




Balboa Village

NEWPORT BEACH, CA

Technical Assistance Panel Report
September 11, 2013

The background of the slide is a photograph of a waterfront building with a prominent cupola, situated behind a body of water. A large, semi-transparent ship's wheel is overlaid on the image, centered behind the text. The wheel has a central hub with a small circle and four spokes extending to the rim. The text is centered within the wheel's hub area.

“ULI’s mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.”



Guiding Principle

The final outcome of every ULI TAP is objectivity, transparency and replicability.

ULI Leadership

Michael Ruane

Chair, ULI Orange County/Inland Empire

Phyllis Alzamora

Executive Director, ULI Orange County/Inland Empire

949-973-0041

phyllis.alzamora@uli.org

orangecounty.uli.org

TAP Panelists

Chris Bennett | Simon Hibbert | Jeff Mayer

Shaheen Sadeghi | Matt Shannon | John Shumway

Report Writer

Jane DeLorenzo

Note: Illustrations on cover and pages 11, 13, 14, 16, 17 by Simon Hibbert.



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Introduction

It is here that you can find an environment that offers a nostalgic and relaxed celebration of good times and family memories.

– Excerpt from *Balboa Village Master Plan*



Balboa Pavillion circa 1908

This description of the Balboa Village Fun Zone is part of the Brand Promise Statement included in the 2012 Master Plan for Balboa Village. In its heyday, the Fun Zone was the heart and soul of Newport Beach, inviting families and visitors to enjoy its amusement park rides, pier, beach, shopping and dining. Yet the historic beachside community has experienced an economic decline over the years, causing concern among business owners, residents, property owners and local government officials.

The revitalization of Balboa Village was identified as a priority objective to be addressed in the Newport Beach City Council budget planning process for fiscal year 2011-12. A Citizen Advisory Panel was formed to create a vision and implementation strategy. City Council Member Michael Henn was appointed as the council's representative to the panel, which met monthly with city staff and consultants for almost a year. The resulting Balboa Village Master Plan was approved by the City Council in September 2012.

A ULI Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) was proposed to provide insight for some of the more extensive revitalization strategies being overseen by the Balboa Village Advisory Committee (BVAC). Council Member Henn and Bob Voit, founder and CEO of Voit Real Estate Services, met with ULI Orange County/Inland Empire to discuss the viability of conducting a TAP. Subsequently, representatives from the city, BVAC, and ULI OC/IE defined the TAP's Scope of Work for the 29-acre Balboa Village site including the Fun Zone.

A panel of experts was formed, and the TAP toured the site, conducted due diligence and interviewed stakeholders. On Sept. 11, 2013, the panelists gathered to finalize recommendations and present their findings at a public meeting at the Balboa Pavilion. Conclusions and recommendations outlined in the presentation are detailed in this report.

Panelists

- » Chris Bennett, Director of Development, LAB Holding
- » Simon Hibbert, Senior Designer, JZMK Partners
- » Jeff Mayer, Director of International Planning, Bassenian/Lagoni
- » Shaheen Sadeghi, CEO, LAB Holding
- » Matt Shannon, Managing Director, Urbanus LLC
- » John Shumway, Principal, The Concord Group

ULI Staff and Support

- » Phyllis Alzamora, Executive Director, ULI OC/IE
- » Jane DeLorenzo, Report Writer



Executive Summary

The City of Newport Beach is planning a revitalization of Balboa Village to increase the economic vitality of the area, improve the aesthetics of the neighborhood, and create a stronger identity and connectivity in the community.

To help identify major issues and concerns pertaining to Balboa Village, TAP panelists interviewed many key community stakeholders including Kimberly Brandt, City of Newport Beach Community Development Director; Grace Dove and Laura Keane, both of Central Newport Beach Community Association; Dave Kiff, Newport Beach City Manager; Fern Nueno, Associate Planner, City of Newport Beach; Gloria Oakes, Balboa Peninsula Point Association; Tom Pollack, CEO, ExplorOcean; Raymond Pourmussa, owner, Balboa Inn; Ralph Rodheim, Balboa Village Merchants Association; Gary Sherwin, President & CEO, Visit Newport Beach; Jim Stratton, Balboa Village Parking Advisory Subcommittee; and Brenda Wisneski, Deputy Community Development Director, City of Newport Beach.

Panelists also discussed revitalization goals with members of the Balboa Village Advisory Committee (BVAC) at its August 14, 2013 meeting. Participants included BVAC members Councilman Mike Henn, Councilman Tony Petros, Ms. Keane, Ms. Oakes, Mr. Pollack, Mr. Rodheim, Mr. Stratton, and City of Newport Beach staff members Ms. Brandt, Ms. Nueno, Ms. Wisneski and Traffic Engineer Tony Brine.

The TAP assembled Sept. 11, 2013, for an all-day work session to discuss findings, create recommendations and prepare for a special joint-session of the City Council, Planning Commission and BVAC that evening. Approximately 60 people attended the public meeting, including council members, city staff, BVAC members, representatives of local neighborhood associations, representatives of the Balboa Village Merchants Association, ExplorOcean administrators, residents, property owners and other interested stakeholders.



For a development team or a municipality, converting sprawl into walkable neighborhoods is one of the most difficult but rewarding tasks. When such projects succeed, the payoff can be tremendous – financially; in terms of community spirit; and, eventually, in terms of improved public health.

(Creating Walkable Places, by Schmitz and Scully, p. 52)

Executive Summary (cont.)

The TAP panelists presented the following recommendations:

1. Develop a Central Park or Plaza to create a heart for Balboa Village.

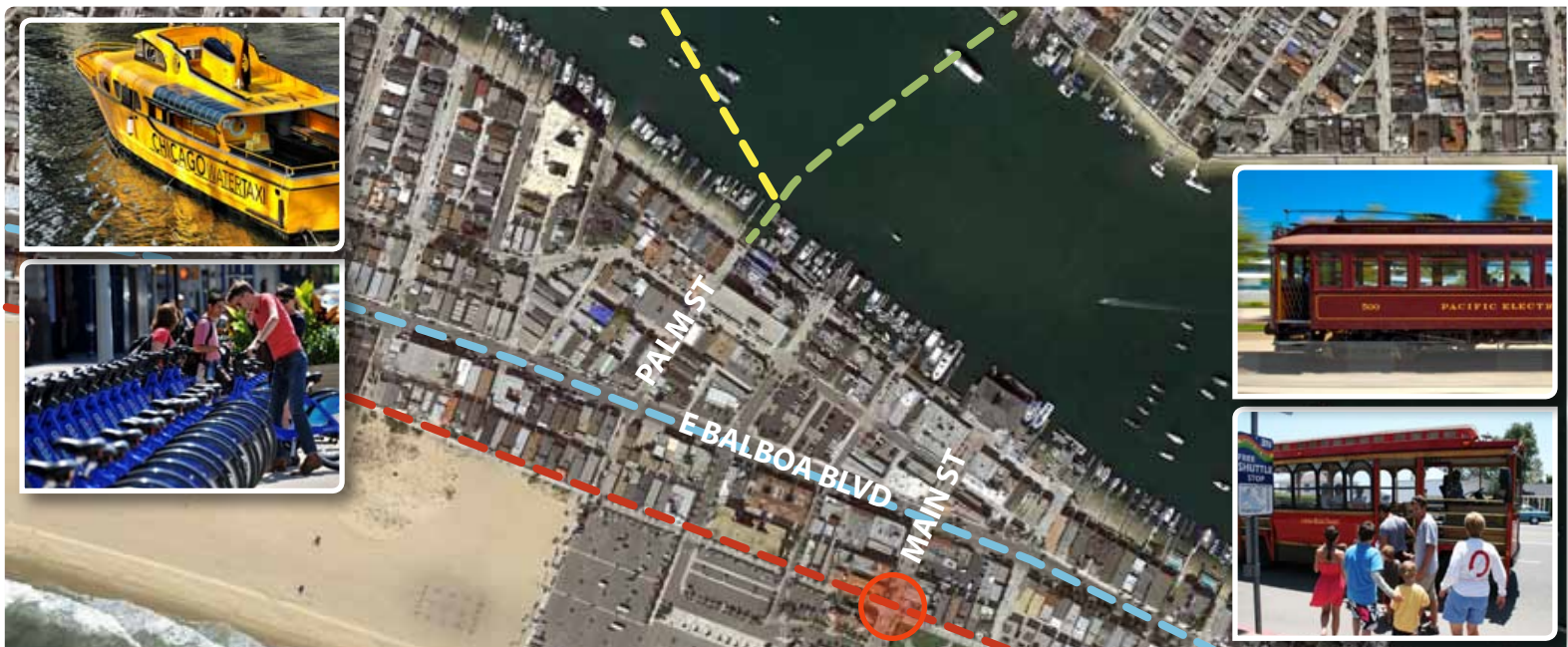
The panelists felt strongly that the parking lot on Balboa Boulevard between Palm Street and Washington Street serves as a negative focal point to people entering the village. The lot is centrally located and city owned, so it could be transformed into a more welcoming pedestrian gathering place, surrounded by eateries and other retailers, and ideal for staging events.

2. Build upon the historic, urban, walkable character of the village while improving restaurants, products and services to benefit the quality of life for local residents.

The widely recognized moniker “Balboa Fun Zone” elicits memories of family outings and enjoyable experiences dating back to 1936, when the amusement park was built. Today an upgrade is needed, yet the personality of the area should be incorporated into revitalization efforts. Adoption of new design guidelines that address architectural styles for renovated and redeveloped buildings would help preserve the Village’s character and scale. Other important objectives of new codes are to enhance the pedestrian experience and to ensure that future changes are consistent. Modern, sterile buildings would not fit with the village’s historic ambience.

3. Implement a parking management system that would integrate alternative modes of transportation including trolleys, light rail, water taxis and bike sharing.

The TAP highly recommended expanding public transit options in order to reduce required parking spaces, curtail traffic congestion, and provide fun ways to travel to the village, much like the Balboa Island Ferry. The panelists even suggested these transportation alternatives may a better financial investment by the city than building a large parking structure (see exhibit below).



Transit should be actively promoted by developers, retailers, and employers because it reduces parking needs, extends the street’s trade area, and brings a greater diversity of demand.

(Ten Principles for Rebuilding Neighborhood Retail, by Beyard, Pawlukiewicz and Bond, p. 13)

Vision

The six panelists on the TAP reflect expertise in the areas of land use, design, urban planning, market feasibility analysis, architecture, residential and commercial development, landscape architecture, strategic planning, civic involvement and other specialties.

Their collective experience and expertise resulted in the following visions for Balboa Village:

- » Balboa Village is a world-class destination attracting visitors from Southern California and globally.
- » Revitalization projects should embrace the village's personality and improve the experience for the local community. If the restaurants, commercial offerings and local activities/events attract residents, they will also attract visitors.
- » A Central Park or Plaza will create the heart of Balboa Village, providing a pleasant gathering place for residents and visitors as well as a sense of pride for locals.
- » Connectivity is key. All pedestrian pathways should be connected, from a central plaza to the ocean, the bay, boardwalks, the sidewalks of Balboa Boulevard, Main Street and Palm Street, and all other walkable elements.
- » Improving the quality of restaurants, products and services will expedite a rebirth of Balboa Village.
- » The arrival experience into Balboa Village via Newport and Balboa boulevards needs significant improvement, as does the wayfinding signage.
- » A balance of the four C's will facilitate renewal: Community, Culture, Commerce and Consciousness. That is, success depends on community support, revitalization efforts should reflect the local culture, and the project should be economically viable and promote a sustainable lifestyle.
- » It is necessary that all stakeholders – the city, residents, property owners and tenants – work together to ensure a sustainable future for Balboa Village.

Shared parking reinvigorates neighborhoods by reducing unnecessary parking areas and allowing more land to be used for productive, activity-generating development... Because residents often expect to have a parking spot available for their exclusive use, shared parking arrangements with residential users can be difficult, but have worked in some cases.

(Creating Walkable Places, p. 51)



Scope of Work

The TAP was asked to provide insight for several improvement strategies specific to the public realm, including the streetscape plan, wayfinding signage, the commercial façade improvement program and the targeted tenant attraction program. The scope of work addressed two sets of questions focusing on public areas and design issues.



Skinny streets ... have a more intimate scale, especially when lined with street trees. This attractiveness contributes to neighborhood livability.

(Skinny Streets & Green Neighborhoods, by Girling and Kellett, p. 86)

Public Realm

1. What are the existing Balboa Village public realm corridors, entry areas, and focal points for vehicles, boats, bicyclists and pedestrians?

- How does each one rank in terms of overall importance?
- How does each one rate in delivering its intended purpose of identifying Balboa Village?

2. Of the existing Balboa Village public realm corridors, entry areas, and focal points for vehicles, boats, bicyclists and pedestrians, what specific improvements need to be made in these key areas?

- Which improvements in the public rights-of-way should be given priority, if funding is not available for all of the improvements at one time?
- What improvements in the public rights-of-way will give Balboa Village the “most bang for the buck” in the immediate future?

3. What areas within the public realm are well-suited for special events and activities?

- What types of events and activities for Balboa Village will attract residents and visitors to the area on a year-round basis?
- How can these best be accomplished?



Design

1. How should the current street, boardwalk, and sidewalk improvements be updated and enhanced to create a stronger identity and connectivity in the public realm corridors, entry areas and focal points?

- a. Should other public realm design elements and/or connections be considered to create identity, connectivity, and cohesiveness along the village corridors, entries and focal points?
- b. With the future “Park Once” concept in Balboa Village, how can pedestrian connections between parking areas and commercial businesses and other attractions be enhanced and strengthened?

2. Should there be one or two defined architectural themes or styles for Balboa Village?

- a. What types of improvements should be made to business façades on private property, in the absence of significant remodels and/or reconstruction projects?
- b. How should the blocks be prioritized for the future city-sponsored façade incentive program and/or targeted tenant attraction program?
- c. Should the Balboa Village Design Guidelines be updated? If so, how?



Set design standards and work with retailers regarding façade improvements, appropriate historic preservation measures, store signage, awnings, window displays, and advertising. These details indelibly frame the pedestrian experience.

(Ten Principles for Rebuilding Neighborhood Retail, p. 11)

Opportunities

The TAP agreed that Balboa Village and the Fun Zone represent the strongest sense of place on the Balboa Peninsula. This is reflected in the lively culture and authentic personality of the village, which the panelists described as “charming,” “eclectic,” “precious,” and “quirky,” among other descriptions. These characteristics were seen as positive attributes that should be celebrated and reflected in revitalization efforts.

The panelists also felt that Balboa Village already has a number of elements in place to create a variety of positive experiences for residents and visitors alike. These elements include the small-town feel of the village, unique location between the ocean and the harbor, popularity as a tourist destination, ample pedestrian and bike paths, access via the ferry, and city-owned parcels that will play an important role in redevelopment.

Constraints

A major concern of the TAP panelists was the unpleasant and tedious driving experience for visitors and residents traveling to the village via Balboa Boulevard. Trolleys and/or light rail would make the journey down the Balboa Peninsula more fun and enjoyable, as would bike-sharing and car-sharing options at stations strategically located along the peninsula and throughout Newport Beach.

The panelists acknowledged there is a great variety of needs and viewpoints expressed by the many stakeholders, namely the residents, property owners, tenants, visitors and the city. Although the built framework for Balboa Village is in place, the area is in decline, and the emphasis appears to have been placed excessively on one group, the visitors. The panel’s recommendation is to focus on the needs of the residents, and the visitors will come.



The first goal for a neighborhood shopping street should be to satisfy the aspirations and enhance the lifestyles of a neighborhood’s residents.

(Ten Principles for Rebuilding Neighborhood Retail, p. 11)

Conversations with property owners and tenants revealed a discrepancy between rental rates that owners are projecting during the current economic recovery and the actual affordability of rates as seen by some long-term tenants. It was noted that many of the properties as well as businesses have been passed down from one generation to the next, creating a strong history of owner-tenant relationships.

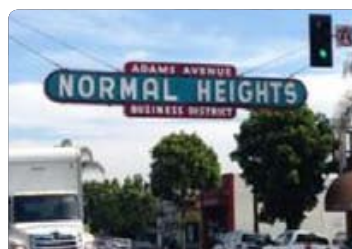
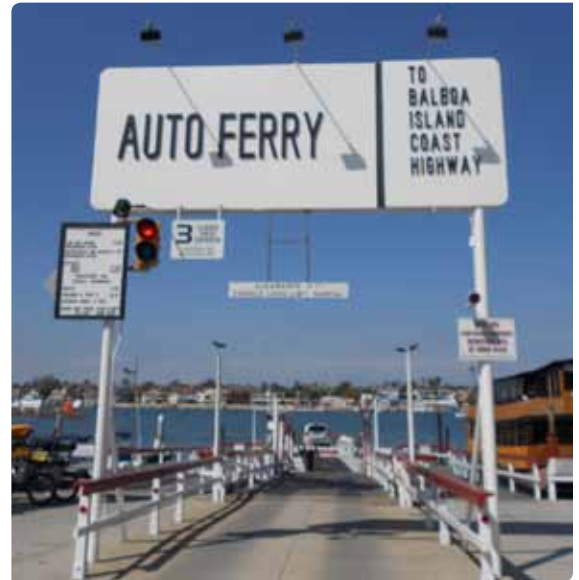
Public Realm Issues

Arrival into Balboa Village

Citing the success of the Balboa Island Ferry, the panelists felt that traveling to Balboa Village should be a fun, enjoyable experience. They suggested adding more alternatives to the automobile, specifically water taxis, wheel-based trolleys (designed to look like the old Southern Pacific trains), light rail, and bike-sharing stations located throughout the peninsula and the rest of Newport Beach. Branding opportunities are available to local merchants and organizations, including logos, messaging and artwork displayed on both land- and water-based vehicles.

Arriving to the village by ferry, visitors and residents would have a better experience if improvements were made to adjacent building façades. In particular, Palm Street, the major corridor for cars and bicycles arriving on the ferry, would be more welcoming if buildings fronted Palm.

Regarding signage, the TAP recommended installing gateway signs or landmark structures that identify all entrances and exit points. These markers will not only improve the village's identity, but also enhance the arrival experience. The first point of entry for drivers is Balboa Boulevard at Adams Street, which would benefit from an eye-catching identifier, such as an archway, monument or vintage sign welcoming people to Balboa Village. Likewise, a similar gateway exit (and entrance) should be installed at Balboa Boulevard and A Street. The panelists also recommended that both the Beach Boardwalk and Fun Zone Boardwalk be marked with entry and exit signs at Adams Street as well as A Street. All designs should be consistent with the village's branding guidelines.



Public Corridors

TAP members agreed that revitalization plans should focus on attracting better quality restaurants and services for local residents, and widening sidewalks to accommodate these businesses. Higher quality would appeal to visitors as well. Current trends indicate consumers are spending much of their budgets on culinary purchases, particularly locally sourced food and farm-to-table restaurants. The panelists envisioned dining experiences “on the sand” where a portion of the ocean parking lot could be transformed into beachside eateries, perhaps for temporary uses.

The TAP commended the city for streetscape improvements made along Main Street, adding that this corridor could be used for special events such as farmers markets or art shows to better utilize the outdoor space. The panelists also suggested that smaller corridors, like Bay Avenue, and some alleys be “activated,” meaning opened up for outdoor dining and other uses. This idea of using small passageways for open-air eateries and markets is popular in some European cities.



Sidewalks should be wide enough to accommodate outdoor dining while providing enough room to allow an unimpeded pedestrian flow; tables should be permitted at the curb line to allow window shoppers to stroll next to the shop windows. Rebuilding sidewalks with brick or patterned concrete also can have a positive effect.

(Ten Principles for Rebuilding Neighborhood Retail, p. 10)

Focal Points

Recognizable focal points throughout the village are valuable to locals and visitors for several reasons: wayfinding, landmark, orientation, architectural cues and branding. The Balboa Pavilion is perhaps the most recognized icon and should be celebrated by increasing programming in and around the facility. The Pavilion anchors Main Street, which is a significant public corridor suitable to many outdoor activities. The creation of a small plaza in front of the Pavilion would facilitate this.

Greening the street is necessary to make it more comfortable for pedestrians. Improvements should include tree canopies that provide shade from day one, green spaces where shoppers can linger and relax, and flowers and shrubs that enliven store fronts, tree boxes, light standards, and parking lots.

(Ten Principles for Rebuilding Neighborhood Retail, P. 10)



The TAP recommended creating focal points at key intersections in the village:

- » Main Street at Balboa Boulevard: This important intersection could be transformed into a focal point that connects rather than divides the Fun Zone side of the village and the pier/beachside. The empty building at the southeast corner could be replaced with a two-story structure possessing great architecture to better anchor the corner.
- » Palm Street at Balboa Boulevard: This intersection could become the gateway to a Central Park or Plaza transformed from the current parking lot. Improved architecture and retail applications at the northwest corner would help define the new Central Park/Plaza space.
- » The end of Palm Street at the Ocean Parking Lot: Rather than a street that simply ends at the parking lot, this area could be opened up to become an attractive pedestrian entryway, perhaps leading to beachside eateries. The addition of a prominent building housing one or more restaurants could be the focal point of the southbound vista down Palm Street.

The panelists also discussed the proposed expansion of ExplorOcean museum, noting that a 61-foot-high modern structure would certainly create a new focal point, but the excessive height and bulk would be out of scale and detract from established focal points in the village. The proposed four-story parking structure also is too tall and has the potential to damage the fragile pedestrian experience along Balboa Boulevard and side streets. The TAP praised the mission of ExplorOcean, particularly the benefits of its educational and cultural programs. However, the panelists felt that a more compatible architectural style as well as horizontal rather than vertical expansion of the facility would be more appropriate for the small-town ambiance of Balboa Village.

The TAP applauded the city's efforts to turn the redesigned Balboa Theater into a focal point both aesthetically and culturally. Quality programming and excellent service will be crucial to the theater's success.

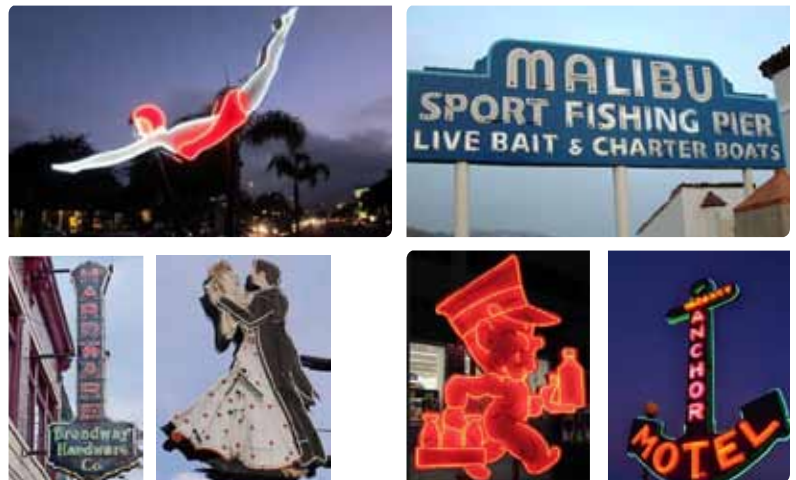
Prioritizing Improvements

The TAP was asked to suggest improvements in the public realm that would provide the “most bang for the buck” in the immediate future. Here are the recommendations:

- » Widen sidewalks to enable outdoor sidewalk cafes. Ideally, the sidewalk widening should not reduce the quantity of parallel parking, which is needed in part for pedestrian security.
- » Improve building façades to enhance the pedestrian experience. A “storefront fund” could be created to assist business and property owners.
- » Install gateway and wayfinding signage that is consistent with the village’s heritage (current vintage signs at the drug store and “U-drive” are good examples).
- » Enhance landscaping, especially creating a tree canopy over sidewalks and using plants to soften areas where the vertical building edge meets the horizontal sidewalk edge.
- » Enhance streetscapes, especially adding more outdoor seating and creating parklettes, or mini parks.
- » Upgrade night lighting for better quality and safety. Add string lights across one or more streets to add to the ambiance.
- » Improve walkability by closing Bay.



Above is a vintage sign at the Fun Zone. Examples of vintage signs below.



Year-round Activities

Approximately 2 million visitors come to Balboa Village each year, but most of them visit only during the peak summer months. About 80 percent of these guests are “day trippers.” The TAP was asked to recommend off-season activities as well as identify locations to host these programs. Areas within the public realm that are well-suited for special events include Balboa Park, the boardwalks, beach, streets, alleys and sidewalks. Panelists suggested some of the following activities to draw residents and visitors year-round:

- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| » Farmers market | » Vintage car shows | » Seasonal music festivals |
| » Craft shows | » Expanded Holiday Boat | » “Taste of Balboa” |
| » Art shows | » Parade activities | » Food trucks |
| » Boat shows | » Craft beer festival | |

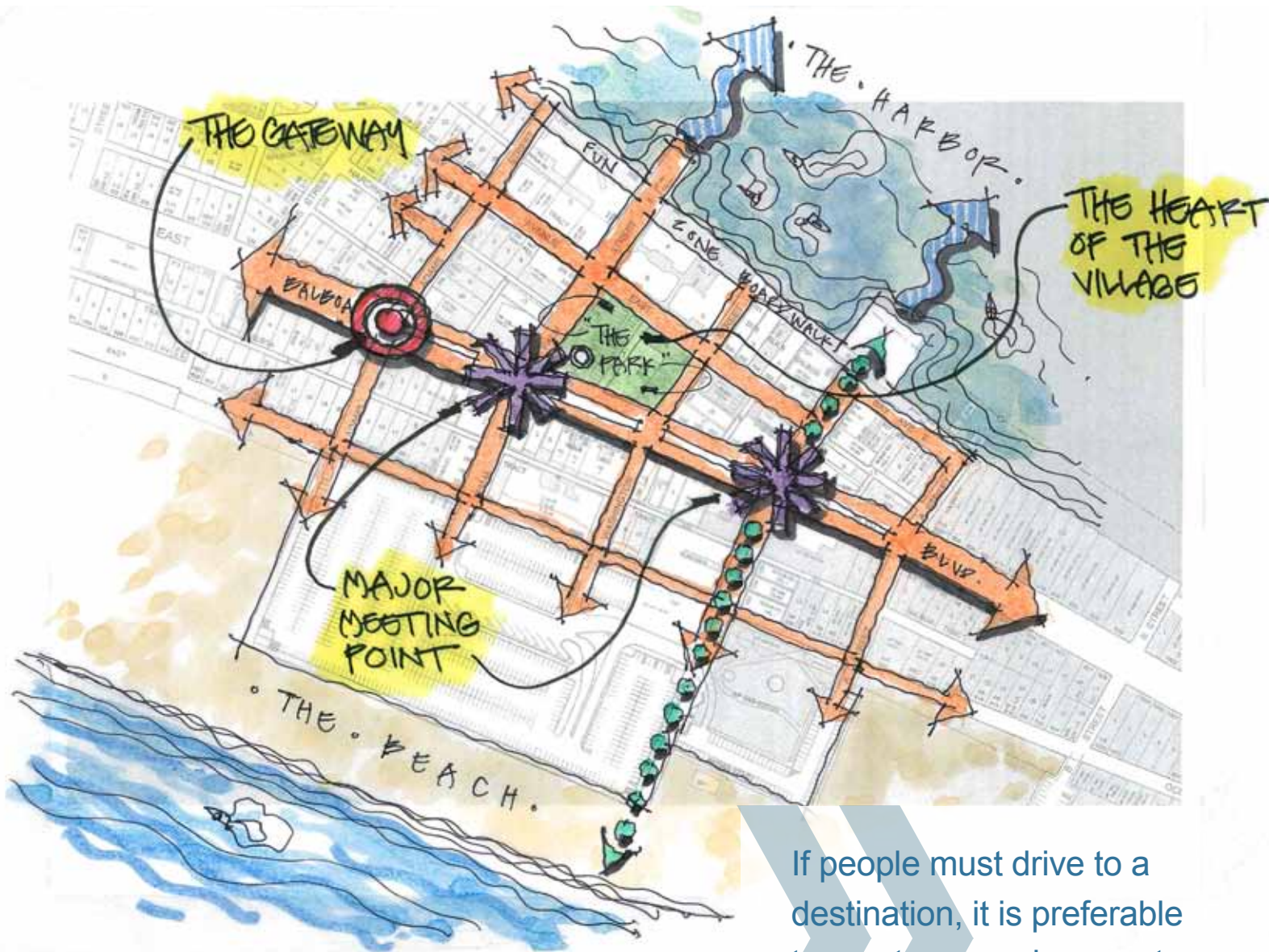
It may be necessary to use management strategies such as valet parking or to run a shuttle to more distant parking areas when it is required to meet demand.

(Shared Parking, by Mary S. Smith, p. 22)

Design Issues

Connectivity in the village

The TAP's number one recommendation for creating a stronger identity and connectivity was to introduce a Central Park or Plaza into the heart of the village. The panelists agreed that the city parking lot at Balboa Boulevard and Palm Street is the most logical location, adding that this would strengthen the connection between the ocean and the bay by creating a village center for people to congregate. A secondary plaza could be developed along Main Street between the pavilion and Balboa Boulevard.



If people must drive to a destination, it is preferable to create an environment in which people park once and then are happy to walk between multiple uses.

*(Creating Walkable Places,
by Schmitz and Scully, p. 49)*

Design Issues

The panelists also felt that the current narrow streets, lack of street canopy, the parking lot and one-sided development on Balboa Boulevard discourage pedestrian traffic. The panelists recommended a major redesign of Balboa Boulevard to provide wider sidewalks and an additional parallel parking lane. The redesign would entail restriping the street to allow one lane of traffic in each direction plus a tree-lined median that would incorporate a dedicated left turn lane.



The TAP supports the "Park Once" concept and encouraged the city to move forward with its parking management plan. The panelists reiterated that parking problems could be alleviated by the addition of alternative land- and water-based transportation. Also discussed was valet service using off-site parking as well as shuttle service for special events.

Design Issues

Architectural Themes and Styles

Improving the exteriors of businesses in the village was viewed as a priority to enhance aesthetics, but the panelists warned that this will not solve the basic infrastructure challenges.

The TAP recommended:

- » Open up opportunities for creative spaces, such as furniture making, galleries, sculpture studios, and live/work units.
- » Create quality dining experiences on the boardwalk that take advantage of waterfront views.
- » Restore the original character of Balboa Theater and other historic buildings.
- » Develop uniform but creative signage criteria for restaurants and retail.
- » Orient buildings on Palm Street to face pedestrians and traffic from the ferry.
- » Work with ExplorOcean to discover ways to scale back the height of the expansion along with parking alternatives. The TAP acknowledged that ExplorOcean may be a catalyst in revitalizing Balboa Village but it is not the sole solution.
- » Implement new design guidelines for architectural styles, building mass and positioning for new construction and renovated buildings.

Buildings must look as though they belong in the neighborhood, especially in terms of scale, height, and character.

(Ten Principles for Rebuilding Neighborhood Retail, p. 10)



Design Issues


Prioritizing Improvements and Guidelines

The TAP was tasked with prioritizing the village blocks for the city-sponsored commercial façade improvement program and the targeted tenant attraction program. Because the panelists were pleased with the street improvements already implemented on Main Street, it did not rank this street high on the list; however, this does not minimize the importance of Main Street as a major focal point in the village.

As previously stated, the panelists prioritized development of a Central Park or Plaza as most worthy of the city's attention and resources. Following that, the blocks were prioritized as follows:

1. Balboa Boulevard
2. Palm Street
3. Bay Street
4. Main Street
5. Alleys

The panelists also strongly recommended that the city incorporate new form-based codes and design standards to preserve and enhance Balboa Village's special urban character and to improve the pedestrian experience. Form-based codes are guidelines that consider the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, the size and types of streets, and the ways in which building façades and public spaces relate to each other. These codes have been adopted in over 200 cities in the U.S. and offer an alternative to conventional zoning.



Designing for the human scale, creating destinations, and improving physical access will all help improve the definition, connectivity, and walkability of communities. It will also provide a greater variety of sensory experiences, which will invite people to stay, explore, and enjoy.

(Creating Walkable Places, p. 55)

About the Urban Land Institute

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) is a nonprofit research and education organization supported by its members. Founded in 1936, ULI now has more than 30,000 members worldwide representing the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines working in private enterprise and public service.

ULI Orange County/Inland Empire is one of the 10 largest ULI District Councils in the world with 900 members.

The mission of ULI is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. The ULI has been a leader in smart growth, mixed-use development, urban redevelopment, transportation and affordable housing. ULI facilitates an open exchange of ideas, information, and experience among industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better places.

About ULI Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs)

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.

The ULI District Councils provide panel services of one day. A fee is charged for the advisory service, and the funds are used to further the research and educational activities of the District Council. Panel members volunteer their time and are not compensated in any way. To ensure objectivity, panel members cannot be involved in matters pending before or be working for the sponsor and cannot solicit work from the sponsor during the panel's assignment period. The District Council assists the sponsor in refining the scope of the assignment and organizing the panel efforts. Panels are then formed to provide expertise to address the issues. At the conclusion of the work period, the panel issues a report with recommendations to the sponsor.

Panelists' Bios

Chris Bennett

As Director of Development for LAB Holding, LLC, Chris Bennett is involved in new project ideation through construction. He has been instrumental in the expansion of the LAB's portfolio to include new retail centers, office projects, event centers and future mixed use projects. Current work includes revitalization of the retail landscape of downtown Anaheim with two projects bringing in approximately 40 new independent restaurants and retail operators.

Prior to joining the LAB, Mr. Bennett worked with JOA Group, a project management firm serving private developers and public agencies in Orange County. He served as a project manager directing capital improvement projects for numerous public agencies including the City of Anaheim, County of Orange Public Facilities and Resources Department and John Wayne Airport.

He also served as Manager of Community Design for TMC Communities, a master planned community developer based in Newport Beach. At TMC he managed teams of planners, architects, engineers and landscape architects for the 3,000-acre Liberty Project and the 500-acre golf community of North Peak, both located in Lake Elsinore. He studied landscape architecture and business administration at Cal Poly University, San Luis Obispo.

Simon Hibbert

Simon Hibbert, Associate and Senior Designer at JZMK Partners, leads a team of junior and intermediate designers and planners on a variety of projects. With experience in vertical mixed-use and infill development both domestically and internationally, he works as a bridge between the Architecture, Design, and Urban Design & Planning studios. He often 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.

Combining his passion for design and travel, Mr. Hibbert has led team charrettes for master-planned projects in China, Turkey and Jordan, as well as California, Texas and Arizona. His involvement in design workshops and local community meetings has resulted in unanimous city council approvals on challenging urban infill developments in Southern California.

Mr. Hibbert enjoys participating in charity builds for homes in Mexico. He is fluent in Spanish and holds a bachelor's degree in City & Regional Planning from Cal Poly University, San Luis Obispo.

Jeff Mayer

Jeff Mayer has more than 30 years of experience in strategic planning, site due diligence, feasibility analysis, site planning, architecture, entitlement planning and construction management. As Director of International Planning at Bessenian Lagoni, he provides urban design and master planning services to clients in the Middle East, China and Africa.

His projects include Palm Springs Country Club, Olympic Spirit Visitors Center in Toronto, Legoland Korea, Nikken World Headquarters in Irvine, Costa Isabela Resort and Biltmore Hotel in Puerto Rico, Goyang Cultural Center in Korea, and Ritter Ranch Visitors Center in Palmdale. He is an international board member of Themed Entertainment Association, which represents creators of compelling places and experiences for clients such as Paramount, Universal and Disney.

Mr. Mayer served as chairman of the ULI Orange County/Inland Empire District Council from 2008 to 2011 and has participated on panels at national ULI events, including Reinventing Retail and Placemaking conferences. He received his bachelor's degree in Planning and Landscape Architecture from the University of Virginia and did graduate work at the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School of Finance.

Panelists' Bios

Shaheen Sadeghi

Shaheen Sadeghi, President and CEO of LAB Holding, LLC, is recognized for his contributions in the unconventional marketplace of niche retailing. Notable projects include the LAB Anti-Mall, the CAMP green retail center, and the SoBeCa District, all in Costa Mesa. His company currently is focused on restoring California historic landmarks, including Casino San Clemente (1937) and three city blocks in downtown Anaheim encompassing the Packing House (1919), the Packard Building (1925) and Farmers Park, a community culinary and education-based green belt.

Additional projects consist of SEED People's Market, a green department store; Healthy Junk, vegan cuisine; Delifornia, a West Coast deli; Barbeer, barber shop and neighborhood bar; Ink & Bean, a writer's coffee shop; Heart & Sole; The GOOD Haberdashery; Home Eco:Nomics; and SOLO, a co-op workspace.

Prior to LAB Holding, Mr. Sadeghi worked in the action sports industry at VF Corp, Gotcha and as President of Quicksilver. His honors include the City of Costa Mesa Mayor's Award in 2013 for unique contributions to the city, the 2013 California Preservation Foundation Design Award for the Anaheim Packing House project, and the 2012 Developer of the Year Award from the Anaheim Chamber of Commerce. He holds a bachelor's degree from Pratt Institute, School of Architecture and Design, Brooklyn, New York.

R. Matthew Shannon

Matt Shannon is the Founder and Managing Director of Urbanus, LLC, a real estate strategy consulting firm. His work focuses on assisting public agencies, developers, property owners, universities and financial institutions to establish and implement transformative development and redevelopment visions that maximize value creation and quality of life.

Previously, Mr. Shannon was Senior Development Director at General Growth Properties, where he led redevelopment activities at twelve retail properties located in California, Wyoming and other states and was an early proponent for LEED certification of such projects. Before GGP he worked for Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company and for Trammell Crow Company, where he was a leasing agent for institutionally-owned office and industrial properties, and also for two residential developers in Florida. He started his real estate career working as a project coordinator and analyst for the redevelopment agency of the City of Glendale, California.

He earned a bachelor's degree in economics from Haverford College and a Master of Business Administration in Real Estate from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. He also is a LEED AP, a licensed real estate broker, a charter member of the Congress for the New Urbanism, and is active in the International Council of Shopping Centers.

John R. Shumway

A Principal with The Concord Group, John Shumway has 30 years of experience in market feasibility analysis for both residential and commercial properties. He has managed numerous engagements focused on strategic planning and best use analysis. These engagements have ranged from large master-planned communities to higher density mixed-use developments in urban areas.

Mr. Shumway's professional affiliations include the National Association of Home Builders, the Building Industry Association and the National Association of Industrial and Office Parks. Mr. Shumway was selected by the Urban Land Institute to participate on the panel that initially developed and published the Ten Principles for Successful Development Around Transit. He also is a member of the advisory board for ULI Orange County/Inland Empire and serves as Vice-Chair of Technical Assistance Panels.

He is a frequent guest lecturer before professional and academic organizations, including UCLA and University of California, Irvine. He also has spoken overseas, including a lecture to key Japanese homebuilders about expanding market penetration in a downsizing economy. He holds a bachelor's degree in Business Economics from the University of Oregon.

Contributors' Bios

Phyllis Alzamora

Phyllis Alzamora was appointed the first-ever Executive Director of the ULI Orange County/Inland Empire District Council in November 2005. The Orange County/Inland Empire chapter is one of the 10 largest ULI District Councils in the world.

Ms. Alzamora has nearly 30 years of experience working for private companies and non-profit organizations, including Rockwell International, Ricoh Electronics, Hyundai Motor Company, the National Association of Manufacturers, the International Public Relations Association and the Building Industry Association, with specific expertise in communications, government affairs and community relations.

She has a strong background in public affairs, including developing grassroots advocacy campaigns, and significant experience managing media relations as well as philanthropic and civic involvement. She has deep community roots in Orange County and is a descendant of the Jeffrey family, early 20th century land owners in east Irvine. She has a bachelor's degree in communications from California State University, Chico, and a master's degree in business communications from the first fully online, accredited Internet university, Jones International.

Jane DeLorenzo

Jane DeLorenzo is Principal of Sustainable Options, a consulting firm specializing in the hospitality industry. She also serves on the Sustainable Surf City Committee of Huntington Beach, where she recently was Co-Chair of the city's first educational Green Forum which provided practical ideas for sustainable living.

Ms. DeLorenzo's consulting projects include the Waterfront Beach Resort, a Hilton Hotel in Huntington Beach, where she worked with department managers to successfully earn California Green Lodging certification. A writer of industry trends, she focuses on energy savings, innovative business practices and sustainable technologies.

This is the second ULI TAP assignment for Ms. DeLorenzo, who authored a report in 2012 on the relocation, expansion, financing and marketing of Pretend City Children's Museum in Irvine. She currently is the project manager for MyPlaceOC.com and Reality Check 2.0, a grant-funded program of the ULI Foundation and ULI Orange County/Inland Empire. She holds a master's degree in Communications Management from USC and earned a certificate in Sustainability Leadership at the University of California, Irvine.

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