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VISION

This chapter presents the vision for the Manhattan Beach Downtown Specific Plan, which comprises a vision statement and four vision goals. The vision statement is an aspirational description of how the project area should look and function when the Specific Plan is implemented. The vision goals implement the vision statement by providing the framework for the development of the Specific Plan's land use plan, circulation and parking strategies, infrastructure improvements, and economic vitality goals. The statement and goals were derived from the ULI visioning charrette activities and report, stakeholder interviews, community workshops, input from the project's Advisory Committee, and direction from the City's decision makers, and are supported by the project area's prevailing economic conditions. All subsequent goals, design guidelines, and recommendations that appear in the Specific Plan support the vision statement and goals.

This chapter is organized into the following sections:

- 3.1 Vision Statement**
- 3.2 Vision Goals**



Figure 3.1 Much of the charm of Manhattan Beach is defined by the large number of walk streets

3.1 VISION STATEMENT

The vision for the future of Downtown Manhattan Beach is to maintain a safe, attractive, pedestrian-friendly village with a small town atmosphere, ~~and sound economy.~~ The Downtown sustains uses, activities, and family and cultural events, primarily oriented toward the local Manhattan Beach community, ~~while acknowledging the role that visitors play in supporting the Downtown.~~

3.2 VISION GOALS

The Downtown is a vibrant, charming, commercial mixed-use and residential district that serves as the City’s central gathering place and heart of the community. Residents and visitors are drawn to the district’s numerous retail, restaurant, and service businesses. The district’s eclectic buildings, open spaces, and streets foster a sense of community and exemplify the ideal characteristics

of an urban district in a small, Southern California beachside community. As a compact, walkable urban district, the project area provides excellent facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists. The district is readily accessible and provides efficient parking options as well as options for all modes of transportation.

The vision goals implement the Specific Plan's vision statement. The goals, as listed below, are described on the following pages.

- **Goal 1:** Preserve and enhance the project area's small town character
- **Goal 2:** Enhance pedestrian and bicycle access to the project area
- **Goal 3:** Improve access to parking and alternative transportation options
- **Goal 4:** Encourage, maintain, and enhance economic vitality

SMALL TOWN CHARACTER DEFINED:

- Relaxed, charming, eclectic beach atmosphere
- Walkable, pedestrian-oriented, clean and safe environment
- Strong sense of community with the Downtown as the heart
- Events that reinforce a shared sense of community and place
- Balance residential and commercial quality of life to maintain the community's integrity and soul

GOAL 1: PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE PROJECT AREA'S SMALL TOWN CHARACTER

Future development in the project area will complement and enhance the project area's small town character. Buildings will adhere to the district's established urban form, composed of narrow, one- and two-story buildings within close proximity to the surrounding sidewalks and pedestrian spaces. Commercial buildings will incorporate prominent ground floor storefronts, occupied by retailers, service businesses, and restaurants that activate the adjacent streets, while providing ample space for other commercial uses and residences on the upper story. Building designs will honor the district's eclectic architectural heritage by utilizing the variety of styles traditionally associated with Manhattan Beach along with newer, contemporary styles that complement the district's character. Open spaces will be incorporated into the urban form to provide outdoor dining and gathering spaces and to enable views of the ocean, beach, the Pier, and other landmarks.

Private development and public improvements guided by the policies, standards, and guidelines of this Specific Plan will preserve and enhance the unique character of Downtown Manhattan Beach so that it perpetuates an area that possesses:

- An urban form comprising narrow, low-scale buildings with limited setbacks, a tight street and block pattern, and narrow streets.
- Buildings and open spaces that provide visual interest and are compatible with their surroundings.
- A limited amount of new development that complements the existing urban form and respects adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- An eclectic array of traditional and contemporary architectural styles.
- Attractive storefronts and outdoor dining spaces that activate the project area's commercial streets, while not interrupting pedestrian traffic.
- A network of outdoor gathering spaces that create a sociable environment.
- Small-scale gateways with signature elements, materials, and plantings to announce arrival and welcome visitors to the Downtown.
- A bustling small town atmosphere that provides a variety of activity-generating uses on the ground floor, with housing and offices on upper stories.
- A diverse mix of commercial uses, providing a broad range of goods and services.
- A viable mixture of local and formula retailers that preserve the project area's identity as an important and unique shopping district in the City and the South Bay area.
- Exciting cultural venues, events, and family-oriented activities.
- A compatible and symbiotic relationship between commercial activities and residential uses.
- Enforcement of standards, regulations, and Use Permit requirements to maintain the quality environment.



Figures 3.2-3.7 Downtown's small town character

GOAL 2: ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE ACCESS TO THE PROJECT AREA

Future improvements to Downtown's streets, sidewalks, and open spaces will enhance pedestrian and bicycle access to the project area. Bicyclists will enjoy safe passage along the project area's streets and ample parking facilities at key destinations throughout the district. Pedestrians will experience a safe, attractive, and amenity-filled environment along the project area's walk streets, sidewalks, and pedestrian spaces.

Private development and public improvements guided by the policies, standards, and guidelines of this Specific Plan will create streetscapes and open spaces that provide:

- ▶ Accessibility for all transportation modes and users, especially pedestrians and bicyclists.
- ▶ A safe, comfortable environment for pedestrians and bicyclists that achieves a significant reduction in conflicts between both modes of transportation and motor vehicles.
- ▶ High-quality pedestrian facilities that feature trees, benches, refuse containers, and other amenities that create an aesthetically pleasing environment which encourages walking.
- ▶ Coordinated, custom streetscape furnishings, landscaping, and materials that unify and beautify the environment while strengthening the project area's sense of place.
- ▶ Wider sidewalks where possible to improve pedestrian circulation, provide impromptu gathering spaces, and include additional space for outdoor seating, streetlights, and other pedestrian amenities.
- ▶ Specially designed and strategically placed gateways that highlight primary entries into the project area.
- ▶ An integrated pedestrian and bicycle network that connects the project area with the surrounding neighborhoods, The Strand, and the beach.
- ▶ Clean and well-maintained facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists.



Figures 3.8-3.13 Enhance pedestrian and bicycle access

GOAL 3: IMPROVE ACCESS TO PARKING

Future improvements to the project area's parking facilities will provide sufficient parking solutions to meet the district's considerable demand. A combination of increased capacity and improved utilization of existing facilities will improve the ability for residents, the district's employees and employers, and visitors to locate parking so that they may access destinations in the project area. The planned Downtown parking solutions will:

- Feature a coordinated, area-wide approach to parking based upon a “park-once” strategy that meets the needs of all users.
- Provide employers and employees with adequate access to parking areas in and around the project area, minimizing the need to park in the surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- Provide for the unique parking needs of Downtown residents, businesses, and visitors while promoting parking strategies that can serve multiple user groups.
- Incorporate shared parking arrangements wherever possible to maximize the project area's parking supply during evenings and weekends.
- Include an expanded user-friendly valet program that safely and efficiently manages the parking needs of the project area's commercial patrons.
- Utilize demand pricing to better ensure that on-street parking spaces are available at all times.
- Include remote parking facilities that are serviced by a shuttle and bike sharing program.
- Explore opportunities to locate additional surface and/or structured facilities outside of the Downtown area.
- Include ample safe, secure bicycle parking facilities that enable bicyclists to easily reach destinations throughout the project area.
- Be connected to mobile tools and mark parking facilities with effective signage, expeditiously directing visitors to available spaces and reducing congestion.
- Include clean, safe facilities that incorporate emerging payment technologies.
- Balance the need for parking with the priority of maintaining a quality pedestrian environment.



Figures 3.14-3.19 Improve access to parking

GOAL 4: ENCOURAGE, MAINTAIN, AND ENHANCE ECONOMIC VITALITY

The Downtown will continue to be a thriving, unique, commercial mixed-use district and heart of the City where people work, shop, eat, reside, recreate, and gather. As the community's core, this area will strike a balance between residential and commercial quality of life to maintain the City's integrity and soul. The City and the district's business community will actively collaborate on economic vitality activities to further capitalize on the district's unique identity and positive attributes, ensuring the future viability of the project area's businesses. These initiatives and the district's business identity will include:

- Retail and community services that support the needs of residents and visitors alike.
- A base of successful locally owned businesses that provide a broad array of goods and services.
- Numerous creative and unique small-shop choices and dining options at every price point.
- Educational resources and retention programs for small businesses.
- A range of employment opportunities.
- Attractive and well-maintained storefronts and business signage that encourages patronage.
- "Pop-up" businesses that provide incubation opportunities for entrepreneurs, while temporarily activating vacant and underutilized spaces.
- Cohesive, high-quality signage and branding that emphasizes the Downtown's position as the City's commercial center.
- Destinations that showcase Manhattan Beach's unique history, art, and culture.
- A vibrant weekly farmers market where residents can shop for local produce and connect with their community.
- Smaller, more community- and family-oriented events that appeal to residents as well as larger festivals that also accommodate visitors.



Figures 3.20-3.25 Encourage economic vitality