

Downtown Specific Plan

City of South Pasadena

November 8, 2017; Version 2

DRAFT



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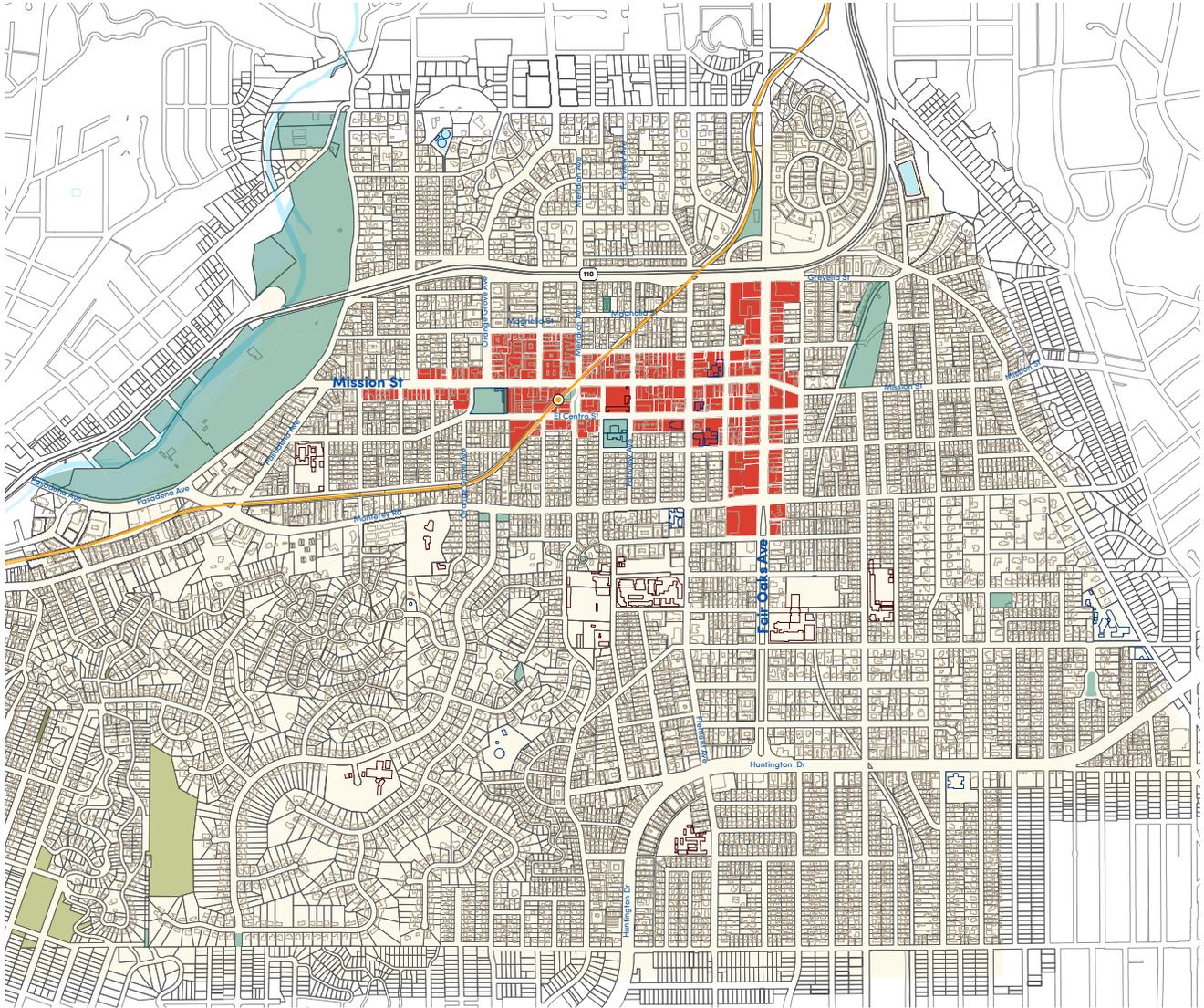
PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Context



South Pasadena is located in the San Gabriel Valley approximately eight miles from downtown Los Angeles via the 110 Freeway. South Pasadena has a rich and varied history, from settlements in the 18th and 19th centuries, through the post-World War II period. It has an impressive collection of neighborhoods representing significant periods of the City's growth, along with important individual examples of period architectural styles and works by prominent local architects.

The social and commercial hub of the City is the traditional Main Street downtown with its unique blend of housing, retail, and civic use. Every Thursday evening the downtown comes alive with one of the region's most popular weekly Certified Farmers' Markets. The downtown is served by Metro's Gold Line Station at Mission and Meridian streets.



To take advantage of the Metro station and to enhance the presence of Mission Street as a “pedestrian-oriented, historic shopping street,” the City Council adopted the Mission Street Specific Plan. The Mission Street Specific Plan has accomplished many of its original goals and has facilitated the orderly development and preservation of many downtown assets.

The central focus of the companion 2018 General Plan update is to protect the historic neighborhoods and direct majority of the growth to downtown area. This Downtown Specific Plan intends to build on the success of the earlier plan and expand the downtown area to include Fair Oaks Avenue. Fair Oaks Avenue is a highly visible corridor with historic assets and many opportunities.

Purpose

The Downtown Specific Plan will guide Downtown South Pasadena in a direction that improves the quality of life for residents, employees, and visitors. A specific plan includes policies and strategies to preserve historic assets, encourage contextual infill development of vacant and underutilized parcels, create jobs, and maintain and support existing compatible businesses and industry, as well as accommodate housing for a variety of income levels. The specific plan will provide a vision for the future as well as predictability for new residential, office, and retail development.

The Downtown Specific Plan offers:

- A community supported vision and guiding principles that encourages a vibrant and walkable Downtown;
- Goals and policies to guide decision-makers in achieving the community's vision for the Downtown area;
- Actions to be taken by the City to develop projects and partnerships that implement the goals and policies;
- Phased catalytic projects to spur economic investment and residential and commercial development in Downtown;
- New form-based standards to provide precise and clear direction for developers and staff, while producing predictable outcomes; and
- Streetscape improvements to activate the public realm, providing an inviting and engaging urban core.

The Downtown Specific Plan also fulfills the goals, policies and actions of South Pasadena General Plan by promoting orderly growth, and efficiently utilizing existing infrastructure and services.

History

EARLY SETTLEMENT

For centuries, Native Americans named Gabrielino after the San Gabriel Mountains lived here. The temperate climate, fertile soil, and numerous streams made it possible to live off the land.

South Pasadena occupies a small portion of the lands that were a part of Mission San Gabriel. After the secularization of Mission lands by the Mexican government, the land on which South Pasadena would later develop was given in an 1835 land grant by the government of Mexico to Juan Marine and Eulalia Pérez de Guillen and named Rancho San Pasqual. Portions of the rancho were sold.

In 1873, Indiana native Daniel Berry moved to Los Angeles with the intention of establishing the California Colony of Indiana, which came to prosper with the cultivation of citrus trees and grapevines. In November of 1873, Berry organized a group of fellow Indianans as well as new associates he had met in California to create the San Gabriel Orange Grove Association. The newly-formed association acquired a large tract of Rancho San Pasqual and subdivided it among its members. Known as the Indiana Colony up until that point, the investors selected the name Pasadena in 1875; residents located in the southern section of the settlement were known as South Pasadenans, but there was no political division at that time.

South Pasadenans petitioned for their own school and later, in 1882, a dedicated post office, both located on Columbia Street. Jane Apostol, in her definitive history book on South Pasadena, notes that Pasadena began working toward incorporation in 1884, but there was less interest in such political recognition in the southern regions, where a desire to avoid “outside interference” prevailed. Pasadena was incorporated in 1886, with Columbia Street as the southern boundary.

The first commercial settlement of the area that would later occupy South Pasadena’s modest, early commercial district occurred in 1870. David M. Raab purchased sixty acres of land to establish his own agricultural operation, first growing fruit trees. Raab’s land occupied the area now bounded by Buena Vista and Mission Streets on the north and south and Meridian and Fremont (then called Fair Oaks) Avenues on the west and east. In 1888, Raab established the Oak Hill Dairy on the property. The portion of the downtown extending to Fair Oaks Avenue was a part of the Marengo Ranch, which made up the eastern portion of the later South Pasadena.

The land that now encompasses South Pasadena’s business district west of Fremont is made up of the land owned by David M. Raab that was purchased out of Rancho San Pasqual. The District west of Fremont, including the Fair Oaks corridor, was a part of the Marengo Ranch along with the holdings of several Indiana Colony investors. Until the turn of the 20th century, the current route of Fair Oaks did not exist, but the street name

of Fair Oaks itself, descending south from Pasadena, jogged at Columbia Street and followed present-day Fremont Street south, until the Fair Oaks route was cut through the west side of Raymond Hill. The establishment of this route made way for the streetcar line that ran down Fair Oaks beginning in 1902.

1771 San Gabriel Mission Established

1822 California becomes Mexican Territory

1870 David M Raab establishes Oak Hill Dairy, first business in South Pasadena

Railroad Expansion

Several train lines opened South Pasadena to development, industry, and tourism. The commercial corridors of Fair Oaks and Mission Street were both born of the presence of rail routes.

The Los Angeles & San Gabriel Valley Railroad first began service to South Pasadena in 1885, served by a depot located on Meridian Avenue at Center (later El Centro) Street. The Santa Fe Railway acquired the Los Angeles & San Gabriel Valley Railroad in 1887, shortly after which the line through Pasadena and South Pasadena became a part of the transcontinental route operated by the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe. In 1895, the track between Highland Park and South Pasadena was rerouted to eliminate excess curves; at this point, a larger, new station was constructed by the Santa Fe along the new tracks (near the northwest corner of El Centro and Meridian) and the old tracks and station were removed from Meridian Ave.

The Meridian Avenue median is a legacy of the earlier route and has persisted since that time. In 1906 the watering trough (a contributing feature of the National Register district) was constructed in the median.

The direct north-south route of Fair Oaks Ave. was not in place until after the turn of the 20th century; prior to that time, Fair Oaks terminated at Raymond Hill, and the southbound electric interurban lines were carried briefly west on Columbia St. and then south on what is now Fremont Ave (but was at the time called Fair Oaks, until the larger road was cut through). The interurban route from Highland Park to Columbia Street was a right of way cobbled together along a number of streets and private rights of way.

The establishment of the new Pacific Electric line along Fair Oaks, first proposed in 1900, appears to be what brought to light the need for a direct north-south rail connection along Fair Oaks. In 1902, the Pacific Electric's Pasadena Short Line was established and ran from Pasadena all the way down Fair Oaks into South Pasadena to the junction at Huntington Drive, known as Oneonta Park. The station at this junction was built shortly after. By this time, the Raymond Hotel (lost to fire in 1895) had been rebuilt, reopening in 1901.

Two Pacific Electric Lines took different routes from Los Angeles into South Pasadena; the Pasadena Short Line arrived via Huntington Drive, while the Mission St. line arrived via Highland Park and the Ostrich Farm, similar to the route of the Santa Fe. The Fair Oaks PE line traveled directly north to Colorado Boulevard while the ATSF steam train ran parallel a block to the east on Raymond Avenue.

As early as the 1920s, many of the PE lines of Pasadena were converted to bus service, a process that continued through the 1940s.⁹ The Pacific Electric announced their intention in 1937 to run busses over the new Arroyo Parkway (later Pasadena Freeway)¹⁰ , and in 1941 sold their local lines to a bus company.

In addition to streetcars, automobiles also made an impact on South Pasadena's Fair Oaks corridor. Fair Oaks from Columbia Street south to Huntington Drive (from which it continued eastward toward Los Angeles) became a part of Route 66 in 1928.^{12,13} By 1930, the corridor reflected the presence of the automobile in other ways, with about ten auto-related businesses (garages, auto repair, auto sales, etc.) to be found on the 1930 Sanborn Map and a similar number in the Mission St. corridor. The 1910 Sanborn Map indicates no such businesses on Fair Oaks or on Mission St., possibly reflecting the modest nature of the community with few early adopters of the automobile at that date. From 1931-1934, Mission Street also served as a variant to Route 66 into Los Angeles. Both of these routes through South Pasadena echo the streetcar routes.

1885 South Pasadena begins passenger and freight service between Pasadena and Los Angeles

1886 Raymond Hotel opens in South Pasadena

1888 South Pasadena incorporated as a City

1895 Electric Interurban Line links South Pasadena to Pasadena and Los Angeles

1896 Cowston Ostrich Farm opens on the Arroyo Seco

Watch Us Grow!

The year 1887 marked a major leap in South Pasadena's commercial development, which likely occurred on the heels of the establishment of the Raymond Hotel. Real estate offices, a meat market, a barber shop and a blacksmith shop opened. By 1888, the Center Street schoolhouse, a Methodist church, and the Graham & Mohr Opera House building ("not completed," noted Reid, "until well on into 1888, when the boom's green leaves had begun to wilt and look very sick"¹⁵) had been erected along Center Street (now El Centro Street). The Meridian Iron Works building, originally occupied by a small hotel and grocery, was constructed at 913 Meridian Avenue at about this time as well, as it first appeared on the 1888 Sanborn Map (the earliest South Pasadena Sanborn Map available, and likely the first to record the town).

The blocks east of Meridian Ave. and south of Mission Street developed as an industrial zone prior to 1900, due to access and proximity to the Santa Fe depot. A citrus packing house, lumber yard and ice company were among those businesses, utilizing large parcels of land, in the area bisected by the Santa Fe tracks.

By 1910 Mission Street was filled by two-story commercial buildings from Meridian to Fairview, all built to the sidewalk. These buildings form the bulk of the National Register-listed South Pasadena Commercial Historic District today. The gap in development that is seen from the intersection of Fairview running east to the intersection of Fremont was present as early as 1910 and has persisted. This portion of Mission was very sparsely developed at that time, with about five houses, a two-story commercial building, and two smaller store buildings among several vacant lots.

1902 Big Red Cars make their first run through South Pasadena along Fair Oaks, between Columbia Street and Huntington Drive

1902 “Watch Us Grow!” was the City slogan

1906 Businesses expand along Mission Street towards Fair Oaks Avenue.

1909 Businessmen organize a Chamber of Commerce

1910 Pacific Electric lays two additional tracks on Huntington Drive

Ride with the Sun

By 1930, South Pasadena’s commercial core had largely been developed. A furniture store, a hardware store, and several small-scale manufacturing businesses, including a stamp manufacturer, an automobile paint shop and a furniture finishing company, were located in South Pasadena’s commercial center. However, commercial prosperity came to a halt in 1929 and the beginning of the Great Depression.

Businesses failed, and the city witnessed a sharp decline in tourism. In 1931, the Raymond Hotel closed its doors, and in 1934, the massive resort hotel was demolished. Cawston’s Ostrich Farm went bankrupt and was forced to close in 1933. The city struggled with a sharp rise in unemployment and sought help from the federal government. Federal relief agencies put jobless South Pasadenans to work on the construction of the flood control channel built in the Arroyo Seco. Federal aid also helped fund new buildings at the high school, a new post office at El Centro Street and Fremont Avenue, and improved sidewalks, storm drains and sewers throughout the city. In 1936, the City Council approved the construction of the Arroyo Seco Parkway through the north end of the city. Ground was broken in 1938, and the Arroyo Seco Parkway officially opened in 1940.

1923 City adopts a Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. Extends the business district on Fair Oaks Avenue south from El Centro Street to Monterey Road

1925 The Moorish-style Rialto Theater opens on Fair Oaks Avenue

1923 “Ride with the Sun” becomes official slogan — South Pasadenans commuted home from work in Los Angeles with the sun at their backs and no glare in their eyes.

The City

With the commencement of World War II, many young men of South Pasadena left their hometown for military training. Nineteen light manufacturing plants opened in the city, including Day-Ray Products (an electrical equipment manufacturer for aircraft companies), Phillips Aviation (an airplane and tank parts manufacturer), and National Technical Laboratories and the Helipot Corporation (manufacturers of precision instruments for measurement and analysis). Perkins Oriental Books, a family-owned business that operated out of a house on Mission Street, produced thousands of Japanese dictionaries and pocket-sized textbooks used by the United States military in language training courses. Over 1,500 individuals, most of whom lived in South Pasadena, were employed by these companies.¹⁸ After World War II, most manufacturing companies left South Pasadena. Two exceptions were an electronics manufacturing company and a scientific instrument manufacturing company on Mission Street in the city’s old commercial center. In 1946, Boller & Chivens, a manufacturer of high quality scientific instruments, began operating out of 1020-1026 Mission Street. By the early 1950s, the company had outgrown its space along Mission Street and moved to the former Helipot Corporation building at 916 Meridian Avenue. The manufacturing company continued to grow and expanded into the building at 915 Meridian Avenue. In 1965, Boller & Chivens was purchased by Perkin Elmer, and a fourth building was acquired. The company continued to operate out of buildings located at the four corners of Meridian Avenue and El Centro Street until the early 1980s when they moved to Costa Mesa.

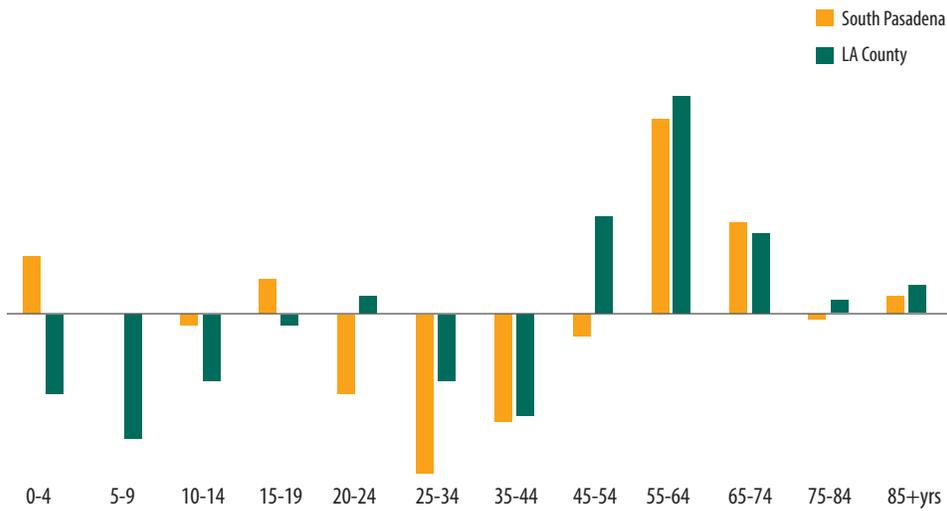
With the exception of Boller & Chivens, most of the large manufacturing companies -- including Beckman Instruments, Stanford Research Institute and Microdot -- had left South Pasadena by the mid-1960s. Most of these companies found it difficult to expand in a small city predominantly zoned for residential and small-scale commercial purposes. Retail business in the city’s commercial center had declined significantly by the 1970s as well. Several ideas were proposed for the revitalization of the downtown commercial core, but all were abandoned. In 1989, the South Pasadena City Council created the Downtown Revitalization Task Force (later known as the General Plan Advisory Committee). In 1996, the Mission Street Specific Plan was adopted to aid in the revitalization of the city’s old commercial core. The plan proved to be successful, and today, businesses are thriving along Mission Street with a number of new restaurants, retail stores and offices occupying some of the city’s oldest commercial buildings.

Profile

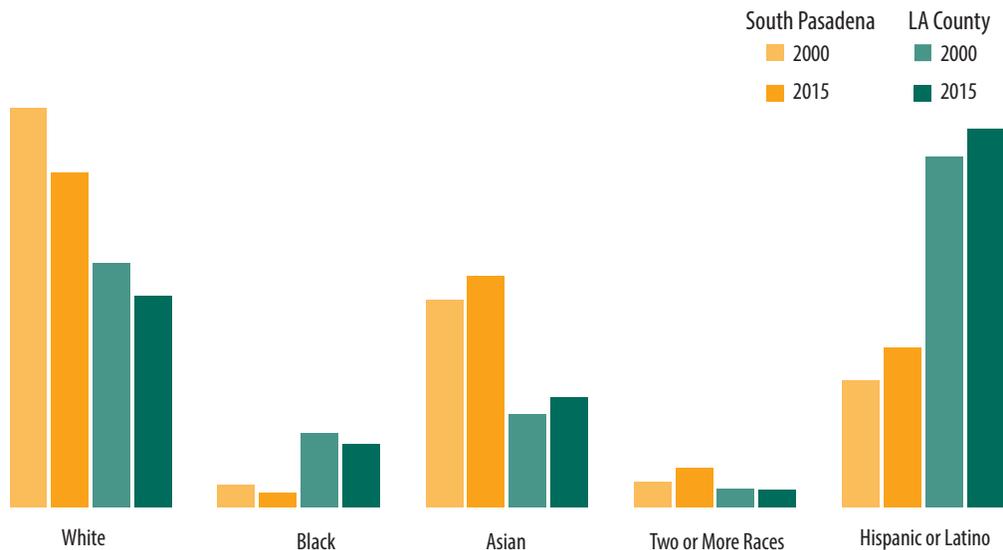
People

Like LA County, South Pasadena's 55 and older population has generally increased. People younger than 20 increased in the City, but declined in the County. Median age in South Pasadena is 40.1 years compared to 35.6 years median age in LA County.

Percent Change By Age Group, 2000-2015. Source: US Census, American Community Survey

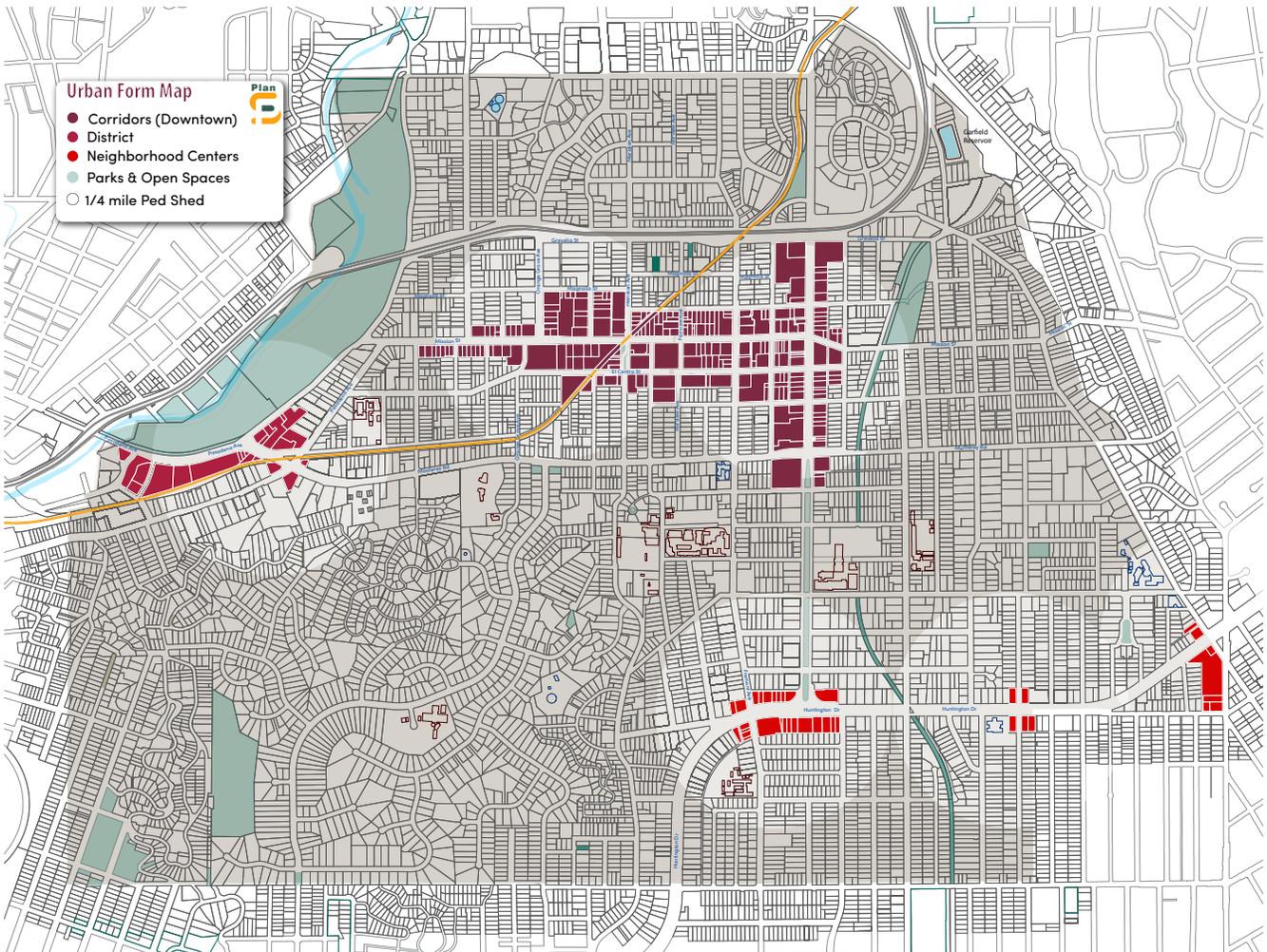


Since 2000, the City has seen a growth in Asian population, with a slight decrease in white and black population.

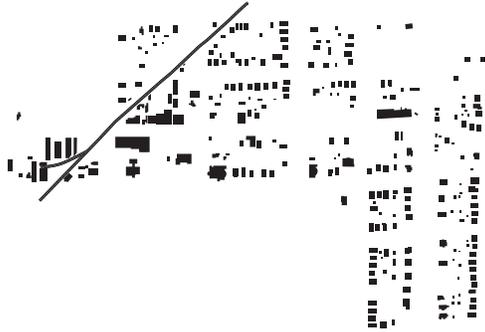


Place

Urban Form: South Pasadena is a residential community with the historic downtown core focused along two corridors Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue.



1910



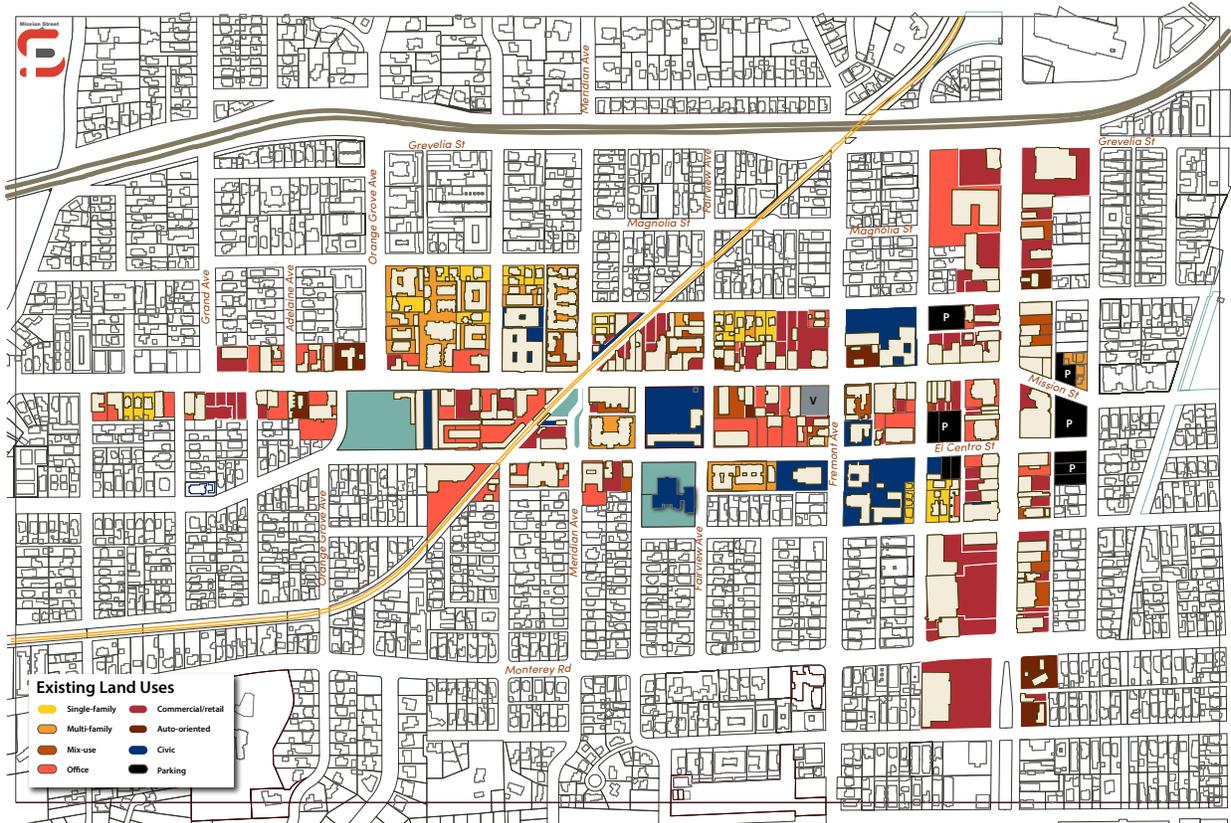
South Pasadena downtown grew around the numerous rail lines at Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue. Since 1930s, the automobile has gradually shifted the downtown focus towards the more visible Fair Oaks Avenue. The arrival of light rail station has sparked revival of the older Mission Street downtown core.

1930



2017





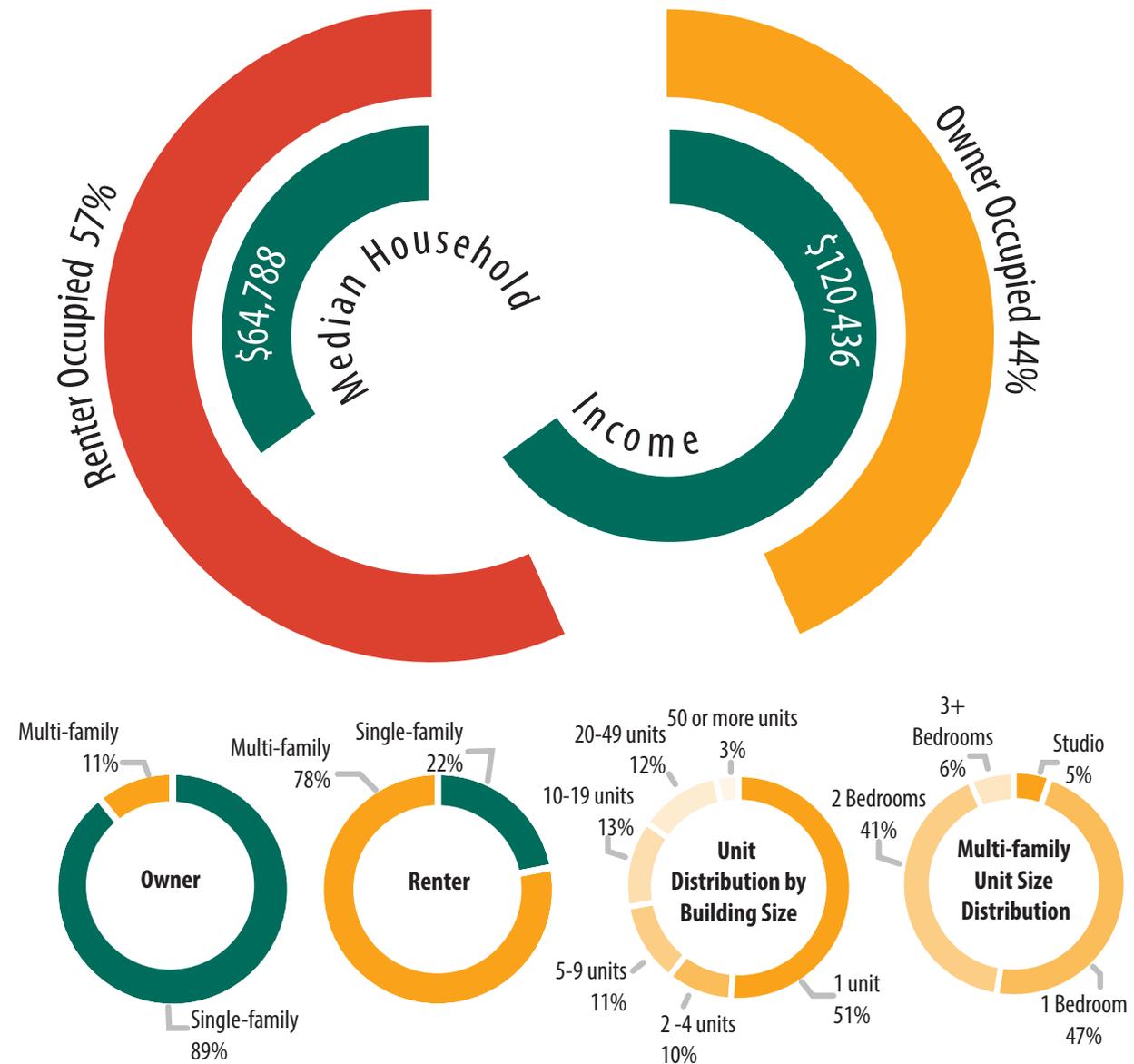
Existing Land Use Map

Downtown South Pasadena has a rich variety of residential, commercial, and civic uses. Mission Street is the historic Main Street with primarily 2 story buildings with pedestrian serving retail and civic uses on the street level and office or residential uses above. Fair Oaks Avenue is commercial corridor has larger format buildings, some with parking lots in the front oriented towards the car.

Housing

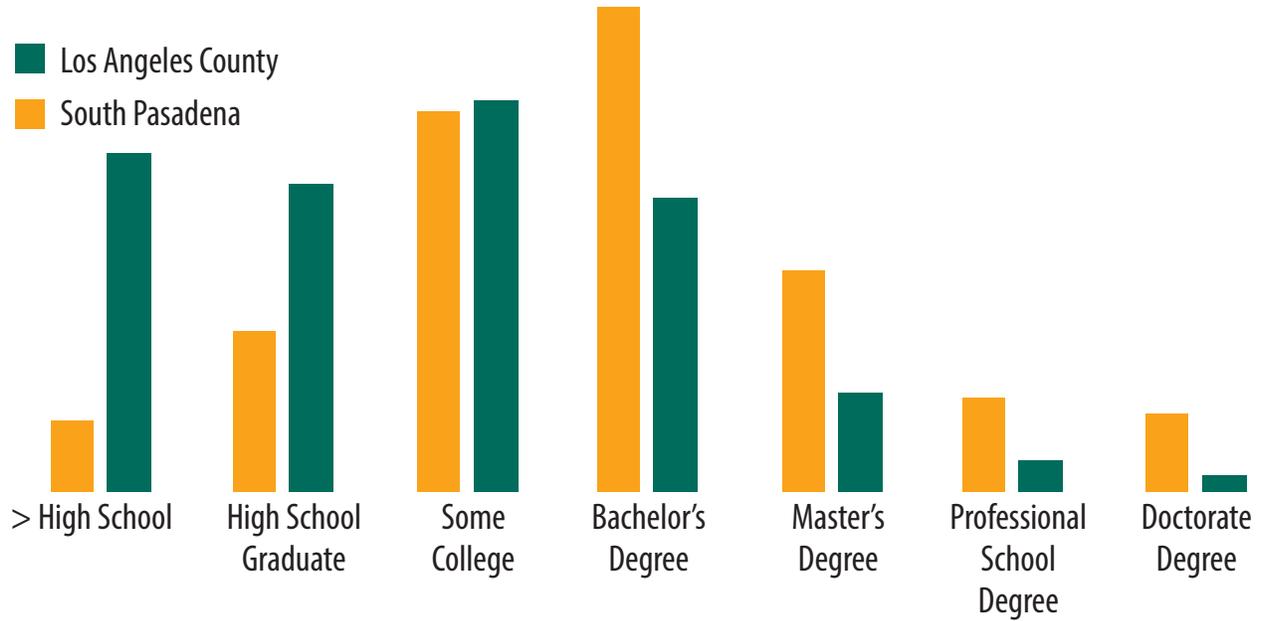
The approximately 11,000 total residential units that make up South Pasadena's housing stock are divided fairly evenly between multi-family and single-family units. Majority of residents are renters who tend to live in multi-family units. Multi-family buildings in the City are small; one to two bedroom units make up 88% of multi-family units in the City.

Source: American Community Survey, DQ News, California Department of Education

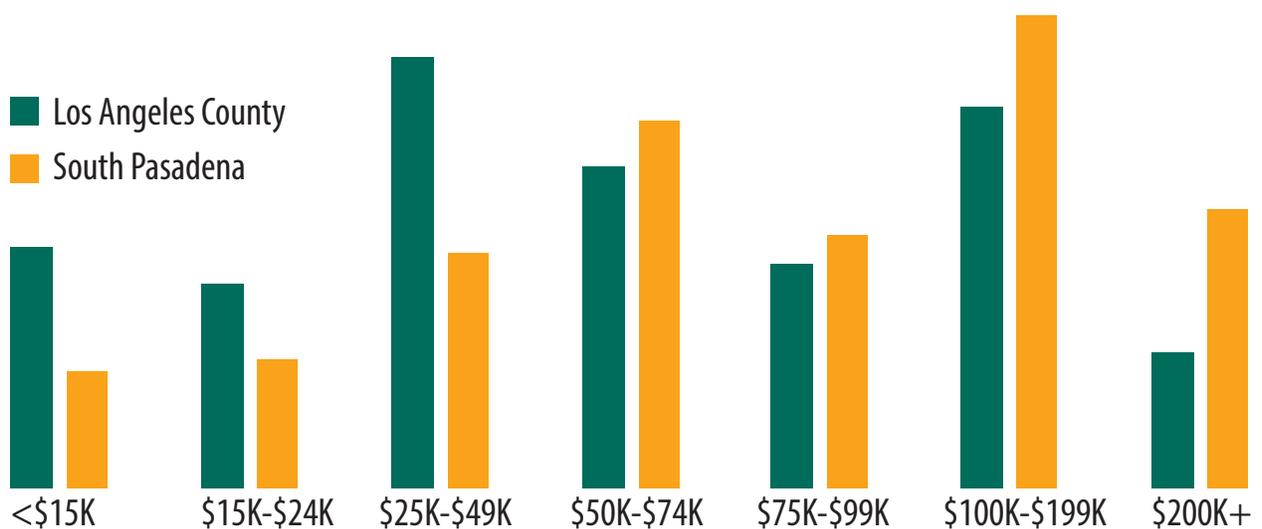


Market

South Pasadena residents earn high incomes, have high levels of educational attainment, and work primarily in health care, education, and professional services.

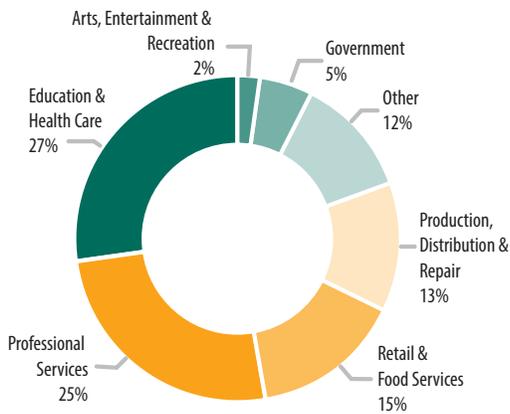


South Pasadena public schools is a key driver of housing driver. Source: American Community Survey.

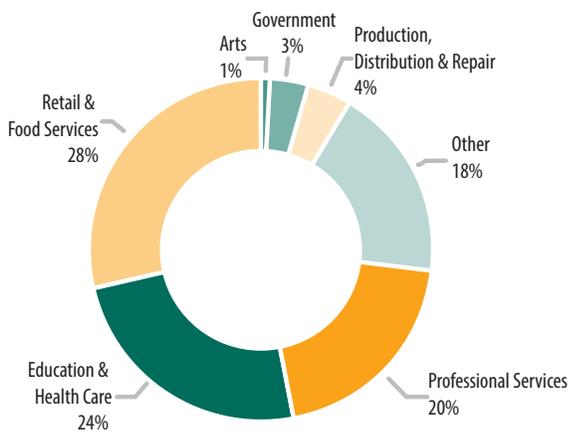


South Pasadena median household income: \$79,299. Source: US Census.

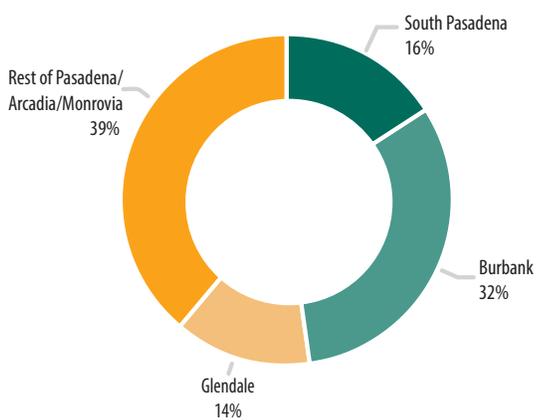
Sectors residents work in:



Jobs in South Pasadena



Creative Office Inventory



Mobility

Travel Patterns

95% of South Pasadena’s residents commute out of the City for work, primarily to Downtown Los Angeles, Pasadena, Burbank, and Glendale. About 6% of commuters use public transportation.

As in most other Southern California communities, most travel in South Pasadena is a) by private vehicle, and b) over relatively long distances, especially for commute trips. Census and Nielsen Company data compiled by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) indicate that average commute time for South Pasadena residents has been growing along with the region, from 29 minutes in 2000 to 31 minutes in 2014.

As shown in Table 1, rates of driving alone declined slightly over that same period, largely due to an increase in transit use¹. However, single-occupant vehicle (SOV) trips remain the dominant mode of commuting.

Mode	Year		
	2000	2010	2014
Drive Alone	84%	86%	83%
Carpool	11%	8%	8%
Transit	1%	1%	5%
Other	4%	4%	3%

¹ The most likely explanation for this is the introduction of Metro Rail Gold Line service to Downtown Los Angeles and Pasadena, although this occurred in 2003, well before the major increase seen between 2010 and 2014. Gold Line ridership has grown substantially over time.

Configuration of Major Streets

Figure X Typical Mid-Block and Intersection Cross-Sections of Mission Downtown



Figure X Typical Mid-Block and Intersection Cross-Sections of Fair Oaks Downtown



Typical sections of segments of Mission and Fair Oaks within the Downtown area are shown in Figures X and X. Within downtown, each street features two general-purpose lanes in each direction, left-turn lanes in some locations, parallel parking along both curbs and “bulbout” sidewalk extensions at corners. However, the right-of-way of Fair Oaks is substantially wider – 100 feet, compared to 80 feet on Mission – so it also features landscaped medians where there are no left-turn lanes as well as wider outside lanes and sidewalks.

Traffic Volumes

The city's busiest roadway is Fair Oaks Avenue, with more than 32,000 vehicles per day south of Monterey. This is followed by other segments of Fair Oaks, Huntington east of Fair Oaks and Fremont, each of which have ADT greater than 20,000. Monterey west of Fair Oaks, Orange Grove north of Mission and Garfield south of Monterey all have volumes in the 10,000 to 20,000 range². No other city street is used by more than 10,000 vehicles per day.

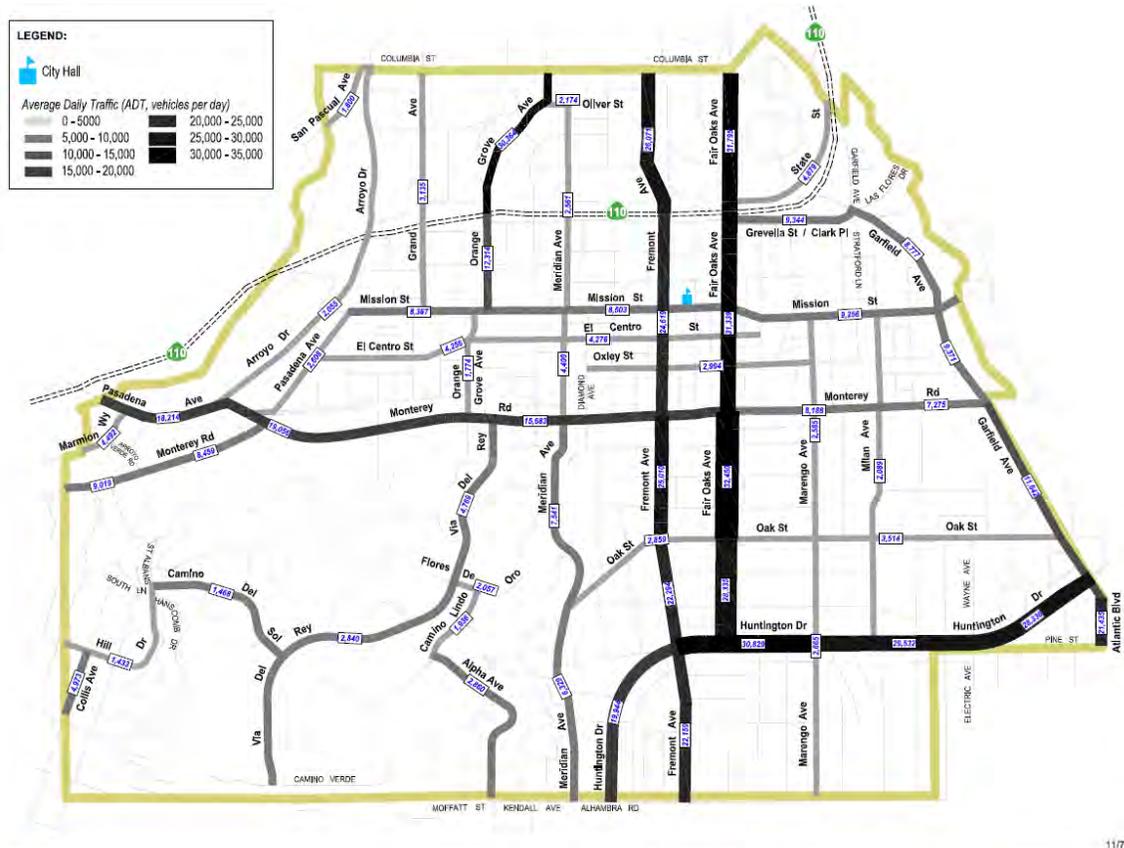


Figure 2. Average Daily Traffic Flow, September 2014
City of South Pasadena 2014-15 Citywide Engineering & Traffic Survey (E&TS)



MINAGAR & ASSOCIATES, INC.

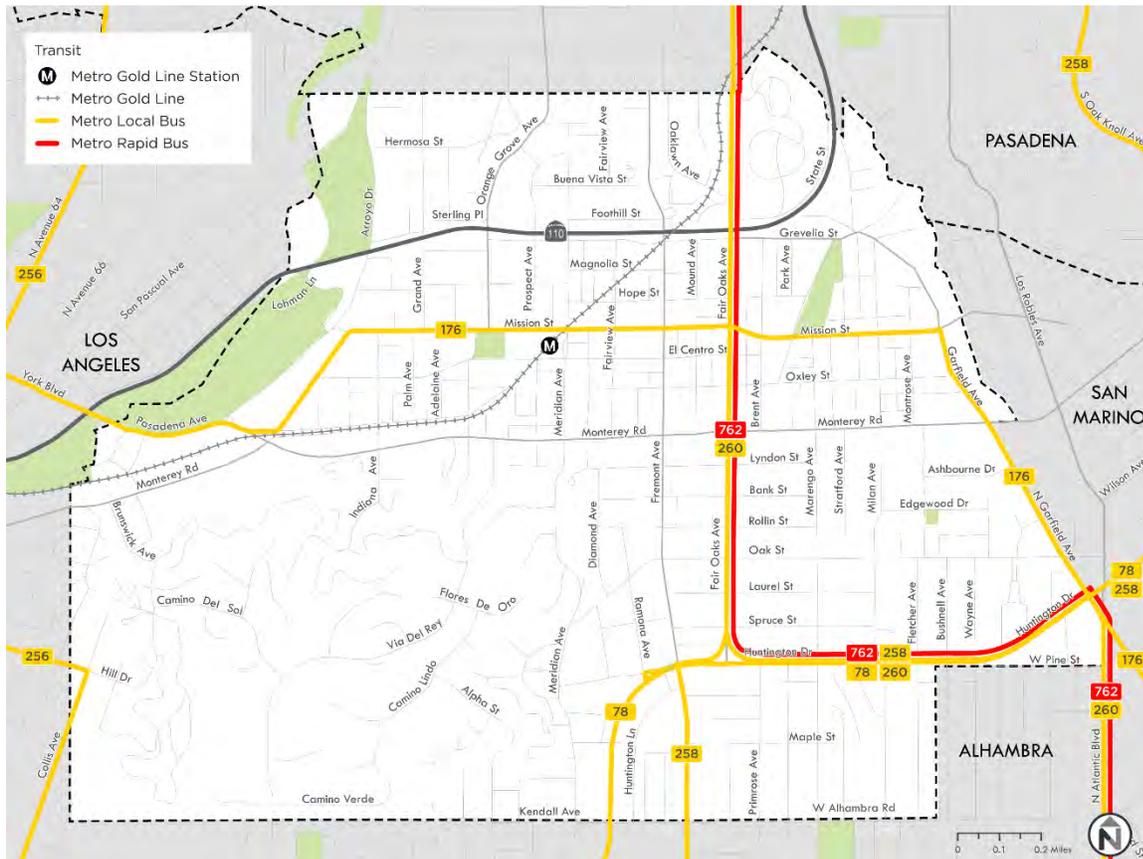
21 Years of Excellence

² The 30,364 figure shown on Orange Grove north of SR 110 appears to be an error, as the line thickness is representative of ADT of less than 15,000, consistent with the segment just to the south.

Transit

South Pasadena is served by Metro rail and fixed-route bus lines, as well as Los Angeles County Access Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit service for persons with disabilities and City of South Pasadena Dial-a-Ride service for older adults. Fixed-route services are shown in Figure X.

Figure 11 Transit Map



Metro Rail Delays

The Metro Rail Gold Line intersects a number of South Pasadena streets at-grade. The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) requires that gates be lowered 20 seconds in advance of train crossings. Because there are up to 20 trains per hour passing through South Pasadena during peak periods, this can result in substantial “gates-down” time and added delay for motorists.

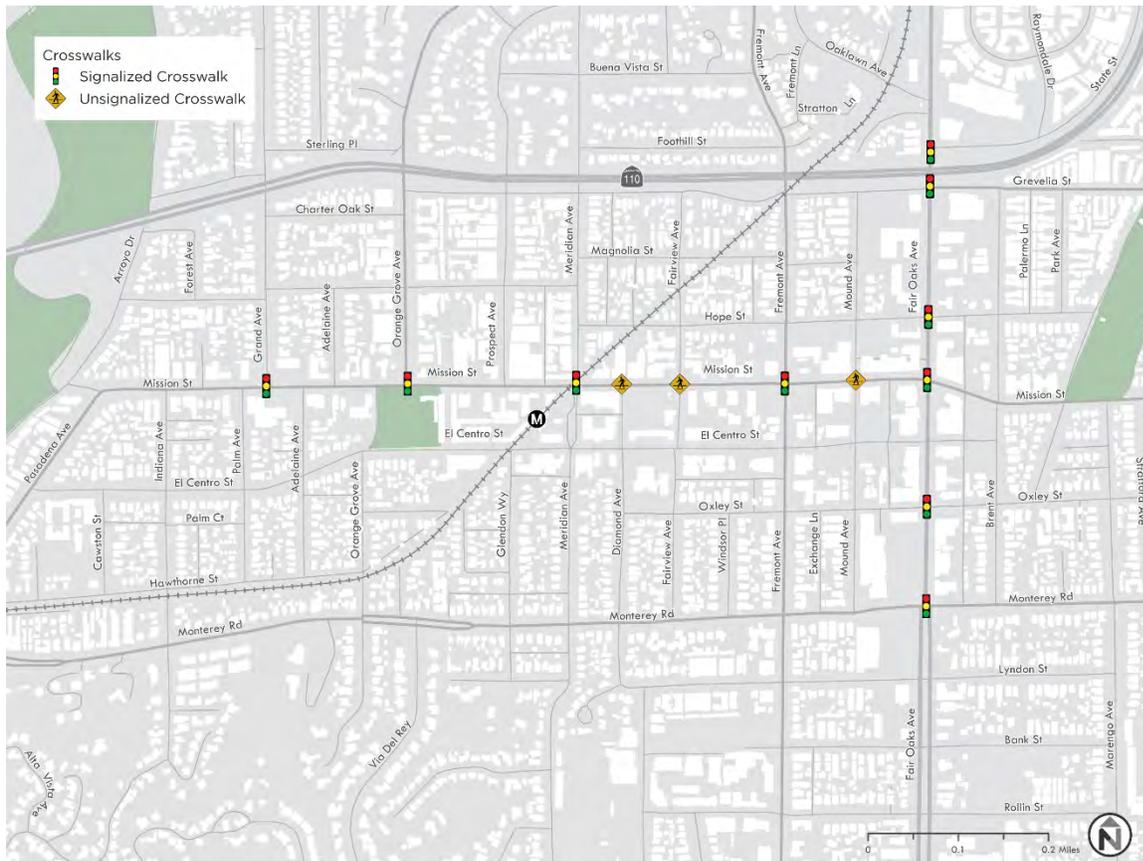
Because the station is immediately southeast of the Mission and Meridian intersection, gates must remain down while northbound trains “dwell” or remain stopped at the platform. This can add 20 or more seconds, resulting in total gates-down time of 45 or more seconds per crossing, including time for the train to pass through the intersection. This problem is compounded for motorists on Meridian, as the signal cycle reverts to a green phase on Mission after every train crossing. If another train approaches from the opposite direction before the cycle is completed, the green phase on Meridian may be delayed until the next cycle, resulting in waits of several minutes.

Pedestrian

Most Downtown streets feature sidewalks, although they are of varying width and condition. There is also no sidewalk on a key downtown blockface, on El Centro between Mound Avenue and Edison Lane. Additionally, residents have indicated through this study process that lighting in residential areas is often inadequate, and that some sidewalks are in substandard condition due to factors including tree root damage.

Figure X below shows locations of marked crosswalks in the Downtown area. These crosswalks are generally of a high-visibility “ladder,” “zebra” or “continental” design, with wide parallel stripes. Most are located at signalized intersections, although a small number on Mission are at uncontrolled intersections. At these locations, additional signage is provided to alert motorists to the presence of pedestrians. Many crosswalks on Mission and Fair Oaks have been shortened using bulbouts. At signalized crossings within the Downtown area, there are crosswalks on all four sides of the intersection and walk phases are pedestrian-actuated (signal cycles and resulting pedestrian wait times vary). Distances between crosswalks in the downtown area vary from a few hundred up to nearly a thousand feet, between Meridian and Orange Grove. In general, crosswalks in areas with high pedestrian volumes should be no more than about 600 feet apart, in order to reduce out-of-direction travel.

Figure X Mission Street Specific Plan Area Crosswalks

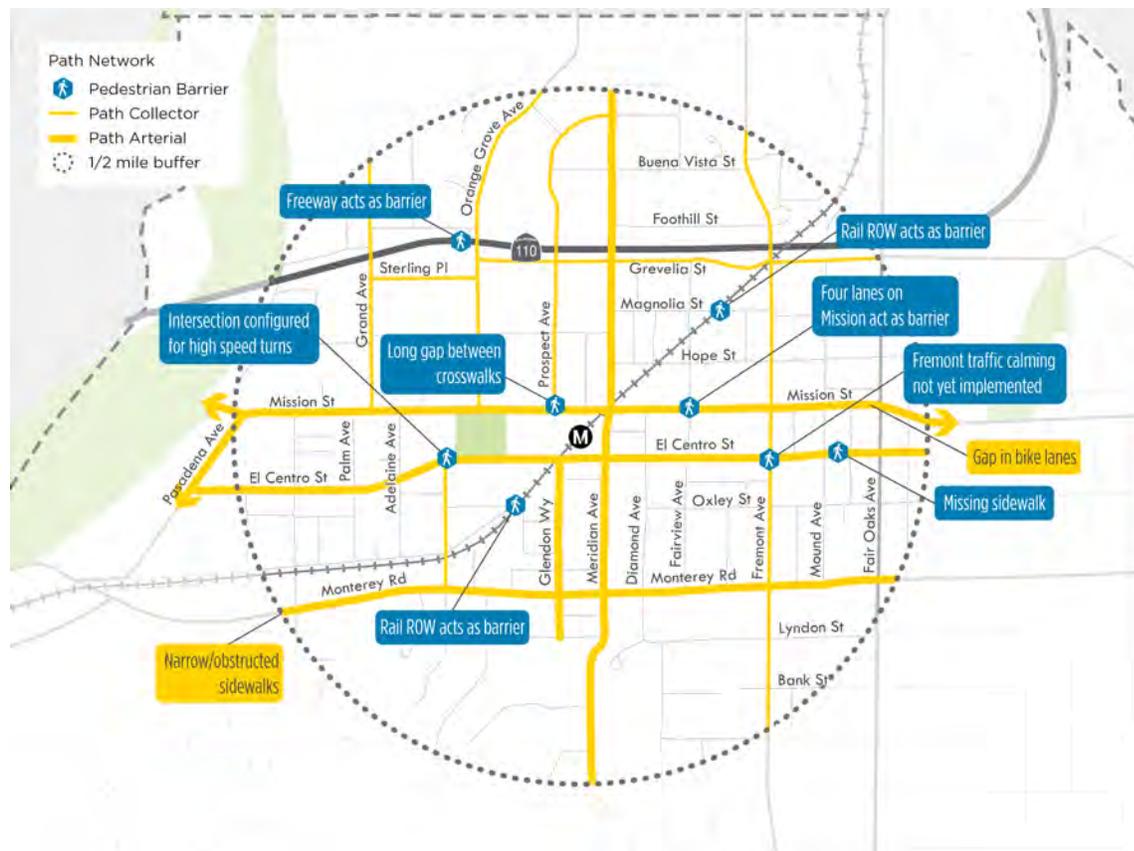


Access to Station

As the figure below notes, there are streets leading directly to the station from the north, south, east and west (Meridian, Mission, El Centro and Glendon). These have been identified as path arterials. There are also a number of streets connecting to these streets that extend some distance and provide important connections. These have been identified as path collectors, and include Grand, Orange Grove, Prospect, Fremont, Grevelia, Charter Oak and Monterey. Some of these streets are existing or planned bicycle routes providing important connections beyond the half-mile radius to the larger bikeshed; for example, Mission and El Centro connect to the Pasadena Avenue bike lanes at their western ends.

As the figure shows, the walkshed around the station generally connects to a well-connected network of streets with relatively small blocks, enabling direct pedestrian and bicycle paths. However, a few obstacles are noted. These include physical barriers – SR-110, the rail line itself – as well as widely spaced or missing crosswalks, substandard or missing sidewalks, gaps between bike lanes and wide streets.

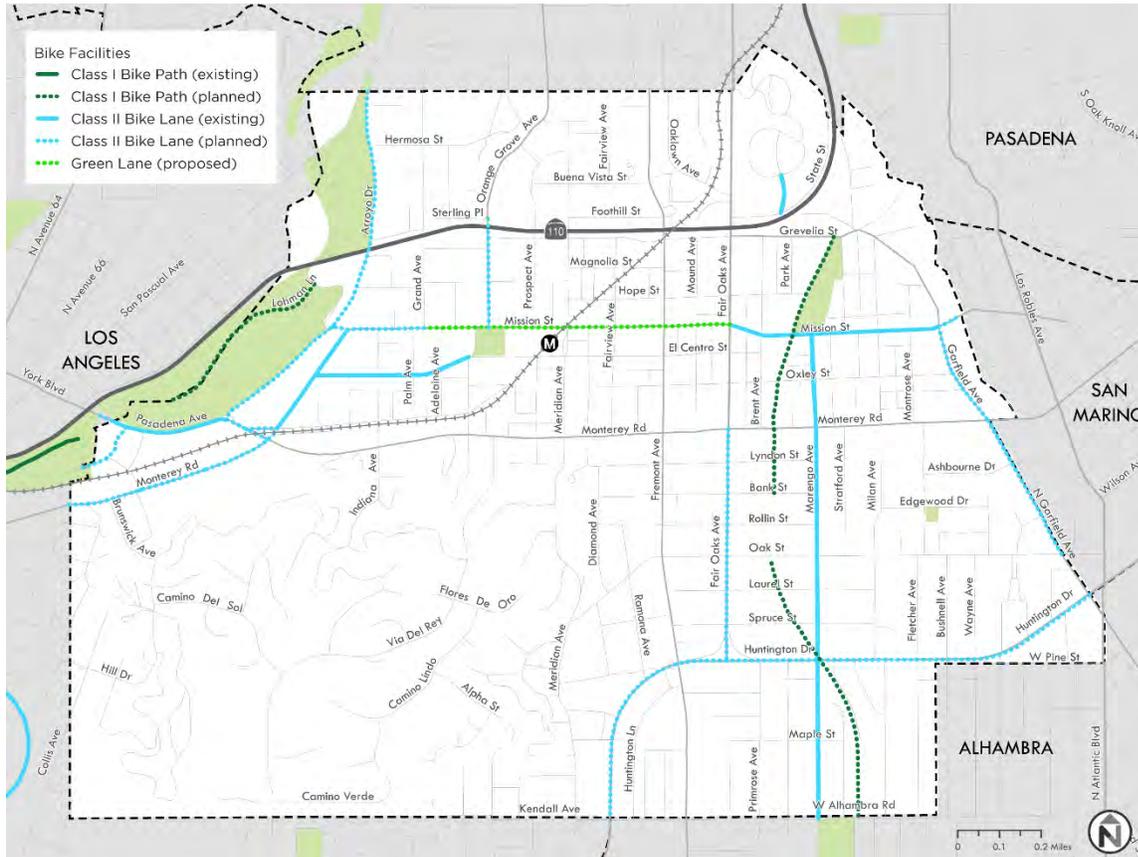
Figure X South Pasadena Station Path and Barriers



Bicycle

Existing and planned off-street Class I bike paths and on-street Class II lanes are shown in Figure X.

Figure 17 Bicycle Facilities (Existing and Planned)



As the figure indicates:

- There are existing Class II on-street bicycle lanes on several street segments, including all of Mission to the east and west of downtown, El Centro to the west of downtown, Pasadena Avenue to the west of downtown.

Together, the existing and planned paths and lanes form a disconnected network of dedicated bicycle facilities. Completion of bike facilities on Mission, Fair Oaks and Huntington, however, would result in a continuous network along major north-south and east-west routes.

There are also bicycle racks located on sidewalks throughout the City, primarily on Mission and at the Metro Rail station downtown.

Parking

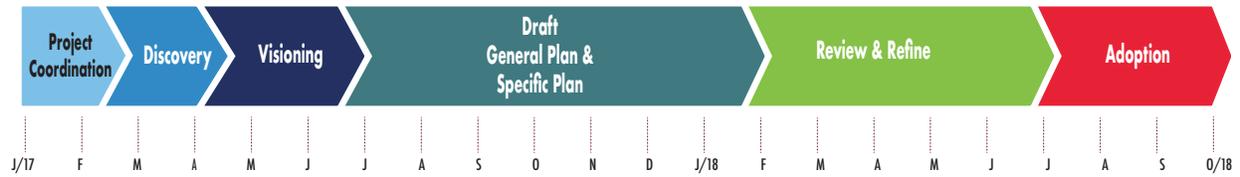
Downtown Parking Availability

In April 2017, Nelson\Nygaard conducted a survey of availability of public parking in the Downtown area. The survey was conducted on a weekday afternoon and evening, Wednesday, April 19 from 2-4 p.m. and 6-8 p.m., and on a weekend afternoon and evening, Saturday, April 15 between 2-4 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. (Note that on Saturday evening, the Taste of South Pasadena event was occurring, resulting in somewhat higher than typical occupancy.) The survey area included most blockfaces within the Downtown area as well as the Mission/Meridian garage and Hope/Mound lot.

The survey found the following:

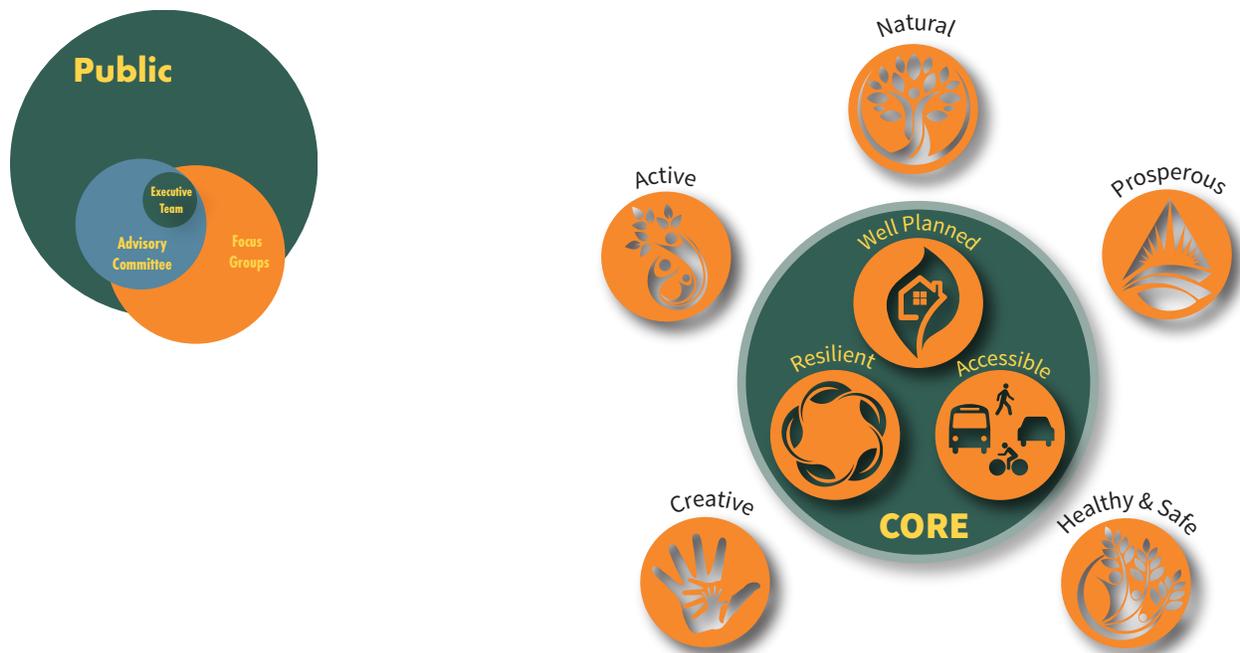
- On the blockfaces surveyed, including most of those in the Downtown area (and consequently, in downtown and on Mission just to the west), there are a total of 643 general (non-disabled or loading) parking spaces. There are an additional 164 spaces in the off-street lots, for a total of 807 in the survey area.
- Occupancy exceeded 85 percent at some locations during all time periods. (Eighty-five percent is a widely used figure representing “optimal” occupancy; parking is generally considered to be oversubscribed whenever availability falls below 15 percent.)
- In general, the locations with the lowest availability were in the Mission corridor rather than along Fair Oaks, where there is greater availability of private parking. They included blockfaces around the Trader Joe’s supermarket on Mission, Orange Grove Park, and the Metro Rail station, as well as on Mission between Meridian and Fair Oaks, including adjoining blocks and the Hope/Mound lot.
- During all time periods, there was availability of more than 15 percent on most blockfaces within the survey area, as well as at the Mission/Meridian garage. In general, there is not currently a shortage of on-street parking in the downtown area, although parking may not be available immediately adjacent to destinations and may require some walking.

Planning Process



The Downtown Specific Plan was developed in conjunction with the General Plan Update. This allowed a wider dialogue about linkages and the role of downtown within the larger city framework.

The planning process for Downtown Specific Plan, which began in January 2017, was designed around extensive and thoughtful public input.



The project team consisted of a core executive team, an advisory committee, and six focus groups. Focus Groups supported the public process of developing policy options and actions to implement the public's vision. Each Focus Group contributed members and expertise to the combined CORE Group which concurrently addressed the Well Planned, Accessible and Resilient Community. This Core Focus Group considered Downtown's approach to growth and preservation, incorporating perspectives from the other five groups.

The Executive Team included key City staff members with responsibility to keep the project on schedule and within budget. The Advisory Committee included members from City Council, Planning Commission, and department heads that provided on-going direction throughout the project.

Civic Engagement



The community engagement approach was designed around five goals:

1. Inform — to provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the challenges, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.

2. Consult — to obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
3. Involve — to work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
4. Collaborate — to partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
5. Empower — to place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

In conjunction with the General Plan Update, the extensive public engagement process combined new and trusted techniques to encourage a diverse group of citizens to contribute to the Downtown plan, including five-day visioning charrette, over 10 Focus Group meetings, a robust online presence to help guide the process. The Speaker Series brought three national experts to provide perspective, present alternatives, and stimulate community dialogue.

Opportunities to participate included large public meetings to small stakeholder roundtables, surveys, project web page updates, Neighborland social media engagement, email notifications, Facebook and Twitter posts. Each method encouraged the public to learn and convey their opinions on what was important for the city to consider over the next 20 years.

An estimated thousand-plus individuals attended these meetings, contributing ideas and insight. Online participation was equally extensive and captured an audience that doesn't typically attend public meetings. Over 340 individuals registered with the Neighborland site, contributing 41 ideas on various topics.

PART 2: VISION

Introduction

This report outlines a vision for the transformation of an approximately 20-block area of Downtown South Pasadena, located just south of the 110 Freeway and focused on Fair Oaks Avenue and Mission Street. Fair Oaks Avenue is a major north-south arterial that goes through the city. Mission Street is the city's historic main street and contains some of its most important buildings including City Hall. Over the past decades, even though Fair Oaks Avenue has remained economically alive, it has seen significant decline in its quality of place due to sprawl buildings and poor landscape. Mission Street by contrast has retained its historic character particularly around the Gold Line Station, and new infill along with successful retail businesses have made it one of the most important destinations in the city. This vision identifies a series of distinct planning strategies – public and private – to guide the social and economic future of Fair Oaks and Mission Street.

Key Ideas of the Vision:

Two Distinct Districts – The vision sees the study area as two distinct districts that are adjacent and complimentary to one another. Both districts have a clear historic center with commercial and retail uses surrounded by single and multi-family neighborhood fabric. The Mission District is centered on the light rail station. The Fair Oaks District is centered on the Fair Oaks – Mission street intersection. Both are enhanced in this vision.

Two Great Streets – The vision is physically organized on the enhancement of Mission and Fair Oaks as two great streets. Mission is seen as a more intimate Main Street with historic commercial buildings and parklets. Fair Oaks is re-designed as grand double-tree lined arterial going from north to south.

Leveraging Public Transit and Multimodality – The presence of the Gold Line Station is enhanced and celebrated. The space around the station is enhanced as a plaza that announces a consciously designed sense of place to commuters getting on or off at this station. Additionally, both Fair Oaks Avenue and Mission Street are re-designed with bicycle lanes to encourage multi-modality.

An Intricate Network of Open Spaces – This vision identifies existing open spaces within the study area and stitches them to new open spaces creating a rich tapestry of parks, plazas, enhanced alleys, parklets and street crossings. This network is designed to enhance walkability, sociability and spontaneous interaction throughout the two districts.

Park Once, Pedestrian First – The two districts are designed to be Park Once walkable places. Carefully located public parking places ensure parking distribution

throughout the two districts, and encourages people to walk to various destinations throughout. All parking is designed to be subservient to the pedestrian and invisible from the public realm.

Responsible Infill Development – This vision promotes selective and responsible infill development along both Mission and Fair Oaks in forms that are specific to their respective streets. The policies and regulations that accompany this vision build on this idea.

Preserving Historic Buildings – This vision identifies and preserves all historic buildings on both Mission and Fair Oaks. New development on Mission Street, particularly east of the station is regulated to build on the character and quality of existing historic commercial and mixed-use buildings to preserve the historic character and quality of the historic character of street.

Catalytic Projects

Public Improvement Projects

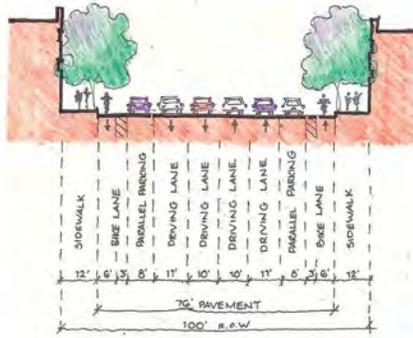
1. Fair Oaks & Mission Intersection enhancement – This project enhances the intersection of Mission & Fair Oaks into a pedestrian-friendly crossing and a visually attractive place. It repaves the entire intersection to define the crossing as a definitive center. The parcel to the south-east and south-west of this intersection are envisioned a new infill buildings with a quality and character appropriate to enhancing this place.
2. Parklets on Mission Street – To augment pedestrian activity and social interaction along Mission Street, and to provide more sidewalk space, the plan proposes a series of parklets distributed throughout the street. These parklets occupy the space of one parallel parking stall, and are designed as intimate places for outdoor seating and dining. The introduction of parklets along Mission is also a way of distinguishing it from the proposed tree lined formality of Fair Oaks Avenue.
3. Mid-block crossings on Mission Street – These crossings help break the large block lengths and encourage pedestrian activity along and across the street.
4. Mission Street Mobility Enhancement – Mission Street is envisioned to be re-stripped as a Main Street with two travel lanes, two bicycle lanes and parallel parking on both sides. This reinforces the character of Mission Street as a bicycle-friendly street connecting the light rail station to Fair Oaks Avenue.
5. Fair Oaks Boulevard Mobility Enhancement – Fair Oaks Avenue is envisioned to be configured as a grand double-tree lined north-south arterial. It will be restriped to have four travel lanes, two bicycle lanes and parallel parking on both sides. The bicycle lanes are located closest to the street curb and separated from the parallel

parking by potted plants in the initial phases and permanent planters in the eventual phases. Bulb outs at each intersection help slow traffic speeds. The bicycle lanes remain continuous across the blub outs.

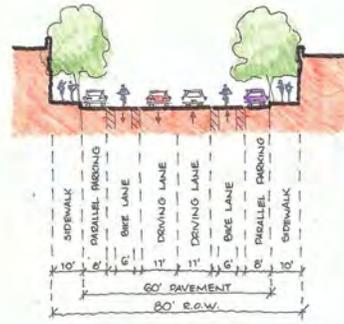
6. Metro Area Enhancement – The area around the Gold Line light rail station is significantly enhanced. The existing triangular park to the east of the station is retained. The asphalted road to the east of the station is redesigned a paved plaza. The existing historic monuments and Oak trees in this space are retained. The intersection of Mission and Meridian is also paved to enhance pedestrian connectivity on both sides of Mission. The station platform is directly connected to open spaces on both west and east by stair directly from the platform.
7. Pico Alley enhancement - The existing alley east of the station is paved and enhanced with string lights. It becomes a quite gathering space as well as an important pedestrian connection from the station to the eastern blocks, without getting onto Mission Street.
8. Edison Lane enhancement – The existing alley behind the Rialto is paved and enhanced with trees and string lights. It becomes a distinct north south pedestrian connection from south to north, connecting the Rialto to Mission.



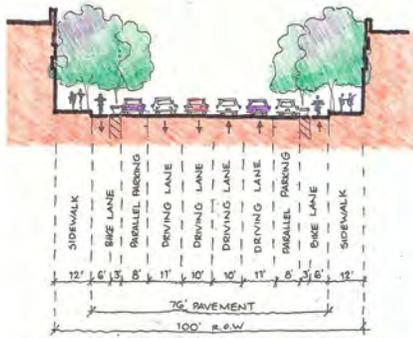
OPEN SPACE & AMENITY NETWORK



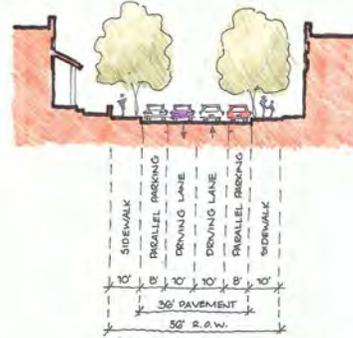
Fair Oaks Avenue Option 1: Existing condition with painted bike lanes



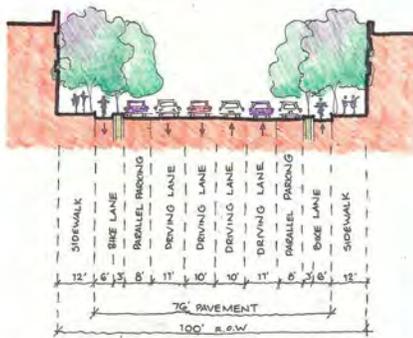
Mission Street



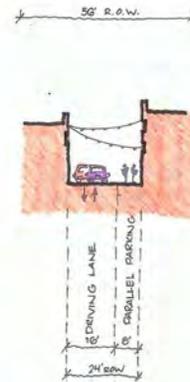
Fair Oaks Avenue Option 2: Painted bike lanes with potted plants in separator



New Streets



Fair Oaks Avenue Option 3: Raised separator with landscape and tree wells



Alley

STREET SECTIONS

Public Improvement Projects with Private Collaboration

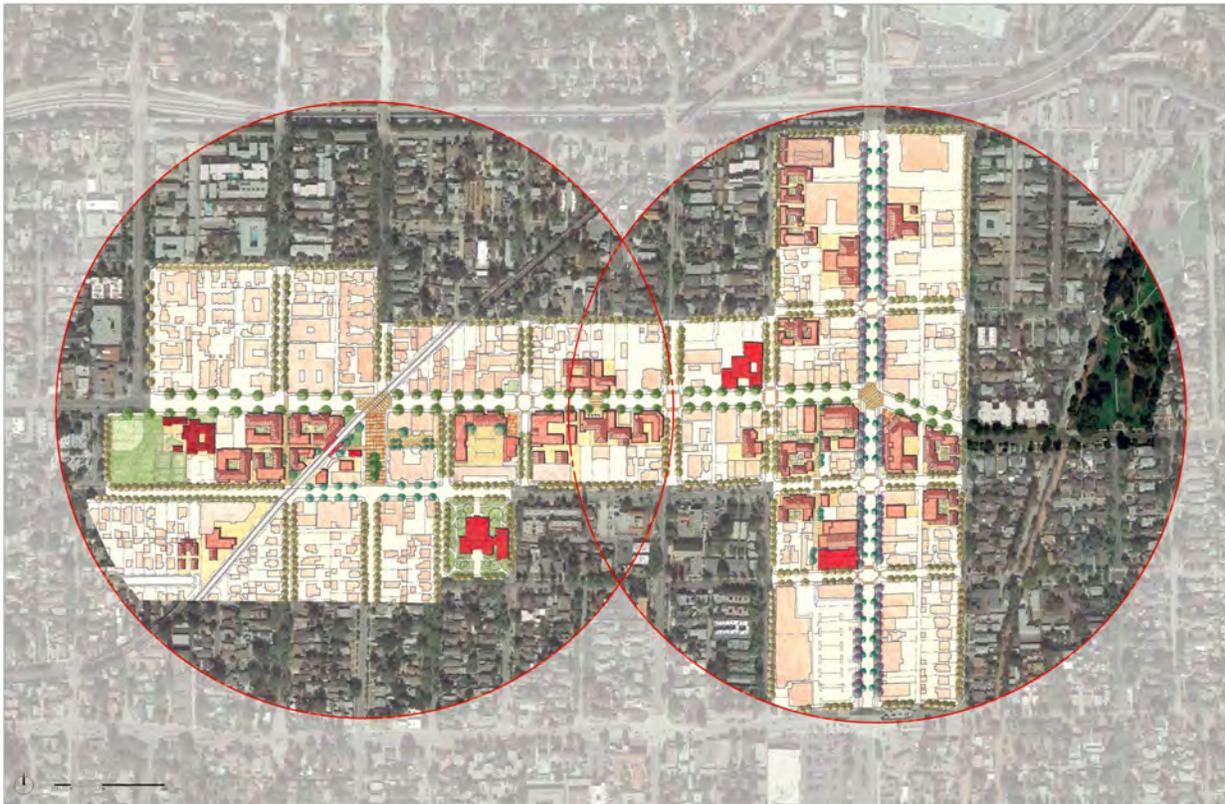
9. Parking Structure adjacent to freeway next to Shakers – The plan envisions a possible above grade public parking garage adjacent to the freeway along Mound Avenue. This garage will be up to 3 stories high and will be lined along Mound to conceal it from the dwellings across the street. Since this garage is located on what is currently private land, it will require public-private collaboration.
10. Various subterranean parking garages as part of infill projects – The plan proposes an economic development incentive wherein private infill development may be entitled to additional density if it provides subterranean public parking. This achieves a number of things: first, it saves municipal money. Second, it helps distribute public parking throughout the district in concentrated locations. Third, it empowers private development to create aid in public good.

Private Projects with Municipal Collaboration

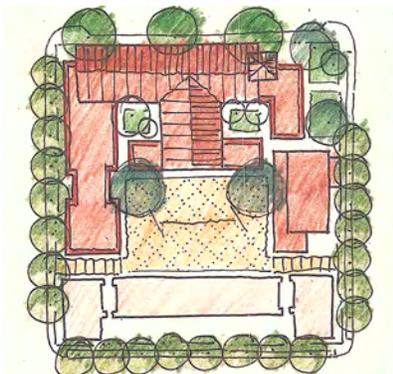
11. Various Infills along Fair Oaks Avenue– The plan envisions various mixed-use infill developments along Fair Oaks Avenue. These infills will be up to 4 stories tall, with active ground floors lining the sidewalks. In order to ensure that the form and character of these new buildings is not monolithic, a number of standards and guidelines are provided as part of this vision to enable contextually sensitive development.
12. Various Infills along Mission Street – New infill along Mission Street will be up to 3 stories tall, keeping the existing scale of Mission Street. To enable buildings to create a fabric that is contrasting to the one on Fair Oaks, building frontage along Mission will allow the creation of courts and yards directly facing the sidewalk, enabling a more porous fabric – and building off of the Mike and Anne’s restaurant on Mission.
13. SPUSD site development with central parking plaza – This is a mixed-use development with retail at the street level facing Mission Street, and commercial and office uses at the upper floors. The historic buildings are preserved. It is possible for this project to retain the existing central parking lot in part or whole. This space is currently used as flex space both for public parking as well as an event space on various occasions. The lot could be paved and converted into an attractive plaza like space used flexible for parking and other uses.
14. Plaza at corner of Fair Oaks Avenue & Mission Street – This triangular plaza could be done as part of the private infill development on the parcel at the southeast and southwest corner of Fair Oaks Avenue and Mission Street.

Illustrative Plan

The adjoining drawing is the summation of all the catalytic projects outlined above. It illustrates a hypothetical built out rendition for Downtown South Pasadena. It specifically shows how public and private improvements could over time, transform the downtown into a unique, destination. It shows the various open spaces existing and proposed integrated into a single cohesive network. It shows the possible formal disposition of various infill projects that will transform the downtown.

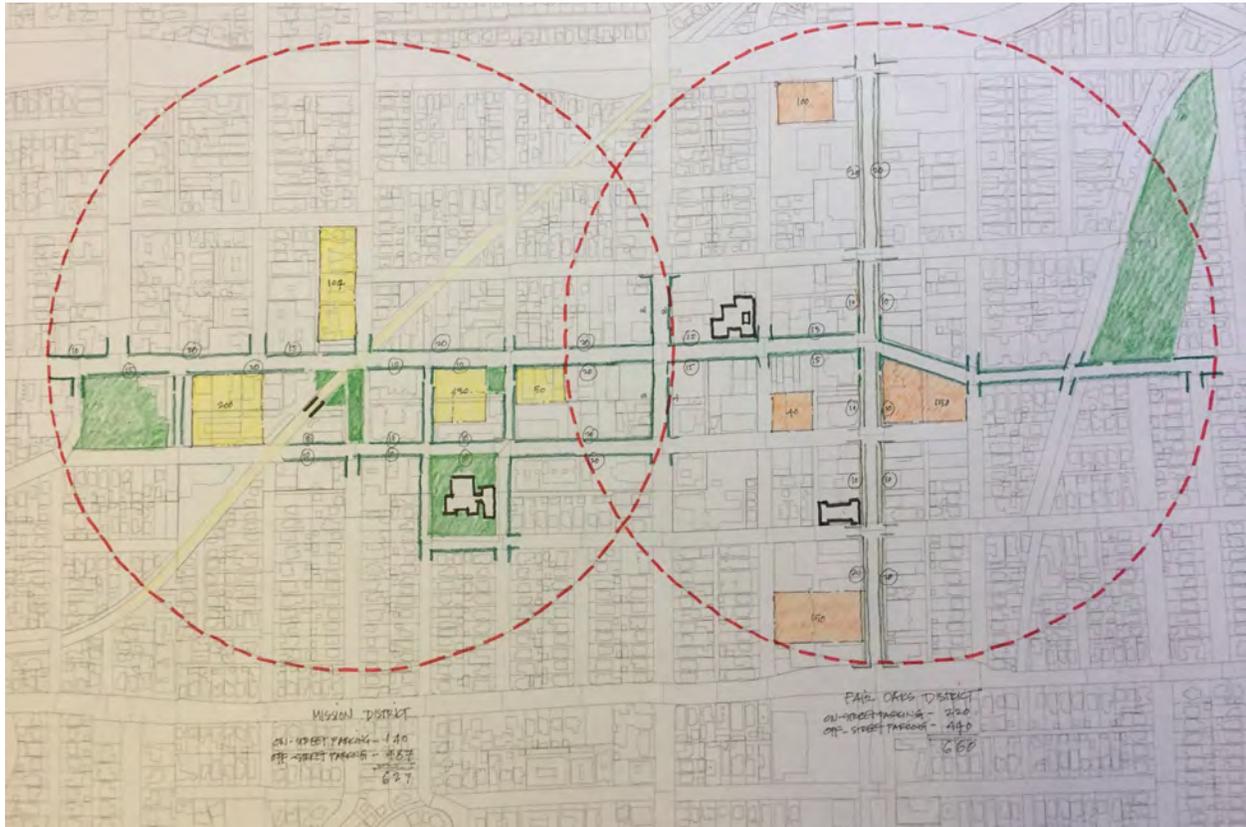


ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN



Alternate layout for SPUSD property that allows a larger building footprint (*more leaseable area*) within a three-story framework.

Parking

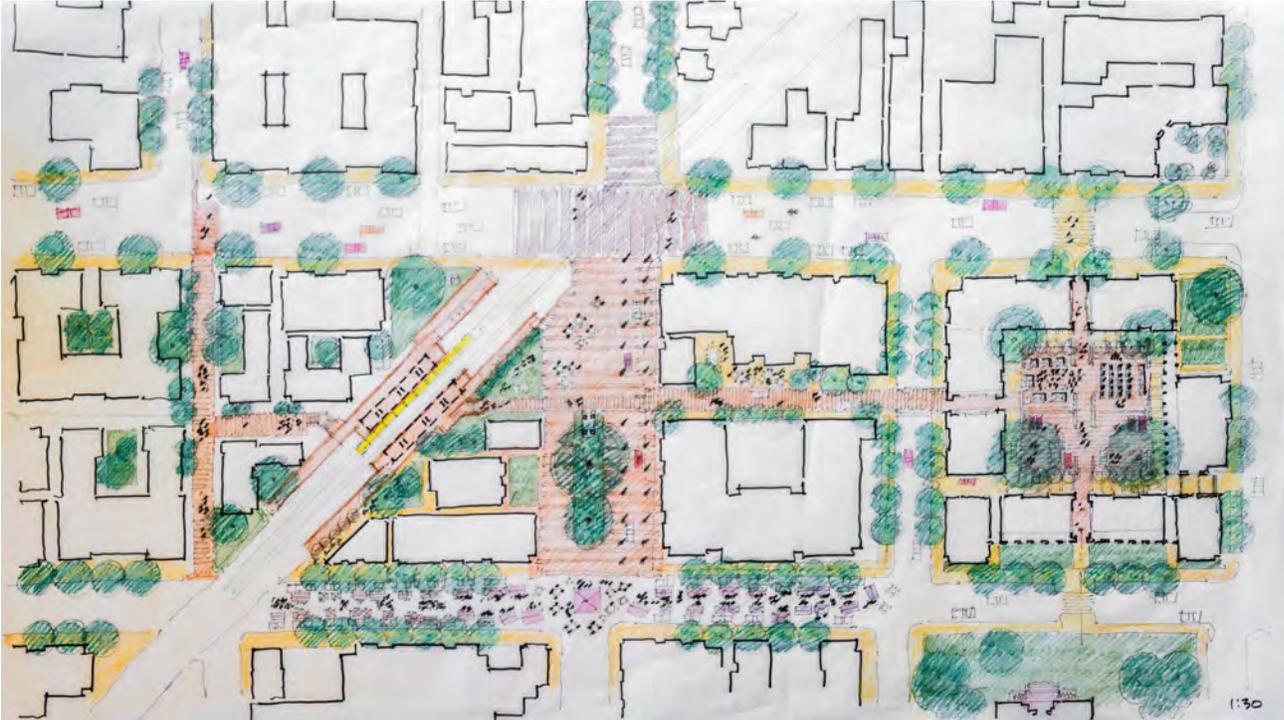


The adjoining diagram shows the envisioned distribution of parking within the two districts. Note how the subterranean parking – as part of individual private developments – can over time create a balanced and evenly distributed series of concentrated public parking locations all within a ¼ mile, 5 minute walk pedestrian shed from the center of each of the districts.



Intersection of Fair Oaks Avenue and Mission Street.

Illustrative Plan for Station Area.



Rendering of a parklet on Mission Street.



Rendering of Fair Oaks Avenue.

PART 3: POLICY

1 Our Natural Community

Green Infrastructure

The General Plan calls for a network of green spaces that protects and enhances the natural ecosystems (i.e.: wildlife) and provides associated benefits for people and the economy. Green Infrastructure harnesses the power of nature to provide critical services such as protection against floods or excessive heat, help improve air and water quality, which underpin human and environmental health.

In the Downtown area the Green Infrastructure includes:

Core Areas: Public Open Space that are destinations, such as the Station Area Plaza, other plazas, parks, and parklets. The desire to retain and build on an authentic sense can be reinforced by public art, contextual architectural features or materials, commemorative features and signage which express and convey the distinctive personality of Downtown area and the regional/local character of the landscape and heritage.

Connecting Corridors: These are the corridors that link the public open spaces. They are streets such as the enhanced Mission and Fair Oaks, with network of bikeways, and enhanced network of alleys. The goals for connectivity include strengthening pedestrian and multi-modal access, and wayfinding and greenway linkages in a networked system throughout the Downtown landscape. These corridors also incorporate infiltration, biofiltration, and/or storage to collect, retain, or detain stormwater runoff. Street trees and other plantings provide cooling, shade, wind protection, attractive streetscapes, and other environmental benefits.

Air

The two main pollutants of concern in South Pasadena are: ozone and suspended particulate matter. In South Pasadena, reducing air pollution is contingent on reducing the number of vehicles miles traveled (VMT) in the city.

Promoting walkable and mixed-use development served by high transit systems; and promoting complete street policies that encourage walking and use of public transit, reduces traffic congestion and improving air quality.

Mission Street is envisioned to be re-striped as a Main Street with two travel lanes, two bicycle lanes and parallel parking on both sides. This reinforces the character of Mission Street as a bicycle-friendly street connecting the light rail station to Fair Oaks Avenue.

Fair Oaks Avenue is envisioned to be configured as a grand double-tree lined north-south arterial. It will be restriped to have four travel lanes, two bicycle lanes and parallel parking on both sides. The bicycle lanes are located closest to the street curb and separated from the parallel parking by potted plants in the initial phases and permanent planters in the eventual phases. Bulb outs at each intersection help slow traffic speeds. The bicycle lanes remain continuous across the bulb outs.

Insert rendering of intersection design developed at the Charrette.

Green Infrastructure in the form of trees and plants absorb certain pollutants from the air through leaf uptake and contact removal. South Pasadena's widely planted trees and plants also cool the air and slow the temperature-dependent reaction that forms ground-level ozone pollution. (see *Trees Section for related policies and actions*)

Policies and Actions

P1.X Promote alternative transportation modes like walking, biking, and transit that reduce emissions related to vehicular travel.

A1.X Redesign Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue to promote walking, biking, ride-sharing, public transit use, the use of alternative fuel vehicles or other clean engine technologies.

Water

By weaving natural processes into the built environment, green infrastructure provides both stormwater treatment and flood mitigation benefits.

Green Streets: Green Streets incorporate infiltration, biofiltration, and/or storage to collect, retain, or detain stormwater runoff as well as a design element that creates attractive streetscapes. The Public Works Department requires new and reconstructed streets and roadway projects and CIP projects conducted within public streets which add or disturb at least 10,000 square feet of impervious surface to require Green Streets.

Low Impact Development (LID): The City requires LID for projects that are required to incorporate stormwater mitigation measures. LID is a strategy for improving the quality runoff by requiring that development projects direct runoff to treatment systems consisting of vegetation and soil.

Policies and Actions

P.1X Promote and require the integration of Green Infrastructure into storm water management systems.

A1.X Review and revise development regulations to encourage a green approach in new developments. Minimize impervious areas. Develop new projects and retrofit existing surfaces to reduce runoff through infiltration.

A1.X Incorporate Green Street elements into the redesign of Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue.

A1.X Promote the use of green roofs, bio-swales, pervious materials for hardscape, and other stormwater management practices to reduce water pollution.

A1.X Promote the use of captured rainwater, grey water, or recycled water.

A1.X Require landscaping for all new development to use drought tolerant plants.

Trees

Trees produce oxygen, provide shade and cooling, encourage walking, filter out air pollution, slow traffic, absorb rainwater and noise, improve property value and reduce people's stress levels. A healthy urban forest is a remarkably valuable asset for Downtown.

Mission Street redesign includes a tree-lined intimate Main Street with historic commercial buildings and parklets. Fair Oaks is re-designed as grand double-tree lined arterial going from north to south.

Improving the urban forest and significantly increasing tree canopy in Downtown will require years of investment in infrastructure improvements and many new trees. Once adequate soil volumes are in place, and coordinated with private development and smart stormwater management strategies, the Downtown urban forest will be a sustainable amenity that delivers numerous social, environmental and economic benefits for generations to come.

Recently planted trees, including drought tolerant species, are dependent upon supplemental irrigation until established, typically for two to three years. The method and amount that is applied may vary depending upon soil composition, heat, wind, planted in turf or ground cover, periods of abnormal rainfall or in poorly drained soils. A water audit should be performed to set watering patterns and timing to minimize waste.

The "Our Prosperous Community" recommends establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) for a variety of public realm enhancements and maintenance. The BID could provide funds for planting and maintaining street trees in the Downtown area.

Policies and Actions

P1.X Preserve, manage, and grow the downtown tree canopy.

A.1.X Preserve the existing Downtown canopy with continued maintenance and protection against tree removal.

A1.X Replace the dead, diseased, declining, or poorly structured, street trees.

A1.X Plant at a minimum 50 new trees annually on Downtown streets and parks.

A1.X Require smart irrigation controls for newly planted trees that adequately water the trees without wasting water.

A1.X Increase species diversity – encouraging the use of native, non-invasive, and water efficient species for a more resilient urban forest.

A.I.X Craft appropriate incentives that encourage property owners to add green infrastructure on private property, including trees, living walls and green roofs.

A1.X Require new development to plant street trees along the property frontages.

A1.X Support BID as a funding source for maintaining trees in the Downtown area.

A1.X Explore alternate sources such as fundraising and private sector donations for planting and maintaining street trees.

2. Our Prosperous Community

The goal of this section is to foster a cohesive mixed-use district that leverages the strengths of both Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue in order to transform Downtown South Pasadena into a vibrant mixed use destination; improve the built environment of downtown with catalytic, mixed-use development and other strategic investments; and ensure that Downtown South Pasadena is a significant positive contributor to the City's long term fiscal health..

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Fair Oaks Avenue is an existing high-traffic, north-south arterial that is well-positioned to capture latent retail demand of the surrounding market. Larger parcels along Fair Oaks are better able to accommodate mixed-use program as well as the required parking. Larger parcels also offer enough flexibility to accommodate physical requirements of national retailers as well as creative and tech office users, who generally prefer larger floor plates. The proposed 4-story height limit also allows for higher intensity residential/commercial mixed use development, enhancing likelihood of development feasibility.

Mission Street is notable for its pedestrian-friendly "Main Street" character, with existing collection of small, locally-owned businesses. The existing Metro Gold Line light rail station provides critical link to countywide transit system as well as a convenient link to Downtown Los Angeles, enhancing the area's desirability for multi-family residential development. It also opens up the area to a wider retail audience, as Downtown South Pasadena is only a station or two away from residents of Pasadena as well as the a number of Downtown Los Angeles neighborhoods, such as Chinatown, Little Tokyo, and the Arts District.

Key limiting factors to achieving a vibrant mixed-use downtown include the lack of a daytime population as well as the citywide 45-foot height limit. The lack of a significant daytime population in the downtown area poses a significant challenge to sustaining a critical mass of retail and dining establishments, as most businesses find it difficult to survive on just weekend and night-time patrons alone. The 45-foot height limit, on the other hand, effectively limits mixed-use development capacity to a maximum of three stories. This is due to the fact that most national retailers expect ceiling heights of 16 to 24 feet, leaving, at most, 29 feet for residential or office uses above, which generally require 10 to 15 feet of height per story (including thickness of floors). As such, most new developments with ground floor retail would only be able to reasonably accommodate three full stories. This limited development capacity hampers financial feasibility of new projects and limits the level of public benefits that the City can extract from new development.

Therefore, if the City is to support the transformation of Downtown South Pasadena into a vibrant urban district, there must be a concerted effort to introduce higher density

nodes within Downtown South Pasadena that includes residences, office space, as well non-retail destinations. This will ensure that the City can effectively leverage the value capture potential of new development while providing a greater chance that new retailers can flourish.

This strategy provides a framework for the City to take advantage of the aforementioned strengths to address the key limitations described above, improving the vibrancy of Downtown South Pasadena while enhancing the city's overall fiscal health and quality of life.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Community members expressed a strong interest in a greater variety of retail offerings, especially “experience-based” retail, outdoor/sidewalk dining, and retail with a wider appeal across a wider range of age groups. With regard to non-retail uses, community members expressed interest in live/work spaces, shared office or co-working spaces (e.g., WeWork), and more office space geared toward ‘creative’ professions. These professions include small- and medium-scale production/post-production studios (i.e. sound, film, and TV), architecture, graphic design, industrial design and multi-media firms, the likes of which some residents currently commute out of the City for. In terms of residential development, a number of residents expressed a desire for a greater variety, including granny flats and housing that is affordable to a range of incomes.

SPECIFIC PLAN AREA MARKET OVERVIEW

Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue has seen the bulk of new development activity that has occurred in South Pasadena since 2000. Mission Street in particular has seen the delivery of a number of sizable condominium and townhome projects, including Mission Meridian Village, 820 Mission Street and 1401 Mission Street. Recent unit sales in these developments are reflective of the strength of Downtown South Pasadena's residential market, with most selling for well over \$600,000, which is the citywide median multifamily sale price in 2016. South Pasadena, as a whole, maintained a higher median multifamily sale price than neighboring submarkets, like Pasadena, Burbank/Glendale, and Northeast Los Angeles.

Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue also contain the majority of the City's retail space. Mission Street is composed of mostly small, storefront businesses, whereas Fair Oaks Avenue generally contains larger format retail. Within the last decade, no new shopping centers have been built in the City, but approximately 68,000 square feet of non-shopping center retail has been built, which the City has added at a faster rate than its Competitive Market Area. Approximately half of this new retail development has been in ground floor space in mixed-use buildings on Mission Street. Retail vacancy on Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue has remained below 5 percent over the past 10 years, as it has throughout the City. The market and demand analysis found that of the 175,000 to 260,000 square feet of support retail space that the City could support over the next 20 years, approximately 55,000 to 80,000 square feet of that could be supported on

Mission Street, and another 125,000 to 180,000 square feet could be supported on Fair Oaks Avenue.

The majority of office space in the Specific Plan Area is located north of Mission Street on Fair Oaks Avenue, including South Pasadena's only Class A office building at 625 Fair Oaks Avenue. Other office spaces in the Specific Plan Area are primarily smaller Class B, catering to small businesses and professional service providers. Rents are more affordable and vacancy is usually lower in South Pasadena in comparison with the surrounding competitive office submarkets, indicating that higher rents could potentially be achievable. Downtown South Pasadena is currently lacking in creative office space, which has been in high demand in nearby submarkets. Creative office spaces are typically larger commercial properties that offer flexible spaces to multiple tenants. Most creative offices are housed within refurbished older buildings to maximize value via adaptive reuse. Such office products are targeted towards boutique professional service firms, design firms and small entertainment and media companies, which matches with the employment of a substantial portion South Pasadena workers. The performance of creative office properties elsewhere in South Pasadena, such as 1010 Sycamore Avenue, has been strong, suggesting that an opportunity exists to provide such a product in the Specific Plan Area.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Foster a cohesive mixed-use district that leverages the strengths of both Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue.

- **P1.1. Enhance internal and external economic development delivery capacity**
 - **A1.1.1. Designate a senior planner or other City staff member to oversee downtown economic development initiatives and partnerships**

The City can ensure that its desired policies are implemented effectively by allocating some staff resources toward creating partnerships that can leverage the capacity of other organizations and non-profit groups that are active in South Pasadena, such as the South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce, South Pasadena Arts Council (SPARC), and South Pasadena Arts Center. Over the long-term, as mentioned in the Citywide Economic Development Element, the City should consider ways to budget for the creation of a full-time economic development position that is empowered to negotiate with private developers, assist projects through the development approval process, and lead acquisition and disposition of City-owned land and other resources, and proactively implement a business attraction program.

- **A1.1.2. Engage with property owners and the South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce to gauge appetite for a Business Improvement District (BID)**
- Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), which have been implemented through Los Angeles County and the US, collect a special levy from property owners

within a geographically defined area to support agreed-upon special services and programs that enhance the desirability and performance of the district. BID activities include district-wide marketing support, public realm maintenance, organizing special events, and providing private security patrols. BIDs have been shown to have a large, positive impact on the value of commercial property while improving the quality of life for community members. In the South Pasadena context, a BID could provide much needed organizational capacity and a more steady, long-term commitment of financial resources. In addition, it could be instrumental in managing many of the initiatives proposed in this plan, including the district branding and marketing, retail tenancing strategy, and shared parking agreements. Formation of a BID will require an individual or group of individuals to form a proponent group to gather community support.

○ **P1.2. Attract a greater variety of desirable retail and office tenants by building upon existing strengths and market opportunities**

- **A1.2.1. Implement district-wide retail branding and tenancing strategy that builds upon nascent cluster of home furnishings and design stores, while adding other retail desired by the community, such as experience-based retail and retail for a wider demographic.**
- The City should implement a district-wide branding strategy that emphasizes building upon the City's existing market opportunities and strengths, including nascent home furnishings and design stores, food and beverage clusters as well as other retail and office uses that the community has expressed interest in, like experience-based retail and tech/creative offices. Such a strategy would best be organized by a Business Improvement District, or similar entity, with the capacity to engage property owners, the broker community, and other relevant stakeholders. A cohesive branding and tenancing strategy will provide a platform for local businesses to reach a wider audience as well as attracting new retail and office tenants to the area,. It will also enhance the image of the area as a cohesive regional destination offering a unique retail, dining, and entertainment experiences. This will help to attract more visitors from surrounding communities, bolstering retail sales and strengthening Specific Plan Area's retail tax base. The strategy should leverage the unique qualities of Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue and ensure a tenant mix that minimizes major competition amongst retailers, creates synergies and enhances the performance of retailers on both corridors.
- **A1.2.2. Host broker, education events to promote South Pasadena and to align office and retail tenant mix with what is desired by the community.**

Community members note that there is an overabundance of retail establishment that do not meet the needs of the South Pasadena residents, and that a wider diversity of retail is needed to meet the needs of different demographic groups. The City should engage brokers through luncheons and other similar events to

encourage brokers to engage potential tenants that will build alignment with the branding strategy mentioned above. Brokers can help the City to accomplish this by attracting tenants that would augment previously identified target clusters, such as home furnishings stores, high-quality food and beverage establishments, design-related stores and offices, and tech offices. As mentioned in the Existing Context section, above, the lack of daytime population in Downtown South Pasadena is a key limiting factor to the long-term vibrancy of the district, and is a market gap that should be filled simultaneously with the other business attraction initiatives outlined in this plan.

- **A1.2.3. Host property owner events to promote landlord practices that attract new small businesses, including flexible lease structures, shorter lease terms etc.**

A selection of retail tenants that complement and drive traffic to one another results in a more active and vibrant district for all to enjoy, while strengthening the City's retail tax base. In order to draw more unique, independently-owned businesses and restaurants, however, landlords may need to offer non-traditional (i.e., shorter) lease terms or alternative lease structures. For example, landlords with underutilized storefronts could offer short-term "pop-up" retail leases, which offer a low-cost way for fledgling business owners to gain exposure to the marketplace. Pop-up shops can generate interest in the area, draw in a wider audience, and maintain a healthy level of activation.

- **A1.2.4. Actively market South Pasadena to notable chefs and restauranteurs to attract high-quality food and beverage establishments**

The City can spur the creation of a destination dining cluster by actively marketing to notable regional chefs and restauranteurs. Mission Street, in particular, is well-positioned to attract potential restaurants that would fit well

- **P1.3. Continue to nurture small, independently-owned businesses**

- **A1.3.1. Engage with the Chamber of Commerce or future Downtown BID (if implemented) to better connect local entrepreneurs with US Small Business Administration loans and other Federal or State assistance programs.**

The South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce already offers a number of services for potential small business owners. Facilitating access to other funding assistance programs can help to build the City's retail tax base while ensuring that home-grown entrepreneurship may be nurtured within City limits.

- **A1.3.2. Engage with successful Farmers' Markets tenants in locating them in retail space in Downtown South Pasadena**

South Pasadena's Farmers' Market is one of the most successful farmers' markets in the San Gabriel Valley. The City can further leverage this valuable

asset by engaging the broker community to help the most popular vendors to find permanent storefronts within Downtown South Pasadena. This will enhance the retail mix of Specific Plan Area while strengthening the retail tax base of the City.

- **A1.3.3. Seek medium-size retailers for Fair Oaks Avenue that can both meet needs of a wide range of residents, satisfy latent demand of surrounding market, and complement smaller independent businesses.**

Larger retailers on Fair Oaks Avenue should complement the small, locally-owned businesses along Mission Street, augmenting the selection of retail offerings in South Pasadena without directly competing with smaller businesses.

- **P1.4. Promote higher levels of pedestrian foot traffic with temporary activities and events**

- **A1.4.1. Encourage Specific Plan Area property owners to collaborate on new “pop-up” events to both make use of vacant storefronts or parcels along Mission Street or Fair Oaks and to generate greater interest in Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue as a unique retail destination**

Pop-up events will bring more activity in the area while demonstrating the viability of the area for additional retail and businesses. The strategy should include food trucks and seasonal festivals or other temporary uses in vacant spaces such as temporary art exhibitions or eating and drinking experiences. The City should also consider engaging with notable events and organizations in neighboring communities, such as CicLAvia, the 626 Night Market, and Make Music Pasadena to establish partnerships that will draw event-goers into South Pasadena.

- **A1.4.2. Created a coordinated calendar of events for different organizations in order to allow for combined marketing of events**

Greater coordination in marketing of existing events will allow for more consistent messaging, while strengthening the brand of Downtown South Pasadena. Greater coordination could also foster more collaboration between event organizers and local businesses. For example, to complement already scheduled movie or concert nights at Garfield Park, businesses could offer extended hours or pre-event specials, which could potentially boost attendance and attract a wider audience, setting the area apart as a singularly compelling destination in the region.

- **A 1.4.3 Link businesses to active transportation by considering the long-term implementation of the Bicycle Friendly Business Pilot Program**

The City should consider transitioning the Bicycle Friendly Business Pilot Program into a permanent program, as it could be useful for attracting patrons from outside of the immediate community with minimal impact to parking demand as well as traffic.

Improve the built environment of downtown with catalytic, mixed-use development and other strategic investments

○ P2.1 Explore new and existing capital funding sources for key public realm improvements

▪ A.2.1.1. Pursue the appropriation of Metro funding resulting from the recently disbanded 710 freeway tunnel initiative for public realm objectives

The Board of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority recently voted to drop their support of the 710 freeway tunnel and instead devote \$700 million to a range of transportation infrastructure improvements. The City should actively pursue this funding to mitigate the impact of the heavy north-south through traffic that runs through South Pasadena.

○ P2.2. Promote new development that supports existing market opportunities and strengths

▪ A2.2.1. Engage the development community and property owners to promote the redevelopment of single-use and single-story retail centers on Fair Oaks Avenue into mixed-use projects with shared parking

Larger opportunity sites along Fair Oaks Avenue, primarily larger, surface-parked neighborhood retail centers, offer a unique opportunity to develop larger scale mixed use project that can accommodate a significant amount of parking. This could allow for these projects to accommodate higher intensity use mix, while also potentially providing additional parking to support area businesses. The City should actively engage with the development community and property owners to explore the viability of redeveloping opportunity sites along Fair Oaks Avenue.

▪ A2.2.2. Establish an inventory of vacant retail storefronts and vacant commercial parcels with all relevant parcel information, development and use potential, and make publicly available ensure it is regularly updated.

Creating such an inventory will make it easier to the City and brokers to actively engage with property owners as well as to promote the redevelopment of underutilized parcels or properties for more productive uses.

▪ A2.2.3. Engage the development community and property owners to promote infill development on underutilized sits along Mission Street.

Vacant and small underutilized sites contribute little to the City's tax base, and also diminish the character and feel of the City. These are prime opportunities for redevelopment and new growth that conforms with the City's urban design standards and context, and bolsters the City's tax base. The City can encourage development on these sites by engaging with property owners and developers to facilitate transactions and development activity. Such actions can include:

- **A2.2.3.a Engage with private owner(s) of larger retail centers on Fair Oaks Avenue**

It is critical to engage with private owners of larger opportunity sites, particularly those who have expressed an interest in redevelopment. Such sites offer an excellent opportunity to begin transforming Fair Oaks Avenue into a veritable mixed-use corridor. Early “proof of concept” projects will demonstrate feasibility, and will likely convince others to follow suit.

- **A2.2.3.b Work with the South Pasadena Unified School District (SPUSD) to create refined development guidelines for the School District site on Mission Street.**

The City’s Planning and Building Department should proactively engage with the SPUSD to formulate clear development guidelines that are aligned with both community desires noted in the General Plan and Downtown Specific Plan update, School District needs, as well as market opportunities. Providing a more resolved illustrative development program that reflects what the community will accept will minimize risk for potential private developer, while helping to ensure that the end product will be agreeable to the community. The City should test development guidelines for market feasibility to ensure sufficient development response, after which the City should initiate a competitive RFP process to solicit a private developer with experience with a proven track record with delivering high-quality urban infill projects that are respectful of neighborhood context. As the SPUSD seeks a development partner, they should work with the City and the community to define an optimum development capacity and use mix that meets financial feasibility requirements as well as Mission Street public benefit goals. Other key considerations include the treatment of historic structures currently occupying the site as well as the potential impact to filming permit fees currently generated by the site.

- **A2.2.4. Establish a set menu of parking and building envelope flexibilities on Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue that developers may apply for in return for desired public benefits.**

Allowable building envelopes are currently very limited, which limits the City’s ability to extract public benefits from new development. Therefore, the City should establish a set menu of parking and building envelope flexibilities that allows developers to achieve a financially feasible project in exchange for other public benefits, such as affordable housing, open space, and public art. Such a system would set clear guidelines for zoning relaxations, allowing for built outcomes that are better aligned with the desires of the City and its residents. This also allows the City to set clear expectations regarding the specific type and scale of public benefit contributions that will be required.

- **A2.2.5. Evaluate the the citywide building height limit on Fair Oaks Avenue in order to support a tiered density bonus system.**

The City should re-evaluate the current 45-foot height limit for particular areas of the City, to ensure that infill development with active ground floor uses are financially feasible, while maintaining a consistent character with the rest of the City. The Fair Oaks Avenue corridor, in particular, is well-suited for greater building heights, as opportunity sites are large enough such that taller buildings can be sufficiently buffered from nearby, single-family neighborhoods.

- **A2.2.6. Develop comprehensive Urban Design Guidelines and Standards for Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue that will support the brand and identity of the Downtown district.**

1. Maintaining a consistent and desirable “look and feel” for Downtown South Pasadena will be critical component of the district’s brand. Therefore, it is important that the City establish clear Urban Design Guidelines and Standards that align with the brand and image that the City wishes to pursue. Design Standards are generally prescriptive criteria that property owners must abide by when completing any significant renovations or new construction. Guidelines provide suggestions on desirable design elements, but they are not mandatory. Standards and Guidelines should include guidance on the following:

- Street furnishings (benches, utility boxes, transit stops, magazine/newspaper racks)
- Public Art (murals, etc.)
- Urban Greenery (specified trees and underplantings)
- Alternative transit (bike lanes)
- Sidewalk/ hardscape design
- Crosswalk and street corner design
- Awning designs
- Street Lighting design (pedestrian lights, traffic signals, street lights, bollards, etc.)
- Public plaza design (particularly as they relate to surrounding uses, like retail)

- **A2.2.7. Enable businesses to share amenities, like plazas and outdoor dining space, and facilities, such as shared-kitchens or buildings in market-style formats**

The City must ensure that zoning and land use regulations allow for more creative uses of both private and public space. This will make South Pasadena a

more welcoming environment for more effective, creative, or non-traditional uses that are aligned with the desires of South Pasadena residents. Allowing for the use of shared kitchens or the creation of multi-tenant market-style retail spaces would create the opportunity for a “food hall” or similar food and beverage experience, which residents have expressed an interest in seeing.

- **P2.3. Explore creative parking strategies to efficiently use available parking and generate potential revenues.**

- **A.2.3.1. Leverage publicly-owned parking lots by allowing public paid access during nights and weekends (or other times when not in use by public facilities)**

There are existing publicly-owned surface parking lots, which are further specified in the Downtown Specific Plan, that are opportunities for the City to earn revenue by allowing public paid access when they are not in use by public facilities. They can be maintained as opportunity sites for development, while generating revenue and helping to provide shared parking for local retail in the near-term.

- **A.2.3.2. Explore metered on-street parking on shopping streets**

The City should consider applying paid parking meters to the currently free on-street parking spaces on retail corridors. This will likely be most successful once South Pasadena becomes a more established shopping destination. However, the City should be careful that charging for parking on retail streets does not encourage drivers to park on residential side streets.

- **A2.3.3. Consider reducing on-site parking requirements on shopping streets to leverage transit access and to incentivize potential office and multi-family residential mixed-use development**

Office and residential users that are located within close proximity to rail transit are much more likely to use it and, as a result, would require less parking. The City should consider offering lower parking minimums for mixed-use office, multi-family, and retail projects of a certain intensity. The provision of parking is a major cost for developers, and any reduction in requirements would enhance development feasibility, potentially generating more development interest in Downtown South Pasadena. Incentives like this will be critical in ensuring that new residential, office, and retail space is delivered to support both existing businesses and the growth of target clusters. Potential impacts to surrounding neighborhoods can be addressed through the revision of existing, or the creation of new, Preferential Parking Districts.

- **A 2.3.4 Conduct a district-wide parking needs assessment in order to reevaluate need for the Mission Street Specific Plan Parking Density Bonus.**

The previous Mission Street Specific Plan incentivized the provision of parking by private developers through the Parking Density Bonus, but the creation of new parking may no longer be a priority, given the likely decline of parking demand in the future. More Downtown South Pasadena residents and visitors are increasingly using other modes of transportation, including public transit and cycling, and new technologies, such as ride-hailing services and autonomous vehicles, will continue to weaken the long-term growth of parking demand in built-out cities like South Pasadena. To make a clear determination, however, current parking demand must be carefully studied to ensure that such demand will be adequately met in the near-term. If the City determines that a significant amount of new parking is not needed, it should consider eliminating the Mission Street Specific Plan Parking Density Bonus in order to divert value capture revenues to other, higher priority, public benefits.

Maintain and monitor the fiscal health of Downtown Area

○ **P3.1. Strengthen the Downtown South Pasadena's tax base**

- **A.3.1.1 Support the renovation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings**

The adaptive reuse of older buildings in the City can provide affordable options for creative office tenants. The City can help bring about these spaces by educating developers and property owners on mechanisms to finance the rehabilitation of their buildings through the use of historic preservation tax credits and the City's already established Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program.

- **A.3.1.2. Locate residential and employment growth in mixed-use buildings or close to retail**

The City should promote a mix of uses within both individual buildings and targeted districts. This will help to create an economically symbiotic relationship between residents, employees and businesses by creating a balance of daytime and night-time population fostering urban vitality and supporting retail activity.

- **A.3.1.3 Ensure that new development is not a fiscal burden to the City**

The City should adopt a clear set of policies to ensure that new development does not impose any fiscal burdens to the City and does not take away resources from providing the current level of services. This is typically achieved by requiring proponents of new developments provide a detailed fiscal impact analysis of proposed projects, and have it peer reviewed by the City's independent

consultants (compensated by the project proponents), prior to approving final entitlements. While it is not suggested that all projects be fiscally positive as a requirement for approval, as there may be projects considered by the City for their strategic importance or catalytic potential, it is important that the fiscal impacts of new projects are publicly circulated and reviewed as part of the City's decision-making process.

- **P3.2. Explore un-tapped opportunities for value capture and revenue generation**

- **A3.2.1. Use developer agreements to support the City's public realm improvement goals.**

New development projects in the Downtown Specific Plan Area should be leveraged to further public realm improvement goals through the use of developer agreements. Such agreements provide certainty to the developer that development standard will remain fixed for a particular site, while contracting the developer to provide benefits to the City, such as infrastructure improvements, public open space, or other public realm improvements.

- **A3.2.2. Fortify the City's existing Development Impact Fee regime**

South Pasadena's current development impact fees are well below what are found in neighboring municipalities. To most effectively leverage the positive impact of new development, the City must develop a rational nexus between desired public realm improvements and the scale of development that City will allow. Given the relatively high performance of real estate in the City, the City should consider significantly increasing the fees levied on new development.

- **A3.2.3. Explore parking fees to enhance fiscal revenue.**

Parking fees are one of the few untapped sources of fiscal revenue in the City of South Pasadena. The City should consider charging for parking on publicly-owned property, including the SPUSD site, City Hall, and on-street spaces. The City should also consider charging a nominal fee for Preferential Parking District permits. This revenue could provide much needed fiscal revenue, while also serving as a security for General Obligation Bonds to fund major capital projects. The City should also explore the creation of a Downtown special assessment district to levy a fee from property owners within a defined geography to help fund major public improvements.

3 OUR WELL PLANNED COMMUNITY

Downtown South Pasadena features a wonderful collection of new and historic buildings, arts and cultural venues, Metro Gold line station, and quality street-oriented building fabric. Buildings are generally placed close to front property lines to continue the existing form and scale of the neighborhood. A mix of uses activate the sidewalks.

A few vacant and underutilized sites offer a great opportunity to fill the current gaps in the urban street facade that disrupt the pedestrian experience. As new development opportunities occur, open spaces can be incorporated in the form of pocket parks, community gardens, parklets, and outdoor civic spaces.

High land value, low vacancy rates, excellent school district, and the appeal of the Downtown South Pasadena lifestyle has resulted in high rent levels, making downtown out of reach for its workforce. Preserving and expanding the supply of affordable housing is an important goal for the Downtown Specific Plan. Appropriately-scaled new infill buildings with diverse housing unit types will increase the supply of workforce housing.

The General Plan directs majority of new growth to the Downtown area. The community vision identified the desired character, intensity, and scale of contextual infill development desired for vacant and underutilized tracts on Fair Oaks Avenue and Mission Street in the downtown area.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR DOWNTOWN

Create an Economically Healthy Downtown.

Expand the role of downtown as the economic engine of the City. Embrace an authentic urban environment that's attractive to workers and businesses in the creative economy. Create opportunities for new business clusters that take advantage of synergies between existing businesses and emerging technologies. Proactively retain and attract retail uses on Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue that complement each other and take advantage of their unique location.

Expand Housing Opportunities

Increase and diversify housing opportunities that are attractive to all lifestyles, demographics and economic realities.

Safe, Comfortable, and Walkable Streets

Provide active storefronts, repurpose Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue to promote safe walking and biking, and activate existing alleys and pathways.

Leverage Transit

Promote pedestrian- and transit-friendly development, provide additional travel options at the station, and improve pedestrian, bike, and transit routes to Gold Line Station.

Get the Parking Right

Efficiently manage supply and demand for Downtown parking to accommodate visitor, commuter and resident parking needs.

Establish an Interconnected Open Space System

Develop a rich and integrated public realm that includes public open spaces, paths, and private courtyards that both the public and private sectors can jointly implement.

Animate the Public Realm

Provide, maintain, and enhance public features such as parks, streetscapes, and civic spaces. Develop clear and predictable standards to achieve a higher quality of development and streetscape enhancements. Develop buildings that engage the street and shape the civic realm.

Contextual Buildings

Design infill buildings that respect the existing small and fine-grain context and enrich the public realm.

Invest in Arts and Culture

Ensure downtown's place as the cultural and creative hub.

Goals and Policies

Contextual Infill

P3.X Conserve the small town character and scale of the downtown area, including its traditional urban design form, while creating places of enduring quality that are uniquely fit to their time and place.

A3.X Develop and adopt a form-based development code that requires the highest standards of context sensitive architecture, urban design, and landscaping.

A3.X Introduce new infill buildings and renovate existing buildings in a manner that preserves and enhances downtown's walkable urbanism of interconnected streets lined by buildings that engage, frame, and activate the street.

P3.X Remove regulatory and procedural barriers to good design.

A3.X Develop and adopt a Form-Based Code for the Downtown area that emphasizes pedestrian orientation, integration of land uses, treatment of streetscapes as community living space, and offers a streamlined development review process.

A3.X Consider seeking voter approval to raise the height limit along Fair Oaks Avenue frontage properties within the Downtown Specific Plan from 45' to 50' to facilitate well designed and proportioned four-story buildings on Fair Oaks Avenue.

P3.X Expand the inventory of publicly accessible community gathering spaces so that residents are within a short walking distance of a park or recreational area.

A3.X New buildings should incorporate public realm improvements described in the Downtown Vision and integrate such improvements into their existing context in a way that enhances Downtown's public space network.

A3.X Allow parklets on Mission Street to provide visual interest and expand the useable area of the sidewalk.

P3.X Encourage green projects and practices.

A3.X Require new and/or renovated buildings to meet USGBC LEED Silver rating or equivalent and advance the City's sustainability goals.

A3.X Incentivize sustainable living and business practices, both passive and active, that encourage energy efficiency, improve indoor air quality, and encourage water and resource conservation.

Affordability

P3.X Provide high quality housing for current and future residents with a diverse range of income levels.

A3.X Provide for quality housing at a range of income levels and price points, emphasizing housing product that captures the underserved multi-family market. **AP, SE**

A3.X Support workforce and market rate units that will expand and diversify Downtown's housing stock, and support growth in Downtown employment. **SE**

A3.X Provide flexibility in development standards to encourage and facilitate non-traditional housing types and options, including co-housing, assisted living facilities, live-work spaces, and artist lofts. **AP, SE**



Rialto Theater

The Moorish Style theater was designed by Lewis A. Smith in 1925. The Rialto has 1,300 seats and a 30-foot stage for live performances. The distinctive neon marquee was added in the 1930s. About 10 years ago, the theater ceased continuous operation and was only rented occasionally. Over the years the theater has fallen into disrepair.

Vision: The community has long expressed the desire for preservation and revitalization of the building to its original glory as a theater. The reuse of the building is constrained by the cost of renovation, uncertain market, and the lack of parking. The community vision is to make the theater the cultural and

social center of the community which in turn could encourage redevelopment of underused parcels on Fair Oaks Avenue. The Downtown Plan recommends a park once strategy wherein strategically located public parking, close to the Rialto Theater, can serve multiple uses. The owners of Rialto Theater should participate in the dialog to provide shared public parking.

Policies and Actions

P.3X Support and ensure restoration and reuse of the historic Rialto Theater for entertainment and other special events.

A.3X Renovate and protect of the historic elements of the theater.

A.3X Interim uses should be mindful of the historical assets and do no harm.

A.3X While under lease for different uses, agreement should be pursued to allow ongoing access to host community events.

4 OUR ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY

The transportation networks in the Downtown Specific Plan area should be designed and managed to support not just mobility and access but broader community goals of safety, health, economic development and environmental sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

As required under the City's adopted Complete Streets Policy, streets should safely accommodate all users. To the extent practically feasible, streets should be designed to encourage active transportation uses including walking and biking while discouraging unsafe vehicle speeds. Existing and potential transit and truck routes should be designed to safely accommodate large vehicles.

Mobility should be optimized by making intersections and interchanges more efficient and by providing alternatives to driving such as enhanced public transportation. The City should also ensure that its methodologies for measuring mobility are consistent with other City policies.

The City should pursue opportunities to improve multimodal access to the Gold Line station, focusing on improvements to access pathways within the station's walkshed, bikeshed and transit shed.

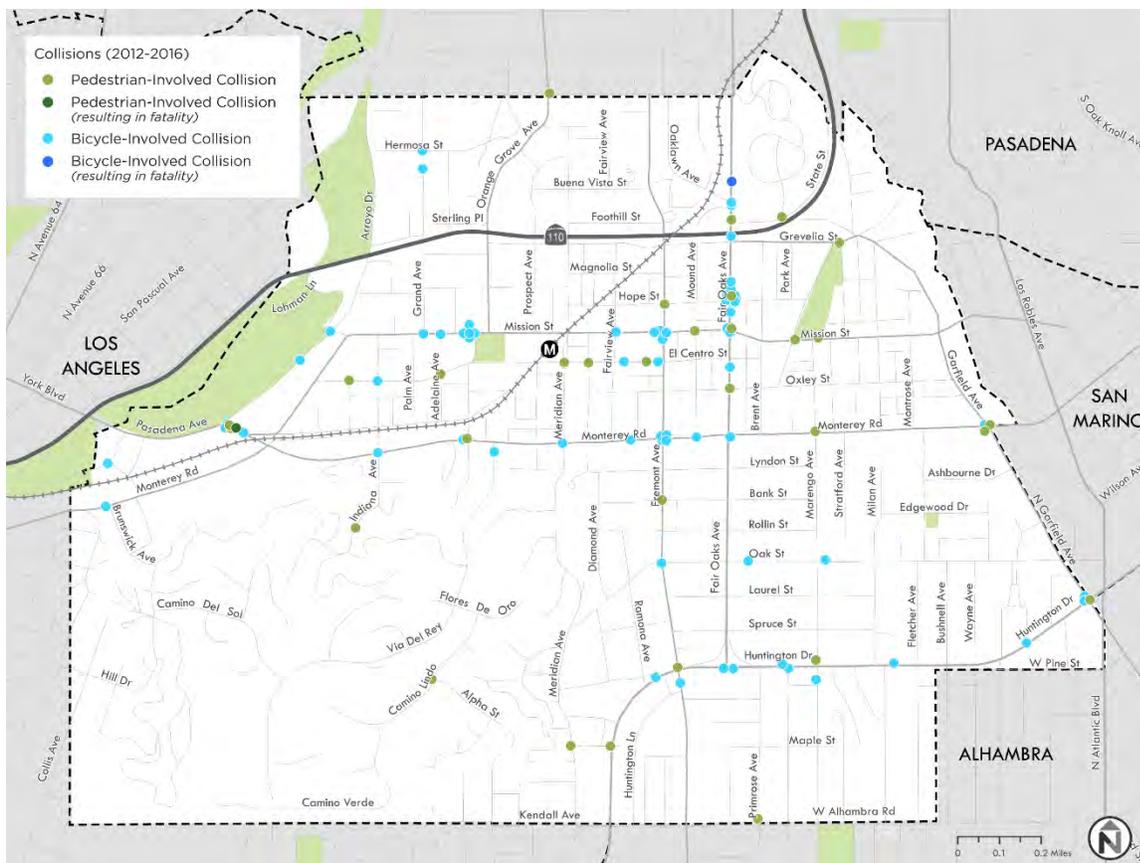
To support mobility and economic development, the City should seek to ensure availability of public parking for residents and visitors within the context of safety and other needs. Before providing additional parking supply, the City should first seek to more efficiently manage demand for its existing supply, then to partner with private entities to provide additional supply that is accessible to members of the general public (this strategy may be of particular utility in the Mission Street Specific Plan area). Considering the future of parking demand is less certain now than in previous years due to the potential emergence of connected and autonomous vehicles and related mobility innovations, the importance of using existing supply, rather than building new garages, is of heightened importance.

1. Complete Streets

Opportunities exist to apply South Pasadena’s recently enacted Complete Streets Policy to major local streets, reconfiguring them to more safely accommodate all users without significantly impacting traffic – and in doing so, to make South Pasadena more of a “complete city.”

While on some major streets, traffic volumes are at or approaching the capacity of the roadway (Fremont Avenue, for example), on others including Mission Street there is excess capacity. On streets including Fair Oaks Avenue, meanwhile, traffic lanes are wider than they need to be, or should be for safety reasons.

These streets also have among the City’s highest rates of traffic collisions involving the most exposed users of the street, pedestrians and cyclists.



On these streets, space that is not needed for traffic purposes may be put to other uses such as bike lanes, transit-only lanes, wider sidewalks, additional parking or landscaped medians.

Policies and Actions

P.4X Support street designs that emphasize safety and that accommodate all users, including pedestrians and cyclists.

P.4X Ensure that streets are pedestrian-oriented, with complete sidewalks, regular crosswalks, and other measures to improve pedestrian safety and comfort such as compact corner radii, “bulb-out” sidewalk extensions at crosswalks, leading pedestrian intervals at signals, additional safety measures potentially including pedestrian-actuated signals at unsignalized crosswalks, other traffic calming measures, and increased investments in sidewalk maintenance and lighting.

P.4X Limit the widths of vehicular lanes in order to discourage speeding (on truck routes or streets on which public transit operates, ensure that lanes are wide enough to safely accommodate large vehicles passing one another in opposite directions, and that intersections can accommodate turns by large vehicles).

A.4X Conduct a study of potential speed management improvements to Fremont, with the objectives of a) establishing the need for safety improvements, and b) identifying improvements that would enhance safety while maintaining traffic throughput.

A.4X Proceed with modifications to the “bulb-out” curb extensions on Fair Oaks. If some bulb-outs are removed as part of this process, implement alternative measures to protect pedestrians including leading pedestrian intervals and enhanced crosswalks.

P.4X On streets identified as priorities for one mode of travel, such as bicycle routes, prioritize improvements for that mode.

P.4X Ensure that bicycle lanes provide a high level of separation from traffic, using buffers, vertical elements or parked cars wherever possible.

A.4X Proceed with implementation of Bicycle Master Plan projects (except where modifications are recommended below, on Mission and Fair Oaks).

A.4X Reconfigure Mission between Fair Oaks and Diamond Avenue (westbound) and Meridian (eastbound) to replace the existing second east- and westbound general-purpose traffic lanes with buffered bicycle lanes. Two general-purpose lanes should be retained on the approaches to the Gold Line crossing at Meridian, in order to maintain existing queuing capacity.

A.4X Provide Class II bicycle lanes on Fair Oaks by narrowing existing vehicular lanes.

A.4X Over the longer term, provide parking-/curb-protected bike lanes on Fair Oaks between Monterey and Grevelia by removing existing raised medians, two-way left-turn lanes and parking as needed (left-turn lanes should be retained at intersections). The “buffer” between the bike lane and parking may initially be configured using striping and planters. Over time, this should be converted to a raised median. Protected intersections should be provided as part of this project.

2. Mobility

Many of the projects described above, under “Complete Streets,” would provide mobility benefits for different users of the street. A number of additional projects, however, might improve mobility for vehicles without unduly impacting other users, or might improve mobility citywide, not just in specific corridors or at specific locations.

Policies and Actions

P.4X Reduce traffic congestion by reconfiguring outmoded interchanges and traffic signals rather than adding lanes to streets.

A.4X Synchronize traffic signals wherever possible to optimize traffic flow at safe speeds.

A.4X Work with Metro and the California Public Utilities Commission to reduce signal delay at the Gold Line crossing of Mission and Meridian while maintaining safety.

P.4X Explore options to improve transit service within South Pasadena, including City programs, public/private partnerships and/or partnerships with Metro.

A.4X Improve transit service within South Pasadena using one of three options: 1) Expand the City’s existing dial-a-ride program to serve all residents (and not just older residents); 2) Implement a circulator shuttle, funded through a public-private partnership, providing connections every 30 minutes or more often during the day to the Gold Line station and other major destinations (one possible routing is shown below; alternately, buses might operate on Fremont to directly serve schools); 3) initiate a partnership with Metro to pilot “microtransit” on-demand service using smartphone apps.

P.4X Adopt performance metrics that are reflective of City policy objectives, including policies in areas other than mobility.

A.4X Consistent with State guidance, discontinue the use of vehicular level of service as a metric for determining transportation mitigations required of new development. Instead, follow State guidance regarding the use of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as an alternative.

A.4X In order to improve the safety of highly constrained street segments, convert Fairview and Diamond from Mission and El Centro to one-way streets (southbound and northbound, respectively).

3. Gold Line Access

The Metro Rail Gold Line South Pasadena Station at Mission and Meridian Avenue is an existing mobility asset that could be better leveraged. There are a number of locations within a half-mile of the station – within its “walkshed,” which includes much of Downtown South Pasadena – where “first/last mile” access to the station and transportation conditions more generally could be improved. This would serve to improve the utility of the station and increase transit ridership; it would also improve safety and mobility for non-users of the station who are traveling through the area.



Some possible improvements, such as grade-separation of the Gold Line at locations where it acts as a barrier, would be relatively expensive (Gold Line grade separations would also almost certainly require property takings). Other relatively low-cost improvements potentially could be implemented, however, using regional funding that Metro has made available for projects to improve mobility in the proposed 710 freeway extension corridor.

Policies and Actions

P.4X Identify important pathways for pedestrian and bicycle travel between the Gold Line station and major destinations, and make improvements to safety and comfort along these paths.

A.4X Add an unsignalized crosswalk, with accompanying safety measures, on Mission at Prospect Avenue.

A.4X Add a sidewalk on the north side of El Centro between Mound and Edison Avenues.

A.4X Reconfigure the intersection of Orange Grove and El Centro to require slower right turns by vehicles from southbound Orange Grove onto westbound El Centro.

A.4X Over the longer term, work with Metro to explore options for grade-separation of existing Gold Line at-grade crossings including Monterey/Pasadena.

P.4X Encourage and facilitate shared-ride options include e-hailing services, carshare and bikeshare.

A.4X In the near term, work with Metro and private partners (carshare companies) to identify “mobility hub” improvements that could be implemented at or near the station, such as additional, secure parking (lockers) for bicycles, a future bikeshare station and carshare vehicles stationed in the Mission/Meridian garage.

P.4X Increase awareness of multimodal alternatives to driving to the Gold Line station.

4. Parking

ensure vehicular access to businesses, homes and other destinations, when developing parking policy cities should focus on *availability* of parking rather than supply. The supply of public and private parking in an area should also, to the extent feasible, be proactively managed as a shared resource, rather than individual allotments that may remain underutilized while parking on adjacent properties is oversubscribed. Finally, cities should remain aware of potential impacts including “spillover” demand from non-residential uses in residential areas as well as the additional traffic congestion, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and rates of collisions associated with additional parking and the real and opportunity costs associated with underutilized parking.

Policies and Actions

P.4X Proactively manage public and private parking supply within a common area as a shared resource, and focus on measures to ensure availability and access rather than simply increasing supply.

P.4.X Take a flexible and creative approach to parking requirements in new development, providing alternatives to mandated parking minimums and looking for opportunities to increase availability of public parking through private development.

P.4X Seek to balance the need for vehicular access to properties with other imperatives, such as the need to reduce traffic for purposes of safety and environmental impact.

A.4X In the Downtown Specific Plan area, reduce the minimum parking requirement for multifamily residential requirement, two-bedroom or larger units, from 2 spaces per unit to 1.5 spaces per unit, and require “unbundling,” under which parking spaces must be sold or leased separately from units.

A.4X In the Downtown Specific Plan area, reduce the minimum parking requirements for research and development, offices and laboratories and for offices, administrative, corporate from 3 spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area to 2.5 spaces per 1,000 square feet.

A.4X In the Downtown Specific Plan area, reduce the minimum parking requirement for multi-tenant retail site or building (two or more uses) from 4 spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area to 3 spaces per 1,000 square feet.

A.4X In the Downtown Specific Plan area, amend the code for restaurant—not part of multi-tenant retail site or building so that for new uses occupying an existing space of any size (rather than 1,200 square feet or less), no new parking is required.

A.4X In the Downtown Specific Plan area, establish an in-lieu program under which developments may have their minimum parking requirement reduced by 50 percent in exchange for a fee to be paid up-front. Revenues may be used to broker lease agreements under which private spaces would be shared with the public at some or all times (this should be accompanied by the wayfinding program described in A4.7). They may also be used for alternate improvements to access within the Downtown Specific Plan area, including pedestrian, bicycle and transit improvements.

A.4X Review the time limits and other regulations for on-street parking supply in Downtown and streamline regulations to improve the ease of interpreting parking rules.

A.4X Develop an enhanced wayfinding system of signage directing motorists to public parking lots in Downtown.

A.4X Periodically monitor parking availability in Downtown. If parking availability becomes a significant access challenge, consider demand management measures combined with an associated benefit district.

A.4X Expand the Mission-Meridian Preferential Parking Permit District to cover all blockfaces west of Fair Oaks, south of SR-110, east of Orange Grove (including Orange Grove itself) and north of Monterey Road (including Monterey itself).

5 OUR RESILIENT COMMUNITY

Over the years, South Pasadena downtown has endured suburbanization, economic recessions, and more recently competition from online shopping. Downtowns that failed to successfully respond to the changing trends continue to decline. Resilient downtowns have been able to successfully adapt to these changes and to even develop the capacity to overcome future hardships.

Resilience in Downtown South Pasadena means tackling systemic, interdependent challenges, such as allowing contextual infill development that preserves the small town character, with thriving retail, access to affordable housing and transit, and vibrant infrastructure to better prepare us for shocks like earthquakes and stresses like climate change.

By leveraging our collective resources and fostering a culture of responsive government centered around residents' needs and robust, green infrastructure development we can address any weakness today and become strong and well prepared for any future adversity. This section considers the resiliency challenges in the eight General Plan focus areas.

1. Our Natural Community

Majority of new growth will be directed to the Downtown Area. New development provides an opportunity to enhance the natural environment. Walkable mixed-use development could reduce the need for driving thereby improving air quality. Green roofs, planters, swales, rain gardens, and sub surface drains can constrain, disperse, and reduce the quantity and increase the quality of stormwater on and off-site, and replenish groundwater. Downtown streets can reconnect rainfall to the environmental life of the city.

The threats of drought, disease, and pests will pose a challenge on maintaining the aesthetic and environmental benefits gained from the tree cover. New insect and disease resilient trees planted by the public and private sector would keep South Pasadena “The Tree City” well into the foreseeable future.

Policies and Actions

P.5X Incorporate natural systems into the Downtown built environment to promote healthy and resilient ecosystem.

A.5X Integrate green infrastructure into Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue alongside transit infrastructure and providing safe places for people walking and biking.

A.5X Adopt an Urban Forest Management Plan that prescribes resilient and drought tolerant trees to plant and maintain on Downtown public and private property.

2. Our Prosperous Community

A focus on the unique features of Downtown, building on existing assets, and using them to attract new investment and strengthen existing businesses offers benefits that extend far beyond enticing visitors, entrepreneurs, small businesses, and corporations. Downtown South Pasadena can harness the power of place-making to give local amenities a dual purpose: enhancing quality of life for all residents and attracting investment. Place-making is a method for capitalizing on existing strengths for the purpose of developing a resilient economy.

Policies and Actions

P.5X Preserve, enhance, and build on existing downtown assets to harness the power of place-making.

A.5X Evaluate the potential for incentives together with a developer-supported fund to assist with preservation activities in the Downtown area.

A.5X Support restoration and adaptive reuse of the historic Rialto Theater.

A.5X Enhance creative and cultural uses, including affordable live-work space for artists, and consider development of an “Art Center” in the Downtown area.

3. Our Well Planned Community

The economy changes quickly. To better respond to changing market conditions flexible land use and zoning policies and regulations in the Downtown area will allow the City to better capture demand from emerging industries, providing opportunities to enhance its tax base.

Affordability

In South Pasadena, 72% of low income renters and approximately 91% of extremely low income homeowner households pay more than 30% of their household income in rent. The Downtown area presents the greatest opportunity to provide transit-supportive affordable housing.

Infrastructure

The Water distribution system serving the Downtown Specific Plan Area lies entirely within the “Central” water system. Water is provided to this system by the Wilson Reservoir in San Gabriel, the Graves Reservoir in San Marino, the Garfield Reservoir on Garfield Avenue north of Hardison Street, the Grand Reservoir at the north end of Floral Park Terrace, and a connection to the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) line at Kollé Avenue south of Monterey Road. A comprehensive analysis of the overall system conducted previously identified a series of system-wide modifications required to improve the operation of the distribution system.

The analysis indicated that during peak use hours, water pressure within the Specific Plan Area averages about 45psi, with the lower pressures occurring on the easterly side. Water pressure of 50 to 70 psi is desirable. Along El Centro Street, the pressure averages about 38 psi with the lower pressures also occurring on the easterly side. These pressures are low but unavoidable given the current system equipment and configuration. Future development may encounter problems associated with the low water pressure which can only be remedied on a system-wide basis.

According to the City's Public Works Department, the sewer system is adequate to handle the current needs of the Downtown Specific Plan Area and should be capable of handling the projected future development. A previous analysis of the overall system concluded that the existing system could sustain a population of 30,000, along with intensification of commercial land uses, including development in the Downtown Specific Plan Area.

Stormwater System

The watershed contributory to the Downtown Specific Plan Area is approximately 113 acres and is roughly defined by Arroyo Drive to the west, Grevelia Street to the north, and Fair Oaks Avenue to the east. Storm water runoff generally flows in a southerly direction through the Specific Plan Area where some is intercepted by storm drains located in Orange Grove Boulevard, Mission Street, Fremont Avenue and Fair Oaks Avenue. The remainder flows to the south. Storm drains on Orange Grove to Mission Street and westerly along Mission Street to the Arroyo Seco channel and on Fremont Avenue from Hope Street south to Mission Street, east along Mission and south along Marengo Avenue, are designed to handle flows generated by a 10-year storm event. On Mission Street, between Orange Grove Boulevard and Fremont Avenue, no storm drains exist. Water flows from a high point at Meridian Avenue to the east or west to the storm drain lines.

The Downtown Specific Plan Area is substantially developed at this time. Proposed development would not include construction over large unpaved areas. As a result,

there should not be any large increases in runoff quantities. According to the City's Public Works Department, there are no major flooding problems in the Downtown Specific Plan Area. The existing storm drain system appears to be adequate to handle most storm water runoff with only minor modifications.

Stormwater System Improvement Recommendations

There are a number of rainwater interventions that could be integrated into the infill/redevelopment plans to help to alleviate pressures on the storm drain system, enhance the livability, and replenish the aquifer. These procedures are often called LID (Low Impact Development) or Green Infrastructure. Below are some recommended rainwater treatment practices for the corridors.

- Tree Pockets can be installed between parking spaces in the parking lanes on streets. Simply sawcut the tree pocket, scoop out a hole, and fill it with soil and a tree. Leave the existing curb and gutter in place, and leave openings so the gutter rainwater can flow into and fill up the tree pocket, and then flow out at the lower end.
- Tree Zippers can be installed in parking lanes by sawcutting the entire strip of parking, scooping it out and replacing with soils, trees, and pervious pavers. Rainwater enters the pervious pavers from the street surface and gutter flow and is absorbed by the trees and soils.
- Tree pockets and zippers help to define the outdoor room of the street, help to shade and cool the paving and parked cars and sidewalks, and absorb rainwater for tree evapo-transpiration while allowing for infiltration that will help replenish the aquifer.
- The Simple Green Street is a slight modification of an existing street curb and adjacent planting area. A portion of curb can either be replaced with a depressed top-of-curb section, or the curb face can be simply core-drilled. Both modifications allow rainwater to pass to the adjacent planting area; which has been slightly excavated and re-landscaped to accept the rainwater run-off. This landscaped area can be planted with indigenous, drought-tolerant landscaping and a permeable surface to allow the rainwater to re-enter the aquifer.
- Pervious pavers and other permeable materials can be used on parking lots and streets as an enhanced surface that provides filtering, infiltration, and storage of rainwater runoff from the site.
- In-Street Detention Storage can be used to detain rainwater runoff and release it slowly after the peak flows in order to reduce flooding downstream. Some infiltration can also be accomplished. Depending on utility locations, some streets may have room in the center of the street and may be conveniently located for this rainwater treatment.
- Car and people parks can be created by designing parking lots as plazas by replacing the usual sea of asphalt with trees and pervious pavers - providing a place for cars and people

while reducing pressure on the storm drain system and helping to recharge the groundwater aquifer.

Policies and Actions

P.5X Support the production of new affordable housing projects through standards and process incentives.

A.5X Adopt flexible regulations that can respond to market changes in emerging industries, and attract contextual development.

A.5X Leverage Gold Line Station for walkable mixed-use development opportunities on nearby catalytic sites to provide variety of affordable housing types, local employment, community benefits, and application of extensive TDM measures.

A.5X Provide contextual reductions in building mass for properties that abut existing residential districts.

P.5X Ensure continuity of critical services.

A.5X Require developers to pay their fair share for water, wastewater, and stormwater system upgrades beyond what is currently in place.

P.5X Support the inclusion of energy efficient design and renewable technologies in all new downtown public and private projects.

A.5X Require solar panels on all new buildings.

A.5X Explore opportunity to develop a clean energy “micro-grids”.

A.5X Install Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers at public facilities in Downtown area. Encourage property owners to install EV chargers at Downtown business and multi-family locations.

4. Our Accessible Community

Resilience at a community level requires a transportation system that can withstand changes in technology, new options for people to get around, unexpected conditions, or extreme demands from equipment failure or disasters. At an individual level, resiliency could mean being able to get around when the car breaks down, or if their income decreases, or if they are disabled.

Transportation systems evacuate people from danger and emergency services to reach the areas in need. Diverse, redundant, and efficient transportation system can continue functioning if one of its link is broken, and accommodates a wide range of user needs and conditions.

Policies and Actions

P.5X Seek resiliency in transportation investments.

A.5X Evaluate, design, and maintain critical components of the transportation system to be fail-safe, self-correcting, repairable, redundant, and autonomous.

A.5X Develop a well connected multi-modal transportation network that provides multiple options to access Downtown destinations.

A.5X Support development of diverse and competing transportation services, such as ride-sharing, delivery services, use of telecommunications to substitute for physical travel, etc.

5. Our Healthy Community

The actions identified to build a connected and prepared community are designed to result in multiple benefits, including improved physical safety, which will result in reduced loss of life and injury in the event of a disaster; increased social cohesion; increased access to services; improved environmental performance of critical City facilities; and improved ability to minimize economic disruption.

Small local food systems like the farmers market and community garden are better able to withstand shocks than their massive counterparts. Because food travels shorter distances, locally grown produce is able to conserve nutrients better, making it more nutritious and tastier, which encourages people to eat more of it. Better nutrition means better public health—a cornerstone of disaster resilience. By reducing the miles between farm and fork, local food systems also limit greenhouse gas emissions.

Policies and Actions

P.5X Promote mix of uses within a walking and biking environment that encourage physical activity.

A.5X Require active and engaging ground floor frontages to increase visual interest and promote walkability.

A5.X Repurpose Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue to include safe and well-connected street networks for walking and biking.

A5.X To increase pedestrian activity and social interaction along Mission Street, and to provide more sidewalk space, provide a series of parklets distributed throughout the street.

P5.X Encourage local food production, processing, and distribution to the greatest extent possible. [SE](#)

A5.X Continue to support farmers' market, fresh food stands, community gardens, community kitchens, and other local initiatives to provide healthy foods, promote food security, and build resilience.

6. Our Safe Community

Over the years, number of unreinforced masonry buildings have been seismically retrofitted. A total of four buildings remain to be retrofitted. The City provides a transfer tax rebate to lower the cost of seismic retrofits and access to Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing, which lets owners borrow money with no upfront cost and pay the money back at fixed rates on their property tax bill. The City is developing an inventory of vulnerable apartment buildings with "soft stories," and will draft an ordinance mandating the retrofitting of these structures.

Policies and Actions

P5X Minimize personal and property damage resulting from seismic hazards.

A5X Require structural reinforcement of all inventoried unreinforced masonry structures.

7. Our Active Community

The new infill development Downtown presents the strongest opportunity for integrating natural and built systems. Public and private open spaces can be conceived as multi-functional green infrastructure that makes the downtown area more resilient.

Policies and Actions

P5X Maximize the efficiency and productivity of parks and open spaces to provide multiple benefits.

A.5X Expand the function of parks and open spaces beyond recreation, to store and clean water, filter air, help improve public health, and provide habitat and connectivity to increase biodiversity.

8. Our Creative Community

Downtown is the creative hub of the City. A strong and vibrant arts scene Downtown can be a reliable and durable driver of South Pasadena's economic growth and resilience. Creative providers should collaborate and effectively partner with business and school district to advocate for City funding for arts and culture; and collectively leverage City funding for private and public support including donors, sponsors and regional and national grants to support more creative endeavors by individuals and organizations.

Policies and Actions

P.5X Link climate and cultural resilience through creative place-making.

A.5X Integrate arts, culture, and creative activities within community development efforts.

P.5X Support funding for arts and cultural groups.

A.5X Document compelling stories supported with facts on economic, social, and environmental benefits of arts and culture in South Pasadena.

A.5X Leverage city funds for private and public sector support including donors, sponsors, and grants.

6 OUR HEALTHY COMMUNITY

The focus group discussions identified three health related topics for the General Plan and the Downtown Specific Plan: active living, mental well-being and access to nutritious and affordable food.

1. Active Living

Design of downtown streets, alleys, open spaces, and buildings can make a significant impact by increasing opportunities for physical activity in daily life. Good pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure; access to parks and open spaces; and building designs that encourage regular stair use can increase physical activity and lower body weight and risk of cardiovascular diseases.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

P6.X Promote higher density mix of uses that encourage physical activity.

A6.X Provide a mix of land uses within new infill projects in the downtown area.

A6.X Activate the ground floor uses along Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue with attractive and engaging store frontages, and maximize transparency of facades at ground level to increase visual interest and promote walkability.

P6.X Lead with roadway design that prioritizes safety. Promote safe networks of complete streets that facilitate safe and comfortable walking and biking. **AP, SE, VZ**

A6.X Repurpose Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue to include safe and well-connected street networks for walking and biking, and to improve access to destinations and other community services.

A6.X Partner with law enforcement and community groups to reduce the frequency of crime and traffic safety problems.

A6.X To augment pedestrian activity and social interaction along Mission Street, and to provide more sidewalk space, provide a series of parklets distributed throughout the street.

A6.X For blocks over 400 feet long on Mission Street, provide mid-block crossings that encourage pedestrian activity along and across the street.

A6.X Pave and enhanced with string lights Pico Alley, east of the Gold Line station, so it becomes a quiet gathering space as well as an important pedestrian connection from the station to the eastern blocks, without getting onto Mission Street.

A6.X Pave and enhance with trees and string lights Edison Alley, behind the Rialto, so it becomes a distinct north-south pedestrian connection, connecting the Rialto to Mission Street.

P6 X Increase infrastructure that supports biking. **SE, VZ**

A6.X Encourage existing and new development to provide secure indoor bicycle parking in the form of indoor racks or storage rooms to ensure security and weather protection, and provide outdoor bike racks.

A6.X Set up a bike-share program in the downtown area to provide access to bikes for residents or tenants on an as-needed basis.

P6 X Repurpose vacant and underutilized spaces that detract from the vitality in the Downtown area for active living.

A6.X Collaborate with downtown residents and merchants to leverage and repurpose vacant and underutilized lots with temporary or permanent active living and mental well-being activities such as community gardens, open spaces, or pop-up events and festivals.

P6.X Promote a healthy community by providing for Aging in Place in residential development designs. **AP**

A6.X Encourage a mix of housing types and housing units that increase the proportion of areas usable by a wide spectrum of people, regardless of age or ability.

P6.X Design buildings to encourage physical activity.

A6.X Require new development to provide open stairs near the entrance; use aesthetic treatments such as vivid colors, artwork, and music; and treat stairs with the same finishing standards as other public corridors in the building.

Mental Well-Being

Social interaction builds self-esteem, self-confidence, and increases sense of belongingness in a community, which helps us cope with life's challenges, and mitigates feelings of loneliness, anxiety and isolation. A walkable Downtown provide opportunities for natural, daily social interaction. Mixed-land use with welcoming shopfronts and nearby amenities, allow people to browse and interact with other people. Parklets and

benches along street and multi-use public open spaces where people can get together for cooperative community events, increase opportunities for participation and volunteering.

Nature, when provided as parks and tree-lined walkways and incorporated into building design, provides calming and inspiring environments and encourages learning, inquisitiveness, and alertness.

Urban environmental conditions such as stress from commute, street danger, lack of physical activity, or contact with nature affect mood. Because people spend approximately 90 percent of their time indoors, buildings play a critical role in minimizing exposure to toxins and protecting the health of occupants. Noise pollution and poor lighting can take their toll on stress levels, whereas the restorative effects of natural environments, daylighting, and quiet spaces can positively affect physical and mental health. Landscape maintenance machines (mowers, leaf blowers) operate at levels up to 110 decibels — clearly worker health is a concern, as is that of the residents that are subjected to this excessive noise, often for long periods.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

P6.X Promote opportunities for people to build connections with their peers, neighbors, and the greater community supporting inter-generational and inter-cultural programs, activities and events. **AP, SE**

A6.X Engage older residents in community conversations and volunteer opportunities so they can find fulfillment in ways that benefit themselves and the community.

P6.X Expand the opportunities in the Downtown area to interact with nature within the streets, open spaces, and buildings. **AP, SE**

A6.X Incorporate street trees, street side planters, parklets into street and alley design.

A6.X Encourage contact with nature through network of public and private green space.

A6.X Amend development regulations to require new development to provide a range of public and private open spaces.

PX.6 Harnesses naturally occurring power of the sun, direction of wind and other climatic effects to maintain consistent indoor temperatures and occupant comfort.

A6.X Encourage correct orientation of buildings with appropriate fenestration that bring natural light into buildings.

P6.X Reduce the prevalence of unpleasant noise and smell. **AP, SE**

A6.X Manage relationship between homes and major noise sources through zoning and environmental review and design measures.

A6.X Provide educational materials and programs that inform the public about noise and pollution risks of gas powered outdoor maintenance and encourage use of alternative environmentally sensitive solutions.

3. Access to Nutritious and Affordable Food

Food is as essential to health and well-being as air and water. People choose among foods that are readily available. Information about nutrition helps residents make healthier food choices. The downtown area has access to several grocery stores located on Fair Oaks Avenue and Mission Street.

For almost two decades, the Award-Winning South Pasadena Farmers Market located next to the Gold Line Station brings local produce to the community. Every Thursday evening, the Farmers Market gives all people access to fresh fruits and vegetables through Nutritional Assistance Programs, WIC (Women, Infants, Children,) and the Senior Farmers' Market Nutritional Program as well as Cal Fresh (EBT).

Community gardens help increase the availability and appreciation for fresh fruits and vegetables, in addition to providing an opportunity for exercise, green space, and a place for community gatherings.

Policies and Actions

P6.X Support efforts to expand access to affordable and nutritious food for all people in South Pasadena. **AP, SE**

A6.X Encourage the use of vacant lots for community gardens.

A6.X Identify and inventory potential community garden/urban farm sites on existing parks, public easements and right-of-ways, and schoolyards, and prioritize site use as community gardens in appropriate locations.

A6.X Encourage new building construction to incorporate green roofs, and encourage conversions of existing roof space to green roofs, to maximize opportunities for gardening.

P6.X Encourage local food production, processing, and distribution to the greatest extent possible. **SE**

A6.X Continue to support farmers' market, fresh food stands, community gardens, community kitchens, and other collaborative initiatives to provide healthy foods, promote food security, and build community.

A6.X Encourage Downtown restaurants to serve locally sourced foods and provide nutritional information. Support businesses that offer healthy foods.

P6.X Avoid a concentration of unhealthy food providers within the Downtown area. **SE**

A6.X Ban drive-through food outlets within Downtown area.

A6.X Restrict approvals of new liquor stores or retailers that sell alcohol for off-site consumption.

7. OUR SAFE COMMUNITY

“In general, life and people themselves, make the city more inviting and safe in terms of both experienced and perceived security.”

Jan Gehl, Cities for People

Public safety is a critical component of city services — it constitutes 49% of the City’s \$25 budget. As of 2017, the police department included 35 sworn officers, 12 non-sworn full-time employees, five part-time employees, and two volunteers; and the fire department included 19 full time career firefighters and three part time employees. Because the Downtown area is built-out with limited projected growth, the Specific Plan does not anticipate that additional facilities and/or public safety employees will be required to serve the Downtown area.

South Pasadena is a safe community with low property and violent crime rate. However, personal and community safety and security in Downtown area is a complex issue. The perception of safety or danger does not always relate directly to the actual incidence of crime. We feel comfortable and confident using areas where there is good visibility and effective lighting, where we can be seen and heard by other people.

Thoughtful design, good management, and involvement from downtown merchants and residents is an important instrument in enhancing sense of well being and making places more user-friendly, easy to understand, and secure. The key design principles that promote personal safety and property security are:

1. Natural Surveillance

The objective is to provide surveillance opportunities from buildings and public streets to discourage anti-social activity. For example: shopfront windows, balconies, entries, allow building occupants and passersby to observe on-site and street activities for the purpose of informal surveillance. Mix uses, particularly at street level, add vitality at different times of the day and night.

2. Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

Loss of life because of preventable traffic is tragic. We should protect our most vulnerable road users, including children, older adults, and people walking and bicycling. This requires a citywide effort that brings together engineers, police officers, advocates, and policymakers to work together towards creating safer streets. Wide multi-lane streets with larger block lengths in the Downtown area result in streets that are both difficult to cross and easier to speed on.

The community supported vision calls for following pedestrian and bicycle safety enhancements for Downtown streets:

- Mission Street to be re-stripped as a Main Street with two travel lanes, two bicycle lanes and parallel parking on both sides. This reinforces the character of Mission Street as a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly street connecting the light rail station to Fair Oaks Avenue.
- Fair Oaks Avenue to be configured as a grand double-tree lined street that maintains the four travel lanes, with bicycle lanes located closest to the street curb and separated from the parallel parking by potted plants in the initial phases and permanent planters in the eventual phases. Bulb outs at each intersection help slow traffic speeds. The bicycle lanes remain continuous across the bulb outs.
- Mid-block crossings on Mission Street help break the longer block lengths and encourage pedestrian activity along and across the street.
- A clear and safe alley system could encourage exploration of the Downtown area, and more enjoyable routes, while allowing a finer grain network that is more comfortable for pedestrians. The Pico Alley east of the station and Edison Lane behind Rialto are recommended to be paved and enhanced with string lights. The alley would become a safe and quiet gathering space as well as a safe pedestrian connection, without getting onto Mission Street or Fair Oaks Avenue.

3. Lighting

To overcome issues such as safety, navigation and visibility – light installations can effectively be used to welcome people in dark public spaces. Improving street lighting can reduce the prevalence and incidence of crime. Downtown South Pasadena will attract pedestrians with flattering full-spectrum, low-watt lamps on short poles.

Besides street lamps, lighting can be mounted on buildings and where appropriate light the facade, or can be integrated into bollards, feature lights, and streetscape elements.

Lighting levels should be achieved by increasing the number of lights, not their height or wattage. Rather than be everywhere, lighting levels respond to the context. In downtown area, street lights should be frequent and support nighttime activity. In residential areas, lighting can be limited with well-lit intersections.

Light streaming from storefront windows along downtown streets can make a significant contribution to the feeling of security at night. Mixed-uses along downtown streets, particularly upper level housing as a crime prevention strategy, increases the feeling of safety. Along Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue, upper-floor housing provides “eyes on the street” that follow what is going on in the street and deter crime.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

P7.X Make Downtown streets safe for pedestrians and bicyclist.

A7.X Carry out the safety enhancements recommend by the Downtown Vision for Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue.

A7.X Add mid-block crossings and parkletts on Mission Street.

A7.X Amend the development codes to allow a variety of context sensitive street types.

P7.X Employ a range of contextual lighting options to promote safety and security on downtown streets.

A7.X Identify downtown public streets and open spaces that are poorly lit and install context sensitive street lights.

A7.X Install string lights in alleys that provide pedestrian connections to destinations.

A7.X Require new infill development to demonstrate on a lighting plan appropriate level of direct and indirect lighting in the public and private realm.

P7.X Reduce opportunities for criminal activity through physical design standards, recreation opportunities, educational programs, and counseling services.

A7.X For new infill development and major rehabilitation, incorporate natural surveillance principles and best practices into development codes and review processes.

A7.X Amend the development codes to require building designs that promote safety by providing active street frontages.

8. OUR ACTIVE COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

Open spaces and recreational facilities provide an opportunity to exercise, access sunshine, nature and fresh air, and encourage people to walk or bike. They can have a significant impact on people's stress levels and overall mental health, particularly in urbanized areas like Downtown South Pasadena. Physical recreation reduces obesity and risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and other health ailments. Public open spaces, whether playgrounds, picnic fields or even just engaging streets, can help build community by giving neighbors a realm in which to get to know each other, and giving children a safe place to play.

The public space network in Downtown South Pasadena needs interesting, inviting, and varied public spaces. The existing two parks do not adequately serve the needs of downtown residents. The Library Park is an open lawn area around the library and the Orange Grove Park is largely dedicated to league baseball and soccer activities. The places for quiet reflection or the places for physical activities and play are missing. The weak public spaces and the lack of substantial daytime focused activities in downtown cause fragile user patterns. An active public life culture in the downtown warrants more invitations throughout the day, week and the year.

In general, downtown has wide and easy accessible sidewalks of good quality with marked crossing and pedestrian signals. Together this provides a fine base for walking. There are a great deal of important destinations in downtown, but they are poorly connected. Downtown has two pulse points of activity: the Metro Station area, and the central node at the intersection of Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue. In between these two pulse points, the walking experience on Mission Avenue is challenged by inactive frontages, vacant parcels, and poor lighting. With the exception of a few blocks, the pattern of development on Fair Oaks Avenue is largely designed for vehicular traffic. To invite more people to walk, active and attractive ground floor facades, invitations to sit and rest along the streets, pedestrian scale street lighting, and clear organization of the sidewalk space to enable unobstructed walking are needed.

In downtown, the car tends to dominate. Vehicular traffic flows are prioritized, at times compromising pedestrian and bicycle flow. Downtown is built out with very limited infill opportunities to provide new parks and open space. The greatest opportunity for public space in Downtown South Pasadena exists in reimagining the streets and alleys as linear public space corridors that continue to facilitate vehicular traffic while also providing safe, comfortable, and inviting walking and biking experiences.

Insert images of "Astride-Aside": The figure accentuates the pedestrian nature of the Mission Street area, and encourages commuters to disembark and visit the diverse shops and restaurants within walking distance of the stop.

ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

The feedback from the focus group meetings, charrette, interviews, and survey point towards opportunities to improve the quality of public space in Downtown South Pasadena and a series of issues to be overcome. Overall, the main findings and recommendations focus on several key areas for action to improve the current situation:

- providing a continuum range of integrated public and private open spaces;
- promoting a shift in mind-sets towards a more people-orientated city culture creating a better balance between vehicular traffic, pedestrians and cyclists;
- upgrading the visual quality of the streets and open spaces;
- improving conditions for walking and cycling;
- improving conditions for resting and simply passing time;
- providing a range of recreational events and programming; and
- a sustainable source of funding to operate and maintain public open spaces and recreational facilities.

VISION

An active way of life for all. The downtown serves as the retail, restaurant, and entertainment center of South Pasadena and is where the greatest numbers of pedestrians are encouraged and expected. This area will need the best gathering places, widest sidewalks, the widest crosswalks, safest bike lanes, the brightest street lighting, the most furnishings, and other features that will enhance the walking and biking environment.

Network of Open Spaces

Open space provides the 'breathing room' within the urban downtown context and promotes opportunities to engage in outdoor activities. The vision identifies existing open spaces within the study area and stitches them to new open spaces creating a rich tapestry of parks, plazas, enhanced alleys, parklets and mid-block crossings that will increase the overall amount of open spaces in downtown, and provide visitors, workers, and residents with an appealing, thermally comfortable outdoor environment.

Recreation

Recreation includes activities that happen both at outdoor open spaces and indoor facilities. Activity is beneficial by way of being fun, stimulating, refreshing, or relaxing. Active recreation involves physical activity while passive recreation usually involves sitting, lying down, or a leisurely stroll.

Active recreation refers to a mix of uses in Orange Grove Park that includes: sports fields, buildings or structures for recreational activities, concessions, courses or sport courts, children's play areas, and recreational pathways.

A passive recreation area refers to a mix of uses at Library Park, which include the landscaped areas, lawn spaces, seating and picnic areas.

The proposed Community Center and redesigned Orange Grove Park will increase opportunities for both active and passive recreation activities.

Redesign Orange Grove Park

The current opaque edge fence intended to keep the baseball and soccer ball inside the field present a dull and inactive frontage that also block visual enjoyment of the park space. During construction of the new Community Center, the softball and soccer field will be used as a construction staging area. The reconstruction of the sports fields presents a wonderful opportunity to improve the edge treatment, improve sight lines to make the park and adjacent areas safe and more inviting, and provide a wide linear path along the edge with amenities including public art.

Redesign Station Area Plaza

The open space around the light rail station is proposed to be significantly enhanced. The existing triangular park to the east of the station will be retained. The asphalted road to the east of the station is proposed to be redesigned a paved plaza. The existing historic monuments and Oak trees in this space would be retained. The intersection of Mission and Meridian would also be paved to enhance pedestrian connectivity on both sides of Mission Street. The station platform is directly connected to open spaces on both west and east by stair directly from the platform.

Parklets

Parklets transform on-street parking spaces into small spaces for people to use and enjoy. They provide pedestrian amenities such as seating, landscaping, and bike parking. To augment pedestrian activity and social interaction along Mission Street, and to provide more sidewalk space, a series of parklets are proposed to be distributed throughout the street. The introduction of parklets along Mission is also a way of distinguishing it from the proposed tree lined formality of Fair Oaks Avenue.

Two Great Streets

Mission Street is envisioned to be re-striped as a Main Street with two travel lanes, two bicycle lanes and parallel parking on both sides. This reinforces the character of Mission Street as a bicycle-friendly street connecting the light rail station to Fair Oaks Avenue.

Fair Oaks Avenue is envisioned to be configured as a grand double-tree lined north-south arterial. It will be restriped to have four travel lanes, two bicycle lanes and parallel parking on both sides. The bicycle lanes will be located closest to the street curb and separated from the parallel parking by potted plants in the initial phases and permanent planters in the eventual phases. Bulb out designs at each intersection will create safer pedestrian crossings, while allowing continuous bicycle lanes to run through.

Park Once

The Downtown area will become a Park Once walkable places. Carefully located public parking places ensure parking distribution throughout the two districts and encourages people to walk to various destinations throughout. All parking is designed to be subservient to the pedestrian and invisible from the public realm.

Mid-block Crossings

Mid-block crossings on Mission Street help break the large block lengths and encourage pedestrian activity along and across the street.

Untapped Potential of Alleys

Downtown alleys have the potential for strengthening the public realm and increased pedestrian invitations. Pico Alley east of the Station and Edison Lane behind Rialto are human scaled and have much potential for more active pedestrian use. The challenge will be to retain the utilitarian functions of the alleys while providing improvements to accommodate pedestrian activity, retail, and other uses.

Green Network

The street trees and other vegetation in downtown function as a localized green infrastructure which is part of the larger “green infrastructure” framework of the city. Street trees and other vegetation substantially enhance pedestrian activity. South Pasadena is known for its extensive and mature street tree canopy, with the exception of its two signature corridors. Both Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue have significant gaps in the tree canopy. The vision calls for thriving and distinctive street trees on these two streets.

Reimagining Streets for Active and Healthy Living

626 Golden Streets

Open Street events such as "Ciclovía" or the 626 Golden Streets event temporarily open stretches of Mission Street in Downtown South Pasadena and beyond for people to walk, jog, skate, bike and more. This event, allows people to take over the street space and enjoy this valuable open space asset for a day and creates an appetite to help make pedestrian and bike infrastructure adjustments that can serve the community other 364 days of the year.

Insert images of 626 Golden Streets

Farmers Market

Every Thursday evening, Meridian Avenue and El Centro Street are closed off (between Diamond Avenue and Glendon Way) for over 70 vendors, picnics, and live music on the lawn adjacent to the Metro Gold Line Station.

Insert images of Farmers Market

Park(ing) Day to Parklet

PARK(ing) Day is an annual event where on-street parking spaces are converted into park-like public spaces. The event shows that car space is also public space that can be used for people activities instead. PARK(ing) Day encourages collaboration amongst local citizens to create thoughtful, but temporary additions to the public realm. The temporary repurposing of parking space for a day allows the concept to be tested and refined while building support for a more permanent parklet space.

Insert images of Parklet

Insert images of passive (movable chairs, movies in the park, etc) at the and active recreation (playground, rollerskating, etc)

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Network of Open Space

P8.X Encourage the dynamic and flexible use of existing open spaces and promote a variety of new recreation and open space uses, where appropriate.

A8.X Re-design the open space around the Metro Gold Line Station to create a large, cohesive, and central civic amenity, improve pedestrian and vehicular flow, and improve the paved surface aesthetics.

A8.X Redesign Orange Grove Park with enhanced sight lines and an active, accessible, and visually engaging perimeter design. Possible use of Orange Grove for other uses besides AYSO & Little League.

A8.X Continue to partner with the South Pasadena School District for the use of their central courtyard to host variety of public events and festivals.

A8.X Amend the development standards to require private development to provide a range of public and private open spaces on the block, lot, and building.

A8.X Pursue and develop innovative long-term funding mechanisms for maintenance, operation, renovation and acquisition of open space and recreation.

Recreation

P8.X Provide and promote a balanced recreation system which offers a variety of high quality recreational opportunities for all residents. [AP](#), [SE](#)

A8.X Provide a range of active and passive recreational activities and programs that are responsive to community needs and changing demographics. [AP](#), [SE](#)

A8.X Support the design and construction of new Community Center and identify a sustainable way to fund its operation and maintenance.

Improve conditions for walking and biking

P8.X Promote a new balanced traffic culture including walking and cycling for all age groups. [AP](#), [SE](#), [VZ](#)

A8.X Support and develop existing publicly-owned right-of-ways and streets into temporary and permanent open spaces like parklet, curb extension, mid-block crossing, sidewalk extension, shared street, and temporary open street or street park. [AP](#), [SE](#), [VZ](#)

A8.X Transform Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue into complete streets that promote safe walking and cycling. [AP](#), [SE](#), [VZ](#)

A8.X Transform downtown alleys into safe, comfortable, and enjoyable walking paths. [AP](#), [SE](#), [VZ](#)

9 OUR CREATIVE COMMUNITY

Art and cultural experiences cultivate a rich quality of life in Downtown South Pasadena. Majority of the cultural assets, events, and activities take place in Downtown area, which spotlights art, culture, and entertainment for South Pasadena. It is an area where residents and tourists can experience the unique character of South Pasadena.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The downtown area contains museums, art galleries, public art, performance venues and restaurants. There are numerous stores selling locally designed and manufactured art, crafts, hand-crafted ceramics, hand made paper, and home furnishings. Cultural attractions include a thriving farmer’s market, diverse festivals, live music, exhibitions, and year-round events for the whole family.

The downtown area has one national and two state historic districts, and (insert #) designated and (insert #) potential historic resources.

Insert Downtown Asset Map

ArtsCrawl In Summer and Winter, the South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce hosts the ArtsCrawl event to showcase artists and musicians, and highlight downtown businesses. Businesses along Mission Street, Fremont Avenue, Fair Oaks Avenue and Hope Street participate in the event, with many boutiques offering deals on merchandise and extending their hours. This free event allows people to hop between gallery openings, hear live music, hands-on art activities for children, and typically features many group shows and exhibitions.

Eclectic Music Festival and Art Walk The musical affair features over 40 artists that perform at venues throughout the downtown. All stages and galleries are within walking distance on Mission Street, Fair Oaks Avenue and some side streets near the Gold Line Mission Station.

ISSUES

- Need a central location for arts center
- Designate downtown as a Cultural District
- Sustained sources of funding

VISION

Weave art and culture into the fabric of everyday life in Downtown through the growth and expansion of cultural institutions and by nurturing creative and artistic expression in the public realm. The Vision focuses on authenticity and a desire to nurture South Pasadena's unique identity. Part of this emphasis on authenticity includes a comprehensive approach to culture, one that weaves together the broad fabric of the community – artists, architecture, culture, history, and the environment. Through implementation of policies that support the preservation of South Pasadena's local heritage while encouraging artistic development, the City is actively pursuing the integration of art, architecture, culture and history to restore and enhance the unique identity of Downtown.

Downtown is a signature cultural space for people to gather and reflects the best of what South Pasadena has to offer. The high quality urban design is achieved through vibrant civic open spaces, streets that support people activity, and architecturally significant buildings.

Arts Center: Developing an “Art Center” in Downtown area would establish a central place for the community to participate fully in creative experiences and to support the vibrant cultural environment. Downtown would be an ideal location as it would contribute to the economic vibrancy of the area, along with creative businesses and restaurants to truly develop an arts and cultural district. Preliminary ideas as to the scale of such a facility could be around 5,000 square feet, which would include a gallery for exhibitions and installations, a “black box” performance space for performing events (music, dance, theater, spoken word, film screenings, etc.), and space for educational programs.

Arts and Cultural District: Downtown South Pasadena has a high concentration of cultural resources and activities. South Pasadena should evaluate designating the Downtown area as a local cultural district. The designation would increase public awareness of cultural activities, attract more cultural tourists, imbue a sense of pride in Downtown residents and businesses, increase opportunities for artists, craftsmen, and other small businesses. Other benefits could include access to grants, tax credits, financial incentives, expedited permit review, and special marketing initiatives.

Home to Artists: Resident artists are the lifeblood of a vibrant cultural district. Downtown will provide opportunities to make art, perform, or contribute to commercial products that fuel the creative economy in South Pasadena. The streets of downtown feature galleries, multimedia studios, supply store, and other establishments that allow artists to produce artworks and experiences close to home.

Preservation: Downtown possesses a rich architectural heritage with eclectic mix of homes, and institutional and commercial vernacular buildings. Downtown's sense of authentic historic uniqueness contributes to place-making that retains and attract residents, business and visitors. By preserving and enhancing that unique quality

through a commitment to architecture and urban design, this plan lays the groundwork for sustaining Downtown as the city center.

Streets as Canvas: Art is incorporated into the fabric of the street by using wider sections of a sidewalk as performance space. Temporary art element could be installed along a blank wall of a building or vacant lot fence. The Metro Station and sidewalks along Mission Street are all sites for continuous art interventions, whether temporary, permanent, or rotating.

Public Art Projects

The Community Visioning Charrette identified many opportunities for public art in the Downtown area. The design of these projects would benefit greatly from early involvement of artists.

Redesign Station Area Plaza — The open space around the light rail station is proposed to be significantly enhanced. The existing triangular park to the east of the station, historic monuments, public art, and Oak trees in this space would be retained. The asphalted road to the east of the station is proposed to be redesigned a paved plaza. The extended plaza provides a fertile canvas for public art.

Parklets — A series of parklets are proposed to be distributed throughout Mission Street. The Parklet could be a venue for public art and could complement the art in Mission Street Galleries and Studios. Rotating public art installations could be designed by artists whose works are featured in the galleries on Mission Street.

Orange Grove Park Public Art Walk — The reconstruction of the sports fields at Orange Grove Park following the construction of the new Community Center presents a wonderful opportunity to improve sight lines into the park, to make the park and adjacent areas safe and more inviting, and provide a wide linear public art walk along the park edge.

Gateway Public Art — Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue are proposed to be redesigned to facilitate safe and comfortable experience for pedestrian and bicycles. The corner of Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue is gateway into Mission Street and the core areas of the Downtown. A public art feature at the intersection would identify entrance into downtown and inspire people to collectively reimagine and reinvent the public space at this core downtown intersection. Public art would enhance both public spaces and private businesses surrounding the sites. Installations should be scaled for both pedestrians and drivers, and incorporate maintenance considerations and be resistant to vandalism.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Creative Prosperity

P9.X Creative businesses have places to work, live, gather, and promote their art in Downtown.

A9.X Work to ensure South Pasadena's creative sector has adequate and inviting spaces to create, sell their products, and network.

A9.X Develop and market spaces for artists including studios, affordable housing, and live/work studios.

A9.X Explore building an Arts Center that offers physical and virtual space for South Pasadena's creative sector to connect, create, and promote their art.

A9.X Establish an arts incubator/accelerator spaces to provide office space, management assistance, technology, and access to funding opportunities.

P9.X Facilitate use of vacant retail space by arts and cultural groups.

A9.X Facilitate artists' temporary and opportunistic use of such spaces and venues as vacant walls, storefronts, empty buildings, open spaces, etc.

A9.X Provide building owners with tax incentives, grants, loans, and streamlined permitting process to renovate buildings that can be used as live/work spaces by artists.

A9.X Work with the owners and the developers to put a variety of pop-up art events, exhibits, performances, and temporary retail in their empty spaces will enliven the street.

Cultural Tourism

P9.X Develop effective tools to promote arts, cultural, and heritage attractions in Downtown.

A9.X Coordinate marketing so visitors and local can readily find information about downtown arts, heritage and cultural attractions/events. Create a master calendar and post events and attractions on local and regional travel websites, travel apps, and social media sites.

A9.X In the short-term, locally designate downtown as a Cultural District. In the long-term, pursue, state-level Cultural District designation.

A9.X Partner with local businesses to showcase the art of talented, emerging artists in downtown cafes, restaurants, and boutique stores.

P9.X Leverage the Gold Line Metro Station and the potential Metro Bike Share Center at the Station to promote creative attractions/events.

A9.X Partner with Metro to advertise Downtown events and attractions to riders.

Public Art

P9.X Integrate public art into the development review and capital improvement program.

A9.X Embed artists in planning projects and initiatives in City agencies, such as Planning, Public Works, and the Community Services Departments.