

1.0 - Relationship to Existing North Montclair Specific Plan

The North Montclair Downtown Specific Plan is a subset of the North Montclair Specific Plan, adopted January 5, 1998 by Resolution No. 97-2163. The North Montclair Downtown Specific Plan is bounded by Central Avenue (on the east), Moreno Street (on the south), Monte Vista Avenue (on the west), and the Metrolink / BNSF railroad tracks (on the north); and the area directly north of the railroad tracks extending to the City limit on the north and west and encompassing the existing commuter parking lots to the east. (See plan on page 4.) This corresponds with Focus Areas 1, 2, 4a, 4b, 5, 6, 7 and 8 as shown on page III-38 of the North Montclair Specific Plan. For properties within the North Montclair Downtown Specific Plan development standards specified in this document supersede the codified language set forth in the North Montclair Specific Plan. Where this document does not specify development standards, the existing North Montclair Specific Plan and Montclair Municipal Code shall be the controlling documents.

1.1 - Purpose

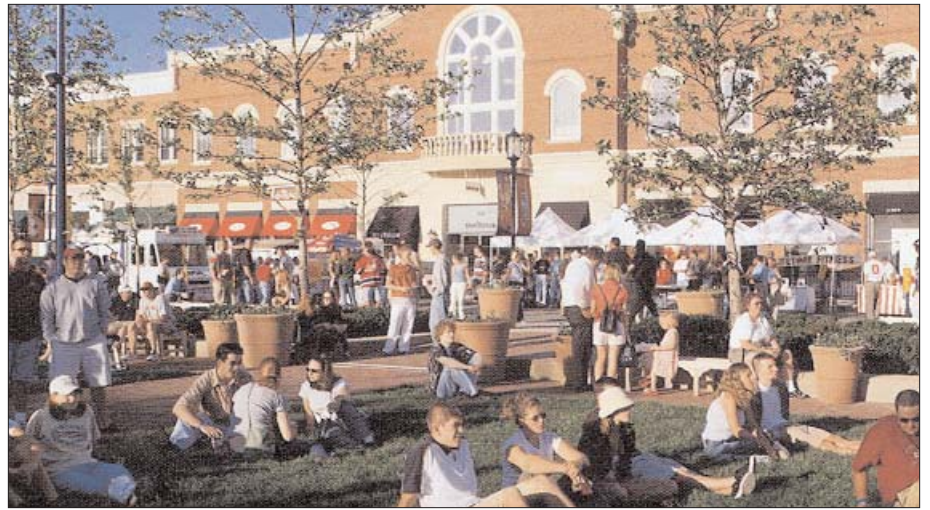
Conventional suburban development is the form of growth which has produced large-scale sprawl throughout Southern California over the last fifty years. Sprawl development is characterized by homogeneous single-use zones, with the housing tract, the shopping center and the business park as its basic elements. These segregated use areas are connected by a discontinuous system of wide thoroughfares designed for the rapid movement of cars. Within such a homogeneous urban structure, dull and repetitive buildings are typically designed without any particular obligation to define a realm of public space. The vast majority of such places designed since the 1940's are architecturally undistinguished and urbanistically destructive, as they both absorb and eliminate the local landscape while generating as inferior a fabric of buildings as has ever been built on this continent.

It is time to reverse both the physical patterns and the social and economic consequences of sprawl by returning to a pattern of community development based on traditional American town principles.

Transit Oriented Development of Districts and Villages is a method of planning that has emerged in the last decade as an alternative conventional suburban development. It stems from the realization that commuter lines and stations can be more than travel nodes, since proximity to transit reduces dependency on the automobile and enhances the value of surrounding buildings as a place to live, work and shop. The typical size of such a district is a quarter-mile radius from physical center to edge. This distance gathers the neighboring population within an average 5-minute walk at an easy pace of a commercial center. Thus the maximum size of a district is determined not by density but by a walkability shed.

Living in a pleasant private setting, connecting to your neighbors by choice and being able to walk to fulfill civic obligations and enjoy commercial entertainment and recreational opportunities are the hallmark of living in a traditional community. It is a way of life which is possible to provide again, and appropriate and desirable, for the future of both Montclair and Southern California.

The Plan for North Montclair is guided by the Design Principles for Transit Oriented Development described on these pages.



Squares



Public Buildings



Plazas

Make Great Public Places - The center of a District is the locus of its public life. Its civic buildings enhance community identity and foster civic pride. Its shops and workplaces provide convenient access to goods and services without need for a car trip. A properly designed and developed transit district will become a unique social and economic asset to Montclair.



Great Neighborhood Streets



Great Retail Streets

Make Great Streets - Street design dictates the form of blocks and buildings. Districts are structured on individual blocks and a network of narrow thoroughfares, which encourage pedestrian movement. This interconnecting pattern of thoroughfares provides multiple routes that diffuse traffic, and additionally increases the options emergency personnel have to reach a distressed location. Streets of varying types are detailed to provide equally for pedestrian comfort and for automobile movement. Street intersections have minimal curb radii to slow cars and minimize the crossing distance of pedestrians. Two-way streets also improve pedestrian crossing safety and minimize automotive speed. Where needed, streets have landscaped center medians, to reduce apparent street width. Finally, streets, where possible, have on-street parking in order to provide a buffer between the moving traffic and the pedestrian, thus diminishing perceived and actual danger.

Live Above Stores and Businesses - A district is a place defined by the same general qualities as a neighborhood, with one major exception: Commercial activities predominate instead of residential. Yet, the quality and amount of housing in a district determine its particular character. Perhaps the most typical dwelling type in a district is the loft or house over retail. Such dwellings allow for a variety of families, typically without children, to live near diverse services, while providing a constant 24/7 rhythm of use for the district.



Contemporary architecture

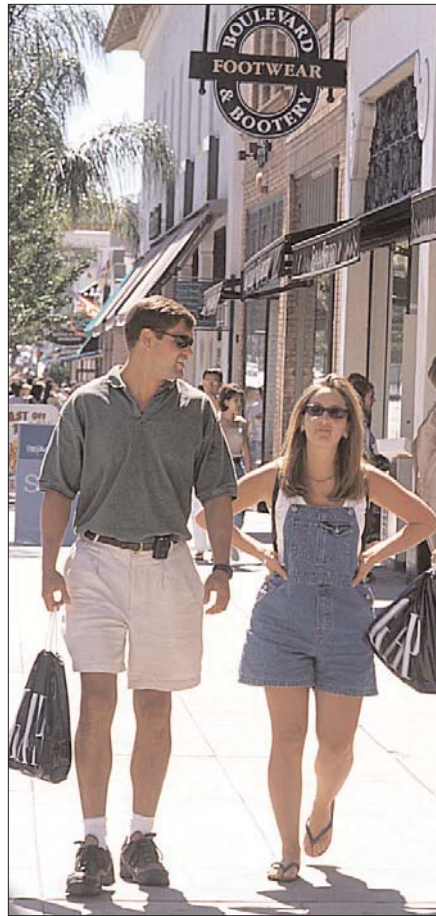


Mix of architecture types and styles



Traditional architecture

Build a Variety of Buildings - The buildings, blocks and streets of a district are interdependent. Each one contains in part the ingredients of all the others. Buildings of a particular quality can define the block that contains them and the street that surrounds them. Design is the matrix that helps either create or destroy the quality and character of a district. Buildings are the smallest increment of growth within a district or neighborhood. A variety of architectural types, including fabric buildings and civic monuments, and their relationship to each other, determine the character of a district as they define the streets and open spaces they face onto.



Pedestrian Friendly Sidewalk



Local Retailers



National Retailers

Get the Retail Right - The retail industry has recently discovered that outdoor, Main Street type retail better fits the lifestyle of busy consumers, often yielding more regular trips and higher sales volumes than standard shopping centers. Retailers should therefore be concentrated to encourage and facilitate pedestrian storefront shopping. The retail center should be located around a pattern of streets accommodating cars and on-street parking. Long term parking should be located in shared "park once" lots or structures, convenient but compatible to the Main Street retail. The retail center should include at least one anchor tenant, and a mix of national and local vendors.

Create a Variety of Housing Choices - As a district matures, and its livability and economic value increase, a more diverse set of housing choices attract an increasingly varied and prosperous resident population. It is not unusual to encounter lofts, live/work buildings, courtyard housing, row housing, even duplexes, triplexes and quadplexes in nearly completely developed districts. All of these dwelling types are also typically provided in rental or ownership configurations.



Granny Flats



Townhouses



Parking as Urban Building



Parking as Urban Building



Attractive and Clear signage



Live/Work



Apartments over Retail

Get the Parking Right - The typical suburban, sequential pattern of "shop and park" requires two movements and a parking space to be dedicated for each visit to a shop, office, or civic institution. For three tasks, this requires six movements and three parking spaces. By contrast, the compactness and mixed-use nature and walkability of districts lend themselves to moving twice, parking just once, and completing multiple daily tasks on foot. The transformation of drivers into walkers is the immediate generator of pedestrian life: crowds of people that animate public life in the streets and generate the patrons of street friendly retail businesses. It is this "scene" created by pedestrians in appropriate numbers that provides the energy and attraction to sustain a thriving Main Street environment.

1.2 - Context

The City of Montclair is located at the western edge of the Inland Empire in San Bernardino County. It is within 10 miles of various regional destinations and transportation links, such as Ontario Airport, the I-15 and I-210 freeways. Direct regional access to Montclair is provided by the I-10 freeway and Metrolink's San Bernardino commuter rail. The City will also be the eastern terminus of the Gold Line light rail, which will link the foothill communities of the San Gabriel Valley with Pasadena and Downtown Los Angeles. Via Metrolink, Montclair is a 55 minute commute to Los Angeles or a 45 minute commute to the City of San Bernardino. When the Foothill Extension of the Metro Gold Line opens, the City will be 40 minutes via light rail from downtown Pasadena. These transportation routes are concentrated in a one square mile area on the City's northern edge. North Montclair is in proximity to both a lively, pedestrian-oriented downtown in Claremont and the regional mall at Montclair Plaza, is convenient to the 10 freeway and is a ten minute drive to the Ontario Airport. Other than Victoria Gardens in Rancho Cucamonga, no other location in the immediate region has such a large amount of undeveloped land in proximity to such a mixture of uses, activities and amenities.

Regional Housing Market - The major market for new housing in the western Inland Empire is in households moving there from the Los Angeles-Long Beach metropolitan area. It is likely that the vast majority of buyers interested in both detached and attached new housing will be households from counties to the west and south looking for more affordable housing. This growth in demand by smaller, professional households looking for starter homes means that smaller attached units, as well as small-lot detached single family units, will be viable real estate products. Attached, amenity-rich, rental housing targeting smaller households should also be developed.

Within the western Inland Empire, North Montclair is well-situated to absorb a much larger share of these households than it has in the past. Demand for detached single family homes throughout the area grew so significantly during the late 1990s that this housing product is now priced beyond the reach of many would-be first time home-buyers looking for for-sale housing in proximity to the job centers in Ontario and Rancho Cucamonga. Demand for housing in Montclair should therefore be gauged more broadly by demand throughout the larger western Inland Empire. Given the amount of land available and the potential to create a true mixed use town center with significant transit infrastructure, North Montclair is well-situated to capture a larger share of this potential demand for attached housing than is proportional to its recent rate of growth (Montclair's growth was limited over the 1990s by the lack of residentially zoned land.) It is an ideal location for higher density attached housing within a mixed use setting. Between 2005 and 2020, the approximate life of the Specific Plan, it is estimated that Montclair can absorb approximately 1,850 households, largely into the North Montclair Specific Plan area. This sizable increment of growth will only occur if sufficient land is zoned accordingly, the city implements a viable infrastructure financing plan and proposed projects are designed properly and approved expeditiously.

Regional Retail / Entertainment Market - Broadly defined, there are three categories of contemporary retail that have some feasibility in North Montclair: large format regional-serving retail, local-serving retail, and small format retail that is appropriate and feasible in a vertical mixed use context. While these various types of retail are beginning to be combined in hybrid shopping centers that serve multiple markets simultaneously, they still tend to have different locational and site requirements and work best in distinct types of built environments. Because of their different formats and market orientations, distinct factors influence the viability of each of these retail types for North Montclair.

Regional-serving retail largely consists of "big box" comparison and discount stores that sell bulk or below-market comparison and, increasingly, everyday goods to a regional or sub-regional market. It also includes entertainment anchors like movie theaters and major department stores. Large format regional-serving retail requires freeway access and substantial amounts of parking. The feasibility of additional regional-serving retail in Montclair is largely circumscribed by General Growth's plans for Montclair Plaza and the impact of the completion of Victoria Gardens in Rancho Cucamonga on the regional market.

Local-serving retail includes stores that provide everyday goods and services, draws primarily on a community-sized trade area, and must be visible and easily accessible from an arterial with a significant amount of car traffic. It includes both chain and independently owned stores, but is typically reliant on a major chain grocery or drugstore as an anchor tenant. Currently, North Montclair has little local-serving retail because it has so few households.

Vertical mixed use retail falls into two general categories: Lower and mid-market small businesses that locate in older retail districts with low rent and walkable historic built environments. Independent boutiques and up-market chains with high design values, that require significant investment in the surrounding built environment and locate near higher income households and white collar workplaces. Like local-serving retail, mixed use retail can be owner-operated or part of a regional or national chain of stores, but does not necessarily require an anchor tenant.



Aerial photo of existing conditions



Flying M sculpture at Montclair Transcenter



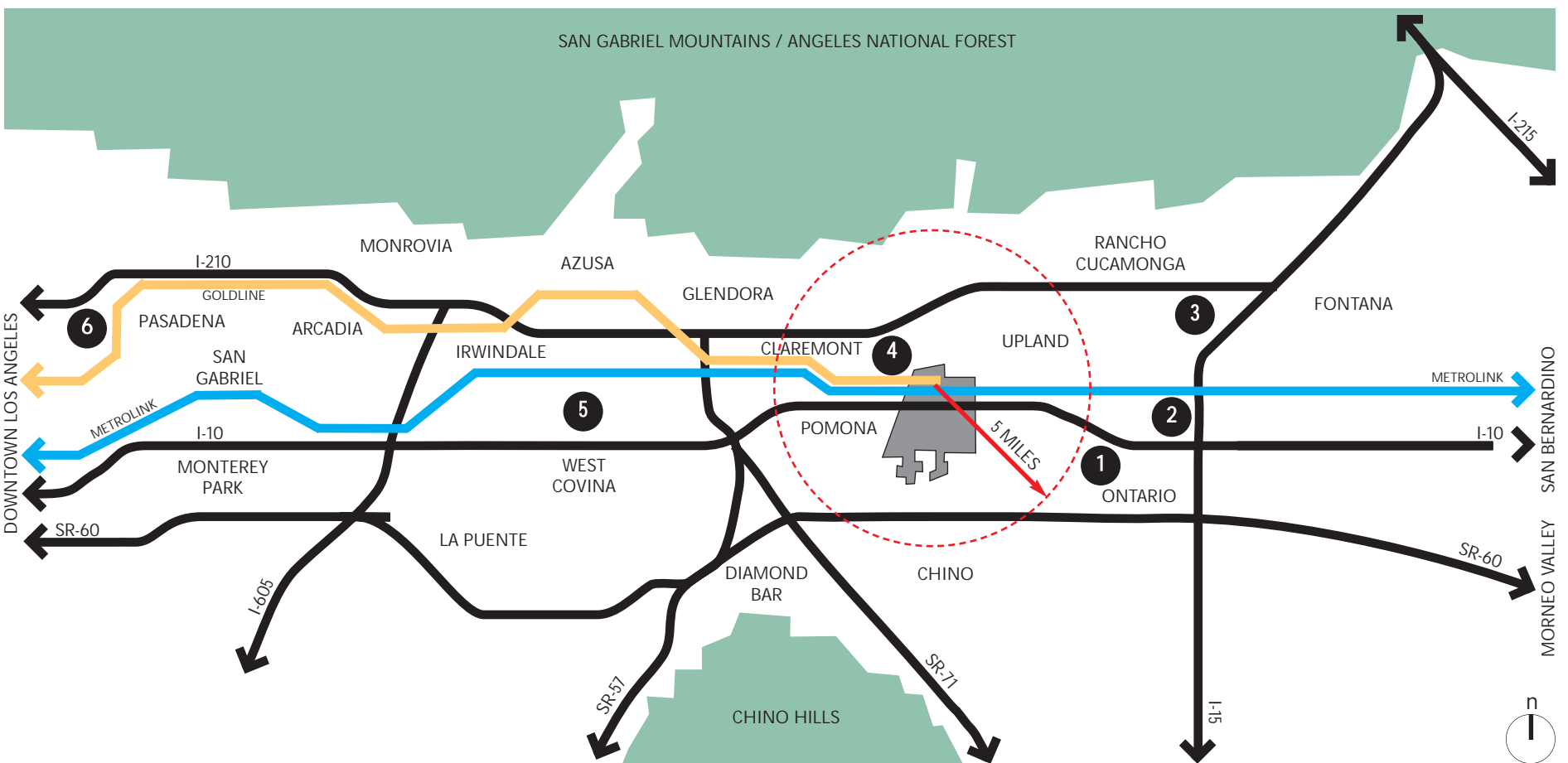
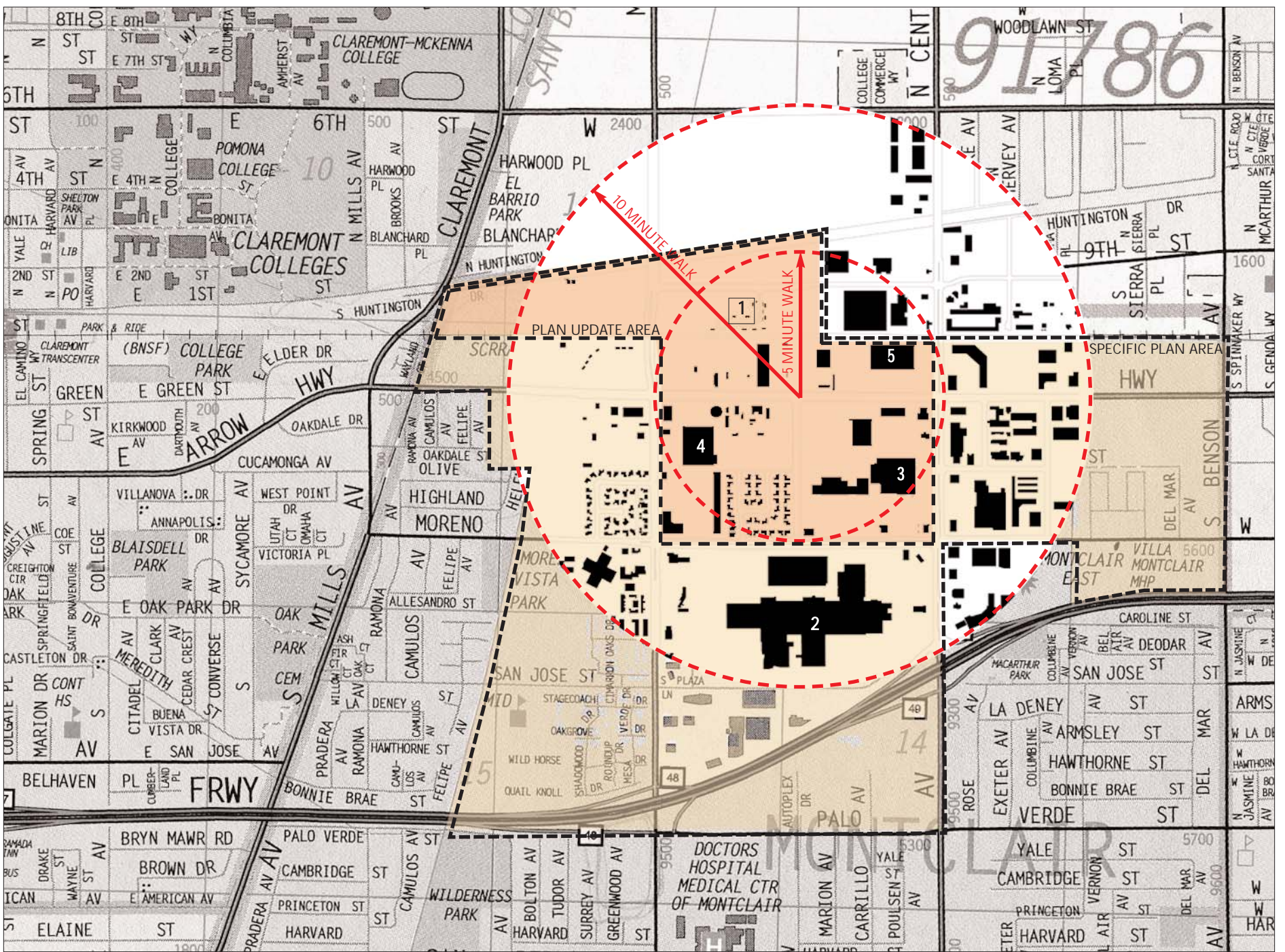
Montclair Plaza



Target Store



San Gabriel Mountains



Regional Context Within a 5 Mile Radius (Above)

- 1 : Ontario International Airport
- 2 : Ontario Mills Mall
- 3 : Victoria Gardens Town Center at Rancho Cucamonga
- 4 : Claremont Village and Colleges
- 5 : West Covina Mall
- 6 : Old Pasadena Shopping District

Local Context Within a 5 and 10 Minute Walking Radius (Top)

- 1 : Montclair Transcenter
- 2 : Montclair Plaza
- 3 : Target
- 4 : former Sam's Club
- 5 : former House-to-Home