CHAPTER VI – IMPLEMENTATION

A. Implementation Overview

The Downtown Village Specific Plan cannot be implemented solely through the actions and investment of public agencies. Typically, a high level of public involvement and investment is required in the beginning phases of a specific plan. This involvement includes public funding of capital improvement projects, providing incentives to private developers, adopting regulatory measures and policies that encourage desired development, and promoting the vision outlined in the Plan. However, these "seed" activities and investments act as a catalyst to stimulate private initiative and investment. Most importantly, the Plan's implementation must involve active cooperation between property owners, business operators, residents, the City of Lemon Grove, and regional public agencies.

Long term sustainability and success of most downtowns also rely on the participation of property owners, business operators, investors and public agencies. To fully implement the Plan's vision, there is a need for both private and public investment in new development, rehabilitation projects, the provision of adequate public and private parking, and the promotion of the Downtown area.

The Downtown Village Specific Plan must be adopted and amended in the same method as a General Plan, although it may be adopted by resolution or by ordinance and may be amended as often as deemed appropriate by the City Council. Once the Plan is adopted, local public works projects, tentative maps, final or parcel maps, zoning and new ordinances require consistency with the Plan. Also, as with the General Plan, it is the responsibility of the City to ensure the implementation of the Plan.
This chapter addresses strategies to implement elements identified in the Downtown Village Specific Plan. Particularly, this chapter:

1. Prioritizes capital improvement projects that will support the vision presented in the Plan,
2. Recommends programs that can be offered or initiated by the City of Lemon Grove, the Lemon Grove Community Development Agency (Agency), and the business community to aid in facilitating the accomplishments of goals presented in the Plan,
3. Identifies financing sources to implement the Plan, and
4. Addresses administration of the Plan.

B. Projects & Programs

The Downtown Specific Plan encourages the development and revitalization of the downtown area. There are several critical capital improvement projects that are required to either facilitate and/or accommodate the Plan's objectives. This section describes key capital improvement projects and possible programs that can be implemented.

Public Capital Improvements

1. Mid-block Crosswalk – To facilitate effective pedestrian circulation and to promote walkability within the downtown area, there is a need for a mid-block crosswalk on Broadway. For maximum benefit, the crosswalk should be closely aligned with the Lester parking lot breezeway. The crosswalk can be initiated by the City using transportation grant funds.
2. San Diego Trolley Issues (Grade Separation and Coordinating Trolley with Traffic Signals) – Currently, the San Diego Trolley traverses the downtown. The trolley tracks pose connectivity challenges to the community as identified in the Plan. As such, the Plan calls for grade separation of the trolley line. However, the cost of grade separation (whether elevating or lowering the tracks) is significant. Until a full engineering study is conducted, it is difficult to provide an accu-

rate cost; however, an estimate is between $35 million and $45 million.

In the interim period, the Plan calls for an interim solution for congestion caused by the trolley. The Plan recommends that trolley movement through the Broadway/ Lemon Grove Avenue intersection and the grade crossing at Lemon Grove Avenue be controlled by traffic signals.

Both the interim and long-term solutions require coordination with MTS and eventually action by MTS. It is recommended that representatives from the City, MTS and SANDAG meet to discuss solution for MTS to implement.

Grade Separation will require the planning and financial participation from many funding sources – SANDAG smart growth and CMAQ, redevelopment, private developer, and General Fund. A grade separation project's scope is complex, requires substantial financial commitment, and relies on the cooperation of several public agencies. As such, it is unlikely that achieving the goal of grade separation will occur in the near future. Due to the significant level of financial commitment from the City, it is an item that would require further City deliberation and planning.

3. Entryway and Directional Signage – The City, through its CIP, should develop a schedule and plan to install entryway signage as specified in the Plan. In addition, the City should require the installation of directional signage by the developers of larger projects in the Plan area (i.e. development comprising more than one acre).

4. Median Improvements – Lower planter pyramids located in the Broadway median and replant street trees.

5. Consolidation of Bus and Trolley Stops – At Plan adoption, the MTS operated bus system stop and the San Diego Trolley platform are not co-located. The two facilities are located on opposite sides of Broadway. As such, challenges exist for those using public transit and traffic circulation is negatively impacted. The Plan recommends that staff from SANDAG, MTS and the City of Lemon Grove develop a strategy to co-locate the bus and trolley stops.

Public/Private Capital Improvements

1. Parking Facilities – Downtown parking seems to be a challenge in many communities. Typically, downtown parking infrastructure does not meet the demands of municipal parking policy requirements. This challenge is currently experienced in Lemon Grove's downtown area as well. However, there are opportunities to create additional public and private parking. The Plan identifies areas in which parking lots and structures can be developed. Primarily, three likely parking projects include:

   - A parking lot or structure located on privately owned property at Broadway and Golden Avenue.

   - An expansion of the Lester Avenue parking lot to the east, necessitating the relocation of the U.S. Post Office's distribution operation to a more suitable location.

   - A parking structure located at the existing publicly owned Lester Avenue parking lot.

   The development of these facilities will rely on public funding, private funding, or both. Three financing tools for the development of these facilities include:

   - Creating a parking space in-lieu fee for all new uses in a specific business district that do not meet parking requirements.

   - Imposing an assessment on property owners to fund long-term debt for the development of additional parking facilities.

- Utilizing redevelopment funds to initiate the development of parking facilities.

2. Sidewalk, Curb and Gutter – An effective sidewalk system includes maintained sidewalks that are installed where pedestrians have need for them. A walking tour of the downtown revealed that installation of additional sidewalks would enhance the sidewalk system. Specifically, sidewalks should be installed at:

   - North and south sides of Lester Avenue,
   - North side of Golden Avenue,
   - Northeast corner of Main Street and Broadway, and
   - Other areas of the downtown require sidewalk improvements and walkability enhancements (security from traffic, comfort, welcoming features, and efficient use of space).

   The sidewalk, curb and gutter gaps on the streets identified above should be required to be installed by property owners that trigger the centerline ordinance. The City may also consider initiating the improvements after obtaining the appropriate right-of-way.

3. Landscape/Open Space – The intention of the Plan is to maximize development in the Plan area. The aim reduces the ability to allocate sufficient open space to meet the needs of potential downtown residents. As such it is important to create pockets of open space in the larger development projects, maximize landscaping opportunities, and create open space and outdoor recreational opportunities in the areas surrounding the Plan area.

   It is recommended that the City institute a park in lieu fee that can be used to purchase land for recreational purposes. These land purchases can occur adjacent to existing park open space areas or in new areas. It is also recommended that both large and small development contribute funds for landscaping enhancements. Landscaping improvements and maintenance are eligible projects and programs for business improvement and assessment districts.

4. Sewer Trunk Capacity Enhancement – In preparing the Plan, it was determined that the sewer trunk that serves the Plan area does not have the capacity to accommodate the Plan's built out flow. It is recommended that when larger projects are proposed, that developers are required to determine the project's impact on the sewer trunk. It is also recommended that the Sanitation District include in its CIP a plan to widen the line funded in part by development fees associated with new development in the Plan area.

5. Storm Drain Improvements – There is no comprehensive storm drain system in the Plan area. There is need for storm drain improvements on North Street and Grove Street. It is recommended that when larger projects are proposed, that developers are required to prepare specific storm drain plans for that area. When funding is available, the City should consider a comprehensive storm drain plan for the Plan area.

Programs

1. Business Grant and Façade Rehabilitation Programs – Many cities and redevelopment agencies throughout California have implemented successful façade rehabilitation programs and small business grant programs aimed at giving aging commercial corridors a face life and promoting economic development. Typically, the programs require matching funds from the property or business owner to complement the public funding. Programs also require compliance with standards established by the local municipality.

2. Downtown Promotions Program – A comprehensive promotion program could assist with increasing consumer awareness of businesses in the downtown area. This

program could be privately or publicly funded. However, when publicly funded it is typical for a non-profit, chamber of commerce or business district association to organize and manage the promotional activities.

3. Downtown Business Association – One of the most successful means to creating an energetic downtown is through the creation of a grassroots downtown business association. An association could promote commercial opportunities and advocate on behalf of the merchants' interests in the district. A business association could also spearhead the creation of a business improvement district that could finance capital improvements that would benefit the entire business district.

4. Affordable Housing Assistance Program – One of the objectives of the Lemon Grove Community Development Agency is to facilitate the increased availability of affordable housing. The Plan calls for mixed-use development that includes a critical housing component. The Agency could create a program in which financial incentives would be offered to developers in exchange for the development of affordable housing units. Other incentives, such as density bonuses and assistance with infrastructure improvements (including parking), could also be included in the program.

Financing Sources

A variety of financing tools will be required to fully implement the Plan's goals and objectives. This section identifies possible funding and financing sources to realize the Plan's vision.

1. General Obligation Bonds – Projects that benefit an entire jurisdiction may be financed through General Obligation Bonds. Only improvements that are general in nature, such as community facilities (street and drainage improvements) would be eligible projects. General Obligation Bonds require approval of the jurisdiction's voters.

2. Lighting and Landscaping District – Lighting and landscaping districts are formed to finance:

   - Lighting and landscaping provided by the City,
   - Land acquisition for parks and open space, and
   - Expenses associated with the formation of the District.

   A district is initiated by the City and funded by assessments of those within the district's boundaries. Formation of a district requires the approval of property owners within its borders.

3. Special Assessment District – Special assessment districts are formed to finance physical improvements that are shared by property owners within an area. Examples of projects include parking lots, installation of curb/gutter/sidewalk, and extension of sewer line.

   Special districts are funded from assessments levied on property owners to pay back the initial cost of installing the improvement. Assessments vary on the level of benefit each property owner derives from the improvement as determined by an Engineer's Report. Formation of a district requires the approval of property owners within the district's borders.

4. Business Improvement District – Business improvement districts can fund a wide range of projects and programs. Eligible activities that can be supported by business improvement districts include:

   - Facade improvements
   - Parking facilities
   - Street lighting
   - Promotional activities

- Business Association (staff, office space, equipment, etc.)

Business improvement districts are funded through an assessment levied on either the property owners or business owners. District formation can be initiated by the City or by the owners of businesses or property. The formation of a district would require approval by the City and by at least 50 percent of those to be assessed.

5. Small Business Administration 504 Loan Program – The SBA 504 Loan Program privately finances projects such as acquisition, construction, and equipment purchases by small businesses. Funding is from long-term fixed rate second mortgages on the property.

6. Transportation Funds – there are a variety of transportation specific grant programs

   - Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) – a Federal government funding source for transportation projects that reduce air pollution (i.e. installing curb and gutters, implementing signal interconnects, reducing traffic congestion).

   - Transportation Equity Act 21 – a Federal government funding source aimed at improving highways, highway safety, and transit programs.

   - TransNet – a San Diego County regional sales tax allocation for improving regional transportation systems.

   - Surface Transportation Program – a Federal government funding source to be used on public road and transit capital projects.

7. SANDAG Programs

   - Planning Grants – SANDAG offers a Local Technical Assistance grant to jurisdiction for planning studies.

   - Smart Growth Funds – through the 2008 TransNet program, SANDAG plans to offer grants to jurisdictions for implementing smart growth development.

8. Lemon Grove Community Development Agency – The Lemon Grove Community Development Agency (Agency) is a redevelopment agency authorized with a stated purpose to:

   - Eliminate blight and blighting conditions in the project area,

   - Encourage business attraction, expansion, and retention in the project area, and

   - Promote affordable housing opportunities in the City.

   Redevelopment funds can be utilized in a myriad of ways ranging from financing capital improvements, acquiring land, offering grants and loans to businesses and developers, and supporting activities that assist in the accomplishments of the Agency's Five Year Implementation Plan.

9. HOME – a Federal government funding source to promote affordable housing.

10. City of Lemon Grove General Fund – the City's General Fund has the flexibility to initiate programs and projects that are deemed in the best interest of the City. However, because of its flexibility, it is the primary funding source for basic municipal services—public safety, parks, recreation, administration, and community development.

11. Revenue Bonds – Governmental agencies are authorized to sell revenue bonds that are secured with a specific revenue source as a result of a specific project. However, the types of public facilities anticipated to be constructed in the Plan area are not revenue generating projects. The only opportunity to

use this funding source is if parking structures or lots were financed through user fees.

12. Impact Fees – Local agencies, under California law, may impose an impact or developer fee to finance public improvements that mitigate the impact of development. For example, the Lemon Grove Sanitation District collects a development fee from new developers to finance the expansion of the sewer system to accommodate sewage flow from the new development. Similarly, the City could impose impact fees related to parking, traffic signals, public infrastructure, open space/parks on new development projects.

Environmental Compliance

Projects within the Downtown Specific Plan Area will be reviewed on an individual basis. Additional air quality, cultural resources, noise, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, public services and utilities, and traffic analyses will be required where deemed appropriate in relationship to the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration and the General Plan Master EIR.