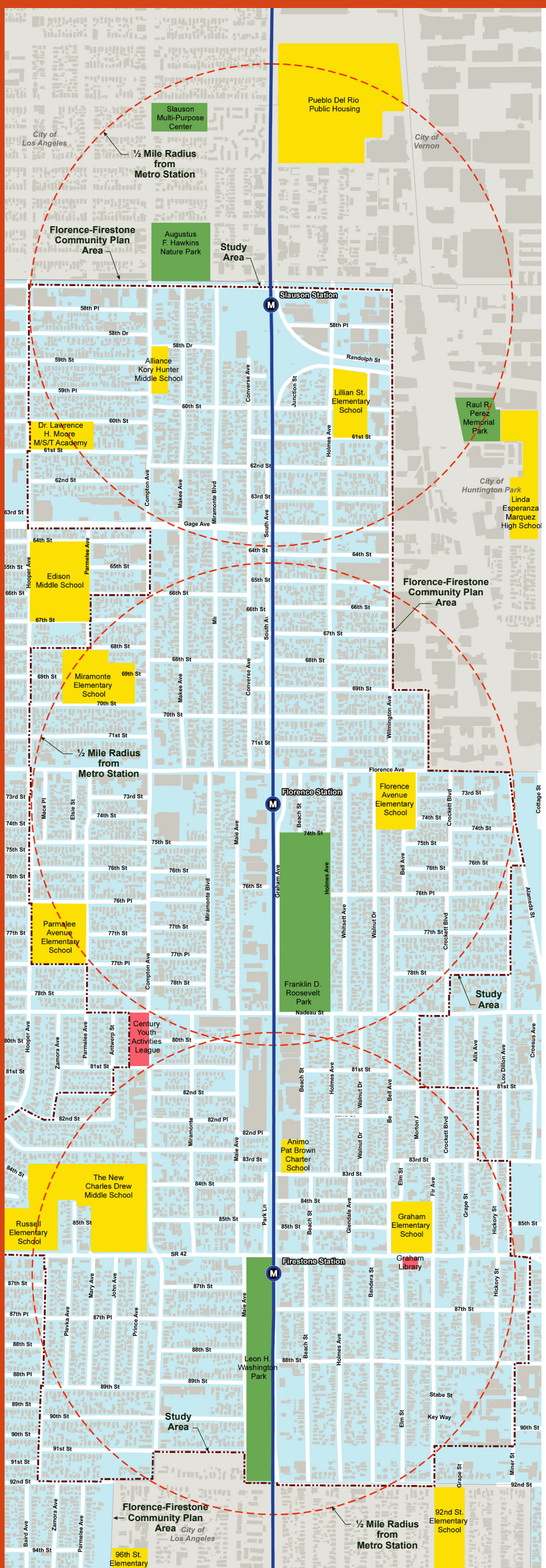
Community Atlas Existing Conditions Report Summary Sheet



Project Description

The Florence-Firestone Transit Oriented District Specific Plan (FFTOD Specific Plan) project will focus on providing increased access to transit stations, promote active transportation for daily needs (walking and biking to your destinations), increasing housing options in the community, and support a mix of uses to encourage transit-oriented development. The FFTOD Specific Plan will address land use, zoning, and mobility improvements that support housing density and employment in proximity to the three Metro stations in the community: the Slauson, Florence, and Firestone Metro A Line (Blue) Stations. The project will implement the Transit Oriented District Program of the Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan.

Existing Conditions Report

The Community Atlas existing conditions report reviewed applicable policy documents and zoning regulations related to the topics of land use, urban design, and civic arts to identify opportunities to support transit-oriented development and safe multi-modal transit access to and from the Slauson, Florence, and Firestone Metro A Line (Blue) Stations. Findings and recommendations from this report will be used to inform the FFTOD Specific Plan. Some of the key findings and recommendations have been summarized here.

Existing Land Use Patterns

Findings:

- Along the main community corridors, the existing uses are predominantly low-scale, mostly one-story, light industrial buildings with interspersed residential homes.
- Many sites immediately adjacent the Slauson and Florence Metro Blue Line stations are industrial, or utility uses, creating challenges to walkability for pedestrians accessing jobs and the stations.
- Densities in excess of 18 and 30 homes per acre are necessary to support new transit oriented development.
- Existing residential zones applicable in the community (with the exception of the MXD zone) do not have zoning regulations (density, setbacks, etc.) that are conducive to enable the densities identified by the Florence-Firestone Community Plan (FFCP).
- Residential properties are small with evidence of overcrowding due in part to conversion of garages into living quarters and the high number of persons per household.

Recommendations:

- Combine mobility improvements with focused updates to land use categories to enable more people to access the stations, and live and work in proximity to the Metro stations.
- Develop a land use approach that harmonizes the varied existing uses into a complete community that supports living, working, learning, and playing in the Florence-Firestone community.
- Establish development zoning standards around TOD types that are appropriate for this community scale, character, and mix of uses to provide appropriate protections and transitions.
- Explore creative parking strategies that balance transit-focused typologies with existing residential parking challenges.
- Evaluate industrial land use policy and zoning intent; can these areas be adapted to support TOD and be appropriate for residential adjacencies or mixed-use development.
- Review residential zone standards to introduce and enable a wider range of housing types and densities.

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Density and Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

Findings:

- Existing development is generally below the currently allowed density and FAR set by the FFCP.
- Industrial property utilization in proximity to the transit stations is generally low.

Recommendations:

- Identify industrial property owners that are interested in changing zoning to mixed-use or more intensive industrial activity to support TOD or employment near transit.
- Explore regulatory incentives to promote infill development in commercial, mixed-use, and residential settings.

Urban Design

Findings:

- Despite general walkable block size in the community, safety is a concern for the Study Area due to limited pedestrian signal and crossing frequency, automobile-oriented streets, and the Metro rail line that bisects the community north to south.
- Presence of alleys in a variety of locations supports walkable TOD configurations; however, as noted in the FCCP, some alleys have a negative perception due to illegal dumping, graffiti, and crime.

Recommendations:

- Identify opportunities for conversion of select alleys to green spaces or multi-use path networks for walking and biking given the large presence of alleys.
- Investigate opportunities for increasing alley safety through pedestrian lighting requirement for new development adjacent to alleys.

Parcel Size, Depths and Ownership

Findings:

- Residential depths of about 140 feet are common and suitable for development at higher densities.
- Key locations near the Slauson Metro Blue Line Station are larger parcels with appropriate size to support TOD.

Recommendations:

- Where parcel consolidation happens in larger east-west blocks, require north-south street or paseo connections to reduce block length.
- Consider the need to address phasing and coordination with multiple entities when establishing standards for public realm improvements.

Built Environment

Findings:

- Vacant and parking lot sizes are generally limited in the Study Area.
- Residential neighborhoods have congested parking conditions according to residents.
- Building patterns and building locations along the commercial corridors are varied; the variety of uses present and lack of building standards require specific building placement.
- Building types vary throughout the Study Area, ranging from single-story industrial buildings with blank frontages, to two-story commercial buildings within a walkable corridor environment, to two-story newly constructed townhomes.

Recommendations:

- Manage parking as a resource by adding shared parking resources, smart technologies, and dynamic tools to better manage resource availability.
- Locate surface parking at the side or rear of buildings and require vehicle access to lots or structures to minimize the impact of parking structures along the street edge.
- Discuss the ‘character’ of key streets such as Compton Avenue and Florence Avenue to support and identity that makes the Florence-Firestone community unique.
- Evaluate the utilization of industrial sites to identify key locations for adaptive reuse or transition to less-intensive uses.
- Explore opportunities to develop specific programs or strategies to help property owners retrofit and/or redevelop older properties within the Study Area.

Civic and Cultural Resources

Findings:

- The County’s Parks Needs Assessment identified Florence-Firestone as requiring more parks and green space; the Community Standards District (CSD) emphasize incorporating more parks and green spaces.
- Further explore the potential for a historic district along Miramonte Boulevard from Gage Avenue to Florence Avenue with 92 historic-age properties.

Recommendations:

- Identify opportunities for conversion of select alleys to green spaces or multi-use path networks for walking and biking given the large presence of alleys and the “very high” park need identified in this community.
- Explore opportunities to require public open space (plazas or urban parks) within new transit-oriented development.
- To help increase alley safety, investigate opportunities for increasing pedestrian lighting through new development adjacent to existing alleys.

Opportunities and Constraints to TOD and Transit Access

Findings:

- A variety of physical conditions and constraints within ¼ and ½ mile of the three Metro stations require further multi-modal evaluation and analysis to be addressed through active transportation, land use, and urban design improvements.
- The greatest number of potential non-residential capacity sites exist along Florence Avenue where mixed-use is allowed.

Recommendations:

- Increase sidewalk widths next to transit stations through establishing minimum sidewalk width development standards.
- Identify large high capacity sites within ¼ mile of the Metro stations that can support mixed-use development as catalyst sites.