

Westchester Town Center

Strategic Plan



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I. INTRODUCTION

“Change,” an old professor once said, “is the only constant in life.” The manner in which individuals adapt to and impact change determines whether they will grow and evolve with it or become stagnant and inflexible resisting it. This same principle applies on a grander scale to our organizations and communities; they are after all simply collections of individuals. Today, more than ever before, our daily lives are under increasing pressure for change. How we respond will be critical to our futures.

For many, pressure for change can cause frustration and pain. And pressure for change at an ever increasing rate can be disabling. Just as one change is mastered or adjusted for, another comes hurtling down upon us. Yikes!! It takes time for individuals, their organizations, and their communities to identify, make sense of, and utilize change forces for the positive benefit of all. Yet time is not a luxury we can count on availing ourselves of given the intense pressure of competitive forces.

Modern management practice has benefited from the development of a “tool” that provides a means for harnessing change, and managing it in order to achieve a shared vision of the future. That process is called “Strategic Planning.”

Strategic Planning is a group dynamic process that allows its participants to review immediate issues, examine trends, assess capabilities, reexamine their organizational purpose, refine and clarify that purpose, and develop an action plan to achieve that new direction.

The Westchester Business Improvement Association Board of Directors (WBIA) courageously embraced the new idea of strategic planning in order to establish a template for Westchester Town Center (WTC) area improvements over the next eighteen (18) to twenty-four (24) months.

Note: Please see Appendix A for a clarification about terminology used in this Strategic Plan about WBIA, WTC, BID, etc.



BID 2008 Directors

Karen Dial
H.B. Drollinger Co.
President



John Rublen
Rublen & Associates
Secretary



Miki Payne
H.B. Drollinger Co.
Treasurer



Tracy S. Thomas
Coreland Companies



Heather Lemmon
Company



William F. Allen
HFH Ltd.





II. CHALLENGES TO WESTCHESTER'S FUTURE

The Westchester Business Improvement District (BID) and the community are confronted with the following major challenges in the immediate future:

- A. How should the BID's Management District Plan be implemented in order to best realize a high return on investment for stakeholder assessments?
- B. How should the WTC be developed in order to optimize real estate returns for both individual property owners and the area as a whole? What particular types of industries or businesses and jobs represent such an optimized development pattern? If such a development pattern represents a change from the status quo, how should the transition from present to future occur?
- C. Historically, Los Angeles International Airport ("LAX") expansion has detrimentally impacted the WTC area. Currently, new airport expansion plans are being discussed that could further negatively impact a significant portion of the business district. Can these adverse impacts be mitigated in a manner that serves the interests of both district property owners and LAX? How?
- D. Traffic congestion in the WTC area is a significant impediment to local business, residents, LAX, and the traveling public. How can traffic congestion be managed for the benefit of these interest groups? Can development for the present and/or future play a role in improving the local "jobs / housing balance" thereby reducing traffic congestion?
- E. Los Angeles World Airports ("LAWA") owns land generally North of Westchester Parkway and contiguous to the WTC that is currently master planned for some four-plus (4+) million square feet of new commercial development. (This land is known as the "LAX Northside Lands") Possible revisions to that master plan are anticipated to be considered by the City. How should the LAX Northside lands be developed in order to optimize the existing WTC and minimize adverse LAX impacts upon the adjacent residential community?

*"We can't solve problems
using the same thinking that
created them."*

— Albert Einstein





III. OBJECTIVES OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

The following objectives were addressed through the initiation of a strategic plan preparation process:

A. Create a Shared Vision for the Future

It is common knowledge that people looking at the same object may nonetheless interpret that object in different ways. If three (3) separate individuals were asked to describe a simple block of wood, for example, one might describe its size or shape, another might describe its color or texture, and another might describe its usefulness. Each description would be accurate and different. It is clear that the best description of the block of wood is that one composed by adding each individual's view to create a "shared" point of view.

The same idea applies to creating "shared vision" for the future of an organization or community. The strategic planning process asks participants to identify elements or characteristics of an "ideal" community and find areas of common ground and general agreement.

B. Clarify Purpose

In order for an individual to truly commit to participating in and contributing to an organization, they need to understand its purpose. What does the organization stand for? In what direction is it headed? The strategic planning process asks participants to identify and clarify the purpose and direction for their organization.

C. Identify Issues / Trends

The strategic planning model has participants identify major issues that are currently facing the organization. Additionally, it considers issues that are still under the surface and not clearly visible. A means of preventing problems or staying ahead of the competition is to anticipate issues and trends before they have the opportunity to spiral out of control.

*"To reach port we must sail —
sail not tie at anchor;
sail not drift."*

— Franklin Delano Roosevelt



D. Develop an Action-Oriented Plan

The strategic planning process asks participants to prioritize the identified issues and trends, and to specify an organizational action that will address each. In doing this, the strategic plan becomes a living document and not just another report that will gather dust on some shelf. It is not just a series of abstract discussions, but, rather, a proven means to impact and shape the future.

E. Improved Stakeholder and WBIA Board Member Relationships

The fact that the strategic planning process is a group process of working together to move forward on common interests means that it is a dynamic process. As people interact, work together, learn from one another, compromise, collaborate, and invent new options for mutual gain, mutual respect and a team orientation grows for all.

In the future, as the strategic planning process is expanded to include other BID stakeholders and community groups, this sense of unity can grow even larger.

F. Improved Understanding of the BID and the Community

Typically organizations and individuals in the community operate under an assumption that others are aware of and understand their actions. This is not always true. The strategic planning process stimulates discussions that unlocks the flow of information between all participants about their organization and the community's needs.

G. Create a Long-Term Template for Community Improvements and Increased Participation

In embarking upon a strategic planning process, the WBIA has committed to an interactive process without any particular end. Each repetition of the process involves new participants, thus ever expanding the reach of the plan. And each repetition, improves upon the quality of the input to the plan. The strategic plan is ongoing and constitutes the organization's work plan.



"The best way to predict the future is to invent it"

— Anonymous



IV. WHAT THE STRATEGIC PLAN IS *NOT*

As important as understanding what the strategic plan is, is to understand what it is NOT. The following notes are important:

- A. No matter how much planning is undertaken, we will never be able to anticipate every new eventuality.
- B. The strategic plan will not focus on the specific concerns of any single participant. Initially, it will be based upon broad themes and a general sense of direction, which can be refined over time.
- C. Individually we may not have all of the solutions to the BID's most pressing problems, but collectively we should be able to get a handle on the organization's key issues and how to address them.
- D. While the basic strategic planning process has been proven to work, we may have to modify it to serve Westchester's needs from time to time.



"One person can have a profound effect on another. And two people . . . well, two people can work miracles. They can change a whole town. They can change the world."

— DÍANE Frolov and Andrew Schneider





V. OVERVIEW OF THE WESTCHESTER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION (WBIA) STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

WBIA's strategic planning process is a group dynamic process which enables the organization to address immediate issues, examine trends, assess capabilities, re-examine the BID's reason for existence, define a new sense of direction, and prepare an action plan that implements that new direction.

The strategic planning process that the WBIA will use can be outlined as shown below. Over time, it is intended to be a continuous process in which the last step of "evaluation, review, and refining" leads back to the first step of "vision / mission development."

- A. Vision / Mission Development
- B. Assessment of Existing Conditions
- C. Identify & Prioritize What Needs to be Done in Order to Achieve the Vision
Goals, Objectives, & Action Plans
- D. Implement the Plan (Do the Work)
- E. Evaluate, Review, & Refine
- F. Begin the cycle again

*"We must become the change
we seek in the world."*

— Mahatma Gandhi





VI. OUR VISION OF AN “IDEAL” WESTCHESTER TOWN CENTER (WTC)

The WeBIA has envisioned an “ideal” state of affairs for the WTC area twenty (20) years into the future. If the participant’s fondest expectations for every success were to become reality, this is what we would see:

- ▼ WTC is community-oriented, friendly, safe, pedestrian-friendly, booming, self-contained, environmentally sound, clean, quaint yet modern, and features engaging nightlife.
- ▼ WTC is vibrant, successful, offers an enjoyable shopping experience, variety, and is fun. “Westchester is on the map!”
- ▼ The “Triangle” section of the WTC is a successful, outdoor, pedestrian-oriented “lifestyle-type shopping center” with flowers, fountains, musicians / performers, water features, and patio dining.
- ▼ WTC area has enticing restaurants, a locally owned book store, a music store, an ice cream / cupcake store, venues for family fun, and a small theater that also serves as a performing arts center for Loyola Marymount University (LMU).
- ▼ Parking structures have been added to the WTC area that provide ample close-by parking for all.
- ▼ The district is resplendent with public art.
- ▼ Westchester is “on the map” and LAX passengers lucky enough to have an extended layover use the direct tram / people mover to avail themselves of sea views from the dunes, a short game of golf, or relaxed strolling among interesting shops.
- ▼ WTC area is lively with nightlife, pedestrian oriented, enjoys crowds, has attractive window shopping displays, a destination for many, provides ample parking through a series of parking structures, has a multi-modal transit center, and fine dining opportunities.
- ▼ WTC features an attractive Christmas Season lighting display that is supported by a number of community groups, which reinforces its “home town” nature.

*“If you can dream it,
you can do it.”*

— Walt Disney



- A. SUPERBLOCK W/ SPACE FRAME ENCLOSURE OVER PLAZA, PARKING STRUCTURE W/ RETAIL FACING PLAZA, A SECOND ANCHOR STORE AND MONORAIL STATION.
- B. A 10 OR 12 STORY MIXED USE BUILDING AND MONORAIL STATION.
- C. OPEN AIR PEDESTRIAN VILLAGE W/ UNDER GROUND PARKING.
- D. RETAIL FACING SEPULVEDA BLVD - PARKING STRUCTURE FACING SEPULVEDA EASTWAY WITH A MONORAIL STATION.
- E. FOOD COURTS BELOW GRADE WITH REFLECTION POOL.
- F. A PROMENADE BETWEEN TWO MIXED USE STRUCTURES - RETAIL WITH RESIDENTIAL.
- G. CONFERENCE CENTER, A BOUTIQUE HOTEL, OFFICE BUILDING AND PARKING STRUCTURE.
- H. STATION FOR THE GREEN LINE EXTENSION CONNECTING WITH THE MONORAIL. THE MONORAIL ENCIRCLES THE BUSINESS CENTER AND EXTENDS WEST THROUGH LAWA'S NORTHSIDE DEVELOPMENT.



- ▼ Westchester is the first stop on a direct tram / people mover that connects LAX to Playa Del Rey, Marina Del Rey, and Playa Vista.
- ▼ An architecturally distinctive LAX corporate headquarters campus and the long discussed LAX area convention / meeting center have been located on the former Northside LAX properties and form new economic corner stones for a vibrant WTC business district.
- ▼ Compelling economic and social connections between Los Angeles World Airways (LAWA), LMU, Otis College, and the Westchester Town Center have formed the basis for the mutual success and prosperity of all.
- ▼ The WTC area's commercial space is fully occupied and produces great "ROIs."
- ▼ Well designed, efficiently functioning mass transit and inter-modal connections have reduced traffic congestion in the LAX area.
- ▼ WTC is safe and well lit at night.
- ▼ WTC is: beautiful, well designed, colorful, comfortable, inviting, walk-able, freshly maintained, contains many retail and restaurant choices for almost every taste, and energizes all that visit it.
- ▼ All WTC programs and projects have been completed on-time and within the originally established budget.
- ▼ The WTC BID has been very successful at leveraging the involvement of local government and other entities to achieving its goals and objectives.
- ▼ Westchester has cultivated mutually beneficial relationships with the local educational institutions including LMU and Otis College.

In order to free the strategic planning work group from the physical constraints of "what is," so that they might focus on "what could be," WBIA Board Member John Ruhlen shared a vision plan he prepared some years ago of a "21st Century Westchester Town Center District." A copy of this drawing is included on page 14.



*"Progress occurs when
courageous, skillful leaders
seize the opportunity to
change things for the better."*

— Harry S. Truman



VII. THE BID'S ROLE IN ACHIEVING THE "IDEAL" WESTCHESTER

The WBIA Board of Directors provides direction as to the organization's role in achieving its established vision for the future. Participants in the strategic planning process thought that the BID's role should be described as follows:

- ▼ The WBIA is committed to the basics of providing property owner value by maintaining the highest reasonable standards of safety, cleanliness, and landscape beauty within its area. The Board will market and promote the area as "Westchester Town Center."
- ▼ The WBIA will provide leadership for the development of local government and non-profit agency policies that are sensitive to property owner interests.
- ▼ In the pursuit of property owner's interests, the WBIA will actively seek to collaborate with other community groups such as the Chamber of Commerce, Neighborhood Council, Westchester Vitalization Committee, the Westchester Streetscape Improvement Association, the Westchester Parking Association, and others.
- ▼ The WBIA will seize incremental opportunities.
- ▼ The WBIA will inspire constructive community development through participation, collaboration, networking, coordination, and visionary planning. The WBIA will seek mutually beneficial, symbiotic partnerships and not simply write checks for the benefit of others.



*"There are two ways of
exerting strength.
One is pushing down.
The other is pulling up."
— Brooker T. Washington*





VIII. MISSION STATEMENT FOR THE WBIA

The organization's mission statement provides direction for the organization, while, at the same time, communicating to all its fundamental "reason for being." In this, the mission statement provides a point of departure, sense of direction, and desired destination.

The mission statement should not be so brief as to be vague or too general and, consequently of little real value. It is not a catchy phrase for the top of a letter head, a bumper sticker, or a tattoo. Conversely, it should not be so detailed or wordy that it fails to clearly communicate the essence of the organization. It is a validation point for BID activities over time.

*"Unity is strength
When there is teamwork and
collaboration, wonderful
things can be achieved."*

— Anonymous

Westchester Business Improvement Association Mission Statement

The Westchester Business Improvement Association pro-actively works to enhance the commercial vitality of the Westchester Town Center area, its stakeholders, and the community by providing an inviting environment, streetscape / landscape maintenance and beautification, marketing & promotions, new business attraction, and policy advocacy.





IX. STRATEGIC PLAN ACTION ITEMS

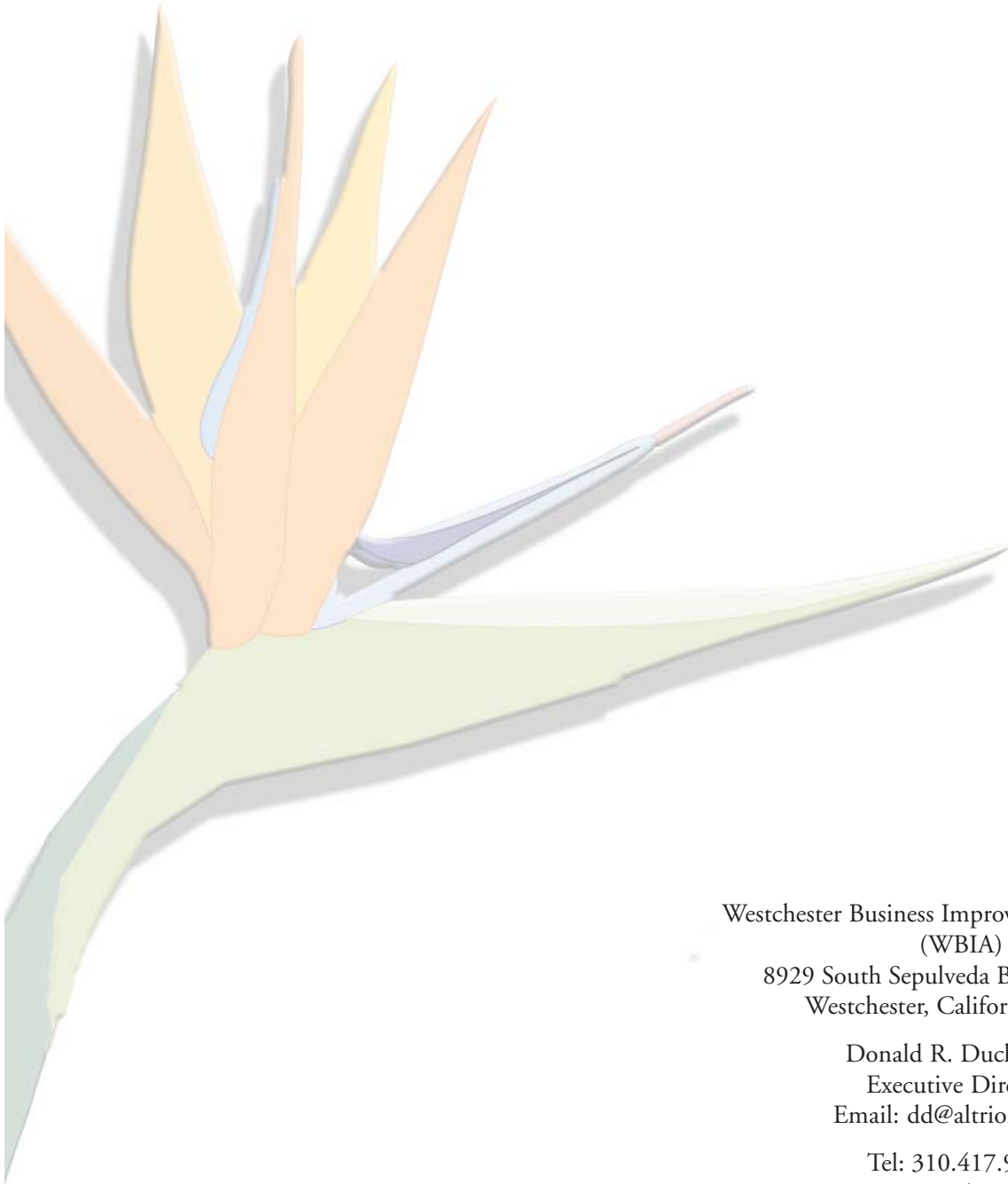
The WBIA has determined that the following priorities need to be addressed over the coming 18 to 24 months in order to achieve its vision:

- A. Integrate WTC BID efforts as a community-wide approach to building a better future (8).
- B. Promote right retail tenant mix (6).
- C. Increase parking for customers & businesses (4).
- D. Provide leadership for the development of an LAX Northside Landuse Plan that meets WTC business interests (3).
- E. Improve transportation linkages to provide congestion relief and provide for a central bus station (3).
- F. Stimulate business cross-marketing in Westchester (3).
- G. Resolve homelessness in the WTC (3).
- H. Beautify the WTC (2).
- I. Increase business activity in the WTC (2).
- J. Promote WTC area security (2).
- K. Unify the community with a University Village BID concept (2).
- L. Promote an enhanced office tenant mix (1).
- M. Create and promote community wide events in the WTC area (1).
- N. Provide leadership for resolving the LAX expansion issue without sacrificing WTC viability (1).
- O. Improve the WTC gateway and address “strip lot” maintenance north of Manchester (1).
- P. Promote a Westside conference center.
- Q. Create high WTC maintenance standards.
- R. Cultural arts.
- S. Holiday decorations.
- T. Promote Loyola Theater as a performing arts venue.
- U. Develop a website.
- V. Joint marketing of WTC businesses with the Neighborhood Council.



*“Failure is the opportunity to
begin again more
intelligently.”*

— Henry Ford



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X. CONCLUSION

As emphasized throughout the strategic planning process, the completion of this document is not the end of the effort. It is a jumping-off point for implementing the action plan, then periodically evaluating, reviewing, and refining the organization's performance. Change will inevitably be integrated into the process. That same old professor said: "We cannot escape the future by hiding from it, but we can outwit it by advancing on it." The challenge for the Westchester Business Improvement Association is to continue to probe, analyze, and conceptualize the future. The choice belongs to the community as to whether it will be a victim of change, or the beneficiary of managing it.



*"Do what you can,
with what you have,
where you are."*

— Theodore Roosevelt



APPENDIX A

What is the Business Improvement District (BID)?

The Westchester Business Improvement District or “BID” is an independent special district that was formed by Ordinance No. 178878 adopted on July 21, 2007 by the Los Angeles City Council. Commercial property owners within the area requested this action by petition representing 55.31% of the assessments needed to pay district costs, and approved BID formation by a vote of over 80% in a secret ballot election conducted by the Office of the City Clerk. BID operations must be consistent with its foundation documents, the Management District Plan (“MDP”) and Engineer’s Report (“ER”).

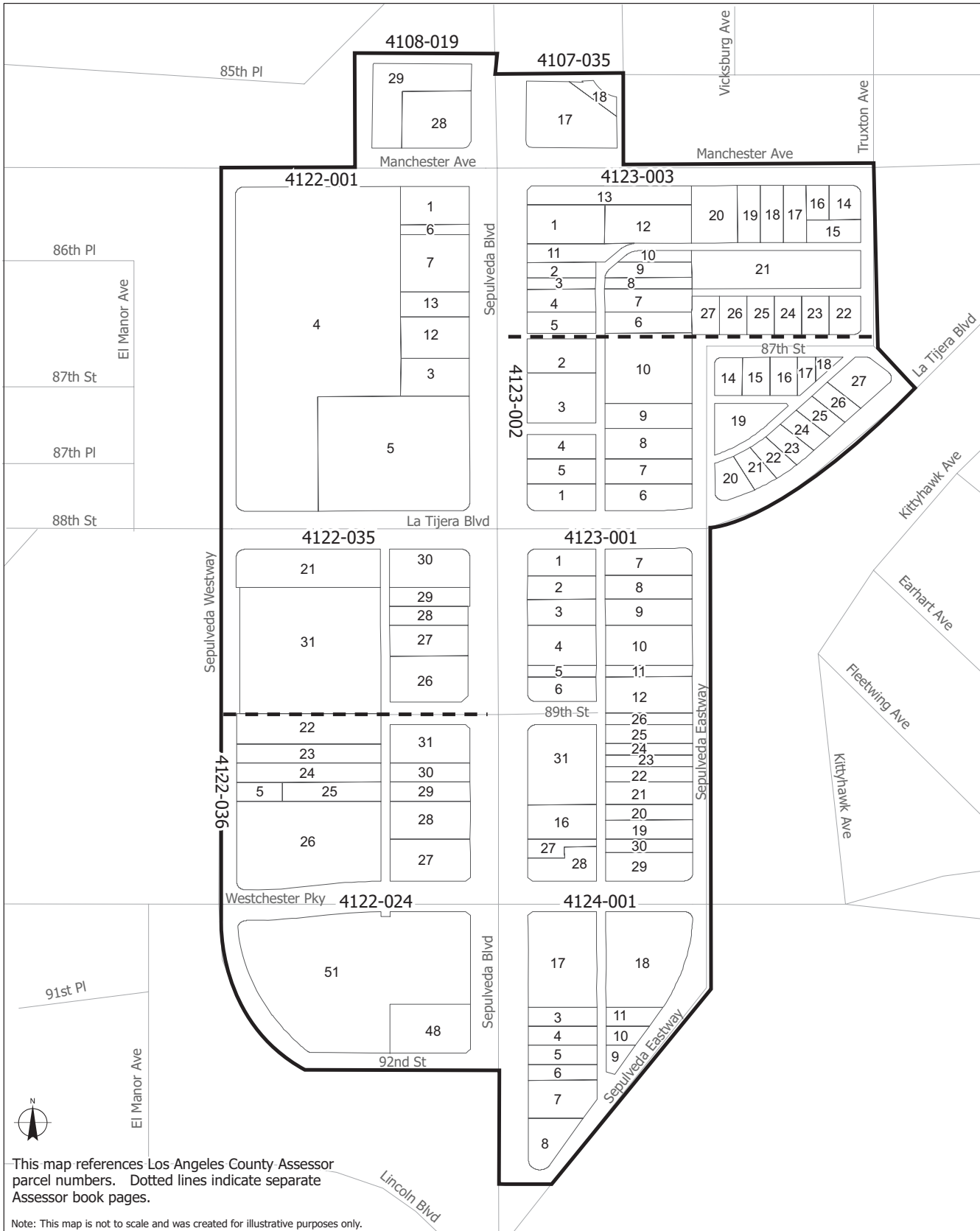
A map of the BID area and a copy of its Multi Year Budget as established by its MDP are included in this Appendix A.

The BID is administered and managed under contract with the City by the Westchester Business Improvement Association (“WBIA”), a 501.c.6 Non Profit Corporation.

The WBIA has initiated a marketing and promotions campaign to enhance business in the BID area by branding it as: “Westchester Town Center.” Given this action, it is anticipated that a formal, legal name change to “Westchester Town Center BID” (as opposed to simply “Westchester BID”) will be implemented as soon as legally appropriate.



Westchester PBID Boundary and Parcels



This map references Los Angeles County Assessor parcel numbers. Dotted lines indicate separate Assessor book pages.

Note: This map is not to scale and was created for illustrative purposes only.



MULTI-YEAR BUDGET

Item	Year #1 2007	Year #2 2008	Year #3 2009	Year #4 2010	Year #5 2011	TOTAL
I. Beginning Balance, Carryover, & Accrued Interest	\$0	As Needed	As Needed	As Needed	As Needed	As Needed
II. Annual Budget Costs						
A. Security	\$25,000 11.1%	25,750	\$26,523	\$27,318	\$28,138	\$132,728
B. Landscape Maintenance, Sanitation, & Beautification	\$64,534 28.7%	99,980	102,979	106,069	109,251	\$482,813
- Non-Sepulveda Maintenance	\$32,000	32,960	33,949	34,967	36,016	\$169,892
- Sepulveda Blvd. Maintenance	\$32,534 *	67,020	69,031	71,102	73,235	\$312,921
C. Marketing & Promotions	\$21,500 9.6%	22,145	22,809	8,494	8,748	\$83,696
D. New Business Attraction	\$10,000 4.4%	10,300	5,000	5,150	5,305	\$35,755
E. Policy Dev, Management & Administration	\$60,000 26.7%	61,800	63,654	65,564	67,531	\$318,548
F. Office, Insurance, Accounting & Other	\$34,000 15.1%	35,020	36,071	37,153	38,26	\$180,511
Sub Total	\$215,034 95.6%	\$254,995	\$257,036	\$249,747	\$257,239	\$1,716,864
H. Uncollected Assessment Reserve	\$10,000 4.4%	10,300	10,609	10,927	11,255	\$53,091
Sub Total	\$225,034 100.0%	\$265,295	\$267,645	\$260,674	\$268,494	\$1,769,956
I. Contingency & Cash Flow Reserve	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
III. GRAND TOTAL BUDGET	\$225,034 100.00%	\$265,295	\$267,645	\$260,674	\$268,494	\$1,769,956

NOTE: The District will endeavor to reduce and/or supplement budgeted expenditures through donations and prudent management practices. All District assessments are subject to inflationary increases based upon movement in the Los Angeles - Orange - Riverside Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, not to exceed three per cent (3%) per fiscal year. The maximum assessment level is assumed above. Some shifting of actual expenditures from the above budget may occur. The District Fiscal Year will be January 1 through December 31 of each calendar year. Contingency and cash flow reserve funds may be used in any fiscal year. Unexpended assessments or incompleting projects from one fiscal year may be carried forward and rebudgeted for subsequent fiscal years for any approved District purpose. Unexpended assessment revenues from District operations may be carried forward and rebudgeted for any renewal term.

*Sepulveda Boulevard landscape maintenance costs are included for only six (6) months of Year #1 operations.