# Section 4.5
## Community and Neighborhood Impacts

This section summarizes the existing communities and neighborhoods within the project area and evaluates the potential for community and neighborhood impacts resulting from operation of the proposed Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project alternatives. Information in this section is based on and updated, where appropriate, from the Community and Neighborhood Impacts Technical Memorandum included in Appendix P of this Draft EIS/EIR.

## 4.5.1 Regulatory Framework/Methodology

### 4.5.1.1 Federal

FHWA guidance (FHWA 1996) for assessing transportation project impacts on communities makes recommendations for performing a community impact assessment. The guidance also identifies key impact topics, along with qualitative criteria, in the form of questions for analysts to consider when determining whether an adverse effect would occur. Topic areas related to low income and minority populations are analyzed in Section 4.18, Environmental Justice, of this Draft EIS/EIR. Noise and vibration are analyzed in Section 4.9, Noise and Vibration, of this Draft EIS/EIR. Crime and safety are analyzed in Section 4.16, Safety and Security, of this Draft EIS/EIR. Viability of businesses is analyzed in Section 4.4, Economic and Fiscal Impacts, of this Draft EIS/EIR. Mobility is discussed in Chapter 3, Transportation Impacts and Mitigation, of this EIS/EIR. The following topic areas are discussed and analyzed in this section:

- Community cohesion and interaction
- Isolation of the community or parts of the community
- Social values
- Changes in quality of life
- Introduction of a barrier effect
- Physical intrusions into communities
- Land use patterns as they relate to community character
- Pedestrian and bicycle access to community facilities and services
- Changes in public transportation service related to access to community facilities and services
- Changes in vehicular access to community facilities and services
- Use and accessibility of public facilities
- Displacement of public facilities

Social character of a community refers to the human interaction aspects of a community, such as sense of community, community values, and community identity. Community events such as parades, holiday celebrations, and community gatherings help people living in a community identify with the community and shape part of the social character of a community. Impacts on social character are analyzed by determining the effects of a project on the social aspects of a community.

These categories were developed for a wide range of transportation projects, including highways and transit. Some of the findings in these categories were made in conjunction with the analysis from other technical disciplines, such as Displacement

and Relocation, Transportation, Economic and Fiscal Impacts, Land Use Impacts, and Safety and Security.

### 4.5.1.2 State

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires analysis of proposed projects' potential to physically divide established communities. No local CEQA thresholds are available in any of the jurisdictions comprising the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 project area; therefore, state thresholds apply. CEQA guidance is provided in the *CEQA Guidelines*. Under CEQA, a significant adverse impact to communities and neighborhoods would occur if the project would physically divide an established community or neighborhood.

### 4.5.1.3 Local

All county and municipal jurisdictions in the state of California are required to maintain and update a general plan, which includes elements key to communities and neighborhoods such as land use and housing. At their discretion, municipalities may opt to include additional elements, which may also be relevant to communities and neighborhoods. The general plans of Los Angeles County and the eight cities through which the proposed build alternatives pass are supportive of transit, enhanced pedestrian activity, economic and commercial development, and community development.

Local plans and regulations, such as those included in the general plans of Los Angeles County and the eight cities through which the proposed build alternatives pass, pertain to communities and neighborhoods. Goals and policies addressing community and neighborhood resources that would be applicable to the project include the following:

*Whittier*

- Encourage the maintenance and development of cohesive, clean, safe, and stable residential neighborhoods.
- Provide a sufficient range of recreational opportunities to meet the needs of residents of all ages and interests in the community.
- Reduce crime and violence.
- Minimize noise levels and discourage noises that are detrimental to public health and welfare and contrary to the public interest.

*Montebello*

- Protect residential areas from through traffic movement.
- Cluster strip commercial developments on Whittier Boulevard, Beverly Boulevard, and Washington Boulevard into functional areas.

*Monterey Park*

- Revitalize downtown areas as a mixed-use district that provides many opportunities for new commercial and residential development in a pedestrian environment.
- Maintain the quality and diversity of the community's residential neighborhoods.
- Provide open space areas that meet the recreational needs of a diverse demographic.

*Commerce*

- Development of a wide range of commercial activities.
- Creation of a strong employment and commercial base to finance public improvements and services.
- Provision of safe, convenient pedestrian linkages across and along streets containing strip commercial business.

*Los Angeles County (East Los Angeles and West Whittier/Los Nietos)*

- Strengthening of existing industrial and commercial job-producing activities in East Los Angeles.

- Improvement of public transportation to spur economic activity and improve recreation access.

*Pico Rivera*

- Maintain safe community facilities, including improvement, rehabilitation, and maintenance of existing facilities.

*Rosemead*

- Encouragement of stable and attractive single-family residential neighborhoods.

*Santa Fe Springs*

- Maintain, expand and enhance historic, cultural, and artistic programs throughout the community.
- Provide the community with opportunities to appreciate the city's significant history through historic exhibits, the Clarke Estate, and the preservation of Heritage Park.
- Administer historical, cultural, and recreational programs within the community and provide opportunities for family-oriented events.

*South El Monte*

- Offer opportunities for residents to participate in diverse recreational programs.

## 4.5.2 Affected Environment/Existing Conditions

This section summarizes the demographic information for the project area, presents future growth projections, describes key community resources, and discusses utilities, and freeway signs that could be visually affected or need to be relocated along each alignment. Information provided in this section focuses on metrics for impacts in portions of the project area that stand out compared with regional averages. More detailed information, including community profiles, is available in the Community and Neighborhood Impacts Technical Memorandum, Appendix P, of this Draft EIS/EIR.

The cities and Census designated places (CDPs) adjacent to the proposed alternatives comprise the affected environment for the project. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the local metropolitan planning organization (MPO), prepares estimates for future regional demographics in the Los Angeles area. Year 2010 population, household, and employment counts in each of the Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 project area cities and CDPs are shown in **Table 4.5-1**. SCAG data is based on year 2010 Census and local growth projections. Both SCAG 2035 projections and available 2010 Census data were used for this analysis. East Los Angeles has the largest population and household counts, while Santa Fe Springs is the largest employment center in the project area.

Overall, the area of potential impact identified for community and neighborhood analysis contains nearly 560,000 residents. As shown in **Table 4.5-2**, all but two of the communities in the project area have a majority Hispanic population, ranging from 65.7 percent in Whittier to over 97 percent in East Los Angeles (Census Bureau 2010). Monterey Park and Rosemead have a sizeable Asian population (approximately 60 to 66 percent in both cities), among the largest proportions in the Los Angeles region. Whittier is the only city with a White population that exceeds 25 percent of the total.

According to the 2010 Census, Spanish is spoken in most of the homes in the project area, as shown in **Table 4.5-3**. In some areas, such as East Los Angeles, over 87 percent of all households speak Spanish. Commerce, Pico Rivera, West Whittier/Los Nietos, Montebello, Pico Rivera, and South El Monte are also among the most heavily Spanish-speaking project area cities. Consistent with the ethnicity data above, Rosemead and Monterey Park have large numbers of households where Asian languages are spoken (predominantly Mandarin Chinese and Cantonese dialects). In Rosemead and Monterey Park, over one-half of the households speak Asian languages, and over one-quarter speak Asian languages exclusively.

## Table 4.5-1. 2010 Population, Households, and Employment within the Area of Potential Impact

| City or CDP | 2010 Population | 2010 Households | 2010 Employment |
|---|---|---|---|
| Commerce | 13,524 | 3,360 | 48,772 |
| East Los Angeles | 128,485 | 29,471 | 18,032 |
| Montebello | 65,728 | 19,165 | 26,079 |
| Monterey Park | 68,636 | 20,411 | 30,943 |
| Pico Rivera | 68,427 | 17,005 | 16,336 |
| Rosemead | 58,240 | 14,537 | 16,658 |
| Santa Fe Springs | 18,778 | 5,253 | 50,416 |
| South El Monte | 22,785 | 4,759 | 16,335 |
| West Whittier/Los Nietos | 27,522 | 7,182 | 2,598 |
| Whittier | 87,689 | 28,603 | 31,731 |

*Source: SCAG 2010.*
*Key:*
*CDP = Census Designated Place*

## Table 4.5-2. Ethnicity within the Area of Potential Impact

| City or CDP | White (non-Hispanic) | African-American | American Indian/ Native Alaskan | Asian | Pacific Islander | Hispanic | Other | Multiracial |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Commerce | 3.1% | 0.5% | 0.4% | 1.0% | 0.1% | 94.5% | 0.2% | 0.2% |
| East Los Angeles | 1.5% | 0.3% | 0.1% | 0.8% | 0.0% | 97.1% | 0.1% | 0.1% |
| Montebello | 8.5% | 0.6% | 0.2% | 10.6% | 0.1% | 79.3% | 0.1% | 0.6% |
| Monterey Park | 5.0% | 0.3% | 0.1% | 66.3% | 0.0% | 26.9% | 0.1% | 1.3% |
| Pico Rivera | 5.2% | 0.6% | 0.2% | 2.3% | 0.0% | 91.2% | 0.1% | 0.4% |
| Rosemead | 4.7% | 0.3% | 0.1% | 60.3% | 0.0% | 33.8% | 0.0% | 0.7% |
| Santa Fe Springs | 11.9% | 1.9% | 0.4% | 3.8% | 0.1% | 81% | 0.2% | 0.7% |

## Table 4.5-2. Ethnicity within the Area of Potential Impact (Continued)

| City or CDP | White (non-Hispanic) | African-American | American Indian/ Native Alaskan | Asian | Pacific Islander | Hispanic | Other | Multiracial |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| South El Monte | 3.4% | 0.2% | 0.1% | 10.8% | 0.0% | 84.9% | 0.2% | 0.4% |
| West Whittier/Los Nietos | 9.3% | 0.7% | 0.3% | 1.4% | 0.1% | 87.6% | 0.2% | 0.4% |
| Whittier | 28.3% | 0.9% | 0.3% | 3.5% | 0.1% | 65.7% | 0.2% | 1.1% |

*Source: Census Bureau 2010.*
*Key: CDP = Census Designated Place*

## Table 4.5-3. Languages Spoken at Home within the Area of Potential Impact

| City or CDP | English Only | Spanish Only | Spanish | Indo-European Languages Only | Indo-European Languages | Asian/Pacific Island Languages Only | Asian/Pacific Island Languages | Other Languages Only | Other Languages |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Commerce | 18.7% | 11.4% | 79.6% | 1.1% | 1.1% | 0.0% | 0.6% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| East Los Angeles | 11.6% | 13.6% | 87.6% | 0.1% | 0.3% | 0.0% | 0.5% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Montebello | 24.9% | 7.0% | 62.0% | 4.0% | 4.8% | 0.6% | 7.9% | 0.0% | 0.5% |
| Monterey Park | 24.4% | 0.7% | 18.3% | 0.9% | 1.3% | 8.6% | 55.9% | 0.0% | 0.1% |
| Pico Rivera | 27.4% | 6.8% | 69.7% | 0.4% | 0.6% | 0.2% | 2.2% | 0.0% | 0.1% |
| Rosemead | 19.6% | 2.0% | 23.7% | 0.3% | 0.5% | 9.9% | 56.2% | 0.0% | 0.1% |
| Santa Fe Springs | 45.0% | 1.9% | 53.1% | 0.1% | 0.2% | 0.1% | 1.4% | 0.0% | 0.3% |
| South El Monte | 13.7% | 14.7% | 75.0% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 2.1% | 11.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| West Whittier/ Los Nietos | 36.6% | 7.0% | 61.9% | 0.5% | 0.7% | 0.0% | 0.8% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Whittier | 55.4% | 2.9% | 40.1% | 1.5% | 2.1% | 0.2% | 2.1% | 0.0% | 0.4% |

*Source: Census Bureau 2010.*
*Key: CDP = Census Designated Place*

There are also a number of English-only households in the project area cities, particularly in Whittier and Santa Fe Springs. Several community events occur in the project area each year including music and cultural festivals, parades, arts and theater performances, and exhibitions. These events often attract hundreds of people, and some attract thousands of people. Some key annual events are listed in **Table 4.5-4**.

**Table 4.5-4. Key Annual Events**

| Name of Annual Event | Location |
|---|---|
| Fourth of July Carnival | Harbor Street, Commerce |
| National Night Out | Bandini Park, Commerce |
| Taste of East Los Angeles | East Los Angeles Civic Center |
| Montebello Fall Festival | Whittier and Montebello Boulevards, Montebello |
| Taste of the Town | Holy Cross Armenian Cathedral Hall, Montebello |
| Harmony Festival | Barnes Park, Monterey Park |
| Health Fair | Barnes Park, Monterey Park |
| Independence Day Festival | Smith Park, Pico Rivera |
| Summer Movies in the Park Series | Smith Park, Pico Rivera |
| Summer Concerts in the Park Series | Smith Park, Pico Rivera |
| Halloween Spooktacular | Smith Park, Pico Rivera |
| Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony | Pico Rivera City Hall and Rosemead City Hall |
| Independence Day Celebration | Rosemead Park, Rosemead |
| Rockin' Rosemead Summer Concert Series | Garvey Park and Rosemead Park, Rosemead |
| 4th of July Celebration | New Temple Park, South El Monte |
| Concerts Under the Stars | Community Center, South El Monte |
| Concerts in the Park | Central Park and Parnell Park, Whittier |
| Wednesday Night Family Festival | Greenleaf Avenue, Whittier |
| Whittier Christmas Parade | Greenleaf Avenue, Whittier |
| Mexican Independence Day Festival | Whittier Narrows |
| Fall Fair | Whittier Narrows |

*Source: AECOM, CDM Smith 2013*

During the scoping process, stakeholders identified a number of key locations in the project area that play an important role in shaping and defining the community. These include landmarks, parks, community centers, and other places that serve as neighborhood focal points and contribute to community character and identity. Field analysis was also performed to supplement the list of identified community resources to be evaluated in this section. Additional consideration was given to resources within one-quarter mile of the proposed LRT alignments because these resources are close enough to experience potential project-related impacts.

Key community resources near the proposed LRT alignments are described in **Table 4.5-5**, below.

## Table 4.5-5. Community Resources

| Community Resource | Location |
|---|---|
| East Los Angeles College | Monterey Park |
| Restaurants on Garfield Avenue, just south of Via Campo | Montebello |
| Trees on the west side of Garfield Avenue between Via Campo and Beverly Boulevard | Montebello |
| Whittier Narrows | Montebello, Rosemead, South El Monte, and Pico Rivera |
| The Shops at Montebello | Montebello |
| Rio Hondo College | Unincorporated Whittier |
| Whittier College | Whittier |
| Pico Rivera Towne Center | Pico Rivera |
| Whittier Greenway | Whittier |
| Trees in the median of Washington Boulevard | Santa Fe Springs |
| Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital | Whittier |
| Uptown Whittier | Whittier |
| Pico Rivera Historical Museum | Pico Rivera |
| Fred C. Nelles Site | Whittier |
| Five Points Intersection | Whittier |

*Source: AECOM, CDM Smith 2013*

- East Los Angeles College (approximately one-quarter mile from both build alternatives) – East Los Angeles College is a public two-year community college operated by the Los Angeles Community College District. It is located near Cesar Chavez Avenue and Atlantic Boulevard in Monterey Park.

- Restaurants on Garfield Avenue just south of Via Campo (adjacent to both build alternatives) – This strip of restaurants is located on the east side of Garfield Avenue south of Via Campo, forming the western edge of a strip mall development. Residents have expressed the importance of these restaurants to community identity. One of the restaurants, Chinese Garden, was one of the first Chinese restaurants to open in the area, which has now grown to include a large Chinese American population. As some of the only street-fronting retail establishments in the project area with no surface parking between the public sidewalks and the business entrances, these unique structures contribute to both the social and physical character of the neighborhood.

- Trees on the west side of Garfield Avenue between Via Campo and Beverly Boulevard (adjacent to both build alternatives) – This row of tall, mature trees lines Montebello Country Club and Bicknell Park, on the west side of Garfield Avenue. The trees tower over the one- and two-story residential and commercial structures on the opposite side of the street and help visually define the neighborhood.

- Whittier Narrows Dam Flood Control Basin (adjacent to the SR 60 LRT Alternative) – Los Angeles County leases 1,258 acres from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for a regional park and the city of Pico Rivera leases 120 acres from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for a city park. The Whittier Narrows Recreation Area is located within the Whittier Narrows Dam Flood Control Basin. SR 60 passes through the park, but lines of trees on both sides of the freeway shield park areas from passing traffic.

- The Shops at Montebello (adjacent to the SR 60 LRT Alternative) – The Shops at Montebello (formerly Montebello Town Center) is a two-level regional shopping center that houses four large anchor department stores and approximately 160 smaller stores. The city of Montebello has identified the mall as a business activity center, both in its General Plan and in scoping comments. The mall is located south of SR 60 between Paramount and San Gabriel Boulevards.

- Rio Hondo College (approximately one-half mile from the SR 60 LRT Alternative) – Rio Hondo College is a two-year public community college located near Workman Mill Road and Peck Road in an unincorporated area. It is approximately one-half mile south of the proposed SR 60 LRT Alternative's Peck Road Station.

- Whittier College (approximately one-half mile from the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative) – Whittier College is a private four-year liberal arts college located just east of Painter Avenue near Philadelphia Street in Whittier. The campus occupies approximately 75 acres and has over 1,300 students.

- Pico Rivera Towne Center (adjacent to the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative) – Pico Rivera Towne Center is a large strip mall development along the south side of Washington Boulevard between Paramount and Rosemead boulevards in Pico Rivera. The shopping center contains 29 stores, including large national discount retailers that serve residents from multiple surrounding cities. The city of Pico Rivera has identified the shopping center as an important activity center, both in its General Plan and in scoping comments.

- Whittier Greenway (approximately 0.125 mile from the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative) – The Whittier Greenway is a former railroad ROW that has been converted to a landscaped area in the vicinity of Whittier Boulevard in the city of Whittier. The greenway contains pedestrian and bicycle paths and other park-like features, and parts of it are frequently used by residents as recreational space. The greenway contributes to the visual character of the community, and has been identified in multiple scoping comments.

- Trees in the median of Washington Boulevard (adjacent to the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative) – The mature trees in two locations along the median of Washington Boulevard visually contribute to the physical character of the surrounding communities. These trees are located in the Rio Hondo Spreading Grounds and along the Santa Fe Springs city limits between Allport and Appledale avenues. The latter grouping consists of swaying palm trees that tower over the roadway and create the appearance of an iconic mid-20th century Southern California boulevard.

- Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital (adjacent to the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative) – Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital is a full-service regional medical center located at the intersection of Whittier Boulevard and Lambert Road in Whittier.

- Uptown Whittier (approximately one-half mile from the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative) – The Uptown Whittier neighborhood, centered around Greenleaf Avenue, is a historic pedestrian-oriented retail and commercial business district. The area contains numerous independent small businesses and the streets serve as venues for community events throughout the year.

- Pico Rivera Historical Museum (adjacent to the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative) – The Pico Rivera Historical Museum is located on the south side of Washington Boulevard at Bonnie Vale Place. The museum is housed in a former train depot building constructed in the late 1880s. Exhibits include photographs, documents, and objects related to the history of Pico Rivera.

- Fred C. Nelles Site (approximately 0.125 mile from the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative) – The Nelles site is located south of Whittier Boulevard between Sorensen Avenue and the Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital. The buildings on site formerly housed the Fred C. Nelles Youth Correctional Facility, which was closed and abandoned by the California Youth Authority in 2004. The site has been designated as a historic landmark by the state of California, and possible plans for redevelopment of the site have been proposed.

- Five Points Intersection (approximately 0.125 mile from the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative) – The Five Points Intersection is the junction of Whittier Boulevard, Washington Boulevard, Santa Fe Springs Road, Pickering Avenue, and La Cuarta Street in Whittier. The Whittier Greenway trail passes above the intersection on a former railroad trestle. It is a landmark intersection and has been identified by the community as a possible location for transit oriented development (TOD).

Several of these elements serve as an integral defining element of neighborhoods and the overall community character. Established communities, neighborhoods, and districts located in proximity to the proposed LRT alternatives are listed in **Table 4.5-6**.

It should be noted, that this list does not include all established community neighborhoods or districts located along each alignment, just those in the immediate vicinity of the alignments that would be affected by the build alternatives.

### 4.5.2.1 Utilities and Freeway Signage

There are various types of utilities throughout the length of the SR 60 LRT and Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative alignments including electrical overhead cables, flood control ditches, cellular phone towers, and four-legged steel electrical towers, among several others. Several utility companies maintain operation of water, power,

**Table 4.5-6. Established Community Neighborhoods and Districts**

| Community/District/Association | Location | Alternative[1] |
|---|---|---|
| Armenian Group | Montebello | SR 60 LRT and Washington Boulevard LRT |
| Avocado Heights | El Monte | SR 60 LRT |
| East Los Angeles | Los Angeles | SR 60 LRT and Washington Boulevard LRT |
| South Whittier | Whittier | Washington Boulevard LRT |
| South San Gabriel | San Gabriel | SR 60 LRT |
| West Whittier – Los Nietos | Whittier | SR 60 LRT |
| Uptown Whittier | Whittier | Washington Boulevard LRT |

*Source: AECOM, CDM Smith 2013*
*Note:*
*[1] This columns identifies which proposed alignment the community neighborhood or district is closest to.*

cable, and phone services in the area. There are many lattice towers and high power transmission lines located along the SR 60 and Washington Boulevard corridors. Southern California Edison and the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power have distance requirement for their respective transmission lines.

In addition, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has established rules relating to the relocation of power transmission lines and the requirements for relocation, which are outlined in the Public Utilities Commission of the State of California General Order No. 131-D.

NEPA and CEQA do not have specific requirements regarding impacts from relocation of freeway signage. Freeway signage provides way-finding for the use of the street and highway systems. Freeway signage is located along the SR 60 Freeway within the SR 60 LRT corridor and along the SR 60 and I-605 Freeways within the Washington Boulevard LRT corridor.

# 4.5.3 Environmental Impacts/Environmental Consequences

This section focuses on the potential adverse effects and significant impacts that would result from construction and operation of the proposed alternatives. Impacts identified as not adverse/no impact in the table below are described further in the Community and Neighborhood Impacts Technical Memorandum, Appendix P, of this Draft EIS/EIR. Cumulative impacts are discussed in the Cumulative Impacts section, Section 4.19, of this EIS/EIR. Potential impacts to communities and neighborhoods are summarized in **Table 4.5-7**.

## 4.5.3.1 No Build Alternative

### *4.5.3.1.1 Impact Analysis*

The No Build Alternative would not involve any new transportation infrastructure, construction, or major service changes beyond what is identified in Metro's *2009 Long Range Transportation Plan* (LRTP). As such, significant adverse impacts are not anticipated within the project area. However, community mobility would deteriorate with the

**Table 4.5-7. Summary of Potential Community and Neighborhood Impacts**

| | No Build | TSM | SR 60 LRT[1] | Washington Boulevard LRT |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **NEPA Effects** | | | | |
| Social/Physical Character | Not adverse | Not adverse | Not adverse after mitigation | Adverse |
| Crime/Health/ Safety/Services | Not adverse | Not adverse | Not adverse after mitigation | Not adverse after mitigation |
| Community Resources/Events | Not adverse | Not adverse | Not adverse after mitigation | Adverse |
| Viability of Local Businesses | Not adverse | Not adverse | Not adverse after mitigation | Not adverse after mitigation |
| Mobility | Not adverse | Not adverse | Not adverse after mitigation | Not adverse after mitigation |
| Population and Employment | Not adverse | Not adverse | Not adverse | Not adverse |
| **CEQA Impacts** | | | | |
| Physical Division | No impact | No impact | Less than significant after mitigation | Less than significant after mitigation |

*Note: [1] The effects and impacts under the SR 60 LRT Alternative also apply to the SR 60 North Side Design Variation.*

worsening regional traffic congestion that is expected to occur between now and 2035. Also, the communities in the project area would not benefit from the additional access, business, and job growth stimulation that the proposed build alternatives would provide.

The No Build Alternative would not result in an adverse effect under NEPA or a significant impact under CEQA with regard to communities and neighborhoods.

#### *4.5.3.1.2 Mitigation Measures*

The No Build Alternative would have no significant adverse community and neighborhood impacts; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

#### *4.5.3.1.3 Impacts Remaining after Mitigation*

**NEPA Finding**

The No Build Alternative would not adversely alter the social or physical character of the community or neighborhood or adversely affect the area. The No Build Alternative would not result in any adverse effects.

**CEQA Determination**

The No Build Alternative would not physically divide any established communities or neighborhoods. The No Build Alternative would not result in any significant construction or operational impacts.

### 4.5.3.2 TSM Alternative

#### *4.5.3.2.1 Impact Analysis*

**Construction Impacts**

The TSM Alternative would provide infrastructure improvements identified in Metro's 2009 LRTP.

Enhanced bus stops would be installed in some locations to provide seating and shelter for waiting passengers. New bus shelter facilities would be installed at key stops, but construction of these small-scale structures would not substantially alter

the social or physical character of their surroundings.

Construction of bus shelters and traffic signal control systems in the project area would be brief, and would be scheduled not to conflict with any community events.

Construction of bus stops and traffic signal control systems would be minor in scale, would occur sporadically throughout the project area, and would not interfere with public services, cause an increase in crime, or affect the viability of local businesses. Existing bus service would not be interrupted by the construction. Brief lane closures and partial sidewalk closures would be needed to construct these improvements, but they would not be of sufficient magnitude to restrict mobility or divide existing neighborhoods.

### Operational Impacts

The new bus shelters would not adversely affect surrounding neighborhoods, community events and resources, or the viability of local businesses, and would slightly enhance the experience of transit use for residents and employees. Mobility would be enhanced by the increased bus service that the TSM Alternative would provide.

The TSM Alternative would provide enhanced bus service along major streets and freeways throughout the project area.

Some bus routes would have traffic signal priority, as is granted to existing Metro Rapid buses, where the traffic signal control system gives longer green lights to approaching transit vehicles. It is unlikely that the TSM Alternative would have any impacts on public health and safety, since the additional buses would use existing roads, many of which already have bus service. The addition of new bus service might increase congestion slightly, which could lengthen emergency vehicle response times. However, the magnitude of transit service changes would be less than significant because bus drivers would be required to let emergency response vehicles pass through the area, and increased bus service may help to reduce congestion because individuals would have more options to take transit instead of driving their own car.

While there is a perception that transit stops may increase crime levels in general, typical operational enhancements, such as additional security services, would help prevent an increase in crime. The creation of new bus stops may slightly increase the potential for crimes such as vandalism, depending on the types of structures placed at each new stop.

Adding new transit service would be beneficial to mobility. Still, any benefits would be contingent upon the ability of buses operating in street and freeway traffic to attract patrons. Additional details about the potential congestion effects of expanding bus service in the project area, including level of service (LOS) data, are provided in Chapter 3, Transportation Impacts and Mitigation.

The TSM Alternative would not substantially affect future projections for project area population or employment. Transit service improvements, such as new bus routes, do not typically attract substantial population or employment growth. Any growth that does occur would happen within the zoning adopted by the governing city or county, and would not be a direct result of the transit project.

The operation of the enhanced TSM bus service would help bridge existing physical divisions in the project area, which would be a beneficial impact. The TSM Alternative would not introduce any new physical divisions in the project area.

The overall effect of adding new transit service would be beneficial. However, the TSM Alternative would have less beneficial community impact than the build alternatives would provide.

The TSM Alternative would not result in an adverse effect under NEPA or a significant impact under CEQA with regard to communities and neighborhoods.

#### *4.5.3.2.2 Mitigation Measures*

The TSM Alternative would have no significant adverse community and neighborhood impacts; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

#### *4.5.3.2.3 Impacts Remaining after Mitigation*

**NEPA Finding**

The TSM Alternative would not adversely alter the social or physical character of the community or neighborhood, or adversely affect the area. The TSM Alternative would not result in any adverse effects.

**CEQA Determination**

The TSM Alternative would not physically divide any established communities or neighborhoods. The TSM Alternative would not result in any significant construction or operational impacts.

### 4.5.3.3 SR 60 LRT Alternative

#### *4.5.3.3.1 Impact Analysis*

**Social and Physical Character**

**Construction Impacts**

Community disruption would occur while construction activities are performed. Most of the construction would occur in the SR 60 ROW and would be consistent with the social and physical character of the freeway corridor, although tree removal may subject adjacent communities to greater freeway exposure than they currently experience. Intermittent roadway, sidewalk, and intersection closures would be needed along Pomona Boulevard and along streets where the new LRT aerial structure would pass overhead.

Construction staging areas for the SR 60 LRT Alternative would all be adjacent to the SR 60 Freeway, and the demolition and construction activities on these sites would not introduce new adverse impacts to community social and physical character, though construction staging and fencing would represent a temporary visual change.

Construction activities would also temporarily alter the appearance of the freeway corridor, but not in a way that would alter the physical or social function of surrounding communities. Construction noise and vehicle traffic would be largely confined to freeway-adjacent areas, and would be similar to existing large vehicle traffic along the freeway. Impacts would be temporary (limited to the duration of construction) and intermittent in nature, and project construction would be phased so that impacts at any one location would not last for the entire construction period. After implementation of the construction mitigation measures proposed in Section 4.5.3.3.2, no substantially adverse construction impacts on the project area's social and physical character would remain.

**Operational Impacts**

The surrounding physical environment and roadway scale are consistent with LRT use, and the SR 60 LRT Alternative alignment would not alter the character of the neighborhood. The overall physical and social character of the communities would remain unchanged. No substantially adverse operational impacts to the project area's social and physical character would occur under the SR 60 LRT Alternative.

The SR 60 LRT Alternative would not result in a substantial adverse effect under NEPA to social and physical character with implementation of mitigation measures described in Section 4.5.3.3.2.

**Crime and Public Health/Safety/Services**

**Construction Impacts**

Construction activities would not directly affect any buildings that provide community public services or perform health- or safety-related functions.

Construction-related street closures and detours would potentially affect emergency response routes for nearby law enforcement and fire stations. Metro would coordinate with emergency response staff in advance of temporary closures to ensure that suitable alternative routes that do not substantially increase response times are identified and remain open.

Although construction sites can sometimes become attractive venues for loitering and illegal activity, Metro or its construction contractors would secure all construction sites, with fencing and security patrols as needed, to prevent intrusion and illegal activities at all times. Once the mitigation measures identified in Section 4.5.3.3.2 are implemented, no adverse construction impacts would remain.

### Operational Impacts

LRT grade crossings can potentially delay emergency vehicles if they arrive at the crossing at the same time as a passing train. Similar to the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, LRT service would be street running and would not have crossing gates at signalized intersections, thus emergency access would not be restricted. As required by each of the affected cities, all roadways would be reconfigured to meet the applicable jurisdiction's safety criteria for emergency vehicles. Emergency vehicles would be required to yield to light rail vehicles (LRVs), per current operations on similar Los Angeles County at-grade rail lines. However, such delays would be brief and would not likely affect the overall service response times, particularly because the SR 60 LRT Alternative only includes grade crossings along the westernmost portion of the alignment. Metro would coordinate with emergency response officials when designing grade crossings to ensure that emergency response times do not deteriorate as a result of the project.

LRT stations and facilities can be perceived as potential safety hazards and attractive locations for illegal activities. However, Metro would provide security services at all LRT facilities as needed to prevent an increase in criminal activity. The stations themselves would become centers of pedestrian activity during the 20 hours per day that trains would operate, and this may create a beneficial public presence in the surrounding community that would dissuade criminal activity.

All LRT facilities and crossings would be designed to ensure safety and minimize potential hazards.

The SR 60 LRT Alternative would not result in a substantial adverse effect under NEPA to crime and public health/safety/services with the implementation of mitigation measures described in Section 4.5.3.3.2.

### Community Resources and Events

#### Construction Impacts

None of the community events identified in Section 4.5.2 occur within the proposed LRT ROW or within a parcel identified as a construction staging area; therefore, no direct impacts to community events are anticipated. Since construction would require intermittent road and sidewalk closures, and would add construction equipment and vehicles to local roadways, there is potential to disrupt traffic patterns along major thoroughfares and make access to community resources and events more difficult. However, Metro would adjust construction schedules as appropriate to avoid disruption of community events and would minimize construction-related detours that would affect traffic flow to and from major events.

Construction of the SR 60 LRT Alternative would occur adjacent to three of the community resources identified in Section 4.5.2, with the following impacts:

- The entire off-street parking lot behind the restaurants on the east side of Garfield Avenue just south of Via Campo would be used as a construction staging area. Adequate on-street parking or replacement off-street parking would need to be identified to accommodate customers and allow access to the restaurants.

- The trees screening the Shops at Montebello from the SR 60 Freeway would be removed during construction, temporarily altering the appearance of the area. Replacement of the trees on-site would be possible. This would not affect the function of the mall as a community resource, and would not constitute a substantially adverse impact. More information about this visual effect is provided in the Visual and Aesthetic Impacts Technical Memorandum, included as Appendix Q of this Draft EIS/EIR.

- Some construction access to the SR 60 ROW through the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area may be necessary, including temporary tree removal. Temporarily removed trees would be replaced with ones of similar age and type. In accordance with the Whittier Narrows Dam Basin Master Plan, if non-native trees are removed, they would be replaced with native species (See Mitigation Measure 4.15-vii in Section 4.15, Parklands and Other Community Facilities, of this Draft EIS/EIR.) Construction

access would be limited whenever possible to hours when the park is closed. Tree removal and use of the park during construction would be done in coordination with Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation. More information regarding potential construction impacts in the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area is provided in Section 4.15, Parklands and Other Community Facilities of this Draft EIS/EIR.

The mitigation measures described in Section 4.5.3.3.2 would reduce potential construction impacts on community resources so that they are not substantially adverse.

### Operational Impacts

Operation of the SR 60 LRT Alternative would not have adverse impacts on any of the community resources or events. Nearby public events would benefit from the increased access provided by the light rail line. Also, community resources within one-quarter mile of the proposed stations (typical walking distance) would have better transportation connections to surrounding communities. Key resources that would benefit include East Los Angeles College, the restaurants on Garfield Avenue, the Shops at Montebello, and the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area.

The SR 60 LRT Alternative would not result in a substantial adverse effect under NEPA to community resources and events with implementation of mitigation measures described in Section 4.5.3.3.2.

## Viability of Local Businesses

### Construction Impacts

Businesses around each of the new stations along the SR 60 LRT Alternative alignment would be affected by construction activities, construction-related traffic, and road and sidewalk closures. Construction would likely result in a temporary decrease in accessibility to some businesses, and reductions in on-street and off-street parking. Construction operations would negatively affect business as the number of customers and ease of deliveries may temporarily decline. This effect would be limited to businesses near the south side of the SR 60 ROW, and along Pomona Boulevard between Atlantic Boulevard and SR 60.

Businesses on the parcel immediately southeast of Garfield Avenue and Via Campo in Montebello would be affected by removal of the surface parking lot for construction of the proposed Garfield Avenue station. Replacement on-street or off-street parking would be identified for the duration of the construction period to support these businesses.

A portion of the parking lot at the Shops at Montebello would be used for construction staging, and this would reduce the number of parking spaces available to mall customers. Field visits on both weekdays and weekends revealed that this portion of the parking lot is typically underutilized.

Although Metro would provide adequate detours and minimize road closures, some indirect impacts to businesses may occur as people may avoid the area altogether. This potential impact would be adverse during the construction phase. Mitigation measures identified in Section 4.5.3.3.2 and Chapter 3, Transportation Impacts would reduce these effects such that they are not adverse. The presence of construction employees in the area as potential customers would also help offset business losses.

### Operational Impacts

Many businesses near the proposed LRT stations would benefit from the improved transit access provided by the SR 60 LRT Alternative. Passengers entering and exiting the rail system would be new potential customers for surrounding businesses. Stations would serve as focal points for new business development. Businesses around the proposed stations would have new transit connections to other destinations served by the Metro system such as LA Live, Grand Avenue, University of Southern California, University of California Los Angeles, Culver City, and Los Angeles County museums. This advantage would make it attractive for businesses to relocate to the areas around the SR 60 LRT Alternative stations. This would be a beneficial impact.

The Monterey Park Market Place is a shopping center that would be developed north of SR 60 on

an area formerly used as a landfill (OII North Parcel). The signage for this commercial development project is anticipated to be taller than the mechanically stabilized earth (MSE) wall associated with SR 60 North Side Design Variation. The MSE wall would not obstruct views of the proposed development, given that the wall would be lower than the berm located between the freeway ROW and the OII North Parcel property line. The MSE wall would also include aesthetic treatments such as landscaping or concrete designs, which would not detract from visibility and would enhance the appearance of the freeway adjacent to the proposed Monterey Park Market Place development. Therefore, the SR 60 LRT Alternative with or without the North Side Design Variation would not result in an adverse effect to viability of this business.

Some commercial properties in Montebello and South El Monte would need to be permanently acquired. All properties would be acquired in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Act and owners would be compensated fairly, as described in Appendix O, Real Estate Acquisition – Displacement and Relocation Technical Memorandum, of this Draft EIS/EIR. This would offset direct impacts to the displaced businesses.

A portion of the parking lot at the Shops at Montebello mall (approximately 400 spaces) would be converted to a park and ride facility. Field visits on both weekdays and weekends revealed that this portion of the parking lot is typically underutilized, and the new light rail service would provide mall customers an alternative to driving. Nonetheless, given the large number of parking spaces that would be displaced at this location, this would result in an adverse effect. However, as part of mitigation (see Chapter 3 mitigation measure 3.0-xvi), Metro would work with local jurisdictions, businesses and merchants, and commerce associations to implement potential parking mitigation options to help offset losses during operation. Customers could also park at stations closer to their residences and ride the light rail line to the mall. This impact would be beneficial overall.

The SR 60 LRT Alternative would not result in a substantial adverse effect under NEPA to viability of local businesses with implementation of mitigation measures described in Section 4.5.3.3.2 and Chapter 3, Transportation Impacts and Mitigations.

### Mobility

#### Construction Impacts

The SR 60 LRT Alternative would require both aerial and at-grade light rail construction. Vehicle and pedestrian mobility would be reduced during construction due to intermittent road and sidewalk closures and detours. Impacts at any one location would be temporary and would not last for the entire duration of the construction phase. Construction would impede movement between communities, particularly those that are already separated by the SR 60 Freeway, since closure of one of the limited freeway crossings would potentially require detours of up to one mile. This impact would potentially be adverse, but would be reduced to a level that is not substantially adverse by mitigation measures outlined in Section 4.5.3.3.2.

#### Operational Impacts

The SR 60 LRT Alternative would not block any existing crosswalks or signalized intersections, nor would it alter traffic movements within or between communities. Overall, the SR 60 LRT Alternative would increase mobility and access for bicyclists and pedestrians within the Eastside and across the region by introducing new light rail service to the project area. The location of the project adjacent to a freeway would promote its visibility to commuters as a viable alternative to solo driving. However, freeway-adjacent stations are not ideal for community access and connectivity due to the automobile-oriented nature of freeway facilities.

Stations along major commercial streets, such as most of the proposed stations for the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative, would provide greater community mobility benefits.

The SR 60 LRT Alternative would not result in a substantial adverse effect to mobility under NEPA

with implementation of mitigation measures described in Section 4.5.3.3.2.

### Population and Employment

#### Construction Impacts

Although permanent displacements discussed in Section 4.3, Displacement and Relocation, would occur, construction activities would result in a temporary increase in jobs in the project area. Construction workers would not necessarily reside in the project area, but their presence would temporarily increase the level of employment activity. The increase would not substantially change project area employment overall, but would provide beneficial new economic activity near the construction zones. No residential structures would be created or removed, and no change in population would occur.

#### Operational Impacts

No residential structures would be displaced by the SR 60 LRT Alternative, and the business displacements described in Section 4.3 would not be large enough to substantially change the number of jobs in the area.

As discussed in Section 4.3, Displacement and Relocation, businesses would be relocated to suitable nearby locations, resulting in a low net job loss. The new light rail service would likely make the station areas more desirable locations for jobs and residences and would encourage growth and economic development. This would be a beneficial impact. However, any such growth would be contingent upon local city zoning regulations and approval. As such, no substantially adverse population or employment changes are anticipated.

The SR 60 LRT Alternative would not result in an adverse effect under NEPA to population and employment.

### Physical Division

#### Construction Impacts

Street and sidewalk closures during construction would temporarily exacerbate the dividing effect that the SR 60 Freeway currently has within the project area. This dividing effect is an existing condition, but construction work would temporarily exacerbate this effect if full closures of any freeway crossings are necessary. The SR 60 Freeway effectively separates the cities of Monterey Park, Rosemead, and South El Monte from the rest of the project area. The distance between freeway crossings ranges from one-half mile to over one mile. When freeway crossings are temporarily closed, vehicle detours would be lengthy (up to two miles), and pedestrian detours across the freeway may be impractical. Closures would be intermittent, and Metro would work with the surrounding communities to establish a schedule. After implementation of the mitigation measures listed in Section 4.5.3.3.2, this construction impact would not be significant.

#### Operational Impacts

The SR 60 LRT Alternative would retain existing freeway crossings and pedestrian crosswalks. Some freeway crosswalks and freeway crossing areas would be enhanced through station area urban design. The new light rail service would also provide a new way to traverse the Rio Hondo and Whittier Narrows Recreation Area, both of which act as barriers to movement between the surrounding communities. As such, the SR 60 LRT Alternative would reduce the dividing effects of the SR 60 Freeway, the Rio Hondo, and the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area. This would be a beneficial impact.

The SR 60 LRT Alternative would not result in a significant impact under CEQA to physical division with implementation of mitigation measures described in Section 4.5.3.3.2. Overall, the SR 60 LRT Alternative would not result in a substantial adverse effect under NEPA, or a significant impact under CEQA, to communities and neighborhoods with implementation of mitigation measures described in Section 4.5.3.3.2.

### Utility Relocation

Some utilities would need to be relocated as part of the SR 60 LRT Alternative including, but not limited to, storm drains, cellular phone towers, one concrete drainage bridge, and electrical overhead (EOH) wires. One identified storm drain is located just south of the SR 60 Freeway within the Caltrans

ROW in the city of Monterey Park, near its boundary with the city of Montebello. This storm drain crosses the Paramount Boulevard off-ramp and continues parallel to the SR 60 Freeway into the city of Montebello. A second storm drain that would need to be relocated is just west of the Rosemead Boulevard off-ramp, perpendicular to the alignment and within the Caltrans ROW. A third storm drain identified for relocation runs parallel to the south side of the SR 60 Freeway. This storm drain is partially within the Caltrans ROW along the Rosemead Boulevard off-ramp, located just east of the previously identified storm drain. Another portion of the third storm drain, located just east of Rosemead Boulevard, would need to be relocated.

One self-supporting aluminum cellular telephone tower, located within the SR 60 LRT Alternative alignment ROW where it intersects with Muscatel Avenue, may need to be relocated. A second cellular telephone tower, located just west of where Lexington Gallatin Road dead ends, is partially located within the proposed ROW of the LRT and would need to be relocated. Finally, a concrete drainage ditch located north of the SR 60 Freeway, within the Caltrans ROW, in the city of Monterrey Park near its border with the city of Montebello, may need to be relocated.

Several EOH wires and poles may need to be relocated as part of the SR 60 LRT Alternative, including EOH cables on the southwest corner of Gerhardt Avenue and Via Campo; a pole on the northwest corner of Garfield Avenue and Via Campo; six EOH wires north of the SR 60 Freeway and Via Palermo, within the Caltrans ROW; as well as a six-wire set of EOH wires just south of the SR 60 Freeway and just east of the boundary between the cities of Montebello and Monterey Park; three EOH wires and two sets of six EOH wires just south of Town Center Drive and east of Paramount Boulevard; a set of 14 EOH wires on the west side of San Gabriel Boulevard south of the SR 60 Freeway and a pole with three EOH wires immediately across, on the east side of San Gabriel Boulevard; a set of 14 EOH wires on the northeast corner of Muscatel Avenue; a set of six EOH wires on the northwest corner of Lexington Gallatin Road and the SR 60 Freeway; and a set of three EOH wires west of Peck Road and just south of where the off-ramp begins. All planned utility relocations will comply with the CPUC and other power agencies' standards and regulations for relocation of utilities.

No additional utilities would need to be relocated for the SR 60 North Side Design Variation.

It should be noted, that these utility relocations are preliminary at this time and were identified for the purpose of analyzing potential impacts; final, actual utility relocations will be identified during the final design phase once a locally preferred alternative has been identified.

**Freeway Signage Relocation**

NEPA and CEQA do not have specific requirements for impacts due to relocation of freeway signage. Freeway signage may need to be relocated along the SR 60 Freeway as part of the SR 60 LRT Alternative. However, relocation of freeway signage would be done in coordination with Caltrans and local jurisdictions regarding the proper placement of signage, which would be included in final restoration plans for the project. Impacts would not be adverse under NEPA or significant under CEQA.

### *4.5.3.3.2 Mitigation Measures*

In addition to mitigation measures identified below, mitigation measure 4.15-vii from Section 4.15, Parklands and Other Community Facilities, and mitigation measures 3.0-ii through 3.0-xiii from Chapter 3, Transportation Impacts would be implemented. (Please refer to the specific section for the detailed mitigation measure.)

Metro would implement the following mitigation measures as they relate to the construction of the SR 60 LRT Alternative:

4.5-i. Whenever possible, Metro would develop detours for any road or sidewalks to be closed during construction; post signs (in appropriate languages) alerting pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles of road and sidewalk closures and detours; ensure

that pedestrian detours are accessible to senior citizen and disabled persons; and develop Worksite Traffic Control Plans in conjunction with the county and municipal departments of transportation to accommodate automobile, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic.

4.5-ii. Metro would maintain access to community facilities affected by construction activities.

4.5-iii. Metro would provide early notification to emergency service providers of any road closures or detours.

4.5-iv. Metro would develop a community outreach plan to notify local municipalities of construction schedules, road and sidewalk closures, and detours; coordinate with local municipalities during preparation of traffic management plans to minimize potential construction impacts to community resources and special events; and consider limiting construction activities during special events.

4.5-v. Metro would develop a construction mitigation plan with local municipalities' input to address construction impacts and determine truck hauling routes and schedules that would minimize impacts on sensitive uses in all parts of the project area. Haul routes should avoid residential areas and use major thoroughfares to the maximum extent feasible.

4.5-vi. Metro would provide crossing guards as needed in the vicinity of construction sites, haul routes, and other relevant sites, as proposed in the California DOT Traffic Manual, Chapter 10-07.3, Warrants for Adult Crossing Guards.

4.5-vii. The construction contractor would erect barriers/fencing and provide security personnel during construction to minimize trespassing and vandalism. Barriers would be enhanced with artwork and attractive design features where possible.

4.5-viii. Metro would forewarn the public of any anticipated road closures or detours due to construction activity.

4.5-ix. Metro would work with businesses along the alignment to maintain their visibility during construction.

4.5-x. Where possible, Metro would phase construction so that activities at any one location do not last for the entire construction period.

4.5-xi. Metro would provide adequate security of construction areas.

4.5-xii. Metro would incorporate input from emergency officials when designing construction plans.

Metro would implement the following mitigation measures as they relate to the operation of the SR 60 LRT Alternative as well as mitigation measure 3.0-xvi as described in Chapter 3, Transportation Impacts:

4.5-xiii. Metro would provide adequate security at LRT facilities.

4.5-xiv. Metro would incorporate input from emergency officials when designing grade crossings.

#### *4.5.3.3.3 Impacts Remaining after Mitigation*

**NEPA Finding**

After mitigation, the SR 60 LRT Alternative would not adversely alter the social and physical character, viability of local businesses, or mobility; or adversely affect crime/health/safety/services, community resources and events in existing communities and neighborhoods, or the area as a whole. After mitigation, the SR 60 LRT Alternative would not result in any adverse effects. This finding applies regardless of whether the SR 60 North Side Design Variation is implemented.

### CEQA Determination

The SR 60 LRT Alternative would not result in any significant construction or operational impacts. This determination applies regardless of whether the SR 60 North Side Design Variation is implemented.

## 4.5.3.4 Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative

### *4.5.3.4.1 Impact Analysis*

#### Social and Physical Character/Community Resources

Along Garfield Avenue in the city of Montebello, the new aerial structure would add substantial transportation infrastructure to a predominantly low-rise residential area. Although Garfield Avenue is a truck route, it retains the appearance of a residential boulevard. Sidewalks are lined with trees, and single-family houses have grassy yards fronting the street. The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would introduce new aerial tracks with bents straddling the roadway, placed approximately 100 to 200 feet apart along most of the way from Via Campo to Whittier Boulevard.

*Construction Impacts*

Community disruption would occur while construction activities are performed. Most of the construction would occur in the ROWs of Pomona Boulevard, SR 60, Garfield Avenue, and Washington Boulevard. Intermittent roadway, sidewalk, and intersection closures would be needed along these routes. Construction staging areas would be located adjacent to these roadways, and would not introduce any new temporary impacts to community social and physical character except potentially at the Garfield Avenue station, where an existing strip mall and parking lot would be removed and temporarily fenced. Given that SR 60, Garfield Avenue, and Washington Boulevard are all designated as major truck routes, construction activity would not differ greatly from the industrial traffic that occurs along these routes on a daily basis. Residential areas adjacent to Garfield Avenue and Washington Boulevard would experience intermittent construction noise, but Metro would work with the community to establish a schedule where activities are minimized during noise-sensitive hours. Construction activities at any one location along the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative alignment would not last for the entire project construction phase.

Tree removal would be necessary along the southern edge of SR 60 between Sadler Avenue and Garfield Avenue, which would subject adjacent residential communities to greater freeway exposure than they currently experience. Construction-related impacts to social and physical character would not be substantially adverse after mitigation measures described in Section 4.5.3.4.2 are implemented.

None of the community events identified in Section 4.5.2 occur within the proposed LRT ROW or within a parcel identified as a construction staging area; therefore, no direct impacts to community events are anticipated. Since construction would require intermittent road and sidewalk closures, and would add construction equipment and vehicles to local roadways, there is potential to disrupt traffic patterns and make access to community resources and events more difficult. However, Metro would adjust construction schedules as appropriate to avoid disruption of community events and minimize construction-related detours that would affect traffic flow to and from major events.

No direct temporary construction impacts to the community resources identified in Section 4.5.2 would occur.

#### Operational Impacts

The proposed infrastructure would change the appearance of the neighborhood and its primary arterial thoroughfare. The noise from the passing trains would introduce new impacts in the center of the residential area, including the Montebello Park neighborhood.

In addition, the removal of the street-fronting restaurants on the east side of Garfield Avenue just south of Via Campo would further contribute to changing the physical and social character of the area. These restaurants were identified during

community meetings and scoping as valued community resources. One restaurant, Chinese Garden, was one of the first Chinese restaurants in an area that has since grown to include a large Chinese American population. This would constitute an unavoidable adverse impact. Potential new TOD opportunities around the station would be beneficial to the community, but would not offset the effects of removing the row of street-fronting restaurants. The removal of the restaurants and introduction of the aerial viaduct and bents would constitute an unavoidable adverse alteration of the physical and social character of the area along Garfield Avenue between Via Campo and Whittier Boulevard. Some of the trees on the west side of Garfield Avenue between Via Campo and Beverly Boulevard may be permanently removed and the landscaped area would be shielded from the residential structures on the opposite side of Garfield Avenue by the aerial structure. Visual separation of the landscaped areas on the west side of Garfield Avenue from the residential structures on the east side would contribute to this adverse separation. As in other neighborhoods along the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative alignment, benefits to social and physical character would include the potential for enhancing livability and sustainability, transportation benefits, and the potential for economic development.

Where Washington Boulevard passes through the Rio Hondo Coastal Basin Spreading Grounds, it is lined with mature trees on both sides and in the median. The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would require removal of the trees in the median. Trees would be either relocated or replaced along the sides of the street in order to offset the visual change to the community's physical character. After mitigation, this impact would not be substantially adverse. At the northern edge of Santa Fe Springs, the palm trees in the median of Washington Boulevard between Allport Avenue and Appledale Avenue would be removed to accommodate the new at-grade LRT tracks. The trees are a visually defining feature of the community, but could be replaced along the sides of the roadway. This impact would not be substantially adverse after mitigation.

As described in Section 4.5.3.4.2, the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would result in a substantial adverse effect under NEPA to social and physical character and community resources and events, even with implementation of mitigation measures because the removal of the restaurants and introduction of the aerial viaduct and bents along Garfield Avenue between Via Campo and Whittier Boulevard and the visual separation of the landscaped areas on the west side of Garfield Avenue between Via Campo and Beverly Boulevard from the residential structures on the east side would be permanent alterations of the physical and social character of those areas.

### Crime and Public Health/Safety/Services

#### Construction Impacts

The crime and public health/safety/services construction impacts for the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would be the same as those described for the SR 60 LRT Alternative in Section 4.5.3.3.1.

#### Operational Impacts

LRT grade crossings can potentially delay emergency vehicles if they arrive at the crossing at the same time as a passing train. Similar to the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, LRT service would be street running and would not have crossing gates at signalized intersections, thus emergency access would not be restricted. As required by each of the affected cities, all roadways would be reconfigured to meet the applicable jurisdiction's safety criteria for emergency vehicles. Emergency vehicles would be required to yield to LRVs, as with current operations on similar Los Angeles County at-grade rail lines. However, such delays would be brief and would not likely affect overall service response times. Metro would coordinate with emergency response officials when designing grade crossings to ensure that emergency response times do not deteriorate as a result of the project. The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative includes more grade crossings than the SR 60 LRT Alternative, but the former alignment

would not cause additional impacts if this coordination occurs.

LRT stations and facilities can be perceived as potential safety hazards and attractive locations for illegal activities. However, Metro would provide security services at all Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 facilities as needed to prevent an increase in criminal activity. The stations themselves would become centers of pedestrian activity during the 20 hours per day that trains would operate, and this may create a beneficial public presence in the surrounding community that would dissuade criminal activity. All LRT facilities and crossings would be designed to ensure safety and minimize potential hazards.

The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would not result in a substantial adverse effect under NEPA to crime and public health/safety/services with implementation of mitigation measures described in Section 4.5.3.4.2.

### Viability of Local Businesses

#### Construction Impacts

Businesses around the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative alignment would be affected by construction activities, construction-related traffic, and road and sidewalk closures. Construction would likely result in a temporary decrease in accessibility to some businesses and reductions in on-street and off-street parking. In particular, off-street construction staging and activities would be located at and adjacent to the proposed stations. During construction, existing on-street parking spaces and loading stalls along the alignment may also need to be temporarily removed.

Construction operations would negatively affect the sales of existing businesses as the number of customers may temporarily decline. This effect would be limited to businesses directly bordering the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative alignment. Although Metro would provide adequate detours and minimize road closures, some indirect effects to businesses may occur as people may avoid the area altogether. This potential effect would be adverse during the construction phase. Mitigation measures identified in Section 4.5.3.4.2 and Chapter 3, Transportation Impacts would reduce these adverse effects to a level that is not adverse. The presence of construction workers in the area as potential customers would also help offset business losses.

#### Operational Impacts

Many businesses near the proposed LRT stations would benefit from the improved transit access provided by the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative, much like the benefits discussed under the SR 60 LRT Alternative in Section 4.5.3.3.1.

Some commercial properties would need to be permanently acquired for LRT ROW, park and ride lots, station facilities, and traction power substations (TPSS) in Montebello, Commerce, Pico Rivera, Santa Fe Springs, and Whittier. These properties consist of restaurants, mixed-use buildings, retail stores, offices, automobile services, a car wash, a laundry service, a bank, and adjacent surface parking lots. All properties would be acquired in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Act and owners would be compensated fairly, as described in the Real Estate Acquisition – Displacement and Relocation Technical Memorandum, included as Appendix O of this Draft EIS/EIR.

Potential commercial acquisitions are clustered around the station areas, where most of the existing land uses consist of commercial strip malls and stand-alone retail buildings surrounded by surface parking lots. None of the businesses to be acquired provides unique services. Displacement of these businesses would not detract from community identity or neighborhood activity. Business acquisitions would occur at intersections scattered throughout the project area, and would not be concentrated in any one area. There are no clusters of similar businesses in the acquisition areas that would generate economic benefits of agglomeration. Little indirect adverse effect on the viability of remaining businesses would occur, since the businesses currently operate in an automobile-oriented setting and are not part of a

cohesive commercial district. Substantial tax and property value losses are not anticipated.

The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would require the elimination of existing off-street parking facilities near each of the proposed stations, which would result in displaced parking on the surrounding streets and the potential for use of other nearby off-street facilities. On-street parking would need to be removed permanently along Pomona Boulevard between Atlantic Boulevard and Sadler Avenue, on Garfield Avenue between Via Campo and Via San Clemente, and along most of Washington Boulevard from Montebello to Whittier. Parking is already prohibited on portions of Garfield Avenue in Montebello and on Washington Boulevard in Pico Rivera. During field visits on both weekdays and weekends, on-street parking along Washington Boulevard appeared to be underutilized. Most businesses have off-street parking lots, and side street parking is also available to absorb some of the displaced spaces. More information about parking is available in Chapter 3, Transportation Impacts and Mitigation.

The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would not result in a substantial adverse effect under NEPA regarding viability of local businesses with implementation of mitigation measures described in Section 4.5.3.4.2 and Chapter 3, Transportation Impacts and Mitigation.

### Mobility

#### Construction Impacts

The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would require both aerial and at-grade light rail construction. Vehicle and pedestrian mobility would be reduced during construction due to intermittent road and sidewalk closures and detours. Effects at any one location would be temporary and would not last for the entire construction phase. Given that some portions of SR 60 and Washington Boulevard have infrequent pedestrian crossing locations (over one-quarter mile apart), this would impede some movement within communities. However, pedestrian activity is generally low and does not appear to be a primary mode of community mobility. This effect would potentially be adverse, but would be reduced to a level that is not substantially adverse by mitigation measures proposed in Section 4.5.3.4.2.

#### Operational Impacts

The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would block some existing crosswalks and unsignalized intersections, but only in areas where other crosswalks are available within one or two blocks. It would not greatly alter pedestrian or vehicular traffic movements between communities.

Overall, the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would increase mobility within the Eastside and across the region by introducing new light rail service to the project area. Most of the stations proposed for the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative are along major commercial thoroughfares, which would provide improved access to community activity centers.

The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would not result in a substantial adverse effect to mobility under NEPA with implementation of mitigation measures described in Section 4.5.3.4.2.

### Population and Employment

#### Construction Impacts

Although permanent displacements (discussed in Section 4.3) would occur, construction activities would result in a temporary increase in jobs in the project area. Construction workers would not necessarily reside in the project area, but their presence would temporarily increase the level of employment activity. The increase would not substantially change project area employment overall, but would provide beneficial new economic activity near the construction zones. No temporary residential structures would be created or removed; therefore, population effects would be minimal. No substantially adverse construction-related population or employment impacts are anticipated.

#### Operational Impacts

Two residential structures (one single-family and one multi-family) would be displaced by the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative, affecting approximately 30 residents. Given the overall population of the area as described in Section

4.5.2, this would not be a large enough change in population to cause a substantially adverse effect. Similarly, the displaced businesses would affect approximately 600 jobs scattered throughout the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative alignment area. According to Section 4.3, Displacement and Relocation, assistance would be provided to relocate displaced residents and businesses nearby, resulting in a low net population and job loss.

The new light rail service would likely make the station areas more desirable locations for jobs and residences and would encourage growth and economic development in a way that is sustainable. This would be a beneficial impact, and would constitute a community enhancement. However, any such growth would be contingent upon local city zoning regulations and approval. As such, no substantial population or employment changes are anticipated as a result of the project.

The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would not result in an adverse effect under NEPA to population and employment.

### Physical Division

#### Construction Impacts

Street and sidewalk closures during construction would temporarily exacerbate the dividing effect that SR 60 currently has between Montebello and Monterey Park. This dividing effect is an existing condition, but construction work would temporarily intensify this effect if full closures of any freeway crossings are necessary. The distance between the Wilcox Avenue, Garfield Avenue, Findlay Avenue, and Gerhart Avenue underpasses range from one-quarter to one-half mile. When one of these crossings is closed temporarily, vehicle and pedestrian detours of up to one mile would be necessary. For pedestrians, this would be impractical. A similar temporary division would occur between Montebello and Commerce if Garfield Avenue needs to be temporarily closed at the UPRR/Metrolink Riverside Line underpass. Closures would be intermittent, and Metro would work with the surrounding communities to establish a schedule. After implementation of the mitigation measures listed in Section 4.5.3.4.2, this construction impact would not be significant.

#### Operational Impacts

All existing SR 60 Freeway crossings would be retained. Some crosswalks along other parts of the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative alignment would be removed, but others within one or two blocks would be maintained. Some intersection crosswalks along the alignment would be enhanced through station area urban design.

The new light rail service would also provide a new way to traverse the I-605 Freeway, Rio Hondo channel, San Gabriel River channel, Montebello Country Club, and UPRR/Metrolink Riverside Line, thereby reducing the dividing effect these sites currently have within the project area. This would be a beneficial impact.

The aerial structures along Washington Boulevard and Garfield Avenue would introduce a visual barrier to the surrounding communities. However, this change would not affect physical movement across the proposed ROW, and would not constitute a new physical division.

The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would not result in a significant impact under CEQA to physical division with the implementation of mitigation measures described in Section 4.5.3.4.2.

Overall, the Washington Boulevard Alternative would result in a substantial adverse effect under NEPA to communities and neighborhoods, even with implementation of mitigation measures described in Section 4.5.3.4.2. The Washington Boulevard LRT would not result in a significant impact under CEQA to communities and neighborhoods with implementation of mitigation measures described in Section 4.5.3.3.2.

### Utility Relocation

Some utilities would need to be relocated as part of the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative, including, but not limited to, EOH wires, flood control facilities, sanitary sewers, gas lines, water mains, and pipe lines.

An existing Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) storm drain beneath Pomona Boulevard would be reconstructed, or reinforced and protected in place, for the 1,750 feet between Atlantic Boulevard and Sadler Avenue. Additionally, the LACFCD storm drain beneath Washington Boulevard would have to be reconstructed, or if feasible protected in place, for approximately 4,700 feet from just west of Rosemead Boulevard to just east of Hasty Avenue. Two LACFCD storm drains along Washington Boulevard would be need to be reconstructed, including approximately 800 feet of a storm drain from just east of Passons Avenue to just west of Morill Boulevard and a storm drain crossing Appledale Avenue for a length of approximately 300 feet.

The existing LACFCD storm drain running under the proposed tracks, along Washington Boulevard between approximately Broadway Avenue and Freestone Avenue, would have to be reconstructed, or if possible, reinforced and protected in place.

Three sanitary sewer lines would also need to be relocated. The existing Los Angeles County Sanitation District (LACSD) sanitary sewer line located on Garfield Avenue, just west of Hay Street and Madison Avenue, and 250 feet north of Repetto Boulevard (approximately 1,600 feet), would need to be relocated. A second sanitary sewer line located on Washington Boulevard at Carob Way would need to be relocated. Lastly, approximately 2,500 feet of an existing LACSD sanitary sewer line located on Washington Boulevard between Milna Avenue and Broadway Avenue would also need to be relocated under this alternative.

Approximately 1,000 feet of a Unocal pipeline, located between Norwalk Boulevard and Duchess Boulevard, would need to be relocated.

A San Gabriel Valley (SGV) water line along Washington Boulevard, from just east of Sorensen Avenue to just west of Calobar Avenue, would need to be relocated.

Several EOH wires and poles that have been preliminarily identified as needing to be relocated include the following:

- EOH cables on the southwest corner of Gerhardt Avenue and Via Campo;
- Three sets of ten EOH wires, three wires and one wire crossing Garfield Avenue near the intersection of Via Campo and Garfield Avenue;
- Five EOH wires south of the proposed Garfield station opposite to Via San Clemente;
- Two sets of four EOH wires crossing Garfield Avenue located near the intersection of Garfield Avenue and Via Corona;
- Two sets of 10 EOH wires and poles located near the intersection of Garfield Avenue and Whittier Boulevard;
- Poles with eight EOH wires crossing Garfield Avenue, near the intersection of Garfield Avenue and Easton Street;
- Poles with ten EOH wires crossing Garfield Avenue, near the intersection of Garfield Avenue and Fairfield Street;
- Four sets of ten, eight, 14, and four EOH wires on each side of UPRR crossing along Garfield Avenue;
- Two sets of eight EOH wires, and four EOH wires crossing Garfield Boulevard, south of Flotilla Street;
- Two sets of eight and six EOH wires crossing Garfield, north of Washington Boulevard;
- Three sets of nine EOH wires, two wires and one wire crossing Washington Boulevard at Vail Avenue;
- Two sets of three EOH wires and two sets of four wires and one set of five wires crossing Washington Boulevard on each side of Maple Avenue;
- Three EOH wires at the proposed Greenwood station;

- Three sets of two, three, and four EOH wires crossing Washington Boulevard near the intersection Washington Boulevard and Montebello Boulevard; and
- Two sets of four EOH wires and poles crossing Washington Boulevard east of Carob Way.

**Freeway Signage Relocation**

NEPA and CEQA do not have specific requirements related to impacts due to relocation of freeway signage. Freeway signage may need to be relocated along the SR 60 and I-605 Freeways as part of the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative. However, relocation of freeway signage would be done in coordination with Caltrans and local jurisdictions regarding the proper placement of signage, which would be included in final restoration plans for the project. As such, no adverse effects under NEPA or significant impacts under CEQA would result.

### *4.5.3.4.2 Mitigation Measures*

In addition to mitigation measures identified below, mitigation measure 4.10-vi from Section 4.10, Ecosystems and Biological Resources and mitigation measures 3.0-xix through 3.0-xxiii from Chapter 3, Transportation Impacts and Mitigation would be implemented. (Please refer to the specific section for the detailed mitigation measure.) The same construction and operational mitigation measures (mitigation measures 4.5-i through 4.5-xiv and 3.0-ii through 3.0-xiii from Chapter 3, Transportation Impacts and Mitigation) identified above in Section 4.5.3.3.2 for the SR 60 LRT Alternative, and summarized in Table ES-2, would also apply to this alternative. The following additional operational mitigation measures would be implemented as well.

4.5-xv. Metro would replace or relocate the trees from the median of Washington Boulevard in the Rio Hondo Coastal Basin Spreading Grounds to the sides of the roadway. Some new trees would need to be introduced in order to provide an adequate density of trees on both sides of the street.

4.5-xvi. Metro would replace or relocate the palm trees from the median of Washington Boulevard between Allport and Appledale Avenues to the sides of the roadway. In order to re-create the visual effect of the evenly spaced row of trees that currently exists in the median along both sides of the street, some new trees would be needed.

### *4.5.3.4.3 Impacts Remaining after Mitigation*

**NEPA Finding**

The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would adversely alter the social and physical character of the existing community along Garfield Avenue in Montebello between Via Campo and Whittier Boulevard. It would adversely affect the area between Via Campo and Beverly Boulevard due to the removal of community resources and adverse visual changes to the neighborhood. Additional discussion of the visual changes is provided in Section 4.6, Visual and Aesthetic Impacts, of this Draft EIS/EIR. However, the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would provide benefits in most of the other categories that federal guidance (Section 4.5.1.1) considers in weighing the effect of a project on quality of life, by increasing mobility and access to the various populations, businesses, and community services listed in that guidance.

Regardless, the adverse changes to the physical character of the existing community in this area cannot be further mitigated. After mitigation, the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would result in adverse effects. This finding applies to both the at-grade and aerial options at Rosemead Boulevard and I-605/San Gabriel River, and to all three maintenance yard options.

**CEQA Determination**

The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would not result in any significant construction or operational impacts associated with physically dividing an established community; crossings either beneath or over the alignment would be maintained and allow communities on either side

of the alignment to remain connected. This determination applies to both the at-grade and aerial options at Rosemead Boulevard and I-605/San Gabriel River, and to all three maintenance yard options.

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