

University of Southern California
University Park Campus
Specific Plan

EXHIBIT 2:

Existing Conditions





#### INTRODUCTION

This exhibit describes the existing conditions of the Specific Plan area, with a focus on the public realm, including sidewalks, street frontages and setbacks, landscaping, entrances and access, and circulation and open space. Special attention is given to Jefferson Boulevard, which acts as a seam that connects properties to the north and the core campus in Subarea 1A. This street will be increasingly critical as a multi-modal space, allowing people to ride bikes, access transit, and safely cross the street, on their way to and from the core campus. As buildings develop along its edges, it will also act more as a place in itself and less as merely a conduit for traffic, transit, and pedestrians along its length.

Each Subarea within the Specific Plan area has a unique character and urban form:

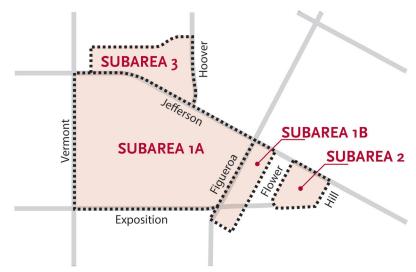
As the core campus area, Subarea 1A is characterized by institutional buildings arranged around plazas and green spaces, with comfortable landscaping, ample bike amenities, and well-lit, pedestrian-friendly walkways and paseos. Walkways are enhanced with special paving and safety devices and pedestrian street crossings are well marked. Subarea 1A is oriented, (as discussed in Exhibit 1) along the historical street grid, which runs perpendicular to Figueroa Street. This causes some of the street edges along Vermont and Exposition, for example, to be pulled back from, and not parallel to the street. The campus is gated around the edges, but there are frequent controlled entries.

Subarea 1B is characterized by buildings with large footprints such as the Galen Center, a large parking garage, and the Radisson Hotel. Figueroa is treated as a front door to this Subarea, while Flower acts as a back. Figueroa has been enhanced with streetscaping and the University side of the street is gated with frequent access points. The Expo Line, which runs along Flower, has a stop at the corner of the Subarea and enhanced streetscaping has softened the pedestrian experience in this area. New development has provided a well-defined street wall along Figueroa and there is mid-rise residential housing south of Exposition within the Subarea. The freeway wall to the east acts as a major barrier.

Subarea 2 is currently used for University facilities, such as parking, IT, and facilities maintenance buildings, among other uses. The buildings are large in scale and massing and often present large walls and unbroken façades to the street. Landscaping in this area is less prominent than in other Subareas and the freeway wall to the east acts as a major barrier along the west edge. In a few areas, paving has been enhanced and trees have been planted to improve the pedestrian experience. Power lines are not undergrounded.

Finally, Subarea 3 is home to a number of mid- and high-rise apartment buildings that are significantly setback from the street behind landscaping. Commercial structures in this area are also mainly setback from the street. There is a pedestrian plaza at Hoover and Jefferson and a new mixed-use development with amenities at Figueroa and Jefferson that opens directly to the sidewalk. Immediately to the north of Subarea 3, there are low-rise apartment buildings and residential structures.

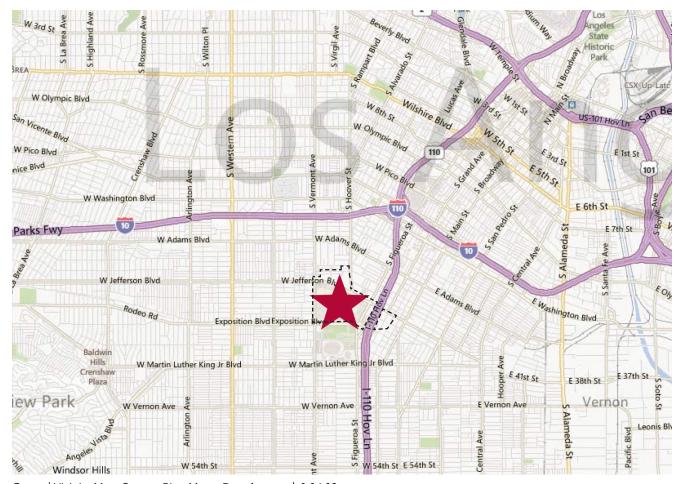




Specific Plan Boundary Key Map

#### LOCATING THE SPECIFIC PLAN AREA

The City Council has established the University of Southern California (USC) University Park Campus Specific Plan for the area bounded generally by Jefferson Boulevard to the northeast; the alley south of 30th Street and 30th Street to the North; Jefferson Boulevard to the northeast; Hill Street to the east; Exposition Boulevard to the south; and Vermont Avenue to the west; and including an areas south of Exposition Boulevard; as shown upon on the map below.

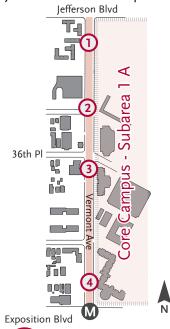


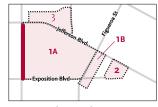
General Vicinity Map; Source; Bing Maps; Date Accessed: 1-14-13

The following pages describe the character of the Specific Plan area in more detail, first by looking at the quality and character of all perimeter streets, then describing access and circulation, and finally delving into a more detailed analysis of Jefferson Boulevard.

#### **VERMONT AVE**

Jefferson Blvd to Exposition Blvd





Segment depicted

This segment constitutes the westernmost boundary of Subarea 1A. For the most part, buildings along the east side of this segment do not exhibit clearly visible street frontages due to the presence of fencing and landscaping buffers. Since this segment is where the angled downtown street grid meets a true north/south street grid, some university buildings are situated at an angle to Vermont Avenue. Buildings along the west side do not exhibit highly visible street frontages, although some pedestrian access points occur where apartment building entries are situated facing the street. Most pedestrian activity on this segment occurs near the one large entry point to campus on 36th Place.



Two-story apartment buildings set back from the street and buffered with fencing and landscaping define the west side of Vermont nearest Jefferson.



University parking lots are hidden from view by fencing and landscaping.



Commercial building frontages are set far behind parking lots.





Fencing and landscaping behind it continue to create a barrier for pedestrians, blocking pedestrian access to university facilities from the street.



Two- and three-story apartment buildings are hidden from view by landscaping, fencing, and large setbacks. Occasional pedestrian access points are present.



Setbacks are minimized on this stretch of Vermont Avenue. The edge is fenced and pedestrian access points are limited to only a few locations.



36th Place is the primary pedestrian and vehicular access point for the west side of the USC campus. Buildings open here to a road and gated sidewalks.



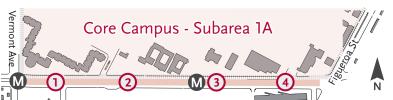
A parking/vacant lot characterizes the western side of Vermont as it nears Exposition, a missed opportunity for an active street corner.

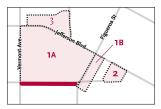


Fencing and large setbacks distance frontages from the public realm on the east side of Vermont as it nears Exposition.

#### **EXPOSITION BLVD**

Vermont Ave to Figueroa St





Segment depicted

This stretch of Exposition Boulevard is the link between USC's campus and the institutional buildings of Exposition Park. The north side of the street includes a mix of mid-rise university buildings. To the south, museums sit at vast distances from the street, linked to the pedestrian realm—but often hidden from view—by the Exposition Park Rose Garden and other landscaped areas and open space. The newly opened Expo light rail line runs down the median of the boulevard.



Farthest to the west, four-story university buildings separated from the pedestrian realm by a fence and moderate setbacks dominate the streetscape on the north side.



Along the south side of the street, a wide decomposed granite path, shaded by a mature allée of trees, defines the pedestrian experience; building frontages are hidden from view.



As the street continues east, four-story building frontages are set back from the pedestrian realm via





To the south, the sidewalk transitions to a concrete path flanked by grass and shade trees. Museum buildings (not shown) are significantly set back from the street.







At point three, building frontages on the north side of the street give way to a large, open plaza (above). The Exposition Park Expo Line stop sits in the middle of the street.

The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County is more visible here than at other places, although fencing along the Expo Line (left) obstructs views from the north side of the street.





Three- to four-story building frontages (above, left) are set back from the street and separated from the pedestrian realm by fencing (above, right), which predominates the north side of the street. A narrow and unshaded sidewalk sits between fencing and the street.



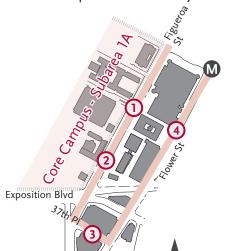


To the south, the concrete sidewalk continues with large swaths of grass on both sides (above, left). Buildings are removed from view by landscaping, and the Expo Line divides the street in two (above, right).



## FIGUEROA ST, FLOWER ST, AND THE AREA SOUTH OF EXPOSITION BLVD

South of Exposition Blvd to Jefferson Blvd





Segment depicted

This area is composed of Figueroa Street and Flower Street, as well as the area flanking a few parcels south of Exposition Boulevard. Figueroa is a bustling thoroughfare with pedestrian activity. The campus edge is fenced. Although landscaping exists on Flower Street, building frontages offer minimal pedestrian access points along the west side and a large wall on the 110 Freeway on the east. The few parcels within the subarea south of Exposition lack a defining street frontage character and exhibit minimal pedestrian traffic.



Along Figueroa Street to the west, mid-rise university buildings and parking facilities, separated by fencing, are removed from the pedestrian realm.



On the east side of Figueroa, the Galen Center and other buildings are set back from the street with no fence. Special paving and landscaping add to the pedestrian experience.



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The university buildings on the western

Bepartment of Bity Planning portion of Figueroa just north of Exposition are fenced off from the street.



New development on the east side of the street presents a well-defined street wall. The sidewalk has special paving and mature street trees.



On 37th Place between Figueroa and Flower, a residential mid-rise building is built to the sidewalk and creates a street wall that defines the block. Pedestrian access points to the building are minimal, however.



On the north side of 37th Place, a parking garage meets the sidewalk. Mature street trees present a comfortable walking environment.



The Galen Center predominates the west side of Flower Street north of Exposition. Large walls and driveways detract from the pedestrian environment; landscaping in a setback softens the edge.



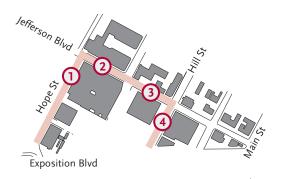
A monolithic freeway wall presents a significant unactivated edge along Flower. Landscaping mitigates aesthetic issues, but pedestrian connectivity suffers.

#### HOPE ST AND JEFFERSON BLVD

110 Freeway to Main St



Segment depicted



Separated from the rest of the study area by the 110 Freeway, Subarea 2 has street frontages that discourage pedestrian activity. The Subarea has two street-fronting borders: Hope Street to the west and Jefferson Boulevard to the north. Hope Street is challenged by the large barrier that the neighboring 110 Freeway presents, while Jefferson Boulevard exhibits a variety of blank walls and empty lots. The southern border of the Subarea sits along a closed-off right of way and is inaccessible to the general public.



The west side of Hope Street meets the 110 Freeway with a long wall and landscaped berm above, extending for the entirety of the block.



Buildings are built to the sidewalk, but frontages do not open to the street, and activity within the buildings is hidden from the public realm.



The north side of Jefferson just east of the 110 Freeway consists of a single, large building with an uninterrupted blank wall. Mature street trees are present and sidewalks are narrow.



There is a large building with blank walls on the south side of Jefferson just east of the 110 Freeway. Some pedestrianoriented street lighting and street trees exist. Sidewalks are narrow but display special brick pavement treatment.





Two blocks from the freeway, parking lots and driveways break up the street wall. Though building frontages have pedestrian access points, they appear unused.



A long, undifferentiated, uninterrupted, two-story façade defines the south side of the block. Special brick pavement treatment and street trees exist along this stretch.



The sidewalk consists almost entirely of a large driveway. There is no landscaping.



A long, blank wall dominates the east side of the Hill Street. Farther south, landscaping creates a barrier to a building's street frontage.

#### JEFFERSON BLVD

Vermont Ave to Flower St



Jefferson Boulevard between Vermont Avenue and Flower Street is the link between USC's campus to the south and the residential and commercial areas to the north. To the south, large setbacks and university security fencing separate buildings from the sidewalk; to the north, expansive setbacks and parking lots also disengage pedestrians from buildings. A landscaped median is provided. Numerous mature street trees are an asset, providing shade for pedestrians along the length of Jefferson Boulevard.



The north side of Jefferson along this stretch is home to a number of mid-rise apartments set back from the street by a large stretch of grass.



Jefferson Blvd

Landscaping hides a large parking lot from view on the south side of Jefferson just east of Vermont. Special brick paving defines the pedestrian space.



A mid-rise apartment, set back from the street and buffered by grass and trees, characterizes the block between Orchard and McClintock. A large, mature tree anchors the corner of McClintock and Jefferson.





The corner of McClintock and Jefferson is one of only a few places on this segment of Jefferson where buildings meet the street without a large setback. However, pedestrian access points are minimal and blank walls dominate the sidewalk realm.



Buildings are significantly set back from the sidewalk and pedestrian views. The streetscape is dominated by the meandering sidewalk, curvilinear street planters, and mature trees.



To the south, buildings are screened from view by large setbacks and mature trees. A large parking lot dominates the sidewalk view.



Where Hoover meets Jefferson, the sidewalk opens to a plaza. Buildings are set back from the plaza and buffered with landscaping.



At Hoover and Jefferson (a highly utilized campus pedestrian entrance), large, landscaped setbacks continue to characterize the streetscape.



On Jefferson just west of Figueroa, a new, eight-story building fronts the street. Stores open to the sidewalk via an arcade and there is no building setback. Special paving and street trees populate the sidewalk.



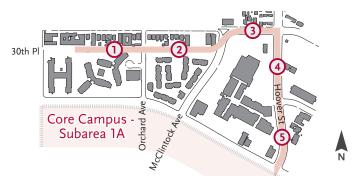
Landscaping screens a large parking structure looming over the south side of Jefferson just west of Figueroa.

Pedestrian access points and architectural treatment are minimal.

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#### 30TH PL AND HOOVER ST

Vermont Ave to Hoover St and 30th Pl to Jefferson Blvd





Segment depicted

Bordering Subarea 3, 30th Place and Hoover Street present a few distinct conditions. 30th Place, the northernmost boundary of the study area, is an auto-oriented alley characterized by the rear of buildings, garages and blank walls; there is no sidewalk present. A short stretch of 30th Street to the northeast exhibits a small cluster of pedestrian-scaled buildings. Parking lots dominate the frontages of the University Village complex. Hoover Street is particularly impact by parking; however, it includes some pedestrian-oriented features such as plazas, wide sidewalks, and pedestrian-scaled lighting.



Garages for low-rise residential buildings make up the north side of the 30th Place alley.

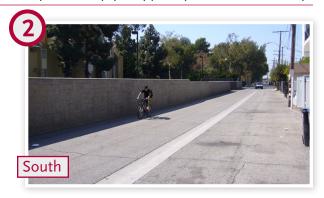


The majority of the south side of the 30th Place alley is composed of a continuous blank wall. Pedestrian access points do not exist, nor does a sidewalk. Mature trees and landscaping on private property are assets; however, they are separated and physically partially occluded from the alley.





Two- to three-story apartment buildings compose the street wall on the north side of the alley east of Orchard.



The majority of the south side of the 30th Place alley here is a blank cement wall. No pedestrian access points exist, although the alley sees some bicycle use.



Low-rise residential buildings exhibit porches, windows and doorways that front the street on this stretch of 30th Street.



A landscaped parkway is situated directly adjacent to the sidewalk. Buildings on the south side of 30th Street are set far back and buffered by mature trees.



Buildings on the west side of Hoover Street are set far back behind a parking lot. Frontages are generally set back at least 50 feet, with a few exceptions.



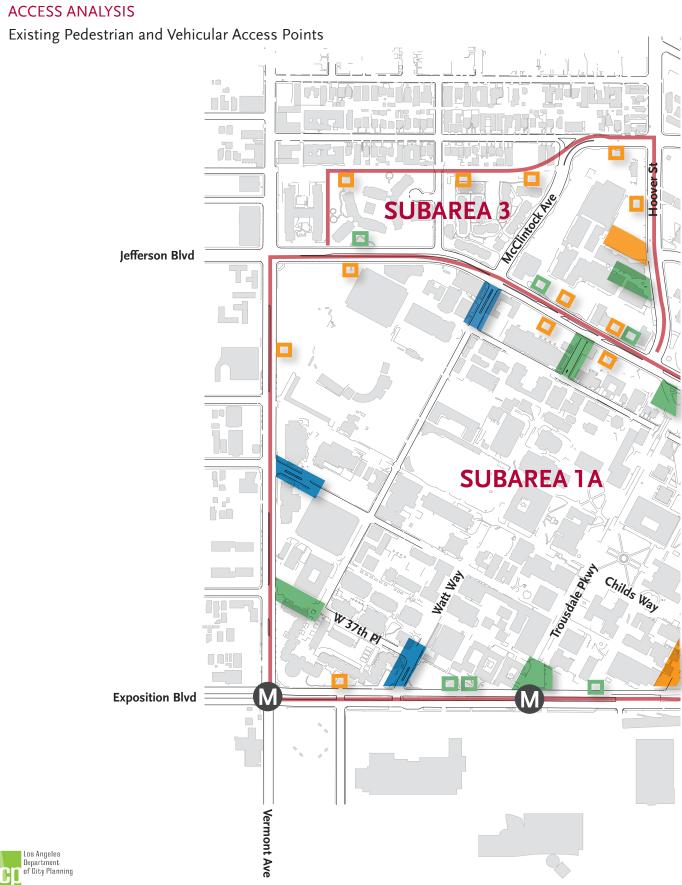
The USC Caruso Catholic Center is situated on this stretch of Hoover, across from University Village. The building has a modest setback.



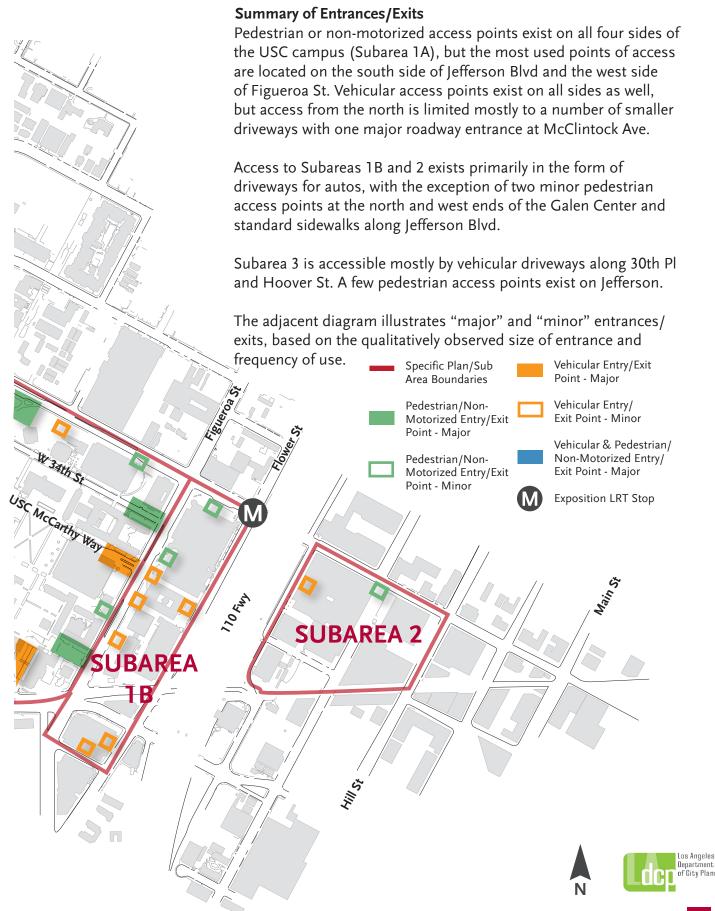
As Hoover nears Jefferson, landscaping and setbacks define the area adjacent to the sidewalk.



Within University Village (along Hoover Street near Jefferson Boulevard) are a plaza, outdoor dining, and a large sign. Pedestrian-scaled lighting lines the perimeter of University Village, where private property meets the sidewalk.

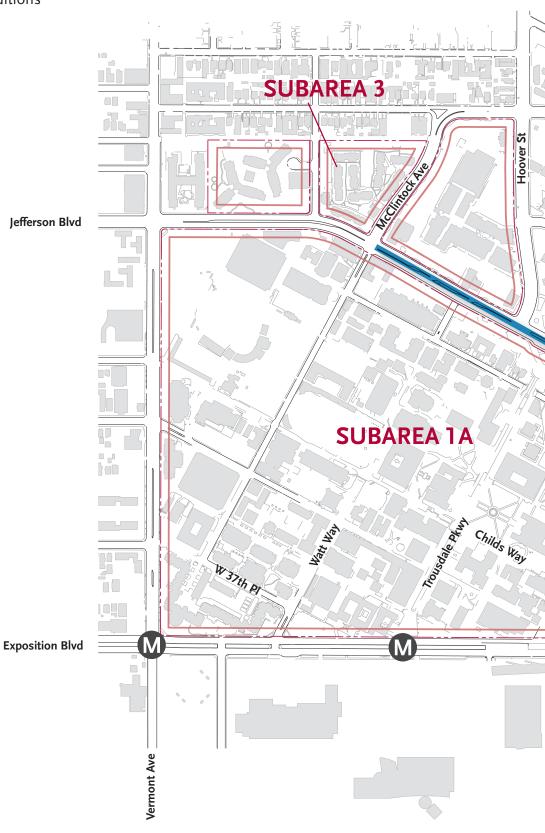




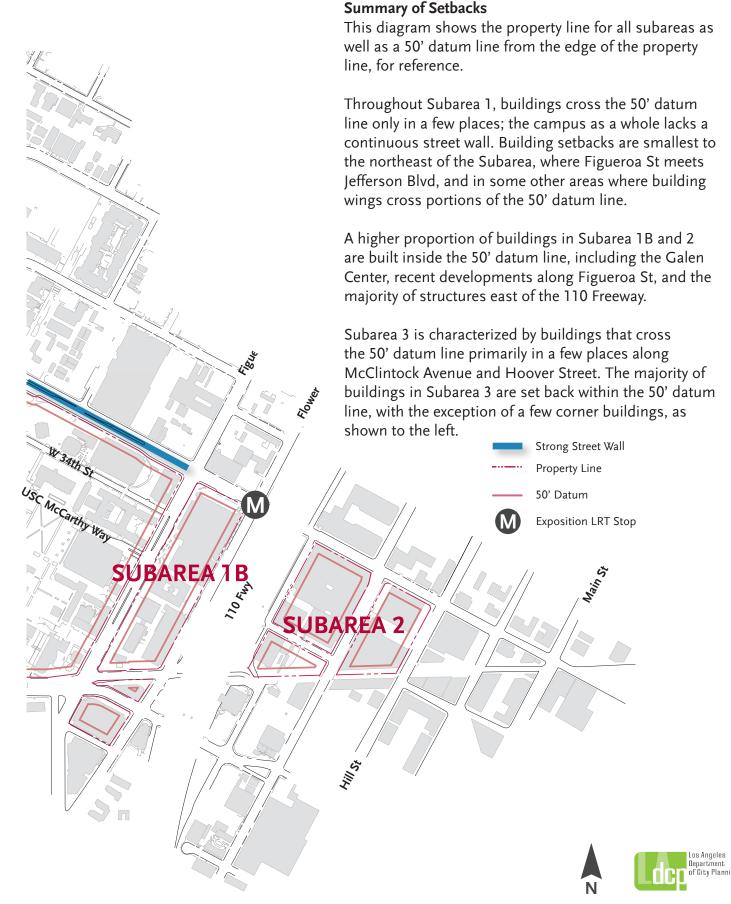


#### **SETBACKS ANALYSIS**

### **Existing Edge Conditions**







#### PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION AND OPEN SPACE



Within the USC campus, there are three hierarchies of pedestrian corridors. Childs Way, Trousdale Parkway, 34th Street and McClintock Avenue are primary corridors providing connections between activity areas inside campus and the campus edge. Secondary corridors feed into and are fed by primary corridors. Though accessible by pedestrians, tertiary pedestrian corridors are oriented more to the automobile.

There is a hierarchy of open space within the study area. Fields are primarily spaces for sports and other







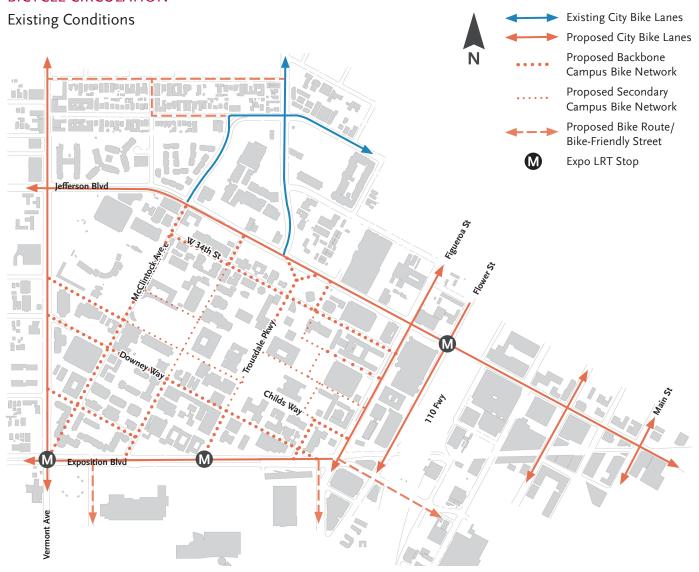
Green



Hardscape



#### **BICYCLE CIRCULATION**



forms of organized recreation. Greens include landscaped public space framed by buildings and may be characterized by quadrangles, courtyards or grassy areas. Plazas and other pedestrian paths constitute campus hardscape areas.

Bicyclists frequent the USC area; however, there are few existing bikeways surrounding the campus. The 2012 USC Bicycle Master Plan proposes a campus bicycle network consisting of two levels of hierarchy. A "Backbone" forms the main north/south and east/west corridors within the campus, while secondary routes increase connectivity by placing every campus building within one block of a bicycle route. There are also bike lanes proposed by the City of Los Angeles as part of its 2010 Master Plan.

Three light rail stops exist around campus: at Jefferson and Flower; at Exposition at Trousdale Parkway; and at Exposition and Vermont. The stop at Exposition and Trousdale Parkway (called "Expo Park/USC" on Metro maps) is highly used.



#### PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION AND OPEN SPACE



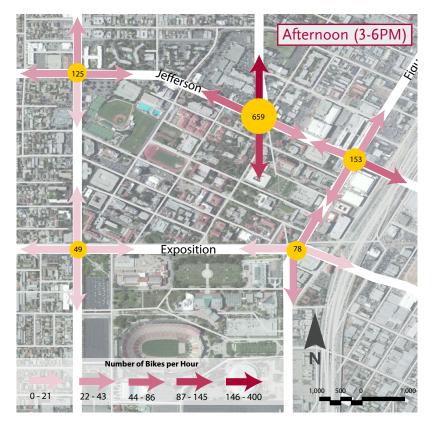


#### **BICYCLE VOLUMES**

**Bicycle Volumes Existing Conditions** 



The figures to the left show average hourly bicycle volumes during the morning and afternoon rush periods. The yellow circles are sized accordingly to show the intensity of cyclists riding against traffic or on the sidewalk. Source: 2012 USC Bicycle Master Plan/'12 USC School of Policy, Planning, and Development Bicycle Planning Studio.





#### JEFFERSON BOULEVARD ANALYSIS

**Existing Conditions: Summary** 



#### Street Trees

Street Trees exist along the majority of Jefferson Blvd from Royal Street to Vermont Avenue. From Royal to Hoover, a large number of trees in the median create ample shade for pedestrians entering campus. From Hoover to McClintock, trees continue at lower frequencies and shade is more limited. At McClintock and Jefferson, a large shade tree dominates the northwest corner. As Jefferson continues west from McClintock, shade trees again continue again at a much higher frequency. In a few cases along this stretch, trees are missing from planters. Species currently present include Jacaranda, Canary Island Pine, Lemon-Scented Gum, Southern Magnolia, Rusty-Leaf Fig, and Mexican Fan Palm.





#### **Street Lights**

Auto-oriented street lighting (lighting illuminating primarily the street, not the sidewalk) exists throughout this stretch of Jefferson at regular intervals. A few pedestrian-oriented street lights exist between Figueroa and Flower, adjacent to the Galen Center.



#### **Driveways**

Driveways dot this stretch of roadway, with the highest number occurring between Hoover and McClintock, where there are numerous parking lots and vehicular access points.



#### **Bus Stops**

Five bus stops are on this portion of Jefferson. Stops for westbound buses are at Hoover and McClintock, while stops for eastbound buses are at Vermont, McClintock, and just east of Hoover. Some bus stop locations have shelters.



#### **Access Points**

There are seven access points to campus along this stretch. Three access points are formally designated as campus entrances by USC: Entrance 4 at Royal and Jefferson; Entrance 5 at McClintock and Jefferson; and Entrance 8 between Vermont and Orchard. There are also three driveways--two for parking lots and one for campus exit only. Finally, there is one main pedestrian access point at Hoover and Jefferson, where University Walk meets the northern border of the campus. A few pedestrian and auto access points dot the northern side of Jefferson.



#### **Utility Cabinets**

Cabinets housing utility equipment are present at various places along Jefferson Boulevard.





#### Crosswalks

Four crosswalks currently exist along this stretch at Royal, Hoover, McClintock, and Vermont. The intersections at Hoover/Jefferson and McClintock/Jefferson currently have "scramble" crosswalks, which allow all-way pedestrian crossings during one phase of the signal cycle. The intersection at Royal/Jefferson currently has a crosswalk to the east side of the intersection, while the intersection at Vermont/Jefferson contains four crosswalks. Crosswalks exist at all signalized intersections.



#### Curb Radii

Curb corners on Jefferson from Vermont to Flower have a radius of approximately 25', with the exception of two instances. The northwest corner of McClintock and Jefferson and the northeast corner of Figueroa and Jefferson have radii of approximately 15'.



#### **Paving**

Sidewalk paving throughout this section of Jefferson is primarily concrete. In places, bricks flank tree planters, defining the sidewalk space. See "Sidewalk Widths" below for more information.



#### **On-Street Parking**

A number of on-street parking conditions exist: no parking, loading only, one hour metered, one hour pay-by-space, and four hour pay-by-space. In one metered section between Flower and Figueroa, there is a "peak hour" lane, where parking is prohibited during posted hours in the morning and afternoon. In pay-by-space sections of the street, parking is paid for at kiosks located on the sidewalk, not parking meters.





#### **Sidewalk Widths**

There are two types of sidewalk conditions present along the roadway. The most common type of sidewalk condition exhibits 10' of total sidewalk with a 3' rectilinear planter interspersed (the sidewalk narrows at planters). The second type of sidewalk condition is less prevalent, exhibiting an 8' sidewalk meandering around curvilinear planters.



#### **Building Setbacks**

From Royal to Vermont, buildings are set back at various distances from the street. The majority of Jefferson from Royal to Vermont is home to building frontages that are more than 50' from the street. A few locations are set back from the sidewalk at distances between 10' and 50'; only one stretch of buildings--from just east of McClintock westward--are set back at distances less than ten feet.

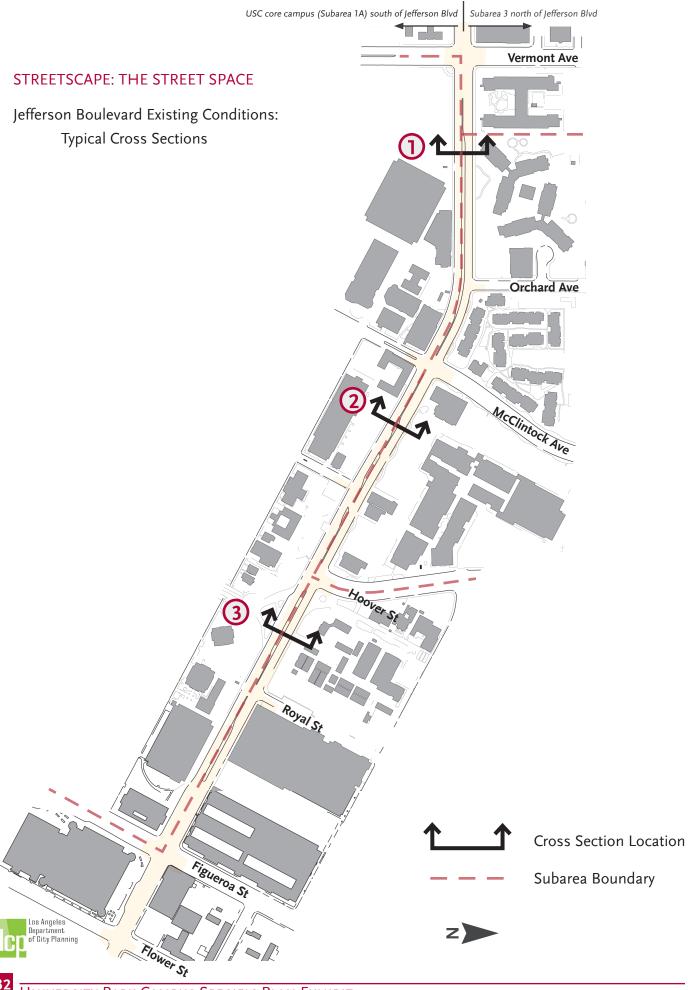
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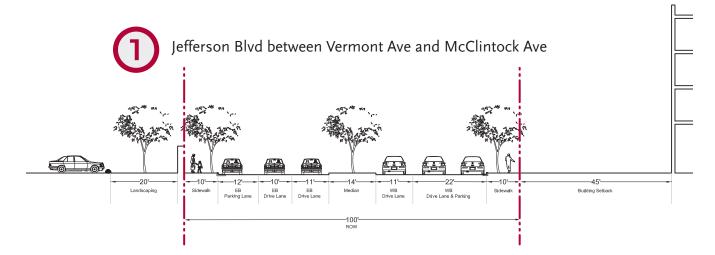




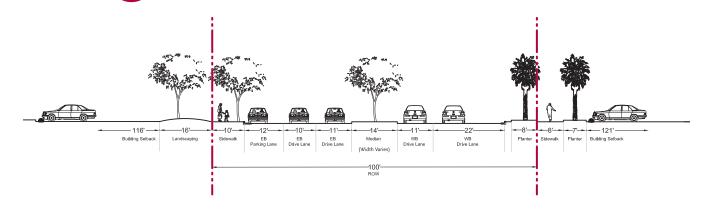




# Jefferson Boulevard Existing Conditions: Typical Cross Sections



2 Jefferson Blvd between McClintock Ave and Hoover St



3 Jefferson Blvd between Hoover St and Royal St

