



Montclair General Plan Update & Arrow Hwy Mixed-Use District Specific Plan



Our Prosperous Community Focus Group Notes



Our Prosperous Community

On January 17th, 2019, a focus group meeting was conducted as part of the City of Montclair's General Plan Update on the topic of economic development. Called "Our Prosperous Community," the event focused on soliciting feedback from community members related to the City's aspirations for its future related to jobs and economic development. Below, is a summary of overarching themes that emerged across the three focus group tables. Each focus group table took notes about its conversation on posters which were transcribed and included following the summary below.

What do you think are Montclair's greatest assets?

- Central location
 - Montclair is easily accessible via multiple freeways (proximity to I-10, 60, 71, 210, etc.) and has good transit connectivity through the Transit Center
 - The City benefits from other nearby assets in neighboring cities of Claremont, Upland, Ontario, and Pomona
- Educational institutions
 - Montclair is located near the Claremont Colleges, Cal Poly Pomona, Chaffey College, and others which attract visitors and prepare talented students
- Strong and stable local government
 - The City offers a myriad of programs for constituents and business and is perceived as being business friendly

What are Montclair's greatest challenges?

- The City lacks a real downtown or high-quality retail
- There is a general lack of awareness of business opportunities and City resources
- The housing stock is limited and increasingly unaffordable to many
- There is a lack of open space and quality parks
- There is a lack of cooperation with the regional government
- There are perceived issues of public safety

Q. What types of retail/dining amenities would you like to see more of in Montclair and where? Where do Montclair residents go for entertainment, shopping, and night life?

- A desire for retail and dining amenities proximate to pedestrian-friendly spaces
- Need for a diversity of dining options, including upscale restaurants and unique eateries
 - 85 Degrees Bakery Cafe, Cheesecake Factory, LA Pizza Kitchen, Porto's, Yard House, were mentioned as examples of desired restaurant uses
- Residents seek entertainment and recreation options
 - Concert venues, performing arts centers, theatres, dancing options
 - Nightclubs, sports bars, concert venues, nightlife
- There was also a desire for healthy food options like restaurants, grocery stores, and farmers markets
- Participants noted that Victoria Gardens is the primary destination that Montclair residents go to shop now that Montclair Place is mostly vacant

Q. What kinds of jobs should the City be able to attract? And where should they be located?

- Participants recommended that the City attract entrepreneurial businesses and "white collar" jobs related to technology (such as medical technology and data-center operations)
- Flex space and co-working space-capable jobs should be encouraged in North Montclair
- The preservation and expansion of light manufacturing jobs and the promotion of small-scale, artisanal manufacturing jobs were also encouraged on existing industrial land near Mission and Holt Boulevards
- Healthcare jobs should be encouraged

Q. What type/s of new multifamily housing are in demand? What is the best area for this type of development?

- Participants recommended that transit-oriented development should be encouraged near the Transit Center and around transit lines
- Mixed-use housing was recommended along commercial corridors including Central Avenue, Holt Blvd, and Arrow Highway (potentially to replace aging strip shopping centers and/or parking lots) and at or near the Montclair Place
- Housing that is affordable to residents was broadly encouraged
- Participants noted the desire for family-oriented housing given the City's make-up

Q. What are the opportunities and challenges of Central Avenue, Mission Boulevard, and Holt Boulevard?

- Central Avenue
 - Opportunities
 - It is a commercial corridor that is an important connector to other cities to the north and south
 - Challenges
 - The fact that the northern portion of Central (above Palo Verde St.) is wholly commercial and the southern portion is primarily built out as low-density residential creates a challenge for creating a continuous place
- Mission Blvd
 - Opportunities
 - One group noted that deep industrial lots and booming market for industrial spaces suggest opportunities for new commercial or industrial developments; others see larger lots as viable for mixed-use development
 - Challenges
 - Older mom-and-pop shops exist in between new developments and development sites and create challenges for creating a sense of continuity along the corridor
 - Limited pedestrian activity makes the area feel unsafe at night
- Holt Blvd
 - Opportunities
 - Housing is available on parts of corridor
 - Challenges
 - Like Mission Blvd., older and generally smaller commercial spaces interrupt the flow of the corridor
 - Limited pedestrian activity makes the area feel unsafe at night
- Public safety (crime) and pedestrian safety are concerns on most corridors

Q. What can improve the Arrow Highway Mixed-Use District (AHMUD)?

- High quality and character of development (akin to the reuse of spaces in Denver's RiNo or L.A.'s Abbot Kinney Boulevard) would be welcomed
- Diversity of uses including office, housing, and light-manufacturing uses
- Improved mobility options

Q. The City has a number of industrial locations. Should these be preserved, expanded or redeveloped into other uses?

- Participants recommended to preserve quality areas which produce quality jobs and where the expansion of small manufacturing for cottage and artisan industries is viable
- Industry incubators were recommended, so long as they are focused on “clean industry” uses

Q. If you were appointed the Mayor/City Manager of Montclair today, what would be your top three priorities to enhance the City?

- Housing
 - Increase stock of affordable housing and preserve aesthetic character of the City
- Transportation Improvements
 - Hasten Gold Line construction, improve local mobility, and reduce traffic congestion
- Quality of Life
 - Provided high-quality amenities such as parks, programs, and schools
 - Make public spaces safer including schools and parks
- Other
 - Jobs and employment
 - Montclair Place redevelopment
 - Implementation of the North Montclair Downtown and Montclair Place Specific Plans