

Chapter 3.

Overall Vision and Development Strategy

General Plan Vision

“To revitalize Downtown as a vibrant mixed-use district that provides many opportunities for new commercial development in a pedestrian environment.”

Livable Community Principles

- *Mixed-use activity areas in walking distance of residences.*
- *A compact urban form with a variety of residential types and densities, combined with retail, employment centers, and public uses.*
- *A pedestrian-friendly environment that includes a street/sidewalk network that connects destinations and emphasizes a lively street life.*
- *An approach to development that provides attractive public spaces and places value on design detail.*
- *Provision of alternatives to the automobile, including transit, bicycling, walking, and centralized parking facilities.*

3.1 Overall Vision for Downtown Monterey Park

This Mixed-Use and Pedestrian Linkages Plan provides a far-reaching Vision for Downtown Monterey Park. This Vision, which is built upon the livable community concept and General Plan vision described in Chapter 1, has been crafted to address the issues, opportunities and constraints described in Chapter 2.

Downtown is envisioned as a “destination” for both Monterey Park residents and visitors from other Southern California communities, as well as a place to live in a walkable environment. Currently, Downtown is focused around the Garvey / Garfield intersection. The Vision includes expanding Downtown to incorporate the study area corridors of Atlantic Boulevard, Garvey Avenue and Garfield Avenue by making these corridors active, lively, visually attractive thoroughfares with places along each corridor to shop, eat, live, visit, work and stroll. The corridors are envisioned to be transformed by a mixture of well-designed uses including retail, residential, restaurants, offices, open space, and public uses connected to each other and to transit by a walkable environment along the street.

Today, most of the corridors are wide streets with an auto-oriented character, a place to pass through. In this vision, each corridor would be designated as a multimodal corridor with more emphasis placed on wider sidewalks for pedestrians, specially-designed transit shelters,

street trees, street furniture, safer and decorative pedestrian crossings, public gathering spaces, and attractive, visually exciting new development oriented to the sidewalk. The City has already made an investment in streetscape along Garvey Avenue in the Business Improvement District, providing a glimpse of this Vision. Also, there has been interest in mixed-use projects in Downtown by the development community.

The remainder of Section 3.1 describes key features of this Vision.

3.1.1 Integration of the Public Realm and the Private Realm

Cities and neighborhoods are each comprised of two complementary “halves,” the public realm and the private realm. In general:

- **The public realm** is those elements of a city primarily within publicly owned rights-of-way. The transportation network – including streets and sidewalks – is the most easily-recognized component of the public realm, but other highly visible urban elements including streetscape, signage, and public spaces also belong to the public realm.
- **The private realm** is primarily comprised of development on private property. However, to varying degrees, much of the private realm, particularly within a commercial area such as Downtown Monterey Park, is still accessible and highly visible to the public at large.

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This Mixed-Use and Pedestrian Linkages Plan takes a holistic look at transportation together with development – an integration of the public and private realms. Throughout this Plan, recommendations have been based on the principle that transportation improvements and surrounding development are inextricably linked. Improvements to either the public realm or the private realm reinforce the success of the other. Therefore, the Plan recommends courses of action for improving both transportation and land use in tandem. In order for objectives to be met recommendations in the Plan must address both Public and Private Realm

3.1.2 An Attractive, Walkable Public Realm and Streetscape Improvements

The public realm, focused on the pedestrian, should must appeal to community members and visitors, so that they are willing to get out of their cars and spend time in Downtown Monterey Park. Already, the City has enhanced the attractiveness of a substantial portion of Downtown through streetscape improvements along Garvey in the Business Improvement District. These kinds of streetscape improvements should be extended throughout Downtown.

In addition to streetscape enhancements, improvements to walkability should be considered (see Figure 3-1), such as wider sidewalks along Garfield and Atlantic, improved crosswalks, particularly in East Garvey where there are few traffic signals, and improved wayfinding signage to help individuals find their

way around Downtown. New open space in Downtown, whether on public or private property, would also improve the attractiveness and walkability of Downtown.

3.1.3 Places for Transit, Bicycles, and Parking

In addition to pedestrian circulation, the public realm provides places for other types of transportation, including transit, bicycles, and cars. In order to improve overall linkages, transit stops in Downtown should be enhanced, with new shelters that increase comfort for transit riders and are attractive to local shoppers and business owners (see Figure 3-2). Curb bump-outs should be considered at bus stops to provide space for additional street furniture, landscaping, and the concentration of waiting transit users and passersby. The City should also take advantage of the future addition of two Metro Rapid Bus lines through Downtown (on Atlantic and Garvey) to make additional improvements at high-ridership stops.

Bicycles provide a useful alternative to the automobile for traveling mid-distances through Downtown and the surrounding neighborhood. Right now, the only striped bicycle lanes are along Alhambra Avenue. Narrow street rights-of-way limit the potential for additional bicycle lanes on major corridors, but consideration should be given to adding lanes on collector streets such as McPherrin and Emerson if the community supports making potential reductions in neighborhood parking or automobile lane widths. Where bike lanes are not possible,



Figure 3-1. An attractive, comfortable pedestrian environment with ample streetscape improvements.



Figure 3-2. Bus shelter in Santa Monica that provides amenities for riders while maintaining the visibility of adjacent businesses.



Figure 3-3. Public parking integrated into the pedestrian environment.



Figure 3-4. Curb bump-outs at intersection encourage more controlled, slower driving.



Figure 3-5. Mixed-use development.

traffic calming measures can be used to make use of the street more comfortable for cyclists. In addition, bicycles should have a place on the main commercial corridors through the addition of attractive, secure bike racks periodically along the sidewalks.

Many people, particularly visitors from outside Monterey Park, will continue to arrive in Downtown via the automobile. Therefore, consideration should also be given to a centralized parking structure in the Garvey / Garfield area. Providing people with a single, easily accessible place to park in Downtown would provide an incentive to walk between nearby shops and restaurants rather than drive from store to store (see Figure 3-3). Because construction of a parking structure would require significant funds, original funding sources should be considered, including development fees or the installation of parking meters on street or in lots.

Traffic calming techniques are envisioned along parallel streets to Garvey Avenue, such as Emerson and Newmark Avenues. Several of these traffic calming strategies would improve pedestrian movement and safety while calming traffic along these streets. Other improvements will also increase the vehicular capacity of the street network, such as the widening of Garfield and Atlantic to six lanes, per the General Plan, while at the same time provide opportunities to enhance and improve the pedestrian environment.

3.1.4 Enhancements of the Pedestrian and Visual Environment when Making Vehicular Traffic Mitigations

Existing traffic in Downtown Monterey Park is already congested, particularly during peak hours on weekdays and much of the weekend. As new development occurs both inside and outside Monterey Park, the pressure on the existing street system will increase. When changes are made to the street system to increase automobile throughput, consideration should be given to improvements that do not negatively impact the pedestrian environment and the positive qualities of Downtown. At a minimum, sidewalks should not be narrowed to improve traffic flow. Traffic calming improvements such as street bumps and curb bump-outs should be considered on neighborhood collector streets to discourage cut-through traffic and widen sidewalks at crossings (see Figure 3-4).

Auto traffic will remain an issue which the City must confront into the future. This Plan provides alternatives to the automobile which will reduce the pressure on local streets. However, growth inside and outside of Monterey Park will continue. The City must arrive at a consensus on the amount of traffic that it can tolerate on its major corridors, with the understanding that widening streets and increasing throughput with likely only succeed as temporary measures. In addition, measures exist to discourage cut-through traffic which could be implemented at the sources of cut-through traffic.



Figure 3-6. Multi-layered mixed-use development with retail, office, and residential.



Figure 3-7. Live-work townhouses.

3.1.5 Well-Designed Mixed-Use Projects

Mixed-use development is the combination of two uses in one development. Generally, mixed use means commercial development combined with multi-family residential. Mixed-use development is becoming an increasingly important way to energize existing commercial areas like Downtown Monterey Park and create new quality housing (see Figure 3-5).

As mentioned previously, the Monterey Park General Plan designated a substantial proportion of the downtown area, focused on North Atlantic Boulevard, Garvey Avenue, and Garfield Avenue, as mixed-use areas. The General Plan uses mixed-use development as a critical component of its goals to establish Downtown as “a vibrant mixed-use district that provides many opportunities for new commercial and residential development in a pedestrian environment.”

■ *Benefits of Mixed Use*

Some of the benefits of mixed-use development include:

- Opportunities to revitalize older commercial corridors by leveraging the strong housing market
- New housing and innovative retail that is less automobile dependent
- Housing in walking distance of existing businesses providing new customers
- Pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods and enhanced community character

- Land resources used more efficiently
- Compatibility with transit access along local corridors

■ *Importance of Mixed-Use Development to Downtown*

There has been very little development in Downtown in the last three decades. However, the strong residential market has spurred developer interest in Downtown for mixed-use projects since the City began allowing mixed-use development. The key to begin revitalizing Downtown will be to capitalize on today’s interest by developers in projects with residential components.

New mixed-use projects, if attractively designed and including public amenities, can act as catalysts to encourage others to invest in additional projects and existing businesses. To demonstrate the possibilities of mixed-use development, the first project to be constructed must emphasize high-quality architectural design, a pedestrian-friendly environment, and offer retail tenants at the intersections of major streets that reflect missing uses and are desired by the community.

■ *Varied Mixed-Use Development Typology*

Mixed-use development can come in many shapes and sizes. While there’s always a commercial and a residential component, the form should vary, including:

- Multi-story apartment and/or condominium development above retail development (see Figure 3-5)
- Layered development with retail on ground floor, office above, and apartments or condominiums on top (see Figure 3-6)
- Live-work townhouses (see Figure 3-7)
- Residential behind commercial buildings
- Other creative forms that may arise in the future

The unit sizes in mixed-use development should also vary depending on a site's location, the residential market, and the General Plan's density requirements. For example, unit sizes could vary from 600 square feet to more than 2,000 square feet per unit depending on whether they are rental or for-sale units, whether they are individual, family, or senior oriented. In Downtown Monterey Park, a variety of unit sizes should be built to attract a diverse population to the area.

■ ***Standards and Guidelines for Mixed-Use***

In Monterey Park, mixed-use projects are processed using the Planned District (P-D) Overlay Zone. Proposed mixed-use projects provide the greatest opportunities to improve an area if they are well designed and located. In order for mixed-use development to be successful, new mixed-use standards and guidelines are needed for

the P-D zoning, and public improvements should be phased in as funding becomes available. Mixed-use standards and guidelines are intended to be flexible to respond over time to changing conditions in the marketplace. The standards and guidelines should be updated periodically and take precedence over the Specific Plans.

Some of the key issues to address in preparing mixed-use standards and guidelines, and designing mixed-use projects include:

- *Varying site conditions in Downtown* including parcel size, shallow lots, and a variety of access conditions from alley access to side street access to access directly from major streets
- *Type of retail tenants*, both national and local, to complement existing businesses to serve the diversity of the Monterey Park population, and to enhance day- and night-time use of the area
- *Mix of commercial and residential relative to the total project*
- *Building height*, including the transition to lower density existing development
- *Residential density and building massing* to respond to location and provide variety in the marketplace
- *Ground-floor building frontage* along sidewalk instead of parking



Figure 3-8. Mixed-use project in Venice which has an arcade at ground level with housing and balconies above.



Figure 3-9. Variety and interest in design features.

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- *Setbacks of buildings* to expand the pedestrian environment/landscaping along sidewalks (see Figure 3-8)
- *Places for transit and pedestrian amenities* incorporated into project design
- *Amount of open space* and landscaping to serve new residential tenants and landscaped public gathering spaces visible from major streets to enhance the pedestrian environment
- *Architectural character* that has pedestrian and visual interest at the ground level and an articulated façade above the ground level to break up the building mass (see Figure 3-9)
- *Sustainability* concerns by designing for passive solar design and natural ventilation
- *Noise reduction* along heavily-traveled corridors
- *Adequate amount of parking* to serve the development and the public depending on a project's location
- *Building entries* providing a separation between the commercial development (public entry facing sidewalks) and residential development (private entries)

3.1.6 New Uses that Enhance the Walkable Environment and Contribute to Downtown as a Destination

As a part of increasing the livability of Downtown, certain types of businesses and other uses should be encouraged:

- A diversity of uses with an emphasis on family-oriented
- New retail and commercial projects that are less auto dependent
- Adding missing pedestrian-friendly uses such as outdoor cafes, bookstores, retail clothing for a diverse population, home improvement stores, movie theaters, and night-time uses
- Adding national tenants

Many of these uses are also desired by members of the community and were suggested during stakeholder meetings and public workshops.

3.1.7 High-Quality Design for Projects That Are Not Mixed-Use

Not all of the new development projects in Downtown Monterey Park will or should be mixed use. High quality commercial-only projects are encouraged in the mixed-use area at the General Plan densities. However, because all development in Downtown is an integral part of the livable community, these commercial projects should complement the mixed-use development by meeting the same standards in terms of attractiveness and the provision of pedestrian amenities. In addition, existing development can be rehabilitated to better integrated with this livable community Vision.

3.2 Development Strategy

In today's economic climate of limited City resources for public improvements, the key to revitalization of the downtown, and to achieve a

livable community, will be for the City to capitalize on today's interest by the development community in developing mixed-use projects with large residential components. These projects can act as catalysts for other nearby properties to invest in their property as well, if strategically located in the study area (particularly on underutilized parcels) and if public amenities such as parking and improved pedestrian environments are included.

Figure 3-10 illustrates a preliminary overall downtown study area land use and development strategy, which is focused on major projects as catalysts for change along the corridors.

3.2.1 Major Mixed-Use Projects as a Catalyst for Change

Figure 3-10 shows diagrammatically three key locations for major mixed-use catalyst projects in the study area:

- The Downtown Core (Garfield/Garvey)
- The Atlantic/Garvey intersection
- Along Atlantic at the gateway to the City from the north

These projects are about ¼ to ½ miles apart or a 5 to 10 minute walking distance of each other. Mixed-use projects have been proposed for most of these sites by developers, but none have been approved to date. **For each project that is developed, it will be critical for the city to insist that the principles of livable community are incorporated and that guidelines to be developed in this study area are followed.**

Downtown Monterey Park Mixed-Use and Pedestrian Linkages Plan

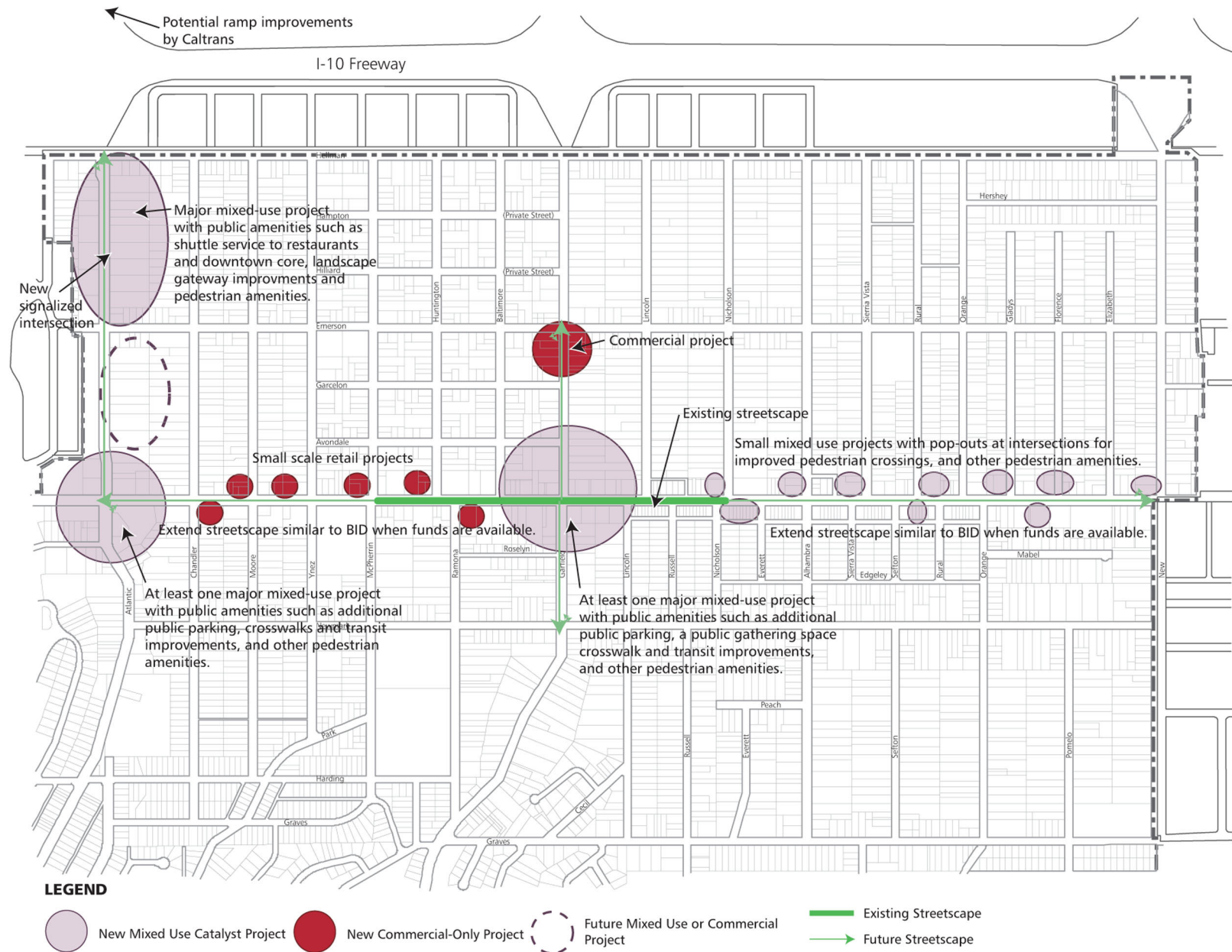


Figure 3-10. Development strategy for Downtown Monterey Park.

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Each project must count toward the overall improvement of the area and include amenities as a part of the private project, as well as improvements and amenities in the public realm. The overall development strategy lists some of the amenities that should be considered in each location.

3.2.2 Small Mixed-Use Projects on East Garvey

In the East Garvey area, parcel depths are small and ownership is fragmented. Therefore, the development strategy includes a series of smaller mixed-use projects on underutilized parcels. This provides investment opportunities for property owners to develop the Garvey frontage in half to full block increments, which may require some consolidation of ownership.

3.2.3 A Commercial-Only Project Near Garfield / Emerson

Near the intersection of Garfield and Emerson, a commercial-only project should be considered. This intersection, near Garfield Hospital and surrounding medical offices, would likely not be appropriate for residential development. However, the high concentration of medical employees and visitors to that area would benefit from high-quality, attractive commercial development at this intersection.

3.2.4 Public / Private Projects Focused on Achieving Key Public Benefits

As these projects are in a redevelopment area, initial catalyst projects may receive assistance from the City for public benefits; however, this

may be limited due to constrained funding. It is recommended that public investment be focused on projects that achieve the most benefits for the area such as incentivizing missing uses or development at least one parking structure near the Garvey / Garfield intersection. This structure could be developed as part of a private development. However, the parking structure should provide additional parking to that which is required by the development, be available to the existing businesses in the area, and be adequately identified to visitors to the area.

3.2.5 Public Realm Projects Implemented With Private Projects and When Funding Available

Funding for the public realm improvements in this Plan is limited. However, the approval of new private development can be strategically linked to the construction or funding of public realm improvements by developers. This will enable many public realm improvements recommended here to be made gradually as private development occurs. In addition, the City should continue to seek out funds for public realm improvements from various resources, including regional, state, and Federal grants.

3.2.6 Lot Consolidation Encouraged

The Specific Plans for North Atlantic and Garvey / Garfield already encourage the consolidation of the relatively small lots with dispersed ownership in Downtown. Lots consolidation has been incentivized through permitting greater development intensities to development on larger lots. This incentive is

continued in the General Plan mixed-use land use designations by only allowing development on parcels of a certain size. However, because lot consolidations would be particularly difficult in the East Garvey area, this Plan recommends that mixed-use development be allowed minimally on a half-block in the East Garvey area, regardless of the particular acreage.

3.2.7 New, Renovated and Rehabilitation Commercial Development to Follow Applicable Design Standards and Guidelines

Not all new projects in Downtown will be mixed-use development, and not every parcel will be redeveloped. However, even those parcels which remain commercial are still an integral part of the livable community envisioned for Monterey Park. Therefore, many of the recommendations for mixed-use development in this Plan will also apply to commercial development, whether new or existing. Sections 5.4 and 5.5 of this Plan describe how the standards and guidelines apply to new or existing commercial development.

3.2.8 Land Use Scenarios to Test Traffic Intersections

In order to project future land use along the Downtown corridor, Gruen Associates calculated a theoretical build-out for the project corridors by comparing the maximum FAR permitted in each area in the General Plan with the existing FAR. The build-out is a theoretical scenario, as it is highly unlikely that all properties would be built to the maximum FAR, and that all existing properties would be

redeveloped. The existing building area in square footage is approximately 2.0 million square feet.

The theoretical build-out, if the entire area were developed at maximum FAR would add an additional 3.6-4.3 million square feet to the existing 2.0 million square feet for a total area of almost 5.6-6.3 million square feet. However, it will not be feasible that every parcel in each subdistrict would be developed to its full intensity. For example, large office projects on Garfield and existing major restaurant/retail developments on Atlantic are unlikely to undergo redevelopment.

Therefore, based on the existing land use inventory, existing General Plan, community input, and the above overall Land Use Development Strategy, several alternative land use scenarios were developed for the study corridors. These land use scenarios reflect a variety of assumptions about scale and type of development and were used in testing market conditions and the traffic analysis.

Chapter 4.

Linkages – Public Realm Recommendations

What has been recommended for Downtown Monterey Park’s public realm?

- *Sidewalk widening*
- *Landscaping and street furniture*
- *Curb bump-outs at crosswalks*
- *Decorative crosswalks*
- *Flashing lights embedded in crosswalks at non-signalized intersections*
- *“Z”-crossings of major streets*
- *Bicycle parking*
- *Bicycle lanes on McPherrin Avenue*
- *Downtown circulation shuttle service*
- *Improved bus stops with curb bump-outs*
- *Integration with Metro Rapid Bus*
- *Centralized public parking facility near Garfield / Garvey intersection*
- *Generate funds for additional parking improvements*
- *New traffic signals*
- *Intersection improvements*
- *Traffic calming*
- *Parking signage*
- *Information kiosks*
- *Public art – Art Walk*
- *Public spaces in new development*
- *Extension of Garvey streetscape*
- *New streetscape for Atlantic and Garfield*

The vision for Downtown Monterey Park described in Chapter 3 seeks to establish Downtown as a pedestrian-oriented, livable community with mixed-use development along major streets in the area. A major component of the study is the creation of improved connections – linkages – throughout Downtown.

This linkages concept places the pedestrian network at the core of an overall network of transportation options and public amenities that addresses the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and drivers. In addition to specific transportation improvements, the linkages concept also includes recommendations for other elements of the public realm including streetscape, signage, and public spaces.

The recommendations are presented in the Chapter are presented first as a holistic network, and overall Linkages Concept. Then, detailed recommendations are provided for specific areas within Downtown, including:

- Garvey Avenue
- East Garvey focus
- Atlantic Boulevard
- Garfield Avenue

In addition, the chapter describes the traffic analysis conducted for the Development Scenarios.

4.1 Overall Linkages Concept

The overall linkages concept proposed for Downtown Monterey Park is comprised of diverse enhancements to the public realm that collectively make possible the livable, pedestrian-oriented Vision that guides this Plan. Figure 4-1 illustrates the combined linkages concept for Downtown. The recommendations are explained here by category, including:

- Pedestrian
- Bicycle
- Transit
- Parking
- Wayfinding
- Public Space
- Streetscape: Corridor Design Concepts
- Traffic
- Traffic Calming

4.2 Pedestrian Recommendations

As described in Chapter 3, the core of any urban neighborhood is its network of pedestrian pathways, primarily its sidewalks and crosswalks. The following recommendations would improve this basic pedestrian circulation network.

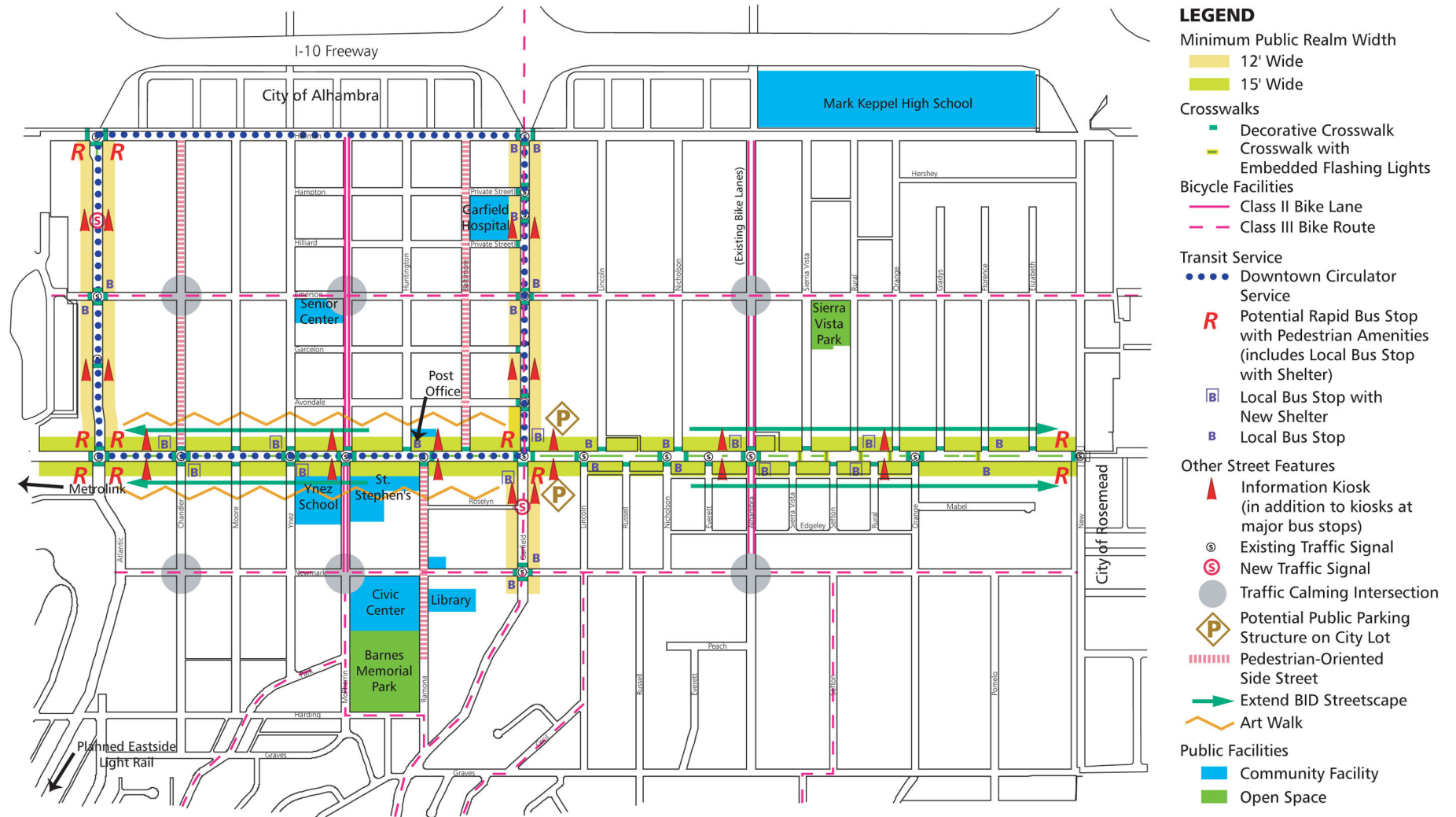


Figure 4-1. Overall linkages concept for Downtown Monterey Park.

4.2.1 Sidewalk Widening

In addition to accommodating larger numbers of pedestrians in greater comfort, wider sidewalks make possible other public realm improvements including improved landscaping and street furniture (see Figures 4-2 and 4-3). Sidewalk widths should be increased along the major streets in Downtown. Sidewalks should be widened to a minimum width shown below:

- Garvey Avenue – 15 foot sidewalks
- Atlantic Boulevard – 12 foot sidewalks
- Garfield Avenue – 12 foot sidewalks

Along each street, the City should establish attractive paving patterns that provide interest while walking on the street (see Figure 4 for the existing pattern in the BID along Garvey).



Figure 4-2. Wide sidewalk in Beverly Hills allowing provide ample space for pedestrians.

4.2.2 Landscaping and Street Furniture

When sidewalks are widened, the opportunity exists to add landscaping and street furniture to the sidewalks. These are pedestrian amenities which make travel on foot more pleasant. Street furniture includes benches, trash cans, bus shelters, lighting, and kiosks.

When landscaping or street furniture is installed, it should be located along the curb of street wherever possible. Other infrastructure such as lighting, fire hydrants, traffic control boxes and signage poles should be located along the curb and spaced to allow street trees. This provides pedestrians with a clear walking space and easy access to the shops and other facilities lining the sidewalk.

In the BID area along Garvey Avenue (and to a limited extent along Garfield in the BID), the City has already installed new landscaping and street furniture (see Figure 4-4). These improvements have been generally well-received by community members, and this overall scheme (with some modifications along East Garvey) should be extended along Garvey Avenue. For Garfield Avenue and Atlantic Boulevard, new streetscape concepts have been recommended in Section 4.10.



Figure 4-3. Wide sidewalk with outdoor seating and landscaping in West Hollywood.



Figure 4-4. Attractive street furniture, landscaping, and sidewalk paving pattern already installed along Garvey in the BID.

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4.2.3 Curb Bump-Outs at Crosswalks

While the curb lane is generally given over to parking, near intersections the curb is often painted red and unused. This unused space can be given over to the sidewalk by “bumping out” the sidewalks into the unused curb lane (see Figures 4-5 and 4-6). Bump-outs at crosswalks reduce the distance and time for pedestrians to cross the street, increasing comfort for pedestrian (particularly the elderly) and reducing pedestrian demands on traffic signal cycles.

Curb bump-outs at crosswalks would not be installed at every intersection in Downtown, but primarily in locations where crossings would not significantly interfere with traffic flow and on-street parking. Where crosswalk and sidewalk improvements have already been made in the BID, bump-outs would not be considered. While specific locations for curb bump-outs should be determined in later study working with the City Traffic Department, potential bump-out concepts are locations are illustrated later in the overall streetscape concept for East Garvey Avenue, Section 4.10.

4.2.4 Decorative Crosswalks

In the Business Improvement District (BID) along Garvey, colored asphalt crosswalks have already been installed (see Figures 4-7 and 4-8). In addition to aesthetics, these decorative crosswalks also improve the visibility of pedestrians, increasing safety. Decorative crosswalks should be installed at intersections throughout the Downtown area, specifically at the locations shown on Figure 4-1.

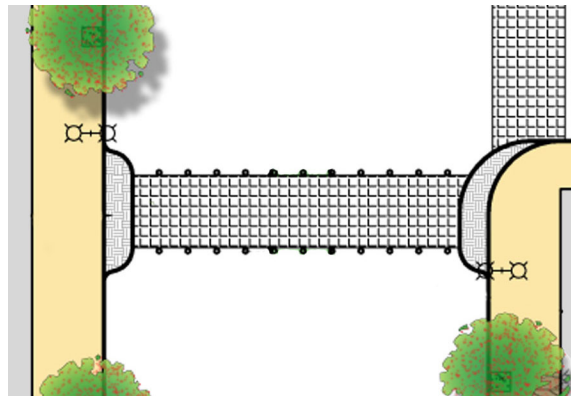


Figure 4-5. Curb bump-outs into curb lane on either side of decorative pedestrian crosswalk.



Figure 4-6. Curb bump-out at striped crosswalk in West Hollywood.



Figure 4-7. Existing decorative crosswalk along Garvey in the Business Improvement District.



Figure 4-8. Highly visible crosswalk pattern in Beverly Hills.



Figure 4-9. Flashing lights embedded in pavement alongside pedestrian crosswalk in Santa Monica.

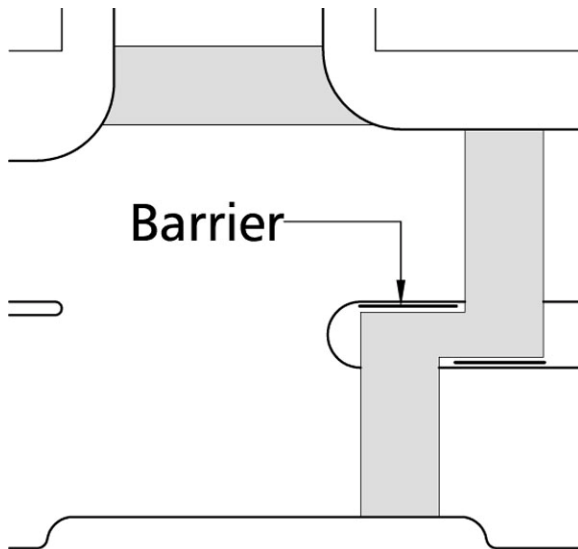


Figure 4-10. Conceptual “z”-crossing of street with jog in crosswalk at existing median.

4.2.5 Embedded Flashing Lights in Crosswalks at Non-Signalized Intersections

Some pedestrian crossings of major streets in Downtown occur at intersections without traffic signals. While drivers are required to stop for pedestrians at these non-signalized intersections, confusion and low pedestrian visibility at these locations often results in unsafe situations. Flashing lights embedded in the pavement alongside non-signalized crossings of major streets would add another type of visibility to crossing pedestrians, contributing to overall safety in the crosswalk. Flashing lights would only activate when crosswalks are used, either via sensors or pushbutton (see Figure 4-9).

4.2.6 “Z”-Crossings of Major Streets with Medians

Increasing safety at pedestrian crossings of major streets involves not just driver but also pedestrian awareness. When crossing a wide street, pedestrians may be tempted to run across the entire street without watching traffic at the far end of the crossing. However, “staged” crossings of the street, half a street at a time, are possible at medians. Pedestrians can be encouraged to pause at medians and reevaluate the traffic situation by creating a “jog” in the pedestrian pathway (see Figure 4-10). Using a barrier to prevent a straight-through crossing of the street, pedestrians are forced to shift and re-evaluate traffic flow on the second portion of the street crossing.

4.2.7 Beeping Crosswalk Signals and Crosswalk Count-Down Timers

Two crosswalk improvements that use technology to improve the safety of pedestrians crossing the street are “beeping” walk signals and countdown timers alongside pedestrian signals. Beeping signals make a small chirping noise when pedestrian crossing is allowed, with different noises made for each direction when crossing in two directions is possible. Another technological improvement to pedestrian walk signals is the count-down timer. A digital display of the number of seconds remaining until the traffic light turns yellow helps pedestrians judge whether they can safely cross the street with more accuracy than a flashing “don’t walk” hand (see Figure 4-11).



Figure 4-11. Count-down timer on pedestrian signal.

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4.2.8 Pedestrian Signal Timing

Another potential pedestrian improvement would be to provide additional signal timing for pedestrian to cross the street. Because there are elderly residents and visitors in the Downtown area, it has been suggested that some signals need to provide more time during the walk / do not walk period to get pedestrians across the street. The adjustment of the pedestrian signal timing could be in conjunction with the potential improvements suggested in section 4.2.7.

4.2.9 Pedestrian-Oriented Collector Streets

While most of the pedestrian recommendations have focused on major streets, collector streets in Downtown Monterey Park can also be improved to increase pedestrian linkages. Several minor streets in Downtown will either be development with mixed-use projects or link major activity centers in the Downtown area.



Figure 4-12. Pedestrian amenities on mixed-use collector street in Long Beach, including decorative paving on sidewalks, street trees, and diagonal parking.

These streets are the most likely candidates for pedestrian-oriented improvements. They are:

- Chandler Avenue north of Garvey
- Baltimore Avenue north of Garvey
- Ramona Avenue south of Garvey

These streets are also shown in Figure 4-1. While they are not the focus of this Plan, as additional development occurs along these streets, consideration should be given to creating pedestrian, bicycle, and urban design amenities in the public realm, including:

- Diagonal parking on the street
- Curb extensions at mid-block and at block ends
- Pedestrian-scale lighting
- Street furniture
- Decorative paving on sidewalks
- Street trees
- Public art

Figures 4-12 and 4-13 illustrate the types of amenities which could be included on pedestrian-oriented collector streets in Downtown.

4.3 Bicycle Recommendations

Bicycles are a useful alternative to the automobile when traveling in and around Downtown Monterey Park. Cyclists have the ability to travel longer distances than pedestrians without getting stuck in traffic. The environmental and health benefits of cycling compared to automobile use also reflect the principles of livable communities. Bicycle-oriented improvements recommended for Downtown are described below.

4.3.1 Bicycle Parking along Major Streets

Downtown possesses few locations for secure bicycle parking along its sidewalks. Either bike racks, regularly spaced along the sidewalk or located at new major developments, would provide cyclists with improved access to the destinations along Downtown's corridors.

4.3.2 Traffic Calming on Bicycle Routes

Class III "bike routes" have no specific physical improvements for cyclists but are designated as such to assist cyclists in navigating through the neighborhood. Garfield Avenue and portions of Newmark, Lincoln, Sefton, and Park Avenues are currently designated as Class III bike routes. These designations should be continued, and Emerson Avenue should be added as a Class III bike route, as shown in Figure 4-1.

In addition to the Class III designation, traffic calming measures should be considered along these corridors. Traffic calming measures, described in greater detail later in this chapter,

would assist cyclists on these routes by slowing and controlling automobile traffic on these streets, making them more comfortable and safe for cyclists. When traffic calming measures are designed, care should be given that the measures do not in fact obstruct bicycles in the street.

4.3.3 Class II Bicycle Lanes along McPherrin Avenue

The only existing set of bicycle lanes in Downtown is located along Alhambra Avenue between Hellman and Newmark. Bicycle lanes (known as Class II bicycle facilities by transportation planners) are striped as an exclusive lane on the pavement, superior to the non-striped Class III bike “routes” described above. The City should seek potential locations for additional Class II bike lanes.

Specifically, bike lanes could be installed on McPherrin Avenue (see Figure 4-13 for existing

conditions on McPherrin). Class II Bicycle Lanes on McPherrin Avenue would link several important bicycle-oriented uses, including Barnes Memorial Park, the Civic Center, Ynez School, and St. Stephen’s Church and School. The intersection of McPherrin and Garvey has one of the highest concentrations of bicycle activity in the Downtown area. Furthermore, bicycle lanes on McPherrin would provide a superior north-south bicycle facility to the Class III bicycle route along Garfield Avenue.

Figures 4-14 and 4-15 illustrate two potential alternatives for installing bicycle lanes on McPherrin Avenue. Alternative 1 would remove parking on one side of the street in order to allow for bicycle lanes in either direction. Alternative 2 would establish McPherrin as a one way street for auto traffic in order to retain parking on both sides of the street. Because McPherrin is part of a relatively dense grid of north-south and east-west streets, one way operation may be feasible. Regardless, further investigation of either alternative with the community and the Traffic Commission would be necessary before implementing either.

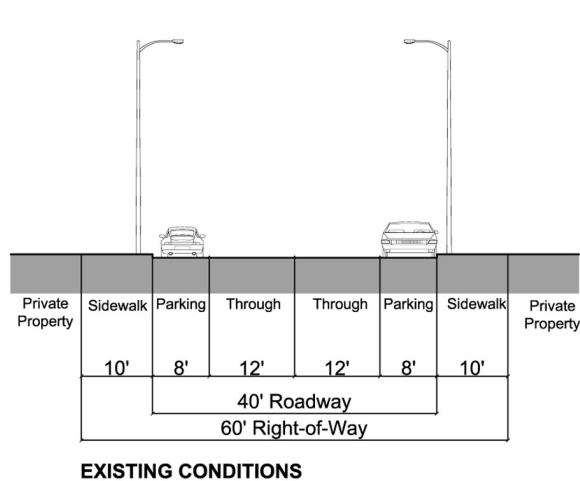


Figure 4-13. Existing Conditions on McPherrin

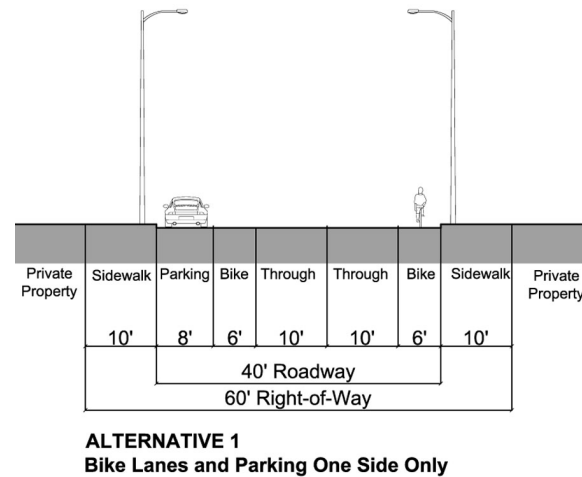


Figure 4-14. Bicycle Lanes on McPherrin, Alt. 1

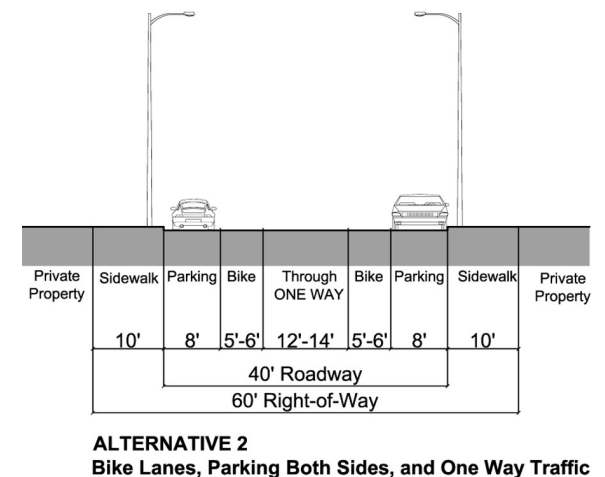


Figure 4-15. Bicycle Lanes on McPherrin, Alt. 2