5.4.5.2 Visual Character Impacts

The proposed project is located in greater downtown Los Angeles, which is a dynamic environment where new projects are constructed on an ongoing basis. Additional development projects are planned throughout the downtown Los Angeles area. Construction of the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would not result in either direct or indirect significant impacts to scenic resources. Therefore, construction of the proposed alternative would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable visual resource impact, nor would it, in combination with other future projects in the downtown Los Angeles area, result in significant cumulative impacts to the visual character of downtown.

5.4.5.3 Nighttime Illumination Impacts

Construction of the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would not result in nighttime illumination impacts; therefore, it would not result in or contribute to significant cumulative nighttime illumination impacts.

5.4.5.4 Shade and Shadow Impacts

Construction of the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would not result in shade and shadow impacts; therefore, this alternative would not result in or contribute to significant cumulative shade and shadow impacts.

5.4.6 Cumulative Operational Impacts

5.4.6.1 Scenic Resource Impacts

Other development projects are planned throughout the downtown Los Angeles area. Operation of the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would not result in either direct or indirect significant impacts to scenic resources. Therefore, operation of this alternative would not contribute to cumulatively considerable visual resource impacts. Nor would the alternative, in combination with other future development projects in the downtown Los Angeles area, result in significant cumulative visual impacts to scenic resources.

5.4.6.2 Visual Character Impacts

The Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative alignment is located in greater downtown Los Angeles, which is a dynamic environment where new projects are being implemented on an ongoing basis. Development of additional projects is planned throughout downtown. Operation of the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would not result in direct or indirect significant impacts to scenic resources. Therefore, operation of the proposed project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable visual resource impact. Nor would it result in significant cumulative impacts to the visual character of downtown in combination with other future projects in the downtown Los Angeles area.

5.4.6.3 Nighttime Illumination Impacts

The Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would not result in direct or indirect nighttime illumination impacts from operations. Therefore, it would not result in or contribute to significant cumulative nighttime illumination impacts.

5.4.6.4 Shade and Shadow Impacts

The Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would not result in direct or indirect shade and shadow impacts. Therefore, it would not result in or contribute to significant cumulative shade and shadow impacts.

5.5 Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1

Alignment of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 is very similar to the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative. Therefore, only specific differences between the two alternatives are addressed in this section.

The proposed alignment for the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 is the same as the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative from the 7th Street/Metro Center Station to 2nd Street and Central Avenue. East of 2nd Street and Central Avenue, the tracks would veer northeast under the property bounded by 1st Street, Alameda Street, 2nd Street, and Central Avenue, where the alignment would connect with a new underground station within this block. The tracks would continue from the station under the 1st and Alameda Streets intersection into a new underground three-way junction.

Leaving the junction, one set of tracks would continue north underground along the eastern side of Alameda Street, beneath Temple Street, and surface in the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power yard. The other set of tracks leaving the three-way junction would rise to the east within 1st Street to accommodate a new portal as well as the Metro Gold Line tracks.

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 alignment is shown in Figure 5-6. No identified scenic vistas are within the project area; therefore, no scenic vista impacts would occur. Potential visual and aesthetic impacts associated with implementation of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 are discussed in the following paragraphs.

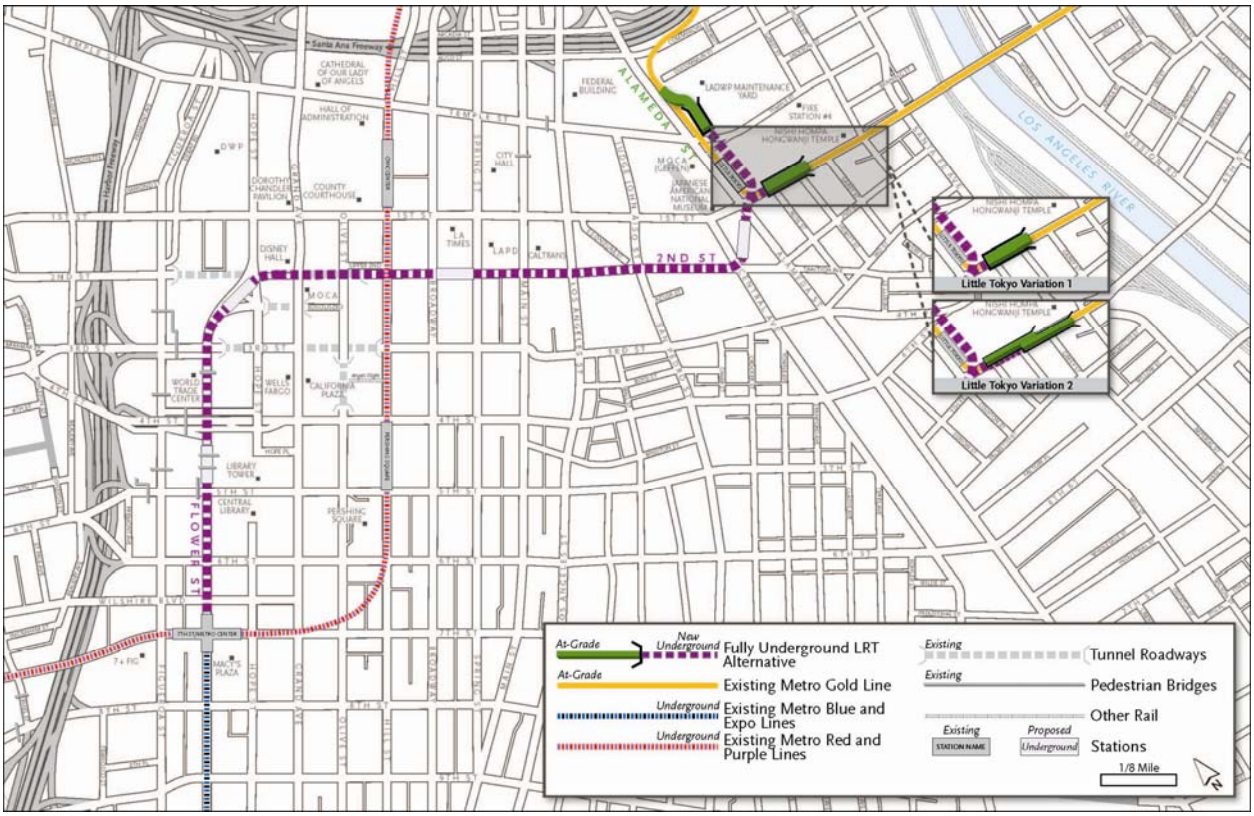

Figure 5-6. Fully Underground LRT Alternatives – Little Tokyo Variations 1 and 2

5.5.1 Direct Construction Impacts

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would require mostly underground construction due to the proposed configuration of the alignment. A cut-and-cover section would begin west of Central Avenue through the block bounded by 1st, 2nd, and Alameda Streets, and Central Avenue.

A center platform station would be constructed under this block, with tracks to the north and east proceeding at the same grade. The tracks leaving this block would split into two different directions. One set of tracks would head east within 1st Street, where it would rise up to an at-grade elevation and join the Metro Gold Line to I-605 about one and a half blocks east of Alameda. The other set of tracks would head northerly east of and parallel to Alameda Street, joining the Metro Gold Line to Azusa and heading north to Union Station. Both north and east portals would be wide enough to accommodate out-bound and in-bound trains in a single structure.

Nearby land users and passersby would have visual access to cut-and-cover construction, construction staging locations, and TBM launch sites. However, most of the construction

associated with this alternative would be below ground and the construction staging sites themselves would be sheltered from direct view by temporary construction walls. TBM construction activities would be entirely below ground and would not be visible to nearby land users or passersby in the Little Tokyo area of downtown Los Angeles.

Metro has identified the entire block for acquisition to stage construction and build a new underground station, station entrances, and ancillary facilities. Metro may also use the site to launch TBMs and transport material from the tunnels.

Metro intends to maintain some of the existing businesses acquired on Central Avenue between 1st and 2nd Streets that would not directly be impacted by construction. This would represent a worst-case scenario. Reductions in acquisition may occur based on further engineering analysis during the preliminary engineering and final design stages. Compared to the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative, construction of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would require removal of two additional businesses and their associated parking. This construction scenario would not have a different visual effect than already described.

Table 5-5. Scenic Resources Potentially Affected by Construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1

Resources	Cut-and-Cover for Guideway	Construction Staging	Stations and Portals	Tunnel Boring
Financial District				
Fine Arts Building	NO	NO	NO	NO
818 Building	NO	NO	NO	NO
Roosevelt Lofts	NO	NO	NO	NO
Pegasus	LTS	NO	NO	NO
811 Wilshire Blvd	LTS	NO	NO	NO
Engine Co. No. 28	LTS	NO	NO	NO
Standard Hotel	LTS	NO	NO	NO
California Club	LTS	NO	NO	NO

Table 5-5. Scenic Resources Potentially Affected by Construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1				
Resources	**Cut-and-Cover for Guideway**	**Construction Staging**	**Stations and Portals**	**Tunnel Boring**
LA Central Library & Maguire Gardens	LTS	LTS	LTS	NO
City National Plaza	LTS	LTS	LTS	NO
Citigroup Center Plaza	LTS	LTS	LTS	NO
Bunker Hill				
Walt Disney Concert Hall	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
2nd Street Tunnel	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Grassy Open Space at General Thaddeus Kosciuszko Way	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Historic Core				
LA Law Center	NO	LTS	LTS	NO
Times Annex	NO	LTS	LTS	NO
Times Building	NO	LTS	LTS	NO
Higgins Building	NO	LTS	LTS	NO
St. Vibiana's Cathedral	NO	LTS	LTS	NO
Redwing Shoes	NO	NO	NO	NO
Civic Center				
Tinker Toy Parking Structure	NO	NO	NO	NO
Little Tokyo				
Little Tokyo Historic District	LTS	LTS	NO	LTS

Table 5-5. Scenic Resources Potentially Affected by Construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1				
Resources	**Cut-and-Cover for Guideway**	**Construction Staging**	**Stations and Portals**	**Tunnel Boring**
Union Center Arts	LTS	LTS	NO	LTS
Koyasan Buddhist Temple	LTS	LTS	NO	LTS
Brunswick Square	LTS	LTS	NO	LTS
Señor Fish	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Arts District				
Nishi Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple	LTS	LTS	LTS	NO
900 East 1st Street	NO	NO	NO	NO
1ST Street Viaduct	NO	NO	NO	NO

NO = No impact
LTS = Less than significant impact

5.5.1.1 Scenic Resource Impacts

Construction staging areas and associated temporary construction walls would be located on the block bounded by 1st, 2nd, and Alameda Streets, and Central Avenue. These areas would not be visible to anyone but those in the vicinity of this block. There would be no impact to scenic resources in this vicinity because there are no nearby resources. There would be no potential impacts to views of historic buildings during construction because the existing historic resources along 1st Street are too far to the east.

Nearby historic resources include a brick building located at 900 East 1st Street and the 1st Street Viaduct. These two structures are each located more than one and a half blocks east of the portal entrance of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1, and therefore would not experience potential visual impacts.

The Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Temple, an important community/cultural resource, is located at approximately 800 East 1st Street. Construction of the portal within 1st Street would

involve cut-and-cover methods and occur in the vicinity of the temple. There would be moderate potential visual impacts during construction near this Buddhist temple.

Table 5-5 includes the only buildings and/or recognized visual resources that could potentially be affected by construction activities associated with installation of tracks and poles, cut-and-cover activities, station construction, and pedestrian and LRT portals. These findings would be the same regardless of whether the entire block or only a portion of the block at 1st, 2nd, and Alameda Streets, and Central Avenue is acquired during construction.

Installation of Tracks and Poles

Installation of tracks and poles along the underground portions of this alternative would not be visible to nearby land users or passersby. Above-ground trackwork already exists at the eastern end of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 as part of the Metro Gold Line. This alternative would include construction of tracks and poles to link the Regional Connector to existing structures. The only locations where construction of tracks and poles would be visible would be associated with the train portals in 1st Street and between Temple and Commercial Streets just east of Alameda Street. At these locations, the tracks and poles would transition from fully underground, sloping uphill out of the tunnel portals, to at-grade level with the existing tracks. Therefore, no or very low visual impacts would result to scenic resources along 1st or Alameda Streets during construction.

Underground Station Sites and Pedestrian Portals

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would require one more underground station than the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative. This additional station would be located under the block bounded by 1st, 2nd, and Alameda Streets, and Central Avenue. The station would be constructed using cut-and-cover techniques.

Construction of this underground station would result in removal of the Señor Fish building. Removal of this structure would result in a less than significant visual impact to the Little Tokyo area because of the building's modest size and its reduced level of historical significance. Through Appropriate urban design of pedestrian portals and surrounding streetscape and landscaping would incorporate historical and visual references of the surrounding Little Tokyo and Arts District neighborhoods that complement these important communities.

No other scenic resources or buildings are located immediately adjacent to the proposed 2nd Street/Central Avenue station. Most of the station construction would occur below ground, and therefore would not be visible to nearby buildings, land users, or passersby. After underground construction is complete, the pedestrian portals would be finished and the ground surface restored. Therefore, construction of the underground station, ancillary facilities, and pedestrian portals—as with all other proposed underground stations—would

be primarily invisible to nearby land uses. Potential impacts to visual resources would be less than significant.

5.5.1.2 Visual Character Impacts

Construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would include cut-and-cover methods, installation of tracks and poles in the at-grade locations within this alternative, and station and pedestrian portal construction. These activities would temporarily alter the existing visual character of downtown Los Angeles. Areas of downtown Los Angeles through which the underground portions of this alignment would pass currently consist of high- and mid-rise buildings and high-density construction. The at-grade portion of this alternative would be limited to the transition areas at the 1st Street and Alameda Street portals, interfacing with the existing at-grade LRT trackway of the Metro Gold Line. The Little Tokyo Historic District would be more than a block away from the proposed train portals and almost a block from the pedestrian portals to the proposed underground station. Construction staging areas and the surrounding walls would be visible for a period ranging from 12 to 48 months.

No recognized or valued views are located in the project area. During construction, activities occurring above ground in roadways and along sidewalks could potentially temporarily disrupt views along the corridors and impede views of historic resources and visual resources. Viewers would see construction-related equipment and activities, and the urban streetscape would be temporarily altered. However, the project would be constructed in a heavily urbanized environment where construction activities are not uncommon. Therefore, project construction would not noticeably reduce visual quality or alter viewing context. Furthermore, temporary construction impacts on visual character would be less than significant.

5.5.1.3 Nighttime Lighting Impacts

During construction, nighttime lighting would be introduced into the project area at the construction staging locations. Lighting would predominantly consist of security lighting and be directed on-site. Therefore, nighttime lighting impacts would be less than significant during construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1.

5.5.1.4 Shade and Shadow Impacts

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would primarily involve underground construction. In addition, the heights of structures and construction-related facilities located above ground would be limited to no more than two stories. Therefore, the potential for construction activities to result in shading and shadows beyond those currently created by the high- and mid-rise buildings along the alignment corridor is limited. Along 1st Street, east of Alameda Street, several of the existing buildings on the south side of the street that cast shade are two stories high. No shade or shadow impacts would result from construction of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1.

5.5.2 Indirect Construction Impacts

5.5.2.1 Scenic Resource Impacts

Construction of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would result in limited localized visual impacts on the Little Tokyo and Arts District areas of downtown. Construction activities would be localized and would not result in any indirect impacts to scenic resources beyond those discussed in the Cultural Resources – Built Environment Technical Memorandum. No indirect visual impacts to scenic resources would occur as a result of construction activities.

5.5.2.2 Visual Character Impacts

Construction of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would be localized and not result in any indirect impacts to visual character beyond those discussed in the Cultural Resources – Built Environment Technical Memorandum. No indirect impacts to visual character would occur as a result of construction activities.

5.5.2.3 Nighttime Illumination Impacts

During construction, nighttime security lighting would be introduced into the immediate project area at construction staging locations. All potential lighting impacts would be localized and therefore would not result in indirect nighttime lighting impacts.

5.5.2.4 Shade and Shadow Impacts

Construction of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would mostly occur underground. Above ground construction and related facilities and equipment, including portals, would be limited, and resulting shadows would be localized to the immediate area. Therefore, no indirect shade and shadow impacts would result from construction activities.

5.5.3 Direct Operations Impacts

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would operate primarily underground with short at-grade segments in the Little Tokyo and Arts District vicinity where the alignment transitions to connect to the existing Metro Gold Line tracks. These transition areas would be adjacent to proposed portals in 1st Street and parallel to Alameda Street. Construction of above-ground entrances to provide access to pedestrian portals at underground stations, including at the proposed 2nd Street/Central Avenue station, would be the same as the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative. With the exception of these above-ground entrances and the at-grade portion of the alignment at the 1st Street and Alameda Street train portals, all operations of this alternative would be located underground. Table 5-6 summarizes potential impacts to scenic resources associated with operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1.

Table 5-6. Scenic Resources Potentially Affected by Operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1				
Resources	**Poles and Track**	**Stations**	**Pedestrian Portals**	**Train Portals**
Financial District				
Fine Arts Building	NO	NO	NO	NO
818 Building	NO	NO	NO	NO
Roosevelt Lofts	NO	NO	NO	NO
Pegasus	NO	NO	NO	NO
811 Wilshire Blvd	NO	NO	NO	NO
Engine Co. No. 28	NO	NO	NO	NO
Standard Hotel	NO	NO	NO	NO
California Club	NO	NO	NO	NO
LA Central Library & Maguire Gardens	NO	NO	LTS	NO
City National Plaza	NO	NO	LTS	NO
Citigroup Center Plaza	NO	NO	LTS	NO
Bunker Hill				
Walt Disney Concert Hall	NO	NO	NO	NO
2nd Street Tunnel	NO	NO	NO	NO
Grassy Open Space at General Thaddeus Kosciuszko Way	NO	NO	NO	NO
Historic Core				
LA Law Center	NO	NO	NO	NO
Times Annex	NO	NO	LTS	NO

Table 5-6. Scenic Resources Potentially Affected by Operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1				
Resources	**Poles and Track**	**Stations**	**Pedestrian Portals**	**Train Portals**
Times Building	NO	NO	NO	NO
Higgins Building	NO	NO	NO	NO
St. Vibiana's Cathedral	NO	LTS	LTS	NO
Redwing Shoes	NO	NO	NO	NO
Civic Center				
Tinker Toy Parking Structure	NO	NO	NO	NO
Little Tokyo				
Little Tokyo Historic District	LTS	NO	NO	LTS
Union Center Arts	LTS	NO	NO	LTS
Koyasan Buddhist Temple	LTS	NO	NO	LTS
Brunswick Square	LTS	NO	NO	LTS
Arts District				
Nishi Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple	LTS	NO	NO	LTS
900 East 1st Street	NO	NO	NO	NO
1ST Street Viaduct	NO	NO	NO	NO

NO = No impact
LTS = Less than significant impact

5.5.3.1 Scenic Resource Impacts

Operation of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would result in only minimal potential visual impacts to scenic resources. Other than pedestrian access and egress through pedestrian portals at the proposed underground stations, most operational

activities would occur underground, with no degradation of views of historic buildings and little or no contrasting visual conditions. There would be no visual impacts as a result of the new trackway and systems appurtenances, which would be located underground, except where the trackway returns to grade in 1st Street and at the Alameda Street train portal.

In the Bunker Hill area, there may be a pedestrian bridge constructed from the 2nd/Hope Street station to Upper Grand Avenue above the existing General Thaddeus Koscuiszko Way right-of-way. The bridge would not be visible from any historic buildings, and thus no adverse visual impacts to historic buildings would occur.

Within the Little Tokyo and Arts District areas, the only above-ground features associated with the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would be station pedestrian entrances, and the train portals in 1st Street and next to Alameda Street. Two identified visual resources near the eastern end of the alignment are the 900 East 1st Street building and the 1st Street viaduct, both of which are located too far east along 1st Street to experience any impacts.

The Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple at 800 East 1st Street, an important community and cultural resource, would experience low visual impacts from the train portal just west of this location. Pedestrians walking along the north or south sides of 1st Street would experience low to moderate visual impacts looking into the street corridor toward the train portal. People walking along the east side of Alameda on the block between Temple and Commercial Streets would experience low visual impacts when looking east into the block at the train portal.

There would be station entrances at up to four potential locations within one block of the proposed 2nd Street/Central Avenue station, though not all of the potential locations would necessarily be used. None of these would adversely affect views due to their relatively small size.

At-grade overhead contact systems, catenary poles, and trackway for the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 (standard features required for a light rail system to operate) would be located only at the easternmost train portal (1st Street) and northernmost train portal (located on the block east of and adjacent to Alameda Street, north of Temple Street). The rest of the alignment and potential visual effects would be the same as described for the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative. Given that the majority of the features associated with the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would be located below ground, potential impacts to scenic resources would be less than significant.

5.5.3.2 Visual Character Impacts

Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 is located in a heavily urbanized environment, and adding primarily underground structures and a limited fixed guideway

would not noticeably reduce visual quality or alter the viewing context in the Little Tokyo or Arts District areas of downtown Los Angeles. Implementation and operation of the alternative would contribute to the existing urban character and high-density, pedestrian friendly environment that already exists in downtown Los Angeles.

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would be primarily underground and thereby not visually accessible to the public. Therefore, potential visual character impacts associated with the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would be less than significant.

5.5.3.3 Nighttime Lighting Impacts

With operation of a new underground LRT project, limited new nighttime lighting would be introduced into the project area. Lighting would predominantly consist of security lighting at pedestrian portal locations, and nighttime lighting would be directed on site. Therefore, no nighttime lighting impacts would occur during operation of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1.

5.5.3.4 Shade and Shadow Impacts

Operation of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would introduce limited new above-ground structures in the already heavily urbanized Little Tokyo and Arts District areas of downtown Los Angeles. The only new above-ground structures would be pedestrian portals to underground stations and two train portals located in 1st Street and east of and adjacent to Alameda Street north of Temple Street. Heights of structures located above ground would be limited to approximately two stories; therefore, the potential for shading and shadows beyond those currently created by the buildings along the alignment's corridors would be limited. No shade or shadow impacts would result from operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1.

5.5.4 Indirect Operational Impacts

5.5.4.1 Scenic Resource Impacts

All potential impacts to scenic resources would be localized. Therefore, no indirect impacts would occur to scenic resources from operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1.

5.5.4.2 Visual Character Impacts

Potential changes in visual character from operation of this alternative would be localized and therefore not result in any indirect impacts to visual character beyond those discussed above and within the Cultural Resources - Built Environment Technical Memorandum. No indirect impacts to visual character would occur.

5.5.4.3 Nighttime Illumination Impacts

New nighttime lighting would be introduced into the immediate project area and at pedestrian portal locations. Nighttime lighting, however, would primarily consist of security lighting and improved pedestrian streetscape lighting where necessary, and effects would be localized. Therefore, no indirect nighttime lighting impacts would result from implementation or operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1.

5.5.4.4 Shade and Shadow Impacts

Operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would be primarily limited to underground LRT operations. Placement of structures above ground would be limited to facilities associated with pedestrian portals to stations and the two train portals discussed previously. Shade and shadows associated with these structures would be localized to the immediate vicinity of the facilities themselves. Therefore, no indirect shade or shadow impacts would result from operation of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1.

5.5.5 Cumulative Construction Impacts

5.5.5.1 Scenic Resource Impacts

Other construction projects are planned throughout the downtown Los Angeles area. Construction of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would not result in either direct or indirect significant impacts to scenic resources. Therefore, construction of this alternative would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable visual resource impact, nor would it, in combination with other future construction projects in the downtown Los Angeles area, result in significant cumulative visual impacts to scenic resources.

5.5.5.2 Visual Character Impacts

Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 is located in greater downtown Los Angeles, which is a dynamic environment where new projects are constructed on an ongoing basis. Additional development projects are planned throughout the downtown Los Angeles area. Construction of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would not result in either direct or indirect significant impacts to visual character. Therefore, construction of this alternative would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable visual resource impact, nor would it, in combination with other future projects in the downtown Los Angeles area, result in significant cumulative impacts to the visual character of downtown.

5.5.5.3 Nighttime Illumination Impacts

Construction of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would not result in nighttime illumination impacts. Therefore, this alternative would not result in or contribute to significant cumulative nighttime illumination impacts.

5.5.5.4 Shade and Shadow Impacts

Construction of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would not result in shade and shadow impacts. Therefore, this alternative would not result in or contribute to significant cumulative shade and shadow impacts.

5.5.6 Cumulative Operational Impacts

5.5.6.1 Scenic Resource Impacts

Other development projects besides the Regional Connector Transit Corridor project are planned throughout the downtown Los Angeles area. Operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would not result in either direct or indirect significant impacts to scenic resources. Therefore, operation of this alternative would not contribute to cumulatively considerable scenic resource impacts, nor would it, in combination with other future development projects in the downtown Los Angeles area, result in significant cumulative visual impacts to scenic resources.

5.5.6.2 Visual Character Impacts

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 is located in greater downtown Los Angeles, which is a dynamic environment where new projects are being implemented on an ongoing basis. Additional development projects are planned throughout downtown. Operation of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would not result in either direct or indirect significant impacts to visual character. Therefore, operation of this alternative would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable visual resource impact, nor would it, in combination with other future projects in the downtown Los Angeles area, result in significant cumulative impacts to the visual character of downtown.

5.5.6.3 Nighttime Illumination Impacts

Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would not result in direct or indirect nighttime illumination impacts from operation. Therefore, this alternative would not result in or contribute to significant cumulative nighttime illumination impacts.

5.5.6.4 Shade and Shadow Impacts

Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would not result in direct or indirect shade and shadow impacts. Therefore, this alternative would not result in or contribute to significant cumulative shade and shadow impacts.

5.6 Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 is the same as the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 for most of its alignment. Therefore, only differences in potential impacts between these two alternatives are addressed in this section.

The proposed alignment for the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 is the same as Variation 1 from the 7th Street/Metro Center Station to the proposed 2nd Street/Central Avenue station. One exception is that, as the tunnels turn northeast from 2nd Street, the northbound tunnel would descend and the southbound tunnel would rise so that the southbound tunnel would be stacked on top of the northbound tunnel. The 2nd Street/Central Avenue station would have two underground levels, each with a single-track platform. The tracks would then leave the 2nd Street/Central Avenue station and proceed northeast under the intersection of 1st and Alameda Streets, where a two-level underground junction would be constructed.

Another difference between Little Tokyo Variations 1 and 2 is that there are two train portals that would extend farther east on 1st Street under Little Tokyo Variation 2. The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 alignment is shown in Figure 5-6.

No scenic vistas were identified within the project area; therefore, no impacts to scenic vistas would occur. Potential visual and aesthetic impacts associated with implementation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 are discussed in the following subsections.

5.6.1 Direct Construction Impacts

Construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would mostly occur underground due to the proposed configuration of the alignment. The cut-and-cover section would begin west of Central Avenue through the block bounded by 1st, 2nd, and Alameda Streets and Central Avenue. A single-track, stacked platform station would be constructed underground at this site.

One set of tracks would travel east within 1st Street, rise up to street level over a three-block stretch, and join the Metro Gold Line to East Los Angeles. The other set of tracks would travel north, just east of and parallel to Alameda Street, to join the tracks heading north to Union Station between Temple and Commercial Streets. The north portal would be wide enough to accommodate out-bound and in-bound trains in a single structure. The east portals would separate eastbound and westbound tracks into two distinct structures.

Nearby land uses and passersby would have visual access to cut-and-cover construction, construction staging locations, and TBM launch locations; however most construction would

be below ground and temporary construction walls would shelter construction staging sites from direct view by the public. TBM construction activities would be entirely below ground and would not be visible to nearby land users or passersby in the Little Tokyo area.

Metro has identified the entire block for acquisition to stage construction and build a new underground station, station entrances, and ancillary facilities. Metro may use the site to launch tunnel boring machines and transport material from the tunnels.

Metro intends to maintain some of the existing businesses acquired on Central Avenue between 1st and 2nd Streets that are not directly impacted by construction activities. This would represent a worst-case scenario. Fewer acquisitions may occur based on further engineering analysis during the preliminary engineering and final design stages. This would result in removal of two more businesses and associated parking than the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative. This construction scenario would not have a different visual effect than described in this technical memorandum.

Table 5-7. Scenic Resources Potentially Affected by Construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2

Resources	Cut-and-Cover for Guideway	Construction Staging	Stations and Portals	Tunnel Boring
Financial District				
Fine Arts Building	NO	NO	NO	NO
818 Building	NO	NO	NO	NO
Roosevelt Lofts	NO	NO	NO	NO
Pegasus	LTS	NO	NO	NO
811 Wilshire Blvd	LTS	NO	NO	NO
Engine Co. No. 28	LTS	NO	NO	NO
Standard Hotel	LTS	NO	NO	NO
California Club	LTS	NO	NO	NO
LA Central Library & Maguire Gardens	LTS	LTS	LTS	NO

Table 5-7. Scenic Resources Potentially Affected by Construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2				
Resources	**Cut-and-Cover for Guideway**	**Construction Staging**	**Stations and Portals**	**Tunnel Boring**
City National Plaza	LTS	LTS	LTS	NO
Citigroup Center Plaza	LTS	LTS	LTS	NO
Bunker Hill				
Walt Disney Concert Hall	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
2nd Street Tunnel	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Grassy Open Space at General Thaddeus Kosciuszko Way	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Historic Core				
LA Law Center	NO	LTS	LTS	NO
Times Annex	NO	LTS	LTS	NO
Times Building	NO	LTS	LTS	NO
Higgins Building	NO	LTS	LTS	NO
St. Vibiana's Cathedral	NO	LTS	LTS	NO
Redwing Shoes	NO	NO	NO	NO
Civic Center				
Tinker Toy Parking Structure	NO	NO	NO	NO
Little Tokyo				
Little Tokyo Historic District	LTS	LTS	NO	LTS
Union Center Arts	LTS	LTS	NO	LTS
Koyasan Buddhist Temple	LTS	LTS	NO	LTS

Table 5-7. Scenic Resources Potentially Affected by Construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2				
Resources	**Cut-and-Cover for Guideway**	**Construction Staging**	**Stations and Portals**	**Tunnel Boring**
Brunswick Square	LTS	LTS	NO	LTS
Señor Fish	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Arts District				
Nishi Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple	LTS	LTS	LTS	NO
900 East 1st Street	NO	NO	NO	NO
1ST Street Viaduct	NO	NO	NO	NO

NO = No impact.
LTS = Less than significant impact.

5.6.1.1 Scenic Resource Impacts

Construction staging areas and associated temporary construction walls would be located on the block bounded by 1st, 2nd, and Alameda Streets, and Central Avenue, and would, therefore, not be visible to anyone but those in the vicinity of this block. There would be no impact to scenic resources in this vicinity because there are no nearby resources.

There would be no potential impacts to views of historic buildings during construction of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 because existing historic resources along 1st Street are too far to the east. Two local historic resources include a brick building located at 900 East 1st Street and the 1st Street Viaduct. These structures are each located more than one-half block east of the easternmost portal of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2. Therefore, there would be no visual impacts to or from these two resources. The Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple another important community/cultural resource, is located at approximately 800 East 1st Street. Construction of the portal within 1st Street would involve cut-and-cover methods and occur in the vicinity of the temple, creating moderate potential visual impacts to this resource during construction. In consultation with the Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Temple, the Reverend indicated to Metro that the portal's proximity to the temple would be visually intrusive.

Table 5-7 shows buildings and/or recognized visual resources that could potentially be affected by construction activities associated with installation of tracks and poles, cut-and-cover methods, station construction, and pedestrian and LRT portals. Impacts to these resources would be the same regardless of whether the entire block or only a portion of the block at 1st, 2nd, and Alameda Streets, and Central Avenue is acquired.

Installation of Tracks and Poles

Installation of tracks and poles along the underground portions of this alternative would not be visible to nearby land uses or passersby. Above-ground trackwork already exists at the eastern end of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 as part of the Metro Gold Line.

The proposed alternative would include construction of tracks and poles to link the Regional Connector to the existing structures. The only locations where construction of tracks and poles would be visible would be associated with the train portals in 1st Street and between Temple and Commercial Streets just east of Alameda Street. At these locations, the tracks and poles transition from fully underground, sloping uphill out of the tunnel portals, to at grade with the existing tracks. Therefore, no or very low visual impacts would potentially result to scenic resources along 1st Street or Alameda Street during construction.

Underground Station Sites and Pedestrian Portals

Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would require that another underground station be constructed under the block bounded by 1st, 2nd, and Alameda Streets, and Central Avenue. This additional proposed station would be constructed using cut-and-cover methods.

Construction of this underground station would result in removal of the Señor Fish building. Removal of this structure would result in a less than significant visual impact to the Little Tokyo area because of its modest size and reduced level of historical significance. Appropriate urban design of pedestrian portals and surrounding streetscape and landscaping would incorporate historical and visual references of the surrounding Little Tokyo and Arts District neighborhoods that complement these important communities.

No other scenic resources or buildings are located immediately adjacent to the proposed 2nd Street/Central Avenue station. Construction of this station would occur below ground and therefore would not be visible to nearby buildings, land uses, or passersby. After underground construction is complete, the pedestrian portals would be finished and the ground surface restored. Therefore, construction activities for this underground station, ancillary facilities, and pedestrian portals—as with the other proposed underground stations—would be primarily invisible to nearby land users. Potential impacts to visual resources would be less than significant.

5.6.1.2 Visual Character Impacts

Cut-and-cover construction, installation of tracks and poles in the at-grade locations within this alternative, and station and pedestrian portal construction would temporarily alter the existing visual character of downtown Los Angeles. Areas of downtown Los Angeles through which the underground portions of this alignment would pass currently consist of high- and mid-rise buildings and high-density construction. The at-grade portion of this alternative would be limited to the transition areas at the 1st Street and Alameda Street portals, interfacing with the existing at-grade LRT trackway of the Metro Gold Line.

The Little Tokyo Historic District would be more than a block away from the proposed train portals and almost a block from the pedestrian portals to the proposed underground station. Construction staging areas and surrounding construction walls would be visible for a period ranging from 12 to 48 months.

During construction, activities occurring above ground in the roadways and along sidewalks could potentially temporarily disrupt views along corridors and impede views of historic resources, visual resources, and viewshed corridors. However, no recognized or valued views are located in the project area.

Viewers would see construction-related equipment and activities, and the urban streetscape would be temporarily altered. However, construction of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would occur in a heavily urbanized environment where construction activities are not uncommon, and would not noticeably reduce visual quality or alter viewing context. Therefore, temporary construction impacts would be less than significant.

5.6.1.3 Nighttime Lighting Impacts

During construction, nighttime lighting would be introduced into the project area at construction staging locations. Lighting would predominantly consist of security lighting, and light would be directed on-site. Therefore, potential nighttime lighting impacts would be less than significant during construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2.

5.6.1.4 Shade and Shadow Impacts

Construction of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would mostly occur underground. Heights of structures and construction-related facilities located above ground would be limited to no more than two stories. Therefore, the potential for construction to result in shading and shadows beyond those currently created by the high- and mid-rise buildings along the alignment corridors is limited. Even along 1st Street, east of Alameda Street, several of the existing buildings on the south side of the street cast shade

that is two stories high. No shade or shadow impacts would result from construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2.

5.6.2 Indirect Construction Impacts

5.6.2.1 Scenic Resource Impacts

Construction of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would result in limited localized visual impacts on the Little Tokyo and Arts District areas of downtown. Construction of this alternative would be localized and not result in any indirect impacts to scenic resources beyond those discussed in the Cultural Resources – Built Environment Technical Memorandum. No indirect visual impacts to scenic resources would occur as a result of construction of this alternative.

5.6.2.2 Visual Character Impacts

Construction activities for the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would be localized and not result in any indirect impacts to visual character beyond those discussed in the Cultural Resources – Built Environment Technical Memorandum. No indirect impacts to visual character would occur as a result of construction of this alternative.

5.6.2.3 Nighttime Illumination Impacts

During construction, nighttime security lighting would be introduced into the immediate project area at construction staging locations. All potential lighting impacts would be localized and therefore would not result in indirect nighttime lighting impacts.

5.6.2.4 Shade and Shadow Impacts

Construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would mostly occur underground. Above ground construction-related facilities and equipment would be limited, and shadows cast by these facilities and equipment would be localized to the immediate area and at the portal locations. Therefore, no indirect shade and shadow impacts would result from construction of this alternative.

5.6.3 Direct Operational Impacts

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would occur primarily underground with short at-grade segments in the Little Tokyo and Arts District vicinity where the alignment transitions connect to the existing Metro Gold Line tracks. These transition areas would be adjacent to the portals in 1st Street and parallel to Alameda Street.

As with the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative, the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 includes above-ground entrances to access to pedestrian portals to underground stations, including the proposed 2nd Street/Central Avenue station. With the exception of these above-ground entrances and the at-grade portion of the alignment at the 1st

Street and Alameda Street train portals, all operations of this alternative would be located underground. Table 5-8 summarizes potential impacts to scenic resources associated with operation of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2.

Table 5-8. Scenic Resources Potentially Affected by Operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2

Resources	Poles and Track	Stations	Pedestrian Portals	Train Portals
Financial District				
Fine Arts Building	NO	NO	NO	NO
818 Building	NO	NO	NO	NO
Roosevelt Lofts	NO	NO	NO	NO
Pegasus	NO	NO	NO	NO
811 Wilshire Blvd	NO	NO	NO	NO
Engine Co. No. 28	NO	NO	NO	NO
Standard Hotel	NO	NO	NO	NO
California Club	NO	NO	NO	NO
LA Central Library & Maguire Gardens	NO	NO	LTS	NO
City National Plaza	NO	NO	LTS	NO
Citigroup Center Plaza	NO	NO	LTS	NO
Bunker Hill				
Walt Disney Concert Hall	NO	NO	NO	NO
2nd Street Tunnel	NO	NO	NO	NO
Grassy Open Space at General Thaddeus Kosciuszko Way	NO	NO	NO	NO

Table 5-8. Scenic Resources Potentially Affected by Operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2				
Resources	**Poles and Track**	**Stations**	**Pedestrian Portals**	**Train Portals**
Historic Core				
LA Law Center	NO	NO	NO	NO
Times Annex	NO	NO	LTS	NO
Times Building	NO	NO	NO	NO
Higgins Building	NO	NO	NO	NO
St. Vibiana's Cathedral	NO	LTS	LTS	NO
Redwing Shoes	NO	NO	NO	NO
Civic Center				
Tinker Toy Parking Structure	NO	NO	NO	NO
Little Tokyo				
Little Tokyo Historic District	LTS	NO	NO	LTS
Union Center Arts	LTS	NO	NO	LTS
Koyasan Buddhist Temple	LTS	NO	NO	LTS
Brunswick Square	LTS	NO	NO	LTS
Arts District				
Nishi Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple	LTS	NO	NO	LTS
900 East 1st Street	NO	NO	NO	NO
1ST Street Viaduct	NO	NO	NO	NO

NO = No impact.
LTS = Less than significant impact.

5.6.3.1 Scenic Resource Impacts

Operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would result in only minimal visual impacts to scenic resources. Other than pedestrian access and egress through pedestrian portals at the proposed underground stations, most operational activities would occur underground, with no degradation of views of historic buildings and little or no contrasting visual conditions. There would be no visual impacts as a result of the new trackway and system appurtenances, which would be located underground except where the trackway returns to grade in 1st Street, and at the Alameda Street train portal.

In the Bunker Hill area, there may be a pedestrian bridge constructed from the 2nd/Hope Street station to Upper Grand Avenue above the existing General Thaddeus Koscuiszko Way right-of-way. The bridge would not be visible from any historic buildings, and thus no adverse visual impacts to historic buildings would occur.

Within the Little Tokyo and Arts District areas, the only above-ground features associated with the project would be station pedestrian entrances and the train portals in 1st Street and next to Alameda Street. Two identified visual resources near the eastern end of the alignment are the 900 East 1st Street building and the 1st Street Viaduct. Both of these resources are located too far east along 1st Street to experience any visual impacts.

The Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple at 800 East 1st Street, an important community and cultural resource, would experience low to moderate visual impacts from the train portal in front of and west of this location. Pedestrians walking along the north or south sides of 1st Street would experience low to moderate visual impacts looking into the street corridor toward the train portal. People walking along the east side of Alameda on the block between Temple and Commercial Streets would experience low visual impacts when looking east into the block at the train portal. In consultation with the Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Temple, the Reverend indicated to Metro that the portal's proximity to the temple would be visually intrusive.

There would be station entrances at up to four potential locations within one block of the proposed 2nd Street/Central Avenue station, though not all of the potential locations would necessarily be used. None of these entrances would adversely affect views due to their relatively small size.

At-grade overhead contact systems, catenary poles, and trackway for the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 (standard features required for a light rail system to operate) would be located only at the easternmost train portals on 1st Street and the northernmost train portal adjacent to Alameda Street between Temple and Commercial Streets. The rest of the alignment and potential visual effects would be the same as the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1. Given that the majority of features

associated with Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would be below ground, potential impacts to scenic resources would be less than significant.

5.6.3.2 Visual Character Impacts

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 is located in a heavily urbanized environment, and adding primarily underground structures and a limited fixed guideway would not noticeably reduce visual quality or alter the viewing context in the Little Tokyo or Arts District areas of downtown Los Angeles.

Construction and operation of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would contribute to the existing urban character and high-density, pedestrian friendly environment that already exists in downtown Los Angeles. Additionally, this alternative would be primarily underground and thereby not visually accessible to the public. Therefore, potential visual character impacts associated with Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would be less than significant.

5.6.3.3 Nighttime Lighting Impacts

Operation of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would introduce limited new nighttime lighting into the project area. Lighting would predominantly consist of security lighting at pedestrian portal locations, and nighttime lighting would be directed on site. Therefore, no nighttime lighting impacts would occur during operation of this alternative.

5.6.3.4 Shade and Shadow Impacts

Operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would introduce limited new above-ground structures in the already heavily urbanized Little Tokyo and Arts District areas of downtown Los Angeles. The only new above-ground structures would be pedestrian portals to underground stations and two train portals in 1st Street and east of and adjacent to Alameda Street north of Temple Street. Heights of structures located above ground would be limited to approximately two stories. Therefore, the potential for shading and shadows beyond those currently created by the buildings along the alignment's corridors is limited. No shade or shadow impacts would result from operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2.

5.6.4 Indirect Operational Impacts

5.6.4.1 Scenic Resource Impacts

All potential impacts to scenic resources would be localized. Therefore, no indirect impacts to scenic resources would occur from operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2.

5.6.4.2 Visual Character Impacts

Potential changes in visual character from operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would be localized and not result in any indirect impacts to visual character beyond those discussed above and within the Cultural Resources - Built Environment Technical Memorandum. No indirect impacts to visual character would occur with this alternative.

5.6.4.3 Nighttime Illumination Impacts

Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would introduce new nighttime lighting into the immediate project area and at pedestrian portal locations. Nighttime lighting, however, would primarily consist of security lighting and improved pedestrian streetscape lighting where necessary, and effects would be localized. Therefore, no indirect nighttime lighting impacts would result from implementation or operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2.

5.6.4.4 Shade and Shadow Impacts

Operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would be primarily limited to underground LRT operations. Placement of structures above ground would be limited to facilities associated with pedestrian portals to stations and the three train portals discussed previously. Shade and shadows associated with these structures would be localized to the immediate vicinity of the facilities themselves. Therefore, no indirect shade or shadow impacts would result from operation of this alternative.

5.6.5 Cumulative Construction Impacts

5.6.5.1 Scenic Resource Impacts

Other construction projects besides the proposed Regional Connector Transit Corridor project are planned throughout the downtown Los Angeles. Construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would not result in either direct or indirect significant impacts to scenic resources. Therefore, construction of this alternative would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable visual resource impact, nor would it, in combination with other future construction projects in the downtown Los Angeles area, result in significant cumulative visual impacts to scenic resources.

5.6.5.2 Visual Character Impacts

The alignment of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 is located in greater downtown Los Angeles, which is a dynamic environment where new projects are constructed on an ongoing basis. Additional development projects are planned throughout the downtown Los Angeles area.

Construction of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would not result in either direct or indirect significant impacts to visual character. Therefore, construction of this alternative would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable visual resource impact, nor would it, in combination with other future projects in the downtown Los Angeles area, result in significant cumulative impacts to the visual character of downtown.

5.6.5.3 Nighttime Illumination Impacts

During construction, Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would not result in nighttime illumination impacts; therefore, this alternative would not result in or contribute to significant cumulative nighttime illumination impacts.

5.6.5.4 Shade and Shadow Impacts

During construction Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would not result in shade and shadow impacts; therefore, this alternative would not result in or contribute to significant cumulative shade and shadow impacts.

5.6.6 Cumulative Operational Impacts

5.6.6.1 Scenic Resource Impacts

Other development projects are planned throughout the downtown Los Angeles area. Operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would not result in either direct or indirect significant impacts to scenic resources. Therefore, operation of this alternative would not contribute to cumulatively considerable scenic resource impacts, nor would it in combination with other future development projects in the downtown Los Angeles area, result in significant cumulative visual impacts to scenic resources.

5.6.6.2 Visual Character Impacts

The alignment of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 is located in greater downtown Los Angeles, which is a dynamic environment where new projects are being implemented on an ongoing basis. Additional development projects are planned throughout downtown.

Operation of the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would not result in either direct or indirect significant impacts to visual character. Therefore, operation of this alternative would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable visual resource impact. Nor would the alternative, in combination with other future projects in the downtown Los Angeles area, result in significant cumulative impacts to the visual character of downtown.

5.6.6.3 Nighttime Illumination Impacts

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would not result in direct or indirect nighttime illumination impacts from operations. Therefore, this alternative would not result in or contribute to significant cumulative nighttime illumination impacts.

5.6.6.4 Shade and Shadow Impacts

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would not result in direct or indirect shade and shadow impacts. Therefore, this alternative would not result in or contribute to significant cumulative shade and shadow impacts.

6.0 POTENTIAL MITIGATION MEASURES

6.1 Potential Construction-Related Mitigation Measures

6.1.1 No Build Alternative

No significant construction-related visual impacts were identified for the No Build Alternative. Therefore, no mitigation measures would be required.

6.1.2 Transportation System Management (TSM) Alternative

No significant construction-related visual impacts were identified for the TSM Alternative. Therefore, no mitigation measures would be required.

6.1.3 At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative

While no significant construction-related visual impacts were identified. The following mitigation measure would further reduce potential impacts.

- Construction staging areas would be screened to the extent necessary to minimize potential effects on scenic resources.

6.1.4 Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative

While no significant construction-related visual impacts were identified for the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative, the mitigation measure described previously for the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would further reduce less than significant potential impacts.

6.1.5 Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1

While no significant construction-related visual impacts were identified for the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1, the mitigation measure identified previously under the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would further reduce less than significant potential impacts.

6.1.6 Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2

While no significant construction-related visual impacts were identified for the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2, the mitigation measure described previously for the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would further reduce less than significant potential impacts.

6.2 Potential Operation-related Mitigation Measures

6.2.1 No Build Alternative

No significant operation-related visual impacts were identified for the No Build Alternative. Therefore, no mitigation measures would be required.

6.2.2 Transportation System Management (TSM) Alternative

No significant operation-related visual impacts were identified for the TSM Alternative. Therefore, no mitigation measures would be required.

6.2.3 At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative

While no significant impacts to the Historic Core, Civic Center, or Little Tokyo communities would result from operation of the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative, the following mitigation measures would further reduce less than significant impacts.

- Metro would work cooperatively with the City of Los Angeles to develop detailed urban design guidelines that could guide future development in and around the Little Tokyo community and in the vicinity of the Regional Connector Transit Corridor project.
- Metro would coordinate with the Little Tokyo community to obtain input on the urban design of the project within the community. Urban design measures would be developed to integrate the LRT facilities into each community as appropriate. Designs might address elements such as catenary poles, materials, station colors, etc.

6.2.4 Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative

While no significant visual impacts to the Little Tokyo community would result from operation of the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative, the mitigation measures described previously for the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would further reduce less than significant impacts.

6.2.5 Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1

While no significant visual impacts to the Little Tokyo or Arts District community would result from operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1, the mitigation measures described previously for the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative and the additional measure provided below would further reduce less than significant impacts.

- The train portal in 1st Street would be screened with appropriate, context sensitive urban design features.

6.2.6 Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2

While no significant visual impacts to the Little Tokyo or Arts District community would result from operation of Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2, the mitigation measures described for Variation 1 would further reduce less than significant impacts.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

Table 7-1 summarizes the overall visual and aesthetic impacts associated with each Regional Corridor Transit Connection Project alternative. As the table shows, there would either be no visual or aesthetic impacts or the impacts would be less than significant.

7.1 No Build Alternative

7.1.1 NEPA Findings

No visual impacts would result under this alternative.

7.1.2 CEQA Determination

No visual impacts would result under this alternative.

7.2 TSM Alternative

7.2.1 NEPA Findings

No adverse visual impacts would result under this alternative.

7.2.2 CEQA Determination

The visual character of the corridor would not change with construction and operation of the TSM Alternative. No visual impacts would result under this alternative.

7.3 At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative

7.3.1 NEPA Findings

The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would result in minor changes in visual character. However, all potential impacts would be less than significant.

7.3.2 CEQA Determination

The visual character of the corridor would change slightly with the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative. The LRT trackway embedded in the street pavement, catenary poles, and overhead wires would result in less than significant visual impacts to the corridor environment. Views would not be degraded under this alternative, and no impacts to existing views from scenic highways would occur. Any potential impacts would be less than significant.

Table 7-1. Summary of Visual and Aesthetic Impacts

Impacts	No Build	TSM		At-Grade Emphasis LRT		Underground Emphasis LRT		Fully Underground LRT			
								Little Tokyo Variation 1		Little Tokyo Variation 2	
		Construction	Operation	Construction	Operation	Construction	Operation	Construction	Operation	Construction	Operation
Scenic Vistas	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Scenic Resources	NO	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Visual Character	NO	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Nighttime Illumination	NO	NO	NO	LTS	NO	LTS	NO	LTS	NO	LTS	NO
Shade and Shadows	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Indirect Impacts	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Direct Impacts	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Cumulative Impacts	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO

[1] *No scenic vistas are located in the project area; therefore, no analysis of impacts is included.*
NO = No impact.
LTS = Less than significant impact.

7.4 Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative

7.4.1 NEPA Findings

The Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would result in minor changes to visual character in localized places along the proposed alignment. However, all potential impacts would be less than significant.

7.4.2 CEQA Determination

The visual character of the corridor would slightly change with the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative. The principal features visible above ground would be station entrances and visual alterations in the vicinity of 1st, 2nd, and Alameda Streets. These visual alternations would not result in significant visual impacts. Views would not be degraded under this alternative, and no impacts to existing views from scenic highways would occur. Any impacts would be less than significant.

7.5 Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1

7.5.1 NEPA Findings

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1 would result in minor changes to visual character in localized places along the proposed alignment. However, all impacts would be less than significant.

7.5.2 CEQA Determination

The visual character of the corridor would slightly change with the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 1. The principal features visible above ground would be station entrances, visual alterations in the vicinity of the proposed 2nd/ Central Avenue station, and the train portals in 1st Street and just east of Alameda Street between Temple and Commercial Streets. These visual alterations would not result in significant visual impacts. Views would not be degraded under this alternative, and no impacts to existing views from scenic highways would occur. All impacts would be less than significant.

7.6 Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2

7.6.1 NEPA Findings

The Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2 would result in minor changes to visual character in localized places along the proposed alignment. However, potential impacts would be less than significant.

7.6.2 CEQA Determination

The visual character of the corridor would slightly change with the Fully Underground LRT Alternative – Little Tokyo Variation 2. The principal features visible above ground would be

station entrances, visual alterations in the vicinity of the 2nd/ Central Avenue station, and the train portals in 1st Street and just east of Alameda Street between Temple and Commercial Streets. These visual alterations would not result in significant visual impacts. Views would not be degraded under this alternative, and no impacts to existing views from scenic highways would occur. All impacts would be less than significant.