6. TAKING TRANSIT IN BEVERLY HILLS

This chapter describes existing public transportation conditions in Beverly Hills, how the community suggested improving transit operations and the rider experience, opportunities and challenges for expanding transit use, and recommended transit infrastructure the City could pursue. Priority projects the City intends to pursue to improve public transportation in the next six years are detailed in the Complete Streets Action Plan.

WHERE WE ARE TODAY

BUS ROUTES AND STOPS

The transit system serving Beverly Hills is primarily comprised of bus service provided by Metro local and rapid lines. Additional bus service is operated by the Antelope Valley Transit Authority (AVTA) and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT). Bus routes serving Beverly Hills are listed in **Table 6-1**.

Table 6-1: Bus Routes in the City of Beverly Hills

SERVICE AGENCY	ROUTE NAME	STREETS	SERVICE AREA	PEAK HOUR FREQUENCY (MINUTES)	
				AM	PM
Metro Local and Limited	2/302	Sunset Blvd	Westwood - Downtown Los Angeles	20-30	20-25
Metro Local	4	Sunset Blvd	Santa Monica/ West Los Angeles - Downtown Los Angeles	15-20	10-15
Metro Local	14	Canon Dr, Beverly Dr, Beverly Blvd, Burton Way & Doheny Dr	Larchmont Village - Downtown Los Angeles	10-20	5-10
Metro Local	16/316	Burton Way & Robertson Blvd	Century City - Downtown Los Angeles	5-15	5-10
Metro Local	17	Robertson Blvd	Culver City - Downtown Los Angeles	25-30	30-40
Metro Local	20	Wilshire Blvd	Santa Monica/ Westwood - Downtown Los Angeles	10-15	10-20

SERVICE AGENCY	ROUTE NAME	STREETS	SERVICE AREA	PEAK HOUR FREQUENCY (MINUTES)	
				AM	PM
Metro Local	28	Olympic Blvd	Century City - Eagle Rock	10-20	10-25
Metro Local	30/330	San Vicente Blvd	West Hollywood - Downtown Los Angeles/ East Los Angeles	25-30	30-45
Metro Local	105	La Cienega Blvd	West Hollywood - Vernon	15-25	15-20
Metro Local	220	Robertson Blvd	Culver City - Beverly Center	Limited	Limited
Metro Rapid	704	Santa Monica Blvd	Santa Monica - Union Station	15-20	10-15
Metro Rapid	705	La Cienega Blvd	West Hollywood - Vernon	10-30	15
Metro Rapid	720	Wilshire Blvd	Santa Monica - City of Commerce	8-11	3-5
Metro Rapid	728	Olympic Blvd	Century City - Union Station	10-20	10-20
Antelope Valley Transit Authority	786	Rodeo Drive & Wilshire Blvd	Century City/ West Los Angeles - Palmdale/Lancaster	Limited	Limited
LADOT Commuter Express	534	Olympic Blvd	Union Station - Westwood	Limited	Limited

Figure 6-1 presents the average weekday Metro boardings and alightings at the 72 local bus stops in the City of Beverly Hills (Source: Metro, 2018). The stops with the highest average weekday boarding are observed at:

- South Santa Monica Boulevard and Crescent Drive
- La Cienega Boulevard and Wilshire Boulevard
- North Santa Monica Boulevard and Crescent Drive

The stops with the highest average weekday alightings are observed at:

- Sunset Boulevard and Canon Drive
- Doheny Drive and Beverly Boulevard
- South Santa Monica Boulevard and Canon Drive

Figure 6-2 presents the average weekday Metro boarding and alightings at the 15 rapid bus stops in the City of Beverly Hills (Source: Metro, 2018). The stops with the highest average weekday boarding and alighting are observed at:

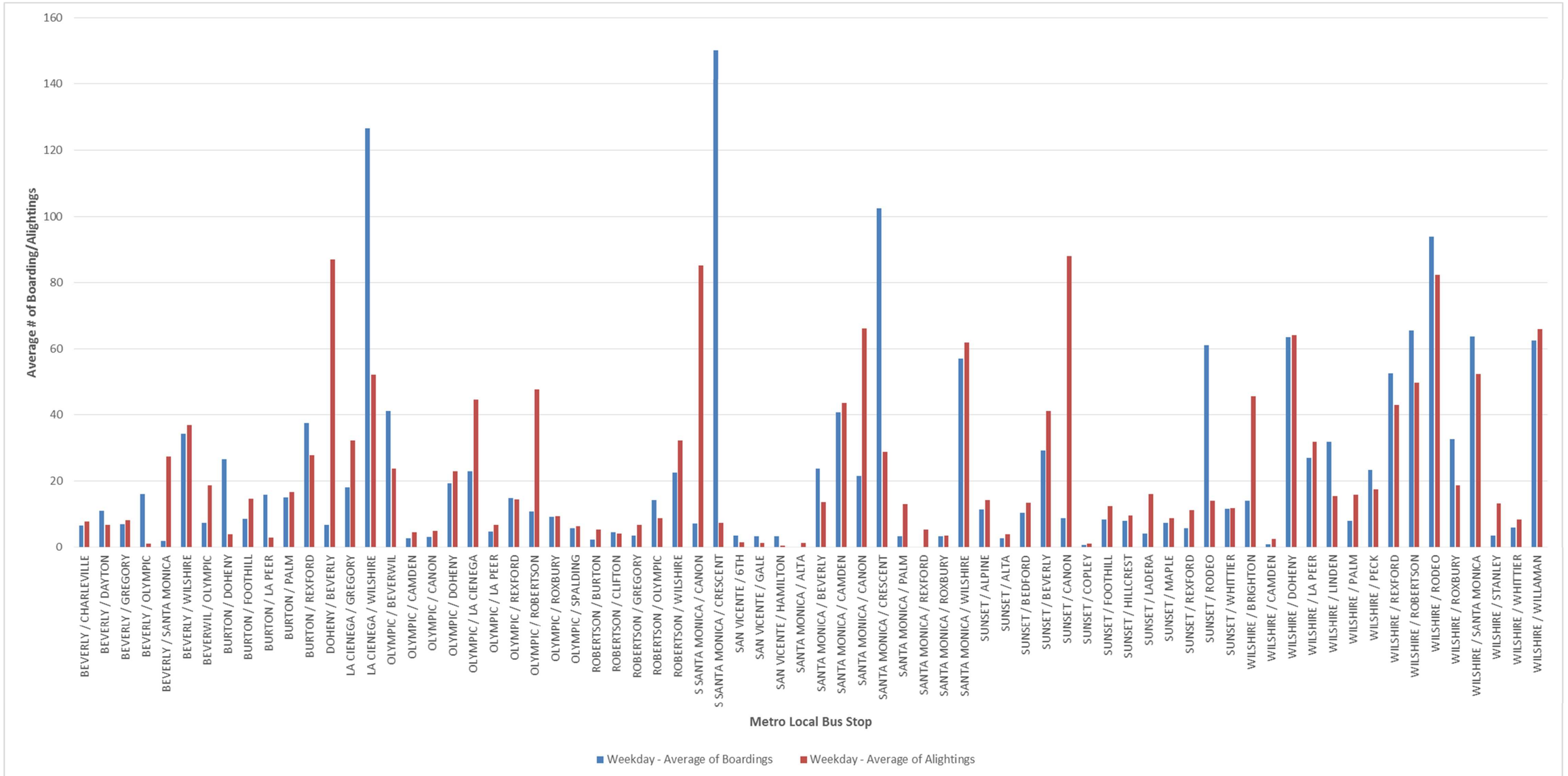
- Wilshire Boulevard and Santa Monica Boulevard
- Wilshire Boulevard and Rodeo Drive
- Wilshire Boulevard and Robertson Boulevard

The City of Beverly Hills has 119 total bus stops for all transit operations, but only one bus shelter (in addition to a shelter at a tour bus layover). Some bus stops have seating, trash receptacles, or other amenities, but many others do not.

METRO PURPLE LINE EXTENSION

Two subway stations are under construction in Beverly Hills as part of the Metro Purple Line Extension from Koreatown in Los Angeles to the VA Hospital in West Los Angeles, shown in **Figure 6-3**. The stations will be located at Wilshire Boulevard/La Cienega Boulevard and Wilshire Boulevard/Reeves Drive (referred to as the Wilshire/Rodeo station). The Metro Purple Line is currently 6.4-miles and will extend another approximately nine miles west when completed.

Figure 6-1: Average Weekday Boarding and Alighting at Metro Local Stops



Source: Metro, 2018

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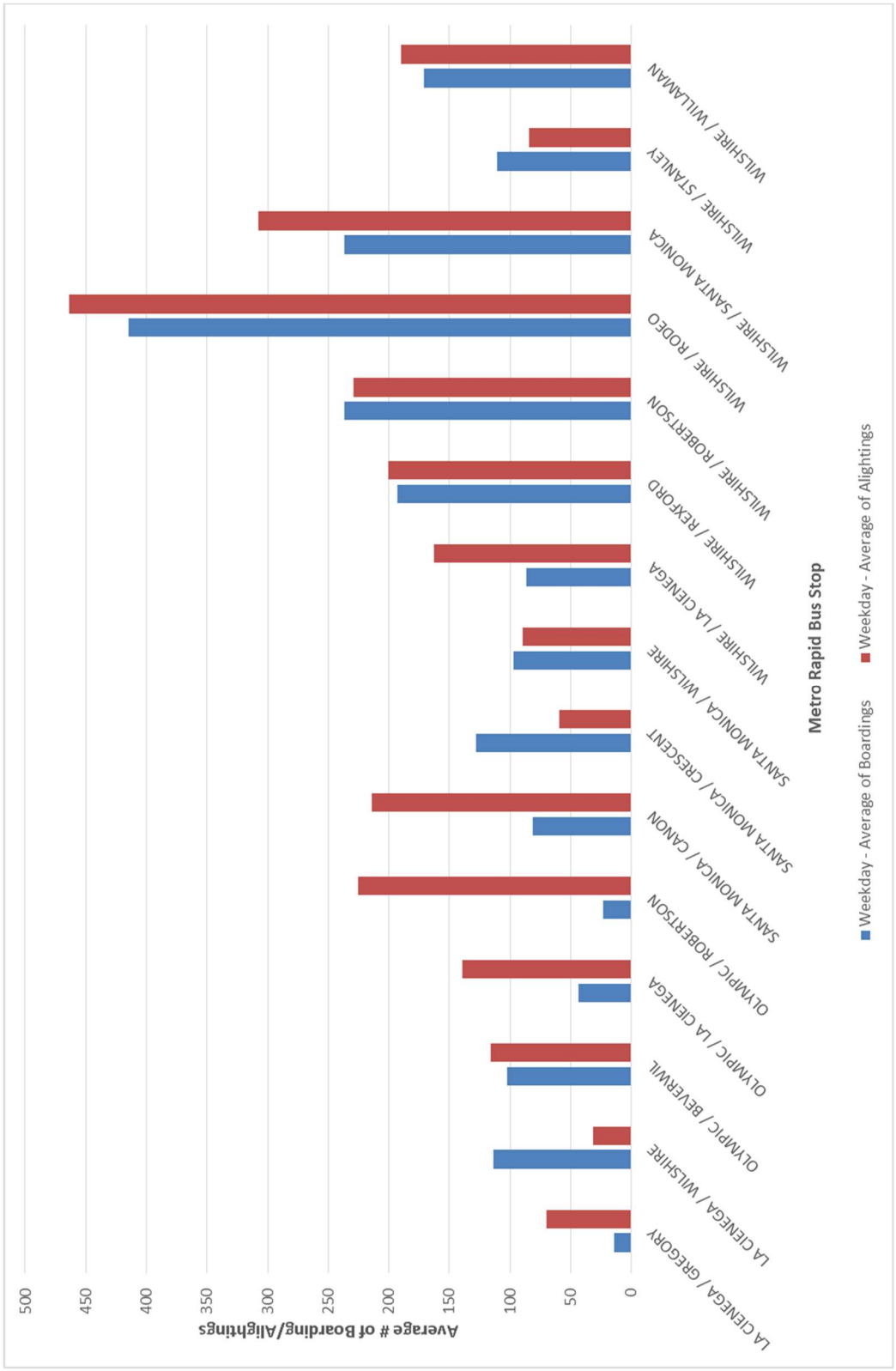
Figure 6-2: Average Weekday Boarding and Alighting at Metro Rapid Bus Stops



Source: Metro

Figure 6-3: Metro Purple Line Extension and Station Locations

In 2023, the Wilshire/La Cienega station of the Metro Purple Line Extension is anticipated to open, followed by the Wilshire/Rodeo station in 2025. While it will fall under Metro's jurisdiction to operate the subway line and manage the station plazas at street level, it will fall under the City's jurisdiction to improve the corridors leading to and from the future stations, providing high quality first/last mile connections.

In early 2019, the City and Metro began the development of a First/Last Mile Plan for the Wilshire/Rodeo station to improve biking, walking, and bus connections to the future station. That effort will be closely coordinated with recommendations made in this Complete Streets Plan.

TRANSIT PROGRAMS

The City of Beverly Hills has instituted several programs designed to promote transit use, described in **Table 6-2** below.

Table 6-2: Beverly Hills Transit Programs

PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION
Trolley	The City of Beverly Hills offers free trolley service between the Third Street tour bus location and Rodeo Drive on Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. During high traffic seasons, such as summer, service is expanded.
Dial-A-Ride	The City of Beverly Hills provides curb to curb pick-up and drop-off for Dial-A-Ride and Supermarket shuttles. The service is for seniors age 62 and older and people with disabilities.
Metro Bus Pass Senior Discount Program	Beverly Hills residents age 62 or older, and disabled residents of any age, are eligible for a 30-day discounted bus passes for $7.00.
New Employee Metro Pass Program	The City of Beverly Hills in collaboration with Metro provides seven days of unlimited transit services to new City employees.

WHAT WE HEARD

In addition to the existing conditions analysis, community feedback helped to inform the recommendations in the Complete Streets Plan. During the public outreach process, 77 percent of survey respondents describe the existing transit service in Beverly Hills as poor or fair. 30 percent of respondents said they find transit service inconvenient and/or unreliable and 42 percent say they would use transit more if service was more frequent. Community workshop participants were enthusiastic about improvements to transit stop amenities, including more benches, shaded areas, and trash bins. They also commented on the need for higher capacity buses, bus lanes, and additional north-south bus routes. More information about the public outreach process is included in **Chapter 2** and detailed public outreach summaries can be found in **Appendix E**.

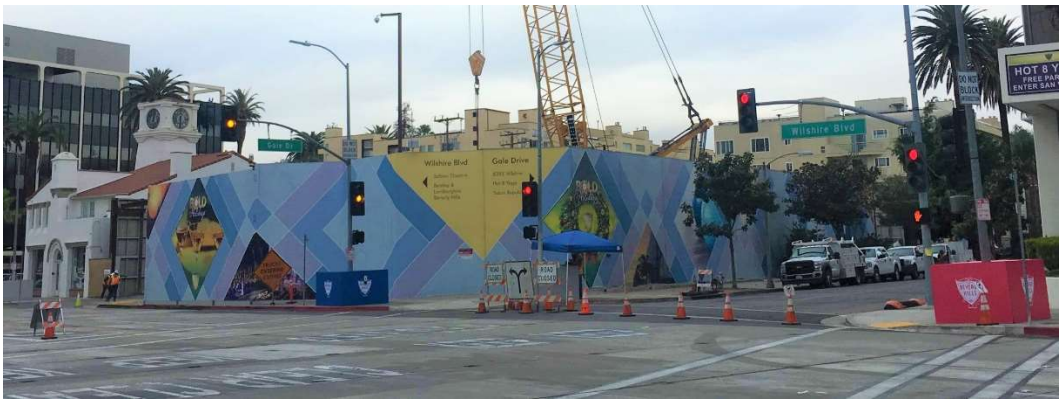
WHERE WE ARE GOING

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The construction of the Metro Purple Line could be considered the greatest recent opportunity for improving mobility in the city, as it brings a high-speed alternative to driving. Metro anticipates that riders will be able to travel from the western terminus of the line at the VA hospital to Downtown Los Angeles in approximately 20 minutes, which currently can take over an hour by bus or car.

However, the Metro Purple Line will not provide direct, point-to-point access to all origins and destinations in Beverly Hills, so the City will be tasked with improving first/last mile connections, which will be no small feat. For example, as previously mentioned, the City only has one bus shelter, which can create an uncomfortable transfer for transit riders connecting to/from the train to buses in heat or inclement weather.

In addition, providing adequate loading and unloading at the Metro Purple Line stations will be a challenge, as there is currently minimal available space on-street adjacent to the stations due to peak hour travel lanes on Wilshire and La Cienega Boulevards. At the Wilshire/La Cienega station, an opportunity for off-street loading exists at the Gale Staging Yard property, which the City purchased and will take ownership of after subway construction is complete. At the Wilshire/Rodeo station, the City is in the process of exploring potential locations for a station entrance north of Wilshire Boulevard, the "North Portal," to better connect the Triangle to the Wilshire/Rodeo station, which could provide an opportunity for loading/unloading north of Wilshire Boulevard. North Canon Drive will be closed at Wilshire Boulevard to create a cul-de-sac as a construction mitigation for at least two years; if stakeholders view the cul-de-sac as favorable in the future and would like to make it longer-term, North Canon Drive could potentially serve as a drop-off/pick-up area.



The City is somewhat limited in its ability to improve transit since it doesn't operate the existing bus systems (or future subway) in Beverly Hills. However, there are opportunities to reduce delay, improve reliability, and enhance the user experience through infrastructure changes that the City can install in partnership with the bus operators.

Emerging trends in public transit (discussed in detail in **Appendix C**) are also an opportunity. Microtransit, for example, is a small-scale, demand responsive transit system, providing more flexibility over conventional public transit. Riders call the service when they want it, are picked up at/near their locations, and are dropped off at/near their destinations. This could serve as a first/last mile connection to the future Metro Purple Line stations. Shared mobility and shared micromobility/autonomous services are another potential option for first/last mile connections and to supplement transit. These services enable users to gain short-term access to transportation modes on-demand and can take the form of car sharing, bike sharing, on-demand ride sharing (carpooling and vanpooling), scooter sharing, and on-demand ride-hailing services. If demand exists in the city to allow a permitting process for shared use mobility devices, standards/guidelines should be developed, including a requirement for the provider to share data with the City. The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) provides guidance for cities and public entities as they look to manage and regulate dockless shared mobility providers. The City should also explore a potential partnership with a shared mobility provider as a demonstration project.

Mobility as a Service (MaaS) is the integration of various forms of transportation services (public and private) into a single, digital mobility platform available on demand. MaaS platforms are key instruments to incentivize public transit ridership, reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and advance shared mobility services. As technology progresses, this is something the City should be aware of.

The City should also monitor new forms of public transit that are emerging as they could help reduce dependence on automobiles and provide other transportation options. For example, Hyperloop has attracted a lot of attention recently as a fifth mode of transportation. Virgin Hyperloop One is working on a demonstration project in Nevada and completed a feasibility study for a project in Missouri. Also, vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) vehicles, popularly called flying cars or passenger drones, are currently being explored. The vehicles are ultimately intended to operate autonomously, though they would be piloted in initial stages, under various concepts proposed by companies such as Boeing, Airbus, Google, and Uber.

RECOMMENDED TRANSIT UPGRADES

Improving bus stops will dramatically improve the transit rider experience in Beverly Hills and is an important first step in implementing first/last mile connections to the future Metro Purple Line stations. **Figure 6-4** shows potential locations for standard (low ridership stop) and enhanced (high ridership stop) bus stop amenities in the city along the transit enhanced network, which are streets with existing bus routes. It is important to note that routes may change with the opening of the Metro Purple Line extension, and some are recommended to change as a result of Metro's Next Gen Bus Study, so the City should be prepared to add/revise this map as needed during implementation.

Standard bus stop amenities include minimum infrastructure for low and high ridership bus stops. At minimum, all bus stops within Beverly Hills should have substantial upgrades to street furniture, including shelter, seating, lighting, trash/recycling bins, poles/signs with route information and schedules, a system map (or link to one), a paved boarding area, and ADA-compliant pedestrian connections. High ridership stops, most of which are Metro Rapid bus stops, should also have standard amenities like street furniture, as well as real-time travel information to display to passengers when the next bus is coming, bicycle parking, automated displays, and potentially bike share/micromobility connections, bus bulbs/floating bus islands, and raised platforms for level boarding. The City should develop design guidelines for bus stops to ensure consistent furniture along corridors. Providing this infrastructure can make the trip more comfortable for existing riders and make transit more attractive to potential users. **Appendix D** includes additional details on transit stop/station design, placement, and first/last mile connections.

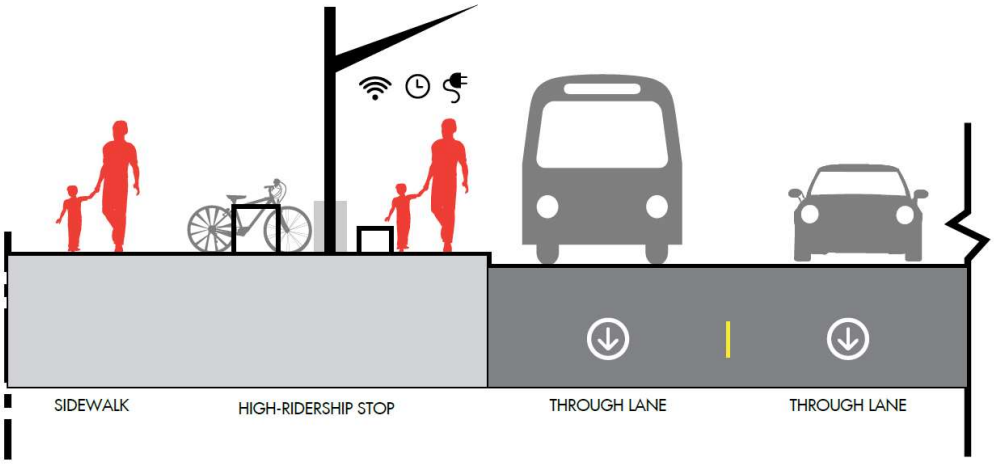
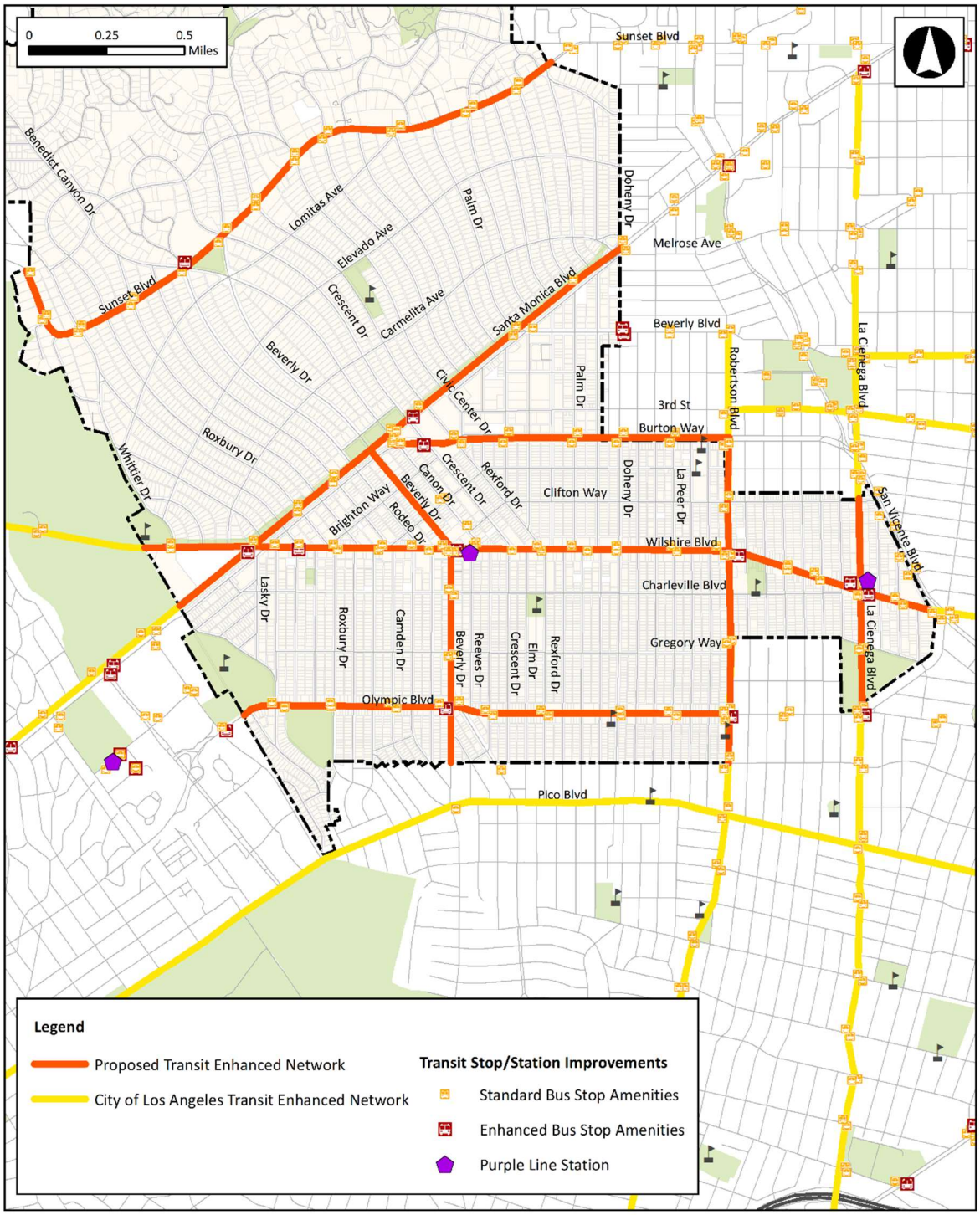


Figure 6-4: Recommended Transit Improvements



As mentioned above, the City purchased the Gale Staging Yard property from Metro, which is an opportunity to provide off-street first/last mile access to the Wilshire/La Cienega station. The City plans to explore options for a "mobility hub" at this site, which could include geofenced loading/unloading for Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), shuttle connections, security and bathrooms, long-term bicycle parking and cyclist amenities, micromobility or shared mobility connections, and other amenities like small shops or cafes. The existing zoning allows for up to a three story building on the property, so the City intends to analyze what types of uses the community would like to have on this site and determine how they could be prioritized or accommodated.

For both the north and south portals to the Wilshire/Rodeo station, the City will need to explore high quality options for loading and unloading of passengers to mitigate traffic impacts to neighborhood streets and the Business Triangle. The City is currently working with Metro on the development of their First/Last Mile Plan for the Wilshire/Rodeo station, which will build upon conceptual recommendations in the Complete Streets Plan and recommend more detailed design changes around the station. Once the location of the North Portal is determined, loading options can be further refined, as well as potential options for a mobility hub to increase multi-modal station access.

Since the future Metro Purple Line Extension and existing bus systems do not provide direct access to all origins and destinations in Beverly Hills, the City should explore implementing a microtransit service (discussed in detail in **Appendix B**) to provide point-to-point service to the subway stations as a first/last mile improvement and to increase transit access. This could take the form of an autonomous shuttle once technology has progressed toward widespread use. The shared use of autonomous vehicles could also help supplement transit service in the City and should be explored in the future, as well. The City should pursue an autonomous vehicle demonstration project in the meantime to begin exploring this concept and to be prepared for when the technology can be brought to Beverly Hills.

There are many infrastructure options the City can explore to improve bus service in Beverly Hills (discussed in detail in **Appendix B**). For example, bus lanes provide a dedicated travel lane for transit vehicles, which can improve reliability and increase travel speeds since the buses do not share lanes with motor vehicle traffic. Bus lanes have been found to reduce congestion because as bus speeds increase, more people switch to transit and there are fewer vehicles on the road. The City could consider a bus lane pilot program on Wilshire Boulevard after Metro Purple Line Section 2 design-build construction activities are completed. This could be a shared bus/bike lane to provide direct bicycle access to the subway stations. Other infrastructure items to consider implementation of include bus bulbs or floating bus islands (shown on the next page as a concept for Burton Way) to minimize the need for buses to pull in and out of traffic, and transit signal priority to reduce bus delay at intersections.

Providing quality infrastructure is only one piece of improved transit. Equally important is providing programs and incentives to encourage people to choose to take public transportation. For example, the City could participate in programs like Rideshare/Shared Mobility Week, which is hosted by Metro the first week of October and is meant to motivate commuters to try traveling by a mode that is not driving alone. Through this program, Metro organizes competitions with prizes to people/teams that log the most miles of commuting by walking, biking, transit, carpooling, vanpooling, or rideshare. Other incentives the City can use to encourage taking transit include providing a fleet of vehicles for site visits if staff commute without their private vehicles, parking cash-outs, subsidized transit passes, and City-managed carpool and rideshare matching. Additional recommendations for reducing automobile trips are discussed in the following chapter.

To supplement infrastructure, transit programs can make riding easier for those who are dependent on taking transit. For example, a Safe Routes for Seniors program, like Metro's On the Move Riders Club, can host events that educate older adults how to take transit.