Technical Memorandum

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From: Jeffrey Lormand, RLA, Parsons

Date: July 28, 2022

Re: Los Angeles Department of Transportation Electric Bus Maintenance Facility - Visual Impact Assessment

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1.0 PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION OF THIS MEMO

The purpose of this memorandum is to document the results of the visual impact analysis of the potential environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of the proposed Electric Bus Maintenance Facility (EBMF or project) in South Los Angeles. This study is conducted in support of the Initial Study to be prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

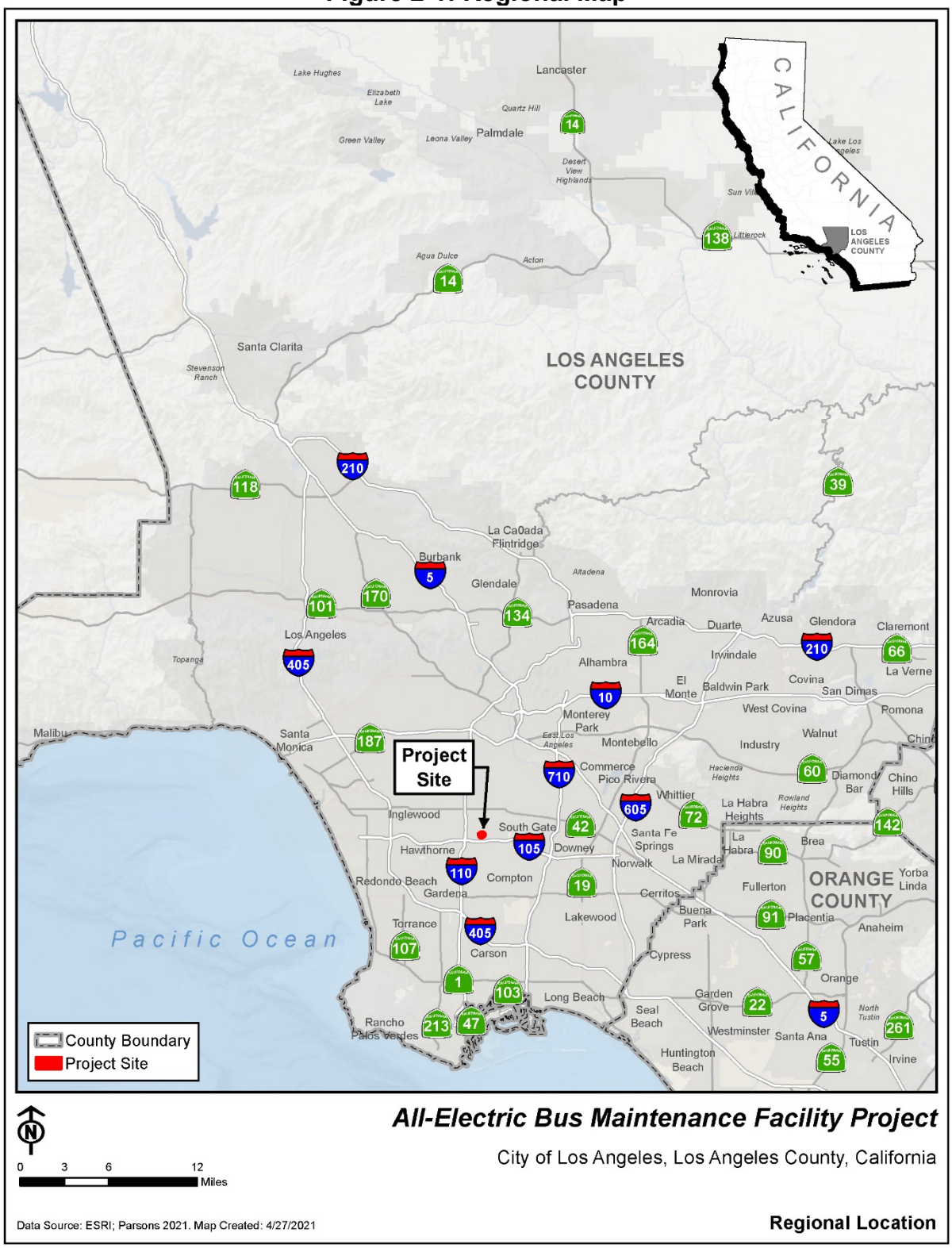
2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Project Location and Setting

The City of Los Angeles (the City) is proposing to construct the EBMF on a 5.5-acre land located at 740 and 800 East 111th Place in South Los Angeles (Assessor's Parcel Numbers [APNs] 6071-022-009 and 6071-022-013). The project site is located on light industrial zoned land and has been recently utilized as a logistics warehouse for solar panels. The site is within Council District 8's jurisdiction in the Southeast Los Angeles Community Planning Area of the City (Figures 2-1 and 2-2). The proposed project will be operated by the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT).

The project site is located between East 111th Place and East Lanzit Avenue, east of South Avalon Boulevard, and has a relatively flat topography. Small clusters of light-industry land uses can be found in the immediate vicinity of the project site, with adjacent land uses surrounding the project site comprised mostly of multi-family and single-family residences but also encompassing land supporting other activities, including commercial and community-oriented social services, such as education and health facilities. The area is largely urbanized and nearly built-out with limited vacant land. There are no natural features or major land formations, surface water bodies, or waterways near the project site, except for Compton Creek, a concrete-lined drainage channel located approximately 0.3 miles east of the site.

Figure 2-1: Regional Map

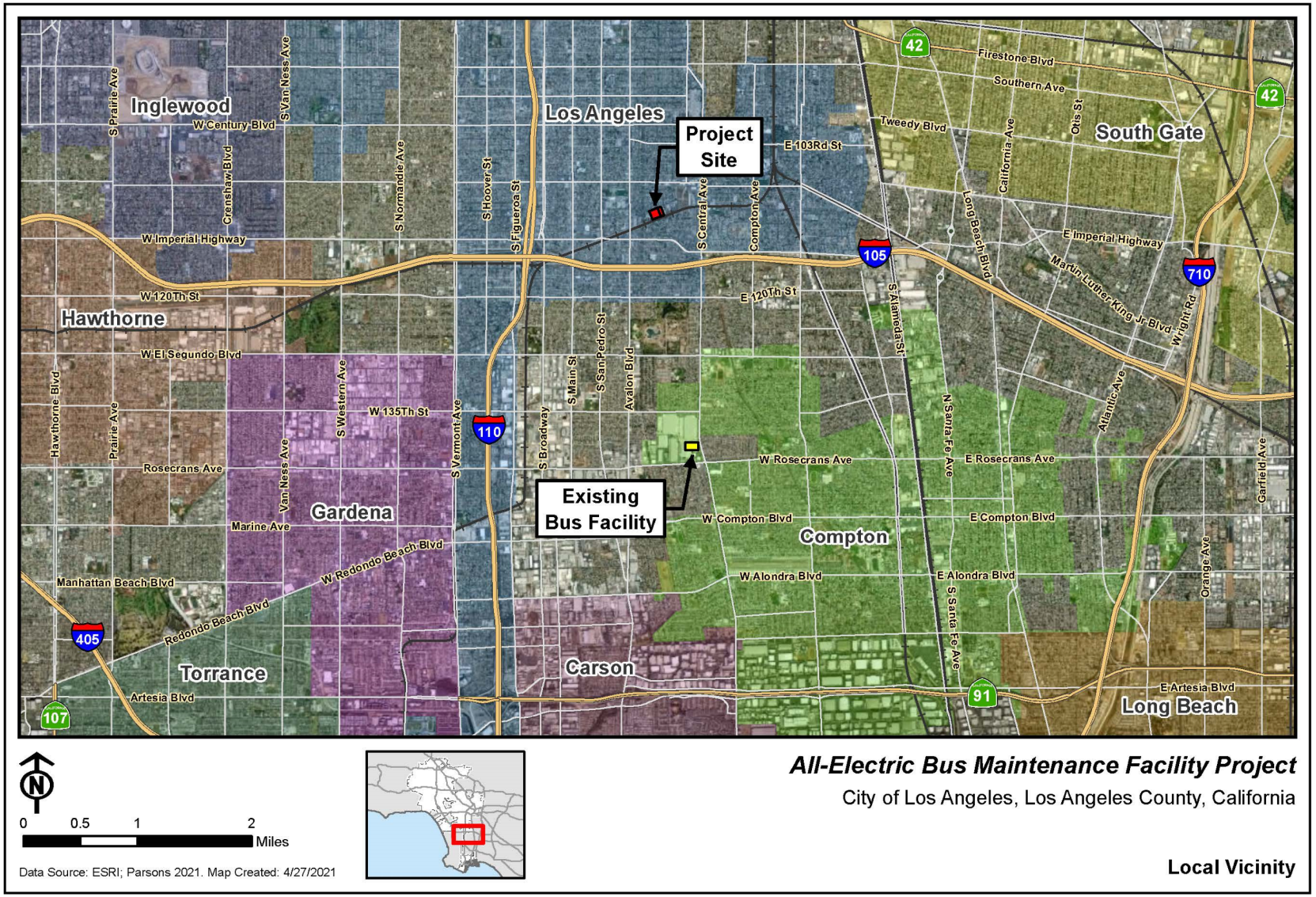


All-Electric Bus Maintenance Facility Project

City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California

Regional Location

Figure 2-2: Project Location Map



The site is bounded by East 111th Place to the northwest, with single- and multi-family residences across the street and by the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) tracks and Lanzit Avenue to the south, with single- and multi-family residences beyond the tracks and street.

Two buildings exist on the site: a 32,000-square-foot warehouse built in 1957 at the eastern section and a 118,800-square-foot warehouse built in 1956 at the central and western sections. The buildings sit back to back and the eastern and western ends of the site are paved as internal driveways and parking areas. The Animo James B. Taylor Charter Middle School is immediately to the east and the Kedren Health Community Center (which provides primary care, mental health care, and a Headstart/State preschool) is immediately to the west.

Access to the site is provided by two driveways off East 111th Place, a street that is designated as a local collector with one lane in each direction and allows daytime on-street parking on each side. The UPRR rail line runs parallel to East Lanzit Avenue south of the project site. Imperial Highway and Interstate 105 (I-105) are located approximately three and seven blocks south of the project site, respectively.

Figure 2-3 presents an aerial view of the project site and its general vicinity.

Figure 2-3: Aerial View of Project Site and its Immediate Vicinity

2.2 Proposed Project Description

2.2.1 Build Alternative

LADOT operates and maintains its existing bus fleet from its South Los Angeles Bus Maintenance Facility (South Yard), located at 14011 South Central Avenue in Compton. This current facility is not owned by the City and is leased through LADOT's operations services contractor. The existing facility does not have sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional maintenance and storage requirements of the proposed transition to electric buses and expanded charging needs of an all-electric bus fleet.

LADOT proposes to build a bus maintenance facility at the project site to serve its future electric bus fleet. The proposed EBMF is planned as a modern maintenance facility to support a larger and cleaner zero-emissions bus fleet, consisting of 130 all-electric battery bus vehicles for the DASH and Commuter Express services provided by LADOT. The EBMF would be used to store and dispatch electric buses for daily service and would provide repair and maintenance services, parking, charging, and inspection functions. The proposed facility would eventually replace the existing LADOT bus maintenance facility located at 14011 South Central Avenue (approximately 2 miles south of the new facility).

After demolition of the existing buildings on the site, the City proposes to construct several buildings and structures, including a two-story operations building to provide dispatch and administrative functions, a maintenance building with 10 bus maintenance bays, a service building, a bus wash building, bus parking/charging area, and a second-story parking deck for up to 360 employee/visitor vehicles, with the canopy above the parking deck topped with a 2,000-kilowatt photovoltaic (PV) system. Electrification equipment, including electrical transformers, switch cabinets, and bus chargers, is also proposed. Figures 2-4 and 2-5 present the site layouts for the proposed facility.

The EBMF would provide preventive maintenance inspections, bus charging, light maintenance and repair, emergency maintenance, interior vehicle cleaning, and exterior vehicle washing. It would also accommodate administrative and operations functions and be used as a report base for bus operators. It would include space for employee parking, conference meeting rooms, operations and maintenance staff offices, dispatcher workstations, employee report and recreation rooms, and areas with lockers, showers, and restrooms for operations and maintenance personnel. Table 2-1 provides a conceptual breakdown of the uses by area of the site.

Figure 2-4: Conceptual Site Plan – Ground Floor

Figure 2-5: Conceptual Site Plan – Second Floor

Table 2-1: Proposed Electric Bus Maintenance Facility Components

Major Buildings/Areas	Size (square feet, SF)	Uses
Maintenance Building	35,912 SF	11 bus bays for repair/inspection; drive in/back out configuration
Operations Building (on 2nd level of Maintenance Building)	12,234 SF	Administration and Dispatch
Service Building	8,150 SF	Office and support areas; Storage areas; 3 service lanes; utility room
Bus Wash Building	4,120 SF	1 wash bay with drive-through configuration; equipment room; utility room;
Bus Fleet Parking and Charging Area	Below Parking Deck	130 stacked spaces for DASH and Commuter Express buses
Employee/Visitor Parking Deck (360 Stalls on 2nd floor of bus parking)	196,560 SF	20 spaces for non-revenue fleet and 340 stalls for employees and visitors; stair enclosure; electrical infrastructure; lobby; offices; meeting areas
Canopy covering Parking Deck	118,530 SF	2000 KW Photo-voltaic capacity

Source: Feasibility Study for an All-Electric Bus Facility, 2019.

The proposed project facility would accommodate as many as 70 of the 30-foot-long DASH buses and 60 of the 45-foot-long Commuter Express buses, comprising a total of 130 Battery-Electric Buses (BEBs) that would be assigned to the new South Los Angeles EBMF. The facility would include surface parking spaces for 130 BEBs in an area located east of the Maintenance Building. The BEBs running easterly from Avalon Boulevard would enter the site through the west entrance driveway on East 111th Place, check in with the onsite security guard, and proceed into the site to the southern section for service and washing. Otherwise, BEBs requiring repairs would park at the bus bays along the western section. Other BEBs may directly run in a counterclockwise direction and park at the central area for charging. The BEBs would leave the site through the east exit driveway and run westerly on East 111th Place to Avalon Boulevard. Vehicles driven by bus operators, proposed project staff, other employees, and visitors would enter and exit through the center driveway that connects to a ramp leading to the second-level parking deck.

Approximately 312 employees would be working onsite and the facility is planned to be open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Staff would be onsite on two or three shifts, which would be staggered depending on their work responsibilities.

The construction schedule for the proposed project has not been determined. For environmental analysis purposes, it is assumed construction would be completed in 24 months following the final engineering design and bidding process in 2023. Any required remediation would be completed prior to the start of construction activities. Assuming no or limited remediation is necessary, project construction is tentatively scheduled to begin

in mid-2024 and would be completed by mid-2026. Construction activities at the proposed project site would include mobilization and staging; building demolition; site clearing, grading and paving; new structure construction, equipment installation, and minor landscaping and finishing. LADOT anticipates the use of the proposed facility starting in mid-2026.

2.2.2 No Build Alternative

For the purpose of the impact analysis, under the No Build Alternative, existing conditions at the South Yard and EBMF project site would remain unchanged. Thus, the EBMF would not be constructed at the proposed project site and, consequently, LADOT's South Yard and its associated bus fleet would have to remain as existing because electric bus charging systems are not available at the South Yard for the use of an all-electric bus fleet. While the City is starting to purchase BEBs and improvements to the City's Washington Yard, Sylmar Yard, and Downtown Yard are in progress, under this alternative, no improvements to LADOT's South Yard would occur and the project would not be built. Rather, the South Yard would continue current operations, and the existing structures and improvements at 740–780 and 800 East 111th Place would remain in place and could be leased and used by other businesses/entities.

3.0 REGULATORY SETTING

This section describes existing laws and regulations related to visual impact and aesthetics that are applicable to the project. This includes federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

3.1 Federal

The NEPA of 1969, and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations to implement NEPA, discuss visual impacts under the heading of aesthetics. These regulations identify aesthetics as one of the elements or factors in the human environment that must be considered in determining the effects of a project. Further, Title 23, USC 109(h) cites "aesthetic values" as a matter that must be fully considered in developing a project. Because LADOT intends to seek funding support from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the project is subject to NEPA review.

3.2 State

In addition to the Federal guidelines and requirements, the State of California, through the CEQA, establishes that it is the policy of the State to take actions to provide the people of the state "with…enjoyment of aesthetic, natural, scenic, and historic environmental qualities. Currently there is no specific methodology outlined by CEQA for visual impact assessments. However, Caltrans has developed the Standard Environmental Reference (SER) which provides information on the approach they use to identify visual and aesthetic issues that may result from transportation projects. to address CEQA requirements. This methodology is not specific to only transportation projects and can be

applied to other projects, such as the proposed project. Therefore, the methodology outlined in the SER has been followed for this analysis.

3.3 Local

City of Los Angeles General Plan Conservation Element

The City's General Plan Conservation Element includes a discussion of the existing landforms and scenic vistas in the City. Objectives, policies, and programs included in this element are intended to ensure the protection of the natural terrain and landforms, unique site features, scenic highways, and panoramic public views as City staff and decision-makers consider future land use development and infrastructure projects.

City of Los Angeles General Plan Mobility Element

The City's General Plan Mobility Element or Mobility Plan 2035, provides an inventory of City-designated scenic highways and includes special controls for protection and enhancement of scenic resources. The Mobility Plan 2035 includes Scenic Highway Guidelines for those designated scenic highways for which there is no adopted scenic corridor plan.

City of Los Angeles General Plan Framework Element

The City's General Plan Framework Element establishes the broad overall policy and direction for the entire General Plan. The Framework Element states that scenic resources are intended to improve community and neighborhood livability in the City. The Framework Element's open space and conservation policies seek to conserve significant resources and use open space to enhance community and neighborhood character in the City.

Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan

The Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan serves as the Land Use Element of the City's General Plan and articulates the vision for long term physical and economic development and community enhancement of the Southeast Los Angeles community. This Community Plan includes goals and policies addressing land use and urban design, mobility, community facilities and infrastructure issues in the community, with the intent of encouraging responsible development that would enhance the quality of life for residents; create healthy and sustainable neighborhoods; and promote business development that serves the needs of the community. Appendix B of the Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan contains design guidelines, with specific industrial design guidelines in Section 9.

Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan Implementation Overlay

The Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO) District implements the goals and policies of the Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan and

contains supplemental development regulations. The project site is located within this CPIO and is part of Subarea K – Compatible Industrial. This subarea applies to industrial uses located adjacent to residential neighborhoods and allows light industrial and commercial uses, while restricting noxious and other incompatible uses. One of the purposes of the CPIO is to protect residential uses from adjacent industrial uses through appropriate screening, buffering and use compatibility. Subarea K seeks to preserve and revitalize industrial land in the Southeast Los Angeles community and improve the aesthetics of industrial buildings and the quality of life for neighborhoods next to industrial uses.

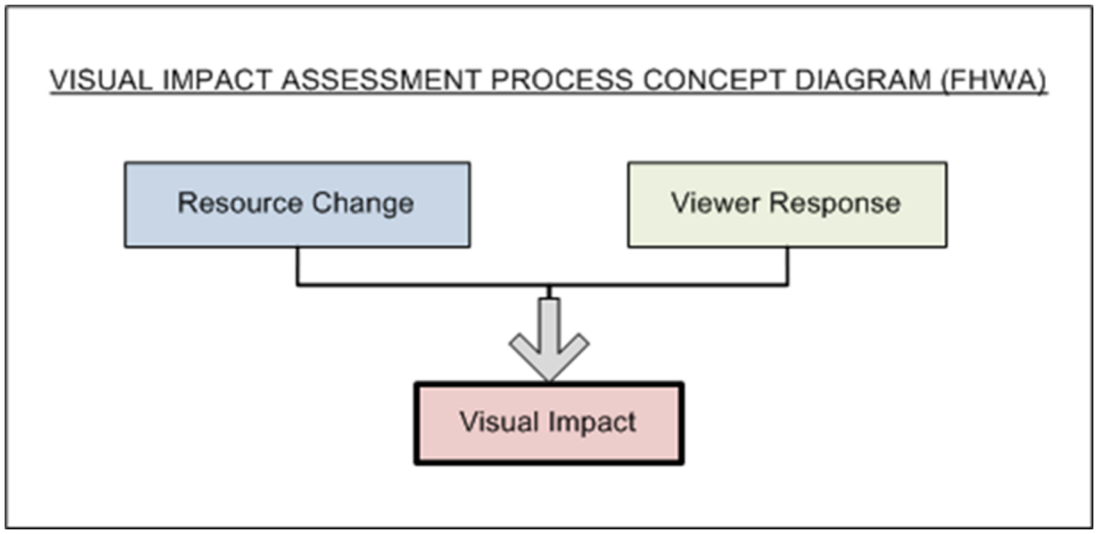
Community facilities, warehouse and storage buildings, and auto-related uses are allowed in Subarea K. The CPIO also includes development standards for building height, density/floor area ratio, building disposition, building design, parking, signs, equipment, fencing and walls, utilities, lighting, and open storage, in addition to the zoning regulations in the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC).

Zoning Regulations

The site is zoned M1-1-CPIO (Limited Industrial-Height District 1-CPIO). Section 12.17.6 of the LAMC contains the development standards for the M1 zone. The standards include permitted uses, restrictions, and required lot areas, yard widths, and loading space. Requirements for off-street parking, building heights, landscaping, signs, and other overlay zones and building regulations are also outlined in the LAMC.

4.0 VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS PURSUANT TO NEPA

Visual impacts are determined by assessing changes to visual resources and predicting viewer response to those changes. These impacts can be beneficial or detrimental. Cumulative impacts and temporary impacts due to construction activities are also considered. A generalized visual impact assessment process is illustrated in the diagram below.



The FTA currently has no guidance on the analysis of a project's visual impacts. Thus, this visual impact assessment generally follows the guidance outlined in the *Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects*, as published by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in March 1981. In addition to the methodology being used extensively for the visual impact assessment for roadway projects, it is also the method used by Caltrans in all of its environmental reporting. Note that the 2015 update to this publication has not been adopted by Caltrans, so for this assessment the 1981 methodology was used.

The visual resource rating numbers shown in this analysis are based on this methodology and the spreadsheets included in the 1981 report. These numbers have been slightly modified over the years to a rating of 1 to 5, low to high, vs. 1 to 7, very low to very high, while maintaining the same approach and application. This was due in part to the extremes rarely, if ever, being relevant to the analysis.

It is important to note in any visual analysis that visual character terms are descriptive and non-evaluative, meaning that they are based on defined attributes that are neither good nor bad in themselves. Changes in visual character cannot be described as having good or bad attributes until they are compared with viewer responses to the change.

As an initial step to determine the level of assessment necessary, the Caltrans methodology by completing the visual assessment questionnaire, as shown in Attachment A of this memorandum, was performed. The results indicate that the potential visual changes to the existing industrial/warehouse site would not result in a substantial change to the visual environment and would require a brief memorandum outlining the proposed changes.

The following steps, based on the Caltrans SER and utilizing the methodology established by the FHWA, were then followed to assess the potential visual impacts of the proposed project:

- Define the project location and setting.
- Identify visual assessment units and key views.
- Analyze existing visual resources and viewer response.
- Depict the visual appearance of project alternatives.
- Assess the visual impacts of project alternatives.
- Propose measures to offset visual impacts.

4.1 Description of Visual Character

The following discussion outlines the existing and anticipated visual character of the site, based on the project description provided in Section 2.2 of this Memorandum.

4.1.1 Existing Visual Character of the Site

The existing visual character of the site is typical for an older industrial/warehouse site with large, metal-sheathed, or concrete warehouse-type structures, and large paved areas with little buffering or landscaping. Given the type of structures on the site, the structures' ages are apparent and graffiti and other maintenance issues can be seen. Figure 4-1 is the photograph of the existing buildings at the project site as viewed from East 111th Place, looking west. Figure 4-2 shows the existing back side of the site, along the railroad tracks, from East Lanzit Drive.

Figure 4.1: Existing structures as viewed from East 111th Place, looking west

Figure 4-2: Existing structures as viewed from East Lanzit Drive, looking west

Under a No Build Alternative, the project site would likely continue to be leased by the landowner as an industrial warehouse facility, similar to its past tenants. Under such an occurrence, there would be anticipated truck and employee traffic to and from the site, with parking potential within the site or along the city streets for visitors/customers to the site. Minor improvements to the site might occur to accommodate the new business, but this would likely be not extensive or cause the removal of the buildings. Under such a scenario, the impacts to the surrounding community would be minor.

4.1.2 Proposed Visual Character under the Build Alternative

Under the Build Alternative, the existing buildings on the site would be demolished and several new structures would be constructed, including a two-story operations building, a maintenance building with 10 bus maintenance bays, a service building, a bus wash building, and BEB parking/charging area. A second-story parking deck for up to 360 employee/visitor vehicles would be located above the bus parking/charging area, with the canopy above the parking deck topped with a 2000-kilowatt PV system.

On the south side of the site, along the existing UPRR tracks and East Lanzit Drive, a minimum 6-foot block wall would be constructed. This block wall would also be placed along the east and west sides of the site. The front entrance of the site, along East 111th Place, an ornamental metal fence is proposed along with landscape plantings. In addition,

planting is proposed along the east and west sides of the site to help provide screening to the community facilities on these sides of the site.

4.2 Analysis of Viewer Groups and Viewer Sensitivity

The following subsections evaluate visual impacts according to viewer response and resource changes, based on the existing and proposed visual character of the site.

4.2.1 Viewer Groups

The population affected by the project could also be called viewers of the project. Viewers are people whose views of the landscape may be altered by the proposed project—either because the landscape itself has changed or their perception of the landscape has changed. Viewers, or more specifically the response viewers have to changes in their visual environment, are one of two variables that determine the extent of visual impacts that will be caused by the construction and operation of the proposed project.

4.2.2 Types of Viewers

There are two major types of viewer groups for this project: neighbors and roadway users. Each viewer group has their own particular level of viewer exposure and viewer sensitivity, resulting in distinct and predictable visual concerns for each group, which help to predict their responses to visual changes.

4.2.2.1 Neighbors (Long-term views to the site)

Neighbors are people who have views of the site from their home or office and therefore, have longer-term views of the site for a typical day. They can be subdivided into different viewer groups by land use. For example, residential, commercial, industrial, retail, institutional, civic, or educational, land uses may include neighbors or viewer groups with distinct reasons for being around the project site and each would have different views of the site and distinct responses to changes in visual resources. For this project, the following neighbors were considered:

- Community Residents
- Business/Facility Owners, Employees, and Customers

4.2.2.2 Roadway Users (Short-term views to the site)

Roadway users are people who have views from the road. This group is divided into two categories – automobile drivers/riders, which would also include delivery or other roadway drivers, and pedestrians and bicyclists. This division is due in large part to the speed of travel along the roadways. For this project the following roadway users were considered:

- Automobile Traffic
- Pedestrians, and Bicyclists

4.2.3 Viewer Response

Viewer response is a measure or prediction of the viewer's reaction to changes in the visual environment and has two dimensions, viewer exposure and viewer sensitivity.

Viewer exposure is a measure of the viewer's ability to see a particular object. Viewer exposure has three attributes: location, quantity, and duration. Location relates to the position of the viewer in relationship to the object being viewed. The closer the viewer is to the object, the more exposure. Quantity refers to how many people see the object. The more people who can see an object or the greater frequency an object is seen, the more exposure the object has to viewers. Duration refers to how long a viewer can keep an object in view. The longer an object can be kept in view, the more exposure. High viewer exposure helps predict that viewers will have a response to a visual change.

Viewer sensitivity is a measure of the viewer's recognition of a particular object. It has three attributes: activity, awareness, and local values. Activity relates to the preoccupation of viewers—are they preoccupied, thinking of something else, or are they truly engaged in observing their surroundings? The more they are observing their surroundings, the more sensitivity viewers will have of changes to visual resources. Awareness relates to the focus of view—the focus is wide and the view general or the focus is narrow and the view specific. The more specific the awareness, the more sensitive a viewer is to change. Local values and attitudes also affect viewer sensitivity. If the viewer group values aesthetics in general or if a specific visual resource has been protected by local, state, or national designation, viewers will likely be more sensitive to visible changes.

4.2.3.1 Community Residents

Residents can be expected to have a high concern and an overall moderate to moderately high response to changes in the visual environment with regard to the project and its effect on views from their homes and neighborhoods. These viewers are most familiar with their community and the existing aesthetic environment. While some residences face to the proposed site, most residential units do not face out directly into the site. Residents would have frequent views as they come to and from their homes and those outside at the front and side yards along East 111th Place and Lanzit Avenue. These viewers could be expected to have:

- Location: views to project elements would be prominent (moderately high)
- Duration: for residents on East Lanzit Avenue and East 111th Place that face the site, views would be long term. For residents on cross-streets, views would be of relatively short (moderately low) duration typically
- Quantity: the number of viewers would be moderate, given the number of residents with direct views into the site (it is anticipated that most residents would see the site while passing to and from their place of residence or when outside at the front and side yards along East 111th Place and Lanzit Avenue)

4.2.3.2 Business/Facilities Owners, Employees, and Customers

Included in this group are the two facilities found on the east side (Animo James B. Taylor Charter Middle School) and west side (Kedren Health Community Center) of the project site. In general, this user group would be expected to have a moderate response to the changes in the visual environment. While users of these facilities have views of and are familiar with the existing site, they are often more concerned with maintaining access to the businesses than with changes in the visual environment; however, owners and managers of the facilities maybe more concerned with the aesthetics of the project and how that might reflect on the community, as are community residents. In summary, for viewers associated with businesses/facilities:

- Location: views to project elements be less than prominent (moderate) to these viewers, due to walls and screening provided
- Duration: views of the east and west sides of the site would be moderate
- Quantity: the number of viewers would be moderate, in general

4.2.3.3 Automobile Drivers/Passengers

Two streets are potentially visually affected by the proposed project – East 111th Place along the north side of the site and East Lanzit Drive on the south side. Both streets are considered local roads, so the level of traffic associated with them tends to be lower than on arterial or collector roads. Travelers on these two streets are anticipated to primarily be local residents and commuters who traverse along the roads in a typical day. Overall, this group could be expected to have a moderate viewer response to changes in the visual environment.

- Location: views to project elements would be less than prominent (moderate), due to the walls and screening provided
- Duration: views would be of short (low) to moderate duration
- Quantity: the number of viewers would be low, given the existing traffic volumes

4.2.3.4 Pedestrians and Bicyclists

These local street users generally have a slower pace and therefore, more time to observe the visual environment. Since many could be expected to be either local residents from the neighborhood areas, students and faculty of the adjacent school and preschool, or employees or customers traveling to or from a nearby business, they would tend to be familiar with the community, its desires, and needs. Overall, this group would be expected to have a moderately high response to changes in the visual environment.

- Location: views to project elements would be prominent (high) as they passed the site
- Duration: views would be of moderate to high duration
- Quantity: the number of viewers would be moderate, due to smaller volumes

4.2.4 Viewer Sensitivity

Community residents in the vicinity of the proposed facility are considered highly sensitive to changes in their visual environment because they have long-term, frequent and multiple views of this site. Commercial and institutional workers and visitors are considered moderately sensitive to changes in their visual environment, because they are generally familiar with the existing visual environment. Local commuters are also considered moderately sensitive to changes in their visual environment because they have passing views of the project site. Occasional motorists are not considered sensitive to changes in the visual environment, as they would not be familiar with the existing visual environment.

In general, most viewers traveling along the roadway would have a moderate awareness of the surroundings, since their primary focus is on traffic and the roadway, or on finding the location they are looking for. This could also be expected of bicyclists, since they, in addition to these concerns, have the added concern of avoiding cars and pedestrians while traveling along the roadway. However, pedestrians would have a much greater potential for awareness since they are traveling slower. Similarly, due to their frequent travel in the area, pedestrian residents would likely have a greater awareness. Business/facilities owners and employees might be expected to have a higher awareness due to the frequency of views, while their customers would likely have a lower awareness.

4.2.5 Summary of Anticipated Viewer Response

The narrative descriptions of viewer exposure and viewer sensitivity for each viewer group were merged to establish the overall viewer response of each group. The results are illustrated in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1: Viewer Group Response Summary

Viewer Group	Exposure			Sensitivity			Total
	Location	Duration	Quantity	Activity	Aware	Values	
Community Residents	Mod	Mod	Mod	Mod	High	High	**Mod High**
Business/Facility Owners, Employees, and Customers	Mod	Mod Low	Mod Low	Mod	Mod	High	**Mod**
Local Street Users – Automobiles	Mod	Low	Low	Mod	Mod	Mod	**Mod**
Local Street Users – Pedestrians and Bicyclists	Mod	Low	Low	Mod	Mod	High	**Mod**
Note: Responses follow the guidance in FHWA's 1981 Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects.							

4.3 Resource Change (Key Viewpoint) Analysis

Resource change is assessed by evaluating the visual character and the visual quality of the visual resources that comprise the project site before and after construction of the proposed project. Resource change is one of the two major variables in the equation that determine visual impacts.

- Visual character includes attributes such as form, line, color, texture, and is used to describe the visual environment, not evaluate; in that these attributes are neither considered good nor bad. However, a change in visual character can be evaluated when it is compared with the viewer's response to that change. Changes in visual character can be identified by how visually compatible a proposed project would be with the existing condition by using visual character attributes as an indicator.

- Visual quality is evaluated by considering the vividness, intactness, and unity present in the visual environment. These three criteria are defined below:

    - Vividness is the extent to which the landscape is memorable and is associated with distinctive, contrasting, and diverse visual elements.
    - Intactness is the integrity of visual features in the landscape and the extent to which the existing landscape is free from non-typical visual intrusions.
    - Unity is the extent to which all visual elements combine to form a coherent, harmonious visual pattern.

Public attitudes validate the assessed level of quality and predict how changes to the view can affect these attitudes. This process helps identify specific methods for addressing each visual impact that may occur as a result of the project.

Because it is not feasible to analyze all the views in which the proposed project would be seen, it is necessary to select some key views associated with visual assessment units that would most clearly demonstrate the change in the project's visual resources. Key views also represent the viewer groups that have the highest potential to be affected by the project considering exposure and sensitivity.

Table 4-2 provides a reference for determining levels of visual impact by combining resource change and viewer response.

Table 4-2: Visual Impact Ratings Using Viewer Response and Resource Change

		Viewer Response (VR)				
Resource Change (RC)		**Low**	**Moderate Low**	**Moderate**	**Moderate High**	**High**
	Low	Low	Mod Low	Mod Low	Mod	Mod
	Moderate Low	Mod Low	Mod Low	Mod	Mod	Mod High
	Moderate	Mod Low	Mod	Mod	Mod High	Mod High
	Moderate High	Mod	Mod	Mod High	Mod High	High
	High	Mod	Mod High	Mod High	High	High

For this analysis, two key viewpoints were analyzed for impacts on the visual environment. For each key viewpoint, there is descriptive text of the orientation, existing visual character/quality, proposed project features, anticipated changes to the visual environment, anticipated viewer response, and the resulting visual impact anticipated in each view. This is followed by the rendered simulations. Lastly, a summary table is provided to summarize the anticipated impacts.

For the impact analysis table provided with the simulation, the numeric analysis rating of 1 to 5 corresponds with the following values[1]:

- High = 4.60 to 5.00
- Moderately High = 3.60 to 4.50
- Moderate = 2.60 to 3.50
- Moderately Low = 1.60 to 2.50
- Low = 0 to 1.50

A numeric number was assigned to each of the three visual quality traits (vividness, intactness, and unity) and each of the four visual character traits (scale, diversity, continuity, and dominance) for both the existing and proposed views. The ratings in each category were added up and divided by the number of traits in each category. There is no greater weighting of any category over any other. For example:

- (Vividness + Intactness + Unity)/3 = Visual Quality Rating
- (Scale + Diversity + Continuity + Dominance)/4 = Visual Character Rating

From these ratings, the percentage of change anticipated in the view was then calculated by finding the difference between existing and proposed view and then dividing that number by the initial rating figure. For example:

1 Numerical values used are based on the FHWA 1988 Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects and reflect an accepted approach to the analysis of visual impacts by Caltrans and other reviewing agencies. Note that the 1981 methodology employs a number range of 1 to 7 for their analysis. This analysis uses a scale of 1 to 5, rather than the 1 to 7 shown in the 1981 methodology.

- (Existing Visual Quality Rating – Proposed Visual Quality Rating)/Existing Visual Quality Rating = Percent Change.

For the viewer responses shown in the individual Analysis Summary Table, the existing and proposed responses would be the same. This is because the viewers themselves do not change and only the stimulus changes. The anticipated changes to character and quality, along with the anticipated viewer response and sensitivity follow the Low – Moderate – High rating designations from above. These are averaged between each category, with the higher rating prevailing to determine the resource change and overall anticipated visual impact within the viewpoint.

4.3.1 Typical Anticipated View

Two key views were selected for analysis to represent the front and rear sides of the project site.

4.3.1.1 Key Viewpoint 1

Figure 4-3 depicts the location of Key Viewpoint 1 on East 111th Place.

Orientation: The photograph is taken from a point along the sidewalk of East 111th Place looking east toward the project site. The perspective is from the view of a pedestrian on the north side of the street.

Existing Visual Character/Quality: The existing visual character of this view is typical of older commercial/warehouse developments with an older concrete warehouse structure and the majority of the site paved. Street elements include street signs, light poles and overhead power lines.

Overall, the visual quality of the existing view is estimated to be low, with low vividness and unity, and moderate intactness.

Proposed Project Features: The proposed project features in this view include the placement of a new two-story structure within the site and a decorative fence and landscaping along East 111th Place.

Figure 4-3: Key Viewpoint 1 Location

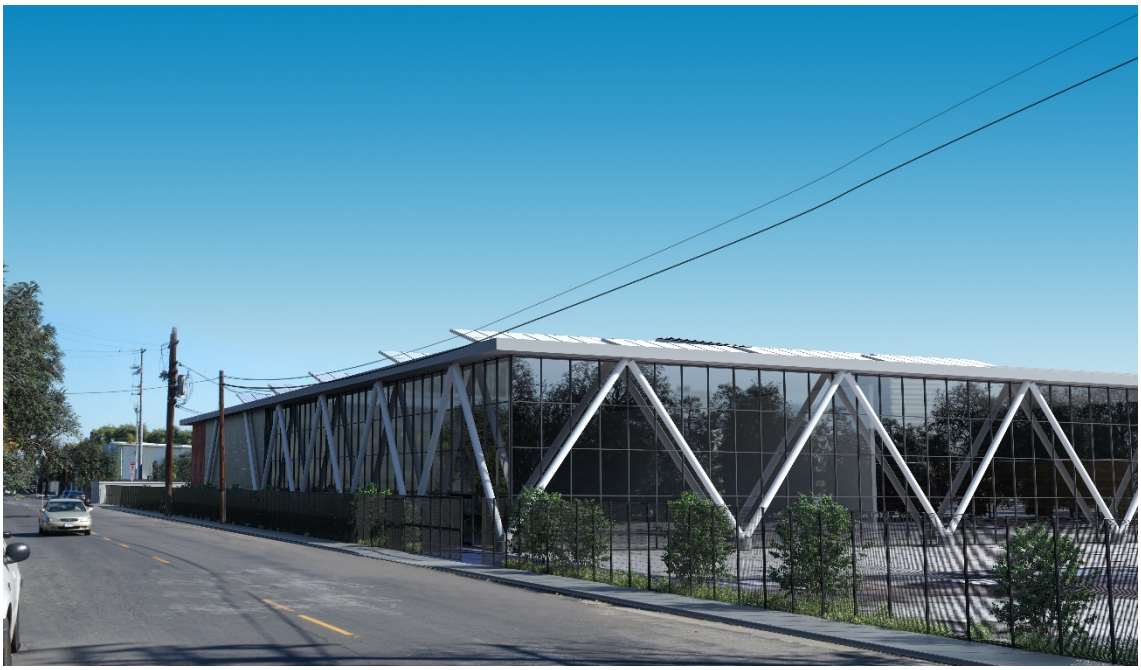
Changes to Visual Character: The biggest change to the view will be the removal of the existing building and construction of the new facility structures, along with the softening elements along the roadway.

Anticipated Viewer Response: It is anticipated that viewers would have a moderate to moderately high sensitivity to any changes in the visual environment. Residents, pedestrians, and bicyclists would have a higher degree of sensitivity than drivers and travelers on the roadway. Within this view, the groups most affected are anticipated to be residents, particularly those that face the facility along, with pedestrians, and sidewalk users, with automobile traffic less affected due to the shorter duration of their views.

Resulting Visual Impact: The resulting changes to the views of the project site are not expected to be substantial due to the nature of the changes. The replacement of the old warehouse structure with a new building may increase the visual acceptance of the facility, given the conceptual design provides more interest to the façade. The addition of the decorative fence and landscaping along 111th Place would also enhance the current low aesthetic appeal of the streetscape along the road.

Figure 4-4 shows an existing view along with a photo simulation of the anticipated changes to the visual environment of Key Viewpoint #1. Table 4-3 rates the anticipated changes in visual character and quality, as well as their effects on the viewers of Key Viewpoint #1.

Figure 4-4: Existing Conditions (top) and Post Construction Simulation (bottom)



Note: The post-construction simulation shows the potential conceptual building design based on similar facilities constructed by the City. However, the final appearance will be developed as part of the final design process.

Table 4-3: Key Viewpoint #1
Anticipated Changes in Visual Character & Quality, and Their Effect on Viewers

	Attribute	Ratings[7]		Remarks (Anticipated changes are shown in the blue rows)
		Existing Condition	Proposed Condition[5]	
Visual Quality[1]	Vividness/Memorability	1.80	3.00	
	Intactness	2.70	2.90	
	Unity	1.75	2.75	
	TOTAL AVERAGE[6]	**2.08**	**2.88**	Percent Change = +38%
Visual Character[2]	Scale	2.30	2.40	
	Diversity	1.50	2.25	
	Continuity	2.35	2.75	
	Dominance	2.25	2.30	
	TOTAL AVERAGE[6]	**2.10**	**2.42**	Percent Change = +15%
Viewer Exposure[3]	Location of Views	4.25		
	Number of Viewers	2.00		
	Duration of Views	3.80		
	TOTAL AVERAGE[6]	**3.35**		Moderate Exposure
Viewer Sensitivity[4]	Attention of Viewer	4.00		
	Viewer Awareness	4.00		
	Local Values and Goals	3.80		
	TOTAL AVERAGE[6]	**3.93**		Moderately High Sensitivity

1 – Vividness = memorable, striking (5) to plain (1); Intactness = free of encroaching elements (5) to cluttered/lacking integrity (1); and Unity = coherent/harmonious (5) to disjointed/jarring (1). A rating below 1 would only be used for an extremely low rating.

2 – Scale = small (5) to monumental (1); Diversity = complex (5) to monolithic (1); Continuity = harmonious (5) to dissonant (1); and Dominance = balanced (5) to prominent/unbalanced (1). A rating below 1 would only be used for an extremely low rating.

3 – Location = foreground (5) to distant views (1); Number = over 100,000 (5) to 20 or less (1); Duration = over 4 hours (5) to less than 1 minute (1). A rating below 1 would only be used for an extremely low rating.

4 – Activity = attention on views (5) to attention focused away (1); Awareness = High (5) to Low (1); and Values = High (5) to Low expectations (1). A rating below 1 would only be used for an extremely low rating.

5 – Proposed (post-construction condition) with avoidance and minimization measures in place. Avoidance and minimization measures are described in Section 11 of this report.

6 – Total = sum of attributes divided by number of attributes – e.g. Overall Visual Quality = (vividness+intactness+unity)/3.

7 – Ratings: 1 = Low, 3 = Moderate, 5 = High

Note: Ratings made by California Registered Landscape Architect based on guidance in FHWA's 1981 Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects.

4.3.2 Key Viewpoint 2

Figure 4-5 depicts the location of Key Viewpoint 2 on East Lanzit Avenue looking north at the project site.

Figure 4-5: Key Viewpoint 2 Location

Orientation: The photograph is taken from the south side of the sidewalk along East Lanzit Avenue looking northeast across the existing railroad tracks towards the project site. The perspective is from the view of a pedestrian.

Existing Visual Character/Quality: The existing visual character of this site shows the back wall to the existing warehouse on the site. The site is located across a set of existing railroad tracks that will not be affected or altered by the proposed project. Overall, the visual quality of the existing view is estimated to be low, with low vividness, intactness, and unity.

Proposed Project Features: The proposed project features in this view include the placement of a perimeter wall along the edge of the existing railroad tracks. In addition, the roofline of the proposed service center structure may be visible above the wall.

Changes to Visual Character: The biggest change to the view will be the removal of the old wall and the construction of the new wall, with elements of the proposed maintenance facility visible above portions of the wall.

Anticipated Viewer Response: It is anticipated that viewers would have a moderately low to moderate sensitivity to any changes in the visual environment. Residents,

pedestrians, and bicyclists would have a higher degree of sensitivity than drivers and travelers on the roadway. Within this view, the groups most affected are anticipated to be residents, particularly those that face the facility along, with pedestrians, and sidewalk users, with automobile traffic less affected due to the shorter duration of their views.

Resulting Visual Impact: The resulting changes to the view are not expected to be substantial due to the nature of the changes. The replacement of the old wall with the new one would not substantially alter the overall view of the site.

Figure 4-6 shows an existing view along with a photo simulation of the anticipated changes to the visual environment of Key Viewpoint #2. Table 4-4 rates the anticipated changes in visual character and quality, as well as their effect on the viewers of Key Viewpoint #2.

Figure 4-6: Existing Conditions (top) and Post Construction Simulation (bottom)

Note: The post-construction simulation shows the potential wall design based on similar facilities constructed by the City. However, the final appearance will be developed as part of the final design process. In addition, the posts and chain-link along the railroad are not part of the proposed project and there will be no change to the existing railroad right-of-way.

Table 4-4: Key Viewpoint #2
Anticipated Changes in Visual Character & Quality, and Their Effect on Viewers

	Attribute	Ratings[7]		Remarks (Anticipated changes are shown in the blue rows)
		Existing Condition	Proposed Condition[5]	
Visual Quality[1]	Vividness/Memorability	1.00	2.00	
	Intactness	1.25	2.00	
	Unity	1.50	2.00	
	TOTAL AVERAGE[6]	**1.25**	**2.00**	Percent Change = +60%
Visual Character[2]	Scale	1.75	2.00	
	Diversity	1.00	2.25	
	Continuity	1.00	1.85	
	Dominance	1.50	1.75	
	TOTAL AVERAGE[6]	**1.31**	**1.96**	Percent Change = +49%
Viewer Exposure[3]	Location of Views	4.25		
	Number of Viewers	2.00		
	Duration of Views	3.80		
	TOTAL AVERAGE[6]	**3.35**		Moderate Exposure
Viewer Sensitivity[4]	Attention of Viewer	4.00		
	Viewer Awareness	4.00		
	Local Values and Goals	3.80		
	TOTAL AVERAGE[6]	**3.93**		Moderately High Sensitivity

1 – Vividness = memorable, striking (5) to plain (1); Intactness = free of encroaching elements (5) to cluttered/lacking integrity (1); and Unity = coherent/harmonious (5) to disjointed/jarring (1). A rating below 1 would only be used for an extremely low rating.

2 – Scale = small (5) to monumental (1); Diversity = complex (5) to monolithic (1); Continuity = harmonious (5) to dissonant (1); and Dominance = balanced (5) to prominent/unbalanced (1). A rating below 1 would only be used for an extremely low rating.

3 – Location = foreground (5) to distant views (1); Number = over 100,000 (5) to 20 or less (1); Duration = over 4 hours (5) to less than 1 minute (1). A rating below 1 would only be used for an extremely low rating.

4 – Activity = attention on views (5) to attention focused away (1); Awareness = High (5) to Low (1); and Values = High (5) to Low expectations (1). A rating below 1 would only be used for an extremely low rating.

5 – Proposed (post-construction condition) with avoidance and minimization measures in place. Avoidance and minimization measures are described in Section 11 of this report.

6 – Total = sum of attributes divided by number of attributes – e.g. Overall Visual Quality = (vividness+intactness+unity)/3.

7 – Ratings: 1 = Low, 3 = Moderate, 5 = High

Note: Ratings made by California Registered Landscape Architect based on guidance in FHWA's 1981 Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects.

5.0 VISUAL AND AESTHETIC ANALYSIS PURSUANT TO CEQA

Using the Initial Study Checklist questions in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City's Thresholds, project impacts are analyzed for significance as follows:

a) *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on scenic vista?*

Reference: L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide (2006) (Sections A.1 and A.2); Caltrans SER, Chapter 27: Visual and Aesthetics Review

Comment: A scenic vista provides focal views of objects, settings, or features of visual interest; or panoramic views of large geographic areas of scenic quality, primarily from a given vantage point. A significant impact may occur if the project either introduces incompatible visual elements within a public field of view containing a scenic vista or substantially alters a view of a scenic vista.

No impact: No scenic vistas or scenic resources have been identified within the immediate areas surrounding the proposed site. Thus, no impact on scenic vistas would occur with the project.

b) *Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?*

Reference: L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide (2006) (Section A.1 and E.3,); Caltrans SER, Chapter 27: Visual and Aesthetics Review

Comment: A significant impact may occur where scenic resources within a State Scenic Highway would be damaged by or removed for the proposed project. For purposes of this analysis, scenic resources include trees, rock outcrops, and historic buildings.

No impact: There is no All-American Road, National Scenic Byway, California State Scenic Highway, or City Scenic Highway near the site or visible from the site. There is also no streetscape plan or scenic corridor plan that encompasses the site or surrounding streets. No impacts on a State-designated or City-designated Scenic Highway would occur.

c) *Would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings?*

Reference: L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide (2006) (Sections A.1 and A.3, Shading); Caltrans SER, Chapter 27: Visual and Aesthetics Review

Comment: A significant impact may occur if the proposed project introduces incompatible visual elements to the project site or visual elements that would be incompatible with the character of the area surrounding the project site.

Less than significant impact: The existing site is developed with warehouses and the buildings reflect the industrial nature of warehouses from the 1950s, as shown partly in

Figure 5-1. In addition, the existing perimeter fencing is an open iron rail picket fence allowing views into the site from East 111th Place and the residential units that face the site (at least where the existing buildings do not fall along the edge of the property). Similar to the north side of the site, the south side along East Lanzit and the UPRR has a similar fence along the edge of the site (between the site and the UPRR tracks) with an additional existing chain-link fence along the outside edge of the UPRR tracks (between the tracks and East Lanzit Avenue). See also Figure 4-4 and 4-6 for existing views of the project site.

Figure 5-1: Existing Site Structures

The proposed facility would include a new 2-story building with maintenance facilities on the first floor and offices and crew parking on the second floor. Figure 5-2 Illustrates the conceptual approach to the layout for the site.

The proposed facility would be surrounded by a perimeter wall and fence similar to the LADOT downtown facility at 454 East Commercial Street in Los Angeles. This will include a minimum 6-foot-high block walls on the eastern, southern and western boundaries of the project site and a combination block wall and steel mesh fence, with steel mesh gates, along the site frontage on 111th Place (northern boundary). The material and construction of the buildings will reflect an industrial architectural design aesthetic consisting of exposed steel, masonry, and concrete, as shown in the conceptual site elevation in Figure 5-3.

Given that the existing site is developed industrial-style buildings from the 1950s that have limited architectural character, the proposed structures would appear as a visual improvement to the character of the site and the adjacent neighborhood.

Figure 5-2: Conceptual Layout for EBMF Site

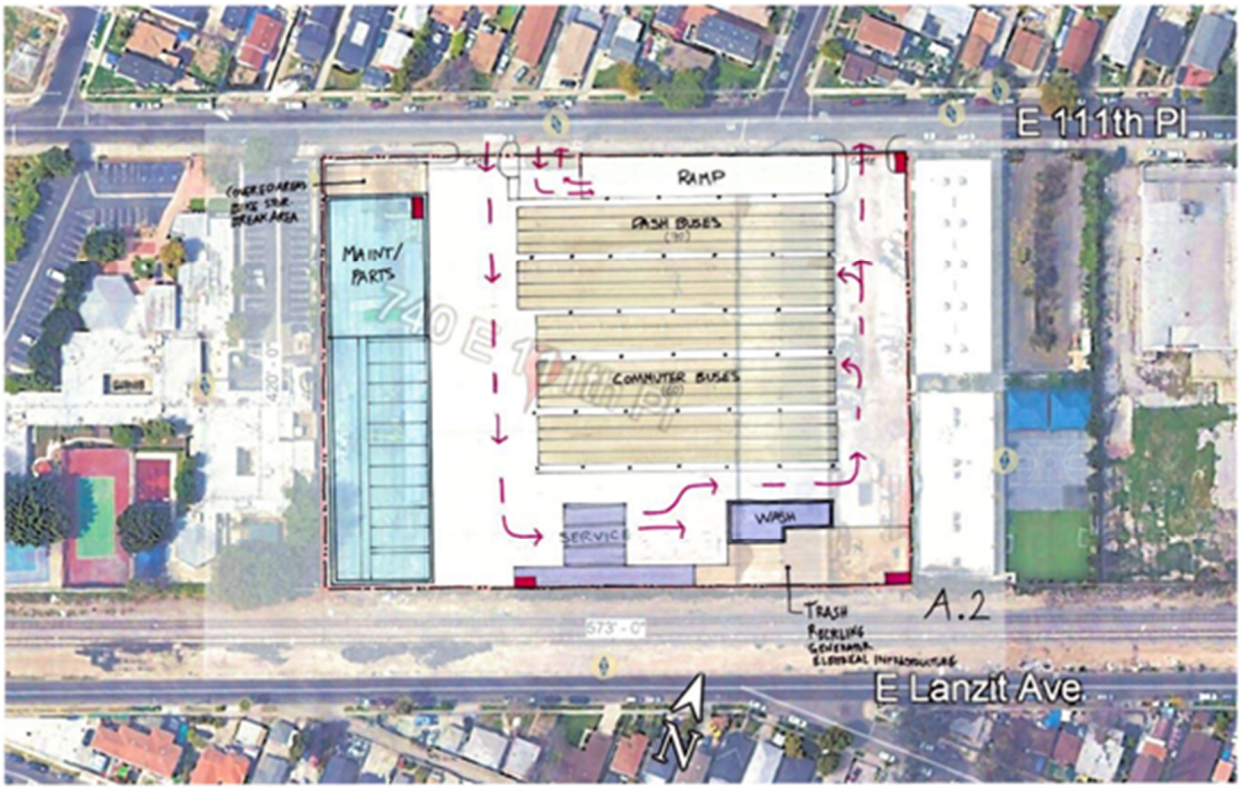
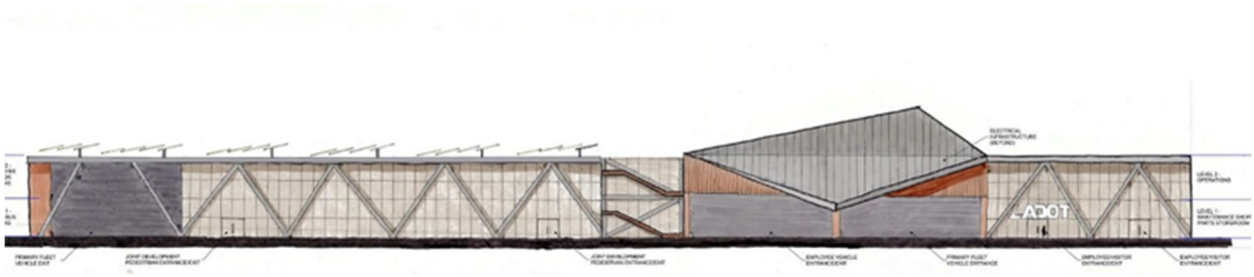


Figure 5-3: Conceptual Elevation View of Primary EBMF Site Structure.



In addition, the project would be designed to comply with applicable development standards and design guidelines in the Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan, Southeast Los Angeles CPIO District, and the City's Zoning Regulations (Standard Condition SC-LU-1), as discussed in the Community Impact Assessment for the project. These standards include allowable floor area ratios, massing, building height, architectural elements/building design, parking, signs, lighting, open space and setbacks, landscaping, sustainability features, equipment, fencing and walls, utilities, and industrial design guidelines. Impacts related to changes in visual quality would be less than significant.

d) *Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?*

Reference: L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide (2006) (Section A.4); Caltrans SER, Chapter 27: Visual and Aesthetics Review

Comment: A significant impact would occur if the proposed project caused a substantial increase in ambient illumination levels beyond the property line or caused new lighting to spill over onto light-sensitive land uses such as residential, some commercial and institutional uses that require minimum illumination for proper function, and natural areas

Less than significant impact: Given the industrial/warehouse use of the site for over 60 years, the presence of building lights and outdoor area lighting for security and safety, and the existing streetlights on East 111th Place and Lanzit Avenue, the anticipated lighting levels from the proposed use would be comparable to existing lighting levels on the site. One advantage of modern fixtures vs. existing lighting fixtures on the site is that modern lights contain cut-off characteristics that would reduce any overspill of lighting into adjacent properties. In addition, the project would be designed to be in compliance with the design guidelines in the Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan's Appendix B (Southeast Los Angeles Design Guidelines) regarding lighting for security purposes and avoiding overspill into adjacent properties, in accordance with SC-LU-1. Impacts on light and glare would be less than significant.

6.0 RECOMMENDED MEASURES

The project would comply with relevant City regulations, as provided in SC-LU-1:

SC-LU-1: The proposed project shall be designed and constructed in compliance with applicable design guidelines and development standards in the Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan, Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO) District, and the City's Zoning Regulations.

In addition, based on the analysis above, the following Project Design Features (PDFs) should be incorporated into the project design to improve the visual quality of the site and avoid any adverse impacts of the project:

PDF-V-1: The project shall be designed to provide vegetative screening along the east and west sides of the site to minimize the views into the proposed facility from the two community assets - Animo James B. Taylor Charter Middle School on the east and Kedren Health Community Center on the west.

PDF-V-2: The project shall be designed to set back the proposed building along East 111th Place to allow for landscaping along the street to soften the height of the building on the streetscape.

PDF-V-3: Where feasible, the project shall be designed to allow for vine plantings along the inside of the wall along the railroad tracks and provide vine portals to allow the vines to grow over the back side of the wall to minimize the surface area for graffiti.

Impacts would be less than significant with compliance with SC-LU-1 and the incorporation of PDF-V-1 through PDF-V-3 into the project design.

7.0 REFERENCES

California Department of Transportation. 2021a. Standard Environmental Reference, Environmental Handbook, Volume I: Chapter 27-Visual & Aesthetics Review. https://dot.ca.gov/programs/environmental-analysis/standard-environmental-reference-ser/volume-1-guidance-for-compliance/ch-27-visual-aesthetics-review.

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8.0 PREPARERS

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Attachment A – Caltrans Visual Impact Questionnaire

Questionnaire to Determine Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) Level

Use the following questions and subsequent score as a guide to help determine the appropriate level of VIA documentation. This questionnaire assists the VIA preparer (i.e. Landscape Architect) in estimating the probable visual impacts of a proposed project on the environment and in understanding the degree and breadth of the possible visual issues. The goal is to develop a suitable document strategy that is thorough, concise and defensible.

Enter the project name and consider each of the ten questions below. Select the response that most closely applies to the proposed project and corresponding number on the right side of the table. Points are automatically computed at the bottom of the table and the total score should be matched to one of the five groups of scores at the end of the questionnaire that include recommended levels of VIA study and associated annotated outlines (i.e., minor, moderate, advanced/complex).

This scoring system should be used as a preliminary guide and should not be used as a substitute for objective analysis on the part of the preparer. Although the total score may recommend a certain level of VIA document, circumstances associated with any one of the ten question-areas may indicate the need to elevate the VIA to a greater level of detail. For projects done by others on the State Highway System, the District Landscape Architect should be consulted when scoping the VIA level and provide concurrence on the level of analysis used.

The Standard Environmental Reference, Environmental Handbook, Volume I: Chapter 27-Visual & Aesthetics Review lists preparer qualifications for conducting the visual impact assessment process. Landscape Architects receive formal training in the area of visual resource management and can appropriately determine which VIA level is appropriate.

Preparer Qualifications:

> "Scenic Resource Evaluations and VIA's are performed under the direction of licensed Landscape Architects. Landscape Architects receive formal training in the area of visual resource management with a curriculum that emphasizes environmental design, human factors, and context sensitive solutions. When recommending specific visual mitigation measures, Landscape Architects can appropriately weigh the benefits of these different measures and consider construction feasibility and maintainability."

Calculate VIA Level Score

Project Information

Project Name

EBMF Project

Project Identification #

Enter Project EA / Identification #

Preparer Name

Jeff Lormand

Caltrans District Landscape Architect (DLA)

For projects on State Highway System Only, Name of Caltrans District Landscape Architect (DLA) providing VIA Questionnaire Score Concurrence - if different than above.

For Projects on State Highway System Only, Enter DLA Name

Change to Visual Environment

1. **Will the project result in a noticeable change in the physical characteristics of the existing environment?**

   Consider all project components and construction impacts - both permanent and temporary, including landform changes, structures, noise barriers, vegetation removal, railing, signage, and contractor activities.

   Moderate Level of Change (2 points)

2. **Will the project complement or contrast with the visual character desired by the community?**

   Evaluate the scale and extent of the project features compared to the surrounding scale of the community. Is the project likely to give an urban appearance to an existing rural or suburban community? Do you anticipate that the change will be viewed by the public as positive or negative? Research planning documents, or talk with local planners and community representatives to understand the type of visual environment local residents envision for their community.

   Moderate Compatibility (2 points)

3. **What level of local concern is there for the types of project features (e.g., bridge structures, large excavations, sound barriers, or median planting removal) and construction impacts that are proposed?**

   Certain project improvements can be of special interest to local citizens, causing a heightened level of public concern, and requiring a more focused visual analysis.

   Moderate Concern (2 points)

4. **Will the project require redesign or realignment to minimize adverse change or will mitigation, such as landscape or architectural treatment, likely be necessary?**

   Consider the type of changes caused by the project, i.e., can undesirable views be screened or will desirable views be permanently obscured so a redesign should be considered?

   No Mitigation Likely (0 points)

5. **Will this project, when seen collectively with other projects, result in an aggregate adverse change (cumulative impacts) in overall visual quality or character?**

   Identify any projects (both Caltrans and local) in the area that have been constructed in recent years and those currently planned for future construction. The window of time and the extent of area applicable to possible cumulative impacts should be based on a reasonable anticipation of the viewing public's perception.

   Cumulative Impacts Unlikely to Occur (1 point)

Viewer Sensitivity

1. **What is the potential that the project proposal will be controversial within the community, or opposed by any organized group?**

This can be researched initially by talking with Caltrans and local agency management and staff familiar with the affected community's sentiments as evidenced by past projects and/or current information.

Moderate Potential (2 points)

2. **How sensitive are potential viewer-groups likely to be regarding visible changes proposed by the project?**

Consider among other factors the number of viewers within the group, probable viewer expectations, activities, viewing duration, and orientation. The expected viewer sensitivity level may be scoped by applying professional judgment, and by soliciting information from other Caltrans staff, local agencies and community representatives familiar with the affected community's sentiments and demonstrated concerns.

High Sensitivity (3 points)

3. **To what degree does the project's aesthetic approach appear to be consistent with applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, policies or standards?**

Although the State is not always required to comply with local planning ordinances, these documents are critical in understanding the importance that communities place on aesthetic issues. The Caltrans Environmental Planning branch may have copies of the planning documents that pertain to the project. If not, this information can be obtained by contacting the local planning department. Also, many local and state planning documents can be found online at the California Land Use Planning Network.

High Compatibility (1 point)

4. **Are permits going to be required by outside regulatory agencies (i.e., Federal, State, or local)?**

Permit requirements can have an unintended consequence on the visual environment. Anticipated permits, as well as specific permit requirements - which are defined by the permitted, may be determined by talking with the project Environmental Planner and Project Engineer. Note: coordinate with the Caltrans representative responsible for obtaining the permit prior to communicating directly with any permitting agency.

No (1 point)

5. **Will the project sponsor or public benefit from a more detailed visual analysis in order to help reach consensus on a course of action to address potential visual impacts?**

Consider the proposed project features, possible visual impacts, and probable mitigation recommendations.

No (1 point)

Calculate Total

It is recommended that you print a copy of these calculations for the project file.

Project Score: 15

Select An Outline Based Upon Project Score

The total score will indicate the recommended VIA level for the project. In addition to considering circumstances relating to any one of the ten questions-areas that would justify elevating the VIA level, also consider any other project factors that would have an effect on level selection.

Score 6-9

No noticeable visual changes to the environment are proposed and no further analysis is required. Print out a copy of this completed questionnaire for your project file or Preliminary Environmental Study (PES).

Score 10-14

Negligible visual changes to the environment are proposed. A brief Memorandum(see sample)addressing visual issues providing a rationale why a technical study is not required.

Score 15-19

Noticeable visual changes to the environment are proposed. An abbreviated VIA is appropriate in this case. The assessment would briefly describe project features, impacts and any avoidance and minimization measures. Visual simulations would be optional. Go to the Directions for using and accessing the Minor VIA Annotated Outline.

Score 20-24

Noticeable visual changes to the environment are proposed. A fully developed VIA is appropriate. This technical study will likely receive public review.Go to the Directions for using and accessing the Moderate VIA Annotated Outline.

Score 25-30

Noticeable visual changes to the environment are proposed. A fully developed VIA is appropriate that includes photo simulations. It is appropriate to alert the Project Development Team to the potential for highly adverse impacts and to consider project alternatives to avoid those impacts.Go to the Directions for using and accessing the Advanced/Complex VIA Annotated Outline.