

Treasures

Challenges



Kansas Avenue Charrette



prepared for the **City of Topeka**





September 3, 2010

Neil Dobler, PE
Bartlett & West, Inc.
1200 SW Executive Drive
Topeka, Kansas 66615

Subject: Kansas Avenue Charrette

Dear Mr. Dobler,

I am pleased to present the enclosed qualifications package to assist you in selecting a consultant for each of the one-day Kansas Avenue Charrettes. I understand that as Topeka's Main Street, Kansas Avenue has a significant physical, social, and economic development role in the community and improving it has emerged as a high priority project for the public and decision-makers. As there is never just one right answer to the question of how to revitalize a downtown or corridor, the charrette process will be exciting and invigorating.

As you will see, I have been involved in downtown planning for over 10 years and community participation for over 15 years, winning awards on both fronts. I have strong ties to Kansas, having grown up in the state and graduated from the University of Kansas, and the prospect of now assisting the Topeka community presents a unique opportunity for me. I believe that my downtown planning and public participation experience will benefit the Topeka community – I will be able to bring my ideas, opinions, and experience to the table, but will focus on facilitating a charrette that allows the community to fully articulate their own the ideas and objectives for Kansas Avenue.

I look forward to this opportunity - I am genuinely eager and interested in working with the community on both a professional and personal level. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 949.472.3467 should you have any questions or require additional information during the selection process.

Sincerely,

Susan J. Harden, AICP, CMSM, LEED AP, CNU-A
Vice President
Planning & Design Services



SECTION 1: CHARRETTE AND VISIONING LEADER BIO

SUSAN J. HARDEN, AICP, CMSM, LEED AP, CNU-A

BACKGROUND



Susan has a broad background in community development and planning. Before joining RBF Consulting's Urban Design Studio, Ms. Harden volunteered with the Peace Corps in Senegal, West Africa and with AmeriCorps involved in both community capacity

building and community revitalization projects. In Kansas City, Missouri, she also led several neighborhood-based planning projects for a not-for-profit environmental organization involved in sustainable neighborhood development, transportation, and environmental justice. During her time with the non-profit, Susan wrote and received a neighborhood planning grant from the Environmental Protection Agency. Susan also worked with the State of Arizona as a community planning specialist, providing technical planning support and assistance to Arizona's rural and tribal communities. She regularly facilitated sessions with the local boards and commissions, as well as facilitated community-wide visioning sessions.

With Urban Design Studio, Susan is primarily involved in leading a team of talented planners and urban designers developing and implementing innovative public participation programs, and directing downtown and neighborhood revitalization projects. Her passion has always been and continues to be to directly involve communities in protecting and improving their physical, natural, and social environments.

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

Susan's educational background includes a dual degree in Environmental Planning and Architectural Studies from the University of Kansas. She received her Master of Planning from Arizona State University where she focused her thesis work on public participation. Since

that time, Susan has continued her education through numerous professional certification programs. She is a registered planner with the *American Institute of Certified*

Planners and is a National Main Street Center's *Certified Main Street Manager*. In addition, she has received a *Professional Certificate in*



Neighborhood Revitalization through the NeighborWorks® America Training Institute and a certificate in *Dialogue, Deliberation, and Public Engagement* from Fielding Graduate University. Most recently, she became a *Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Accredited Professional (LEED AP)*; and *Congress the New Urbanism Accredited Professional (CNU-A)*.

DOWNTOWN PLANNING & REVITALIZATION

Susan has been involved with countless downtown and/or business district planning efforts, most of which that that have included a combination of extensive visioning, streetscape enhancements, placemaking, traffic calming, design guidelines, and implementation strategies. Several of the downtown projects in which she has been integrally involved have received awards, including the Downtown Imperial Master Plan (CA), the Taft District Urban Renewal Plan (OR), the Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan (Coachella, CA) and the Fullerton Alleyscape (CA).

As a certified Main Street Manager, Susan is a strong proponent of the Four Point Approach for downtown planning – a strategic approach to revitalization which has proven very successful in





many downtown areas throughout the United States that is grounded in: (1) Design, (2) Economic Restructuring, (3) Promotion, and (4) Organization.

Susan has a particular emphasis on placemaking in downtown planning, finding ways to add value and meaning to the public realm through community-based revitalization projects rooted in local values, history, culture, and natural environment. The strategies leverage urban design practices to heighten people’s connections to their community-and to each other-in ways that are affordable and realistically attainable for communities with limited resources.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & FACILITATION

Involving the community is the cornerstone of the Susan’s approach to all planning and urban design projects she undertakes. She has successfully completed a wide range of projects involving extensive community participation. She prides herself on providing creative and fun opportunities for public involvement that engage all levels of the community, including youth, and yield important and valuable results. Facilitating and organizing hands-on workshops, design charrettes, visual and written surveys, focus groups, and employing internet-based involvement techniques represent just a part of her extensive public involvement experience and commitment.



Susan is skilled in meeting facilitation with experience in both small and large group facilitation and facilitation training. She is well-versed in

a variety of tactics to ensure effective participation at public venues that will encourage dialogue and balance participation between meeting participants. This includes the ability to create an effective agenda, manage time, listen effectively and record comments, paraphrase comments, stack conversations, and draw people out.

Susan believes that plans built upon consensus are more readily implemented and sustainable and has won several awards specifically for her community

involvement programs, including Downtown Sierra Madre Education Series (CA), Santa Paula Citywide Visioning (CA), Plan Santa Paula Workshop Series (CA), and the Prescott Valley General Plan (AZ).

PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Susan recently co-authored an APA Planners Advisory Service Report called “Placemaking on a Budget” a handbook style publication that illustrates community projects rooted in local values, history, culture, and community participation.



She is a regular speaker at local, state and national conferences, including the Neighborhoods USA, National Planning Association, New Partners for Smart Growth, and the National Town Meeting on Main Street (National Main Street Institute Conference).

Susan also recently co-taught a graduate planning studio course in neighborhood revitalization at California Polytechnic University, Pomona and will be teaching another graduate planning studio this fall at University of California at Irvine (UCI). She also serves as part of the training faculty for NeighborWorks® America where she teaches a course to community development professionals that she co-developed entitled “Essential Tools for Successful Neighborhood Revitalization”.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Susan serves on the Board of Directors for HOMES, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to providing transitional and supportive housing to persons with mental illness. She also helped found RBF Consulting’s Good Works program – a company-wide volunteer organization. Susan has also served as an application reviewer for the Case Foundation grant program, “Make It Your Own Award”. Most recently, she facilitated a board and staff retreat for a local chapter of the Boys and Girls Club.



SECTION 2: DOWNTOWN & FACILITATION PROJECT EXPERIENCE

The partial list below illustrates the depth of Susan’s experience as it pertains to downtowns, business corridors, and community involvement. Additional detail on select projects is found in the following pages.

- Arizona, Arizona Main Street Program Design Guidelines
- Banning, CA - Downtown Plan Assessment & Streetscape
- Brawley, CA - Downtown Specific Plan
- Brookings, OR - Downtown Master Plan
- Buellton, CA - Citywide Visioning
- Calaveras County, CA - San Andreas Rural Livable Mobility Plan
- Carlsbad, CA - Ponto Beachfront Village Plan
- Coachella, CA - Downtown Revitalization Master Plan
- Coronado, CA - Orange Avenue Specific Plan
- Enumclaw, WA - Downtown Streetscape
- Ft. Bragg, CA - Citywide Design Guidelines
- Ft. Bragg, CA - Downtown Revitalization Study
- Fullerton, CA - SoCo District Alleyscape
- Glendora, CA - Route 66 Corridor Specific Plan
- Grass Valley, CA - South Auburn Street Master Plan
- Greensboro, NC - SafeScape Park Assessments, Design Guidelines, and Training
- Imperial, CA - Redevelopment Master Plan and Design Guidelines
- Kansas, KS, Placemaking - Kansas Main Street
- Keizer, OR - River Road Renaissance
- La Mesa, CA - Downtown Streetscape Plan
- La Mirada, CA - Imperial Highway Corridor Plan
- Lancaster, CA - Low Tree Neighborhood Vision Plan
- Lancaster, CA, North Downtown Lancaster Transit Village Neighborhood
- Lincoln City, OR - OceanLake Redevelopment District
- Lincoln City, OR - Taft Redevelopment Plan
- Lompoc, CA - Old Town Lompoc Specific Plan
- Medford, OR - Evergreen Front Street Couplet and In-Town Village Design Guidance
- Mesquite, NV - Downtown and Urban Corridor Revitalization Plan (Mesquite, NV)
- Ottawa, KS - Your Town Ottawa
- Perris, CA - Downtown Specific Plan
- Poway, CA - Poway Town Center Process
- Prescott Valley, AZ - Parkway Redevelopment Plan
- Prescott Valley, AZ - General Plan Update
- Rocklin, CA - Downtown Plan
- San Diego, CA - Hillcrest Corridor Mobility Plan
- San Diego, CA - Imperial-Commercial Corridor Vision
- San Diego, CA - University Avenue Mobility Plan
- Sandy, OR - Downtown Design Standards
- San Juan Bautista, CA - Historic District Plan
- Santa Ana - Citywide Design Guidelines
- Santa Paula, CA - Plan Santa Paula: Housing Workshop Series
- Santa Paula, CA - Citywide Visioning
- Scottsdale, AZ - Advance Planning Facilitation
- Scottsdale, AZ - Downtown Plan Update and Community Workshop Series
- Sedona, AZ - Uptown Sedona Design Guidelines
- Sedona, AZ - Uptown Sedona Enhancement Project
- Sierra Madre, CA - Downtown Tour & Education Series
- South Bay Cities Council of Governments, CA - South Bay Cities Livable Communities Program
- South Bay Cities Council of Governments - Vision for Sustainable South Bay
- Thousand Oaks, CA - Thousand Oaks Boulevard Traffic and Parking Analysis
- Vista, CA - Mercantile/Santa Fe Revitalization Plan
- Windsor, CA - A Vision for Shiloh Road
- Yucca Valley, CA - Old Town Specific Plan





PUEBLO VIEJO REVITALIZATION PLAN | COACHELLA, CA

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) funded planning and revitalization efforts within Pueblo Viejo – the downtown core of the City of Coachella – as priority project within the Compass Blueprint Demonstration Grant Program.



The RBF/UDS team, led by Susan Harden, included a market analyst from Economic Research Associates (ERA) and transportation planner from Urban Crossroads. Together, the RBF Team joined forces with Coachella City Staff and SunLine Transit Agency to work with local stakeholders in developing short- and long-term revitalization strategies for Pueblo Viejo. Specifically, planning efforts included an assessment of opportunities and constraints related to land uses, underutilized or vacant parcels, circulation, and façade rehabilitation. Final products included a vision plan and poster, illustrative street sections, and an implementation plan.

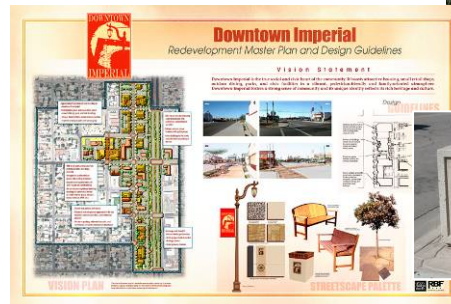
- Community Visioning
- Façade Rehabilitation Recommendations
- Market and Pro Forma Analysis
- Vision Poster and Illustrations



2010, Crystal Eagle Award through the California Downtown Association

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN AND DESIGN GUIDELINES | IMPERIAL, CA

RBF’s Urban Design Studio, led by Susan Harden, was selected by the City of Imperial to assist in developing a vision and design guidelines to guide future redevelopment. The planning process was divided into three phases focused on different stages of the project. Phase I included a walking tour and workshop with the citizen-based committees, stakeholder interviews, and a logo contest with Imperial High School students. RBF/UDS prepared a series of existing conditions “Pattern Sheets”, researched local history, and an Opportunities and Constraints Plan to assist in understanding Downtown. In Phase II, the committees participated in a hands-on design charrette to develop ideas for downtown redevelopment and urban design character. With the information derived from the results of the preliminary steps, RBF/UDS developed maps and illustrative graphics to depict areas of civic importance, expanded sidewalks,



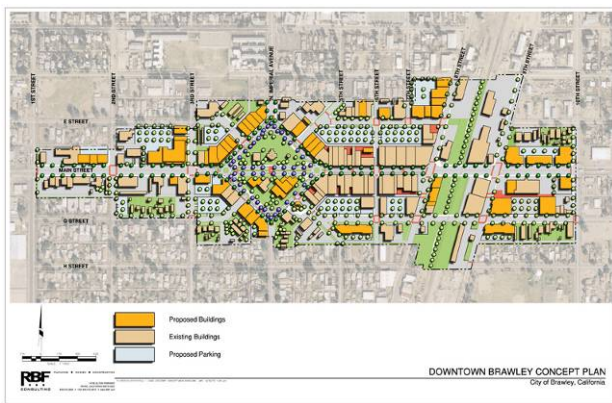
pedestrian ways, new parking areas, and streetscape enhancements that incorporate features of Imperial's natural and cultural history. Phase III entailed the final review of the master plan and design guidelines with the Committees and ended with the development of a comprehensive implementation program to answer the essential questions of “who, what, when, where, how, and how much.” The program clearly articulates immediate and long-term implementation action steps. The City has begun implementation incorporating the logo concept into streetscape enhancements.

- Downtown Revitalization
- Youth Logo and Branding
- Streetscape
- Implementation Program



DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN | BRAWLEY, CA

RBF/UDS, under the direction of Susan Harden, developed the Downtown Brawley Specific Plan for the City's Downtown Overlay District, an area ripe for timely redevelopment given the nearly-complete Highway 111/78 by-pass project. Upon completion, the by-pass will redirect regional and truck traffic around town, allowing the City to reclaim its downtown Main Street for commercial, cultural, and social activities. With the reduction in traffic comes the challenge to maintain vibrant retail activity and enhance the sense of place for visitors, residents, and businesses.



The project included various alternatives for circulation, parking and land use alternatives, as well as infrastructure studies. Detailed review of available traffic data was provided to consider narrowing Main Street within the downtown from the existing 4-lane roadway to a pedestrian-friendly 2-lane roadway that provides a welcoming place with a balanced set of expectations for motorists, transit users, and bicyclists and pedestrians.

Extensive community outreach was conducted to develop a vision statement, identify visual design preferences, and identify constraints and opportunities for growth within the downtown. The final plan included a detailed Form-Based Code and implementation strategy.

- TownScan™ Visual Preference Survey
- Vision Plan
- Form-Based Regulatory Code
- Public Involvement
- Implementation Strategies

MESQUITE BOULEVARD CORRIDOR PLAN | MESQUITE, NV

The City of Mesquite hired RBF's Urban Design Studio, directed by Susan Harden, to prepare a vision plan, form-based Regulating Code, and implementation strategy to revitalize the Mesquite Boulevard corridor and the downtown. To formulate the basis for the plan, RBF/UDS worked closely with residents, property/business owners, and City staff during a two-day Community Immersion, which included walking tours, interviews, focus groups, a TownScan visual preference survey, workshops, and a design charrette. RBF/UDS facilitated input regarding appropriate land use patterns, businesses, pedestrian circulation improvements, and streetscape improvements. Based on the collective input, a vision plan was prepared for the corridor and the downtown. An Implementation Strategy was designed as a comprehensive approach to revitalization and included strategies related to urban design, economic restructuring, organizational development, and downtown promotion. A key implementation measure is the creation of Community Development Corporation, which will serve to create public-private partnerships for future Downtown Development.



The vision plan and implementation strategy were accepted unanimously by the City Council in November of 2009. Business owners and property owners are currently working to form a Community Development Corporation to help implement the plan.

- Community Immersion
- TownScan™ Visual Preference Survey
- Walking Tours
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Vision Plan
- Form-Based Regulatory Code
- Implementation Strategies

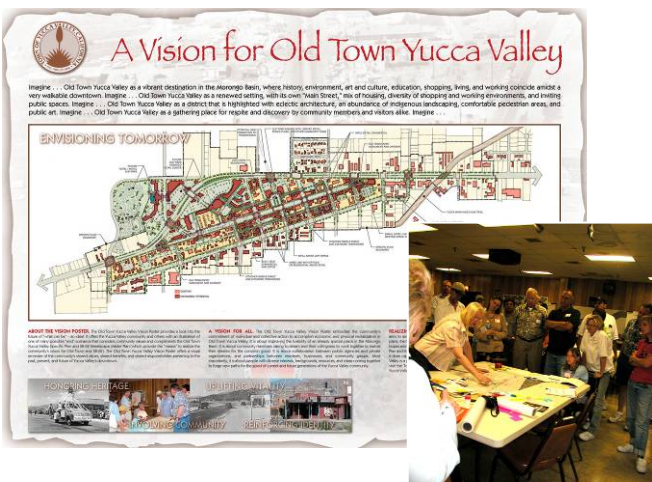


OLD TOWN SPECIFIC PLAN | YUCCA VALLEY, CA

RBF/UDS was selected by the Town of Yucca Valley to utilize its multi-disciplinary experience in streetscape design and downtown revitalization planning to prepare a meaningful first-ever two-pronged set of: the Old Town Yucca Valley Specific Plan (a downtown revitalization plan and an SR62 Streetscape Master Plan (a streetscape plan for 7 miles of State Route 62, the Town's main street). For both projects, partnerships with the Town of Yucca Valley, San Bernardino County, the Hi-Desert Water District, and Caltrans are invaluable.

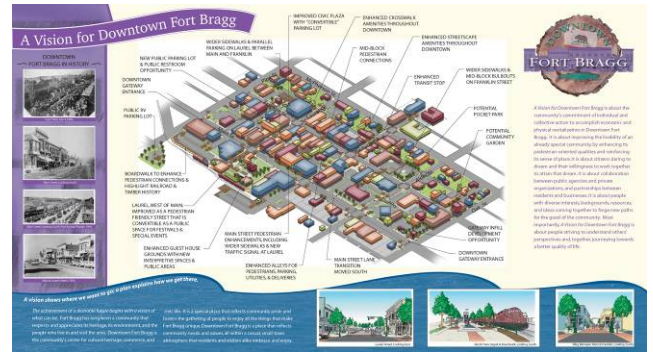
Through a community-driven process co-managed by Susan Harden, RBF/UDS worked to craft a specific plan that taps existing downtown assets in Yucca Valley and leverages local and regional resources to uplift the vitality of the community's historic heart. Mixed-use infill development opportunities, image and identity enhancements, and an improved pedestrian environment are among the elements desired for Old Town. RBF/UDS worked with the community to define the important roles this highway corridor plays locally and regionally, and has endeavored to craft the ingredients needed in the streetscape plan to transform this corridor into a binding seam that conveys a positive statement about Yucca Valley. This includes realigning a portion of the roadway through the Old Town to facilitate the creation of a narrow, pedestrian-friendly environment. Currently, RBF is under contract to provide environmental clearance with Caltrans on the concept to realign that segment of SR 62.

- Community-driven Revitalization Process
- Downtown Vision Plan
- Streetscape Design for Highway & Main Street



DOWNTOWN PLAN & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM | FORT BRAGG, CA

RBF/UDS was selected to work with the Fort Bragg community to develop a downtown revitalization plan, a project co-managed by Susan Harden. Through an intensive public participation program and close coordination with the community, City of Fort Bragg staff, and Caltrans, RBF/UDS developed a consensus-based vision poster, streetscape furniture palette, and implementation program to enhance the physical and economic potential of Downtown Fort Bragg. Additionally, a comprehensive parking study and strategic traffic study were prepared in concert with the community and Caltrans that aided in the identification of related strategies to contribute to the successful planning and design effort. Public involvement activities included numerous downtown walks, focus groups, community workshops, and open review sessions with elected officials.



RBF/UDS nurtured unique partnerships within the community to implement the Plan. For example, Mendocino Fine Woodworkers Association, Georgia Pacific and Adirondack Designs (an outdoor furniture manufacturer staffed by individuals with special needs) initiated a partnership to produce a uniquely designed downtown bench.

- Intense Community Participation Program
- Downtown Vision Poster
- Streetscape Furniture Palette
- Focus on Placemaking



TAFT & OCEANLAKE REDEVELOPMENT PLANS | LINCOLN CITY, OR

RBF/UDS prepared community-based revitalization plans and implementation strategies for two of the City's many struggling business districts. Through each step of the planning process, a concerted effort was made to include the community and youth by incorporating unique and meaningful public participation opportunities, including district bike rides, community walks, a youth logo contest, public workshops, and a hands-on design charrette. The location of a state highway resulted in a close and successful relationship between the project team and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). A complex set of physical, environmental, economic, and social issues were addressed in the plan for each area, including traffic and circulation, downtown redevelopment, streetscape and urban design, beach access, wetland preservation, and housing. Each step of the way, the community was involved in identifying and evaluating opportunities, constraints, and alternatives. With tremendous community support, the Taft Redevelopment Plan, and subsequently, the OceanLake Redevelopment Plan, were formally embraced by the City Council and implementation began occurring at a rapid pace.

- Extensive community outreach
- Vision Plans
- Implementation program



Inaugural Transportation Planning Excellence Award, Public Involvement, Education & Outreach Organization: FHWA, FTA & APA Oregon Chapter, APA, Professional Achievement in Planning

DOWNTOWN PLAN UPDATE WORKSHOP SERIES | SCOTTSDALE, AZ

RBF/UDS, led by Susan Harden, was retained by Kevin Gardiner & Associates (the lead consultant hired by the City to update the Downtown Plan) to facilitate a community outreach series as part of the Downtown Scottsdale Plan Update. RBF/UDS worked closely with the City of Scottsdale and Kevin Gardiner & Associates to conduct a unique community engagement process as well as train City staff to assist with workshop and meeting facilitation.



A three-day Placemaking Series included a visioning workshop, two (2) walking audits, a business forum, and a design charrette was the first component of the outreach program. The outcome of the Placemaking Series is a graphically rich community visioning report that provides the framework for the Downtown Plan Update. Following the development of the Draft Downtown Plan, RBF/UDS assisted the City of Scottsdale in a one-day Alternative Futures Workshop series including a business forum and open house.

Soon after the Downtown Plan was complete, RBF/UDS was invited to lead the facilitation on two additional community area plan processes for the City.

- Intensive Workshop & Charrette Series
- Staff Facilitation Training
- Visioning Report



“YOUR TOWN” OTTAWA | OTTAWA, KS

Based on the extensive downtown revitalization experience of RBF, Susan Harden and an RBF colleague were recruited to participate in the multi-day, nationally recognized “Your Town” program - a joint program of the National Endowment of the Arts and the Citizens Institute for Rural Design. Ottawa, Kansas, was the subject location and RBF/UDS was hired to facilitate training and instruction of local community members on “Placemaking on a Budget” focused on revitalizing an underutilized downtown park/plaza and creating a highly visible staging area to tie together a rail trail and downtown. The success of the “Placemaking on a Budget” training is yielding significant implementation progress.

- Community Driven Process
- 3-day Intensive Design and Education Session
- Implementation Focus
- Downtown Park/Plaza and Rail Trail Staging Area



PLACEMAKING | KANSAS MAIN STREET

Susan Harden and an RBF colleague were on contract with the Kansas Main Street Program to provide training seminars on “Placemaking on a Budget.” The training entailed a two-part program: 1) Focus on the Concept of “Place” and How to Be Authentic; and 2) Focus on Hands-On Training to Identify Authentic Placemaking Projects and Implementation Resources for Participants’ Communities. Through presentation, small group exercises, and individual exercises, the Main Street Managers in attendance from around the state developed a series of placemaking project ideas and implementation resources for their downtowns.

- Placemaking on a Budget
- Hands-On Training
- Community Values Based Projects
- Implementation Focused





CITYWIDE VISIONING | BUELLTON, CA

RBF /UDS, led by Susan Harden, was selected by the City of Buellton to facilitate a Citywide Visioning Process with particular emphasis on transforming their “Avenue of Flags” into a vibrant downtown. The team worked closely with a community-based steering committee to develop and implement a number of participation activities. In addition to a Visioning Steering Committee, a number of opportunities were provided to obtain input and engage in community dialogue. A series of four workshops were held to engage community members in dialogue about their desired visions for the future of Buellton, gain input on priorities and develop potential action steps. The second workshop was a design charrette focused on how to improve and change the Avenue of Flags. We also conducted two workshops with middle school students in Buellton to document their “treasures,” “challenges,” and “visions” for the City and to develop maps showing potential walking and bicycling routes. Additionally, virtual workshops in the form of online surveys and materials were developed to provide community members with additional opportunities to participate.

- Extensive Community Outreach
- Community-Wide and Small Group Activities
- Online Survey
- Vision Plan and Report



CITYWIDE VISIONING | CITY OF SANTA PAULA, CA

With her RBF/UDS Team, Susan Harden assisted the City of Santa Paula conduct a Citywide Visioning process and prepare an illustrative vision plan. The process included working closely with a community-based steering committee and organizing numerous creative participation opportunities, including a youth logo contest, visioning block parties, a community-wide visioning festival, a speakers bureau, and a project website. The resulting vision plan and poster, rooted in community values and desires, is being used to guide future community decisions and actions through both words and illustrations.

- Community Involvement
- Youth Logo Contest
- Visioning Block Parties and Festival
- Bilingual Publications



American Planning Association, California Chapter, Central Coast Section, 2005 Planning Awards, Santa Paula Citywide Visioning Project, Category 2 - Planning Implementation Award, Sub-Category B - Small Jurisdiction.



CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

“The City of Lancaster and Lancaster Redevelopment Agency has been working with Susan Harden of RBF Consulting for approximately a decade. Susan is very professional, efficient and effective in research, planning, design, and Redevelopment. Susan has done numerous neighborhood visions plans, housing needs assessments, homeless needs assessment, continuum of care and other tasks for the agency. We have never been disappointed in the product that Susan produces. Susan listens to what the Agency needs on particular projects and understands that those needs which is extremely critical as they may change over time or in the middle of a project because of the politic nature of a governmental agency. My staff and I enjoy working with Susan and her staff. Susan as become an extension of staff to the Redevelopment Agency. We discuss and brainstorm what the Agency needs and wants and Susan with very little effort on our part produces a product that is never disappointing and always exceeds what we asked for.”

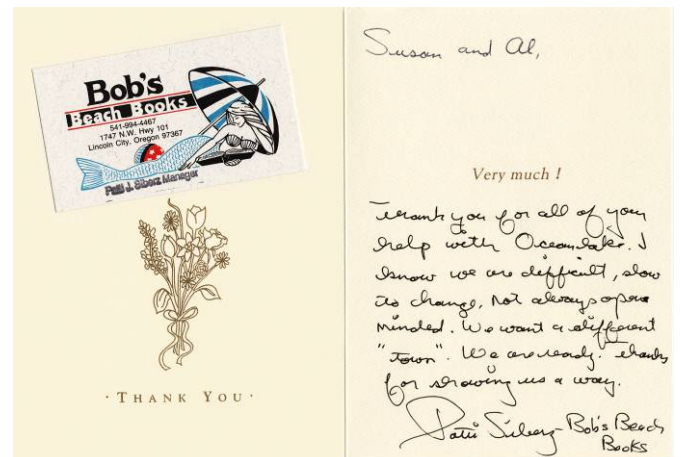
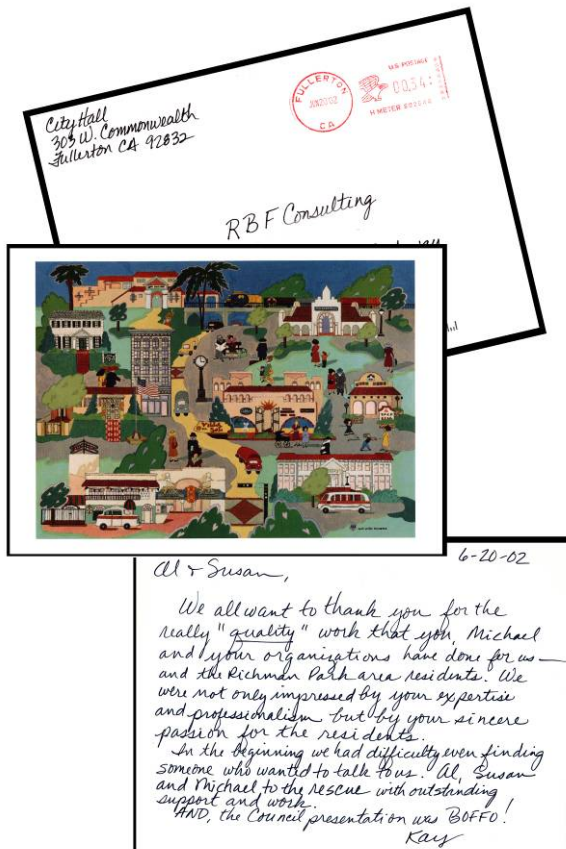
Elizabeth Brubaker, Director,
Lancaster Redevelopment Agency

“Thanks Susan for your leadership! You have been a total professional throughout this process. Your organizational skills are remarkable! If you can keep this group from veering off with all those passions bouncing around in the room, you can do anything!”

Dee Johnston, Santa Paula
Visioning Committee Member

“The work of Urban Design Studio was well-received in an area where we knew consensus would be an issue. They did an excellent job of translating the information gathered during the charrettes and developing a vision for this area which genuinely reflects the values and characteristics of the place. The vision poster they created is a wonderfully understandable document . . . user-friendly, highly graphic product which non-planners can easily understand.”

Lesley Henegar, Senior Planner,
City of San Diego





CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

“Susan was an effective facilitator at the community outreach meetings. She has a keen ability to collect a vast number of public comments, reflecting a broad range of viewpoints, then organize and summarize these thoughts in manner that captures the overall sentiment of the community.”

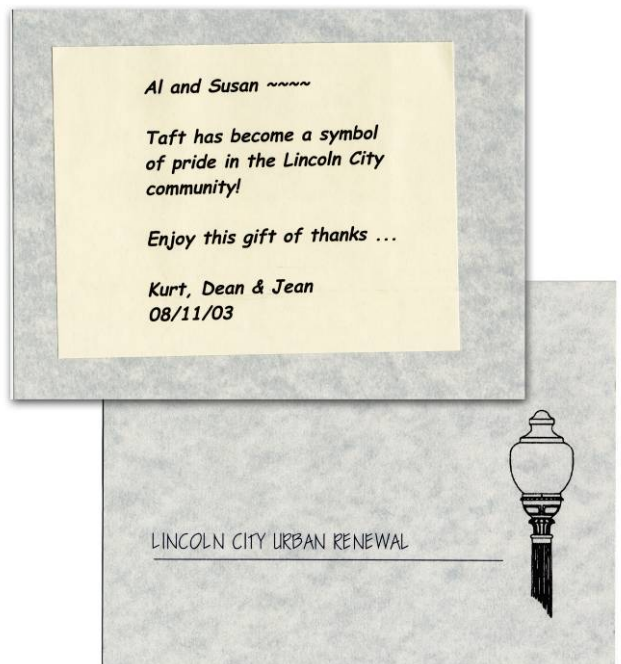
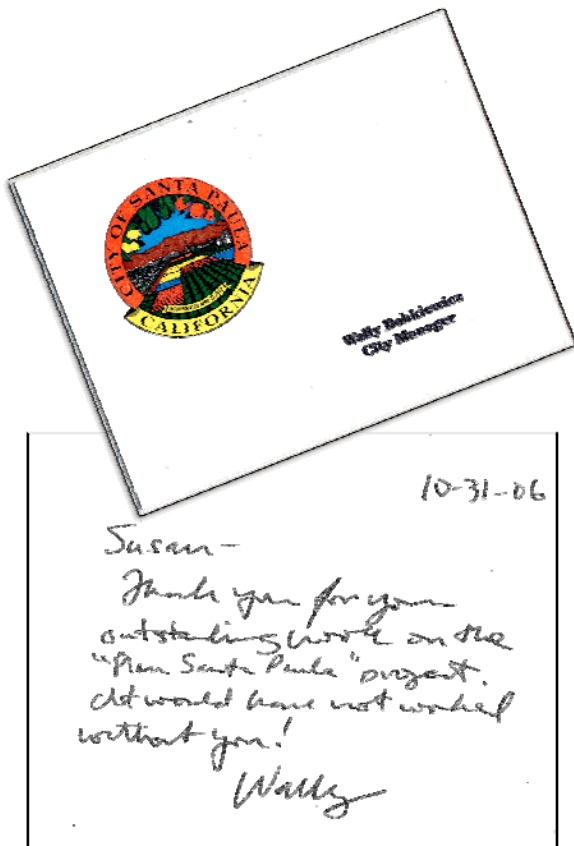
Chuen Ng, Associate Planner, City of Lancaster

“Susan and David struck an immediate rapport with our community and, as a result, resident participation was extremely high. They are especially gifted in facilitating community discussions – getting the community to think creatively, and keeping discussions on track.”

Vicki Parker, Principal Planner, City of Vista

“It seems that the Councilmen from Oro Valley were especially excited about the information and ideas presented. They told me they would love to invite you and Susan to work in their community . . .”

Kristin Keener, Community Planning Specialist, Arizona Department of Commerce





SECTION 3: FIRM BACKGROUND

RBF RBF Consulting (RBF) is a full service consulting firm providing planning, engineering, surveying, construction management, and related professional services. RBF is a privately owned **California corporation founded in 1944** and incorporated in 1961. The firm offers a professional staff of over 600 employees located throughout fifteen offices in the western United States.

Corporate Office: RBF Consulting
 14725 Alton Parkway
 Irvine, CA 92618
 949.472.3505



RBF provides a variety of services to our clients ensuring timely, cost-effective, and innovative solutions for projects by highly qualified staff.

RBF Services include:

- Planning
- Urban Design
- Environmental
- Public Works
- Landscape Architecture
- Transportation Planning and Engineering
- Water Resources
- Structures
- Surveying
- Geographical Information Systems
- Land Development
- Construction Management

URBAN DESIGN STUDIO, A DIVISION OF RBF CONSULTING



URBAN DESIGN STUDIO is a distinct division of RBF Consulting that recognizes the special needs of communities undergoing revitalization. RBF/UDS focuses on planning, design, and community building projects that have the following core attributes:

- ❖ Clients Represent the Public or Non-Profit Sectors
- ❖ Projects Located within an Existing Built Environment
- ❖ Process is Community-Driven and Partnership-Based
- ❖ Solutions Integrate Sustainability and Green Design
- ❖ Products Honor Community Values, Heritage, Culture, and the Environment
- ❖ Implementation is an Explicit Objective

RBF/UDS is a collaboration of experienced planners and designers dedicated to making a difference in towns and cities through the following services:

- ❖ Downtown and Neighborhood Revitalization
- ❖ Community Involvement and Education
- ❖ Design Guidelines / Development Codes / Form-Based Codes
- ❖ Sustainable Planning and Green Design
- ❖ Strategic Planning and Organizational Development
- ❖ Community Development and Promotion
- ❖ Streetscape Design and Landscape Architecture





RBF/UDS employs a highly qualified staff of professionals who have registrations, certifications, and experience essential for outreach and facilitation efforts on technical projects:

- ❖ American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP)
- ❖ Certificate in Dialogue, Deliberation, and Public Engagement (Fielding Graduate University)
- ❖ Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED AP)
- ❖ Professional Certificate in Neighborhood Revitalization (NeighborWorks® America)
- ❖ Certified Main Street Manager
- ❖ IAP2 Certificate in Public Participation (International Association for Public Participation)
- ❖ Certified Architects
- ❖ Certificate in Community Health Impact Assessments
- ❖ Recognized speakers, educators, and authors



URBAN DESIGN & LAND USE

RBF/UDS' planning and design professional focus on integrating unique planning solutions with sound implementation principles in order to create viable responses to physical, social, economic, and environmental challenges. Balanced land uses, enhancement of amenities, reinforcement of community values, and integration of environmental solutions are integral components of the RBF/UDS planning process. Urban design is at the heart of what we do; however, we believe that land use and urban design must go hand-in-hand. RBF/UDS has extensive experience developing urban design and image enhancement programs which have included:

- revitalization infill concepts
- computer modeling

- architectural and urban design guidelines
- wayfinding systems
- storefront remodel designs
- public plazas, and
- streetscape plans
- transit-oriented development

We draw from traditional urban design concepts, such as those conveyed by Kevin Lynch, to those of our contemporaries, such as the Congress for the New Urbanism and National Main Street Center.

The RBF/UDS Team has extensive experience in preparing housing elements, housing related studies, mixed use ordinances, and mixed-use project design plans, so we are poised to deal with these issues. We understand that the provision of housing and mixed-use development, within the context of a solid urban design framework, is at the foundation of successful revitalization projects; most importantly, we base our urban design and land use on local context with a global view of neighborhoods and downtowns that work worldwide. Our team members not only practice urban design, but also instruct courses in urban design, land use, and revitalization at several universities.

TOWNSCAN™

TownScan was developed by RBF/UDS and is used as a research and community consensus-building tool that assists communities to define their desires and physical aspirations for the future. TownScan is a hybrid of the Visual by Preference Survey Anton Nelessen which RBF/UDS expanded and refined to provide more specific results related to architecture, streetscape, signs, street furniture and other community design elements. Through the use of handheld polling devices, workshop participants are able to instantaneously see group reactions to various architectural and streetscape imagery, facilitating meaningful dialogue and direction-setting around urban design choices.

