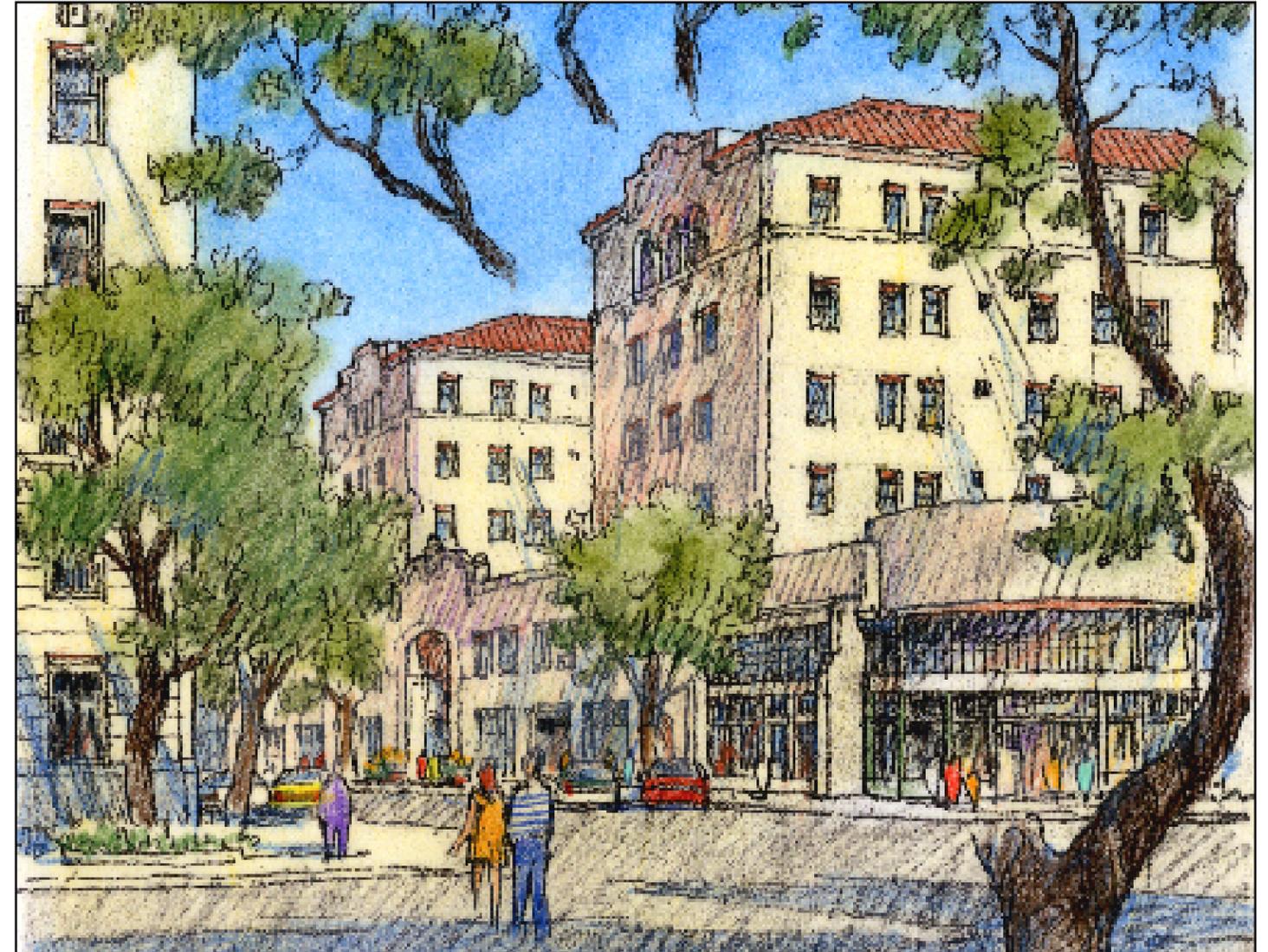


UPTOWN WHITTIER SPECIFIC PLAN

Whittier, California

Approved: November 18, 2008

Amended: June 24, 2014



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Date of Adoption: November 18, 2008

City Council Resolution: No. 8165



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Uptown is the historic retail core of the City of Whittier. The Uptown Specific Plan area covers approximately 185 acres and 35 city blocks, with each block measuring about 300 feet by 600 feet. The Specific Plan is based on two fundamental sets of principles. One is an in-depth understanding of the area derived from photographic documentation, analytical diagrams, economic and demographic analysis, public outreach and stakeholder interviews, study sessions with city staff and elected officials, and a week-long public design charrette. The second set of principles is for healthy and livable town center design, including pedestrian orientation, mix of land uses, infill development, interconnected street system, quality of public realm, distinct character, housing choice, and smart transportation and parking.

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The illustrative plan visualizes the possible build-out scenario of Uptown in 20 years, and integrates the priorities identified in the analytical portion of the planning process. The Plan also leverages Uptown's assets, including numerous historic structures and a highly walkable environment, into six catalytic strategies for its redevelopment into the jewel of Whittier. The strategies are: strengthening existing retail and introducing new national-brand retail, an efficient shared parking system, an increase in housing choice, especially ownership types, transforming churches and their properties into catalysts for affordable housing and mixed use development, economic and social partnerships with Whittier College, and developing a distinct sense of identity through high design standards for development, improved landscaping, and increased sense of safety with the presence of a vibrant resident population.



Aerial photograph of Uptown and surrounding neighborhoods



Historic image of Greenleaf and Philadelphia intersection



Presentation on final day of public design charrette



Outdoor eating on a paseo off Greenleaf Avenue



Courtyard housing and park option on Bailey at Comstock



Close-up of illustrative plan of potential 20-year build out of Uptown

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The Plan proposes a development strategy driven by private investors and public support. Plan-wide policies of the City of Whittier focus on historic preservation, retail and employment, shared parking, the public realm, affordable housing, civic initiatives, and specific plan-implementation initiatives such as fast-tracking desirable development and recruiting and/or training city planning staff in design expertise. Private sector development will be driven by residential, retail, and commercial market demand, and by the attraction of public improvements, streamlined entitlement processes, and Uptown's unique and desirable character within the southern California region.

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The form-based code regulates development over time to produce a town center of high design quality based on historic character, a desirable public realm, and zones of varying development intensities, ranging from the Uptown Core zone to the Uptown Edge zone. A wide range of building types—from single family dwellings to mixed-use and commercial buildings—populate each zone according to existing geographies and desired urban forms. The Code is lavishly illustrated with examples of plans, axonometric drawings, and photographs in order to serve as a proactive guide to high standards for future development.

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A.1 Analytical Diagrams	A:1 - A:7
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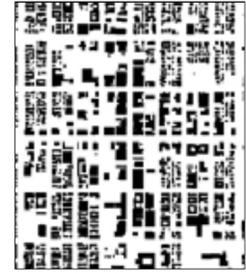
A sample of the extensive set of analytical diagrams utilized to understand the Uptown area includes local context, reverse figure-field, topography, civic, institutional, and places of worship, districts and boundaries, churches and church-owned properties, parking network, and town comparisons. The analytical diagrams constituted the vital first step of documenting, analyzing, and identifying priorities for the Uptown Whittier Specific Plan area.



Diagram of capital improvement projects in Uptown



Regulating plan and development zones



Existing figure-field diagram



Existing parking lots diagram



Existing civic and open spaces



Existing topography diagram



Example of street which requires minor modifications: Greenleaf Avenue



Example of building type which is appropriate for Uptown

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

Uptown is the historic retail core of the city of Whittier. The Uptown Specific Plan area is bound by the northern edge of the north side of Hadley Street to the north, Painter Avenue to the east, Penn Street to the south, and Pickering Avenue to the west. The area covers approximately 185 acres and 35 city blocks, each block measuring about 300 feet by 600 feet.

1.1.1 Purpose

Uptown has the potential of becoming the jewel of Whittier: a source of pride for its citizens, a sense of identity from its historic roots, and a place of great character and attraction due to its unique urban form and diversity of activities. Uptown possesses a number of valuable assets. First, it is highly walkable due to its compact size, mix of land uses, and relatively small scale of its buildings and streets. Second, its filled with numerous locally-owned stores, restaurants and services. Third, it contains or is in close proximity to many churches and civic institutions which serve as anchors of the community. And fourth, Uptown is known for a number of historic buildings and houses which have been restored and are in active use. The goal of the Uptown Whittier Specific Plan is to leverage these assets, and shape the area into a destination and urban experience. In order to achieve this goal, the Specific Plan is guided by a number of principles for designing town centers, which stand in contrast to sprawl development.

1.1.2 Conventional Sprawl Development

Sprawl development is characterized by homogeneous, single-use zones, with the housing tract, shopping center and the business park as its basic elements. These segregated use-areas are connected by a discontinuous system of wide thoroughfares designed for the rapid movement of cars. Within such a homogeneous urban structure, dull and repetitive buildings are typically designed without any particular obligation to define a realm of public space. The vast majority of such places designed since the 1940s are architecturally undistinguished and urbanistically destructive, as they eliminate the local, historic landscape while generating a generic and inferior fabric of buildings.

This kind of bleak development pattern can be observed all over California. The walled tracts, the excessively wide streets, McMansions, ugly strip retail development, the absence of sidewalks on streets, cul de sacs, three-car garage houses with invisible front doors, are all symptoms of the dominance of sprawl thinking in contemporary development practice. It is time to reverse both the physical patterns and the social and economic consequences of sprawl by returning to a pattern of community development based on the traditional American ideas of the neighborhood, the district and the corridor.



Left: The post World War II automobile-oriented environment of large highways and long commutes has led to fragmented and generic patterns of urban development. Due to these patterns, residents have to increasingly rely upon their vehicles and travel often unreasonable distances to live, work, shop and play.

Far left: Retail centers built over the last 50 years are large, inhuman objects surrounded by a sea of surface parking.



Above: An example of the generic automobile-oriented environment, consisting of excessively wide roads and extremely similar houses dominated by large car garages in the front. Such residential developments discourage pedestrian activities and lack spaces for social gathering.

Left: Historic retail centers, such as Uptown, are pedestrian-friendly due to their compact size and dense fabric.

1.1.3 Principles of Uptown Whittier Specific Plan

New Urbanism promotes the creation and restoration of diverse, walkable, compact, vibrant, mixed-use communities composed of the same program components as conventional development, but assembled in a more integrated fashion, in the form of complete communities. These contain housing, work places, shops, entertainment, schools, parks, and civic facilities essential to the daily lives of the residents, all within easy walking distance of each other. New Urbanism is the revival of our lost art of place-making, and is essentially a re-ordering of the built environment into the form of complete cities, towns, villages, and neighborhoods—the way communities have been built for centuries in our country.

A. Principles of Town Center Design

1. Pedestrian Orientation

Compact size, human scale and multiple destinations within close proximity: Most daily uses should be within a 5 minute walk from home and work. Development that adheres to this principle will: locate buildings to define street edges and corners, enliven street frontages to enhance the pedestrian experience, and create memorable places for people.

2. Mix of Land Uses

Synergistic relationships between a variety of destinations and activities: Such diversity uses land efficiently, provides for neighborhood convenience and contributes to unique urban experiences. Development that adheres to this principle encourages a compatible mix of uses at the town center scale, and identifies opportunities for shared uses. This yields a mix of stores, offices, apartments, houses, and civic institutions within the area.

3. Infill Development

Effective use of existing land and infrastructure: Instead of spreading out, development fills in to create higher densities and a more vibrant center. More people within walking distance of many uses enables a more efficient use of services and resources, and creates a more convenient place to live and work.

4. Interconnected Street System

Multiple access points and routes: Places need to be easy to get to and integrated physically and visually with their surroundings. This requires attention to how to get around on foot, by bicycle, public transport and the car. Interconnected streets also help disperse traffic rather than concentrating it only on a few major arteries.

5. Quality of the Public Realm

An appealing place with attractive and successful outdoor areas: A primary task of all urban architecture and landscape design is the physical definition of streets and public spaces as places of shared use. Public open space is designed as a series of outdoor rooms and a few special places are treated as civic art. The public realm serves as places of movement, gathering, and celebration.

6. Distinct Character

A place with its own distinct identity: Preservation and renewal of historic buildings, districts, and landscapes affirm the continuity and evolution of urban society. New development should enrich the quality of existing urban places. This means encouraging a distinctive response that arises from and complements its setting, including an emphasis on beauty, comfort, and creating a sense of place.

7. Housing Choice

Housing that fulfills both policy goals and market demand: Within the town center, a broad range of housing types and price levels can bring people of diverse ages, races, and incomes into daily interaction, strengthening the personal and civic bonds essential to an authentic community. A variety of dwelling types—houses, bungalow courts, row houses, live/work units, lofts and apartments—ensure that younger and older people, singles and families, the moderate income and the wealthy may find places to live.

8. Smart Transportation and Parking

Choices and quality in modes of transportation: Streets are more than simply utilitarian channels for the movement of vehicles. They are also places for people with narrow widths and slow speeds, curbside parking, lined with trees, and parking lots and garages in the back. There is also a greater choice of modes of transportation, with an emphasis on the most affordable and least environmentally destructive ones: walking and bicycling, and public transit such as buses and vans.



Left: Uptown already possesses several elements crucial to smart transportation and parking, such as streets with trees, slow speeds, diagonal parking on the two primary retail streets of Greenleaf and Philadelphia, walkable sidewalks, and an interconnected street grid which allows multiple access points for vehicular traffic.



Left: Much of Uptown is pedestrian friendly with multiple civic, institutional and retail destinations with a 5-minute walk. The special paving for crosswalks on Greenleaf and Philadelphia, trees that provide shade and contribute to urban form, and buildings which orient themselves to entrances on the street (rather than to parking at the back) contribute significantly to the area's pedestrian orientation.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

1.1.4 Process

A. Study of Previous Plans

In preparation for this Specific Plan, the consultants reviewed and incorporated, as applicable, the following documents:

- Uptown Whittier Specific Plan, adopted 1989
- Whittier General Plan, adopted 1993
- City of Whittier Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan, adopted 2004
- Whittier Boulevard Specific Plan, adopted 2005
- Whittier Municipal Code, electronic version passed 2006

B. Field Tour: May 15, 2006

The consultant team facilitated a day-long tour of places and projects for stakeholders from Uptown Whittier. The purpose was to compare and contrast the potential of Uptown with these places, and to draw specific lessons about possible strategies to embrace as well as to avoid. The tour included the following places in southern California within driving distance of Whittier:

1. Downtown Fullerton

Downtown Fullerton is a center of culture and home to financial, religious, and government institutions, as well as 70 historic buildings, 2,500 parking spaces, 350,000 square feet of retail, and 275,000 square feet of retail. The regional transportation center serves 350,000 passengers per year.

2. Seven Fountains, West Hollywood

Seven Fountains is the first new building in 75 years in the urban courtyard housing tradition that has a distinguished history in the Los Angeles region. Housing units are organized around private gardens, public courtyards, and live/works spaces in a relatively dense, urban setting.

3. Moule & Polyzoides Architects and Urbanists office, Pasadena

A visit to the lead consultants' office including a presentation on the "Architecture of Density", and a discussion on housing types, density ranges, and architectural form.

4. Old Pasadena

Currently a thriving area, Old Pasadena was a depressed neighborhood 20 years ago. The turnaround was due to a combination of factors: a comprehensive, revenue-generating parking strategy, major investment in national-level retail, restoration and renovation of historic structures, and financing mechanisms for the operation and maintenance of the area.

5. Mission Meridian, South Pasadena

Sixty-seven condominiums, 5,000 square feet of retail space, and a bicycle storage facility are designed next to the Gold Line light rail station. Buildings of various types are arranged on the 1.65-acre site, including courtyard housing, single-family houses, duplexes, and mixed-use lofts.



The stakeholder interviews and public outreach meetings consisted of dialogue between the consultant team and citizens of Whittier. The discussions, mostly conducted in the Historic Train Depot, above, focused on documentation and analysis of Uptown, explaining the planning approach, and soliciting citizen concerns and desires with regard to the future of the Specific Plan area.



The consultant team was led by the City of Whittier's Director of Community Development on a walking tour of Uptown on the first day of the charrette.



The multidisciplinary team integrated multiple issues and concerns about Uptown into hand-drawn and computer-generated drawings, policy recommendations, and implementation strategies at the charrette.



An essential component of the charrette is the discussion between different experts such as those in landscape architecture, transportation engineering, architecture and urban planning which leads to an integrated approach in the Specific Plan.



The Pre-Charrette Study Session was held in the presence of a packed audience in the City Council Chamber, above, of City Hall next to Uptown Whittier. After presenting findings from the field tour and public outreach, and principles for town center design, the consultant team answered questions and provided explanations about the strategy for the Specific Plan.

C. Public Outreach: May 2006

The lead consultants, in collaboration with City of Whittier planning staff, conducted meetings with 112 individuals representing 34 stakeholders. The purpose was three-fold: to explain the planning process for Uptown Whittier, to solicit concerns, desires, and questions about major issues, and to initiate a longer dialogue between the planning team and the stakeholders. Representatives from the following stakeholder groups participated in the public outreach meetings.

Citizens of Whittier
Whittier City Council
City of Whittier Heads of Departments
Assistant City Manager
Community Development Director
Community Services Manager
Library Director
Parks Director
Police Chief
Public Works Director
Whittier Planning Commission
Whittier Design Review Board
Whittier Historic Resources Commission
Whittier Parking and Transportation Commission
Boys and Girls Club of Whittier
Developers, Property Owners and Brokers
First Christian Church
First Day
Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital
Skills Foundation
St. Matthias Episcopal Church
Whittier Chamber of Commerce
Whittier City School District
Whittier Coalition
Whittier College
Whittier Conservancy
Whittier High School
Whittier High School Alumni Association
Whittier Historic Neighborhood Association
Whittier Union High School District
Whittier Uptown Association
YMCA of Greater Whittier

A number of critical issues emerged from the public outreach meetings and stakeholder interviews:

- Recognizing the assets of Uptown, and building upon the architectural traditions of Whittier
- A perceived lack of safety in Uptown, and enhancing the appearance of the public realm
- The crucial economic and symbolic role of the historic retail core of Whittier, while introducing a greater range of retail choices
- Inadequate public amenities, and improving utilities and street infrastructure
- A continuing demand for residential development, and the need for quality in design
- A concern about youth in the area, and strategies for integrating them into Uptown

- Creating a unique destination and rich urban experience. These issues were presented at the Pre-Charrette Study session for discussion and further input from stakeholders.

D. Pre-Charrette Study Session: May 25, 2006

The session presented findings of the field tour and public outreach, and New Urbanist principles for town center design as applicable to Uptown. The presentations were followed by a public discussion, including a question and answer session

E. Charrette: June 4 – 9, 2006

The consultant team and city staff organized an intense week-long design workshop in the heart of Uptown, at the Crystal Marquis Ballroom, from June 4th through 9th, 2006 to develop an integrated multidisciplinary design strategy for the Uptown Whittier Specific Plan. Participants included a team of architects, urban designers, planners, landscape architects, economists, retail consultants, and transportation engineers, with input from city staff, stakeholder groups, and citizens. The charrette is a forum to work on design together with political consensus in a short, focused manner rather than in a more drawn-out process that takes several months or more. Most crucially, the charrette served as a public format for discussion and debate about planning issues and strategies, and as a transparent decision making process.

Each day was a 12 – 14 hour work session devoted largely to drawing the plan by hand and on computers, creating a three-dimensional computer model of Uptown, testing ideas and strategies, and multidisciplinary collaboration on designing a Specific Plan. Highlights of each workday are noted below:

Sunday, June 4th:

- Set-up of charrette space, including furniture, computers, equipment, and posters displaying site analyses and major issues
- Walking tour of Uptown for consultant team
- Dinner and discussion with consultant team at local restaurant

Monday, June 5th:

- Introductions and consultant briefing with city staff
- Lunch time presentation and discussion: Retail Development

Tuesday, June 6th:

- Morning briefing with city staff
- Lunch time public presentation: Parking and Transportation
- Evening progress review: Retail strategies, historic preservation

Wednesday, June 7th:

- Morning briefing with city staff
- Lunch time public presentation: Zoning and Form-Based Codes
- Evening progress review

Thursday, June 8th:

- Morning briefing with city staff
- Lunch time presentation discussion: Finance and Implementation
- Evening progress review: Rough draft of Specific Plan proposals

Friday, June 9th:

- Morning briefing with city staff
- Afternoon open house: Public presentation and discussion of Specific Plan draft

Right: Lunch time presentations and discussions, such as this one on form-based codes, enabled city staff, leadership, and citizens to learn about different aspects of the Plan, such as retail, transportation, historic preservation, and finance and implementation.



Right: The final presentation was held in the same location as the rest of the charrette, the Crystal Marquis Ballroom, located in the heart of Uptown. The format of the presentation was an open house; that is, an overview presentation open to all, followed by question-and-answer sessions in small groups focused around specific issues and concerns. The products of the charrette were displayed on large boards for stakeholders and citizens to examine.



CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION
1.2 LEVERAGING HISTORICAL ASSETS

For decades, the City of Whittier has acknowledged and protected its historic resources, preserving the history written in the built environment. A detailed analysis of Uptown, along with the community charrette, reinforces this commitment to identify and reuse the City's historic assets and highlights the need for a planning strategy based on historic preservation, adaptive reuse, and compatible infill that respects the scale and architectural quality of the existing fabric.

Historic Uptown, characterized by residential districts clustered around a central commercial core, enjoys the pedestrian scale, intermixing of uses, and spatial connectivity that has come to be highly valued as an alternative to automobile-oriented sprawl. This historic pattern is as important to Uptown's special character as its individual resources or architectural features. Preserving and reinforcing the historic character and pedestrian nature of Uptown is fundamental to the success of its transformation.

Successful urban districts often generate appeal by seriously leveraging their historic resources, enabling new development to occur within a solid and recognizable framework. The historic pattern sets the foundation for compatible future development, blending new infill and historic rehabilitation. This requires clear and articulate guidance, as well as adherence to the Secretary of the Interior's standards for rehabilitation. These standards advocate that related new construction respect historic buildings and their character-defining features with compatibility in massing, size, scale and architectural detail. The goal is to protect the essential form and integrity of historic buildings and their environment while allowing for well-designed new development.

Title 18 'Zoning', Division IV 'Historic Resources' of the City of Whittier Municipal Code governs the preservation of historic resources. Chapter 18.84 'Historic Resources' specifies designation of historic landmarks and districts, certificate of appropriateness—economic hardship, Mills Act agreement, maintenance and demolition, and historic preservation. Chapter 18.87 and Chapter 18.88 describe the standards of the two historic districts within the Uptown Whittier Specific Plan area, the Hadley/Greenleaf Historic District, and the Central Park Historic District.

The Specific Plan recognizes that Whittier's considerable historic assets are a vital part of the future growth of Uptown by seeking to:

- Identify and evaluate historic assets to be consistent with definitions under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), existing surveys, and with Whittier's landmarks and district ordinances.

- Identify existing and potential districts which gives Uptown its historic and cultural character
- Adaptively reuse existing buildings
- Use existing buildings as catalysts for future development
- Plan for infill with appropriate size, scale, massing and design compatible with historic structures
- Use the existing historic built form to influence new buildings
- Use existing historic land use patterns to inform future decisions (e.g. civic, institutional, residential, and commercial)

The three dimensional models and accompanying photographs on the following page illustrate the immense possibilities of using historic resources to guide a possible 20-year build out of Uptown.

Key

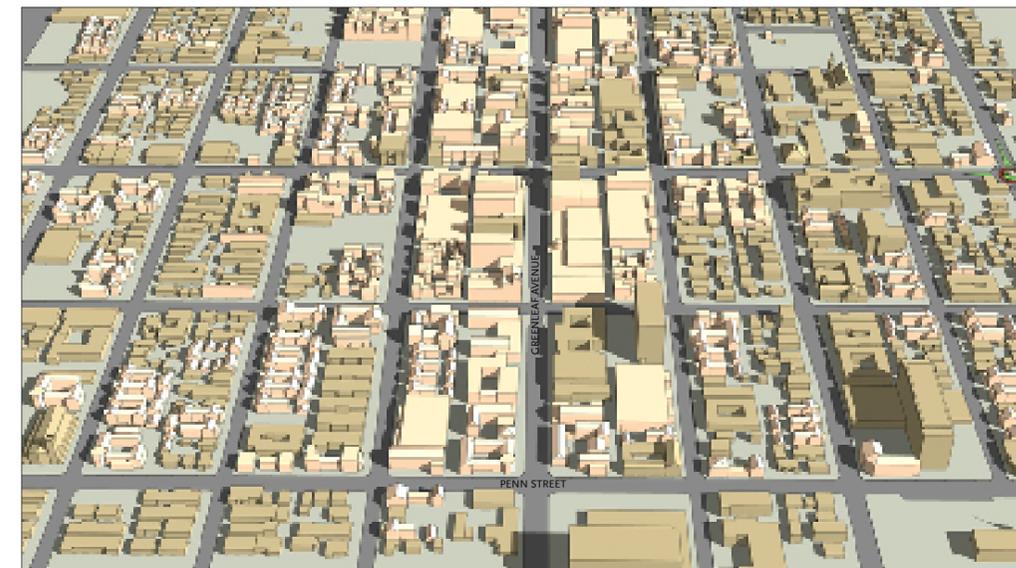
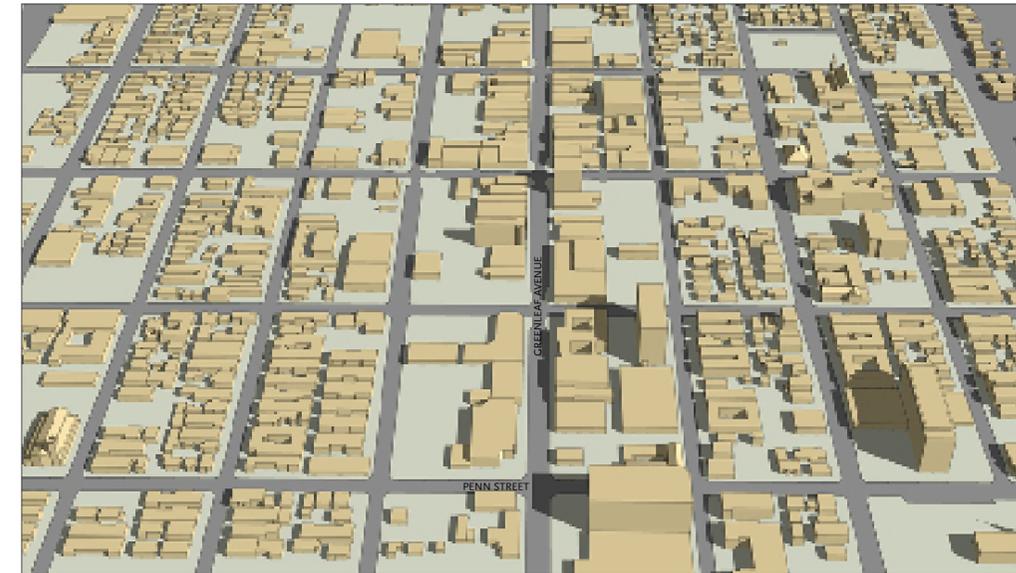
- Uptown Specific Plan Area Boundary
- - - Existing Historic District
- - - Proposed Historic District
- Historic Asset

Examples of Historic Architectural Styles

- 6526 Pickering Avenue
- 6736 Pickering Avenue
- 6706 Newlin Avenue
- Monterey Building
- Bank Building
- Bank of America (National Bank of Whittier)
- Standard Oil Building
- 6516 Bright Avenue
- 6513 Washington Avenue
- Charles House
- 7055 Washington Avenue
- 6554 Friends Avenue
- Whittier Women's Club
- 7212 Friends Avenue
- 7222 Friends Avenue



Uptown has a wealth of historic properties, which are the communities major character defining features. These historic assets serve as the starting point for the design of the specific Plan.



Left: This computer model of Uptown looking north highlights opportunities for historically compatible infill. Strategic projects on a vacant lot, surface parking lots, and city owned property will act as a catalysts for future infill development.

Left: The same view as above, with infill build-out indicated in the lighter colored buildings. The most intensive zone of development in terms of scale of buildings occurs along Greenleaf Avenue where the upper limits of the urban form are dictated by two historic buildings: the Beaux-Arts style former First National Bank and Bank of America building (1928), which is on the local official register of historic resources, and the Spanish Colonial Revival style Hoover Hotel (1929), whose 2001 renovation received several awards.



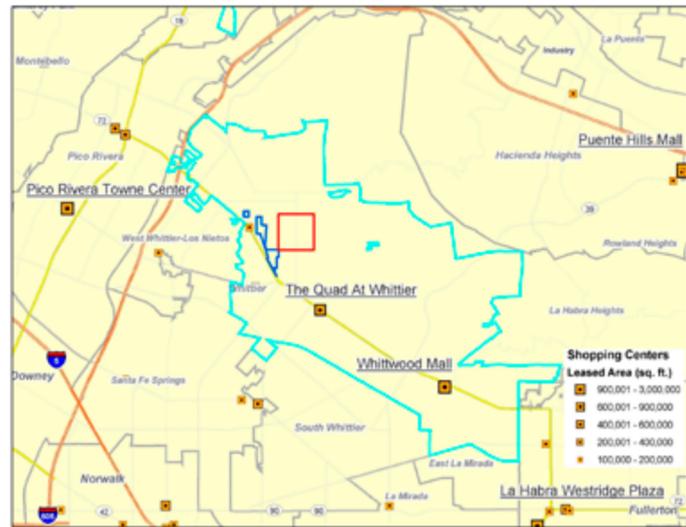
Above: This aerial from 1925 illustrates Uptown Whittier near the peak of its historic development. The scale, placement and proportion of many properties within the core remain unchanged. This authentic pre-WWII pattern is remarkably rare in southern California and is a distinguishing characteristic of Whittier.



Philadelphia Street looking east in the 1930s. Above: Philadelphia Street has historically been one of the major streets of Uptown, and the intersection with Greenleaf Avenue—marked by the former First National Bank and Bank of America building—has long been considered the heart of Uptown. The Specific Plan respects the historic nature of this pattern by concentrating the retail core around this intersection and specifying the highest intensity development along Philadelphia and Greenleaf.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.3 REGIONAL CONTEXT



Left, top: A regional map of the retail centers surrounding Uptown Whittier, shown in red in the center. Uptown's comparative advantage is two-fold: an authentic 100-year old history, and a unique urban experience. Uptown's many historic buildings, some of which have been restored and renovated, lends a genuine character to its fabric. Similarly, Uptown constitutes an attractive urban experience thanks to its compact size, walkable systems of blocks and streets, and relatively dense fabric—all of which is being rediscovered by consumers weary of generic, automobile-oriented retail centers. At present, the retail in Uptown is vastly under-performing, but has the potential to improve with the introduction of national brand anchor retail, strengthening of existing local retail, and public improvements.

Right: As this regional location map indicates, Uptown Whittier possesses both advantages and disadvantages in the context. Among its many advantages is its location in close proximity to the heart of a global metropolitan region, downtown Los Angeles, and its proximity to major regional access points such as interstate highway 605 and Whittier Boulevard. At the same time, Uptown requires a greater visual and physical presence on the arteries, for example, by announcing a 'gateway' off Whittier Boulevard via development which follows Uptown character: historically sensitive, denser than surrounding development, and with an urban orientation that fronts on to the street and creates a pedestrian-friendly environment.

	2005-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020	2020-2025	2025-2030	Total
San Gabriel Valley Cities	33,825	34,870	35,340	34,901	34,673	173,609
Gateway Cities	17,478	21,939	22,357	22,116	22,066	105,956
Total	51,303	56,809	57,697	57,017	56,739	279,565

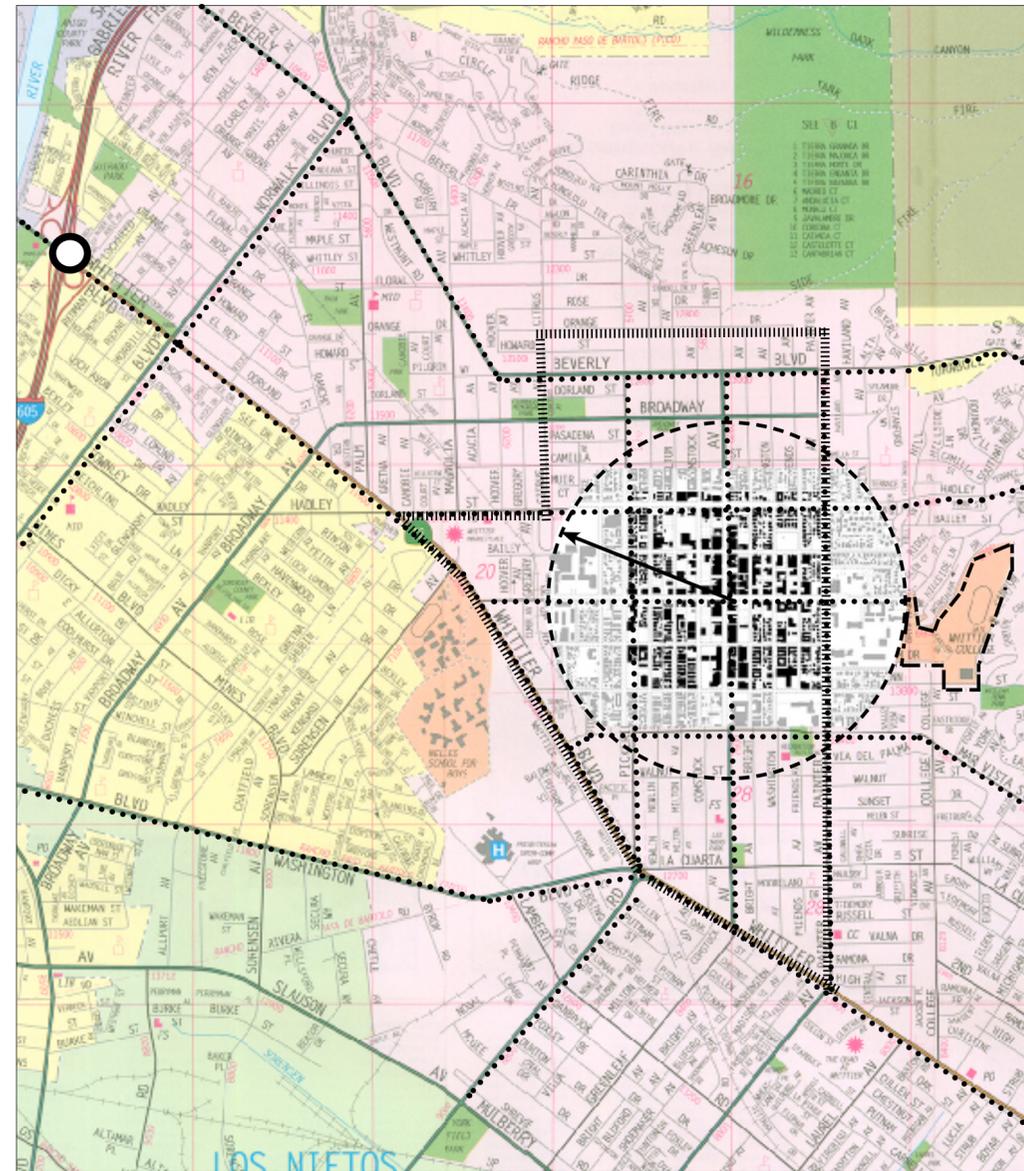
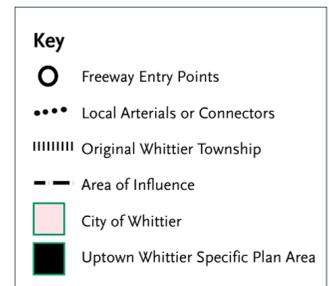
Whittier	728	725	740	736	738	3,667
Whittier's Projected Growth Share	1.4%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	

Whittier's 2005 Share of above = **2.5%**

Potential 5 Year Capture	2005-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020	2020-2025	2025-2030	Total	
Projected by SCAG	728	725	740	736	738	3,667	
Maintain Current Share	Low	1,281	1,418	1,440	1,423	1,416	8,979
Aggressive (3%)	High	1,539	1,704	1,731	1,711	1,702	8,387

Average Annual Capture	2005-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020	2020-2025	2025-2030	Total
Current Share (6%)	Low	44	44	44	44	220
Average	Moderate	137	150	152	150	739
Aggressive (15%)	High	231	256	260	257	1,258

Above: The table of projected regional growth estimated by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The calculations indicate that over the next 25 years, Uptown Whittier could very well capture over 1,200 new households as potential residents with an aggressive trajectory—such as the one embodied in this Specific Plan—and one which is reflected in a strong regional demand for housing. Uptown's potential for capturing this regional housing demand is particularly significant due to an increasing number of households who are rediscovering the benefits of a town center lifestyle.



1.4 LOCAL CONDITIONS

The Uptown Specific Plan area consists of approximately 185 acres and 35 city blocks in the historic retail core of Whittier. The area encompasses the Central Park Historic District and includes part of the Hadley Greenleaf Historic District. The Central Park Historic District contains 6 properties on the local register of historic places, but Uptown on the whole contains many more historic structures, as the diagram on page 1:5 indicates. Buildings in Uptown range from 1-story single family houses to mid-rise multistory buildings. A number of streets in Uptown are heavily traveled by vehicles, including those running north-south: Pickering, Greenleaf, and Painter, and others running east-west: Hadley, Philadelphia, and Penn.

Retail is concentrated in a 4-block area along Greenleaf Avenue and its intersection with Philadelphia Street, and is surrounded by local services, offices, and smaller retail. The primary retail destinations include a multi-screen cinema and several restaurants. Uptown can also derive greater benefit from the presence of several civic and institutional anchors such as 12 churches, City Hall, Whittier College, Whittier High School, Public Library, Police Station, Post Office, and YMCA.

Uptown faces a number of challenges. There are several vacant properties, an excessive number of surface parking lots for a potentially vibrant town center, an under-performing retail sector, vandalism in the form of graffiti and glass etching, a perception of lack of adequate safety, and poor quality of architecture in recent development. As result of these factors and its under-performing retail sector, Uptown captures only 6% of the City of Whittier's total retail sales.

1.5 RELATIONSHIP TO WHITTIER GENERAL PLAN

The Uptown Specific Plan is consistent with and implements many relevant policies of the Whittier General Plan by facilitating the continuing enhancement of the Uptown core area and adjacent neighborhoods within the plan area. Specific plan recommendations and requirements providing for new mixed-use development and its additional housing resources, an overall pedestrian-orientation, an improved environment for successful retail, and the preservation of historic resources are all consistent with key goals and policies in several General Plan elements.

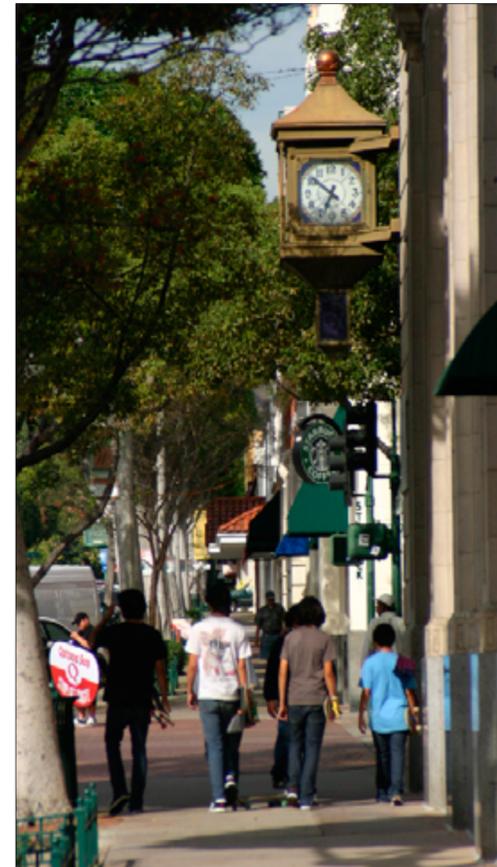


Above: The skyline of Uptown Whittier looking toward the northwest with the Hoover Hotel on the left, shows its eclectic mix of architecture and building types, from single family houses in the foreground to the movie theater in the middle ground and the multistory building in the background.

Below: The diagram of income levels in and around Uptown indicates not only a wide range of disposable incomes but also concentrations of middle to high income neighborhoods that can benefit retail in Uptown.



Above: Among the challenges Uptown faces is a plethora of large-for-a town center area-surface parking lots which can either generate greater revenue as Park Once structures, or be redeveloped into mixed-use development such as retail and residential.



Above: Streets such as Greenleaf Avenue are generally pedestrian-friendly but also contain an excessive number of planters which make sidewalks sometimes too narrow, and are also covered with gum and dirt. The excessive size and number of planters tends to diminish the width of the sidewalk in places, and a lack of adequate lighting on the exterior of storefronts contribute to a perception of a lack of safety.

Left: One of the most unique aspects of Uptown is that it has several historic examples of well-designed and well-built single family houses within a traditional retail core. Most of these houses are well restored and contribute to the quality of the public realm through appropriate street frontages and landscape quality.