

Envision Whittier General Plan



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LOU HENRY HOOVER SCHOOL



5302

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WHAT YOU WOULD HAVE IN THE LIFE OF A NATION
YOU MUST FIRST PUT INTO ITS SCHOOLS

YON HUMBOLDT

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context

Whittier encompasses 14.6 square miles in southeastern Los Angeles County, bounded by the unincorporated community of Hacienda Heights and the cities of La Habra Heights and Industry to the north/northeast. The city of Pico Rivera lies to the west, city of La Habra to the southeast, and the city of Santa Fe Springs and Orange County to the south (Figure I-1). Several freeways and highways offer regional access to Whittier. Interstate 605 (I-605) runs along the western boundary. State Route 60 (SR-60), five miles north, offers access via Workman Mill Road and Colima Road. Access from Interstate 5 (I-5) is six miles south. Whittier Boulevard (State Route 72) bisects Whittier from the northwest to the southeast and provides a freeway alternative into downtown Los Angeles to the west and the city of La Habra on the east. Colima Road (County Route N8) runs north-south across the eastern portion of Whittier, providing access to the San Gabriel Valley communities to the north.

This General Plan addresses all lands within the City's corporate limits, as well as some unincorporated Los Angeles County neighborhoods near Whittier, within the City's Sphere of Influence. In this General Plan, the combined City area and Sphere of Influence are termed the "planning area," as illustrated (in red) in Figure I-2. While properties within the Sphere of Influence are under the jurisdiction of Los Angeles County agencies, these properties bear a critical relationship to Whittier's planning activities. Many of these areas already receive some services from Whittier and could be annexed into the city in the future. Planning for service extensions, integrated infrastructure, and high design quality is timely and prudent.

Whittier's General Plan, also known as "Envision Whittier", reflects the community's shared values of what Whittier is today and plans to be in future years. Often referred to as the community's "blueprint", a general plan establishes the basis for zoning regulations and provides guidance in the evaluation of development proposals. Additionally, it creates the framework for economic development, mobility improvements, and balancing the community's desires regarding sustainability, City services, and parks. The Envision Whittier General Plan will lead the community toward a more healthy and sustainable future.

community effort

In Whittier, we understand that community building and public participation are the cornerstones of a thriving city. The public participation effort arose from Whittier's fundamental belief that an active resident population must be integrally involved in important policy discussions. Envision Whittier's public participation program was multi-faceted and included the components described below.

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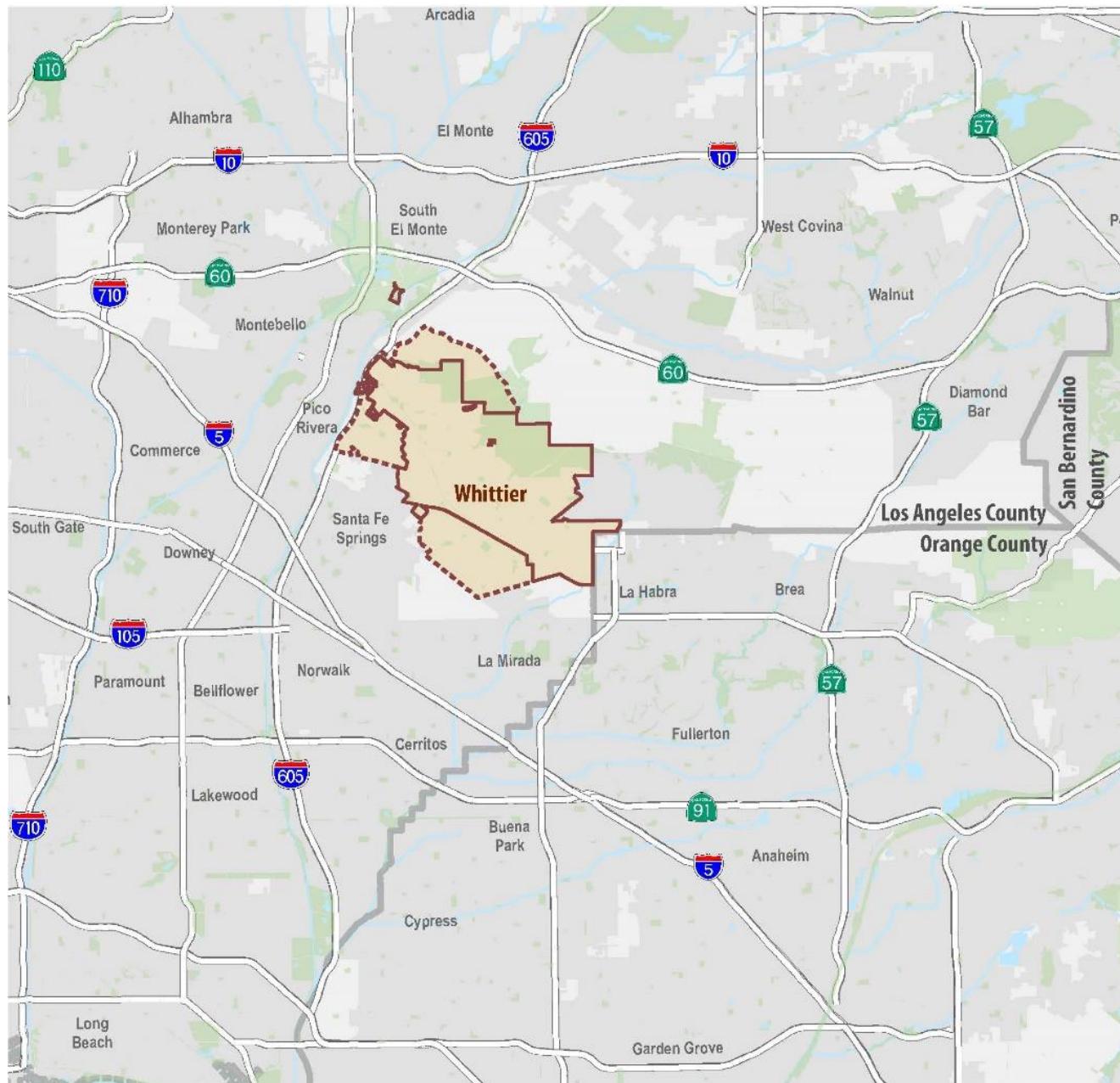


Figure I-1: Regional Location

ENVISION WHITTIER

Boundaries

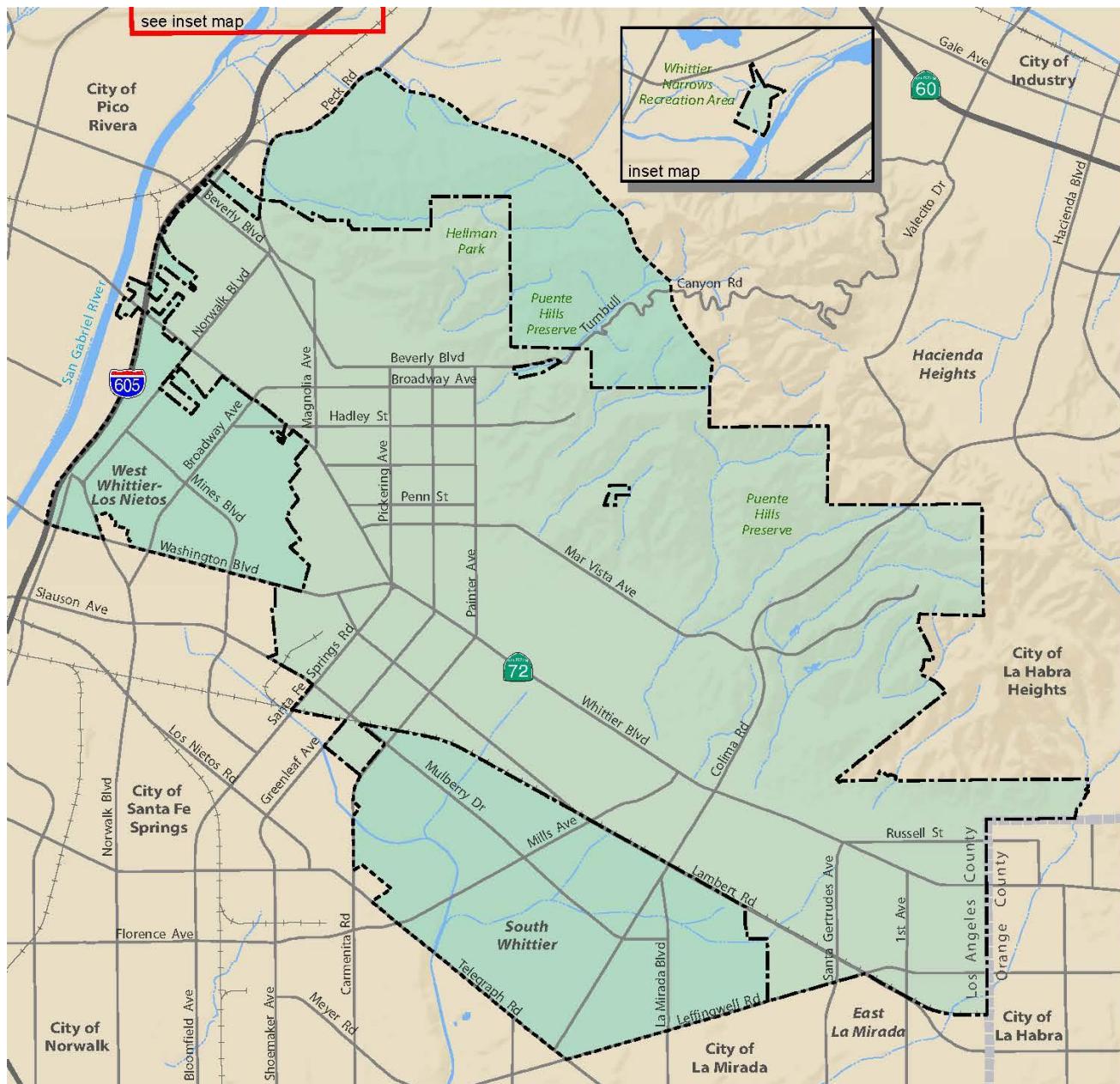
- Whittier City Boundary
- Whittier Sphere of Influence

Source: City of Whittier and American Community Survey, 2015.

Prepared by MIG, 2022.



0 1 2 4 6 Miles

**Figure I-2: Planning Area**

ENVISION WHITTIER

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stakeholder interviews

Two stakeholder interview sessions with a total of 24 participants representing 19 organizations were convened at the start of the General Plan update, in July and August 2017. The stakeholders were a diverse group of community representatives, including residents, developers, business owners, law enforcement, school administrators, and various Whittier-based organizations. The interactive sessions encouraged participants to share a wide range of perspectives and opinions regarding Whittier's assets, concerns, and opportunities.

launch workshops

Four Envision Whittier launch workshops were conducted to assess the community's view regarding what is valued most about Whittier. The four workshops took place during September 2017. Community members were given passbooks and encouraged to visit the workshops' five stations: "Where do you live?", "What do you value most?", "How do you get around?", "How do we stay healthy?", and "What are Whittier's community assets and future opportunities?". These workshops were designed to educate community members about the General Plan, inform the public about the update process, and gather feedback from a wide cross-section of Whittier constituents. In total, more than 75 people provided input at the four workshops. Workshops were advertised using City social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram), email blasts, and the Envision Whittier website.

questionnaires

Soon after the project's launch, in November 2017, a total of 491 Whittier residents, property owners, students, and workers responded to a questionnaire for Envision Whittier. The questionnaire's objectives were to understand the community's opinions on issues and opportunities in Whittier and solicit input on what community members value, building on perspectives collected during the launch workshops.



Questionnaire outreach during Whittier Earth Day Event
2018

A total of 403 community members participated in a second Envision Whittier questionnaire built from public input provided at previous outreach events and the first questionnaire. The purpose of this questionnaire was to shape the General Plan's vision and guiding principles. The City

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distributed and collected the 2nd round of questionnaires during the months of April and May 2018.

commission/committee workshop

A workshop for Whittier Commissions/Committees, convened in December 2017, gathered members' desired outcomes for the Envision Whittier process. Commissioners and committee members had the opportunity to direct the planning program and provide comment on the General Plan and input on key themes that would create the Plan's guiding principles. The following Commissions/Committees participated, represented by 25 members: Planning Commission; Historic Resources Commission; Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission; Design Review Board; and the Parking & Transportation Commission. The workshop was open to the public; twelve community members participated.

guiding principles public workshop

In June 2018, approximately 40 community members attended a public workshop held to draft Envision Whittier's guiding principles and opportunities. The workshop consisted of three parts—an open house, presentation, and breakout group activities—and solicited public input on the Plan's land use, transportation, and other planning issues. Workshops were advertised using City social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram), email blasts, and the Envision Whittier website.



Public Workshop at Parnell Park Community Center. June 20, 2018.

commissioners/public workshop

In September 2018, a joint Commissioners/Public workshop was held with 63 participants—43 community members and 20 commissioners/board members. The Commissions and Boards represented included the Planning Commission; Historic Resources Commission; Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission; Parking & Transportation Commission; and the Design Review Board. The purpose of the workshop was to recommend General Plan policy ideas, framework ideas, and issues.



Commissioners/Public Workshop at Whittier Community Center. September 2018.

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council study session

In March 2019, during the continued engagement process to identify community priorities, a City Council Study Session was held with City staff and included discussions about the following topics:

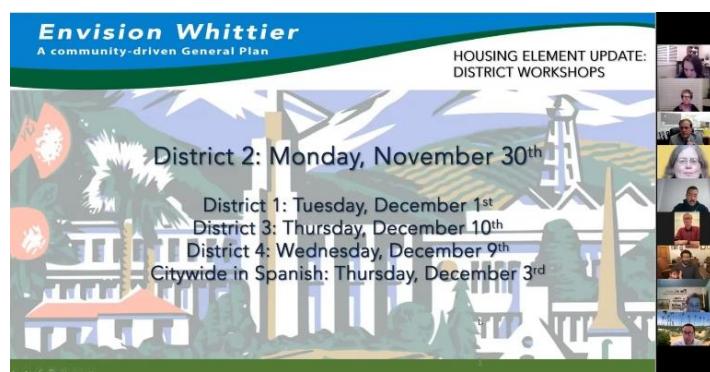
- PIH/ L-Line Station (formerly called the Gold Line) (Expanding Transit Oriented Corridors and Development)
- Whittier Boulevard (Specific Plan- Development priorities)
- Lambert Road (Mixed Use Development)
- Uptown (Specific Plan)
- Mobility (Vehicular, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Circulation)
- Health and Wellness (Park Improvements, Urban Greening, Recreational Activities, Food Options)
- Historic Resources (Preservation)

These topics and themes have informed the draft General Plan goals and policies, the land use policy map, and buildout estimate. Based on the Study Session discussion, the City initiated an extensive land use analysis, which resulted in a variety of programs and policies that aim to strategically create and develop programs enhancing Whittier's unique character and quality of life.

A second City Council Study Session was held on October 13, 2020, to review community outreach progress and to discuss next steps. This meeting addressed key themes identified throughout all community meetings to date. This particular meeting also began discussion of community needs as repercussions of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

housing element update

As required for every California jurisdiction, the City of Whittier updates its General Plan Housing Element on an eight-year cycle. In November and December 2020, the City hosted five community workshops to collect input on housing challenges, needs, and strategies from a broad cross-section of residents and stakeholders. Due to the



District Housing Element Workshop Series, 2020.

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constraints on public gathering imposed by the Center for Disease Control as a result of the novel COVID-19 virus pandemic, an online workshop was held for each of the four Council Districts. The Housing Element presentations focused on the housing laws' legislative intent, population and housing characteristics in Whittier, how affordable housing is defined, and how the City can accommodate its Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) of 3,439 units. In addition, a fifth workshop was conducted completely in Spanish. The Spanish language workshop's content was the same as the Council Districts workshop. Workshops were advertised using City social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram), email blasts, and the Envision Whittier website.

social media and website

Online community engagement was being conducted throughout the Envision Whittier process. The multimedia campaign used the following social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

In addition, the City used the Envision Whittier website to provide current and ongoing information on the General Plan update. Public meetings summaries, questionnaires, technical documents, Envision Whittier documents, and information on the program's progress were posted for review. The public was asked to comment on various aspects of the Envision Whittier documents during their formation.



City of Whittier

vision

Based on the community input, the Envision Whittier's vision and guiding principles were developed. The Envision Whittier General Plan seeks to redefine what the City of Whittier will look like, and how the city is experienced in the generations to come. The General Plan Update defines and reflects the community values and aspirations of today. Through an intensive, inclusive, and creative community engagement process the City was able to identify key needs and identify areas of improvement throughout the many districts and neighborhoods of Whittier.

Topics identified for improvement included housing, parks and physical activity, transportation, safety, a clean environment, and sustainability.

guiding principles

The Guiding Principles direct the development of Envision Whittier's goals and policies. They reflect the vision for Whittier, rather than describe Whittier as it exists today. The Guiding Principles were developed with community and staff input and were vetted by the community and City Council.

- Whittier has a small town feel with a strong sense of community where gathering spaces, engaging events, and attractive streetscapes and greenways connect the community physically and socially. Our vibrant Uptown, diverse commercial corridors, stable residential neighborhoods, and natural open spaces provide places where all community members feel at home.
- Whittier strives to preserve its historic landmarks and districts, protect its hillsides, grow local businesses, and promote quality neighborhood character while encouraging complementary, managed, and sustainable growth.
- Whittier embraces Uptown as its urban retail core with local businesses, events, civic institutions, and a safer environment. Whittier promotes a unified Whittier Boulevard as a corridor that efficiently connects our neighborhoods to adjacent communities and provides a diversity of commercial businesses and institutions for locals and visitors. The Boulevard also benefits from the presence of higher-density housing that offers homes to people of all income levels and lifestyles.
- Whittier strengthens its economic prosperity by leveraging local assets and establishing community partners to grow quality jobs, enhance services, and maintain stable revenues.

- Whittier offers attractive, convenient transportation options and provides walkable, cyclable, safer, and livable streets while continuing to strengthen access to the greater region. Community amenities are accessible by all residents.
- Whittier values and is committed to enhancing the Puente Hills Preserve, a safer and scenic trail system, and diverse recreational facilities where the community can experience nature and engage in healthy activities.
- Whittier wisely manages its open space, water, energy, and air resources for sustainable use.
- Whittier residents, business interests, and local decision makers come together and celebrate Whittier's shared community values while working toward Whittier's best community interests.

user's guide

The General Plan is a community document intended for use by all residents, business owners and employees, and decision-makers in Whittier. As such, Envision Whittier is written and organized for ease of use. Tables, diagrams, and maps help readers understand planning concepts. A glossary provides further guidance and support to encourage a deeper understanding of all topic areas.

The organization of the General Plan allows users to turn to the element that interests them and quickly obtain a perspective of City policies on the subject. However, General Plan users should realize that the goals, policies, and programs throughout all elements are interrelated and should be examined comprehensively. These policy components must be considered together when making decisions.

The General Plan is intended to be both a long-term and a dynamic document and must be periodically updated to respond to changing community needs. Requests for amendments may be submitted by individuals or initiated by the City itself. Amendments may involve a land use designation change for a particular property, or policy/text changes applicable to larger areas or the entire city. Proposed amendments will be publicly reviewed to ensure consistency with all General Plan Elements and the General Plan EIR. Per State law, General Plans may be amended up to four times per year. A city is under no obligation to process General Plan amendments, as it constitutes a legislative act. To facilitate a larger number of amendment requests, a jurisdiction may group together several amendment requests to process together as one General Plan amendment.

administering the plan

The Whittier City Council will implement this General Plan by establishing annual planning and budgeting goals based on the Plan, and by adopting implementing ordinances, regulations, and programs. City departments will use General Plan policies to guide their programming and planning and, importantly, to review development applications for consistency with the community's vision.

State law provides direction on how cities can maintain the general plan as a contemporary policy guide. California requires each planning department to report annually to its city council on "the status of the plan and progress in its implementation". Moreover, it is the Whittier City Council's policy to review the General Plan periodically to maintain the currency of its goals and policies, as well as its background and technical information. Envision Whittier has been adopted pursuant to this policy.

The City of Whittier regulates the use of property within its jurisdiction through the General Plan in conjunction with the zoning and specific plans, subdivision, building codes, and other municipal code sections. Following the General Plan's adoption, any regulations in zoning, subdivision, building, and other ordinances that are not consistent with the General Plan will be amended to ensure consistency.

envision whittier general plan v. state mandated elements

Table I-1: Envision Whittier Plan v. State-Mandated Elements

Elements of the Envision Whittier General Plan Update	State-Mandated General Plan Elements
Land Use and Community Character (Land Use, Urban Design, and Economic Development)	Land Use
Mobility and Infrastructure (Transportation, Sustainable Communities/Climate Protection, Supportive Infrastructure)	Circulation
Resources Management (Parks and Recreation, Natural Resources, Environmental Sustainability, Oil and Gas Resources)	Conservation Open Space
Historic Resources	Historic Resources

Table I-1: Envision Whittier Plan v. State-Mandated Elements

Elements of the Envision Whittier General Plan Update	State-Mandated Elements	General Plan
Public Safety, Noise, and Health	Noise Safety Air Quality	
Implementation Plan	--	
Housing Element (Housing Element is under a separate cover)	Housing	

NOTE: Environmental Justice policies are woven throughout the Envision Whittier General Plan.

statutory requirements

Every California jurisdiction is required to adopt a general plan and update it at regular intervals. The purpose of the general plan is to anticipate and plan for “the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning” (California Government Code §65300). A general plan must address many issues that are related to and influence land use decisions. Specifically, California law requires the general plan to address land use, circulation, housing, conservation of natural resources, preservation of open space, noise environment, public safety, and environmental justice (Government Code §65302). Jurisdictions may prepare and adopt other general plan elements or address any other topics of relevance or interest to that community, with the understanding that these optional elements must be implemented with the same vigor – and are subject to the same legal scrutiny – as the mandatory elements or topics.

key focus symbols

Throughout the Envision Whittier General Plan, symbols are used to identify key focus policies and programs. The health and sustainability focus will be identified by a green leaf symbol. The Environmental Justice symbol will be identified using a green globe.



health and sustainability focus

Envision Whittier takes a holistic approach to community health, weaving principles of sustainability into every element. Sustainability is achieved through careful planning to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

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Sustainability issues are addressed throughout Envision Whittier. The General Plan's sustainability symbol, a green leaf, indicates the goals, policies, and/or programs that include specific attention

to best practices from the perspective of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, conserving natural resources, or promoting a healthier lifestyle. Sustainability is a cornerstone of the General Plan.

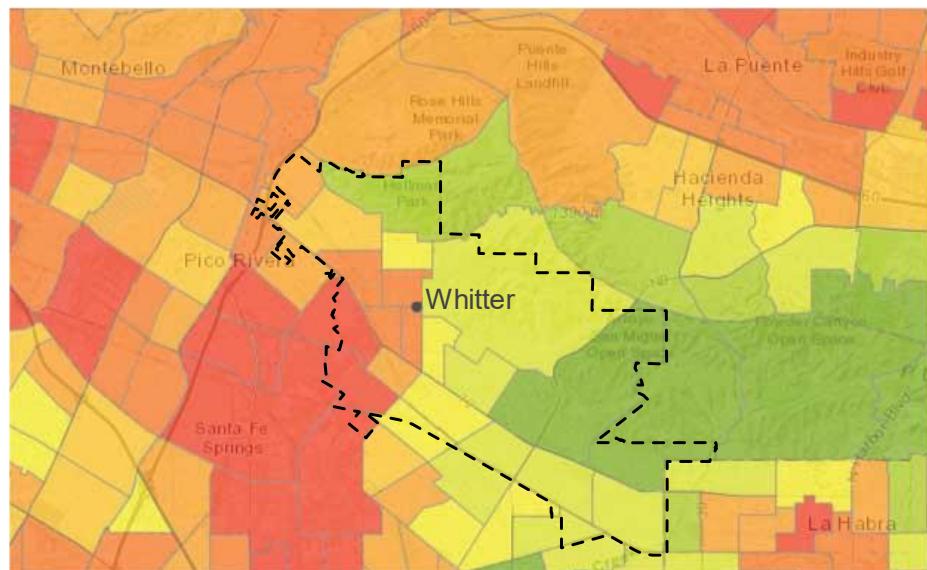


Whittier Greenway Trail

environmental justice focus

Envision Whittier, also, takes a holistic approach to environmental justice issues. Environmental justice issues are defined as those that promote community engagement in the public

decision-making process, reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities, and prioritize improvements and programs to address the needs of disadvantaged



CalEnviroScreen 3.0 Analysis of Whittier

communities. Disadvantaged communities as defined by the State of California are communities (area, neighborhoods, or parts of neighborhoods) that are disproportionately burdened by

multiple sources of pollution and with population characteristics that make them more sensitive to pollution.¹

Some of Whittier's western neighborhoods (including some SOI neighborhoods) are considered by the State to be disadvantaged communities in CalEnviroScreen 3.0². For all of Whittier, especially those western neighborhoods, it is critical that environmental justice be considered at every level of Envision Whittier's implementation. Like sustainability, environmental justice is also integrated into every Element. Envision Whittier policies and programs support the environmental justice goal by reducing pollution exposure; promoting public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, physical activity, and adaptation to climate change; and by supporting civil engagement. These are all marked with a green globe symbol.

key terminology

goal

A goal is an ideal future end; it is a direction-setter. As such, a goal may be abstract in nature, and, generally, not quantifiable or time dependent.

policy

A policy is a specific statement that guides decision-making. It indicates a commitment of the City of Whittier City Council to a course of action. A policy implements a general plan's goal.

program

A program is a coordinated set of specific measures and actions (e.g., zoning, subdivision procedures, and capital expenditures) that local government intends to use in carrying out the policies of the General Plan.

general plan reference documents

The General Plan is the result of thousands of hours of research and technical studies, the collective efforts of the diversity of elected decision-makers, individuals, and agencies who cumulatively guide and shape land use development and natural resource conservation, and the

¹ "Disadvantaged communities" are defined as areas identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency as those in the top 25 percent of highest scoring census tracts in CalEnviroScreen. CalEnviroScreen calculates a score for each census tract in California based on both pollution levels and socioeconomic factors. For this document, we will be identifying the Disadvantaged communities as Environmental Justice communities.

² Several blocks located west of Painter Avenue and south of Whittier Boulevard are in the CalEnviroScreen 3.0 91-100 percentile range, while blocks north of Whittier Boulevard and between Broadway Avenue and Painter Avenue are in the 76 – 90 percentile range.

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engagement of numerous individuals throughout the community who have articulated their hopes and expectations for the City's future.

Through the process, several related documents have been produced, that will provide resource material for years to come. These include:

- Envision Whittier Existing Conditions Atlas
- Envision Whittier Guiding Principles
- Public Engagement Summaries
 - Stakeholder Interviews Summary (2017)
 - General Plan Update Launch Workshop Summary (2017)
 - Envision Whittier Questionnaire #1 Summary (2017)
 - Commission/Committee Workshop Summary (2017)
 - Envision Whittier Questionnaire #2 Summary (2018)
 - Guiding Principles and Opportunities for the Future Public Workshop Summary (2018)
 - Options for Our Future Commissioners/Public Workshop Summary (2018)
- General Plan Environmental Impact Report
- ADK&A Market Analysis
- KMA Market Analysis



land use and community character

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key terms

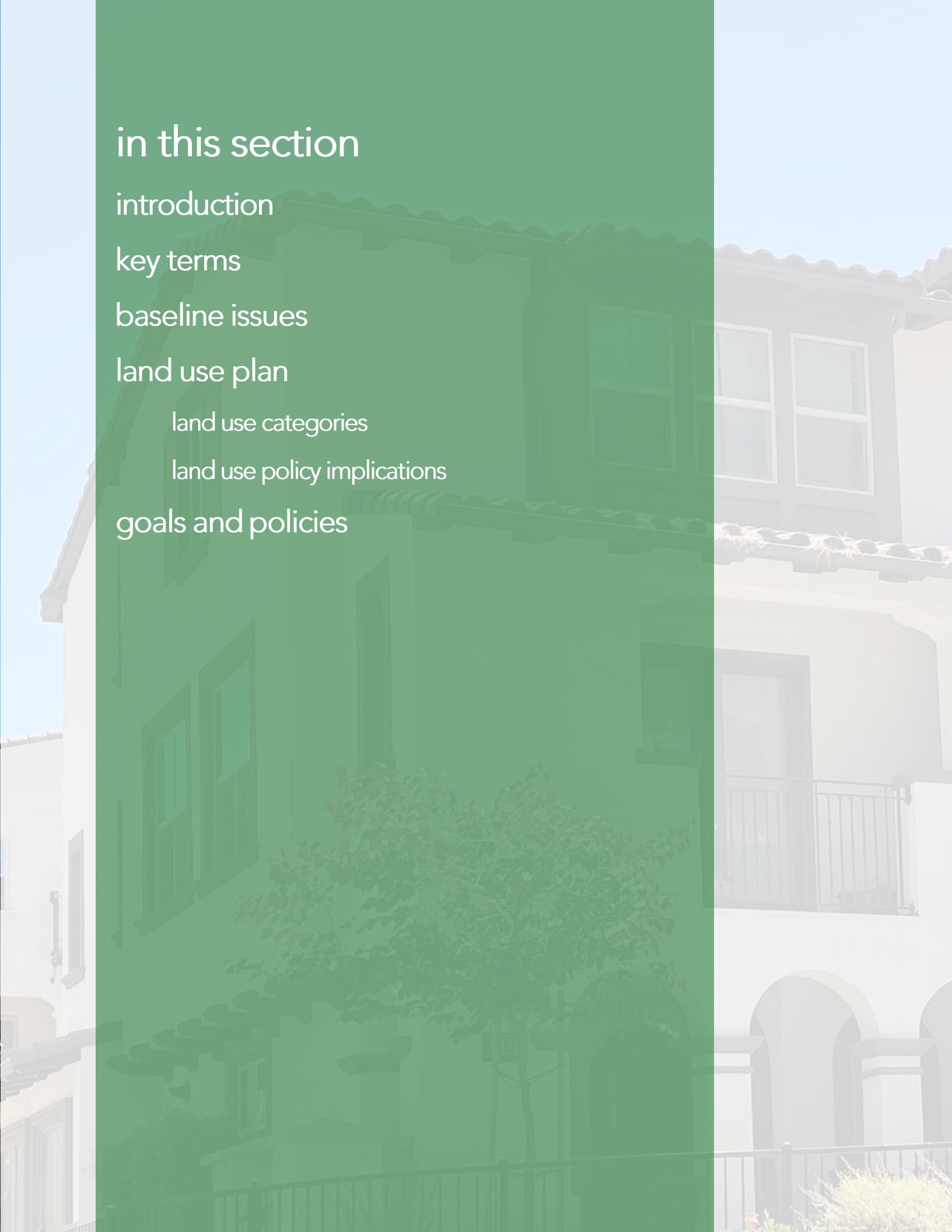
baseline issues

land use plan

 land use categories

 land use policy implications

goals and policies



introduction

The land use types and distribution in Whittier affect the quality of life, health, and local experiences of residents, people who work here, and visitors to our city. By carefully shaping the interrelationship of uses and urban form—and the networks that connect the two—we can create distinct places, great streets, and complete neighborhoods. Together, these building blocks of a well-defined city can promote community pride, connect neighborhoods and districts, and support successful enterprises critical to a strong local economy.

This Land Use and Community Character Element directs Whittier's long-term growth and physical development through the year 2040 by designating the future use of land within the corporate City limits and Whittier's designated Sphere of Influence. The element identifies the planned locations, types, and intensity of housing, businesses, industries, open spaces, public buildings, and institutions. Policies intertwine land use and urban form by establishing building heights and orientation, design of the public realm (the space between buildings, including streets), and the public realm relationship to adjacent buildings.

This element frames all other General Plan elements since the use of land affects:

Complete Neighborhoods

In Whittier, complete neighborhoods offer diverse housing options, intentional urban design, historic character, street trees, parks and open spaces, walkable streets, and convenient access to services.

Great Streets

At their most basic function, streets provide the connections between neighborhoods and destinations. However, streets are more than simply places to drive cars and place public utilities. The physical design of a street impacts how and how often people use it based on comfort, access and mobility, and activity. Streets can promote business activity, provide a front yard for residents, be a distinct place and attraction independent of the nodes it connects, and provide a comfortable route for people using all travel modes—on foot, by bicycle, in a car, or using transit. The vitality of urban life is tied to design approaches that celebrate the multifaceted roles that streets play.

Complete Networks

Building out complete networks for all modes—pedestrians, bicycles, transit, autos, and goods movement—is essential to moving and connecting people throughout Whittier and activating urban streets. See the Mobility and Infrastructure Element.

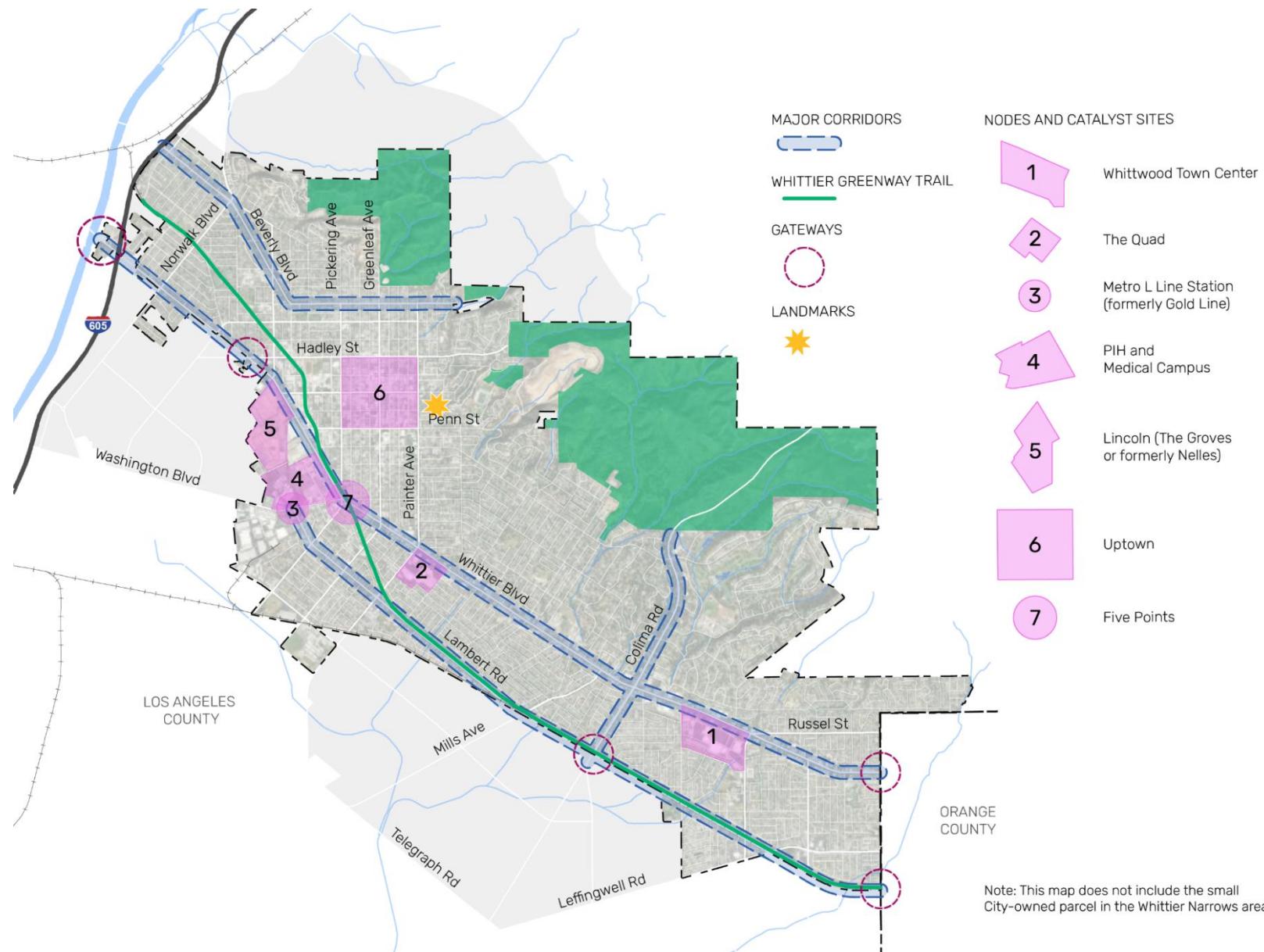
LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

- The design, location, and extent of the circulation system (Mobility and Infrastructure Element)
- Where new housing development occurs (Housing Element)
- The conservation and use of natural resources, including the allocation of parks and open space resources (Resource Management Element)
- Whittier's identity of distinctive architecture and commitment to the preservation and restoration of landmarks, historic homes, and structures (Historic Resources Element)
- Quality of life indicators such as rates of chronic disease, local air quality, natural hazards, and exposure to contaminants (Public Safety, Noise, and Health Element)
- Extent of urban services and utilities (Mobility and Infrastructure Element)

In this element, the definition of each land use category includes not just the land use intent but also the three-dimensional aspects of development required to implement the vision for a district or neighborhood. For example, much of Whittier Boulevard is planned to accommodate mixed-use development at varying densities, dependent upon location along the boulevard. To implement the vision for an integrated, visually and physically connected mix of uses and attractive streetscape, the land use designations indicate the required urban design approaches. More specific implementing strategies—including the details for the community benefits incentives—are to be set forth in the zoning code and applicable specific plans.

Figure LUCC-1 illustrates the urban design framework for Whittier—the major corridors that support new mixed-use developments, focal activity areas and catalyst sites, City landmarks, greenways and parks that tie neighborhoods and districts together, and gateways.

Figure LUCC-1: Corridors, Gateways, and Landmarks



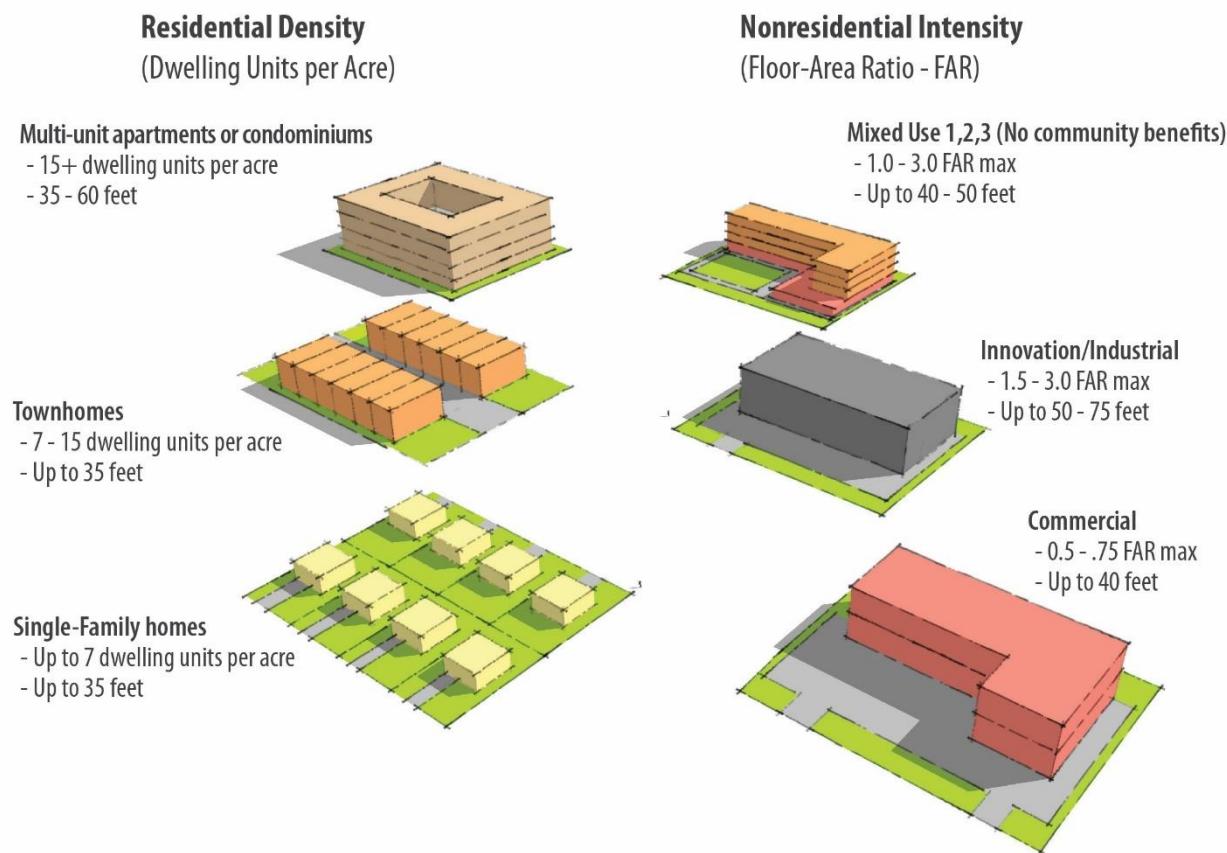
key terms

Building Façade refers to the side of a building that faces the public realm.

Community Benefits refers to an incentive zoning program that allows a developer to achieve higher development densities/intensities in exchange for providing defined community amenities (for example additional open space, affordable housing, publicly oriented plazas, etc.) beyond those otherwise required.

Density and Intensity are quantitative measures used to describe the degree to which land can be used and developed.

Figure LUCC-2: Density and Intensity



Dwelling Units per Acre (du/ac) refers to the maximum number of residences, or dwelling units, allowed per acre of developable land. Density is measured in du/ac and only applies to residential uses. In Whittier, densities are stated in terms of gross acres measured to the centerline of adjacent streets and alleys.

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is a ratio of the gross floor area permitted on a site divided by the total net area of the site (exclusive of streets, alleys, and easements). Intensity is measured in FAR and typically describes nonresidential uses. In Whittier, FAR calculations for residential uses are defined in the zoning regulations.

A **Goal** expresses general direction or vision. It is an ideal future end related to the public health, safety, and general welfare of people living in, working in, and visiting Whittier. A goal is a general expression of community values and may, therefore, be abstract in nature. Thus, a goal is generally not quantifiable or time dependent.

Green Infrastructure means a network of parks, street trees, landscaped areas, open spaces, drainageways, floodplains, and human-made facilities that help manage stormwater and provide vital environmental, economic, and social benefits, such as improved air and water quality, reduced flooding risk, urban heat mitigation, and climate resiliency.

Landmark means a physical element that provides a point of reference or serves as a community identity marker. A landmark can be a structure, space, or natural feature. This differs from a historical landmark, which refers to an officially designated historic structure, landscape, or element.

Land Use Designation describes the type of activity allowed to occur on a parcel of land, which in turn dictates how a parcel and/or building will be occupied.

Natural Features include trees, landscaping, plants, water bodies, topography, and other non-human-made elements.

Planning Area refers to all properties within the City of Whittier corporate limits and within the City's designated Sphere of Influence.

A **Policy** is a specific statement that guides decision-making and is carried out by implementation measures. A policy indicates the City's commitment to a course of action. A policy is based on and helps implement the goals and the larger vision.

A **Program** is the actionable item intended to achieve stated policies and goals.

Social Spaces are places where people gather to interact and engage with each other in either an urban setting or the natural environment. These places can vary in size from a small plaza downtown to a neighborhood park in a more residential setting.

Travel Lanes move people in cars and buses, or people biking.

Urban Design focuses on spatial relationships within the public realm and how the built environment affects social interaction and human behavior.

Defining Physical Space

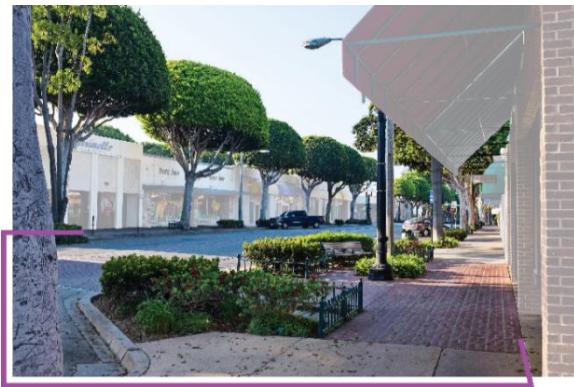
Built Environment (synonymous with Urban Form or Built Form) refers to the configuration of a place's physical components.

The **Public Realm** consists of all things within the public right-of-way between private buildings. This includes travel lanes, sidewalks, squares, paseos, plazas, parks, recreational corridors, and other outdoor places available, without charge, for everyone to use.

An enjoyable pedestrian experience is different for each user and based on many factors. Encouraging Whittier residents to walk as part of their everyday routine can be achieved by providing the physical framework and making that space inviting. Sidewalks must be recognized not only as a pedestrian amenity, but as the foundation of Whittier's transportation network. To encourage people to linger, sidewalks need to be safe, comfortable, and attractive, with facilities that accommodate people of all ages and abilities, as well as wide enough to allow for a variety of activities to occur simultaneously. Transforming sidewalks into public spaces requires intentional design of the following basic components, illustrated to the right:

- **Building Frontage** (or Street Frontage) is the primary defining feature of a street. Vibrant urban thoroughfares are largely defined by the design and architectural details of buildings that make up the street edge and activate the street with windows, entries, and engaging ground floor uses. It is critical that the design of both the streetscape and adjacent buildings mutually reinforce one other.
- **Walkways** enable everyone, including those who use mobility-assist devices, to access destinations. They include sidewalks and street crossings. As all persons will be a

Figure LUCC-3: Components of the Public Realm



PUBLIC REALM
right-of-way



pedestrian amenity zone designated pedestrian walkway building frontage



STREETSCAPE

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

pedestrian at some point, walkways are a fundamental element of the transportation system. They are also critical to creating active, vibrant street level spaces.

- **Pedestrian Amenities** contribute to a high-quality transportation system, including street trees and landscaping, bike racks, furniture (such as benches), fountains, paving material, wayfinding signs, and street lighting.

The **Streetscape** includes every individual component that makes up a street, both public and private. How those components work together define its character.

baseline issues

- **Cost and Shortage of Housing Options.** The high cost of housing—and lack of readily available (easy to develop) land to build new, more affordable housing—concerns many residents. All communities across California, including Whittier, face significant housing challenges: lack of supply, affordability, and a steady decrease in homeownership rates. Housing costs and supply issues particularly affect vulnerable populations that tend to have the lowest incomes and experience additional barriers to housing access.

Whittier is largely built out, with little land to accommodate new housing development. Most housing units in Whitter are single-family residences (65 percent as of 2020) in neighborhoods averaging 4.8 units per acre. Historically, the highest housing densities occurred in Uptown, at approximately 10 units per acre. Although this level of density might be relatively standard for suburban cities, it is low compared to Los Angeles County urban areas.

During the early 2010s, developer interest in properties along Whittier Boulevard, driven largely by demand for any type of new housing, resulted in construction of several projects at densities up to 30 units per acre. While marginal growth in the local housing stock between 2010 and 2020 relieved some pressures, demand remains. Lack of housing supply compounds affordability and homelessness issues. Looking forward, the City recognizes that diverse housing types and higher density residential development will be necessary to meet pent-up demand and ensure affordable housing options for people of all ages, family sizes, and incomes. Diverse housing types encourage diverse populations—a condition that enriches the community. Also, higher-density residential development typically is more affordable than lower-density development and the only path toward significantly contributing to housing affordability.

- **Aging Building Stock and Infrastructure.** Housing age often has a direct correlation to the quality and condition of housing units. Approximately 60 percent of housing units in Whittier were built during or before the 1950s. Housing units 50 years old or older typically require rehabilitation to maintain compliance with building and safety codes. Most of the

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

housing stock in Whittier is over 70 years old and may likely require significant repairs and/or modernization. The intense interest in preserving the historic architectural gems in many Whittier neighborhoods has resulted in significant investments in older homes that have sustained neighborhood quality. However, other concerns include the age and capacity of existing infrastructure (water lines, sewer lines, storm drainage, etc.) to handle additions and new development.

Older non-residential buildings with outdated systems (plumbing, ventilation, etc.) and requiring significant repair are common along commercial corridors. Some buildings have not been improved for quite some time and, therefore, do not encourage the tenants to make improvements. As these buildings age, the properties continue to degrade, thus demanding less rent and attracting marginal commercial uses, which results in reduced sales tax revenue. As with houses, this is not necessarily the case for historic buildings, which property owners have taken great care to improve and maintain. Both above paragraphs may sound harsh, but older buildings are likely to require significant repair to ensure their longevity and to incorporate green building standards that could reduce operational costs.

- **Marginal Growth and Shifts in Composition.** Whittier experienced only moderate population growth between 2010 and 2020, when the City last comprehensively updated its Housing Element, with only 1.7 percent increase in population (or 1,470 people) and 0.4 percent increase in housing units during that decade (or 130 units)¹. Although the population is generally young (45 years old or younger), the population is aging and becoming more diverse. As a result, service demands (recreational, medical, etc.) and housing preferences will evolve and become more important to maintain a high quality of life.
- **Disparities in Disadvantaged Communities.** Several neighborhoods in the City and Sphere of Influence are considered Disadvantaged Communities per the definition established by the State. As discussed in detail in the Public Safety, Noise, and Environmental Health Element, residents living in neighborhoods with elevated exposure to environmental hazards suffer most from a combination of economic, health, and environmental burdens. These burdens include poverty, high unemployment, air and water pollution, presence of hazardous wastes, and high incidence of asthma and heart disease. Land use policies can address some of these conditions.

¹ California Department of Finance, 2010 – 2020.

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

- Poor “Walkability”. Whittier lies nestled against the Puente Hills Preserve to the north and the San Gabriel River to the west. Shaped by these natural features and post-World War II priorities and values linked to the housing boom of the 1950s, development patterns in portions of Whittier lend themselves largely to car travel. Development patterns—the separation of uses, expansive single-family neighborhoods, wide thoroughfares with no sense of enclosure, and lack of street grid in some areas—discourage walking. When people cannot walk easily in their communities, they miss out on making connections with neighbors and opportunities to improve their health.

Of exception is Uptown, the pattern of which was established in the late 1890s/early 1900s, before most people owned automobiles. This neighborhood is extremely walkable. Also, the neighborhoods surrounding the Whittwood Town Center on Whittier Boulevard has a diversity of housing types within easy walking distance to shops and services.

- **Underutilized Public Realm.** Cities are often defined and remembered through the quality of their streets because we structure our experiences and memories of a community by moving along its pathways. Tenets of good street design beyond engineering tell us that:

- Streets are public spaces and should be designed as such.
- Streets are channels for movement and should be designed to ensure that a wide variety of users—people walking, parking, shopping, bicycling, driving, resting, eating, etc.—have their own designated space and can cross paths safely and comfortably regardless of age, ability, or mode.
- Streets are an economic asset as much as a functional element. Well-designed streets generate higher revenues for businesses and higher value for surrounding homeowners.
- Streets should be designed as ecosystems where human-made systems interface with natural systems. From pervious pavements and bioswales that manage stormwater run-off, to street trees that provide shade and are critical to the health of cities, ecology has the potential to act as a driver for long-term, sustainable design.
- **Auto-Oriented Commercial Corridors.** Since the 1940s, Whittier Boulevard (SR-72) and Lambert Road have developed much like a suburban commercial strip, resulting in scattered and unfocused auto-oriented retail and services, convenience and big-box uses, drive-through restaurants, and sporadic office and industrial uses. As the City’s main commercial thoroughfare and primary distributor within the City’s transportation network, Whittier Boulevard presents an opportunity to evolve from a commercial strip to a series of walkable mixed-use and employment districts.

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

While a mix of land uses is encouraged along most of Whittier Boulevard, concentrated activity hubs provide opportunities for clustering similar and compatible uses, supporting economic development and creating brand identity. Designated nodes and catalyst sites include (see Figure LUCC-1):

- (1) Whittwood Town Center
- (2) The Quad
- (3) Metro L Line (formerly Gold Line) station site
- (4) PIH and Medical Campus
- (5) Lincoln (The Groves or formerly Nelles)
- (6) Uptown
- (7) Five Points

As one of the only parallel streets to Whittier Boulevard, and adjacent to the Greenway Trail, Lambert Road has the potential to evolve into a vibrant neighborhood-serving commercial corridor.

Colima Road (County Route – N8) connects Whittier to neighboring communities in both Los Angeles and Orange Counties, with motorists using the road as a by-pass route when freeways are clogged. A unifying streetscape theme would distinguish the route as it traverses Whittier and could encourage increased investment in the commercial nodes.

- **Distribution of Parks and Recreation.** While Whittier has well-used parks, establishing new green space will be difficult given the community's built-out character. Additionally, over 70 percent of Whittier's total park acreage consist of natural parks in the Puente Hills Preserve. A limited number of residents have direct access to trails and open space within the Puente Hills Preserve, and those who do are largely higher-income households. In addition, access is limited by the lack of trailhead parking and designated connections. The Greenway Trail, however, connects many neighborhoods to destinations across the city, and its extension will improve connections and access to green space.
- **Evolving Economy.** Whittier long relied on the economic success of the Whittier Boulevard corridor and to a lesser extent, Uptown, to provide jobs and generate tax revenues. As businesses moved toward increased automation, the nature of retail shifted to on-line sales and the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-21 demonstrated the ease with which many knowledge workers (versus skilled workers) can work from home. Whittier has found the need to increase capacity for businesses that sustain through economic transformations: healthcare, experiential retail, technology, and creative and maker industries at all scales.

land use plan

This Land Use Plan guides the development, maintenance, and improvement of land and properties in Whittier. The Land Use Plan comprises the following components:

- **Land Use Categories** (Table LUCC-2): Establishes the general intent, character, built form, and development regulations for each land use category
- **Land Use Policy Map** (Figures LUCC-4 and LUCC-5): Illustrates the planned distribution of land uses throughout the Planning Area
- **Implications and Buildout** (Table LUCC-3): Summarizes projected population growth and the capacity created for residential and non-residential development through 2040, assuming development at the permitted densities and intensities

Together, these components define how Whittier will achieve its vision.

The land use categories are implemented via the zones in zoning and specific plan regulations. More than one zone may implement a single General Plan land use designation. Zones and specific plan regulations are more detailed than the General Plan land use designations but, in all circumstances, development must be consistent with General Plan policies.

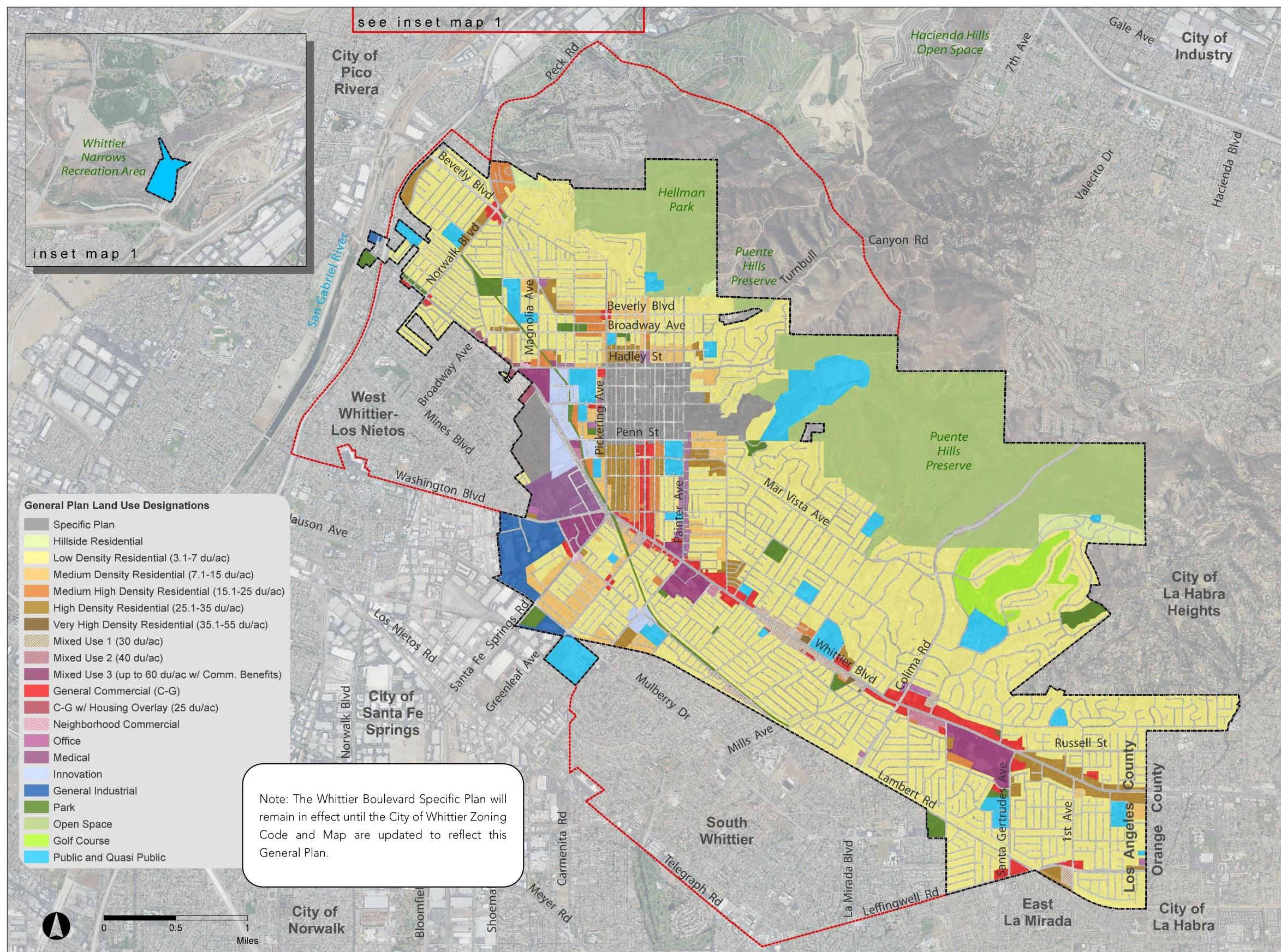
The Land Use Policy Map consists of two maps. Figure LUCC-4 identifies land use policy for properties within the Whitter corporate limits (as they existed in 2020). Figure LUCC-5 indicates policy for properties within the City's Sphere of Influence. The land use designations on Figure LUCC-5 reflect designations from the Los Angeles County General Plan. If at any time a property is proposed for annexation to Whittier, the land use equivalencies shown in Table LUCC-1 will be used to apply City land use designations to the property(ies) being annexed.

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

Table LUCC-1: County/City Land Use Category Equivalencies

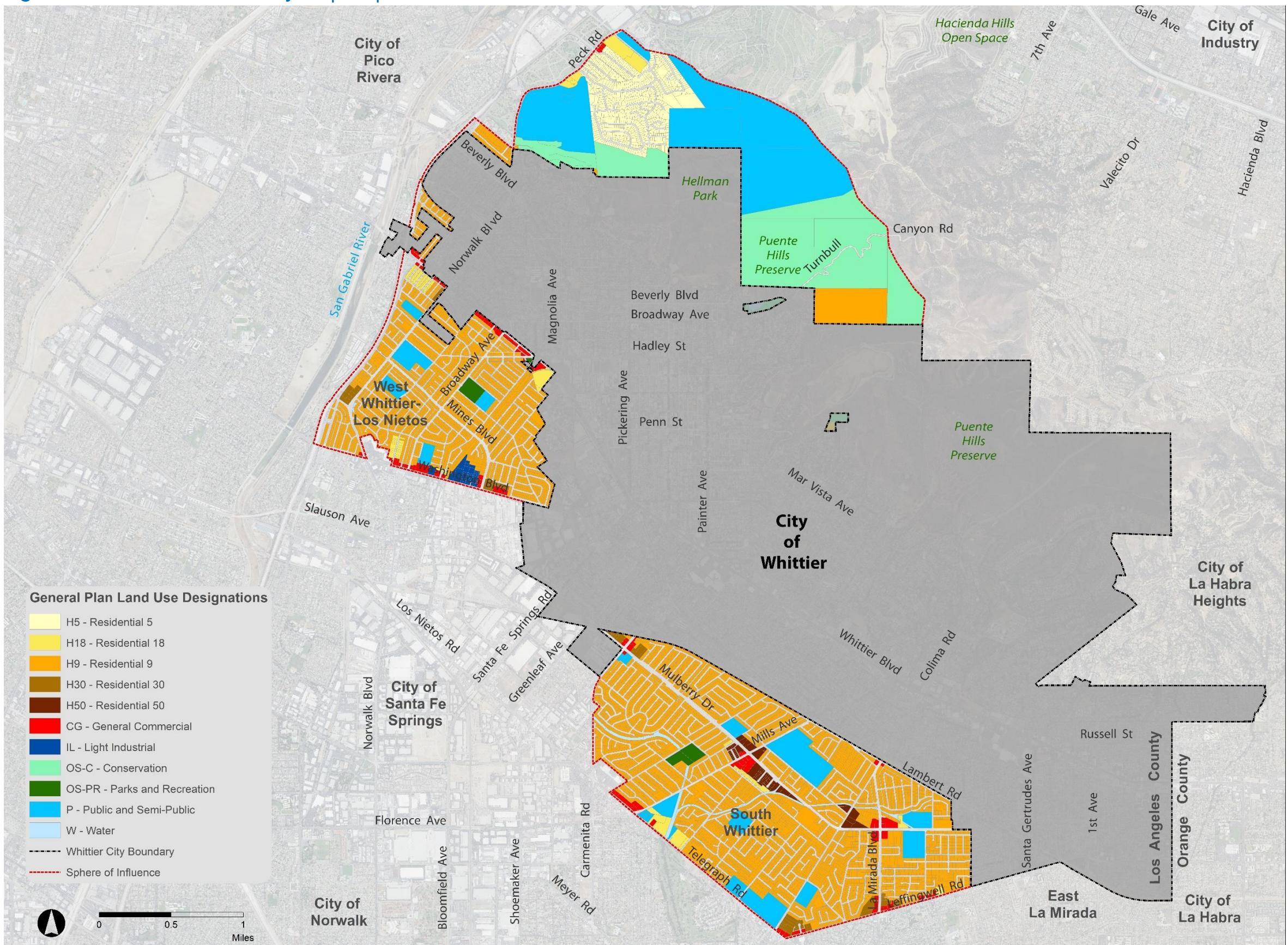
LOS ANGELES COUNTY GENERAL PLAN LAND USE CATEGORY	CORRESPONDING CITY OF WHITTIER GENERAL PLAN LAND USE CATEGORY
Residential 5	Low Density Residential
Residential 9	Medium Density Residential
Residential 18	Medium High Density Residential
Residential 50	Very High Density Residential
General Commercial	General Commercial
Light Industrial	Innovation
Conservation	Open Space
Parks and Recreation	Park
Public and Semi-Public	Public and Quasi-Public
Water	Public and Quasi-Public

Figure LUCC-4: Land Use Policy Map



LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

Figure LUCC-5: Land Use Policy Map – Sphere of Influence



land use categories

These land use categories identify the general purpose of each district, maximum densities and intensities, and guidance for structure height, which is addressed in detail in the Zoning Code. The descriptions also define intended character and built form in text and illustrations.

The descriptions apply to all new development proposals and substantial rehabilitation and alterations of existing land uses and structures, whether these actions are permitted as a matter of right or require discretionary approval by the City.

By defining intent, character, and the expected built form, the City establishes its desired urban design framework and expected design quality. The design quality of new development significantly impacts the overall character of Whittier's neighborhoods and business districts. Well-designed places function well and invite people to interact with the spaces and others using the space. Well-designed buildings are more cost-effective to maintain, provide flexible spaces that can be easily adapted to meet the community's changing needs, and incorporate sustainable materials and practices.

Table LUCC-2: At a Glance: Land Use Categories

LAND USE CATEGORY	DENSITY/INTENSITY	HEIGHT (MAXIMUM)
Hillside Residential	0 - 3 du/ac	30 feet
Low Density Residential	3.1 - 7 du/ac	35 feet
Medium Density Residential	7.1 - 15 du/ac	35 feet
Medium High Density Residential	15.1 - 25 du/ac	35 feet
High Density Residential	25.1 - 35 du/ac	50 feet
Very High Density Residential	35.1 - 55 du/ac	60 feet
Mixed Use 1	20 - 30 du/ac 1.00 FAR	40 feet
Mixed Use 2	25 - 40 du/ac 1.00 FAR	50 feet
Mixed Use 3	25 - 40 du/ac 1.00 FAR	50 feet
Mixed Use 3 - Tier 1	50 du/ac 2.00 FAR	60 feet
Mixed Use 3 - Tier 2	60 du/ac 3.00 FAR	75 feet
Neighborhood Commercial	0.50 FAR	40 feet
General Commercial	0.75 FAR	40 feet
General Commercial with Housing Overlay	25 du/ac 0.75 FAR	40 feet
Office	1.50 FAR	40 feet
Medical	3.00 FAR	125 feet
Innovation	3.00 FAR	75 feet
General Industrial	1.50 FAR	50 feet
Parks and Urban Trails	N/A	N/A
Open Space	N/A	N/A
Golf Course	N/A	35 feet
Public and Quasi Public	0.35 FAR	75 feet
Specific Plan	Per Specific Plan	

Note: Maximum heights may change when granted a Conditional Use Permit, adjacent use is single family residential, or received a density bonus/land use concession for affordable housing units (as permitted by State law).

residential categories

Each residential neighborhood in Whittier is recognizable by its character and personality, unique architecture, varying densities, and street treatments. During the public engagement process for this General Plan, residents expressed the importance of preserving the distinct character of neighborhoods. Residents appreciate Whittier's small-town feel and strong community ties. They embrace the opportunities to connect residential neighborhoods to local hiking trails, the Greenway Trail, shops and restaurants, and local businesses.

Six residential categories accommodate a range of housing types and densities to reflect long-established development patterns and to allow new higher-density housing near commercial activity and transit corridors/hubs.

- Hillside
- Low Density
- Medium Density
- Medium High Density
- High Density
- Very High Density

Within all residential neighborhoods, additionally allowed uses (subject to Zoning Code regulations) include public and private schools, religious institutions, and public facilities/infrastructure.

HILLSIDE RESIDENTIAL			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
0 - 3 du/ac	up to 9 pp/ac	N/A	30 feet

Intent and Character

- Support established development patterns, densities, and scale
- Maintain design character of established neighborhoods: single-unit detached residences on large lots, low-scale buildings, and generous setbacks
- Fire-safe development approaches in wildland/urban interface areas



Whittier residences

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
3.1 - 7 du/ac	up to 21 pp/ac	N/A	35 feet

Intent and Character

- Support established development patterns, densities, and scale
- Maintain design character of established neighborhoods
- Preserve the integrity of historic districts
- Maintain the predominance of single-unit detached residences



Low density residences in Whittier

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
7.1 - 15 du/ac	up to 45 pp/ac	N/A	35 feet

Intent and Character

- Support established development patterns, densities, and scale
- Maintain character of established neighborhoods: single-unit detached and lower-scale multi-unit residential buildings, such as duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, townhomes, and small-lot subdivisions
- Includes a combination of on-site private and common open spaces
- Parking that is well-integrated into building design rather than provided as shared parking facilities



Single-family residences



Medium density multi-family residences illustrative

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

MEDIUM HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
15.1 - 25 du/ac	up to 75/pp/ac	N/A	35 feet

Intent and Character

- Variety of building forms, including units with direct access to a public street and units with common interior access
- Characterized by two- to three-story multi-unit residential buildings, including townhomes, small lot subdivisions, quadplexes, garden apartments, and stacked flats
- Includes a combination on-site private and common open spaces
- Parking that is well-integrated into building design



Medium high density multi-family residences illustrative

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
25.1 - 35 du/ac	up to 105 pp/ac	N/A	50 feet

Intent and Character

- Variety of building forms, including units with direct access to a public street and units with common interior access
- Characterized by two- to three-story multi-unit residential buildings, with four stories acceptable where context appropriate, such as garden apartments and stacked flats
- Includes on-site private and common open spaces
- Parking facilities provided as shared or private facilities, all well integrated into building design



High-density multi-family residences along Greenway Trail in Whittier



High-density multi-family residences illustrative

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

VERY HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
35.1 - 55 du/ac	up to 165 pp/ac	N/A	60 feet

Intent and Character

- Variety of building forms, largely with common interior access but with a clear interaction with the street
- Characterized by multi-unit residential buildings up to five stories based on context and direct access with the street, where possible
- Building heights transition to adjacent lower-density development using such approaches increased setbacks and tiered buildings
- Includes on-site private and common open spaces
- Parking facilities largely provided as shared facilities in structures rather than surface lots, either underground or as a wrapped podium and well-integrated into building design



High density and very high-density multi-family residences illustrative

mixed use categories

Mixed-use development is characterized by pedestrian-oriented environments that integrate residential, commercial, cultural, and institutional uses. Mixed-use development creates vibrant, compact, and walkable environments, with comfortable pedestrian connections between neighborhoods and destinations and interesting, engaging, and place-distinctive urban design features, including public art. Uptown Whittier exemplifies a mixed-use district that has a diversity of housing types and commercial businesses that both cater to everyday needs and attract visitors to Whittier. The availability of large lots along Whittier Boulevard with aging shopping centers lends opportunities to create new smaller-scale mixed-use developments that can complement surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Three mixed-use designations allow for compatible retail, entertainment, office, residential, hotel, civic, cultural, and recreation uses at varying context-sensitive development densities/intensities, ranging from 20 to 60 dwelling units per acre and FARs of 1.00 to 3.00. Regarding use, the intent for each area is similar: provide places to integrate housing with concentrated activity and business hubs in a walkable/bikeable environment.

To promote added amenities within mixed-use districts and developments, a tiered development system—a Community Benefits program—applies to the Mixed Use 3 designation. The Community Benefits program, to be defined in the Zoning Code, provides the City with the capacity and tools to shape how private development contributes to the urban fabric, ensuring that new development creates special places that enhance Whittier. A two-tier system of benefits allows developers to achieve higher densities and intensities when defined public realm and community-serving amenities are provided.

Allowed uses within the Mixed-Use categories include:

- Residential, commercial goods and services, and entertainment/recreation businesses that are compatible with residential use
- Public and private schools
- Religious institutions
- Public facilities/infrastructure

Specifically prohibited are industrial uses, freight and trucking operations, and warehousing/storage.

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

MIXED USE 1			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
20 - 30 du/ac	up to 90 pp/ac	1.00 FAR	40 feet

Intent and Character

- Variety of building forms, with reduced scale adjacent to lower-density neighborhoods
- Stand-alone residential and commercial development types are allowed
- Accommodates small-scale, neighborhood-serving commercial storefronts
- Residential units with direct street access

Built Form

Building Orientation

- Orient buildings toward the primary street corridor to define the public realm and concentrate pedestrian and retail activity by:
 - Creating a clear building frontage and designated pedestrian walkway
 - Framing the primary street corridor
 - Framing and enclosing gathering spaces, plazas, parks, etc. located along the primary street corridor

Building Massing and Treatments

- Create articulation with intentional use of different materials and building form with such treatments as:
 - Variation in colors, materials, and textures
 - Vertical and horizontal projections (for example, columns or banding that help create a rhythm on the façade)
 - Base element/treatment
 - Four-sided architecture, with additional treatments on all street- and alley-facing elevations
 - Private open space (balconies, terraces, etc.)
 - Variation in roof forms and/or window composition
- Prohibit blank facades along major corridors
- Require upper-level stepbacks to transition scale and intensity between land uses

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

- Pedestrian Circulation and Amenities
 - Create a clear and distinct pedestrian corridor by defining minimum pedestrian walkway and amenity zone widths
 - Help distinguish zones with different use of pavement materials
- Consider traffic-calming measures and roadway design element approaches, such as:
 - Minimize curb cuts
 - Slow traffic at intersections with tight curb radii, curb extensions, raised intersections/crosswalks, and signage
- Maximize sightlines, activity, and access points along major corridors by creating pedestrian pass-throughs between properties and mid-block crossings, and reduced crossing distances at intersections
- Provide landscaped buffers to separate pedestrians from the flow of traffic, pollution, and noise
- Encourage consistent pedestrian amenities along Whittier Boulevard and Lambert Avenue (size, shape, colors, materials, etc.) to establish a streetscape continuity and identity
- Provide coordinated pedestrian amenities pursuant to master design plans: lighting, seating options, trash and recycling receptacles, information kiosks, planters, bike racks, etc.
- Connections to the Greenway Trail for properties abutting the Trail

Parking and Buffers

- Use of alleyways for access to parking areas wherever possible
- Public parking structures and facilities, where provided, that are easily accessible and attractively designed
- Surface parking located along the side or at the rear of buildings to minimize visibility from public roadways
- Use of buffers (walls, fences, and landscaping) to separate pedestrians from any surface parking lot(s) along the streetscape
- Buffers designed to maintain building and site visibility
- Fences and walls consistent with style, materials, and design of buildings on the site

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

MIXED USE 2			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
25 - 40 du/ac	up to 120 pp/ac	1.00 FAR	50 feet

Intent and Character

- Variety of building forms, with reduced scale adjacent to lower-density neighborhoods
- Stand-alone residential and commercial development types are allowed
- Accommodates small-scale, neighborhood-serving commercial storefronts and regional-serving centers
- Accommodates diverse housing types that provide opportunities for home ownership and that appeal to a spectrum of household sizes and incomes
- Encourages new retail activity, complementing well-established commercial districts and surrounding residential neighborhoods

Built Form

Building Orientation

- Orient buildings toward the primary street corridor to define the public realm and concentrate pedestrian and retail activity by:
 - Creating obvious building frontages and designated pedestrian walkways
 - Framing the primary street corridor
 - Framing public spaces, plazas, parks, etc. along the primary street corridor
- Align, arrange, and group buildings along major corridors toward the street so that their primary orientation creates a well-defined building frontage



Building orientation to define pedestrian walkways illustrative

Building Massing

- Create articulation with intentional use of different materials and building form with such treatments as:
 - Variation in colors, materials, and textures
 - Vertical and horizontal projections (for example, columns or banding that create textures and variation on the façade)
 - Private open space (balconies, terraces, etc.)
 - Variation in roof forms and/or window composition
- Prohibit blank facades on all elevations

Require upper level stepbacks or increased setbacks to transition scale and intensity between land uses

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

Pedestrian Circulation and Amenities

- Wide sidewalks along Whittier Boulevard with pedestrian amenities and protection zones (from traffic flow)
- Well-defined on-site pedestrian corridors distinguished by use of different pavement materials
- Consider traffic calming measures and roadway design element approaches, such as:
 - Minimize curb cuts
 - Slow traffic at intersections with tight curb radii, curb extensions, raised intersections/crosswalks, and signage
- Maximize sightlines, activity, and access points along major corridors by creating pedestrian pass-throughs between properties, mid-block crossings, and reduced crossing distances at intersections
- Consider landscaped buffers to separate pedestrians from the flow of traffic, pollution, and noise
- Provide coordinated pedestrian amenities pursuant to master design plans: lighting, seating options, trash and recycling receptacles, information kiosks, planters, bike racks, etc.
- Pedestrian amenities to consider include lighting, seating options, trash and recycling receptacles, information kiosks, planters, bike racks, etc.
- Connections to the Greenway Trail for properties abutting the Trail



Concept for buildings with roof variations and balconies illustrative

Parking and Buffers

- Use of alleyways for access to parking areas wherever possible
- Parking structures and facilities that are easily accessible and attractively designed
- Surface parking located along the side or at the rear of buildings to minimize visibility from public roadways
- Use of buffers (walls, fences, and landscaping) to separate pedestrians from any surface parking lot(s) along the streetscape
- Buffers designed to maintain building and site visibility
- Fences and walls consistent with style, materials, and design of buildings on the site

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

MIXED USE 3			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
25 - 40 du/ac	up to 120 pp/ac	1.00 FAR	50 feet
TIER 1 - DENSITY BONUS WITH COMMUNITY BENEFITS			
50 du/ac	up to 150 pp/ac	2.00 FAR	60 feet
TIER 2 - DENSITY BONUS WITH COMMUNITY BENEFITS			
60 du/ac	up to 180 pp/ac	3.00 FAR	75 feet

Proposed Community Benefits Program Framework

The Mixed Use 3 category allows for increased densities through a community benefits incentive system. Tier 1 and 2 densities may only be achieved with provision of community benefits in accordance with the program outlined in the Zoning Code. Any density and intensity bonuses associated with the provision of community benefits are supplementary to density bonus provisions established by State law.

Development must provide a measurable and/or clearly identifiable community benefit in the form of affordable housing, jobs generation, parkland or open space, and/or other criteria established in the Zoning Code. Community benefits are not tied to income restrictions or senior housing. Examples include:

- Publicly accessible plazas, paseos, seating areas, playgrounds, parks, etc. along Whittier Boulevard, Lambert Road, Washington Boulevard, and Greenleaf Avenue, particularly near larger residential and mixed-use developments and in underutilized parking areas within commercial centers
- New connections to the Greenway Trail
- Inclusion of arts and local culture, such as sculpture gardens, local art installations, and outdoor amphitheaters
- Lot consolidation
- Innovative use of shared parking, including parking structures
- Sustainable, energy-efficient buildings beyond standard CALGreen requirements
- Shuttle/transit hub, including shuttle stops and designated areas for people to gather (bike parking, seating options, trash receptacles, shade, etc.). Potential stops for the shuttle, once established, are the Metro Line L station, PIH, Whittwood Town Center, The Quad, Lincoln (Nelles), and trailheads

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

Intent and Character

- Variety of building forms, with context-sensitive heights and site planning adjacent to lower-scale residential uses
- Stand-alone residential and commercial development approaches allowed on smaller-acreage development sites, with integrated uses required on larger sites, as defined in the Zoning Code
- Regional high-activity nodes with an expansive draw, attracting Whittier residents and people all over the region
- Employment hubs
- Major transit stops within a larger connected multimodal network
- Opportunity for highest density and intensity of mixed uses citywide, in support of and adjacent to the Metro Line L station and PIH Health Campus
- Redevelopment and reorientation of aging shopping centers (Whittwood Town Center and The Quad) toward Whittier Boulevard



Concept for ground-level façade treatments and landscaping illustrative

- Small civic and urban recreation spaces within walking distance from residential uses and employment centers

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

- Clear and distinct street edge with active ground floor uses, limited setbacks, and engaging facades (windows, entries, consistent signage and building materials that create visual continuity, etc.). See Built Form for additional design considerations.
- Defined transition areas between established lower-density residential neighborhoods adjacent to Mixed Use 3, with design approaches that soften the change in scale and intensity, such as ground-level façade treatments, upper-level setbacks, and landscaped buffers to address privacy, noise, and other concerns.

Built Form

Building Orientation

- Orient building frontages toward Whittier Boulevard, Washington Boulevard, Painter Avenue, and Lambert Road (other than adjacent to the Greenway Trail) to define the public realm and concentrate pedestrian and retail activity by:
 - Creating well-defined building frontages and designated pedestrian walkways
 - Framing the building's relationship to Whittier Boulevard and other major frontage streets
- Framing and where appropriate, enclosing public spaces, plazas, parks, etc. oriented toward Whittier Boulevard and other major frontage streets

Building Massing

- Create articulation with intentional use of different materials and building form, such as:
 - Variation in colors, materials, and textures
 - Vertical and horizontal projections (e.g., columns or banding that help create a rhythm on the façade)
 - Private open space (balconies, terraces, etc.)
 - Variation in roof forms and/or window composition
- Four-sided architectural treatments

Pedestrian Circulation and Amenities

- Wide sidewalks with pedestrian amenities and protection zones (from traffic flow on major corridors)
- Well-defined on-site pedestrian corridors distinguished by use of different pavement materials
- Consider traffic calming measures and roadway design elements, such as:

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

- Minimize curb cuts
- Slow traffic at intersections with tight curb radii, curb extensions, raised intersections/crosswalks, and signage
- Maximize sightlines, activity, and access points along Whittier Boulevard by creating pedestrian pass-throughs between properties, mid-block crossings, and reducing crossing distances at intersections
- Use landscaped buffers to separate pedestrians from the flow of traffic, pollution, and noise
- Provide coordinated pedestrian amenities pursuant to master design plans: lighting, seating options, trash and recycling receptacles, information kiosks, planters, bike racks, etc.
- Pedestrian amenities to consider include lighting, seating options, trash and recycling receptacles, information kiosks, planters, bike racks, etc.
- Connections to the Greenway Trail for properties abutting the Trail

Parking and Buffers

- Use of alleyways for access to parking areas wherever possible
- Parking structures and facilities that are easily accessible and attractively designed
- Locate surface parking along the side or at the rear of buildings
- Buffers (walls, fences, and landscaping) should be used to separate pedestrians from surface parking lot(s) that line the streetscape
- Buffers should be designed to maintain building and site visibility. Fences, walls, etc. should be consistent with style, materials, and design of buildings

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

commercial and industrial categories

Whittier's commercial and industrial districts provide places for businesses of all varieties to thrive and opportunities for people to work in diverse professions. The City looks to attract and retain businesses that contribute substantially to the local tax base, offer jobs for people of all skills and education levels, and provide complementary goods and services. The City recognizes that industries constantly change, particularly due to advances in automation, changing shopping habits, and work-at-home options. Thus, flexible land use regulations are critical to allow commercial and industrial spaces to be adapted over time. While economic development and diversity are key City goals, the City will also focus on ensuring compatibility of commercial/industrial uses and districts with adjacent residential neighborhoods.

The commercial and industrial land use categories may be implemented by a series of zones, allowing for lower-intensity and lower-scale commercial uses to be integrated within neighborhoods and more intense uses to be focused along Whittier Boulevard and the southern portions of Colima Road.

In all categories, government facilities, utility operations, schools, and similar complementary uses are permitted where considered appropriate per zoning regulations.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
N/A	N/A	0.50 FAR	40 feet

Note: Maximum height exceptions can occur with a Conditional Use Permit or located near single family residential.

Intent, Character, and Built Form

- Allowed uses focused on low-impact businesses with operating characteristics compatible with adjacent residential uses, with an emphasis on local-serving uses.
- Prohibited vehicle repair and servicing, public storage facilities, and any business with late-night hours of operation.
- Lower-scale commercial buildings on small lots.

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

- Site and building design that emphasize quality and timelessness
- Access and circulation that prioritize the needs of pedestrians and cyclists over cars
- Landscaping used to soften buildings and pavement treatments
- Surface parking located along the side or at the rear of buildings



Softening landscape and building designs in Whittier



Pedestrian-oriented building designs in Whittier

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

GENERAL COMMERCIAL			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
N/A	N/A	0.75 FAR	40 feet

Note: Maximum height exceptions may occur with a Conditional Use Permit or located near single family residential.

Intent, Character, and Built Form

- Allowed commercial uses include a full range of retail, service, office, entertainment, and automotive-related uses, but specifically exclude heavy-duty vehicle repair and warehousing/storage uses (inclusive of personal storage businesses)
- Commercial development scaled to reflect surrounding sites and buildings
- Businesses with operating characteristics compatible with adjacent residential uses
- Site and building design that emphasize quality and timelessness
- For sites on major travel corridors, access and circulation that accommodate cars while safely integrating the needs of pedestrians and cyclists
- Use of landscaping to soften buildings and pavement treatments
- Cohesively designed shopping centers, with buildings that relate well to each other and to on-site signage and landscaping
- Use of architectural design approaches that clearly distinguish the base, middle, and upper stories of higher-rise buildings, and that promote unique, memorable design



Classic design components for commercial areas



Adaptive reuse

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

- Minimized presence and public view of parking lots and structures, with surface parking located along the side or at the rear of buildings
- Use of alleyways for access to parking areas wherever possible

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

GENERAL COMMERCIAL WITH HOUSING OVERLAY			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
25 du/ac	up to 75 pp/ac	0.75 FAR	40 feet

Note: Maximum height exceptions may occur with a Conditional Use Permit or located near single family residential.

Intent, Character, and Built Form

- Allowed commercial uses include a full range of retail, service, office, entertainment, and automotive-related uses with operating characteristics compatible with residential uses, but specifically exclude heavy-duty vehicle repair and warehousing/storage uses (inclusive of personal storage businesses)
- Residential uses that accommodate diverse housing types sufficiently buffered from intense commercial businesses
- Commercial and residential development scaled to reflect surrounding sites and buildings
- Site and building design that emphasize quality and timelessness
- For sites on major travel corridors, access and circulation that accommodate cars while safely integrating the needs of pedestrians and cyclists
- Use of architectural design approaches that clearly distinguish the base, middle, and upper stories of higher-rise buildings, and that promote unique, memorable design



Building design with soft landscaping in Whittier



Building design methods to define walkways illustrative

- Use of landscaping to soften buildings and pavement treatments
- Cohesively designed shopping centers, with buildings that relate well to each other and to onsite signage and landscaping

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

- Well-marked and safe pedestrian travel paths from parking lots to the main building entrance(s)
- Use of alleyways for access to parking areas wherever possible
- Surface parking located along the side or at the rear of buildings



Landscape designs to emphasize building and pedestrian corridors illustrative

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

OFFICE			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
N/A	N/A	1.50 FAR	40 feet

Intent, Character, and Built Form

- Allowed uses are primarily offices for all types of businesses—professional, medical/dental, service—characterized generally by low-intensity use throughout the day
- Mid-rise structures, with new construction to include architectural detailing to distinguish the base floor from upper stories
- Use of architectural design approaches that clearly distinguish the base, middle, and upper stories of higher-rise buildings, and that promote unique, memorable design
- Building entrances generally limited to main entrance(s) from a street or parking lot, with doors to individual businesses on the interior
- Landscaping and signage coordinated with building architecture
- Use of landscaping to soften buildings and pavement treatments
- Use of alleyways for access to parking areas wherever possible
- Well-marked and safe pedestrian travel paths from parking lots to the main building entrance(s)
- Minimized presence and public view of parking lots and structures, with landscaping and architectural treatments used to help disguise parking structures and surface parking located along the side or at the rear of buildings



Commercial building spaces with entrances from street and parking lots

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

MEDICAL			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
N/A	N/A	3.00 FAR	125 feet

Intent and Character

- Intended to accommodate master-planned medical facility complexes such as hospitals and nearby complementary medical office and medical research uses
- Developments within a district of a similar use/nature allow for easy pedestrian access from one site to another
- Use of distinctive landscaping to highlight buildings
- Use of architectural design approaches that clearly distinguish the base, middle, and upper stories of higher-rise buildings, and that promote unique, memorable design
- Minimized presence and public view of parking lots and structures, with landscaping and architectural treatments used to help disguise parking structures and surface parking located along the side or at the rear of buildings



Design concept for medical facilities with a defined pedestrian corridor and landscaping

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

INNOVATION			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
N/A	N/A	3.00 FAR	75 feet

Intent, Character, and Built Form

- Intended to accommodate creative design and manufacturing businesses focused on new technologies, maker industries, research and development, and craft businesses such as breweries/wineries/distilleries, and specifically excluding heavy-duty vehicle repair and warehousing/storage uses (inclusive of personal storage businesses)
- Adaptive reuse of historic and industrial buildings, with new construction echoing the scale and design aesthetic of long-established character buildings
- Reduced parking requirements when within a 15-minute walk of a light rail station
- Use of alleyways for access to parking areas wherever possible
- Use of architectural design approaches that clearly distinguish the base, middle, and upper stories of higher-rise buildings, and that promote unique, memorable design
- Use of landscaping to accent buildings



Building with intricate use of materials to create an interesting design aesthetic illustrative

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

GENERAL INDUSTRIAL			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
N/A	N/A	1.50 FAR	50 feet

Intent and Character

- Allowed industrial uses are best characterized as light manufacturing and assembly businesses, and vehicle servicing and repair, as well as supportive commercial service uses and indoor recreation facilities. Trucking, freight uses, and warehousing/storage uses (inclusive of personal storage businesses) allowed on a very limited basis.
- May be developed as stand-alone buildings or master-planned business parks
- Buildings display design character through at least two complementary exterior finishing treatments
- Use of architectural design approaches that clearly distinguish the base, middle, and upper stories of higher-rise buildings, and that promote unique, memorable design
- Use of landscaping to accent buildings



Industrial building space

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

open space and public facilities designations

Whittier's open spaces include parks, recreation facilities, urban trails, golf courses, and natural habitats. Public facilities comprise government, civic, cultural, public school, and infrastructure uses that support community needs.

PARKS AND URBAN TRAILS			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Intent and Character

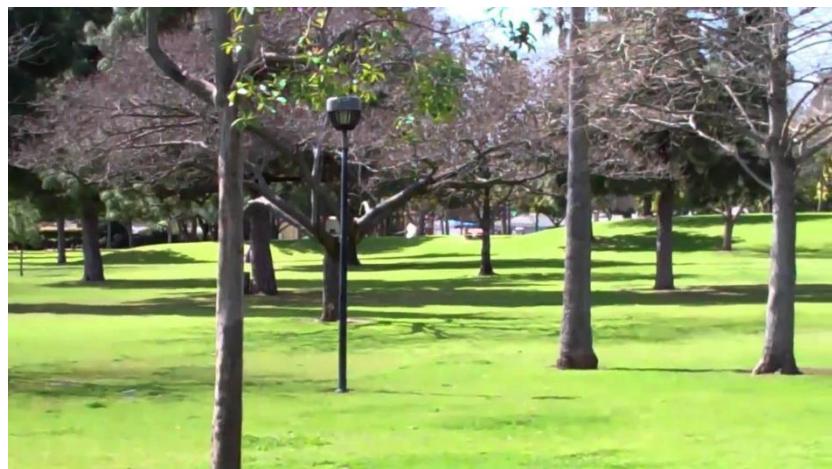
- Designates areas for active recreation use by all members of the public
- Improved open space with or without recreation fields and courts, play spaces, community buildings, public swimming pools, and trail amenities



Michigan Park



Wildlife habitats and green spaces at Turnbull Canyon



Open spaces to promote recreational activities

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

OPEN SPACE			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Intent and Character

- Generally, unimproved open space areas are established for purposes of preservation of natural resources, managed production of resources, outdoor recreation, health and safety, and scenic landscape protection
- Development limited generally to trails, trailheads, and related support buildings, as well as utilities and telecommunications infrastructure



Golf course illustrative

GOLF COURSE			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
N/A	N/A	N/A	35 feet

Intent and Character

- Golf courses and associated buildings and other improvements such as clubhouses, sports courts, and swimming pools
- Low-scale buildings that are compatible with surrounding residential neighborhoods

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

PUBLIC AND QUASI PUBLIC			
Density	Population Density	Intensity	Height (Maximum)
N/A	N/A	0.35 FAR	75 feet

Intent and Character

- Applies to land uses operated and maintained for public administration and welfare
- Accommodates government, trails, civic, cultural, schools, public library, post offices, public utility, public parking, religious institution, and infrastructure uses that support community needs
- Development scale that is compatible with surrounding neighborhood and districts



Whittier City Hall



A public water utility company in Whittier

land use policy implications

Over time, as properties recycle to new development and uses, the distribution of uses within the community will change. Application of the Land Use Plan will facilitate the evolution toward the mix of uses Whittier envisions. Table LUCC-3 summarizes the capacity created for development through 2040. If Whittier is developed in accordance with this Land Use and Community Character Element at the densities and intensities permitted, the Planning Area is anticipated to have approximately 53,649 dwelling units, 161,291 residents, approximately 13.1 million square feet of nonresidential use, and 35,160 jobs.

Table LUCC-3: Land Use Plan Buildout, 2040 Projections

	Residential		Non-Residential	
	Units	Population	Square Feet	Jobs
City of Whittier	36,487	106,014	9,509,576	26,525
Sphere of Influence	17,162	55,278	3,584,793	8,635
Planning Area (Whittier + SOI)	53,649	161,291	13,094,369	35,160

Source: City of Whittier Land Use and Community Character Element GIS data; California Department of Finance, 2020; Southern California Association of Governments, 2018 and 2019.

Note: 1) Nonresidential buildings include commercial, office, industrial, hotels/motels, and public facility buildings.

goals and policies

Goal 1: A city of complete neighborhoods

- LUCC-1.1: Retain the unique characters of long-established residential neighborhoods.
- LUCC-1.2: Maintain the quality and character of established housing stock and historic residential neighborhoods.
- LUCC-1.3: Accommodate population growth and projected demographic shifts with a range of housing options.
- LUCC-1.4: Require new and infill development be sensitive to neighborhood context, building form, and scale.
- LUCC-1.5: Ensure all residential streets provide a safe, comfortable, and enjoyable pedestrian experience, with design elements to include street trees and sidewalks.
- LUCC-1.6: Identify transition areas between lower-density land uses adjacent to higher-intensity development to ensure new and infill development transitions well to established uses.
- LUCC-1.7: Provide City programs that encourage neighborhood beautification and residents' efforts to participate and take pride in their neighborhoods.



Goal 2: A network of great streets and public spaces that encourage social and economic activity

- LUCC-2.1: Activate and improve the pedestrian experience along Whittier Boulevard and Lambert Road (see Figure LUCC-1) by applying the following:
 - Separate potentially conflicting uses (vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, etc.).
 - Prioritize pedestrian facilities and amenities.
 - Implement designated land uses (scale, density/intensity, intent, character, and built form).
- LUCC-2.2: Establish a continuity of streetscapes along Whittier Boulevard and Lambert Road that define the public realm, are scaled to the pedestrian experience, and reflect the City's cultural identity through public art, street furniture, landscaping, architectural character, materials, etc.
- LUCC-2.3: Concentrate mixed-use development at designated nodes and catalyst sites (see Figure LUCC-1) along Whittier Boulevard and Lambert Road to provide opportunities for clustering similar and compatible uses, support economic

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

development, and create and maintain vibrant pedestrian-oriented spaces and experiences.

- LUCC-2.4: Develop objective design standards and guidelines for each land use designation within the Whittier Municipal Code, ensuring the integration of the intent, character, and built form considerations outlined in this General Plan.

Goal 3: Distinctive and successful mixed-use and transit-oriented districts

- LUCC-3.1: Continue to encourage private and public investment in Uptown, with public improvements that support pedestrian activity, park-once strategies, and the enjoyment of being outdoors. Ensure land use policies for Uptown allow for a diversity of businesses and residential densities that meet housing needs for people in all life stages.
- LUCC-3.2: Support the reinvention of aging commercial properties as mixed-use developments and districts that integrate housing, retail, dining, entertainment, and office in both vertical and horizontal configurations, and that provide connections among all uses within the developments/districts.
- LUCC-3.3: Promote development surrounding the Metro L Line station that provides transit-supportive housing types/densities and businesses that contribute to a lively living environment.
- LUCC-3.4: Encourage the growth of medical-related and health care businesses surrounding the PIH Health Hospital – Whittier to create a regional center for medical care, research, and technology businesses.
- LUCC-3.5: Prepare a Whittier College Master Plan to provide for the college to integrate well into the surrounding neighborhood and serve as a continuing asset to the greater Uptown area and Whittier as a whole.

Goal 4: A dynamic mix of businesses, uses, and employment that sustains a strong local economy, with design qualities that contribute to their success



- LUCC-4.1: Advocate for and support local and small businesses and business owners.
- LUCC-4.2: Provide a balance of business opportunities and housing choices that make it easy for persons of all income ranges to live and work in Whittier.
- LUCC -4.3: Facilitate the growth of a diverse business sector resilient to change over time and compatible with a broad range of skills and workers.
- LUCC-4.4: Create concentrated employment centers along major corridors to provide opportunities for innovation, investment, and growth.

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

- LUCC-4.5: Require new and renovated employment center developments along Whittier Boulevard, Colima Road, and Lambert Road to:
 - Incorporate accessory uses such as public open space and/or trails, transit amenities, childcare facilities, and supportive retail uses based on the size and location of development.
 - Include design features to accommodate safe and convenient walking, biking, and transit use, including:
 - interconnected system of streets and walkable blocks with ample space for walking, a landscaped buffer protecting pedestrians from street activity, and street furniture and amenities
 - innovative parking solutions that reduce surface parking lots, relocate parking away from the street edge, and encourage parking structures and shared parking programs
 - buildings with primary entrances facing public streets and/or sited around public plazas, courtyards, walkways, the Greenway Trail, parks, open spaces, etc.
 - extensive on-site landscaping
 - coordinated and well-designed wayfinding signage
 - pedestrian-scaled lighting to promote activity
- LUCC-4.6: Sustain Whittier as a center for goods and people movement by protecting land designated as Industrial and concentrate all scales of industrial activity within these areas.
- LUCC-4.7: Improve and maintain the visual and aesthetic qualities of commercial and industrial districts through the control of design, signs, parking, landscaping, architecture, and property maintenance.
- LUCC-4.8: Require high-quality design in commercial and industrial development.

Goal 5: Urban recreation and open spaces and experiences that contribute to complete neighborhoods for all residents

-  ▪ LUCC-5.1: Encourage active living, physical activity, health, and wellness by creating and maintaining a green network that provides equitable access to recreational facilities, parks, trails, greenways, open spaces, gardens, etc.
-  ▪ LUCC-5.2: Encourage new uses along Lambert Road to orient or otherwise provide direct public access to the Greenway Trail to activate the corridor, provide a link

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

between Lambert Road and Whittier Boulevard, and promote walking, biking, and alternative modes of travel citywide.

Goal 6: An inclusive and equitable community

- LUCC-6.1: Develop a variety of housing types for low-income groups, seniors, and other special needs populations.
- LUCC-6.2: Facilitate safe, convenient, and affordable access to basic services and community-based amenities.
- LUCC-6.3: Engage residents, property owners, business owners, and organizations in planning processes.
- LUCC-6.4: Ensure residents are engaged in languages that allow for their full participation in community events and engagement activities.
- LUCC-6.5: Ensure safe and sanitary housing conditions, redevelopment of vacant and underutilized infill areas, and land use decisions that prioritize health equity, well-being, and economic vitality.
- LUCC-6.6: Consider proximity to environmental health risks when planning for residential uses and address potential health risks at sites previously occupied by nonresidential land uses.
- LUCC-6.7: In areas identified as Disadvantaged Communities (see Figure LUCC-6), emphasize walkable and compact development patterns to reduce total vehicle miles traveled, improve air quality, and encourage physical activity.

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

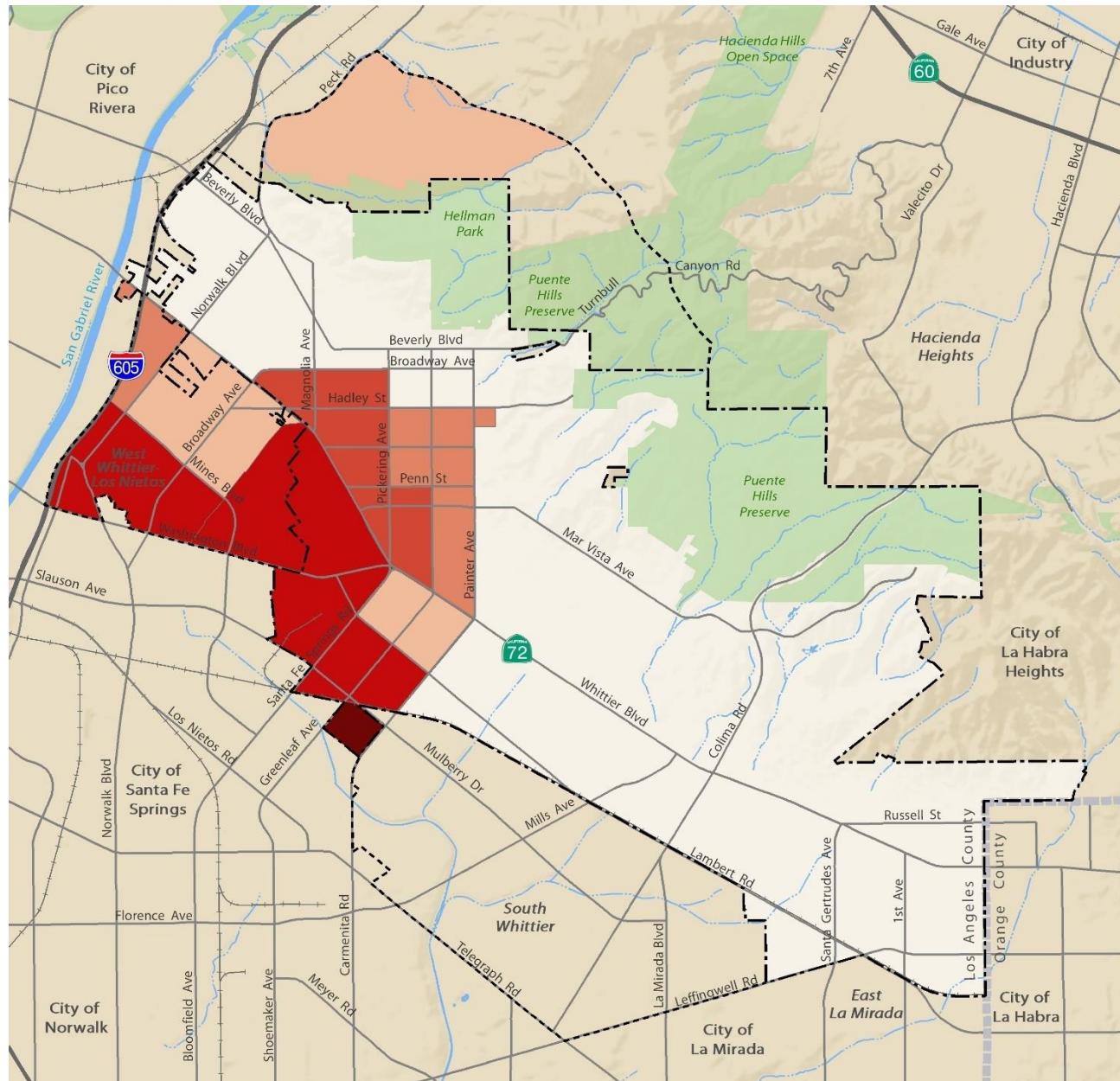
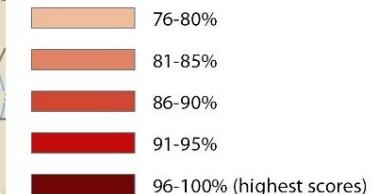


Figure LUCC-6:
Disadvantaged Communities

Disadvantaged Communities

CalEnviroScreen 3.0 Results



CalEnviroScreen 3.0 uses statewide indicators to characterize both pollution burden and population characteristics. A formula is used to produce a CalEnviroScreen scoring system in which percentiles are averaged for a set of indicators under four components: exposures, environmental effects, sensitive populations, and socioeconomic factors. This map identifies the CalEnviroScreen scoring results.

Base Map Features

- Whittier City Boundary
- Whittier Sphere of Influence
- County Boundary
- Major Streets
- Freeways
- Railroads
- River and Creeks
- Waterbodies
- Open Space/Natural Areas

Source: City of Whittier, CalEPA, and Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, 2017.

Prepared by MIG, July 2017.



Note: Due to exhibit scale, the Whittier Narrows parcel is not shown on this exhibit.



mobility and infrastructure

in this section

mobility

mobility introduction

baseline considerations

key terms

goals and policies

infrastructure

infrastructure introduction

baseline considerations

key terms

goals and policies

mobility introduction

Moving around, to, and through Whittier is facilitated by many modes of transport: car, bus, bike, electric bike/scooter, and our own two feet. Whittier residents and businesses also have ready access to airports in Burbank, Ontario, Santa Ana, and Los Angeles. Coordinated transportation planning has created a relatively efficient system of freeways, roads, sidewalks, and trails, that give residents and the business community many mobility choices, including choices for recreation. Even so, the private automobile continues to dominate as the mode of choice; local, regional, and national agencies traditionally have focused both planning efforts and spending on freeway and roadway improvements. This auto- and truck-centric model has contributed to congestion, pollution, and elevated CO₂ levels, leading to increasing concerns regarding health and the environment. As such, Whittier's model for mobility in the 21st century deviates from traditional transportation planning. We shift circulation and associated land use planning toward options that will improve environmental quality, encourage healthier lifestyles, support economic development, and provide options for safe alternative modes of transportation.

We recognize the freedom of movement cars provides – and the fact that people often use cars as expressions of status and personality. This freedom of travel will continue to influence circulation infrastructure investment choices, resulting in significant funds that will be spent over the next 20 to 30 years on roads and freeways. The City supports investment to remedy traffic congestion spots. However, in Whittier such spending will be balanced with commitments to improve access to bus, local shuttle, and future light rail transit, improve bicycle access and safety, and enhance the pedestrian experience.

Whittier's overarching mobility goal is to establish and maintain a balanced, multi-modal transportation network that enables residents to travel safely and minimizes environmental and neighborhood impacts.

baseline considerations

Most trips begin and/or end with a person walking to/from a destination, at least for a short distance. Thus, the walking environment is one of the most basic elements of public space. Whittier's pedestrian network consists primarily of sidewalks provided along most roadways in commercial districts and residential neighborhoods. Sidewalks vary in width and physical conditions, making some more attractive to walking than others. Sidewalks also provide a primary transportation mode for mobility-impaired population groups such as youth, seniors, and disabled persons. In addition, Class I bicycle paths are designed as multi-use trails that pedestrians can also use. The many neighborhoods, centers, and corridors throughout Whittier

MOBILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENT

offer different levels of “walkability.” Factors affecting walkability include sidewalk condition, destinations to walk to (parks, schools, and commercial areas), ease in crossing streets, connectivity between areas and modes of transportation, good lighting, and an overall perception of safety. Improving pedestrian accessibility, amenities, and walkability is key to the Envision Whittier General Plan.

Uptown Whittier is one of the most walkable areas: pedestrian visibility and access are prioritized at most pedestrian/vehicle conflict locations. Uptown’s commercial and entertainment destinations, combined with easy access to transit, flat terrain, short blocks, wide sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian-scale lighting, convenient parking, frequent crosswalks, and low-speed roadways all contribute to create a safe and inviting pedestrian environment that encourages walking. Initiatives to link pedestrians from Uptown to surrounding neighborhoods including the nearby Disadvantaged Communities, local trails, and other Whittier destinations is paramount. This connectivity is the basis for pedestrian planning, which includes the proposed local circulator (shuttle), enhanced parking strategies, and a ride/car sharing policy.

Physical barriers such as major roadways discourage or in some places prohibit pedestrian access, and they limit pedestrian connectivity between many neighborhoods. Wide roadways with high speeds and long blocks, such as segments of Whittier Boulevard, discourage pedestrian crossings. Many intersections along wide arterials prohibit pedestrian crossings at one or more approaches to signalized intersections, forcing pedestrians to take indirect routes or dash dangerously across busy roadways outside of crosswalks. Pedestrian improvements are important to better facilitate movement between the residential neighborhoods flanking the commercial corridor, proposed mixed-use development, and existing commercial destinations.

Whittier has many features that make cycling pleasurable: a mild climate, relatively flat or gently sloping terrain, and proximity to many recreational and shopping destinations. Whittier’s commitment is to accommodate all categories of bicycle riders and encourage healthier lifestyles and a healthier environment. Whittier seeks to make safety a goal for “8-80” riders, making bicycle riding comfortable and safe for 8 year old children as well as 80 year old adults.

Whittier has adopted three classes of bicycle facilities, which mirror the standard classifications used by Caltrans and commonly adopted by other jurisdictions.

- **Class I Bikeway (Bike Path):** A separate facility designated for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians, with vehicle and pedestrian cross-flow minimized. An example of a Class I facility is the Greenway Trail.
- **Class II Bikeway (Bike Lane):** A striped lane designated for the use of bicycles on a street. Vehicle parking and vehicle/pedestrian cross-flow are permitted at designated locations. Examples of Class II facilities are Broadway Avenue, Greenleaf Avenue, and First Avenue.

MOBILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENT

- **Class III Bikeway (Bike Route):** A route designated by signs or pavement markings for bicyclists within the vehicular travel lane (i.e., shared use) of a roadway. Portions of Penn Street, Painter Avenue, and Mulberry Drive/Slauson Avenue are examples of bike routes.

In addition, several recreational paths are provided in Whittier including the Whittier Greenway Trail. However, bicycle access to the Whittier Greenway Trail from other parts of Whittier is limited. Although bicycle facilities are provided along many roadways, the bicycle network in Whittier does not serve all areas. In addition, potential conflicts with buses or trucks on heavily traveled commercial corridors, turning vehicles, and steep terrain in the northern area of Whittier serve as bicycle barriers.

The Envision Whittier Plan puts forth policy to address the barriers, and enhance bicycle safety and connectivity, including extending the Greenway Trail further east to the County border.

Public transit takes many forms, including light rail, bus, and paratransit. Whittier looks to expand public transit to include the proposed eastside light rail extension Metro "L" Line (formerly Gold Line) and a local circulator (shuttle); creating easier access to all types of transit is a key goal.

While public transit is provided and maintained by other agencies, the City can greatly influence ridership through land use and zoning decisions, connectivity to other modes (including biking and walking), providing a shuttle service linking key destinations, and improving traffic operations within strategic corridors to facilitate bus headways. The City can also dedicate rights-of-way for new systems where appropriate and continue extensive consultation with various agencies to expand transit service and accessibility.

Whittier's well-developed street system allows people to travel from their homes and businesses to destinations within the community with relative ease and to access the freeways that link the community to the region.

Historically, Whittier defined its roadway network according to the classification system used by State highway departments: freeways, expressways, arterials, collectors, and local streets. This traditional approach is primarily focused on ensuring access and mobility for automobiles, and generally does not account for other travel modes or the surrounding context. Whittier has a variety of different contexts, however, and each one deserves a different type of transportation focus. For instance, in the Uptown context, a much greater emphasis is placed on pedestrian



Cyclist on Greenway Trail near Mar Vista Street

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mobility, amenities, and on-street parking, whereas in an industrial or strip commercial district, focus is typically on automobile mobility and off-street surface parking.

To ensure a balanced, multi-modal transportation network, the Envision Whittier General Plan organizes streets and other transportation facilities according to typologies that consider the context and prioritize different travel modes for each street. Together, the typologies provide a network of “complete streets” to accommodate all types of local transportation modes. These typologies will guide the development of standards, to ensure transportation plans and improvements consider relationships to surrounding land uses, appropriate travel speeds, and the need to accommodate multiple travel modes and various users.

The following typology definitions apply to the streets and other facilities that make up the Whittier vehicle circulation plan (Figure MI-1).

Major arterials are designed to move large volumes of traffic through the community to other major arterial roadways or freeways. Whittier Boulevard (State Route 72) is Whittier’s only major arterial; it provides access to I-605 and connects with the adjacent cities of Montebello, Pico Rivera, and La Habra. Whittier Boulevard provides two travel lanes in each direction with limited street parking. Whittier Boulevard’s posted speed limit is 35 to 45 miles per hour.

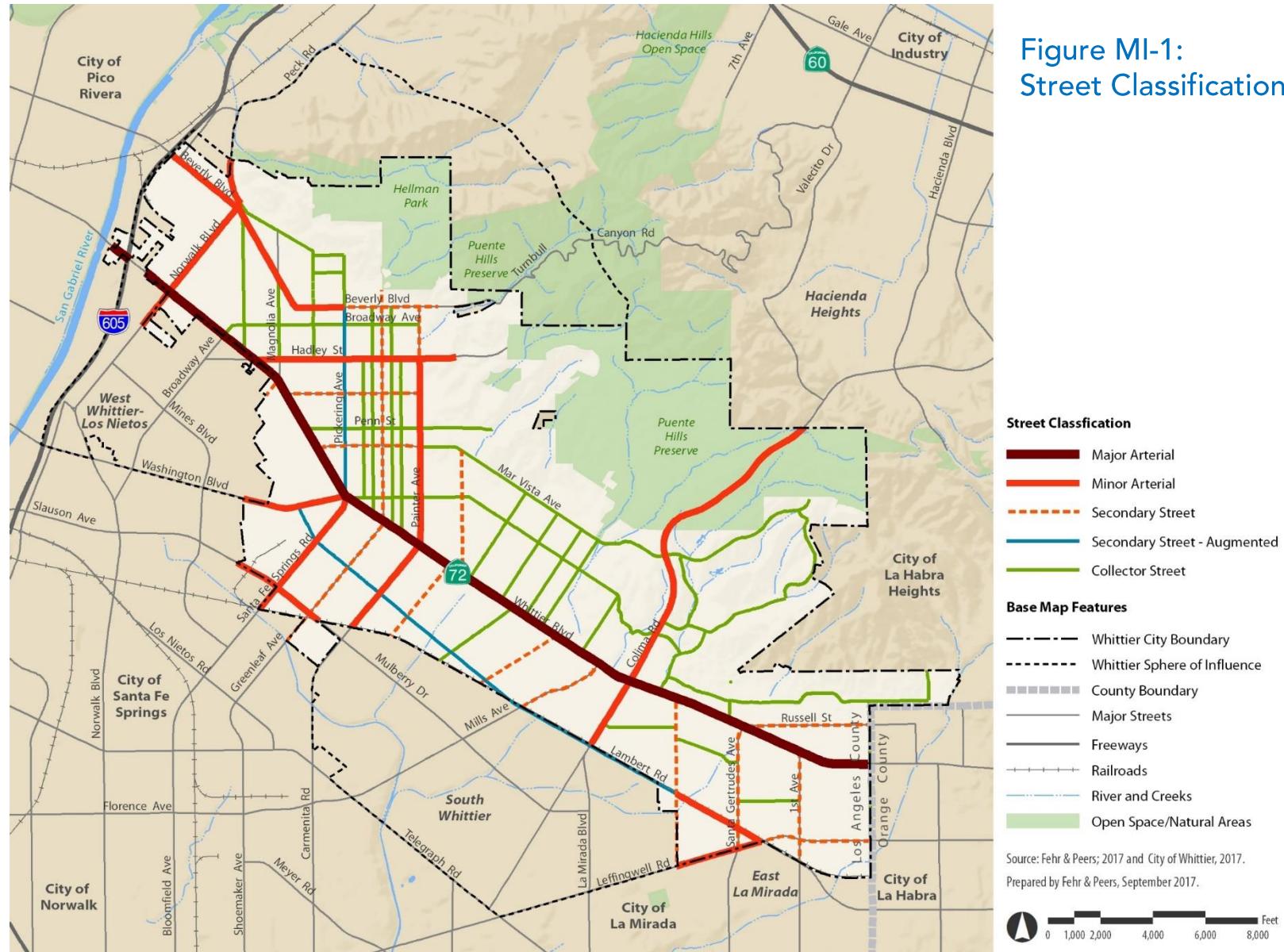
Minor arterials are designed to move traffic from major arterials to secondary streets. Beverly Boulevard; Norwalk Boulevard; Hadley Street; Painter Avenue; Colima Road (County Route N8); portions of Lambert Road, Washington Boulevard, Mulberry Drive; and Santa Fe Spring Road are minor arterials.

Secondary streets are designed to collect and distribute traffic from major highways and arterials to community destinations. Greenleaf Avenue, Santa Gertrudes Avenue, and Mar Vista Street are secondary streets.

Collector streets are designed to move traffic from local streets to secondary major arterials. Janine Drive, La Cuarta Street, and Washington Avenue are classified as collector streets.

Local streets provide access to individual parcels and generally provide one travel lane in each direction, with on-street parking permitted on both sides of the street.

The Envision Whittier General Plan looks to improve connectivity, reduce neighborhood intrusion, “right size” rights-of-way, and improve parking management to balance automobile vehicle needs with other transportation modes while improving access in all neighborhoods, including the Disadvantaged Communities, and enhancing pedestrian, bicyclist, and automobile safety.



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- The City of Whittier does not have designated truck routes; however, the Whittier Municipal Code provides truck traffic restrictions on the streets. Typically, truck routes are established to facilitate the movement of vehicles, which exceed maximum gross weight of three tons. Routes are designated based on the districts served, access to freeways and connector streets, and the avoidance of residential neighborhoods. Identifying truck routes is important not just to preserve dedicated routes serving industrial districts and reducing land use conflicts, but also to allow for proper street construction and maintenance, given that heavy truck traffic impacts physical street conditions more quickly than automobile traffic. An effective and efficient goods movement system is essential to the economic livelihood of all districts in the city. Policies for goods movement address all transportation facilities' abilities to accommodate the effective and efficient movement of goods, while balancing the needs of other travel modes.

key terms

Complete Streets refers to a comprehensive approach to the practice and related policies of mobility planning. The complete street concept recognizes that transportation corridors have multiple users with different abilities and mode preferences (e.g., pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and drivers) that need to be accounted for.

Corridor refers to major commercial or mixed use streets that connect centers and neighborhoods, and have their own identity.

Environmental Justice is defined as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental regulations and policies implemented by local agencies.

Disadvantaged Communities refers to areas and people throughout California suffering most from a combination of economic, health, and environmental burdens. These burdens include poverty, high unemployment, air and water pollution, presence of hazardous wastes, and high incidence of asthma and heart disease.

Level of Service (LOS) is a qualitative measure used to relate the quality of motor vehicle traffic service. LOS is used to analyze roadways and intersections by categorizing traffic flow and assigning quality levels of traffic based on performance measure like vehicle speed, density, congestion, etc.

Multi-Modal is the utilization of all available modes of travel that enhance the movement of people and goods including, but not limited to, highway, transit, nonmotorized, and demand

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management strategies (including telecommuting). The availability and practicality of specific multimodal systems, projects, and strategies may vary by county and region in accordance with the size and complexity of different urbanized areas. (Government Code §65088)

Paratransit is an alternative mode of passenger transportation that does not follow fixed routes or schedules, and consists typically of mini-vans or cutaway-buses. Paratransit services are operated by public transit agencies, community groups or not-for-profit corporations, and for-profit private companies or operators.

Right-of-Way refers to any place that is dedicated to use by the public for pedestrian and vehicular travel. A right-of-way may include but is not limited to, a street, sidewalk, curb, and gutter. A right-of-way may be a crossing, intersection, parkway, median, highway, alley, lane, mall, court, way, avenue, boulevard, road, roadway, railway, viaduct, subway, tunnel, bridge, thoroughfare, park square, or other similar public way.

Smart Cities refers to an urban area that uses technology and data to improve the efficiency of city service delivery, enhance equity of life, and increase equity and prosperity for all residents and businesses.

Traffic Calming is the combination of policies and measures that reduce the negative effects of motorized vehicle use by improving livability in the surrounding neighborhood. With traffic calming, accessibility and mobility are not reduced; they are modified to fit needs of neighborhood. Traffic calming achieves this by modifying the design of streets to serve a broad range of transportation, social, and environmental purposes.

Transit is the conveyance of persons or goods from one place to another by means of a local public transportation system (e.g., Metro Bus, Dial-A-Ride and L Line).

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) refers to moderate- to higher-density development, located within an easy walk of a major transit stop (L Line future station, shuttle or bus stops), generally with a mix of residential, employment, and shopping opportunities designed for pedestrians without excluding the auto. TOD can be new construction or redevelopment of one or more buildings whose design and orientation facilitate transit use.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is a strategy for reducing demand on the road system by reducing the number of vehicles using the roadways and/or increasing the number of persons per vehicle. TDM attempts to reduce the number of persons who drive alone on the roadway during the commute period and to increase the number in carpools, vanpools, buses and trains, walking, and biking. TDM can be an element of TSM (see below).

Transportation Systems Management (TSM) refers to individual actions or comprehensive plans to reduce the number of vehicular trips generated by or attracted to new or existing

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development. TSM measures attempt to reduce the number of vehicle trips by increasing bicycle or pedestrian trips or by expanding the use of bus, transit, carpool, vanpool, or other high occupancy vehicles.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) is the total distance traveled in miles by all motor vehicles of a specific group in a given area at a given time.

Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.

Walkability refers to a measure of how friendly an area is for walking. Factors affecting walkability include but are not limited to: land use mix; street connectivity; residential density (residential units per area of residential use); "transparency" which includes amount of glass in windows and doors, as well as orientation and proximity of homes and buildings to watch over the street; plenty of places to go to near the majority of homes; placemaking, street designs that work for people, not just cars; and nonresidential floor area ratio. Major infrastructural factors include access to mass transit, presence and quality walkways, buffers to moving traffic (planter strips, on-street parking, or bike lanes) and pedestrian crossings, aesthetics, nearby local destinations, shade or sun in appropriate seasons, street furniture, and traffic volume and speed.

Wayfinding is all the ways in which people orient themselves in physical space and navigate from place to place, including signage and other graphic communication.



Traffic signal maintenance along Lambert Road

goals and policies

Goal 1: A connected, balanced, integrated, safe, and multi-modal transportation system that accommodates all travel options

- MI-1.1: Establish Whittier's transportation network as a Complete Streets system and maintain the system in excellent condition to ensure that motor vehicle drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, transit users, goods movement, and people using any other mobility mode can easily and safely reach their destinations in Whittier. This includes:
 - developing street design standards on arterial corridors that are context sensitive to adjacent land uses and districts, and to all roadway users including transit, bicycles, and pedestrians;

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- maintaining or improving the level of service to acceptable levels on major streets and intersections throughout the community. Level of Service D or better is the goal, except for areas with a multi-modal priority, including Uptown, Whittier Boulevard, and the area surrounding the planned L Line rail station;
- prioritizing roadway safety by such means as minimizing and mitigating neighborhood intrusion by commuter traffic, moving commuter traffic through Whittier on arterial streets, and improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists;
- reviewing the safety and functioning of the street system on a regular basis to identify problems and develop solutions;
- considering applying traffic calming concepts adjacent to schools;
- designating local truck routes;
- upgrading existing ITS systems with new technologies such as traffic signal heads, roadside units, traffic management systems, digital signages, transit Signal prioritization, V2X communication, etc. to increase vehicular capacity efficiencies and make the ITS infrastructure future ready for autonomous vehicles (AV) and CVs; specific locations include Colima Road, Whittier Boulevard, Lambert Road, Five Points, and areas near freeway ramps;
- coordinating with regional authorities and adjacent jurisdictions for regional highway network improvements, regional multi-modal programs, and signage programs;
- developing a comprehensive wayfinding signage program for motor vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians that directs people to efficient travel routes to reach key destinations;
- requiring all new and substantially renovated office, retail, industrial, and multi-family developments to: a) install transit amenities such as bus turnouts, pedestrian shelters, and other elements, b) include bicycle and pedestrian amenities on and off site such as on-site bike paths, sidewalk improvements, benches, and pedestrian signal push-buttons at nearby signals; c) install and connect to open space areas (parks, dog parks, or other open spaces);
- requiring all new and substantially renovated office, retail, industrial, mixed-use, and multi-family developments adjacent to the Greenway Trail to provide pedestrian and bicycle access to the Trail; and

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- incorporating planning and design principles to promote healthy physical and economic activities that serve all users (all ages and abilities) and trip types (all travel modes and consideration of non-commute trips) through the investment in public infrastructure.
- MI-1.2: Establish a citywide pedestrian network consisting of both on-street (sidewalks) and off-street (trails or paths) facilities to connect neighborhoods, schools, open space, and major destinations. This includes:
 - enhancing pedestrian access to local and regional transit, known as "first/last mile" strategies that can help make taking transit a more convenient option;
 - improving the pedestrian experience by providing benches, street trees, wayfinding signs, trash receptacles, and adequate lighting using design tools to enhance safety and comfort through "eyes on the street". Focus should be given to the pedestrian circulation and amenities in and adjacent to the areas most deficient particularly Disadvantaged Communities;
 - encouraging the use of outdoor seating and parklets in Uptown; and
 - requiring all new and substantially renovated office, retail, industrial, multifamily, and mixed-use developments to provide pedestrian amenities on and off-site including paths, benches, trash receptacles, and pedestrian signal push-buttons at nearby signals.
- MI-1.3: Develop and maintain a citywide bicycle network of off-street bike paths, on-street bike lanes, and bike streets (Figure MI-2). Including:
 - enhancing existing and proposed Class II bike lanes to protected bike lanes and bike routes to bike lanes or bike boulevards on streets such as Colima Road, Russel Street, Mills Avenue, Washington Boulevard, Broadway Avenue, and Norwalk Boulevard;
 - enhancing bicycle access to local and regional transit, known as "first/last mile" strategies that can help make taking transit a more convenient option;
 - improving the network to encourage cycling as a key travel mode by including supportive bicycle facilities, such as bike stations and secure bike storage. Focus should be given to the bicycle network and amenities in and adjacent to



Whittier bus stop with bench, shade structure, and trash bin



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the Disadvantaged Communities, and within one mile of the proposed L Line station.

- MI-1.4: Establish a Safe Routes to School Program, including:
 - forming a Safe Routes to School Task Force ("Task Force") to develop and implement strategies grounded in the "E's" (education, encouragement, engineering, engagement, evaluation, economics, and equity) that address Safe Routes to School planning, funding, and policies. The Task Force should be composed of City staff, staff representing the school districts in Whittier, students, and parents; and
 - ensuring that Safe Routes to School resources are distributed equitably across all Whittier school districts and schools including those serving the Disadvantaged Communities. Any prioritization considers, among other things, personal and traffic safety concerns, crash data, infrastructure deficiencies, equity issues such as existing and potential patterns of students walking and bicycling to school.

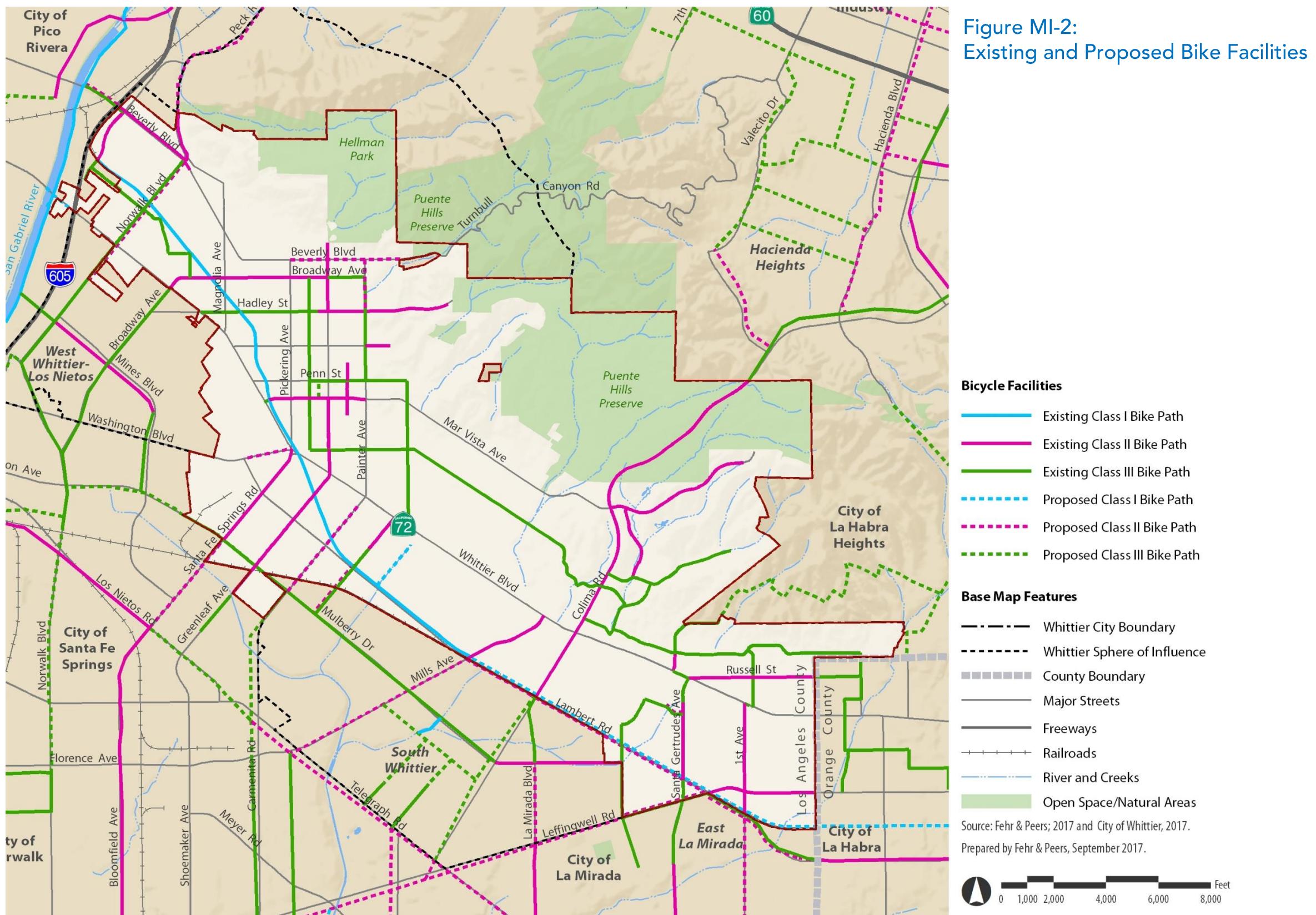
Goal 2: Easy access to regional and local transit service for all residents and people working in Whittier

- MI-2.1: Establish a local transit circulator system that connects Whittier residents and visitors to shopping and employment districts, regional transit facilities, schools, and recreation destinations (Figure MI-3).
- MI-2.2: Establish a transit hub near Metro's planned L Line light rail station; connect local transit circulator services at the future station.



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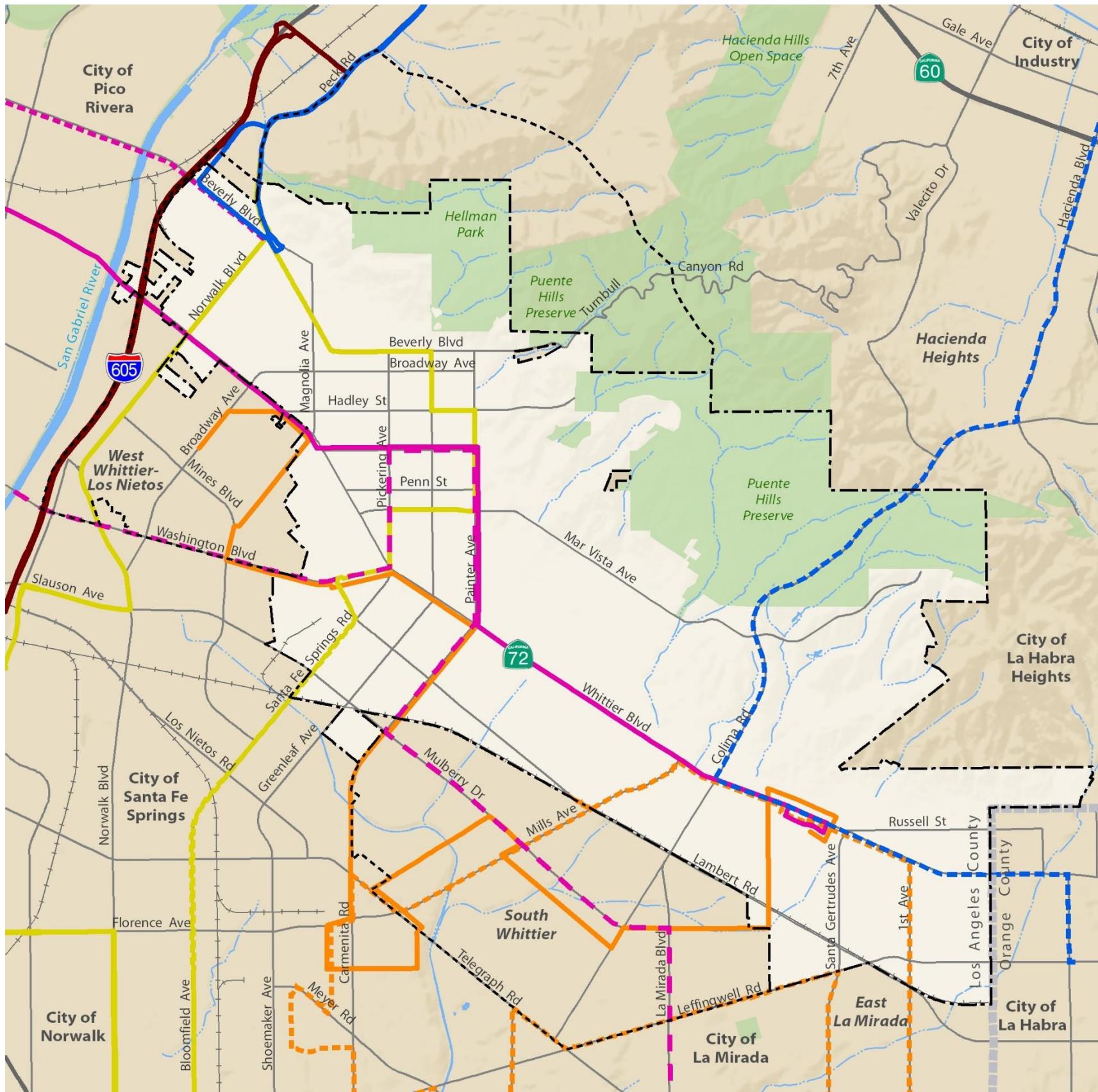


Figure MI-3:
Bus Transit Routes

Bus Routes

- Foothill Transit - 274
- - - Foothill Transit - 285
- LA Metro - 120
- Montebello - 10
- - - Montebello - 40 and 90
- - - Montebello - 50
- Norwalk Transit - 1
- - - Norwalk Transit - 7
- Sunshine Shuttle - A
- - - Sunshine Shuttle - B

Base Map Features

- Whittier City Boundary
- - - Whittier Sphere of Influence
- County Boundary
- Major Streets
- Freeways
- Railroads
- River and Creeks
- Open Space/Natural Areas

Source: Fehr & Peers; 2017 and City of Whittier, 2017.

Prepared by Fehr & Peers, September 2017.



Note: This map does not include the small City-owned parcel in the Whittier Narrows area.

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- MI-2.3: Promote the use of transit within the Whittier as a means of reducing local traffic congestion, achieving greenhouse gases reduction targets, and connecting the community physically and socially. This includes:



- coordinating with transit agencies to enhance regional transit connections through additional routes and increased service frequency and exploring the expansion of Rapid Bus Service on routes serving Whittier. Other strategies include adjusting routes to better connect Disadvantaged Communities with major transit hubs and key destinations such as parks, schools, and healthy food opportunities;
- working with transit service providers to enhance service effectiveness, including:
 - providing additional routes and increased service frequency;
 - adjusting routes to better connect Disadvantaged Communities with transit hubs and key destinations;
 - providing/expanding rapid bus service;
 - providing attractive and convenient bus stops with shade/weather protection, seats, transit information, and trash receptacles; working with regional transit agencies to develop an on-demand transportation system that caters to seniors, people with disabilities, and residents in the Disadvantaged Communities;
- considering partnering with on-demand micro-shuttle services such as Via; and
- considering partnering with companies such as Uber or Lyft to provide a feeder system that can fill the network gaps within the local transit network.

- MI-2.4: Establish Comprehensive Operational Analysis & Long-Range Transit Plans, including:



- researching the potential of integrating autonomous micro-transit services to provide more comprehensive – and nimble – transit service (e.g., first/last mile connections; and
- evaluating the potential of on demand transit to provide end to end mobility services forming public private partnerships with other mobility providers. i.e., leveraging autonomous vehicles (AV) or transportation network company (TNC)



Norwalk Transit line on Greenleaf Avenue and Hadley Street

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service providers for first/last mile services and/or replacing low performing transit routes.

Goal 3: Vehicle miles travelled (VMT) reduced by 15% to meet SB743 thresholds and to establish consistency with State-mandated performance metrics.

- MI-3.1: Enhance first-last mile at transit stops, including improved access, local shuttle service, new transit-supportive infrastructure, and subsidized fares.
- MI-3.2: Implement Transportation Demand Management measures including requiring new developments within one mile of the Whittier Greenway Trail to provide improved pedestrian and bicycle access to the trail.

Goal 4: A strategic roadmap to implement emerging sustainable transportation systems

- MI-4.1: Develop and support electrified modes of transportation, include strategies such as:
 - creating partnerships with regional public utility companies to enable electrification infrastructure roll-out;
 - evaluating opportunities to prioritize Disadvantaged Communities for electrification infrastructure investments;
 - supporting electric vehicle public charging infrastructure; and
 - requiring new and substantially renovated office, retail, industrial, mixed-use, and multi-family developments to provide EV charging infrastructure.

- MI-4.2: Develop citywide car and bike sharing programs to reduce traffic congestion and promote sustainable travel modes.

- MI-4.3: Develop an implementation framework for alternative fuel vehicle infrastructure by inventorying existing supply, evaluating future demand levels, and identifying approaches to accommodate future demand for alternative fuel vehicle stations and other related infrastructure.

- MI-4.4: Prioritize and identify Disadvantaged Community locations to develop sustainable mobility hubs that include car-sharing, bike-sharing, and public EV charging infrastructure.



Metro Bike Hub illustrative



Electric Vehicle Charging Station illustrative

Goal 5: Reduced traffic congestion and environmental impacts associated with goods movement

- MI-5.1: Focus truck traffic onto designated truck routes including retaining and strengthening ordinances restricting through truck movement in residential neighborhoods.
- MI-5.2: Develop a curb management strategy to accommodate on-demand food and goods delivery services' loading needs.
- MI-5.3: Enhance infrastructure to accommodate last-mile delivery services.

Goal 6: Well-managed parking demand and supply citywide

- MI-6.1: Encourage and support joint-use and off-site parking where appropriate, including:
 - monitoring Uptown's parking demand and developing strategies to allow shared parking approaches and use of public parking facilities; and
 - reviewing development proposals to ensure potential adverse parking impacts are minimized or avoided, and that pedestrian and bicycle circulation are not negatively impacted.
- MI-6.2: Develop a strategy to address parking near trailheads to reduce parking intrusion into adjacent residential neighborhoods. The strategy could include parking restrictions for non-residents, creation of trailhead lots, and provision of remote parking with shuttle service. Development of this strategy should consider interested parties' (such as the responsible land management organizations, the adjacent neighborhoods' residents and resident organizations, others) perspectives.
- MI-6.3: Examine the potential shift in parking demand due to parking management implementation and increased use of ride share services (and autonomous vehicles) in the future. This approach should include inventorying existing parking spaces and understanding the adaptability of these spaces for future uses with dynamic pricing and multiple usage during different times of day.
- MI-6.4: Research the possibility of providing overnight and midday storage areas for Transportation Network Companies (TNC) drivers or areas for TNC drivers (future autonomous vehicles) to park while not in use to help reduce congestion and VMT.

Goal 7: An effective Curbside Management Strategy

- MI-7.1: Assess existing assets and create a curbside management strategy, including:
 - inventorying existing curb assets and identifying necessary improvements to make the curb space ready to accommodate micro-mobility scooter, dynamic loading zones for commercial delivery services, autonomous vehicle services, etc. (e.g. location of loading zones, street furniture, etc.);