

Florence-Firestone Commercial Areas

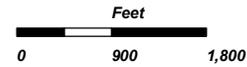
Unincorporated Florence-Firestone

Base Layers

-  Union Pacific Railroad &/or Metro Blue Line
-  City / Community Boundary
-  Assessor Parcel Boundary

Commercial

-  CG - General Commercial
-  MU - Mixed Use



Prepared by DRP GIS Section / March 2017



Commercial Areas (C)



Florence Ave signage.

Vision

Create vibrant commercial areas that function as the connective fabric of the community, support a variety of commercial activities dispersed community-wide, provide an attractive and safe public realm, and identify Florence Mile as the community’s “main street”.

Background

The commercial areas contain a mix of land uses including, commercial and residential, as well as three Metro Blue Line Stations (Slauson, Florence, and Firestone).

The primary commercial corridors of the community are:

North/South

- Central Avenue
- Compton Avenue

East/West

- Florence Ave
- Firestone Boulevard



Fox Theater on Florence Avenue ca. 1933.
Courtesy, California State Public Library

Commercial land uses are also located along portions of Slauson, Holmes, and Gage Avenues, as well as Nadeau, Alameda and Santa Fe Streets. However, along these streets commercial uses do not make up the primary land use. There are residential uses, industrial uses, and/or public facilities in addition to commercial uses. The area bordered by Florence Avenue, Nadeau Street, and Compton and Graham Avenues, has a concentration of County services and public facilities with a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

Florence Avenue, known as the ‘Florence Mile’, has the greatest concentration of pedestrian and commercial activity, particularly between Graham and Compton Avenues, which includes the Florence Blue Line Station. Historically, the Florence Mile has been the primary shopping street in the community. Florence Avenue contained two movie theaters that were constructed in the 1930s and subsequently demolished in the 1960s. One theater stood on the site of the present Rite-Aid, which is not oriented to Florence Avenue, but rather creates a long, blank façade that has been a source of complaints by community members.



The Rite-Aid on Florence Avenue does not provide an entrance from Florence Avenue and is not oriented to the street.



Primary Commercial Corridors

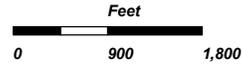
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Base Layers

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Primary Commercial Corridors

-  Florence Avenue
-  Firestone Boulevard
-  Compton Avenue
-  Central Avenue



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Florence Avenue retail corridor near Holmes Avenue, 1952.

Photograph by Julius Shulman. Source: © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

Today, Florence Avenue contains a mix of small, locally-owned businesses and national retailers providing a range of shopping options, but no entertainment uses. The diversity of retail options and commercial activity present on Florence Avenue is not distributed throughout other commercial areas of the community. Large parts of Firestone Boulevard, Central Avenue, and Compton Avenue do not have significant pedestrian activity, nor a variety of retail options or services to meet the community's needs. In addition, there is inconsistency in commercial structures' orientation to the street, with some properties maintaining a traditional urban form with storefronts built to the sidewalk, while others were converted to strip-mall development with parking adjacent to the sidewalk.

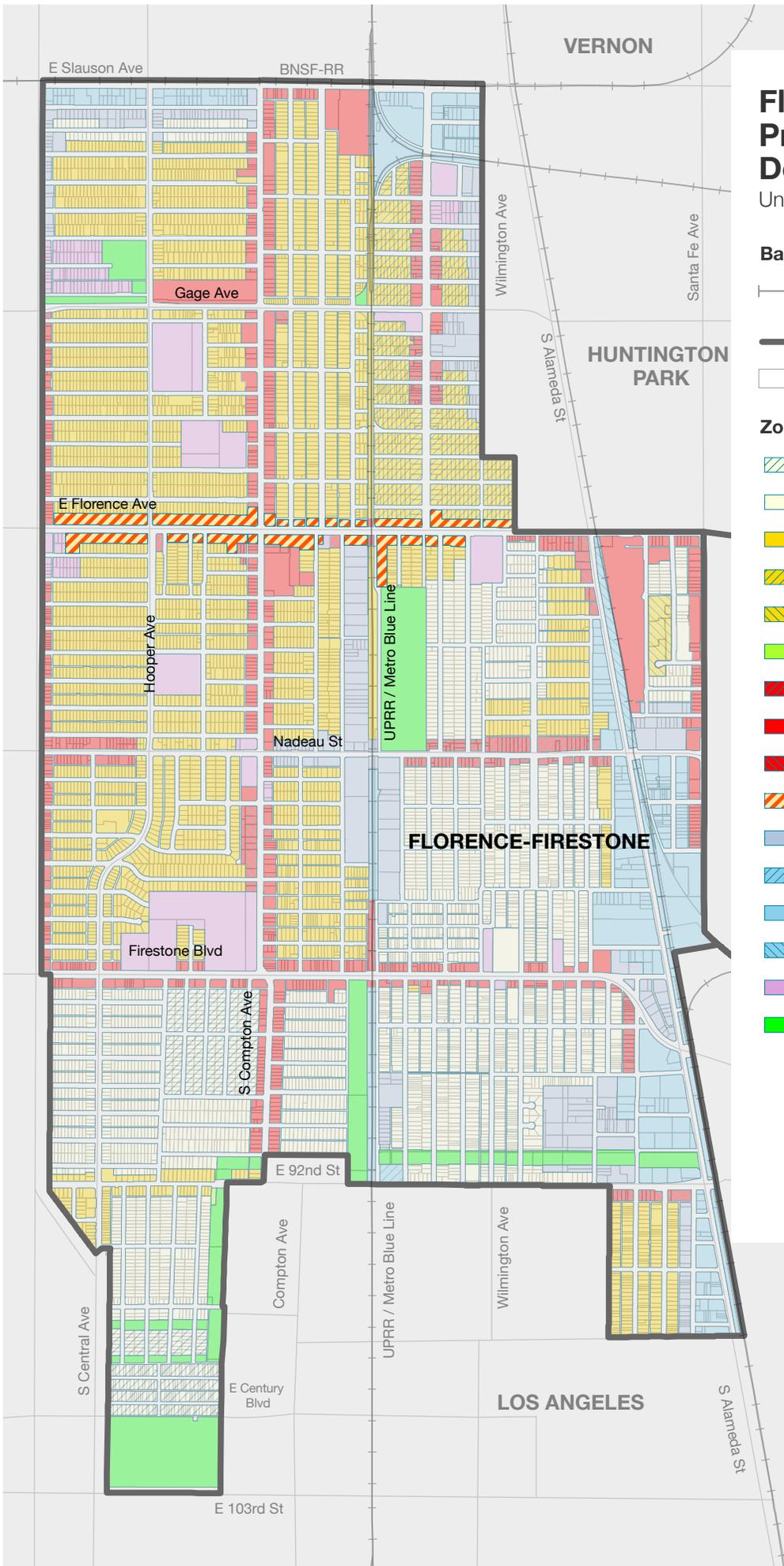
Opportunities and Challenges

Vibrant Commercial Districts

Revitalization of commercial areas is one primary objective of the plan. Improvements to existing buildings are vital to creating vibrant commercial districts. As many structures pre-date the 1960s, reinvestment in both privately-owned buildings and public infrastructure is needed to support and enhance the commercial areas.

Commercial areas contain locally-owned businesses that cater largely to local populations. With the presence of small and medium-sized locally owned businesses, there is an opportunity to nurture and support their growth. Some businesses, including Latin American specialty foods and furniture manufacturers, attract customers from the larger L.A. region. Providing assistance, access to capital, branding, façade improvements, and business support programs will enhance commercial corridors and support the local and regional draw of these businesses. These enhancements will provide a strong foundation to attract new businesses, increase retail options and services and retain existing commercial uses.

Community members have commented on the lack of gathering places, such as sit-down restaurants, entertainment venues, or outdoor seating areas within commercial developments. Further, no performance venues exist within the community. Incentivizing the inclusion of gathering spaces in commercial developments can add these types of spaces throughout the community. To further enhance the vibrancy of the commercial corridors and attract additional retailers, a public plaza with a performance space should be located near pedestrian activity.



Florence-Firestone Proposed Mixed Use Development Zone

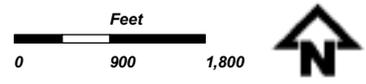
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Zoning

- R-1 - Single-Family Residence
- R-2 - Two-Family Residence
- R-3-(U) - Limited Density Multiple Residence
- R-4-(U) - Medium Density Multiple Residence
- RPD - Residential Planned Development
- A-1 - Light Agricultural
- C-2 - Neighborhood Business
- C-3 - General Commercial
- C-M - Commercial Manufacturing
- MXD - Mixed Use Development (Proposed)
- M-1 - Light Manufacturing
- M-1.5 - Restricted Heavy Manufacturing
- M-2 - Heavy Manufacturing
- M-3 - Unclassified
- IT - Institutional
- O-S - Open Space



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La Alameda Shopping Center,
Florence Avenue.



La Florencita located on Florence Avenue,
ca. 1952 was one of three movie theaters
that existed in Florence-Firestone between
the 1920s and 1960s.

Source: © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research
Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

Presently, community assets, public facilities, and services are centered in the blocks between Florence Avenue, Compton Avenue, Graham Avenue, and Nadeau Street. This area has a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses, providing a central concentration of activity that can integrate with the commercial areas and be considered for the development of a public gathering space. This area presents an opportunity to develop into an active and vibrant community center with a mix of uses, including residential, retail, parks, services, offices, and public facilities in a compact, walkable, and transit-oriented environment.

Mix of Land Uses

Commercial areas have a mix of land uses with residential, retail, public facilities, and schools in proximity. This mix supports an opportunity for developing mixed-use buildings and activating commercial corridors throughout the community. Mixed-use buildings can provide retail, services, or public facilities on the ground floor and housing on upper stories to support diverse commercial activities and maintain an active street life.

The construction of residential development in the commercial areas will increase housing availability and can also attract a greater diversity of retail uses, services, and entertainment options. In addition, the presence of residents in commercial areas supports a vibrant commercial corridor and can enhance safety of the public realm especially when projects incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) elements such as increased lighting, visibility, and unobstructed windows.

Pedestrian- and Transit-Friendly

Commercial corridors throughout the community have transit stops and stations with regional and local connections, including the Metro Blue Line and Metro bus routes. Current development in commercial areas is low-intensity, allowing future opportunities for mixed-use development near stations to support ridership, housing, and access to services for transit-dependent residents.

Improving the public realm and providing safe connections between transit stations, housing, activity areas, and public facilities will support activating commercial corridors. Commercial corridors can be further improved with streetscapes that promote a pedestrian-friendly environment and provide visible and safe public spaces. Street-facing retail incorporating windows and increased lighting, where feasible and appropriate, will further activate commercial corridors. Commercial areas can also be enhanced by thoughtful urban design

that helps create successful public and private spaces where people feel comfortable and fosters a sense of place.

Goals and Policies

Residential and Mixed-Use Projects. As residential and mixed-use projects are encouraged on appropriate sites in the Commercial Areas, goals and policies from the Residential Areas element are applicable here.

VIBRANT COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

GOAL C-1

Florence Avenue is the commercial “main street” of Florence-Firestone.

Policy C-1.1

Florence Mile Identity. Create a sense of place, community identity, and beautify Florence Mile through public art interventions, and where appropriate, continuously maintained street trees, pedestrian amenities, downward directed lighting, distinctive cross-walk treatments, and organized programs and activities that celebrate Florence Mile and its rich history.

Policy C-1.2

Development Near Florence Station. Support the development of high quality mixed-use buildings, diverse retail options, and community-service uses adjacent to the Metro Florence Blue Line station.

Policy C-1.3

Community Marketplace. Support creating a community marketplace that offers independent local craftsmen and specialty foods makers a venue to sell their goods and provides a gathering place for community members.

GOAL C-2

Commercial areas are vibrant centers of activity for community members to gather and interact.

Policy C-2.1

Catalyst Projects. Promote public -private sector partnerships to identify and fund mixed-use catalyst projects that meet the needs of community members and positively contribute to a vibrant commercial area.

Policy C-2.2

Incentivize Gathering Spaces. Incentivize the inclusion of gathering spaces in commercial, mixed-use, and residential development through parking reductions, floor area ratio increases, or other relevant incentives.



La Alameda Shopping Center contains a gathering space fronting Florence Avenue.



Example of a community marketplace structure and gathering space.
 Courtesy, Wormcast (Own work) [CC BY-SA 3.0 (creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via Wikimedia Commons.



Example of mixed-use multifamily housing and pedestrian-oriented development on a major corridor.

Policy C-2.3

Activity Centers. Develop pedestrian-friendly activity centers expressive of community identity near transit and public facilities that provide employment, housing, community services, a diversity of retail, and cultural amenities.

Policy C-2.4

Incorporate Public Facilities in Commercial Centers. Incorporate public facilities and/or public agency satellite offices that provide access to public information in active commercial centers.

Policy C-2.5

Farmer's Market. Establish a recurring farmer's market within the streets of the Florence-Firestone community or collocated at a public facility where appropriate and feasible.

General Plan Policy

Community Design

Policy LU 10.11: Facilitate the use of streets as public space for activities that promote civic engagement, such as farmers markets, parades, etc.

MIX OF LAND USES

GOAL C-3

Commercial areas provide a diverse mix of high-quality retail, residential, and mixed-use development.

Policy C-3.1

Reduce Barriers to Changes of Use. Reduce barriers to renovate and change uses within existing structures through reductions in requirements that may inhibit renovation and reuse of older structures.

Policy C-3.2

Shared Parking. Facilitate and encourage shared parking between commercial uses and shared parking facilities for commercial areas, such as the development of shared parking structures or other off-street parking facilities.

Policy C-3.3

Mixed-Use Development. Support development of mixed-use and residential development on commercial corridors, such as Florence Avenue, Central Avenue, Compton Avenue, Nadeau Street, Gage Avenue, and Firestone Boulevard.

Policy C-3.4

Residential Development. Promote the development of medium-density residential development to increase housing opportunities, including senior and affordable housing, where appropriate.

Policy C-3.5

Incentivize Commercial Diversity. Incentivize the establishment of uses that satisfy the daily needs and desires of the surrounding neighborhoods including, small and large-scale grocery stores, sit-down restaurants, diverse retail, entertainment venues, services, and cultural spaces.

Policy C-3.6

Land Assembly. Facilitate the development of small and undersized parcels, through parcel assembly, lot consolidation, or other means to support revitalization of commercial areas.

PEDESTRIAN-& TRANSIT-FRIENDLY**GOAL C-4**

Commercial corridors are attractive, welcoming, and pedestrian-friendly.

Policy C-4.1

Commercial Corridor Enhancements. Attract visitors, pedestrians, and investors to commercial areas by requiring buildings and entrances to orient to the sidewalk and by enhancing streetscapes and infrastructure to create a safe and aesthetically pleasing environment.

Policy C-4.2

Streetscape Maintenance. Maintain streetscape and infrastructure investments in the public realm and ensure use of high-quality, durable materials.

Policy C-4.3

Artist/Designer Consultant for Public Realm Projects. Incorporate consulting artists and/or designers in the public outreach, design, and construction of streetscapes, public realm infrastructure, beautification projects, and similar efforts to provide attractive, place-specific elements responsive to community needs and preferences.

Policy C-4.4

Continuous Commercial Street Frontage. Promote high-quality urban design with continuous commercial street frontage on major commercial corridors.



Example of pedestrian-oriented development and streetscape enhancements.

Policy C-4.5

Façade Beautification. Support beautification of existing businesses and encourage redevelopment of building facades.

Policy C-4.6

Architectural Elements. Provide defining architectural elements and visual interest in new development and renovations to existing structures, including renovating long expanses of windowless walls along the street frontage.

Policy C-4.7

Building Scale. Require that the scale and massing of new development along major commercial corridors provides transitions in building height and bulk consistent with the character of adjacent low-scale neighborhoods.

Policy C-4.8

Business Improvement Districts. Provide support to the community organization-based efforts in revitalization and capacity development for commercial areas, including formation of a Business Improvement District (BID)

