

SUMMARY

MIDTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN

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1.0 Summary

1.1 VISION, PURPOSE, AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Vision: A Vibrant Midtown

Midtown will be a vibrant and thriving community for our children, family, and friends. Midtown will be known for its unique blend of parks, strong businesses, and transit-oriented housing. Additionally, Midtown will be an early leader in multi-modal transportation practices, where a person can safely and easily travel by walking, riding a bike, catching a bus, taking a train, or driving a car.

Purpose of the Specific Plan

The Midtown Specific Plan provides a framework for the development and improvement of a 369-acre corridor along Long Beach Boulevard in the City of Long Beach.

The Specific Plan is intended to be more flexible than conventional zoning to encourage new investment and development along the corridor. The Specific Plan establishes a land use plan and regulations, infrastructure requirements, design guidelines, and implementation strategies necessary to achieve the vision.

Guiding Principles

Five principles accompany the vision to guide the Specific Plan and support Citywide efforts to increase non-motorized transportation, promote healthy living options, and work toward a more sustainable future.

1. Enhanced Mobility and Complete Streets

Long Beach Boulevard must evolve to prioritize and enhance the walkability of the corridor, improve mobility options for bicycles and transit riders, and preserve functionality of the corridor as a thoroughfare for automobiles. The addition of trees, landscape, furnishings, and bikeways; improved pedestrian crossings; and small changes in travel lanes will enhance the public realm experience for all users.

2. Safety and Wellness

The physical environment plays a critical role in our community's overall health. Providing active and passive park spaces for urban neighborhoods along Long Beach Boulevard is critical to improve health and wellness. A well-designed street creates a safer and more appealing setting for families, bicyclists, and others along the corridor. The Specific Plan proposes physical and programmatic connections between health-related institutions, park areas, and the public right-of-way.

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Enhanced Mobility and Complete Streets

Safety and Wellness

A Sustainable Future

Supporting Urban Amenities

Working with and for the Community

3. A Sustainable Future

The City of Long Beach supports a sustainable future for its residents, its businesses, and the environment. The Midtown area should improve and develop in a sustainable manner by decreasing the reliance on automobiles, reducing the urban heat-island effect, and promoting a balance of jobs and housing.

4. Supporting Urban Amenities

The supporting amenities serving Midtown must be improved to stimulate reinvestment and attract new development. Midtown must be an enjoyable place to live and do business. Improvements and new development will seek out urban amenities such as attractive rights-of-way, safe and efficient bikeway and pedestrian facilities, parks and parklets, and landscaping enhancements.

5. Working with and for the Community

The ideas and plans presented in this Specific Plan were generated by close coordination with existing residential, business, property owner, and development communities. Working with and for the community does not stop after the adoption of the Plan. This Plan places special emphasis on coordinating public and private improvements and programming with Long Beach Memorial and other medical facilities in Midtown.

1.2 ACHIEVING THE VISION

1.2.1 Partnerships and Coordination

Midtown is a complex organism containing numerous interdependent components. Long-term success will rely not only on the public agencies that fund and maintain public improvements, but on the businesses and institutions that offer services and employ thousands; the property owners that develop, fund, and maintain private and public improvements; and the general public who live, work, and/or learn along the corridor.

An open dialogue between the transit agencies, local advisory groups, the general public, medical centers, development community, business owners, and land owners helped define the guiding principles. Maintaining collaboration and communication among these groups will be necessary to bring positive change to Midtown. Future partnerships should include interagency and public/private partnerships.

1.2.2 Responding to the Market

Current market trends indicate that capitalizing on existing amenities like transit stations and proximity to jobs, schools, and housing make this area a prime location for revitalization. Redirecting and concentrating commercial facilities and transit-oriented development along the boulevard will redefine Midtown. Attracting new business will bring development opportunities. Taking advantage of opportunities to build on vacant lots

and energizing tired store fronts will attract residents and visitors to shop, dine, and support businesses along the corridor. Other development efforts, such as the Promenade, courthouse, and numerous façade improvements throughout the City, have demonstrated the success and economic gain from strategic enhancements with long-term vision.

1.2.3 Investments and Financing

Public-private partnerships, transit funding, street improvements, and business and improvement districts are all possible mechanisms for funding revitalization and growth projects along the corridor. Midtown has substantial vacant and underutilized land resources alongside major transit investments, and excellent access to the freeway and Downtown Long Beach.

1.3 LAND USE PLAN

The Midtown Specific Plan regulates the project area through four development districts: Transit Node, Corridor, Medical, and Open Space. Each district has its own development standards and land use patterns. Overall, the 375-acre Specific Plan could ultimately support roughly 3,600 homes and 15,600 jobs in 2.9 million square feet of building space, concentrating and intensifying development at key transit and employment nodes.

Figure 1-1 and Table 1-1 summarize the development intensity and boundaries for each district, including the projected distribution of development potential by district subarea.

1.3.1 Land Use Districts

Transit Node (TN)

The Transit Node District supports compact, transit-oriented mixed-use and residential development centered on the three Metro Blue Line stations.

Corridor (CDR)

The Corridor District is applied to properties along Long Beach Boulevard between Blue Line stations and the 405 Freeway. It is intended to provide housing options and neighborhood-serving uses within walking distance of a transit node.

Medical (M)

The Medical District establishes a comprehensive health campus based on the Long Beach Memorial Medical Center's master planning efforts.

Open Space (OS)

The Open Space District identifies existing areas reserved for community and mini-parks and creates new space for parks.

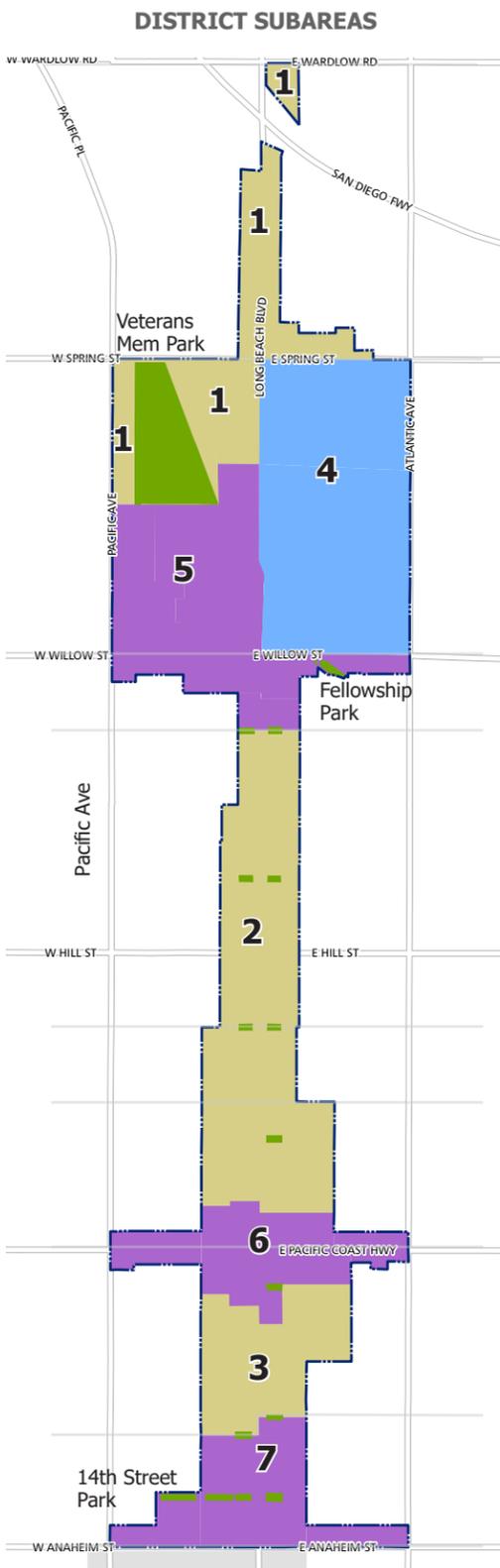
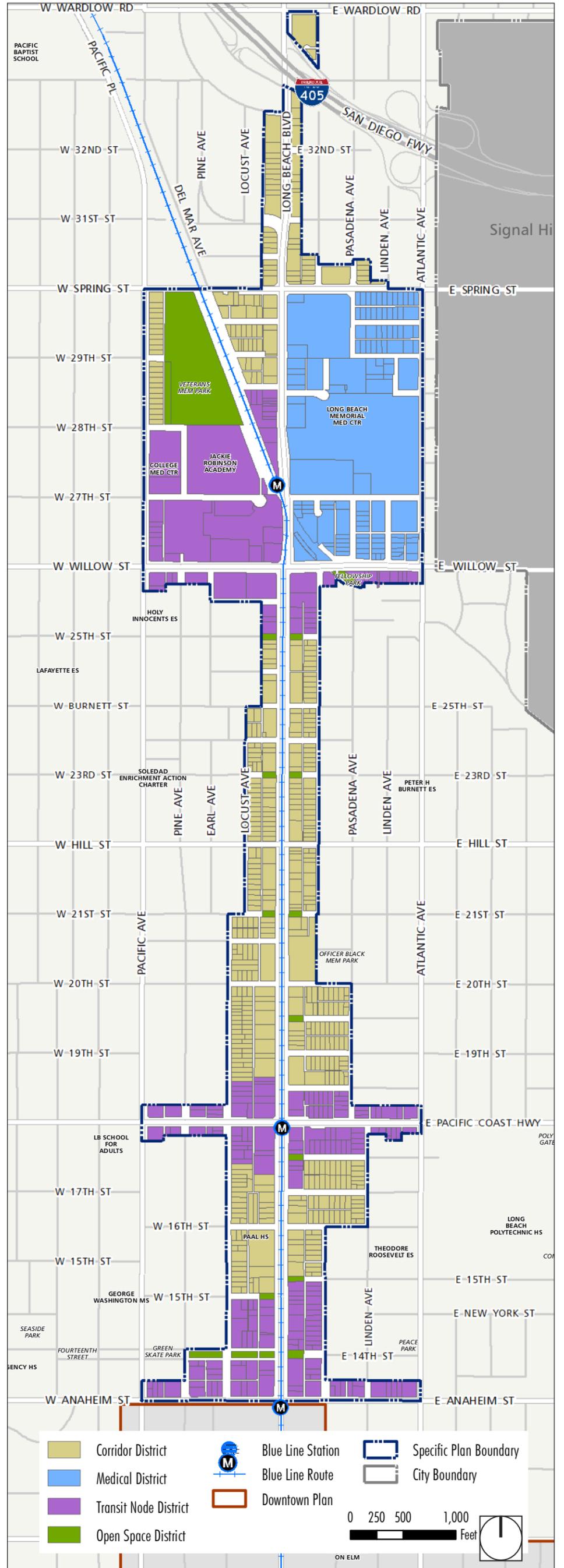
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TABLE 1-1 LAND USE SUMMARY BY DISTRICT

Land Use Summary by District					
District	Acres	Typical Density (per ac)	Dwelling Units	Comm/Employ Sq Ft	Hotel Rooms/Hospital Beds
Corridor Districts					
1	25	15-40	408	274,766	---
2	51	15-40	924	331,815	---
3	20	15-40	450	92,663	---
Total	96	-	1,782	699,244	---
Medical District					
4	63	20-30	300	757,600	854 beds
Total	63	-	300	757,600	854 beds
Transit Node Districts					
5	44	30-60	774	924,296	175 rooms/148 beds
6	20	30-60	362	297,125	102 rooms
7	19	30-60	401	319,000	---
Total	83	-	1,537	1,540,421	277 rooms/148 beds
OS ¹	18	-	-	-	-
ROW	114	-	-	-	-
Total	375	-	3,619	2,997,265	277 rooms/983 beds

Note:
1. The Open Space District consists of 15.2 acres of existing park area plus 2.6 acres of future parklets. Figures above subject to rounding.

FIGURE 1-1 LAND USE PLAN



This map divides the land use districts into subareas to summarize the approximate distribution of development potential throughout the Midtown Specific Plan.

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1.4 MOBILITY AND STREETScape PLAN

Drawing from the Mobility Element of the City's General Plan, the mobility plan for Midtown incorporates enhancements that promote active transportation, including walking, cycling, and skating. This Plan also promotes alternative transportation modes that can help to alleviate roadway congestion, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and improve air quality, while helping residents to improve their own health and wellness. Infrastructure improvements related to mobility include enhancements that will create a complete street, a roadway network that provides safe and convenient access for all users—pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and automobile.

The mobility and streetscape plan are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4, Mobility and Streetscape.

1.5 DESIGN GUIDELINES

The design guidelines in this Plan are intended to promote quality design that is consistent with the overall vision, and provide a level of flexibility to encourage creative design. The guidelines direct the physical design of building sites, architecture, and landscape elements within the Specific Plan boundary. The design guidelines are established to create a distinct character for Long Beach Boulevard and to ensure that new development is designed to cultivate an active street life while creating an overall positive architectural aesthetic.

The design guidelines are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5, Design Guidelines.

1.6 INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

The potential buildout of this Specific Plan can rely on existing facilities for water, sewer, and stormwater. A few improvements, already identified by the City's Master Plan of Drainage, need to be implemented as development occurs in the Medical District and Corridor District 2. Overall, changes in Midtown proposed by this Plan have a minimal impact on the City's infrastructure systems and public services provided in the area.

The infrastructure plan is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6, Infrastructure.

1.7 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Revitalizing Midtown will require streetscape and infrastructure upgrades to stimulate change and turn this Plan's vision into reality. Based on an analysis of the corridor and input from the residents, property owners, and development community, this Plan identifies several infrastructure

enhancements, including the addition of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, more canopy trees, and flexible regulations to spur private investment and revitalization in Midtown. Financing for the development concept projects and other future corridor enhancements are summarized below and provided in Chapter 7, Administration and Implementation.

1.7.1 Implementation Funding and Strategy

Funding the implementation of upgraded infrastructure could come from a variety of resources. These include, but are not limited to, local capital funds; local partnerships; regional, state, and federal grants; district-based assessments; and developer contributions. Many of these funding mechanisms depend on capturing a portion of real estate value and may take time to implement because they partly depend on improvement in property values or development activity in Midtown.

However, changes to the Specific Plan area are intended to occur incrementally. The City can start with small interim projects, such as adding street trees and furniture, which may help to attract developer interest and increase property values.

Since funding may be limited, the City should employ a strategy of concentrating improvements in stronger nodes to maximize their market impact. Short-term investments should be concentrated in the highest-potential development areas within a few blocks of the intersection of East Anaheim Street and Long Beach Boulevard (Transit Node 7) and near the Willow Transit Station area (Transit Node 5). Where feasible, bicycle lanes and the installation of other bicycle facility improvements could occur in the short term around these nodes. Over time, the improvements can be extended when grant funding and/or local district-based funding sources become available.

Table 1-2 provides a summary of the applicable funding sources categorized by potential infrastructure improvement.

TABLE 1-2 FUNDING SOURCES FOR INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Funding Source Category	Funding Source	Improvement Category				
		Bicycle Network & Facilities	Pedestrian Enhancements	Streetscape	Park & Recreation	Transit Facilities
Local Revenues & Fees	Local Revenues	X	X	X	X	X
	User Fees					X
Property-Based Financing Tools	BID/PBID	X	X	X	X	X
	Assessment District	X	X	X	X	X
	Community Facilities District	X	X	X	X	X
Development	Impact and In-Lieu Fees	X	X	X	X	X
	Development Agreements	X	X	X	X	X
	Local Partnerships		X	X	X	X
Grant Programs	SCAG RTP	X	X	X		X
	LA Metro TIP	X	X	X		X
	SCAG ATP	X	X	X		
	Caltrans ATP	X	X	X		
	HCD Housing-Related Parks				X	
	HCD IIG		X	X		
	HCD TOD Housing	X	X	X		X
	California Parks and Rec LWCF				X	
Other Tools	HUD CDBG	X	X	X	X	X
	Structured Funds					
	Revolving Loan Funds	X	X	X	X	X

1.8 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The Specific Plan was adopted in compliance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.). Pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines (Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3, Section 15000 et seq.), the City of Long Beach prepared an Initial Study and Notice of Preparation and made these documents available to responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and interested parties for a 30-day public review period, which extended from March 9 to April 7, 2015. Through the Initial Study, the City determined that implementation of the Specific Plan could result in potentially significant environmental impacts and that the preparation of a programmatic-level Environmental Impact Report (Program EIR) was required.

The Midtown Specific Plan EIR (State Clearinghouse No. 2015031034) is a Program EIR. As provided in Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines, a Program EIR may be prepared on a series of actions that may be characterized as one large project. The Specific Plan establishes an overall development program that can be characterized as one large project,

but its implementation will require a series of future discretionary actions (approvals of specific projects) by the City of Long Beach. The Specific Plan Program EIR is intended to serve as the primary environmental document for all future entitlements (later activities) associated with implementation of the Specific Plan, including all discretionary approvals requested or required to implement the project.

Pursuant to Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines, a later activity under the Specific Plan development program must be examined in the light of the Specific Plan Program EIR to determine whether additional environmental documentation must be prepared. Each later activity must undergo an initial study and analysis by the City to determine if the activity is within the scope of the Specific Plan Program EIR. Because these later activities are not new projects as defined by CEQA, compliance for each impact category is narrowed to a determination as to whether the activity would result in: (1) no substantial change from the previous analysis; (2) a more severe impact; or (3) a new significant impact. Based on the results of this initial study, the City will determine which of the following actions is applicable to the later activity:

- The later activity is a component of and consistent with the Specific Plan and has been previously analyzed as a part of the Specific Plan Program EIR and findings certified pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines. No additional CEQA documentation is required (CEQA Guidelines Section 15168).
- The later activity is a component of the Specific Plan and has been previously analyzed as a part of the Specific Plan Program EIR and findings certified pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines; however, minor technical changes or additions are needed to make the previous documentation adequate to cover the project. An Addendum to the Specific Plan Program EIR is required (CEQA Guidelines Section 15164).
- The later activity is either not a component of the Specific Plan or has not been previously analyzed as part of the Specific Plan Program EIR, in which case an initial study and additional environmental review under CEQA will be required unless the later activity is exempt under CEQA.

In addition, future development projects within the Specific Plan area may be eligible for streamlining under CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.3, effective January 1, 2013. To be eligible, a project must:

- Be located in an urban area on a previously developed site or surrounded by urban uses (75 percent of perimeter);
- Satisfy performance standards in CEQA Guidelines Appendix M; and
- Be consistent with the general use designation, density, building intensity, and applicable policies in the Southern California Association of Governments Sustainable Communities Strategy.