



Appendix A
General Plan Consistency

City of Downey
Downtown Specific Plan



8. Appendix A: General Plan Consistency

California Government Code (Title 7, Division 1, Chapter 3, Article 8, Section 65440-65457) permits adoption and administration of Specific Plans as an implementation tool for elements contained in the local general plan. Specific Plans must demonstrate consistency in regulations, guidelines and programs with the goals and policies set forth in the general plan. The Downtown Downey Specific Plan has been prepared in conformance with the goals and policies of the City of Downey 2025 General Plan.

This chapter indicates how the Downtown Downey Specific Plan complies with the City of Downey 2025 General Plan. Typically, policies or goals that are not addressed are not applicable to the Specific Plan area. Approval of the Specific Plan is based on the finding that this Specific Plan furthered the goals and policies of the General Plan. These goals and policies are as follows:

Land Use Element

- ▶ Goal 1.1. Provide sufficient land areas for uses that serve the needs of residents, visitors and businesses.

- ▶ **Policy 1.1.1. Maintain a balance of land uses.**

The Specific Plan addresses the mix of uses in Downtown, dividing the area into five land use districts to ensure that a variety of uses are provided and that the needs of residents, visitors and businesses are met. Establishing land use districts will ensure that an appropriate balance of uses is established in Downtown and also allows for specific Floor-Area Ratios (FAR) to be determined for each individual district.

- ▶ **Policy 1.1.2. Provide an appropriate amount of land area to absorb the City's future population growth.**

The Specific Plan establishes Downtown as a population growth absorption area, where new residential uses can be accommodated. The Specific Plan is also consistent in that it establishes a specific Core Residential land use district and promotes the development of mixed-use and housing projects in Downtown.

- ▶ **Policy 1.1.3. Provide an appropriate amount of land area for business and employment.**

The Specific Plan is consistent, with this policy as specific land use districts, including the Firestone Boulevard Gateway and the Paramount Boulevard Professional districts, are specifically focused on generating new business opportunities, and high paying jobs for the community. The implementation of the land use districts will help

prevent the concentration of a particular use and ensure that businesses and employment opportunities are shared throughout Downtown.

▷ **Policy 1.1.4. Provide an appropriate amount of land area for people to acquire goods and services.**

The Specific Plan is consistent, as each of the five land use districts allow for a variety of retail, commercial and service business opportunities within neighborhood “nodes”. Implementation of the land use districts will help to prevent the over concentration of a particular use and ensure that a diversity of services and goods are available for residents to acquire. The Firestone Boulevard Gateway district will also encourage the establishment of dining and entertainment uses on the ground floor to facilitate a “restaurant row” environment.

▷ **Policy 1.1.5. Provide an appropriate amount of land area for recreation and entertainment.**

The Specific Plan encourages the addition of open space, parks, and recreational facilities, as well as entertainment uses, in all five land use districts. As identified in the General Plan, the Specific Plan is intended to establish Downtown as a destination for entertainment and dining opportunities in the region.

▶ Goal 1.2. Advance livable community concepts.

▷ **Policy 1.2.1. Promote livable communities concepts that allow added flexibility in addressing land use needs.**

The Specific Plan implements these programs and policies by creating a mixed-use area that includes a variety of commercial, residential, dining, and employment opportunities in a compact area. The majority of the businesses in Downtown are within a quarter mile walking distance from the core, located at Downey Avenue and Third Street, and the Specific Plan establishes guidelines to improve the walkability of the area. As shown in the Mobility chapter, a park-once strategy and includes efforts to incorporate bicycle lanes into the existing right-of-way and improve bus routes through Downtown.

▷ **Policy 1.2.2. Focus on areas where livable communities concepts are most likely to have the most impact as a catalyst for similar projects elsewhere in the City.**

The Specific Plan establishes Downtown as a destination point and unique experience for residents living in and around Downey by introducing new commercial, residential, dining, and other service uses in the compact area. The Specific Plan identifies existing uses, such as the movie theater, religious institutions, City Hall and the Embassy Suites hotel as catalysts for new development and will focus on specific land use districts to promote Downtown as the place to go for dining, entertainment, and shopping.

- ▶ Goal 1.3. Address changes in land use and zoning trends.

- ▶ **Policy 1.3.1. Minimize or eliminate conflicts where incompatible land uses are in proximity to each other.**

The Specific Plan development standards and urban design guidelines will identify specific permitted uses for each of the five land use to ensure that new and recycled uses are consistent with the character of Downtown. The Specific Plan also establishes unique architectural design and development standards regulating building facades, heights, setbacks, landscaping, and walkways, among other elements.

- ▶ **Policy 1.3.2. Monitor and address changes in land use trends.**

Prior to the adoption of the Specific Plan, Downtown included a range of zones, from residential to industrial. With the adoption of the Specific Plan, Downtown will be uniformly zoned as Specific Plan with specific permitted uses and development and design guidelines for each land use district.

- ▶ Goal 1.4. Protect and enhance the residential neighborhoods.

- ▶ **Policy 1.4.1. Promote neighborhood identity.**

The Specific Plan identifies a unique identity for Downtown as the center of the City. The Specific also establishes Downtown as a new residential neighborhood.

- ▶ **Policy 1.4.2. Promote residential construction that complements existing neighborhoods.**

The Specific Plan introduces new residential uses into Downtown. The Plan establishes a specific Core Residential land use district with the intention of promoting new residential development. The Specific Plan allows diversity in residential product types. The Design Guidelines and Standard chapter of the Specific Plan also promote compatibility between existing and future uses.

- ▶ **Policy 1.4.3. Promote home ownership.**

The Specific Plan allows for and encourages the introduction of both rental and home ownership opportunities in Downtown.

Circulation Element

- ▶ Goal 2.1. Increase the capacity of the existing street system.
 - ▷ **Policy 2.1.1. Maintain a street system that provides safe and efficient movement of people and goods.**

The Mobility chapter of the Specific Plan maintains the established grid street pattern and maintains an acceptable level of service to safely move people and goods throughout Downtown.
 - ▷ **Policy 2.1.2. Promote improvements in the street system through the development process.**

As the Specific Plan is implemented, roadway improvements will occur as necessary to ensure that roadways are used appropriately and that traffic flows are accommodated within Downtown. The Specific Plan also promotes a park-once strategy, encouraging trip consolidation.
- ▶ Goal 2.2. Promote the use of alternative modes of travel, other than single-occupant vehicles, to relieve traffic congestion.
 - ▷ **Policy 2.2.1. Promote site development design that is safe and convenient to pedestrians.**

The Specific Plan features new street design features to promote safe pedestrian movement throughout the Specific Plan area. As shown in Exhibit 4.5 of the Mobility Plan, curb extensions, augmented sidewalks, and raised crosswalks will be implemented to improve pedestrian safety.
 - ▷ **Policy 2.2.2. Promote bicycling as an attractive alternative to vehicular transportation**

As Downey has not implemented a bicycle master plan, the Specific Plan sets forth a framework for the City to initiate a citywide effort. The Specific Plan includes recommendations regarding the ideal locations for new bicycle lanes and potential connections from Downtown to the bikeways along the Rio Hondo River, the San Gabriel River, the Union Pacific Railroad Line, and surrounding communities.
 - ▷ **Policy 2.2.3. Reduce the number and length of vehicle trips generated by land uses in Downey.**

The main objective for Downtown is to create a mixed-use development that includes residential units, employment opportunities, and retail and dining options in a compact area. Although, expanded roadway improvements have been identified in the Downtown Downey Specific Plan Traffic Study to meet above

satisfactory level-of-service such improvements are not necessarily consistent with the overall goal of creating a vibrant, pedestrian and bicycle friendly Downtown. Generally, the recommended cross-sections for roadways within Downtown allow for wider sidewalks and narrower travel lanes. A sufficient level-of-service can be accomplished through implementation of a program to monitor conditions at specific intersections and roadway segments and potentially funding alternative improvements such as traffic signal coordination, ridesharing, transit information kiosks or improvements to the infrastructure for alternative modes of transport (walking, bicycling, NEVs).

▶ **Policy 2.2.4. Promote public transit as an attractive alternative to vehicular transportation**

The Specific Plan promotes the Downey Link and the Metro bus lines running through the City. The Downey Depot Transit Center is included in the Specific Plan area and recommendations are to increase the visibility of the bus lines by moving the station to a more prominent location and to position bus stops to promote use by residents living in and near Downtown.

▶ Goal 2.5. Minimize the impacts from the lack of parking.

▶ **Policy 2.5.1. Provide for adequate parking supply to meet parking demands.**

Prior to the completion of the Specific Plan, a parking study was conducted to identify any imbalances in parking opportunities in Downtown. The Specific Plan identified for shared parking opportunities, guidelines for each permitted land use and strategies to better utilize existing surface parking lots and structures.

▶ Goal 2.7. Maintain the City's infrastructure.

▶ **Policy 2.7.1. Provide adequate utility and communications infrastructure.**

The Specific Plan ensures that adequate utilities and communication infrastructure are provided in Downtown. The land use intensities proposed in the Specific Plan are actually significantly lower than the intensities proposed in the General Plan for Downtown and are consistent with the capacities of existing and planned infrastructure and public services.

Housing Element

- ▶ Goal 3.2. Encourage a variety of housing types and adequate supply of housing to meet the existing and future needs of City residents.

The Specific Plan accommodates a variety of housing types in Downtown. The Specific Plan includes a Downtown Residential land use district which specifically promotes the development of apartments, townhomes, live-work units, and other residential unit types. The Specific Plan encourages rental and ownership opportunities in order to accommodate residents with varying income.

- ▶ Goal 3.3. Expand and protect housing opportunities for all economic segments and special housing needs of the community.

The Specific Plan accommodates a variety of housing throughout Downtown, including both home ownership and rental opportunities. The Specific Plan allows for housing to be built at densities above 30 dwelling units per acre, which is the default density established through State legislation for the production of affordable housing. The City plans to work with housing developers interested in Downtown to create units affordable to residents earning a range of incomes are available.

Conservation Element

- ▶ Goal 4.2. Prevent the contamination of groundwater

- ▶ **Policy 4.1.1. Monitor and improve groundwater quality.**

The Specific Plan will not include uses or allow business practices that contribute to soil contamination that degrade groundwater quality. The City will approve and monitor the uses in Downtown to ensure that contamination does not occur.

- ▶ Goal 4.4. Preserve trees wherever possible.

- ▶ **Policy 4.4.1. Preserve trees on private and public property.**

Whenever possible, development will preserve existing trees on both public and private property. The Specific Plan also requires that a minimum of one twenty-four (24") inch box tree with a minimum mature canopy of fifteen (15') feet shall be planted on site for each 500 square feet of provided ground-level on-site open space.

- ▶ Goal 4.5. Encourage activities that improve the air quality.

- ▶ **Policy 4.5.1. Pursue every available means and opportunity to reduce air particulate and pollutants within the City and region.**

The Specific Plan implements this policy by creating a mixed-use area that includes a variety of commercial, residential, dining, and employment opportunities in a compact area. The majority of the businesses in Downtown are within a quarter mile walking distance from the core, located at Downey Avenue and Third Street, and the Specific Plan establishes guidelines to improve the walkability of the area. As shown in the Mobility chapter, a park-once strategy and includes efforts to incorporate bicycle lanes into the existing right-of-way and improve bus routes through Downtown thereby reducing the number of vehicle trips in the City.

▶ **Policy 4.5.2. Improve air quality through land use decisions.**

The Specific Plan creates a diverse area with a variety of commercial, residential, dining, and employment opportunities within 131 square acres. The majority of the businesses in Downtown are within a quarter mile walking distance from the core, located at Downey Avenue and Third Street, and the Specific Plan establishes guidelines to improve the walkability of the area. By locating residential units near employment opportunities and creating new shopping, dining and recreational areas in walking distance, the Specific Plan will reduce the number of vehicle trips in and around Downtown.

▶ Goal 4.6. Conserve energy resources.

▶ **Policy 4.6.1. Promote the conservation of energy by residents and businesses to conserve energy**

The Specific Plan encourages new development to integrate energy efficient design and quality building materials whenever possible. The City will help developers achieve energy conservation efforts by providing information at City Hall.

Safety Element

▶ Goal 5.3. Maintain and improve fire protection services.

▶ **Policy 5.3.1. Provide adequate response to fire emergencies.**

The Specific Plan currently identifies that fire services are adequate to meet the needs of residents and businesses located within Downtown.

▶ Goal 5.4. Promote the protection of life and property from criminal activities.

▶ **Policy 5.4.1. Prepare for adequate response to crime.**

The Specific Plan currently identifies that police services are adequate to meet the needs of residents and businesses located within Downtown.

- ▶ Goal 5.6. Protect life and property from flooding hazards.
 - ▷ **Policy 5.6.2. Minimize the potential for flooding due to stormwater generation.**

The Specific Plan currently identifies existing storm drains located within Downtown. Additional storm drains will be added as necessary as new development occurs.

- ▶ Goal 5.7. Reduce the likelihood of traffic accidents.
 - ▷ **Policy 5.4.1. Promote traffic safety along streets.**

The Specific Plan recommends the introduction of pedestrian safety features along major roadways such as curb bump-outs and raised crosswalks to ensure pedestrians can safely cross the street.

- ▶ Goal 5.9. Promote the well-being and general health of those that live and work in Downey.
 - ▷ **Policy 5.9.2. Promote healthy building design and use as a means to prevent future medical problems.**

The Specific Plan establishes a mix of uses within a compact, walkable area encouraging residents and employees to leave their cars parked and walk to their destinations in Downtown. In walking more residents are likely to increase their overall health.

Noise Element

- ▶ Goal 6.1. Protect persons from exposure to excessive noise.
 - ▷ **Policy 6.1.1. Minimize noise impacts onto noise-sensitive uses.**

The Land Use Plan, specifically the Permitted Uses Table by District ensures that the appropriate uses are located within each land use district. As residential uses are introduced into Downtown the Planning Division is responsible for ensuring that the location of uses within each district is appropriate.

- ▶ Goal 6.2. Protect persons from exposure to excessive noise generated by various modes of transportation.
 - ▷ **Policy 6.2.1. Reduce noise generated by vehicular traffic.**

To ensure that the area is safe for pedestrians and to maintain roadway noise, neighborhood-appropriate speed limits will be preserved within Downtown.

- ▶ Goal 6.3. Minimize noise impacts on noise-sensitive land uses.

- ▶ **Policy 6.3.1. Minimize the amount of noise generated by land uses.**

The Land Use Plan, specifically the Permitted Uses Table by District ensures that the appropriate uses, taking into consideration the amount of noise generated by the use, are located within each land use district. As residential uses are introduced into Downtown the Planning Department is responsible for ensuring that the location of uses within each district is appropriate. Generally any noise impacts resulting from the Specific Plan would be less significant as the Specific Plan proposes than the impacts of the General Plan as the

Open Space Element

- ▶ Goal 7.3. Increase the amount of park acreage.

- ▶ **Policy 7.3.1. Promote the expansion of the existing park system.**

The Specific Plan responds to the City's need for a comprehensive open space system to provide a variety of outdoor opportunities for residents, workers and visitors. To meet this need, the Specific Plan identifies areas with potential for conversion from their existing use to green space. The Open Space Opportunities section identifies areas with potential for redevelopment into a large civic park, pocket parks, and the development of pedestrian parkways throughout Downtown. Developers are required to pay an in-lieu parks fee that will finance the development of future parks in Downtown.

Design Element

- ▶ Goal 8.1. Promote quality design for new, expanded and remodeled construction.

- ▶ **Policy 8.1.1. Promote architectural design of the highest quality.**

The Specific Plan utilizes development standards and design guidelines to maintain and enhance the existing character of Downtown. Quality architectural materials and consistency with the style of adjacent buildings is required.

- ▶ Goal 8.2. Maintain and enhance the appearance of properties.

- ▶ **Policy 8.2.2. Promote compliance with code regulations.**

The Specific Plan encourages the implementation of a Business Improvement District (BID) which encourages business owners to be active in Downtown. Through the BID, code violations can be collectively addressed to improve the area as a whole.

▷ **Policy 8.3.2. Promote City-initiated streetscape enhancement projects.**

The Specific Plan requires the implementation of pedestrian pathways with street trees and other pedestrian amenities to be funded through an in lieu fee paid as new development occurs.

▷ **Policy 8.3.3. Promote the installation of new trees.**

The Specific Plan requires that a minimum of one twenty-four (24") inch box tree with a minimum mature canopy of 15 feet be planted on site for each 500 square feet of provided ground-level on-site open space.

Economic Development Element

▶ Goal 9.2. Promote Downey as an employment center.

▷ **Policy 9.2.1. Promote job-generating uses.**

The Specific Plan identifies specific areas in Downtown that are appropriate for the creation of large employment centers and limits other uses in those districts to ensure that employment opportunities can be created.

▷ **Policy 9.2.2. Promote employment in various economic sectors to shield against business cycles.**

The Specific Plan identifies specific uses that are allowed in each land use district and varies the uses to ensure that new businesses are diverse.