

# SAN BERNARDINO DOWNTOWN CORE **VISION** & ACTION PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
JUNE 2009



Economic Development Agency | EDAW | AECOM







Reaching this new vision for downtown San Bernardino, the development of the Downtown Core Vision & Action Plan was a collective effort of the San Bernardino community. Together with the San Bernardino Economic Development Agency (EDA) and EDAW, we are now in position to move forward to revitalize Downtown.

The San Bernardino Downtown Core Vision & Action Plan is a guide, a roadmap for the future revitalization and redevelopment of downtown San Bernardino. The Vision & Action Plan is realistic and doable. It builds around our already existing core strengths of government, transportation and education, and will allow Downtown to be distinct from any that exists in a 50-mile radius. More important, Downtown will be unique and will not compete (i.e., take business from) with other successful areas within the City.

The following Executive Summary provides an overview of the Background, Analysis, Visioning Process, Principles, Alternative Scenarios, the Vision, and Development Standards. Also included is an Implementation summary that addresses a group of initiatives that will spur a complete Downtown Renaissance. Downtown will no longer be populated from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., but will transform itself into a Downtown where people live, work and socialize around the clock.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





# SAN BERNARDINO DOWNTOWN CORE VISION & ACTION PLAN

## STUDY AREA





# INTRODUCTION

San Bernardino is set to soon become the capital of the Inland Empire — a city defined once again by a thriving and walkable downtown, beautiful public places, and a wide array of choices to live, work, and play. Anchored by a revitalized night-time district and the historic California Theatre at its core, the city's downtown will announce a new era in government, combining the County Administration needs and those of City Hall into a vital, new Civic Center with an authentic Southern California atmosphere — casual, relaxed, warm but shaded, with fountains, lakes, small parks, paseos, and plazas at every turn.

Currently, San Bernardino's Downtown has three main components: a government institutional district, a residential district, and a retail district which conflict in scale, functionality and image. Its governmental/institutional district is composed of large scaled "superblocks" which attempt to internalize its services. Its over scaled City Hall block serves as its focal point. The surrounding residential district is an isolated patchwork of residences that are cut-off and screened from the adjacent government district by commercial uses, surface parking lots and vacant parcels. Its housing stock is old, often in poor condition, lacking in amenities and other service-oriented, neighborhood retail. The retail district is outdated and consists of suburban, automobile oriented typologies such as indoor shopping malls and drive-through eating establishments. These and other issues facing downtown offer an opportunity to rethink how a new downtown social and economic potential can be realized.

The main focus of the San Bernardino Downtown Core Vision & Action Plan is to create a vision and strategy for how Downtown San Bernardino can prosper. With this focus in mind, the San Bernardino Downtown Core Vision & Action Plan is a guide, a blueprint for the future redevelopment, revitalization and growth of downtown San Bernardino. A plan which seeks to encourage a renewed interest in living, working, shopping and socializing in Downtown through the creation of a quality urban environment that will enhance the everyday experience. As such, the Vision & Action Plan is built around a series of key initiatives which seeks to:

- Leverage and compliment existing retail uses
- Develop a Civic Center
- Establish a night-time Theatre District
- Redefine the existing shopping mall as Urban Street Retail
- Develop a "Heritage" Square District
- Develop Housing
- Develop a Comprehensive Parking District
- Develop a Comprehensive Business Plan

In July 2008, the City of San Bernardino Economic Development Agency and a multidisciplinary team of urban design, planning and economic experts from EDAW, started the work of preparing a Vision & Action Plan for the Downtown Core of San Bernardino. The Vision & Action Plan study area encompasses an area of approximately 60 blocks in Downtown San Bernardino. It is located east of the Interstate 215 Freeway, west of Waterman Avenue, between Sixth and Seventh Streets to the north, and Rialto Avenue and the rail line to the south. This area is the historic heart of the City and includes City Hall, the Carousel Mall, County of San Bernardino Courts and Administrative Offices, a former hotel and convention center. Over a period of 11 months, the Agency and EDAW worked together, meeting regularly, conducting interviews with major downtown stakeholders and business representatives and organizations. In addition to data analysis, planning and urban design process, and the development of alternatives, a two-day Charrette and two Community Open Houses were held in order to engage the citizens of San Bernardino and seek their input to craft a new Vision for downtown San Bernardino. What has been prepared is a Vision & Action Plan document that will serve as a roadmap for change both in the short and long term future.







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# WHY DOWNTOWN SAN BERNARDINO?

San Bernardino will celebrate its bicentennial in 2010. In the two centuries since its foundation, the city has experienced economic cycles that have left their imprint on its fabric and have shaped the current condition of its downtown area. Like many cities all over the world, San Bernardino – now home to more than 200,000 residents – has had to react to the market realities that have dictated its growth without a long-range vision. One consequence of this uncoordinated response is that Downtown San Bernardino is perceived as a patchwork of land uses with little cohesiveness, incapable of dynamic economic development, and attracting, instead, an array of social problems.

## **BUILDING ON SAN BERNARDINO'S CORE STRENGTHS: A FOUNDATION ALREADY IN PLACE**

Perception does not always match reality. Downtown San Bernardino has significant assets. It is currently the home of a wide range of civic uses and resources such as City Hall, the County and State Administrative Offices, Courts and the location of one of the first universities dedicated to sport education in the United States. Downtown San Bernardino is also the stage for a number of important regional events, including the Route 66 Rendezvous and the National Orange Show. The California Theatre, one of San Bernardino's most storied institutions, is active and attracts visitors from many surrounding cities to stellar productions of concerts and operas linked to the community's roots. Although these regional attractions are indeed important in both historic significance and scale, they have not been able to rekindle downtown San Bernardino's economic vitality. Moreover, the major regional shopping center - Carousel Mall, built in the booming '60s amidst a sea of parking in the heart of the city – has gradually lost its competitive edge to other regional retail developments and created a vacuum of activity in Downtown.

## **FORGING AHEAD: AN ACTION PLAN IN PLACE**

Downtown San Bernardino has recently become the object of increasing attention with many projects either being planned or under construction. Currently SANBAG and Caltrans are working

on the Interstate 215 Freeway Widening Project, which is improving mobility through the region and accessibility to Downtown San Bernardino. Omnitrans' sbX Bus Rapid Transit Project, the first rapid transit line in the region, and a Multi-Modal Transit Station, are planned to start operations in 2012. A new State Courthouse is under development and a new campus for County Administrative Offices is being planned. City Hall needs to undergo major seismic retrofitting and the adjacent hotel has closed for repositioning. The retail presence in Downtown has an opportunity to be entirely revamped with a major reconfiguration of the Carousel Mall Site and adjacent complementary uses envisioned under the stewardship of its multiple owners. The Cinemas has announced a plan to significantly upgrade the existing movie theatres and add an IMAX theatre. And Stater Brothers Market continues to provide goods for area residents, which is key for supporting a Downtown. With a dynamic scenario of change, these projects need to be carefully orchestrated so their combined efforts translate into coordinated and cohesive action by both public and private stakeholders who are committed to building a bright future for San Bernardino's Downtown.

Building on the recent 2007 Urban Land Institute (ULI) study recommendations for Downtown San Bernardino, the aim of this Vision Plan is to provide a feasible framework for aggressive and immediate action. It is clear that cities must constantly reinvent and reinvest in themselves, and this process is best managed by crafting a practical vision for the future – a roadmap that establishes certainty for all current and foreseeable future developments. By practicing good urban design, rigorously engaging the public, relying on sound financial feasibility analysis, and most importantly, building the optimism of private investors, the path forward can be addressed with each and every action, large or small. This will set the stage for a full makeover in which there will be a Downtown of villages or neighborhoods, each with its own unique personality.

The planning effort for the Downtown Core Vision & Action Plan took approximately 11 months to complete and consisted of eight distinct tasks. The initial phase of the consultants work

reaffirmed the goals and objectives of the ULI study, reaching out to the community at-large through a rigorous stakeholder and public engagement process, and developing a range of scenarios for redevelopment and revitalizations. These alternatives were then tested and brought back to the community and downtown stakeholders for their review and comment. A final "Preferred Plan" was presented in April 2009, with specific elements recommended for early implementation. In June 2009, the Mayor and Common Council, along with the Community Development Commission adopted, by resolution, the San Bernardino Downtown Core Vision & Action Plan and directed EDA staff to move forward with the implementation process. Perhaps the most significant development beyond the ULI study was the realization that immediate opportunities for development existed, and that if orchestrated well, could bring the radical change and repositioning of Downtown as imagined.







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**PACIFIC ELECTRIC**

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CHAFFETTES

**RATHBUN**

GATEWAY **HOTEL**  
GATEWAY HOTEL

**J.C. PENNEY COMPANY**

**SHOES CLOTHING**  
MEN'S, BOYS' & CHILDREN'S

ROOMS  
HOTEL



# BACKGROUND

San Bernardino, more than most cities in Southern California, possesses the pioneering spirit of 19th Century America. Its history however goes back much further. Descendants of the Serrano Indians, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, roamed a territory that spanned the San Bernardino Mountains, the valley and adjoining desert lands. Through to the 1850's, the first European settlement was founded, along with the San Gabriel Mission establishing Rancho San Bernardino. In 1851, the first significant influx of new residents occurred. Captain Andrew Lytle led a band of 500 Mormons and settled on the banks of the creek that today bears his name. The Mormons returned to Utah soon after San Bernardino was incorporated in 1854. Toward the end of the 19th Century, San Bernardino had become a hub for three national railroads. The railroads brought thousands of newcomers to the City, which became the gateway to Southern California, triggering several years of explosive growth. Today, San Bernardino is the 18th largest City in California, and the 101st largest City in the United States.

The historic core of the City, located near Third Street and "E" Street, experienced growth in a manner typical of North American settlements in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. It was comprised of a fine grained pattern of streets, a "main street", an efficient network of street cars, and a clustered mix of residential, commercial, and civic uses. San Bernardino's first permanent City Hall opened in 1901 at the corner of Third Street and "D" Street.

The early patterns of urban development were drastically altered with the introduction of the automobile, while the City was still in its infancy. Today, the Carousel Mall epitomizes the struggles of Downtown San Bernardino. In 1972, the Downtown shopping mall then known as Central City Mall opened with much fanfare with anchor stores such as the Harris Company, J.C. Penney, and Montgomery Ward. Today, all the anchor stores and many of the businesses have left. Despite the closing of these stores, the memory of family outings to shop and walk by the festive holiday storefronts, still linger in the minds of many.

In 2007, the California Planning & Development Report rated Downtown San Bernardino as one of California's "Most Disappointing Mid-Sized City Downtowns." But the city is not alone. The post-war development of suburbs, the abandonment of the traditional city center, the vacancy of residents and businesses, the loss of public realm as the needs of the automobile crowded out the needs of locals on foot, are all problems that most American cities are confronting today. Fortunately, during the past decade, progressive policies and attitudes have recognized the irreplaceable value that urban cores hold for the larger region and much progress has been made in reclaiming them back for people to enjoy.

## REGIONAL CONTEXT

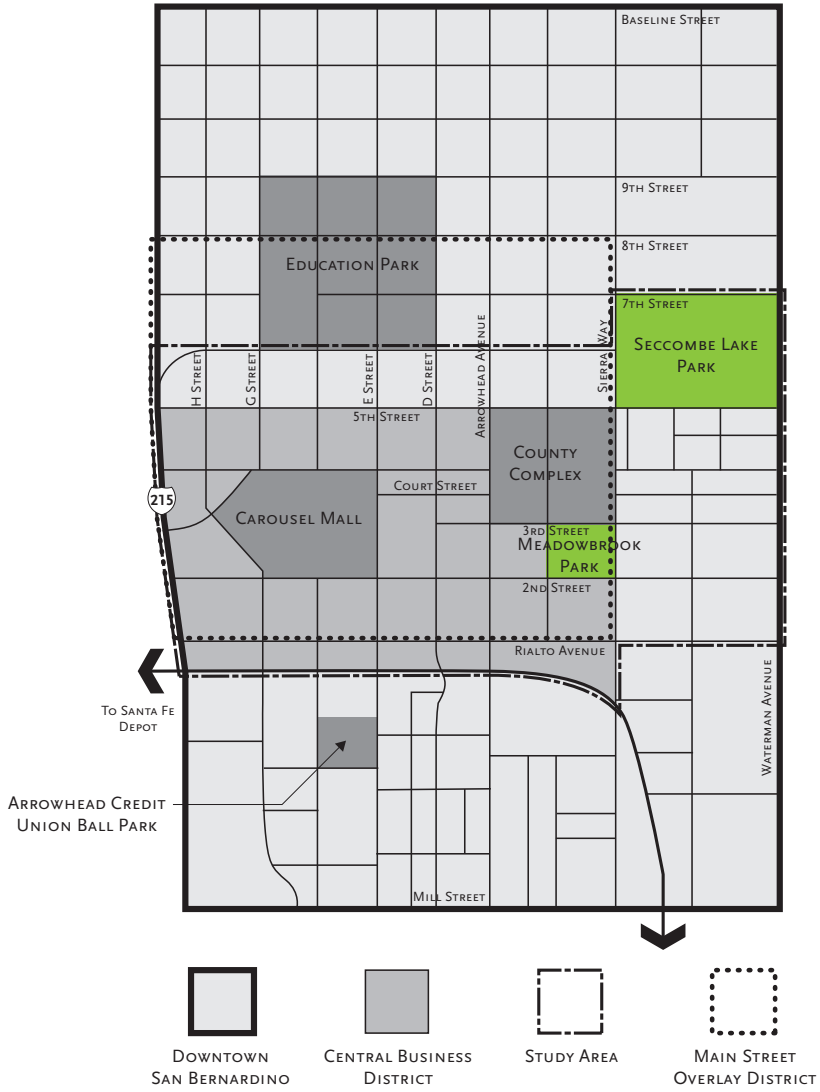
The City of San Bernardino is the hub of The Inland Empire, the vast urbanized region located at the western edges of Riverside and San Bernardino counties. The Inland Empire has a population of more than four million residents and is the 14th largest metropolitan region in the United States. It developed as the agricultural region of the Los Angeles Basin and its history is steeped with narratives of vineyards, citrus and dairy farms.

The City of San Bernardino is also the seat of government of the largest county in the United States, San Bernardino County. The City has historically been the eastern gateway into Southern California and evolved into a large transportation and logistics hub fed directly by the railroad lines and highways. In times since, for the 20 million residents of Southern California, San Bernardino has become the gateway into California's hinterland with freeway exit signs directing motorists to the mountain resort towns of Lake Arrowhead and Big Bear, and to the natural wildernesses of San Bernardino National Forest, Joshua Tree National Park, and the Mojave National Preserve.

## STUDY AREA

The Downtown Core Vision & Action Plan area encompasses more than 60 blocks of the Central Business District and includes City Hall, the former Clarion Hotel and Convention Center, the Carousel

Mall, County Administrative Offices and Courts, the historic core, and the proposed multimodal transit station. This area is the historic heart of the City, which over time has lost residents, businesses, and civic institutions. Located within the boundaries of four redevelopment project areas, the Vision & Action Plan area is located east of the Interstate 215 Freeway and west of Waterman Avenue, between Sixth and Seventh Streets to the north and Rialto Avenue and the rail line to the south.





HOUSING

MOVIES

CA

P

P

M

P

P

TRANSIT

MEADOW BROOK

VILLAGE

VILLAGE



# ANALYSIS

## STUDY AREA AND CONTEXT

Downtown San Bernardino has three main components: a civic/governmental/institutional district, a residential district, and a retail district that conflict in scale, functionality and image. Its civic/governmental/institutional district is composed of large scaled “superblocks” that attempt to internalize its services. It’s over-scaled City Hall block serves as the focal point. The surrounding residential district is an isolated patchwork of residences which are cut off and screened from the adjacent government district by commercial uses, surface parking lots and vacant parcels. The retail district is outdated and consists of suburban, automobile-oriented typologies such as indoor shopping malls and drive-through restaurants. The areas two major open spaces are Meadowbrook Park and Seccombe Lake Park. The I-215 Freeway provides excellent accessibility to the Downtown but also acts as a barrier to the neighborhoods to its west. The north-south streets are primarily continuous arterials of consistent width and rank. The east-west streets are more discontinuous and are primarily local.

## ECONOMIC AND MARKET PROFILE

Between the years 2000 to 2007, a period which largely corresponds to the unprecedented housing market boom in Southern California:

- The population of the Vision & Action Plan area increased 18 percent to more than 700 residents. The City’s population increased 8 percent to just over 200,000.
- Median household sizes in downtown were 2.11
- Median household income within the Central Business District was under \$10,000 a year. In comparison, the City’s was over \$41,000 and the County’s was over \$56,000.
- Of the over 15,000 plus employees in the Vision & Action Plan area, more than 53 percent of them work for the City, County, State and Federal government and governmental agencies. They spend over \$600,000 annually on lunch, and incidental shopping close to their place of work. In the larger downtown area, there are almost 20,000 workers spending close to \$2 million a year on local area businesses.

- The median price ranges for both single family homes and condominiums are lower than those for the neighboring communities of Ontario and Rancho Cucamonga as well as for the County as a whole.
- Taxable sales with the City and County are a little over \$15,000, more than 50 percent less than neighboring Ontario at around \$33,000.

## REGIONAL COMPETITORS

A review of downtown areas and major commercial centers of eight neighboring cities was done to identify current and potential regional competition facing Downtown San Bernardino.

Three cities, Rancho Cucamonga, Riverside, and Ontario, currently offer area residents a wide range of services and activities within their downtowns and represent a strong source of direct competition in terms of attracting retail tenants and customers. Though not currently operating at the level of the previous three cities, the cities of Redlands, Fontana, and Pomona have all enacted or implemented similar action plans and have begun constructing a series of integrated mixed-use projects in order to form a more cohesive, identifiable and attractive downtown. These cities represent potential future competitors that may be able to gain an increased portion of market share as more of their projects reach completion.

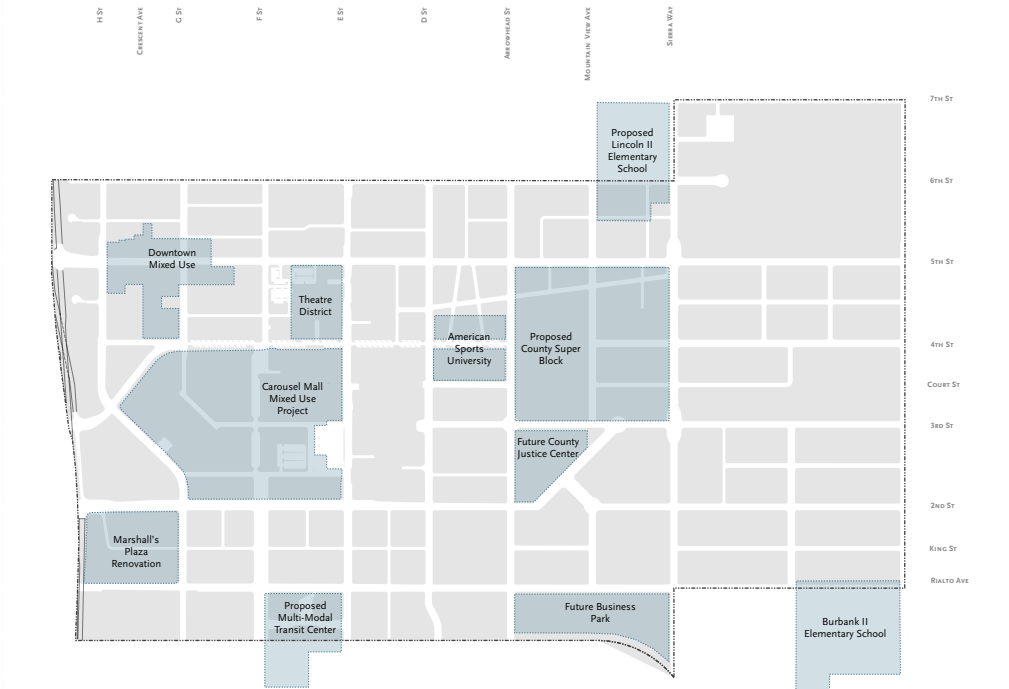
Finally, two cities that were examined but represent no current competitive downtown center, nor showed potential to become a regionally competitive destination in the near future, are the Cities of Moreno Valley and Chino.

## PIPELINE PROJECTS

A wide variety of development projects, created by both public and private entities, have been planned for the City’s downtown core. These projects include schools, courthouses, civic administration buildings, entertainment venues, retail centers and transportation centers.



DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS



PIPELINE PROJECTS

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



create a compelling **FIRST IMPRESSION** • save our **GREAT EXISTING ARCHITECTURE** • consolidate county and city facilities into a **NEW CIVIC CENTER** • great **GATEWAY** to the city • **FRUIT TREES** smell great • lets see **SIGNIFICANT CHANGE** • emphasize **WATER** • promote **TRAIN SERVICE** • create a **“RIVERWALK”** • new **WALKING AND BIKING TRAILS** • more **ART IN PUBLIC PLACES** • go **SOLAR** • **ECO-CONCIOUSNESS** • bring **REAL INNOVATION** into the design • **EYES ON THE STREETS** • i would love a **SPA RESORT** • restore downtown’s **DIVERSITY** • promote **GREEN STREETS** • a plan for **FUTURE GENERATIONS** • **SCHOOLS** are the key to bringing people back • **LINK AREAS** together • celebrate our **HERITAGE** • **ENTERTAINMENT** works here • capitalize on **GREEN TECHNOLOGIES** • a plan that is **UNIQUE** • **BUILD A STORY** • a **CLEAN AND SAFE** environment should come first • **YOUTHFUL** image

# what we heard

our city has a **HEART & SOUL** • bring in a **FARMERS’ MARKET** • a **GARDEN CITY** • incubator for the **ARTS** • **HIGH-TECH** IT corridor • **NIGHT TIME** district • **LIVE AND WORK** in downtown • a place where **IDEAS COME TO LIFE** • we need to **ACT NOW** • downtown is **SIGNIFICANT TO THE ENTIRE CITY** • a place where our children will want to **RAISE FAMILIES** of their own • capitalize on our unique **ARTS AND CULTURAL COMMUNITY** • downtown needs **PROGRAMMED ACTIVITIES** • **COURT STREET** is the **HEART** of downtown • **MALL SITE** should be a top priority • develop a **SUSTAINABLE** environment • get workers to **SPEND TIME AND DOLLARS** downtown • keep **SUPPORTING EXISTING BUSINESSES** • a **CHILDRENS’ MUSEUM** would be wonderful • **PEDESTRIANS FIRST** environment • an **ARTISTS’ MALL**



# THE VISIONING PROCESS

The development of the Vision & Action Plan centered on a process designed to engage the community and obtain input.

## APPROACH

The Vision & Action Plan was completed in eight distinct tasks, which were broadly organized in three planning phases – Analysis, Alternatives, and Preferred Plan. The Analysis Phase allowed all participants the time required to thoroughly understand the site, its constraints and opportunities, and to develop a firm understanding and agreement of the guiding principles for the design, development, and entitlement process. During the Alternatives Phase, the project team tested the guiding principles with the development of three options which were evaluated as to how they address and perform against the established and agreed upon guiding principles. At the end of this phase a ‘Preferred Plan’ was selected to fully develop in the final phase.

The framework underlying the approach has three key goals. It is rigorous in analyzing data, engaging the community, and generating alternative visions for the future. It is flexible in accommodating changes in direction and responding to new information. It is also simple to allow all participants to have a clear sense of the phases and milestones of the process.

## PUBLIC PROCESS

A plan is only as successful as the level of support it receives from the community. Throughout the process, the Project Team repeatedly stressed the value of public participation and how it contributes to developing a better solution to a particular problem. Public participation in the planning process builds trust and support between planners, stakeholders, and local residents. It not only enables consensus-building, it also allows practitioners to draw on local knowledge that is only apparent to people who inhabit a place and know it in better detail than any survey can reveal. Downtown San Bernardino, expectedly, has a multitude of stakeholders representing business, cultural, civic, and residential interests and have built relationships early in the process established the necessary levels of trust. This set the stage for:

## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

A series of stakeholder interviews were conducted in August and September 2008. The primary purpose of these interviews was to engage both stakeholders and community members in getting information and feedback on a revitalized Downtown San Bernardino.

## COMMUNITY MEETING 1: CHARRETTE

The first community meeting, a Charrette, was conducted on September 24 and 25, 2008. The two day event attracted more than 60 participants and was well received. The primary purpose of the Charrette was to engage both stakeholders and community members in establishing the design principles behind the Vision & Action Plan.

## COMMUNITY MEETING 2: COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE

The second community meeting, a Community Open House, is where three alternative development strategies were presented. On November 13, 2008, more than 150 downtown community members and stakeholders saw how the Vision & Action Plan was to take shape. Upon presentation of these alternatives, participants were encouraged to ask questions and voice their concerns, reactions and opinions in an open forum and one-on-one with project team members. The input gathered from the open house attendees was then used to guide the subsequent development of a “Preferred Plan” direction.

## COMMUNITY MEETING 3: PUBLIC PRESENTATION/OPEN HOUSE

The third community meeting was a Public Presentation / Open House that took place on April 9, 2009. A new vision of Downtown San Bernardino was unveiled after an 11 month process. Approximately 200 individuals witnessed a presentation that consisted of highlights of a new Downtown along with a number of presentation boards, a 3-D model, and a computer simulation that showed what Downtown San Bernardino could look like in the

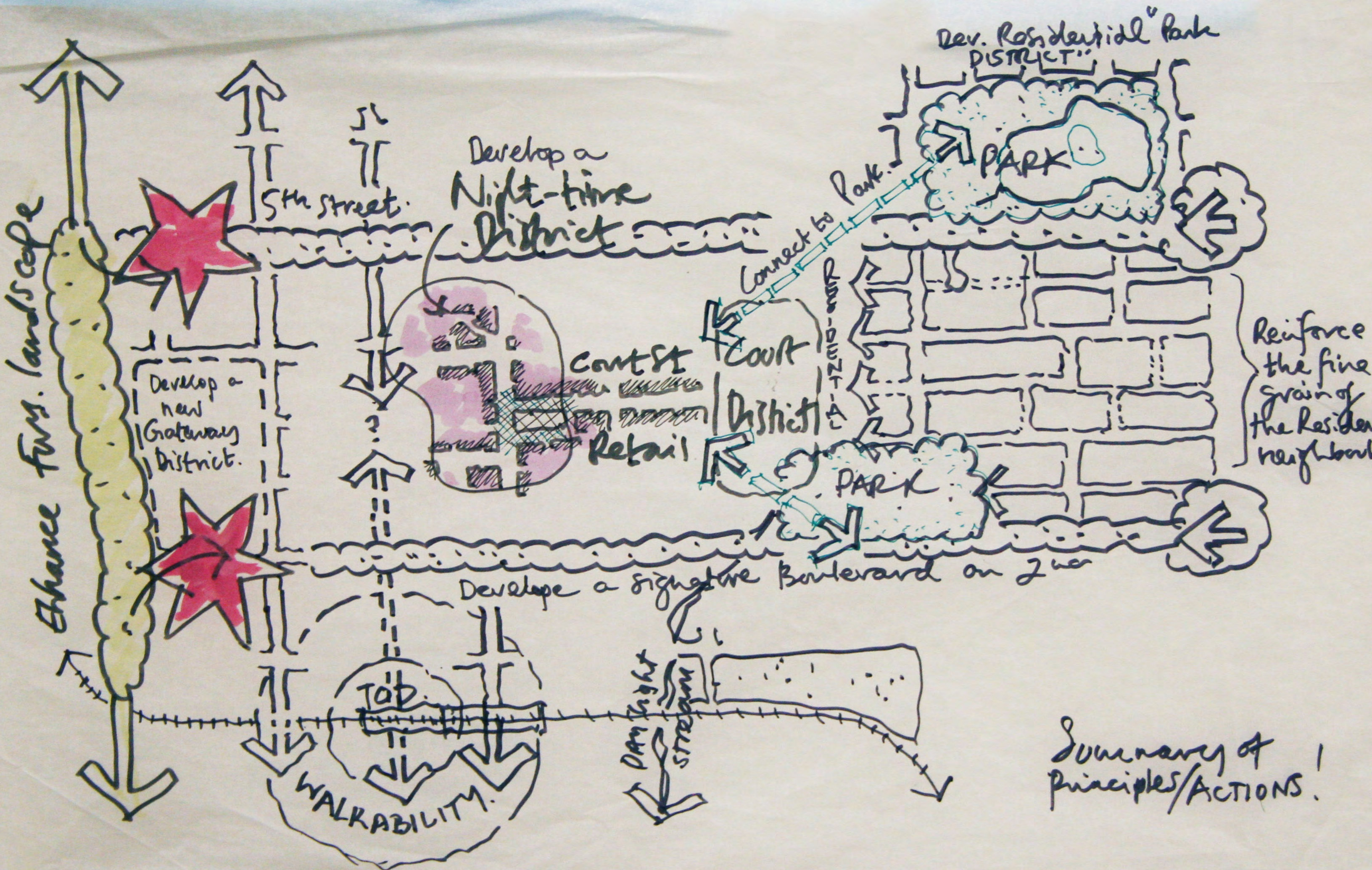
future. The evening session of the Presentation included a panel discussion by members of the development community. Again, participants were encouraged to ask questions of the panelists and staff. Additional input from this Public Presentation / Open House was then considered in preparing the final draft of the Preferred Plan.

## COUNCIL ACTION: JUNE 1, 2009

On June 1, 2009, the Mayor and Common Council, along with the Community Development Commission adopted a resolution, formally endorsing and accepting the San Bernardino Downtown Core Vision & Action Plan. The Mayor, Council and Commission, recognize that the content and recommendations as to the implementation of the San Bernardino Downtown Core Vision & Action Plan will change over time, and that the San Bernardino Downtown Core Vision & Action Plan shall be viewed as a working document to accommodate and provide direction to future developments within the Downtown Area. In addition, the Mayor, Council and Commission directed EDA Staff to proceed with the implementation process as identified and proposed in the San Bernardino Downtown Core Vision & Action Plan.







Summary of Principles/ACTIONS!



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The successful implementation of the Vision & Action Plan will serve as a standard for future investment, involvement, and cooperation needed to redevelop and energize Downtown San Bernardino. The approach for its future development must be based on a set of principles that are interrelated and applicable to the broad range of needs and opportunities facing San Bernardino. The following summary of guiding principles, if implemented in a thoughtful manner, will provide the means through which the City can enjoy a revitalization that takes advantage of its attributes and leadership position in the Inland Empire and the Southern California region.

## NEW DISTRICTS

- Develop a Parking District that promotes shared and comprehensively managed public parking from the Metrolink transit stop through the Downtown area
- Create an around-the-clock Entertainment/Theatre District with mixed uses with the historic California Theatre and the refurbished Cinemas as an anchor.
- Build a Transit Village District at a proposed new rail commuter station and expand intermodal opportunities throughout Downtown.

## NEW USES

- Transform the former Carousel Mall, the existing Stater Bros. Market, and other retail sites throughout downtown into new pedestrian-oriented paseos and retail Main Streets.
- Meet various housing needs by providing a range of housing choices (rental, ownership, various sizes, forms, and densities).
- Cultivate a comprehensive Open Space Network of landscaped boulevards, neighborhood parks, pocket parks, and gardens.

## IDENTITY AND BRANDING

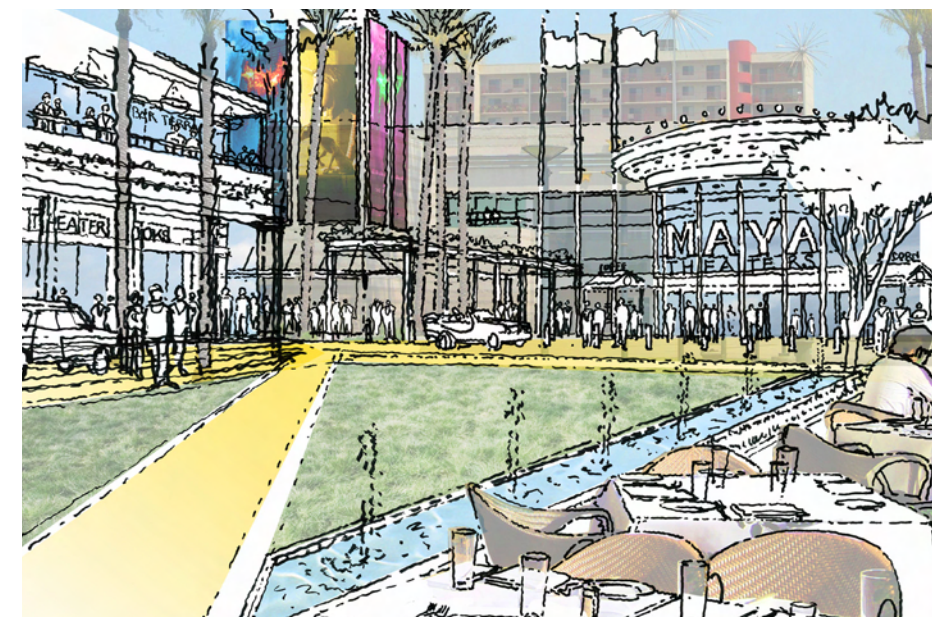
- Redefine Downtown with a youthful and vibrant brand.
- Enhance the visibility of Downtown from the I-215 Freeway.
- Establish iconic gateway elements (landscape or built forms) at the main entries into Downtown.

## PHASING

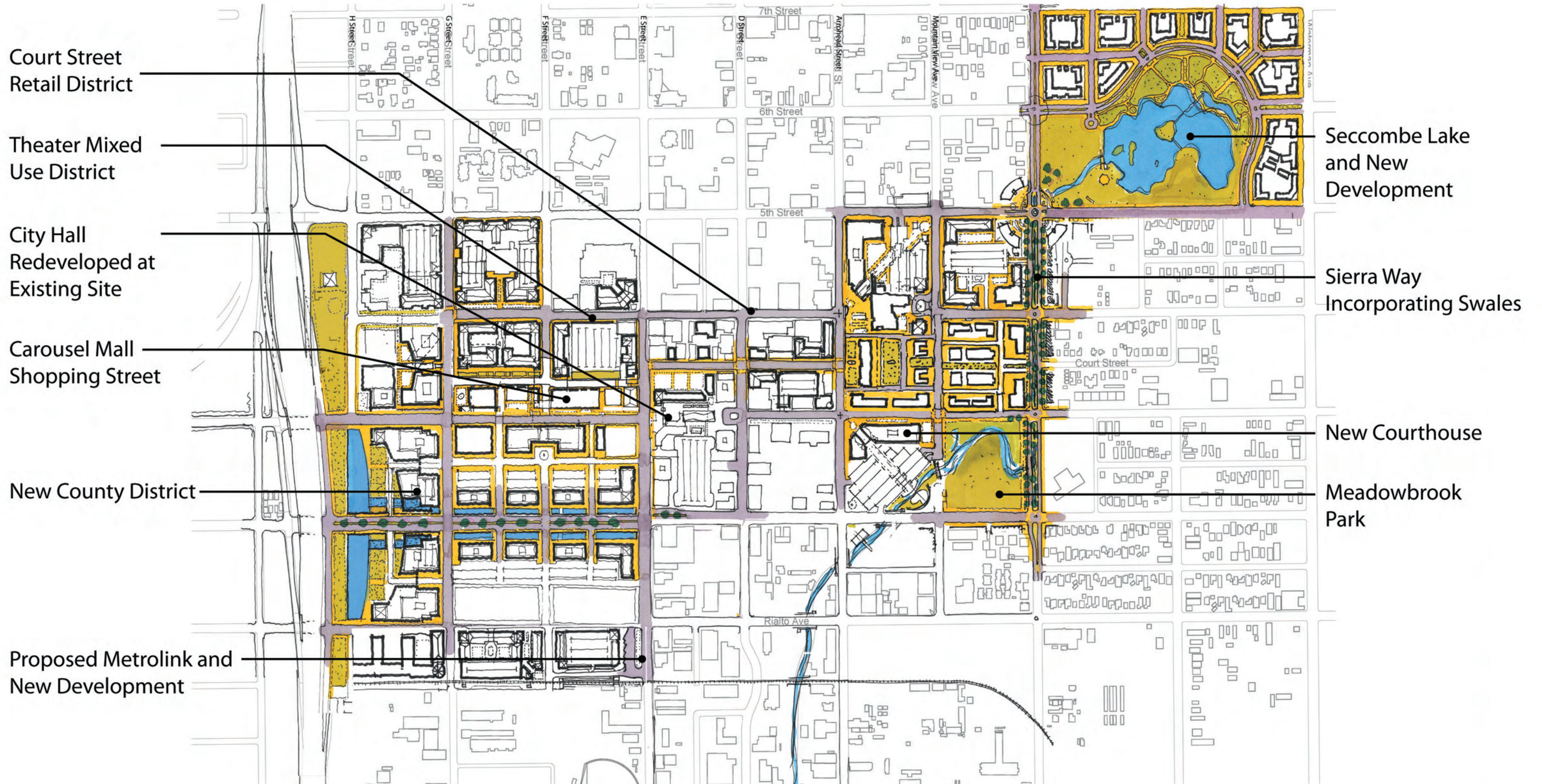
- To achieve the goals of this Vision & Action Plan, focus on a Phasing Plan that initiates redevelopment at the east end of the existing Carousel Mall.

## ECONOMIC

- Focus all development and improvement efforts to follow the Vision & Action Plan
- Ensure that future developments do not compete with the developments established within this Vision & Action Plan.







## ALTERNATIVE SCENARIO "B"

ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS A, B AND C ARE DESCRIBED IN THE  
DOWNTOWN CORE VISION & ACTION PLAN DOCUMENT



# ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS

The development of the Vision & Action Plan included a process where a number of downtown areas were considered and explored, resulting in a number of alternatives that were developed. In all, the explorations and alternatives were based on input received from stakeholder interviews and the early community meetings.

### EXPLORATIONS

The project team looked at a number of important downtown areas and prepared a series of concepts for each. These explorations considered the rehabilitation, the infill, reuse, present location and relocation of major downtown facilities and uses.

### STUDY AREAS

	ALTERNATIVE A	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C
CITY HALL	MOVES	STAYS	MOVES
COURT STREET	IN-FILL	IN-FILL	RESORT
THEATER DISTRICT	LIMITED RETAIL	MIXED USE	AMPHITHEATER
COUNTY	STAYS	MOVES	MOVES
NEW COURTHOUSE	STAYS	MODIFIED	MODIFIED
CAROUSEL MALL	STAYS	MODIFIED	MODIFIED
GATEWAY	FORD STAYS	FORD MOVES	FORD MOVES
TOD STATION	IN	IN	IN
SPORTS	IN	IN	IN
SECCOMBE LAKE	DEVELOPMENT	DEVELOPMENT	ENLARGED
MEADOW BROOK PARK	DEVELOPMENT	DEVELOPMENT	ENLARGED
SIERRA WAY	N/A	SWALE	PARK

Three alternative scenarios for the study area were developed. These tested the guiding principles with the development of options which can be measured and evaluated as to how they address and perform against the established and agreed upon principles. At the end of this phase a ‘preferred plan’ is selected to be fully developed in the final phase.

Each alternative had a distinctive approach in addressing some of the key elements of the plan, as outlined in the adjoining matrix. It was important for each alternative to narrate a story and paint a vision that was unique and clear in order to aid the comparative selection process.

In addition, all alternative scenarios have the following in common:

- STREET GRID: All the scenarios above are to re-establish the city grid where possible, introduce mid-block streets, providing more choice, linkages and a finer grain urban fabric, especially in the Court Street District
- COURT STREET: An initial/immediate phase/focus of retail should concentrate at the intersection of Court Street and E Street, with approx 80,000 square feet of ground floor, street oriented retail in both existing and new storefronts
- HERITAGE SQUARE: This central town square is to be surrounded on all sides with ground floor retail. It should be civic in scale, possibly providing a shaded arcade on the west and south sides, screening the existing loading dock adjacent to the back and the edge of the convention/meeting space. The new buildings should be one-to-two stories in height, relate to the hotel upper level deck, with a terrace for a future swimming pool and or dining area. A street oriented café should front the town square
- RETAIL DISTRICT: Future increments of retail supported locally would accommodate up to 320,000 square feet. Moving west into the re-furbished mall site, and ultimately a regional

attraction in the Downtown could support increased retail of up to 1,000,000 square feet. This could possibly be oriented north-to-south from the proposed new transit oriented development up to the California Theatre on 4th Street

- NIGHT TIME DISTRICT: The Historic California Theatre and the refurbished Cinemas are to become the focus of the nighttime activity, complimented by restaurants serving a range of dining options. An urban plaza with outdoor dining and retail carts is to be the central element of the plan, oriented to 4th Street and the corner at E Street. The California Theatre is to be expanded on the east wall, with smaller ground-level retail uses and a second level ‘balcony bar’ overlooking the new plaza.
- RESIDENTIAL: An initial residential market of up to 300 dwelling units is anticipated. A great variety of residential types and environments is to be provided. Urban lofts, seniors housing, condos, live-work and single family homes
- PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK: A signature new public realm or framework needs to be established early in the revitalization beginning with Heritage Square, creating a legible and connected systems of parks, walks, great sidewalks, trails, bikeways, streams, etc.
- A “WORKING WATER PLAN” is to be the foundation of the sustainability strategy, implemented through reuse and recycling of grey water in public fountains, swales and wetlands, as well as lakes and canals.
- BOULEVARD/MEDIAN STREETS: All major through streets; Waterman Avenue, Sierra Way, Mountain View Avenue, D Street, E Street (except at Celebration Square); as well as 2nd Street, 3rd Street, and 5th Street are to have medians added with turning pockets at intersections



# PREFERRED PLAN





# THE VISION: DOWNTOWN SAN BERNARDINO

The Vision for the future of San Bernardino's Downtown has emerged from a rigorous stakeholder and public engagement process. The community's clear desire was that Downtown San Bernardino must remain a place that connects community, commerce, and culture. The plan preferred by the community and institutional stakeholders, radically repositions Downtown San Bernardino. Long dormant in the cycles of recent revitalization and unable to capitalize on the not too recent retail and residential waves of development, the city is poised to take on a new and exciting era of civic revitalization, setting the stage for a full makeover – to become a downtown of villages or neighborhoods, each with its own unique personality.

## THE VISION

- The Downtown is to be branded as a series of neighborhoods/ villages offering a wide array of choices to live, work and socialize each with an exemplary public place or street.
- County Administrative Facilities and City Hall to be relocated in a new Civic Center closer to the I-215 Freeway with greater visibility and access.
- Carousel Mall will be reconfigured as an open-air mixed use and retail district.
- A nighttime Theatre District centered around the historic California Theatre and new Cinemas is to be enhanced with restaurants and retail, focused on a redesigned public plaza.
- 4th Street is to be narrowed and scaled to be more pedestrian friendly with angled parking and wider sidewalks. Secombe Lake Park will be managed and maintained as a first-class urban amenity, including both passive and active uses.
- A Parking District is to be developed, serving as the agent for managing the change, providing ambassadors, security and cleaning/maintenance of the public realm.

San Bernardino has the opportunity to promote a youthful image

and become a vibrant place of choice for residents and businesses to relocate. It stands poised to take advantage of its significant built-in infrastructure of good streets and utilities, and radically transform and re-establish itself as the next great place and the natural hub of the Inland Empire.

Capitalizing on the projects in progress and soon to be “shovel-ready” projects a unique opportunity exists to recast government uses typically seen as stodgy, into a civic catalyst for the “alternative urban life style complementing San Bernardino's existing traditional neighborhoods”...“in a highly visible location” as outlined by the ULI study. What is envisioned is, high-quality new urban developments built around exemplary new and accessible public spaces and “civic landmarks” within view of the 250,000 automobiles passing by the Downtown each and every day on the soon to be reconfigured I-215 Freeway.

Each and every new development needs to be called to deliver the highest standard of development set by the next big move. To this end, every step needs to be measured and successful. Second best is not good enough and failure is not an option, if San Bernardino is to attract a significant number of the forecast population growth of 2 million residents in the Inland Empire by 2020.









# DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Development Standards will be used to help establish the design and development intent for a new Downtown San Bernardino. Existing development standards within the Downtown Core Project Area were reviewed, while new standards were recommended.

The goal is to establish a set of development standards that strengthen the identity of each focus area within the plan and allow flexibility of uses to enhance livability. The development standards and guidelines of this Vision & Action Plan will adhere to and provide additional guidelines to complement those established in the existing development code and the Main Street Overlay District (Chapter 19.19, City of San Bernardino Development Code). It is recommended that the two sets of standards be merged into a single overlay district with a common set of development standards. Generally, the standards identified below will set the minimum level of excellence for development of residential, commercial, transit, institutional and open space uses.

These standards, while providing flexibility to individual projects, also establish certainty for users and neighbors with regards to the quality of the built environment. In the end, all development standards will need to be reviewed and considered by the City's Development Services Department. This Vision & Action Plan identified and recommended development standards for:

- Streets and Transit
- Buildings
- Landscaping, Open Space and Public Realm
- Sustainability/Shading/Energy/Water/Drainage









# IMPLEMENTATION

A thorough and well thought out implementation strategy is crucial to bringing Downtown San Bernardino and the Downtown Core Vision & Action Plan to life. Achieving this will require a coordinated effort between elected officials, city staff, developers, stakeholders, downtown area businesses and residents, and the San Bernardino community at large. The following is an overall plan for implementing the Downtown Core Vision & Action Plan. Similar strategies and principles have proven to be the key components to successful downtown plans of the past. It should be noted that the Vision & Action Plan may be modified in the future based on additional information, technical reports and studies, plans and community input, however, it should still uphold the values identified during the visioning process. Additional implementation recommendations will be identified as the Vision & Action Plan evolves and develops. The successful implementation of the Vision & Action Plan will consist of the following:



## ACTION TEAMS

Management and oversight of development, design and public investment in Downtown San Bernardino will be necessary to realize the Vision. The coordination of strategies and policies is critical to ensuring that the Vision is realized. This will require the work and cooperation of a number of Action Teams. The Action Teams, or committees, are intended to become the implementation ‘agents’ for this orchestrated effort, managing the change in a seamless fashion by focusing on the following, patience, persistence and flexibility. Communication and partnerships among the Action Teams will ensure that project objectives are implemented. The Action Teams may include, but may not be limited to the following representatives: elected officials, governmental agencies, city and county departments, business organizations, and private property owners. The Action Teams may include the following:

- Steering Committee
- Parking District Team
- Project Managers’ Team
- Bicentennial / Heritage Square Team
- Cinemas / Theatre Square Team
- Retail Leasing Team
- Education Team
- Civic Center / Carousel Mall Site Team
- Public Relations and Marketing Team

## PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

A new urban planning effort and strategy in a developed downtown area, in addition to a number of existing plans, presents additional difficulties and issues. New decisions regarding the future and development of downtown San Bernardino requires communication and coordination with all affected and interested parties. Funding and other resources for projects and programs will require participation from both the public and private sectors. Staff will employ all efforts to build coalitions between the City, County, community groups, organizations, individual property and business owners before, during and after projects are implemented. This type of up-front communication is important to developing trust, which translates to continuing support in the future.

## SUSTAINABILITY

The Vision for a revitalized Downtown San Bernardino includes a sustainable Downtown. A new Downtown San Bernardino will include residential, office, retail and commercial uses and developments, all built to high environmental standards and designed to reflect the sustainable development needs of the City, County and State. A new downtown San Bernardino will be a multi-year effort with a long-term vision of promoting sustainability, encouraging the use of public transit, solar and wind power, green building practices, water sustainability, efficient landscaping, and pedestrian-friendly urban working and living. Staff will work together to review and incorporate the best sustainability practices for use in new and revitalized development projects in Downtown San Bernardino.

## CODES / REGULATION COORDINATION

Codes and regulations that incorporate forward thinking components can help to guide quality development and promote sound urban-design practices. Changes to existing development codes and/or regulations should be considered, where needed, to ensure quality development and promote design excellence. The City should encourage sound development practices and set the



# IMPLEMENTATION

standards for future development of Downtown. Market forces alone will not bring change to Downtown San Bernardino. A solid framework is necessary to ensure quality development. One way to achieve this is through land use and zoning considerations and updates. Staff will work together to review existing zoning, development and building codes and regulations to determine if existing polices could work or if new standards will need to be considered and adopted.

## FUNDING

A key component of implementation is understanding and applying available fiscal resources, programs and incentives to achieve the Downtown Vision. As part of the implementation process, Staff will identify current and potential financial resources for implementing priority projects in Downtown. These and other identified resources should be matched with the appropriate plan strategies to advance implementation efforts. The following are sources of funding the City can make use of when developing its strategy for revitalizing Downtown:

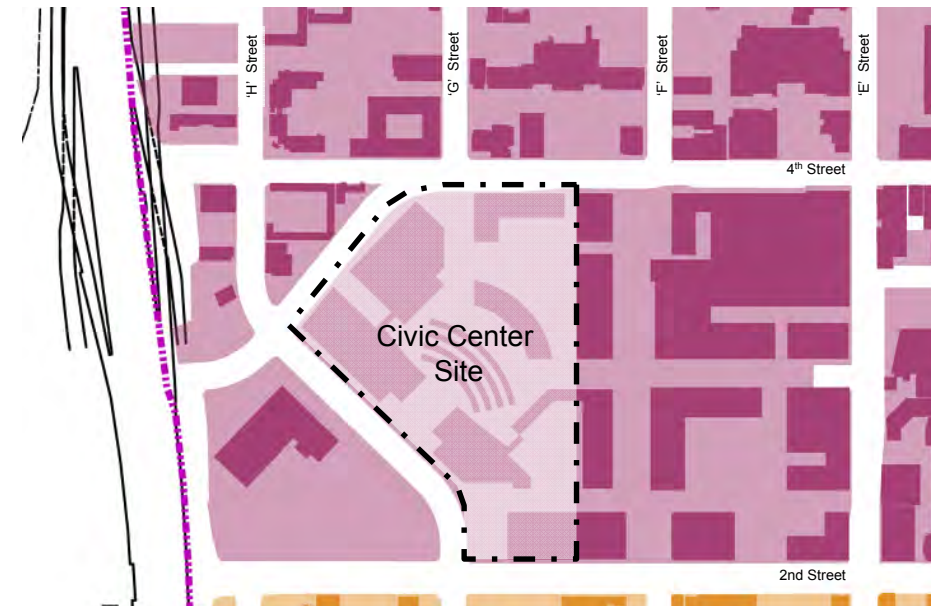
- Tax Increment Financing
- State and Federal Grants
- Special Districts
- Enterprise Zone
- Capital Expenditures
- Private Sector Financing

## PHASING

The implementation of the Vision & Action Plan will be a decades-long process. Over a period of time, the economy, markets, political will and community desires will change. These factors will have an effect on a timeframe for implementation and completion of proposed improvements, efforts, programs and projects. As depicted on the right, a phasing plan is just one of many examples

for the development of a Civic Center. As one of the many Action Teams explore and develop various alternatives, other sites and phases may be identified for further consideration. The following examples below describe how phased improvements may occur:

- During the first five years of the Vision & Action Plan, several key and catalyst projects will be initiated. New development will be complemented by infrastructure improvements.
- Over the next 10 years, development and redevelopment in all areas of Downtown will have started at a majority of all sites concentrated in a series of districts
- Finally, in 25 years, the development, redevelopment and revitalization of Downtown is realized.



DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE CIVIC CENTER SITE PLAN



DEVELOP A PHASED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR FULL BUILD OUT





# THE BEGINNING

The rehabilitation, revitalization and renaissance of any city typically starts with its downtown. For downtown San Bernardino, it will take vision and action for long-term growth and sustainability to ensure our City's recovery and success.

The Vision that is being created is the first of many steps necessary in planning for a revitalized downtown and preparing for a prosperous tomorrow. Having an action plan will help carry us in the coming years when this vision is transformed into a reality. A reality that will include thousands of jobs, housing, new business and retail, and entertainment options for our community as a whole. A reality that will support and help make our local economy thrive.

American architect and urban planner, Daniel Burnham, once stated, "Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men's blood and probably will not themselves be realized," Our vision and action for a rehabilitated and revitalized downtown San Bernardino is not a small plan.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our sincere thanks to all of the elected officials, stakeholders, organizations, property and business owners, residents and interested individuals who provided input and participated in the public process and development of the San Bernardino Downtown Core Vision & Action Plan.

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Mayor & Chairperson

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CDC Member

#### DENNIS J. BAXTER

Councilmember – Ward 2

CDC Member

#### TOBIN BRINKER

Councilmember – Ward 3

CDC Member

#### FRED SHORETT

Councilmember – Ward 4

CDC Member

#### CHAS A. KELLEY

Councilmember – Ward 5

CDC Member

#### RIKKE VAN JOHNSON

Councilmember – Ward 6

CDC Member

#### WENDY McCAM MACK

Councilmember – Ward 7

CDC Member

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California State University, San Bernardino

Omnitrans

Omnitrans - sbX Office

San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors

San Bernardino Associated Governments

San Bernardino Chamber of Commerce

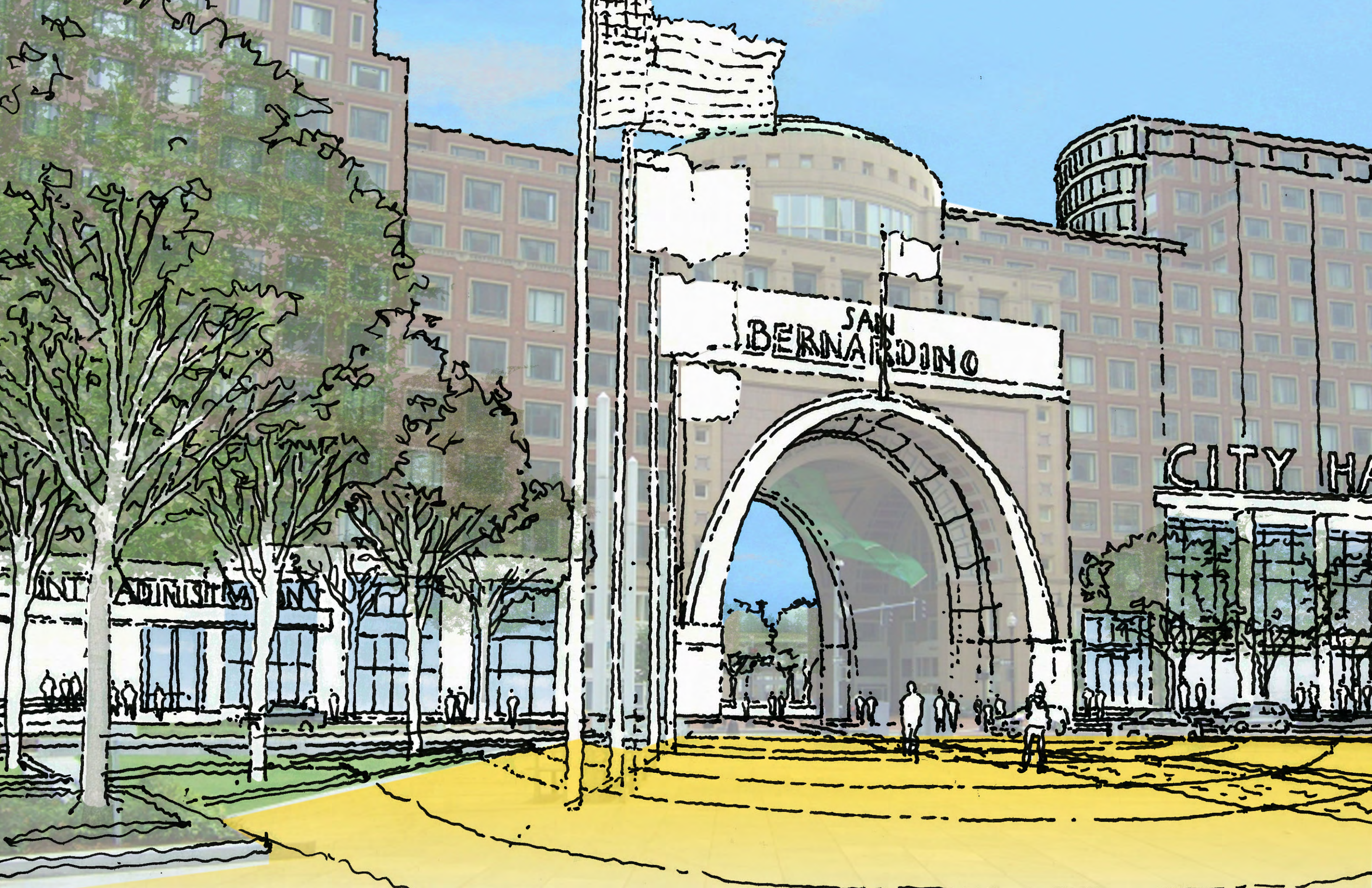
San Bernardino Convention & Visitors Bureau

San Bernardino Downtown Business Association

San Manuel Band of Mission Indians

Vanir Development



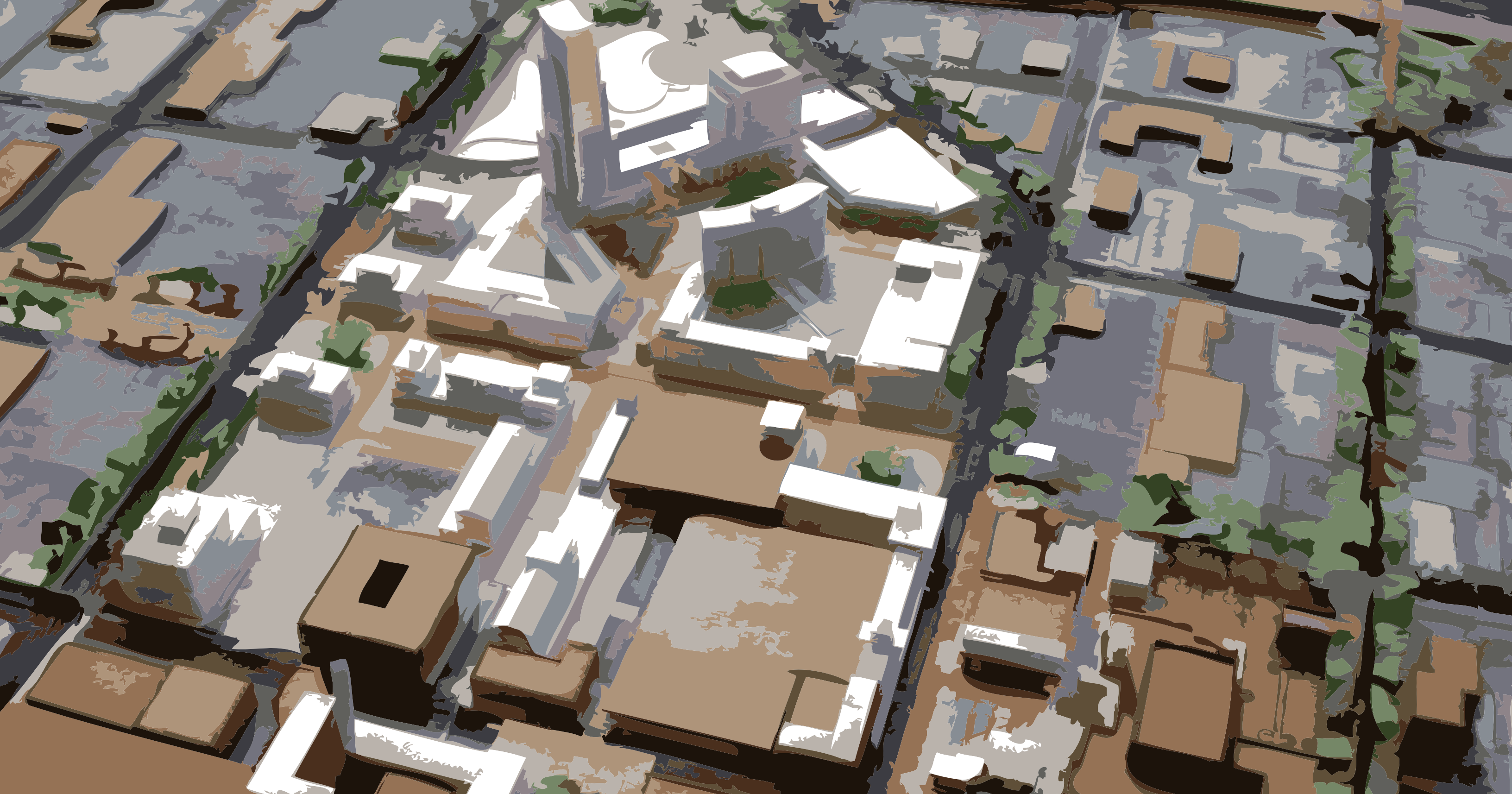


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The San Bernardino Downtown Core Vision & Action Plan was formally endorsed and accepted by the City of San Bernardino Mayor and Common Council, and the Community Development Commission on June 1, 2009

The San Bernardino Downtown Core Vision & Action Plan is posted on the City of San Bernardino Economic Development Website at <http://www.sbrda.org>. For further information, contact the San Bernardino Economic Development Agency at (909) 663-1044.

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