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Belmar

Reconnecting people and place

Today, the average family living in the outer suburbs takes between 10 and 15 car trips per day. For the majority of people, there are significant distances between living, working, shopping and playing. Only a few neighborhoods actually combine residential, office, retail and entertainment, and they all were built over 70 years ago.

Belmar will become a modern version of that kind of neighborhood. It will become a true downtown for the City of Lakewood, the first it has ever had. It is being built on a site that has been the traditional gathering place for people who live in the city. The site is adjacent to many of Lakewood's amenities including Belmar Park, Lakewood Cultural Center, the library and a number of recreational facilities. And it will bring together all of the features that comprise what we all think of as a good downtown.

Taking cues from successes of the past, the City of Lakewood is not only redefining "neighborhood," it is re-energizing the heart of the community with a bold vision for a new town center--called Belmar. The opposite of urban sprawl and the epitome of smart growth, Belmar is a special place designed to create an environment to bring people and their surroundings closer together.

There will be activity from morning into the night with residences, offices, shops, restaurants and entertainment. Streets will be alive with people, not overrun with automobiles. In addition to national chain stores, Belmar will be home to the local hairdresser, drug store, dry cleaners and grocery store. There also will be specialty stores not found elsewhere. This is a place where shopkeepers will know your name and the products you prefer--as they would in a friendly small town.

Entertainment at Belmar promises to be a multifaceted experience. An outing to the cinema in the heart of town, could turn into an all-day adventure including shopping, dinner at one of the unique restaurants or a leisurely stroll by a coffee shop or ice cream parlor. Day and night, the town plaza will be home to art fairs, concerts and other community events. There will something for everyone, from kids to grandparents.

The plaza is just one example of how Belmar invites people to come outside, get together and linger in public spaces. Tree-lined promenades, a village green and outdoor cafes all combine to create an attractive, relaxing ambiance. In fact, many of the 25-year-old trees currently on the site are being conserved for use in Belmar.

A wide variety of architectural forms and patterns accentuates Belmar's most refreshing attribute--diversity. The variety of homes, offices and shops mirrors the lively mix of people and activities that will come together at Belmar. Diversity is the key to lasting value, and the essence of a true downtown.

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