

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA'S GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

from the

GENERAL PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE

of

CITIZENS PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF SANTA BARBARA COUNTY



MAY 2008



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Citizens Planning Association's City of Santa Barbara General Plan Update Committee (GPUC) is pleased to present its comments and recommendations on the city's General Plan Update. Some sections of the current General Plan require complete rewriting, while others need no or only minor revision.

Having limited resources, the GPUC reviewed and commented on most but not all elements or sections. There are suggested rewrites, new policies, goals and implementation strategies, a proposed new Historic and Cultural Resources element, proposed new sections on Creeks and Watersheds and on the Urban Forest, some reformatting suggestions and for some elements some general suggestions.

You have a big task before you, and we hope that the carefully considered recommendations and suggestions in this brochure are helpful.

Sincerely,

Sheila Lodge, Chair
General Plan Update Committee

Cover photo: View from
Franceschi Park

CITIZENS PLANNING ASSOCIATION'S MISSION

To protect the unmatched natural assets of Santa Barbara County and advocate for their appropriate management and stewardship;

To alert residents of our region to the negative impacts of unregulated growth;

To cooperate with private groups and public offices in designing sound planning goals for our communities and surrounding countryside;

To conduct a broad education program on behalf of such objectives; and

To maintain a staff and center for their effective realization.

CPA'S CITY OF SANTA BARBARA GENERAL PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE

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GENERAL PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE MISSION:

*TO PROTECT, PRESERVE AND ENHANCE
THE UNIQUE QUALITIES OF
SANTA BARBARA.*

COMMITTEE CORE VALUES:

1. Living within our existing resources including air, water, wastewater, and visual resources.
2. Managing growth to protect openness and naturalness from congestion, pollution, and crowding.
3. Preserving public views of the ocean, mountains and foothills.
4. Protecting clean air, public health and safety.

DESIRED END PRODUCT:

1. A General Plan built on Santa Barbara's illustrious history to chart our course for the future.
2. Zoning ordinances that are consistent with the General Plan.



East de la Guerra Street - classic Santa Barbara

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

This Element needs reformatting. All Goals, Policies and Implementation Strategies of the Conservation Element currently are together in a separate section at the end of the element. Each set of Goals should be with the resource to which they apply.

THE GPUC RECOMMENDS THE ADOPTION OF
THE FOLLOWING NEW ELEMENT:

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

PROPOSAL FOR A HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION ELEMENT

Santa Barbara's history is integral to the City's identity, cultural activities, economic health, and its physical appearance. The City has been in the forefront of historic preservation activities for fifty years. Recognition of this heritage and its preservation legacy must exist in the elements of the General Plan. The current Conservation Element, adopted in 1979, contains a section on Cultural and Historic Resources. Included in this section are statements on archaeological, historic, and architectural resources. These statements and their accompanying goals could be updated and revised and the appended obsolete lists of resources removed. More effective, however, would be the formulation and adoption of a separate new Historic Preservation Element encompassing goals and strategies for the continued recognition and for protection of our heritage.

The introduction to the City of Santa Barbara General Plan, adopted in 1964, expresses the community's respect for its heritage:



Southern Pacific Train Station - built 1905

El Cuartel - built 1788 -
the oldest building in
Santa Barbara and the
second oldest building in
California.



Santa Barbara has, built into its very substance, a meaning. A reason for being. The natural beauty of its setting speaks of this meaning. Its history and its past generations of dwellers speak of it. And we know by the volumes of words devoted to the capturing of this meaning, and the great variety of opinion about it, that this meaning is not a superficial thing.

Unfortunately, the subjects of history, historic preservation, archaeological resources, historic architecture, and building height regulations in historic areas are not addressed in the General Plan 2030 document *Conditions, Trends, and Issues*. Santa Barbara, with its special position among California communities, should adopt a Historic Preservation Element to provide a focus for conservation, recognition, and assistance for the resources of which we are so proud.

Citizens Planning Association (CPA) recommends that the City of Santa Barbara prepare and adopt a Historic Preservation Element amendment to the General Plan. The General Plan Update Committee of CPA provides the following suggestions for text, goals, and implementation strategies. It is recommended that the City use these suggestions during the process and that it add to them.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ELEMENT

Section 22.22.010 of Chapter 22.22 of the Municipal Code, entitled "HISTORIC STRUCTURES" sets forth the purpose for the chapter. The opening paragraph reads:

It is hereby declared as a matter of public policy that the recognition, preservation, enhancement, perpetuation and use of structures, natural features, sites and areas within the City of Santa Barbara having historic, architectural, archaeological, cultural or aesthetic significance is required in the interest of the health, economic prosperity, cultural enrichment and general welfare of the people...

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

PROPOSAL FOR A HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION ELEMENT (continued)

Specific purposes are then listed. The above declaration also applies to the City's Historic Preservation Element, and to the remainder of the General Plan itself. Santa Barbara is known throughout the world for its beautiful natural setting, its pleasing character and architectural heritage based on its Spanish Colonial background, and the protective policies and generosity of its citizens. The people desire to continue protection of these unique features and to remain vigilant through the use of public policies and actions.

The statements and recommendations of this General Plan element reflect the long-held preservation wishes of the community, embodied initially in the early 1920s with architectural controls, furthered forty years later by the creation of a review committee and adoption of the first Historic Structures ordinance, and updated by the 1977 ordinance. The element seeks to reaffirm the value of Santa Barbara's historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources. Each General Plan policy and implementing action shall take into consideration the provisions of this element.

EXISTING PROGRAMS:

The City of Santa Barbara has a number of ordinances, policies and programs relating to archaeological sites, historical resources and architectural control in sensitive areas. Efforts must be made to promote, expand and continue such programs.



Victorian house
Haley and Chapala Streets

GOALS:

Continue to protect, preserve, and enhance the city's historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources.

Adopt a positive attitude towards preservation at every phase of City government decision-making as a valid and necessary component. Encourage cooperation from other governmental agencies.

Adopt a program of public awareness and support for historic and cultural resource preservation for all age groups as a key to Santa Barbara's uniqueness and continuing economic vitality.



Brinkerhoff
Avenue

Continue to protect significant buildings, structures, archaeological sites, infrastructure, stonework, trees, and 1853 street names through Landmark, Structure of Merit and district designations, and state and federal designations.

Continue the city-wide program of architectural and historical resources surveys to identify and record information about significant structures and sites.

Enact Municipal Code provisions to require setbacks and similar regulations to protect the historic and architectural character of residential neighborhoods and mixed-use neighborhoods.

Consider adoption of a program to recognize historic buildings, structures and sites, such as publications with maps or modest signs compatible with the area's historic character.

Make use of state and federal legislation and procedures enacted to aid in the preservation of historic buildings, sites, and structures.

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

PROPOSAL FOR A HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION ELEMENT (continued)

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

Provide educational opportunities for City staff who are charged with interpreting and enforcing ordinances concerned with historic structures and sites; include those who are assigned to process development projects.

Provide sufficient staff time to manage the architectural and historic resources survey program, which is essential to the identification of potential Landmarks, Structures of Merit, landmark districts, and historic neighborhoods.

Provide sufficient staff time to process Landmark and Structure of Merit designations.

Adopt ordinance definitions and provisions for preservation districts other than architectural control districts.

In order to protect and preserve historic properties and neighborhoods, require that the use of specific plans and other adjustments to a proposed development's zoning regulation compliance shall not be used

The
Presidio -
established
1782.



to exceed allowed building heights or to reduce setbacks, open space, planting, and parking space requirements.

Adopt a policy requiring the City Council, boards and commissions to consider stylistic and architectural compatibility for development projects located at or near the borders of two architectural control districts.

Amend the General Plan Land Use Element to include frequent references to the City's policies for the preservation of historic resources.

Amend the General Plan Housing Element to include provisions to recognize and protect historic resources and to restore regulations to assist their preservation in all zones.

Rework the Urban Design Guidelines where necessary to protect identified historic and cultural resources and to include building height limits in landmark districts.

Review and amend the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance, where necessary, to protect historic resources and neighborhoods.

Adopt policies to encourage adaptive reuse of historic buildings where the earlier uses are no longer in effect.

Continue to encourage use of the California Historical Building Code and similar codes. Use tax relief programs, conservation/preservation easements, and similar historic preservation incentives.

Continue the involvement of the City Redevelopment Agency in the historic preservation policies and efforts of the community. Require this involvement of any agencies/divisions that may be formed in the future.

Create a restoration/rehabilitation loan program specifically for structures included on the designation lists or the potential historic resource lists.

Encourage the establishment of educational programs and public information activities by local, state and national organizations, including schools and the news media, to further the preservation of historic and cultural resources.

Prepared by Mary Louise Days,
former City of Santa Barbara Historian
April 2008

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

VIEW PRESERVATION POLICY

New development shall preserve scenic public views including those of the ocean and lower elevations of the City viewed respectively from the shoreline and foothills and of the foothills and mountains viewed respectively from the beach and lower elevations of the City.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

1. Create a digital photo inventory of key views seen by pedestrians, bicycle riders, bus riders, and motorists from the Highway 101 gateway to the City, Cabrillo Boulevard, State Street, Anacapa Street and Garden Street. Bus stops and public gathering places should also be included.
2. Adopt scenic overlay zones for view corridors where lower height limits (25-30 feet) and greater setbacks are needed to ensure preservation of scenic public views.



The view from State and Ortega Streets



The view from Cabrillo Boulevard

OPENNESS POLICY

New development shall maintain and enhance the existing degree of openness, naturalness, and lack of congestion.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:

Establish a Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.0 in office and commercial zones to ensure compatibility with the size, bulk, mass, and scale of existing development and to prevent a canyon effect.

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

URBAN FOREST

The current *Conservation Element* has a small general discussion of Specimen and Street Trees, and their importance to the city is recognized. However, while Santa Barbara has been designated a *Tree City USA* for the last 25 consecutive years, this great resource lacks its own goals, policies and implementation strategies. The City's urban forest merits these to help assure its maintenance and enhancement. We urge the City to add these as the General Plan is updated. The urban forest is vital to Santa Barbara's air quality, beauty and livability.

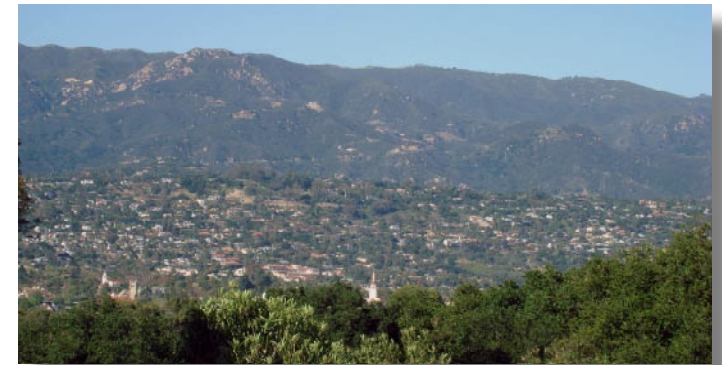


From KEYT

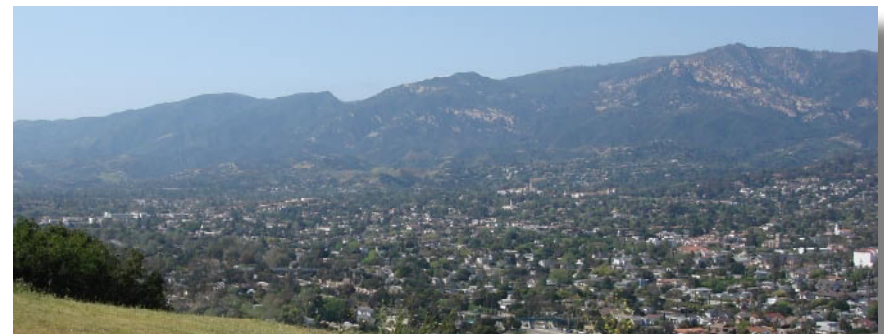
When the Presidio was started in 1782, it was built on a largely treeless plain. Now whichever way you look in Santa Barbara (except for downtown) whether at street level or on a hill, you see mostly trees. They must not be taken for granted.



From Franceschi Park



From Meigs Road



From KEYT

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

URBAN FOREST

(continued)



Ficus on West Anapamu



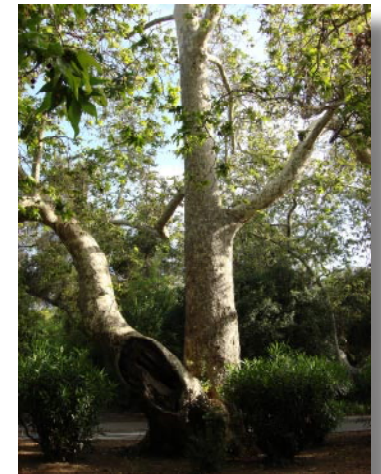
Italian Stone Pines on East Anapamu



Magnolias on San Andres

The Italian Stone Pines on Anapamu and the Magnolias on San Andres are well known. The other street trees in Santa Barbara are also important.

The concept of Fruit Forests was presented at the Development Trends workshops in March 2008. This idea should be explored.



Sycamore on San Remo Drive



A mix of Eucalyptus, Jacarandas, Sycamores and Palms on State Street



Jacarandas on West Carrillo



Podocarpus trees on Wentworth Avenue

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

AIR QUALITY

A. SUMMARY REMARKS

Clean air may well be the most important natural resource for both human health and planetary life. We believe that Santa Barbara should do more than it does to protect its limited share of this precious resource. We recommend, therefore, that the Air Quality Chapter of the city's Conservation Element (first adopted in 1979 and last amended in 1994) be updated both against the general background of climate change and with the following two particular concerns in mind:

1. THE SOUTH COAST'S AIR QUALITY IS LESS THOROUGHLY MONITORED NOW THAN IT WAS BETWEEN 1988 AND 2000, AND 2. THE NUMBER AND SOPHISTICATION OF SCIENTIFIC STUDIES DEMONSTRATING AIR POLLUTION'S HEALTH IMPACTS HAVE GREATLY INCREASED IN RECENT YEARS BUT THE IMPLICATIONS OF NEW FINDINGS -- FOR EXAMPLE, ABOUT THE HEALTH RISKS INVOLVED WITH RESIDING TOO CLOSE TO HEAVY STOP-AND-GO CITY TRAFFIC -- HAVE NOT YET BEEN BROUGHT TO BEAR ON LAND USE DECISIONS.

The proposed update can build upon the existing document's fine coverage of numerous topics. These include the topographic and meteorological features that limit Santa Barbara's "holding capacity" for pollutants and the financial consequences of air pollution affecting the community. We should also strive to reach the 1994 update's two primary goals:

"Maintain air quality above Federal and State ambient air quality standards" and "Reduce dependence on the automobile." But at least two additional goals deserve to be considered for inclusion: "Develop means for site-specific monitoring of air quality in different parts of the city" and "Coordinate land use policies with site-specific considerations of traffic-generated air pollution.

B. FURTHER DISCUSSION

In terms of the pollutants for which state and national standards have been established, Santa Barbara County's overall air quality is

respectable but needs improvement. Furthermore, air quality in the county as a whole is one thing; air quality at specific locations is quite another. For example, our downtown area's officially estimated background cancer risks due to air pollution are far worse than the corresponding risks in other parts of the county. It is easy to see why this should be so.

The City of Santa Barbara (along with the City of Goleta and some adjacent unincorporated areas) is "in the eye of the storm" when it comes to the combined impact of motorized sea, air, and ground transportation -- three major sources of air pollution which mainly rely on fossil fuels and produce both green house gases and toxic particulate matter. Federal or state legislation is needed to set more rigorous emission standards for air and ground transportation, and international agreements must be reached for lessening the pollution levels caused by cargo shipping.

Yet it is up to local officials to regulate (or at least influence) the kind and amount of traffic affecting local roadways, and to ensure that residential buildings and other sensitive receptor locations like schools, daycare centers, and nursing homes are sited at a safe distance from freeways and heavily traveled traffic corridors. For both kinds of governmental intervention it is essential to have site-specific information about traffic-related air pollution within the city. At present, however, there is no way to gather sufficiently accurate detailed information, in part because only one monitoring station operates in the entire city.

Recent research* has established clear links between heavy traffic and the health of "sensitive receptors" (e.g., children, seniors, pulmonary patients) in the population. In particular, numerous studies have demonstrated the increased probability for the occurrence of both asthma and retarded lung development in children residing near highways and city arterials. Ways must thus be found to spot check or reliably estimate the health risks associated with particular city locations before they are approved for residential development or other sensitive land uses.

*Source references are provided at www.citizensplanning.org under Issues and Events: "CPA's Proposed Updates for the City of SB's Conservation Element's Air Quality Chapter" and "Attached Abstracts."

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

AIR QUALITY

(continued)

We believe that the city's updated Conservation Element should continue to stress the need for promoting modes of transportation other than the use of motor vehicles with single occupancy. The improvement of sidewalks, bike paths, and street lighting, as well the offering of various incentives for ride sharers and bus riders, should remain an integral part of our efforts to improve air quality. We also believe, however, that strong added language is needed to caution against land use decisions which place dense residential developments near freeways or too close to our most heavily traveled surface streets without (a) improved site-specific monitoring of current conditions and (b) reliable forecasts of the resulting public health risks in the locations under consideration.

The siting of dense residential developments downtown and along traffic corridors has sometimes been advocated on the assumption that increasing urban density (unlike increasing suburban sprawl) might decrease air pollution. The validity of that assumption has not been proven. Furthermore, most advocates of urban densification tend to overlook the complex relationship between population density and traffic-generated air pollution.

Consider two examples:

- (1) It may be true that the typical household located in a higher density area generates fewer trips than the number of trips that would be generated by the same household if it were located in a lower density area. BUT: The denser area would generate more trips by dint of being inhabited by more households, and the first and last miles of the additional trips (as well as many "cold starts" of automobile engines) would be concentrated within the dense area itself. The resulting congested traffic would especially impact public health in densely populated areas where, due to the presence of taller buildings and the absence of sufficiently generous setbacks, air pollution takes longer to dissipate.
- (2) It may also be true that people living in a high density area will

often rely on alternative modes of transportation, especially if walking and biking are made safe and public transportation is convenient. BUT: People who live and/or work in a densely populated area are exposed to its polluted air even as they try to derive health benefits from the outdoor exercise afforded by biking or walking. While such exercise may help to diminish the health risks posed by excessive weight gain and obesity, the benefits are often coupled with the respiratory and cardiovascular harm done by air pollution.

IN THE LIGHT OF THE FOREGOING CONSIDERATIONS, WE URGE THAT THE UPDATED AIR QUALITY CHAPTER OF THE CONSERVATION ELEMENT (1) ADDRESS BOTH THE PERTINENT ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF FURTHER INCREASING THE RESIDENTIAL DENSITY IN AREAS OF HEAVY TRAFFIC, AND (2) INSIST THAT ANY SUCH INCREASE IN DENSITY BE MADE CONTINGENT ON ADEQUATE AIR QUALITY MONITORING OF THE SITES PROPOSED FOR HIGH-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT.

C. CONCLUSION

AS MENTIONED AND JUSTIFIED ABOVE, WE PROPOSE THAT TWO NEW GOALS RELATING TO AIR QUALITY BE ADDED TO THE CITY'S CONSERVATION ELEMENT:

GOAL #3: DEVELOP MEANS FOR SITE-SPECIFIC MONITORING OF AIR QUALITY IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE CITY, AND

GOAL #4: COORDINATE LAND USE POLICIES WITH SITE-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS OF TRAFFIC-GENERATED AIR POLLUTION.

The skyline is brown from locally generated air pollution in this view from the Santa Barbara County Court House tower.



CONSERVATION ELEMENT

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The goals and policies are fine, but the section gives short shrift to sensitive lands such as Parma Park. The Wilcox property has become the Douglas Preserve. The words "City of Goleta" should be added to the discussion of the Goleta Slough. As do many of the sections in the Conservation Element this one needs updating.

DRAINAGE AND FLOOD CONTROL

The City's creeks are treated as part of a drainage and flood control system. There is little about their aesthetic and recreational value. The GPUC suggests that there be a separate Drainage and Flooding section and a separate Creeks and Watersheds section of the Conservation Element and recommends that each subject in the element be a separate chapter with separate section for goals, policies and implementation strategies, acknowledging that there is significant overlap. The existing goals, policies and strategies for Drainage and Flood Control should be retained.

In addition the GPUC recommends the adoption of the new goal and three implementation strategies below which are related to buildings within the 100 year flood plain.

GOAL:

Provide a substantial amount of publicly owned recreation and open space land within the 100 year flood plain.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

1. Require a minimum 50 feet buffer between the top of the bank of the four major creeks and any structure or road.
2. All new buildings located within the 100 year flood plain shall have habitable floors one foot above the 100 year flood elevation as shown on the FEMA flood map with no exceptions and no modifications allowed.
3. All new buildings located within the 100 year flood plain shall provide a means for floodwater to flow under and through the

building in a space below the floor.

4. Create, keep permanently and update annually a map with identified locations of desired recreation and open space land located within the 100 year flood plain for future purchase or dedication as opportunities arise.
5. Each year allocate money in the City Parks and Recreation budget for the purchase of recreation open space land located in the 100 year flood plain. Money not spent in a fiscal year shall accumulate in a new "Open space purchase fund".
6. Incorporate strategies 1, 2 and 3 into the zoning ordinance.

THE GPUC RECOMMENDS THE ADDITION TO THE CONSERVATION ELEMENT OF THE FOLLOWING NEW SECTION:

CREEKS AND WATERSHEDS

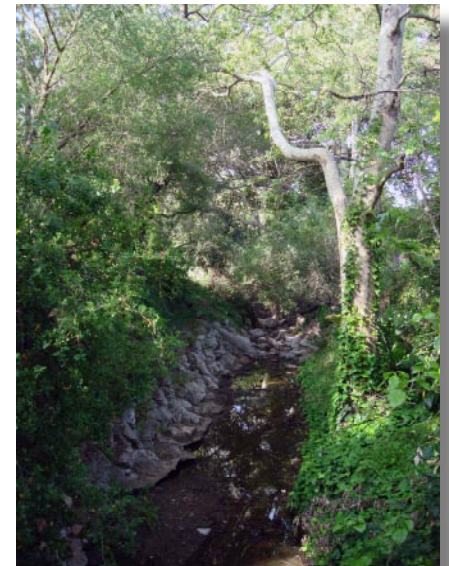
GOAL: Restore and maintain healthy and visually attractive creek and watershed environments.

POLICY 1. RESTORE NATURAL CREEK AND CREEKSIDE ENVIRONMENT TO BENEFIT WATER QUALITY, DIMINISH FLOODING RISKS, DIMINISH FIRE RISKS, PROMOTE HABITAT RECOVERY IN RIPARIAN CORRIDORS AND ENHANCE VISUAL RESOURCES.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Restore natural creek bottom in creeks and restore native riparian vegetation when and where feasible. Replace failed control structures with biotechnical solutions.
2. Remove concrete walls and hard bank treatment where feasible.
3. Through redevelopment, increase creek setbacks where problems exist to allow removal of hard bank armament
4. Prohibit creek water diversion.

San Roque Creek at San Remo Drive



CONSERVATION ELEMENT

CREEKS & WATERSHEDS

(continued)

5. Restore flows that have been diverted by past actions.
6. Manage and enhance vegetation to help maintain fuel moistures in a safe range.

POLICY 2. STRENGTHEN STANDARDS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT ADJACENT TO CREEKS TO REDUCE CREEK POLLUTION AND FLOODING.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Increase building setback requirements to a minimum of 50 feet to protect water resources and to protect homes from hazards.
2. Install bioswales within the riparian buffer to minimize downstream flooding, help maintain fuel moistures in a safe range, control erosion, and improve water quality.
3. Restrict use of pesticides and herbicides within creek buffer. Adopt Integrated Pest Management (IPM) throughout watersheds.
4. Employ Best Management Practices (BMP's) including better enforcement of runoff management, hazardous vegetation management and weed abatement programs.
5. Require pervious surfaces in driveways, patios and walkways as well other landscape treatment to slow run-off release.
6. Daylight buried stream sections wherever feasible to return functionality and health to city watersheds.
7. Build all new and replacement construction over streams to equal or exceed the 100-year flood capacity.

POLICY 3. MAXIMIZE EFFECTIVENESS OF WATERSHED PLANNING.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Include other agencies where multiple municipalities or other agencies share a watershed.
2. Include the entirety of a watershed in planning for greater flooding protection, fire protection, habitat, aesthetic, and groundwater benefits.



Sycamore Creek
at
Mason Street

POLICY 4. FUND AND IMPLEMENT A ROBUST MAINTENANCE PROGRAM FOR ALL ASPECTS OF WATERSHED INFRASTRUCTURE AND IMPROVEMENT.

POLICY 5. ESTABLISH A LEVEL OF TOLERABLE RISK IN CREEK WATERS.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Work with experts in drinking water, recreational water and wastewater reuse to determine and evaluate risks.
2. Design best management practices (BMP's) with numeric limits that treat pollutants of concern as well as total suspended solids.
3. Require water quality monitoring to assure that BMP's are effective.

POLICY 7. MAINTAIN POLLUTION FREE CREEKS.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Require sewer hookups for all upstream uses where feasible.
2. Integrate stormwater management with riparian restoration utilizing state of the art stormwater practices, including use of vegetation, wetlands and ponds, porous pavement, bioswales and retention basins.
3. Rigorously maintain sewer lines to prevent leakage into the groundwater basin and runoff into creeks.
4. Analyze potential for increased runoff caused by additional impervious surfaces of new development and design and build creek stormwater handling capacities to safely handle the additional flow.

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

WATER RESOURCES

The Water Resources section of the Conservation Element needs to be entirely rewritten. The latest date mentioned is 1979 while everything changed since the drought that ended in 1993. For example, the table showing the categories of demand, drought, normal, and wet, are all predrought and not even close to existing conditions. Higher prices placed on water and conservation measures caused a significant decrease in demand so that "normal" demand is now somewhat lower despite greater population. The water section should bring us up to date on where we are now.

On water supplies the document should show the effect of the agreements with Cachuma in accounting for Gibraltar water. The document should show how much water is received on average from Mission Tunnel, which is physically independent from the Gibraltar source. The update of the General Plan should take the opportunity to inform the citizens of all that has happened since the drought.

1. The Cachuma contract has been renegotiated and its terms should be plainly explained.



Cachuma Reservoir
Santa Ynez River

2. The state of the desalting plant should be clearly explained and the document should state how it is to be integrated into our drought planning.



The Charles Meyer
Desalination Facility
Yanonali Street

3. The most profound change is the recent action by the Court to curtail pumping in the Delta. The California State Department of Water Resources (DWR) has now issued a document stating the expected decrease in deliveries. The longterm average deliveries now calculated by DWR would be 63% of contractual amounts; in a six year drought this drops to 34 to 38%. Thus the City's 3000 acre feet share is only worth a little over 1000 acre feet in a drought when it would be most needed.
4. The Zaca fire of 2007 burned two-thirds of the watershed of Gibraltar. The effect on reservoir yields needs to be calculated and made part of the document.

Gibraltar
Reservoir
Santa Ynez
River



All photos on this page are courtesy of the City of Santa Barbara

HOUSING ELEMENT

CPA urges the City of Santa Barbara to adopt the following goal, policies and implementation strategies.

GOAL:

Reconcile the community's need for diverse housing opportunities with its longstanding commitment to preserve the established character of the city and to live within our resources, including land, water, air quality, transportation, waste management, and visual resources.

POLICY 1: CREATE EFFECTIVE INCENTIVES FOR NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT THAT FAVOR WELL-DESIGNED PROJECTS DIRECTED TO THE NEEDS OF THE WORKFORCE AND THEIR FAMILIES, SO AS TO REDUCE THE CURRENT JOBS/HOUSING IMBALANCE.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

1. Preserve aging rental units through aggressive acquisition and rehabilitation or through low interest loans to present owners for needed repairs.
2. Permit condo conversions and new residential developments only to benefit, by resale restrictions and rent controls, very low, low, moderate, and middle income members of the workforce or the needy and the disabled.
3. Strengthen the existing restrictions on commercial development and require projects to include employee housing.
4. Support programs subsidized by employers for both resale restricted and rent-controlled housing affordable to members of the middle income workforce.
5. Where site-specific circumstances permit, offer extraordinary bonus density to projects consisting entirely of a mix of resale restricted or rent-controlled units affordable to very low, low, moderate and middle income workforce.
6. Provide ample landscaped setbacks and areas of protected open space to minimize air pollution's impact, documented in recent research, on children and other sensitive receptors who reside near freeways and traffic corridors.
7. Persuade SBCC and other schools to limit out-of-town enrollment and to build dormitories in order to reduce competition for reasonable rentals between students and low-paid workers.

8. Consider overlay zones to implement Policy #1.

POLICY 2: PRESERVE SANTA BARBARA'S HISTORICALLY ESTABLISHED CHARACTER AS A RELATIVELY SMALL, EMINENTLY LIVABLE, AND WIDELY ADMIRER CITY.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

1. Continue to provide homeowners, renters, commuters, and tourists ample natural and cultural opportunities to enjoy the city and its surroundings.
2. Strengthen zoning laws and architectural design guidelines that limit new buildings to human scale, protect significant public views, and favor pedestrian friendly streetscapes through generous sidewalks, landscaped setbacks, and other open spaces.
3. Find ways to decrease traffic congestion with increased support for alternative modes of transportation rather than undue limitations on commercial or residential parking.

POLICY 3: ASSURE THAT THE CITY'S GROWTH IS CAREFULLY PLANNED AND MEANINGFULLY CONTROLLED SO THAT SANTA BARBARA REMAINS WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF ITS NATURAL AND INFRASTRUCTURAL RESOURCES.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

1. Inventory our major resources (clean air and water, infrastructure for sewage and solid waste disposal, road capacity, public ocean and mountain views, etc.) to determine whether they have increased, decreased, or have remained stable since the city estimated in 1985 that its resources can sustain roughly 40,000 units of housing.



La Casa de las Fuentes - high density work force housing (57 dwelling units per acre) that fits within the community.

HOUSING ELEMENT

(continued)

2. Determine the number and condition of illegal and often substandard living units so that their impact on our resources, as well as on the residents' health and safety, can be realistically assessed.
3. Forecast the traffic impact of proposed developments with the realistic baseline of actually existing traffic rather than on the theoretical basis of nationwide "average daily trips" that have little to do with site-specific circumstances.
4. Amend the zoning ordinance to require calculating the residential density of a mixed-use project after the square footage of the proposed commercial component has been deducted from the total square footage allowable by zoning.
5. Promote environmental sustainability through enforceable standards for green building techniques.

LAND USE ELEMENT

In 1989 the voters approved Measure E to limit new commercial development. It has been effective, and the GPUC recommends that it be renewed prior to its expiration date, preferably by a charter amendment, using the remaining allocations.

We believe that in order **TO STAY WITHIN OUR RESOURCES WE MUST KEEP RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT TO 40,005 DWELLING UNITS.**

We recommend that City Council ask the Planning Commission to review and evaluate through a public hearing process the Land Use Element Implementation Strategies and make recommendations for any needed revisions.



SEISMIC SAFETY/SAFETY ELEMENT

The GPUC recommends that this element be renamed the "SEISMIC SAFETY AND HAZARD SAFETY ELEMENT" and that it be divided into two distinct chapters, each with its own separate list of goals, policies and implementation strategies. The GPUC recommends the following additions to the existing element.

Policy: (under the Seismic Safety chapter)

PROVIDE GREATER SAFETY FOR ALL NEW CONSTRUCTION.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

1. Assess all projects on a site-specific basis for seismic or other geologic risk, natural hazards, and man-made hazards.
2. Enforce all applicable codes and regulations.
3. Maintain, revise as needed and enforce existing standards and criteria to reduce or avoid all levels of seismic or other geologic risk.
4. Maintain and update maps identifying known and probable seismic or other geologic risk.
5. Adequately fund and staff an Office of Emergency Services.

Policy: (under the Seismic Safety chapter)

Advocate, educate, and coordinate for greater seismic safety.

Policy: (under the Hazard Safety chapter)

STRENGTHEN STANDARDS FOR EXISTING AND NEW DEVELOPMENT IN HIGH FIRE HAZARD AREAS.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

1. Capture roof runoff for reuse; require use of cisterns; require runoff retention on site and employ methods to slow release of water to help maintain live fuel moistures in safe range.
2. Provide appropriate Fire Department connections to cisterns, and require that cisterns be kept full during fire season to give fire companies augmented water sources during major fires.
3. Prohibit further encroachment into dangerous fire environments where types of fuels, steepness of topography, hydrology, soil types and risks posed to environmental resources prevent emergency responders from providing safety.

NOISE ELEMENT

While the current Noise Element needs very few substantive changes, the GPUC suggests the addition of three new implementation strategies under Policy 1.

1. SET 65 COMMUNITY NOISE EQUIVALENT LEVEL (CNEL) AS THE CITY'S THRESHOLD FOR SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT TO REQUIRED OUTDOOR LIVING SPACE.
2. REQUIRE A NOISE STUDY ON ANY PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT LOCATED WITHIN THE 65 CNEL OR HIGHER NOISE CONTOUR.
3. AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE TO PROHIBIT ANY NEW RESIDENTIAL UNITS WHERE THE NOISE LEVEL OF THE REQUIRED OUTDOOR LIVING SPACE WOULD EXCEED 65 CNEL.

The GPUC also suggests that each policy be stated in more positive terms, i.e., "Establish land use noise compatibility standards..." instead of "Land use noise compatibility standards should be established..." The policies should be immediately followed by the pertinent implementation strategies. The City of Goleta needs to be added to the list of "other governmental jurisdictions."



The 101 freeway and the railroad along with the airport are the largest generators of noise in the city.

Kids' World

East
Alameda
Park



PARKS & RECREATION ELEMENT

The GPUC recommends that the present Parks and Recreation element be organized into sections with goals, policies and implementation strategies so it conforms to most of the other elements, and we recommend two new goals:

1. ADD TO EXISTING PARKLAND TO PROVIDE FOR AN EXPANDING POPULATION IN SANTA BARBARA'S DOWNTOWN.
2. PROVIDE FOR A VARIETY OF RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, ESPECIALLY FOR AT-RISK YOUTH.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES: make "opportunity purchases", especially along creeks; explore public-private partnerships or partnerships with other governmental agencies, e.g. school districts; trade sites with military facilities so as to acquire both the Canon Perdido and State Street armories.

The text of the current element needs to be updated.

SURVEY OF CPA MEMBERS

In May of 2007 CPA's General Plan Update Committee sent out a questionnaire about the City of Santa Barbara's General Plan Update to all CPA members. 38% (106) of those who received the questionnaire filled it out, an extraordinarily high response rate.

Some questions resulted in clear answers. Others found no real consensus.

The first question about **SANTA BARBARA'S MOST IMPORTANT QUALITIES** indicated that none of them are considered less than moderately important. **THE TOP THREE IN IMPORTANCE – CLEAN AIR (1 IN RANKING), SWEEPING PUBLIC VIEWS AND CLEAN BEACHES AND WATERSHEDS (EACH 2) AND OPENNESS (3) ARE SEPARATED BY ONLY 1/10 OF A PERCENT.**

The second question about **THE MOST IMPORTANT PLANNING ISSUES** elicited a similar response in that nothing is considered of less than moderate importance. There is more separation,

however, and **TRAFFIC CONGESTION IS FIRST IN IMPORTANCE FOLLOWED BY CREEK AND OCEAN POLLUTION.**

THE GREAT MAJORITY OF RESPONDENTS FOUND THE CURRENT BUILDING HEIGHT LIMITS APPROPRIATE IN RESIDENTIAL ZONES, WITH THE MAJORITY WANTING TO REDUCE THEM IN INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL ZONES where four stories up to 60 feet are permitted now.

No consensus was reached on high density housing downtown and along traffic corridors. A significant percentage were undecided. Some who supported the concept expected that high density housing downtown and uptown would have a "detrimental effect on the community."

88.3% SUPPORTED THE EXISTING GENERAL PLAN GOALS OF LIVING WITHIN OUR RESOURCES AND MAINTAINING THE ESTABLISHED CHARACTER OF THE CITY. 8.7% said there were overriding considerations that warranted changing this goal in order to provide adequate housing for working families or for cleaner air and the protection of the ocean.

