

DRAFT

Conceptually Approved by the City Council
on December 8, 2003 and February 23, 2004

10/25/2004
6.B. (8:00 P.M.)
ATTACHMENT G

Central District Specific Plan

**CITY OF PASADENA
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

PRIME CONSULTANT:

RTKL Associates Inc.

SUB-CONSULTANTS:

Crawford, Multari, & Clark Associates

Kaku Associates, Inc.

Keyser Marston Associates Inc.

Parsons Harland Bartholomew & Associates

ADDITIONAL CONSULTANTS TO THE CITY:

Moore Iacofano Goltsman Inc.

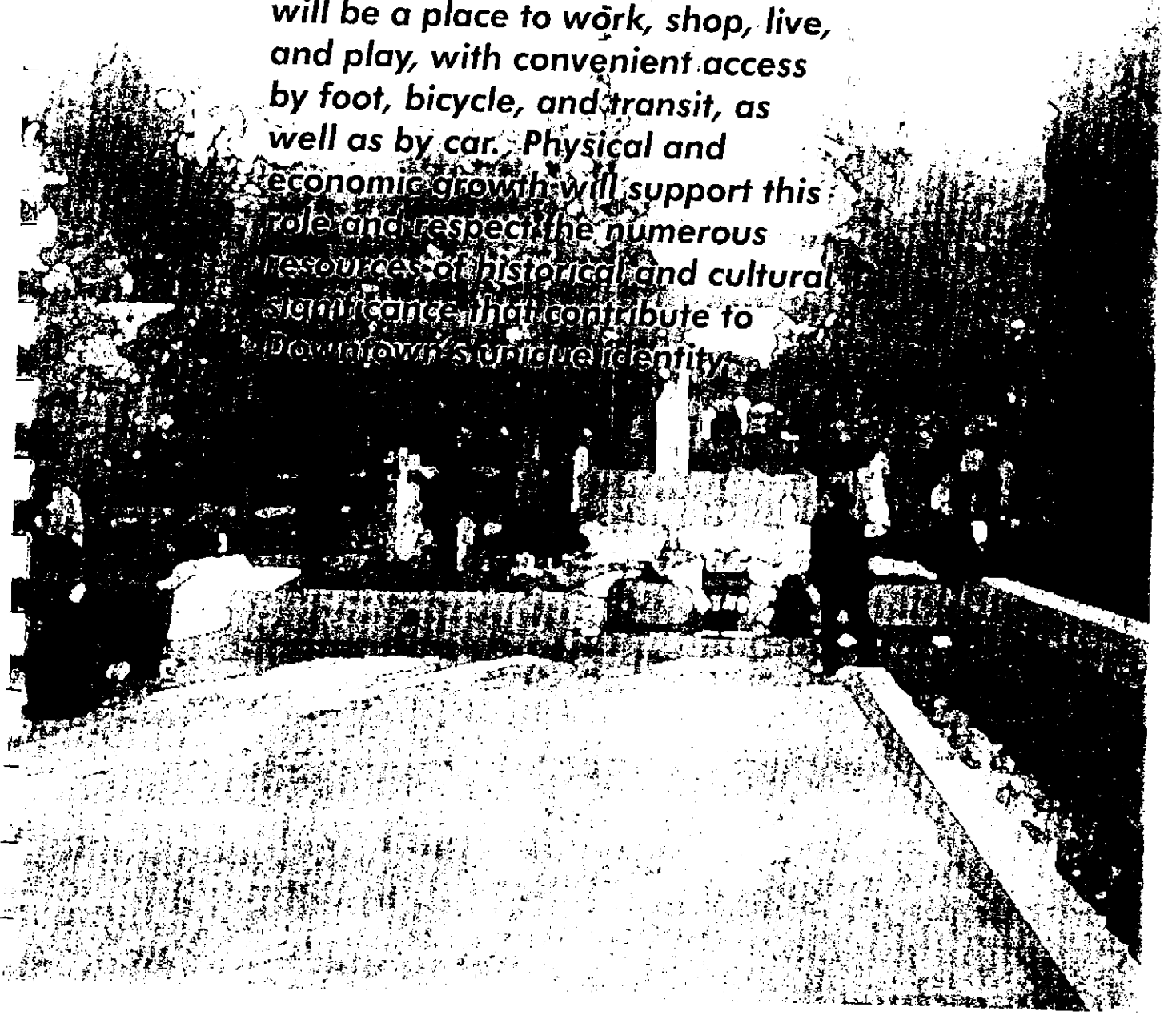
Cotton Bridges Associates

John Spalding, JES and Associates

Banerjee and Associates

10/25/2004
6.B. (8:00 P.M.)
ATTACHMENT G

The Central District will function as the City of Pasadena's vibrant urban core, providing a diversity of economic, residential, and cultural opportunities. Downtown will be a place to work, shop, live, and play, with convenient access by foot, bicycle, and transit, as well as by car. Physical and economic growth will support this role and respect the numerous resources of historical and cultural significance that contribute to Downtown's unique identity.



CONTENTS

<i>Section 1</i>	DOCUMENT OVERVIEW	1
<i>Section 2</i>	CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND	10
<i>Section 3</i>	POLICY FRAMEWORK	29
<i>Section 4</i>	DISTRICT-WIDE LAND USE CONCEPT	38
<i>Section 5</i>	DISTRICT-WIDE MOBILITY CONCEPT	58
<i>Section 6</i>	DISTRICT-WIDE URBAN DESIGN CONCEPT	74
<i>Section 7</i>	SUB-DISTRICT PLANNING CONCEPTS	94
<i>Section 8</i>	PUBLIC REALM DESIGN GUIDELINES	125
<i>Section 9</i>	PRIVATE REALM DESIGN GUIDELINES	141
<i>Section 10</i>	SUB-DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES	163
<i>Section 11</i>	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	176
	APPENDICES	203



EXHIBITS & MAPS

Section 1	DOCUMENT OVERVIEW	
	<i>District-wide Map 1: Specific Plan Boundaries</i>	3
	<i>Exhibit 1: Downtown Goals</i>	5
Section 2	CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND	
	<i>Exhibit 2: Regional Map</i>	12
	<i>Exhibit 3: Local Map</i>	13
	<i>Exhibit 4: Historic Maps</i>	15
	<i>District-wide Map 2: Historic Resources</i>	16
	<i>District-wide Map 3: Land Use Patterns (1999)</i>	18
	<i>District-wide Map 4: Development Intensity (1999)</i>	19
	<i>District-wide Map 5: Street Classification (1999)</i>	21
	<i>District-wide Map 6: Public Transit (1999)</i>	22
	<i>District-wide Map 7: Figure - Ground (1999)</i>	24
	<i>District-wide Map 8: Key Views & Vistas</i>	25
Section 4	DISTRICT-WIDE LAND USE CONCEPT	
	<i>District-wide Map 9: Sub-District Concept</i>	42
	<i>District-wide Map 10: Precinct Concept</i>	43
	<i>District-wide Map 11: Land Use Character Concept</i>	46
	<i>District-wide Map 12: Housing Concept</i>	49
	<i>District-wide Map 13: Development Intensity Concept</i>	54
	<i>District-wide Map 14: Maximum FAR Concept</i>	55
	<i>District-wide Map 15: Maximum Residential Density Concept</i>	57
Section 5	DISTRICT-WIDE MOBILITY CONCEPT	
	<i>District-wide Map 16: Local Transit Concept</i>	63
	<i>District-wide Map 17: TOD Concept</i>	64
	<i>District-wide Map 18: Sidewalk Width Concept</i>	67
	<i>District-wide Map 19: Bikeway Concept</i>	69
	<i>District-wide Map 20: Multimodal Corridor Concept</i>	73
Section 6	DISTRICT-WIDE URBAN DESIGN CONCEPT	
	<i>District-wide Map 21: Linkage Concept</i>	78
	<i>Exhibit 5: Arroyo Parkway Entrance Corridor Study</i>	79
	<i>District-wide Map 22: Public Open Space Concept</i>	83
	<i>District-wide Map 23: Street Setback Concept</i>	86
	<i>District-wide Map 24: Pedestrian-Oriented Use Concept</i>	87
	<i>District-wide Map 25: Maximum Height Concept</i>	93



EXHIBITS & MAPS

Section 7 SUB-DISTRICT PLANNING CONCEPTS

<i>Sub-district Map 1: Old Pasadena Linkage Concept</i>	96
<i>Exhibit 6: Old Pasadena Character Study</i>	99
<i>Sub-district Map 2: Civic Center / Midtown Linkage Concept</i>	101
<i>Exhibit 7: Civic Center / Midtown Character Study</i>	104
<i>Sub-district Map 3: Walnut Housing Linkage Concept</i>	106
<i>Exhibit 8: Walnut Housing Character Study</i>	108
<i>Sub-district Map 4: Pasadena Playhouse Linkage Concept</i>	110
<i>Exhibit 9: Pasadena Playhouse Character Study</i>	113
<i>Sub-district Map 5: Lake Avenue Linkage Concept</i>	115
<i>Exhibit 10: Lake Avenue Character Study</i>	118
<i>Sub-district Map 6: Arroyo Corridor / Fair Oaks Linkage Concept</i>	120
<i>Exhibit 11: Arroyo Corridor / Fair Oaks Character Study</i>	123

Section 11 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

<i>Table 1: Land Use Implementation Strategies & Schedule</i>	181
<i>Table 2: Mobility Implementation Strategies & Schedule</i>	184
<i>Table 3: Urban Design Implementation Strategies & Schedule</i>	189
<i>District-wide Map 26: Recommended Zoning Districts</i>	193
<i>Table 4: Recommended Land Use Classifications A</i>	194
<i>Table 5: Recommended Land Use Classifications B</i>	195
<i>Table 6: Recommended Land Use Classifications C</i>	196
<i>Table 7: Recommended Land Use Classifications D</i>	197
<i>District-wide Map 27: Change in Height Limits</i>	201
<i>District-wide Map 28: Change in Maximum Residential Density</i>	202

APPENDICES

<i>Table 8: Document Status</i>	212
<i>Exhibit 12: Civic Center / Midtown Opportunity Sites</i>	214
<i>Exhibit 13: Convention Center / Civic Auditorium Site Study</i>	216
<i>Exhibit 14: Broadway & Cen Fed Blocks Site Study</i>	220
<i>Exhibit 15: Centennial Square Site Study</i>	222
<i>Exhibit 16: Courthouse Block Site Study</i>	224
<i>Exhibit 17: Walnut / Euclid Street Parcels Site Study</i>	226



A high-contrast, black and white photograph of a courtyard. In the center is a multi-tiered fountain. To the left is a large arched doorway. The walls are light-colored with some decorative elements like lanterns. The overall image has a grainy, high-contrast appearance.

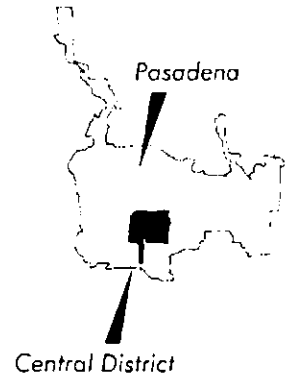
Section 1. **DOCUMENT OVERVIEW**

- Purpose
- Process
- Organization
- Application

Section 1 **DOCUMENT OVERVIEW**

Purpose

Legal Authority *The Central District Specific Plan is enacted pursuant to Section 65450 et seq. of the California Government Code and other applicable laws, and is intended to provide for systematic implementation of the General Plan, as related to the properties located within the boundaries of the Central District Specific Plan area. (Reference District-wide Map 1: Specific Plan Boundaries.) Upon adoption, all subsequent entitlements shall be consistent with the policies, standards, and guidelines of the Specific Plan.*



Relation to the General Plan A specific plan is a tool used by cities to guide development in a defined geographic area. It is an effective approach to implementing the General Plan, and provides a bridge between the goals and policies of the General Plan and individual development projects. Therefore, a specific plan shall be consistent with the General Plan.

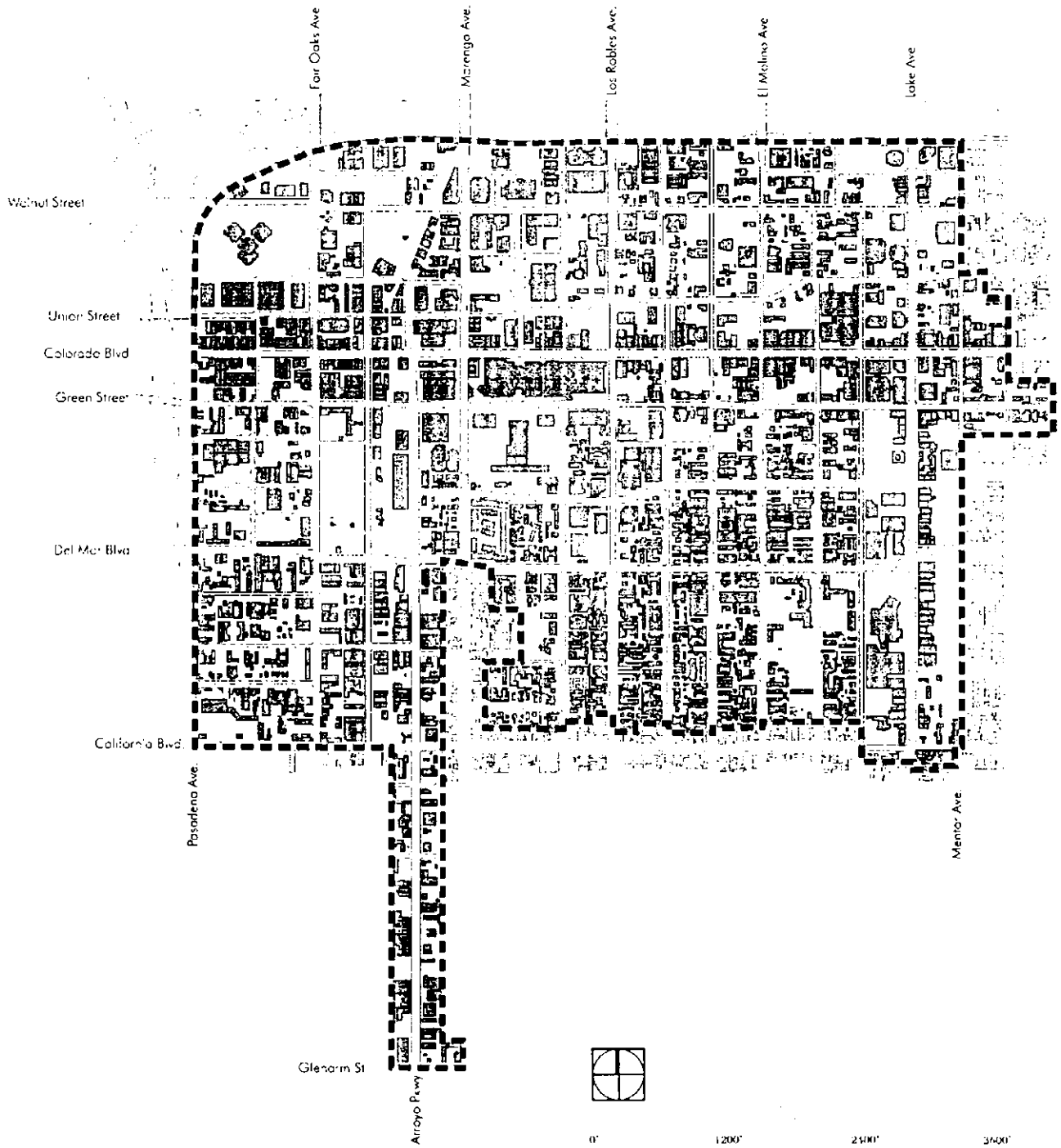
The Land Use Element of the City of Pasadena Comprehensive General Plan establishes an overall pattern of development that directs growth “into specific areas in order to protect residential neighborhoods and create mixed-use urban environments.” The Central District is one of seven areas throughout the City requiring preparation of a specific plan to implement this goal. These areas are based on a concept of higher density, mixed-use environments that support transit- and pedestrian-oriented mobility strategies.

A Plan to Achieve the Vision The Central District is especially unique – it is Pasadena’s urban core. “This Specific Plan will include a diverse mix of land uses designed to create the primary business, financial, retailing, and government center of the City,” according to the General Plan. The Central District Specific Plan explores the relationship between land use policy, design standards and guidelines, and implementation strategies to accomplish this goal of a vibrant downtown. Building upon the area’s existing strengths, it establishes the direction to create the place that is envisioned by the community.



Section 1 **DOCUMENT OVERVIEW**

District-wide Map 1: Specific Plan Boundaries



Section 1 **DOCUMENT OVERVIEW**

Process

The Planning Program

Preparation of the Central District Specific Plan has not proceeded in isolation. It is the product of a larger planning effort that acknowledges the Specific Plan's critical link to the General Plan, and has proceeded concurrently with the following components: 1) the Land Use Element Update; 2) the Mobility Element Update; and 3) a Comprehensive Zoning Code Revision. The Land Use and Mobility work reviews, updates, and refines the General Plan Elements adopted in April / May of 1994 that created a new vision for the City under the theme of "Imagine a Greater City." This vision reallocated a major share of development away from residential neighborhoods into specifically targeted areas, and reasserted the role of the Central District as Pasadena's mixed-use urban core.



Community Participation

As the success of any planning effort largely depends upon the scope and quality of public participation, the community has played an ongoing role in the preparation of the Specific Plan, as well as the larger planning program. Area residents, property owners, business interests, and other community stakeholders have come together at a series of venues to identify issues, establish a common vision and goals (*Exhibit 1: Downtown Goals*), and guide plan preparation. A "kickoff" festival, community forums, focus group meetings, and Commission and Council presentations and working sessions have provided multiple opportunities for City staff, project consultants, and community members to work toward a consensus vision for Downtown.



Plan Preparation

With regular community input, a team of City staff and project consultants (experienced in land use, mobility, urban design, zoning, and economic issues) have formulated the Specific Plan following a traditional planning method that emphasizes 1) background analysis; 2) alternatives and concept development; 3) plan evaluation and refinement; and 4) implementation. Plan preparation and timing have been coordinated to achieve consistency with the larger planning program.



Plan Adoption & Implementation

Adoption of the Specific Plan by the City Council is by no means the final step in the planning process. To make its vision a reality, a concerted effort at implementation will be required, including timely reviews of the planning document and the progress made toward its ends.



Exhibit 1: Downtown Goals

City staff and consultants worked with area residents and stakeholders to develop the following goals for the Downtown. These goals have been fully integrated into Section 3: POLICY FRAMEWORK.

- *Carefully consider the types, location and mix of new development to lessen impacts, especially traffic, in residential neighborhoods and on residential streets.*
- *Require new buildings to respect and enhance their surroundings.*
- *Encourage and provide inviting, interesting, and well-landscaped streetscapes and public spaces.*
- *Enhance the distinctive, yet complementary nature of the Downtown's Sub-districts by ensuring that they support each other and are linked both economically and visually.*
- *Provide for new development consistent with the scale, density, and urban design features of the historic districts.*
- *Strengthen Downtown's economic vitality by nurturing existing businesses and providing opportunities for supportive new development.*
- *Preserve and create pleasant ways where one can walk and bike between Sub-districts of the Downtown.*
- *Provide the opportunity to park once and visit many destinations.*
- *Maximize the use of transit and transit corridors.*
- *Provide a wide variety of housing options in Downtown in terms of type, location, size, and price.*



Section 1 **DOCUMENT OVERVIEW**

Organization

The Central District Specific Plan document is presented in eleven sections plus appendices as follows:

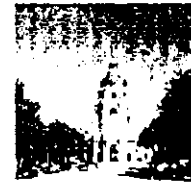
Section 1: **DOCUMENT OVERVIEW** discusses the purpose and organization of the Specific Plan, as well as the process of preparing the document. This section explains why the Specific Plan is important to the growth and development of the Central District.



Section 2: **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND** introduces the unique setting and character of the Central District, including the regional, historical, physical, socio-economic, and policy contexts that provide the background for sensitive planning.



Section 3: **POLICY FRAMEWORK** summarizes the vision and lists objectives for growth and development of the Central District. The vision statement and objectives are intended to support the Seven Guiding Principles of the General Plan, and provide a policy basis for the Central District's planning concepts.



Section 4: **DISTRICT-WIDE LAND USE CONCEPT** in conjunction with the Mobility and Urban Design Concepts, offers a comprehensive vision for the physical design and development of Downtown. The Land Use Concept in particular describes the envisioned land use character and suggests appropriate development intensities for the Central District.



SECTION 5: DISTRICT-WIDE MOBILITY CONCEPT supports the Land Use Concept, and discusses the auto, transit, bicycle and pedestrian connections that will provide convenient access throughout Downtown. It advocates a balanced system of movement accommodating multiple modes of travel.



Section 1 **DOCUMENT OVERVIEW**

Organization

SECTION 6: DISTRICT-WIDE URBAN DESIGN CONCEPT focuses on proposals for the physical design character of Downtown, with an emphasis on creating an active and engaging public realm. The relationship between public and private realms is closely examined.



Section 7: SUB-DISTRICT PLANNING CONCEPTS expands upon the District-wide planning concepts, presenting more detailed land use and urban design concepts and strategies for each of Downtown's Sub-districts. This section considers the unique role of each Sub-district within the Downtown, including areas that previously received less consideration through the planning process.



Section 8: PUBLIC REALM DESIGN GUIDELINES describe general principles and criteria for the design of the Central District, consistent with its urban character. This section includes recommendations for the design and appearance of public streets.



Section 9: PRIVATE REALM DESIGN GUIDELINES includes design guidelines for private sector development throughout the Central District. Private realm design guidelines help ensure that individual development projects advance the public vision for Downtown; therefore, there is an emphasis on a building's relationship to its context.



Section 10: SUB-DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES supplements the district-wide guidelines presented in Sections 8 and 9, with additional guidelines and recommendations applicable to particular Sub-districts. This section further considers the character defining elements of these areas.



Organization

Section 11: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES details strategies and approaches for implementing the Specific Plan. These are specific tasks that will be undertaken to achieve the vision for the Central District.



APPENDICES provide technical information and supporting data, including a discussion that clarifies the relationship between the Central District Specific Plan and previously adopted Downtown plans.



Section 1 **DOCUMENT OVERVIEW**

Application

Subsequent Entitlements

The Central District Specific Plan establishes objectives, policies, and guidelines for both public and private sector development. Its provisions shall apply to all properties located within the Specific Plan area, and all entitlements subsequent to adoption of the Specific Plan shall be consistent with its policies, standards and guidelines. This document supersedes all previous Specific Plans and similar documents applicable to these properties, as indicated in Appendix B.

Design Guidelines

The objective of design guidelines is to establish a high standard of design for all new development within the Central District.

- Section 8: PUBLIC REALM DESIGN GUIDELINES requires that public improvement and private sector development projects alike should be mindful of their impacts upon the overall character of the community and contribute to a positive community image. Included are guidelines applicable to improvement projects located within the public right-of-way.
- Section 9: PRIVATE REALM DESIGN GUIDELINES is applicable to all properties situated outside of the public right-of-way. Projects shall meet the intent of these guidelines; deviations from specific recommendations may be approved where the basic intent is satisfied.
- Section 10: SUB-DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES recognizes the special design character of Downtown's various Sub-districts, and development projects shall also comply with the applicable criteria.
- Residential projects located within the In-Town Housing Sub-district are exempt from the above described guidelines; instead, they are subject to the City of Gardens requirements.

Land Use Regulations & Development Standards

Section 11: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES outlines a few key zoning recommendations for the Central District. *For the comprehensive provision of applicable land use regulations and development standards, reference Title 17 of the Pasadena Municipal Code (The Zoning Code).* Regulations and standards contained therein shall be consistent with and implement the objectives, policies, guidelines and recommendations set forth in the Specific Plan.



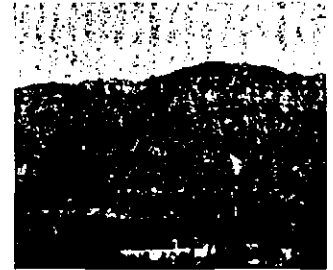


Section 2. **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND**

- Local & Regional Setting
- Historical Context
- Physical Context: Land Use
- Physical Context: Mobility
- Physical Context: Urban Design
- Socio-economic Context
- Policy Context
- Community Values

Local & Regional Setting**Regional Setting**

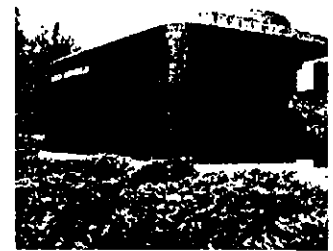
Pasadena is situated at the foot of the San Gabriel Mountains in the western San Gabriel Valley, approximately 10 miles northeast of downtown Los Angeles. This location offers numerous advantages, including convenient freeway and airport access that will continue to provide the City a competitive advantage as a regional business hub. Moreover, few localities can match the physical beauty afforded by the backdrop of the San Gabriels.

*San Gabriel Mountains***Local Setting**

Located in the heart of the City, the Central District's approximately 960 acres essentially correspond to the area recognized by Pasadena's residents as "Downtown." (Downtown and Central District will be used interchangeably in this document.) Included within its boundaries are the activity centers popularly known as Old Pasadena, the Civic Center, the Playhouse District, and South Lake Avenue; each makes a special contribution to this urban setting with an active mixture of uses. The Central District's boundaries are clearly marked to the north and west by the 210 and 710 Freeways respectively, and its buildings are prominent features along these highways. Approaching the campuses of the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) and Pasadena City College (PCC), the eastern boundary lies one to two blocks east of Lake Avenue. The southern limit roughly follows California Boulevard, except that the Specific Plan area includes the Arroyo Parkway corridor extending from the 110 Freeway into the midst of Downtown.

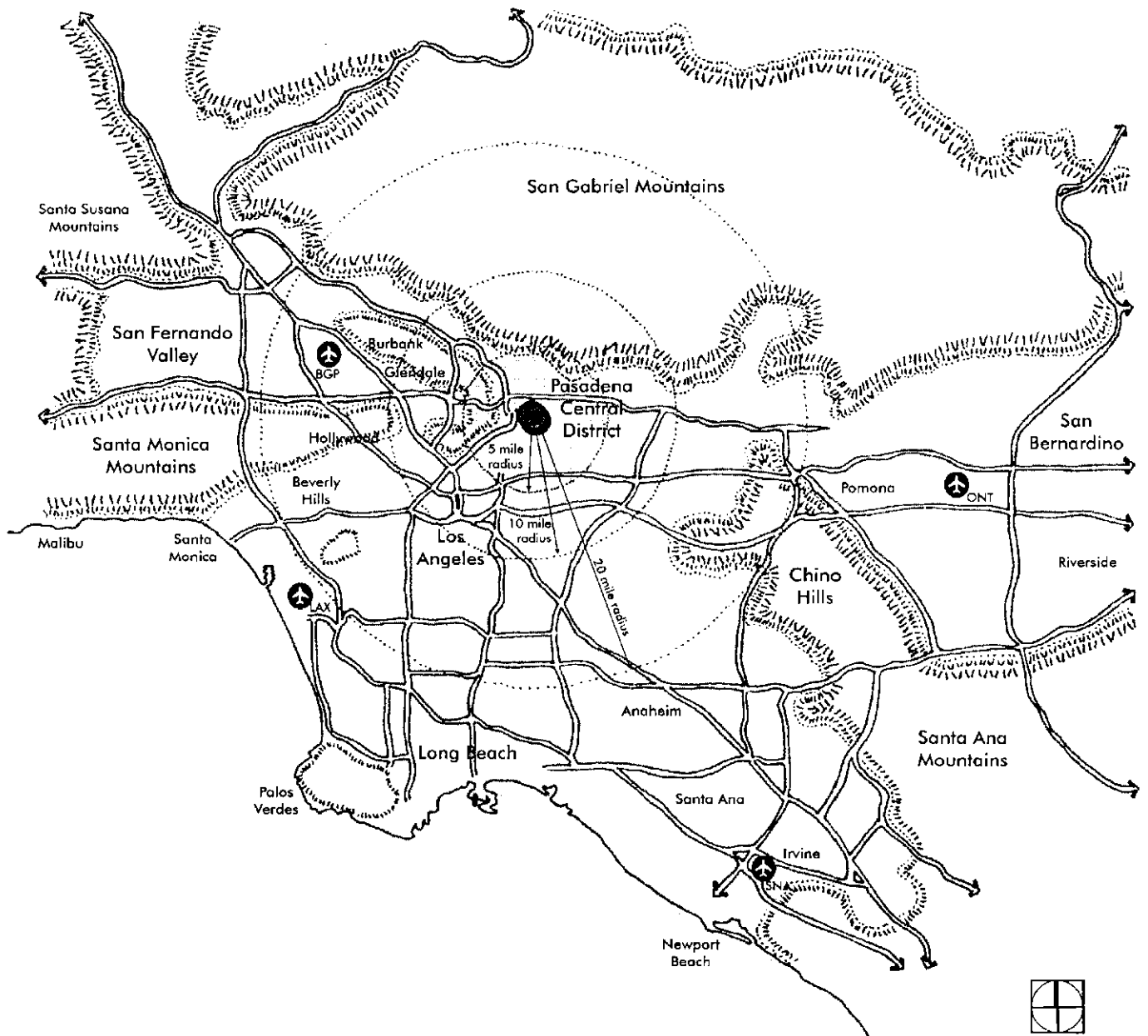
*California Institute of Technology***Local Resources**

Pasadena possesses an extraordinary wealth of resources, including cultural amenities, corporate headquarters, educational and scientific institutions, and entertainment and recreational venues. Among the world renowned institutions are: Caltech; Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL); Art Center College of Design; the Norton Simon Museum; Huntington Library and Museum; and the Rose Bowl and the Tournament of Roses Parade. Moreover, a number of Pasadena's most important cultural, institutional and recreational resources are located within or near the Central District. These include: civic facilities – City Hall, the Central Library, and the Civic Auditorium; popular entertainment and retail attractions – Old Pasadena, the Pasadena Playhouse; outstanding educational and scientific facilities – Caltech, PCC, and Huntington Memorial Hospital; and natural resources – the Arroyo Seco nature area located west of the Central District, as well as spectacular views of the San Gabriel Mountains.

*Norton Simon Museum**The Arroyo Seco*

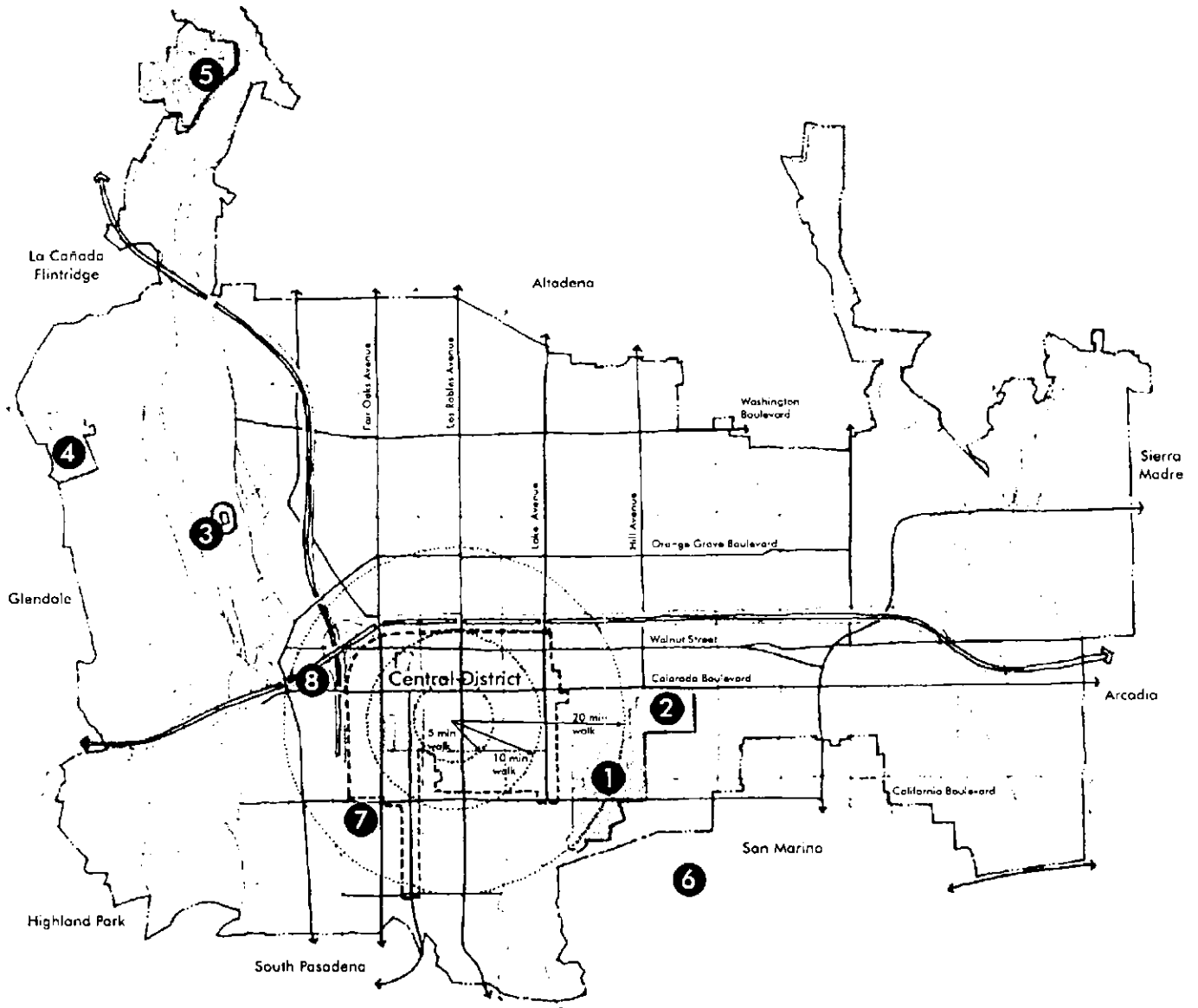
Section 2 **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND**

Exhibit 2: Regional Map



Section 2 **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND**

Exhibit 3: Local Map



- 1. California Institute of Technology
- 2. Pasadena City College
- 3. Rose Bowl
- 4. Art Center College of Design

- 5. Jet Propulsion Laboratory
- 6. Huntington Library and Gardens
- 7. Huntington Memorial Hospital
- 8. Norton Simon Museum



Section 2 **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND**

Historical Context

Early Land Patterns

Downtown's streets and urban land patterns began developing as far back as the 1880s, and early Zoning Maps (c1920s) are suggestive of existing land use and development patterns. Colorado Boulevard and Fair Oaks Avenue were designated as Pasadena's main commercial corridors, with a commercial district surrounding the intersection of these two streets. Today, we identify this area as Old Pasadena. Arroyo Parkway accommodated industrial development, with the remaining areas set aside for residential uses, decreasing in density with distance from the commercial core.



Colorado Boulevard, Early 1900s

The Bennett Plan

In 1925, Pasadena unveiled a bold vision for the creation of a new Civic Center. Commonly referred to as the Bennett Plan, it established the Beaux Arts framework for siting major civic buildings. City Hall, the Central Library, and the Civic Auditorium were subsequently commissioned and built, and continue to be among the City's most splendid architectural landmarks. These neoclassical buildings and Holly Street's tree-lined procession on axis with City Hall are proof that the spirit of the plan remains intact.



The Central Library, Late 1920s

Post-War Development

Through the 1920s, 30s, and 40s the scale of development Downtown remained relatively constant, with commercial activity moving eastward along Colorado. Colorado, Fair Oaks, and later Lake Avenue continued to develop as the main commercial corridors, featuring buildings constructed to the sidewalk and front entrances facing the street. Like most cities, however, the character of Downtown began to change at a more rapid pace following World War II. Large-scale, single use projects often built on an auto-oriented, suburban model were introduced with increasing frequency, interrupting the urban fabric. The former Plaza Pasadena and the Parsons Corporation are the most notable examples of this trend. Recent years have seen a renewed interest in the City's architectural heritage and historic urban patterns.



South Lake Avenue, Early 1950s

Historic Resources

Numerous historically significant structures are still found within the Central District, contributing to its unique character, as well as its urban identity. Many of these structures also contribute to National Register Districts or are individually listed buildings. Most notable are the Old Pasadena, Pasadena Playhouse and Civic Center Historic Districts; Old Pasadena features the largest concentration of historic commercial buildings in the City, creating a popular and pedestrian-oriented environment over many blocks.

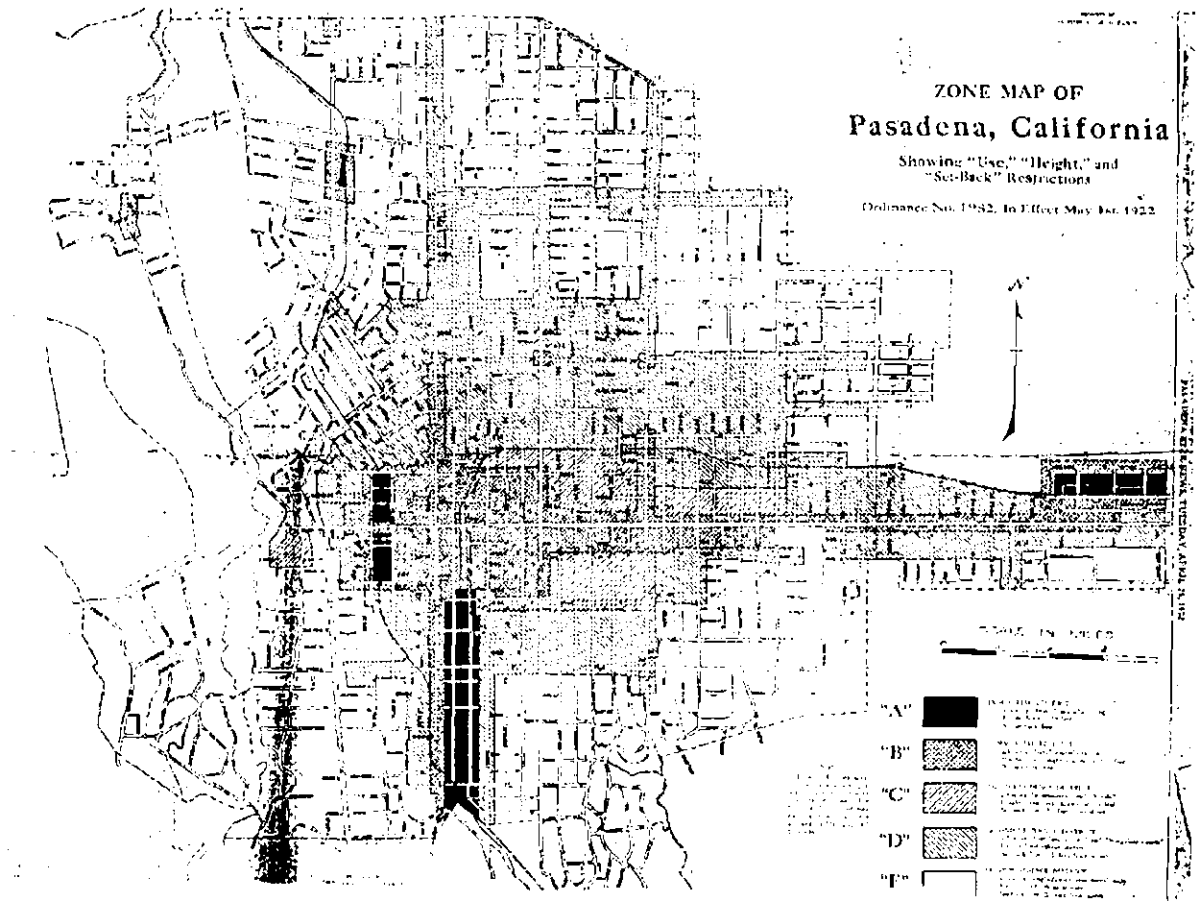


Union Street in Old Pasadena, Late 1990s



Section 2 **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND**

Exhibit 4: Historic Maps



Historic Zoning Map (1922)

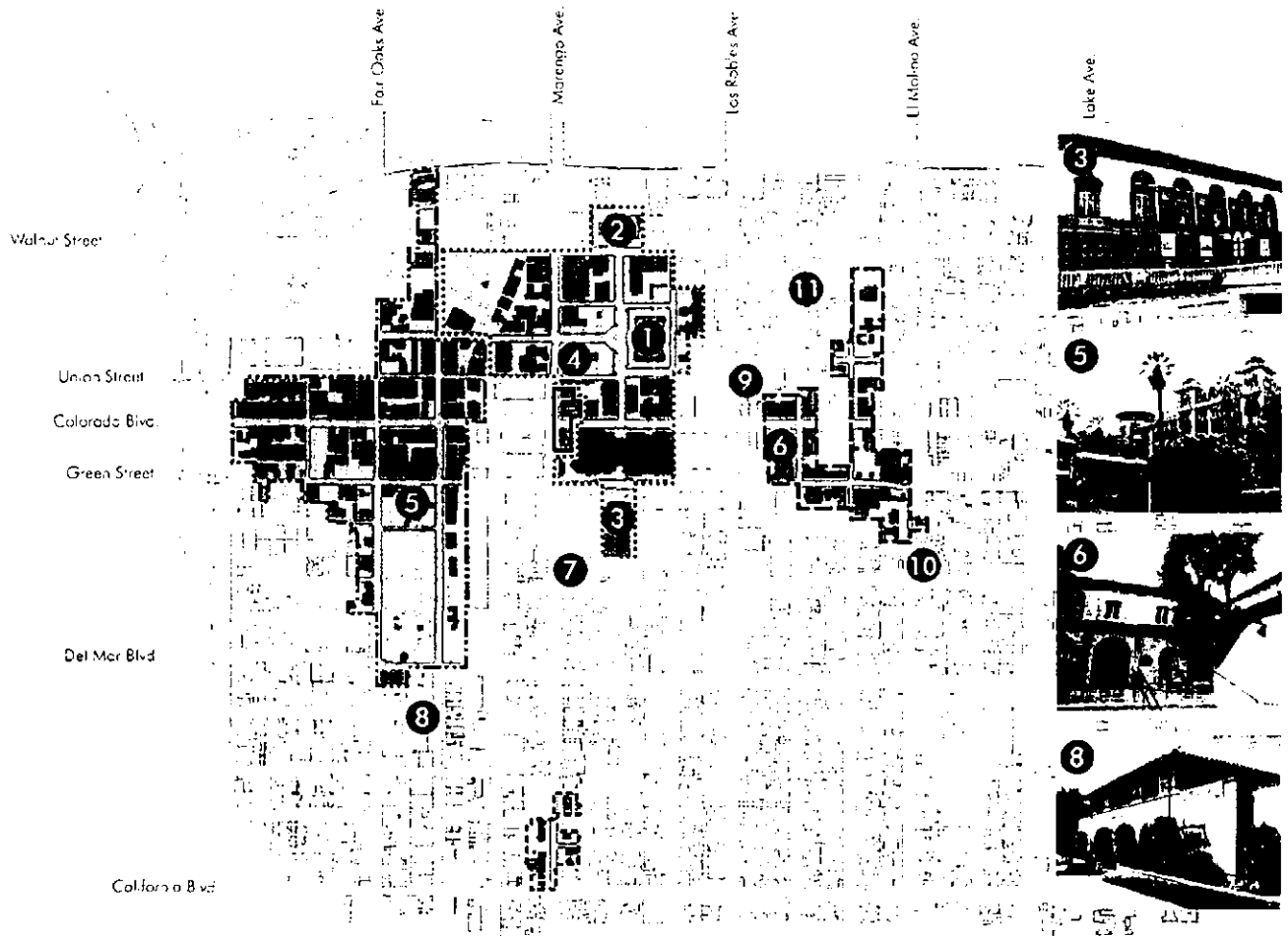


Bennett Plan (1923)



Section 2 **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND**

District-Wide Map 2: Historic Resources



National Register Historic Districts:

- Old Pasadena
- Pasadena Civic Center
- Civic Center Financial
- Pasadena Playhouse
- South Marengo

Designated City Landmarks:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. City Hall | 7. Morton Bay Fig Tree |
| 2. Public Library | 8. Pasadena Humane Society |
| 3. Civic Auditorium | 9. Grace Nicholson Building |
| 4. Y.W.C.A. | 10. Casa Del Mar Apartments |
| 5. Castle Green Apartments | 11. Edmond Blinn House |
| 6. The Pasadena Playhouse | |



0' 1200' 2400' 3600'



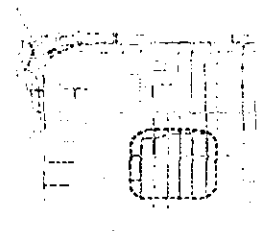
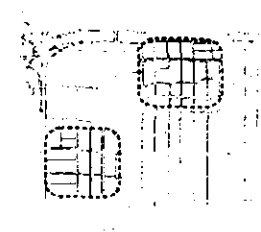
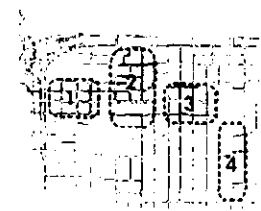
Physical Context: Land Use

Land Use Land uses in the Central District form a rather identifiable pattern. Colorado Boulevard, Fair Oaks Avenue, and Lake Avenue are dominated by *commercial retail and office uses*. Arroyo Parkway and areas west include a mix of commercial and light industrial uses, medical office space, and housing. North of Cordova Street is typified by a mixture of uses, including many public, educational and service institutions. An established moderate density residential area is located approximately south of Cordova Street and east of Marengo Avenue, often described as “In-Town Housing.”

Core Areas Within this land-use mix, particular areas of Downtown have developed their own unique identities. The boundaries are not distinct, but these places tend to be recognized by residents and visitors alike.

- Old Pasadena is the historic core of the City that has developed into a vibrant retail and entertainment destination.
- The Civic Center is the governmental center of the City, distinguished by the landmark City Hall.
- Pasadena Playhouse is developing as an arts-oriented area, anchored by the Pasadena Playhouse.
- South Lake is a popular shopping and dining street, primarily catering to local residents.

Building Intensity Reflecting their function as important commercial spines, Colorado Boulevard and Lake Avenue are Downtown’s most intensely developed streets, although building intensities along these streets are far from consistent. This is apparent in the periodic presence of multi-story office buildings and towers. Los Robles Avenue north of Cordova is also built to a rather high intensity, including a number of major hotels, indicative of its proximity to the Civic Center and the Convention Center. On the other hand, properties in the southwest and the northwest regions of Downtown, outside of the core areas, are developed at much lower intensities. Because of the proximity to anticipated rail stations, these areas are ripe for infill and higher density transit-oriented development.

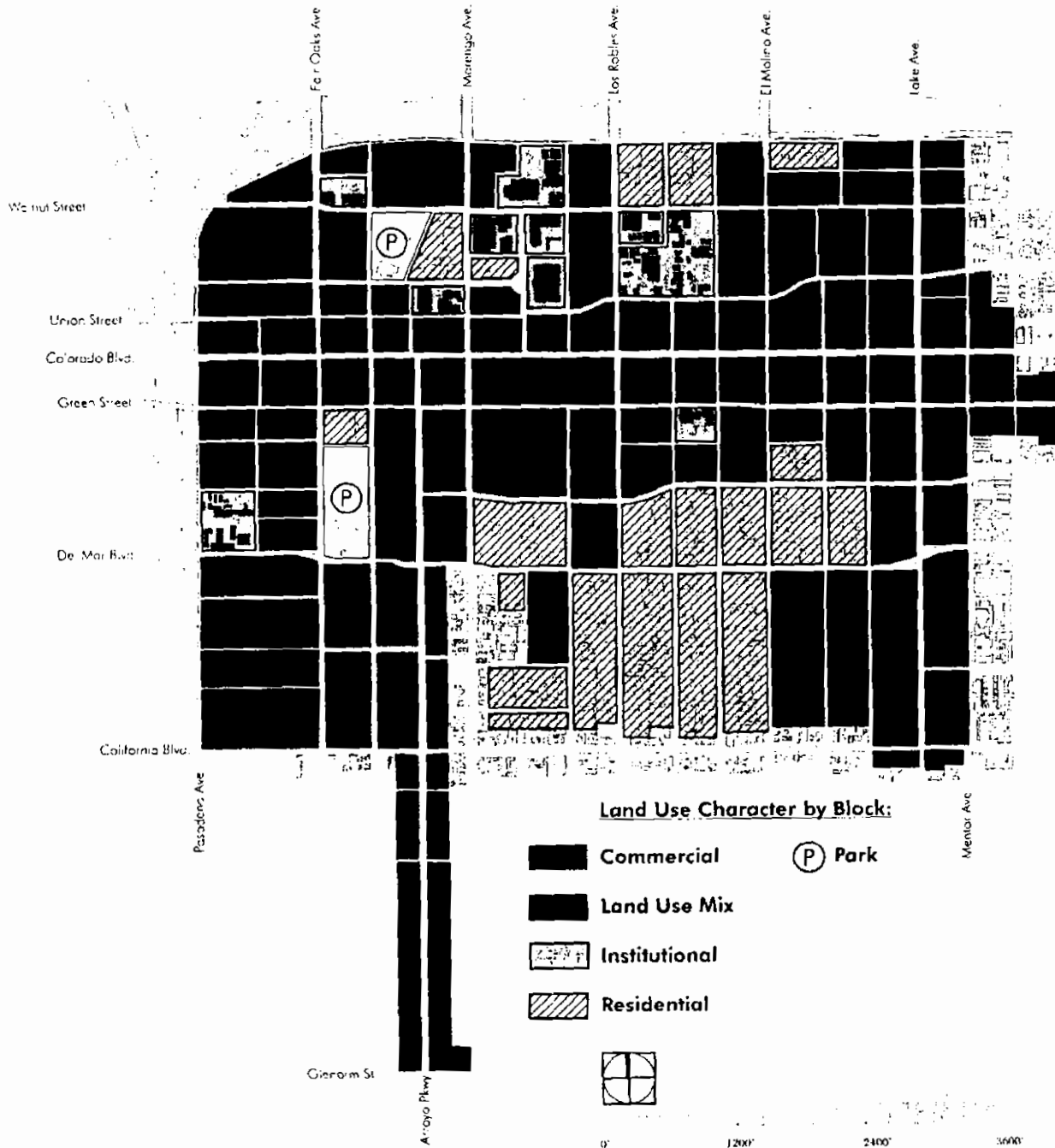
*Main Commercial Spines**In-Town Housing**Areas of Mixed-Use*

- 1 Old Pasadena
- 2 Civic Center
- 3 Pasadena Playhouse
- 4 South Lake

Core Areas

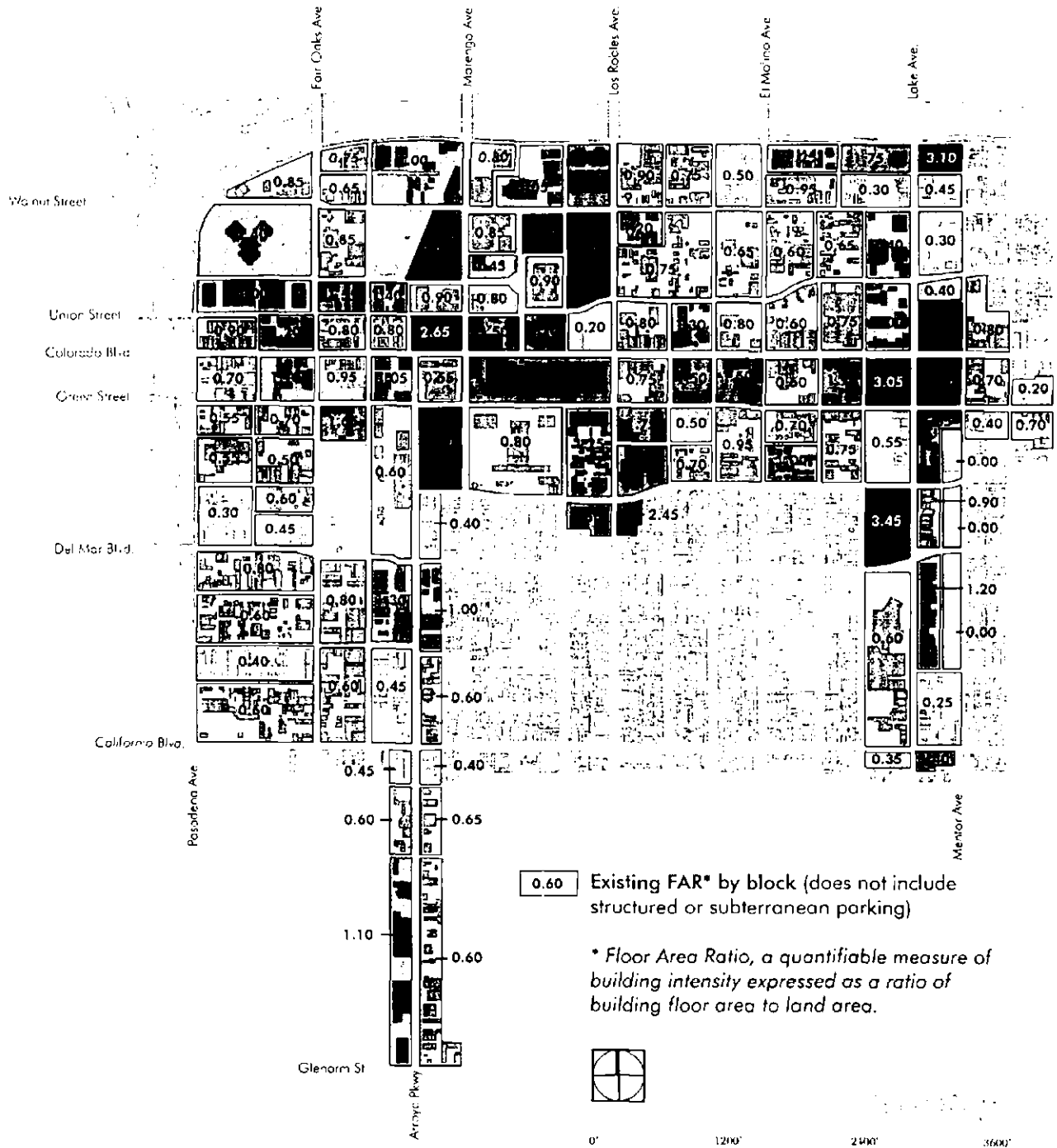
Section 2 **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND**

District-wide Map 3: Land Use Patterns (1999)



Section 2 **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND**

District-wide Map 4: Development Intensity (1999)



Physical Context: Mobility

Regional Traffic

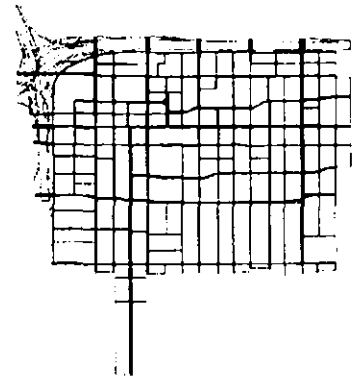
The Central District is situated at the confluence of several major regional transportation corridors, with impacts upon the local network. Much of this traffic may be attributed to residents of areas east traveling to and from Downtown Los Angeles, and through traffic seeking a connection between the 210 and 110 Freeways. Although the Central District's road network generally functions properly, Downtown land use and mobility strategies need to consider the impact of regional traffic growth and regional transit systems. Regional traffic impacts upon the Central District will likely intensify as the region and surrounding communities grow.

Downtown Circulation

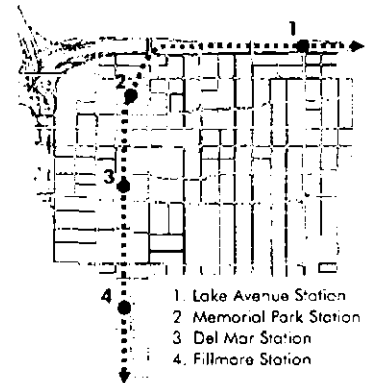
A gridded patterns of streets makes the Central District highly accessible and permeable, accommodating pedestrian and vehicular movement. Consequently, many of Downtown's major streets and intersections are under vehicular capacity and function at a suitable level of service. Nonetheless, the evening rush period finds exceptions along California Boulevard, Del Mar Boulevard and Lake Avenue, a concern to adjacent residential areas. Currently, the City defines Fair Oaks Avenue, Arroyo Parkway (to Colorado), Los Robles Avenue, and Lake Avenue as the principal north-south mobility corridors. The principal east-west mobility corridors are Walnut Street and Del Mar Boulevard, while Colorado Boulevard is classified as a primary arterial.

Public Transit

Construction of the LA-Pasadena Gold Line is expected to bring light rail service to Pasadena by July 2003, providing Downtown with another vital regional connection. Four Gold Line stops will serve the Central District: 1) the Lake Avenue Station to be located in the median of the 210 Freeway at Lake Avenue; 2) the Memorial Park Station providing close access to Old Pasadena and the Civic Center; 3) the Del Mar Station on the site of the historic Santa Fe Train Depot at Del Mar Boulevard and Raymond Avenue; and 4) the Fillmore Station adjacent to Arroyo Parkway. Local and regional bus transit currently serves the Central District, generally following major streets and arterials. Nonetheless, an improved local network with a greater number of connections is advocated by many members of the community.



Street Pattern

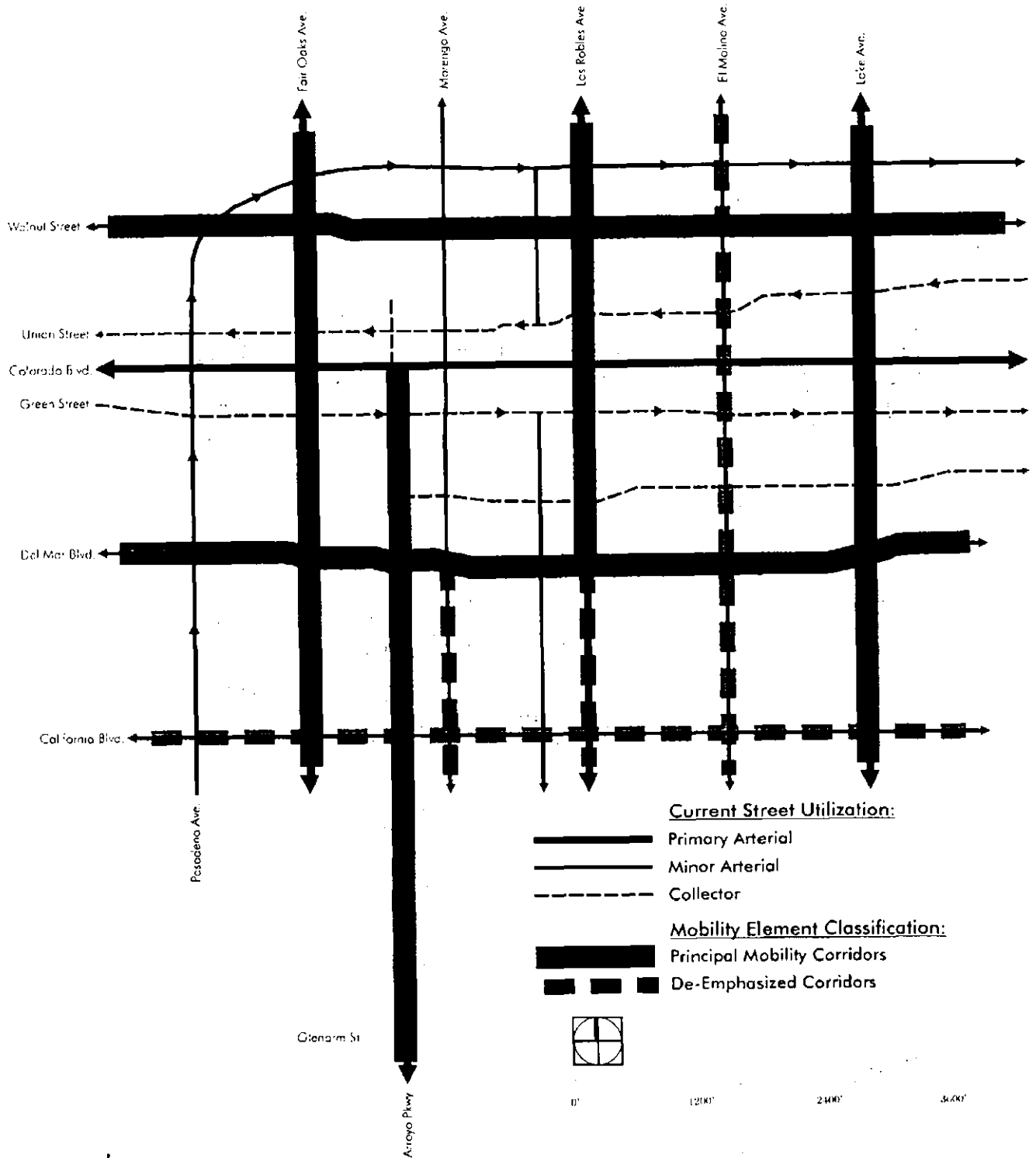


Rail Stations



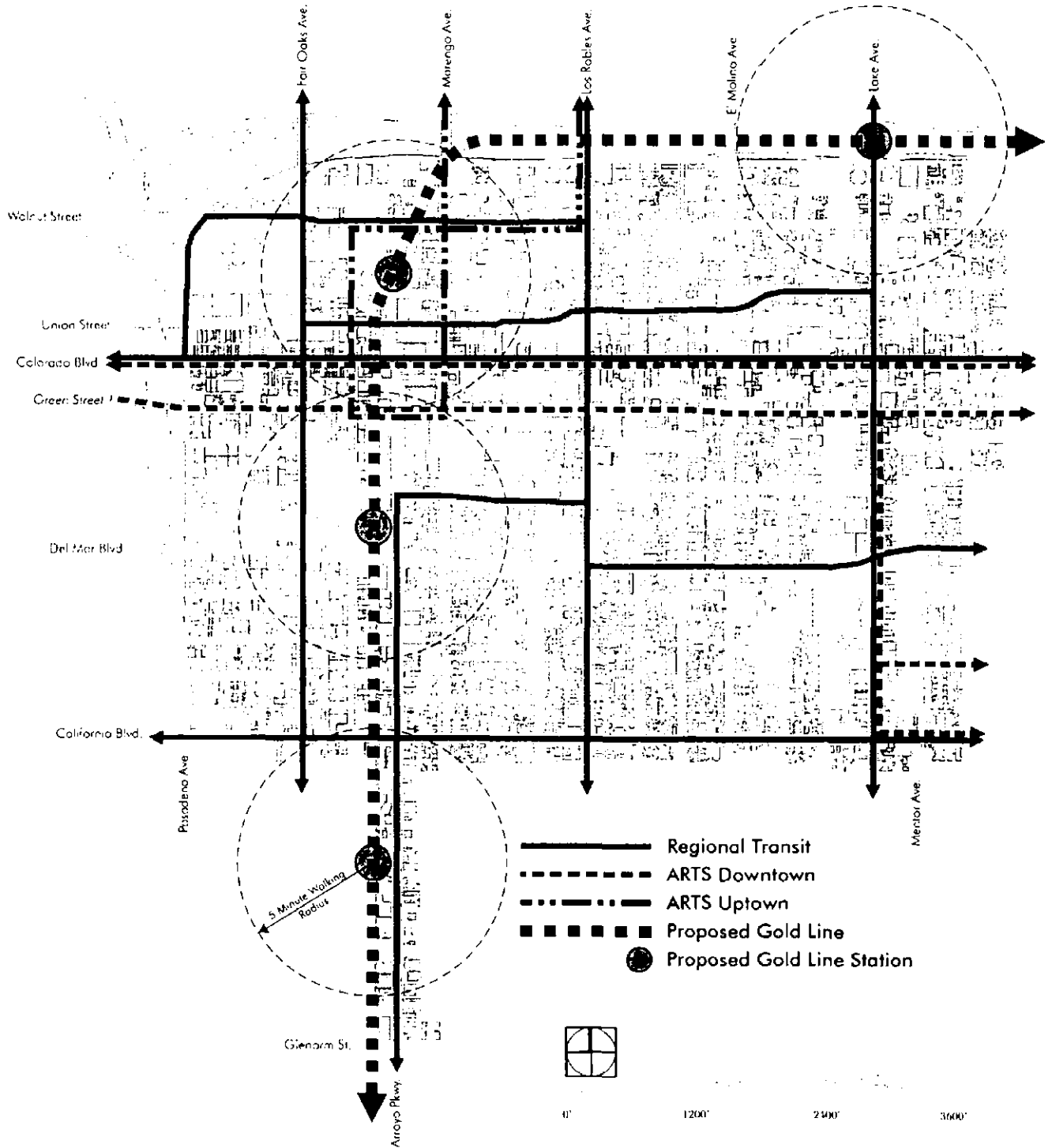
Section 2 **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND**

District-wide Map 5: Street Classification (1999)



Section 2 **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND**

District-wide Map 6: Public Transit (1999)



Section 2 **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND**

Physical Context: Urban Design

Architectural Character

The Central District generally exhibits a level of architectural character and quality that is rarely found among Southern California communities; in particular, Downtown's core (Old Pasadena, the Civic Center and the Playhouse District) presents a consistently strong and identifiable character. While these older mixed-use areas contain a number of architecturally and historically significant structures, their development reveals a traditional and consistent emphasis on the street. Nonetheless, peripheral areas of the Downtown and certain corridors are more variable in their architectural character, showing broken development patterns often based on an inappropriate suburban model. Walnut Street, Union Street, Arroyo Parkway, and major intersections along these streets are particularly weak links in the architectural fabric, and offer a poor introduction to the Downtown.



Street-oriented development pattern in Old Pasadena

Landscape Character

Areas of the Civic Center and Old Pasadena also provide a model for the proper relationship between downtown buildings and urban outdoor space. A unique series of outdoor rooms, streets, and alleys integrate shade trees, public artwork, seating and lighting to create a high quality walkable environment with visual interest and physical comfort. In-town residential neighborhoods are also recognized for their uniformly tree-lined streets that create a lush, shady canopy. However, this quality is not universal. Many of the area's major streets would benefit from streetscape improvements that support the Downtown experience. For instance, Green Street's mature Ficus trees provide a cool, walkable environment that may be contrasted with Union Street's rather inhospitable environment.



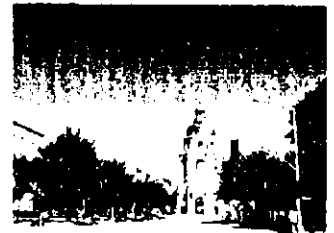
Broken development pattern along Union

Views & Vistas

Pasadena offers views and vistas of impressive built and natural features. They are a valuable part of the City's identity and are an aid to orientation. Scenic views and vistas of the San Gabriel Mountains are a special part of the Downtown experience, and superior vistas occur along the major north-south arterials – Fair Oaks Avenue, Los Robles Avenue, and Lake Avenue. The Bennett Plan established an indispensable precedent for axial views of the City's major public buildings -- City Hall, the Central Library, and the Civic Auditorium. With the recent restoration of an uninterrupted view between the Library and Auditorium, the City should be mindful to protect these visual resources, including opportunities to glimpse the dome of City Hall, an icon for the community.



Alley walkway in Old Pasadena

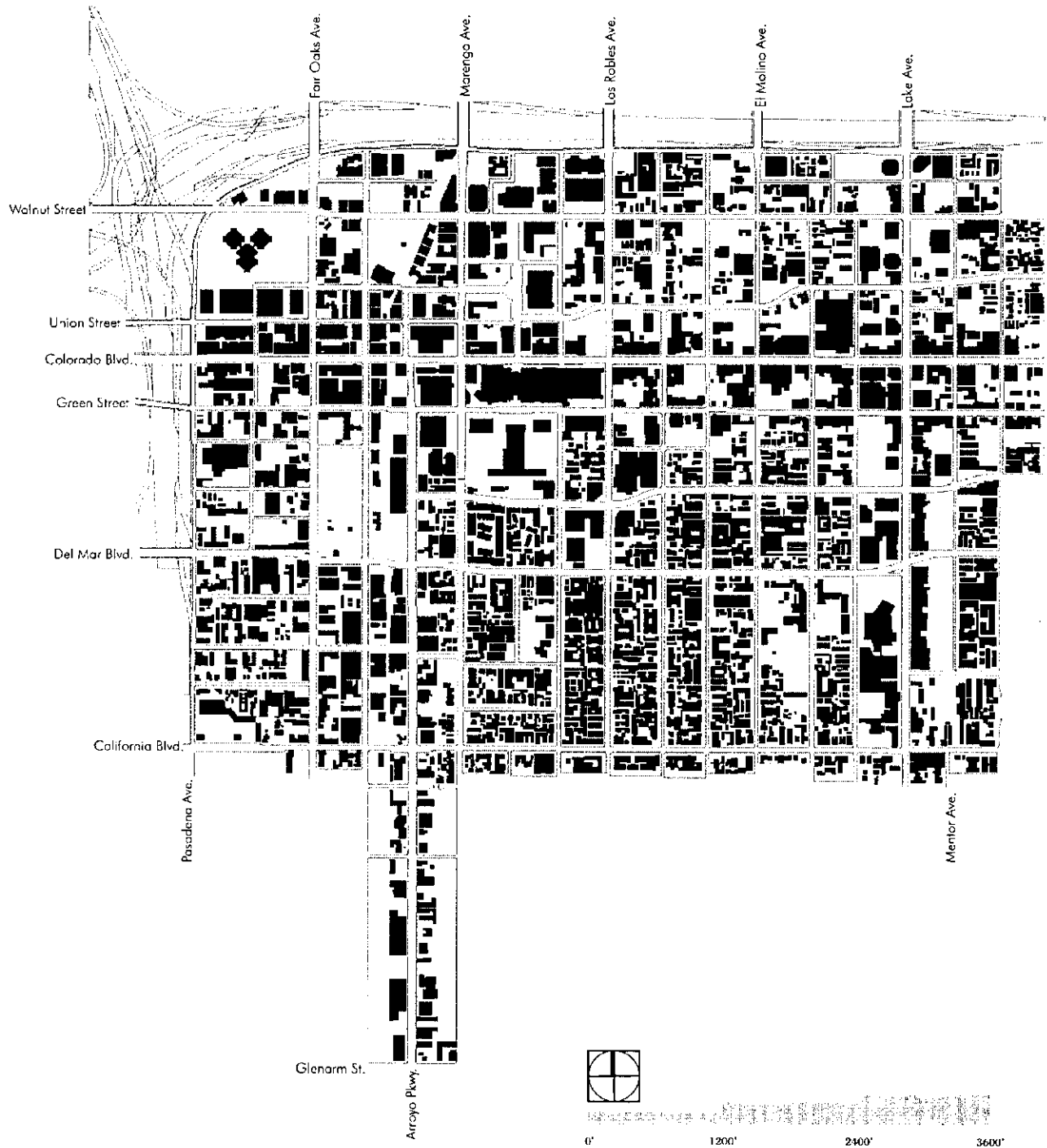


View along Holly Street to City Hall



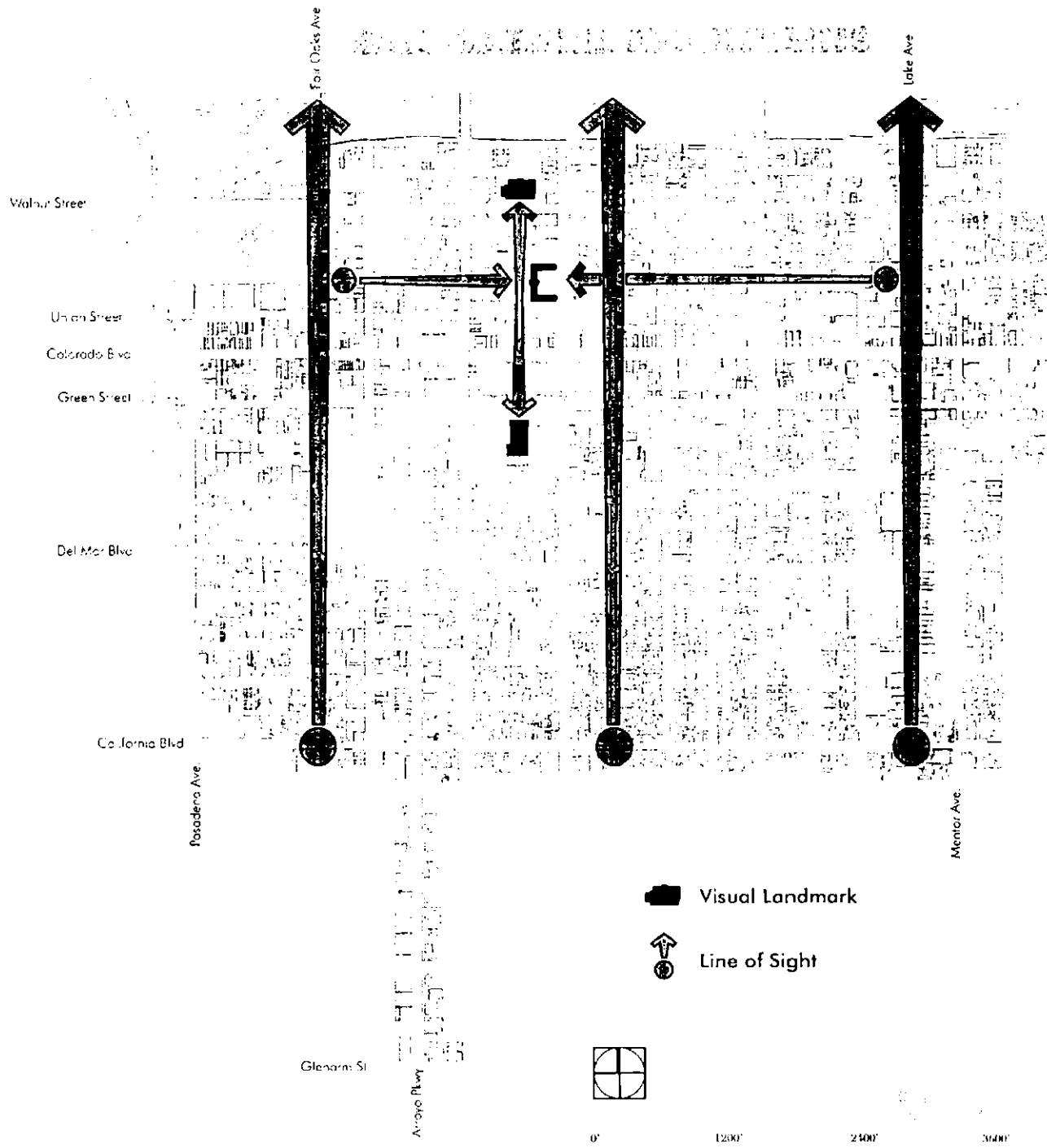
Section 2 **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND**

District-wide Map 7: Figure-Ground (1999)



Section 2 **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND**

District-wide Map 8: Key Views & Vistas



Socio-economic Context**Population Characteristics**

Central District households tend to be smaller and per capita income is consistent with the City and higher than the County. On the other hand, the average household income is significantly lower in the Central District as compared to the City and County. Why?

Downtown is marked by a high percentage of senior citizens, but also the strong presence of singles and couples in their 30's and 40's with relatively few children. In general, residents tend to be white, well-educated, and are employed in professional jobs, using their financial well-being to take advantage of an urban village lifestyle.



Startup in Old Pasadena

Employment Characteristics

The Central District serves as the business hub of the City; nearly one-half of Pasadena's jobs are located Downtown. Retail and office uses have traditionally been a major source of Central District employment, and the following are key employment generators: banks, savings, and lending institutions; real estate trusts and holding companies; health and legal services; business services; general merchandise stores; and eating and drinking establishments.



Local shopping along Lake Avenue

Market Outlook

Office: The office market in the region has slowed in the last two years. However, Pasadena, and specifically the Central District, is still seen as a desirable location with a diversified tenant mix, including many "cutting-edge" and high-technology businesses that benefit from the presence of Caltech and JPL.

Retail: The Central District is an important retail center for the community, accounting for 25% of the City's total sales. Three major retail nodes are located Downtown: 1) Old Pasadena will likely continue to perform as an attractive regional draw; 2) the Playhouse District shows potential as an arts-oriented district; and 3) South Lake will likely continue to serve a more local clientele.



Urban housing near the Civic Center

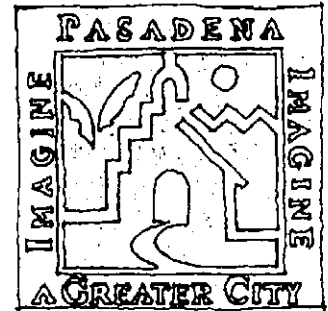
Residential: Downtown also functions as a significant residential market, home to approximately 8% of the City's residents. Moreover, an expanding regional economy and population will generate sustained demand for new housing, and that demand is expected to outpace the increase in supply. Upper-income housing demand appears to be strong Downtown, and there is an opportunity for non-traditional housing types such as work-live space and transit villages, reflecting household trends. However, the City also needs to be mindful of its broader housing policy objectives.



Section 2 **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND**

Policy Context

General Plan Allocation Because it is imperative to maintain consistency with the General Plan, it is necessary to understand its policy implications for the Central District. The 1994 General Plan revision was developed with extensive community participation and focused on Seven Guiding Principles described below. Coupled with the basic premise of creating the “primary business, financial, retailing, and government center of the City,” the 1994 Land Use Element allocated a major share of future growth to the Central District. *This share was quantified as an additional 5,095 residential units and 6,217,000 square feet of non-residential development.*



General Plan Seven Guiding Principles The Seven Guiding Principles embody the goals and values of the community; it is critical that the Specific Plan support these ideals:

1. *Growth will be targeted to serve community needs and enhance the quality of life.*
2. *Change will be harmonized to preserve Pasadena's historic character and environment.*
3. *Economic vitality will be promoted to provide jobs, services, revenues, and opportunities.*
4. *Pasadena will be promoted as a healthy family community.*
5. *Pasadena will be a City where people can circulate without cars.*
6. *Pasadena will be promoted as a cultural, scientific corporate, entertainment, and educational center for the region.*
7. *Community participation will be a permanent part of achieving a greater City.*

General Plan Policy Summary In general, the General Plan establishes a basis for drafting policies and strategies that support physical development of the Central District as Pasadena's urban core: more urban (compact, denser) land patterns; transit- and pedestrian-oriented development patterns; increased transit service and alternative transit modes; integrated urban open spaces; and accessible services and facilities that are characterized by shared use.



Community Values**Community Concerns**

Through participation in the planning process, community members voiced some special concerns relative to Downtown growth and development:

- Increasing popularity and rising demand may operate to narrow the range of housing, local shopping and lifestyle choices available Downtown.
- In-town and adjacent residential streets and neighborhoods may be negatively impacted by additional growth and development, including traffic and parking impacts.
- Architectural design may not reflect the high standard expected of development within the Central District, and may not be respectful of the area's architectural heritage.
- There are limited park space and active recreational facilities within the Central District, a problem that may be worsened by additional growth and development.

*Asset: Views and Vistas**Asset: Special Districts***Community Aspirations**

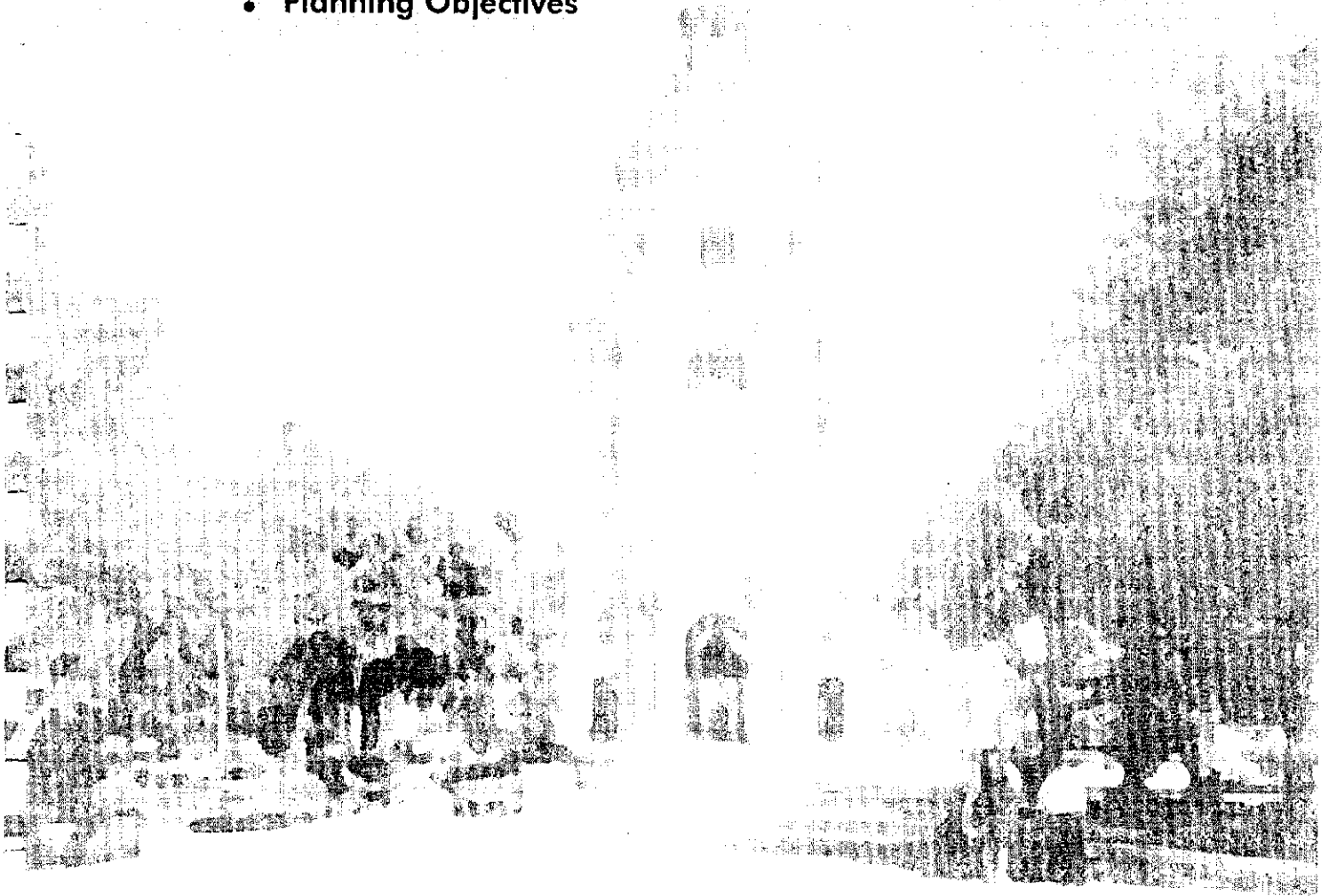
Despite their concerns, members of the community take pride in the area's numerous assets and envision a successful Downtown. Their aspirations reflect the community's continued support for the principles and policies of the General Plan:

- *Community livability* through the provision of suitable Downtown housing, employment, services, and recreation.
- *Neighborhood conservation* that maintains the character, and provides for the protection and safety of in-town and adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- *Public mobility* through planning efforts that mitigate traffic impacts and support multiple modes of transportation.
- *Civic design* that protects and augments Downtown's unique physical qualities and rich architectural heritage.
- *Recreational opportunities* that support an urban lifestyle, including a variety of active and passive opportunities, such as walkable streets.

*Asset: Mature Landscape**Asset: Historic Buildings*

Section 3. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- **Vision Statement**
- **Planning Objectives**



Vision Statement

Vision **The Central District will function as the City of Pasadena’s vibrant urban core, providing a diversity of economic, residential, and cultural opportunities. Downtown will be a place to work, shop, live, and play, with convenient access by foot, bicycle, and transit, as well as by car. Physical and economic growth will support this role and respect the numerous resources of historical and cultural significance that contribute to Downtown’s unique identity.**

Discussion The Central District lies at the heart of the City of Pasadena. It contributes many of the civic and cultural institutions that make Pasadena a regional center with world-wide recognition. It is also the City’s center of commerce and government, as well as home to many of Pasadena’s residents. In this role, the Central District can anticipate much of the City’s future growth. The challenge is to direct this growth to achieve a high quality of life for the entire community – to make a desirable place to live, work, study, play, grow-up, raise a family, and age with dignity and grace. The above Vision Statement is a concise presentation of those qualities that the community envisions for its Downtown. The Policy Framework that follows supports this vision and further defines the role of Downtown within the City.



Planning Objectives

*General Plan
Guiding
Principle 1*

GROWTH WILL BE TARGETED TO SERVE COMMUNITY NEEDS AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE.



In accordance with the General Plan, the Central District is one of the Specific Plan areas toward which growth will be directed. The purpose is to create an exciting urban core with diverse economic, residential, and cultural opportunities. However, it is necessary to further specify the location, character, and quality of growth. A rich mixture of compatible uses and activities throughout the Downtown is especially important.

*Central District
Objective 1*

SPECIFY QUALITY GROWTH. Balanced, high-quality growth will provide opportunities to live, work, shop, and play in the Downtown, and contribute to the physical appearance and socio-economic well-being of the City.

*Central District
Objective 2*

IDENTIFY GROWTH AREAS. Downtown growth and development will be directed toward the most appropriate locations, with the intention of 1) protecting existing residential neighborhoods; 2) supporting transit usage; 3) and revitalizing underutilized areas.

*Central District
Objective 3*

DEVELOP URBAN LAND PATTERNS. Development patterns will support Downtown's role as Pasadena's distinctive urban core, emphasizing a vibrant community with diverse opportunities. Transit-oriented, pedestrian-oriented and mixed use development will be encouraged.

*Central District
Objective 4*

EXPAND OPEN SPACE NETWORK. Downtown will feature an extensive network of public, semi-public and private open spaces, including street and alleys, parks, urban plazas, and other improvements that will augment and expand the existing network.

*Central District
Objective 5*

BUILD HOUSING DOWNTOWN. Downtown will offer a range of housing opportunities, with provisions for the construction of new market-rate and affordable housing units, as well as non-traditional forms of housing, such as work-live accommodations.



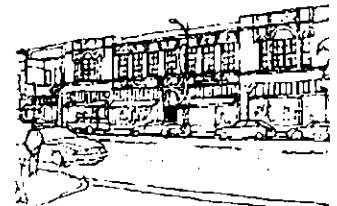
Section 3 **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

Planning Objectives

*General Plan
Guiding
Principle 2*

CHANGE WILL BE HARMONIZED TO PRESERVE PASADENA'S HISTORIC CHARACTER AND ENVIRONMENT.

A significant number of Pasadena's architecturally and culturally significant buildings and landscapes are located Downtown. Collectively, they are an important part of the City's identity. Because much of the City's growth is targeted for Downtown, it is imperative that these resources are protected and that new development contribute to Downtown's unique character.



*Central District
Objective 6*

REINFORCE DISTRICT CHARACTER. The distinctive character of Downtown and its unique Sub-districts will be maintained and further enhanced. New development will respond to the area's architectural heritage with sensitivity and offer creative design solutions.

*Central District
Objective 7*

PRESERVE HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES. Downtown will retain its cultural heritage through recognition and protection of culturally and historically significant resources. Adaptive reuse and infill development that respect existing resources will be encouraged.

*Central District
Objective 8*

CONSERVE IN-TOWN NEIGHBORHOODS. Downtown's residential neighborhoods will continue to provide a desirable living environment. Sound residential dwellings will be retained and new residential development will respect the character and scale of existing residences.

*Central District
Objective 9*

PROTECT LANDSCAPE RESOURCES. Downtown's public outdoor spaces will remain a community asset through protection and enhancement of important landscape resources, including the area's mature street trees.

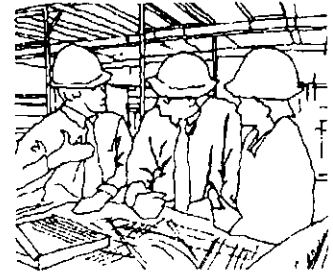
*Central District
Objective 10*

SUPPORT TRADITIONAL URBAN PATTERNS. New construction and contemporary design will reinforce Downtown's traditional development patterns, respond to the surrounding context, and contribute to Pasadena's status as an inviting and memorable place. Streets will support public activity and buildings will be scaled to the presence of people.



Planning Objectives*General Plan
Guiding
Principle 3***ECONOMIC VITALITY WILL BE PROMOTED TO PROVIDE JOBS, SERVICES, REVENUE, AND OPPORTUNITIES.**

The Central District functions as Pasadena's primary center of government, business, financial, and retail activity. Therefore, the City's fiscal health is heavily dependent on a strong Downtown economy. To build a stronger and more diverse economic base, Downtown must leverage its many resources to retain and attract desired business enterprise. Downtown is especially well-positioned to benefit from the global shift toward a knowledge-based economy.

*Central District
Objective 11*

PROVIDE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY. Downtown will provide opportunities for private investment so as to capture the area's economic development potential. This will include the opportunity to develop vacant and underutilized land in a manner that is compatible with the vision of balanced growth.

*Central District
Objective 12*

DIVERSIFY DOWNTOWN ECONOMY. Downtown will support a healthy mix of business activity, including enterprises adapted to the emerging knowledge-based economy, and entrepreneurial activity such as home-based work and the incubation of small business.

*Central District
Objective 13*

ENCOURAGE BUSINESS RETENTION. Downtown business will be retained and nurtured, promoting long-term investment in the community. Accordingly, Downtown will provide convenient access to local resources, services and amenities, including child care facilities and public transportation.

*Central District
Objective 14*

PROMOTE JOB GROWTH. Compatible economic development will provide new and expanded job opportunities in the Downtown. Job expansion will benefit from physical and economic linkages with the City's abundant resources - cultural, corporate, scientific, and educational.

*Central District
Objective 15*

MAINTAIN FISCAL HEALTH. Downtown will maintain a vital local economy that continues to function as the primary business, financial, retailing and government center of the City.



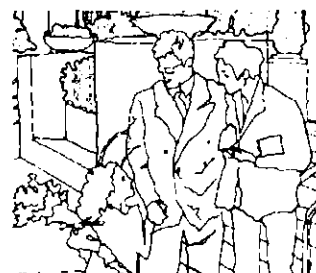
Section 3 **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

Planning Objectives

*General Plan
Guiding
Principle 4*

PASADENA WILL BE PROMOTED AS A HEALTHY FAMILY COMMUNITY.

In its role as Pasadena's urban core, the Central District addresses one or more needs of virtually all of the City's occupants. Consequently the well-being of the entire community rests in Downtown's position as a place where a diversity of people can thrive. This begins with meeting the most basic needs: a safe and attractive community; suitable housing; and accessible services.



*Central District
Objective 16*

PROVIDE ADEQUATE SERVICES. A coordinated network of public and private institutions and service organizations will support the social, cultural and economic life of Downtown, addressing the needs of diverse peoples and lifestyles. This objective acknowledges the importance of convenient access to services.

*Central District
Objective 17*

PROMOTE COMMUNITY SAFETY. Downtown will be a safe and secure place for its occupants. Physical design strategies that generate vitality, populate public space, and create a self-policing environment will be encouraged.

*Central District
Objective 18*

OFFER SUITABLE HOUSING. Downtown housing will meet proper standards of maintenance, and accommodate a variety of income levels and lifestyles.

*Central District
Objective 19*

INCREASE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITY. Downtown will accommodate a wide range of active and passive recreational activities, making optimum use of available facilities and resources, including existing parks and schools, as well as public streets and plazas.

*Central District
Objective 20*

ENHANCE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY. The health and vitality of Downtown will benefit from the presence and conservation of local natural resources, in particular, the development of the area's urban forest.



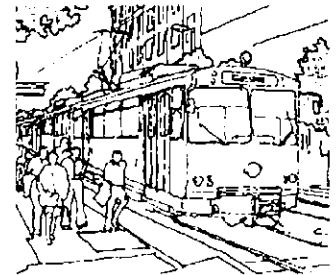
Section 3 **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

Planning Objectives

*General Plan
Guiding
Principle 5*

**PASADENA WILL BE A CITY WHERE
PEOPLE CAN CIRCULATE WITHOUT CARS.**

The General Plan requires that targeted development areas, including the Central District, emphasize mixed-use, and support pedestrian and transit activity. This is in keeping with Downtown's role as Pasadena's urban core. Improved transit and pedestrian mobility will support this function by building connections between the many experiences and activities found throughout Downtown.



*Central District
Objective 21*

REDUCE AUTO DEPENDENCY. Downtown will provide an integrated and balanced transportation system that accommodates access by foot, bicycle, transit, and car.

*Central District
Objective 22*

MINIMIZE TRAFFIC IMPACTS. As far as feasible, traffic impacts upon in-town and adjoining residential neighborhoods will be minimized. New development will be directed toward principal mobility corridors and in close proximity to transit stations.

*Central District
Objective 23*

MANAGE PARKING FACILITIES. Downtown will balance economic vitality with environmental quality in the provision of parking, emphasizing a shared parking strategy that allows visitors to "park once" and visit many destinations.

*Central District
Objective 24*

PROMOTE TRANSIT USAGE. Transit will be a viable option for movement within and through Downtown, emphasizing improved transit connections between the activity centers of Downtown. Regional transit will be supported by transit-oriented development near light rail stations.

*Central District
Objective 25*

MAKE DOWNTOWN WALKABLE. Downtown will be a safe, convenient and comfortable place to walk, a place where walking is the mode of choice for short trips.

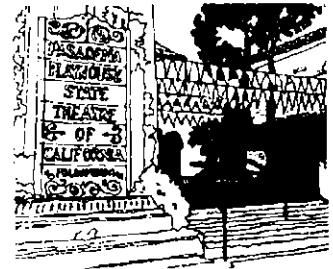


Section 3 **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

Planning Objectives

*General Plan
Guiding
Principle 6*

PASADENA WILL BE PROMOTED AS A CULTURAL, SCIENTIFIC, CORPORATE, ENTERTAINMENT, AND EDUCATIONAL CENTER FOR THE REGION.



Pasadena is home to a number of significant institutions - regionally, nationally and globally - many of which are located within or adjacent to Downtown. These institutions greatly contribute to the vitality, economy and prestige of the City, and often lend a unique character to particular areas of the Downtown. Downtown's diversity and abundant resources provide an outstanding opportunity for existing and potential new institutions to grow and prosper according to their specific needs.

Central District Objective 26 **STRENGTHEN SUB-DISTRICT IDENTITY.** The unique identity and distinct qualities of Downtown's Sub-districts will be reinforced so that these areas complement one another.

Central District Objective 27 **BUILD SUB-DISTRICT CONNECTIONS.** Physical, social, and economic linkages between Downtown's Sub-districts will be strengthened so that these areas support one another.

Central District Objective 28 **CAPITALIZE ON KEY RESOURCES.** Physical, social and economic linkages will connect Downtown with its numerous cultural, educational, and scientific resources. For instance, Downtown should capitalize on its proximity to Caltech and the Art Center College of Design by promoting opportunities and establishing linkages between the arts and technology.

Central District Objective 29 **SUPPORT INSTITUTIONAL GROWTH.** New and existing institutions in the Downtown will be provided an opportunity to grow and prosper in a manner that is compatible with Downtown's identity and economy. Institutions that reinforce the City's position as a leader in cultural, scientific and other intellectual pursuits will continue to be an especially important feature of Downtown.



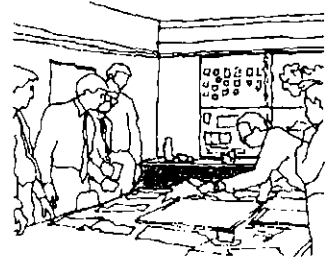
Section 3 **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

Planning Objectives

*General Plan
Guiding
Principle 7*

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION WILL BE A PERMANENT PART OF ACHIEVING A GREATER CITY.

The General Plan dictates that the Central District accommodate a considerable amount of Pasadena's future growth. The citizenry demands that the inevitable change is positive and support a high quality of life. This is only possible with an informed constituency that directly participates in the shaping of Downtown. Civic pride, access to information, and a forum that promotes open dialogue are the key components.



Central District Objective 30 PROVIDE PUBLIC INFORMATION. Stakeholders will be provided with accessible, up-to-date information on Downtown planning and development issues.

Central District Objective 31 PROMOTE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION. Stakeholders will be provided a forum to participate in decisions that affect the planning, growth, and development of Downtown.

Central District Objective 32 BUILD LOCAL IDENTITY. Local stakeholders will be encouraged to play an active role in the life of Downtown, emphasizing local or neighborhood ownership and civic pride.



Section 4. **DISTRICT-WIDE LAND USE CONCEPT**

- Land Use Concept Components
- Sub-district Designation
- Land Use Distribution
- Residential Distribution
- Land Use Intensity
- Residential Density

