

# Downtown Huntington Park Business Improvement District



## ***Strategic Plan for Downtown Management***

January 2005 - June 2008



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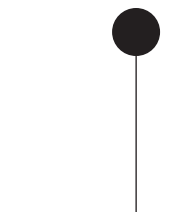
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Vice Mayor Ofelia Hernandez  
Councilmember Mario Gomez  
Councilmember Edward Escareño  
Councilmember Richard V. Loya

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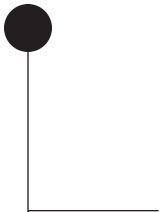
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# Introduction and Purpose

**D**owntown Huntington Park is a thriving commercial district serving a regional Latino market. Foot traffic is heavy, there are few vacancies, and land values and commercial rents are strong.

While business is good and the current downtown management activities are successful, recent developments have caused the City of Huntington Park, the Downtown Huntington Park Business Improvement District (BID) Advisory Board and the Huntington Park Chamber of Commerce to want to develop a long-term business plan to improve the downtown's ability to compete in the marketplace. These developments include:

- ✂ Potential competition from proposed Big Box retail developments within the city's primary market area.
- ✂ Increased competition from new shopping centers.
- ✂ Opportunities to reuse the Warner Theater.

- ✂ Increased cleanliness and security problems.
- ✂ The desire to more clearly identify the downtown's target customer base.
- ✂ The desire to develop a consensus vision for the downtown.
- ✂ The desire to have a comprehensive, "holistic" business improvement plan to guide the BID's activities.

These issues are among the opportunities and concerns addressed in the Strategic Plan for Downtown Management.

The Strategic Plan is an economic development tool that documents the downtown's competitive position in the marketplace and identifies short and long-term strategies that the BID, the City and the Chamber can undertake to ensure the economic health of the downtown and the BID's downtown management program.

The Strategic Plan is designed to do this while achieving the com-



munity's overall vision for the downtown and preserving the unique quality of life that is enjoyed by Huntington Park residents.

The Strategic Plan is a companion document to the City's redevelopment plans and its Downtown Specific Plan. Its implementation will be led by the BID Advisory Board, in partnership with the City of Huntington Park and the Huntington Park Chamber of Commerce. Its tenure will include the remainder of FY 2004-05 (January 2005-June 2005) through FY 2007 (July 2007-June 2008).

**The City of Huntington Park, the Downtown Business Improvement District and the Chamber of Commerce want to develop a long-term business plan to improve the downtown's ability to compete in the marketplace.**



The Strategic Plan is a companion document to the City's redevelopment plans and the Downtown Specific Plan. Its implementation will be led by the BID Advisory Board, in partnership with the City and the Chamber of Commerce.

## Guiding Downtown Huntington Park

The planning team of Eichenfield & Associates and Urban Transformation prepared the Strategic Plan under contract with the City of Huntington Park Community Development Department and its appointed Downtown Task Force.

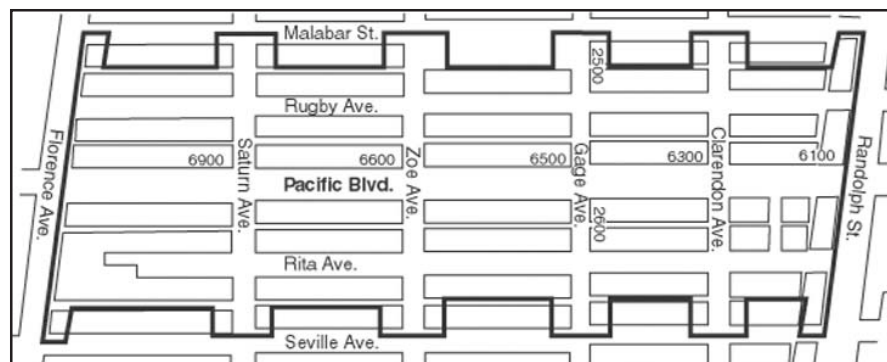
The team used previously collected economic data; new input received from the community in stakeholder and merchant interviews, consumer surveys (Exhibit B), public workshops (Exhibit C), a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

exercise conducted with the Downtown Task Force and the BID Advisory Board, and its lengthy experience in downtown management and development. Jeff Eichenfield and Darlene Rios Drapkin led the team.

The Huntington Park City Council accepted the Strategic Plan in March 2005. The BID Advisory

Board will use the priority rankings contained herein to develop its annual work plans.

The BID Advisory Board is excited about the ongoing level of commitment to the downtown business district and believes this commitment has been solidified through the work with the community on this Strategic Plan.





# Downtown's Vision and Competitive Position

**W**hile the downtown is an asset and amenity to all members of our community, the vast number of competing shopping outlets means that, from an *economic* viewpoint, it cannot be all things to all people.

As with any product or shopping area, the downtown needs to:

- ✂ Understand **WHAT** is the attribute or benefit that gives it a competitive advantage.
- ✂ Identify **WHO** are the most-profitable and best-potential customers.
- ✂ Deliver a product (both in message and in actuality) in an uncomplicated way, consistently over time.

A clear vision and position statement guides how a downtown will look, the types of businesses it will contain, and how it will be marketed and to whom.

The Downtown Task Force and the BID Advisory Board have adopted the following vision and competitive position statement for the downtown:

Downtown Huntington Park is an economically strong, pedestrian-oriented business district of shops, services, dining, entertainment and cultural uses serving the City of Huntington Park and the South East Los Angeles County region.



It uniquely offers an authentic Latino cultural experience in an historic downtown ambiance emphasizing a strong sense of family and community with easy access to mass transit. The downtown primarily serves lower- and moderate-income Latinos and new immigrants, and has quality products, activities and amenities that attract higher-income and second-generation Latinos as well.

**Huntington Park's downtown is an economically strong, pedestrian-oriented business district of shops, services, dining, entertainment and cultural uses serving the city and the South East Los Angeles County region. It uniquely offers an authentic Latino cultural experience in an historic downtown ambiance emphasizing a strong sense of family and community with easy access to mass transit. The downtown primarily serves lower- and moderate-income Latinos and new immigrants, and has quality products, activities and amenities that attract higher-income and second-generation Latinos as well.**

# Strategic Goals

To implement this vision, the Downtown Task Force and the BID Advisory Board have set the following Strategic Goals for 2005-08:

- 1 Management and Organization** – Maintain a strong business district management program that funds, coordinates and implements beautification, promotion and marketing, business development, cleanliness and security, and parking and transportation activities.
- 2 Beautification** – Coordinate and implement physical and design improvements that reflect the downtown’s unique character and culture and make the boulevard a more comfortable place to shop.
- 3 Promotion and Marketing** – Increase awareness of the downtown’s existence, its offerings and its brand image.
- 4 Economics and Business Mix** – Facilitate business retention and recruitment.
- 5 Cleanliness and Security** – Keep the downtown a clean and safe place to shop and socialize.
- 6 Parking and Transportation** – Ensure the downtown is easily accessible by transit, auto traffic and pedestrians.

**Successful business districts are often managed in a similar way as are shopping centers. They have some centralized entity that keeps the shopping area clean, safe, promoted and fully tenanted.**

Strategies to achieve these goals, and the general timeline for implementing them, are detailed in the remainder of this plan and its “at-a-glance” summary (Exhibit A).

Short-term strategies are generally meant to be completed by June 2006. Longer-term strategies are meant to be completed by June 2008.

## **Strategic Goal 1: Management and Organization**

**Maintain a strong business district management program that funds, coordinates and implements beautification, promotion and marketing, business development, cleanliness and security, and parking and transportation activities.**

Successful business districts are often managed in a similar way as are shopping centers. They have some centralized entity that keeps the shopping area

clean, safe, promoted and fully tenanted. The BID Advisory Board serves this management role in downtown Huntington Park.

Organized in 1995, the BID is a merchant assessment district that represents approximately 600 businesses through a City appointed advisory board of directors. The BID raises approximately \$325,000 each year for downtown improvements. BID fees are paid at the same time as City business license fees.

The BID Advisory Board and the City staff work together each year to budget and account for these funds. The Advisory Board hires staff and/or contractors to help implement its activities.

The Advisory Board also serves as a liaison between the City and the downtown business community, educating merchants about the BID and acting as one of the business community’s voice at City Hall, alongside the Huntington Park Chamber of Commerce.

Major strategies for 2005-08 to maintain an effective downtown management program are detailed below. All activities will reinforce the community's vision for the downtown and its economic position in the marketplace.

**1.1 Continue the existing BID management structure and funding level in the short term.**

For the period from January 2005 to June 2006, the BID will continue to be organized, funded and staffed as in prior years. The BID Advisory Board will set direction and coordinate downtown management activities in close working partnership with City staff and the Chamber of Commerce.

- ✂ Use the Downtown Strategic Plan and the proposed Downtown Specific Plan to guide the BID's activities.
- ✂ Raise \$325,000 from BID assessments, of which \$150,000 will be dedicated to police services.
- ✂ Employ one full-time BID staff person to help the Advisory Board coordinate its activities. The BID Advisory Board will identify staff activities in its annual work plan.
- ✂ Contract out more event planning duties to the Chamber of Commerce to allow BID staff to spend more time on business community outreach.



- ✂ Develop other arrangements with the Chamber of Commerce where possible to increase synergy.

**1.2 Increase merchant and property owner communication and outreach.**

Most merchants are aware of the BID and downtown management activities. Many are confused, however, about which activities are BID-sponsored and which are City- or Chamber-sponsored. There is also confusion as to whether the BID and the Pacific Boulevard Merchants Association (PBMA) are the same entity (they are).

Many merchants and property owners interviewed for the Strategic Plan said they would be interested in participating more in meetings related to the BID and in working more closely together towards the district's improvement. Communication and outreach should be especially directed at these individuals.

- ✂ Eliminate confusion over the BID and PBMA names and logos. Choose a single name that best represents the business district management organization and use it consistently in all communications and promotions. (short term)
- ✂ Publish regular BID newsletters. These will contain information about current downtown developments and upcoming BID activities. Newsletters will also increase the visibility of BID Advisory Board and staff. (short term)
- ✂ Investigate the feasibility of BID e-mail bulletins. These could supplement the newsletters and include information about matters requiring immediate attention. (short term)
- ✂ Hold regular membership meetings. These could be held at least twice a year and have a social as well as educational component. (short term)
- ✂ Increase one-on-one merchant contact. BID staff will spend time on the street getting to know individual business members, directly hearing their issues and concerns and enlisting their support for BID and other district management programs. (short term)

**Many merchants and property owners interviewed for the Strategic Plan said they would be interested in participating more in meetings related to the BID and in working more closely together towards the district's improvement.**

- ✦ Hold regular property owner forums. These could be held twice a year as a way for property owners to network with each other and inform the BID Advisory Board about current real estate developments and trends. These could also serve as a way to enlist property owners' financial support for BID activities. (short term)

- ✦ Establish "block captains" on each block to maximize outreach efforts. Block captains can get to know the merchants on their block and unite them. After recruiting a block captain, the other merchants within their designated area are invited to a one-time block captains' business meeting to learn more about the BID and its objectives.

Following that initial meeting, block captains then serve as messengers for their blocks. They encourage other business owners to maintain their storefronts and bring their concerns to membership meetings.

They interface with BID staff and police officers assigned to the downtown, and they inform other merchants about promotions and other important updates. The block captain is

a designated advocate at City Hall on high-priority issues. (short term)

### 1.3 Educate merchants about the BID.

Many merchants understand that the BID is an addition to their business license fee, but don't fully understand what the money is spent on or how it provides them with special benefits above and beyond the standard services provided by the City. Merchants would like to receive information about the BID when applying for and renewing their business license at City Hall.

- ✦ Prepare a brochure explaining the BID. Make it available at the City's Finance Department and have it distributed with all applications for business licenses. (short term)

- ✦ Personally visit new businesses to welcome them to the downtown and enlist their involvement in the BID. (short term)

- ✦ Produce an annual report to educate government officials, merchants, investors and the general public about the BID's accomplishments. Present the report at an annual member-



ship meeting and at a City Council meeting. Develop press releases with success stories. (short term)

### 1.4 Develop an annual BID work plan.

A detailed annual work plan is necessary for the BID Advisory Board to clearly detail its planned program of activities each year and to effectively allocate its financial, volunteer and staff resources. (short term)

- ✦ Annual work plans will be divided into sections for each Strategic Goal and include a list of the specific activities that will be undertaken in any given year to achieve that goal.

- ✦ Annual work plans will detail the tasks, funds and volunteer/staff time needed to accomplish each activity.

**The BID Advisory Board will explore ways to permanently increase the amount of funding available to its downtown management activities by June 2006. The board's long-term budget goal is to raise at least \$600,000 annually.**

### 1.5 Raise funds to augment current assessment district revenues.

While the current merchants' assessment district provides a stable base of funding (approximately \$325,000 annually), the BID Advisory Board will explore ways to permanently increase the amount of funding available to its downtown management activities by June 2006. The Advisory Board's long-term budget goal is to raise at least \$600,000 annually.

- ✂ Educate merchants about the importance of reporting sales and paying sales tax. Some merchants are not reporting cash sales to the State Franchise Tax Board. This results in lost sales tax revenues to the City and less funding available for City services to downtown. It may also hinder a businesses' ability to secure business loans because actual revenues are not being reported. Develop a strategy to address this lingering issue which might include:
  - Quantify the repercussions of underreporting and communicate these to the business community. (short term)
  - Collaborate with Internal Revenue Service and State Franchise Sales Tax Board which may already have aggressive education programs. (short term)

- Identify other affected cities and entities interested in pursuing this issue; convene a roundtable to explore solutions. Involve state assembly representatives. (short term)
- Look at legislative options (longer term)
- ✂ Explore inserting a cost-of-living increase (COLA) into the current merchant BID. Rates have not increased in 10 years. (longer term)
- ✂ Explore the feasibility of expanding the current merchant BID to include businesses north of Randolph to 53rd Street. (longer term)
- ✂ Research grant opportunities that may be available to the BID if it becomes, or is affiliated with, a nonprofit organization under contract to the City. These could include foundation grants for youth involvement, job creation, public art, cultural programs, or cleanliness and safety activities; Community Development Block Grants for economic development activities; and corporate grants for community and economic development. (longer term)
- ✂ Explore the feasibility of creating a property owner based assessment district (PBID) to augment or replace the current merchant BID. (longer term)



### 1.6 Continue role in business advocacy.

The BID Advisory Board currently serves as one of the downtown business community's advocates at City Hall. The Association will continue its current activities in this area and continually seeks ways in which to hear what is on the minds of business community members.

- ✂ Hold regular membership meetings. (short term)
- ✂ Periodically visit business owners in their stores. (short term)
- ✂ Conduct annual membership surveys to determine how the businesses feel about current issues affecting the downtown. Insert in newsletters or distribute via email. (longer term)



**The Advisory Board will review the plan in FY 2007-08 to determine what updates will be necessary to guide operations in FY 2008-09 and beyond.**

**1.7 Increase volunteer participation and form new partnerships to help plan and implement activities.**

Implementing the Strategic Plan will be more work than the BID Advisory Board and staff can do on their own. They must constantly be on the lookout for new volunteers who can help them implement their activities. Volunteers can include residents, members of the business community and other organizations with common interests. Volunteers from the community at large are important for the unique expertise, perspective and dedication they can bring to the BID's work.

Business community volunteers are important for spreading the word about the BID's good work and for creating buy-in from those who pay the BID fees.

The BID must also strive to keep its volunteers happy and interested in their work.

- ✦ Increase interest in Advisory Board service. The board will seek ways to make board service prestigious and fun. This may include publicizing board elections and activities, including social aspects in board meetings, giving awards, holding annual retreats, creating official board member badges or pins, etc. (short term)

- ✦ Increase media publicity about BID activities in order to attract the general public to volunteer. Publish regular press releases promoting activities and seeking volunteers. (short term)
- ✦ Publish an annual work plan that clearly outlines tasks in order to facilitate volunteer recruitment. (short term)
- ✦ Recognize volunteers' efforts. Hold volunteer appreciation events after projects are completed. Give out volunteer awards. (short term)
- ✦ Hold regular membership meetings to recruit volunteers from the business community. (short term)
- ✦ Use committee projects as a way to prepare volunteers for future BID Advisory Board leadership. (short term)

**1.8 Update the 3-Year Strategic Plan after completion of the 2005 Specific Plan.**

The BID Advisory Board will review the Specific Plan to determine what kinds of additional business district management activities it recommends be undertaken by the BID. This may require an update of the Strategic Plan in 2005. (short term)

**1.9 Update the Three-Year Strategic Plan in FY 2007-08.**

The BID Advisory Board will review the Strategic Plan in FY 2007-08 to determine what kind of update will be necessary to guide operations in FY 2008-09 and beyond. (longer term)

## Strategic Goal 2: Beautification

**Coordinate and implement physical and design improvements that reflect the downtown's unique character and culture and make the Boulevard a more comfortable place to shop.**

One of the downtown's major strengths is its unique character and ambiance – major components of which are its pedestrian scale, historic buildings, landscaping and visible Latino culture. The BID Advisory Board will work closely with the City to protect and enhance this key asset.

During the 2004 strategic planning process, residents and members of the business community expressed a desire for a more consistent design style/theme (including streetscape, building designs, banners, murals, public art and color) that reflects Huntington Park's unique character and culture.

People also asked for more gathering spots, public restrooms and more attractive street lighting (the current light poles have historic bases but modern tops and need to be painted; the current low-pressure sodium lights are yellow and unattractive).



To protect historic downtown buildings, the City is preparing a historic preservation ordinance and inventory of possible downtown landmarks. This will facilitate redevelopment of the Warner Theater and facilitate the use of historic tax credits on other older downtown buildings.

Major beautification strategies for 2005-08 are detailed below. All activities will reinforce the community's vision for the downtown and its economic position in the marketplace.

### **2.1 Participate in developing the Downtown Specific Plan.**

The Downtown Specific Plan is to be completed in 2005 and will

include designs, standards and guidelines for buildings and streetscape improvements. The BID Advisory Board will fully participate in the public process that will be used to gather input for the Specific Plan and help gather ideas from the business community. (short term)

- ✂ Guide creation of a consistent design style/theme that reflects Huntington Park's unique character and culture.
- ✂ Guide creation of comfortable gathering spots. Community members reference Plaza Mexico, Santa Monica's Third Street Promenade and Old Pasadena as environments they would like downtown Huntington Park to emulate.
- ✂ Encourage the preservation of historic architecture. Incorporate this into downtown design guidelines. Give input into the new historic preservation ordinance. Help the City give information about historic tax credits to property owners.
- ✂ Help build consensus between the City and business community on code and zoning issues that impact business operations (including display and maintenance standards, signs, building uses, business types).

**Residents and members of the business community expressed a desire for a more consistent design style/theme (including streetscape, building designs, banners, murals, public art and color) that reflects Huntington Park's unique character and culture.**

- ✂ Help the City generate ideas for public restrooms.
- ✂ Offer input on how to increase use of the current storefront improvement grant program.
- ✂ Offer input on how to improve the appearance of downtown street lighting.
- ✂ Review signage and display codes to ensure they are beneficial and reflect the consensus of the community. Then ensure enforcement is firm but fair.

**2.2 Maximize use of storefront improvement grant program. (short term)**

The City currently offers storefront improvement grants to renovate downtown buildings. Only \$120,000 is available citywide, however. This makes it difficult to achieve a noticeable visual impact. Merchants and property owners would like the grants process to be streamlined so that applications and payments can be made more quickly.

- ✂ Increase collaboration between the City program and the BID. Use BID staff to help market the grants program.
- ✂ Work with the City to identify additional sources of funds for the program that will be specifically for downtown, targeting code violators.
- ✂ Work with the City to streamline the application and reimbursement process.



**The Downtown Specific Plan is to be completed in 2005 and will include designs, standards and guidelines for buildings and streetscape improvements.**



## Strategic Goal 3: Promotion and Marketing

**Increase awareness of the downtown's existence, its offerings and its brand image.**

One of the most important purposes of the downtown BID is to promote the downtown business community through local and regional marketing campaigns. In the past, the BID has paid for radio, print and direct mail advertising campaigns geared to specific holidays, distribution of a downtown business directory, holiday decorations in partnership with Chamber of Commerce, and decorative banners on streetlight poles in partnership with the City.

The BID Advisory Board also works with the Chamber to support retail promotions and special events the Chamber organizes to benefit downtown businesses. The special events organized by the Chamber serve to promote downtown and enhance the city's overall image.

For 2005 and beyond, the BID Advisory Board will continue to support these types of marketing campaigns while developing new



ways to promote downtown. There is a strong family feeling to Huntington Park and the Advisory Board wants to introduce more ways in which families can come and share that feeling.

During the 2004 strategic planning process, residents and members of the business community expressed a desire for more weekend and evening entertainment inside stores and on the street, for the Warner Theater to be reopened for cultural and entertainment uses, and for more activities for youths.

They also noted that for many people, the downtown has an unsafe image. This means the BID Advisory board must actively work to correct safety issues and aggressively promote the downtown as a safe and comfortable shopping area.

The BID will also develop new retail events to help the merchants' cash registers ring. And because the downtown is not close to a freeway and drivers must travel some distance to get there, promotions must convince shoppers to overcome this "inland barrier."

Major promotion and marketing strategies for 2005-08 are detailed below. All activities will reinforce the community's vision for the downtown and its economic position in the marketplace.

### 3.1 Coordinate more events with the Chamber of Commerce.

Merchants appreciate special events as ways to attract future shoppers and build goodwill. The Chamber is a very successful downtown event organizer and is interested in increasing this role.



✦ In 2005, the Chamber will continue to organize Carnival Primavera, Sabor de Mexico and the Christmas Lane Parade as they have in prior years. It will also review its current collaboration with the BID Advisory Board on Reyes Magos. (short term)

### 3.2 Coordinate retail promotions and advertising in collaboration with the Chamber.

The BID and the Chamber of Commerce will continue to organize retail sales promotions to help businesses generate higher sales and profits. For 2005, it will develop a limited number of retail promotions based on merchant input. Retail events or activities will focus attention on families and their extended members and encourage later store hours.

✦ Evaluate the effectiveness of prior years' retail promotions (sidewalk sales, Valentine's, Mother's Day, Easter, Back to School, Christmas etc.). Many of these events have involved radio remotes. Their effectiveness is maximized when engaging merchant participation through matching dollars. (short term)

- ✦ Consider new retail promotion ideas (short term):
  - Senior Citizens Promo Day.
  - Student Passport created specifically to attract youth.
  - Frequent Shopper Program to build loyalty.
  - Family Fun Friday series with special activities to encourage businesses to stay open late.
  - Safe Trick or Treating for children after dark.
  - Downtown Dollars or “Dolares” gift certificates for redemption in the downtown stores.
  - Christmas Cash – for every \$2 of purchases, customers are entered in raffle.
  - An event modeled after “Posada,” a Mexican Holiday tradition. The community re-enacts Mary and Joseph’s historical journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem in search of “posada,” or lodging, stopping at downtown stores for an evening of caroling, piñatas and refreshments.
- ✦ Add evening security for nighttime retail promotions. (short term)
- ✦ Develop clear purpose statements, goals and objectives for each retail promotion or event. (short term)
- ✦ Communicate a message of distinction. In all its retail promotions, downtown businesses

should strive to differentiate the downtown from other shopping areas. (short term)

- ✦ Expand collaborations with local media that communicate current events and announcements about downtown and the shops (short term):
  - Consider featuring a monthly merchant or monthly column about “what’s happening” in downtown Huntington Park.
  - Explore “coop” advertising that uses the merchants’ suppliers’ marketing dollars.
- ✦ For 2006 and beyond, develop a full program of regularly scheduled retail sales promotions. (longer term)

### 3.3 Sponsor and encourage entertainment and entertainment uses.

Customers would like a more festive and fun shopping experience downtown. Having other outdoor entertainment as well as additional entertainment-related businesses downtown will help give them that experience.

- ✦ Increase outdoor entertainment offerings. Hire bands and/or strolling musicians to entertain customers on weekends and during the evening. (short term)
- ✦ Find permanent locations for entertainers. Designate areas of the public right of way that



could be used as make-shift entertainment plazas and gathering spaces. This could include side streets, alleys, parking areas or sidewalk areas. These could be identified as part of the 2005 Specific Plan process. (longer term)

- ✦ Encourage more in-store entertainment. This could include musicians in restaurants, new clubs, or other cultural facilities. (longer term)
- ✦ Work with the City to re-open the Warner Theater for cultural and entertainment uses. (longer term)

### 3.4 Program more activities between Gage and Randolph.

This northern end of the district receives less pedestrian traffic than the southern end. Activities here could help draw customers from Pacific and Florence to businesses further up the street. Since this area is less congested, there is also more “open space” in which to hold special events and cultural activities. (longer term)

**Residents and members of the business community expressed a desire for more weekend and evening entertainment inside stores and on the street, for the Warner Theater to be reopened for cultural and entertainment uses, and for more activities for youths.**

### 3.5 Create positive media stories to enhance the downtown's perceived image.

Current media coverage tends to reinforce negative aspects of the downtown – security issues. The BID Advisory Board will actively identify positive news stories and promote them through press releases to the media. (short term)

- ✂ Promote new business openings, expansions and anniversaries.
- ✂ Profile unique business practices and products.
- ✂ Profile unique merchant personalities and accomplishments.
- ✂ Solicit news ideas from merchants through newsletters, membership meetings and one-on-one contacts.

### 3.6 Work with the Cultural Arts and Historic Preservation Commissions to expand cultural and heritage tourism.

Cultural and heritage tourism is defined as visits by persons from outside the community who are motivated wholly or in part by interest in historical, artistic, scientific or lifestyle/heritage offerings of a community, region, group or institution. Cultural and heritage tourism is a growing economic sector in California, and downtown



Huntington Park is uniquely situated to capitalize on this trend.

The BID Advisory Board will strive to attract visitors interested in the downtown's historic and cultural offerings. (longer term)

- ✂ Focus on authenticity and quality.
- ✂ Preserve historic architecture and cultural landmarks.
- ✂ Identify historic and cultural landmarks in high-quality brochures, visitor maps, sample travel itineraries and walking tours.
- ✂ Promote downtown events in visitor materials.
- ✂ Distribute tourism information to area hotels and visitors bureaus.
- ✂ Promote the downtown to visitors through the BID, City and Chamber's web sites.
- ✂ Work to create new tourism offerings such as museums, cultural centers, art galleries, performance spaces and festivals.
- ✂ Ensure that downtown amenities, events and attractions are easily found through directional signage and a kiosk directory.
- ✂ Consider adding stores that focus on Mexican products and arts like those at La Placita Olvera in Los Angeles.
- ✂ Offer tours to travel writers.

### 3.7 Establish closer ties to LA's Latino music industry.

Los Angeles is home to a great number of Latino record producers, musical groups and radio stations. As the center of Latino cultural life in South East Los Angeles County,



the downtown is uniquely situated to partner with this industry to bring more customers to the downtown.

- ✂ Bring more professional entertainment to local festivals. (short term)
- ✂ Organize more frequent radio station on-site broadcasts. (short term)
- ✂ Create permanent performance spaces. (longer term)
- ✂ Recruit musical professionals to locate in downtown office space. (longer term)

### 3.8 Publish an annual downtown promotions calendar.

An annual promotions calendar will be a useful planning tool for residents and the business community. (short term)

- ✂ Distribute in a BID newsletter.
- ✂ Include in promotional and tourism materials.
- ✂ Post on the City and Chamber's web sites.
- ✂ Send to neighborhood groups.
- ✂ Send to local media.

### 3.9 Include maps and/or driving directions from major freeways in all promotional materials. (short term)

## Strategic Goal 4: Economics and Business Mix

### Facilitate business retention and recruitment.

There is more than two million square feet of commercial space in the downtown BID area. Since the early 1930s, the downtown has been a regional-serving shopping district with good transit access. It is currently a regional center for lower-priced family clothing, "ranchero" or Western menswear, bridal supplies, medical services and business services (legal, travel, tax, insurance, immigration, etc.) (Exhibit E).

Individual merchants indicate that between 30-70 percent of their customers come from outside Huntington Park. Seventy-two percent of those who completed the shopper survey conducted for the Strategic Plan came from outside Huntington Park. This includes nearby communities and the South East Los Angeles County region.

Second- and third-generation residents and residents in higher income groups interviewed for the Strategic Plan recognize that the downtown is primarily geared to lower-income groups. Nevertheless, they would like to see a more diverse mix of shopping, dining and entertainment uses that meet their needs as well. New malls, shopping centers and movie theaters are drawing these customers away from downtown Huntington Park.



### There is a strong desire to have more name brand, chain stores to anchor the downtown.

If a new big-box or major discount retail project were to be constructed in Huntington Park, it could adversely impact the downtown, but it has not been professionally quantified.

Community members would also like to see more housing downtown to create a built-in customer base and keep the district busy day and night.

Major strategies for 2005-08 to maintain a diverse mix of uses are detailed below. All activities seek to reinforce the community's vision for the downtown and its economic position in the marketplace.

#### 4.1 Conduct business attraction to meet middle-income customer needs.

Businesses that are underrepresented in the district include entertainment venues, sporting goods, juice and coffee establishments, drug stores and pharmacies, bookstores, party supplies and crafts, luggage, cookware, fitness, higher end apparel,

sit-down restaurants, a large food market and a copy center (Exhibit E).

Residents and customers also want a greater variety of dining offerings. This includes American and Italian cuisine, healthier food choices, outdoor dining and a cocktail lounge/wine bar.

There is also a strong desire to have more name-brand chain stores to anchor the downtown. Name-brand chains want to locate on the street, but find the rental rates to be high.

✂ Quantify the demand for more middle income stores, restaurants and entertainment uses. A focused market demand analysis should be conducted to see how various kinds of businesses catering to middle income customers would perform downtown, as well as more modern movie theaters. This could be done as part of the 2005 Specific Plan. (short term)

- ✂ Quantify the demand for more housing downtown. This could be done as part of the 2005 Specific Plan. (short term)
- ✂ Form a business recruitment committee. City Economic Development staff could lead a committee of community members, property owners and commercial brokers who can identify new business prospects. Prospects could include current business owners who want to expand or who know people who want to open a business, businesses from other communities and other parts of Huntington Park who want to expand, and Small Business Development Center (SBDC) clients. (longer term)
- ✂ Survey merchants to determine the types of leases (month-to-month, sub-leases, triple net, long-term etc.) they currently have in order to establish future leasing standards and be pro-active about enhancing business mix. (longer term)
- ✂ Continue to try to recruit regional and national chain stores. Chains have historically anchored downtown districts. Their drawing power gives added exposure to the unique independent businesses that give the downtown its character. Consider a study that quantifies to chains how their sales would justify the current rents. (longer term)
- ✂ Recruit restaurants. Parking in-lieu fees and evening security issues may be disincentives for new restaurants. These issues should be looked into and addressed in meetings with City staff and restaurant operators.



This could be done as part of the 2005 Specific Plan. The City is promoting outdoor dining and the BID will work with the City to facilitate this. The BID should meet with SBDC, SoCal Edison and the HUB Cities Project to see how they could help recruit and train restaurateurs. (longer term)

- ✂ Upgrade movie theaters. The existing movie theatres are worn, thereby inducing viewers to travel to Southgate and pay \$9.00 vs. \$6.75 in Huntington Park to enjoy modern seating. In addition, Huntington Park theatres close at 8 p.m. The BID Advisory Board will work with the City to establish relationships with theater owners to communicate customers' needs and explore financing options for modernizing theaters. This could be done as part of the 2005 Specific Plan. (longer term)

#### **4.2 Conduct small business assistance and education.**

The business environment is constantly changing and ongoing education is essential for the health of any business. In addition, many merchants feel the City spends a lot of time enforcing zoning code rules. Merchants do not fully

understand the codes or the need for minimum standards and need education on this issue.

- ✂ Keep in close contact with merchants about their ideas for improving downtown business. Talk to merchants one-on-one through in-store contact and membership meetings. (short term)
- ✂ Survey merchant training needs. Merchants are often reluctant to leave their stores for training programs, especially if they are not convinced those programs will meet their needs. The BID will work with the Chamber and the SBDC to survey and address the merchant's most immediate concerns through one-on-one training or workshops as appropriate. (longer term)
- ✂ Explore providing Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) training to help merchants understand the importance that design plays in sharply reducing criminal behavior and in providing aesthetically pleasing storefronts to attract more shoppers. (longer term)

## Strategic Goal 5: Cleanliness and Security

Keep the downtown a clean and safe place to shop and socialize.

The downtown is much cleaner and safer than in years past thanks to the establishment of the BID and coordinated efforts of the BID and the police and public works departments. Uniformed police officers and cadets patrol the area on bicycle to discourage crime, graffiti and parking violations. Code enforcement officers discourage illegal sidewalk encroachments, vending, business uses and building renovations. The City contracts with MAG Cleaning Services to sweep and steam clean sidewalks and empty downtown trash containers and remove graffiti.

Residents, shoppers and merchants, however, want a still higher level of cleanliness and safety. Window acid etching and graffiti is a recurring problem.

Because there are no security patrols in the evening or early mornings, merchants do not feel comfortable opening during these times, even though customers would like later evening and early morning shopping hours. Car break-ins are common in parking lots behind stores. Although these lots are free, people are apprehensive about using them due to the security issues.



Trash cans and the sidewalks around them are grimy, especially after busy weekends and when restaurants dump grease and waste into them instead of using behind-store dumpsters.

Gutters and storm drains need to be monitored for blockages and rodent infestations. Cleaning up behind the businesses that the regular trash service doesn't handle and removal of visible bulky trash and shopping carts from public and private alleys, parking lots and rear of stores, also needs to be addressed.

Merchants and property owners see uniformed personnel on patrol, but it is often unclear to them who these personnel are (officers, cadets or code enforcement?) and what their priorities should be.

Businesses on side streets want more cleaning and policing services.

Major strategies for 2005-08 to maintain a clean and safe downtown are detailed in the following section. All activities seek to reinforce the community's vision for the downtown and its economic position in the marketplace.

### 5.1 Help coordinate clean and safe planning with police and City staff.

The BID Advisory Board will continue to work with City staff to plan and coordinate a regular program of cleanliness and safety activities and explain this program to merchants and property owners.

- ✦ Conduct an annual clean and safe planning meeting. Each year, when preparing the BID

and City budgets, the BID Advisory Board will meet with City staff (Public Works, Police, Code Enforcement, Parks & Recreation, and Community Development) to plan the upcoming year's cleanliness and safety activities. As part of this annual planning process, the BID board will do a walk-thru with police and City staff and MAG Cleaning to identify any problem areas. The BID board will also solicit merchant and property owner input through newsletters and membership meetings, and work with the police department to determine the best uses for the \$150,000 in annual BID revenues that are dedicated for police services. (short term)

- ✂ Hold regular clean and safe meetings for coordination and consistency purposes. The BID Advisory Board, or a separate cleanliness and safety committee, will hold these several times each year with police and City staff, including neighborhood services. (short term)
- ✂ Discuss sidewalk, trash can and side street cleanliness issues at annual and ongoing meetings with City staff and MAG Cleaning. (short term)

### **5.2 Develop and implement creative community clean and safe activities.**

The BID Advisory Board will seek new and innovative ways to keep the downtown clean and safe.

- ✂ Create a Business Neighborhood Watch in conjunction with the Police to launch periodic stake outs to catch window acid etching offenders. (short term)
- ✂ Develop ways to change the relationship youth have with graffiti. Sponsor youth participation in arts academies. Provide structured forums like a youth mural program for alternative artistic expression. (short term)
- ✂ Encourage merchants to participate in the City's new GEAR (Graffiti Etching Abatement Rebate) Program which will provide 50-percent reimbursement for applying graffiti protective film to display windows. (short term)
- ✂ Investigate grant funding for a youth Ambassador program. Ambassadors wear colorful uniform jackets and caps, welcome visitors, give directions to shoppers and report code and safety violations. They receive a stipend for their time spent walking the streets as a positive, visible presence. (longer term)
- ✂ Explore holding a downtown clean-up event, possibly in conjunction with national Earth Day (longer term). Have local youth and residents participate in activities such as:
  - Painting or cleaning the public rights of way (bus stops, etc.).
  - Cleaning the exteriors of businesses, including awnings.



- Sweeping and washing down the grime on the sidewalk.
- Painting out graffiti.
- Removing cobwebs and washing windows.
- Making repairs, patching holes, removing weeds.
- Introducing a mascot to entertain/educate the community about littering and graffiti.
- Celebrating accomplishments with music and donated food.
- Offering incentives such as donated bicycles to families who participate and do a certain amount of cleanup.
- ✂ Research organizations that provide grants for urban "quality of life" issues such as the Department of Justice Weed and Seed Program, banks and insurance companies. (longer term)

- ✦ Explore community policing strategies that rely on community partnerships and problem solving to resolve many of the chronic downtown safe and clean issues. Community policing is a collaborative effort between the police and the community that identifies problems of crime and disorder and involves all elements of the community (business, civic officials, public agencies, community institutions, schools, hospitals, the faith community, non-profit agencies, formal and informal community leaders, and community residents) in the search for solutions to these problems. It is founded on close, mutually beneficial ties between police and community members.

Community policing offers a way for law enforcement to help re-energize the community. Developing strong, self-sufficient communities is an essential step in creating an atmosphere in which serious crime will not flourish. Visit [www.communitypolicing.org](http://www.communitypolicing.org), a program of the Department of Justice to learn more. (short term)

### 5.3 Increase public education about clean and safe.

The BID Advisory Board will continue to work with merchants and property owners to explain the current

level of services provided by the City and to let them know that they play a key role in keeping the downtown clean and safe.

- ✦ Distinguish between how much money the City spends on downtown Clean and Safe and how much the BID spends. This will allow merchants and property owners to better understand the City's high level of commitment and involvement. (short term)
- ✦ Publish written information to merchants. The BID will publish a downtown Clean and Safe bulletin. This will educate merchants about cleanliness and safety services the City and BID provides and inform them of their responsibilities in keeping the downtown clean and safe. (short term)
- ✦ Use "block captains" to maximize outreach efforts. (longer term)
- ✦ Develop an anti-litter public education program. Declare the downtown a litter-free zone. Create a poster or sticker that identifies the area as such, to hang in display windows and other key places. (longer term)
- ✦ Involve elementary schools by holding a drawing contest about "What a clean downtown Huntington Park looks like."

Hang up the entries and winners in banks or well-frequented venues. (longer term)

### 5.4 Provide evening security and parking lot security.

The BID Advisory Board will work with police and City staff to provide more evening security and parking lot security.

- ✦ Discuss at annual clean and safe planning meetings. The BID Advisory Board will discuss evening and parking lot security at its annual and ongoing meetings with police and City staff. This should also be done when discussing parking issues during the 2005 Specific Plan process. (short term)
- ✦ Commit more existing funds. In 2005, the BID Advisory Board will work with the City to see if additional General Fund or BID funds can be allocated to evening and parking lot security, either by contracting through Huntington Park Police or via a private service. (short term)
- ✦ Raise additional funds. In 2006 and 2007, the BID Advisory Board will explore whether additional General Fund, assessment district revenues or grants may be available for evening and parking lot security. (longer term)

**Downtown is much cleaner and safer than in years past thanks to the establishment of the BID and coordinated efforts of the BID and the Police and Public Works departments.**



## Strategic Goal 6: Parking and Transportation

Ensure the downtown is easily accessible by transit, auto traffic and pedestrians.

**A**mong the downtown's key strengths are its ample supply of parking, its location as a major thoroughfare for bus transit, and its wide sidewalks that allow for good pedestrian flow. City leaders and the business community had the forethought in years past to form a parking district to create parking lots behind stores. Recent streetscape improvements included attractive bus-shelter waiting areas.

The intersection of Pacific and Florence is one of the most heavily traveled transit intersections in Los Angeles. All these features make it easy for customers to access the shopping district.

Most merchants interviewed for the Strategic Plan and shoppers interviewed through the consumer survey feel there is enough parking, except on busy weekends. Rear parking lots and the public parking garage would be used more, they believe, if there was



better signage directing shoppers to them and if these areas were perceived as safer. Many merchants and shoppers are concerned about the number of car break-ins that occur in rear lots. Parking meters that only accept quarters are a disincentive to shoppers. Other districts accept nickels and dimes. On-street parking is considered expensive compared to other communities. Parking meters are enforced seven days a week.

Traffic flow is also difficult on weekends when pedestrians often conflict with auto traffic, especially in crosswalks and in the right-hand turn lane.

There is a new shopper shuttle running up and down Pacific Boulevard, but few people know of its existence.

Major strategies for 2005-08 to maintain easy access to the downtown are detailed below. All activities seek to reinforce the community's vision for the downtown and its economic position in the marketplace.

### 6.1 Participate in the Specific Plan process.

The Downtown Specific Plan is to be completed in 2005 and will include recommendations for parking, traffic calming and pedestrian amenities (along with design, maintenance, land use and zoning standards). The BID Advisory Board will fully participate in the public process that will be used to gather input for the Specific Plan and help gather ideas from the business community. (short term)

### 6.2 Help promote the downtown shopper shuttle.

The BID Advisory Board will work with Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) to promote the downtown shuttle through its regular communications to BID members and as part of advertising and promotions directed at shoppers. (short term)

**6.3 Explore parking meter policies that are shopper-friendly:**

- ✂ Change machines that provide quarters for shoppers' ease. (short term)
- ✂ Meters that accept nickels and dimes. (short term)
- ✂ Remove parking meters and instead enforce free one- or two-hour parking, as some other shopping districts have done, including the Fruitvale District in Oakland and Paso Robles near San Luis Obispo. This option will also eliminate graffitied parking meters. (short term)

**6.4 Introduce better directional signage to downtown parking areas.** (short term)

## Exhibits

- A Strategic Plan At-A-Glance
- B Key Findings from Consumer Surveys
- C Public Workshop – Grouped Comments and Common Themes
- D Potential Funding Sources
- E Downtown Business Mix

# A. Strategic Plan At-A-Glance

The timeframe for Plan Tasks are indicated with:

S = Short-term by June 2006

L = Longer-term by June 2008

## 1. MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION

### 1.1 Continue the existing BID management structure and funding level in the short term.

- Use the Downtown Strategic Plan and proposed Specific Plan to guide BID activities. ....S
- Raise \$325,000 from BID assessments, of which \$150,000 will be dedicated to police services. ....S
- Employ one full-time BID staff person to help the Advisory Board coordinate its activities. ....S
- Contract out more event planning duties to the Chamber of Commerce .....S  
to allow BID staff to spend more time on business community outreach.
- Develop other arrangements with the Chamber where possible to increase synergy. ....S

### 1.2 Increase merchant and property owner communication and outreach.

- Eliminate confusion over the BID / PBMA names and logos. ....S
- Publish regular BID newsletters. ....S
- Investigate the feasibility of BID e-mail bulletins. ....S
- Hold regular membership meetings. ....S
- Increase one-on-one merchant contact. ....S
- Hold regular property owner forums. ....S
- Establish "block captains" program. ....S

### 1.3 Educate merchants about the BID.

- Prepare a brochure explaining the BID. ....S
- Personally visit new businesses to welcome them to the downtown and enlist their involvement in BID. ....S
- Produce an annual report to promote the BID's accomplishments. ....S

### 1.4 Develop an annual BID workplan. ....S

### 1.5 Raise funds to augment current assessment district revenues.

- Educate merchants about the importance of reporting sales and paying sales tax. ....S
- Explore inserting a cost-of-living increase (COLA) into the current merchant BID. ....L
- Explore feasibility of expanding current BID to include businesses north of Randolph to 53rd St. ....L
- Research grant opportunities that may be available to the BID if it becomes, .....L  
or is affiliated with, a nonprofit organization under contract to the City.
- Explore the feasibility of creating a property owner based assessment district .....L  
(PBID) to augment or replace the current merchant BID.

**1.6 Continue role in business advocacy.**

- Hold regular membership meetings. ....S
- Periodically visit business owners in their stores. ....S
- Conduct annual membership surveys to determine how businesses  
feel about current issues affecting downtown. ....L

**1.7 Increase volunteer participation and form new partnerships to help plan and implement activities.**

- Increase interest in Advisory Board service. ....S
- Increase media publicity about BID activities to attract the public to volunteer. ....S
- Publish an annual work plan that outlines specific needed tasks to encourage volunteer recruitment. ....S
- Recognize and reward volunteers’ efforts. ....S
- Hold regular membership meetings to recruit volunteers from the business community. ....S
- Use committee projects as a way to prepare volunteers for future BID Advisory Board leadership. ....S

**1.8 Update the Three-Year Strategic Plan after completion of the 2005 Specific Plan. ....S**

**1.9 Update the Three-Year Strategic Plan in FY 2007-08. ....L**

**2. BEAUTIFICATION AND PUBLIC AMENITIES**

**2.1 Participate in developing the Downtown Specific Plan.**

- Guide creation of a consistent design style/theme that reflects  
Huntington Park’s unique character and culture. ....S
- Guide creation of comfortable gathering spots. ....S
- Encourage the preservation of historic architecture. ....S
- Help build consensus between the City and business community  
on code and zoning issues that impact business operations. ....S
- Help the City generate ideas for public restrooms. ....S
- Offer input on how to increase use of the current storefront improvement grant program. ....S
- Offer input on how to improve the appearance of downtown street lighting. ....S
- Review signage and display codes to ensure they are beneficial and reflect community consensus. ....S

**2.2 Maximize use of storefront improvement grants program.**

- Increase collaboration between facade program and BID to market the program. ....S
- Work with the City to identify additional sources of funds for downtown facades. ....S
- Work with the City to streamline the application and reimbursements process. ....S

### **3. PROMOTION AND MARKETING**

#### **3.1 Coordinate more events with the Chamber of Commerce.**

- The Chamber will continue to organize 2005 Carnival Primavera, Sabor de Mexico, .....S  
and Christmas Lane Parade and review collaboration with BID on Reyes Magos.

#### **3.2 Coordinate retail promotions and advertising in collaboration with the Chamber.**

- Evaluate the effectiveness of prior years' retail promotions. ....S
- Consider new retail promotions. ....S
- Add evening security for night-time promotions. ....S
- Develop clear purpose statements, goals and objectives for each retail promotion or event. ....S
- Communicate a message of distinction. ....S
- Expand collaborations with local media that communicate events and announcements. ....S
- For 2006-beyond, develop a full program of regularly scheduled retail sales promotions. ....L

#### **3.3 Sponsor and encourage entertainment and entertainment uses.**

- Increase outdoor entertainment offerings. ....S
- Find permanent locations for outdoor entertainers. ....L
- Encourage more in-store entertainment. ....L
- Work with the City to re-open the Warner Theater for cultural and entertainment uses. ....L

#### **3.4 Program more activities between Gage and Randolph. ....L**

#### **3.5 Create positive media stories to enhance downtown's perceived image.**

- Promote new business openings, expansions and anniversaries. ....S
- Profile unique business practices and products. ....S
- Profile unique merchant personalities and accomplishments. ....S
- Solicit news ideas from merchants through newsletters, .....S  
membership meetings and one-on-one contacts.

#### **3.6 Work with the Cultural Arts and Historic Preservation Commissions to expand cultural and heritage tourism.**

- Focus on authenticity and quality. ....L
- Preserve historic architecture and cultural landmarks. ....L
- Identify landmarks in brochures, visitor maps, travel itineraries and walking tours. ....L
- Promote downtown events in visitor materials. ....L
- Distribute tourism information to area hotels and visitors bureaus. ....L

- Promote downtown to visitors through BID, City and Chamber web sites. ....L
- Work to create new tourism offerings. ....L
- Ensure downtown amenities, events and attractions are easily found through directional signage and kiosk. ...L
- Consider adding stores that focus on Mexican products. ....L
- Offer tours to travel writers. ....L

**3.7 Establish closer ties to LA's Latino music industry.**

- Bring more professional entertainment to local festivals. ....S
- Organize more frequent radio station on-site broadcasts. ....S
- Create permanent performance spaces. ....L
- Recruit musical professionals to locate in downtown office space. ....L

**3.8 Publish an annual downtown promotions calendar.**

- Distribute in a BID newsletter. ....S
- Include in promotional and tourism materials. ....S
- Post on City and Chamber web sites. ....S
- Send to neighborhood groups. ....S
- Send to local media ....S

**3.9 Include maps and/or driving directions from major freeways in all promotional materials. ....S**

**4. ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS MIX**

**4.1 Conduct business attraction to meet middle-income customer needs.**

- Quantify the demand for more middle-income stores, restaurants and entertainment uses. ....S
- Quantify the demand for more housing downtown. ....S
- Form a business recruitment committee. ....L
- Survey merchants to determine the types of leases they have. ....L
- Continue to try to recruit regional and national chain stores. ....L
- Recruit restaurants and evaluate their issues with parking in-lieu fees and evening security. ....L
- Upgrade movie theaters. ....L

**4.2 Conduct small business assistance and education.**

- Keep in close contact with merchants about their ideas for improving downtown business. ....S
- Survey merchant training needs. ....L
- Explore providing Crime Prevention through Environmental Design training. ....L

**5. CLEANLINESS AND SECURITY**

**5.1 Help coordinate clean and safe planning with police and City staff.**

- Conduct an annual clean and safe planning meeting. ....S
- Hold regular clean and safe meetings for coordination and consistency purposes. ....S
- Discuss sidewalk, trash can and side street cleaning issues at meetings. ....S

**5.2 Develop and implement creative community clean and safe activities.**

- Create a Business Neighborhood Watch program. ....S
- Develop ways to change the relationship youth have with graffiti. ....S
- Encourage merchants to participate in the City’s Graffiti Etching Abatement Rebate Program. ....S
- Investigate grant funding for a youth Ambassador program. ....L
- Explore holding a downtown clean up event in conjunction with Earth Day. ....L
- Research organizations that like to provide grants for urban “quality of life” issues. ....L

**5.3 Increase public education about clean and safe.**

- Distinguish between how much money the City spends on downtown clean and safe and how much the BID spends. ....S
- Publish written information to merchants. ....S
- Establish “block captains” to maximize outreach efforts. ....L
- Develop an anti-litter public education program. ....L
- Involve elementary schools by holding drawing contest about a clean downtown. ....L

**5.4 Provide evening security and parking lot security.**

- Discuss at annual and ongoing clean and safe meetings with City staff. ....S
- Commit more existing funds. ....S
- Raise additional funds. ....L

**6. PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION**

**6.1 Participate in the Specific Plan process. ....S**

**6.2 Help promote the downtown shopper shuttle. ....S**

**6.3 Explore parking meter policies that are shopper friendly. ....S**

**6.4 Introduce better directional signage to downtown parking areas. ....S**

## B. Key Findings from Consumer Surveys

- ✂ 319 customer surveys taken on Pacific Boulevard between August 11-13, 2004. Surveys were conducted in English and in Spanish at various times of the day and locations along the street.
- ✂ Only 28% of respondents are Huntington Park residents.
- ✂ 79% of respondents visit Pacific Boulevard once a week or more. 34% are there 5 -7 times per week.
- ✂ 46% of respondents take public transit to Pacific Boulevard.
- ✂ 58% of Huntington Park resident respondents walk to Pacific Boulevard.
- ✂ 23% of respondents work downtown.
- ✂ 28% of respondents said they come to dine.
- ✂ The largest shopping group is ages 25 to 44, almost half of all respondents (47%).
- ✂ 76 respondents did not answer the question about household income, making the answers to that question difficult to interpret. Country of birth and educational level may be another way to ascertain respondents' income/demographic group.
- ✂ 16% of respondents are U.S.-born. 42% of the U.S.-born respondents are 19 and under. 22% of the Huntington Park residents who responded are U.S.-born.
- ✂ U.S.-born respondents mostly live in Huntington Park and in Southgate.
- ✂ Higher-education respondents mostly live in Huntington Park, Compton and Paramount.
- ✂ 24% of respondents mentioned Gallo Giro and 10% mentioned JC Penney's as the anchor stores they visit.
- ✂ Respondents shop Pacific Boulevard primarily for its low prices (56%) and friendly customer service (29%). 39% of U.S.-born respondents rated convenient location as important.
- ✂ U.S.-born and higher-educated respondents shop often at malls. They are seeking variety, quality and name brands as well as a clean and safe environment.
- ✂ Cleaner sidewalks, longer parking limits, sitting areas and improved safety are the higher-rated improvements desired by all respondents.
- ✂ 11% of respondents would like public restrooms. (Note this answer was not included in the multiple choice replies offered.)

— Conducted by Eichenfield & Associates/Urban Transformation, August 2004

☞ For a detailed breakdown of survey responses, contact the City of Huntington Park Business Improvement District.



## B. Pacific Blvd. Shopping District Survey – English

1. In what city (area) do you live?
2. How often do you come (go) to Pacific Blvd?
  - a) 5-7 times/week or more
  - b) 2-4 times/ week
  - c) Once/week
  - d) Less than once a week
  - e) Never (Skip to #8)
3. What travel means do you usually use to get to Pacific Blvd?
  - a) Car
  - b) Public transportation
  - c) Walk
  - d) Bike
4. For what reason do you come (go) to Pacific Blvd.  
Ex: shopping, work, personal services, transit connections, driving through, etc.
5. What types of goods and services do you purchase/use on Pacific Blvd.?
6. What businesses do you frequent most often?
7. If you do shop on Pacific Blvd, what thing(s) do like most about it?
  - a) Good selection of goods/services
  - b) Convenient location
  - c) Low prices
  - d) Friendly customer service
  - e) Authentic Latino experience
  - f) Downtown pedestrian feel
  - g) Other \_\_\_\_\_
8. Where besides Pacific Blvd do you do most of your shopping?
9. Why do you shop there?
10. What type of improvements on Pacific Blvd would prompt you to shop (t)here more often?
  - a) Later evening store hours
  - b) Longer parking time limits,
  - c) Cleaner sidewalks and streets
  - d) Improve safety
  - e) More trees
  - f) More comfortable places to sit outside
  - g) More outside entertainment
  - h) Other
11. What types of new stores or services would you like to see on Pacific Blvd. that would prompt you to come here more often?
12. Gender: M \_\_\_ F \_\_\_
13. Age range:  
\_\_\_ 19 or under      \_\_\_ 20-24      \_\_\_ 25-44  
\_\_\_ 45-64            \_\_\_ 65+
14. Where were you born?  
\_\_\_ USA  
\_\_\_ Mexico  
\_\_\_ Central America  
\_\_\_ Other
15. Household Income level  
\_\_\_ \$ 0 - \$14,999  
\_\_\_ \$15,000 – 24,999  
\_\_\_ \$25,000 – 34,999  
\_\_\_ \$35,000 - \$49,999  
\_\_\_ \$50,000 - \$74,999  
\_\_\_ \$75,000+
16. Educational level  
\_\_\_ Grammar  
\_\_\_ Intermediate  
\_\_\_ Some High  
\_\_\_ High School  
\_\_\_ Some college  
\_\_\_ College degree
17. Marital Status: Single \_\_\_ Married \_\_\_
18. Other Comments:

## B. Encuesta Pacific Blvd. – Espanol

1. ¿En que ciudad vive?
2. ¿Con que frecuencia va (viene) Ud. a la Pacific Blvd?
  - a) 5-7 veces por semana
  - b) 2-4 veces por semana
  - c) Una vez por semana
  - d) Menos de una vez por semana
  - e) Nunca (Salte al #7)
3. ¿Que modo de transporte usa Ud. usualmente para ir a Pacific Blvd?
  - a) Automóvil
  - b) Transporte Público
  - c) A pie
  - d) Bicicleta
4. ¿Por cual(es) razones viene (va) a Pacific Blvd. Ej: Compras, Trabajo, Servicios, Cambiar de Autobus, etc.
5. ¿Que tipos de productos y servicios compra Ud. en la Pacific Blvd?
6. ¿Que negocios visita con mas frecuencia?
7. ¿Si hace compras en la Pacific Blvd, que es lo que mas le gusta?
  - a) La Buena selección de bienes/servicios
  - b) El sitio es conveniente
  - c) Bajos Precios
  - d) Buen Servicio al Cliente
  - e) Experiencia auténtica Latina/Se habla Español
  - f) Céntrico/Se siente peatonal
  - g) Otro \_\_\_\_\_
8. A donde, además de Pacific Blvd., hace Ud. la Omayoría de sus compras?
9. Por que compra allí?
10. Que tipo de mejoras en la Pacific Blvd le animaría a comprar allí mas seguido?
  - a) Que los establecimientos abrieran mas tarde
  - b) Mas tiempo limite de estacionamiento
  - c) Banquetas y calles mas limpias
  - d) Mejorar la seguridad
  - e) Mas arboles o flores adornando la calle
  - f) Mas comodidad para sentarse afuera
  - g) Mas entretenimiento/actividades en la calle/afuera
  - h) Otro
11. Que tipos de tiendas o servicios le gustaría ver en la Pacific Blvd. Que le haría venir con mas frecuencia?
12. Sexo: M \_\_\_ F \_\_\_
13. Edad:  
\_\_\_ 19 or under      \_\_\_ 20-24      \_\_\_ 25-44  
\_\_\_ 45-64            \_\_\_ 65+
14. Donde Nació?  
\_\_\_ USA  
\_\_\_ Mexico  
\_\_\_ C. America  
\_\_\_ Otro
15. Nivel de Ingreso Casero  
\_\_\_ \$ 0 - \$14,999  
\_\_\_ \$15,000 – 24,999  
\_\_\_ \$25,000 – 34,999  
\_\_\_ \$35,000 - \$49,999  
\_\_\_ \$50,000 - \$74,999  
\_\_\_ \$75,000+
16. Nivel Educativo  
\_\_\_ Primaria  
\_\_\_ Secundaria  
\_\_\_ Algo de Secundaria  
\_\_\_ Algo de Universidad  
\_\_\_ Título Universitario
17. Estado Civil: Soltero \_\_\_\_\_ Casado \_\_\_\_\_
18. Otros Comentarios:

# C. Public Workshop – Grouped Comments and Common Themes

## YOUR DOWNTOWN, YOUR IDEAS

### Envisioning the Future of Downtown Huntington Park

August 10, 2004, Workshop

#### Beautification

- ✂ Improve overall ambiance (4)\*
- ✂ Consistent style/theme (4)
  - Design guidelines
  - Reflect unique culture
  - Colorful facades, not so sterile like in malls
- ✂ Mexican style plazitas (2)
- ✂ More landscaping and trees (2)
- ✂ More like Pasadena and Santa Monica
- ✂ Need water features/waterfall
- ✂ Arch decorations over street
- ✂ Light pole decorations at major cross streets
- ✂ Colorful banners

#### Cleanliness

- ✂ Street needs to be cleaner (5)
- ✂ Ticket litterbugs (2)
- ✂ Educate residents and merchants to be cleaner (2)
- ✂ Need a recycling center

- ✂ Remedy bad smells from gutters
- ✂ Need cleaner alleys

#### Security

- ✂ More police patrols (foot, bicycle) and more frequency (4)
- ✂ Brighter street lights (2)
- ✂ Less graffiti (2)
- ✂ Resolve cruising issue (2)
- ✂ Increase safety in rear parking lots (2)
- ✂ Remove false document sales
- ✂ Remove illegal street vendors
- ✂ Remove excess pay phones
- ✂ Need better security at Montana Plaza (Florence & Rugby)
- ✂ Need better security at Saturn and Rugby
- ✂ Need 24-hour security
- ✂ Reduce congregating groups

#### Business Mix

- ✂ More variety of food (3)
  - Healthier
  - Outdoor dining (5)
  - Jamba Juice
  - Ice cream (2)
  - Italian (Olive Garden)
  - American food
- ✂ Fewer bars and liquor stores (2)

- ✂ Need anchor retailers (Target, Costco, Ross, Mervyn's, Macy's, Robinson-May) (2)
  - Locate at Pacific and Zoe
- ✂ More bookstores (2)
- ✂ More variety of clothing stores (2)
- ✂ Banks and bridal stores are assets
- ✂ Recruit Trader Joe's
- ✂ More youth-oriented stores (1)
- ✂ Renovate J.C. Penny store and increase variety of merchandise
- ✂ More English music stores
- ✂ More public services
- ✂ Big Box stores (specifically Wal-Mart) threaten small Mom-and-Pop stores

#### Merchant Practices

- ✂ Higher quality products (2)
- ✂ Cleaner and safer theaters (2)
- ✂ Retain second- and third-generation customers
- ✂ More credit card acceptance
- ✂ More inventory turnover and variety of products
- ✂ More senior and student discounts
- ✂ Enforce collection of sales taxes

\*Attendees were organized into seven small discussion groups. The numbers (#)'s beside the comments indicate how many of the seven groups made this comment.

- ✂ Enforce payment of fair wages
- ✂ Improve store displays
- ✂ Later store hours
- ✂ Eliminate barkers and handbills

### **Promotion and Marketing**

- ✂ Publish a user-friendly promotional brochure
- ✂ Present Best Business awards
- ✂ Promote a cleaner, safer and more cohesive image.

### **Housing**

- ✂ Improve affordability (2)
- ✂ Improve quality (2)

### **Customer Entertainment and Amenities**

- ✂ More gathering spots (5)
  - Food court
  - Spanish-style plazitos (3)
  - Close off street for gatherings
  - Benches
  - Improve ambiance

- ✂ More weekend and evening entertainment (4)

- Later store hours
- Friday night performers
- Close off street
- Stage @ Randolph
- Indoor and outdoor music
- People-watching
- Outdoor dining

- ✂ Re-open Warner Theater (3)

- Independent films
- Multiplex
- Plays and performing arts
- Variety shows

- ✂ More activities for youths (3)

- Community center
- Stores
- Playground
- Organized activities/programs
- Gathering spots

- ✂ Need public restrooms (3)

- ✂ More hotels
- ✂ Certified vendors

### **Parking and Transportation**

- ✂ Remove parking meters (3)
- ✂ More free parking (3)
- ✂ Meters are too expensive (3 )
- ✂ Quarters-only system is too inconvenient, need to accept dimes and nickels or have change machines
- ✂ Need traffic calming (3)
  - Pedestrian friendly
  - Medians
  - Four-way crosswalks/ traffic signals (2)
- ✂ Need shuttles to Pacific Blvd. (3); need to promote the downtown shuttle
- ✂ Make parking behind stores safer (2)
- ✂ Unlicensed taxi drivers take up parking
- ✂ Apartment dwellers take up parking
- ✂ More parking

## D. Potential Funding Sources

This exhibit provides the BID Advisory Board with some ideas for exploring funding sources available to groups designated as nonprofit 501(c)3 charitable organizations. The Advisory Board may want to consider forming a 501(c)3 organization or partnering with a local 501(c)3 with common economic development goals to pursue these diverse funding sources.

Fundraising tips, resources to help hone fundraising skills and a partial list of potential funders that have previously funded and have expressed an interest in community/economic development projects are listed below.

### FUNDRAISING TIPS

Foundations, both private and corporate, are an excellent grant source, dispersing money to economic development causes. When applying for grants from foundations, be as flexible and creative as possible in the way you pitch your program. Your downtown corridor activities must fit into a foundation's program priorities, (such as the environment, youth development, traffic abatement, technology and community/economic development). Find creative ways to make connections between the issues – if you can't get a grant to beautify the street or paint trash cans, you might be able to get a grant to hire local youths to do this work.

Corporations like to fund programs with high visibility to which they can attach their name.

They are often less interested in funding capacity-building. They generally are more willing to fund physical, tangible improvements. They also are interested in funding technology training and projects that engage youth to meet simultaneous education goals.

Banks (a habitual commercial revitalization funder) are particularly interested in numbers – the number of people served, the number of people who attended an event that they sponsored, how many people will be taught using the curriculum that they are attach-

ing their name to, etc. They are interested in funding programs that will promote their own interests (teaching financial literacy classes). To increase the chances of receiving grants from banks, it is a good idea to work with a local branch manager. You may even be able to get them to submit the grant proposal for you to the regional or national office.

When pursuing grant funding, keep in mind that most institutions prefer funding efforts that impact their local interests. Finally, foundations' priorities are constantly changing. One year, community development may be high on their list; the following it could be education. Therefore, identifying potential funders requires constant researching and updating.

### FUNDRAISING RESOURCES

#### ■ Center for Nonprofit Management

To research the most current local, state and federal grant sources for community development projects, your local, nonprofit resource center is the place to visit. This center provides a comprehensive array of resources, services and training programs, including periodic workshops on grant seeking, proposal writing, financial management, staff development and other topics of interest to nonprofit managers.

It is best to personally visit the center's research library, open Monday-Tuesday, 12 noon to 8 p.m., and Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Local grants are constantly changing. It is important to research frequently to stay abreast of the most current resources.

Center for Nonprofit Management  
606 S. Olive St. #2450  
Los Angeles, CA 90014  
213-623-7080

[www.cnmsocal.org](http://www.cnmsocal.org)

The following are examples of resources you can navigate when visiting the center's library. Many of these online libraries require a subscription fee. The library provides you free access.

➤ Grants Locator (eCivis)

An electronic database of state and federal funding opportunities for local governments and nonprofit organizations. Grants Locator contains an average of 3,000 grants at a given time. Ask library staff for login and password. [www.ecivis.com](http://www.ecivis.com)

➤ Grant Explorer (GuideStar)

An electronic database containing research information on funding, programs and grants. Grant Explorer contains more than 42,000 of the nation's largest foundations and more than 1.6 million grants of \$5,000 or greater. Grant Explorer's records allow you to search for more specific information on grantmakers by providing full access to the 990-PFs. Ask library staff for login and password. Tutorial: [www.guidestar.org/services/ge.jsp](http://www.guidestar.org/services/ge.jsp)

[www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org)

➤ Guide to Funders in Southern California (Volunteer Center of Orange County)

Information on more than 750 California grantmakers, including all Orange County foundations and all corporate grantmakers in California. Updated regularly, it will be expanded over time to include funders from other Southern California counties. Ask library staff for login and password.

[www.volunteercenter.org](http://www.volunteercenter.org)

Database:

[www.alephinc.net/socal/Public/Funding.asp](http://www.alephinc.net/socal/Public/Funding.asp)

Online Guide:

[www.alephinc.net/socal/Public/Help.asp](http://www.alephinc.net/socal/Public/Help.asp)

➤ Guide to Grants (Chronicle of Philanthropy)

An electronic database of all foundation and corporate grants listed in The Chronicle of Philanthropy since 1995. Grants starting at \$5,000. Grant records link automatically to stories featured in the Chronicle. The library also has access to the Chronicle's online archive of articles dating back to 1997. <http://philanthropy.com>

■ Department of Justice Community Capacity Development Office Program

The Community Capacity Development Office (CCDO) (formerly Weed and Seed) program works with local communities to design strategies for deterring crime, promoting economic growth, and enhancing quality of life. CCDO helps communities help themselves, enabling them to develop solutions to public safety problems and to strengthen leadership to implement and sustain those solutions (funding included). The Dunbar EDC, focusing on South Central LA's Vernon Avenue, received weed and seed funds to impact its graffiti and gang-related issues. [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ccdo/funding.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ccdo/funding.htm)

■ Foundation Center

The Foundation Center is a national training organization that provides the nuts and bolts of fundraising. Headquartered in Washington, DC, their nearest field office to Huntington Park is in San Francisco. <http://fdncenter.org>

Foundation Center

312 Sutter St., Suite 606

San Francisco, CA 94108-4314

415-397-0902

San Francisco Library: [www.fdncenter.org/sanfrancisco](http://www.fdncenter.org/sanfrancisco)

■ Fundsnet Online Services

Fundsnet Online Services is a comprehensive web site for providing nonprofit organizations with online information about financial resources. [www.fundsnet.com/cult01.htm](http://www.fundsnet.com/cult01.htm)

■ Local Initiatives Support Corporation

Local Initiatives Support Corporation is a national nonprofit which provides capacity building, funding and technical assistance to community-based 501(c)3 organizations for commercial corridor revitalization. They have recently funded revitalization programs in Leimert Park, South Central Los Angeles and Canoga Park.

Attn: Louise Manuel, Senior Program Director  
1055 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1600  
Los Angeles, CA 90017  
[www.lisc.org/whatwedo/programs/#economic](http://www.lisc.org/whatwedo/programs/#economic)

■ Los Angeles Public Library Databases

There are many database available for free through the Los Angeles Public Library. Some can be accessed remotely when you have a library card, others must be used at a branch library and some must be used at the Central Library in Downtown Los Angeles. [www.lapl.org](http://www.lapl.org)

■ National Community Development Services

There is an interesting NCDs article about funding economic development programs.  
[www.ncdsinc.net/article\\_fundcocedp\\_01.htm](http://www.ncdsinc.net/article_fundcocedp_01.htm)

■ Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation

Local NeighborWorks organizations and Neighborhood Housing Services of America make up the NeighborWorks system, which has successfully built healthy communities for more than 25 years.  
[www.nw.org/network/comstrat/comstrat.asp](http://www.nw.org/network/comstrat/comstrat.asp)

■ Prospect Research Online (iWave)

A database designed specifically for nonprofits, Prospect Research Online combines philanthropic data from corporate research, foundation research, major gift announcements, executive biographies, and donor/board lists. [www.iwave.com](http://www.iwave.com)

**CORPORATION CORPORATE GIVING PROGRAMS AND FOUNDATIONS THAT CURRENTLY FAVOR COMMUNITY/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

■ American Express

[http://home3.americanexpress.com/corp/giving\\_back.asp](http://home3.americanexpress.com/corp/giving_back.asp)

■ AT&T

[www.att.com/foundation](http://www.att.com/foundation)

■ Bank of America

[www.bankofamerica.com/foundation](http://www.bankofamerica.com/foundation)

■ Citibank

[www.citigroup.com/citigroup/corporate/foundation](http://www.citigroup.com/citigroup/corporate/foundation)

■ John Deere

[www.deere.com/en\\_US/compinfo/johndeere\\_foundations/contributions\\_index.html](http://www.deere.com/en_US/compinfo/johndeere_foundations/contributions_index.html)

■ Gannett

[www.gannettfoundation.org](http://www.gannettfoundation.org)

■ Hasbro

[http://hasbro.org/pl/page.what\\_we\\_fund/dn/hcf/default.cfm](http://hasbro.org/pl/page.what_we_fund/dn/hcf/default.cfm)

■ Home Depot

[www.homedepot.com/HDUS/EN\\_US/corporate/corp\\_respon/hd\\_community.shtml](http://www.homedepot.com/HDUS/EN_US/corporate/corp_respon/hd_community.shtml)

■ Metropolitan Life

[www.metlife.com/Applications/Corporate/WPS/CDA/PageGenerator/0,1674,P284,00.html](http://www.metlife.com/Applications/Corporate/WPS/CDA/PageGenerator/0,1674,P284,00.html)

■ SBC

[www.sbc.com/Common/files/pdf/npower\\_community\\_development.pdf](http://www.sbc.com/Common/files/pdf/npower_community_development.pdf)

■ Union Bank

[www.uboc.com/about/main/0,,2485\\_3960,00.html](http://www.uboc.com/about/main/0,,2485_3960,00.html)

■ U.S. Bank

[www.usbank.com/about/community\\_relations/charit\\_giving.html](http://www.usbank.com/about/community_relations/charit_giving.html)

■ Wells Fargo

[www.wellsfargo.com/about/charitable/ca\\_guidelines.jhtml](http://www.wellsfargo.com/about/charitable/ca_guidelines.jhtml)

■ Washington Mutual

[www.wamu.com/about/community/support/givingguidelines/givingguidelines.htm](http://www.wamu.com/about/community/support/givingguidelines/givingguidelines.htm)

## E. Downtown Business Mix

Type	Number
Clothing .....	139
[Misc-41, shoes-31, women's-25, family-19, children's-15, men's-8]	
Medical clinic .....	44
Beauty [hair, nail, barber, skin care] .....	38
Bridal/wedding .....	32
Tax and insurance .....	28
Business services .....	28
General merchandise/variety .....	21
Travel .....	21
Jewelry .....	20
Legal .....	19
Fast food .....	18
Restaurants .....	17
Dental .....	16
Electronics and computers .....	15
Cell phones .....	14
[Some electronics stores also carry cell phones]	
Money transfers/check cashing .....	13
Food market .....	12
Furnishings and appliance .....	12
Photo studios .....	11
Vitamins and herbs .....	7
Real estate .....	7
Educational .....	7
Bakery .....	6
Religious .....	5
Financial institutions .....	5

Type	Number
Ice cream .....	5
Music .....	5
Theater/nightclub .....	5
Gifts .....	5
Optometry .....	4
Drug stores .....	4
Bicycles/sporting goods .....	3
Printing and stationery .....	3
Pets .....	3
Liquor/bar .....	3
Juice .....	3
Laundry/tailor .....	3
Toys .....	3
Auto parts and service .....	3
Books .....	2
Hotel .....	2
Party supply .....	2
Arcade .....	2
Luggage .....	2
Cookware .....	2
Crafts .....	1
Fitness .....	1
Coffee .....	1
Medical supply .....	1
Fabric .....	1
Water .....	1
Miscellaneous .....	4
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>629</b>

— Compiled from City of Huntington Park  
business license data, as of August 2004