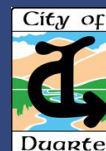


CITY OF DUARTE

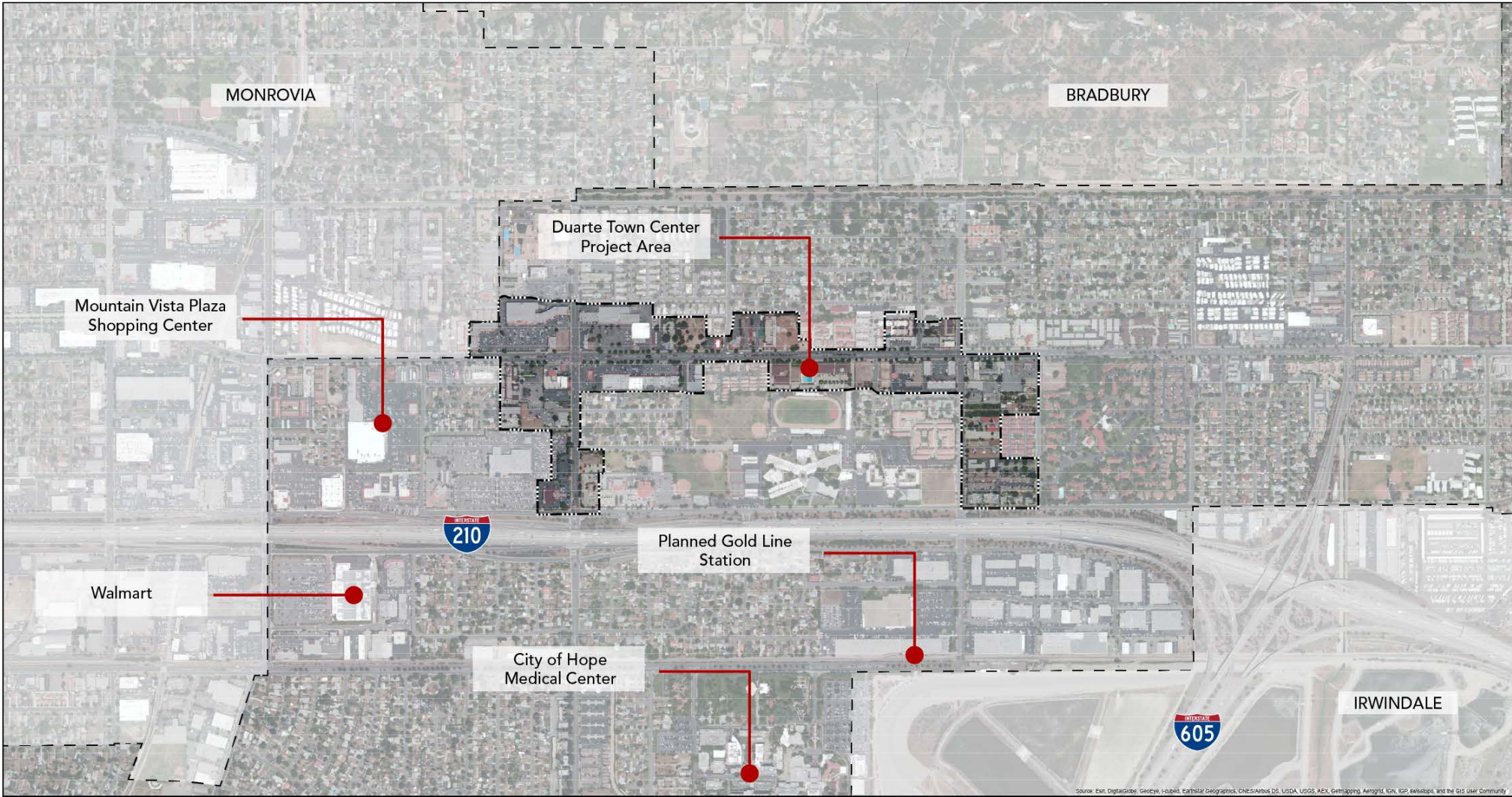
# Town Center Specific Plan

EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2015



City of Duarte  
**TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN**



**Legend**

Town Center Specific Plan Boundary

City Boundary Line



June 2015  
 Source: City of Duarte  
 Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

**Figure 1.1**  
**REGIONAL CONTEXT**

# 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This report provides an overview of the existing conditions, issues and opportunities present within Duarte's Town Center area. This information will be used during the planning process as a foundation for shaping strategies for strengthening and enhancing the Town Center. Specifically, this report discusses the existing conditions and potential opportunities related to **land use, community design, mobility and infrastructure** in the Town Center area. A market analysis depicting existing economic conditions will be provided under separate cover.

This introductory section provides a brief overview of the purpose of developing a specific plan for the Town Center. It details the legal context for preparation of the plan and the planning process that is currently underway. The regional context and specific boundaries for the Study Area are presented in Section 2: Land Use.

## 1.1 HISTORY AND CONTEXT

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The city of Duarte is located within a **beautiful foothill setting and is home to an array of assets and amenities**. From its tree-lined streets and world-class hospitals to its rich historic past, Duarte is a unique community that evokes a sense of pride in its residents. However, in many ways Duarte lacks a "sense of place." It has no historic town center or central gathering spot. It lacks a place where pedestrians can comfortably shop or stroll along storefronts, relax with friends in a plaza, or come together for community events. As a result, over 12 years ago, the City embarked on a Town Center Concept Plan, to foster just such a place. Adopted by City Council in 2003, the Town Center Concept plan envisioned a community-oriented, walkable, mixed-use activity center in the heart of Duarte.

In 2012, the City convened a Town Center Ad Hoc Committee to review the 2003 Town Center Concept Plan vision. The Ad Hoc Committee reaffirmed the original Vision and recommended that the City Council authorize development of a specific plan to implement that Vision. The specific plan would encourage and promote mixed-use development and set forth a plan for streetscape improvements in the area.

The Town Center Concept Plan originally identified an approximately one-mile stretch of Huntington Drive, along with the portion of Buena Vista Street from Huntington Drive south to the I-210 freeway, as Duarte's core town center, to be fostered and enhanced. Given the anticipated opening of the Duarte Metro Gold Line Station in early 2016, the Town Center concept has been expanded to also include Highland Avenue in this new planning effort, to foster enhanced mobility options to and from the Gold Line station area, as well as to promote additional transit-oriented development opportunities.

## 1.2 PURPOSE

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The Duarte Town Center Specific Plan provides a **long-term strategy for revitalizing and increasing the development potential** of central Duarte. This includes the Huntington Drive, Buena Vista Street and Highland Avenue corridors, particularly with regards to its underutilized commercial spaces and certain vacant properties. The Town Center area has the potential to become an iconic and attractive area for residential, shopping and entertainment, with improved access to destinations and an inviting environment for bicycle and pedestrian activity. The specific plan will establish land use, transportation, infrastructure, economic development

and urban design strategies that seek to attract investment into the Town Center and promote well-balanced retail development, mixed-use and residential development and active civic and public spaces. This will all contribute towards a more unified aesthetic and greater sense of place within the Town Center.

### Impact of Adoption

Once adopted, the Town Center Specific Plan will guide all new development in the Planning Area. New development projects will be required to follow the policies, programs and guidelines set forth in the Specific Plan. Existing developments will not be directly affected unless the occupants or owners choose to expand or change their structures, grounds or uses.

Any environmental impacts, such as noise, traffic and school enrollment, that could result from the Town Specific Plan implementation will be anticipated and analyzed in the State-mandated environmental review before the Specific Plan is adopted.

## 1.3 LEGAL CONTEXT

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A specific plan is one of the many policy and regulatory tools used by local governments as a complement to a general plan. Specific plans implement a city or county's general plan through the development of **policies, programs and regulations** for a localized area and in greater detail.

A specific plan can focus on broad policy concepts or detailed development regulations, but it must address:

- Land Use;
- Transportation and Circulation;
- Utilities and Infrastructure;
- Development Standards; and
- Implementation and Financing.

Since specific plans are mechanisms for executing the goals and policies of a community's general plan, State law requires that specific plans can only be adopted or amended if they are consistent with the area's adopted general plan. The authority for preparation and adoption of specific plans is set forth in the California Government Code, Sections 65450 through 65457.

## 1.4 PLANNING PROCESS

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To prepare the Town Center Specific Plan, the City of Duarte is leading the process in partnership with a multi-disciplinary consultant team, led by urban planners and designers MIG, Inc. This process expected to lead to an adopted plan in early 2016.

The first phase of work will focus on **background analysis**, drawing from studies and information already available and supplementing this work with additional field observations, research and analysis to fully understand the existing conditions in the Planning Area. The next phases consist of **creation of the plan framework and specific plan development**, followed by public review, environmental analysis and adoption.

To help guide the process as the plan develops, a Duarte Town Center Ad Hoc Committee (DTCAHC) will serve in an advisory role to make recommendations. The general public will also be invited to participate in community workshops, surveys and public hearings pertaining to the project.

## 2 LAND USE

To **enhance economic vitality, foster walkability and build on existing assets to create a true destination for Duarte residents**, the Duarte Town Center Specific Plan will set forth uniform development standards that leverage recent investments along the corridor and maximize potential for future improvements. To help formulate the land use plan that will provide the basis for proposed changes, this section of the report documents baseline conditions for land uses in the Town Center Specific Plan area. In this section, key issues relevant to the area today are identified, providing a context for examining development constraints and opportunities for land use changes. The information presented in this report will be used to help formulate strategies for a specific plan that reflects current trends, development patterns and community preferences.

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

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Duarte is and will remain a **desirable place to live and do business**. Residents are proud to call Duarte home and seek to enhance their home town with a sense of place—a community focal point and gathering place to represent the town’s heart.

The city has never had a traditional downtown or city center area. Commercial development in the city has been focused on Huntington Drive and areas north of Interstate 210 (I-210, Foothill Freeway), west of Buena Vista Street. The existence of a variety of civic uses, close proximity to schools and the performing art center and function of Huntington Drive as Duarte’s primary commercial corridor make this area of Duarte the ideal place to create a town center. The Town Center Specific Plan is the next step in creating a community-oriented, walkable, mixed-use activity center in the heart of Duarte.

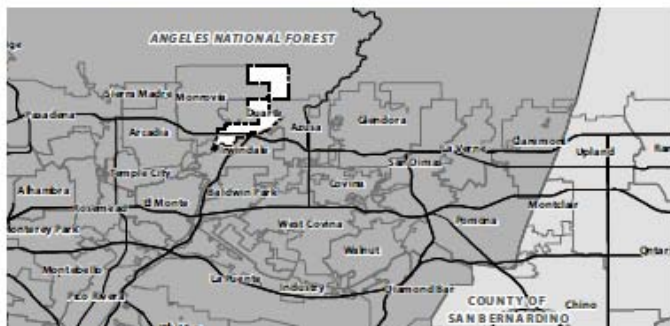
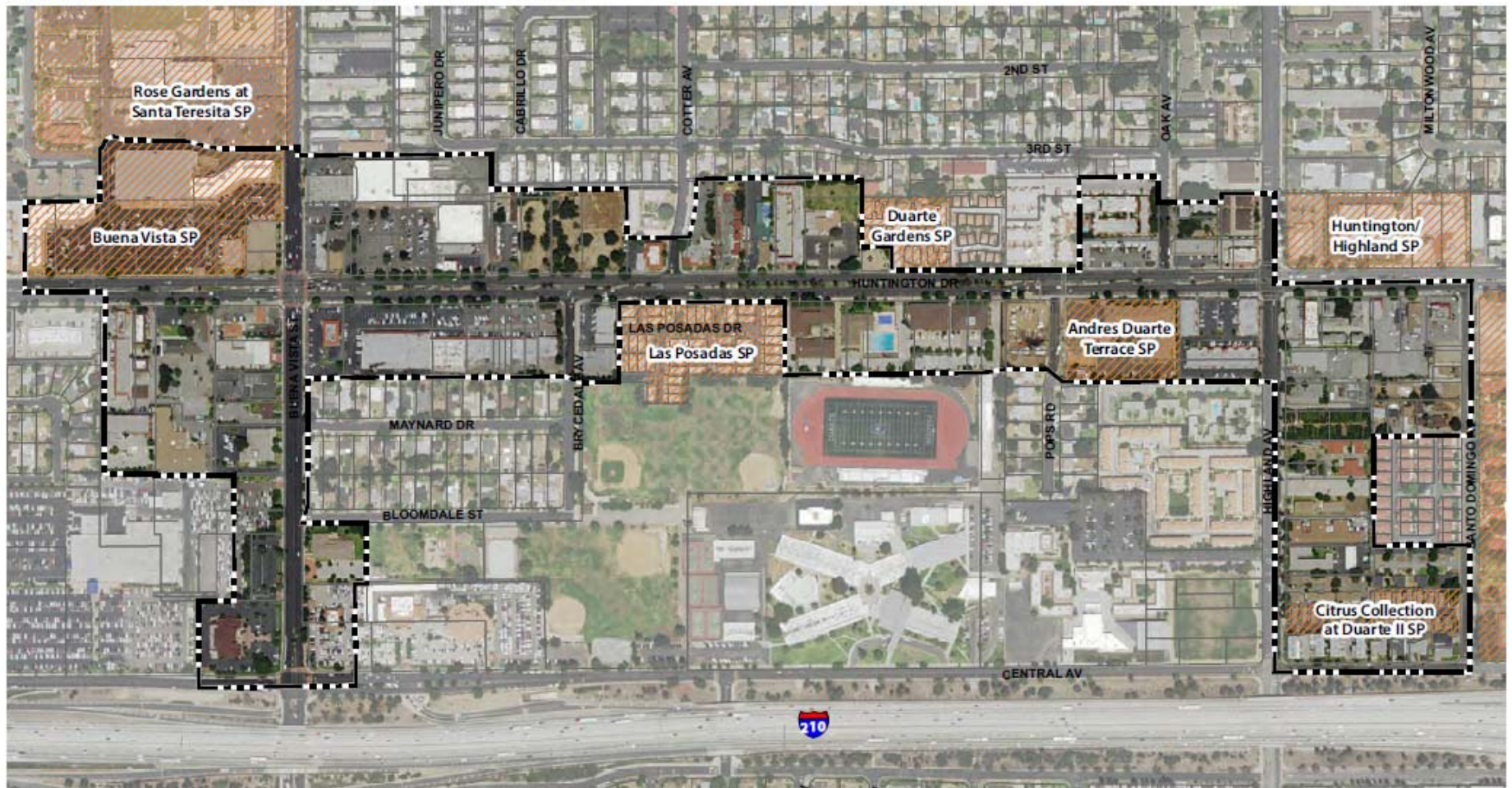
#### Regional Location

Duarte is located at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains, approximately 21 miles northeast of Los Angeles. The city borders Monrovia to the west, Bradbury to the north, Azusa to the east and Irwindale to the south. Additionally, the San Gabriel River and Santa Fe Flood Control Basin abut Duarte to the east and south.

#### Project Study Area

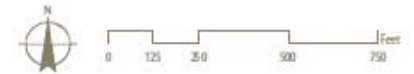
Located in the western portion of the city, north of I-210, the Town Center Specific Plan area generally encompasses properties fronting on Huntington Drive, Buena Vista Street and Highland Avenue (see Figure 2.1). On the west side, the Specific Plan area is bounded by city limits north of Huntington Drive and includes parcels west of Buena Vista Street. On the east side, the Town Center Specific Plan area is bounded by Highland Avenue north of Huntington Drive and Santo Domingo Avenue south of Huntington Drive. Between Buena Vista Street and Highland Avenue, the Specific Plan area spans one to two parcels north and south of Huntington Drive. West of Buena Vista Street and east of Highland Avenue, the Specific Plan area spans south to Central Avenue, which is located adjacent to I-210. The Specific Plan area covers 0.13 square miles (86 acres) or just less than two percent of the city’s total area of 6.8 square miles. Regional access to the Town Center Specific Plan area is provided by I-210 and I-605 (San Gabriel River Freeway) as well as the Metro Gold Line with access from the soon-to-open (early 2016) Duarte station near the corner of Highland Avenue and Duarte Road.

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN



### Legend

- Town Center Specific Plan Boundary
- Specific Plan Areas



**Figure 2.1**  
**STUDY AREA MAP**

September 2015  
Source: City of Duarte  
Map Prepared by: MKG, Inc.

## 2.2 LAND USE PLANNING EFFORTS

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Existing land use and development plans provide a starting point for the analysis of existing land uses within the Town Center Specific Plan area. Several recent and current land use planning efforts have helped shape development patterns within the area. Two planning efforts, the Duarte Town Center Concept Plan (2003) and Town Center Ad Hoc Committee Report (2013), have previously considered the potential of the Town Center Area and have established recommendations and a vision for the area. It is also important to consider larger planning frameworks including the General Plan land use policy and the Duarte Development Code, which has prescribed use and development standards for existing buildings in the study area.

### City of Duarte General Plan (2005-2020)

Any land use approach for the Town Center Specific Plan must be consistent with the primary goals of Duarte's General Plan, which was adopted in 2007 (the Housing Element was last updated in 2014). The General Plan provides a citywide approach to planning for future development and includes eight elements: Safety, Open Space and Conservation, Noise, Land Use, Housing, Historic Preservation and Public Safety. The General Plan identifies a set of goals, objectives and policies related to each of the elements. The goals, objectives and policies laid out in the Duarte General Plan that relate to potential land use decisions in the Town Center Specific Plan area include the following:

#### *Open Space and Conservation Element*

**Conservation Goal 3:** To protect Duarte's environment through proper consideration of the environmental implications of new development in the city.

**Air Quality Goal 1:** Create land use policies that address the relationship between land use and air quality to protect public health and minimize impacts on existing land use patterns and future land use developments.

**Objective 1.1:** Through land use plans, provide heightened consideration of policies and strategies to minimize exposure of sensitive receptors and sites (e.g. schools, hospitals and residences) to health risks related to air pollution.

**Policy AQ 1.1.2:** Promote and support mixed-use land patterns that allow the integration of retail, office, institutional and residential uses.

**Policy AQ 1.2.1:** Establish a Mixed-Use Zoning District that offers incentives for mixed-use developments.

#### *Noise Element*

**Noise Goal 3:** To establish land uses which are compatible with noise levels within the community.

**Objective 1.3:** Land use planning decisions directly relate to potential noise impacts. Therefore, careful consideration of noise impacts should be a part of all land use decisions.

### *Land Use Element*

**Land Use Goal 1:** Maintain a balanced community consisting of various residential housing types and densities, commercial activities, industrial development, mixed use where appropriate and open space.

**Objective 1.1:** Improve on Duarte's balance of uses.

**Policy LU 1.1.7:** Expand regional economic development along the I-210 corridor beyond current uses.

**Land Use Goal 2:** Develop compatible and harmonious land uses by providing a mix of uses consistent with projected future social, environmental and economic conditions.

**Objective 2.1:** Assure that future development complements surrounding areas.

**Policy LU 2.1.1:** New infill residential development should be compatible in design, bulk and height with existing nearby residential development as referenced in Duarte's Architectural Design Guidelines.

**Policy: LU 2.1.2:** Permitted uses along Huntington Drive should accurately reflect economic market conditions and incompatible uses and activities should be eliminated.

**Land Use Goal 3:** Provide unique areas to better serve the needs of Duarte residents and businesses.

**Objective 3.1:** Improve the land use mix in selected areas so that it generates synergies and convenience to patrons and residents.

**Policy LU 3.1.1:** Develop Specific Plan areas which will provide the flexibility needed to make these places unique.

**Policy LU 3.1.2:** Develop a flexible specific and strategic plan for the commercial area along the Huntington Drive and Buena Vista axis capturing traffic off the I-210 freeway.

### *Housing Element (2014-2021)*

**Housing Element Goal 5:** Provide adequate housing sites through appropriate land use, zoning and specific plan designations to accommodate Duarte's share of regional housing needs.

**Policy 5.1.1:** Provide site opportunities for development of housing that responds to diverse community needs in terms of housing type, cost and location, emphasizing locations near services and transit that promote walkability.

**Policy 5.1.3:** Promote the efficient use of land by encouraging commercial and residential uses on the same property in both horizontal and vertical mixed-use configurations.

### **2014 General Plan Housing Element Housing Sites Inventory**

State law requires that a community provide an adequate number of sites to allow for and facilitate production of the city's regional share of housing (Regional Housing Needs Assessment or RHNA). To determine whether the city has sufficient land to accommodate its share of regional housing needs for all income groups, Duarte must identify "adequate sites"



with appropriate zoning and development standards. Compliance with this requirement is measured by the jurisdiction's ability to provide adequate land to accommodate the RHNA. Several vacant properties located on the north side of Huntington Drive just west of Cotter Avenue are included in the sites inventory and are owned by the Duarte Housing Authority. The properties are zoned for commercial use, but are intended to be part of a larger mixed use project with this portion being high density residential. As discussed in more detail under *Pending Projects* below, as of June 2015 a project has been proposed on this site to include 150 new residential units.

### Duarte Development Code

The Development Code, which represents the combined zoning and subdivision regulating documents for the city, is the principal implementation tool for a General Plan. State law requires that Development Codes be consistent with the General Plan. The Duarte Development Code establishes specific regulations for the use and development of land in zoning districts within the Duarte city limits.

### Duarte Town Center Concept Plan (2003)

Adopted by City Council in 2003, the Town Center Concept plan was created by a Council-appointed task force charged with establishing a vision for future development of the Town Center. The Concept Plan envisioned a community-oriented, walkable, mixed-use activity center in the heart of Duarte. An emphasis was placed on creating an economically feasible concept that could develop over time. The task force identified the following action steps to catalyze development in the area:

1. Form an on-going Town Center implementation action team
2. Initiate zoning code changes to allow for mixed-use development
3. Create an economic development strategy
4. Research and promote city sites for mixed-use development
5. Invest in public improvements

The Vision for the Town Center provided the foundation for the Town Center Concept Plan. In 2012 the Town Center Ad Hoc Committee reviewed the 2003 Town Center Concept Plan vision and recommended the vision be reinstated. The Vision is presented below.

### Duarte Town Center Ad Hoc Committee Report (2013)

In 2012, the City convened the Town Center Ad Hoc Committee and charged the Committee with considering the potential of the Town Center Area and preparing recommendations to the City Council on a vision. The Town Center Ad Hoc Committee reviewed the 2003 Town Center Concept Plan vision and recommended the vision be reinstated. The vision statement is as follows:

*Duarte's Town Center is an attractive mixed-use activity center that offers a "sense of place" or focal point for the community. The mix of uses includes retail stores, restaurants, housing, civic buildings and central public plazas with open space. These central spaces and the uses around them serve as Duarte's civic*

*and cultural hub - an active, dynamic social gathering space for the entire city. The Town Center is one of the many districts that comprise the city, linking other activity areas throughout the community.*

*Duarte's Town Center is family-oriented and pedestrian-friendly, inviting people to stroll along storefronts, dine outdoors at a café, relax with friends on a lawn or bench, enjoy public art and come together for community events. This Town Center provides amenities for people of all ethnicities, ages, orientations and income levels, reflecting and celebrating the diversity of our city's residents.*

*Duarte's Town Center is economically strong and diverse. It preserves and enhances the city's existing locally owned businesses while attracting some larger, more regionally oriented anchor commercial uses. New stores and services in the Town Center improve the city's retail tax base while complementing - rather than competing with - established businesses in other parts of town and neighboring cities. Duarte's economic position is also bolstered by its proximity to major transportation corridors, including Huntington Drive/Route 66, I-210, I-605 and the Gold Line.*

*Duarte's Town Center has a distinctive design that draws upon the city's history while looking forward to modern architectural styles. Influential themes such as Route 66 imagery help to create a truly unique, innovative and vibrant Town Center for residents to enjoy long into the future.*

To fully implement the Town Center vision, the Town Center Ad Hoc Committee recommended that the City Council approve the development of a specific plan that follows the vision and development principles set forth in the 2003 Town Center Concept Plan. The Town Center Specific Plan would encourage and promote mixed use development and set forth a plan for streetscape improvements in the area. The Ad Hoc Committee would play an advisory role in the development of the Plan.

### Neighboring Specific Plans

Prior to adoption of a new Development Code in 2010, inflexible development regulations led to the adoption of a number specific plans throughout the community. The new Development Code incorporated a Planned Development Permit and related administrative process, which allows projects to deviate from standards while still achieving zoning objectives. Without the Planned Development mechanism, a specific plan was required to provide the necessary flexibility from zoning regulations.

Three adopted specific plans are located within the Town Center Specific Plan area and several are located adjacent to its boundary (see Figure 2.1). To avoid future land use conflicts, the Town Center Specific Plan must take into consideration the actual and future land uses in these areas. Furthermore, each specific plan that exists within the proposed Town Center Specific Plan boundaries must be rescinded so that the plan provides clear regulating direction.

#### *Specific Plans within the Proposed Town Center Boundaries*

**Huntington/Buena Vista Specific Plan.** Adopted in 1989 and located within the northwest corner of the Town Center Specific Plan area (north of Huntington Drive and west of Buena Vista Street), the Huntington/Buena Vista Specific Plan was established to guide development of the 6.8 acre commercial site. The area is currently developed with the Ralph's Shopping Center.

Ralph's, which has served as the city's neighborhood grocery for many years, has indicated its intent to close its doors this July.

**Andres Duarte Terrace Specific Plan.** Adopted in 2003, the Andres Duarte Terrace Specific Plan area is located on the south side of Huntington Drive between Pops Road and Highland Avenue. The Andres Duarte Terrace is an 80-unit affordable senior housing development with a 55-year affordability covenant that extends to 2061.

**Citrus Collection at Duarte II.** The Citrus Collection at Duarte II is located within the southeast area of the Town Center Specific Plan, north of Central Avenue between Highland and Santo Domingo Avenues. Although the Citrus Collection Specific Plan was not formally adopted, preliminary development standards were set in place in 1999. The Specific Plan area has been developed with 22 detached, single family homes.

#### *Specific Plans Proximate to Proposed Town Center Boundaries*

**Duarte Gardens Specific Plan.** The Duarte Gardens Specific Plan area is located just outside the Town Center Specific Plan boundary on the north side of Huntington Drive between Cotter and Oak Avenues. Adopted in 2006, the Duarte Gardens Specific Plan was intended to facilitate development of seventeen single family homes on 1.5 acres of land. The site is fully developed.

**Huntington/Highland Specific Plan.** The Huntington/Highland Specific Plan is located just outside the Town Center Specific Plan boundary at the northeast corner of Huntington Drive and Highland Avenue. Adopted in 1982, the Specific Plan was intended to guide development of office and commercial uses on the site. Following adoption of the Specific Plan, the site was fully developed with office and commercial uses.

**Westminster Gardens Specific Plan.** The Westminster Gardens Specific Plan area is home to the 32-acre Westminster Gardens continuing-care retirement community that includes independent living, assisted living and memory care, all on one campus. The Westminster Gardens Specific Plan is located just beyond the eastern boundary of the Town Center Specific Plan area.

**Las Posadas (Town Center Villas) Specific Plan.** Adopted in 1996, the Las Posadas Specific Plan was crafted to facilitate development of single family homes on a 1.89-acre site. Located just outside the Town Center Specific Plan boundary on the south side of Huntington Drive (east of Brycedale Avenue), Las Posadas Specific Plan is fully developed with 46 detached, single-family homes.

**The Rose Gardens at Santa Teresita Specific Plan.** The Rose Gardens at Santa Teresita Specific Plan was adopted in 2011 to guide expansion of the Santa Teresita hospital with a nearly 300,000-square-foot project intended primarily for assisted living. The site will be developed with a mix of skilled nursing facilities, including assisted and independent living units while retaining integral uses and buildings already located within the project area. The project site is approximately 12 acres. The project increases the number of beds from the existing 169 to 360. Part of the Specific Plan is located in Monrovia.

**Duarte Station Specific Plan.** While not located in the immediate vicinity of the Town Center Specific Plan, the Duarte Station Specific Plan, adopted in 2013, will impact development in the area as it will provide significant additional development capacity and expanded regional transit access. The new Duarte Gold Line station, scheduled to open for service in 2015/2016, will be located south of I-210 at the northwest corner of Duarte Road and Highland Avenue. The extension of the Gold Line and establishment of the Duarte station will create opportunities to

invest in the area adjacent to the station by allowing new uses besides what is permitted under the area's previous manufacturing zoning. The Duarte Station Specific Plan will guide development of a vibrant, mixed-use transit-oriented development proposed in the current 19-acre industrial area immediately adjacent to the future station. The plan provides for up to 475 residential units, 400,000 square feet of office, 12,000 of commercial space and 250 hotel rooms in the 19-acre planning area.

### City of Duarte Economic Development Strategy

The Economic Development Strategy, adopted in 2011, is intended to guide the City's economic development from 2011 to 2015. Los Angeles County Economic Development Commission (LAEDC) was contracted by the City to develop the document, which provided an overview of the city's demographic conditions and set out objectives and tasks under five major goals to bolster Duarte's economic future. The goals established in the Economic Development Strategy include:

- **Prepare an Educated Workforce** — Connect schools to communities by linking local community organizations, non-profits, businesses and corporate leaders with schools through formal partnerships; help address existing and projected future workforce gaps by facilitating more opportunities for public-private collaboration between individual businesses, community colleges and universities.
- **Create a Business-Friendly Environment** — To further improve, the city needs to retain and expand the existing job base while proactively attracting new businesses, industries, jobs and investment; and leverage the research and development activities to the City of Hope for the commercialization of research, technology and similar opportunities.
- **Enhance Duarte's Quality of Life** — Ensure public safety, improve mobility and reduce traffic congestion, encourage transit-oriented development, promote healthy living, encourage and expand cultural and artistic amenities available to the public and revitalize low income communities.
- **Implement Smart Land Use** — Ensure that the prime industrial area adjacent to City of Hope between Duarte Road and the I-210 Freeway is protected from encroachment by incompatible uses. Encourage the creation of an incubator for medical research technology and similar uses tied to the City of Hope. Develop a specific plan for the development of a city center/town center at Huntington Drive and Buena Vista Street.
- **Build 21<sup>st</sup> Century Infrastructure** — Expand community-wide programs promoting waste-reduction, recycling, composting, water conservation and other green strategies. Develop a ridership program to connect the planned Metro Gold Line station to local employers.

### Pending Projects

Table 2.1 and Figure 2.2 show pending and current projects in the Town Center Specific Plan vicinity.

**Table 2.1: Pending Development Projects – May 2015**

Map Legend (Figure 2.2)	Approved/ Proposed Use	Status	Address
P1	<b>Rose Gardens at Santa Teresita:</b> The site will be developed with a mix of skilled nursing facilities, including assisted, skilled nursing and independent living units while retaining integral uses and buildings already located within the project area. The project site is approximately 12 acres. The project increases the number of beds from the existing 169 to 360 and increases the existing square footage by 195,015 square feet to 487,350 square feet.	Entitled – Not Constructed	819 Buena Vista Street
P2	<b>Andres Duarte Terrace Phase II:</b> 43 unit affordable senior housing development. Construction completion anticipated summer 2015.	Entitled – Under Construction	1700 Huntington Drive
P3	<b>Medical Office Building:</b> The proposed project is a 3-building Medical Office Complex.	Under Review	1230 Huntington Drive
P4	<b>Starbucks Coffee Shop:</b> The project includes a retail coffee shop and drive through. The 1,850 square foot location will fill a key corner location in the city and replace the existing Starbucks in the Huntington-Buena Vista Shopping Center.	Entitled – Construction scheduled for early fall 2015	1263 Huntington Drive
P5	<b>Former Mike’s Food Center:</b> The property owner is currently in the process of marketing the location to small grocery uses with the intent of making interior and facade improvements when a new tenant is chosen.	Proposed	1322 Huntington Drive
P6	<b>New Residential Development:</b> The proposed project includes 150 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom apartment units in a 4-story building.	Under Review	1415, 1423, 1435 Huntington Drive
N/A	<b>Duarte Gold Line Light Rail:</b> Construction of 1.5 miles of two-light rail tracks and light-rail station platform. Various traffic, pedestrian, bicycle and bus improvements along the alignment and near the station area. Project completion anticipated 2015/early 2016.	Entitled – Under Construction	Station: northwest corner of Duarte Road and Highland Avenue. Rail ROW: north of Duarte Rd. from west to east city boundary line. Parking lot and streetscape

Source: City of Duarte, 2015

### Building Permit Data

Figure 2.2 also shows the location of building permits issued in the Town Center Specific Plan vicinity in the last five years. As shown on Figure 2.2, most building permits issued in the area are for improvements such as interior remodels and accessibility (Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA) improvements. The location of the building permits for improvements are clustered at the Big Lots and Mike’s Food Shopping centers on both sides of Huntington Drive between Buena Vista Street and Brycedale Avenue. In the last five years, two building permits for property additions were issued within the Specific Plan area. The most significant addition was the expansion and remodel of the Grace Fellowship Church, located on the north side of Huntington Drive, midblock between Cotter and Oak Avenues.

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN



## Legend

Building Permits Issues (2010-2015)

P1 Pending Projects (June 2015)

- Property Addition
- Property Improvement



June 2015  
 Source: City of Duarte  
 Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

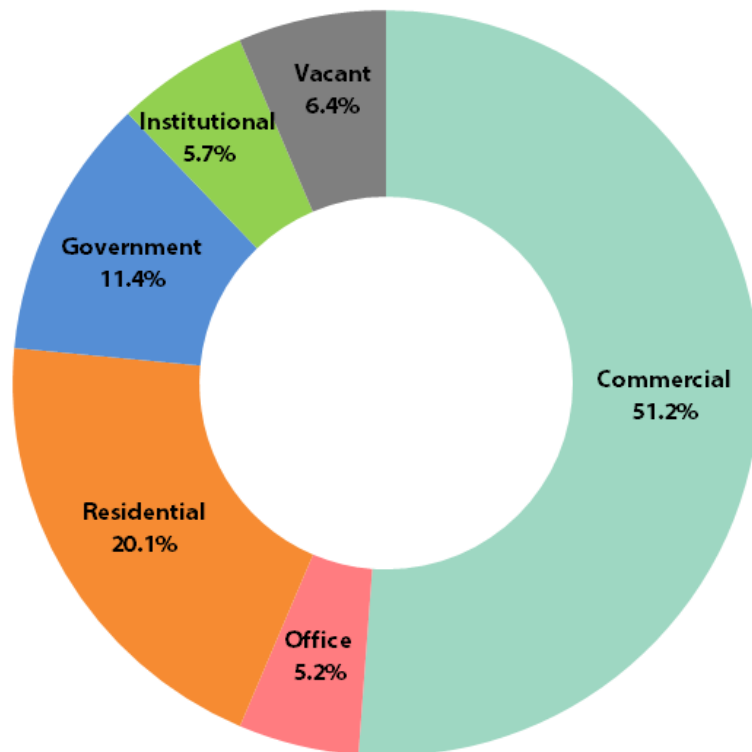
**Figure 2.2**  
**BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY AND PENDING PROJECTS**

## 2.3 EXISTING LAND USE CONDITIONS

### Existing Land Use Pattern

The Town Center Specific Plan area is made up of 151 unique parcels spanning 68 acres (not including street rights-of-way). The Town Center Specific Plan area is generally occupied by commercial uses on the eastern and western sides of the area, government uses in the center and residential uses intermixed along the corridors.

Commercial uses are distributed throughout the planning area but are concentrated in the western half of the Specific Plan area. Except for businesses with direct access to the I-210 freeway, Duarte businesses tend to be smaller establishments serving a local market. Due to its location near the I-210, commercial uses in the Town Center Specific Plan area are primarily composed of commercial centers (Table 2.2), including both small-scale strip commercial centers and larger commercial shopping centers. The largest centers are located at the corner of Huntington Drive and Buena Vista Street, which serves as an anchor and focal point for the Special Plan area. Commercial developments make up more than half (51 percent) of land uses in the Specific Plan area (including their respective off-street parking facilities). Commercial center uses account for 31 percent of commercial use acreage. Stand alone commercial uses and restaurants/taverns account for 6.8 and 5.9 percent of land uses, respectively.



**Figure 2.3: EXISTING LAND USE DISTRIBUTION**

Just over 20 percent of land uses are residential and are concentrated in the eastern portion of the Specific Plan area, east of Oaks Avenue and Pops Road. Residential land uses are split almost evenly between multi-family and single family units. While lower density, single-family homes remain the dominant housing type citywide (totaling 77 percent of the city's housing stock in 2010) residential uses in the Specific Plan area are predominantly higher density, ranging from apartment homes to attached townhomes. The single family uses also tend to be higher density than elsewhere in the city, in the form of small lot developments such as the homes developed at the Citrus Collection Specific Plan area at the south end of Highland Avenue. Included in the residential land uses are also two senior housing developments: the Huntington Oaks Village and the Andres Duarte Terrace. Phase II of the Andres Duarte Terrace is currently under construction (2015).

Office uses make up just over five percent of land uses and are generally clustered around the Buena Vista Street and Highland Avenue intersections with Huntington Drive. Office uses are characterized by medium to small office buildings with surface parking areas.

A variety of civic uses are located along the central portion of Huntington Drive, as well as along Buena Vista Street. Civic uses make up over 11 percent of the area's total land uses. These uses include the Civic Center (including City Hall and the Fitness Center with its 25-yard competition pool), Public Library, U.S. Postal Service Office, the City of Duarte Teen Center and Duarte Plaza. Private institutional uses such as churches and nursing homes make up an additional 5.7 percent of land uses.

Vacant parcels make up less than four percent of the area's land use, most of which is intended for commercial use. The largest vacant area is located on the north side of Huntington Drive, midblock between Buena Vista Street and Cotter Avenue. These properties are owned by the Duarte Housing Authority; a proposed project at this site could include 150 new residential units.

Figure 2.3 and Table 2.2 show the allocation and distribution of existing land use in the Specific Plan area. Figure 2.4 maps the existing land uses throughout the plan area.

**Table 2.2: Existing Land Use (2015)**

General Land Use Category	Detailed Land Use	Acres	Percent of Total
<b>Commercial</b>		<b>35.0</b>	<b>51.2%</b>
	Auto Repair	1.3	1.9%
	Auto Sales	2.2	3.2%
	Restaurant/Tavern	4.1	5.9%
	Hotel/Motel	1.4	2.1%
	Commercial Center	21.4	31.2%
	General Commercial	4.6	6.8%
<b>Office</b>		<b>3.6</b>	<b>5.2%</b>
<b>Residential</b>		<b>13.8</b>	<b>20.1%</b>
	Single Family Residential	6.3	9.2%
	Multi-Family Residential	7.5	10.9%
<b>Government</b>		<b>7.8</b>	<b>11.4%</b>
<b>Institutional</b>		<b>3.9</b>	<b>5.7%</b>
	Churches	2.3	3.3%
	Nursing Homes	1.6	2.4%
<b>Vacant</b>		<b>4.4</b>	<b>6.4%</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>68.4</b>	<b>100.0%</b>





Phase II of Andres Duarte Terrace is currently under construction



Civic uses are a visible component and amenity within the Town Center area

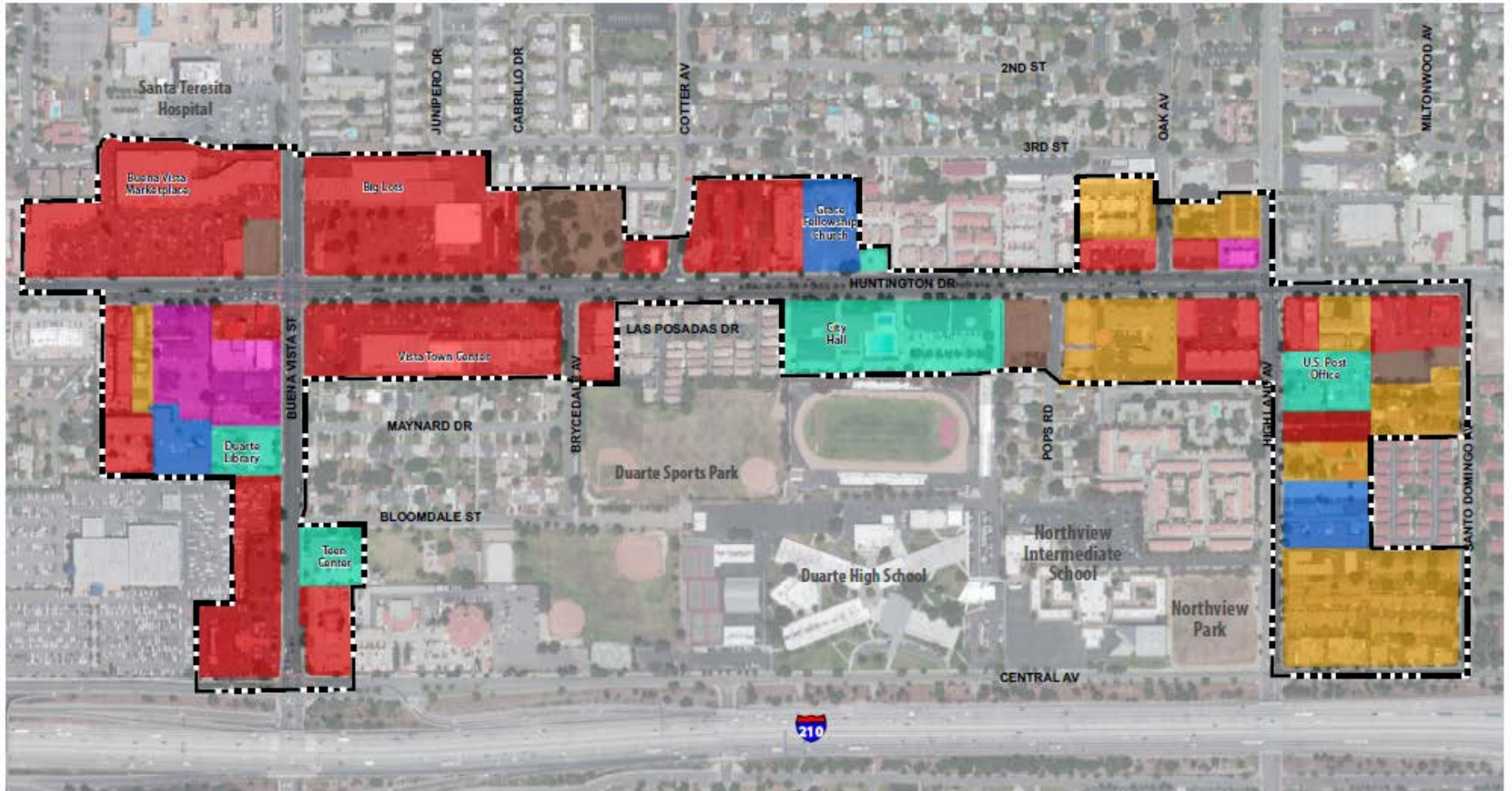


Existing uses, such as this commercial center, contain ample surface parking



Existing office uses are predominately medical office.

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN

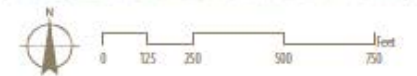


## Legend

Town Center Specific Plan Boundary

## Existing Land Use (2015)

Commercial	Government
Office	Institutional
Residential	Vacant



June 2015  
 Source: City of Duarte  
 Map Prepared by: MNG, Inc.

**Figure 2.4**  
**EXISTING LAND USE**

## Development Characteristics

### *Building Age*

The average year for development of all properties in the plan area is 1970. The two larger shopping centers (the Big Lots and Mike's Food Centers located on either side of Huntington Drive, just east of Buena Vista Street) have sections of the centers that were built between the 1950s and 1970s. The Ralph's Shopping Center (located within the Buena Vista Specific Plan) is newer by comparison, with a development date of 1991. Among residential uses, older buildings are found in the area south of Huntington Drive and east of Highland Avenue. In contrast, residential uses in the Duarte Terrace and Citrus Collection Specific Plans are newer, having been developed in 2005 and 2000 respectively. See Figure 2.5 for a graphic representation of building age along the corridors.

### *Lot Size and Building Heights*

In general, lot size and building heights are closely tied to land uses. For example, commercial properties tend to have much larger lot sizes than residential uses. The largest lots in the area (over 40,000 square feet in size) are generally found along Huntington Drive and Buena Vista Street and are generally occupied by commercial uses. Most residential lots in the Specific Plan area range in size from 20,000 to 40,000 square feet (see Figure 2.6).

Building height in the area is closely associated with lot size and zoning. Many of the tallest buildings in the area (over 35 feet tall) are located on the lots that are greater than 40,000 square feet in size. Most of the taller buildings are also located on commercial properties with the exception of two residential uses (Andres Duarte Terrace and the Huntington Oaks Village), both of which are located on Huntington Drive just west of Oak Drive. The tallest building in the Specific Plan area is the Ralph's grocery store; with the façade reaching 47 feet in height (see Figure 2.7).

### *Parking Areas*

Due to the prevalence of medium to large commercial uses in the Specific Plan area, a significant amount of land is dedicated to off-street parking, in the form of surface parking lots. Figure 2.8 shows areas dedicated to off-street parking and areas where on-street parking is allowed. Street parking is allowed along the majority of Huntington Drive and portions of Buena Vista Street and Highland Avenue within the Plan area. These roads experience a high level of drive-through regional traffic. On-street parking is also available along the smaller side streets that intersect with Huntington Drive.

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN

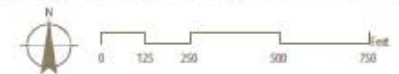


**Legend**

Town Center Specific Plan Boundary

**Year Built**

	1920 - 1949		1980 - 1999
	1950 - 1959		2000 - 2005
	1960 - 1979		N/A



**Figure 2.5  
YEAR BUILT**

June 2015  
Source: City of Duarte  
Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN

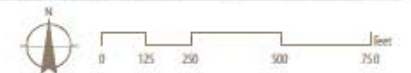


## Legend

 Town Center Specific Plan Boundary

## Lot Sizes

	up to 5,000 sq. ft.		20,000 - 40,000 sq. ft.
	5,000 - 10,000 sq. ft.		40,000 - 80,000 sq. ft.
	10,000 - 20,000 sq. ft.		> 80,000 sq. ft.



June 2015  
 Source: City of Duarte  
 Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

**Figure 2.6**  
**LOT SIZES**

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN



**Legend**

Town Center Specific Plan Boundary

**Building Height**

	up to 15 feet		30 - 40 feet
	15 - 30 feet		40 - 47 feet



June 2015  
 Source: City of Duarte  
 Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

**Figure 2.7**  
**BUILDING HEIGHT**

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN



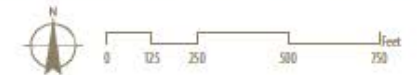
### Legend

 Town Center Specific Plan Boundary

### Existing On- and Off-Street Parking (2015)

 Off-Street Parking (Surface Lots)

 On-Street Parking Allowed



June 2015  
Source: City of Duarte  
Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

**Figure 2.8**  
**EXISTING ON- AND OFF-STREET PARKING**

*Underutilized Land*

At its June 2012 meeting, the Town Center Ad Hoc Committee selected properties that it identified as underutilized or that it felt warranted major aesthetic improvements in the coming years. The Committee used the following definition to generate the underutilized properties list:

*An underutilized property is, generally, a property that can be developed with more density including additional square frontage, more stories, increased lot coverage and has buildings that may be in a good or deteriorated state. It may also be a property where the aesthetic qualities of the building are not at a standard acceptable to the community.*

The creation of an underutilized property inventory was meant to build consensus on how much change was appropriate in the future. Table 2.3 lists the underutilized properties identified by the Ad Hoc committee. Figure 2.9 shows that identified underutilized properties are located mostly along Huntington Drive with clusters of underutilized properties at the Buena Vista Street and Highland Avenue intersection.

**Table 2.3: Underutilized Properties (2013)**

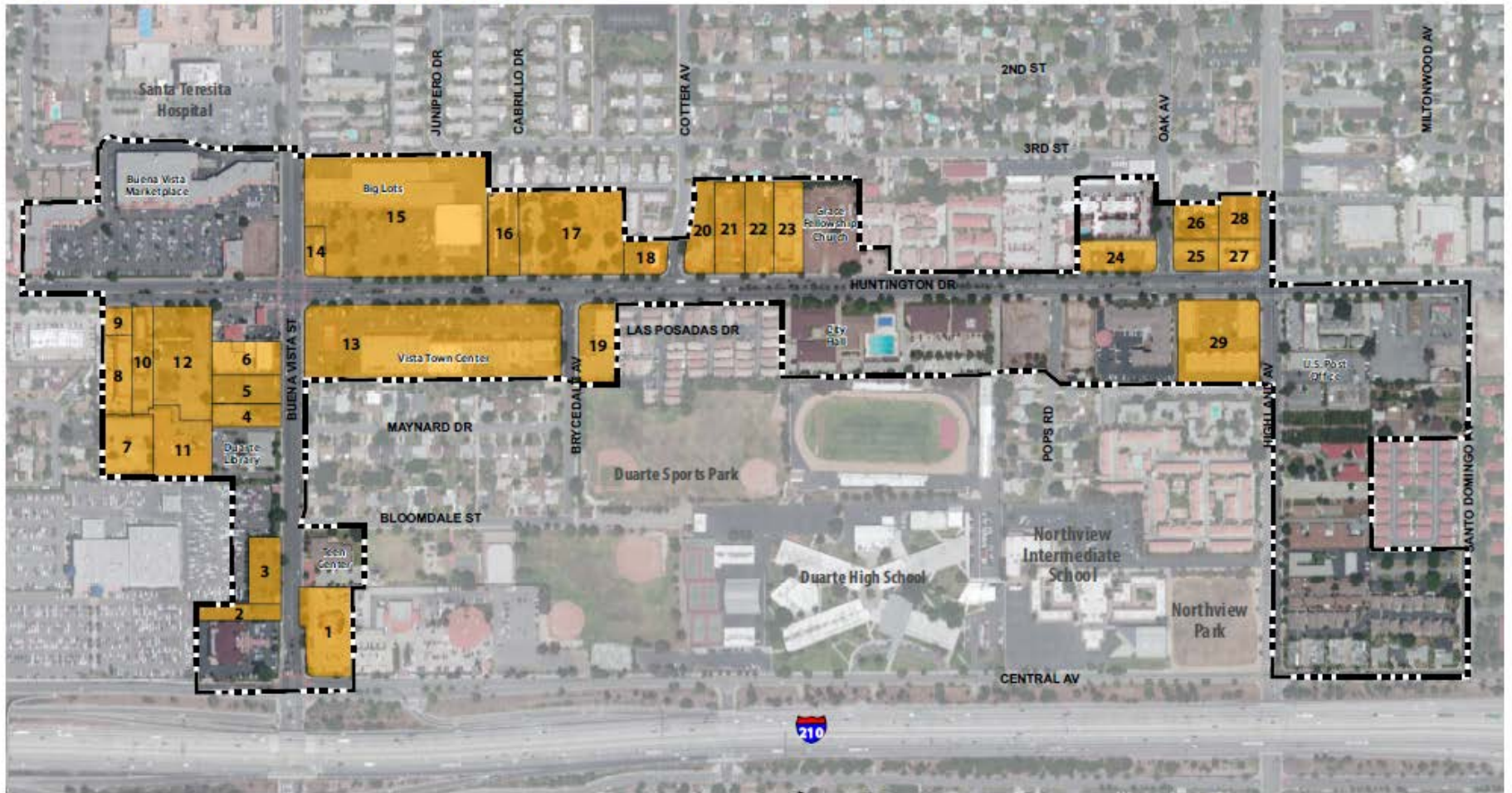
Figure 2.9 Map Legend	Address	Property Description	Notes
1	1434 Buena Vista Street	Performance Nissan	Corner parcel should be developed, balance of property car sales.
2	1427 Buena Vista Street	Old Spaghetti Factory	Parking north of Building should be assembled with east frontage Car Max parking area and developed.
3	1131 Central Avenue	Car Max	
4	1235 Buena Vista Street	Office	
5	1227 Buena Vista Street	Office	Should be assembled to create larger development piece.
6	1219 Buena Vista Street	Office	Should be assembled to create larger development piece.
7	1200 Huntington Drive	Duarte Inn	Poorly maintained. Should be assembled to create larger development piece.
8	1202-1210 Huntington Drive	Commercial Center	Poorly maintained. Should be assembled to create larger development piece.
9	1212 Huntington Drive	Pollo Loco	Poorly maintained. Should be assembled to create larger development piece.
10	1214 Huntington Drive	Apartments	Should be assembled to create larger development piece.
11	1220 Huntington Drive	Monrovia Convalescent Hospital	Poorly maintained. Should be assembled to create larger development piece.
12	1230 Huntington Drive	Office	Should be assembled to create larger development piece.
13	1302-1420 Huntington Drive	Mike's Food Center and Carl's Jr.	Poorly maintained. In need of complete renovation or redevelopment.
14	1303 Huntington Drive	Liquor Store	Poorly maintained. Should be removed for more appropriate development with positive corner focus.
15	1307-1355 Huntington Drive	Big Lot's Center	Poorly maintained. In need of complete renovation or redevelopment.



Figure 2.9 Map Legend	Address	Property Description	Notes
16	1409 Huntington Drive	Romo Automotive	Should be assembled to create larger development piece.
17	1423-1437 Huntington Drive	Vacant	Should be assembled to create larger development piece.
18	1475 Huntington Drive	One West Bank	Building in good shape. Could be developed at higher density.
19	1430-1440 Huntington Drive	Bank of America and offices	Could be developed at higher density or with more up-to-date building.
20	1501 Huntington Drive	Ranchero	Could be developed at higher density or with more up-to-date building.
21	1515 Huntington Drive	Rancho Inn Motel	Poorly maintained. In need of complete renovation or redevelopment. Could be assembled to create larger development piece.
22	1521 Huntington Drive	Village Restaurant	Poorly maintained. In need of complete renovation or redevelopment. Could be assembled to create larger development piece.
23	1533 Huntington Drive	Days Inn	Could be developed at higher density or with more up-to-date building.
24	1701-1723 Huntington Drive	Auto Repair and Sushi Restaurant	Poorly maintained. Property in need of redevelopment and should be developed at higher density or with more up-to-date building.
25	1735-1745 Huntington Drive	Commercial Center	Poorly maintained. Property in need of redevelopment and should be developed at higher density or with more up-to-date building.
26	1118-1122 Oak Avenue	Multi-Family Residential	Poorly maintained. In need of complete redevelopment. Could be developed with adjacent Huntington Drive pieces at higher density.
27	1755 Huntington Drive	Office Building	Could be developed at higher density or with more up-to-date building.
28	1115-1139 Highland Avenue	Apartments	Not poorly maintained. Could be assembled with Huntington Drive and Oak Avenue properties for higher density development.
29	1750-1764 Huntington Drive	Office Building	Could be developed at higher density or with more up-to-date building.


Source: Town Center Ad Hoc Committee Final Report, 2013

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN



## Legend

 Town Center Specific Plan Boundary

 Underutilized Properties (2013) as Identified by the Ad Hoc Committee

See Table 2.3 for map legend and corresponding details



June 2015  
 Source: City of Duarte Town Center Ad Hoc Committee (2013)  
 Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

**Figure 2.9**  
**UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTIES**

## Land Use Designations

### *General Plan Designations*

The General Plan applies a land use designation to each property in the city and provides a general description of allowable land uses for within each land use designation. The General Plan is implemented by the more detailed and specific Development Code. The Duarte General Plan Land Use Element (adopted in 2007) assigns 10 land use designations to the properties within the Plan area, as shown in Figure 2.10.

- The **Neighborhood Commercial** designation is intended to provide neighborhood retail, service and office uses for businesses serving the daily needs of nearby residential areas, while preventing significant adverse effects on adjoining residential properties. In the Town Center Specific Plan area, only a small commercial center located at the southeast corner of Huntington Drive and Brycedale Avenue is designated for Neighborhood Commercial.
- The **General Commercial** designation is intended to provide for sites to meet the shopping needs of the entire community and provide sites for regional commercial activity along the I-210 freeway corridor. A large portion of the properties in the Specific Plan are designated General Commercial.
- The **Civic Center Mixed Use Area** was established to create a unique area within the center of the community as a gathering spot where Duarte residents and business owners can come together to live, socialize and shop. The designation is applied to the Big Lots and Mike's Food Shopping Centers located on Huntington Drive, east of Buena Vista Street. Implementation of this designation is expected to include a specific plan to provide flexibility in allowing vertical and/or horizontal mixed high density and commercial uses. As identified in the General Plan, the specific plan must also provide unique parking standards, sufficient residential densities, housing types and appropriate pedestrian-friendly design to provide the needed synergy to make this project work economically and visually in the short and long term.
- The **Administrative/Professional** designation is considered the most restrictive of the commercial land use designations. Allowable include general offices, medical offices, clinics and general research facilities. The properties located near the corner of Huntington Drive and Buena Vista are designated Administrative/Professional.
- The **Low Density Residential** land use designation is the predominant residential land use designation within Duarte, but is applied to only one property in the Town Center Specific Plan area. The designation allows for one to six units per acre. One property just south of the Andres Duarte Terrace development (on the east side of Pops Road) is designated Low Density Residential.
- The **Medium Density Residential** designation allows for residential development of detached or attached single and multi-family dwellings with densities ranging from seven to 21 units per acre. Medium density residential uses are concentrated on the east end of the Specific Plan area. Specifically, most of the properties east of Highland Avenue are designated Medium Density Residential.
- The **High Density Residential** designation allows multi-family developments, including apartments, condominiums and attached townhomes at a density of 21 to 28 units per acre. Parcels designated for high density residential use are generally concentrated around Huntington Drive and in the southern end of the city along Buena Vista Street. In the

Specific Plan area, the properties developed with the Huntington Oaks Village and Andres Duarte Terrace Phase II development (both located on Huntington Drive between Pops Road and Oaks Avenue) are designated High Density Residential.

- Over 50 percent of Duarte’s land area is designated **Open Space**, mostly due to a large portion of Angeles National Forest within the city boundaries. Within the Specific Plan area, only the 0.19 acre Duarte Plaza, a small outdoor plaza, is designated Open Space.
- Several public facilities in the Specific Plan area are designated as **Public/Quasi Public**. Located on Huntington Drive, the Duarte Civic Center is home to City Hall, a senior center, a community fitness center and pool and a Duarte Unified School District Education Center. On Buena Vista Street, the teen center and public library are also designated Public/Quasi-Public.

### *Zoning Districts*

The Duarte Development Code (DDC) promotes the public health, safety and general welfare and implements the policies of the General Plan. The DDC establishes land use districts (zones) designated to promote the orderly growth of the community. In addition to regulating use of property, the DDC also provides standards such as building setbacks, maximum allowable height of structures and lot area.

Properties within the Town Center Specific Plan are zoned for a variety of uses ranging from commercial to open space (Figure 2.11). More than half (56 percent) of properties in the Specific Plan area are zoned for commercial uses. Residential and Specific Plan zoning accounts for 18 and 16 percent of the area’s zoning, respectively. Development standards for the following zoning districts are presented in Table 2.4, at the end of this section.

- The **Commercial Professional (C-P)** zone provides locations appropriate for administrative and professional offices, with limited accessory retail and service uses.
- The **Commercial General (C-G)** zone provides locations for a wide variety of commercial enterprises and intended to serve local and regional needs.
- The **Commercial Freeway (C-F)** zone provides locations along I-210 for large, auto-oriented and regional-serving retail commercial developments that benefit from the increased exposure and regional traffic afforded by a freeway-adjacent location and where development standards can be tailored to attract and maintain such regionally oriented uses.
- The **Single Family Residential (R-1)** provides for the development and preservation of residential subdivisions consisting of detached residences and accessory uses compatible with the residential use of the zone.
- The **Multiple Family Residential (R-3)** zone is intended to accommodate residential development generally characterized by single structures or a collection of cohesive structures that house individual and/or multiple units, with common open space areas and amenities.
- The **Multiple Family Residential (R-4) zone** is intended to accommodate higher-density, multi-story residential development, with a focus on providing an intensity and function at locations within easy walking distance to transit, recreation and community facilities and commercial services.

- The **Public Facilities (PF)** zone provides for areas at suitable locations for facilities intended to provide supportive government functions to the population, including community centers, cultural institutions, government facilities, libraries, public utilities and public schools.
- The **Open Space (O)** zone is used for areas necessary to maintain and protect open spaces for the purposes of recreation, natural resource protection and enhancement, hazards management, utility corridors and the protection of prehistoric places, features and objects.
- The **Specific Plan (SP)** zone is applied to any property or group of properties lying within the bounds of a specific plan that has been adopted by resolution or ordinance of the Council. The specific plan is a tool designed to provide flexibility, innovative use of land resources and development, a variety of housing and other development types and an effective and safe method of pedestrian and vehicular circulation. Each specific plan establishes comprehensive site design and architectural standards; standards for parking and signage may also be provided. There are three specific plans located within the boundaries of the Town Center Specific Plan: the Buena Vista Specific Plan, The Andres Duarte Terrace Specific Plan and the Citrus Collection at Duarte II Specific Plan. Detailed description of these specific plans is provided earlier in this report.

Once adopted, the Town Center Specific Plan zoning will replace the existing zoning for each parcel within the area boundaries.

### Development Standards

The City's Development Code describes development standards and allowable uses citywide. Development standards for zones currently applied to properties in the Town Center Specific Plan area are presented in Table 2.4 and include setbacks, lot area, site coverage, landscaping and open area requirements, height limits and parking standards.

The City allows some variation from the application of its parking standards. The Development Code provides reduced parking standards for senior housing of one space per one bedroom unit and has approved further reductions in parking and other standards through the specific plan process.

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN

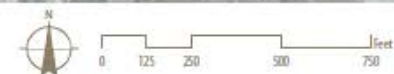


## Legend

Town Center Specific Plan Boundary

### General Plan Land Use

	Neighborhood Commercial		Medium Density Residential
	General Commercial		High Density Residential
	City Center Mixed Use Area		Public/Quasi Public
	Administrative/Professional		Specific Plan
	Low Density Residential		Open Space



**Figure 2.10**  
**GENERAL PLAN LAND USE**

June 2015  
Source: City of Duarte  
Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN



## Legend

Town Center Specific Plan Boundary

### Existing Zoning (2015)

- |  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
|  | CG - Commercial General                           |  | R4 - Multiple Family Residential (High Density) |
|  | CP - Commercial Professional                      |  | PF - Public Facilities                          |
|  | CF - Commercial Freeway                           |  | SP - Specific Plan                              |
|  | R1 - Single Family Residential                    |  | O - Open Space                                  |
|  | R3 - Multiple Family Residential (Medium Density) |  |   |



June 2015  
 Source: City of Duarte  
 Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

**Figure 2.11**  
**EXISTING ZONING**

**Table 2.4: Development Standards**

Zone	Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	Max. Height	Density (units/acre)	Setbacks			Max. Lot Coverage	Min. Parking	Open Space
				Front	Side	Rear			
Commercial Professional (C-P)	10,000	50'	N/A	15'	0'/20' (abutting residential/non-residential)	15'	0.5 FAR	1 space/200 sq. ft. – 1 space/500 sq. ft. depending on commercial/office type; hotel/motels – 1 space/room + 1 space/3 employees	N/A
Commercial General (C-G)	10,000	50'	N/A	15'		15'	0.5 FAR		N/A
Commercial Freeway (C-F)	40,000	60'	N/A	15'		0'/25' (abutting residential/non-residential)	15'/20' (abutting alley/residential)		0.5 FAR
Single Family Residential (R-1)	6,500	35' or 2 stories	6.7 du/ac (1 du/6,500 sf.)	20'	5'	10-20'	35-40%	2 spaces/unit (0-4 bedrooms); 3 spaces/unit (5+ bedrooms)	N/A
Multiple Family Residential (R-3)	9,000	40' or 3 stories	21 du/ac (1 du/2,074 sf.)	30'	5'	20-25'	50%	2 spaces/unit + 2 spaces/4 units; senior housing: 1 space/1-bedroom unit, 2 spaces/2-bedroom unit.	Private: ground floor – 100 sq. ft./unit; upper floors – 200 sq. ft./unit Common:200 sq. ft./unit
Multiple Family Residential (R-4) zone	10,000	50' or 4 stories	28 du/ac (1 du/1,556sf.)	30'	5'	20-25'	60%		
Public Facilities (PF)	10,000	75'	N/A	10'	0'/15' (abutting residential/non-residential)	5'/15' (abutting alley/residential)	None	Assembly/meeting facility: 1 space/5 fixed seats or 1 space/ 100 sq. ft. of floor area;	N/A
Open Space (O)	N/A	75'	N/A	20'	10'/20'/30' (abutting non-residential/residential/side street)	45'	N/A	N/A	N/A
Specific Plan (SP)	Each specific plan establishes unique comprehensive development standards.								

Source: Duarte Development Code, 2015



## 2.4 KEY FINDINGS AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

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- New development exhibits a much more positive appearance than some existing buildings and uses that have been neglected over time. Specific Plan measures should **ensure that development contributes positively to the visual and functional character** of the area and identify catalyst mixed-use sites that create identifiable focal points in the plan area.
- Existing uses provide a variety of amenities, but still leave visitors and residents looking for a more **cohesive place to visit and linger**. The Specific Plan will identify opportunity sites to encourage activity centers, parking facilities and desired outdoor urban amenities for residents, workers and visitors. The Huntington Drive/Buena Vista Street intersection will be a critical component of the plan, with potential for development of mixed-use retail buildings, restaurants or cafés and other uses that create a destination feel for residents and visitors.
- In order to encourage economic development, **development standards should emphasize flexibility, creativity and innovation**. The Specific Plan development standards should allow for higher intensity development and mixed uses, while also reacting to community tolerance for height and density. For specific land uses or areas that required a higher level of flexibility to attract desired uses, general parameters related to character and scale by land use, sub-area, or zone should be included with a very basic set of development standards.
- In addition to buildings and uses, the public realm provides the foundation for how one experiences the Town Center. The Specific Plan must encourage the provision of **public amenities that support a pedestrian friendly environment** and establish setback requirements that create a comfortable pedestrian setting. Outdoor public/quasi-public space should be encouraged in private developments to create gathering spots for the community.
- To augment existing uses, the Specific Plan should encourage the development of **retail stores, services and office uses that attract people to the area** throughout the day. In addition, mixed-use housing units along Huntington Drive can provide a built-in market for the new retail uses while helping to keep the street active after businesses close in the evening.
- Surface parking lots currently abound within the district. The Specific Plan will establish standards that **limit the proliferation of surface lots and parking structures** within the plan boundary. Surface parking lots should be minimized in size and located behind buildings, away from the street whenever possible.

## 3 COMMUNITY DESIGN

### 3.1 PURPOSE

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This section of the Existing Conditions report addresses the **overall physical patterns and characteristics** of the Town Center Specific Plan area. It analyzes a range of elements that shape both private and public realms within the Specific Plan area, and also describes the relationships between them. The intent is to provide an overall physical framework in which key urban design assets, issues and opportunities are identified and can be highlighted for future preservation, improvement or transformation in the Town Center Specific Plan.

### 3.2 AREA DESIGN CHARACTER

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#### Assessing Built Form and Urban Design

**Well-designed streets, destinations and neighborhoods ensure attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places.** The term “built form” refers to the physical form and shape of a city’s buildings. Within a particular place, there is often a recognizable cycle of building development that contributes to its underlying character. At the building level, “built form” is used to describe what a building looks like and what its shape is on the ground, how tall it is, how much of its parcel it takes up, how far it is set back from the sidewalk and street, whether there is a parking lot in the front or back of the building, how many windows and doors are visible from the street and the building’s architectural style. Understanding these architectural and site layout characteristics helps to reveal the context of a place, and starts to explain why some buildings may feel more welcoming than others, or have more successful retail in them. Well-designed buildings promote urban vitality, with more people on the streets, in an active, vibrant environment.

Built form also refers to how buildings, streets, landscaping and other features are woven together at the block, parcel and corridor level. Variations in building design, block, parcel and street patterns create very different environments. Blocks can be large or small, parcels uniform or irregular in shape and size, streets can be wide or narrow, and city roadway networks can be laid out in a grid or oriented towards central thoroughfares surrounded by a more curvilinear or irregular pattern. Understanding these patterns helps to establish the existing and desired experience of the Duarte Town Center.

#### Study Area

The Duarte Town Center plan area is characterized by a broad spectrum of commercial and residential land uses, development characters, block patterns, parcel patterns and building types, which together constitute the area’s built form (Figure 3.1).

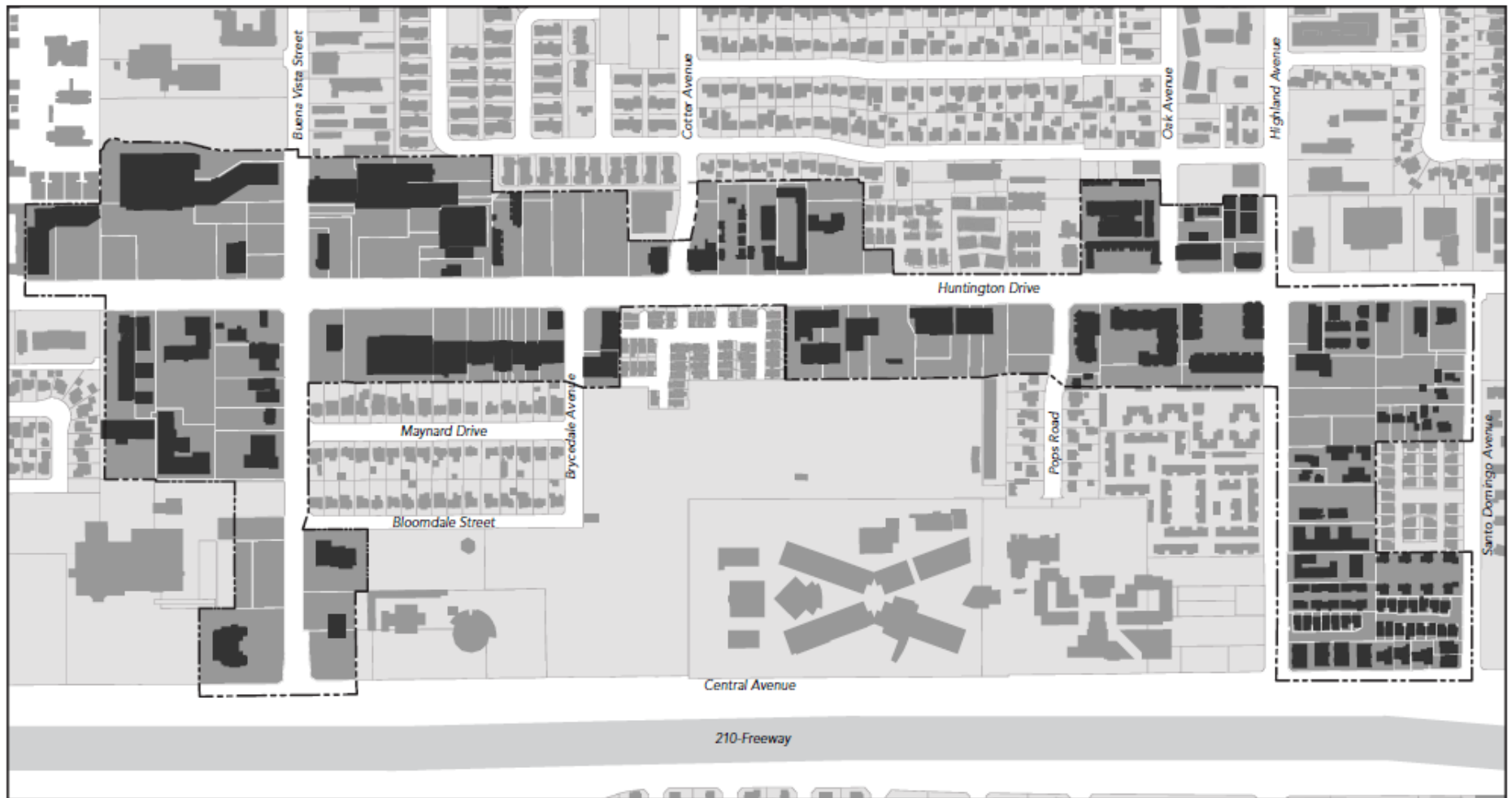
As described in Section 2 (Land Use), the planning area for the Duarte Town Center Specific Plan is bounded by Santo Domingo Avenue to the east, the edges of retail just before Bradbury Avenue to the west and the edges of retail to the north and south. The edges between one area and another are often not clearly defined and fail to reinforce a sense of a cohesive identity. Duarte Town Center's built form in regard to its block, street and parcel patterns has been temporally shaped in response to changes in land uses, including new uses coming in and existing uses moving to other areas, public and private decisions, environmental constraints and evolving design trends. The streets and blocks have also been shaped by incoming uses, key travel routes, housing trends, patterns of neighboring communities and parcel availability, amalgamations and subdivisions.

In general, Duarte Town Center's existing built form is often characterized by the auto-oriented "strip" commercial establishments along Huntington Drive and portions of Buena Vista Street. The strip commercial areas are surrounded by single- and multi-family suburban development. Each predominate built form feature in these areas supports the use of the car and subordinates all other types of mobility, such as walking, transit and biking. The majority of resources and services within the Specific Plan area are oriented towards the car and are virtually inaccessible to non-car users. The width of the streets like Huntington Drive, Buena Vista Street and Highland Avenue encourages high traffic speeds, with very few options for pedestrians to cross midblock. This street design allows for efficient vehicle travel but makes bicycle and pedestrian circulation challenging. Block sizes are generally very large with limited options for pedestrian circulation, even amongst shorter blocks. Parcel sizes vary considerably throughout the Specific Plan area. The building pattern in the residential areas is typical of suburban single-family and multi-family neighborhoods, contrasted by an irregular pattern of commercial buildings often with large gaps between buildings and a large portion of space devoted to surface parking.

### *Block Pattern*

The Town Center block pattern is organized in an irregular grid network typical of suburban developments and strip corridors (see Figure 3.2). The space between the blocks defines the public space network through a hierarchy of streets that give shape to the corridor or place. The block pattern includes wider arterial streets such as Buena Vista Street and Highland Avenue that extend in a north-south direction and connect with the main street in the Town Center, Huntington Drive. Other local streets and cul-de-sacs that run north-south offer few connections and limited permeability. Streets that run east-west, parallel with Huntington Drive, also generally provide limited connectivity and traverse short distances in the immediate vicinity. Other east-west streets that extend longer distances include Royal Oaks Drive to the north (a residential thoroughfare) and Central Avenue to the south (a service drive running adjacent to the 210 freeway). Huntington Drive intersects with seven other streets in the project area, but only two (Highland Avenue and Buena Vista Street) are through-streets; all other connections result in "T" intersections. The area between Buena Vista Street and Highland Avenue is particularly disconnected with very few intersecting streets, highlighting the need for better connectivity. The block pattern creates discontinuous routes along Brycedale Avenue and Pops Road (which ends in a cul-de-sac) severing north-south connectivity.

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN



## Legend

 Specific Plan Area



Date: June 2015  
Source: City of Duarte  
Base Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

**Figure 3.1**  
**FIGURE GROUND**

Blocks throughout the Town Center area are not organized homogeneously or with regularity but rather are characterized by long-block streets, discouraging pedestrian movement. Connectivity and continuity are further limited by a lack of through streets and cul-de-sacs. For an area to be walkable, block lengths should generally not exceed approximately 300 feet. Blocks greater than 600 feet create long distances that discourage pedestrian movement and essentially create an incubator for the use of the car as a dominant mode of transportation. There is only one block along Huntington Drive (the block between Highland Avenue and west to Oak Avenue) that is scaled for walkability at 300 feet. In general, block sizes along Huntington Drive range from 600 to 1,200 feet, which feels very long from the pedestrian's perspective and thus encourages the use of the car at the expense of pedestrian activity.

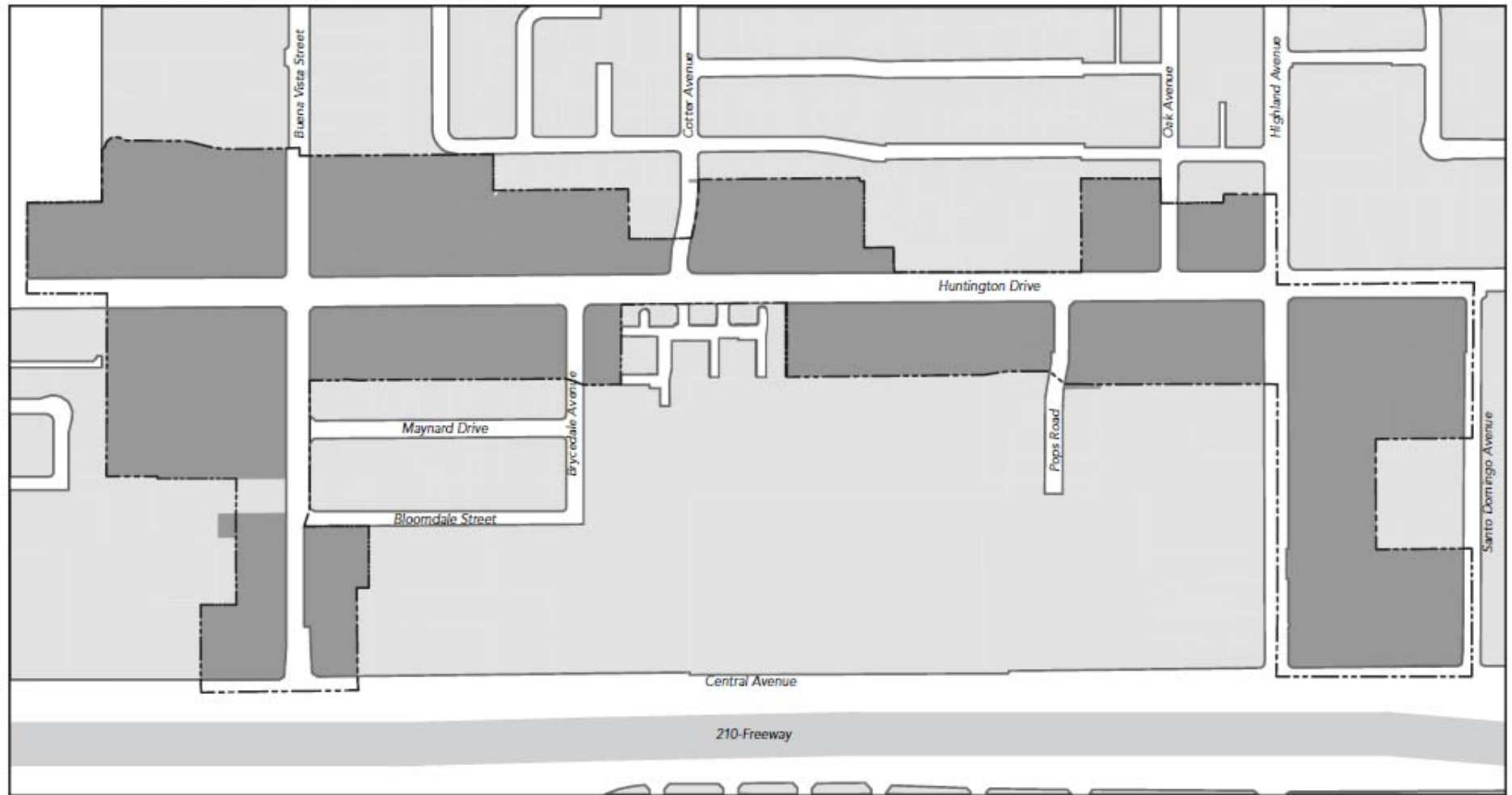
### *Parcel Pattern*

The Town Center has two main contrasting parcel patterns (see Figure 3.3). Along the primary corridors, parcels vary widely in size from as small as 20 by 250 feet to as large as 620 by 215 feet. Parcel depth along the southern side of Huntington Drive is generally uniform at 250 feet. The majority of parcels that front Huntington Drive between Buena Vista Street and Highland Avenue abut residential lots to the rear. Outside of the project area, to the south, is a very large parcel that contains Duarte High School and Sports Park and then the I-210 freeway beyond, effectively limiting the options for pathways for connectivity to the south to just Buena Vista Street and Highland Avenue. The residential areas abutting the Specific Plan area generally follow a parcel pattern structured in a homogeneous and coarse-grained manner. A typical parcel in this area is 75 by 100 feet. Some larger residential parcels exist along Huntington Drive and are occupied by multi-family residential and senior housing.

### *Building Pattern*

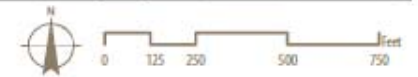
The existing building pattern (Figure 3.4) reveals the incongruity between the denser residential single- and multi-family housing areas and the less dense commercial areas along Huntington Drive, Buena Vista Street and Highland Avenue. Most residential buildings follow rectilinear alignments in response to the rectilinear city grid. Residential buildings are freestanding, physically separated from adjoining buildings, but with limited space around them. They closely follow the street configuration. Commercial uses, also physically separated from adjoining buildings, have larger footprints with a significant amount of space around them dedicated to surface parking. The popularity of freestanding buildings over the traditional dense urban fabric with buildings flush to the street is the result of the age of buildings (the vast majority of buildings in the district were built after 1950, in an automobile-oriented era), the street's function as Historic Route 66, cheaper costs associated with singular buildings and diverse real estate interests of developers. The building pattern of commercial uses within the Specific Plan area has created an amorphous space with a series of auto-oriented, unrelated, small complexes of buildings surrounded by streets and large swaths of surface parking. The vast majority of "white space" depicted in Figure 3.4 is either vacant land or parking lots.

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN



## Legend

[---] Specific Plan Area



Date: June 2015  
Source: City of Duarte  
Base Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

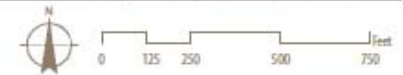
**Figure 3.2**  
**BLOCK PATTERN**

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN



## Legend

--- Specific Plan Area



Date: June 2015  
Source: City of Duarte  
Base Map Prepared by: MNG, Inc.

**Figure 3.3**  
**PARCEL PATTERN**

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN



## Legend

[---] Specific Plan Area



Date: June 2015  
Source: City of Duarte  
Base Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

**Figure 3.4**  
**BUILDING PATTERN**



*Street Wall*

The street definition lacks spatial cohesion due to an extremely discontinuous building edge. The building pattern has evolved to accommodate fast-moving vehicular traffic and surface parking lots. This is evident in the numerous curb cuts along the sidewalk and irregular, broken building pattern interspersed with parking lots which effectively eliminate the urban fabric of a “street wall.” “Street wall” defines a condition where buildings consistently line or front onto the edge of a street, which is best achieved where buildings have consistent setbacks built out to the sidewalk. Figure 3.5 shows the existing conditions along Huntington Drive, with large gaps in the street wall. The figure also shows a comparative example, Main Street in downtown Alhambra, which exhibits some similar gaps in its street wall, but overall is much more complete, as seen by the relative lack of red. A fragmented building pattern has a profound impact on the streetscape and pedestrian environment contributing to isolation and separation resulting in a negative pedestrian experience.

*Development Character*

Within the project area, most commercial development is single story and of fair building quality with a variety of façades including stucco, stone, tile and concrete. Ceramic roof tiles can be seen as a common feature shared by many commercial buildings. Newer commercial and residential developments use stone as an accent material along their facades. Some newer and remodeled structures are built to a higher standard of quality than other development.

The residential areas within and adjacent to the Town Center area are characterized by one-story single-family residences and a variety of two-story multi-family apartments and townhomes. The residential development tends to have Spanish roofs and stucco facades with varying degrees of quality but mostly in fair condition.



Typical commercial development within the district



An example of senior housing located in the district



Huntington Drive



Comparison, Main Street, Alhambra, CA

**Figure 3.5**  
**EXISTING STREET WALL GAPS**



Gaps in the street wall deter pedestrian activity



Blank surface parking lots detract from the street



This blank wall does not support active street life



Pedestrian-scale development with outdoor seating such as this is rare



The use of stone as a façade accent material is common in newer buildings



The Ralph's Center is newer and higher quality than other strip commercial



Signage reflects an eclectic mix of styles



New residential development incorporates craftsman style

### 3.3 VIEWS, GATEWAYS AND LANDMARKS

---

As people pass through or visit places, they experience their surroundings by observing not only the buildings and streets, but also the larger views, gateways into the area and particular landmarks. Each of these experience points is important to a community's overall sense of place and is described in more detail in this section.

#### Views

Duarte's location in the San Gabriel Valley provides views to the scenic San Gabriel mountain ranges to the north. The mountains provide an attractive natural frame to the city, as well as an element of uniqueness that contributes to the area's sense of identity. The mountains also provide a constant resource for physical orientation and direction. Views of the mountains can be seen throughout the project area.

In addition to mountain views, smaller experiences and features create micro-views that contribute to a sense of place. For example, the median on Huntington Drive often provides a beautiful view of large trees that provides relief from its more urban surroundings.

Within the district, however, views vary considerably. The quality of the view varies where there is no median and where street planting is sparse and trees are small. Conversely, there are multiple places similar to the City Hall area along Huntington Drive where views can be lovely and special, and begin to create a sense of cared-for street where one would want to live and shop along. These places are currently few, but provide strong clues for how to improve the streetscape.

#### Gateways

Gateways are public visual or ceremonial entryways that often form your first impression of an area. Improving and adding gateways into the city at strategic points in the district can reinforce the Town Center's unique identity and sense of place by announcing a threshold or a passage into a particular locale, and by creating a sense of arrival. Despite the existence of many unique neighborhoods and destinations in the city, opportunities for gateways within the Town Center area have not been fully realized.

Existing gateway signs installed in the medians provide context as well as beauty. In addition to these signs, Duarte has installed a semi-permanent banner sign on Buena Vista Street at the entry from Central Avenue and north of the 210 freeway. The flexibility of a banner sign is noted; however, it is typically intended exclusively for vehicles. Gateways can be improved for pedestrians and vehicles to experience the district, especially at the key entrance points of both Highland Avenue and Buena Vista Street and the I-210 freeway and the key intersection of Buena Vista Street and Huntington Drive. In particular, improvements to the freeway underpass at Highland Avenue could facilitate pedestrian and bicycle movement north from the Duarte Gold Line Station (discussed in more detail in Section 4: Mobility and Street Design). On Buena Vista, a gateway feature could be located further north, to reflect the more vehicle-oriented nature of that street.



The majestic San Gabriel Mountains dominate the view on northbound streets



Street trees in parkways and medians provide critical green views and shade



Existing gateway signage is distinctive



A stronger point of entry is needed in particular locations

## Landmarks

Duarte Town Center's major landmarks are another key element to establishing orientation within the area as well as a sense of identity and place. Landmarks are external points of reference to an observer and are generally unique or memorable in context. Landmarks vary widely in scale; some larger landmarks, such as towers, spires and hills are typically seen from many angles and from distances. Other smaller landmarks are primarily local in orientation – such as sculptures, signs and trees – and are visible only in specific areas or from certain approaches. Landmarks can provide design direction and inspiration for new developments, anchor a particular area with strong iconic design and contribute to the design structure of a place. The Town Center area contains only a few unique landmarks as discussed below.

### *Duarte Clock Tower*

The Duarte Clock Tower is located on the same parcel as the Teen Center, on the corner of Buena Vista Street and Bloomdale at Duarte Park. The tower can be seen from over 1,000 feet away at the corner of Buena Vista Street and Huntington Drive, making it an easily identifiable and powerful local landmark.

### *Duarte LED Monument Sign*

Duarte's LED monument sign is located at the center of the project area, in front of City Hall, on the southern side of Huntington drive between Monterey Court and Pops Road. The sign is bordered by stone and displays the latest community events and information.

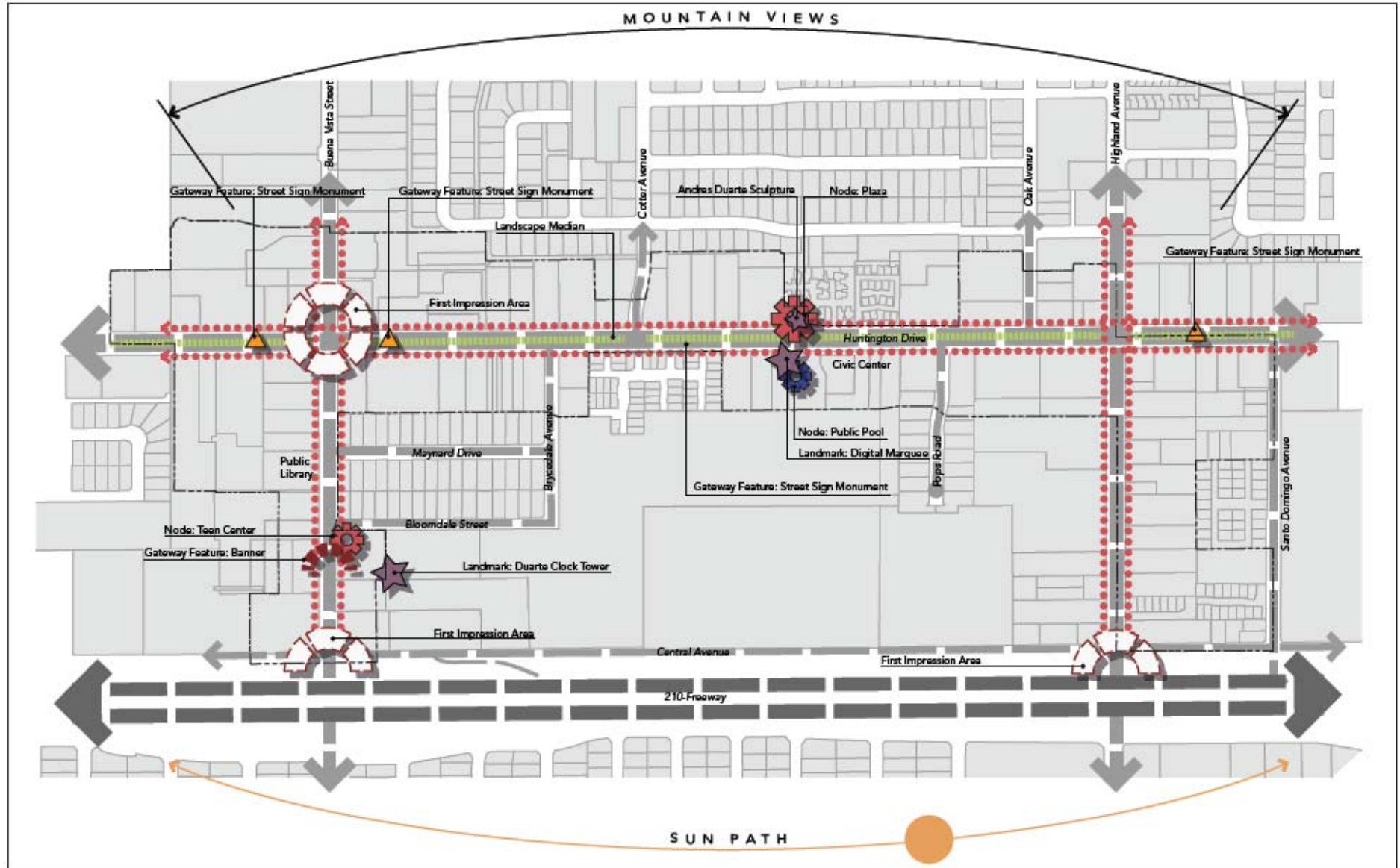
### *Andres Avelino Duarte Sculpture*

Located across the street from City Hall is an iconic statue of Andres Duarte, the recipient of a 7,000-acre Mexican land grant in 1841, then known as the Rancho Azusa de Duarte. The land grant comprised what is now Duarte and portions of Arcadia, Monrovia, Irwindale, Azusa and Baldwin Park. The statue is situated in a local plaza and signifies a historic figure of the city's past.

### *Historic Route 66 Signage*

Historic Route 66 follows Huntington Drive through Duarte. Signs line the corridor to signify this historic and famous road, which when opened in 1926 was the first road to link the main streets of small-town American from Chicago to Los Angeles.

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN



Date: June 2015  
Source: City of Duarte  
Base Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

**Figure 3.6**  
**VIEWS, GATEWAYS AND LANDMARKS**





City of Duarte LED monument sign at City Hall



Andres Avelino Duarte Iconic Statue



Historic Route 66 Signage



Duarte Clock Tower at Duarte Park

### 3.4 KEY FINDINGS AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

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- **Buildings are typically oriented inward**, away from thoroughfares, keeping pedestrians away from cars and motorists away from curbside distractions.
- Duarte Town Center’s built form is characterized by **auto-oriented “strip commercial” corridors** along Huntington Drive and portions of Buena Vista Street and Highland Avenue. Each of the elements that comprise the built form supports the use of the car and subordinates other types of mobility (Figure 3.1: Figure Ground).
- **Block sizes are generally very large** with limited options for pedestrian circulation, even amongst shorter blocks (Figure 3.2: Existing Block Pattern).
- Within the project area, **parcels vary widely in size** from as small as 20 by 250 feet to as large as 620 by 215 feet. Parcel depth along the southern side of Huntington Drive is generally uniform at 250 feet from the curb edge. The majority of parcels which front Huntington Drive in-between Buena Vista Street and Highland Avenue are adjacent to residential lots at their rear (Figure 3.3: Existing Parcel Pattern).
- The **building pattern in the residential areas is typical of a suburban single-family neighborhood**, contrasted by an **irregular pattern of commercial buildings** often with large gaps between buildings and a large portion of space devoted to surface parking (Figure 3.4: Existing Building Pattern).
- The building pattern has evolved to accommodate **fast-moving vehicular traffic and need for parking**. This is evident in the numerous curb cuts along the sidewalk and irregular, broken building pattern interspersed with parking lots which effectively eliminate the urban fabric of the “street wall.” Figure 3.5 shows these large gaps in the street wall. Figure 3.5 shows a comparative example at the same scale, Main Street in downtown Alhambra, which exhibits some similar gaps in its street wall, but overall is much more complete, as seen by the relative lack of red.
- Duarte’s location in the San Gabriel Valley provides **views to the scenic San Gabriel mountain ranges** that can be stunning. The mountains not only provide an attractive natural frame to the city, but also provide an element of uniqueness and contribute to the area’s unique identity and sense of place.
- Existing gateway features are installed in the median of Huntington Drive and help indicate **public visual or ceremonial entryways**. Improving and adding gateways into the city along Buena Vista Street, Huntington Drive, or Highland Avenue (Figure 3.6) can reinforce the city’s unique identity and sense of place by announcing a threshold or a passage into a special place and by creating a sense of arrival.
- Key landmarks within the project area include the clock tower at the Teen Center, City Hall and the marquee sign, the Andres Avelino Duarte Plaza and Historic Route 66 Signage, alerting travelers and visitors to the area’s historic roots. These landmarks provide inspiration for future design elements, as there is a limited **amount of community gathering places, few vibrant public spaces and few strong landmarks** that serve as iconic elements and provide a unique identity for the Town Center area. These elements are needed to make the Town Center a memorable place.

- Several private mini-malls provide **commercial anchors** at regular intervals throughout the project area. These uses should be encouraged to grow into more pedestrian-friendly plazas that add to and enhance the **public realm**.
- Opportunities exist to **preserve and enhance the many single-family residential neighborhoods**, which abut the project area on all sides. Opportunities also exist to consider changes to the character of specific areas over the life of the Specific Plan. The encouragement of new uses into the corridor in an appropriate and compatible way, such as mixed-use development or higher-intensity residential development, will be a key element of the Specific Plan.

## 4 MOBILITY AND STREET DESIGN

The Town Center project area contains a street network that provides **key connections within the city and between neighborhoods for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and automobiles.**

The current network is primarily designed to accommodate vehicular traffic but still boasts an array of multi-modal users. The three arterials that traverse the Town Center constitute major transit corridors and exhibit regular pedestrian and bicycle activity regardless of limited pedestrian and bicycle facilities. This section of the Existing Conditions Report provides an overview of the Town Center circulation pattern and existing design along Buena Vista Street, Huntington Drive, Highland Avenue, Central Avenue, and Santo Domingo Avenue.

Urban street patterns define the rhythm of a community by organizing the urban form into coherent, navigable geographic groupings. Successful urban design of streets has a significant impact on the quality and accessibility of a roadway from a user and commercial standpoint. Street form can be very diverse, from being visually dynamic or static, long or short, enclosed or open, wide or narrow, curved or straight. Additional considerations include a street's existing connections to other streets or places of interest and the sense-of-movement and horizontal flow of space as defined by the street wall. Patterns of streets have often developed over long periods of time, where new roads and freeways bisect old street patterns and fragment neighborhoods. A poorly designed street pattern can hinder mobility, create an unsafe environment for bicyclists, generate traffic for motorists, and foster an unwelcome or uninviting atmosphere for shoppers. A well-designed street pattern offers users a choice of routes through and within a neighborhood, safely accommodates all modes of transportation, provides convenient access to commercial areas for pedestrians and motorists and generates a healthy, safe and comfortable place to live.

### 4.1 STREET NETWORK

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Duarte's road system is used as a thoroughfare for all modes of traffic to and from the City and neighboring jurisdictions. Street types are defined primarily by the streetscape character, modes of transportation carried, and speed and volume of traffic they carry and are defined in the City's General Plan. Within Duarte they include (1) arterials, (2) collector streets and (3) local streets. In addition to the street types is the regional freeway, I-210. This freeway connects Duarte regionally but also poses a significant physical barrier to the City's pedestrians and bicyclists as it divides neighborhoods. The various street typologies and the functionality help provide an understanding of multimodal circulation. Figure 4.6 shows the street network and hierarchy within the Specific Plan area.

Huntington Drive, which runs east-west, is one of five streets identified as "arterials" within the City of Duarte, as are Buena Vista Street and Highland Avenue, which run north-south at the western and eastern ends of the project area, respectively. Central Avenue is the sole collector street that borders the southern end of the project area and intersects Buena Vista Street and Highland Avenue. Buena Vista Street and Huntington Drive provide direct connections to other cities and freeways. Local streets tend not to extend throughout the city, but are contained within certain neighborhoods. This fragmented street layout can present a challenge to pedestrians and bicyclists, especially bicyclists who might prefer a quieter neighborhood street but cannot take one very far due to an impermeable street grid.

As defined in the Circulation Element of Duarte’s General Plan, “the primary focus of the Circulation Element is the Duarte street and roadway network, alternative modes of travel such as bus transit, rail transit, bicycles, and pedestrians are also addressed and become more significant as congestion continues to mount in the Los Angeles basin.”<sup>1</sup> The City also has an objective to “Encourage and promote the use of travel modes other than the single occupancy vehicle, such as bus transit, rail transit, carpools, vanpools, bicycling, and walking.”<sup>2</sup> These excerpts clearly acknowledge that while the roadway network is of utmost importance, the City also supports other modes of transportation. The Town Center street network needs to safely and efficiently accommodate all users and modes of transportation. Features of successful streets contain stopping space for buses and waiting space for transit users, public gathering space in front of key neighborhood nodes, bicycle facilities and infrastructure, connections to planned transit, comfortable sidewalks and an environment that enhances Duarte’s existing and future commercial areas.

The **arterials** like Huntington Drive (Figure 4.1) are not only a thoroughfare for vehicular traffic, but have many other functions besides moving large numbers of cars. Arterial streets in the project area feel wider to pedestrians and bicyclists due to the lack of a street wall or any sense of enclosure. Arterial streets in Duarte maintain right-of-way widths between 80 to 108 feet and function as regional, sub-regional, and intercity travel corridors. They also provide direct access to adjacent properties and intersecting streets. Outside of vehicular travel, arterial streets are well-used by pedestrians and bicyclists. While arterial streets are primarily designed for vehicular movement, the keys to transformation of streets such as Buena Vista Street (Figure 4.2), Huntington Drive, or Highland Avenue (Figure 4.3) are possible through careful attention to urban design together with thoughtful, high-quality land use development. Most important, the streets must be redesigned specifically for these uses, with pedestrians foremost in mind.

A **collector** street serves as an intermediate route that accommodates travel between local streets and arterial roadways and provides access to adjacent properties. Collector streets in Duarte maintain a right-of-way typically 60 feet wide. Central Avenue is the only collector street in the project area. Similar to the arterials, Central Avenue is primarily oriented toward the movement of vehicular traffic and has limited pedestrian accommodations. In the project area, Central Avenue forms the southern boundary to Duarte High School and Northview Intermediate School. Central Avenue runs parallel to the I-210 freeway and functions as a “service drive” to the freeway; thus it is likely to maintain much of its vehicle orientation.

A **local** street is designed to have low vehicular speeds and provide direct access to adjacent properties. Local streets in Duarte maintain a right-of-way between 50 and 60 feet. Cotter Avenue (Figure 4.4), Santo Domingo Avenue (Figure 4.5), Brycedale Avenue, Pops Road and Oak Avenue are local streets in the Specific Plan area. Within the project area, Santo Domingo Avenue maintains intermittent sidewalks in the residential neighborhood. Residential neighborhoods, schools and parks in Duarte are primarily accessed by local streets.

## 4.2 TRANSIT

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Duarte Transit currently operates two fixed routes (Blue and Green) throughout the day and one commuter shuttle (Red) that operates on weekday mornings. Both the Blue and Green lines run

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<sup>1</sup> Duarte General Plan; page 9-1.

<sup>2</sup> Duarte General Plan; page 9-3

along Huntington Drive through the Town Center plan area, and the Red commuter line runs south from Royal Oaks Drive along Highland Avenue. In addition, regional service is provided by Foothill Transit, with three routes (292, 494, and 187) that pass through the Town Center plan area.

In addition to bus transit, and new Gold Line light rail transit station is scheduled to open in Duarte in early 2016. The new station will be located at the northwest corner of Duarte Road and Huntington Avenue, just south of the I-210 freeway and the Town Center plan area. The City has undertaken a Transit Study to assess service improvement strategies to Duarte Transit bus service, especially in light of the new Gold Line station's 2016 opening. One key recommendation from that Study is to realign Duarte Transit's Blue Line to serve the new station, thus providing key bus access to the Town Center area.

### 4.3 PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT

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Pedestrian movement, as noted above, is currently constrained by limited mid-block crossings, narrow and impeded sidewalks in certain locations, and an unfriendly walking atmosphere. As discussed in more detail in Section 3 (Community Design), long block lengths within the district discourage walking.

As part of the Town Center Specific Plan, special attention should be paid to facilitate pedestrian access from the Town Center to the new Duarte Gold Line Station. To access the Town Center from the Duarte Station, under existing conditions, a pedestrian would experience gaps in the sidewalk near the station (outside the plan area), and a nondescript and somewhat imposing freeway underpass as one heads north. The sidewalk is located directly adjacent to the street along Highland, without a parkway buffer. In addition, sidewalk impediments such as light poles and electrical boxes further decrease the sidewalk width. The City received grant funding through the Active Transportation Planning Grants (2014) to complete pedestrian improvements to fill in gaps in the sidewalk south of the I-210 freeway and to provide a Class II bicycle lane to connect the station to the Class I bicycle facility located on Royal Oaks (discussed more below).

### 4.4 BICYCLE CIRCULATION

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There is currently no bicycle infrastructure within the plan area. The majority of bicycle riders use sidewalks rather than the street for bicycle movement. North of the project area, Duarte has one of the only city-specific Class I Bicycle Paths in the San Gabriel Valley. The multi-use bike/pedestrian path runs east-west through town alongside Royal Oaks Drive, within an old trolley right-of-way.

As of July 2015, the City is undertaking a Bicycle Master Plan. The process will include a citywide online survey to assess needs and identification of recommended improvements to bicycle routes and infrastructure. The study will also assess the need for certain pedestrian crossings in critical areas. The Town Center Specific Plan team will coordinate with these other ongoing efforts to ensure consistency in recommendations.

City of Duarte

## TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN

Huntington Drive - Looking East - Existing



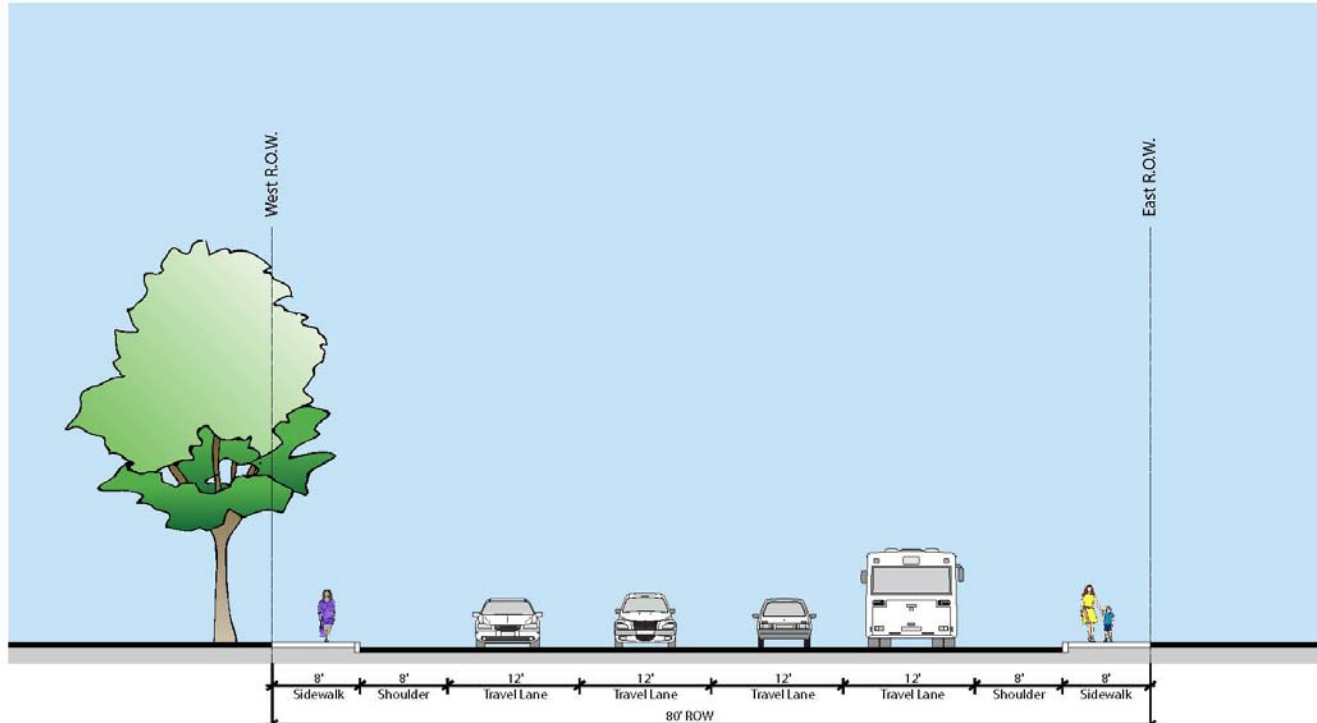
Date: June 2015  
Source: City of Duarte  
Base Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

**Figure 4.1**  
**HUNTINGTON DRIVE STREET SECTION**

City of Duarte

## TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN

Buena Vista Street- Looking North - Existing



Date: June 2015  
Source: City of Duarte, SCAG  
Base Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

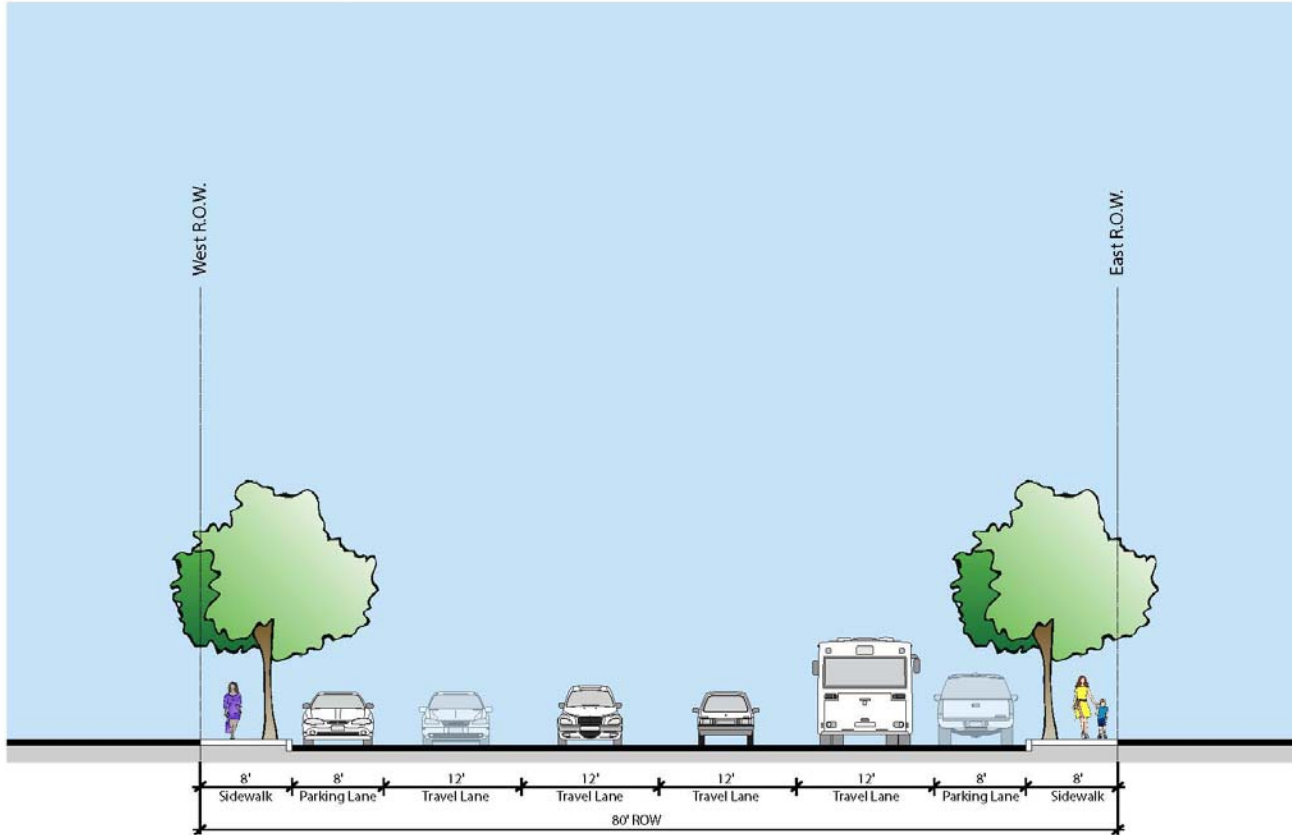
**Figure 4.2**  
**BUENA VISTA STREET SECTION**



City of Duarte

## TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN

Highland Avenue - Looking North - Existing



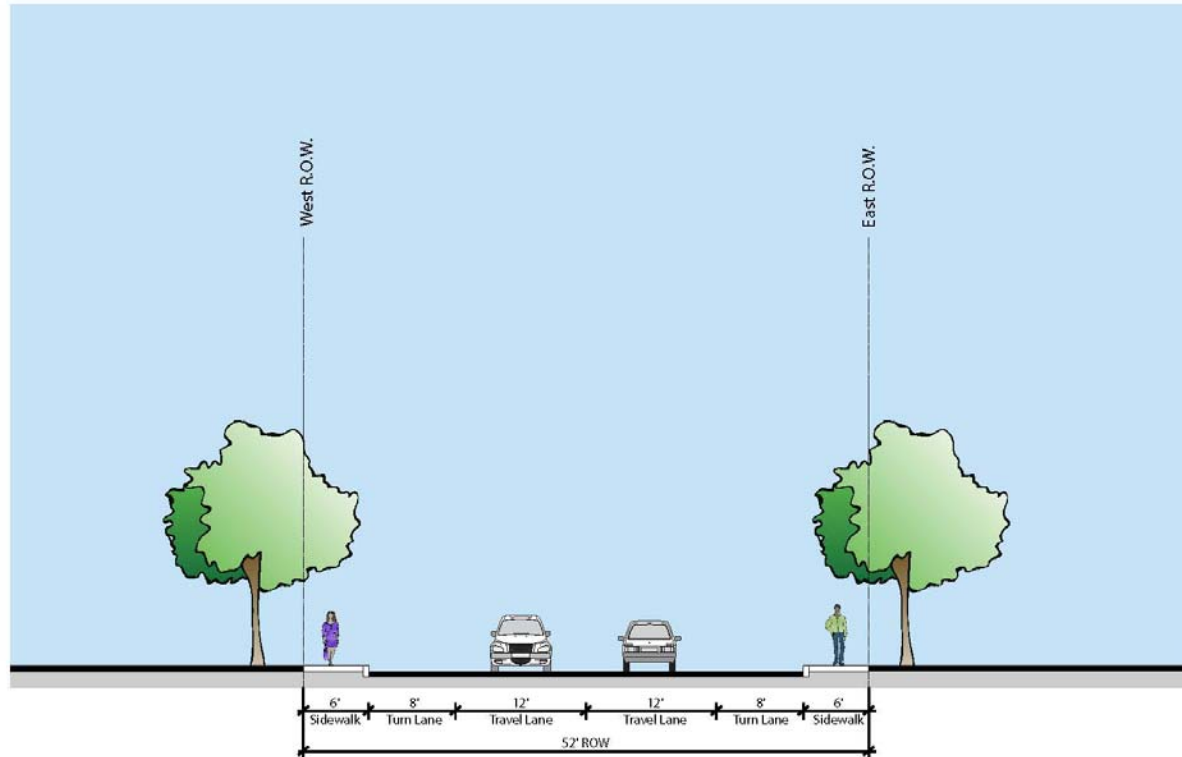
Date: June 2015  
Source: City of Duarte  
Base Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

**Figure 4.3**  
**HIGHLAND AVENUE STREET SECTION**

City of Duarte

## TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN

Cotter Avenue - Looking North - Existing



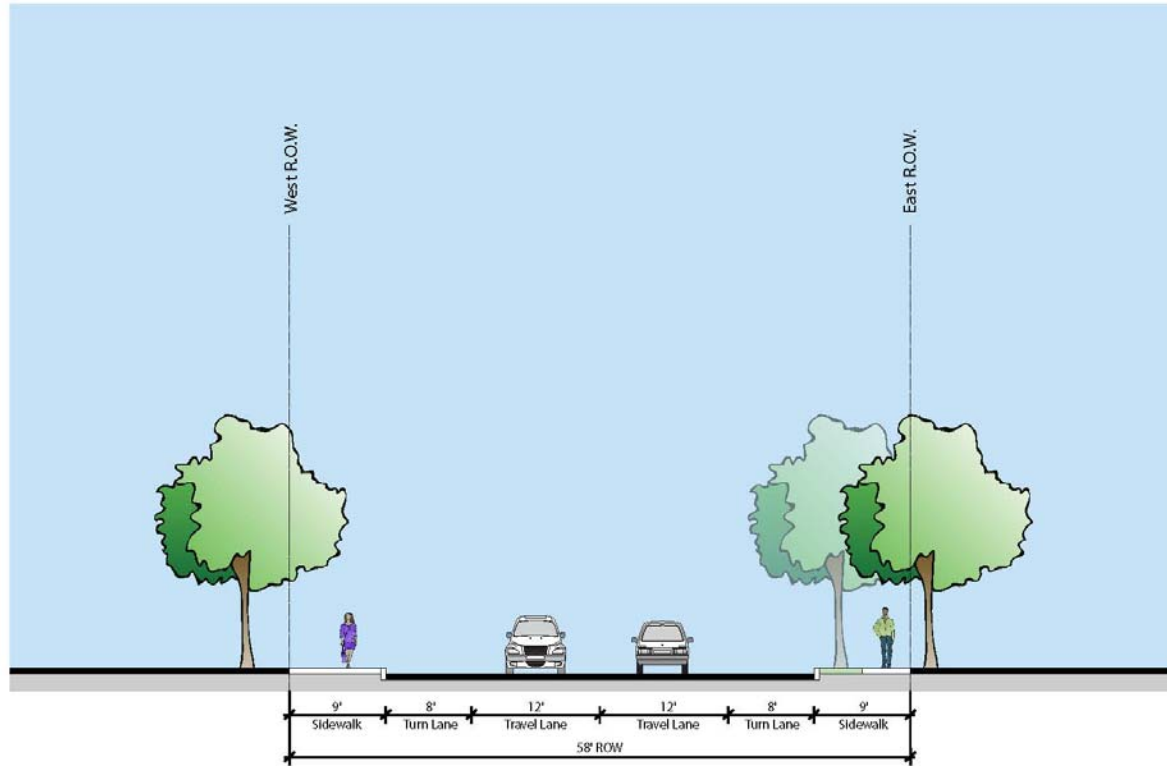
Date: June 2015  
Source: City of Duarte  
Base Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

**Figure 4.4**  
**COTTER AVENUE STREET SECTION**

City of Duarte

## TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN

Santo Domingo Avenue - Looking North - Existing



Date: June 2015  
Source: City of Duarte  
Base Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

**Figure 4.5**  
**SANTO DOMINGO AVENUE STREET SECTION**

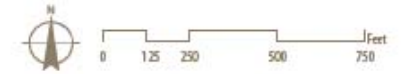
# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN



**Legend**  
[Dashed Line] Specific Plan Area

**Street Hierarchy**

- [Thick Blue Arrow] Freeway
- [Thick Brown Arrow] Arterial
- [Thick Green Arrow] Collector
- [Thin Green Arrow] Local



Date: June 2015  
Source: City of Duarte  
Base Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

**Figure 4.6**  
**EXISTING STREET HIERARCHY**



The median along Huntington provides green relief and softens the streetscape



Street trees provide a shade canopy for pedestrians



Transit users wait for the bus without shade structure or street trees



On-street parking is underutilized during most of the day



Many bicyclists prefer to use the sidewalk due to high traffic speeds



Huntington Drive is a major transit corridor



Pedestrians have few marked crossing opportunities and therefore often cross mid-block, using the median as a half-way refuge



Wide intersections are unfriendly to the pedestrian

## 4.5 KEY FINDINGS AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

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- Vehicles dominate the rights-of-way on the major arterials within the Town Center. Not only are these roads designed primarily for cars, a large percentage of the businesses are auto-related. Accordingly, **conditions for pedestrians, transit riders, and bicyclists are poor**. This is true even though Buena Vista Street, Huntington Drive, and Highland Avenue are major transit corridors with both a local and a commuter bus line; even though there are already a good number of pedestrians using the sidewalks and crossing the wide intersections; and even though there is a steady stream of bicyclists, most of who are forced to ride on the sidewalk. Addressing these deficiencies to make the Duarte Town Center area a safer and more walkable and transit- and bike-friendly place will be critical to its transformation and future growth – especially if the project area develops with a greater mix of uses, with more people living directly on Buena Vista Street, Huntington Drive and Highland Avenue.
- According to the General Plan, three of Duarte’s five arterials run through the Specific Plan Area, specifically Huntington Drive, Buena Vista Street, and Highland Avenue. These roads are designed to accommodate **regional and intercity travel while providing direct access to adjacent properties and intersecting streets**. The right-of-way width accommodates long forward vision and wide visibility splays at corners. The flow of vehicle traffic along these streets is precedent to other forms of mobility.
- Huntington Drive’s role as a “cut-through” route for vehicles attempting to avoid or bypass the parallel I-210 diminishes its ability to serve as a **safe and pleasant gathering place, shopping area, and neighborhood street**. If significant development along Huntington Drive is anticipated, the necessity of maintaining Huntington Drive as a major “cut-through” street for vehicles should be reevaluated.
- Pedestrian crossings are limited to dedicated light-controlled crossing points. Along Huntington Drive in the project area, there are **only three dedicated pedestrian crossings**: at Buena Vista Street, Pops Road and Highland Avenue. Due to this limitation, many pedestrians attempt mid-block crossings, which can often be unsafe. **Pedestrian and bicycle connections to key destinations** in adjoining neighborhoods should be established and/or enhanced to provide **convenient access for all modes of travel**. Sidewalks with street trees and planting strips can provide a safer and more comfortable pedestrian environment, while **dedicated bicycle facilities** are needed to **improve safety and comfort for bicyclists** already along the major arterials, and to encourage more bicyclists.
- Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure is lacking to connect the Town Center to the forthcoming (2016) **Duarte Gold Line Station**. Opportunities for bicycle lanes, improvements to sidewalks, and improvements to the freeway underpass should be explored.

## 5 INFRASTRUCTURE

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

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An efficient and reliable infrastructure system is **vital to any city's health, safety, livability and economic well being**. Availability of infrastructure determines growth patterns, density and intensity of land use. Where insufficient infrastructure capacity exists for proposed new development, cities and service providers must identify ways to increase capacity and service to the area. Currently, the Town Center Specific Plan area is generally categorized as a commercial district with some medium to high density development up to three story buildings, especially in the eastern portion of the district. Additional development (as expected within the Town Center Specific Plan) will increase demand for infrastructure services. This section provides a review of the area's **water, wastewater (sewer) and storm drainage infrastructure and services that support the Town Center Specific Plan area**. Transportation infrastructure such as roadways and bicycle and pedestrian facilities are addressed in Section 4 (Mobility and Street Design).

### 5.2 RELATED PLANS AND PROGRAMS

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#### State Resolution No. W-4976

In recent years, California has experienced extreme dry weather conditions due to diminished rainfall, thus causing a state-wide drought emergency. In an effort to promote water conservation efforts, Resolution No. W-4976 was adopted by the California Public Utilities Commission in February 2014, establishing procedures for water conservation to reduce consumption. Since many water utility agencies and companies secure their water supply from multiple sources, including water wholesaler sales, surface water and/or ground water, the adoption of this mandate has affected how water utility districts plan their service distribution while encountering various levels of water supply adjustments within each service area.

#### Urban Water Management Plans (UWMP)

Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs) are prepared by California's urban water suppliers to support their long-term resource planning and ensure adequate water supplies are available to meet existing and future water demands. As required by the California Urban Water Management Planning Act (UWMP Act), all urban water suppliers with more than 3,000 connections or distributing more than 3,000 acre feet per year (afy) must complete an UWMP every five years. The UWMP Act is administered by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), who is responsible for compiling data for statewide and regional analysis and publishing the accepted documents online for public access. The Urban Water Management Plan that is applicable to Duarte is the California American Water (Cal Water) Southern Division - Los Angeles County District Urban Water Management Plan, which was last prepared in 2010. The 2015 updated UWMP is due to the Department of Water Resources July 1, 2016. The Los Angeles Division of Cal Water consists of three Districts, which includes Duarte District, Baldwin Hills District and San Marino District. The Duarte District serves the cities of Duarte and Bradbury.



## National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Program

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Program is a comprehensive two-phased national program for addressing non-agricultural sources of stormwater discharge adversely affecting the quality of the nation's waters. The Program uses control and monitoring measures through the NPDES permitting mechanism to prevent harmful pollutants from being washed into local bodies by stormwater runoff. The NPDES program requires the owner or operator of any facility, or any person responsible for any activity that discharges waste into rivers, lakes and oceans to obtain a NPDES permit from the Regional Water Quality Control Board, as mandated by the Clean Water Act. Duarte is within Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board's (RWQCB) jurisdiction, which works in coordination with the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to administer the NPDES program to control direct stormwater discharges. The general permit requires an applicant to file public notice when they intend to discharge stormwater and prepare and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP).

## City of Duarte Stormwater and Urban Runoff Pollution Control Ordinance

The Stormwater and Urban Runoff Pollution Control Ordinance (Chapter 6.15 of the Duarte Municipal Code) is intended to enhance and protect water quality of local rivers and other bodies of water, consistent with the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Ord. 756 § 1 (part), 2000). The Ordinance provides specific local regulations for stormwater pollution prevention and regulates non-stormwater discharge to the storm drain system; providing for the control of spillage, dumping, or disposal of materials into the storm drains system; and reduction of pollutants in stormwater and urban runoff to the maximum extent practicable.

### 5.3 WATER SUPPLY

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Water service is provided to Duarte by California American Water which operates three Division Offices. Duarte is located under the Southern Division, which includes the Los Angeles County District. This District consists of the Baldwin Hills, Duarte and San Marino service areas.

California American Water obtains its water supply for Duarte from: 1) Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District (USGVMWD) imported water, 2) Main San Gabriel Basin (MSGB) groundwater and 3) MSGB surface water from the San Gabriel River. USGVMWD obtains its imported water supply from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan). Where demand cannot be met with groundwater allocations, supplemental water is purchased from a wholesaler for direct potable use, or untreated raw water is used as replacement water for the groundwater basin to remediate over-pumping. Table 5.1 (Duarte System Water Supplies) shows the current and projected supplies for the Duarte system. Between 2015 and 2030, Cal Water anticipates a decrease of 0.3 percent in water demand within the Duarte District to reflect water conservation measures, as the population of the District is anticipated to increase by approximately seven percent.

**Table 5.1: Duarte System Water Supplies (Acre-Feet Per Year)**

Source	2015	2020	2025	2030
Main San Gabriel Basin (MSGB) Groundwater	4,062	4,062	4,062	4,062
MSGB Surface Water	1,672	1,672	1,672	1,672
Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District (USGVMWD)	1,648	1,307	1,471	1,628
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,382</b>	<b>7,041</b>	<b>7,205</b>	<b>7,362</b>
<b>Percent of all Cal Water Southern District</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>31%</b>

Source: California American Water. 2010 Urban Water Management Plan for the Southern Division – Los Angeles County District.

It is anticipated that Cal Water facilities currently serving the Los Angeles Division, including Duarte, are adequate to meet anticipated service demands in the area.<sup>1</sup> Future development would be adequately served by Cal Water, assuming source and supply capacities remain consistent with current conditions, as well as future projections.

Cal Water projections for Duarte assume that most growth will result from redevelopment and higher density development. Exacerbated drought conditions, climate conditions or impacts to regional water conveyance infrastructure could quickly change these conclusions. With the advent of the mandated conservation measures outlined in the 2010 UWMP, Cal Water’s supply is expected to be highly reliable through 2035.<sup>2</sup> This reliability is a result of the projected reliability of USGVMWD’s reliance on Metropolitan for its imported water supplies and the planning initiatives undertaken by Metropolitan in the last several years.

The 2010 Cal Water UWMP shows “above-normal” water supply availability during average, single dry and multiple dry years for the Duarte District. Under normal conditions, Cal Water meets its customer demands with a combination of imported water, pumping groundwater from the MSGB and surface water from the San Gabriel River. According to the 2010 UWMP, USGVMWD will meet projected water demands under all anticipated hydrologic conditions in the Duarte service area. During single-dry and multiple-dry years, replacement purchases are expected to increase, with more imported water making up for the decrease in local supplies. Metropolitan, USGVMWD and the MSGB have implemented projects to ensure that imported water and groundwater demands can be met under normal, single-dry year and multiple-dry years.

The California Public Utilities Commission has approved a fee increase that will allow Cal Water to provide a \$33.1 million infrastructure upgrade to the Duarte System of the Los Angeles Division. This infrastructure upgrade would accommodate future development projects or growth that would be served by the Duarte System. Furthermore, the 2015 UWMP will take into account any increases in demand resulting from the Town Center Specific Plan development plan.

<sup>1</sup> The Rose Gardens at Santa Teresita Master Plan Program Environmental Impact Report. March 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Duarte Station Duarte Station Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report. September 2013.

## 5.4 WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

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Wastewater – commonly referred to as sewage – is the water that drains from our sinks, toilets and showers into the sewer system. The Consolidated Sewer Maintenance District (District), managed by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LACDPW) Sewer Maintenance Division (SMD) provides sewage collection services for the unincorporated County areas and 37 member cities, including Duarte.

Local sewer lines within Duarte are owned by the City. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LACDPW) operates and maintains Duarte’s local wastewater conveyance infrastructure, which connects to the County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (CSDLAC) District 22 regional trunk sewer pipelines, which lead to the San Jose Creek Water Reclamation Plant (SJCWRP), located in unincorporated Los Angeles County (adjacent to the City of Industry) and the Whittier Narrows Water Reclamation Plant (WNWRP), located in South El Monte. The San Jose Creek WRP is the largest of the District’s water reclamation plants, with a capacity of 100 million gallons per day (mgd).

Duarte’s local sewer lines and access manholes are shown in Figure 5.1. Sewer lines, which are typically eight inches in diameter, are located throughout the Specific Plan area in public street rights-of-way. Located adjacent to the western and eastern edges of the Specific Plan area are larger, 10- and 15-inch sewer lines.

The District collects and administers funds for the ongoing health of sewer infrastructure, including repairs to the sewer collection system and pump stations. The District’s Condition Assessment Program follows a ten-year cycle which includes Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) inspection of the sanitary sewer lines to identify maintenance and structural issues. In 2009, LACDPW’s CCTV maintenance inspection of the sewer system revealed that approximately 90.5 percent of Duarte’s system was free of blockages or restrictions that would impede sewer flows.<sup>3</sup> The remaining 9.5 percent of the inspected pipe segments within the Duarte area had a “poor” maintenance grade. Two of these segments are located in the Specific Plan area, on Huntington Drive between Oak and Cotter Avenues, which had issues associated with tree root intrusion. These segments were incorporated into LACDPW’s routine cleaning schedule and corrective action taken. As part of the CCTV structural inspection, it was identified that approximately 95.3 percent of inspected pipe segments within Duarte were free of severe structural defects. The remaining 4.7 percent of the inspected pipe segments had a structural grade of “poor” or “immediate attention required.” Included in these was one section located on Huntington Drive just west of Calle Mariposa and a second segment on Highland Avenue just south of 2nd Street. Both of these segments had breaks in the sewer line, but required no corrective action as the structural integrity was deemed intact.

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<sup>3</sup> The 2009 Condition Assessment Program did not include the areas within the Specific Plan located on Buena Vista Street or on Huntington Drive west of Buena Vista Street.

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN



## Legend

Town Center Specific Plan Boundary

## Sewer Lines

8" Diameter

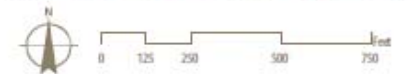
10" Diameter

15" Diameter

Non Sanitation Maintenance District Sewer Line

Sewer Manhole

Non Sanitation Maintenance District Manhole



June 2015  
 Source: City of Duarte  
 Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

**Figure 5.1**  
**SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE**

All new development is reviewed by the City of Duarte to determine if local sewer lines have sufficient capacity to accommodate effluent from new development. The City charges new developments a fee to upgrade or extend local sewer lines, which would be necessary to accommodate new developments. The LACDPW requires the satisfactory completion of capacity study by a private registered civil engineer prior to giving approval for projects that can affect the capacity of the public sewer system. All new developments are required to pay fees to mitigate local wastewater conveyance impacts.

## 5.5 FLOODING AND STORM DRAINAGE INFRASTRUCTURE

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### Stormwater

Stormwater refers to precipitation and irrigation runoff that collects on streets and in gutters, along with any other particles and substances that the runoff carries along with it. Considerable stormwater volumes can be generated during a significant rain storm, potentially resulting in the runoff overwhelming the local collection and conveyance infrastructure. Duarte's location at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains exposes it to the storm flows that come down the canyons. The Los Angeles County Flood Control District provides the majority of drainage infrastructure within incorporated and unincorporated areas in every watershed, including 500 miles of open channel, 2,800 miles of underground storm drain and an estimated 120,000 catch basins. The District encompasses more than 3,000 square miles, 85 cities, including the City of Duarte, and approximately 2.1 million land parcels. The storm drain system represents critical infrastructure in the Specific Plan area's highly developed and impervious environment.

The drainage system in the Specific Plan area is made up of a network of reinforced concrete pipe storm drains. Storm drains are located underground, predominately in the western part of the Specific Plan area (west of Cotter Avenue) where there is higher concentration of commercial development (Figure 5.2). The eastern end of the Plan area (east of Highland Avenue), is also served by a storm drain. Storm water drainage from individual properties is facilitated by lateral lines that connect to the storm drain system. Catch basins are located throughout the Specific Plan area with a concentration around the Huntington Drive and Buena Vista intersection. The catch basins prevent clogging of storm drains by sediment and debris washed off streets and other surfaces. Most of catch basins are maintained by the Los Angeles County Flood Control District or the City of Duarte. The storm drain manholes shown on Figure 5.2 provide access to storm drain pipes for inspection and maintenance.

Stormwater quality is a significant concern in southern California, as stormwater runoff is a significant contributor to local and regional pollution and the largest source of unregulated pollution to the waterways and coastal areas of the United States. Federal, State and regional regulations require the City of Duarte to control the discharge of pollutants to the storm drain system, including the discharge of pollutants from construction sites and areas of new development or significant development. The City of Duarte requires completion of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) prior to any construction activity on projects that would disturb more than one acre of land. The SWPPP must identify the source control and/or treatment control practices (best management practices, or BMPs) that would significantly reduce, avoid or mitigate runoff pollutants to the maximum extent practicable.

# TOWN CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN



## Legend

Town Center Specific Plan Boundary

Storm Drains

Lateral Lines

Maintenance Holes

### Catch Basins maintained by:

Los Angeles County Flood Control District

City of Duarte

CALTRANS

Other



June 2015  
 Source: City of Duarte  
 Map Prepared by: MIG, Inc.

**Figure 5.2**  
**STORM DRAIN INFRASTRUCTURE**

## Flooding

Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) show the extent to which areas of a community and individual properties are at risk for flooding. These flood maps help residents and business owners make better financial decisions about protecting their property. Most of the Specific Plan area is located in Zone X on FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), or areas of minimal flood hazard, which are the areas outside the Special Flood Hazard Areas and higher than the elevation of the 0.2-percent-annual-chance flood. The entire Buena Vista Street right-of-way within the Specific Plan area is located in an area of undetermined flood hazard (Zone D). In this area, there are possible but undetermined flood hazards, as no analysis of flood hazards has been conducted.

## 5.6 UTILITY AND SAFETY SERVICE PROVIDERS

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### Phone/Cable/Internet

Cable television service is provided by Charter Communications. Charter Communications also offers internet and telephone service. Telephone is also available to Duarte residents through Verizon, which also offers cable and internet services in some areas. It is anticipated that one (or both) of these providers would provide cable, internet and telephone service to the Specific Plan area.

### Fire and Police

Fire protection services are provided to Duarte by the County of Los Angeles Fire Department (LACFD). LACFD is divided into 22 Battalions, each serving a territory or multiple cities in Los Angeles County. Battalion 16 provides service to Duarte, Covina, Baldwin Park and Azusa. The Battalion operates out of eight fire stations located within this service area. Fire Station #44 is located at 1105 S. Highland Avenue, in Duarte, directly adjacent to the Specific Plan area at the southwest corner of Highland Avenue and 3rd Street.

The City of Duarte General Plan includes a Safety Element, which identifies potential safety hazards, including fires, and establishes goals, objectives and policies to protect life and property from these hazards. The element provides recommendations to minimize the risk to lives and property due to fire hazards and ensures that adequate emergency response can be provided when needed. Duarte's location at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains creates an urban/wildland interface that makes the northern portions of Duarte more susceptible to wildfires. The Specific Plan area is not located adjacent to the San Gabriel Mountains or wildland areas. The General Plan identifies the Specific Plan area as located within a low fire hazard area.

Police protection services are provided to Duarte by the County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department. The Department has a satellite station located at 1042 Huntington Drive, located less than a quarter-mile from the western edge of the Specific Plan area. The Duarte Satellite Station located at 1042 Huntington Drive is the launching center for 30 officers that provide Duarte, Bradbury and the unincorporated area west of Duarte with law enforcement services 24 hours a day. The station does not have dispatch or booking ability.

## 5.7 KEY FINDINGS AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

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- **No significant deficiencies** that require immediate action have been identified to the existing sewer and storm drainage systems. **CalWater is planning an infrastructure upgrade** to accommodate future development projects within the Duarte System. The Town Center Specific Plan will assess the demand and potential impacts for future development within the Specific Plan area, and will **require the satisfactory completion of all appropriate studies** prior to giving approval for projects that can affect the capacity of these public infrastructure systems.
- In order to ensure continued infrastructure capacity, the Town Center Specific Plan should require that new development within the Specific plan area **fund fair-share costs associated with the provision of water, sewer and storm drain service** and are consistent with City and service provider plans to complete needed improvements and funding capacity for such improvements.
- To achieve sustainability goals and mandates, the Specific Plan should encourage the use of design features, including those focusing on stormwater design, which would **limit the disruption and pollution of natural water flows by managing stormwater runoff**. Development standards should ensure that future projects provide landscaping areas and use pervious paving systems and subsurface retention systems that allow stormwater to infiltrate the site.