

# Technical Memo

Date: April 30, 2026

To: Tina Andersen, T&B Planning, Inc.

From: Sarah Brandenberg, Dongyang Lin, and Emily Turner, Fehr & Peers

**Subject: UCLA Research Park Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Screening Assessment**

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This technical memorandum documents a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) screening assessment conducted by Fehr & Peers for the proposed UCLA Research Park Project (the “Project”) located at the site of the Westside Pavilion shopping center in the City of Los Angeles. The Governor’s Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI)<sup>1</sup> *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)* (December 2018) was used as a guide for a qualitative VMT assessment for the proposed Project. The Project description, estimated trip generation, and results of the VMT assessment are described in further detail below.

## Project Description

The Project proposes the development and operation of a state-of-the-art, multidisciplinary research and innovation hub, referred to as UCLA Research Park located on the site occupied by the Westside Pavilion shopping center, which operated for over 35 years. UCLA Research Park will bring scholars, research institutions, industry partners, government agencies, and startup companies together to collaboratively conduct scientific research and advance scientific knowledge. Located on an approximately 9.3-acre site, the Project site encompasses Research Park East located at 10800 W. Pico Boulevard and Research Park West located at 10850 W. Pico Boulevard in the City of Los Angeles (City), approximately two miles south of the UCLA main campus in Westwood. Research Park East and West are connected by an enclosed pedestrian bridge across Westwood Boulevard. The Project site was acquired by UCLA in late 2023 and at that time the eastern portion of the property was midway through conversion of the shopping center into high-tech office space, along with related common areas, food service, and other amenities.

UCLA proposes to continue the adaptive reuse of the Project site to create UCLA Research Park. This adaptive reuse project involves interior improvements to approximately 744,400 existing GSF and limited new construction to provide over 800,000 GSF of scientific program space plus approximately 29,000 SF of open space and outdoor amenity areas and approximately 1,100 parking

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<sup>1</sup> Effective July 1, 2024, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research was renamed the Governor’s Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation.

spaces on-site, for a total of up to approximately 1.35 million GSF of research park uses.<sup>2</sup> The proposed uses will include wet and dry laboratories, office space, meeting and assembly spaces including instructional spaces, ancillary food service, common and circulation areas, existing subterranean parking, and outdoor open space. The program space in UCLA Research Park would include open, collaborative areas for research and creative activities; leased startup company incubator spaces; makerspace and shared equipment rooms; shared office space for bench researchers; private office space for project leaders; conference rooms; spaces leased to outside entities such as established companies, government laboratories, and outside institutions; and auditoriums and gathering spaces to support seminars, performances, and small conferences. Anchor tenants will include the California Institute for Immunology and Immunotherapy (CIII) and the UCLA Quantum Innovation Hub (QIH), with space allocated to the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine (DGSOM) and future non-UCLA partners. A summary of the proposed Project uses is provided in **Table 1**. Construction of UCLA Research Park will occur in phases beginning in 2026, with full buildout anticipated by 2035.

**Table 1. Project Land Use Summary**

Proposed Uses	Research Park East Blocks 1, 2A, 2B and 3 (GSF)	Research Park West Block 4 (GSF)	Total Floor Area (GSF)
Program Floor Area			
Wet and Dry Laboratories	233,500	37,700	271,200
Office	189,300	25,100	214,400
Meeting and Assembly Space	37,000	15,400	52,400
Common and Circulation Areas	171,100	87,600	258,700
Food Service	4,300	10,400	14,700
<b>Total Program Area</b>	<b>635,200</b>	<b>176,200</b>	<b>811,400</b>
Non-Program Area			
Central Loading Dock	18,900	0	18,900
Mechanical Areas	20,100	10,000	30,100
Subterranean Parking (Area)	54,700	434,500	489,200
Subterranean Parking (Spaces)	84 spaces	1,029 spaces	1,113 spaces
<b>Total Non-Program Area</b>	<b>93,700</b>	<b>444,500</b>	<b>538,200</b>
Other Uses			
Open Space	25,700	3,300	29,000
Additional Parking—Per Use Agreement at Adjacent Structure			400 spaces

Source: Flad Architects, 2026.

<sup>2</sup> Total square footage of 1.35 million GSF includes approximately 489,200 GSF of existing multi-level subterranean parking. GSF = Gross Square Feet.

# Trip Generation

The number of vehicle trips generated by the Project was estimated based on the current edition (12<sup>th</sup> Edition) of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual. Given the proposed land use characteristics, the trip generation rates for Office Park were applied to the Office, Meeting and Assembly, Food Service, and proportionate associated Common and Circulation components, while rates for Research and Development Center were applied to the Wet and Dry Lab and proportionate associated Common and Circulation components of the proposed Project. Since the Project is located within approximately one-half mile of two existing Metro E Line stations, Westwood/Rancho Park and Expo/Sepulveda, trip reductions for walk, bike, and transit modes were applied using the Mixed-Use Development (MXD) methodology to reflect the share of trips made by non-auto travel.

Fehr & Peers developed the MXD methodology in partnership with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to improve accuracy in estimating project trip internalization and net external trip generation for mixed land use projects. The MXD methodology adjusts standard ITE trip rates to reflect the internalization and site-specific attributes of mixed-use developments, and estimates the percent of walking, biking, and transit trips generated by the site. The MXD model was developed not only to better capture travel behavior for projects with a mix of uses, but also to adequately account for the effects of compact development, site design, walkability, transit, and regional accessibility. While the Project is not a traditional mixed-use development combining commercial and residential uses, the MXD model is appropriate to estimate the Project's external trip reductions for non-automobile modes given the variety of uses proposed. The model incorporates several variables to determine the number and share of external trips by alternative modes, including vehicle ownership rates, the percentage of regional employment accessible within a 30-minute transit trip, and intersection density. These variables are tailored to the site and derived from sources such as the American Community Survey,<sup>3</sup> the EPA Smart Location Database,<sup>4</sup> and regional travel demand models.

The MXD model has been approved for use by the EPA.<sup>5</sup> It has also been peer-reviewed in the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Journal of Urban Planning and Development, peer-reviewed in a 2012 Transportation Research Board (TRB) paper evaluating various smart growth trip generation methodologies, recommended by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) for use on mixed-use smart growth developments, and promoted in an American Planning Association (APA) Planning Advisory Service (PAS), which recommended it for evaluating traffic

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<sup>3</sup> United States Census, American Community Survey. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs.html>

<sup>4</sup> United States Environmental Protection Agency, Smart Location Database. <https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/smart-location-mapping#SLD>

<sup>5</sup> Trip Generation Tool for Mixed-Use Developments (2012). [www.epa.gov/dced/mxd\\_tripgeneration.html](http://www.epa.gov/dced/mxd_tripgeneration.html)

generation of mixed-use and other forms of smart growth, including in-fill and transit-oriented development.<sup>6, 7, 8, 9, 10</sup>

**Table 2** summarizes the trips estimated to be generated by the Project after accounting for vehicle trip reductions. As shown, the total number of vehicle trips generated by the Project site would be reduced by 5.9% on a daily basis, including 7.0% in the AM peak hour and 5.4% in the PM peak hour, due to trips made by walking, biking, and transit. Taking these reductions into account, the Project is forecast to generate a total of 8,317 daily vehicle trips. To account for travel demand that would no longer occur upon conversion of the existing buildings to the proposed research park uses, the estimated 18,976 daily trips generated by the shopping center at the Project site were applied as a trip credit. Therefore, in comparison to the estimated trips generated by the shopping center during its approximately 35-year operational history on the Project site, the proposed Project is anticipated to reduce the total number of daily vehicle trips by 10,659, with 174 more AM peak hour trips and 1,077 fewer PM peak hour trips.

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<sup>6</sup> Ewing, R. et al. (2010) Traffic Generated by Mixed-Use Developments—Six-Region Study Using Consistent Built Environmental Measures. *Journal of Urban Planning and Development*, 137(3), 248–261.

<sup>7</sup> Shafizadeh, K. et al. (2012) Evaluation of the Operation and Accuracy of Available Smart Growth Trip Generation Methodologies for Use in California. *Presented at 91st Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board, Washington, D.C.*

<sup>8</sup> SANDAG Smart Growth Trip Generation and Parking Study.  
<http://www.sandag.org/index.asp?projectid=378&fuseaction=projects.detail>

<sup>9</sup> Walters, J. et al. (2013) Getting Trip Generation Right – Eliminating the Bias Against Mixed Use Development. *American Planning Association*.

Gard, J. et al. (2020) Still Getting Trip Generation Right: Revalidating MXD+. *American Planning Association*.

<sup>10</sup> The MXD model has also been used successfully in multiple certified EIRs in California.

**TABLE 2**  
**UCLA RESEARCH PARK (10800 & 10850 W. PICO BOULEVARD)**  
**PROJECT TRIP GENERATION ESTIMATES**

Land Use	ITE Land Use Code	Size														
			Daily	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour			Daily Trips	AM Peak Hour Trips			PM Peak Hour Trips		
			ITE Trip Rate [a]	ITE Trip Rate [a]	In%	Out%	ITE Trip Rate [a]	In%	Out%		Total	In	Out	Total	In	Out
PROPOSED PROJECT																
Office Park [c] <i>Less: Walk/Bike/Transit Adjustment [b]</i>	750	413.3 KSF	11.44 5.9%	1.14 7.0% 7.0%	89% 7.0%	11% 7.0%	0.79 5.4%	15% 5.4%	85% 5.4%	4,729 (279)	470 (33)	418 (29)	52 (4)	327 (18)	49 (3)	278 (15)
Research and Development Center [d] <i>Less: Walk/Bike/Transit Adjustment [b]</i>	760	398.1 KSF	10.32 5.9%	0.48 7.0% 7.0%	78% 7.0%	22% 7.0%	0.45 5.4%	25% 5.4%	75% 5.4%	4,109 (242)	191 (13)	149 (10)	42 (3)	179 (9)	45 (2)	134 (7)
TOTAL PROJECT EXTERNAL VEHICLE TRIPS										8,317	615	528	87	479	89	390
EXISTING USE ADJUSTMENT																
Shopping Center (> 150k) [e] <i>Less: Walk/Bike/Transit Adjustment [b]</i>	820	552.1 GLSF [f]	36.39 5.5%	0.85 6.1% 6.1%	62% 6.1%	38% 6.1%	2.95 4.6%	49% 4.6%	51% 4.6%	20,091 (1115)	470 (29)	291 (18)	179 (11)	1,631 (75)	799 (37)	832 (38)
TOTAL EXISTING VEHICLE TRIPS										18,976	441	273	168	1,556	762	794
NET INCREMENTAL EXTERNAL TRIPS										(10,659)	174	255	(81)	(1,077)	(673)	(404)

- Notes**
- [a] Source: Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), Trip Generation, 12th Edition, 2025. The General Urban/Suburban setting was chosen to reflect the surrounding area context. Fitted Curve Equation or Average Rate was applied based on ITE Trip Generation Handbook 3rd Edition (Figure 4.2 Process for Selecting Average Rate or Equation in Trip Generation Manual Data).
- [b] The Project site is located within 1/2 mile of the existing Metro E-Line Westwood/Rancho Park Station and Expo/Sepulveda Station. Trip reductions for walk, bike, and transit modes were applied using the Mixed-Use Development (MXD) methodology to reflect the share of trips made by non-auto travel for the proposed land uses and for the existing use credit.
- [c] Office Park includes the proposed Office, Meeting/Assembly, Food Service and proportionate associated Circulation gross square footage. Based on ITE Land Use description, an office park (Code 750) is typically a subdivision or planned unit development that contains general office buildings and support services, such as banks, restaurants, and service stations, arranged in a park- or campus-like atmosphere. ITE Trip Generation 12th Edition does not have a Daily Trip Rate for Office Park, therefore, the 11th Edition Daily Rate was applied.
- [d] Research and Development Center includes the proposed Wet & Dry Labs and proportionate associated Circulation gross square footage. ITE description for a Research and Development Center is a facility or group of facilities devoted almost exclusively to research and development activities. The types of businesses included in this land use category vary significantly. ITE Trip Generation 12th Edition Daily Trip Rate only has one study for this land use with a lower rate than the 11th Edition; therefore, the 11th Daily Rate was applied.
- [e] Based on ITE Land Use description, a shopping center (Code 820) is an integrated group of commercial establishments planned, developed, owned, and managed as a unit. Each study site in this land use has at least 150,000 square feet of gross leasable area (GLA). The vehicle trips generated at a shopping center are based upon the total GLA of the center. In the case of a smaller center without an enclosed mall or peripheral buildings, the GLA is the same as the gross floor area of the building.
- [f] Gross leasable square footage (GLSF) is used based on the ITE Trip Generation rates for large shopping centers as explained in [e].

# VMT Assessment

The following sections describe relevant considerations for conducting a VMT assessment, including an initial screening of the Project to determine whether a determination of less-than-significant VMT impact can be readily made, or if a more extensive evaluation of VMT-related transportation impacts is necessary to determine the potential for significant impacts.

## Regulatory Context

On September 27, 2013, Governor Jerry Brown signed SB 743 into law, which initiated a process to change transportation impact analyses completed in support of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation. SB 743 eliminates the vehicular level of service (LOS) as a basis for determining significant transportation impacts under CEQA and provides a new performance metric, VMT. As a result, State law has shifted from measuring a project's impact to drivers (LOS) to measuring the impact of driving (VMT) as it relates to achieving State goals of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, encouraging infill development, and improving public health by promoting active transportation. The requirements of SB 743 are further implemented by the regulations set forth in Section 15064.3 of the CEQA Guidelines. To further help lead agencies with SB 743 implementation, LCI produced a *Technical Advisory* that provides recommendations on VMT impact thresholds and considerations on the level of VMT analysis that is required based on a project's characteristics. The LCI Technical Advisory has been widely applied to projects for the University of California and throughout Los Angeles County and is the best available resource for determining the potential VMT impacts of a project per Section 15064.3 of the CEQA Guidelines.

## VMT Impact Analysis

The first step of a VMT assessment is to determine what type of analysis is needed. LCI's *Technical Advisory* suggests three screening criteria that agencies can use to identify if a project is expected to cause a less-than-significant impact without conducting a detailed study: project size, project accessibility to transit, and project location within a low VMT area. The project size criterion identifies a small project threshold of 110 daily vehicle trips, which is not applicable to the proposed Project because it is anticipated to generate approximately 8,317 daily vehicle trips (conservatively not taking into consideration the trips associated with the shopping center uses that have historically operated within the existing buildings). The latter two screening criteria are relevant to assessing whether a detailed VMT analysis is required for the Project. These applicable screening criteria are detailed below and applied for each component of the Project to determine if the Project has the potential to result in a VMT impact.

### Transit Priority Area (TPA) Screening

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(1) provides that projects within one-half mile of either an existing major transit stop or a stop along an existing high quality transit corridor should generally be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact. As further articulated in LCI's *Technical Advisory*, projects located in proximity to a major transit stop or along a high-quality transit corridor may be screened out from conducting a VMT analysis due to their location within a transit priority area (TPA) because they are presumed to have a less than significant impact absent

substantial evidence to the contrary. The California Public Resources Code defines these terms as follows:

- Major transit stop (CA Public Resource Code, §21064.3)
  - An existing rail or bus rapid transit station.
  - A ferry terminal served by either a bus or rail transit service.
  - The intersection of two or more major bus routes with a frequency of service interval of 20 minutes or less during the morning and afternoon peak commute periods. (*This definition was amended from 15 minutes to 20 minutes as of January 2025.*)
- High-quality transit corridor (CA Public Resource Code, §21155)
  - A corridor with fixed route bus service with service intervals no longer than 15 minutes during peak commute hours.
- Transit priority area (CA Public Resources Code §21099)
  - An area within one-half mile of a high-quality transit corridor or major transit stop that is existing or planned, if the planned stop is scheduled to be completed within the planning horizon included in a Transportation Improvement Program or applicable regional transportation plan.

As noted above, a project should generally be presumed to have a less-than-significant impact near transit stations if it satisfies CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(1) of being located within one-half mile of a major transit stop or an existing stop along a high-quality transit corridor. However, LCI's *Technical Advisory* states that this presumption does not apply to certain types of projects if the project does not meet additional considerations recommended by the LCI *Technical Advisory* related to floor area ratio (FAR), parking, consistency with the applicable Sustainable Communities Strategy, and replacement of affordable housing. Because the proposed Project would function from a VMT perspective in a manner similar to the types of projects identified in the LCI's *Technical Advisory*, this analysis conservatively applies the same screening criteria to ensure that the CEQA Guidelines' presumption of a less-than-significant impact may appropriately be applied to the Project.

Multiple transit agencies provide transit service in the Project vicinity, as shown in **Figure 1**. The Project site is located approximately 0.25 mile from the Westwood/Rancho Park Metro Station and approximately 0.5 mile from the Expo/Sepulveda Metro Station, both within the one-half mile threshold. The stations are served by Metro's E Line, which provides light rail service between East Los Angeles and Santa Monica, and are considered major transit stops per CA Public Resource Code, §21064.3. The City of Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus is the primary bus transit provider with the largest number of bus routes and stops in close proximity to the Project site. Los Angeles (LA) Metro, Culver CityBus, and the LA Department of Transportation (LADOT) also provide transit service within the Project vicinity. Thus, the Project site is located within a TPA.

The additional project-specific and location-specific characteristics that the LCI *Technical Advisory* recommends for consideration for transit proximity screening are documented in **Table 3**.

**Table 3. Additional Considerations for Transit Proximity Screening**

LCI Considerations	Project Site Characteristics	LCI Guidance Met?
Has a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) above 0.75	The Project has a FAR of 2.0. <sup>1</sup>	Yes
Does not provide more parking than required by jurisdiction	Although UCLA does not have established parking requirements, the Project would provide less parking than specified by standard ITE parking rates for the proposed uses. The Project would provide 1,129 parking spaces compared to 2,015 spaces specified by standard ITE parking rates. <sup>2</sup>	Yes
Is consistent with applicable Sustainable Communities Strategy	Although as a State constitutional entity the UC is not subject to the regional planning process, the Project site is located within a Priority Development Area (PDA) (i.e., an area targeted for future growth) in Connect SoCal 2024, SCAG's 2024–2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS).	Yes
Does not replace affordable housing units with smaller number of moderate- or high-income units	The Project would not replace affordable housing units, as none exist on-site.	Yes

Note:

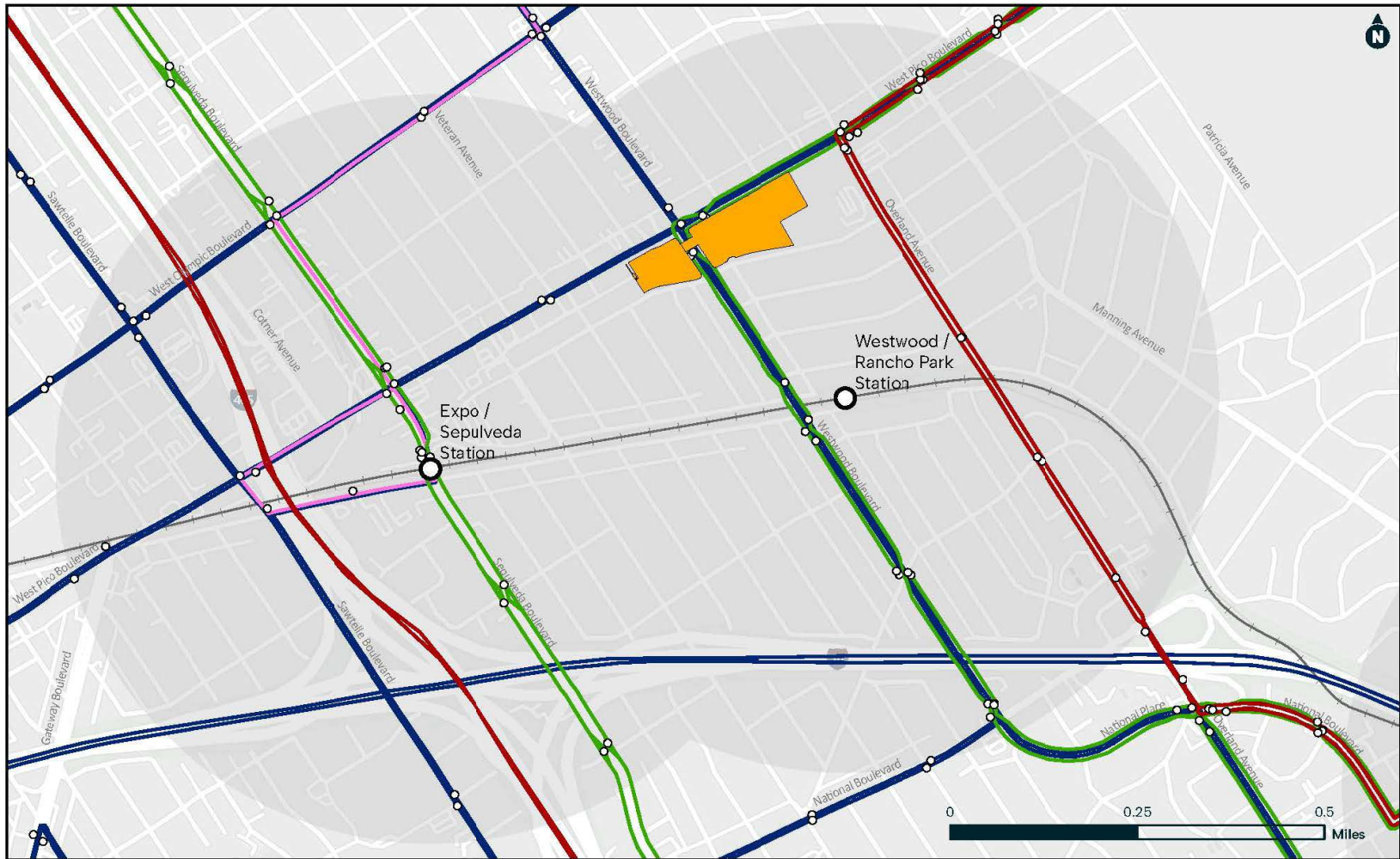
1. FAR calculated based on 9.3-acre site and 811,400 gross square feet of program uses (i.e., excluding parking, loading dock, and rooftop mechanical areas).
2. The 2,015 parking spaces were estimated using applicable parking generation rates for Office Park and Research and Development land uses from the *ITE Parking Generation Manual*, 6th Edition.

As summarized above, the characteristics of the Project site satisfy the general presumption of a less than significant transportation impact set forth in the CEQA Guidelines and further meets the guidance provided by LCI for a project to be screened out from further VMT analysis due to location within a TPA and project-specific characteristics. Therefore, the Project is presumed to have a less-than-significant VMT impact and is screened out from further VMT analysis.

## Low VMT Area Screening

LCI's *Technical Advisory* states that projects located within a low VMT-generating area may be presumed to have a less-than-significant impact absent substantial evidence to the contrary. A low VMT-generating area generally has higher density, a mix of land uses, and provides opportunities for people to walk to nearby uses instead of driving. Low VMT areas are defined as areas that currently generate VMT below specified VMT thresholds.





#### Bus Routes

- Metro Bus
- Culver CityBus
- Santa Monica Big Blue Bus
- LADOT Commuter Express

- Bus Stop
- ⊙ Metro Rail Station
- Metro E Line
- Project Site
- Half-Mile Station Radius

FIGURE 1

## Transit Service in Project Vicinity

Based on the VMT impact threshold recommended by LCI, low VMT is defined as an area that generates VMT on a per capita or per employee basis that is 15% or more below the baseline VMT.

To determine if the Project site is located within a low VMT area, VMT data from the 2024 Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Travel Demand Forecasting Model was obtained for the Project area and for the SCAG region. Given the Project's non-residential land uses, Home-Based Work VMT per Employee is the appropriate VMT metric and was obtained from the SCAG model. For non-residential land uses, vehicle trips between home and work are accounted for and then divided by the number of employees within the geographic area to produce Home-Based Work VMT per Employee.

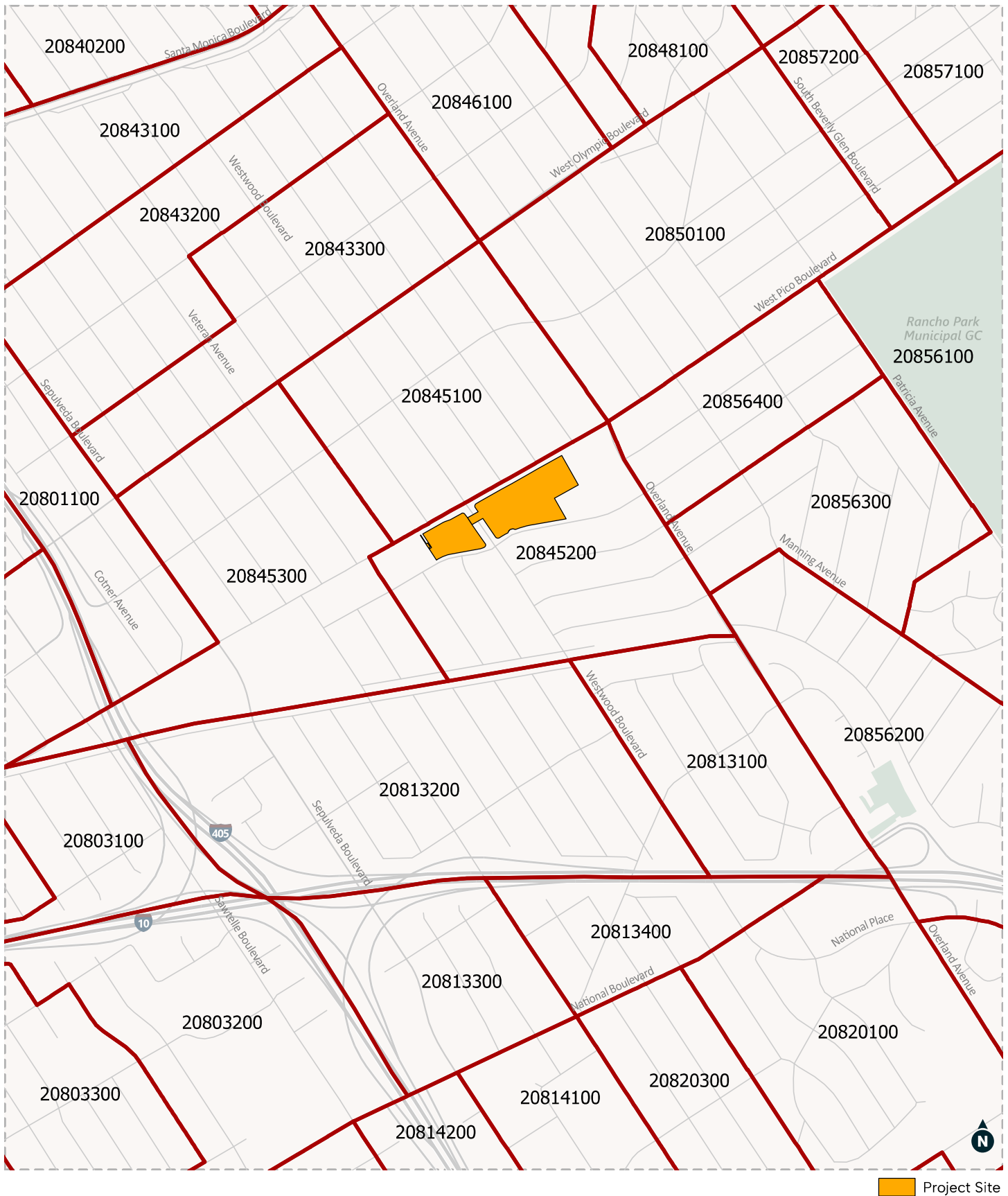
In the SCAG region, a low VMT area for non-residential uses generates no more than 10.77 daily Home-Based Work VMT per Employee (15% below the regional baseline of 12.67 daily Home-Based Work VMT per Employee). For non-residential uses in the SCAG traffic analysis zone (TAZ) that represents the Project site, the daily Home-Based Work VMT per Employee is 7.23, which is 43% below the regional baseline (see **Attachment A** for the SCAG model TAZ boundary). Therefore, the Project site qualifies as a low VMT area, meaning the Project is presumed to have a less-than-significant VMT impact and can be screened out from further VMT analysis for this additional and independently sufficient reason.

## Conclusions

The proposed UCLA Research Park Project at 10800 W. Pico Boulevard and 10850 W. Pico Boulevard would adaptively reuse the site of the Westside Pavilion shopping center to create a multidisciplinary research and innovation hub. This VMT assessment focuses on the Project's eligibility for screening from further VMT analysis based on its location within a TPA and low VMT area in accordance with the CEQA Guidelines. As detailed above, the Project site is located within one-half mile of two major transit stops, Westwood/Rancho Park Metro Station and Expo/Sepulveda Metro Station, as well as numerous bus stops and is, therefore, considered a TPA. Additionally, the Project area's daily Home-Based Work VMT per Employee is 43% below the SCAG regional baseline, qualifying it as a low VMT area.

Based on the CEQA Guidelines and as further informed by the LCI *Technical Advisory*, the proposed Project meets the VMT screening criteria for TPAs and low VMT areas. Therefore, the Project is presumed to have a less-than-significant VMT impact based on the foregoing analysis of project- and location-specific information, and no further quantitative analysis of VMT is required.

# **Attachment A – SCAG Model Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) in Project Area**



ATTACHMENT A

## SCAG Model Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) in Project Area