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# The Gold Line: Exploring the Resurgence of Public Rail Transport in Los Angeles

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**THE GOLD LINE:  
EXPLORING THE RESURGENCE OF PUBLIC RAIL TRANSPORT IN LOS  
ANGELES**

by

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**SUBMITTED TO SCRIPPS COLLEGE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
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## **Preface**

I came to study in Claremont with little to no understanding of the dynamics of Los Angeles. My conception of LA came from the movies and television shows that I watched at home in India, and I pictured the city to look like a combination of Malibu, Beverly Hills, the Hollywood walk of fame, Bel Air and Compton. I never realized that many people saw Los Angeles as a gritty, concrete, urban sprawl consisting of hill towns, valley cities and freeways. I also had no idea about how socio-economically and racially segregated Los Angeles' many cities and towns are (I thought that Compton and South Central were the extent to the poor neighborhoods in LA), and I definitely did not know that the public transport system in LA left a lot to be desired.

When I finally got here, I was unpleasantly surprised to find that Claremont was incredibly far from where I thought "the action" was: it bothered me that the place I was going to be living in was a good half-hour to forty minutes away from downtown LA (even though I had no idea of what downtown looked like at the time) and even further away from the LA of the television (Malibu, Beverly Hills, Bel Air). It came as another unpleasant shock to be told by numerous different people that LA's public transport system was horrific and unride-able, and that I should make friends with someone who had a car in order to get to places that I wanted to go to see. As a result of this, my first few months in LA were confined to Claremont and Upland. I did not venture out of this area because none of my friends had a car.

In the February of my first year at college, a friend suggested we go to Chinatown to watch the Chinese New Year parade. She suggested we take the Metrolink downtown and walk to Chinatown from Union Station. Neither of us had ever taken the train to LA or visited Chinatown before, but nonetheless, both of us decided to try it out. \$11, 50 minutes and an easy

Metrolink ride later, we both realized that the train had opened up a new space for us: downtown LA. We spent that day partly walking around Chinatown and partly walking around the rest of downtown, fully absorbed in exploring new a new part of LA.

A month later, another friend and I found out that we could get to Old-Town Pasadena on public transport by going downtown and taking the Metro Gold Line to Pasadena from Union Station, so we decided to go explore. The trip one-way to Pasadena took us a total of about an hour, but we were happy to find that we could get there by relying solely on the trains.

Since then I have traveled to many different parts of LA (including Santa Monica, UCLA, Pasadena and Hollywood) by using a combination of the Metrolink, light rail lines and bus routes. Through these trips, and through the process of understanding how mass transit in this city runs, I have come to realize that LA actually has an extensive public transport system. I have also come to decide that the reason public transport has received a terrible reputation is because it is not run as effectively as it should be and because the city's sheer size guarantees that public travel (especially through buses) will be slow.

Since most of LA's public transport consists of buses that run behind schedule, traverse long distances and stop frequently every couple of blocks, the common conception is that the people of the city have preferred to use personal motor vehicles (mostly cars) to get them from one point to another in this giant urban sprawl. But this notion is erroneous because it does not account for the thousands of people who use public transport in this city, simply because they do not own personal vehicles: there are thousands, even millions, of people in LA who don't own cars simply because they cannot afford them. These people rely on public transport, no matter how slow and how inconvenient it may be, as they have no other way to travel around the city. According to the Los Angeles County Metro Transit Authority (MTA) the current statistics

surrounding system-wide public transport use in LA puts ridership at 1,467,860 in terms of average weekday boardings, as of October 2009. Within this, average weekday boardings on the bus system accounts for 1,194,471 boardings and average weekday boardings on the rail system accounts for 273,389 boardings<sup>1</sup>. These statistics indicate that the need for public transport in LA is ever present, that there are thousands of people using the public transport system everyday and that this city could benefit by improving its bus system while simultaneously building new light rail lines to facilitate faster travel across the region.

Also present within this need to improve the public transport system is the need to assess how best to lay new rail lines and strengthen bus access to these rail lines. Currently, the rail line systems are few and far between and the MTA needs to assess how effectively the metro rail is helping to get people to where they need to be. Since the rail system is finite in its reach, it cannot connect LA in the same way that bus routes can. So, the need to assess the ridership patterns and demographics of these rail lines still exists. The MTA needs to understand commuter demographic and commuter need as extensively as it possibly can, in order to improve its bus and rail systems to compliment each other, so that it can best serve the people of Los Angeles.

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<sup>1</sup> Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority, "Ridership Statistics". November 12, 2009 <[http://www.metro.net/news\\_info/ridership\\_avg.htm](http://www.metro.net/news_info/ridership_avg.htm)>.

## **Introduction: Rationale and methodology for this project**

Mass transit in the form of light rail is, in many ways, a new and revolutionary idea for the Greater Los Angeles Area. Although mass light rail transit did exist in Los Angeles in the form of the Pacific Electric Railways red car system, an extensive network of metro rail lines has never existed in Los Angeles County since Pacific Electric was dismantled and shut down in 1950. Because of this, the popular mode of transport in LA County has traditionally been cars, and public transport has consisted mostly of bus routes. This has all changed in the last few decades. Since the 1980s, LA County has conducted several studies and, as a result of those studies, has proposed to build an extensive network of light rail lines to connect the county. In more recent years, many of these project plans have been approved, and the MTA has overseen the construction and functioning of new railway lines that are connecting far-flung regions of LA County with Union Station in downtown LA<sup>2</sup>. Currently, the MTA operates 5 light rail lines within LA county—the Blue Line, the Red Line, the Purple Line, the Green Line and the Gold Line—that extend north, south and east of downtown LA. Each of these lines has been functional for a varying amount of time, but current weekday ridership on this system of lines has crossed the 280,000 mark as of September 2009<sup>3</sup>.

Since this system is so new, the changes that this kind of mass transit has brought to people's experiences of the city are still unknown. However, since so many people are actually

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<sup>2</sup> LACMTA has also been active in the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA), which has overseen the construction of the Metrolink rail routes that connect Union Station to various points in Los Angeles County, Orange County, Riverside County, San Bernardino County and Ventura County. Metrolink rail routes are heavy rail routes, and do not consist of light rail lines. According to the "About Us" section in the Metrolink website, Metrolink has a daily weekday ridership of approximately 45,000. Currently, Claremont is connected to Union Station through the San Bernardino Metrolink line.

<sup>3</sup> Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority, "Ridership Statistics". October 4, 2009 <[http://www.metro.net/news\\_info/ridership\\_avg.htm](http://www.metro.net/news_info/ridership_avg.htm)>.

using the light rail system, we know that there are some people who are no longer relying on private transport to get around the county. Since these people are not using their cars to travel around LA, they are experiencing the city in a way that has been unheard of in recent living memory. This is why I feel that we are at a crossroads in LA's history. The Los Angeles cityscape is changing and so are people's perceptions of their city, simply because commuters are no longer forced to experience the city from behind their closed car doors. They have been provided a cheaper and more environmentally friendly way of traveling and are constantly coming into contact with other train riders who are from a variety of cities within the Greater Los Angeles Area. I think it is important to document the rail lines at this stage, because we're positioned at the point in a time when people are experiencing something new in LA, and because we are positioned in a time where the cityscape is changing. At this stage in LA's history, the city has the potential to move away from its reputation of a freeway-reliant metropolis and move back toward being a county with an extensive railway network.

I have chosen to document the Gold Line in particular, because it is the rail line that I have used most and it is the line that I have become most familiar with. I have often traveled downtown from Claremont using Metrolink and have then taken the Gold Line to Old-Town Pasadena. I feel that I have seen the station stops, if only in passing, many times, and since I am familiar with this line more so than any of the other four, I feel that I would be better equipped to document the Gold Line than any of the others. Additionally, the Gold Line is going through the process of expansion. Los Angeles County has recently completed the construction of the Gold Line's (South) Eastside Extension from downtown LA to East LA, with that section of the line becoming operational on November 15, 2009. MTA also has plans for what it is calling the Foothill expansion of the Gold Line, which looks to extend the Gold Line northeastward from



the Sierra Madre Villa termination stop in Pasadena to the city of Montclair in San Bernardino County. If the Foothill Extension plans for the Gold Line come to fruition, Claremont will get a station stop on the Gold Line, and will eventually be connected to downtown LA through MTA operated light rail metro via Pasadena, as well as Metrolink via the El Monte transit center.

Thus, my choice to document the Gold Line is born of three reasons: first, it is the metro light rail line that I am most familiar with and the one of the five that I use most often. Second, it is truly in transit right now since construction of Phase II of the line has just recently been completed and its operation has only recently begun. Third, it is the line of most significance to Claremont—the part of Los Angeles that I live in—since the current plan for Phase III of the Gold Line incorporates a stop in the city of Claremont.

As far as the content of what I am documenting is concerned, I am interested in photographing two different aspects of the line. Since the lines are part of a changing cityscape, I am interested in photographing the physicalities of the rail line including the station stops, the public art that has been installed in these station stops, the immediate views of the neighborhoods around the station stops, the rail line tracks, the numerous pedestrian crossings that occur sporadically on the line, and the trains themselves.

I am also interested in documenting commuters that use the rail line, in order to gain some insight into the demographics of Gold Line users. My tactics in documenting commuters has followed a two-fold strategy: first, I have looked to document commuters by taking pictures of them as they waited on platforms or got on and off the train. Second, I have tried to document commuters by approaching them individually on platforms and engaging them in conversations about their experiences, usages and opinions of the Gold Line. My conversations with people have varied, but every time I have spoken with someone I have asked tried to ask them about

how frequently they use the line, whether they think the line has been helpful to them and the cities they live in, and whether they know a lot of people who have been using the line.

Following my conversation with these commuters, I have asked for permission to photograph them in a portrait. If commuters were traveling in a group, I have approached the entire group collectively and have asked to photograph the commuters in their group, rather than individually.

I do understand that my photographs of commuters cannot be representative of the entire demographic of the line since I have not taken pictures of every single person who has been using the train at the same time as me, and since I have only been documenting commuters on the line for three months. I have, however, been careful to ride the line at a variety of different times including weekday mornings, afternoons and evenings, as well as all day on weekend days, in order to see if there are differences in commuter demographics depending on the time of day or day of week. I think that my approach to photographing commuters has worked successfully insofar as my photographs attempt to be *reflective* and *not representative* of the demographics of people who chose to use the Gold Line.

## **Chapter I: Overview to the Gold Line**

On July 6, 2003, Los Angeles County inaugurated the first functional section (or Phase I) of the Gold Line, a 13.7-mile light rail corridor that connects parts of Pasadena, South Pasadena and northeastern portions of the city of Los Angeles to Union Station in downtown LA. Phase I of this line, which is operated by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA), currently passes through a variety of neighborhoods, including Chinatown, communities along the Arroyo Seco<sup>4</sup>, and residential parts of South and Old-Town Pasadena, and stops at a total of 13 stations. Initial studies, conducted between July 2004 and August 2005, on the Gold Line put its ridership at 15,500 riders per weekday<sup>5</sup>, but more recent data from August 2009 suggests that ridership has gone up to about 24,000 boardings per weekday<sup>6</sup>.

Now, six years since the inauguration of Phase I of the line, Los Angeles County has launched the Gold Line Eastside Extension (Phase II) to the already operational section of the Gold Line light railway. This extension connects Union Station (and therefore Pasadena) to the town of East LA via the communities of the Little Tokyo/Arts District and Boyle Heights, and will add a total of eight new station stops to the line. The Eastside Extension project made use of a budget of \$898 million and began daily operation on November 15, 2009.

Also in the works is the proposed Foothill Extension of the Gold Line (Phase III). This proposal looks to add an additional 24 miles of light rail, heading east of Pasadena into the

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<sup>4</sup> The Arroyo Seco is a stream or watershed in Los Angeles County, California that is one of the most celebrated canyons in the Southern California Region. The watershed begins in the San Gabriel Mountains and makes its way across the cities of Altadena, Pasadena, South Pasadena, Highland Park and Montecito Heights before emptying into the LA river.

<sup>5</sup> Ralph & Goldy Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, University of California, Los Angeles, "Gold Line Study Final Report", 9. Southern California Association of Governments, Sept 21, 2009

<[http://www.scag.ca.gov/publications/pdf/2007/Gold\\_Line\\_FINALReport\\_040907.pdf](http://www.scag.ca.gov/publications/pdf/2007/Gold_Line_FINALReport_040907.pdf)>.

<sup>6</sup> Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority, "Ridership Statistics". October 4, 2009 <[http://www.metro.net/news\\_info/ridership\\_avg.htm](http://www.metro.net/news_info/ridership_avg.htm)>.

Inland Empire region, which is on the eastern edge of Los Angeles County. Currently, the proposal looks to connect east Pasadena to an additional 11 cities along the 210 freeway, and eventually looks to connect Montclair, which lies in San Bernardino County, to downtown LA via Pasadena. The Foothill Extension Project is to be completed in two phases, with the East Pasadena to Azusa corridor expected to be operational in 2011/2012 and the Glendora to Montclair corridor in 2014<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority, "The Extension Quick Facts". October 4, 2009 <<http://www.metrogoldline.org/extension.html>>.

## Chapter II: The Los Angeles cityscape

Since the 1950s, when the Pacific Electric Rail Car System was dismantled and freeways were coming into wide use, concrete and paved tar have permeated popular imagination to become iconic and representative of the LA cityscape. For the last 60 years, photographers have gone into the concrete sprawl that is the Greater Los Angeles area and have seen and portrayed the metropolis in wide array of ways. While each photographer has attempted to capture a variety of different metaphors in the cityscape through their own unique vision, somehow, freeways have always managed to infiltrate their photographic frames. As a result of this Los Angeles' status as a freeway and road reliant city has taken firm root not just in imagery related to the fine photographic arts, but also in the city's own popular imagination and envisioning of itself.

As mentioned previously, the (re)introduction of commuter rail into the Southern California region is beginning to challenge the status of freeways in Los Angeles. While it is still true that rail line usage is nowhere near as high as freeway usage, the simple and small presence of the rail in some parts of Los Angeles is redefining how a minute, but growing, population of the metropolis is moving through the city. For this small population, LA is changing because it is no longer being seen from the isolated interiors of a car. Instead, it is being viewed from within a train that travels across the cities that constitute LA, instead of circumventing them on their peripheries like freeways do. For this reason, it is important to photograph the light rail lines and represent them as important and integral components of the changing landscape of Los Angeles.

In her photographic series *Freeways* Catherine Opie took pictures of Los Angeles' freeways on weekend mornings, when the usually chaotic motorways were virtually abandoned<sup>8</sup>. *Freeways* consisted of forty platinum prints, shot with a 6x17 centimeter panoramic camera, that

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<sup>8</sup> For images *Freeways*, please see Appendix A.

paid special attention to more the pictorial and abstract forms created when the gigantic roads overlapped each other at junction points. Through this particular series, Opie honed in on freeways as the representative icons of Southern California but wanted to highlight their divisive nature. In an interview that she gave in 1997, Opie stated that “freeways separate[d] communities” and that they especially “separate[d] the city from the suburb”<sup>9</sup>. Opie tried to capture this divisive aspect of the motorways by photographing them when traffic was virtually nonexistent. As a result of this, the freeways of Opie’s series seem abandoned: there is little to no presence of motor vehicles or people in her photographs, and it is simply the freeway structure that is highlighted in these photographs. This was intentional on Opie’s part because her empty freeways are stripped of their functionality, and their emptiness emphasizes their structural (and divisive) quality<sup>10</sup>.

In some parts of Los Angeles, the light rail operates in a completely different way from how Opie feels the freeways function. In the areas where the rail cuts across neighborhoods, it does not divide the city from its suburbs. Instead, it connects them to each other. Although the Gold Line runs on the 210 freeway following the Memorial Park stop (and so divides parts of Pasadena in the way that the freeway divides it), for the majority of its 20 miles, it connects downtown LA and the cities of Los Angeles and East Los Angeles to more suburban parts like South Pasadena and Pasadena<sup>11</sup>. Thus, in some parts of LA, public rail transport actively combats the inherent divisiveness of the freeways and provides commuters (and through my photographs, I hope it provides viewers) with an alternate reading of the cityscape: a reading that

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<sup>9</sup> Opie, quoted in Colette Dartnall, “Interview with Catherine Opie, July 11, 1997,” in Catherine Opie, *Exhibition Catalog* (Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art), unpaginated.

<sup>10</sup> Opie, Catherine. *Catherine Opie: American Photographer* (New York, N.Y. : Guggenheim Museum: Available through D.A.P./Distributed Art Publishers, c2008), 80-81.

<sup>11</sup> After the Memorial Park stop, the Gold Line runs on the surface of the freeway. Because of this, the Lake, Allen and Sierra Madre Villa station stops are on the freeway.

emphasizes a new kind of connectivity between cities that have previously only been divided from each other by freeways.

Additionally, the very nature of public transport and travel is beginning to change the notion of personal, isolated viewings of the city. Since there are many people who get onto the trains simultaneously and use it to get around the city, the train becomes a site of amalgamation. As you will see in the next chapter, the Gold Line, in particular, connects racially, ethnically and socio-economically disparate areas to each other. Since there are boardings and alightings at pretty much every station stop on the line, it is safe to assume that there are people from all sorts of backgrounds getting on and off the trains and using them to get from one place to another. The group usage of this mass transport forces people of diverse backgrounds to congregate in one site, the railway or subway car, and forces LA's residents to come into contact with other residents from an assortment of different backgrounds. This aspect of the rail lines also actively challenges the divisive nature of the motorways because it forces people, who were formerly isolated in their car travels, to come into contact with people they do not know.

In addition to this, the MTA has made the visibility of public art a priority in the metro station stops. On its website the MTA has announced that it has formally decided to allocate 0.5% of rail construction costs to the creation of original artworks in stations because it believes that "art creates a sense of place and engages transit riders"<sup>12</sup>. Although the website does not elaborate on how the MTA hopes to engage transit riders simply by placing the art in the stations, it does provide a detailed list of the works of art that have already been commissioned and put into place in the station stops. The MTA has also stated that it wants the station stops to

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<sup>12</sup> Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority, "Metro Art Department- Overview". Metro Art Department. October 4, 2009  
<[http://www.metro.net/about\\_us/metroart/default.htm](http://www.metro.net/about_us/metroart/default.htm)>.

reflect the communities and cities that they exist in. Thus, each station's architecture and commissioned art is either inspired by the communities around it or by the ideals and values held by these communities.

In the Chinatown station stop of the Gold Line, for example, art created by artist Chusien Chang is on display at the plaza, mezzanine and platform levels of the station. There are a total of three components to Chang's work at the Chinatown station with a 34-foot Ba-gua<sup>13</sup> at the plaza level of the station, four benches with Italian, Croatian, Latino, and Chinese images to reflect the four communities of Chinatown on the platform and plaza levels of the stations, and a 16 foot diameter I Ching dial at the mezzanine level of the station. Also scattered around the plaza level of the station are 64 granite pavers depicting the hexagram symbol of I Ching that were placed with the assistance of students from the Castelar Elementary School in Chinatown<sup>14</sup>. All these pieces are based on the Chinese book of I Ching, which describes the 64 states of human situations. On the MTA metro website, Chang has explained why she created art works around the idea of I Ching for the Chinatown station:

“I selected the I Ching as the concept for my art at the station because the I Ching encompasses the fundamentals of Chinese philosophy and culture. The I Ching became the basis for Confucian and Taoist thought and today its influence is best seen in the practice of Feng Shui, the concept of the Yin and Yang, and the symbol of the Ba Gua. I thought the I Ching would be appropriate because its influence not only has permeated into all aspects of Chinese culture but it also has influenced western thought and the American culture since the 1960s.”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Ba-gua is an octagon shaped Chinese symbol that represents the eight elemental forces of nature: Fire, Earth, Lake, Heaven, Water, Mountain, Thunder, and Wind. These are the building blocks for the hexagrams of the I Ching. The Ba-gua in the Chinatown station is built of railroad tracks to commemorate the Chinese railroad laborers of the early and mid 1800s. (information from the Chinatown art page on Metro website <[http://www.metro.net/about\\_us/metroart/ma\\_mrgldccc.htm](http://www.metro.net/about_us/metroart/ma_mrgldccc.htm)>)

<sup>14</sup> Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority, "Chinatown Station". Metro Art Department. October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009 <[http://www.metro.net/about\\_us/metroart/ma\\_mrgldccc.htm](http://www.metro.net/about_us/metroart/ma_mrgldccc.htm)>.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.



So in the creation of these station stops as public spaces, MTA has included art to attempt to engage commuters. In the case of stops like Chinatown, Marachi Plaza and Little Tokyo the MTA has opted to put art that it feels is reflective of the communities that live in the area as well as the history of the area that the station stop is in. In other station stops Pico/Aliso, Soto, Indiana, Maravilla, the East LA civic center and Atlantic the MTA has approved station design to reflect the architecture of prominent building of surrounding neighborhoods, naturally occurring flora of the area and ideals and values held by the communities of the area. In the Pico/Aliso station, for example, station canopies have been built to reflect the structure of the nearby 1<sup>st</sup> Street Bridge. Similarly, canopies in the Maravilla station reflect architectural features of the Our Lady of Lourdes Church and canopies in the East LA Civic Center station evoke a “linear field” of California poppies, which are intended to reflect the “park-like elements” of the East LA Civic Center. The Soto station stop canopy is built in a spiral shape, which “draws on the rich history of the Boyle Heights community and presents a path for its future”<sup>16</sup>.

While the extent to which these spaces actually engage commuters in the way that the MTA has hoped is unclear, the MTA’s *intention* to engage commuters indicates that it is interested in not only transporting people from one point to another, but also in nudging them to think about the social, cultural and artistic histories of the cities that the line runs through. The presence of MTA sanctioned public art in these station stops also indicates that the MTA values the inclusion of art and community history in the reconfiguring of Los Angeles’ physical cityscape, as well as the cityscape as it exists in the minds of Los Angelinos.

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<sup>16</sup> Los Angeles County Metropolitan Authority, "Gold Line Eastside Extension: Station Overview" November 30, 2009.

### **Chapter III: Demographics of the commuters who use the line**

When the Gold Line began operation on July 6, 2003, over 70,000 people rode up and down the line on inauguration day. Metro officials believed that this response was an overwhelmingly good one, because the system was designed to handle only half that amount<sup>17</sup>. The MTA hoped that this overwhelming response reflected a growing need to use the line but when data began to be collected, the MTA realized that its original ridership projections had been too ambitious. The actual daily ridership of the Gold Line was nowhere near the number that was originally predicted for it.

In March 2007, the Ralph and Goldy Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, University of California, Los Angeles published a final study report<sup>18</sup> that looked at the characteristics of station areas and their populations, in order to provide a baseline profile of the corridor to facilitate future assessments surrounding the impact of the line on station areas. The report discussed some of the “motivations, tensions and challenges” that developers, architects and planners face in areas surrounding the line, and identified strategies and recommendations to combat these tensions and challenges<sup>19</sup>. It also assessed the usefulness and effectiveness of the line, in terms of commuter utilization, and attempted to shed light on why ridership of the line failed to meet the MTA’s estimates.

Originally, the MTA projected that the Gold Line would have an average weekday boarding of 38,000 people by the end of 2005, but the line had only averaged about 15,000 weekday boardings at the time of the study’s publishing. Although ridership numbers since that

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<sup>17</sup> Ralph & Goldy Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, “Gold Line Final Study Report”, 13.

<sup>18</sup> Please see Appendix B for the particular tables and figures of this report that have been analyzed in this chapter.

<sup>19</sup> Ralph & Goldy Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, “Gold Line Final Study Report”, 1.

date have increased, the present day numbers from August 2009 still do not meet the MTA's original projection, with weekday boarding remaining at the 24,000 mark<sup>20</sup>.

These numbers show that the Gold Line is the least used Metro Line: when the study was published, the Blue Line's monthly boardings sat at 2,064,000 and the Red Line's monthly boardings at 3,085,000. The Green Line saw monthly boardings hovering just above the 1,000,000 mark, but the Gold Line's highest monthly boardings (in August 2005) sat at a meager 530,000 in comparison. The study partly attributes the slow start to the line on the transit strike that occurred in 2003<sup>21</sup>. It is, however, also possible that ridership is highest on the Blue and Red Lines because they are longer and older: the Blue Line is 22 miles in length and opened in 1990, while the Red Line is 14.3 miles long and its first section began operation in 1993. Since the Eastside extension of the Gold Line has now opened, we know that ridership numbers for the Gold Line will go up simply because more route mileage has been added to the line. The MTA also expects that more people will begin to use the rail transit system over time, when more rail lines and high speed bus routes get added to the overall county system.

The station-by-station daily boarding and alighting data in this study covers the time period from August 2003 to June 2005. It is essential to point out that this data, in particular, is merely an estimation of station-by-station boarding and alighting, and it doesn't precisely reflect ridership trends. Boarding and alighting can greatly vary at particular stations based on season and daily fluctuations. However, this data is useful in that it helps to give insight into overall ridership trends. This particular data shows that Union Station had the most daily boardings and alightings (over 5,000 a day). This is probably because Union Station is an important transit hub, where commuters can make regional connections to the Red Line, Metrolink, AMTRAK and

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 13.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 13-14.

numerous other bus routes. Sierra Madre Villa, which is the terminal stop of the line in Pasadena, saw over 1,600 boardings and alightings, Memorial Park, a stop near Old-Town Pasadena, saw more than 1,200 and Highland Park, the most densely populated region on the Gold Line, saw just above 1,000. The station stops with the lowest boardings/alightings were Southwest Museum and Heritage Square/Arroyo with the figures for boardings/alightings falling under the 400 mark<sup>22</sup>.

The study also discusses demographics and socio-economics of the areas and cities surrounding the lines. While the study tackles this data in order to recommend strategies for urban development around the railway line, its data can also provide some insight into the boarding/alighting trends and commuting patterns in the areas surrounding the line. All of this data was based on 2000 decennial census data, and the changes in demographic, socio-economic and commute patterns were tracked by comparing 1990 and 2000 decennial census data.

The communities that live around the Gold Line have vastly different demographic characteristics. Essentially, the most densely populated areas around the line lie near the Heritage Square/Arroyo station stop and the Highland Park station stop. The areas near the stops closer to the terminal point of the line in Pasadena (Lake, Allen and Sierra Madre Villa) have the lowest population density. The station stops in the city of Los Angeles (Chinatown, Lincoln/Cypress, Heritage Square, Southwest Museum and Highland Park) tend to have higher populations of foreign born residents and higher percentage of “linguistic isolation”. The Chinatown station area has the highest percentage of senior citizens over the age of 65 (30%) of all other station stop areas and has the highest concentration of Asian/Pacific Islanders (83%) on the line. The other Los Angeles stops tend to have more families with more children and a larger percentage

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid, Table 1.1, 14-15.

of Hispanic/Latino residents. Except the Southwest Museum area, most of the city of Los Angeles Gold Line station stop communities have higher rates of poverty (over 20%), more “households receiving public assistance” (about 10%) and have “lower levels of educational achievement”<sup>23</sup>.

The areas surrounding the station stops that lie outside of the city of Los Angeles in South Pasadena and Pasadena reflect very different demographics. The areas around the Mission, Fillmore, Del Mar and Memorial Park stops have a high concentration of single-person households (at over 50%) and much higher levels of “educational attainment”, with over 50% of the population around these stops having at least a Bachelor’s degree. The highest concentration of African Americans around the Gold Line is downtown around Union Station and in central Pasadena around the Lake and Memorial Park stops<sup>24</sup>, where African Americans make up between 20-25% of the population. Otherwise, census data shows that, on average, African Americans represent less than 15% of the population in the areas around most of the Gold Line stops<sup>25</sup>.

What this data primarily shows is that the station stops within the city of Los Angeles consist of working class neighborhoods, mostly populated by people of color. Chinatown has a majority self-identified Asian American and Pacific Islander population, with a large percentage of the population being foreign born/recent immigrant, while the areas around the rest of the city of Los Angeles stops (Lincoln/Cypress, Heritage Square/Arroyo, Southwest Museum and Highland Park) are populated primarily by people who identified as Hispanic, with a large population also being foreign born/recent immigrant. This data also shows that the area around

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid, Figures 1.3, 1.4, 1.5 and Tables 1.2, 1.3, 15-20.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, Figures 1.3, 1.4, 1.5 and Tables 1.2, 1.3, 15-20.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, Figure 1.3 and Table 1.2, 17-19.

the station stops in South Pasadena (Mission) and near Old-Town Pasadena (Fillmore, Del Mar, Memorial Park) can be considered middle class, with low percentages of people under the poverty line, low unemployment rates and high “educational achievement” rates<sup>26</sup>.

In terms of commuter patterns, Figure 1.5 of the study shows that, in 2000, the areas around the Chinatown, Lincoln Heights, Heritage Square, Highland Park, Del Mar and Memorial Park had over 30% carless households. Sierra Madre Villa, Fillmore, Mission and Southwest Museum station stops had less than 10% carless households. However, Chinatown and Highland Park were the only two station stops that showed a higher than 20% use of public transport in 2000. The popular mode of transport in the neighborhoods with low car ownership tended to be carpooling. In the areas surrounding the South Pasadena and Pasadena station stops, except Del Mar and Memorial Park, the popular commuter choice was solo driving<sup>27</sup>.

Relating this data back to the ridership statistics shown in Table 1.1 only serves to further complicate ridership patterns on the Gold Line. The stops with the maximum boardings and alightings are Union Station, Sierra Madre Villa, Memorial Park and Highland Park. As previously mentioned, Union Station’s high rates of boardings/alightings are most probably reflexive of its status as a terminal hub with connections to a multiplicity of other public transportation options. Sierra Madre Villa’s high rates of boardings/alightings are also most probably reflective of its position as the other terminal end of the Gold Line, from where residents who live beyond Pasadena can catch the light rail toward downtown. Memorial Park’s proximity to Old-Town Pasadena probably accounts for the high numbers of boardings/alightings at its stop (along with a large carless population), while Highland Park’s

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 25

high population density and low usage of cars to get around probably accounts for the large number of boardings/alightings that occur at its station stop<sup>28</sup>.

Interestingly, Heritage Square/Arroyo station has the lowest numbers of boardings and alightings of all station stops on the Gold Line, even though the area surrounding the station has a high population density and even though the area saw a decrease in the percentage of commuters who drove alone by car from 1990. The study mentions that the number of commuters driving alone fell, but the number of people carpooling went up<sup>29</sup>. This might help explain why the number of people using the line at this stop is so low: commuters chose to carpool instead of using the line. It is also entirely possible that the line is not helpful to most of the residents of the Heritage Square/Arroyo area because the rail system (and bus system) doesn't efficiently connect Heritage Square to where they need to go, but data to support this premise is currently unavailable.

However, the ridership trends in Table 1.1 show an interesting trend at the Heritage Square/Arroyo station stop, and this trend is reflected in data surrounding some of the other station stops such as in Lincoln Heights, Southwest Museum, Mission and Fillmore: for both 2004 and 2005, the average weekday boardings at the Heritage Square/Arroyo stop were about 50 more than the average weekday alightings. This indicates that there were more people getting onto the Gold Line at the Heritage Square/Arroyo stop than there were getting off. This pattern shows that while people were not interested in visiting the Heritage Square area (probably because it is a residential area<sup>30</sup>), there were people who were using the line to get out of the area. Inversely, the daily alightings at the Chinatown, Memorial Park, Lake, Allen and Sierra

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 24.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 24.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 13.

Madre Villa stations outnumbered the daily boardings, indicating that more people were interested in going to these areas, as opposed to leaving them.

This overall study conducted by the Ralph & Goldy Lewis Center has its drawbacks, however. Most of the data that was collected for this study is now between 5-10 years old, and it is entirely possible that demographic trends of the line have changed. However, the MTA does not have any additional studies available yet, as this study was published in March 2007.

Another point to note is the discrepancies in dates of the census data. The 2000 census data was used in this study, but the line was only operational in 2003. While it is unlikely that the data surrounding race, ethnicity and socio-economics changed drastically between 2000 and 2003, commuter pattern could possibly have shifted considerably. In fact, the opening of the line probably skewed commuter patterns in very different directions from what the 2000 census data indicates the pattern was. This is not to say that the data isn't useful; it will come most in handy when future commuter pattern studies are conducted (now that the line is open), especially since the 2010 census will be conducted shortly.

All this data can prove useful to the MTA if it is used to assess commuter need. If the MTA conducts more extensive studies, particularly studies related to the people who are actually getting on to the line, it can better figure out what bus systems it needs to improve in order to connect the Gold Line to more places in LA. In order to get more people who live on and around the line to get on to the trains and use them regularly to commute from one point of Los Angeles to another, the MTA has to find ways to connect the line to other parts of the city. This way, people will find that their commutes by public transport are as time efficient as their commutes would be if they used the freeway, and they will be more likely to switch over.



## **Conclusion: The Cityscape and Demographical Data as they relate to my project**

In the past three months, I have gone through the process of discovering and unfolding a fledgling, burgeoning part of Los Angeles. I travelled up and down the Gold Line every week, on as varied points of time as my schedule would allow. Sometimes I stopped commuters at various station stops to talk to them about their thoughts on the line, while other times commuters came up to me, intrigued by the Hasselblad camera that I was carrying on my person. Almost always, the people that I spoke with allowed me to take their portrait once they found out about my project.

I can't say that I have excellent insight into who uses the line: I have not ridden it enough to say with confidence that I know what kinds of people ride the line and why. I hesitate to make any such assumptions, particularly because I was not able to ride the line during office rush hours in the morning or in the evening as much as I wanted to. So, I can not pretend to know what the demographics of the line during those hours are. I also can not claim to know ridership trends according to the socio-economic background of commuters because I never asked anybody what their job was, or whether they used the line to commute for their job unless they volunteered that information first. I was, however, able to get a sense of other commuter patterns related to line usage.

My time spent riding the line has convinced me that a bicycle culture maybe emerging in LA. One of the most common things that I noticed while riding the line was that a multiplicity of people of all ages, genders and racial backgrounds were bringing their bikes along with them on the train so that they could get to where they needed to go once they got off the train. On

average, I would say that I saw a person with a bike come on and off the train at least once, every other stop.

In terms of the number of people getting on and off at each stop, I found that some of the station stops were deserted for a majority of the time that I was at them. These stations corresponded with the data presented in Table 1.1, as I found that Lincoln Heights/Cypress Park, Heritage Square/Arroyo and Southwest Museum were the most deserted stations of all. Many of my film negatives show that these stops were either deserted or mostly deserted. In my experience, the most crowded stops were Union Square, Highland Park and Memorial Park, which also corresponds well with the boardings and alightings data in Table 1.1.

I was also fortunate enough to be able to go to the inauguration of the Gold Line Eastside Extension on November 15, 2009. The response at the opening of the East LA extension of the line was overwhelming with an estimated 90,000 people showing up to ride the line. On that day, turnaround time at the terminal stops of the Eastside Extension of the line went up to about 40 minutes. I, myself, spent 40 minutes at the Atlantic stop in East LA, waiting to get onto the train to go back towards Union Station. Currently, the MTA is hopeful that this section of the line will be well used and widely ridden, but their estimations for daily ridership are a little more cautious than they were in 2008.

Only time will tell if the Gold Line will get used more frequently by more people; and only time will tell if Angelenos will be willing to forgo their cars and freeways to get around their city. But for now, the signs are encouraging. As long as the MTA builds railways and improves bus routes according to demonstrated commuter need, I am hopeful that LA will move away from being freeway oriented toward being mass transit oriented.

## **Epilogue: The Advanced Senior Project**

This project took a few turns in Spring 2010, morphing from a demographic, documentary study of the Gold Line to a landscape study of the same. In this past semester, the emphasis of the project shifted: instead of focusing on the people who use the line, I tried to focus on the actual physical existence of it. Here, my aim was to portray the Gold Line's train track as it exists in the Los Angeles landscape, as opposed to its intended and actual usage. The end result of this shift was a series of eight images that depicted the Gold Line in a variety of different places including the line's terminal Sierra Madre Villa stop in Sierra Madre, CA, the Del Mar station stop in Pasadena, CA, the track on the periphery of the Los Angeles Historic State Park, the track at the Chinatown stop, the underside of the overhead track near Union Station, the track as it appears from a look out point in Union Station, the track opposite the Los Angeles city court and the track as it curves out of the Little Tokyo station stop. Each image was maintained in black & white to remind viewers of the historic legacy of the train track in Los Angeles.

To reinforce the historical significance of the train track in Los Angeles, I had originally intended to intersperse my own photographs with historical images of LA train tracks culled from books and the Internet. However, I ultimately decided against adding the historical images as most of my own photographs were devoid of trains and people, while the historical images tended to emphasize both. I found that my own images were focusing on the track while the historical images were focusing on the train and felt that the images did not work in conjunction with each other in the way that I wanted them to. Thus, I decided not to include the historical images in the final showing of my work.

Overall, my intention for this semester's final work was to make viewers reconsider their own preconceived notions of Los Angeles landscape. My hope is that my focus on the train track, as opposed to the freeway, will force viewers to think about alternate modes of transport in Los Angeles County and will move the focus of Los Angeles landscape from paved tar roads to molded steel tracks.

Lastly, by showing viewers the train track in Los Angeles, I want to reinforce the idea that Los Angeles can look like a variety of different cities across the world and I want viewers to think of other cities with extensive train transport infrastructure when viewing my photographs (for example, when looking at the overhead tracks, I hoped viewers will think of Chicago and when looking at the track embedded in the street, I hoped viewers will think of San Francisco). Simultaneously, however, I hope that my decision to anchor some of my photographs in Los Angeles landmarks like the freeway in the Sierra Madre stop photograph, the skyscrapers of downtown in the Los Angeles Historic Park photograph and Homeboy industries in the Chinatown stop photograph, will constantly remind viewers that they are viewing Los Angeles, despite its visual similarity to a host of other cities.

## Appendix A

Catherine Opie:



Untitled #11 (Freeways), 1994

Platinum print

2 1/4 x 6 3/4 inches

Edition of 5

image sourced from:

“Freeways”

<[http://web.guggenheim.org/exhibitions/exhibition\\_pages/opie/exhibition.html](http://web.guggenheim.org/exhibitions/exhibition_pages/opie/exhibition.html)>



Untitled #40 (Freeways), 1994

Platinum print

2 1/4 x 6 3/4 inches

Image sourced from:

“Art Review- Catherine Opie”

<[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/26/arts/design/26opie.html?pagewanted=1&\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/26/arts/design/26opie.html?pagewanted=1&_r=1)>

## Appendix B

All figures and tables presented in this section have been sourced from the Gold Line Study Final Report, conducted by the Ralph & Goldy Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, University of California, Los Angeles for the Southern California Association of Governments. The document can be found at:

<[http://www.scag.ca.gov/publications/pdf/2007/Gold\\_Line\\_FINALReport\\_040907.pdf](http://www.scag.ca.gov/publications/pdf/2007/Gold_Line_FINALReport_040907.pdf)>.

Table 1.1 Daily Boarding and Alighting Estimates by Station, 2003-2005

	Union Station	Chinatown	Lincoln Heights / Cypress Park	Heritage Square / Arroyo	Southwest Museum	Highland Park	Mission	Fillmore	Del Mar	Monterey Park	Lake	Allen	Sierra Madre Villa	All Station Areas
<b>Daily Boardings</b>														
Aug 2003 - June 2004	5,289	690	482	313	342	1,088	850	747	768	1,237	848	548	1,677	14,877
July 2004 - June 2005	5,461	754	469	386	414	1,219	809	787	638	1,308	917	657	1,656	15,475
Difference	173	64	-13	73	73	132	-41	39	-130	71	69	109	-21	598
% Change	3%	9%	-3%	24%	21%	12%	-5%	5%	-17%	6%	8%	20%	-1%	4%
<b>Daily Alightings</b>														
Aug 2003 - June 2004	5,150	841	329	268	295	1,003	782	627	685	1,351	895	720	1,930	14,877
July 2004 - June 2005	5,260	749	429	339	377	1,208	770	737	619	1,523	1,000	758	1,707	15,475
Difference	110	-92	99	71	81	205	-11	110	-66	171	105	38	-223	598
% Change	2%	-11%	30%	26%	28%	20%	-1%	17%	-10%	13%	12%	5%	-12%	4%

■ Represents a 10% or more of an increase.

■ Represents a 10% or more of a decrease.

Source: Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority Estimates

Table 1.2 Selected Demographic Characteristics by Station Area, 1990 & 2000

Year	Chinatown		Lincoln Heights/ Cypress Park		Heritage Square/ Arroyo		Southwest Museum		Highland Park		Mission		Fillmore	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Number of Blocks	43	41	46	66	31	38	23	24	47	44	56	62	35	30
Area Square Miles	0.31	0.31	0.43	0.43	0.28	0.27	0.38	0.35	0.33	0.34	0.29	0.29	0.38	0.38
Total Population	3,133	3,149	2,456	2,208	4,809	4,778	2,883	2,977	5,913	7,804	2,991	2,987	2,765	2,593
Growth 1990-2000		1%		-10%		-1%		3%		32%		0%		-6%
Density (Persons/Sq. Mile)	10,239	10,293	5,742	5,167	17,218	17,413	7,494	8,535	18,038	23,102	10,153	10,139	7,250	6,811
Growth 1990-2000		1%		-10%		1%		14%		28%		0%		-6%
<b>Age</b>														
% Age 0-5	6%	5%	14%	9%	14%	10%	11%	7%	14%	11%	7%	4%	7%	5%
% Age 6-17	11%	12%	20%	23%	20%	24%	13%	18%	17%	24%	11%	13%	6%	9%
% Age 18-64	57%	54%	59%	60%	60%	59%	66%	64%	61%	60%	66%	68%	72%	75%
% Age 65 and over	27%	30%	7%	9%	6%	7%	10%	11%	8%	5%	17%	16%	16%	11%
<b>Race*</b> (not directly comparable)														
% White	4%	5%	35%	23%	45%	31%	64%	48%	49%	36%	72%	66%	72%	60%
% Black	3%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	5%	5%	3%	3%	3%	5%	12%	11%
% API	87%	83%	36%	34%	19%	14%	13%	13%	14%	6%	16%	17%	9%	17%
% Other	7%	10%	28%	39%	35%	50%	18%	30%	35%	45%	9%	8%	7%	9%
% Multirace (2000 only)		2%		4%		4%		5%		9%		4%		4%
<b>Hispanic Status</b>														
% Hispanic	10%	13%	62%	64%	77%	83%	52%	59%	72%	83%	17%	22%	19%	21%
% Non-Hispanic White	1%	2%	2%	2%	4%	2%	2%	31%	22%	13%	7%	64%	53%	49%
<b>Households</b>														
Total Households	1,219	1,288	596	566	1,131	1,171	973	1,050	1,781	2,161	1,303	1,403	1,328	1,380
Growth 1990-2000		6%		-2%		4%		8%		21%		8%		4%
Population in Households	3,062	3,124	2,448	2,183	4,809	4,744	2,706	2,810	5,835	7,710	2,741	2,811	2,502	2,494
Persons per Household	2.5	2.4	4.1	3.7	4.3	4.1	2.8	2.7	3.3	3.6	2.1	2.0	1.9	1.8
<b>Household/Person Distribution</b>														
% HHs w/ 1 Person	39%	40%	13%	13%	9%	11%	27%	28%	24%	16%	42%	45%	48%	51%
% Family HHs (w/ 2+ Per)	56%	56%	82%	84%	87%	85%	60%	62%	71%	77%	49%	44%	40%	39%
% Female-Headed Family HHs	3%	3%	11%	11%	12%	11%	7%	11%	12%	16%	7%	6%	4%	4%

Source: 2000 Census Summary File 1 block data and 1990 Census Summary File 1B block data

\* Note: Area racial characteristics are not directly comparable between 1990 and 2000 due to significant differences in how racial data was collected by the census. Blocks for 1990 and 2000 cover a similar geographic area near stations. However, the geographic coverage does not correspond exactly since block boundaries changed between 1990 and 2000. See the appendix for maps of the 1990 and 2000 block boundaries used for this report.

- Represents a 5% or more of an increase.
- Represents a 5% or more of a decrease.

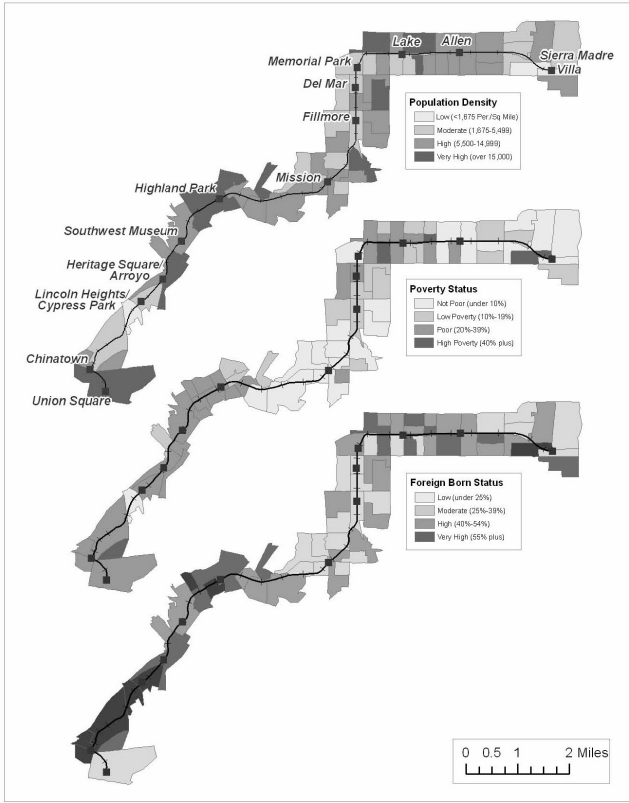
Table 1.2 (Cont.) Selected Demographic Characteristics by Station Area, 1990 & 2000

Year	Del Mar		Memorial Park		Lake		Allen		Sierra Madre Villa		All Station Areas		Los Angeles County	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Number of Blocks	47	48	58	74	38	41	54	62	33	38	511	568	72,444	89,614
Area Square Miles	0.42	0.42	0.39	0.39	0.37	0.37	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.44	4.49	4.45	2607	2607
Total Population	3,067	2,798	505	1,201	4,466	4,381	3,587	3,793	1,181	1,095	37,756	39,764	8,863,164	9,519,338
Growth 1990-2000		-9%		138%		-2%		6%		-7%		5%		7%
Density (Persons/Sq. Mile)	7,288	6,649	1,290	3,068	12,129	11,898	7,851	8,302	2,632	2,475	8,413	8,937	3,400	3,652
Growth 1990-2000		-9%		138%		-2%		6%		-6%		6%		7%
<b>Age</b>														
% Age 0-5	5%	4%	8%	4%	10%	6%	9%	6%	12%	7%	10%	7%	11%	8%
% Age 6-17	6%	5%	6%	6%	10%	13%	12%	15%	15%	20%	13%	17%	15%	20%
% Age 18-64	72%	78%	76%	75%	65%	63%	70%	71%	63%	62%	64%	64%	64%	62%
% Age 65 and over	18%	14%	10%	16%	16%	18%	9%	8%	10%	11%	13%	12%	10%	10%
<b>Race*</b> (not directly comparable)														
% White	74%	62%	65%	53%	49%	48%	64%	54%	54%	50%	52%	43%	57%	49%
% Black	11%	10%	13%	18%	23%	17%	10%	9%	4%	3%	7%	6%	11%	10%
% API	7%	16%	5%	16%	9%	12%	11%	13%	15%	13%	20%	19%	11%	12%
% Other	8%	8%	18%	7%	19%	17%	16%	17%	28%	28%	20%	26%	21%	24%
% Multirace (2000 only)		4%		6%		6%		7%		7%		6%		5%
<b>Hispanic Status</b>														
% Hispanic	20%	20%	29%	18%	30%	35%	29%	34%	49%	55%	43%	49%	38%	45%
% Non-Hispanic White	62%	51%	54%	44%	39%	33%	50%	39%	33%	25%	31%	24%	41%	31%
<b>Households</b>														
Total Households	1,558	1,662	260	812	1,967	1,990	1,452	1,490	378	338	13,946	15,331	2,989,552	3,133,774
Growth 1990-2000		7%		212%		1%		3%		-11%		10%		5%
Population in Households	2,746	2,616	434	1,156	4,297	4,091	3,565	3,735	1,165	1,059	36,310	38,533	8,691,099	9,344,086
Persons per Household	1.8	1.6	1.7	1.4	2.2	2.1	2.5	2.5	3.1	3.1	2.6	2.5	2.9	3.0
<b>Household/Person Distribution</b>														
% HHs w/ 1 Person	55%	61%	65%	73%	45%	51%	33%	32%	25%	23%	36%	38%	25%	25%
% Family HHs (w/ 2+ Per)	33%	30%	25%	22%	44%	40%	57%	57%	70%	72%	55%	54%	67%	68%
% Female-Headed Family HHs	4%	2%	6%	4%	8%	6%	7%	6%	6%	6%	7%	7%	8%	8%

Source: 2000 Census Summary File 1 block data and 1990 Census Summary File 1B block data

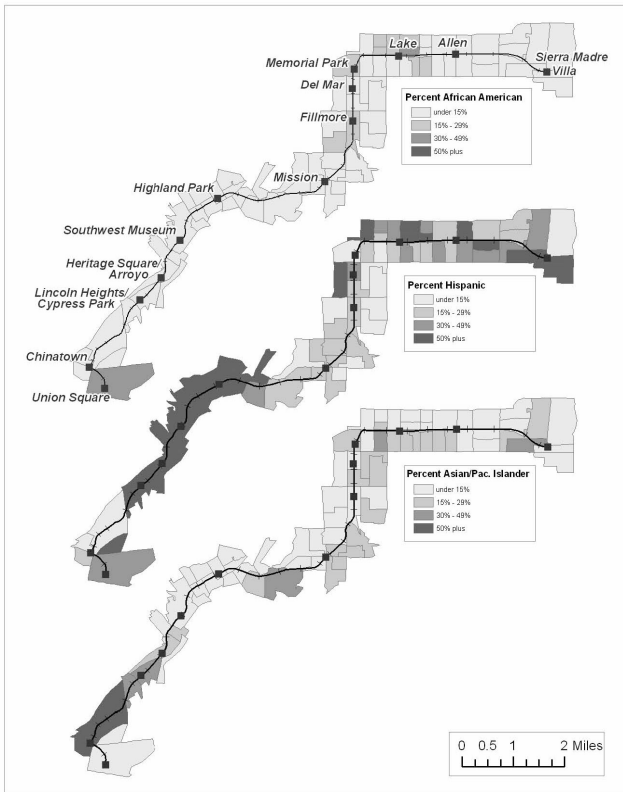
\* Note: Area racial characteristics are not directly comparable between 1990 and 2000 due to significant differences in how racial data was collected by the census. Blocks for 1990 and 2000 cover a similar geographic area near stations. However, the geographic coverage does not correspond exactly since block boundaries changed between 1990 and 2000. See the appendix for maps of the 1990 and 2000 block boundaries used for this report.

- Represents a 5% or more of an increase.
- Represents a 5% or more of a decrease.



Source: 2000 Census Summary File 3 blockgroup data.

Figure 1.3 Gold Line Corridor Socioeconomic Characteristics



Source: 2000 Census Summary File 3 blockgroup data.

Figure 1.4 Gold Line Corridor Race/Ethnic Composition



Table 1.3 Selected Socioeconomic, Housing, and Employment Characteristics by Station Area, 1990 & 2000

	Chinatown		Lincoln Heights/ Cypress Park		Heritage Square/ Arroyo		Southwest Museum		Highland Park		Mission		Fillmore	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Number of Blockgroups	2	2	1	1	3	3	1	1	7	6	6	6	4	4
Area Square Miles	0.15	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.28	0.28	0.40	0.40	0.71	0.54	0.77	0.78	0.77	0.77
<b>Socioeconomic Measures</b>														
% Foreign Born Persons	79%	82%	66%	68%	61%	50%	39%	38%	56%	49%	17%	20%	15%	22%
% Recent Immigrant (of FB Pop)	62%	40%	44%	21%	50%	24%	46%	32%	60%	41%	32%	43%	32%	30%
% Persons in Poverty	20%	28%	42%	24%	27%	27%	25%	21%	19%	25%	7%	8%	5%	6%
<b>Educational Attainment</b>														
% Less Than High School	67%	66%	68%	68%	68%	65%	33%	36%	58%	58%	11%	8%	10%	7%
% High School / Some College	26%	27%	24%	25%	27%	30%	43%	43%	33%	32%	45%	43%	34%	27%
% Bachelors Degree or Higher	8%	7%	8%	7%	5%	5%	24%	21%	9%	10%	44%	49%	57%	66%
<b>Housing Tenure &amp; Vacancy</b>														
% Vacancy	6%	4%	0%	8%	6%	4%	8%	6%	6%	5%	6%	4%	5%	4%
% Owner-Occupied HUs	4%	27%	23%	31%	28%	47%	37%	26%	26%	33%	31%	49%	49%	49%
% Renter-Occupied HUs	98%	96%	73%	77%	69%	72%	53%	63%	74%	74%	67%	69%	51%	51%
<b>Labor Force and Employment</b>														
Labor Force Participation Rate	43%	40%	63%	52%	63%	51%	67%	63%	67%	55%	69%	65%	70%	69%
% Unemployment	6%	15%	24%	7%	11%	10%	12%	11%	11%	11%	3%	5%	3%	5%

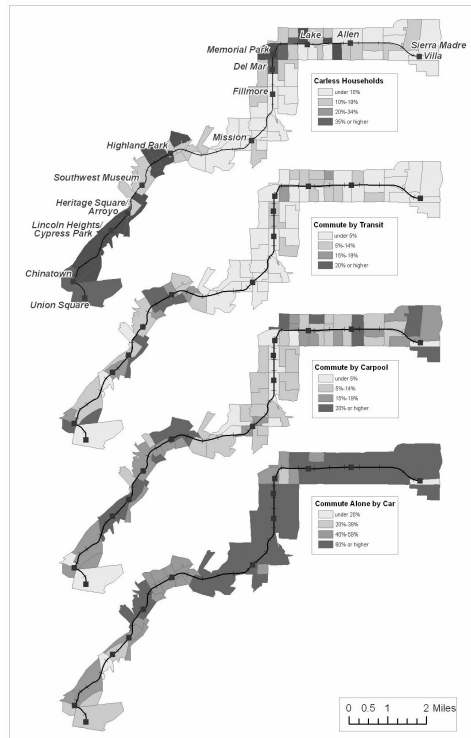
Table 1.3 (Cont.) Selected Socioeconomic, Housing, and Employment Characteristics by Station Area, 1990 & 2000

	Del Mar		Memorial Park		Lake		Allen		Sierra Madre Villa		All Station Areas		Los Angeles County	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Number of Blockgroups	4	4	2	2	9	9	5	5	5	5	49	48	6,008	6,371
Area Square Miles	0.52	0.52	0.32	0.32	0.75	0.75	0.63	0.64	1.27	1.27	6.77	6.64	2,607	2,607
<b>Socioeconomic Measures</b>														
% Foreign Born Persons	26%	26%	28%	33%	32%	37%	35%	39%	39%	35%	38%	40%	33%	36%
% Recent Immigrant (of FB Pop)	71%	43%	76%	48%	64%	49%	44%	39%	33%	25%	53%	38%	53%	35%
% Persons in Poverty	14%	17%	33%	14%	18%	21%	11%	10%	10%	10%	18%	18%	15%	18%
<b>Educational Attainment</b>														
% Less Than High School	23%	14%	18%	15%	27%	23%	21%	17%	25%	25%	35%	31%	30%	30%
% High School / Some College	37%	32%	60%	35%	40%	41%	45%	46%	46%	43%	39%	37%	48%	49%
% Bachelors Degree or Higher	40%	54%	21%	50%	33%	36%	34%	36%	28%	32%	25%	32%	22%	25%
<b>Housing Tenure &amp; Vacancy</b>														
% Vacancy	7%	7%	4%	10%	7%	4%	5%	4%	5%	5%	6%	5%	5%	4%
% Owner-Occupied HUs	13%	21%	5%	7%	11%	12%	42%	39%	73%	68%	30%	29%	48%	48%
% Renter-Occupied HUs	87%	79%	95%	93%	89%	86%	58%	61%	27%	32%	70%	71%	52%	52%
<b>Labor Force and Employment</b>														
Labor Force Participation Rate	66%	69%	62%	65%	67%	62%	68%	71%	69%	63%	58%	61%	67%	60%
% Unemployment	4%	10%	5%	7%	8%	9%	5%	9%	5%	5%	8%	9%	7%	8%

Source: 2000 Census Summary File 3 blockgroup data and 1990 Census Summary File 3 blockgroup data

Note: Blockgroup for 1990 and 2000 cover a similar geographic area near stations. However, the geographic coverage does not correspond exactly since blockgroup boundaries changed between 1990 and 2000. See the appendix for maps of the 1990 and 2000 blockgroup boundaries used for this report.

- Represents a 5% or more of an increase.
- Represents a 5% or more of a decrease.



Source: 2000 Census Summary File 3 blockgroup data.

Figure 1.5 Gold Line Corridor Vehicle Availability & Commute Mode Patterns

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