

NORTH LAKE SPECIFIC PLAN UPDATE

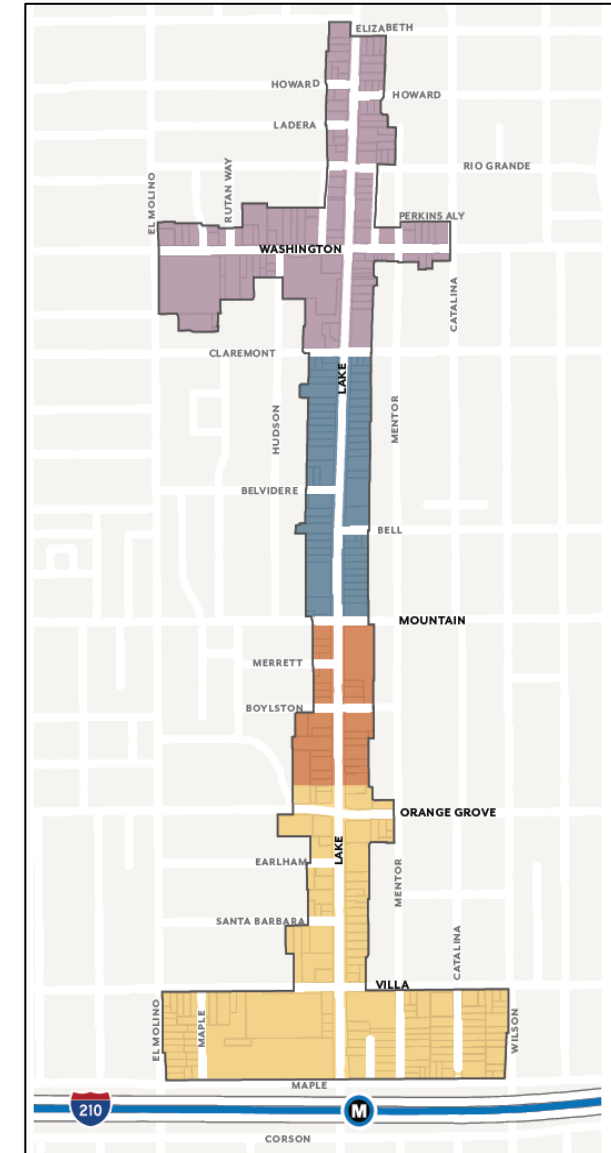
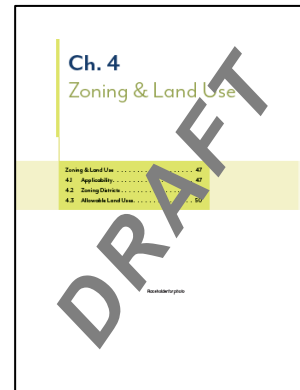
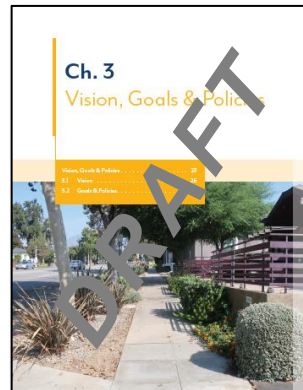
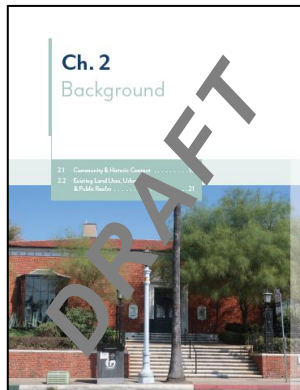
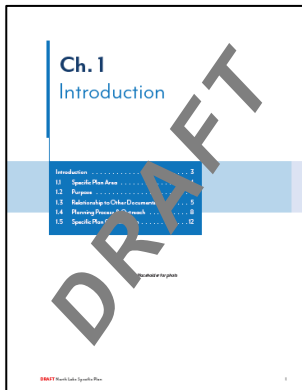
*Planning Commission Study Session
November 13, 2024*



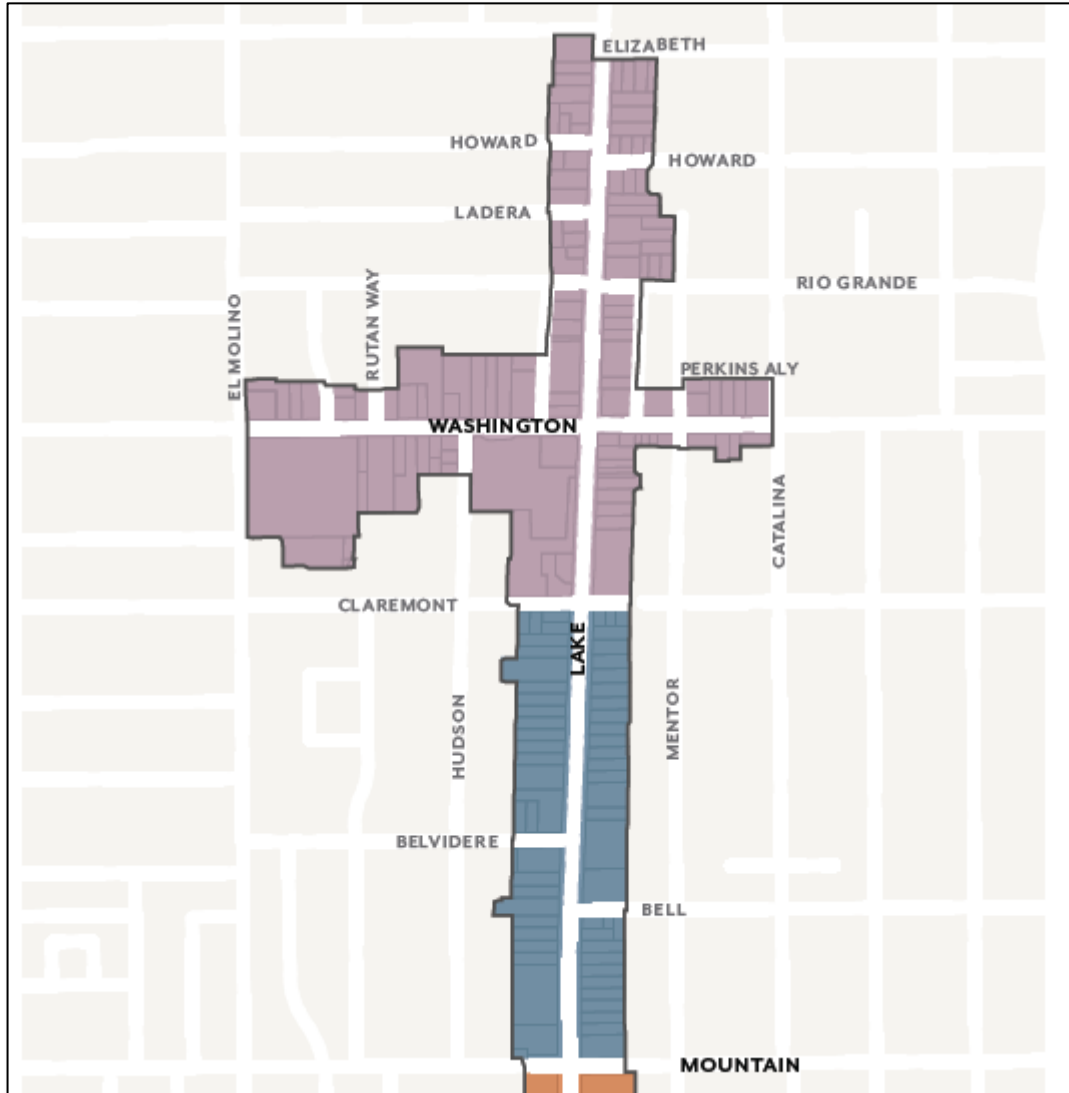
OUR PASADENA
PUTTING THE PLAN IN MOTION

Planning Commission Study Sessions on NLSP Update

- **Study Session #1:** May 2023 – Planning background, plan vision, & subarea concepts
- **Study Session #2:** January 2024 – Plan boundary, uses of land, & residential density
- **Study Session #3:** April 2024 – Drive-through businesses & potential redistribution of residential density.
- **Study Session #4:** May 2024 – Discussion on the public realm
 - Department of Transportation presentation
 - Public Works Department presentation
 - Public Realm Subcommittee created



Planning Commission Study Sessions on NLSP Update



Planning Commission Subcommittee: Public Realm

- Subcommittee Meetings
 - May 28: with Planning and Public Works staff
 - June 7: with Transportation staff (one Subcommittee member)
 - July 15: with Executive Director of South Lake Business Association
 - August 17: with invited community members
 - 10-member working group formed
 - Working Group Meetings
 - August 26
 - September 9



Planning Commission Subcommittee: Public Realm

- Subcommittee Recommendations
 - Definitions
 - 'Complete Street'
 - 'Greenstreet'
 - 'Streetscape'
 - Recommendations for Transforming the Public Realm
 - Goals (9)
 - Objectives (4)
 - Policies (25)

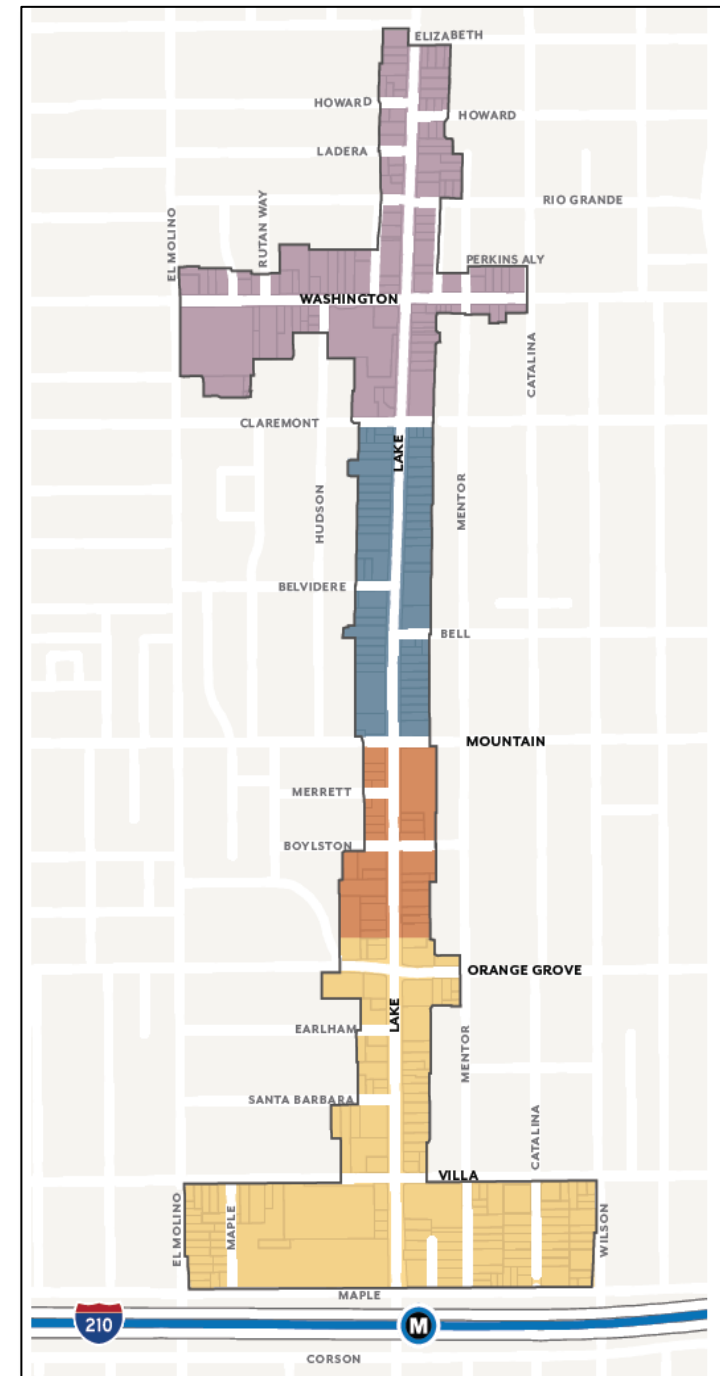


Next Steps



Next Steps

- Feedback and input will be discussed with Departments of Transportation and Public Works
- Complete Draft Specific Plan
 - Planning Commission Public Hearing (TBD)
 - City Council Public Hearing (TBD)



Thank you



NORTH LAKE SPECIFIC PLAN UPDATE

*Planning Commission Study Session
November 13, 2024*



OUR PASADENA
PUTTING THE PLAN IN MOTION

North Lake Avenue



Transforming the Public Realm

Subcommittee Report from:

Commissioner Rick Cole

Commissioner Julianna Delgado

Commissioner Carol Hunt Hernandez

Commissioner Beverly Sims

City of Pasadena Planning Commission

November 13, 2024

North Lake Avenue



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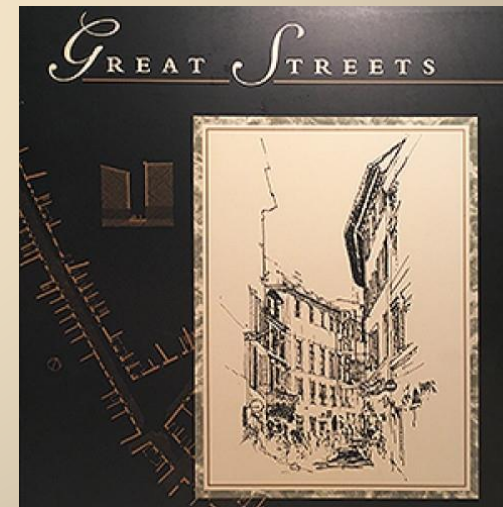
City of Pasadena Planning Commission

November 13, 2024

*Streets are more than public utilities, more than mere traffic conduits, more than the equivalent of water lines and sewers and electric cables, more than linear physical spaces that permit people and goods to get from here to here....**Streets shape the form and comfort of urban communities.***

Allan B. Jacobs

Great Streets, 1993



How Do We Transform North Lake Avenue into a “Great Street”?

North Lake Avenue



Transforming the Public Realm

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Commissioner Rick Cole

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City of Pasadena Planning Commission

November 13, 2024

- **SAFE AND CLEAN**
- **GATHERING PLACE FOR ALL**
- **CONNECT NEIGHBORHOODS**
- **SUSTAINABLE**
- **GREEN AND BEAUTIFUL**
- **ECONOMIC GENERATOR**
- **MODEL FOR OTHERS**
- **LEGACY**
- **HEART OF SPECIFIC PLAN**

North Lake Avenue

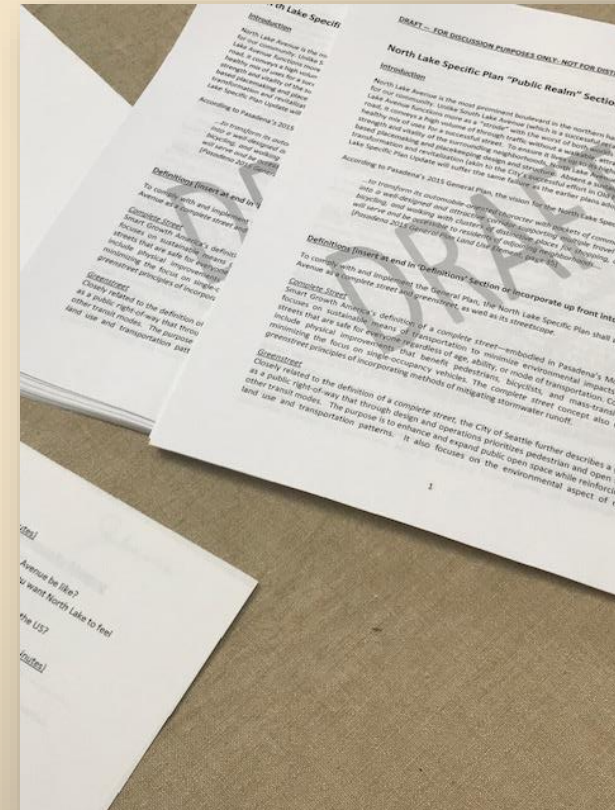


Transforming the Public Realm

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City of Pasadena Planning Commission
November 13, 2024

- **BACKGROUND**
- **RESEARCH**
- **COMMUNITY INPUT**
- **FOLLOW-UP**
- **RECOMMENDATIONS**



BACKGROUND: History

While the delight of bungalow life in California is largely attributable to the quality of climate, a generous share of credit is due also to good architects and first-class builders who have brought into the country the best ideas of their art and craft.

Charles Francis Saunders
Under the Sky in California, 1913



Looking north on Chester Avenue from Mountain Street, 1919



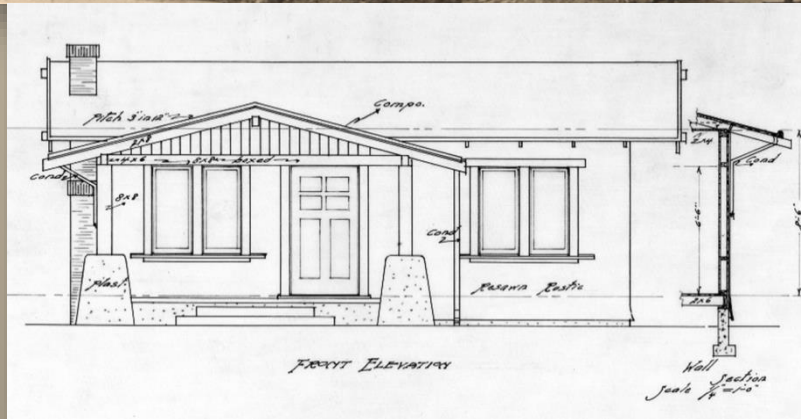
BACKGROUND: History



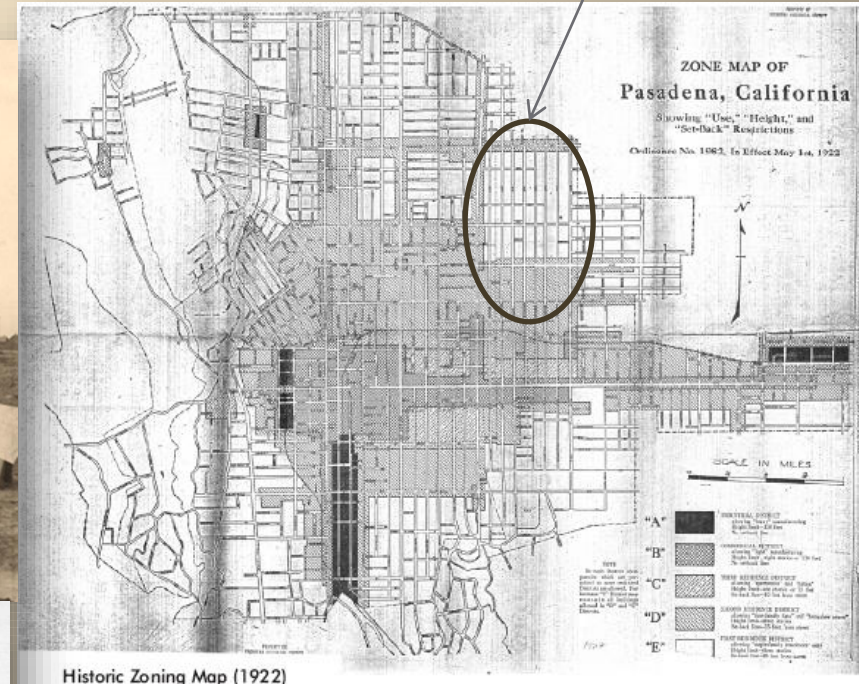
Charles Francis Saunders Home, 580 North Lake Avenue
Designated local landmark, 2005



BACKGROUND: History



North Lake Avenue



Pasadena's First Zoning Map, 1922



BACKGROUND: History



Lake Vineyard Avenue, residential street
(photo by Charles Francis Saunders from his home)



BACKGROUND: History



BACKGROUND: History



Per the 1925 Bennett Plan, Lake Avenue Widened for Automobiles

BACKGROUND: History



Lake Avenue becomes “Main Street” (looking south from Washington)



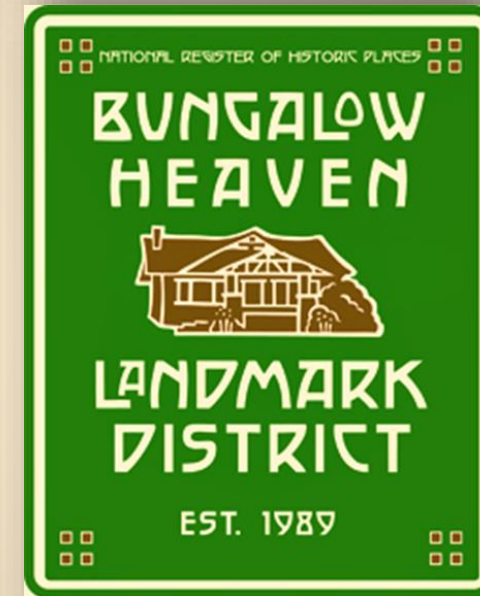
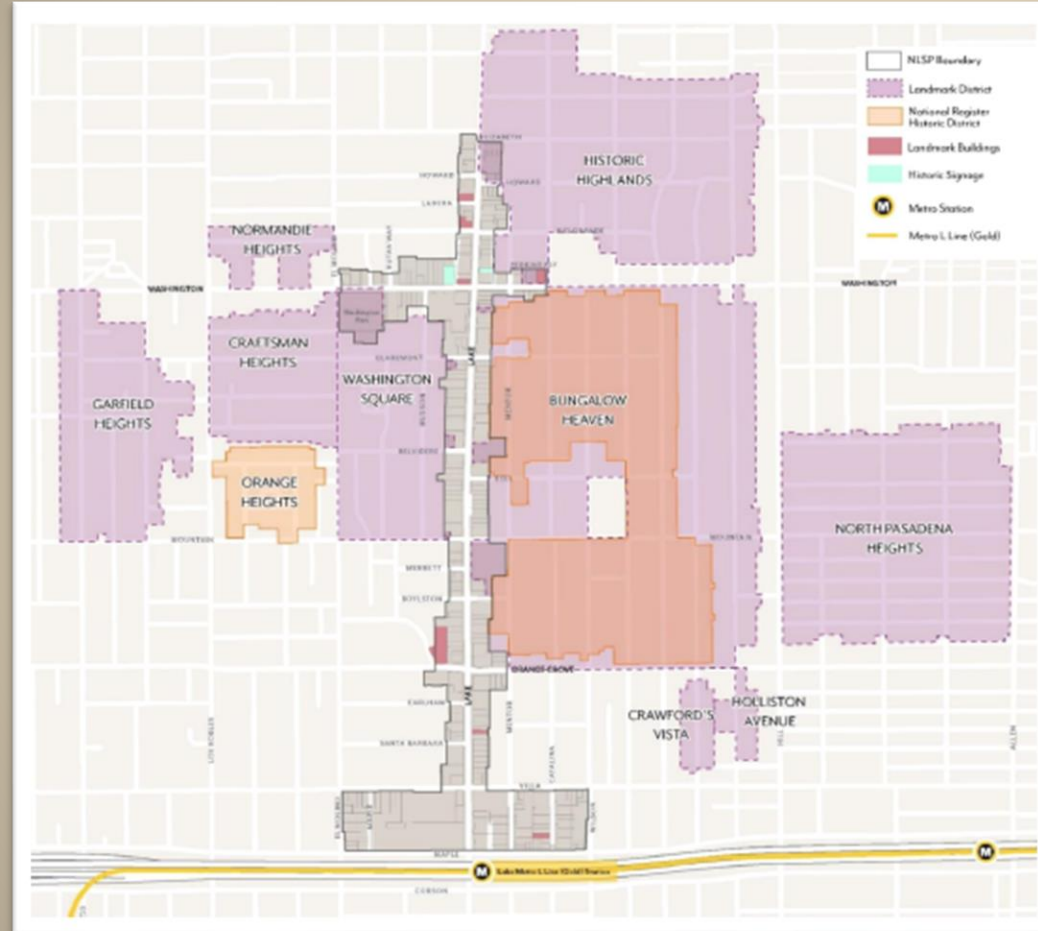
BACKGROUND: History



1970s, Areas North of the 210 Freeway Neglected



BACKGROUND: History



**1980s, Citywide Movement to
Restore and Preserve Historic Resources**



BACKGROUND: Existing Conditions



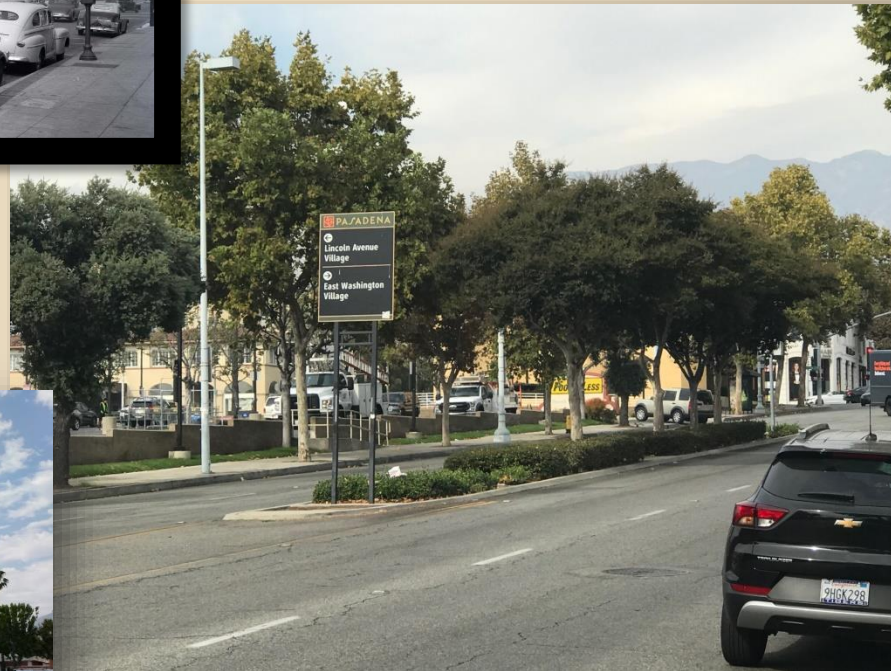
BACKGROUND: Existing Conditions



North Lake Avenue is “Modernized”



BACKGROUND: Existing Conditions



BACKGROUND: Existing Conditions



North Lake Avenue is Auto-Oriented, with Mini-Malls



BACKGROUND: Existing Conditions



Photos by Liza Billington

North Lake Avenue is Barren and Neglected



BACKGROUND: Existing Conditions



Photos by Neil Larson

North Lake Avenue Continues to Deteriorate



BACKGROUND: Existing Conditions



North Lake Avenue Has No Identifying Entrance



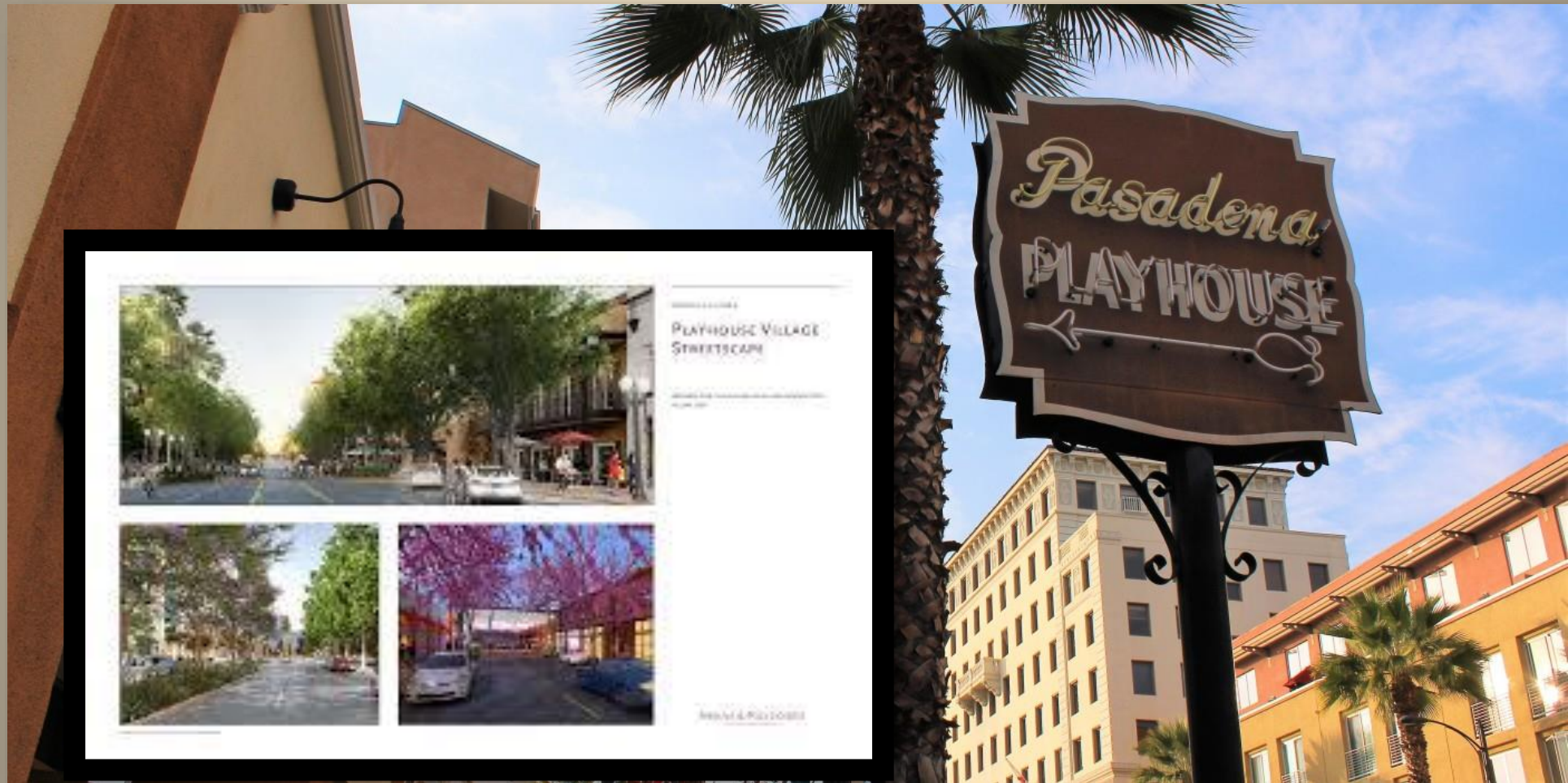
BACKGROUND: Existing Conditions



North Lake Avenue is Disconnected from Surrounding Neighborhoods



RESEARCH: Pasadena Examples



Playhouse District

North Lake Avenue



Transforming the Public Realm

RESEARCH: Pasadena Examples



Playhouse District (ArtWalk 2024)



RESEARCH: Pasadena Examples

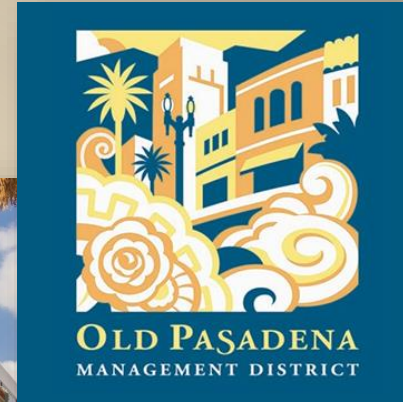


Playhouse District (ArtWalk 2024)



North Lake Avenue
Transforming the Public Realm

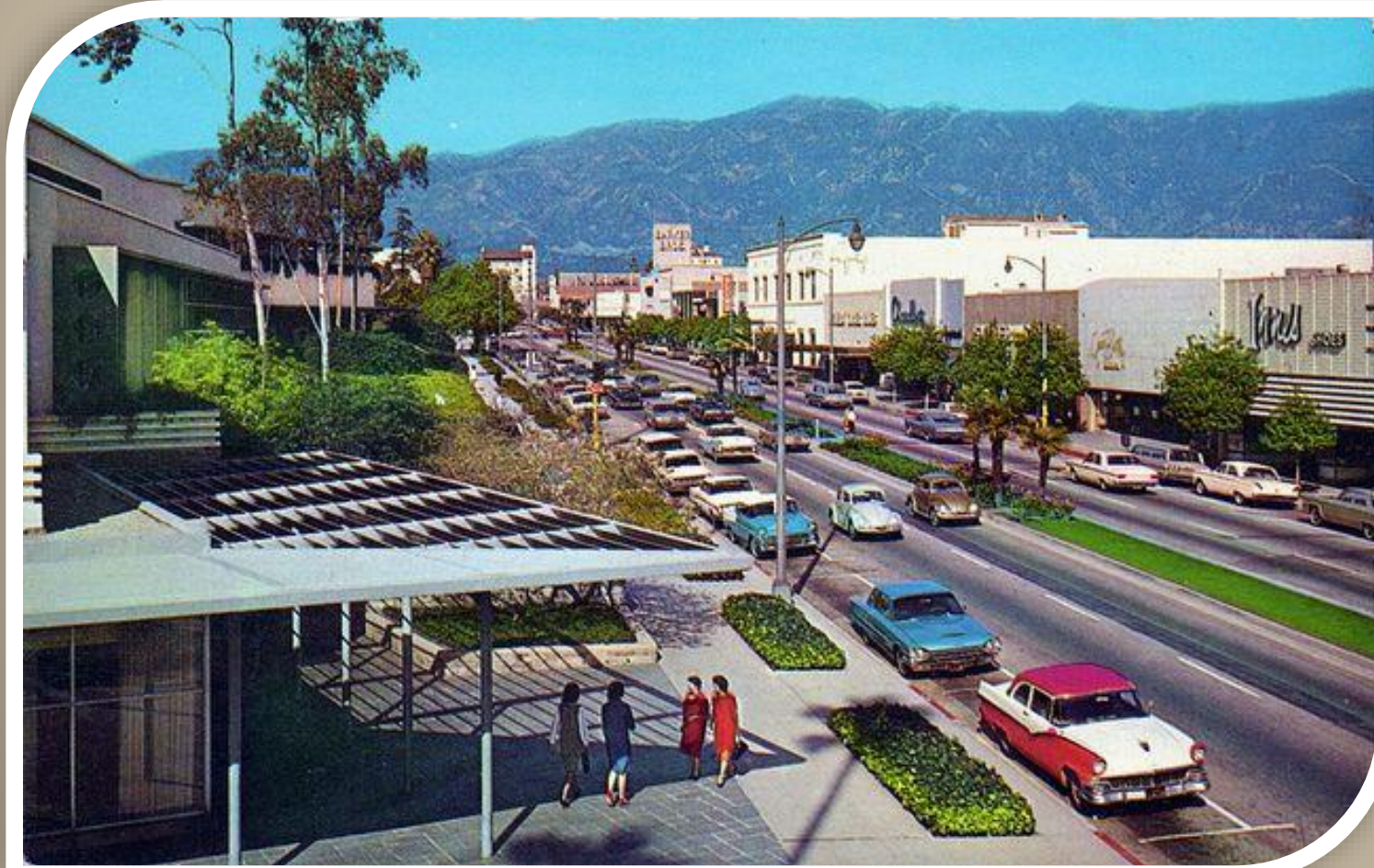
RESEARCH: Pasadena Examples



Old Pasadena



RESEARCH: Pasadena Examples



South Lake Avenue, circa 1950



RESEARCH: Pasadena Examples



South Lake Avenue



RESEARCH: Pasadena Examples



South Lake Avenue



RESEARCH: Pasadena Examples



Learning from Gina:

- Clean, Fun, Safe
- Get Property and Business Owners Involved (PBID)
- Develop Strong, Consistent Contact with the City

Gina Tleel, Executive Director
South Lake Business Association



RESEARCH: Other Examples



Portland's South Park Blocks



RESEARCH: Other Examples



High Line, Manhattan



RESEARCH: Other Examples

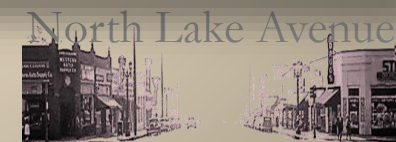


Hudson Street, Manhattan

RESEARCH: Other Examples



Larchmont Village



Transforming the Public Realm

RESEARCH: Other Examples



Rosemead Boulevard, Temple City



RESEARCH: Other Examples



Lancaster Boulevard (Before)



RESEARCH: Other Examples



Lancaster Boulevard (After)

RESEARCH: Other Examples



Lancaster Boulevard (After – Halloween Street Fair)



RESEARCH: Other Examples



Hollywood Boulevard



RESEARCH: Other Examples



Hollywood Boulevard Walk of Fame



Transforming the Public Realm

RESEARCH: Other Examples

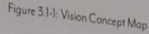


San Vicente Boulevard, West Hollywood



Transforming the Public Realm

COMMUNITY INPUT



August 17th Gathering

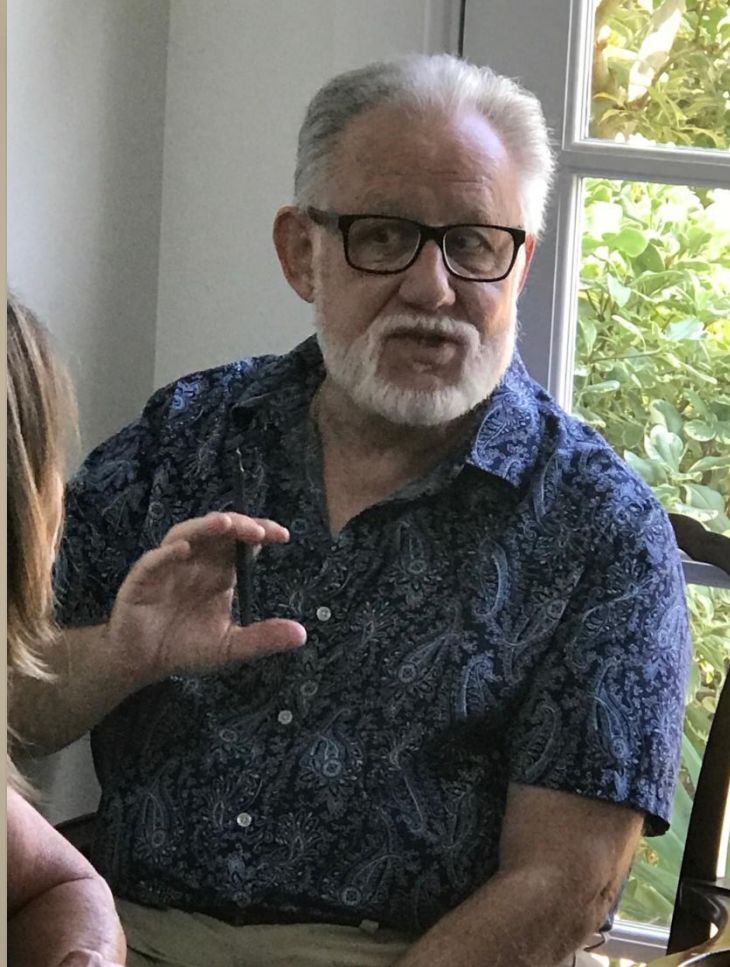
- **20+ Residents attended**
- **Six Historic Districts**
- **Provided copies for review and developed DRAFT**



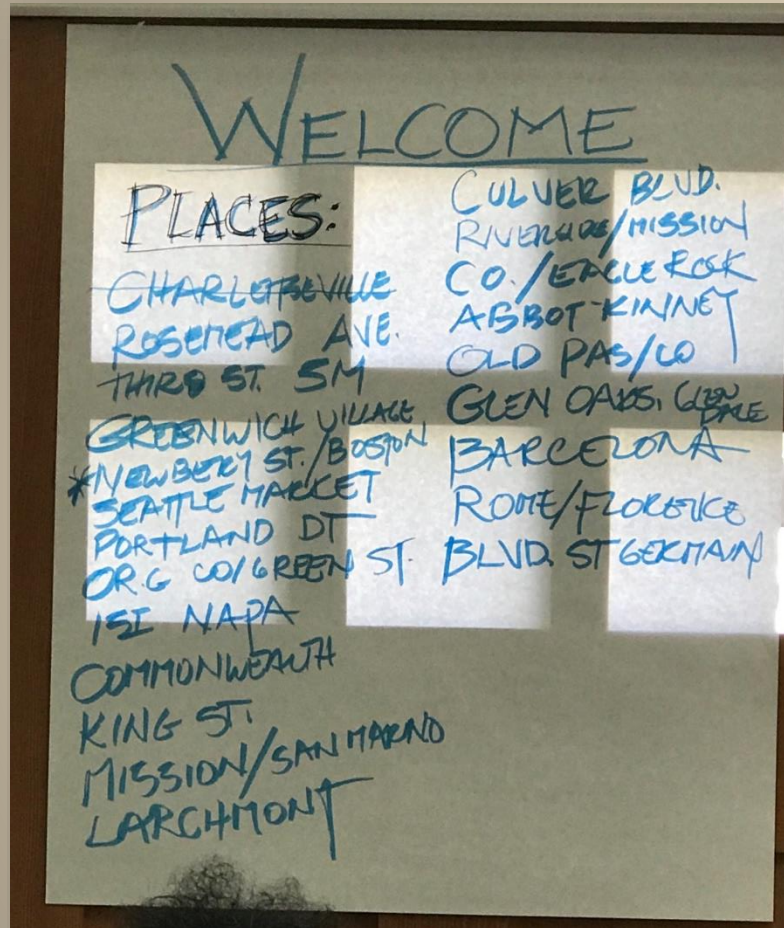
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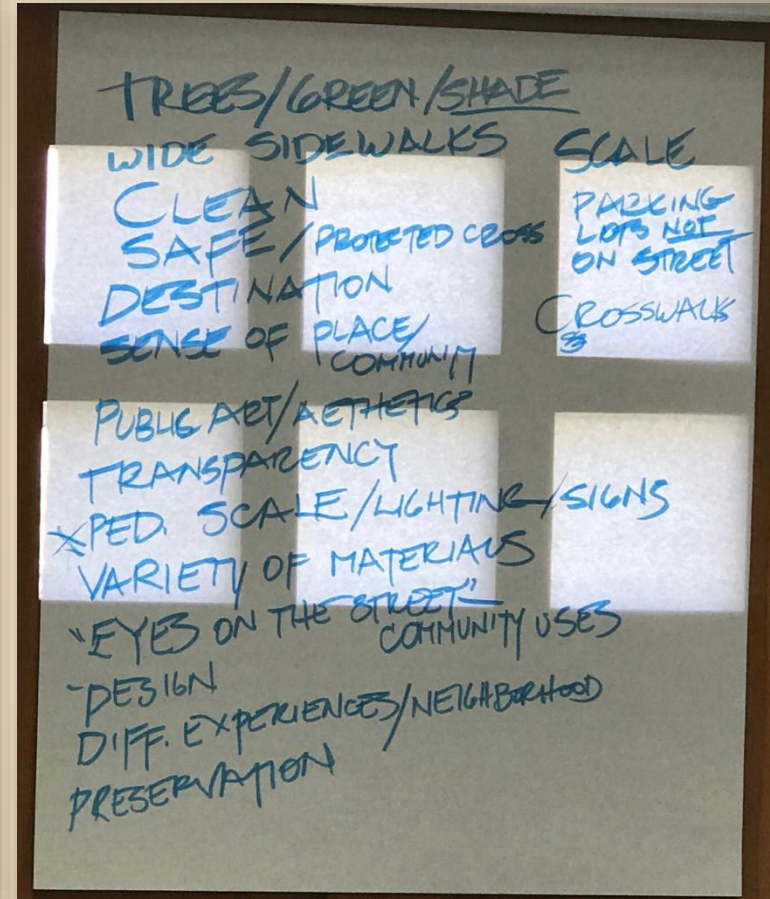
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COMMUNITY INPUT



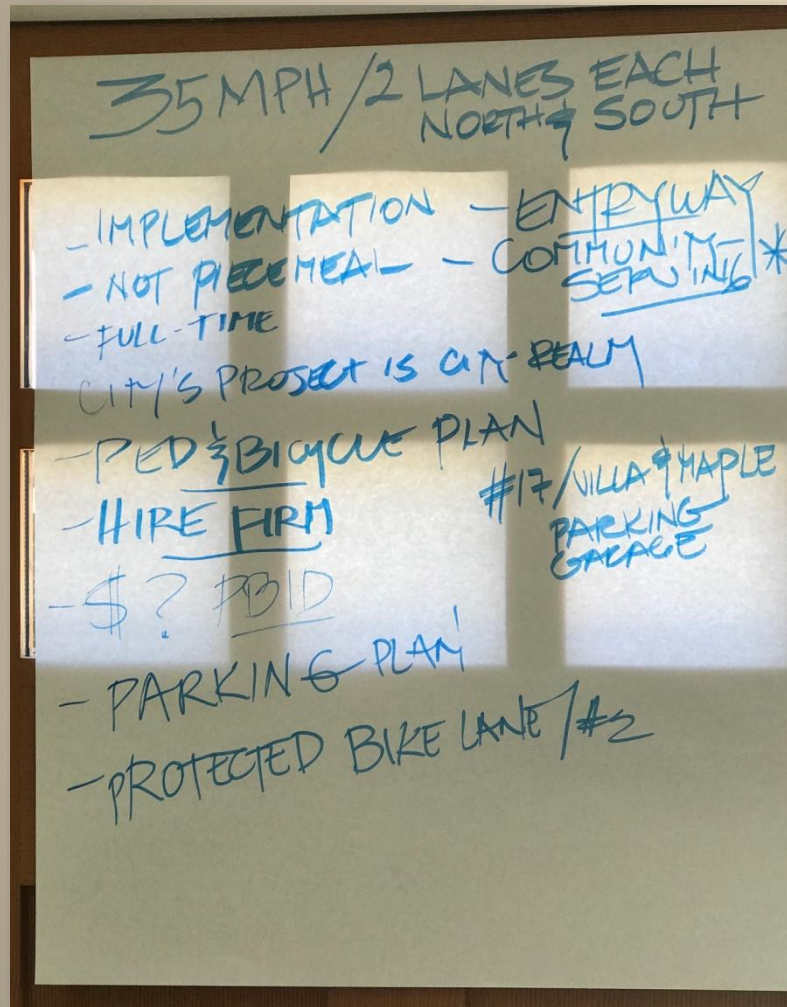
What do they have in common?



What are some "Great Streets"?

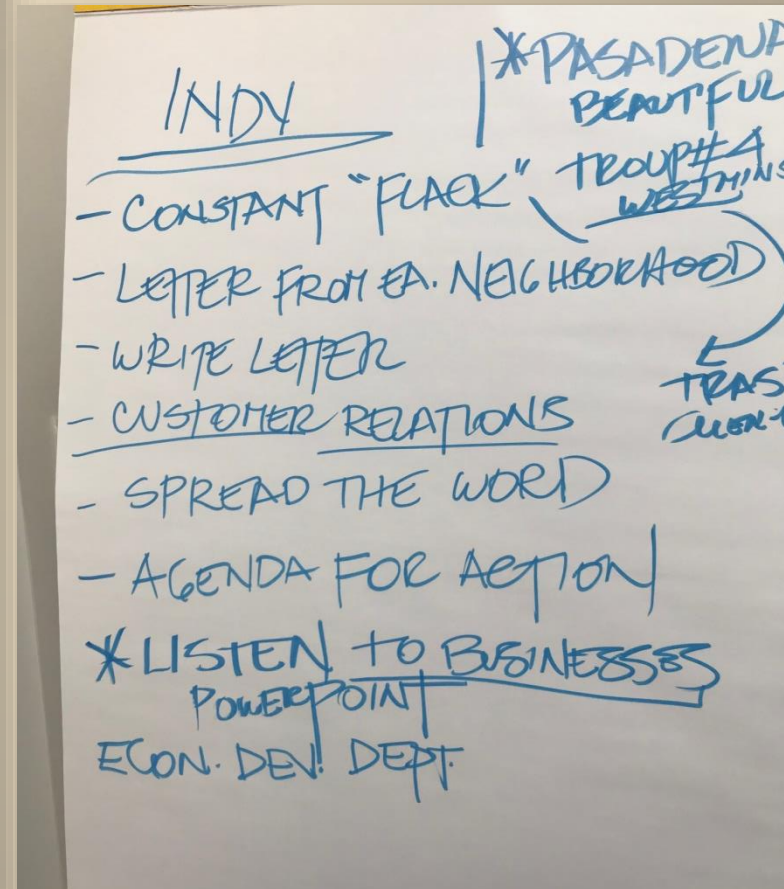


COMMUNITY INPUT



What needs to be changed or added?

How do we move the Plan forward?



COMMUNITY INPUT: Going Forward

- Created North Lake Avenue Community Working Group – consisting of multiple neighborhoods
- Created a Database of all Property/Business Owners
- Sent Information to Owners in English and Spanish
- Sent Owners Notices about Study Session
- Organize Second Gathering for Owners in early 2025
- Subcommittee Received Comments and Incorporated



COMMUNITY INPUT: Potential Views of North Lake Avenue



Images Generated by Megheti DerBoghossian

COMMUNITY INPUT: Potential Views of North Lake Avenue



Images Generated by Megheti DerBoghossian

Subcommittee Recommendations



Subcommittee Report from:

Commissioner Rick Cole

Commissioner Julianna Delgado

Commissioner Carol Hunt Hernandez

Commissioner Beverly Sims

City of Pasadena Planning Commission

November 13, 2024

Sub-Committee Goals





Sub-Committee Goals

1. *Build a sense of place for the community and individuals by changing the current space and scale to create a vibrant outdoor living room.*
2. *Attract investment in business and mixed-use projects, especially housing and its retail and service needs.*
3. *Ensure visible care and upkeep critical to the safety, vitality, and sense of community pride and ownership in North Lake Avenue's urban street life. Above all else, the Avenue must be clean and safe.*
4. *Find effective ways to calm traffic movement along North Lake Avenue through symbols of enhanced walkability, traffic management in a two-way system, and design of traffic lanes to promote and protect pedestrian and bicycle use and safety.*
5. *Emphasize transit to and within the planning area rather than transit through it.*

Sub-Committee Goals

6. *Manage and reduce congestion. For North Lake Avenue as a destination via all modes of transportation, understand that congestion is a byproduct of successful urban places. A place by definition that supports concentrations of social and economic activities within a pedestrian-scaled environment is going to be congested.*
7. *Address environmental impacts and the heat-island effect by reducing our carbon footprint. De-emphasize single-occupancy vehicle use and dependence on fossil fuels, reduce excessive impermeable paving, substantially increase the extent of the tree canopy, and ensure a memorable, walkable, delightful, and sustainable environment that is a model for other parts of the City.*
8. *Mitigate stormwater runoff through creative landscaping.*
9. *Establish a creative public art program that includes murals and reinforces a strong sense of place and continuity between the past, present, and future.*

**Sub-Committee Objectives:
How to Make North Lake
Avenue a *Great Street***



Sub-Committee Objectives

1. Fund and Develop a Pedestrian Plan and Implementation Strategy.

The Pedestrian Plan will provide the foundation for planning and developing the Public Realm for the North Lake Specific Plan Area. It will provide the blueprint for implementing pedestrian-oriented capital improvements to make it easier, safer, and more interesting to walk along the Avenue as well as to and from adjoining neighborhoods. The Plan will describe the existing conditions facing pedestrians on North Lake Avenue, analyze walking data and trends, describe best practices successfully used in other cities, and provide the basis and justification for funding and implementing capital improvements aimed at walking.

Sub-Committee Objectives

2. Design a Comprehensive Streetscape Plan for North Lake Avenue that incorporates principles of beautification, complete streets, and greenstreets.

Following adoption of the North Lake Specific Plan Update, the City shall develop and design a Comprehensive Streetscape Plan through a community outreach and participation effort, which is expected to include a citizen-lead steering committee. The Specific Plan's zoning will enable more residents to 'live above the store' along the Avenue and provide the needed 'eyes on the street' for safety and self-policing that will also support new community-serving businesses. The purpose of the Comprehensive Streetscape Plan—in concert with the zoning—is to transform North Lake Avenue physically into a great street. It serves as a catalyst for improving the visual character of the planning area while respecting, preserving, and celebrating its historic fabric and context. The Plan will establish a unique sense of place, providing pedestrian amenities, and supporting wellness through walking and biking. The 'new' North Lake Avenue will be clean and safe, no longer serving solely as an arid thoroughfare but as the heart of the surrounding neighborhoods. It will increase the customer base and property values, and generally enhance the quality of life for the planning area and the City as a whole in a sustainable way.

Sub-Committee Objectives

- 3. Fund installation and maintenance of the Comprehensive Streetscape Plan through public and private investment based on the City's binding commitment to direct adequate public resources to achieve the goal.***

Along with the Pedestrian Plan studies, as first steps in the process, the City shall conduct an economic study of the North Lake Specific Plan Area while surveying and engaging the property and business owners. Prioritize City investment, apply for State and Federal grants, and support establishing a Property-based Business Improvement District (P-BID). Also, explore establishing an Enhanced Infrastructure Funding District (EIFD), a Parking District, or other financing mechanisms. Consider creating a set-aside fund with fees collected from new development projects in lieu of required onsite improvements to install the Comprehensive Streetscape Plan, which Pasadena has done in the past. Explore alternate funding sources such as fundraising and private sector donations for planting and maintaining street trees and creating a Landscaping Improvement District (LID) for adjacent neighborhoods. In the event that parking meters are installed along North Lake Avenue, explore the use of meter revenues in excess of expenses to fund improvements (as was done in Old Pasadena).

Sub-Committee Objectives

- 4. Designate a City staff lead to spearhead a planning and design team to coordinate and develop the Public Realm. This would include developing and installing capital improvements recommended by the Plan and an operation and maintenance program to ensure their viability over time.***

Establish a City staff lead person for North Lake Avenue to work closely with residents, businesses, private investors, and relevant City departments—especially Planning, Transportation, and Public Works—to ensure all capital improvements are installed and maintained in a comprehensive, cost-efficient, and resource conscious manner. Ensure the Housing and Economic Development departments actively and consistently market investment opportunities along North Lake Avenue, especially housing opportunities and community-serving retail that supports residents. To be most effective, improvements to the Public Realm should be implemented within the same period of time to achieve the best possible effect (as was done in Old Pasadena).

**Sub-Committee Policies:
Twenty Five Ways to
Transform North Lake
Avenue into a *Great Street***



Sub-Committee Policies

1. *Create an equitable balance of space usage between sidewalks and streets in the public right-of-way. The ideal allocation is 50/50 between pedestrians and vehicles. This translates on North Lake Avenue, with its 105-ft. right-of-way, to about 50 feet for pedestrian-oriented use and the remaining 50 feet for all other modes of travel and on-street parking.*
2. *Provide two vehicular travel lanes in each direction going north and south along North Lake Avenue. The travel lanes shall be narrowed as much as possible to deemphasize the width of the right-of-way yet still provide two safe travel lanes. Vehicle lanes shall not exceed 12 feet in width. The design speed along North Lake Avenue shall not exceed 35 mph.*
3. *Eliminate the current shared vehicle/bicycle travel lanes. Instead, install one-way protected bicycle lanes on the east and west side of the Avenue or a two-way bikeway on one side protected from vehicle traffic by trees, landscaping, and parking lanes without the barrenness and confusion of the Union Street bikeway (see the City of Rosemead as a model). Include bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements around the Metro stop/freeway overpass zone that connect to North Lake Avenue.*

Sub-Committee Policies

4. *Maximize off-street parking as much as possible. Eliminate on-street parking from Orange Grove to Mountain Streets where fronting drive-thrus. Where critically needed to serve businesses without onsite parking, reduce the number of on-street spaces or re-configure them to be more efficient (i.e. install diagonal parking, create parking inlets, etc.).*
5. *The center turning lanes shall be removed or minimized as much as possible for safe turning at intersections. Useable space freed up within the right-of-way shall be dedicated to pedestrian or community use. The additional space can be used for central, pedestrian-oriented medians, ramblas (such as in the City of Lancaster), and wider sidewalk areas.*
6. *The additional right-of-way gained from eliminating on-street parking and center turning lanes shall be used to establish or enlarge useable medians along all or part of North Lake Avenue to benefit the community. The additional space can be used for walkable, landscaped 'park blocks' like in Portland or West Hollywood, especially from Orange Grove to Washington flanked by drive-thrus. Or, create central diagonal-parking and event space like the Moule & Polyzoides-designed ramblas for Downtown Lancaster; or community gardens like in Vancouver and Oakland; or some combination.*

Sub-Committee Policies

7. *“Pedestrian refuges” shall be installed at the end of each median or somewhere in the middle of longer ones where needed, to ensure that those who cannot cross the entirety of the street can wait safely in the median until they can continue crossing to the other side, like sections of South Lake Avenue.*
8. *Lighted crosswalks at selected locations in between the controlled intersections shall be installed, with flashing lights embedded in the road and on signs beside it to alert drivers.*
9. *Install diagonal crossings (like in Old Pasadena) and continental “ladder” crosswalks at intersections. These will serve to mark North Lake Avenue better as a pedestrian street, significantly lessen the mixing of pedestrians and vehicles, and reduce traffic speeds. At all signalized intersections ensure enough time for pedestrians to cross the street comfortably and safely. Default to pedestrian crossing prior to initializing green lights for vehicles.*
10. *At all bus stops, ensure a permanent tree canopy or other shading devices to shelter transit users from the elements. Provide adequate lighting, comfortable seating, and real-time transit information.*

Sub-Committee Policies

11. *The entire streetscape shall be landscaped using water-conserving low-impact development (LID) and smart irrigation techniques. Incorporate permeable paving, bio-swales, and other methods to control runoff and capture stormwater for onsite reuse.*
12. *Landscaping should include a diversity of species—native, non-native Mediterranean, non-invasive and other water efficient types—to increase urban resilience, create habitat for insects and birds, and serve as drought-tolerant, waterwise demonstration gardens.*
13. *Plant appropriate, evergreen street trees—as designated in an updated adopted Street Tree Plan for the North Lake area--that provide a year-round canopy with a spread preferably of 18 feet or more, planted at about 10 - 30 feet on center intervals, depending on the species. Consider planting citrus and other food-producing species for resilience and as accents to celebrate our climate and heritage.*
14. *Sidewalks shall be 18 feet in width as a baseline, with 10 feet apportioned for the path of travel next to the building property line, known as the “pedestrian zone,” and the remaining 8 feet reserved for trees, utility access, street furniture, known as the “curbside zone.” Variations in these two zones may be designed to accommodate outdoor dining, installing public art, street vending, and other activities.*

Sub-Committee Policies

15. *Widened sidewalk areas shall be landscaped and installed at one time or phased along entire blocks or sub-districts in a coordinated way. Interest and continuity shall be provided in the design that also connects people safely to the median and across the street. Provide hardscape variation in shape, width, and quality paving materials to promote strolling and discovery and differentiate the sub-districts. Accommodate activities such as ‘people-watching,’ street vending, and street or farmers markets, with kiosks, newsstands, and outdoor dining, shaded from the California sun. Include permanent street furniture (benches and chairs for gathering and lingering, waste receptacles, water faucets, etc.), public art and murals, pedestrian-scaled lighting, bicycle facilities, and other amenities.*
16. *To give variety to the design of the corridor, special landscaping treatments shall be installed as decorative nodes or ‘plazas’ at four major intersections along North Lake Avenue: at Villa Street, Orange Grove Blvd., Mountain Street, and Washington Blvd.*
17. *The east side of Boylston Street shall be closed off or vehicle access curbed to stop illegal cut-through traffic from fast food businesses on North Lake Avenue into the neighborhood.*

Sub-Committee Policies

18. *Identify and acquire potential paseos, parklets, and greenspaces. Reduce onsite parking requirements, support shared parking arrangements on private property, or develop district-wide parking or through some other means reduce excess space for cars, and instead acquire easements for passive greening (non-active recreational use) and public space throughout the planning area.*
19. *At the Food for Less property, the onsite parking requirements shall be reduced to eliminate the heat island effect from the massive, underutilized sea of asphalt. The City shall find the means to incentivize the property owners to redevelop the site with underground parking and added housing, with residential units above stores or offices along the North Lake Avenue frontage, and community-serving retail to support residents. The same shall be undertaken for the CVS property, the former Big Lots property, and others with parking fronting North Lake Avenue.*
20. *As much as possible, underground parking shall be required for redeveloped sites. In all cases, new onsite surface parking lots abutting North Lake Avenue shall be prohibited.*

Sub-Committee Policies

21. *The City shall develop and support the means to “Park Once and Walk” along North Lake Avenue by working with property and business owners to increase shared parking opportunities in publicly owned parking lots and to reduce on-site parking requirements to the extent possible. Include some public parking in the redevelopment of the former Kaiser site at Lake and Villa as a start.*
22. *New curb cuts shall be prohibited along North Lake Avenue. As uses change, current ones shall be relocated or eliminated to increase the safety and continuity of the pedestrian realm.*
23. *Emphasize allowing outdoor dining along the street frontage that is protected from vehicle emissions through screening or landscaping. Outdoor dining shall not be allowed adjacent to residential uses, especially in parking lots or open space in the rear of restaurants, without approval of a Minor Conditional Use Permit (MCUP).*

Sub-Committee Policies

24. *Develop an incentivized façade improvement “Main Street”-type program to encourage and assist existing owners to upgrade their properties flanking the public right-of-way through building repair, re-modeling, re-painting, and onsite landscaping. Partner with Habitat for Humanity, the American Institute of Architects, or other professional, service, educational, faith-based, and neighborhood organizations, as well as businesses to provide pro bono design assistance, labor, and materials.*
25. *Develop, adopt, maintain, and enforce a comprehensive, coordinated sign program for the North Lake Specific Plan Area. Pay special attention to reducing the amount of signage that obscures street-facing windows to increase transparency and a sense of safety for pedestrians. An over-street sign at the start of the streetscape or a system of banners or other artistic means shall be installed to demarcate the planning area, enhance its unique visual character, and create a sense of entry and arrival (look to Culver City and Santa Monica as examples).*