



**MID-CITY RAPID BUS PROJECT**

**FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL INITIAL STUDY / MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**  
**OCTOBER 2008**  
**SCH# 2008091021**

Map labels: C St., Park, Naval Hospital, Zoo Pl., University, Texas, 30th, 35th, 40th, 43rd, Euclid, 49th, 54th, College, Plaza, El Cajon Blvd, Park.

**SANDAG**  
 401 B Street  
 Suite 800  
 San Diego, California 92101

**SANDAG**

**EDAW | AECOM**

**EDAW, Inc.**  
 1420 Kettner Boulevard  
 Suite 500  
 San Diego, California 92101



SCH #2008091021

**MID-CITY RAPID BUS PROJECT**  
**Final Initial Study/  
Mitigated Negative Declaration**

**October 2008**



401 B Street, Suite 800 • San Diego, CA 92101-4231 • (619) 699-1900





**San Diego Association of Governments**

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**THE INITIAL STUDY PREPARED FOR THIS PROJECT IS ATTACHED.**

**Form Prepared By:**

Miriam Kirshner, Senior Transit Planner  
SANDAG  
401 B Street  
San Diego, CA 92101  
Phone: (619) 699-6995; E-mail: mki@sandag.org

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Miriam B. Kirshner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

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**Signature**

**Date**

## **PREFACE**

This is a Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND), prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), addressing potential environmental consequences of the implementation of the Mid-City Rapid Bus Project in the City of San Diego. The Draft IS/MND was circulated for public review for a 30 day period that concluded on October 2, 2008. The Department of Toxic Substances Control and the California Department of Transportation each provided one comment letter. The San Diego Archaeological Society submitted one letter. The City of San Diego provided one comment letter. The City Heights Area Planning Committee submitted one comment letter. Carmen Graham, JA Cooley Foundation provided one comment letter. The Taoist Sanctuary of San Diego provided comments in two separate submittals (e-mail and letter). Robert Hoffman provided comments in an e-mail. John Suhr e-mailed comments on two separate dates. In addition, SANDAG conducted outreach to business owners and community with a meeting held on September 11, 2008. The Draft IS/MND was provided to the State Clearinghouse and documentation regarding its distribution of the document is included as well.



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER  
GOVERNOR

October 6, 2008

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE of PLANNING AND RESEARCH  
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE AND PLANNING UNIT



CYNTHIA BRYANT  
DIRECTOR

Miriam Kirshner  
San Diego Association of Governments  
401 B Street, Suite 800  
San Diego, CA 92101

Subject: Mid-City Rapid Bus  
SCH#: 2008091021

Dear Miriam Kirshner:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Mitigated Negative Declaration to selected state agencies for review. The review period closed on October 3, 2008, and no state agencies submitted comments by that date. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

1

Please call the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process. If you have a question about the above-named project, please refer to the ten-digit State Clearinghouse number when contacting this office.

Sincerely,

Terry Roberts  
Director, State Clearinghouse

1400 10th Street P.O. Box 3044 Sacramento, California 95812-3044  
(916) 445-0613 FAX (916) 323-3018 www.opr.ca.gov

**Response to State Clearinghouse letter (dated 10/06/2008)**

**Comment 1**

This comment has been received and noted. No response is necessary.

**Document Details Report  
State Clearinghouse Data Base**

**SCH#** 2008091021  
**Project Title** Mid-City Rapid Bus  
**Lead Agency** San Diego Association of Governments

**Type** MND Mitigated Negative Declaration  
**Description** Development of a rapid bus project, including upgraded stations, traffic signal priority, transit lanes, real-time information, and improved service frequency.

**Lead Agency Contact**

**Name** Miriam Kirshner  
**Agency** San Diego Association of Governments  
**Phone** (619) 699-0995 **Fax**  
**email**  
**Address** 401 B Street, Suite 800  
**City** San Diego **State** CA **Zip** 92101

**Project Location**

**County** San Diego  
**City** San Diego  
**Region**  
**Cross Streets** Park Blvd from University to El Cajon, and El Cajon Blvd from Park to College Ave.  
**Lat / Long**  
**Parcel No.**  

Township	Range	Section	Base

**Proximity to:**

**Highways** I-805, I-15, I-8  
**Airports** San Diego International  
**Railways** Trolley/Coaster/Amtrack  
**Waterways** San Diego River  
**Schools** several  
**Land Use** Street right-of-way

**Project Issues** Aesthetic/Visual; Agricultural Land; Air Quality; Archaeologic-Historic; Biological Resources; Geologic/Seismic; Landuse; Minerals; Noise; Population/Housing Balance; Public Services; Recreation/Parks; Toxic/Hazardous; Traffic/Circulation; Water Quality

**Reviewing Agencies** Resources Agency; Department of Fish and Game, Region 5; Office of Historic Preservation; Department of Parks and Recreation; Department of Water Resources; Caltrans, Division of Aeronautics; California Highway Patrol; Caltrans, District 11; Air Resources Board, Transportation Projects; Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 8; Department of Toxic Substances Control; Native American Heritage Commission

**Date Received** 09/04/2008 **Start of Review** 09/04/2008 **End of Review** 10/03/2008

Note: Blanks in data fields result from insufficient information provided by lead agency.





Department of Toxic Substances Control

Maureen F. Gorsen, Director  
5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, California 90630



Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor

October 2, 2008

Mr. Rob Rundle  
San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)  
401 B Street, Suite 800  
San Diego, California 92101

DRAFT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION (ND) FOR MID CITY RAPID BUS  
(SCH# 2008091021)

Dear Mr. Rundle:

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) has received your submitted document for the above-mentioned project. DTSC has the following comments:

- 2 { 1) Your document states: "Mid-City Rapid will provide faster travel times and better schedule reliability than the current bus route by using bus-only pockets key intersections, priority lanes, traffic signal improvements, and enhanced stations. Stations will include ticket vending machines, upgraded shelters, and passenger information signs, raised platforms, and upgraded paving". The ND should identify the current or historic uses at the project site that may have resulted in a release of hazardous wastes/substances, and any known or potentially contaminated sites within the proposed Project area. For all identified sites, the ND should evaluate whether conditions at the site may pose a threat to human health or the environment.
- 3 { 2) The ND should identify the mechanism to initiate any required investigation and/or remediation for any site that may be contaminated, and the government agency to provide appropriate regulatory oversight.
- 4 { 3) All environmental investigations, sampling and/or remediation for the site should be conducted under a Workplan approved and overseen by a regulatory agency that has jurisdiction to oversee hazardous substance cleanup. The findings of any investigations, including any Phase I or II Environmental Site Assessment Investigations should be summarized in

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**Response to Department of Toxic Substances Control letter (dated 10/02/2008)**

**Comment 2**

MND Discussion Item 7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, includes a discussion of the historical uses and a summary of the regulatory agency database review and site reconnaissance as conducted for the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment. This item also includes an evaluation of the site conditions and did not identify any significant hazards to the public or the environment. The project site and adjacent properties have been developed for commercial, residential, and light industrial use as early as 1930. Historical records did not indicate uses associated with the storage, transfer, or disposal of hazardous materials on the project site.

**Comment 3**

MND Discussion Item 7(d) includes a monitoring mitigation (HAZ-1) for environmental concern regarding construction activities at two bus stations due to their proximity to two LUST listings.

**Comment 4**

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was prepared for the proposed project and the findings were summarized in MND Discussion Item 7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials. The LUST sites identified in the project vicinity are included in Table 4 of this document.

- 4 [ the document. All sampling results in which hazardous substances were found should be clearly summarized in a table.
- continued 5 [ 4) Proper investigation, sampling and remedial actions overseen by the respective regulatory agencies, if necessary, should be conducted at the site prior to the new development or any construction. All closure, certification or remediation approval reports by these agencies should be included in the ND.
- 6 [ 5) If buildings or other structures, asphalt or concrete-paved surface areas are being planned to be demolished, an investigation should be conducted for the presence of other related hazardous chemicals, lead-based paints or products, mercury, and asbestos containing materials (ACMs). If other hazardous chemicals, lead-based paints or products, mercury or ACMs are identified, proper precautions should be taken during demolition activities. Additionally, the contaminants should be remediated in compliance with California environmental regulations and policies.
- 7 [ 6) Project construction may require soil excavation or filling in certain areas. Sampling may be required. If soil is contaminated, it must be properly disposed and not simply placed in another location onsite. Land Disposal Restrictions (LDRs) may be applicable to such soils. Also, if the project proposes to import soil to backfill the areas excavated, sampling should be conducted to ensure that the imported soil is free of contamination.
- 8 [ 7) Human health and the environment of sensitive receptors should be protected during the construction or demolition activities. If it is found necessary, a study of the site and a health risk assessment overseen and approved by the appropriate government agency and a qualified health risk assessor should be conducted to determine if there are, have been, or will be, any releases of hazardous materials that may pose a risk to human health or the environment.
- 9 [ 8) If it is determined that hazardous wastes are, or will be, generated by the proposed operations, the wastes must be managed in accordance with the California Hazardous Waste Control Law (California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.5) and the Hazardous Waste Control Regulations (California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 4.5). If it is determined that hazardous wastes will be generated, the facility should also obtain a United States Environmental Protection Agency Identification Number by contacting (800) 618-6942. Certain hazardous waste treatment processes or hazardous materials, handling, storage or uses may require authorization from the local Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA). Information about the requirement for authorization can be obtained by contacting your local CUPA.
- 10 [ 9) If the project plans include discharging wastewater to a storm drain, you may be required to obtain an NPDES permit from the overseeing Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

### **Comment 5**

Please see response to Comment 4.

### **Comment 6**

Please see response to Comment 4.

### **Comment 7**

It is not anticipated that any soils would be contaminated during construction as any potential impact would be avoided through implementation of regulatory requirements, industry standards, and BMPs. Typical BMPs applicable to the project are included in Section II of this document.

### **Comment 8**

As discussed in MND Discussion Item 7(b), the construction of the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

### **Comment 9**

As discussed in MND Discussion Item 7(a), the operation of the proposed project would not involve the routine use, transport, storage, and/or disposal of hazardous materials.

### **Comment 10**

As discussed in MND Discussion Item 7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Item 8, Hydrology Water Quality, construction activities would be required to comply with existing regulatory requirements related to hazardous waste disposal and short-term water quality impacts related to erosion and sedimentation (i.e., acquisition of an NPDES General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit and implementation of a SWPPP).

Mr. Rob Rundle  
October 2, 2008  
Page 3 of 3

- 11 { 10) If during construction/demolition of the project, the soil and/or groundwater contamination is suspected, construction/demolition in the area should cease and appropriate health and safety procedures should be implemented.
- 12 { 11) If the site was used for agricultural, livestock or related activities, onsite soils and groundwater might contain pesticides, agricultural chemical, organic waste or other related residue. Proper investigation, and remedial actions, if necessary, should be conducted under the oversight of and approved by a government agency at the site prior to construction of the project.
- 13 { 12) DTSC can provide guidance for cleanup oversight through an Environmental Oversight Agreement (EOA) for government agencies that are not responsible parties, or a Voluntary Cleanup Agreement (VCA) for private parties. For additional information on the EOA or VCA, please see [www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Brownfields](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Brownfields), or contact Ms. Maryam Tasnif-Abbasi, DTSC's Voluntary Cleanup Coordinator, at (714) 484-5489.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Al Shami, Project Manager, preferably at "ashami@dtsc.ca.gov" or at (714) 484-5472.

Sincerely,



Al Shami  
Project Manager  
Brownfields and Environmental Restoration Program - Cypress

cc: Governor's Office of Planning and Research  
State Clearinghouse  
P.O. Box 3044  
Sacramento, California 95812-3044  
[state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov](mailto:state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov)

CEQA Tracking Center  
Department of Toxic Substances Control  
Office of Environmental Planning and Analysis  
1001 I Street, 22nd Floor, M.S. 22-2  
Sacramento, California 95814  
[gmoskat@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:gmoskat@dtsc.ca.gov)

CEQA#2296

### **Comment 11**

Please see response to Comment 8 and 10. As discussed in Item 8(f), the proposed project would not substantially degrade water quality.

### **Comment 12**

As discussed in MND Discussion Item 7, the project site and adjacent properties have been developed for commercial, residential, and light industrial use as early as 1930. Historical records did not indicate uses associated with the storage, transfer, or disposal of hazardous materials on the project site.

### **Comment 13**

This comment has been received and noted. No response is necessary.

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 11  
 PLANNING DIVISION  
 4050 TAYLOR STREET, M.S. 240  
 SAN DIEGO, CA 92110  
 PHONE (619) 688-6960  
 FAX (619) 688-4299  
 TTY 711



*Flex your power!  
 Be energy efficient!*

October 2, 2008

11-SD-VAR  
 (15, 805)  
 Draft EIS/MND, September 2008  
 Mid-City Rapid Bus

Ms. Miriam Kirshner  
 Senior Transit Planner  
 San Diego Association of Governments – SANDAG  
 401 'B' Street, Suite 800  
 San Diego, CA 92101-4231

Dear Ms. Kirshner:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) appreciates the opportunity to review the Draft Environmental Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration document (DEIS/MND – September 2008) for the Mid-City Rapid Bus project, which proposes improvements on the El Cajon Boulevard interchanges with SR-15 and I-805. Caltrans has the following comments:

- 14 SR-15 and El Cajon Boulevard
- The platforms on the SR-15 median are a "potential" transit station for the Managed Lanes and not "future," as the placement of the stations are still being discussed between Caltrans, SANDAG, and the Mid-City community.
- 15
- Inside crosswalks at the SR-15 ramps and El Cajon Blvd will require an exclusive pedestrian phase or "scramble phase" at both ramp intersections, which is *not* mentioned in the pedestrian safety section.
- 16
- The BRT station located between the SR-15 ramp intersections includes an expanded sidewalk on both sides of El Cajon Blvd. This will block the number three through-lane in each direction to through vehicular traffic. Is this lane now intended to be a bus-only lane?
- 17
- SYNCHRO analysis:
    - The analysis shows no observable difference between the near term "with" and "without" transit signal priority (TSP). However, the queue jumpers on the westbound (WB) approach to the northbound (NB) ramp intersection and on the eastbound (EB) approach to the southbound (SB) ramp intersection of SR-15 will block access to all other vehicular traffic. Hence, each of the "with" TSP analyses

*"Caltrans improves mobility across California"*

## Response to Department of Transportation, District 11 letter (dated 10/02/2008)

### Comment 14

The design details for the I-15 stations at El Cajon Boulevard are still being developed as part of the I-15 Managed Lanes process and may occur in the median, on-ramps, or off-ramps. Figure 10 is intended to illustrate the design and location of the Mid-City Rapid stations on the bridge deck. The station will provide convenient connections to the I-15 Managed Lanes stations, wherever they may be located.

### Comment 15

The design of the I-15 stations, including any improved pedestrian facilities, is still being developed as part of the I-15 Managed Lanes process. Figure 10 depicts the station drawing for this station, which has been revised to eliminate the inside crosswalks, since the design of the pedestrian facilities will depend on the design of the I-15 stations.

### Comment 16

The curb bulb-out will not eliminate a through travel lane.

### Comment 17

For clarification, the small painted bus refuges at the head of intersections as "bus storage pockets." The storage pockets allow the bus to proceed to the front of the intersection, saving valuable time when the light turns green. There would be no special signal phase to advance the bus through the intersection ahead of other through traffic, so they are not described as queue jumpers. The bus storage pockets would effectively reduce the number of through lanes at the intersections.

- 17 should have one fewer through-lane than the "without" TSP condition on approach to the interchange.
- 18
- o If the number three through-lane between the ramp intersections in both the EB and WB directions are intended to become exclusive bus lanes, then the analysis needs to model a reduction from 3 to 2 lanes for the WB approach to the SB intersection and the EB approach to the NB intersection respectively.
- 19
- o The "with" TSP analysis needs to be modeled with an exclusive pedestrian phase. If scramble phases are proposed, then the cumulative flashing "don't walk" phase should be equivalent to four feet per second considering the longest diagonal crosswalk considered.

- 20
- I-805 and El Cajon Boulevard
- There is no special treatment mentioned for El Cajon Blvd and the I-805 ramp intersections. Will pavement striping and signal operations remain "as is", or are queue jumpers and exclusive bus lanes proposed here?

Any work performed within Caltrans right-of-way will require an encroachment permit. Additional information regarding encroachment permits may be obtained by contacting our Permits Office at (619) 688-6158. Early coordination with our agency is strongly advised for all encroachment permits.

If you have any questions, please contact Connery Cepeda at (619) 688-6968.

Sincerely,



JACOB ARMSTRONG, Chief  
 Development Review Branch

*"Caltrans improves mobility across California"*

Additional analysis was conducted to test the potential traffic impacts of reducing one through lane through the intersections at both approaches to the I-15 bridge deck. The results of this analysis are included with this document as Appendix C and are as follows.

INTERSECTION	El Cajon Blvd I-15 NB Ramps		El Cajon Blvd I-15 SB Ramps	
	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS
<b>Near-term AM Peak</b>				
No Project	9.2	A	15.3	B
With Project	9.3	A	15.7	B
With Project & TSP Activated	10.2	B	16.5	B
<b>Near-term PM Peak</b>				
No Project	15.2	B	17.7	B
With Project	15.1	B	24.0	C
With Project & TSP Activated	15.3	B	21.9	C
<b>Horizon Year AM Peak</b>				
No Project	9.9	A	15.7	B
With Project	10.1	B	16.0	B
With Project & TSP Activated	10.4	B	17.1	B
<b>Horizon Year PM Peak</b>				
No Project	15.8	B	18.5	B
With Project	16.3	B	38.5	D
With Project & TSP Activated	52.8	D	30.4	C

Source: KOA Corporation 2008

The reduction in through lanes results in a drop in level of service and an increase in delay, especially at the southbound ramp intersection, in the long-term condition in the afternoon peak. However, the projected Level of Service D at the signalized intersections with less than 80 seconds of delay is considered to be acceptable.

**Comment 18**

Please see response to Comment 17.

**Comment 19**

Please see response to Comment 17.

**Comment 20**

There are no proposed transit lanes or queue jumpers at the I-805 interchange or its approaches. However, SANDAG would like to work with Caltrans during the final design process to implement transit signal priority (green extensions) at the four Caltrans signals at I-805 and I-15.



**San Diego County Archaeological Society, Inc.**

Environmental Review Committee

15 September 2008

To: Mr. Rob Rundle  
Principal Planner  
San Diego Association of Governments  
401 B Street  
San Diego, California 92101

Subject: Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration  
Mid-City Rapid Bus Project

Dear Mr. Rundle:

I have reviewed the subject DMND on behalf of this committee of the San Diego County Archaeological Society.

21

Based on the information contained in the DMND and initial study, we concur with the impact analysis and mitigation measures for cultural resources as defined.

Thank you for including SDCAS in the public review of this project's environmental documents.

Sincerely,

  
James W. Royle, Jr., Chairperson  
Environmental Review Committee

cc: SDCAS President  
File

P.O. Box 81106 • San Diego, CA 92138-1106 • (858) 538-0935

**Response to San Diego County Archaeological Society, Inc.  
letter (dated 09/15/2008)**

**Comment 21**

This comment has been received and noted. No response is necessary.



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

September 29, 2008

Miriam Kirshner, Senior Transit Planner  
SANDAG  
401 B Street  
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Ms. Kirshner

SUBJECT: Draft Environmental Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Mid-City Rapid Bus Project

The Development Services Department has completed its initial review of the Draft Environmental Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Mid-City Rapid Bus Project dated September 2008 distributed by SANDAG and EDWA, Inc and offers the following general comments:

- 22 \* In the project description, the number of through lanes in City of San Diego street right-of-way is not changing with the proposed project. However, there are five locations on El Cajon Blvd where the proposed project removes a through travel lane when the bus is at the bus stop. We support maintaining the number of existing through lanes with the project which will require providing a bus stop outside of the existing travel lanes.
- 23 \* With the expected increase in ridership and potential ADA access to the proposed express bus, the currently proposed five bus stops on El Cajon Blvd in the through lanes was not analyzed as part of the Traffic Impact Study. There would be an expected dwell time at the bus stops effectively closing a through lane on the street. Impacts to both street segments and intersections will require mitigation to bring the level of service back to the pre-project LOS.
- 24 \* The proposed bus stop pop-out design on El Cajon Blvd is of concern. This feature typically is found only at intersections, not mid-block as designed. This introduces a traffic hazard in the middle of the major street and effectively has the bus patrons standing in the middle of the street next to the through travel lanes with the fast moving vehicle traffic.



Development Services  
1222 First Avenue, MS 501 • San Diego, CA 92101-4155  
Tel (619) 446-5460

## Response to City of San Diego letter (dated 09/29/2008)

### Comment 22

The proposed stations on El Cajon Boulevard are designed as curb bulb-outs. The bus would stop in-lane at the stations while boarding and disembarking passengers. The dwell time at stations is expected to be approximately 30 seconds. Measures incorporated into the project to reduce dwell times are advanced fare payment, route information, next bus message signs, use of low floor vehicles, raised platforms, and the bulb-outs themselves, which allow the bus to leave the stations more quickly without having to wait to merge back into traffic. The use of transit signal priority will further reduce the frequency with which the bus dwell time will occur during the through movement. Green extensions will allow the bus to proceed through the intersection right before the light turns red, allowing them to board and alight passengers while the side street signal indication is green. While the bus is stopped at a station, traffic will either wait behind the stopped bus or pass in the adjacent lane. Stations are located at the far side of intersections where possible, in order to avoid conflicts with right-turning vehicles.

### Comment 23

Please see response to Comment 22.

### Comment 24

The proposed bulb-outs are generally located at corners of controlled intersections, with improved crosswalks to promote pedestrian safety. In some cases, the bulb-out designs are located just off the corner in order to avoid driveways or drainage facilities. There are no proposed mid-block stations.



25

\* In the traffic impacts section, the report states that the level of service improves with the project at specific intersections with "improved timing and coordination." Because the computer program used to estimate the level of service at intersections automatically calculates the recommended timing at the intersection, any improvement to the level of service must be the result of a proposal to coordinate existing signals. The report needs to document any signal coordination plans in detail to allow the City to comment on those plans.

26

\* The report did not provide information on any alternatives which may have been examined. For example, there may be ways to create bus stops which do not impact through lanes which still provide for rapid acceleration for the bus back into traffic stream. Also, an alternative route, such as Park Blvd/Howard Avenue/Orange Avenue/Trojan Avenue/College Avenue features a through route with less traffic volumes and is located midway between El Cajon Blvd and University Avenue, which may serve a greater population within walking distance.

For further information, please contact Labib Qasem at 619-446-5358 or via email at [LQasem@SanDiego.gov](mailto:LQasem@SanDiego.gov).

Sincerely,



Labib Qasem  
Senior Traffic Engineer

LQ:JJL

### **Comment 25**

Improved signal coordination is proposed. The City of San Diego has expressed a desire to replace the existing fiberoptic cable under El Cajon Boulevard, which is buried in a shallow trench. Also, the signal progression is reported to be functioning poorly. This project would include replacement of fiberoptic cable, where needed, and updated signal timing plans for each signalized intersection of El Cajon Boulevard. The signal timing plans will be developed during final design, in coordination with the City of San Diego. The document has been revised to reflect these concepts.

### **Comment 26**

The proposed route will upgrade and replace the existing Route 15, which operates along El Cajon Boulevard. Locating the route along residential streets is not recommended due to the potential for incompatibility with residential uses. Alternatives that were examined during the planning process include transit lanes on El Cajon Boulevard, alternative designs for the Park Boulevard transit lanes, and locating the transit stations on the near side of intersections.

City Heights Area Planning Committee

Postoffice Box 5859  
San Diego CA 92165  
(619) 280-3910

September 17, 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR: San Diego Association of Governments

From: Jim Varnadore, Chair

Subj: Mid-City Rapid Bus Project - Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration

- 27 1. At its September 15 meeting, the Committee reviewed the draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration, and offers the following suggestions:
- 28 a. The study and declaration should include provisions for re-routing traffic around the construction at the stations and all other construction sites, especially during the morning and afternoon commute rush hours.
- 29 b. The traffic light sequencing after completion should be such that the bus does not leave a station only to have to stop at the next traffic light along the route. Especially, this should not be the case when the bus departs a station using traffic priority. If shorter travel times are a goal, traffic light sequencing is mandatory. The IS/MND does not adequately consider sequencing.
- 30 c. The IS/MND offers no pedestrian upgrades beyond the confines of the stations. If the new route is to be successful at inducing people to use transit, which improves the environment, rather than their personal vehicles, which continue to degrade the environment, then pedestrian facilities on both sides of stations must be improved to a walking distance of half a mile.
- 31 d. There is no provision in the plan to offer transfers. A rider traveling from 38th Street to downtown, for example, must walk to the nearest Route-1 station, pay full fare for a short ride on Route 1 to the 35th Street station, then pay full fare again on the express bus downtown. If the new route is to succeed at inducing people to use transit, which improves the environment, rather than their personal vehicles, which continue to degrade the environment, then the fares must be adjusted so that travel is not onerously expensive. A transfer arrangement is part of the effort to induce more riders to take transit. This is not a fiscal matter. It's an environmental matter.
- e. The IS/MND offers no comparisons of the transit times presently experienced by riders to the transit times predicted for the new system. Those comparisons must be made in order to validate the environmental rationale for the new system, i.e. to

[continued]

**Response to City Heights Area Planning Committee (dated 09/17/2008)**

**Comment 27**

Roads will not be closed to traffic during construction. It is not anticipated that re-routing traffic would be required during construction. A traffic control plan would be determined and approved by the City of San Diego to minimize traffic impacts and may depend on the equipment proposed. Flagmen may also direct traffic as determined appropriate by the City of San Diego.

**Comment 28**

The project includes re-timing traffic signals along El Cajon Boulevard. The document has been revised to include this project feature.

**Comment 29**

The project provides pedestrian upgrades at each station site, but does not extend these improvements to a half-mile perimeter around the stations. These improvements are under the responsibility of the City of San Diego.

**Comment 30**

The project does not include a new fare structure for passengers traveling on the Mid-City Rapid route. Fares will be the same as for other local services in the MTS system. Currently, MTS does not offer transfers, but provides for a day pass, currently costing \$5.00. MTS may change its fare policy in the future.

- 31 induce riders to take transit rather than use their privately owned vehicles. Without those comparisons, this project imposes a large cost on the taxpayers for which no environmental improvement rationale or environmental stability rationale is offered.
- Continued
- 32 i. The IS/MND does not examine alternatives other than the no-build alternative. At least one alternative was suggested to SANDAG transit planners more than two years ago, and is an alternative that should be considered before the IS/MND is certified. The alternative suggested is to decrease the headway of Route 15 to fifteen minutes or less, designate the busses as Route 15A and Route 15B, and have the busses stop at alternate stations along the El Cajon Boulevard portion of the present route. That will make the transit time shorter than the present transit time for the Route 15 which stops at every station for which there is a call. This alternative is nearly free of cost. It proposes shorter transit times than the proposed system of busses and stations. It requires no new vehicles or other equipment, and it can be implemented within a few months. It is a viable alternative. It should be considered in the IS/MND.

**Comment 31**

The Mid-City Rapid route has an estimated travel time of 38 minutes from end to end. This is a travel time savings of approximately 25% over the current Route 15, which operates along a similar corridor. The travel time savings will be accomplished by a number of measures, including limited stops, low floor vehicles, raised curbs, bulb-outs to reduce merge times, transit signal priority, and improved fare collection. The document has been revised to discuss the anticipated travel time savings.

**Comment 32**

An increase in the frequency of Route 15 and the inclusion of the buses to serve alternate stations would save some travel time through reduced station stops, however, it would not achieve the travel time savings as described (please see response to Comment 31), since it would not include physical improvements to the stations, signals, and intersections. In addition, an IS/MND is not required to examine alternatives to the proposed project.

**Response to Carmen Graham, JA Cooley Foundation letter  
(dated 09/01/2008)**

**Comment 33**

The proposed project would develop transit lanes in the median of Park Boulevard from University Avenue to El Cajon Boulevard. Stations are located near the northern and southern ends of this segment. In order to accommodate the width for the station platforms at these two locations, some existing on-street parking would be converted from diagonal to parallel, causing some reduction.

The original design would result in the loss of 7 parking spaces on the east side of the 4200 block of Park Boulevard, plus two additional spaces south of Howard Avenue on the west side of Park Boulevard. At the south end, north of University Avenue, the stations would cause the loss of 17 spaces. However, replacement parking on Polk Street and Centre Street, and in the center segment of Park Boulevard provide 24 replacement parking spaces.

A revised design (see new Figure 6) has been developed for the northern station along Park Boulevard. The revised design locates the station along Park Boulevard, south of Howard Avenue. This new design would retain the existing diagonal parking on the 4200 block of Park Boulevard, but transfers the 7-space parking loss the 4100 block. However, several of the businesses located on the 4100 block of Park Boulevard provide off-street parking and this block is closer to the replacement parking area.

Overall, along Park Boulevard, a total loss of 26 parking spaces would result from new bus stations and 30 parking spaces would be gained. A net total of four parking spaces would be gained along Park Boulevard.

September 1, 2008

Re Rapid Bus Coming to Mid City

Dear Councilwomen Toni Atkins,

Thank you Ms. Atkins for the support and for the wonderful work you are doing for the 3<sup>rd</sup> District in San Diego. Your continued support to make our neighborhood safer and to aid small business by keeping big corporations out is greatly appreciated by many of us. We hope that you will continue to help our community.

33

We recently met Miriam Kirshner, Senior Regional Planner of Sandag, to discuss the Rapid Bus project they have suggested on Park Blvd. We appreciated her time and thank you for sending representatives of your office to the meeting. Although, we do see public transportation is important we disagree with the current proposed project. The current proposal has most of our parking and commercial loading zones to be taken out so the station can be built. In recent years the 4200-4400 block of Park Blvd has taken shape and is one of the most vibrant and profitable blocks in the Hillcrest area. The central location between Park Blvd and the start of El Cajon Blvd gives this block prestige and value. By removing the existing parking it would mean that the 20+ businesses on this block would have to close since most depend on the availability of parking. These buildings have been owned 20+ years by these owners and have been harassed by the City of San Diego over the past few years with hundreds of thousands spent on mandatory retro-fittings. Now Sandag and the City wants to run them out of business. These businesses are service oriented like hair salons, educational schools like the Taoist Sanctuary, one of San Diego's oldest businesses Frank The Trainmen (who has been on Park and El Cajon since 1943), a clock shop, mosaic imported tile store, laundry mat and several other businesses none in which their clients would be taking public transportation.

34

Have you also considered the increase in crime that often and has been proven occurs when mass transportation comes into an area? Chief Alan Lanning of La Mesa Police Department has spoken several times on the negative impact the trolley has had on the City Of La Mesa and the negative effect on the La Mesa Village businesses. The current buses that run up and down Park Blvd usually are half full so is it fiscally smart currently that this important government spending occur due to the current state of our local and state budgets. Our business can not afford to lose the integrity of our neighborhood.

35

Currently, Park and El Cajon Blvd is a very dangerous well traveled intersection. We see several accidents a week and sometimes they can be fatal. Adding increased pedestrians crossing an already unsafe intersection, adding buses going from a center lane on Park Blvd turning onto El Cajon Blvd East will only increase the confusion and hazardous condition of Park Blvd. Can the City afford a wrongful death suit or the liability of this project?

36

The Taoist Sanctuary one of the businesses that depend on parking to stay open has a petition and letter opposing the proposed project. This is just 60 people of several thousands that we anticipate that will object to the Rapid Bus. We hope that you join in support of us your constituents and that this proposed project be sent to a ballot for the residences and other businesses can voice their opinions and be heard.

37

Always, we appreciate your time and we look forward to hearing from you. We would be happy to host another meeting if you would like to hear first hand the opposition of the neighbors and businesses to this project. Thanks again for the wonderful job and we look forward to the future with you support.

Sincerely,



Carmen Graham  
JA Cooley Foundation

### **Comment 34**

As discussed in the project description, the proposed project will replace the existing Route 15, which follows a similar alignment.

### **Comment 35**

As discussed in the project description, improvements to pedestrian circulation and safety are also proposed in conjunction with the new enhanced stations. The pedestrian improvements are generally planned for the intersections closest to the new stations and typically include:

- Ladder-style crosswalk markings, which are more visible to drivers
- Sidewalk bulb-outs that would decrease the width of street crossings
- Median improvements to accommodate pedestrians waiting to complete the street crossing

### **Comment 36**

Please see response to Comment 33.

### **Comment 37**

This comment has been received and noted. No response is necessary.



(619) 692-1155  
fax: (619) 692-0428  
tao@taoistsanctuary.org www.taoistsanctuary.org  
4229 Park Boulevard, San Diego, CA 92103-2512

August 1, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

38

Be it noted that we, the undersigned,  
The Faculty, Staff, and Students of the Taoist Sanctuary of San Diego  
and  
The Owners/Proprietors and Customers of businesses on the 4200 block of Park Blvd.  
are

1. Totally and completely opposed to the City of San Diego's proposal to establish a bus lane on the 4200 block of Park Blvd.

and

2. Totally and completely opposed to any changes to the current parking on the 4200 block of Park Blvd.

*Stanley Mitchell Jr.*

## Response to Taoist Sanctuary of San Diego letter (dated 08/01/2008)

### Comment 38

The commenter does not support the proposed project; however, a specific comment on the analysis in the IS/MND is not provided. As noted in the IS/MND, the loss of specific parking spaces resulting from the proposed project would be offset by the provision of new parking spaces. In sum, the proposed project would not result in a shortage of public parking.

1. Helen Laurie Guder
2. Bill Hel
3. James D. Glover
4. Mary Ann Wigg
5. Tommy L. Adelle
6. ~~Bill Hel~~
7. Robert Poor
8. Joyce Payne
9. Langa Wallace
10. Allen Hel
11. Christin Kato
12. George A. Cole
13. William Siefert
14. Bill Lusk
15. Taryn Clement
16. Lois Young

- 17. ~~XXXX~~
- 18. ~~XXXX~~
- 19. Regina M. Greene
- 20. Shi'Ketha Davis
- 21. Jay Solomon
- 22. Darban J. Adom
- 23. Asplay Beats
- 24. Juanita P.
- 25. Jazrell CARTER
- 26. ~~XXXX~~
- 27. Rich & bond
- 28. Sherita allie
- 29. Tamatha Skelton
- 30. ~~XXXX~~
- 31. Dorian & Myra
- 32. Randolyn myler
- 33. ~~XXXX~~ Anna Davis
- 34. Linda Beasley
- 35. ~~XXXX~~



33. Diane Bohner
34. Christina Schube
35. Stephen R. Hopton
36. Patricia E. Curran
37. David F. Fitch
38. Jang Kwon
39. Bob Ganten
40. Watter Muryong
41. Ann Patton
42. Kris Senlock
43. Todd Appleman
44. Janet M. Bishop
45. Rosemarie Demarski
46. Babara M. Furd
47. Celeste Kapic  
Harroce L. Lobb

48. Angelina Ibarra
49. Rudy AVALES
50. Gabriel Eranoff
51. NOEL VERRILLO
52. Anne Slaw
53. Dick Thi
54. Carl Emerick
55. Marie-Louise Harms
56. May Ely-futon
57. Brenda Summell Rich. Y.
58. Richard Wauson
59. Liz Mori
60. Anne Graham
61. Jim A. Lodge
62. N. Baker
- 63.

**Response to Taoist Sanctuary of San Diego e-mail (dated 09/08/2008)**

**Comment 39**

Please see response to Comment 33.

**Comment 40**

Please see response to Comment 39. A revised design has been developed for the northern station along Park Boulevard. This revised design is located along Park Boulevard, south of Howard Avenue.

**Comment 41**

Please see response to Comment 39.

**Comment 42**

Please see response to Comment 39.

**Comment 43**

Please see response to Comment 39.

**Comment 44**

Please see response to Comment 39. A revised design has been developed for the northern station along Park Boulevard. This revised design is located along Park Boulevard, south of Howard Avenue.

-----Original Message-----

From: Taoist Sanctuary [mailto:tao@taoistsanctuary.org]  
Sent: Monday, September 08, 2008 3:40 PM  
To: Rundle, Rob  
Subject: Mid city rapid bus route station on Park Blvd at El Cajon Blvd

Dear Mr. Rundle,

39 The business owners and operators along Park Blvd. are very concerned about the changes that are proposed for the 4200 block. As currently proposed we will lose very valuable parking in front of our businesses.

40 As we communicated to David Berryman, Project Engineer for Mid City Bus Rapid Transit, and to Miriam Kirshner, Senior Planner, it would be much less disruptive and in everyone's best interest if the proposed bus station was moved one block south in front of the San Diego City branch library (University Heights) and Henry's Market. Mr. Berryman and Ms. Kirshner have agreed to propose this change to the Mid City Rapid bus route from the corner of Park Blvd. and El Cajon Blvd. to the corner of Park Blvd and Howard Ave. We urge you to make this change to the plan also.

41 Building the bus station at Park and Howard (currently there is a bus stop) would 1) better serve those using the bus as most of the bus riders are going to either the library or Henry's 2) preserve the much needed parking spaces in front of our businesses, and 3) have no impact on the library, Henry's or businesses south of them on the block.

42 It is not too dramatic to say that taking away much of the parking in the 4200 block would be disastrous to the businesses located here. We depend on the parking for our customers in a neighborhood that already has a critical shortage of parking.

43 Of very great importance to us at the Taoist Sanctuary is our concern for our senior tai chi students. We offer a senior tai chi class every Tuesday and Thursday morning for an hour. This class is offered at a very reduced rate to encourage seniors to come and participate in gentle exercise and to enjoy fellowship with each other.

On any given Tuesday or Thursday during class time the parking spaces in front are to a large degree filled with our students who have handicap parking permits. Reducing the spaces in the 4200 block would be a great hardship on many of these students. Parking could be many blocks away for them if the spaces in front are eliminated.

44 We hope that you will continue to look into this matter and will encourage Mr. Berryman and Ms. Kirshner to modify their proposal by moving the bus stop one block.

Respectfully,

Bill Helm and Kate Obendorfer  
Taoist Sanctuary of San Diego  
4229 Park Blvd.  
San Diego, CA 92103  
619 692-1155  
619 692-0428 (fax)

tao@taoistsanctuary.org

**Kirshner, Miriam**

**From:** Rundle, Rob  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 01, 2008 2:53 PM  
**To:** Kirshner, Miriam  
**Subject:** FW: Mid-City Rapid Bus Project 9-28-08.doc

**From:** Robert Hoffman [mailto:rohof@nethere.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 01, 2008 2:41 PM  
**To:** Rundle, Rob  
**Subject:** Mid-City Rapid Bus Project 9-28-08.doc

September 28, 2008  
5041 Guava Avenue, Apt. 320  
La Mesa, CA 91941-3654  
rohof@nethere.com

Mr. Rob Rundle  
SANDAG  
401 B Street, Suite 800  
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Mr. Rundle,

Hardly had the review of the *Mid-City Rapid Bus Project* begun than it was evident that the human element had little bearing on the analysis. The examination opens with consideration of such matters as aesthetics, geology and soils, hydrology, traffic, and utilities. It reads like a visit to *Toys R Us* rather than a business plan.

45

Businesses place features attractive to potential customers ahead of all else. Here such considerations don't begin until page 71 and end two pages later. Even this is just a superficial examination of the customer's interests.

There are eighteen items that commuters want from their service. Six of them date back to an examination by Henry Ford II in the 1960's when he pointed out the characteristics that made the automobile such a successful conveyance. There never has been a similar study for mass transit.

This review has just been a make-jobs device for transportation engineers. It will never entice a massive shift of commuters to government offered services.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Hoffman

10/01/2008

## Response to Robert J. Hoffman e-mail (dated 10/01/2008)

### Comment 45

The Draft IS/MND was prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and is focused on environmental issues as directed by the law. Economic and social effects are not considered impacts under CEQA. As discussed in Item 9, Land Use and Planning, the proposed project would also be consistent with applicable goals and guidelines.

Kirshner, Miriam

From: JohnSuhr@aol.com  
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2008 3:48 PM  
To: JerrySanders@sanidiego.gov; donnafrye@sanidiego.gov; anthonyyoung@sanidiego.gov; jmadaffer@sanidiego.gov; kevinfaulconer@sanidiego.gov; ScottPeters@sanidiego.gov; benhueso@sanidiego.gov; bmalenschein@sanidiego.gov; tonlatkins@sanidiego.gov  
Cc: opinion@uniontrib.com; Gallegos, Gary; Kirshner, Miriam  
Subject: Mid City Express Bus Plan will increase congestion

46

The present plan taking 3rd. lanes on El Cajon and Park Blvds. for express bus use will increase congestion rather than reduce it. The 3rd. lanes could easily 1000 carry people per hour for all vehicles including regular buses, whereas express buses might carry about 600 (6 buses per hour @100 passengers each) a reduction in capacity of 400. Bus stations should be at the curb in all cases, not blocking essential traffic lanes. Please request this change be made to do the most to relieve congestion, fuel waste and emissions, including CO2.

The plan can be found at:

<http://www.sandag.org/index.asp?projectid=317&fuseaction=projects.detail>

John Suhr

Looking for simple solutions to your real-life financial challenges? Check out WalletPop for the latest news and information, tips and calculators.

09/22/2008

## Response to John Suhr e-mail (dated 09/22/2008)

### Comment 46

The proposed project does not eliminate a travel lane on El Cajon Boulevard. An earlier project design did include transit lanes on El Cajon Boulevard, but this feature was eliminated from the project as a result of community opposition. While the current design does not eliminate a travel lane on El Cajon Boulevard, it would involve blocking the outside travel lane while the bus is serving a station. This condition would occur for about 30 seconds each time a bus is in the station (every ten minutes during peak hours). Transit lanes are proposed along northern Park Boulevard. The transit lanes would not eliminate any travel lanes, but would require reconfiguring the parking lane at the station sites near University Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard.

**From:** JohnSuhr@aol.com [mailto:JohnSuhr@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 23, 2008 5:52 PM  
**To:** Kirshner, Miriam; Gallegos, Gary  
**Cc:** JerrySanders@sandiego.gov; donnafrye@sandiego.gov; anthonyyoung@sandiego.gov; jmadaffer@sandiego.gov; kevinfaulconer@sandiego.gov; ScottPeters@sandiego.gov; benhueso@sandiego.gov; bmaienschein@sandiego.gov; toniatkins@sandiego.gov; opinion@uniontrib.com; info@theboulevard.org  
**Subject:** Mid City Express Bus Plan will increase congestion

Thanks for your reply.

There is confusion on the SANDAG project website:

[http://www.sandag.org/index.asp?projectid=317&fuseaction=projects\\_detail](http://www.sandag.org/index.asp?projectid=317&fuseaction=projects_detail)

The "El Cajon Blvd. Simulation" shows a bus stopping in the first lane, a lane away from the curb, whereas the Station Plans show the buses pulled up to a projecting curb. Which is it? Hopefully the latter as stopping in the middle of the road is dangerous to boarding and departing passengers and should not be done.

Unfortunately, the "Station Plans" show the station curbs intruding into the existing parking lanes, forcing buses to block the first traffic lane. So, they do indeed reduce three through lanes to two. In several other cases, buses take existing traffic lanes entirely - El Cajon/Park Blvds. reduces southbound through traffic to one lane. The same is true on westbound El Cajon Blvd. at College AV, etc. This is bound to snarl overall traffic flow and increase congestion rather than reduce it.

Are these plans finalized? Who's the engineer? The plans carry no identification. Have they been approved by San Diego traffic engineers, police, Caltrans, etc.?

Does it make sense for express buses to compete with regular buses, which will continue to run? Won't that duplicate services to the detriment of both? Why not run one or the other and eliminate the need for duplicate stations?

Why does the service terminate at San Diego State University rather than going on to La Mesa or El Cajon. Wouldn't those destinations generate more ridership? Also, won't the service to SDSU compete with the trolley, again to the detriment of both?

Apparently an effort has been made recently to synchronize signals on El Cajon Blvd., significantly improving traffic flow. It could thus become an attractive alternative to I-8 during rush hours. Wouldn't overall congestion be reduced by further improving signal synchronizing (and removing a number of unnecessary signals where cross traffic is minimal and left turns can go around through the medians, making synchronization easier)? Wouldn't that be a better investment of scarce public funds benefiting all traffic flow? And wouldn't allowing buses signal priority defeat the synchronization system, thus adding to congestion rather than reducing it?

In short, has this plan been thoroughly thought out from the economic and engineering perspectives or is it just wishful thinking on the part of Transit First ideologues? Isn't SANDAG's responsibility to the entire public, not just vocal special interests?

John Suhr  
481-1246

## Response to John Suhr e-mail (dated 09/23/2008)

### Comment 47

The transit vehicles will pull up to a curb projection and stop in-lane at the stations on El Cajon Boulevard. There are eight locations where this design will be utilized. While the bus is serving a station, other traffic will have to either bypass the bus in the adjacent lane, or wait behind the bus until it pulls out of the station.

### Comment 48

Park Boulevard will retain two travel lanes in each direction, except at the northern end, southbound, where one wide lane will flare open into two. The one-lane segment of Park Boulevard is receiving traffic from one lane only.

### Comment 49

The plans are in the preliminary engineering stage. SANDAG will need to complete final design plans and go through a more formal review process with the City of San Diego. The City of San Diego has been kept well-informed about the project plans and has reviewed and commented on Draft MND.

SANDAG used two engineering firms to prepare the preliminary engineering drawings: Kimley Horn and Bureau Veritas.

### Comment 50

The current limited-stop Route 15 will be eliminated and replaced by the proposed Mid-City Rapid Bus route. Local Route 1 will remain in service on the El Cajon Boulevard corridor. SANDAG and MTS believe that a local route must be maintained in order to serve those patrons who need more frequent station spacing. SANDAG is looking for potential opportunities to combine the local bus stop with the rapid bus stop where feasible.

### **Comment 51**

Future extensions of the bus route are possible. SANDAG chose SDSU as the terminus because it keeps the bus route to a reasonable length and provides transfer opportunities to the passengers accessing the transit station at SDSU.

The proposed bus route may attract some passengers who would otherwise take the trolley, because service to the eastern area of downtown will be faster (since the trolley currently requires a transfer at Old Town). However, the proposed bus route will also provide travel time savings to many passengers in the Mid-City communities, who would otherwise have to go out-of-direction to take the trolley downtown or take a slower local bus route. Ridership projections for the proposed bus route are very strong (approximately 15,000 passengers in its initial operation).

### **Comment 52**

The project includes improvements to signal synchronization along El Cajon Boulevard through signal re-timing and replacement of fiberoptic cable where needed. Signal priority would not compete with synchronization, but would allow all through (east-west) movement to save a few minutes of travel time.

### **Comment 53**

There have been on-going efforts in the development of the proposed project. As discussed in the project description, the RTP for the San Diego region, entitled 2030 San Diego Regional Transportation Plan, Pathways for the Future, envisions a regional transit system that would be peoples' first choice for many trips. This vision, MOBILITY 2030, was adopted by SANDAG in March 2003, calls for a network of fast, flexible, reliable, safe, and convenient transit services to connect residential neighborhoods to major employment and activity centers. In



2002, SANDAG initiated a study to explore a mid-city bus rapid transit project as one of the first Transit First implementation projects. A Project Review Committee composed of local community and business interests helped to develop project goals; reviewed preliminary ridership projections; provided advice on transit location, design, and placement; and assisted with public outreach efforts. The conceptual plan emerging from this process was documented in Showcase Bus Rapid Transit: Preliminary Engineering Study University to Fairmount Avenue (SANDAG 2005). The primary components of the Showcase Project included deployment of specialized BRT buses, dedicated transit lanes running the portions of El Cajon and Park Boulevards, transit priority mechanisms at intersections, enhanced stations, pedestrian improvements, and smart technologies for ticket vending and real-time schedule alerts. Implementation of the complete Showcase Project was postponed due to community concerns about the proposed dedicated transit lanes on El Cajon Boulevard. SANDAG then initiated planning for the Mid-City Rapid Bus Project to accomplish the objectives of the Showcase Project and at the same time address these community concerns. SANDAG also recently held a community outreach meeting on September 11, 2008.

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## ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

### I. PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Title: Mid-City Rapid Bus Project
2. Lead Agency Name and Address: San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)  
401 B Street, Suite 800  
San Diego, CA 92101-4231
3. Contact Person and Phone Number: Miriam Kirshner, Senior Transit Planner  
(619) 699-6995
4. Project Location: Approximately 4.6 miles of El Cajon Boulevard, (between Park Boulevard on the west and College Avenue on the east) and approximately 0.5 mile of the Park Boulevard corridor, (between El Cajon Boulevard on the north and University Avenue on the south), within central San Diego and passing through the communities of Centre City, Balboa Park, Uptown, Greater North Park, Normal Heights, City Heights, Kensington-Talmadge, Eastern Area, and College Area (west to east)
5. Project Sponsor's Name: Same as lead agency
6. General Plan Designation: The project occurs on public streets, which are designated for transportation uses. Surrounding properties are designated Residential, Commercial, Institutional (Public and Semi-Public, Park/Open Space/Recreation, Multiple Use, Military Use, School (including Universities/Colleges), Fire/Police
7. Zoning: Route passes adjacent to residential and commercial zones

## II. INTRODUCTION

### Introduction and Regulatory Guidance

SANDAG is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is responsible for preparing and adopting this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND). The City of San Diego is a Responsible Agency and owns the public right-of-way on which the project will be constructed.

Under CEQA, the lead agency is the public agency with primary responsibility over approval of the proposed project. SANDAG is the lead agency for the proposed Mid-City Rapid Bus Project. SANDAG has prepared this IS/MND to determine the environmental effects of the proposed project in compliance with CEQA. The purpose of this document is to determine whether significant environmental impacts would occur with implementation of the project and to present to decision-makers and the public the environmental effects of implementing the proposed project. As disclosed in the analysis contained herein, the potential environmental effects of the proposed project can be addressed through the implementation of several mitigation measures. With the adoption of these measures, it has been determined that the project would not cause significant impacts to the environment. This disclosure document is being made available to the public for review and comment. The IS/MND was available for a 30-day public review period from September 2, 2008 to October 2, 2008.

Comments should be addressed to:

Miriam Kirshner  
Senior Transit Planner  
SANDAG  
401 B Street, Suite 800  
San Diego, CA 92101  
(619) 699-1905 Fax

E-mail comments may be addressed to [mki@sandag.org](mailto:mki@sandag.org). If you have questions regarding the proposed IS/MND, please call Miriam Kirshner at (619) 699-6995. If you wish to send written comments (including via e-mail), they must be postmarked by October 2, 2008.

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, SANDAG may (1) adopt the MND and approve the proposed project; (2) undertake additional environmental studies; or (3) abandon the project. If the project is approved and funded, SANDAG could design and construct all or part of the proposed project.

A copy of the IS/MND is available for public review at the following locations:

- (1) SANDAG  
401 B Street, Suite 800  
San Diego, CA 92101  
[www.sandag.org/midcitybus](http://www.sandag.org/midcitybus)
- (2) San Diego Public Library (Central Library)  
820 E. Street  
San Diego, CA 92101

- (3) San Diego Public Library (City Heights Branch)  
3795 Fairmount Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92105
- (4) San Diego Public Library (College/Rolando Branch)  
6600 Montezuma Road  
San Diego, CA 92115
- (5) San Diego Public Library (Kensington/Normal Heights Branch)  
4121 Adams Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92116
- (6) San Diego Public Library (North Park Branch)  
3795 31st Street  
San Diego, CA 92104
- (7) San Diego Public Library (University Heights Branch)  
4193 Park Boulevard  
San Diego, CA 92103

In addition, copy of the IS/MND has been submitted to the County of San Diego Library system, San Diego Community College District Library, San Diego State University Library, and Serra Cooperative Library System.

### **Summary of Findings**

Chapter VI of this document contains the evaluation and discussion of potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. Based on the issues evaluated in this chapter, it was determined that the proposed project would have no impact related to the following issue areas:

- Agricultural Resources
- Biological Resources
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation

Impacts of the proposed project were determined to be less than significant for the following issue areas:

- Aesthetics
- Geology and Soils
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Transportation/Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems

Impacts of the proposed project were determined to be less than significant with mitigation incorporation for the following issue areas:

- Air Quality

- Cultural Resources
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Noise

### **Permits and Discretionary Actions**

The proposed project would require the following permits:

1. Erosion and Surface Water Quality: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Construction Activity Permit (CAS000002, pursuant to State Water Resources Control Board Order No. 99-08-DWQ) from the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). Standard construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) may include, but are not limited to the following:
  - Street sweeping, if not mixed with debris or trash, would occur as necessary to provide sediment and tracking control. Street sweeping prevents sediment from the project site from entering storm drains or receiving waters.
  - Storm drain inlet protection consists of a sediment filter, drop inlet, or curb inlet to provide sediment control. Storm drain inlet configurations/protection measures would remove sediment by filtering runoff before it enters the storm drain.
  - Paving and grinding operations are designed to prevent or reduce the discharge of pollutants from paving operations. Related measures would include the prevention of runoff pollution, properly disposing of wastes, and training of employees and subcontractors. These procedures are implemented where paving, surfacing, resurfacing, or saw cutting may pollute storm water runoff or discharge to the storm drain system.
  - Illicit connection/Illegal Discharge practices, and notification/reporting procedures are designed for construction contractors to recognize illicit connections or illegally dumped or discharged materials on a construction site. This would include solids (i.e., debris) and liquids (i.e., visible staining/discoloration on ground surfaces, pungent odors from drainage systems, and abnormal water flow).
  - Vehicle cleaning, fueling and maintenance procedures and practices are to occur at appropriately designated off-site locations to prevent or reduce the discharge of pollutants to storm water.
  - Concrete curing includes the use of both chemical and water methods. Discharges of storm water and non-storm water exposed to concrete during curing may have a high pH and may contain chemicals, metals, and fines. Proper procedures to reduce or eliminate the contamination of storm water runoff may include avoid over spraying of chemicals, minimizing the drift of chemicals by applying the curing compound close to the concrete surface, proper storage and handling techniques, protection of drainage inlets prior to the application of curing compounds, directing or collecting cure water away from drainage inlets, and proper removal and disposal of curing compounds.
  - Concrete finishing methods include sand blasting, shot blasting, grinding, or high pressure water blasting. Discharges of storm water and non-storm water exposed to



concrete finishing may have a high pH and may contain chemicals, metals, and fines. Proper procedures to minimize the contamination of storm water runoff may include proper collection and disposal of water, proper storage and handling techniques, protection of drainage inlets during concrete finishing activities, directing or collecting contaminated water away from drainage inlets.

- Proper material delivery and storage would prevent, reduce, or eliminate the discharge of pollutants from material delivery and storage to the storm water system. This may include minimizing the storage of hazardous materials on-site/storing hazardous materials off-site, storing materials in a designated area, installing secondary containment, conduct regular inspections, and train employees and subcontractors.
- Proper material use would prevent or reduce discharge of pollutants to the storm drain system. This may include the use of alternative products, minimizing hazardous material use on-site, and training employees and subcontractors.
- Stockpile management procedures and practices are designed to reduce or eliminate air and storm water pollution from stockpiles (i.e., soil, paving materials, and asphalt concrete). Protection of stockpiles would include locating stockpiles a minimum of 50 feet away from concentrated flows of storm water and drainage inlets, using a temporary perimeter sediment barrier, place materials on pallets and under cover (particularly during rainy season).
- Spill prevention and control measures prevent or reduce the discharge of pollutants to drainage systems from leaks and spills by reducing the chance for spills, properly disposing of spill materials, and training employees and subcontractors.
- Waste management would include solids, hazardous materials, contaminated soils, concrete, and liquid. Designated waste collection areas and containers, regular proper disposal methods, and training employees and subcontractors would prevent or reduce the discharge of pollutants to storm water.

2. Right-of-entry permits from the City of San Diego.

### III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

#### Introduction

SANDAG proposes implementation of the Mid-City Rapid Bus Project (proposed project) in the Mid-City area within the City of San Diego. The proposed project includes a new 10-mile limited-stop rapid bus route between downtown and San Diego State University (SDSU). The rapid bus route will replace the existing Route 15, which follows a similar alignment. Improvements to support the rapid bus route are focused within segments of the Park Boulevard and El Cajon Boulevard corridors and include transit priority measures and new enhanced rapid bus stations at 10 major intersections. The project also includes deployment of visually distinctive buses, improvements for pedestrian safety and several street system modifications to improve local traffic flow.

While the number of through automobile lanes in the street rights-of-way would not change under the proposed project, the project includes several modifications to lane configurations and movements. The segment on Park Boulevard between University Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard would operate along the center of the roadway in bus-only designated transit lanes. Medians would separate these transit lanes from the general automobile lanes and be used to support the stations. The median would be raised and, in some locations, be landscaped. In the El Cajon Boulevard segment, no through transit lanes would be added; buses would travel in the outside lanes and boarding would occur at extended street curbs at the street edge.

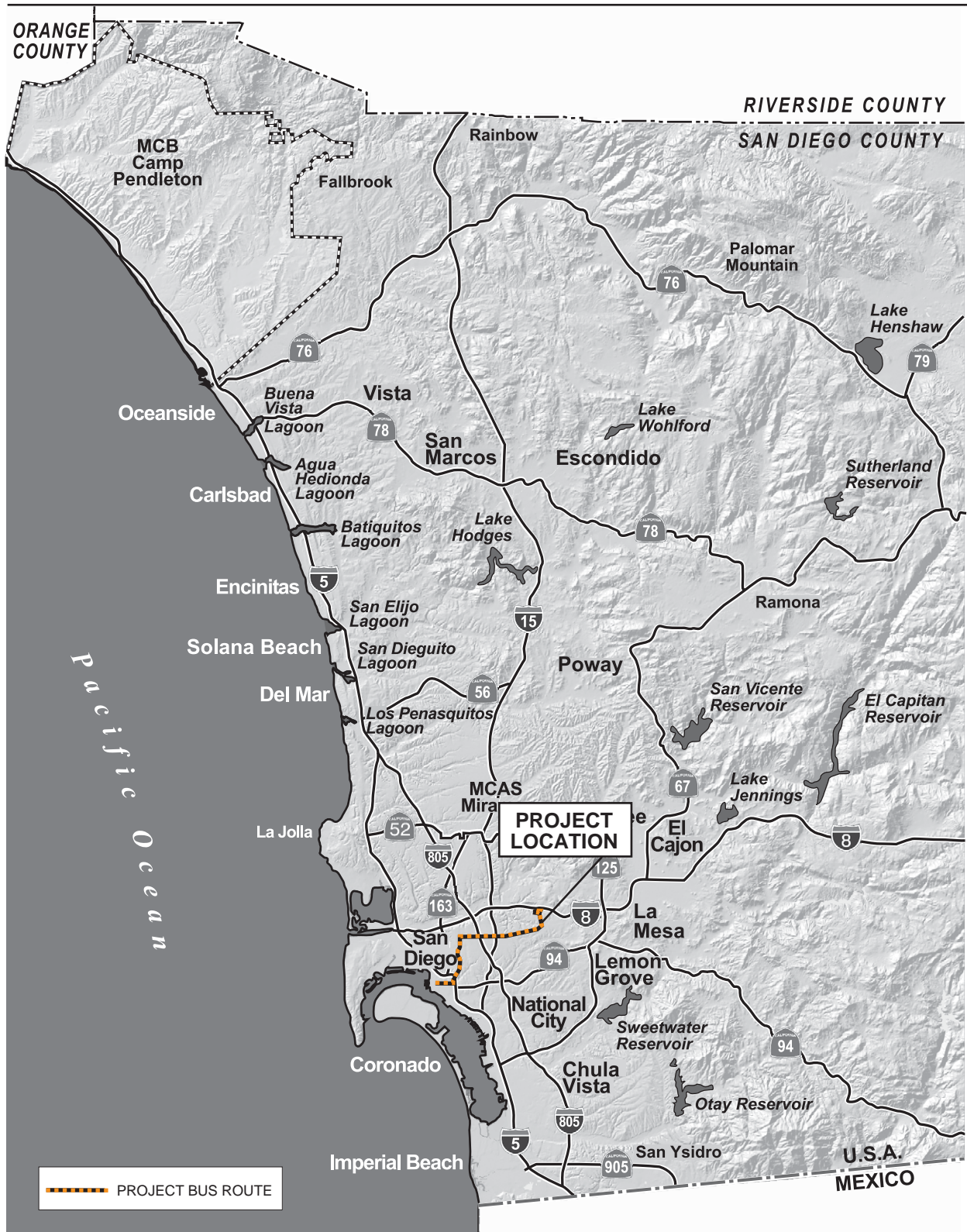
#### Project Location and Setting

The proposed project is entirely located within the City of San Diego, in southwestern California. The planned rapid bus route extends approximately 10 miles from downtown San Diego to SDSU via the streets of Park Boulevard, El Cajon Boulevard, and College Avenue. All three streets are major corridors in the central district of San Diego. Regional access is provided by State Route 163 (SR-163) and Interstates 15 and 805 (I-15 and I-805). Figure 1 shows the proposed project within the regional context and Figure 2 depicts the location of the proposed rapid bus route within the City of San Diego.

The proposed rapid bus route extends along public streets through nine of San Diego's designated Community Planning Areas: Centre City (Downtown San Diego), Balboa Park, Uptown, Greater North Park, Normal Heights, City Heights, Kensington-Talmadge, Eastern Area, and College Area (from west to east). The distribution of these Community Planning Areas is shown in Figure 3.

The land uses adjacent to the proposed rapid bus route are developed with mixes of commercial, office, institutional, and residential development of varying densities. Exceptions include Balboa Park (a regional park) along Park Boulevard and stretches of mostly residential development on both Park Boulevard, between Balboa Park and University Avenue, and on College Avenue, between El Cajon Boulevard and Montezuma Avenue.

Of the approximately 10-mile linear project area, only 5.1 miles would be subject to physical improvements. These improvements span two corridor segments: (1) the Park Boulevard corridor is approximately 0.5 mile between the University Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard intersections and (2) the El Cajon Boulevard corridor is approximately 4.6 miles between the Park Boulevard and College Avenue intersections. Figure 2 calls out the corridor segments subject to improvements. The characteristics of the proposed improvements are described later in this chapter. In the remainder of the rapid bus route, the proposed bus service would use existing stations, lane configurations, and signal systems.



 PROJECT BUS ROUTE

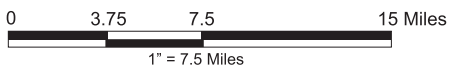
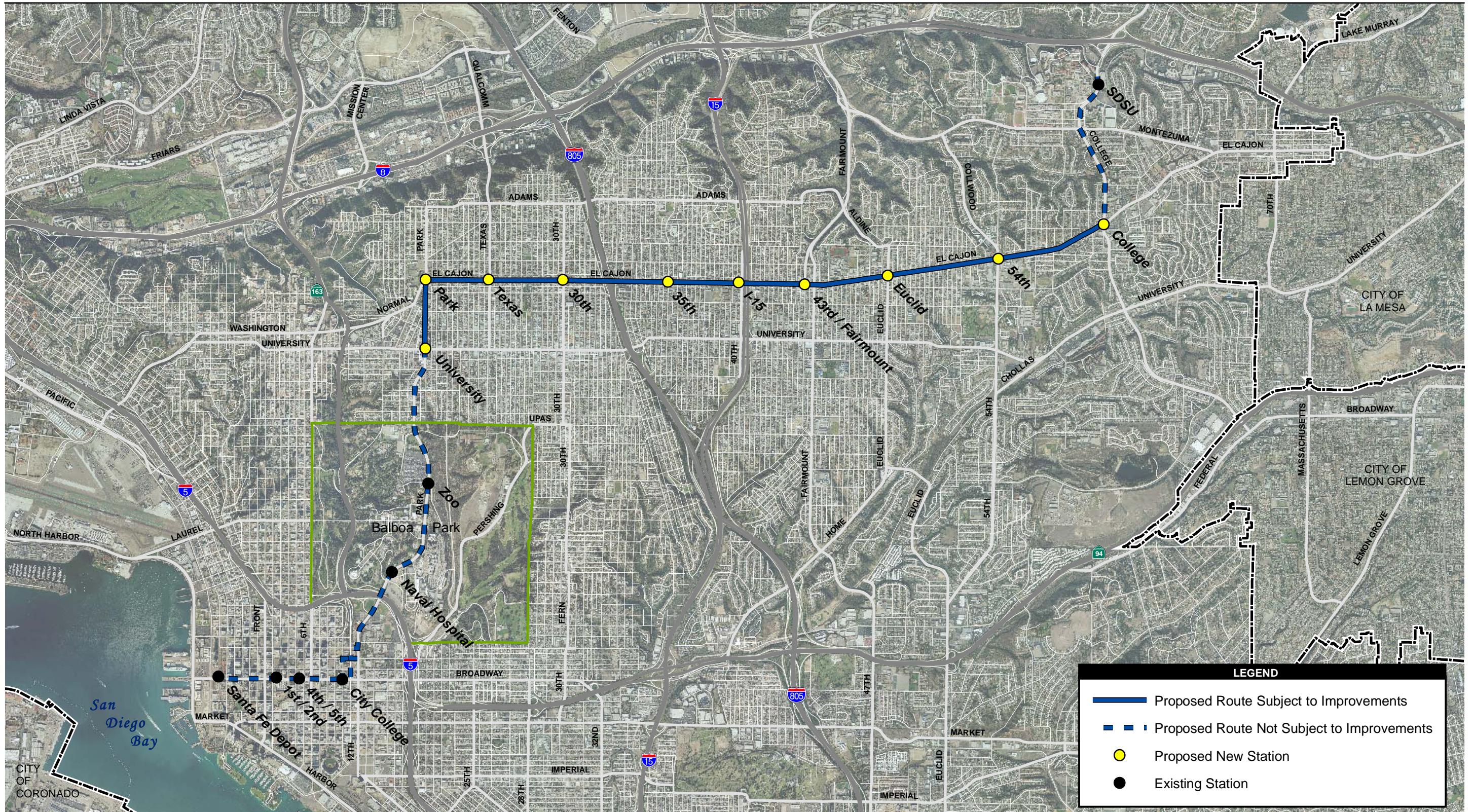


Figure 1  
Regional Location Map

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Source: SanGIS 2007; SANDAG 2006

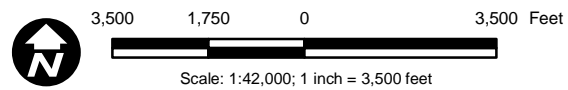
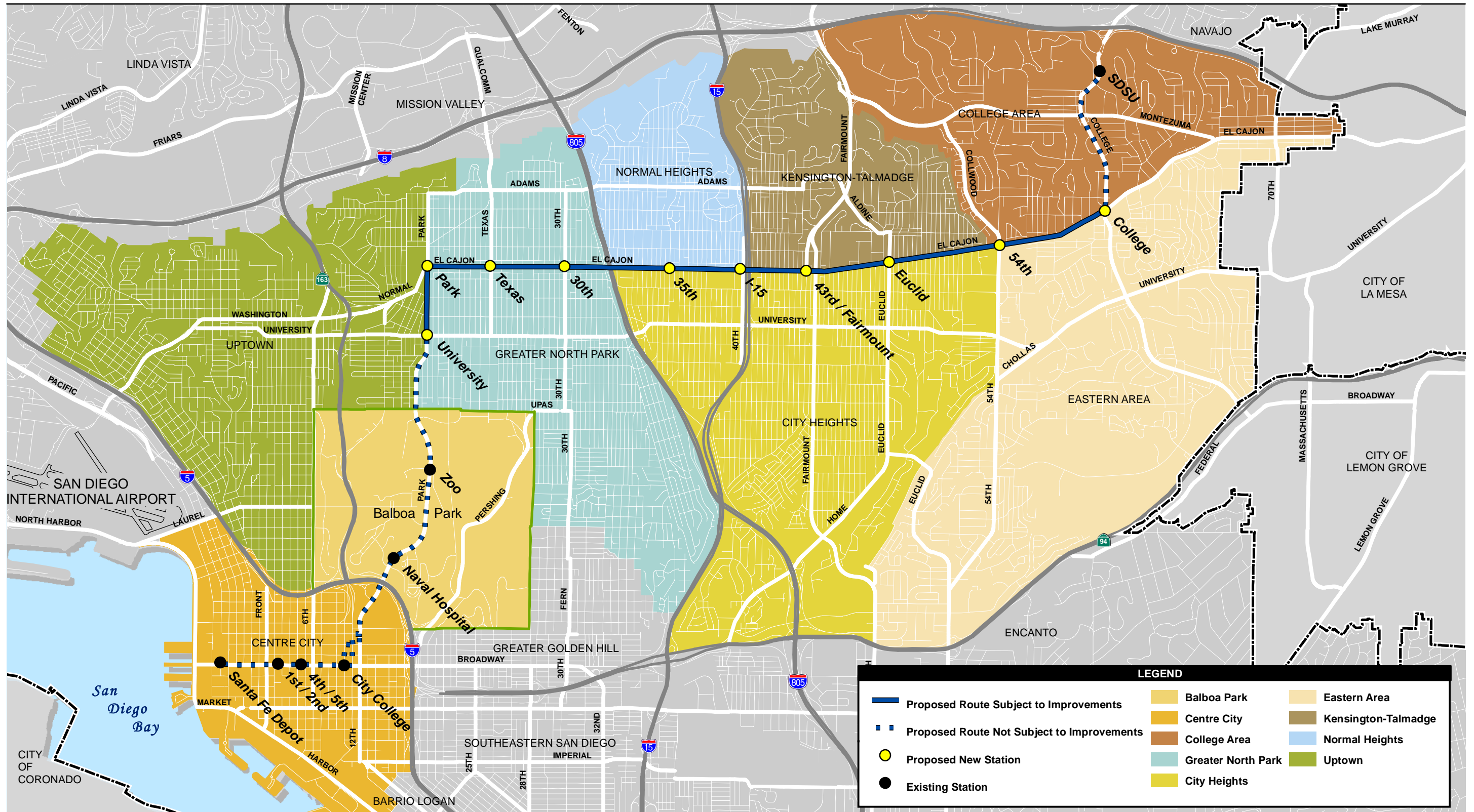


Figure 2  
Proposed Project

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Source: SanGIS 2007; SANDAG 2006

3,500 1,750 0 3,500 Feet

Scale: 1:42,000; 1 inch = 3,500 feet

**LEGEND**

	Proposed Route Subject to Improvements		Balboa Park		Eastern Area
	Proposed Route Not Subject to Improvements		Centre City		Kensington-Talmadge
	Proposed New Station		College Area		Normal Heights
	Existing Station		Greater North Park		Uptown
			City Heights		

**Figure 3**  
Community Planning Areas

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## **Background and Need for the Proposed Project**

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the San Diego region, entitled 2030 San Diego Regional Transportation Plan, Pathways for the Future, envisions a regional transit system that would be peoples' first choice for many trips. This vision, MOBILITY 2030, was adopted by SANDAG in March 2003, calls for a network of fast, flexible, reliable, safe, and convenient transit services to connect residential neighborhoods to major employment and activity centers. The implementing strategy, known as Transit First, focuses on four key elements: (1) service concepts (including long-distance, medium-distance, local, and neighborhood services); (2) transit priority measures; (3) customer experience; and (4) community design.

In 2002, SANDAG initiated a study to explore a mid-city bus rapid transit (BRT) project as one of the first Transit First implementation projects. Called the Transit First BRT Showcase Project ("Showcase Project"), the conceptual plan included special express service between SDSU and downtown via El Cajon and Park Boulevards. This corridor was selected because of its high ridership potential, existing transit-supportive land uses, and near-term implementation feasibility. A Project Review Committee composed of local community and business interests helped to develop project goals; reviewed preliminary ridership projections; provided advice on transit location, design, and placement; and assisted with public outreach efforts.

The conceptual plan emerging from this process was documented in Showcase Bus Rapid Transit: Preliminary Engineering Study University to Fairmount Avenue (SANDAG 2005). The primary components of the Showcase Project included deployment of specialized BRT buses, dedicated transit lanes running the portions of El Cajon and Park Boulevards, transit priority mechanisms at intersections, enhanced stations, pedestrian improvements, and smart technologies for ticket vending and real-time schedule alerts.

Implementation of the complete Showcase Project was postponed due to community concerns about the proposed dedicated transit lanes on El Cajon Boulevard. SANDAG then initiated planning for the Mid-City Rapid Bus Project to accomplish the objectives of the Showcase Project and at the same time address these community concerns. The major difference between the two projects is the absence of the dedicated transit lanes on El Cajon Boulevard and the use of specially marked Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) buses. In addition, dedicating lanes for transit on El Cajon Boulevard and Park Boulevard through Balboa Park could be considered at some future time.

## **Project Objectives**

The proposed project is intended to achieve the following interrelated objectives:

- Reduce transit travel time
- Increase the number of transit riders
- Enhance the rider experience
- Improve the pedestrian environment within the walking zones around stations
- Optimize traffic operations along Park Boulevard and El Cajon Boulevard
- Respond to community input
- Protect parking resources in the corridors
- Improve operational and maintenance efficiencies

## **Project Characteristics**

### ***Route and Service***

#### Route

The proposed project would provide express transit service between downtown and SDSU, primarily incorporating segments of Broadway, Park Boulevard, El Cajon Boulevard, and College Avenue. The reduced travel times would be accomplished by limiting the number of stations, which are strategically proposed at activity centers and transfer points. The reduced travel times also would result from giving the buses signal priority at intersections, giving them a few extra moments to get through green lights, and improved signal synchronization, which will be accomplished by replacing fiberoptic cable where needed, and through proper signal timing. . In addition, boarding times would be reduced by providing near level boarding, low-floor vehicles, station bulb-outs, and improved fare collection.

The rapid bus route would replace the existing MTS Route 15, which has a similar route between downtown and SDSU and limited stops for express service. Instead of utilizing Park Boulevard for downtown access, Route 15 instead travels along SR-163 south of El Cajon Boulevard/Washington Street. Both Route 15 and the proposed rapid bus route utilize Broadway for cross-downtown service, although alternate routes for BRT service in the downtown area are being studied.

The anticipated frequency for the Mid-City Rapid Bus service is 10 minutes during peak hours and 15 minutes during off-peak hours, including weekends. Higher frequencies are possible in the future if operating funds can be identified. A total of 15 buses would provide this service with 12 buses in operation during peak service times. Both standard-length and articulated buses may be used for this rapid bus route. Total end-to-end travel time is expected to be approximately 38 minutes, which is about a 25% improvement over existing travel times on the Route 15..

#### Rapid Bus Transit Vehicles

The buses serving the rapid bus route would be new, articulated, low-floor alternative-fueled vehicles. They would have a special branding (exterior wrap, special paint, or other identifying markers) for unique appearance and identity. This would help riders differentiate between buses serving the standard routes and the rapid bus route, in addition to advertising the faster service option.

### ***Proposed Improvements***

This section provides an overview of the improvements associated with implementation of the proposed project. Two segments of the rapid bus route would be subject to these proposed improvements: (1) Park Boulevard between University Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard and (2) El Cajon Boulevard between Park Boulevard and College Avenue.

Different transit facility configurations are proposed for Park Boulevard and El Cajon Boulevard.

On Park Boulevard, dedicated transit lanes would extend down the center of the roadway and flow in the same direction as the general traffic and replace the existing center median. New medians would separate the bus lanes from the general automobile lanes and support the stations. No additional right-of-way will be needed to accommodate the transit lanes.

On El Cajon Boulevard, no continuous transit lanes would be created for the project. Rather, buses would flow in the same direction as traffic, and boarding would occur at stations on the right sides of the roadway.

Figures 4 through 14 illustrate the conceptual designs for the proposed bus stations and associated pedestrian and street improvements.

Rapid Bus Stations

New enhanced stations for boarding the proposed service are planned for 10 locations, the locations of which are shown in Figure 2 and summarized in Table 1. The stations would be located adjacent to existing local bus (Route 1) stations to facilitate efficient transfers.

<b>Table 1 MID-CITY RAPID BUS PROJECT PROPOSED STATIONS AND LOCATIONS</b>	
<b><i>Existing Stations (No Proposed Improvements)</i></b>	
<b>Station Name</b>	<b>Location</b>
Downtown – Santa Fe Depot	Broadway at or near Santa Fe Depot
Downtown – 1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> Avenues	Broadway between 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Avenues
Downtown – 4 <sup>th</sup> /5 <sup>th</sup> Avenues	Broadway between 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> Avenues
Downtown – City College	11 <sup>th</sup> Avenue and Park Boulevard north of Broadway <sup>1</sup>
Naval Hospital	Park Boulevard at Space Theater
Zoo	Park Boulevard at Zoo Place
SDSU	SDSU Transit Center
<b><i>New Stations (Improvements Proposed)</i></b>	
<b>Station Name</b>	<b>Location</b>
University Avenue	Park Boulevard at University Avenue
El Cajon Boulevard	Park Boulevard at El Cajon Boulevard
Texas Street	El Cajon Boulevard at Texas Street
30 <sup>th</sup> Street	El Cajon Boulevard at 30 <sup>th</sup> Street
35 <sup>th</sup> Street	El Cajon Boulevard at 35 <sup>th</sup> Street
I-15	El Cajon Boulevard at I-15 Transit Center
43 <sup>rd</sup> Street/Fairmount Avenue	El Cajon Boulevard between 43 <sup>rd</sup> Street and Fairmount Avenue
Euclid Avenue	El Cajon Boulevard at Euclid Avenue
54 <sup>th</sup> Street	El Cajon Boulevard at 54 <sup>th</sup> Street
College Avenue	College Avenue at El Cajon Boulevard

1. The Downtown-City College station would be relocated to the approved station to be constructed as part of the Smart Corner development project at Broadway and C.

On El Cajon Boulevard, the stations would function as side-running platforms (on the right side of the roadway). Typical features of the enhanced stations on both Park Boulevard and El Cajon Boulevard include:

- Larger station platform compared to existing stations, accomplished by expanding the sidewalk by up to 8 feet from existing curb line using a bulb-out (also called curb pop-out)
- Passenger staging area measuring 8 feet by 8 feet to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements
- Transit shelter and bench
- Kiosk for ticket vending and route information

- LED “real-time” bus arrival and information screen
- Bike rack
- Station marker and lighting
- New street trees

On Park Boulevard, two paved median strips would separate the transit lanes from general traffic lanes within the station area. South of University Avenue, the transit lanes merge together with general traffic. Each station on Park Boulevard would have direct access to crosswalks that would provide pedestrian access to both sides of the street, with pedestrian push buttons to activate a crossing signal when needed. Amenities for the Park Boulevard stations would be similar to those described for the El Cajon Boulevard stations.

For specific design concepts for individual proposed bus stations, please refer to Figures 4 through 14.

### Pedestrian Improvements

Improvements to pedestrian circulation and safety are also proposed in conjunction with the new enhanced stations. Plans for specific improvements are illustrated in the bus station design concepts provided in Figures 4 through 14. The pedestrian improvements are generally planned for the intersections closest to the new stations and typically include:

- Ladder-style crosswalk markings, which are more visible to drivers
- Sidewalk bulb-outs that would decrease the width of street crossings
- Median improvements to accommodate pedestrians waiting to complete the street crossing

The enhanced environment, new street trees, and expanded sidewalks included with the new stations would contribute to improving pedestrian circulation.

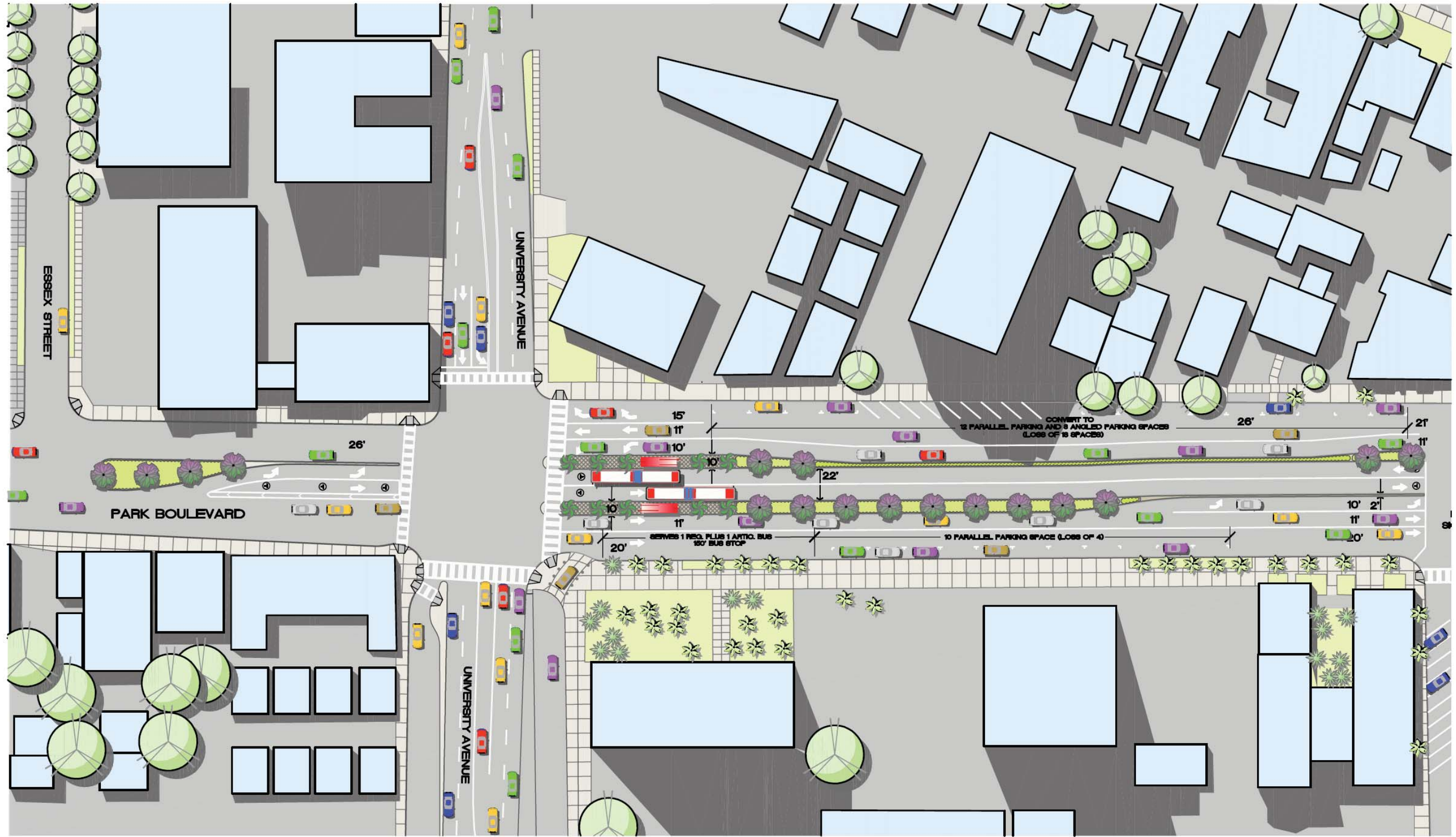
### Parking

Parking would be lost due to the installation of new bus stations. However, parking would also be recouped by eliminating existing local bus stations and re-striping. Along El Cajon Boulevard, a total loss of 35 parking spaces would result from new bus stations and 11 parking spaces would be gained. A net total of 24 parking spaces would be lost along El Cajon Boulevard. Along Park Boulevard, a total loss of 26 parking spaces would result from new bus stations and 30 parking spaces would be gained. A net total of four parking spaces would be gained along Park Boulevard.

### Bus Priority Improvements

The proposed project contains two components designed to give buses priority over vehicles at the intersections near the proposed new stations:

- Transit Signal Priority would give buses a few seconds of extra green time when they approach intersections at the end of the green cycle. Traffic signal controllers would be equipped with technology that senses the presence of an approaching bus and holds the green light so that the buses can pass through the intersection.
- Queue Jumper Lanes are short transit pocket lanes that allow buses to advance to the front of the intersection. The lanes would be controlled by a special signal cycle that would provide a special green light to the bus a few seconds before the green light is given for other vehicles.

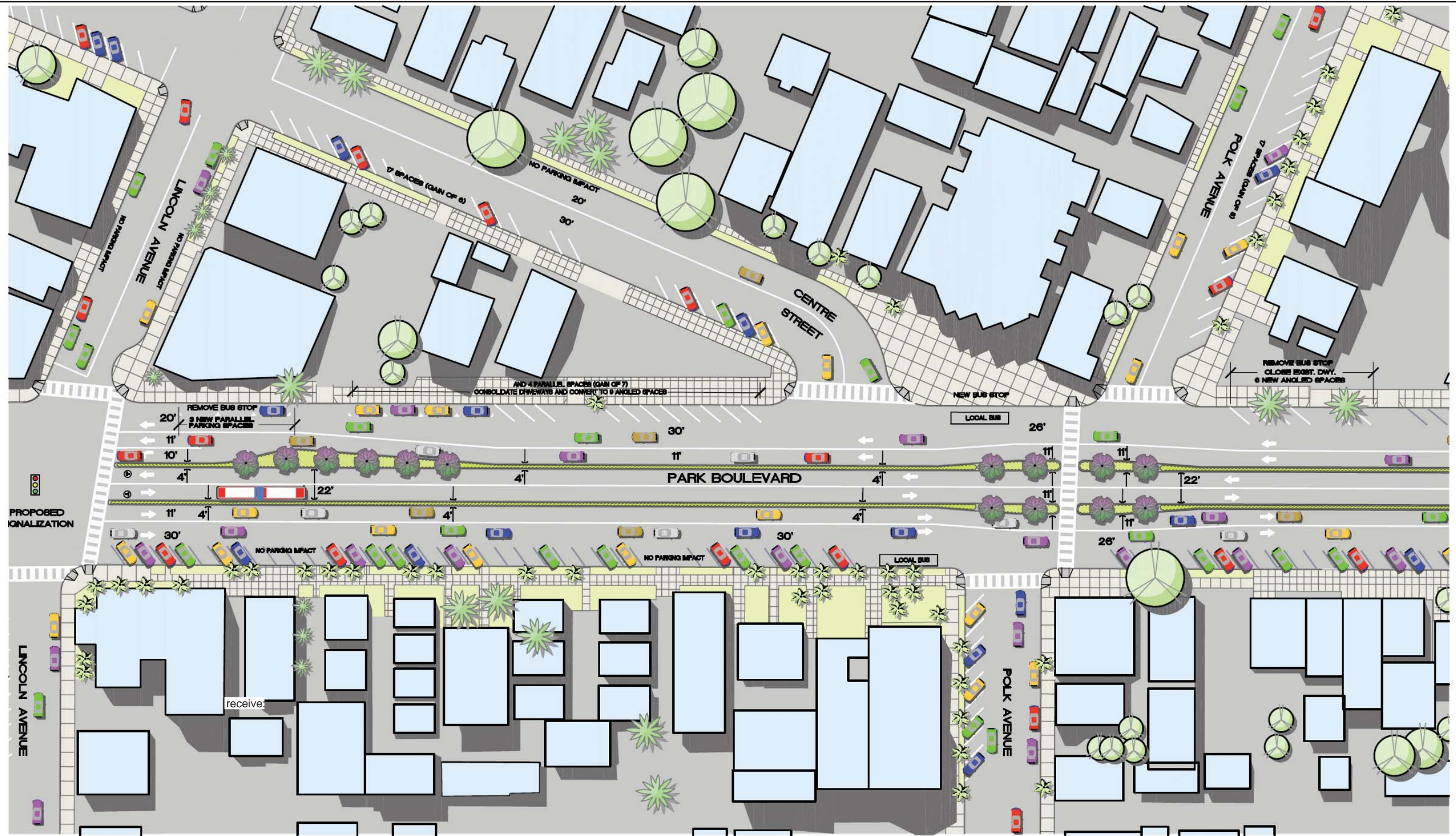


Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates 2008



Figure 4  
Park Boulevard, South Segment

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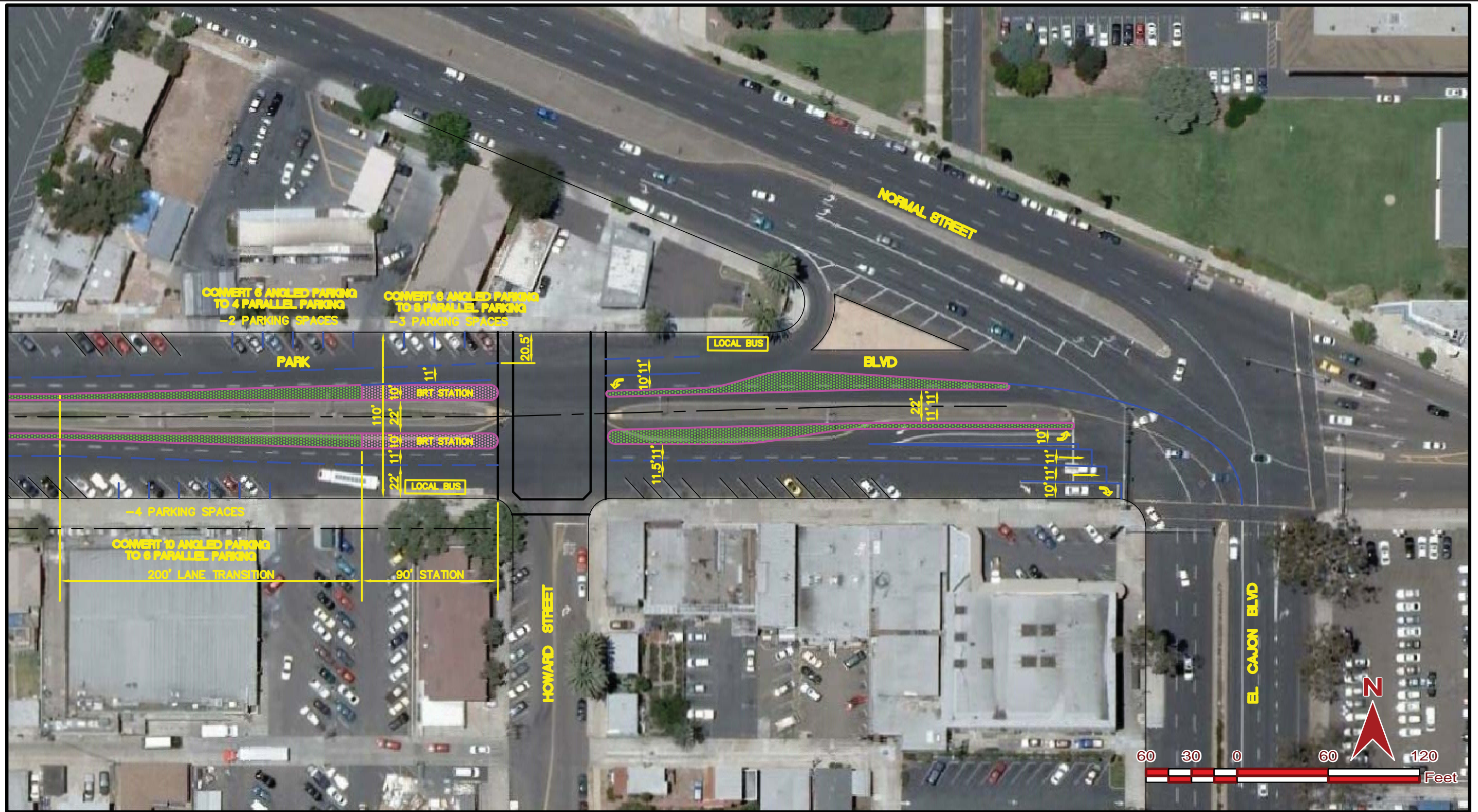
Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates 2008



Figure 5  
Park Boulevard, Middle Segment

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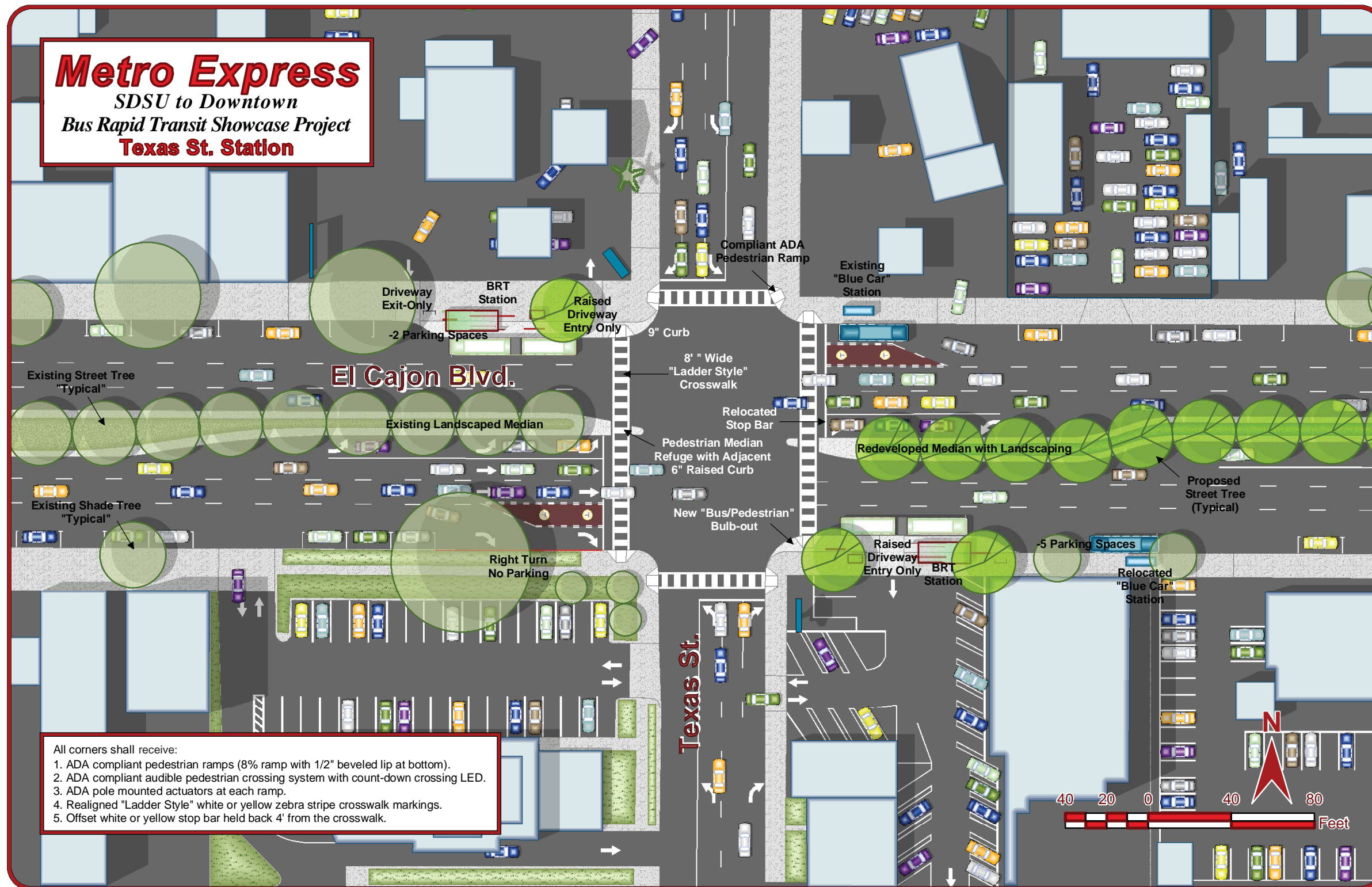


Source: SANDAG 2008



Figure 6  
Park Boulevard, North Segment

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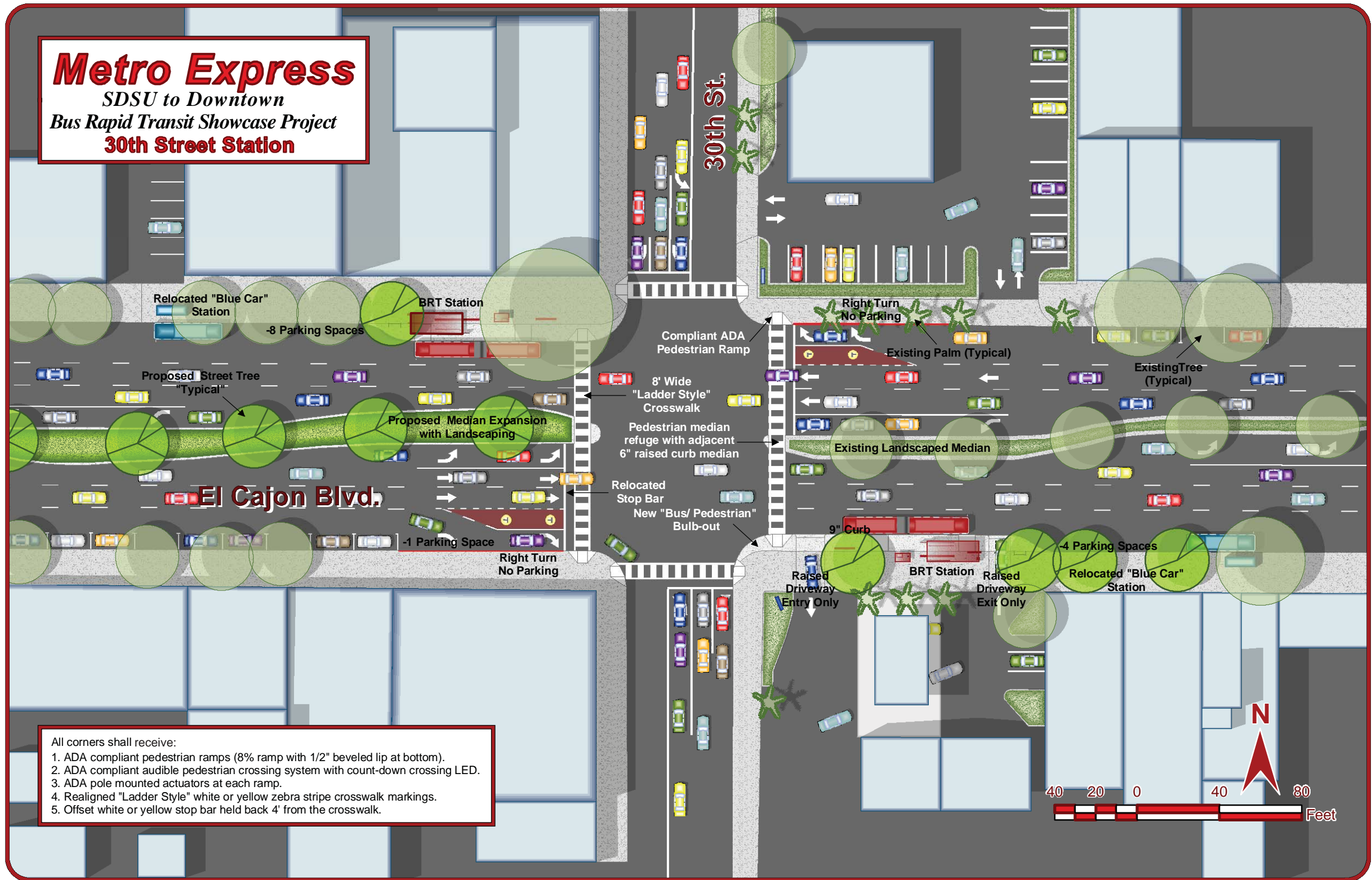


Source: SANDAG 2007



Figure 7  
Texas Street Bus Station

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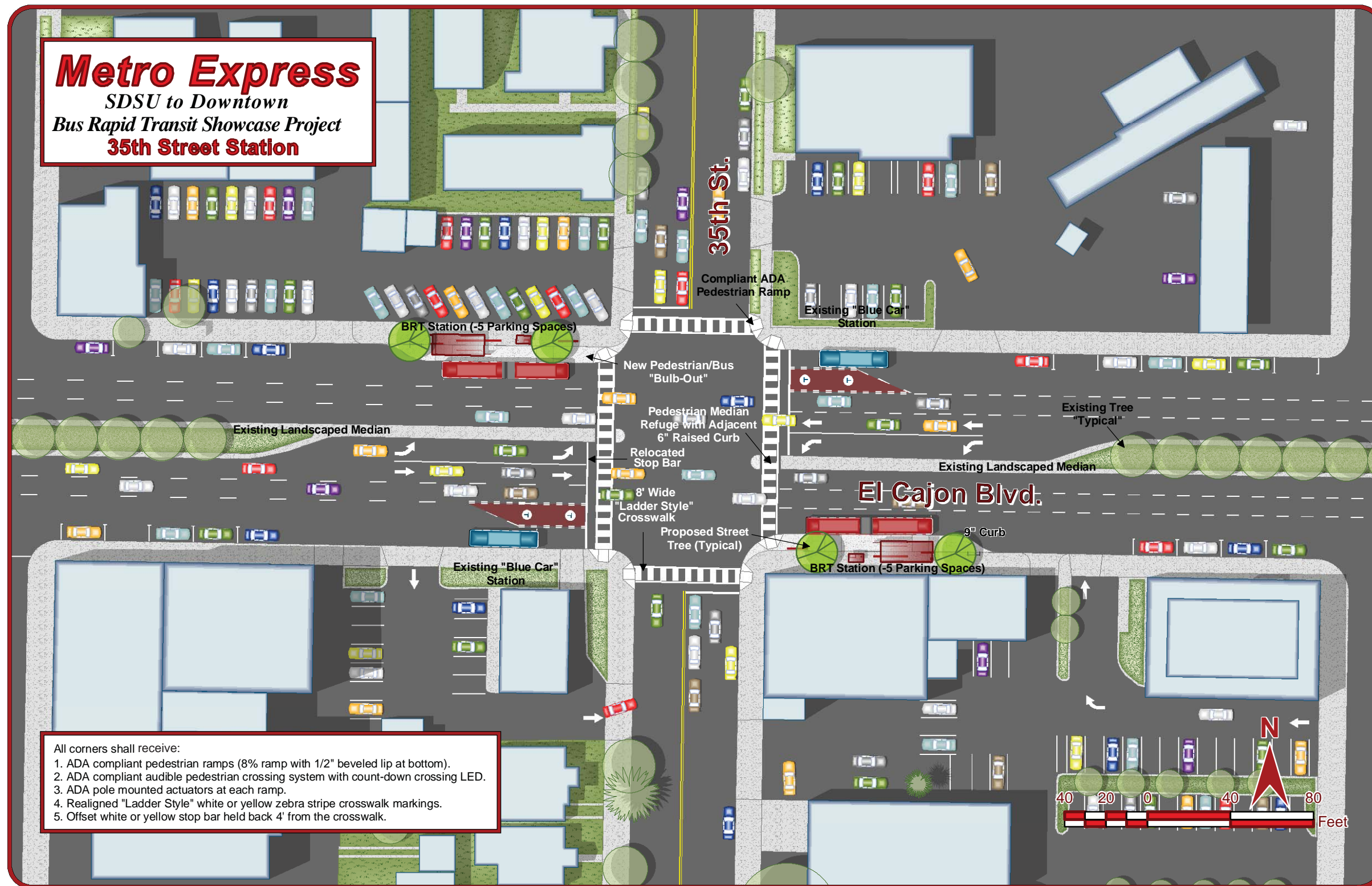


Source: SANDAG 2007



Figure 8  
 30th Street Bus Station

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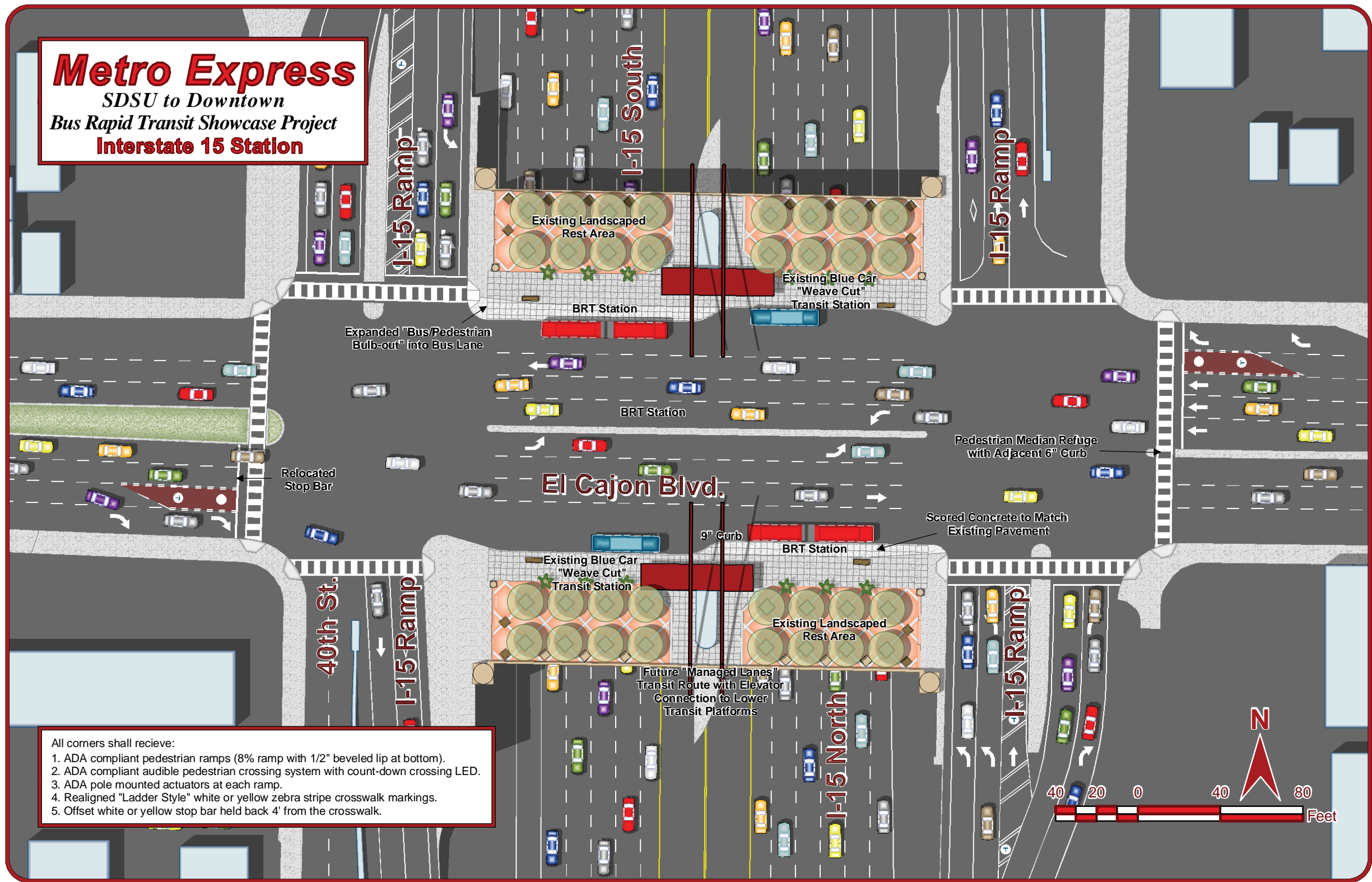
Source: SANDAG 2007



Figure 9  
35th Street Bus Station

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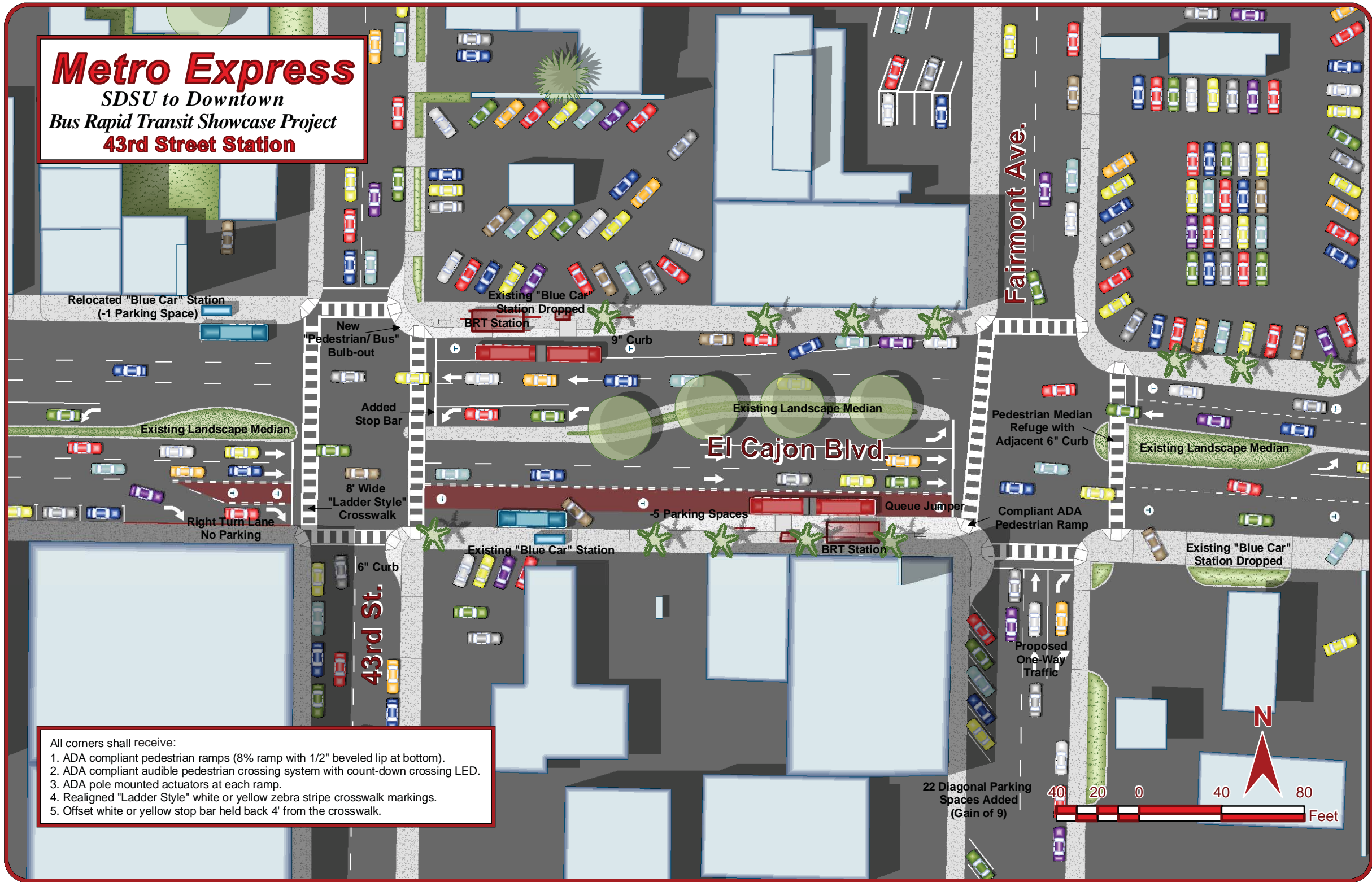


Source: SANDAG 2008



Figure 10  
 I-15 Bus Station

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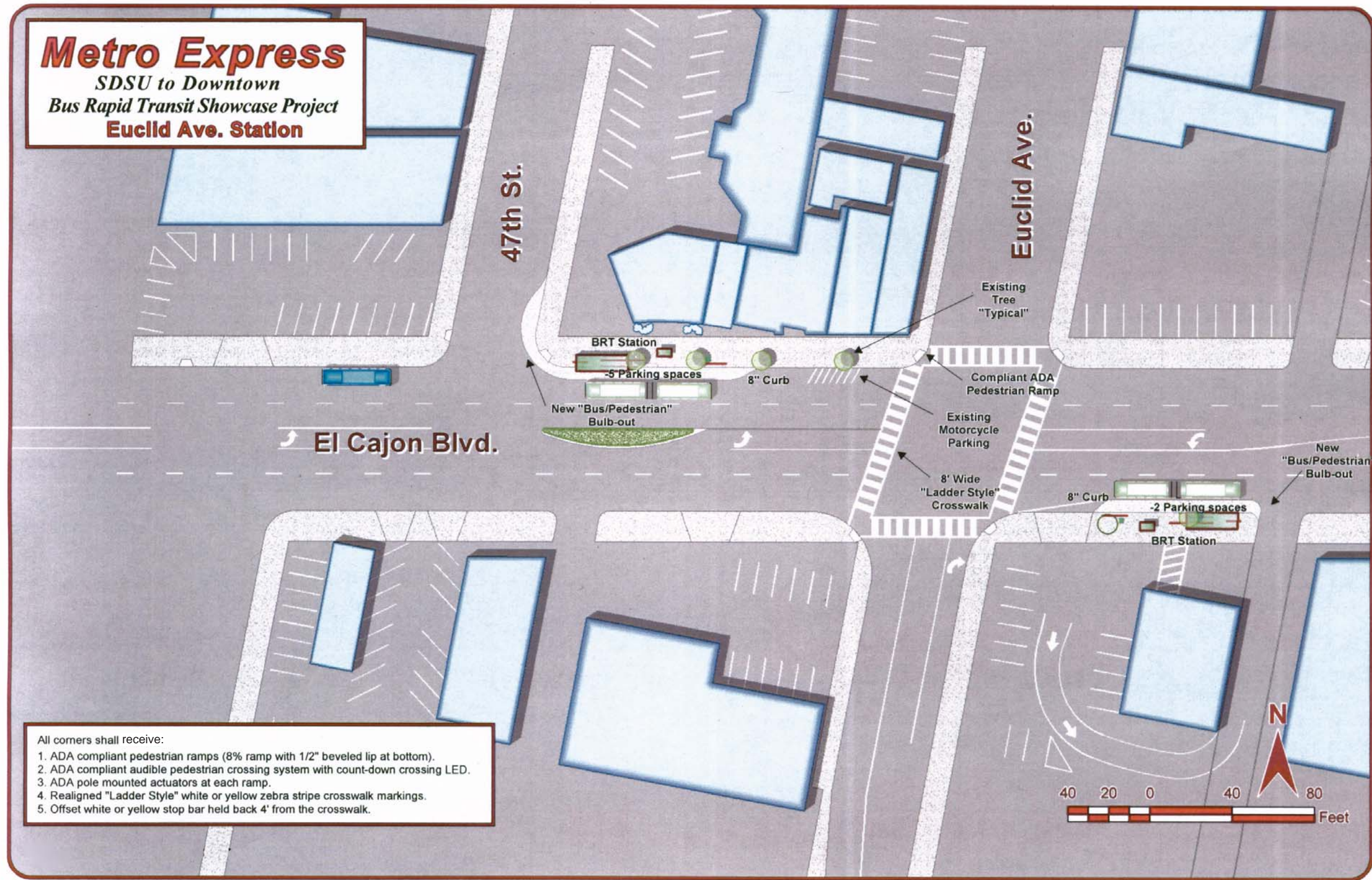


Source: SANDAG 2007



Figure 11  
 43rd Street / Fairmount Avenue Bus Station

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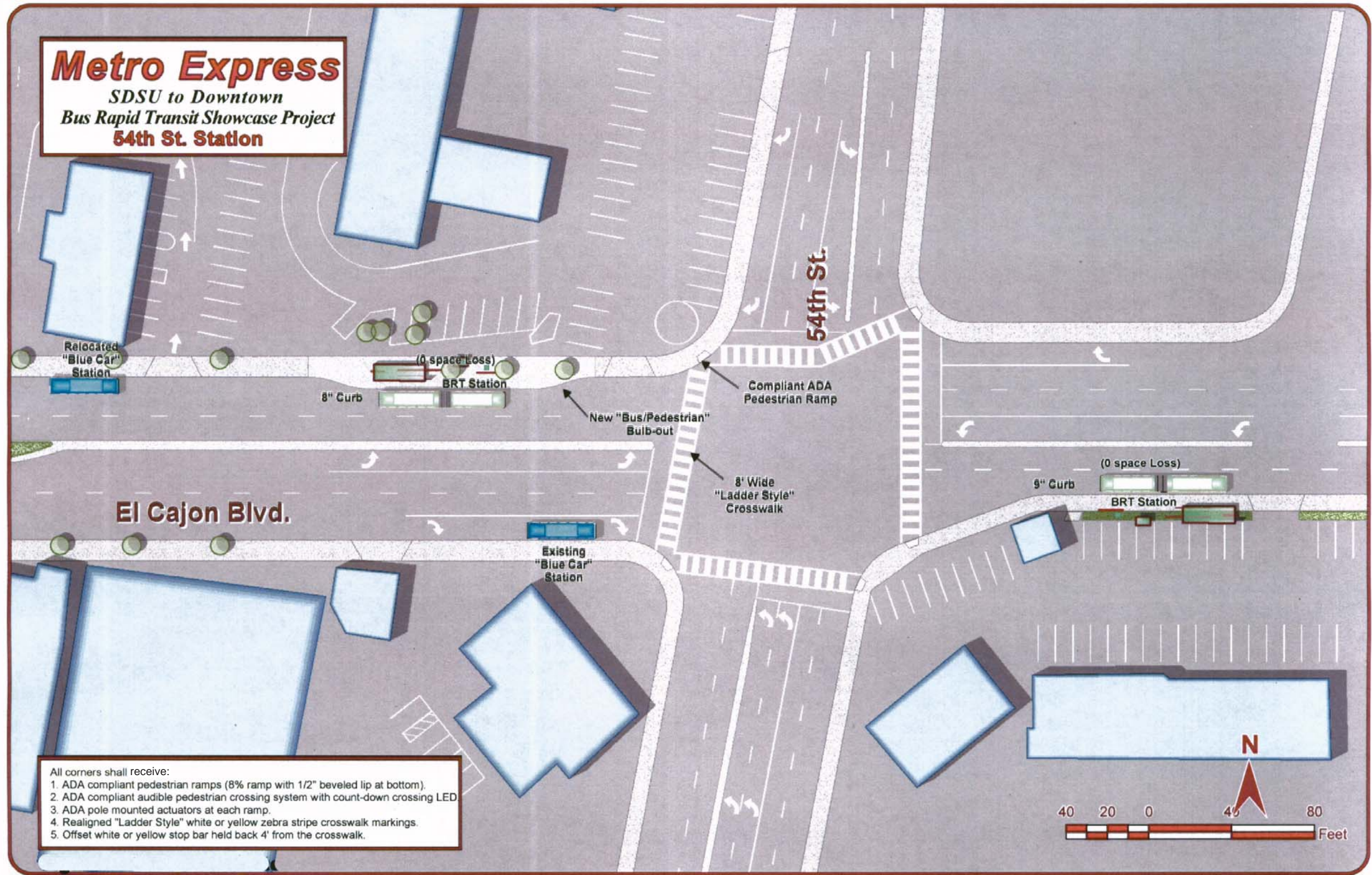


Source: SANDAG 2007



Figure 12  
 Euclid Avenue Bus Station

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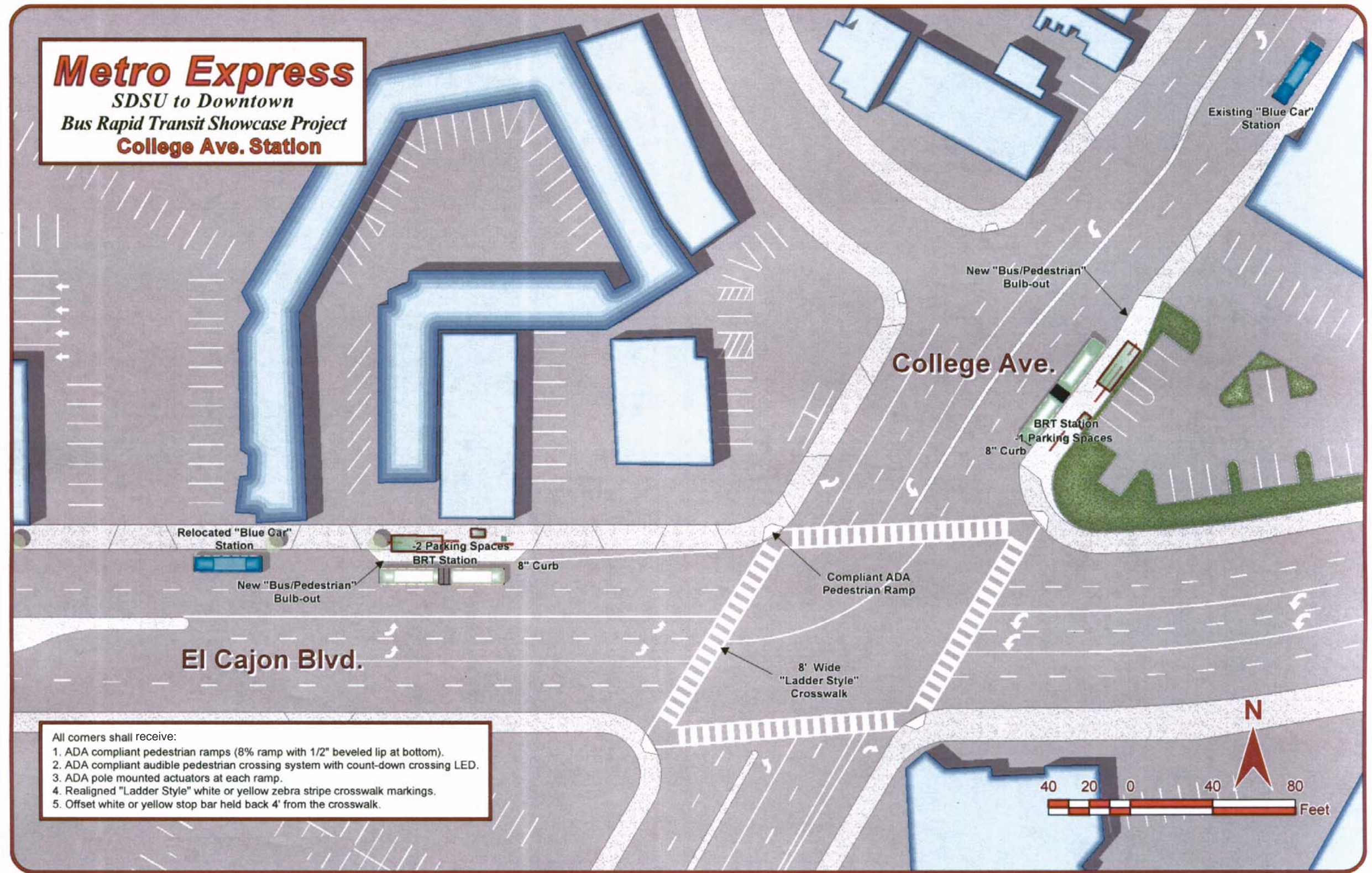
Source: SANDAG 2007



Figure 13  
 54th Street Bus Station

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Source: SANDAG 2007



Figure 14  
 College Avenue Bus Station

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### New Dedicated Transit Lanes

On El Cajon Boulevard, there are two queue jumper segments of transit lanes planned in conjunction with the I-15 and 43rd Street/Fairmount Avenue stations:

- I-15 Station: The proposed project would utilize the transit lanes that were built when the I-15 Transit Center was designed and constructed. These lanes only occur on the overpass itself (Figure 10). This project would add colored asphalt to the lane surface to distinguish transit lanes from the mixed vehicle lanes.
- 43rd Street/Fairmount Avenue Station: A transit queue jumper lane would extend in the eastbound direction between 43rd Street and Fairmount Avenue (Figure 11). The queue jumper lane would allow buses to advance to the front of the intersection and give them a few extra seconds to merge into traffic east of Fairmount Avenue, where the road narrows from three lanes to two lanes in each direction.

On Park Boulevard, new dedicated transit lanes would extend along the center of the roadway between El Cajon Boulevard and University Avenue. These transit lanes would be marked with signage, special coloring, and/or barriers to prevent other drivers from encroaching into the transit lanes.

### Modified Lanes and Traffic Flow Movements

Related to the construction of the above-described transit lanes are plans to improve overall traffic flow and circulation.

On El Cajon Boulevard, roadway modifications are limited to the following:

- At the 43rd Street/Fairmount Avenue station area, a right-turn lane would be added on eastbound El Cajon Boulevard at 43rd Street. In addition, Fairmount Avenue between El Cajon Boulevard and Orange Avenue would be converted to one-way travel (northbound) to help complete the Fairmount Avenue/43rd Street couplet. The adjacent community is currently debating the benefits and impacts of converting Fairmount Avenue into one-way travel. The Rapid Bus project does not depend on this design, but is shown in the current design, as it addresses issues of safety, on-street parking, and bus merges.

On Park Boulevard, several roadway modifications are proposed:

- Signalize the Lincoln Avenue intersection
- Close Polk Avenue to vehicle cross traffic but maintain a pedestrian crossing, utilizing the existing signal infrastructure
- Install a new signal at Howard Avenue to allow left turns from Howard onto Park Boulevard and to provide for safe pedestrian access to the rapid bus shelters
- At the University Avenue/Park Boulevard intersection, alter the two frontage streets leading to the top of the Georgia Street Bridge. The vehicle access to and from Park Boulevard would be narrowed to improve pedestrian safety at this intersection. This would be accomplished by use of bollards, extended sidewalk paving, and raised driveway aprons.

## Project Summary

Table 2 provides a summary of proposed improvements along the rapid bus route.

## Project Construction

The proposed project is anticipated to be built in 2010 and operational in 2011, if funding for the project is identified. The project currently anticipates funding from the TransNet Extension measure and the federal Very Small Starts program. All construction would occur Monday through Friday between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

**Table 2  
MID-CITY RAPID BUS PROJECT  
SUMMARY OF PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS**

Station	New Rapid Bus Station	New Street Trees at Station	Improved Pedestrian Crosswalks	Pedestrian Bulb-Outs and Sidewalk Ramps	Central Median Pedestrian Refuges	Bus Storage Pockets	Transit Signal Priority (will occur at all signals on El Cajon Blvd.)	New Transit Through Lanes	Street System Modifications <sup>1</sup>
Park at University Avenue	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X <sup>1</sup>	X
Park at El Cajon Boulevard	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X <sup>1</sup>	X
Texas Street/El Cajon Boulevard	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
30 <sup>th</sup> Street/El Cajon Boulevard	X	X	X	X	X <sup>2</sup>	X	X		
35 <sup>th</sup> Street/El Cajon Boulevard	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
I-15/El Cajon Boulevard	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X <sup>3</sup>	
43 <sup>rd</sup> Street and Fairmount Avenue/El Cajon Boulevard	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X <sup>4</sup>	X
Euclid Avenue/El Cajon Boulevard	X	X	X	X			X		

**Table 2  
MID-CITY RAPID BUS PROJECT  
SUMMARY OF PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS**

<b>Station</b>	<b>New Rapid Bus Station</b>	<b>New Street Trees at Station</b>	<b>Improved Pedestrian Crosswalks</b>	<b>Pedestrian Bulb-Outs and Sidewalk Ramps</b>	<b>Central Median Pedestrian Refuges</b>	<b>Bus Storage Pockets</b>	<b>Transit Signal Priority (will occur at all signals on El Cajon Blvd.)</b>	<b>New Transit Through Lanes</b>	<b>Street System Modifications<sup>1</sup></b>
54 <sup>th</sup> Street/El Cajon Boulevard	X	X	X	X			X		
College Avenue/El Cajon Boulevard	X	X	X	X			X		

1. Pair of transit lanes in center of roadway between University Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard, separated from vehicle lanes by medians.
2. Central median expansion also proposed.
3. On I-15 deck only. These are existing transit lanes that will be modified with new pigment.
4. Between 43<sup>rd</sup> Street and Fairmount Avenue in the eastbound direction only.

#### IV. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

<input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality
<input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils
<input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials	<input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Noise	<input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems	<input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance	

## V. DETERMINATION

On the basis of the initial evaluation that follows:

- The proposed project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to the general exemption (CEQA Guidelines, 15061 (b)(3)), a statutory exemption, and/or a categorical exemption, and that if a categorical exemption, none of the exceptions to the exemption apply. A NOTICE OF EXEMPTION will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, no further environmental document is required. FINDINGS consistent with this determination will be prepared.



Signature

Rob Rundle, Principal Regional Planner

Date

For: San Diego Association of Governments

## VI. EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

This section evaluates the potential environmental effects of the proposed project using the environmental checklist from the State CEQA Guidelines as amended. The definitions of the response column headings include:

- A. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- B. "Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from earlier analyses may be cross-referenced).
- C. "Less Than Significant Impact" applies where the project creates no significant impacts, only Less than Significant impacts.
- D. "No Impact" applies where a project does not create an impact in that category. "No Impact" answers do not require an explanation if they are adequately supported by the information sources cited by the lead agency which show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project specific screening analysis).

### 1. Aesthetics

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## ***Environmental Setting***

The project site is located in the mid-city area within the City of San Diego. The proposed project includes a new 10-mile limited-stop rapid bus route between downtown and SDSU, primarily on existing public right-of-way, which follows an existing bus route. Improvements to support the rapid bus route are focused within segments of the El Cajon Boulevard and Park Boulevard corridors and include transit priority systems and new enhanced rapid bus stations at 10 major intersections. The proposed project is surrounded primarily by residential and commercial uses, which are not considered to contain scenic features. The proposed rapid bus route is not located on designated or eligible scenic roads and it does not intersect a designated or eligible scenic road (Caltrans Scenic Highway Program 2007).

The visual character of the proposed rapid bus route is defined by primarily level topography in a highly urbanized area with the exception of the segment of Park Boulevard, which traverses through Balboa Park. However, this segment of Park Boulevard through Balboa Park would not include any road modifications or the construction of new bus stations. The dominant foreground views from the proposed bus route are of a densely urbanized area and views of the landscaped Balboa Park. The middle ground and background views are limited due to the relatively flat topography of the project area and the obstruction of the structures and buildings adjacent to the roads identified for the proposed bus route. Within the areas where the middle ground and background views are visible along the rapid bus route, the views are consistent with the foreground views of densely urbanized areas and Balboa Park.

## ***Discussion***

### ***a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?***

**No Impact.** No designated scenic views, vistas, or resources are located along the project route. The project is located on relatively level topography in a highly urbanized area consisting of institutional, commercial, and residential uses within the nine communities of the City of San Diego as shown in Figure 3. Due to the level topography and surrounding development, no views of the ocean are provided along roadways of the proposed rapid bus route. Additionally, the proposed project would not involve construction of any new structures at a bulk or scale that could obstruct any views or alter a current viewshed (i.e., downtown skyline, Balboa Park). Therefore, no impacts to scenic vistas would occur.

### ***b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?***

**No Impact.** No designated state scenic highways are located in the vicinity of the project. No historic structures, landmarks, or rock outcroppings would be removed as a result of project development. Additional discussion related to historical resources is provided in Item 5. The proposed project is located along existing roads in developed/urbanized areas where on-site vegetation consists of ornamental street-side landscaping, which is not considered a significant scenic resource. The proposed project does traverse through Balboa Park; however, this portion of the alignment would not include any modifications to the road (Park Boulevard) or the construction of any new bus stations. It is anticipated that project implementation would not substantially affect existing landscaping. Landscaping, however, would be installed where necessary, to offset any removal of landscaping occurring with project implementation. No impacts to scenic resources would occur.

**c. Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?**

**No Impact.** Implementation of the proposed project would not result in a substantial change in the visual character or land use of the project site, since all improvements would be made within existing rights-of-way. The proposed project would be consistent with applicable General Plan and zoning designations and would be compatible with existing surrounding land uses as it utilizes existing roads and follows an existing bus route. Hardscape improvements would include passenger platforms and associated transit-related furniture, such as benches and shelters, and traffic lanes and signals. Implementation of the proposed project would have an overall positive effect on the visual character of the site as the new bus stations, intersection improvements, and deployment of specialized buses would be consistent with and integrate with surrounding land uses (e.g., residential, commercial, institutional, etc.). The visual character of the site would be altered during construction activities; however, this would be temporary. Therefore, the project would not result in visual impacts related to visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings.

**d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The project site is located in the City of San Diego and is surrounded by urban development that currently includes streetlights along roadways, and adjacent institutional/commercial/residential uses. Project lighting would consist of new traffic signals and lighting at stations. The addition of project lighting would contribute incrementally to urban light sources but would not create a new source of substantial light or glare. Proposed lighting would be directional and/or shielded to minimize spillover into surrounding land uses. This type of lighting is currently in use along the proposed rapid bus route and would represent a negligible addition relative to the existing facility lighting. Therefore, a less than significant impact related to lighting and glare is anticipated as a result of the proposed project.

**2. Agricultural Resources**

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:</p>				
<p>a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c. Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use?	□	□	□	■

**Environmental Setting**

The project is located in the mid-city area within the City of San Diego. The proposed project includes a new 10-mile limited-stop rapid bus route between downtown and SDSU along existing roads. Agricultural uses and land designated for agriculture are not located along the proposed rapid bus route. The corridors within the proposed rapid bus route are highly urbanized and developed with mixes of commercial, office, institutional, and residential development of varying densities with the exception of Balboa Park (a regional park) along Park Boulevard. Residential development is primarily located along both Park Boulevard, between Balboa Park and University Avenue, and on College Avenue, between El Cajon Boulevard and Montezuma Avenue.

**Discussion**

**a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project route is located in a highly urbanized, developed, mixed-use area. No agricultural resources exist on or adjacent to the alignment. No Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance is mapped in the project vicinity. The project alignment and surrounding areas are classified as “urban and built-up land” by the State of California Department of Conservation under the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP). “Urban and built-up land” is defined as land occupied by structures with a build density of at least one unit to one and one-half acres. The proposed project would be constructed in “urban and built-up land” as classified by the FMMP. The proposed project would not introduce a new adjacent use that could be incompatible with the current uses. Rather, the proposed project would provide the same type of activity that currently exists. Therefore, no impacts to prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance would result with implementation of the proposed project.

**b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project route does not contain agricultural resources, is not zoned for agricultural uses, and is not the subject of a Williamson Act contract. No impacts to agricultural resources would occur.

**c. Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use?**

**No Impact.** No Farmland is present in the project vicinity and the proposed project would not change the existing environment that would result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural uses.

### 3. Air Quality

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### **Environmental Setting**

The proposed project is located in the San Diego Air Basin (SDAB), the boundaries of which are coincident with San Diego County. The agency responsible for administering state and federal air quality laws and regulating sources of air pollution in the County is the San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD).

As required by the federal Clean Air Act, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) sets and maintains federal standards for air pollutants, known as the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The state of California sets and maintains California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) that are equal to or more restrictive than the NAAQS and include pollutants not included in the NAAQS.

Areas are classified as either “attainment” or “non attainment” areas for each pollutant based on whether or not the NAAQS and CAAQS have been achieved. Attainment classifications for the SDAB are shown in Table 3.

Pollutant	Attainment Status	
	Federal	State
O <sub>3</sub> – 1-Hour	-- <sup>1</sup>	Nonattainment Serious
O <sub>3</sub> – 8-hour	Nonattainment - Basic <sup>2</sup>	
PM <sub>10</sub>	Attainment	Nonattainment
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	Attainment	Nonattainment
CO	Attainment	Attainment
NO <sub>2</sub>	Attainment	Attainment
SO <sub>2</sub>	Attainment	Attainment
Pb	Attainment	Attainment

Sources: USEPA 2007; ARB 2007

O<sub>3</sub> – ozone; PM<sub>10</sub> – particulate material equal to or less than 10 microns in diameter; PM<sub>2.5</sub> - particulate material equal to or less than 2.5 microns in diameter; CO – carbon monoxide; NO<sub>2</sub> – nitrogen dioxide; SO<sub>2</sub> – sulfur dioxide; Pb – lead.

1. Repealed by law in June 2005.

2. Formally classified as Subpart 1.

## **Discussion**

### **a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?**

**Less than Significant Impact.** The applicable air quality plan for the SDAB is the Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS), which is prepared by the SDAPCD. The RAQS establishes the plans and control measures designed to attain the state air quality standards for ozone. The RAQS is part of the California State Implementation Plan for attaining the ozone NAAQS. There are no air quality plans for particulate pollutants. Plans are not required for pollutants for which the SDAB is in attainment.

The RAQS contains pollutant emission budgets that are based upon existing and planned development in the region. Projects that conflict with the RAQS are those that would change land uses or take other actions resulting in pollutant emissions that are greater than anticipated. The pollutants might be generated on the project site; by vehicle trips generated by the proposed project; or by changes in vehicle trip parameters, such as average trip distance or average speed.

The proposed project would not change any land uses nor would it generate new vehicle trips. Objectives of the proposed project include making transit more attractive and increasing the number of transit riders. The result would be a reduction in non-transit vehicle trips and a reduction in vehicle emissions. The project traffic report (KOA Corporation 2007) analyzes project effects at 21 intersections for near-term and horizon year scenarios. The numbers and magnitudes of increases and decreases in intersection delays are approximately equal, and it may be concluded that the effects on vehicle emissions resulting from intersection delays, would be relatively small. Therefore the proposed project would not conflict with the RAQS, and the impact would be less than significant.

***b. Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?***

**Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would include construction activities at each of the proposed bus stations and additional construction or demolition at some existing local bus stations and signal locations. The principal sources of pollutant emissions during construction are fugitive dust and construction equipment engine exhaust. Fugitive dust includes particulate matter equal to or less than 10 microns in diameter (PM<sub>10</sub>) and particulate matter equal to or less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). As shown in Table 3, the SDAB is currently in nonattainment for both PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. Release of these pollutants during construction activities leads to dust deposits on buildings, vehicles, and plants. In construction equipment exhaust, the principal pollutants of concern are those that result in ozone formation. These pollutants are volatile organic compounds (VOC) and oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>). VOC is not a criteria pollutant and does not have any federal or State standards. A secondary source of VOC is painting. NO<sub>2</sub> is a criteria pollutant and does have federal or State standards; however, as shown in Table 3, the SDAB is in attainment for NO<sub>2</sub>.

Fugitive dust is generally created during pavement, curb, and sidewalk demolition and transfer of sand and gravel and similar materials. The proposed project construction work does not include extensive grading of undeveloped land or vehicle travel on unpaved roads. Therefore, the quantity of particulate pollutant emissions would not be substantial. Similarly, the relative size of these construction projects would limit both the number of pieces of construction equipment required and the duration of use, and the quantity of ozone-forming emissions would not be substantial. Therefore, the construction activities of the proposed project would not violate any air quality standard, nor contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation; the impact would be less than significant.

Pollutant emissions from vehicles on El Cajon and Park Boulevards and intersecting streets would not be substantially greater than existing emissions and may even be less than existing emissions because of a reduction in non-transit vehicle trips, as discussed in section 3a above. Therefore, the operational activities of the proposed project would not contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation; the impact would be less than significant and potentially beneficial.

***c. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?***

**Less than Significant Impact.** The SDAB is nonattainment under federal or state designation for ozone, particulate material equal to or less than 10 microns in diameter (PM<sub>10</sub>), and particulate material equal to or less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). As described in the previous two sections, both short-term and long-term pollutant increases would not be substantial, and long-term emissions could be decreased from existing conditions. The quantities of emissions would not be cumulatively considerable and the impact would be less than significant.

***d. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?***

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.** While regional particulate emissions would be relatively small, as described above, there is the potential to expose persons and property to short term

concentrations of dust and particulates. This exposure could result from project construction occurring in busy commercial areas with considerable pedestrian and vehicle traffic.

Exposure of this nature is prohibited by the City of San Diego Municipal Code, as follows: "Air contaminants including smoke, charred paper, dust, soot, grime, carbon, noxious acids, toxic fumes, gases, odors, and particulate matter, or any emissions that endanger human health, cause damage to vegetation or property, or cause soiling shall not be permitted to emanate beyond the boundaries of the premises upon which the use emitting the contaminants is located" (City of San Diego Municipal Code Chapter 14, Article 2, Division 7, §142.0710 Air Contaminant Regulations, 2000). Although the "premises" of the proposed project construction areas are not defined by property boundaries, there is a clear intent of the law to separate pollutant generation from receptors.

In order to reduce potentially significant impacts resulting from short term construction activities to less than significant, the following mitigation measure shall be adopted.

#### **AIR-1: Dust Control**

The Project Contractor shall prevent dust exposure to persons or property by implementation of one or more of the following measures to prevent visible dust plumes from extending beyond the boundary of the construction area and into public space:

- Physical separation of the source and receptors with a solid barrier that would prevent the transmission of dust
- Physical separation of the source and receptors by creation of a buffer zone and pedestrian and vehicle detours
- Wetting of areas to prevent the generation of dust plumes.

#### ***e. Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?***

**Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not locate or relocate people close to a source of objectionable odors. In addition, the operation of the proposed project would not introduce objectionable odors. Construction activities may generate temporary odors from asphalt installation, painting, or other typical construction tasks. While these odors may not be desirable, they would not occur in the intensity or duration to be considered substantially objectionable. The impact would be less than significant.

#### 4. Biological Resources

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### **Environmental Setting**

The proposed project is located entirely within existing developed roadway rights-of-way within a highly urbanized area.

#### **Discussion**

- a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?**



**No Impact.** The proposed project is located entirely within existing developed roadway rights-of-way within a highly urbanized area. No candidate, sensitive, or special status species are expected to occur on the project site. Thus, no impacts to sensitive species would occur.

**b. *Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?***

**No Impact.** Development of the proposed project would not impact any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

**c. *Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?***

**No Impact.** No federal or state jurisdictional areas occur within the limits of construction and operation of the proposed project. Therefore, no impacts to federally protected wetlands (as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act) would occur.

**d. *Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?***

**No Impact.** The project site is located in an urban area within the City of San Diego that is designated in applicable land use plans for institutional, commercial, residential uses. The site is not within a designated preserve area, nor is it contiguous with a wildlife corridor. The proposed project would utilize existing roads and not require the expansion or widening of these roads. Therefore, no associated impacts would occur.

**e. *Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?***

**No Impact.** The proposed project would not conflict with any local policies protecting biological resources.

**f. *Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?***

**No Impact.** The project site is not located within the limits of the regional City of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) study area. The proposed rapid bus route traverses adjacent to an area designated as part of the MSCP along Park Boulevard in Balboa Park; however, it would not require the expansion of Park Boulevard into Balboa Park as the proposed project will utilize existing roads and follow an existing bus route. The project site does not contain sensitive habitat or species. As a result, the project does not conflict with the conservation goals of the Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) and no impacts resulting from a conflict with an adopted habitat conservation plan would occur.

## 5. Cultural Resources

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### **Environmental Setting**

The sequence of human occupation of coastal southern California begins in the Paleoindian period (11,500-8500 B.P.), a time in which adaptations were formerly believed to be focused on the hunting of large game, but are now recognized to represent more generalized hunting and gathering, with considerable emphasis on marine resources (Erlandson and Colten 1991; Jones 1991). The following period, the Archaic (8500-1300 B.P.) is traditionally seen as encompassing both a coastal and an inland focus, with the coastal Archaic represented by the shell middens of the La Jolla complex and the inland Archaic represented by the Pauma complex. The Late Prehistoric period (1300-200 B.P.) is marked by the appearance of small projectile points indicating the use of the bow and arrow, the common use of ceramics, and the replacement of inhumations with cremations.

During the Spanish period (1769-1821), the San Diego region was subject to exploration and the establishment of permanent Spanish settlements. San Diego Presidio and the missions at San Diego and San Luis Rey were built and occupied during this period. Water has always been an important resource in the semiarid San Diego region and water projects began in the Spanish period with the construction of Padre (Mission) Dam and its appurtenant 6-mile flume. Agriculture and livestock grazing formed the basis of the economy. Aboriginal lifeways were increasingly modified, as more and more of the local natives came under the influence of the missions.

Many Spanish practices survived into the early part of the Mexican period (1821-1848). The secularization of the missions in 1834 brought notable changes to the land ownership in the region. Large tracts of land were granted to families and individuals. Cattle ranching was a major economic focus.

The American period (1848-present) began when Mexico ceded California to the United States as part of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. While some of the previous land claims were validated, much of the land that was once part of the ranchos became available for settlement. Population movement into California was an outgrowth of several events, including the discovery of gold, the conclusion of the Civil

War, the passage of the Homestead Act, and the construction of connecting railways, as well as both World War I and II.

A records search conducted at the South Coastal Information Center (SCIC) and the San Diego Museum of Man identified previous cultural resource investigations and archaeological resources within and in the vicinity of the project area. The records search revealed that a total of 20 prehistoric and historic archaeological sites have been recorded within 1 mile of the project area. Prehistoric sites range from sparse scatters of shell and artifacts to major habitation sites, while historic sites consist mainly of deposits of debris and the remains of structures.

The historic address database located at the SCIC identified 24 historic addresses within a 1-mile radius of the project area. Only one, the Georgia Street Bridge, is located within or immediately adjacent to the project area.

A total of 85 previous cultural resources investigations have been conducted within a 1-mile radius of the project area. Of these, 67 are survey investigations, 9 are monitoring projects, 7 are evaluation of historic residences, 1 is a literature review, and 1 is an Environmental Impact Report.

A historic and archaeological survey was conducted on October 2, 2007, along the project corridor to identify potential impacts to historic and archaeological resources. The entire project alignment was surveyed, with special attention given to each bus stop identified in the current project design. One historic structure, the Georgia Street Bridge, and one historic element, a sidewalk stamp, were identified within the project area. Although trolley tracks from the San Diego Electric Railway have been documented along Park Boulevard and University Avenue, no trolley tracks were observed within the project area during the survey effort.

### ***Discussion***

#### ***a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?***

**Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** There is one significant historical resource in the proposed project area. The Georgia Street Bridge (P-37-016277) is located immediately adjacent to the proposed new station at Park Boulevard and University Avenue. The Georgia Street Bridge (including the retaining walls associated with the Georgia Street Bridge) is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP); therefore, it is considered a significant resource under CEQA. No other significant historical resources were identified at the proposed bus station locations.

Under the proposed project, new raised driveway aprons will be constructed immediately adjacent to the retaining walls of the Georgia Street Bridge. As currently proposed, the construction of the raised driveway aprons, will occur on the northeast and southeast corners of the intersection of Park Boulevard and University Avenue. These raised aprons would be placed within the middle of the approach lanes to the bridge ramps and would be defined by a flexible bollard protection system that would separate the apron from the retaining walls. Although the raised aprons will not physically encroach on the fabric of the retaining walls and bridge, they are in close enough proximity to have the potential to cause a visual intrusion which could be a significant impact to the historical resource.

One historic sidewalk stamp, marked "G.R. Daley 3-1925", was identified at the southwest corner of the intersection of 30th and El Cajon Boulevard. No other sidewalk stamps were identified at the proposed bus station locations. The project proposes a new bus/pedestrian bulb out on the southeast and northwest corners, and new compliant ADA pedestrian ramps are proposed for all four corners of the intersection. As proposed, the construction of the pedestrian ramps may cause a significant impact to the sidewalk stamp located on the southwest corner. Adoption of the mitigation measures stated below would reduce these impacts to less than significant.

#### **CUL-1: Raised Driveway Aprons on Park Boulevard Near the Georgia Street Bridge**

During creation of construction details for the raised driveway aprons at the corners of Park Boulevard and University Avenue, the design of the aprons and associated construction will be sympathetic to the Georgia Street Bridge and its retaining walls. This should follow the guidelines set forth in the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Appropriate treatments could include making sure that the concrete in the raised aprons are of a similar type to that of the bridge (yet distinguishable from the bridge), since the "innovative use of reinforced-concrete..." is noted in the significance assessment of the bridge as a historic resource (Department of Parks and Recreation form 523B for site P-37-016277).

#### **CUL-2: El Cajon Boulevard and 30th Street Bus Station – Sidewalk Stamp**

Prior to the issuance of a building/construction permit, the construction plans for the 30<sup>th</sup> Street bus station shall be reviewed by City of San Diego Historic Resources Board. If the City of San Diego Historic Resources Board determines there would be an impact to the sidewalk stamp, the stamp shall be preserved prior to construction per recommendation by the City of San Diego Historic Resources Board in compliance with Policy HP-A.5.c in the Historic Preservation Element of the City of San Diego's General Plan, which serves to "protect and preserve historic sidewalk stamps, street signs, lamp posts, street trees, and other hardscape and landscape elements that contribute to the historic character of a neighborhood." If the sidewalk stamp will be affected, the stamp will be saw-cut and relocated in the same general location with the same orientation as it was originally. All work would be monitored by an archaeologist identified by the City of San Diego. If as a result of that review, it is determined that the sidewalk stamp would not be affected, no mitigation would be necessary.

#### ***b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?***

**Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** No archaeological resources were identified during the survey investigation and no previously recorded archaeological sites were located within the project area. Historic research indicates trolley tracks from the San Diego Electric Railway ran along Park Boulevard and University Avenue. While these tracks were not observed during the field investigation, there is a potential for these tracks or associated elements to be buried under the current roadway. The project proposed the construction of new medians along Park Boulevard, north and south of University Avenue, and along Park Boulevard, south of El Cajon Boulevard. Damage to these undiscovered buried railway elements would be considered as a significant impact to these potential resources.

**CUL 3: Park Boulevard - San Diego Electric Railway Trolley Tracks**

Subsurface activities at the median construction areas will be monitored by an archaeologist and any tracks that are found would be recorded.

**c. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?**

**No Impact.** The project site is located within the Mission Valley Groundwater Basin. This basin underlies Mission Valley and is bounded by the contacts of alluvium with the semi-permeable San Diego and Poway Formations and the impermeable Lindavista Formation. There are no known sensitive paleontological resources or unique geological features within the project area as associated with these formations (*Paleontological Resources: County of San Diego*, Demeré and Walsh 2003, p. 7, 8, 14, and 15). As such, there would be no impact to paleontological resources or geologic features and no mitigation measures would be required.

**d. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?**

**No Impact.** There are no known human remains within the project area. As such, there would be no impact to human remains.

**6. Geology and Soils**

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv. Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

The surface soil for the proposed project consists of urban land that comprises 2 to 9 percent slopes. The landscape has generally been altered by cut-and-fill operations with the fills consisting of a fine sandy loam (*Phase I Environmental Assessment*, SOTA Environmental Technology, Inc. p. 20 and 21). The geology of the project site is composed of middle to early Pleistocene paralic deposits consisting of mostly poorly sorted, moderately permeable, reddish,-brown, interfingered sandstone, beach, estuarine, and conglomerate deposits.

The San Diego coastal area is tectonically active characterized by northwest-trending, oblique right slip faults within the western part of the Pacific/North American Plate boundary. The nearest fault zone to the project site is the Rose Canyon fault zone, which includes the Mount Soledad, Old Town, Point Loma, Silver Strand, Coronado, and Spanish Bight faults. The Mount Soledad fault of the Rose Canyon fault zone displaces Holocene sediment in Rose Canyon 5 miles west of the project site where a late Pleistocene slip rate of 1 to 2 millimeters per year has been estimated.

**Discussion**

**a.i Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** No active faults traverse the project area, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map. The nearest known active fault zone is the Rose Canyon fault zone, located approximately 5 miles west of the project site. The Mount Soledad fault of the Rose Canyon fault zone displaces Holocene sediment in Rose Canyon 5 miles west of the project site where a late Pleistocene slip rate of 1 to 2 millimeters per year has been estimated. In addition, mapped active faults in the region include the Elsinore and San Jacinto fault zones. While the potential for on-site rupture cannot be completely discounted (e.g., unmapped faults could conceivably underlie the site), the likelihood for such an occurrence is considered low due to the absence of known faulting within or adjacent to the site. Therefore, impacts related to fault rupture from implementation of the proposed project would be less than significant.

***a.ii Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The project site is located in seismically active southern California and is likely to be subjected to moderate to strong seismic ground shaking. Seismic shaking at the site could be generated by events on any number of known active and potentially active faults in the region, including the Rose Canyon, Elsinore, and San Jacinto fault zones. Faulting in the region generally comprises a number of northwest-trending, predominantly right-lateral strike-slip faults at the boundary between the Pacific and North American tectonic plates. An earthquake along any of these known active fault zones could result in severe ground shaking and consequently cause injury and/or property damage along the rapid bus route. The proposed project does not include construction of any major structures (limited to transit furniture, platforms, and shelters). The project would be designed to accommodate applicable seismic loading parameters through conformance with applicable regulatory guidelines. Based on the incorporation of required design specifications, potential impacts related to seismic ground shaking would be less than significant.

***a.iii Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?***

**No Impact.** Liquefaction is the phenomenon whereby soils lose shear strength and exhibit fluid-like flow behavior. Severe or extended liquefaction can result in significant effects to surface and subsurface facilities through the loss of support and/or foundation integrity. Loose, granular soils are most susceptible to these effects, with liquefaction generally restricted to saturated or near-saturated soils at depths of less than 100 feet. The project site is located within the Mission Valley Groundwater Basin. This basin underlies Mission Valley and is bounded by the contacts of alluvium with the semipermeable San Diego and Poway Formations and the impermeable Lindavista Formation. The principal water-bearing deposits are the Pleistocene paralic deposits consisting of poorly sorted, inter-fingered standline, beach, estuarine, and conglomerate deposits. This unit has an average thickness of about 80 feet. The primary source of recharge for this basin is the infiltration of stream flow from the San Diego River. Due to the low potential for near surface groundwater and the proposed project located within existing roads that have been previously graded and leveled, the potential for liquefaction occurring at the site of the proposed project is considered very low. No impacts related to seismic-related liquefaction are anticipated from project implementation.

***a.iv Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death landslides?***

**No Impact.** The project site occurs within developed roadways in a developed area. The roadways have been graded and are level. No landslide-prone areas along or adjacent to the proposed rapid bus route are identified in applicable land use plans. Given the absence of active faults and the relatively level topography in the project area, the potential for seismically induced landslides is very low to nonexistent. No impacts related to landslides would occur.

***b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?***

**No Impact.** Erosion potential within the project site is considered low, due to the level nature of existing topography and minimal grading associated primarily with the new bus stations. Improvements would occur within existing right-of-way. Areas proposed for development would be

paved and landscaped and, therefore, would not be susceptible to significant long-term erosion and sedimentation. No other significant long-term erosion impacts would occur.

Short-term grading and construction activities would not result in substantial erosion or loss of topsoil due to the level site topography. Conformance with an NPDES General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit would be required, including the preparation and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which incorporates Best Available Technology (BAT) and/or best conventional pollutant control technology (BCT) through the use of BMPs. Typical BMPs applicable to the project are included in Section II of this document. Implementation of a General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit (SWPPP) would avoid or reduce potential short-term erosion and sedimentation impacts.

- c. ***Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?***

**No Impact.** Surface and underlying materials along the proposed project alignment include the semipermeable San Diego and Poway Formations, the impermeable Lindavista Formation, and topsoils. As previously discussed in Items 6(a)(iii) and(a)(iv), no potential impacts associated with liquefaction and landsliding would occur. Moreover, the project area is considered to exhibit nominal/low/variable risk for geologic hazards, including subsidence. Therefore, impacts related to unstable geologic units or soils would not occur.

- d. ***Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?***

**No Impact.** Expansive soils are generally high in clays or silts that shrink or swell with variation in moisture. The proposed project alignment is located along existing developed road rights-of-way, which were designed and built in compliance with the California Building Code, taking into account potential impacts due to expansive soils. Aside from the new bus stations, the proposed project would not build any large structures that would be subject to damage by expansive soils. Therefore, impacts related to expansive soils would not occur.

- e. ***Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?***

**No Impact.** No wastewater disposal systems involving the use of septic tanks, leach fields, or alternative sewage disposal systems that depend upon appropriate soil regimes are currently in use at the project site. No associated impacts from wastewater disposal systems would occur.



**7. Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

Information presented in this section is based on a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (SOTA Environmental Technology, Inc., 2007), which included a visual site inspection and a regulatory agency environmental records review of the project site.

**Historical Use**

The project site and adjacent properties have been developed for commercial, residential, and light industrial use as early as 1930. Historical records did not indicate uses associated with the storage,

transfer, or disposal of hazardous materials on the project site. Aerial photographs from 1953 show the project site and the vicinity as a fully developed corridor primarily used for mixed commercial and residential use as well as the presence of schools. Gas and oil stations are also shown along the proposed project alignment, primarily along El Cajon Boulevard; however, no evidence of releases could be identified or associated with the locations shown in the historical data. Highway construction near the project vicinity is first shown in 1975.

**Site Reconnaissance**

SOTA Environmental Technology, Inc. (SOTA) personnel conducted a visual site inspection on August 2, 2007, of the project alignment and surrounding areas to identify existing or potential environmental conditions. No evidence of improper storage or disposal of solid waste was observed. No presence of water wells and dry wells was observed. Leach lines and septic tanks were not identified, which is consistent with the dense development of the area with service provided by the municipal sewer system. Transformers are located on or adjacent to many areas along the proposed project alignment. These transformers are owned and operated by San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E). No leaks or stains were observed under or around the transformers and no indications of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) storage and/or waste were observed. In general, minor surface staining was observed throughout the project alignment and appeared to be petroleum type products associated with vehicle or equipment use. The primary types of business identified with the use of hazardous substances include gas stations, automotive/motorcycle-related businesses, and car washes, which may use lubricants, fuels, paints, waste oil, and solvents. Other businesses include fast-food operations, grocery stores, and small service-oriented businesses such as hair salons, realty, etc. The hazardous substances associated with these types of businesses are more similar to residential use.

**Regulatory Agency Database Review**

A computerized database search of various agency lists was conducted for the project site and surrounding area to identify potential hazardous contamination sites. Based upon all the standard federal environmental record sources, only a few listings were found; however, they were all not considered to pose an environmental concern for the project alignment. According to all the standard state environmental record sources, five leaking underground storage tank (LUST) listings were determined to have potential environmental impact and 22 underground storage tank (UST) sites are located adjacent to or near the project route. However, three of the LUST listings were considered to pose a low potential of environmental impact due to the distance from the project site and the 22 UST listings do not indicate that a spill or release have occurred; therefore, these sites are not considered to pose an potential environmental impact to the project site. The two remaining LUST listings that pose a potential for environmental concern due to the distance and regulatory case status are summarized in Table 4.

<b>Table 4 LUST SITES IN THE PROJECT VICINITY</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Approximate Distance from Project Alignment</b>	<b>Status</b>
Chevron USA NT0015	4745 El Cajon Blvd. San Diego, CA	Adjacent to the proposed Euclid Avenue Station and approximately 0.5 mile east of the 43 <sup>rd</sup> Street/Fairmount Avenue Station	As of July 31, 2007, no further assessment has been conducted on the site other than the removal of unleaded USTs as part of a leak

Table 4 LUST SITES IN THE PROJECT VICINITY			
Name	Address	Approximate Distance from Project Alignment	Status
			confirmation; one open case listing associated with the site.
TP Auto Repair	2426 El Cajon Blvd. San Diego, CA	Adjacent to the proposed Texas Street Station and approximately 0.5 mile east of the proposed Park Blvd./El Cajon Blvd. Station	Hydraulic oil releases identified in 1997 have impacted soil with subsequent soil removal activities conducted at the facility in the same year; no further action taken as it is considered a low priority case by the regulatory agency; one open case listing associated with the site.

Source: SOTA, 2007.

### Discussion

- a. **Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?**

**No Impact.** Operation of the proposed project would not involve the routine use, transport, and/or disposal of hazardous materials. The proposed project would consist of bus loading, unloading, and transit areas only. Therefore, no long-term operational impacts would result from project implementation.

- b. **Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?**

**No Impact.** Construction of the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Construction-related hazardous materials (fuels, etc.) would be used that could potentially result in adverse environmental impacts through accidental discharges associated with storage, vehicle operation (e.g., refueling), or maintenance.

Significant project-related impacts would be avoided or adequately minimized with implementation of regulatory requirements, industry standards, and BMPs. Typical BMPs applicable to the project are included in Section II of this document. Construction activities would be required to comply with existing regulatory requirements related to hazardous waste disposal and short-term water quality impacts related to erosion/sedimentation (i.e., acquisition of an NPDES General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit and implementation of a SWPPP). As stated above, the project would not result in any long-term operational impacts. As a result, no significant impacts to worker and/or public health and safety or project schedule would occur.

- c. ***Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?***

**No Impact.** There are a number of schools within 0.25 mile of the proposed rapid bus route; however, buses are not utilized to transport hazardous material substances. Any potential impact would be avoided through implementation of regulatory requirements, industry standards, and BMPs. Typical BMPs applicable to the project are included in Section II of this document. Therefore, no significant hazardous materials impacts to schools would result from project implementation.

- d. ***Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?***

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.** As shown in Table 4, two LUST listings, Chevron USA and TP Auto Repair, have been identified as a potential for environmental concern due to their proximity to two bus stations along the project route. Chevron USA is adjacent to the proposed Euclid Avenue bus station and a half mile east from the proposed 43<sup>rd</sup> Street/Fairmount Avenue bus station. TP Auto Repair is adjacent to the proposed Texas Street bus station and a half mile east from the proposed Park Boulevard bus station. Potential significant impacts could result from the release of hazardous material at for these sites. Adoption of the following mitigation measure shall reduce potentially significant impacts resulting from the hazardous materials sites to less than significant.

**HAZ-1:** Any construction activities at the two bus stations shall be monitored for environmental concern, such as impacted soil and/or soil vapor emissions that might threaten public health, the environment, and construction personnel. In addition, any soil designated for removal and/or exportation from the project site should be sampled for waste characterization to identify appropriate disposal methods.

- e. ***For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?***

**No Impact.** The western end of the proposed project alignment is approximately 1 mile south of the San Diego International Airport located downtown at 3225 Harbor Drive and is within the Airport Approach Overlay Zone. This Airport Approach Overlay Zone includes the downtown area and the southern area of Balboa Park where the proposed project would not include the construction or alteration of structures. The segment of the proposed rapid bus route within downtown and the southern area of Balboa Park is within the airport's Influence Area and designated Accident Potential Zones (City of San Diego Municipal Code, Chapter 13, Article 2: Overlay Zones, 2006, p. 4). However, construction and operation of a bus transit route in this area would not expose people to safety risks associated with operations of the San Diego International Airport.

- f. **For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project site is not located in the vicinity of any private airstrips. Therefore, no associated impacts would occur.

- g. **Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project would not impair or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. Proposed improvements such as upgrading signal equipment would enhance rather than hinder or block traffic flows, and primary access to all major roads would be maintained during construction of the proposed project. Buses serving station will briefly block traffic in the curb lane; however, this would not impede the progress of emergency vehicles. Therefore, no associated impacts would occur.

- h. **Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project is located in a developed, institutional/commercial/residential area. No wildlands are located in the project vicinity. Therefore, no impacts related to wildland fires would occur.

## 8. Hydrology and Water Quality

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
manner which would result in flooding on or off site?				
e. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm-water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g. Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h. Place within a 100-year flood hazard area, structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
j. Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

The project site is located within the Mission San Diego Hydrologic Subarea of the San Diego Hydrologic Unit. The main body of water in this subarea is the San Diego River, which is located several miles north of the project area and drains into the Pacific Ocean. The project site is located within the Mission Valley Groundwater Basin. This basin underlies Mission Valley and is bounded by the contacts of alluvium with the semipermeable San Diego and Poway Formations and the impermeable Lindavista Formation. The southwest boundary is Mission Bay. The principal water-bearing deposits are the Pleistocene paralic deposits consisting of poorly sorted, inter-fingered standline, beach, estuarine, and conglomerate deposits. This unit has an average thickness of about 80 feet. The primary source of recharge for this basin is the infiltration of stream flow from the San Diego River.

**Discussion**

**a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Potential water quality impacts associated with the proposed project would include short-term construction-related erosion/sedimentation and long-term operational storm water discharge. The short-term water quality impacts related to erosion/sedimentation would be less than significant based on conformance with existing regulatory requirements (i.e., acquisition of an NPDES General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit and implementation of a SWPPP).

Long-term water quality impacts associated with the project would include generation of minor quantities of urban contaminants, such as petroleum compounds, metals, and other types of contaminants that typically accumulate on roadways. Long-term water quality impacts would be

addressed through compliance with NPDES guidelines for municipal storm water runoff in accordance with the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Order No. 2001-01. This order requires that pollutant discharges and runoff from development are reduced to the maximum extent practicable and that receiving water quality objectives are not violated throughout the life of the project through implementation of source control and structural post-construction BMPs. Implementation of required BMPs would ensure that long-term water quality impacts associated with the proposed project would be less than significant.

- b. Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?**

**No Impact.** The project does not propose the use of groundwater. The project site is currently covered with impervious surfaces that have low absorption rates. The project would not significantly impact local groundwater recharge due to the relatively small development area involved and the fact that the project would not substantially increase the impervious surface area.

- c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or vicinity and would not alter the course of a stream or river. The proposed transit stations will require changes to the existing on-site drainage facilities because curb heights will be raised to provide for level boarding. In some cases, runoff would continue to be directed to the street and into existing drainage facilities such as concrete curb, gutter, and drainage inlets. In other cases, swales or trench drains may be needed to convey runoff into the drainage inlets. The runoff would then be conveyed into the existing municipal storm water drainage system. Water quality impacts related to erosion/sedimentation, runoff rates and quantities, and/or flooding would be less than significant.

- d. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off site?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As previously discussed in Item 8(c), the proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or vicinity and would not alter the course of a stream or river. On-site surface runoff would be collected in existing drainage facilities and conveyed into the existing municipal storm water drainage system. Where existing curb, gutter, and/or inlets would be removed to accommodate the new station platforms, similar facilities would be constructed at approximately the same location in areas that are currently impervious. Runoff quantities would not substantially change because there would be only an insignificant net increase in hardscape/impervious surfaces as only two of the bus stations, El Cajon Boulevard and 54<sup>th</sup> Street and El Cajon Boulevard and College, would create additional impervious surface. The station at El Cajon Boulevard and 54<sup>th</sup> Street would remove approximately 540 square feet of existing landscape adjacent to a parking lot along El Cajon Boulevard. The station at El Cajon Boulevard and College Avenue would remove approximately 790 square feet of existing landscape adjacent to a parking lot along College Avenue.

The City of San Diego has adopted thresholds of significance related to acceptable amounts of newly created surfaces and disturbance areas. Approximately 1,330 square feet of new impervious area would be created by the proposed rapid bus project, which is far less than the City of San Diego's 5,000 square feet. Furthermore, the total disturbed area at each station platform site would be significantly less than the City's 1.0-acre disturbance threshold. Accordingly, runoff quantities generated by this project at each station platform site is anticipated to be minimal, and below the 0.5 cubic feet per second per site threshold established by the City of San Diego. Water quality impacts related to erosion/sedimentation, runoff rates and quantities, and/or flooding would be less than significant.

**e. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?**

**Less than Significant Impact.** Because there would be no substantial net increase of impervious surfaces upon project construction, runoff volumes would not increase. Runoff volumes associated with the proposed project would have a minor increase and thus would not exceed the capacity of existing storm drain facilities. As discussed above, the project could result in polluted runoff; however, the potential for water quality impacts would be addressed through implementation of mitigation and compliance with the requirements of the San Diego Municipal Storm Water Permit (RWQCB Order No. 2001-01; NPDES No. CAS0108758). Therefore, water quality impacts related to storm water capacity and/or polluted runoff would be less than significant.

**f. Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project would not substantially degrade water quality. Implementation of standard BMPs during construction, and storm drains, would reduce potential water quality impacts to less than significant. Typical BMPs applicable to the project are included in Section II of this document. In addition, there would be three to four walls located in the back of some of the bus stations for drainage purposes. These walls would be curved/curbed gravity drains to direct runoff from private property to public property (i.e., sidewalk). At some locations, trench drains would be utilized to direct runoff. Implementation of these drainage designs would ensure that potential water quality impacts would be less than significant.

**g. Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project does not involve construction of residential units or any other substantial structures. Based on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps, most of the route lies within "Other Areas - Zone X," or areas determined to be outside of the 500-year floodplain (FEMA 2006). The roads identified for the proposed rapid bus route are not known to be prone to frequent flooding during typical storm events. No associated impacts related to flooding would occur.

**h. Place within a 100-year flood hazard area, structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?**

**No Impact.** As discussed in Item 8(g), the proposed project is located within "Other Areas - Zone X," or areas determined to be outside of the 500-year floodplain (FEMA 1997). The proposed project does not include any substantial grading or fill that would impede or redirect water flow. In addition, the roads identified for the proposed rapid bus route are not known to be prone to frequent flooding during typical storm events. No associated impacts related to flooding would occur.



**i. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?**

**No Impact.** As discussed above in Items 8(g) and (h), the project route is not subject to flooding. The project route is not located within the vicinity of any reservoir dam structures. Therefore, the potential for inundation due to dam failure is nonexistent. No associated flooding impacts would occur.

**j. Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The project route at its most westerly point is located approximately less than 1 mile inland and, therefore, could potentially be inundated in the event of a large catastrophic tsunami. Although the likelihood of such an event is extremely low, it cannot be completely discounted given the seismically active region of southern California. However, due to its inland location of the proposed alignment, the potential for seismically induced inundation of the project area is very low to nonexistent. In addition, implementation of the project would not increase the potential for seismically induced inundation.

The project route also is not in close proximity to any large reservoirs or other surface waters. Therefore, the project route would not be subject to inundation impacts from seiches. Additionally, the project site would not be subject to impacts related to inundation by mudflow based on the location and topography in the project area. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in impacts related to inundation by seiche or mudflow.

**9. Land Use and Planning**

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

The proposed project route would be located within an older urbanized, high-intensity mixed-use area within the City of San Diego. The proposed route is located within nine different communities of the City of San Diego as shown in Figure 3, which include Centre City, Balboa Park, Uptown, Greater North Park, Normal Heights, City Heights, Kensington-Talmadge, Eastern Area, and College Area. The proposed project alignment traverses a variety of land uses, which include residential, commercial, institutional, park, and open space General Plan and zoning designations.

## Discussion

### a. **Physically divide an established community?**

**No Impact.** The proposed rapid bus route would not be incompatible with all such designations/zones and associated adjacent land uses. Provision of a transit route within the project area would be a compatible and beneficial use. Moreover, implementation of the proposed project would not change existing land uses. The project would be located within existing roadways that currently include bus operations. No new roads, structures, or other improvements would be developed that would divide or separate neighborhoods or physically divide an established community. Therefore, no associated land use impacts would occur.

### b. **Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project would not conflict with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations, including the *San Diego Strategic Framework* and the *City of San Diego Pedestrian Master Plan*. The proposed project would be consistent with applicable goals and guidelines. The recommendations contained in the Mobility Policy of the *San Diego Strategic Framework* are to “integrate land use and transportation planning to improve mobility” and to “support plans that make transit a viable option for peak and non-peak trips.”

The proposed project would also be consistent with applicable goals and guidelines contained in the Mobility Element of the San Diego General Plan. The Mobility Element is a part of a larger body of plans and programs (i.e., 2030 RTP) that guide the development and management of the City’s transportation system. One of the listed goals is to provide “a coordinated, multimodal transportation system capable of meeting increasing needs for personal mobility and goods movement at acceptable levels of service.” (City of San Diego *Progress Guide and General Plan, Transportation Element*, p. 87, 2006). Consistent with these goals, the proposed rapid bus route would provide a local transit route intended to increase mobility.

Additionally, the City General Plan provides a strategy to improve transportation options and reduce use of single-occupant vehicle trips by encouraging alternative modes of travel, such as carpooling, vanpooling, transit use, bicycling, and walking (City of San Diego *General Plan, Mobility Element, Transportation Demand Management*, p. ME-34, 2006). In addition, the Mobility Element includes applicable policies which include the following:

- Policy ME-B.1 Work closely with regional agencies and others to increase transit ridership, and mode share through increased transit service accessibility, frequency, connectivity, and availability.
  - a. Develop an urban network of routes that operate with a base, mid-day service frequency of ten-minute intervals or better,
  - b. Provide transit routes that offer efficient connections between highly frequented origins and destinations; and
  - c. Enhance overall transit customer experience through attention to safety, station areas, vehicles, seating, and other factors.

Policy ME-B.3 Design and locate transit stops/stations to provide convenient access to high activity/density areas, respect neighborhood and activity center character, implement community plan recommendations, enhance the users' personal experience of each neighborhood/center, and contain comfortable walk and wait environments for customers.

The proposed project would provide for increased transit opportunities in an effort to alleviate dependence on the automobile, which in turn would reduce air pollution (less emissions) and energy consumption (via fuel consumption). Table 5 summarizes the relevant goals, policies, and objectives of the applicable community plans. The proposed project would not result in impacts related to conflicts with adopted land use plans.

<b>Table 5 APPLICABLE PLANNING DOCUMENTS</b>	
<b>Community Plan</b>	<b>Relevant Policy/Goal/Objective</b>
Downtown (formerly Centre City)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision of accessibility throughout the region by a safe, efficient, and environmentally sensitive transportation system that will emphasize mass transit, reduce longstanding dependence on the private auto, relieve congestion on our freeways and downtown streets, and improve the quality of our air.</li> <li>• Development of a comprehensive multimodal transportation system that supports planned development intensities and land use patterns in Centre City.</li> <li>• Aim for the increased use of mass transit, especially by daily commuters, with less reliance on automobiles and long-term downtown parking.</li> <li>• Broadway will not only emphasize pedestrian access, but will emphasize transit through improved bus accommodations.</li> </ul>
Greater North Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the pedestrian interface between Balboa Park and the community, ensuring that vehicular access to Balboa Park does not use local streets in Greater North Park as through travel routes.</li> <li>• Provide adequate off-street parking in residential and commercial areas.</li> <li>• Enhance existing urban level bus service by increasing the frequency of service, adding express service where studies deem it feasible, reducing headways between buses, and improving transit stops, thereby establishing higher level of service within the community and providing strong public transit links with adjacent communities.</li> <li>• To provide a safe and efficient transportation system that maximizes access for residents and visitors to the community, links the community to major activity centers, and minimizes adverse environmental effects.</li> <li>• Reduce vehicular traffic in Greater North Park by encouraging the use of alternative modes of transportation, including public transit, bicycles, and pedestrian travel.</li> <li>• Pedestrian walkways should be sharply delineated from traffic areas and set apart where possible to provide a separate circulation system.</li> <li>• New curb cuts should be restricted or prohibited to preserve existing on-street parking for older development that is dependent upon it.</li> </ul>
Uptown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a fully integrated system of vehicular, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities to meet current and future needs.</li> <li>• Provide improved transit service, efficiency, and route coordination.</li> <li>• Provide a high level of transit service and promote usage.</li> <li>• Establish a focal point for transit services within the community.</li> <li>• Increase the availability of off-street parking but not at the expense of retaining and enhancing the pedestrian amenities.</li> <li>• Minimize the loss of on-street parking caused by curb cuts. New curb cuts should be minimized to preserve existing on-street parking.</li> <li>• Develop off-street parking facilities.</li> </ul>
Mid-City (includes Normal Heights, City Heights, Kensington-Talmadge,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish light rail transit service from downtown to San Diego State University.</li> <li>• Provide streetscape features to improve vehicular circulation, public transit, and the pedestrian experience for public transportation users. Features include street trees, paving patterns, landscape buffer, attractive bus and trolley stops, directional</li> </ul>

<b>Table 5 APPLICABLE PLANNING DOCUMENTS</b>	
<b>Community Plan</b>	<b>Relevant Policy/Goal/Objective</b>
and Eastern Areas)	<p>signage, a new neighborhood park, off-street parking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage pedestrian activity and the use of public transit through public and private investment in quality streetscape improvements including landscaping, crosswalk paving, lighting, and other pedestrian-oriented enhancements.</li> <li>• Provide parking that is adequate for its intended use but does not produce negative impacts on community character by providing an oversupply of parking.</li> <li>• Provide accessible public transit service for all residents, employees, shoppers, and visitors to Mid-City.</li> <li>• Provide a high level of public transit service along major corridors.</li> <li>• Provide direct public transit access to major regional employment centers.</li> <li>• Enhance existing urban level bus service to the extent possible by increasing the frequency of service, adding express service, reducing headway between buses, allowing buses to preempt traffic signals, and improving transit stops and surfacing of streets along bus routes.</li> </ul>
College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand express commuter service between the community and business centers in other communities (i.e., downtown, Greater North Park). This expansion should include the addition of new routes as well as increased frequency of service on existing routes.</li> <li>• Locate parking areas within the commercial structures or behind them, with auto access taken from alleys.</li> <li>• Mass transit should decrease travel time from the community to regional employment and shopping centers. This improvement would involve an increased number of commuter routes serving the community and increased frequency of service on old routes.</li> </ul>

**c. Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?**

**No Impact.** The project site is not located within the City of San Diego MSCP planning area, although a segment of the proposed project alignment is adjacent to the portion of MSCP along Park Boulevard. The project site is designated for transportation and is not located within or adjacent to the Multiple Habitat Planning Area, which identifies lands designated for open space and habitat preservation. In addition, the project site is fully developed and does not contain sensitive habitat or species that would require mitigation. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with policies of the MSCP. In addition, the project does not conflict with the conservation goals of the CDFG's NCCP. Therefore, impacts related to conflict with an adopted habitat conservation plan would not occur.

## 10. Mineral Resources

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### ***Environmental Setting***

The proposed project alignment traverses an older urbanized, high-intensity mixed-use area (i.e., residential, commercial, institutional, park, and open space) within the City of San Diego. No known mineral resources are located on or surrounding the project site.

### ***Discussion***

***a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?***

**No Impact.** The project site has not been used for mineral resource recovery and is not delineated as a mineral resource recovery site on any land use plans; therefore the proposed project would not change the existing availability of mineral resources that would be of value to the region and residents of the state.

***b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?***

**No Impact.** No known locally important mineral resource recovery site is located on the project site or within the vicinity of the project site; therefore, impacts to mineral resources would not occur as a result of project implementation.

## 11. Noise

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in:				
a. Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or where such a plan has not been adopted within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### **Environmental Setting**

The proposed project area includes El Cajon Boulevard from College Avenue to Park Boulevard, and Park Boulevard from El Cajon Boulevard to University Avenue. The majority of land uses adjacent to these roadway segments are commercial; there are some residential uses.

The dominant sources of noise in the project area are vehicles on El Cajon Boulevard, Park Boulevard, the streets intersecting the two boulevards, and Interstates 15 and 805, which cross under El Cajon Boulevard. Average daily traffic (ADT) volumes on El Cajon Boulevard in the project area range from approximately 22,000 to 36,000 (SANDAG, Average Daily Traffic Volumes for the City of San Diego, 2007). ADT volumes on Park Boulevard in the project area range from approximately 6,000 to 16,000 (SANDAG, Average Daily Traffic Volumes for the City of San Diego, 2007). The posted speed limit on El Cajon Boulevard ranges from 30 to 40 miles per hour, and on Park Boulevard is 35 miles per hour (KOA Corporation 2007). With these parameters, the average daytime noise level at a distance of 50 feet from the center line of the roadway is estimated at 66 to 68 decibels A-weighted (dBA) along El Cajon Boulevard and 61 to 65 dBA along Park Boulevard.

## **Discussion**

### **a. Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?**

#### Construction

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.** Construction noise is governed by the City of San Diego Noise Ordinance (City of San Diego Municipal Code, Section 59.5.0404, 2004). This ordinance prohibits construction activities on Sundays and holidays, and between 7:00 p.m. through 7:00 a.m. on weekdays. The noise ordinance limits noise levels as follows: “It shall be unlawful for any person, including The City of San Diego, to conduct any construction activity so as to cause, at or beyond the property lines of any property zoned residential, an average sound level greater than 75 decibels during the 12-hour period from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.”

The Noise Ordinance, section 59.5.0501, also contains the following general prohibition: “It shall be unlawful for any person to make, continue, or cause to be made or continued, within the limits of said City, any disturbing, excessive, or offensive noise which causes discomfort or annoyance to any reasonable person of normal sensitiveness residing in the area.”

The principal sources of noise during construction would be the diesel engines of construction equipment and the tools used to remove curbs, paving, and similar features, such as concrete saws, jackhammers and hoe-rams. Short-term, maximum noise levels from this equipment would be approximately 85 to 90 dBA at a distance of 50 feet. The hourly average of these noise levels at 50 feet would be range from 78 dBA to 83 dBA, which is less than these maximum noise levels, and the 12-hour average would be less than 75 dBA at the properties near the construction areas. As stated in the project description, construction would occur during the hours allowed by the noise ordinance. Therefore, no persons would be exposed to noise levels in excess of the applicable standards, and these impact would be less than significant as based upon these applicable 12-hour standards.

Although the 12-hour average noise level requirements of the Noise Ordinance would be met, short-term construction noise levels from jackhammers and concrete saws would create a potentially significant impact. Adoption of the mitigation measures stated below would reduce this impact to less than significant.

#### **NOISE-1: Jackhammers**

If jackhammer use is required within 40 feet of pedestrians, residents, or open businesses, the quietest jackhammer suitable to perform the work shall be used. If the selected equipment is the Atlas Copco Model TEX P90S model with an elongated effective muffler casing or bellows of greater than 15 inches in length, Chicago Pneumatic CP 1240 with muffler, or equivalent model with muffler, then no noise mitigation is required. If larger or noisier equipment is required, then a portable noise barrier shall be used. The barrier shall have no gaps or holes and shall be high enough to block the line of sight between the equipment and nearby receptors. The barrier shall be made of ¾-inch plywood, acoustical blankets, or similar material with a minimum Sound Transmission Class (STC) rating of 30.

## **NOISE-2: Concrete Saws**

If concrete saw use is required within 40 feet of pedestrians, residents, or open businesses, then a portable noise barrier shall be used. The barrier shall have no gaps or holes and shall be high enough to block the line of sight between the equipment and nearby receptors. The barrier shall be made of ¾-inch plywood, acoustical blankets, or similar material with a minimum STC rating of 30.

### Operations

There are no applicable standards relative to the long-term noise impacts that would occur with implementation of the proposed project. See Item 11(c) below for additional discussion of long-term noise impacts.

***b. Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?***

**Less than Significant.** Heavy construction operations can cause groundborne vibration. The heaviest equipment, such as pile drivers or large bulldozers, can generate vibrations of 0.089 to 1.52 inches per second peak particle velocity (PPV) at a distance of 25 feet. It is not anticipated that any of this heaviest equipment would be used on the proposed project. The equipment with the greatest vibration potential that may be used on the proposed project is a jackhammer, with a source level of 0.035 inches per second PPV at 25 feet. There are no applicable city, state, or federal standards for vibration. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recommends maximum limits of 0.2 inches per second PPV for fragile buildings and 0.12 inches per second PPV for very fragile buildings. It is not anticipated that jackhammer operations would be closer than 15 feet to buildings, and vibration would not exceed 0.2 inches per second PPV. The impact to buildings would be less than significant.

For people passing within 25 feet of the operations, vibration from jackhammer use would be perceptible, but not excessive, and the exposure to vibration would be transient. The impact would be less than significant.

***c. A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?***

**Less than Significant.** Ambient noise levels in the project vicinity result from traffic traveling along the project route and adjacent road ways. Bus noise is a very small part of the overall vehicle noise. Implementation of the proposed project would result in an increase in average speed for the bus traffic, and a corresponding increase in bus noise. The project proposes the operation of 12 buses which would increase the overall noise level only a negligible amount. The 12 buses will operate on a ten-minute frequency (six buses per hour) during peak hours and a fifteen-minute frequency (four buses per hour) during off-peak hours in each direction. These buses will replace the current Route 15 which operates on a fifteen-minute frequency in each direction throughout the day. Therefore, two trips per hour are added in each direction during the peak hours with implementation of the proposed project. Older buses will be replaced with newer buses anticipated to be quieter and more fuel-efficient. It is anticipated that the addition of two buses per hour is negligible compared to the traffic that travels through the corridor. Additionally, objectives of the proposed project include making transit more attractive and increasing the number of transit riders. The result would be a reduction in non-transit vehicle trips and a reduction in vehicle noise. Physical improvements at the stations would reduce the length of time a bus would idle while picking up or discharging passengers. The



changes in ambient noise levels would be imperceptible, and the impact would be less than significant.

- d. A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?**

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** See discussion in Item 11(a) above.

- e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or where such a plan has not been adopted within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?**

**No Impact.** The project area is not within the airport land use plan of a public airport. Implementation of the project would not change the exposure of people to existing aircraft noise levels.

- f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?**

**No Impact.** The project area is not in the vicinity of a private airstrip. Implementation of the project would not change the exposure of people to existing aircraft noise levels.

**12. Population and Housing**

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

The project site is located in the mid-city area within the City of San Diego. The proposed project is a 10-mile limited-stop rapid bus route between downtown and SDSU. The proposed project alignment follows an existing bus route through a highly urbanized, particularly older densely developed neighborhood with multi-family and single-family residences. Improvements to support the rapid bus route are focused on existing roads within segments of the El Cajon Boulevard and Park Boulevard corridors. The proposed

project also includes transit priority systems and new enhanced rapid bus stations at 10 major intersections, but does not include any housing developments or redevelopment of existing housing.

**Discussion**

- a. **Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project does not include the development of housing and implementation of the proposed project would not directly induce population growth. The project site is located in a highly developed urban area with commercial and residential areas. The proposed project would not provide substantial new employment that would foster migration. No new roads, road extensions, or bridges are proposed with the project. No impacts related to population growth inducement would occur.

- b. **Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

**No Impact.** The project would occur within existing road rights-of-way and would not affect existing housing or displace any residents. No associated impacts would occur.

- c. **Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

**No Impact.** The project would occur within existing road rights-of-way and would not affect existing housing or displace any residents. No associated impacts would occur.

**13. Public Services**

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## ***Environmental Setting***

The project site is located in a developed, institutional/commercial/residential area currently served by existing public services, including fire and police protection, schools, and parks. The City of San Diego Fire Department provides fire protection and emergency medical services within San Diego and would provide any fire and/or emergency medical service associated with the proposed project. Police protection is provided by the San Diego Police Department. The proposed rapid bus route traverses through Balboa Park along Park Boulevard. The proposed project would not increase the demand for public services, including fire and police protection, schools, parks, or other public services; therefore, no impacts related to the provision of adequate public services would occur.

## ***Discussion***

### ***a. Fire protection?***

**No Impact.** Implementation of the proposed transit project in an existing developed area would not generate population growth and therefore would not result in a demand for any new or altered fire protection services.

### ***b. Police protection?***

**No Impact.** Implementation of the proposed transit project in an existing developed area would not generate population growth and therefore would not result in a demand for any new or altered police protection services.

### ***c. Schools?***

**No Impact.** The proposed project would not generate students; therefore, it would not increase the demand for schools in the area.

### ***d. Parks?***

**No Impact.** The proposed project could increase access to these parks to a minimal degree, potentially increasing demand for park and recreation services, but it is unlikely that any such increase would be large enough to require facility upgrades or increased services.

### ***e. Other public facilities?***

**No Impact.** SDG&E would provide gas and electric facilities to the project. The project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered SDG&E facilities. The proposed project would not increase the demand for electricity and gas facilities.

**14. Recreation**

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

***Environmental Setting***

Existing recreational facilities are located within the project vicinity. However, a segment of the proposed rapid bus route along Park Boulevard is located within Balboa Park. Balboa Park is a regional park owned and operated by the City of San Diego. Balboa Park is a significant horticultural and cultural resource on approximately 1,172 acres. There are 14 specialty gardens, nearly 100 arts, 15,000 trees, educational and recreational programs, social and sports organizations, and 14 museums. Balboa Park is also home to the San Diego Zoo and Old Globe Theatre.

***Discussion***

- a. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?***

**No Impact.** Operation of the proposed rapid bus route would not substantially increase the use of these existing facilities, nor would it result in an increase in the demand for any new or altered park facilities. The proposed project could provide increased opportunities for local park access and therefore a negligible increase in demand for park and recreation services at parks along the new rapid bus route. However, if any increase in use were to be experienced, it would be minimal and would not be large enough to require facility upgrades or increased services. Therefore, no impacts related to recreational facilities would occur.

- b. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?***

**No Impact.** The proposed project does not include or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. No associated impacts to recreational facilities would occur.

**15. Transportation/Traffic**

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f. Result in inadequate parking capacity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

An Engineering Study was prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. (Kimley-Horn 2005) and a traffic report (Appendix A) analyzing the existing signal timing analysis and improvements was prepared for the proposed project by KOA Corporation (KOA Corporation 2007) which detailed the analysis, findings, and recommendations. In addition, a memorandum was prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates (Kimley-Horn 2008) summarizing traffic analysis specific to Park Boulevard (Appendix B) and another technical memorandum was prepared by KOA Corporation (KOA Corporation 2008) summarizing an analysis that was conducted an analysis of near-term and long-term conditions at the El Cajon Boulevard intersections with the I-15 northbound and southbound ramps (Appendix C). The traffic report (KOA Corporation 2007) determined that signalized intersection movements with a Level of Service (LOS) E or F was considered to be the limit of acceptable delay with a controlled stop delay of 55 to 80 seconds per vehicle. Therefore, LOS D or better as well as a delay at a controlled stop of less than 80 seconds are considered to be acceptable. In addition, the implementation of a proposed project may produce a change in delay by 2.0 seconds or less for intersections operating at LOS E or a change in delay by 1.0 second or less for intersections operating at LOS F is considered acceptable by the City of San Diego. The two traffic memorandums (Kimley-Horn 2008 and KOA Corporation 2008) also determined that intersections operating at LOS D or better are considered to be acceptable. These

thresholds are consistent with the guidelines as identified in the City of San Diego's CEQA Significance Determination Thresholds (City of San Diego *CEQA Significance Determination Thresholds*, Section O. Transportation/Circulation and Parking, p. 69 – 72, 2007). Field investigations were conducted August 7, 2007, through August 21, 2007, for the morning peak period and evening peak period along El Cajon Boulevard and July 28, 2008, through August 8, 2008 for the Park Boulevard segment. The principal roadways in the project study area are El Cajon Boulevard and Park Boulevard. El Cajon Boulevard traverses east to west connecting the University Heights and College Area communities. It is classified as a major road with three lanes in each direction from Park Boulevard to 43<sup>rd</sup> Street/Fairmount Avenue and two lanes in each direction from 43<sup>rd</sup> Street/Fairmount Avenue to College Avenue. Park Boulevard runs north to south connecting the University Heights and Downtown San Diego communities. It is classified as a major road with two lanes in each direction from El Cajon Boulevard to University Avenue. Both El Cajon Boulevard and Park Boulevard provide driveway access to adjacent land uses and have a median with median breaks. The median on El Cajon Boulevard is intermittently raised and landscaped. There are bus stops and sidewalks along both roads. Table 6 and Table 7 summarize the morning peak hour and evening peak hour conditions for the study intersections along Park Boulevard and El Cajon Boulevard respectively. Currently, all intersections along Park Boulevard and El Cajon Boulevard operate at LOS D or better.

<b>Table 6 EXISTING INTERSECTION CONDITIONS FOR PARK BOULEVARD</b>				
<b>Intersection</b>	<b>Delay</b>	<b>LOS</b>	<b>Delay</b>	<b>LOS</b>
	<b>AM Peak Hour</b>		<b>PM Peak Hour</b>	
Park Boulevard/University Avenue	17.3	B	37.9	D
Park Boulevard/Lincoln Avenue	10.4	B	21.9	C
Park Boulevard/Polk Avenue	6.9	A	8.4	A
Park Boulevard/Howard Avenue	9.0	A	10.5	B
Park Boulevard/Normal Street	19.7	B	24.9	C

Source: Kimley-Horn 2008.

**Table 7  
EXISTING INTERSECTION CONDITIONS FOR EL CAJON BOULEVARD**

Intersection	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS
	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
El Cajon Boulevard/Park Boulevard	34.4	C	33.2	C
El Cajon Boulevard/Florida Street	7.9	A	19.2	B
El Cajon Boulevard/Texas Street	42.8	D	48.0	D
El Cajon Boulevard/30 <sup>th</sup> Street	32.0	C	41.9	D
El Cajon Boulevard/I-805 Southbound	15.0	B	42.1	D
El Cajon Boulevard//I-805 Northbound	20.5	C	20.0	B
El Cajon Boulevard/33 <sup>rd</sup> Street	2.0	C	35.5	D
El Cajon Boulevard/35 <sup>th</sup> Street	14.6	B	19.9	B
El Cajon Boulevard/I-15 Southbound	15.1	B	16.2	B
El Cajon Boulevard//I-15 Northbound	9.1	A	12.2	B
El Cajon Boulevard/Marlborough Avenue	14.9	B	24.7	C
El Cajon Boulevard//Copeland Avenue	16.0	B	24.5	C
El Cajon Boulevard/43 <sup>rd</sup> Street	17.0	B	28.2	C
El Cajon Boulevard/Fairmount Avenue	30.2	C	16.4	B
El Cajon Boulevard/Highland Avenue	3.1	A	3.3	A
El Cajon Boulevard/Chamoune Avenue	7.6	A	3.9	A
El Cajon Boulevard/Menlo Avenue	13.2	B	13.2	B
El Cajon Boulevard/Euclid Avenue	19.5	B	26.1	C
El Cajon Boulevard/54 <sup>th</sup> Street	34.7	C	43.4	D
El Cajon Boulevard/College Avenue	41.2	D	44.6	D

Source: KOA Corporation 2007.

**Discussion**

- a. **Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.**

Operational Impacts

Traffic growth on area roadways is a function of the expected land development, economic activity, and changes in demographics. The near-term (2010) conditions for the morning peak hour and evening peak hour intersection conditions were evaluated for El Cajon Boulevard only and are summarized in Table 8 and Table 9 respectively. All intersections in the near-term morning peak hour conditions operate at LOS D or better. All intersections in the near-term operate at LOS D or better during evening peak hour conditions with the exception of the intersection of El Cajon Boulevard and College Avenue which operates at LOS E as highlighted in Table 9.

<b>Table 8 NEAR-TERM (2010) MORNING PEAK HOUR INTERSECTION CONDITIONS FOR EL CAJON BOULEVARD</b>					
<b>Intersection</b>	<b>Without Project</b>		<b>With Project</b>		<b>Change in Delay (seconds)</b>
	<b>Delay</b>	<b>LOS</b>	<b>Delay</b>	<b>LOS</b>	
El Cajon Boulevard/Park Boulevard	35.5	D	31.6	C	-3.9
El Cajon Boulevard/Florida Street	8.1	A	8.4	A	0.3
El Cajon Boulevard/Texas Street	43.9	D	42.3	D	-1.6
El Cajon Boulevard/30 <sup>th</sup> Street	32.6	C	31.3	C	-1.3
El Cajon Boulevard/I-805 Southbound	15.3	B	15.0	B	-0.3
El Cajon Boulevard//I-805 Northbound	20.8	C	21.5	C	0.7
El Cajon Boulevard/33 <sup>rd</sup> Street	21.5	C	22.0	C	0.5
El Cajon Boulevard/35 <sup>th</sup> Street	14.6	B	14.0	B	-0.6
El Cajon Boulevard/I-15 Southbound	15.3	B	15.5	B	0.2
El Cajon Boulevard//I-15 Northbound	9.2	A	9.5	A	0.3
El Cajon Boulevard/Marlborough Avenue	15.1	B	15.4	B	0.3
El Cajon Boulevard//Copeland Avenue	15.9	B	15.0	B	-0.9
El Cajon Boulevard/43 <sup>rd</sup> Street	16.7	B	16.8	B	0.1



**Table 8  
NEAR-TERM (2010) MORNING PEAK HOUR  
INTERSECTION CONDITIONS FOR EL CAJON BOULEVARD**

Intersection	Without Project		With Project		Change in Delay (seconds)
	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	
El Cajon Boulevard/Fairmount Avenue	30.7	C	29.1	C	-1.6
El Cajon Boulevard/Highland Avenue	3.1	A	3.2	A	0.1
El Cajon Boulevard/Chamoune Avenue	8.1	A	7.2	A	-0.9
El Cajon Boulevard/Menlo Avenue	13.7	B	13.0	B	-0.7
El Cajon Boulevard/Euclid Avenue	20.7	C	19.7	B	-1.1
El Cajon Boulevard/54 <sup>th</sup> Street	35.6	D	36.1	D	0.5
El Cajon Boulevard/College Avenue	41.6	D	41.7	D	0.1

Source: KOA Corporation 2007

**Table 9  
NEAR-TERM (2010) EVENING PEAK HOUR  
INTERSECTION CONDITIONS FOR EL CAJON BOULEVARD**

Intersection	Without Project		With Project		Change in Delay (seconds)
	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	
El Cajon Boulevard/Park Boulevard	33.1	C	34.2	C	1.1
El Cajon Boulevard/Florida Street	20.4	C	19.9	B	-0.5
El Cajon Boulevard/Texas Street	49.7	D	49.8	D	0.1
El Cajon Boulevard/30 <sup>th</sup> Street	43.8	D	42.4	D	-1.4
El Cajon Boulevard/I-805 Southbound	50.3	D	50.5	D	0.2
El Cajon Boulevard//I-805 Northbound	20.4	C	20.2	C	-0.2
El Cajon Boulevard/33 <sup>rd</sup> Street	42.7	D	45.1	D	2.4
El Cajon Boulevard/35 <sup>th</sup> Street	20.7	C	19.7	B	-1.0
El Cajon Boulevard/I-15 Southbound	16.5	B	17.2	B	0.7
El Cajon Boulevard//I-15 Northbound	12.9	B	13.2	B	0.3

**Table 9  
NEAR-TERM (2010) EVENING PEAK HOUR  
INTERSECTION CONDITIONS FOR EL CAJON BOULEVARD**

Intersection	Without Project		With Project		Change in Delay (seconds)
	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	
El Cajon Boulevard/Marlborough Avenue	25.3	C	23.5	C	-1.8
El Cajon Boulevard//Copeland Avenue	25.0	C	22.4	C	-2.6
El Cajon Boulevard/43 <sup>rd</sup> Street	29.4	C	29.8	C	0.4
El Cajon Boulevard/Fairmount Avenue	16.6	B	17.5	B	0.9
El Cajon Boulevard/Highland Avenue	3.5	A	3.7	A	0.2
El Cajon Boulevard/Chamoune Avenue	4.5	A	4.4	A	-0.1
El Cajon Boulevard/Menlo Avenue	15.2	B	14.7	B	-0.5
El Cajon Boulevard/Euclid Avenue	26.9	C	28.7	C	1.8
El Cajon Boulevard/54 <sup>th</sup> Street	50.4	D	54.8	D	4.4
<b>El Cajon Boulevard/College Avenue</b>	<b>64.5</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>62.3</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>-2.2</b>

Source: KOA Corporation 2007

The horizon year (2030) conditions for the morning peak hour and evening peak hour were evaluated for the intersections along Park Boulevard and El Cajon Boulevard. The morning peak hour conditions for Park Boulevard and El Cajon Boulevard are summarized in Table 10 and Table 11, respectively. The evening peak hour conditions for Park Boulevard and El Cajon Boulevard are summarized in Table 12 and Table 13, respectively. All intersections in the horizon year morning peak hour conditions will operate at LOS D or better. All intersections in the horizon year evening peak hour conditions will operate at LOS D or better with the exception of one intersection highlighted in Table 12 and four intersections highlighted in Table 13. The intersection of Park Boulevard/Lincoln Avenue will operate at LOS E only under the condition without the project. The intersections of El Cajon Boulevard/I-805 southbound, El Cajon Boulevard/33<sup>rd</sup> Street, and El Cajon Boulevard /54<sup>th</sup> Street will operate at LOS E. The intersection of El Cajon Boulevard /College Avenue will operate at LOS F.

<b>TABLE 10 HORIZON YEAR (2030) MORNING PEAK HOUR INTERSECTION CONDITIONS FOR PARK BOULEVARD</b>						
<b>Intersection</b>	<b>Without Project</b>		<b>With BRT</b>		<b>With BRT and TSP</b>	
	<b>Delay</b>	<b>LOS</b>	<b>Delay</b>	<b>LOS</b>	<b>Delay</b>	<b>LOS</b>
Park Boulevard/University Avenue	21.4	C	35.0	D	33.2	C
Park Boulevard/Lincoln Avenue	11.8	B	34.7	C	35.0	D
Park Boulevard/Polk Avenue	7.4	A	1.9	A	1.9	A
Park Boulevard/Howard Avenue	9.2	A	7.2	A	7.4	A

Park Boulevard/Normal Street                      23.5              C              23.9              C              23.9              C

Source: Kimley-Horn 2008

<b>Table 11 HORIZON YEAR (2030) MORNING PEAK HOUR INTERSECTION CONDITIONS FOR EL CAJON BOULEVARD</b>					
<b>Intersection</b>	<b>Without Project</b>		<b>With Project</b>		<b>Change in Delay (seconds)</b>
	<b>Delay</b>	<b>LOS</b>	<b>Delay</b>	<b>LOS</b>	
El Cajon Boulevard/Park Boulevard	36.0	D	32.4	C	-3.6
El Cajon Boulevard/Florida Street	8.3	A	8.6	A	0.3
El Cajon Boulevard/Texas Street	44.9	D	43.3	D	-1.6
El Cajon Boulevard/30 <sup>th</sup> Street	33.9	C	32.5	C	-1.4
El Cajon Boulevard/I-805 Southbound	18.6	B	17.9	B	-0.7
El Cajon Boulevard//I-805 Northbound	19.3	B	20.7	C	1.4
El Cajon Boulevard/33 <sup>rd</sup> Street	22.0	C	23.2	C	1.2
El Cajon Boulevard/35 <sup>th</sup> Street	20.0	B	17.5	B	-2.5
El Cajon Boulevard/I-15 Southbound	15.4	B	15.9	B	0.2
El Cajon Boulevard//I-15 Northbound	9.9	A	10.0	A	0.1
El Cajon Boulevard/Marlborough Avenue	15.6	B	16.0	B	0.4

**Table 11  
HORIZON YEAR (2030) MORNING PEAK HOUR  
INTERSECTION CONDITIONS FOR EL CAJON BOULEVARD**

Intersection	Without Project		With Project		Change in Delay (seconds)
	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	
El Cajon Boulevard//Copeland Avenue	14.8	B	14.4	B	-0.4
El Cajon Boulevard/43 <sup>rd</sup> Street	17.1	B	17.1	B	0.0
El Cajon Boulevard/Fairmount Avenue	29.7	C	28.9	C	-0.8
El Cajon Boulevard/Highland Avenue	2.9	A	3.1	A	0.2
El Cajon Boulevard/Chamoune Avenue	6.9	A	6.3	A	-0.6
El Cajon Boulevard/Menlo Avenue	14.4	B	13.6	B	-0.8
El Cajon Boulevard/Euclid Avenue	19.6	B	18.9	B	-0.7
El Cajon Boulevard/54 <sup>th</sup> Street	35.9	D	36.7	D	0.8
El Cajon Boulevard/College Avenue	43.7	D	43.8	D	0.1

Source: KOA Corporation 2007

**TABLE 12  
HORIZON YEAR (2030) EVENING PEAK HOUR  
INTERSECTION CONDITIONS FOR PARK BOULEVARD**

Intersection	Without Project		With BRT		With BRT and TSP	
	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS
Park Boulevard/University Avenue	45.7	D	46.1	D	47.3	D
Park Boulevard/Lincoln Avenue	<b>36.2</b>	<b>E</b>	49.2	D	50.2	D
Park Boulevard/Polk Avenue	9.9	A	2.0	A	2.5	A
Park Boulevard/Howard Avenue	113	B	8.6	A	7.4	A
Park Boulevard/Normal Street	31.4	C	31.8	C	32.7	C

Source: Kimley-Horn 2008.

**Table 13  
HORIZON YEAR (2030) EVENING PEAK HOUR  
INTERSECTION CONDITIONS FOR EL CAJON BOULEVARD**

Intersection	Without Project		With Project		Change in Delay (seconds)
	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	
El Cajon Boulevard/Park Boulevard	33.9	C	35.1	D	1.2
El Cajon Boulevard/Florida Street	21.4	C	20.8	C	-0.6
El Cajon Boulevard/Texas Street	52.0	D	52.9	D	0.9
El Cajon Boulevard/30 <sup>th</sup> Street	46.1	D	44.7	D	-1.4
<b>El Cajon Boulevard/I-805 Southbound</b>	<b>62.1</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>61.1</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>-1.0</b>
El Cajon Boulevard//I-805 Northbound	20.9	C	20.8	C	-0.1
<b>El Cajon Boulevard/33<sup>rd</sup> Street</b>	<b>62.0</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>60.6</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>-1.4</b>
El Cajon Boulevard/35 <sup>th</sup> Street	22.0	C	20.8	C	-1.2
El Cajon Boulevard/I-15 Southbound	17.0	B	18.3	B	0.3
El Cajon Boulevard//I-15 Northbound	13.5	B	13.9	B	0.4
El Cajon Boulevard/Marlborough Avenue	25.0	C	23.6	C	-1.4
El Cajon Boulevard//Copeland Avenue	25.2	C	22.9	C	-2.3
El Cajon Boulevard/43 <sup>rd</sup> Street	30.9	C	32.5	C	1.6
El Cajon Boulevard/Fairmount Avenue	17.8	B	19.2	B	1.4
El Cajon Boulevard/Highland Avenue	3.7	A	3.9	A	0.2
El Cajon Boulevard/Chamoune Avenue	4.9	A	4.8	A	-0.1
El Cajon Boulevard/Menlo Avenue	17.7	B	16.9	B	-0.8
El Cajon Boulevard/Euclid Avenue	26.3	C	30.2	C	3.9
<b>El Cajon Boulevard/54<sup>th</sup> Street</b>	<b>56.8</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>58.0</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>1.2</b>
<b>El Cajon Boulevard/College Avenue</b>	<b>85.8</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>81.3</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>-4.5</b>

Source: KOA Corporation 2007

Additional analysis was conducted to test the potential traffic impacts of reducing one through lane through the intersections at both approaches to the I-15 bridge deck. The results of this analysis are summarized in Table 14.

<b>Table 14</b>				
<b>NEAR-TERM (2010) AND HORIZON YEAR (2030) CONDITIONS AT EL CAJON BOULEVARD AND I-15 INTERSECTION</b>				
<b>INTERSECTION</b>	<b>El Cajon Blvd I-15 NB Ramps</b>		<b>El Cajon Blvd I-15 SB Ramps</b>	
	<b>Delay</b>	<b>LOS</b>	<b>Delay</b>	<b>LOS</b>
<b>Near-term (2010) AM Peak</b>				
No Project	9.2	A	15.3	B
With Project	9.3	A	15.7	B
With Project & TSP Activated	10.2	B	16.5	B
<b>Near-term (2010) PM Peak</b>				
No Project	15.2	B	17.7	B
With Project	15.1	B	24.0	C
With Project & TSP Activated	15.3	B	21.9	C
<b>Horizon Year (2030) AM Peak</b>				
No Project	9.9	A	15.7	B
With Project	10.1	B	16.0	B
With Project & TSP Activated	10.4	B	17.1	B
<b>Horizon Year (2030) PM Peak</b>				
No Project	15.8	B	18.5	B
<b>With Project</b>	<b>16.3</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>38.5</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>With Project &amp; TSP Activated</b>	<b>52.8</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>30.4</b>	<b>C</b>

Source: KOA Corporation 2008

The reduction in through lanes results in a drop in level of service and an increase in delay, especially at the I-15 southbound ramp intersection, in the long-term condition in the afternoon peak. However, the projected LOS D at the signalized intersections with less than 80 seconds of delay is considered to be acceptable.

Overall, the proposed project would generally maintain the same level of projected intersection conditions, while potentially providing some improvement to various intersections. The potential for intersection improvements are caused by developing new signal timing plans to improve coordination and update to current conditions. Signal timing plans will be developed during the final design phase, in coordination with the City of San Diego. Intersections operating at LOS D or LOS E at horizon year without the proposed project showed improvements in delay time with the proposed project.

For those intersections projected to operate at LOS E or F conditions in 2030, only one intersection, El Cajon Boulevard/54<sup>th</sup> Street, showed an increase in delay during the horizon year evening peak hour with the proposed project. This increase in delay is due to signal timing changes which allow for brief extensions of the green phase for buses. However, this increase in delay is below the significance threshold specified by the City of San Diego for intersections currently operating at LOS E (increase in delay of 2.0 seconds) (City of San Diego *CEQA Significance Determination*

*Thresholds*, Section O. Transportation/Circulation and Parking, p. 70 - 71, 2007). Thus, the impact would be less than significant.

**b. Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Project construction activities would require construction workers to commute to the site on a daily basis. However, this short-term, temporary traffic increase would not result in a change to an LOS standard for any of the local roadways and would be considered a less than significant impact.

The proposed project was selected as the prototype for improvements to transit operations and performance based upon the vision outlined in the 2030 RTP as adopted by SANDAG. As discussed in Item 15(a), the proposed project's contribution to congestion would not be substantial nor would it substantially deteriorate the LOS. The impact would be less than significant.

**c. Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project does not include any aviation components and, therefore, would not affect air traffic patterns. No associated traffic impacts would occur.

**d. Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project would not increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment). The proposed bus route follows a current bus route on existing roads. As discussed in the project description, the proposed project would include design measures, such as signage, dedicated lanes, and other features, that would clearly separate traffic flow in roadways from transit flows. No associated traffic impacts would occur.

**e. Result in inadequate emergency access?**

**No Impact.** Temporary construction activities would not hinder access to roadways in the project area by emergency vehicles. Operation of the proposed project would not impact emergency access. All stations are located along existing roadways and are thus accessible by emergency vehicles. Accordingly, the project would not result in inadequate emergency access.

**f. Result in inadequate parking capacity?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Parking along the rapid bus route would be lost due to the creation and/or reconstruction of the new bus stations; however, parking would also be recouped by eliminating existing local bus stop stations. A total loss of 24 parking spaces would occur along El Cajon Boulevard. A total gain of 4 spaces would occur along Park Boulevard. A parking deficiency of ten percent or more, where the deficiency results in a substantial impact on the surrounding area, is determined to be an impact. The parking loss of 24 spaces along El Cajon Boulevard does not represent ten percent of the total parking available along El Cajon Boulevard. Accordingly, the project would not result in inadequate emergency access.

The following is a summary of the parking losses at the specific locations along El Cajon Boulevard and an assessment of the alternative parking solutions.

- El Cajon Boulevard / Texas Street: A net loss of 1 space in the westbound side of the street and net loss of 3 spaces in the eastbound side of the street is partially offset with existing available street parking on Euclid Avenue north and south of El Cajon Boulevard.
- El Cajon Boulevard / 30<sup>th</sup> Street: A net loss of 5 spaces in the westbound side of the street and net loss of 4 spaces in the eastbound side of the street is partially offset with existing available street parking within a two block radius of this location (Ohio Street both north and south of El Cajon Boulevard) and on El Cajon Boulevard.
- El Cajon Boulevard / 35<sup>th</sup> Street: A net loss of 4 spaces in the westbound side of the street and net loss of 4 spaces in the eastbound side of the street is partially offset with existing available street parking on 35th Street north and south of El Cajon Boulevard and along El Cajon Boulevard.
- El Cajon Boulevard / Euclid Avenue: A net loss of 5 spaces in the westbound side of the street and net loss of 2 spaces in the eastbound direction is partially offset with existing available street parking on Euclid Avenue north and south of El Cajon Boulevard.
- El Cajon Boulevard / 54<sup>th</sup> Street: A net loss of 1 space in the westbound side of the street is partially offset with existing available street parking on El Cajon Boulevard and adjacent side streets.
- El Cajon Boulevard / College Avenue: A net loss of 2 commercial parking spaces would have a minimal impact to the existing commercial facility.

In summary, the project would result in some loss of parking in particular bus station locations. However, these parking losses would not create significant impacts to the overall availability of parking due to the relative availability of other parking in close proximity.

***g. Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?***

**No Impact.** The proposed project would promote the use of alternative modes of transportation by increasing public transit services in San Diego, specifically in the communities of Downtown San Diego, Balboa Park, Uptown, Greater North Park, Normal Heights, City Heights, Kensington-Talmadge, Eastern Area, and College Area. As discussed in Item 5(b), the proposed project would not conflict with applicable land use plans, policies or regulations, including the *San Diego Strategic Framework* and the *City of San Diego Pedestrian Master Plan*. The proposed project would also be consistent with applicable goals and guidelines contained in the Transportation Element of the *San Diego Progress Guide and General Plan*. One of the listed goals is to provide “a coordinated, multimodal transportation system capable of meeting increasing needs for personal mobility and goods movement at acceptable levels of service.” Bicycle paths are not planned as part of this proposed project. Operation of the proposed project would not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation.

## **16. Utilities and Service Systems**



Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a. Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f. Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g. Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

The project site is located in a developed area currently served by existing utilities and service systems, including water, wastewater, and solid waste disposal. Water supply, wastewater services, and solid waste disposal are all provided by the City of San Diego.

**Discussion**

**a. Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project is located in a developed area served by existing utilities. No restrooms or other facilities that would generate wastewater are proposed. Therefore, no impacts associated with wastewater treatment facilities would occur.

**b. Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project is located in a developed area served by existing water and wastewater facilities. Operation of the transit stations would connect to existing potable water lines in the project vicinity for irrigation purposes. The proposed project would not require water or wastewater services or any new or expanded facilities, except for new street tree plantings at the stations. Therefore, no impacts associated with water facilities would occur.

**c. *Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or vicinity. Whenever possible, on-site surface runoff would be collected in existing drainage facilities, such as concrete curb, gutter, and drainage inlets, and conveyed into the existing municipal storm water drainage system. Where existing curb, gutter, and/or inlets would be removed to accommodate the new station platforms, similar facilities would be constructed at approximately the same location in areas that are currently impervious. Runoff quantities would not substantially change because there would be only an insignificant net increase in hardscape/impervious surfaces as only two of the bus stations, El Cajon Boulevard and 54<sup>th</sup> Street and El Cajon Boulevard and College, would create additional impervious surface. The station at El Cajon Boulevard and 54<sup>th</sup> Street would remove approximately 540 square feet of existing landscape adjacent to a parking lot along El Cajon Boulevard. The bus station at El Cajon Boulevard and College Avenue would remove approximately 790 square feet of existing landscape adjacent to a parking lot along College Avenue. Approximately 1,330 square feet of new impervious area would be created by the proposed rapid bus project, which is far less than the City of San Diego's 5,000 square feet threshold per station platform site. Furthermore, the total disturbed area at each station platform site would be significantly less than the City's 1.0-acre disturbance threshold. Accordingly, runoff quantities generated by this project at each station platform site is anticipated to be minimal, and below 0.5 cubic feet per second per site threshold established by the City of San Diego and no new storm water facilities would be needed. Impacts associated with storm water drainage facilities would be less than significant.

**d. *Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?***

**No Impact.** The proposed project would result in a negligible increased demand for water associated with irrigation of proposed landscaping. Irrigation for the proposed landscaping would be provided by existing potable water lines. This increase, however, would not be substantial and would not require construction or expansion of existing water supply facilities or entitlements. Therefore, no impacts related to water supply would occur.

**e. *Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?***

**No Impact.** The proposed project would not generate wastewater and therefore would not affect the applicable wastewater treatment provider. No impact related to wastewater treatment capacity would occur.

**f. *Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?***

**No Impact.** Transit patrons would generate some trash, and trash receptacles would be provided at each station, to be collected as part of a shelter maintenance contract. The amounts of solid waste generated by the proposed project would not be substantial and thus would not significantly impact regional landfills. The proposed project would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

**g. Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?**

**No Impact.** As stated in Item 16(f), the proposed project would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, no associated impacts would occur.

**17. Mandatory Findings Of Significance**

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable (“cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion**

**a. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?**

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.** The proposed project would not reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, or threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community. Development of the proposed project would not impact sensitive species or their habitat. As discussed in Item 5, the proposed project would not eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. The Georgia Street Bridge is identified as one significant historical resource located adjacent to the proposed new station at Park Boulevard and University Avenue. However, the construction of the raised driveway aprons, located on the northeast and southeast corners of the intersection of Park Boulevard and University Avenue, are approximately 10 to 20 feet west of the Georgia Street Bridge retaining walls and are outside the documented footprint of this previously NRHP listed resource. Therefore, the construction would not cause a significant impact to the Georgia Street Bridge or its retaining walls. In addition, Item 5 also identifies one historic sidewalk stamp, marked "G.R. Daley 3-1925," at the southwest corner of the intersection of 30th Street and El Cajon Boulevard. Under the proposed project, a new bus/pedestrian bulb out is proposed on the southeast and northwest corners, and new ADA -compliant pedestrian ramps are proposed for all four corners of the intersection. As currently proposed, the construction of the pedestrian ramps may cause a significant impact to the sidewalk stamp located on the southwest corner. However, as identified by mitigation measure CUL-1, the City of San Diego Historic Resources Board determines there would be an impact to the sidewalk stamp, the stamp shall be preserved prior to construction per recommendation by the City of San Diego Historic Resources Board in compliance with Policy HP-A.5.c in the Historic Preservation Element of the City of San Diego's General Plan. The stamp will be saw-cut and relocated in the same general location with the same original orientation. Although historic research indicates trolley tracks from the San Diego Electric Railway ran along Park Boulevard and University Avenue, these tracks were not observed during the field investigation. However, there is a potential for these tracks or associated elements to be buried under the current roadway and therefore all ground-disturbing activities associated with the new medians along Park Boulevard, north and south of University Avenue, and along Park Boulevard, south of El Cajon Boulevard will be monitored by a qualified archaeologist identified on the City of San Diego's approved list of qualified archaeologists to monitor within the City of San Diego.

Mitigation measures designed to minimize construction-related environmental effects to air quality, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, and noise are listed in Items 3, 5, 7, and 11. No operational impacts related to the proposed rapid bus are anticipated.

***b. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals?***

**No Impact.** The proposed project would occur entirely within existing roads, which is not included in long-term environmental protection plans. The project site is not located within the City of San Diego MSCP planning area, although a segment of the proposed project alignment is adjacent to the portion of MSCP along Park Boulevard. The project site is designated for transportation, and is not located within or adjacent to the MHPA, which identifies lands designated for open space and habitat preservation. Mitigation measures designed to reduce air quality impacts during the construction phase would not jeopardize or conflict long-term goals for the SDAB and long-term pollutant emissions would not be considerable and could be decreased from existing conditions. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

***c. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable ("cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable***

***when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?***

**No Impact.** The proposed project could contribute to cumulative impacts associated with light and glare, air quality, water quality, and noise. However, the project's contribution would not be cumulatively considerable due to its incremental and/or short-term nature. In the case of light and glare, the project would include some lighting at the stations in an already heavily lighted area, and all lighting would be directional to minimize spillover into the night sky. As discussed under Air Quality, both short-term and long-term pollutant emissions would not be considerable and long-term emissions could be decreased from existing conditions. The quantities of emissions would not be cumulatively considerable. Regarding water quality, the proposed project and other projects in the area would be required to be in compliance with applicable standards and permit conditions from appropriate regulatory agencies (i.e., RWQCB, City of San Diego). Potential cumulative noise impacts would be In the case of noise, implementation of the proposed project could lead to an increase in bus noise and a decrease in nontransit vehicle noise. These changes would likely be imperceptible, and the project would not lead to a cumulatively considerable increase in noise levels.

***d. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?***

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As discussed in Items 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 15, and 16 of this IS/MND, the proposed project would not cause in any substantial adverse environmental effects on humans. Please refer to specific discussions under Aesthetics, Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Transportation/Traffic, and Utilities and Service Systems.

#### **FISH AND GAME DETERMINATION**

Based on the information above, there is no evidence that the project has a potential for a change that would adversely affect wildlife resources or the habitat upon which the wildlife depends. The presumption of adverse effect set forth in 14 CCR 753.3(d) has been rebutted by substantial evidence.

Yes (Certificate of Fee Exemption)

No (Pay fee)

## **VII. MITIGATION MEASURES**

The following mitigation measures and recommended measures to further minimize impacts are identified for the proposed project.

### **Air Quality**

#### **AIR-1: Dust Control**

The Project Contractor shall prevent dust exposure to persons or property by implementation of one or more of the following measures to prevent visible dust plumes from extending beyond the boundary of the construction area and into public space:

- Physical separation of the source and receptors with a solid barrier that would prevent the transmission of dust
- Physical separation of the source and receptors by creation of a buffer zone and pedestrian and vehicle detours
- Wetting of areas to prevent the generation of dust plumes.

### **Cultural Resources**

#### **CUL-1: Raised Driveway Aprons on Park Boulevard Near the Georgia Street Bridge**

During creation of construction details for the raised driveway aprons at the corners of Park Boulevard and University Avenue, the design of the aprons and associated construction will be sympathetic to the Georgia Street Bridge and its retaining walls. This should follow the guidelines set forth in the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Appropriate treatments could include making sure that the concrete in the raised aprons are of a similar type to that of the bridge (yet distinguishable from the bridge), since the “innovative use of reinforced-concrete...” is noted in the significance assessment of the bridge as a historic resource (Department of Parks and Recreation form 523B for site P-37-016277).

#### **CUL-2: El Cajon Boulevard and 30th Street Bus Station – Sidewalk Stamp**

Prior to the issuance of a building/construction permit, the construction plans for the 30<sup>th</sup> Street bus station shall be reviewed by City of San Diego Historic Resources Board. If the City of San Diego Historic Resources Board determines there would be an impact to the sidewalk stamp, the stamp shall be preserved prior to construction per recommendation by the City of San Diego Historic Resources Board in compliance with Policy HP-A.5.c in the Historic Preservation Element of the City of San Diego’s General Plan, which serves to “protect and preserve historic sidewalk stamps, street signs, lamp posts, street trees, and other hardscape and landscape elements that contribute to the historic character of a neighborhood.” If the sidewalk stamp will be affected, the stamp will be saw-cut and relocated in the same general location with the same orientation as it was originally. All work would be monitored by an archaeologist identified by the City of San Diego. If as a result of that review, it is determined that the sidewalk stamp would not be affected, no mitigation would be necessary.

### **CUL-3: Park Boulevard – San Diego Electric Railway Trolley Tracks**

Subsurface activities at the median construction areas will be monitored by an archaeologist and any tracks that are found would be recorded.

#### **Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

**HAZ-1:** Any construction activities at the two bus stations shall be monitored for environmental concern, such as impacted soil and/or soil vapor emissions that might threaten public health, the environment, and construction personnel. In addition, any soil designated for removal and/or exportation from the project site should be sampled for waste characterization to identify appropriate disposal methods.

#### **Noise**

##### **NOISE-1: Jackhammers**

If jackhammer use is required within 40 feet of pedestrians, residents, or open businesses, the quietest jackhammer suitable to perform the work shall be used. If the selected equipment is the Atlas Copco Model TEX P90S model with an elongated effective muffler casing or bellows of greater than 15 inches in length, Chicago Pneumatic CP 1240 with muffler, or equivalent model with muffler, then no noise mitigation is required. If larger or noisier equipment is required, then a portable noise barrier shall be used. The barrier shall have no gaps or holes and shall be high enough to block the line of sight between the equipment and nearby receptors. The barrier shall be made of ¾-inch plywood, acoustical blankets, or similar material with a minimum Sound Transmission Class (STC) rating of 30.

##### **NOISE-2: Concrete Saws**

If concrete saw use is required within 40 feet of pedestrians, residents, or open businesses, then a portable noise barrier shall be used. The barrier shall have no gaps or holes and shall be high enough to block the line of sight between the equipment and nearby receptors. The barrier shall be made of ¾-inch plywood, acoustical blankets, or similar material with a minimum STC rating of 30.

## VIII. INITIAL STUDY/NEGATIVE DECLARATION DISTRIBUTION LIST

### FEDERAL AGENCIES

n/a

### STATE AGENCIES

State Clearinghouse  
Office of Planning and Research  
1400 Tenth St. Room 222  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Water Resources Control Board  
Storm Water Permitting  
P. O. Box 1977  
Sacramento, CA 95812-1977

California Native American Heritage Commission  
915 Capital Mall, Room 364  
Sacramento, CA 95814

### LOCAL AGENCIES/ORGANIZATIONS

APCD  
10126 Old Grove Road  
San Diego, CA 92131

Balboa Park Committee  
Attn.: Charlie Daniels

Caltrans, District 11  
Attn.: Bill Figge  
4050 Taylor Street  
San Diego, CA 92110

CCDC  
Attn.: David Allsbrook

Centre City Advisory Committee  
Attn.: Brad Richter  
225 Broadway, Suite 1100  
San Diego, CA 92101

City Heights Area Planning Committee  
Attn.: Jim Varnadore, Chair  
P.O. Box 5859  
San Diego, CA 92165

City of San Diego  
William Anderson, Director of Planning  
Hon. Toni Atkins, Councilmember  
Steve Celniker, Senior Engineer  
Hon. Kevin Faulconer, Councilmember  
Duncan Hughes, Senior Engineer



Hon. Jim Madaffer, Councilmember  
Linda Marabian, Senior Engineer  
Marlon Pangilinan, Senior Planner  
Hon. Jerry Sanders, Mayor  
Ken Teasley  
Cathy Winterrowd, Senior Planner

College Area Business Improvement District  
Attn.: Jennifer Finnegan  
4704 College Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92115

College Area Community Council  
Attn.: Doug Case, Chair  
5444 Reservoir Dr. #20  
San Diego, CA 92120

County of San Diego  
Hon. Ron Roberts, Supervisor  
Department of Health Services  
Planning Director  
Recorder's Office

Downtown San Diego Partnership  
401 B Street  
San Diego, CA 92101

Eastern Area Planning Committee  
Attn.: Laura Riebau, Chair  
4231 54<sup>th</sup> Place  
San Diego, CA 92115

El Cerrito Heights Community Council  
Attn.: Joseph Theriault  
4248 East Overlook Drive  
San Diego, CA 92115

El Cajon Blvd BIA  
Attn.: Gary Weber  
3727 El Cajon Blvd.  
San Diego, CA 92104

Greater North Park Planning Committee  
Attn.: Bob Steppke, Chair  
3939 Arizona Street  
San Diego, CA 92104

Hillcrest Association

Kensington-Talmadge Planning Committee  
Attn.: Tom Hebrank, Chair  
P.O. Box 16391  
San Diego, CA 92176

Libraries

San Diego Public Library (Central Library)  
820 E. Street  
San Diego, CA 92101

San Diego Public Library (City Heights Branch)  
3795 Fairmount Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92105

San Diego Public Library (College/Rolando Branch)  
6600 Montezuma Road  
San Diego, CA 92115

San Diego Public Library (Kensington/Normal Heights Branch)  
4121 Adams Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92116

San Diego Public Library (North Park Branch)  
3795 31st Street  
San Diego, CA 92104

San Diego Public Library (University Heights Branch)  
4193 Park Boulevard  
San Diego, CA 92103

San Diego Community College District Library,

San Diego County Library System  
Attn.: Mloretta McKinney

San Diego State University Library

Serra Cooperative Library System  
Attn.: Mary Hobson

MTS

Denis Desmond, Senior Planner  
Harry Mathis, Chair

Normal Heights Community Planning Committee  
Attn.: Jim Baross, Chair  
3335 N. Mountain View Dr.  
San Diego, CA 92116

Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Attn.: Stacey Backowski  
9174 Sky Park Ct., Suite 100  
San Diego, CA 92123

San Diego County Archaeological Society  
P. O. Box 81106

San Diego, CA 92138

San Diego State University  
Facilities Planning and Management  
Attn.: Larry Piper

San Diego Zoological Society  
Attn.: Mr. Steve Fobes  
Post Office Box 551  
San Diego, CA 92112

University Heights Committee, Development Corp.

Uptown Planners  
Attn.: Leo Wilson, Chair  
536 Maple St. #202  
San Diego, CA 92103

**OTHER**

AT&T  
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1453 Edinger Ct.  
Tustin, CA 92780

Pearson Ford  
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## IX. REFERENCES

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KOA Corporation.

2007. SANDAG El Cajon Boulevard Mid-City Bus Rapid Transit System Traffic Impact Study. October.

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- 1992 Centre City Community Plan, Revised March 2002.
- 1989 College Area Community Plan, Revised August 2002.
- 1986 Greater North Park Community Plan, Revised June 1990.
- 1998 Mid-City Communities Plan, Revised September 2003.
- 1998 Uptown Community Plan, May 2002.
- 2006 General Plan, Mobility Element, October.
- 2000 Municipal Code, Chapter 14, Article 2, Division 7, §142.0710 Air Contaminant Regulations. Effective January 1.
- 2004 Municipal Code. Chapter 5, Article 9.5, Noise Abatement and Control. Section 59.5.0404 Construction Noise. Last amended January 3.
- 2006 Municipal Code. Chapter 13, Article 2: Overlay Zones. Section 132.0302 Where the Airport Environs Overlay Zone Applies. April 2006.
- 2007 Historic Preservation Element, General Plan. Policy HP-A.5.c. September

SOTA Environmental Technology, Inc.

- 2007 Phase I Environmental Assessment – Mid-City Rapid Bus Project: Park Boulevard and El Cajon Boulevard. October.

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- 2007 Green Book, Criteria Pollutant Area Summary Report. Available at <http://www.epa.gov/air/oaqps/greenbk/anc12.html>. Accessed December 12.

**GIS Data**

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Groundwater Basins (California Department of Water Resources 2000)

Hydrologic Units (Geo Data Base 2004)

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David Lohr ..... Geologist

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**APPENDIX A  
TRAFFIC REPORT**

*(bound separately)*





**APPENDIX B  
TRAFFIC MEMORANDUM**

*(bound separately)*



**APPENDIX C  
TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM  
EL CAJON BOULEVARD/I-15 INTERSECTION ANALYSIS**

*(bound separately)*

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