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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bringing Back Broadway Streetscape Master Plan Unveiled

Bold, pedestrian-oriented, environmentally-friendly plan prioritizes people over vehicle, prepares for streetcar to run downtown by 2014

LOS ANGELES (Dec. 1, 2009) —On Tuesday, more than 100 community members gathered at The Exchange Building in Downtown's Historic Core to review and provide Melendrez Design Partners with input on the Broadway Streetscape Master Plan, which is part of Councilmember José Huizar's 10-year plan to revitalize Broadway.

"The streetscape plan boldly prioritizes people over vehicles, provides much-needed infrastructure support and major improvements to a street that has been neglected for far too long, while providing a showcase for the Downtown L.A. Streetcar and the revitalization of the Historic Broadway Theatre District" said Councilmember José Huizar.

The Streetscape Plan calls for sidewalk and basement reconstruction in places where basements extend out under current sidewalks, which are collapsing in places. Widened and reinforced sidewalks, with a reduction in traffic lanes, will provide for greater pedestrian comfort and security on one of the city's busiest pedestrian streets. Curb extensions will provide space for comfortable, real-time transit stations for bus and streetcar users as well as for ticket kiosks and tourist/visitor areas. On-street parking and loading will support Broadway's small business merchants and provide a buffer between pedestrians and traffic along Broadway.

Original engineering drawings of the very first Broadway streetlamps have been uncovered and the new streetscape plan calls for streetlamps made from the original, authentic design. Transit stations, bike racks, wayfinding signage and other features are also highlighted in this design. Trees and plantings will be added to offer green elements to the street (supported by a storm water retention and recycling system).

(more)

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Tuesday's meeting culminated a series of public events and workshops that took place throughout 2009, beginning with a Broadway Walk in February where participants visited numerous interactive stations set up along Broadway to discuss topics such as Green Streets, Street Design, Character/Historic Influence, Transit Stations, Design Palette, Paseos/Open Space, Curb Extensions/Crossings and Pedestrian Safety and Comfort.

Participants at the February event were also encouraged to bring along cameras to document things they wanted to see addressed in the plan. Input from the Broadway Walk was used to devise a range of options regarding street configuration, design, signage and street furniture, which were presented for public input at a subsequent public meeting in May. Feedback from more than 200 attendees at that mid-process workshop provided the design team with input needed to narrow down the range of concepts to a single design, which was refined and presented this past Tuesday.

"This process involved stakeholders from a broad cross-section of downtown and started on a rainy night in the middle of winter when more than 100 people walked up and down Broadway to provide input on the themes they wanted to see addressed," Councilmember Huizar said. "This final plan incorporates all that feedback and delivers plans for a streetscape experience we can all look forward to on Broadway."

Bringing Back Broadway focuses on the revitalization of Broadway from Second Street to Olympic Boulevard, which is part of a National Register Historic District and boasts one of the largest concentrations of historic theatres on a single street in the nation. The next steps for the streetscape plan includes environmental review, city adoption procedures and a "dress rehearsal" of the streetscape plan conducted temporarily in paint and planters before construction begins.

Completion of the streetscape plan is intended to coincide with construction of the streetcar line which will connect historic Broadway with L.A. Live on one end and the Bunker Hill/Music Center area on the other by 2014.

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