

TUESDAY, AUGUST 20, 2002

An adjourned meeting of the Council of the City of Burbank was held in the Council Chamber of the City Hall, 275 East Olive Avenue, on the above date. The meeting was called to order at 5:13 p.m. by Mr. Laurell, Mayor.

STUDY SESSION

Present- - - - Council Members Golonski, Murphy, Vander Borgh and Laurell.

Absent - - - - Council Member Ramos.

Also Present - Mr. Ovrom, City Manager; Ms. Scott, Chief Assistant City Attorney; and, Mrs. Campos, City Clerk.

Downtown Revitalization Joint Study Session with the Redevelopment Agency  
Mrs. Georgino, Community Development Director, explained that a comprehensive strategy for revitalization of the downtown is being studied because it has been identified as one of the Council's top ten goals for the past several years, and that the City and Agency have made considerable investments in the downtown, with the two most recent being the new AMC project (\$9 million investment) and the old police block (\$10 million investment).

Next, Mrs. Georgino identified the elements which make downtowns work, and discussed in detail the following components which the comprehensive strategy will focus on: land use, architecture, and design guidelines; public infrastructure; market, demographics, retail leasing strategy, identity, and balance; key development opportunities; public investment; wayfinding; financing; and, staffing. She stated market research had been conducted in order to create a vision for the downtown and provide certainty for the future which included key focus group sessions and stakeholder outreach, and discussed the conclusions of a market analysis conducted by Keiser Marston & Associates.

Mrs. Georgino noted the downtown has different markets and identities and discussed three distinct districts in detail: the Civic District, the Village District and the Mall District. She stated it was important to build on the existing strengths in the downtown and outlined them as follows: location; civic presence; use of public buildings to anchor districts and lend identity; market penetration; public investment; infrastructure, including a Parking Management Plan and streetscape and design attributes; overall land use site plan; and, implementation of zoning, building codes and design guidelines that foster mixed-use projects. With regard to existing challenges, she discussed land use and building obsolescence, fragmented/absentee ownerships, major vacancies, the Magnolia frontage on the Mall, market share (Mall v. Empire Center), and a lack of unified vision, including

identity, wayfinding, lack of retail strategy, lack of a housing plan and lack of financing/incentives to deal with key challenges.

Mrs. Georgino discussed the staff's proposed comprehensive strategy and follow-up programs beginning with the development of additional markets for the downtown besides restaurants/entertainment, and the need for additional research to identify and capture the media/media related employment sector for a daytime consumer base through increased regional marketing and a diversified retail strategy. With regard to the need to attract quality tenants/developers for downtown vacancies, she highlighted a leasing strategy, tenant incentive program for the San Fernando Boulevard vacancies, potential developers for multiple buildings, recruiting and supporting mixed-use developers and encouraging adaptive re-use of property. She discussed a Parking Management Plan that includes installation of "smart parking technology" in all public parking structures and the need to facilitate the flow of people around the Mall District to the Village District through a wayfinding strategy, suggesting the creation of "Village Drive" along First Street to facilitate the flow of traffic around the Mall to the Village District.

Next, Mrs. Georgino stated the need to recapture downtown non-senior urban dwellers by encouraging the development of quality housing diversity, and discussed the housing opportunities at the Old Police Block Site and four projects identified in the housing study being conducted by RTKL. She suggested the redesign and restructuring of the stakeholders and downtown marketing and promotions district through investigating the transition of the Business Improvement District (BID) from a tenant-based BID to a property-based BID, noting the necessity to create a stakeholders association that is more reflective of the district and more collaborative, in addition to examining the City's role in staffing the downtown district.

Finally, Mrs. Georgino summarized staff's recommendations as follows: conduct more demographic research on the daytime population; develop marketing materials for retail-leasing program; focused coordination and promotion on special events in the downtown; continue working with the downtown marketing consultant; assist the Mall with repositioning/revitalization; work with the Parking Management Committee to develop a Parking Management Plan; prepare drawings and bid specifications for the wayfinding program; initiate the transition from a tenant-based BID to a property-based BID; return with a new downtown staffing proposal; development a new tenant incentive

program and funding mechanism; create the design framework for new development and redevelopment of vacant storefronts; work with the Council on downtown housing strategy; complete studies and return to the Council with recommendation for "Village Drive"; and, return with a comprehensive downtown revitalization budget proposal.

The Council noted and filed this report.

6:09 P.M.            The Downtown Revitalization Joint Study Session with the  
Adjournment        Redevelopment Agency was adjourned at this time.

APPROVED OCTOBER 1, 2002

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Margarita Campos, City Clerk

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Mayor of the Council  
of the City of Burbank