



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

DATE: April 28, 2010

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission

FROM: Administration Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Parks and Recreation Commission Comments on Draft General Plan Update and Draft Environmental Impact Report for Plan Santa Barbara

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission review, finalize, and approve comments on the Draft General Plan Update and Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Plan Santa Barbara.

DISCUSSION:

At a special meeting on April 14, 2010, the Parks and Recreation Commission received a presentation from Planning staff and formulated the following comments regarding the Draft General Plan Update and Draft Environmental Impact Report for Plan Santa Barbara. The following discussion is drafted for submittal to the Planning Commission and the City Council.

Overall, the Commission believes that the draft General Plan policies are going in a good direction, since they identifying desired neighborhood characteristics, such as enhancing physical and social connectivity, and provide for open space enhancement, local community centers, and pedestrian improvements. In addition, the Commission supports the overall sustainability framework of the draft General Plan.

The Commission has comments on a number of policies and issue areas, as outlined in the following bullets:

- Support the draft General Plan Open Space & Parks Element Policy OP1.1, Park and Open Space Standards and Planning. There is a critical need to establish standards that identify how many and what types of additional parks are needed in different neighborhoods.
 - Examples of park needs include the shortage of soccer fields, and need for small parks in dense neighborhoods.
 - The analysis in the DEIR does not thoroughly consider the potential variety of needs since it combines all park acreage to conclude that overall there is an adequate amount of park space.

- Support OP2. Open Space, Park and Recreation and Trails Acquisition and Maintenance Funding, including:
 - Development of Quimby Act funding (OP2.1). Quimby Act funding mechanisms have been very successful in other jurisdictions. It is especially needed for denser areas that need additional facilities.
 - Prioritize parkland acquisition in under-served neighborhoods.
 - Funding to maintain park resources (OP2.2). For example, the Street Trees USA program requires expenditures of \$2 per capita for a jurisdiction to receive the Tree City USA designation.
- Support Land Use Element Policy LG17. Sustainable Neighborhood Planning. Neighborhood plans should be a priority but should not preclude development of individual components (such as parks) separate from the planning process.
- Provide a stronger connection in the draft General Plan between the neighborhood planning policies in the Land Use Element and the Parks and Recreation policies.
- In Housing Needs section of the plan, identify needs for seniors with dementia. Santa Barbara does not have adequate services.
- As part of the connectivity and transit policies, suggest that review of new development should consider transportation requirements to high schools to limit vehicle congestion.

SUBMITTED BY: Jill E. Zachary, Assistant Parks & Recreation Director

APPROVED BY: Nancy L. Rapp, Parks & Recreation Director