



WESTSIDE SUBWAY EXTENSION PROJECT

Addendum to the Visual and Aesthetic Impacts Technical Report



August 2011

SUMMARY

On October 28, 2010, the Metro Board selected the Westwood/VA Hospital Extension (Alternative 2 in the Draft EIS/EIR) as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) and authorized the preparation of the *Westside Subway Extension Final EIS/EIR* (the Final EIS/EIR) to analyze the LPA. This alternative would extend HRT, in subway, approximately nine-miles from the existing Metro Purple Line Wilshire/Western Station to a Westwood/VA Hospital Station. A detailed description of the LPA is provided in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS/EIR.

This addendum supplements materials in the *Westside Subway Extension Project Visual and Aesthetics Impacts Technical Report* (the Report) dated August 2010 and supports the Final EIS/EIR. The LPA is referred to as Alternative 2 in this addendum and the Report. Modifications to the Report incorporated into this addendum reflect responses to comments on the Draft EIS/EIR and refinements to Alternative 2 as described in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS/EIR.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

No Change.

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Change The Project description has been refined as part of the Final EIS/EIR.

On October 28, 2010, the Metro Board selected the Westwood/VA Hospital Extension (Alternative 2 in the Draft EIS/EIR) as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) and authorized the preparation of the *Westside Subway Extension Final EIS/EIR* (the Final EIS/EIR) to analyze the LPA. This alternative would extend HRT, in subway, approximately nine-miles from the existing Metro Purple Line Wilshire/Western Station to a Westwood/VA Hospital Station. The extension would include a total of seven new stations:

- Wilshire/La Brea
- Wilshire/Fairfax
- Wilshire/La Cienega
- Wilshire/Rodeo
- Century City (Century City Santa Monica or Century City Constellation)
- Westwood/UCLA (Westwood/UCLA On-Street or Westwood/UCLA Off-Street)
- Westwood/VA Hospital (Westwood/VA Hospital South or Westwood/VA Hospital North)

The estimated one-way running time for the project would be approximately 15 minutes from the Wilshire/Western Station to the Westwood/VA Hospital Station. The extension would operate at headways of 4 minutes during peak periods and 10



minutes during off-peak periods. As part of the project, Metro is also planning several enhancements to the Division 20 Maintenance and Storage Facility.

The construction schedule for the Project is partially dependent on the timing of Federal funding availability. Two LPA construction scenarios are considered. Both scenarios will contain the same elements with differences only in the timing of when they are built and operational. The first construction scenario assumes that under the America Fast Forward (30/10) Scenario (Concurrent Construction), the LPA would open in its entirety to the Westwood/VA Hospital Station in 2022 with the three construction segments built concurrently (Wilshire/Western to Wilshire/La Cienega, Wilshire/La Cienega to Century City and Century City to Westwood/VA Hospital). The second construction scenario assumes that under the Metro Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Scenario (Phased Construction), the LPA would open in three consecutive phases (Phase 1 to Wilshire/La Cienega, Phase 2 to Century City, and Phase 3 to Westwood/VA Hospital), with the entire LPA operational to the Westwood/VA Hospital Station in 2036.

A detailed description of the LPA is provided in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS/EIR.

3.0 APPLICABLE GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS

No Change.

4.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

No Change.

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Change The following is a modification of and replaces Section 5.2.3.2

Wilshire/La Brea Station

The station entrance will be at the northwest corner of the Wilshire Boulevard and S. La Brea Avenue intersection on Metro-owned property or at the southwest corner as shown in Figure 5-2. Design of the entrance plaza area is expected to complement the Art Deco aesthetic of this commercial and residential neighborhood. The station will also include a one-story structure for the emergency generator along the east side of S. Detroit Street. The generator structure will fit within the visual context of the other station components and nearby three- to six-story buildings.

The existing view of the Metro Service Center and Blockbuster Video building and a simulated view showing the building replaced by the station entrance and canopy are shown on Figure 5-3. The canopy would be a prominent visible structure on the corner of Wilshire Boulevard and S. La Brea Avenue but would blend with the varied scale of existing streetscape elements. Other aboveground station components that would be visible include signage; defining lighting; streetscape amenities such as benches, landscaping, and art. The belowground station components visible to viewers would include escalators, elevators, and stairs, as well as the station waiting and boarding areas.

The station would be within the section of Wilshire Boulevard that is designated scenic (the Miracle Mile); however, no adverse impacts to the scenic highway would occur. The canopy design is expected to complement the aesthetic of the area. Overall, the station entrance may contribute to improving visual quality along the Miracle Mile section of Wilshire Boulevard. Scenic vistas of the Santa Monica Mountains would not be adversely altered by any of the potential entrances. The existing Metro customer service center would be incorporated into the new station design.

Several existing buildings will be removed to accommodate construction staging areas. However, removal of these buildings is not expected to adversely affect the areas' visual character or quality.

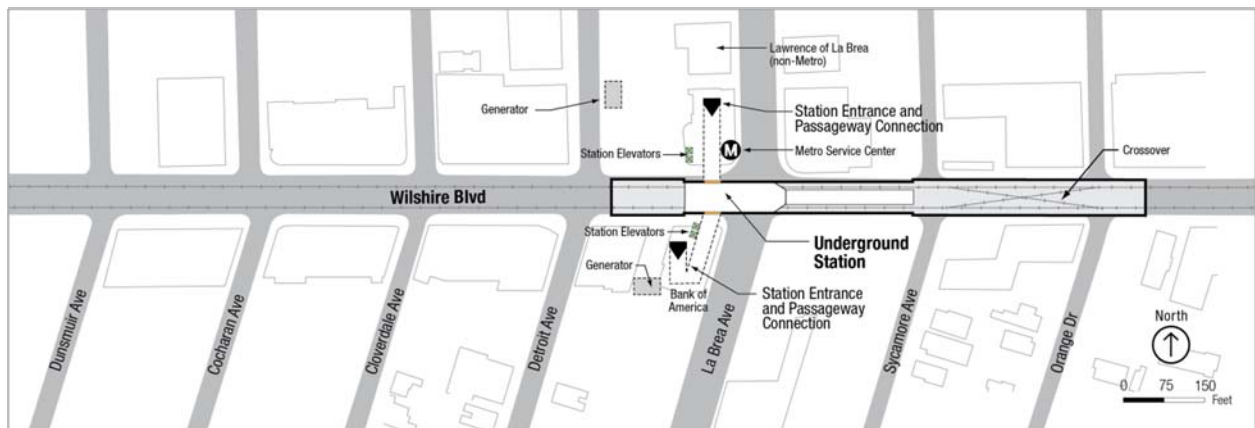


Figure 5-2. Wilshire/La Brea Station



Figure 5-3. Wilshire/La Brea Station Entrance, Replacing the Metro Service Center and Blockbuster Video (Existing View (top) and Visual Simulation (bottom))

Change The following is a modification of and replaces Section 5.2.3.3

Wilshire/Fairfax Station

The station entrance will be west of Johnie's Coffee Shop or at alternate entrance options at the northeast corner of Wilshire Boulevard and S. Fairfax Avenue or the southeast corner of Wilshire Boulevard and S. Orange Grove Avenue as shown in Figure 5-4. The aboveground station components are expected to complement the regional visual resources along Wilshire Boulevard, such as the LACMA West building and Petersen Automotive museum buildings, within the Miracle Mile Corridor. Figure 5-5 shows existing and simulated views of the potential entrance west of Johnie's Coffee Shop.

This section of Wilshire Boulevard is also designated scenic (the Miracle Mile); however, no adverse impacts to the scenic highway would occur. The station entrance may contribute to improving visual quality along the Miracle Mile Corridor. Scenic vistas of the Santa Monica Mountains would not be adversely altered by any of the potential entrances.

Several existing buildings will be removed to accommodate construction staging areas. However, removal of these buildings is not expected to adversely affect the areas' visual character or quality.

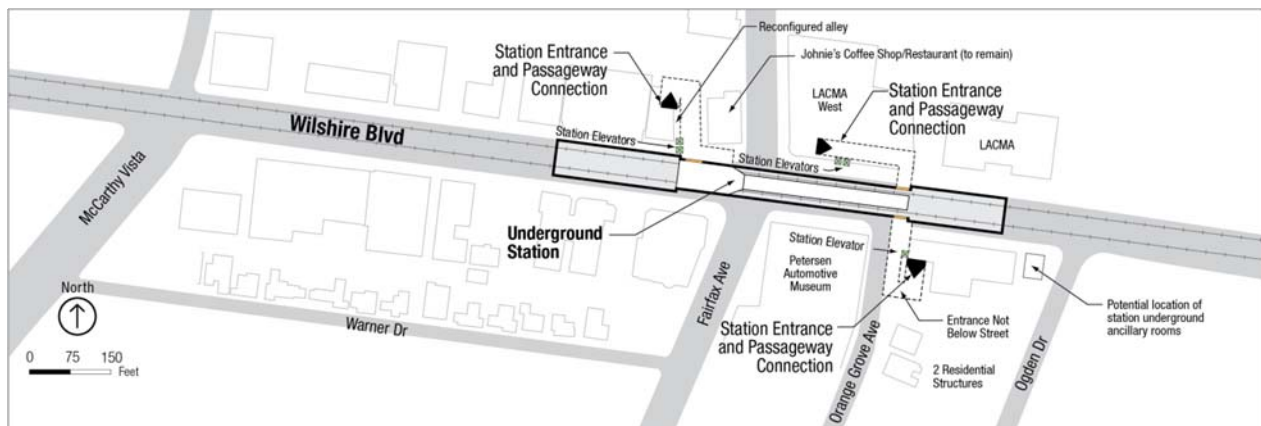


Figure 5-4. Wilshire/Fairfax Station

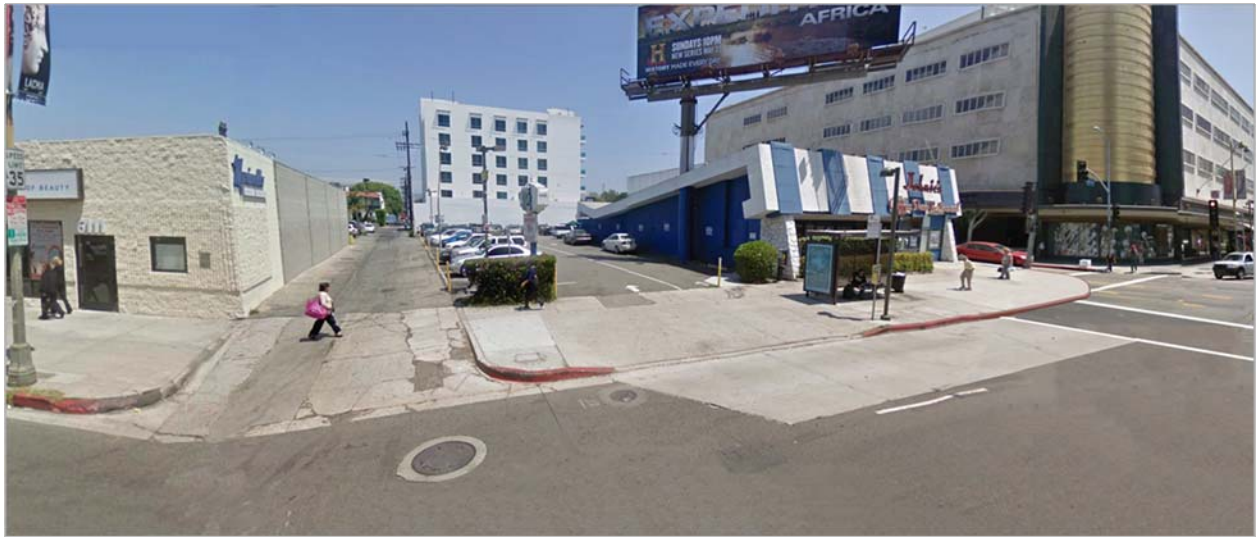


Figure 5-5. Wilshire/Fairfax Station—Entrance West of Johnie’s Coffee Shop (Existing (top) and Simulation (bottom))

Change The following is a modification of and replaces Section 5.2.3.4

Wilshire/La Cienega Station

The Wilshire/ La Cienega Station entrance would require the removal of the existing Citi Bank building and a restaurant behind the Citi Bank. The entrance would be an open site that could eventually be part of a joint-development project (Figure 5-6). The station entrance will change the setting and visual character at the Wilshire Boulevard and S. La Cienega Boulevard intersection. However, this change will not be significant and the station entrance may contribute to improving visual quality along this section of the Wilshire Boulevard corridor. The existing view of the Citi Bank site and a simulated view showing the potential plaza and entrance are provided in Figure 5-7. As

shown by the simulated view, the station entrance would be a prominent feature on the corner. Aboveground station components would include the station entrance structure, signage, defining lighting, benches, landscaping, special paving, art, and bike facilities.

Scenic vistas along S. La Cienega Boulevard to the Santa Monica Mountains would not be adversely altered by the station. Several existing buildings will be removed to accommodate construction staging areas. However, removal of these buildings is not expected to adversely affect the areas' visual character or quality.

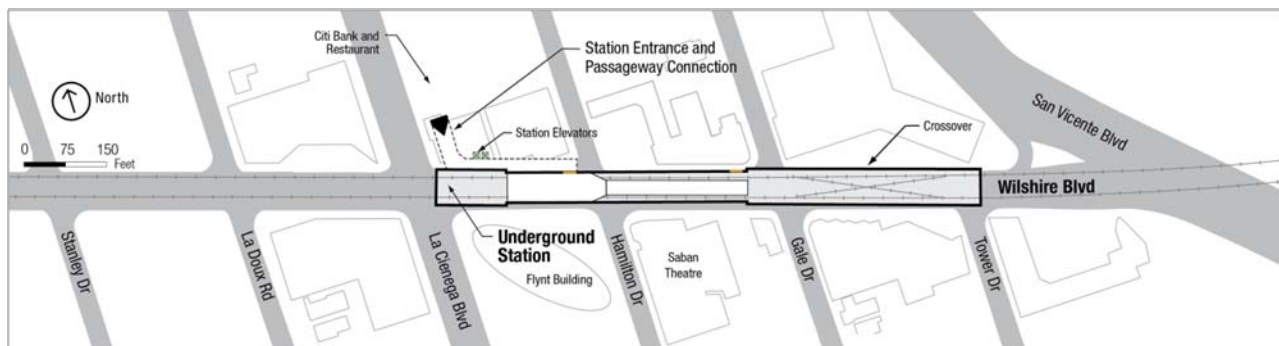


Figure 5-6. Wilshire/La Cienega Station



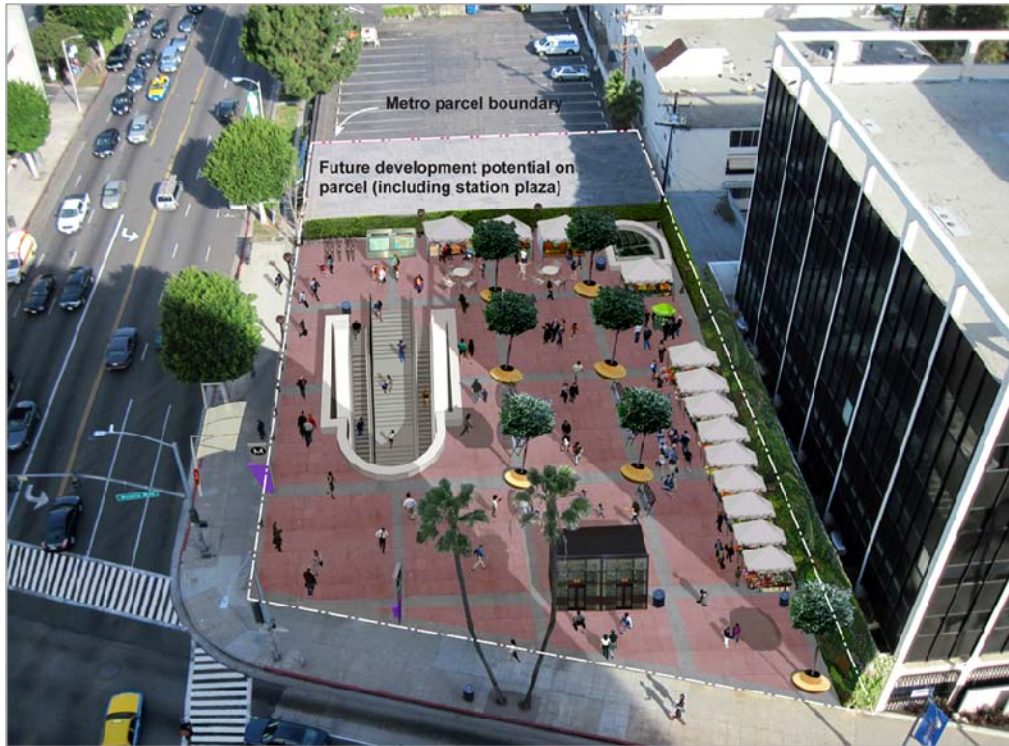


Figure 5-7. Wilshire/La Cienega Station (Existing View (top) and Visual Simulation (bottom))

Change The following is a modification of and replaces Section 5.2.3.5

Wilshire/Rodeo Station

The station entrance will be located on the southwest corner of S. Beverly Drive and Wilshire Boulevard at the current site of the Ace Gallery or at alternate entrance at the Bank of America building at the northwest corner of Wilshire Boulevard and N. Beverly Drive or the Union Bank building on the south side of Wilshire Boulevard (Figure 5-8). Metro will select one of these options.

The design of the station entrance is expected to complement the eclectic, Modern, Neo-Traditional, International, Art Deco, and less distinguishable buildings that contribute to the area's visual character. Aboveground station components would include the station entrance structure, signage, defining lighting, benches, landscaping, special paving, art, and bike facilities. The belowground station components visible to viewers would include escalators, elevators, and stairs, as well as the station waiting and boarding areas and impacts will be minimal. The existing view of the potential entrance at the south west corner of South Beverly Drive and Wilshire Boulevard and the simulated view are shown in Figure 5-9. Scenic vistas east and west down Wilshire Boulevard would not be adversely altered by any of the potential entrances, and no impacts to scenic highways would occur.

Several existing buildings will be removed to accommodate construction staging areas. However, removal of these buildings is not expected to adversely affect the areas' visual character or quality.

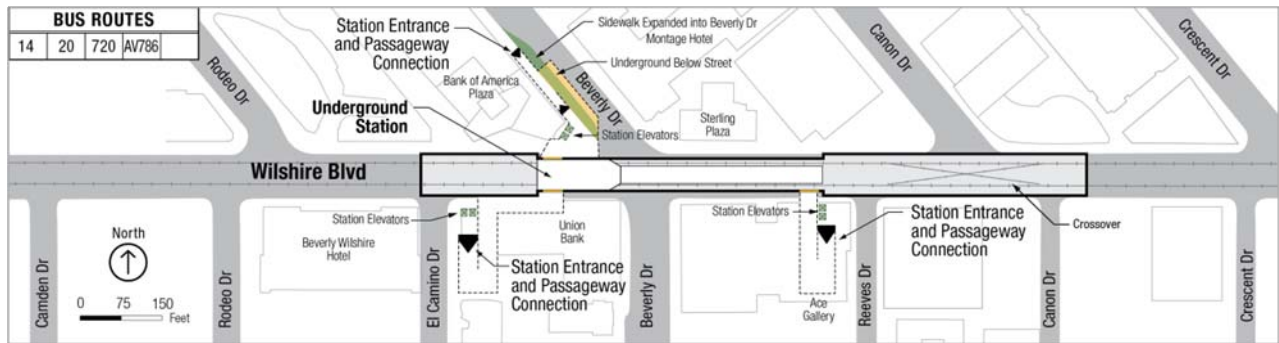


Figure 5-8. Wilshire/Rodeo Station



Figure 5-9. Wilshire/Rodeo Station—Station Entrance at the Southwest Corner of South Beverly Drive and Wilshire Boulevard (Existing View (top) and Visual Simulation (bottom))

Change The following is a modification of and replaces Section 5.2.3.6

Century City Station

There are two options for the Century City Station, one at Santa Monica Boulevard and the other at Constellation Boulevard. Metro will select one alignment and station location. The station option at Santa Monica Boulevard is shown on Figure 5-10. The Santa Monica Boulevard station entrance is at the southwest corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and Century Park East and would be incorporated into the sidewalk along Santa Monica Boulevard. Consistent with Metro’s canopy design, the entrance would include a plaza with a canopy-covered entrance that would be highly visible and prominent in this area of mid- and high-rise buildings, including from the Los Angeles Country Club golf course on the north side of Santa Monica Boulevard.

Other aboveground station components that would be visible include signage; defining lighting; streetscape amenities such as benches, landscaping, special paving, and art; and bike facilities such as racks or lockers. The belowground station components visible to viewers would include escalators, elevators, and stairs, as well as the station waiting and boarding areas. The designs for the aboveground station components are expected to complement the prominent buildings that contribute to the area’s visual character.

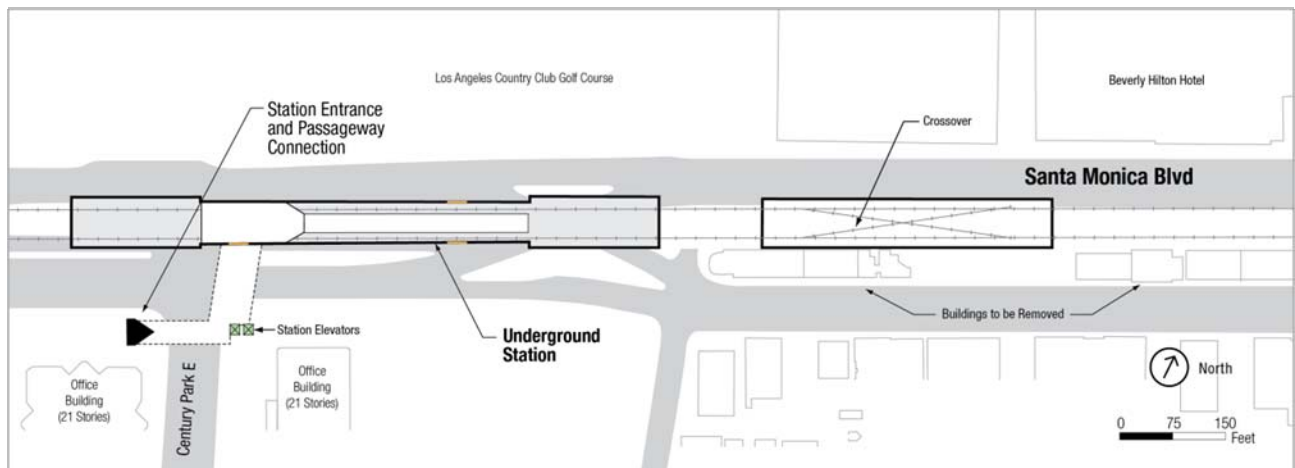


Figure 5-10. Century City Santa Monica Boulevard Station

The potential entrances for the Constellation Option are shown on Figure 5-11. The Constellation Boulevard station entrance either would be incorporated into the landscaped area of the Hyatt Regency Hotel plaza or at the northeast corner of Constellation Boulevard and Avenue of the Stars. Visual impacts would be similar to the potential entrance for the Santa Monica Boulevard option, since each would include a plaza with a canopy-covered entrance that would be highly visible from the street and upper floors of surrounding buildings. However, the Constellation Option is located at a busy intersection that is surrounded by office towers, and the canopy in this setting would be less prominent than the canopy for the Santa Monica Boulevard Option. The design for the above-ground

station components at either location is expected to complement the prominent buildings that contribute to that area’s visual character.

Both of the Century City station options are located along scenic highways. However, no adverse visual impacts to the scenic attributes of either highway would occur. The station entrance components, including the canopy, may improve visual quality in Century City. Scenic vistas of the Santa Monica Mountains and the iconic Hollywood sign would not be adversely altered by any of the potential entrances.

Several existing buildings will be removed to accommodate construction staging areas for either station location. However, removal of these buildings is not expected to adversely affect the areas’ visual character or quality.

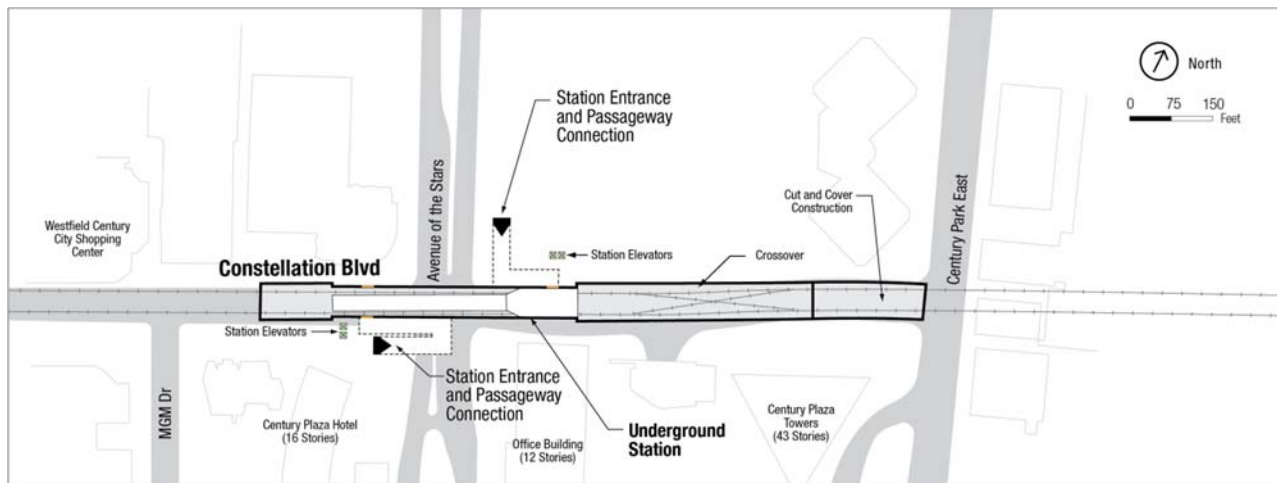


Figure 5-11. Century City Constellation Boulevard Station

Change The following is a modification of and replaces Section 5.2.3.7

Westwood/UCLA Station

There are two options for the Westwood/UCLA Station, one off-street and the other on-street.

Given the high ridership projections for Westwood/UCLA, two entrances are proposed for each station location. The Off-Street Option would be north of Wilshire Boulevard, between Veteran Avenue and Gayley Avenue (Figure 5-12). The entrance at Wilshire Boulevard and Gayley Avenue for the Off Street Station would be visual prominent. The aboveground station components that would be visible with all of these entrances include signage; defining lighting; streetscape amenities such as benches, landscaping, special paving, and art; and bike facilities such as racks or lockers. The belowground station components visible to viewers would include escalators, elevators, and stairs, as well as the station waiting and boarding areas.

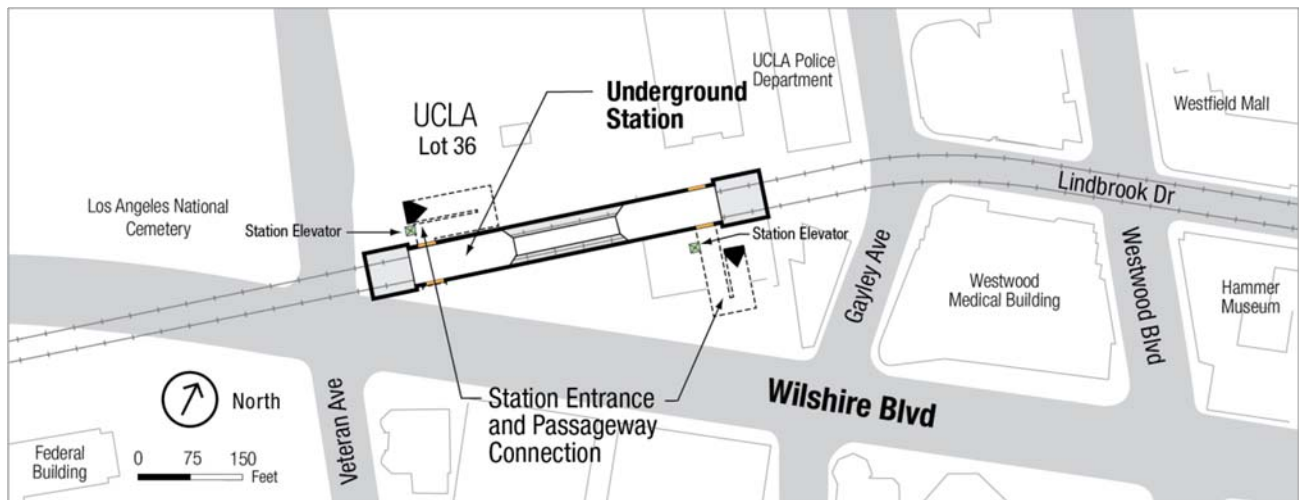


Figure 5-12. Westwood/UCLA Off-Street Station

The entrance at the northwest corner of the Wilshire Boulevard and Westwood Boulevard intersection for the On-Street Station (Figure 5-13) would be retrofitted into the existing structure and therefore would not be as prominent as the other entrances being considered. Alternatively, the entrance option on the southwest corner of the Wilshire Boulevard and Westwood Boulevard intersection would be located in the plaza outside of high-rise office buildings. Designs of the aboveground station components for both options would complement the surrounding mid- to high-rise residential towers, hotels, and office buildings. Views in the Westwood area are limited by high-rise buildings. No scenic vistas would be adversely altered by either station option. In addition, none of the potential station entrances are located in Westwood Village, where they could contrast with the village character created by wide sidewalks, street-facing retail shops, and shade trees.

Several existing buildings will be removed to accommodate construction staging areas for either station location. However, removal of these buildings is not expected to adversely affect the areas' visual character or quality.

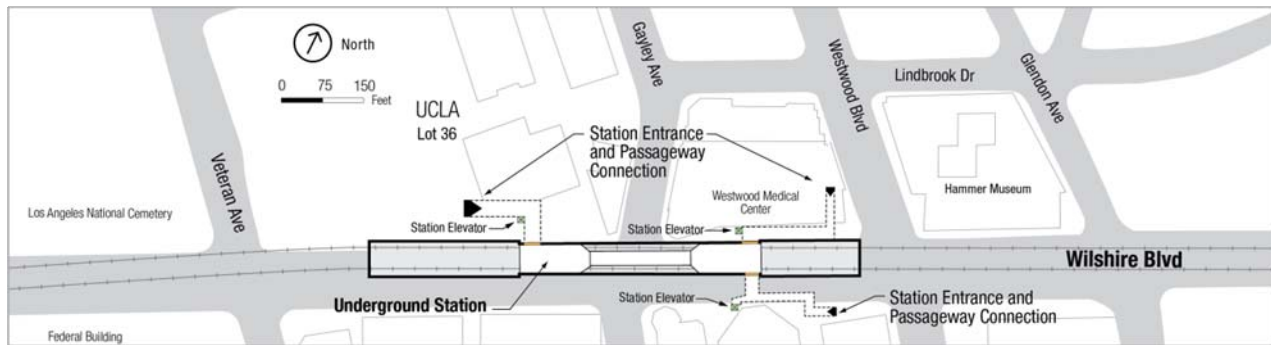


Figure 5-13. Westwood/UCLA On-Street Station

Change The following is a modification of and replaces Section 5.2.4.1

Westwood/ VA Hospital

There are two options for the Westwood/VA Hospital Station: one north of Wilshire Boulevard and the other south of Wilshire Boulevard. The entrance for the South Station would be in the parking lot at the southeast corner of Wilshire Boulevard and Bonsall Avenue (Figure 5-14). The South Station would also include a one-story structure for the emergency generator east of the entrance and a three-story parking structure on the site of an existing parking lot east of the VA Hospital. The generator structure would fit within the visual context of the other station components and would not alter any scenic vistas. The parking structure would block some territorial views to the east from the first- through third-story windows of the VA Hospital.

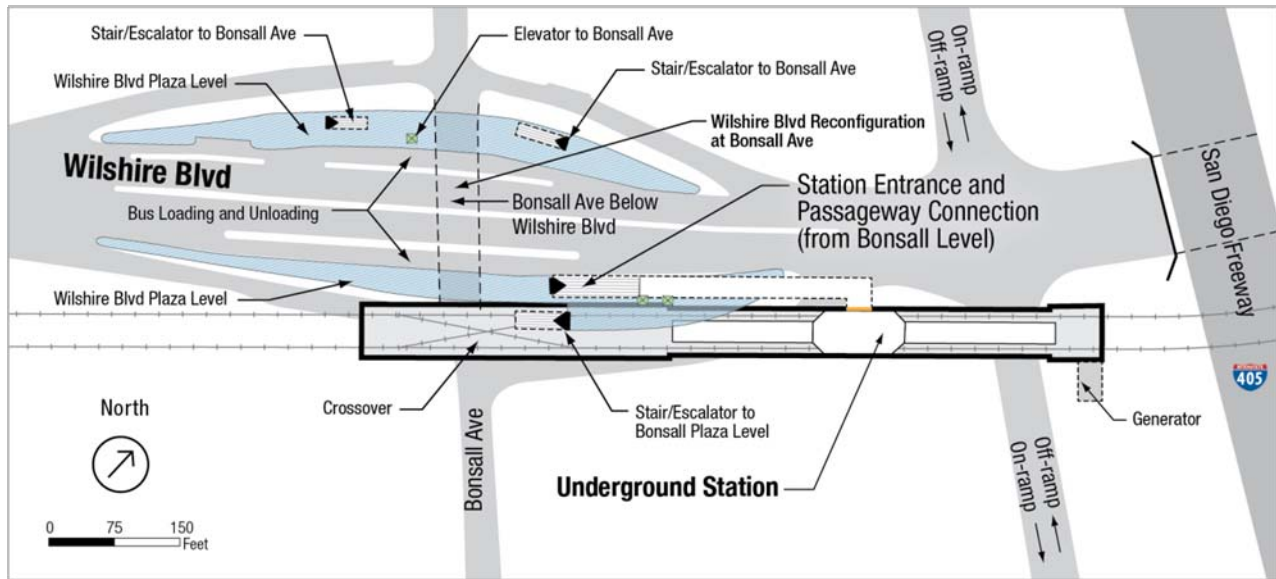


Figure 5-14. Westwood/VA Hospital South Station

The entrance for the North Station would be along the north side of Wilshire Boulevard just west of Bonsall Avenue (Figure 5-15). The North Station would also include a one-story structure for the emergency generator east of the entrance, near the I-405 ramps. The generator structure would fit within the visual context of the other station components and would not alter any scenic vistas.

The canopy at each entrance would be highly visible and prominent along Wilshire Boulevard. The other aboveground station components such as signage; defining lighting; streetscape amenities such as benches, landscaping, special paving, and art; and bike facilities such as racks or lockers would be integrated into the station design and would not be as visible. Most open-space areas surrounding the parking lot sites are well-landscaped with palms or other mature trees and lawn. Designs of the above-ground station components for both station options will complement the surroundings. None of the components for either option will conflict with the area's character, which includes large parking lots and other buildings on the VA property.

Views in this area are limited by the I-405 overpass over Wilshire Boulevard. However, views to the north include the Santa Monica Mountains and Hollywood Hills. Views to the south include the taller buildings in Century City. No scenic vistas would be adversely altered by any of the potential entrances.

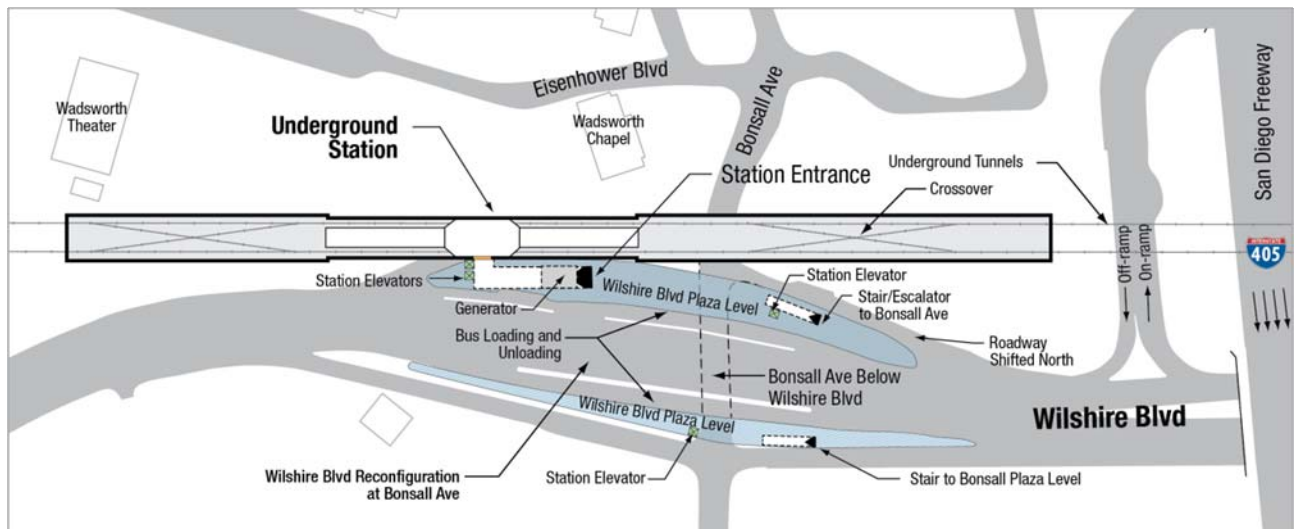


Figure 5-15. Westwood/VA Hospital North Station

Change The following is a modification of and replaces Section 5.3

Construction Impacts Common to All Build Alternatives

Construction impacts include temporary changes in views of and from the construction area. Construction activities, at station and staging areas and the selected maintenance and operations facility, may introduce considerable heavy equipment such as cranes and associated vehicles, including bulldozers, backhoes, graders, scrapers, and trucks, into the view corridor of public streets, sidewalks, and properties. Viewers in the construction area may experience inconveniences due to the presence of this equipment, as well as stockpiled construction-related materials. Mature vegetation, including trees, will be removed from some areas. Views of construction staging activities may be possible from residential land uses on some of the adjacent parcels, either directly through fencing, through entrance gates, or over fencing from second story and higher windows. If not screened from view, construction staging activities could temporarily affect adjacent viewers. Lighting of the construction staging areas at night could also affect viewers.

The current estimate for the cut-and-cover station construction is 72 to 84 months. The primary visual impact to the local neighborhood will be associated with the time it takes to install piles and decking for the station box support system, visible for a three-to-four-month period. Construction of the station will continue while traffic travels on the decking so visual impacts during this period will be reduced.

The Wilshire/Fairfax Station and the Wilshire/La Brea Station may require raised decking for station construction to minimize impacts to paleontological resources. The raised decking may temporarily increase the visual impacts to adjacent properties.

No Change to Section 5.3.1

6.0 MITIGATION MEASURES

Change The following is a modification of and replaces Section 6.1

Mitigation for Operational Impacts

The Project will be designed consistent with Metro Design Criteria (*Transit Design Criteria and Standards [Metro 2010]*). Mitigation measures, as listed below, are proposed for the Build Alternatives to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts related to conflicts between scale and visual character, building removal and right-of-way acquisition, removal of mature vegetation, location of ancillary facilities, and introduction of new sources of light and glare.

- To minimize visual clutter, system components should be integrated and the potential for conflicts reduced between the transit system and adjacent communities; design of the system stations and components will follow the recommendations and guidance developed in the urban design analysis conducted for the Project (*Station Planning & Urban Design Concept Report, Metro 2009*). These guidelines include the following: (1) preserve and enhance the unique cultural identity of each station area and its surrounding community by implementing art and landscaping; and (2) promote a sense of place, safety, and walkability by providing street trees, walkways or sidewalks, lighting, awnings, public art, and/or street furniture.
- Where mature trees are removed, replacement with landscape amenities of equal value will be incorporated into final designs, where feasible, to enhance visual integrity of the station area.
- Source shielding in exterior lighting at stations and maintenance facilities will be used to limit spillover light and glare.
- Station designs will be integrated with area redevelopment plans. The objective is to create a unified visual setting where the station components such as entrances complement redevelopment plans.

Change The following is a modification of and replaces Section 6.2

Mitigation for Construction Impacts

To reduce impacts related to construction activities, the following mitigation measures are recommended to be implemented:

- Visually obtrusive erosion-control devices, such as silt fences, plastic ground cover, and straw bales, should be removed as soon as the area is stabilized.
- Stockpile areas should be located in less visibly sensitive areas and, whenever possible, not be visible from the road or to residents and businesses. Limits on heights of excavated materials will be developed during design based on the specific area available for storage of material and visual impact.
- Lighting should be directed toward the interior of the construction staging area and be shielded so that it will not spill over into adjacent residential areas. In addition, temporary sound walls of



Metro approved design will be installed at station and work areas. These will block direct light and views of the construction areas from residences.

- Construction staging areas could be screened where possible, to reduce visual effects on adjacent viewers.

7.0 CEQA DETERMINATION

No Change.