

Downtown Core Vision/Action Plan NEWSLETTER

The Case for Planning the Downtown Core...

In June 2007, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) analyzed and prepared a report for the San Bernardino Downtown Central Business District. The purpose of the ULI's involvement was to study and provide recommendations for the City of San Bernardino to consider, relative to land use, transportation, lifestyle, urban design, commerce and government that would bring physical and economic vitality back to Downtown, as well as recommendations and proposals for the City to implement with the goal of redeveloping and re-energizing downtown San Bernardino. In August 2007, these findings and recommendations were received by the Mayor and Common Council. EDA Staff was asked to review and evaluate the ULI Study and its recommendations. While the recommendations are broad, as part of an overall implementation strategy, it was determined that further study was needed.

To carry out the additional study, a multidisciplinary team of experts from EDAW, Inc., will be tasked to prepare a Conceptual Vision/Action Plan for the Downtown Core of San Bernardino. This effort will be headed by Vaughan Davies, Director of Urban Design, who will serve as the lead Design Principal. Mr. Davies has significant prior experience in the City of San Bernardino and the region and in particular with the Downtown area during a specific plan process in the early 2000's. Mr. Davies has the knowledge and experience to lead a team solving complex urban issues.

Project Tasks:

The following tasks will be performed over an eight month period to develop a Vision/Action Plan for San Bernardino:

Analysis:
Design Options / Alternatives
Preferred Plan
Development Standards
Zoning / Change of Zone / Overlay
Implementation Plan
Final Report / Presentation



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Successful Charrette kicks off Vision/Action Plan

The San Bernardino Downtown Core Vision and Action plan kicked off last month with a two day Charrette on September 24 and 25, beginning with an Open House forum coordinated by the City of San Bernardino Economic Development Agency (EDA) for stakeholders and conducted by the EDAW Consultant Design Team, at the former Woolworth Building. The Charrette provided an in-depth opportunity for business and community leaders, area residents, public officials and other interested persons to discuss issues and opportunities facing the revitalization of the downtown area. During the two day event, more than 60 individuals came together to listen and share their concerns and ideas.

In his welcoming remarks, EDA Executive Director, Emil Marzullo, noted the link between the previous ULI Study and the current Vision and Action Plan effort. Then, the EDAW Design Team introduced participants to the charrette format and presented relevant data related to the downtown core. Participants asked questions, provided input and addressed topics most relevant to downtown San Bernardino. Based on what they heard, the Design Team prepared a series of plans and drawings depicting opportunities for change and development.

At the conclusion of the final day, the results of the two day event were presented in an Open House format that was attended by the public and charrette participants. Overall, the charrette was stimulating and filled with fun, creativity and thoughtful insights for a new vision and action plan for downtown San Bernardino.

The charrette, with important public input, will provide the basis for EDAW developing a more specific revitalization strategy for downtown and an implementation action plan. The Downtown Core Vision and Action is expected to encompass an eight-month period.

EDAW, an internationally recognized Urban Design, Planning and Landscape design firm was selected and retained as consultants for this project because of their significant experience with the City of San Bernardino and region, and their credentials with challenging downtown projects, such as the highly successful Paseo Colorado in Pasadena, and the Kodak Theatre District in Hollywood.

Downtown Core Vision / Action Plan Project Team:

EDAW
Vaughan Davies, ISAA
Principal
Director of Urban Design

Maria Rosario, AIA, LEED
Senior Urban Designer
Project Manager

Joan Isaacson, AICP
Senior Project Manager
Community Outreach

Alexander Quinn
Director of
Sustainable Economics

Sylvia Gugu
Urban Designer

Jacqueline LaTorre
Urban Designer

Gurav Srivastava, AICP
Associate Planner
Urban Designer

San Bernardino EDA
Emil Marzullo
Director

Don Gee
Deputy Director

Jeffrey Smith, AICP
Senior Urban Planner

June Durr
Marketing &
Public Relations Manager

Mayor & City Council
Patrick J. Morris
Mayor

Esther R. Estrada
Councilmember – Ward 1

Dennis J. Baxter
Councilmember – Ward 2

Tobin Brinker
Councilmember – Ward 3

Neil Derry
Councilmember – Ward 4

Chas A. Kelley
Councilmember – Ward 5

Rikke Van Johnson
Councilmember – Ward 6

Wendy McCammack
Councilmember – Ward 7



We heard You!

Individuals who participated in the stakeholder interviews and charrette were asked about their feelings and vision for Downtown San Bernardino. EDAW identified and recorded the following initial ideas:

- Create a safe and youthful image for downtown
- Develop a truly urban mix of uses for Downtown San Bernardino
- Preserve and compliment the historic fabric of downtown
- Develop a comprehensive open space network of great streets, pocket parks, neighborhood parks and gardens
- Maximize the benefits of water as a transformative element in the downtown
- Fully integrate Seccombe Lake and the hidden streams into the downtown
- Create gateways to the downtown with iconic elements (landscape and/or built forms)
- Reintroduce a finer grain of streets and paseos throughout the downtown and especially on the Carousel Mall site
- Restore downtown as the heart of San Bernardino
- Develop Court Street as an active "pedestrian first" environment; i.e., Farmers Market, "Celebration" Town Square, "Broadcast City" as a growing media bureau market with TV3
- Develop a "Transit Village" for commuters, i.e., new commuter station, commuter parking (shared), maximize the Intermodal (multimodal) opportunities
- Identify and develop an early win / phase one
- Develop a range of housing choices to attract multi-age tenants from young professionals, middle class to retired seniors; i.e., single family, townhouses and apartments/condominiums, mid-rise and high-rise
- Develop a hotel(s) in a resort/visitor district/environment which compliments the downtown with state-of-the-art convention/business facilities
- Re-integrate the former Carousel Mall site and retail mall, i.e., create an environment which is outwardly facing/street oriented; focus the early phases of re-development at the east end of the existing mall
- Link to and reinforce the existing sports uses/youth activities in San Bernardino; capitalize on "Hall of Fame" hometown heroes and celebrity past

What You told Us

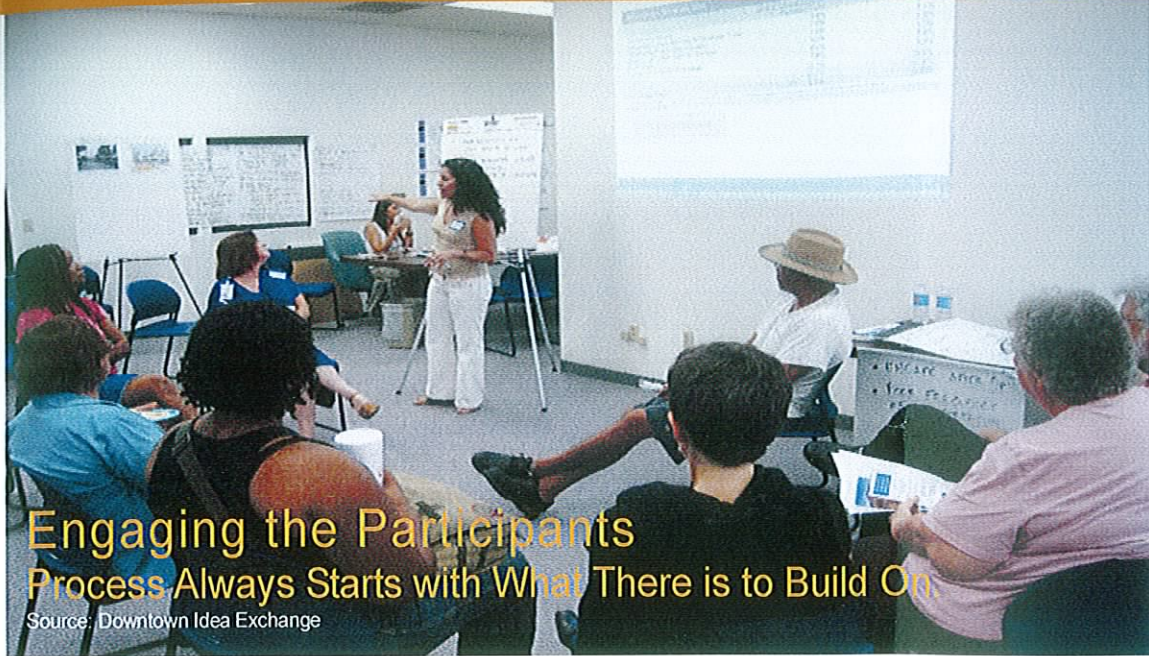
We asked Stakeholders and Charrette participants their feelings and vision for a revitalized and successful Downtown San Bernardino

- Redevelop City Hall as part of a new civic center
- Combine the new County courthouse needs/integrate with the proposed new civic center
- Create a strong entertainment/night time district with the historic California Theatre as an anchor
- Focus on the positive

Turning ideas into constructive feedback
Source: Downtown Idea Exchange

It is often said that people who are in a downtown everyday don't see where improvements are needed as clearly as outsiders do. Warren Rauhe, Director of the Small Town Design Initiative, disagrees with that conventional wisdom.

"I think people see the problems," he says. "They just don't know how to convey a visual solution. They are not trained to do that, and most people don't think visually. If you show them a plan, most people could not read it. They would listen to what you said and try in their mind to form an image based on where they have been." However, when those same people see an interpretation of their comments on a screen, juxtaposed atop the familiar corner on a street, their comments become very precise. "Until they see a picture of it, they really don't know what people are saying," Rauhe says.



Engaging the Participants
Process Always Starts with What There is to Build On.
Source: Downtown Idea Exchange

Each downtown is different, but verbalize the things they want at which ideas and goals are freely "the starting point on all projects is downtown to be in the future. "A discussed. These ideas are then the character, history, attitude, and lot of times, that goes beyond just transformed into visual renderings the physical aspect of things, and by the design team. Some renders may be right on, and others may miss by a mile. Facilitators then try to understand why some ideas failed to better hone in on what people want.

Downtown Core Project Area



Thank you for your participation

The following individuals participated in the in the initial Stakeholders Interviews and September Charrette. We thank them for their willingness to lend their time to this project, and hope to speak to them again during the course of this Vision/Action Plan effort.

Mayor Pat Morris

Councilmembers:
Esther R. Estrada, Tobin Brinker, Chas A. Kelley, Rikke Van Johnson, Wendy McCammack

Planning Commissioners:
Larry Heasley, Mike Sauerbrun, Jim Mulvihill, Susan Lien-Longville, George Rawls, Lance Durr

Jim Morris, Bryan Benso, Rohan Kuruppu, Brett Clavio, Sam Catalano, Agustin Rodriguez, Tom Provencio, Harry Hwang, Nick Di Pasquale, Bob Temple, John Peukert, Wale Elatar, Judi Penman, Alex Estrada, June Durr, Tom Pierce, Emil Marzullo, Julie Rynerson Rock, Gerry Newcomb, Ken Fischer, Robert Eisenbeisz, Stacy Aldstadt, Michael Conrad, Ramone Mata, Jan Wages, Jim Sharer, Wayne Austin, Alan Bone, Larry Sharp, Jack VanderWoude, Michael Anne Barner, Bryant Fairley, David Agnew, Lilian Aguilan, Lori Brede, Lisa Sanford, Carrie Gilbreth, Jane Dreher, Alfred Packer, Lue Schnepf, John Chiu, Tierney Harris, Courtney Lee, Steve Cuevas, Carman Oropeza, David Young, Steve Sutherland, Evelyn Trevino, Steve Smith, Tim Adams, Heidi Adams, Mari Escarcege, Terri Rahhal, Peter Bethel, Julie Williams, Sukirk Aganwal, Daniel Kopulsky, Calley Buyer, Fred Shorret, Evelynne Alexander, Nick Geane, John Schrader, Joy Schrader, Joseph Henson, Allen Everson, Mark Benjamin, Tony Bocanegra, Ty Shulling, Samer Alzabaidi, Tim Deland, Margret Schwarz, John Oquendo, Carlotta Melon, Andrew Edwards, Kevin Wolf, Ray Desselle, Henry Rowland, Tony Caluillo, Molly Bogh, William Wilson, Nancy Saverbrun, Bill Carey, Pastor Larry A. Lee, Estrella Barroga, Elaine Carbrey, Jill Wagner, Don Dudley, Jim Eble, William Flemming, Warner Hodgdon, Al Palazzo



What is a Charrette?

The French word, "charrette" means "cart" and is often used to describe the final, intense work effort expended by art and architecture students to meet a project deadline. This use of the term is said to have originated in Paris during the 19th century. Today, the charrette combines this creative, intense work session with public workshops and open houses.

A charrette is a collaborative planning process that harnesses the talents and energies of all interested parties to create and support a feasible plan that represents transformative community change. More importantly, charrettes allow everyone who participates to be a mutual author of the plan.

Source: NCI Charrette Institute

Project Milestones

Thus far, the EDAW Design Team has achieved the following milestone

Analysis:

- Design Team collected available data and performed analysis of data and project site survey
- Numerous visits to downtown San Bernardino
- Interviews with stakeholders
- Conducted initial charrette, public participation
- Development of preliminary design principles for Design Options / Alternatives Task

Next Task

Design Options / Alternatives:

- Design Team will develop and test two to three alternative design concepts for the San Bernardino Downtown Core

Upcoming Event

Open House

- Thursday, November 13, 2008
12 pm – 6:30 pm

Location:

Former Woolworth Building
Lobby Area
396 North "E" Street

This newsletter has been prepared by the City of San Bernardino Economic Development Agency as part of the public outreach effort for the City of San Bernardino Downtown Core Vision/Action Plan. If you have any further questions regarding this urban planning effort, please contact the project manager:

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