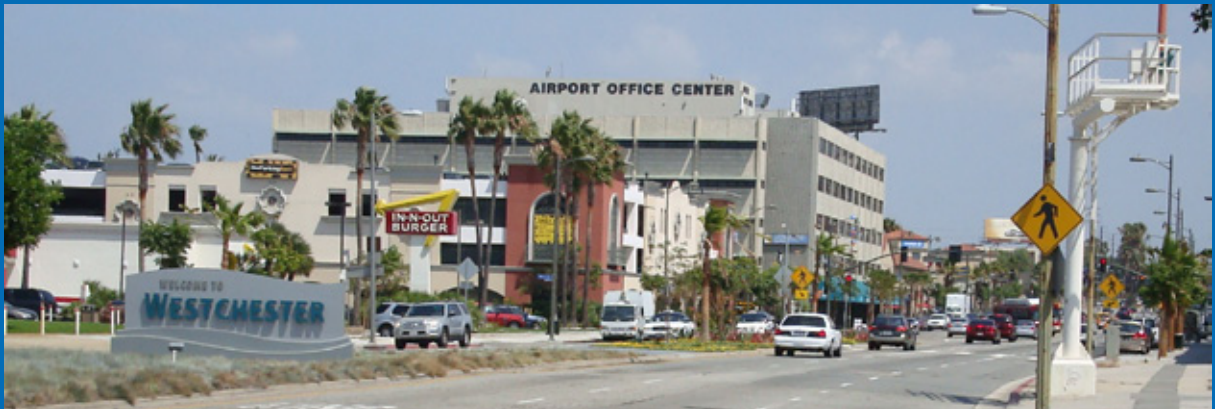


Westchester Town Center Los Angeles, California



©2009 by ULI—the Urban Land Institute
1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW
Suite 500 W
Washington, DC 20007

All rights reserved. Reproduction or use of the whole or any part of the contents
without written permission of the copyright holder is prohibited.

Westchester Town Center

Technical Assistance Panel

Report for The Westchester Business Improvement District

February 27, 2009

ULI Los Angeles

Los Angeles District Council of the Urban Land Institute



Panel Members and Committee: Jim Kumon, Bob Gardner, John Fransen, Richard Thompson, Donald Brackenbush, Neal Payton, Javier Mariscal, Ned Fox, Bill Fulton, Jonathan Curtis, Donald Duckworth, and Robin Baral.

ULI Los Angeles

444 South Flower Street, Suite 3880

Los Angeles, California 90071

Acknowledgements

The panelists and ULI Los Angeles wish to thank the Westchester Business Improvement Association for requesting the panel to provide advice and guidance regarding the future of Westchester Town Center. The panel could not have proceeded in this endeavor without the support of Donald Duckworth, Executive Director for the Westchester Business Improvement District. Thank you to Javier Mariscal, Donald Brackenbush, and Sadie Carver of Public Private Ventures for guiding the development of the written report. Also thanks to William Whitney, Whitney & Whitney; Joseph Fahey, Lupert Adler West; Chris Alford, Otis College; David Voss, Esq. Airport Relations Committee of LAX Coastal Communities Chamber of Commerce; Gordon Hamilton and Betsy Weisman, City of Los Angeles Planning Department; Bob Tarnofsky, Continental Development Corporation; and David Flaks, LAEDC for their time in serving as resources.

ULI Advisory Services

and the Technical Assistance Panel Program

The goal of ULI's Advisory Services Program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 500 ULI member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for such issues as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfields redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's Advisory Services.

Each team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the topic and screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI teams are interdisciplinary and are developed based upon the specific scope of the assignment. They provide a holistic look at development problems. A respected ULI member with previous panel experience chairs each team.



Javier Mariscal introduces the panel assignment and objectives.

Technical Assistance Panels, or TAPs, are conducted by the local District Council level of ULI. ULI Los Angeles has been at the forefront in creating the TAP program, offering the expertise of local ULI members to local government and nonprofit entities through one or two day panels. The TAP Program guidelines are the same as those that govern the entire Advisory Services Program.

To date, ULI Los Angeles has conducted Technical Assistance Panels for the City of Beverly Hills, City of Culver City, City of Pasadena, City of Whittier, University of Southern California, the Los Angeles Conservancy, the Ports O'Call Village, First United Methodist Church of Los Angeles, and The Canaan Group, among others.

A key strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw upon the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academics, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the Urban Land Institute's mission, this TAP report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities.

For more information about how a ULI Los Angeles Technical Assistance Panel could benefit your city or nonprofit organization, contact Christine Aure, Project Manager, at Aure@uli-la.org or Jonathan Curtis, ULI TAP Committee Chair from Trevear Holdings, at Joncurtis@sbcglobal.net.

For more information about ULI Los Angeles, a District Council of the Urban Land Institute, contact Katherine Perez, ULI Los Angeles Executive Director, at Perez@uli-la.org, or the ULI LA website, www.uli-la.org.

ULI Project Staff

Thomas W. Eitler

Vice President
Urban Land Institute

Katherine Aguilar Perez

Executive Director
ULI Los Angeles

Jonathan Curtis

ULI TAP Committee Chair
Trevear Holdings

Christine Aure

Project Manager
ULI Los Angeles

Ciara Contreras

Project Assistant
ULI Los Angeles

Sadie Carver

Editorial Consultant
Project Assistant, Public Private Ventures

John Dlugolecki

Photographer

Robin Baral

Transcriber
Student, Loyola Law School

Contents

Acknowledgements	ii
ULI Advisory Services	iii
Introduction	3
Regional Context	7
The Westchester Town Center	12
Recommendations	17
Panel Members	23



South entrance into the town center.



Panel Members touring the site area

Introduction

The Westchester Business Improvement District (BID) engaged the Los Angeles District Council of the Urban Land Institute (ULI LA) to convene a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) to advise the BID on the preparation of a vision that maximizes the future opportunities as a neighborhood and regional center and to provide recommendations for implementation.

The following report presents the findings and conclusions of the Urban Land Institute Technical Panel (ULI TAP) of the Los Angeles District Council regarding its initial perception of the future opportunities and constraints facing the Westchester Business Improvement District (BID). The TAP, comprised of a group of planning and real estate professionals who volunteered their services for a one-day charrette to study the District, were initially provided a briefing document that included land use

information covering the BID and demographic materials that described the market potentials of the larger Westchester community.

The Panel gathered additional information from interviews held with local public planning officials and private real estate owners active in the local area, and toured the BID in order to better understand its physical character and evaluate existing conditions. Following these intensive reviews, they proposed a series of ideas that would promote positive change in support of the BID's stated goals and objectives.

The Panel members are all based in southern California and very knowledgeable about local conditions. In this regard, they recognize the unique position of the Westchester BID as a community-serving commercial district that is juxtaposed immediately



Loyola Theater serves as a medical office building today.



Westchester pays tribute to LAX and its ties to aviation history.



Panel Members getting the pedestrian experience on Sepulveda Boulevard.



Neal Payton explores design improvements for the area.

adjacent to Los Angeles International Airport, perhaps the most significant economic “engine” in the entire region. The airport is currently undergoing a planning process that may lead to its significant expansion, thus potentially impacting surrounding communities.

Hopefully, the Panel’s report will assist the BID in its determination of an appropriate future that can both accommodate LAX expansion and lead to its successful evolution as an enhanced “Westchester Town Center”.

Technical Assistance Panels

In keeping with ULI’s mission, Technical Assistance Panels are convened to provide pro-bono planning and development assistance to public officials and local stakeholders of communities and nonprofit organizations who have requested assistance in addressing their land use challenges. A group of diverse professionals

representing the full spectrum of land use and real estate disciplines typically spend one day visiting and analyzing the built environments, identifying specific planning and development issues, and formulating realistic and actionable recommendations to move initiatives forward in a fashion consistent with the applicant’s goals and objectives.

Panel of Experts and TAP Process

Panel Members

ULI convened a panel of professionals who represent a variety of disciplines connected with land use and real estate development, such as planning, urban design, commercial office leasing, retail center operation, real estate brokerage and airport planning/impact analysis. Members were selected with the intent of convening a robust array of professional expertise relevant to the BID’s objectives for the study and who had local working knowledge of this sub-region. Panel members included the following:

- Javier Mariscal, AICP, Project Principal, Public Private Ventures
- Donald Brackenbush, Principal, Public Private Ventures
- Ned Fox, Partner, Vantage Property Investors, LLC.
- John A. Fransen, President, The Fransen Company



Panel Members tour the site area with representatives from OTIS College, the City of Los Angeles, and the Westchester BID.



Left to right: Bill Fulton, Jim Kumon, Richard Thompson, Ciara Contreras, Ned Fox, John Fransen, Robin Baral, Neal Payton, and Javier Mariscal.

- Bill Fulton, Principal, Design Community & Environment (DCE)
- Jim Kumon, Project Manager, Miralles Associates
- Neal I. Payton, AIA, Senior Principal, Torti Gallas and Partners, Inc.
- Neil Resnick, Executive Vice President—Transaction Services, Grubb & Ellis
- Richard W. Thompson, FAIA, AICP, Principal, AC Martin Partners, Inc.

TAP Process & Objectives

Panel Members tour the site area with representatives from OTIS College, the City of Los Angeles, and the Westchester BID.

Upon the submission of the TAP request, ULI representatives met with the Westchester Business Improvement District to determine the scope of the panel assignment. The panel was selected based upon their ability to address the stated objectives for the program provided by the BID:

- To develop a Vision for the Westchester Business Improvement District (BID) that maximizes the future opportunities that exist by serving as the town center for the Westchester/Playa del Rey market area and the “Gateway” to the LAX North Side Area; and
- To prepare a “Road Map” for the implementation of these future opportunities through the establishment of appropriate linkages with LAWA and the Westchester community.

The Westchester BID provided background materials that were distributed to the Panel in advance. The Chair of the Panel and the TAP Committee were briefed on the issues by the BID Executive Director, Donald Duckworth.

On February 27, 2009, the panel convened for the one-day panel. The panel began with a tour of the site and a briefing with the BID director. Representatives from OTIS College, the City of Los Angeles, Continental Development Corporation, and local stakeholders participated in a short interview session. Panel members engaged in informal discussions regarding issues and opportunities.

Panel’s Assignment

The Westchester BID requested that the ULI LA Technical Assistance Panel consider the BID’s future opportunities given its unique location adjacent to the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX); the anticipated future land use of the area north of LAX; the potential north runway expansion plans of LAX; and traffic congestion. To this end, the BID leadership identified the following major issues that it believed the TAP should consider while addressing the future of the District:

- What should be the future land use profile of the Westchester BID area, given its unique location adjacent to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and its critical role as a commercial service center for the Westchester community? What types of businesses and/or industries should be encouraged in the future?



Ned Fox reviews the final presentation with Ciara Contreras and Christine Aure.



Bill Fulton explains the unique political dynamics of the region Westchester faces.

- Los Angeles World Airports (“LAWA”) owns 350+/- acres of vacant land known as the North Side Development Area that is contiguous to the BID, and is entitled for office, industrial, hotel and retail uses. What steps should be taken to ensure that the North Side is developed in a manner that is beneficial to the Westchester Business District and the local community?
- Prior expansion activities at LAX related to the North Runway have negatively impacted the Westchester BID by reducing its local customer base and removing businesses in the Sepulveda Corridor via property acquisitions. At present, new airport expansion initiatives are being considered that could take additional properties and jeopardize the economic viability of the entire District. What measures can the District take in order to help LAX find planning solutions that are “win-win” with respect to their impact on the airport and the local community?
- Traffic congestion in the Westchester Business District is a significant impediment to the successful functioning of local businesses, residents, LAX operations and the traveling public. How can traffic congestion be managed for the benefit of all these different interests? Is there any possibility for introducing some form of light transit to the area that could serve the needs of both Westchester and LAX?
- Are residential uses appropriate for the Westchester BID given modern building technologies and the view opportunities?
- What innovative funding approaches for the implementation of the vision and the “Road Map” should be considered by the BID?

Ned Fox discusses opportunities for Westchester Town Center



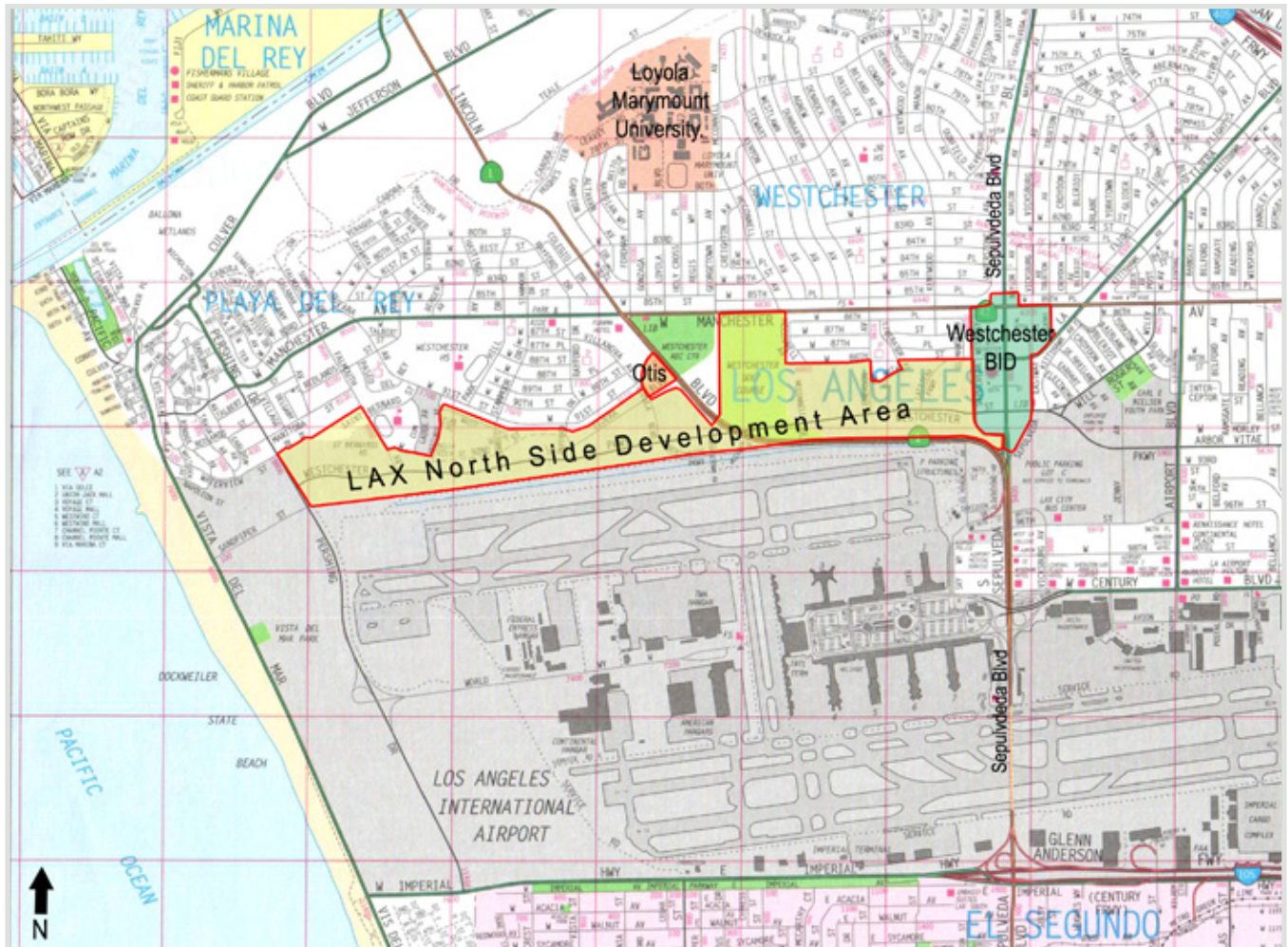
Regional Context

The Westchester Community

The Westchester BID is located in the Community of Westchester that is part of the City of Los Angeles. It is comprised of 120 properties that straddle Sepulveda Boulevard between Manchester Avenue on the north and the northern boundary of LAX and Lincoln Boulevard on the south. The district's regional location is shown in Figure 1.

The positioning of the BID on Sepulveda Boulevard, an important north-south arterial that both directly serves to LAX as well as connects the South Bay with West Los Angeles to the South Bay and beyond, is both a blessing and a curse.

Figure 1: Regional Context





Entrance sign to the Los Angeles International Airport



On the day of the panel, construction crews were busy completing sidewalk improvements and planting trees.



Former Mervyn's site on Sepulveda Boulevard to be occupied by Kohl's in late 2009.

Sepulveda serves as an important feeder street to the airport and thus offers an economic opportunity of sorts for the BID to be considered a “Northern Gateway” to and from LAX, it is heavily-travelled by automobiles passing through the district as an alternative to the freeway system.

This condition is made worse by the east-west configuration of LAX, which effectively forces north-south traffic on regional roads such as La Tijera Boulevard and Lincoln Boulevard to be funneled onto Sepulveda at intersections that are located in or adjacent to the BID, further exacerbating local traffic conditions at the peak periods. Access to the BID is also provided by Manchester Avenue and Westchester Parkway that generally flow in an east-west direction through the Westchester Community.

Immediate Neighborhood Environment

The Westchester BID serves as a community and neighborhood shopping center for a residential population of nearly 42,000 persons. At the present time Westchester is undergoing substantial upgrading by younger households who are attracted to one of the few remaining affordable residential locations that is both near the ocean yet still highly accessible to major employment centers that are located northerly of LAX along the Wilshire Corridor

In terms of abutting neighborhoods, the Westchester Community is bounded by the Playa Del Rey Community on the west; the developing community of Playa Vista and the City of Culver City on the north; and the City of Inglewood on the east. Two large educational institutions make their home in Westchester, Loyola Marymount University and Otis College. Westchester is connected to other parts of the Los Angeles region by the I-405 and I-105 Freeways. Public transportation includes bus rapid transit. Some planning concepts recommend the extension of the Metro Green Rail Line to LAX, then northerly to the immediate vicinity of the BID.

Westchester Town Center's Assets and Strengths

Westchester Town Center has a unique location and an important economic opportunity associated with its immediate adjacency to LAX, as it offers the first and last contact point for many thousands of travelers venturing in and out of southern California. In addition, the BID is bounded on the north and west by the stable and affluent Westchester residential neighborhoods. The following summarize the special strengths of the BID:



South entrance into the town center.

Business Improvement District

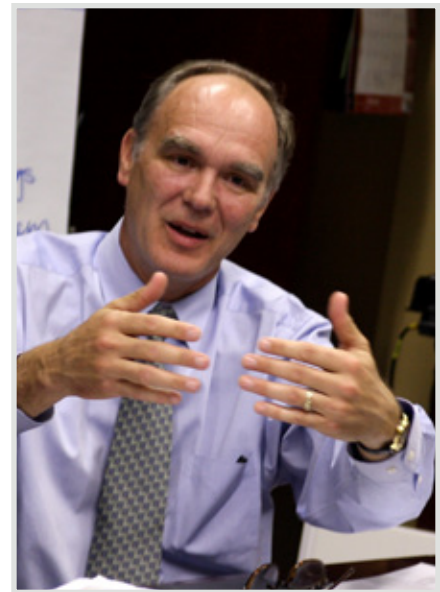
The Westchester Business Improvement District (BID) was borne out of a public-private partnership with the City of Los Angeles for local commercial property owners to provide for landscape maintenance along Sepulveda Boulevard in exchange for the City's funding of an \$11.6 million infrastructure project. The existence of this entity is an excellent catalyst for revitalization. A business improvement district provides the leadership, organizational structure, and a continuous revenue stream for revitalization of the district.

Functioning Business Corridor

Along Sepulveda Boulevard the Westchester BID is home to a number of national and regional retailers, and is fortunate that the former Mervyn's retail space will be re-occupied by a Kohl's Department Store by the end of 2009. In the eastern 87th Street Triangle, the district also has a variety of thriving small businesses.

Otis College of Art and Design

Otis College of Art and Design wishes to expand its operations in the Westchester community. Otis moved from the Mid-Wilshire area in 1997 to Westchester, and has slowly grown from 600 to more than 1200 students. As the college plans to further expand its campus, Otis is evaluating its alternatives, and is negotiating with LAWA for a six- to eight-acre site in the North Side Development Area. Otis plans to build a campus of one- and two-story



John Fransen discusses the BID's challenges.



Javier Mariscal brings together key ideas and strategies.

buildings scattered along the site with a greenbelt. The school is also interested in creating a street scene presence and enhancing its overall visibility in the community, and might consider some form of presence in the BID.

Extension of Transit Lines

Expansion of LAX will likely include the extension of the Green Line into the main terminal area. Given this proximity, it may be possible to further extend transit into the Westchester area where it could serve the BID. Such expansion of the Green Line would also encourage the addition of businesses and jobs in the North Side Area with minimal impact on automobile traffic in Westchester and surrounding communities.

LAX North Side Development Area

LAX North Side Development Area is a 350 acre strip of largely-developable land that borders the Westchester BID along Sepulveda Westway between La Tijera Boulevard and 92nd Street. The property is owned by LAWA and serves as a buffer between the North Runway and the Westchester Community.

The North Side has been planned and entitled for 4.3 million to 5.0 million square feet of commercial and related development area¹. Development of this

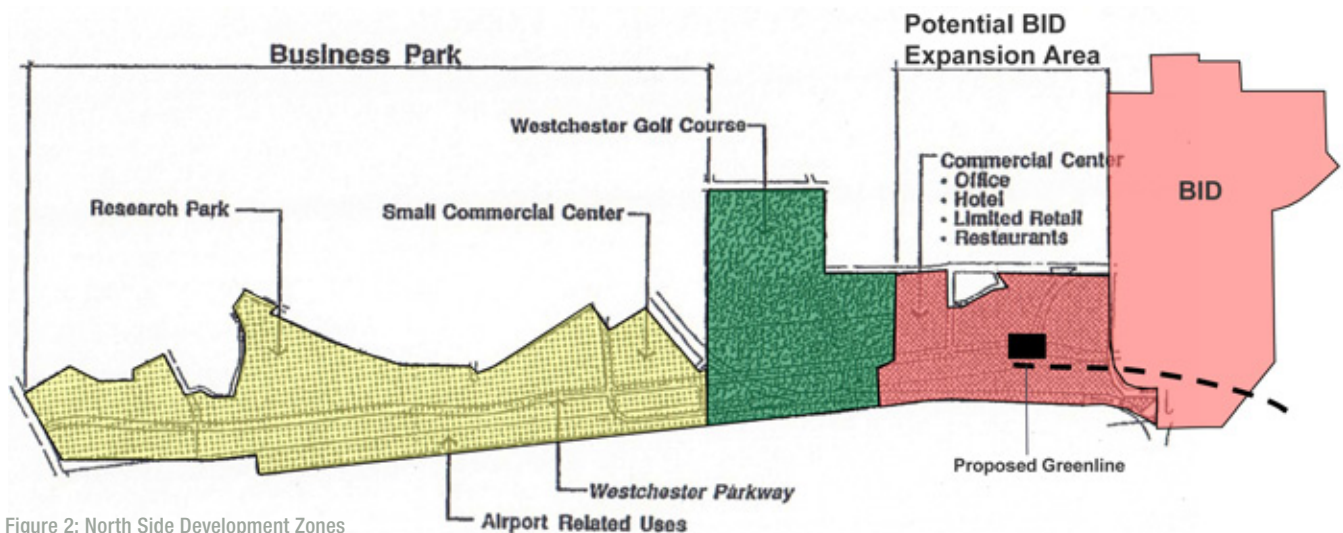


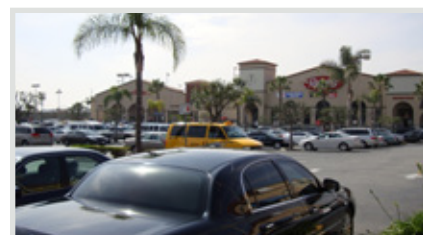
Figure 2: North Side Development Zones

¹ While planning documents indicate that the development potential of the North Side Development Area ranges from 4.3 million to 5.0 million square feet based upon traffic limitations, informal discussions with planners familiar with the EIR process for LAX expansion suggest that development potential is more likely in the 2.0 million square foot range.

property could have a significant impact on the vitality of the BID by adding to the attractions found in or near the District and expanding the customer base. The property is increasingly recognized by the City of Los Angeles as a highly suitable location for new businesses, thus represents a potential employment center that could be one of the keys to future economic growth in the region. The North Side Development Area Design Plan is shown in Figure 2.



Panel members touring the site area.



Ralphs Shopping Center

Northern section of Sepulveda Boulevard

The Westchester Town Center



Retail stores on Sepulveda Boulevard.



Commercial buildings on Sepulveda featuring Bed Bath & Beyond, Starbucks, and Wachovia Bank.

Long-term airport parking facility on Sepulveda Boulevard.



Characteristics

According to the Westchester / Playa del Rey Community Plan, Westchester is a community serving commercial area. Accordingly, the district is characterized by mostly one and two-story commercial retail structures, though there are several multi-story buildings that are occupied by general and medical office users.

Based upon recent surveys completed in early 2009, the existing building space in the district is occupied by the following major activities: Retail, 38%; Eating and Drinking Facilities, 11%; Services, including auto-related, 13%; Medical-Dental, Offices, 20%; and General Office, 19%. Despite the current economic conditions, the vacancy rate for existing space is at 2%, which is very low relative to other parts of the City of Los Angeles at about two percent.

Collectively, the retail space is somewhat characteristic of a large

community/sub-regional shopping center, though there are several large stores that serve the needs of local businesses. Retailers include well known national and regional chain stores, such as CVS Drugs; Trader Joe's; Office Depot; Petco; Bed Bath and Beyond; and Staples. These retailers have generally selected higher-visibility locations on Sepulveda Boulevard. Smaller, locally-owned businesses have clustered in the 87th Street / La Tijera Boulevard triangle.

The existing distribution of the 490,000 square feet of office space is 43% general office use, 13% financial services, and 44% medical services.

It is also important to note that other than a few automobile-related activities such as long-term parking lots and rental car facilities there are very few uses that are obviously taking advantage of proximity to the airport or would logically appeal to the visitor market.

Westchester Business Improvement District (BID)

Originally conceived by local commercial property owners as a means to provide for landscape maintenance along Sepulveda Boulevard as part of a public-private partnership with the City of Los Angeles, the Westchester Business Improvement District (BID) was established in July 2007 with a substantially broader purpose of enhancing the commercial vitality of the Westchester area. In its first Strategic Plan, the BID's Board of

Directors established the following objectives for the organization:

1. Identifying a future development program that will provide optimum returns for BID property

owners and accommodate LAX expansion requirements.

2. Seeking ways to mitigate the historic and possible future negative impacts from LAX expansion on the BID.

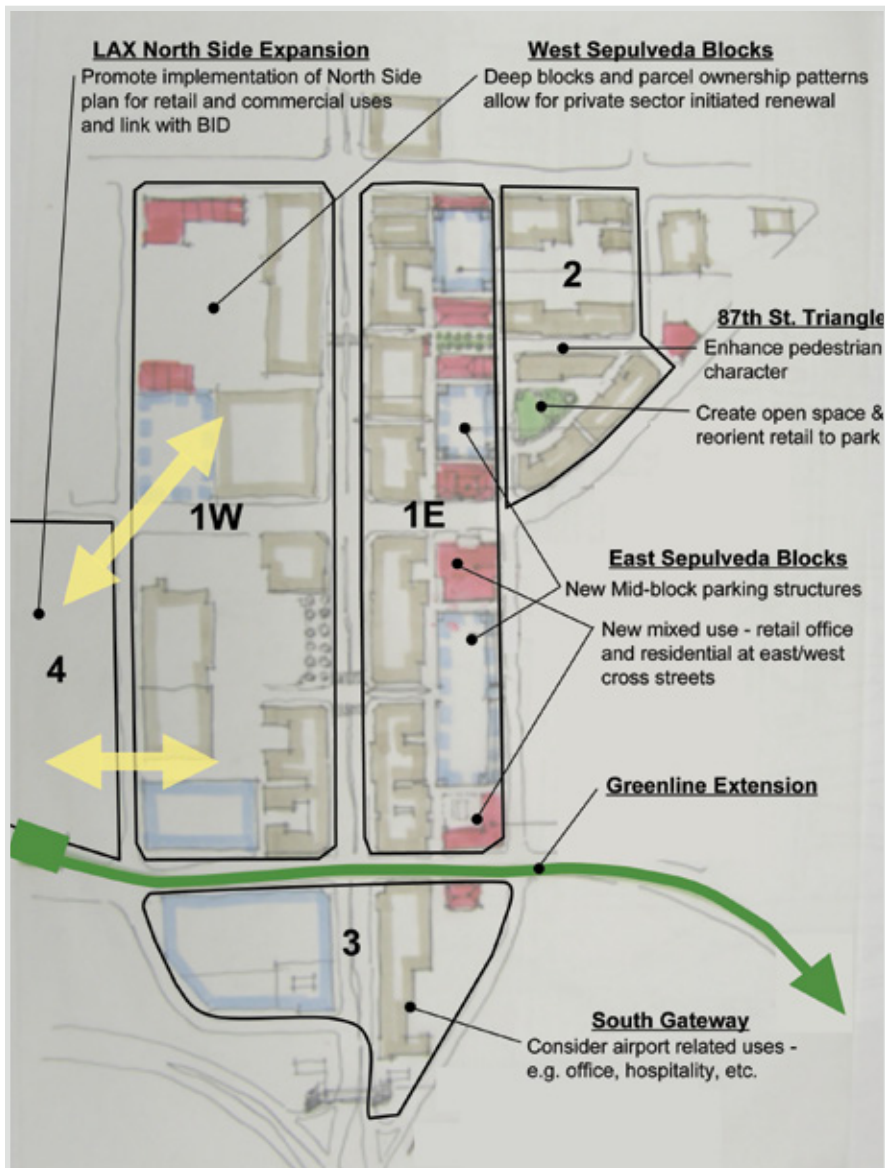


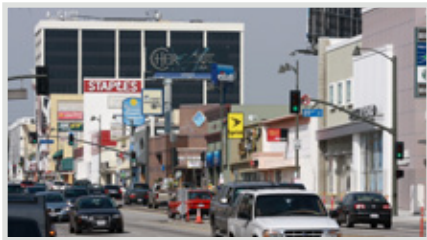
Figure 3: Design concept alternative ideas



Unmanaged off-street parking on the Sepulveda Eastway.



Retail stores on Sepulveda Boulevard.



Traffic on Sepulveda Boulevard.

Parking on south end of Sepulveda Eastway.



3. Providing substantive input to the planning for the North Side Development Area to ensure it will be beneficial to the BID and the larger community.
4. Finding approaches to relieve local traffic congestion through such measures as extending the Green Line to LAX and to the BID.

The Westchester BID covers 120 parcels of land that encompass 46.05 acres or 2,006,074 square feet of area. Based upon recent surveys, the existing building space exclusive of parking structures is estimated at 1,096,883 square feet. The geographic boundaries of the Westchester BID are identified in Figure 3, while the individual properties that comprise the District are delineated in Figure 4.

Downtown Concerns and Challenges Throughway

As the Panel observes, Westchester suffers from the use of Sepulveda as an alternative to the I-405 Freeway

and as a major entry road to LAX. As a result, the road carries a disproportionate amount of through traffic as people are proceeding from destinations north and south of the airport to those at the airport and other parts of the region. The challenge for Westchester is to mitigate the effects of through traffic so that it can better serve its customer base. It also needs to consider how it can convert communities into customers.

It is also important to recognize that the width of Sepulveda Boulevard as a regional arterial together with the high traffic volumes present significant issues to planning the BID as a single physical space. Over time, it may be important to recognize that the planning of the District requires consideration of separate solutions for each side of this major street.

LAX North Runway Expansion/ Reconfiguration

In March 2008, the Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) published a Notice of Preparation of a Draft



Parking in the 87th Street Triangle.

Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) which includes alternative development plans to reconfigure the north runway. Alternatives under consideration range from keeping the existing runway in its current location to moving it northerly as much as 340 feet. Moving the runway northerly toward the BID could require the taking of properties and the re-design of the circulation system, this scenario could negatively affect the economic performance of the BID. While timelines are reportedly slipping, the DEIR is scheduled for release in August 2009, then faces a significant period of review before adoption and a final determination of the runway alignment.

LAWA's unknown intentions and uncertain schedule for making a final decision regarding the North Runway's alignment—not to mention possible changes in the roadway circulation system, the configuration of future parking lots, locations of rental car operations and even the

alignment of the Green Line—provide severe challenges to the BID as it attempts to plan for its future.

Parking

The Panel recognizes that the BID is well aware of a number of parking issues facing the District, and also notes that parking studies are under way that should lead to solutions to the current problems. It is unfortunate that these studies were not completed prior to the TAP, as they might have been a useful resource in the evaluation process.

Altogether, there are reportedly 4,000 off-street parking spaces in the BID, approximately 600 spaces less than the number prescribed by the Los Angeles City ordinance. As understood by the Panel, the apparent shortage is further exacerbated by high demand created by patients who are visiting medical offices. It is also important to recognize that the configuration of the blocks in terms of their existing

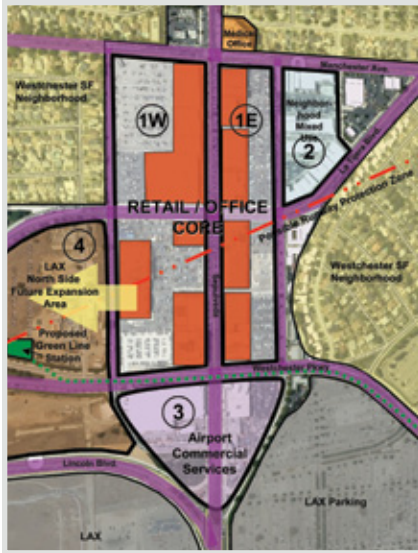


Figure 5: Areas of opportunity

depths presents problems for their redevelopment to higher and better uses. For example, the deeper blocks on the west side of Sepulveda have been able to accommodate a greater balance between parking need and space availability than the narrower blocks that front the east side of Sepulveda. It is also important to recognize that the east side also suffers from lack of coordinated parking management that is of particular concern to the proper functioning of the east side of Sepulveda.

Areas of Opportunity

In order to facilitate the analysis, the BID and selected adjacent lands were divided into five sub-areas as shown in Functional Areas Map on the following page. The general problems and opportunities facing future development that the Panel identified with each sub-area are presented in the table below:

Action Area	Problems	Opportunities
1W - Central Retail Corridor West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term lessees on NW blocks may limit future redevelopment Heavy traffic on Sepulveda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deep block depth allows retail to open to Sepulveda Kohl's will strengthen retail drawing power
1E - Central Retail Corridor East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small lots and multiple owners Heavy traffic on Sepulveda Shallow block depth Need for unified parking management Blank wall to Sepulveda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low vacancy rates Video wall statement
2 - 87th Street Triangle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small lots with multiple owners Low density results in low yields Parking encroachment from medical offices Heavy traffic on La Tijera 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inviting walking scale Unique streetscape on 87th Street Opportunity to expand pedestrian and amenity areas
3 - South LAX Adjacent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land uses serve LAX and area is disconnected from rest of BID Transition to more intense use probably impacted by unknown LAX expansion requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for more intense uses that relate to other activities in the BID.
4 - LAX North Side Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LAX has not made clear its intentions for future development and schedule for new uses A clear connection to the central retail corridor is somewhat obscured by existing parking structure and the Ralph's building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible Green-Line transit extension Vacant, well located land, multiple reuse possibilities (residential, hotel, office, retail) Potential major employment center with quality jobs

Recommendations

Vision

The Panel's vision for Westchester Town Center recognizes and responds to what the group feels is possible given existing and future market conditions and the political realities associated with the location immediately adjacent to LAX. In addressing the current problems and opportunities, the BID should embrace and endeavor to build upon the assets that Westchester Town Center possesses and be mindful of constraints.

The major assets to build upon include: the potential opening of the North Side Area; the expanded retail opportunity represented by the opening of a new anchor store, Kohl's; the potential market represented by LAX passengers and employees; the expansion objectives of Otis College; the growing affluence and consumer strength of the Westchester Community and surrounding neighborhoods; and the existing tenant base in the BID that consists of a unique blend of well-known national retailers and locally-owned small businesses.

The Panel's vision for the Westchester Town Center is one that believes the regional and neighborhood markets it serves can be accommodated in a manner that creates both high quality jobs that fuel the region while also providing needed community services. These diverse markets should be managed to complement one another, and should embrace the extension of mass transit in way that reduces traffic congestion while encouraging the growth of the local economy.

Ultimately, Westchester can serve as a demonstration of the principle that economic growth, high quality jobs, community services, and environmental responsibility are interrelated goals that serve the best interests of the region as a whole as well as the local neighborhood. The BID, the City of Los Angeles and the Westchester community will realize this goal by bringing their unique resources together to form a constructive and active partnership.

Gateway

Westchester should respond in some capacity to its proximity to LAX. Unlike any other southern California neighborhood, Westchester has an opportunity to make the "first claim" on arrivals to a world-class international city. Similarly, the BID could take advantage of its strategic location at the neck of the "funnel" of regional roads that terminate at Sepulveda, as millions of people travel through



Javier Mariscal and Donald Brackenbush prepare for the oral presentation.



Jim Kumon, Richard Thompson, Ned Fox, and Neal Payton develop the conceptual diagrams.



Medical Office Building on the northern edge of the district.



Richard Thompson offers suggestions on development opportunities.

Westchester each year, either starting from LAX or by participating in the north-south commute between the South Bay and West Side employment centers and other destinations.

Today, Westchester is a through-way: a place people pass through on their way to somewhere else. In recognition of this unique characteristic, one possible brand suggested by the Panel was “Westchester Town Center – Portal to Los Angeles.”

Creative City

Given the proximity and good relations with Otis College (and for that matter, Loyola-Marymount University) Westchester has the opportunity to become a unique creative community. Recognizing the immediate opportunity, the BID should work with Otis to determine ways that Otis can have a visible presence in Westchester.

Possible options include the provision of student art as part of the local streetscape, attaining gallery space, and locating “outposts” of the college in the BID. It would also be important for the BID to support Otis in its efforts to create a campus in the North Side Development Area. This “first step” would constitute an important signal to the development community that the North Side can become an important employment center that is crucial to the economic growth of Los Angeles.

Otis College’s interest in centralizing its campus on the North Side properties is so important to the local area that LAWA and the City of Los Angeles should incentivize this opportunity by providing a prominent location for the facility at a subsidized rent to ensure that it can be afforded by the institution.

Other creative-related elements that could enliven the BID are live/work spaces, a boutique hotel, and theater/cultural performance spaces.

Automobile traffic filters through Westchester to LAX and destinations elsewhere.



Potential Expansion of Retail Development

The panel suggests the BID focus on attracting unique small business retailers, especially with a connection to the arts. Other candidate retail uses include the types of chains being attracted to locations along Sepulveda and Rosecrans in the cities of El Segundo and Manhattan Beach as well as stores and restaurants that can serve the large employment base located in and around LAX.

The BID and the City of Los Angeles should actively promote private sector efforts to revitalize the retail block containing the Kohl's store. As presented to the Panel, the property owner has a number of important ideas to improve the existing center that will also contribute to the growth of the larger community.

Immediate Expansion of the BID to the West

While the BID is constrained on three-and-a-half sides by Westchester Community residential neighborhoods and LAX, there is the possibility of expanding to the west into the LAX North Side Development area along two major regional streets, Westchester Parkway and La Tijera Boulevard.

The basic access is in place, and site areas are sufficient to allow such development to evolve over time as an important extension of the BID provided such area is made available by LAWA for private use.

Road Map/Implementation Plan

The following section discusses possible courses of action for the BID to consider in the further planning and execution of its Vision

Participation in LAX Modernization and Runway Expansion Planning Process

The Panel appreciates that it is extremely difficult for the BID to make plans for new development opportunities when so much of the scope, and timing of these plans are dependent upon factors largely beyond its immediate control. The LAX runway expansion plan would have a tremendous negative effect on a number of properties at the southern entrance of Westchester Village. In anticipation of the final EIR study and LAX's plans, the BID should become a voice for the property owners and the district and strengthen its relationships with LAWA and with the City Planning Department which is likely to play a major role in the interface between LAX and the surrounding communities.

Support Implementation of LAX North Side Development Plan

Given the potential for the North Side Development Area to enhance the Westchester Town Center by providing both land for expansion and an additional



John Fransen and Ned Fox discuss possible implementation strategies for the concept plan.



Richard Thompson puts the finishing touches on the plan.



Westchester Golf Course. Source: American Golf Website



Downtown Culver City built parking structures as part of its overall revitalization. Source: Tishman Construction Website.

base of customer support, it would be important for the BID to encourage LAWA to make these lands available for private development. Such support would also be consistent with the City of Los Angeles' economic development policies which are increasingly focused on supporting the City's job base, particularly higher-paying jobs in fields of high technology, creative arts and information-related activities.

Golf Course Expansion on the North Side

The existing Westchester Golf Course is an important amenity for the community, but its current configuration has only 15 holes rather than the typical 18 holes for most facilities. As part of the North Side development, the Panel believes that this course should be expanded to 18 holes and offer enhanced restaurant/meeting facilities that could serve both the business and local resident communities. When enhanced, the course might also represent an important location for a new hotel facility.

Make Parking an Asset

A well-functioning parking system is an important ingredient to successful



The panel tours the southern end of the district.

revitalization of a business corridor. If well managed, parking can be a valuable asset as a source of revenue. Developing the management system is a key priority for the BID as a first step to revitalization. New construction of facilities, a market driven rate structure for on and off street parking to ensure full utilization of spaces, and professional management will all encourage more visitors to the community.

Before any major decisions about parking are taken, it is important to carefully review the study of existing parking supply and assessment of future needs that is being completed for District. The study should evaluate the number of spaces needed in the district.



New patio dining on east side of Sepulveda Boulevard.

Part of the evaluation should also include consideration of the rate structure for parking and the location of parking. In addition, management of the parking resources, operations, and enforcement should be consolidated under a Parking Authority. This will allow the BID to meet the needs of the whole. Ideally, two parking structures could be developed on the east side of the Sepulveda Boulevard corridor. The parking structures will serve as catalysts for development and provide incentives for companies to relocate into Westchester Village.

Portal to Los Angeles

To build upon the Westchester Town Center– Portal to Los Angeles concept, developing a gateway landmark at the intersection of Sepulveda and Lincoln would set the stage for Westchester’s image and branding. The landmark should make an iconic statement that tells visitors they have arrived in Los Angeles. Some of the ideas that came from the Panel to create this statement were the use of video screens, billboards, murals, and other graphics that will illuminate Sepulveda Boulevard.



87th Street Triangle

Specific Planning Concepts for the East Side of Sepulveda Boulevard

The Panel’s review of the Westchester BID physical conditions found that the west side of Sepulveda was largely stable in character, and that some of the landowners were already pursuing development programs that would enhance their properties and the District as a whole. In addition, it was perceived that the primary attention of the BID related to the west side of Sepulveda should be directed toward expanding the boundaries to the west and incorporating North Side properties.

In contrast, the portion of the BID on the east side of Sepulveda drew the Panel’s attention, as the relatively narrow blocks fronting Sepulveda and La Tijera Boulevards face immediate issues as property owners consider expansion and redevelopment to higher and better uses, particularly with respect as to how parking is to be provided. Accordingly, some detailed development concepts evolved which are presented below.

The eastern section of Westchester Town Center, where La Tijera Boulevard, Truxton, and 87th Street converge (87th Street Triangle), is comprised of a number of unique small local businesses. Upon examination, the panel believes this 87th Street is an overlooked asset, which could flourish if parking and other infrastructure improvements could be undertaken.

Potential uses could include creative office spaces and a boutique hotel. In addition, creating a street cut-through to link 87th Street to Sepulveda Boulevard would link the two areas together and reinforce and east west pedestrian circulation and frontage. The extended 87th street would be built for slow-moving



Store frontage in the 87th Triangle



Donald Brackenbush, Ned Fox, and John Fransen walk along the store frontage in the 87th Street Triangle.

traffic. Bricks and pavers can provide an element of “inhospitality” for vehicle traffic in favor of pedestrian traffic.

To further enhance the Triangle, the Panel suggests creating a green space that replaces the parking lot located on the parcel number 19 between 87th Street and La Tijera Boulevard (see Figure 7 below) which is currently used as a parking lot. This would help to add some green open space currently non-existent in Westchester Village. In addition, a transfer/sale of development rights from the 87th Street triangle parcel could provide a source of economic return to incentivize new development on adjacent sites and support the construction of replacement parking.

Second Phase of ULI TAP Involvement

The Panel believes that the one day charrette has resulted in a fruitful discussion of a number of planning and development issues facing the BID and the outlining a number of possible solutions for its consideration. However, the members also believe that there would be substantial benefit to having a second program where the ULI TAP would reconvene and assist the BID in a joint planning session that would involve LAWA and planners from the City of Los Angeles.

The purpose of the second ULI TAP program would to further explore the interaction between the future evolution of the BID, the northerly expansion of LAX, the extension of the Green Line into the Westchester Community and the future utilization of the North Side Development Area. Logically, this TAP could be funded by LAWA as part of its larger planning and environmental review process, and would provide important contributions to both the LAX and Westchester planning processes.

The City of Los Angeles and LAWA should encourage an ongoing BID/ULI/ City program to strengthen and implement the concepts identified by the ULI and build upon them with its plan for the Westchester BID and other parts of the Community. Another ULI TAP Panel should be convened within the next six months for that purpose that, hopefully, is funded by LAWA environmental mitigation monies.

For the longer term, a work group comprised of Westchester BID, LAWA, City Planning Department, Mayor’s Office and Council District 11 Office representatives should be formed to guide professional planning and related services that can guide the implementation of this report. Once again, it is believed that funding for this activity can also be provided by LAWA through its Environmental Assessment sources.

Panel Members

PANEL CHAIR



Javier Mariscal, AICP

Project Director, Public Private Ventures

Javier Mariscal is highly experienced in public and private sector urban redevelopment. Javier has over 18 years of real estate development experience, including 10 years in the public sector as redevelopment agency staff for the Cities of Huntington Park, West Covina, Ontario and Cypress. He also worked more than 8 years in the private sector homebuilding industry specializing in urban infill development for award-winning builders such as the Olson Company and John Laing Homes. Javier was instrumental in acquiring and entitling urban infill housing sites that created over 750 new homes in diverse communities including Santa Ana, Claremont, Inglewood, Sylmar and Pasadena. Javier is a nationally accredited urban planner and member in good standing with AICP. Born and raised in South Central Los Angeles, Javier received his MA in Urban Planning from UCLA and his BA in Architecture from Yale University.



Donald Brackenbush,

Urban Design

Principal, Public Private Ventures

With PPV, Donald Brackenbush has participated in developing and implementing asset development plans for the new California State University, Channel Islands Campus in Camarillo, the asset development program for Cal Poly Pomona, as well as the plan for College Park (Chino, California)—a new community that incorporates a new Chaffey Community College District campus. With PPV, Donald has been a key participant and manager in all PPV asset development programs. Donald is PPV's lead principal relating to the planning, design, and engineering aspects of this work. Donald is presently managing the site searches for and planning for new campuses for the Kern Community College District in Bakersfield and the College of the Desert in the Coachella Valley.



Edward (Ned) D. Fox

Partner, Vantage Property Investors, LLC

Since January 2003, Mr. Fox has served as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Vantage Property Investors, LLC, a private real estate investment and redevelopment company. Prior to 2003, Mr. Fox was Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Center Trust, a real estate investment trust, from 1998 to January 2003 when Center Trust was acquired by Pan Pacific Retail Properties. Mr. Fox also served as the Chairman of Commonwealth Partners from 1995 through October 2003, a fully integrated real estate operating company that he co-founded in 1996. Prior to forming Commonwealth Partners, Mr. Fox was a senior partner with Maguire Thomas Partners. He is a member of the ICSC, ULU and the American Institute of CPA.



John A. Fransen

President, The Fransen Company

John A. Fransen is the president of The Fransen Company, a Newport Beach-based real estate consulting firm founded in 1984. The company works with cities, private land owners, developers, and users of property, as well as pension funds and lenders on new projects, redevelopments, and re-positioning of existing properties. The firm evaluates project potential, provides strategic plans, and in many cases also assists in the implementation of the plan. Current and past clients have included: Third Street Promenade and the Bayside District in Santa Monica; TIAA-CREF; The California cities of San Jose, Glendale, Long Beach, Los Angeles, and Big Bear Lake; The Irvine Company; Newhall Land and Farming; Westfield; The City of San Bernardino; and The San Diego Olympic Training Center.



Bill Fulton

Principal, Design Community and Environment

Deputy Mayor, City of Ventura

William Fulton, Principal, joined DC&E in 2008 as part of its merger with Solimar Research Group, where he was the Founding President for eight years. Bill specializes in urban planning, metropolitan growth trends, economic development, TDR and policy projects with a focus on government agencies, land conservation organizations and developers as clients. Leading DC&E's Ventura office, he is well known as the best-selling Author of the Guide to California Planning and the L.A. Times best-seller, The Reluctant Metropolis: The Politics of Urban Growth in Los Angeles. Currently serving as Ventura's Deputy Mayor, Bill is also a Senior Scholar at the School of Policy, Planning, and Development at the University of Southern California. He is also the founding publisher of California Planning & Development Report.



Jim Kumon

Project Manager, Miralles Associates

Jim Kumon is a Project Manager at Miralles Associates where he leads the implementation of sustainable design practices within a full service architecture firm. With a background in urban design, design/build development and construction management, he is uniquely qualified to consult on delivering diverse residential and mixed use buildings as the foundation of vibrant urban neighborhoods. He is a LEED Accredited Professional and graduate of the University of Michigan. Recently, he has been speaker for the Urban Land Institute Los Angeles and the Congress for New Urbanism, as well as served as the chair of the AIA Pasadena Committee on the Environment.



Neal Payton

Senior Principal, Torti Gallas and Partners, Inc.

Neal I. Payton, AIA, LEED-AP, is a Senior Principal at Torti Gallas and Partners, Inc. where he created, opened and directs the West Coast office in Downtown Los Angeles. Projects extend from the coast of Mississippi and central Texas, to Washington State, Salt Lake City, as well as throughout southern California, including a 70-acre redevelopment parcel in Boyle Heights known as Wyvernwood. Often called upon to work on politically and culturally sensitive sites, Mr. Payton has led over 40 design charrettes and participated in close to 100. His work centers on Urban Design and Town Planning at a variety of scales including inner city revitalization, inner suburban infill and refill, transit oriented development in emerging development areas as well as regional plans for counties and metropolitan areas.



Neil Resnick

Executive Vice President/Transaction Services, Grubb & Ellis Company

Neil Resnick, a veteran office leasing broker, has joined the West Los Angeles office of Grubb & Ellis as a senior vice president. Resnick's forte is tenant representation. While he has represented numerous high profile corporate tenants, his specialty has been acting in an advisory capacity to entertainment and creative firms. Resnick got his start in 1986 joining the Beverly Hills/Century City office of CB Richard Ellis, where he was consistently a top producer. His partial list of clients include Universal Music Group, MCA Music Publishing, CarsDirect.com, IBM e-Business, Fox Studios, Motown Record Co., Brillstein / Grey Entertainment, Hilton Hotels Corp., Bank of America and the William Morris Agency. Prior to the Seagram acquisition of PolyGram, Resnick was responsible for assisting PolyGram with numerous office relocations and renewals across the country.



Richard W. Thompson, AIA, AICP

Principal, Urban Design & Planning, AC Martin Partners

As Principal in Charge of the Urban Design and Planning Studio at AC Martin Partners, Inc., Richard leads the firm's division dedicated to urban and campus planning. Under his leadership, the studio has developed a national reputation with an award-winning portfolio that includes significant projects in Campus Master Planning, New Community Planning, Urban Mixed-use Development, Urban Revitalization and Corporate Master Plans. The success of the studio's practice is reflected in the fact that all of AC Martin's master plans have been approved by their respective communities and institutions and are guiding the architecture that follows. Richard has also been honored as a member of American Institute of Architects's prestigious College of Fellows.

