General Plan Introduction

"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. What Santa Barbara seems to be saying transcends all of mankind's material sciences, most of his culture. It touches a basic need in man to feel and be reminded of his source, to sense the depth and strength of his roots, and hence to be assured of his own meaning. It offers the experience of man's relationship to his Earth neither dominating nor being suppressed, but each existing in harmony with the other." (Excerpt from the Introduction, Santa Barbara General Plan, 1964.)

The City of Santa Barbara nestles in a beautiful setting between the Santa Ynez Mountains and the Pacific Ocean with expansive views of the sea and of the mountains. In its temperate Mediterranean climate almost everything grows. Tens of thousands of street trees provide shade, beauty and a calming serenity.

Santa Barbara's history extends back some 8,000 years to its first human settlements. The periods of Hispanic and early California history are captured in the beautiful architecture of the built environment, creating a unique and diverse community of charm, warmth and grace.

The health, safety and welfare of the community is of primary importance to the City. The Downtown is vibrant and eminently walkable; the arts and culture lively and engaging. There are fine art, historic and natural history museums, and Santa Barbara's zoo is a delight for people of all ages. There are numerous parks as well as a state historic park. There are miles of lovely and easily accessible beaches.In addition, Santa Barbara is an extraordinarily environmentally responsible and caring community. Hundreds of non-profit organizations work to improve the lives of the people of the area.

Generations of Santa Barbarans have worked with determination to protect and preserve Santa Barbara's special qualities, its beautiful views, its sense of place, its small town feel and its environment. These are the things about Santa Barbara that residents and visitors alike cherish. These are the things about Santa Barbara that make it internationally renowned.

This General Plan seeks to maintain these special qualities and a socially, environmentally, and economically healthy and sustainable community as the City goes forward to 2030.

GENERAL PLAN PURPOSE AND NEED

From adoption of "Living Within Our Resources" as a central mission statement, the people of Santa Barbara have affirmed the importance of sustainability. Because of its desirability as a place to live, housing and land prices have always been higher in Santa Barbara than in communities in North Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties. Although a significant portion of the city's housing stock is affordable to low and very low income households, few middle-income affordable housing options exist for the needs of our diverse community, risking the very character we strive to retain.

High energy prices and global unrest add a new dimension of economic complexity and uncertainty to people's life choices about where to live and work. Affordable transportation will likely follow suit. The portion of Santa Barbara's workforce, economically displaced to live in outlying communities, will face higher commute costs, threatening business and service industries that keep our community running.

Climate change may indeed influence our pattern of living, how we do business, and how we use local resources. It may influence how we get our energy, food and water. We may rely less on fossil fuels for travel and household needs. Increasing food distribution costs will urge us to seek food sources more locally.

Global weather and temperature changes could also impact our region's water supply, compelling us to pursue new conservation and supply options. The City's infrastructure is maintained by a network of funding mechanisms. The current funding structure covers only the minimum in maintenance and limits our ability to fund solutions to existing and future challenges. Moving forward with a vision of sustainability will require new funding approaches and unwavering political will.

In order for the community to successfully address the issues that challenge our ways of life and those of future generations, Santa Barbara will need to become a more sustainable community (for a definition of a sustainable community see page 23). The purpose of this updated 2011 General Plan[1] is to adjust our current course to become more holistically sustainable. For Santa Barbara, sustainability is to blend and balance protecting and enhancing our natural and built environments, social equity, and economic vitality, which together form the character of our community.

The challenges facing the City now and into the future include many that are familiar, such as growth management, environmental stewardship, affordable housing, historic preservation and design compatibility, and a few that are new, such as sustainability, climate change and the promotion of community health. How Santa Barbara's government and its people address these challenges will influence Santa Barbara's evolution in the next twenty years and beyond.

ISSUES AND POLICY DRIVERS

Development and Growth Issues

Both local necessities and global forces compelled updating the City's General Plan beginning in 2005.

- The need for the community to revisit the City's Charter sections §1507, living within resource limits, and §1508, managing growth particularly non-residential development, which expired December 31, 2009;
- The need to adequately fund the city's capital and service needs;
- The socio-economic consequences of the types of market housing that have been built throughout the past decade; and
- The increasing global need to live and develop in a more sustainable way.

These trends and forces are in fact highly interconnected and encompass a myriad of considerations for the General Plan. The baseline report, *Conditions, Trends and Issues* (2005) defined the status of important city components, and identified numerous key land use issues. These issues and additional ones offered by members of the public were discussed throughout a year-long consultation process that is distilled in the *Community Input Summary Report*, 2007. From all of these sources, the compatibilities and conflicts became evident between community values and aspirations, global and regional forces and trends, physical limitations, and economic realities.

[1] For an explanation of the approach to the General Plan and which elements were comprehensively updated as part of the 2011 *Plan Santa Barbara* General Plan Update please refer to pages 27 and Content section for each of the goals and policies section.

What emerged were several recurring themes that have shaped and focused the substance of this plan. These themes or "policy drivers" have been divided into five groups. However, connecting all of them is the underlying, indisputable need for Santa Barbara, along with the rest of the world, to become more sustainable.

Policy Drivers

In considering the recent trends and challenges facing Santa Barbara, the *Plan Santa Barbara* General Plan Update process focused on several key issues that have gained importance as the planning process has evolved. These issues and implications also reflect comments and concerns about growth expressed by residents and community interest groups that participated in the 2007 *Plan Santa Barbara* outreach and workshop process. They are issues that have continued to inform the community dialogue about reassessing existing City land use and growth management policies, with the objective of determining which policies should be reaffirmed, which policies amended, and what new policies are required. Balancing among competing policy objectives is a key challenge in this effort.

These issues are referred to in this document as "policy drivers" because they often underlie a number of key policy questions demanding an integrated response. The following discussion also identifies some of the possible implications of future growth and development if the City made no changes to its current growth management policies, and the development trends since 1990 continued to the year 2030. Equally important, these policy drivers and implications are addressed thematically in the proposed Sustainability Principles, as well as through specific yet correlative goals and policies found throughout the several areas of the General Plan. Five key policy drivers that have been identified in the *Plan Santa Barbara* process are:

- Economic and Fiscal Health
- Historic and Community Character
- Growth Management
- Public and Community Health
- Energy and Climate Change

Economic and Fiscal Health

Economic events such as the 2008 stock market crash, housing market meltdown, and ensuing international credit crisis are sobering reminders of the cyclical nature of economies. From time to time Santa Barbara must expect and be prepared for such reversals. The abiding trends of loss of affordable housing, loss of our socio-economic diversity, and loss of local businesses have not changed. Also unchanged is the government sectors struggle with funding for public services and for maintaining and expanding necessary infrastructure.

The lack of affordable housing will continue to have an effect on the "jobs/housing" imbalance, long distance commuting, overcrowding and illegal dwellings, and worker recruitment and retention. One significant fiscal concern related to housing is the expiration of the Redevelopment Agency in 2015 as it has funded a sizable percentage of the City's permanently affordable housing stock.

Though more transitory in nature, but significant nevertheless, the current state of the economy could extend deferred maintenance of City infrastructure. Continuing to defer maintenance or upgrades to infrastructure will likely increase the overall cost when it is eventually undertaken, and could possibly in the meantime delay desired development for lack of capacity.

Numerous City programs are in place to provide for water service, wastewater collection and treatment, storm drains, waste management and recycling, fire and police protection, schools, parks and recreation, disaster preparation, and other public facilities and services. There are also extensive regulations and development review criteria in place for considering the infrastructure and services issues of new development. The continuing challenge is to ensure adequate public facilities and services, and their maintenance, commensurate with future growth. Some potential implications of future development on infrastructure and services are:

- Difficulties in continuing to provide adequate funding, as public facilities and service costs increase over time, and as services are expanded to support upgraded service levels or new development.
- Increase in long-term water demand exceeding the level presently planned for, along with potential reduction in Lake Cachuma and Gibraltar Reservoir surface water supplies due to environmental water releases and sedimentation.
- Potential increased facility and service needs for wastewater, solid waste management, police and fire protection and disaster planning, parks and recreation, schools and other child care and youth services, health care facilities, and County services.
- Cumulative loss of open space.

Historic and Community Character

Numerous General Plan policies and guidelines for site and architectural design, circulation, landscaping, historic preservation, and neighborhood preservation have been adopted and implemented by the City over the past 40 years. Development over this period has resulted in many benefits to the Downtown commercial/mixed use center, including rehabilitation/revitalization of buildings, landscape improvements, paseos, and other improvements that foster accessibility, visual character and aesthetics, and a sense of community.

The City of Santa Barbara is largely built out, and development predominately involves demolition and redevelopment of already built sites, and development of in-fill sites. The development policies and design guidelines provide for flexible application to specific site circumstances. Therefore, substantial discretion on the part of decision-makers is also provided with respect to project sizes and compatibility issues.

The recent growth pattern of redevelopment has been for larger and taller mixed-use structures and sizable condominiums within commercially zoned areas, and larger additions and home replacements in residential neighborhoods. The Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance addresses the latter issue. Continuing this trend of larger redevelopment and in-fill development into the future has the following potential implications to community character and design:

- Larger and taller mixed-use structures and sizeable condominiums within commercially zoned areas.
- Additional pedestrian activity in the Downtown and other commercial districts.
- Changes in visual and historic character of the urban Downtown.
- Cumulative and localized reduction in openness and scenic views.

Growth Management

Policies were developed to control growth, particularly non-residential development, in part due to concerns over resource limitations, and to try to correct an imbalance between jobs and affordable housing available in the City. City Charter Section 1508 ("Measure E") was effective in limiting net new non-residential growth, as well as encouraging infill development and the redevelopment of existing structures.

Non-residential development will continue to be limited and, for the next increment of non-residential growth, expected to be 1.35 million net new square feet with support for Community Benefit uses.

On the other side of the equation, the City affordable housing programs and policies have successfully produced a significant amount of affordable housing in an area with very high land values. From 1990 to 2007, 698 units of affordable housing have been built or are under construction, with additional units approved or with applications pending (this includes both public and private projects). As of 2009, approximately 8 percent of the housing units in the City are affordable under long-term restrictions, and another 4 percent are rented to low income persons at affordable rents under the HUD Section 8 Voucher Program. The City's goal is to maintain or increase the percent of affordable housing.

However, continuing increases in land values and the cost of housing have resulted in most new market-rate housing being unaffordable to the work force. Further, one of the unforeseen consequences of limiting non-residential projects under Section 1508 and encouraging mixed-use development has been the proliferation of large condominiums. Some potential implications of continuing current housing trends include:

- Continued development of large condominiums and loss of sense of community due to more part-time residents.
- Loss of affordable housing and escalating housing costs resulting in additional residents and workers relocating out of town, particularly critical workers such as those in the fire, police, health and education sectors.
- Decreased socio-economic diversity.
- Worsening jobs/housing imbalance due to continuing job growth without sufficient affordable housing.
- Recruitment and retention concerns for employers.

Public Health

A causal relationship has been identified between the built environment and public health issues, especially in relation to epidemics such as obesity, respiratory disease and diabetes. Health professionals maintain that where we locate our housing, how we get from Point A to Point B, and what kind of access is available to open space, recreation, and healthy food are key determinants of such epidemics. Planning decisions may link the physical environment and public health, and include consideration of public health and particularly active living in preparing plans and project review.

Potential benefits of designing the built environment with regard to public health issues include:

- A decrease in the number of residents with obesity, respiratory disease, and diabetes.
- Greater opportunities to live a safe and healthy lifestyle.
- An increased level of productivity and quality of life.
- A stabilization or reduction in the cost of healthcare.

These positive impacts can be realized by:

- Creating neighborhoods that are safe for walking and biking by people of all ages.
- Creating neighborhoods that promote physical activity.
- Promoting convenient access to affordable and healthy food.
- Reducing air pollution.
- Providing a wide variety of housing options for people of all income levels to help address the need of the local healthcare workforce.

Energy and Climate Change

Like the nation, state and region, Santa Barbara looks to petroleum for a multitude of necessities and pleasures. If fossil fuels become scarce, the consequences could touch many aspects of our lives including: mobility restrictions, economic development, food production and perhaps climate changes (fires, flooding and sea-level rise), some of which could be potentially severe. If needed, shifting Santa Barbara's economy to one less dependent on fossil fuels and inclusive of more "green businesses" would require conscientious planning and political will. Beyond how Santa Barbara chooses to address these issues as a community, state law now requires specific planning as outlined in recent legislation.[2]

Single occupant vehicles are the main determinant influencing fuel consumption, regional and local land use development patterns, economic development, air quality, and perhaps global climate impacts. Failure to address the role of the automobile over the next 20 years could extend well beyond increasing congestion levels at local freeway interchanges. Transportation implications of future growth may include the following:

- The City's continuing position as a regional employment, commercial, educational, institutional, cultural, and recreational center could attract added regional trips contributing to congestion at freeway interchanges and City streets serving them.
- Additional job creation in the City without sufficient affordable housing would result in more commuters, freeway and interchange congestion, as well as potential traffic effects in the jurisdictions housing workers.
- The construction process for planned highway improvements south of Santa Barbara, including freeway widening, could result in increased highway congestion over the next one to two decades.
- External factors affect increased traffic congestion even more than land development, including population, per capita vehicle ownership, Highway 101 congestion levels, land prices, location choices for jobs and homes, and availability of commute alternatives.

The response to these policy drivers is presented through a sustainable planning approach for Santa Barbara, and specifically through a sustainability framework for the new General Plan.

[2] AB32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act, 2006, and SB375 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, in 2008.

Sustainability Framework

This section defines sustainability for Santa Barbara, establishes a set of sustainability principles, outlines the sustainability framework for the General Plan, and provides a systematic process to assess the progress toward General Plan goals set forth in this framework. To achieve a flexible and resilient community, the goals and policies that guide decisions need to be expanded beyond living within our resources in which we simply consider existing resource capacities to manage growth and preserve the City's heritage and lifestyle. We need to look at our ecological footprint and determine how we are using those resources and, equally important, to what end. Being a sustainable community means making decisions based on the connections between the environment, the economy, and the people of our community, for the benefit of all the residents of our city, present and future, and to preserve and enhance our community character.

Santa Barbara is an ecosystem where individual, organizational, and governmental decisions affect the sustenance of all. These decisions can enhance or hurt the natural and physical environment, the valued qualities of our city, diversity, and health, safety and welfare of all residents and visitors. Therefore, a new policy framework is needed to inform and support individual, organizational, and governmental decisions to move in a direction that brings about a more sustainable Santa Barbara.

SANTA BARBARA AS A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

A comprehensive definition of sustainability takes into account a number of factors, including:

- A long-term, and regional perspective;
- Concern for the welfare of the entire population, both current and future generations;
- Acknowledgment of human dependence on Earth's finite natural resources; and
- Recognition of the relationship between humans and their environment that attempts to achieve a steady balance over time.

A sustainable Santa Barbara is a diverse community that strives to live within its resource capacities and integrate all aspects of its ecosystem, while protecting and improving the natural and built environment for the social and economic benefit of present and future generations.

The vision for this 2011 General Plan, therefore, is one in which the goals, policies and implementation measures work together to move Santa Barbara toward increasing sustainability. This vision is based on the *Community Input Summary Report* (2007) which summarized the public input received during the community outreach phase at the beginning of the *Plan Santa Barbara* process.

Vision of a Sustainable Santa Barbara

Santa Barbara strives to become a more sustainable community. All members of the Santa Barbara community are stewards, and we accept that responsibility with the understanding that change is inevitable, that perfection can only be pursued, that there will always be a dynamic tension between our many goals, and achieving a momentary balance between them is a never-ending challenge.

The City, residents, businesses, developers and community organizations envision working together to achieve the following:

Sustainability: Becoming more sustainable by managing wise use of resources.

Community Health: Providing a physical environment that is healthy, and encourages healthy, active living.

Environment: Protecting and enhancing the scenic beauty of Santa Barbara's natural setting and built environment which is intrinsic to our appreciation and enjoyment of the City. At the same time, improving on conservation of resources such as, energy, water, open space, and native habitat, through innovation and determination.

Growth: Managing growth within our limited resources, and in so doing, retaining the desirable aspects of the physical city without sacrificing its economic vibrancy and demographic diversity.

Community Design: Carrying on the tradition of preserving open space for public enjoyment, preserving historic buildings, and the continuity of emblematic architecture in new development and redevelopment.

Historic Resources: Preserving and enhancing historic resources now and in the future.

Housing: Allowing as much housing as possible within resource limits to provide an array of lifestyle options for a demographically and economically diverse resident population.

Transportation: Creating a diverse transportation network that serves our community's economic vitality, small-town feel, a variety of housing options, economic stewardship, and healthy lifestyles.

Public Services and Facilities: Understanding that public services and facilities are limited resources, in particular with respect to financial considerations, explore technological solutions to safeguard, improve and expand the natural resources of Santa Barbara, while applying innovation to maintain or improve the quality of life and protect the natural environment.

Economy: Seeking stability through diversity, and balance between serving residents and visitors or non-resident investors, consistent with our environmental values and the need to be sustainable and retain unique character.

Civic Participation: Believing the best decisions are made with the greatest community participation. We know that full consensus is rare, but greater participation, where people have an opportunity to be heard and all opinions are respected, will achieve greater understanding, acceptance and appreciation which are so essential to our sense of community.

Over the next 20 years, these are the values for Santa Barbara to increasingly reflect in all its manifestations: physical, cultural and social, and through its General Plan.

SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES

The following set of principles elaborate on the basic components of sustainability: Economy, Environment, and Equity, to reflect the key challenges for Santa Barbara. Maintaining Santa Barbara's natural and historic resources and community character are integral to all three components.

Economy

- The vitality and long-term health of the Santa Barbara economy relies on maintaining the City as a center for commerce, tourism, education, employment, institutions, medicine, culture and recreation for the South Coast region, as well as encouraging economic retooling that improves the natural environment, while improving social equity.
- A fiscally sound municipal government is essential to actively support the types of public services, infrastructure, and facilities that will be required to move the community towards a more sustainable future.

Environment

- "Living Within Our Resources" means effectively managing growth and in-fill development to conserve and protect the community's natural, physical, historic and cultural resources for present and future generations. Future development and resource use must be met with creative solutions for the multiple objectives of the General Plan including preserving historic and cultural resources, retaining community character, a diverse population and culture, and allowing sufficient growth to support a steady economy.
- Efficiently and effectively managing and protecting our natural and physical resources entails practicing innovative strategies that achieve protection, conservation, enhancement, reduced consumption, reuse, recycling, self-sufficiency, and adaptation to changing climate conditions, should they occur.
- Historic and cultural resources and the small town character of Santa Barbara need to be protected throughout the City by utilizing preservation strategies to enhance the human scale of architecture, public open space, landscaping, and public views.
- Circulation within, to and from Santa Barbara should fully utilize all available modes of transportation. If fossil fuels become increasingly scarce and prices rise, the City may need to dramatically accelerate efforts to plan, improve and build viable alternatives such as transit, rail, bicycle, and pedestrian/wheel chair access ways.

Equity

- Socio-economic diversity is important for maintaining a healthy culture and stable economy, and should be supported through: housing affordable to all income levels and mobility options for a range of income levels; economic policy to encourage livable wages and good jobs; and opportunities for all to participate in education, cultural events and the arts.
- A healthy community requires investment in public infrastructure, facilities and services that provide equal access to open space and recreation, clean air, healthy food, housing and neighborhood-serving commercial uses. The plan for the entire community should provide for all life phases, the design of the built environment needs to be responsive to the needs of all, including youth, seniors and people with disabilities.

- All members of the community should be provided with information about and strongly encouraged to participate in community decisions that affect them.
- "Living Within Our Resources" includes supporting, maintaining and enhancing our human resource, such as our workforce, in particular workers needed to keep the city functioning for normal day to day living, or in the event of disaster.

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESOURCE CAPACITY

Resource capacity has been an important part of "Living Within Our Resources," and it is an important aspect of sustainability as well.

However, sustainability is a broader, more challenging concept in which resource capacity is but one of several factors to consider in making decisions for the whole of the community. For many resources, their capacity to support a population is not a fixed amount in absolute terms, though it may be at any moment in time. Resource capacities can be increased or decreased depending on life-style preferences, conservation strategies, technological advances, availability of alternative resources or substitutes, and changes in relative resource costs. Santa Barbara can grow and evolve and also retain a high quality of life and an amenable environment, with foresight in the management of its resources.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

An Adaptive Management Program (AMP) contains the evaluation, feedback, and adaptation components of the General Plan to track progress toward achieving the plan's goals, objectives and desired outcomes. Adaptive management enables revision of policies and implementation measures throughout the 20-year planning period to effect course corrections in response to external trends or to avert future unintended consequences. Incorporating an adaptive management approach supports sustainability by allowing the General Plan to be a living document, maintaining its relevancy through timely adjustments, and reducing the need for major updates that are often after-the-fact and reactive.

In order to measure progress toward General Plan goals, the Sustainability Framework sets out objectives, which will be found in the AMP, for each of the elements. The objectives provide the link between the General Plan and the AMP by interpreting the aspirations of the goals into more explicit statements. Objectives can express either a desired end-state or a benchmark toward a desired end-state. While goals generally remain constant, the objectives may change throughout the course of the General Plan either as they are achieved and new objectives are desired, or more relevant measures are developed. Some policies include a monitoring requirement as well.

The components of the AMP include baseline information, community indicators, monitoring procedures and timeframes, and reports. The environmental assessment for the General Plan Update provides much of the baseline data along with other studies.

The community indicators are the applied measures (often referred to as "metrics") which can be methodically observed, enumerated, calculated, or gauged. Indicators will be developed through review of the baseline data, the objectives, and community and Planning Commission input. Monitoring procedures will employ a variety of methods that may involve statistical evaluation, technical measurement or the use of surveys. The availability of water is a primary resource to sustain growth and development, and is a good example of an existing community indicator.

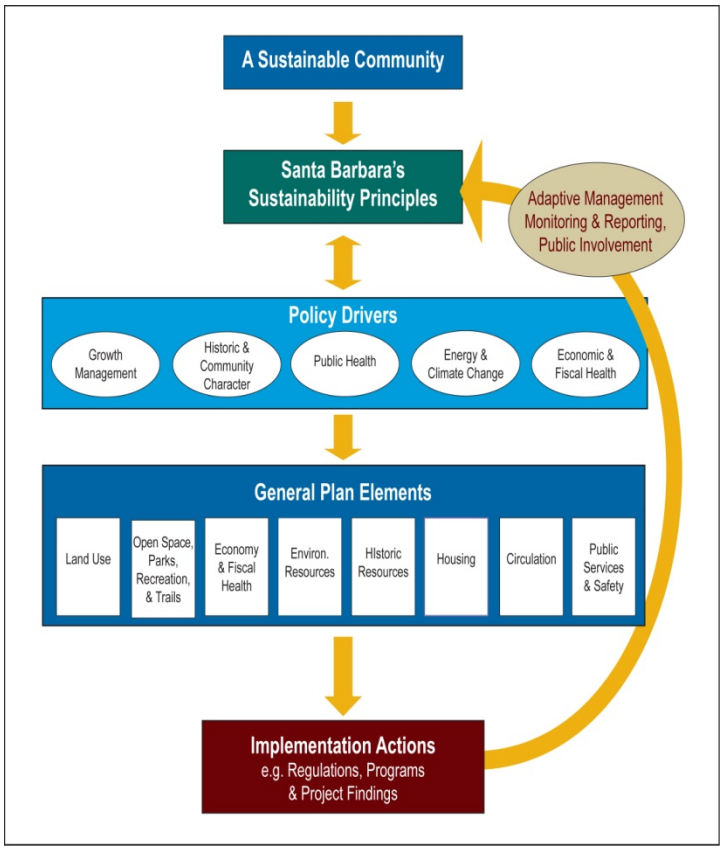
The AMP includes reports to the City Council on the status of the City's water supply management program, which includes tracking new demand and the status of the City's various water supplies. On a five year cycle, the City also conducts a more formal water supply update in the form of its Urban Water Management Plan.

The AMP will set out a comprehensive schedule of regular reports for each of the community indicators. Reports will provide the results of monitoring, explain the process and techniques used, and make recommendations for revisions to the General Plan.

SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

The diagram of the Proposed Sustainability Framework (Figure 1) helps to better understand how the key issues that have driven the *Plan Santa Barbara* process are carried forward into the General Plan elements, implementation actions and feedback mechanisms.

Figure 1: General Plan Sustainability Framework



Sustainability Principles: These overarching principles are the bridge between the definition of a sustainable Santa Barbara and the goals and policies of each respective General Plan element. The principles also directly address the key policy issues (or "drivers") the community faces today and into the future.

Policy Drivers: These are the issue areas with local, regional and global significance that affect both the guiding principles and the goals and policies. The policy drivers: growth management, energy and climate change, community character, economy and fiscal health, and public health, were discussed in the previous section.

General Plan Elements: The General Plan is organized by the elements that comprise the updated General Plan document. As noted later under the Climate Change policies in this plan, a comprehensive program to address climate change may affect elements of the General Plan.

The proposed General Plan Elements include:

- Land Use (updated in 2011)
- Housing (updated in 2011)
- Open Space, Parks, and Recreation(new goals, policies and implementation actions)
- Economy and Fiscal Health (new Element)
- Environmental Resources (new goals, policies and implementation actions)

- Historic Resources (new Element with expected completion in 2012)
- Circulation (new goals, policies and implementation actions)
- Public Services and Safety (new goals, policies and implementation actions)

The proposed goals and policies contained in the general plan elements provide the specific direction to make the City General Plan more sustainability-focused. However, many existing goals and policies already reflect a sustainable approach or address key planning considerations for Santa Barbara. These goals and policies have been retained, sometimes revised and/or relocated to a different element, and are still part of the General Plan. As additional elements are updated, many existing policies, standards and implementation actions will be carried forward into the updated General Plan, most of which are anticipated to remain unchanged.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A key component of the Sustainability Framework is public participation, for there can be no social equity without an informed and engaged community. Initiating and sustaining participation across all socio-economic levels during a long-term planning process, such as a General Plan Update process, can be a particular challenge. However, public participation lies at the heart of our democracy and is reflected in the community planning process.

In 2005, the City Council set a public participation goal for the General Plan Update process: *Encourage public involvement and participation at all levels of city planning and other government activities*. This acknowledges the critical importance of public participation to the balancing of needs in the resulting planning policies. But public participation does not stop with completion of the plan. The General Plan must continue to impartially encourage and facilitate the public's role in the planning decision process for development, and in resource use and stewardship in relation to individual projects, development of implementation tools or future plan amendments.

GOAL

- ***Fostering Public Participation.*** The City provides a public participation process that is inclusive, responsive, and balanced with regard to the broad needs of the community.

Public Participation Policies

PP1: **Access to Information.** Members of the public shall have access to the necessary information and understanding of procedures to participate in decisions that affect them.

PP2: **Wide Participation.** The City shall encourage the widest possible citizen participation in local government decision-making by:

- Welcoming, encouraging and enabling participation in the planning process by citizens who may be unfamiliar with City procedures.
- The City Council, Boards and Commissions meeting in the evening, as necessary and appropriate, so that all citizens can take part.

HOW ELEMENTS WORK TOGETHER

Legal Requirements

Cities and counties in the state of California are required by law to have an operating General Plan at all times to address its physical development. While charter cities such as Santa Barbara are exempt from some state land use law, all California counties and cities including charter cities must have a general plan containing, at a minimum, the required substance for the mandated elements. Further, all general plans must be internally consistent.

State legislation specifies the content and process for developing the plans. Although the legislation mandates seven elements: Land Use, Housing, Circulation, Conservation, Open Space, Safety, and Noise, it also permits a local government to prepare optional elements to focus on additional issues, or topics that are particularly relevant to the community, such as historic resources, public health or the local economy. All elements have the same force and effect, including optional elements, and no element takes precedence over any other. All parts of the general plan must be weighed equally in making decisions on individual developments.

The State also advocates that a general plan be "clear, concise and easy to use," and suggests that condensing elements is one way to achieve this. The State encourages combining elements or reorganizing the statutory issues into elements considered more functional or appropriate for a particular jurisdiction. Local governments are encouraged to prepare a plan that best suits their community, provided that it addresses all of the relevant statutory issues.

Consistency

The California Government Code also requires that general plans contain an integrated, internally consistent set of policies. When an element of the General Plan is revised, and especially when new policies and priorities are proposed, the other elements must be reviewed and, if necessary, updated to ensure that internal consistency is maintained. Integration in policies is not only required, it is unavoidable in order to address issues holistically without overlooking an important facet.

One of the primary tenets of the *Plan Santa Barbara* General Plan Update process was to provide a framework to further consistency and integration among the elements. The 2011 Santa Barbara General Plan is based on an overarching sustainability framework, guided by sustainability principals of economy, environment and equity. These principals are carried forward through the goals, policies and implementation actions of each respective General Plan element. A thorough review was conducted of all existing General Plan goals and policies as part of the *Plan Santa Barbara* process to ensure, among other factors, internal consistency.

CONTENT OF THIS AND FUTURE UPDATES

This edition of the General Plan incorporates a subtle shift in the concept of its permanency. As part of a more sustainable approach, the plan is expected to provide continuity and certainty while responding to changing trends and planning outcomes. Consequently, the General Plan is no longer viewed as a static set of policies to guide growth and development in the city for the next 20 years; rather, it is intended to be an evolving set of policies that can adjust to new issues, or imbalance between goals and outcomes. The Adaptive Management Program is one tool to implement this approach. No recommendation in this plan shall be interpreted as mandating the hiring of additional personnel or consultants.

The 2011 update to the Santa Barbara General Plan reformats the plan with an overarching introduction explaining the sustainability framework and providing a background of history as well as a city profile. The elements have been re-organized around the sustainability framework, to provide a more integrated plan, with comprehensive updates to the Land Use Element, the General Plan Map, and the Housing Element.

The sustainability framework also provides direction for the future update of the remaining elements through the Sustainability Principles as well as specific goals for each of the respective elements. Selected policies have also been identified for the remaining elements that either were reorganized from a previous element or arose as a new policy during the *Plan Santa Barbara* process. Up until the time the remaining elements are updated, the new goals and policies as well as the existing elements will remain in force.

Plan Elements, Goals, Policies and Implementation

The 2011 General Plan is comprised of the eight reorganized elements, of which the seven mandatory elements are included therein. Optional stand alone elements include Historic Resources and Economy Fiscal Health. Each element contains a set of goals, policies and implementation actions to be considered.

The ***goals*** provide the general direction and desired outcome for each chapter within each respective element. The California General Plan Guidelines defines a goal as, "a direction setter. It is an ideal future end, condition, or state related to the public health, safety or general welfare toward which planning and planning implementation measures are directed. A goal is a general expression of community values and, therefore, is abstract in nature. A goal is generally not quantifiable, time-dependant or suggestive of specific actions for its achievement."

A ***policy*** is the method to achieve the goals, and typically there are numerous policies under each goal. The General Plan Guidelines defines a policy as, "a specific statement that guides decision-making. It indicates a clear commitment of the local legislative body."

Implementation strategies are specific methods to achieve the vision of a more sustainable community and provide examples of programs and actions that the City may take to achieve the goal and policy. The General Plan Guidelines define an implementation strategy as "a rule of measure establishing a level of quantity that must be complied with or satisfied. Implementation strategies further define the abstract terms of goals and policies." To underscore that these are examples of what may be undertaken by the City, the subheading "***Possible Implementation Action to be Considered***" is used throughout the document.

Table I-1: General Plan Elements

Required Elements	Existing Optional Elements (prior to 2011)	PlanSB Elements
Land Use	Parks and Recreation Scenic Highways	Land Use
Housing		Housing
Circulation		Circulation (& Scenic Highways)
Open Space		Open Space, Parks and Recreation
Conservation		Environmental Resources (& Conservation & Noise)
Safety		Public Services and Safety
Noise		Economy and Fiscal Health
		Historic Resources

Background and Setting

The best way to plan for tomorrow is with a clear understanding and appreciation for today and yesterday. This chapter includes a summary of the history of Santa Barbara, its history of city planning, and a profile of the city as of 2010. The historical summary highlights key events in the City's history that cumulatively have brought us to the present time, and provides the backdrop for city planning along the way. A fuller city history is provided in Appendix C. The planning history explains how values, concerns and planning solutions have evolved throughout the City's planning history, including the most recent *Plan Santa Barbara* process. Finally, the Setting presents a snapshot of Santa Barbara, circa 2009; the starting point and benchmark for resource use, development, preservation and conservation activities over the next 20 years.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Chumash Period (before 1782), Spanish and Mexican Periods (1782 – 1848)

Santa Barbara's history extends back some 8,000 years to its first human settlements. In 1769 when the Spanish Portola Expedition visited Syuxtun, they found it to be a thriving village of approximately 600 Chumash. Archaeologists now estimate that the village, located at the beach, west of the mouth of Mission Creek, had been continuously inhabited for at least 800 years prior to contact with the Spanish (Cabrillo) Expedition in 1542.

Permanent European settlement began when the Spanish returned and established the presidio (fort) in Santa Barbara in 1782. Once the presidio was complete, the Franciscans founded the Mission Santa Barbara on December 4 (St. Barbara's Day), 1786. A major earthquake destroyed the adobe structure in 1812. It took five years to construct a new sandstone church. The second tower was added in 1833, giving the mission its iconic symmetrical façade.

Reconstructed Chapel and Comandante's Quarters at El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park

A dam and aqueduct system was constructed about 1.5 miles up Mission Canyon in 1807 to provide water to the growing community living on mission grounds. An 1806 reservoir near the Mission was so well built that it was used to store water until 1993, when it was transferred from Public Works to the Parks Department.

The presidio, also damaged by the 1812 earthquake, gradually lost its military importance. For their service to the Spanish Crown, presidio soldiers were given small land grants adjacent to the presidio. A pueblo characterized by small single-story adobe houses connected by irregular pathways began to form around the deteriorating fort. These simple adobe structures, built using available building materials, were virtually unadorned, yet their character is often emulated in Santa Barbara today.

In 1821, Mexico achieved independence from Spain, and California became a Mexican territory. Santa Barbara continued to develop slowly as a Mexican pueblo until California was ceded to the United States by the Mexican government at the conclusion of the Mexican-American war in 1848.

Americanization Period (1848 – 1902)

At the close of the Mexican-American War in 1848, California was under the control of the United States military. Two years later, on September 9, 1850, California became the 31st state without first passing through a territorial stage. At this time, Santa Barbara had already incorporated as an American City on April 9, 1850 (five months before California became a state). Early in its existence, the City Council hired Captain Salisbury Haley to survey the city and create an "American" grid street system to replace the winding pathways of the former pueblo. The survey lacked uniformity in the block sizes despite City Council direction to make each side 450 feet long. A deliberate misalignment is at the intersection of Santa Barbara and De la Guerra Streets and State and De La Guerra Streets, resulting from the position of the Leyva Adobe formerly located on De la Guerra Street just east of State Street. Most of the errors in dimensions were the result of poor surveying on the part of Haley.

American migrants to Santa Barbara did not favor the existing Spanish style adobe homes and introduced wood frame construction to the city. Since the main form of access to the city was by steamships, significant growth did not occur until the completion of Stearns Wharf in 1872. The deep-water wharf provided the City with dockage for steam ships, which brought people and building materials. This improved access, along with a beautiful setting and favorable climate made Santa Barbara ripe as a tourist destination. The City's first public transportation system, a mule-car line, was completed in 1875. The system provided direct access to the Arlington Hotel from Stearns Wharf, and also provided service along Cabrillo Boulevard to the Bath House at Castillo Street. The mule-cars operated for 22 years.

The railroad finally arrived in Santa Barbara in 1887, providing regular service to Los Angeles. With this reliable and convenient transportation link to Los Angeles, came the establishment of Santa Barbara as a premier destination for wealthy families from the east coast, midwest, and Europe. Resort hotels, such as the Arlington, catered to their visitors. Businesses needed to support Santa Barbara's growing tourism industry expanded the City's center, especially along State Street, which was then surrounded by new houses needed by the increasing work force. Well-to-do families began to construct winter homes on the upper east side. Most of the buildings constructed during this late Victorian period were built in the popular architectural styles of the day; Italianate, Stick/Eastlake, Stick, Folk Victorian, and Queen Anne, which were prevalent throughout the country. Parts of Santa Barbara looked like any small American city. The City's first major medical center, "Cottage Hospital" opened on December 8, 1891. The hospital would shape the development of the surrounding Oak Park neighborhood for over one-hundred years.

The Consolidated Electric Company was organized in 1896 to provide electric street-car service in Santa Barbara. The narrow gauge tracks serviced East Beach and West Beach, State Street to the Arlington Hotel, and extended to Cottage Hospital and the Old Mission. This street-car service helped to establish Santa Barbara's earliest residential suburbs.

As different ethnic groups arrived, they formed separate centers for their businesses and surrounding homes, creating neighborhoods where their culture and language were predominant. In the early twentieth century, Chinatown occupied the first block of East Canon Perdido Street. Japanese immigrants resided in various parts of the city, but many chose to locate on the second block of East Canon Perdido Street. English and Italian stone masons created the majority of the stone retaining walls, stone steps, and gate posts found throughout the Riviera section of Santa Barbara.

Late in this period renewed interest in the history of the California Missions became the inspiration for the Mission Revival architectural style in California. Only three major buildings in Santa Barbara (the second Arlington Hotel, the Potter Hotel, and the Southern Pacific Railroad Station) would be constructed in the Mission Revival style. The style was relatively short-lived in Santa Barbara, being quickly eclipsed by the popular Spanish Colonial Revival style of architecture.

Santa Barbara (1902 – 1925)

Santa Barbara embraced the City Beautiful Movement with open arms. In 1904, the City Council added two important parks (Oak Park and East Beach Park, now known as Chase Palm Park) to the City's park system. During this time period (and through at least 1931), various civic organizations bought much of the remaining waterfront assuring its preservation for public use.

By the turn of the 20th Century, Santa Barbara was well established as a vacation destination for people trying to escape the frozen winters back east. In 1902, the 600-room Potter Hotel was constructed near the beach, and ten years later the new Arlington hotel was completed after fire destroyed the first hotel in 1909. Both hotels were eventually destroyed; the Potter by fire in 1921 and the 1925 earthquake severely damaged the Arlington Hotel, which was then demolished.

In 1901, the long awaited railroad link to San Francisco was completed allowing travel to Santa Barbara by rail from either Los Angeles or San Francisco. During this time the City's streetcar system was expanded and one could travel from the beach to the Mission, and in 1913, up to the State Normal School campus located on the Riviera. The Riviera Development Company had bought about 300 acres of land, built the roads, sandstone retaining walls, underground utilities, and had planted hundreds of oak trees. This substantial subdivision imposed the first restrictions requiring use of the "Riviera" style which featured white stucco walls with red tile roofs.

Shortly after the conclusion of the First World War, Santa Barbara began to revamp its visual image. During this period, in 1919, a competition was held for the design of a "County courthouse and WWI memorial with some county and city offices," requiring that both structures be designed in a Hispanic/Mediterranean style. Between 1923 and 1925, there were a series of public exhibitions of drawings showing how individual blocks of State Street could be rebuilt using a unifying Hispanic architectural theme.

El Paseo Courtyard, Spanish Colonial Revival Style

Civic leaders Pearl Chase and Bernhard Hoffmann of the Plans and Planting Committee, formed in 1922, were the driving force behind the movement to return Santa Barbara to a Hispanic city. One year later, in 1923, the City Council created a Planning Commission and in 1925 adopted a building and zoning ordinance. At the urging of the Plans and Planting Committee, several important civic buildings were constructed in the Spanish Colonial Revival Style between 1922 and 1924. These were the City Hall, Santa Barbara High School, the original Roosevelt Elementary School, and the Lobero Theater. Additionally, several important private buildings were also constructed between 1922 and 1925. The most influential of these was El Paseo, still regarded today as one of the finest examples in scale and details that characterize the Spanish Colonial Revival style of architecture. Pearl Chase, dubbed "Santa Barbara's Pearl" continued to work tirelessly to beautify Santa Barbara until her death in 1979 at the age of 90.

Tragic Opportunity (1925 - 1939)

One of the most significant catalysts for the architectural development of Santa Barbara was the massive earthquake which struck at 6:42 A.M. on June 29th, 1925. The earthquake severely damaged most of Santa Barbara's business district, which was comprised of mainly un-reinforced masonry buildings. Fortunately, a vast majority of the residential structures in town were wood-frame and stood-up to the shaking, mainly loosing brick chimneys, but otherwise left intact.

During this time, city activists such as Bernhard Hoffmann and Pearl Chase were carefully educating the public on the need for and value of architectural controls and a City Council appointed public safety board established the Architectural Advisory Committee. One function of the Committee was a Community Drafting Room, which provided certain free services to the public. The City Council created an Architectural Board of Review (ABR) by ordinance in July, 1925. This ABR only lasted nine months.

During this time period, the introduction of affordable automobiles facilitated the creation of Santa Barbara's early automobile suburbs on the upper east and west sides and eventually further out, such as San Roque, and up on the Mesa. In the early suburbs, such as the upper west side, the garages were detached structures placed at the rear of the lot allowing the houses, generally with covered porches, to be oriented to the street, retaining a traditional development pattern.

Later development patterns on the Mesa placed two car garages at the front of the house, providing larger private back-yards, but this change in orientation fostered less interaction between neighbors. As a result of the popularity of private automobiles, the city abandoned its street-car lines in 1929. Private bus systems followed.

The Second World War and Beyond (1940 – 1975)

The largest impact that World War II had on Santa Barbara was the construction of a large military hospital (Hoff General Hospital) in the Casa Loma area, near the Samarkand neighborhood. Most of the war surplus buildings had been moved or demolished by 1960 to make way for MacKenzie Park and the Municipal Golf Course. The historic Naval Reserve Center and adjacent ship repair and warehouse shops serviced Navy destroyers during the war.

As was the case across the country, Santa Barbara experienced a post-war population and construction boom to provide housing for returning World War II veterans. Although Santa Barbara established a board of architectural review in 1947, by the mid-1950's the architectural character of the city began to change. In response to development pressure and the loss of several of the City's historic adobes, the El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District (EPV) was established by ordinance in 1960. The original EPV encompassed a 16-block area representing the approximate location of the old pueblo. The City Council designated the Advisory Landmark Committee to oversee implementation of the new ordinance.

In 1969, the largest oil blowout in the waters off of California, and now the third largest in the United States, occurred in the Santa Barbara Channel. It is estimated that up to 100,000 barrels of oil erupted into the Channel. Crude oil coated the city's beaches and wildlife and damaged Santa Barbara's environment and economy. The event had an international impact, and it is considered the source of the modern environmental movement.

Development by Design (1975 – 2010)

In 1977, the boundaries of the EPV were expanded to include more of the commercial center of the city and the principal streets providing access from the 101 Freeway. Eventually the importance of the established guidelines for the architecture within the EPV necessitated the elevation of the Landmarks Committee to a "Historic Landmarks Commission" by City Charter amendment.

Another driving force that significantly shaped Santa Barbara was the creation of the Redevelopment Agency (RDA) with two of its Redevelopment Project areas, which were the Presidio Springs under HUD's Neighborhood Development Program (NDP) and the Central City Redevelopment Project area (CCRP). The agency has been responsible for many improvements in the city including the widening of the sidewalks, addition of significant landscaping along the lower State Street corridor, and a number of almost invisible public parking garages, which service the central business district. The RDA also constructed affordable housing projects that were designed to be compatible with their setting and have the appearance of market rate housing. The development of the Paseo Nuevo outdoor shopping mall Downtown in 1990 by the RDA was the most significant catalyst for the rejuvenation of State Street as a shoppingt district.

HISTORY OF CITY PLANNING

As evidenced by its history, both local and external events, pressures and trends have shaped the city for more than 200 years and will continue to do so. These forces were recognized by the early residents and city officials, and as a result the city has benefited from a high level of civic involvement ever since.

The first comprehensive zoning ordinance was adopted in 1930. The current comprehensive ordinance was adopted in 1957. The General Plan was adopted in 1964. The Historic Landmarks Commission began as an advisory committee in 1960 and received additional powers in 1977. The current Architectural Board of Review was established in 1947, and the Planning Commission was established in 1923. These planning milestones and many others were in response to public expressions of concern about the direction of the city, and, within the limits of state and city requirements, express the general public will. The planning documents, regulation, and the review and decision making bodies have been principal agents guiding city growth, form and character.

1964 Plan to 2005

The original 1964 General Plan comprised the total plan in one volume plus a map and did not include many of the elements (see below) that currently exist. Since then a number of amendments have been made to the adopted plan.

While there have been amendments over the intervening years, the city's General Plan has never been comprehensively updated.

Other elements of the city's General Plan were completed, or substantially updated on the following dates:

- Land Use Element, July 1964, March 1972, last updated in February 1995
- Current General Plan Map, March 1975
- Conservation Element, 1964, August 1979, July 1994
- Circulation Element, July 1964, 1971, November 1979, Interim March 1988, November 1997
- Housing Element February 1977, 1982, 1985 Addendum, February 1995, August 2004

- Noise Element, August 1979, November 1983
- Open Space Element, January 1972
- Scenic Highways Element, February 1974
- Parks and Recreation Element, July 1964, August 1982
- Seismic Safety and Safety Element, August 1979

A major planning effort included the City of Santa Barbara's Goals Report submitted by the Citizens General Plan Goals Committee in April 1971. This committee, appointed by City Council in 1970, worked for a year to study the general plan goals and to formulate recommendations. The City Council adopted the committee's report in 1971 as an official statement of City policy. Large scale amendments were made to the General Plan in 1972 including a section called "Principles and Goals" with the adopted goals. Building on these goals and the values within them, goals have been rewritten for this 2011 General Plan Update.

Even in 1964, the original plan's predominant focus was to preserve Santa Barbara's distinctive character and "feel", and it raised concerns about growth despite its passive support of a significant amount of development, both residential and non-residential. Bit by bit over the intervening years, goals and policies have been revised in response to evolving community values and concerns over growth as various elements were prepared and updated, with "Living Within Our Resources" being just the beginning.

A more sustainable approach to city planning was heralded in the 1997 update to the Circulation Element, in which the automobile and alternative transportation received equal attention. The primacy of affordable housing addressed in the Housing Element in 1995 and again in 2004 addressed the equity component of sustainability for the city. Before it became a household term, Santa Barbara was going sustainable. But a persistent planning concern since the 1970s has been to manage Santa Barbara's growth.

Growth Management

The 1964 General Plan reflected the build-out potential under the existing zoning in excess of 100 million square feet of nonresidential development, and a potential residential population of between 140,000 and 170,000. Following its adoption, community concern began to grow regarding the effects that the maximum build-out could have on the community and the ability of the City to provide resources to support that amount of development.

In response to this concern for the quality of life in Santa Barbara and its relation to resource limits, and at the recommendation of the Planning Commission that a study be carried out, the City Council contracted with the Santa Barbara Planning Task Force in 1974 to conduct a study, which resulted in the 1974 report *Impacts of Growth*. The study looked at what the city would be like at different population levels. It showed that significant effects on the quality of life would occur if population increased to the then theoretical buildout (140,000 to 170,000) because the City would not have the resources to maintain the population at the theoretical buildout.

In response to the study, the City Council adopted amendments to both the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance which resulted in the 1975 residential down zoning which reduced densities in residential areas to accommodate an optimum population level of 85,000. However, no commercial down zoning occurred. The 1975 down zoning was the initial step towards a concept which has come to be known as "Living Within Our Resources." The concept of "Living Within Our Resources" calls for a population build-out level consistent with the City's water supply, traffic and parking capacity, sewage treatment capacity, air quality, etc., which maintain the high quality of life that Santa Barbarans presently enjoy.

In 1977, due to concerns with increasing population a two part advisory measure was put on the ballot to give City Council the opinion of the voters regarding the down zoning. The ballot asked the community if they supported efforts to limit population to 85,000 and if voter approval should be required for changes that would increase the population. The community voted affirmatively to both and the City Council upheld the 1975 down zoning.

In 1982, the City Council established a Charter Committee to incorporate the 85,000 population goal into the City Charter. It was determined that a population goal was too specific and legally could not be incorporated into the Charter. The result of the Charter Committee's discussions was a ballot measure, Measure K, which proposed a Charter Amendment mandating that "land development shall not exceed its public services and physical and natural resources…All land use policies shall provide for a level and balance of residential and commercial development which will effectively utilize, but will not exhaust, the City's resources in the foreseeable future..." Measure K was approved by 60 percent of the voters and incorporated into the City Charter as Section 1507.

In 1982, technical studies for a General Plan Update (GPU) were initiated. The GPU Public Participation Process began in 1988. In 1989, the City Council placed the nonresidential growth limitation before the voters as ballot Measure E which was approved by 55 percent of the voters. Measure E was incorporated into the City Charter as Section 1508.

In 1990, the City Council adopted amendments to the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance which:

- Reduced commercial development potential;
- Recognized residential needs as the highest priority;
- Limited development based on the 1985 Master Water Plan which assumed a capacity equivalent to 40,005 dwelling units;
- Established mixed use development as a high priority implementation strategy to provide additional multi-family housing;
- Determined that transitional areas must be studied and plans prepared to preserve existing dwelling units; and
- Established higher density residential in the Downtown area as a high priority implementation strategy to provide additional dwelling units.

In 1995, the Housing Element was amended with a special emphasis on multi-family housing in and around the Downtown employment center and incentives for mixed use development. The Housing Element goals were supported and substantiated with the 1997 update of the City's Circulation Element. The emphasis of the Circulation Element Update was on alternative modes of transportation.

Concurrent with the adoption of the 1995 Housing Element, the City Council also amended the Land Use Element to incorporate the discussion regarding the theoretical maximum residential build out of 40,000 residential units.

In 2005, the City Council initiated the *Plan Santa Barbara* process with an updated affirmation of the 1988 General Plan Update Goals.

In 2011, the City Council continued to recognize the importance of limiting new non-residential square footage due to concerns such as the jobs to housing ratio and set 1.35 million new square feet as the amount of commercial growth permitted to 2030.

PLAN SANTA BARBARA PROCESS

The City Council initiated *Plan Santa Barbara* to update the Land Use and Housing Elements of the General Plan, specifically to address the sunset of Charter Section 1508, which regulates non-residential growth in the City, and to reassess the City's capability to construct more than 40,005 housing units as specified by the Housing Element.

One of the first tasks was to inventory city resources, facilities and services which was completed in 2005 and published as the *Conditions, Trends and Issues Report*. Also in 2005, a ten-member Outreach Committee, comprised of City Council members, Planning Commissioners and community leaders was appointed by City Council to help guide the public outreach process.

Plan Santa Barbara Public Outreach Effort

In the spring of 2007 (2006 was devoted to the Upper State Street Study), the public outreach phase of the *Plan Santa Barbara* process began in earnest. Staff from the City Planning Division led this outreach effort in coordination with the Outreach Committee. In an effort to reach a wide selection of community members, a variety of methods were utilized, including informational mailings, community workshops, forums, a website, surveys, and Planning Commission meetings.

City residents attend community workshop related to future City growth

City residents provide input at public workshops

Plan Santa Barbara Website

The City launched the *YouPlanSB.org* website in the spring of 2007. The website was intended to involve the public in the planning process. The website served to provide up-to-date information about the General Plan Update process, post planning documents and staff reports, and announce public workshops and meetings related to the update process. Individuals interested in participating could register on the site and receive periodic updates whenever new information was posted. It also allowed City residents to provide online feedback. The website contained a library of planning documents prepared as part of the update process, as well as videos of all the workshops and some Planning Commission work sessions. The City maintained a distribution list of interested individuals and community groups and organizations. Public Service Announcements (PSA) were also released advertising the community workshops in an effort to outreach to as much of the community as possible.

Plan Santa Barbara Brochure and Comment Cards

A four-page informational brochure was also mailed in the spring of 2007 to over 36,000 households and businesses in Santa Barbara. The brochure contained an explanation of the *Plan Santa Barbara* process, information about upcoming community workshops, and a bilingual comment form that could be mailed back to the City or submitted via the plan website. The City received 546 individual comment cards either sent by mail or through the website.

Grassroots Meetings

To actively seek out community input from individuals who might not otherwise attend a public workshop related to the *Plan Santa Barbara* process, Outreach Committee members and City staff attended approximately 40 local grassroots meetings with local organizations. Participants of these meetings represented a broad range of community interests, including affordable housing, growth capacity, preserving residential neighborhoods, youth, economy, transportation, environment, and health. Approximately 700 individuals participated in these meetings, which provided an opportunity for focused dialogue with committee members and City Staff. A complete list of the groups participating in the grassroots outreach meetings is provided below:

GROUPS PARTICIPATING IN GRASSROOTS MEETINGS	
Allied Neighborhood Association	*Green Hills Software*
Arts Advisory Committee	*Independent Living Resource Center*
Board of Realtors Government Relations	*League of Women Voters*
Bungalow Haven	*Legal Aid Foundation*
Chamber of Commerce	*Nonprofit Support Center*
Child Care Planning Council	*Pearl Chase Society*
Christian Science First Church	*Rotary Club*
Citizens Planning Association	*Safe Routes to School*
Coalition for Sustainable Transportation	*Santa Barbara Association of Realtors*
Coalition for Community Wellness	*Santa Barbara Beautiful*
Coastal Housing Partnership	*Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition*
Community Environmental Council	*Santa Barbara Contractors Association*
Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital	*Santa Barbara County Action Network*
Downtown Organization	*Santa Barbara High School Swap Meet*
Downtown Santa Barbara Childcare	*Second Baptist Church*
Endowment for Youth	*Sunrise Rotary Club*
Faith Baptist Church	*The Sustainability Project*
Green Building Alliance	*Vista Del Monte*

Between March and September of 2007, well over 900 City residents attended small group meetings and public workshops. During the public workshops and grassroots meetings, City staff recorded individual comments as precisely as possible in order to fully capture all comments. The comments were then transcribed, compiled and categorized in source documents to create the *Community Input Summary Report* (December 2007). Summaries for each meeting were also made available on the *YouPlanSB.org* Website.

Youth Survey

A youth survey was undertaken to gain input from high school aged members of the community. The survey created an opportunity for youth to express their concerns and ideas about their community. The City Youth Council in collaboration with City staff developed the questions for the Youth Survey. In May 2008, 400 high school students from eight different schools in the City participated in taking the survey. The survey covered the following areas: student information, neighborhoods, things to do-places to go, and transportation. Key findings of the survey related to housing and community are summarized below:

- The need for affordable retail and affordable housing elicited the highest response, which parallels what the larger community has expressed in the *Plan Santa Barbara* process.
- Approximately 56 percent of the respondents did not believe they could afford to live in Santa Barbara.
- The majority (73 percent) of youth responding indicated that they are satisfied with their neighborhood.
- Approximately 29 percent indicated walkability as the most importance aspect of their neighborhood.

Community Workshops and Reports

During the months of June and July 2007, a series of four community workshops were held in different areas of the City. Workshop participants learned about the *Plan Santa Barbara* process through a video and a PowerPoint presentation. Community input was gathered through the following activities:

- As a large group, workshop participants discussed what they loved about Santa Barbara.
- In smaller groups, participants discussed their hopes, concerns, and suggestions related to housing and neighborhoods, transportation, the environment, the economy, community design and services and facilities.
- In a final large group, the participants presented ideas for the City's future.

In the fall of 2007, the *Community Input Summary Report* was published that summarized all the comments received to date from the website, comments cards and workshops.

In April 2008, a *Development Trends Report* was released to the public presenting residential and non-residential development trends that have occurred in the City between 1990 and 2007. Subsequent to the release of the report and a worksession with the Planning Commission, the City held two public workshops to discuss the overall implications of these trends and potential adjustments to City policies, standards and programs. Approximately 150 participants had the opportunity to focus on questions about future growth, living within our resources, housing, community character and transportation.

In July 2008, a *Policy Options Report* was issued to the public and two community workshops were held to discuss draft policies contained in the report. Draft policies categorized under issue areas raised consistently during the *Plan Santa Barbara* process were presented. These included land use/growth management, community character, housing, transportation, energy and climate change. The workshops involved four different exercises and were attended by over 250 people.

In the fall of 2008, building on the value themes identified in the *Community Input Summary*, as well as community input on the *Development Trends Report*, and the *Policy Options Report*, the draft goals and policies for guiding preparation of the new General Plan were developed. These draft goals and policies were presented within in a sustainability framework for the General Plan entitled the *Draft Policy Preference*s report that City Council accepted in December 2008 for initiating the environmental review process, and further policy development.

In June 2009, two community workshops were held to solicit feedback from the public related to the feasibility of constructing non-subsidized affordable housing units targeted to middle-income and workforce households. A panel discussion with two economists and City staff allowed the community to provide comments and ask questions about the feasibility to increase residential densities in the Downtown area and certain multi-family zones.

Starting in 2009 and culminating in this document, the City undertook several parallel efforts: (1) further development and refinement of the *Sustainability Framework*, goals and policies for the General Plan Update; (2) preparation of the *Land Use Element*; (3) conversion to digital format, update and revision of the *General Plan Map*; and (4) preparation of the 2011 *Housing Element Update*. Additionally, the City prepared and adopted a city-wide programmatic environmental impact report, and drafted an adaptive management program for monitoring the effectiveness of general plan policies.

Work Sessions, Public Hearings and Final Products

In the fall of 2010, the City Council formed the PlanSB Council AdHoc Subcommittee that held 14 meetings to discuss and make recommendations to the full Council on key policy issues in the General Plan.

As of December 2011, forty-six work sessions and public hearings with the Planning Commission and/or the City Council were held to provide information associated with the General Plan Update process. All meetings were treated as public hearings allowing City residents to provide verbal comment or submit written testimony. In addition, meetings were noticed to interested individuals and community groups via email and/or mailed notice.

CITY PROFILE

Photo credit: AMEC, 2009.

This section provides a brief profile of the city of Santa Barbara as an orientation for users of the General Plan. Greater detail on several topics is provided in specific elements or appendices.

Santa Barbara is a small city within a larger unincorporated urban area, along with neighboring cities of Carpinteria and Goleta. The urban area is encircled by open space, be it agriculture, the rugged Santa Ynez Mountains, or the Pacific Ocean. Located on the south coast of Santa Barbara County, the city and area are distinguished by their culture, geography, and climate.

Culture

The high regard with which the Santa Barbara community views the importance of maintaining a continuing program of education and cultural activities for all of its citizens is apparent in their profusion throughout the year. Days are rare indeed that a lecture, theatrical performance, concert or exhibit is not offered to the public. More often than not, there is a choice of several such activities.

In addition there is a broad and many-faceted schedule of participative activities. These are provided by Santa Barbara Community College's Adult Education program and a host of non-profit organizations offering opportunities for the learning and exercising of a variety of arts, skills and subjects. Openings abound for the city's residents to participate to whatever active degree wished in a cultural pursuit of particular interest.

One of the effects of this atmosphere of cultural respect is to make the Santa Barbara area attractive for the establishment of institutions of education and the arts as well as corporate research headquarters. These institutions not only thrive in such an atmosphere, but give back as much or more than they receive, thereby enhancing the reputation of the community as a cultural center. The largest single influence on the community in this field has been the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB). Many of the events provided by UCSB's Arts and Lectures are held in the city. Westmont College and Santa Barbara Community College provide lectures, concerts and theater as well.

Santa Barbara contains numerous performing art venues, including the Arlington Theater, the historic Lobero Theater, the Granada Theater (completely rebuilt in 2008), and an art gallery and small theater in Paseo Nuevo. The Santa Barbara Bowl seats thousands in an outdoor performance space. Classical music lovers have several excellent concert series to choose among. These include the Santa Barbara Symphony, the Santa Barbara Chamber Orchestra and Camerata Pacifica, a small chamber music group. The Music Academy of the West, a summer music school, hosts an annual music festival. The Santa Barbara International Film Festival, begun in 1985, has grown in stature over the years and provides an opportunity for the community to see a wide range of new movies from independent film makers every year.

A number of cultural festivals are celebrated annually at Oak Park that draw hundreds of participants, including the Greek, French and Jewish festivals. Santa Barbara also celebrates its history and its creativity. Two major parades -- the Fiesta Parade and the Summer Solstice Parade -- started as small local events; each now attracts upwards of 100,00 attendees.

The city's fine art, historic and natural history museums continue to grow, refine and expand their collections and facilities. They and many of the musical groups provide special educational programs for children as well as the general population. Santa Barbara's strong support for the arts enriches the lives of all. This community makeup leads to a broad view of the human situation, to engagement in community life and to preservation of what makes Santa Barbara a very special place.

Physical Characteristics

Santa Barbara is prized for many things, but the most basic are the city's setting and climate.

***QUICK FACTS:* Physical Characteristics**	
Area (2009)	Total 44.3 sq. miles; Land 21.75 sq. miles; (13,920 ac); Water 22.0 sq. miles
Elevation	Sea Level to 1,200 ft. (Majority of city is below 300 ft.)
Length of Coastline	5.75 miles
Average Temperatures: **Winter** **Summer** **Annual**	(Daily Mean Temperatures) 56° 71° 61°
Average Rainfall	17.7 inches, annual total (WRCC, 2009)
Days of Sunshine	220+ sunny days per year (City GP, 1995)
Foggy Days	Average of 21 heavy fog days per year (WRCC, 2009)

Geography

Santa Barbara is located at the approximate center of a narrow, coastal shelf which extends in an east-west trending direction for about 25 miles along the South Coast of Santa Barbara County. From the arcing beach containing Stearns Wharf, the oldest portion of the city occupies a basin between the Mesa, standing 300 to 400 feet in elevation on the southwest, and the Santa Ynez Mountains on the northeast and north, that reach just over 4,000 feet at their highest peaks. The city extends up onto both the Mesa and the Santa Ynez foothills reaching a highpoint of approximately 1,200 feet in the foothills. At the base of the Santa Ynez Mountains, the city turns westward into the Goleta Valley.

Approximately eight miles west of the city's main area, a separate 952 acres of land comprises the City's airport, related industrial land, and most of the Goleta Slough.

The city's 5.75-mile shoreline is roughly half maintained beach extending approximately 3 miles east to west, and half narrow or intertidal beaches backed by eroding cliffs that rise up to 60 feet. To the southeast, about 30 miles offshore from Santa Barbara, four of the Channel Islands - Santa Rosa, San Miguel, Santa Cruz and Anacapa - lie parallel to the coast impeding the predominantly southeasterly swell coming in from the Pacific Ocean during the summer months.

Surrounding communities include unincorporated Goleta Valley and Montecito and the cities of Goleta and Carpinteria. The University of California Santa Barbara campus adjoins the airport portion of the city on the west. Ranch and farmland occupy part of the Carpinteria Valley to the east, and north and west of the city of Goleta. Also to the west of the south coast urban area are three major state beach parks: El Capitan, Refugio, and Gaviota. Los Padres National Forest occupies the majority of the upper portion of the Santa Ynez Mountains which forms an imposing backdrop for the entire south coast and the city.

Climate

Santa Barbara's latitude is sufficiently south to be out of the path of most of the Pacific storms which come onto the mainland out of the northwest. At the same time, it is far enough north to receive precipitation from the nearly spent storms which impact the coast of Northern California. This geographic location, combined with the modifying influence of the ocean and the protective encirclement of mountains, hills and islands, compose a mild climate with a mean winter temperature of 56 degrees and a mean summer temperature of 71 degrees with cool nights. With averages of 17.7 inches of rainfall and more than 220 sunny days per year, occasional fogs and the infrequent intrusion of blustering storms out of the less protected southeast, Santa Barbara's climate is as much enjoyed for its diversity as for its equability.

Occasionally, a mass of warm, dry air is pushed over the mountains from the eastern deserts, sweeping into the South Coast for several days at a time. Originally referred to as "Santanas," these "Santa Ana" winds affect most of coastal Southern California during the spring and fall. Locally, the winds are referred to as "sundowners" as they often intensify in the late afternoon or early evening rising in temperature as they come over the mountains down to lower elevations.

Indigenous vegetation is diverse and comprises species that are suited to the Mediterranean climate, adapted to periodic drought and fire. Emblematic species include the coast live oak, sycamore, laurel, toyon, ceanothus, and sages. Indigenous bunch grass species can sometimes still be found, but have long been replaced by European grasses imported since the time of the first explorers and rancheros.

Though scientists have estimated that the California Sierra snow pack has decreased by 10 percent, and sea level has risen by 7 inches in the last 100 years, the impacts of climate change to date for Santa Barbara are not yet known (CA DWR, 2005). It may be necessary to consider future impacts of climate change, not only on the weather, but on existing and new development.

Geology

Santa Barbara occupies the steep lateral ridges and canyons on the south-facing flanks of the Santa Ynez Mountains, the coastal plain at their base that extends to the city's beachfront, and the uplifted marine terrace which forms the Mesa.

The coastal shelf which supports the South Coast urban area of the county, including the city of Santa Barbara, lies within the Santa Barbara Fold Belt, a geological structure containing numerous folds and faults in the marine and alluvial material that was laid down over about 1.6 million years. The folding and faulting is considered the result of movement along the San Andreas Fault which lies 40 miles northwest of the city. Overlying the fold belt for much of the city is marine sedimentary rock. However, Rincon Shale and Monterey Formation rock are found in the foothill areas of the city such as Northridge Road, Mission Canyon, Riviera, as well as the Las Positas Valley. Where these materials combine with steep slopes, there is a higher potential for soil creep, slumps and landslides.

Numerous faults encircle the city. Active or potentially active faults in the Santa Barbara Channel south of the city include the Oak Ridge Fault, North Channel Slope Fault, Red Mountain Fault and the Santa Cruz Island Fault. North of the city in the foothills is the More Ranch Fault, and six miles beyond in the mountains is the Santa Ynez Fault. On the Mesa side are the La Mesa and Lavigia faults, and on the Riviera side are the Mission Ridge Fault Zone and the Lagoon Fault. Needless to say, Santa Barbara has experienced several major earthquakes: in 1806, 1812 and 1852. Since the invention of the seismograph, major quakes include: 1925 (magnitude 6.8); 1941 (magnitude 5.9); 1968 (magnitude 5.2); and 1978 (magnitude 5.1).

Demographic Characteristics

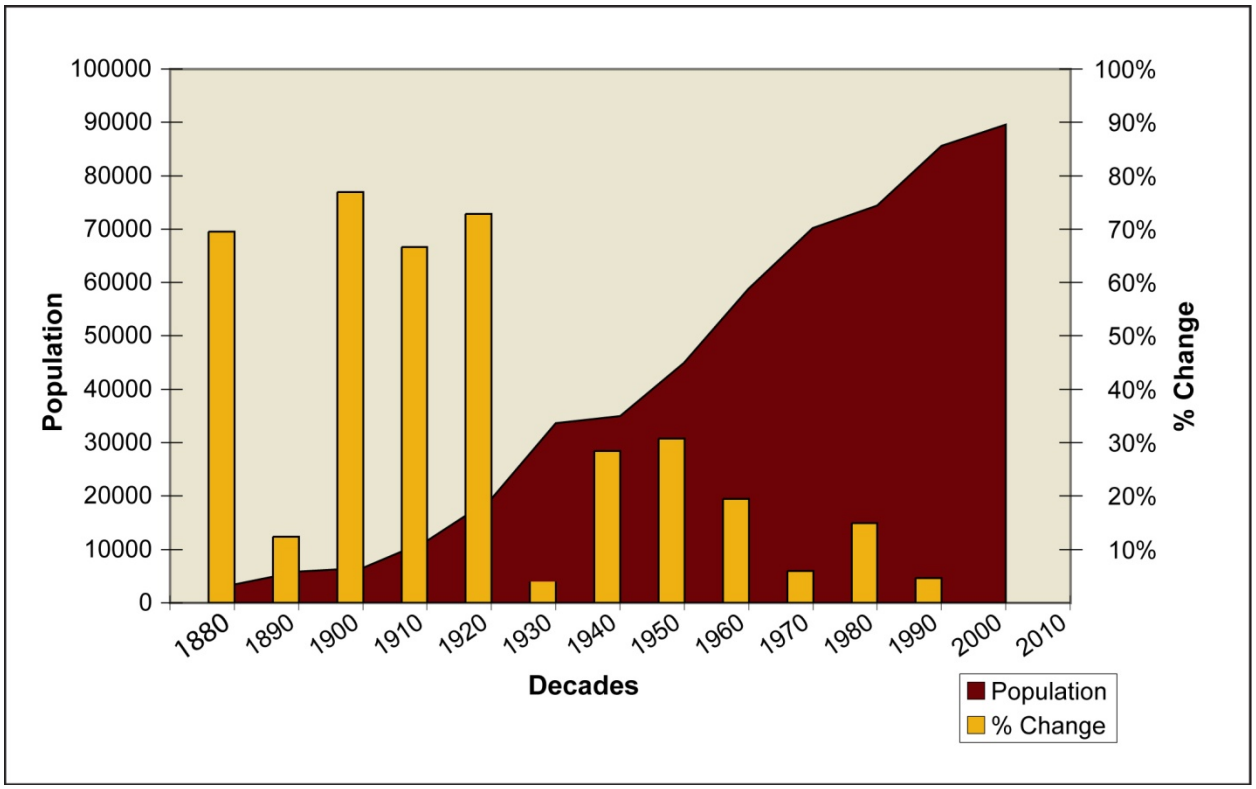
Santa Barbara is the largest city on the South Coast. Its 2000 census population was 89,606, while that of the South Coast was approximately 250,000. Though the entire South Coast Region's population has slowly increased over the last decade, both the U.S. Census Bureau and the State Department of Finance estimate that Santa Barbara's population has remained essentially unchanged since 2000.

***QUICK FACTS:* Demographic Characteristics of Santa Barbara**	
Population (2009 est.)	90,308
2000 – 2009 Growth Rate	0.8% (< 0.1%/year)
Median Age (2008)	37.7 years
Male/Female Ratio (2008)	Male 50.5%; Female 49.5%
Diversity (2008):	
White	59.9%
Black	2.1%
Asian	3.8%
Native American	0.2%
Other or multi-racial	1.8%
Hispanic/Latino	32.1%
Number of Households (2008)	35,461
Average Household Size (2008)	2.35
(Sources: 2006-08 American Communities Survey; DOF, 2009)	

Based on the recent estimates available from the U.S. Census and state Department of Finance, in comparison with 2000 census data Santa Barbara's population has on average aged by about 3 years. The average household size has decreased; it is less diverse ethnically; and it appears the male population has increased disproportionately to the female population.

Historically, the greatest relative growth, took place between 1880 and 1930 where, with the exception of the 1890s, growth averaged about 70 percent each decade, increasing 5-fold in 5 decades to a total of 33,600. Between 1940 and 1970, Santa Barbara's population more than doubled from 34,960 to 70,215, with the greatest population increase of almost 14,000 occurring in the 1950s. Population has increased every decade since 1970, though at slower rates, to the estimated 90,300 for 2009. (DOF, 2009)

Figure 2: History of Population Growth for Santa Barbara, 1880 to 2000



(Source: U.S. Census, 2006-08; DOF, 2009)

The steady growth trend from 1940 to 1990 began to slow throughout the 1990s and may have faltered since 2000. US Census estimates for the inter-census years since 2000 indicate the population may have even dropped throughout the years from 2000 to 2006, then rebounded slightly starting in 2007. Although their estimates for changes in population size and trajectory over the inter-census years differ, both DOF (2009) and the US Census (2006-08) estimate that Santa Barbara's population has been slowly growing again in the last few years. It is too soon to evaluate whether or not this is a sustained trend.

Economic Characteristics

Given the dramatic turns taken by the economy recently, it is extremely difficult to present an accurate economic picture of Santa Barbara at this time. Using the estimates presented in the chart below, the jobs to housing ratio for 2008 was about 1.22 jobs for each housing unit. This could be a reduction from the 2000 ratio of 1.48:1 (U.S. Census, 2000). If the jobs/housing ratio has declined it could be a reflection of the current global recession.

It is worth noting that more than half of Santa Barbara's residents are renters; that two-thirds of them are paying more than 30 percent of their income for housing; and over 50 percent of jobs in the city are in the retail or service sectors of the economy.

***QUICK FACTS:* Economic Indicators**	
Housing Costs	
Dwelling units (2008)	37,720
Median Home Value (2007)	$1,000,000.00
Median Monthly Rent (2007)	$1,310.00
Vacancy Rate (2008)	6.0%
Residents Paying Housing Costs Above Affordable Levels (2007):	
Level for Renters - 30%	61.6%
Level for Owners 35%	35.2%
Proportion of Owners to Renters (2008)	Owners 41.3% / Renters 58.7%
Income and Employment	
Size of City Workforce (2008)	46,465
Percent of City Population (+16 yrs old) Employed	63.8%
Median Income (2009 est.)	$60,396
2006-2008 Employment by Industry:	
Agriculture, Fishing, and Mining	.5%
Construction	6.6
Manufacturing	6.3
Transportation, Warehousing, Information, Utilities	5.5
Retail Trade	10.6
Wholesale Trade	2.1
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	7.4
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative and Waste Management Services	17.7
Educational Services, Health Care and Social Assistance	22.4
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, Food Services	12.8
Other Services	6.1
Public Administration	2.3
Private wage and Salary workers	74.8
Government Workers	13.8
Other (e.g. self-employed)	11.5
Total Private and Public Sectors	100%
(Source: American Community Survey, 2007 estimates; ACS 2006-2008)	

In a report on economic conditions prepared for the City in 2009, Strategic Economics offered the following findings:

Santa Barbara's economy is highly reliant on institutional sectors including health, education and government, which are relatively stable and can moderate regional economic fluctuations. This sector which provides higher incomes is expected to grow modestly over the next 20 years.

The tourism industry is also an important part of the economy supporting jobs in retail and hospitality, but is more susceptible to economic fluctuations. Long-term growth projections favor this sector which generates current incomes ranging from $30,000 to $40,000 annually.

In 2000, 50,741 residents were in the city's workforce, and over a third of them worked outside the city (The Inter-Regional Partnership for Jobs, Housing and Mobility, Part I, June 2004). Conversely, of approximately 48,000 jobs in the city then, 29,240 (61 percent) were filled by residents and 39 percent filled by commuters from elsewhere. By 2006, only 36 percent of jobs in the city were filled by residents, with another 15 percent residing in communities nearby, including Goleta, Isla Vista, Montecito and Carpinteria. Nearly 50 percent of employees commuted from beyond the South Coast Region. (Strategic Economics, 2009)

In 2000, the household income of residents that worked in the city had a bi-modal profile with the highest concentrations of employees in the highest categories (41 percent earning $75,000 and above at that time) and a much smaller concentration in the lowest income categories (about 27 percent earning below $40,000). At that time, the low income threshold was $37,000 (Strategic Economics, 2009). Inter-census data indicates that this pattern has not changed.

When the economic and demographic information is taken together, one conclusion could be that Santa Barbara is becoming even more of a retirement and vacation community, losing its families with children as well as its resident work force in their prime years, while being replaced by predominantly single males working in the tourism industry, in services and retail positions.

Existing Land Uses

The chart below summarizes the general land uses that comprised the city in 2009. Based on land use, it is evident that Santa Barbara is predominantly a residential city, despite serving as a regional center for government, health, cultural institutions, and tourism. Over 60 percent of land is in residential use. This does exclude the residential portion of mixed-use developments in the Downtown or other commercial areas.

QUICK FACTS: **Existing Land Use Summary, 2009**		
Land Use	**Acres**	**% of City**
Residential – single family	7,587	53.2
Residential – multi-family	1,137	8.0
Commercial	1,096	7.7
Industrial	303	2.1
Institutional	593	4.2
Airport	400	2.8
Open Space/Parks	1,086*	7.6
Circulation	2,052	14.4
TOTAL	14,254	100.0

**This total does not include beaches (which lack parcel definition) and City-owned parkland outside corporate boundaries.*

(Source: City GIS database, 2009.)

The almost 600 acres of institutional uses include such things as schools, hospitals and government buildings. Open space and parks acreage is understated as it includes only publicly provided space within the boundaries of the city (and excluding beaches in the above table). At the current estimated population of 90,308, that equates to about 12 acres of open space per 1,000 residents. Much of this open space is provided by the Goleta Slough and hilly, natural areas.

Greater detail on land use is provided in the Land Use Element.

Annexations

The City of Santa Barbara has grown from a land area of slightly less than four square miles in 1855 to almost 22 square miles of land at present, including the airport. Over the first 100 years of its incorporation, the area of the city grew by huge swaths of land, including: the harbor and shoreline; the Westside; the Eastside, Riviera and Cottage Hospital area; the Mesa; Samarkand and San Roque; the eastern foothills; Veronica Meadows area, and Cater Treatment Plant. All totaled, there have been about 115 annexation proceedings that have expanded the geographic breadth of the city. Since the 1950s, though there have been numerous annexations, only a handful have exceeded 50 acres and few have exceeded 100 acres.

***QUICK FACTS:* History of Annexations, 1855-2009 (land area only)**			
Dates	**#**	**Area**	**Cumulative (acres)**
Original Charter City	-	~ 4 sq.mi.	2,560.00
1855 – 1899	1	3,402.60 ac.	5,962.60
1900 – 1924	4	5,442.60 ac.	11,405.20
1925 – 1949	7	855.28 ac.	12,260.48
1950 – 1974	68	2,591.36 ac.	14,851.84
1975 - 1999	27	138.51 ac.	14,990.35
2000 - 2009	8	260.67 ac.	15,251.02
Totals (Approximate land area in sq.mi.)	115	23.83 sq.mi.* Totals (Approximate land area in sq.mi.)	
**Total exceeds 2009 official land area (see Quick Facts for Physical Characteristics above) due to a portion of tidelands included in annexations #2, 1899, and #4 and #5, 1921.*			

Over the 160 years since incorporation, the city's land area is more than five times its original size. The constant process of growth involved annexations of parcels of land ranging in size from less than one acre to over 2,000 acres, none over 1,000 acres since 1921. The average annexation has been approximately 130 acres in size. Almost 40 percent have been less than 10 acres in size.