

# West Hollywood General Plan

## Traffic and circulation Background Report

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The following sources were used to compile this report:

- City of West Hollywood General Plan Circulation Element (June 1988)
- Final West Hollywood Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan (April 2003)
- Westside Mobility Study, Final Report (October 2003)
- City of West Hollywood Department of Public Works: Preferential Parking Advisory Group Draft Policy (October 2007)
- West Hollywood Preferential Parking Program Review of Districts 7-10: Phase Two Report (October 2004)
- City of West Hollywood Zoning Code (June 2007)
- City of West Hollywood Transportation Demand Ordinance - Municipal Code Chapter 10.16 (1993)
- City of West Hollywood's Operating Budget and 5 Year Capital Work Plan (FY 2007-2008)
- U.S. Census Data (2000)
- CityLine Ridership Statistics (FY 2006-2007)
- Santa Monica Boulevard Master Plan (May 1999)
- Sunset Boulevard Specific Plan (July 1996)
- City of West Hollywood website ([www.weho.org](http://www.weho.org))
- Consultant team notes from field work observations (January 2008)
- Nelson/Nygaard notes from interviews with City of West Hollywood staff (January 2008)
- Hogle-Ireland summary of West Hollywood General Plan Community Fair (February 23, 2008)
- Workforce Housing Study, Westside Subregion (November 2008)

## Overview

This report is a summary of the existing transportation conditions, challenges, and opportunities relevant to updating the City of West Hollywood's General Plan Circulation Element. It is based on Nelson\Nygaard's meetings with City staff, review of past and current planning documents, field observations, and the West Hollywood General Plan Community Fairs on February 23 and November 8, 2008.

As a dense urban village that is a destination within the Southern California region and a crossroads between downtown, west Los Angeles, and the Westside cities, West Hollywood faces many challenges when it comes to circulation. The automobile is the primary transportation mode in West Hollywood: 75% of West Hollywood residents work trips are single-occupant vehicles according to the 2000 Census. Of the remaining 25% of residents approximately six percent walk or bike, five and half percent take transit, six percent carpool, and seven percent worked at home. The automobile will continue to be the primary transportation mode in West Hollywood for the foreseeable future. At the same time, West Hollywood's location, land use patterns, community values, and adopted policy goals provide unique opportunities for the City to continue its regional

leadership position in managing transportation and parking resources to promote balanced mobility options.

This report provides a summary of key transportation issues and opportunities, and is divided into the following sections:

- Motor vehicles (circulation and parking)
- Transportation demand management
- Transit
- Pedestrians
- Bicycles

## Motor Vehicles

The City of West Hollywood General Plan circulation element defines the functional classification of major roadways inside the City boundaries. Traditionally, functional classification has been applied to automobile traffic and describes the extent to which a given roadway segment fulfills its two general purposes of mobility and access. Most local jurisdictions define five or more functional classifications, ranging from local streets, which primarily provide access, to freeways, which primarily provide mobility. The City of West Hollywood specifically defines only three classes, with local streets being implied. This limited classification is reasonable in West Hollywood, a geographically small city with few different types of roadways. Figure T-1 illustrates the current functional classification system.

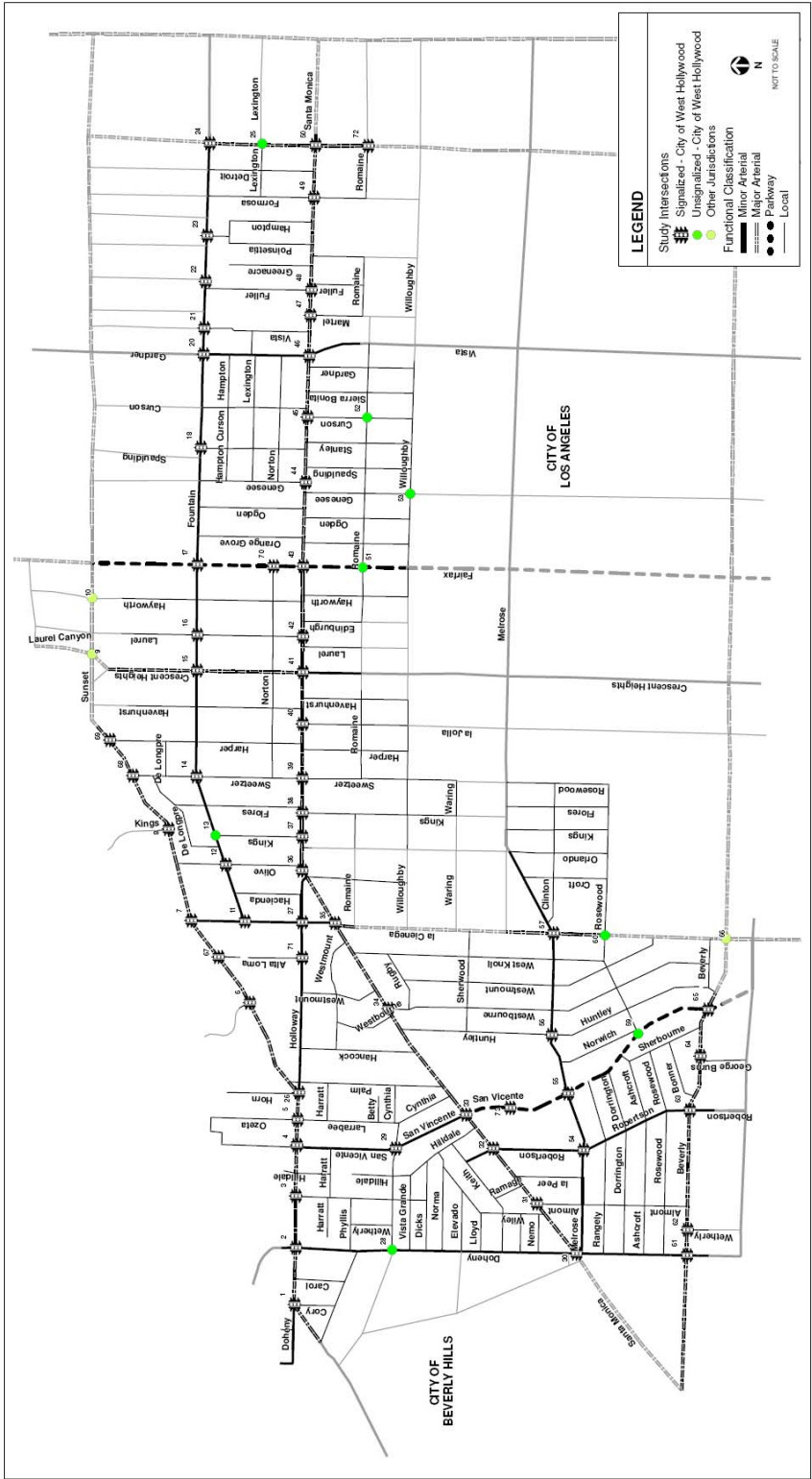
Major east-west motor vehicle thoroughfares within the City include Santa Monica Boulevard, Sunset Boulevard, and Fountain Avenue which serve not only local trips but a significant number of regional trips. In the north-south direction, La Brea Avenue and La Cienega Boulevard serve regional as well as local trips. At the General Plan Community Fair in February 2008, West Hollywood residents cited traffic congestion as one of the biggest issues facing the City. Indeed, congested-related delays on the streets and highways of Los Angeles generally and the Westside specifically are among the worst in the nation,<sup>1</sup> impacting private vehicles, commercial delivery trucks, taxis, and transit buses and reducing the efficiency of West Hollywood's transportation system. Business owners, and in particular the retail sector, have also expressed ongoing concerns over increased traffic congestion and its impacts on West Hollywood businesses' economic viability and regional competitiveness for customers and employees.

The City of West Hollywood is a built out city situated in the midst of a highly urbanized area. Cut-through traffic, trips with neither a beginning nor an end in the City, accounts for a sizeable portion of vehicle trips in the City of West Hollywood. The November 2008 Westside Cities Workforce Housing Study conducted an analysis of commute patterns for

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<sup>1</sup> In 2005 the Texas Transportation Institute ranked the Los Angeles-Long Beach Metro Area as #1 among "Very Large Areas" in the US for congestion-caused a) travel delay, b) excess fuel consumed, and c) costs (source: Texas Transportation Institute, [http://mobility.tamu.edu/ums/congestiondata/tables/national/table\\_2.pdf](http://mobility.tamu.edu/ums/congestiondata/tables/national/table_2.pdf)). In 2008, the 33 of the most congested intersections in the US in were in the Los Angeles-Long Beach Metro Area according to the traffic-tracking firm Inrix (source: reported in Forbes, [http://www.forbes.com/2009/02/24/traffic-intersections-worst-lifestyle-autos\\_intersections.html](http://www.forbes.com/2009/02/24/traffic-intersections-worst-lifestyle-autos_intersections.html)).

Figure T-1



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CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD - STUDY INTERSECTIONS  
FIGURE 1



Westside residents and found that for each of the Westside cities between 83 and 90 percent of jobs are held by persons who do not reside in the city where they work, resulting in significant cross-jurisdiction commuting. In the City of West Hollywood, the study found that only 18.4% of West Hollywood residents work in West Hollywood and that 85.4% of jobs in West Hollywood are held by employees who are commuting to West Hollywood from other cities.

Additionally, West Hollywood attracts trips from all over the Southern California area as a regional destination for jobs, entertainment, and shopping amenities. Additionally, the City is surrounded by a broad mixture of land uses that interact with one another, sending automobile traffic through the streets of West Hollywood, which consumes limited roadway and intersection capacity.

Therefore, much of the traffic in the City of West Hollywood can be attributed to sources over which the City has little control, in the case of cut-through traffic, or that are vital to the City's ongoing economic success, such as attracting regional visitors. Because the City is built out, increasing roadway capacity may not be feasible or even desirable.

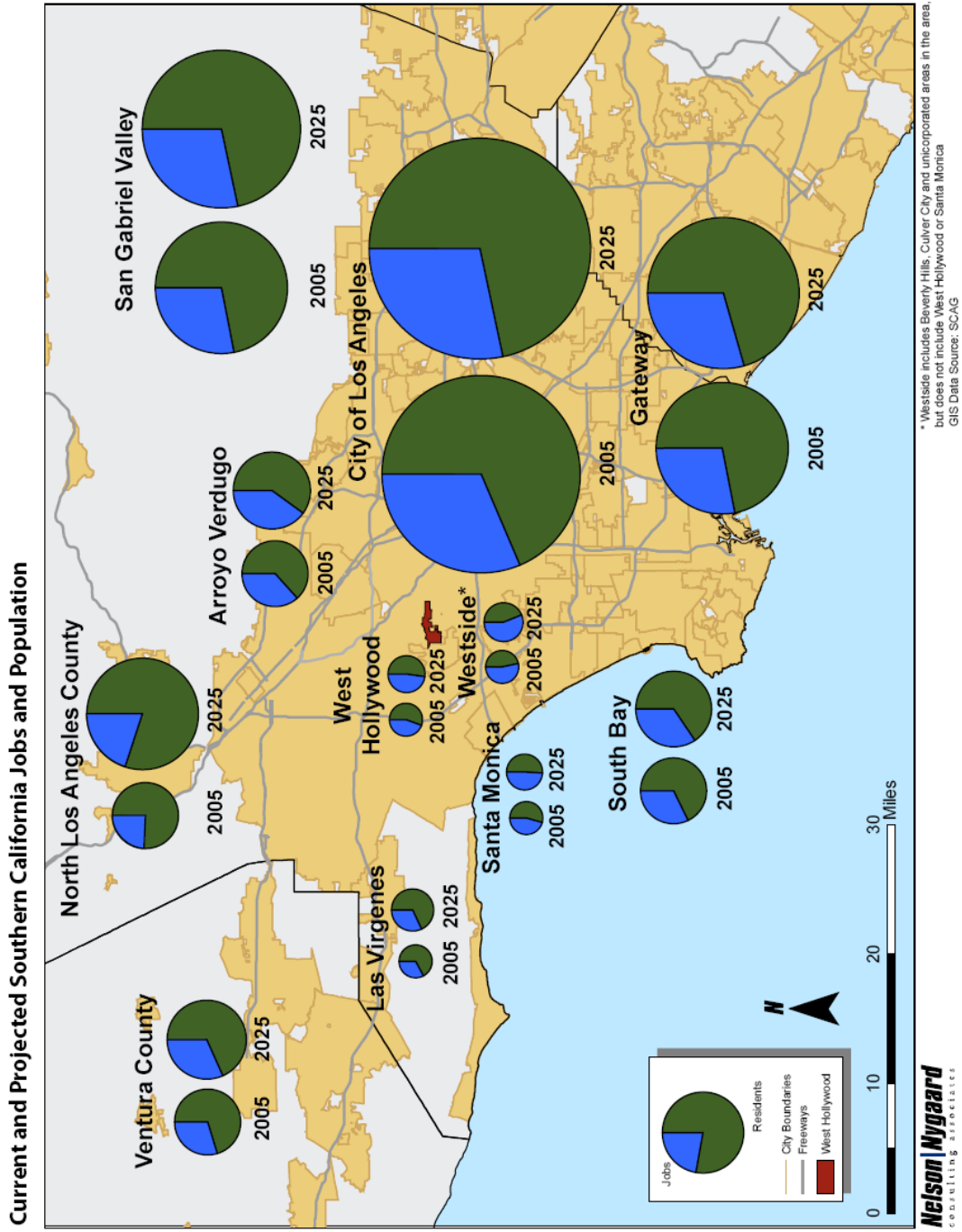
West Hollywood has a limited supply of roadway and intersection capacity, and there is high demand throughout the day for automobile travel within, to, and through the City. Additionally, many operational conditions contribute to traffic friction, including a large number of closely-spaced traffic signals and most major corridors being lined with commercial land uses and on-street parking. The result is congestion experienced in West Hollywood not just during the traditional a.m. and p.m. peak periods, but for long periods throughout the day.

The City of West Hollywood is situated in a region where the automobile is the dominant form of transportation. Although the City itself is relatively compact and amenable to alternative modes of transportation, its regional context suggests that the automobile will be the dominant mode of transportation in the City as well. Trips from and through the City from neighboring jurisdictions, as well as trips by West Hollywood residents from the City to other areas generally rely on the automobile.

Parking is allowed along most major streets in the City. While supplying parking to supplement deficiencies in off-street parking availability, on-street parking reduces the available right-of-way for traffic carrying lanes, and vehicles attempting to access this parking often block a lane of travel while they execute the parking maneuver. The City has addressed this problem by imposing peak period parking restrictions along certain corridors. Given West Hollywood's location, city streets are heavily used by regional traffic. In order to address the pressure placed on West Hollywood's streets by regional traffic, the City has focused primarily on managing existing roadway capacity so that regional traffic uses major thoroughfares rather than diverting to local residential streets.

The October 2003 Westside Mobility Study noted that West Hollywood's projected population and job growth is relative to its size, but is small compared to the projected regional growth of the surrounding cities. The report states that managing roadway capacity and making transit improvements will be critical to ensure that traffic congestion in West Hollywood does not worsen in the future due to regional traffic. For more detailed information on projected regional job and population growth refer to Figure T-2.

Figure T-2



## Auto Ownership

According to the 2000 U.S. Census<sup>2</sup>, West Hollywood's household size is smaller than average for Los Angeles County<sup>3</sup> and nearly 75% of West Hollywood households could be considered "low car" (1 or fewer cars) or "no car". Seventeen percent of residents do not own a car, 57% own one car, 22% own two cars, and four percent own three or more cars.

Within the city, auto ownership varies significantly by neighborhood; in some Census block groups nearly everyone owns a car, while in others nearly 40% do not. Households in the east side of West Hollywood tend to own fewer vehicles than households on the west side of the City. Likewise, the number of autos owned per household and autos owned per person is highly variable, most likely due to differences in income and household size. For more detailed information on car ownership by Census block group please refer to Figures T-3 and T-4.

## Parking

Parking in West Hollywood is repeatedly mentioned by both City staff and residents as one of the top issues facing the City. While West Hollywood's average household auto ownership rate is low relative to other communities in the region, West Hollywood is a relatively dense and compact community that includes many older buildings without parking that contribute to the charm and walkability of City streets. It is partially the mixture of historic character and new activity and energy that make West Hollywood a popular community to visit, attracting people from the region as well as tourists, particularly on the weekend evenings. This fluctuation in parking demand creates many challenges in managing the public on- and off-street parking supply. The City of West Hollywood has implemented several innovative programs to increase parking availability, including adding new public supply (some via public/private partnerships), parking permit districts in residential areas, and parking pricing with meters that accept multiple forms of payment in commercial areas.

## Residential Parking

Parking in residential neighborhoods is often scarce because many buildings were built at a time when auto ownership rates and off-street parking requirements were lower, thus a significant percentage of the older housing stock is currently "under parked" by current parking requirement standards. Additionally, rising rents have resulted in more people sharing apartments, increasing in the number of vehicles parked on residential streets. Furthermore, West Hollywood is a regional entertainment destination, and some motorists attempt to avoid paid parking in commercial districts by parking on residential streets. As a result, many streets are designated permit parking only districts (see the next

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<sup>2</sup> While almost ten years old, 2000 U.S. Census data was used as it is the only data available for this information.

<sup>3</sup> According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the average household size in Los Angeles County is 2.98 compared to an average household size of 1.53 in the City of West Hollywood.

Figure T-3

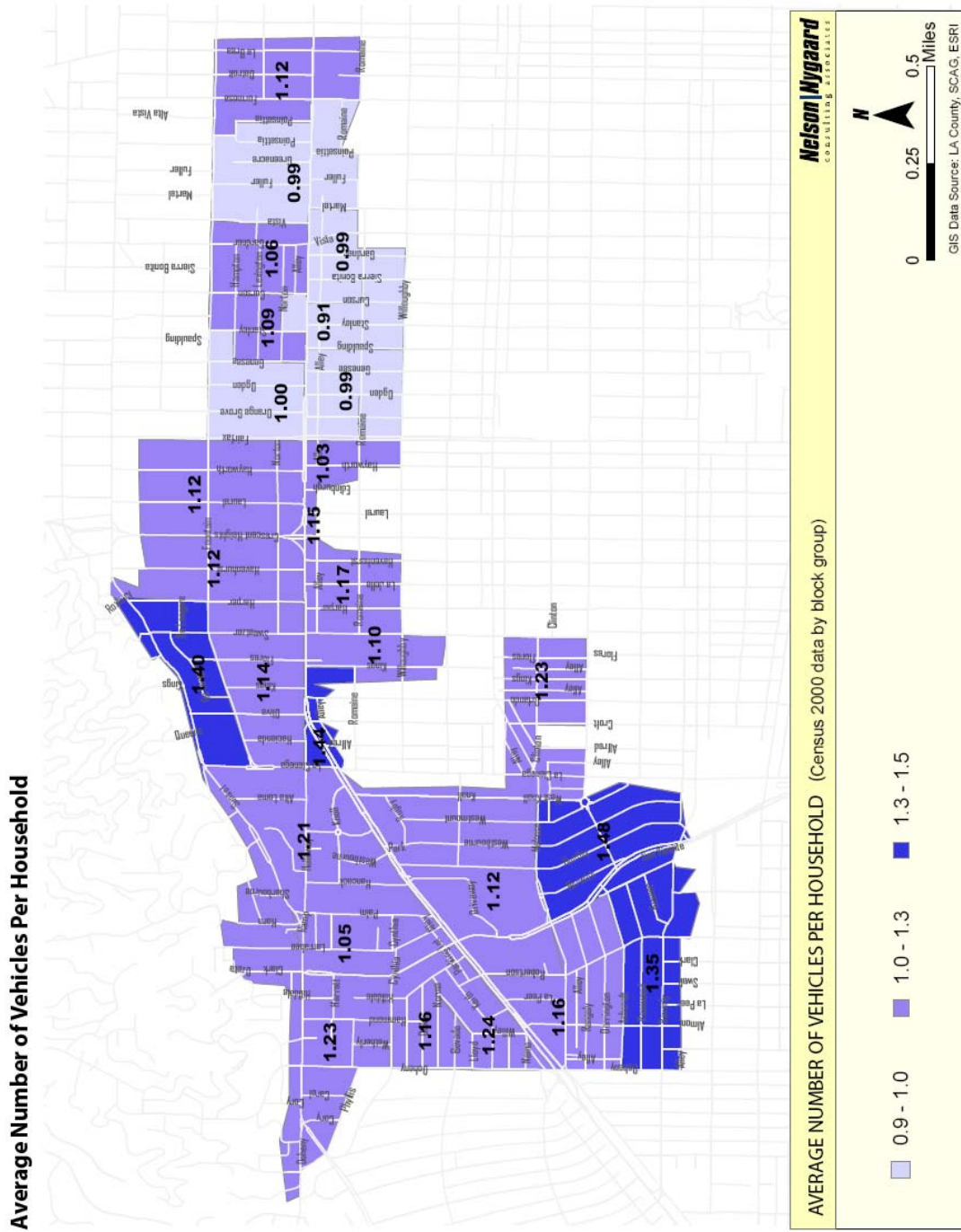
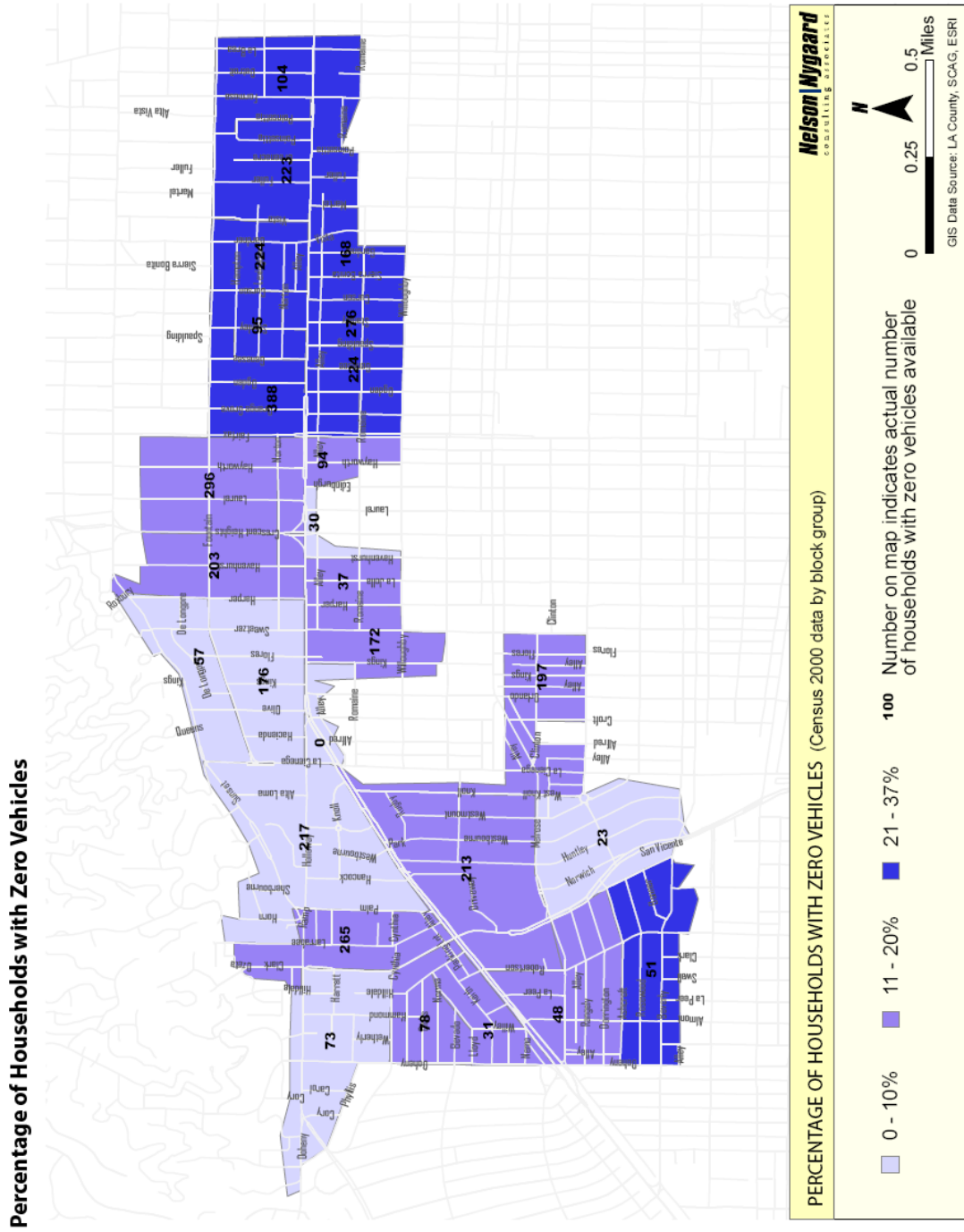


Figure T-4

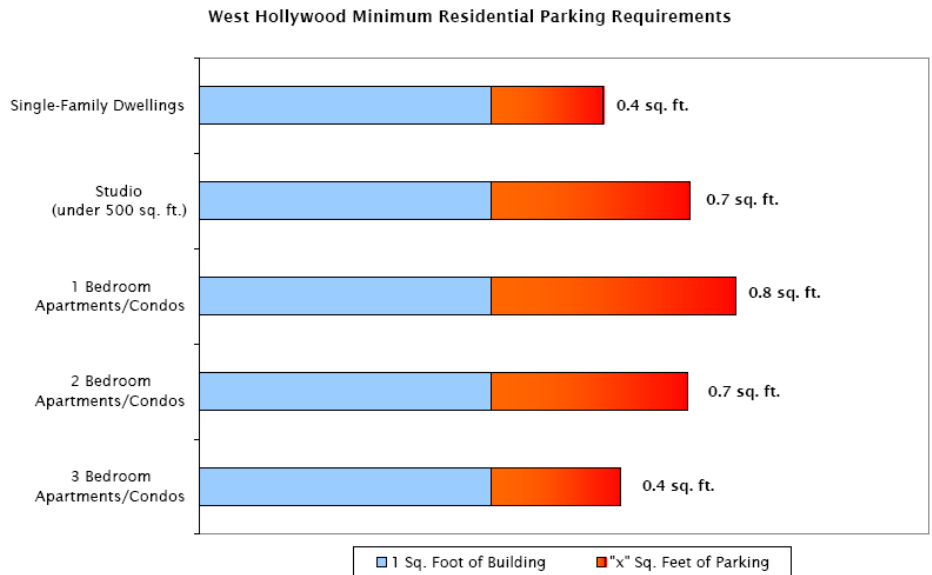


Note: 2000 Census Data used as it is the best available data

section for more information). Together, these factors have resulted in high demand for a limited number of on-street parking spaces in residential neighborhoods.

Numerous residents at the February 23, 2008 General Plan Community Fair expressed concern that the strain already placed on residential parking will further be exacerbated by the condominium projects which are now under construction or will be built in the future. Some residents felt that new developments should be required to provide more parking than is currently required and some also suggested that this parking be available to the public, not just the residents of the development<sup>4</sup>. Figure T-5 shows the relationship between the square footage occupied by parking versus housing under West Hollywood’s minimum residential parking requirements.

Figure T-5



Source for parking requirements: West Hollywood Municipal Code - Title 19 Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 19.28 Off-Street Parking and Loading Standards, Table 3-6, June 2007.

Source for average unit size: www.rent.com, www.homegain.com

Methodology: Square footage for each housing type was obtained from February 2008 rental and sale postings for the City of West Hollywood.

A minimum of at least five data points for each housing type was used to determine an average square footage. The relationship between the size of required parking area to housing area was determined by comparing the average square footage of the housing type to the number of parking spaces required under West Hollywood Zoning Code.

Other residents at the Community Fair did express interest in the possibility of reducing requirements or implementing new parking management programs such as unbundling parking costs, which separates the cost of parking from the cost of rent or the purchase price of a housing unit allowing owner or renter to choose to if they would like to purchase parking or not, shared parking, and parking benefit districts as a way to improve housing affordability. The Westside Workforce Housing Study found that most workforce households cannot afford rental prices or home purchase prices in West Hollywood.

<sup>4</sup> All new development in West Hollywood is required to provide on-site parking.

Some residents noted that requirements tailored to seniors or those on a fixed income would be worth considering if it would make it more affordable for them to remain in West Hollywood. Given that parking represents approximately 15% of the rental price for a 1-bedroom apartment and approximately 10% of the construction cost for an average 2-bedroom condo in West Hollywood, such management strategies could be pursued to promote both increased parking availability and housing affordability.

## **Residential Permit Parking Program**

West Hollywood currently has 11 preferential residential parking districts. The timing restrictions vary by district: parking is restricted at night but not during the day in some areas (like those areas near Sunset Boulevard) and in other areas parking is restricted to permit holders during the day but not at night.

Permit fees for annual residential pass are \$15 for the first vehicle, \$35 for the second, \$70 for the third and \$120 for the fourth. Annual guest passes are available for \$18, with a limit of two passes per address. In the Preferential Parking Advisory Group's (PPAG) Draft Policy, October 2007, PPAG and City staff recommended limiting the number of passes to three per dwelling unit. Visitor passes are also available and these are good for specific periods of time no longer than ten days. Visitor passes are free of charge. PPAG and City staff recommended that the monthly limit be lowered from 400 visitor passes per dwelling unit to 100 passes per dwelling unit. In addition to residential parking permits, the City of West Hollywood sells, on a limited basis, commercial permits in Districts 1, 2 and 3.

In the October 2004 Preferential Parking Program Review of Districts 7-10 the study found that while the majority of permit holders felt the program was well managed and enforcement is effective, there was not a clear consensus on the impacts of the program. While some residents felt that the preferential parking program had improved their ability to park, others stated that parking is still difficult because there are just too many cars and simply not enough parking. A similar sentiment was expressed at the General Plan Community Fair: a number of residents felt that while the program was valuable, it did not address the perception that new development has resulted in not enough street parking for residents despite the fact that new projects are required to have on-site parking.

Refer to Figure T-6 for a map of the 11 preferential residential parking districts that was prepared by the City of West Hollywood.

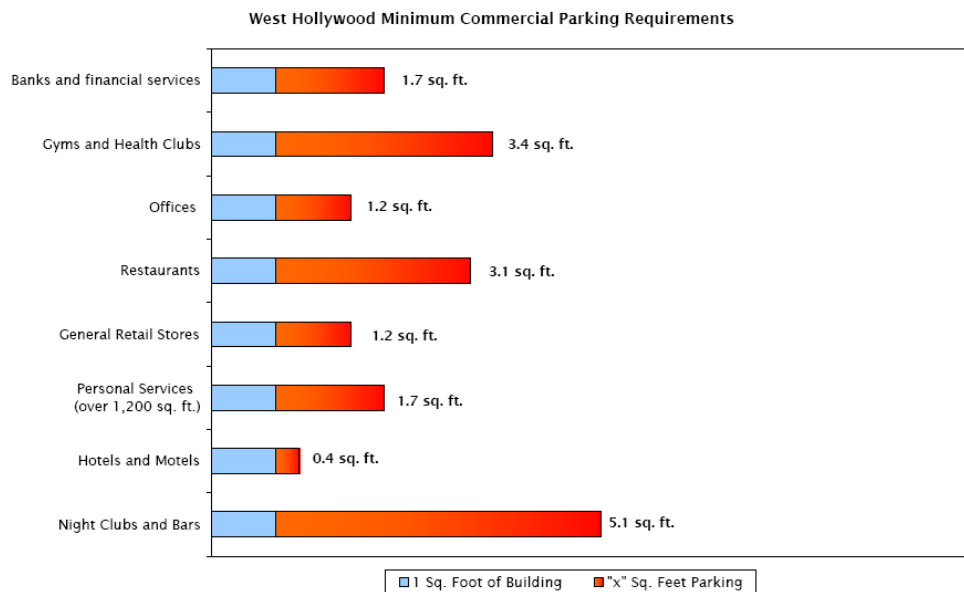
## **Commercial Parking**

In addition to the residential parking requirements discussed above, the City of West Hollywood currently has fairly typical minimum parking requirements for commercial uses. As Figure T-7 shows, meeting West Hollywood's commercial parking requirements can take up a significant amount of land area; as a result, the square footage dedicated for code-required parking spaces is often greater than the square footage of the actual shop or restaurant that the parking serves.

Figure T-6



Figure T-7



Source: West Hollywood Municipal Code - Title 19 Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 19.28 Off-Street Parking and Loading Standards, Table 3-6, June 2007.  
 Methodology: Parking requirements (spaces/KSF) for each use were obtained from the West Hollywood Municipal Code. The number of spaces required per KSF for each use was multiplied by the average size of a parking space (340 SF) and divided by 1,000 to show the ratio of SF of required parking per SF of building.

West Hollywood’s existing “one-size-fits-all” minimum commercial parking requirements can also make it difficult to redevelop commercial spaces for new and different land uses. Given the smaller size of parcels in the City, it is often not possible to provide the required on-site parking. In many communities, this situation can present a barrier to redevelopment of existing buildings for different uses, or can prevent vacant commercial space from occupied, as tenants and land uses change over time. The City has recognized this issue, and has a variance process which can allow (on a case-by-case basis) a project to provide less than code-required parking.

West Hollywood residents have expressed a strong desire to maintain and attract small, unique neighborhood-serving shops, restaurants, and galleries. It is also important to note that West Hollywood’s regional market niche is in large part due to the walkable, “Main Street” charm and diversity of many of its commercial shopping districts, which is a rare commodity in the Southern California retail landscape. As discussed above, the City of West Hollywood’s current commercial parking requirements may be hindering local residents’ and regional shoppers’ preferences for local, unique, and diverse shops, restaurants, and galleries and market position, as many small business likely can neither provide the required parking on-site nor afford to construct or lease parking off-site.

The City of West Hollywood has been working to address this problem through programs such as a valet service which allow small businesses to share off-site parking. In addition, the City has been strategically increasing the parking supply as part of public-private partnerships, in which some portion of the parking supply constructed as part of new development projects is made available to the public.

Some cities have modified their commercial parking requirements to meet parking demand on a district-wide basis rather than requiring each individual parcel, building, or

use to provide its own individual parking facilities. It will be a policy decision for the City of West Hollywood whether there is support for investigating a district-wide approach to commercial parking requirements.

The City will be working with Civic Enterprise Associates LLC starting in May 2009 to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the parking inventory throughout commercial areas in the City to identify shared use parking opportunities that will assist businesses with their parking needs. The goal of the analysis will be better manage the overall parking supply and help businesses that are experiencing difficulties in securing parking as required by code. The analysis will help shape policy recommendations to more effectively manage public and private parking resources.

## **On-Street Parking**

Currently there are 2,100 on-street parking meters in operation. The majority of meters operate from 8 AM to 6 PM, Monday through Saturday except for those on Sunset Boulevard, which operate from 8 AM to 2 AM, Monday through Saturday. Most meters throughout West Hollywood have a 2-hour time limit. The time limits on Sunset Boulevard change from 2 to 4 hours after 10 PM. In addition, there are some short-stay meters (10 to 30 minutes) to accommodate businesses that have requested short-term parking. Parking charges that vary from \$0.75/hour to \$1/hour depending on the area (the latter are concentrated on Sunset Boulevard and the area around Pacific Design Center).

Parking is allowed along most major streets in the City. While supplying parking to supplement deficiencies in off-street parking availability, on-street parking reduces the available right-of-way for traffic carrying lanes, and vehicles attempting to access this parking often block a lane of travel while they execute the parking maneuver. The City has addressed this problem by imposing peak period restrictions along certain corridors.

Much of the on-street parking remains free or underpriced during the evenings, which is the time period when there is a surge in parking demand, especially on the weekends. As a result, drivers coming to West Hollywood for the nightlife are likely circling for free on-street parking (and contributing to traffic congestion) to avoid paying for off-street parking. Additionally, employees who work in the evenings (but arrive for their shifts before most customers) are likely occupying prime on-street parking spots in front of a business which would be better utilized by the customers.

As mentioned above, the City is a leader in innovative management of on-street parking with new payment and enforcement technologies and policies. However, some of these innovations have thus far only been implemented in limited pilot areas. Expanded implementation subsequent to additions to the parking supply is described below.

## **City-owned and/or Operated Off-Street Parking**

There is a limited supply of public off-street parking in West Hollywood, and while additional supply is pending as part of conditions of approvals for new development, other public off-street parking could be lost to redevelopment. West Hollywood's existing public off-street parking supply includes:

- Sunset Lot (former Tower Records Parking Lot): 78 spaces
  - 8775 Sunset Blvd.
  - City owned
- Spaulding Parking Lot: 28 spaces
  - 7718 Santa Monica Blvd.
  - City owned
- El Tovar Parking Lot: 44 spaces (70 with valet)
  - 8752 El Tovar Place
  - City Owned
- La Peer Parking Lot: 41 spaces (75 with valet)
  - 623 La Peer Dr.
  - Leased by the City
- West Hollywood Park Temporary Lot: 113 spaces
  - 615 N. San Vicente Blvd.
  - City owned
- PDC (negotiated rate after 6pm weekdays and all day on weekends): 183 surface spaces (spaces to increase to 400 spaces when Red Building is complete).
  - 800 block of San Vicente Blvd.
  - Privately owned
- Orange Grove Parking Lot: 45 spaces
  - 1114 N. Orange Grove Ave.
  - Leased by the City
- Kings Road Municipal Parking Structure: 166 spaces
  - 8383 Santa Monica Blvd.
  - City owned
- Melrose Parking Lot: 35 spaces
  - 8732 Melrose Ave.
  - Leased from Los Angeles County
- La Jolla/Havenhurst Parking Lot: 28 spaces
  - 8200 Santa Monica Blvd.
  - Leased from Los Angeles County
- Hancock Mixed-Use Project: over 150 public parking spaces approved as part of project
  - 901 Hancock
  - Joint Development/Privatey Owned
- West Hollywood Library: 31 spaces
  - 715 N. San Vicente Blvd.
  - City owned

The City of West Hollywood is actively pursuing additional off-street parking supply, including:

- Design approval for 2 parking structures totaling 424 public parking spaces as part of the West Hollywood Park Master Plan. Existing surface parking will be replaced by 333 garage spaces. Current library surface parking will be replaced by 91 below grade parking spaces which will be covered with grass at-grade.
- Exploring options for a proposed parking structure in the mid-city area to add approximately 210 additional parking spaces.
- 185 underground parking spaces as part of Plummer Park Master Plan.

The residents of West Hollywood also voiced support for increasing the off-street parking supply. At the General Plan Community Fair, of the 9 existing programs, residents gave the most transportation dollars to adding more parking supply. While increased off-street parking supply could help increase parking availability, additional supply can not address parking problems caused by backwards pricing, lack of wayfinding signage, or parking efficiency strategies (such as universal valet to accommodate highly peaked demand patterns). For this reason, it will be a policy decision for the City of West Hollywood to find the most cost-effective balance to increasing parking *availability*, through creating additional supply, increased management of current supply, or both.

## Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

The City of West Hollywood has adopted a TDM Ordinance which requires all businesses with five or more employees at a worksite located in the city and in a development of 10,000 or more square feet of enclosed space to:

1. Create a trip reduction plan which must be reviewed and revised annually;
2. Offer parking cash out to employees if the employer subsidizes or provides free parking for employees, and
3. Provide alternative transportation information, as well as a number of other items.

However, this policy does not apply to many of the existing businesses in West Hollywood as they are below the size requirement. Since approximately 2006, the City has phased in application of this requirement to smaller developments. Transportation demand measures that comply with the City's policy include:

1. Car sharing;
2. Telecommuting;
3. Sale/subsidy of transit passed by building owners; and
4. Property-owner provided bicycles per unit or building.

Interviews with City staff suggested that this ordinance could be made more effective by including more strategies in the "TDM Toolkit", expanding TDM requirements to apply to residential development, as well as increased enforcement. Participants at the Community Fair—while not explicitly referencing the TDM Ordinance—consistently expressed support for policies and programs that would increase transportation choices so that more trips for more people would be possible without a car.

## Transit

There is a broad range of transit services in West Hollywood, each with different markets and goals. These include:

- The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, or Metro, is West Hollywood's primary transit service provider and it provides West Hollywood's residents with transit connections via 16 local bus routes and four rapid bus lines. Within West Hollywood, Metro Rapid Bus service operates on Santa Monica, La Cienega, and Fairfax (lines 704, 705, and 780 respectively); with high frequency,

higher speeds, and wider stop spacing than the local bus, Metro Rapid Bus is designed to compete with the car in one of the densest corridors in the region. As a result, it operates very efficiently, with a low cost per ride, attracting many long-distance trips, and eliminating a lot of cars from city streets. But Metro Rapid stops are too far for many people to walk to, and the service is not intended to serve local trips.

- Metro also provides local bus service along major streets like Sunset, Santa Monica, Melrose, La Cienega, and Fairfax (Metro lines 2, 4, 10, 105, and 217 respectively), which provide connections with the region at high frequency but with more frequent stops and slower speeds than Metro Rapid.
- Metro is in the planning phase of identifying a Westside rail extension that may run along Santa Monica Boulevard.
- The City of Los Angeles' Department of Transportation (LADOT) Community DASH service supplements Metro service by connecting local communities with local service connections through three community shuttle services in the area: the Hollywood/West Hollywood DASH that operates on Sunset Blvd. connecting the Hollywood/Highland Red Line subway station to Cedars Sinai Medical Center; the Fairfax DASH operates a circular route running north-south on Fairfax Avenue, each-west on Melrose, north-south on La Cienega Blvd. to Cedars Sinai Medical Center, and east-west on 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. to the Farmer's Market; and the Hollywood DASH operates a circular route that primarily runs east-west on Hollywood Blvd. and Fountain Avenues between Highland Ave. and Vermont Ave.
- West Hollywood's CityLine is a local fixed-route transit service provided by the City of West Hollywood primarily running east-west along Santa Monica Blvd. and Fountain Ave. between La Brea Ave. and Cedar Sinai Medical Center. This service is used by residents and primarily serves low-income seniors as 50% of riders are 62 years of age or older and 57% earn less than \$15,000 a year. CityLine operates every 40-50 minutes, connecting the front doors of a broad array of community services, and the annual ridership is 77,000 trips. It is hugely important to the population using it, since most have few other mobility options, but it is not designed to meet the full spectrum of existing transit needs.
- The City of West Hollywood operates a dial-a-ride transportation service for senior and disabled residents, and provides a taxi subsidy program to assist seniors with local transportation trips. These services are coordinated with the City of Beverly Hills.
- Access Services, Inc. provides ADA paratransit services for the City of West Hollywood as part of the coordinated ADA paratransit plan for Los Angeles County.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, about six percent of City residents as a whole take transit to work, and the vast majority of these trips are taken on Metro. Given the increased traffic and congestion pressures that the City of West Hollywood and the Westside as a whole will face in the coming years as the resident and employee populations increase, there has been a focus on improving regional public transit options. The role of transit in improving mobility and helping mitigate regional traffic has been discussed in a number of West Hollywood and regional planning documents and efforts. These include:

- The City of West Hollywood's FY 2007-2008 Operating Budget and 5-Year Capital Work Plan includes major transit projects and regional transit initiatives such as

working with Westside Cities to bring rail to West Hollywood and implementing a Metro Rapid Bus program utilizing a Metro grant. This program is 70 percent complete, and in tandem with pending signal pre-emption program, will support Metro Rapid buses on Santa Monica Blvd. and Fairfax Ave.

- The Westside Mobility Study takes a regional approach to addressing transportation needs. Out of the study's analysis came a prioritized list of both short- and long-term projects/programs for implementation. A number of the recommended projects are public transit projects and include the extension of rail transit through West Hollywood which would connect to the regional rail system, express bus improvements, major transportation hubs to link to Metro, regional street corridor capacity enhancement, added multimodal capacity in selected regional corridors, and local public circulators.

Community members have expressed their support for increasing transit service and options. At the General Plan Community Fair, residents were asked to prioritize a number of potential transportation programs by giving "WeHo bucks" to programs which they wanted to see in West Hollywood. Of the 18 options available (9 existing programs and 9 potential programs), the most transportation dollars were "spent" on regional rail service serving West Hollywood.

## Pedestrians

West Hollywood's compact size and higher density make it a very walkable city. When residents were asked at the February 23, 2008 General Plan Community Fair what they liked best about their neighborhood, many responded that they valued being able to walk to a number of destinations, amenities, and even work. As one resident at the February 2008 Community Fair noted: "I can walk to the store, shops...to eat and drink. Friends come in visit us...and love to walk around our part of town."

The design of the pedestrian realm (which includes the ground-floor street wall, public sidewalk/crosswalk right-of-way, and private/public open spaces) on a number of streets within West Hollywood is excellent, particularly considering the amount of auto traffic that the major streets are carrying. There has been significant public sector investment to improve streetscapes, such as Santa Monica Boulevard (to make it more pleasant to walk), and the private sector has also invested in pedestrian realm amenities.

West Hollywood is committed to removing all ADA mobility barriers in the public right-of-way and programs to address these barriers are ongoing. Areas such as east West Hollywood and Fountain Boulevard could benefit from improvements and investments in pedestrian facilities to create more pleasant places to walk. A number of City staff and residents commented specifically on the need for improvements on Fountain Boulevard, both in terms of safety for pedestrians and cyclists, and also to make it a more comfortable place to walk or cycle given the traffic speeds, narrow sidewalks, and lack of amenities.

Improvements in the pedestrian environment are also an important component to transit use, as most trips on transit begin with a walking trip. The Santa Monica Boulevard Master Plan provides specific recommendations which address the complementary relationship between walking and transit. The plan calls out two gathering places: Fairfax Bus Stop Gardens (which has been completed) and San Vicente Plaza. Bus stops located at the

intersection of Fairfax and San Monica Boulevard have the highest boardings in West Hollywood and among the highest in Los Angeles County. The plan provides a number of design recommendations which are focused on providing amenities for both transit users and pedestrians.

## Bicycles

The compact layout, relatively flat geography, and mild climate of West Hollywood are ideal for making biking a convenient and pleasant way to meet everyday transportation needs for many residents. Currently, West Hollywood has a limited number of excellent bike facilities, such as the dedicated bike lanes on Santa Monica Boulevard between Almont and Kings Roads. In addition, San Vicente, Beverly, Melrose, Fairfax, and Fountain Avenue between Fairfax and La Brea are signed bike routes. In total, the bicycle network consists of approximately 5.5 miles of bike lanes and routes.

While a number of people already bicycle in West Hollywood for recreational purposes and to get to destinations both within the city and in surrounding communities, the lack of designated bike lanes and a complete bike network are a hindrance to bicycling for many residents. At the General Plan Community Fair, a number of residents expressed the need for the creation of more bike lanes in addressing safety concerns, as well as making bicycling a more viable transportation option. As one resident stated:

*"More bike lanes are needed in West Hollywood. A lot of West Hollywood residents want to be friendly to the environment and reduce the use of cars, but riding our bikes is not safe now. I have a bike, but I can rarely use it because when I have, I have almost been run down by cars." Another resident commented on the need for "[m]ore bike lane protection; Santa Monica and Sunset...the bike lanes just end."*

The West Hollywood Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan, adopted in April 2003, strives to address the gaps in the bicycle network by proposing a number of bicycle facility improvements which would add an additional 11.3 miles of bike lanes and routes to the current network when complete. The plan proposes to convert signed bike routes on Fountain Avenue, San Vicente, and Fairfax between Holloway and Willoughby to bike lanes, and to add a bike lane to Robertson between Beverly and Melrose. The plan also touches on the importance of providing connections to adjacent cities' bicycle networks and transit nodes in order to enable regional connections to be made by bike. However, the remaining improvements would consist solely of adding signed bike routes, which may not seem to fully address the concerns expressed by the residents of West Hollywood. Figure T-8 shows West Hollywood's existing and proposed bike lanes and routes.

Figure T-8

