I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose of Specific Plan

The purpose for this Specific Plan is to ensure an integrated, well planned, and high-quality environment within the Mountain Village Area (Figure 1), where the development of commercial, office and residential uses is expected. In large part, the Mountain Village Specific Plan seeks to implement the redevelopment of blighted parcels through the establishment of effective regulations, design guidelines and implementation measures. The Plan also intends to aid applicants and the City as they design and review future projects.

B. Applicable State and Local Regulations

This document fulfills the Specific Plan requirements of the City of Ontario Municipal Code and the State of California.

Any development standards or other regulations not specifically addressed in this Specific Plan are subject to the City of Ontario Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, and Standard Specifications and Drawings of the City of Ontario. Unless otherwise approved in the Specific Plan, all off-site improvements are subject to those City Standards and policies in effect at the time of submittal of improvement plans.

All construction within the Mountain Village Specific Plan will be in compliance with the Uniform Building Code, Uniform Fire Code and other ordinances pertaining to construction and safety. In addition to City standards, any subdivision of the property will be subject to California Subdivision Laws.

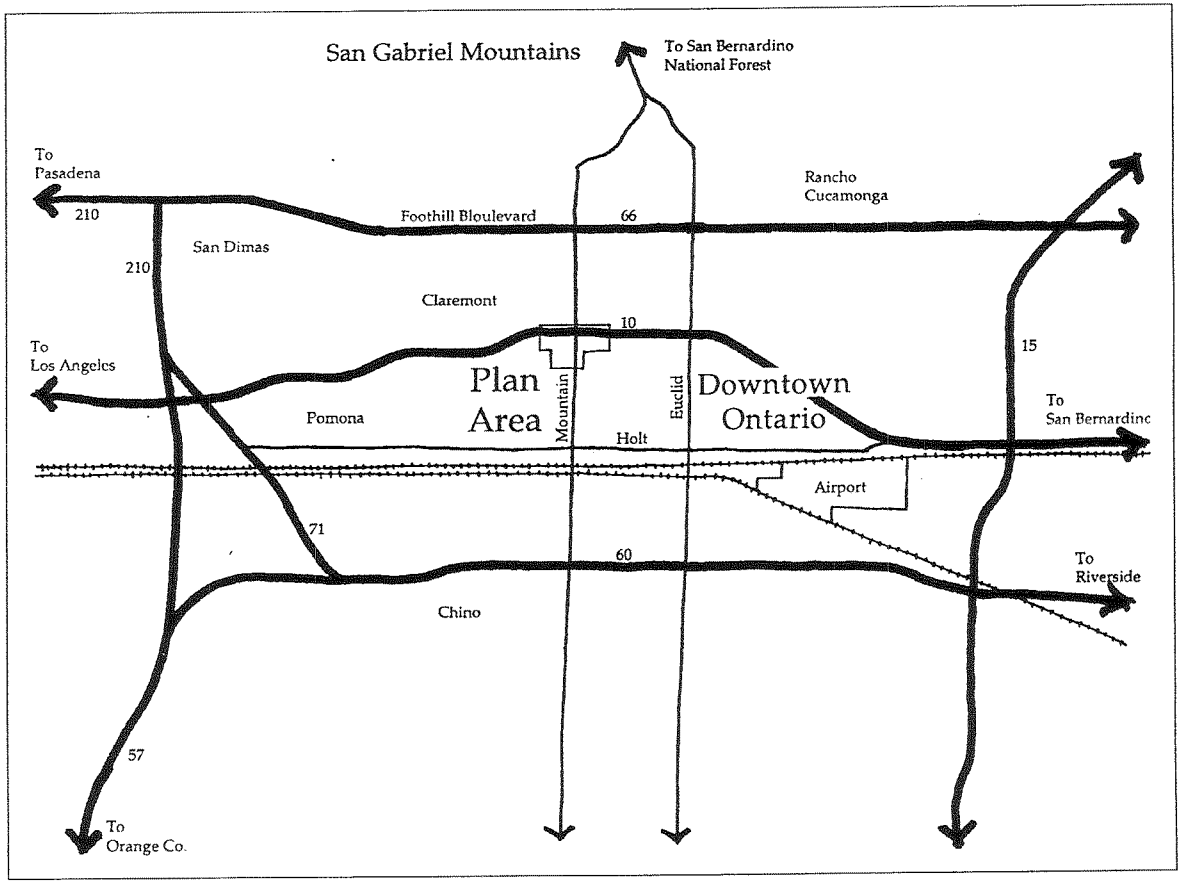

Figure 1, Location Map. The Mountain Village Specific Plan will guide the development of underutilized properties at one of Ontario's major gateways. Located just south of the San Bernardino Freeway's interchange with Mountain Avenue, the area is highly accessible. At the same time, development in the area must complement the residential neighborhoods that are located just east and west of the site.

C. History

Prior to 1950, agriculture was the cornerstone of Ontario's economy and virtually all of northwest Ontario was covered with orange groves (see Figures 2 and 3). Later in the same decade, the newly constructed San Bernardino Freeway was open for travel, making Los Angeles only 40 minutes away by automobile; commuting was a novel idea and gained in popularity. Subsequently, suburbs began to develop throughout the city, particularly in the northwest region

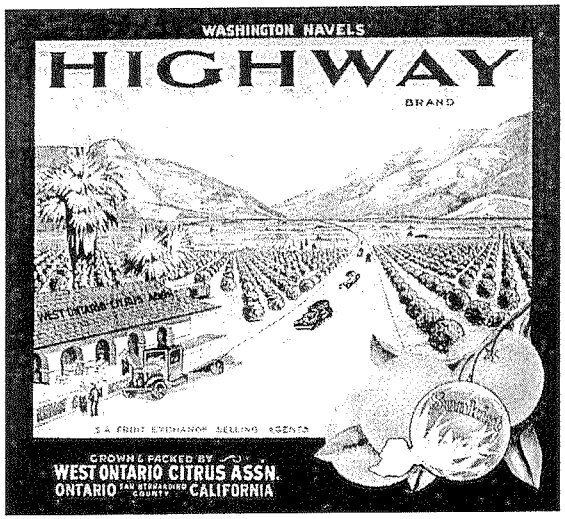

Figure 2, Ontario's Agricultural Heritage. Orange groves were key to Ontario's economy prior to 1950.

Figure 3, Mountain Avenue Prior to Urban Development. Mountain Avenue was lined by orange groves prior to post-war development.

where a number of homes were built around Mountain Avenue. Unfortunately, this favored concept led Ontario to suffer the same fate as other cities: the downtown area became less important as the new "centers-away-from-the-center" grew increasingly fashionable. For example, Ontario Plaza, currently at the intersection of

Mountain Avenue and Fourth Street, was built to serve the rapidly expanding residential areas and stood as the only shopping center in the area for many years (see Figure 4).

It was not until the 1980's that most of Mountain Avenue's length developed into a commercial strip (see Figure 5). New businesses, primarily retail and food establishments, sprang up along the western side of Mountain Avenue. Target, Toys-R-Us, Ralph's (now Food-4-Less), and Carl's Jr. located to the area and have served the general community for the past decade. However, while new businesses were coming in, others were leaving.

In the late 1980's, the County Courthouse vacated their office buildings. The Thunderbird Bowling Alley ceased business in 1991. Both properties, which flank Mountain Avenue north of Sixth Street, sat unoccupied and became attractions for graffiti, vandals, and vagrants. The blighted properties generated many debates among community residents and a formal coalition was eventually formed. Residents in the immediate area established the Ontario Mountain Village Association and spearheaded campaigns to have the blighted buildings razed. By the end of 1996, all buildings that were located on the Courthouse and Bowling Alley site were demolished and the area awaits a new future.

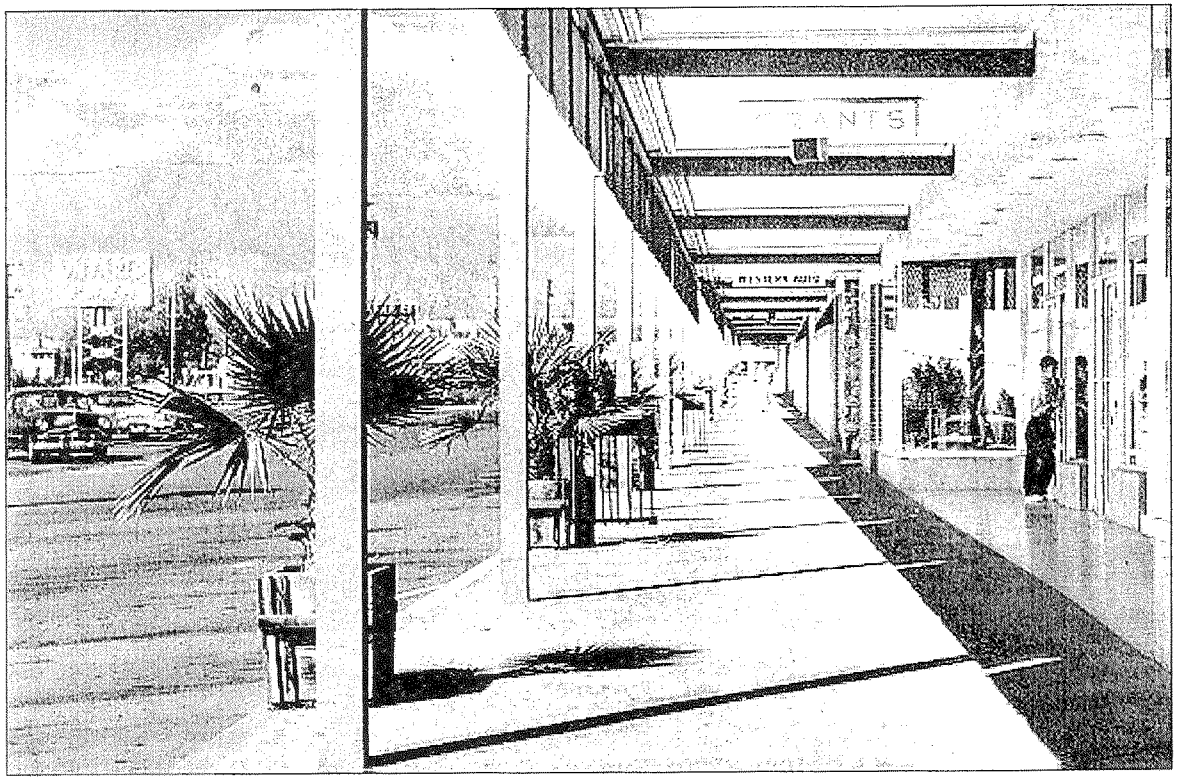

Figure 4, Ontario Plaza Circa 1950. *Ontario Plaza, built in the late 1950s, is a good example of suburban shopping centers of the time.*

D. Land Use Context

The Specific Plan Area is bounded by the San Bernardino Freeway and the City of Upland to the north, by Colony Park and single-family residences to the south, by single-family residences to the east, and by single- and multi-family residences to the west.

Land within the Specific Plan Area is generally underutilized (see Figure 5). While some buildings are in fair-to-good condition, several factors call for the current redevelopment effort: relatively low development intensities, excessive parking lots, vacant lands, and buildings at the end of their life cycle.

Major redevelopment opportunities are present north of Sixth Street. East of Mountain Avenue, the San Bernardino County Courthouse complex was recently vacated and demolished, and further east around the Palmetto Avenue cul-de-sac, properties are vacant or in poor condition — except for the Credit Union which has a relatively new building near the northeast corner of Sixth and Palmetto. West of Mountain and north of Sixth, the bowling alley and motel buildings have been demolished.

Further west, the Plan Area includes the multiplex apartment buildings surrounding Elderberry and Dahlia Courts, which are in poor condition and have a high incidence of crime. Many of these properties have been condemned and cleared in anticipation of future redevelopment.

Several viable uses are located immediately south of Sixth Street: the La Cheminee Restaurant, the Covington-Crowe office building, a Carl's Jr. fast-food restaurant, and the Target Center. However, this area (south of Sixth Street and west of Mountain) also contains service commercial uses that are expected to redevelop over time.

Two buildings, the Boy Scouts of America offices and a synagogue, are located east of Mountain and south of Sixth Street. These uses are expected to remain.

The only park in the vicinity of the Plan Area is Colony Park, which lies just south of the Plan Area and between Fourth and Fifth Streets. Colony Park is an 18-acre park serving the northwest corner of Ontario with playing fields, play equipment, and picnic areas. A few small, private recreation facilities are also near the Plan Area. These are associated with the multi-family housing complex along Elderberry Court and Fifth Street.

E. Circulation Context

Regional access to the Plan Area is provided via the San Bernardino Freeway (Interstate 10). This east-west freeway has on- and off-ramps serving Mountain Avenue, the major north-south arterial which runs through the center of the Specific Plan Area. To avoid future traffic congestion, the Mountain Avenue-Interstate 10 interchange will be improved. Ten travel lanes have been planned (from the interchange to Sixth Street).

South of Sixth Street, Mountain Avenue is expected to transition quickly from eight lanes (six through-lanes with two turn-lanes) to five lanes (four through-lanes with a center turn lane). Ultimately, six through-lanes are planned along Mountain Avenue south of Sixth Street.

Sixth Street is presently a two-lane collector that provides a vital cross-town link. Based on future cross-town traffic projections and the development of underutilized properties, Sixth Street will require two travel lanes in each direction and two turn lanes at its intersection with Mountain Avenue. Outside of the Plan Area boundaries, Sixth Street's existing two-lane cross-section can be maintained and high volumes of through traffic will be discouraged.

Several local streets provide critical connections to the surrounding neighborhoods. Fifth Street acts as a sub-collector and also gives access to Colony Park. Hawthorne Street is aligned with an entrance to the Target Center. La Deney Drive and Bonnie Brae Court are cul-de-sacs east of Mountain Avenue that are closed to vehicular movement but offer nearby residents convenient pedestrian routes to Mountain Avenue. Fifth Street forms the southern boundary of the Plan Area and will be improved as part of this effort.