

MOBILITY & STREETSCAPE

MIDTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN

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4.0 Mobility and Streetscape

The mobility and streetscape plan for Midtown is guided by the City's General Plan Mobility Element. Creating an efficient, balanced, multi-modal mobility network is a priority for both plans. Although Long Beach Boulevard is already a multi-modal corridor, this Plan puts an emphasis on integrating autos, public transit, bicycles, and pedestrians into a complete street. Synchronizing traffic signals, reconfiguring streets and freeway ramps, and applying a context-sensitive approach to balance the mobility system along the boulevard are just a few of the strategies that will help to create an enjoyable area for all users of the corridor.

The City put a new focus on mobility starting with the 2013 update to the General Plan Mobility Element. The Element presents future plans for improving the way people, goods, and resources move within and across the City. New features of the Plan include improving the quality of life for residents and protecting the natural environment—for today and into the future.

One component of improving quality of life is to increase active transportation. Modes of active transportation include walking, cycling, and skating. Promoting these types of alternative transportation modes can help to alleviate roadway congestion, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and improve air quality, while helping residents to improve their own health and wellness. The majority of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements in Midtown capitalize on active living transportation. These infrastructure upgrades are designed to change the physical environment and improve the way people interact with and move along the corridor.

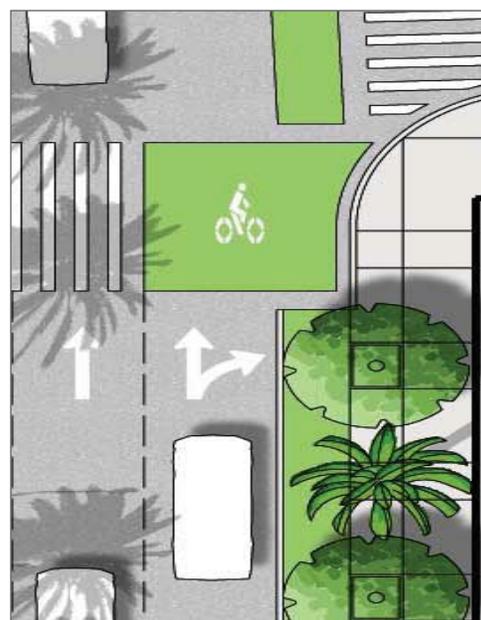
4.1 COMPLETE STREETS

A complete streets roadway network provides safe and convenient access for all users—motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders. Complete streets are accessible to all ages and abilities. They are designed and operated to make it easier to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. Ultimately, they improve safety for all users. The complete streets network for Midtown consists of four types of facilities—pedestrian, bicycle, vehicular, and public transit.

Each design for a complete street is unique. The updated street designs for the Midtown Specific Plan area combine the existing amenities along the corridor with new features such as additional bike lanes, wider sidewalks, landscaping buffers, and improved intersection crossings. This corridor benefits from access to the Metro Blue Line and a future connection to the Green Line. Special care has been taken to improve access to the Metro stops for multiple modes of transportation.

Mobility is the movement of goods and people through an area. For Midtown, mobility starts with feet first. The network of sidewalks, bike paths, streets, and transit lanes has been designed to make it safe for all modes of transportation. In a transit-oriented area, connections to transit nodes are particularly important.

The mobility plan in this chapter provides redesigned street sections and pedestrian and bicycle enhancements to improve multi-modal transportation for the corridor.



Bike boxes are a roadway treatment applied to improve bike safety at intersections. They give cyclists priority at an intersection by bringing awareness and visibility of bikes on the road to other users of the street.

A **context-sensitive** street classification system categorizes streets into a hierarchy organized by both function and community context, taking into account all road users and the character of adjacent properties and buildings.

4.2 STREET CLASSIFICATIONS

Streets within the Midtown Specific Plan are divided into six classifications: Regional Corridor, Boulevard, Major Avenue, Minor Avenue, Neighborhood Connector, and Local Street. These classifications are consistent with the General Plan Mobility Element and reflect the roadway character from a context-sensitive approach. Table 4-1 provides a description of each classification, and Table 4-2 identifies the classifications for each of the major streets within the Specific Plan area. Figure 4-1 maps the street classifications in and around the Midtown Specific Plan.

TABLE 4-1 GENERAL PLAN STREET CLASSIFICATIONS

Regional Corridor	Designed for intraregional and intercommunity mobility, these corridors emphasize traffic movement and include signalized pedestrian crossings. The adjacent land uses should provide continuous mixed-use and commercial land uses with adequate off-street parking to minimize dependency on on-street parking.
Boulevard	Characterized by a long-distance, medium-speed corridor that traverses an urbanized area, boulevards consist of four or fewer vehicle travel lanes, a balanced multi-modal function, landscaped medians, on-street parking, narrower travel lanes, more intensive land use oriented to the street, and wide sidewalks. Buildings uniformly line the edges.
Major Avenue	A major avenue serves as the major route for the movement of traffic within the City as well as a connector to neighboring cities. Most traffic using a major avenue will end the trip within the City (as opposed to through-traffic). Therefore, design treatment and traffic operation should give preference to this type of traffic. Long corridors with typically four or more lanes, avenues may be high-transit ridership corridors. Goods movement is typically limited to local routes and deliveries.
Minor Avenue	A minor avenue provides for the movement of traffic to neighborhood activity centers and serves as a route between neighborhoods. Avenues serve as a primary bicycle route and may serve local transit routes as well.
Neighborhood Connector	A neighborhood connector street serves trips generated in surrounding or adjacent neighborhoods and should discourage through-trips that do not end within the neighborhood. Goods movement is restricted to local deliveries only.
Local Street	Local streets primarily provide access to individual residential parcels. The streets are generally two lanes with on-street parking, tree planting strips, and sidewalks. Traffic on a local street should have a trip end on that street or on a connecting local street or to a connector.

Source: City of Long Beach General Plan Mobility Element, 2013.

TABLE 4-2 MIDTOWN STREET CLASSIFICATION

Regional Corridor	Pacific Coast Highway
Boulevard	Long Beach Boulevard from 31 st Street to Anaheim Avenue Willow Street
Major Avenue	Long Beach Boulevard from Wardlow Road to 31 st Street Atlantic Avenue Spring Street between Atlantic Avenue and Long Beach Boulevard
Minor Avenue	Pacific Avenue between Spring Street and Hill Street Spring Street between Long Beach Boulevard and Pacific Avenue
Neighborhood Connector	Hill Street
Local Street	Neighborhood streets not noted above

Source: City of Long Beach General Plan Mobility Element, 2013.

Note: For segments of the streets within the Specific Plan boundaries.

4.3 TRANSIT

Three Transit Node Districts have been created to support the existing Metro stations and foster transit-oriented development around them. The Willow, Pacific Coast Highway, and Anaheim stations all provide access to the Blue Line and serve as transit hubs for multi-modal access in Midtown. The City's General Plan Mobility Element proposes future expansion of the Metro Green Line through Willow Station.

In addition to light rail, Long Beach Transit bus routes offer another transportation option connecting Midtown to the rest of the City. East-west routes connect through the transit nodes at Willow Street, Pacific Coast Highway, and Anaheim Street. North-south routes run along Pacific Avenue, Long Beach Boulevard, and Atlantic Avenue. Figure 4-2 displays current transit routes and stations.

Transit improvements to the corridor include the installation of bicycle racks and lockers, helping to add options for riders to complete their "last mile" (a transit term that refers to connecting people from a transit hub to their final destination). Pedestrian and bicycle access could also be improved through implementation of plans such as the Willow Station Bike Access Transit Plan. The City could also work with Metro on other facility upgrades to visually enhance existing Blue Line stations.

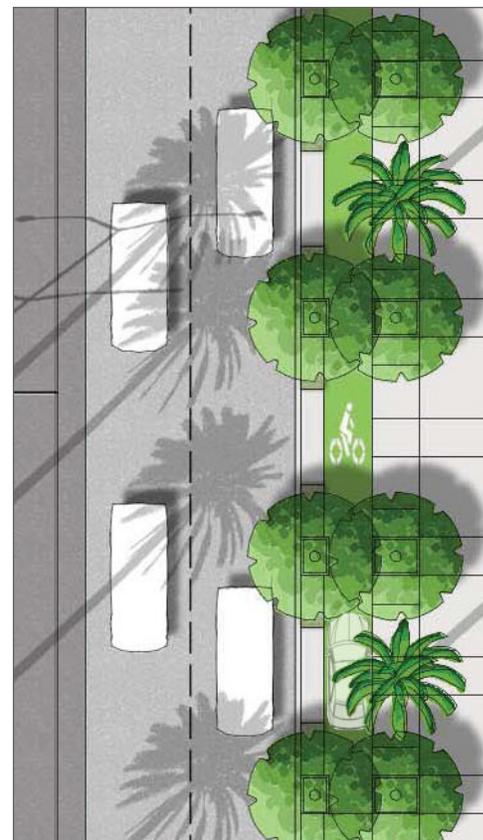
4.4 BICYCLES

Bicycle improvements to Midtown will help to connect existing bicycle infrastructure throughout the City, strengthening Long Beach's commitment to being the nation's most bicycle-friendly city. Bicycles are a popular transportation mode in Midtown; however, existing bicycle access is unsafe and not clearly defined. Many bicyclists are forced to use the sidewalk, which impacts the pedestrian experience and safety. Additionally, existing palm trees offer little shade for bicyclists or pedestrians. Figure 4-3 maps existing and proposed bike facilities.

This Plan recommends inclusion of an improved Class III or IV bikeway and bike boxes along Long Beach Boulevard where and when feasible. Bicycle improvements to Long Beach Boulevard will be determined in the Bicycle Master Plan Update. As conditions change along the boulevard, new bikeways would add connectivity to other transit options, such as the Metro Blue line, and other bicycle connections in the City. Where feasible and when on-street parking is deemed unnecessary, new bike lanes could be physically separated from pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Curb extensions could also be considered to create space for the new lanes by reducing on-street parking and right turn pockets. This treatment creates safer environments for pedestrians and bicyclists while encouraging healthy alternative transportation options for people living and working in the area. The streetscape layouts in Section 4.6 illustrate the proposed bicycle enhancements for each street type in the corridor.



The Blue Line is a major transit connection between Midtown and Downtown Long Beach.



A class IV bike lane, also known as a cycletrack (protected bike lane), could be considered for Long Beach Boulevard if on-street parking is no longer needed.

Other streetscape improvements include the addition of canopy trees to provide shade throughout Midtown. Canopy trees will be added to the street between the existing palm trees in an additional buffer zone along designated sections of the bike lane and in bulb-outs. Guidelines for landscaping are discussed in Chapter 5, Design Guidelines.

Bike facilities will also be improved along the corridor. Bike-sharing programs are encouraged. The City is rolling out a bike share program that will conveniently rent bikes at on-street stations and allow them to be returned to another destination in Long Beach. Midtown is a candidate for possible expansion of this program.

Improvements to areas around transit stations have already been proposed in the Metro Blue Line Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Improvement Plan. The Blue Line Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Plan assesses and recommends physical infrastructure and safety improvements to increase bicycling and walking. The improvement plan includes new crosswalks and countdown signals, a wayfinding plan, resurfacing of designated bikeways, improved lighting, and more bike parking.

The Willow, Pacific Coast Highway (PCH), and Anaheim stations along the corridor are included in this improvement plan.

Recommended improvements for the Anaheim and PCH stations include:

- Enhanced access at the southern end of the station.
- Widening sidewalks and installing buffers, such as bike lanes and landscaping, to protect pedestrians.
- Intersection improvements, including high-visibility crosswalks and bicycle loop detectors.
- Development of bicycle boulevards along 12th Street, 15th Street, and 20th Street.

Recommendations for the Willow Station include:

- Adding trees, street furniture, and increased lighting to create a buffer zone between pedestrians and street traffic.
- Repaving sidewalks and installing curb ramps with truncated domes at all intersections.
- Installing high-visibility crosswalks and increasing pedestrian crossing time.
- Increasing the link between the station and Veteran's Park by installing wayfinding signs and converting the existing sidewalk into a Class I shared use path.

- Development of a bicycle boulevard along Pasadena Avenue.
- Installation of bike parking in the plaza adjacent to the station.

Additionally, this Specific Plan proposes installing new bike lockers and racks throughout Midtown, with the largest concentration in Transit Node Districts and at Metro stations.

4.5 PEDESTRIANS

Despite poor pedestrian conditions, walking is popular in Midtown. The existing pedestrian environment is uninviting, with predominantly narrow concrete sidewalks, limited landscaping, and a lack of art and color. Without safe bicycle systems, bicyclists use the sidewalks, making them less safe for pedestrians. Limited crossings along Long Beach Boulevard make it hard to navigate the corridor by foot.

Pedestrians will benefit from many of the bicycle improvements with some additional feet-friendly options. The creation of separated bike lanes will improve safety, and widening the sidewalk will increase usability. Pedestrian scale lighting will also improve safety and activate night-time use of restaurants offering outdoor dining and sidewalk cafes. The addition of canopy trees will provide much-needed shade and add color to the public realm.

Other enhancements include parklets that will serve as oases amid the corridor and a pedestrian bridge linking the Medical Center, Veterans Park, and Willow Transit Station. Implementation for many of these enhancements are proposed partnerships between the City, Memorial Medical Center, and/or Metro. Figure 4-3 maps existing and proposed pedestrian pathways. Section 4.7 provides detailed street sections, including the pedestrian enhancements described above, for the roadways in Midtown. Implementation and financing mechanisms are discussed in Chapter 7, Administration and Implementation.

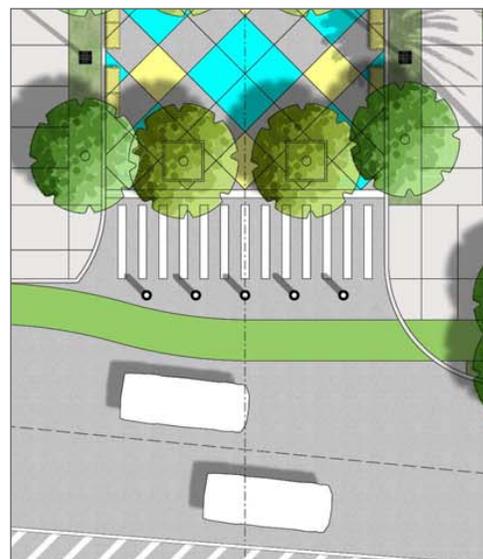
4.6 VEHICULAR STREET CLOSURES FOR PARKLETS

The Environmental Impact Report for the Midtown Specific Plan included a transportation impact analysis, also referred to as a traffic study. The purpose of the traffic study was to evaluate the potential transportation and traffic impacts implementation of the Midtown Specific Plan would have in the City of Long Beach. Additionally, the analysis evaluated the potential impacts of closing a portion of 11 streets to vehicular traffic to create parklets along Long Beach Boulevard.

The study assumed that vehicular traffic volumes from roadways proposed to be converted to parklets were redistributed to nearby intersections since motorists will need to find a new route to access each closed location. The redistributed trips associated with the parklets generally did not affect the



Wide sidewalks and well lit pathways provide safe and comfortable spaces for pedestrians.



Parklets are street parks of about a quarter acre. The Specific Plan proposes the addition of 11 parklets to Midtown by closing through traffic on low volume streets that intersect Long Beach Boulevard.

The illustrative above is shown for conceptual purposes only.

operations of the study intersections given the relatively low contribution of traffic associated with those roadway closures.

Figure 4-3, Pedestrian Paths and Bike Facilities shows the locations of the proposed parklets in relation to other pedestrian and bike facilities in Midtown. See Chapter 3, Section 3.3.2, Proposed Open Space for additional information on parklets.

FIGURE 4-1 STREET CLASSIFICATIONS



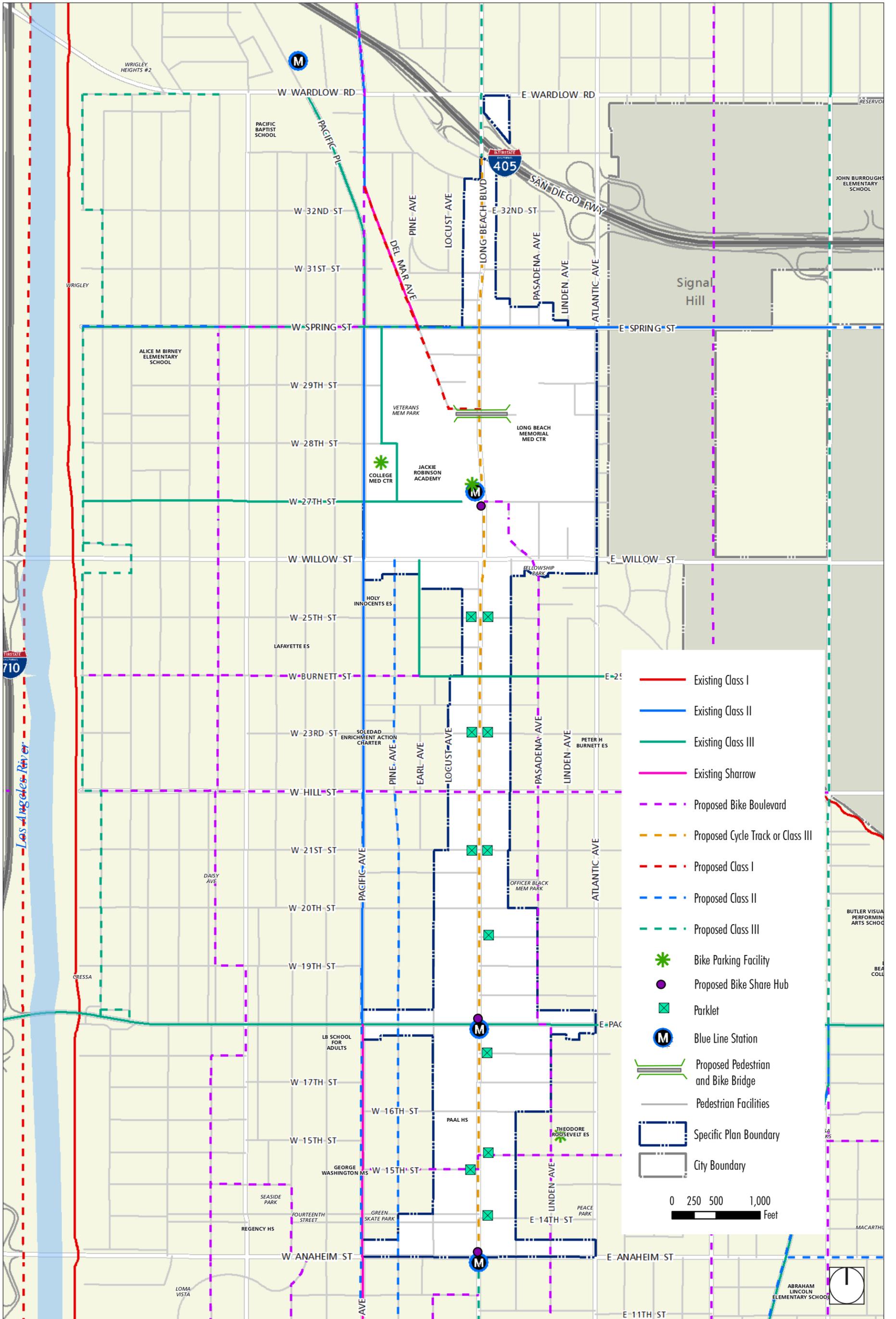
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FIGURE 4-2 TRANSIT LINES AND STATIONS



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FIGURE 4-3 PEDESTRIAN PATHS AND BIKE FACILITIES



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4.7 STREET SECTIONS

The streetscape layout is one of the most important aspects of this Plan. To improve connectivity and safety for multiple modes of transportation, modifying existing streets may involve expanding one part of the roadway and reducing another. For example, adding a bicycle lane will require additional street right-of-way. This additional space may be acquired by eliminating street parking or narrowing the travel lanes.

The street sections in this document are illustrations depicting typical conditions for the streets shown. Right-of-way may vary along the street. The following pages provide typical midblock sections for the street designations in the planning area (see Table 4-2). Each street section is provided on a single cutsheet. This page is a guide to street sections that follow.

FIGURE 4-4 GUIDE TO TYPICAL MIDBLOCK STREET SECTIONS

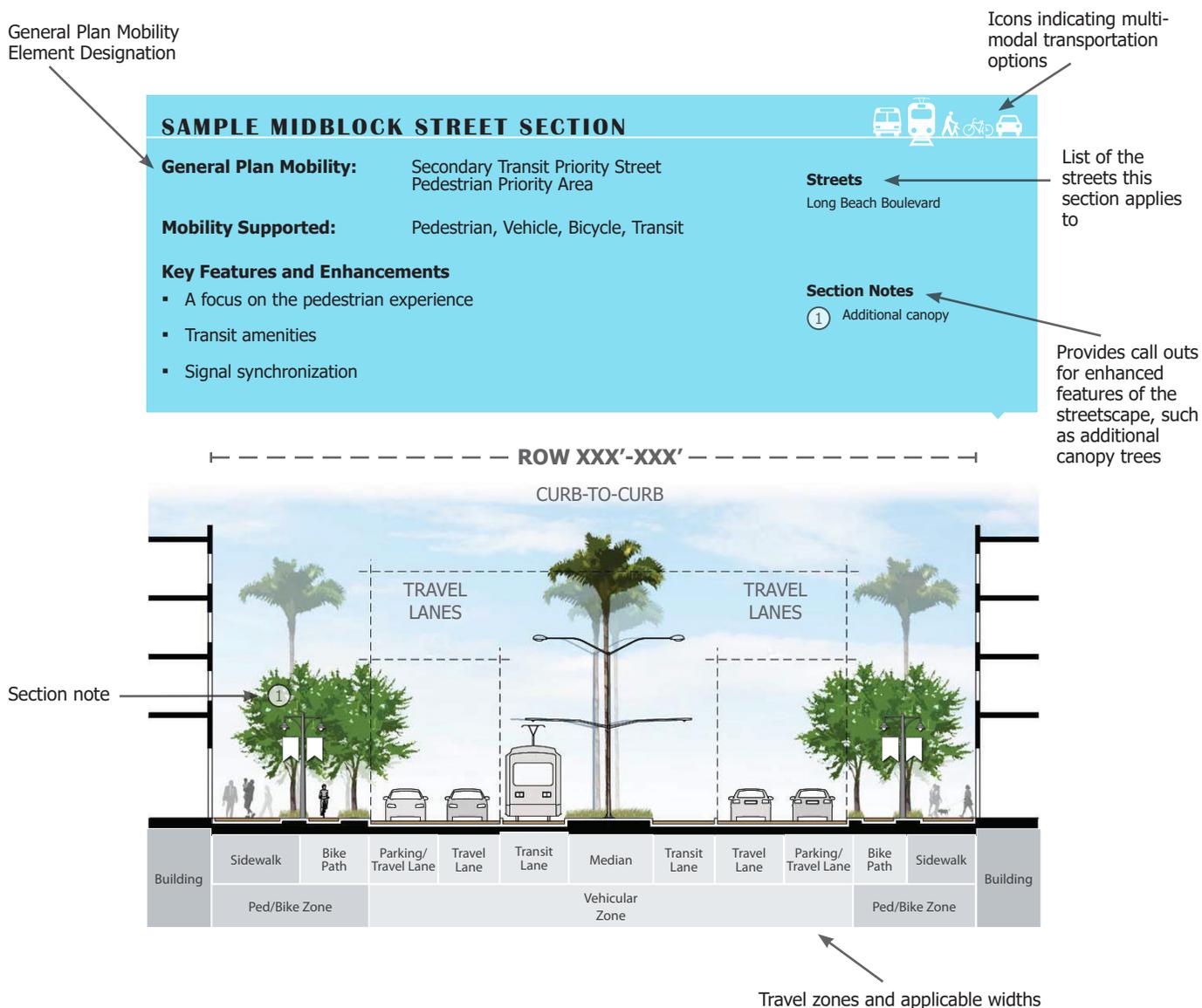


FIGURE 4-5 BOULEVARD (WITH SEPARATED BIKE PATHS)

BOULEVARD TYPICAL MIDBLOCK STREET SECTION (MULTI-MODAL WITH SEPARATED BIKE LANE OR PARKING)

General Plan Mobility: Primary Transit & Pedestrian Priority Street

Mobility Supported: Bus and Rail Transit, Pedestrian, Bike, Vehicle

Key Features and Enhancements

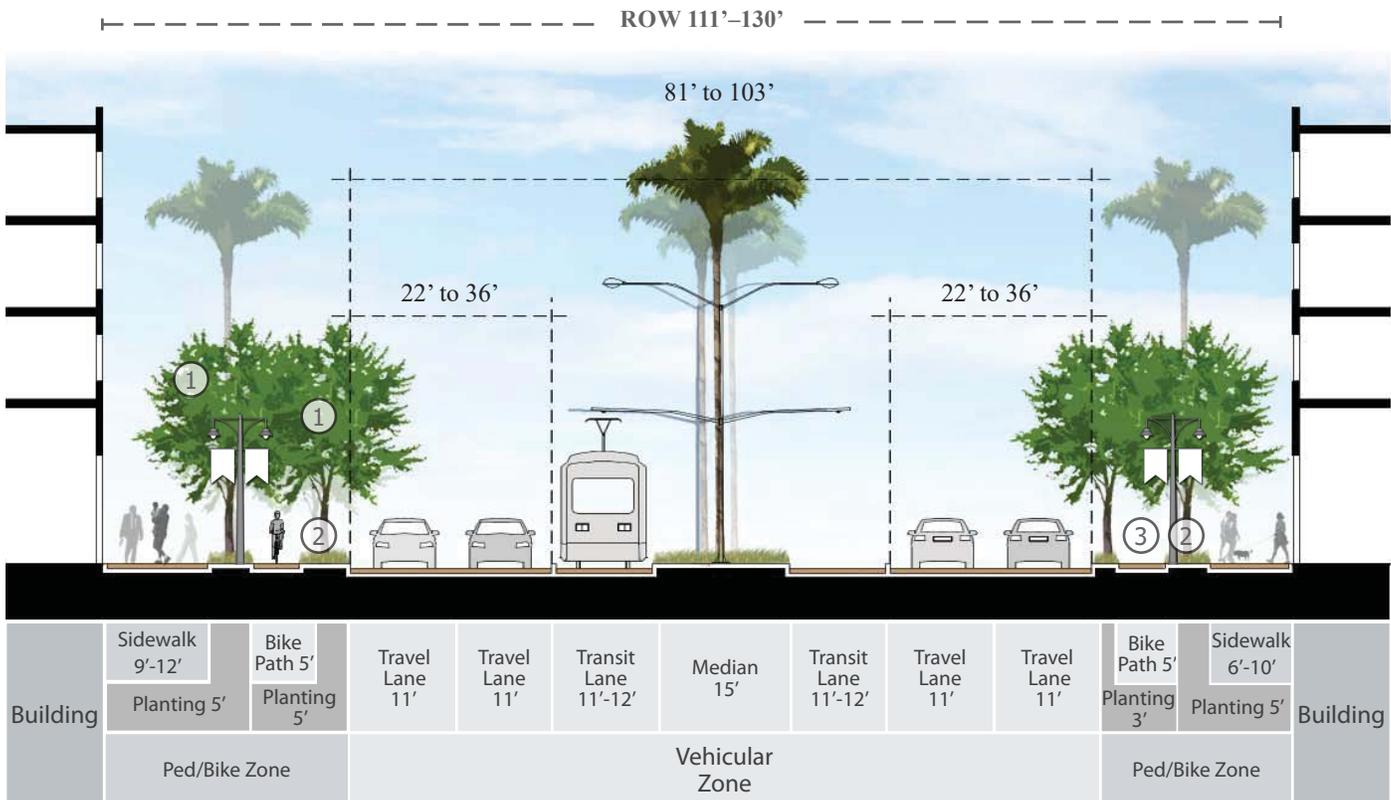
- A focus on the pedestrian experience
- Transit amenities
- Transit only and shared transit lanes
- New bicycles lanes
- Signal synchronization



Streets
Long Beach Boulevard
between Willow Street &
Anaheim Street

Section Notes

- ① Additional canopy trees
- ② Landscaping buffer zone
- ③ Enhanced separated bike lane at curb level (if on-street parking is no longer needed)



Note: Typical conditions for the streets shown; right-of-way may vary along the street. The portions of the public ROW that fall outside the Specific Plan boundary may not conform to the street sections shown in this figure.

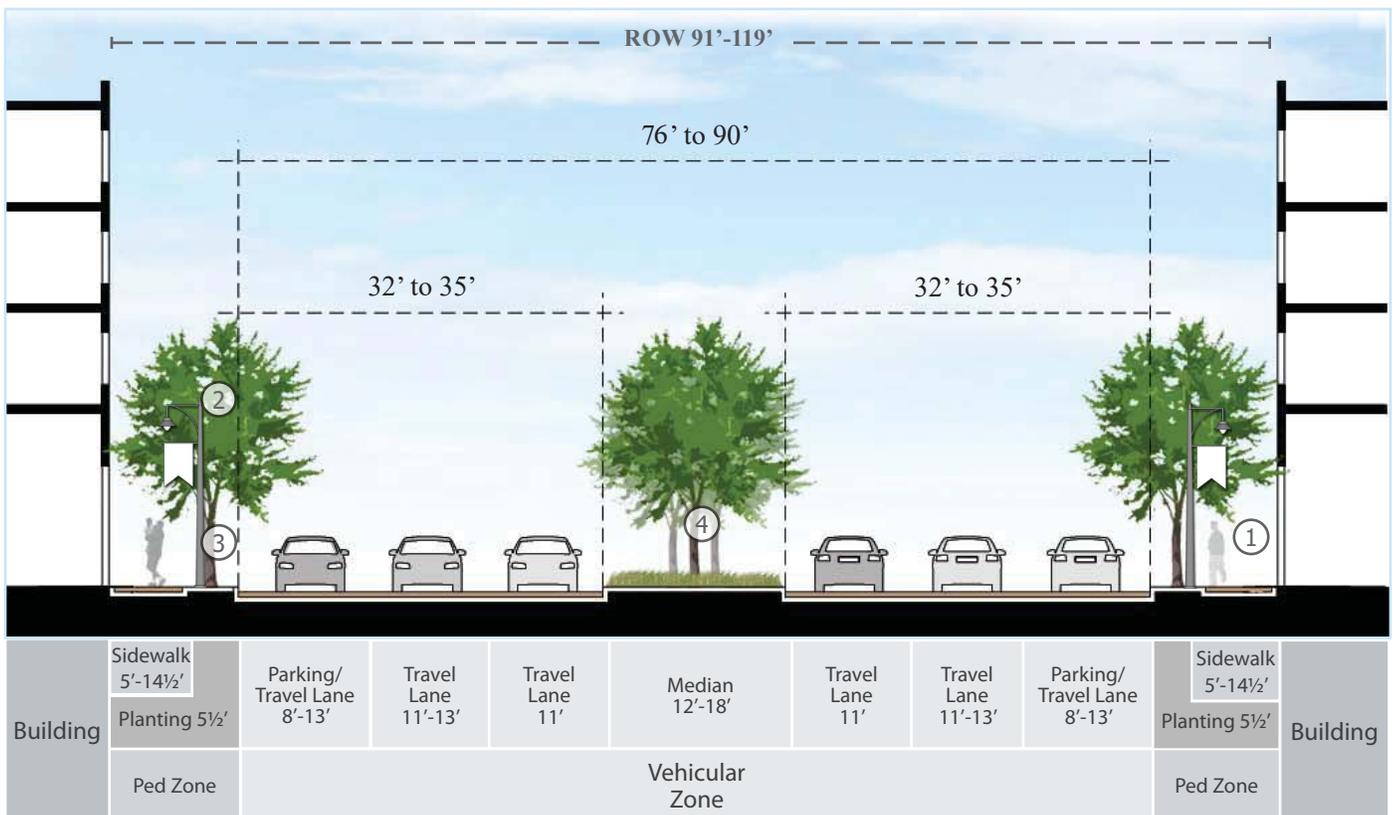
A class IV bike lane, also known as a cycletrack (protected bike lane), could be considered for Long Beach Boulevard if on-street parking is no longer needed.



FIGURE 4-6 BOULEVARD (WITHOUT SEPARATED BIKE PATHS)

BOULEVARD TYPICAL MIDBLOCK STREET SECTION (WITH OR WITHOUT BIKE PATHS)

<p>General Plan Mobility: Secondary Transit Priority Street Pedestrian Priority Area</p> <p>Mobility Supported: Pedestrian, Vehicle</p> <p>Key Features and Enhancements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A focus on the pedestrian experience ▪ Transit amenities ▪ Signal synchronization 	<p>Streets Willow Street Long Beach Boulevard between Wardlow Road & Willow Street</p> <p>Section Notes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> ① Wider sidewalks ② Additional canopy trees ③ Landscaping buffer zone ④ Planted center median
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Notes: Typical conditions for the streets shown; right-of-way may vary along the street. The portions of the public ROW that fall outside the Specific Plan boundary may not conform to the street sections shown in this figure.

Consistent with the City's General Plan and/or Bicycle Master Plan an on-street bike path may be designated on LBBM north of Willow Street.

FIGURE 4-7 REGIONAL CORRIDOR

REGIONAL CORRIDOR TYPICAL MIDBLOCK STREET SECTION



General Plan Mobility: Transit & Pedestrian Priority Street

Mobility Supported: Bus and Rail Transit, Pedestrian, Bike, Vehicle

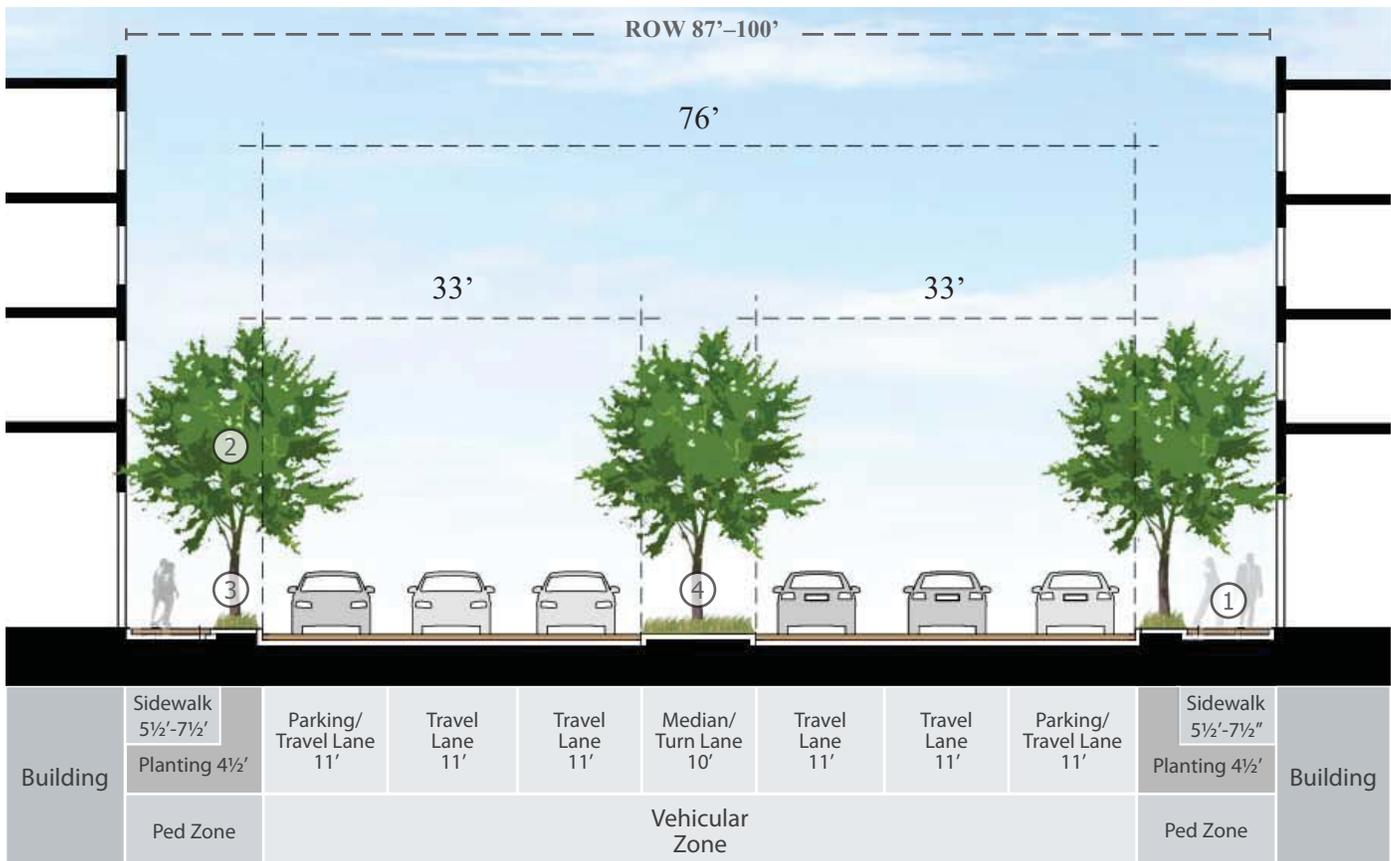
Key Features and Enhancements

- A focus on the pedestrian experience
- Transit amenities
- Transit only and shared transit lanes
- Signal synchronization

Streets
Pacific Coast Highway

Section Notes

- ① Wider sidewalks
- ② Additional canopy trees
- ③ Landscaping buffer zone
- ④ Planted center median



Note: Typical conditions for the streets shown; right-of-way may vary along the street. The portions of the public ROW that fall outside the Specific Plan boundary may not conform to the street sections shown in this figure.

FIGURE 4-8 MAJOR AVENUE (WITH BIKE LANE)

MAJOR AVENUE TYPICAL MIDBLOCK STREET SECTION (WITH BIKE LANES)

General Plan Mobility: Varies

Mobility Supported: Bus, Pedestrian, Bike, Vehicle

Key Features and Enhancements

- A focus on the pedestrian experience
- Shade for sidewalks & bicycle lanes
- Incorporation of planting areas along curb

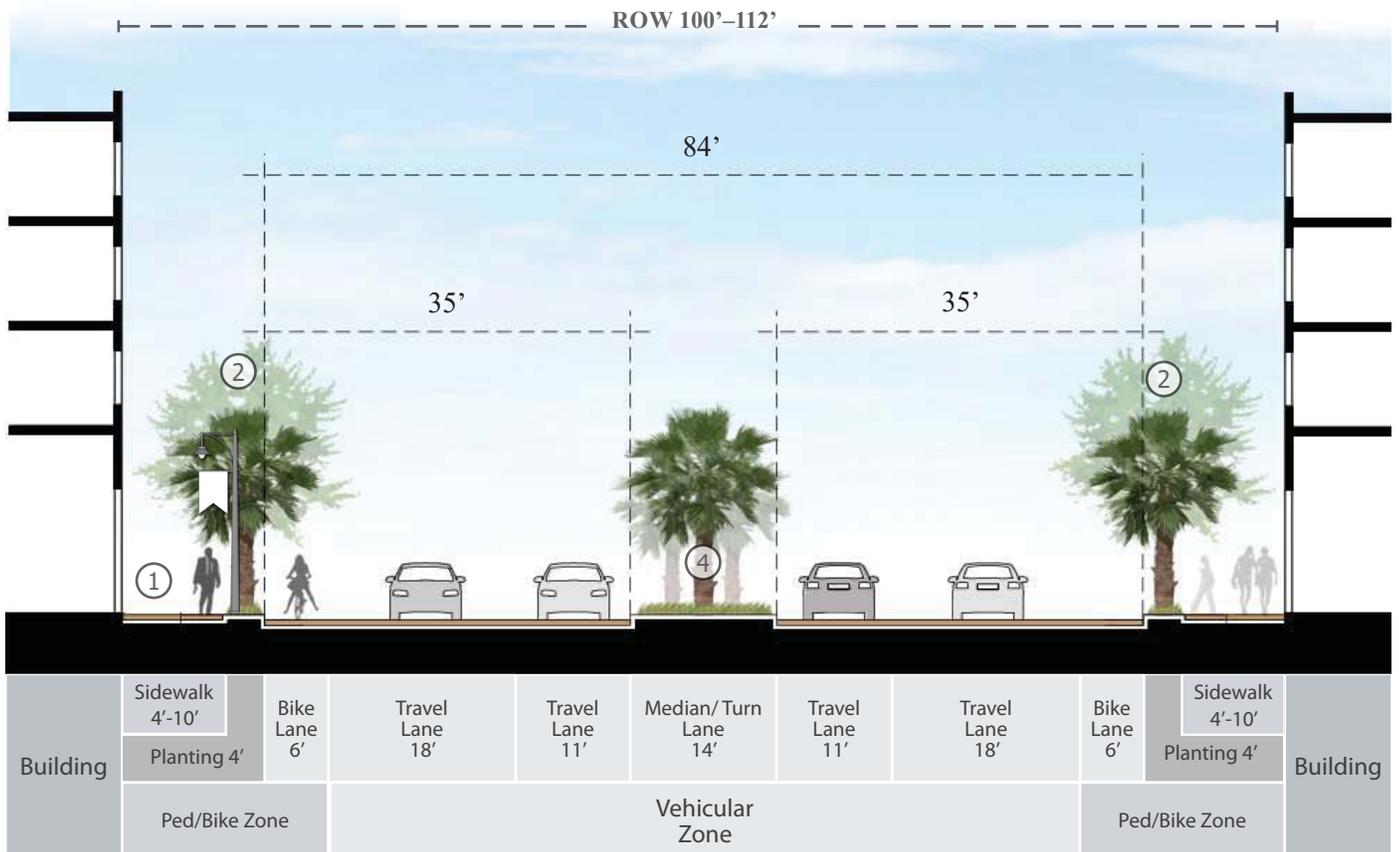
Section Notes

- ① Wider sidewalks
- ② Additional canopy trees
- ③ Landscaping buffer zone
- ④ Planted center median

Streets

Spring Street between Long Beach Boulevard & Atlantic Avenue





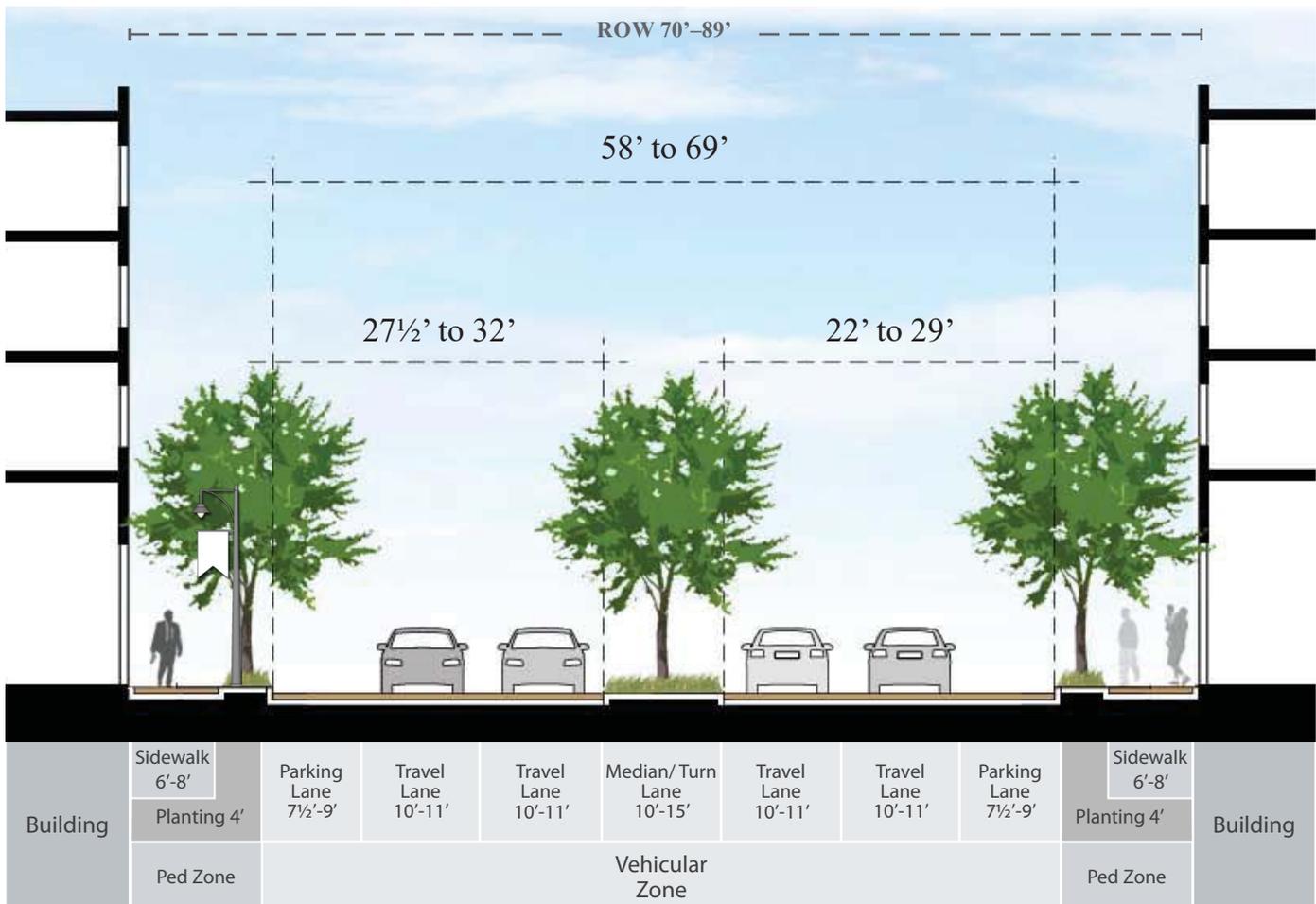
Note: Typical conditions for the streets shown; right-of-way may vary along the street. The portions of the public ROW that fall outside the Specific Plan boundary may not conform to the street sections shown in this figure.

FIGURE 4-9 MAJOR AVENUE (WITHOUT BIKE LANE)

MAJOR AVENUE TYPICAL MIDBLOCK STREET SECTION (WITHOUT BIKE LANE)



<p>General Plan Mobility: Varies</p> <p>Mobility Supported: Bus, Pedestrian, Vehicle</p> <p>Key Features and Enhancements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A focus on the pedestrian experience ▪ Bicycle Lanes ▪ Signal synchronization 	<p>Section Notes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> ① Wider sidewalks ② Additional canopy trees ③ Landscaping buffer zone ④ Planted center median 	<p>Streets</p> <p>Atlantic Avenue</p> <p>Anaheim Street</p>
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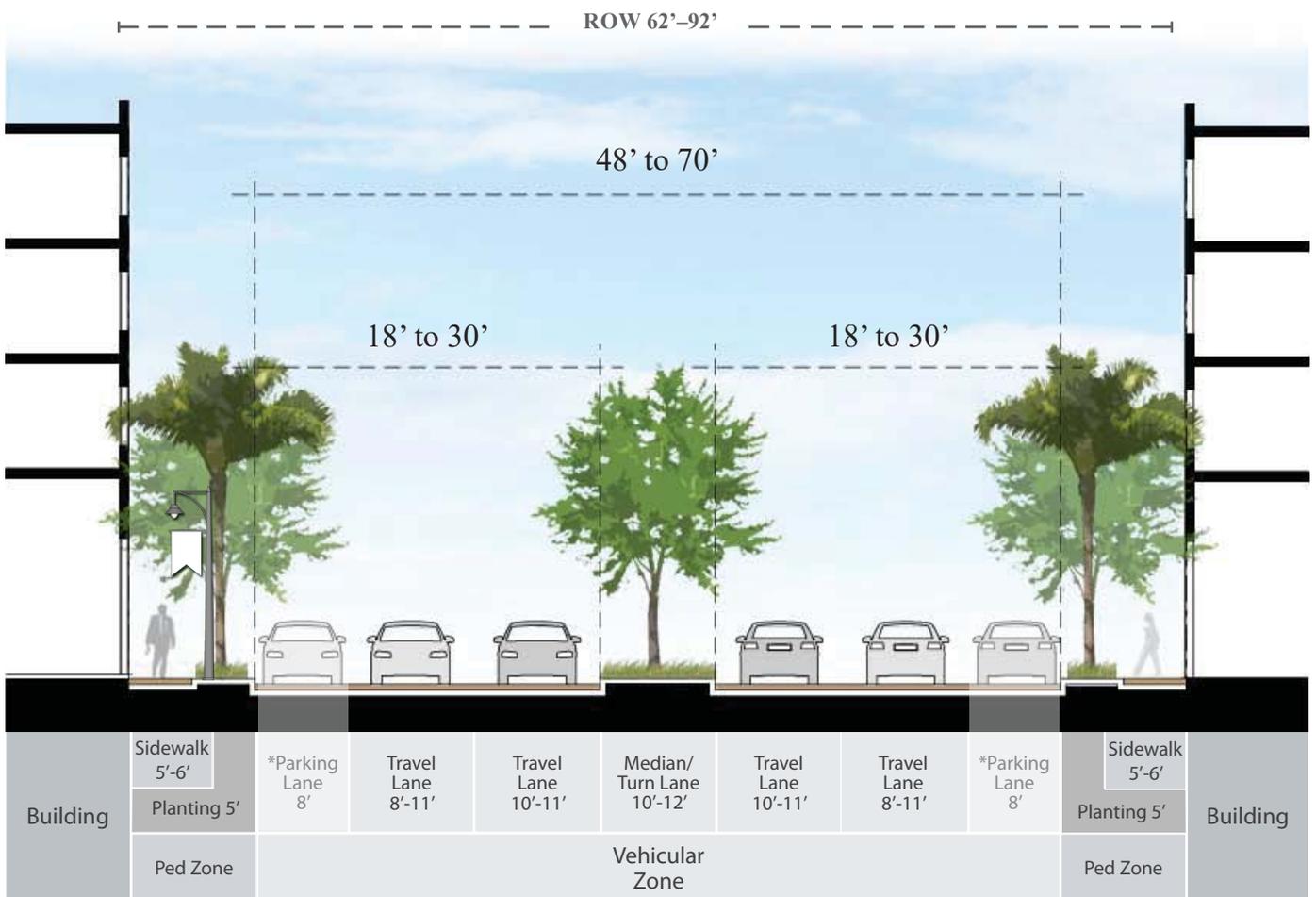
Note: Typical conditions for the streets shown; right-of-way may vary along the street. The portions of the public ROW that fall outside the Specific Plan boundary may not conform to the street sections shown in this figure.

FIGURE 4-10 MINOR AVENUE

MINOR AVENUE TYPICAL MIDBLOCK STREET SECTION



<p>General Plan Mobility: Not a Priority Street</p> <p>Mobility Supported: Bus, Pedestrian, Vehicle</p> <p>Key Features and Enhancements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A focus on the pedestrian experience ▪ Signal synchronization 	<p>Section Notes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> ① Additional canopy trees ② Landscaping buffer zone ③ Planted center median 	<p>Streets</p> <p>Pacific Avenue</p> <p>Spring Street between Pacific Avenue & Long Beach Boulevard</p>
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Note: Typical conditions for the streets shown; right-of-way may vary along the street. The portions of the public ROW that fall outside the Specific Plan boundary may not conform to the street sections shown in this figure.

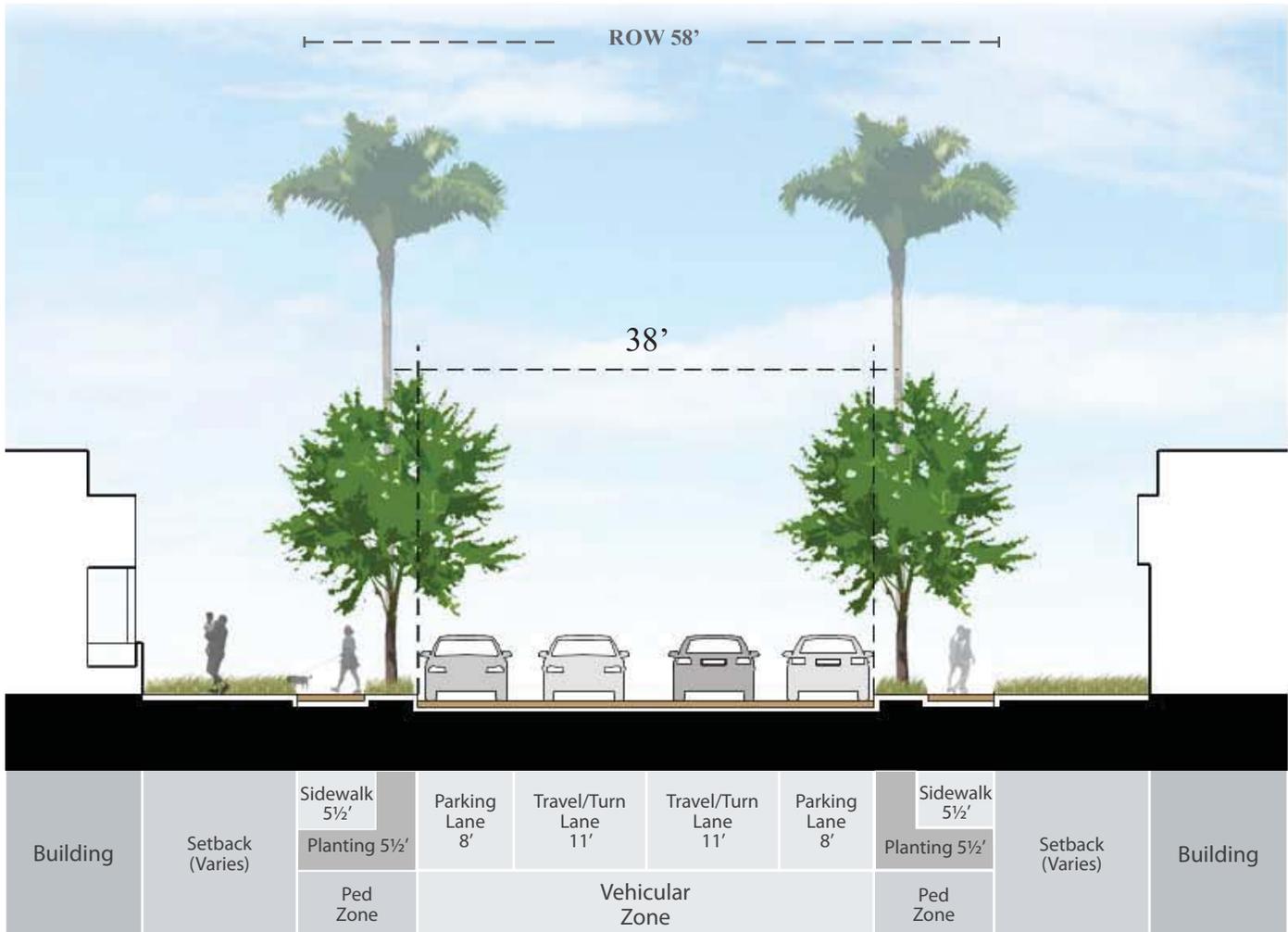
*Parking Lane applies to Pacific Avenue.

FIGURE 4-11 NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTOR AND LOCAL STREET

NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTOR AND LOCAL STREET TYPICAL MIDBLOCK STREET SECTION



<p>General Plan Mobility: Not a Priority Street</p> <p>Mobility Supported: Pedestrian, Bike, Vehicle</p> <p>Key Features and Enhancements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A focus on the pedestrian experience 	<p>Section Notes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> ① Wider sidewalks ② Additional canopy trees ③ Landscaping buffer zone ④ Enhanced separated bike lane at curb level 	<p>Streets</p> <p>Streets not otherwise noted</p>
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Note: Typical conditions for the streets shown; right-of-way may vary along the street. The portions of the public ROW that fall outside the Specific Plan boundary may not conform to the street sections shown in this figure.