

AN ADVISORY SERVICES PANEL REPORT

North Hollywood Los Angeles, California



Urban Land
Institute

North Hollywood Los Angeles, California

Transit and the Arts in NoHo: Building a Vibrant Community

January 25–30, 2004
An Advisory Services Panel Report

ULI—the Urban Land Institute
1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, N.W.
Suite 500 West
Washington, D.C. 20007-5201

About ULI—the Urban Land Institute

ULI—the Urban Land Institute is a non-profit research and education organization that promotes responsible leadership in the use of land in order to enhance the total environment.

The Institute maintains a membership representing a broad spectrum of interests and sponsors a wide variety of educational programs and forums to encourage an open exchange of ideas and sharing of experience. ULI initiates research that anticipates emerging land use trends and issues and proposes creative solutions based on that research; provides advisory services; and publishes a wide variety of materials to disseminate information on land use and development.

Established in 1936, the Institute today has more than 20,000 members and associates from 70 countries, representing the entire spectrum of the land use and development disciplines. Professionals rep-

resented include developers, builders, property owners, investors, architects, public officials, planners, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, academics, students, and librarians. ULI relies heavily on the experience of its members. It is through member involvement and information resources that ULI has been able to set standards of excellence in development practice. The Institute has long been recognized as one of America's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development.

This Advisory Services panel report is intended to further the objectives of the Institute and to make authoritative information generally available to those seeking knowledge in the field of urban land use.

Richard M. Rosan
President

©2004 by ULI—the Urban Land Institute
1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, N.W.
Suite 500 West
Washington, D.C. 20007-5201

All rights reserved. Reproduction or use of the whole or any part of the contents without written permission of the copyright holder is prohibited.

ULI Catalog Number: ASH068

Cover illustration by: David Molina of Creative Capers Entertainment, Inc. ©Summit Design International, LLC.

Text photos by Zane Segal.

About ULI Advisory Services

The goal of ULI's Advisory Services Program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 400 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for issues such as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfields redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's Advisory Services.

Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the panel topic and screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI panel teams are interdisciplinary and typically include several developers, a landscape architect, a planner, a market analyst, a finance expert, and others with the niche expertise needed to address a given project. ULI teams provide a holistic look at development problems. Each panel is chaired by a respected ULI member with previous panel experience.

The agenda for a five-day panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing day composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives; a day of hour-long interviews of typically 50 to 75 key community representatives; and two days of formulating recommendations. Many long nights of discussion precede the panel's conclusions. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel's visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consideration, partic-

ipants in ULI's five-day panel assignments are able to make accurate assessments of a sponsor's issues and to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A major strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw on the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academicians, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services panel report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

ULI Program Staff

Rachelle L. Levitt
Executive Vice President, Policy and Practice

Mary Beth Corrigan
Vice President, Advisory Services

Nancy Zivitz Sussman
Senior Associate, Advisory Services

Nicholas Gabel
Associate, Advisory Services

Jason Bell
Panel Coordinator, Advisory Services

Yvonne Stanton
Administrative Assistant

Nancy H. Stewart
Director, Book Program

Duke Johns
Manuscript Editor

Betsy VanBuskirk
Art Director

Kim Rusch
Graphics

Martha Loomis
Desktop Publishing Specialist/Graphics

Diann Stanley-Austin
Director, Publishing Operations

Acknowledgments

On behalf of ULI, the panel extends its sincere appreciation to the panel cosponsors: the Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles (CRA) and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). Without the vision, leadership, and commitment to collaboration exhibited by CRA CEO Bud Ovrum and MTA CEO Roger Snoble, this panel would never have gotten off the ground. The guidance and insight provided by Los Angeles County Board Supervisor and MTA Board Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky were indispensable to the panel, as were the energy and commitment to the North Hollywood redevelopment effort evidenced by City Councilman Tom LaBonge and CRA Commissioners Shu Kwan Woo and John Schafer. The continued involvement of all these officials will be essential to the success of this effort, and, in the panel's view, the community is lucky to have such determined, dedicated, and skilled leaders.

Special thanks are extended to the CRA North Hollywood office staff led by David Riccitiello, and particularly to Robert Fazio, who skillfully managed all facets of the panel project, as well as to their counterparts at the MTA working under the direction of Carol Inge. In particular, the panel would like to thank Nelia Custodio for her thoughtful guidance as the MTA representative. The CRA and MTA staffs worked tirelessly to prepare a comprehensive briefing book for the panel; to arrange for tours and meetings with local business owners, theater managers, and other community leaders; and to orchestrate one of the best community outreach efforts ever undertaken in preparation for a ULI panel. Special recognition goes to Michelle Banks-Ordone, Daniel Rios, William Mason, and Julia Stewart of the CRA staff and to Kevin Michel, Kathleen Sanchez, and Lynn Goldsmith of the MTA staff for their invaluable assistance. The quality of the market analysis, urban design, and community facilitation services provided by consultants was also impressive,

with the work of Rosalie Udewitz, Robert Goldman, Patricia Smith, John Kaliski and Michael Wells, Sandra Kulli, and Susan Whittaker all making a substantial contribution to the panel's understanding of the issues.

The panel was quite taken with the eloquent and perceptive input it received from members of the North Hollywood community. In pictures, personal conversations, letters, and written comments, residents of all ages and backgrounds, business owners and employees, artists, community activists, and others openly shared their hopes, concerns, and expectations for their community. More than 60 stakeholders took the time to meet with panel members. Their energy, optimism, and commitment to meeting the challenges facing North Hollywood were inspiring. Clearly, North Hollywood is a special place in large measure because of the creativity and determination of the people who live and work there.

The panel is grateful to the Universal City/North Hollywood Chamber of Commerce for the participation of Bruce Spiegel, and to the Mid-town North Hollywood Neighborhood Council for the involvement of Diann Corral and Eric Reuveni. These are two key organizations that work to coordinate and channel the energy of the community.

Two members of the panel, Mark Feinknopf and Cynthia Moe, copresidents of Sacred Space in Atlanta, were unable to complete the week owing to a family emergency. The panel was sorry to lose their expertise and perspective but was grateful to have the benefit of their insights and written comments in its initial deliberations.

Finally, the panel wishes to thank ULI Trustee Wayne Ratkovich, who was instrumental in the conception of this panel assignment.

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| ULI Panel Members and Project Staff | 6 |
| Foreword: The Panel’s Assignment and Summary of Recommendations | 7 |
| Market Potential | 10 |
| Planning and Development Strategies | 19 |
| Implementation | 31 |
| Conclusion | 40 |
| About the Panel | 42 |

ULI Panel and Project Staff

Panel Chair

Frank J. Sparicio
Principal
Corporate Real Estate Strategies
Rumford, Rhode Island

Panel Members

Douglas Betz
Partner
Woolpert LLC
Dayton, Ohio

Toni L. Griffin
Deputy Director
Office of Planning
Washington, D.C.

Elisa Hill
Senior Development Specialist
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Washington, D.C.

Christopher W. Kurz
President and CEO
Linden Associates
Baltimore, Maryland

Terry R. Margerum
Senior Managing Director
Sedway Group/CBRE Consulting
San Francisco, California

Zane Segal
Project Director
Zane Segal Projects
Houston, Texas

ULI Project Directors

Mary Beth Corrigan
Vice President, Advisory Services

Suzanne D. Cartwright
Director, Community Outreach

ULI On-Site Coordinator

Chiquita Manago
Department Coordinator
Policy and Practice

Foreword: The Panel's Assignment and Summary of Recommendations

The Urban Land Institute was invited by the Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles (CRA) and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) to examine development opportunities in the core area of the CRA's North Hollywood Redevelopment Project and, in particular, property owned by the MTA at the North Hollywood subway station.

Originally a farming community, North Hollywood evolved into a convenient and affordable residential community that attracted entertainment industry workers, artists, and immigrants, among others. Like many first-tier suburban communities, North Hollywood experienced years of decline in the 1960s and 1970s, partly as a result of freeway construction and the development of shopping malls that took traffic and shoppers away from the Lankershim Boulevard corridor that had been the community's "main street."

The CRA established the redevelopment project area in 1979, and its initial revitalization efforts have met with some success, reflected in the Hewlett-Packard office building (1985), the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences complex (1991), the community shopping center at Vineland and Magnolia (1993), and over 750 net new housing units, including elderly, handicapped, and low-income units. Since 1993, significant events have included the 1994 Northridge earthquake and the opening of the Red Line Metro subway station in 2000. The impacts of the earthquake have generally been mitigated, and the new subway station seems to have catalyzed significant new investment in the blocks near the station, perhaps offering the opportunity to create a new community focal point for North Hollywood. Several new multifamily apartment projects are under construction, and a major mixed-use project, NoHo Commons, is scheduled to start construction imminently.

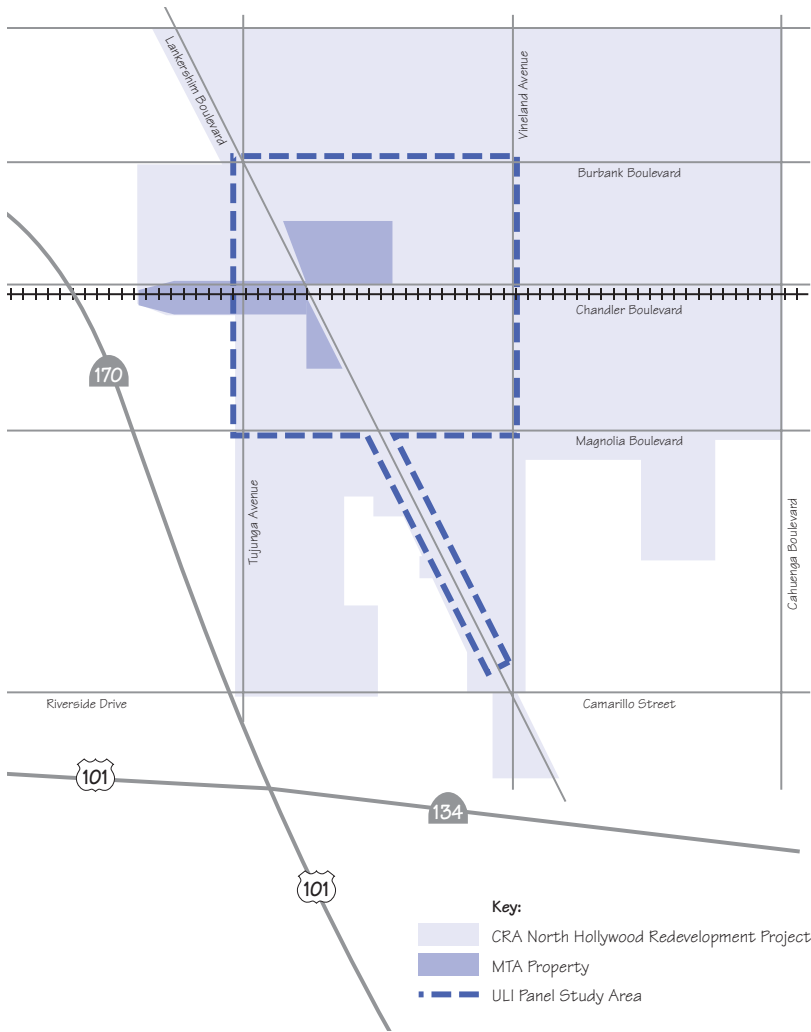
Another positive element is the emergence of the NoHo Arts District, designated by the Los Angeles City Council in 1992 as a moniker for the area's lively and burgeoning theater and arts scene. Public consciousness of NoHo is slowly but steadily increasing in the greater Los Angeles community. A recent market study for the proposed World Animation Center museum estimated annual visitors to the NoHo Arts District at over 175,000.

The Panel's Assignment

These factors have brought the revitalization effort in North Hollywood to a pivotal point. Ongoing residential development activity, the development opportunities associated with MTA property at the Red Line subway station, and the construction of the Metro Orange Line bus rapidway with its terminus station on Lankershim Boulevard across from the subway are all components that can be used to shape a new vision for the North Hollywood community. This ULI panel was as-



Location map.



Panel study area.

Excellent transit access and the NoHo Arts District are key North Hollywood assets.



sembled to provide advice and recommendations regarding how the community can capitalize on these efforts and how future public policy, planning, design, and development decisions can be integrated to achieve a fully revitalized, vibrant, and sustainable North Hollywood downtown area for the 21st century.

Of critical importance is the future development of strategically located sites owned by the MTA, including the 10.45-acre subway station site and two smaller parcels (1.8 and 1.9 acres) located directly west across Lankershim Boulevard on either side of Chandler Boulevard. (See panel study area map.) Maximizing the potential of these sites, and integrating the new development with the transit services and the arts district, will be crucial in determining the character of the community and in meeting redevelopment goals. While the panel made detailed recommendations for these properties, it also considered planning, design, and development strategies for the arts district and the broader redevelopment project area.

The panel wrestled with the question of the relative importance of the arts district in the redevelopment plan. Beyond the immediate community of actors and artists who live and work in the NoHo area, the NoHo Arts District does not appear to have substantial name recognition within the greater metropolitan region. One most likely could not get in a cab at the Los Angeles International Airport and ask to be taken to NoHo without receiving a blank stare from the driver. Other parts of the region have arts offerings that equal or exceed those found in NoHo. Preservation of the low-rise, inexpensive buildings necessary to foster the community's small, experimental theaters and avant-garde galleries could be expensive and might conflict with rising land values and increasing market demand for other uses generated in part by the presence of significant transit service.

The Panel's Recommendations

The panel came to the conclusion, however, that NoHo's funky arts identity is an irreplaceable part of the community's character—a character that in and of itself is an important catalyst for redevelopment activity and that will enhance property val-

ues for both existing and new development. Preserving this character will take determined work, but the panel believes strongly that it will be well worth the effort. This report contains several recommendations for achieving this important part of its vision for NoHo.

The second big question that the panel discussed at length was how to direct and control the development of the MTA sites and surrounding areas to achieve a more livable environment for all. The panel's vision focused on creating walkable streets that encourage leisurely shopping, café dining, gallery hopping, and a safe and convenient evening at the theater, a movie, or a concert. Such places also are attractive locations for employees, especially when combined with the superior transit service that is increasingly available in North Hollywood. Achieving this urban village atmosphere will require immediate attention to creating a balanced plan, given the strong rental residential market and the number of projects already in the development pipeline. An overall design plan with detailed development guidelines must be put in place so that each new building will contribute to quality of the community and not detract from it.

The condition of the public realm—the street-scapes and green spaces (or the lack thereof)—was an important focus for the panel. While a denser built environment is both inevitable and desirable—especially if it results in reduced vehicle traffic through transit use and more walking—it must be balanced with a well-thought-out network of greenways, open spaces, parks, and peo-

ple-friendly streets. At the same time, the availability of a sufficient amount of well-located and visually unobtrusive parking is critical for safety and the economic vitality of the area's businesses and arts venues. The panel devoted considerable time to considering how best to balance the need to accommodate vehicular traffic with the human-scale, pedestrian-oriented spaces that make a community an attractive place to live, work, shop, and play.

Finally, given the impossibility of successfully planning and implementing a complex redevelopment plan without extensive collaboration with a multitude of stakeholders, the panel focused on the CRA and MTA development review processes and on how they can work together more effectively. Much good work has already been done, and the panel encourages the agencies to take the final steps necessary to begin implementation of a shared vision for NoHo. Now is the time to take the necessary actions to preserve and strengthen the arts district, to plan for balanced development, to invest in the public infrastructure, and to begin to build a new future for North Hollywood.

This report summarizes the panel's conclusions and recommendations, which were delivered to the sponsors during a public presentation on January 30, 2004. The panel hopes that the findings in this report will contribute to the successful redevelopment of North Hollywood.

Market Potential

North Hollywood is a district within the city of Los Angeles, located in the east San Fernando Valley, over the hills from Hollywood and approximately ten miles from downtown. As such its boundaries are not precisely defined, but it generally encompasses an area between the 101 Ventura Freeway on the south, Sherman Way on the north, the 170 Hollywood Freeway on the west, and the city of Burbank on the east.

The statistical data gathered by the CRA for this advisory panel used somewhat larger boundaries stretching as far west as Van Nuys Boulevard. Both of these areas are considerably larger than the CRA's redevelopment project area and the MTA station area that were the foci of the panel's analysis, as shown on the ULI panel study area map. The area within which market and demographic data was collected is referred to as the greater North Hollywood market study area, shown in the accompanying figure. These boundary differences should be kept in mind when considering the economic and market data discussed in this report.

Economic and Demographic Overview (1990–2000)

The population of North Hollywood grew by almost 11 percent between 1990 and 2000 to a total of 239,279, with a major increase in the Hispanic population, which now constitutes 45.6 percent of the total. The Hispanic population is concentrated north of Burbank Boulevard, where it encompasses nearly two-thirds of the populace. Incomes grew by 20 percent, less than the 30 percent increase in the Los Angeles metropolitan area's Consumer Price Index. The area has a skewed distribution of household sizes, with a disproportionate amount of both large (six or more persons) households and singles. Educational, employment, and income

characteristics are lower than in nearby submarkets such as Studio City, Universal City, and Burbank. The area's largest employers are two medical firms, two department stores, and an insurance company, all with 300 to 400 employees. By contrast, Burbank and Universal City's major employers are entertainment companies with up to 7,500 employees.

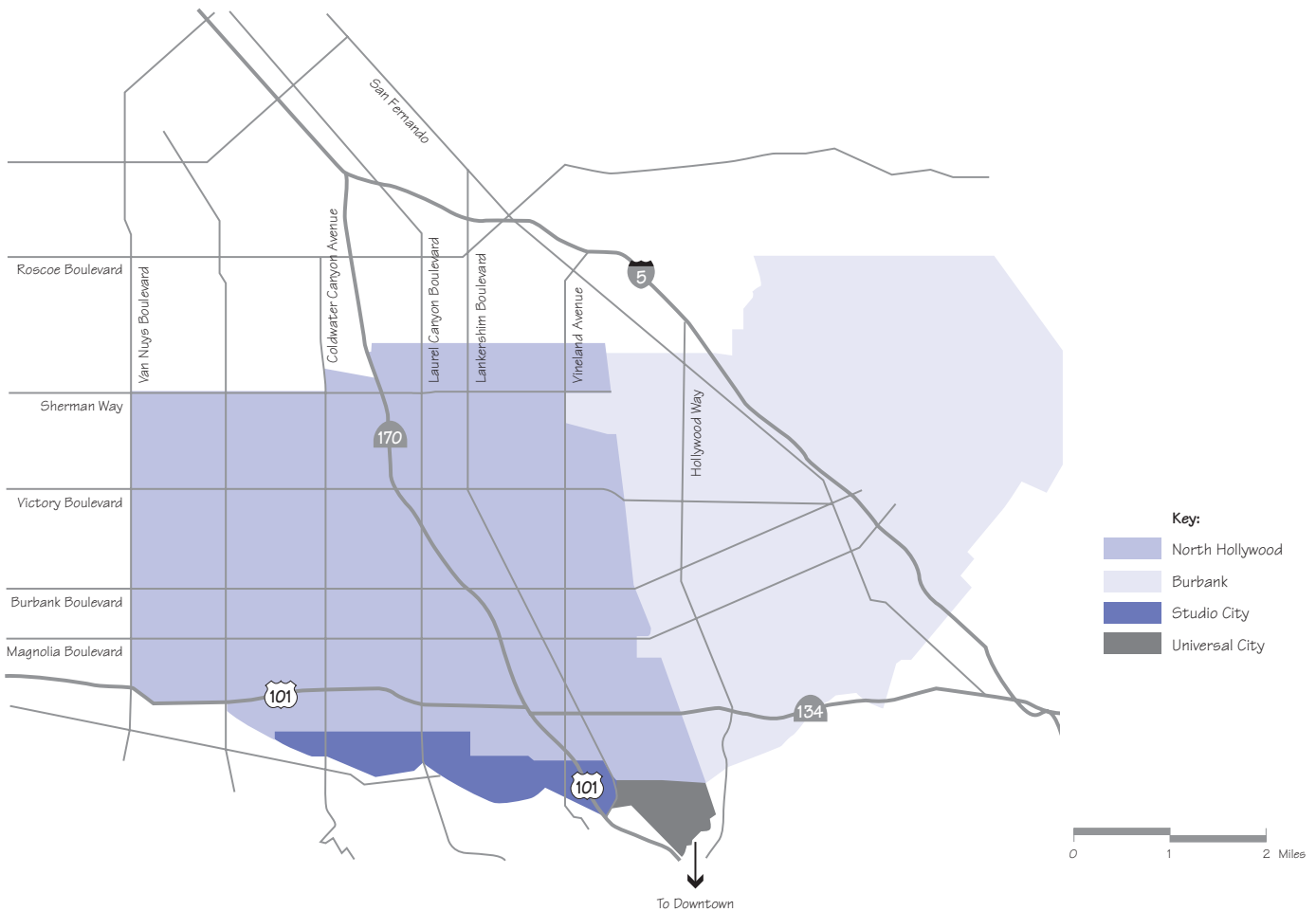
Office Market

As of July 2003, the overall Los Angeles office vacancy rate was 15.8 percent and full-service rents were at \$28.80 per square foot, down slightly from \$29.88 in 2002. At present rates of absorption it would take 4.5 years even to reach the 10 percent vacancy benchmark. For the overall North Hollywood market, which comprises about 2.35 million square feet, vacancy is at 15.4 percent with rents between \$8 and \$33. However, the three major buildings nearest the Metro station contain about 510,000 square feet and appear to be about 7 percent vacant, with rents in the mid-twenties. A majority of tenants are reported to be entertainment industry-related.

There is no question that, all other things being equal, the MTA station enhances the potential for creating an office node in this part of North Hollywood, particularly for entertainment industry users. Current rents, however, do not support the cost of new construction and any near-term project would likely require subsidies. If a few key sites are designated for office use and a proactive and sustained marketing effort is made, office uses may well be achievable within five to ten years.

Regional and Subregional Retail Market

North Hollywood's traditional retail strengths are in department stores and auto supplies. The



greater North Hollywood area is served by two regional shopping centers, Westfield Fashion Square in Sherman Oaks and Panorama Mall/Walmart in Panorama City. The latter caters to the large Hispanic population. The subregional market is dominated by the Burbank Empire Center, Burbank Media Center, and the Valley Plaza shopping center, an old subregional center located approximately two miles to the northwest, where Sears and Robinsons May department stores are located. There are more than 70 multiplex movie screens in North Hollywood, Burbank, and Universal City, most in configurations of ten or more screens. Of these retail establishments, only the auto supply stores are prominent in the immediate study area.

Retail prospects in the station area do not seem promising for a destination “town center” mall

configuration with major comparison-goods retailers and a multiplex cinema. A more organic Main Street model, with local niche retailers such as galleries and vintage clothes shops, interspersed among the existing theaters and restaurants, seems more appropriate.

Convenience and Neighborhood Retail

There appears to be a healthy local retail market, with 13 centers (approximately 600,000 square feet) and a vacancy rate of 5.6 percent. Rents range from \$1.25 to \$3.50 (triple net), with the highest rates in Sherman Oaks and Studio City. Rents in the Magnolia Vineland Center are in the \$1.50–\$2 range, and vacancy is reported at 1.1 percent. The Ralph’s grocery store in the center is reportedly one of the chain’s best performers. In addition, two other grocery chains, Hows Markets

The North Hollywood market study area is considerably larger than the panel’s study area, which is located entirely in North Hollywood.



Above: Eclectic local retailers create a distinctive ambience. Right: The North Hollywood multifamily residential market has been strong in recent years.



and Henry's (a subsidiary of Wild Oats) have expressed interest in the NoHo Commons site.

More broadly, the local retail scene is rather funky and eclectic, reminding some observers of Melrose in an earlier day or of various neighborhoods in Berkeley or San Francisco. In addition to arts-related retailers, one growing niche is that of vintage clothes shops. A recent market study reported that there were over 60 restaurants of diverse types in the arts district, nearly half of them serving Asian cuisine.

Since the panel did not receive specific data on rents, vacancy, and turnover for the local retailers on Lankershim and Magnolia boulevards, it is reluctant to draw detailed conclusions. Overall, however, the local retail scene appears stable, and it should be expected to benefit substantially from

the wave of new, relatively affluent residents who will occupy the 1,500-plus apartment and loft units now in the development pipeline.

It is important to realize that, by itself, the transit investment does less for retail than for residential or office development. In the words of a recent ULI report, *Successful Development around Transit*, "retail must be viable on its own." Retail does not drive development around transit, but rather "follows rooftops."

Multifamily Residential Market

In the greater North Hollywood market study area, multifamily units constitute 64 percent of the 59,000-unit residential inventory. Between 1990 and 2000, the greater North Hollywood market study area added 2,763 units, more than half of them in projects of 50 or more units. Within this area, renters lease 68.1 percent of occupied units, as contrasted with Burbank, where the number is 56.4 percent.

The overall vacancy rate is 3.2 percent, and rents vary greatly depending on the quality and vintage of product. The high end is about \$2 per square foot per month. Over 1,500 new apartment units are approved or under construction in the study area, about 90 percent at market rate. They are all projecting market rents in the \$1.75–\$2 range.

The average value of condo resales is \$244,000, compared with single-family homes at just under \$277,000. The average sales price of condos/townhomes was \$205 per square foot in 2002. Currently no for-sale product is under construction, but two are scheduled to start construction this spring: 36 condominiums on Burbank Boulevard and 69 lofts on the former Adolph's Meat Tenderizer warehouse site. New condos in Burbank are being marketed at an average price of \$305 per square foot. The panel anticipates that more for-sale product will emerge as the area's desirability becomes more evident, and it believes that such development should be encouraged with policies that support homeownership.

It remains to be seen whether the projected rents will be fully achieved with so much new product coming on market so quickly. Given the low va-

cancy rates, however, area housing developers have cause for optimism. Regardless, the long-term prospects for NoHo as a major transit-oriented residential node are excellent, due both to market trends and to locational advantages. With its Red Line and future rapid bus stations, North Hollywood is well positioned as an urban infill site to capture a significant share of future subregional residential growth.

While this growth potential is very positive for the local economy, including the arts district, there is a danger that, without any intervention, the strong residential market could crowd out other uses that are equally important to the area's long-term economic health. The CRA may wish to consider policies for ensuring provision of housing targeted at the local work force, seniors, and low-income people in general; reserving a few key sites for employment-generating uses such as office and retail; and preserving certain single-family neighborhoods.

Hotel Market

No hotel market data were collected for the panel, and thus the following comments are based on the panel's familiarity with hotel markets in the United States and California generally and on selected interviews with industry professionals. There are currently no hotels in the NoHo district.

Generally speaking, it continues to be a difficult time for new hotel development. Even strong players such as Hyatt and Marriott can have trouble finding financing. The hotel developers the panel spoke with saw no foreseeable potential for hotel development in the North Hollywood station area because "there's no reason to go there." This view could change if the station area builds out, as anticipated by some of the recent forecasts promulgated by developers and planners.

Clearly there are no major destinations in the area now. However, just one short Metro stop away is City Walk and the Universal City theme park, the top tourist destination for visitors to Los Angeles County. The panel believes it may be worthwhile to explore with selected hotel companies or developers the pre- and post-September 11, 2001, performance of Universal City hotels and



to solicit their views on NoHo generally. Another option to explore is an extended-stay "suites" hotel, geared toward entertainment industry workers.

The Academy of Television Arts and Sciences is an important entertainment industry anchor in the study area.

Oasis Arena Facility

This proposal for an 8,000-or-more-seat arena, which has been presented to the MTA for one of its transit station properties, deserves special mention. The expected events include college and minor-league professional sports, concerts, family entertainment, and conventions. The panel reviewed a preliminary feasibility analysis provided by the developer. The conclusions in the preliminary market study are more hypothetical than definitive because the developer has no firm commitments from the proposed anchor tenants. Consequently, the report is couched in caveats, and properly so. A more conclusive analysis must await submission of more detailed data by the developer.

Local support for this project seems highly divided, with most stakeholders feeling that it is not an appropriate use for an arts district location, although its access to the transit hub and its synergistic use with MTA parking facilities is certainly logical. The panel believes that the Universal City station, with its closer access to the freeway system and office-shared parking opportunities, or some other transit station with a more

Too many arts and entertainment businesses currently shut out the neighborhood behind blank walls that lack windows, creating streets that feel unfriendly or even unsafe for pedestrians.



regional or subregional destination character, might be a better location for this project.

Market Potential for Arts-Related Uses

While the name “Hollywood” describes a relatively small area within the city of Los Angeles, major studios and the literally thousands of smaller production, distribution, exhibition, and service businesses that compose the entertainment industry have proliferated in recent decades in the southeastern San Fernando Valley in and around North Hollywood. With the addition in 2000 of the Metro Red Line subway service and given the planned opening of the cross-valley Orange Line bus rapidway in 2005, North Hollywood is ever more appealing as a location for entertainment industry businesses and the creative and technical people who work for them.

Many industry organizations and businesses, including the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences on Lankershim Boulevard two blocks south of the subway station, have made North Hollywood their home. Numerous smaller entities, such

as music studios, postproduction houses, photography studios, and prop and costume storage facilities, have also located in the area, primarily in low-rise industrial spaces, owing to the combination of low rent and good freeway and transit access. These businesses may be quite appropriate to the area, yet they often present a blank face to the street; their buildings frequently lack identifying features, signage, or even windows. The resulting lack of “eyes on the street” makes the neighborhood appear less secure and friendly than it actually may be.

Paradoxically, the emergence of more cafés, shops, service retail, and better housing in the area is likely to increase the desire of entertainment industry businesses to locate in North Hollywood, while the supply of cheap space is likely to dwindle due to redevelopment. One approach for reconciling these conflicting forces is to encourage the development of secure yet creatively designed office and live/work spaces that will relate to the streets and the surrounding urban fabric.

The presence of 21 live theaters in NoHo is another function of the low rent available for storefront spaces and of the many actors and would-be actors who desire to be near industry giants while they hone their craft. These theaters are as much about classes, auditions, and rehearsals as they are about performances, and so they stay busy day and night, weekday and weekend. Yet some of them are already being threatened by rising rents as new construction commences and speculation occurs.

Other components of the NoHo Arts District, such as the dance studios and visual artists’ spaces and galleries, have also benefited from the relative affordability of commercial space and housing. These too could be threatened by the success of the revitalization of the area. This is not a new or unique situation, of course. It is a common process in urban rehabilitation that pioneering artists move into disused warehouses and abandoned areas, fixing them up by hand, organizing, and struggling. Then, after they have begun the process of turning an area around, young professionals and empty nesters are attracted, with the result that prices escalate and the pioneers are forced out. Because of the inordinately high and

still rising residential prices in the Los Angeles region, the new wave of market-rate housing about to inundate NoHo could well thwart the continued growth of this nascent arts district just when it is beginning to savor success, unless strategies are implemented to nurture and preserve the district.

A Vision for the Arts District

What steps must be taken to preserve and encourage the NoHo Arts District? First, the arts community must keep doing what it is already doing. Special events such as the NoHo Theater and Arts Festival need to grow, proliferate, and be better promoted. They showcase the improvement in the physical structure of the area, as well as the improving range and quality of the theater companies.

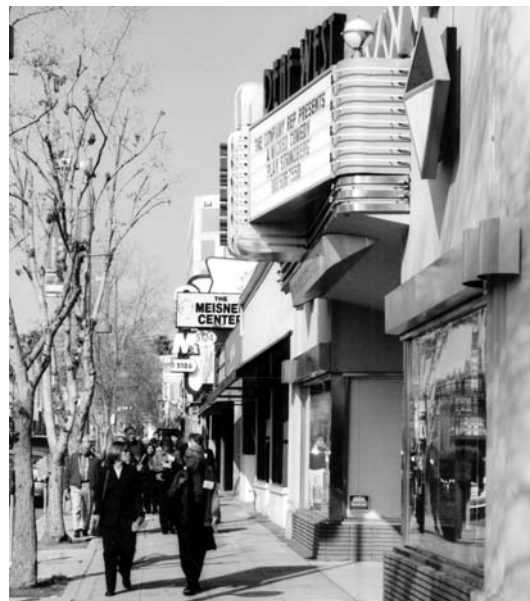
Second, the streetscape improvements already designed need to be put in place to make a strong visual statement about the district's special, quirky character. The bikeways and open spaces need to be programmed, as much as appropriate, with events such as organized bike tours that will bring new people into the area at a gradual enough pace to enjoy it. Such programs will highlight the continuing physical improvements, including the already completed mural project along the bikeway to the east and the many new sculptures, murals, and facade improvements in place and planned.

Third, the various arts organizations need to work together. The new loose affiliation known as the NoHo Theater and Arts Business Collaborative illustrates an excellent approach for the various theaters, dance troupes, and visual artists to unite and attract a greater audience. Important targets for these efforts are new residents and workers, as well as those who are already living and working in the community. A “buy local” and even an “eat local” grass-roots marketing campaign could have an effect. The goal should be to lure the area's hidden media people, those in the walled-in music studios and sound-isolated postproduction houses, out into the light of day, at least for lunch.

Finally, while there are many concentrations of artistic, cultural, and entertainment attractions



The historic El Portal theater and the Deaf West theater are two examples of the more than 21 live theater venues in the NoHo Arts District.



in the greater Los Angeles area, NoHo is the region's only self-proclaimed arts district. Precisely because few Angelenos and virtually no tourists yet recognize the NoHo name, there is every reason to keep proclaiming it via banners, newspaper and other media ads, publicity, streetscapes, public art, gallery events, and live theater. Eventually, the NoHo brand will seep into the public consciousness, strengthening the area's arts institutions and the greater North Hollywood community's sense of identity.

Additional Cultural and Civic Anchors

The panel proposes several significant cultural and civic anchors of a regional and valleywide sub-regional scale that could dramatically improve the

The design concept for the World Animation Center's interior shows the potential for this museum to provide an interactive, memorable experience for visitors.



public's awareness of the NoHo Arts District and improve patronage of its venues.

The World Animation Center

In 2002, the CRA commissioned a study for a world-class animation museum of 40,000 to 50,000 square feet to be located in the NoHo Arts District. Virtually everyone the panel spoke with was in favor of this project as a tourist draw and signature design element, and the panel too was unanimous in recommending that this project be put on the front burner for CRA consideration. While several other entertainment industry hubs throughout the region are competing for the project, a location on one of the NoHo MTA sites or on a nearby commercial site on Lankershim is a natural. The cartoonlike concept for the building design is completely synergistic with the artistic flair of the proposed streetscape.

The panel reviewed a detailed market and financial feasibility analysis for the proposed museum.

The prospects for the facility are promising, with a number of important caveats. The North Hollywood location is in a large urban market with significant tourist visitation and several major destinations nearby. On the other hand, Los Angeles is a highly competitive market, with 38 major museums in addition to zoos, aquariums, and nature centers. The animation museum's feasibility analysis estimated a development budget of \$25 million to \$30 million, an annual stabilized visitation of 200,000, and an operating deficit of \$1.9 million. The latter would imply the need for an endowment of more than \$30 million.

NoHo Theater Center

The panel proposes construction of a new theater center that would include several up-to-99-seat non-Equity live-performance black-box theaters and one approximately 350- to 500-seat theater. It would also incorporate joint ticketing, promotion, costume, scenery, and prop creation and storage spaces, plus classes for performance and back-of-

the-house theater arts. The panel does not believe that such a facility would threaten the existing theater scene beyond the threat it is already under, and it would help to create a critical mass of quality theater offerings that would raise the visibility of the district overall. The joint instructional, promotional, and ticketing functions could also be extended to the other theaters in the arts district, improving attendance and financial viability for all.

Art-House Cinema

An art-house cinema complex with five to seven small theaters showing independent, foreign, documentary, short, and festival fare offers another potential anchor element embraced by virtually everyone who discussed the possibility. There are several reputable operators for this type of complex in California and, among them, the Laemmle chain has already shown interest in locating in a NoHo project.

Another concept that would also differ significantly from the stadium-seat megaplexes surrounding the area in every direction (as at Universal CityWalk) is the Cinema Grill or Alamo Drafthouse type of complex, which integrates first-run and art movies with a casual sit-down dining concept within the theater space itself. These dinner-movie houses have been notably successful in many markets around the country.

Art Institute/Arts High School

An art institute complex could include student-level and professional-level training in all disciplines of the arts, including film and television production and postproduction, writing, acting, painting, sculpture, web and graphic design, interior design, drafting, and even culinary arts. In addition, a tie-in with the new high school being developed to the east of the transit nexus would be logical: it could provide the site of the institute on an after-hours basis, at least in the beginning, similar to the way in which many community colleges use public school facilities in the evening, or the two schools could be programmatically linked. The panel also recommends that the Los Angeles Unified School District consider designating the new high school as an arts magnet school.

The panel believes that all four of these anchor elements could work well together, and that a high

percentage of the use of these facilities would be at night and on weekends. Thus, shared parking should work well with the daytime use of the MTA parking facilities. Any of these arts anchors could be sited on any of the available MTA or CRA sites or on privately held land.

Market Conclusions

The MTA's transportation infrastructure investment has enhanced and will continue to enhance North Hollywood's market-based development opportunities for multifamily residential space; conventional office space in the middle to long term; arts and entertainment district-related development; and destination uses like the proposed World Animation Center.

The spate of recent developer interest attests to this fact, as do numerous national studies documenting the rent premiums associated with proximity to a major transit facility. However, the panel cautions the CRA and MTA that there are substantial differences in near-term viability (and hence level of required subsidy) among the various developer proposals now under consideration.

An additional transit boon for the area would be construction of a bus rapidway extension eastward to the Burbank Airport and the major Burbank employment centers. Such a transit linkage would strengthen both office and hotel potential in North Hollywood and reinforce NoHo as a well-situated yet reasonably priced alternative to the more expensive and built-up areas to the south and east.

Market trends augur well for the area's revitalization. It will be led by new multifamily residential development that will enhance and expand the local retail market and create more local customers for the arts and theater businesses. Once this occurs, assuming a well-conceived NoHo Arts District marketing plan, the area could become more of a subregional draw for the 2-million-plus population of the San Fernando Valley and communities to the north. As a genuine center for the North Hollywood community takes shape, the station area's attractiveness as an office employment center will grow.

In order for this vision to be realized, there will need to be adequate public policies and implementation strategies to ensure a mix of housing choices, and to protect and preserve key arts district uses and sites. In addition to the recommendation that the CRA and the community consider adding several subregional and regional cultural and civic anchors to the arts district, the panel suggests exploring the creation of a business improvement district and, even more important, an arts district foundation (both discussed later in this report).

Planning and Development Strategies

North Hollywood is geographically and chronologically at a crossroads. It is situated at the intersection of four major freeways and two transit lines and lies in the midst of the entertainment industry clusters in Burbank, Universal City, and Studio City. Access and convenience continue to attract residents and arts- and entertainment-oriented businesses. As the area's racial and ethnic mix has diversified, so too has the area's rich mix of uncommon retailers and cultural institutions. Relatively inexpensive land values and rents have attracted a cosmopolitan mix of actors, artists, students, and entertainment industry production workers, as well as recent immigrants. Lower land values also drive some of the land uses—including the preponderance of auto sales, repair, and storage facilities. Given the arrival of the Red Line subway, the construction of the Orange Line bus rapidway, and the emergence of a strong residential market, the community is now presented with a series of choices that will shape its built environment and social fabric.

Strengths

NoHo is characterized by a funky, eclectic mix of uses. This character is central to the identity of the community and it has been further strengthened in recent years by the CRA's public art, banners, facade enhancement, and streetscape programs, which reinforce the arts district brand. The area also includes a number of historically significant and landmark structures. A strong residential market and increasing expressions of interest by developers have created a sense of momentum for redevelopment in the private sector. CRA and MTA control of the key subway area station parcels means that a strong public-sector vision can set the tone for future development.

Challenges

The overriding challenge is to create a strong, cohesive neighborhood instead of a collection of individual and disconnected projects. Meeting this goal will require a clear and consistent vision, as well as sustained leadership to implement that vision over time. This vision must balance the considerable market pressure for rental residential development with the need to preserve affordable housing, the economically fragile arts institutions, and the eclectic atmosphere, all while taking full advantage of the substantial transportation investment to create a mixed-use, higher-density town center for the community.

The physical condition of the public realm needs to be improved, which will enhance both the perception and the reality of the community's safety. The large-scale, expansive pavements and uncontrolled curb cuts that characterize the district's major streets should be modified to create people-friendly places that will encourage walking, sidewalk activities, and serendipitous exploration. Additional open space should be provided in areas that are accessible to the neighborhoods, and these areas should be interwoven with a network of attractive sidewalks and bikeways. Providing the number of parking spaces needed to support future development will undoubtedly be a financial challenge.

The market today does not yet support the optimum mix of uses that would otherwise be desirable at an intermodal transit hub. The strength of the residential market could result in an unbalanced land use pattern unless it is controlled through a well-conceived community plan.

Furthermore, some of the residential projects that are pioneering development in the area are being designed in response to the rather harsh current character of the neighborhood—creating internal streets and open spaces that insulate residents

Among North Hollywood's strengths are its stable residential neighborhoods and historic buildings.



from the larger neighborhood—rather than setting the stage for a more integrated and open neighborhood environment. Continuing this design trend could yield a series of residential enclaves rather than a neighborhood of connected places. The intensity of development relative to lot size for some of the newer residential projects also poses neighborhood design challenges.

The CRA's current design regulatory tools fall short of guiding project designers and their clients to quality solutions. Urban design guidelines are needed to ensure that future projects will come on line in a harmonious fashion, adding to the neighborhood's character and not detracting from it.

Opportunities

North Hollywood is poised to distinguish itself from other centers in the San Fernando Valley,

moving from a locally known arts district to a thriving regional cultural, commercial, and residential center. The market potential that accompanies a transit-rich environment creates the opportunity for the emergence of a denser, mixed-use core, as well as providing a source of private investment that can be used to revitalize, stabilize, and strengthen the surrounding neighborhoods. The MTA- and CRA-controlled sites can be the catalysts for the creation of an exciting, vibrant place in which to live, work, and play. Meanwhile, the emerging arts district has the potential to strengthen downtown NoHo's identity if other anchor cultural uses are developed. NoHo's off-beat arts scene, central location, and excellent transit and freeway access are powerful assets upon which a dynamic community can be built. It is truly NoHo's time to shine and prosper.

The panel saw the primary planning and design challenge as “defining the center”—giving downtown NoHo an identity that would put it on the map as one of Los Angeles's hottest new neighborhoods for living, dining, entertainment, and the arts. Suggesting design strategies that will support this vision while protecting and enhancing the historic and bohemian context of the neighborhood that exists today was the panel's goal. The panel's general plan of existing and proposed land uses is represented in the accompanying illustration. To provide a road map for implementation of this plan, the panel divided the study area into five distinct places or neighborhoods, centered around a new consolidated multimodal transit cen-



Street trash, graffiti, and an absence of pedestrian amenities mar the public realm.



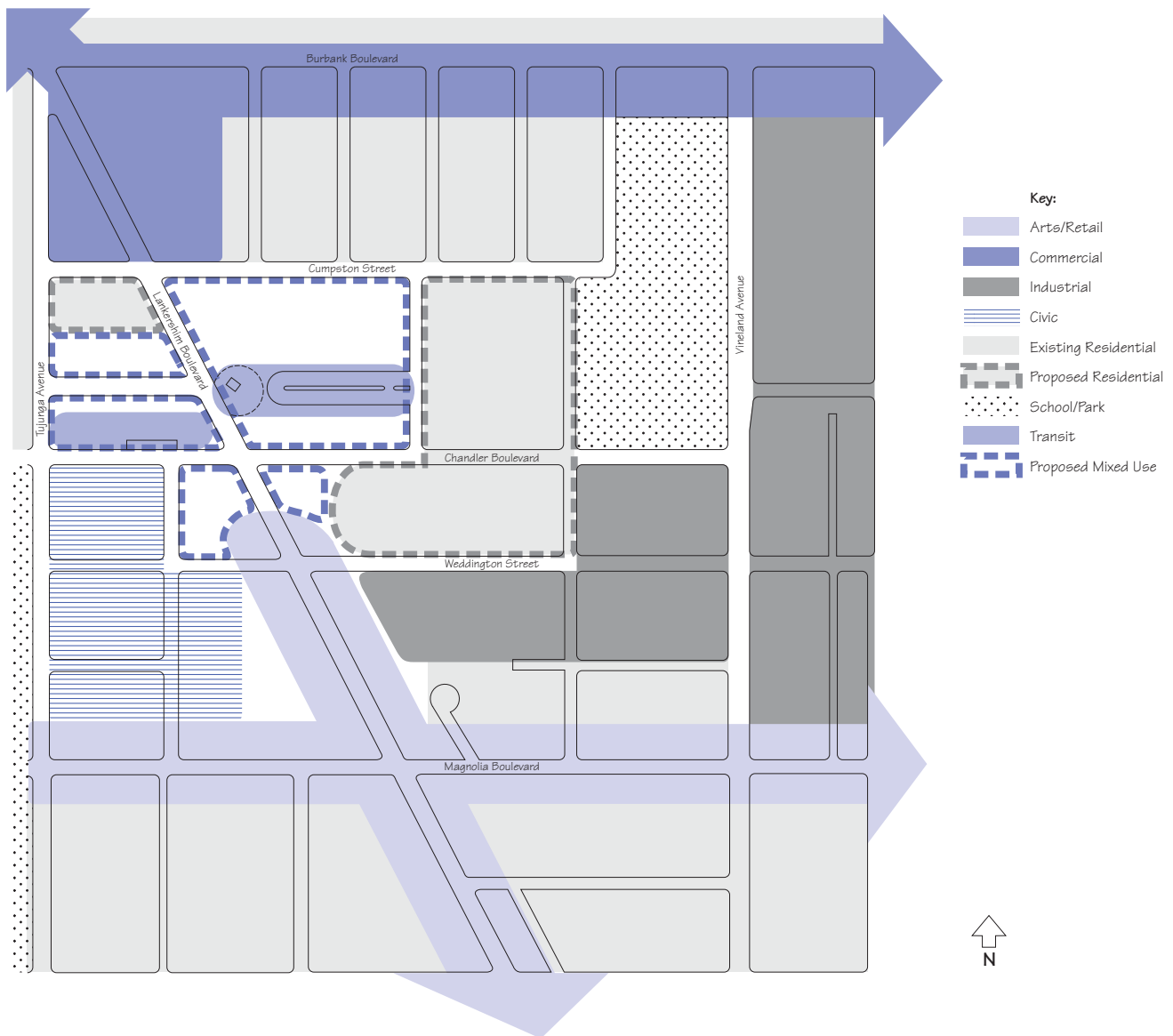
ter and connected by an open-space network. Specific development strategies for each of these NoHo neighborhoods are described and illustrated in the following section.

Development Strategies

The development program that the panel proposes seeks to implement both the market potential for the area and the land use planning and design vision: concentration of higher-density office and commercial uses along Lankershim Boulevard north of Weddington Street; preservation of existing residential neighborhoods, while allowing for increased residential density within easy walking distance of transit; and preservation of historic structures and local retail and cultural uses, particularly along Lankershim and Magnolia boulevards.



Banners, murals, and public sculpture contribute to a growing awareness of the NoHo identity.



The panel's concept for existing and proposed general land use areas.

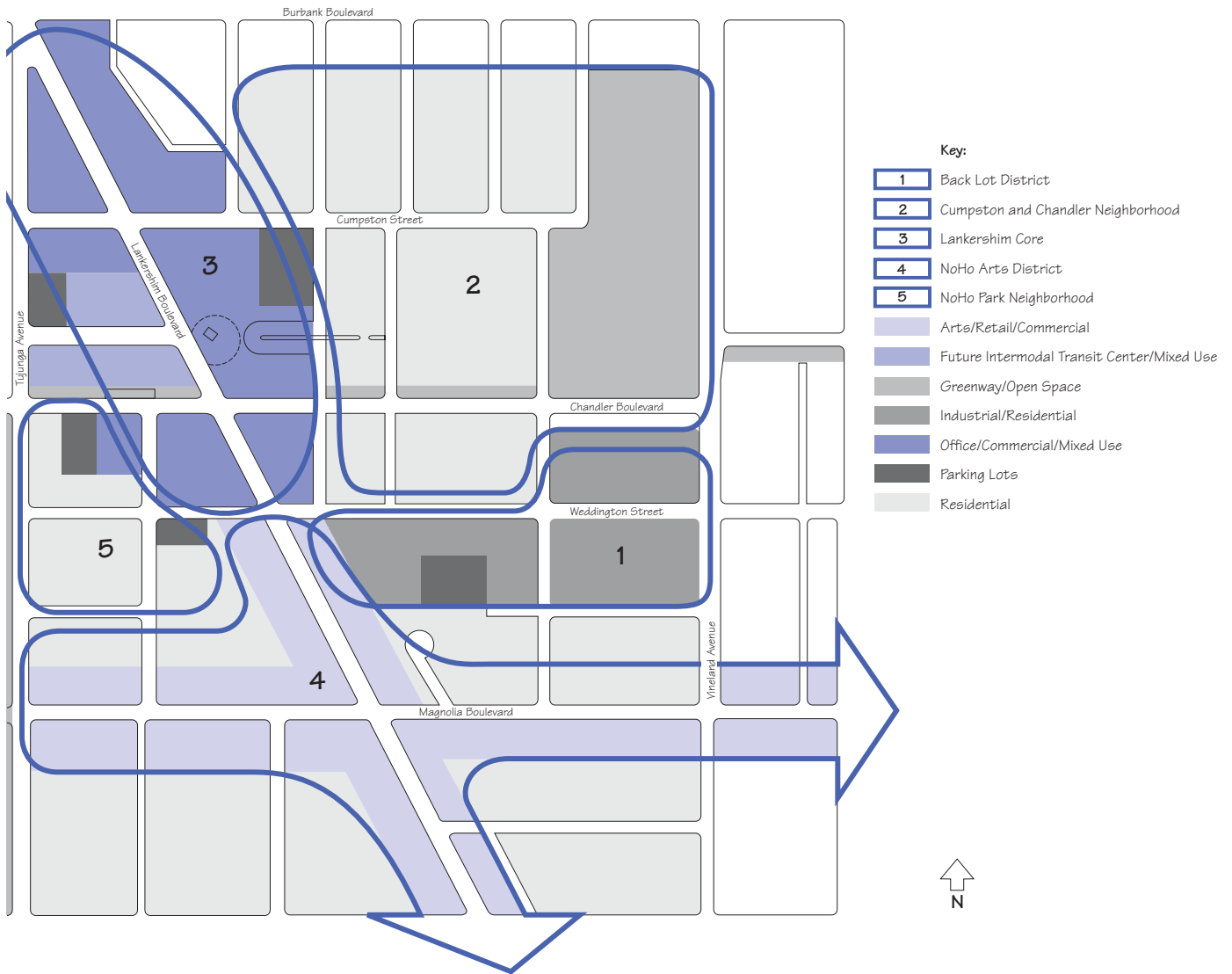
The Lankershim Core

The Lankershim Core is the high-density area of the downtown that encompasses both sides of Lankershim Boulevard from Burbank Boulevard to Weddington Street and is anchored by a proposed multimodal, mixed-use transit center. Residents, commuters, and visitors using the local bus service, subway, or Orange Line bus rapidway could emerge from the new transit center into the heart of NoHo. Here at the core, people could live, work, and enjoy convenient retail, restaurant, and cultural venues along a tree-lined boulevard with a landscaped median. High-rise buildings as tall as 15 stories could line the street from Burbank to Chandler Boulevard, taking the most advantage of the core's proximity to transit. This district serves as the northern entrance to NoHo for traffic using the Burbank freeway interchange and has already been marked as a gateway with a plaza and sculp-

ture highlighting the community's identity as an arts district.

Commercial core. As indicated in the "Market Potential" section of this report, the panel believes that in the middle to longer term, North Hollywood has the potential to develop into a significant commercial node within the San Fernando Valley. NoHo has excellent transit access, highway connections, and proximity to major entertainment industry centers. Therefore it would be a logical location for ten- to 15-story commercial/mixed-use buildings.

In the near term, major tenants pioneering in these commercial buildings would undoubtedly need the inducement of substantially subsidized rents. In lieu of direct rent subsidies, development costs could be supported through publicly funded



infrastructure improvements (such as parking garages) and tax credits. Such developer incentives could serve to reduce any necessary rent subsidies. Over the longer term, the advantages of location and a stronger regional economy should eliminate the need for subsidy. The panel therefore recommends that the major properties along Lankershim Boulevard north of Cumpston Street be reserved for office/commercial development until market conditions support new construction. In the meantime, the existing auto-related uses could remain. As public parking facilities are constructed in the area, it may become feasible for auto storage uses to be moved to leased spaces within one or more of those garages, freeing key parcels for higher-value commercial development.

Transit station area. The panel recommends that consideration be given to consolidating the existing and planned bus transit facilities—both

local service and the bus rapidway—within a new intermodal transit center on the MTA parcel adjacent to the former train station. This approach would free up MTA land on the east side of Lankershim Boulevard for higher-value uses and could provide operational efficiencies and more convenient transfers for transit passengers. Such an intermodal transit center would eliminate duplication in kiss-and-ride, ticketing, and fare and trip-planning information facilities. Bus bays for pickup and dropoff, turnaround, and layover for both bus services could be provided either at grade or below grade with mixed-use air-rights development above. Direct access to the subway platform from the west side of Lankershim Boulevard could be opened up at the existing emergency exit stairway.

The panel divided the study area into five neighborhoods.

The development program for both MTA parcels on the west side of Lankershim Boulevard should be determined by market conditions but should, over the long term, include a mix of retail, office, hotel, cultural, recreational, residential, and entertainment uses. A structured parking deck with 1,000-plus spaces is proposed to accommodate Metro patrons and the new uses in the core. This garage would be accessed off of Tujunga Avenue and could be either above grade or partially below grade. Consistent with the district's identity as the core, the panel recommends building heights in the ten- to 15-plus-story range. Because of the significant density accorded to these buildings, a cultural facility should be required as part of the development program in each building. Ground-floor retail along Lankershim Boulevard is desirable.

The panel does not believe that the proposed arena use is appropriate for this site; the building's scale would be inconsistent with a pedestrian-oriented arts district, and the traffic generated by arena events could overwhelm Tujunga Avenue and other neighborhood streets between the site and the freeway access ramps.

The MTA parcel south of Chandler Boulevard has attracted the most development interest in the project area. Development of this parcel should incorporate and interact with the restored bank building on the corner of Lankershim Boulevard and Weddington Street, and building heights should wedge back along Weddington to reflect the street's proposed pedestrian/neighborhood connectivity functions.

Subway station site and NoHo Commons parcels.

The almost 11-acre MTA property surrounding the subway station on the east side of Lankershim Boulevard and the NoHo Commons Phase I and II parcels are key NoHo redevelopment opportunities. While the NoHo Commons parcels have already been entitled, the MTA parcel should receive the highest-density development program—15 or more stories—and it should feature a synergistic mix of uses to promote transit ridership as well as a safe and attractive pedestrian experience. Development can be phased to accommodate current market conditions while preserving the key transit-adjacent portions of the site for long-term highest-value uses. The site should be subdivided

with streets to enhance connectivity with surrounding neighborhoods.

The panel recommends that the eastern third of the MTA property be designated for mid- to high-rise residential. This portion of the program can be built under current market conditions and will generate new tax revenues from this publicly owned property. Given the preference of the MTA to lease rather than sell its property, it is most likely that this residential development will be in the form of rental apartments, but condominium development would also be desirable if feasible. The panel recommends that the MTA construct a 1,000-plus-space garage with access off Cumpston Street to replace existing surface parking and for shared use with future buildings on the site in the evenings and on weekends. A portion of the site along the Chandler bikeway should be reserved for a park or other open space. The balance of the site should be entitled for mixed-use high-rise development, with the specific uses left flexible as long as design guidelines (setbacks, massing, and so on) are met. This arrangement would provide maximum clarity and minimum entitlement process delays for conforming development and thus should make the site attractive to developers as soon as market conditions are met.

NoHo Commons Phase II currently calls for one-story retail (most likely a grocery store use) at the corner of Lankershim and Chandler boulevards. Given the location of this parcel in the heart of the core, it would otherwise be desirable to increase the building heights on this “100 percent” corner. While the panel recognizes that it may be difficult to amend the development program at this point, it does recommend that the developer and the CRA consider transferring density from NoHo Commons Phase III to the Phase II site and encourage the construction of at least mid-rise office, health club, hotel, or other mixed uses over the grocery store and its affiliated parking.

The NoHo Arts District Neighborhood

This neighborhood lies at the heart of the existing arts district, including both sides of Lankershim Boulevard between Weddington Street and Camarillo Street and along Magnolia Boulevard between Tujunga Avenue and Vineland Avenue. A strengthened arts district is a central component



Lankershim Boulevard currently is a wide, pedestrian-unfriendly street, not the true, visually appealing boulevard it could be.

of the panel's development vision for North Hollywood. The focus in this neighborhood should thus be on creating a historic, pedestrian-friendly commercial and cultural environment from the ground up. Some of the arts facilities are currently housed in historic spaces, and the panel recommends that these buildings be preserved and reserved for arts uses. The arts district also includes colorful local retailers that provide an appealing, funky atmosphere and would most likely not survive in a higher-rent environment.

The panel recommends that revenues be set aside via a foundation or other new entity (discussed in the "Implementation" section of this report) for the purchase of key theater properties to permit the retention of economically marginal arts uses in the district. Height limitations should also be considered to protect the economic and aesthetic viability of the smaller retail uses.

The attractiveness of Lankershim and Magnolia boulevards for pedestrian exploration, outdoor dining, informal public entertainment, and festival use should be enhanced. The panel recommends that the CRA enlist the assistance of key elected officials to establish a partnership with the Los Angeles Department of Transportation to design and guide streetscape improvements. Lankershim should receive a true boulevard treatment with a landscaped median, street trees, planter boxes, benches, and street furniture. It should not be widened. Magnolia Boulevard should receive similar streetscape improvements, and retail uses

should be permitted to fill in available sites west of Lankershim.

The panel recommends that the NoHo Commons Phase III development program be amended to remove buildings that would block views and access to the Academy of Television plaza from Lankershim Boulevard. This portion of the site may be better used as an extended plaza or public performance space. The panel further recommends that the portion of the Phase III site at the corner of Lankershim and Weddington Street be programmed for another significant arts anchor, ideally the proposed World Animation Center. The landmark-quality design of this building and the exciting, interactive nature of the exhibits would create a significant destination for arts district patrons, drawing pedestrians down Lankershim Boulevard from the transit station to the museum and the arts district beyond.

While the funds necessary for the construction and operation of the animation museum would need to be raised elsewhere, the panel suggests that it is an ideal use for CRA property. The increased foot traffic and enhanced community identity generated by the museum would substantially benefit surrounding landowners and businesses. The panel believes that CRA land is better used for this type of cultural use rather than for residential projects that would otherwise be built to meet market demand in the current economic environment.

The NoHo Park neighborhood includes beautiful public buildings such as the library, the post office, and several churches.



The NoHo Park Neighborhood

This neighborhood includes the majority of the civic amenities for North Hollywood, including a park, a library, a recreation center, St. Paul's church and school, Lankershim Elementary School and its after-school recreation area, a health clinic, the post office, the fire department, and a YMCA facility. The neighborhood is bounded by North Hollywood Park and the properties just behind Lankershim Boulevard and extends between Chandler Boulevard and Magnolia Boulevard.

The panel believes that the concentration of these community service amenities argues for preservation of this neighborhood for residential uses, while the proximity of the neighborhood to transit argues for permitting infill residential construction on vacant or underused parcels and increasing densities somewhat. Building heights should be kept to no more than two to five stories, and special attention should be paid to setback requirements and streetscape investments so that residents will be encouraged to walk throughout the district. Weddington Street, with its western

terminus at the recreation center and its narrower, more neighborhood street quality, is an important east-west pedestrian spine. This may be an area where homeownership incentives such as location-efficient mortgages should apply.

The Back Lot District

This mixed-use neighborhood on the eastern edge of the study area extends from Chandler Boulevard to Magnolia Boulevard and between Vine-land Avenue and the NoHo Commons and Academy properties. It currently features a mix of both new and aging multifamily residential development as well as light industrial uses, some of which are linked to the entertainment industry. Once again, Weddington Street is a key pedestrian spine on the east side of Lankershim Boulevard.

The panel recommends that this area be retained as a fine-grained mixed-use district, both to preserve its character and to incorporate lower-cost artist housing and studio opportunities and retain local entertainment industry jobs. Design guidelines or other regulatory tools should be used to regulate setbacks and the intensity of develop-



Design guidelines are needed to improve the way buildings address the public realm, avoiding residential buildings such as these that loom over the street with no setbacks or open areas.



The Cumpston and Chandler neighborhood juxtaposes attractive Spanish bungalows (left) with architecturally undistinguished multifamily buildings (far left) that are rapidly deteriorating.

ment in this district so that the almost zero-lot-line character of the recent apartment projects does not become the dominant form for new construction, creating an overwhelming intensity of development.

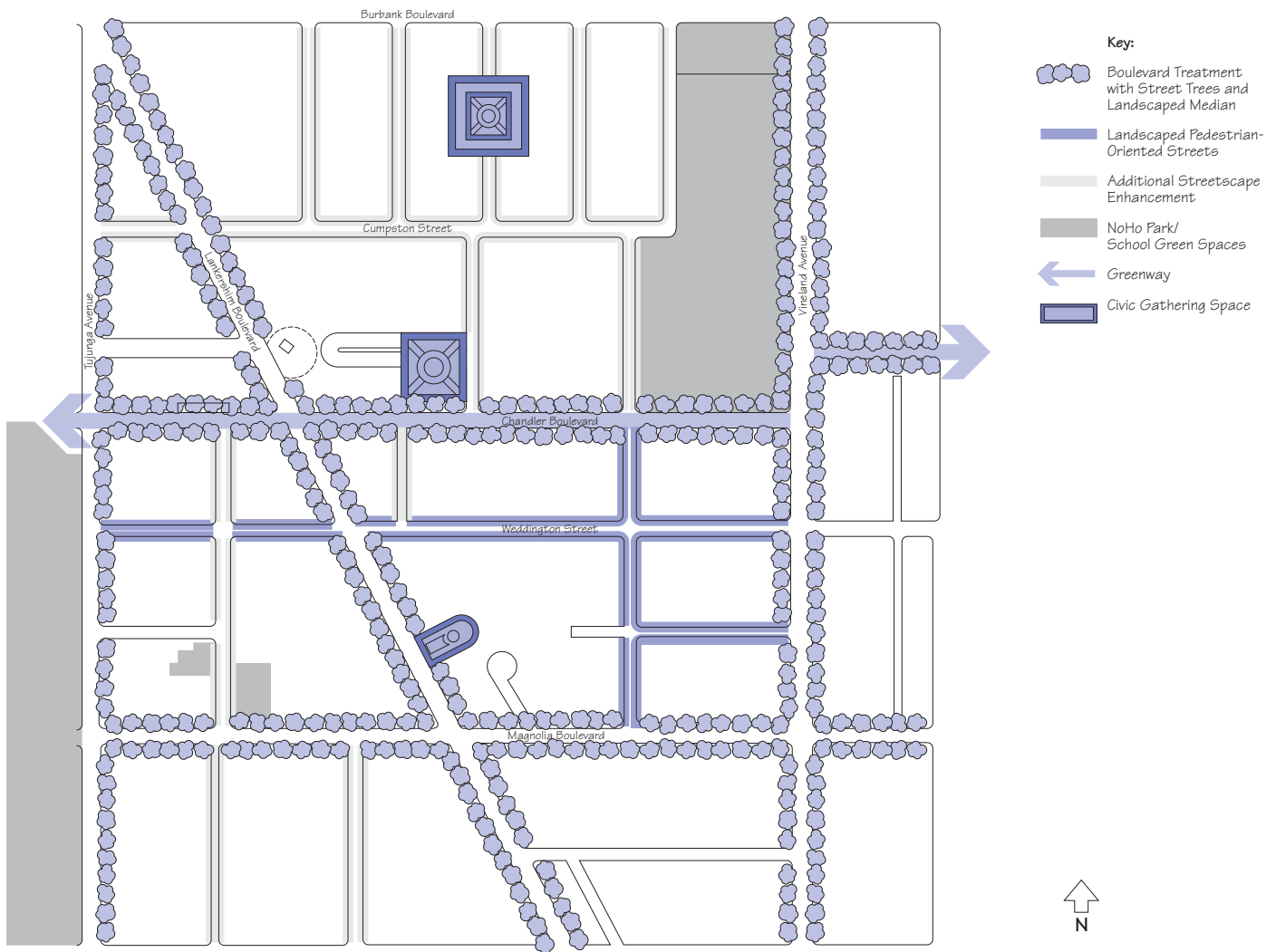
The Cumpston and Chandler Neighborhood

This residential neighborhood extends between Burbank Boulevard and Chandler Boulevard and between Elmer Street and Vineland Avenue. It appears to have been in transition for some time, with single-family homes being replaced by small multifamily buildings. The panel recommends that this neighborhood's stabilization be made a priority, including roadway and streetscape improvements, "clean and safe" programs, and homeownership programs. This area and the residential neighborhood just north of Burbank Boulevard are also key to maintaining housing affordability while the character of North Hollywood overall is improved. The properties on the northern side of Cumpston Street and the western edge of Case Street are particularly important for enhancing the character of the NoHo Commons Phase I resi-

dential project and the new high school respectively. Attractive, well-designed infill residential should be permitted on these streets where opportunities arise. The panel recommends that overall density in this district not be increased beyond the existing zoning.

Urban Design Guidelines

New developments are being proposed at much higher densities than those that currently exist in NoHo's historic core: five- to 15-story buildings versus one- to two-story buildings. The panel supports this level of development, particularly around the Metro station area, as a means of creating a strong critical mass of residents and workers who can support local businesses and cultural venues. However, without clear design standards in place by which to review proposals, these projects might overpower, and in some cases eradicate, the local, historic, and eclectic character of the district. Guidelines that will specify how larger-scale developments may coexist adjacent to lower-density residential, commercial, and indus-



The panel's concept for a network of open spaces.

trial buildings must be reviewed and defined now before it is too late. Similarly, these new projects must take into consideration the larger public realm: the connection and integration of new streets, streetscapes, and public open spaces. The panel's conceptual sketch for an open-space network is presented in the accompanying illustration.

The panel was given access to a number of previous planning studies for the NoHo area. Two of particular note are the urban design study by the Jerde Partnership and the draft urban design principles developed by Pat Smith, AICP, with input from the Urban Studio/John Kaliski. These studies have addressed the need for defining urban design and development guidelines that can better assist the CRA, the MTA, and the private development community in achieving design excellence. The panel strongly recommends that the CRA build upon the solid groundwork that has already been laid in these studies. In particular, the

panel recommends that, working in close collaboration with the MTA and the community, the CRA adopt not only a revised general redevelopment plan for the area, but also a new "Design for Development" document that would specify detailed design guidelines for all new development and rehabilitation projects in the redevelopment area.

Since the panel generally supports the land uses currently permitted in the area, it recommends that the CRA use a "form-based" code approach to design guidelines rather than a traditional use-based code. A form-based approach would concern itself primarily with the appropriate distribution of massing, building heights, and design characteristics of buildings throughout the district, rather than regulating the uses of those buildings. Form-based guidelines focus on the streetscape and public spaces and how buildings relate to each other and to the public space. They can be particularly helpful in creating and preserving places of distinct character, and can also be used to protect

areas of undeveloped land or lower-density uses. When implemented well, form-based guidelines can also expedite the development process, since buildings that meet the guidelines can be approved much more quickly than under a traditional building-by-building review process. Arlington County, Virginia, has successfully implemented a form-based code along the Columbia Pike corridor, and Timothy Lynch, the executive director of the Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization, could be a resource to the CRA in devising an effective design review process.

NoHo's design guidelines should address issues related to building design (massing, materials, and sustainability), as well as to the public realm and site planning. The panel did not spend time addressing all these issues but instead focused on the critical design issues that could have an immediate impact on pending development projects. These suggestions are obviously preliminary in nature, and the panel encourages the CRA to continue to develop a more detailed and thorough set of design standards.

Land Use, Density, and Intensity of Development

- The Lankershim Core: Consideration should be given to requiring a minimum floor/area ratio (FAR) in the immediate transit station area to maximize the development potential of the transit adjacency over time. A minimum building height (three stories or more) might also be appropriate. The panel recommends a maximum building height of 15 stories, consistent with a suburban downtown core district. Mixed-use development should be promoted for all redevelopment sites in the core.
- The Arts District: In order to preserve the district's laid-back character and historic buildings, the panel recommends that new construction be limited to a maximum height of two or three stories and that when existing buildings are modified, a setback be required for all floors above two stories.
- The NoHo Park and Cumpston/Chandler residential neighborhoods: As property values drive density up from single-family homes to small apartment buildings, the panel recommends that building heights be restricted to a maximum of five stories.
- Back Lot District: The panel suggests promoting infill residential development, especially lofts and live/work units, while preserving the neighborhood's existing light-industrial, mixed-use character. A four-story height maximum is recommended.

Ground-Level Building Use and Design

- The Lankershim Core: All ground-level uses should be retail or cultural uses. Ground-floor spaces within new buildings in this district should be designed with a minimum floor-to-ceiling height conducive to retail/entertainment/cultural uses (14-foot minimum), with a minimum of 75 percent glazing—regardless of whether retail is the intended use in the near term. Parcels south of Chandler Boulevard within this district are encouraged to set back ten feet from the build-to line above the second story.
- Weddington Street and Chandler Boulevard: Special attention should be paid to establishing a streetscape conducive to walking on these key east-west pedestrian circulation corridors. Residential, retail, and cultural uses should be the predominant ground-floor uses. Floor-to-ceiling heights should be designed to accommodate retail, cultural, or live/work space (14-foot minimum).

General Building Design and Massing

- All new or renovated buildings should conform with build-to lines along the major streets.
- Distinctive corner-building massing is encouraged for buildings fronting the intersection of Lankershim and Chandler Boulevards, where maximum building heights are allowable.
- Building massing for parcels at the intersection of Lankershim Boulevard and Weddington Street is encouraged to strengthen and promote the arts district's historic and civic character, established in part by the former Security Pacific Bank building and the El Portal Theater. Corner massing should not exceed five stories at this intersection.

Parking and Circulation

- Exposed parking-garage facades should be discouraged within the Lankershim core and the arts district.
- Parking garages should be located midblock and wrapped with other uses when fronting a major street, including the important pedestrian connector streets such as Weddington Street.
- Very large-scale parking garages (such as those for MTA parking requirements) should be discouraged. Instead parking needs should be met by multiple smaller, conveniently located garages throughout the district.
- Parking entrances and other curb cuts should be discouraged along Lankershim Boulevard, Weddington Street, and Chandler Boulevard.
- Improved pedestrian and vehicular circulation should be promoted throughout the neighborhood by introducing new streets and breaking down the scale of large superblocks.

Streetscapes

- A landscaped center median along Lankershim Boulevard between Burbank and Camarillo Street should be provided, and the existing landscape and hardscape elements along the corridor should be enhanced.
- Sidewalks should measure a minimum of 12 feet wide along Lankershim, Magnolia, and Chandler boulevards and should be landscaped.

- A unified design for street furniture and lighting should be established and maintained.
- Neighborhood streets should be enhanced by adding landscape treatments and lighting.

Open Space

- The regional bikeway system should be enhanced with generous landscaping and pedestrian amenities, and it should be linked with the community's green spaces.
- A central civic gathering space should be developed that can be programmed with community events, festivals, plays, concerts, and other special events.
- Existing green spaces should be improved, and the ballfields and playgrounds at the schools in the area should be incorporated within the open-space network.
- Small public park spaces should be created in residential areas that do not have them.

Neighborhood Preservation

- Neighborhood connections to existing civic resources, including the schools, library, recreation center, post office, health center, and YMCA, should be strengthened.
- View corridors to important civic uses should be maintained and strengthened.
- Residential districts should be anchored with civic architecture and uses.

Implementation

Having a vision for North Hollywood is critical, but knowing how to make the vision a reality is equally important. The two lead players, the CRA and the MTA, can prepare the area and deliver the key development sites. Private landowners have equally critical lead roles in bringing their properties into play. Other stakeholders in the community have important supporting roles to protect, preserve, enhance, and market the NoHo Arts District and the broader NoHo community.

Five Key Strategies

The panel has recommendations for these stakeholders regarding five implementation strategies: special purpose organizations, marketing, finance, planning, and collaboration. The panel also offers some recommendations specifically for the MTA joint development program.

Special Purpose Organizations

The key goal should be to differentiate North Hollywood from other competing locations. NoHo's best asset is its unusual arts district, which should be strengthened for the long term. This community identity is as important as the subway station and the bus rapidway in creating new market opportunities. Therefore, a top priority for CRA redevelopment efforts should be the establishment of additional cultural anchors along Lankershim to enhance the existing arts district. Such anchors may include the World Animation Center, a relocated and expanded YMCA, a theater center, and an art-house cinema.

The existing arts organizations will also need nurturing and protection. A new concept favored by the panel would be establishing a nonprofit foundation, the NoHo Arts District Foundation, to acquire properties such as existing small theaters and gallery spaces so that their physical integrity and cultural uses can be maintained regardless of

rising property values, which could otherwise render them no longer economically feasible. Although one developer active in the area remarked that the arts district should be allowed to succeed or fail on its own, the panel does not agree. The arts, at all levels, need to be sustained and supported in order to remain viable. The panel believes that the district's artistic character will in fact increase the value of new development, both residential and commercial. It is not unreasonable to require developers to underwrite, in some fair manner with the CRA and the MTA, the creation of a NoHo Arts District Foundation.

The NoHo Theater and Arts Business Collaborative has recently begun operations without yet officially establishing itself as a nonprofit organization. An organization such as this could serve as the genesis for this foundation, since it already has the cooperation of many of the arts and theater entities and leaders. Funding could come from a variety of sources, including established foundations and corporations that support the arts, government grants, and special events, but the panel believes that a dedicated revenue source would be needed for the foundation to make a significant impact, especially since property values will continue to rise as the area matures. Other implementation tools recommended by the panel will serve to preserve the storefront character of the main boulevards, but in order to retain their use for the arts, some form of ownership control will need to be asserted as well.

There is already a percent-for-art requirement for new development projects, and this is a noteworthy start. But the use of these funds is controlled by the project's developer, and so the results can be spotty. The panel believes that every new project should dedicate its required arts contribution to the proposed NoHo Arts District Foundation. In addition, the CRA needs to take a proactive role in dedicating a portion of tax increment fi-

The panel's proposed NoHo Arts District Foundation would help small theaters and galleries like these to purchase their buildings before rising property values price them out of the neighborhood.



nancing to this foundation as well, perhaps seeding it with significant funds in the beginning so that a critical mass of structures can be preserved before prices escalate further. The management of the arts foundation would include a combination of the arts, business, and development communities so that all their interests would be mutually served.

The panel is also aware that there have been extensive efforts to date toward creating a business improvement district (BID). There is currently about \$1.5 million available to fund this district. The panel strongly encourages the property owners to vote for the creation of this BID, whose purposes would include promoting the area, managing a “clean and safe” program, and maintaining street furniture and other elements of the public realm. This function is a critical part of a successful redevelopment effort, and annual contributions from area stakeholders, including the owners of yet-to-be-developed properties, are a common and justifiable means for raising the necessary funds.

Marketing

As previously discussed, there is presently a strong market in North Hollywood for rental and ownership residential product, a good market for neighborhood retail, and little or no market for office, hotel, or regional retail. All markets are cyclical, and those that are hot today will not necessarily stay so. The panel recommends that the business community, the MTA, other property owners, and the CRA form a joint NoHo marketing team and become proactive in creating and expanding opportunities for balanced development, rather than waiting passively for new market opportunities to emerge.

Two desirable uses that would optimally locate in the NoHo core are hotel and office. Under existing zoning, the western portion of the MTA site alone could support as much as 1.2 million square feet of office space. Absent proactive intervention, however, it could be a long wait before sufficient demand for these uses materializes.

The panel recommends that the joint marketing team approach both Hilton and Marriott, educate them about what is happening in NoHo, and ask them which hotel products might be appropriate for this market today and which might become appropriate as other components of the NoHo vision materialize. It may be that there is enough present market demand for an extended-stay hotel or a facility similar to the Oakwood Garden Apartments. Regardless of whether Hilton or Marriott think there are sufficient current hotel opportunities, the team should ask for a good demand analysis of the area as a whole, not an opinion on a specific site. The resulting information will be more valid than any consultant study as to if and when a hotel will be feasible.

Office developers know that the tenants to fill their buildings generally are already located within two to three miles of their site. The NoHo marketing team should inventory the existing office users in the immediate area—especially the larger users—to determine their immediate and future needs and to make them aware of the availability of office land nearby. Keep in touch with the inventory list. Potential tenants forget and need to be reminded that NoHo can be part of their space planning. Pay close attention to changes affecting major office users, because they may eventually need significant new blocks of space.

Government agencies lease substantial space in the area, and these leases have been important catalysts in starting new buildings in North Hollywood. These catalysts do not have to stay where they are. As existing leases near their end of term, use preleasing by government agencies for five-year terms as the catalyst for new office buildings.

Retail space is marketed by retail real estate brokers who represent various retail tenants. Good brokers will not recommend a location until they have done research on the area and are comfortable that their clients will do well there. Doing this research takes time that they will not spend unless the available space will enable them to do several deals and make good commissions. Macrolevel retail feasibility studies for the study area show little retail demand, owing to area demographics and existing competition. The sales of retailers in the area, however, suggest that the market is much stronger than it is currently perceived. The joint marketing team should quantify how existing retailers are doing, identify the few good retail brokers who work in the area, and approach them in person to inform them about the market, available space, and development opportunities. Make it the team's business to provide these brokers with all the information they need for their clients. The goal should be to make the brokers either a formal or informal part of the marketing team.

NoHo's rental residential market is strong, as evidenced by the several projects going forward, but the best plan for the area is not one of 100 percent apartments. A broader spectrum of residential products will stabilize the area and reduce market risk. Elsewhere in the nation, rental markets have become soft, and real estate capital is no longer flowing into apartment projects. This may well happen here in the near future. A balance of other housing types (senior housing, work/live housing, condos, and other new high-density ownership types such as stacked townhouses) should be added to the planned mix of housing products. Developers specializing in these products should be identified and approached for development proposals.



A proactive marketing effort is recommended to address office vacancies and create balanced development opportunities.

Finance

The panel believes that the CRA should reorder its funding priorities. Rather than using public financial resources to write down land for developers, the agency should use resources to make the market stronger—lifting demand and making projects feasible at today's land values. Land purchase subsidies should be used only to facilitate cultural or strategic developments. Subsidizing market-rate housing is no longer a good use of the CRA's financial resources. Land assemblage should continue to be a CRA tool, but primarily as a way to make the development process quicker and more attractive.

The CRA and the MTA have already made substantial investments that should make the NoHo area more attractive for developers. They cannot rest on their laurels, however, and must join together to engage the city and the county in making the additional streetscape, lighting, and road improvements that are needed to create a lively pedestrian- and transit-friendly environment. The Los Angeles Department of Transportation is a key stakeholder in NoHo, but it doesn't appear to know that yet. The NoHo vision needs to be widely publicized among all of the agencies with capital improvement budgets that impact the area.

CRA Project Planning and Implementation

The panel's suggestions for the CRA are intended to strengthen its capacity to plan and manage the NoHo redevelopment effort. Perhaps most important, the panel believes that the CRA needs to reorganize and to call on outside talent with experience in real estate deal making. The agency's internal structure should be organized at the local

Improving the public realm with pedestrian-friendly streetscape improvements should be a priority.



level by function, separating planning from investment and both from community relations.

The CRA should promulgate design guidelines for all properties in the study area. These guidelines should be concise yet specific and should clearly set forth the rules of engagement for future development projects. Agreement on these guidelines must be obtained from the MTA and any other government entities involved in the project approval process *prior* to the MTA's release of any solicitation for development proposals. This step is essential. In the solicitation, the MTA should set forth its requirements for replacement of facilities and protection of its interests, but development on the site should be controlled by the CRA-developed guidelines.

The objective should be to support the controlled and coordinated redevelopment of the area. The CRA must streamline what appears to developers to be a ponderous approval process, especially for projects that require a change in zoning and thus are not “by right.” Subjecting developers to layers of review and the conflicting requirements of various public agencies results in confusion, wasted resources, and discouragement. Developers hate uncertainty and will go elsewhere if confronted with too much bureaucracy. The locus of control should remain with the CRA, but the process should require sufficient input from other involved agencies to ensure that their interests are met without subjecting developers to fruitless duplications of effort. The CRA should be empow-

ered to issue the requisite approvals for a project to move forward expeditiously.

Rather than wait for developers to make site-specific proposals, preapprovals based on the adopted redevelopment plan vision should be put in place (i.e., this site is already approved for a ten-story building with this density, this setback, and so on). Just as suburban office park developers put in the roads and utilities to sell their sites to future tenants, the CRA should “set the table” for development by clarifying the regulatory approval process as much as possible prior to developer involvement.

Collaboration

In the panel's estimation, every participant in the North Hollywood redevelopment effort has some, but not all, of the qualifications necessary to create high-quality projects. The combination of two or more stakeholders collaborating on a particular site can produce a powerful development force significantly greater than what any one participant alone could achieve. Such collaboration should be the rule and not the exception, and should be strongly encouraged from the top down. Collaboration requires flexibility, compromise, a willingness to assume some risk, and a determination to resist the separate institutional imperatives that otherwise undermine joint undertakings. These requirements can be challenging when two or more public-sector agencies, each with different agendas, share a public stage. Thus, leadership at the very top must pave the way for close, sus-

tained cooperation between the CRA, the MTA, and other public agencies. These entities should aim to speak as one voice to the business community. The reward, as every great actor knows, is that strong fellow actors only serve to make the overall performance better. Such partnerships, however, should be undertaken on a site-specific basis and not broadly for the entire area. Partnering on one site is difficult enough; doing so on multiple sites exponentially increases the difficulty.

Examples of possible financial collaboration tools that could be used in various combinations to improve project feasibility include coupling CRA tax increment financing with MTA flexibility in ground-lease terms; tax abatement benefits; developer construction of improvements in exchange for favorable land-lease terms from public entities; inclusion of investors with longer-term investment goals, such as pension funds and life insurance companies, in financing projects with longer-term upside potential; and public agency lead tenant commitments.

There are also many opportunities for more indirect forms of financial collaboration. For example, parking should be viewed as a collective resource for the entire area. MTA parking spaces should be shared with other area uses during nonpeak hours and should be physically combined with non-MTA parking uses to increase economies of scale and reduce per-space costs. Spaces built for area buildings should be leased to developers, and the CRA should promote this as an appropriate parking

source for new projects. The MTA could adopt the role of parking finance and management czar in the area and view this role as a profit center. Throughout the nation, parking at mass transit stations is becoming paid parking. While it may be important to offer free parking at the Metro station today, as ridership in the system builds, the day will come when it is feasible and thus desirable to charge for parking. The MTA should plan and prepare for this eventuality.

Finally, it goes almost without saying that the CRA and the MTA must work together to promote the arts district. New avenues for this partnership should be developed. For example, the panel believes that MTA sponsorship of the annual NoHo arts festival would dramatically increase attendance and thus ridership.

Recommendations for the MTA

The MTA's extensive land holdings present extraordinary development opportunities that may not be fully appreciated by the development community. To capture the potential of these sites, the MTA has instituted a joint development program to forge the public-private partnerships necessary to bring these projects to fruition. The program has been successful, but its effectiveness, especially in developing the North Hollywood sites, could be enhanced through the implementation of the following recommendations.



The ULI panel and the CRA and MTA staffs discuss the challenges and opportunities for redevelopment in North Hollywood.

Metro station areas can be important public gathering places that add value to surrounding developments, which in turn provide the people who energize the station areas.



Internal Resources and Procedures

The joint development program must be made a priority within the MTA and supported by the entire organization. Within the last four years, the well-established joint development program of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority in Washington, D.C., has approved projects that will generate approximately \$145 million over the term of the agreements. Given the amount of developable property that it owns, the MTA's joint development program has a similar potential to produce revenue as well as to increase ridership, but to achieve these objectives the program must have the explicit support of top management and other departments throughout the organization.

Multidisciplinary staff. Success begins with a strong, committed program staff, dedicated solely to joint development activities and composed of professionals from many disciplines. Staff should have extensive experience in managing public and private development projects, planning, financial analysis, and real estate law. In other words, MBAs, planners, and lawyers should be on board, as well as people with direct development experience to lead the program. Supplementary consultant resources may be used as necessary for specialized tasks beyond staff expertise, but their involvement should be kept to a minimum.

Interdepartmental support. Other departments such as operations, general counsel, and engineering must cooperate with joint development staff to get projects underway. Solving problems rather

than creating obstacles must be the rule, and the team approach should be emphasized in a revision of the agency's "Joint Development Policies and Procedures" documentation.

Consolidation of proposal review process. The joint development solicitation and evaluation process should be reviewed to ensure that it is comprehensible and effective. The panel reviewed the MTA's flow chart entitled "Joint Development Implementation Procedures," which details the steps involved in the process. It is a two-step evaluation, the first level of which is a checklist review seemingly used as a screening tool. If a proposal meets this threshold, a recommendation is then taken to the board and approval is sought to execute an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA). The second level is an evaluation of additional, more detailed information that the developer submits after execution of the ENA and subsequent negotiation of an agreement for which board approval is sought.

The panel suggests consolidation of some of these steps. The developer should be required at the outset to submit a very detailed proposal that is thoroughly reviewed by the evaluation team, with a recommendation on selection of a developer taken to the board as a first step. This would ensure that the board only has to consider a serious proposal that has met all the fundamental requirements. The second step should be approval of terms that have been further negotiated (to the MTA's advantage, of course) and set forth in a term sheet



Redevelopment of surface parking lots as vibrant mixed-use places that will generate tax revenues and transit ridership has been a successful strategy for transit agencies around the nation.

with a request that the board authorize staff to incorporate these terms into an agreement. No further board action should be necessary.

Procurement policies. Joint development should be exempted from the MTA's standard procurement policies and procedures, and a new set of procedures should be developed that would permit the requisite coordination with entities outside the MTA and would expedite the processing of proposals. Selecting a developer is not like buying routine supplies or services and should be not be treated in the same manner within the organization.

Parking facilities. The issue of replacement of MTA facilities, especially surface parking facilities, should be addressed before offering a site for development, if possible, by determining the alternatives for relocation of interim and permanent facilities and identifying possible financing alternatives to the developer's assumption of the cost. Creative solutions should be considered, such as consolidating parking into several smaller structures instead of one large behemoth or devising a system of shared parking. The desirability of a local shuttle bus service (and possible mechanisms for funding it) should also be considered at this stage in the process.

External Collaboration

The MTA's joint development program cannot succeed without the informed and enthusiastic participation of numerous external stakeholders. The earlier in the process that the MTA can engage

the community, developers, and other agencies in discussions about potential project parameters, the better.

Circulate an annual work program. The MTA should consider the release of an annual "Joint Development Work Program" document that would be distributed to the CRA and other jurisdictional representatives to notify them of the MTA's intention to market specific sites in the upcoming fiscal year. Development issues, priorities, and constraints could then be discussed with the local jurisdictions and addressed in advance of the release of any solicitation. This additional effort at communication with local governments is essential to achieving a smooth development review process and can save both the MTA and its developer partners much wasted time and effort. This offers a good time to begin the process of organizing public support for development concepts and to identify incentives that could be put in place to enhance the development opportunity. Any possibility of assemblages with adjacent public or private land should also be explored. The goal of such coordination is to prepare the jurisdictional representatives who will participate in the project approval process for the release of the site and to enhance the attractiveness of the site offering to the development community.

Joint marketing effort for commercial development. The CRA and the MTA must cooperate to ensure the successful development of the MTA NoHo properties. Since the panel's vision for the NoHo

North Hollywood's former train station could be the site of a new intermodal transit center integrated within a mixed-use development that would include hotel, cultural, retail, office, and/or entertainment uses.



study area includes a significant component of high-density commercial development for which the market is currently uncertain, a joint marketing effort should be instituted to jump-start near-term commercial development interest. Such an effort could include a developers' forum with prominent support from the mayor, the city council, the county, and the CRA to provide information on the NoHo vision and the particular opportunities these sites present. Financial incentives should be highlighted that would enhance the attractiveness of this location for office/retail development, such as:

- discounted ground rent until project stabilization;
- replacement of parking and station facilities at no cost to developer;
- property tax abatement;
- reduction or waiver of fees; and
- assemblage opportunities with adjacent public or privately owned land.

The vision for NoHo should be repeatedly emphasized to instill developer confidence that investment in commercial development in this relatively untested market has the full support of the

major stakeholders and that everything possible has been done to reduce the developer's risk to an acceptable level.

Requests for Proposals. The momentum for development must be sustained. The joint development process is not a passive exercise. Rather than waiting for an unsolicited proposal, the sites should be aggressively marketed. The marketing effort should culminate in the issuance of an RFP for the sites with a commitment from the CRA to expedite approvals and streamline the process for the selected developer. The acceptability of phased development and long-term buildout should be emphasized. Alternatively, the MTA may want to consider the use of real estate brokers to identify prospects and continue the marketing effort if there is no satisfactory initial response to the RFP. A developer may be willing to assume a broker's fees if the broker is able to secure the opportunity on reasonable terms. Interested parties would have to submit the standard information required in an RFP.

Inclusive proposal review process. The MTA's proposal evaluation process should be as inclusive as possible in order to ensure CRA and public support of the selected developer. The CRA, other designated public agencies, and representatives of

community organizations should be involved in all aspects of the process except for the negotiation of proprietary matters between the MTA and the developer.

Competitive negotiations. Simultaneous negotiations with two or more competitive developers should be considered to achieve project objectives. A “selected developer” and an “alternate selected developer” could be designated.

Finally, the panel believes that the importance of consolidating subway and bus rapidway facilities at the North Hollywood station into a new multi-modal transportation center cannot be overemphasized. In order to ensure a well-balanced and

integrated approach to development on its properties, all three of the MTA properties at the station should be offered for development at the same time, including the site of the train depot and the property north of the Orange Line right-of-way, unless there is an exceptionally strong rationale for offering them piecemeal. The MTA should be seeking landmark projects that will interface with the new transportation facilities and enhance their effectiveness. Given the size of the parcels, a master developer and phased development strategy will be required, ultimately involving multiple development entities. Only highly qualified and well-financed developers need apply.

Conclusion

The panel believes North Hollywood is well positioned for a dynamic period of growth and revitalization. The primary challenge facing the CRA, the MTA, and the community will be to guide that growth and development so that an integrated urban village neighborhood is created, not merely a series of individual projects.

The panel advocates a vision for NoHo featuring a balanced, mixed-use downtown core and a vibrant arts district surrounded by stabilized and strengthened residential neighborhoods that provide a variety of housing options for residents of all income levels. The eclectic, funky character of NoHo should be preserved and enhanced with new dining, entertainment, retail, and arts attractions. Office and hotel uses can be added to the mix as the market for these products develops; until that time, development opportunities should be reserved for these uses so that the full potential of the transit infrastructure will be realized. Streets and public spaces should receive priority attention so that residents, employees, and visitors all enjoy and feel safe walking within the neighborhood, lingering at a sidewalk café, or biking to visit a friend.

Achieving this vision will require determined and enlightened leadership and skillful collaboration across agency boundaries. The foundation for success exists in the work already done by the MTA

and the CRA and in the planning and design studies already completed. The task now is to move to the final implementation phases of the revitalization effort. The panel's key recommendations are summarized as follows:

- Strengthen the arts district. Use available resources to add arts institution anchors; create an arts foundation to purchase and preserve key properties; restrict building heights to hold property values down and protect the district's existing character; and form a BID to market and maintain the district.
- Create a livable mixed-use downtown. Consolidate transit services at an intermodal transit station facility; prepare design guidelines that provide a planning framework for a walkable, livable community and at the same time expedite the development process; and don't allow the strong market for rental residential development to overwhelm the area.
- Invest in the public realm. Give Lankershim Boulevard a real boulevard treatment, with a landscaped median, street trees, planter boxes, and furniture, so that traffic is slowed in the core, shoppers, arts patrons, and other walkers are welcomed, and drivers are signaled that interesting attractions are nearby; implement effective "clean and safe" programs that will improve the overall maintenance and safety of the community; and build on the existing NoHo park and greenway plans to create a network of pocket parks, landscaped streets, and bikeways throughout the community to provide visual relief from the intensity of development in the area.
- Be proactive in marketing the area and reducing development uncertainty. Coordinate and be aggressive in marketing the area to developers and potential tenants; streamline the CRA and MTA development approval processes and use development guidelines to preapprove as many



NoHo's potential as a walkable, arts- and transit-oriented urban village is already evident.

sites as possible; create shared parking strategies and package development incentives to maximum effect; and use the creative energy of the community to inspire and support the revitalization process.

The panel is confident that NoHo is on the verge of emerging as one of Los Angeles's hottest new neighborhoods, and the community should aspire to nothing less. As Daniel Burnham so aptly re-

minded planners at the turn of the last century, "Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood." North Hollywood has its own special alchemy, and with the public, private, and non-profit sectors all working together in creative partnership, the panel expects that the community's transformation into a full-fledged urban village will appear magical indeed.

About the Panel

Frank J. Sparicio

*Panel Chair
Rumford, Rhode Island*

Frank J. Sparicio is founding principal in Corporate Real Estate Strategies, a consulting firm dealing primarily with the repositioning and disposition of assets resulting from consolidations within the corporate sector. Previously, he served as senior vice president of Fleet Boston, where he was responsible for the bank's corporate real estate assets, including 10 million square feet of commercial space and more than 800 branches, offices, and operations centers.

Before joining Fleet Boston, Sparicio was responsible for all major real estate transactions as director of corporate real estate for GTE, a position in which one of his principal responsibilities involved the relocation of the company's entire telephone operations to a new headquarters in Las Colinas, Texas. Earlier, he served as an officer of Harco, the Hartford Insurance Company's real estate subsidiary.

A member of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) for more than 30 years, Sparicio has served as vice chair of its Corporate Real Estate Council. He also has served on a number of advisory services panel assignments.

Douglas Betz

Dayton, Ohio

Douglas Betz serves as a senior partner of Woolpert LLP, a nationally known A/E/P firm of 650 people. He is the principal-in-charge of the firm's developer and private-sector group, which totals 85 people. He is experienced in leading multidisciplinary teams of professionals and is responsible for managing special projects that involve planning expertise.

Betz's responsibilities include directing a national practice that focuses on the design of theme parks, resorts, retail projects, industrial/office parks, and correctional facilities. He has over 25 years of experience in representing clients at planning commission meetings, zoning hearings, city council meetings, and other public meetings.

An active member of ULI, Betz has served on several advisory services panels and project analysis teams and is a member of the Community Retail Council (CRC Green Flight). He is a graduate of University of Cincinnati, where he received a bachelor's degree in urban planning and design.

Toni L. Griffin

Washington, D.C.

Toni L. Griffin currently serves as the deputy director for revitalization planning in the Washington, D.C., Office of Planning. She oversees large-scale redevelopment projects, neighborhood planning, and an overall strategic revitalization plan for the city in coordination with other public, private, and nonprofit entities. She has spent the last two years building a staff of seventeen planners to tackle complex urban development and neighborhood planning projects, including revitalization of the Anacostia waterfront; reuse of the downtown existing convention center site; development of the historic St. Elizabeth's Hospital campus; and completing strategic neighborhood action plans for every neighborhood in the city.

Previously, Griffin served as the vice president for planning and tourism development for the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Development Corporation in New York City. Her principal challenge was to position Harlem, a neighborhood with a rich and diverse African American and Latino cultural heritage, to take advantage of New York's growing tourism economy. With a small team, she created a comprehensive heritage

tourism initiative designed to stimulate economic development opportunities through tourism while maintaining the highest level of cultural preservation and balance of gentrification.

Prior to moving to New York, Griffin was an associate partner with the Chicago office of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP. Joining the firm in 1986 after completing her degree in architecture at the University of Notre Dame, she was involved in architecture and urban design projects including commercial and office developments in London, Barcelona, Sydney, and Beijing and a development plan for Chicago's historic Bronzeville neighborhood. In her final role at SOM, Griffin managed the Detroit project office for the General Motors global headquarters at the Renaissance Center project. In addition to coordinating all architectural and engineering efforts between the client and design consultants, her role also involved working with various city, state, and civic agencies to establish policy frameworks for the redevelopment of the Detroit River waterfront and the central business district.

In 1998, Griffin completed a year-long appointment as a Loeb Fellow at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. As a Fellow, she explored methods of using cultural heritage and historic preservation as a means toward creating economic and community development in urban ethnic neighborhoods. Her activities that year also included teaching an urban design studio at the school and traveling to Cuba.

Elisa Hill

Washington, D.C.

Elisa Hill is currently supervisor of property planning and development for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) in Washington, D.C. In this capacity, she is one of the managers of WMATA's joint development program, considered to be among the most successful in the nation. Her duties include evaluation of proposals for development of WMATA properties and negotiation of development agreements.

At WMATA Hill has worked with a number of communities attempting to maximize the eco-

nomical development impacts of transit access, and she has participated in numerous local planning and zoning processes. To date, construction along Metrorail rights-of-way at or near WMATA stations has totaled \$15 billion. Hill is currently working on strategies to position the remaining property in WMATA's joint development inventory to receive the maximum economic benefits.

Prior to joining WMATA, Hill was a principal in a residential condominium development firm and a deputy director of a federally funded community development corporation, both in Boston. She is a graduate of Brandeis University, Columbia University, and Boston College Law School. She has also completed the Minority Developers Executive Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Christopher W. Kurz

Baltimore, Maryland

Christopher W. Kurz is president and CEO of Linden Associates, Inc., a regional real estate services and mortgage banking company engaged in the financing, acquisition, development, and management of commercial property. The firm also consults for corporations on real estate matters. Previously, he was a cofounder, chairman, and CEO of McGill Development Company, which grew into the fourth largest commercial real estate development company in the Baltimore metropolitan area. Kurz served as chairman of the board of directors and cofounder of Columbia Bancorp and the Columbia Bank, a \$500 million, publicly traded bank holding company. As a principal at Alex Brown Real Estate Group, Inc., he acquired investments for pension fund clients. Other companies with which Kurz has been involved include the J.G. Smithy Company, Maryland National Corporation, and the Rouse Company.

Kurz holds an MBA from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and a BA from the University of Pennsylvania. A ULI member, he has been chair of the Baltimore District Council, vice chair of the Small-Scale Blue Development Council, and a National Program Committee member. He is also a member of the International Council of Shopping Centers, a past member of

the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties and the Mortgage Bankers Association, and a past board member of the Catherine McAuley Housing Foundation in Denver.

Terry R. Margerum

San Francisco, California

Terry R. Margerum is a senior managing director of Sedway Group, a division of the CB Richard Ellis Consulting practice. He has over 25 years of experience in upper management and consulting positions in both the public and private sectors. He is an authority and frequent speaker on transit-oriented development and public/private joint ventures. He has extensive experience in redevelopment, asset management, strategic planning, fiscal impact analysis, resort development, entertainment retail development, and development feasibility studies. He also has substantial experience as an owner's representative in securing project entitlements, especially in complex political settings.

In addition to many conventional purchase and sale transactions, Margerum has also been involved in a number of more complex negotiations, including long-term ground and air-rights leases, sale of transferable development rights, development agreements among and between both public and private entities, joint construction and use agreements, and transit special access agreements.

His management experience has included executive positions with the Association of Bay Area Governments; Vail Associates, where he managed much of the planning for Beaver Creek, Vail's sister resort; and the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART), where he was hired to establish and direct the agency's joint real estate

development department. He recently completed a transit-oriented development analysis of the new stations that will be built as part of BART's extension from Fremont to San Jose and Santa Clara.

Zane Segal

Houston, Texas

Zane Segal is a project director, marketing consultant, and real estate broker with Zane Segal Projects, Inc. Specializing in mixed-use, residential, retail, historic, hospitality, urban, and resort properties, he has 25 years of experience in real estate venture management, development, construction, brokerage, and marketing on a range of property types, including land, lofts, townhomes, custom homes, low- and mid-rise condominiums, hotels, retail centers, office buildings, subdivisions, and sports facilities.

He received his bachelor's degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a master of fine arts degree from the University of Southern California, and he has studied graduate-level architecture at the University of Houston.

Segal is vice chair of the ULI Houston District Council and has served on three ULI advisory services panels. He was the founding executive director of the Museum District Business Alliance and the first president of the Houston Association for Film and Television and is often published and quoted by the media as a spokesperson for development, urban design, and the arts.

His community activities include participation in the Regional Planning Committee of the Greater Houston Partnership, delivering presentations on urban design for Imagine Houston, and serving as president of the Sparacino Company Dancers.