

DRAFT

North Lake Specific Plan

1. Introduction
2. Background

Planning Commission Study Session

May 24, 2023

1. Introduction

The North Lake Specific Plan (NLSP) area serves as a primary northern gateway to the City. The plan area features a prominent north-south corridor connecting the historic residential neighborhoods of Historic Highlands, Washington Square, and Bungalow Heaven to the Metro Lake Station, the I-210 Freeway, and the Central District to the south. The plan area also includes portions of Orange Grove Boulevard, Washington Boulevard, and Villa Street, branching off North Lake Avenue. These intersections act as important commercial nodes and east-west connections for the plan area. Today, the NLSP is predominantly a commercial district whose character reflects the evolution of design and development trends over the past century of growth. However, with the adoption of the 2015 General Plan, there is an opportunity to incorporate low-medium scale residential development on infill sites throughout the area, while preserving and celebrating historically significant properties and architectural characteristics and supporting a more pedestrian-oriented streets environment.

This specific plan establishes the following vision statement for the NLSP area, which reflects ideas and feedback from a multi-phase community engagement effort between 2018 and 2021:

“North Lake Avenue will be a vibrant mixed-use corridor that provides housing opportunities, neighborhood-serving businesses, and amenities accessible to transit for residents, visitors, and employees. Development will respect the historical properties and neighborhoods that are located within the plan area and provide sensitive transitions to landmark and historic neighborhoods adjacent to the plan area.”

The NLSP presents an opportunity for this vision to be grounded in policy and practice, and for the City and community to work together in confronting planning challenges and envisioning the future of the North Lake area. In addition to an extensive public outreach and visioning process, the NLSP represents the outcome of a robust outreach process and technical planning and design effort, directly informed by the perspectives and expertise of community members, City staff, the Planning Commission, Design Commission, Northwest Commission, and the City Council.

1.1 Specific Plan Area

The NLSP area generally encompasses the area between Elizabeth Street to the north, Wilson Avenue to the east, Maple Street to the south and El Molino Avenue to the west (*Map 1.1-1 to be created following Study Session*). While the NLSP primarily regulates development along the Lake Avenue corridor, the standards and policies are influenced by, and intended to benefit the surrounding residential communities, including landmark and historic districts of Bungalow Heaven, Washington Square, and Historic Highlands.

1.2 Purpose

The NLSP sets out a plan to facilitate development and improvements to the Plan Area, that will ultimately help realize the community’s vision for North Lake Avenue. The NLSP optimizes land

uses to increase opportunities for financially feasible commercial and residential developments, and help ensure that new development, sidewalk improvements, and added amenities contribute positively to the pedestrian experience. The NLSP includes standards to protect historic resources and support existing elements of the area that provide a sense of place and distinct character, while providing contextual standards for new development.

Future redevelopment opportunities will focus on infill development and making incremental changes to the area's-built environment and land use mix. This document will be used by property and business owners, grant seeking nonprofits, developers, decision makers, and City staff as the regulations that will guide private and public development projects. While the specific plan introduces a framework and toolkit for designing and implement future developments, it does not mandate or accelerate any specific projects or immediate changes to the built environment.

1.3 Relationship to Other Documents

General Plan

The NLSP is one of eight Specific Plans that serve to implement the City's 2015 General Plan Land Use and Mobility Elements. The General Plan contains eight Guiding Principles and a series of goals and policies that demonstrate the relationship between land use and high-quality design, the arts and culture, sustainable infrastructure, a vital economy, exemplary public services, and public involvement and participation.

The NLSP mirrors and builds upon the General Plan's policies to achieve consistency with the General Plan's vision and guidance. It seeks to focus development around transit, create a pedestrian-oriented gathering place for surrounding neighborhoods near the Lake/Washington intersection, create a well-designed and vibrant corridor with a mix of uses that support multiple modes of travel. Projects that are consistent with the NLSP policies and development standards will in turn be consistent with the General Plan Guiding Principles, goals, and policies.

While the NLSP establishes an overall vision for North Lake Ave, the policies and standards herein apply specifically to private development and adjacent sidewalks. The NLSP serves as one of many complementary tools the City uses to implement the General Plan, and to meet sustainability goals through prioritization and guidance for private and public investments.

Summary of 2015 General Plan Guiding Principles:

1. Growth will be targeted to serve community needs and enhance the quality of life.
2. Pasadena's historic resources will be preserved.
3. Pasadena will be an economically vital city by providing jobs, services, revenues, and opportunities.
4. Pasadena will be a socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable community.
5. Pasadena will be a city where people can circulate without cars.
6. Pasadena will be a cultural, scientific, corporate, entertainment and education center for the region.
7. Community participation will be a permanent part of achieving a greater city.

8. Pasadena is committed to public education and a diverse educational system responsive to the broad needs of the community.

General Plan Goal 36: North Lake. “A well-designed and attractive corridor supporting multiple travel modes including transit, bicycling, and walking with clusters of distinctive places for shopping, dining, and living.”

36.1 Economic Vitality of the Avenue. Transform North Lake Avenue from a low-density strip commercial corridor to series of distinctive low- to medium-density, pedestrian oriented, mixed-use villages designed and scaled to transition with adjoining residential neighborhoods where residents and visitors can live, shop, work and be entertained.

36.2 Lake Transit Village. Provide for the development of higher intensity mix of retail, office, and multi-family housing uses in proximity to the Metro Gold Line station that expanded the customer base for local businesses and support Metro Gold Line ridership contributing to the reduction of vehicle trips, energy consumption, and GHG emissions.

36.3 Lake-Washington Neighborhood Village. Promote the development of additional commercial uses with housing and pedestrian-oriented plazas and amenities to establish a “village-like” environment where people shop, dine, meet friends, linger, and actively use public places.

36.4 Neighborhood Compatibility. Require that the types of use and location, scale, and design of development buffer commercial and mixed-use development on Lake Avenue from adjoining lower residential neighborhoods.

36.5 Transitional Heights and Setbacks. Protect adjacent Low Density Residential and Low-Medium Density Residential areas north of Orange Grove Boulevard, which contain a number of locally and nationally recognized historic properties and districts, from the development of mixed use or residential projects by requiring appropriate transitional heights. Mixed use or residential projects proposed in these locations shall be limited to no more than three stories in height abutting the Low and Low-Medium residential areas. Appropriate setbacks shall also be established in order to provide further protection.

36.6 Accessibility. Design Lake Avenue and Washington Boulevard as complete streets that accommodate transit, bicycle, and pedestrian use. Include wider sidewalks, public plazas, bike lanes, and bicycle parking.

Previous North Lake Avenue Specific Plan

The NLSP builds on many of the objectives from the original 1997 NLSP (amended in 2007) with updated goals, policies, land use regulations and development standards that address current and future current needs, opportunities, and challenges. The previous Plan’s aspirations for Lake Avenue to grow beyond its role as a major north/south mobility corridor and meet its full potential as a thriving center of activity for residents of surrounding neighborhoods remain integral to the goals, policies, and standards of the NLSP update. This update of the NLSP further supports the goals and policies set forth in the General Plan.

Zoning Code

The Pasadena Municipal Code (PMC) is one of the primary tools for implementing the City's General Plan. Specifically, Title 17 of the PMC, or the Zoning Code Section, describes allowable land uses, development standards, and permit requirements for each zoning district in the City. The zoning districts and associated land use regulations and development standards established by the NLSP will be codified in the Zoning Code.

Design Guidelines for Neighborhood Commercial & Multi-Family Districts

The Design Guidelines for Neighborhood Commercial & Multi-Family Districts (October 2009) supplement the design-related goals and policies of the General Plan Land Use Element and offer more direction for proceeding with the design of a project. The guidelines illustrate options, solutions, and techniques to achieve the goal of excellence in new design specifically for commercial, residential, and mixed-use buildings that are subject to design review. The guidelines are not zoning regulations or development standards, but rather performance goals that apply to areas within the City that do not have detailed guidelines or supplement existing guidelines, including those in the NLSP.

Sign Design Guidelines

The Sign Design Guidelines provide guidance in the way signs are designed, constructed, and placed in order to further implement the purposes of Chapter 17.72 (Sign Regulations) of PMC. The guidelines are intended to provide good examples of techniques that should be used in order to meet the City's expectations for quality business signage to be applied during the City's design review process or the approval of a discretionary land use permit.

Bicycle Transportation Action Plan

The Department of Transportation's Bicycle Transportation Action Plan (BTAP) (August 2015) provides specific goals, objectives, actions, and timeframes for creating an environment (1) where people circulate without a car, (2) that significantly increases the number of people who commute by bike, (3) that increases the number of people who commute by bike, (3) that increases the number of people who use a bike for utilitarian trips, fitness and recreation, and (4) that provides business and economic benefits for the City. The BTAP provides details for a network of bikeways so that every neighborhood is within ¼ mile of an effective bicycle route and funding strategies to implement the plan. The NLSP area contains a portion of the BTAP's Villa Street buffered bike lane or cycle track route that stretches from Champlain Avenue to Hill Avenue. While outside of the plan area, a bicycle lane running east-west on Washington Boulevard from Forest Avenue to El Molino Avenue are located immediately west of the plan area boundaries. The NLSP also supports the BTAP through promoting enhanced sidewalks that allocate space for bicycle parking and supporting bicycle infrastructure within the plan area.

Pasadena North Lake Avenue Traffic & Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Plan

The North Lake Avenue Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Project was programmed by the City of Pasadena to focus on enhancing traffic and pedestrian safety along North Lake Avenue Between Maple and Mountain Streets. The segment length of 0.6 mile-long is intended to

identify concerns and opportunities to enhance traffic and walkability along the corridor. The project team has engaged in several efforts to understand the existing nuances of the corridor. Such efforts include examining and analyzing roadway characteristics, traffic volumes, and collisions. The Plan is consistent with the Pasadena General Plan goals of creating a pedestrian-friendly environment and enhancing the streetscape. As the project prioritizes access for people of differing abilities by providing more accessible pedestrian crossings and maintaining curb access for paratransit users, it is consistent with the goals of the Complete Streets Act of California.

Greenways Feasibility Study

Building upon the efforts of the 2015 Mobility Element and associated Bicycle Transportation Action Plan, the City of Pasadena commissioned a detailed feasibility study to further develop improvements on four north-south bicycle boulevard corridors, or Greenways. The study evaluates traffic calming features based on existing traffic conditions, bicycle level of traffic stress, vehicle level of service, and cost of corridor improvements, and proposes planning level concept plans for each Greenway. Two of the Greenways identified are El Molino Avenue and Wilson Avenue, located a quarter mile to the west and east of Lake Avenue, respectively. On El Molino Avenue parallel to the NLSP area, the study proposes Class III bicycle boulevard using “sharrow” markings and offset edge islands to create traffic-calming chicanes. On Wilson Avenue parallel to the NLSP area, the study proposes a Class III bicycle boulevard using “sharrow” markings, mid-block traffic-calming islands and diverters, and painted bike intersection crossings at Orange Grove Boulevard. Both of these north-south greenways would connect to buffered bike lanes on the I-210 overcrossings, improving bicycle access to the Central District and the two-way cycle track along Union Street.

Pasadena Street Design Guide

The Department of Transportation’s Pasadena Street Design Guide (March 2017) implements the 2015 General Plan Mobility Element Complete Streets Policy, including the following goals and objective: (1) Streets should reflect neighborhood character and accommodate all users; (2) Complete Streets should accommodate all users such as pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit, skateboarders and scooter; and (3) Streets should reflect individual neighborhood character and needs, and support healthy activities such as walking and bicycling. The NLSP references the Street Design Guide as it applies to sidewalks, parkways, and street trees, which fall under Chapter 5 (Public Realm) of the NLSP.

Master Street Tree Plan

The Department of Public Works’ Master Street Tree Plan serves as the guiding document that designates the official tree species to be planted on a block-by-block basis throughout the City. The NLSP references the Master Street Tree Plan in Appendix A.2 (Design Guidance for Tree Selection) to guide discussions between the City and community when updating the Master Street Tree Plan for the area. Appendix A.2 includes a description of the existing street trees along North Lake Avenue within the plan area, followed by recommendations for potential new species.

Pasadena Climate Action Plan

The Pasadena Climate Action Plan (CAP) (March 2018) provides a strategic framework measuring, planning, and reducing the City's share of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions with the goal of reducing emissions by more than half by the year 2035. The NLSP supports the CAP and the identified strategies to reduce GHG through sustainable land use and pedestrian infrastructure as well as urban greening, which are addressed in Chapter 4 (Land Use), Chapter 5 (Public Realm), and Appendix A.2 (design Guidance for Tree Selection).

1.4 Planning Process & Outreach

1.4.1 Our Pasadena Program

The General Plan is a document that outlines the community's vision for Pasadena over the next 20 years. As an overall visioning document, the General Plan's goals and policies are implemented in various ways, including Specific Plans. *Our Pasadena – Putting the Plan in Motion* is the City's General Plan implementation program. Focused on updating Pasadena's Zoning Code and establishing neighborhood-specific design and land-use goals for the City's eight Specific Plans: Central District, East Colorado, East Pasadena, Fair Oaks/Orange Grove, Lamanda Park, Lincoln Avenue, North Lake, and South Fair Oaks.

The NLSP is informed by a thorough planning and public outreach process led by the City's Planning & Community Development Department, and supported by a consultant team of urban planners, urban designers, outreach specialists, economists, architects, and landscape architects. The planning process also involved coordination with staff from Pasadena's department of Public Works, Transportation, Economic Department, Northwest Programs, and Accessibility Coordinator.

1.4.2 Public Outreach

Throughout the planning process, the City solicited input from residents, property owners, businesses, community leaders, and other stakeholder groups through a variety of outreach events, public meetings, and online engagement tools. The following list provides a summary of public outreach methods, workshops, meetings, and hearings, and an overview of key recurring feedback themes from the outreach process.

Community-Wide Open Houses

March 2018

In 2018, the City initiated the Our Pasadena Program to review and update the City's eight specific plan areas. The program's primary objective was to establish neighborhood-specific goals and policies resulting in a refined set of permitted uses, residential densities, and development standards and guidelines that will shape the built environment along the City's major commercial and mixed-use areas within the eight planning areas in accordance with the City's General Plan and Guiding Principles. The program kicked-off with a series of open houses to introduce the program and solicit feedback on the general vision on each of the eight specific plan areas, including North Lake Avenue.

Round 1 Workshop

June 21, 2018

In the Round 1 Workshop, the Planning & Community Development Department facilitate a listening and learning session to find out more about participants' experience living and/or working in, or visiting the NLSP area, and their ideas for how the NLSP could improve the area. The workshop began with a brief interactive visioning activity, and an introductory presentation on the NLSP Update program, the General Plan vision for the NLSP area, and background information. For the majority of the workshop, participants were divided into small groups with facilitated discussions on specific topics such as appropriate land uses and housing types, streetscape and public amenities, and mobility and parking. The main objective of the workshop was to solicit feedback from the community, rather than reach consensus on any particular topic. This workshop was followed by a second online survey.

Community Walking Tour

April 6, 2019

The Planning & Community Development Department hosted a one-mile walking tour of the NLSP area, starting at the corner of Washington Boulevard and El Molino Avenue and ended at the Santa Catalina Branch Library. Participants wrote comments on walking tour worksheets as they walked east along Washington Boulevard, then north up Lake Avenue, and back down to Washington Boulevard. At the end of the tour, participants identified specific locations on large maps with image cards depicting desired uses. The following represents major themes that emerged during the walking tour: Residential Development, Washington Theater, Washington Boulevard/Lake Avenue intersection, Active Sidewalks and Storefronts, Pedestrian Experience, Automotive Uses, and Parking Requirements.

Round 2 Workshop

May 30, 2019

The Planning & Community Development Department hosted a second community workshop to present preliminary land use and urban form concepts that considered a number of factors, including community feedback received since the first workshop. Input received helped to refine these concepts and guide the drafting of goals, policies, and development standards. In an opening icebreakers activity, participants were able to reaffirm what we heard so far from the community by placing stickers next to those comments. Next, City staff gave a PowerPoint presentation covering background information on the program, an overview of the existing Specific Plan area, emerging themes and draft vision, and preliminary concepts. Lastly, participants broke out into small groups to discuss the preliminary concepts. Each table reported back to the large group with a summary of the main points.

Round 3 Virtual Open House

October 2020 - March 2022

(Live Webinar: October 15, 2020)

For the third and final round of community workshops, the Planning & Community Development Department hosted an interactive virtual open house website and live webinar. Through an introductory presentation and a series of informational materials, staff presented the refined NLSP vision and concept, along with full draft standards for the Land Use, Public Realm, and Development & Design chapters of the plan. Participants were encouraged to provide detailed input through an online survey, and to submit questions in the Q&A portion of the live webinar event. While the community was unable to gather in person due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the virtual platform was available 24/7 for an extended period of time, allowing participants to visit and provide feedback at their pace and convenience, as well as download materials and share the open house site with family, friends, and neighbors.

Northwest Commission & Design Commission Meetings

April 13, 2021 & May 18, 2021

Following the Round 3 Webinar, the Planning & Community Development Department presented at the Northwest Commission and Design Commission in Spring of 2021 to solicit feedback on the preliminary draft of the NLSP, respond to clarifying questions from commissioners, and discuss various issues to be considered in the development of standards, policies, and implementation strategies for the next draft of the plan.

Planning Commission Meetings – TBD

Section to be completed after Planning Commission meetings

City Council Hearing – TBD

Section to be completed after City Council meeting

Summary of Mailings & Promotional Materials

In addition to these public outreach events and workshops, the Planning & Community Development Department has advertised the NLSP and provided updates through the following platforms and publications:

- Mailers to property owners, occupants, and renters within the NLSP area and within 500 feet of the NLSP area boundaries
- E-mailing list for program newsletter subscribers
- OurPasadena Program website
- OurPasadena and Citywide social media accounts
- Council District Newsletters
- City of Pasadena InFocus
- Local Press Coverage

What We heard

Participants shared a wide range of input throughout the outreach process, including the following recurring themes:

- Reinforce the North Lake Avenue and Washington Boulevard intersection as a focal point of community activity offering a variety of commercial uses, housing options, and public gathering spaces to foster a stronger sense of place and more pleasant walking environment.
- Encourage the adaptive reuse of existing residential buildings between Claremont and Mountain Street for compatible uses, while allowing for a mix of residential and commercial uses.
- Encourage new development that is consistent with the existing character and design in this area.
- Provide opportunities for the development of higher intensity commercial and residential uses with public gathering spaces south of Orange Grove Boulevard with increased access to the Metro Lake Station and improved walkability.
- Enhance the aesthetics and design of new development through strengthen design and development standards, including provisions for building form transitions sensitive to adjacent single-family residential neighborhoods and historic landmark districts.
- Incorporate active ground-floor uses and pedestrian-oriented design treatments along North Lake Avenue and intersecting streets that support a more vibrant street atmosphere, increase greenery and better connect the corridor with surrounding neighborhoods.
- Recognize the importance of the area’s historic and cultural resources and utilize them as the basis for strengthening the district identify for North Lake Avenue.
- Continue to provide opportunities for new housing that complements existing uses and adjacent neighborhoods, with an emphasis on housing that is affordable for people who work in the community.
- Enhance North Lake Avenue’s streetscape to support safe pedestrian and bicycling, and use of public transportation.
- Encourage the development of increased housing options that supports affordable housing.

1.4.3 Environmental Clearance

In the 2015 Pasadena General Plan update, the City prepared a programmatic General Plan Environmental Impact Report (GP EIR) to analyze potential citywide impacts, broad policy alternatives, and programmatic mitigation measures associated with the update of the General Plan and specific plan amendments. An Addendum to the GP EIR was prepared to address potential site-specific environmental impacts associated with the update to the NLSP.

Per the GP EIR, future discretionary review may rely on the analysis provided in the GP EIR for the purpose of tiering and/or streamlining. The purpose of tiering is to use the analysis of general matters contained in a broader EIR (such as the GP EIR) with later California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents on narrower or more site-specific projects. Tiering serves to reduce repetitive analysis and provide subsequent site-specific analysis at a time when it is meaningful.

1.5 Specific Plan Organization

The NLSP is organized into seven chapters and multi appendices, as described below.

Ch.1 – Introduction

This chapter presents the purpose of the NLSP and outlines the planning outreach process. It also discusses the relationship of the NLSP to other planning documents and introduces the 2015 General Plan Guiding Principles, goals, and policies that inform the NLSP.

Ch.2 – Background

This chapter provides additional historical context for the NLSP area and identifies challenges and opportunities within the plan area's existing conditions.

Ch.3 – Vision, Goals, & Policies

This chapter establishes the overall vision for the NLSP area, and specific visions for the subareas. The vision is followed by goals and policies by subarea and topic.

Ch.4- Zoning & Land Use

This chapter introduces the zoning districts for the NLSP and establishes the types of land uses allowed for potential new development within each zoning district.

Ch.5 – Public Realm Standards

This chapter presents standards and guidelines for the public realm adjacent to new development, including sidewalks, parkways, and street trees.

Ch. 6 – Development Standards

This chapters presents standards and guidelines for development of private property, including allowable densities and heights, as well as required setbacks, open space, and parking standards.

Ch. 7 – Implementation & Administration

This chapter presents implementation actions and responsibilities, and potential programming and funding opportunities to bring the NLSP vision to life.

Appendix

The NLSP includes two appendices:

A.1 – Definitions provides a glossary of land use planning urban design terminology used throughout the document.

A.2 – Design Guidance for Tree Selection supplements the public realm standards and guidelines introduced in Chapter 4 with a detailed overview of existing street tree conditions, and recommendations for tree species to be incorporated in future updates to the Department of Public Works' Master Street Tree Plan.

2. Background

2.1 Community and Historic Context

From its origin as a burro trail in the 1860s, Lake Avenue today serves as a primary northern gateway to the City, and a central north/south thoroughfare connecting Pasadena's historic residential neighborhoods of Historic Highlands, Washington Square, and Bungalow Heaven to the Metro L Line Lake Station, the I-210 Freeway, and the Central District to the south.

Residential development from the early 20th Century began north of the NLSP area, gradually extending south to Villa Street. Commercial development soon followed, and by the 1920s, the Lake/Washington intersection was an important retail center serving surrounding neighborhoods.

Once containing large tracts that were filled with citrus trees or vineyards, properties along Lake Avenue were subdivided in the early 20th Century to accommodate housing for the growing population. In the 1920s, zoning districts were established citywide, with residential uses allowed along North Lake Avenue. The original zoning districts allowed for the development of residential bungalow courts, four-family flats, and single-family housing along Lake Avenue, while commercial development was limited to the intersections at Maple Street, Orange Grove Boulevard, and Washington Boulevard. Economic growth and increased vehicle access supported the expansion of commercial uses from Orange Grove Boulevard to Maple Street in the southern portion of the NLSP area, and between Claremont Street and Elizabeth Street at the northern portion of the NLSP area. By the 1960s, the residential area between Claremont Street and Orange Grove Boulevard was zoned for neighborhood commercial uses. During the 1980s, more intense commercial uses were permitted in the portion south of Mountain Street to Orange Grove Boulevard. Many of the original residential structures in the neighborhood commercial portion remain, but have since been adapted for commercial uses.

In 1997, the City Council approved the North Lake Specific Plan, which articulated a vision of a thriving integrated area of commercial, residential, cultural, recreational, and civic activities, featuring a diverse array of shops, services, residential developments, and neighborhood gathering spaces. The Specific Plan implemented the 1994 General Plan vision for the area and placed focus on revitalizing North Lake Avenue, building neighborhood identity and creating community cohesion. Areas within the corridor were identified for mixed-use development and aimed to promote a pedestrian friendly environment. Notably, the 1997 NLSP shifted away from auto-oriented uses by prohibiting new drive-through services and new eating establishments with take-out service. The NLSP was amended in 2007 to revise the zoning district boundaries and designations for several parcels within the NLSP, however amendments did not introduce any changes to the overall plan vision or policies.

The 2015 General Plan Update maintains a primarily mixed-use environment throughout the NLSP area, with the exception of a commercial-only designation along Lake Avenue between Orange Grove Boulevard and parcels just north of Mountain Street, and an institutional designation on the Lake Avenue Church site on the northwest corner of Lake Avenue and Maple Street. Initiated in 2020, the Pasadena North Lake Avenue Traffic & Pedestrian Safety

Enhancement Plan includes infrastructure improvements for pedestrians and bus riders in portions of the NLSP area along Lake Avenue between Mountain Street and Maple Street. Implementation of the Safety Enhancement Plan is in progress at the time of the NLSP update.

North Lake Avenue Timeline

1860-1930

- Originally called Lake Vineyard Avenue, which connected Benjamin Wilson's Lake Vineyard Ranch with the mountains in the 1860s. By 1875, land along Lake Avenue was subdivided into lots with residential and small citrus groves.
- In 1893, the Mount Lowe Railway is constructed and becomes a tourist attraction as the "Most Scenic Mountain Railway in the World".
- Early homes are built in typical American styles of the period. Most homes utilize the plentiful 'arroyo stone' sourced from the nearby Arroyo Seco river.
- Zoning districts are established in the 1920s, with North Lake Avenue designated for housing. Commercial development is initially limited to the intersections at Maple Street, Orange Grove Boulevard, and Washington Boulevard.
- *C.C. Loury House (397 N. Catalina Ave) is constructed in 1901.*
- *Washington Theater Building (851 E. Washington Blvd) is constructed in 1924.*
- *Oversen Building (1347 N Lake Ave) is constructed in 1925.*
- *Eberle Mortuary Building (817 E Orange Grove Blvd) is constructed in 1926.*

1930-1970

- In 1930, commercial uses are permitted to extend from Orange Grove Boulevard to Maple Street and from Claremont Street to Elizabeth Street.
- The Lake-Washington area becomes the focal point of commercial uses that serving the surrounding neighborhoods.
- After World War II, Lake Avenue is rezoned to allow for more intensive development.
- In the 1960s, residential areas between Claremont Street and Orange Grove Boulevard are zoned for neighborhood commercial uses.
- *Santa Catalina Library (999 E. Washington Blvd) is constructed in 1930.*
- *Lake Avenue Church (434 Maple Way) is constructed in 1951.*

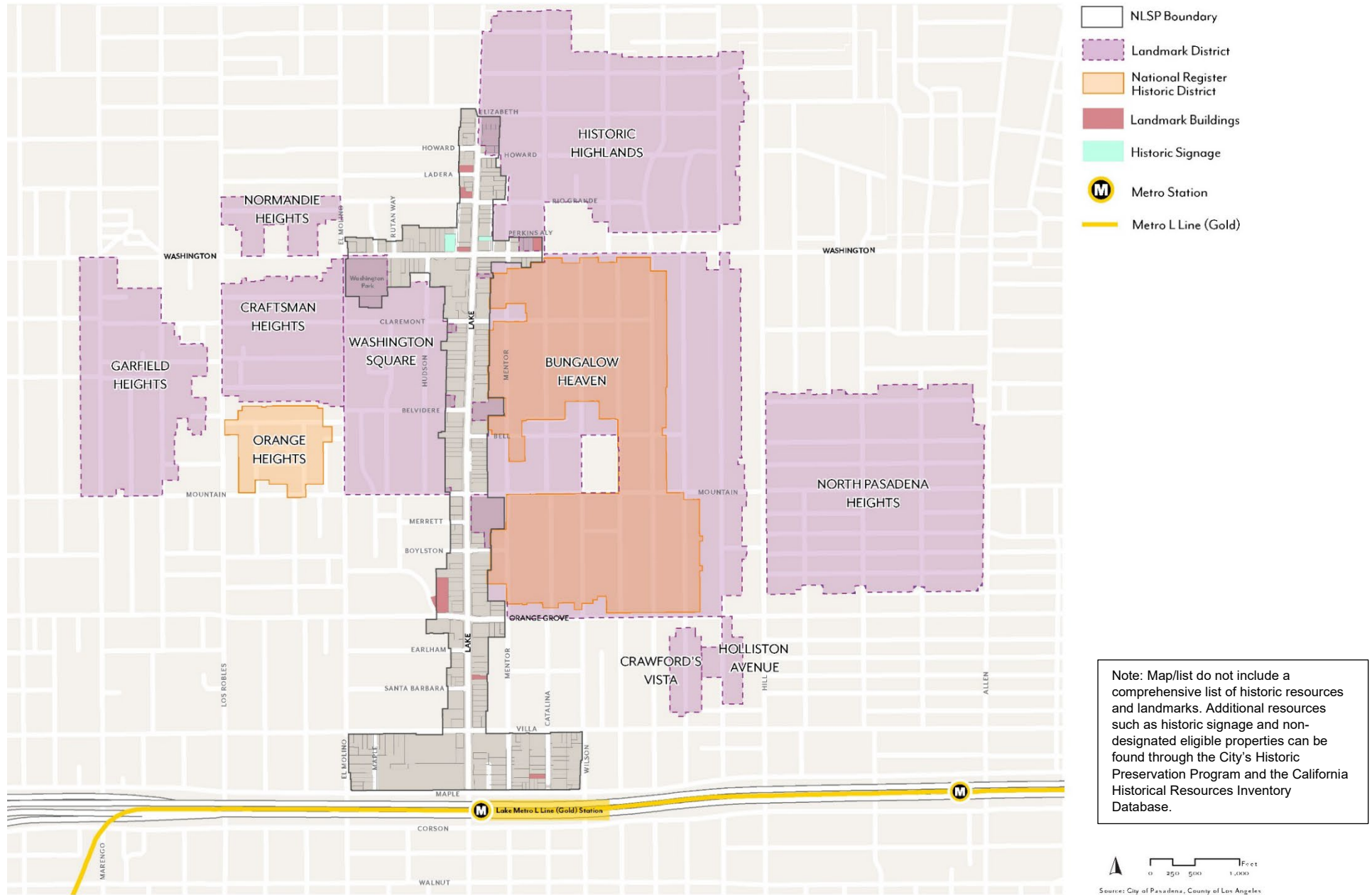
1970-2000

- Lake Avenue continues to change throughout the 1970s and 1980s, predominantly toward larger-scale, auto-oriented commercial and institutional uses, with some multi-family residential development.
- In the 1980s, larger commercial uses are permitted in the area south of Mountain Street to Orange Grove Boulevard.
- The North Lake Historic Survey is completed for the plan area in 1995.
- The first North Lake Specific Plan is adopted in 1997, with a focus on creating a pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented mixed-use district with businesses to serve the surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- *LA County Public Social Services Pasadena District building (955 N Lake Ave) is constructed in 1983.*
- *La Villa Lake Apartments (1070 N Lake Ave) are constructed in 1973.*
- *North Lake Square Shopping Center (1239 N Lake Ave) is constructed in 1986.*

2000-Present

- Metro L Line (Gold) begins service on July 26, 2003, including Lake Avenue station just south of the NLSP area.
- Limited development occurs overall in the NLSP area. Some commercial development occurs surrounding the intersection of Lake Avenue and Orange Grove Boulevard, and a multifamily residential property is developed at the intersection of Lake Avenue and Rio Grande Street.
- The Our Pasadena Specific Plan Update process begins in 2018.
- In 2020, the North Lake Avenue Traffic & Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Plan is initiated to provide mobility and safety enhancements to the streetscape along North Lake Avenue between Maple Street and Mountain Street.
- *Pasadena Accessible Apartments (915 E Rio Grande St) are constructed in 2003*
- *Goodwill Southern California Boutique and Donation Center (703 N Lake Ave) is constructed in 2005*
- *Walgreens Drug Store (670 N Lake Ave) is constructed in 2006*

NLSP Designated Historic Resources



Locally Designated Landmark Buildings	
Resource Name	Address
Saunders House	580 N Lake Avenue
Reynolds & Eberle Mortuary*	825 E. Orange Grove Boulevard
C.C. Loury House	397 N. Catalina Avenue
Oversen Building	1347 N. Lake Avenue
Santa Catalina Library	999 E. Washington Boulevard
Commercial Building	1445 N. Lake Avenue
Breiner House**	1495 N. Lake Avenue

Historic Signs	
Resource Name	Address
Washington Theater*	851 E. Washington Boulevard
Crown Hotel and Restaurant Supply Co.	1368 N. Lake Avenue

Historic and Landmark Districts
Bungalow Heaven
Historic Highlands
Washington Square

* Appears eligible for listing in the National Register

** Determined eligible for listing in the National Register

Other Properties Identified in Historic Resources Survey
Individual Property that is listed or designated locally
1101 N. Lake
1540 N. Lake
1550 N. Lake
580 N. Lake
731 E. Washington
867 E. Washington
Appears to be individually eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation
1007 E. Maple
1027 N. Lake
1037 N. Lake
1046 E. Villa
1052 Villa
1062 E. Villa
1072 E. Villa
1112 N. Lake
1136 N. Lake

1154 N. Lake
1159 - 69 N. Lake
1200 N. Lake
1212 N. Lake
1353 -59 N. Lake
1374 - 86 N. Lake
1389 Prime Ct
1399 -1401 N. Lake
1403 N. Lake
1415 -19 N. Lake
1445 - 49 N. Lake
1530 N. Lake
26 E. Washington
378 N. El Molino
386 N. Mentor
387 N. Catalina
387 N. Wilson
388 N. El Molino
392 N. Mentor
395 Maple Way
397 N. Catalina
399 N. Mentor
400 N. El Molino
407 Maple Way
407 N. Mentor
410 N. El Molino
411 Maple Way
414 N. Catalina
416 N. El Molino
417 N. Mentor
419 Maple Way
420 N. Mentor
425 Maple Way
426 N. El Molino
429 N. Catalina
429 N. Mentor
433 Maple Way
433 N. Catalina
445 N Wilson
446 N. Catalina
450 N. El Molino
454 N. El Molino
458 N. Mentor
565 N. Lake
620 N. Lake
662 E. Villa
674 E. Villa

678 E. Villa
688 E. Villa
69 Washington
691 E. Washington
698 E. Villa
707 E. Maple
712 E. Villa
717 N. Lake
720 E. Villa
726 E. Villa
740 N. Lake
744 E. Villa
766 N. Lake
774 N. Lake
817 E. Washington
827 Washington
883 N. Lake
956 E. Villa
962 E. Villa
963 E. Maple
979 E. Washington
987 Washington
988 E. Washington
989 E. Maple
999 E. Washington
Contributor to a district that is listed or designated locally
1251 N. Mentor
1261 N. Mentor
1269 N. Mentor
1275 N. Mentor
1285 N. Mentor
1291 N. Mentor
1303 N. Mentor
1365 - 73 N. Mentor
1379 - 81 N. Mentor
1385 N. Mentor
1393 N. Mentor
1401 N. Mentor
1409 N. Mentor
1417 N. Mentor
1425 N. Mentor
1000 N. Lake
1010 N. Lake
960 N. Lake
966 N. Lake
982 N. Lake
990 N. Lake

Appears to be a contributor to a district that appears eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation

539 N. Lake

2.2 Existing Land Uses, Urban Form, & Public Realm

Washington Neighborhood

Land Use and Urban Form

The Washington Neighborhood subarea serves as a northern entrance to both the City and the NLSF area, extending from the Specific Plan's northern boundary at Elizabeth Street, south to Claremont Street, and along Washington Boulevard between El Molino and Catalina Avenues. The subarea is focused around the neighborhood-serving commercial node at the intersection of Lake Avenue and Washington Boulevard, with commercial office, retail, and restaurant uses occupying a variety of building typologies.

While the Santa Catalina Library, the Washington Theater building, and several traditional retail storefronts reflect the subarea's early pre-1940 development, Washington Neighborhood includes an eclectic variety of mid-to-late 20th-century and early-2000s development. Lake Avenue's somewhat fragmented and inconsistent built form reflects its competing functions as both a major thoroughfare and neighborhood-serving commercial corridor. Many commercial uses in the subarea feature parking in the rear, with sidewalk-oriented entrances that activate and provide passive surveillance to the streetscape. Other buildings have blank walls and poor transparency along the sidewalk that detract from the pedestrian-friendly design. In contrast with the subarea's sidewalk-facing storefronts, the North Lake Square Shopping Center serves as the most prominent example of the subarea's auto-oriented strip mall developments, containing approximately three acres of surface parking on the southwest corner of Lake Avenue and Washington Boulevard. Aside from the strip malls, commercial buildings along Lake Avenue are typically built to the sidewalk without a setback. Residential uses in the subarea are typically single-family homes featuring substantial grass lawn setbacks of 20 feet or greater. Buildings within the subarea are generally one to two stories in height, with a few exceptions such as the three-story apartments attached to the Washington Theater building.

Public Realm and Open Space

Like its urban form, Washington Neighborhood's public realm features a variety of conditions reflecting an evolution of planning priorities and development styles over the past century. Sidewalk widths and conditions are generally adequate for pedestrian travel, and street trees are frequent and large enough to provide visual enhancement and shade. However, the public realm offers inconsistent amenities and attention to pedestrian comfort and experience, particularly for an area with predominantly neighborhood-serving commercial uses. The Washington Neighborhood subarea is not located within the boundaries of the North Lake Avenue Traffic & Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Plan.

Sidewalk widths in the subarea are generally 10 to 12 feet along both Lake Avenue and Washington Boulevard, with some exceptions. Sections of sidewalk on both sides of Lake Avenue between Washington Boulevard and Rio Grande Street have been extended to approximately 18 feet in width, accommodating additional space for parkways and tree plantings. Parkway widths in the subarea are typically 5 feet, however some parkways along Lake Avenue north of Washington Boulevard feature irregular parkway widths of 1-3 feet, and

up to 10 feet on extended sidewalk segments. Most parkways include grass, street trees, and occasional landscaping elements.

Street tree canopy in the subarea is most consistent along Lake Avenue in the block south of Washington Boulevard, where sidewalk street trees are complemented by additional street trees along a landscaped street median. Most trees planted along other portions of Lake Avenue in the subarea are mature enough to provide intermittent shade coverage on both sides of the street, however street trees and associated shade coverage is much less consistent along Lake Avenue north of Rio Grande Street, particularly on the west side of the street. Sidewalks along Washington Boulevard within the subarea are consistently planted with columns of palm trees, which do not provide shade canopy for pedestrians despite framing the street with striking visual effect.

At bus stops, riders can typically find benches and trash receptacles, however the only covered bus shelter in the subarea is located at the corner of Lake Avenue and Claremont Street. Sidewalk lighting is provided through ornately designed pedestrian-scale streetlamps. Signalized intersections offer pedestrian crossing opportunities along Lake Avenue at Rio Grande Street, Washington Boulevard, and Claremont Street. Other than the Lake Avenue intersection, there are no marked pedestrian crossing opportunities along Washington Boulevard within the NLSP area, other than El Molino Avenue at the western edge of the subarea (1,400 feet from Lake Avenue), and Catalina Avenue at the eastern edge of the subarea (750 feet from Lake Avenue).

The 5-acre Washington Park, located at the intersection of Washington Boulevard and El Molino Avenue, provides ample green space along with playground equipment, basketball and tennis courts, and a softball diamond. There are currently no other public plazas, pocket parks, or smaller public gathering spaces.

Mixed-Use Corridor

Land Use and Urban Form

The Mixed-Use Corridor subarea encompasses the section of Lake Avenue between Claremont Street to the north and Mountain Street to the south. The subarea has a predominantly residential character, comprising a mix of single-family and multi-family residential uses, however small commercial uses are also located throughout the subarea, many of which occupy formerly residential structures. The scale and form of the subarea's development reflects the historic character of neighboring Bungalow Heaven and Washington Square historic residential districts.

The subarea is characterized by a variety of historic architectural styles, low building heights, and large landscaped setbacks. The north/south block lengths are long and comprised of mostly small lots with approximately 45 feet of frontage and shallow depths, reflecting the early 1900s subdivisions intended for residential use. One- and two-story single-family residential buildings that remain include California Bungalow (Craftsman), Spanish Colonial Revival/Spanish Eclectic, and Minimal Traditional styles that were popular from the 1900s through the 1940s.

Greater variation to the subarea's urban form is introduced south of Belvidere Street. The most notable exception to the subarea's design character is the Los Angeles County Social Services

building, which is one of the subarea's few three-story structures, and features high level windows and blank walls facing Lake Avenue.

Public Realm and Open Space

The subarea's public realm includes mature street trees that provide high-quality shade in some segments but are inconsistent, in part due to the prevalence of driveways. Sidewalk widths within the subarea along North Lake Avenue are typically between 10 to 12 feet, with approximately half of the sidewalk width dedicated to grass parkway. Decorative brick paving and street trees are incorporated in sidewalk extensions toward the southern end of the subarea, but are too inconsistent to provide to create a cohesive public realm character. Bus stops on either side of Lake Avenue at Belvidere Street provide a sheltered bench and trash receptacles. Sidewalk lighting is provided through ornately designed pedestrian-scale streetlamps. The Mixed-Use Corridor subarea is not located within the boundaries of the North Lake Avenue Traffic & Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Plan.

In addition to signalized pedestrian crossings at the northern and southern boundaries of the subarea (Claremont Street and Mountain Street) the only opportunity for pedestrians to cross Lake Avenue within the subarea is at Belvidere Street, located 1,000 feet from the nearest crossing in either direction. Given Lake Avenue's 75-foot street width, the lack of dedicated crossing opportunities presents accessibility challenges for pedestrians in the subarea.

Commercial Corridor

Land Use and Urban Form

The Commercial Corridor subarea encompasses the section of Lake Avenue between Mountain Street to the north and Orange Grove Boulevard to the south. The subarea is characterized primarily by commercial retail uses, many of which are occupied by fast food establishments with street-facing surface parking lots and drive-through facilities. The subarea also includes a large CVS drug store and pharmacy, a Goodwill donation center, a Homeless Services provider, and several neighborhood-serving small businesses.

The subarea is intersected by Boylston Street about halfway between Mountain Street and Orange Grove Boulevard. On the east side of Lake Avenue, this creates two large north/south blocks of approximately 600 feet each. On the west side of Lake Avenue, Merrett Drive intersects the northern half of the subarea, creating two smaller blocks. The CVS and associated surface parking lot occupy approximately 3 acres in the northeastern block of the subarea.

The subarea is characterized by 1-2 story structures that reflect an eclectic variety of design styles from mid- to late-20th Century development and a diversity of site planning arrangements with low lot coverage. The prevalence of small building footprints, inconsistent setbacks, large surface parking lots, and frequent driveway curb cuts create an auto-oriented character. Many commercial lots feature shared driveways and surface parking lots for adjacent businesses. Sidewalk-fronting storefronts generally provide surface parking lots in the rear, exemplified by Rose City Plaza's retail businesses along Lake Avenue.

Façade treatments lack consistency within the subarea. Some sidewalk-oriented buildings in the subarea contribute to visual interest and the pedestrian experience through transparency, awnings, and articulation, while other commercial buildings, most notably the CVS, feature blank walls fronting the sidewalk. Some commercial operations have adaptively reused formerly residential homes, similar to those found more commonly in the Belvidere Gardens subarea. Fast-food establishments within the subarea have typically received contemporary architectural updates in line with corporate design guidance.

The Eberle Mortuary building, occupied by Union Station Homeless Services at 825 Orange Grove Boulevard, is a designated Pasadena landmark. According to the City's 1995 North Lake Historic Survey the building appears eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as a significant example of the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style.

Public Realm

The subarea's public realm typically provides adequate sidewalk widths, however pedestrian comfort is challenged by development patterns that focus on vehicle travel and access for surface parking lots and drive-thru lanes. The Pasadena North Lake Avenue Traffic & Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Plan proposes a traffic signal with high visibility crosswalks and curb extensions at the central intersection of Lake Avenue and Boylston Street, which currently lacks the infrastructure for pedestrians to cross Lake Avenue safely within the subarea.

Improved sidewalks north of Boylston Street feature extended widths with decorative brick paving and large tree wells. Street tree coverage is inconsistent, however mature street trees provide shade toward the north and southern ends of the subarea. A landscaped median in the southern portion of the subarea also contains mature trees, contributing to traffic calming and greening in the subarea.

Public street furniture and amenities in the subarea are limited to bus stop benches and trash receptacles, and occasional bicycle racks. Sidewalk seating areas associated with restaurants contribute positively to the pedestrian experience and activate the public realm. Sidewalk lighting is provided through ornately designed pedestrian-scale streetlamps.

North Lake Transit District

Land Use and Urban Form

The North Lake Transit District is the NLSP's southernmost subarea, bounded by Orange Grove Boulevard to the north, Wilson Avenue to the east, Maple Street to the south and El Molino Avenue to the west. The I-210's Lake Avenue freeway offramps, Lake Avenue Overpass, and Lake Metro L Line Station (accessible via the overpass) all contribute to a multimodal southern gateway to the subarea. The subarea is characterized by a mix of commercial, institutional, and residential uses. Residential and institutional uses are primarily focused in the area south of Villa Street, between El Molino Avenue and Wilson Avenue, with the prominent Lake Avenue Church and Villa Gardens health center and retirement community to the west of Lake Avenue. At the time of the NLSP's update, the City and County are pursuing a joint acquisition of the former Kaiser Permanente medical center on the southeast corner of Villa Street and Lake Avenue, to redevelop as a site for affordable housing, mental health care services, and primary outpatient services. Institutional uses continue up the west side of Lake Avenue to Santa

Barbara Street, including Fire Station 33 and Pasadena Covenant Church. Although not an institutional use, the Pasadena Job Center serves as a resource in connecting reliable workers with homeowners and contractors, and as a community hub for education and cultural exchange. A variety of commercial uses front Lake Avenue and Orange Grove Boulevard throughout the rest of the subarea.

The North Lake Transit District's urban form is generally characterized by one to two-story buildings with a mix of architectural characters. Notably, the subarea's institutional uses introduce exceptions to the scale and form of development, featuring taller building heights and unique design. The subarea's two long blocks on the east side of Lake Avenue reinforce an auto-oriented corridor character, while the west side of Lake Avenue is broken into four blocks, contributing to a more walkable environment and providing access to adjacent neighborhoods via Earlham Street and Santa Barbara Street.

Many commercial storefronts and office uses in the subarea contribute to a relatively consistent street wall with structures built at or near the front property line, as well as a pedestrian-oriented character with windows, awnings, and entrances that open to the street. However, include surface parking lots and blank or opaque walls adjacent to the sidewalk.

The southern portion of the subarea also includes two residential areas between Villa Street and Maple Street: the block between El Molino Avenue and Maple Way, and the block between Mentor Avenue and Wilson Avenue. These blocks feature a mix of single-family and multifamily residential building typologies, typically ranging between 1 to 3 stories. Many of the subarea's single-family houses are built in the California Bungalow and Craftsman styles typical of Pasadena's historic urban form. The C.C. Lory House, a local landmark and significant example of the early 1900s Vernacular Hipped Cottage architectural style, is located in the subarea along Catalina Avenue.

Public Realm and Open Space

The public realm within the North Lake Transit District subarea is adequately designed to accommodate pedestrian activity, however Lake Avenue's street design and building forms prioritize vehicle movement and access, greatly diminishing the overall pedestrian experience. Pedestrian access is particularly challenging along Lake Avenue between Orange Grove Boulevard and Villa Street, which lacks a marked pedestrian crossing opportunity for 1,200 feet. Sidewalk widths range from 10 to 12 feet throughout the corridor, with relatively consistent tree wells and streetlamps, and occasional bicycle racks. Most blocks include a bus stop with seating and a trash receptacle. A lack of parkways along the corridor maximizes room for pedestrian travel and sidewalk amenities, but increases a feeling of exposure to vehicle traffic. Some segments of the subarea have clusters of street trees planted with enough consistency to provide shade and a sense of buffer from the street, however mature street tree canopy is lacking from several portions of the corridor. Some more recent tree plantings offer potential to enhance the pedestrian experience through shade and buffering as they mature. The subarea does not include any publicly-accessible open spaces.

Public realm conditions along Villa Street, Maple Street, El Molino Avenue, Mentor Avenue, Catalina Avenue, and Wilson Avenue in the residential portions of the subarea are comfortable

with consistent shade provided by mature street trees. Full sidewalk widths typically range from 10-15 feet, with 5 feet of walkable sidewalk space and 5 to 10 feet of grass parkway.

The North Lake Avenue Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Plan proposes sidewalk improvements from Orange Grove Boulevard to Maple Street, including curb extensions at all corners of the North Lake Avenue and Orange Grove Boulevard intersection and enhanced signals, signage, and striping at the fire station. South of Villa Street, the Safety Enhancement Plan proposes traffic calming measures and improved pedestrian conditions such as high-visibility crosswalks and pedestrian refuge island to shorten crossing distance across Lake Avenue.