A Great Place for Business

The City of Upland is one of the most desirable places to live, work, and play in the state of California; its climate, spectacular scenery, prime location near Interstates 10 and 210, Metrolink train operations that provide access to Los Angeles and the Inland Empire, a quaint historic downtown and other amenities make Upland an ideal place to start or grow a business.
Upland, in the County of San Bernardino, was officially incorporated on May 15, 1906 by George and William Chaffey as a rural town based on citrus and grape agriculture. The small town grew quickly, and just a year after its incorporation, the area’s first hospital (San Antonio Hospital) opened at the Southeast corner of Arrow Highway and San Antonio Avenue. The San Antonio Hospital was initially staffed by five doctors and had eighteen beds; less than twenty years later, the local population had more than doubled, and a bigger facility was needed. San Antonio Regional Hospital broke ground at its current location along the north side of San Bernardino Road about a mile away.

Countless turn of the century small downtowns in America have disappeared due to the midcentury modernization movement that occurred during the post war era of the 1950s and 1960s; fortunately, many of Upland’s early structures still exist to this date — especially those in the Historic Downtown Upland. Nearly two hundred businesses including specialty shops such as antique stores and independent boutiques, restaurants offering everything from Italian to Mexican to American cuisine, coffee houses, dessert shops and bakeries, wine bars and craft breweries, personal and professional care services such as dental offices and cosmetic salons, and live theater productions held at the historical Grove Theater are enjoyed and patronized by residents and tourists daily.

Upland’s historical charm is further enhanced by the “…hundreds and hundreds of historical homes,” as said by Upland’s former Interim Development Services Director Steve Dukett. “They are absolutely beautiful to see, and we work hard to maintain them. That’s been...
a commitment over decades: working hard to preserve them, including funding, to retain them for the future.” Throughout its history, Upland has preserved many historical neighborhoods such as Victorian Row, Pleasant View District, Arrow and Laurel Bungalow District, Old Magnolia District and Euclid Craftsman District through the use of federally funded programs aimed at historic preservation and employing Mills Act provisions.

Upland is a proud supporter of local culture and history as evident in its Cooper Regional History Museum located at 217 A Street. The museum helps to preserve local history and hosts many community events ranging from music to magic, comedy and craft beer tastings. In addition, Upland is one of few cities in America to have a fully restored Carnegie Library. The building was donated to the City by the Carnegie Foundation in 1913 and is located at 123 E. D Street. The library was the first public building in Upland and was designed by architect Homer W. Glidden and served as a library through 1969, when it moved to a newer building in the Civic Center. The City still owns the Carnegie Library and rents it to the public for community events.

In 1990, the building was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Furthermore, Upland is bifurcated by two major historical arteries; Historic Route 66 (aka Foothill Blvd) and Historic Euclid Avenue (SR-83) and at that intersection sits the last of the Madonna of Trail Monuments. These statues consist of 12 identical monuments to honor the courage and spirit of the pioneer women in the United States, commissioned in 1928-29 by the National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution, and extend from Cumberland, Maryland along the National Old Trails Road to Upland, California.

Upland has a median income above $60,000, an average income well over $90,000, and a young population with the average age of thirty-seven. It also has a highly educated workforce, with thirty percent of the workforce holding a bachelor’s degree or higher. The combination makes Upland a solid environment for commerce, retailers, restaurants and entertainment.

The City of Upland has steadily grown to an overall population today of 77,017 residents and is home to a range of businesses, including significant employers such as the San Antonio Regional Hospital. The hospital recently underwent a $160 million expansion project that included a four-story patient tower, additional patient beds, and a larger emergency department to meet the healthcare needs of the growing population of San Bernardino and Riverside counties. The area is the base of many other long-time businesses, such as the Cable Airport which was founded by Dewey and Maude Cable in 1945 and remains a key employer in the area. The Cable Airport is conveniently situated just two miles northwest of Upland’s central business district and also has airport-related services and a café. Today, after almost seventy-five years in business, the privately-owned airport is grooming its fourth generation of family ownership.

Another established business in the area is Holliday Rock, one of the biggest independent producers of construction materials such as hot-mix asphalt, aggregates, and ready-mix concrete. The company was formed back in 1937, in the midst of the Great Depression, by Otha and Ethel Holliday, and is still family-owned after eighty-two years. Holliday Rock is one of the most respected companies of its kind in Southern California and an employer of about 250. The company has dozens of sites in Adelanto, San Bernardino, Foothill, Santa Clarita, Mission, and other areas.
For over a century, San Antonio Regional Hospital has delivered exceptional care with compassion. This promise continues with the completion of our major expansion project. Our new patient tower and larger emergency department were designed with you in mind. With next generation medical technology, private rooms, and extra amenities for the comfort of our patients and their families, a brand new experience in patient care has arrived to meet the needs of our growing region.

**New Patient Tower**
- 180,000 square foot expansion
- 92 private rooms, including third intensive care unit
- New 52-bed emergency department
- Grand lobby entrance with adjacent parking
- New visitor amenities, including an art gallery, coffee bistro, and healing gardens

**Advanced Technologies**
- Designated STEMI Receiving Center (advanced heart attack treatment)
- Accredited Chest Pain Center
- Certified Primary Stroke Center
- Orthopedic Institute and Joint Replacement Center
- Women’s Breast and Imaging Center
- Gamma knife non-invasive radiosurgery (brain surgery without an incision)
- da Vinci Surgical System (minimally invasive robotic surgery)
- StreamLAB (robotic laboratory system)
- Tomosynthesis (3-D mammography)
Along with changes to the San Antonio Regional Hospital, many other properties in the City of Upland are undergoing renovations from street resurfacing to improvements at the Upland High School, which saw $1 million in renovations. Decades-old bleachers were replaced, and state-of-the-art football playing surfaces were installed. The installation of a renewable energy solar carport is nearly complete at city hall, and other energy retrofits are happening at the police department, the public works department, recreational facilities, and the local animal shelter. As well as solar panels and energy-efficient LED lighting both inside and outside, the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems were upgraded, and computer-based control systems were added to help control power use better.

“It is a very large project, nearly $7 million,” states City Manager Jeannette Vagnozzi. “We are close to wrapping up in the next few months.” The project has been underway for about a year.

The city has several recently-built, renovated or expanded plazas and centers. This past summer highly-anticipated Sycamore Hills Plaza opened within the forty-two-acre Sycamore Hills master-planned community, which will have 320 new homes when complete. The ten-acre, 80,000-square-foot shopping center is conveniently located at the intersection of Baseline Road and Highway 210 and is anchored by Whole Foods Market 365. It is a completely leased, with tenants ranging from CVS Pharmacy to the UPS Store, Union Bank, Supercuts Hair Salon, Orangetheory Fitness, and others.

The aging Upland Village Center, originally built in 1968, is getting a much-needed facelift. The shopping center, at 229 East Foothill Boulevard, was acquired by Wood Investments Inc. for $18.5 million and has been undergoing renovations for about a year. It has a terrific, highly-visible location close to Foothill Boulevard and Euclid Avenue, and is passed by over 100,000 vehicles every day. New tenants will include department store giant Ross, chicken finger restaurant Raising Cane’s, and department store Burlington.

“It was an existing twelve-acre shopping center that got a complete revamp and rehabilitation,” says Economic Development Coordinator Melecio Picazo with regard to the 150,000-square-foot facility. The upcoming phase will see an additional exercise facility in the center.

In late 2018, the highly-anticipated, 20,390-square-foot Aldi’s grocery store at the Mountain Green Shopping Center held its grand opening. Mountain Green’s management worked with brokers to bring in new tenants for the benefit of retailers and the city. The privately-owned, recently-revitalized, nineteen-acre shopping center, at 357 South Mountain Avenue, is already home to well-known tenants such as craft store Michaels and Dunkin’ Donuts. Other tenants include Optima Salons and Pathway Vet Alliance.

“This is basically response to market demand and the interest from credit tenants,” states Dukett. “It shows that the socio-economics that are present not only in Upland but the service area of these retailers – because we do draw a lot of folks from adjoining cities – that their level of economic activity is such that the tenants are interested. Therefore, if they are interested, the tenants are willing to come, and the owners/developers are at the point to pursue development to bring them into town. These are market forces at play, and we don’t claim they apply only to Upland; they apply to our region, and we are maximizing our ability to take advantage.”

Another way Upland works to attract business to the area is through the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC), a worldwide shopping center trade association founded in 1957. ICSC’s conference last year enabled city staff to promote existing vacancies in shopping centers to brokers and retailers.

From its shopping centers to historical downtown, the City of Upland is popular with many types of retailers due to factors ranging from market demand to its central location. One such retailer is CNC Motors, Inc., a family-owned and operated automobile dealership that specializes in high-quality, pre-owned exotic vehicles from manufacturers such as Alfa Romeo, Bentley, Lamborghini, and Rolls-Royce. CNC has an 80,000-square-foot facility on a three-and-a-half-acre site at 1018 East 20th Street. It had relocated to another city but came back home to Upland, where it is quite visible just above the 210 Freeway.

Upland also has economic development programs to incentivize and assist downtown businesses with façade improvements and provide working capital for new business expansion. “It’s a good program to attract new businesses and keep the businesses that we have in our downtown,” says Picazo.
While Upland’s age and lack of availability of large tracts of land suitable for industrial and commercial works makes it challenging for very large companies to come in, it is the perfect place for smaller types of business operations. According to Interim Development Services Director Dukett, the city has three primary traded business clusters – which are clusters of related businesses working cooperatively to export services or products. A fourth business category, says Dukett, is labor export, as many people want to live in the area, but their jobs are somewhere else, even Los Angeles. Fortunately, there is a Metrolink system to get them there efficiently and easy access to the 210 and other highways.

“Among those four, that’s the reason the city exists the way it does,” he says, “and everything else is in support of those major activities, such as retail and service and smaller business operators, which we have a lot of. If you look at our industrial areas, you will see they are developed in such a way for multi-tenant use, and the bulk of them are 50,000 square feet or less. And we have several major shopping centers of good size. There is a little bit left in terms of room on the north side, north of the Foothill Freeway. Other than that, we are looking at infill going forward. Our limitations, relative to area, are what they are, so that is certainly something to keep in mind. So there will be a lot of re-inventing of existing sites as the market demands.”

And with people wanting to live here, what the market demands – and is getting – is more housing. A recently completed, 209-unit development from William Lyon Homes is located near the Metrolink station on a ten-acre site. Other residential projects are newly finished, including a seventy-four-unit live and work project, and 145 units are currently under construction near the Sycamore Hills Plaza in Phase 3 of a residential development.

The area is popular with businesses, tourists, and residents. “When you see Euclid Avenue looking north to the vista of the mountains, it’s really quite striking,” says Development Services Manager Liz Chavez. The street – three lanes going north, three lanes going south – boasts a wide center median with rows of trees and is tree-lined on both sides.

Upland is nicknamed ‘The City of Gracious Living’ and takes care to preserve its past while focusing on the future. “So we have a history. We have a unique look with Euclid Avenue, and we have a really strong residential base, so it’s really a great place to live, to work, and to raise a family,” says Development Services Manager Liz Chavez.