

4.3 Community and Neighborhood Impacts

This section summarizes the existing communities and neighborhoods in the project area, and the potential impacts that the proposed alternatives, including the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), could have on these areas. The information in this section is based on the Community and Neighborhood Impacts Technical Memorandum, which is incorporated into this EIS/EIR as Appendix O.

Community and neighborhood impacts encompass physical division of a community, adverse alterations of its social or physical character, or degradation of quality of life, which can include:

- Deterioration of public health and safety
- Increase in crime, and adverse effects on community resources and events
- Adverse effects on senior citizens and disabled persons
- Reduction of local business viability
- Deterioration of community public services
- Large changes in population or employment

This section has been updated since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR to address comments received on the Draft EIS/EIR, as indicated in the Responses to Comments, Volumes F-2 and F-3, of this Final EIS/EIR, and based on refinements to the LPA. Updates include additional analysis demonstrating that the LPA refinements since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR reduce community impacts by lessening the amount of surface disruption; additional detail added to the final LPA mitigation measures; and more analysis regarding project benefits to the community. A vertical line in the margin is used to show where revisions have occurred to this section since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR, excluding minor edits for consistency and correction of formatting and minor typographical errors. Since designation of an LPA, mitigation measures have been refined and confirmed for the LPA, which are listed in Section 4.3.4 below, based on input received during the Draft EIS/EIR public review period. No changes to the NEPA impact findings or CEQA impact determinations were identified as a result of refinements to the LPA, responses to comments, or other developments since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR. Mitigation measures listed for the LPA in this section have been carried forward and included in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), Chapter 8, of this Final EIS/EIR.

Refinements to the LPA since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR have reduced the significance of potentially adverse community and neighborhood impacts in Little Tokyo. Less cut and cover construction and fewer business acquisitions would be needed, and tunnel boring machine (TBM) staging would be in a less impactful location. The refinements reduce the need for road and sidewalk closures, property acquisitions, and overall neighborhood disruption during construction.

The analysis of community and neighborhood impacts associated with the LPA is detailed below in Section 4.3.3.5.

Some impacts contained in other overlapping sections are also discussed in this section, including:

- The Displacement and Relocation Section (Section 4.2)
- The Parklands and Other Community Facilities Section (Section 4.13)
- The Transportation Impacts and Mitigation Chapter (Chapter 3)
- The Environmental Justice Section (Section 4.17)
- The Safety and Security Section (Section 4.15)

4.3.1 Regulatory Framework

The community and neighborhood impact analysis and proposed mitigation measures for the Regional Connector Transit Corridor project was performed in accordance with all applicable NEPA, CEQA, and local guidelines.

At the federal level, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) provides specific NEPA guidance to assist with determinations of community and neighborhood impact significance. Other federal regulatory requirements include:

- Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

At the state level, the CEQA guidelines require analysis of potential project impacts that could physically divide an established neighborhood or community. Additional local regulations and plans that pertain to communities and neighborhoods that would potentially be affected by the Regional Connector Transit Corridor project are:

- Central City Community Plan (City of Los Angeles General Plan Land Use Element)
- Central City North Community Plan (City of Los Angeles General Plan Land Use Element)
- City of Los Angeles Planning and Zoning Code

Potential effects on communities and neighborhoods were evaluated by the potential for each alternative to affect the following key criteria:

- Community mobility
- Emergency service response times

- Community resources and events
- Business viability

4.3.2 Affected Environment

The project area encompasses several downtown Los Angeles communities, including the Financial District, Bunker Hill, Civic Center, Historic Core, Little Tokyo, and the Arts District. Depending on which alternative is selected, these communities could have new light rail infrastructure added as part of the Regional Connector Transit Corridor project. Other areas that would be indirectly affected through improved transit service would include communities along the Metro Gold Line, Metro Blue Line, and the future Metro Expo Line.

4.3.2.1 Demographic Overview

In 2000, the central downtown area's¹ population was approximately 23,175, representing less than 0.6 percent of the entire City of Los Angeles' population (Census Bureau 2000). In 2005, SCAG estimated that the central downtown area's population was approximately 24,794, which was about 0.6 percent of the City's population (City of Los Angeles Planning Department/Demographic Research Unit 2009). Table 4.3-1 shows the 2000 and 2005 population by census tract for central downtown. Figure 4.3-1 shows the locations of these tracts.

Figure 4.3-2 shows the ethnic makeup of the central downtown area.

The average age of the population in the central downtown area varies considerably throughout the different communities. In 2000, three main areas recorded relatively higher populations of seniors (over the age of 65):

- The Bunker Hill area
- The Little Tokyo area
- The northern portion of central downtown

Table 4.3-2 shows the median age of the central downtown population by census tract for the year 2000 (Census Bureau 2000).

The most common language spoken at home throughout the central downtown area in 2000 was English, followed by Asian/Pacific Isle languages, Spanish, Indo-European languages, and other languages (Census Bureau 2000). Each community within the downtown area varies considerably regarding the language spoken at home. Figure 4.3-3 shows the percentage breakdown of the languages spoken at home by census tract for the year 2000.

¹ Note: The total population of the analysis area for the community and neighborhood impacts is shown. The area and population defined in the Central City Community Plan and the Central City North Community Plan will vary. Also, some of the census tracts included in the demographic data extend beyond the boundaries of the communities to be analyzed.

4.3.2.1.1 Housing

There were an estimated 10,500 housing units in the central downtown area in 2008. Of the 10,500 housing units, only 200 were single-family units, and the remainder were multi-family units. The vacancy rate for all housing units was about 11 percent (City of Los Angeles Planning Department/Demographic Research Unit 2009).

Land designated for residential use is found in the east and south portions of central downtown and makes up only about five percent of the total land use (City of Los Angeles Planning Department 2003a). The residentially zoned properties in the central downtown area are found in Bunker Hill and Little Tokyo. To meet an increased demand for housing, some commercial buildings in the central downtown area have been redeveloped into residential units (City of Los Angeles Planning Department 2003a).

Table 4.3-1. Population for the Central Downtown Area

Census Tract	Approximate Neighborhoods	2000 Population	2005 Estimated Population
2060.30	Little Tokyo, Arts District, Boyle Heights*	955	1,029
2060.40	Little Tokyo, Arts District, Boyle Heights*	3,445	3,753
2062	Little Tokyo, Central City East*	3,477	3,638
2063	Central City East*, Central Industrial District*	4,995	5,320
2073	Historic Core	3,739	4,068
2074	Civic Center	1,237	1,344
2075	Bunker Hill	4,098	4,326
2077.10	Financial District, South Park	1,229	1,316
Total		23,175	24,794

Source: Census Bureau, Summary File 1, 2000; 2SCAG 2009

* Neighborhood included in census tract data but is too far from proposed alternatives, including the LPA, to be impacted. More specific data is not available.

4.3.2.1.2 Employment

The central downtown area employs a substantial number of people: over 170,000 in 2005. As shown in Table 4.3-3, most of the people working in the central downtown area do not live there and must commute to work each day.

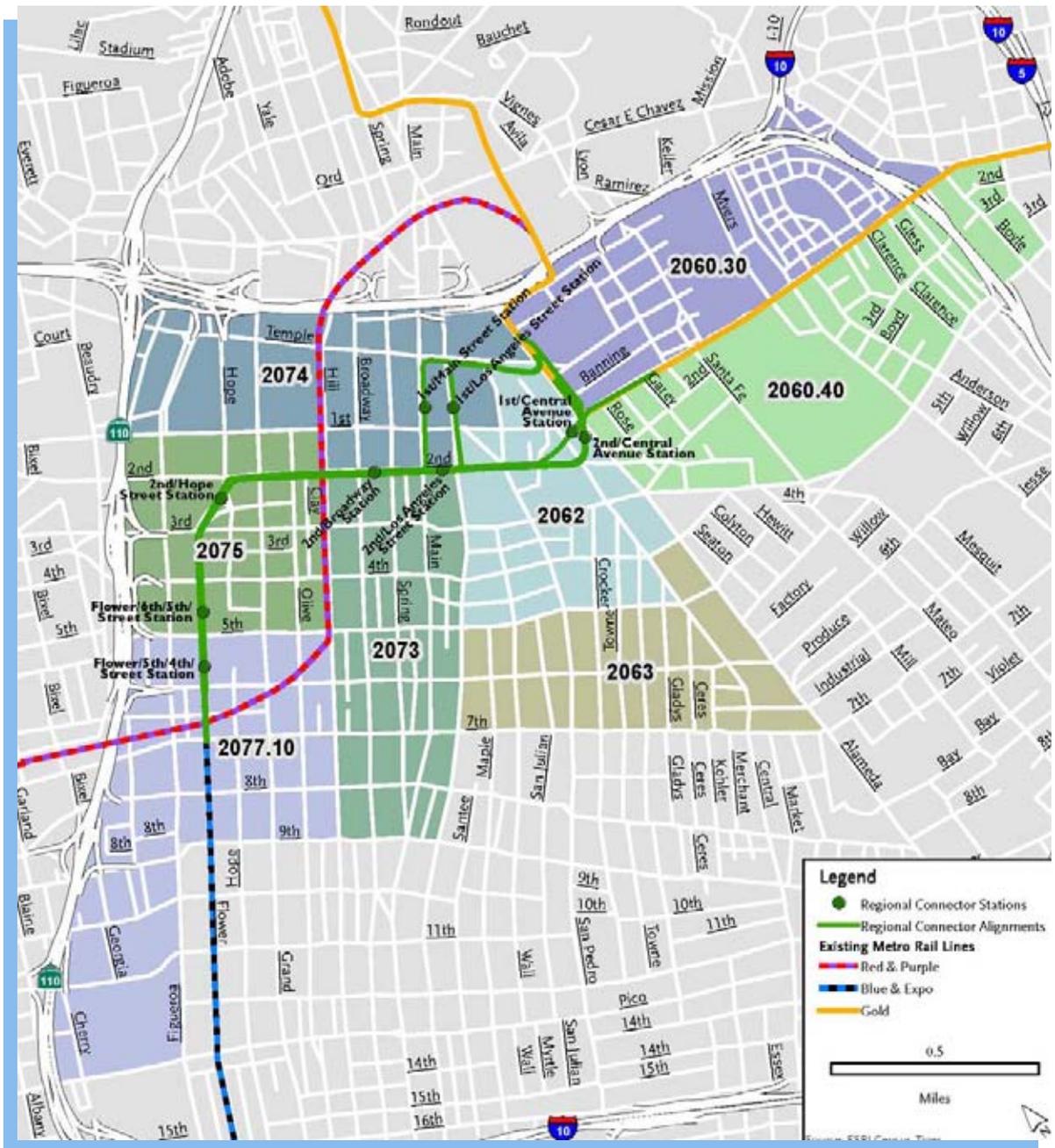
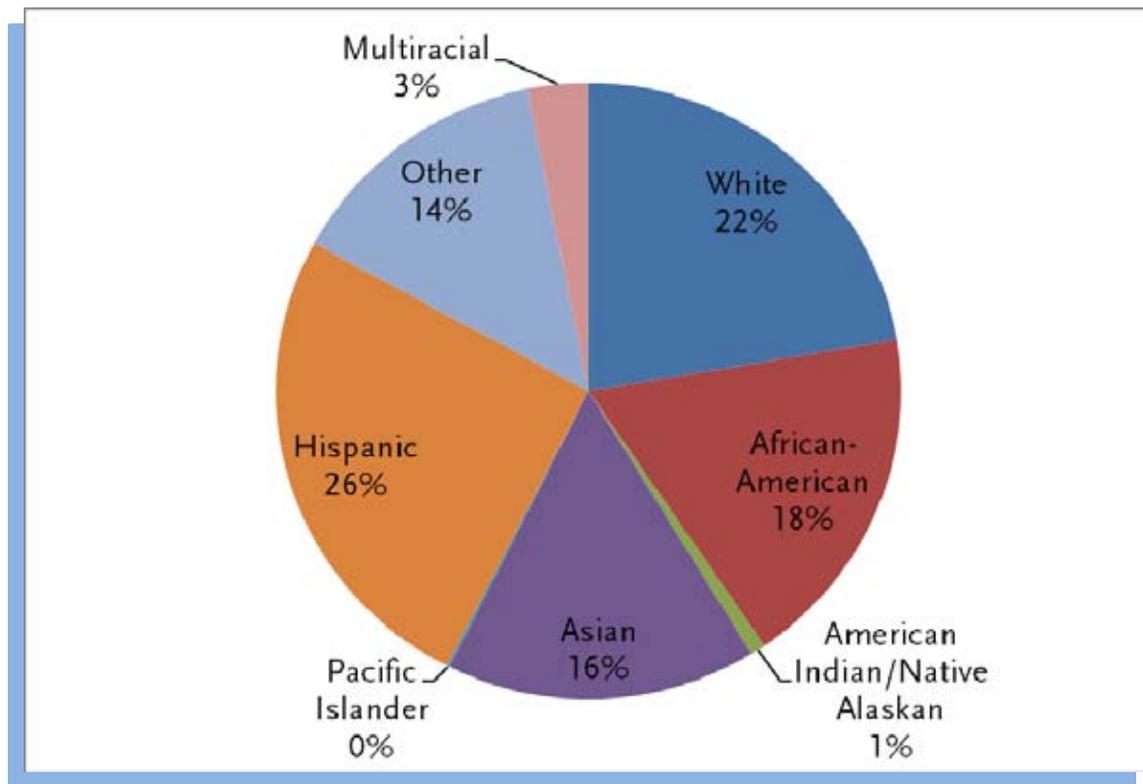


Figure 4.3-1. Census Tract Location



Source: Census Bureau, Summary File 1, 2000

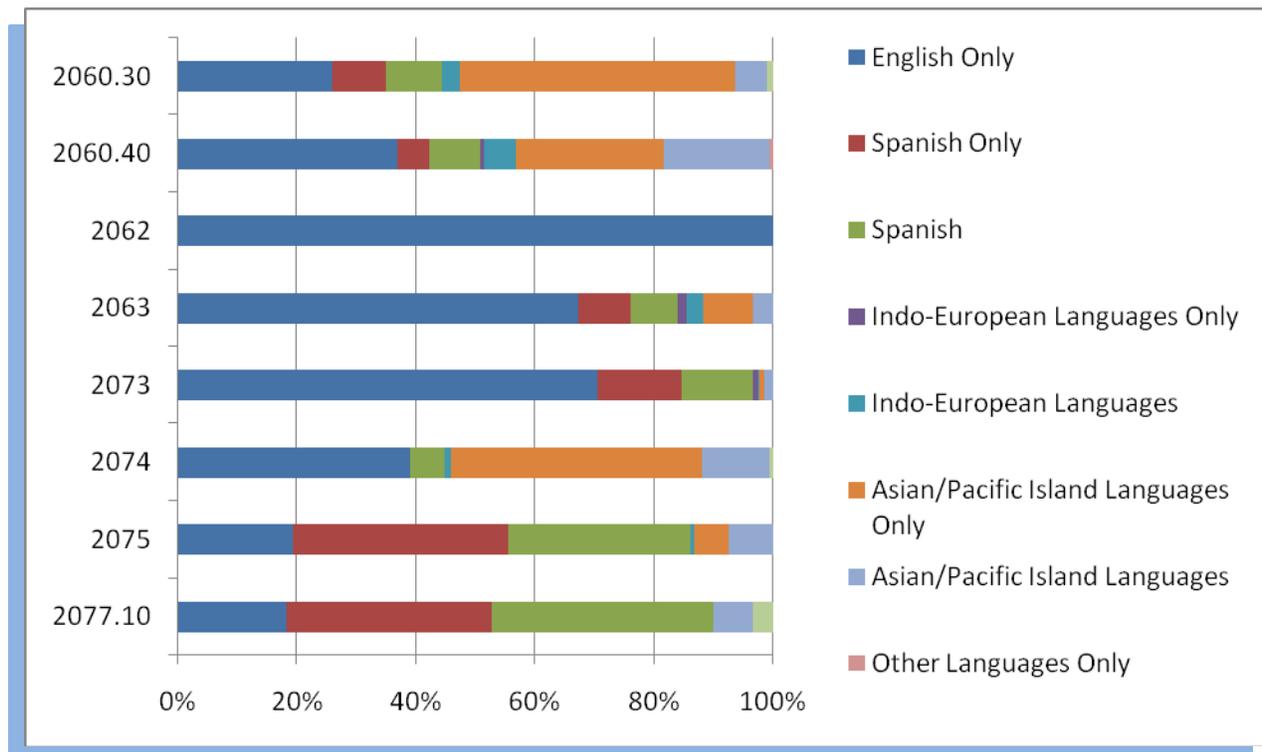
Figure 4.3-2. Ethnicity for Central Downtown

Table 4.3-2. Median Age of Central Downtown Population

Census Tract	Approximate Neighborhoods	Both Sexes	Male	Female
2060.30	Little Tokyo, Arts District, Boyle Heights*	28.2	28.7	27.1
2060.40	Little Tokyo, Arts District, Boyle Heights*	32.3	31.5	33.1
2062	Little Tokyo, Central City East*	45.1	43.6	50.4
2063	Central City East*, Central Industrial District*	42.1	43.3	38.4
2073	Historic Core	49.2	49.2	49.4
2074	Civic Center	35	34.5	38
2075	Bunker Hill	48.5	43.1	53.4
2077.10	Financial District, South Park	45.4	43.6	48

Source: Census Bureau, Summary File 1, 2000

* Neighborhood included in census tract data but is too far from proposed alternatives, including the LPA, to be impacted. More specific data is not available.



Source: Census Bureau, Summary File 3, 2000

Figure 4.3-3. Languages Spoken at Home by Census Tract in Central Downtown

Table 4.3-3. Population, Households, and Employment for the Central Downtown Area

Census Tract	2005 Population	2005 Households	2005 Employment
2060.30	1,029	267	2,444
2060.40	3,753	1,125	2,855
2062	3,638	1,179	6,631
2063	5,320	1,591	4,670
2073	4,068	3,101	35,488
2074	1,344	8	38,760
2075	4,326	3,024	27,319
2077.10	1,316	635	53,760
Total	24,794	10,930	171,927

Source: SCAG, 2009

The areas within central downtown that provide the largest number of jobs include:

- The Financial District
- The Civic Center
- The Historic Core/Jewelry District
- The Fashion District

4.3.2.1.3 Community Mobility

The central downtown area experiences heavy pedestrian traffic on weekdays, particularly during the commute and lunch hours (City of Los Angeles Planning Department 2003a). Much of the pedestrian traffic occurs in areas with daytime employment such as Bunker Hill, the Financial District, and the Historic Core. Some pedestrian movement occurs between the Civic Center and Little Tokyo along Temple, 1st, and 2nd Streets (City of Los Angeles Planning Department 2003a).

The Fashion District attracts many pedestrians during both weekdays and weekends, as does Broadway between 2nd and 7th Streets. Due to the location of Wilshire Grand and Sheraton Hotels, office buildings, residential buildings, restaurants, and retail businesses, 7th Street often carries large volumes of pedestrians. Pedestrian activity decreases at night in the central downtown area because much of the daytime population leaves after business hours. The exceptions are Little Tokyo and the Arts District that have experienced a resurgence of evening activity due to increases in new housing in the area and a solid commercial base of restaurants.

The main pedestrian infrastructure in central downtown consists of sidewalks and crosswalks. An elevated pedestrian walkway network is located adjacent to Bunker Hill that connects many of the large hotels and office buildings.

The central downtown area is served by over 100 bus lines, operated by ten different transit agencies, and a network of commuter rail, light rail, and heavy rail lines. Metrolink operates commuter rail trains from Union Station to multiple points in Los Angeles, Ventura, Orange, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Riverside Counties. Metro operates the Metro Red Line heavy rail subway to North Hollywood, the Metro Purple Line heavy rail subway to Wilshire/Western Station, the Metro Blue Line light rail service to Long Beach, and the Metro Gold Line light rail service to Pasadena and East Los Angeles. The Metro Expo Line light rail service to Culver City is currently under construction.

Transit mobility within downtown, to and from the communities of downtown, and within the region as a whole is impaired by the lack of a train connection between the Metro Gold Line and Metro Blue Line. Passengers traveling between these two LRT lines must currently transfer via the Metro Red and Metro Purple Lines. This lack of a direct connection adversely affects travel times and the ability of transit to attract automobile commuters. For information on travel times within the project area, see the Alternatives Considered Chapter (Chapter 2).

The Regional Connector Transit Corridor project would eliminate transfers by enabling through service between the Metro Gold Line, Metro Blue Line, and Metro Expo Line. The Regional Connector Transit Corridor would add additional reliable transit service that, unlike buses, would not be subject to future deteriorating traffic conditions if surface street congestion increases.

For information on existing traffic patterns within the project area, see Appendix L, Transportation Technical Memorandum.

4.3.2.2 Community Events

Many community and cultural events occur in the Regional Connector Transit Corridor project area each year, including music festivals, parades, arts and theater performances, and exhibitions. These events often attract hundreds of people to the area. Large events scheduled in the project area during 2009 included:

- World City
- First Thursday San Pedro Art Walk
- Downtown Art Walk (monthly)
- St. Patrick's Day Parade
- Cherry Blossom Festival of Southern California
- Azusa Street Festival
- AT&T Fiesta Broadway
- Annual Children's Day
- Mixed Roots Film and Literary Festival
- Shakespeare Festival
- Grand Performances (recurring)
- Nisei Week Japanese Festival
- Los Angeles County Holiday Celebration

4.3.2.3 Crime and Emergency Services

Crime in the central downtown area has fluctuated in recent years, with between 5,000 and 7,000 arrests made annually. Law enforcement is provided from the Central Area Community Police Station and the new Los Angeles Police Department headquarters.

The following three fire stations are located in the central downtown area as well:

- Near Temple and Alameda Streets
- 1st Street and Fremont Avenue
- 7th and San Julian Streets

4.3.2.4 Community Profiles

The following subsections present brief profiles for each of the communities and districts within the central downtown area that have the potential to be directly affected by construction or operation of the Regional Connector Transit Corridor project. Figure 4.3-4 provides a map of the approximate locations of these communities. While distinctions have been made between the different districts, many districts continue to develop and expand their area of influence, often resulting in an overlap with other districts or communities. The boundaries of the districts discussed below are for descriptive purposes only and are not meant to delineate distinct borders. Not all of the communities shown on the map would experience negative impacts from the project, however all of them would benefit from the improved transit service the Regional Connector would provide. The communities that could potentially experience impacts are profiled in the following subsections.

4.3.2.4.1 Financial District

The Financial District contains most of the City's banks, large hotels, and skyscraper office buildings. It is also home to the Central Library, Maguire Gardens, retail stores, and social clubs. This area experiences a high volume of traffic during daytime hours because of its location next to the SR 110 Freeway. While not as pedestrian-friendly as some of the other districts, the Financial District lies within walking distance to the 7th Street retail area, Grand Avenue corridor, and Pershing Square. This neighborhood is within walking distance to the Metro Red Line, Metro Purple Line, Metro Blue Line, and future Metro Expo Line.

The Central Library, located on Hope Street, is one of the key features of the Financial District. North of the library is downtown's tallest building, and at 73 stories high, the Library Tower is visible for miles (City of Los Angeles Planning Department 2003a). The Bunker Hill Steps surround the building and connect the Financial District to Bunker Hill (City of Los Angeles Planning Department 2003a).

4.3.2.4.2 Bunker Hill

Bunker Hill is within close walking distance to the Financial District, the Historic Core, and the Civic Center and is easily accessible by public transit. It includes a large portion of central downtown's residential population due to the presence of numerous apartments and condominiums (over 3,200 residential units, mainly in mid- and high-rise buildings).

Major downtown destinations located within Bunker Hill include the Walt Disney Concert Hall, Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), high-rise office towers, senior and market rate housing, hotels, and commercial/retail centers. Large development projects planned for this area include Civic Park, the Broad Art Foundation Museum (currently under construction), and the Grand

Avenue Development project that will develop this area into a regional arts, entertainment, and residential destination.

4.3.2.4.3 Toy District

The Toy District is a wholesale and retail area with over 500 businesses offering silk flowers, incense/oils, craft supplies, luggage, electronics, and traditional toys like dolls, die-cast cars, action figures, and video games (Central City East Association 2009). This area experiences high volumes of pedestrians. The Medallion project under construction in this district is expected to provide 192 residential lofts and over 200,000 square feet of retail space.

4.3.2.4.4 Civic Center

The Civic Center contains federal, state, and local government offices and has the second largest concentration of civic buildings in the country (City of Los Angeles Planning Department 2003a). Important community resources in this area include the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels on Temple Street, Los Angeles City Hall, the County Hall of Administration, the California State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Headquarters, and a U.S. Federal District Courthouse planned for the block bounded by 2nd, Hill, and 1st Streets, and Broadway. The area includes the Civic Center Historic District centered around the City Hall building.

Most of the government facilities in this area are within a ten minute walk of each other designated as the “10 minute diamond.” Several cultural, arts, and music facilities are located in the Civic Center such as the Ahmanson Theater, Mark Taper Forum, and the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion (City of Los Angeles Planning Department 2003a).

4.3.2.4.5 Historic Core

The Historic Core approximates the area where Los Angeles originated in the early 1800s and contains a variety of historic and architecturally significant buildings. In addition, the Historic Core links many of the districts and communities of central downtown.

Two historic districts registered in the National Register of Historic Places (City of Los Angeles Planning Department 2003a) are located in this area, including:

- The Spring Street Financial District between 4th and 7th Streets, and
- The Broadway Theater District between 3rd and 9th Streets.

Broadway is the major corridor in the Historic Core, with clothes outlets, restaurants, Grand Central Market, and other shops frequented by the Hispanic population (City of Los Angeles Planning Department 2003a). To the east, a variety of offices, hotels, shops and government buildings are located along Los Angeles, Spring, and Main Streets. Many buildings here have been renovated and converted to residential uses with ground floor retail, restaurants, and art galleries. Most of the historic financial buildings of the 1920s are found on Spring Street. Several historic theatres are located in this area; however, some are currently vacant or are being used for retail purposes.

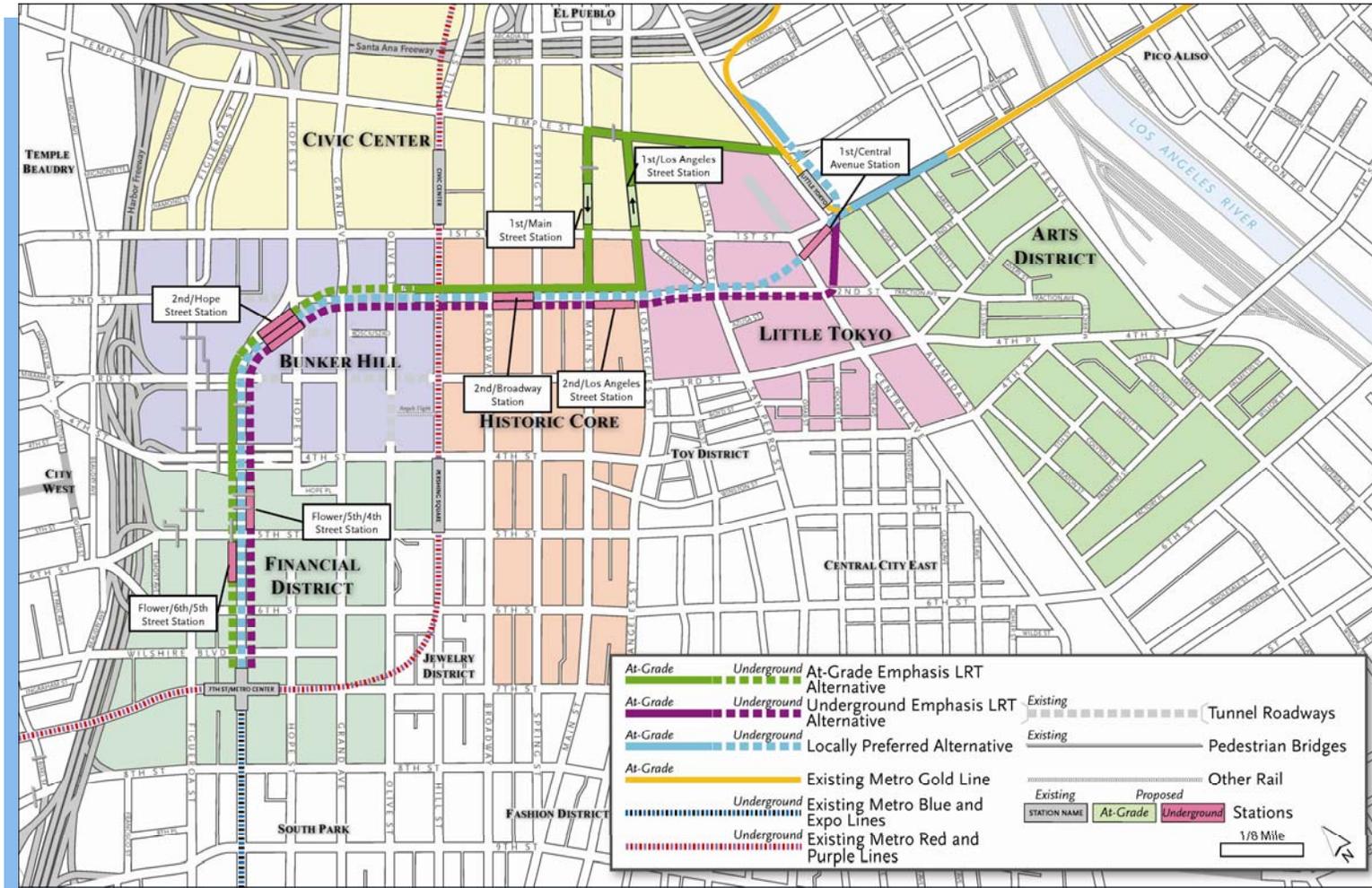


Figure 4.3-4. Downtown Communities

The southern end of the Historic Core is adjacent to the Fashion District and contains historic buildings now used to manufacture clothing. The Metro Red Line and Metro Purple Line travel beneath this district with a shared station on Hill Street between 4th and 5th Streets (City of Los Angeles Planning Department 2003a). The Skid Row community (considered part of the Central City East area) is located adjacent to the Historic Core/Center City area and contains a large homeless population and many single-occupant hotel residential properties.

4.3.2.4.6 Little Tokyo

Little Tokyo is a unique cultural community in downtown Los Angeles because it has the largest Japanese-American community in the continental United States (City of Los Angeles Planning Department 2003). Little Tokyo is one of only three remaining Japantowns in the United States (in addition to San Francisco and San Jose). Little Tokyo has a range of mixed-uses including retail, hotel, office, and commercial spaces.

The area also contains a substantial portion of central downtown's residential units and has several new residential developments. The rehabilitation of existing spaces into residential uses is also occurring in Little Tokyo. Important developments in the early planning stages include a 4.5-acre site adjacent to the Little Tokyo/Arts District Station on the Metro Gold Line. Due to the proximity to Metro's transit lines, this development could potentially contain a high-density combination of offices and housing.

Little Tokyo, which exists to the east and west of Alameda Street, contains a variety of important cultural venues and resources including the Japanese American National Museum (JANM), the Jodo Shu Betsuin Temple, the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Temple, and the Japanese-American Cultural and Community Center. The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA is located behind JANM. The Go For Broke Monument, located north of The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA at Temple and Alameda Streets is a monument dedicated to the Japanese-American veterans of World War II. East West Players, the largest and oldest Asian American theater organization in the country, is located across from The Geffen Contemporary and the Go For Broke Monument, in the Union Church Building (now the Union Center for the Arts). Little Tokyo also houses the Little Tokyo Service Center that provides affordable housing and community services to residents of the area.

The Little Tokyo Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986. The district spans from the north side of 1st Street from Judge John Aiso Street to Central Avenue and the east side of Judge John Aiso Street from 1st Street to midblock between 1st and Temple Streets. Buildings in the Historic District include commercial buildings on the north side of 1st Street, the Union Church on San Pedro Street, and the former Nishi Hongwanji Temple (the first Buddhist Temple built in Los Angeles) located at 1st and Central Streets.

4.3.2.4.7 Arts District

The Arts District is technically outside central downtown and considered a part of the Central City North Community Plan area; however, it is discussed in this section because it is adjacent to Little Tokyo and would be affected and served by the project. The Arts District consists mostly of old warehouses that have been converted to artists' lofts and studios (City of Los Angeles Planning Department 2003b). The largest concentration of artists is within the area

between 1st, Palmetto, and Alameda Streets, and the Los Angeles River. This area is also sometimes referred to as the Artist-in-Residence District (City of Los Angeles Planning Department 2003b).

The Arts District has experienced a fast-paced revitalization over the past several years. New condominium and apartment buildings have opened, and additional industrial spaces have been converted to restaurants and retail establishments, some of which include sidewalk dining. Most of the streets through the district are not major thoroughfares, resulting in a quieter, more pedestrian-friendly environment than some other parts of the downtown area. Notable institutions in the area include Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-ARC), an independent architecture school.

4.3.3 Environmental Impacts/Environmental Consequences

The following sections summarize the evaluation of potential community and neighborhood impacts for each alternative. Impact conclusions for all of the alternatives are based on the thresholds identified above in Section 4.3.1. Table 4.3-4 summarizes the results of the analysis.

Table 4.3-4. Summary of Potential Impacts to Communities and Neighborhoods

Alternative	Physically Divide Community (CEQA)	Community Mobility (NEPA)	Emergency Services Response (NEPA)	Community Resources and Events (NEPA)	Business Viability (NEPA)	Adverse NEPA Effects After Mitigation	Significant CEQA Impacts After Mitigation
No Build	None	Decline	None	None	None	None	None
TSM	None	None	None	None	None	None	None
At-Grade Emphasis LRT	None	Adverse construction effects	Adverse construction effects	Adverse construction effects	Adverse construction effects	None	None
Underground Emphasis LRT	None	Adverse construction effects	Adverse construction effects	Adverse construction effects	Adverse construction effects	None	None
LPA	None	Adverse construction effects	Adverse construction effects	Adverse construction effects	Adverse construction effects	None	None

4.3.3.1 No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative would not involve any new transportation infrastructure, construction, or major service changes beyond what is identified in Metro’s 2009 LRTP. As such, significant adverse impacts are not anticipated within the project area. However, community mobility would deteriorate with the worsening regional traffic congestion that is expected to occur between now and 2035. Also, the communities in the project area would not benefit from the

additional access, business, and job growth stimulation that the proposed build alternatives, including the LPA, could provide.

4.3.3.1.1 NEPA Finding

The No Build Alternative would not have adverse construction, operation, or cumulative effects on communities or neighborhoods, except for deterioration of community mobility in the long-term.

4.3.3.1.2 CEQA Determination

The No Build Alternative would not have significant adverse construction, operation, or cumulative impacts on communities or neighborhoods.

4.3.3.2 TSM Alternative

The TSM Alternative includes the same provisions as the No Build Alternative, plus two new shuttle bus lines that would provide additional mobility benefits to Little Tokyo, the Civic Center, Bunker Hill, the Historic Core, and the Financial District. However, the proposed bus lines would not improve regional mobility as much as the proposed build alternatives, including the LPA. The increased availability of transit service could also stimulate local businesses. However, these benefits may not be permanent if worsening traffic congestion causes a reduction in operating speeds and service reliability.

4.3.3.2.1 NEPA Finding

The TSM Alternative would not have adverse construction, operation, or cumulative effects on communities or neighborhoods.

4.3.3.2.2 CEQA Determination

The TSM Alternative would not have significant adverse construction, operation, or cumulative impacts on communities or neighborhoods.

4.3.3.3 At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative

The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would require the construction of a new light rail alignment and three new stations in the following areas:

- The Financial District along Flower Street
- Bunker Hill
- The Civic Center area composed of two one-way stations located on adjacent streets

Construction of these stations would require temporary sidewalk and street closures. During construction, installation of the at-grade tracks and other necessary light rail infrastructure would require street closures on Temple, Main, Los Angeles, and 2nd Streets in the Civic Center and Historic Core areas. The alignment would run underground from Flower Street and the Financial District through the Bunker Hill area onto 2nd Street. Cut and cover excavation activities for the underground portion of the alignment would result in road closures in the

Financial District, Bunker Hill, and the vicinity of the proposed underpass in Little Tokyo. These combined activities could reduce pedestrian and vehicle mobility between communities throughout the project area during construction, which would constitute a potentially adverse construction impact.

Road closures associated with construction activities could result in increased response times for emergency services (e.g., police and fire). Any increase in response times for emergency services would be an adverse construction impact.

Road and sidewalk closures and the addition of construction vehicles and equipment to central downtown streets could also adversely affect annual festivals and events in the central downtown area. Construction could also disrupt traffic patterns and make public access to certain community resources (e.g., The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA building and the Go For Broke Monument) more difficult. This potential construction impact could be adverse.

Construction activities would likely result in a decrease in accessibility to many businesses and could reduce on-street and off-street parking. This could negatively affect business activity levels because the number of customers may temporarily decline, which would be a potentially adverse construction impact to business viability.

All attempts would be made to provide adequate detours and to minimize road closures, however, some consumers might avoid the area altogether which could have an indirect effect on businesses within the project area. When short-term construction impacts and long-term operational benefits are considered together, there would be a net benefit due to new transit access to businesses and the enhancement of downtown as a business destination.

Once constructed, the alternative would permanently improve community mobility by providing a new attractive means of access that does not rely on solo driving. Connections to other neighborhoods within the downtown area and across the region would be strengthened by the rail link. Business viability would improve because the increased pedestrian traffic near the proposed stations would provide new potential customers.

4.3.3.3.1 NEPA Finding

The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would have adverse construction-related effects on community mobility, emergency service response times, community resources and events, and business viability. However, these impacts would be temporary and could be reduced to a not substantially adverse level by the mitigation measures proposed in Section 4.3.4 of the Draft EIS/EIR.

4.3.3.3.2 CEQA Determination

The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would not have significant adverse construction, operation, or cumulative impacts on communities or neighborhoods after mitigation measures are considered.

4.3.3.4 Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative

This alternative would require the construction of a new light rail alignment and three new underground stations in the following areas:

- Near the Financial District
- Bunker Hill
- The Historic Core/Little Tokyo

Construction of these stations would require temporary sidewalk and street closures. Installation of underground tracks would require tunnel construction along 2nd and Flower Streets. The segment on Flower Street would require temporary cut and cover excavations and concrete decking along the entire length of the roadway from 7th Street/Metro Center Station to the new portal just south of 3rd Street. Temporary street closures and construction activities similar to cut and cover would be needed in the vicinity of the proposed underpass at 1st and Alameda Streets. Streets and sidewalks in the vicinity of the temporary excavation areas would likely be periodically closed during construction. Along 2nd Street, TBMs would be used for the majority of the alignment. As such, construction impacts to surface traffic and mobility would be less pronounced in the Historic Core than in the Financial District and Little Tokyo. In summary, road and sidewalk closures and traffic detours could reduce mobility for pedestrian and vehicle traffic in all neighborhoods in the project area which could be a potentially adverse impact.

Road closures associated with construction activities could result in increased response times for emergency services (e.g., police and fire). Any increase in response times for emergency services would be an adverse construction impact.

Road and sidewalk closures and the introduction of construction vehicles and equipment would have the potential to create temporary adverse effects on festivals and events in the central downtown area. It could also result in an adverse impact to traffic patterns and make it more difficult for the public to access certain community resources like the JANM and The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA building. Little Tokyo stakeholders have expressed concern about retaining the character of the existing community and cultural events in the area. Measures to address these concerns would be considered for implementation once the ongoing coordination process is complete within the Little Tokyo community. However, this is not necessary because the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative was not designated as the LPA by the Metro Board of Directors.

Businesses around each of the new stations and along the proposed alignment could be affected by construction activities, construction-related traffic, and road and sidewalk closures. Construction activities would likely result in a temporary decrease in accessibility to many businesses and could reduce on-street and off-street parking which could negatively affect business activity levels as the number of customers may temporarily decline. Metro would provide adequate detours and minimize road closures; however, some indirect effects to businesses may occur as people may avoid the project area altogether. This potential impact

could be adverse during the construction phase. The introduction of construction employees into the area who could potentially be new customers of neighborhood restaurants and retail establishments could lessen this impact.

Some existing commercial properties would need to be acquired under this alternative in Little Tokyo and the Historic Core. Displaced businesses could include Office Depot, Señor Fish, and Starbucks Coffee in Little Tokyo, and the businesses on the southeast corner of 2nd and Spring Streets in the Historic Core. The businesses that would be removed in Little Tokyo do not contribute to the community identity as a Japanese-American cultural and community center. Properties would be acquired according to the Uniform Relocation Act, and owners would be compensated. However, loss of these businesses could indirectly affect the viability of surrounding businesses because less people could be drawn to the general area which could be a potentially adverse impact.

Once constructed, the alternative would permanently improve community mobility by providing a new attractive means of access that does not rely on solo driving. Connections to other neighborhoods within the downtown area and across the region would be strengthened by the rail link. Business viability would improve because the increased pedestrian traffic near the proposed stations would provide new potential customers. The rail infrastructure would be almost entirely underground and out of view, and station entrances would be designed to enhance the surrounding urban landscape. Vacant parcels remaining after construction could potentially be developed as transit oriented developments or other neighborhood-supportive resources.

4.3.3.4.1 NEPA Finding

The Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would have temporary adverse construction-related effects on:

- Community mobility
- Emergency service response times
- Community resources and events
- Business viability

The alternative would also have a short-term adverse operation effect on business viability due to acquisitions, (though not permanent). These effects could be reduced to a not substantially adverse level by the mitigation measures proposed in Section 4.3.4 of the Draft EIS/EIR.

4.3.3.4.2 CEQA Determination

The Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would not have significant adverse construction, operation, or cumulative impacts on communities or neighborhoods after consideration of proposed mitigation measures.

4.3.3.5 Locally Preferred Alternative

This alternative was developed in response to community concerns voiced during the Draft EIS/EIR analysis process. It was initially adapted from the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative to allow the alignment and junction to run underground at 1st and Alameda Streets.

This alternative would require the construction of new light rail alignment and three new underground stations in the following areas:

- Bunker Hill area
- Historic Core
- Little Tokyo/Arts District

Construction of these stations would require temporary sidewalk and lane closures. Installation of underground tracks would require tunnel construction along 2nd and Flower Streets. The segment on Flower Street would require temporary cut and cover excavations and concrete decking along the entire length of the roadway from 7th Street/Metro Center Station to 4th Street. Cut and cover would also be needed on a portion of Central Avenue between 1st and 2nd Streets, in the 1st and Alameda Streets intersection, and on 1st Street between Alameda and Garey Streets. Street lanes and sidewalks in the vicinity of the temporary excavation areas would likely be periodically closed during construction. Along 2nd Street and the portion of Flower Street north of 4th Street, TBMs would be used for the majority of the alignment except at stations and crossovers as described in Chapter 2. As such, construction impacts to surface traffic and mobility would be less pronounced in the Historic Core than in the Financial District and Little Tokyo/Arts District.

Compared to the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative, this alternative would involve a larger construction area, and potentially greater impacts to surface traffic during construction, since two portals would need to be constructed instead of one. Closures would also have the potential to create temporary adverse effects on festivals and events in the central downtown area. It could also result in a potentially adverse impact to traffic patterns and make it more difficult for the public to access certain community resources like the JANM and The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA building. This would not result in a considerable contribution to a cumulative impact. Access to these facilities would be maintained throughout construction. Street lane closures associated with construction activities could result in increased response times for emergency services (e.g., police and fire). Any increase in response times for emergency services would be a potentially adverse construction impact. Closures and traffic detours could also reduce mobility for pedestrian and vehicle traffic in all neighborhoods in the project area, which could be a potentially adverse impact. This would not result in a considerable contribution to a cumulative impact.

Little Tokyo stakeholders have expressed concern about retaining the character of the existing community and cultural events in the area. Measures to address these concerns have been developed during an ongoing coordination process with the Little Tokyo community, and have been included in the MMRP.

Businesses around each of the new stations and along the proposed alignment could be affected by construction activities, construction-related traffic, and street lane and sidewalk closures. Construction activities would likely result in a greater temporary decrease in accessibility to many businesses and a greater impact to on-street and off-street parking than the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative due to the additional construction needed on 1st Street. As with the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative, this potential impact could be adverse during the construction phase. The introduction of construction employees into the area who could potentially be new customers of neighborhood restaurants and retail establishments could lessen the impact. This would not result in a considerable contribution to a cumulative impact.

Some existing commercial properties would need to be acquired under this alternative in Little Tokyo. Displaced businesses would include Señor Fish, Weiland Brewery, and The Spice Table in Little Tokyo. This would be a greater number of businesses than would be displaced by the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative. The businesses that would be removed in Little Tokyo do not contribute to the community identity as a Japanese-American cultural and community center. Properties would be acquired and owners would be compensated according to the Uniform Relocation Act. However, loss of these businesses could indirectly affect the viability of surrounding businesses because less people could be drawn to the general area which could be a potentially adverse impact. This would not result in a considerable contribution to a cumulative impact.

Once constructed, the alternative would permanently improve community mobility by providing a new attractive means of access that does not rely on solo driving. Connections to other neighborhoods within the downtown area and across the region would be strengthened by the rail link. Business viability would improve because the increased pedestrian traffic near the proposed stations would provide new potential customers. The rail infrastructure would be entirely underground and out of view, and station entrances would be designed to enhance the surrounding urban landscape. Vacant parcels remaining after construction could potentially be developed as transit oriented developments or other neighborhood-supportive resources.

Refinements to the LPA since publication the Draft EIS/EIR have reduced the significance of potentially adverse community and neighborhood impacts in Little Tokyo. Cut and cover construction would no longer be needed on 2nd Street; fewer businesses would need to be acquired on the parcel bounded by 1st Street, Alameda Street, 2nd Street, and Central Avenue; and TBM staging would occur on the Mangrove property instead of on 2nd Street. The refinements reduce the need for road and sidewalk closures, property acquisitions, and overall neighborhood disruption during construction.

4.3.3.5.1 NEPA Finding

The LPA would have temporary adverse construction effects on community mobility, emergency service response times, community resources and events, and business viability. The alternative would also have a short-term adverse operational effect on business viability due to acquisitions, though not permanent, because businesses could return in future developments on these sites. These effects will be reduced to a not substantially adverse level by the final mitigation measures in Section 4.3.4 and Chapter 8.

4.3.3.5.2 CEQA Determination

The LPA would not have significant construction or operation impacts on communities or neighborhoods after the final mitigation measures in Section 4.3.4 and Chapter 8 are implemented. The LPA would not result in a considerable contribution to a cumulative impact.

4.3.4 Mitigation Measures

4.3.4.1 Updates to the Candidate Mitigation Measures from the Draft EIS/EIR

The Draft EIS/EIR included candidate mitigation measures for review and comment by the public, agencies, and other stakeholders. Since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR, Metro has adjusted and added specificity to the candidate mitigation measures for community and neighborhood impacts presented in the Draft EIS/EIR. The final LPA mitigation measures, shown in Section 4.3.4.2 below, are included in the MMRP for the LPA, Chapter 8, of this Final EIS/EIR, and supersede candidate mitigation measures identified in the Draft EIS/EIR. Updates to the mitigation measures made since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR include:

- Addition of a 24-hour live hotline for community concerns regarding construction, as well as a project office within the Little Tokyo community, in order to maintain day-to-day contact with the community during construction.
- Addition of the Regional Connector Community Leadership Council (RCCLC) to provide input into the construction mitigation and outreach plans.
- Addition of an “Arts District Path” linking the Arts District to the 1st/Central Avenue station.
- Addition of measures to mitigate possible temporary intermittent utility disruption, including field verification of underground utility line locations, coordination with utility providers, protective construction measures, and immediate technician response in the event of unplanned outages.

4.3.4.2 Final Mitigation Measures for the Locally Preferred Alternative

Mitigation measures listed for the LPA in this section have been carried forward and included in the MMRP for the LPA, Chapter 8, of this Final EIS/EIR. They are the final committed mitigation measures for the LPA. MMRP index numbers are shown in parenthesis after each mitigation measure.

To mitigate the temporary disruption of traffic patterns and access to residences and businesses during construction, which could affect the economic vitality of some businesses:

- Accessible detours shall be provided whenever possible. Detours shall be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Signage shall be provided in those languages most commonly spoken in the immediate community. Signs shall mark detours in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, and other applicable local and state requirements. Detours shall be designed to minimize cut-through traffic in adjacent residential areas. (CN-1)
- Early notification of traffic disruption shall be given to emergency service providers. Work plans and traffic control measures shall be coordinated with emergency responders to prevent impacts to emergency response times. (CN-2)
- Traffic management and construction mitigation plans shall be developed in coordination with the community to minimize disruption and limit construction activities during special events. Worksite Traffic Control Plans shall be developed in conjunction with LADOT and surrounding communities to minimize impacts to traffic, businesses, residents, and other stakeholders. Crossing guards and other temporary traffic controls shall be provided in the vicinity of construction sites, haul routes, and other relevant sites as proposed in California DOT Traffic Manual, Section 10-07.3, Warrants for Adult Crossing Guards, and as appropriate to maintain traffic flow during construction. (CN-3)
- A 24-hour live hotline for community concerns regarding construction shall be provided, as well as a project office within the Little Tokyo community. Residents and businesses shall also be provided with comment/complaint forms during construction. A construction office shall also be placed within the community to provide in-person assistance and services. Metro shall negotiate with the Japanese American National Museum to locate the office within the museum's historic building on 1st Street. The hotline and office shall enable Metro to maintain day-to-day contact with the community during construction and provide community members with all project details that may be relevant to the public. (CN-4)
- A community outreach plan shall be developed and implemented to notify local communities and the general public of construction schedules and road and sidewalk detours. Metro shall coordinate with local communities during preparation of the traffic management plans to minimize potential construction impacts to community resources and special events. Construction activities shall be coordinated with special events. (CN-5)
- Metro shall develop a construction mitigation plan with community input to directly address specific construction impacts in the project area. Metro shall establish and receive input from the RCCLC in developing the construction mitigation plan. The RCCLC shall consist of representatives from all parts of the alignment area. Metro shall work with the RCCLC in developing the outreach plan. (CN-6)

- Metro shall work with the City to develop a parking mitigation program to mitigate the loss of public parking spaces during construction. This would include, but is not limited to, restriping the existing street to allow for diagonal parking, reducing the number of restricted parking areas, phasing construction activities in a way that minimizes parking disruption, and increasing the time limits for on-street parking. Restriping would occur on portions of Temple Street, Alameda Street, 1st Street, 2nd Street, Central Avenue, San Pedro Street, Judge John Aiso Street, 3rd Street, and Traction Avenue. Such parking mitigation shall be implemented on a temporary, tiered basis pending findings of the annual parking analysis described in EJ-11 in the MMRP for the LPA, Chapter 8, of this Final EIS/EIR. (DR-4)
- Metro shall not hinder access to other public parking lots during construction. (DR-5)

To mitigate the negative impact construction sites could have on the community if left unsecured:

- Barriers shall be erected and security personnel provided during construction to minimize trespassing and vandalism. Barriers shall be enhanced with culturally-relevant artwork, attractive design features, and advertisements for parking locations and businesses. Signage shall also identify that businesses are open during construction. Community input shall be sought in determining artwork and design features. (CN-7)

To incorporate both the Arts District and Little Tokyo neighborhood identities into the 1st/Central Avenue station:

- Metro shall implement urban design improvements in the form of an "Arts District Path" linking the Arts District to the 1st/Central Avenue station. Metro shall invite SCI-ARC and other local students to participate in the path's design. The path shall include sidewalk enhancements, design elements, way finding signage, and crosswalk improvements. The design of the station shall enhance pedestrian circulation. (CN-8)
- Design of the 1st/Central Avenue station shall encourage connections and pedestrian travel to the Japanese Village Plaza, Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Temple, the Japanese American National Museum, and businesses south of 2nd Street. (CN-9)

To mitigate the temporary intermittent utility disruption that could occur as part of construction:

- Metro shall field verify (by potholing or other methods) the exact locations and depths of underground utilities and conduct condition checks prior to utility relocation. (CN-10)
- Metro shall coordinate closely with utility providers to develop a service plan as needed to address planned and unplanned utility service interruptions. Should an unplanned outage occur as a result of construction activities, Metro shall contact the appropriate utility provider immediately to restore service. Metro shall also maintain access to utilities for providers' technicians. Metro shall provide protective measures such as pipe and conduit support systems, vibration and settlement monitoring, trench sheeting, and shoring during construction to avoid potential damage to utilities. (CN-11)

