



Third Community Meeting
First Congregational Church-241 Cedar Avenue
March 4, 2010 6 PM– 8PM

Vision, Themes and Actions

Retail Vision:

It is 2015: Downtown Long Beach is riding a wave of accelerating urban reinvestment, propelling this international trading post that smartly blends metropolitan style with bohemian sensibility. This coastal community's authenticity stands out amongst Southern California cities – its built environment is compact and walkable, while its approachable citizenry embodies a sense of stewardship and charm. Many of the new retail offerings reinforce Long Beach's reputation as a multicultural city and complement its strong cultural events and attractions. The retail composition has struck a harmonic balance between independent and national businesses, and Downtown residents, employees, and visitors are able to fill most of their everyday needs without leaving the neighborhood. With its blending of eclectic shops, boutiques, entertainment, nightlife, and dining uses, Downtown offers a unique tapestry of retail experiences that are distinctly Long Beach.

Public Input Themes:



Aligning community efforts



Simplifying the process



Expanding market potential



Increasing accessibility



Improving quality of life

























































Growing vibrancy



Showcasing our assets

Actions/Strategies Overview:

Public Realm	Public use of private space	   
	Private property lighting	  
	Expand wayfinding	  
	Pedestrian lighting	  
	Pedestrian plan and crossings	    
	Valet Parking	 
Policies and Regulations	Ease parking requirements	 
	Expand mobility	     
	Panhandling task force	 
	Support zoning	  
	Regulatory reform task force	  
Civic Action	Implement parking study	   
	Coordinate planning	 
	Coordinate economic development	    
	Investments support plan	  
	Transparent incentive program	   

Align marketing/branding

Align marketing/branding



Promotion

Engage Mayor



Public safety promotion



Keep plan alive



Visitor study



Gain commitments



Recruit

Recruitment materials



Conventions/advertising



Recruitment strategy



Identify underserved niches



Foster entrepreneurship



Demystify the process



Retain

Celebrate new business



Shop local campaign



Assist heritage retailers
















Expand business acumen













Actions/Strategies Detail:



Public Realm:

Public use of private space	Create a set of guidelines that provides businesses and property owners with a flexible set of opportunities to utilize the public realm. Among those guidelines, explore repealing the requirement for fences that enclose outdoor cafes along the street. Additionally, explore prohibiting permanent “tent” dining structures on the sidewalk. They reduce the space for pedestrians, prevent people-watching, likely violate the ADA rules (when remaining sidewalk is less than the minimum 5 feet wide – unobstructed) and severely degrade the quality of the public realm.	   
Private property lighting	Expand upon recent investments in LED lighting along building facades and other community assets, such as bridges and the lighthouse. Explore coordinated opportunities for the creative and festive use of lighting and other electronic media on private buildings and other structures.	  
Expand wayfinding	Effective wayfinding is critical for first time visitors to downtown, including tourists and conventioners. The existing system should be reevaluated and expanded, with more focus on the needs of: 1) visitors on foot; and 2) motorists searching for public parking.	  


<p>Pedestrian lighting</p>	<p>Lighting is critical to the perception of safety at night. Distinct lighting can help to define a district. Establish a lighting standard that is scaled to the needs of the pedestrian – not cars (they have lights). Set lighting standards for private developments along the street edge. Private fixtures along the column line contribute more light and offer an opportunity to add interesting details to a façade.</p>	
<p>Pedestrian plan and crossings</p>	<p>Almost every transaction in downtown Long Beach is conducted on foot. The needs of pedestrians should come before those of the automobile. Develop a long-term public realm/pedestrian improvement plan and strategy that focuses capital improvements on creating a safe, attractive and well-maintained public realm in those areas targeted for retail developments. Create a standard pedestrian crossing design that gives the pedestrian priority over vehicles. Street crossings can create the most discomfort for pedestrians. Most pedestrian/vehicular accidents occur during a street crossing attempt.</p>	
<p>Valet parking</p>	<p>Valet parking is a service that consumers are increasingly demanding, particularly when patronizing dining and entertainment establishments. Rather than see a proliferation of private stands throughout Downtown, the City and DLBA should explore the creation of a public/private “utility” that manages all of the valet parking there.</p>	











Policies and Regulations:



<p>Ease parking requirements</p>	<p>To help in lowering costs as an incentive for prospective tenants, new shops, restaurants and entertainment venues, parking requirements through zoning should be lowered in the Downtown. Additionally, explore progressive code changes such as allowing the use of shared parking.</p>	 
<p>Expand mobility</p>	<p>Transit is a key component of civic mobility. It expands access and increases the trade area of retail/restaurant/entertainment districts. The current transit systems should be evaluated through open public processes to ensure a supportive impact on the designated retail/restaurant/entertainment districts. System operators, property owners and other stakeholders should implement any actions that result in a win-win for patrons, transit riders, residents and business owners. Additionally, include bicycle planning within the larger context of mobility. Bicycles are low impact, easy to park and serve to expand the trade area of downtown. The Downtown section of the Bicycle master plan should be implemented and augmented where feasible. Additional private bike-rental kiosks, rickshaws and other such initiatives should be supported.</p>	     
<p>Panhandling task force</p>	<p>Panhandling is an issue in every major city, perhaps worse in cities like Long Beach which have been favored with great climates. Search out successful strategies from other California cities for dealing with panhandling and implement the best of them.</p>	 

<p>Support zoning</p>	<p>Investment flows into the areas of least resistance. Fairness, clarity, and predictability are among the highest aspirations for transparent approvals processes. Alleviate uncertainty in zoning approvals by working with local officials and other influential groups to follow a professional and traditional path for approving projects and uses.</p>	
<p>Regulatory reform task force</p>	<p>Create a regulatory reform task force to meet with proprietors, research how other cities have addressed these issues, uncover the regulatory impediments and make changes that remove barriers to opening new establishments. Look especially for those regulations that have a high private cost and low public benefit. Rather than take a piecemeal approach, bring a coordinated package of reforms to the Council for quick action. If possible, couple and coordinate this effort with the adoption of the new Community Plan.</p>	


Civic Action:










<p>Implement parking study</p>	<p>Advocate for a strategic implementation plan for those action items included within the Carl Walker parking analysis.</p> <p>Encourage the development of a parking management strategy that is weighted towards the needs of patrons (rather than focused on maximizing revenue). Such a strategy should also serve to create and reinforce the broader perception that parking in Downtown is easy and convenient, as well as incentivize the opening of new shops, restaurants and entertainment venues.</p>	
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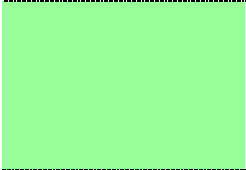
<p>Coordinate planning</p>	<p>Coordinate the Retail Vision and Strategy with all current and future planning efforts, such as the Downtown Community Plan, new neighborhood planning efforts, key economic development initiatives, the long-term plans of local anchors (e.g. CSULB, County Courthouse), etc. Identify a lead agency and regular meeting intervals for coordinating the various efforts and initiatives.</p>	 
<p>Coordinate Economic Development</p>	<p>Coordinate economic development efforts to ensure that new Downtown projects and initiatives are programmed and sited so as to add to the “in-place” customer base for existing and new shops, restaurants and entertainment venues.</p>	    
<p>Investments support plan</p>	<p>Seek and promote private development, public investments and programming opportunities that would further augment the “in-place” customer base for the Downtown sub-district positioning – e.g. artist live/work spaces in the East Village, international food festivals on Upper Pine, etc.</p>	  

<p>Transport incentives program</p>	<p>Borrowing from “Best Practices” in comparable downtowns across the country, develop a strategic and transparent “Retail Incentive Program” to jumpstart the implementation of the recruitment strategy. Set a sunset date to encourage immediate action.</p>	
<p>Align marketing/ branding</p>	<p>Align on-going marketing and branding campaigns – and work with local media vehicles – to better communicate the plan and its implementation to target markets. Speak as one voice about the positive changes occurring in the Downtown.</p>	

Promotion:

<p>Engage Mayor</p>	<p>Heighten the involvement of the Mayor and members of the City Council into an active and high-profile role in recruitment efforts, including, for example, the pursuit of possible retail anchors at major industry events. Enlist both the Mayor and well-known merchants to provide testimonials on Downtown’s behalf that can be used in marketing collateral.</p>	
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Public safety promotion	Document the actual crime rates and the perception of safety within the entire city. Compare Downtown to other similar districts, both within and outside of Long Beach. If the results are favorable – publicize the results, if not or if there is still room to improve – get all of the stakeholders to the table and develop a comprehensive strategy to bring the figures down.	 
Keep plan alive	To broaden the constituency for implementing the Retail Vision and Strategic Plan, continue the outreach to new people, interest groups and non-profit entities. Develop a PowerPoint that can be continuously updated for future presentations to the City Council, neighborhood associations, non-profits, arts organizations, etc. Consider the use and development of social networking techniques like Facebook, Twitter, and listservs to keep the public engaged and ready to voice their preferences and concerns at meetings where key decisions are made.	 
Visitor study	Expand outreach to the visitor segment by offering a better introduction to the Downtown Long Beach retail market. Conduct a study to better understand the visitor base to Downtown Long Beach. Use historic tourism, eco-tourism and Long Beach’s unique assets to leverage a deeper understanding of the city for visitors and residents alike.	  
Gain commitments	Work to secure “buy-in” to the recruitment strategy from key implementers and stakeholders, including, most importantly, the landlords of and brokers for Downtown retail space.	 



Recruit:

Recruitment materials

Develop an effective set of recruitment collateral that articulates the opportunities for and advantages of investing in Downtown Long Beach.



Conventions & advertising








Continue to promote Downtown Long Beach as a retail location at industry events, and consider advertising placements in industry media vehicles, not only for the purpose of luring new tenants, but also, raising Downtown’s profile more generally.












Recruitment strategy

Making sure not to risk the cannibalization of one by the other, confirm the positioning of each of the three main Downtown sub-districts – the Core (including Upper Pine, the Promenade, CityPlace shopping center and Long Beach Boulevard), the Waterfront (including Lower Pine and The Pike at Rainbow Harbor) and the East Village. Develop a



	<p>recruitment strategy to reinforce these positions, complete with recommendations on catalytic projects and tenant prospects. Pursue tenant prospects from the list developed as part of the recruitment strategy and direct leads to the landlords of (or brokers for) the spaces in which they are most interested. Continuously update this list based on earlier outreach efforts, shifting market conditions, Downtown’s changing profile, etc.</p>	
<p>Identify underserved niches</p>	<p>Undertake an analysis of other business districts and shopping centers in Long Beach so as to detect un- or under-served niches in the broader competitive marketplace, and then evaluate the potential for Downtown sub-districts to fill them.</p>	 
<p>Foster entrepreneurship</p>	<p>Develop non-traditional entrepreneurship support methods such as business incubators or retail competitions for attracting retail tenants that will help to reinforce and fortify the positioning of each retail district.</p>	  
<p>Demystify the process</p>	<p>Expand upon the DLBA’s Economic Development web portal to include recruitment assistance tools that will assist brokers and prospects in estimating their approvals and permitting timelines based upon their desired use and the changes that need to occur in the space.</p>	 

Retain:

Celebrate new business	Develop a set of tools and / or programs that provide business owners with assistance planning and promoting grand openings of those new business investments that occur in the Downtown.	  
Shop local campaign	Develop a "Shop Local Program" that educates new Downtown residents about Downtown shops, restaurants and entertainment venues, for example, through "Meet the Proprietor" events that allow for the sampling of merchandise and the formation of new resident-merchant relationships. This program should communicate to residents that every time they leave Downtown to spend money on a good or service that is available within the Downtown, they are weakening the case for Downtown retail. It must also impress upon Downtown merchants the importance of listening to their customers and developing new offerings that respond to the needs of the changing marketplace.	  
Assist heritage retailers	In an effort to retain Downtown's (and the city's) authenticity and distinctiveness, develop a "Heritage Retail Program" that works with local, long-time merchants to help them understand the positioning and strategy for their respective sub-districts, and adapt their businesses accordingly.	  

Expand
business
acumen

While attracting new businesses to Downtown Long Beach may garner significant media attention, an equally important ED strategy is the retention and expansion of the existing businesses. A viable and effective business retention and expansion (BRE) program ensures that the needs of local businesses are not only heard, but also addressed. Examples of the types of BRE programs to be developed include business marketing seminars, merchandising, and fostering productive business-to-business relationships.

