

CENTRAL DISTRICT

SPECIFIC PLAN UPDATE

*Planning Commission Study Session
December 8, 2021*



OUR PASADENA
PUTTING THE PLAN IN MOTION

Study Session Goals

- Provide update on Central District Specific Plan
- Seek the Commission's input
 - Development standards/guidelines in response to Council Direction
 - Potential General Plan Amendments

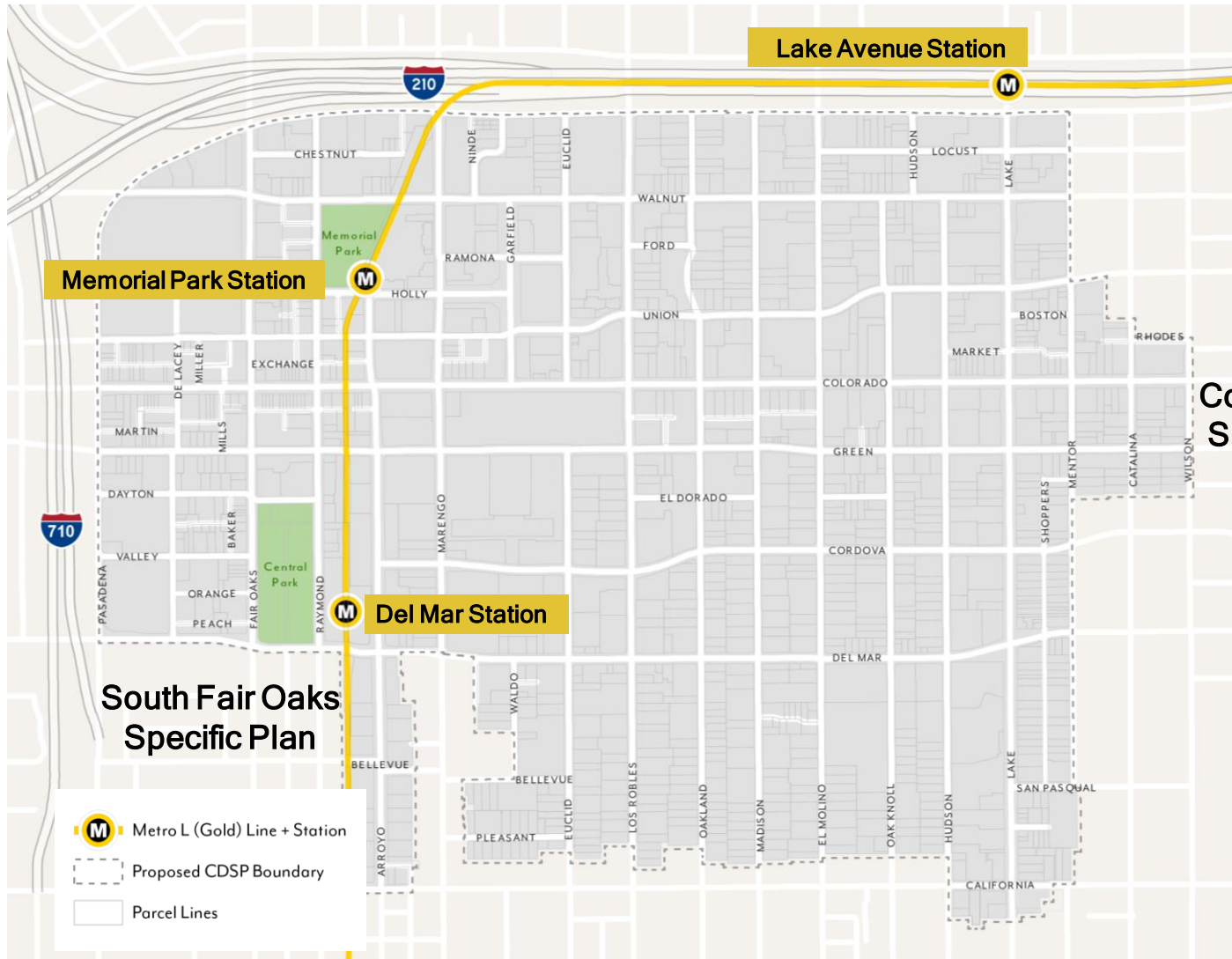


Central District today

SPECIFIC PLAN AREA CONTEXT

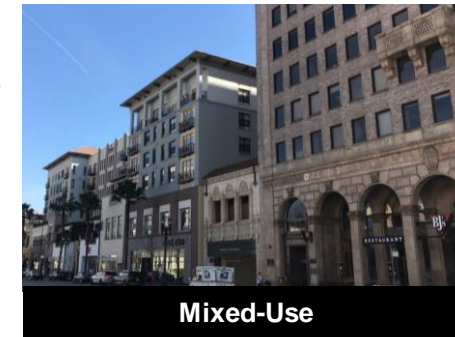


Central District Specific Plan Area



East
Colorado
Specific
Plan

- East of 710 Fwy, South of 210 Fwy
- Bordered by South Fair Oaks and East Colorado Specific Plan Areas
- Includes Del Mar and Memorial Park Metro L Line (Gold) Stations



COMMUNITY OUTREACH & FEEDBACK



Community Feedback

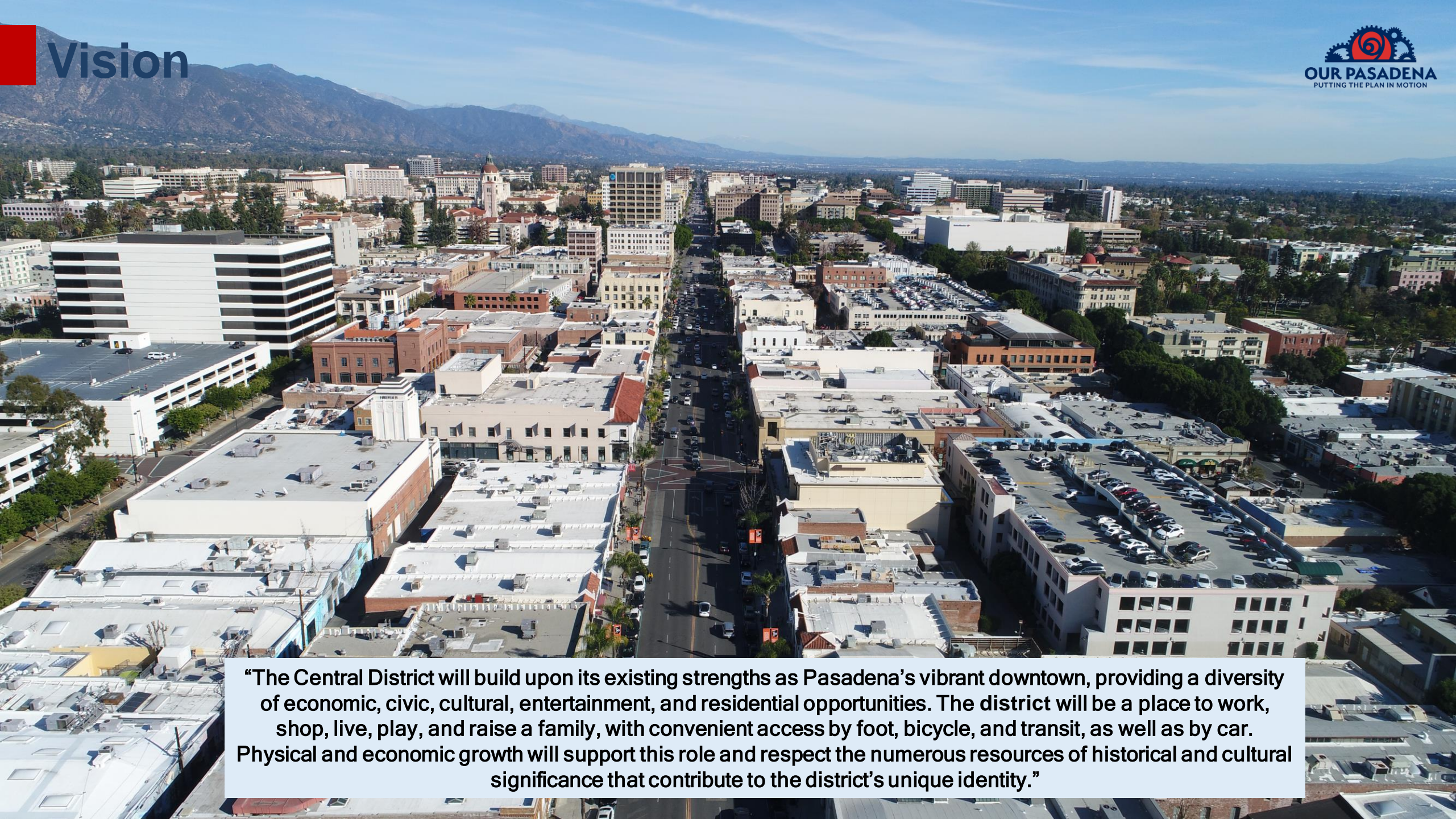
- Support for more housing around the Del Mar, Memorial Park, and Lake Metro L (Gold) Line Stations
- Support for affordable housing for families, singles, and seniors
- Strong desire to protect existing historic resources and iconic view sheds
- Desire to protect and add to the tree canopy
- Interest in traditional storefronts adjacent to the sidewalk, but with greater flexibility on ground floor uses due to concerns about vacancies
- Support for pedestrian enhancements such as wider sidewalks, mid-block crossing opportunities, and sustainable landscaping



- Desire to maintain existing density in residential areas south of Cordova
- Support for implementation of paseos and more significant open spaces with various features and amenities
- Concerns about density and height in South Lake, especially south of California Boulevard
- Interest in reducing density and height in multi-family areas west of South Lake

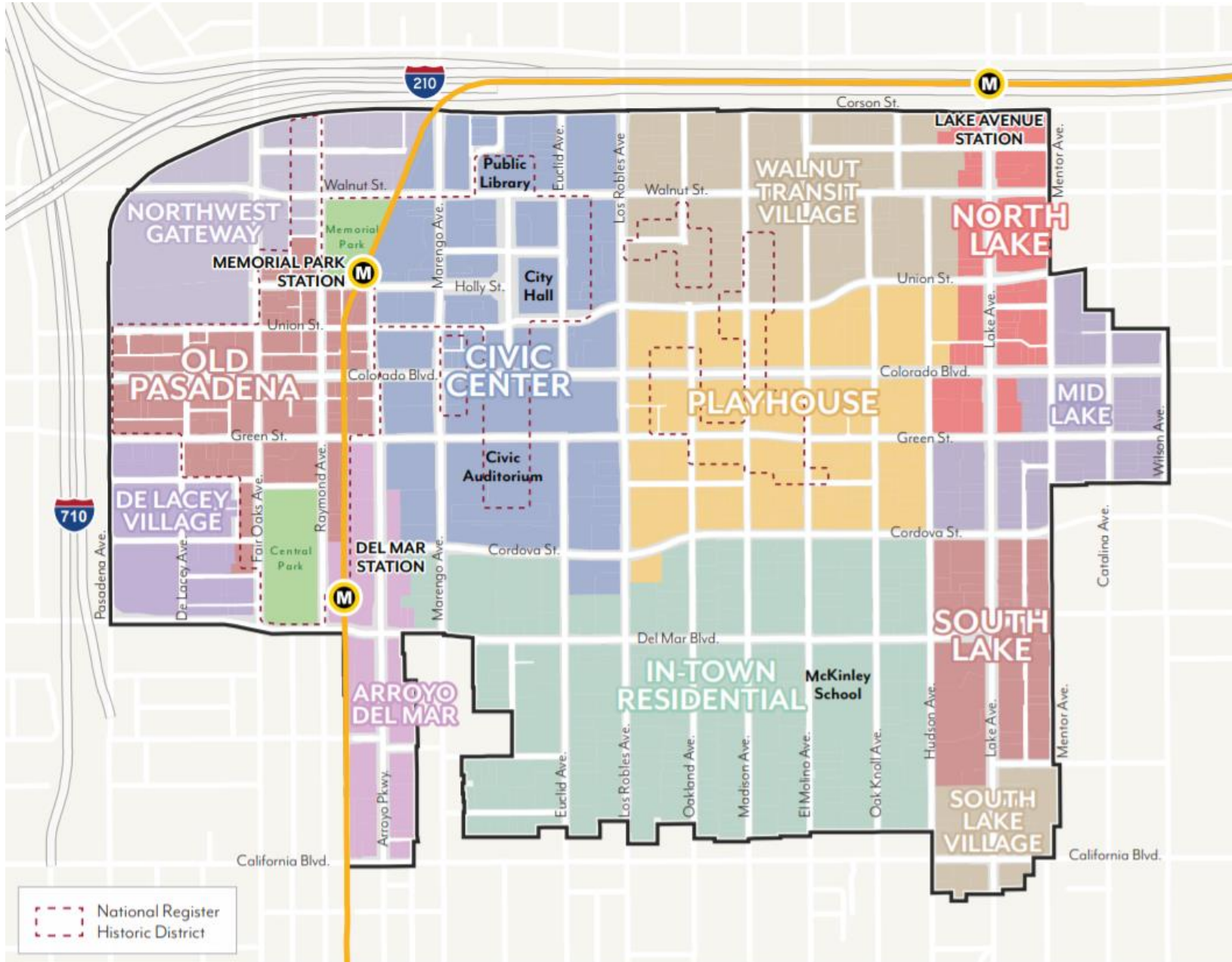
PLAN CONCEPT





“The Central District will build upon its existing strengths as Pasadena’s vibrant downtown, providing a diversity of economic, civic, cultural, entertainment, and residential opportunities. The district will be a place to work, shop, live, play, and raise a family, with convenient access by foot, bicycle, and transit, as well as by car. Physical and economic growth will support this role and respect the numerous resources of historical and cultural significance that contribute to the district’s unique identity.”

Specific Plan Sub Areas



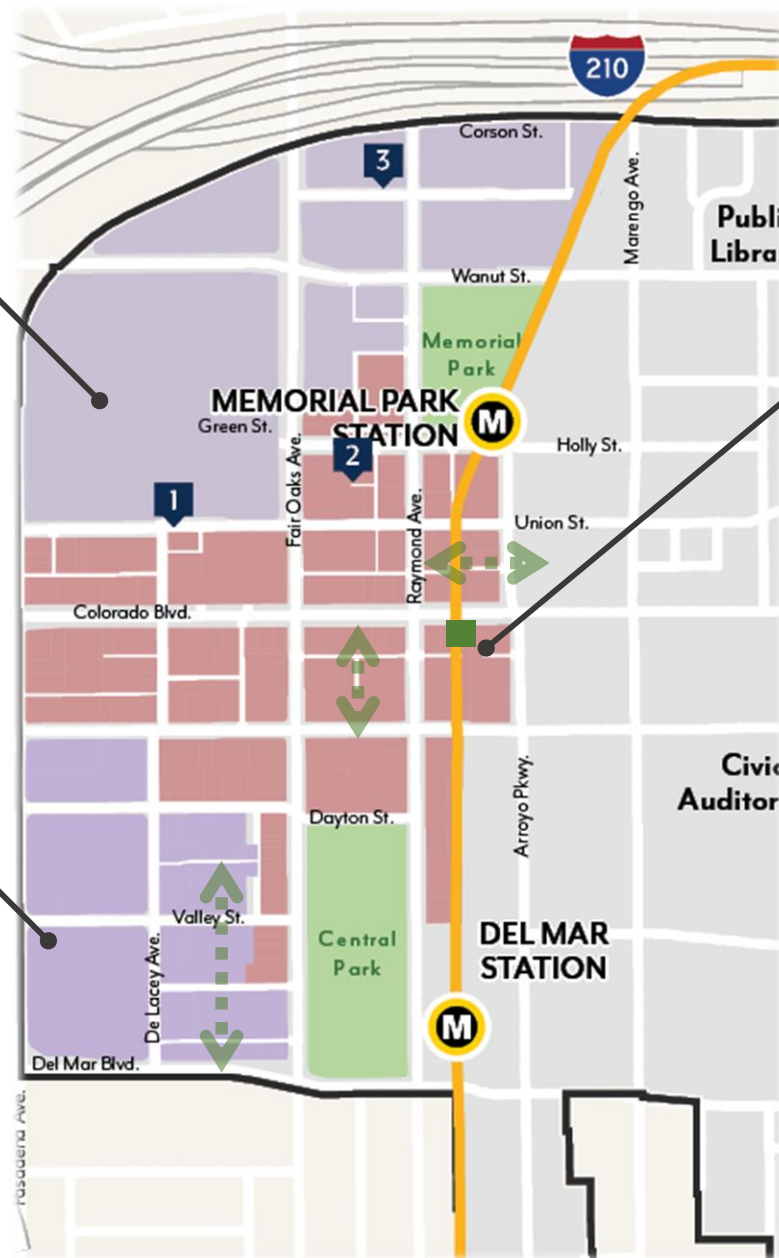
Vision Concept: NW Gateway, Old Pasadena, De Lacey Village

Northwest Gateway

- Support as major employment center & prominent entrance to downtown Pasadena
- Improve existing urban character through new mixed use & residential development

De Lacey Village

- Support quality residential & mixed use development near Del Mar Station
- Extend the network of paseos between Westgate, Old Pasadena & Central Park

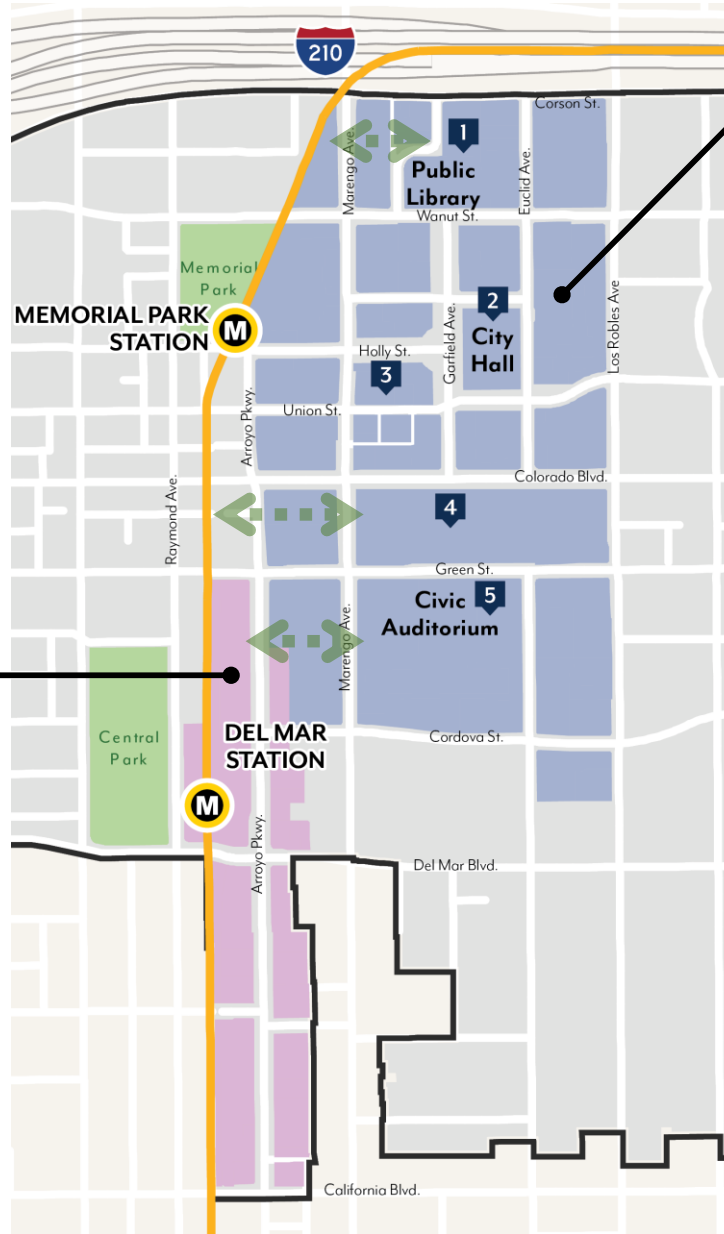


Old Pasadena

- Preserve as city's historic core – vibrant, walkable main street & entertainment destination
- Match design standards & guidelines with historic context
- Require compatibility with character & scale of historic district

- 1 Friendship Baptist Church Historic Property
- 2 Hotel Green Historic Landmark
- 3 St. Andrew Catholic Church

Vision Concept: Civic Center, Arroyo-Del Mar



Civic Center

- Distinguish as governmental center & encourage presence of cultural & public institutions
- Improve connections between City Hall, Public Library, Civic Auditorium, & Old Pasadena, supporting Civic Center Plan
- Implement streetscape improvements & supportive mixed use infill

Arroyo – Del Mar

- Enable quality, higher-intensity mixed use infill near transit
- Enhance Arroyo Parkway as gateway to city and connection between Del Mar Station, South Fair Oaks, & Old Pasadena

- 1 Pasadena Public Library Landmark Building
- 2 Pasadena City Hall Landmark Building
- 3 YWCA Historic Monument
- 4 Paseo Colorado
- 5 Pasadena Convention Center Landmark Building

100

- ## In-Town Residential

-
- A detailed map of the McKinley School area. The map shows a grid of streets including Corson St., Walnut St., Union St., Colorado Blvd., Green St., Cordova St., Del Mar Blvd., and California Blvd. Vertical streets include Los Robles Ave., Oakland Ave., Madison Ave., El Molino Ave., Oak Knoll Ave., and Hudson Ave. The McKinley School is located at the intersection of Del Mar Blvd. and El Molino Ave. Two bus routes are indicated: Route 2 (blue line) and Route 1 (green line). Lake Avenue Station is located at the top right of the map. The map is color-coded with yellow for the school area, green for the bus route area, and light blue for the surrounding area.

- 1 Pasadena Playhouse Landmark Building
- 2 Ford Place National Register Historic District

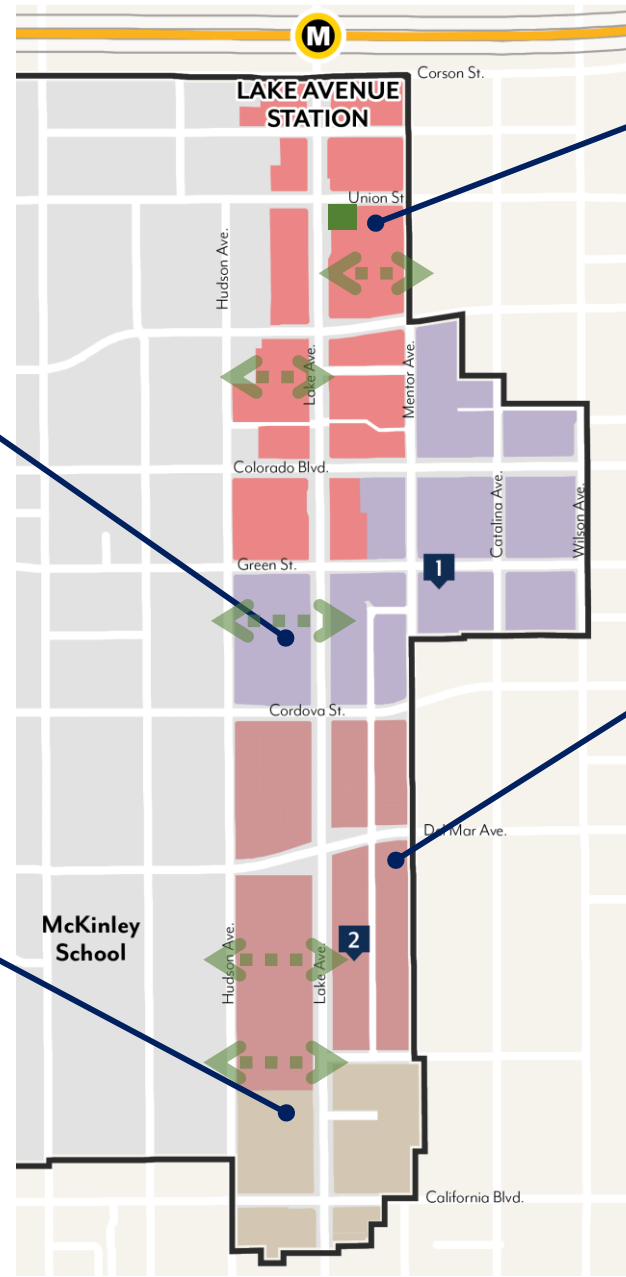
Vision Concept: N. Lake, Mid-Lake, S. Lake, S. Lake Village

Mid-Lake

- Strengthen as mixed use commercial and employment node
- Support context-appropriate infill as transition between Playhouse, Lake Ave, and Green Street Village Landmark District

South Lake Village

- Continue to support residential and neighborhood services area
- Integrate context-appropriate neighborhood services and residential infill as gateway to district



North Lake

- Continue to support existing mid-rise office & commercial-only core for long-term economic vitality, growth
- Improve district character and connections to Lake Station through improved sidewalks and public realm

South Lake

- Continue to support as a vibrant pedestrian-oriented “main street” shopping core
- Strengthen focus on restaurant & dining activities to support existing office & retail

1 Green Street Village Landmark District

2 South Lake Shopping/ Shoppers Lane

KEY DRAFT CHANGES



Vision Concept: Uses & Ground Floor

Mix of Uses

Residential and commercial uses are mixed throughout most of the area, with the most active uses in Old Pasadena and Playhouse

Residential Neighborhoods

Residential-only clusters to support existing neighborhoods and context-sensitive residential infill development

Economic Vitality

Commercial-only clusters to support office and retail uses that contribute to economic vitality and growth

Lively Streets

Ground floor uses that promote lively activity on the ground floor in areas with high numbers of pedestrians

Residential Character

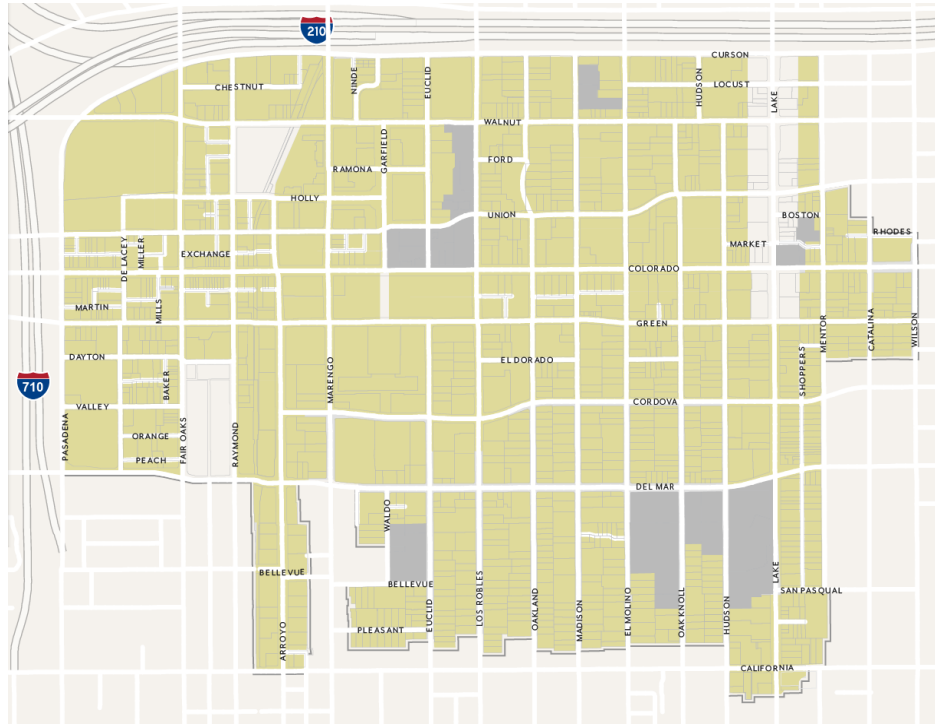
Ground floor residential units accessible from the sidewalk in areas where a residential character is envisioned



Key Changes: Housing Allowed Adjustments

Central District Specific Plan (Draft 2021)

Existing Central District Specific Plan (2004)



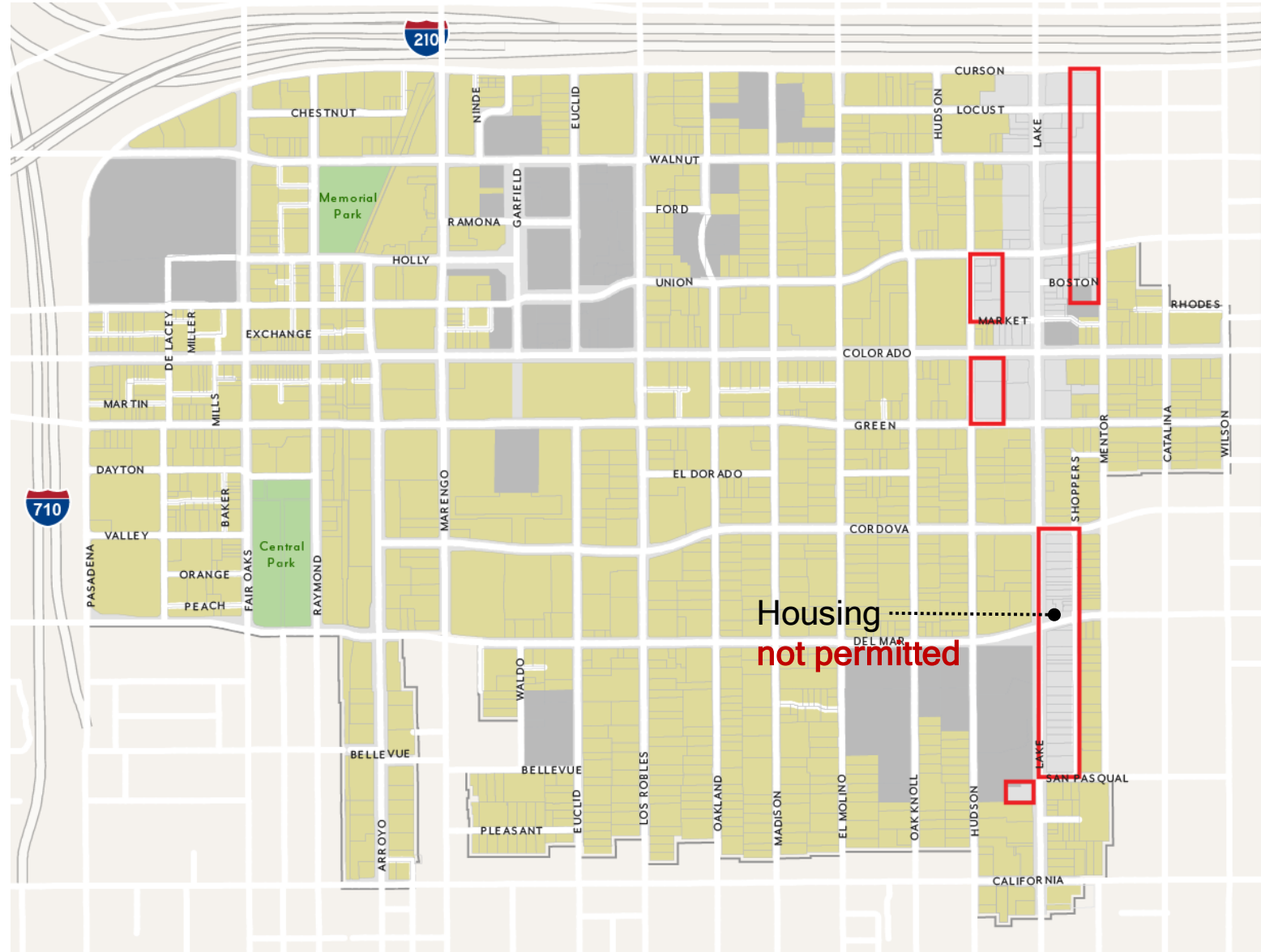
Housing

Permitted

PD*

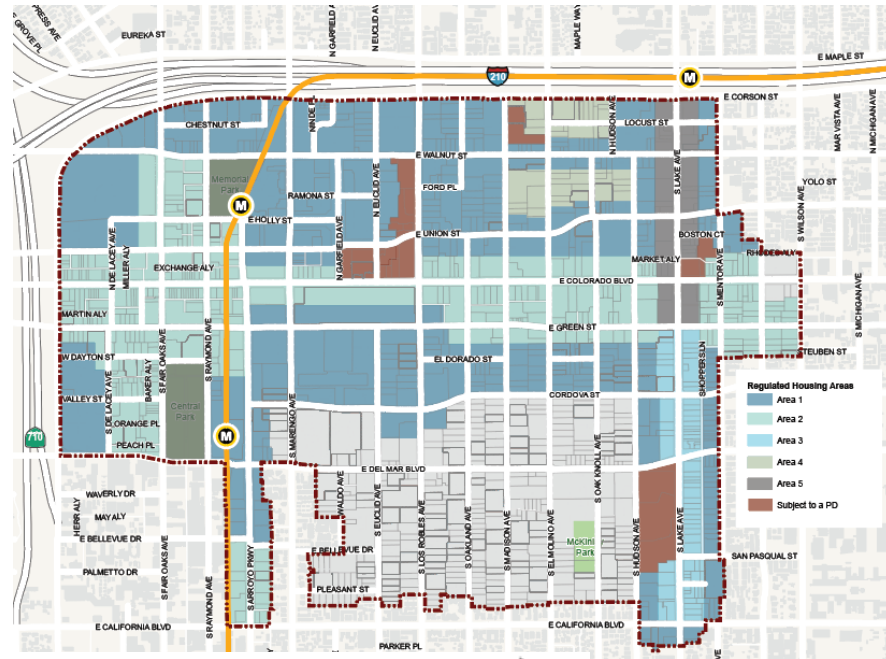
N/A

*Planned Development standards determined by Conditional Use Permit or Master Plan



Key Changes: Ground Floor Uses

Existing Central District Specific Plan (2004)



Standard / Limitation	Housing Area	Housing Permitted	Housing Required	Ground Floor Housing Permitted
Housing permitted	1	✓		✓
Ground floor housing prohibited	2	✓		
50% max. of total floor area	3	✓		
Ground floor housing not required	4	✓	✓	✓
Housing prohibited	5			

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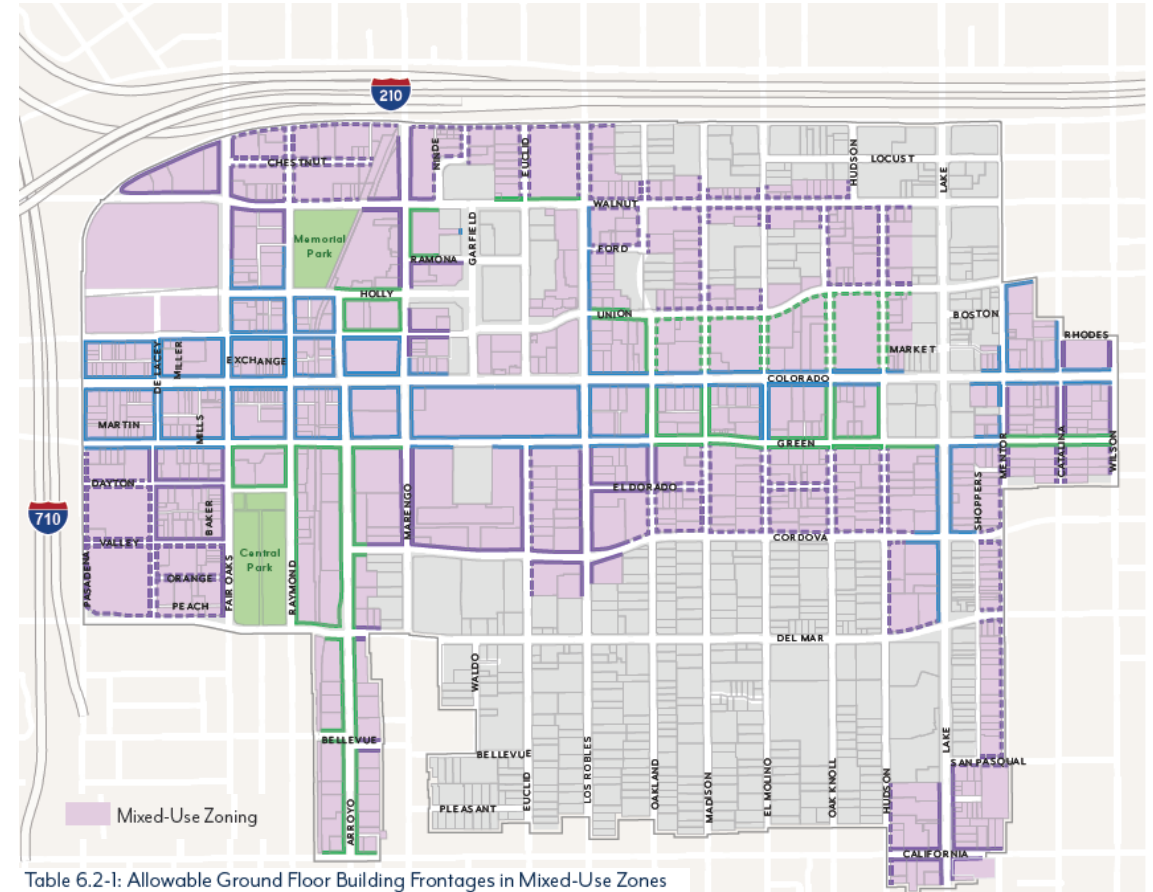







Table 6.2-1: Allowable Ground Floor Building Frontages in Mixed-Use Zones

Type		Commercial Uses	Residential Common Space	Residential Dwelling Units
	1A	80% minimum	20% maximum	Prohibited within 35 feet of sidewalk line
	2A	20% minimum	80% maximum	
	3A	Allowed, no percentage requirements		
	2B	20% minimum	80% maximum	
	3B	Allowed, no percentage requirements		

Key Changes: Ground Floor Uses

Central District Specific Plan (Draft 2021)

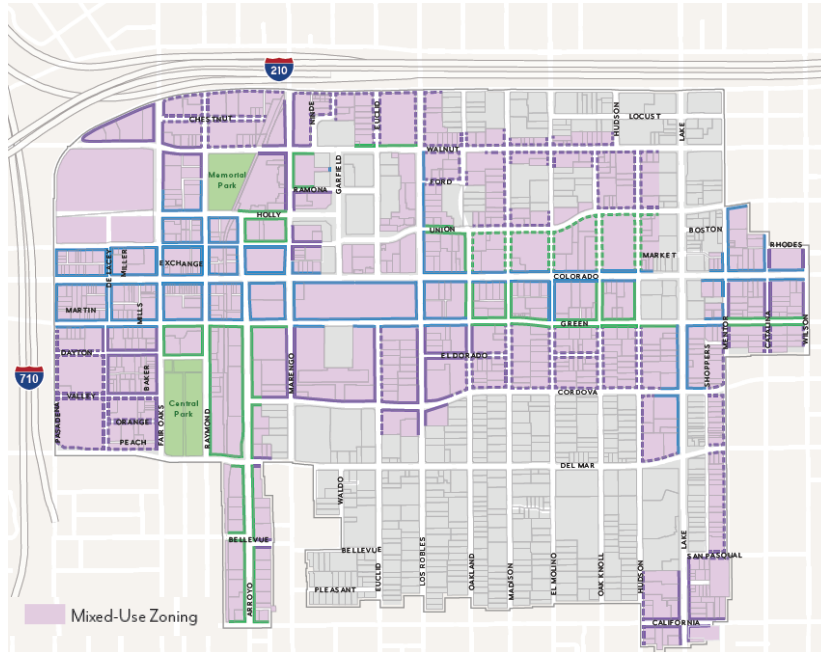







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Type 1A



Type 2A



Type 3A



Type 2B



Type 3B



Vision Concept: Intensity, Density, & Height

Density & Intensities

Residential densities and Floor Area Ratios aligned with General Plan aimed at focusing majority of new growth in Central District

Height in Mixed Use Areas

Increased building height in key locations aligned with General Plan's Medium and High Mixed Use designations

Varied Roof Lines

Continue "height averaging" for a compelling skyline

Massing & Form

Stepbacks and transitional height areas to preserve tree canopies and prevent large massing

Ground Floor

Small increases in height to accommodate more traditional 15-ft ground floor heights, consistent with historic character

View Corridors

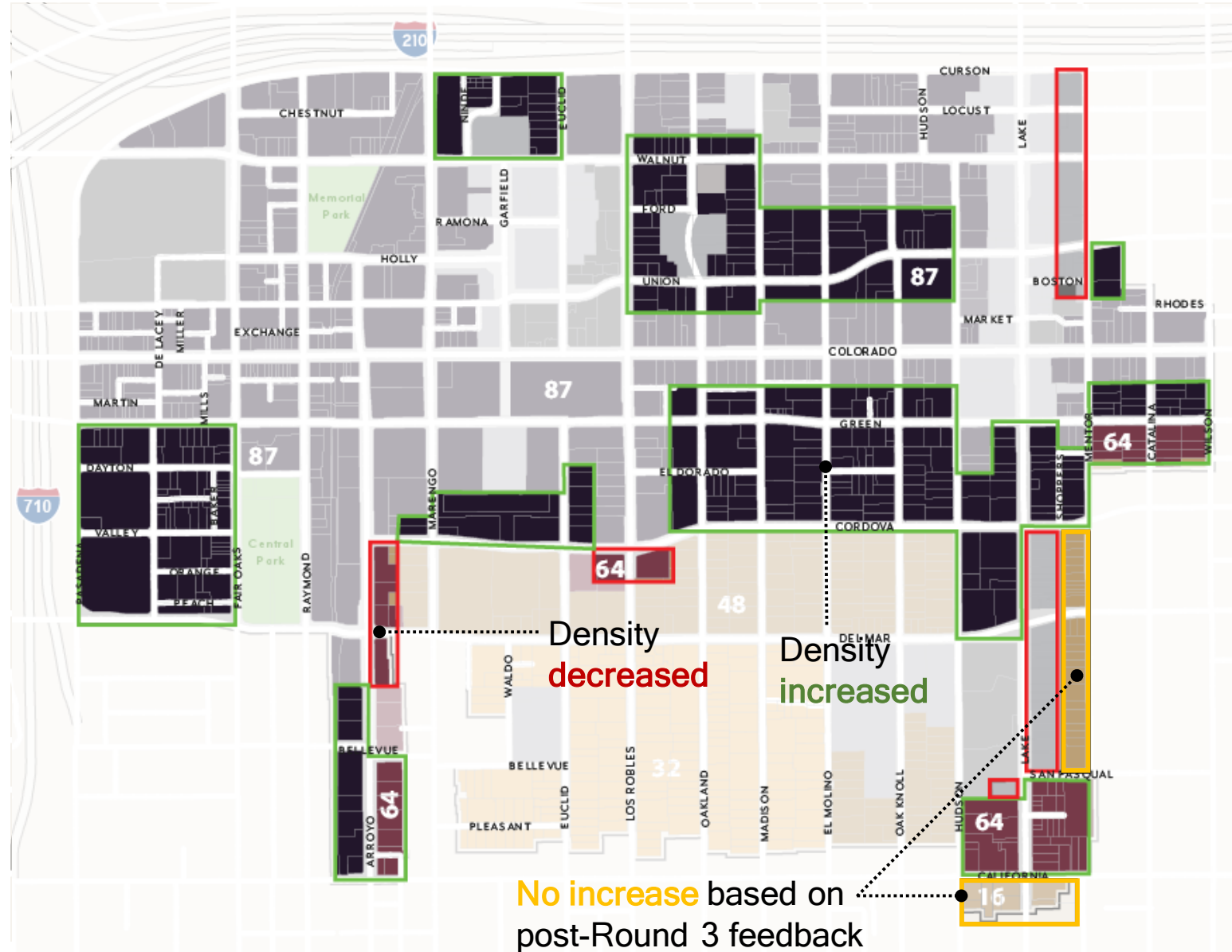
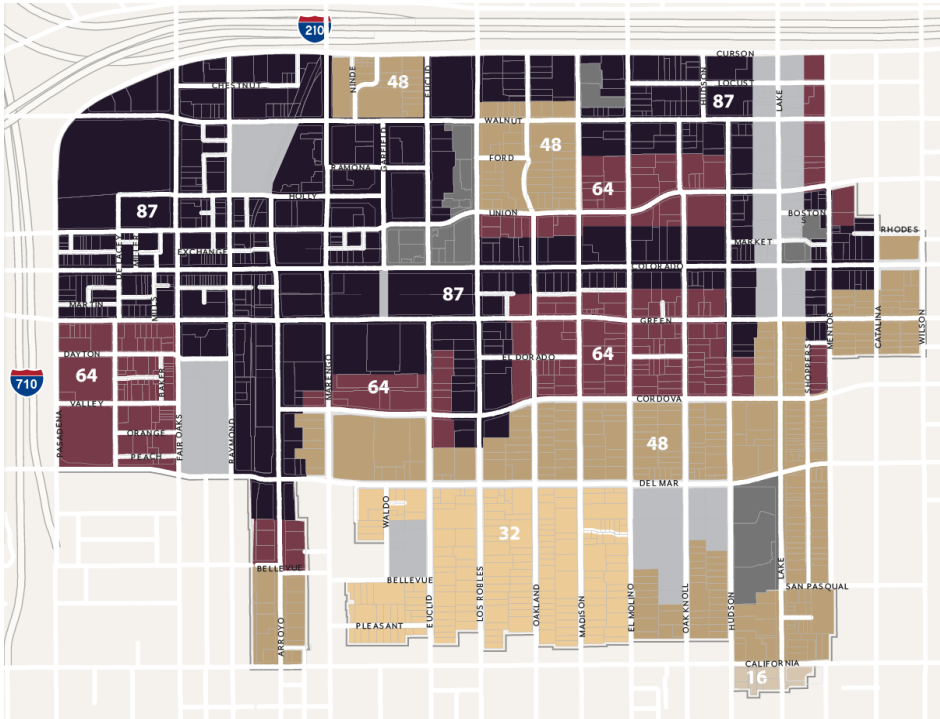
Preserved views of landmarks like City Hall



Key Changes: Residential Density Adjustments

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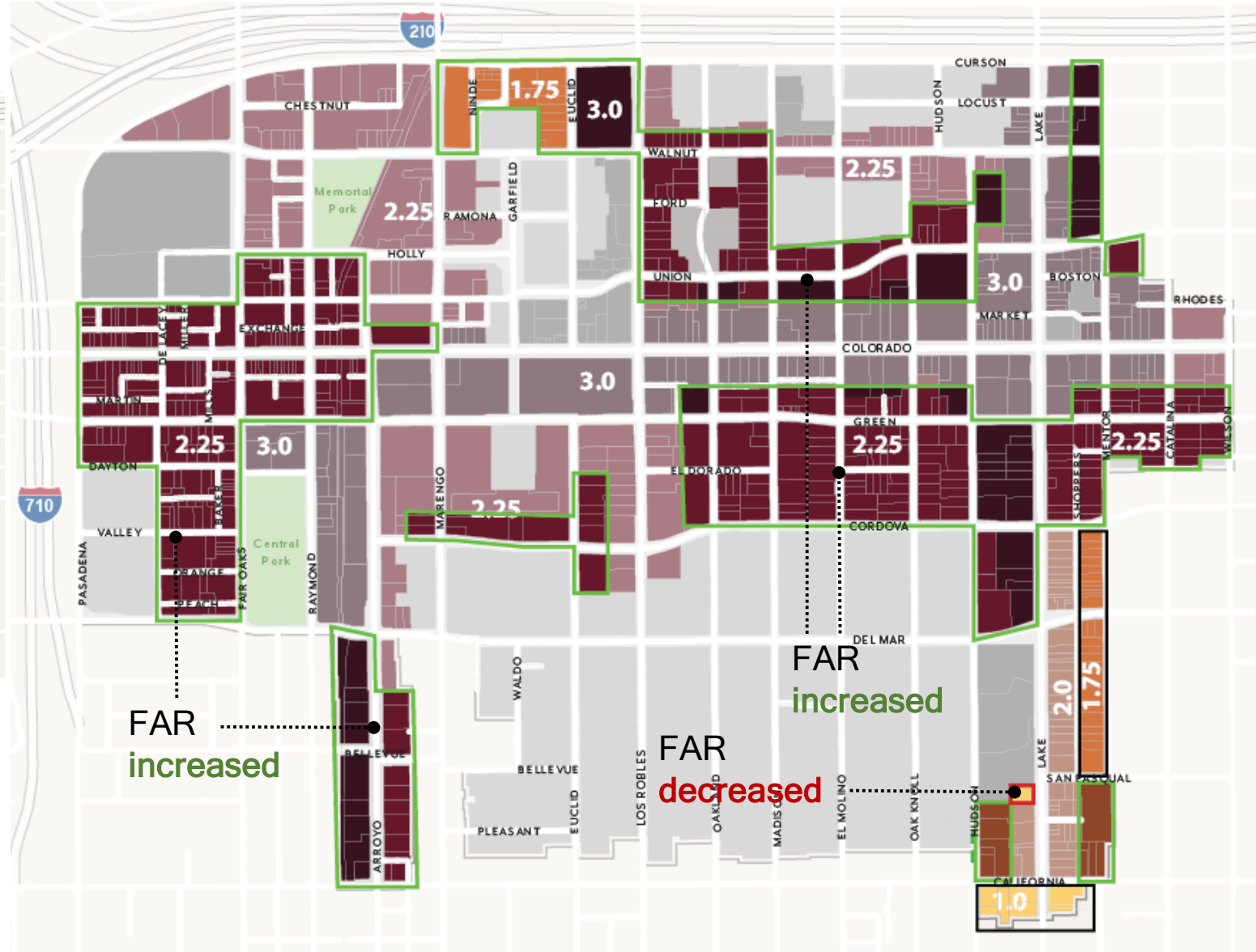
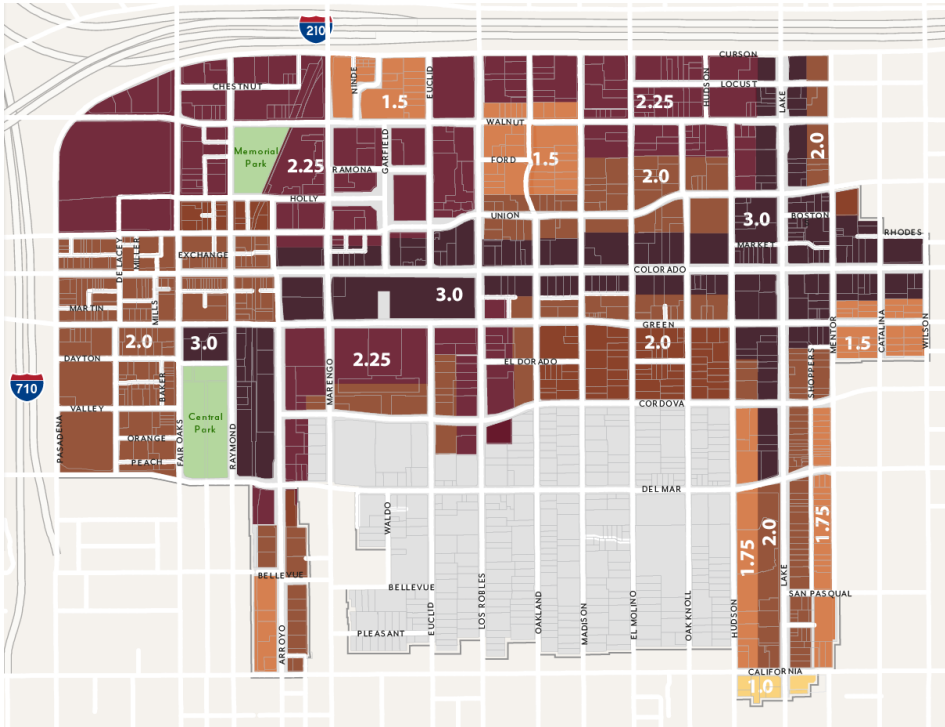
Existing Central District Specific Plan (2004)



Key Changes: Floor Area Ratio Adjustments

Central District Specific Plan (Draft 2021)

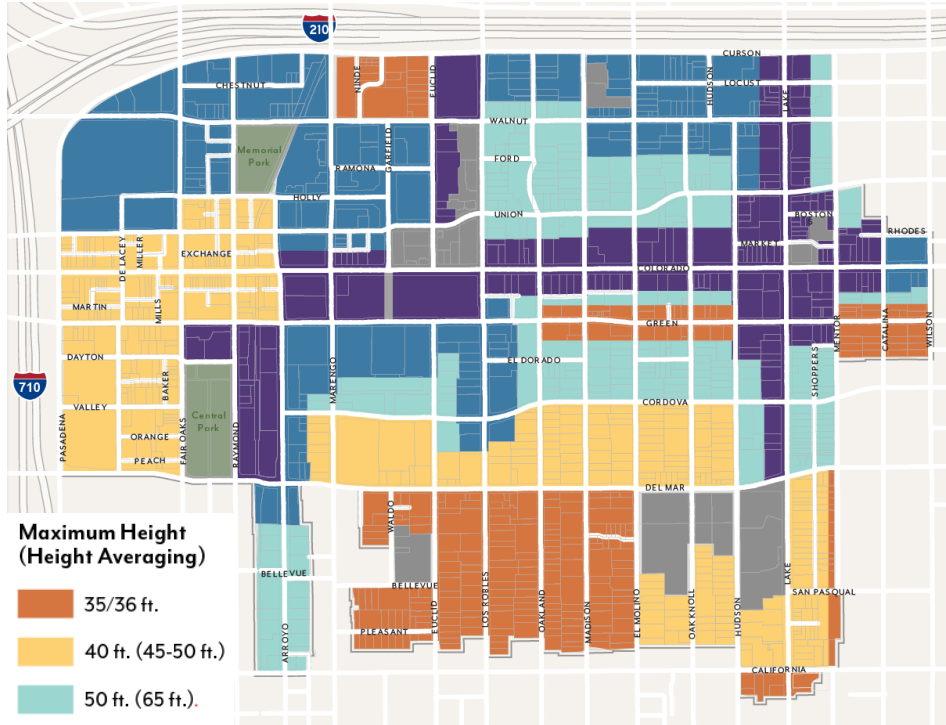
Existing Central District Specific Plan (2004)



Key Changes: Height Adjustments

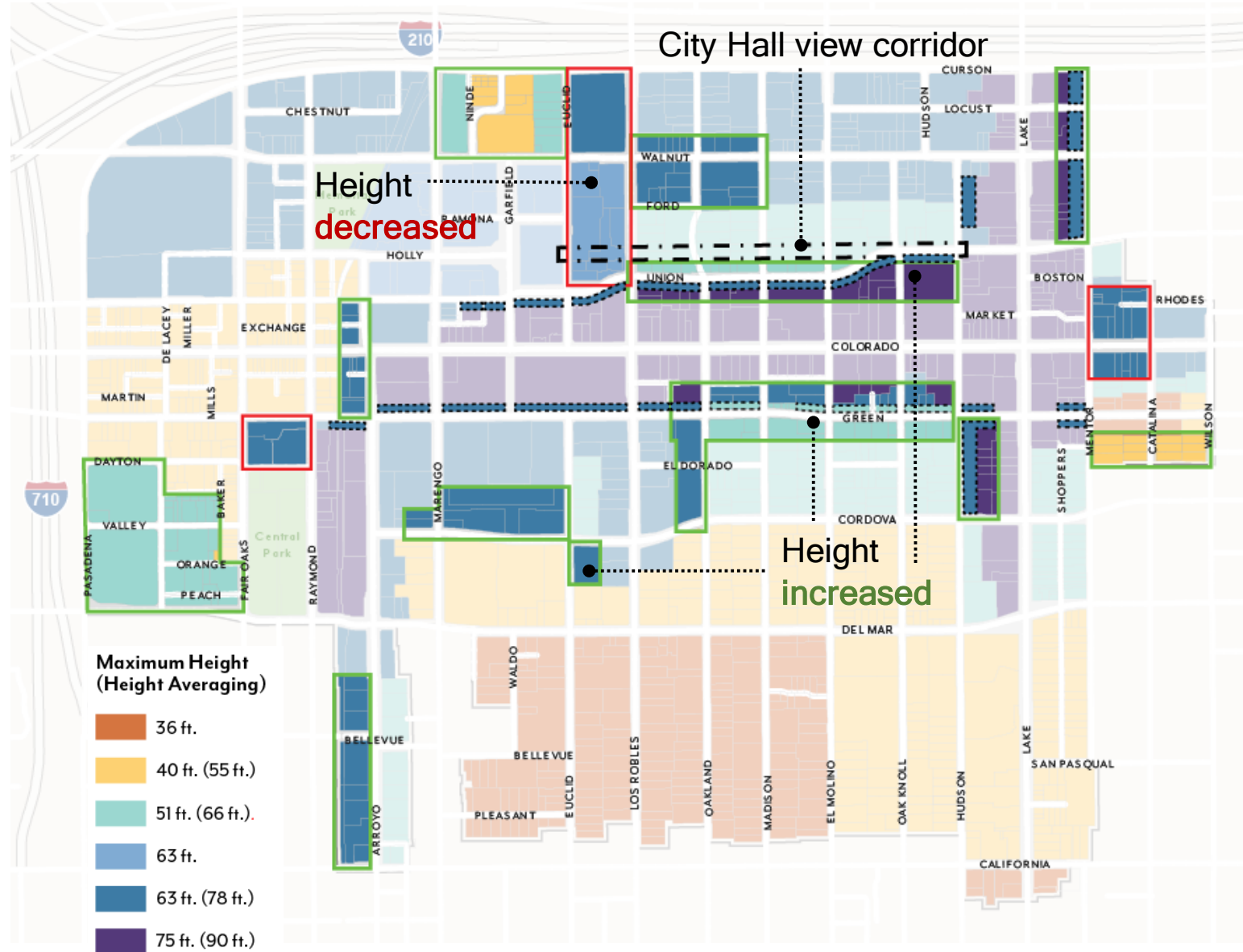
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Transitional height areas
> Color within dashed line shall apply per key
> Height Averaging not permitted

City Hall view corridor
> Height Averaging not permitted

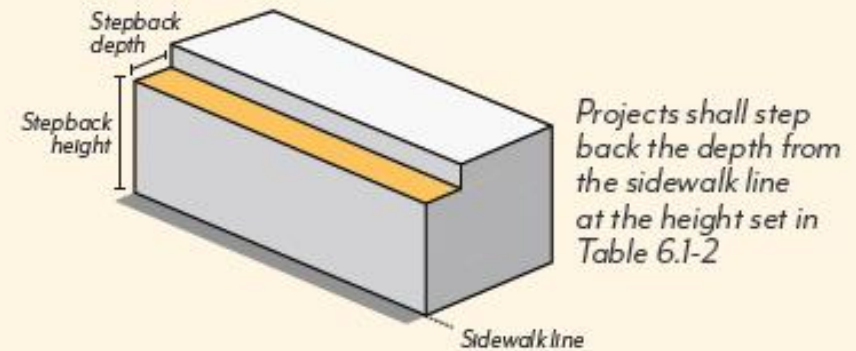


Key Changes: Stepbacks

- Introduction of stepback requirement on Green Street to preserve tree canopies and shape urban form
 - Buildings not to exceed 20 feet in height before stepping back 8 feet in depth



Figure 6.1-6: Street Stepbacks



Note: Diagrams used for illustrative purposes only.



Vision Concept: Public Realm

Building Setbacks

Setback standards that reinforce the existing character and frame the street but allow more flexibility for landscaping and sidewalk dining

Street Trees

Standards that promote a robust tree canopy to increase shade and cooling for pedestrians



More Parkways

Landscaped, permeable parkways to enhance pedestrian experience and increase stormwater capture

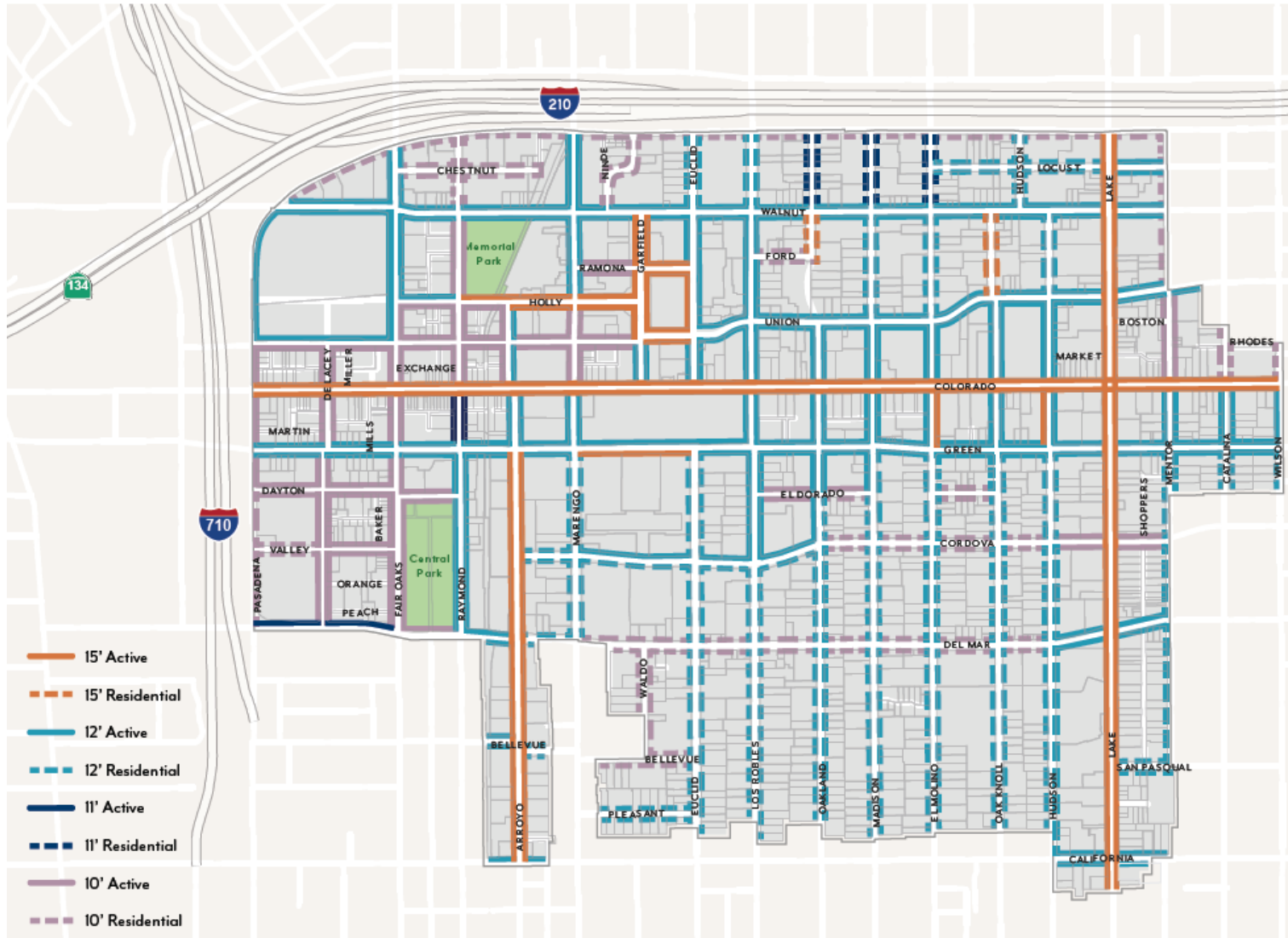
Wider Sidewalks

More space for pedestrians, greenery and other amenities

Double Duty

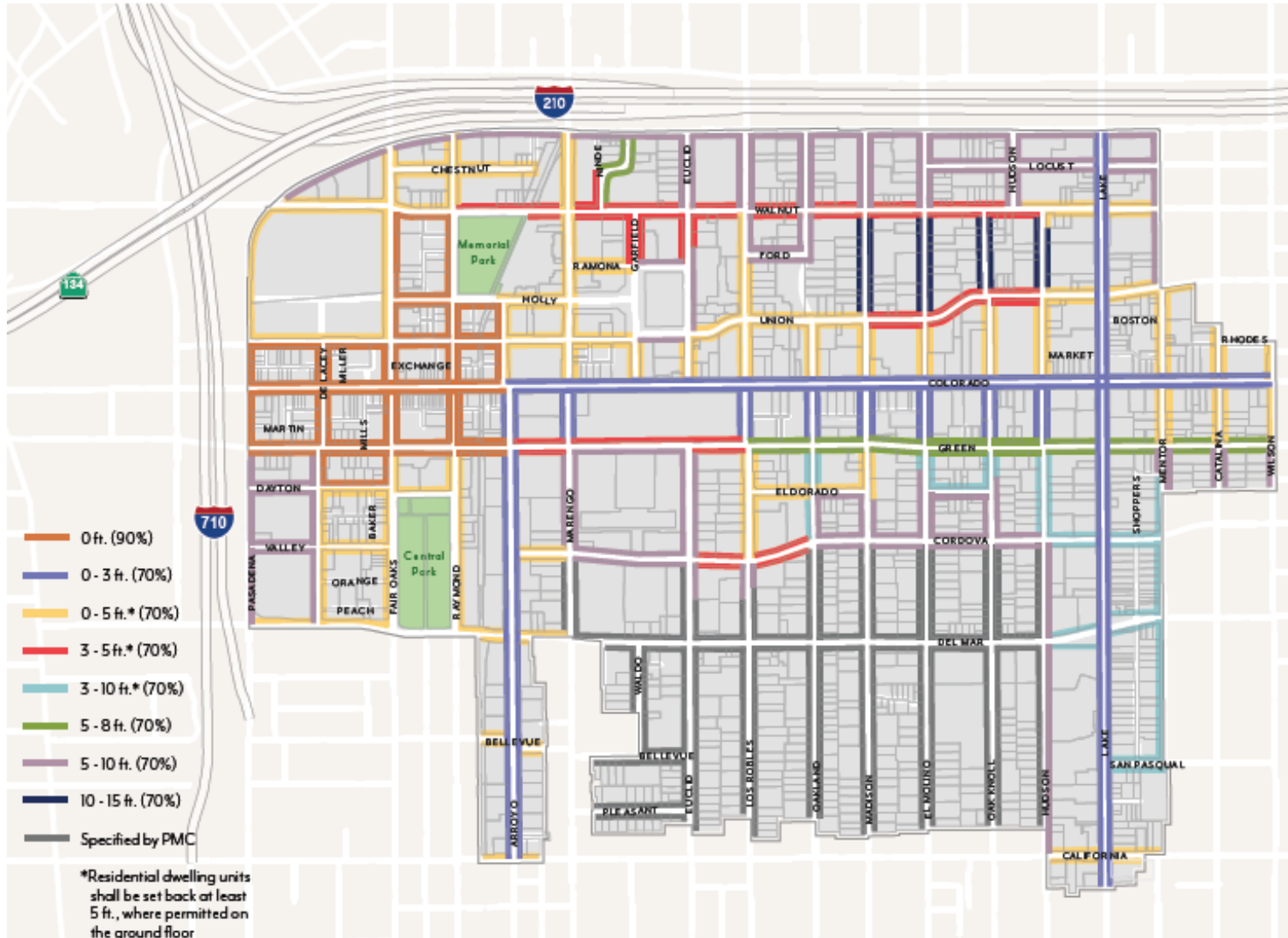
Sidewalks can provide room for activities like outdoor dining and benches for seating

Key Changes: Sidewalk Adjustments



- Refined sidewalk widths to support pedestrian mobility and amenities
- Ranges from 10 - 15 feet, with widest sidewalks along major thoroughfares:
 - Colorado Blvd
 - Lake Ave
 - Arroyo Parkway
 - Streets within Civic Core

Key Changes: Setback Adjustments



- Provide flexibility for building design while maintaining appropriate setbacks
- **0-foot setbacks** reinforce existing streetwall, like in Old Pasadena historic district
- **3-8 foot setbacks** promote landscaping and existing tree canopy
- **5-15 foot setbacks** support primarily multi-family residential uses and character

Vision Concept: Open Space & Parking

Refined Parking Standards

Updated parking standards to allow for greater flexibility for changes in uses & encourage adaptive reuse & transit usage

Visual Interest

Open spaces can modulate a building, adding visual interest to the facade

Common Space

Required for commercial projects to create amenities for visitors & employees

Private & Common Space

Based on number of bedrooms in each proposed unit, resulting in increase in amount of open space

More Open Space

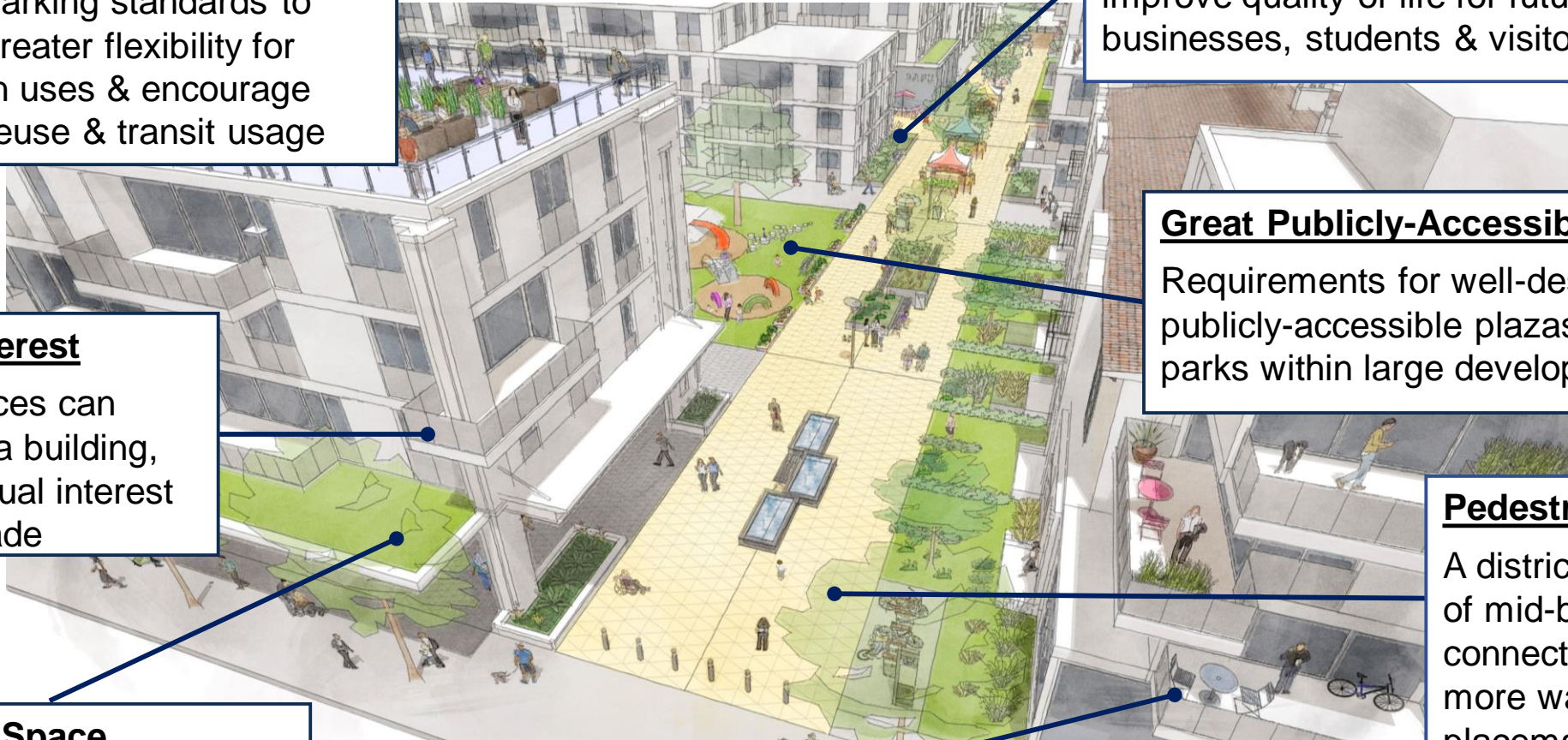
Revised open space requirements to improve quality of life for future residents, businesses, students & visitors

Great Publicly-Accessible Spaces

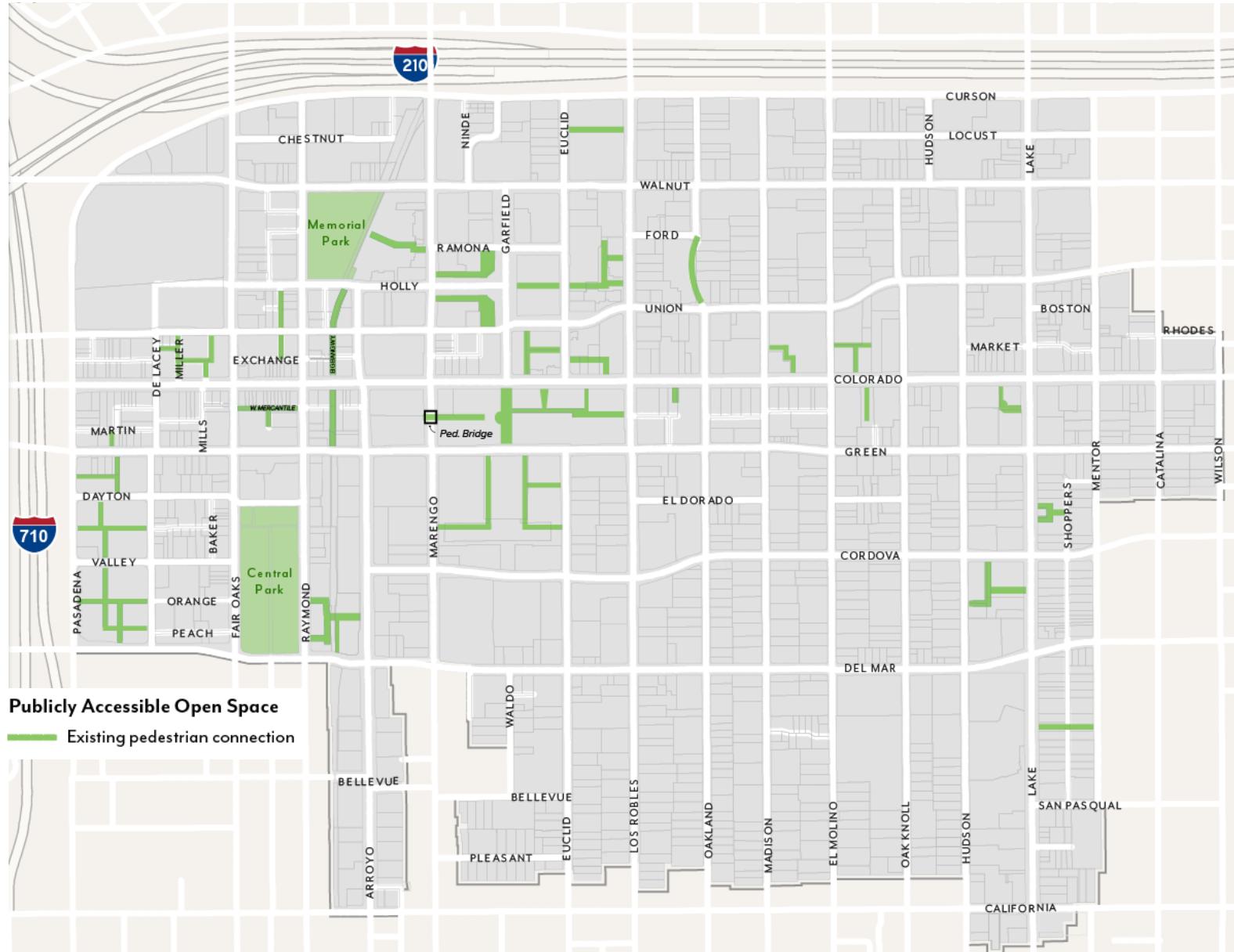
Requirements for well-designed, publicly-accessible plazas & small parks within large developments

Pedestrian Paseos

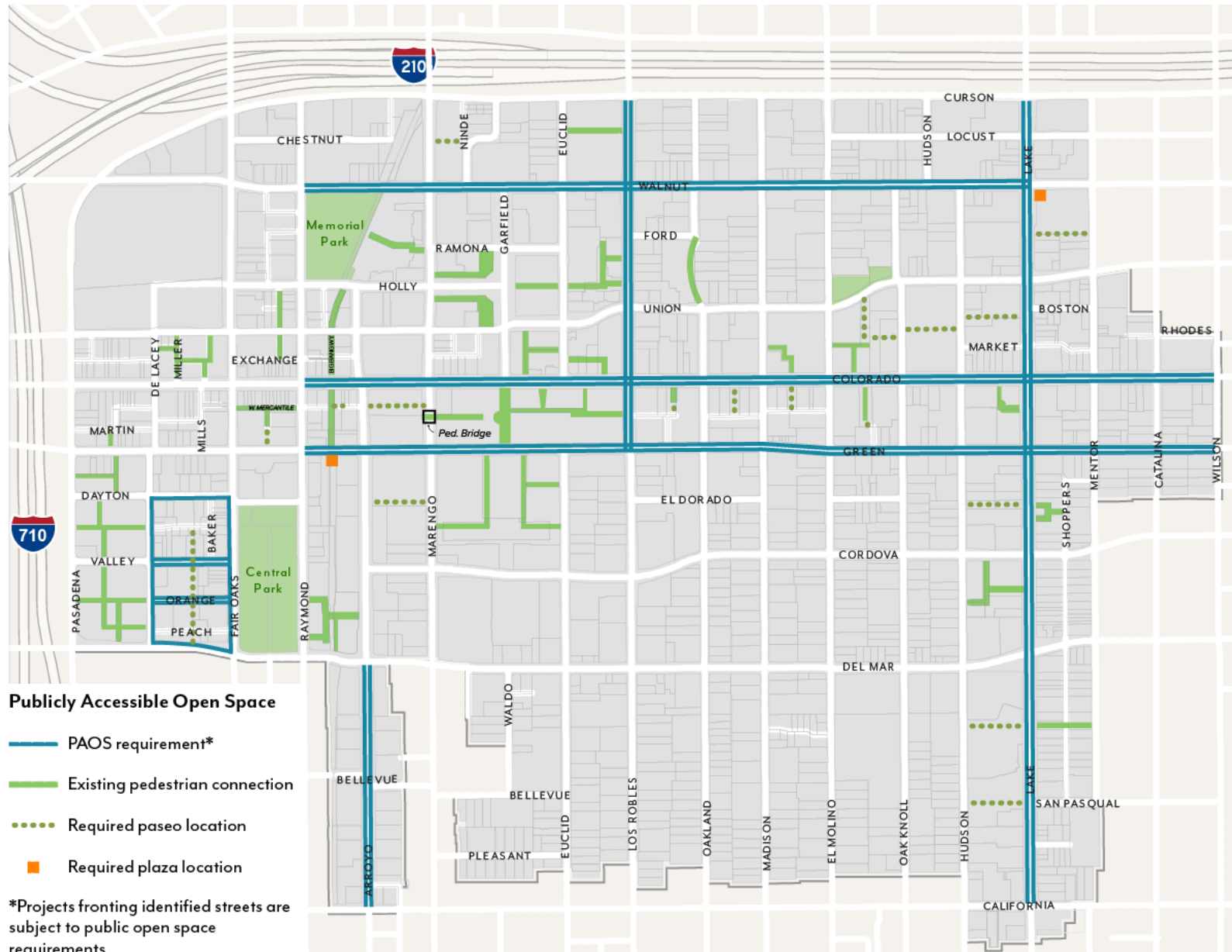
A district-wide series of mid-block connections create a more walkable city & placemaking opportunities



Key Changes: Publicly Accessible Open Space



Key Changes: Publicly Accessible Open Space



- Builds upon historic legacy and past planning documents
- Publicly Accessible Open Space (“PAOS”) proposed for projects 80,000+ gross floor area
 - Amount increases based on size & proximity to Metro station
- PAOS requirement near transit combined with required plaza locations at Green St between Raymond and Arroyo and SE corner of Walnut and Lake
- Paseos required in specific opportunity areas based on variety of considerations

DISCUSSION



Feedback Topics

- General Plan Amendments
 - Allow mixed-use with housing in North Lake subarea
 - Amend parcel for new park in Playhouse Village to Open Space
 - Amend parcels south of Del Mar Boulevard between El Molino Avenue and Hudson Avenue to align with existing RM-48 density standards
- Densities and Heights
 - South Lake and South Lake Village subareas
 - Mid Lake Subarea, east of Lake Avenue
 - Other density adjustments per Council direction
- Plan Area Boundary Change
 - Removal of parcels south of California Boulevard between Hudson and Mentor Avenues

