

THE COUNTY OF
ORANGE

THE CITY OF
**LAGUNA
NIGUEL**

ULI TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL

APRIL 28, 2011



**Urban Land
Institute**

Orange County/Inland Empire



ULI ORANGE COUNTY/INLAND EMPIRE

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"A city is a place
where there is no
need to wait for
next week to get the
answer to a question,
to taste the food of
any country, to find
new voices to listen
to and familiar ones
to listen to again."

- Margaret Mead, cultural anthropologist

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ABOUT THE ULI



**Urban Land
Institute**

Orange County/Inland Empire

The Urban Land Institute is an international, non-profit research and education organization that serves to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. The ULI is based out of Washington, D.C., and is connected throughout the Americas, Europe and Asia by a network of district councils. ULI has grown from seven regional district councils in 1983 to more than 60 global district councils today. In North America, there are currently 51 district councils, and in Europe, there are currently 13 district councils. The ULI Orange County/Inland Empire is one of the ten largest district councils worldwide, with over 900 members. The ULI is funded by sponsors, programs, and its members. Over 30,000 members are active in the research and education of land use planning and development issues. ULI members have access to information such as publications, case studies, and community catalyst reports. The ULI also organizes special workshops and programs geared toward people who develop and redevelop neighborhoods, business districts and communities across the U.S. and around the world. Networking is one of the primary reasons to join the ULI as professionals seek to be connected and share best practices.

The members of the ULI Orange County/Inland Empire are community builders. They represent a range of professions from academicians to economic development officials and designers to property managers. The activities of the ULI Orange County/Inland Empire are geared specifically toward local land use issues, but also towards issues that affect the Southern California region and California statewide. In an effort to create a forum where professionals under 35 years old could network with their colleagues or meet seasoned professionals in the industry, in 2003, the Young Leaders Group was formed.

The mission and the principles of the ULI have withstood the test of time for 75 years. Founded in 1936, by J.C. Nichols, the ULI has been bringing together leaders from the private and public sectors in an open exchange of ideas and experiences to improve the quality of real estate and development decisions in regions throughout the world and in the Orange County/Inland Empire region.

“The activities of the ULI Orange County/Inland Empire are geared specifically toward local land use issues, but also towards issues that affect the Southern California region and California statewide.”



ULI ADVISORY SERVICES

The Urban Land Institute is a leader in conducting research and providing information on all aspects of real estate development and land use policy. In order to maintain its status as a valued and objective source in the private and public sectors, the ULI seeks to bring together leaders from across the fields of real estate and land use policy to exchange best practices and serve community needs; foster collaboration within and beyond ULI's membership through mentoring, dialogue and problem-solving; explore issues of urbanization, conservation, regeneration, land use, capital formation, and sustainable development; advance land use policies and design practices that respect the uniqueness of both built and natural environments; share knowledge through education, applied research, publishing, and electronic media; and, sustain a diverse global network of local practice and advisory efforts that address current and future challenges.

Since 1947, ULI's Advisory Services Program has been assisting communities by bringing together panels of seasoned real estate, planning, financing, marketing, and development experts to provide unbiased pragmatic advice on complex land use and development issues. At the local level, the ULI Orange County/Inland Empire District

Council provides advisory services panels on specific issues, which are addressed in one or two days.

To ensure objectivity, members of a District Council Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) cannot be involved in matters pending before or be working for the sponsor of a TAP, and cannot solicit work from the sponsor during the panel's assignment period. The panel consists of professionals, who are ULI Orange County/Inland Empire members, with expertise relative to the scope of the project. All TAP panelists are volunteering their time and expertise to participate. Sponsors request TAPs and the District Council assists the sponsor in refining the scope of the assignment and in organizing the panel's efforts. At the conclusion of the TAP, the panel issues a report with findings and recommendations to the sponsor. A fee is paid to the ULI Orange County/Inland Empire for the TAP, which is used by the District Council to further the Institute's mission to share best practices and provide educational services in local land use planning and real estate development.



ULI members participating in a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP).

CONTEXT/BACKGROUND

The County of Orange and the City of Laguna Niguel engaged ULI Orange County/Inland Empire (ULI OC/IE) to conduct a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) to explore the highest and best use for a site in the City of Laguna Niguel that contains the former Superior Court of California Harbor Justice Center. This report will provide key recommendations to allow the County and City to plan strategically for redevelopment of the entire site, with concepts flexible enough to facilitate connectivity to the existing Civic Center, Town Center and surrounding uses.

The County of Orange, in coordination with the City of Laguna Niguel, prepared a program Master Plan in 2004, to evaluate options for the existing Superior Court of California Harbor Justice Center. The planning efforts were designed to develop a new County courthouse, expand the existing Orange County public library, and develop a new City Hall on the site. The City has been operating in leased office space since its incorporation in 1989, but considered the Superior Court of California Harbor Justice Center an appropriate location for a permanent City Hall. Under the Master Plan, all of the proposed program elements would share the site. Included in the master-planning process was the County's intention to develop a vacant parcel on the northeast side of the site (proposed as a new office building), which would allow the County to capitalize on the development potential of the site.

In 2008, the existing Justice Center and ancillary facilities were closed and the proposed new courthouse construction

program was terminated. The County moved forward with land sale of 4.1 acres to the City of Laguna Niguel, for the new City Hall, and agreed to share in the cost of the public library renovation/expansion.

With the sale of a portion of the site to the City of Laguna Niguel and the closure of the Justice Center, the County of Orange requested ULI OC/IE conduct the TAP to explore revenue-generating uses for the remaining acres. The TAP panel was requested to provide guidance on what land uses might facilitate private investment in the development of the remaining parcels and be supportive of all the surrounding land uses.

"The planning efforts were designed to develop a new County courthouse, expand the existing Orange County public library, and develop a new City Hall on the site."



The City of Laguna Niguel, circa 1975. Images provided by Orange County Archives.



STUDY AREA



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The City of Laguna Niguel is one of the first masterplanned communities in Southern California. Originally designed in 1959, but primarily developed after the 1980s, the city is defined by the lowly mountain ridges and valleys that run through the community. The construction of the San Diego Freeway, known as the Interstate 5 or I-5, opened up the area to development. The City is bordered by the Cities of Aliso Viejo and Laguna Beach to the west, Laguna Hills to the north, San Juan Capistrano to the east, and Dana Point to the south, all located in the southern part of Orange County. When the City's first General Plan was adopted in 1992, the Town Center area was designated as a special community focal point. The Town Center is a distinctive area in the center of the community that contains a mix of retail, office, financial and residential uses.

The 'Civic Center' study area¹ is located in the southern portion of the Town Center area in Laguna Niguel. The 28-acre site is located on generally flat land at the bottom of a steeply graded hillside, at the southwest corner of the intersection of Alicia Parkway and Crown Valley Parkway. The first building constructed on site was a fire station, built in 1968. The South County Courthouse was completed in 1969. Four other buildings associated with the courthouse, consist of the public defender's building, the district attorney's building, the jury assembly building, and the court support building. The Orange County Public Library, Laguna Niguel is located adjacent to the new City Hall, on Crown Valley Parkway. A County Vehicle Maintenance Facility is adjacent to the

fire station, in the northern portion of the site, on Pacific Island Drive and Highland Avenue. None of these buildings have a large footprint, with no more than 35 percent of the site occupied by buildings and 30 percent of the site covered in surface parking lots. Except for the new City Hall, all of these facilities, as well as the remaining vacant parcels, are on County-owned land and are consistent, but not subject to, the Laguna Niguel General Plan land use designations.

The site is composed of two land use designations, with 90 percent Community Commercial/Professional Office/Public Institutional. Approximately 10 percent of the site is designated Public Institutional and holds the Public Library and Fire Station uses. The zoning ordinance designates approximately 90 percent of the property as Community Commercial and 10 percent as Public Institutional. Administrative office and retail/service business uses are permitted uses under the CC zoning.

The new City Hall is being constructed on the northeast corner of the Civic Center study area on a 4.1-acre site purchased from the County of Orange. The City is paying \$25 million, in cash, for the purchase and construction costs of the new building. Permits were issued in 2010, with estimated construction to be



Photos of the project site taken by TAP participants during the preliminary analysis phase of the TAP.

¹ For the purposes of this TAP, the Town Center or Town Center area generally refers to the Community Commercial land use designations in the center of the City of Laguna Niguel. The Civic Center or Civic Center area generally refers to the Community Commercial/Professional Office/Public/Institutional land use designation adjacent to the Town Center in the City of Laguna Niguel. The center of the City refers to the areas surrounding the intersection of Crown Valley Parkway, Alicia Parkway, and Niguel Road, in the City of Laguna Niguel.

² Retail Demand Study, The Concord Group, April 2011.

complete in the Fall of 2011. The design is a multi-story, steel-framed city hall building that includes a multi-purpose community room, offices for staff members and police services, council chambers, a small public outdoor amphitheatre, and a pedestrian link to the existing library. The original master plan design, undertaken in 2004, placed a new Courthouse in the middle of the Civic Center parcel, and the City Hall to the northeast. With the closure of the old courthouse and the cancellation of a new courthouse, the design for the City Hall was reversed, so that the new building is now located on the corner of Aliso and Crown Valley Parkways, with the surface parking lot behind and internal to the site.

The existing development surrounding the Civic Center parcel is suburban in scale and comprised of a variety of land uses.

The Town Center is considered a place for traditional shopping and patronized primarily by residents of Laguna Niguel². Key destinations include the Laguna Niguel Town Center, to the east of the site, across Alicia Parkway, which includes retail and office space. South, across Crown Valley Parkway and east of Hillhurst Drive, is the Crown Valley Mall, a commercial retail area which contains a drug store, fast food restaurants, and other small-scale retail. Large surface parking fields surround almost all of the commercial/retail development and provide free parking for shoppers, as well as the employees. West of Hillhurst Drive are multifamily apartments (directly adjacent to Crown Valley Parkway). Laguna Niguel Plaza is to the north,

across Pacific Island Drive. The Plaza is a commercial/retail development and includes an anchor grocery and residential duplex units. The Niguel Summit condominiums (for-rent apartments) and the El Niguel Terrace (a for-sale residential development) are to the west on the hillside directly adjacent/above to the site.

Buildings in the Town Center are relatively new and developed at relatively automobile-centric low-intensity/density. The area has poor pedestrian circulation, with stand-alone buildings separated by large surface parking lots, landscaping and arterial roads. The Town Center and Civic Center are served by two arterial roads, Crown Valley Parkway and Alicia Parkway. Crown Valley Parkway is a major east-west arterial. Alicia Parkway is a north-south arterial, each with six traffic lanes and center medians. Pacific Island Drive is a secondary east-west connector that travels the west side of the study site, but changes designation and name as it crosses Alicia Parkway. Arterial traffic counts are low, at 21,000 cars a day.

Study area photos taken by TAP participants during the initial site walk and analysis.

² Retail Demand Study, The Concord Group, April 2011.





Anamonte

Chapala Ct

Sonrisa Ln

Highlands Ave

Brockton Ct

Laguna Niguel Plaza

Post Office

Pacific Island Dr

Alicia Pkwy

Ivy Glenn Dr

County Maintenance Yard

Fire Station

Courthouse

Library

City Hall Site

Town Center Dr

Laguna Niguel Town Center

Crown Valley Pkwy

Crown Valley Mall

Hillhurst Dr

Mirador Ct

Paseo Del Valle

Via Valle

Via Corona

Via Venida

Via Reata

Abington Ct

N Hampton Rd

Mirandela Ln

Via Estoril

250 500 1,000 Feet

SCOPE OF WORK

As part of the initial TAP study process, ULI members met with City and County staff to discuss what the parties would like to accomplish with the TAP. The focus of the TAP was to identify revenue-generating uses for the site, as well as develop recommendations for development opportunities for the remaining vacant parcels. As an outcome of those discussions, the following scope of work was created to direct the panelists' efforts:

1. What steps can the County and City take to create a collaborative partnership arrangement and entice developers to build at this site so that it is a win-win and benefits all partners? What are some strategic recommendations on how to attract well-organized, well-capitalized developers, or create successful public-private partnerships or other non-profit equity alliances?
2. What are the key recommendations for land use(s) for the site that are compatible with the location of the new City Hall and its planned amenities, along with the County Public Library, Laguna Niguel branch (currently under renovation), the County Fire Station and the County Vehicle Maintenance Yard?
3. How can this site be developed as a "revenue-generator" for the County that is also beneficial to adjacent city businesses and residents? The County is interested in considering a plan that calls for active income-producing uses rather than a plan that seeks to increase open space or parkland in this area of the City.
4. What are some opportunities offered by this site to be a catalyst project to encourage additional development, connectivity with, and revitalization of the adjacent commercial and offices uses in order to create a sense of place in the Town Center area as a whole?
5. What is the highest and best use of the property owned by the County of Orange? What are recommendations for establishing the character of this site based on target markets and market realities?

OUTREACH & DILIGENCE



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Two weeks prior to the day of the TAP, City staff scheduled a walking tour to allow panelists and guests to observe the study area first hand. City staff, joined by County staff, conducted a walking tour through the site, allowing attendees to view the conditions of the existing County structures, as well as view the current construction efforts on the City Hall and Public Library expansion. Existing conditions were photo documented, with panelists asking detailed questions to gain a greater understanding of the issues of the site. After the walking tour, panelists windshield-toured the surrounding land uses.

One of the challenges for TAP panelists is to make accurate assessments of a community where they don't live or work. The assessment gathering process included outreach, interviews and due diligence, focused to advise the panelists and inform their final recommendations. Public and private stakeholders were interviewed to better understand the existing framework and issues of the area. The stakeholders included County and City staff and officials, local land and business owners, and property managers. The stakeholders, who were interviewed as part of the due TAP diligence, are as follows:

- Gary Capata, Mayor, City of Laguna Niguel
- Paul Glaab, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Laguna Niguel
- Linda Lindholm, Councilmember, City of Laguna Niguel

- Joe Brown, Councilmember, City of Laguna Niguel
- Robert Ming, Councilmember, City of Laguna Niguel
- David Weiss, Chairman, Laguna Niguel Planning Commission
- Fred Minagar, Vice Chairman, Laguna Niguel Planning Commission
- Jerry Slusiewicz, Commissioner, Laguna Niguel Planning Commission
- Cher Alpert, Commissioner, Laguna Niguel Planning Commission
- Tim Casey, City Manager, City of Laguna Niguel
- Dan Fox, Community Development Director, City of Laguna Niguel
- Robert Montgomery, Buie Communities, Laguna Niguel Town Center
- Robert Clippinger, Owner, Ivy Glen Center

Panelists walking through the study area with City and County officials during the preliminary site analysis phase of the TAP.

"Previous development within the Town Center has occurred on various parcels, individual in design and use, resulting in a patchwork of commercial, offices and residential pods of development."



Themes noted in the stakeholder interviews included thoughts and observations about the connectivity and integration of any new project, both internal and external to the Civic Center site. Previous development within the Town Center has occurred on various parcels, individual in design and use, resulting in a patchwork of commercial, offices and residential pods of development. Various stakeholders raised the idea of a pedestrian bridge crossing Alicia Parkway, linking any new development at the Civic Center to the existing Town Center. While the grade change across Alicia Parkway may serve to be a constraint, limiting pedestrian connectivity, stakeholders stated that planning for the integration of the two sites was core to any development plan that should move forward.

Multiple stakeholders discussed their vision for the site, understanding that it would be based in market reality, yet also viewing it as a catalyst and inspiration for the community and the rest of the Town Center. It is clear that many of the stakeholders interviewed see the Civic Center as a symbolic area for the City and seek to complete the Town Center vision established years ago in the General Plan documents.

The TAP panelists, led by City and County officials, explored the study area in order to better understand the potential opportunities and constraints it offers.





OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

The day of the actual TAP, April 28, 2011, panelists began with an Opportunities and Constraints exercise to set the focus for the day's work. Panelists discussed the various opportunities and constraints inherent to the site, as well as the issues and ideas raised by the interviewed stakeholders.

SITE PHYSICALITY

Opportunities

- *High demand in terms of context (location – people – retail availability);*
- *Opportunity for 500,000 sf of additional retail/commercial*
- *Roads can support more retail / traffic;*
- *Desirable area where people want to live;*
- *No water found near surface on site;*
- *No issue for potential landslides on site;*
- *Pre-planned infrastructure/utilities are in and primed to serve uses;*
- *Ability to improve water quality drainages to ocean, such as a municipal drainage facility;*
- *Existing infrastructure line complements adjacent options for connections;*
- *Adjacent to new City Hall and Public Library;*
- *Grading may open up visibility issues.*

Constraints

- *Arterial road traffic counts low;*
- *Distance from freeway may limit type of office development;*
- *Distance and travel time may heighten risk for office development;*
- *Local market needs a major user with a couple of key drivers;*
- *30-feet of un-engineered fill on site;*
- *Appears to be a disruption in storm drain system;*
- *Slope area supported on buttress-filled slope;*
- *Silty, clay stone soil;*
- *Existing signals (on Alicia Parkway and Hillhurst/Pacific Island Drive) may create issue for location of new access roads;*
- *(Lack of) visibility to potential uses to street;*
- *65-foot elevation change from top of site to the bottom of site.*

MARKET VIABILITY

Opportunities

- *Retail market demand in market is there;*
- *Affluent household income (\$100k average median household income in City);*
- *Relatively small household sizes;*
- *Median age is 40, older than the County median;*
- *Able to accommodate additional retail;*
- *Straight shot to the coast from Crown Valley Parkway.*

Constraints

- *Nothing has been built to meet demand;*
- *Traffic counts on arterials are not robust;*
- *Movie theatres are over-saturated for area.*

REVENUE GENERATING USES

Opportunities

- Hybrid hotel or Eco-hotel;
- Business hotel on a small scale;
- Lifestyle and recreation adjacency to hiking;
- Special uses and indoor entertainment or music and arts;
- Underserved “Pubs and Clubs” uses;
- Senior housing (apartments, for-sale or active living);
- Multi-family (4-story podium with surface parking, semi-sub or wrap).

Constraints

- Distance to the freeway not ideal for hotel;
- Distance to large business districts in area;
- Careful balance of uses to residential and demographic demand;
- Elevated costs associated with dependent care senior housing;
- Cost of subterranean parking may not be justified in current investment;
- Density may be an issue because of cost ramifications associated.

COMPATIBLE/SUPPORTIVE TO SURROUNDING LAND USES

Opportunities

- Compatible uses to Civic Center;
- Looking for retail-adjacent analogs in Chino Hills³ and Newport Beach⁴ area;
- Streamline aesthetics of area;
- Upper-end office space possibility;
- Supportive of higher density, if allowed vision of Civic Center and existing Town Center;
- Supportive of public-private partnership venture;
- Proponent of pedestrian bridge if it helps linkages;
- Medical tourism (doctors with specialization);
- Larger vision needed;
- Medical school to support education gap and support residential demand.

Constraints

- Lacking connectivity;
- Parking accommodations on site;
- Closure of Superior Courthouse;
- Height of new City Hall spire;
- Sound restrictions;

- Site is dark at night;
- Local senior population vocal/ concerned about noise, light and views;
- Lack of commercial recreation;
- Huge missing piece of activities that education population and support activities to promote community talent and skills.

Initial discussions centered on the existing land uses to remain on site, other than the new City Hall and Public Library renovation/ expansion. Both of these new/existing uses were perceived as community-gathering opportunities that could serve to draw residents to the Civic Center/Town Center area. The panel proposed the removal of the closed Superior Courthouse, as well as the demolition of its ancillary buildings. Efforts should be made to pursue relocating the County Vehicle Maintenance Yard, by relocating it to another site within the City or possibly combining the use with another existing County facility. Continued use of the yard was not seen as the highest or best use, nor viewed as an appropriate land use for the Civic Center. The Fire Station was viewed as an allowable use, with consideration that it may limit grade change opportunities and impact the placement of any future development on the site.

³ The Shoppes at Chino Hills

⁴ Newport Beach Civic Center

The surrounding arterial roads and low-density land uses act as opportunities and constraints for development alternatives. Residential can be a revenue-generating use for the Civic Center site, but care should be given to craft a program that can meet the financial needs of the County and Developer, while minimizing the impact to the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Development should be context sensitive and integrated into the fabric of the existing development. Panelists suggest all parties (County/City/Developer) work collaboratively with the existing neighborhoods to design a project that fits both the developer and the community's needs.

The surrounding arterial roads can deliver shoppers and employees to the site, but the road widths serve to separate the Civic Center from the rest of the Town Center. The elevation change from the Civic Center to the Town Center, and the Alicia Parkway arterial road width, constrains the opportunities for pedestrian connections or a pedestrian bridge between the two sites. Numerous stakeholders envision the opportunity for a pedestrian bridge that crosses over Alicia Parkway and connects the two land uses into a more cohesive development. Consideration was given to the reality of a pedestrian bridge, with the panel concluding it would not be an effective solution.

It is suggested that multiple and alternative ways of connecting the Civic Center and Town Center be pursued. If there is an opportunity for pedestrian linkage between

the two sites, planning efforts should also be directed to enhance the connectivity within the Town Center. The Town Center, in its current configuration, and with its extensive parking fields, tends to reduce the potential for pedestrian activity. Care should be given to pursue development that is compatible to the Town Center, so as to not cannibalize from the existing business.

The construction of the new multi-story City Hall on the highest visibility corner of the site may limit the visibility of the remaining for-sale

parcels on the site. When originally designed in coordination with the Superior Court expansion, the location and height served to enhance the master plan design. Now, the City Hall may act as a view and value constraint to any future development opportunities on site. In addition, the existing grade change within the Civic Center parcel, currently at a 65-foot differential from top of site to bottom, may serve to limit or constrain the placement of new development within the site. Although, the removal of up to 30 feet of un-engineered fill may provide the opportunity to mitigate the grade constraint.



A simple site diagram helps to map and better visualize the opportunities and constraints present in utilizing the study area.



GUIDING VISION



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Next, the TAP panelists established two vision statements, useful as a framework, for developing potential solutions for the rest of the TAP tasks.

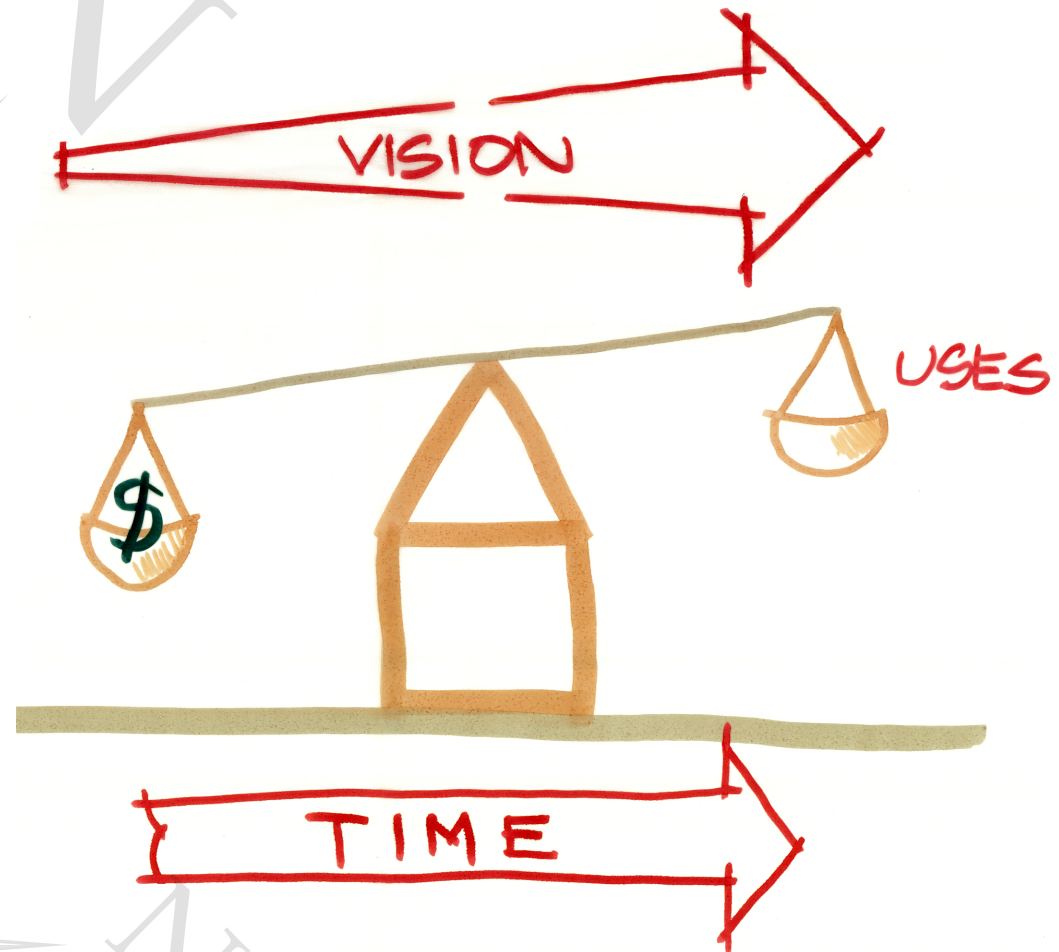
Vision Statement One:

Create a community hub in Laguna Niguel that leverages and complements what is here, benefits the residents and produces income to the County and the City.

Vision Statement Two:

Respond to constituent and community needs by taking into account the long-term impact of what is being created today.

The panel then moved into establishing recommendations for the defined questions and goals.



A sketched graphic illustrating the vision of uses on the study site, complementary to those already present in the City of Laguna Niguel, increasing as time passes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

QUESTION 1—RECOMMENDATION: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP

What steps can the County of Orange and City of Laguna Niguel take to create a collaborative partnership and entice developers to build at this site so that it is a win-win arrangement and benefits all partners? What are some strategic recommendations on how to attract well-organized, well capitalized developers, or create successful public-private partnerships or other non-profit equity alliances?

- *Build and support trust between the City and County through cohesive economic vision;*
- *Mitigate outstanding risks and uncertainty for outside for-profit developers;*
 - » *Streamline lower-risk entitlement process*
- *Consider Ground Lease (subordinated), Joint Venture, Public Finance;*
 - » *County and City-supported framework and effort*
- *Educate City and County on similar developments, from financial and physical structure standpoint;*
- *Re-examine development standards and requirements to support unique site attributes (i.e., parking standards reductions).*

Panelists suggest that the relationship between the County and the City is key to achieving the goals of both partners. Both have different agendas; what the City envisions for the Civic Center/Town Core versus what the County needs for revenue. But, there are synergies that can be found between place-making and

profit. For both parties to be successful, this should to be a collaborative process. In a collaborative partnership, prior to going public with a Request for Proposal (RFP), the parties should establish consensus on what land uses are acceptable to both. For example, the County may see apartments as a strong revenue generator, but it won't help the City establish the Civic Center as a public space, or a sports park might serve the community, but it will not get the County the revenue it pursues. The program can be developed so that the development community has some clarity about the vision and program for the site.

The next part of this recommendation is for the County/City to deliver a streamlined, expedited, low risk development opportunity. Developers want to know how long it will take to get entitlements, for effective management of the entitlement process is fundamental to project financial viability. The County/City should pursue efforts to minimize the development risks for the site, especially in the entitlement process.

The panelists suggest the City/County re-examine the development standards and requirements. Reviewing or creating clear standards before the development process

can reduce entitlement risk. Consider the Town Center and the Civic Center as a holistic piece; plan for the development of the site so that it fits into the overall vision and financial strength of the area. Can the developer build to reduced parking standards because of the mix of uses proposed for the site? Think and plan outside the box, researching what has worked in other locations, to address the specific needs of this unique site.

Finally, the County/City should consider financing options as part of the risk package. For example, as development has become more economically complex, public/private partnerships have emerged as financing mechanisms for both the public and private sector. Public/private partnerships assist with the financial viability of development because they create and sustain value for both the public and private sectors. The public sector creates value whenever it provides amenities, since these amenities often enhance value for adjacent private development, as well as the public. For developers, these partnerships can provide value and reduce risk. Anything the City and County can support or partner on that will minimize the risk or increase financing opportunities for a developer will increase the value for the site.

QUESTION 2—RECOMMENDATION: COMMUNITY-SERVING LAND USES

What are the key recommendations for land use(s) for the site that are compatible with the location of the new City Hall and its planned amenities, along with the County of Orange Public Library, Laguna Niguel (currently under renovation), the County Fire Station and the County Vehicle Maintenance Yard?

- *Community-serving uses arranged to support retail and create a concentration of activity complementary to the area;*
 - » *“There-there” soft programming of space*
 - » *Design a steady pulse of activity. Scheduled programming of uses and operating hours.*
 - » *Establish a unique name / association behind activity and uses*
 - *“The Farm” aka Town Center*
 - *“Sea Country Corral”*
- *User needs a reason to stay, rather than a one-stop shop experience;*
 - » *Higher-end types of uses*
 - *Hospitality*
 - *Entertainment*
 - *Food*
 - » *Create a reason to get out of the car*
 - » *Mixed-Use opportunity*
 - *Hospitality – Offices – Food*
 - » *Signage and Identity required to establish area as a ‘Center’*
 - » *Educational Activity*
 - » *Medical (office or tourism)*
- *Existing Land Use Considerations;*
 - » *Superior Courthouse and ancillary buildings*
 - *Not compatible with proposed development vision*
 - *Cripples ideal flow of land use pattern*
- *County Vehicle Maintenance Yard*
 - » *Retaining use can have detrimental effect on highest and best use, with regards to environmental considerations and land value.*

The key panel recommendation centers on the development of community-serving uses that support existing retail and provide a concentration of activity for the space. The goal is to create a ‘place’ that causes individuals to stay on site for an extended time. Currently, the commercial uses and design of the existing Town Center creates a type of one-stop shopping. Local shoppers drive to their destination, shop, then get back in the car to drive to the next destination. The pedestrian experience is minimal, the design auto-centric. People need a reason to get – and stay - out of the car. Destinations that provide an amenity-rich environment can get people out of their cars.

As part of the due diligence, market studies were performed for the site⁵. The strongest opportunity for revenue was entertainment retail (food sales), such as sit-down and limited service restaurants. During the stakeholder interviews, several individuals mentioned they and local residents leave the city to find alternatives to the local restaurants. Consequently, dollars are leaving the city due to the lack of choices for dining experiences. Goldman Properties, a firm known for developing urban areas into dynamic pedestrian neighborhoods, deliberately ‘primes the pump’ by locating a restaurant in their developments. This creates a café culture and purposefully gives the site an image which others will want to associate. Goldman Properties views food as a magic ingredient, since it draws people, and because the act of sharing meals seems to give the community a sense of ownership in the development.

The panelists consider soft programming a key recommendation to turn the Civic Center into a people-friendly place. Granville Island, in Vancouver, British Columbia, is a former industrial waterfront that was redeveloped into a local destination for the city dwellers.

⁵ Market Studies by The Concord Group; demographic information from Claritas, retail information from Costar, April 2011.

In another example, Canadian library administrators have started to envision the 'library of the future' as a public square where all members of the community come together to learn. In addition to programming inside the libraries, librarians are incorporating new activities into the public spaces around the structures, providing additional services for the surrounding community. At the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, the library now includes an outdoor patio with seating for the locals. Plans are in the works to create a neighborhood café on the patio, to provide more community-gathering spaces. Soft programming, such as educational activities in coordination with the library, or small public events at the City Hall amphitheatre, can help attract people to the Civic Center public space. Soft programming would require the City to design a steady pulse of activity to activate the space. Day/night activity for 3 or 4 days a week may be appropriate.

A preliminary concept for the study area, anchored by a soft-programmed central node wrapped by a variety of uses, including a farmers' market, residential, hospitality, and the City's existing civic uses. Graphic by Simon Hibbert, JZMK.

QUESTION 3—RECOMMENDATION: AUTHENTIC, LOCAL, & ACTIVE

How can this site be developed as a “revenue-generator” for the County, as well as beneficial to adjacent city businesses and residents? The County is interested in considering a plan that calls for active income-producing uses, rather than a plan that seeks to increase open space or parkland in this area of the City.

- *Create a reason to want to be here: the “Third Place”;*
 - » *Interesting and Different*
 - *Koi ponds at Fashion Island*
 - *Market & Pier in San Francisco*
 - *Fountains & Courtyards, walking in Irvine*
- *Day & Night ‘Life’ Activities;*
 - » *Alcohol-sales leakage*
 - » *“Pubs & Clubs”*
 - *Coffee bar during day, Wine Club at night*
 - » *Double-duty as Social Venue*
- *Sustainability throughout (shared parking, buy local, community-oriented, localized activity, healthy lifestyle, holistic design);*
- *Locate uses to complement the adjacent retail centers;*
 - » *Create the next Great Community Place*
 - » *Use Iconic ‘Food’ Places – Malibu Country Market*
- *Authenticity is KEY;*
- *Hybrid category between Neighborhood Services & Destination*

- Retail;*
 - *Dynamic mobile uses – Food Trucks & Farmers Market;*
 - *Specialty retail and great restaurants;*
 - *Education;*
 - *Public Art;*
 - *Income-producing Uses;*
 - » *Apartments (+/- 40 du/ac)*
 - *Condo conversion*
 - *Tuck under*
 - *Retail as amenity*
 - *‘Village at Spectrum’ case study*
 - » *Hospitality*
 - *Spa*
 - *Restaurants*
 - *Sports Club*
 - *Conference Center*
- *Retail*
 - » *Outdoor Activities*
 - » *Community-oriented*
- *Entertainment*
 - » *Music and Performance Art*
- *Sports Center*
 - » *Community Bulletin Board*

- » *Conference Rooms*
- » *Local, Authentic, Grass Roots*

The Civic Center site offers the opportunity for a mix of revenue-generating uses, from apartments and townhomes, to additional retail opportunities. Current market realities favor the development of apartments as a high-value development opportunity. Residential is an appropriate land use with the existing uses on site and complementary to the existing residential to the west and south. But, does this land use also serve as the necessary catalyst for the Civic Center/Town Center?

The current market study also suggests an opportunity for an additional 500,000 square feet of retail. The initial retail development should be community-oriented, such as indoor/outdoor restaurants and specialty retail, as it can activate the public realm, while not competing with the existing Town Center businesses. Yet, retail development is the most difficult of all land uses to develop because its success depends so much on non-real estate factors such as merchandising or the public's tastes.

The panel suggests neither land use will achieve the best revenue-generating opportunity without the community support. The current economic downturn presents an opportunity to respond to a widespread desire for a strong public realm. With the growing interest in place-making, a new vision is emerging that stems from a community's assets; one that is focused on a strong public realm and the strengthening of the local economy.

Informal gathering places outside the home and workplace can work as catalysts for economic growth. Known as 'third places', Terranomics Development has designed three innovative projects in Seattle as informal gathering places. The Crossroads Shopping Center in Bellevue, Washington, is developed around a bookstore as an anchor tenant, but with unusual tenants that include a library, a police station, a city hall, and community meeting areas. The central plaza area is a public gathering place for residents, students, and shopping center employees, and its food court is dominated by local restaurants, not big chains. The development holds live music events and festivals that draw residents from throughout the community. Crossroads has been transformed from a rundown shopping center to a destination/community gathering place.

The deep pride in local character and lifestyle suggests that any Civic Center development can thrive as a place that is inviting, vital, and safe, day and night. It can have places for people to sit, children to play, reach out

to all age groups and energize the space with pedestrian activity. It can have outdoor dining, evening events, and lots of people. These factors point to a major opportunity for a type of development that taps into the desire for something beyond just another office building, residential tract, or shopping experience; a new destination that generates revenue for the County and provides a real sense of ownership for the community.

"The initial retail development should be community-oriented, such as indoor/outdoor restaurants and specialty retail, as it can activate the public realm, while not competing with the existing Town Center businesses."



A concept of the project area that retains a central green space but changes the uses and orientation of the site layout. Vertical mixed-use provides options for retail, office, education, and hospitality space, while civic and residential uses anchor much of the remainder of the concept. Graphic by Simon Hibbert, JZMK.

QUESTION 4—RECOMMENDATION: CATALYST PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES

What are some opportunities offered by this site, as a catalyst project, to encourage additional development, connectivity with, and revitalization of the adjacent commercial and office uses, so as to create a sense of place in the Town Center area as a whole?

1. Destination Complex (Entertainment, Retail, Recreation);
2. Must have a Civic or Plaza Space to allow for 'soft programming';
 - a. *Concerts in the Park*
 - b. *Farmers Market*
 - c. *Art Festival*
3. School and Education;
 - a. *Cooking School*
 - b. *Tutoring*
 - c. *Arts, Theatre, Music*
4. Outpatient / Medical Doctors Groups;
 - a. *Medical Tourism*
 - b. *Doctors Groups (established in one area)*

Local destinations and vibrant public spaces are becoming major economic drivers in attracting and retaining capital for a city. Discovery Green, a 12-acre space in downtown Houston includes two restaurants, an interactive fountain, a stage, a market promenade, and a lake with a café. It is credited with spurring construction of new office and residential high rises nearby. While the energetic center of Discovery Green is a public park, it is rapidly becoming an area that

includes a dynamic mix of residential, office, hotel, and retail development.

The key of a catalyst project is to 'prime the pump' and set the vision for a 'Destination Complex' in order to draw additional resources and redevelopment dollars to the Civic Center/Town Center. The process begins with a vision, continues with planning, and ends with implementation. Developing a plan that places the right uses in the right location is critical. While the market may determine the timing and scale, the development should be designed as a whole to be as economically and environmentally sustainable as possible over time. Playing off the civic uses of the public amphitheatre and library can create a stronger sense of place for any new development. The complementary nature of these uses to a vibrant public space should be explored and encouraged. Woven into the project is the programming, in the form of concert series, farmers' market, or other events, that draw the public into the development for non-shopping reasons. All of these increase the community connection to the Civic Center and ultimately increase value and the developer's ability to command higher rents long term.

Revitalization of the Town Center and the emergence of the Civic Center Core is not complete without a discussion of sustainability.

Development efforts within this urban core have the potential to create a vibrant central place that can nourish both the social and economic aspirations of the all parties. Although sustainable design can be used as a marketing strategy, emerging data indicates that sustainable projects can add significant value with increased velocity, longer tenancy periods, lower operating expenses, and increased rental income. A successful project can provide long-term benefits and advantages to everyone involved by viewing the development opportunity through the lens of sustainability that is appropriate to the County, City, and local community.

QUESTION 5—OVERALL RECOMMENDATION

What is the highest and best use of the County-owned property? What are recommendations for establishing the character of this site based on target market and market realities?

- *Establish a place of authentic character that is people-centric;*
 - » *Holistic landscape that is organic in design*
 - » *Community Art Installations*
 - » *Less is More – Simplicity in natural, tactile elements*
 - » *Necklaces of Pedestrian Spaces to linger and pause. People-scale is imperative.*
 - » *Connection & linkage to existing Retail*
 - » *'Brentwood Country Mart' (example)*
- *Market Realities – Scale versus Time;*
 - » *Apartments*
 - » *Retail*

The stumbling economy is being balanced by a surge of all things local, the improvement of public places, and the rediscovery of meaningful ways to belong to a community. If one can combine this catalyst with land use, the results can be an economic powerhouse for the County and the City. The core civic uses – and opportunities – are in place. The County controls enough acreage to allow for a synergistic mix of income-producing uses on the site; from residential development, to restaurants and local serving retail. A

mix of development that is concentrated, rather than dispersed, interactive rather than isolated, social rather than introspective, and stimulating rather than secluded, can establish the character of the place. Development possibilities include residential, retail, restaurants, a sports club, medical office groups, and educational facilities.

The founding vision is almost always born of the community itself. The panelists suggest the County put more emphasis on the framework and allow the development to happen. The success of the vision depends not solely on the sum of the individual buildings, but on their interaction as a whole. The County and City can first begin by defining the vision for the site and decide what land uses are acceptable to both parties. Moving beyond the vision will require the buy-in of all stakeholders, as well as a serious commitment of private capital; possibly a prescription for a public/private partnership.

There are challenges to moving forward with the project in this manner, for each party may have a different way of measuring project success. For the City, a community-centric design allows for a greater public acceptance and possibly a more organic, holistic design. Community acceptance and use is fundamental to project success. For the

County, success means financial viability. For the development to be a success, each party must recognize the importance of the other's objectives. The evolution of the development will require a coherent vision, collaborative dialogue and planning efforts, and community support to create sustaining value for all parties.



The refined site concept retains the City's civic uses, while bolstering the site's usability with a combination of residential, service, and variety mixed-use options, all wrapping around a central park and plaza. Graphic by Simon Hibbert, JZMK.

PANELISTS' BIOGRAPHIES



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ANDREW K. BOYUM
Manager, The Concord Group

Andrew K. Boyum is an Engagement Manager with The Concord Group, with offices in Newport Beach, San Francisco and Boston. The Concord Group provides strategic independent advisory services to all sectors of the land use industry, advising public agencies, financial institutions, developers, and joint ventures, on real estate and economic development issues. Since joining the firm in April 2005, Andrew has managed over 300 engagements, including financial optimization analyses, market feasibility studies, urban infill programming, land planning, resort property analysis, and the segmentation of mixed-use master planned communities. He has significant experience with international development, having completed numerous engagements throughout Mexico and Central America. Prior to joining The Concord Group, Andrew worked as a research analysis at the Orange County Business Council and as a planning assistant at the City of Hermosa Beach Community Development Department.

Andrew is a native of Irvine, California, and graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles with a Bachelors of Arts in Economics, with minors in Urban Planning and Political Science.

WILLIAM G. CAMPBELL
Principal, Knightsbridge Realty Capital, Inc.

Currently, Mr. Campbell is founding principal of Knightsbridge Realty Capital, Inc., a financial advisory firm that arranges equity and debt for investment real estate transactions. Bill has over 20 years of diversified real estate finance experience, and has senior management responsibility for business development, credit approval and asset management within the firm. Knightsbridge focuses on delivering solutions that achieve its clients' objectives across a broad range of capital requirements. Since its inception in 2002, the firm has completed over \$2 billion of client assignments.

Prior to forming Knightsbridge, Bill led the commercial real estate lending division of a major financial institution. He served as Chief Operating Officer of a nationwide mortgage-banking firm that became a leader in the CMBS industry in the 1990's. Bill has extensive experience structuring equity and debt transactions for developers and owners of commercial real estate and served for four years on the Board of Directors for a NYSE-traded home building company.

Bill holds a Masters in Business Administration from Pepperdine University, is a licensed California real estate broker and Certified Public Accountant.

SIMON HIBBERT
Senior Planner & Associate, JZMK Partners

Simon Hibbert has been a part of JZMK Partners for over ten years, working with both the Architectural Design and Planning studios. With extensive experience in vertical mixed-use and infill development, he works as a bridge between the Architecture, Design, and Urban Design & Planning studios of JZMK. He is involved in the exploration and creation of new and innovative housing types, with a strong interest in the integral bond between architecture and site planning. Able to work in a variety of scales, Simon will switch between architectural floor plans and elevations to a master site plan the next. His involvement in design workshops and community meetings have supported unanimous city council approvals on challenging urban infill developments in Southern California.

Combining a love for design and for travel, Simon has led week-long team charrettes for projects in Europe, China, the Middle East, Central America, as well as in Texas and Arizona. Locally, his work includes projects for numerous land developers and home builders, such as The Irvine Company, Rancho Mission Viejo Company, Brookfield Homes and William Lyon Homes.

Simon is a member of the Urban Land Institute, and enjoys participating in charity-builds for homes in Mexico. He has participated in two ULI Technical Assistance Panels, assisting the team with hand-drawn perspective renderings, site plans and sketch diagrams. He was born in England and is fluent in Spanish. He holds a Bachelor of Science in City & Regional Planning from Cal Poly University, San Luis Obispo.

RUSS PARKER
Vice Chairman, Parker Properties LLC

Mr. Parker is the Director of New Business / Advisory Services, and serves as Vice Chairman of Parker Properties LLC. He manages the new business and special services, and directs the design, entitlements, and leasing/marketing strategies for all company projects. His specialties are the creative and marketing aspects of commercial real estate. Recent projects include the Summit at Aliso Viejo. Working as a team leader with the design and construction teams, his forte has clearly been creating innovative places to work.

Russ has been actively involved in California's commercial markets for more than thirty years. Prior to his role with Parker Properties, Russ worked with CBRE, JMB Realty and Kennedy Wilson. During that time, he managed leasing and marketing activities for a large Southern California office portfolio, leased and sold industrial, retail and office space, sold by auction thousands of banked-owned properties in California and developed office buildings.

Russ holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Design from the University of California at Los Angeles. He is active with NAIOP, serving on the Board of Directors, Chairman of Community Service, and on the Young Professional Group Committee. He resides with his wife and three children in Laguna Niguel.

WILLIAM A. PHILLIPS
Senior Designer, Hogle-Ireland, Inc.

Mr. Phillips is responsible for the Design Section of Hogle-Ireland. In addition to his management responsibilities, he participates in and oversees all creative design activities for the firm. He has over twenty-five years in the design/development industry with an emphasis in project management. His roles include design, governmental processing, estimating and scheduling, and construction oversight for large-scale master planned communities. His expertise includes the preparation of large-scale master / specific plans and urban redevelopment plans.

Bill was directly responsible for the design elements of the Urban Village Specific Plan for the City of Laguna Hills and the Newport Center Long Range Plan for the City of Newport Beach. He recently participated in the development of citywide design guidelines for the City of Lancaster, California.

Bill is one of the Founding City Council Members in the City of Aliso Viejo. He served as the City's third mayor in 2004 and again in 2008. He has been involved in new development within the city limits, presently focused on economic development that seeks to make the City one of the largest job hubs in South Orange County.

Graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, Bill has more than 27 years of experience in the design and development industry.

JEFFREY SHARPE
Senior Vice President, CB Richard Ellis

Mr. Sharpe joined CB Richard Ellis in 2009 as a Senior Vice President specializing in corporate real estate. He provides high-level, strategic counsel and complex transactional execution to multi-market, corporate clients.

Prior to joining CBRE, he was a senior director at Cushman & Wakefield from 2001-2009. Prior to C&W, Jeff was employed at Cushman Realty Corporation where he held various positions, including vice president of brokerage services and vice president of real estate services, where he was responsible for managing the financial services and research divisions of the firm, as well as providing technical expertise and consulting to company clients on transactional, investment and development issues. He began his career at Arthur Andersen as a consultant in the real estate consulting and valuation practice group.

Throughout his 20 year career, Jeff has led the execution of all types of transactions and advisory assignments including: leasing, subleasing, acquisitions, dispositions, financial structuring and build-to-suits. His ability to advise clients on real estate strategies and manage the execution of real estate transactions has allowed his clients to benefit from his experience across the U.S. and around the world.

Jeff holds a Bachelors of Science degree with honors in political economy from the University of California Berkeley, and a Masters of Business Administration degree with an emphasis in real estate/finance from the University of Southern California. He is active in promoting sustainability initiatives and is a member of the Urban Land Institute, currently serving on the Sustainable Communities Initiative council, the Sustainable Energy/Sustainable Environment (SE2) advisory committee at the University of California, Irvine, and CBRE's Sustainability Practice Group in Orange County.

JOHN R. SHUMWAY
Principal, The Concord Group

John R. Shumway, as a Principal with The Concord Group, is an expert on the market dynamics impacting successful development. In 2001, he was selected to participate on the first panel to develop and publish the 10 Principles of Transit Oriented Development. More recently, he led a year-long effort by ULI that successfully conducted Technical Assistance Panels in Placentia, Corona, Riverside and Ontario, to help these rail-adjacent cities to better plan and implement transit

oriented development. John has extensive experience, spanning more than 25 years, in the evaluation and analysis of both residential and commercial properties. His broad client range includes land developers, homebuilders, institutional investors, family landowners, as well as public agencies and universities throughout the nation. His engagements range from large-scale master planned communities, with hundreds of homes, to infill mixed use development within the urban city cores.

John is a graduate of the University of Oregon, with a degree in Business Economics. He is a frequent guest lecturer at UCI and UCLA, as well as before professional organizations. He is very active in local community and civic groups, and resides with his wife and son in the City of Irvine.

LINDA A. SIEGEL, PE
President, LAS Engineering, Inc.

Mrs. Siegel, PE is President of LAS Engineering, Inc., and has over 20 years of experience in the civil engineering industry. Linda is well known for her experience with mixed-use, urban infill projects and multi-family developments throughout Southern California. She has provided entitlement, project management and civil engineering services on many high-profile transit oriented development projects, including the Hollywood & Vine project in Hollywood, California, as well as working on the Playa Vista development, the largest infill development project in the City of Los Angeles. In her role as President, Linda oversees the preparation of feasibility studies, due diligence and assessment reports. Other services include entitlement services, preliminary and final engineering plans, including grading, drainage, storm drain, sewer, water and street improvement plans.

Linda earned her Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from California State Polytechnic University in Pomona and is a registered civil engineer in California. She enjoys dedicating her time to industry events and organizations, and was involved in the Hollywood Walk of Fame Task Force to provide much needed maintenance to the Walk of Fame for their 50th anniversary celebration. She also served on the

ULI TOD Marketplace Committee and participated in the ULI Technical Assistance Panel for the Riverside Downtown Metrolink Station.

KENNETH J. SMITH, AIA
Principal, Architects Orange

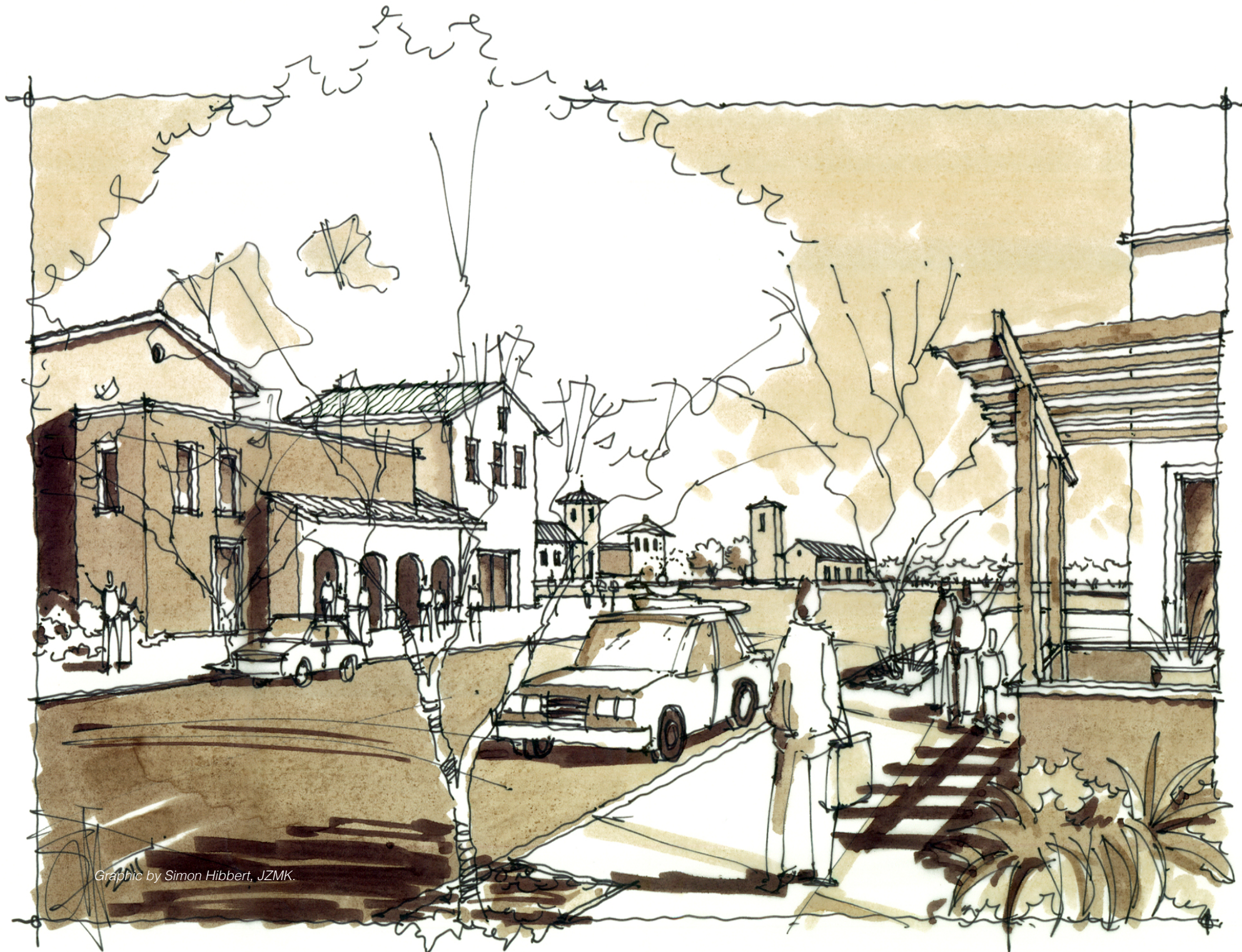
Mr. Smith has over 30 years of national and international experience including numerous award winning retail and mixed-use projects. He brings a dynamic approach to the design process that has fostered long relationships with clients and his colleagues alike. He has a reputation for innovation and for bringing together talented design teams that have set trends in mixed-use, retail and entertainment design.

As Design Principal, Ken is involved in the development of market strategies, advertising and public relations both nationally and internationally. He oversees the design studio and serves as principal designer/planner for major projects both retail, mixed-use and residential practice areas of the firm.

Prior to joining Architects Orange, Ken was the Design Principal for Jacobs Carter Burgess, founded the retail studio in Orange County in 2000, and successfully led the growth of the mixed-use and hospitality components of the practice. Major projects included the 17-million-square-foot Ibn Batutta Mall and Commercial Centre located in Dubai, UAE; the 750,000-square-foot Las Colinas Live mixed-use center in Irving, Texas; the 1,000,000-square-foot University Town Center in La Jolla, California; the 550,000-square-foot Citrus Plaza in Redlands, Calif.; Laguna Hills Civic Center expansion and renovation in Laguna Hills, California; and The Orchard, a 275,000-square-foot hybrid retail and lifestyle center in Lake Forest, California. His design teams continue to offer excellence in retail, mixed-use and hospitality design.

Ken currently holds a council seat on ULI's Urban Mixed-Use Council and is a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA), the

Urban Land Institute (ULI) and the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC). He is a frequent speaker and industry panel member discussing mixed-use and retail-driven mixed-use developments. Ken is a graduate of the University of Southern California and is a licensed architect in the State of California. He is active in the local community and is 28-year committee member of the Tournament of Roses Association.



Graphic by Simon Hibbert, JZMK.



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