



# Section 4.6

## Visual and Aesthetic Impacts

This section summarizes the existing visual and aesthetic environment within the project area and evaluates the potential for visual and aesthetic impacts resulting from operation of the proposed Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Project alternatives. Potential visual impacts to historical resources are summarized in Section 4.14.1, Cultural and Historical Resources - Built Environment. Information in this section is based on, and updated where appropriate from, the Visual and Aesthetic Impacts Technical Memorandum, which is incorporated into this Draft EIS/EIR as Appendix Q.

### 4.6.1 Regulatory Framework/Methodology

#### 4.6.1.1 Regulatory Framework

The following regulatory policies are applicable specifically to the evaluation of visual effects for the proposed project.

- Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 regulates activities that could impact historic properties by “diminishing the visual integrity of the property’s significant historic features” (Title 36, CFR Part 800.5(a)(2)).
- Section 401 of the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act of 1968 puts regulatory responsibility on the federal government to use all practicable means to assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings (Title 42, USC, Section 4231(b)).

Local planning policies are included in city and county general plans to preserve and enhance the visual quality and aesthetic resources within the plans’ jurisdictions. These policies focus on

maintaining visual diversity, defining urban form and character, protecting and managing scenic, historic, and cultural resources, enhancing existing visual character and quality, and controlling development.

#### 4.6.1.2 CEQA Impact Criteria

The analysis of aesthetic impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is largely based on the criteria contained within Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*. The project would have a significant aesthetic impact if it results in:

- Substantial adverse effects on a scenic vista;
- Substantial damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within (a view from) a state scenic highway;
- Substantial degradation of existing visual character or quality of a site and its surroundings; or
- Creation of a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area.

In the absence of any quantitative or qualitative shade and shadow thresholds for jurisdictions within the project study area, the following *L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide* was used for identifying and evaluating whether or not potentially significant shade and shadow impacts would occur to light-sensitive land uses adjacent to the project alignments:

- Would project-related structures result in the shading of shadow-sensitive uses for more than three hours between the hours of 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM Pacific Standard Time (between late October and early April), or for more than four hours between the hours of

9:00 AM and 5:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time (between early April and late October)?

### 4.6.1.3 Methodology

The visual and aesthetic impact analysis utilized a multi-step process to evaluate the potential aesthetic impacts associated with the proposed alternatives; the full analysis is included in Appendix Q, Visual and Aesthetic Impacts Technical Memorandum, of this Draft EIS/EIR. The progressive steps of this analysis included:

- First, an existing conditions survey was conducted to identify major scenic views and substantive visual elements along segments of the corridor, including open space resources and street trees.
- Second, in order to assess the changes in the visual environment, the existing visual quality was categorized using three components based on the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) “Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects Guidelines:” vividness, intactness, and unity; the combined result indicated the degree of quality of the landscape.
- Third, key viewpoints along the corridors and from the public right-of-way (ROW) were identified and used to describe the viewer sensitivity and the value viewer groups place on them.
- Fourth, computer-generated simulations were included from key viewpoints where visual changes would be noticeable after project implementation. Visual simulations are provided at a select number of representative viewpoints. Further information on the key viewpoints is available in Appendix Q, Visual and Aesthetic Impacts Technical Memorandum, of this Draft EIS/EIR.
- Fifth, potential visual impacts of the build alternatives were analyzed.
- Sixth, shade and shadow modeling and analysis was done for elevated portions of the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative to

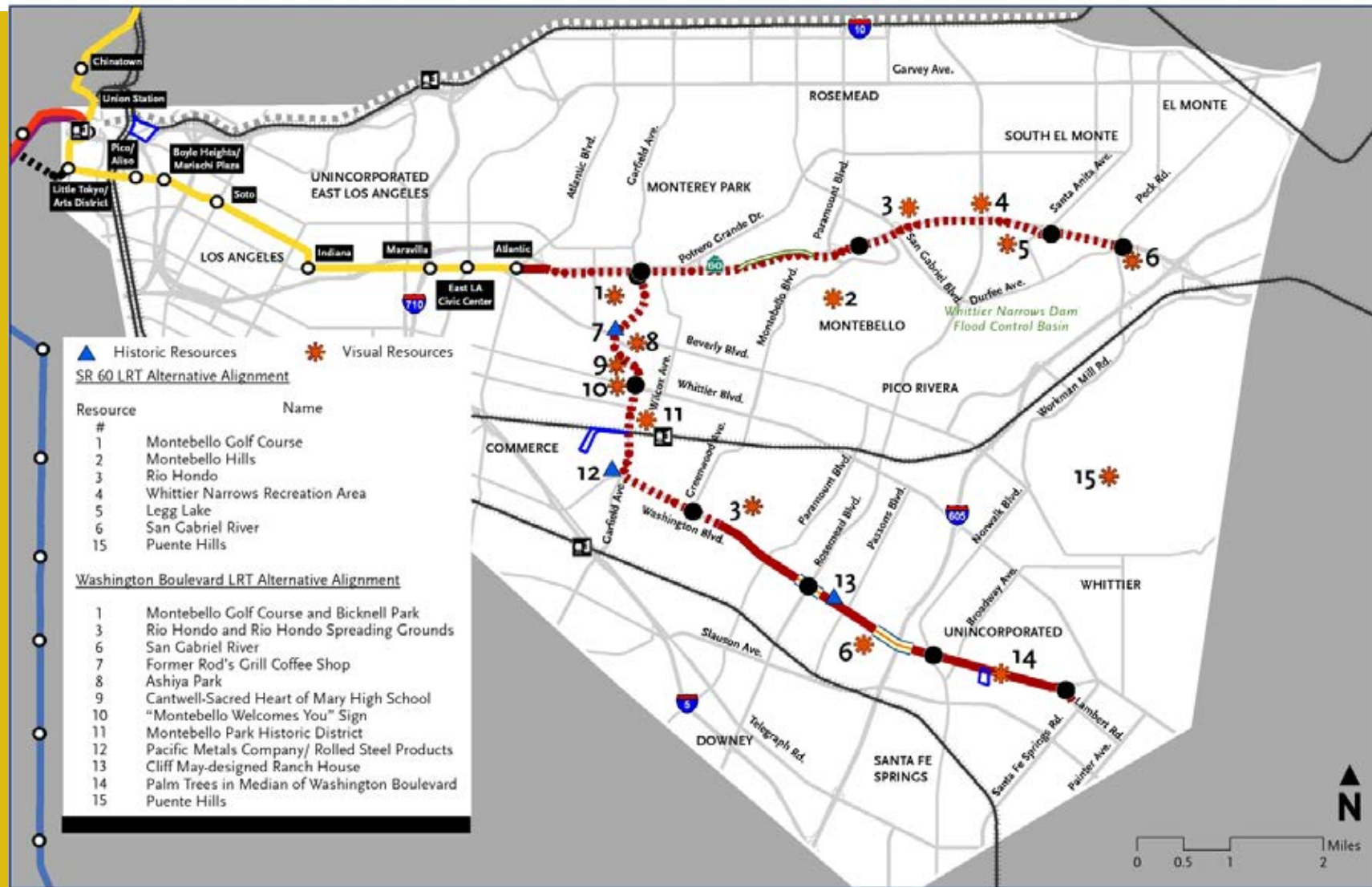
determine whether or not implementation of an aerial alignment would negatively affect shade- and shadow-sensitive uses along Garfield Avenue and Washington Boulevard. (See Appendix Q, Visual and Aesthetic Impacts Technical Memorandum, for a detailed discussion of this methodology and resulting shade and shadow diagrams.) Shade and shadow modeling was not done for elevated portions of the SR 60 LRT Alternative because there are no shade-sensitive receptors along this primarily transportation land use (a freeway corridor).

- Finally, mitigation measures were identified as appropriate. (See Section 4.6.3.3.2 and Section 4.6.3.4.2 for mitigation measures relative to the SR 60 LRT Alternative and Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative, respectively.)

## 4.6.2 Affected Environment/Existing Conditions

The visual landscape in the project area is characterized by a primarily built-out urban environment featuring a variety of commercial, industrial, and residential development, including waterway infrastructure and recreational open space areas. No designated scenic roadways, highways, or vistas are within the project area. Visual resources within the area of potential impact, defined as approximately 700 feet from the alignment, include but are not limited to structures of historic significance or visual prominence, open space and recreational areas, distant views of the horizon from public locations, and landscaped medians. The recognized visual and visually-sensitive historical resources located within the immediate proximity of the project alternative alignments are shown in **Figure 4.6-1**.

The Whittier Narrows Recreation Area, the Rio Hondo, and the San Gabriel River are aesthetic resources that play a major role in defining the landscape and character of the SR 60 corridor.



Source: CDM Smith January 2012.

Figure 4.6-1. SR 60 LRT Alternative and Washington Boulevard Alternative – Visual Resources

The overall visual quality of the SR 60 LRT Alternative corridor ranges from moderately low to moderate due to the predominantly ground-level views of a freeway environment. However, the greenery vistas of the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area adjacent to the SR 60 create a high visual quality value. The Whittier Narrows Recreation Area, the Rio Hondo, and the San Gabriel River are aesthetic resources that play a role in defining the landscape and character of the SR 60 corridor by providing natural scenery, landscaping, and open space in an urban environment. The visual resources along this alignment are shown in Figures 4.6-1 through 4.6-3, and include:

- Montebello Golf Course
- Distant views of the downtown Los Angeles skyline, the San Gabriel Mountains, and the Puente Hills (which are visible only on clear days)
- Mature landscaping along the SR 60 ROW
- Whittier Narrows Recreation Area and Legg Lake
- Rio Hondo and San Gabriel River
- Montebello Hills

The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative alignment consists of Garfield Avenue, which is bordered by neighborhoods and schools, and Washington Boulevard, which is bordered by a combination of industrial, commercial, and residential areas. The overall visual quality along this alignment ranges from low to moderate, based on an average rating for each of the three FHWA components. The visual resources along the alignment are shown in Figure 4.6-1 as well as Figures 4.6-4 through 4.6-7, and include:

- Montebello Golf Course and Bicknell Park
- Former Rod's Grill Coffee Shop building
- "Montebello Welcomes You" sign

- Ashiya Park
- Cantwell-Sacred Heart of Mary High School
- Montebello Park Historic District
- Pacific Metals industrial warehouse building
- Rio Hondo bike path
- Trees within the median through Rio Hondo Coastal Basin Spreading Grounds
- Distant views of the downtown Los Angeles skyline, the San Gabriel Mountains, the Montebello Hills, and the Puente Hills (which are visible only on clear days)
- Cliff May-designed ranch house
- San Gabriel River and bike trail
- Mature palm trees in the median of Washington Boulevard in Santa Fe Springs

Few shade-sensitive uses are located in the immediate vicinity of the SR 60 LRT Alternative alignment (e.g., residences and the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area); however, there are several shade-sensitive uses (e.g., parks, schools and residences) in the immediate vicinity of the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative alignment. These are discussed in detail in Appendix Q, Visual and Aesthetic Impacts Technical Memorandum, of this Draft EIS/EIR.

### 4.6.3 Environmental Impacts/Environmental Consequences

The following section summarizes the analysis and conclusions for each project alternative, as discussed in detail in Appendix Q, Visual and Aesthetic Impacts Technical Memorandum, of this Draft EIS/EIR. **Table 4.6-1** provides a summary of all impact conclusions discussed herein.

**Table 4.6-1. Summary of Potential Visual and Aesthetic Impacts**

Alternative	Scenic Vistas	Scenic Resources	Visual Character	Light and Glare	Shade and Shadows
No Build	None	None	None	None	None
TSM	None	None	None	None	None
SR 60 LRT <sup>1</sup>	Not adverse/ Less than significant	Not adverse/ Less than significant	Not adverse/ Less than significant	Not adverse/ Less than significant	Not adverse/ Less than significant
Washington Boulevard LRT <sup>2</sup>	Not adverse/ Less than significant	Not adverse/ Less than significant	Adverse effect after mitigation/ Significant impact after mitigation <sup>3</sup>	Not adverse/ Less than significant	Adverse effect/ Significant impact <sup>3</sup>

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Includes the SR 60 North Side Design Variation.

<sup>2</sup> Includes the aerial crossing options.

<sup>3</sup> Refers to Segment 2 only.

### 4.6.3.1 No Build Alternative

#### 4.6.3.1.1 Impact Analysis

No direct or indirect operational impacts to scenic vistas, scenic resources, nighttime lighting, and/or shading and shadowing would occur with the No Build Alternative because there would be no new transit operations.

#### 4.6.3.1.2 Mitigation Measures

Since the No Build Alternative would have no impact to visual and aesthetic resources, no mitigation measures are required.

#### 4.6.3.1.3 Impacts Remaining After Mitigation

##### NEPA Finding

There would be no effect to visual and aesthetic resources under the No Build Alternative.

##### CEQA Determination

There would be no impact to visual and aesthetic resources under the No Build Alternative.

### 4.6.3.2 TSM Alternative

#### 4.6.3.2.1 Impact Analysis

##### Construction Impacts

The TSM Alternative may include some minor construction activities associated with new Rapid Bus shelters and intersection improvements. Improvements to existing bus services would not alter visual character. Therefore, the TSM Alternative would not result in a construction-related adverse effect under NEPA or a significant impact under CEQA with regard to visual and aesthetic resources.

##### Operational Impacts

No direct or indirect operational impacts to scenic vistas, scenic resources, nighttime lighting, and/or shading and shadowing would occur with the TSM Alternative from new bus stops located throughout the project area or from increased bus operations. Therefore, the TSM Alternative would not result in an operational-related adverse effect under NEPA or a significant impact under CEQA with regard to visual and aesthetic resources.

#### 4.6.3.2.2 Mitigation Measures

Since the TSM Alternative would have no impact on visual and aesthetic resources, no mitigation measures are required.

#### 4.6.3.2.3 Impacts Remaining After Mitigation

##### NEPA Finding

There would be no effect on visual and aesthetic resources under the TSM Alternative.

##### CEQA Determination

There would be no impact on visual and aesthetic resources under the TSM Alternative.

### 4.6.3.3 SR 60 LRT Alternative

#### 4.6.3.3.1 Impact Analysis

##### Construction Impacts

###### *Scenic Vistas*

Background views of downtown Los Angeles to the west would remain unimpaired during construction. Construction activities would minimally block distant views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north and Puente Hills to the west. However, SR 60 is not a state-designated scenic highway and construction effects would be temporary and considered negligible.

###### *Visual Character*

Construction activities would result in visual disruptions to the immediate vicinity. However, construction would be temporary and the extent of the visual nuisance from construction equipment and vehicles would be limited to the areas adjacent to SR 60, a visible transportation land use. Construction activities would not substantially affect the aesthetic appeal or extensively intrude into Whittier Narrows Recreation Area, North Lake, Center Lake, Legg Lake, Montebello Hills, Rio Hondo, or the San Gabriel River. In addition, construction of the maintenance yard would not impede the visual quality of the surrounding industrial area.

###### *Light and Glare*

Construction activities would primarily occur during daylight hours and, therefore, would not require

lighting. However, when limited construction activities do occur during nighttime hours, lighting would be hooded or directed toward the construction areas in order to limit spillover lighting. Construction would not significantly increase the ambient light levels in the vicinity because the construction duration would be short and temporary, and would not constitute a substantial source of light or glare.

###### *Shade and Shadow*

Equipment required for construction of columns and aerial stations would include drilling rigs, small bulldozers, large cranes, and truck trailers to deliver pre-cast concrete girders. The erection of precast girders would be lifted over active roads by large cranes and secured to the columns. However, the potential for construction activities to result in shading and shadows along SR 60 would be minimal. Shadows would only be cast onto parking lots in the northernmost portions of the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area, and the length of shadows would not reach any shade-sensitive uses. In addition, portions of residential neighborhoods adjacent to SR 60 would remain unshaded despite proximity to the SR 60 LRT Alternative alignment because shadows from aerial structures would not project directly to the south, since the sun travels from east to west. (Refer to Appendix Q, Visual and Aesthetic Impacts Technical Memorandum, for a detailed discussion.)

###### *Indirect Impacts*

Construction of the SR 60 LRT Alternative would be limited and localized to the areas immediately surrounding the freeway ROW, and would not result in any indirect visual impacts.

The SR 60 LRT Alternative would not result in a construction-related adverse effect under NEPA or a significant impact under CEQA with regard to scenic resources, visual character, nighttime illumination, or shade and shadows.

##### Operational Impacts

###### *Scenic Vistas*

No officially designated scenic vistas exist within the project area; however, distant views of the

downtown Los Angeles skyline, the Puente Hills, and the San Gabriel Mountains, which are only visible on clear days, do exist from the SR 60 Freeway corridor. The SR 60 LRT Alternative would minimally change distant views.

*Visual Character*

Along the majority of the corridor, the columns and aerial guideway associated with the LRT would be consistent with the predominantly freeway-related visual character. However, at select locations the visual character of the corridor would be noticeably altered. Adjacent to the Montebello Town Center, as shown in **Figure 4.6-2**, distant views of the San Gabriel Mountains from the shopping center parking lot would be blocked.



**Figure 4.6-2. Visual Simulation at Montebello Town Center**

In addition, through the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area, the aerial LRT would reduce motorist views of the recreation area and North Lake while creating new views for LRT riders. However,

the visual character within the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area and at North, Legg, and Center Lakes would not be significantly affected because existing vegetation within the recreation area would continue to shield the majority of views of both the freeway and the new LRT, as shown in **Figure 4.6-3**.

The proposed Mission Junction maintenance yard and park and ride facilities would fit within the context of the existing character and surrounding industrial and commercial land uses.

In all other locations, the LRT improvements would be consistent with the existing visual character of the transportation corridor and the adjacent land uses.



**Figure 4.6-3. Visual Simulation from North Lake**

*Light and Glare*

New nighttime lighting associated with the four stations and with the light rail vehicles (LRVs) themselves would be introduced as a result of the

SR 60 LRT Alternative. However, the project area is predominantly urban, and the new light sources would be located along the existing SR 60 Freeway transportation corridor.

*Shade and Shadow*

Operation of the SR 60 LRT Alternative would involve LRVs running primarily above-grade along the existing SR 60 Freeway transportation corridor.

The supporting columns and aerial guideway would produce shading and shadows that would change throughout the day as the sun moves through the sky. Shade-sensitive uses include residential uses (residences on the south side of Via Campo) and open space uses (Whittier Narrows Recreation Area).

No historical resources exist along the SR 60 corridor, and the lengths of shadows cast along this corridor would not affect the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area or residences along SR 60.

Implementation of the SR 60 LRT Alternative, including all project-related lighting, would be localized and would be visible only from the immediate vicinity of the project alignment.

The SR 60 LRT Alternative would not result in an operational-related adverse effect under NEPA or a significant impact under CEQA with regard to scenic resources, visual character, nighttime illumination, or shade and shadows.

**4.6.3.3.2 Mitigation Measures**

**Construction Mitigation Measures**

- 4.6-i. Construction methods and practices and other management approaches would be consistent with applicable Metro design criteria and local and state regulations, as well as general laws for building and safety.
- 4.6-ii. Construction staging areas, access roads, and structure locations would be maintained in an orderly manner and kept free of trash and debris daily by the construction contractor.
- 4.6-iii. Areas disturbed by construction activities would be restored by Metro and the

construction contractor to their pre-project condition upon completion of construction activities, where feasible.

- 4.6-iv. Visually obtrusive erosion control devices, such as silt fences, plastic ground cover, and straw bales, would be removed by the construction contractor as soon as the area is stabilized.
- 4.6-v. Street trees and other vegetation removed to accommodate construction would, where feasible, be stored by Metro during construction and replanted upon completion of construction. Those trees considered historic would be replanted in close proximity to their original locations. Where storage and replanting is not possible, the mature vegetation would be replaced with appropriate sized trees and vegetation within one month of construction completion.
- 4.6-vi. Stockpile areas would be located in less visually sensitive areas (i.e., away from public recreational facilities, natural open spaces, residences, and other visually sensitive resources) and would be shielded by the construction contractor from residents and businesses.
- 4.6-vii. Lighting would be hooded and directed towards the interior of construction staging areas by the construction contractor to minimize spillover effects into adjacent residential areas and other sensitive land uses.
- 4.6-viii. Screening and construction fences would be used by the construction contractor to shield construction lighting from adjacent residential land uses wherever possible.
- 4.6-ix. Non-permanent landscaping and aesthetically pleasing fencing, with possible community artwork, where feasible, would be used by Metro and the construction contractor to shield construction activities and staging areas from residential and visually sensitive areas. Metro and the

construction contractor would coordinate with local jurisdictions and school districts to develop art work for fencing.

### Operational Mitigation Measures

While operation of the SR 60 LRT Alternative would have no adverse effects or significant impacts to visual and aesthetic resources, the following mitigation measure would further reduce effects/impacts below the level of adverse/significant.

- 4.6-x. Use of form liners, textured surfaces, and non-reflective building materials would be included in the design of the retaining walls and sound walls, where feasible.

#### 4.6.3.3.3 Impacts Remaining After Mitigation

##### NEPA Finding

There would be no adverse effects to visual and aesthetic resources under the SR 60 LRT Alternative.

##### CEQA Determination

There would be no significant impacts to visual and aesthetic resources under the SR 60 LRT Alternative.

### 4.6.3.4 Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative

#### 4.6.3.4.1 Impact Analysis

##### Construction Impacts

###### *Scenic Vistas*

Background views of downtown Los Angeles from Washington Boulevard would be blocked by construction activities. However, the downtown Los Angeles skyline is only visible from Washington Boulevard on clear days. Vistas of the San Gabriel Mountains and Puente Hills to the north and east, respectively, would not be substantially obstructed during construction.

###### *Visual Character*

Construction activities would involve demolishing roadway median and subsequently installing columns primarily on Garfield Avenue, and laying trackwork mostly along Washington Boulevard. The presence of construction equipment, worker vehicles, trailers, and staging locations would be

visible to nearby land uses and may visually disrupt the residential and commercial activity of the corridor. Residential areas located immediately adjacent to the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative alignment would have vast and evolving views of the various phases of construction. The bulk of construction would temporarily alter the visual character along the corridor for a limited duration. In addition, upon completion of construction activities any trees removed would be relocated along the sides of the roadway in order to create a visual effect similar to what currently exists.

Construction of the potential maintenance yards would not result in a substantial change in visual quality. The proposed maintenance yard locations are all in existing industrial zoned areas. Construction of these sites would be designed in a manner that would appropriately consider the existing urban context in which the maintenance yards are located.

###### *Light and Glare*

Construction activities would primarily occur during daylight hours, and therefore would not require lighting. However, when limited construction activities are performed during nighttime hours (i.e., closing down intersections) lighting would be directed toward the construction areas such that no spillover lighting is anticipated.

Construction would result in additional nighttime security lighting at construction staging areas, which would be hooded and shielded to minimize spillover effects and glare. Construction activities and the lighting associated with construction would not significantly increase the ambient light and would not constitute a substantial source of light or glare.

###### *Shade and Shadow*

Equipment required for construction of columns and aerial stations would include drilling rigs, pile drivers, small bulldozers, large cranes, truck trailers to deliver pre-cast concrete girders, and other related equipment. The erection of falsework or precast girders would be lifted over active roads by large cranes and secured to the columns. However, the potential for construction activities to result in

shading and shadows along the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would be minimal.

Construction of the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would be limited and would be localized to the areas immediately surrounding the alignment.

The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would not result in a construction-related adverse effect under NEPA or a significant impact under CEQA with regard to scenic resources, visual character, nighttime illumination, or shade and shadows.

### Operational Impacts

#### *Scenic Vistas*

No officially designated scenic vistas exist within the project area; however, distant views of the downtown Los Angeles skyline, the Puente Hills, and the San Gabriel Mountains, which are only visible on clear days, do exist from Washington Boulevard. The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would minimally block select distant views along Washington Boulevard; no distant views exist along Garfield Avenue.

#### *Visual Character*

The visual character of the existing community through the majority of the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative alignment would not be negatively affected by the introduction of an aerial and/or at-grade project. However, the potential does exist for significant and adverse impacts to visual character in certain limited sections of the alignment due to the removal of trees and the construction of aerial structures. A number of visual resources exist along Garfield Avenue between Via Campo and Whittier Boulevard, and the low-scale residential (one-story single family homes and two-story multi-family apartments) neighborhood character would be substantially altered with the introduction of an aerial guideway and columns straddling the roadway. **Figures 4.6-4 through 4.6-6** provide

conceptual visual simulations of how the visual character would be altered along Garfield Avenue with implementation of the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative.

The proposed Mission Junction, Commerce, and Santa Fe Springs maintenance yards and park and ride facilities would not result in degradation of visual quality and character along the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative alignment, as they would be consistent with the industrial and commercial nature of the surrounding areas.

As demonstrated in the conceptual visual simulations, the visual character along the segment of Garfield Avenue between Via Campo and Whittier Boulevard would be altered such that significant impacts would occur.

In addition, mature trees would be removed along the median of Washington Boulevard at the Rio Hondo Coastal Basin Spreading Grounds and near the intersection of Sorenson Avenue in order to accommodate the at-grade LRT. As shown in **Figure 4.6-7**, the loss of these mature trees would have the potential to result in a significant visual impact.

Throughout the remaining Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative alignment, implementation of the LRT project would be consistent with the transportation-related character of Washington Boulevard and visual character impacts would be less than significant.

#### *Light and Glare*

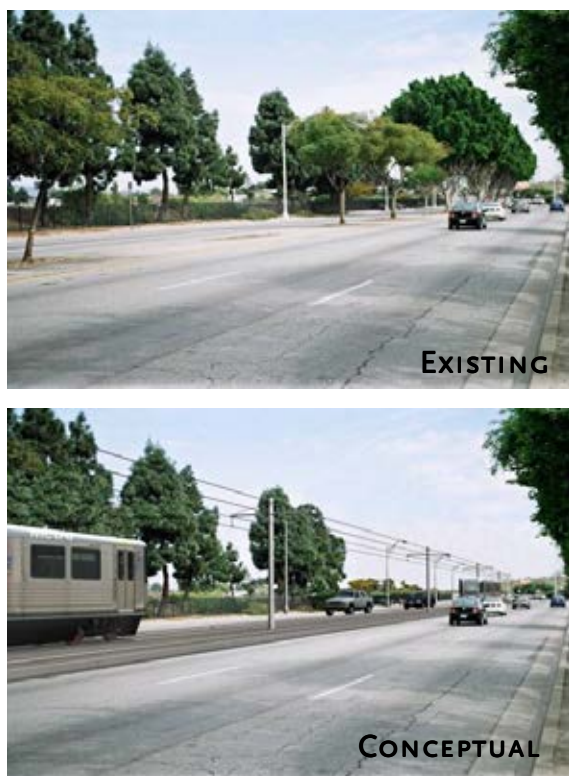
New nighttime lighting associated with the six stations and with the LRVs themselves would be introduced as a result of the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative. However, the project area is predominantly urban and the new light sources would be located along the existing major transportation thoroughfares of Garfield Avenue and Washington Boulevard.



Figure 4.6-4. Visual Simulation of Garfield Avenue and Via San Clemente

Figure 4.6-5. Visual Simulation of Garfield Avenue and Via Acosta

Figure 4.6-6. Visual Simulation of Garfield Avenue and Madison Avenue



**Figure 4.6-7. Visual Simulation of Washington Boulevard at Rio Hondo Coastal Basin Spreading Grounds**

*Shade and Shadow*

The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would include the construction of an aerial guideway along Garfield Avenue and a portion of Washington Boulevard west of Montebello Boulevard. Shade-sensitive uses, which consist of land uses sensitive to loss of light, include residential, public recreation, historic, and educational uses. **Table 4.6-2** and **Table 4.6-3** summarize Summer Solstice and Winter Solstice shade and shadow impacts, respectively, on shade-sensitive uses.

Based on the shade and shadow analysis completed for the project, during Summer Solstice the multi-family residences located adjacent to the former Rod’s Grill Coffee Shop along Garfield Avenue would be shaded for a three-hour period of time. They would therefore be significantly and adversely affected by shadows cast by the aerial guideway.

Based on the shade and shadow analysis completed for the project, during Winter Solstice the Our Lady of Miraculous Medal Church and adjacent multi-family residences along Garfield Avenue, the former Rod’s Grill Coffee Shop and adjacent multi-family residences along Garfield Avenue, and the multi-family residences across the street from Cantwell-Sacred Heart of Mary High School would all be shaded for a period of three hours or longer. These locations would, therefore, be significantly and adversely affected by shadows cast by the aerial guideway.

Impacts associated with implementation of the Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative, including all project-related lighting, would be localized and would be visible only from the immediate vicinity of the project alignment.

The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would result in an operational-related adverse effect under NEPA and a significant impact under CEQA with regard to visual character and shade and shadows along Garfield Avenue.

**4.6.3.4.2 Mitigation Measures**

**Construction Mitigation Measures**

The same construction mitigation measures (mitigation measures 4.6-i through 4.6-ix) identified above in Section 4.6.3.3.2 for the SR 60 LRT Alternative and summarized in Table ES-2 would apply to this alternative.

**Operational Mitigation Measures**

While there is no mitigation that would enable the light rail components of the build alternatives to become inconspicuous, implementation of the following mitigation measures, including mitigation measure 4.6-x identified above in Section 4.6.3.3.2 for the SR 60 LRT Alternative and summarized in Table ES-2, would reduce the changes to the visual attributes of the surrounding neighborhoods and potentially reduce the severity of adverse visual impacts identified for sensitive land uses along Garfield Avenue between Via Campo and Whittier Boulevard.

**Table 4.6-2. Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative Summary of Shade/Shadow Impacts During Summer Solstice**

Shade-Sensitive Receptor	Impact
Montebello Golf Course and Bicknell Park	Minimal shading during the day
Our Lady of Miraculous Medal Church and adjacent multi-family residences	Shading from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM
Rod's Grill Coffee Shop	Minimal shading during the day
<b>Multi-family residences adjacent to Rod's Grill Coffee Shop</b>	<b>Morning shadows from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM</b>
Ashiya Park	Undersized shadows at 5:00 PM would be cast on the southern edge of the park
Cantwell-Sacred Heart of Mary High School and adjacent multi-family residences	Shading from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM
Montebello Park Historic District	Morning shadows at 9:00 AM for the residences on the west side of Garfield Avenue and from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM for those on the east side

Source: CDM Smith, January 2012.

Note:

Receptors that would be impacted for three hours or longer are shown in **bold**.

**Table 4.6-3. Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative Summary of Shade/Shadow Impacts During Winter Solstice**

Shade-Sensitive Receptor	Impact
Montebello Golf Course and Bicknell Park	No substantial shading
<b>Our Lady of Miraculous Medal Church and adjacent multi-family residences</b>	<b>Shading throughout the afternoon hours of 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM</b>
<b>Rod's Grill Coffee Shop and adjacent multi-family residences</b>	<b>Shadows in the morning hours of 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM</b>
Ashiya Park	Southern edge of park would be shaded at 3:00 PM
<b>Multi-family residences facing Cantwell-Sacred Heart of Mary High School</b>	<b>Shading from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM</b>
Cantwell-Sacred Heart of Mary High School	No significant shading
Montebello Park Historic District	Morning shadows would occur from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM for the residences on the west side of Garfield Avenue and from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM for those on the east side

Source: CDM Smith January 2012.

Note:

Receptors that would be impacted for three hours or longer are shown in **bold**

- 4.6-xi. Existing mature trees that are removed to accommodate LRT components would be preserved and relocated close to their original location by Metro, where feasible. Where practical and appropriate, additional landscape treatments comparable in design to those along the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, and consistent with city policies, would be installed by Metro.
- 4.6-xii. To ensure privacy, screen fencing on the aerial guideway would be provided by the construction contractor to block direct views of homes visible from aerial stations. Aesthetic treatments on screen fencing would be used in order to deter graffiti and vandalism and provide visual attractiveness for the residences.
- 4.6-xiii. Proposed stations and associated park and ride facilities along street frontages would be visually screened by Metro with landscape buffers which may include a combination of plantings, decorative fencing, planters, and public art.
- 4.6-xiv. Light source shielding (e.g., canopies, landscaping, and walls) would be installed by Metro on light fixtures in order to cut off the view angle and limit spillover light and glare to residential areas. A lighting plan would be developed with community input during final design.
- 4.6-xv. Coordination with utility providers would be conducted by Metro to consolidate existing overhead utility wires with an overhead catenary system (OCS) or place existing wires underground, where appropriate, in order to reduce visual clutter in residential areas.
- 4.6-xvi. Canopies, fencing, and wayfinding signage would be pedestrian-scaled. Signs would also be coated with anti-graffiti coating (easily washable) to deter and discourage graffiti artists. Graffiti removal efforts would be based upon a graffiti control program created and operated by Metro.
- 4.6-xvii. In locations where project components (i.e., columns, bents, aerial crossings, and retaining walls) are too large to apply minimizing techniques, sensitive “showcasing” of the components would be used by Metro, where practical and appropriate. Showcasing may include, but would not be limited to, decorative lighting, installing texture on project components, relief designs, and contextual art features.
- 4.6-xviii. Before final design, Metro would coordinate with the cities and communities during the station area planning process to develop guidelines for incorporating design features in and around station areas. Design guidelines include, but are not limited to, conservation of historical character and structures; promotion of a sense of place, safety, and walkability by providing public design features, uniform signage, and lighting schemes consistent with the surrounding neighborhood character; reduction of the massing and profile of the rail structure, where possible; and incorporation of design features in all walls, structures, and fences to improve appearance and reduce visual intrusion.
- 4.6-xix. Conformance with the following city design guidelines, to the maximum extent practicable, would be incorporated in the project by Metro.
  - Pico Rivera – provide well-designed parking facilities that are safe, convenient, and attractive; lighting fixtures would be integrated into the visual environment with an appropriate architectural theme.
  - Montebello – add visual interest to the street scene by creating a safe and inviting environment for pedestrian and bicycle mobility with tree-lined streets and drought-tolerant landscaping.

- Monterey Park – avoid sign clutter within commercial districts and achieve an overall sense of community through coordinated design standards.
- Los Angeles County – implement a streetscape beautification program to influence the number of people willing to ride as an alternative to driving. People are likely to walk or ride farther and more often when the streetscape offers more attractions and when they feel comfortable and secure.

#### ***4.6.3.4.3 Impacts Remaining After Mitigation***

##### **NEPA Finding**

The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would result in adverse visual effects, including effects from shade and shadows, to the existing community

along Garfield Avenue in Montebello between Via Campo and Whittier Boulevard. The removal of trees along the median of Washington Boulevard would create an adverse visual effect before mitigation.

Implementation of mitigation measures would reduce visual effects to not adverse for the removal of trees along the median of Washington Boulevard, but visual effects would remain adverse and unavoidable along Garfield Avenue between Via Campo and Whittier Boulevard.

##### **CEQA Determination**

The Washington Boulevard LRT Alternative would substantially change the visual character of Garfield Avenue between Via Campo and Whittier Boulevard and result in significant impacts. The visual alteration of the community along Garfield Avenue, including shading and shadows, would be prominent and would result in significant and unavoidable impacts, even after mitigation.

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