



3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The current Duarte Station Specific Plan was adopted and the EIR certified by the City on December 10, 2013. This proposed project represents a comprehensive amendment and update to the adopted Specific Plan. This chapter describes the proposed Duarte Station Specific Plan Update components and actions addressed throughout the EIR. As explained by CEQA Guidelines Section 15124 (Project Description), the project description that follows has been detailed to the extent needed for adequate evaluation of potential environmental impacts.

3.1 PROJECT LOCATION

Regionally, the project site is located in the City of Duarte (City or Duarte) in Los Angeles County. Duarte is located in the northcentral portion of the San Gabriel Valley, approximately 21 miles northeast of the City of Los Angeles. Duarte is situated at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains and is bordered by the City of Irwindale to the south, the City of Monrovia to the west, the City of Bradbury and the Angeles National Forest to the north, and the City of Azusa to the east; refer to *Exhibit 3-1, Regional Vicinity*.

Locally, the project site is located at the northwest corner of Duarte Road and Highland Avenue. The project site is bounded by Evergreen Street and the Foothill Freeway (Interstate 210) to the north, Highland Avenue to the east, a single-family residential neighborhood to the west, and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro)-owned railroad right-of-way (ROW) and Duarte Road to the south; refer to *Exhibit 3-2, Local Vicinity*.

3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

EXISTING LAND USES

The approximately 19.08-acre site comprises four parcels under separate ownerships (refer to *Exhibit 3-3, Specific Plan Area*). The parcels are developed with a mix of industrial uses totaling approximately 313,955 square feet.

- Parcel 1 (Assessor Identification Number [AIN] 8528-011-023), at 1801 Highland Avenue, which abuts the Metro Gold Line station, is approximately 6.60 acres in size and includes a 128,466-square-foot warehouse building occupied by multiple tenants.
- Parcel 2 (AIN 8528-011-025), at 1700 Business Center Drive, located in the center of the plan area, is approximately 7.75 acres in size and includes a 114,599-square-foot industrial building currently occupied by Woodward-Duarte. Parcel 2 under the original Duarte Station Specific Plan and EIR was subsequently split into what are now referred to as Parcels 2 and 4 since approval of the original Specific Plan.
- Parcel 4 (AIN 852-8011-906), located at 1789 Business Center Drive, in the center of the plan area and accessible from Highland Avenue, is approximately 1.41 acres in size and is currently a Metro Gold Line parking lot. The site is vacant.
- Parcel 3 (AIN 8528-011-024), at 1716 Evergreen Street, located in the northern portion of the plan area, is approximately 3.32 acres in size and includes a 70,890-square-foot warehouse building occupied by multiple tenants.

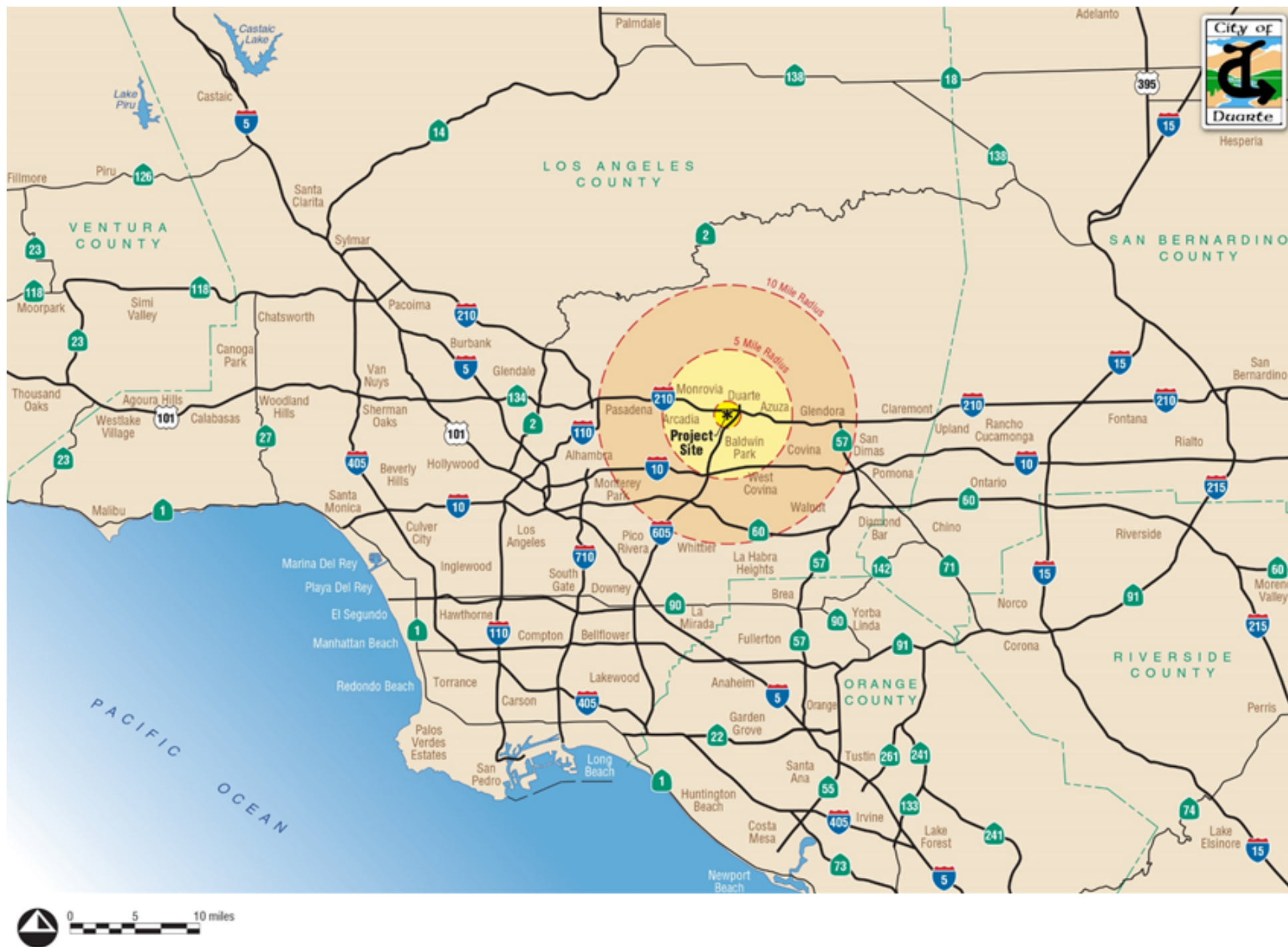
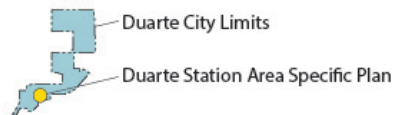
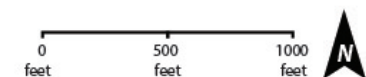


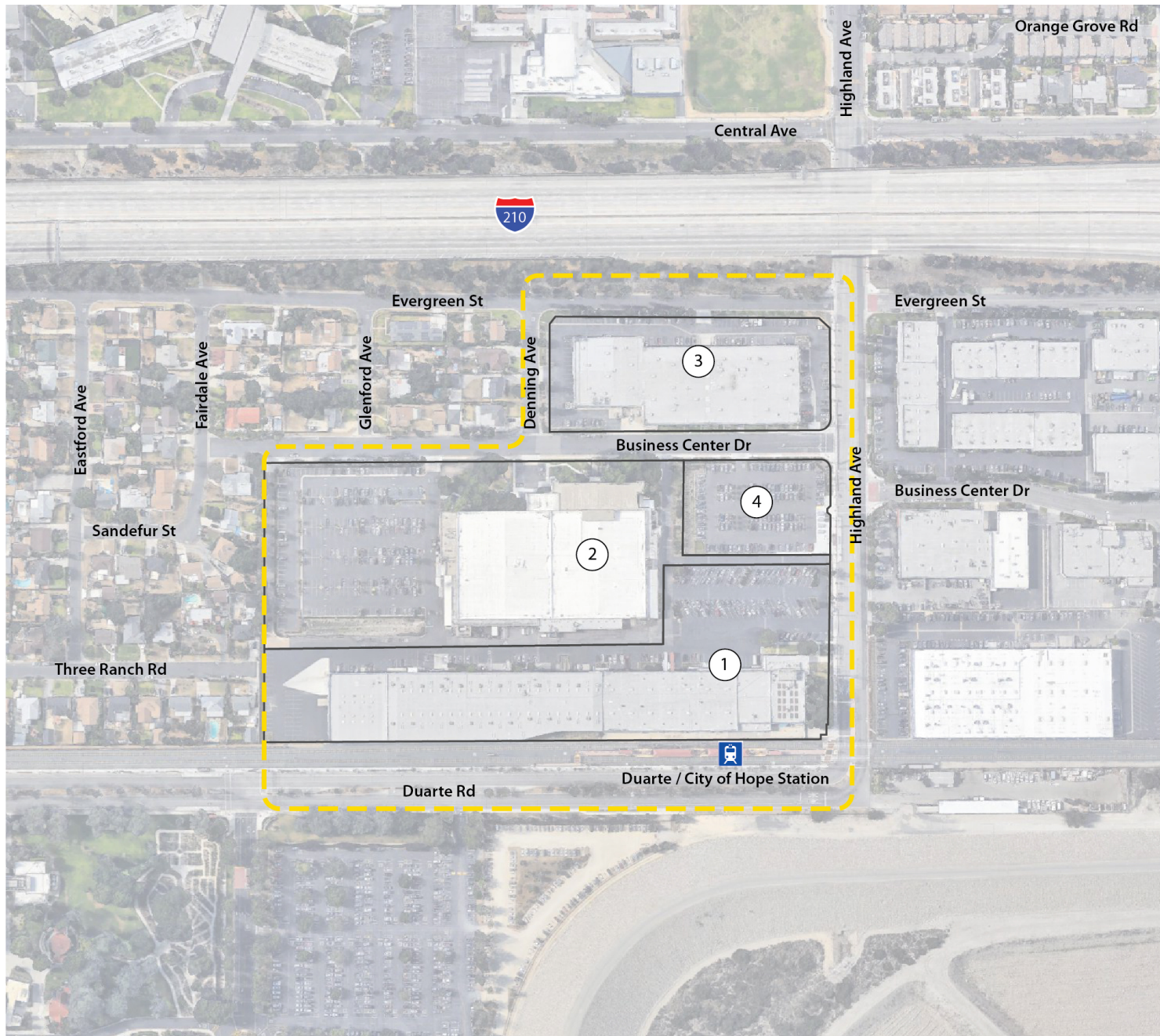
Figure 3-1 Regional Vicinity Map

Duarte Station Specific Plan Subsequent EIR



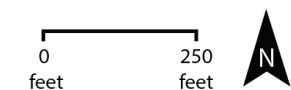
- ■ ■ ■ Duarte Station Area Specific Plan Boundary
- - - - Duarte / Irwindale City Limits
- ||||| LA Metro: Gold Line





- ① Parcel 1
6.60 acres
AIN: 8528-011-023
- ② Parcel 2
7.75 acres
AIN: 8528-011-025
- ③ Parcel 3
3.32 acres
AIN: 8528-011-024
- ④ Parcel 4
1.41 acres
AIN: 8528-011-906

Total = 19.08 acres



Source:
LA County Assessor. July 22, 2019
Property Assessment Information System.
(maps.assessor.lacounty.gov)



SURROUNDING LAND USES

The project site is surrounded by the following uses:

- North: Evergreen Street and Interstate 210 immediately bound the site to the north, with single-family residential uses located to the north across Business Center Drive.
- West: An approximately 204-unit single-family residential neighborhood is located south of Evergreen Street, east of Buena Vista Street, north of Duarte Road, and west of the project site.
- South: The Metro-owned railroad right-of-way is directly adjacent to the project site. The City of Hope medical research campus and the Santa Fe Dam Recreational Area, owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and operated by Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, are located in the City of Irwindale to the south, across Duarte Road.
- East: The Duarte/Lewis Business Center occupies approximately 40 acres to the east, across Highland Avenue, south of Interstate 210, and west of the San Gabriel Freeway (Interstate 605).

3.3 EXISTING GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING DESIGNATIONS

The Duarte General Plan designates the project site as the Duarte Station Specific Plan (formerly the Gold Line Station Area Development Specific Plan). The zoning map designates the project site as Specific Plan #18. The current Duarte Station Specific Plan is consistent with the General Plan and allows the following uses (see *Table 3-1*):

Table 3-1: Existing Specific Plan - Master Land Use Plan

Land Use Category	Density/Intensity	Acres
Station Plaza Mixed Use	--	0.81
Mixed Use (non-residential) Mixed Use (residential)	2.0 FAR Max 70 du/ac Min 40 du/ac	12.06
High Density Residential	Max 70 du/ac Min 40 du/ac	2.55
Open Space	--	0.80
Roads(A)	--	2.87
Total Acreage		19.09(A)
Notes: (A) The original EIR for the Duarte Station Specific Plan assumes that roads comprise 2.86 acres for a total of 19.08 acres.		

This project will revise the existing Duarte Station Specific Plan Master Land Use Plan and allowable development; the project also includes amendments to the General Plan to achieve consistency in the text description of the Specific Plan.



The following text from the 2013 amended *General Plan* Land Use Element describes the intent of the original Duarte Station Specific Plan (referred to as the DSSP).

“The City’s 2007 General Plan designated the 19.08-acre parcels (3) as the Gold Line Station Area Development Specific Plan land use designation. The DSSP project required that General Plan Amendment 13-1 be adopted to reflect the community’s commitment to a vibrant, mixed-use transit village near the light rail station. General Plan Amendment 13-1 amended the land use designation from Gold Line Station Area Development Specific Plan to Duarte Station Specific Plan for the three parcels identified in the Plan Area. The DSSP would permit the maximum development potential of up to 475 high-density residential uses, 250 hotel rooms, 400,000 square feet of office, and 12,000 square feet of commercial uses.”

Development Code Section 19.22.010 describes the Specific Plan zone (SP zone) as a zone that provides for 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.

GENERAL PLAN LAND USE ELEMENT

Land Use Element Table LU-4 includes the original planned land use and/or development densities/intensities for the Duarte Station Specific Plan area. As indicated in Table LU-4, the current General Plan projects 475 dwelling units, 400,000 square feet (sf) of retail, 12,000 sf of office space, and a 250-room hotel. Table LU-4 projects an anticipated density of 40 to 70 dwelling units per acre (DU/acre) and stipulates a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) per acre of 2.0. The current General Plan projects a population of 1,430 in the Duarte Station Specific Plan area. These projected General Plan land use and/or development densities will be amended concurrently with the Specific Plan Amendment to address buildout consistent with the updated Specific Plan and development scenario presented in this Chapter.

GENERAL PLAN HOUSING ELEMENT

The 2014-2021 Housing Element identifies the Duarte Station Specific Plan as a key component of the sites inventory, with the ability to provide up to 475 housing units. The Housing Element includes the following objective related to the Specific Plan:

Program 15: Provide zoning and development standards to facilitate residential and mixed-use development within the Duarte Station TOD, including incentives for the inclusion of affordable units.

3.4 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The proposed updated Duarte Station Specific Plan looks to achieve the following goals and objectives consistent with General Plan land use policy direction:

1. GOAL: A MIXTURE OF LAND USES

- a. *Objective:* Develop a flexible mixed-use land use pattern that incorporates residential opportunities with options for retail, office, research and development, and hospitality,



and that will effectively complement each other and provide maximum land use efficiency, while providing economic and social benefits to all users.

- b. *Objective:* Program retail uses that are neighborhood and transit station serving.

2. GOAL: AN ECONOMICALLY FEASIBLE DEVELOPMENT

- a. *Objective:* Provide opportunities for adaptive reuse of existing buildings, and design new non-residential spaces with flexibility to allow for shifts in market demand and allow options throughout various economic cycles and scenarios.
- b. *Objective:* Create a range of residential unit types that will be accessible to residents of all income levels.
- c. *Objective:* Provide residential opportunities to assist the City of Duarte in meeting its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) objectives.
- d. *Objective:* Encourage the development of a hotel to create local jobs, support City of Hope lodging needs, provide community meeting space, and increase tax revenues within the community.

3. GOAL: PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

- a. *Objective:* Create a development pattern that effectively provides for efficient and comfortable pedestrian movement and connectivity throughout the site.
- b. *Objective:* Give precedence to pedestrians and foster multimodal transportation with bicycle, pedestrian, and transit access.
- c. *Objective:* Provide supportive commercial uses and an active street frontage on Highland Avenue that facilitates a pedestrian friendly experience and links to other centers in the city.

4. GOAL: SUPERIOR URBAN DESIGN

- a. *Objective:* Allow for building types that will achieve desired density ranges to establish a critical mass of residents and employees to support the transit station, maximize transit ridership, and support retail spaces and local employment centers.
- b. *Objective:* Minimize setbacks to allow buildings to frame and activate the street.
- c. *Objective:* Use trees, shrubs and other landscape and hardscape materials along streets to provide shading, screening, and human scale.
- d. *Objective:* Promote high quality architectural design to establish a contemporary design character that creates an identity in the Duarte Station Specific Plan area.
- e. *Objective:* Establish context-based standards and guidelines that address specific design concerns while also allowing for creativity and flexibility in development projects.



5. GOAL: OUTDOOR SPACES

- a. *Objective:* Provide outdoor spaces—such as an urban green space, public plaza, promenade, or linear park—that provide a transition between the station and the surrounding transit village uses and facilitates pedestrian movement and/or public gathering.
- b. *Objective:* Encourage rooftop open space areas to increase the amount and the quality of open space while taking advantage of quality views from the site.
- c. *Objective:* Program outdoor space(s) to accommodate the needs of various user groups, such as residents, employees, commuters, and visitors.

6. GOAL: AWARENESS OF SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENT

- a. *Objective:* Provide opportunities for new goods and services uses to support surrounding residents, students, and employees within and around the Duarte Station Specific Plan area.
- b. *Objective:* Provide for appropriate transitions with adjacent existing lower-intensity residential uses through height limits, articulation and modulation requirements, design guidelines, and landscape requirements.
- c. *Objective:* Upgrade the existing streetscape infrastructure and solidify pedestrian connections between the Plan Area, Duarte Station, and critical areas of interest around the site.
- d. *Objective:* Consider the future needs of the City of Hope as part of land use planning.

7. GOAL: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

- a. *Objective:* Encourage transit-oriented development that supports multimodal opportunities and adhere to Levels of Sustainable Development Practices as prescribed in Chapter 19.52 of the City's Development Code.
- b. *Objective:* Ensure that construction and demolition waste is disposed of in accordance with all City regulations and standards.
- c. *Objective:* Consider building layout, siting, and building design to not preclude alternative energy production on-site.
- d. *Objective:* Maximize energy efficiency through local and state standards, indoor environmental quality, energy-efficient lighting, building orientation, shading, and implementation of LEED principles (or similar) and/or attaining LEED Certification.
- e. *Objective:* Reduce heat island effect through site planning and selection of landscape and hardscape materials.



- f. *Objective:* Incorporate water-efficient design features such as permeable surfaces, collection devices, biofiltration devices, green rooftops, cisterns, berms and swales, and/or green rooftops.
- g. *Objective:* Include drought-tolerant and climate-appropriate landscape within the Specific Plan area.

3.5 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

BACKGROUND

Beginning in 2005, the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority (Authority) began working with the City of Duarte to review the preliminary construction plans for light rail transit (LRT). At that time, the Authority introduced the idea of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) to cities along the LRT corridor and the benefits it may present to communities. The idea of TOD resonated with the City Council, and the City began to contemplate the integration of TOD into the City's land use documents. In August 2007, the City Council adopted a comprehensively updated General Plan that included the re-designation of the approximately 19 acres of industrial land uses near the future Gold Line Station into the Gold Line Station Area Development Specific Plan designation. In 2007 and 2008, the City participated in a Caltrans Community Based Transportation Grant. The grant was sponsored by the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments and produced a TOD visioning study for the project site based upon significant public outreach, a joint City Council and Planning Commission workshop with over 150 residents in attendance, and a summary presentation before the City Council in April 2008. All of these efforts have served as a catalyst for both the City Council and the community to realize a TOD development at the project site.

Since 2008, the City has entertained multiple development teams that have shown interest in initiating a TOD development at the project site. The City had received a preliminary application for a development project, and because the Duarte City Council is committed to the realization of development in the area, it supported City Staff in submitting a Metro TOD Planning Grant. The City was awarded the grant which led to efforts to create the original Duarte Station Specific Plan to replace the Gold Line Station Specific Plan. The existing Duarte Station Specific Plan was adopted and the EIR certified by the City Council on December 10, 2013.

This proposed project represents a comprehensive amendment and update to the adopted Duarte Station Specific Plan. The City has also received a new preliminary application for a development within the amended Duarte Station Specific Plan area, The Residences at Duarte Station, on parcels 8528-011-025 and 8528-011-906. This development is described in greater detail below.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The project is the adoption and long-term implementation of the update Duarte Station Specific Plan. The updated Duarte Station Specific Plan identifies the long-term vision and objectives for private development and public improvements within the plan area. The Specific Plan update establishes the general type, parameters, and character of the development aimed at creating an integrated, vibrant, mixed-use transit village that allows for residential uses, office, hospitality uses, supporting commercial uses (such as retail and services), and urban open spaces. The Metro Gold Line transit station on the project's southern edge acts as the gateway to the area. A



strong emphasis is placed on walkability through a pleasant sidewalk environment where buildings frame the street.

The Duarte Station Specific Plan allows for a flexible mix of uses near transit, facilitating economic development in Duarte. A major goal of the planning effort is to achieve a coordinated, cohesive environment and character in the plan area using form-based code approaches and recommended streetscape design improvements.

Additionally, the updated Specific Plan reorganizes the existing Specific Plan to structure its provisions in a way that can be more effectively communicated by City staff and accessible to a wider audience. This reorganization consists of consolidating *Section 3 - Land Use and Development Standards* and *Section 5 - Design Guidelines* into one section and replacing existing Section 3, thus moving *Infrastructure and Services* to Section 4 of the Specific Plan.

The updated Duarte Station Area Specific Plan is organized as follows:

Section 1 – Introduction

Section 2 – Development Plan

Section 3 – Development Standards and Design Guidelines

Section 4 – Infrastructure and Services

Section 5 – Administration

Section 6 – Appendices

As used in this EIR, the terms "Duarte Station Specific Plan," "Specific Plan," "Plan" (when specifically distinguished from another plan), and "project" are synonymous and refer to all aspects of the Duarte Station Specific Plan update.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

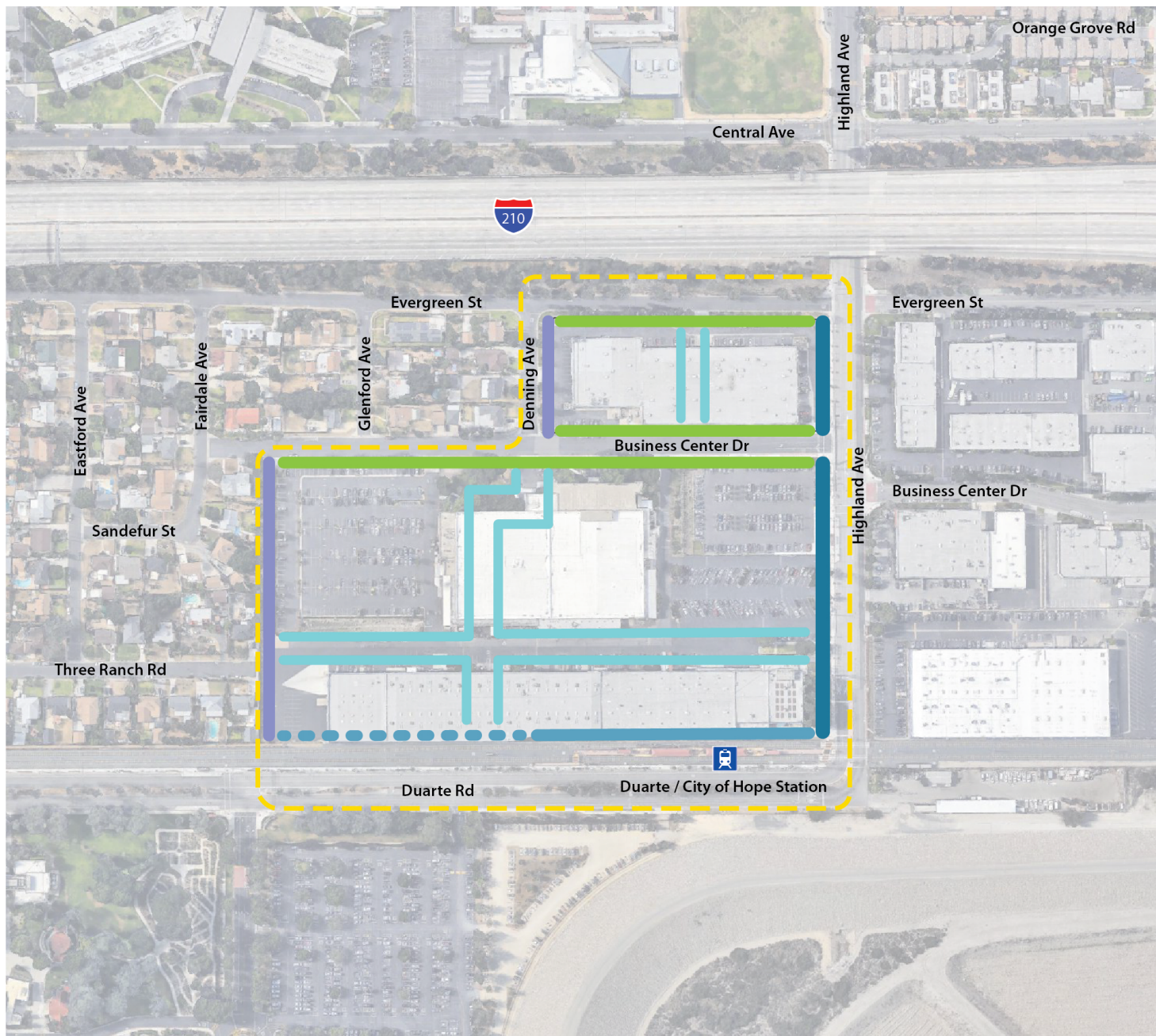
Form-Based Code and Frontage Standards

The amended Specific Plan uses a form-based code approach to govern the design of building form and elements within the planning area. This form-based approach is an effective way to realize the project objectives and place-making goals, as it focuses on creating an enhanced streetscape experience, land use flexibility, and attractive building and amenities design site-wide.

The provisions and standards of the form-based code are structured by two general levels of applicability: General Development Standards and Frontage Type (refer to *Exhibit 3-4, Frontage Types*). General development standards govern building massing and form requirements such as height and floor area ratio and, to an extent, land uses. Frontage Type standards are based on the location and visibility of each project's frontage and are structured to allow for certain building forms, designs, and elements that are optimized based on streetscape context and to provide design flexibility. Tables, exhibits, and maps outlining the provisions of General Development and Frontage standards are set forth in Section 3 – Development Standards and Design Guidelines of the amended Specific Plan.

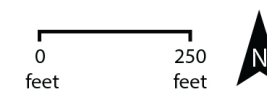


Insert Figure 3-4
Frontage Types
8.5 x 11, color



Frontage Class Plan

- Highland Frontage
- Secondary Frontage
- Rail Frontage - primary
- Rail Frontage - secondary
- Internal Frontage*
- Neighborhood Frontage



* Not exact location of Internal Frontage; actual locations determined by site design.

Figure 3-4 Frontage Types

Duarte Station Specific Plan Subsequent EIR



Proposed Development Project Located within the Specific Plan Area

The Residences at Duarte Station

The City has received a preliminary application for a development project on parcels 8528-011-025, called The Residences at Duarte Station. The development comprises a two-building residential development on parcel 8528-011-025 consisting of 619 dwelling units, 1,082 parking spaces (located in two parking structures), and 157,195 square feet of open space, much of which is in the form of a linear park that doubles as a north-south pedestrian connector. The total proposed net square footage of the project is 454,148 square feet and the proposed maximum building height is 66 feet. Height to top of parking structures is 74 feet; height to top of roof deck amenity parapets, including the clubhouse and fitness spaces, is 86 feet. On-site amenities are to include the linear park, pocket parks, adventure play areas, fitness and pool facilities, and rooftop decks.

The western edge of the project site is buffered from existing single-family residential uses with a driveway fire lane/buffer indicated on the plans. Landscaping throughout the site is demonstrated in the landscaping plan and includes lawn courts for community gathering and trees within courtyards and along frontages. The leasing office and primary access would occur via an entry court located on Business Center Drive.

Circulation within the site is through a network of pedestrian paths. Parking is centralized within two large parking structures that are wrapped by five-story residential structures. Several access drives and the fire lane/buffer connect the parking structures to Business Center Drive. A private drive is proposed to encircle the project site, with both ends linking with Business Center Drive.

The plan set for this development are shown in Appendix J.

Duarte Intergenerational Housing Project on Parcel 8528-011-906

The City has also received a second preliminary application for the Duarte Intergenerational Housing Project to build an affordable housing development on parcel 8528-011-906 that would comprise a mixed-use building, with ground-floor commercial use and up to 80 units of rent-restricted affordable housing. Conceptual plans for this development are shown in Appendix K.

GROWTH OVER EXISTING CONDITIONS

As shown in *Table 3-2, Growth Relative to Existing Conditions*, the anticipated growth in residential and non-residential uses beyond existing year 2019 conditions within the plan area is:

- Addition of 1,400 dwelling units
- Reduction of 313,955 square feet industrial uses
- Addition of 100,000 square feet of nonresidential (office) uses
- Addition of 12,500 square feet of retail/restaurant uses

**Table 3-2
Growth Relative to Existing Conditions**

Land Use	Residential (units)	Non-Residential (square feet)
Existing		
Warehouse/Industrial		313,955
Total		313,955
Proposed Specific Plan		
Retail/Restaurant		12,500
Office		100,000
High Density Residential	1,400	
Total	1,400	112,500
Difference Between Existing Conditions and Specific Plan Assumptions	+1,400	-201,455

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT

The project will include a General Plan Amendment to revise the text of the current General Plan to match anticipated buildout consistent with the amended Duarte Station Specific Plan.

3.6 PROJECT PHASING

To address development interest and market conditions, an amended phasing approach is presented in Section 2 – Development Plan of the Specific Plan. This updated approach adjusts the scope, scale, and area of Phase I and combines the remaining phases outlined in the existing plan into a single Future Phase. This amendment also necessitates amendments to Section 5 – Administration (formerly Section 6), where the existing phasing strategy is presented in a matrix.

3.7 PERMITS AND APPROVALS

The City of Duarte is the Lead Agency for the project and has discretionary authority over the project which includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Certification of the Final EIR;
- Adoption of a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP);
- Adoption of the amendment to the Duarte Station Specific Plan;
- Approval of a Vesting Tentative Tract Map for The Residences at Duarte Station, for condominium purposes;
- Adoption of a General Plan Amendment consisting of text changes to the Land Use Element to be consistent with the updated Duarte Station Specific Plan;
- Discretionary review as necessary, including any applicable CEQA review, for other current and future individual public and private development proposals in the planning area, such as the Duarte Intergenerational Housing Project.



Future individual public and private development proposals in the Specific Plan area would be expected to also require review or approvals from other jurisdictional agencies, including, but not limited to:

- California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- County of Los Angeles
- Duarte Unified School District
- Los Angeles County Fire Department
- Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
- County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (LASCD)
- Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (METRO)
- South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)
- Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)
- California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)

3.8 AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION MEASURES

In compliance with Assembly Bill (AB) 52 as well as Senate Bill (SB) 18, on May 13, 2019, the City sent out notification of the project and the preparation of a SEIR. The City received one request back from the Kizh Nation of the San Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians to consult

with the City on the project. As a result of consultation conducted between the City of Duarte and the Kizh Nation of the San Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians, the City proposes to implement the following measures to avoid and minimize potential impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs) in the event of the unanticipated discovery of archaeological or cultural resources during earthmoving operations conducted under the Specific Plan.

CULT-1: Conduct Archaeological Sensitivity Training for Construction Personnel. The applicant shall retain a qualified professional archaeologist who meets U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications and Standards to conduct an archaeological sensitivity training for construction personnel prior to commencement of excavation activities. The training session shall be carried out by a cultural resource professional with expertise in archaeology, who meets the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications and Standards. The training session will include a handout and will focus on how to identify archaeological resources that may be encountered during earthmoving activities and the procedures to be followed in such an event, the duties of archaeological monitors, and the general steps a qualified professional archaeologist would follow in conducting a salvage investigation, if one is necessary.

CULT-2: Conduct Periodic Archaeological Resources Spot Checks during Grading and Earth-moving Activities in Younger Alluvial Sediments. The applicant shall retain a qualified professional archaeologist, who meets the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications and Standards to conduct periodic Archaeological Spot Checks beginning at depths below two (2) feet to determine if construction excavations have exposed or have a high probability of exposing archaeological resources. After the initial Archaeological Spot Check, further periodic checks will be conducted at the discretion of the qualified archaeologist. If the qualified archaeologist determines that construction excavations have exposed or have a high probability of exposing archaeological artifacts, construction monitoring for archaeological resources will be required. The applicant shall retain a qualified archaeological monitor, who will work under the guidance and direction of a professional archaeologist, who meets the



qualifications set forth by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications and Standards. The archaeological monitor shall be present during all construction excavations (e.g., grading, trenching, or clearing/grubbing) into non-fill younger Pleistocene alluvial sediments. Multiple earth-moving construction activities may require multiple archaeological monitors. The frequency of monitoring shall be based on the rate of excavation and grading activities, proximity to known archaeological resources, the materials being excavated (native versus artificial fill soils), the depth of excavation, and if found, the abundance and type of archaeological resources encountered. Full-time monitoring can be reduced to part-time inspections if determined adequate by the project archaeologist.

CULT-3: Prepare Report Upon Completion of Monitoring Services. The archaeological monitor, under the direction of a qualified professional archaeologist who meets the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications and Standards, shall prepare a final report at the conclusion of archaeological monitoring (if required). The report shall be submitted to the applicant, the South Central Coastal Information Center, the City, and representatives of other appropriate or concerned agencies to signify the satisfactory completion of the project and required mitigation measures. The report shall include a description of resources unearthed, if any, evaluation of the resources with respect to the California Register and CEQA, and treatment of the resources.



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