



CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH BALBOA VILLAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA

ExplorOcean
600 East Bay Avenue
Wednesday, April 9, 2014 - 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Committee Members:

Michael Henn, Council Member (Chair)
Tony Petros, Council Member
Gloria Oakes, Balboa Peninsula Point Association
Ralph Rodheim, Balboa Village Merchant Association Member
Grace Dove, Central Newport Beach Community Association
Tom Pollack, ExplorOcean Representative
Jim Stratton, At-Large Representative

Staff Members:

Kimberly Brandt, Community Development Director
Brenda Wisneski, Deputy Community Development Director
Tony Brine, City Traffic Engineer
Fern Nueno, Associate Planner

-
- I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
 - II. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS (comments limited to 3 minutes)
 - III. ITEMS FOR REVIEW
 1. MINUTES OF MARCH 12, 2014 (ATTACHMENT 1)
Recommended Action: Approve March 12, 2014 Minutes
 2. UPDATE ON VILLAGE MAINTENANCE
Recommended Action: Receive and file
 3. FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM OPTIONS (ATTACHMENT 2)
Recommended Action: Review program options, provide direction for future program consideration
 - IV. PUBLIC COMMENT
 - V. ADJOURNMENT (Meeting End Time: 5:30 p.m.)
Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, May 14, 2014, 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Please refer to the City Website, <http://www.newportbeachca.gov/index.aspx?page=2196>, for additional information regarding the Balboa Village Advisory Committee.

AN AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING HAS BEEN POSTED AT LEAST 72 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING AND THE PUBLIC IS ALLOWED TO COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS.

IT IS THE INTENTION OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH TO COMPLY WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) IN ALL RESPECTS. IF, AS AN ATTENDEE OR A PARTICIPANT AT THIS MEETING, YOU WILL NEED SPECIAL ASSISTANCE BEYOND WHAT IS NORMALLY PROVIDED, THE CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH WILL ATTEMPT TO ACCOMMODATE YOU IN EVERY REASONABLE MANNER. PLEASE CONTACT LEILANI BROWN, CITY CLERK, AT LEAST 72 HOURS PRIOR TO THE MEETING TO INFORM US OF YOUR PARTICULAR NEEDS AND TO DETERMINE IF ACCOMMODATION IS FEASIBLE (949-644-3005 OR CITYCLERK@NEWPORTBEACHCA.GOV).

INTENTIONALLY BLANK PAGE

ATTACHMENT 1

March 12, 2014
Meeting Minutes

INTENTIONALLY BLANK PAGE

CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH
BALBOA VILLAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Location: ExplorOcean

600 East Bay Avenue

Wednesday, March 12, 2014 - 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

I. Call Meeting to Order

Council Member Petros called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. He thanked those in attendance for participating in the process and noted that Council Member Henn would be absent due to a conflict. The following persons were in attendance:

Balboa Village Advisory Committee Members:

Tony Petros, Council Member

Ralph Rodheim, Balboa Village Merchant Association Member

Grace Dove, Central Newport Beach Community Association (arrived at 4:51 p.m.)

Tom Pollack, ExplorOcean Representative

Jim Stratton, At-Large Representative

Staff Members:

Kimberly Brandt, Community Development Director

Brenda Wisneski, Deputy Community Development Director

Brad Sommers, Senior Civil Engineer

Fern Nueno, Associate Planner

II. Public Comment on Non-Agended Items

Interested parties were invited to address the Committee on Non-Agended Items.

There being no one wishing to address the Committee, Council Member Petros closed the Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items portion of the meeting.

III. Approval of Minutes

Recommended Action: Approve February 12, 2014 Minutes

Council Member Petros noted that Council Member Gardner's name needed correction.

Action: Committee Member Ralph Rodheim moved to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2014 meeting as amended; Committee Member Jim Stratton seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

IV. Bicycle Master Plan – Paul Martin, Alta Planning + Design

Recommended Action: Review Draft Bikeways Plan and provide recommendations for the Balboa Village area to the Bicycle Master Plan Oversight Committee

Council Member Petros introduced the item and deferred to Paul Martin for a presentation.

Paul Martin, consultant from Alta Planning and Design, discussed the Bicycle Master Plan Project and presented slides to outline the project purpose and goals of the plan. It is to create a comprehensive network with an eye for sustainability and a connection with the community and bicycle network throughout the City. The plan also seeks to educate and encourage the community and youth on bicycle safety, as well as working with law enforcement to monitor progress. Details of the draft network were displayed, noting that these plans are available for viewing on a dedicated website and the public is encouraged to leave comments, inputs, and ideas. On May 31st at West Coast Highway, a table will be set up for cyclists to weigh in on the development of the Master Plan. The City Council will review of the Master Plan in the fall.

Council Member Tony Petros noted the importance of funding and focusing on what the most desirable mode of transportation is within Newport Beach.

Tom Pollack stated that bicycles are a staple of the City and that he hopes the plan will include parking for bicyclists and offer lit wayfinding signage.

Jim Stratton added that it is important to encourage bicyclists to ride in the area and that there needs to be bicycle storage space that will not be an eyesore.

Ralph Rodheim stated that he would prefer to ride down the ocean path, as opposed to riding in a bike lane down Balboa Boulevard.

Council Member Petros discussed the bike share program and added that he would like to see remote parking off of congested locations and off the peninsula so visitors could park and rent a bike.

Bill Dildine noted that at the last Bicycle Master Plan Oversight Committee meeting, there were two letters about extending the path beyond the wedge and onto the beach, yet that provides problems with residents.

Alison Ryffel, Balboa Peninsula Point Association, responded that the association has been working closely with the police department and the City to configure a safe way to mitigate the safety problem residents' face.

Janis Dinwiddle discussed the Centennial celebration.

Howard Hall added that extending the trail down to the wedge will increase traffic and that residents will fight it.

Ralph Rodheim stated that a walking path and a riding path back and forth from the wedge will not be in the plans.

Jim Mosher stated that he comes to Balboa once a month to attend meetings and only comes by bike. He noted that if signage is overdone, it can be overwhelming and also that he ties his bike to the railing because of the way he approaches the building and the inability to find a bike rack.

Council Member Petros added that wayfinding does not have to be a sign, but there should be a common color or sign to alert bicyclists of parking locations for bikes.

Alison Ryffel noted the hordes of bicycles piled up in front of Cabo Cantina recently, and the subsequent need for organized bike parking and signage.

Brad Sommers added that parking and wayfinding need to be convenient, simple, and effective.

Council Member Petros thanked the staff and the community for their dedication to this process and the development of the Master Plan.

V. Review 2014 Work Program Action Plan

Recommended Action: Review Action Plan

Fern Nueno, Associate Planner, discussed the proposed schedule for the rest of the year, as well as the scope of work for the consultants. Each of the five proposed programs was outlined, starting with the Commercial Façade Improvement Plan. The Targeted Tenant Attraction Program, Design Guidelines, and Streetscape Plan and Wayfinding were briefly discussed in regards to timelines and presentation dates.

Ralph Rodheim discussed what the Balboa Village Merchants Association (BVMA) is planning with the silk flowers. Janis Dinwiddie and Terri Pasquale shared pictures of the existing streetscape, including the current garden pots, and the new silk flowers. Mr. Rodheim stated that this is just an informational item and he will continue to communicate with the BVAC regarding BVMA items. The plan is for live plants not be used, which will save the City money, and they could be changed out seasonally.

Kimberly Brandt discussed the Pilot Plant Program, which would encourage consistency among the garden pots being used and communication with staff.

Brenda Wisneski, Deputy Community Development Director, proposed.

Council Member Petros asked that the record reflect that Grace Dove, Central Newport Beach Community Association, arrived to the meeting.

Ralph Rodheim stated that City staff has put so much time and effort into the Village and that BVMA appreciates all the work.

Action: The committee concurred with the proposed schedule.

VI. Review Project Scopes of Work

1. Design Guidelines

Recommended Action: Review and Finalize Scope of Work

2. Streetscape Improvements and Wayfinding Sign Program

Recommended Action: Review and Finalize Scope of Work

Brenda Wisneski, Deputy Community Development Director, discussed the scopes of work and the proposed plan of using consultants. The consultants will be provided with a framework, which they can use to design the best plan of work.

Council Member Petros added that it is critical to involve residents and allow them an opportunity to provide input.

Brenda Wisneski discussed the plans for improvement, including landscaping, community involvement, and coordination with Public Works.

Kimberly Brandt, Community Development Director, added that staff will select consultants and then return to the Committee.

Council Member Petros requested that an update on maintenance efforts be put on a future agenda.

Alison Ryffel stated that an email blast can be sent out to all members with the Peninsula Point Association Members and publications.

Ms. Wisneski concluded her presentation discussing the wayfinding and signage.

Committee Member Grace Dove added that she is frequently stopped by people asking for directions and that wayfinding is an important issue to address.

Action: The committee provided direction to move forward with the scopes of work.

VII. VII. Public Comment

Ralph Rodheim noted that Steve Beazley is currently present, representing the Balboa Theater, and that with the support of the community, there will be a theater in the future.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Balboa Village Advisory Committee, Council Member Petros adjourned the meeting at 5:17 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, April 9, 2014 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

ATTACHMENT 2

Facade Improvement Program Memo

INTENTIONALLY BLANK PAGE



**CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
100 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE
NEWPORT BEACH, CA 92660
(949) 644-3227**

Memorandum

To: Balboa Village Advisory Committee
From: Fern Nueno, Associate Planner
Date: April 3, 2014
Re: Commercial Façade Improvement Program

The Balboa Village Master Plan included a recommendation to develop a façade improvement program to incentive property owners to invest in the rehabilitation of their buildings. The excerpt from the Master Plan is attached. The program could offset all, or a portion of, the costs for items such as paint, signage, awnings, window casings, and structural repairs. While the costs of these improvements can be relatively minimal, they can significantly improve the appearance and overall appeal of the Village.

These types of programs are common among districts like the Village, but can vary significantly. The following information and attachments highlight potential programs, funding options, and recommendations.

TAP Report Recommendations

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) Report (excerpt attached) also includes recommendations for a façade program. The TAP Report provides recommendations for public realm improvements that would provide the “most bang for the buck,” one of which is improving the building façades to enhance the pedestrian experience and creating a “storefront fund” to assist the business and property owners. The report also states that visitors and residents arriving to the Village by ferry would have a better experience if improvements were made to adjacent building façades. The report prioritized blocks for both the Façade and Tenant Attraction programs as follows:

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

Balboa Boulevard could be targeted for initial funding as a model block that will have the most impact upon completion. This will help spur other property owners to participate in the program after seeing the results from the model block.

Program Options

Façade improvement programs range in cost and level of change desired. Some cities have created programs simply offering funds to off-set the costs of basic improvements, such as awnings, signage, and paint. These programs can be relatively inexpensive. Some programs started with as little as \$25,000 for the first year. Other cities, seeking to make a greater impact, complete the design and improvements on behalf of the property owners/businesses.

1. Seed Money Program (less expensive, less aggressive)
 - Establish loan or grant fund
 - Identify maximum funds per building
 - Funds for property owners/tenants for qualified projects
 - Financial assistance can be based on the linear feet encompassed by the façade, or project scope
 - City could identify priority areas, notify property owners, and provide technical assistance in the preparation of the applications
 - Cost estimate is \$999-30,000 per suite depending on program elements

2. Full Cost Program (more expensive, more aggressive)
 - City controls process and design elements
 - City bears entire cost
 - Property owners grant the City a façade easement for a ten year period
 - Property owners are responsible for upkeep
 - Requires participation of all owners in target area
 - Cost estimate for Balboa Village is \$100,000-175,000 per building

Programs in Other Jurisdictions

The cities of Saratoga, San Clemente, Santa Cruz, Westminster, and Fontana have implemented Commercial Façade Improvement Programs (additional information is attached). Some of the concepts include:

- Application process with property owner consent required
- Grants awarded for up to 50% of the project costs up to a maximum amount
- Money is reimbursed at completion of project after receipts have been submitted
- Maximum funds based on tenant frontage, or project scope
- Projects must be completed within one year of approval
- Properties eligible once every ten years
- City permit requirements still applicable

- Allowed façade improvements must be visible from primary streets and include painting, lighting, anti-graffiti film coating, awnings, landscaping, window treatments, and other improvements to architectural features
- Grants could be awarded for architectural or design services
- Fontana implemented a full cost program with façade easements

Recommendation

As stated in the ULI TAP Report, revitalization efforts should embrace the Village's personality and improve the experience for the local community. The village character is appreciated, and only needs enhancement. For this reason, it is recommended that a façade improvement program take a less aggressive approach to implementation. Simply offering seed money can be the incentive needed to replace some of the fading signs, chipped paint, or weathered window treatments in the Village.

Program Implementation Steps

- Develop program criteria and application process
- Identify program costs and identify funding sources
- Obtain City Council approval
- Outreach to property owners and tenants
- Provide technical assistance for application
- Administer program

- Residential development is an economic engine for mixed-use development opportunities; carries the cost of ground floor commercial
- Cultural catalysts - ExplorOcean and Balboa Theater
- City-owned parking lot on Palm Street may be developed and serve as a catalyst to promote economic development in Balboa Village

Strategies:

- Pursue adoption of a Local Coastal Plan to expedite project review/permit issuance
- Eliminate parking requirements for new or intensified commercial uses
- Support/facilitate development of ExplorOcean/Balboa Theater
- Create financial incentive programs to encourage façade improvement and rehabilitation of commercial properties
- Support and encourage a variety of events and activities in the Village to improve community interest and increase business sales for local merchants
- Consider developing the Palm Street parking lot with a mixed use project, either hotel or residential with a small amount of ground-floor commercial
- Identify new revenue sources to assist in funding programs and projects recommended for Balboa Village

The following recommendations were made by the CAP in order of priority by category based on need and the ability to make the greatest impact with the limited resources available.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A number of economic development related tools and strategies must be employed in Balboa Village to enhance its ability to be a viable commercial and tourist district. The following priority recommendations are ranked in the order provided:

1. Develop and Implement a Commercial Facade Improvement Program

There are approximately 55 commercial buildings located in Balboa Village, some of which contain residential units above the ground floor commercial space. Many of these buildings are in need of exterior renovations, such as paint, signage, awnings, window casings, and structural repairs. The KMA report concluded that, while commercial space rents in this area are adequate by market comparison, on balance, the property owners do not perceive that investing in exterior improvements will generate significant rent increases. The deterioration of these buildings is a key contributor to the overall declining appearance and appeal of the area to residents and visitors alike.

In an effort to incentivize property owners to invest in the rehabilitation of their buildings, it is recommended that the City Council create a facade improvement program and fund a portion of the costs to rehabilitate these commercial structures. These types of

programs are common in special districts such as Balboa Village, and the success of such a program would lead to a renewed sense of place.

As noted in the KMA study, there are several options the City could consider when developing such a program. The CAP is recommending that a tiered, matching fund grant program be created. The program would be designed to insure that City funds are not expended until such time as the owner's funds are available, such as requiring an escrow account for draw-down purposes. The City should consider a range of rebates based on the extent of improvements needed for a particular building, as suggested below:

Minor Building Improvements

These would include items such as sign removal and replacement, and exterior painting (no major repairs involved). The rebate would be based on scope as opposed to building frontage, with a not to exceed rebate of \$15,000 per building.



Major Building Improvements

Up to 25' frontage	\$15,000
25' to 50' frontage	\$25,000
50' to 75' frontage	\$37,500
75' and above	\$50,000

Key to the program's success will be the targeting of initial funding to a model block that will have the most impact upon completion. This will demonstrate to the owners the potential for their buildings, and give tenants, residents and visitors renewed hope in the

revitalization of the area's commercial district. Often, these building improvements will lead to interior tenant improvements with existing businesses and/or attract new tenants to better serve the area. The specifics of such a program and potential funding sources will be developed if, and when, the City Council approves moving forward with such an incentive. A potential funding source would be the use of CDBG funding which is discussed in further detail below.



2. Develop and Implement a Targeted Tenant Attraction Program.

A complementary effort to the Facade Improvement Program is a key tenant, targeted marketing program. Based on the findings of the KMA market study, there exists a limited opportunity to attract a few key tenants and developments to the area (e.g., sit-down restaurant, quality boutique retail, and a boutique hotel). To do so, however, may require financial incentives on the part of the City to encourage such uses to locate in the Village. These might include fee waivers for plan check and building permits, and perhaps a tenant improvement loan program to offset the expense of opening a new restaurant in the area. Once the incentive programs are developed, a method to provide outreach will be needed to make potential tenants aware of the opportunities. First

establishments could benefit from the increased visitation created by these developments. Therefore, it would be advantageous for the City to support and facilitate the development of these uses.

Façade Improvement Programs

Façade improvement programs can be implemented to assist in creating aesthetically pleasing, tenant preferred, commercial space. A well designed program can increase business exposure, enhance visual attractiveness, stimulate private investment and create harmonious commercial districts. Façade improvement assistance programs run the gamut from the provision of seed money to property owners, to programs that fund 100% of the approved façade improvement costs.

To entice property owners to participate in the program, façade improvement assistance is often provided in the form of a grant. However, to ensure that the desired tenancies remain in place over a specified timeframe, this assistance is sometimes treated as a forgivable loan. For example, the loan could be forgiven in 20% increments over a five year period. In that case, if a tenant remains for the entire five years, then the loan is forgiven in full.

Typically, the eligible work is limited to upgrading the facades that are visible from the street. The eligible improvements can include painting, masonry cleaning, exterior lighting, signage, accessibility improvements and so forth.

Seed Money Program

In a seed money program, the City would establish a loan or grant fund that provides qualified property owners with a grant or loan equal to a portion of the façade improvement costs. For example the City could contribute up to 50% of the eligible façade improvement costs up to a defined limit. One way to measure the grants is to tie the assistance to the number of linear feet encompassed by the façade. For example, seed money assistance could be set within the following range:

Façade under 25 feet	\$15,000
Façade between 25 and 50 feet	\$25,000
Façade between 50 and 75 feet	\$37,500
Façade above 75 feet	\$50,000

In a seed money program it is advisable for the City staff to identify target buildings, and to notify the property owners that the program is available. To further encourage participation, it may be useful to offer technical assistance to these owners in the preparation of the loan/grant applications.

Full Cost Program

A more aggressive program would involve the City controlling the entire process. In this program, the City would bear the entire cost burden for the façade improvements. In return, building owners would grant the City a façade easement, typically in the range of 10 years. In addition, after the improvements are completed, the property owners would be responsible for ongoing upkeep of the improvements.

To achieve the maximum impact, this type of program would require the participation of all the owners within the designated target area. With the City controlling the process, the design elements would be consistent, economies of scale could be achieved for the construction costs, and the improvements could be completed expeditiously. For reference purposes, the costs incurred by other programs have fallen in the range of \$1,000 to \$1,800 per linear foot. Based on the characteristics of Balboa Village commercial properties, the total cost is estimated to range from approximately \$100,000 to \$175,000 per building

Tenant Improvement Loans

Tenant improvement loan programs are designed to bring new desirable tenants to an area. The tenants that are selected to receive assistance should meet defined City objectives such as significant sales tax generation; ability to attract shoppers, diners, and visitors; and/or creation of “spin off” benefits to other businesses in the area. These programs are typically utilized to catalyze an area that is underperforming by making it financially attractive for desired tenants to rent space in the area.

In a tenant improvement loan program, the City assistance would be provided to qualified businesses to improve building interiors; assistance related to business operations should not be provided. Tenant improvement loans are particularly useful for restaurants, which have higher tenant improvement costs than other commercial uses due to the required kitchen equipment, décor and furnishings. However, they can also be used to attract desired retail shop space.

Programs that KMA has assisted in structuring require the building owner, the tenant and the City to contribute funds for the tenant improvement costs. The City contribution is typically capped at no more than 50% of the tenant improvement costs, and the assistance costs have fallen in the range of \$30 to \$70 per square foot of building area. The cost range is directly tied to type of tenancy and the magnitude of the improvements being constructed.

Source	Description
Community Development Block Grant Funds (CDBG)	These funds are awarded to the City by the federal government. The funds can be used to achieve defined national objectives, including the construction of public improvements such as streetscape improvements.
Disposition of City Assets	The City can sell or lease City owned property to attract desired uses.
General Fund	Includes sales taxes, transient occupancy taxes (TOT), property taxes, motor vehicle license fees, etc. These funds can be used to fund economic development and capital programs.
Parking Benefit District Revenues and Recreational Vehicle Parking Revenues	Parking revenues can be used to fill gap in funding existing parking obligations. In the future, the City Council could make the policy decision to direct revenues back into Balboa Village to fund implementation activities.
Community Facilities Districts (CFD) and Special Assessment Districts	A special tax is assessed on properties to fund public facilities and services.
Development Impact Fees	The City can impose impact fees directly tied to improvements and/or services necessitated by development.
Developer Advances	Developers can be asked to pay for public improvements in return for repayment from the public revenues generated by their project over time.
California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank (IBANK)	The Bank offers a low interest bonds for projects such as streets, parks, and transit. The loans range from \$250,000 to \$10 million.

ATTACHMENT 1 - TABLE 1

POTENTIAL FUNDING MECHANISMS
 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES
 BALBOA VILLAGE IMPLEMENTATION
 NEWPORT BEACH, CALIFORNIA

	Loan & Grant Programs	I-Bank - Infrastructure State Revolving Fund Program
A. Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● City can administer revolving loan funds, low interest loan programs or loan guarantee programs. ● Local or regional lenders can be approached to ascertain their interest in contributing funds for lending. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Low cost financing to public agencies for a wide variety of infrastructure projects.
B. Eligible Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tenant improvement loans ● Façade improvement loans ● Small business start-up loans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● City streets. ● Educational facilities. ● Environmental mitigation measures. ● Parks and recreational facilities. ● Public transit.
C. Funding Parameters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Funds would be available to applicants on a demonstrated needs basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Infrastructure State Revolving Fund Program offered by the I-Bank offers loans ranging between \$250,000 to \$10,000,000 with eligible repayment sources including General Fund revenues, tax increment revenues, and property assessments.
D. Funding Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Funding provided by City based on scale of program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Repaid by City with local tax revenues.

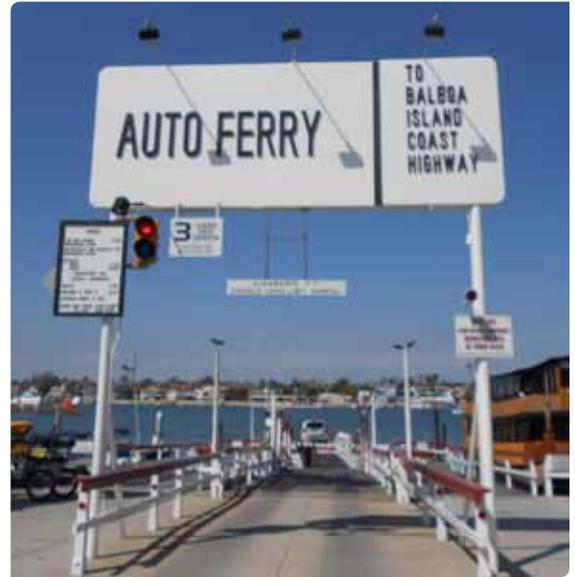
Public Realm Issues

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.



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 parkettes, 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 Parade activities | » “Taste of Balboa” |
| » Art shows | » Craft beer festival | » Food trucks |

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

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)



City of Saratoga, California

<http://www.saratoga.ca.us/about/village/>

Village property owners or business owners (with property owner consent) can receive up to a 50% reimbursement of total project costs for façade improvements. The maximum award for an approved façade improvement to a storefront visible from Big Basin Way is \$5,000. Exterior improvements to storefronts in the Village Commercial District that are visible from Big Basin Way are eligible for the program. Projects range from new paint, installation of an awning, to landscaping.

To receive grant money, participants must submit an application and project proposal to the City. If the project meets necessary requirements and funding is available, then the project will be approved by the City Council Village Ad Hoc Committee and staff will notify the applicant if any permits or approvals need to be obtained. Façade improvements must be completed within 1 year of project approval and original receipts for all project expenses (labor, materials, etc.) are required for reimbursement. Village

Façade Improvement Program funds are distributed on a first-come-first-serve basis.

- Exterior improvements, visible from Big Basin Way
- Painting, signage, lighting, and exterior repair projects that follow Village Design Guidelines
- Addition of shade feature to storefronts, particularly awnings
- Landscaping that beautifies Big Basin Way streetscape
- Improvements that enhance design elements and architectural features, such as inlaid tile, brick, decorative cornices, enhanced doors or window treatments

Examples of Approved Projects:

- New exterior paint Installation or replacement of canvas awning
- Improvements to sidewalk seating areas, including landscaping
- New signage or improvements to existing signage Enhancements to doors and windows, including new trim
- Installation of exterior planter boxes

City of San Clemente, California

<http://san-clemente.org/sc/standard.aspx?pageid=653>

<http://san-clemente.org/sc/standard.aspx?pageid=650>

Programs and Incentives

The Los Molinos Business District currently has funds available for the successful and award winning Los Molinos Business District Façade and Site Enhancement Grant Program (LMBD Façade Grant). In the three year history of the program, there have been substantial improvements to facades and signage within the District. In addition to the funds provided by the City, for most projects, all related City fees are waived, allowing additional cost savings to be passed onto the business/property owners to promote more investment and enhancement in the District. Funds are available on a first come first serve basis, and funds are still available for this program.

Grant Program

A façade and site enhancement program (modeled after the Los Molinos Program) is available for North Beach commercial properties. The individual grants are up to \$999 and are to help assist existing businesses with signage and improvements that would increase the pedestrian friendly atmosphere.

City of Santa Cruz, California

<http://www.cityofsantacruz.com/index.aspx?page=1707>

The Facade Improvement Program provides grants to businesses or property owners to enhance and restore their storefronts. Since 1994, more than 100 facade improvement projects have been completed, aiding over 260 businesses. Facade Improvement grants prioritize:

1. Painting entire buildings
2. Improving public safety lighting
3. Installing anti-graffiti film coating on display glass windows and doors

If these priorities are met in a grant project budget and design, then the grant may also include signage, awnings, and limited landscaping. These noticeable improvements help to attract customers, leverage private investment from owners, and inspire improvements to neighboring buildings.

Grants are provided as reimbursements to the participant after the project is completed and do not have to be repaid. The Facade Improvement Program includes:

- Up to \$10,000 whole grant for the project
- Up to \$5,000 matching grant *per storefront* when the participant provides a match of \$5,000
- Up to \$1,000 beyond the grants to cover the cost of a City-selected designer to help you choose paint colors and other elements for your unique storefront design

All commercial properties with ground floor retail access to each occupied and operating storefront are eligible. Proof of three years or more remaining on each storefront lease must be provided. Properties cannot participate in the program more than once in any ten-year period.

City of Westminster, California

<http://www.westminster-ca.gov/depts/citymanager/econdev/faqs.asp>

The Commercial Façade Improvement Program is designed to stimulate private investment in high quality building improvements that contribute to the overall strength of Westminster's retail centers as shopping and dining destinations. Through this program, the Westminster Redevelopment Agency will share the cost of improving building exteriors, thereby promoting joint private/public action and investment, which will complement and enhance redevelopment efforts.

After a citywide survey of Westminster's commercial areas, along with an assessment of high visibility corridors and City gateway and entry areas, the City's commercial areas have been classified using the following priority evaluation criteria below.

Priority Area Evaluation Criteria:

- Area I) Visual and Physical blight at City entryways or high traffic areas
- Area II) Visual and Physical blight not located at entryways or high traffic areas
- Area III) Physical and Economic blighted areas
- Area IV) Areas with no Visual/Physical blight, but economically underutilized

Owners and tenants of property within the Areas above are eligible to apply for assistance. Tenants must have the property owners consent before any improvements are made. In addition, the grant application must be signed by the property owners.

The program funds are to be used for exterior building improvements rather than simple maintenance. Applications will not be accepted to refinance improvements already completed, nor improvements made to the interior building. The program provides funding of eligible costs on a reimbursement basis after work has been completed. Any applicant business(es) must have a current business license and must be in compliance with all municipal codes and be free of any outstanding violations. In order to receive funds, a completed grant application must be submitted to and approved by the program administrator prior to the beginning of work. Grants of up to \$30,000 per storefront are available, conditioned upon proper maintenance of the improvements for 10 years.

Any renovations must result in significant long-term improvements to the building such as:

- Exterior wall repair, re-plastering, and painting
- Landscaping and sidewalk replacement
- Awning purchase, repair, or replacement
- Sign purchase, repair, or replacement
- Lighting purchase, repair, or replacement
- Door and window repair, or replacement
- Roofing improvements

The Commercial Façade Improvement Program will not reimburse funds for removal of illegal improvements, and/or routine maintenance.

Funding

Funding eligible property owners and/or tenants who propose façade improvements can apply for a grant up to 50 percent of the cost upon completion of improvements. The City’s matching grants are based on the amount of linear footage as shown below, but maybe amended by the Executive Director given the need of specific projects:

Linear Feet of Façade	Maximum Grant (assuming 50% of total cost)
25’ or less	\$ 7,000
26’ to 50’	15,000
51’ to 75’	20,000
76’ or more	30,000

City of Fontana (Full Cost Program)

<http://www.calredevelop.org/External/WCPages/WCWebContent/WebContentPage.aspx?ContentID=1449>

By 2002, Fontana’s Downtown was in very poor shape and needed revitalization and a dramatic visual enhancement. Property owners were scrambling to keep their buildings occupied with anybody who would pay the rent on time; they were not inclined to make needed improvements to their buildings. The challenge was to achieve the goals and objectives that were set down by the City Council acting as the Redevelopment Agency to:

- (1) Create a safe and attractive Downtown through the elimination of blight;
- (2) Revitalize the economic energy that was once there;
- (3) Create a friendly family and community atmosphere; and
- (4) Nurture and support the business community as it makes its recovery.

Most other city façade programs have historically included matching dollar investment, forgivable grants, and “not to exceed” dollar amount programs. In most cases, 100% participation by property owners and/or businesses was rarely achievable resulting in only moderate, and largely unnoticed or unremarkable, improvement. To achieve the Council’s/Agency’s goals and objectives, staff determined that a very non-traditional Façade Program approach was necessary.

Fontana opted to implement a façade renovation program in the Core downtown area, along Sierra Avenue, that would have a maximum visual impact, and hopefully change ‘perceptions’. As a first step towards downtown revitalization, passersby needed to “see” a new look to the downtown. Maximum control over the entire process was paramount. A three-phase, multiyear program was prepared, and each year a separate block of facades along Sierra Avenue would be renovated.

The City also decided to use Redevelopment Agency revenues to completely fund the entire three block façade renovation. The property and business owners are not responsible for design or construction costs. The next challenge was to secure an 18” Façade Easement from the property owners. The City would “own” the first 18 inches of each building front on the block for a period of ten years. The property owner would receive back 10% ownership of the building facade every year, achieving total re-ownership of their building façade in the tenth year. Per the terms of each property’s façade easement, after the new façade has been built, the property owner is required to maintain the new façade and is subject to City ordinances regarding signage, music, banners, temporary signs, and lighting. If the property or business changes ownership or character, the new owner/tenant is responsible for new signage and lighting costs. Any changes to the facades would be subject to City approval.

The Redevelopment Agency is funding the entire Façade Renovation program including the architectural fees and construction costs. Phase 1 construction costs for nine businesses totaled \$688,070.00. The average facade improvement cost was about \$50,000.00 per business.

The innovative approach that the Fontana has taken with the façade renovation program is both unique, and the concept is easily transferred to other communities. Fontana wanted to create a successful program that would positively impact the residents, property, and business owners.