ULI MISSION STATEMENT
At the Urban Land Institute, our mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.

ABOUT ULI TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANELS
In keeping with the Urban Land Institute mission, Technical Assistance Panels are convened to provide pro-bono planning and development assistance to public officials and local stakeholders of communities and nonprofit organizations who have requested assistance in addressing their land use challenges.

A group of diverse professionals representing the full spectrum of land use and real estate disciplines typically spend one day visiting and analyzing the built environments, identifying specific planning and development issues, and formulating realistic and actionable recommendations to move initiatives forward in a fashion consistent with the applicant’s goals and objectives.

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CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ................................................................................2
ULI’S TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANELS .....................................................6
THE FOX HILLS REAL ESTATE AND DEVELOPMENT MARKET ...............7
RECOMMENDATIONS ................................................................................12
URBAN DESIGN AND PLACEMAKING TEST CASES ................................. 16
IMPLEMENTATION .....................................................................................21
CONCLUSION ............................................................................................24
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .............................................................................25
PANEL MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES ...............................................................26
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ASSIGNMENT

In 2014, Culver City launched a “Reimagine Fox Hills” initiative to plan the future of a relatively quiet corner of the city, ripe with economic development potential.

In 2019, much of that potential is still unrealized, but market forces are increasingly looking to Fox Hills as a logical next step for the expansion of the “Silicon Beach” economy that has reshaped the Westside of Los Angeles in recent years. Fox Hills has also already added large-scale redevelopment on the C3 property at the north end of the Fox Hills commercial area, and other neighborhoods in Culver City, like Downtown and the Hayden Tract, have achieved significant levels of redevelopment and economic development.

Still, most of the commercial properties in Fox Hills retain development patterns and urban design principles from the 1970s and ’80s.

Culver City stakeholders recognize that opportunity and change are coming to Fox Hills. The key question is how to prepare for that change. Planning and policy-making will be necessary for the area to achieve its potential while also maintaining and improving quality of life for the diverse collection of stakeholders who live and work in the area.

Fox Hills could be the next economic development and urban revitalization success story in Culver City, but the physical attributes, building patterns, and the scale of the infrastructure in Fox Hills will require a different more focused approach than Downtown and the Hayden Tract.

To further the “Reimagine Fox Hills” initiative, and prepare for a next phase of policy, planning, and development work, Culver City engaged with the Urban Land Institute – Los Angeles (ULI) to undertake a technical assistance panel (TAP). The goals of the TAP include providing a new development framework that suits the needs of Culver City’s emerging economy, identifying market feasibility for redevelopment potential, responding to stakeholder input, and beginning to sketch out a vision of the future for the Fox Hills area.
The TAP’s study area focused on the commercial office district in Fox Hills, generally located in the southeast corner of Culver City, bounded by Slauson Boulevard to the north, Interstate 405 to the west, Centinela Boulevard to the south, and the city of Los Angeles to the east. The Fox Hills study area is comprised of small- to medium-scale office buildings, situated in a suburban office park environment that abuts high-density residential neighborhoods. Most of the commercial properties are surrounded by surface parking lots that create separation between the building edge and the street. There are currently very few retail and pedestrian amenities for employees during the week, and the commercial area is mostly vacant on the weekends.

Bristol Parkway provides the primary thoroughfare through the commercial area, but the corridor lacks street-facing businesses or an active public realm. The parkway’s wide right of way, lack of pedestrian crossings, and absence of on-street parking encourages drivers to speed through the neighborhood and discourages pedestrians from traveling on foot. The Westfield Culver City mall and Fox Hills Park are positioned like bookends on either side of the commercial area, but large surface parking lots, a lack of pedestrian connections, and fenced off property lines make it difficult to move freely through the area and connect to the neighborhood’s varied assets.

The result of all these attributes creates an isolated, suburban feel in the area. Businesses and residents agree that Fox Hills is quiet and serene compared to most neighborhoods on the Westside of Los Angeles, but complain about a lack of amenities and an identifying character. A common critique: there is no “there” there.

The TAP worked to determine the feasibility of future development and lay out planning and design principles that could take Fox Hills to a new level of prosperity and activity more in line with the emerging economy and tenant base. The TAP recommends these changes with the understanding that new development and infrastructure investments can improve the quality of life already enjoyed by the current residents and workers in the neighborhood and ensure that the characteristics of the area already valued by current residents and office workers thrive in the future.
KEY QUESTIONS

Culver City requests the ULI TAP panel review and make recommendations relative to the following questions:

1. **Real Estate Market Impact/Development Opportunities (Land Use)**
   - How can the current trends in the real estate market impact development opportunities in Fox Hills (i.e. maximum floor area, maximum building height)?
   - What is the expected creative office market absorption?
   - How will the market position of Fox Hills business park change in light of current real estate market trends locally and in surrounding areas (i.e. Playa Vista, Santa Monica, El Segundo, Inglewood, and Culver City’s emerging TOD District and the Hayden Tract)?
   - How can housing be part of the solution for leveraging new area investment?

2. **Bristol Parkway ROW Use**
   - What specific financial, legal, logistical, and design approaches can be used to encourage the private market to create a “main street” using excess right of way (ROW) and to create a successful shared parking district?

3. **Plan Implementation Tools**
   - How should the City use entitlements, permitting, and assessments as incentives to influence future development in accordance with a master plan for development?
   - What specific financial methods and tools (e.g., pro rata share, equitable contributions, assessment per sq. ft./per front foot, etc.) should be considered to implement the master plan?
   - What “quid pro quo” approaches should be considered relative to the proposed development of Culver City and the city’s desire for district parking, enhanced use of Culver City Transit Center facilities, and connectivity to the area?

4. **Public Engagement – Commercial and Residential**
   - What strategies should be considered to coalesce business, developer, hotel, and residential interests to support the master plan?

5. **Design Ideas: Master Plan and General Plan - Placemaking**
   - What design considerations (e.g., paths, trails, open space, mobility options, topography, building and site layout, and parking utilization) play into connecting and supporting the various elements of the community?
   - How does Fox Hills become a “place/destination” while retaining the characteristics the residential and commercial community enjoy (i.e. quiet, safe, and peaceful)?

6. **Parking as a Tool/Lever to implement Goals**
   - How can the City use parking as a tool to expand desirable uses and make more out of properties and projects (e.g., surface parking lots, parking districts, and development standards)?

7. **Brand Strategy**
   - What should the brand be for the area, and how would it balance Westfield, Culver Pointe, and residential naming conventions?
MAJOR CONCLUSIONS

The regional economy is evolving quickly as technology and digital media companies locate in key neighborhoods over the Westside of the Los Angeles metropolitan area, transforming the real estate market in the process. The question is how Fox Hills should evolve with these changing market forces.

Fox Hills faces a range of choices for how to respond to the changing market. The City could decide to maintain the status quo—just leave Fox Hills as it is without making any substantive changes to the built environment or create a development plan for the entire area leading to major new development. Both of those options are unlikely, and mostly undesirable.

The TAP recommends a path in the middle of those two extreme options, which the panel describes as an “enhanced status quo.” Enhancing the status quo will involve maintaining the existing community, while polishing and improving the area by taking advantage of feasible improvements and leveraging change into a higher quality of development. The other concept the TAP uses to describe these recommendations is a “guided evolution”: laying policy groundwork to ensure that the City takes advantage of the growing market opportunities while updating the general character and quality of Fox Hills.

Both an enhanced status quo and a guided evolution will require a combination of policy and investment approaches, so the TAP tested various urban design and development concepts on two potential development test sites in the area. The design strategies highlighted by these tests aren’t meant to be prescriptive: in applying various urban design concepts and redevelopment approaches, however, each test illustrates potential outcomes that might be expected to result.

There are a set of overall area recommendations that are more urgent, regardless of individual site development outcomes. In the future, the Fox Hills must be better connected to the multi-modal transportation options that connect to the larger region—the existing Expo Line and future rail transit expansions of the Crenshaw Line and the Purple Line Subway, as well as the expanding system of bike infrastructure in Culver City and Los Angeles.

Better mobility options within the Fox Hills area—between the office properties, the residential neighborhood, the regional retail at the Westfield Mall, and the local retail at the Fox Hills Plaza—will create a more cohesive and connected Fox Hills. To achieve these goals, the TAP recommends a series of connectivity improvements, from adding a mobility hub that provides access to a full suite of innovative mobility options (e.g., car share, ride-hailing pick-up and drop-off, bike share, and on-demand shuttles, among others) to creating improved pedestrian pathways and connections throughout the area.

The TAP also recommends changes to the street configuration of Bristol Parkway to reduce the width of street, improve walkability and pedestrian safety, and begin to engender a sense of place in the public realm. Pedestrian improvements, like mid-block crossings and bulb-outs (i.e., extended sidewalks at intersections to reduce pedestrian crossing times and slow traffic) are also recommended for Green Valley Circle.

Necessary to any change in the future will be an inclusive engagement and planning process. Every resident, worker, property owner, and local official should have the opportunity to participate in the process of anticipating the coming changes and create policies to effectively implement the future desired by the entire Fox Hills community.
ULI’S TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANELS

TAP PROCESS
Prior to the TAP, ULI panel members met with representatives from Culver City to determine the scope of the panel assignment. ULI selected panel members with practiced and professional skills that address the stated objectives for the TAP. Panel members reviewed background materials, including market and demographic data, economic data, the preliminary Reimagine Fox Hills study, the Culver City Zoning Code, and more, prepared by Culver City staff prior to the TAP.

Given Culver City’s desire for a thorough study of the opportunities presented by the study area, this TAP lasted for two days. On the first day, panel members toured the study area by van with Mayor Thomas Small, Councilmember Göran Eriksson, Community Development Director Sol Blumenthal, City Manager John Nachbar, and other city officials. Later in the day, the TAP also met with key stakeholders including local residents, business tenants and their employees and commercial property owners. On the second day, panelists worked through an intensive analysis of the specified issues before presenting their findings at a public event attended by elected officials, city staff, and members of the community.

THE EXPERTS OF THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL
ULI convened a panel of professionals representing a variety of disciplines connected to land use and real estate development, including architecture and urban design, real estate development, transportation, economic analysis, development financing, brand strategy, and community engagement. The ULI panel members brought professional expertise relevant to Culver City’s objectives for Fox Hills and a working knowledge of the real estate market, planning, architecture and landscape design, regulatory strategies, parking and transportation engineering. All panel members volunteered to participate in the panel process and did not receive compensation for their work.
THE FOX HILLS REAL ESTATE AND DEVELOPMENT MARKET

STUDY AREA AND BACKGROUND-
FOX HILLS AND CULVER CITY
A community of approximately 40,000 residents, Culver City is an island in the middle of the city and county of Los Angeles. Incorporated in 1917, Culver City became a charter city in 1947 and over the years has annexed more than 40 pieces of adjoining land, including the Fox Hills area.

Culver City has achieved widespread admiration for its “small town” charm, growing high-tech and creative economy, and a downtown that features boutique restaurants, live theatre, and other amenities. Culver City benefits from a central and accessible location on the Westside of the Los Angeles metropolitan area, with access to the 405, 10, and 90 freeways, the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), and the Metro Expo Line. Culver City also has its own municipal bus service that operates seven lines in and around Culver City, extending to Westwood, LAX, Santa Monica, and Playa Vista.

With the completion of the Expo Line, Culver City now has a Metro station between Santa Monica and Downtown Los Angeles, connecting the city to the region at large. A new Transit Oriented Development (TOD) District has sparked redevelopment in the neighborhood adjacent to the Culver City Expo Line station, including new commercial, retail, office, housing, and hotel uses.

Fox Hills, however, stands somewhat apart from the rest of Culver City, both physically and in its development history. Fox Hills was annexed by Culver City in 1964. Starting in the late 1960s, garden-style apartments and condominium developments were constructed along the southern and eastern edge of the Fox Hills area.

In the late 1970s through the late 1980s, most of the remaining available parcels in Fox Hills were developed as office parks, including Buckingham Heights, Park Place, Fox Hills Business Park, and, eventually, Corporate Pointe (now called Culver Pointe). The TAP study area focuses specifically on these commercial parcels at the center of Fox Hills, comprised of mostly low scale Class A and B office buildings, large surface parking lots, with limited retail and restaurant amenities. The study area totals approximately 119 acres, covered by 4,320 surface parking spaces and another 286 on-street parking spaces.

That total area is split between approximately 72 parcels, owned by 28 different owners. There are 11 contiguous parcel ownerships in the commercial area. Parcels are zoned Commercial Regional Business Park (CRB) and Commercial Regional Retail (CRR).
The commercial area is bisected by Bristol Parkway, which is classified as a Secondary Highway in the Culver City General Plan. The width of Bristol Parkway—with a right-of-way that varies from 80 feet to 94 feet, two travel lanes in each direction, a middle turn lane, and no curb parking—compounds the isolating effect of the surface parking throughout the area. The Fox Hills commercial area is a car-oriented, suburban style development.

In addition to its physical isolation from the rest of Culver City, the community of Fox Hills has remained relatively isolated from citywide politics—kind of an island within the larger island of Culver City. Recent controversy regarding a development proposal for the 6221 Bristol Parkway site (more on this development proposal follows in multiple sections of this report) shifted that dynamic, creating a concern by some about the future of Fox Hills. Culver City responded with an innovative outreach program that also achieved a new level of engagement between the neighborhood and the city.
RECENT PLANS AND DEVELOPMENT

In 2014, Culver City launched the “Reimagine Fox Hills” initiative to study and explore options for a master plan to redevelop the existing 119-acre office and industrial park at the center of Fox Hills into a more contemporary creative office, health, and technology district, with a new “campus” orientation. Any redevelopment of the commercial area would require small parcels to be assembled, maximizing the amount of space available for new tenancy in new buildings with open floor plans and formats that attract creative office tenants.

Among the many goals of the Reimagine Fox Hills initiative, Culver City also explored the possibility of 1) creating a vibrant “main street,” lined with retail and restaurants to attract employees and residents during the day and in the evening; 2) implementing new mobility resources, like bike lanes and bike sharing, to make it easier to get around the area and easier to connect to the wider region; 3) replacing surface parking lots with structured and managed parking to allow space for creative office expansion; 3) developing new recreational and mobility opportunities with open space, walking and bike paths within the area; and 5) creating a public-private financial partnership to fund redevelopment and other improvements in the area.

As part of the Reimagine Fox Hills process, Culver City hosted several public outreach meetings with area residents and businesses to discuss a potential master plan development and to identify areas with the potential for change. At the time, some attendees expressed concern over increased traffic and potential new residential development, while other residents and businesses supported the city’s goals. One key area of concern, however, was a lack of support from the area’s property owners for a public-private partnership to finance redevelopment and infrastructure improvements.

Additionally, controversy arose in response to the proposed redevelopment of 6122 Bristol Parkway, a six-acre site, located adjacent to the commercial area. Local residents opposed the development’s proposed 760 residential units, which required levels of density and height beyond current zoning regulations. Also, local residents objected to the development’s displacement of existing neighborhood-serving retail, and were not convinced that the 20,000 square feet of ground level commercial included in the development proposal would be a net benefit. The application to redevelop 6122 Bristol Parkway has been withdrawn, but some of the concerns still linger.

Several previous and ongoing planning initiatives also could inform improvements of mobility infrastructure in Fox Hills. Culver City approved a Bicycle Master Plan in 2010 and launched a TOD (Transit Oriented District) Visioning Plan in 2017. As part of the TOD Visioning Process, Culver City is looking at microtransit opportunities to reduce traffic congestion and increase access and circulation throughout the city.

Finally, the city is also currently undertaking a General Plan update, which will provide the framework for future growth and development in Culver City over the next 20 years.
FOX HILLS MARKET ASSESSMENT

The potential of the current commercial and office spaces in the Fox Hills study area will face both increasing pressure from office trends in the local area and the larger region.

After the last recession, the digital media and technology industry exploded with growth on the Westside of Los Angeles, especially in Santa Monica, Playa Vista, and the Hayden Tract. Developers and companies have been busy reconfiguring traditional office and industrial spaces to meet this new industry demand, transitioning to a new building typology and land use referred to as “creative office.” The result in the market has been staggering: Between 2010 to 2018, office rents increased by 70 percent on the Westside.

With prices constraining many commercial areas on the Westside, the market is beginning to look elsewhere for growth opportunities. Fox Hills is in line for that next wave of growth. Right now, the Fox Hills commercial area includes older commercial building stock, a mix of smaller spaces and tenants, and a variety of office types. Businesses are located in Fox Hills because it’s cost effective. Smaller spaces provide opportunities for newer and smaller businesses to locate.

These characteristics of the tenants in the commercial area could change as spillover from the surrounding areas brings larger businesses to Fox Hills. If and when larger numbers of development investors turn their attention to Fox Hills, they will encounter a built environment with origins in the 1970s and 1980s. The commercial park is defined by its rigid separation of land uses (the residential, retail, and commercial are all separated) and a reliance on a single-occupant automobile. If the Fox Hill area were planned and developed today, the Fox Hills commercial area would not be built in the same configuration of buildings, streets, and parking. Fox Hills is a ‘70s or ‘80s office park in a 21st century Culver City.

These suburban qualities; of small lot sizes with multiple ownerships while potentially limiting major redevelopment of the area do create opportunities to respond to the market for creative office that exist today.

There is also the challenge of leveraging new development to support needed improvements in the urban design and public realm of Fox Hills.

That’s not to say that Fox Hills is currently stagnant or declining. The Fox Hills commercial area has evolved with the market, and a number of the properties have been upgraded to respond to the needs of new tenants. The C3 project provides a big, splashy example of one end of the potential development spectrum. Westfield Culver City mall is evolving as it responds to continuing changes in the retail market.
Moreover, the commercial properties in Fox Hills are well maintained and profitable with low vacancy rates. Some properties are underutilized compared to their potential economic opportunity, but this just enhances the opportunity to steer the appropriate growth of the area. By no means does Fox Hills pose a problem in Culver City. Fox Hills provides an opportunity in Culver City.

The retail sector has been experiencing dynamic change, with online retail gaining popularity and impacting traditional brick and mortar retail. Westfield Culver City is doing well, but they’ve also adapted to the existing market and diversified their uses. Given those market realities, the TAP sees new opportunities for retail in the Fox Hills study area, to serve both the residential population and the commercial workforce. The TAP believes future retail should be focused in clustered nodes in the study area, at a scale that responds to the demand created from existing and future commercial and residential development. For example, it takes 4-6,000 households to support a traditional grocery retail development site. The market will determine the right scale and mix for retail in the neighborhood.

For residential development, it’s important to consider the ongoing housing crisis in Southern California and the need for new housing types that support all income levels and situations. There is strong demand for new residential developments of all types in the real estate market. That strong demand also makes residential a high performing use for developers as it provides significant financial return. For this particular area, residential development could also help provide a stronger retail market and contribute to a more active and vital neighborhood.

There is some interest for additional hotel development and appears to be demand from office users for more hotels in the area. Roughly one million square feet of office supports 200 hotel rooms. The proximity of LAX provides additional demand for hotel uses in Fox Hills. However, the feasibility of a hotel development really depends on the availability of a large-scale development site for a location. In Fox Hills, that depends on the sites that become available.

Given this diverse collection of market pressures and development history, the big question facing property owners, developers, residents, and city government is how Fox Hills should evolve in the next five, ten, and 20 years.

Those questions aren’t unique to Fox Hills. Other areas with similar characteristics have and are dealing with these market and development forces; the Hayden Tract, the Olympic corridor in West L.A. and Playa Vista, Smokey Hollow in El Segundo, and the Glencoe/Maxella area near Marina del Rey are good Westside models. All these areas of older office and industrial developments have evolved over time and developed in response to a changing market. Fox Hills stakeholders could look to those areas for precedents.
RECOMMENDATIONS

MOBILITY
The TAP sees the Fox Hills study area as ripe with opportunities to increase mobility options.

The Culver City Transit Center at the Westfield Culver City mall and the Expo Line station in Culver City offer a few valuable transit assets for Fox Hills, but the study area still lacks sufficient mobility connections and circulation elements throughout the neighborhood—between the residential neighborhood, the commercial office, openspace, and local and regional shopping.

Mobility hubs are a potentially powerful addition to deploy to the area. Mobility hubs offer car share and bike share, access to multiple public transit lines, bike and scooter sharing facilities, and pick-up and drop-off zones for cars—bringing multiple modes into one place to provide options for circulating through and within the area. The TAP recommends adding a mobility hub in the Fox Hills commercial area, and another in the Transit Center near the Westfield mall.

Micromobility, such as on-demand shuttle services like the LANow system recently launched on the Westside of Los Angeles, could also provide increased connectivity and provide major mobility benefits to the region. In addition to enhancing mobility options in and around Fox Hills, the TAP also suggests considering the connections beyond the neighborhood—to the rest of Culver City and the Expo Line. Some of the potential development strategies will benefit from non-automotive connections to the region. Options to consider include better bus frequencies and direct shuttle services.

Improved pedestrian and bike infrastructure would deliver major benefits to the quality of life in Fox Hills. The streets around Fox Hills, especially in and around the residential neighborhood, could benefit from signalized mid-block pedestrian crossings and improved pedestrian crossings at intersections. New pedestrian pathways linking building to building throughout the study area would encourage more pedestrian activity and better connections throughout the area. Well-designed pedestrian crossings can help narrow the roadway, to slow cars, lessen the amount of time it takes a pedestrian to cross the street, and potentially prevent cut-through traffic. The TAP also recommends connecting the bicycle network in the area to provide safer options for active, non-motorized transportation.

Neighborhood protection should motivate mobility infrastructure improvements in Fox Hills. Using the term “neighborhood protection” frames infrastructure changes that calm traffic, slow vehicle speeds, and improve traffic safety as a public safety matter that can benefit all users of the street. Proper framing of these strategies and their benefits will be necessary to achieve broad public support.

Additional wayfinding signage would also improve the pedestrian networks and routes throughout the commercial area, as well as helping limit or direct some of the cut-through traffic in and around the residential area.
PARKING

Once structured parking and parking garages are built they have a long shelf life. With that kind of longevity, it’s important to assess the current parking supply and to build the right type and number of new parking spaces into the area.

The future parking needs of Fox Hills must be included in any assessment of opportunities to increase the amount of commercial development and activity in the area. There is already an abundant supply of surface parking in the commercial areas of Fox Hills, but the TAP suggests making a more complete study about how parking is used (when, where, and how) in the study area to inform future decisions about how to “right-size” parking for Fox Hills.

One important idea for addressing parking now and in the future is shared parking—managing existing parking and the growing need for parking in the future by sharing parking between daytime and nighttime users as well as weekday and weekend users. Fox Hills Park could benefit by allowing access to the parking inventory already available in the commercial office lots—The lack of parking for the Park often adds congestion in the residential neighborhood on the weekends when the parking lots in the commercial properties remain relatively empty. The pedestrian pathway mentioned in the mobility section earlier in this report would help improve the user experience of a shared parking arrangement.

Paid parking provides another opportunity to manage demand and pay for transportation and infrastructure improvements, like a shuttle system, and enhanced streetscape. On-street paid parking could be used to generate funding for a parking benefit district. Money generated in Fox Hills would be spent in Fox Hills to help improve the public realm.

Wayfinding and real-time parking information helps efficiently utilize the existing parking supply, and inform the need for new parking as development occurs.

Fox Hills will need to keep up with quickly changing transportation technology and behavior. The potential of automated vehicles or self-driving cars to alter the future of transportation require flexibility and adaptability to change. When a new development comes along, parking should be planned relative to the present and the future transportation modes.
BRISTOL PARKWAY

Culver City staff requested that the TAP consider a new configuration for Bristol Parkway, the major thoroughfare that cuts through the Fox Hills study area, as a “Main Street”. The questions before the city: What is the minimum amount of right of way needed to accommodate traffic in each direction, new bike lanes, accommodating sidewalks, and perhaps even new development along the right of way that would incorporate a portion of the abutting private property? And: Can the streetscape and the street configuration be altered to enhance this corridor to provide this “Main Street” feel in the neighborhood?

Bristol Parkway is a wide street, surrounded by surface parking, lacking any design or engineering impediments to speeding drivers. A 64-foot roadway fills most of the 84-foot right of way. All 64 feet of pavement is given to travel lanes—there is no on-street parking. The result is an inhospitable public realm to any other mode than the single-occupant automobile.

To accommodate additional users, new technologies, and more mobility options, the TAP recommends narrowing the pavement width of the street. A street with 58 feet of pavement would allow for the same number of travel lanes, narrowed to calm traffic, with room to accommodate either on-street parking, a bike lane, or ride-hailing pick-up and drop-off zones.

The extra space on the street could supplement the existing landscape berm that currently separates the street from the commercial uses and surface parking along the Bristol Parkway corridor. This new landscape area would add an additional 35 feet for public improvements and additional development. That extra space could be programmed with uses that support and encourage a more Main Street feel.

That extra space could also be used to add lighting and trees for shade and to contribute to a more hospitable pedestrian experience.
BRANDING AND IDENTITY

Among the renowned neighborhoods of Culver City, Fox Hills is a relative unknown, which could be part of the appeal for many local residents and workers—but the lack of an identity also contributes to the sense that there is no “there” in the neighborhood.

The TAP recommends creating a unified branding identity to promote the neighborhood and create a stronger sense of place for Fox Hills; a neighborhood that the residents and tenants can identify with and feel proud of.

A branding identity can also help drive economic development for Fox Hills. When people can identify Fox Hills, and they feel a pride of place when they are in the neighborhood. It will also act as a marketing tool to help attract and retain business.

Elements in branding include a logo, naming, websites, merchandise, and events. Applying a focused Brand strategy to the neighborhood could include monuments, gateways, signage, wayfinding, and public art.

Starting with the logo and the name, Fox Hills should be thought of as sub-brand of Culver City, so that larger identity can provide a bigger “umbrella” for the Fox Hills identity, while still identifying Fox Hills as a unique location in the City.

The TAP also recommends creating a naming convention for the brand. An example would be something like “The Village of Fox Hills.” It already feels like a village, and that’s part of the appeal of the neighborhood. With the Fox Hills name, which is already memorable, and the attachment to Culver City, people will be able to instantly identify and remember this place. Another benefit of the branding process is involving the community in participating in the selection of a memorable name and identity.

The existing street grid provides opportunities to create gateway elements and landmarks that help identify the neighborhood, provide directions through the neighborhood, and create landmarks at different points of interest. These landmarks reinforce the sense of community and identity and can enhance the overall marketing of the area. Gateways and landmarks can also clarify the boundaries of the neighborhood, at locations like the corner of Slauson Avenue and Bristol Parkway, Green Valley Circle and Bristol Parkway, and the locations shown in the diagram included here.

The TAP provided a few examples of how branding imagery and a name could be applied to the public art and gateway elements. Wayfinding can also support the area’s brand identity, while helping more easily identify locations and find available parking. Branding could be integrated into bikeway signs, pedestrian path signs, or kiosks that show a map of the neighborhood. All of these branding elements could be digital as well. A banner program could provide a lively element that changes to promote events and the brand. The color palette and a symbol can unify the whole neighborhood with a clear identity.

Merchandising is also possible—create hats, create t-shirts, and brand the shuttle that drives people around the neighborhood. All of these elements can become a part of the fabric and create a sense of place in Fox Hills.
A consistent message communicated during the TAP session was that “there’s no there there”. Creating this increased sense of place can be done in an incremental way with key interventions that will help reinforce the urban design principles and placemaking in Fox Hills.

The TAP decided to test a few options as “what if” scenarios on two sites in Fox Hills to show what could be possible with a more contemporary approach to urban design and development on these sites.

It is important to acknowledge that these aren’t detailed design proposals but rather studies about what might be possible. The idea of the test cases is to imagine how these sites could evolve over time and see how urban design strategies might be applied in the neighborhood. The TAP’s test scenarios are designed to apply design principles in a way that could translate to any of the sites in the study area.

The TAP didn’t have time or the resources to fully examine the financial viability of these plans. Additional study would need to be done to prove the feasibility of these ideas.

These test cases can, however, provide a new launching point for discussion about the potential of the commercial sites located around the Fox Hills study area.
TEST SITE #1: FOX HILLS PLAZA.
The TAP sees the Fox Hills Plaza (6221 Bristol Parkway) as a great opportunity for new development. There’s a need for increased retail and amenities—and this site could provide these to both the daytime office worker and the residential population living nearby. While a development proposal on this site created controversy in the past, the TAP feels there are many opportunities for common ground between the neighborhood and the developers, and this development opportunity can be pursued as a potentially positive addition to the neighborhood.

The TAP examined three conceptual options for this site:
- **SCENARIO A**: Remodel/Refresh
- **SCENARIO B**: Lifestyle Center Redevelopment
- **SCENARIO C**: Village-Scale Mixed-Use

The **Remodel/Refresh** idea upgrades and beautifies the existing center with more people-oriented spaces, food options, and additional retail. The building in the center of the property could become a welcoming and pleasant people plaza, with the buildings relocated to the street edge along Bristol Parkway. This would help to activate the street while creating additional amenity space for the community. The TAP modeled this idea on a similar shopping center in Marina del Rey, which went from a typical shopping center to a more outdoor, people-friendly space.

The next idea, for a **Lifestyle Center Redevelopment**, rethinks the site to a more significant degree. A lot of the work in this idea is accomplished by pushing the buildings away from the center and toward the street creating a stronger street edge, that creates a larger open space. This version of the plan also allows for more retail, restaurants, and amenities for the community.

There’s a lot of slope on this site and taking advantage of the topography could allow for underground parking without creating another big field of surface parking. The TAP also identified a precedent project for this concept: a project in Claremont that organizes around a large, centralized open space.

The last scenario provides a **Village Scale** reimagining of the site, which includes a street through the site, retail pushed out to the street, and area for and development of additional office, or residential. This mixture of uses would make the site more integrated with the surrounding uses.
SCENARIO B

Study Site 1 – Fox Hills Plaza

Placemaking

Fox Hills Reimagined TAP

PROGRAM

NEW RETAIL
FOOD & BEVERAGE
+ ENTERTAINMENT

94,300 SF
Study Site 1 – Fox Hills Plaza

Placemaking

Fox Hills Reimagined TAP

SCENARIO C

PROGRAM

HOUSING (4 STORIES)  200 UNITS
RETAIL ADDED  44,020 SF
Together, it’s a ten-acre site with a central location in the business park. The land currently has low productivity—only a third of the building area is currently being used. The site offers a chance to develop a new office product attractive to tech, media, and entertainment tenants. The site also offers the space and flexibility to create a campus environment, which is attractive to these kinds of businesses. —even the parts that haven’t yet changed. The open space, amenities and connectivity possible in a campus would engage the street and facilitate linkages to the park. This development could begin to substantively connect to the larger area of Fox Hills and benefit the entire business park.

The building footprints shown on the design concept created by the TAP’s design team are larger, which is in high demand with media tenants. All of the green space in the design concepts are made possible by consolidating parking into a centralized parking structure. The connectivity elements can potentially connect all the way to the C3 development and Slauson Avenue. The corner that’s most central to the business park would be a good place to create a gathering space, new retail and amenities that serve both the office park and the residential community. If a link through to the park can be established, the entire neighborhood could connect in a way that isn’t possible now.

There will be trade-offs in setting the policy to create these kinds of environments. The TAP experimented with pushing beyond the constraints of the existing land use regulations of the city, especially the 56-foot height limit. Right now there’s about 165,000 square feet of office space. With the 56-foot height limit still in place, the TAP’s initial study estimates it is possible to develop about 250,000 square feet of office. That’s probably not enough to incentivize a new development. By increasing the height to 85 feet, about the height of C3, approximately 500,000 square feet of development is possible. Some residential uses might also be included which would help the financial feasibility of the project and a more vibrant mix of uses.
IMPLEMENTATION

The TAP report is intended to promote continuing conversation about the future of Fox Hills. This is a step, not the end point, of the process.

As Fox Hills moves forward, stakeholders must make big decisions that focus on preferred outcomes. Such a decision-making process will require multiple participants: the city will have a role, the property owners will have a role, the residential community will have a role, financial institutions will have a role, and transit agencies will have a role. All of those stakeholders need to be at the table in the public engagement process that will produce a vision for the future of Fox Hills.

The city has already implemented a robust public engagement process. Similar public engagement would be necessary in any kind of future planning process, whether it’s a master plan, a specific plan, or a zoning overlay. It will be important in the future to ensure that the entire community is represented in those public processes. There are business owners, property owners, and homeowners, in addition to renters and employees. The latter two populations are particularly hard to represent in these processes, but they are a part of the community and need to have a seat at the table.

The development and planning community that make these projects and plans a reality also need to be involved, to make sure that these processes are delivering actionable and feasible goals.

VISION, POLICY, AND ORDINANCES

The city should take a leadership role in facilitating the conversation and the initial steps toward realizing a preferred vision. The city has many policy tools at its disposal, so the city should take a central and leading role in the visioning and policy-making process.

Some of the tools the city can and should use in the future are already at work. For instance, the city is already working on an update to the Culver City General Plan. The General Plan can begin to set policies that decide the future direction of Fox Hills—the uses, the scale, and the character.

To provide tools that grant even greater certainty about the future of Fox Hills, the TAP also recommends going to another level of policy and regulatory detail beyond the General Plan. The city is already discussing a master plan for the area, but other tools are available. A zoning overlay or specific plan are also powerful policy tools. The TAP recommends a specific
plan as compared to a master plan because state legislation grants regulatory “teeth” to specific plans under the California Environment Quality Act (CEQA). Once that environmental review has been accomplished through a specific plan, no further environmental review is required of projects (developers and planners call this “by-right” approval). The Specific Plan does the environmental work, so projects can move forward expeditiously when the time is right and without having to slow for discretionary approval processes, which can add years to development timelines.

Any kind of plan today needs to be flexible and adaptable to change, acknowledging that different types of uses change in different ways over time. Residential neighborhoods have a great deal of longevity, lasting 40-50 years and longer in places like Bungalow Heaven in Pasadena. Residential neighborhoods tend to be stable over long periods of time. Commercial areas and office uses evolve. Creative businesses are new, for instance. Nobody was talking about creative office space ten years ago, and now these buildings are hot commodities on the real estate market.

The same dynamic is at work in Fox Hills. The commercial center of Fox Hills is evolving much more rapidly than the surrounding residential area. As Fox Hills plans for the future, stakeholders must recognize that commercial areas are going to change to meet demand from the market in ways that aren’t always predictable. Plans need to be agile enough to respond to those changes while making sure that future uses fit the needs of the community.

The city has other tools, like the parking ordinance, that can help implement the vision for Fox Hills as well, and it’s important to consider what other plans outside of the General Plan or specific plan could be brought to bear to support the vision of the future for Fox Hills.
PROPERTY OWNERS
The property owners in the business area lack organization for representation—there is no chamber of commerce or business improvement district. These kinds of organizations offer business owners a forum for conversation and working together on common issues. But these organizations also offer a platform for engaging with representatives from surrounding neighborhoods and the city government. The TAP recommends that the business and property owners in the commercial areas of Fox Hills organize to create this kind of representative organization. Such an organization could also undertake area-wide marketing and coordination of services.

PHASING
The concept that should organize the initial steps in the Fox Hill progress after the conclusion of this TAP report is to start small, but make changes that have real impact for the area. Early accomplishments should signal that the kind of change desired by the community. Potential short-term improvements include the logo and branding, mobility improvements that can be achieved with paint rather than paving and jackhammers, and the organization of the commercial property owners.

Mid- and long-term goals should include an ongoing process of engagement and review toward the plan.

Financial tools will have to be established after the planning processes put in place a regulatory framework, so they should be considered in the long term.
CONCLUSION

Much of the most substantive recommendations included in this TAP Report focus on mobility and connectivity improvements that could have real positive impact for the Fox Hills commercial area. In that sense, the TAP is recommending that Fox Hills immediately launch a process of improvements that provide the benefits of healthier and more technologically advanced transportation infrastructure. Much of those changes could be achieved within the existing built conditions, without any additional redevelopment or land use changes.

But redevelopment and land use changes are coming, and they present larger challenges in terms of achieving a balance between neighborhood interests, business interests, financial interests, and the politics of the city and the region. The owners of the office and commercial uses at the center of Fox Hills, the economic engine of the area, will inevitably face unprecedented pressure from the market to change. The community and the city has the unique opportunity to commit to helping guide that evolution.

Careful plans and policies must be laid to ensure the right kind of public engagement, market and policy incentives, and control over the outcomes of the development investments to come. Quality of life improvements will follow development investments if the community and the owners of commercial properties in Fox Hills can lay the policy groundwork for a shared vision of the future for Fox Hills.

Maintaining the status quo by not embracing the coming opportunities will still result in change, but that kind of passive approach won’t achieve the potential benefits in quality of life for the entire Fox Hills community, as well as the larger community of Culver City. Full scale redevelopment, from the ground up, isn’t politically or economically feasible, nor would it maintain the village feel of Fox Hills as it is today. A middle path—the “enhanced status quo” or “guided evolution” described in this report—will be necessary.

This TAP report described multiple scenarios, explored on a pair of potential development sites (one more speculative than the other), to illustrate the kinds of outcomes that could be achieved by specific design, regulatory and policy decisions. This kind of exploration can be helpful in future planning processes, and could inform the creation of an even greater variety of scenarios to explore. The task of deciding both the vision and the tools to achieve that vision is left to the stakeholders Fox Hills and the political leadership of Culver City.

Given this unique opportunity and potential it’s time for all the stakeholders in Fox Hills to come together and decide on a plan for their future.
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Richard Barkhordarian, Park Place owner
Nelson Algaze, Property and Business owner
Barrett Miester, Pinnacle Development
Fred Kimia, Buckingham Heights owner
Ron Rader, Lee West Associates
Alex Rivera, Real Estate Broker
Henry Shahery, HSH Management Group
Rob Kane, Entrada
Renee Baylee, Fox Hill Neighborhood Association
Judi Sherman, Fox Hill Neighborhood Association
Yumi Mandt-Raunch, Fox Hills Alliance
Fred Puza, Active Resident
Scott Kecken, Active Resident
Adam Tan, Fox Hills Neighborhood Alliance
Michelle Playford, Fox Hills Alliance
Deborah Wallace, Fox Hills Alliance
CON HOWE
Managing Director, CityView

Con Howe is Managing Director of CityView’s Los Angeles Fund, which has built or renovated 21 projects with over 2500 units in Los Angeles County. CityView is an institutional housing investment firm chaired by Henry Cisneros and active throughout California and the Southwest. Prior to joining CityView, Con was Director of Planning for the City of Los Angeles for 13 years, responsible for the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance, the Downtown Housing Incentive Ordinance and zoning codes that incentivized mixed-use, infill, small lot and affordable housing. Previously he was Executive Director of the New York City Planning Department, working extensively on Times Square and Lower Manhattan. He holds degrees from MIT and Yale University and teaches a course in planning and redevelopment at USC.
PANEL MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES

SARAH DROBIS
Principal Associate, Gibson Transportation Consulting, Inc.

Sarah Drobis has 22 years of experience in the traffic and transportation engineering industry, directing and conducting complex parking and transportation planning studies for a wide variety of public and private projects throughout Southern California. Sarah has performed numerous traffic impact and parking demand studies, comprehensive mitigation programs, and site access/internal circulation reviews for retail, residential and medical development projects as well as schools, universities and churches throughout California.

Her expertise also includes operational analyses, access and circulation planning for various travel modes (vehicular, pedestrian, truck, transit, etc.), transportation master planning, regional travel demand modeling, corridor studies, signal warrant analyses, development of trip generation models and traffic simulation modeling. Sarah also has extensive experience in working with elected officials, public agencies, and neighborhood stakeholder groups in developing neighborhood traffic management plans. She has also managed numerous parking studies and shared parking demand analyses for various commercial, entertainment venues, residential, institutional and mixed-use developments. In addition, she led the transportation studies for the award-winning Memphis Aerotropolis: Airport City Master Plan in Memphis, Tennessee. After graduating from Vanderbilt University with a degree in Civil Engineering and Mathematics, Sarah began her career in Atlanta, where she assisted on traffic simulation modeling, highway and transit regional transportation demand modeling, traffic studies, development of trip generation models, and traffic data collection surveys for transportation engineering and planning projects throughout the Southeast.

RANDY JOHNSON
Executive Vice President, Brookfield Residential

Randy Johnson is Executive Vice President of Brookfield Properties Development, working on new acquisitions and mall repositioning. He is currently based in San Diego. Previously, he was in charge of the Los Angeles operation which includes Playa Vista, Five Knolls, and other land development projects for Brookfield Residential. Prior to Brookfield purchasing Playa Capital Company, LLC, in 2012, he served as Co-President and CFO of Playa Capital Company, LLC. He has worked on the Playa Vista project since 1989, the earlier part of which he was employed by Maguire Thomas Partners. He worked on all aspects of Playa Vista with emphasis on residential and commercial development, infrastructure, and financing.
ALAN PULLMAN, AIA
Senior Principal, Studio One Eleven

Alan Pullman, AIA, is Senior Principal and founder of Studio One Eleven, leading the design and integration of the firm’s architectural and urban design work. He is a licensed architect with over 30 years of experience working with cities and communities in the Los Angeles region to enhance and improve the design and quality of the urban environment through an inclusionary design process. Alan has led several planning and urban revitalization efforts including strategic plans for Downtown Long Beach, community-driven vision plans for the cities of Carson and Lomita, and large site revitalization projects for properties throughout Los Angeles. Alan is a registered architect in California and a member of the American Institute of Architects and the Urban Land Institute, where he serves on Urban Revitalization Council.

ALEX ROSE
Senior Vice President, Continental Development Corporation

Alex J. Rose serves as Senior Vice President for Continental Development Corporation in El Segundo, California. He is responsible for leading all development, acquisition, disposition and redevelopment activities for the suburban office/medical/R&D park developer, whose holdings cover nearly 5 million square feet in Southern California’s Los Angeles County South Bay and City of San Francisco markets.

Rose has overseen the development and acquisition of over 4 million square feet of Class A office, medical, recreation and retail space and the redevelopment of over 3 million square feet of single-tenant R&D facilities into multi-tenant general and medical office space, restaurants, retail, entertainment and education uses, collectively totaling nearly $2 billion in real estate development activity. Previous responsibilities have included planning and execution of all tenant improvement, core and shell renovation and new construction work; major facilities maintenance and upgrades; project budgeting and cost controls; internal project management; architect, engineer and contractor management; asset and property management. Rose also has extensive experience in title insurance and is a licensed California attorney, with experience in general civil and bankruptcy litigation practices.

He is an Urban Land Institute Trustee and Foundation Governor, has served as Chair of ULI’s Los Angeles District Council Executive Committee, Chair of ULI’s Commercial and Retail Development Council and numerous other national and local leadership positions. Rose has chaired and served on over 30 national ULI Advisory Service assignments focusing on downtown and transit corridor redevelopment, revitalization and strategies as well as office and mixed use development issues.
CLIFFORD SELBERT
Partner, Selbert Perkins Design Collaborative

Educated as a Landscape Architect at the Rhode Island School of Design and expanding his talents to encompass graphic design, product design, and environmental communications, Clifford Selbert has successfully developed a multidisciplinary approach to design and strategic marketing-based design process, branding him a reputation for design excellence. Clifford Selbert’s conceptual intuitiveness to design solutions and strategic approach to brand equity development is illustrated by such projects as the identity, master plan, environmental graphics and gateway for Los Angeles World Airports (LAX); master plan, signage and wayfinding, and gateways for Dubai Festival City; identity, master plan and environmental communications for Canal City Hakata; and environmental communications for the Fourth Street Live! retail and entertainment destination in Downtown Louisville, KY; as well as numerous retail, education, and mixed use projects around the world.

Clifford Selbert is a former board member and current member of the Society for Environmental Graphic Design (SEGD), as well a SEGD Fellow Award recipient. He is a respected lecturer and speaker having appeared before audiences at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, Boston Design Center and Boston Architectural Center, and has served as a judge for design competitions at the SEGD, Communication Arts, and the Connecticut Art Directors Club. Clifford Selbert has been honored with the “Business of Design Award” from the Rhode Island School of Design.

JUDITH TAYLOR
Partner, HR&A Advisors

Judith Taylor is a Partner in HR&A’s Los Angeles Office. With over 15 years of experience in the fields of land use consulting, redevelopment, and community development, Judith has a breadth of experience providing customized economic analyses including real estate market analysis, economic impact analysis, fiscal impact analysis, development advisory assistance, revitalization strategies, and funding and value capture strategies, to aid clients in optimizing unique development opportunities. Her expertise is focused in transit-oriented development (TOD) and placemaking economic strategies for suburban, exurban, and historically disinvested communities.

Judith is a graduate of Stanford University with a Bachelor’s of Arts in Economics, and holds a Master’s in Public Policy and Urban Planning from the Harvard Kennedy School. Judith is an active member of ULI and APA and a Board Member of the Westside Urban Forum and WTS Los Angeles.
WOODIE TESCHER  
Principal, Placeworks

Woodie Tescher, Principal, for PlaceWorks, is recognized for his innovation and leadership in developing and applying planning and design approaches that reflect community values and visions, are grounded by principles for equity, environmental sustainability, neighborhood livability, and commercial and community center vitality. Woodie has implemented these principles in a diversity of plans for pedestrian-oriented, transit-oriented, mixed-use, live/work, and traditional residential neighborhoods.

Illustrating his experience are general plans for the cities of Pasadena, Sacramento, La Habra, Newport Beach, and West Hollywood; the Los Angeles General Plan Framework; transit-oriented community plans for the Exposition Rail Jefferson-La Cienega Station Area, Laguna Niguel Gateway, and Santa Monica’s Bergamot Station; specific plans for Santa Monica’s Third Street Promenade, San Gabriel’s Valley Boulevard Neighborhoods, and Merced County’s University Community. Woodie serves as an Adjunct Instructor for USC’s Sol Price School of Public Policy and, among his many honors, are the Distinguished Leadership Award from the California Chapter of the American Planning Association.

JONATHAN WICKS  
Consultant, Walker Consultants

Jonathan joined Walker’s Parking Operations Consulting Group after 10 years of leadership positions with private parking operators. Based out of the Los Angeles office he covers the West Coast and has expertise in all manners of parking including Class A commercial garages, hotel, event and stadium, on street valet, mixed use, municipalities, off-airport, and flat lots.

Jonathan designs and implements parking systems and technology improvements for public and private entities across the West Coast. Recent parking equipment and technology upgrade consultations include the Cities of Santa Ana, Alameda, Culver City, Mountain View, Sacramento, San Francisco, Palo Alto, Long Beach, Pasadena, and Davis.

He has developed parking policy and procedures and consulted for the City of Beverly Hills, SFMTA, Stanwood, CIM, LBA, the Irvine Company, and the Counties of Santa Clara, Alameda, and Contra Costa. He is a forward thinking parking operator who has recently led work in mobile App development and EV implementation.
TAP Panelists from left to right: Clifford Selbert, Shruti Shankar, Cat Callaghan, Woodie Tescher, Con Howe, Alex Rose, Marty Barke, Randy Johnson, Allan Pullman, David Sabunas, Sarah Drobis, Jonathan Wicks, Judith Taylor
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Established in 1936, ULI is a nonprofit education and research institute with over 40,000 members across the globe – 2,000 here in the Greater Los Angeles area. As a nonpartisan organization, the Institute has long been recognized as one of America’s most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development.

The membership of ULI Los Angeles represents the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines. They include developers, builders, investors, architects, public officials, planners, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, lenders, academics and students.