

PLANSB WORKSHOP COMMENTS
JUNE 13, 2007 - FAULKNER GALLERY, CITY LIBRARY

GENERAL LARGE GROUP THOUGHTS ABOUT SANTA BARBARA

Housing

- Historic Architecture/Preservation
- Spanish/Mexican Heritage
- Green City of Santa Barbara RV Ordinance
- Small Town Character
- Affordable housing
- Make process democratic
- Growth/Urban Core
- Don't displace housing

Transportation

- Nature/Transportation
- Trolley
- Public Transit
- Accessible/safe bike routes

Economy

- Small town with big city amenities
- Diverse
- Self-determination

Environment

- Views
- Natural Resources
- Well defined borders
- Progressive Culture

Community Design

Walkability

Other

- Responsive Government
- Vision
- Maintain ordinance
- Help for homeless
- Amend voting

SMALL GROUP COMMENTS

Group #1

OVERALL THEMES

- Ways to address affordable housing issues to maintain the diversity of the community in SB.
- How to become more sustainable and recognize the connectivity of all our actions and the impact our decisions have on the environment (not just direct)
- Santa Barbara can be an innovative leader in addressing these tough issues

HOUSING/NEIGHBORHOODS

- People need to understand the history of SB, impact of growth
- If you limit housing, price increases
- What is the impact on our community diversity?
- Need to slow down the way we live and remember the “pre-history” of this place
- Carrying capacity – are we there??
- Decrease impact of current population or decrease population to maintain resource use
- Argument has become affordable housing vs. growth
- We need to do both
- Keep existing structures – convert into affordable housing that people can live in all stages of their lives
- Community polarization between people who own here and the people who work here
- Our vision should be truly socio-economically diverse
- School districts should use their properties for housing
- Inclusionary housing further stratifies housing costs, by driving up the cost of the market units to compensate for the affordable units
- Need to develop middle-range (i.e \$400K) housing
- Cost of land, length of process, building envelope DRIVE cost of housing
- Create another category \$600K/ 2bed
- As long as housing is seen as investment we will never solve the problem.
- Need to create non-market housing (city or employer subsidized)
- Middle-income co-ops
- Can be funded by City or banks as mortgage brokers (not subsidies)
- Mix types of housing in same neighborhoods
- Chapala developments address a lot of the issues talked about
- Lower impact
- Housing options
- On transportation corridor
- Cooperative Housing Program
- City investment (not just subsidy)

TRANSPORTATION

- Build housing on transit corridors

- Decrease parking
- Create car/sharing opportunities
- Try to live without a car
- Improve transportation systems
- Busing our kids to high school
- SB should be an example
- Carpool
- Drive slower
- Planning rules need to stop prioritizing automobile
- Develop high speed trans. to SLO

ECONOMY

- People move because of prices – if people could live here we could maintain this population
- What is the plan for SB tourism?
- Need more of the business community involved

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Plant trees
- Permaculture
- Address solar like we did water conservation (everyone switched to low-flow)
- The City should not make \$\$ on selling water
- City does not incentivize innovative approaches (e.g. greywater etc.)
- Recycling is successful because you get \$\$
- We can use “climate change” as a “carrot”
- Provide better incentive for green buildings

COMMUNITY DESIGN

- It is unrealistic to increase inclusionary housing and decrease heights
- We need a program like City Repair that is grassroots, environmental, social, etc.
- We need the working middle-class included in these discussions
- Guiding principal should include HOT/sustainability
- Green tourism/universal design

SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Concern over the impact of development on City facilities – in particular youth facilities

OTHER

ARTS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES WEBSITE

Need new web portal that lists services and facilities for adults and kids that is totally comprehensive (e.g. Calendar/blogs)

YOUTH

We need a big idea for our youth – 1:1 intervention

HEALTH

Support a healthy City (healthy food, walkable communities, health care)

“BIG” IDEAS PRESENTED TO LARGER GROUP

Goal should be to develop a holistic (i.e. social, environmental, economic, housing, trans.) , incentive driven plan for the future that is a healthy and affordable model for other communities

Group # 2

OVERALL THEMES

Overall community health, including the environment, where we live, and how we travel were the general themes throughout. The areas with the most comments include:

- Housing and Neighborhoods Issues
- Transportation Issues
- Services / Facility Issues

The discussion did try to counter people’s ideas by challenging how feasible some of these ideas were, but the facilitator kept the group on track for simply brainstorming issues and concerns.

HOUSING/NEIGHBORHOODS

- Planter / Parkway strips are being paved
- Needs dorms at SBCC
- Preserve mature trees
- We can’t provide population for all – put a cap on the population
- If Inclusionary Housing Program is part of a project, make it rental
- Better define the words AFFORDABLE HOUSING
- Quit waiving parking requirements for developments
- No density bonus for market rate projects, only for affordable/rental
- Rental housing developed but not subsidized by owners
- Affordable housing is not in \$\$ reach of workers
- Prevent sub-urban sprawl
- Need more affordable housing near Sr. Housing, especially workers in SB
- Affordable housing can be smaller units
- Limit Affordable Housing purchases to those in SB already
- Don’t push density to the neighborhoods
- Funds to subsidize Sr. Affordable housing.

TRANSPORTATION

- There is an overuse of private automobiles
- Make bus stops wheelchair accessible
- Need regional Light Rail – Elevated Rail
- Need local (south coast) Light Rail
- Would like small public transportation on Riviera

- Need investment into multimodal transportation system
- Affordable housing linked to transportation via commuters who cannot afford local housing
- 101 Routed inland
- Give free Segways within City limits for use
- Shared taxi / jitney / colectivos
- Solar lights / better lights at bus stops
- Convince public (education) of the benefits of walking in conjunction with transportation
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- Convince public (education) of the benefits of walking in conjunction with transportation
- Development applications should go to TCC 1st to be better linked to land use
- Do not reduce parking requirements
- Widen 101 to Venture
- More bus turnouts
- Wider sidewalks and landscaping
- All public transportation should be hybrid or green of some type
- Better public transportation to schools from neighborhoods
- Better Amtrak services to improve air quality and see stars – environmental item too.
- Need regional high speed rail maybe 300 mph
- Use freeway line for the high speed rail
- Move Transit center to Train Station
- Shift lanes on 101 during commute to alleviate traffic

ECONOMY

- Preserve / encourage local business
- Large commercial space broken into small spaces for local business, to make it more affordable for them.
- Use RDA funds
- Preserve the Funk Zone
- Renew Measure E

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Need more enforcement of gas blowers
- Enforce doggy bags on trails, etc.
- Adequate water supply
- Live within our resources
- Clean up creeks and beaches
- No septic allowed near creeks and beaches
- Recycling liaison that goes to apartments and businesses
- Fix (re-engineer or redesign) storm drains to prevent pollution
- Fossil Free by 33
- Reduce carbon emission to ZERO
- Better recycling education such as putting items in water bills.
- Turn garbage into energy. Covanta Company CVA on stock exchange

- Encourage homeowners and business to use compostable products

COMMUNITY DESIGN

- Use Floor Area Ratio for R3 and C2
- Limit height to 40'

SERVICES AND FACILITIES

- Reduce light pollution
- Do road work at night
- Better distribution of Community Service Information
- 211 – educate the community on this
- Better publicize CERT
- Publicize public services on buses
- Purchase Armory and Army Reserve sites – convert to Teen Centers
- Temporarily close State St. to vehicles, maybe on weekends
- Temporarily close interchanges
- Pay for resettlement
- Neighborhood Task Force groups such as Community Outreach Police Officer and Eastside / Westside / Mesa areas
- Enforce traffic laws, red light, school zones, etc.
- Red light cameras
- More and less traffic circles where appropriate

OTHER

- Health
- Community health concerns
- Improve walk ability, bike paths
- Plant fruit trees
- Need better mental health facilities and housing – also effects the jail
- Pesticide free SB – include homeowners and schools
- More City involvement in mental health issues
- Large income gap for SB workers
- Affordable housing for health care workers is needed = higher densities
- Population pressure underlying health issues
- Population pressure affects housing and need balance between new housing and reducing other units.

GROWTH

Slow or no growth

“BIG” IDEAS PRESENTED TO LARGER GROUP

Transportation

- Shared taxi / jitney / colectivos
- 101 Routed inland
- Need regional high speed rail maybe 300 mph

Environmental

- Need a recycling liaison that goes to apartments and businesses
- Need better recycling education such as putting items in water bills.
- Turn garbage into energy. Covanta Company CVA on stock exchange

Economy

- Turn large commercial space into small spaces for local business, to make it more affordable for them.
- Use RDA funds

Public Services / Facilities

Purchase Armory and Army Reserve sites – convert to Teen Centers

GROUP #3

OVERALL THEMES

- Environment,
- Education,
- Transportation.

Issues about the environment, education, and transportation were primary areas of interest within the group discussion. These issues tied together to promote energy and water conservation; reducing demand for oil consumption and personal vehicle use; creating a safer pedestrian and bike safe community; promoting a light rail or other alternative transportation method; centering around a more local based economy; and increasing public education to promote goals of sustainability and environmental stewardship. Emphasis was also placed on improving local school systems and creating a less ethnic and economic divide in our schools. Encouraging our youth to become involved in decision making was another value discussed as children today will one day become leaders.

HOUSING/NEIGHBORHOODS

- Rent Caps – City Ordinance
- Increase mixed use zones;
- Streamline permits for mixed use;
- Increase density; build up not out;
- Large employers provide housing;

TRANSPORTATION

- Encourage joint City and County Transportation planning!
- Place controls on maximum number of highway lanes (before there are six lanes in each direction).
- Pollutions controls; control carbon output; improve air quality;
- Increase housing density in transportation corridors;
- Pedestrian oriented City.

- Synchronize the City traffic lights to reduce stop and go.
- Standardize left turn signal systems;
- reduce traffic congestion,
- increase fuel efficiency, and
- improve air quality;
- Reduce demand of oil; consider peak oil; world reserve v. supply;
- Increase the number of buses and frequency; extended service (5 a.m. – 1 a.m.); increase number of electric/hybrid busses; phase out standard gasoline engine buses.
- Create incentives for public to utilize alternative modes of transportation.
- Employers provide bus passes;
- Create and encourage greater and safer bike paths and pedestrian friendly facilities;
- Improve street lighting – safety for pedestrians.
- Encourage a light rail system; possible relocate Greyhound station to outer City area and expand alternative transportation center;
- Reduce personal vehicle parking areas;
- Educate the public about modes of alternative transportation and explain environmental benefits.

ECONOMY

- Taxes: direct tax money towards a local environmental emphasis;
- Education in Green technologies; LEED Certification;

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Encourage and increase efforts in sustainability.
- Concerns of Global warming; reduce impacts!
- Effects of increased ocean levels and City sewer system;
- The system will soon be under water;
- Water and Energy Conservation;
- Encourage and create incentives to increase local food supply;
- Aim for a Zero-waste City;
- Require large corporations to be environmental stewardships
- Incentives and penalties.

COMMUNITY DESIGN

- Improve / encourage neighborhood communities; walkable for all needs;
- Improve / encourage landscaping – helps air quality.
- Preserve cultural values; arts;
- Preserve public ocean and mountain views and access to open spaces;

SERVICES AND FACILITIES

- Education:
- Improve school systems; eliminate income/social biased schools; all public schools shall be treated equally.
- Invite and encourage school officials to attend public workshops.
- Encourage youth involvement in decision making;

“BIG” IDEAS PRESENTED TO LARGER GROUP

- Improve the education system for local schools and the general public;
- Housing: put caps on rental properties; create more affordable rental housing; create housing communities with markets and general needs in walkable distances;
- Reduce demand for personal vehicles; provide alternate transportation system; and gear towards a pedestrian oriented city.

GROUP #4

OVERALL THEMES

- Housing Needs
- Transportation and Traffic
- Growth Issues Associated with Development

HOUSING/NEIGHBORHOODS

- Preservation of Neighborhoods by maintaining architectural character
- Housing Ownership Programs for the Disabled
- Increase the percentage of Section 8 Housing required
- Inclusionary Housing needs to be fixed to cover a broader range of people/needs
- Maintain and increase affordable rental housing
- Needs programs to ensure that rental housing is in good condition/maintenance/quality
- Collect funds to increase affordable rental housing
- Limit or Eliminate New Time Shares – Does not Serve the Community
- Promote health by bringing density downtown to encourage biking & walking

TRANSPORTATION

- Concern of the amount of people commuting
- Traffic circulations issues associated with new development
- Traffic concerns for Upper State Street
- Increase hours of Trolley Service and increase route to include Upper State St.
- Increase State Street Shuttle Service
- Operate Cross Town Shuttles on the Weekends
- Increase bus service to every 10 minutes and increase late night bus service
- Make public transportation easier and cheaper
- Challenge to get people out of their cars
- Make driving cars less convenient
- Reduce parking to get people out of their cars
- Concerns of safety of public transportation at night & takes too long to get to your destination
- Provide more transit service to meet the needs of Senior citizens
- Traffic congestion on Hwy 101 due to single occupancy vehicles
- Need commuter rail service from SB to Goleta and from SB to Ventura
- Increase connections for service from Train Station & other areas of the City to encourage commuter rail service

- Need more grid **street systems as collector streets create problems**

ECONOMY

- Too much catering to the affluent
- Inability of the community to stop or limit development

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Live within our resources and limit development
- Resist Urban Sprawl
- Need walkable/livable community
- Growth concerns for the future/SB desirable place to live creating demand for growth
- Global Warning concerns with increase vehicle use
- Maintain healthy environment

COMMUNITY DESIGN

- Make City more pedestrian friendly
- Concerned with Large Development
- How do we make people less dependant on their vehicles?
- Limit Height of Building
- Density – Concerns with overbuilt properties
- Mixed-Use is good to promote walking & vibrant neighborhoods
- Increase the number of bike racks required
- More open space/not high density

SERVICES AND FACILITIES

- Concerns with limited resource and constraints on service
- Need sidewalks on Upper State Street

OTHER

Planning terms and jargon are confusing; – more education and public outreach needed to explain planning issues to public

“BIG” IDEAS PRESENTED TO LARGER GROUP

- **Growth & Health – Concern with consequences of growth and what to do about it – need to balance growth with affordability of housing and loss of housing**
- **Transportation for disabled people – need more seating on buses for the disabled**
- **Downtown State Street – turn into a pedestrian zone & Milpas Street – turn into a pedestrian zone or take out a lane of traffic or remove street parking**

GROUP #5

OVERALL THEMES

- Housing; transfer tax on market housing could reduce speculation and help subsidize much needed downtown housing
- Alternative and inexpensive public transportation very important
- Global warming issues and concern with resources like water

HOUSING/NEIGHBORHOODS

- Concerned that SB is getting too big
- Can't build our way out of problems
- Children's future should be focus of development plans
- How do universities –UCSB, City College, Westmont—expect to meet the needs of everyone?
- Downtown housing should be for downtown workers
- Limited space between mountains and ocean permitting only limited growth
- Need to understand how much housing area can support
- Currently 87% Single-Family residential – need to look at alternative developmental models
- Smart growth model OK but in SB there is no place to sprawl
- The City is limited by State mandates – State maintains control because they control \$\$
- Tension between public planning and private property rights
- May not be able to accomplish everything through public planning
- Housing policy needs to consider who we build for and what kind of housing we want
- At the current rate we will only have expensive, rich housing
- Demand rental, smaller housing
- Concern with “mansionization” in some neighborhoods
- Need affordable housing that will maintain charm of neighborhoods
- How do we create affordable housing?
- Rent control? Price control?
- How healthy is a “company town” – a city with price controls?
- Revenue from title transfer fee can go right to affordable housing
- Housing build for “poorer” folks is now not affordable to middle-class
- Concern with building envelope/ air space denied to locals and out of town people develop
- Are housing units serving local needs? Those vested in community?
- Preserve SF zones but need amenities in neighborhoods

TRANSPORTATION

- SB should be car free
- Parking lots could be transformed into affordable housing
- Bus riders who ride to and from work should get a discount
- Concern with St. Francis project. People will need to drive, why not some of the housing in Goleta
- Public transportation needs to be improved
- Need rapid transit.
- Taking the bus not fast enough
- Need commuter parking lots
- Need to address commuter traffic
- Other cities are more successful with bicycle amenities
- People would use bicycles if safer to ride in city.
- 20 year goal – lots of bicycles

- Largest room in most houses is the garage – does not make sense
- Need motor vehicle free areas
- Future alternative fuel technologies will not address/alleviate congestion
- In London you can only drive on certain days or you can charge for access to city roads
- Taking cars away from downtown, however, may adversely affect downtown merchants
- Better integration of transit, e.g. buses should carry more bicycles
- Integrate bus and rail, e.g. move bus depot to Amtrak

ECONOMY

- Will always have very poor and very rich.
- Need to look at our Middle Class
- Do not want to become a Carmel (lacking vitality)
- .5 of 1% on transfer tax would generate \$6 million
- Impacts only those speculating rather than long-term residents
- Are we going to start targeting a certain workforce?
- Money needs to go where it is needed not just to the general fund – we need strict rules on where money goes
- Local businesses being forced out by large retail chains (e.g. Starbucks).

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Do we want to stay within our resources
- Concern with global warming, water resources, sustainability
- Have to be able to deliver basic resources
- If water were to raise 2' we would lose beaches, hotels, highways
- Need to construct dykes between cliffs and downtown
- Very small margin of error
- Need to think bio-region and not just City – Rincon → Gaviota
- Question wisdom of lawn-as-accessory – need public education on problems with watering lawns
- Need to address motor vehicle emissions

COMMUNITY DESIGN

- Need a common set of values to have these conversations
- i.e. land available per population, planning for families
- Both long-term residents and those seeking housing must listen to each other
- Are there other communities that we can use as a model?
- Survey 10 similar communities
- Community design and housing go together
- Zone for rental or small ownership – overlay zone for upper state, downtown, most of town
- Should not rezone agricultural land for higher density – agricultural land being outpriced for agriculture
- Transfer rights within the city. Can build up if providing open spaces, parks or other community benefits

SERVICES AND FACILITIES

- Large homes require services
- Concern with services, especially water
- Need water filter installed upstream to improve tap water quality
- Where do we get water resources?
- 1990s water moratorium worked
- Why did city sell lots of desalination equipment?
- Water quality is not acceptable
- Need to define higher water quality standard (value statement, what is acceptable?)

OTHER

EDUCATION

- People are moving because schools are not very good
- Concern with consolidation of education
- Instead plan local schools in neighborhoods which would reduce taxes

“BIG” IDEAS PRESENTED TO LARGER GROUP

- Increase transfer fee so less land speculation. Money goes into housing, downtown
- workforce housing.
- assess what other cities have done
- Integrate transportation, center at train station