

### **III. Environmental Setting**

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#### **A. Overview of Environmental Setting**

This section of the EIR provides an overview of the existing regional and local setting in which the Project Site is located and a brief description of the existing conditions at the Project Site. Specific environmental setting information related to the individual environmental topics evaluated in this Draft EIR is provided in each of the environmental issue analyses found in Section IV, Environmental Impact Analysis of this Draft EIR. In addition, Section II, Project Description, of this Draft EIR, includes additional information regarding existing conditions at the Project Site.

##### **1. Project Location and Environmental Setting**

The Project Site is located at 1251 North Spring Street and 1030–1380 North Broadway within the Central City North Community Plan area of the City of Los Angeles. From the Project Site, the Metro A Line tracks and the Los Angeles State Historic Park are located generally to the southeast, and North Broadway is located generally to the northwest. The western portion of the South Parcel is located behind existing commercial uses that front North Broadway. The Project Site has a curvilinear shape, with Bishops Road and Savoy Street located across North Broadway near the center of the Project Site.

###### **a. On-Site Conditions**

The Project Site is comprised of approximately 8.08 acres and is partially developed, with portions of the Project Site currently used for transportation operations and maintenance-related facilities, bus parking and construction staging.<sup>1</sup> The Project Site's topography consists of a south-facing vegetated sloped area that spans from the North Parcel to the South Parcel until reaching the vicinity of Mandarin Plaza, at which point the South Parcel becomes mostly paved. The sloped area faces towards the Metro A Line tracks and the Los Angeles Historic State Park and consists mainly of bare ground with limited vegetation, containing remnants of concrete foundations/footings, and retaining walls. Chain link fencing is located along the perimeter of the Project Site between North Broadway and the Metro A Line tracks. The Project Site includes 20 existing on-site trees consisting of Canary Island date palm (*Phoenix canariensis*), Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*),

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<sup>1</sup> The Project involves the dedication of a three-foot-wide strip along North Broadway to the City resulting in a net acreage of 7.87 acres.

and desert fan palm (*Washingtonia filifera*) and three street trees consisting of jacaranda trees (*jacaranda mimosafolia*), none of which are protected under the City's Protected Tree and Shrubs Ordinance No. 186,873. Further, the Project Site has 13 static billboard structures along North Broadway, including three billboards on the South Parcel and 10 billboards on the North Parcel.

Existing access to the South Parcel is located via a gated driveway on North Broadway across from St. Peter's Italian Catholic Church as well as an existing easement from North Spring Street, which crosses under the elevated Metro A Line tracks at the southeastern corner of the South Parcel.<sup>2</sup> The South Parcel is largely paved and partially developed with structures associated with transportation operations and maintenance-related facilities including an approximately 12,800-square-foot rectangular one-story metal auto repair building located in the southern portion of the South Parcel, with vehicle bays and roll-up doors, as well as a vehicle shelter/wash bay, trash enclosure, paved surface parking areas, paved outdoor storage yard, utility infrastructure, retaining walls, concrete foundations/footings, and fencing. Additionally, an approximately 2,132-square-foot addition to the rear of an existing off-site restaurant (the Golden Dragon Restaurant) and associated parking that encroaches onto the Project Site is located in the southwestern portion of the South Parcel. As further analyzed in Section IV.G, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, of this Draft EIR, two existing groundwater monitoring wells are located on the South Parcel for ongoing monitoring of the adjacent Union Pacific Railroad Cornfield Site under regulatory oversight by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board. An abandoned oil well has also been previously mapped within the South Parcel.

Access to the North Parcel is currently provided via two gated entryways along North Broadway, with one across from Solano Avenue and the other at the northeastern corner of the North Parcel. The North Parcel includes foundation remnants and graded areas, and is generally used for construction staging and bus parking. There are no existing buildings on the North Parcel. As further evaluated in Section IV.G, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, of this Draft EIR, records from CALGEM indicate the presence of two inactive abandoned oil wells on the North Parcel. One inactive oil well has been confirmed on the North Parcel (Southern Pacific Corehole No. 1). Although records indicate the presence of a second abandoned oil well on the North Parcel (Freight Depot No. 1), the precise location of a second well has not yet been confirmed.

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<sup>2</sup> Access to the South Parcel from North Spring Street is provided via existing access easements (Inst. No. 03-3736225, December 10, 2003, and Inst. No. 03-3736226, December 10, 2003).

### a. On-Site Cultural Resources

The Zanja Madre (the “Mother Ditch”), a subsurface brick conduit constructed in 1781, was constructed as an open irrigation ditch which was eventually expanded into a complex network of irrigation ditches that served the growing pueblo, and later City of Los Angeles. A portion of the Zanja Madre is exposed at grade within the Metro A Line property generally across from Bishops Road near the narrowest portion of the Project Site. Through investigations as a part of this Draft EIR, a portion of the Zanja Madre has been identified in the South Parcel of the Project Site and is further discussed in Section IV.C, Cultural Resources, of this Draft EIR.

The Cornfield/River Station is designated Historic Cultural Monument No. 82. The Cultural Heritage Board of the City of Los Angeles designated the “River Station Area/Southern Pacific Railroad” as HCM No. 82 on June 16, 1971. The designated boundary comprises the current sites of the Los Angeles State Historic Park, the Metro A Line right-of-way, and the Project Site, collectively. At the time of designation, the River Station site was said to retain many vestiges of 19th-century railroading. Nevertheless, the Cultural Heritage Board agreed that recognition of the River Station Area would exclude any structures located therein. This fact was noted in 1998 when a City staff report recommended allowing the demolition of a 1958 car and auto repair shop, stating that “the HCM declaration for this property specifically excluded any structures.” Moreover, a 1999 preliminary historic assessment noted that the River Station site lacks integrity due to the changes that have occurred since its 1971 HCM No. 82 designation, including the destruction of the Southern Pacific Railroad Office and Freight House A by fire in 1978, and that the historic resource has for all intents and purposes been destroyed.

### b. Surrounding Uses

The Project Site is located within an urbanized area and includes a mix of land uses located north of downtown Los Angeles within the vicinity of Chinatown neighborhood. The Project Site is adjacent to the Metro A Line tracks to the southeast. The South Parcel is located 400 feet north of the Metro A Line Chinatown Station. The Los Angeles State Historic Park (formerly Cornfield Park), located adjacent to the Metro A Line tracks to the southeast, contains 32 acres of active and passive open spaces and recreational amenities.<sup>3</sup> The Capitol Milling Company is located south of the Project Site and includes retail uses, restaurants, and offices. Various industrial, commercial, and warehouse uses, are located along the southeastern side of North Spring Street and along Baker Street. A channelized portion of the Los Angeles River is located approximately 575 feet east of the of the northeastern most portion of the Project Site. The South Parcel is largely located behind

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<sup>3</sup> *California State Parks, Los Angeles State Historic Park General Plan and Final Environmental Impact Report, June 10, 2005, p. 3.*

Mandarin Plaza commercial center, which includes one- and two-story commercial buildings and a two-level parking structure located along the frontage of North Broadway. Northwest of the Project Site, across North Broadway are various commercial uses, a high school, religious centers, surface parking lots, multi-family residences, and vacant lots. In addition, located across North Broadway is the approximately 600-acre Elysian Park, Radio Hill Gardens, and the Solano Canyon residential neighborhood, which includes single- and multi-family homes. Dodger Stadium is also located approximately 0.45 miles to the northwest of the Project Site.

## 2. Land Use Plans

City land use plans applicable to the Project Site include the following: the City of Los Angeles General Plan and Framework Element; Mobility Plan 2035; the Central City North Community Plan;<sup>4</sup> and the Citywide Urban Design Guidelines. Regional plans that are applicable to the Project Site include the Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) 2020–2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2020–2045 RTP/SCS), SCAG's 2024-2050 RTP/SCS, and the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP).

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<sup>4</sup> *The City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning updated the Central City North Community Plan and the Central City Community Plan, whose areas together make up Downtown Los Angeles (sometimes known as DTLA), in a combined planning process referred to as the DTLA 2040 Plan, which became effective on January 27, 2025. Since the application for this Project was filed and deemed complete before DTLA 2040 became effective, the provisions of DTLA 2040 do not apply to this Project. As such, the Central City North Community Plan is still the operative land use document for the Project Site, and therefore, DTLA 2040 is not applicable to the Project or Project Site.*

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#### **B. Related Projects**

Section 15130 of the State CEQA Guidelines states that cumulative impacts shall be discussed in an EIR when a project's incremental effects are potentially "cumulatively considerable," which is defined in Section 15065(a)(3) as occurring when "the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects."<sup>5</sup>

As set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15130, the determination of cumulative impacts is generally a two-step process. The first step is to determine whether or not the combined effects from the proposed project and related projects, as identified below, would result in a potentially significant cumulative impact. If the answer is no, then the EIR only briefly needs to indicate why the cumulative impact is not significant and is not discussed in further detail in the EIR. If the answer is yes, then the analysis proceeds to the second step, which is to determine whether the proposed project's incremental effects are cumulatively considerable. CEQA Guidelines Section 15065(a)(3) defines "cumulatively considerable" to mean that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a)(3), a project's contribution is less than cumulatively considerable if the project is required to implement or fund its fair share of a mitigation measure or measures designed to alleviate the cumulative impact. In addition, the lead agency is required to identify facts and analyses supporting its conclusion that the contribution will be rendered less than cumulatively considerable.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b) further provides that the discussion of cumulative impacts reflect "the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence, but the discussion need not provide as great of detail as is provided for the effects attributable to the project alone." Rather, the discussion is to "be guided by the standards of practicality and reasonableness, and should focus on the cumulative impact to which the identified other projects contribute."

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<sup>5</sup> Title 14, California Code of Regulations (CCR), Section 15065(a)(3).

CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b) states that complying with one of the following two protocols is necessary to provide an adequate discussion of significant cumulative impacts:

- (A) A list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency; or
- (B) A summary of projections contained in an adopted local, regional or statewide plan, or related planning document, that describes or evaluates conditions contributing to the cumulative effect. Such plans may include: a general plan, regional transportation plan, or plans for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. A summary of projections may also be contained in an adopted or certified prior environmental document for such a plan. Such projections may be supplemented with additional information such as a regional modeling program. Any such document shall be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the lead agency.

Cumulative study areas are defined based on an analysis of the geographical scope relevant to each particular environmental issue. Therefore, the cumulative study area for each individual environmental impact issue may vary. For example, a cumulative schools impact may only affect the schools serving the project site, while a cumulative air quality impact may affect the entire South Coast Air Basin. The specific boundaries and the projected growth within those boundaries for the cumulative study area of each environmental issue are identified in the applicable environmental issue section in Section IV, Environmental Impact Analysis, of this Draft EIR.

A list of development projects in the area of the Project that could affect conditions in the Project area (e.g., by generating construction noise and/or generating population increases) was prepared based on information obtained primarily from LADOT and the Department of City Planning. Based on consultation with LADOT and the Department of City Planning, a total of 25 potential related projects have been identified for inclusion in the cumulative impact analysis for this EIR. These related projects are in varying stages of the approval/entitlement/development process and consist of a variety of land uses reflecting the diverse range of land uses in the vicinity of the Project Site. The related projects comprise a variety of uses, including apartments, condominiums, restaurants, hotels, office, industrial, studio and retail uses, as well as mixed-use developments incorporating some or all of these elements.

The related projects are listed in Table III-1 on page III-8, which identifies the location of each related project along with the types of land uses proposed. The locations of Related Project Nos. 1 through 25 are shown in Figure III-1 on page III-11. It is noted that some of

the related projects may not be built out by 2034 (i.e., the Project buildout year), may never be built, or may be approved and built at reduced densities. To provide a conservative forecast, the future baseline forecast assumes that Related Project Nos. 1 through 25 are fully built out by 2034.

According to projections associated with DTLA 2040, an additional estimated 125,000 people, 70,000 housing units, and 55,000 jobs will be added to the Downtown area by the year 2040.<sup>6</sup> Only the initial period of any such projected growth would overlap with the Project's future baseline forecast, as the Project is anticipated to be completed in 2034, before the Community Plan Update's horizon year of 2040. Moreover, the Project's projected buildout and occupancy years are generally similar to those of many related projects identified in Table III-1 on page III-8. Accordingly, it can be assumed that the projected growth reflected by the list of related projects, which itself is a conservative assumption as discussed above, would account for any overlapping growth that may be assumed by the DTLA 2040 Plan.

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<sup>6</sup> *City of Los Angeles, Downtown Los Angeles Community Plan Update, [https://planning.lacity.gov/odocument/f608317b-911a-461e-8e6e-ea05c1a1cd6f/2\\_Plan\\_Background\\_Information.pdf](https://planning.lacity.gov/odocument/f608317b-911a-461e-8e6e-ea05c1a1cd6f/2_Plan_Background_Information.pdf), accessed June 19, 2025.*

**Table III-1  
Related Projects**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Project Name and Project Address</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Size</b>
1. <sup>a,b</sup>	1101 North Main Condos 1101 N. Main St.	Condominiums	318 du
2.	Mixed-Use 511 N. Grand Ave	Apartments	299 du
		Retail	8,000 sf
3. <sup>a</sup>	Hill Mixed-Use Project 708 N. Hill St.	Apartments	162 du
		Retail	5,000 sf
4. <sup>a</sup>	Alpine Mixed-Use 211 W. Alpine St.	Apartments	160 du
		Retail	2,499 sf
5. <sup>a</sup>	College Station Mixed-Use 129 W. College St., 924 N. Spring St.	Apartments	725 du
		Commercial	51,600 sf
6. <sup>b</sup>	Ferrante 1000 W. Temple St.	Apartments	1,500 du
		Retail	30,000 sf
7. <sup>a</sup>	1201 North Broadway Mixed-Use 1201 N. Broadway	Apartments	118 du
		Office/Commercial	8,800 sf
8. <sup>b</sup>	Mixed-Use Barranca Project 169 N. Avenue 21	Apartments (5 Affordable)	100 du
		Hotel	100 rm
		Retail	4,946 sf
9. <sup>a</sup>	643–655 North Spring Street 643–655 N. Spring St.	Apartments	294 du
		Hotel	149 rm
		Commercial	15,878 sf
10. <sup>a</sup>	Data Center 900 N. Alameda St.	Data Center	179,900 sf
11. <sup>a</sup>	942 North Broadway 942 N. Broadway	Residential (9 Affordable)	178 du
		Restaurant and Office Space	35,805 sf
12. <sup>c</sup>	Sunset Boulevard Mixed-Use (Holy Hill Mixed-Use) 1111 W. Sunset Blvd.	Apartments	737 du
		Hotel	180 rm
		Hotel Retail	10,000 sf
		Hotel Restaurant	10,000 sf
		Office	48,000 sf
		Retail/Gym/Grocery	50,000 sf
		Restaurant	25,000 sf
13. <sup>a,b</sup>	843 North Spring Street Mixed-Use 843 N. Spring St.	Office and Restaurant Space	100,517 sf
14. <sup>a</sup>	Mixed-Use 1457 N. Main St.	Live-Work	244 du
		Retail	9,829 sf
15. <sup>d</sup>	Clean Water Campus Project 303 N. San Fernando Rd.	Office	150,000 sf
16. <sup>a</sup>	Stadium Way and Chavez Ravine Apartments 959 E Stadium Wy.	Apartments	237 du
		Affordable Housing	30 du
17. <sup>a</sup>	Pagoda Hotel 995 N. Broadway	Hotel	101 rm
		Restaurant	6,211 sf

**Table III-1 (Continued)  
Related Projects**

No.	Project Name and Project Address	Description	Size
18. <sup>a</sup>	1101 North Broadway 1009-1015 N. Broadway	Hotel	92 rm
		Restaurant	1,713 sf
		Café/Retail	895 sf
		Café	978 sf
19. <sup>a</sup>	1635 Norh Main Street 1635 N. Main St.	Office	140,000 sf
		Retail	5,000 sf
		Restaurant	8,000 sf
20. <sup>a</sup>	TRJLA Mixed-Use 717 N. Hill St.	Apartments	411 du
		Affordable Housing	39 du
		Retail	17,140 sf
21. <sup>a</sup>	College Street Residential Project 871 N. Figueroa Ter.	Apartments	153 du
		Affordable Housing	17 du
22. <sup>a</sup>	950 Stadium Way Residential 950 E Stadium Wy.	Apartments	57 du
		Affordable Housing	8 du
23. <sup>a</sup>	130 College Office Project 130 W. College Street	Office	224,597 sf
		Retail	4,110 sf
		Restaurant	5,894 sf
24. <sup>a</sup>	Los Angeles State Historic Park Pedestrian Bridge	A pedestrian bridge connection is proposed to provide access to the Los Angeles State Historic Park from Broadway. Current access to the Los Angeles State Historic Park is only available along Spring Street. There is currently no dedicated funding or design of the future pedestrian bridge connection.	
25. <sup>a,e</sup>	Los Angeles Aerial Rapid Transit (LA ART)	An aerial rapid transit gondola system is proposed to provide transit service to connect communities of Chinatown, Mission Junction, Elysian Park, Solano Canyon, and the Los Angeles State Historic Park. The proposed route with stations include Union Station, Chinatown/Los Angeles State Historic Park, and Dodger Stadium. Construction could begin as early as 2024 and would take approximately 25 months. The LA ART could be in operations by 2027, prior to the completion of the Project. The LA ART is anticipated to generate approximately 20 employees.	
<p>_____</p> <p><i>du = dwelling units</i>  <i>rm = rooms</i>  <i>sf = square feet</i></p> <p><sup>a</sup> <i>Related project is located within 0.5 mile of the Project Site.</i></p> <p><sup>b</sup> <i>Although construction of the related project may be partially or entirely complete, the project was not fully occupied at the time when traffic counts were conducted. Therefore, the related project was considered and listed to provide a more conservative analysis.</i></p> <p><sup>c</sup> <i>This related project proposes two development options. For conservative purposes, the development option resulting in greater vehicle trips was considered.</i></p>			

**Table III-1 (Continued)  
Related Projects**

No.	Project Name and Project Address	Description	Size
<sup>d</sup>		<i>Related project information based on available information provided by LADOT for LADOT Project ID 51299.</i>	
<sup>e</sup>		<i>Final Environmental Impact Report for the Los Angeles Aerial Rapid Transit Project (Kimley-Horn, December 2023).</i>	
<p><i>Source: Related project information for developments within 0.5 miles of the Project Site and 0.25 miles of the traffic analysis study area are based on available information provided by LADOT (December 5, 2023), Department of City Planning, and recent traffic studies prepared in the area; Eyestone Environmental, 2025.</i></p>			



**Figure III-1**  
Location of Related Projects