

2.0 - The Plan Program and Concept

The North Montclair Downtown Specific Plan proposes an ambitious mixed-use, transit-oriented district between the Gold Line / Metrolink Station and the Montclair Plaza shopping center.

The vision for the Plan, articulated by the City and community, is that of a walkable, vibrant Town Center that includes multiple uses and activities that take advantage of the major transit amenities to be found in the plan area. This vision, together with the current and projected level of demand for different types of retail and the competitive supply of existing and planned retail in the western Inland Empire, defines what development is appropriate and feasible in North Montclair.

This market-driven program is paired with a series of placemaking policies, to organize the Plan:

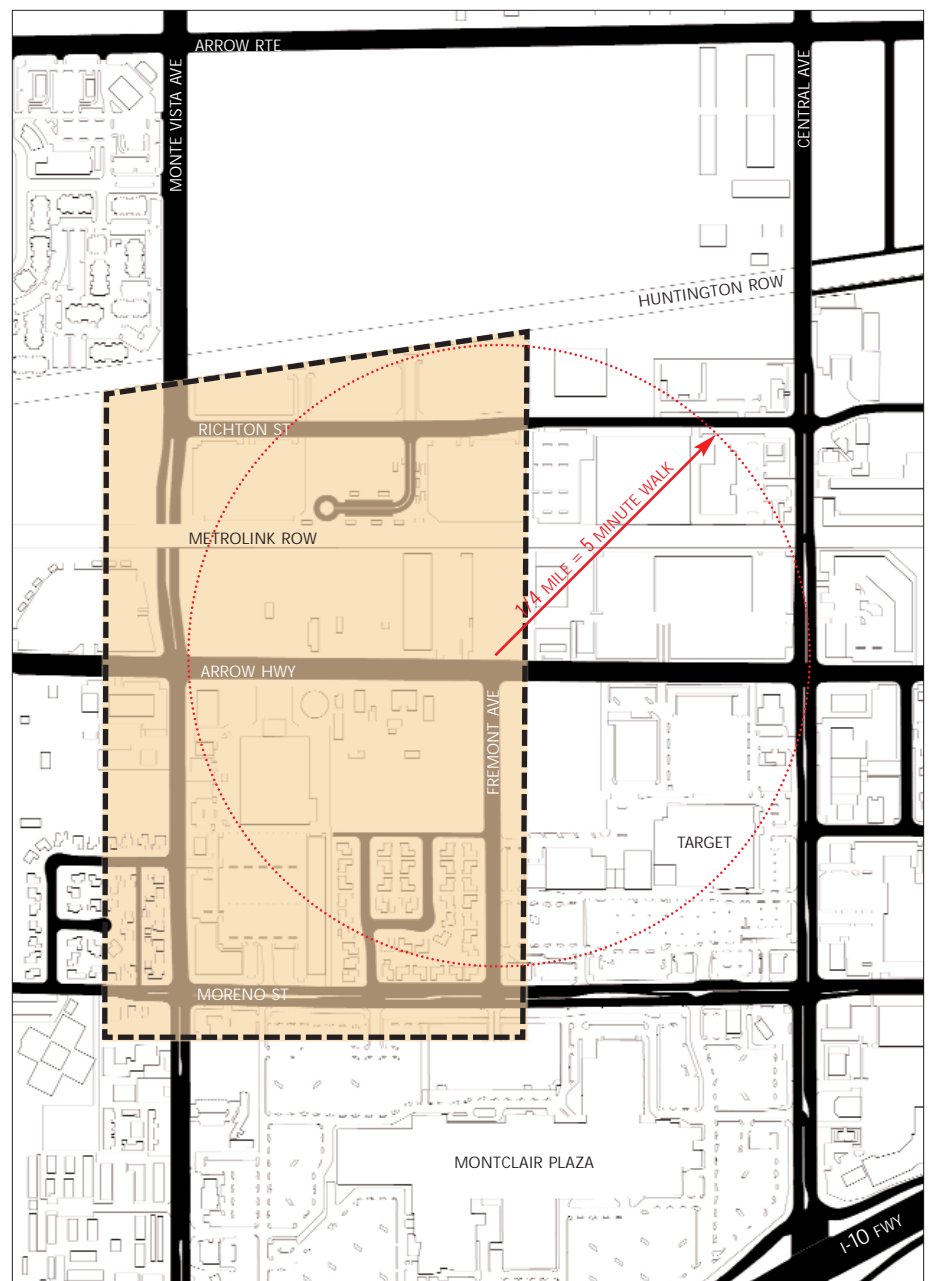
1. Build a variety of housing types, massing configurations and architectural styles in keeping with the spirit of a transit "village." Housing types to include lofts, townhouses and courtyard housing.
2. Build a mix of uses: residential, commercial, office, retail and flex live-work.
3. Activate ground floor frontages with flex uses to enhance the pedestrian activity of the streets.
4. Design a continuous hierarchy of public open spaces, including the transit plaza, numerous parks and retail courts, various streetscapes and the intimate private residential courtyards.
5. Increase the connectivity of both sides of Arrow Highway by providing pedestrian crosswalks and landscaped medians.
6. Rejects the megablock approach, and creates a network of pedestrian-friendly blocks and streets.
7. Integrate parking seamlessly into the project through on-street and subterranean parking, and lined parking garages.
8. Encourage "Park Once" by sharing localized parking for train and bus commuters with retail customers.

The Specific Plan therefore articulates in sequence:

1. A market-driven program of uses and development opportunities. (Section 2.1)
2. An urban design framework establishing planning goals and guidelines related to the large-scale configuration and organization of streets, open space, civic buildings, parking structures, and image-making architectural features. (Section 2.2)
3. Illustrative Projects indicating the potential build-out and phasing of the Plan through detailed design studies of particular sites, including the disposition of programs and architectural types, with representative images of suggested buildings, streets and open spaces. (Chapter 3)

2.1 - The Plan Program

Given the amount of regional retail that exists or is currently under development within the western Inland Empire and the strength of the housing market for both single family and attached residential, it is the purpose of the North Montclair Downtown Specific Plan to create a transit oriented district centered on quality housing with supporting retail and professional services. Because of the current strength of the housing market, and the lack of households in the area to support retail, it is recommended that the first phase of development be primarily residential. Development of a local-serving town center should be feasible in the second phase of the plan, given sufficient supporting residents. Mixed use development will follow. Development of additional major regional-serving retail will depend largely on Montclair Plaza's plans and the performance of Victoria Gardens Town Center in Rancho Cucamonga.



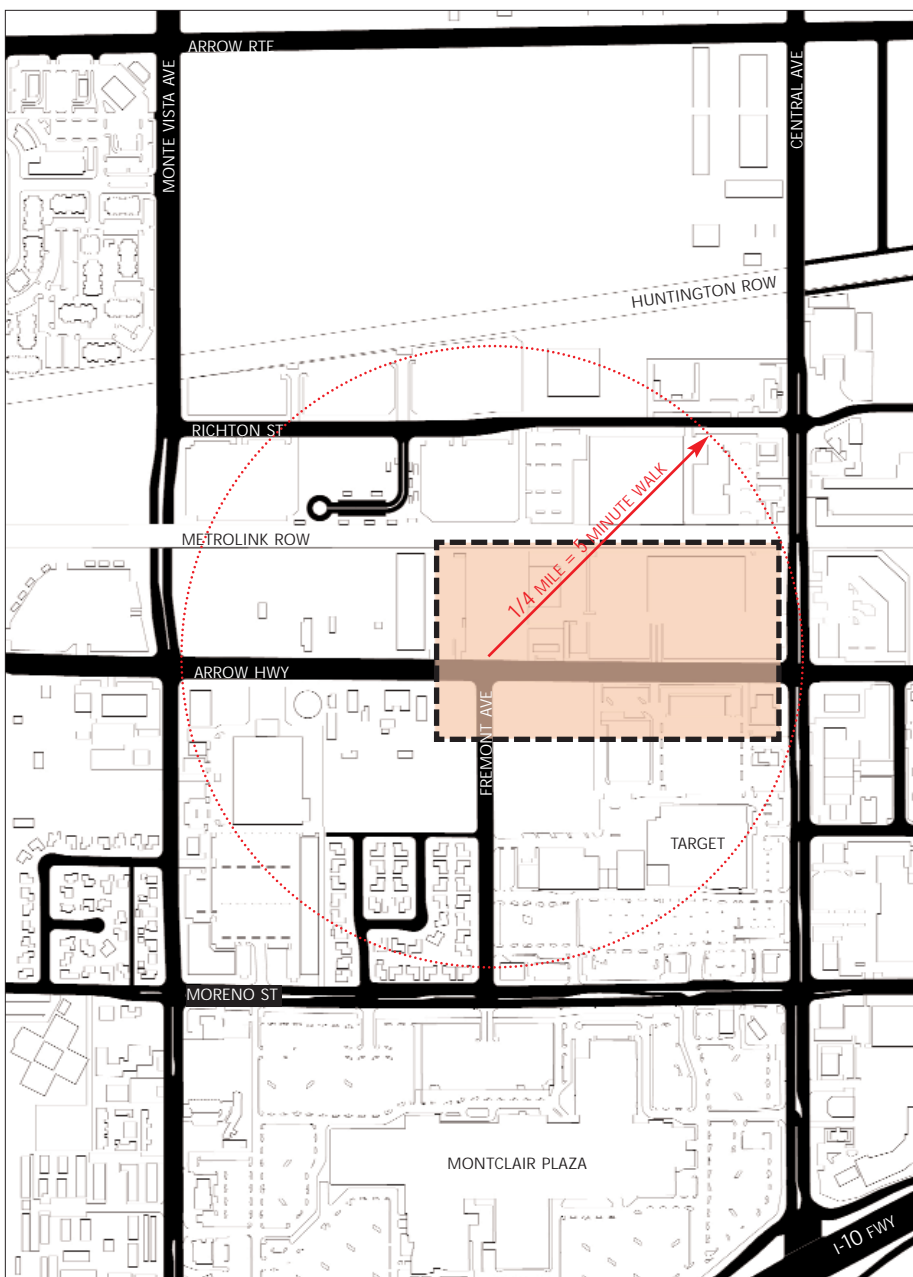
North Montclair Plan - Concentration of Housing

Housing - What was once strictly a single family detached housing market for commuter households seeking more affordable housing outside of Los Angeles County has matured into a multi-tiered housing market supporting development of a diversity of housing types. Detached single family homes have become so expensive and so far beyond the means of most first-time home buyers that for-sale attached units are becoming a viable housing choice in the western Inland Empire. Attached housing projects, within mixed use contexts, are currently under construction and planned for areas just adjacent to the North Montclair Downtown Specific Plan Area.

Given the intense demand for housing in the western Inland Empire, the extremely high price of new detached single family houses in Montclair, the very strong performance of pioneering attached projects in the surrounding area and North Montclair's unique locational advantages and available land supply, the project could absorb a considerable number of households over the life of the Plan: approximately 1,850 households between 2005 and 2020, the estimated life of the Plan.

Residential developers interviewed emphasized the importance of proximity to the transit station and expressed interest in building mostly small two bedroom units at 35 to 40 dwelling units per acre. They foresee targeting small professional households making first-time home purchases, students and other young households interested in renting in a more urban setting. Based on the availability of transit in the area and the types of households targeted, developers agreed that parking ratios for the smaller attached units could be pushed below the standard 2.0 parking spaces per unit to 1.5 spaces per unit. The most dense, attached residential component of the Plan should be located near the transit stations, a major amenity for residential development and convenient for walking to the station and commuting.

Location and Design - It is recommended that most of this housing be located west of Fremont Avenue and as far north as the Montclair-Upland boundary. Most of these properties are not only available for immediate development, they are also best suited for future residential neighborhoods. They are adjacent to existing houses in North Montclair and future residential development in Upland; they are most removed from the auto-oriented commercial development on Central Avenue; and these properties are essentially equi-distant from the primary activity centers of North Montclair - the Montclair Plaza shopping center, the future Town Center at the Transit Station, and the Claremont Village further west. As individual properties are developed, they should contribute towards the creation of an integrated and connected street grid. Streets should be appropriately sized for low-impact residential use, and provide a web of pathways for residents to walk and bike to the adjacent transit, shopping, entertainment opportunities.



North Montclair Plan - Concentration of Local Serving Retail

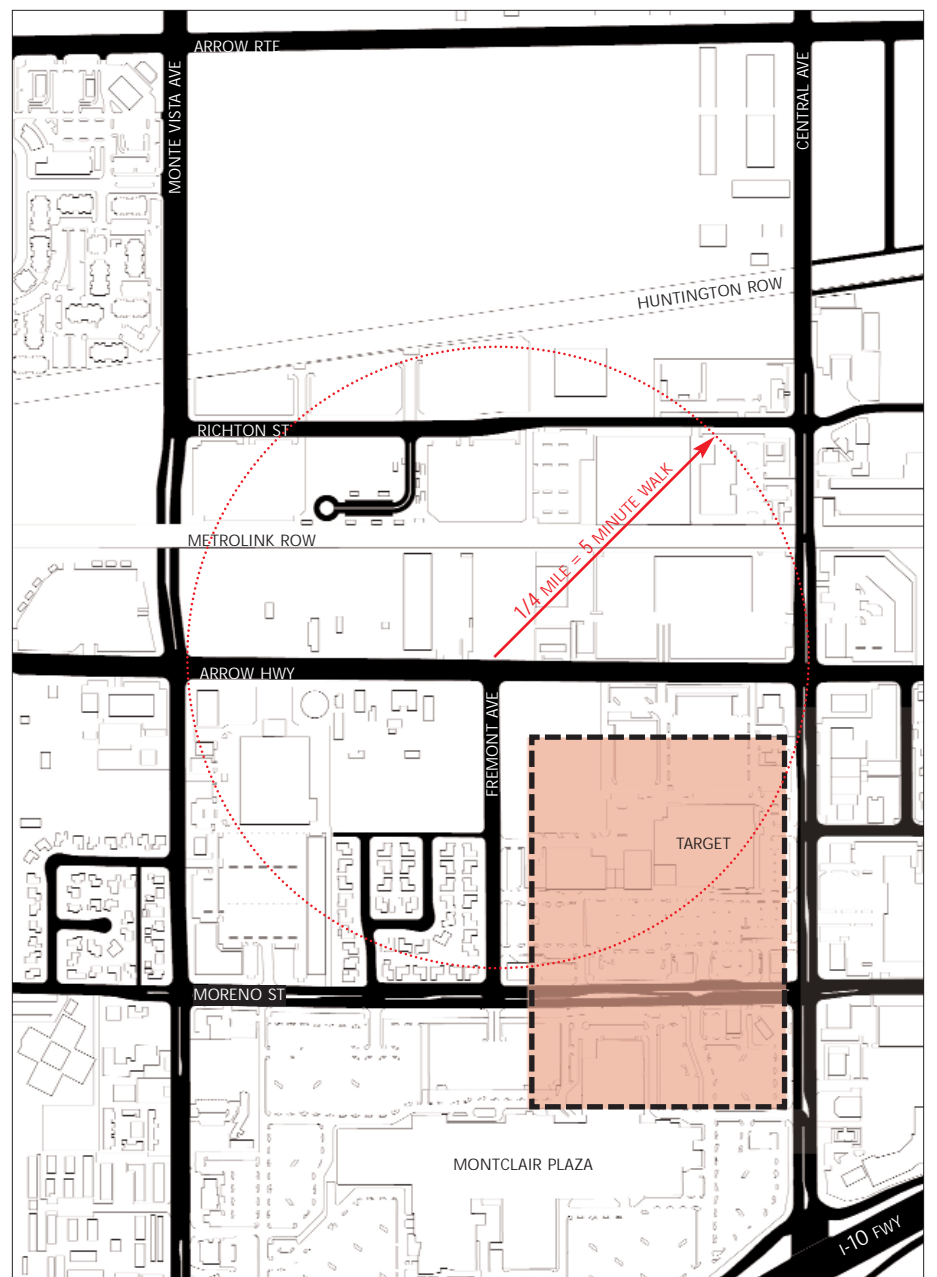
Local Serving Retail - Once approximately 1,000 new housing units are developed in the North Montclair area, in addition to the 500 units in the College Park project to the northwest of the Specific Plan area, a local-serving town center of approximately 90,000 to 130,000 square feet and anchored by a full-service grocery store will become possible. This center will provide new North Montclair residents with daily needs and services, from groceries to dry-cleaning to video rentals.

The local-serving shopping center should be located off Central Avenue or Arrow Highway. Typically, major chain groceries require access from a major arterial with 30,000 ADT and convenient surface parking visible from the arterial. However, chains are becoming more willing to make compromises on location requirements and site and building design in densely developed environments surrounded by affluent and highly educated households. Once the first phases of residential development in the Plan area occur and new households are attracted to North Montclair, chain grocery operators may be willing to develop a store with a more pedestrian-friendly design and site plan.

Mixed Use, Small Office and other Uses - It is recommended that the mixed use portions of the plan allow for multiple ground floor uses, retail or small office or housing, to allow developers maximum flexibility as the market changes with the new households that move to North Montclair. It is estimated that approximately 50,000 to 80,000 square feet of retail and restaurant and 50,000 to 100,000 square feet of small office will eventually be feasible as ground floor uses; however, the evolution of this demand will take time and these increments should not be included in the first phases of development.

Hotel and conference facilities, while not investigated from a market perspective, are also appropriate uses for a mixed use, transit-oriented Town Center district, if well designed and well integrated, and should be allowed under the Plan. Design standards regarding liner retail and structured or underground parking should also be included to ensure that the large, single entry buildings and parking fields that typify such projects in more suburban contexts do not interrupt the integrity and pedestrian character of the district.

Location and Design - The Town Center of North Montclair, comprised of this mix of uses, should be located between the Transit Station and Arrow Highway, extending east to Central Avenue. Although Arrow and Central will obviously provide significant auto-access to support the Town Center, the physical heart of North Montclair should be a pedestrian-oriented square located at the Transit Station facing Fremont Avenue.



North Montclair Plan - Concentration of Regional Serving Retail

Entertainment - After migrating from traditional downtowns to suburban shopping malls, multiplexes are starting to be successfully integrated into new mixed use Town Center projects across the country. Movie theaters can work as ideal night-time anchors, driving foot traffic that supports restaurants and other night-time uses and sharing parking with retail or other day-time uses. Unfortunately, the western Inland Empire cinema market is currently saturated, with approximately 122 screens for a population which, according to industry standards, can support approximately 89 screens. It will be many years before the Montclair area can support sufficient additional screens to interest movie theater chains in building another multiplex in this area. Because of this, any site within the specific plan area designated for a multiplex should be in the later phases of development.

Regional Retail - The amount of additional major regional-serving retail that can be supported within the Plan area is difficult to estimate given the uncertainty of Montclair Plaza's plans and the recent opening of Victoria Gardens. It is recommended that the existing big box within the power center on Moreno Street be consolidated and the parking structure at Montclair Plaza be redeveloped more intensely to accommodate parking for the Plaza and to allow for more intense retail development. The existing Plaza and power center sites should then be able to accommodate additional major regional retail that wishes to locate in Montclair.

It is recommended that, over time, existing regional-serving big box be concentrated along Central Avenue and Moreno Street, closer to the Montclair Plaza, distinct from the mixed use portions of the plan, and farthest from the transit amenities. It is estimated that whatever additional major regional-serving retail can be attracted to North Montclair will fit within the existing mall site, or just across Moreno Street with intensification of the existing Power Center. The existing two story parking garage at Montclair Plaza should be redeveloped to a greater intensity to serve both the Plaza and the retail along Moreno Street.

Location and Design - The expansion of regional retail and entertainment should as much as possible enhance pedestrian connections north towards the Transit Station, Town Center, and planned neighborhoods. A significant public and pedestrian entry to Montclair Plaza should be located on Moreno Street, east of Fremont Avenue. A second north-south street east of Fremont is recommended to connect Montclair Plaza with the Town Center - as the seam between Montclair Plaza, the Town Center, auto-oriented development on Central Avenue, and the neighborhoods to the west, this street should be the principal location for any long-term mixed use development.

CHAPTER 2 : THE PLAN
PROGRAMS AND CONCEPTS



Neighborhood Streets & Parks



Commercial Streets & Plazas



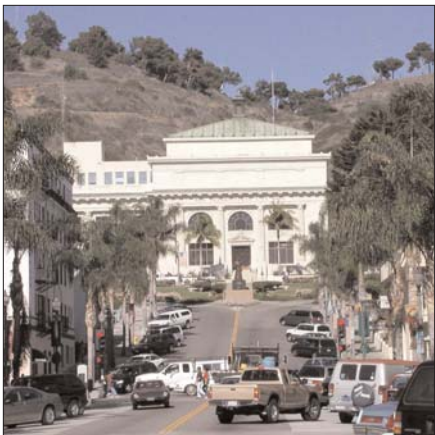
Civic Building and Civic Park



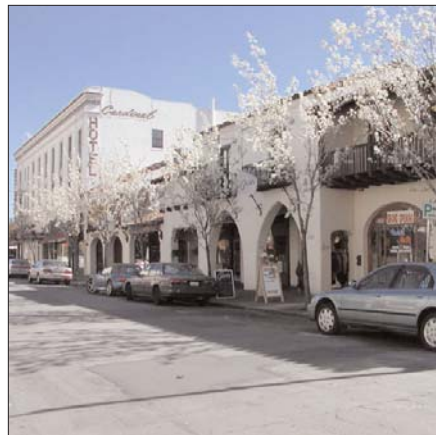
Continuous Retail Frontage



Terminated Street Vista



Terminated Street Vista



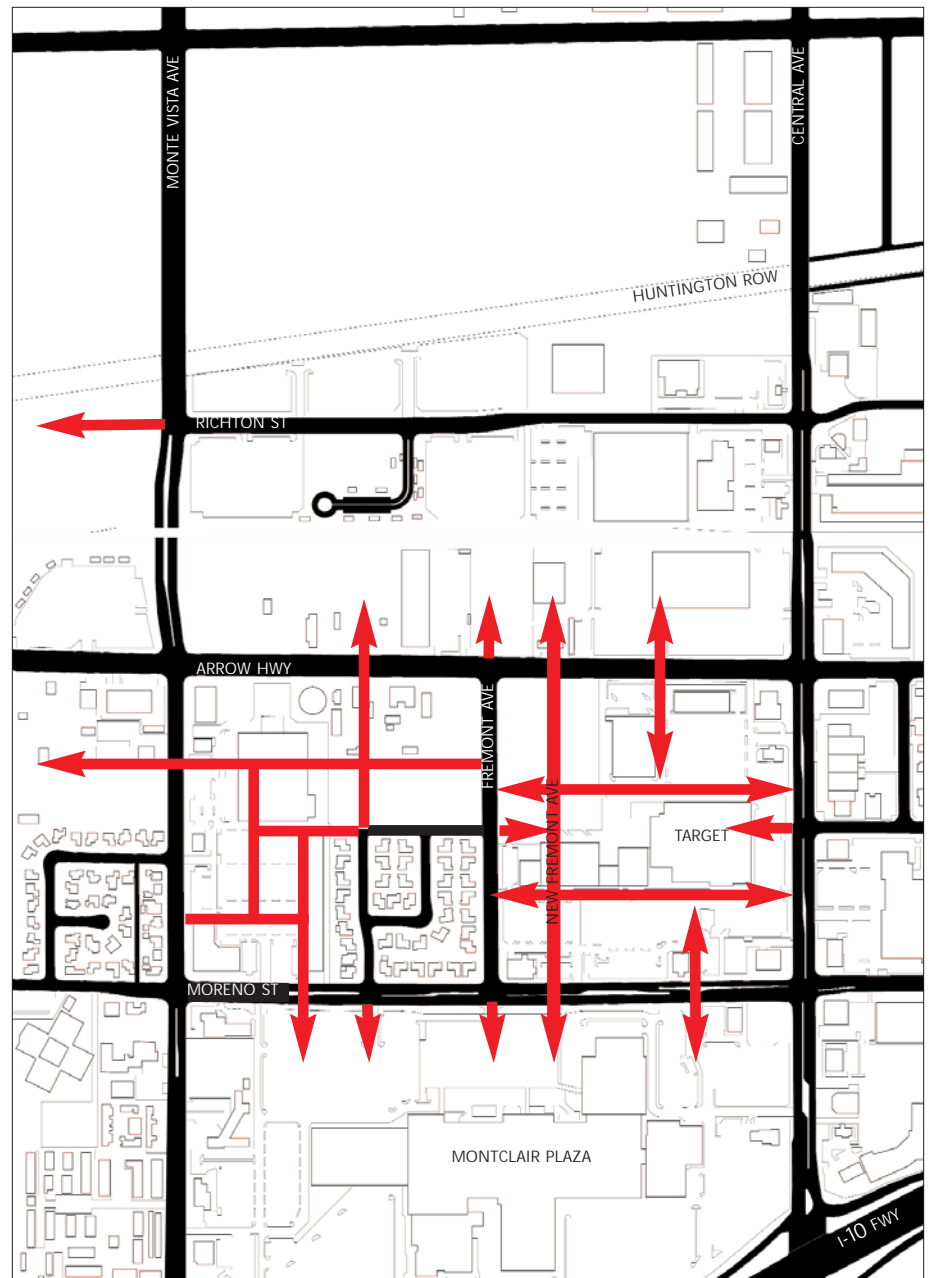
Continuous Retail Arcade

2.2 - The Plan Concept

In addition to the mix of economic and development programs described, the North Montclair Downtown Specific Plan proposes a set of urban design goals and planning guidelines to facilitate the transformation of North Montclair from a suburban, auto-oriented retail zone into a pedestrian-oriented mixed use transit district. This urban design strategy and concept is intended to integrate individual projects into a cohesive district with a clear and unique identity, by providing a physical and architectural framework of future development within the Plan area.

The Plan Concept as outlined here is intended to accomplish the following urban design goals:

1. Establish an identifiable Town Center adjacent to trains
2. Concentrate commercial mixed-use development around the Transit Center
3. Build inter-connected Neighborhoods
4. Connect the District with the Montclair Plaza shopping center
5. Integrate auto-oriented big box retail with pedestrian-oriented neighborhood
6. Connect the District with Claremont Village and Upland's College Park



North Montclair Plan - Street Connections

Preferred Street Extensions and Connections ←

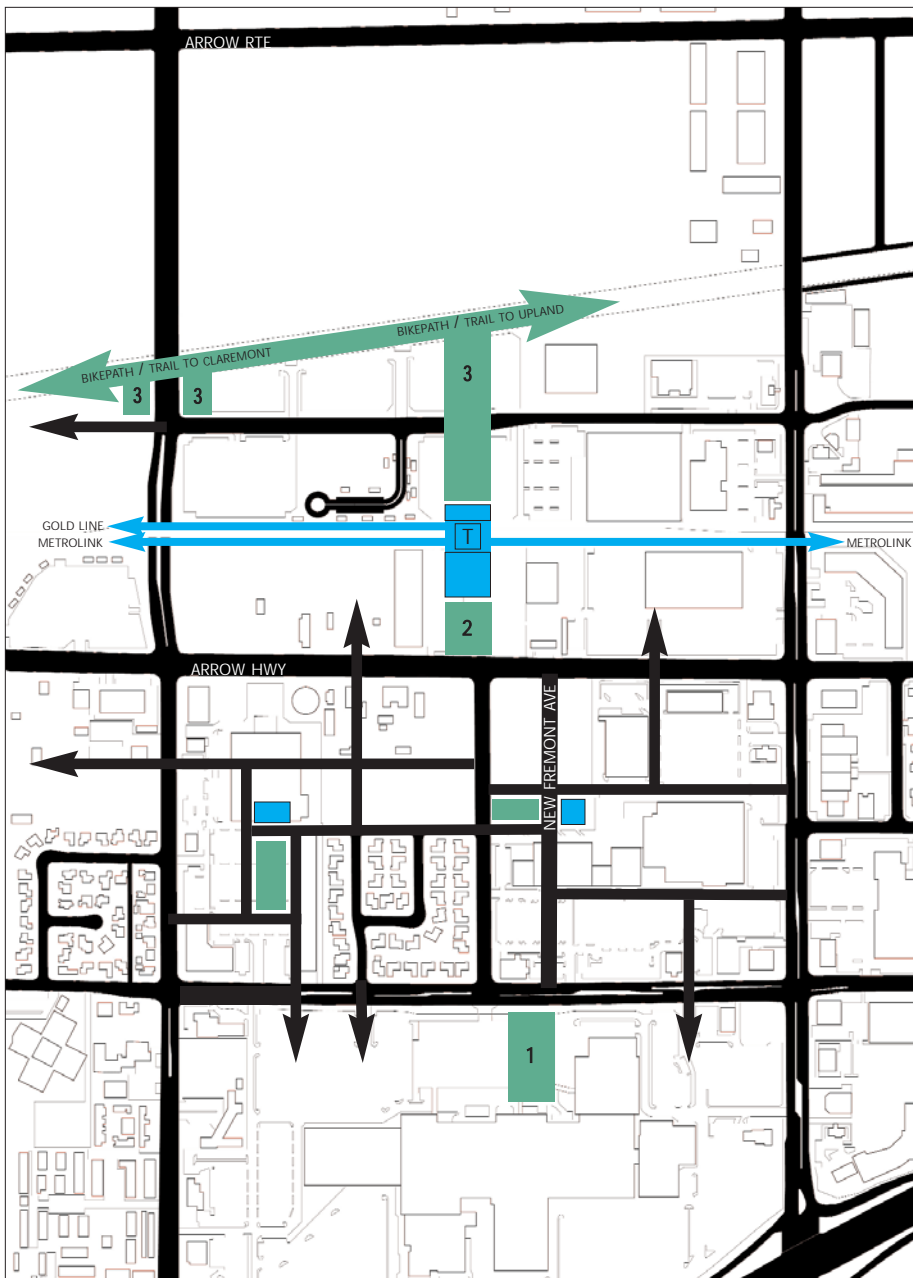
Street Connections - Currently, North Montclair is characterized by "super-block" development - blocks that are well over 800 to 1000 feet in length, and are oriented towards automobile movement. In large measure, this is the result of parcels that have not yet been improved, or are subdivided only as necessary to accommodate big box retail with surface parking.

In contrast, most pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods and villages are located within an inter-connected street grid of blocks no longer than 600 feet in any given direction. To transition North Montclair into a such a mixed-use district requires an increase in the number of streets and reduction of parcel sizes within the Plan area. It is equally important that new streets connect both with each other and existing streets in the Plan area. Development should be interconnected with existing and planned neighborhoods, the future Town Center, and regional retail center to encourage pedestrian activity.

Thus existing streets, parking lot curb cuts and drive aisles should be extended and linked to create a connected street grid. These streets will be sized appropriately to handle low-speed, low-volume neighborhood-oriented traffic, and provided with crosswalks, sidewalks, ample landscaping, and pedestrian lighting to create a pleasant walking environment.

Of the proposed streets, "New Fremont Avenue," located parallel but one block east of Fremont Avenue, is especially important. This street will become the primary axis of mixed-use development connecting North Montclair's economic centers - the transit station, Montclair Plaza shopping center, and auto-oriented big box retail facing Central Avenue. Fremont Avenue itself will remain an important north-south street in the district, but its emphasis will be residential with mixed-use commercial development confined to the intersections at Arrow Highway and Moreno Street, and the roadway will be narrowed appropriately for such an emphasis.

To establish this street grid, it may be necessary to literally and legally subdivide existing parcels; but property owners may opt for a "conceptual" subdivision that provides the physical appearance of smaller parcels - developers may provide streets across their property that are linked with the neighboring streets and consistent with the Plan's street standards. (see Section 5.3.030 Subdivision Standards)



North Montclair Plan - Civic Spaces

- Civic Facilities (Train Station, Community Centers) ■
- Civic Spaces (Squares, Parks, Greenways) ■

Civic Spaces and Facilities - Districts require public sites of unique qualities that establish an identifiable sense of place. This can be achieved through civic spaces and facilities that provide locations for public gatherings and expand the purpose of the district beyond commerce. The creation of an integrated street grid in North Montclair will provide opportunities for a variety of unique civic-oriented open spaces and sites for public facilities. Generally speaking, civic structures and spaces should be coordinated - civic buildings should front public parks and squares - and they should be located at the intersection of significant streets.

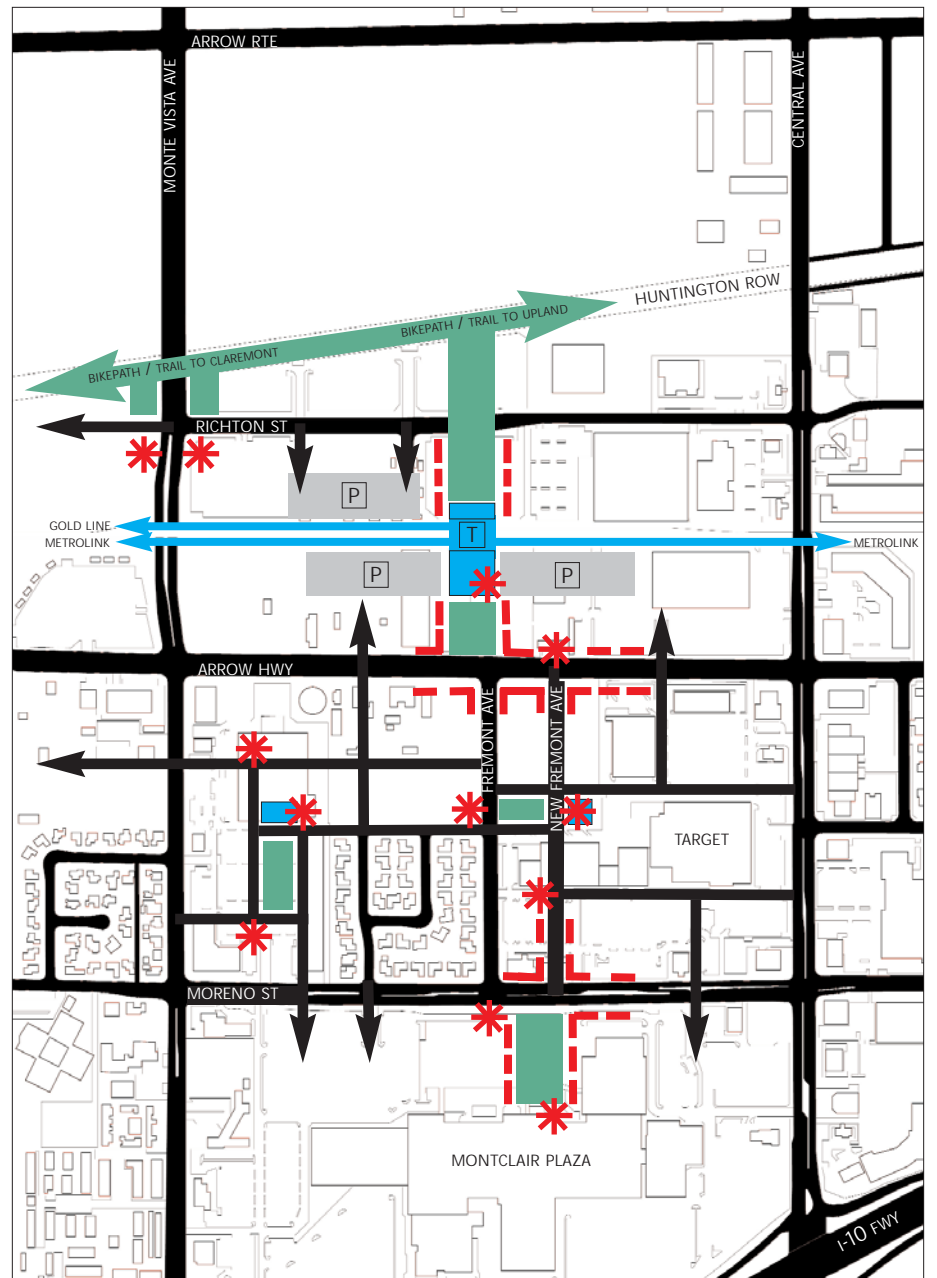
Of the sites identified for civic buildings and squares, two are of particular importance, and are conceived as a linked twins - the binary heart of North Montclair.

The first location, at Fremont Avenue and Moreno Street, should be developed as pedestrian plaza connecting the residential and commercial developments of the North Montclair Downtown Specific Plan with the front door of the Montclair Plaza shopping center. (Identified above as 1)

The second site is the physical and perceptual center of North Montclair - a public square terminated by a station building associated with the Metrolink and Gold Line commuter trains. Although today access the Metrolink platforms is from the north side of the tracks, the Plan proposes that the primary access be from the south, oriented towards Arrow Highway. This orientation will create a square with both enhanced pedestrian access for residents in the core area of the transit district and increased visibility to automotive traffic on Arrow Highway for retailers. The square and station is located between Arrow Highway and the Metrolink tracks, between Fremont Avenue and "New Fremont Avenue." (Identified above as 2)

The axis of this square should be continued north across the railroad tracks to the Huntington right-of-way. This right-of-way is identified as a corridor for bike paths and pedestrian trails to Claremont Village and Upland. At the intersection of this corridor and Monte Vista Avenue, an ornamental and symbolic garden should be created to establish a visual gateway to Montclair. (Identified above as 3)

Additional sites identified by the Plan are of lesser significance, but are intended to provide for neighborhood-oriented open space, like playgrounds and dog runs, and may be anchored by community facilities such as senior centers, public pools, and/or recreation centers.



North Montclair Plan - Architectural Features

- Architectural Feature (Tower, Prominent Facade or Building Entry) *
- Principal Retail Frontages (Continuous Storefronts or Arcades) ---
- Proposed Parking Structures P

Parking - Parking for transit commuters and retail customers should be provided in a series of lots or structures orientated parallel and adjacent to the railroad tracks. These are the best locations to minimize both the visual and traffic impact of the parking structures, and the noise of the trains on adjacent development.

Architectural Features - The terminus of principal streets and the face of major parks are locations suited for unique architectural features, such as towers, prominent building entries or signage. Gateway locations (such as at Huntington right-of-way and Monte Vista Avenue) are also appropriate sites for prominent architectural features.

Significant squares, plazas, and intersections should be ringed with active ground level building facades, which may be continuous storefronts or arcades.