparable to the City of Los Angeles but higher than the county.

Neighborhood Characteristics. The Wilshire corridor is one of the major east-west commercial corridors in the City of Los Angeles. The Wilshire corridor also forms a central spine for commercial activity for several neighborhoods, including Westlake, Lafayette Park, Koreatown, Wilshire Center, Mid-Wilshire, Hancock Park, Miracle Mile, Carthay Circle, Carthay Square, Westwood, Boulevard Heights, West Los Angeles, and Brentwood Village. Most of these neighborhoods are high-density neighborhoods dominated by multifamily housing.

¹ Other includes people identified as Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, and bi-racial.

Table 2: Race and Ethnic Information

Jurisdiction/ Community Plan Area	Total Population	White (Non Hispanic)	%	African American	%	American Indian/ Native American	%	Asian	%	Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	%	Other Race	%	Two or More Races	%	Hispanic	%
County of Los Angeles	9,519,338	2,959,614	31.1	901,472	9.5	25,609	0.3	1,124,569	11.8	23,265	0.2	19,935	0.2	222,661	2.3	4,242,213	44.6
City of Los Angeles	3,694,820	1,099,188	29.7	401,986	10.9	8,897	0.2	364,850	9.9	4,484	0.1	9,065	0.2	87,277	2.4	1,719,073	46.5
Brentwood– Pacific Palisades	54,118	46,839	86.5	481	0.9	51	0.1	3,119	5.8	23	0.0	160	0.3	1,202	2.2	2,243	4.1
Westlake	106,710	4,463	4.2	4,291	4.0	335	0.3	13,679	12.8	35	0.0	128	0.1	1,011	0.9	82,768	77.6
Wilshire	292,101	69,097	23.7	25,727	8.8	513	0.2	68,060	23.3	158	0.1	895	0.3	6,952	2.4	120,699	41.3
Westwood	49,298	31,131	63.1	1,000	2.0	42	0.1	11,079	22.5	68	0.1	182	0.4	2,314	4.7	3,482	7.1
West Los Angeles	71,944	46,866	65.1	2,101	2.9	101	0.1	10,030	13.9	70	0.1	201	0.3	2,718	3.8	9,857	13.7

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000, Summary File (SF) 1; Los Angeles City Planning Department website 2008.

Table 3: Poverty Level

Jurisdiction/ Community Plan Area	Population for Whom Poverty Is Determined	Population below Poverty Line	% of Population below Poverty Line
County of Los Angeles	9,349,771	1,674,599	17.9
City of Los Angeles	3,622,606	801,050	22.1
Brentwood-Pacific Palisades	54,110	3,258	6.0
Westlake	106,711	56,138	52.6
Wilshire	292,059	92,735	31.8
Westwood	49,306	10,838	22.0
West Los Angeles	71,944	10,336	14.4

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000, Summary File (SF) 1; Los Angeles City Planning Department website 2008.

The commercial activities along the corridor are mainly professional offices and small retail businesses.

Community Facilities and Services. Table 1 lists community facilities within 0.25 mile of the proposed corridor. Wilshire Boulevard has several churches, schools, and parks along the entire length of the proposed corridor. Additionally, Museum Row, which includes the Los Angeles County Museum of Arts, Petersen Automotive Museum, Simon Wiesenthal Center Museum of Tolerance, George C. Page Museum of La Brea Discoveries, Museum of Television and Radio, Craft and Folk Art Museum, and Rancho La Brea Tar Pits, is located along Wilshire Boulevard.

Project Features That Could Result in Potential Impacts

The project features that have the highest potential to result in impacts are as follows:

- **Construction Period:** Construction activities, such as reconstructing and resurfacing curb lanes, restriping, removing jut-outs between Comstock Avenue and Malcolm Avenue, and reducing sidewalks on both sides between Bonsall Avenue and Barrington Avenue, and lane closures necessary during construction.
- **Operation Period:** Loss of 11 parking spaces between Western Avenue and Fairfax Avenue, loss of approximately 85 existing on-street parking spaces between Selby Avenue and Comstock Avenue during peak hours (53 on the north side of the street and 32 on the south side), loss of mature trees between Comstock Avenue and Selby Avenue and between Federal Avenue and Barrington Avenue, reducing sidewalks on both sides between Bonsall Avenue and Barrington Avenue, and potential increase in traffic congestion during operation period.

Impacts on Community

The following discussion is intended to describe the potential impacts on the community that may result from construction and operation of the proposed project.

Land Use and Planning

Potential land use and planning impacts associated with the proposed project are related to: (1) the compatibility of the project with existing land use, (2) the consistency of the project with local plans and policies, and (3) the type and number of property acquisitions required for the project. Impacts of the proposed project in Community Plan Areas are discussed below.

Within the **Westlake Community Plan Area**, the proposed project would convert existing peak hour curb lanes to weekday peak period bus lanes within an existing transit corridor and would not propose any land use changes along the corridor. No property would be acquired for the proposed project. The proposed project would be consistent with local plans and policies identified in Westlake Community Plan.

Within the **Wilshire Community Plan Area**, the existing curb lanes would be reconstructed and resurfaced between Western Avenue and Fairfax Avenue and converted to weekday peak period bus lanes. Between Fairfax Avenue and the Beverly Hills city limits, existing curb lanes would be converted to weekday peak period bus lanes by minor surface repairs of curb lanes on Wilshire Boulevard between Fairfax Avenue and San Vicente Boulevard. The proposed project involves construction activities and operational changes during weekday peak periods within an existing roadway and would not result in any change in surrounding land uses. No properties would be acquired as a result of the proposed project. The project would be consistent with local plans and policies identified in the Wilshire Community Plan.

In the **Westwood Community Plan Area**, the proposed project would convert existing curb lanes to weekday peak period bus lanes between the Beverly Hills city limits and Comstock Avenue and between Glendon Avenue and Sepulveda Boulevard. The proposed project would include removal of jut outs, realigning of curb, and creation of peak period bus lanes between Comstock Avenue and Malcolm Avenue. These improvements would include resurfacing/ reconstruction of curb lanes between Beverly Hills city limits and Westholme Avenue. The proposed improvements would occur within the existing ROW, and no land use changes are proposed. No properties would be acquired for the proposed project. The proposed project would be consistent with local plans and policies identified in the Westwood Community Plan.

A segment of the proposed project between Veteran Avenue and Federal Avenue (approximately 0.8 mile) is under County jurisdiction. The project elements in this portion of corridor include creating new bus lanes by reducing the sidewalk widths on both sides of Wilshire Boulevard to a uniform width of 10 feet,, restriping lanes, and lengthening the eastbound left-turn pockets near Sepulveda Boulevard. Minimum width of sidewalk required by County guidelines would be maintained. Improvements would be carried out within the existing ROW of Wilshire Boulevard.

No properties would be acquired, and no land use changes would occur. The proposed project would be consistent with local plans and policies.

In the **West Los Angeles and Brentwood–Pacific Palisades Community Plan Areas**, the outermost lanes in each direction of Wilshire Boulevard would be widened by reducing sidewalk widths on both the north and south sides to accommodate a new eastbound peak period bus lane between Federal Avenue and Barrington Avenue and conversion of the westbound curbside lane to a peak hour bus lane. The minimum width of sidewalk required by City guidelines would be maintained. Existing peak period curb lanes would be converted to weekday peak period bus lanes between Barrington Avenue and Centinela Avenue. The proposed improvements would be carried out within the existing ROW of Wilshire Boulevard, and no land use changes would occur. No properties would be acquired for the proposed project. The proposed project would be consistent with local plans and policies identified in the West Los Angeles and Brentwood – Pacific Palisades Community Plan Areas.

The proposed project alternatives include the No Project Alternative, and Alternative A (Truncated Without Jut-out Removal). The No Project Alternative would result in no impact, as no project related construction or operational activities would occur. Alternative A would involve a similar overall extent of construction activity as compared to the proposed project. Under Alternative A there would be no jut-out removal between Comstock Avenue and Malcolm Avenue, and there would be no bus lane-related construction from approximately 300 feet east of Veteran Avenue to the I-405 northbound ramps, nor east of S. Park View Street. However, there would be an additional 1.8 miles of curb land reconstruction and resurfacing between Fairfax Avenue and San Vicente Boulevard, and between the City of Beverley Hills and Westholme Avenue. Impacts resulting from Alternative A would be similar to the proposed project. Therefore, neither of these project alternatives would be expected to result in significant adverse effects on land use.

Acquisitions and Displacements

The proposed project would convert existing curb lanes to peak-period bus lanes. Between Bonsall Avenue and Federal Avenue, the sidewalks on both sides of Wilshire Boulevard would be narrowed to accommodate the bus lane. Between Federal Avenue and Barrington Avenue, bus lanes would be created on Wilshire Boulevard by narrowing the sidewalks and restriping to accommodate a new eastbound bus lane and conversion of the westbound curb lane to a peak period bus lane. The project would be carried out within the existing ROW. No property acquisition or permanent easements would be required for the project.

The proposed project alternatives include the No Project Alternative, and Alternative A (Truncated Without Jut-out Removal). The No Project Alternative would result in no impact, as no project related construction or operational activities would occur. Alternative A would involve a similar overall extent of construction activity as compared to the proposed project. Under Alternative A there would be no jut-out removal between Comstock Avenue and Malcolm Avenue, and there would be no bus lane-related construction from approximately 300 feet east of Veteran Avenue to the I-405 northbound ramps, nor east of S. Park View Street. However, there would be an additional 1.8 miles of curb land reconstruction and resurfacing between Fairfax Avenue and San Vicente Boulevard, and between the City of Beverley Hills and Westholme Avenue. These activities would occur entirely within the existing Wilshire Boulevard ROW, and would not require acquisition or displacement of adjacent businesses or residences. Overall impacts resulting from Alternative A would be similar to the proposed project. Therefore, neither of these project alternatives would be expected to result in acquisitions or displacements.

Population and Housing

The potential population and housing impacts associated with the proposed project are related to: (1) temporary construction effects, (2) community access and circulation, (3) changes in demographic characteristics, and (4) community cohesion.

The population to be affected by the proposed project would include (1) adjacent business owners and residents, (2) patrons of businesses (3) transit users/pedestrians, and (4) neighborhood residents/motorists trying to get onto Wilshire Boulevard.

Construction activities, such as repaving and curbside improvements, would result in temporary, localized, site-specific disruptions to the residents, pedestrians, businesses, and commuters adjacent to the proposed corridor. These disruptions would be related primarily to construction equipment used in the area, partial and/or complete lane closures, increased noise and vibration, light and glare, and increased fugitive dust emissions. Some of the construction work would be completed at night, as is the practice for other City maintenance projects. Because the project construction activities would be temporary in duration and the project is minor in scope, no long-term or permanent adverse effect is expected to result. Nonetheless, efforts will be made to regularly inform the community about construction activities.

Other than the short-term access disruptions during project construction, no permanent barriers to access are expected. Existing access points and circulation routes to and from the residential neighborhoods just north and south of the project area would remain open. The proposed project would result in increased traffic congestion in peak periods as a result of conversion of the existing mixed-flow curb lane to a peak-period bus lane. Appropriate avoidance and/or mitigation measures would ensure that impacts are not adverse. However, nine intersections would remain adversely impacted due to the absence of any feasibly mitigations.

The proposed project would convert existing curb lanes to a peak period bus lane within an existing ROW and would not result in any changes in demographic characteristics along the proposed corridor. The proposed project would result in improvement to the public transportation system serving the project area. The improvements in transit along the corridor are not expected to result

in substantial population growth. Population growth in the project vicinity is largely contingent upon existing housing availability, home prices, and market factors not directly related to proposed transit improvements. Therefore, no substantial direct impact on population growth is expected to occur as a result of the proposed project.

The proposed project would remain within the existing Wilshire Boulevard ROW. Accordingly, no physical barrier would be created that would obstruct access. Additionally, the proposed project would not require acquisition of any residential or commercial properties. Therefore, it is anticipated that the community surrounding the proposed project would remain intact.

The proposed project alternatives include the No Project Alternative, and Alternative A (Truncated Without Jut-out Removal). The No Project Alternative would result in no impact, as no project related construction or operational activities would occur. Alternative A would involve a similar overall extent of construction activity as compared to the proposed project. Under Alternative A there would be no jut-out removal between Comstock Avenue and Malcolm Avenue, and there would be no bus lane-related construction from approximately 300 feet east of Veteran Avenue to the I-405 northbound ramps, nor east of S. Park View Street. However, there would be an additional 1.8 miles of curb land reconstruction and resurfacing between Fairfax Avenue and San Vicente Boulevard, and between the City of Beverly Hills and Westholme Avenue. These activities would occur entirely within the existing Wilshire Boulevard ROW, and would not require acquisition or displacement of adjacent businesses or residences. Similarly, this alternative would not contribute to population growth. Overall impacts resulting from Alternative A would be similar to the proposed project. Therefore, neither of these project alternatives would be expected to result in significant adverse effects to population and housing.

Community Facilities

The proposed project could affect access to community facilities and businesses during construction. These disruptions would be related primarily to construction equipment use in the area, partial and/or complete lane closures, increased noise and vibration, light and glare, and increased fugitive dust emissions. It is possible that construction work would be completed at night, as is the practice for other City street maintenance projects. Because the project construction activities would be temporary in duration and the project is minor in scope, no long-term or permanent adverse effect on nearby community facilities is expected to result. Nonetheless, all construction activities will be performed in compliance with City of Los Angeles requirements regarding construction, traffic, and noise. Efforts will be made to regularly inform the community about construction activities.

The proposed project would remove 11 parking spaces along Wilshire Boulevard between Western Avenue and Fairfax Avenue and approximately 85 spaces between along Wilshire Boulevard between Selby Avenue and Comstock Avenue during peak hours. This would reduce the parking supply for commercial businesses and residences along this segment of the proposed corridor. However, there is ample parking supply in the surrounding area to accommodate the loss of the 11 parking spaces between Western Avenue and Fairfax Avenue. It is impossible to determine with reasonable certainty whether secondary physical effects, if any, may result from the

proposed project due to loss of peak hour parking spaces between Selby Avenue and Comstock Avenue. Therefore, there would be no adverse effects attributable to loss of parking.

Between Bonsall Avenue and Federal Avenue, the proposed project proposes to create new peak period bus lanes by narrowing the sidewalks on both sides of Wilshire Boulevard. The proposed project also would narrow sidewalks on both sides of Wilshire Boulevard between Federal Avenue and Barrington Avenue to accommodate a new eastbound bus lane and conversion of the westbound curb lane to a peak period bus lane. The width of the sidewalks after narrowing would be 8 feet. Even with the reduction in sidewalk width, the sidewalks would be in conformance with the Los Angeles City code requirements of a minimum six (6) feet of unobstructed distance to be provided for pedestrian and wheelchair passage (SEC. 62.03.2). Accordingly, reducing the width of the sidewalks would not result in adverse effects to pedestrian and transit users.

From Comstock Avenue to Selby Avenue and from Federal Avenue to Barrington Avenue, mature trees along the sidewalk may be removed. These trees are ornamental trees within the ROW. Adequate avoidance and/or mitigation measures will be incorporated to minimize these impacts.

The proposed project alternatives include the No Project Alternative, and Alternative A (Truncated Without Jut-out Removal). The No Project Alternative would result in no impact, as no project related construction or operational activities would occur. Alternative A would involve a similar overall extent of construction activity as compared to the proposed project. Under Alternative A there would be no jut-out removal between Comstock Avenue and Malcolm Avenue, and there would be no bus lane-related construction from approximately 300 feet east of Veteran Avenue to the I-405 northbound ramps, nor east of S. Park View Street. However, there would be an additional 1.8 miles of curb land reconstruction and resurfacing between Fairfax Avenue and San Vicente Boulevard, and between the City of Beverly Hills and Westholme Avenue. These activities would occur entirely within the existing Wilshire Boulevard ROW, and would not require acquisition or displacement of community facilities. Overall impacts resulting from Alternative A would be similar to the proposed project. Therefore, neither of these project alternatives would be expected to result in significant adverse effects to community facilities.

Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations, signed on February 11, 1994, directs federal agencies to take the appropriate and necessary steps to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of federal projects and programs on minority and low-income populations to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law.

A determination of whether the effects of the proposed project are disproportionately high and adverse depends on whether:

- The effects of the project are borne predominantly by a minority or low-income population and/or
- The effects of the project are appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude on minority or low-income populations than the effects on non-minority or non-low-income populations

(see the Federal Highway Administration's Western Resource Center Interim Guidance—Addressing Environmental Justice in the EA/EIS [1999]).

The effects of the project are predominantly borne by a minority or low-income population.

As discussed above, the Westlake and Wilshire Community Plan Areas of the proposed corridor are inhabited by persons identified as both minority and low income. The proportions of these groups in the community plan areas are much greater than in either the City or County of Los Angeles. The impacts of the proposed project would be borne by the local community. However, the impacts borne by the minority and low-income communities of Westlake and Wilshire Community Plan Areas would be similar and no greater than impacts borne by all populations and populations in non-minority Community Plan Areas. Nonetheless, it is noted that minority populations may rely on transit heavily and, therefore, transit improvements as a result of this project would be beneficial to these communities.

Adverse Effects on Overall Population

The technical reports and analyses addressing noise and vibration, traffic and transportation, air quality, and cultural resources indicate that some potential adverse effects are expected as a result of the proposed project. The impacts identified in these technical reports and the measures to avoid or reduce them are summarized as follows:

Noise and Vibration

Construction Noise and Vibration

Construction activities (e.g., breaking of pavement, reconstruction of the roadway base, repaving/resurfacing) may lead to a temporary increase in noise and vibration levels in the project area resulting from the short-term use of construction equipment on the project site. Assuming an average noise level of 89 dBA (at 50 feet distance from roadway centerline) during excavation activities for roadway reconstruction of the curb lanes in the segment between Western Avenue and Fairfax Avenue, noise levels would temporarily increase by more than 15 decibels from the typical ambient daytime noise levels. Although the increases in noise levels would be substantial, the increases would be intermittent and temporary during daytime hours as permitted by the City's Noise Ordinance (i.e., 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. during weekdays, and 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays). Therefore, it is unlikely that significant impacts on noise-sensitive uses or activities would occur. The other corridor segments with sensitive receptors, including residences in the Westwood area, that would require roadway and/or curb reconstruction or jutting removal, would not result in an increase in noise from existing levels above the 15-decibel threshold of significance. The existing ambient noise levels in the Westwood area have been measured to be as high as 84.2 dBA. Therefore, no adverse construction noise or vibration effects are anticipated.

The proposed project alternatives include the No Project Alternative, and Alternative A (Truncated Without Jut-out Removal). The No Project Alternative would result in no impact, as no project related construction or operational activities would occur. Alternative A would involve a similar overall extent of construction activity as compared to the proposed project. Under Alternative A there would be no jut-out removal between Comstock Avenue and Malcolm Avenue, and there would be no bus lane-related construction from approximately 300 feet east of Veteran Avenue to the I-405 northbound ramps, nor east of S. Park View Street. However, there would be an additional 1.8 miles of curb land reconstruction and resurfacing between Fairfax Avenue and San Vicente Boulevard, and between the City of Beverley Hills and Westholme Avenue. These activities would occur entirely within the existing Wilshire Boulevard ROW, and similar to the proposed project, construction activities would adhere to best management practices (BMPs), and all required construction related noise ordinances specified by the City of Los Angeles Municipal Code (Section 41.40). Overall impacts resulting from Alternative A would be similar to the proposed project. Therefore, neither of these project alternatives would be expected to result in construction noise or vibration effects.

Operational Noise and Vibration

Noise from motor vehicle traffic associated with the proposed project was analyzed using the data from the project's traffic study². The worst-case scenario with regards to traffic volumes were input into the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) TNM® model. ADT volumes for the Existing Year, Opening Year Without Project, Opening Year With Project, Horizon Year Without Project, and Horizon Year With Project scenarios were used to predict the changes in traffic noise at selected roadway segments. According to the noise modeling results, project noise levels in both the opening year and horizon year are predicted to decrease from what they would be Without Project at most locations, and increase only slightly, and by no more than 1 dBA in other locations. Therefore, no adverse effects due to noise would occur during operation of the proposed project.

According to FTA's Vibration Screening Procedure, included as Chapter 9 of the 2006 Traffic Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment, for projects that involve rubber-tire vehicles, vibration impact is unlikely except in unusual situations. One of the project elements involves the reconstruction and smoothing of the roadway surface, where it is deteriorated, resulting in holes, dips, and bumps. By smoothing these irregular portions of Wilshire Boulevard, the proposed project would result in a benefit due to the net reduction in vibration from roadway surface irregularities affecting buses along the project corridor. Therefore, no adverse effects due to vibration would occur during operation of the proposed project.

The proposed project alternatives include the No Project Alternative, and Alternative A (Truncated Without Jut-out Removal). The No Project Alternative would result in no impact to noise or vibration (no change from current conditions), as no project related construction or operational activities would occur. Alternative A would involve a similar overall extent of construction and roadway improvements as the proposed project. Operation of Alternative A would include reconstruction and smoothing of the roadway surface on much of Wilshire Boulevard. Similar to the proposed project, these traffic improvements and reconstruction and smoothing of the street

² Iteris. 2009. Wilshire Boulevard Bus Rapid Transit Project Traffic Impact Analysis, Administrative Review Draft.

surface would decrease traffic noise, and vibrations resulting from passing vehicles. Overall impacts resulting from Alternative A would be similar to the proposed project.

Accordingly, neither the proposed project, nor project Alternative A, would result in long-term adverse traffic noise and vibration impacts on the surrounding area.

Traffic and Transportation

The proposed project would not result in significant traffic impacts on local residential streets or access to businesses or residences along Wilshire Boulevard. Though the loss of 11 parking spaces along Wilshire Boulevard between Western Avenue and Fairfax Avenue would not result in significant adverse effects, impacts of loss of approximately 85 existing on-street parking spaces between Selby Avenue and Comstock Avenue during peak hours is impossible to determine with reasonable certainty whether secondary physical effects, if any, may result from the proposed project. In addition, though the parking supply during peak hours would be reduced, parking supply during the off-peak hours would be increased because the removal of the jut-outs would create room for additional parking in the curb lanes. Therefore, the removal or restriction of parking spaces on Wilshire Boulevard would not result in significant impacts on the environment. However, under both the proposed project and Alternative A would result in significant impacts on up to nine intersections within the traffic study area in either year 2012 or 2020, since no feasible mitigation measures that fully mitigate the project's impact were available.

Air Quality

Some short-term air quality impacts due to fugitive dust could occur during construction. However, adherence to Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust) of South Coast Air Quality Management District would ensure that the effects on air quality are not significant adverse. The control measures incorporated in the Rule are available in a Rule 403 Implementation Handbook. During operations, the proposed project would not generate new trips but rather would facilitate the movement of existing traffic through the study corridor, as well as other traffic generated by new development in the area. However, the proposed project may result in the shifting of existing travel patterns, as drivers adjust their behavior to utilize the additional capacity provided by the proposed project. As such, the proposed project would not generate any new regional operational emissions. Based on the URBEMIS and CALINE modeling of the proposed project, the project would not result in exceedance of any criteria pollutants at local level as well during project operations phase. Since the proposed project would operate CNG buses rather than diesel buses and would not result in the emission of acute and/or chronically hazardous TAC pollutants, an air toxics Health Risk Assessment is not warranted. Potential project-generated air toxic impacts on surrounding land uses would be less than significant, under both the proposed project, and Alternative A.

Cultural Resources

The ICF International survey identified 21 architectural historic resources. Of the 21 resources, six were determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). These properties consist of 1250 Federal Avenue, 10375 Wilshire Boulevard, 10401 Wilshire

Boulevard, 10416 Wilshire Boulevard, 10497 Wilshire Boulevard, and 10822 Wilshire Boulevard. These properties were found to be eligible for the National Register under Criterion C at a local level of significance. In addition, two previously recorded historic properties are located in the APE, Chateau Colline at 10335 Wilshire Boulevard, which was listed in the National Register on May 22, 2003, and the Veterans Administration (VA) Medical Center, which was determined eligible for the National Register as a historic district on November 11, 1980. As a result, both of these properties are also listed on the California Register. In addition, while the archaeological field survey did not result in the identification of any new superficial prehistoric or historic archaeological sites or features, two previously recorded historic sites, as well as the archaeological/ paleontological La Brea Tar Pits site, are located in areas where construction-related ground-disturbing activities are proposed.

Although views of these identified historical resources may be temporarily disturbed during the construction period, the proposed project would not involve any elements or structures that would result in a significant permanent change to the views of the historic resources identified. Similarly, Alternative A would not result in significant permanent change of the view of historic resources.

The bulk of the project involves activities such as sidewalk removal, pavement replacement, or restriping, which are not ground disturbing. For purposes of this project, pavement replacement is not considered a ground-disturbing activity. However, any associated disturbances of the sub-grade, including grading or excavation for utility vaults, utility relocation, traffic signals or signage, street drains, etc., have the potential to disturb archaeological and paleontological resources in the project area, particularly in the vicinity of La Brea Tar Pits, and have a potential adverse effect on these resources. Compliance with procedures required by Section 15064.5 (d,e) of the CEQA Guidelines would ensure that adverse effects would be minimized or avoided.

The project would comply with the requirements of CCR 14.3 Section 15064.5. For archeological resources, if cultural materials (prehistoric or historic artifacts) are encountered during construction, work shall stop in the vicinity of the find until a qualified archaeologist can assess the material and recommend further action, if necessary. Design of a treatment plan and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer may be required to appropriately mitigate any unanticipated discoveries. If, during cultural resources monitoring, the archaeologist determines that the sediments being excavated have been previously disturbed or are unlikely to contain significant cultural materials, the archaeologist shall instruct that monitoring be reduced or eliminated.

Compliance with Section 15064.5(d) of the CEQA Guidelines would ensure that no adverse significant impact would occur. If paleontological resources are discovered during construction-related ground-disturbing activities, work shall stop in that area and within 50 feet of the find until a qualified paleontologist can assess the significance of the find and, if necessary, develop appropriate treatment measures. The qualified paleontological monitor shall retain the option of reducing monitoring if, in his or her professional opinion, the sediments being monitored were previously disturbed. Monitoring may also be reduced if the potentially fossiliferous units, previously described, are not present or, if present, are determined by qualified paleontological personnel to have a low potential to contain fossil resources.

As detailed in Section 15064.5(e) of the CEQA Guidelines, if human remains are exposed during construction, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the county coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98.

Disproportionately High and Adverse Effects on Minority and Low-Income Populations

Environmental Justice considerations require an assessment of whether the effects of the project on minority and low-income groups could be considered disproportionately high and adverse.

Efficacy of Mitigation Efforts—Unavoidable Adverse Effects

The proposed project would result in unavoidable adverse traffic effects on up to nine intersections due to absence of mitigation measures that fully mitigate the impacts of the proposed project. All adverse effects that have been identified in the technical studies for the proposed peak period bus lane for air and noise, including potential adverse construction effects, could be avoided or substantially minimized through implementation of the proposed mitigation measures.

Potential Disproportionately High and Adverse Effects

The determination of whether the effects of the proposed project are disproportionately high and adverse depends on whether (1) the effects of the project are borne predominantly by a minority or low-income population or (2) the effects of the project are appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude on minority or low-income populations than the effects on non-minority or non-low-income populations. Technical studies have shown no demonstrable evidence that the effects of this project are borne mainly by low-income and minority communities or are markedly different in severity or magnitude from other past or present highway improvement projects in the region.

Most of the potential adverse effects could be satisfactorily avoided or minimized through the implementation of mitigation measures discussed above and in the resource technical studies. The traffic impacts that would be unavoidable would result in congestion and delay for all drivers, and would not result in disproportionately higher adverse effects on minority and low-income populations. Because there has been no evidence to suggest that the efficacy of these measures would differ with respect to different population groups, the net result would be the same for all population groups for these resource areas. The proposed project would not result in disproportionately high adverse effects on minority and low-income populations.

The proposed project alternatives include the No Project Alternative, and Alternative A (Truncated Without Jut-out Removal). The No Project Alternative would result in no impact, as no project related construction or operational activities would occur. Alternative A would involve a similar overall extent of construction activity as compared to the proposed project. Under Alternative A there would be no jut-out removal between Comstock Avenue and Malcolm Avenue, and there would be no bus lane-related construction from approximately 300 feet east of Veteran Avenue to the I-405 northbound ramps, nor east of S. Park View Street. However, there would be an additional 1.8 miles of curb land reconstruction and resurfacing between Fairfax Avenue and San

Vicente Boulevard, and between the City of Beverley Hills and Westholme Avenue. Overall impacts resulting from Alternative A would be similar to the proposed project. Therefore, neither of these project alternatives would be expected to result in disproportionate adverse effects on minority and low-income populations.

The lead agencies have instituted public involvement and community outreach efforts to ensure that issues of concern or controversy to minority and low-income populations are identified and addressed, where practicable, as part of the project planning and development process and the environmental process. Additionally, in accordance with Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (August 11, 2000), which requires that federal programs and activities be accessible to persons with limited English language proficiency, meaningful language access (Korean and Spanish) has been and will continue to be provided during public outreach for the project.

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