



SOUTHEAST TRANSIT VILLAGE PLANNING AREA VISION PLAN

21 DECEMBER 2012

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Lancaster, a town born of the railroad, got its start at the corner of what today is Lancaster Boulevard and Sierra Highway and is the northwest corner of the Southeast Transit Village Planning Area (STVPA). This spot was more than likely selected due to the presence of subsurface water, and originally consisted of a well, railroad worker housing, a garage for a hand-car, and a tool house. In 1884, Lancaster became a passenger depot with a railroad passenger agent and a land sales office. Settlers, responding to promotional literature, began to establish farms around in the growing town of Lancaster, which soon became the business center of the Antelope Valley. The construction of the California Aqueduct in the early 1900s firmly established Lancaster as an important agricultural town, and in the 1940s Lancaster's economy was diversified with the coming of the aerospace industry.

Downtown Lancaster grew on the west side of the railroad tracks and Sierra Highway, while the land to the south and east – the STVPA – has remained only partially developed to this day. With the recent rebirth of the Downtown as the civic heart of the City, the STVPA provides a remarkable opportunity for the City of Lancaster to expand the Downtown as a place to live and work with a set of new walkable, mixed-use living environments at the center of the City, a short walk from the once-again-vibrant Lancaster Boulevard (The BLVD) district, and on the spot where the City began.



Historic view of the Lancaster Station.

INTRODUCTION

The Metrolink Station – on the site of the historic depot, the original epicenter of this California railroad town but currently something of an island between the Downtown and the underdeveloped STVPA – is envisioned as the focal point of a new transit-oriented mixed-use neighborhood, encompassing and unifying the STVPA and the easterly blocks of the Downtown.

Indeed, the STVPA provides a major opportunity for the City to re-imagine the ways in which Lancaster connects to and participates in the regional economy. Current Metrolink ridership is largely limited to riders who drive to the station in the morning to commute to jobs in Los Angeles. But as the STVPA and the Downtown mature together, it will be possible to replace many of those car trips to and from the station with short walks from surrounding neighborhoods, with new incoming commuters from throughout the Los Angeles region walking to nearby jobs and connecting to local transit services.

The successful 2010 transformation of Lancaster Blvd. and the Downtown has sparked a strong new interest in and hope for realizing a city center made of such lively, pedestrian-oriented places. Because the BLVD District of Downtown Lancaster is the only place in the Antelope Valley offering a pedestrian-oriented mixed use urban environment and life-style, the STVPA is uniquely positioned to play this role.

This Plan builds on previous planning efforts including:

- The 2030 General Plan, adopted in 2009, which envisions a future in which land use and transportation systems will be rebalanced in favor of walkable places and sustainable development.
- The Master Plan of Trails and Bikeways, which provides a blueprint for creating a connected network of on-road and off-road trails and bikeways for users of all ages and abilities to encourage and enable healthier, outdoor lifestyles.



Historic view of General Merchandise building on the southwest corner of Lancaster Boulevard and Yucca Avenue.

- The Lancaster Design Guidelines, which establish standards for the design of quality new development and redevelopment that enhance the City’s image, pride, and quality of life.
- The Downtown Specific Plan, which provides a vision and standards for the blocks to the north and south of Lancaster Boulevard and west of Sierra Highway as a vital urban district with a mix of retail, civic, residential and employment uses around a pedestrian-oriented public realm.

This Vision Plan continues the goals and policies of these plans, including:

- Promoting a variety of housing types located within a safe and easy walking distance of public transit and other daily services.
- Expanding transportation options, creating a streetscape that serves a wide range of users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists.
- Introducing compact, mixed-use, infill development, while accommodating existing uses.
- Ensuring pedestrian comfort, convenience, and connectivity in and adjacent to mixed use developments and transit.
- Creating high-quality developments with architectural and natural elements that reflect the interests of residents and businesses.
- Encouraging the development of flexible urban buildings that will be assets to the community over time.
- Ensuring safe and inviting pedestrian corridors through CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles.
- Improving the coordination of land use and transportation, increasing availability of transit service, and integrating multi-modal transportation approaches.



Historic view of Sierra Highway looking south from Lancaster Boulevard.

A. LOCATION OF THE STVPA

The City of Lancaster is located in Los Angeles County along State Route 14, seventy miles northeast of Los Angeles. This high desert city is located in the Antelope Valley of the Mojave Desert, which is bounded by the Tehachapi Mountains to the north and the San Gabriel Mountains to the south. Incorporated in 1977, the City has a population of almost 158,000 within its 94 square miles.

The Southeast Transit Village Planning Area (STVPA) is approximately 98 acres in size, located just to the east of Downtown, south of Lancaster Boulevard, and east of Sierra Highway and the Union Pacific line. The STVPA is bounded by Sierra Highway to the west – on which the existing Lancaster Metrolink station is located – Avenue J to the south, Division Street to the east, and Milling Street, Yucca Avenue, and Lancaster Boulevard to the north (see **Figure 1**).

The STVPA is also part of the City’s Transit Village Development District, adopted in 2001. Since then the City has undertaken several planning and visioning efforts within this District, including the North Downtown Transit Village Vision Plan – which has guided development of transit-oriented housing, mixed-use development, and new parks facilities in the neighborhood north of Lancaster Boulevard – and the Downtown Lancaster Specific Plan that has guided the revitalization of the commercial district along Lancaster Boulevard (the BLVD), including new housing, commercial, and entertainment uses (see **Figure 2**).

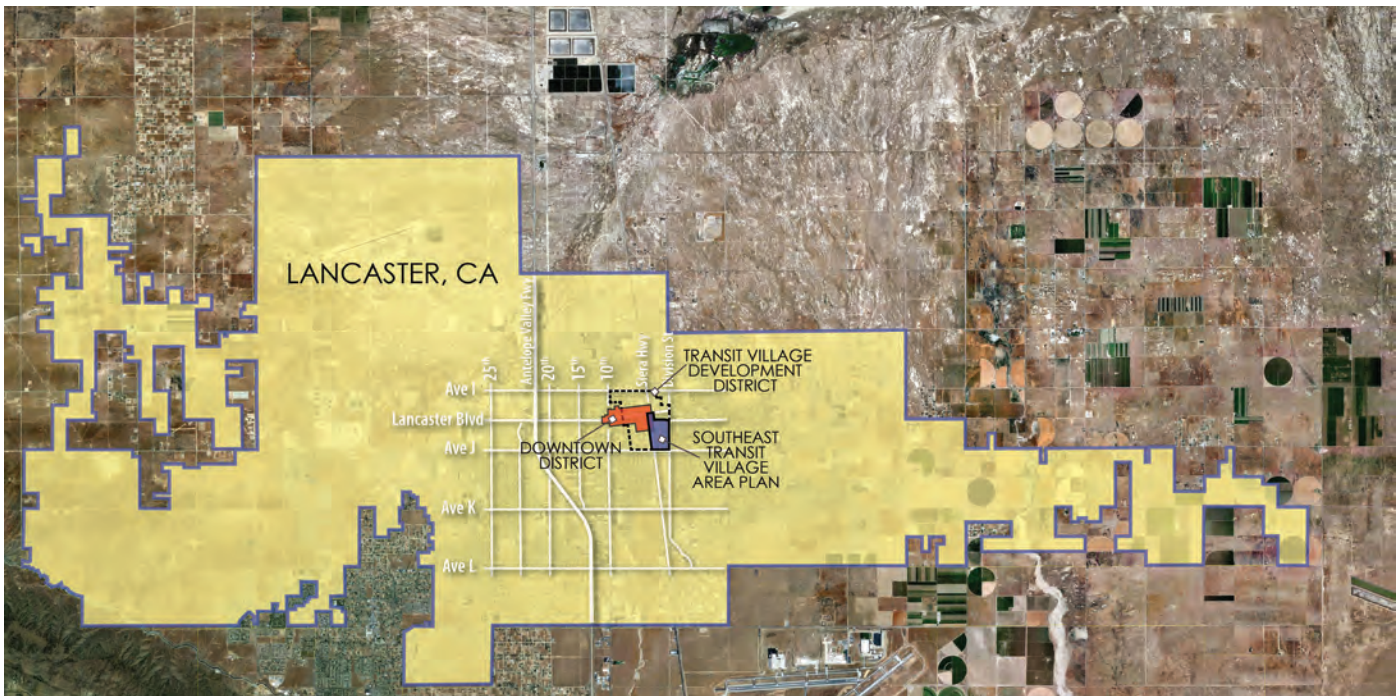


Figure 1. Location of the STVPA in relation to the City of Lancaster.



View from Sierra Highway of the Metrolink Station and its parking lot.



View toward the Metrolink Station from the large, vacant parcel to the east of the station.

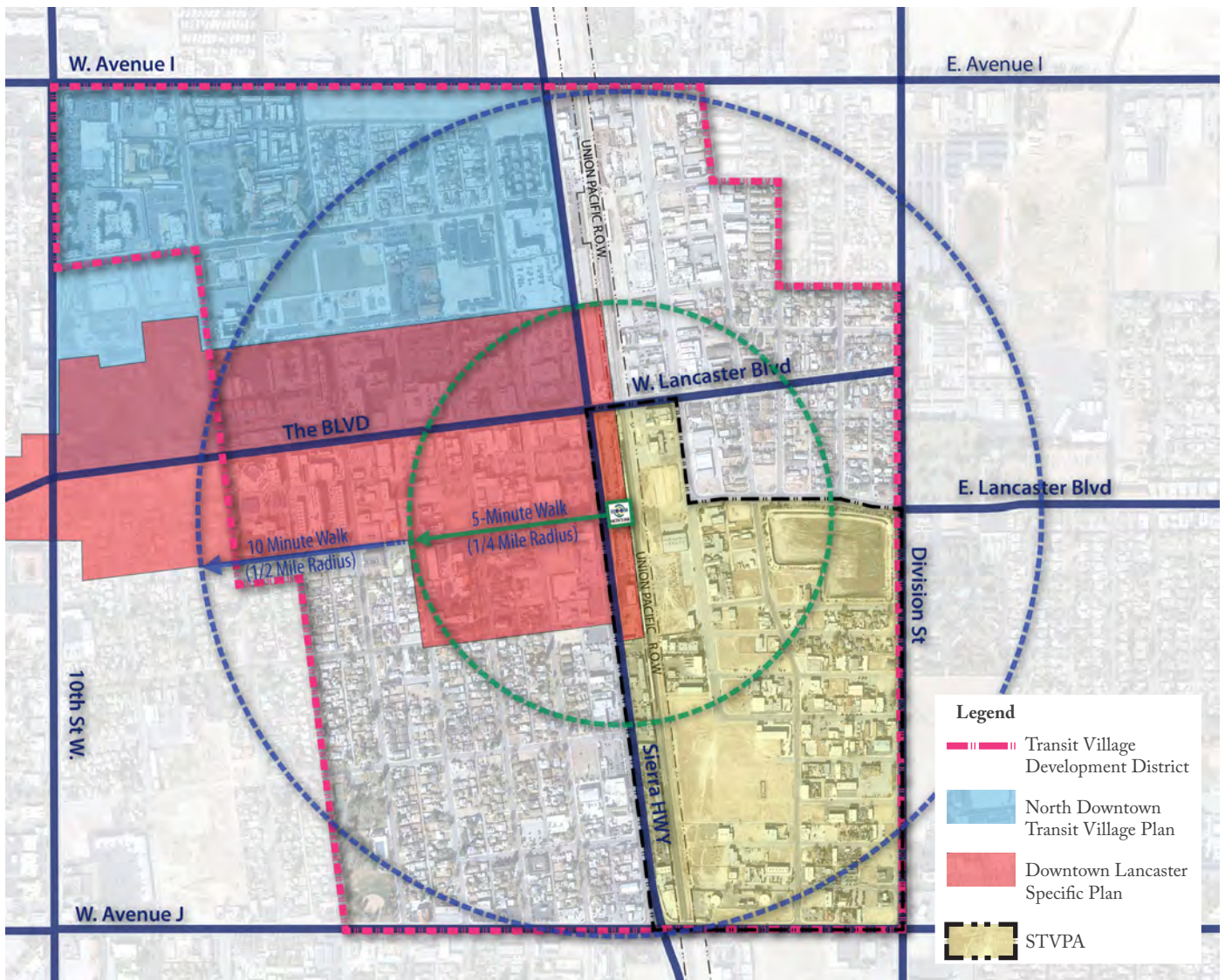


Figure 2. The STVPA in relation to the City's Transit Village Development District, the North Downtown Transit Village Plan, and the Downtown Lancaster Specific Plan.

B. WHAT WE SAW AND HEARD

To establish a strong foundation of shared information as the basis for considering the future of the STVPA, the City and the consultant team conducted a significant urban design analysis and public outreach effort that included:

- Meeting with a wide range of stakeholders, including Metrolink, Antelope Valley Transit Authority (AVTA), the City of Lancaster Public Safety Department, the City of Lancaster Economic Development Department, The Housing Authority, the Architectural and Design Commission, the BLVD Association, various business owners, the Lancaster Community Shelter, pastors from local churches, and the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Office.
- Meeting with members of the community in three workshops and two joint Planning Commission/Architectural & Design Commission meetings.

Information gained and comments received during these outreach meetings generally fell within five categories, as follows:

I. LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER

1. The Plan Area to the east of the Union Pacific Railroad is largely underdeveloped, vacant, and perceived as “unsafe” by many residents and potential Metrolink commuters (see **Figure 3**).
2. A large detention basin divides the Plan Area from the neighborhoods to the north and east. The berms and fencing that enclose it provide unattractive faces to the adjacent STVPA properties and to surrounding neighborhoods.
3. The existing fragmented ownership pattern – many small parcels under separate ownership, many previously owned by the City’s Redevelopment Agency – presents challenges to coherent development (see **Figure 4**).
4. Larger, underdeveloped parcels within and immediately adjacent to the Plan Area provide promising sites for new residential, job-producing, and transit-oriented uses.
5. Uses that provide jobs for local residents should be encouraged.



The STVPA’s street network is incomplete.



View of intermittent sidewalks along Yucca Avenue.

6. The STVPA would be an appropriate location for hip, urban, artist-oriented housing that preserves some of the industrial aesthetic of the Plan Area’s light industrial uses. Lancaster’s artist community is growing, especially with the revived presence of the Lancaster Museum of Art and History (MOAH). Perhaps the STVPA or a portion of the STVPA could be developed as a Cultural District.
7. Green/sustainable buildings should be encouraged in the Plan Area.
8. There is a perception that the area around the Metrolink Station and the east end of The BLVD near Sierra Highway is dangerous, which has a negative effect on business and property values.
9. Vandalism and graffiti within the Plan Area have not been a big problem.
10. Many properties within the Plan Area are still on septic systems, and comprehensive utility system improvements will be needed to support new urban development.

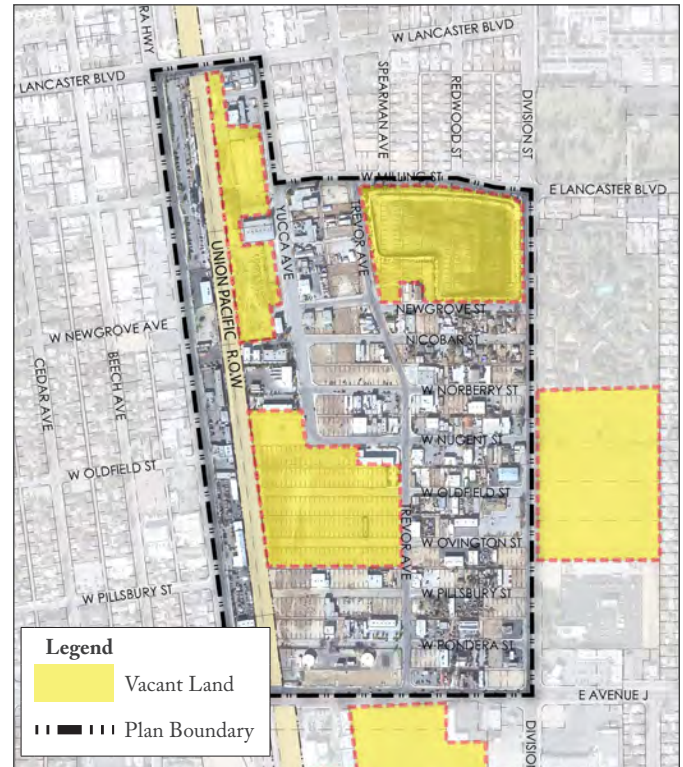


Figure 3. Large opportunity sites.

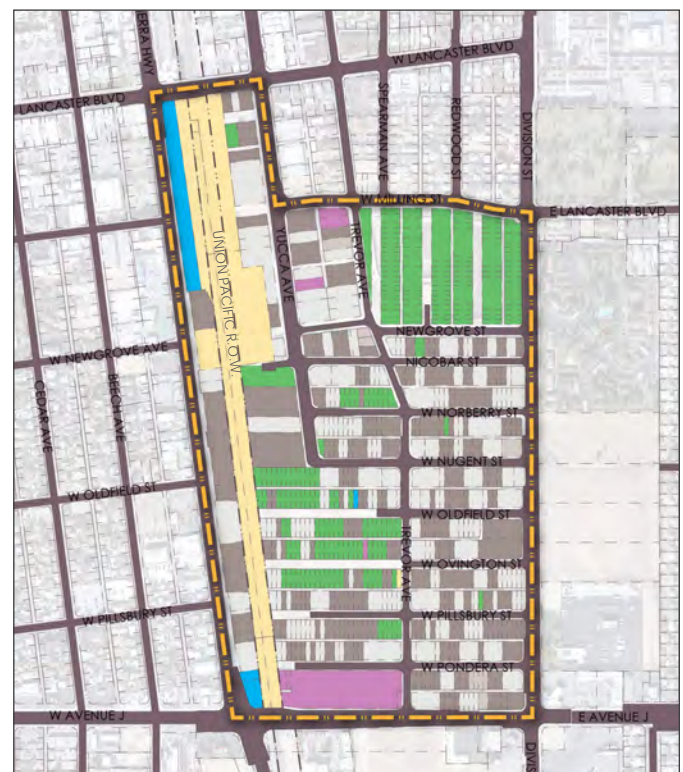
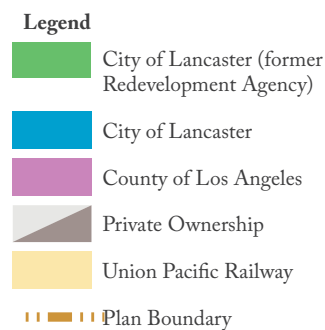


Figure 4. Existing Ownership.

II. PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY AMENITIES

1. The future of the homeless shelter is important and must be taken into account as part of this planning process.
2. There are currently no parks within the STVPA and one or more new parks should be provided.
3. In the short term, the stormwater detention basin might be used as a dual-purpose facility, with the addition of a putt-putt golf course, batting cage, playing fields, perimeter exercise path, and/or similar uses.
4. In the long run, a stormwater management plan should be prepared that avoids the need for a major stormwater basin in this important downtown neighborhood.

III. CIRCULATION AND WALKABLE STREETS

1. The street network is incomplete, due mainly to the largely undeveloped western half of the Plan Area and the large detention basin located south of Milling Street.

2. Pedestrian and bicycle amenities are very limited: many streets lack sidewalks, street trees, good street lights, and bicycle lanes. Further, there are currently no transit routes that run through the Plan Area.
3. Existing streets are wide, currently encouraging driving speeds that are inconsistent with a pedestrian-oriented environment, but also providing room for more parking, street trees, planted medians, and pedestrian and bicycle amenities.
4. The interconnected street and alley network along the eastern edge of the Plan Area can be extended and transformed into an attractive, walkable and bikeable network of “complete streets.”
5. Sierra Highway should be better landscaped, traffic-calmed, and transformed to have more the character of an avenue that is part of the Downtown, and less that of a highway bypass.

IV. TRANSIT

1. The Metrolink Station is isolated, largely cut off from the east side of town by the railroad tracks, separated from Downtown by



View of Sierra Highway at Milling Avenue. Sierra Highway's multi-lane width makes it uninviting for pedestrians to cross the streets to the station.



View of the stormwater detention basin from Division Street.

Sierra Highway, lacking pedestrian and bike amenities, and most bus stops a long block away.

2. The Planning Area includes the Lancaster Metrolink Station, just across Sierra Highway from Downtown, and served by nine inbound and nine outbound trains per weekday, averaging around 500 daily boardings.
3. The design of the station area should encourage and welcome visitors from other parts of the County and region to travel to Lancaster via Metrolink, especially during events and festivals such as the Poppy Festival. Also, local residents should be encouraged to take AVTA buses to these festivals and events.

V. POLICY & REGULATORY CHANGES

1. Following the acceptance of this Vision Plan, a number of the City’s regulatory documents – including the General Plan, the Zoning Map, and the Zoning Ordinance – should be amended to better support transit oriented development within and around the STVPA.



Beautiful streetscape along Lancaster Boulevard, looking east from Trevor Avenue, provides a model for some new STVPA streets.



Tree-lined street in one of Lancaster’s older neighborhoods, similar in design to those envisioned for the STVPA.



View of the White House drive-thru restaurant on Division Street and a vacant parcel in the foreground.



New pedestrian-oriented “liner building” on the BLVD in Downtown. Similar buildings may help transform the STVPA.

C. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Based on the discussions throughout the public engagement process, and integrating that information with existing policies from the General Plan and other relevant City plans and initiatives, the following Guiding Principles for the future of the STVPA have been drafted and reviewed by the City’s Planning Commission and Architectural and Design Review Commission:

1. SUPPORT EXISTING BUSINESSES AND LANDOWNERS

Future plans for the area should support existing businesses and land owners to build value and expand opportunities and alternatives for economic development. As new buildings and uses are introduced to the STVPA, their location and design should avoid and, where possible, correct land use conflicts and negative health impacts.

2. SUPPORT CITYWIDE ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Future uses and development in the area should serve the city’s broader goals, including:

- Creating jobs.
- Providing a balanced range of industrial and commercial land uses.
- Providing a range of diverse housing options.
- Supporting transit.
- Supporting Downtown.
- Improving Lancaster’s community character and sense of place.

3. LEVERAGE THE VALUE OF THE METROLINK STATION

The Metrolink station should be an urban, pedestrian-oriented, multi-modal transit facility with a strong presence within the Downtown to the west and the STVPA to the east.

4. IMPROVE CONNECTIONS TO ADJOINING AREAS

Better east-west connections through the STVPA, particularly to Downtown, should be provided for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

5. IMPROVE STREETScape AND STREET CHARACTER

Improve the beauty, character, and pedestrian accommodation of streets throughout the STVPA in order to help improve property values and attract new investment in high quality urban buildings.

6. PROVIDE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR COMPLETE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Ensure that there is sufficient and appropriate infrastructure throughout the Plan Area to support future development, including sewer, water, telecommunications, natural gas, streets, stormwater, and flood protection.

7. ANTICIPATE THE HIGH SPEED RAIL BUT DON’T WAIT FOR IT

The High Speed Rail (HSR), if it is built, will run along Sierra Highway. Though the timing, design, and even whether it will be

implemented at all are uncertain, the City should nevertheless a) be clear about the nature of a preferred HSR design, and b) move forward with a plan for the STVPA that is viable regardless of the HSR outcomes.

8. PROVIDE VALUABLE PUBLIC SPACE

Find opportunities to add parks, plazas, trails, and other public space to the STVPA, especially in areas near the transit station and near potential housing, where these amenities can create a sense of place and add value for potential new residents and businesses.

9. REFINE EXISTING PLANNING AND ZONING

Current planning policies and regulations call for the STVPA to be developed as a transit-oriented area, but need to be refined to better define the varied development types, neighborhood character, and preferred uses that will be necessary to successfully implement that broad goal.

10. PURSUE SUSTAINABILITY AND HEALTH AS A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Position the STVPA as a unique, regionally recognized example of a sustainable urban place by promoting strategies that complement the inherently eco-friendly characteristics of infill development and multi-modal transportation systems. Additional recommended strategies include on-site stormwater management, energy efficiency, water efficiency, district-shared energy, green building design, adaptive reuse of buildings and materials, and access to renewable energy.

Further, create a public realm that reflects these environmental values, encourages healthy outdoor lifestyles, and emphasizes walking, cycling, and access to parks. Locate land uses so that all residents – particularly vulnerable populations like children and the elderly – are protected from poor air quality, while enabling land uses that promote economic opportunity and access to employment.



A lively retail district that promotes walking and biking.



A main street with large street trees, angled parking, corner bulbouts, and street furniture – a model for Yucca Avenue.

D. VISION PLAN

The Vision Plan, **Figure 5**, illustrates a range of potential development possibilities for the STVPA, within a recommended framework of streets and open spaces. Key components of the Vision Plan include:

- A** Rebuild the Metrolink Station as an urban, pedestrian-oriented, multi-modal transit facility that has a strong civic presence, is more accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists, and is better connected to local bus services.
- B** Extend a variation of the BLVD environment of the Downtown across the tracks to Yucca Avenue with “main street commercial” buildings and a landscaped median in the center of Lancaster Boulevard.
- C** Capitalize on the STVPA’s proximity to Downtown and the Metrolink Station to develop its vacant and underutilized parcels as a compact, mixed-use, walkable, and memorable urban center. Introduce buildings up to four stories in height that accommodate a mix of residential, office, and limited retail uses.
- D** Transform Sierra Highway to the north and south of the BLVD into a Downtown Avenue by introducing curbside parking, corner bulb-outs, better crosswalks, and improved bicycle facilities. Continue to allow commercial and retail uses along Sierra Highway, including automobile-oriented commercial uses.
- E** Mend the “railroad gap” in Downtown’s urban fabric by introducing additional pedestrian and/or vehicular track crossings. Potential interventions include: constructing a pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks at Milling Street; extending Milling Street beneath the railroad tracks; and/or extending Oldfield Street beneath the railroad tracks to connect to Nugent Street.
- F** Repair and complete the Plan Area’s internal street network, adding missing street segments, missing sidewalks and street trees along all streets, and connect to adjacent neighborhoods and districts by extending Nugent Street to the east and Trevor Avenue to the south.
- G** Amend the City’s Master Plan of Drainage so that a stormwater detention basin is not required in the STVPA – or if a basin is required, consider relocating it next to the railroad tracks. Once removed or moved, redevelop the parcels currently occupied by the stormwater detention basin with uses that are compatible with the existing neighborhoods. New development alternatives include residential, office, and/or institutional uses such as a college campus.
- H** Introduce varied park space within the STVPA. Potential new parks include a large recreational field adjacent to the railroad tracks (either by itself or within the relocated detention basin), neighborhood greens, plazas, community gardens, and tot lots.
- I** Create new zoning that encourages mixed-use transit-oriented neighborhood development in the northerly portion of the STVPA, and similar, transitional development to the south, but without residential near industrial uses.
- J** Amend existing zoning standards to allow existing light industrial and automotive repair businesses in the southeast corner of the STVPA to continue and expand.
- K** Create a zone for light industrial uses on the largely vacant parcels south of Avenue J, with a street and block network that is connected to the STVPA and accommodates larger parcels.

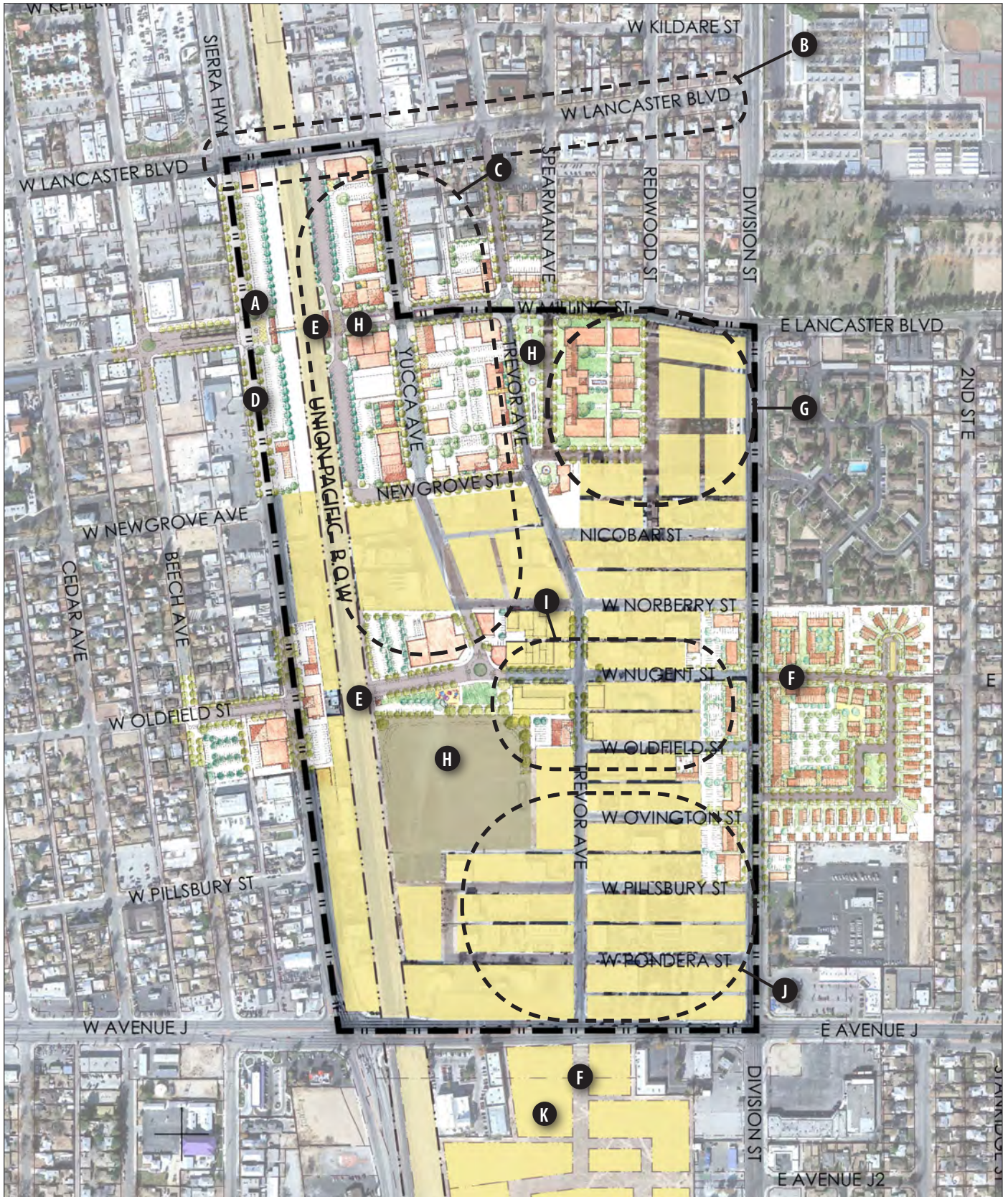


Figure 5. STVPA Vision Plan

I. LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN

ENVISIONED COMMUNITY CHARACTER

A. EXISTING CONDITIONS

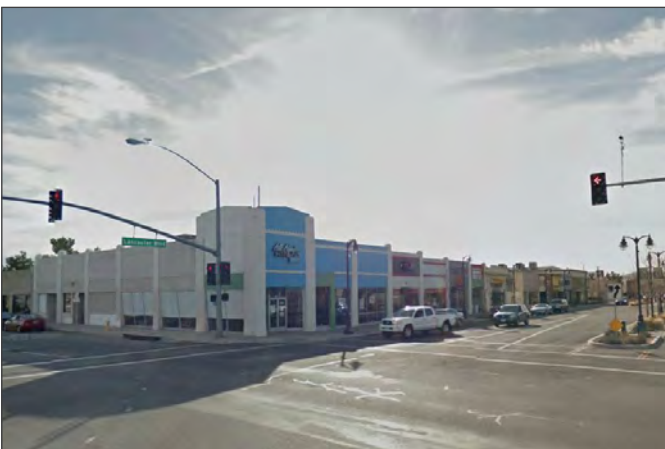
1. Land Use. The Plan Area is designated Mixed-Use by the most recent Lancaster General Plan and is zoned Mixed-Use-Neighborhood MU-N. The STVPA is partially developed with a mix of industrial and commercial uses intermixed with some residential uses. There are several streets within the STVPA on which single-family houses are located immediately adjacent to or behind industrial uses.

Regarding property ownership, most of the land within the STVPA is privately owned, but a number of parcels are owned by public agencies. The City itself owns approximately seven acres of vacant land within the Plan Area, including the parking lots between Sierra Highway and the railroad tracks. Los Angeles County Waterworks Districts owns a water tank facility on the north side of Avenue J between Trevor Avenue and the railroad tracks and a well site on the southwest corner of Milling Street and Trevor Avenue. The Union Pacific Railroad

owns the majority of the property within the railroad right-of-way and on both sides of the tracks, with the exception of the track spurs that lead to the Metrolink Station, which are owned by the LA County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA).

One unique element of the Plan Area is three blocks of small lots, platted in increments of 25 foot widths. Like most of the STVPA, these were given away to subscribers as part of a promotion by the Los Angeles Herald Examiner newspaper in the early 1900s, but have never been developed. Some of those lots have been assembled by the City of Lancaster, but the ownership pattern is highly fragmented and many owners are difficult to reach.

Throughout the area there are a range of light industrial uses that generate noise and odors that would be incompatible adjacent to many new urban uses.



View of The BLVD just to the west of the STVPA (at the corner of Sierra Highway).



An automobile related use in a one-story "main street" building at the corner of Lancaster Boulevard and Yucca Avenue.

2. **Physical Design Character.** The existing physical design character of the STVPA – that is, the character-defining combinations and compositions of streetscapes, lot frontages, building placement, scale and type, and other elements – can be described in terms of five general Character Areas (see **Figure 1.1**):

- **Unresolved.** The Plan Area’s various vacant and under-developed parcels – totaling an area of approximately 43 acres – give it an empty and unresolved character. The majority of this area, located adjacent to the railroad tracks,

lacks improvements. This is the area that could become the core of new Transit Oriented Development (TOD).

- **Main Street.** This area occurs along Lancaster Boulevard between Sierra Highway and the alley between Yucca Avenue and Trevor Avenue, as well as along Sierra Highway for the half-block just south of Lancaster Boulevard. It consists of streets lined by one-story buildings built prior to World War II, located next to and accessed from the adjacent sidewalk through shopfront frontages, with off-street parking behind the buildings. On-street parking is present along both sides of these streets in parallel spaces, supporting the street-facing pattern of the businesses.
- **Major Corridor.** Sierra Highway is a four-lane arterial that marks the western edge of the Plan Area. Prior to the construction of State Route 14, it was the main highway connecting points south to the high desert and mountains to the north. Currently it consists of a assortment of pedestrian-oriented

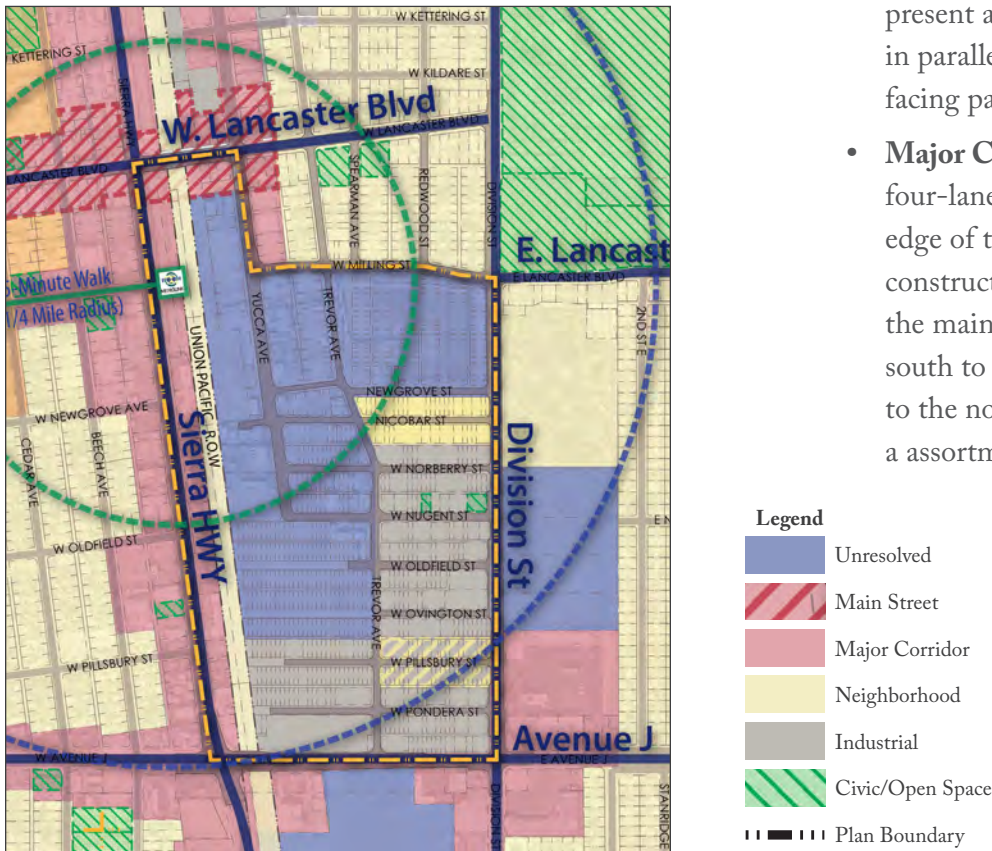


Figure 1.1. Existing Physical Design Character

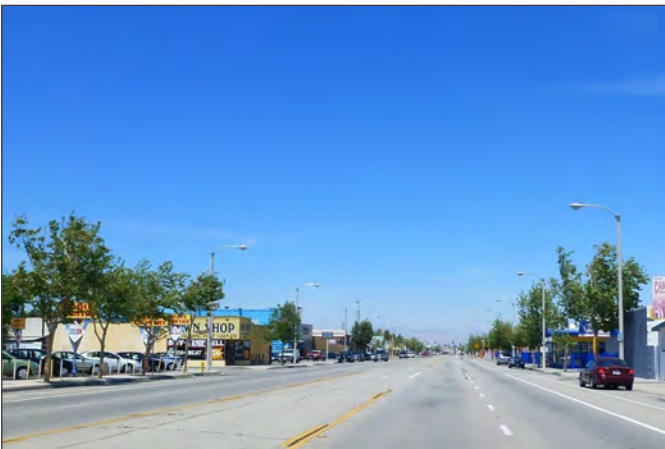
buildings that are built close to and accessed from the sidewalk, auto-oriented buildings that are separated from the sidewalk by parking lots and outdoor storage, and surface parking lots. Parallel parking and bicycle lanes are provided on both sides of Sierra Highway.

- **Neighborhood.** Development along Nicobar Street, Pillsbury Street, as well as the neighborhoods located to the north and to the west of the Plan Area share a similar residential character. Buildings are predominantly one-story, single-family houses set back from the street behind front yards, often enclosed by low front yard fences and walls. On-street, parallel parking occurs along both sides of these streets. Sidewalks, street trees, and streetlights normally associated with neighborhood streets are only sporadically present.
- **Industrial.** The remainder of the developed portions of the Plan Area consists of large and small industrial buildings, many with blank walls and opaque security fencing facing the street,

and portions of the site dedicated to parking or outdoor storage/assembly areas. Many buildings are occupied by automobile repair and other light manufacturing uses. On-street parking occurs along both sides of most streets, often in informal configurations without curbs, pavement or stall markings.

3. Urban Design Considerations. In addition to the physical design character described above, there are a number of existing and environmental conditions that should help to inform the design of new buildings that are introduced within the STVPA.

- The afternoon sun is very strong and architecture should be encouraged to address this through appropriate architectural elements, shading devices, and landscape screening.
- Strong prevailing winds blow from west to east and open spaces should be sheltered or screened whenever practical.
- Lancaster’s artist community is growing, especially with the revived presence of the Lancaster Museum of Art and History (MOAH). A portion of the



View of Sierra Highway, a four lane arterial along the western boundary of the STVPA.



Single family houses along Lancaster Boulevard, just to the east of the STVPA.

Plan Area might well be developed as a Cultural District, which could include housing and studios suited to a range of artists, as indoor and outdoor exhibit spaces.

4. **Safety.** During the public outreach process, various stakeholders and community members stated that the area around the Metrolink Station and the east end of The BLVD is perceived as dangerous – a perception that has had a negative effect on nearby businesses. In addition to the obvious safety risks of being exposed to crime, the perception and fear of crime is a significant deterrent to pedestrian activity and to new investment.
5. **Challenges to Development.** Beyond the perceived safety issues and the proximity of industrial uses that are at odds with new investment in high quality mixed-use development, the lack of redevelopment powers and the related tax increment financing tools presents a significant challenge to developing the STVPA. Per California law, land owned by now decommissioned city redevelopment agency

must be sold, and proceeds sent to the taxing agencies who then distribute funds to the County and School Districts, with the City receiving just a small portion. Exceptions to this can include land for which a public use is identified.

The utility systems throughout the STVPA are generally aging, incomplete and/or undersized to support new mixed-use development. Some properties may also require environmental cleanup and remediation. When the costs for such clean-up are added to the cost of new infrastructure, the land residual value of some parcels may well be negative. In such cases State and Environmental Protect Agency (EPA) funds could potentially be available to help support the development of the STVPA.

Please see Chapter VI (Implementation) for a more detailed discussion of potential funding sources and development implementation strategies.



Typical STVPA industrial buildings.



The recently-opened Lancaster Museum of Art and History is just a few blocks from the STVPA.

B. VISION

The STVPA is transformed into a safe, attractive, and healthy neighborhood with a range of housing choices and a variety of goods, services, and employment opportunities. Housing choices support the social and familial needs of its residents and are located within walking distance of nutritious food, markets, open space, and reliable transit – including Metrolink and AVTA buses. Well-maintained sidewalks, bicycle routes and a safe, comfortable urban environment promote sustainable, pedestrian-oriented lifestyles for residents, with abundant for exercise and social interaction, building and nurturing a sense of community while improving air quality and public safety.

- 1. Land Use.** The STVPA accommodates a variety of uses including:
 - Mixed-use and residential buildings near the Metrolink Station
 - Residential buildings to the east of Trevor Avenue and north of the alley between Nugent Street and Nicobar Street.
 - Ongoing light industrial and employment businesses in the southerly

portions of the Plan area, south of the alley between Oldfield Street and Ovington Street.

- “Buffer” or “transitional” uses – nonresidential employment and light industrial uses that are compatible with adjacent residential uses – in the area between residences in the northerly portions of the STVPA and the potentially noisy and odiferous industrial uses to the south. Similar buffer uses are encouraged and enabled along the east side of Sierra Highway.
- 2. Physical Design Character.** The STVPA develops according to four character areas (see **Figure 1.2**), described in further detail on the following pages:
 - **TOD.** This recommended character area is comprised primarily of multi-family housing, offices and small-scale retail, and is intended to generate a compact, mixed-use, walkable area adjacent to the Metrolink station (see **Figure 1.3**).



A one-story commercial building with street-facing windows.



Neighborhood-scale multi-family housing.

- **Neighborhood.** This recommended character area is applied to the area bounded by Division Street, Milling Street, Trevor Avenue, and the alley between Norberry Street and Nugent Street. It is comprised of single family houses and house-scale multi-family buildings. Or it could alternatively accommodate an educational, institutional, or employment campus.
- **Workforce Flex.** This recommended character area is applied to areas currently occupied by a variety of building types and uses, including larger-footprint industrial buildings, smaller scale commercial and industrial buildings, and single family dwellings.

The intent of this zone is to create a vibrant, flexible, multi-use environment that better defines the street edge. In addition, it provides flexibility for growth, either in the direction of more mixed-use

office/retail or more industrial, depending on market conditions. Finally, the Workforce Flex area protects existing and future residents from the health risks of air pollution, hazardous materials, noise, and truck traffic that may occur at the south end of the STVPA. The proposed “Workforce Flex” buffer zone could become an attractive space for green technology, workshops, technology, artist spaces, and other new clean uses.

- **Industrial.** This recommended character area applies to areas that are well suited to a variety of moderate to intense industrial and manufacturing activity. These areas are comprised primarily of varied building sizes and substantial activity from large cargo vehicles.

See **Appendix B** for more detailed descriptions of the intended Physical Design Character.



Illustrative view looking west down Milling Street towards the eastern entrance to the Metrolink Station. Residential and mixed-use buildings face a plaza in front of the station.

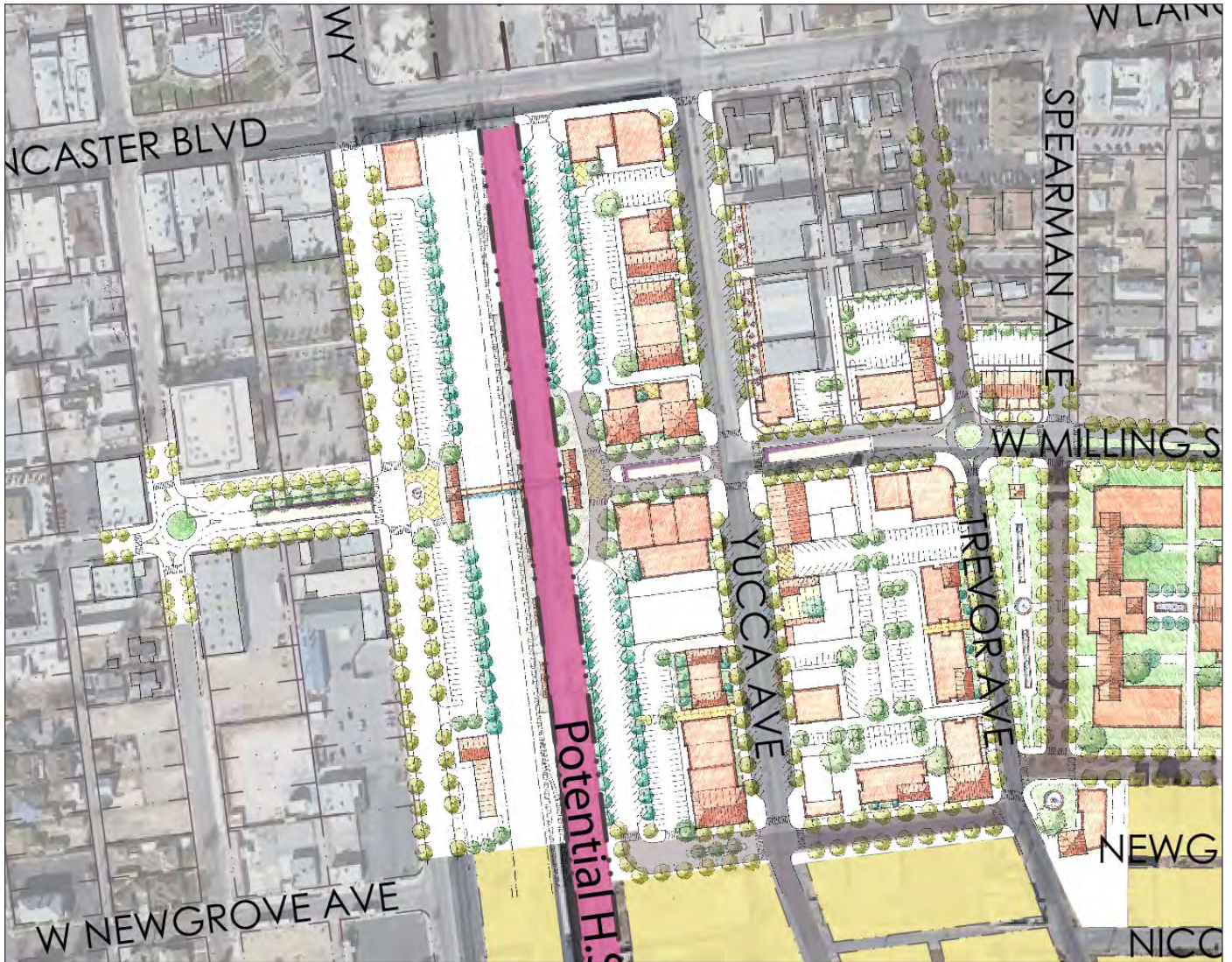


Figure 1.3. Illustrative Plan of TOD.



A mixed-use street in a TOD.

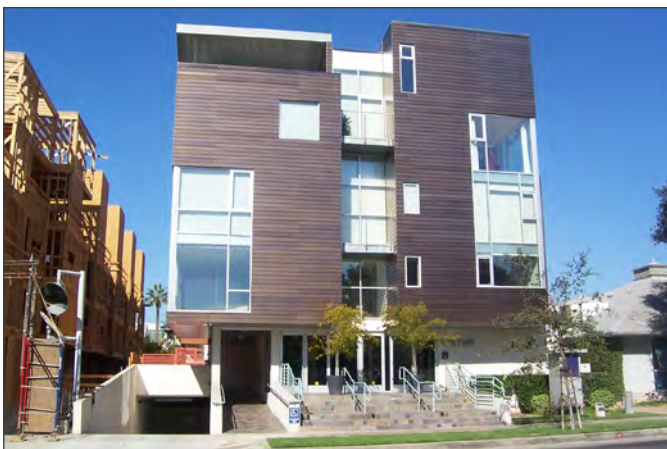


A Farmers Market in a TOD.

3. Architecture and Urban Design. New development serves the needs of residents and business owners, while improving the quality, character, and value of the STVPA over time. Building design and architecture create an attractive, comfortable, safe, and successful pedestrian environment with high rates of walking and physical activity. Green building techniques – including non-toxic and recycled materials, natural light to reduce power consumption, water-efficient landscaping and stormwater management, and renewable energy sources – are employed to improve the health and productivity of building occupants, as well as the health of the environment. Finally, an architectural aesthetic that is unique to the STVPA is encouraged: “hip,” urban, artist-oriented housing and workplaces that incorporate some of the industrial aesthetic of the STVPA’s light industrial uses into more urban building types.

To achieve these goals, new buildings and renovations of existing buildings incorporate the following elements:

- Active ground-floor uses at key activity nodes and Metrolink.
- Building entrances facing and windows overlooking sidewalks, avoiding blank walls along the streets.
- Off-street parking located behind or along the sides of buildings.
- Building articulation and massing to avoid monolithic buildings along streets.
- Building heights generally taller than 1 story, generally set close to the street in order to foster a sense of “enclosure” and a more intimate relationship between buildings and the pedestrian.
- Green/sustainable buildings that utilize renewable energy, passive and active solar architectural elements, water-efficient landscaping, non-toxic materials, and other green building features.
- Design of all sides/elevations of prospective buildings (“360-degree architecture”), while also recognizing that urban buildings have both fronts and backs.



Multi-family housing with entrance and large windows overlooking the street to promote pedestrian safety.



Industrial building adapted for a retail business.

4. **Safety.** More residents and workers, fewer vacant parcels, more “eyes on the street,” better connections to the rest of Lancaster, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies, and quality policing decrease both the incidence and the fear of crime. This improves the quality of life of residents, transit users, store patrons, and office workers.

While no CPTED strategy can guarantee a crime-free environment, general strategies include:

- **Natural Surveillance.** “Eyes on the street,” including unobstructed doors and windows, pedestrian-friendly streets, front porches, and gathering and dining in public space.
- **Territorial Reinforcement.** Clear delineation of public and private space to encourage residents’ and businesses’ sense of “territorial control.”
- **Access control.** Design treatments (sidewalks, building entrances, landscaping, neighborhood gateways)

indicating where public access is encouraged or limited.

- **Maintenance.** Facade improvement, blight reduction, home improvement, and landscape maintenance in order to send a clear signal that someone cares about the space and is likely to defend it against intruders or vandals.



Commercial buildings face and are accessed from the adjacent sidewalk and provide pedestrian-friendly frontages.



Use of drought resistant native landscaping and ground cover reduces the need for water.

II. PUBLIC SPACE AND COMMUNITY AMENITIES

ENVISIONED PUBLIC REALM TRANSFORMATION

A. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The only existing community amenities within the STVPA are the Lancaster Community Homeless Shelter and four churches (see **Figure 2.1**). There are also a number of additional community amenities within a half-mile of the STVPA, including:

- 1. Schools.** Four schools, both public and private, near the Plan Area: Antelope Valley High School, El Dorado Elementary School, and Sacred Heart Catholic School.
- 2. Parks.** Four parks within the vicinity of the Plan Area: Jane Reynolds Park, El Dorado Park, American Heroes Park, and Pierre Baine Park.
- 3. Churches.** There are an additional 25 churches nearby.
- 4. Social Service Organizations.** There are several social service organizations within a block or two of the Sierra Highway corridor between Avenue J and Avenue I, including:

Grace Resources Center, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Salvation Army Corps, the Family Urgent Care facility, and the Antelope Valley Enrichment Services Center.

- 5. Lancaster Cemetery,** which is located across Division Street, just east of the Plan Area.



One of the churches on Lancaster Boulevard just north of the STVPA.



Existing stormwater detention basin at the corner of East Milling and Division Street.

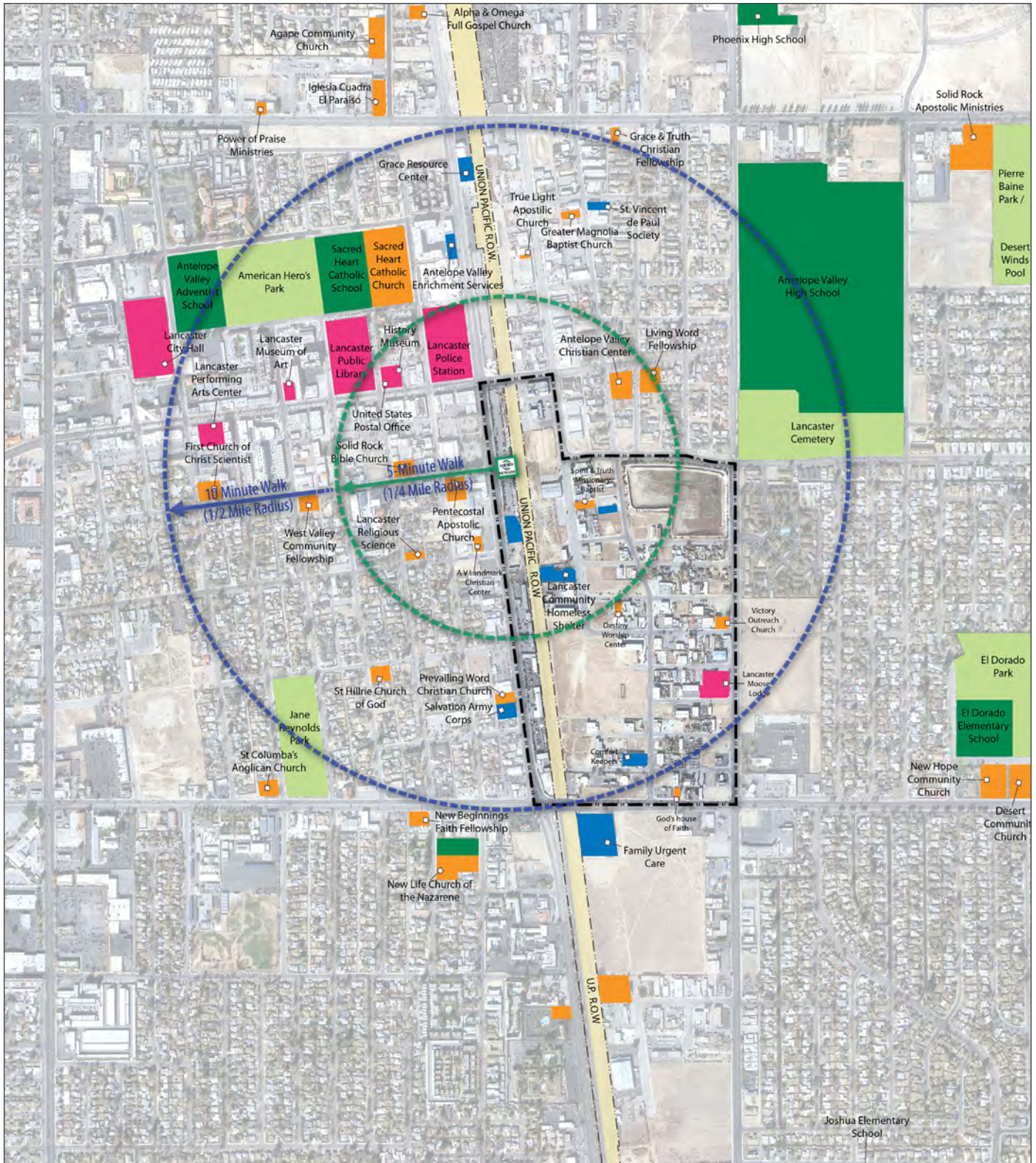


Figure 2.1. Existing Civic Venues and Community Gathering Places.

B. VISION

A number of new parks and greens – varied in size and function – provide new focal points for community recreation and social activities. Potential open space types include recreational fields; smaller and more informal neighborhood greens, parks, and tot lots; more urban plazas, especially near the Metrolink Station; and community gardens (see **Figure 2.2**). A potential new civic park between Trevor Avenue and Spearman Avenue is illustrated below.

These parks can range from small tot lots, to informal greens where one can throw a frisbee or kick a soccer ball around, to a plaza where you can sit on a bench and read a book, to larger fields that accommodate organized sporting activities. Recreational fields could be provided on the existing stormwater detention basin or

elsewhere within the STVPA – possibly within the basin if its moved or as standalone fields if it is determined that a stormwater basin is not needed within the STVPA. All parks are within safe and easy walking distance of residents and visible from surrounding sidewalks and buildings. Connections to nearby parks and amenities outside the STVPA are improved by way of new bike paths and street connections.

In addition, existing community amenities such as the Lancaster Community Homeless Shelter and existing churches are accommodated.



Illustrative view of neighborhood green in front of an educational or employment campus. Trevor Street is to the left of the green and an extended Spearman Avenue is to the left.

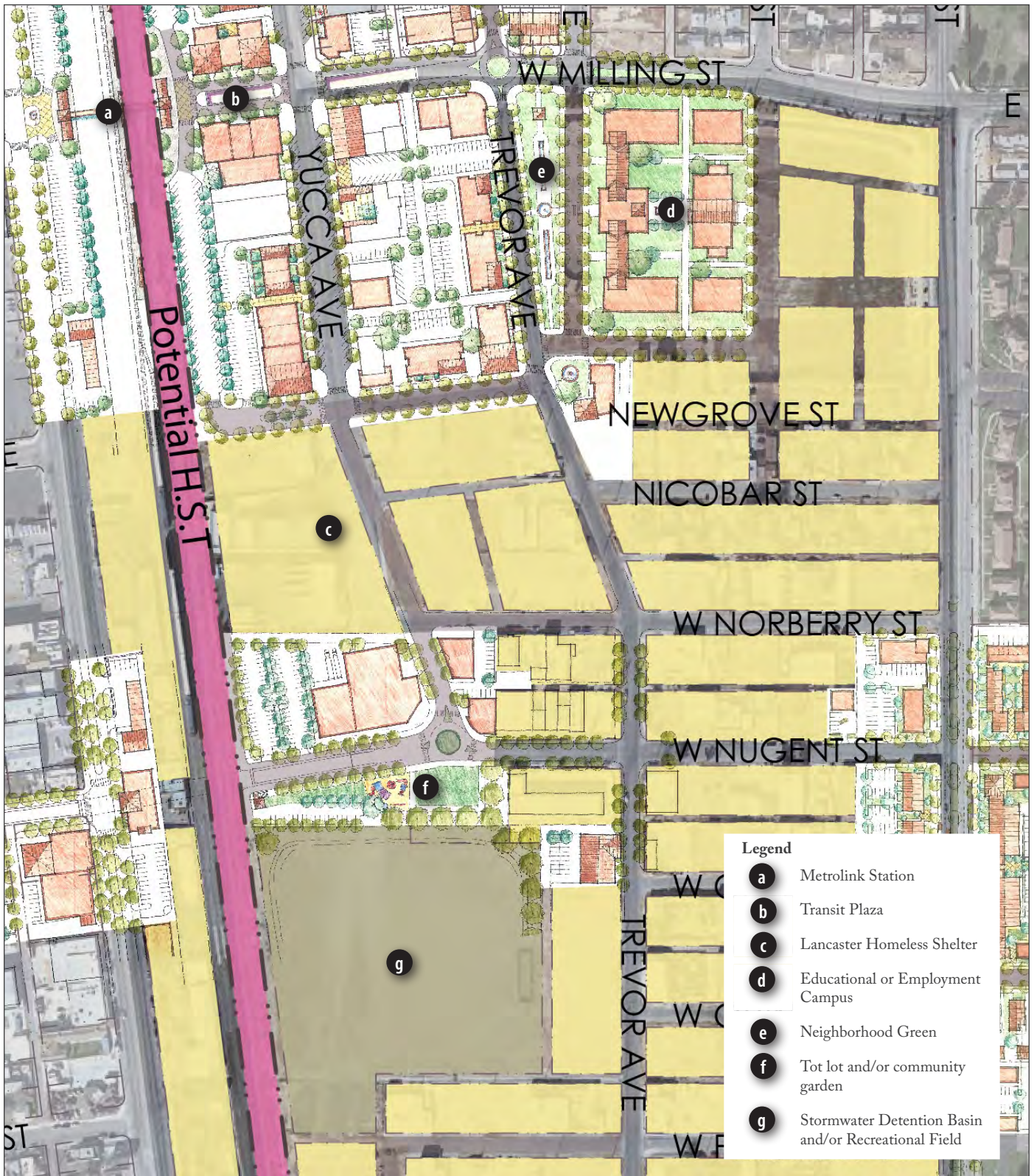


Figure 2.2. Proposed Public Realm Diagram

III. CIRCULATION AND WALKABLE STREETS ENVISIONED STREET AND BLOCK TRANSFORMATION

A. EXISTING CONDITIONS

1. Street and Alley Network. Like hundreds of California towns, Lancaster’s original street network is laid out square to the railroad right-of-way (see **Figure 3.1**). This original pattern of rectilinear, pedestrian-scaled blocks is evident in the Downtown, along Sierra Highway and within the northwest portion of the STVPA. Streets outside the original town plat are oriented north-south in relation to the one-mile grid that exists in much of Los Angeles County.

Aside from the major break at the Union Pacific line spanned by only two railroad crossings – at Lancaster Boulevard and at Avenue J – the street grid in the northerly, easterly, and southerly portions of the Plan Area is relatively complete. The network in the western portion of the STVPA is largely unbuilt, although the majority of the right-of-ways are still in place.

Sidewalks are present along most major streets in the Plan Area, with the exception of the west side of Division Street between West



Figure 3.1. 1927 Sanborn Map illustrating original block pattern and platting in the planning area.

B. VISION

Lancaster Boulevard and Milling Street. Most of the STVPA’s lower capacity local streets lack sidewalks. Most streets also lack street trees and street lights, consistent with the STVPA’s generally underdeveloped character and predominance of vacant and industrial parcels.

2. **Parking.** Currently, the STVPA and its vicinity is oversupplied with parking, as large areas of combined supply – including an estimated 760 on-street parking spaces within the STVPA – are only lightly utilized. A few areas of high demand are present, however, mainly the south Metrolink parking lot, and the nearby Downtown blocks of Lancaster Boulevard.
3. **Bicycle Network.** There are large gaps in the existing bicycle network, notably an absence of a good quality east-west bicycle route, which is particularly important given the barrier presented by the railroad right-of-way. A lack of wayfinding makes the bicycle network difficult to navigate.

1. **Street and Alley Network.** A complete, well-connected street network provides a greater number of varied destinations within a comfortable walking distance encouraging and enabling much more walking and somewhat less driving. The STVPA’s street network can be completed and improved by:

- Completing the street network within the STVPA.
- Mending the barrier that Sierra Highway creates between Downtown to the west and the Metrolink Station and the STVPA to the east.
- Adding more connections across the railroad tracks between Downtown and the STVPA.
- Connecting to existing, adjacent neighborhoods and districts with walkable, local streets.



A neighborhood street lined by street trees, sidewalks, and dwellings with that face and are accessed from the street.



An urban sidewalk with street trees planted in tree wells.

III. CIRCULATION AND WALKABLE STREETS

- Infilling missing sidewalks and pedestrian-scaled street lights to create a safer, more walkable environment, during both day and night.
- Planting street trees to create a sense of place, encourage slower driving speeds, provide much needed shade and wind protection, and generally make the pedestrian and cyclist environment more comfortable and attractive.
- Providing street furniture in appropriate locations, primarily benches and trash cans, particularly within the TOD.
- Optimizing the supply of on-street parking to support the planned uses along each street.
- Implementing traffic-calming measures such as bulb-outs, bike lanes, and angled on-street parking to slow driving speeds and create better buffers between pedestrians and moving traffic, thereby improving pedestrian safety and comfort.
- Introducing alleys in all new blocks and refinishing or repaving existing alleys either by regrading and introducing gravel, repaving with asphalt, or introducing a 10 foot wide asphalt lanes flanked on either side by gravel. Alleys greatly improve the opportunities to generate pedestrian-friendly streetscapes by enabling access to parking, trash and service functions without numerous driveways that break the sidewalks or service functions located in front yards.

The Proposed Street and Block Network shown in Figure 3.2 illustrates the street improvements that create an interconnected street network within the STVPA and better link the STVPA to the rest of the City. Key components include:

- A** Connect across the railroad tracks at Milling Street with a pedestrian bridge, vehicular underpass (see **Figures 3.3 and 3.4**), or both.
- B** Extend Milling Street west of Yucca Avenue as a “close” street that provides access to the Metrolink Station and the pedestrian bridge.
- C** Introduce a vehicular and pedestrian crossing beneath the railroad tracks at Oldfield Street, connecting Oldfield Street to Nugent Street.
- D** Extend Nugent Street eastward to connect to the neighborhoods to the east of the STVPA.
- E** Extend Trevor Avenue south across Avenue J.
- F** Completely remove or relocate the detention basin elsewhere within the STVPA and introduce an interconnected street and alley network that accommodates develop that is compatible with the adjacent existing neighborhoods.
- G** Introduce a large recreational field, either by itself or within the relocated detention basin, adjacent to the railroad tracks.
- H** Introduce a park along the east side of Trevor Avenue between Nicobar Street and Milling Street.
- I** Remove Nicobar Street between Yucca Avenue and Trevor Avenue to create a new block that fronts Newgrove Street.
- J** Complete the street network within the southern portion of the Plan Area by extending Pillsbury Street to Pondera Street and Newgrove Street to the railroad tracks..
- K** Introduce a service alley along the eastern side of the railroad right-of-way.



Figure 3.2. Proposed Street and Block Network

III. CIRCULATION AND WALKABLE STREETS



Figure 3.3. Section view of Milling Street underpass between the Metrolink Station and Trevor Avenue.

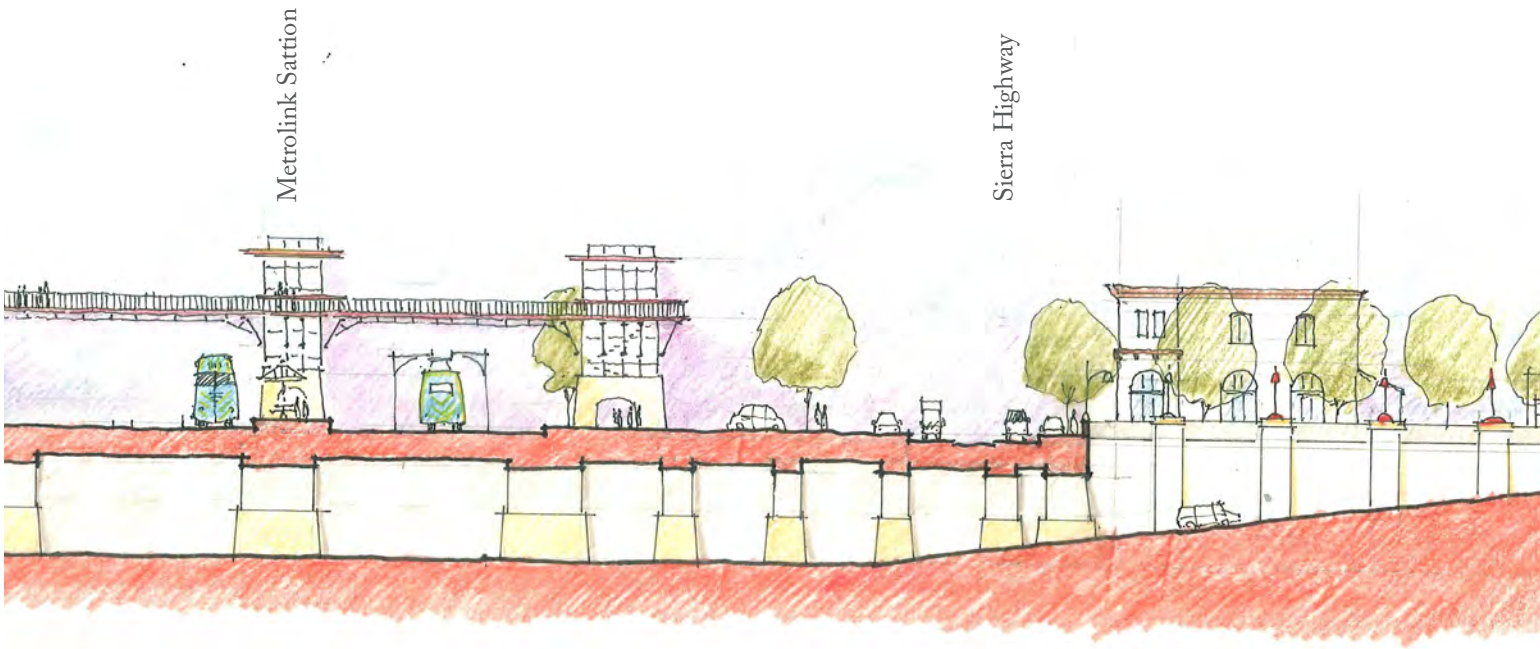
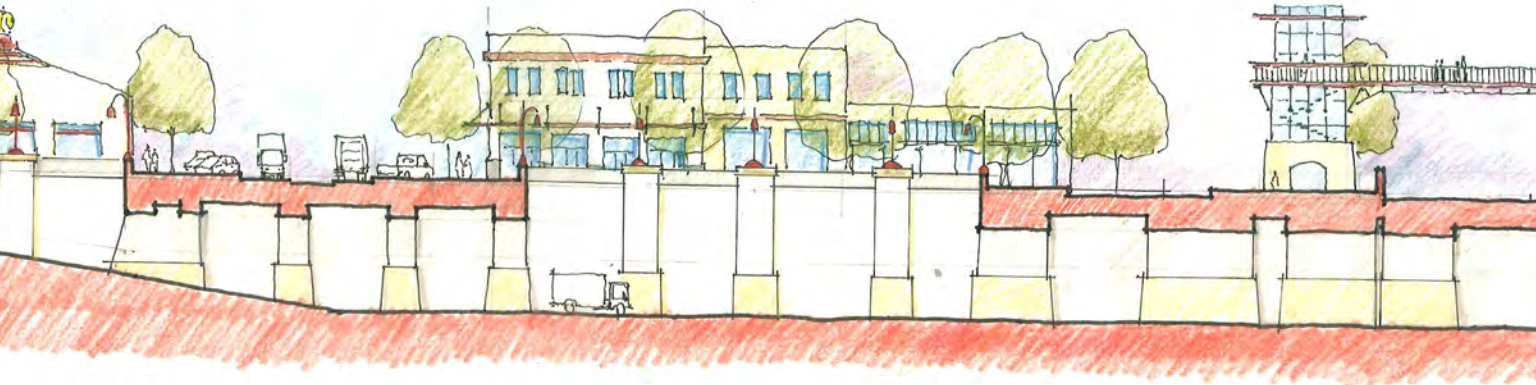


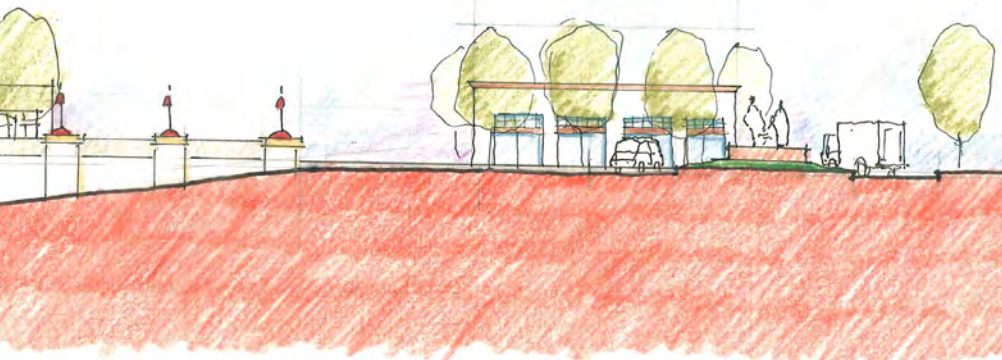
Figure 3.4. Section view of Milling Street underpass between the Metrolink Station and Beech Avenue.

Yucca Avenue

Metrolink Station



Beech Avenue



Location Map



2. Parking. The efficient use of the existing parking supply along with standards ensuring that new development is not over-parked help to achieve the goals of neighborhood sustainability and vitality, while fostering a distinct sense of place.

Parking is located on the street or within parking lots behind or along the sides of buildings. Parking lots that are visible from the street are screened from view by low walls and/or landscape.

Shared parking is encouraged, especially where nearby uses have clear hours of peak demand (such as the Metrolink lots, where demand is highest during commute hours and declines precipitously during evening hours).

3. Bicycle Network. In conformance with the Master Plan for Trails and Bikeways, bike lanes are introduced around the perimeter of the STVPA as follows (see **Figure 3.5**):

- A Class I cycle track along Sierra Highway between Avenue J and Lancaster Boulevard, with two-way bicycle traffic separated from automobile traffic by a physical barrier, such as parked cars, bollards, a landscaped buffer, or a curb. If the High Speed Rail is built with an elevated alignment (see Chapter II),



A Cycle Track provides one bicycle lane in each direction and can be separated from adjacent vehicular traffic by bollards.

a Class I lane could be introduced beneath the guideway, connecting the existing Class I bikeway that currently terminates at Avenue J to a planned future Class I bikeway beginning at Avenue I. Alternatively, Class II bike lanes could be provided.

- Class II bike lanes along Lancaster Boulevard between Sierra Highway and Division Street; along Division Street between Lancaster Boulevard and Avenue J; along Avenue J between Division Street and Sierra Highway.

In addition, bike lanes are recommended within the STVPA as follows:

- Class II bike lanes along Yucca Avenue between Lancaster Boulevard and Nugent Street and along Milling Street between Division Street and Yucca Avenue.
- Class III bike lanes along Trevor Avenue between Lancaster Boulevard and Avenue J and along Nugent Street between Division Street and Yucca Avenue.

Finally, a coordinated bicycle and pedestrian wayfinding system is introduced in conjunction with Downtown businesses, the Metrolink Station, and new development in the Plan Area.



Bicycle lanes promote sustainable alternative modes of transportation for residents while decreasing air pollution.

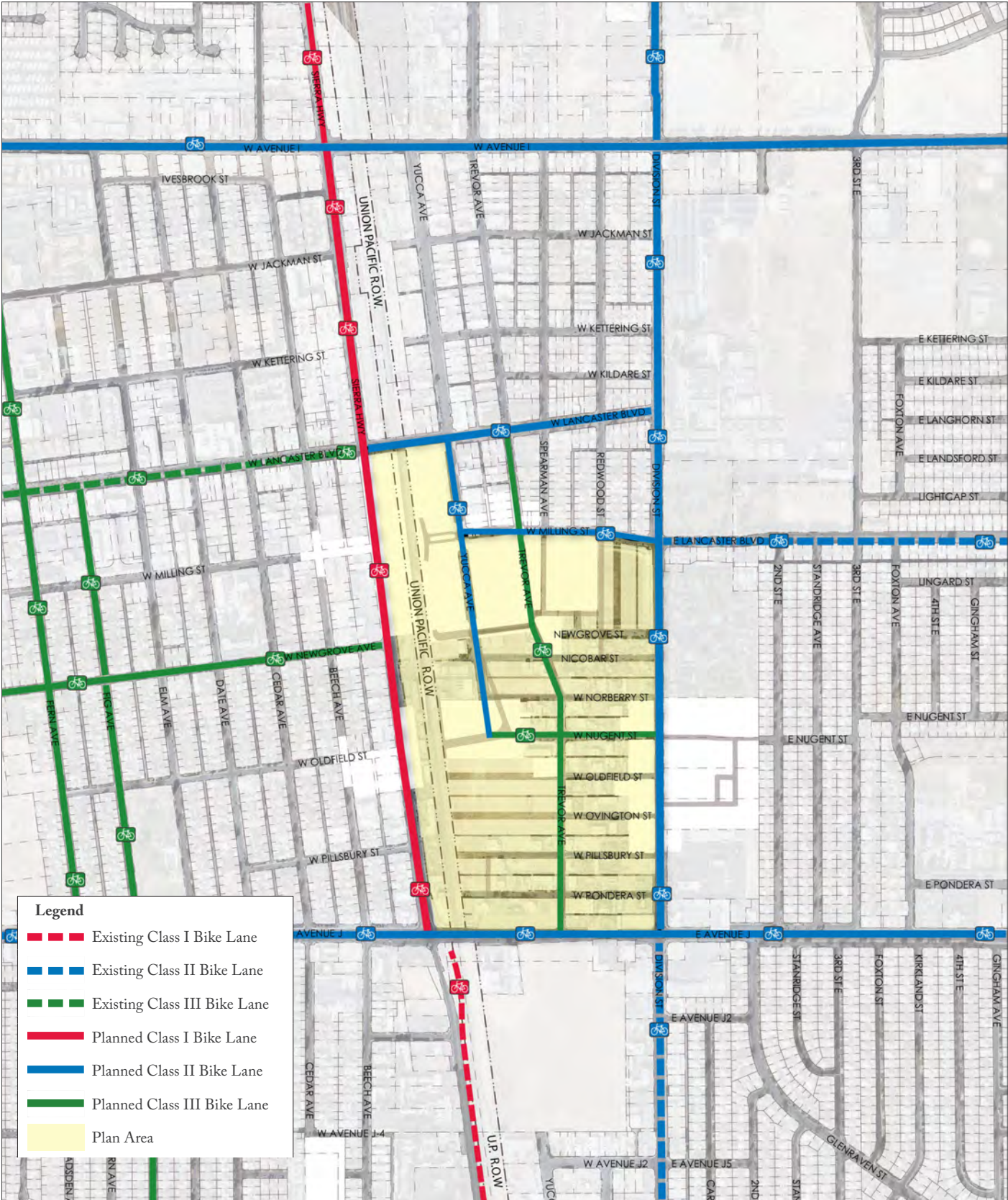


Figure 3.5. Existing and Proposed Bicycle Network.

III. CIRCULATION AND WALKABLE STREETS

4. Complete Streets. Collisions between vehicles and other vehicles, with pedestrians, and with bicyclists kill around 40,000 people annually in the United States. In general, lower street speeds reduce the risk of injury from collisions. Many studies have shown that the likelihood of injury or death to a pedestrian, bicyclist, or vehicle occupant in the event of a collision increases exponentially with speed. A pedestrian environment that feels unsafe also discourages pedestrian activity. This Plan incorporates a number of strategies to improve pedestrian safety, including better cross-walks and reduced

crossing distances for pedestrians across busy streets, especially Sierra Highway; traffic calming features like curb bulbouts and medians; and better designed bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The STVPA's existing streets, which currently favor vehicular traffic, are transformed into "complete streets" that provide safe access to all users – pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders – of all ages and abilities. They make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They enable buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to and from bus stops and train stations.



Illustrative transformation of Yucca Avenue looking south before (bottom) and after (top). The existing parallel parking is replaced with angled parking. Angled parking could also be front-out, which provides motorists with better vision of bicyclists, pedestrians, cars and trucks as they exit a parking space and enter moving traffic.

Different street types – major through streets, downtown streets, neighborhood streets – emphasize different modes, but accommodate all users. Thus, arterial streets such as Avenue J might emphasize vehicular mobility, but would still accommodate bike lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks, transit stops, and ADA curb ramps.

Examples of how two of the STVPA's streets – Yucca Avenue and Nugent Street – can be transformed into complete streets are shown below.

All new streets are designed as complete streets. Please see **Appendix A** (Street Sections) for descriptions and conceptual streets standards for each of the STVPA's streets.



Illustrative transformation of Nugent Street looking east before (bottom) and after (top).

IV. TRANSIT

ENVISIONED MOBILITY TRANSFORMATION

A. EXISTING CONDITIONS

1. Metrolink Station. Rail transit to Lancaster is provided by Metrolink, the commuter rail system servicing the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area. The Lancaster Metrolink station is located at Sierra Highway and Milling Street, on the western border of the Plan Area.

The station provides 420 commuter parking spaces, as well as public telephones, restrooms, and a waiting room. Most connecting bus transit services (including Santa Clarita Transit, Antelope Valley Transit Authority, and Amtrak ThruWay Bus routes) stop along Sierra Highway one block north of the station. The exception is Eastern Sierra Transit, which stops directly in front of the rail station. Limited bicycle parking and lockers are provided at the station, and the area is relatively unprotected from the Antelope Valley’s high winds.

2. Bus. The Antelope Valley Transit Authority (AVTA) is the primary bus transit service provider in Lancaster. Six lines serve the Plan Area. Four lines stop at Lancaster Boulevard and Sierra Highway, a block north of the Metrolink station and the remaining two stop a very long block south of the station at Avenue J and Sierra Highway. Additional bus providers, all departing from the Lancaster Metrolink Station, include:

- Santa Clarita Transit, with twice daily morning and evening weekday express service between Lancaster and Santa Clarita.
- Amtrak ThruWay with twice daily northbound and southbound service.
- Eastern Sierra Transit Authority, Mammoth Lakes-Lancaster Route with Monday, Wednesday, and Friday service between Lancaster and Mammoth Lakes.



A Metrolink Train at the Lancaster Station



An AVTA bus.

3. **High Speed Rail.** The California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) has planned that the High Speed Rail (HSR) - eventually connecting Los Angeles to San Francisco - will pass through Lancaster along the east side of Sierra Highway. The nearest HSR Station will be in Palmdale and the HSR will not stop in Lancaster.

B. VISION

Continued transit service – via Metrolink and the various bus providers – is enabled and encouraged as the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), with its dense, active, diverse and transit-supportive land uses develops, and Downtown continues to grow around the station. Well-used rail and bus transit consumes less fuel and creates fewer polluting emissions per passenger mile travelled than single-occupancy vehicles. Transit riders also tend to get more daily exercise as a result of walking at their trip origin or destination.



Example of a pedestrian bridge over railroad tracks.

1. **Metrolink Station.** The Metrolink Station is conceived as an urban, pedestrian-oriented, multi-modal transit facility that has a stronger presence, is more approachable to pedestrians and bicyclists, and is served by buses that stop closer to the station (see **Figure 4.1**).

The station can remain in its current location on the east side of Sierra Highway at the terminus of Milling Street or, if the High Speed Rail is built with an at-grade alignment that closes the Lancaster Boulevard railroad crossing, it could relocate to the terminus of The BLVD.

Other key recommendations for the Metrolink Station include:

- The station connects across the railroad tracks via a pedestrian bridge and has a presence on both sides of the tracks.
- Crosswalks and bulbouts are introduced at Lancaster Boulevard, Milling Street,



Example of a train station with a small plaza in front.

and Newgrove Street to provide safer, more comfortable crosswalks.

- If the width of Sierra Highway is modestly decreased to transform it from an old highway to an urban avenue, the Metrolink parking lot can be widened to two aisles, expanding the number of parking spaces at the station and greatly improving circulation.
- Buses stop curbside on Sierra Highway in designated bus pull outs, bringing buses much closer to the station to encourage transfers. Buses can be accommodated solely on the east side of the street or on both the west and east sides. Additional bus stops can be provided on the east side of the tracks (see below).
- Curb space for “kiss and ride” drop-off is provided immediately adjacent to the Metrolink platform, both to the north and to the south of the station.

2. **Bus.** A number of strategies are employed to bring buses closer to the Metrolink Station (see **Figure 4.2**), including:

- Legend**
- a** Bus Parking / Drop off
 - b** Kiss and Ride
 - c** Parking
 - d** HSR Alignment (if built)
 - e** Metrolink Station
 - f** Pedestrian Overcrossing
 - g** Plaza
 - h** New Mixed-use Building
 - i** Additional Bus Parking / Drop off (if needed)

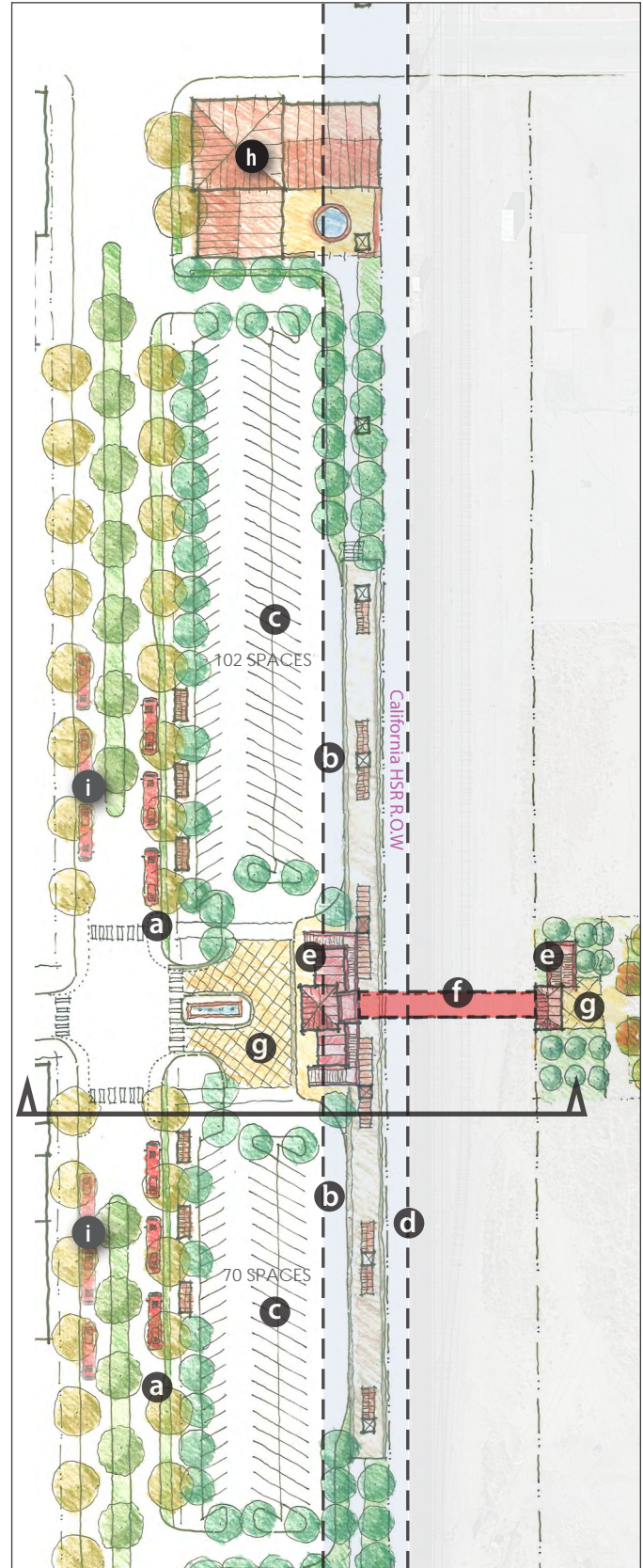


Figure 4.1. Metrolink Station Plan.

- Introducing bus stops along Sierra Highway directly in front of the Metrolink Station – preferably on the station-side of Sierra Highway – with at least two spaces per line, per direction.
- Alternatively, or in addition to bus stops along Sierra Highway, providing bus stops on the east side of the tracks in the TOD. Potential bus stop locations include:
 - To the north and to the south of the Metrolink Station adjacent to the platform. Buses would be routed south down Lancaster Boulevard, stop in front of the station, then continue along the tracks to Nicobar Street, where they would head east to Division Street.

Legend

- Metrolink Parking Lot
- Metrolink Platform
- Bus Staging Areas at Metrolink Station East
- Metrolink Station East Bus Circulation Route
- Alternative Bus Staging Areas at Yucca Avenue
- Alternative Yucca Avenue Bus Circulation Route
- Bus Staging Areas at Sierra Highway
- “Kiss-n-Ride” Drop-off
- Pedestrian Circulation Routes
- Pedestrian Bridge over Tracks
- Bicycle Parking
- Street Parking
- Metrolink Station

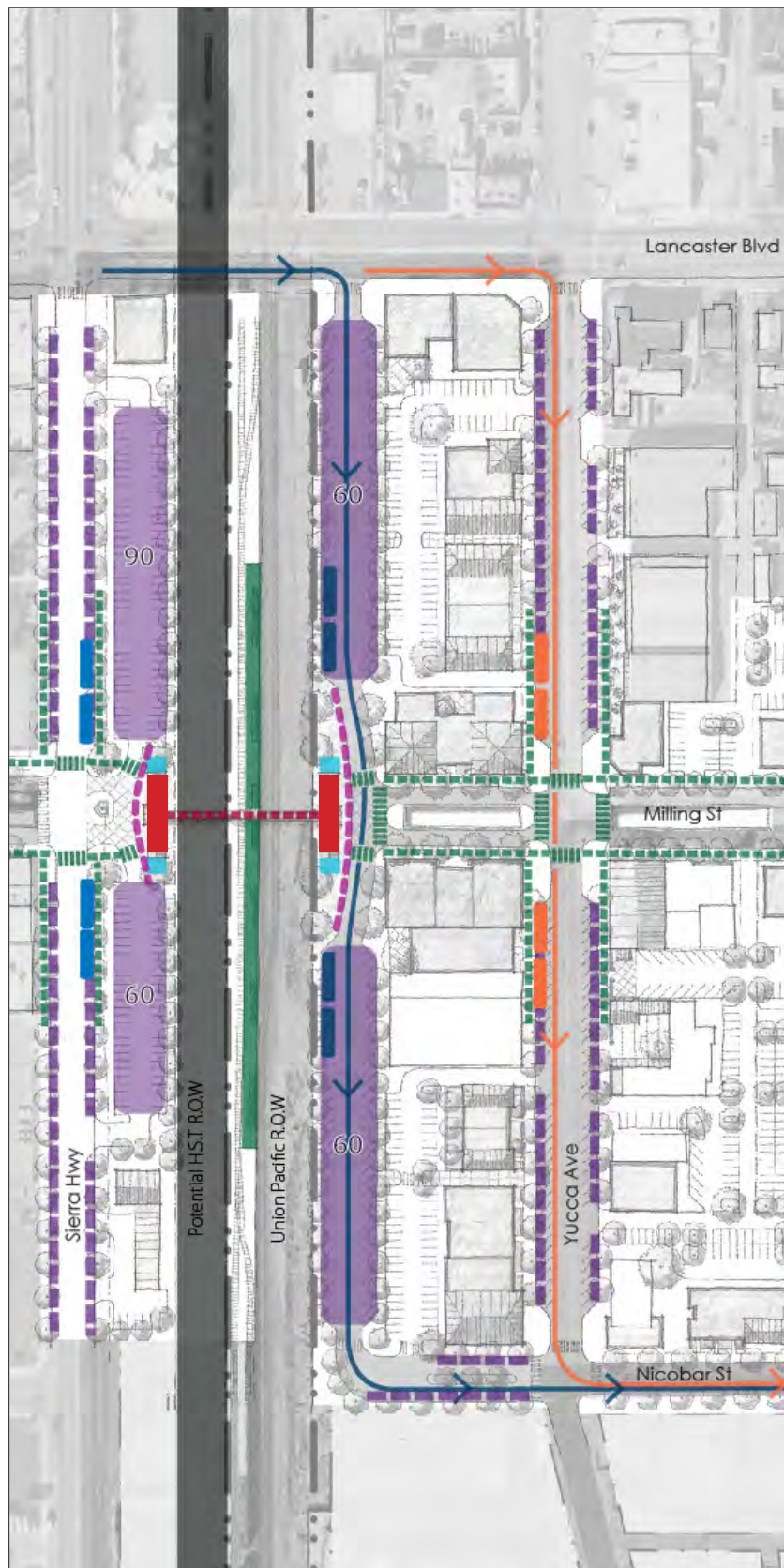


Figure 4.2. Multi-Modal Transit Strategy.

- Along Yucca Avenue at Milling Street, in the event buses cannot be routed adjacent to the tracks. Buses would be routed south down Yucca Boulevard, stop at Milling Street, then continue south to Nicober Street, where they would head east to Division Street.
- Note that the AVTA transfer center, located at City Park at 10th Street remains at its current location since it is located closer to the centroid of the Lancaster/ Palmdale transit service area.
- Bus stops should be designed to maximize passenger comfort, safety and convenience. Stops should be located in active pedestrian areas adjacent to commercial and/or civic amenities whenever possible, and always equipped with proper benches and shelters, maps and schedules, and lighting and trash receptacles. Where feasible, stops should include advanced passenger information systems, such as real-time displays.

3. High Speed Rail. There are two scenarios for how the HSR passes through Lancaster: elevated or at-grade. The elevated scenario would have the least impact on the STVPA, the Downtown, and the City as a whole, and is accordingly the preferred alternative.

- a. **Elevated HSR.** This scenario places the HSR on an elevated guideway located just west of and immediately adjacent to the existing Union Pacific/MetroLink railroad right-of-way. This keeps the guideway in the center of the existing Sierra Highway/ UPRR transportation corridor, locating the visual and noise impacts of the HSR as far as practical from the urban living environments of the Downtown and STVPA (see **Figure 4.3**).

Legend

- a** Bus Parking / Drop off
- b** Parking
- c** Metrolink Station
- d** HSR Elevated Guideway
- e** Pedestrian Overcrossing

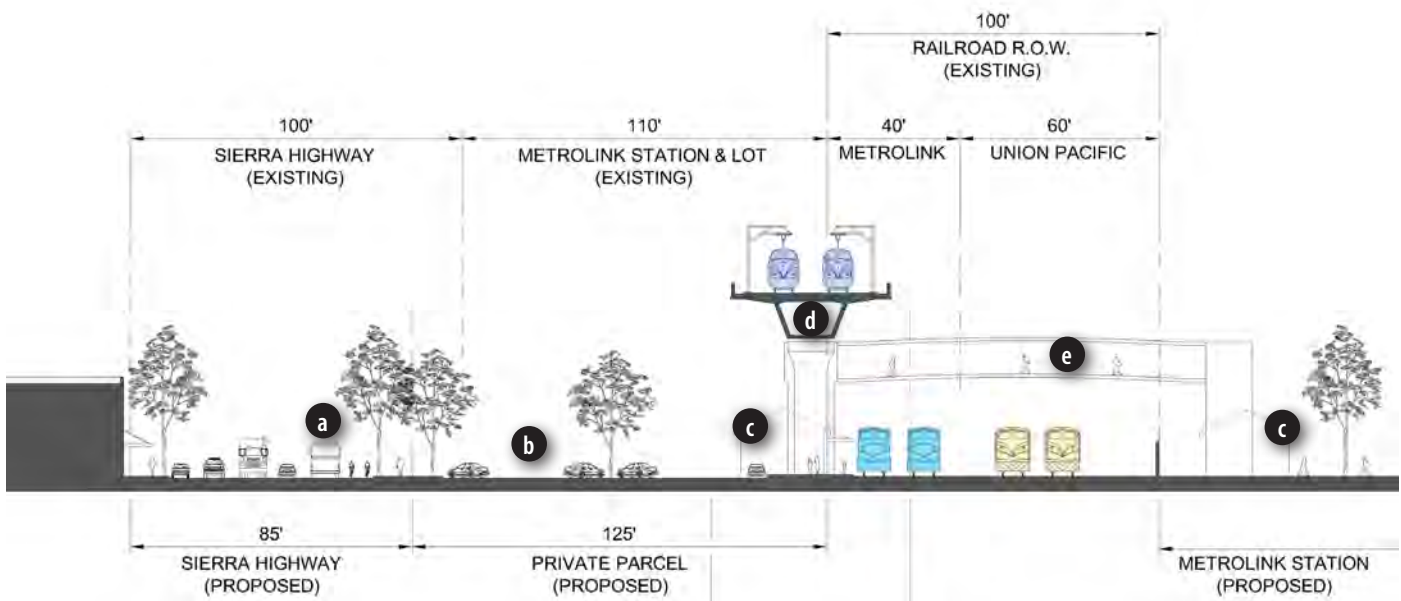


Figure 4.3. Cross section showing elevated High Speed Rail alignment.

In concept, a pedestrian bridge that connects the Metrolink Station to the east side of the tracks could be built over the UPRR and beneath the elevated HSR guideway structure. Alternatively, an undercrossing could be introduced, although this solution would probably be more expensive and less successful as a pedestrian environment.

The depth of the parcels along the east side of Sierra Highway ranges from about 110' to 138'.

- b. **At-grade HSR.** This scenario places the HSR at-grade just to the west of the existing UPRR, passing through the location of the existing Metrolink Station and parking lot (see **Figure 4.4**). It would likely also close Lancaster Boulevard at the tracks, probably with new grade separated railroad crossings would at Avenue J and Avenue K. A Lancaster Boulevard undercrossing of the UPRR and HSR would not be out of the

question but would be very costly and would impact the easterly block of The BLVD.

This scenario requires that the Metrolink Station be relocated – either just to the west of its current location, to the east side of the tracks near Milling Street, or to a completely different location such as at the terminus of Lancaster Boulevard.

Key improvements that the City of Lancaster might seek to obtain from the the California High Speed Rail Authority in conjunction with the HSR construction are shown in **Table 4.1**.

- Legend**
- a** Bus Parking / Drop off
 - b** Parking
 - c** Metrolink Station
 - d** HSR At-Grade R.O.W.
 - e** Pedestrian Overcrossing

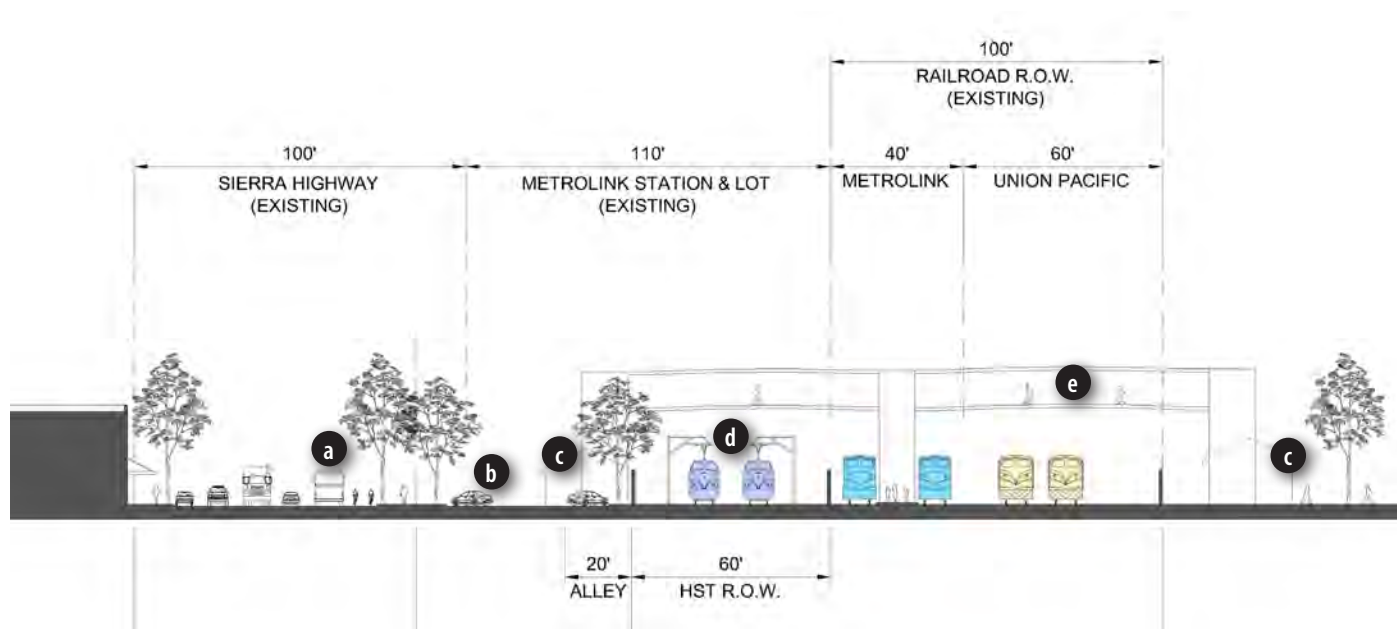


Figure 4.4. Cross section showing at-grade High Speed Rail alignment.

Table 4.1. Priority California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) Mitigations

If elevated	If At-grade
<p>Priority 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSR Elevation. The City should advocate for an elevated guideway, which would have less impact than an at-grade configuration on Downtown and the STVPA, including not severing the connection between Downtown and the STVPA and not requiring the relocation of the existing Metrolink Station. • Class I bikeway. Install a Class I bikeway beneath the elevated HSR alignment on CHSRA property, connecting the existing Class I bikeway that currently terminates at Avenue J with the future Class I bikeway planned to begin at Avenue I. • Maintain existing connections. Maintain all existing connections across the HSR right-of-way, including Lancaster Boulevard and Avenue J. • Narrow Sierra Highway. To compensate for property lost by the HSR’s new right-of-way and preserve the value of these parcels, narrow Sierra Highway from a 100-foot right-of-way to an 85-foot right-of-way by extending the eastern curb and property lines 15 feet to the west. Include a travel lane in each direction, center turn lane, and sidewalks on both sides of the street. Also include a Class I cycle track if the alignment under the elevated HSR tracks is not possible. 	<p>Priority 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milling Connection. Assuming that Lancaster Boulevard is severed by the HSR, connect Milling Street under the Union Pacific and Metrolink and Sierra Highway rights-of-way to provide vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle access between the STVPA, east Lancaster and the Downtown. • Metrolink Station Re-build. Recreate the Metrolink station with one station building entrance at Milling between Sierra Highway and the HSR alignment, and one station building entrance at Milling east of the Union Pacific alignment, connected to one another and the Metrolink platform by pedestrian bridges. • Avenue I and J overcrossings. Build street overcrossings at for Avenues I and J to provide vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle access between the east and west sides of the tracks. • Narrow Sierra Highway. To compensate for property lost by the HSR’s new right-of-way and preserve the value of these parcels, narrow Sierra Highway from a 100-foot right-of-way to an 85-foot right-of-way by extending the eastern curb and property lines 15 feet to the west; include a travel lane in each direction, center turn lane, Class I cycle track on the east side of the street, and sidewalks on both sides of the street.
<p>Priority 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milling Connection. Connect Milling Street under the Union Pacific and Metrolink and Sierra Highway rights-of-way to provide vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle access between the STVPA, east Lancaster and the Downtown. 	<p>Priority 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lancaster Blvd. ped connection. Build a pedestrian/bicycle overcrossing for Lancaster Boulevard over the HSR, Metrolink, and Union Pacific right-of-way.

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V. RECOMMENDED POLICY & REGULATORY UPDATES

The following tables suggest revisions to existing City policy and regulatory documents that would support and enable implementation of the vision for the STVPA as a livable, walkable, transit-oriented district with a diversity of jobs, uses, housing types, and public spaces. The concepts presented in this STVPA Vision Plan are built upon and closely conform to the City's vision for the area as presented in the General Plan, the Downtown Lancaster Specific Plan, and the Lancaster Design Guidelines. This STVPA vision plan expands upon and more sharply focuses that pre-existing vision for this quadrant of the greater Downtown Transit Village Development District.

For example, the General Plan identifies a "Transit Village District" encompassing the great majority of the STVPA, calling for transit-oriented development, periodic review of the boundaries and function of the Transit Village District (GP Policy 16.4.1(c)), and zoning refinements to better support this vision. The General Plan, adopted in the summer of 2009, also introduces a "Mixed-use" Land Use Designation for the STVPA. While this STVPA Vision Plan proposes further refinement of the mixed-use land use designations in different portions of the STVPA, these refinements are very much in line with the General Plan's vision for a mixed-use, transit-oriented district.

Similarly, while this STVPA Vision Plan proposes refinements to the urban form and parking requirements directly around the Metrolink Station, the adopted Downtown Specific Plan strongly supports the concept of transit-oriented development and a walkable downtown. The adopted Lancaster Design Guidelines, while not required of all development, also provide a helpful precedent for the

types of urban design strategies and improvements to public space that are called for in this Vision Plan.

Under the above broad umbrella of policy direction and support, the recommendations below identify recommended changes and refinements to the Lancaster General Plan (**Table 5.1**); changes to the Downtown Specific Plan (**Table 5.2**); and changes to the Zoning Code (**Table 5.3**) to more fully support the implementation of the City's vision for the STVPA. One potential approach to creating the necessary standards for public improvements and private development within the STVPA would be the preparation of a Specific Plan for the area, but a potentially a simpler approach could be the creation and adoption of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) zoning supported by a separate, but closely coordinated public realm and infrastructure master plan and implementation plan for the underdeveloped areas east of Sierra Highway. Recommended topics and features that should be addressed in new regulatory and implementation documents, regardless of their format, are shown in (**Table 5.4**).

Table 5.1. Recommended Policy Changes - Lancaster General Plan

Topic	Existing Policy	Proposed Change
Land Use Designations	<p>The General Plan (GP) designates the entire Southeast Transit Village Plan Area as “Mixed Use,” which allows for a mix of retail, service, office, and residential uses at an average density of 21 dwelling units per acre and 1.0 FAR. The General Plan also defines a Transit Village District encompassing about 80% of the STVPA, but there is currently no corresponding land use designation or overlay, and GP Policy 16.4.1(c) calls for periodic review and adjustment of these boundaries.</p>	<p>Refine General Plan land use designations to align with this Vision Plan concept:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a mixed-use, “main street”, or Transit-Oriented District zoning designation along Milling Street and Lancaster Boulevard, and along Yucca Avenue north of Milling Street. Include standards for building form and character in this designation and encourage transit-supportive uses (see GP Policy 14.4.5(c) and Specific Actions under GP Objective 16.4 related to transit-supportive uses). • Adopt a flexible light industrial/commercial zoning designation for areas roughly south of Newgrove Street. • Prohibit industrial uses that may conflict with residential uses, i.e., in terms of noise and smell, north of Nugent Street. Encourage any existing incompatible/industrial uses north of Nugent Street to re-locate south of Nugent Street. Develop a list of restricted uses based on the California Air Resources Board’s Air Quality and Land Use Handbook (http://www.arb.ca.gov/ch/handbook.pdf).
	<p>The existing “Mixed Use” designation calls for mixed use “in the same building or on the same site.”</p>	<p>Define “mixed-use” to allow for and promote “horizontal” mixed use throughout the District to emphasize the opportunity to locate compatible but different uses next door to or near one another, in addition to enabling “vertical” mixed use with a mix of uses in the same building. Define an appropriate mix of uses for the several (e.g. mixed-use, main street, and/or light industrial/commercial) zoning designations described above.</p>

Table 5.1. Recommended Policy Changes - Lancaster General Plan (continued)

Topic	Existing Policy	Proposed Change
LOS standards	<p>The General Plan calls for traffic Level of Service C on city streets wherever possible, with Level of Service D acceptable during peak hours (GP Objective 15.1). This could be incompatible with plans for the Southeast Transit Village to be highly walkable and to have a high multi-modal level of service.</p>	<p>Adopt General Plan language that encourages complete streets that balance the efficiency and convenience of vehicular operations with the goal of increasing transit use, bicycling, and walking, while fostering the City’s economic development goals. Potential strategies include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allowing peak hour level of service (LOS) “E” or “F” within the Transit Village Development District. 2. Allowing decreased levels of vehicular speed and convenience on a case by case basis in areas where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widening or altering a roadway would conflict with environmental, historic, or community character objectives; • A significant cause of the congestion is regional traffic beyond the City’s control; • Substantial transportation improvements have already been required and further improvements are not feasible; • Other factors related to accommodation of pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit, and road improvements may be substantially detrimental to the desired capacity, convenience, safety, or efficiency of these other travel modes; or • Congestion is of a limited duration due to special events or organized activities at local public facilities.
Transportation and Streets	<p>Policy 14.1.1(c): “As part of the development review process, continue to analyse the potential impacts of traffic generated by projects and the effects on adjacent land uses and surrounding neighborhoods. This information shall be used to determine appropriate mitigation measures for the project and will be added to the citywide traffic data base.”</p>	<p>Revise GP Policy 14.1.1(c) to read as follows: “As part of the development review process, continue to analyse the potential impacts of traffic generated by projects and the effects on adjacent land uses and surrounding neighborhoods. This information shall be used to determine appropriate mitigation measures for the project, which may include improvements to the multi-modal transportation system, and will be added to the citywide traffic data base.”</p>

Table 5.1. Recommended Policy Changes - Lancaster General Plan (continued)

Topic	Existing Policy	Proposed Change
Parking	GP Policy 14.3.2(a): “Review individual development projects to ensure that parking areas are designed to minimize visual disruption of the overall project design and are screened from streets to the extent consistent with police surveillance needs through a combination of mounding, landscaping, low profile walls (not to exceed three feet), and/or grade separations.”	Revise GP Policy 14.3.2(a) to read as follows: “Review individual development projects to ensure that parking areas are designed to avoid negative impacts on the pedestrian environment and minimize visual disruption of the overall project design. Surface parking lots should be placed to the side of or behind buildings, not along the sidewalk, particularly in residential, mixed-use, and downtown areas. Alternatively, parking lots may be screened from streets and sidewalks to the extent consistent with police surveillance needs through a combination of landscaping, low profile walls (not to exceed three feet), and/or grade separations.”
High Speed Rail	N/A	Endorse elevated HSR as the preferred alignment for the City.
Branding and Definitions	The name “Southeast Transit Village Planning Area” may not be valid if the Lancaster Metrolink Station moves, does not highlight key district features such as proximity to Downtown and walkable live-work potential, and may not attract the investment and interest that the City desires.	Consider a name change or re-branding for the Southeast Transit Village Planning Area, pending the eventual status of the Metrolink Station, emphasizing live-work opportunities, central location, and extension of Downtown.
Future STVPA Specific Plan	The General Plan Mixed Use Designation states that “areas considered for mixed use development will typically require development under the guidance, of a specific plan,” implying that there could be a future Southeast Transit Village Specific Plan.	In lieu of a specific plan, consider creating regulatory and implementation documents including zoning districts within the existing zoning ordinance (Title 17) and an infrastructure master plan and implementation plan for the STVPA that collectively address the topics identified in Table 4.4 in a vision-driven and well coordinated manner.

Table 5.2. Recommended Policy Changes - Downtown Specific Plan

Topic	Existing Policy	Proposed Change
Land Use	The Downtown Specific Plan boundary has been adopted as a General Plan Overlay, and is defined as “Subdistrict TD-1,” which allows mixed-use “Commercial Block” buildings up to 5 stories, with either retail or building lobby frontages.	Adjust the Downtown Regulating Plan’s designations for height, building type and use along either side of Sierra Highway according to this STVPA vision, or according to a future Specific Plan for the STVPA area.
		Account for the High-Speed Rail alignment or potential changes in Metrolink station location or function in any changes.
		Adjust height, intensity, and use regulations along West Milling Street to encourage a mixed-use, active street with a variety of housing types including townhomes and row houses, duplexes and triplexes, and small- to medium-sized apartment buildings.
Milling Street	The Downtown Specific Plan shows Milling Street terminating at Genoa and Sierra Highway (Downtown Specific Plan, Page 3-9)	Mention or illustrate the potential extension of Milling Street west beyond Genoa and east across the Union Pacific and High-Speed Rail alignment.
Transportation and Streets	No mention of High-speed Rail.	Encourage vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle connections across future HSR tracks of Lancaster Boulevard, Avenue J, Milling Street, and any other locations feasible.
Parking	The Downtown Specific Plan identifies projected parking requirements for the seven different Districts within the Specific Plan Area, including the Specific Plan Transit District that surrounds the Metrolink Station and is partially within the Southeast Transit Village Plan Area. However, parking requirements around the Metrolink Station appear to be as high as any other area in the Downtown Specific Plan area.	Reduced parking requirements near transit is an important policy change in the Vision Plan to encourage transit-oriented development.
LOS Standards	No LOS standards identified.	Consider amending LOS requirements in the Downtown Plan similar to what is recommended for the General Plan, above.

Table 5.3. Recommended Zoning Code (Title 17) Changes

Topic	Existing Policy	Proposed Change
Permitted Uses	The MU-N zone permits a variety of uses that are supportive of a mixed-use, transit oriented transit village. However, the MU-N zone prohibits the development of new light industrial, automotive repair, outdoor storage on private property, and mini-storage uses, although these existing uses are permitted to continue as nonconforming uses.	Adjust the zoning within the STVPA by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying a Mixed-Use – Employment (MU-E) zone to the industrial portions of the STVPA. The MU-E zone would be intended to provide an area for non-retail employment uses in close proximity to residential uses. It permits multi-family residential uses in conjunction with office professional, business park-type, and some light industrial uses. The MU-E zone is not intended for heavier industrial uses. • Applying a use and building type overlay to portions of the STVPA that allows light industrial and auto repair uses, as wells as a Light-Industrial Building type, to preserve existing viable businesses.
Permitted Building Types within the MU-N Zone	The MU-N zone does not permit the light-industrial building type. Currently there are many industrial buildings within the Plan Area that are nonconforming under the MU-N zone.	Adjust the zoning per above.
Mixed-use Building Side Yard Setback within the MU-N Zone	Mixed-use buildings must provide a 5-foot side yard setback, a requirement that is potentially inconsistent with the creation of the pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented, urban setting that is envisioned for the STVPA. This is especially true for the smaller lot sizes (5,000 sf), where buildings would be separated by 10-foot wide gaps at regular intervals.	Change building standards to allow 0-foot side yard setbacks in order to create a continuous frontage in some areas, like the buildings that currently line Lancaster Boulevard in Downtown Lancaster. In other areas, a minimum lot width might be established, thus requiring the consolidation of existing 25 foot wide lots into larger parcels so that side setbacks become practical. Decisions regarding such new standards should be made in the context of preparing comprehensive development standards for all areas of the STVPA.
Apartment/Condominium Building Side yard Setback within the MU-N Zone.	Apartment/Condominium Buildings must provide the following side yard setbacks: 5 feet for the ground floor, 10 feet for the second-story portion, 15 feet for the third-story portion. This provision could result in buildings with “wedding cake” massing.	This provision should be studied further based on the context of the building, for instance, whether it is in an urban setting such as Downtown or whether it is next to and existing residential, single family house neighborhood.

Table 5.3. Recommended Zoning Code (Title 17) Changes (continued)

Topic	Existing Policy	Proposed Change
<p>Parking Requirements</p>	<p>The parking requirements for transit-oriented development are potentially high and consideration should be made to reducing these requirements. For example, for most building types, two parking spaces must be provided per unit regardless of the number of bedrooms, guest parking must be accommodated on-site, and commercial/office buildings must provide 1 space per 250 sf of gross floor area.</p>	<p>Implement shared parking, reduced parking requirements, and allow parking requirements to be met with on-street parking. Recommended standards are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Minimum requirements (shared = publicly accessible): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Multi-Family Residential <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Studio and 1 Bedroom: 1.25 per unit, of which 0.25 must be shared. ii. 2 Bedroom+: 1.75 per unit, of which 0.5 must be shared. b. General commercial & office: 3 per 1,000 square feet, of which 1.5 must be shared. c. Industrial: 1.25 per 1,000 square feet, of which 0.5 must be shared. d. Metrolink – Provide a minimum of 200 spaces, inclusive of both sides of tracks. <p>In addition, institute the following requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Do not allow curb cuts unless alley access is not available or is required for emergency access. b. New development must provide bicycle parking in accordance with the latest version of the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals Bicycle Parking Guidelines. c. Allow development to fulfill 100% of its minimum requirement through payment of an in-lieu fee to be used for shared parking facilities or alternative mode improvements. d. Allow new development to count on-street parking spaces abutting its property towards its minimum requirement. e. Allow by right off-site parking within 500 feet.

Table 5.3. Recommended Zoning Code (Title 17) Changes (continued)

Topic	Existing Policy	Proposed Change
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="867 289 1515 506">f. The Planning Director should be empowered to grant new development relief from minimum parking requirements if the applicant conducts a shared parking study that demonstrates the peak hours of usage are appropriately staggered with those of the other use(s) sharing the parking lot. <li data-bbox="867 516 1515 653">g. Metrolink parking should be unregulated unless there are early morning uses adjacent that would result in others occupying spaces prior to the arrival time of Metrolink riders.

Table 5.4. Recommended Features for Future Regulatory and Implementation Documents

Topic	Existing Policy	Proposed Change
Future Regulatory and Implementation Documents	The existing regulatory and implementation documents need to be updated or new ones created.	<p>Create regulatory and implementation documents for the STVPA that include the following elements, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refined lists of allowed land uses and design standards. • Standards for STVPA form and character, including form-based zoning (See GP Policy 17.1.6(e)) and sustainable design principles (See GP Policy 19.2.2(a)). • Context-sensitive street design and complete streets (See GP Policy 17.1.6(e)). • Definition of and requirements for block structure and street network. • Identification of parks and public space. • Reduced parking requirements and shared parking arrangements, particularly near Downtown and near the Metrolink Station. • Placement of surface parking lots to the side of or behind buildings, not along the sidewalk. • Complete street strategies that balance the efficiency and convenience of vehicular operations with the goal of increasing transit use, bicycling, and walking, while fostering economic development goals. • Designated truck routes within the STVPA that avoid residential uses and other sensitive receptors. • Other important design and policy considerations identified in this Vision Plan. • Accommodation of potential or confirmed HSR alignment. • STVPA district-wide water, sewer, and stormwater planning, particularly in conjunction with the removal or relocation of the stormwater detention of this Vision Plan. • Explicit reference to Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (See GP Policy 18.1.4(a)).

Table 5.4. Recommended Features for Future Regulatory and Implementation Documents (continued)

Topic	Existing Policy	Proposed Change
		<p>Also consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install a dedicated “purple pipe” system for recycled water within a new Landscape Maintenance District (per GP Policy 3.1.3(c)). • Require drought-tolerant landscaping (per City landscape ordinances and GP Policy 3.2.1(a)). • Incentivize or encourage new solar and renewable energy installation in the STVPA (GP Policy 3.6.3(b)). • Adopt energy conservation criteria for new development proposals in the STVPA, such as, but not limited to those listed in General Plan Policy 3.6.2.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION

This section provides a discussion of financing tools that might be used for funding the improvements to the public realm and infrastructure, and recommends a development strategies for implementing the City’s vision for the STVPA.

A. INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

In the past, a TOD site like the STVPA would have been a prime opportunity for the use of redevelopment funds. However, with the passage of AB 1x 26 and AB 1x 27 in 2011, California created a significant disjunction from long-standing legal authority for tax increment financing (TIF) by the State’s municipalities as an instrument for funding public improvements. Since its initial passage in 1949, California redevelopment law has been the most significant economic development tool available. With redevelopment gone, the available tools to stimulate investment in the public realm and propel plan implementation are now considerably limited.

The logic of most of the remaining options is based on the notion that development can and should pay for the external costs that it places on the public realm. This requires that revenues raised for mitigation of effects be tied specifically back to the source of demand. As a result, most of these tools are relatively specific in how they can be deployed. The key sets of available options are shown in **Table 6.1** and described below.

1. Community Facilities Districts.

Community facilities districts, also referred to as “Mello-Roos” districts, are among the most frequently used method for financing

public services on an annual operating basis. Community Facilities Districts (CFD) are a form of special tax on real property located within an identified geographic area. These districts are commonly used to fund infrastructure improvements on greenfield development sites. CFD’s are not an as-of-right tool available to developers, but rather must be extended by the issuing authority through the formation of a special district. This is done through a ballot process that includes only property owners if there are less than 12 located within the district. Otherwise the district must be formed through a regular election.

Uses

These special districts can be used to fund annual operating services for police and fire protection, as well as park, recreational and open space maintenance. Other eligible operating costs include flood and storm water protection services. In terms of capital costs, CFD’s can be used to fund improvements with a useful lifespan of at least five years. Eligible capital projects include; school and library facilities, streets, transportation, and backbone utility infrastructure.

2. Landscape Lighting Maintenance

Districts. The authority for the creation of Landscape Lighting Maintenance Districts (LLMD) resides in the California streets and highways code. The goal of this act is to allow public agencies with authority over streets to create effective and well maintained streetscapes. The LLMD is a

Table 6.1. Potential Funding Sources

Topic	Proposed Change
Community Facilities Districts (“Mello-Roos” District).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual operating costs for police and fire protection; park, recreational, and open space maintenance; flood and storm water protection services. • Capital costs for schools and library facilities; streets; transportation and backbone utility infrastructure.
Landscape Lighting Maintenance Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation and maintenance of sidewalks, curbs, and gutters, public lighting, landscaping, and park recreation facilities. • Acquisition of land for parks, recreation, and open space.
Open Maintenance Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planting and maintenance of trees and vegetation; creating regulations for preserving open space.
Benefit Assessment Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The operation and improvement of drainage and flood control facilities; street lighting and maintenance.
Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land acquisition and the provision of low and moderate income housing units.
MAP-21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit facilities and related improvements.
Prop 84	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation of the Storm Water Detention Basin and creation of a park facility.
Safe Routes to Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to proximity of Antelope Valley High School and nearby elementary schools, could fund pedestrian and bicycle improvements throughout the plan area.

special assessment that requires a formation process that includes a protest ballot process for affected landowners and a finding of public benefit.

Uses

LLMDs can be used for the installation and maintenance of sidewalks, curbs, and gutters, public lighting, landscaping, and park and recreation facilities. Additionally, this tool can be used for the acquisition of land for parks, recreation, and open space. Revenue from the special assessment can be used for capital financing.

- 3. **Open Space Maintenance Districts (OSMD).** As the title suggests, these districts are used for funding the cost of improving and maintaining open space areas. They are a tool available to any public district that provides services related to natural open space. Use of these districts requires a formation process with a protest ballot as well as a finding of public benefit.

Uses

OSMD can be used to fund the cost of improving and maintaining open space in the following ways: removal of aggressive and noxious plants, planting and maintaining trees and vegetation, and protecting open space – including the creation of regulations necessary for the preservation of open space.

- 4. **Benefit Assessment Districts.** These are special assessment districts that were first authorized in 1982. Like the other districts that are tied to specific purpose, a formation process is required that includes public hearings and a protest ballot for affected

landowners. A rational nexus between the assessment and benefit to the property owner must also be established.

Uses

The benefit assessment district can fund the operation and improvement of drainage and flood control facilities as well as street lighting and maintenance. The coverage area of the assessment must directly benefit from operation of the improvements that are being funded via the district. It is also possible to use this tool to fund capital costs associated with the identified uses.

B. NEW INITIATIVES

As of the end of the 2012 legislative session, the State of California began to consider opportunities to add new local economic development tools that could redress the loss of redevelopment authority. As of the preparation of this Vision Plan, it is not clear if any of these initiatives will be accepted by the Governor’s office and as a result become available to California communities. The main initiatives are as follows:

- SB 1156 would create new entities called Sustainable Communities Investment Authorities. These would create tax increment funding (TIF) districts on a voluntary basis. This would allow counties and other agencies to withhold their property tax contributions if they don’t support the development project (unlike redevelopment, which attached county, school, and special district revenues).
- SB 214 expands an existing CFD program by removing the voter

approval requirement in establishing an Infrastructure Facilities District (IFD). Although the IFD authority has been in effect since 1990, it has only been used once, in Carlsbad, California to fund public improvements for a new hotel located adjacent to the Legoland theme park. SB 214 would also expand the types of projects that could be financed, and require districts to provide greater evidence that they are benefiting the community as a whole. AB 2144 modifies SB 214. It would not eliminate the voter approval requirement entirely, but would reduce it from two-thirds to 55 percent for adoption of a new IFD.

Each of these new tools, if signed into law, could be potentially used in place of redevelopment for financing public improvements in the absence of an initial project or private investment initiative.

C. GRANTS AND STATE BONDING PROGRAMS

Other potential sources of financing include a variety of competitive grants and State bonding programs such as:

- **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).** This could be used for land acquisition and the provision of low and moderate income housing units in the plan area
- **MAP-21.** This is the federal highway bill that authorizes federal transportation expenditures through 2014. Transit facilities and related improvements may be eligible for funding via this program.
- **Prop 84 Funding.** This State funded parks and clean water investment fund might

be accessed on a competitive basis for the relocation of the drainage basin and creation of a park facility.

- **Safe Routes to School.** The proximity of Antelope Valley High School and nearby elementary schools could allow for the provision of pedestrian and bicycle improvements throughout the plan area.

D. DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Planning for the STVPA will need to react to external conditions, both in the changing physical environment around the area as well as evolving economic market conditions. Once the vision is fully implemented the plan will transform the district from being primarily an infrastructural and industrial area to a more fully articulated transit oriented community.

Undertaking transformation of this scale is a long-term prospect that would require flexible responses from both public sector and private stakeholders. Key issues influencing the eventual disposition of the Plan Area include the following.

1. **High Speed Rail.** The presence of the High Speed Rail (HSR) arriving through the Plan Area will be the single most important defining issue in the overall disposition of the Plan Area. At this time is not clear that the entire California HSR initiative will be completed as a linkage between San Francisco and Los Angeles. At present the Central Valley portions of the system in Fresno and Kern counties are in the pre-development phase and have been authorized for construction. Given these circumstances, it is likely that the second leg of the project – connecting Bakersfield

to Palmdale – could occur during the same time period that the STVPA plan is being implemented.

If the HSR crosses through Lancaster, the project will have the potential to split the east and west sides of the City in half.

This is particularly true if an at grade alignment is put in place in Lancaster. An at grade alignment would effectively isolate the plan area from Downtown Lancaster. A small portion of the Planning Area along Sierra Highway would be made largely inaccessible to the bulk of the plan area on the east side of the alignment. The Sierra Highway frontage could be planned in the context of Downtown Lancaster however, the rest of the plan area should be considered as an opportunity for the creation of a new neighborhood on the east side of Lancaster. This new neighborhood would be near the Downtown, but lack the accessibility between the Plan Area and Downtown, other than at designated major arterials. In addition, the difficulty of creating pedestrian linkages would effectively serve to isolate the Plan Area from Downtown.

Furthermore, if an at-grade alignment is selected, then the role of the Lancaster Metrolink station is likely to decline in importance relative to the creation of the major regional transportation hub that would be located at the intermediate terminus of the high-speed rail system that would be located in Palmdale.

Careful physical planning would need to be undertaken to ensure that commuter rail would still be viable at its current location. Under these conditions, planning

for this district should envision its buildout as a compact mixed-use urban type neighborhood integrated into the communities to the east side of the city.

If HSR is brought through the Plan Area in some kind of grade separated or elevated solution, opportunities will exist to orient the neighborhood towards the west and plan for its inclusion as an extension of Downtown Lancaster. In these circumstances the western end of the plan area can develop out as a higher density TOD that would be amenitized by its proximity to Downtown. Even if a grade separated elevated system is used, the spacing of the pylons and an elevated structure's presence will tend to focus any development opportunities towards the eastern side of the plan area.

2. Development Phasing. With the expectation that HSR will arrive in Lancaster, it is important to recognize that the presence of the train will have a determinative effect on the character of the STVPA. Noise and vibration generated by High Speed Rail will need to be buffered as a result, and some uses will need to be displaced from the alignment, including possibly the Metrolink station itself. In order to accomplish this, the following order of operations should be undertaken in order to develop the plan area.

a. Predevelopment Planning. The City of Lancaster, working with Metrolink, should identify the new platform location for the Metrolink on a site between Lancaster Boulevard and Milling Street. Support uses such as surface parking should be located to the

west of the tracks between Sierra Highway and the HSR right-of-way. This land can be acquired as part of the station improvements required by Metrolink and HSR's capital program.

The City of Lancaster should begin acquiring land for the development of a park facility that would replace the existing drainage basin on land south of the station site between Yucca Avenue and the rail right-of-way. Partial funding for this park could be accomplished through one of the benefit assessment tools described above.

- b. Phase 1 Private Investment.** In the absence of redevelopment, it is difficult to identify the exact mechanism by which the City of Lancaster would prescribe a specific development outcome on the STVPA. However, the goal should be to coordinate and if need be, subsidize and support a largely market rate multifamily residential development within the northwest portion of the Plan Area. The proximity of the STVPA to both the Metrolink Station and a co-developed park should help create the environment that will be conducive to attracting private investment once the market for residential development begins to accelerate in Lancaster.
- c. Phase 2 private investment.** The northeast portion of the STVPA should be re-zoned in a manner that would allow for gradual infill and redevelopment by private investors. This zoning should allow for a mix of residential densities ranging from single-family houses on standard lots to duplexes, and house-scale multi-family buildings.

Industrial uses and substandard lots would become nonconforming uses and over time the underlying land value should increase on the sites adjacent to the park and Metrolink station.

d. Ongoing Industrial improvements.

Industrial uses south of Oldfield Street should be retained and be encouraged to upgrade and improve. Uses that serve the local consumer base such as auto repair, cabinet making, construction materials, and related businesses will continue to contribute to the economy of the city and the character of the Plan Area. Performance standards regulating outdoor storage, hours of operation and noise and emissions should be considered so that land use incompatibilities with the transit oriented neighborhood do not arise over time.

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APPENDIX A

PROPOSED STREET SECTIONS



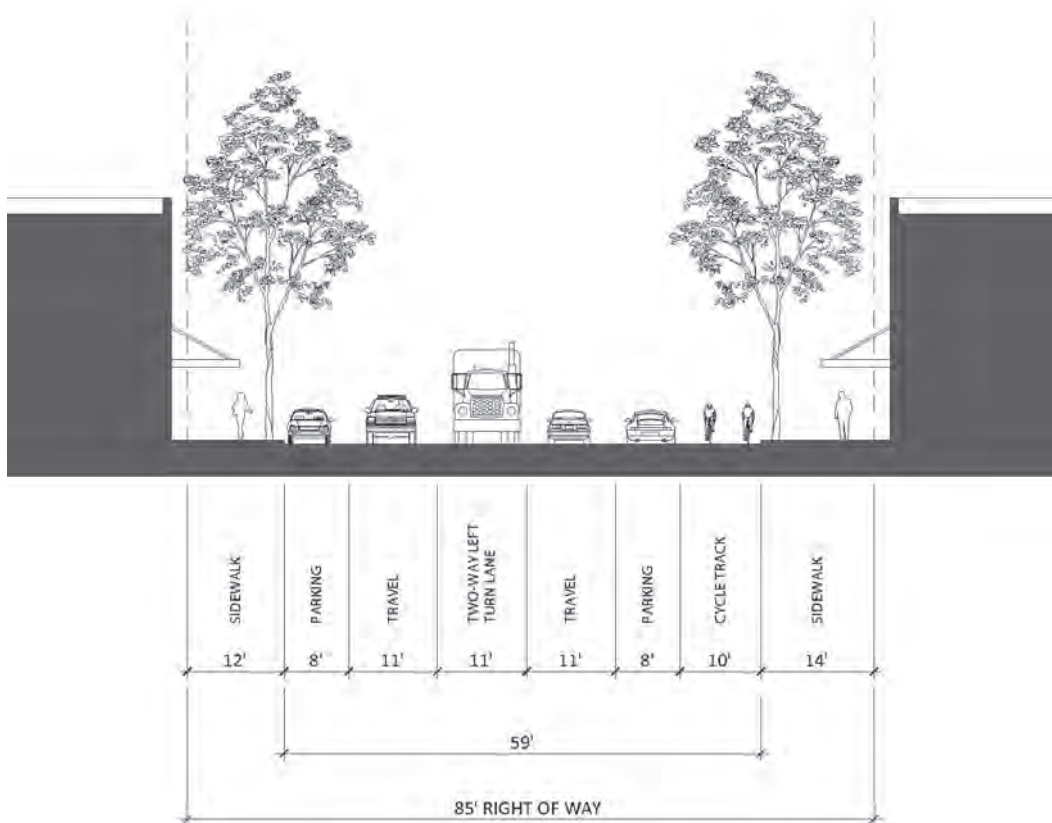
Figure A.1. Proposed Street Network.

1 SIERRA HIGHWAY

Sierra Highway’s right-of-way width is reduced from 100 feet to 85 feet, and the number of lanes in each direction is changed from two or three lanes in each direction - with a center turn lane - to one lane in each direction with a center turn lane. Parallel parking is provided on both sides of the street and a cycle track is provided on the east side of the street.



Bulbouts and a wide crosswalk provide a more inviting and safer place for pedestrians to cross the street.



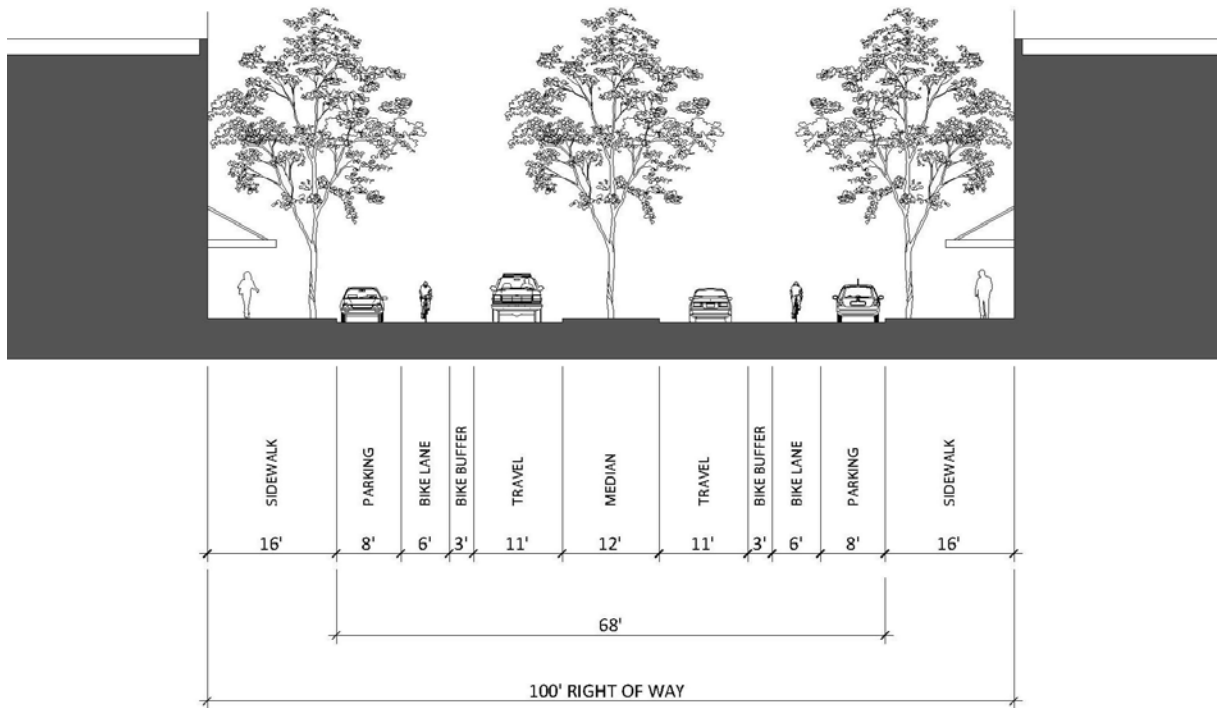
Proposed Sierra Highway street section.

2 W. LANCASTER BOULEVARD

The number of lanes in each direction are reduced from two traffic lanes in each direction with parallel parking on both sides of the street to one traffic lane and one bike lane and bike buffer in each direction. Parallel parking is retained on both sides of the street and a planted median is introduced down the center. Sidewalks are urban in character with street trees planted in tree wells at regular intervals.



Multi-colored concrete sidewalks provide a colorful path for pedestrians to cross a relatively wide arterial street.



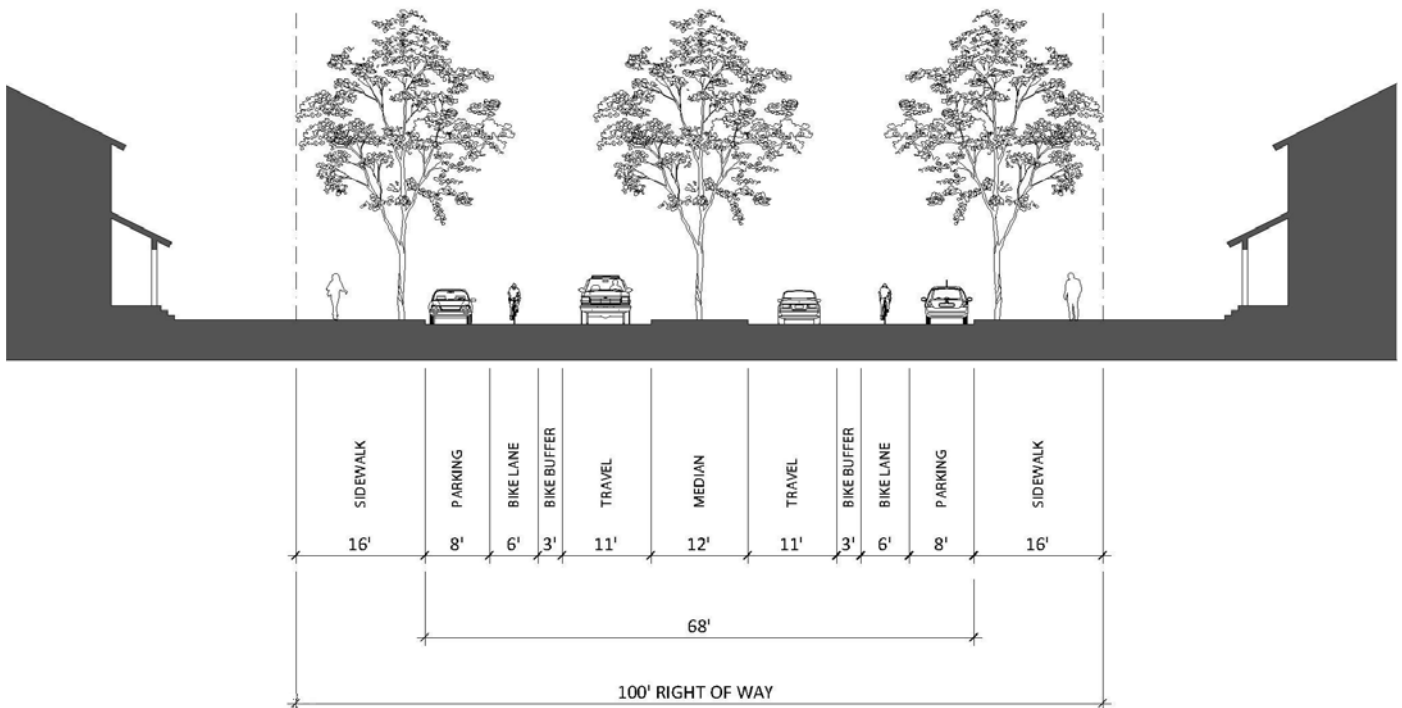
Proposed street section for W. Lancaster Boulevard between Sierra Highway and the alley between Yucca Avenue and Trevor Avenue.

3 W. LANCASTER BOULEVARD

The number of lanes in each direction are reduced from two traffic lanes in each direction with parallel parking on both sides of the street to one traffic lane and one bike lane and bike buffer in each direction. Parallel parking is retained on both sides of the street and a planted median is introduced down the center. Sidewalks are suburban in character with street trees planted in continuous planters.



A planted median on a residential street.



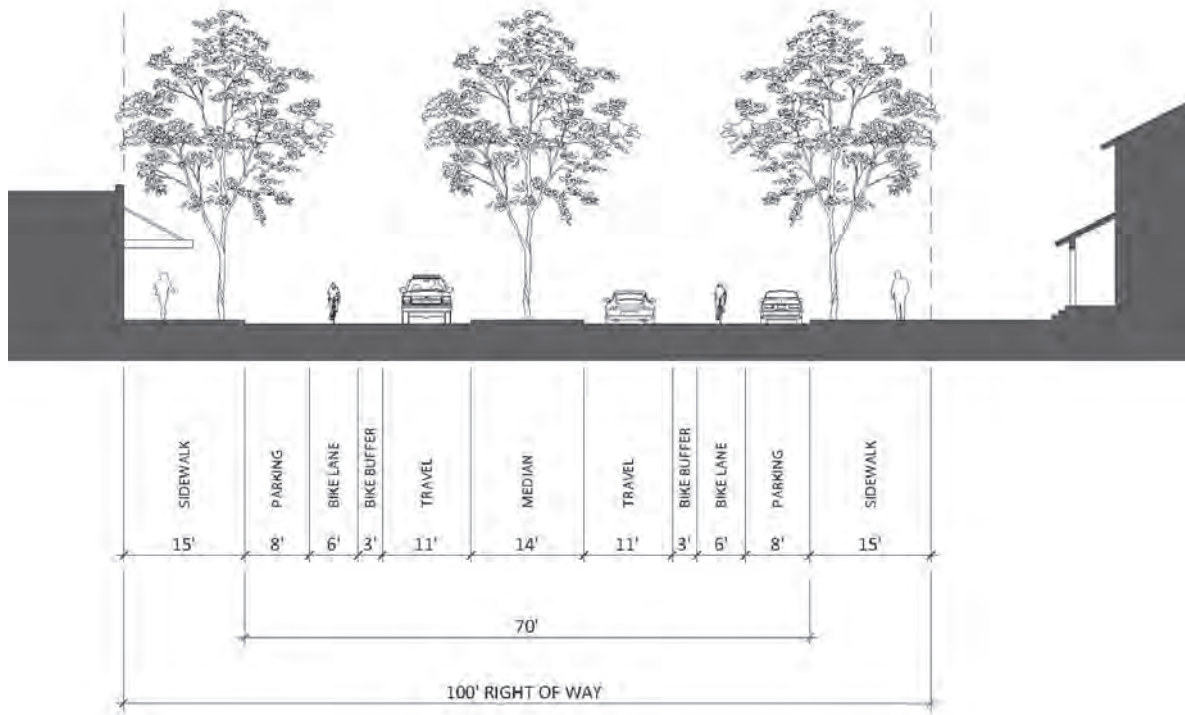
Proposed street section for W. Lancaster Boulevard between the alley between Yucca Avenue and Trevor Avenue and Division Street.

4 DIVISION STREET

Division Street is reduced from two vehicular lanes in each direction to one with a bike lane and bike buffer in each direction. A wide planted median is introduced down the center of the street and planted with trees. Street trees, spaced at regular intervals, are added along both sides of the street. Sidewalks are either urban (trees planted in tree wells) or neighborhood (trees planted in continuous planters) depending on the adjacent building types and land uses.



Example of neighborhood-serving commercial streetscape that could serve as a model for frontages along Division Street



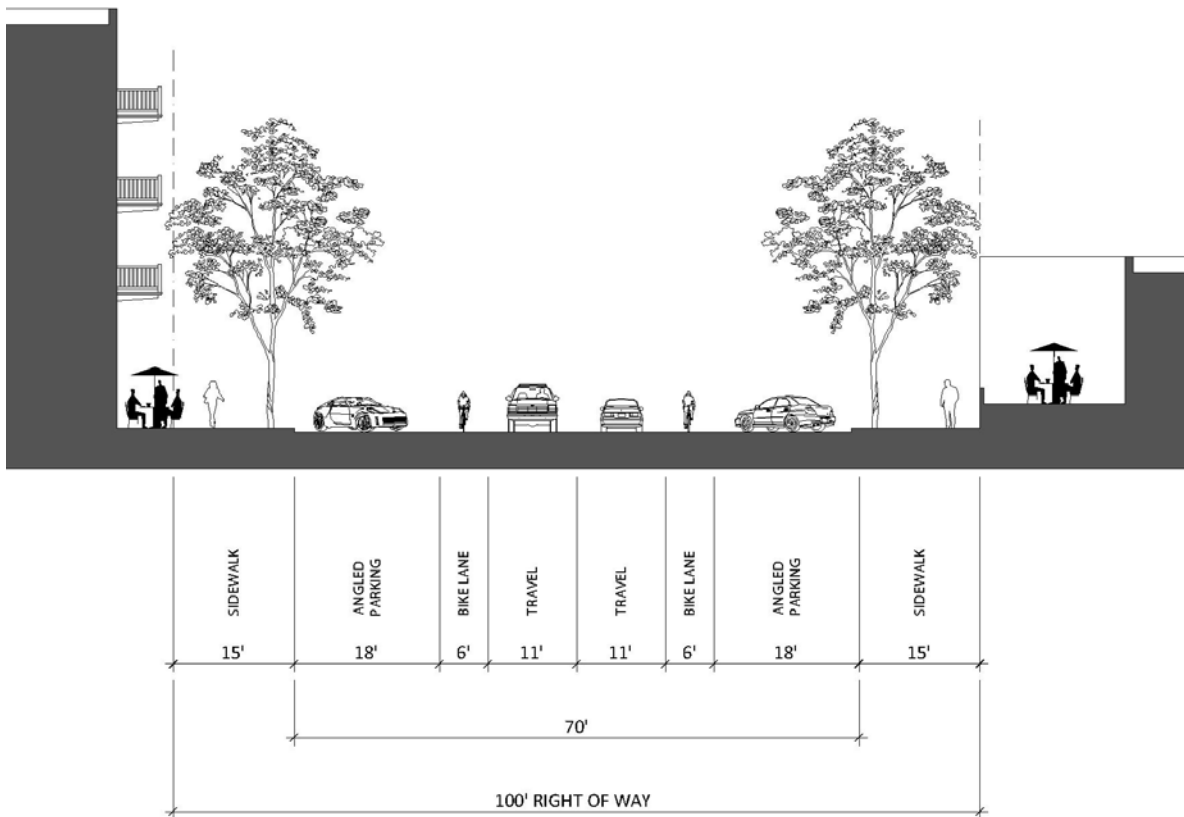
Proposed street section for Division Street.

5 YUCCA AVENUE

Yucca Avenue is reduced from two vehicular lanes in each direction to one with a bike lane in each direction. The parallel parking is transformed into front-out angled parking in order to help reduced the width of the travel lanes, while also increasing the amount of available on-street parking. Front-out angled parking is safer than front-in angled parking as it provides motorists with better vision of bicyclists, pedestrians, cars and trucks as they exit a parking space and enter moving traffic. Sidewalks are urban, with trees planted in tree wells at regular intervals.



A vibrant street with curbside parking, street trees, and colorful banners



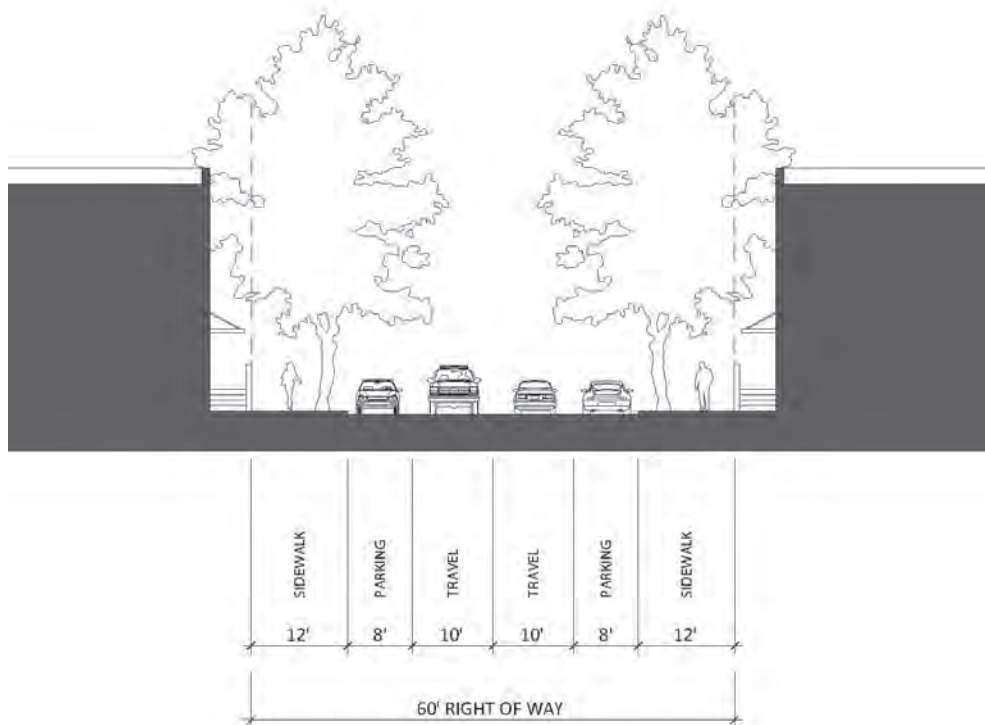
Proposed street section for Yucca Avenue with front-out angled parking.

6 TREVOR AVENUE AND NUGENT STREET

Trevor Avenue and Nugent Street remain one lane in each direction with parallel parking on both sides of the street. Street trees, spaced at regular intervals, are added along both sides of the street. Sidewalks are either urban (trees planted in tree wells) or suburban (trees planted in continuous planters) depending on the adjacent building types and land uses.



Live/work buildings facing a tree-lined street.



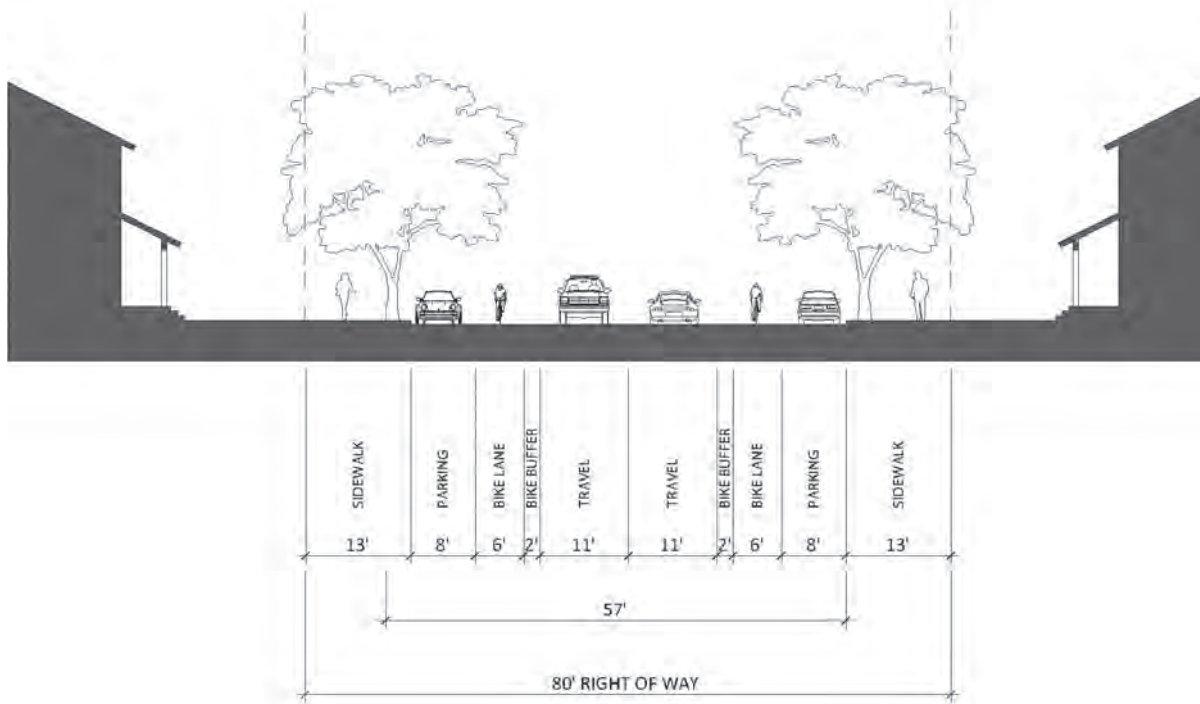
Proposed street section for Trevor Avenue and Nugent Street.

7 MILLING STREET

Milling Street is reduced from two vehicular lanes in each direction to one with a bike lane and bike buffer in each direction. Parallel parking is retained on both sides of the street. Between Trevor Avenue and Division Street, sidewalks are suburban with street trees planted in continuous planters. Between Trevor Avenue and the Metrolink Station, sidewalks are urban with street trees planted in regularly spaced tree wells.



A neighborhood center gathering place on a street similar to the envisioned character of Milling Street.



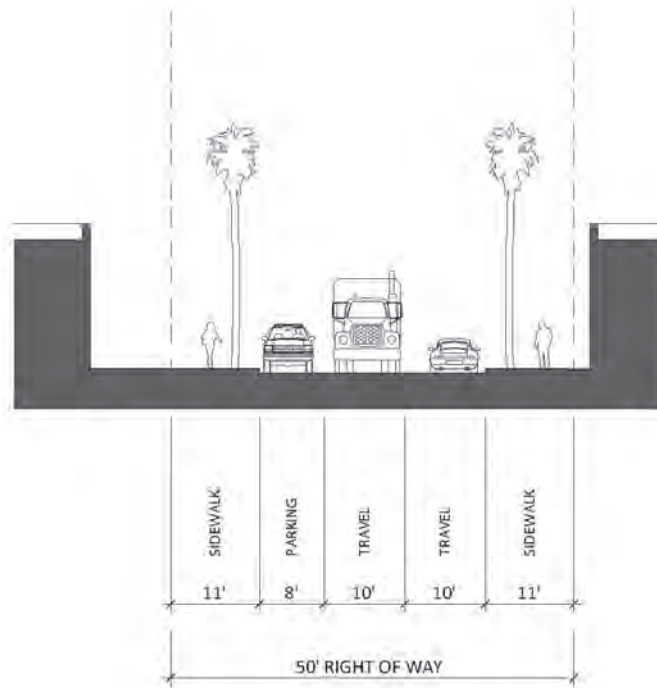
Proposed street section Milling Street

8 TYPICAL EAST/WEST STREET

Typical east-west running streets, including Nicobar Street, Norberry Street, Oldfield Street, Ovington Street, Pilsbury Street, and Pondera Street remain one lane in each direction. Parallel parking is introduced on one side of the street and sidewalks can be introduced whether on one side or both sides of the street.



An creative workshop building with an informal frontage on a low-speed, low-volume neighborhood street.



Proposed street section for typical east-west streets.

APPENDIX B

RECOMMENDED PHYSICAL DESIGN CHARACTER (BASIS FOR FORM-BASED ZONING)



TOD

This area (potential future zone) is comprised primarily of multi-family housing, office uses and small-scale neighborhood-serving retail, intended to generate a compact, mixed-use, walkable area adjacent to the Metrolink station.

Intended Physical Character. New buildings are block-form, up to four stories tall, and located at or near the sidewalk to generate an active and pedestrian-oriented public realm appropriate for a transit-oriented center. Most upper stories are expressed in single volumes with multiple volumes moderating larger buildings.

Intended Streetscape and Public Realm. Streetscapes are urban and shaped by commercial frontage types, including galleries, arcades, shopfronts, and stoops. Street trees reinforce the human scale the mixed-use streets with inviting sidewalks that support pedestrian activity and commerce.

Intended Parking Arrangements. On-street parking is vital to the character and function of this mixed-use environment, and should be optimized for the intended commercial or residential development within each block. Off-street parking should be located under, alongside and/or behind buildings. Strategically located and dispersed shared lots and garages - generally within 500 feet of the uses they serve - complete the array of parking options. Minimum parking standards are as low as possible to free up as much land as possible for more productive uses, and to maximize use of other more environmentally friendly modes of transportation.

Intended Land Use Range. Buildings allow ground floor retail uses, office, and live-work uses to support active streetscapes and walking. Upper floors are occupied with office and residential uses, which may also occupy some ground floors.





NEIGHBORHOOD

This designation is applied to the areas generally bounded by Division Street, Milling Street, Trevor Avenue, and the alley between Norberry Street and Nugent Street. Buildings include single family houses, duplexes, and house-scale multi-family residential buildings set back from the street behind front yards.

Intended Physical Character. New buildings are house-scale and up to 2 and in some cases perhaps 3 stories tall. Landscaped front yards separate the buildings from the sidewalk, and living rooms, dining rooms, and other more “public rooms” of the dwellings are oriented toward and activate the street. House-form, multi-family buildings are scaled and massed for compatibility with existing houses.

Intended Streetscape and Public Realm. Active ground floor residential frontages – such as front yards, porches, and stoops – face traditional, tree-lined streets. Canopy street trees – planted in continuous planters

between the sidewalk and street or in parking lane planters – reinforce the human scale and low intensity nature of the streetscape and providing shade and wind protection for pedestrians and for front yards.

Intended Parking Arrangements. On-street spaces provide parking for visitors, while residents are provided with off-street parking located within the rear half of the lot and shielded from street views. Off-site parking within 500 feet of the site may also be allowed.

Intended Land Use Range. Uses are limited to residential and home occupation.

(Note that within the STVPA Vision Plan some portions of the areas recommended for Neighborhood might alternatively be planned for an employment or institutional campus. If that option is selected, the implementing zoning would likely be a separate “campus” designation, not part of Neighborhood.)



WORKFORCE FLEX

This designation is applied to a recommended transition/buffer area between the planned TOD in the norther portion of the STVPA and the remaining industrial uses in the southerly portion of the STVPA. The intent of this zone is to create a vibrant, flexible, multi-use environment that is an appropriate neighbor to both the TOD to the north and the Industrial to the south.

Intended Physical Character. New buildings are block-form, up to three stories tall, generally located at or near the sidewalk to activate the sidewalk with pedestrian oriented commercial activity.

Intended Streetscape and Public Realm. Streetscapes are urban and shaped by commercial frontages such shopfronts and forecourts. Street trees reinforce the human scale of this urban neighborhood and its mixed-use streets with inviting sidewalks, supporting pedestrian and commercial activity.

Intended Parking Arrangements. Parking is provide by a flexible combination of on-street spaces, off-street spaces located behind and next to buildings, and shared facilities within 500 feet of the site served.

Intended Land Use Range. Buildings are occupied with commercial, light workshop, artist studio, office and other non-residential uses and building types that are compatible with the industrial uses to the south and with the residential and commercial uses to the north.





LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

This designation enables variety of moderate to intense industrial and manufacturing activity. These areas are comprised primarily of large and varied building sizes with substantial activity from large cargo vehicles.

Intended Physical Character. New buildings are up to three stories tall or 50 feet and located anywhere on the lot. Building volumes are expressed in single or multiple volumes as determined by the function of the industrial activity. Ground floor activity ranges from industrial and manufacturing uses and outdoor assembly to offices.

Intended Streetscape and Public Realm. Ground floor industrial frontages, including loading docks and front yards shape the utilitarian streetscape. Whenever practical the more human-scale activities - such as offices, customer interface and limited retail areas, and employee break areas - should be oriented to the street frontage to provide activity on and overlooks of the street. Street trees are present

to provide shade, while accommodating the needs of large service and delivery vehicles.

Intended Parking. Parking consists of on-street spaces and/or on-site spaces, ideally located behind or along the side of buildings, with as much of the necessary parking as possible provided in on-street spaces. Off-site parking within 500 feet of the site is also permitted.

Intended Land Use Range. Buildings are occupied with light industrial and manufacturing uses, auto maintenance and repair, offices and some outdoor assembly and storage. Outdoor storage and operations should be conducted in screened yard areas beside or behind the buildings to the extent possible.

