

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
BUREAU OF ENGINEERING
1149 S. BROADWAY, 7th FLOOR LOS
ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90015
CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT
NOTICE OF EXEMPTION
(Articles II and III – City CEQA Guidelines)**

COUNTY CLERK'S USE

Submission of this form is optional. The form shall be filed with the County Clerk, 12400 E. Imperial Highway, Norwalk, California, 90650 and with the State Clearinghouse in the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation, if filed with the County Clerk, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21152(b). Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21167(d), the filing of this notice starts a 35-day statute of limitations on court challenges to the approval of the project.

LEAD CITY AGENCY AND ADDRESS: City of Los Angeles c/o Bureau of Engineering 1149 S. Broadway, Suite 600, MS 939 Los Angeles, CA 90015	COUNCIL DISTRICT 14
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PROJECT TITLE: Valley Boulevard Multi-Modal Transportation Improvement Project	LOG REFERENCE
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PROJECT LOCATION: Along Mission Road from its intersection with Cesar Chavez Avenue on the west end, northeasterly to Valley Boulevard and continuing along Valley Boulevard easterly and northeasterly to the I-710 terminus on the east end, in the Boyle Heights and Northeast LA Community Plan Areas of the City of Los Angeles. Please see *Figure 1. Project Location* and *Figure 2. Aerial View of Project Location*.

DESCRIPTION OF NATURE, PURPOSE, AND BENEFICIARIES OF PROJECT: The main purpose of the Valley Boulevard Multi-Modal Transportation Improvement Project (project) is to improve mobility, pedestrian and bicycle access, transit infrastructure and a potential enhanced bus lane (during peak period) to provide safe and accessible mobility along the corridor. This project also aims to increase transit service, connectivity, transit ridership, and improve access to employment centers, educational facilities, healthcare facilities, parks and recreational centers. Project beneficiaries include property owners, businesses, employees, and residents along the project corridor, as well as travelers who pass through the project corridor by providing multi-modal transportation opportunities, such as sidewalks, a cycle track, and peak hour bus lanes that would improve transit services through the corridor. In October 2024, the Bureau of Engineering accepted the *Valley Boulevard Multimodal Improvement Project Alternative Analysis Report* and on November 13, 2024, closed the project Pre-design Phase and moved the project to the Design Phase.


CONTACT PERSON Maria Martin	CONTACT INFORMATION Maria.Martin@lacity.org
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EXEMPT STATUS:		
CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION*	CITY CEQA GUIDELINES	Art. III, Sec. 1 Classes 1(3), 2(3), 4(13)
	STATE CEQA GUIDELINES	Sec. 15301(c), 15302(c), 15303(d), 15304(h), 15305(c)

* See Public Resources Code Sec. 21080 and set forth state and city guidelines provisions.

JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT EXEMPTION: This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Article 19, Sections 15301(c), *Existing Facilities*; 15302(c), *Replacement or Reconstruction*; 15303(d), *New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures*; 15304(h), *Minor Alterations to Land*; and 15305(c), *Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations*. The project is also exempt pursuant to *Los Angeles CEQA Guidelines* Article III, Section 1, Classes 1(3) - *Existing Facilities*, 2(3) - *Replacement or Reconstruction*, and 4(13) *Minor Alterations to Land*. None of the limitations set forth in State CEQA Guidelines 15300.2 apply.

IF FILED BY APPLICANT, ATTACH CERTIFIED DOCUMENT OF EXEMPTION FINDING

SIGNATURE:  Maria Martin	TITLE: Environmental Affairs Officer Environmental Management Division	DATE: 07/22/2025
FEE: \$75.00	RECEIPT NO.	REC'D BY
		DATE

DISTRIBUTION: (1) COUNTY CLERK; (2) STATE CLEARINGHOUSE; (3) AGENCY RECORD

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CONTACT PERSON Maria Martin	CONTACT INFORMATION Maria.Martin@lacity.org
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	STATE CEQA GUIDELINES	Sec. 15301(c), 15302(c), 15303(d), 15304(h), 15305(c)

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JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT EXEMPTION: This project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Article 19, Sections 15301(c), *Existing Facilities*; 15302(c), *Replacement or Reconstruction*; 15303(d), *New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures*; 15304(h), *Minor Alterations to Land*; and 15305(c), *Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations*. The project is also exempt pursuant to *Los Angeles CEQA Guidelines* Article III, Section 1, Classes 1(3) - *Existing Facilities*, 2(3) - *Replacement or Reconstruction*, and 4(13) *Minor Alterations to Land*. *None of the limitations set forth in State CEQA Guidelines 15300.2 apply.*

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CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION NARRATIVE

I. DESCRIPTION OF NATURE, PURPOSE, AND BENEFICIARIES OF PROJECT

The City of Los Angeles (City) is proposing the Valley Boulevard Multi-Modal Transportation Improvement Project (project), which would improve mobility, pedestrian and bicycle access, transit infrastructure and a potential enhanced bus lane (during peak period) to provide safe and accessible mobility along the corridor.

The project limits extend along a 4.5-mile corridor through the Lincoln Heights, Boyle Heights, and El Sereno communities of the city, connecting the Interstate (I)-710 freeway to Union Station in Downtown Los Angeles via Valley Boulevard, Mission Road, and Cesar Chavez Avenue. This road segment is a four-lane, primarily east-west corridor that accommodates an average daily traffic of 17,000 to 24,000 vehicles. It provides access to several major destinations, such as Los Angeles Union Station, California State University - Los Angeles (Cal State LA) campus, Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) Los Angeles Transportation Center, Lincoln and Ascot Hills Parks, Los Angeles County University of Southern California (LAC-USC) Medical Center, and the USC Health Science campus. The UPRR tracks run along Valley Boulevard through most of the project corridor. The corridor is predominantly developed with industrial land uses but also has adjacent commercial, institutional, recreational, and residential uses. **Figure 1** is a regional location map and **Figure 2** is the aerial view of the project corridor.

Project Purpose

The main purpose of the project is to improve mobility, pedestrian and bicycle access, transit infrastructure, and a potential enhanced bus lane (during peak period) to provide safe and accessible mobility along the corridor. The project also aims to increase transit service, connectivity, transit ridership, and improve access to employment centers, educational facilities, healthcare facilities, parks, and recreational centers.

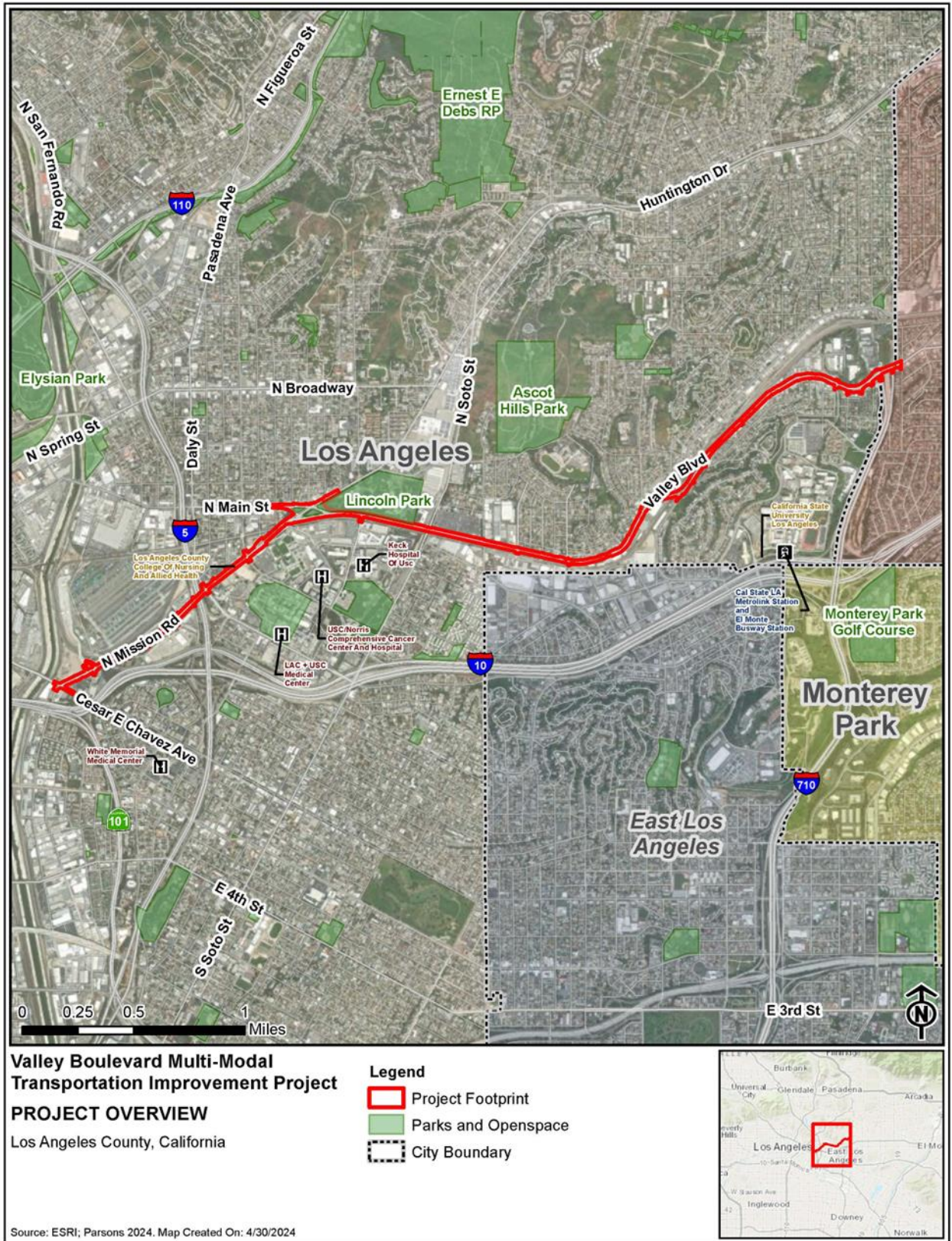
In recognizing that access to Valley Boulevard is constrained by a disjointed street grid, lack of consistent roadway features, and an adjacent freight railroad corridor, the following needs were identified:

- Improvement of mobility in an equitable manner that connects communities, education and healthcare services, and regional transit centers.
- Incorporation of green space and safe opportunities for leisure.
- Improvement of the quality of life around the freight railroad corridor adjacent to Valley Boulevard.

Figure 1. Project Location



Figure 2. Aerial View of Project Location



Project Description

The City developed several conceptual alternatives for various improvements proposed to address pedestrian, bicyclist, and transit safety, mobility, and accessibility concerns, both from the engineering and community perspectives. Upon evaluation of various alternatives, and consideration of public needs and preferences, the preferred alternative was chosen, which would retain the existing four-lane configuration (two travel lanes in each direction) of Valley Boulevard and Mission Road throughout the project corridor, including the sections adjacent to Lincoln Park and El Parque de Mexico, while incorporating the following improvements:

Dedicated Bus Lanes

The outside lanes of Valley Boulevard and Mission Road along the project corridor, including the sections adjacent to Lincoln Park and El Parque de Mexico, will be restricted to bus use during peak hours. The westbound lane will be designated for bus use only during the AM peak hours and the eastbound lanes for bus use only during the PM peak hours. New bus stop shelters are also proposed along the project corridor to replace/relocate the existing bus stops and add new ones. This is intended to improve the mobility of transit service buses along the corridor and encourage greater use of public transportation.

Class IV Bike Facility

A 12-foot-wide separated bikeway, or two-way cycle track, is proposed on the west side of Mission Road from Cesar Chavez Avenue to the driveway of the Metro Division 10 facility. This bikeway will then cross to the east side of Mission Road until Lincoln Park, at which point it will then be part of the proposed multi-use path at this park. From Lincoln Park, the bikeway will run along the north side of Valley Boulevard until Rowan Avenue, where it will cross to the south side and continue east until it ends at the I-710 off-ramp.

Street Vacation

The section of Main Street between Valley Boulevard and Mission Road may be vacated as this street currently separates Lincoln Park and El Parque de Mexico and limits pedestrian access to both parks.

Park Improvements

If the section of Main Street is vacated, the land available from the vacation would be converted to parkland, including a multi-use path. A partial acquisition of four small slivers of land within El Parque de Mexico adjacent to the existing roadways, for a total of 0.15 acre, will be required. If the section of Main Street is vacated, the usable area of El Parque De Mexico would increase by 1.07 acres to a total area of 2.55 acres of parkland. The proposed improvements also include the addition of playground or park fitness equipment within existing available space in Lincoln Park, directly adjacent to this segment of Main Street. No park tree removals are anticipated. However, if required, they would be subject Board of Recreation and Park approval and subject to the Department of Recreation and Parks tree replacement policy.

Sidewalks and Curb Ramps

Standard width sidewalks along with Americans with Disabilities (ADA)-compliant curb ramps at intersections/crosswalks, will be provided throughout the project corridor, including the sections adjacent to Lincoln Park and El Parque de Mexico and the newly developed parkland if the segment of Main Street is vacated, as described above. A meandering sidewalk through a landscaped area is proposed on the west side of Mission Road from Gallardo Street to the driveway of the Metro Division 10 facility. This sidewalk would not be adjacent to either of the parks.

Sidewalk Green Space/Landscaped Parkways

Landscaped parkways and tree wells along the sidewalks are proposed throughout the corridor, including the sections adjacent to Lincoln Park and El Parque de Mexico. Existing trees will be preserved in-place where feasible and approximately 1,800 new trees will be planted at the parks, parkways/tree wells, and medians along the corridor. Approximately 400 tree removals, if required, would be conducted in accordance with applicable City policies. The street tree removals would be subject to Board of Public Works approval, StreetsLA Urban Forestry Division (UFD) permitting, and tree replacement requirements per City policy as determined by UFD.

Raised Medians

Landscaped center medians are proposed along the project corridor to improve the visual quality of the streetscape including the sections adjacent to Lincoln Park and El Parque de Mexico. In addition, approximately 63 left-turn pockets at the end of the medians will be provided at street intersections to accommodate turning vehicles without obstructing through traffic.

On-Street Parking Areas

The city currently allows on-street parking along the project corridor and there are approximately 638 spaces, with an average of 298 spaces (44 percent) being utilized daily on weekdays. The project would reduce on-street parking to about 231 spaces. This would be accompanied by the provision of peak hour bus lanes, a cycle track, and improved sidewalks that would promote greater use of transit services, biking, and walking and, at the same time, reduce the demand for on-street parking. On-street parking reduction between Lincoln Park and El Parque de Mexico would also occur if the section of Main Street between Valley Boulevard and Mission Road is vacated.

Railroad Quiet Zone

A Railroad Quiet Zone will be established along the rail corridor that runs alongside Valley Boulevard in coordination with UPRR and Amtrak trains that use the adjacent railroad tracks. This will be done through the installation of automatic warning devices, such as flashing lights and crossing gates and gate arms at two at-grade crossings along the corridor. This improvement will restrict locomotive horn sounding during overnight hours between 10:00 P.M. and 7:00 A.M. Fencing is also proposed to separate the project corridor from the railroad tracks, starting at the south side of Valley Boulevard near El Parque de Mexico to Boca

Avenue and on the north side of Valley Boulevard from Cavanagh Road to Block Place.

Pedestrian Crossings/Crosswalks

Enhanced visibility pedestrian crossings (e.g., lighted) and dedicated crosswalks will be marked at intersections with local streets along the project corridor, including sections adjacent to Lincoln Park and El Parque de Mexico.

Street Lighting and Pedestrian Lighting

Streetlights and pedestrian lighting will be provided along the sidewalks and cycle track along the project corridor, including sections adjacent to Lincoln Park and El Parque de Mexico, to improve visibility and safety for all users. A High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) Beacon signal will be added to cross N Mission Road, between El Parque de Mexico and Main Street, on the east side of the roadway.

Traffic Signal Upgrades and Synchronization

Traffic signals will be relocated as necessary and upgraded along the project corridor, including sections adjacent to Lincoln Park and El Parque de Mexico. They will also be synchronized along the corridor and with nearby intersections to the east and west to improve traffic flow.

Utility Line Relocations

Existing overhead and underground utility lines will be relocated outside of the travel lanes to avoid conflicts with the cycle track, sidewalks, parkways and other utility lines that would remain in place. Improvements to the storm drain system (e.g., curb inlets and catch basins) will also be constructed to account for the new curbs and gutters that would be provided. These relocations and improvements will occur along the project corridor, including sections adjacent to Lincoln Park.

Right-of-Way Acquisition

Construction of the proposed roadway improvements would require a small amount of permanent right-of-way (ROW) acquisition and temporary construction easements (TCEs). Partial acquisitions would result in permanent land acquisition, while TCEs would be used only on a short-term basis during construction to accommodate access, staging, or other temporary activities associated with project delivery.

Table 1 summarizes the number of parcels along the project alignment, the total land area of those parcels, and the area subject to partial acquisition or temporary construction easements.

Table 1 – Summary of Potentially Affected Properties

	Number of Parcels	Total Land Area of Affected Parcels (sf)	Land Area Proposed for Partial Acquisition (sf)	Percent of Total Land Area Affected
Parcels adjacent to the project alignment	270	15,674,508		
Parcels subject to partial acquisition	4	210,572	5,999	2.8% (of 4 parcels) / 0.04% (of total)
Parcels subject to TCE	127	4,349,169	176,016	4.25% (of 127 parcels) / 1.1% (of total)

Permanent Acquisition

A total of four parcels along the project corridor would be subject to partial acquisition, affecting approximately 5,999 square feet, which represents 2.8 percent of the total area of the affected parcels, and only 0.04 percent of the total area of the 270 adjacent parcels. No residences, businesses, or employees would be displaced, and no changes in land use would occur as a result of these partial acquisitions. Details are summarized below:

- Assessor’s Parcel Number (APN) 5210-025-906: This parcel is listed as government-owned and is currently vacant. The proposed acquisition would involve a sliver of land along the edge of the parcel, comprising less than 1 percent of its total area. No structures would be altered or removed, and the current vacant use would not be impacted.
- APN 5210-025-911: This parcel is part of El Parque de Mexico, a public park. A 1,415-square-foot take (equivalent to 0.03 acres or about 2 percent of the park’s current 1.51-acre area) would be required for the construction of a bus pull-out area. The acquisition would not impact existing facilities, park statues, or public access. An avoidance measure has been incorporated to ensure statues remain unaffected.
- APN 5215-014-002: This parcel is a commercial property currently occupied by a shoe manufacturing business. The partial acquisition would involve less than 1 percent of the parcel area and would not affect existing structures or operations.
- APN 5215-014-001: This parcel is listed as commercial but currently serves an institutional use as the Ming Ya Buddhist Temple (4371 Valley Boulevard). The proposed partial take—located near the existing sidewalk—would affect less than 3 percent of the parcel area. No structures would be impacted, and the temple’s ongoing operations would not be affected.

All permanent acquisitions will be carried out by the City of Los Angeles in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act, the California Relocation Assistance Act, and Chapter 2, Article 2 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code.

Temporary Construction Easement Acquisition

A total of 127 parcels would be subject to TCEs, affecting approximately 176,016 square feet, which represents 4.25 percent of the total area of those 127 parcels, or about 1.1 percent of the total land area of all 270 adjacent parcels.

These easements would be temporary in nature and used only during construction. All areas affected by TCEs would be restored to their original or improved condition upon completion of construction and prior to project closeout.

Applicable Regulations and Standard Conditions

Unless otherwise stated, the proposed project will be designed, constructed, and operated in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations, ordinances, and formally adopted City of Los Angeles standards, including but not limited to the following:

- City of Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC)
- Bureau of Engineering Standard Plans
- Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction “Greenbook”, including Additions and Amendments
- Work Area Traffic Control Handbook

Standard Conditions and Minimization Measures

The project will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local environmental regulations, including those governing stormwater management, air quality, noise, hazardous materials, and public safety. As such, the project would not conflict with or violate any applicable laws, regulations, or policies.

In accordance with applicable regulatory requirements and standard conditions, the project incorporates the following design features, best management practices (BMPs), and minimization measures, as summarized below. See Section III.B for more detailed information.

Aesthetics

- The project includes several design elements that would enhance the visual quality of the corridor, such as landscaped medians, tree-lined sidewalks, meandering walkways, multi-use paths, and the planting of approximately 1,800 new street trees.
- The proposed improvements along the Main Street segment between Lincoln Park and El Parque de Mexico would further improve the area's visual character by increasing green space and adding publicly accessible amenities.

Air Quality

- To minimize temporary air pollutant emissions during construction, the project will

implement BMPs including:

- Regular moistening of exposed soils to control fugitive dust.
- Tire washing to prevent track-out.
- Routine maintenance of construction equipment per manufacturer specifications.
- Use of equipment with emission control technologies.
- Idling restrictions for construction vehicles and equipment.

Biological Resources

- The following standard practices and minimization measures will be implemented to avoid or reduce impacts to sensitive species and habitats:
 - A Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) will be provided for construction personnel.
 - A pre-construction nesting bird survey will be conducted by a qualified biologist if work occurs during the nesting season (generally February 1 through August 31).
 - A biological monitor will be present during initial ground-disturbing activities to identify and avoid any sensitive biological resources, if encountered.
- Compliance with Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Sections 62.161–62.176 is required for street tree removal and replacement, including:
 - A minimum 2:1 replacement ratio using 24-inch box-size stock.
 - A three-year watering and maintenance period.
 - Public notification and a Board of Public Works hearing when three or more street trees are removed at a given location.
- The City of Los Angeles requires compliance with LAMC Sections 62.161–62.176, which govern street tree removal and replacement. Under these regulations, a 2:1 replacement ratio is required, using 24-inch box-size stock with a minimum three-year watering and maintenance period. Public notification and a hearing before the Board of Public Works are also required when three or more street trees are removed at a given address.
- Approximately 1,800 new trees will be planted as replacement for the required removal of 400 trees. New trees will include California native and climate-adapted species approved by the Urban Forestry Division (UFD), such as African sumac, Western redbud, and London plane tree. The landscape palette will feature drought-tolerant evergreen and flowering shrubs and groundcovers and will exclude invasive species identified by the California Invasive Plant Council.

Archeological Resources

- In accordance with the “Greenbook” and applicable regulations, if archaeological materials are encountered during construction, work in the vicinity will be halted until a qualified archaeologist evaluates the find and recommends appropriate treatment.

Hydrology and Water Quality

- To prevent impacts to Lincoln Park Lake and nearby drainage features:
 - Temporary fencing will be installed along the trail adjacent to the lake to prevent debris or materials from entering the water.
 - The project will comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements through preparation and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP will include BMPs for erosion and sediment control, spill prevention, equipment staging, and material handling.

Noise

- All construction activities will comply with LAMC Chapter XI (Noise Regulation), which prohibits noise-generating construction between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., and limits equipment noise levels to 75 dBA at 50 feet, unless deemed technically infeasible.
- To further reduce potential construction noise impacts, the contractor will implement BMPs including:
 - Use of properly maintained mufflers on equipment.
 - Limiting unnecessary idling.
 - Providing advance notice to nearby residents.
 - Installing temporary noise barriers where warranted.

Tribal Cultural Resources

- Archaeological and Native American monitoring will be conducted during ground-disturbing activities in accordance with the approved Minor Phasing Plan: Post-Review Discovery and Monitoring Plan (PRDMP), prepared under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).
- If human remains are discovered during construction, the contractor will comply with Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e), and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. These regulations require immediate notification of the Los Angeles County Coroner, who will determine if the remains are of Native American origin and, if so, notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The NAHC will appoint a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) within 48 hours,

who will then have the opportunity to recommend culturally appropriate treatment or reburial within 24 hours.

II. PROJECT HISTORY

In 2021, the City of Los Angeles initially studied improvements that may be needed to improve mobility near the I-710 terminus, northeast of Downtown Los Angeles. One proposal involved improvements along Mission Road and Valley Boulevard from the Los Angeles Union Station to the I-710 terminus.

Based on research of the existing roadway configuration, traffic volumes, adjacent land uses, population and employment density, transit services, alternative transportation, destinations, utility lines, the adjacent UPRR corridor, and other similar considerations, the city determined that improvements would be needed to roadway, rail crossings, transit bus services, sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, and other elements of complete streets. Community and stakeholder input was also solicited to better gauge public needs, preferences, and other concerns for the project corridor.

Short-term, mid-term and long-term improvements along the corridor were proposed, as well as future mixed use development at the eastern end. For the near-term improvements, the city developed several conceptual alternatives for various improvements proposed to address mobility concerns both from the engineering and community perspectives. Alternative 3 was then selected as the preferred alternative and is the proposed project, as described above.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A. Basis for Categorical Exemption

The proposed project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Article 19 as follows:

- Section 15301, Class 1(c) – Existing Facilities: This exemption applies to the repair, maintenance, and minor alteration of existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities. It includes alterations such as the addition of bicycle facilities (e.g., bicycle parking, bicycle-share stations, and bicycle lanes), transit improvements (e.g., bus lanes and pedestrian crossings), street trees, and similar features that do not result in additional automobile lanes.
- Section 15302, Class 2(c) – Replacement or Reconstruction: This exemption applies to the replacement or reconstruction of existing utility systems and/or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of capacity.
- Section 15303, Class 3(d) – New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures: This exemption covers minor modifications to utilities and construction of limited street improvements.

- Section 15304, Class 4(h) – Minor Alterations to Land: This includes the creation of bicycle lanes on existing rights-of-way.
- Section 15305, Class 5(c) – Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations: Reversion to acreage in accordance with the Subdivision Map Act. This exemption applies if the segment of Main Street between Valley Boulevard and Mission Road is vacated. The land available from the vacation of Main Street is anticipated to be reverted to and added to the adjacent park facilities.

The project is also exempt under Los Angeles CEQA Guidelines Article III, Section 1, Class 1(3), which applies to the repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing highways, streets, sidewalks, gutters, and bicycle/pedestrian trails, provided they remain within the public right-of-way and maintain current transportation uses; Class 2(3), which applies to replacement or reconstruction of existing utility systems and/or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of capacity; and Class 4(13) for the creation of bicycle lanes on existing rights-of-way.

B. Consideration of Potential Exceptions to use of a Categorical Exemption

Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2, categorical exemptions cannot be used under certain conditions, as discussed below:

1. Location

Exemption Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located--a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply in all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies. Although parts of the project qualify under these classes, the project area is confined to previously disturbed public rights-of-way along Mission Road, Main Street, and Valley Boulevard and does not contain sensitive environmental resources or natural communities.

While a small methane zone and buffer area are located near the intersection of Mission Road and Cesar Chavez Avenue, the project does not involve construction of enclosed structures that could pose a hazard in relation to methane exposure. No other hazardous concerns within the project corridor have been designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted by federal, state, or local agencies.

Regarding land use compatibility, the project aligns with the Mobility Plan 2035 goals. Although proposed roadway widths (44 to 56 feet) are narrower than the planned classifications for Avenue I and Boulevard II, the design complies with Mobility Plan Policy 2.17 – Street Widening, which encourages context-sensitive design based on safety, mobility, and cost considerations.

In terms of parking, while the project would reduce on-street parking, the proposed

improvements, including peak-hour bus lanes, a cycle track, and improved pedestrian access, would promote alternative modes of transportation and help offset demand. Policy 4.13 of the Mobility Plan, which calls for a balance between on-street and off-street parking supply, has been considered.

As such, the location exception does not apply to this project.

2. Cumulative Impact

This exception applies when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same location could result in a significant impact.

The proposed project is one component of the 710 North Mobility Improvement Program, which also includes the Huntington Drive and Eastern Avenue Multi-Modal Transportation Improvement Projects. These related efforts are being implemented in independent phases, with distinct scopes, funding, and timelines.

The project represents near-term improvements and has independent utility from other planned or future efforts. It has a unique purpose, funding structure, and construction timeline, and would not overlap with other infrastructure projects in a manner that would create cumulative impacts.

Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

3. Significant Effect

This exception applies when, although a project may otherwise be exempt, there is a reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

The proposed improvements would occur primarily within existing public rights-of-way and are consistent with the surrounding urban context. No unusual circumstances are present along the corridor or adjacent areas that would result in significant environmental effects. Project impacts would primarily be temporary during construction, with long-term beneficial effects to traffic operations, public transit, pedestrian access, and bicycle infrastructure.

The city, in coordination with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans District 7), has conducted technical studies to assess potential environmental impacts along the corridor. These studies concluded that, with incorporation of project design features, standard conditions, and minimization measures, the project would not result in significant environmental effects. A summary of topic-specific findings is provided below. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

Aesthetics

The project corridor traverses a highly urbanized environment characterized by industrial, commercial, institutional, recreational, and residential uses. The proposed improvements would occur predominantly within the existing public right-of-way and would not involve the

construction of buildings or other vertical structures that could obstruct public views or substantially degrade the existing visual character of the area.

Instead, the project includes several elements that would enhance visual quality along the corridor. These include the installation of landscaped medians, tree-lined sidewalks, meandering walkways, multi-use paths, and the planting of approximately 1,800 new street trees. The improvements of the segment of Main Street between Lincoln Park and El Parque de Mexico would also contribute positively to the area's visual character by increasing green space and providing attractive public amenities.

No scenic vistas, scenic highways, or designated view corridors are located within or near the project area. Construction activities would be temporary and localized, and any visual disturbance would cease upon project completion.

Therefore, the project would not result in a significant effect on visual resources, and no unusual circumstances are present that would elevate aesthetic impacts to a level of significance under CEQA.

Agriculture and Forestry

The project site is located within a highly urbanized area of the City of Los Angeles and is not zoned or designated for agricultural or forest land use. There are no farmlands, forest lands, timberlands, or land under a Williamson Act contract in or near the project corridor. As such, the project would not convert agricultural land to non-agricultural use, conflict with agricultural zoning, or result in the loss of forest resources.

Therefore, no impact to agriculture or forestry resources would occur, and this resource area does not represent an unusual circumstance.

Air Quality Impact

During construction, the project could result in temporary emissions of criteria pollutants from the operation of on-site equipment and construction vehicles. However, best management practices would be implemented to minimize these emissions. These include moistening loose soils to reduce fugitive dust, washing tires to prevent track-out, maintaining construction equipment according to manufacturer specifications, using equipment with emission control devices, and limiting vehicle and equipment idling times.

The project is included in the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) under ID No. LAPIM103. On July 23, 2024, the Transportation Conformity Working Group (TCWG) determined that the project is exempt from regional air quality conformity analysis as it falls under the category of projects that correct, improve, or eliminate a hazardous location or feature.

In addition, the project would not result in significant operational emissions and is not anticipated to conflict with applicable air quality plans. Therefore, no significant air quality impacts are expected, and this resource area does not present an unusual circumstance.

Biological Resources

The project area is located within a developed urban environment. A Natural Environment Study – Minimal Impact (Parsons, 2024) was conducted for the entire corridor and its vicinity, covering a total of 134.81 acres. The Biological Study Area (BSA) consists primarily of developed, disturbed, or landscaped areas, including residential, commercial, and industrial zones, as well as a small public park. Urban hardscape features in the BSA include roadways, sidewalks, driveways, railroad crossings, utility infrastructure, and other urban elements such as streetlights and signage.

Tree species observed within the project footprint and BSA include eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus sp.*), Canary Island pine (*Pinus canariensis*), Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*), and a variety of other common street trees.

Special Status Plant and Animal Species

Due to the heavily developed and landscaped nature of the project corridor, habitat quality for special-status species is low. Most of the BSA lacks suitable habitat to support sensitive biological resources. No special-status plant species identified during database searches were found to have habitat present within the BSA.

A total of 45 special-status and sensitive wildlife species were identified in regional database searches as having potential to occur in the project vicinity. Within the BSA, there is limited low-quality habitat for species such as the southwestern pond turtle, Swainson's hawk, American peregrine falcon, western mastiff bat, and pallid bat. However, the high level of urban disturbance and lack of connectivity to undisturbed natural areas reduces the likelihood of their presence. Of the species evaluated, only the American peregrine falcon has been observed within the BSA in the last 25 years.

To ensure avoidance of impacts to potentially occurring species and sensitive biological resources, the following standard practices and minimization measures will be implemented:

- A Worker Environmental Awareness Program will be provided to construction personnel.
- A pre-construction nesting bird survey will be conducted by a qualified biologist if construction is scheduled during the nesting season (generally February 1 through August 31).
- A biological monitor will be present during initial ground-disturbing activities to identify and avoid any sensitive resources if encountered.

Constructed Freshwater Pond Habitat

Lincoln Park Lake, located adjacent to Main Street and Valley Boulevard, is the only freshwater feature near the project footprint. According to the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), it is classified as a permanently flooded, excavated freshwater pond. The lake is humanmade, concrete-lined, and highly disturbed, with limited wildlife value due to its urban setting and isolation from other natural habitats. Terrestrial wildlife movement through this

area is constrained by surrounding roadways and sparse vegetation.

Although Lincoln Park Lake lies outside the project footprint, nearby construction could result in water quality impacts during construction. As a protective measure, fencing will be installed along the trail adjacent to the lake to prevent construction debris from entering the water. Additionally, implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and associated monitoring and sampling of stormwater runoff will further reduce potential impacts to water quality.

Tree Removal and Replacement

Construction of the project would require the removal of approximately 400 trees out of the estimated 750 within the project footprint to accommodate new sidewalks, cycle tracks, medians, and other improvements. A full inventory was conducted to document the type, size, and condition of these trees. None of the trees slated for removal are protected or considered special-status species.

The City of Los Angeles requires compliance with LAMC Sections 62.161–62.176, which govern street tree removal and replacement. Under these regulations, a 2:1 replacement ratio is required, using 24-inch box-size stock with a minimum three-year watering and maintenance period. Public notification and a hearing before the Board of Public Works are also required when three or more street trees are removed at a given address.

In compliance with and exceeding these requirements, the project includes planting approximately 1,800 new trees, well above the 2:1 replacement ratio. New street trees will include California native and climate-adapted species approved by the UFD, such as African sumac, Western redbud, and London plane tree. The landscape palette will also include drought-tolerant evergreen and flowering shrubs and groundcovers. Invasive species identified by the California Invasive Plant Council will not be used.

Consistency with Conservation Plans

The project site is not located within an area subject to a Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, the project would not conflict with any applicable conservation plans.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the Natural Environment Study and the project's compliance with applicable regulations and implementation of minimization measures, the proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts to biological resources, and this resource area does not represent an unusual circumstance under CEQA.

Cultural Resources

Archeological Resources

A cultural resources screening was performed for the project. A records search was conducted by the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) on March 27, 2024, and

identified two cultural resources within the Area of Potential Effects (APE)—defined as the area subject to ground disturbance.

- Resource 19-186112 is the Union Pacific Railroad, historically known as the Southern Pacific Railroad, which runs through the Los Angeles area. The railroad crosses into the APE from the east at Alhambra Avenue and N. Marianna Avenue and from the west at N. Mission Road, running parallel to much of Valley Boulevard.
- Resource 19-187085 is the Mojave Road, designated as California Historical Landmark #963. This historic travel corridor, once used by Indigenous groups and later settlers, crosses N. Mission Road on the west side of the APE, adjacent to the southwest corner of the railroad hump yard.

Neither resource would be physically affected by the proposed project, and no alterations are proposed that would impact their significance or setting.

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) conducted a search of its Sacred Lands File and reported no known sacred sites within the project region. However, the NAHC recommended that 13 tribes be contacted for consultation. See more detailed information about Native American Outreach in the Tribal Cultural Resources Section.

In addition to the SCCIC records search, additional sources were reviewed to assess the cultural context of the APE, including the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historical Resources (California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR)), California Historical Resources Information System (California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS)), California Historical Landmarks (California Historical Landmarks (CHL)), the City of Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources, and California Points of Historical Interest (California Points of Historical Interest (CPHI)).

As the project consists of roadway improvements within previously disturbed areas, the discovery of intact archaeological resources is not anticipated. However, in the unlikely event that archaeological materials are encountered during construction, in accordance with the “Greenbook”, all work in the vicinity find will be halted until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the find and recommend appropriate treatment.

If human remains are discovered, the contractor will follow the procedures outlined in Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e), and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98.

The project does not include operational components that would involve excavation or additional ground disturbance after construction. Therefore, the project would not have a significant effect on archaeological resources.

Historical Resources

A Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) and Historic Resources Evaluation Report (HRER) were prepared for the project. No individual properties or historic districts within the APE are currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

One property within the APE, Lincoln Park, previously identified in SurveyLA, was determined eligible for listing in both the NRHP and the CRHR as part of the current study. Lincoln Park was found eligible under Criterion A (Recreation) and Criterion C (Architecture and Landscape Architecture), with a Period of Significance from 1886 through 1980. In addition, the following resources within Lincoln Park were determined individually eligible for the NRHP through this study: the Abraham Lincoln Statue; the Lincoln Park Gateway, the Ruben Salazar Bicentennial Buildings, Plaza de la Raza; and the Lincoln Park Boathouse, Plaza de la Raza.

One other property within the APE, El Parque de Mexico, also previously identified in SurveyLA, was evaluated and found ineligible for listing in both the NRHP and CRHR as part of the current study due to a lack of sufficient integrity to convey significance under any of the NRHP evaluation criteria. In addition, the following resources within the El Parque de Mexico were determined individually eligible for the NRHP through this study: the Benito Juarez Statue; the Don Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla Statue; the Emiliano Zapata Equestrian Statue; and the Jose Maria Morelos Y Pavon Statue.

Proposed improvements near these historic resources are limited to the existing public right-of-way and would not affect any character-defining features of Lincoln Park or other individually eligible historic resources within the two parks. The project may vacate the segment of Main Street between Lincoln Park and El Parque de Mexico, with the addition of landscaping, a sidewalk/multi-use path, and a cycle track. These enhancements are designed to improve connectivity and public access between the parks and would not impair the integrity of the eligible historic resources.

Therefore, the project would not have a significant impact on historical resources.

Energy

Implementation of the project would result in temporary energy consumption during construction, primarily through the use of fossil fuels in construction equipment, vehicles, and materials transport. Electricity may also be used for temporary lighting, equipment, and other limited uses during construction activities.

However, the project would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local energy conservation regulations, including those that govern fuel efficiency and equipment standards. Construction activities would be short-term and would not result in the inefficient or wasteful use of energy resources.

The project does not involve the construction of new buildings or other facilities that would generate long-term operational energy demands. Instead, the project supports energy conservation in the long term by promoting alternative transportation modes such as transit, walking, and biking, and by reducing dependence on single-occupancy vehicle travel. These features are consistent with local and regional energy and sustainability goals, including those in the City of Los Angeles General Plan, SCAG's Connect SoCal Plan, and State energy efficiency policies.

As such, the project would not result in significant impacts related to energy consumption or

efficiency, and this resource area does not represent an unusual circumstance.

Geology and Soils

The project corridor is located in a highly urbanized area that has already been subject to substantial ground disturbance associated with roads, utilities, and other public infrastructure. Proposed construction activities, such as excavation for sidewalks, bike lanes, medians, and utility relocation, would involve relatively shallow ground disturbance and would not include any grading or development on unstable slopes or previously undeveloped land.

The project site is not located within a known Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone, and no active surface fault traces have been identified within the corridor. While the region is seismically active, the project does not involve the construction of habitable structures and would be subject to applicable California Building Code (California Building Code (CBC)) and City of Los Angeles grading and construction standards, which are designed to minimize risks related to seismic ground shaking, liquefaction, or lateral spreading.

During construction, potential for soil erosion or sediment runoff would be minimized through the implementation of standard BMPs as part of the project's SWPPP.

The project does not include significant excavation or grading in areas of expansive soils, nor does it involve the use of septic systems. Therefore, the project would not result in significant impacts related to geology or soils, and this resource area does not represent an unusual circumstance.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The proposed project would generate temporary and short-term greenhouse gas (Greenhouse Gas (GHG)) emissions during the construction phase from activities such as material hauling, equipment operation, and worker vehicle trips. These emissions would primarily consist of carbon dioxide (CO₂), with minor contributions from methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O).

However, construction activities would be of limited duration and would occur in accordance with applicable local, regional, and state regulations, including the use of well-maintained equipment, idling restrictions, and dust and emissions control measures. The project would not result in substantial GHG emissions during operation, as it does not include new sources of long-term energy demand or new vehicular trips.

In fact, the project supports long-term greenhouse gas reduction goals by encouraging mode shift to public transit, bicycling, and walking, and by improving multimodal connectivity and access within the corridor. These features are consistent with the City of Los Angeles Sustainability pLAN, SCAG's Connect SoCal regional plan, and the California Air Resources Board (California Air Resources Board (CARB)) 2022 Scoping Plan.

Because construction-related GHG emissions would be short-term and minor, and the project would have no significant operational emissions, there is no reasonable possibility that the project would result in a significant impact due to GHG emissions. Therefore, this resource

area does not represent an unusual circumstance.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The proposed project is located within a developed urban corridor and would not involve the routine use, transport, or disposal of hazardous materials that could pose a risk to the public or the environment. Construction activities may involve the short-term use of fuels, lubricants, and other standard materials; however, these would be handled in compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations governing hazardous materials management and construction site safety.

A Phase I Initial Site Assessment (ISA) was prepared for the project and identified several recognized environmental conditions (RECs) along the corridor, including former and current industrial properties, gas stations, and locations adjacent to active railroad corridors. Potential contaminants include aerially deposited lead (Aerially Deposited Lead (ADL)), lead-based paint (LBP) in traffic markings, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in electrical equipment, creosote in wooden utility poles, and residual petroleum or solvent contamination at former industrial sites.

Although the project does not involve the development of new structures or excavation in undisturbed natural areas, a Phase II Site Investigation (SI) will be conducted as part of the NEPA clearance process, for which Caltrans is the lead agency. The results of the SI will help identify appropriate soil management practices to ensure worker safety and prevent environmental exposure during construction. Any necessary BMPs or protective measures will be implemented based on those findings.

No long-term use or generation of hazardous materials would result from the operation of the project. The project would not impair emergency response plans or place people in proximity to hazardous materials or emissions.

Therefore, the project would not result in significant impacts related to hazardous materials and does not represent an unusual circumstance under CEQA.

Hydrology and Water Quality

As noted under the Biological Resources section, Lincoln Park Lake is the only surface water feature located adjacent to the project footprint. While the lake lies outside of the construction limits, nearby construction activities could temporarily affect water quality if not properly managed.

To avoid impacts to the lake and surrounding drainage features, the project will implement several protective measures. These include the installation of temporary fencing along the trail adjacent to the lake to prevent debris or construction materials from entering the water body. In addition, the project will comply with NPDES permit requirements through the preparation and implementation of the SWPPP. The SWPPP will include BMPs for erosion and sediment control, spill prevention, proper equipment staging, and material handling. These measures will minimize the potential for stormwater runoff impacts during construction.

Because the project is limited to previously developed urban areas and does not involve construction within jurisdictional waters, wetlands, or floodplains, there would be no long-term impact on hydrology or drainage patterns. Therefore, the project would not result in a significant impact on hydrology or water quality, and this resource area does not represent an unusual circumstance.

Land Use and Planning

The project would not result in the physical division of an established community. Improvements would occur within the existing public right-of-way along Valley Boulevard and Mission Road and would not create any new barriers between or within the adjacent neighborhoods of Lincoln Heights, Boyle Heights, and El Sereno. The proposed partial right-of-way acquisitions would not result in the displacement of residents or businesses, and Valley Boulevard and Mission Road would continue to serve as local and regional corridors providing access to jobs, education, services, and recreational areas.

The project is fully consistent with applicable land use plans and policies at the local, regional, and state levels. It supports the goals of the City of Los Angeles General Plan, including the Framework Element, Mobility Plan 2035, Health and Wellness Element, Noise Element, Air Quality Element, and Open Space Element. The project will also be consistent with the land use goals and policies of the Boyle Heights Community Plan, Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan, and the City's zoning regulations, as it does not propose any changes to existing land use designations or zoning classifications.

At the regional level, the project is consistent with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Connect SoCal 2024 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). It supports RTP/SCS goals related to multimodal mobility, equitable access, improved air quality, and sustainable development. The project is included in the SCAG RTP/SCS Project Listing (ID No. 1MO101) and the 2023 FTIP as Project LAMIP103, which is currently being amended to reflect the updated scope.

The project would not conflict with any applicable zoning regulations, municipal code provisions, or other adopted policies such as the 2010 Bicycle Plan, Vision Zero, or the Sidewalk and Transit Amenities Program (STAP). As a standard condition, the project will incorporate applicable Community Design and Landscaping Guidelines from the Boyle Heights and Northeast Los Angeles Community Plans to ensure visual and contextual compatibility with surrounding areas.

Therefore, the project would not result in any significant impacts related to land use or planning, and no unusual circumstances are present under CEQA.

Mineral Resources

The project corridor is located within a fully developed, urbanized area of the City of Los Angeles, consisting of existing public streets and rights-of-way. The area is not designated as a Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) containing regionally significant mineral deposits, nor is it identified by the California Geological Survey or the City of Los Angeles as an area of current or potential mineral resource extraction.

The project would not involve activities that would interfere with mineral resource recovery, nor would it result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource of local or regional importance. Therefore, the project would not result in significant impacts to mineral resources, and this resource area does not represent an unusual circumstance.

Noise

Sensitive receptors, including single-family residences located adjacent to the project corridor, could be temporarily exposed to elevated noise levels during construction. These short-term noise impacts would be associated with roadway and infrastructure improvements such as pavement removal, grading, and equipment operation.

Although no project-specific ambient noise measurements were conducted, typical daytime noise levels along major urban arterial roadways such as Valley Boulevard range from approximately 65 to 75 A-weighted decibels (dBA) Leq, based on data provided in the Caltrans *Technical Noise Supplement to the Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol* (TeNS, 2020). Valley Boulevard serves as a heavily traveled arterial in a developed urban setting, and ambient conditions along the corridor are expected to fall within this representative range.

Construction equipment such as loaders, backhoes, compactors, and saw cutters typically generate noise levels between 80 and 90 dBA at 50 feet. However, these noise levels would be temporary, limited to specific activities, and would occur during permitted construction hours.

All construction activities would comply with Chapter XI (Noise Regulation) of the Los Angeles Municipal Code, which prohibits noise-generating construction between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., and limits equipment noise levels to 75 dBA at 50 feet, unless deemed technically infeasible. To further reduce potential noise impacts, the contractor would implement best management practices (BMPs), including equipping machinery with properly maintained mufflers, limiting unnecessary idling, providing advance notice to nearby residents, and installing temporary noise barriers where warranted.

The project does not include new stationary or long-term mobile noise sources. Once operational, the project would not introduce any new stationary or mobile noise sources beyond existing conditions. Therefore, the project would not result in a significant noise impact, and this resource area does not represent an unusual circumstance under CEQA.

Population and Housing

The project would not induce population growth, as it does not involve the construction of new homes or businesses, nor does it extend infrastructure into previously undeveloped areas. The proposed improvements would occur entirely within the existing public right-of-way along an established urban transportation corridor.

Although the project would require minor partial acquisitions and temporary construction easements, none of the affected parcels contain housing, and no residential structures would be acquired or displaced. As such, the project would not displace any existing housing or residents, and no relocations would be required.

Therefore, the project would not result in significant impacts related to population growth or housing displacement, and this resource area does not represent an unusual circumstance under CEQA.

Public Services

The proposed project would not involve new residential, commercial, or institutional development that would generate increased demand for public services. As such, the project would not increase the need for or result in the construction of new facilities related to fire protection, police protection, schools, or other public services.

The project is limited to multi-modal transportation and streetscape improvements along existing public roadways. While the project includes park enhancements and expanded pedestrian and bicycle access, these are intended to improve recreational connectivity and access, not to accommodate population growth. No permanent staffing or public service resources would be required for operation of the project.

During construction, temporary traffic control measures and standard safety practices would be implemented to ensure continued emergency access and coordination with fire and police departments, as required by the City of Los Angeles. No disruption to service availability is anticipated.

Therefore, the project would not result in significant impacts to public services, and this resource area does not represent an unusual circumstance under CEQA.

Recreation

The project would not induce population growth or introduce new residential development and therefore would not increase the use of existing parks or recreational facilities in a way that would cause physical deterioration or require expansion.

Instead, the project would enhance recreational access and opportunities by providing a new multi-use pedestrian and bicycle path, improved connectivity between Lincoln Park and El Parque de Mexico, and expanded parkland if the segment of Main Street between these two parks is vacated. These improvements would increase the usable park area and promote safe, active transportation.

As discussed elsewhere in this document, these improvements would not result in adverse environmental effects. Therefore, the project would not have a significant impact on recreational facilities, and this resource area does not represent an unusual circumstance under CEQA.

Transportation

The project would not generate new trips or increase vehicle miles traveled (VMT), as it does not involve new residential, commercial, or employment-generating land uses. Instead, the project would enhance multimodal access and mobility by improving infrastructure for pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit users along an existing urban corridor.

Under the proposed condition, approximately 800 feet of Main Street, linking Valley Boulevard and Mission Road in the eastbound (EB) travel direction, may be vacated and converted into park space. The eastbound traffic would be rerouted to Valley Boulevard, connecting to Mission Road at the existing intersection of Valley Boulevard and Mission Road. A comprehensive traffic analysis was conducted to evaluate the proposed changes, and the results indicate no alteration in the Level of Service (LOS) between the existing and proposed conditions during both AM and PM peak hours, ensuring that traffic flow remains consistent and unaffected.

The project would retain the existing number of travel lanes and would improve traffic operations and circulation through signal synchronization, bus priority lanes during peak hours, and improved roadway design. These features would promote mode shift to transit and active transportation, consistent with the City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan 2035 and SCAG's Connect SoCal RTP/SCS.

Improvements would also enhance safety and accessibility for all users through the addition of ADA-compliant curb ramps, marked crosswalks, traffic calming features, and upgraded lighting. Emergency access will be maintained during construction, with traffic control and detours implemented per city standards and in coordination with emergency service providers.

The project is listed in the 2023 FTIP (ID No. LAMIP103) and was reviewed by the TCWG, which determined on July 23, 2024, that the project is exempt from regional air quality conformity review as a project that improves an existing hazardous location.

Therefore, the project would not result in significant transportation impacts and would not conflict with applicable transportation plans, policies, or thresholds. This resource area does not represent an unusual circumstance under CEQA.

Tribal Cultural Resources

Tribal outreach was conducted as part of Section 106 consultation under the NHPA in accordance with NEPA compliance, with Caltrans serving as the NEPA lead agency.

Outreach to 13 tribes identified by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was initiated on November 6, 2024. Two tribes—the Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California and the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation—responded and requested consultation.

A consultation meeting was held with the Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California on February 4, 2025, during which tribal representatives indicated that Valley Boulevard aligns with traditional Indigenous pathways and lies near the historic village of Yaanga and other Tongva settlements. The tribe expressed concern about potential impacts to tribal cultural resources and requested that a Native American monitor be present during all ground-disturbing activities.

Caltrans made multiple attempts to schedule a consultation meeting with the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation beginning on November 7, 2024. After the tribe was

unable to attend any scheduled meetings, it requested that consultation be conducted via email. Caltrans invited the tribe to submit comments by March 24, 2025; however, no response was received.

In response to the concerns raised by the Gabrielino Tongva, the project will include archaeological and Native American monitoring during all ground-disturbing construction activities to avoid potential impacts to tribal cultural resources.

Although this consultation occurred under Section 106, the project would also not result in significant impacts to tribal cultural resources under CEQA. The project is confined to previously disturbed urban rights-of-way and does not involve development in undisturbed or culturally sensitive areas.

If human remains are encountered during construction, the contractor will comply with Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e), and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, which require immediate notification of the Los Angeles County Coroner within 24 hours. If the remains are determined to be of Native American origin, the coroner will notify the NAHC, which will designate a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) within 48 hours. The MLD will have the opportunity to recommend, within 24 hours, culturally appropriate treatment or reburial of the remains and any associated grave goods.

With incorporation of monitoring and standard protocols for the treatment of inadvertent discoveries, no significant impacts to tribal cultural resources would occur. As the project's operation phase would not involve further excavation or ground disturbance, no additional impacts to tribal cultural resources are anticipated.

Utilities and Service Systems

The proposed project would not involve development that would require new water supply, wastewater treatment capacity, solid waste services, or energy infrastructure. Construction and operation would not generate significant demands on utility systems or result in the need for new or expanded utility service facilities.

Minor utility line relocations may be required to accommodate improvements such as sidewalks, cycle tracks, landscaped parkways, and curb extensions. These activities would be limited in scope, confined to the existing public right-of-way, and conducted in coordination with utility providers and City departments.

The project would also comply with applicable stormwater regulations, including implementation of the SWPPP and construction of new curb inlets and catch basins, as needed, to address localized drainage and stormwater runoff.

Therefore, the project would not result in significant impacts to utilities or service systems, and this resource area does not represent an unusual circumstance under CEQA.

Wildfire

The project would involve improvements to Mission Road and Valley Boulevard within the

existing public right-of-way, as well as enhancements to adjacent parkland areas. The project is located in a densely developed urban area of the City of Los Angeles and is not located within or near a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, as mapped by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE).

The project includes streetscape enhancements, including the planting of approximately 1,800 new trees along sidewalks, medians, and landscaped parkways. All new vegetation will be selected and installed in coordination with the city's Urban Forestry Division, using fire-resistant and drought-tolerant species appropriate for urban settings. The landscape design will not increase the risk of wildfire ignition or spread.

The project would not interfere with any designated emergency access or disaster response routes, such as nearby arterials or freeway corridors, nor would it include infrastructure that could exacerbate wildfire risks (e.g., overhead transmission lines, large fuel storage, or flammable materials). No structures intended for human occupancy would be constructed.

Construction and operation of the project would comply with applicable fire and building codes, and standard safety measures would be followed to ensure that people and structures are not exposed to post-fire risks, such as slope instability or flooding.

Based on the project's urban location, design features, and compliance with safety regulations, the project would not result in significant impacts related to wildfire, and this resource area does not represent an unusual circumstance under CEQA.

4. Scenic Highway

This exception applies when a project may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway.

Mission Road and Valley Boulevard are not designated scenic highways by Caltrans or the City of Los Angeles. In addition, there are no designated State, county, or city scenic highways in or near the project corridor.

The project area does contain a substantial number of existing street trees, which contribute to the visual character of the corridor. These trees have been considered during the planning and design phases of the project. The proposed improvements are designed to preserve existing trees where feasible and include the planting of approximately 1,800 new trees along sidewalks, medians, parks, and landscaped parkways throughout the corridor.

The project does not involve removal of historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or other significant scenic resources, and it is expected to enhance the overall visual quality of the project area through upgraded streetscape features and expanded green space.

Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

5. Hazardous Waste Site

This exception applies when a project is located on a site listed as a hazardous waste site under Government Code Section 65962.5 (commonly referred to as the Cortese List).

A review of the most current list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 confirms that no portion of the project corridor is located on or includes a listed hazardous waste site. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

6. Historical Resources

This exception applies when a project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

As described under Section 3, Cultural Resources, the HPSR and HRER were prepared for the project. No individual property or historic district within the project's APE is listed in the NRHP.

One property within the APE, Lincoln Park, previously identified in SurveyLA, was determined eligible for listing in both the NRHP and the CRHR as part of the current study. Lincoln Park was found eligible under Criterion A (Recreation) and Criterion C (Architecture and Landscape Architecture), with a Period of Significance from 1886 through 1980. In addition, the following resources within Lincoln Park were determined individually eligible for the NRHP through this study: the Boathouse; the Lincoln Statue; the Florence Nightingale Statue; and the Plaza de la Raza Cultural Center.

One other property within the APE, El Parque de Mexico, also previously identified in SurveyLA, was evaluated and found ineligible for listing in both the NRHP and CRHR as part of the current study due to a lack of sufficient integrity to convey significance under any of the NRHP evaluation criteria. In addition, the following resources within the El Parque de Mexico were determined individually eligible for the NRHP through this study: the Benito Juarez Statue; the Don Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla Statue; the Emiliano Zapata Equestrian Statue; and the Jose Maria Morelos Y Pavon Statue.

Proposed improvements in proximity to these sites are largely confined to the existing public right-of-way and would not result in any adverse physical impacts to character-defining features of Lincoln Park or other individually eligible historic resources within the two parks.

The project may vacate the segment of Main Street between Lincoln Park and El Parque de Mexico, with the addition of landscaping, a sidewalk/multi-use path, and a cycle track. These improvements are designed to enhance connectivity and public access between the parks and do not involve changes that would impair the historical integrity of Lincoln Park or other individually eligible historic resources within the two parks.

Therefore, the project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, and this exception does not apply.

IV. LIST OF TECHNICAL STUDIES

- Air Quality Conformity Exemption, Parsons 2024
- Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR), Parsons 2025
- Historic Resources Evaluation Report (HRER), Parsons 2025
- Location Hydraulic Study Technical Memorandum, Parsons 2024
- Land Use Consistency Technical Memorandum, Parsons 2024
- Natural Environmental Study-Minimal Impacts, Parsons 2024
- Phase I Initial Site Assessment, Parsons 2024
- Right of Way Impacts Memorandum, Parsons 2024
- Water Quality Technical Memorandum, Parsons 2024

V. REFERENCES

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