

An aerial photograph of downtown Los Angeles, showing a dense urban landscape with numerous skyscrapers and buildings. The sky is clear and blue, with a slight haze on the horizon. The title 'your downtownLA VISION PLAN' is overlaid in the center of the image. The word 'your' is in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font. 'downtownLA' is in a larger, bold, sans-serif font, with 'downtown' in white and 'LA' in dark blue. 'VISION PLAN' is in a smaller, white, uppercase, sans-serif font.

your downtownLA

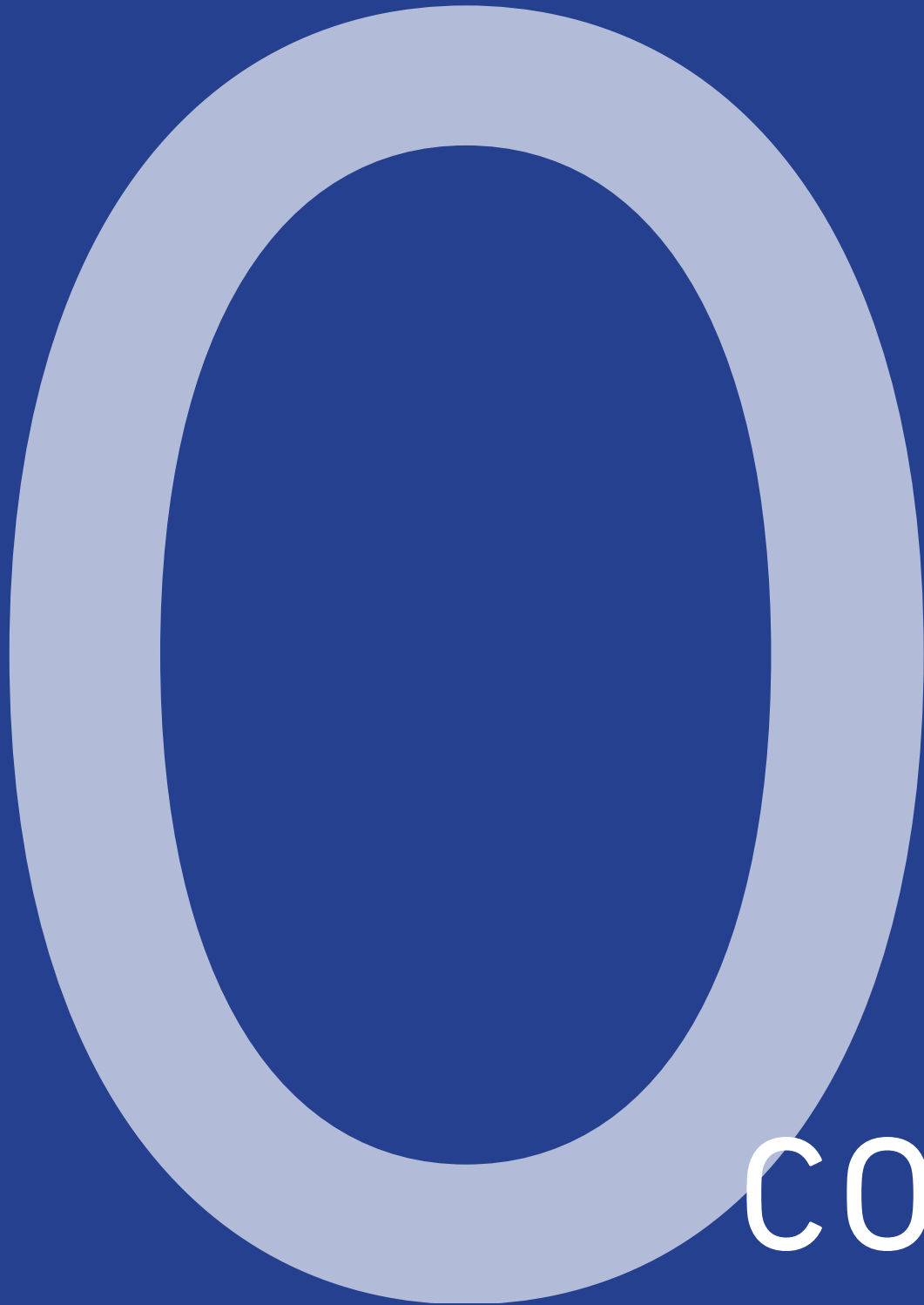
VISION PLAN



This is a project for the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council with funding provided by the Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) Compass Blueprint Program. Compass Blueprint assists Southern California cities and other organizations in evaluating planning options and stimulating development consistent with the region's goals. Compass Blueprint tools support visioning efforts, infill analyses, economic and policy analyses, and marketing and communication programs.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Los Angeles is the quintessential global city. Breathtakingly diverse, the second-most populous U.S. city, and the cultural heart of the west coast, it is able to project its influence and ideas unconstrained by geography. It is one of only a handful of cities that the rest of the world looks to for leadership and inspiration.

In a competitive global context, it is critical that Los Angeles continually re-invigorates its core – Downtown – as a choice place to live in, work in and play in. Downtown’s skyline is the image most strongly associated with the City of Los Angeles. According to multiple surveys, Downtown Los Angeles is also home to more than 52,000+ residents, 200,000+ workers, 10 million+ visitors, and a multitude of neighborhoods and districts.

In the early 2000s, with the bold goal of “Empower Yourself, Empower Your Community, Empower LA,” the City of Los Angeles embraced, in an unprecedented fashion, citizen-based governance and grassroots democracy. Neighborhood Councils were established all across the city and have, in the decade since, empowered community members to lead, engage, and participate in the governance of their city and their neighborhoods. Today there are over 95 neighborhood councils, each its own crucible of civic engagement and pride.

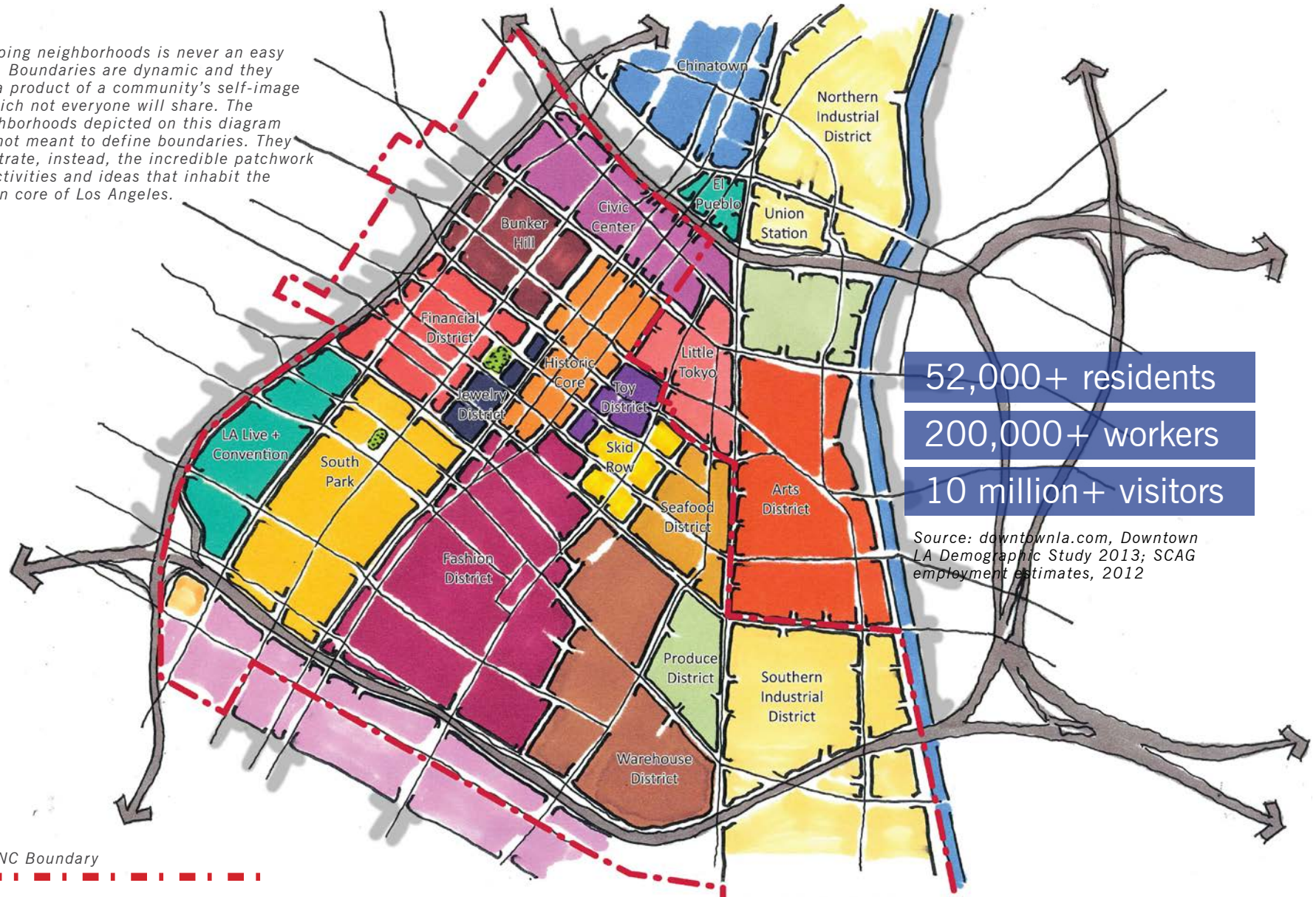
The Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council (DLANC) was established in 2002, one of the first neighborhood councils in the City. Its mission is to “promote more citizen participation in government and make government more responsive to the local needs” of the Downtown community.

DLANC continues to be a pioneer. It is the first neighborhood council to have sought and secured the resources to map its own future. In 2012, it was awarded a grant from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) to craft its own vision for the future. This document is the product of that grant. The greatest promise of Vision Downtown will be its ability to provide a much-needed framework for Downtown’s successful evolution and fulfill the vision for future generations. DLANC’s proactive efforts to shape its own future will serve as pilot study for all neighborhood councils. This vision plan and the underlying process has the potential to serve as a model for other neighborhood councils interested in proactively crafting their own destiny.

Just as neighborhood councils were once an experiment, this next level of community planning is as well. The success of DLANC’s planning will transform the dynamics of traditional city planning in the City of Los Angeles. What is not lost upon DLANC and the community are the limitations of their roles. Neighborhood councils

A patchwork quilt of neighborhoods.

Mapping neighborhoods is never an easy task. Boundaries are dynamic and they are a product of a community's self-image – which not everyone will share. The neighborhoods depicted on this diagram are not meant to define boundaries. They illustrate, instead, the incredible patchwork of activities and ideas that inhabit the urban core of Los Angeles.



do not have any official authority or responsibility to regulate and manage land uses. That lies with City Planning. Neighborhood Councils do not have funds or mandates for making any kind of public improvements. The City and County do. Neighborhood councils do not have permanent staff and therefore lack the institutional and management continuity to shepherd long-term initiatives. The City and County do. Neighborhood Councils primarily play a (powerful) advisory role to decision makers.

How will DLANC benefit from this vision plan?

It will provide guidance to the DLANC board as it performs its review/advisory role for projects within its jurisdiction.

It provides a community-endorsed set of aspirations that will provide input to City and other public agencies as they decide on revising and establishing new regulations for Downtown development. ReCode LA, the new Downtown Development Code, and the Central City/Central City North Community Plans are of immediate relevance.

It identifies short-term individual projects in the public realm, which DLANC can pursue for implementation via additional fundraising.

Finally, it assembles in one place a comprehensive set of aspirations that embody the vision of this generation of the Downtown community.

The Downtown community embraces its unique position of serving as the heart of the city, a

crucible of its finest aspirations. It strives to protect its inclusive and diverse mix of residents, jobs, and visitors and is ready to set standards – that the rest of the city may emulate – for progressive and responsible urban growth. It welcomes the opportunity to place the pedestrian first and lead the way in redefining the city's relationship with car and pedestrians.

The Downtown community recognizes that residents – people who live and raise their families in the neighborhood – have been instrumental in guiding Downtown's resurgence. The decline of American Downtowns after World War II was precipitated by the gutting of its residential populations. Downtown Los Angeles is one of the most successful U.S. cities leading their return by prioritizing housing in future developments – for all incomes and generations. Downtown doubled its population from more than 20,000 to over 40,000 between 2000 and 2010. Downtown now aspires to reach a population of 100,000 in the next 10 years. A critical mass of residents will ensure that amenities, attention, and opportunities continue to follow.

Through zoning changes introduced in the early 1900s, industrial uses in Downtown were expanded and have grown to become an integral part of its local economy and an engine of the regional economy. Downtown should remain a major employment center for the city and the region; the Downtown community and City leaders would like to see the Downtown area continue to provide quality jobs at a variety of income and skill levels. But not all that is currently designated as industrial land needs to remain so. The dynamics of the global economy have

seen many manufacturing jobs leave the country, leaving behind vacant or underutilized industrial districts. Downtown stakeholders want to “leave a light on” for manufacturing jobs to return, but in the interim would like greater flexibility in how industrial lands are utilized. This plan suggests a precedent-setting “flex use” approach along with a development strategy centered around existing and new transit. These provide the city a framework to manage future growth.

The quality of open space in Downtown and its ability to sustain existing and attract new residents is fundamental to Downtown’s future. The Downtown community demands that open space be equitably distributed, actively programmed, and designed and operated to the highest global standards.

Streets are the theatre of public life and no great city can be one without great streets. Downtown lies at the nexus of the city’s street grid and at the center of the County’s regional public transportation network. It bears a great responsibility in ensuring that its streets are inclusive and usable by people on feet, people on wheels, and people on transit. Given the diversity and intensity of street users, Downtown seeks its own rules to ensure everyone’s safety.

Billions of dollars of public and private investment are planned and proposed in Downtown. These are significant efforts that will dramatically transform Downtown. However, in 2010, the AIA Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) confirmed that Downtown stakeholders bemoan the absence of a Downtown-wide framework plan that can guide individual projects and help them to integrate into

the larger vision for Downtown, rather than be evaluated on an isolated, project-by-project basis. This effort – Vision Downtown – aims to provide that framework and serve as a mechanism for bringing together the aspirations of the community and the needs of a global city. It follows in the footsteps of past visioning efforts in Downtown – the Silver Book Plan of 1972, the Downtown Strategic Plan of 1994, and the Diamond Plan of 1997. This is a formidable legacy but an absolute imperative, for there has been no Downtown-wide planning effort since the Adaptive Reuse Policy adopted by the City in 1999. Downtown’s population has more than doubled since, but new amenities and public improvements have not followed apace. The Downtown community strongly advocates for Vision Downtown to orchestrate these efforts under its umbrella.

Part manifesto, part vision plan, Vision Downtown embodies and broadcasts the aspirations and expectations that the Downtown community has for its neighborhood.

Downtown is
special. It will
always be the
commercial,
entertainment,
cultural, and civic
heart of LA.



Why is Downtown important ?

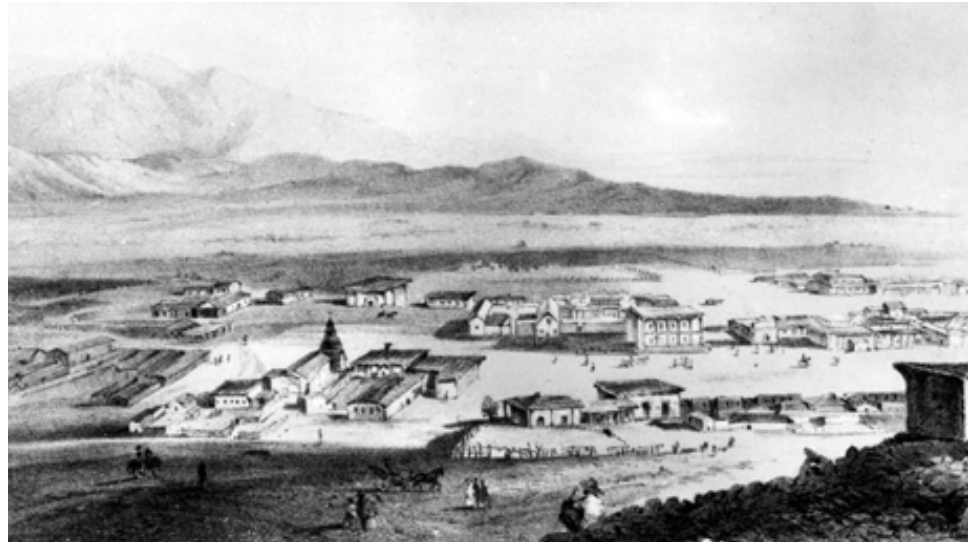
Image: Installation at 8th and San Pedro. Source: AECOM

01a. It is the birthplace of Los Angeles.

El Pueblo is the City's original heart.

In 1769, during the first Spanish sojourn into Alta California, Father Juan Crespi noted an inland location with a small river, with water in the summer, and good soil. He suggested in his diary that should a town be needed in the area, this was a good choice and he named the site, as above, for the feast of the day: Our Lady, Queen of the Angels.

El pueblo de Nuestra Señora, La Reina de Los Angeles de Porciúncula was founded as a city on September 4, 1781. It is the second oldest city in California and today we know it as Los Angeles. After Mexico declared its independence from Spain in 1821 and the United States prevailed during the Mexican-American War in 1848, Los Angeles officially became an American city. It was later incorporated in 1850, the same year California became a state.



Bird's eye view of Los Angeles in 1853. The Plaza is located in the left-center of the drawing, behind the Plaza church. Source: LAPL.



Pre-1869 view of the Los Angeles Plaza. Source: California Historical Society Collection, USC Libraries.

01b. All roads lead to Downtown.

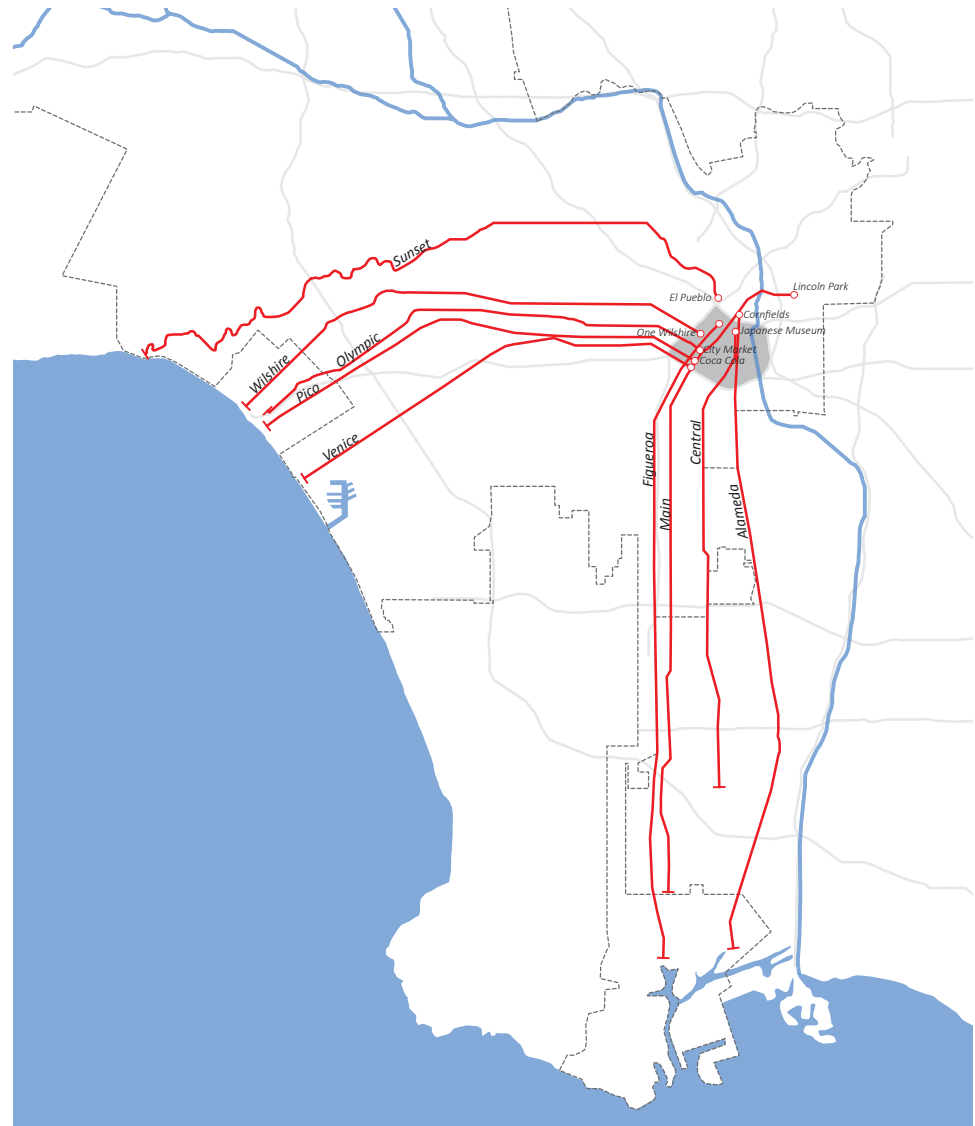
It is the origin of Los Angeles' great boulevards.

East-West Boulevards

Sunset Boulevard terminated at El Pueblo before it was extended to connect with Macy Street and head east under Union Station. Wilshire Boulevard dead-ends (without much fanfare) at Grand Avenue at One Wilshire. Olympic Boulevard dead-ends at City Market (although it picks up again at Stanford Avenue, continuing into Montebello). Pico Boulevard terminates at the historic Coca Cola Factory east of the Fashion District. Venice Boulevard (which used to be 16th Street) once terminated at Alameda Street. It is only east of Main Street that Venice Boulevard returns to being 16th Street, but is now devoured by the frontage system of the 10 Freeway at the Fashion District.

North-South Boulevards

Alameda Street runs parallel to the Alameda Corridor, spanning 21 miles from the Cornfields in Chinatown to Wilmington near the Port of Long Beach. Central Avenue originates at the Japanese Museum in Little Tokyo and dead-ends in Carson. Main Street begins just north of Downtown in Lincoln Park and terminates in Carson. Figueroa, has an ambiguous interruption near the 110-101 freeway intersection, but also terminates at the Port of Long Beach.



It is at the confluence of multiple lines of transport.

Automobile

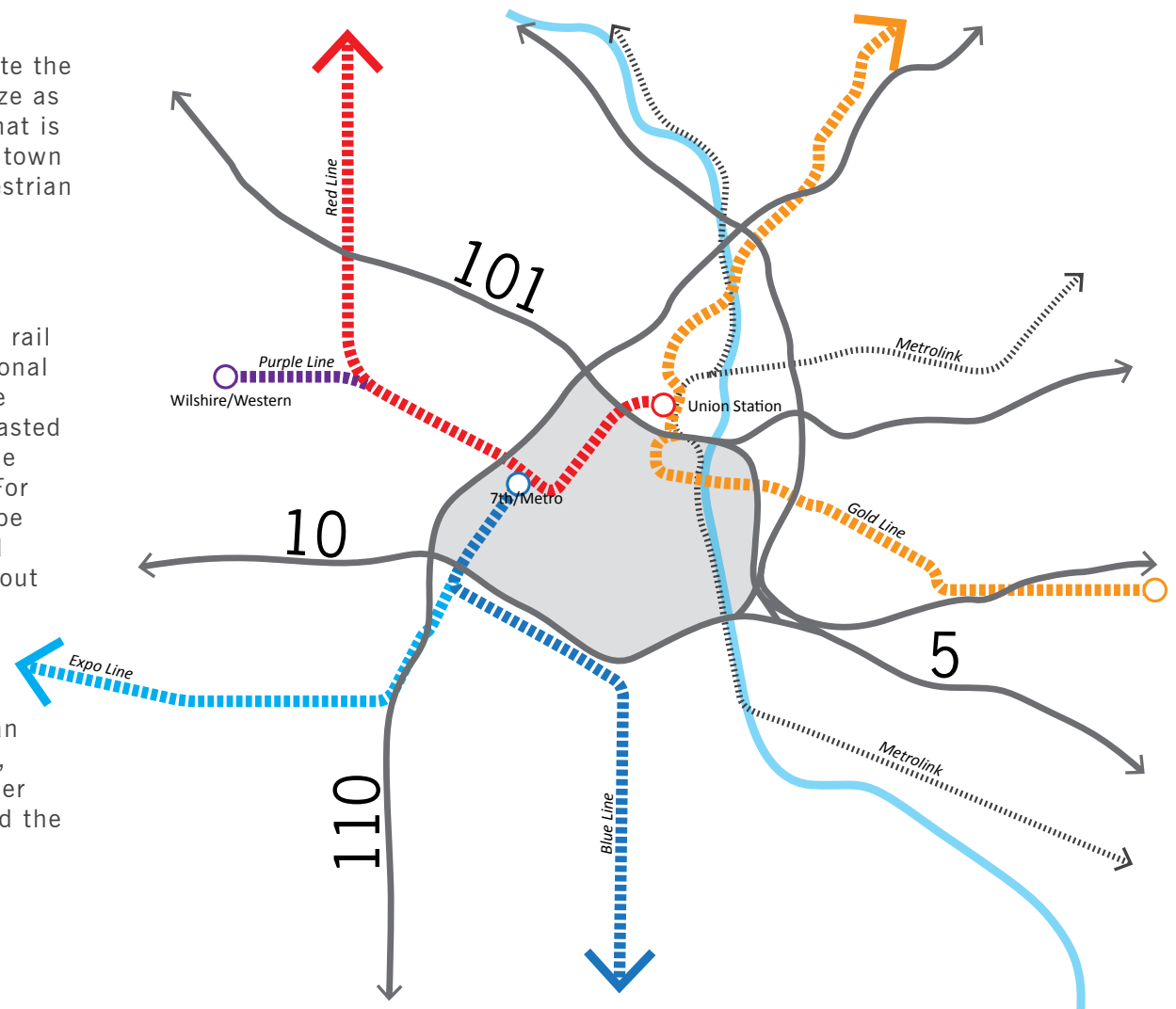
The 10, 101, 110, and 5 freeways demarcate the boundaries of what many Angelenos recognize as Downtown, drawing a clear distinction of what is considered to be inside and outside of Downtown (albeit at the detriment of good quality pedestrian connection experiences).

Rail Transit

Downtown is also the center of Metro's light rail system. 7th/Metro Center Station is the regional hub for the Red, Purple, and Expo lines. The much-anticipated Regional Connector (forecasted opening in 2020) will provide a one-seat ride for travel across all of Los Angeles County. For example, on the Gold Line, passengers will be able to travel from Azusa to Long Beach and from East Los Angeles to Santa Monica without transferring lines.

Bus Transit

Similarly, Downtown is serviced by more than a hundred bus transit lines, including Metro, commuter bus lines (including dozens of other municipal and regional transit agencies), and the LADOT's DASH bus.



01c. It is the civic, cultural, and commercial heart of Los Angeles.

And it is once again becoming a place of choice to live, work, learn, explore, and play in.



Images: Life throughout Downtown Los Angeles. Source: AECOM

Downtown LA
predated the
automobile, and
there is little
doubt it will
outlast it.

A nighttime photograph of a city street, likely Broadway in Los Angeles, featuring illuminated signs for 'ANGELLES', 'Los Angeles', and 'JEWELRY'. A bus with route '30 PICO-RIMPAN' is visible on the right. A large, light gray stylized number '2' is overlaid on the right side of the image. A red banner with white text is positioned on the left side.

What has shaped Downtown?

Image: Los Angeles Theater on Broadway, looking north. Source: AECOM

02a. Significant milestones in Downtown's development

As expansive and sprawled as Los Angeles has become in the past century, Downtown Los Angeles remains the center of the city. In its early years, the city grew outward from El Pueblo, following the banks of the Los Angeles River, along rail lines and street car routes. Through zoning, Victorian homes and mansions that lined the grid of Downtown eventually gave way to industrial and commercial uses. The proliferation of the automobile and popularization of suburban sprawl encouraged a Downtown devoid of its original vibrancy. In the past two decades, however, Downtown Los Angeles has been undergoing a new renaissance.

1769

On August 2, 1769, missionary Juan Crespi notes in his diary an inland location with a river that has water in the summer and good soil. He suggests, should a town be needed in the area, this was a good choice.

1781

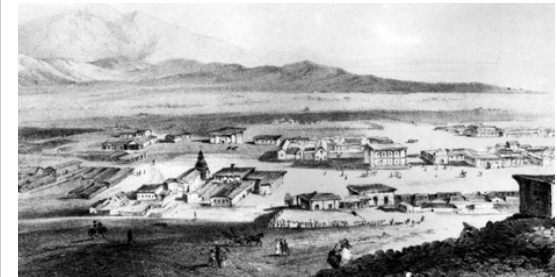
A group of 11 families settles by the Porciúncula (the Los Angeles River) under the order of Felipe de Neve, Spanish Governor of Las Californias. September 4, 1781 marks the official date of the founding of El Pueblo de La Reina de Los Angeles.



Pre-1869 view of Los Angeles Plaza. Source: California Historical Society Collection.

1821

Mexico declares its independence from Spain in 1821, freeing Alta California from Spanish control. Since Spain had always acted through the viceroy at Mexico City, there was little change seen in Los Angeles.



Bird's eye view of Los Angeles in 1853. Source: LAPL.

1740

1760

1780

1800

1820

1840

1848

Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo is signed to end the Mexican-American War. Mexico formally cedes California to the United States.

1850

Compromise of 1850 is signed. Los Angeles is incorporated as a municipality, and California becomes the 30th state in the union.

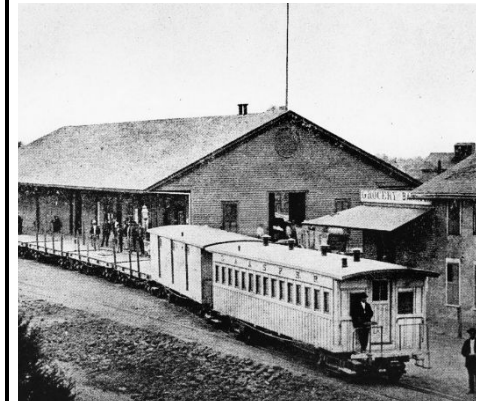


The "Great Compromiser," Henry Clay, introduces the Compromise of 1850 in the U.S. Senate. Source: ushistory.org.

1860

1869

Southern California's first railroad is constructed, connecting Downtown with San Pedro Bay.



1870s view of the Los Angeles and San Pedro Railroad at Alameda and Commercial. Source: Dick Whittington Photography Collection, USC Libraries.

1876

Cathedral of Saint Vibiana, designed by Architect Ezra Kysor, is completed. It is the city's first cathedral.

The Southern Pacific Railroad connects Los Angeles to San Francisco, giving Los Angeles transcontinental service.

1870

1885

Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad completes its transcontinental line, making Los Angeles its west coast terminus.

1893

Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad opens its La Grande Depot on Santa Fe Avenue.



The Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad once operated the La Grande Station on Santa Fe between what are now 2nd and 3rd Streets (currently the site of One Santa Fe). 1890. Source: Huntington Library Collection.

1909

Los Angeles is the first large city in the nation to adopt a zoning ordinance. It divides the city into 27 districts, including one large zone restricted to residential.

1897

The first gasoline-powered automobile in Los Angeles hits the streets in Downtown.



Built by Philip Erie, the driver. Los Angeles Mayor, William H. Workman, is in the rear seat. 1897. Source: Los Angeles Public Library.

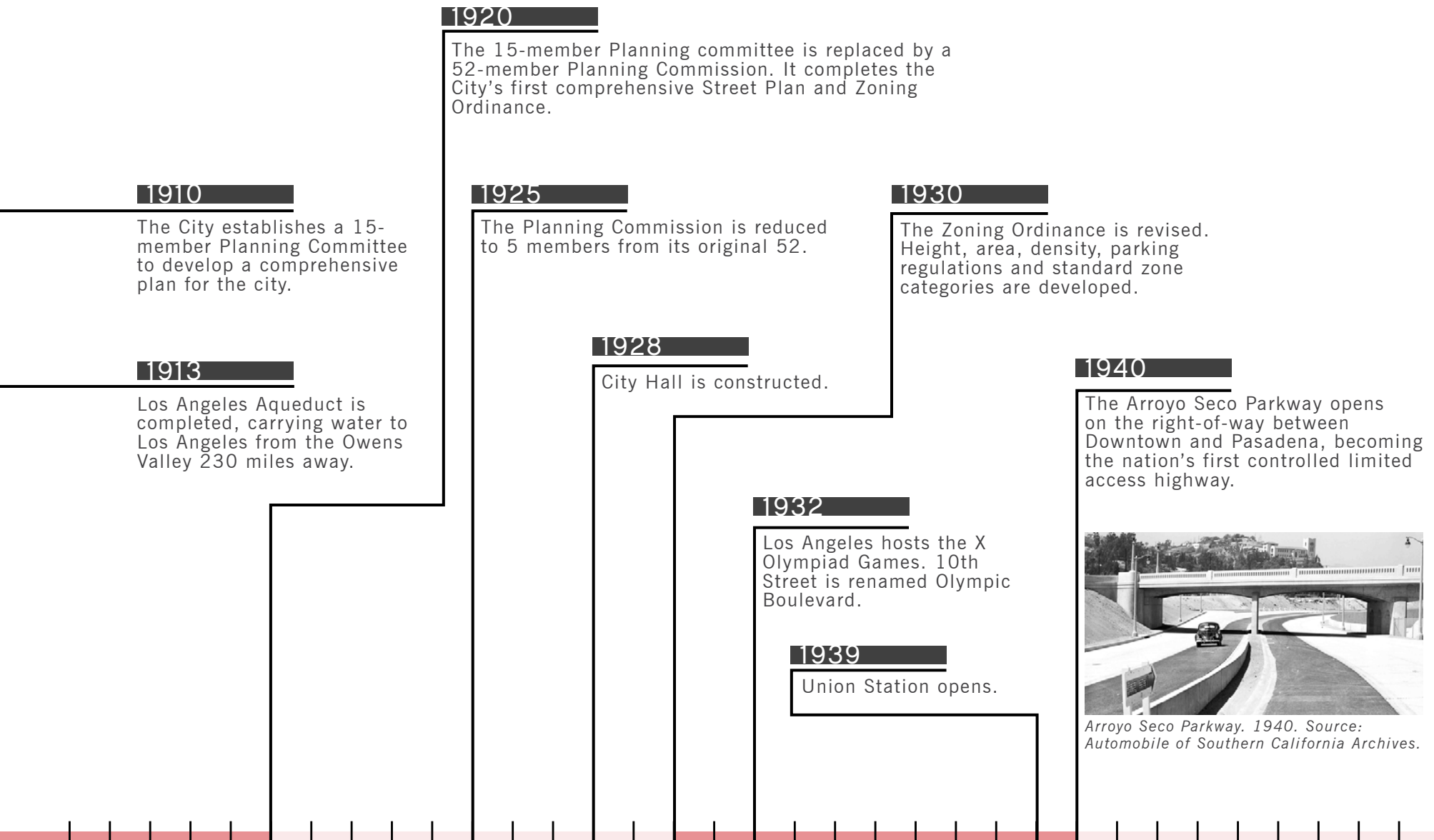
1901

Pacific Electric is formed. At its peak in 1920, it was the nation's largest interurban electric railway system covering over 1,100 miles of rail lines throughout the Los Angeles region.

1880

1890

1900



1910

The City establishes a 15-member Planning Committee to develop a comprehensive plan for the city.

1913

Los Angeles Aqueduct is completed, carrying water to Los Angeles from the Owens Valley 230 miles away.

1920

The 15-member Planning committee is replaced by a 52-member Planning Commission. It completes the City's first comprehensive Street Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

1925

The Planning Commission is reduced to 5 members from its original 52.

1928

City Hall is constructed.

1930

The Zoning Ordinance is revised. Height, area, density, parking regulations and standard zone categories are developed.

1932

Los Angeles hosts the X Olympiad Games. 10th Street is renamed Olympic Boulevard.

1939

Union Station opens.

1940

The Arroyo Seco Parkway opens on the right-of-way between Downtown and Pasadena, becoming the nation's first controlled limited access highway.



Arroyo Seco Parkway. 1940. Source: Automobile of Southern California Archives.

1946

The City adopts the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (this is the same document in effect today).



Newspaper ad announcing the forthcoming 1946 Zoning Ordinance. Source: recode.la.

1947

The Collier-Burns Act is passed, allocating millions of dollars to the construction of freeways.

1948

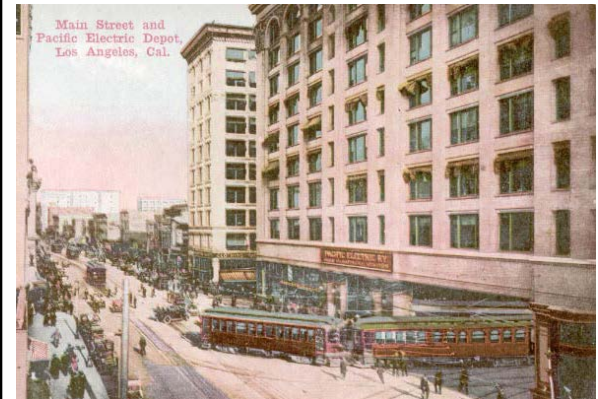
The Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA/LA) is created, dedicated to revitalizing blighted areas.

1956

President Dwight D. Eisenhower signs the Federal-Aid Highway Act, authorizing the construction of 41,000 miles of highway.

1961

The last of the Pacific Electric Red Cars in Los Angeles (the line to Long Beach) ceases operation.



Pre-1960. Pacific Electric Depot (now PE Lofts) at Main and 6th Streets. Source: spectracompany.com.

1974

The City Council adopts the "Centers Concept," which envisions LA as a network of urban centers or nodes of development connected by rail.

1950

1960

1970

1984

Los Angeles becomes the only American city ever to host the summer Olympic games twice.



Celebration at Pershing Square in honor of 1984 Olympic Games. Source: Los Angeles Public Library.

1990

US Bank Tower opens.
The Metro Blue Line opens connecting Downtown to Long Beach.

1993

The Metro Red Line from Union Station to Westlake/MacArthur Park opens.

1996

City Council adopts a new guiding document for long-range planning called the General Plan Framework.

1999

The Adaptive Reuse Ordinance is adopted for Downtown, facilitating the conversion of historic commercial buildings into housing. Staples Center opens.

2000

The City Planning Commission is expanded from 5 to 9 members, and 7 Area Planning Commissions are established.

2003

Walt Disney Concert Hall opens, a new architectural emblem for the city.

2008

LA Live opens.

2011

CRA is disbanded.

2013

Plan re:code LA is launched, a comprehensive 5-year rewrite of the Zoning Code.

2014

Vision Downtown

02b. From pueblo to urban core

Portions of the historical information below are supplemented by research material from KCET's "LA as Subject" online series.

A prescribed beginning

By the time El Pueblo was settled in 1781, its location, orientation, and design had already been prescribed. As a New World Spanish colonization, the settlement of El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora, La Reina de Los Angeles de Porciúncula followed the strict regulations listed in the Spanish Law of the Indies. It ordered new settlements to build homes around a rectangular plaza (La Plaza was originally 200 x 300 feet); locate 20 miles from the sea to avoid sea-borne attacks (El Pueblo is located within reasonable distance from Santa Monica and Long Beach); locate near a freshwater source (El Pueblo settled just a Zanja Madre's stretch away from the Porciúncula, today known as the LA River); locate close to a native tribe for labor (at the time, the area near El Pueblo was home to the Yanga, the largest Tongva native village); and disorient 45 degrees from true north (because of the irregularity of the Porciúncula, only a close 36 degree compliance was possible).

Center of commerce and life

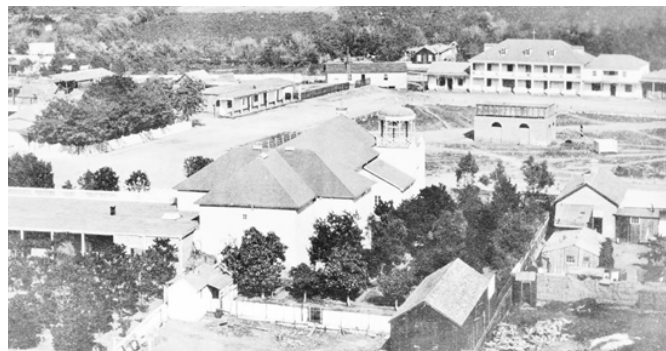
At its infancy, Los Angeles was an unimportant, dusty pueblo consisting of not more than a few hundred inhabitants. Yet, for decades, El Pueblo remained the center of civic and commercial life. At this time, planning was crude and largely based upon the need to make connections. As such, many roads originated at El Pueblo. The old road to San Pedro Port (which evolved into San Pedro

Street) became the location for residential living. Mission Road led to the San Gabriel Mission. And Santa Fe Avenue was named for the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad that ran alongside the Los Angeles River.

Railroads, cable cars, and streetcars

As Los Angeles continued to grow, its form followed the alignments of its railroads and streetcars. For example, the Los Angeles and San Pedro Railroads ran down Alameda Street towards the Port of San Pedro. Horse-drawn streetcars moved people from town out towards parks such as Westlake Park (now MacArthur Park), Agricultural Park (now Exposition Park) and Echo Park. Other lines were laid to railroad depots such as the Southern Pacific (at Alameda Street) or the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe (at Santa Fe Avenue and 3rd).

Cable-car railroads and electric railroads



*1860s. The Plaza before the City converted it into a park.
Source: California Historical Society Collection.*



1897. Mateo Street & Santa Fe Ave. Street Car Co. seen traveling on an unpaved Santa Fe Avenue at 9th Street. Source: LAPL.

eventually took the place of horse-drawn lines as the systems continued to expand. Lines were laid further and further out. With the breakup of the ranchos during the second half of the 19th century, these vast tracts of land often sprouted new towns, such as Santa Monica, Downey, and Pasadena.

In the late 19th and early 20th century, Henry Edwards Huntington's traction systems -- the Los Angeles Railway (yellow car for local travel) and the Pacific Electric Railway (red car for distance travel) -- extended over Southern California like a constellation. At its zenith, the system stretched from Redlands to the San Fernando Valley to Balboa Island, covering some 1,100 miles of track. Huntington consolidated older systems and built new ones to create the largest inter-urban streetcar system in the world. Sadly, the system

never made Huntington any money, but he built the system as a means to subdivide real estate, so it essentially became a needed tool towards that end.

The need to separate uses

During the Progressive Era, the City of Los Angeles formed the City Planning Commission. It was formalized in 1920 out of the voluntary 1910 City Planning Association. Los Angeles was originally built as a city of residences; it was not known as a manufacturing center. In 1909, Los Angeles became the first large city in the nation to adopt a zoning ordinance. It divided the city into 27 districts, including one large zone restricted to residential. At the time, infill development caused



1889. Looking south on Broadway just after 2nd St. New cable car inauguration. The new cable company went broke after 3 years and cost \$1 million. Source: LAPL.



1890. Large houses on the south side of 7th St from Flower to Figueroa. This became the site of the Barker Bros. Department store (818 Building) in 1926. Source: LAPL.

concern that manufacturing, commercial, and industrial uses of land would mar the beauty of the residential districts that had so successfully attracted people of substance from the mid-Western states.

In 1922, the City of Los Angeles zoned residential housing out of the Downtown area in order to create a larger commercial district. This was in response to a need for a bigger commercial district following the addition of large tracts of land resulting from the 1916 water vote. During the 1920s, homes were razed throughout the Downtown area from middle- and working-class housing near the Los Angeles River to the mansions lining blocks and blocks of Figueroa Street. With the suburbanization of entertainment and shopping, finding its high point after World War II, this policy brought about a Downtown

that was devoid of culture and nightlife, yet increasingly occupied by people who were down and out. By 1960, one could say that Downtown Los Angeles was the world's largest "office park."

In 1930, height, density, and parking were added to the zoning categories. In 1946, the City of Los Angeles adopted the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. This is the same document, amended but never comprehensively edited or rewritten, used today. In 2013, Plan re:code LA was launched, a 5-year comprehensive and concerted effort to rewrite this now-aged document.

A city without a center

In response to the changing nature of land use, the City of Los Angeles adopted the Centers Concept in 1974. This concept envisioned Los



1938. Cars lined up to make a right-hand turn at 9th and Hill and Pacific Electric cars waiting to cross the intersection. Source: LAPL.

Angeles as a network of urban centers or nodes of development connected by rail. To an extent, this new visionary concept was a response to the high value of real estate at the time and the sale of studio back lots such as Warner Studios (Warner Center) and 20th Century Fox (Century City). These large-scale land uses had become less necessary with off-the-lot filming. In addition, the value of the real estate was so high at this time that keeping the land became difficult.

With the emphasis on suburban growth dominating the eras after the arrival of the transcontinental railroads, the subdivision of the ranchos, and the importation of water, Downtown Los Angeles was lost in the shuffle. Through the addition of consolidated towns such as Sawtelle, Eagle Rock, Hollywood, and many others, Downtown



1885. Residences at Bunker Hill looking west from 3rd St and Hill. To the right is the First Congregational Church. Source: LAPL.



1927. Northwest corner of 5th and Grand Ave. The Baronne and other apartments are seen around the corner parking lot. Source: LAPL.

Los Angeles lost its importance as the city center. These other towns already had Downtown components and many suburbanites found it more convenient to work and to shop in those places than to commute to Downtown Los Angeles for the same purpose. Downtowns in general declined after World War II; Downtown Los Angeles lost its shopping and entertainment venues to the suburbs (the housing piece having already been zoned out in the early 1920's).

Redevelopment

The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), a joint-powers authority between the City and the State, began to reinvent Downtown just after World War II, with the mission of reducing urban blight. The 1959 Bunker Hill Redevelopment area was one of their major projects which literally scraped the hill and -- with a 26-block plan labeled A-Z -- saw the rise of an expanded Civic Center area and the addition of many high-rise structures, including offices and hotels. Similarly, the South Park area was once full of small, dated apartments and parking lots. Through the CRA, these were reinvented as the Los Angeles



1926. Looking north at Main and 4th St. The Westminster Hotel is on the northeast corner and the San Fernando Building on the southeast. Source: LAPL.



1962. Bunker Hill buildings are demolished as Angels Flight continues up the hillside. Source: Los Angeles Times Photographic Archive, Young Research Library, UCLA.

Convention Center and, much later, as the Staples Center/LA Live entertainment complex we know today. Residents were relocated using CRA funds.

Adaptive Reuse

In 1999, the City of Los Angeles adopted the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance for Downtown facilitating the conversion of historic commercial buildings into housing. This Ordinance was a

joint public-private effort and arose from the abandonment of the older commercial core in favor of the newer high-rise office buildings in and around Bunker Hill. Adaptive reuse permitted the reuse of older commercial structures in the Historic Core as residential over retail, allowing dated commercial structures to be recycled and move forward with a new purpose.

A large amount of affordable housing was also created using CRA funds. Many of the people displaced by CRA projects had few alternatives to the low-income housing that was being lost to redevelopment. The CRA built or rehabilitated much of this housing on the east side of Downtown in the area between Alameda Street and Main Street -- the traditionally poorer neighborhoods that once competed for space



July 22, 1999. Developer Tom Gilmore (in white shirt) stands on 4th Street near Main St. Source: LAPL.

with the older traction lines and rail lines before the construction of Union Station and the loss of fixed-rail public transit.

Adjacent to this area -- between Alameda Street and the Los Angeles River -- was the area, strengthened in the 1922 zoning law, in which commercial and industrial land uses were permitted. About 8% of land in Los Angeles is devoted to industrial use. Today, about 50% of Downtown is zoned industrial and it provides a disproportionately large share of the City's industrial land supply. In recognition of the changing industrial/commercial land markets, many of these uses -- such as warehousing -- have shifted inland, first to the City of Commerce/City of Industry areas and later to the Inland Empire.

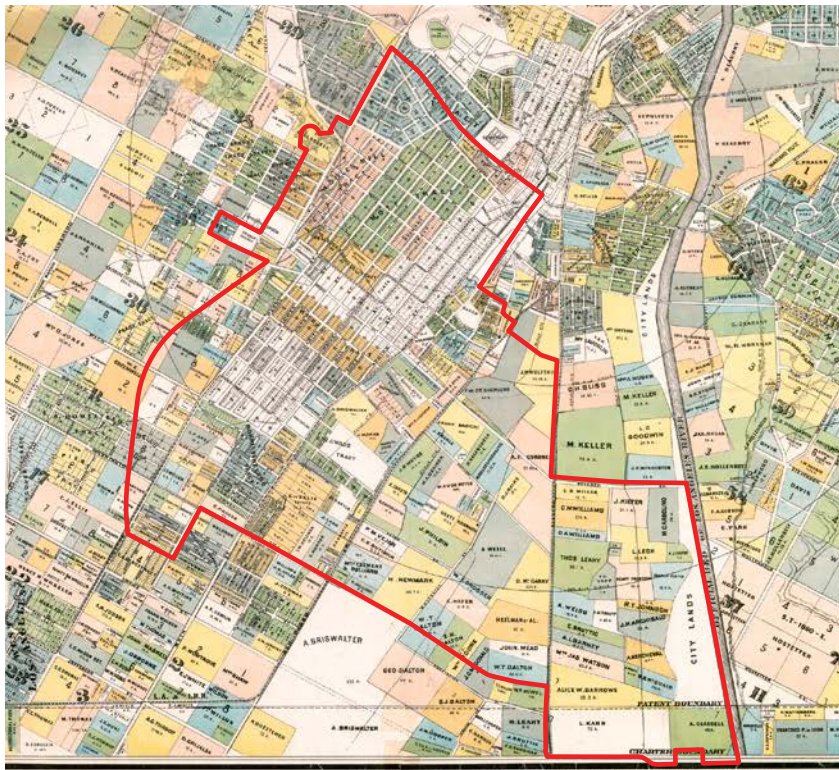
Renewed Renaissance

The City of Los Angeles has grown in 233 years from a dusty settlement along a small river to an expansive and enormous metropolitan area. Los Angeles started as a plaza surrounded by a pueblo, settled by families from Sonora, Mexico and guided by a Spanish planning document that, while fairly simple, gave Los Angeles parameters for its establishment and growth. Downtown Los Angeles, the place of the city's birth, remains the heart of the city and finds itself -- as it has often in the past -- at a crossroads, in need of a thoughtful road-map to guide its next transformation.

How has Downtown's form evolved through history?

Late 1800s

- Small, fine-grained residential lots throughout
- Main Street marked the edge of developed areas
- Agricultural lots in the flood plain in southeast



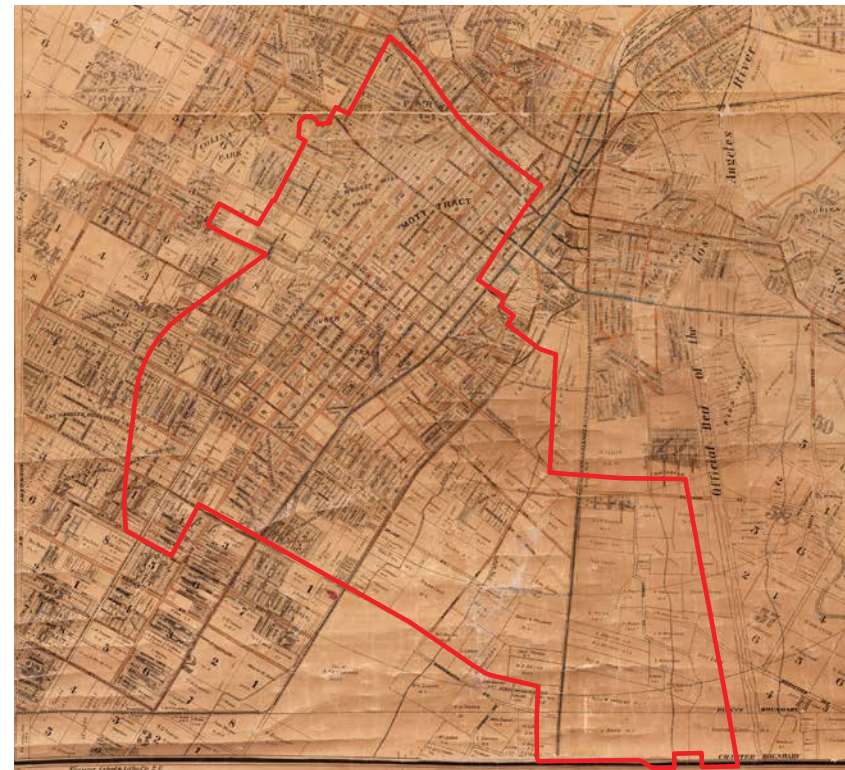
1884

Source: Los Angeles Public Library, HJ Stevenson Survey.

— DLANC Boundary in 2014

Late 1800s

- Developed areas move past Main Street

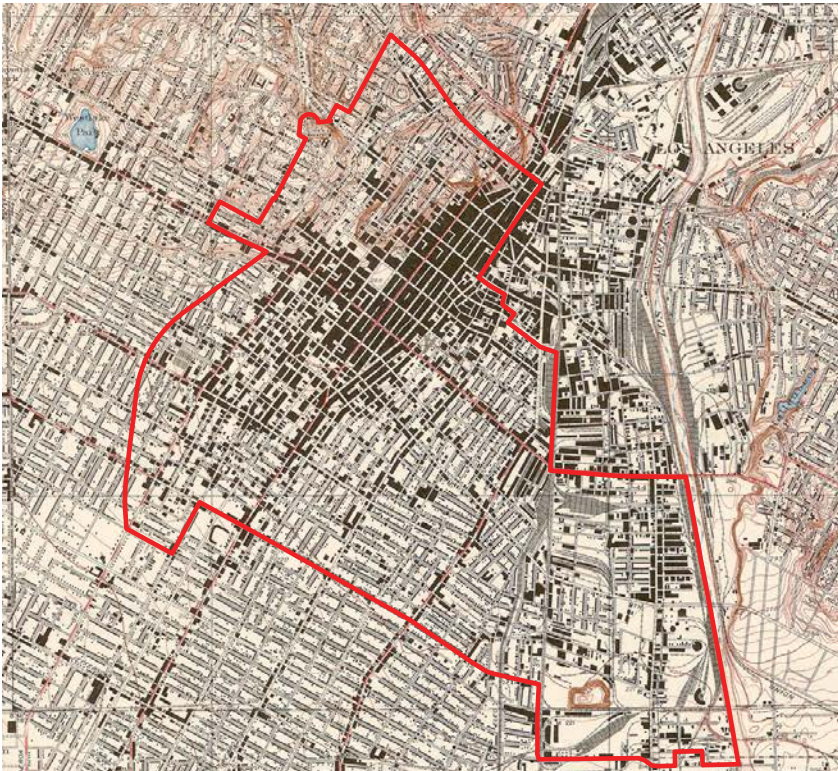


1887

Source: CRA, Los Angeles Survey.

Early 1900s

- Residential parcels replaced by large building footprints
- Industrial uses introduced to southeast
- Residential Bunker Hill is still intact



1926

Source: CRA, US Geological Survey of Los Angeles.

Late 1900s

- Staples Center is constructed
- Bunker Hill is transformed to high-rise offices
- Industrial land remains in southeast



1994

Source: Google Earth aerial.

Billions of
dollars of public
and private
investment are
currently planned
and proposed in
Downtown.



Downtown today

Image: Construction crane at Olive and 8th. Source: AECOM

03a. Ongoing development trends

The western half of Downtown is getting most of today's attention.

Currently underway and planned developments as of June 2014 (Source: LA Downtown News, Curbed LA)

The year 1999 marked a turning point in the recent history of Downtown Los Angeles. That year, the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance was adopted and facilitated a widespread and long lasting transformation of the Old Bank District along Spring and Main Streets in the historic core. Quite literally, old bank buildings, that had experienced a generation of upper level vacancies when the financial district of Downtown moved from here to Bunker Hill in the 60s and 70s, came back to life via the creative reuse efforts allowed by the Ordinance. The effect was dramatic. Downtown's population doubled from about 20,000 in 2000 to over 40,000 in 2010 (and over 50,000 today).

The adjoining diagram maps projects that are currently in construction or are supposed to be soon. What it does not map are projects that have already been constructed - e.g., the significant development activity that occurred from 1999 - 2014 in Historic Downtown, Little Tokyo, the Fashion District, Central City East (primarily affordable housing) and significant parts of the Arts District.

- Residential construction (new)
- Residential renovation/rehab
- Commercial construction (new)
- Commercial renovation/rehab

▬▬▬▬▬ DLANC boundary



The media agrees. Downtown is “so hot right now.”

The Great Recession of 2008 hit Downtown hard and brought development activity to a standstill for five years. The year 2013 saw it pick up once again with force. Downtown development again appears unstoppable (raising, in the process, fears of the next bubble). Pre-recession development was concentrated in the Historic Core and the Financial District, with significant pockets of activity in Little Tokyo, Arts District and South Park. Post-recession, development is clustered on the west side of Downtown – primarily in the Historic core and South Park. Fashion District, just to the south of the Historic Core, has emerged as the next Downtown district poised for transformation. Outside of DLANC’s jurisdiction, the Arts District represents the sole cluster of development activity in Downtown’s east side.



America's Next Great City Is Inside L.A.

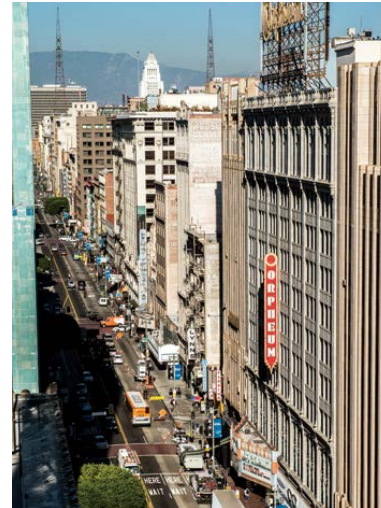
The New York Times

52 Places to Go in 2014

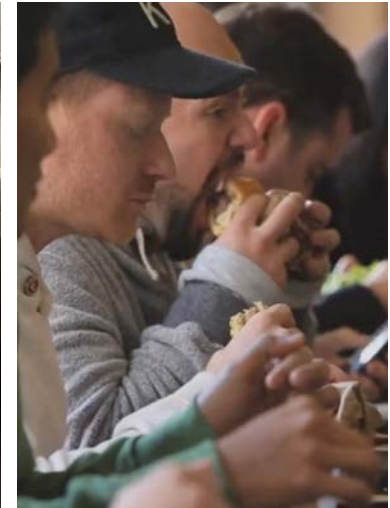
5. Downtown Los Angeles

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

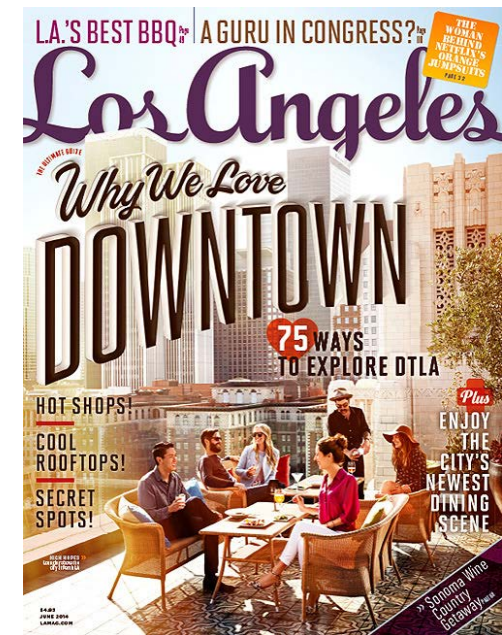
Downtown L.A. Goes From Gritty to Glitzy



Source: GQ Magazine. January 2014.



Source: Wall Street Journal. April 2014.



Source: Los Angeles Magazine, June 2014.

03b. Public infrastructure initiatives

The public sector must keep pace with the private sector by continuing to invest in Downtown.

While the private sector has been booming with investments in recent years, the public sector must keep the pace. In particular, Downtown is beginning to transform its streets into “complete streets” that serve all modes of transportation and its users (pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and auto drivers), but much work still remains to be done. A balanced approach is the key to a successful, livable, and attractive Downtown.

Some key projects worth noting include:

Metro Regional Connector -- This new connection will extend the subway tunnel from 7th/Metro Center to near 2nd Street/Alameda to connect the Metro Blue and Expo Lines to the Metro Gold Line. Forecasted to open in 2020, the Regional Connector will provide a one-seat ride for travel across all of Los Angeles County. For example, on the Gold Line, passengers will be able to travel from Azusa to Long Beach and from East Los Angeles to Santa Monica without transferring lines.

Sixth Street Viaduct Replacement Project -- Due to deterioration of the existing concrete bridge, the Sixth Street bridge over the LA River and the 101 Freeway will be replaced. The viaduct will include pedestrian and bicycle paths, improving non-motorized connections between Boyle Heights and Downtown. Completion scheduled for 2018.

Union Station Master Plan -- The masterplan will

address future transportation needs at the station, including how best to accommodate a station for the California High Speed Rail project.

Bringing Back Broadway -- Bringing Back Broadway is an ambitious 10-year plan to revitalize the Historic Broadway corridor by way of urban design guidelines, reactivating historic theaters and vacant commercial space, and restoring the LA Streetcar.

LA Streetcar -- The alignment will connect Broadway and the Civic Center area to the Staples Center/LA Live area. The environmental impact report for the streetcar is currently underway.

MyFigueroa Corridor -- These improvements will remake a 3-mile section of Figueroa Street between the Financial District and USC (including a segment of 11th Street). Urban design upgrades will address bicycle lanes, street trees, lighting, and wider sidewalks.

Union Station Linkages -- This ongoing effort seeks to improve bicycle and pedestrian connections between Union Station and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Park 101 -- Planned as a freeway cap park over the 101, Park 101 would create usable park space and enhance pedestrian connections across the freeway between Civic Center and Chinatown, El Pueblo, and Union Station.



Public projects planned or currently underway in Downtown

Source: LA Downtown News, Curbed LA

Los Angeles is
one of a few cities
that the rest of
the world looks to
for leadership and
inspiration.

A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles. The building's iconic, undulating, metallic facade is composed of many rectangular panels that reflect the sky. The sky is a clear, vibrant blue with some wispy white clouds. A large, semi-transparent white number '4' is superimposed on the right side of the image, partially covering the building's facade. In the bottom left corner, there is a small, dark blue rectangular box containing the text 'Vision Downtown' in white. At the very bottom left, there is a small line of text: 'Image: Disney Concert Hall. Source: AECOM'.

Vision Downtown

Image: Disney Concert Hall. Source: AECOM

What does Downtown want to be?

Image: Bird's eye helicopter view of Downtown Los Angeles. Source: AECQM

>A dynamic patchwork of unique and diverse neighborhoods, districts, and special places that are home to residents, workers, creators, students, and visitors.

>A preeminent destination that serves as the iconic image of the cultural capital of the world.

>A model for the resurgence of the American downtown; a place energized by the individual and collective aspirations of the four million people who call the second-largest US city their home.

>A safe, clean, beautiful, inspiring, electric, and eclectic environment that is a fountainhead of opportunities for everyone.



04b. Stakeholder Input

DLANC is keenly aware that plans and initiatives are successful only if they have the support of the community. To that end, it pursued a two-pronged approach in soliciting input and feedback for this visioning effort. First, it sought direct input early in the process from key stakeholders who are embedded in Downtown from an operational, regulatory, or political standpoint. These included Central City Association (CCA), Central City East Association (CCEA), Council District 14, Fashion District Business Improvement District (BID), Historic Core BID, and the Los Angeles Department of City Planning.

Second, DLANC established an online community portal at dtlvisionplan.nationbuilder.com to provide updates on the project and solicit input. A short five-question survey was available during the entire planning effort and has provided hundreds of responses from the Downtown community. These proved invaluable in shaping the plan and its recommendations.

The following narrative captures the broad themes of stakeholder input.

Overview

"Downtown Los Angeles is more than just the Historic Core, the Financial District, and South Park. The Vision Plan must be inclusive and proactively reach out to Downtown neighborhoods and stakeholders who are not considered to be core."

"Downtown is special. It will always be the commercial, cultural, entertainment, and civic heart of the city."

"Downtown has special needs and exists in a special context. Permitting of conditional uses, provision of parking, and management of open space should not be analyzed/implemented on the basis of city-wide regulations."

"The Vision Plan should help Downtown redefine and expand its image - locally, regionally, nationally and globally."

Homelessness

"The Vision Plan does not have the resources to address homelessness in-depth. However, it is important to note that homelessness has been inadequately addressed by civic leaders. It has tangible and daily impacts on all who live in, work in and visit Downtown, especially the homeless themselves; it also deeply affects local, regional, national and global perceptions of Downtown LA."

"The Vision Plan can mark itself as a point of inflection in Downtown's attitudes toward homelessness by highlighting the deliberate policies that put Skid Row in place and suggest how to begin their reversal."

Land Use

"Neighborhoods and districts have moved beyond their underlying land uses. Fashion District is a good example. It is zoned industrial, but almost all activity now relates to retail and wholesale. In some places industrial zones (put in place by the rezoning of Downtown in the 1920s) are holding Downtown back." "Some neighborhoods are struggling and in urgent need of reinvention. For example, the Toy District has

devolved into swap meet type retail. But it has great historic building stock and sensitively scaled streets and sidewalks. It is a great opportunity to establish missing connections between the Arts District and the Historic Core.”

“The Vision Plan does not have the resources to effectively address land use challenges. Rather it should discuss quality of space, neighborhood character, amenities, etc. Subsequent efforts can further explore these aspirational ideas and translate them to more concrete land use recommendations.”

“The Vision Plan should analyze and find ways to support the proposed Adaptive Reuse Ordinance for commercial uses (to supplement the one already in place for residential uses). This will have a dramatic positive impact on the vacant office space along Broadway.”

“Upper level vacancies are a major detriment to Downtown’s future. Residential adaptive reuse has already revitalized the most feasible structures. The ones that are still vacant are best suited for commercial/office adaptive reuse (currently infeasible as retrofitting requirements are too inflexible and costly).”

“Ground floor activity is a critical ingredient for Downtown’s success (not just during the day, but also during evening and night). Food trucks are a great amenity in some neighborhoods of Downtown. However, in others they impede or even prevent establishment of stable restaurants – whose absence consequently discourages evening activity.”

“Many large, single-use facilities that serve the LA region may no longer be appropriate for the Downtown

area (e.g. Twin Towers’ unfortunate proximity to our regional transportation center, LA Union Station.) A scattered sites approach (that only Los Angeles County can implement) can free up institutional land in Downtown for more appropriate amenities/developments.”

Usability

“Support and supplement ongoing efforts by other Downtown stakeholders, like CCA, CCEA, and various BIDS.”

“Provide guidance to DLANC board and other agencies as they review projects and initiatives.”

“Serve as a fundraising tool to gather resources for implementation of projects and recommendations.”

“Treat this process as a precedent-setting planning experiment for Neighborhood Councils across the City. It should serve as a model for how neighborhoods across the city can manage and craft their own future.”

“Coordinate and share findings with the Department of City Planning’s Central City Community Plan update team as well as re:Code LA’s Downtown efforts and transit station area planning.”

“Coordinate with Department of Recreation and Parks on the ongoing Downtown open space planning effort.”

“Identify and prioritize low hanging fruit for implementation (using the Vision Plan as a tool to identify and obtain funding for those efforts).”

“Use this exercise as a tool to educate the Downtown

community as to how planning is undertaken in the City of Los Angeles and how they can participate and influence the process.”

Pedestrian Experience

“The resources available for this planning effort are most effectively utilized by focusing on street-level issues that affect the daily lives of residents and workers, e.g., from a pedestrian point of view, Downtown is increasingly becoming a victim of its own success. Dog-friendly housing was a critical element to attracting many early residents Downtown; however, overuse of the sidewalks as “dog bathrooms” has negatively impacted the urban experience. Addressing issues like this should be prioritized in the plan.”

“Explore non-profit institutional structure to manage and maintain all trees in Downtown. The City does not have the resources to be in charge.”

“Explore the policy tools available to disallow bicycles on sidewalks. Sidewalks are for pedestrians – especially in a place like Downtown that has such heightened pedestrian activity.”

“Explore scramble sidewalks at key intersections (successfully used on Colorado Blvd in Pasadena). These were installed on Maple Avenue in the Fashion District about five years ago, but failed because of poor implementation/education.”

“Update street lights. Make Downtown a 24-hour destination.”

“Downtown needs a lot more green space. Pershing

Square needs to be redone.”

Mobility

“LA Streetcar, Inc. should expand its mission to become a transit provider for all of Downtown. It should create and share aspirational route maps that show an extensive Downtown network (especially new east-west linkages) to build support for future phases.”

“Bike share programs will provide big benefits, but they need more visibility.”

“While Downtown is the hub of our regional transit network, the transit linkages between Downtown neighborhoods are insufficient to make navigating Downtown (and using multi-modal transit) pleasant for residents, workers and visitors.”

“The pedestrian experience is the predominant experience in Downtown. Improvements for pedestrians should take precedence over, but not exclude, improvements for cyclists and motorists.”

“Making improvements (designing transit-friendly projects, adding infrastructure, or making monetary contributions) to public transportation should be the number one public benefit mitigation expected from developers.”

“Demand pricing as introduced by ExpressPark is credit worthy. However, its application in destination retail areas like Santee Alley is counter-productive. Santee Alley competes with free parking at regional retail malls and loses visitors who would rather park for free. So while ExpressPark makes progress in undoing the

perception that free/cheap parking is a public right, it does so at the expense of the most vibrant street retail destination in the city.”

“Short-term parking users are penalized by the current system of private parking options. Express Park aims to address that by balancing their needs with larger downtown goals.”

Linkages

“The Vision Plan should prioritize improving east-west connections – especially those from the Historic Core to the Arts District.”

“LA Live needs much better pedestrian and transit connections. It is a regional destination, but is poorly accessible to its immediate neighbors.”

Schools

“Downtown LA needs a comprehensive plan to address the lack of schools for new and growing families. LAUSD’s Ninth Street Elementary in the Fashion District is far from the residential populations in Downtown LA. Metro Charter Elementary School in South Park was started in 2013 to fill this need for a walkable neighborhood school for the Downtown community. But more needs to be done to meet the needs of the growing population of new families.”

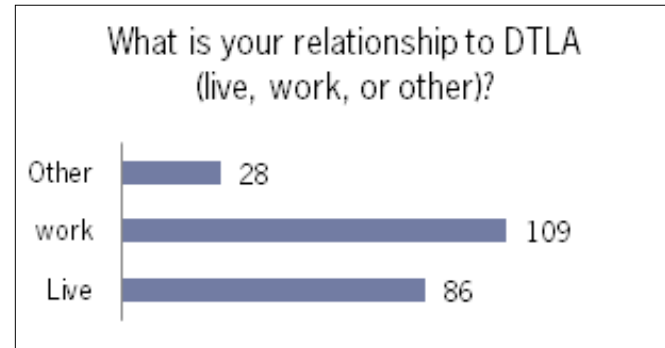
04c. Public Input

From June 3, 2014 to June 30, 2014, an online survey was provided to the public. The survey link was distributed to 1,276 people included on the DLANC distribution list. The survey link was also posted to Facebook groups focused on DTLA. The survey generated 154 responses.

Those participating in the survey were asked six questions. In an attempt to draw out items of concern, most of the questions needed subjective answers. The survey was not intended to quantify the value of “soft goods,” but rather provide DLANC with an emotional sense of community needs. The survey asked the following questions:

- *What is your relationship to DTLA (live, work, or other)?*
- *Why is DTLA important to you?*
- *Are you optimistic, pessimistic, or neutral about the future of DTLA?*
- *What does DTLA have too much of?*
- *What improvements would you like to see in DTLA?*
- *Opportunity for additional comments?*

What is your relationship to DTLA (Live, Work, or Other)? -- When asked about their relationship to DTLA, most people noted they live and work in DTLA. If they didn't live and work in DTLA, most responded that they only work in DTLA. Of those who live and work here, most said they worked in DTLA prior to living in DTLA. Those who neither work or live DTLA, were most likely to visit cultural institutions.



Source: Summary respondent tally from <http://dtlavisioanplan.nationbuilder.com>.

Why is DTLA important to you? -- When asked why DTLA is important, there was a strong sense of community. People valued the small locally-owned businesses (while simultaneously noting support for retail chains). Respondents also noted that DTLA is the “center” of transportation, cultural activities, and for employment opportunities.

“I live and work here and on a global level I feel that it is the heart of Los Angeles and should represent the BEST that our city has to offer.”

Are you optimistic, pessimistic, or neutral about the future of DTLA? -- When asked about the future of DTLA, people responded how they felt about it. Their answers provide some insight about a general willingness to participate in community building activities, as those who feel optimistic

are more likely to feel like they are a part of an overall effort. 87% responded noting optimism. The small percentage of pessimism would later note concerns about rising housing costs that would cause them to move from the neighborhood.

What does DTLA have too much of? -- In previous surveys, DTLA stakeholders have always been asked about missing items. From missing retail, open space, and transportation needs, DTLA is not without missing items. However, when the tables were turned and DTLA Stakeholders were asked “What Do You Have Enough Of,” stakeholders were able to outline additional needs to address their subjectable “wealth.” Most respondents noted concerns with the price of available housing, high end retail and canine needs.

“High-end restaurants/retailers, luxury apartments, buildings with less parking than units, mentally-ill/homeless population and...yes, dogs.”

What improvements would you like to see in DTLA? -- We already know that DTLA stakeholders are a committed group of stakeholders. There is a strong sense of community and civic pride, and a desire to participate in community building activities. Stakeholders were simply asked about desired improvements, without additional prompts. The findings: low to mid-range retail and housing, increased access to homeless services, and cleaner sidewalks.

“Housing that is accessible to average, working people. The jobs-housing balance needs to be addressed in order to support public transportation investments.”

Opportunity for additional comments? -- At the end of the survey, the community was given a blank box to submit any additional comments about the survey for consideration. Most noted the need to protect historic buildings, the current sense of community, and noted concerns that people moving into DTLA would not be in a position to understand why certain things “are the way they are.”

“Do you even know how many people are rooting for DTLA to succeed at this point? It’s remarkable.”

“Our transit system, our weather, our proximity to other neighborhoods, our artistic sensibility, our rawness, our potential to become anything (everything is possible) - we need less rules and more flexibility!”

Industrial jobs
are integral to
Downtown's
economy, but not
all land designated
industrial needs to
remain so.



Land Use

Image: Santee Alley in Fashion District at night. Source: AECOM



Land Use Guiding Principles

Image: Adaptive reuse project under construction on Santee St in Fashion District. Source: AECOM

> Downtown needs its own rules.

Because of the complexity of issues that Downtown faces, the preeminent position that it occupies in the regional economy, and the number of visitors it attracts, Downtown is unique. The needs of local residents and workers must be balanced with the needs of occasional visitors and tourists. The sheer variety of uses and users necessitates an approach different from any part of the city to be able to manage its public realm, land uses, and mobility issues appropriately.

> Accommodate 100,000 residents by 2025.

Residents -- people who live and raise their families in the neighborhood -- have shaped Downtown's recent resurgence. Downtown doubled its population from more than 20,000 to over 40,000 between 2000 and 2010. As of 2014, Downtown's population has grown to roughly 52,000 people. As it continues to grow, Downtown should prioritize housing in future developments -- for all incomes and generations. A critical mass of residents will ensure that amenities, attention, and opportunities will follow.

> Challenge underlying land use constraints.

Often existing land use policies (e.g., restrictive industrial zoning or inability to reuse historic buildings) prevent districts from naturally evolving. Downtown should challenge these policies and demonstrate that the need for land use flexibility is necessary and essential to the continuing success of Downtown.

> "Keep a light on" for manufacturing.

Industrial jobs will always be integral to Downtown's economy. However, the dynamics of global economics are always in constant flux. Where it is cheap to manufacture now will be expensive in the future and vice versa. At some point, manufacturing (in the form of clean-tech or otherwise) may return to Los Angeles. When it does, Downtown needs to be prepared to accommodate it.

05a. Embed flexibility into the zoning code

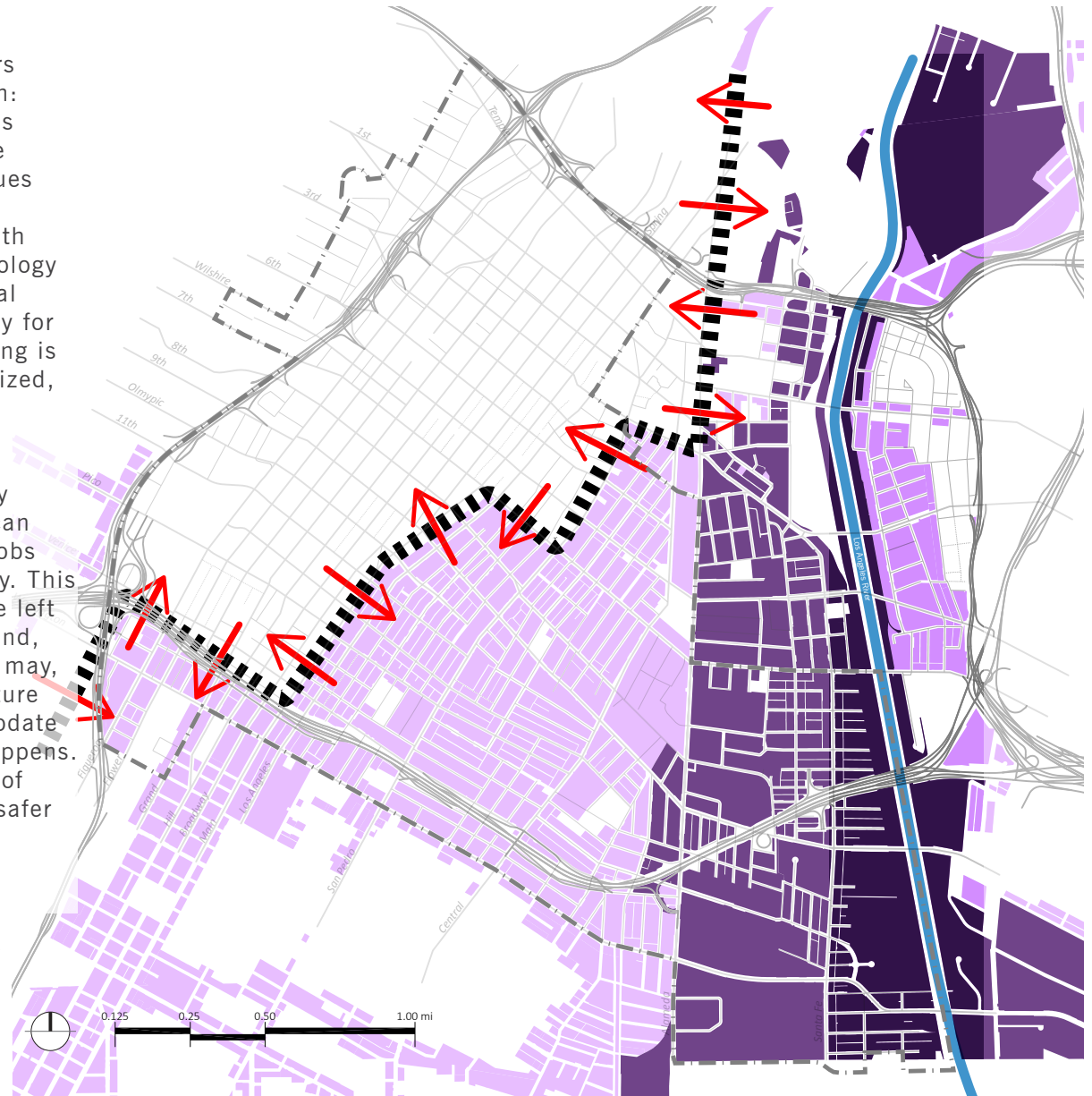
More than half of Downtown is zoned industrial, but some areas are at the forefront of change.

Diagram illustrating light and heavy industrial zones (source: City of Los Angeles), and the threshold between industrial and non-industrial uses.

Los Angeles County houses the largest cluster of industrial jobs in the nation. Several clusters are located in the industrial heart of the region: Downtown, Vernon, Commerce, and other cities in south Los Angeles County. These areas have provided middle class jobs that the region values and wants to protect. However, the types of industrial jobs (and the incomes associated with them) continues to evolve in the face of technology and the global economy. Middle-class industrial jobs have been leaving the city and the country for over a generation to places where manufacturing is cheaper. What is left behind is often underutilized, marginal, and vacant industrial land.

This is not to say that all industrial jobs have left LA. It still makes economic sense for many industries to manufacture locally (e.g., American Apparel and Forever 21). As such, industrial jobs will always be integral to Downtown's economy. This is also not to say that industrial jobs that have left will never come back. As wages, the cost of land, and other factors equalize across the globe, it may, once again, make economic sense to manufacture locally. Cities need to be prepared to accommodate a return of manufacturing jobs if/when that happens. Regardless, it seems certain that the majority of manufacturing operations will be cleaner and safer as a result of technological innovation.

- light industrial zones
- heavy industrial zones
- threshold between industrial and non-industrial uses
- DLANC boundary



Strengthen corridors in transition and strategically position selected districts for “flex” uses.

Diagram illustrating corridors already in transition at the threshold between industrial and non-industrial uses.

Although industrial uses are an integral part of Downtown’s economy, there are a number of east-west streets that are well positioned to facilitate a transition from industrial-only uses to a “flex” approach (allowing light industrial, commercial, and residential to coincide simultaneously on one parcel).





Investment in these corridors (3rd St through 11th St) can help neighborhoods that are no longer operating as industrial only and are poised and willing to accommodate a wider diversity of uses and amenities.

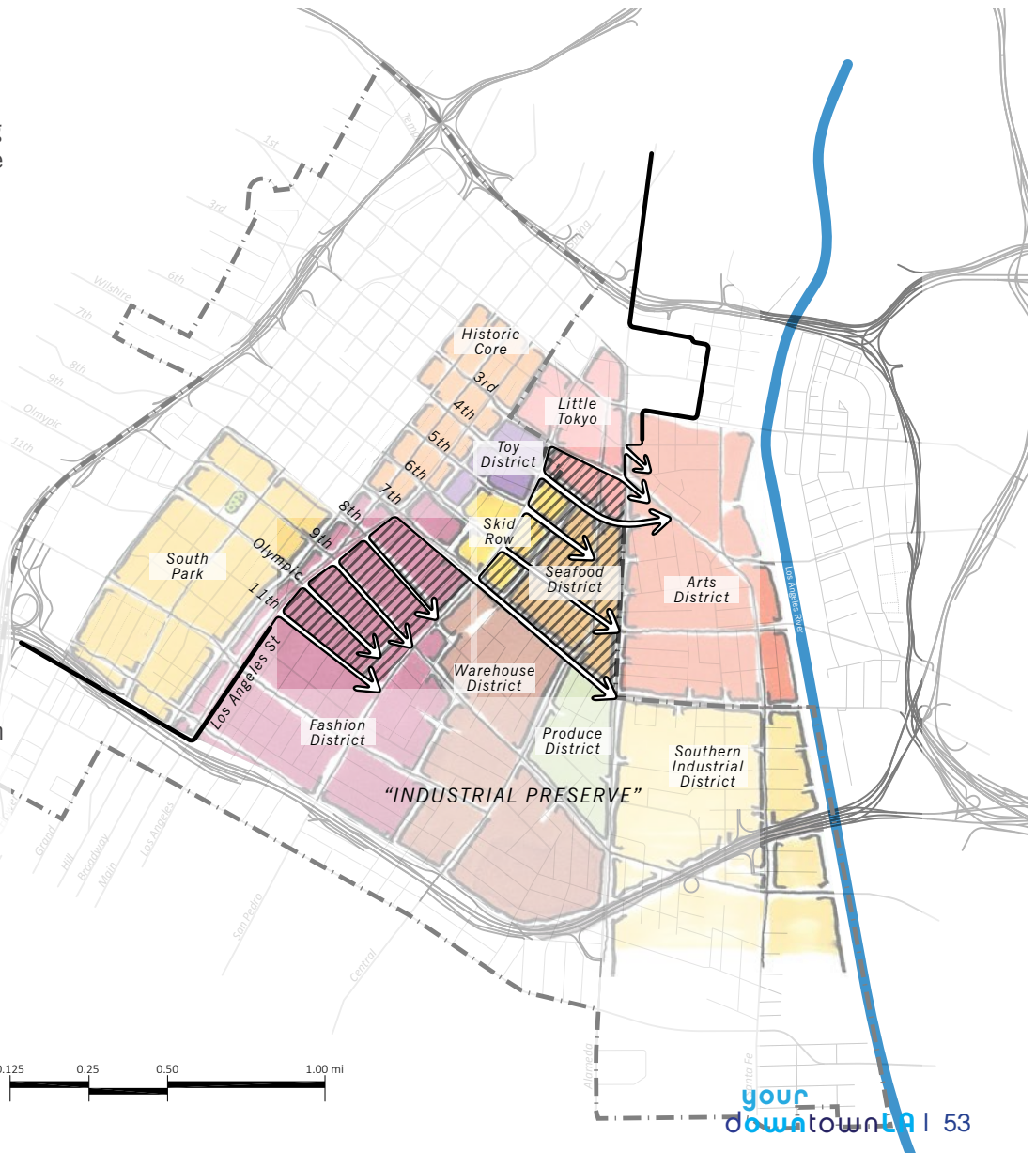
South of 7th St, these corridors connect South Park to San Pedro Street, providing the northern end of the Fashion District (which has very few industrial uses today) a framework for “flex” uses.

North of 7th Street, these corridors connect the Toy District and San Pedro Street to Alameda Street and the Arts District. They allow the Seafood District and Central City East (CCE) a mechanism for “flex” uses.

The current industrial-only zoning between San Pedro and Alameda north of 7th is discouraging investment in CCE, isolating low-income and homeless CCE residents from other neighborhoods, and preventing mobility between neighborhoods such as Historic Core, CCE and the Arts District.

Generally, east of San Pedro Street and south of 7th Street, industrial uses may be preserved.

-  corridors in transition
-  areas strategically positioned for “flex” uses
-  threshold between industrial and non-industrial uses
-  DLANC boundary

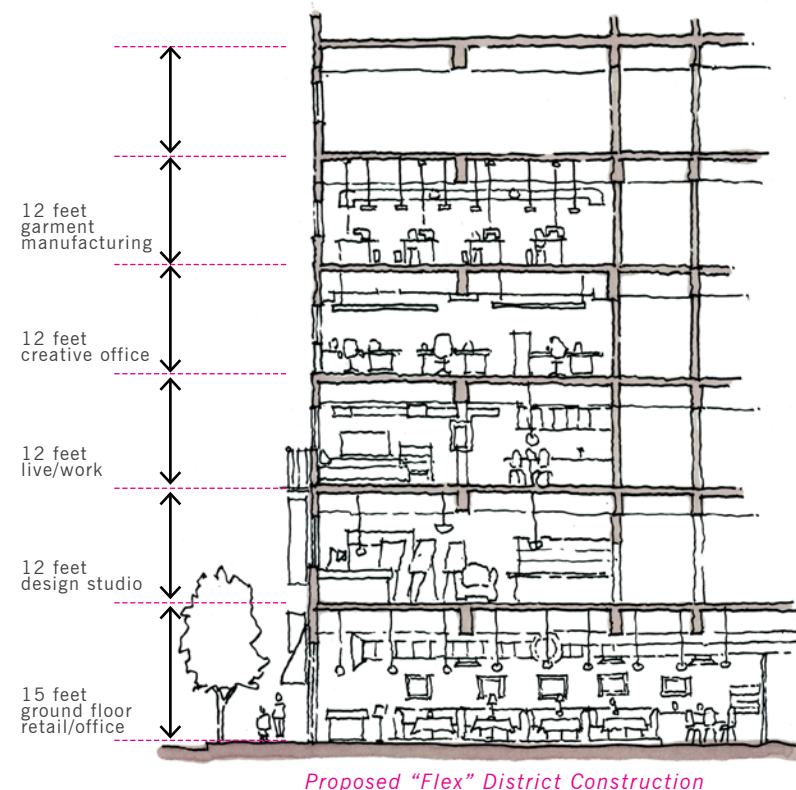
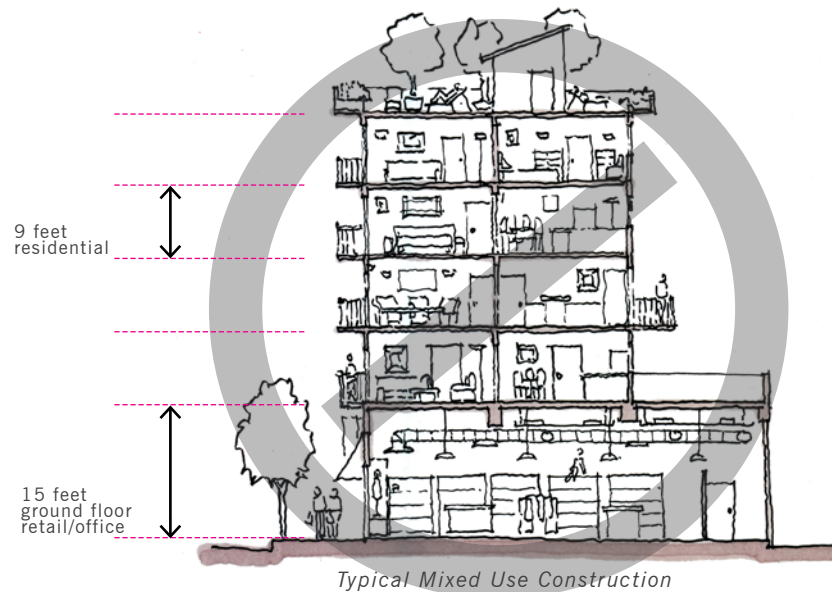


Develop guidelines for “flex” uses.

Given the constraints of industrial uses, flexibility should be embedded into the zoning code to ensure that, if and when demand for industrial uses shifts, parcels and buildings will not remain vacant or underutilized.

This type of flexibility can occur in a “Flex” District, where parcels previously zoned industrial are enabled to accommodate more than just industrial uses. In these cases, light industrial, warehousing, wholesale, office, retail, hotel, and residential may be able to coexist on the same parcel (akin to traditional mixed use zoning). Ground-floor uses should be reserved to retail, industrial and office to allow for active pedestrian activity.

To embed flexibility into new construction in a “Flex” District, building standards should include ceiling clearances of 15-foot minimum at the ground level (for commercial or light industrial use) and 12-foot minimum clearances at the upper levels. Typical mixed use construction have about 9-foot clearances for upper levels, but this permanently precludes any non-residential uses in the upper levels. The goal of a “Flex” District is to prevent exactly that from occurring.



Expand adaptive reuse for industrial properties.

The City of Los Angeles, via the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance of 1999, set in motion a decade of transformational initiatives that reinvented the aging Old Bank District as a vibrant 24-hour neighborhood with an eclectic mix of jobs, homes, and services. The City continues to provide the regulatory framework for expanding the scope of adaptive reuse opportunities -- the most recent being the effort to allow office and commercial uses, which has the potential to similarly transform the historic Broadway corridor. Vision Downtown would like the City to go further.

Currently adaptive reuse in industrial districts requires discretionary approvals (as compared to by-right building permits in commercial and high-density residential). The City should allow aging buildings in industrial zones by-right reuse opportunities as are provided in other zones. This approach will complement a “flex”-use approach and allow industrial areas (especially along the margins with commercial areas) to contribute in creating a 24-hour Downtown.



1969. Los Angeles Times Article noting that “Spring Street is facing an uncertain future with the emergence of a new Downtown financial center” at Bunker Hill. The Old Bank District remained more or less vacant for roughly 30 years before the 1999 Adaptive Reuse Ordinance revitalized its historic buildings with residential uses. Source: Los Angeles Times.



2010. Old Bank District 10th Anniversary Block Party. Looking west on 4th Street at Main Street. Source: AECOM.

05b. Accommodate future growth through infill development

Maximize infill opportunities on vacant and underutilized parcels and buildings.

Diagram illustrating underutilized parcels as opportunities for infill development (Source: Google Earth).

Surface parking lots are not the highest and best use for parcels in any downtown urban core. They, along with underutilized or vacant buildings, are prime opportunities for infill development.

South Park is the only neighborhood in Downtown that prioritizes residential development (R5 zoning) over other uses. Despite the recent residential construction boom (currently under construction or in the pipeline), South Park still sees a significant underutilization of land. Its ability to accommodate future residential growth is significant.

In contrast, the Historic Core (C2 through C5 zoning) is mostly built out. Yet, infill opportunities do remain, especially for existing building stock with high levels of vacancies at upper levels. Commercial buildings that were able to convert into residential units via the residential adaptive reuse ordinance have likely already done so. Those that remain “unconverted” and vacant are likely inherently unsuited for residential, or have substantial code constraints for new non-residential uses. These remaining properties (like those along Broadway) should be rehabilitated into office or other commercial uses via a commercial adaptive reuse approach. “Bringing Back Broadway Historic Commercial Reuse Guidelines” facilitate these conversions along Broadway, but should be expanded to the rest of Downtown, like the Toy District which is starting to feel the growing pressures from the Historic Core and whose existing (sometimes historic) building stock is prime for creative offices.

■ vacant or underutilized parcel (e.g. surface parking lot)

■ DLANC boundary

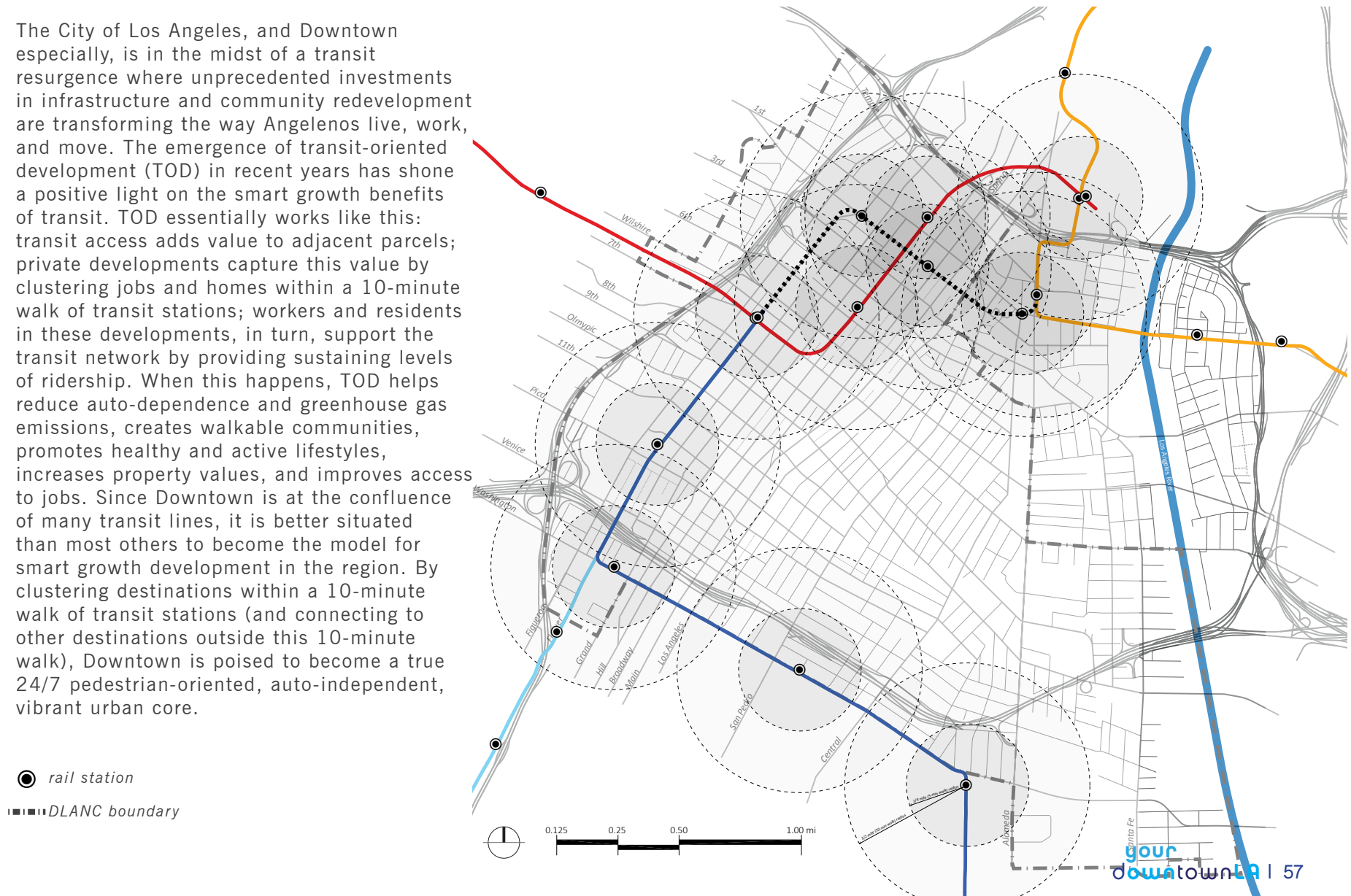


05c. Transit networks should serve as the framework for future smart-growth development

Cluster destinations within a 10-minute walk of rail stations.

Diagram illustrating 1/4 and 1/2 mile radius walk zones from existing and future rail stations (source: Metro).

The City of Los Angeles, and Downtown especially, is in the midst of a transit resurgence where unprecedented investments in infrastructure and community redevelopment are transforming the way Angelenos live, work, and move. The emergence of transit-oriented development (TOD) in recent years has shone a positive light on the smart growth benefits of transit. TOD essentially works like this: transit access adds value to adjacent parcels; private developments capture this value by clustering jobs and homes within a 10-minute walk of transit stations; workers and residents in these developments, in turn, support the transit network by providing sustaining levels of ridership. When this happens, TOD helps reduce auto-dependence and greenhouse gas emissions, creates walkable communities, promotes healthy and active lifestyles, increases property values, and improves access to jobs. Since Downtown is at the confluence of many transit lines, it is better situated than most others to become the model for smart growth development in the region. By clustering destinations within a 10-minute walk of transit stations (and connecting to other destinations outside this 10-minute walk), Downtown is poised to become a true 24/7 pedestrian-oriented, auto-independent, vibrant urban core.




Downtown should
lead the way in
redefining the
city's relationship
between the
automobile and
the pedestrian.

The background image shows a group of people riding bicycles on a city street. In the foreground, a man in a dark t-shirt and plaid shorts is riding a bicycle, leaning forward. Behind him, other cyclists are visible, including one in a red shirt and another in a dark shirt with a white cap. The street is lined with buildings, and the scene is captured in a slightly blurred, dynamic manner. A large, semi-transparent, stylized number '6' is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Mobility

Image: Ciclavía along Spring Street in the Historic Core. Source: AECOM



Mobility Guiding Principles

Image: Looking north at 5th and Flower in the Financial District. Source: AECOM

> All Downtown streets should be “complete streets.”

All streets throughout Downtown should be safe, well-balanced and usable by everyone -- pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders. To make them so, the right street infrastructure improvements must be made, in addition to operations and maintenance, e.g., sidewalks, bike lanes, bus lanes, pedestrian crossings, curb extensions, transit stops, etc.

> Downtown neighborhoods, districts, and destinations should be better connected and accessible.

Although Downtown is the hub of regional transit networks, the transit linkages between Downtown neighborhoods are insufficient to make navigating Downtown (and using multi-modal transit) pleasant for residents, workers and visitors. Whether by bike, bus, or rail, all transportation networks should be expanded across all of Downtown, not just regional destinations (e.g., Union Station and 7th/Metro Station).

> Downtown needs its own “short-hop” transit service.

Neither Metro nor LADOT provide enough service for all Downtown. If the Downtown DASH bus network cannot be improved, Los Angeles Streetcar, Inc. (or other entity) should expand its mission to become the dedicated transit provider for Downtown, offering frequent and convenient service 7-days a week (including evening and nighttime service) throughout all of Downtown’s neighborhoods and districts. Let’s get more people Downtown out of the car.

06a. People on feet

Improve the pedestrian experience.

Walkscore for every major street intersection in Downtown (source:walkscore.com)

Walkscore measures walkability (how friendly an area is to walking) on a scale from 0-100, with 100 being the best. Factors that affect walkability include the presence of active ground floor activity, street connectivity and access, pedestrian infrastructure (landscaping, crosswalks, lighting), and distances to destinations like retail, restaurants, parks, and grocery stores.

As evident on the diagram to the right, the southeastern half of Downtown is significantly less walkable than areas like the Historic Core and Financial District to the northwest. This is not unusual given that industrial areas by their nature do not present “active ground floors” or amenities.

However, even in the industrial southeast, streets like San Pedro, Central, and Alameda should cater to the pedestrian experience. Currently, they function mainly as vehicular thoroughfares to provide access to Downtown’s industrial uses, but these corridors can be much more.

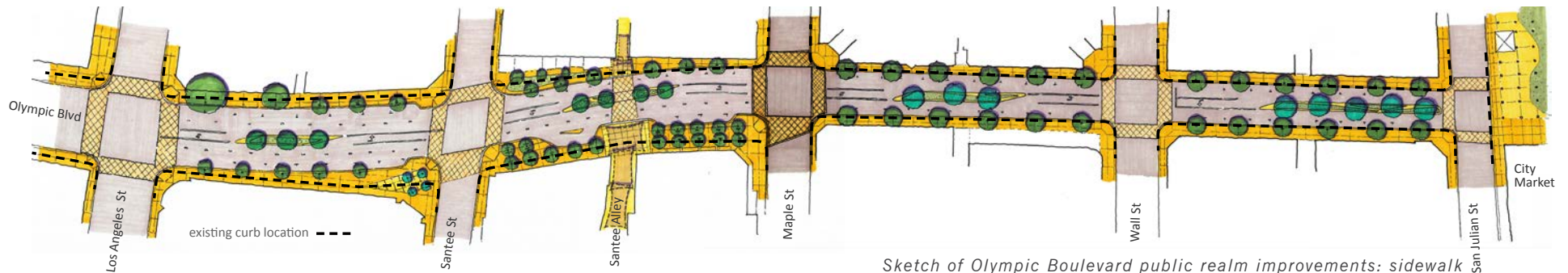




Existing view east along Olympic at Los Angeles St



Existing view west along Olympic at Santee St

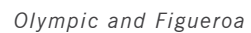
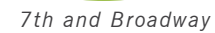


Sketch of Olympic Boulevard public realm improvements: sidewalk widening, addition of landscaped medians, and new street trees.

Example of pedestrian experience improvement: Olympic Boulevard

Originally named 10th Street, Olympic Boulevard was renamed for the 1932 Summer Olympics held in Los Angeles. It was the 10th occasion of the modern event. The termination of Olympic Boulevard, a celebrated and historic boulevard for the city, at City Market in the Fashion District instantly makes the Downtown component of the boulevard significant. This follows in a long-standing tradition of Los Angeles boulevards that start in Downtown and end at the Pacific Ocean. Given the generous width of Olympic Boulevard, the sketch above illustrates how Olympic Boulevard can be reconfigured to reclaim for pedestrians some of its surplus asphalt. The block between Santee Street and Maple Avenue has the most sidewalk to gain (on the south side). The northern entrance to Santee Alley is located mid-block and can also gain additional sidewalk space.

Intersection locations best suited to accommodate scramble crosswalks.



A scramble crossing prioritizes pedestrian flow at an intersection by allowing pedestrians to cross in every direction, including diagonally, at the same time. Vehicular traffic is stopped in all directions during this period of the signal.



Example of an improved mid-block pedestrian crossing: Los Angeles St.

People tend to cross the street wherever it is most convenient for them to cross, even if that means illegally (and dangerously) walking across multiple lanes of traffic. Well-designed mid-block pedestrian crossings help to deter jay-walking and reduce pedestrian collisions. Through the use of bulb-outs (as illustrated above), these crossings can also shorten the distance pedestrians have to cross a street, making it safer, more accessible, and more convenient to get to one's destination. These are especially useful in areas of high pedestrian traffic, like Los Angeles Street in the Fashion District, and Spring Street in the Historic Core.



Existing

06b. People on wheels

Expand and improve bicycle infrastructure.




Existing and future bikeway network (source: City of Los Angeles), and unserved Downtown districts.

In 2011, the City of Los Angeles adopted its 2010 Bicycle Master Plan. It designated over 1,000 miles of bikeways throughout the city, including several in Downtown.

This renewed focus on bicycles has especially helped Downtown residents and workers that are car-free and use bicycles as a form of commuting, in addition to recreation. However, the network of proposed bikeways, although extensive for Los Angeles, is not sufficient for Downtown.

Currently, the southeast portion of Downtown (home to a significant industrial job base) is largely unserved by bikeways. Especially for those who use bikes as a form of commuting, it is critical that Downtown's bike network connect homes to jobs, in addition to centers of retail, entertainment, and recreation.

Corridors that can especially benefit from continuous bikeways include 6th, 7th, 11th and Pico, which connect Downtown industrial employment centers to commuters from Pico-Union and Boyle Heights. Special care must be taken to consider and address the potential conflicts between trucks (especially large trailers that have larger blind spots and wide turning radii.)

-  existing bikeways
-  proposed bikeways (per 2010 Bicycle Plan)
-  DLANC boundary





Example of bikeway improvement: 7th St

Sometimes simple bike lane striping is not enough, especially during congested peak hours when cars, buses, delivery trucks, and other motorized vehicles leave little breathing room for bicyclists. Improved, protected right-of-ways for bicycles will not only encourage more people to get out of their cars in exchange for a bike (thereby reducing auto congestion), but its associated infrastructure (sidewalks, landscape, lighting) help to make Downtown streets more vibrant and attractive for businesses and residents alike.



Existing

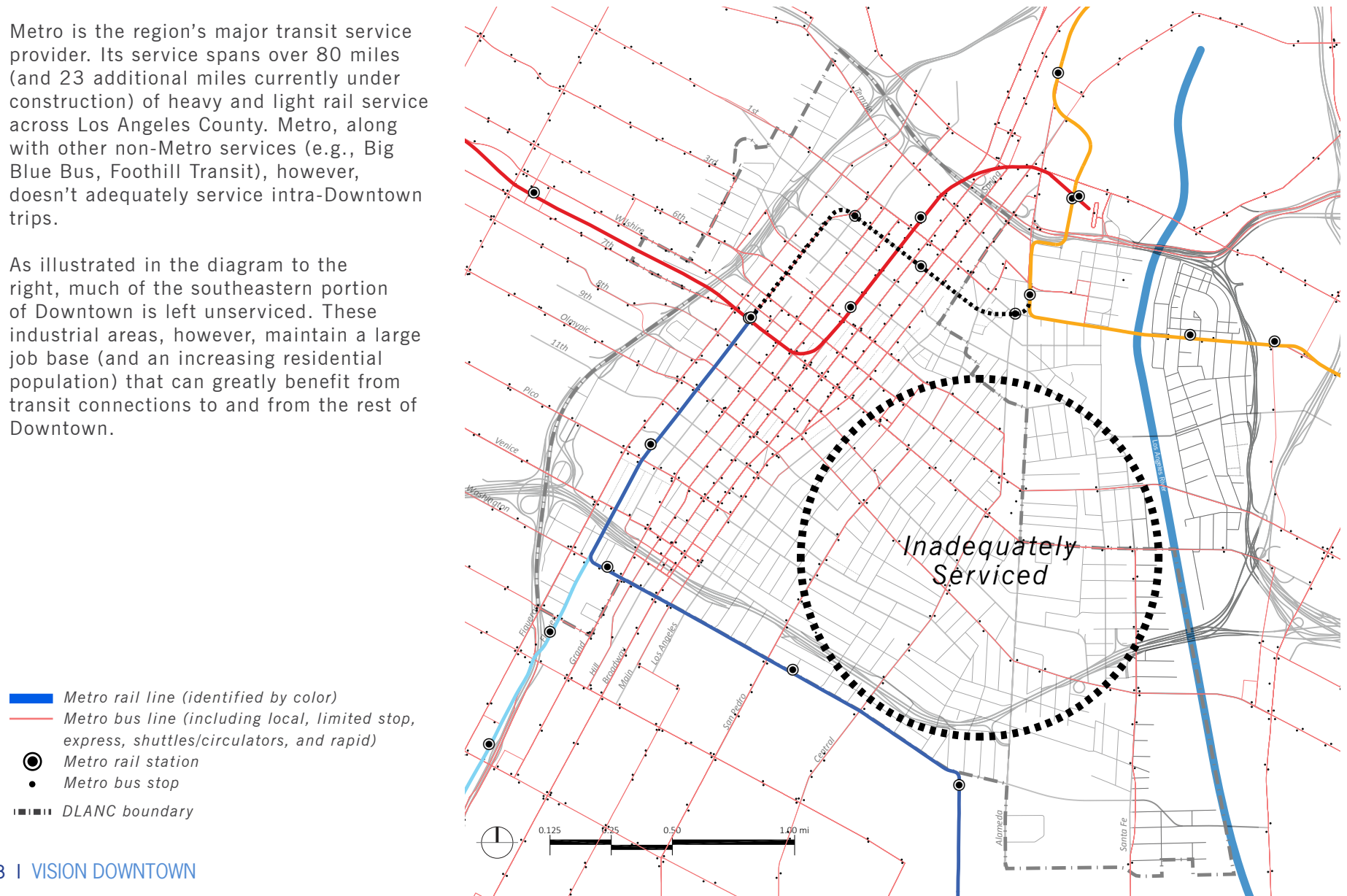
06c. People on transit

Metro is a regional transit provider, not a Downtown provider.

Existing Metro bus and rail network (source: Metro.net).

Metro is the region's major transit service provider. Its service spans over 80 miles (and 23 additional miles currently under construction) of heavy and light rail service across Los Angeles County. Metro, along with other non-Metro services (e.g., Big Blue Bus, Foothill Transit), however, doesn't adequately service intra-Downtown trips.

As illustrated in the diagram to the right, much of the southeastern portion of Downtown is left unserved. These industrial areas, however, maintain a large job base (and an increasing residential population) that can greatly benefit from transit connections to and from the rest of Downtown.



DASH is Downtown's local transit provider, but its network is incomplete.

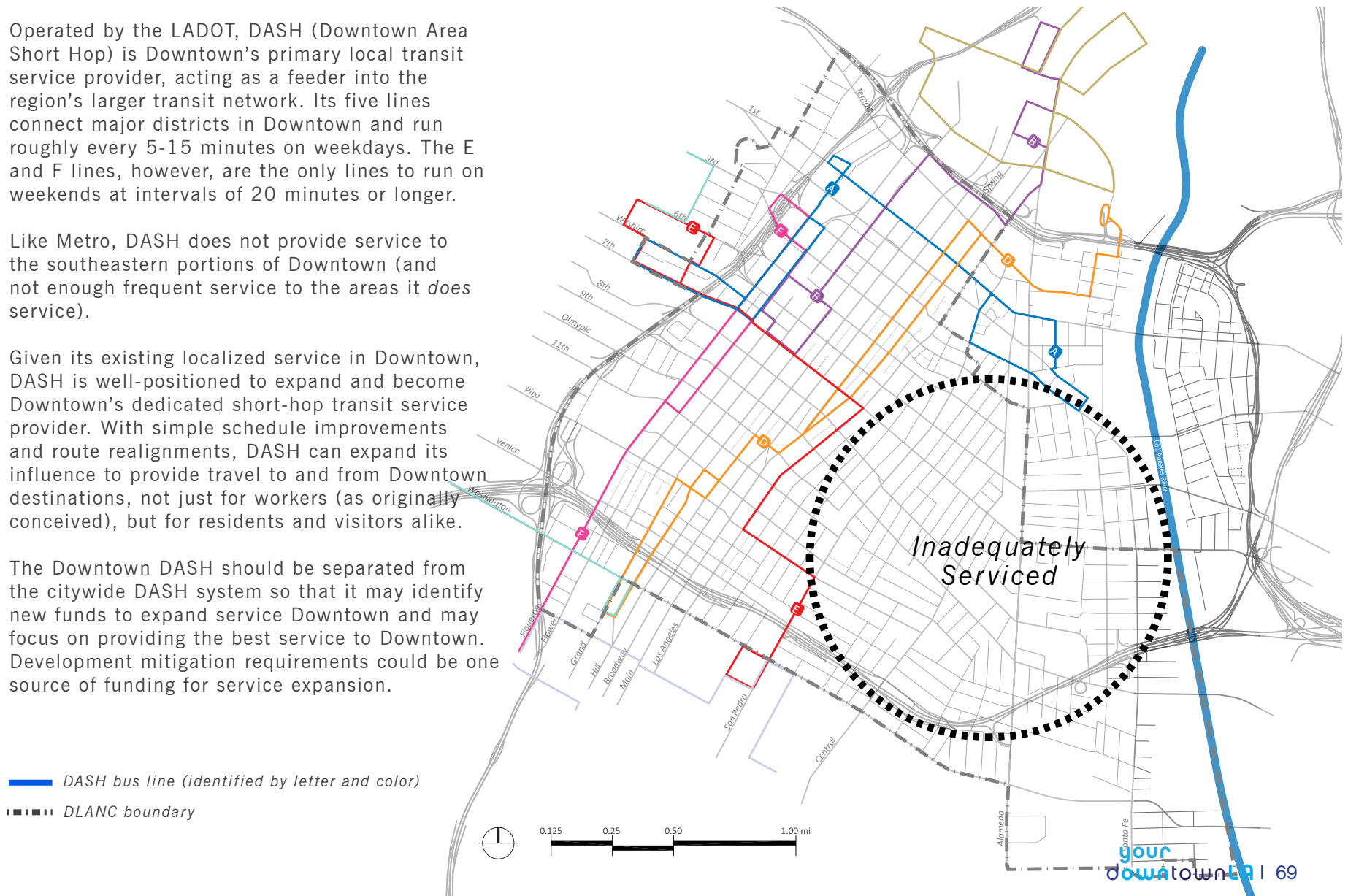
Existing DASH bus network in and around Downtown (source: LADOT.com).

Operated by the LADOT, DASH (Downtown Area Short Hop) is Downtown's primary local transit service provider, acting as a feeder into the region's larger transit network. Its five lines connect major districts in Downtown and run roughly every 5-15 minutes on weekdays. The E and F lines, however, are the only lines to run on weekends at intervals of 20 minutes or longer.

Like Metro, DASH does not provide service to the southeastern portions of Downtown (and not enough frequent service to the areas it does service).

Given its existing localized service in Downtown, DASH is well-positioned to expand and become Downtown's dedicated short-hop transit service provider. With simple schedule improvements and route realignments, DASH can expand its influence to provide travel to and from Downtown destinations, not just for workers (as originally conceived), but for residents and visitors alike.

The Downtown DASH should be separated from the citywide DASH system so that it may identify new funds to expand service Downtown and may focus on providing the best service to Downtown. Development mitigation requirements could be one source of funding for service expansion.

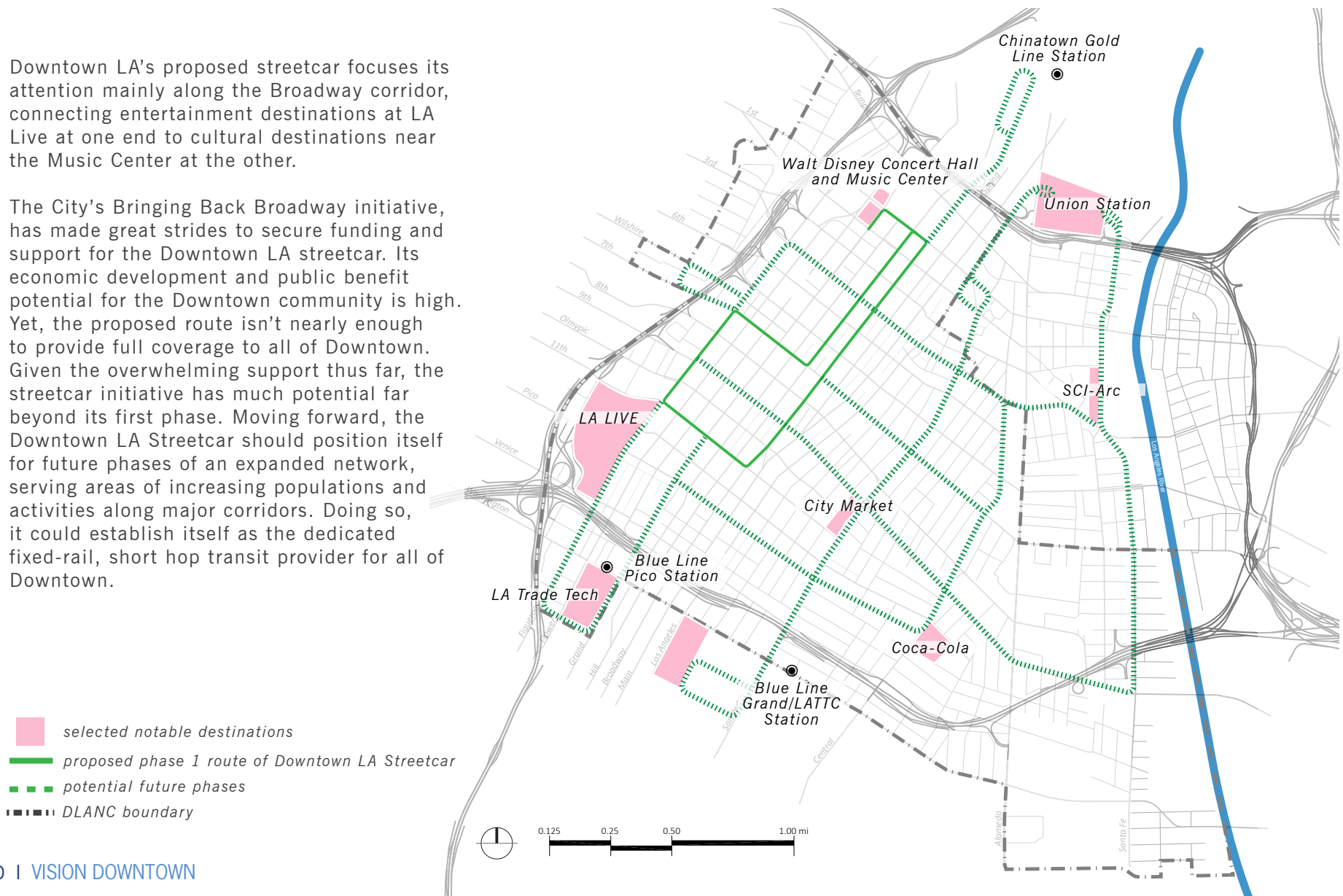


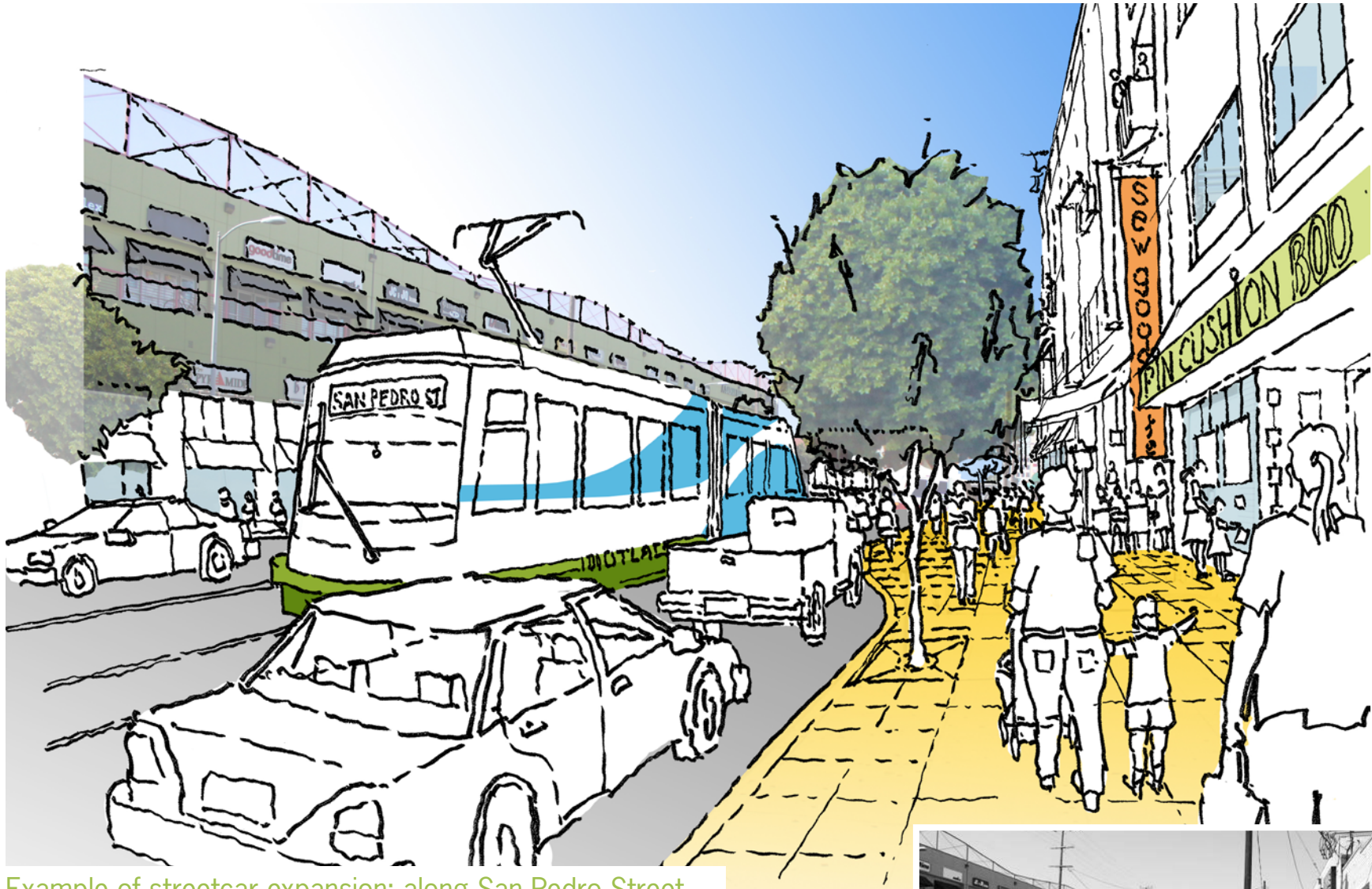
Make the proposed streetcar Downtown's dedicated fixed-rail transit provider.

First phase of the proposed streetcar route (source: goLAstreetcar, Downtownla.com)

Downtown LA's proposed streetcar focuses its attention mainly along the Broadway corridor, connecting entertainment destinations at LA Live at one end to cultural destinations near the Music Center at the other.

The City's Bringing Back Broadway initiative, has made great strides to secure funding and support for the Downtown LA streetcar. Its economic development and public benefit potential for the Downtown community is high. Yet, the proposed route isn't nearly enough to provide full coverage to all of Downtown. Given the overwhelming support thus far, the streetcar initiative has much potential far beyond its first phase. Moving forward, the Downtown LA Streetcar should position itself for future phases of an expanded network, serving areas of increasing populations and activities along major corridors. Doing so, it could establish itself as the dedicated fixed-rail, short hop transit provider for all of Downtown.





Example of streetcar expansion: along San Pedro Street

San Pedro Street is a major north-south artery of Downtown that deserves attention. Historically, it served as a major yellow car transit corridor and is again well-situated to serve that purpose. A future phase of the Downtown LA Streetcar network could have a spur that extends to San Pedro Street and eventually connects transit riders from the Blue Line along Washington through Fashion District to Little Tokyo. San Pedro Street is a bustling low-rise corridor, but with fixed rail streetcar, could support more density and an even more eclectic mix of street-level activity.



Existing

There is not
enough open space
in Downtown for
10 million visitors,
200,000+ workers,
52,000+ residents
(and their dogs).

Source: downtownla.com, Downtown LA Demographic Study 2013; SCAG employment estimates, 2012)

An aerial photograph of a large, paved public plaza. In the lower center, there is a cluster of tables and chairs, many of which are shaded by large, bright blue umbrellas. Several people are seen walking or sitting at the tables. To the left, there is a small tree and a planter box. The plaza is surrounded by buildings, and the overall scene is bright and sunny. A large, semi-transparent white graphic element, resembling a stylized '7' or a large arrow, is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Public Realm

Image: City National Plaza in the Financial District. Source: AECOM



Public Realm Guiding Principles

Image: View towards City Hall from Grand Park. Source: AECOM

> The pedestrian comes first.

At some point in time before and after driving a car, riding a bus, taking the train, or riding a bicycle, every person is a pedestrian. The pedestrian experience is the predominant experience in Downtown. The design and upkeep of Downtown's public realm should provide a safe, comfortable, attractive, and easily navigable environment for all pedestrians.

> Reclaim what the automobile has taken.

Downtown predated the automobile. Pedestrian and railway rights-of-way both yielded to the automobile in the post-war era. Opportunities to expand the areas for pedestrian or transit activity exist in spaces that more recently have catered to the automobile. Alleys, dead-ends, and odd-angle intersections, for example, are often overlooked or neglected spaces, but can be reclaimed as more usable, public spaces.

> Give everyone in Downtown equal access to open space.

Creative solutions are possible (in land acquisition, design, funding, operations, and management) to create more public open space throughout Downtown, especially for areas that are currently under-served. All Downtown users (residents, workers, and visitors) should be no more than a 10-minute walk from a public park that is sized proportionately to the number of users within the 10-minute walk.

> Private developments should provide public benefits that contribute to the public realm.

Private developers should incorporate publicly-accessible open space (parks, plazas, paseos, dog runs, and programmed alleyways) into their developments. The benefits are two-fold: improvements add value to their developments while enhancing the public realm for all of Downtown. An effort must be made to identify why many developers resist it, and how more publicly-accessible open space can be incentivized.

07a. Opportunities to expand the public realm

Recognize alleys and dead-end streets as pedestrian-first opportunities.

Existing alleys and dead-end streets (Source: Google Maps, Los Angeles City Planning)

Downtown's compact street and block framework is conducive to a walkable neighborhood. In the Historic Core, a typical Downtown block, bounded by major east and west streets, measures a roughly 330 by 600 feet. As one moves eastward, major streets become less frequent, creating larger, less walkable blocks with few, if any, pedestrian destinations.

Despite its disparately loose grid, the eastern half of Downtown has an extensive network of alleys and dead-end streets.

For example, because of places like Santee Alley and its adjoining streets or the San Pedro wholesale area, the Fashion District boasts an abundance of uninterrupted ground level activity - both on streets and in alleys.

Along otherwise seemingly nondescript alleys or dead-end streets, there lies an opportunity to expand the public realm by allowing the pedestrian to come first. These spaces could be opportunities for shared streets, farmer's markets, food trucks, or alternate pedestrian paths.

Most alleys will continue to primarily be vehicle and service oriented. However, they too help improve the pedestrian environments on streets by reducing curb cuts and truck traffic and loading/unloading.

— alleys
— dead-end streets
- - - DLANC boundary





Example of dead-end street improvement: Wall St

Wall Street is a minor, non-through street in the Fashion District, running from 3rd St to Pico Blvd. To help local businesses and improve the pedestrian experience, Wall Street could be closed either permanently or temporarily for outdoor flower sales. In July 2014, “The Wall” was instituted, closing off Wall Street between 7th and 8th Streets for “food + flowers + farmers market.” Because the Flower Market presently lacks any kind of space that is able to provide it an identity, this is an opportunity to animate the street, dramatically alter the relationship the market has with its visitors and workers, and give the Flower Market a visible place of its own.



Existing

Odd-angle intersections are opportunities to expand the public realm.

Existing odd-angle intersections in Downtown (source: Google Maps)



Pico & Olive



3rd & Main



Pico & Main



8th & San Pedro



Odd-angle intersections are those where streets meet at awkward jogs, leaving leftover spaces underutilized or redundant. These intersections could be opportunities for plazas and parks to host outdoor retail, farmer's markets, or food trucks.



Example of odd-angle intersection improvement: Pico & Main

Odd-angle intersections, when reconfigured as public space, can present good development opportunities. At Pico and Main, the generous expanse of asphalt can be reclaimed as a landscaped public plaza fronting businesses along Pico. With these public improvements, it makes sense to also improve the surface parking lot and adjoining lot(s) as a redevelopment opportunity (ground floor retail with commercial or residential above).





Example of odd-angle intersection improvement: 8th & San Pedro

The odd-angle intersection at 8th and San Pedro Streets (in the Flower District) presents another opportunity to introduce a new amenity in the short term. By eliminating the slip lane from San Pedro onto 8th Street, a large plaza is made possible (programmed to allow outdoor sales of flowers) and creates a fairly large development opportunity on the adjacent parcel fronting 8th Street.



Existing



Example of odd-angle intersection improvement: 8th & San Pedro

Given the site's current use, this new plaza can serve as a space for accommodating events on the Flower Market's busiest days (e.g., Valentine's Day and Mother's Day). It could also serve as an arrival gateway into the Flower Market and the Fashion District as one drives eastward on 8th Street.



Existing

Narrow, highly pedestrian places are opportunities for shared streets.

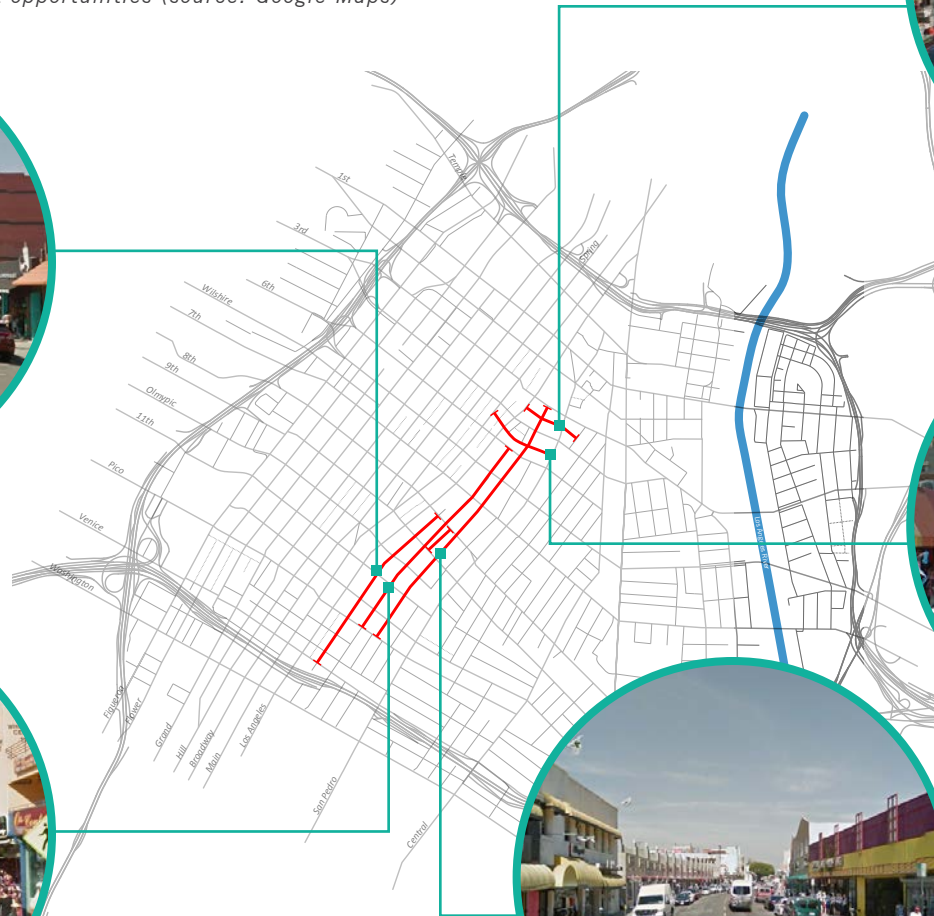
Potential locations for shared street opportunities (source: Google Maps)



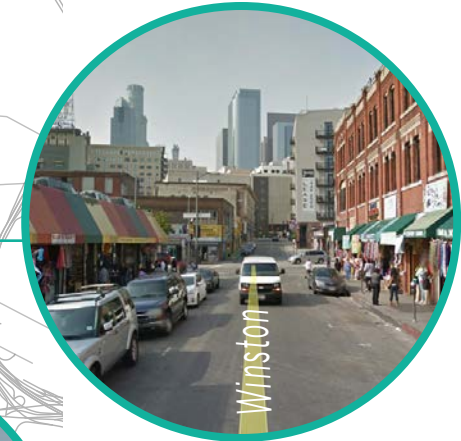
Santee Street
between
8th and 15th



Maple Ave
between
5th and Pico



Boyd Street
between
Los Angeles and Omar



Winston St
between
Main and San Pedro



Wall St
between
7th and Pico



Example of a shared street: Maple Ave between 11th and 12th

Because of its heavy pedestrian, active ground-floor storefronts, and limited through traffic, Maple Avenue between 11th and 12th Streets is an ideal location to introduce a “shared street,” where pedestrians, (low-speed) automobiles, and bicycles have equal use of the street. By removing the curb, the line between sidewalk and street is blurred, creating one shared space for all. Trees, planters, and street parking help keep automobile traffic speeds to a minimum and pedestrians safe.



Existing

07b. Green open space for all

There is insufficient green open space for everyone.

Existing green open space in Downtown (Source: Los Angeles City Planning, Google Earth)

There is not nearly enough green open space in Downtown for its 200,000+ workers and 53,000+ residents (and their dogs). As illustrated in the diagram to the right, the minimal green open space that does exist is disproportionately distributed, with Bunker Hill, Civic Center, and the Historic Core being the primary beneficiaries.

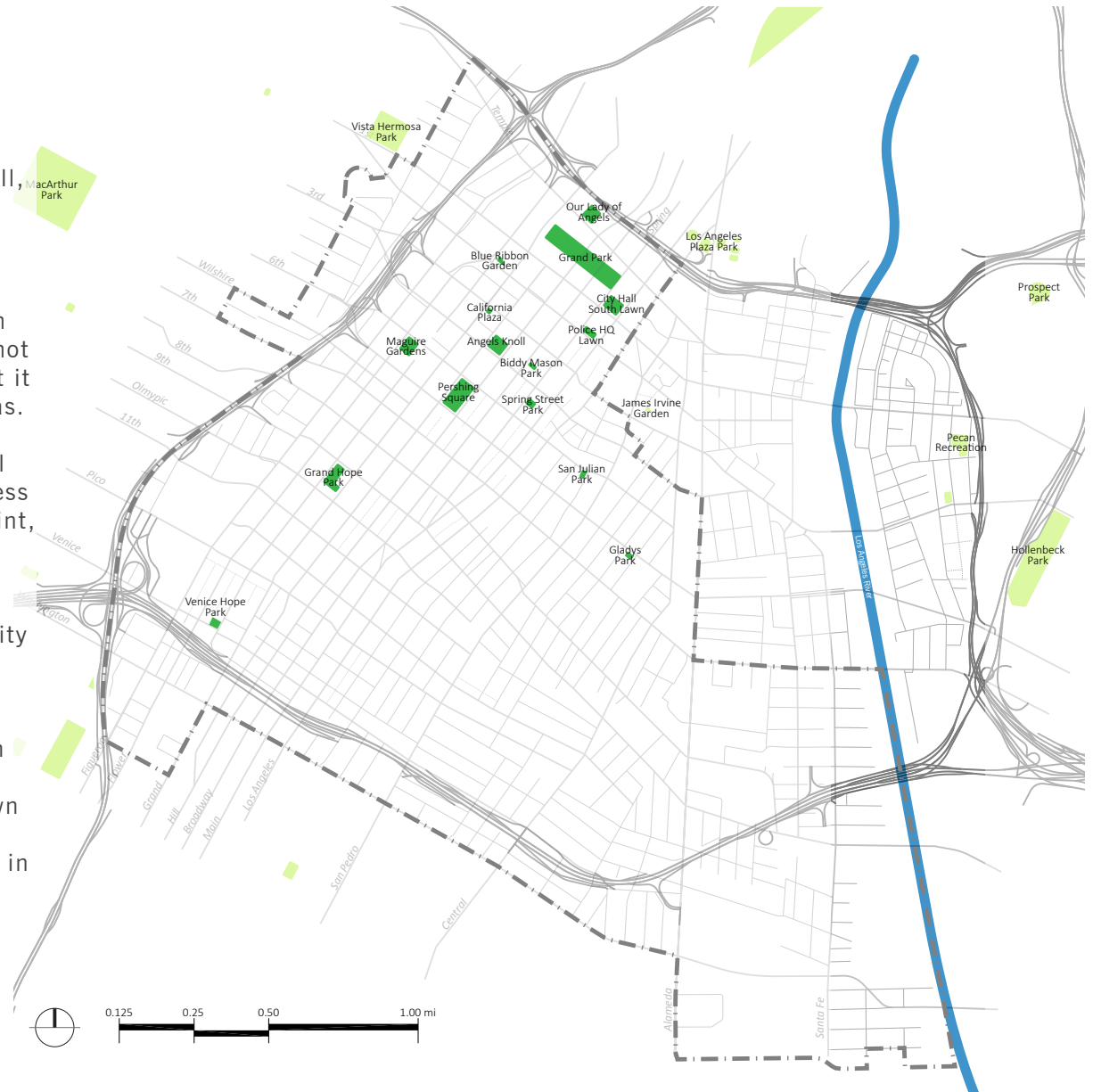
Most of the industrial southern and eastern portions of Downtown have no access to green open space. Introducing green open space is not necessarily discouraged in industrial uses, but it is certainly first prioritized for residential areas.

While it may appear that at a geographic level the Historic Core has comparatively good access to parks, in reality, from a per capita standpoint, it is under-served. According to Census data, the Historic Core is home to almost 10,000 residents.

Using Spring Street Park as the center of gravity of the Historic Core, there are only a handful of green open spaces within a 5-minute walk, equating to 0.8 acres of green open spaces to 1,000 residents. As a reference, the American Planning Association (APA) recommends 5 acres to 1,000 residents. Far worse, Downtown as a whole only provides 0.6 acres per 1,000 residents. Clearly, current amenities fall short in serving this many residents' needs.

■ green open space

■■■■■ DLANC boundary



Prioritize opportunity sites for open space.

City-owned parcels in Downtown (Source: Los Angeles City Planning)

Access to open space should not be a privilege enjoyed by only those in the Civic Center, Historic Core, or South Park. Workers (and now a growing number of residents) in the Fashion District and industrial districts of Downtown should also have equal opportunities to open space.

Access to open space, especially in the context of the dense urban environment that is Downtown, should be a right. Studies show that access to parks offers a range of benefits (American Planning Association, 2014): enhancing well-being, increasing fitness, reducing obesity, and mitigating the negative impacts on our climate, air, and water.

To increase the amount of open space in Downtown, one strategy lies in identifying under-utilized agency-owned land as opportunities for new parks. Working through the constraints of land acquisition and funding, the City can prioritize opportunity sites for potential new parks based on strategic locations and relative neighborhood need, all with the intent of eventually creating an inter-connected network of green open spaces throughout Downtown.

Currently, the Department of Recreation and Parks is developing the Downtown Los Angeles Open Space Master Plan. DLANC should provide input to shape the overall plan.



07c. Public Benefits

Private developments should provide public benefits that contribute to the public realm.

With the demise of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA/LA), Los Angeles – and certainly Downtown Los Angeles – has lost a strong partner charged with investing and providing public benefits via tax increments. The resulting void places a greater burden on city agencies and private developers to provide public benefits. Vision Downtown identifies the following categories of benefits that all large private developers (developing projects larger than 50,000sf) should be expected to provide as part of their public benefits package.

Open space -- Downtown Los Angeles is park poor. Its residential population is growing exponentially, but the provision of open space has not kept pace. Spring Street Park and Grand Park are certainly welcome additions, but more can and should be done, especially at a fine-grained block-by-block scale. All new private developments should be mandated to provide physical (not in-lieu) park improvements, even if they appear atypically small. This is important given the poor distribution of accessible open space in Downtown. These open space amenities should be open to the public and programmed for a variety of users (and must provide critically deficient public dog parks). Given the context of Downtown Los Angeles, there will be need for a higher level of security and operations/maintenance than the typical city park model. Public/private partnerships (e.g. BIDs or other models) may be able to augment or replace private or public maintenance of open space. Operations and maintenance agreements must not become a hindrance to creating more open space. Issues such as liability need to be addressed.

Short-hop transportation -- Major employers and property owners already provide shuttle service within Downtown to connect workers to Union Station and other transit hubs (often as part of traffic mitigation agreements with the City). A short-term fix to address Downtown's short-hop transportation needs would be, in the future, to encourage that these worker-focused benefits be opened for use by all.

Contribution to redo Pershing Square -- Pershing Square was the heart of Downtown. Few would say it still is, trapped in an unfortunate series of well-intentioned, but unsuccessful reconfigurations. Although visible improvements are ongoing and successful in the near term (e.g., chess tables, concerts, farmer's markets, etc), more comprehensive efforts are needed to improve Pershing Square in the long term. For Downtown to live up to the aspirations embedded in this plan, it needs a Pershing Square that is world-class. It needs a place that can contain, celebrate, and broadcast the energy of all Downtowners. Downtown developers, regardless of their proximity to Pershing Square, stand to gain from its success. A contribution to fix the square should be part of their public benefits package.



Example of a new park (on a City-owned lot): Los Angeles Street

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) owns a 0.6-acre parcel directly across the street from Santee Court on Los Angeles Street. Seventy percent of the parcel is occupied by an underground transformer and the surface is leased for parking. LADWP could partner with the Fashion District community to introduce a park on the parcel. The design of the park will have to work around the operational constraints of the underground transformers.



“Our streets are our largest public asset, forming and reflecting the character of our neighborhoods.”--
Eric Garcetti.



Elizabeth
(Jr. Plus)

Speed
PACKING

Wall St
1100 S

4

FOR
PARKING
11 AM
6 PM

WIDE ALLEY FASHING

8E32176
LOS ANGELES

Opportunity Corridors

Image: Looking west on 7th at Los Angeles. Source: AECOM

Corridor Guiding Principles

Image: Looking south on Broadway at 7th Street. Source: AECOM

> A great city should have great streets.

Los Angeles has over 6,500 miles of streets, making it the largest municipal street system in the United States. This network is the city's largest public space asset, but its streets aren't valued, recognized, or maintained as well as they should. To thrive, a city must have a great streets framework that drives the vibrancy of its neighborhoods, people, and culture.

> Downtown should provide diverse street experiences.

Some streets should be formal and well-behaved; others should be left unscripted. Its diversity in street experiences — from the neon-lit facades of Broadway, to the narrow streets in the Fashion District, to the colorful bustle of Santee Alley, to the lofty rise of Grand Avenue — this is what keeps Downtown unique, exciting, and interesting.

> Streets are places too.

Streets are often viewed merely as conduits that move vehicles from point A to point B, but they ought to be seen as opportunities for memorable place-making. Streets must provide amenities, destinations, and experiences that define neighborhood character. They should keep people safe, interested, and wanting to return.

08a. Thriving north-south corridors

Build off already active corridors and channel their energies throughout Downtown.

Selected north-south corridors in Downtown

As the most active corridors in Downtown, these streets have been most successful in reinventing themselves over time; reinvention has often been difficult and has typically required changes in public policy and/or an influx of public/private resources.

Broadway is a prime example. In its heyday of the 1920s, the corridor was host to numerous theaters, commercial activity, and pedestrian life. In the past few decades, it has stagnated with an unusual combination of high street-level rents, disinvestment, and upper-level vacancies, but the recent efforts of “Bringing Back Broadway” is breathing new life into its historic building stock.

Similar revitalization efforts, although lacking a formal, structured initiative, are also occurring along Broadway's other north-south neighbors. Spring is becoming a thriving eclectic street with a neighborhood feel. Figueroa bustles with ongoing office, commercial, and entertainment activity.

Needless to say, the successful activity along these corridors is occurring mostly north of 7th Street. Redevelopment efforts should channel this energy southward, infusing more life into South Park and the otherwise disconnected communities south of the 10 Freeway.

↔ corridors

⋯ fragmented segments (i.e. buildings turn their backs to the street; lack of destinations, ground floor activity, or inadequate pedestrian infrastructure)

▬▬▬ DLANC boundary



08b. Neglected north-south corridors

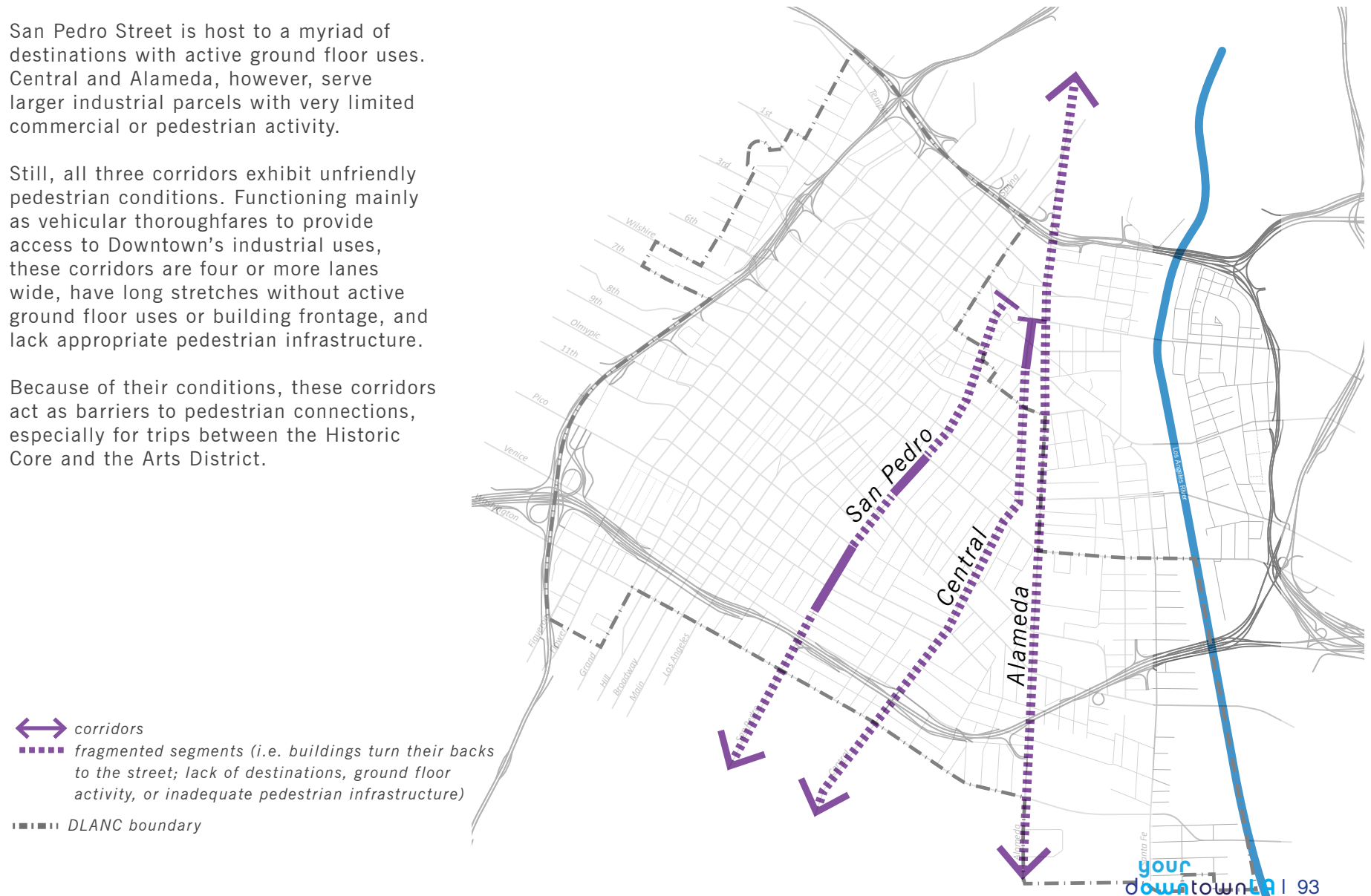
Invest in corridors that require extra attention.

Selected north-south corridors in Downtown

San Pedro Street is host to a myriad of destinations with active ground floor uses. Central and Alameda, however, serve larger industrial parcels with very limited commercial or pedestrian activity.

Still, all three corridors exhibit unfriendly pedestrian conditions. Functioning mainly as vehicular thoroughfares to provide access to Downtown's industrial uses, these corridors are four or more lanes wide, have long stretches without active ground floor uses or building frontage, and lack appropriate pedestrian infrastructure.

Because of their conditions, these corridors act as barriers to pedestrian connections, especially for trips between the Historic Core and the Arts District.



08c. Fragmented east-west corridors

Fill in the gaps along fragmented east-west opportunity corridors.

Selected east-west corridors in Downtown

Streets like 6th and 7th have seen much revitalization in recent years (e.g., “restaurant row” on 7th through the Financial District and adaptive reuse on 6th in the Historic Core). But there are gaps on major pedestrian corridors that need attention (private development, infrastructure, etc.) to provide “complete streets.”

To the east, revitalization in the Arts District and renewed attention along the LA River poses a significant opportunity. 6th & 7th Streets are well situated to help channel the energy from the ends (Historic Core and the Arts District) into Central City East, filling in the gaps (from a public realm and pedestrian standpoint) along fragmented segments.

Similarly, Olympic and Pico require extra attention, as one approaches LA Live and the Convention Center westward from the Fashion District.

Pico, in particular, would benefit from a streetscape plan and infrastructure investment. Such investment would help spur private investment on Pico, which could be revitalized as a great pedestrian/retail corridor adding to its already active segment within the Fashion District.

- ↔ corridors
- fragmented segments (i.e. buildings turn their backs to the street; lack of destinations, ground floor activity, or adequate pedestrian infrastructure)
- - - - DLANC boundary



Diagram illustrating major destinations along 7th Street with disparately concentrated clusters at either end.



*Alameda Square proposal
by Evoq Properties
at 7th & Alameda*

Seventh Street's less recognizable eastern stretch spans across Downtown's major industrial districts. Recent revitalization efforts (e.g., new restaurants and retail) have been focused across the historic stretch of 7th Street west of Los Angeles Street. The most eastern edge of 7th Street through the Arts District has also been benefiting from redevelopment efforts as well. However, a mile gap of a lack of activity and attention still remains between Los Angeles and Alameda Streets.

Sixth Street: a 2-mile stretch, from the Financial District to the LA River.

Diagram illustrating major destinations along 6th Street with disparately concentrated clusters at either end.



Much like 7th Street, 6th Street also benefits from filling in the missing gap along its entire 2-mile length through Downtown. Recent efforts have been focusing on the western edge of 6th Street (e.g., PacMutual Building and potentially Pershing Square), but its eastern edge has been relatively neglected, with the exception of the 6th Street Viaduct Replacement Project. When completed, the bridge redesign will help to better connect Downtown to Boyle Heights with better access to the LA River.

Olympic and Pico: from LA Live/Convention Center to the Fashion District.

Diagram illustrating fragmented segments of Olympic and Pico in Downtown



Both Olympic and Pico are major boulevards that originate at the Pacific Ocean and terminate in Downtown. Their stretches through Downtown, however, are more or less uneventful, with the exception of their endpoints (e.g., LA Live, City Market) and short patches of activity (e.g., retail along Pico through the Fashion District).

In a competitive
global context,
it is critical that
Los Angeles
continually
re-invigorate its
core: Downtown.

An aerial photograph of Downtown Los Angeles, showing a dense urban landscape with numerous skyscrapers, parking lots, and highways. A large, semi-transparent white number '9' is overlaid on the right side of the image. In the bottom left corner, there is a semi-transparent dark grey box containing the title text.

Game- Changing Opportunities

Image: Aerial helicopter view of Downtown Los Angeles. Source: AECOM

Game-Changing Opportunities

Downtown must seize once-in-generation, transformational opportunities.

Downtown is poised to engage many transformational ideas and opportunities that come just once in a generation or even a century. These have the potential to alter the trajectory of the city – akin to the Los Angeles Aqueduct of the early 20th century and how it positioned Los Angeles for a sustained century of growth (notwithstanding its controversial history). Several proposals centered in and around Downtown are in the works and the Downtown community is uniquely positioned to shape their final form.

LOS ANGELES RIVER

The Army Corp of Engineers recently undertook an exercise to analyze alternatives to return a 9-mile segment of the Los Angeles River (from Downtown to Verdugo Wash) to a more natural state. Alternative 20 – the most ambitious of the proposals – has recently been approved. It will build upon the ideas of the Los Angeles River Masterplan and provide much needed open space and recreational amenities. Downtown is a river-adjacent neighborhood but is disconnected by the rail corridors that run along the west bank. It is time to bury the rail corridors (extend the trenched Alameda Corridor along the west bank of the river) and connect Downtown to the river. Improvements should be made allow people to access the river.

FREEWAY CAP PARKS

The freeways of Southern California have scarred and disconnected communities all across the region, but none more so than Downtown where the 10, 101 and 101 have created an inhospitable moat around Downtown. Freeway cap park proposals like Park 101 and potentially over the 110 to connect City West can heal the connections and become iconic public places.

HIGH SPEED RAIL

High speed rail brings forth the possibility of infinite connections. If implemented, high speed rail will dramatically increase the number of visitors that arrive and depart Downtown Los Angeles. In doing so, improvements must be made to better connect Union Station to the rest of Downtown Los Angeles.

OLYMPICS 2024

Los Angeles is currently competing to host the 2024 Olympics. The opportunity to create a legacy plan that would maximize the long-term benefit of the new infrastructure the Olympics would bring could be realized with foresight and strategic planning.

CLEANTECH CORRIDOR

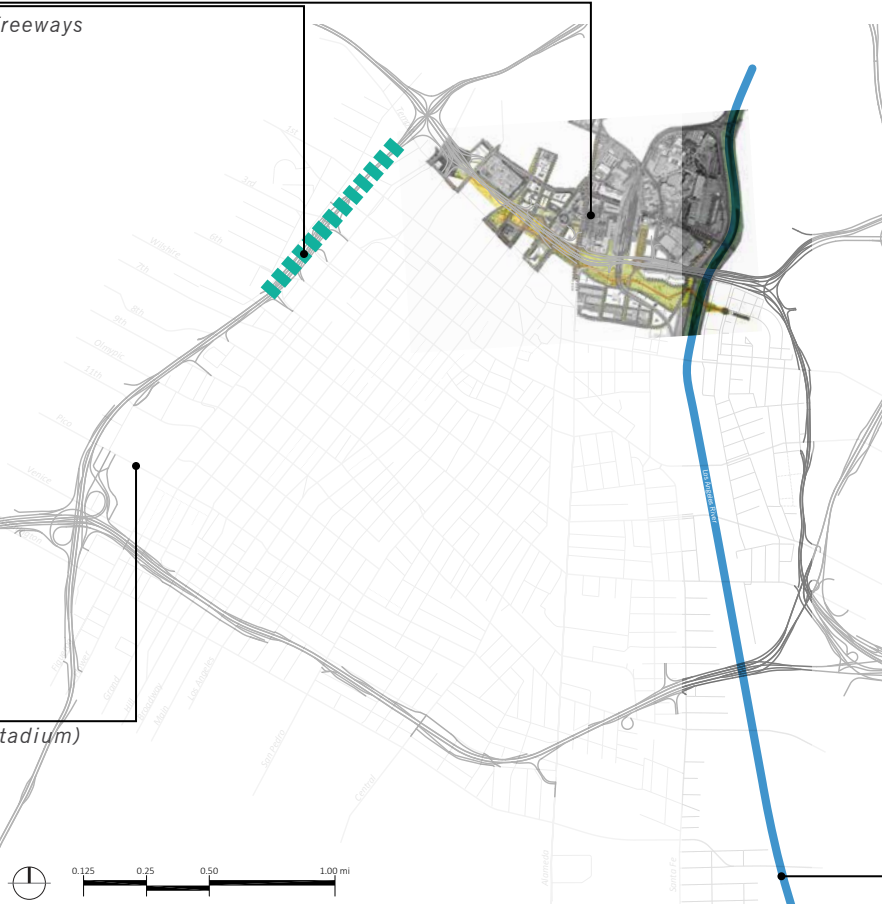
Position Los Angeles to ride the wave of the next generation of industrial jobs in clean- and info- technology. Repurpose aging industrial uses along the Los Angeles River, while simultaneously protecting its diverse job base and adding to the economic vitality of Downtown.



Freeway cap parks at the 101 and 110 Freeways



LA Convention Renovation (and/or NFL Stadium)



Los Angeles River Revitalization Masterplan and adjacent communities

Game-changing opportunities potentially coming in the next 20 years that could change the landscape of Downtown forever.

Vision Downtown
provides the city
a mechanism for
bringing together
the aspirations of
a community and
the needs of a
global city.

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Next Steps

Image: Aerial helicopter view of Downtown Los Angeles. Source: AECOM

Next Steps

The Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council (DLANC), like all neighborhood councils, does not have the ability to regulate private development or manage public infrastructure improvements. That responsibility lies with agencies and departments of the City of Los Angeles.

IMPLEMENTATION WORKING GROUP

For DLANC to make progress on implementing the regulatory recommendations included in this plan, it will have to partner and engage with city departments and public agencies. To that end, a special implementation working group of the DLANC board should be created and charged with moving this vision plan forward.

The Department of City Planning may be the appropriate lead agency, although participation from other departments will be critical to its success. Planning currently updating the Central City and Central City North Community Plans. Together, they comprise a majority of DLANC's jurisdiction. This vision plan should serve as priority, community-vetted input to City Planning's team and provide the rationale for ideas like the flex-use land designation. City Planning is also in the process of updating and simplifying the zoning code with a special emphasis on a Downtown Development Code. Vision Downtown must help shape the new regulations that will be crafted via that effort.

The Recreation and Parks Department is currently preparing an open space master plan for Downtown Los Angeles. For that effort to

accurately reflect the expectations and needs of Downtown stakeholders, it is vital that DLANC provide input and ideas embedded in Vision Downtown to the Recreation and Parks team.

The Implementation Working Group should also be charged with engaging Central City Association (CCA) and Central City East Association (CCEA), and all of the BIDs across Downtown LA. These organizations represent Downtown property owners and businesses and are at the forefront of attracting and programming new uses and amenities into Downtown.

PROJECTS WORKING GROUP

While it may lack regulatory teeth, DLANC excels at developing grassroots support for community improvements. Vision Downtown identifies several opportunities to make immediate improvements in the public realm (e.g., reconfiguring odd-angle intersections). The Projects Working Group should be charged with preparing a list of low-hanging opportunities and develop community support, sponsorship, implementation, and operation strategies around them. The City's Department of Transportation (LADOT) has recently launched a new program – People St – that has the potential to dramatically improve Downtown's public realm via small-scale low intensity interventions. People St allows communities to apply for approval to create public realm projects that enhance the quality of life and includes plazas, parklets, and bicycle corrals. Opportunities for these interventions abound in Downtown.

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