

INTRODUCTION

TOOLKIT PURPOSE.....3

GOALS & OBJECTIVES.....3

LOCAL CONTEXT4

DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS.....5

100



◀ Precedent - de la Concorde Transit Station, Laval QB

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 TOOLKIT PURPOSE

This toolkit provides streetscape and station design guidelines for the proposed Regional Connector Transit Corridor Project. It emphasizes the station sites and structures and pays particular attention to design decisions affecting how the system fits within the existing downtown.

This document builds upon the Metro Regional Connector Urban Design Report and is based on an analysis and distillation of best practices gleaned from guidelines developed for other transit systems, in conjunction with recommendations arising from the team's evaluation of the specific context and requirements of this project.

These guidelines do not contain rigid requirements or numerous specific dimensions. Rather, they outline key elements and design objectives for transit-system design in relation to its setting. The elements of this 'Toolkit' are intended to be applied to the design of the Regional Connector Transit Corridor Project and to support the decisions that Metro makes in concurrence with existing City of Los Angeles plans and policies.

Consistent with these plans, the introduction of the Regional Connector is seen as an opportunity to improve the downtown pedestrian environment. By integrating its stations within the urban fabric, future development will be encouraged in a pattern that promotes walking, transit use, environmental stewardship and a sense of community.

1.2 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

► REINTEGRATE DOWNTOWN INTO THE LARGER CITY CONTEXT

A downtown core that is accessible from anywhere in the city and active around the clock becomes a natural destination location for residents and tourists.

► PROMOTE MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION

Transit systems designed to be fast, affordable and visually appealing, provide the public with a welcome alternative to commuting by car.

► PEDESTRIANIZE THE DOWNTOWN

Urban streets lined by mixed-use development, vibrant streetscapes and public spaces create safe and enjoyable pedestrian travel to daily amenities.

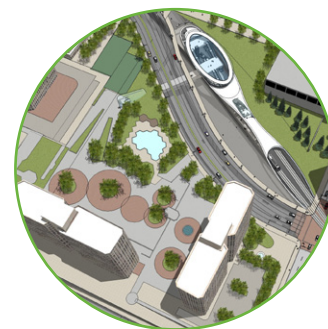
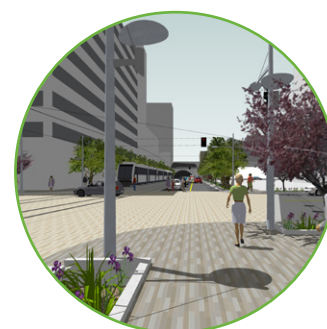
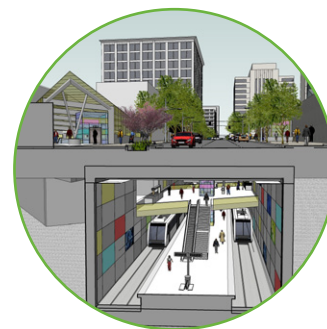
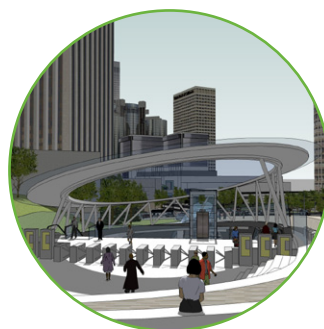
► GREEN THE DOWNTOWN

Greenery adds interest, ornamentation and continuity between urban spaces, while performing a valuable role in the reduction of noise and air pollution.

► ESTABLISH A SENSE OF PLACE

The concept of placemaking acknowledges and builds upon a neighborhood's unique character through its architectural mix and street-side atmosphere.

By integrating its stations within the urban fabric, future development will be encouraged in a pattern that promotes walking, transit use, environmental stewardship and a sense of community.





◀ (Left / Right) Historic Broadway, Los Angeles

1.3 LOCAL CONTEXT

1.3.1 HISTORY

Los Angeles' history of growth cannot be separated from its history of transportation. The two grew together, intertwining with and encouraging the growth of the other. The city's setting – a vast basin bordered by the Pacific Ocean, the mountains and the desert – permitted unbridled outward growth. This sprawl eventually led to an over-reliance on the automobile.

The city's use of rail, both heavy and light, has fluctuated over time. Rail travel enjoyed popularity in the 1900s, when the first five railways and the addition of the local electric railways (red cars) provided a number of commuter-rail options. However, in the mid-1920s the automobile made its debut and began to replace trains as the preferred mode of transportation. Freeway networks were built parallel to the first five tracks. Except for a brief period during World War II, the use of rail steadily declined. By 1959, only the Los Angeles to Long Beach Trolley remained but, two years later, it too ceased operations.

In the mid-1980s, after many failed attempts at introducing mass rail transit, the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission and Southern California Rapid Transit District began to reassemble the rail right-of-ways abandoned years earlier. Today, a radial network of rail transit lines once more serves the city. The Metro Rail system consists of over 73 miles of track.

The Regional Connector will increase commuter options, allowing transit passengers to access the Metro Blue Line, the Metro Gold line and the Metro Expo Line without a transfer from one system to the next. The Regional Connector will facilitate the integration of LRT, bus and passenger-rail service in the region, increasing the effectiveness of the entire mass transit system.

The Regional Connectors timing is right. The car culture that once typified North American cities – and particularly Los Angeles – is becoming a thing of the past. Increased awareness of the need to reduce greenhouse gases has prompted citizens to voluntarily carpool, cycle, walk and take public transit instead of driving. The simultaneous move towards controlling urban sprawl has sparked a renewed interest in the quality of urban life.

Downtown Los Angeles underwent its own recent overhaul with the introduction of major civic drawing points like the Staples Center, the Walt Disney Concert Hall and the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels. Plans underway, including the Grand Avenue project, will make the downtown even more of a destination. Already, this increased activity in the city center has made it a much more attractive place in which to live, work and play.

Another influence comes from Latin American urban design, which leans heavily towards lively urban plazas and pedestrian promenades. This influence in Los Angeles is further driving the move away from car culture and towards pedestrian culture.

1.3.2 CLIMATE

Los Angeles has a dry-summer subtropical climate characterized by 263 sunshine days per year on average and only 35 days of precipitation. The period of May through October is warm to hot and dry with average high temperatures of 74 – 84°F. The winter season includes minimal frost and lower temperatures that range from 73 – 48°F. The key to enjoying the outdoors in the city is the ability to escape from excessive heat and the occasional rain shower. Waiting areas and public spaces must offer escape from exposure to the sun.

Downtown Los Angeles happens to be one of the most favored climates in North America for the growing of subtropical plants. From a landscape architecture perspective, there is opportunity to provide protection from the elements with plant screens, walls and canopies.



◀ Los Angeles Freeways



◀ Aerial of Los Angeles Today



◀ (Left) Financial District – Existing Metro Center; and (Right) 5th & 6th at Flower Station At-Grade

1.4 DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS

The urban grid of streets and blocks throughout most of Downtown LA are based on a 'superblock' scale of generally 300' x 600'. The grid layout is inclined diagonally at a 26° angle off the cardinal grid of the rest of the city, following the original Spanish grid of El Pueblo de la Reina de Los Angeles.

The alignment has been subdivided into three major 'districts' within the downtown – the Financial District, Bunker Hill District and Historic Core / Little Tokyo District. These character zones will provide a 'jumping-off point' for developing themes and treatments for the streetscape. Please refer to Fig. 1 on page 7 and Fig. 2 on page 8, which illustrate all of the identified districts in downtown Los Angeles.

exits, along the length of the frontages of this segment of Flower Street.

Significant employment centers include the Bank of America Headquarters tower, the 444 Flower Street tower, the Westin-Bonaventure Hotel, the World Trade Center, the Marriott Hotel, the Figueroa Courtyard low-rise office complex and other job centers. Significant residential development includes the existing 990 dwelling units within the Bunker Hill Towers complex north of Third Street, and the 606 dwelling unit Promenade Towers residential complex, located at the NWC of Second Street and Figueroa, for a nearby residential total of 1,596 dwelling units.

1.4.2 BUNKER HILL DISTRICT

Significant cultural attractions in the immediate vicinity include Disney Hall, the Music Center with the Chandler Pavilion, Mark Taper Forum, Ahmanson Theater complex, the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels and the new Civic Park.

Major job centers include the LA Department of Water and Power Headquarters at the northwest corner of Hope and First Streets, the Los Angeles County Hall of Justice Courthouse, the County Administration Offices flanking the new Civic Park, the Colburn School of Performing Arts, MOCA, and Phases I & II of The Grand Avenue mixed-use office, residential, hotel and retail / entertainment development complex directly across Grand Avenue. Other nearby Bunker Hill employment destinations include the Bank of America Headquarters tower, the California Plaza towers, and the Wells Fargo Bank towers on upper Grand Avenue, all within a 5 to 6 minute walking range (see Fig. 1 and 2 for context).

With up to 2,660 dwelling units proposed for The Grand Avenue Project at build-out, the local residential neighborhood will include the existing 990 dwelling units Bunker Hill Towers residential complex, 391 dwelling units Grand Tower apartments, and the 217 dwelling units Museum



◀ Financial District – Existing Plaza

1.4.1 FINANCIAL DISTRICT

The Financial District extends throughout the lower and upper west Bunker Hill areas on the north and generally to Seventh Street METRO Center area on the south. The District is adjacent to the Harbor / Pasadena I-110 Freeway on the west and extends generally to Grand Avenue and beyond (see Fig. 1 and 2 for context).

The area encompasses more than 19 million sq. ft. in existing development, primarily high-rise office towers, hotels, the Los Angeles Central Library and Maguire Gardens Landscaped Art Park & Plaza, the Westin-Bonaventure Hotel / Conference Center and numerous existing high-rise office buildings surrounding the Fifth and Flower Street intersection, as well as the adjacent upper Bunker Hill concentration of office towers.

The segment of Flower Street, between Third and Fourth Streets, is flanked by the (±) 50' tall World Trade Center podium on the west and the (±) 60' tall Bank of America podium building on the east. Both podium buildings enclose parking garages and are internally oriented to vertical circulation cores with no significant street level pedestrian access, entrances or

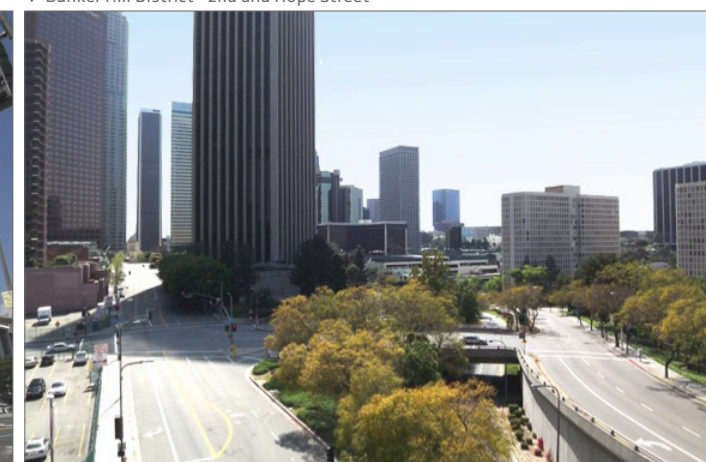


◀ Financial District – Existing Streetscape

▼ Bunker Hill District – Disney Music Hall



▼ Bunker Hill District – 2nd and Hope Street





◀ Historic Core / Little Tokyo District – Existing Pedestrian Bridge

Tower apartments near Second and Olive Streets, for a proposed total of 4,258 dwelling units, all within a 3 to 6 minute walking range of the proposed station.

1.4.3 HISTORIC CORE / LITTLE TOKYO DISTRICT

Within a 5 to 6 minute walking range to the north, the quarter mile radii along the second street transit corridor encompass approximately 80% of the Civic Center Federal, State, County and City Government employment centers and the related public destinations along the north side of First Street between Hill Street and Alameda Street.

Vibiana's Garden is located at the southeast corner of Main and Second and plans include the proposed Vibiana Place mixed-use development on the south side of the Vibiana property. The Vibiana site area also includes a proposed Little Tokyo Recreation Center on Los Angeles Street between Second and Third Streets. The Little Tokyo Branch Library is located at the southwest corner of Second and Los Angeles Streets, and represents the west gateway into the Little Tokyo Community RPA.

The quarter-mile radius around the proposed Little Tokyo Station includes the City Hall and Civic Center. Other predominant uses within Little Tokyo Station area are retail shopping, hotel and hospitality uses, international banking, financial and commercial offices, historic resources, temples, churches, cultural and institutional services, and most recently, a rapidly increasing number of medium to high-density residential and mixed-use infill development projects (see Fig. 1/2 for context).



◀ (Left) Historic Core / Little Tokyo District – Existing Public Art; and (Right) Los Angeles City Hall.

This includes the site for a proposed new Federal Courts and U.S. Government office tower between Hill and Broadway, the L.A. Times / Mirror Square office buildings between Broadway and Spring, the new LAPD Headquarters building between Spring and Main Streets, the Caltrans Headquarters building between Main and Los Angeles Streets, the Kyoto Grand Hotel & Gardens complex, the Weller Court Shopping Plaza at the corner of Second and San Pedro Streets, approximately 80% of the Amended Little Tokyo Redevelopment Project Area (RPA) and the Little Tokyo / Arts District.

The existing land use pattern within the original Little Tokyo RPA is largely a reflection of development that has occurred since 1970. Plans are in place to revitalize and preserve a mixed-use, full service community that continues to serve as the cultural, religious, social and commercial center of the Japanese American Community in Southern California.

Also within a 5 to 6 minute walking range lie the proposed site of the 50-story, mixed-use Zen Residential Tower at the northeast corner of Hill and Third Streets, and the north portion of the Historic Core District, which includes numerous historic resources such as the Million Dollar Theater building, Grand Central Market, Angels Flight, the Bradbury Building and Biddy Mason Park, and proposed new buildings such as the Medallion Project, a 200 dwelling units mixed-use development at the southeast corner of Third and Main Streets.

In addition, the Little Tokyo Block 8 Mixed-Use Development (MXD) Project is presently in construction to include 750 dwelling units, with 50,000 sq. ft. of ground floor commercial space, 40,000 sq. ft. of landscaped open space and pedestrian paseos and parking for more than 1,000 cars, plus an additional 600 public parking spaces to serve the local area.



▼ Historic Core / Little Tokyo District – Panorama