



**City of Santa Barbara**  
Community Development Department

**Memorandum**

**DATE:** April 7, 2010  
**TO:** Park and Recreation Commission  
**FROM:** Bettie Weiss, City Planner *BLW*  
**SUBJECT:** *Plan Santa Barbara* General Plan Update  
Comments on Draft Documents

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**Draft General Plan and Draft Environmental Report**

The Park and Recreation Commission held earlier discussions during the *PlanSB* process as staff was working with the Planning Commission and community on the Policy Preferences Report (see attached). The Council approved this report as the basis for the updated General Plan. Staff also carefully reviewed the existing General Plan and has carried forward all relevant policies and history. Staff suggests that the Commission focus its review on the following sections of the documents:

**Part I: Introduction and Background**

Chapter 1 - Introduction  
Chapter 2 - Sustainability Framework

**Part II: Elements**

Chapter 1 - Land Use Element

- Santa Barbara's neighborhoods for background (beginning on page 83)
- Review Goals, Policies and Implementation (beginning on page 141)

Chapter 2 - Open Space, Parks, Recreation and Trails Element

- Sustainability Goals and Policies

*Note: This element is not part of the update, it will be updated at a later date, however, the goals and policies are part of the update and will provide direction for the future update.*

Chapter 4 - Environmental Resources Element

- Sustainability Goals and Policies, with a focus on Biological Resources policies as they relate to parks and the urban forest (page 185)

*Note: This element is not part of the update, it will be updated at a later date, however, the goals and policies are part of the update and will provide direction for the future update.*

**Draft Environmental Impact Report** - Executive Summary, Section 14 - Public Services

## **Discussion and Comments**

The *PlanSB* primary objectives were to update the City's Growth Management Program, Update the Housing Element, and to incorporate sustainability into the General Plan. The Council set out goals at the start of the process (see attached). Over the last 5 years as the process has evolved we are at the point where a more formal update of the General Plan includes the Land Use Element and associated Land Use Map. Also important new policies are also proposed for future element updates.

The outcome of the *PlanSB* process will be important guidance for comprehensive policies and programs for many years to come. The draft documents contain many policies and mitigation measures that can improve and enhance the communities built and natural environment. As we have reviewed with the Commission in prior discussions there is a desire to see enhanced recreation amenities and services as well. All the work cannot be done at one time and more detailed regulations, master plans, and projects will follow. At the time the Council adopts the Updated General Plan we will also need to identify a priority work program for implementation and next steps and planning into the future for opportunities including better financial conditions.

At this stage of the process we are all reviewing a lot of information, and there will be questions about the basis for analysis (for example the number of residential units we may see in the next 20 to 50 years), the likelihood of projected outcomes (amount of sea level rise due to climate change), and the availability of critical resources (such water). The analysis is critical for an informed decision making process.

In August 2008, the Parks and Recreation Commission provided the Planning Commission and City Council with detailed comments on the proposed Policy Options under consideration at that point in the process. Of the eight recommendations perhaps the first, to "Revise the Land Use/Growth Management Goal to include more specificity to Parks and Recreation Facilities" is most important. In fact, the recommend General Plan Update now proposes a stand alone Open Space, Parks & Recreation Element.

A number of the other recommendations have been also included in this recommended update including the following selected highlights:

- Land Use and Growth Management to Include Parks & Recreation – Land Use Element Goals
- Standards for Open Space – MODA Principals (LG 4)
- New Development and Open Space (LG 5.2)
- Youth and services – Community Benefit Land Uses (LG7)
- Sustainable Neighborhood Plans (LG17)
- Hwy 101 Setback – Does Not Preclude Parks, Plan for More Landscaping

### **Public Review Process**

*Plan Santa Barbara* Draft General Plan elements and a Draft Environmental Impact Report were issued on March 18, 2010 for a public review and comment period to May 17<sup>th</sup>. Planning Staff would like to assist the Park & Recreation Commission in its review and comment on the draft documents.

The following public meetings are part of the public review and comment period for the Draft General Plan and DEIR:

#### **Wed April 28 (9:00 a.m.) Planning Commission**

Staff presentation highlighting key issues, and public comment hearing on the Draft General Plan and Draft EIR documents

(Thurs April 29 1:00 p.m.) (Planning Commission)

(If necessary, continued hearing time for additional public comment, questions from Planning Commission)

#### **Thurs May 6 (1:00 p.m.) Planning Commission**

Continued Planning Commission meeting for Commission discussion and comments on the Draft documents, Commission direction to staff on Final EIR preparation, and Commission recommendations to City Council for preparation of Final General Plan documents

#### **Tues/Wed June 22 (6:00 p.m.) & 23 (1:00 p.m.) City Council/Planning Commission Joint Meeting**

Discussion and policy direction to staff for preparation of Final General Plan documents (Staff presentation and public comment on June 22<sup>nd</sup> 6:00 p.m.)

**Subsequent Process Steps:** Following the end of the Draft General Plan and Draft EIR public review and comment period, proposed Final *Plan Santa Barbara* General Plan documents and a proposed Final EIR (including responses to comments received by May 17, 2010) will be prepared. Subsequent noticed public hearings will be held at the Planning Commission and City Council to consider actions to certify the Final EIR and adopt the Final General Plan documents (anticipated in Fall 2010).



**City of Santa Barbara**  
Parks and Recreation Department

**Memorandum**

**DATE:** August 26, 2008

**TO:** Planning Commission  
City Council

**FROM:** Park and Recreation Commission

**SUBJECT:** Commission Comments On The Plan Santa Barbara Policy Options

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The Park and Recreation Commission (Commission) conducted a special meeting on Wednesday, August 20<sup>th</sup> to consider the Plan Santa Barbara Policy Options Report and provide recommendations to the Planning Commission and the City Council. The Commission specifically reviewed policies related to park, recreation, and open space as well as the creek and water quality recommendations of the Creeks Advisory Committee. Major recommendations from the Commission are outlined below. The Commission would like these policy considerations included in the environmental review phase of Plan Santa Barbara. Comments and recommendations from the Commission and the Creeks Advisory Committee on the other policy options are outlined in the attached tables. The Commission concurs with the recommendations from the Creeks Advisory Committee.

The Commission recommends that the Planning Commission and the City Council consider the following recommendations as well as those in the attached tables.

**Land Use/Growth Management**

Recommendation 1: Revise the Land Use/Growth Management Goal to include more specificity to parks and recreation facilities.

The Commission believes that parks, and recreation facilities, are a key resource (in addition to water, energy, food, housing and transportation) in the consideration of growth through in-fill development. Land use/growth management goals need to strongly consider that residents should live within walking distance of active and passive recreational facilities and parks/open space.

**Recommendation 2: Establish Park/Open Space Standards for New Development and Redevelopment.**

The Commission discussed, at length, the need for land development standards to support the provision of parks, open space and recreational facilities within neighborhoods. As Santa Barbara continues to pursue infill development there will be an increasing need for public open spaces and recreational opportunities. Such standards would be applied in a similar fashion to others (such as parking) in the consideration of new development or redevelopment projects. The standard would be applied at a neighborhood level. For implementation, if not needed in one neighborhood, the requirement could be transferred to another neighborhood.

**Community Character - Open Space, Parks and Recreation.**

**Recommendation 3: Develop mechanisms by which public and private facilities can be use for neighborhood recreation activities.**

The Commission recommends that the Planning Commission and the City Council promote creative and innovative mechanisms for fostering recreational opportunities within neighborhoods. As an example, when not in use, private and public parking lots and school properties provide potential opportunities for recreational activities.

**Recommendation 4: Provide neighborhoods that are safe and inviting for youth.**

Youth development through recreation opportunities and job training is a key interest of the Commission. The Commission recommends that the next phase of Plan Santa Barbara include policy options that address the need for neighborhoods to be safe and inviting for youth (specifically youth between the ages of 10 and 18). Neighborhoods should include community social spaces for youth and family activities.

**Recommendation 5: Integrate walking paths in parks.**

In addition to the need to provide park and recreation opportunities within walking distance of residential areas, the Commission recommends that walking paths in parks will increase neighborhood accessibility, promote safety, and enhance pedestrian opportunities. In addition to the Park and Recreation Element, policies related to walking paths in parks could be integrated into an update to the Pedestrian Master Plan.

**Community Character – Urban Forest**

**Recommendation 6: Establish design standards that provide for adequate tree wells/landscape area to promote the planting of large shade trees in parkways, parking lots and setbacks.**

Street trees, setback trees and public and private landscape trees comprise Santa Barbara's Urban Forest. Shade trees reduce the urban heat island effect and require

adequate tree wells to flourish. As Santa Barbara continues to grow, shade trees will continue to play an important role in the shape and value of the community's character. The Commission recommends that in addition to establishing standards for adequate space for trees to flourish, standards should also allow for/encourage the reduction in parking requirements and the under-grounding of utilities to support the growth of a large urban forest canopy. A policy related to large shade trees could also be integrated into the Pedestrian Master Plan.

## **Resources**

### Recommendation 7: Policy Option R1. Highway 101 Setback – Do Not Consider.

While the Commission respects the consideration of the California Air Resources Board land use guideline, the Commission does not support consideration of this policy option for a number of reasons. Santa Barbara's land area is limited and there is a critical need to balance limited land availability and community needs. In addition to residential and commercial areas, there are a number of existing park, recreation and community facilities within the proposed setback. By restricting the placement of such facilities, residents of those areas would be disproportionately affected. Although not guaranteed, improvements in automotive technology over time may result in reduced emissions and improved air quality.

### Recommendation 8: Strengthen the City's role as a sponsor for youth development and youth employment.

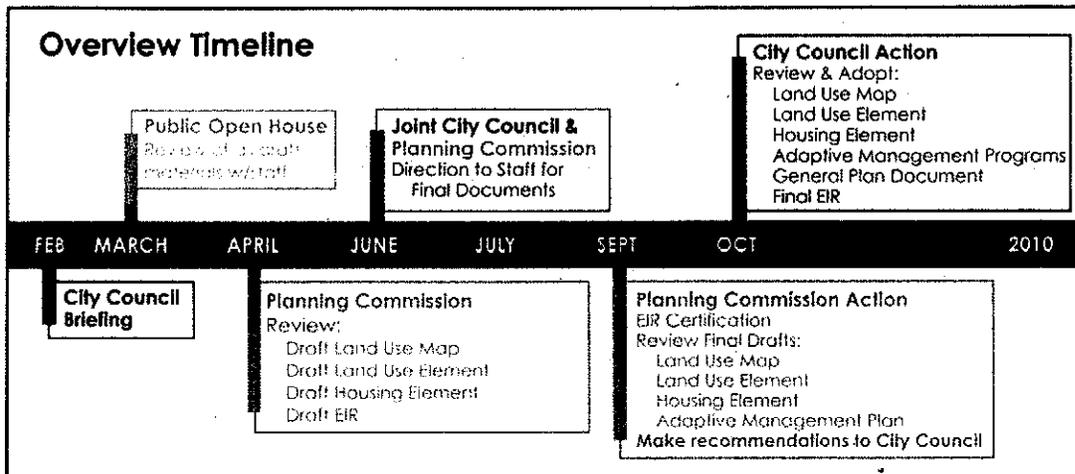
As a major employer and community service provider, the City's role as a sponsor for youth development and youth employment should be strengthened through inclusion as a policy consideration in Plan Santa Barbara.

cc: Nancy-L. Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director  
Jill Zachary, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director  
Paul Casey, Community Development Director  
Bettie Weiss, City Planner  
John Ledbetter, Principal Planner



## 2010: The Decision Year

### Key Steps to a Completed General Plan Update



Plan Santa Barbara Goals (adopted by City Council, 2005)

1. **Live within our resources** by balancing development with available resources and promoting sustainable, pedestrian scale, transit-oriented development.
2. Ensure **affordable housing** opportunities for all economic levels in the community, while protecting the character of established neighborhoods.
3. Provide **safe and convenient transportation** through improved transit, circulation, and parking.
4. Ensure a **strong economy** that provides the revenue base necessary for essential services and community enhancements.
5. Advance **regional thinking**, collaboration, and solutions.
6. Maintain the unique **character and desirability of Santa Barbara** as a place to live, work, and visit.
7. Provide **adequate services** and facilities.
8. Encourage **public involvement** and participation at all levels of city planning and other government activities.
9. Develop **explicit environmentally sustainable policies**.

## Key Deliverables

- Updated growth management program (formerly Measure E, 1989)
- Revised & mandated Housing Element
- Updated Land Use Element
- Accurate Land Use Map
- Framework to guide updates of remaining elements (Open Space, Parks & Recreation, Historic Resources, Circulation, Environmental Resources, Public Services & Safety, Economy & Fiscal Health)
- Certified EIR

## Progress to Date

- 2009** Planning Commission work sessions, *Economic Study* and forum, *General Plan Framework*, staff prepared drafts of: *Land Use Element & Map*, *Housing Element*, *Adaptive Management Plan*, *Environmental Impact Report*
- 2008** *Development Trends Report*, *Policy Options Report*, youth survey, community survey, public workshops & public meetings, *General Plan Framework: Draft Policy Preferences* approved by City Council, *EIR* scoped
- 2007** Plan SB public outreach: mailings to all city residents, 40 community meetings, 4 public workshops, Plan SB website launched, updates to City boards & committees, City Council adopts *Upper State Street Study*
- 2006** Upper State Street study
- 2005** City Council initiates Plan SB with 9 goals and creates public outreach committee, *Conditions, Trends & Issues Report* published as baseline

## Key Issues

### Areas of general agreement:

- Regulate future **growth**
- **Economic vitality**
- Live within our **Resources**
- Prioritize **affordable housing**
- Require **smaller units**
- Preserve SB's historic, small town **character**
- Enhance our **active, healthy, and walkable community**
- Plan for sustainable **neighborhoods**

### Unresolved issues:

- **Building heights**
- **Density:** Should we allow more units in smaller buildings? Can the building size be controlled with Floor to Lot Area Ratios (FARs)?
- **Parking standards**
- **Priority** of implementation actions
- **Inclusionary housing**

## Results of an Updated General Plan

1. Meets State mandate for Certified Housing Element
2. Reduces vulnerability to lawsuits challenging environmental review & climate change
3. Continues State funding programs dependent on EIR and adopted General Plan
4. Meets need for new planning standards re: growth and ways to protect Santa Barbara's character
5. Provides leadership for the future of our city (continuing efforts from 1970's Impacts of Growth and 1990's Measure E)



# Plan Santa Barbara

LIVING WITHIN OUR RESOURCES

## Public Reference Guide Regarding PlanSB and Draft Documents

- I. Public Open House:** March 18, 10:00 am to 7:00 pm, Faulkner Gallery, Central Library, 40 E. Anapamu Street
- II. Draft General Plan (GP) Update and Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) Documents for review:**
- A. PlanSB Website:** [www.YouPlanSB.org](http://www.YouPlanSB.org)
- B. Documents Available on CD:** Draft EIR and Draft GP Update documents available at the Planning Division, 630 Garden Street.
- C. Printed Copies:** Limited copies available - only one per organization. A copy can be viewed at the Planning Division, 630 Garden Street; or at Central Library, 40 E. Anapamu Street; and Eastside Library, 1102 E. Montecito Street. Copies will also be made available for a 7 day check out from the Planning Division, 630 Garden Street.
- III. Public Comment Period:** March 18 – May 17, 2010
- A. Regarding DEIR and GP Comments:** Please provide written comments on the Draft EIR separately from comments on the Draft General Plan Update document.
- Written Comments on Documents:** Please:
1. e-mail your comments to [info@YouPlanSB.org](mailto:info@YouPlanSB.org); or
  2. [jledbetter@santabarbaraCA.gov](mailto:jledbetter@santabarbaraCA.gov); or
  3. mail to the Planning Division, Attn: John Ledbetter, P.O. Box 1990, Santa Barbara, CA 93102; or
  4. drop off at 630 Garden Street, Attn: John Ledbetter.
- B. Oral Comments: Public Hearings before the Planning Commission (at City Hall, Council Chambers):**
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|---------------------|---------|--|
| Wednesday, April 28 | 9:00 am | Staff Presentation & Public Comment          |
| Thursday, April 29  | 1:00 pm | (If necessary for additional public comment) |
| Thursday, May 6     | 1:00 pm | Commission Discussion & Comments             |
- IV. Where Can One Check To See Recommended Land Use Designation Changes?**  
The public can check the existing and proposed land use maps and land use designations on the PlanSB website : [www.YouPlanSB.org](http://www.YouPlanSB.org) The website also has a database called *General Plan Designation by Parcel* found on the home page under subheading "Proposed Changes to Land Use or Zoning Designations in the City."  
Use *General Plan Designation by Parcel* to check your property's existing zoning, existing land use designation, and proposed land use designation.

(Continued on other side...)

- A.** The Database has 5 columns and all the parcels in the City.
1. APN – Assessor Parcel Number
  2. Site Address
  3. Land Use Designation – Existing
  4. Existing Zoning
  5. Land Use Designation - Proposed
- B.** To find the parcel you are interested in, search the database by clicking on the 'Find' button. If you cannot find the 'Find' button **click Edit in the Menu bar and click the Find button** there. A search box should appear.
1. Type in the APN or Site Address in the search box, preferably the APN. (There could be multiple addresses per parcel or the same address on many parcels, but there is only one APN per parcel.)
  2. If typing in APN use the following format **000-000-000** with the dashes. If typing in the Site Address use abbreviations for the street name, for example use **rd** for road or **st** for street, without the period.
  3. Click **Find**.
  4. The APN number or site Address should be highlighted. Confirm that this is the correct address.
- V. When Would Any Changes Occur?** The recommended changes are DRAFT. Planning Commission recommendation and formal adoption by Council would not occur until sometime in the fall.
- VI. Where Can One See the Program Timeline?** On the website [www.YouPlanSB.org](http://www.YouPlanSB.org) homepage.
- VII. Where Can One Call With Questions?** (805) 564-5470, (805) 897-2509