

Downtown Los Angeles US 101 Cap Concept Study

---

# Outreach Assistance and Assessment Report

FINAL DRAFT

September 25, 2008

Caltrans Statewide  
On Call Public Outreach  
and Engagement Services

Contract No. 74A0244

EA: 606836



169 N Marengo Ave.  
Pasadena, California 91101  
626-744-9872  
[www.migcom.com](http://www.migcom.com)

## Table of Contents

I. Introduction .....	3
II. Outreach Methods Overview and Assessment .....	5
III. Daily Activities and Outreach Documentation .....	8
IV. Task Order .....	57

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

## INTRODUCTION

MIG, Inc. was engaged under the Caltrans Statewide On Call Public Outreach and Engagement Services contract to assist Caltrans, area stakeholders and the EDAW internship program in carrying out the accelerated two-week program involving an international group of interns recruited and managed by EDAW. The internship program process was designed to engage stakeholders in a community-based visioning process, developing a range of ideas and scenarios for an innovative, context-sensitive urban design concept based upon a previously studied proposal to cap the US 101 freeway in downtown Los Angeles

In addition to supporting the program and documenting activities, MIG was asked by Caltrans to prepare an overview of the outreach methods, and the effectiveness with which program-stated goals were reached, including lessons learned and recommendations for future action.

## **II. OUTREACH METHODS OVERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT**

## OUTREACH METHODS OVERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT

As originally described in the Task Order, the community outreach component of the internship program for the Downtown Los Angeles US 101 Cap Concept Study were intended to "...energize the efforts of stakeholders and city agencies and engage the residents and business owners of adjacent neighborhoods such as Chinatown, Angelino Heights, El Pueblo, Boyle Heights, Civic Center and Little Tokyo..."

In developing and designing the program of activities for the internship program, it was apparent that EDAW had done considerable "groundwork" in meeting with elected officials, city officials and their staffs to identify potential issues, opportunities and topics for discussion. EDAW staff also made efforts to engage certain neighborhood representatives, such as a representative of El Pueblo and the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council. These representatives were recruited to provide resource presentations as well as critique of student products.

During the internship program itself, outreach was primarily conducted during the first week of the program, as interns sought to better understand the site context beyond the results of physical analysis.

The mechanism for this outreach was chiefly through lectures and panel discussions. During these events, private, non-profit and public agency representatives with expertise in the history of Los Angeles, historic resources, urban design, local demographics and other applicable topics were brought in to share their knowledge regarding the project area and surrounding context. Experts then responded to questions from interns.

Additionally, the program introduction, vision presentation and final presentation provided a forum through which politicians and other key decision-makers could view and respond to the interns' work. Visiting reviewers included the Director of the Los Angeles Planning Department and the Director of Planning and Economic Development for Councilmember José Huizar, Council District 14.

Venues to solicit and incorporate resident, business owner, and community group input were less apparent. The Vice President of the Downtown LA Neighborhood Council was present throughout the process, speaking on panels and engaging with students during studio sessions. Interns also spent one day in the field interviewing residents and business owners from Chinatown and Boyle Heights, whose comments were then integrated into the final presentation. In addition, the public had a chance to view and respond to the project at the final presentation of the design.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Professionals and politicians were well-represented throughout the process. As a result, their expertise, concerns and comments most significantly shaped the way in which interns came to understand the site, and the overarching social and political context.

However, while the program scope shows recognition of the need for outreach to residents and businesses owners of adjacent communities, affirming that "...interns will engage stakeholders from the adjacent, predominantly Hispanic and Asian communities of Chinatown, Angelino

Heights, El Pueblo, Boyle Heights, Civic Center, and Little Tokyo..."<sup>1</sup> these groups were less integral to the process.

Creating a robust participatory process by which the public can respond and add to project design and development should be a priority in future efforts. Public engagement can ensure that proposed program and urban design will be appropriate for, and well-received by, the community. This in turn can greatly affect the speed and chance of project approval and implementation. As the EDAW Intern Program states in the promotional literature, the communities that would be most impacted by this project are the park-poor communities that lie adjacent to the site. Input from these populations will be a necessary part of maximizing the social and economic benefits the project could bring.

## CONCLUSION

The EDAW/AECOM Los Angeles Intern Program successfully integrated specialists, City staff, politicians, and other key members of the planning and design community into the 101 Freeway Cap design development process.

Missing, however, was a mechanism by which a cross-section of residents, business owners and community groups could share their knowledge of the site, voice their needs, and provide feedback on the design development. As a result, significant questions remain regarding the current design's potential relevance to adjacent communities, and thus its ability to garner the public support necessary to move the project from concept to reality.

As a next step, Caltrans could work with Metro, the City of Los Angeles and the County of Los Angeles to define a joint project, including funding sources and participants, that could engage the broader community (especially those potentially benefitting from the project) in defining a future direction for a real-life Downtown Freeway Cap project. This process would be designed to engage a cross-section of residents, business owners and community groups in assessment of area needs, understanding of potential constraints and development of fundable, implementable approaches that integrate with other efforts (such as the Grand Avenue Project) to revitalize the eastern and northern portions of downtown Los Angeles.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.edaw.com/intern08/scope/scope.aspx>, July 11, 2008

## **II. DAILY ACTIVITIES AND OUTREACH DOCUMENTATION**

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Sunday, June 15, 2008

**7:00 AM BREAKFAST AT USC CAFETERIA**

**8:00 AM DEPART FOR STUDIO**

**8:30 AM BRIEFING**

Interns were given a briefing regarding studio amenities, rules and hours. A presentation familiarized students with Los Angeles geography, necessary safety precautions and other logistical matters.

**10:00 AM TOUR WITH DOUG FAILING**

Interns toured the Caltrans building with Doug Failing, Caltrans District 7 Director. After viewing the landscape of downtown from Doug's office, interns learned about the design and development process for the recently-completed Caltrans building. Doug explained how defining design elements successfully resolved programmatic concerns, and praised the partnership between contractor, architect and Caltrans that made the project successful. During the tour, Mr. Failing also described the mission, purpose and scope of Caltrans work in District 7, which encompasses two counties and 11 million people.

**11:00 AM FORMAL WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS/PROJECT KICK-OFF**

Panelists in attendance:

Joe Brown, CEO/President of EDAW/AECOM

Doug Failing, Caltrans District 7, Director

Emily Gabel-Luddy, City of Los Angeles Urban Design Studio

Gail Goldberg, Los Angeles Planning Department, Director

Brady Westwater, Downtown LA Neighborhood Council, Vice President

Jessica Wethington Mclean, Planning and Economic Development Director for

José Huizar, Council District 14

--

After introductions, panelists provided a more detailed description of their organizations' roles in the planning and development of Los Angeles and provided perspective on culture, livability, image, politics and other topics within this context. They affirmed their commitment to, and explained their role in, the EDAW Intern Program, expressed their excitement for the anticipated product, and pushed the interns to provide innovative, provocative solutions and proposals.

Panelists then fielded questions from interns regarding a number of topics. Following are some areas of discussion and quotes from panelists:

## EDAW Intern Program 2008

### SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Sunday, June 15, 2008

- Union Station and its perceived versus actual connectivity with downtown Los Angeles
- Freeway development in Los Angeles and resulting community and neighborhood segregation
- "If you do this right, we'll change what's possible" - Doug Failing
- The challenge of creating an evolving, fluid, and flexible city that is balanced by "timely achievements" that form the foundation for a stable and livable city
- The future character of the Los Angeles River in downtown and its anticipated role in transforming the city. Is there a middle way between naturalizing/industrializing the river?
- The conflict between planning for growth and livability in the future with the more pressing need to address current quality of life challenges.

Vaughan Davies, Urban Designer/Architect, EDAW provided the wrap-up to the discussion, thanking the panel for their time and expertise, as well as EDAW employees for their hard work in bringing the program together. Joe Brown, CEO/President of EDAW/AECOM concluded with some final words, stressing that interns must be strategic in their planning and design methods, and urging a process of "think-design" and "thought-leadership".

### NOON LUNCH

### 1:30 PM SITE VISIT

[MIG representative not in attendance]

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Monday, June 16, 2008

**7:00 AM BREAKFAST AT USC CAFETERIA**

**8:00 AM DEPART FOR STUDIO**

**9:15 AM PRE-EVENT INTERN PRESENTATION**

Prior to starting the program interns were asked to submit a project of choice that showcased their skills and interests. The projects presented reflected the diversity of interns' backgrounds and geographical origins, ranging from landscape design at the Berlin airport, to a community redevelopment project in Trenton, New Jersey. The presentations also exhibited the depth of the knowledge held collectively - in landscape architecture, architecture, policy, redevelopment, sustainability, economics, planning and more.

**NOON LUNCH/PANEL DISCUSSION 1: GROWTH OF LA**

Panelists in attendance:

Ken Bernstein, City of Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources

Greg Hise, Assistant Professor at University of Southern California

--

Ken Bernstein is Director of the Historic Resources Department at the City of Los Angeles. He oversees preservation efforts city-wide and is currently involved in efforts to survey the entire city's historic resources. Prior to this, Ken directed the Los Angeles Conservancy, a non-profit dedicated to the recognition, preservation and revitalization of the architectural and cultural heritage of greater Los Angeles. Greg Hise is an Assistant Professor at the University of Southern California specializing in architectural and urban history; with previous experience as an architect and contractor.

Prompted by the moderator, the two spoke on the following topics:

**THE COMPONENTS OF DOWNTOWN**

The districts and neighborhoods seen today oftentimes follow or reference the development patterns established by previous inhabitants. El Pueblo was the original settlement in Los Angeles, and the birthplace of the City. Bunker Hill is built on the remnants of an old storied Victorian neighborhood. Downtown is one of the largest historic districts intact in the USA, and Union Station stands at the location that the original Chinatown once stood. The history of the City is built into these layers.

**LOS ANGELES**

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Monday, June 16, 2008

Greg provided information regarding both the institutional and alternate versions of Los Angeles history. Greg noted the strong forces of globalization present today along with contrasting efforts to rebuild the center.

### STUDY AREA

Regarding the site in particular, Greg recommended interns look at past plans for Los Angeles for their future inspiration. Visionaries such as Franklin Law Olmsted provided bold plans that were never fully realized – how might these inform the interns' process? Ken stressed that no project alone can solve the connectivity issues that exist between the site and near-by cultural resources such as El Pueblo. Rather, interns must increase physical transparency and connectivity to increase activity and flow. Greg agreed and added that social connectivity was as important as physical connectivity to create a successful project. Greg also touched on downtown's topography, and the significant Mexican and immigrant populations that lived "below the bluff" that continue to do so today.

### 1:30 PM VISUAL SURVEY AND INVENTORY/PROJECT SITE VISIT

The project area was divided into five sections (A,B,C,D and E), each oriented perpendicular to the 101 freeway. Interns were then split into five groups of complementary skill sets before heading back to conduct an inventory of an assigned section. Groups were charged with returning and presenting any qualitative and quantitative information they found relevant.

### 4:00 PM PANEL DISCUSSION 2: LOS ANGELES CITY URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Panelists in attendance:

Emily Gabel-Luddy, Urban Design Studio

Simon Pastucha, Urban Design Studio

Lisa Padilla (City Works, Urban Planner)

Sacha Schwarzkopf, EDAW

--

The impetus and motivation for creating the Urban Design Principles was a recognition of the nature of Los Angeles' unique development patterns and politics and the tailored set of urban design principles it demanded. The Urban Design Studio had three goals for the resulting Urban Design Principles (UDP): they had to "spark discussion, develop a civic program, and be applicable throughout the city". To meet these requirements, the UDP had to step back from a prescriptive and design-oriented approach and instead turn to a series of broader visionary goals for the City that were applied on a case-by-case basis depending on climate, character, scale, culture and other variables. By allowing

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Monday, June 16, 2008

a more local interpretation of these principles, resulting design solutions are intended to be a better fit for the community in which they are being built. In addition, the Urban Design Studio was going to take the Principles to all City of Los Angeles departments, general managers and commissioners to continue conversation and encourage implementation.

Regarding the site in particular, Lisa Padilla, City Works Urban Planner spoke about the presence of another big public investment in close proximity – Grand Avenue Civic Park, and recommended a strategic programmatic and spatial response to establish a complementary relationship between the two.

### ELEVEN URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES - DRAFT

Simon presented the eleven principles accompanied by photos that illustrated the diverse interpretations that might result depending on individual site conditions.

1. Usable and accessible transit areas
2. Reinforce walkability and wellbeing
3. Bridging the past and the future
4. Accentuate visual interest
5. Nurture neighborhood character
6. Develop street furnishings
7. Emphasize early implementation and long-term maintenance
8. Stimulate sustainability and innovation
9. Improve equity and opportunity
10. Generate public open space
11. Navigation, connection and flow

### DISCUSSION

A summary of major discussion points from the question and answer period follows:

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Monday, June 16, 2008

- What are your top three urban design recommendations for the site?
  - Lisa recommended that interns 1) design programmatically and spatially with consideration of the Grand Civic Park, 2) address authenticity in a “blank-slate” site (Will it attempt to reconnect to existing context or create something entirely new?), and 3) Understand scale in a scale-less zone (It is a vast area horizontally – look to topography to help break down site).
- How do the Urban Design Principles address form?
  - Emily stressed that although the Principles continue to be refined, they do not attempt to give direction regarding form. Rather, the Principles are structured in order to generate dialogue regarding the individual needs of a site and neighborhood, although political pressures and City planning goals will remain a significant influence on the outcome.
- How might the Urban Design Principles help to create more great streets in Los Angeles?
  - The Urban Design Principles are intended to address Los Angeles’ lack of great streets. Sidewalk standards in downtown are currently changing, with selected street narrowings, sidewalk widenings, bulb-outs and other improvements applied on a case-by-case basis in recognition of current and anticipated activity. Specifically:
    - Downtown streets principally one-way couplets = ability to handle more surface traffic and accommodate alternative transportation.
    - Downtown sidewalks to be increased to minimum 15’ and up to 24’ depending on local context.
    - Transportation consultant concluded that “no significant impacts” and potentially improvements in traffic conditions in 2030 if desired changes made.
    - Framework is now in place – funding now needed. Change to be implemented street by street or by project through partnerships with developers and architects.
- What recommendations do you have regarding creating appropriate spatial and programmatic transitions between the park and its surrounding context?
  - Simon recommended interns look at existing conditions to help identify the important connections and create relationships using elements such as topography, existing urban features such as the elevated plaza at cathedral, and creating appropriate scale.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Monday, June 16, 2008

- How might interns create a catalytic and relevant project?
  - Imagine how the project may change 50-100 years from now and how it might still remain a relevant part of regional transportation or economic activity.
  - Resolve the functional problems that exist (connectivity, amenities). Then look at how this project may provide the extraordinary/transcendental.
- How has the development community responded to the Urban Design Principles?
  - Response has been mixed. With profit as the goal, the perspective of the developer is understandably different and can be conflict when it comes to key issues such as changing parking standards and design.
    - Other cities can finance a development with very little parking. Not in Los Angeles.
    - Additionally, urban design goals can be hard to design and implement. Hiding parking and activating ground floors is difficult and expensive. Here in downtown Los Angeles, for instance, it was a struggle to get developers to agree a pedestrian-friendly parking structure design for Ralph's. Now, however, 50 percent of people walk to the store, and it is one of the highest grossing.

**5:30 PM DINNER + PANEL DISCUSSION 3: SUSTAINABILITY**

Monday, June 16, 2008

Panelists in attendance:

Kathleen McQuiggan, EDAW (moderator)

Amitabh Barthakur, Economics Research Associates (ERA)

Paula Daniels, Commissioner, Los Angeles City Board of Public Works

Claire Bowin, City of Los Angeles Planning Department

Claire Bonham-Carter, EDAW-SF, Director of Sustainable Development

--

SUMMARY

Representatives from EDAW, City of Los Angeles and the ERA provided their perspective on creating a more sustainable Los Angeles. The panel discussion began with a presentation by Claire Bonham-Carter, who discussed EDAW's progress in understanding and refining the firm's understanding of urban design and potential environmental impacts. Her presentation referenced tools currently used by EDAW to develop their expertise and scope in this area, including the Sustainable Systems Integration Model (SSIM), a program that allows the users to shape and modify development to lower impacts and

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Monday, June 16, 2008

increase sustainability. Paula Daniels then presented on “green streets”, a growing method of treating polluted storm water through the integration of bioswales in streetscapes. Paula presented national case studies, and discussed the City of Los Angeles’ current and planned efforts to integrate more of these into Los Angeles streetscapes downtown. Discussion then turned to understanding sustainability in the context of economics. Amitabh from ERA argued that Los Angeles’ unique economic context demanded strategic ideas regarding sustainability. His recommendations urged an approach that promoted diverse and adaptable industries, questioned the wisdom of big capital investments in a volatile economy, and supported the crafting of adaptable and flexible policies that can succeed in the fluctuating economic dynamics of LA.

### EDAW AND SUSTAINABILITY

Claire Bonhan-Carter spoke on the relationship between urban design and environmental impacts, and EDAW’s progress in this arena. To help support experimentation and specialization in this area, EDAW has pursued a series of projects and competitions that facilitated the development of appropriate skills and tools. New tools developed since this effort has begun include:

- Sustainable Systems Integration Model (SSIM), a program that allows the user to shape and modify development to lower impacts and increase sustainability.
- EKOBLOX is a work in progress that strives to create a zero carbon neighborhood by focusing on the block rather than individual houses.
- Webinars allow for the in-depth training of employees in EDAW as offices around the world on topics around sustainability.

### GREEN LOS ANGELES

Paula Daniels provided insight to Los Angeles’ efforts to address storm water pollution and a host of other environmental water quality issues through the use of green streets.

Storm Water is the largest source of pollution to ocean in Los Angeles. Bioswales are one type of landscaping that can be added to streets to cleanse and filter polluted water. Precedent for this exists nationally, with the cities of Seattle and Portland leading the charge with multiple examples of successful bio-swale prototypes. Departments within the City of Los Angeles, as well as outside agencies see this as a joint effort with shared benefits. This indicates that “green” streets, as streets with bio-swale infrastructure are oftentimes referred, are sustainable elements that would find popular and political support. The City of Los Angeles has studied and incorporated some of the designs utilized by Seattle and Portland. Both have green streets program, funded through a fee on

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Monday, June 16, 2008

street construction. The main feature of the streets redesign is a notched curb that slows down movement of water and directs it to vegetated areas.

Prototype projects have been created in Los Angeles, namely Ord Street near the Los Angeles River and at Hope and 11<sup>th</sup> Street. A larger and more comprehensive test site will be created in a 14.6 acre neighborhood near to the Los Angeles River, where the City aims to capture 100 percent of the stormwater run-off that is currently being dumped directly into the River. The City will work with the community to decide on desirable drought tolerant plants.

In the future, catchment basins and pollutant loading will be used to prioritize subsequent areas for green streets to be implemented. Additionally, green alleys, where a vegetated strip is added at the center, may also be incorporated. Given the miles of roads and alleys in Los Angeles, distributed networks of Best Management Practices can have substantial effect on water quality in the long-term.

## ECONOMICS

Amitabh stressed that economic sustainability requires an understanding of the Los Angeles context. While scale of growth is similar to many Asian cities, similarities beyond this are few, and precedent is hard to find. The city has experienced rapid and dramatic change over a very short period of time and continues to be in a state of flux. Rail network was replaced by freeways, Bunker Hill built on what was previously established neighborhood. If freeways weren't so difficult and expensive to dismantle and sell, this may have already happened, said Amitabh.

The infrastructure that will be created today will be completely different than what came before and what will come after, as will be the resulting impact on city fabric. Recognize that what you create will not be permanent, look at lifecycle from the perspective of construction, use and obsolescence. Create a durable, low maintenance infrastructure that either adapts quickly or can be changed out quickly and cheaply. Remember that with the speed of technological innovation, any infrastructure will over time be found obsolete, and make big capital investments questionable. In such a context, sustainability requires the development of diverse and adaptable industries and the crafting of policies to capitalize and work with fast-changing economic dynamic.

## DISCUSSION

Following is a summary of major discussion points from the question and answer period:

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Monday, June 16, 2008

- The economy and housing are closely tied, and affordable housing can be linked to economic strength. In Los Angeles many industries were forced to move as housing prices rose.
- Regional planning is hard to implement in a region so fragmented – 88 cities in Los Angeles County, and five counties making up the Los Angeles Metro Area.
- Consider how freeways may adapt as other modes of transportation become utilized. Might they become the greenways for our cities?
- While tele-commuting may not have been compelling earlier, congestion and gas prices may cause people to rethink their lifestyles and norms.
- “Future-proof” the project to make it relevant. Provide centralized energy-center co-generation plants on a block-by-block basis to provide services. This system is 20 to 40 percent more efficient than a conventional power station and allows for easy upgrading to new power sources. The UK and Sweden already pursuing this.
- How are property-value cycles influenced by infrastructure?
  - Los Angeles just passed through an unusually long upswing that last year began its descent. Typically, these cycles pass through 10-15 year cycles. If a city is dependent on a single industry this may result in a long-term decline. Cities must keep economically diverse and adaptable to continue the increase in property values.
  - Regarding the relationship between capital infrastructure and infrastructure, if a lacking resource is added, such as a park in Los Angeles for instance, an increase in property values will result. Additionally, California and Los Angeles have tools in place to allow for the capture of this incremental value, and much of our public infrastructure is funded through this value capture mechanism.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

**7:00 AM BREAKFAST AT USC CAFETERIA**

**8:00 AM DEPART FOR STUDIO**

**9:15 AM GROUP PHOTO**

**9:30 AM WORK SESSION AND ANALYSIS**

Groups A, B, C, D, and E are given two hours to synthesize information and impressions gathered from their first round of site visits the day before for a pin-up presentation at 11:30.

**11:30 AM PIN-UP**

Groups A, B, C, D, and E each presented their initial findings from their reconnaissance to the site, and in particular, their assigned section. Groups used an assortment of methods, including quick perspectives, diagrams, sections, and photos to convey their impressions regarding the site conditions they found most compelling or relevant. Topics covered included site connectivity, noise, view corridors, open space and more. While group presentations indicated that site conditions did vary between the five sites, there were many shared concerns, seen following:

- Conflict between pedestrian and automobile connectivity
- Poor streetscape quality, incl. noise, façade engagement with street, lack of shade, etc.
- Lack of amenities to draw users to site

Specific comments from each group follow:

**GROUP A**

Group A identified three issues that most characterized the challenges and potential opportunities of their site. In order of concern these were the freeway entrance, street edge character, and connectivity, and in particular:

- Freeway entrance should be removed to potentially create park space and reduce traffic
- Facades did not engage the street (activity on 2nd story of many buildings created disconnect)
- Connectivity and flow of pedestrians and cars must be studied and resolved

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

### GROUP B

Group B divided the site into five different areas to facilitate closer examination and understanding of the site.

This resulted in the identification of four issues that most characterized the challenges and potential opportunities of their site. These were "The Wall" (massive stretch of buildings including the LA County Heating and Refrigeration Plan and cathedral), connectivity issues, topography changes, and the multiple and diverse pockets of people that were observed around the site. Following are specific concerns voiced:

- "The Wall" resulted in a disconnect from Broadway
- Problematic "pinch point"
- Connectivity was compromised because of blocked view corridors
- Diversity of users include local and regional workers, and local residents

### GROUP C

Group C identified three main themes that defined their site: spatial aggregation, micro-climate and noise. In particular, members of this group made these observations:

- Open space and figure ground diagrams revealed a considerable amount of vacant land
- Pedestrian experience affected by views, breeze, shade and tree cover
- Prevalent sound is mainly buses, however natural noises found on parts of site

### GROUP D

Group D perceived their site as monumental, undefined, "void-like", and disorienting. They felt that site analysis and recommendations needed to go beyond the focus on the core, and recognized side streets as critical collectors that would draw users to the project area. Group D identified multiple issues, opportunities that defined their site as well as goals:

- Disconnected
- Illegible routes
- Un-maintained public space
- Poor street hierarchy (Main plus others)
- No "draw" cards (such as shop fronts) to draw people
- Poor streetscape (no landscaping, trees, too hot)

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

### GROUP E

Group E began with a series of photos that provided a strong sense of the social character of the site. They went on to speak about the strengths, street conditions, and circulation patterns found on site. Group members in particular noted the following:

- Strengths include public places, neighborhoods, tourism and wide sidewalks
- Street conditions and quality vary greatly across the site
- Circulation patterns are awkward and amount of activity and noise adds to disorientation
- Travel to and from Union Station can be difficult for pedestrian – five minute walk (~1/4 mile) from Union Station barely takes pedestrian across the highway

### NOON LUNCH/PANEL DISCUSSION 4: LOCAL CULTURE/HISTORY OF THE FREEWAY

Panelists in attendance:

Sue Ellen Cheng, El Pueblo

Ron Kosinski, Caltrans Env Planning Branch

Bill Reagan, Caltrans

Jenny Martinez, EDAW-LA

--

### TRANSPORTATION

Representatives from Caltrans discussed the transportation in downtown Los Angeles as it relates to the project area. They noted the rise of the freeways and the distinction enjoyed globally until recently, as weaknesses in this system have begun to arise. They also talked about Union Station, built in 1939, its renown as one of the great train stations in California, and its status as a major gateway for regional transportation. And, while the train's distinction in Los Angeles dropped off with the development of the freeway, the rising ridership of MetroLink and Metro system, along with oil prices, have brought it back into the spotlight. Bill and Ron also discussed the most recent major improvement project conducted by Caltrans recently – the extension of a regional bus route to Union Station to increase connectivity.

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

In regards to the project site in particular, they made the following comments:

- A design competition for the same site yielded entries that Caltrans did not find aesthetically acceptable – the highest score given was 17 out of 100.
- Plans for 101 include the addition of car pool lanes in either direction.
- Closing an on or off-ramp requires a long public process, however, the closing of an on-ramp is less disruptive

## HISTORIC RESOURCES

Sue Ellen Cheng then presented on the El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument. She emphasized that the monument goes much beyond its most well-known component, Olvera Street, built in 1930. Twenty-seven historical buildings on site reflect the architectural and cultural diversity of Los Angeles, some built as early as 1870. Major monuments include the Firehouse Museum, Sepulveda House, Italian Hall, Chinese-American Museum, all reflecting the eras in which they were constructed. She also reflected on the number of historic resources and communities that have been destroyed over time due to development decisions, such as the displacement of Chinatown for the construction of Union Station and the construction of the 101 Freeway. Sue Ellen advised interns to look carefully at El Pueblo, and to recognize the value it adds the site and the City.

## ARCHEOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT

Jenny Martinez provided an archeological perspective on site history through the story of an EDAW project area within it. Slated to be developed as a high school in 2004, ground-breaking revealed human bones. The subsequent analysis and excavation of the site unearthed 171 graves and the site's original purpose as a cemetery - one of the first the City operated, as well as one of the first Protestant non-denominational cemeteries. The site was redesignated as a site for schools in the early 1900s, during which time graves were relocated to the Rosedale Cemetery.

The identification of remains was subject to a number of regulatory measures, including CEQA and the California Health and Safety Code. Piecing together the puzzle and identification of remains involved dental analysis, artifact analysis, GIS mapping, and more. These processes together unearthed a fascinating history of the site and of Angelenos during that time.

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

## DISCUSSION

The following is a summary of major discussion points from the question and answer period:

- What would be the effect of putting a freeze on widening the 101 Freeway? How about removing a lane?
  - Two lanes that are proposed would be for carpool and buses only. In the past 15 years, the only lanes that have been added have been for carpools. Federally, lanes cannot be added unless they are shown to not have adverse effects on air quality. Eliminating freeway lanes is politically untenable, as exemplified by the Santa Monica Freeway example.
- Where are HOV lanes targeted?
  - 20-40 year plan calls for HOV lane improvements to be added within the project area.
- Would you consider removing an on-ramp within the project area?
  - Deleting the on-ramp within site area would be difficult because of public response, but possible, since transportation options have increased in the area
- What about adding parking to the downtown area; and especially close by to the Metro station?
  - People are arriving from the larger region and being distributed around downtown via buses, Metro and Dash. Not as many are looking for parking locally, and quite a bit of private parking already exists.
- Are there any new transit plans that may alter access patterns to and from downtown?
  - New Metro lines and extensions will potentially add access to and from East Los Angeles, Culver City and Santa Monica. There is also discussion of extending the Blue Line to Union Station.
  - Councilman Huizar is proposing a streetcar system on Broadway
  - LA County Metro also considering downtown connector system in the form of either a double-wheel or light rail system.
- What is the expected student population at the new High School?
  - The High School population is expected to be more than 500. Parking is typically provided for staff but not for students, however \$30/day is most likely too much for most students to afford. As a charter school, it is likely to attract students city-wide.
- Where are the origins of destinations? Where are the flows by foot and bike?
  - Peak times for pedestrian traffic are between four and five in the evening as workers head towards Union Station.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

**1:30 PM CRITIQUE AND DISCUSSION ON PROCESS**

Gaurav and Mike provided feedback to Groups A, B, C, D, and E on the work presented that morning during the Site Analysis Pin-Up. Both remarked that information gathered thus far was appropriate and well-presented. They went on to complement particular groups' approach to presenting or perspective on the site, and provided recommendations as to other important site documentation needed to support the process.

Discussion also continued regarding goals for the project, and approach to the site. In particular, much debate ensued around the freeway and the appropriate approach - should it be celebrated as a representation of Los Angeles' most defining feature? Was it important to engage automobiles below as well as users above? Interns also brought up additional data they felt important to incorporate, but difficult to gather, such as demographics. Dialogue regarding the site led into a larger conversation regarding the diagrams and products perceived to best help to resolve larger questions. These are listed below:

- Land/Building Use Plan
- Open Space Assessment (Public/Private/Accessible)
- Destinations
- Regional Connections
- 5-Min Walk Radius
- Vehicular Circulation
- Car/Pedestrian Land Allocation
- View/Vistas
- Historic Resources
- Historic Growth Patterns
- Demographics And Distribution
- Topography (Historic/Water Flow)
- Noise
- Canopy Study

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

**3:30 PM LECTURE: CEQA PROCESS/ENVIRONMENT MOVEMENT IN CALIFORNIA**

Panelists in attendance:

Eric Wilson, EDAW-LA, Principal

Melissa Hatcher, EDAW-LA

--

Panelists discussed the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) purpose, process, and impact on this project. While CEQA and NEPA processes are similar, NEPA only applies to projects sited on federally owned land, or sites being funded with federal money. Then intention of CEQA/NEPA is to provide the public and decision-makers information regarding the impacts of a project prior to its development, and to provide a venue for inquiry regarding these impacts. Both the CEQA/NEPA are very public processes and include 30-day public comment periods and meetings where the public may comment on the technical studies. During the comment period, every comment must be responded to and all comments are incorporated into the final document.

Following are the categories for which a project must evaluate its impacts, including some of the specific variables for which impacts would be analyzed:

- Transportation and Traffic
- Noise and Vibration
  - Impacts both during construction and operation
- Air Quality
  - Impacts on global warming
- Environmental Justice
  - Disproportionate impacts on specific communities
- Aesthetics
  - Scenic resources impacts
  - Light and glare impacts
  - Shade and shadow impacts
  - Visual character impacts
- Cultural Resource
  - Historical, archeological, paleontological resources
    - For example, Zanja Madre
- Geology and Soils
  - Impacts on erosion, liquefaction, expansive soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Public Services

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

- Utilities and Service Systems
- Land Use
  - Impacts on established communities
  - Impacts on established habitats
- Population and Housing
  - Impacts on growth or displacement

## DISCUSSION

The following is a summary of major discussion points from the question and answer period:

- Engaging the 101 Freeway with the park may sound compelling, but public opinion is largely leaning towards a desire to get away from traffic.
- Resolve contentious design issues prior to CEQA/NEPA process – negative impacts can impede implementation and induce cost overruns
- Maximize the benefits the project can provide in order to increase leverage
  - e.g., Tensions over water only to increase – look to water reclamation, xeriscape
- Urban agriculture adjacent to freeway does not have unforeseen issues, but process would reveal health impacts.

### 4:30 PM EDAW-LA OFFICE VISIT

Text to be inserted - EDAW

### 5:30 PM PANEL DISCUSSION 5: PUBLIC PROCESS

Text to be inserted - EDAW

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

**7:00 AM BREAKFAST AT USC CAFETERIA**

**8:00 AM DEPART FOR STUDIO**

**8:30 AM WORK SESSION**

**9:30 AM GOAL DEVELOPMENT**

On Tuesday, groups were tasked with coming up with their own over-arching goals for the project. This was done with the intent of allowing group's to further explore the root issues their analysis revealed, and find the commonalities between. These identified commonalities became the preliminary list of goals that were tagged for further refinement. Below are the major themes that emerged, followed by a list of each group's goals.

**PRELIMINARY GOALS SUMMARIZED**

1. Place for People
2. Flexibility
3. Image and Identity
4. Be Aware of Planet
5. Re-Define Urban Fabric And Connections
6. A Needed Place Downtown
7. Improve Freeway Operations

**GROUP A**

1. Ownership
2. Interactive usable
3. Malleability, phase-ability (flexibility re: seasonal, time, decades, centuries)
4. Creating a resource – thinking regionally
5. Creating a strong edge

**GROUP B**

1. Connectivity – diffuse boundaries
2. Maintain global image while – expressing
  - Easy to recognize and LA-specific
  - Balance between glorify and downgrade
3. Flexible
4. Financial sustainability through community/biz buy-in

Fulcrom – Project as Image

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

GROUP C

Triple P Model:

1. Profit
  - create developable spaces
  - increase profit
2. Planet
  - increase biodiversity, resolve water issues
  - reduce water and air pollution
  - use renewable energy resources
3. People
  - increase 24/7 use
  - improve mobility
  - enhance neighborhood identify

GROUP D

1. fertile soil/botanical garden --- "adaptable ground plate"
2. Keep locally and globally relevant for 300 years
3. bridging and stitching
4. focus on culture
5. distinct yet complementary to surrounding (own yet dialoguing)
6. urban deign principles 2.0 – creating fertile soil for neighborhoods and users and opening possibilities of use

GROUP E

1. Transportation
  - a. Highway 101: how to make flexible?
  - b. Vibrant community through node creation – how to make node of transportation at street level?  
How to match to other nodes?
2. Finance
  - a. capitalize on PP partnerships
  - b. finance can help to justify
3. Urban fabric
  - a. infill dead space to improve promising areas
4. Community
  - a. create park or large park integral to LA – delightful complex diverse and engaging
  - b. providing broad range of program
  - c. health and safe environment for all pedestrians
  - d. participatory planning framework for future development

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

**10:30 AM TASK #4 INDIVIDUAL IMPRESSIONS/SOLUTIONS TO SITE**

Interns were asked to provide an individually-generated diagrammatic solution to the site challenges as they understand them in half-hour. Each intern was given an 11x17 piece of paper and told to use their medium of choice.

**11:00 AM TASK PRESENTATION, CRITIQUE AND DISCUSSION**

Students presented their individual and preliminary solutions to the design challenge using diagrams, sketches, and models. Reoccurring themes that all interns addressed were the nature of the decking/infill 101 cap, addressing underutilized sites, improving access to amenities and creating connectivity. Interns recognized that the resolution of these issues was strongly interconnected, and recommendations reflected this. Following are some of major themes that emerged.

- Bridge the gap:
  - extend street grid to "fill in" deleted fabric
  - create icon and new landmark
  - add amenities and resources to provide purpose to cross
- Respect the historical context while building new layer unique to time and place
- Increase access to green space; specifically recreational and agricultural opportunities
- Revitalize the site through infill on parking lots and other underutilized areas
- Strengthen connectivity between adjacent district and neighborhoods to allow access to existing amenities and attract neighboring residents

**11:30 AM LUNCH/PANEL DISCUSSION 6: LOCAL CONTEXT & DEMOGRAPHICS**

Panelists in attendance:

Mike Downs, EDAW-SD, Senior Social Scientist

Diana Martinez Lily, El Pueblo

Esmeralda Garcia, MIG (moderator)

--

**SITES OF HISTORICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Mike Downs spoke on sites of historical and anthropological significance and the added value these sites, and their associated communities, can bring to a project and to the process. He also noted the difficulty in finding the balance between acting as a designer while considering cultural context, but stressed its

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

importance. As an example, Mike spoke regarding a few infrastructure projects with which he had been personally involved, including a freeway widening project in north San Diego. He urged interns to think about the cultural context of the project, and to remember that many communities use recreational, retail, and commercial environments differently.

### EXISTING COMMUNITIES

Diana began by discussing her history with public outreach around the development of two major public parks, including the recently completed public process for the Cornfields site. The 145 public meetings that took place resulted in neighborhood groups becoming endeared to the project because of the relationships that were formed and collaboration that occurred. Diana then discussed the history of Los Angeles in regards to the infrastructural interventions that have occurred, touching on the number of freeways that have been built, and the strategic way in which they were placed so as to suppress revolutionary activities within the communities. As a result, these neighborhoods have suffered from reduced mobility and access to amenities. El Pueblo would very much like to see a cut and cover of the 101 Freeway to restore these lost connections to downtown and the civic core. However, Diana warned that community buy-in was absolutely critical to the success of this project. Community groups could utilize CEQA to halt the process if the project's environmental justice impacts were seen as negative. Diana ended by referencing a capping project in San Diego in the Normal Heights neighborhood. The strenuous process of project approval will likely result in the scope being cut significantly – she recommends that the project be scoped at a large size if advocates hope for an average-size site to result.

### BOYLE HEIGHTS

Esmeralda spoke on the historical/cultural context and background of Boyle Heights, whose geographic, social and cultural connection to downtown made it an important part of the community context for the project. Boyle Heights has long been known as a gateway for immigrant to Los Angeles. Waves of immigrants, including Italians, Russians, Japanese and Latinos have put their imprint on the neighborhood, leaving behind their cultural re-interpretations of the urban environment. The Jewish community built pedestrian-scaled and neighborhood-serving retail. The Japanese influence is still seen in some housing details and landscaping. The Latino community created their own vernacular by stuccoing over and adding arches and Spanish tile to the original Victorian and Craftsman homes.

Regarding the collaborative process, Esmeralda recommended that demographics, history and cultural context of the area be studied prior to reaching out to community members. It is also important that outreach occurs at

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

the beginning of the design process. The community's experience and understanding of the physical environment of the site can provide unique information regarding existing conditions and contextually appropriate solutions.

## DISCUSSION

A summary of major discussion points from the question and answer period follows:

- How might a freeway cap affect the adjacent populations that have been historically disadvantaged?
  - Cap = access. Also, remember that gentrification means that demographics always in flux. What is introduced, if practical, will succeed over time.
  - Design challenge crux is to make this area work on a number of different scales. Reconnect formerly pedestrian-connected communities, facilitate interstate transport and create signature public space that attracts people from beyond immediate neighborhood. Also, Native American influence presence for 10-15,000 years, and the ways in which they oriented development towards their resources can provide lessons for modern day development.
- How amenable will residents be to being reconnected to the Civic Core given current level of distrust of government?
  - Diana stressed that the desire for access to amenities and shortened pedestrian commutes would trump any anger on the part of residents. For instance, residents or workers in Chinatown on their way to work or shop downtown must walk an additional seven blocks to get around the barrier of the freeway. The reconnection a freeway cap provides would have an immediate effect on quality of life.
- What is the current status of Zanja Madre resources in the site area?
  - The Zanja Madre was currently uncovered at El Pueblo. Freeway widening could cause impacts to this and other historic resources, such as the Yana village that was previously located in this area.
  - ReMap LA (a website) has a map that shows the historic placement of Zanja Madres around historic Los Angeles.
- Working with existing historic/cultural conditions can enhance project and site. For example, the remains found at a project at Seal Beach site were reburied at a scaled down replica of burial grounds, and an interpretive trail was incorporated.
- How might interns integrate community outreach methods into a 2-week period? Panelists offered the following methods:

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

- o Reach out to Community Advisory Groups and Neighborhood Councils. Identify other community stakeholders using the General Plan
- o Utilize Network or "snowball" sampling. This involves identifying community leaders, interviewing them and then moving on to those they recommend. The resulting community buy-in from this process can be enormous.
- o Use the above method, except with the internet
- o Tap into panelists that are visiting. As local experts and may have previous experience working with community groups, business owners or residents.
- o Do a field study. Talk with merchants and residents.
- There is an existing regional draw for Latino demographic in downtown. Interns need to strategize how the project might help to keep this existing demographic while also attracting a wider demographic.
- Good design is good design. Residents of disadvantaged communities want the same as their richer counterparts in better neighborhoods.

### **2:00 PM TASK #5: DEVELOPING THE VISION**

Interns were given four hours to collectively determine the framework of goals and principles and further develop the vision the group would like to pursue.

### **6:00 PM DINNER/PRESENTATION BY BOB HALE, RIOS CLEMENTI HALE**

Bob came to speak to interns regarding the Grand Avenue Civic Park, designed by his firm, Rios Clementi Hale. During his lecture Bob spoke on the topics of community participation in design development, project goals, project phasing, and final program decisions. He also showed illustrations of the proposed design.

The three major goals for the project were to 1) Make it memorable, 2) Tie it together and 3) Connect it to the city. Bob also stressed the importance of the Civic Park in an area that severely lacks green space, and its responsibility to respond to the needs of the diversity of residents that reside in the region surrounding downtown Los Angeles. The project is a joint City/County agreement, with public land leased to developers for \$51 million to fund park development. In addition, bond money is being pursued. Community workshops were an integral part of the design development process, and allowed Rios Clementi Hale to narrow down the desired characteristics of the park. The first workshop took place on the Court of Flags within the site. Here, ten groups were asked to create their desired park scheme using a provided kit of parts. Each workshop built on the results of the last as workshops continued, with a diagrammatic and programmatic plan created from the input. The

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

community planning process revealed that residents, workers and other participants favored the development of a sustainable park with space for events and festivals, water features and art, pedestrian amenities, views and preserved historic features.

Historic buildings, most built between the 1940s and 60s, including the Hall of Records designed by Richard Neutra, presented additional challenge to the planning process. Many of the buildings had historic importance; in addition, the Hall of Administration and the County Courthouse were damaged during the 1994 earthquake. These unresolved issues required designs to address park expansion or changes that might occur over time.

Next steps involved design development. Connectivity was an important element to boost awareness of the park's presence from adjacent neighborhoods, but also to improve circulation within the park, which had long been structured on a formal north-south alignment. Outside of the park, side streets that connect to the park would be improved, and connections would be made to major transit nodes, such as the subway. Internally, diagonal paths would be introduced to allow a more informal and direct circulation. In further developing the financing, a phased approach was identified as the most feasible way in which take advantage of funding. Phase I would be affordable given current budget, and would provide a park "base". Phase II would then be built as money became available, adding special design features that are not necessary, but desirable.

Bob then described the project design in detail, including the characteristics of the buildings currently on site, design challenges, and programming strategies. Four distinct but connected areas are to be created within the park. These are the Fountain Plaza, Civic Garden, Community Terrace, and the Green. The Fountain Plaza will include an improved and more interactive historic fountain, two new terraced stairways. The Fountain Plaza area will open onto the Civic Garden which will feature a great lawn, with distinct areas including an event space, a shade garden, and a sun garden. The Community Terrace would open up the area where the where the Court of Flags currently stands. The Court would be reinterpreted into a less formal and more playful "outdoor living room" featuring bent plates with infill of colored glass that continue the reference to flags, but serve a more functional purpose of providing shade and cover. The two-level parking structure underneath would be improved and used. The Green is a large open space to connect the site back to Broadway, allow for vendors, farmers markets and a potential permanent café and restaurant. Here, a pedestrian bridge may be built to provide a grade separated change across Broadway for safety and to add a strong visual feature.

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

## DISCUSSION

A summary of major discussion points from the question and answer period follows:

- How long did community outreach efforts last?
  - Community outreach started last spring and went through fall – 6-9 months. Vision master plan proceeded after. Next are schematics. City and County are looking for additional funds, hopefully bond \$ comes through. If no more money, we'll proceed with the base plan
- Could you explain in more detail how the phased approach to the park might work?
  - A good example is Millennium Park in Chicago. The base infrastructure is very simple, but well-designed green space and path system. Over time Chicago has added high-profile and discrete pieces that have added to the Park's value.
- How did community respond to the collaborative process?
  - According to Brady Westwater, the Grand Civic Park project was the most vetted project of any in the history of Los Angeles. A better design plus community buy-in has resulted providing critical support and momentum.
- How might building configuration change and how might the park design respond to the removal of any of the historic buildings along its axes?
  - Park may expand in coherent ways into open spaces
  - Buildings might be consolidated and rebuilt on same site in more vertical configuration
  - Hall of Administration may move up to Department of Water and Power site
  - Ultimately the Park should be looking 50-100 years from now to anticipate changes. However, it would be impossible to finance if all of these uncertain variables were taken into account. Instead, Park design must be begin by designing to withstand current day issues and givens.
- Are there enough people in the downtown area to support this Park?
  - The Grand Civic Park Starbucks reportedly has one of the highest dollar per square foot revenues of any Starbucks in Los Angeles.
  - There are 50,000 government employees within three blocks. Additionally, greater Los Angeles residents occasionally access the civic buildings or to attend arts and cultural events. This creates strong activity Monday thru Friday from 9am-5pm, and light activity in the evenings. Ultimately, downtown residents are needed in the area to add 24-7 vitality.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

- Interns observed a large homeless population in the area. Does the Park plan consider their needs?
  - Homelessness is a problem across downtown. Creating a more active and open Park will naturally result in less users that are considered undesirable.
- What demographic was represented at the community workshops? We have seen a lot of skaters downtown, but a skate park was not considered a desired part of the programming. Why?
  - There was little representation by skaters or bike messengers at the meetings, and no interest on the part of other participants for a skate park. However, there are many skate parks in residential areas outside of downtown. Additionally, this demographic may prefer to skate on the street versus at a skate park.
- Aren't more shade structures or trees necessary to create a cooler micro-climate in such an open-space heavy plan?
  - Creating places for people to cool down, rest or chat was a priority in the plan, and we believe adequate space for this exists. However, open space plays an important part in the Park's role to host a number of different community events at same time.
- Given water resource concerns in the Los Angeles region has there been objection to amount of lawn in this proposal? Or have alternative materials been explored to address this?
  - There has not been very much discussion around this from the public. And, while sustainability has been focus internally, funding constraints are a limiting factor.
  - All plantings are native and drought tolerant.
  - Design team may look into water efficient lawn materials.
  - Asphalt strips and hardscape have been replaced with permeable surfaces as much as possible.
  - Additionally, there is potential to tap rooftops drains to provide water to plants.
  - Ultimately, the addition of a green open space in the center of downtown will help to create a 24 hour sustainable community – this may be the “greenest” and most important outcome of the project.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

- How can another park 2 blocks away be successful?
  - Given the park-poor nature of Los Angeles, the development of another park is appropriate and needed. Still, the program must be complementary to what is occurring at the Grand Civic Park. Look at the unique characteristics of your site to determine what might be appropriate. Perhaps a skate park would be appropriate in the noisier and more urban environment over the freeway, for instance.
  - Needs to be synergy between the two to create momentum collectively

**7:00 PM TASK #5: DEVELOPING THE VISION (CONTINUED)**

Text to be inserted - EDAW

**9:00 PM MID-WEEK WRAP-UP**

[MIG representative not in attendance]

EDAW Intern Program 2008

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Thursday, June 19, 2008

7 AM BREAKFAST AT USC CAFETERIA

8 AM DEPART FOR STUDIO

9:00 AM TASK #5 PART 2 (CONTINUES)

10:00 AM WORK SESSION

11:30 AM LUNCH AT FARMERS MARKET

12:15 PM LUNCH/PANEL DISCUSSION 7: ON STRUCTURES LANDSCAPES/  
CAPPING PRECEDENTS/FEASIBILITY

Panelists in attendance:

Brady Westwater, Downtown LA Neighborhood Council, Vice President

Alexander Quinn, EDAW

Androush Danelians, DMJM Harris

Barbara Faga, EDAW- Miami, Senior Landscape Architect

Mike Williams, EDAW (moderator)

--

Androush provided a general overview of the topic of bridge engineering and the types of issues that need to be addressed. [MIG representative not in attendance during this part of the presentation]

#### BIG DIG

Barbara discussed her involvement in the Big Dig project to demonstrate the complexities of getting buy-off from the public on large-scale infrastructure projects. Scoped for five community meetings, the final meeting count for the project was 150. One area of concern was the dramatic changes in property value that occurred as the project progressed, which in some cases, quadrupled. Another large obstacle to progress was the difficulty in illustrating to the public what the resulting visual impacts would be and what mixture of open space and buildings was desirable. Misunderstanding led to much of the negative coverage of the project. Finally, it was only a model that finally succeeded in conveying the project in a way that was understandable to the public. This in turn helped in getting it through the approval process quickly.

Park design sought to complement the already complex and detailed architecture present adjacent to the site by adding simple elements that were attractive but not overly designed. Another intent was to integrate historic references where appropriate. For example, original wharf blocks were restored

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Thursday, June 19, 2008

and displayed along with information regarding history of the pier and the area. When done subtly, this can be successful.

### FINANCING DECKING

Alexander shared his experienced in decking over freeways, and discussed in more detail a few of the projects he had worked on. Nearly all were financed by federal dollars and creative financing around air rights was an integral part of project realization.

Alexander went on to discuss the I-5 decking project in Sacramento, for which he worked as a public finance consultant. The goals of the decking project were to reconnect Sacramento with its riverfront while providing a flood barrier between the river and city. Project funding was developing land adjacent to the site, and using profits to finance the decking. Alexander recommended this as a potentially applicable technique for the intern's project area. Other projects mentioned and key strategies associated with them included the "Freeway" Park in Seattle financed through federal appropriations, the Papago Freeway in Phoenix for which the freeway authorities sold the air rights, and the Highline that utilized a design competition and celebrity interest to generate support and momentum.

Additional strategies recommended included selling air rights, creating a Community Benefits Agreement (CBD), densification or consolidation of uses, accessing public-private funds and community grants; and acquiring congressional support and associated discretionary funds.

The following are some of the recommendations given to interns regarding engineering costs:

- Tunnel characteristics greatly affect design and costs
- ROW impacts are expensive – know your impacts
- Consider off-on ramp impacts and resulting circulation
- Biggest impacts on cost in parks: engineering and time
- Phasing: increase in material costs over time can outweigh positives
- Typical parking structure = 30,000/space
- Lift system 14,000/car (robotic parking)
  - value of land must be high to pursue

Alexander ended with lessons learned:

- Federal appropriations are essential
- Describe as mitigation – resolving a wound that was created when first placed here  
Highway 101 Mitigation Project – NOT Highway 101 Decking Project

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Thursday, June 19, 2008

- Have realistic expectations – must think about phasing.
- Think about locations or areas that provide the most “splash”.
- Think about context of surrounding and capturing the value there
- Secure commitment from local property owners

### CASE STUDY: STEEL CLOUD

Brady Westwater discussed the Steel Cloud project and the political context that led to its failure. To begin, this project was proposed between City Hall and El Pueblo and its intended goal was to connect the two. However, the proposed development was going to block views between El Pueblo and City Hall, which caused enormous opposition. Secondly, the developer and architect did not communicate effectively with community groups and other concerned community stakeholders. This lack of communication led not only to a design that the community would not support but also to programming for the development that did not meet local needs. Developer proposed program included an aquarium, library and art gallery, all of which required a different entity to support and run them. No existing non-profit was tapped or consulted in the process to coordinate on the development of these spaces, leaving the programmatic element of the project without advocates. And, park program proposed was primarily large expanses of lawn and passive activities, neither of which has been historically successful with Los Angeles residents. The unwillingness on the part of developers to negotiate ultimately led to the project's cancellation.

Brady went on to discuss the intern's project area. He stressed the number of parks that are going to be built in this area, and the need for a compelling feature that attracts more than workers at lunch hour.

In regards to funding, Brady mentioned that many of the typical funding sources were not available on this project. There is no privately owned land over the freeway, Community Benefits agreements were not possible without a community located adjacent to the site, and federal appropriations are very competitive, especially now. Touching on mobility, Brady stressed that widening the freeway would be a necessary part of lessening congestion in the downtown area because “less than one percent of rush hour traffic takes place on rail”, and much of our public transportation relies on roadways which are impacted by back-up on on-and-off ramps.

### DISCUSSION

A summary of major discussion points from the question and answer period follows:

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Thursday, June 19, 2008

- How do you get the public to understand and discuss design?
  - Barbara stressed that public consensus does not take place at a singular event, it is a process. "Build, trust, educate". 1) Start with the facts, 2) Get consensus on that, 3) Build from there. Don't end a public meeting without a decision made on something, however small it might be. This builds a feeling that decisions are being made collectively, and the next meeting may move on from there.
  - Brady responds that educating the public first is an important step, and can be done in a variety of ways. Provide books and ask the public to comment on desirable precedents with sticky notes, take tours of cities/towns of interest. Identify community representatives and work with them to self-educate and speak with their communities
- Why do financing costs vary so greatly?
  - Engineering and time costs
  - Engineering and time costs
  - Cost of oil brings transportation of materials up
  - Price of steel can double cost of projects
  - Take your costs and double to account for time
- How can economies of scale affect project costs?
  - While phasing has its benefits, one must consider how material costs may change considering the size of the order.
- Have you ever seen community objection stop a project?
  - Andrew mentioned the I-5 project, where community expectations were for a much bigger and expansive project. Keeping community support requires honest dialogue with the community regarding cost and square footage.
- What organizations do you recommend we talk to, to ensure this project has the support it needs?
  - Brady responds that he has spoken with local BIDS, Chinatown leaders, and local Neighborhoods Councils. He recommends that the next step be to form an organization to provide support after the program ends. The project needs media attention to keep the public informed and interested.
- What would be a reasonable amount of cost estimation that we can do?
  - Decking costs estimation
    - structure itself : \$350/sq ft (dirt and plants)
    - with cars: \$270/sq ft
    - buildings: \$100/sq ft for every 2 stories
      - maybe, don't build on top, build around
      - Consolidate buildings onto solid ground to fund park?

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Thursday, June 19, 2008

- Can we expect to see an upzone in Chinatown given its location so near to downtown?
  - Brady warns that such a proposition would be met with resistance, and that it is south of Cesar E Chavez Avenue that an increase in density can be reasonably expected. In general, dialogue needs to begin with the adjacent neighborhoods and how new development might fit with their expectations.
- Does development of parking underground affect air right?
  - It is only development above ground that would be considered use of air right. Development under another building would require that "condo'ing" of the parcel take place. Currently, there is a surplus of air rights and lack of demand downtown.
- Would you recommend we make a model to convey our ideas for this project?
  - Absolutely. Remember that a majority of the population can't read a plan. However, the model would need to be at a large enough scale to be convincing.

### 1:30 PM STUDIO DISCUSSION: SIX BIG IDEAS

Interns and supporting EDAW staff discussed how best to vet alternatives. The group then identified the larger gestures that were shared across groups and the individual alternatives they presented the day before. Once a common gesture was agreed upon, the group further clarified its central meaning and possible interpretations. Moderators placed sticky notes on each scheme to help guide group in process. In crafting the "Big Ideas" interns expressed a desire to provide the client with distinctly different and clearly articulated concepts that could be conveyed and responded to easily, even if concepts may be complementary to each other.

The following six "big ideas" resulted. The group then re-divided into six groups based on interest in the concept to flush out the idea for presentation for the next day.

1. "Grandole'" aka linear gesture aka Grand Boulevard Redefined
2. Weave/Mesh/Stich/Hold Hands: Mending the urban fabric
3. The Big Park
4. Production (agriculture, energy, etc)
5. The Village
6. The River Linkage

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Friday, June 20, 2008

**7 AM BREAKFAST AT USC CAFETERIA**

**8 AM DEPART FOR STUDIO**

**8:30 AM WORK SESSION**

**10:45 AM DRY-RUN PRESENTATION AND REVIEW**

Interns presented a dry-run of the presentation and receive feedback from visiting reviewers.

**12:30 AM WRAP-UP AND PREP FOR PRESENTATION**

**1:00 PM PRESENTATIONS**

Reviewers in attendance:

Dan Cohen, Catellus Development Corporation

Brady Westwater, Downtown LA Neighborhood Council

Doug Failing, Caltrans District 7, Director

Cherri Devlin, EDAW

Phil Arnold, L.M. Scofield Co., CEO

Barbara Faga, EDAW-Miami, Senior Landscape Architect

Ralph Exxion, Director of ED

Dave Neubecker, Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)

Tina began by introducing the project area and the scope of the project. Alex then touched briefly on methods of analysis used and the nature of information and experts provided to them and on what topics. Finally the goal statement was read. The audience was then told that six different visions for the project site were going to be presented; each was intended to be viewed as either stand-alone or complementary projects. Each project team then introduced their projects. Following are the main characteristics and intentions of each project, followed by the feedback from panelists.

**THE CORRIDOR**

---

- Look to our freeway networks as method of greening the landscape
- Phasing over time to turn freeways into green corridors
- Springboard for other nodes
- Induced meandering – movement to collection spaces
- Topography to shape space, tucking in program
- Pull festivals to the river
- Create regional connectivity
- Potential proto-type

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Friday, June 20, 2008

### THE BOULEVARD

- Iconic and memorable destination
- Zone for public life
- Place of spectacle and expression
- Create "Bookends" to bring together the political character of El Pueblo and the artistic/cultural character of Water Hall
- Create opportunities to increase interaction between people of different socio-economic backgrounds
- Create a uniquely Angeleno Boulevard that brings pedestrians to the forefront
- City as a snapshot

### CITY COMMONS

- Multi-modal access and multidisciplinary focus
- Urban voids become a city common
- Combat heat islands
- Bringing in cultures/character of each neighborhood into center
- Edges: civic buildings become edge to fill in gaps and create gateways to surrounding districts
- Interior: park land to envelop civic buildings to isolate from danger while activating space

### RE-TEXTURING LOS ANGELES

- Many districts around LA have no effective connection
- How to re-weave?
- Recognize/utilize important corridors
  - Highways
  - Rivers
  - Existing open space
  - Typ LA downtown center
- 50-100 years later, our site as green spine to join the above elements together
- Inspiration from movement along highway itself. Turning the plan view perpendicular but with buildings not cars
- Mixed Use areas, generate life and atmosphere
- Utilize buildings as bridges

### THE HILLSIDE CAMPUS

- Massive availability of space
- Congestion

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Friday, June 20, 2008

- Consolidate parking
- Freeway directly to parking
- Ground plane, no cars
- High speed train corridor
- University Campus
- Generate through campus – studies shown Technology campus
- Pockets for festivals and people watching
- Fluid plan, regional and local
- Diagrams 30,60,90 years

## THE COMMON GROUND

- Prototype for LA and beyond
- Climate change
- LA County has fewest open space /capital
- Commercial/urban agricultural enterprises
- 36 freeways in LA
- Program only pad/bike/etc on linkages between districts (?)
- Food production/ energy production
- Phase 1 – food and energy
- Phase 2 – surface streets for animals, wildlife corridors, food production plus hubs for humans and wildlife
- Layers:
  - human grid,
  - wildlife grid,
  - agriculture,
  - high-speed transit,
  - energy production

Below is the feedback from panelists organized into general comments, followed by comments specific to each concept.

Panelists recognized and appreciated how all schemes addressed the broad themes of connectivity, movement, places of gathering, public realm, community, and sustainability, and how individual elements had the capacity to stand alone or be mixed and matched.

Panelists also pointed out design and programmatic aspects of the plan that needed work. In particular, panelists felt the edges of the site needed to be addressed in order to ensure a successful transition between the site and its context. They also felt it imperative that interns understand, convey and respond to scale in order to program and design appropriately, especially in regards to the 101 and park space. They additionally stressed that social context of the area

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Friday, June 20, 2008

was critical to programming decisions and project success – “Open space does not equal program”.

Regarding areas for further exploration, panelists shared additional comments:

- How might cap address larger issues humanity is facing - global warming
  - Convincing Angelenos to get out of cars?
- Consider how the project might grow identity and economy through expression of Los Angeles’ largely unrecognized assets - arts, culture and contemporary arts
- Angelenos adverse to using open space even when provided
  - Critical mass of program and users
  - Larger question of how to change attitudes
  - Macarthur Park as precedent
- Create Multi-level transit ways – potential to add additional modes within the ROW of the freeway?

Panelists then provided the following comments regarding the individual schemes:

### THE CORRIDOR

- How does it relate to River?
- Green space over parking – not feasible right now
- More plan diversity?

### THE BOULEVARD

- 101 is major entry point. If cut off, shift may impact other areas
- Why are people going to use your Boulevard – what is your niche that makes you more appealing than Grand Civic Park, etc?

### CITY COMMONS

- “Lot of land”
- Consider current pedestrian patterns
- Is it green to destroy millions of dollars worth of buildings?
  - Why not just add greenways and butterfly gardens? : )

### RE-TEXTURING LOS ANGELES

- Good viewsheds
- Legibility lost in some of the graphics
- Appreciate the diversity of elements at play
- Combines elements from multiple groups successfully
- Working with the existing context – strong idea

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Friday, June 20, 2008

THE HILLSIDE CAMPUS

- Missing inter-connectivity, don't quite understand
- Bold, but complicated
- Mixed community college rather than university
- Or, encourage small specialized colleges along boulevard

THE COMMON GROUND

- Don't quite understand the global view
- Homes will be displaced – challenge is: how to lighten the impact?
  - Intervene at small scale

**3:45 PM VISIT TO CITY HALL**

Interns make a trip with Simon Pastucha (Urban Design Studio) to City Hall's top floor and viewing deck to view their project area and the downtown landscape from a different perspective.

**5:30 PM DEPART FOR THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL**

**6:30 PM PICNIC DINNER AT THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL**

**8:00 PM OPENING NIGHT AT THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL**

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Monday, June 23, 2008

**7:00 AM BREAKFAST AT USC CAFETERIA**

**8:00 AM DEPART FOR STUDIO**

**9:00 AM STUDIO DISCUSSION: FINAL PRESENTATION STRATEGY**

EDAW staff and interns gathered to strategize for the up-coming week and in anticipation of the final presentation on Friday. After reviewing expected materials due on Friday, EDAW staff gave direction regarding immediate and long-term timeline. Friday's presentation and feedback indicated one major gap existed across all concepts - the "3<sup>rd</sup> dimension" in regards to the freeway cap. Further exploration of the freeway cap and what physical form it might take both underneath and over was integral to a complete presentation. Interns went on to diagram gestures and site decisions that were shared across concepts.

Debate continued regarding the concept of a "campus" environment and what it meant in this project. It was decided that further analysis was needed to clarify terms, identify precedents, address the traditional conflict between city and university around growth and redefine how/what a campus might be and the issues it might tackle over a millennium.

Next steps were then identified and sub-groups created to engage with master plan refinement, storyboard/narrative, graphics coordination, model building, and analysis.

**NOON LUNCH/STUDIO DISCUSSION: SUB-GROUP REPORT BACK**

The group met again to touch base on analysis progress. Major areas of discussion were circulation, open space, university precedents, planning context, and pedestrian circulation. The group then split again to tackle unresolved issues in the plan; and specifically, the translation of the group's ideas into physical form. Below, discussion points around these topics are outlined.

**CIRCULATION**

- Perception regarding street hierarchy - what is perceived as primary to outsiders may be secondary to community (e.g., Chinatown – Hill versus Broadway)
- On and off-ramps must be redefined to realistically create new project
  - All are identified in diagram, notes regarding congestion
  - "Super junctions" where and what?
  - Concept should lead transportation engineers, not vice versa
  - Options are open regarding recommendations, if framed correctly
    - 50s design of off/on-ramps unsuccessful, desire for change is there, \$ is not

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Monday, June 23, 2008

- Deletion of ramps should be accompanied by strategy to increase capacity elsewhere
  - Hope St could accommodate this congestion improve circulation
  - Alameda may provide appropriate location to delete ramp
- Phase to complement circulation changes
- Create “gateway” roads as well as physical structures
- Start with Master Plan at Build-Out – then work backwards
  - Create assumptions and story it out
- Traffic numbers have been consistent over [x] years because of transit ridership
- Opportunities to hide parking in topography?

## PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

- Diagram – existing pedestrian pathways
- Diagram – attraction and destination
- Diagram – sidewalk – [could not hear]

## OPEN SPACE

- Discussion on typology
  - “Texturing” – park space may take on various character depending on place
  - “Ambition” - how to retain
  - Reorient the hillside to match texturing?
  - Look to precedent:
    - Montmartre – the transition from a flat to steep topo potentially interpreted here
    - NY – every n/s boulevard ends in park

## PRECEDENTS

- New York University
- Portland State University
  - Work with existing grid
  - Edged by mixed use
  - Bisected by streetcar
- Newhaven, CT
- CC near downtown, village green and transit
- Kelvin Grove, Queensland
  - University plus campus in one area, mixed use, affordable housing, shops, lifestyle facilities etc.
  - Sustainable

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Monday, June 23, 2008

- Menominee River Valley, WI
  - Business Park Campus, infrastructure shared
  - Park as stormwater management – feeds to river
- Application to project
  - Pull existing into project (Sci-Arc has remote location here, etc)
  - NYU buildings NOT all adjacent
  - Provision of public amenities; hospitals, child care centers
  - All based on city grid, we have no existing base
    - Should we replace grid and move forward? = more flexibility?
    - V argues otherwise, topo demands diff treatment
    - Going beyond typical solutions e.g. connecting back grid

PLANS

- Other existing plans
  - LA River Master Plan – 1.3 billion dollars and improvements between Chinatown and 1<sup>st</sup> St.
  - Transportation Master Plans
    - Incorporate High Speed Rail design details
  - Neighborhood Cultural Connections
  - Ecological connections

**5:30 PM STUDIO DISCUSSION: PROGRESS REPORT**

[MIG representative not in attendance]

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Tuesday, June 24, 2008

**7:00 AM BREAKFAST AT USC CAFETERIA**

**8:00 AM DEPART FOR STUDIO**

**9:00 AM STUDIO DISCUSSION: BASE PLAN + NEXT STEPS**

The consolidated base plan is presented. The intent was to create a clear, legible foundation that is flexible and contextual. Major elements include a Campus Zone, including the El Pueblo, Church and School, a Grand Boulevard, and a Great Park. Elements are arranged to provide the flexibility needed to allow the site and design to accommodate the diversity of concepts contained in the six alternatives, as well as allow for changes over time.

Also discussed was the outline for Friday's final presentation. Planned components include scope of project, issues analysis, project area context, vision statement, design process, diagrams, master plan, phasing and next steps. While work continues on detailing the base plan with elements from the six alternatives, the team will move ahead with the development of other products for the final presentation. These included hand sketches, photo simulations, sketch-up modeling and sections.

Concerns and questions:

- Too much focus on the church?
- Should campus be concentrated in one area
- Presentation should emphasize the stakeholder input, pre, during and post-program

**10:00 AM STUDIO WORK SESSION**

Teams concentrate on completing their discrete tasks while collaborating with other groups on overlapping elements.

**NOON LUNCH**

**5:00 PM STUDIO DISCUSSION: PROGRESS REPORT**

Each group provided a report-back to talk about progress, convey problem areas and get feedback from the entire team.

**SITE PLAN**

The team dedicated to developing the site plan has worked to clarify site plan elements to the point that they can be passed along for further detailing from other team members. This has been done so far with the central park area along with the building fabric. Feedback from the rest of the team:

## SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Tuesday, June 24, 2008

- Civic Center Park - infill current open space with building to eliminate any duplication of styles between the two parks
- Clarify beginning/end or approach to the park, including resolution to the spaghetti
- Use of "eyebrows" to resolve site at front and back
  - Could park be pulled to edge of gold line? Bring rail users into view corridor and park experience

## STORYBOARDING

The intent is to style the presentation to invoke the drama of a movie, introducing the characters (site, context, people), building to climax (illustrating the challenges), and then providing resolution (matching identified challenges with resolving gestures).

## GRAPHICS

### Slide template

- Color issues? Can't see logo at bottom
- Should template to reflect presentation environment of Caltrans plaza?
- In process

### Figure Ground

- Block patterns - 1888
- Comments: highlight changes, animate between images, pump up contrast

### Land Use diagrams

- regional and site area

### Regional Diagrams and Phasing

- Mega-region, region, highway and river hydrological systems (plan and section)

### Sections

- Existing sections pulled
- Additional must be designed
- Shifting planes needed to be resolved
- Section cuts based on view sheds, pinch points
- Structuring open space – balance

EDAW Intern Program 2008

**SUMMARY OF EVENTS**

Wednesday, June 25, 2008

**7:00 AM BREAKFAST AT USC CAFETERIA**

**8:00 AM DEPART FOR STUDIO**

**9:00 AM STUDIO WORK**

Teams concentrate on completing their discrete tasks while collaborating with other groups on overlapping elements. This day's focus is also on completing the script for the presentation, and on formatting the images and presentation template.

**NOON LUNCH**

**1:00 PM STUDIO WORK**

The two primary groups (Analysis/Graphics, and Storyboarding/Presentation) continued to finalize their respective portions for inclusion into the final presentation. Graphics work and script writing continued throughout the day.

Additionally, several urban designers worked on various components of the site model, including buildings, the Master Plan overlay, and additional design features.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Thursday, June 26, 2008

**7:00 AM BREAKFAST AT USC CAFETERIA**

**8:00 AM DEPART FOR STUDIO**

**9:00 AM STUDIO WORK**

Teams continued to work on the PowerPoint presentation by finalizing graphics, refining the script, and completing the Master Plan.

**11:00 AM POWERPOINT DRY-RUN (GRAPHICS ONLY)**

This presentation provided the first look at the organization, content, and flow of the PowerPoint being prepared for the public presentation on Friday evening. The slides presented the format of the content, focusing on the layout and readability of the various graphics and text. Comments centered on the following over-arching principles:

- Ensure that maps are consistently oriented to North
- Add labels and context maps to sections to enhance readability for viewers
- Make regional context maps more similar – highlighting freeways with similar lineweights, etc.

**NOON LUNCH**

**1:00 PM PRESENTATION REVISIONS**

The project team worked to complete drafts of the script and graphics presentation based on feedback received at the 11:00 run-through. Of critical importance was developing a working title for the project, which the team began calling “Park 101”.

**2:30 PM POWERPOINT DRY-RUN W/SCRIPT**

**Overall comments on the presentation:**

- Thank sponsors, dignitaries present
- Provide background/key facts in handout
- Too abstract and brief – there is time for more discussion and detail
- Needs to be inspiring to pass the baton of ownership
- “Transform the trench into a place of possibilities”

**Specifics to flow and organization and content:**

- Why are we here? Where is the site? Where is our project area?
- Need to emphasize the effort, name and purpose
- Describe and show the SWOT analysis – show the good and the bad
- What was impact of what you learned from interviewing people on the street?

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Thursday, June 26, 2008

- Show studio work sessions, site tour, people and works-in-progress

**Highlight main principle taken from each of the 6 design concepts:**

- Green ribbon beginning downtown
- Central gathering space
- Radical shift in accessibility and mobility
- Introducing a fine-grain of development
- Environmental sustainability/connections
- A "line of focus" to create a strong edge

**Direction for Master Plan presentation:**

- Build in a story for each before-and-after photosimulation (imagine...)
- Detail the land uses and zones of the plan diagram. Add labels to identify key landmarks and bearings.
- Describe building prototypes, especially ideas behind vertical precedents. Explain the relationships of building types to their contextual surroundings.
- Show a land use Venn Diagram to illustrate the land use calculations (commercial, residential, office, park space)
- Clarify the role of the agricultural/ecosystem feature of the plan.

**Regarding the final wrap-up:**

- Distinguish the phasing plan with a plan-view diagram clearly showing phase areas.
- Emphasize smarter, green mobility as a component of future expansion throughout Los Angeles. Ensure that colors and diagram elements reflect the green nature of the project.
- Replace quote from Tom Bradley with comments from Doug Failing, Gail Goldberg
- Expound upon vision as opportunity to create world-renowned destination that can educate future generations and inspire locals alike

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Friday, June 27, 2008

**8:00 AM STUDIO WORK**

Teams continued to work on the PowerPoint presentation by finalizing graphics, refining the script, and completing the Master Plan. Changes focused on responding to comments from Thursday's run-through with EDAW staff.

**11:00 AM PRESENTATION REHEARSAL**

This rehearsal provided a second run-through of Friday's presentation. Gaurav and Mike provided an introduction and set the stage for the interns' presentation. The interns were grouped in sets of two to four people, who covered a series of the slides. Each person spoke individually yet the combination of speakers resulted in a presentation that was well-choreographed and organized. Comments from those in observance focused on:

- Complemented interns on flow, organization, and material.
- Reminded interns to speak clearly/annunciate, and make contact with the audience. Demonstrate passion and enthusiasm!
- Be sure to add labels to enhance readability for viewers
- Add photos of field trips/positive LA experiences

**NOON LUNCH**

**1:00 PM MODEL COMPLETION**

Interns and staff worked to complete the model for Park 101. At a 1" = 40' scale, the model presented a three-dimensional representation of the project site and Master Plan.

**2:00 PM DEPART FOR USC**

**3:00 PM STAGE/PRESENTATION SET-UP**

**5:00 PM FINAL PRESENTATION TO STEERING COMMITTEE AND PUBLIC**

**Comments on the presentation:**

Jessica Worthington McLean:

- Lessons learned are to put planning in realistic and political context.
- The design is surprisingly do-able!
- Enamored with 101 swings in our downtown.

Hito Shitabe:

- Historically has been struck by LA's lack of a sense of connection to environment, which this project strives to recognize and introduce.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Friday, June 27, 2008

Doug Failing

- The interns listened to stakeholders and the steering committee – they were not interested in hearing themselves talk but in listening to others' ideas.
- Sees blend of six original concepts
- Likes the meandering design and the fluid motion that is adaptive to the site
- Appreciates economic aspect
- There is enough realism in the design and concepts to be able to respond to this challenge!

Gail Goldberg

- The interns captured the spirit of Los Angeles – capturing opportunity where none seems possible.
- The process has begun a conversation to change a city known for its maze of freeways into a city known for beautiful parkways.
- We accept the interns' challenge to create a pedestrian-friendly environment!

Joe Brown

- John Lennon would be proud – this is imagination brought to life. LA can be a leading city in a global trend towards environmental sustainability and pedestrian activity. LA is suited to such transformational thinking as presented here!

The presentation concluded with thanks for the program sponsors and steering committee. Vaughan, Gaurav, and Mike thanked the audience. The program ended at 6:30pm.

## **IV. TASK ORDER**

**District No.:** D07-01

**Date:** June 10, 2008

**Contractor:** Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc. (MIG)

**MIG Project No.:** 2929.18

**Contract No:** 74A0244

**Project Title:** Downtown Los Angeles US 101 Cap Concept Study

**EA: 606836**

## **I. PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION**

Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc. (MIG) consultant services will be used to assist in engaging stakeholders in a community-based visioning process for development of an innovative, context sensitive, urban design concept based upon a previously studied project proposed to cap the US 101 Freeway in Downtown Los Angeles; a key focus will be on providing opportunities for transit oriented development (TOD) adjacent to the largest interregional multi-modal transit center (Union Station) in Southern California.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Downtown Los Angeles US 101 Cap Concept Study has been proposed by EDAW for their 2008 Internship Program; a program that is in its 27<sup>th</sup> year of bringing students of planning and design from all over the world to work in real-world settings involving issues of regional, national, and/or international significance. The study limits are defined as US 101, between Los Angeles Street to Main Street; with a broader area one-half mile in width between SR 110 and the Los Angeles River, just west of I-10. The proximity to the largest interregional multi-modal hub in Southern California makes this study area particularly ideal for urban revitalization that focuses upon TOD.

The purpose of the concept study is to develop a community-based, context-sensitive urban design concept based upon a previously studied freeway cap in the heart of downtown Los Angeles. The study capitalizes upon a unique opportunity to bring a wide range of stakeholders together for a visioning process involving urban revitalization and TOD. The visioning process will address community needs in the context of major transportation infrastructure improvements needed along US 101, as well as the adjacent street system in downtown.

Outreach activities are intended to achieve early “buy-in” by the surrounding community by using a “bottoms up” approach. A cap over US 101 in downtown Los Angeles reconnects the downtown area and adds a highly desired open space, urban environment while enabling Caltrans to make capacity and operational improvements that might otherwise be virtually impossible to obtain public support.

In addition to the benefits to regional transportation, communities that benefit most from the proposed cap concept are the densely urbanized and park-poor communities of inner Los Angeles. The cap reconnects the civic, cultural, and financial cores of the present-day modern Los Angeles with the City’s historic origins at El Pueblo, Chinatown and Union Station. The proposed outreach activities intend to actively engage communities, as well as a wide spectrum of civic and business leaders. This effort will seek community involvement in the adjacent, predominantly Hispanic and

## **Downtown Los Angeles US 101 Freeway - Cap Concept Study**

---

Asian communities of Chinatown, Angelino Heights, El Pueblo, Boyle Heights, Civic Center, and Little Tokyo, which together are home to over 30,000 residents (almost a third of whom live in poverty).

Following a period of community consultation, an intensive, two-week public workshop will culminate in students producing an original urban design proposal comprising a pragmatic blend of values identified by stakeholders. The proposed concept will be presented at upcoming planning and business conferences in order to receive critically needed exposure to a wide-range of audiences. For example, the concept will be presented later this year to business and development industry leaders worldwide, in partnership with the Urban Land Institute (ULI), by means of an exhibition at the ULI Global Cities Pavilion. The final report to be produced by EDAW will propose strategic and physical designs for the concept, as well as potential funding and implementation mechanisms.

### **CHALLENGES**

- **Heavy congestion/bad air, but little hope for fixing the problems.** Los Angeles has some of the worst traffic congestion in the nation, as well as some of the worst air pollution; yet we also have some of the biggest challenges in the State in terms of building major transportation improvements because of right-of-way impacts in a highly developed area.
- **Downtown freeways are major "bottlenecks" for interregional and regional travel.** A number of major interregional and regional freeways form a "loop" around Downtown (US 101, I-110, I-10, I-5, I-710, SR 60). It is a hub, with "spokes" in which most travelers in the LA area drive through; about 75 percent of the travel on these facilities in Downtown are "pass through" trips.
- **Major transportation improvements needed:**
  - **Connection of northern terminus of I-110 Transitway to the western terminus of I-10 Transitway (El Monte Busway) at Union Station.** Although Caltrans and Los Angeles County Transportation Metropolitan Authority (Metro) recognize there is tremendous regional benefit to connecting these transitways, Caltrans' initial engineering document evaluating alternatives for this indicated that community impacts and political issues are among key reasons that make this "infeasible" to implement.
  - **Reduce US 101 "bottleneck" and improve throughput.** Caltrans has been interested in making improvements to US 101 in Downtown, but impacts on adjacent properties and political issues are among the key reasons for not being able to move forward with fixing operational deficiencies and improving throughput.

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

- **Proximity to largest multimodal transportation station (Union Station) in Southern California.** The proposed cap would provide an opportunity for major TOD adjacent to the largest and most significant multimodal transit station in Southern California.
- **Freeway cap provides unique opportunity for community "buy in" for major transportation projects.** A cap over the freeway would help Caltrans to mitigate most of the impacts (and increase political viability) for the proposed transportation projects needed for US 101 in central downtown.
- **Unique characteristics of downtown would induce a wide range of funding opportunities supporting TOD.** Transportation options provided at Union station could support significant densities in the surrounding area, and the resulting development would

provide ample opportunities to tap into private funds and for Metro and/or Caltrans to pursue public-private, joint-use development. Also, Caltrans could receive revenues from air rights leasing of development on the freeway cap.

## GOALS

- **Achieve sustainable urban growth by linking statewide transportation objectives with community land uses.** Obtain a common long-range land use and transportation vision for the Downtown segment of US 101 among decision-making stakeholders by working collaboratively to realize local, regional, and interregional goals and objectives. Known as the study's "Steering Committee," these stakeholders include partner agencies, such as Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), City of Los Angeles, Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and California Department of Transportation (District 7), as well as key community groups and businesses (*see Attachment 1A*).
  
- **Create a framework for future transportation and land use planning activities.** Use the long-range visioning process to establish a framework for future planning efforts to ensure that the near- and mid-range land use and transportation plans are consistent with, and help build towards, the vision and support:
  1. Better integration of transportation planning and land use decisions; and
  2. Full public engagement throughout the project development process.

The proposed freeway cap will provide previously separated local communities with new connections between recently constructed development projects to and with key historic areas. Specific benefits to the communities and to users of the transportation system include:

1. Provision of new, improved and innovative transit solutions and related opportunities for TOD;
2. Conceptual design for replacement of existing obsolete over-cross bridges together with new "green" community transportation infrastructure;
3. Generation of new park and open space areas downtown not otherwise available;
4. Support for infill development, mixed use development and affordable housing development in and around the project area; and
5. Stimulation of opportunities for related urban revitalization, including improved pedestrian and bicycle mobility, street connections and traffic calming features, and improved connections to new schools in the area.

### Project Objectives

Objectives of this proposal are:

1. To solicit a wide range of input from the community early in the planning process; a planning concept that reconnects the communities.
2. To conduct a visioning process in order to assist civic leaders, city planners and transportation officials in further advancing urban revitalization goals into the future.
3. To provide deliverables that will embody a creative long-range vision of achievable ideas for sustainable urban development that can be set into motion by a diverse range of influential business and community leaders, and in doing so, enable Caltrans and partner agencies to build the major transportation infrastructure needed

at the heart of the interregional system to relieve some of the worst traffic congestion in the nation.

## **PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS**

Caltrans Contract Managers	Tom Neumann, Office of Community Planning (916) 651-6882 Terri Bridges, Office of Community Planning (916) 654-3419
Partner Agency Contacts	See Attachment 1B
Caltrans District Contract Coordinator and Project Manager	Linda Taira, Corridor/Special Studies Branch (213) 897-0813
Contractor Project Manager	Joan Chaplick, Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc. (MIG) (510) 845-7549 Pat McLaughlin, MIG, (626) 744-9872 Esmeralda Garcia, MIG, (626) 744-9872

## ***II. Scope of Services (for Two Week Workshop/Series of Charrettes)***

### **TASKS**

The contractor shall execute the following tasks for an intensive 2-week visioning and concept design exercise that will be held from June 15<sup>th</sup> through June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at Caltrans' District 7 headquarters in Los Angeles, drawing on the skills of 25 student interns from design and planning schools all over the world, bringing an international perspective and new focus to the issue (EDAW used a 2-stage intern selection process to identify the most qualified participants from up to 300 applicants). Caltrans District 7 headquarters is located at 100 South Main Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012 and the series.

#### **TASK 1 – STAFF/OTHER SUPPORT AND CHARRETTE PARTICIPATION**

*The following activities will take place at Caltrans District 7 Headquarters (100 South Main Street, Los Angeles, CA).*

##### ***Sub-task 1.1 – Staff/Other Support and Documentation (8 hours per day for 15 days)***

- Support EDAW team in initially setting up the interactive design studio setting prior to the 2-week period on June 14<sup>th</sup> for 8 hours (from approximately 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM).
- Support EDAW team for outreach related activities throughout the 2-week period and document all outreach activities every day during the 2-week workshop/series of charrettes for approximately 8 hours per day.
- Provide refreshments (snacks and drinks) each morning and afternoon over the 2-week workshop/series of charrettes, as well as refreshments for the three key media events during the two weeks.

##### ***Sub-task 1.2 - Kick-off Media Event (1 meeting – 4 hours)***

## **Downtown Los Angeles US 101 Freeway - Cap Concept Study**

---

- Assist/support kick-off event on Sunday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, in which the Steering Committee introduces the concept study to the workshop participants and collectively confirm the goals and objectives of the study. This effort is expected to include some preparation time and the event itself, which is from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM.
- Print 100 copies of a 2-sided color handout prepared by EDAW and 60 copies of 10-15 page 11x17 color briefing packages prepared by EDAW, which will have background and contextual information, e.g., description of concept study goals, objectives, purpose and need, as well as historic maps, council districts, neighborhood councils, stakeholders, base maps, summary diagrams. Since materials will have the EDAW reference information (e.g., logo, etc.), it is not expected to result in “product liability” for MIG.

### **Sub-task 1.3 – Charrette/Panel Discussion (1 meeting - 4 hours)**

- Facilitate panel discussion on Wednesday, June 18<sup>th</sup> relating to local context and demographics.

## **TASK 2 - TOWN HALL MEETING**

*A single community workshop on Friday, June 20<sup>th</sup> will be held at Caltrans District 7 headquarters (100 South Main Street, Los Angeles, CA) that introduces the concept study to community stakeholders in a setting akin to a ‘town hall meeting’. The goals of the meeting/workshop will be to document local knowledge, gather business and community members’ perspectives on local issues as well as related neighborhood concerns, elicit expectations the community has of the concept study, discuss the opportunities and constraints, generate ideas and ultimately arrive at a shared vision.*

### **Sub-task 2.1 (1 meeting – 4 hours)**

Assist EDAW team in facilitating the Town Hall meeting on Friday, June 20<sup>th</sup> with 50-70 community and charrette participants, e.g., help provide all presentation materials; equipment; and recommended “the message” for stakeholders; and prepare meeting notes. This effort is expected to involve some preparation time and the event itself, which is from 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM.

## **TASK 3 – FINAL DAY “WRAP-UP” EVENT**

*Assist EDAW in facilitating a final “wrap-up” event on Friday, June 27<sup>th</sup> involving media, which will be held on the last day at Caltrans District 7 headquarters (100 South Main Street, Los Angeles, CA). Facilitation includes helping participants in preparing final presentations to the stakeholders. The shared vision will be showcased at a presentation to be given at 5:00 PM. A number of speakers will provide comments and ideas for “next steps”, etc.*

### **Sub-task 3.1 (1 meeting – 8 hours)**

Assist EDAW team in facilitating an event on Friday, June 27<sup>th</sup> with 50-70 community and charrette participants, e.g., help provide all presentation materials; equipment; coordinate logistics for speakers assist in developing topics and recommended “the message” for stakeholders; and prepare meeting notes. This effort is expected to include providing assistance for a dry run of the presentation at 11:00 AM and for the final presentation by students at 5:00 PM; the program will conclude by 6:00 PM.

## **TASK 4 - PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND FINAL PRODUCT**

### **Sub-task 4.1 - Project Management (2 meetings)**

Assist in managing outreach activities, as defined in this Task Proposal. Duties will include participating in public events, ensuring quality and timeliness of deliverables, submitting monthly invoices and progress reports, etc.

### **Sub-task 4.2 – Wrap up Documentation and Final Report**

- Prepare a report documenting the activities and providing recommendations to Caltrans for “next steps” for outreach related efforts to support implementation of the “shared vision.”
- Provide outreach related documentation needed in support of EDAW’s final report for the concept design. The entire public engagement process will be described in the final report; the report will provide detailed information on the process leading to the concept design, which represents a “shared vision”; and Steering Committee recommendations.

### **Expected Results**

The expected results of this outreach effort are:

1. Engaging the stakeholders early in the planning process will result in greater public “buy in” and increased credibility of agencies; ensuring that the proposal has “legs” in the long run.
2. The concept study is sufficiently narrow in focus so as to enable the production of visioning proposals of the highest quality. The specificity of proposals will complement existing urban revitalization efforts already underway by local officials.
3. Leadership provided by the Steering Committee from the outset will help focus in on the most effective concept strategies; ongoing participation of the Steering Committee will result in “buy in” of the study recommendations.

## **DELIVERABLES**

### **TASK 1 – STAFF/OTHER SUPPORT AND CHARRETTE PARTICIPATION**

- Supporting materials for outreach related events and activities. This will include refreshments (snacks and drinks) each day in the morning and afternoon, as well as for three key media events during the two week period.
- Documentation of all stakeholder meetings and events during the two weeks

### **TASK 2 – TOWN HALL MEETING**

- Supporting materials for meeting
- Documentation of meeting, e.g., list of attendees, presentation materials, comments received

### **TASK 3 – FINAL DAY “WRAP-UP” EVENT**

- Supporting materials for meeting
- Documentation of meeting, e.g., list of attendees, presentation materials, comments received

### **TASK 4 – PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND FINAL REPORT**

- Monthly invoices and progress reports
- Documentation relating to direct expenditures and other contract related information
- Supporting materials for outreach related activities for conferences
- Draft and final report describing outreach activities

### **III. Reports and/or Meetings**

- A. Submit progress reports as noted in the Contract under Exhibit A.1.1.5. and Exhibit D.6.A.
- B. Task Order's Project Manager shall meet with the Caltrans' Contract Manager and Caltrans' Project Coordinator as needed to discuss progress on the outreach support for the concept design study, as noted in the Contract under Exhibit A,1.H.

### **IV. Period of Performance**

Work under this proposal shall begin on **Tuesday, June 10, 2008** and terminate on **Friday, August 1, 2008**.

### **V. Project Schedule**

Schedule of tasks and costs attached on separate page.

### **VI. Cost**

- A. Contractor shall be paid for actual hours worked in accordance with Contract No. 74A0244, Attachment 1 to Exhibit B, "Cost Breakdown;" Attachment 4 to "Cost Proposal Estimate Part B;" and with the Contractor's proposed project cost estimate attached to this Task Proposal (Attachment 4).
- B. In addition, the Contractor shall be paid for actual direct costs, other than salary costs, that are identified in Attachment 2, pursuant to Exhibit B of Contract No. 74A0244.
- C. The total amount payable by Caltrans under this proposal shall not exceed **\$ 55,058**.

### **VII. Requesting Project Manager**

The requesting Caltrans District Project Manager is:

Name: Linda Taira, Corridor and Special Studies  
Address: District 7 Planning, 100 S. Main Street, MS 16  
Phone No.: 213-897-0813

## **VIII. SIGNATURES**

I certify that this proposal and attachments comply with the provisions of Contract No. 74A0244, are necessary for the satisfactory completion of the product(s) contracted for, and that sufficient funding has been encumbered to pay for this work.

---

### **Tom Neumann**

Contract Manager  
Caltrans

I certify that this proposal and attachments are within the scope of the project and are necessary for the successful completion of the project.

---

### **Joan Chaplick**

Project Manager  
Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc.

**Downtown Los Angeles US 101 Freeway - Cap Concept Study**

---

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this proposal has been executed under the provisions of Contract No. 74A0244 between the State of California, Department of Transportation, and Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc. (MIG). By signature below, the parties hereto agree that all terms and conditions of this proposal and Contract No. 74A0244 shall be in full force and effect.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MOORE IACOFANO GOLTSMAN, INC

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Tom Neumann**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Joan Chaplick**

Title: Chief, Office of Community  
Planning

Title: Project Manager

Date: \_\_\_\_\_, 2008

Date: \_\_\_\_\_, 2008

Attachments:

- 1A. Steering Committee
- 1B. Partner Agencies
- 2. Schedule
- 3. Picture/Map of Project Area
- 4. MIG Cost Estimate

**Attachment 1: Attachments 1A and 1B, Steering Committee and partner agency staff, are provided on separate pages**

The stakeholders list is evolving to include or eliminate stakeholders as the public engagement process is carried out:

**Still to be confirmed (TBC);**  
Los Angeles Times Correspondent  
Legal Council/Landuse Attorney

Other stakeholders include:  
Russell Brown ([russ.hdbid@gmail.com](mailto:russ.hdbid@gmail.com)), Executive Director of the Historic Downtown Improvement District  
Shiraz Tangri ([stangri10@yahoo.com](mailto:stangri10@yahoo.com)), chair of the Downtown LA Neighborhood Council land use committee  
Kim Benjamin, President of the Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council

**ATTACHMENT 2:**

Draft day-to-day schedule for the duration of the 2-week workshop/series of charrettes.

**ATTACHMENT 3:**

**PROJECT AREAS PICTURES AND MAP ATTACHED.**

**ATTACHMENT 4:**

**MIG COST PROPOSAL.**