Silicon Valley Economic Development Alliance
St. Helena Technical Advisory Panel

November 2, 2023
About the Urban Land Institute (ULI)

- ULI’s mission is to shape the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide. ULI is committed to:
  - CONNECT active, passionate, diverse members through the foremost global network of interdisciplinary professionals
  - INSPIRE best practices for equitable and sustainable land use through content, education, convening, mentoring, and knowledge sharing
  - LEAD in solving community and real estate challenges through applied collective global experience and philanthropic engagement

- Established in 1936, ULI is a nonprofit education and research institute with over 45,000 members across the globe—2,100 here in the San Francisco Bay Area
Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) Program

- Provides independent, objective candid advice on important land use and real estate issues

- TAP Process
  - Define TAP scope and questions
  - Review background materials
  - Receive city briefing presentation and tour
  - Conduct stakeholder interviews
  - Review data, address issues and solutions, and develop recommendations
  - Present findings and recommendations
  - Produce a final report

- 51 TAPs conducted by ULI SF since 1982

- Contact: Joy Woo, joy.woo@uli.org
The Panel

- Jane Lin, AIA, Founding Partner, Urban Field Studio (TAP Chair)
- Nell Selander, Director of the Economic & Community Development Department, City of South San Francisco (TAP Vice Chair)
- John Bela, Partner, Urban Field Studio
- Noah Friedman, CEO/Co-Founder, Vibemap
- Jim Heid, Founder, CRAFT DnA
- Paul Peninger, Principal, BAE Urban Economics
- Edith Ramirez, Assistant City Manager for Development Services, City of Morgan Hill
- Mariana Ricker, Associate, SWA Group (TAP Report Writer)
The Client (Lead from City)
- Anil Comelo, City Manager
- Maya DeRosa, Community Development Director

Public Officials Engaged
- Paul Dohring, Mayor
- Eric Hall, Vice Mayor
- Anna Chouteau, Council member
- Lester Hardy, Council member
- Billy Summers, Council member
- Joe Leach, Public Works Director
- Dave Jahns, Parks and Recreation Director

Site Tour Guides
- Aaron Hecock, Senior Planner
- Stephanie Smithers, St. Helena Chamber of Commerce
Why St. Helena Engaged ULI?

City desired expertise of ULI panel to provide candid feedback regarding how St. Helena could better develop our unique identity in Napa Valley and attract more economic investment.
Recovering and Thriving Through the Pandemic

TOT Growth by Jurisdiction - Fiscal Year

FY22 TOT contributions not only returned to pre-pandemic levels but surpassed FY19, which was previously the watermark.

St. Helena has lagged its neighboring Napa Valley cities in TOT growth due to a lack of new hotel investment.

Increased TOT Revenue = Increased Revenue for Napa Valley Cities & Towns = Improvements to Infrastructure such as Roads & Sidewalks, Fire Safety, Parks & Recreation, and More
The Napa Valley Region

St. Helena is one of the most historic appellations in Napa Valley. So many key events in the valley’s early days took place here. Our narrative map depicts the vineyards in unprecedented detail while framing the context of how present-day St. Helena came to be.

Antonio Galloni, Vinous
Visit Vinous.com for more information
TAP Study Area: Downtown St. Helena
Panel Assignment Questions

1. What are downtown St. Helena’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) that should be incorporated into placemaking?

2. What should St. Helena’s distinctive brand be? How should St. Helena differentiate itself as a distinctive destination city in the wine country region?

3. How can the placemaking effort interact with the City’s current plan and land use regulations?

4. What is a potential decision-making framework that can guide city officials in implementing the placemaking, place-branding and urban design perspectives? How can existing City tools and measures be leveraged, modified, or updated to support implementation?
SWOT
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
**STRENGTHS**

- Historic Character Authenticity
- Birthplace of Wine Culture
- Strong Business Environment
  - Entrepreneurial Depth + Strong Retail Market
  - Access to Capital

**WEAKNESSES**

- No Downtown Cohesive Identity
- Limited Affordable / Accessible Options
- Civic Organization + Budgetary Limitations
  -Disconnected Thinking: No Clear Vision
  - Lack of Capacity and Institutional Stagnation
  - Inability to Coalesce Key Players
  - Limited Funding Sources Related to Needs
OPPORTUNITIES

- **Placemaking**
  - Better Serve Residents
  - Expand Downtown through Walkable Urbanism
  - More Public Art
  - Activation at all Hours: Lunchtime, Nightlife

- **Physical Improvements**
  - Multiple Opportunity Sites (including parking lots)
  - Laneways!
  - More Affordable Housing
  - More Hotels
  - Bringing CIA to Main Street
  - Bring Vine Trail through Town
OPPORTUNITIES (cont)

- **Political Climate**
  - Aligned City Council
  - Fresh Staff
  - Sense of Urgency for Improvement

- **Change Making**
  - Awareness of Financial Health
  - More Funding Sources
  - Growing and Diverse Community

Frustrations = Opportunities

Share the Cost and Resources
THREATS: Facing St. Helena

- Fire
- Water
- Climate Change Impacts on Agriculture
- Greater Economy
- Workforce Competition

- False Perceptions
  - Lack of Parking
  - Weak Retail Market
- Battles within Community
  - Visitors vs. Local Residents + Workforce
  - Older vs. Younger Demographic
  - Retailers vs. Hotels
- Lack of Staffing + Funding Capacity
- Aging Buildings
- Loss of Market Relevance

- Doing Nothing
- Regional Lack of Affordable Housing
Reinvigorating the Historic Heart of Napa Valley

Downtown St. Helena should be the historic heart of Napa Valley, but it is performing below its full potential.

With extraordinary character and wealth of resources, it’s time for the St. Helena community to come together to reinvest in Downtown.
IDENTITY
Brand, Aspirations, Vision for the Future
St. Helena’s Distinctive Identity

- Historic center of Napa Valley wine culture with a global reach.
- Walkable downtown with an historic small town feel.
- Growing Latinx community.
- People actually live here. This is a real town.
User Experience

Residents
A historic center in the heart of the town of St. Helena
- Daily Needs
- Socializing
- Gathering

Visitors
An international destination in the heart of Napa Valley.
- Eat and drink
- Shop
- Stay

Local, local, local
Visitors want to “live like a local”
What is good for residents is good for visitors.
What’s the Vibe?

Beyond Main Street

- More to St Helena than just Main St.
- Expand sense of place beyond Main St. (East, West, South)
- Complete, healthy small town.
- Many St Helenas, not just one.
Culture Building

Inclusive Destination Marketing

- Organize events that bring people together.
- Support local arts & entertainment
- Tell the story to the world
  - Website
  - Social Media
  - Marketing

It’s more than just Main Street…
St Helena is...

Build the brand together

- Engage residents to help identify the identity, character, and brand of St. Helena.
- Ask residents what they want St. Helena to be in the future?
  - Optimistic
  - Future-oriented
  - Inclusive

Culture
Culture is made by working together to achieve something greater than ourselves.

True identity leads to real authenticity.
PLACEMAKING
Linking the Brand and Downtown Form
Create a fabric, not a corridor

Create pedestrian prioritized loops with activated spaces

Define Gateways - Use Architecture First

Not just a Main Street, Downtown
Concentrate, Connect and Catalyze

1. OPPORTUNITY SITE - IMMEDIATE REPOSITION ST. HELENA HOTEL
2. Opportunity Site - Near Term Infill Boutique Hotel
3. Opportunity Site - Mid Term Affordable Sr Housing with Ground Floor NBHD Serviced commercial
4. LANEWAYS
5. Opportunity Site - Long Term Intensify Parking Lot / Street Frontage

1/4 Mile - 5 Minute Walk
#1. IMMEDIATE - St. Helena Hotel

Refresh and Reposition
The Madrona, Healdsburg
Historic property, deep retrofit 24 rooms
Acclaimed, loved by locals, high ADR+TOT
#2. Near Term - Bank of America Site

Piazza Hospitality Infill Hotels

Three hotels work together to create a smaller scale appropriate for towns and activate the street
#3. Mid Term - 1480 Main Former Old City Hall Site

- Mixed-Use
- Ground Floor Neighborhood Serving Retail
- And other possibilities!
#4. Near Term - Site Search Incubator Kitchen

- Build on CIA Icon
- Create lower priced food options
- Incubate New Jobs
- Create Resident Reason to Come Downtown
#5. Two Stage - Sunshine Foods / Wells Fargo Site

**Existing Site:** Excellent mix of neighborhood serving commerce and retail, but urban form does not contribute to downtown.

**Phase 1:** Interim Use: incubator kitchen, retail, public art, events.

**Long Term:** Define the gateway, redesign, incorporate existing and new uses with rear parking or parking deck.
#5. Sunshine Foods / Wells Fargo Site: Interim Use

Proxy SF, The Yard at Mission Rock
Activation of under-utilized parking lot to become community hub
PLACEMAKING
Streets, Parklets, Woonerfs, Laneways
Reimagining Main Street
Reimagining Main
Main Street (Existing Condition between Adam and Spring)
WeHo Dining Outzones

OUTZONES FRAMEWORK - PEDESTRIAN CLEARANCES

A PAIR WALKING

ONE PAIR WALKING + INDIVIDUAL PASSING

TWO PAIRS PASSING + SOMEBODY STANDING

4' MIN

6' MIN

10' MIN

TWO PAIRS PASSING

ONE PAIR WALKING + DELIVERY ROBOT

TWO PAIRS PASSING + DELIVERY ROBOT PASSING

8' MIN

6' MIN

10' MIN

West Hollywood Dining OutZones

Prepared for The City of West Hollywood by Studio One Eleven
Main Street (between Adam and Spring)

Create flex zone for parking/planting/outdoor dining

Remove the center turn lane

More space for dining and pedestrians

25’ more space for pedestrians and local businesses
There are enough parking spaces:

- Count them
- Direct people to them
- Encourage shared parking
- Parking management will unlock more of it

Avoid building a parking structure or requiring underground parking
Reimagining Main Street

St Helena
Main Street
Today, 5’ Pedestrian Zone

Larimer Square
Denver
Colorado.
25’ sidewalk
Reimagining Main Street

Castro Street
Mountain View
18’ sidewalk and flex zone
Main Street (between Adam and Spring)

- Remove the center turn lane
- More space for dining and pedestrians
- +VINE TRAIL!
Main Street (between Adam and Spring)
Parklets, Patios, and Curblane Extensions

Rebar’s Parklet for Tony’s Pizzeria North Beach SF
Laneway Activation, Public Art

In Between Two Worlds by artist Jason Wing, Sydney Australia
Street / Laneway Mural Program
DECISION MAKING

Process, Choices, Actions
What is a potential decision-making framework that can guide City officials in implementing the placemaking and branding recommendations?
Focus on Enhancing Quality of Life & Achieving Economic Sustainability

Creating a sustainable community and stable economy requires meeting basic needs and providing opportunities for current and future residents.

*General Plan Update 2040*
Be Practical in Decision Making

- Is it a real or perceived problem?
- Does it support the residents?
- Does it generate revenue?
- Does it leverage outside resources?
- Is it sustainable—can we maintain in the long run?

- Do you have the capacity to implement?
  - Budget
  - Staff
Sort Projects by Level of Effort

Big Deals
- Downtown Master Plan
- Development Opportunity Sites
- Streetscape Improvements

Small Wonders
- Twinkle Lights
- Uplighting
- Signage
- Parklets
- Maintenance

Make Mid- to Long-Term Gains
Short-Term Quick Wins
Develop a North Star: Consider an Economic Blueprint with Actionable Strategies

- Identify opportunities
- Have clear intentions
- Develop implementation strategies
- Foster partnerships
- Use economic indicators to evaluate progress
- Remove unnecessary barriers

Example from Morgan Hill, CA
Make it Actionable, Create an Implementation Strategy

Identify Strategies

Develop Clear Actions

Establish Timeline

Assign Responsibility

Example from Morgan Hill, CA
Measure Success

- **Quality of Life**: Unemployment rate, jobs/housing ratio, number of retail businesses
- **Fiscal Sustainability**: Sales Tax, Property Tax, TOT, Commercial Vacancy Rate
- **Job Growth**: Number of jobs, Business to Business Revenue, Number of companies
- **Tourism**: Number of Hotel Rooms, TOT, Occupancy Rate
How can existing City tools and measures be leveraged, modified, or updated to support implementation?
Financial Tools: Leverage Funding Sources the City can Control

- **Update developer, impact, and user fees**
  - New projects should pay their fair share

- **Apply for grants**
  - Tie infrastructure to affordable housing

- **Seek private-sector support**
  - Donations, public private partnerships

- **Ensure contracts are aligned with today’s priorities**
Financial Tools: Earn Trust to Win that Vote

Show value through small wonders/quick wins before considering:

- Raising TOT
- A new local sales tax measure
- Assessing a business license tax
- Proposing general obligation bonds
- CFDs, EIFDs, and PBIDs

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<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Budget Strategies</th>
<th>Ongoing Financial Impact</th>
<th>One-time Financial Impact</th>
<th>Service Level Impact</th>
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<td>• Implement a gross receipts-based business license tax at 0.8%</td>
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<td>• Increase the local transactions and use (sales) tax by 0.5%</td>
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<td>Provides capacity to address unfunded/underfunded needs</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>• Implement a gross receipts-based business license tax model at 1%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Implement a real property transfer tax of 1.5% and create a City Charter</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Sell surplus property</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>• Increase the transient occupancy tax by 1%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Implement a library parcel tax of $313</td>
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Source: bakertilly
Long Range Financial Forecast Budget Strategies (2023)
Land Use Tools: Look at Codes & Plans with an Economic Development Lens

Take a red pen to your Zoning Code

- Make zoning less prescriptive
- Allow spaces to be flexibly programmed
- Allow more uses by right
- Don’t be afraid of density, address through form
- Make it performance based zoning

Rather than Master Plans, consider a Specific or Precise Plans with an EIR to streamline development

Beyond community engagement, invite your colleagues from other jurisdictions to give honest feedback
RECOMMENDATIONS

Start Tomorrow
RECOMMENDATION 1: Invest in (and grow) your City Team
Positions Needed

Permanent Staff
Address deficiencies that impact resident quality of life

Temporary Staff
Focus on a few heavy lifts that need an internal champion to work externally

Interns & Fellows
Partner with local business community to fund positions to grow capacity

Consultants & Contractors
Hire experts when specific, hard-to-find skills are needed to realize goals
Hire a High-Level Doer

- Reports to the City Manager
- Real-estate experience & savvy
- Focused on a clear agenda implementing the City’s vision
- Entrepreneurial
- Great people skills
RECOMMENDATION 2: Shake the Money Tree
New Funding and Financing Strategies

**Ongoing Funding Sources**
- Taxes
- Fees
- Charges for services
- Long-term leases of City-owned properties

**One-time Funding Sources**
- Federal, State, Local Grants
- Private/Foundation Grants
- Land Sales

**Financing Tools** (require voter and/or business and property owner approval)
- General obligation and revenue bonds
- Special Financing Districts (e.g. Community Facilities Districts)
RECOMMENDATION 3: Short Term Wins and Actions
(no more plans)
Short-term Wins and Actions that have a District-wide Impact

● Quick Wins!
  ○ Earn trust and gain buy-in

● Improve more than Main Street
  ○ This is your once in a generation opportunity to get it right
  ○ Don’t just replace, enhance, remake, reimagine
  ○ Think of the district as a whole and solving more than one problem
Make a Marketing Map

Articulate the value proposition

- Restaurants
- Shops
- Galleries
- Kids
- Public Art
- Historic Buildings
- Walking Map
- Identify Opportunity sites (lease, sale, development)
Direct People to Existing Parking

There are enough parking spaces:
- Count them
- Direct people to them
- Encourage shared parking
- Parking management will unlock more of it

Avoid building a parking structure or requiring underground parking
Hold and Rethink the Streetscape Project

- Change More than Just Sidewalks - increase the public realm
  - Remove center turn lane in core
  - Widen sidewalk with parklets

- Short Term - Small Wonders: Put boxes of trees in the parking areas and parklets on Main Street as a temporary move
District Actions (In-lieu of a Full-blown Plan)

Independent Timeline (could happen any time)
1. Alley Activation with murals
2. Temporary Activation for Money Lane or Railroad Avenue

Big Deal: Main Street Improvements
- Minimize Interruption to Businesses
- Ask for an extension to the grant deadline for Phase 1
- Wait for more funding capacity to be available

Get more bang for your buck, more impact for your time, and a significant change for the public realm.
Any action is better than inaction.

- St. Helena Resident
Ah ha moments!

- Reimagine Main Street - remove center median and expand sidewalks
Ah ha moments!

● We are MORE than Main Street
  ○ Plan a vision for adjacent corridors that can add to overall downtown appeal (Railroad Avenue and Oak Avenue
  ○ Think of the district as a whole and solving more than one problem
Accomplishments Since TAP In March 2023

Big Deal- New Hotels Announced:
• Adams Street Hotel and Residences (Downtown)
• St. Helena Resort @ Charles Krug Winery

Other Movement
● Downtown Specific Plan funded
● Zoning Code Adoption
● Public Art Policy approved
● Mural Permit process
● Activation of alleys underway
St. Helena TAP Report

https://sf.uli.org/uli-resources/st-helena-tap-2023/

For more information about TAPs, contact Joy Woo at joy.woo@uli.org