



# City Council & Planning Commission Work Session



Plan Santa Barbara & Community Design  
September 10, 2007

# Agenda

## Plan Santa Barbara

- *Community Input Summary Report - preliminary findings*
- Discussion

## Community Design

- July 18 Worksession results & next steps
- Discussion

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## Background

- PlanSB Purpose
  - Measure E sunsets in 2010
  - Reaching housing build-out projection
  - Re-assessing *Living with Our Resources*
- Process Goals
  - Council initiation 2005
  - Affirmation of 1988 GPU approach
- Conditions, Trends & Issues Report
  - Baseline of resources, public services & facilities

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## Outreach Committee

- Appointed by Council in 2005
- Multi-function
  - Review outreach tools & methodologies
  - Identify key community groups
  - Sounding board
  - Ambassadors

# *Community Input Summary Report*

## Outreach Strategies

- Comment forms (brochure & website)
- Website
- Community workshops
- Grassroots meetings

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## Understanding the Input

- Different sources
- No assigned values or quantitative results
- Goals:
  - Identify broad themes in aggregate
  - Identify ranges of opinion & order of magnitude w/in context of each outreach approach
  - Ensure input captured in policy options for strategic framework

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## [YouPlanSB.org](http://YouPlanSB.org)

- Disseminates info & receives input
- Features
  - Calendar of events
  - Library
    - C, T, & I
    - Workshops & Grassroots meetings
  - E-mail Notification
  - Comment forms & polling function

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## Comment Forms

- City-wide mailing & YouPlanSB.org
- 554 responses
- Questions:
  - “What do you love about Santa Barbara?”
  - “What are your concerns about the future?”
  - “What are your hopes for the future?”

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## Community Workshops

- Four workshops - June & July 2007
- 258 attendees
- Methodology
  - Gather input on vision, issues, opportunities
  - Open nature not designed for consensus
  - ID broad themes & range of opinions

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## Grassroots Meetings

- Seeking-out input
- Outreach Committee “plus” & staff
- Over 40 meetings & 700 participants
- Brochures & comment cards

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## Qualities: “What I love about Santa Barbara”

- Small town feel and community connectedness
- Diverse population
- Scenic beauty (beaches, ocean, mountains, creeks, etc.) & views
- Distinctive architecture, especially downtown
- Preservation of historic character and neighborhoods
- Vibrant and dynamic culture

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## Key Issues: Housing & Neighborhoods

- Lack of affordable housing
- Loss of the middle class
- Absentee landlords
- Need to maintain neighborhood character and diversity

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## Key Issues: **Community Design**

- Too much growth might adversely affect character of the city
- Overcrowding in the MF neighborhoods
- Building heights & large projects
- Too many luxury condos
- Public health concerns

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## Key Issues: **Environment**

- Preserve scenic beauty (creeks, beaches, etc.)
- Expand green space/ improve public health
- Living with Our Resources still important
- Reduce waste & explore alternative energies
- Address global warming
- SB should play a leadership role on environmental issues

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## ◆ Key Issues: Transportation

- Traffic congestion
- Parking
- Balanced transportation network
- Public transit improvements
- Bicycle/pedestrian safety
- Accessibility

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## ◆ Key Issues: **Economy**

- Need for workforce housing
- Difficult to attract/retain workers
- How to preserve/encourage small businesses
- Tourism (pro and con)

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## Key Issues: Public Services & Facilities

- Public safety (e.g. gangs)
- Recreation - especially youth
- Social services (homeless, childcare, etc.)
- Water quality- sewage, drinking water

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## What are the community's hopes for the future?

- SB can meet serious future challenges
- Balance growth and preservation
- Meet the needs of all residents & workers
- Create environmentally sensitive policies

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## How will this input be used?

- Staff in the process of quantifying impact of existing plans & policies
- Next step - analyze which of these policies need to change and how
- This input confirms a number of important issues e.g. growth, housing, the environment
- Also frames the range of opinion, as well as new issues that should be considered

# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

## Next Steps

- Analyze community input to inform policy options-  
- **fall 07'**
- Meet w/ Outreach Committee & Planning  
Commission – **fall 07'**
- Conduct Round II Policy Options workshops  
- **early 08'**
- Initiate environmental review - **spring 08'**
- Develop strategic policy framework draft  
- **summer 08'**



# Plan Santa Barbara *Community Input Summary Report*

Questions and/or comments...

# Community Design

## Outline

- July 18<sup>th</sup> Joint Worksession
- Four Objectives & Outcomes
- Community Benefit Findings - Legal Considerations
- Next Steps



# Community Design

## July 18<sup>th</sup> Joint Worksession

**Participants** - City Council; Planning Commission, Architectural Board of Review and Historic Landmarks Commission

**Purpose** - Discuss Community Design policies & standards w/in the context of recent large scale development projects.

**Format** - Staff presentation; small group discussions; large group presentations

# Community Design

## 1. Common Understanding of Existing Policies & Standards for Review of Large Projects

**Recognition** - Urban Design Guidelines not being used to the extent possible. In particular:

- Compatibility of new development with existing environment
- Human-scale character
- Building / street edge

**Support** - design review boards required to make findings consistent w/ Urban Design Guidelines.

# Community Design

## 2. **Confirmation: Existing Rules, Guidelines & Findings give Sufficient Direction to Approve, Revise or Deny projects.**

**Urban Design Guidelines** - need stronger implementation including new findings for design review approval.

**City's Goals Questioned** – is recent develop. adequately meeting Affordable housing & historic character goals?

**No Consensus** - regarding current plans and policies; will have significant implications for Plan SB process.



# Community Design

## 3. **Gage Interest in Near-Term Actions: Establish Additional Findings; Change Variable Density to Reduce Size of new Units.**

**Broad Support** - additional findings for design review approval are needed (see attachment).

**Variable Density Standards** - much more complex and complicated to change; address concurrently as part of & during Plan SB process.



# Community Design

## 4. Ideas & questions to help shape policy options & trade-offs in Round II of Plan SB.

**Wide Range of Opinions** - whether the City's current plan and policies are on track.

**Many Excellent Questions** - were raised and suggestions for additional information to be considered during *Plan SB* process.

**Helpful to Staff** - to plan next phase of public workshops on future growth & development.

# Community Design

## Community Benefit Findings - Legal Considerations

Only allow maximum height (3-4 stories) if community benefits provided or meets existing community needs. Ideas have included:

- Providing more affordable housing than required by IHO,
- For rental housing only,
- Exceeding new Green Building requirements,
- Receiving Transfer of Development Rights from Gaviota Coast or elsewhere to preserve open space.

## State Law

- Prohibits findings that result in exactions not directly related to the project's impacts, if consistent w/ GP & Zoning.

# Community Design

## Next Steps

- ◆ **Design Review Findings** – provide input on attached findings today; Council initiate ordinance amendment to incorporate new findings for HLC and ABR;
- ◆ **Variable Density** – address concurrently as part of and during the Plan SB process;
- ◆ **Community Benefit Findings** - considered within the context of *Plan SB* discussion.



# Community Design

## Potential Design Review Findings:

The Historic Landmarks Commission and Architectural Board of Review must find that the proposed development demonstrates compatibility on four different levels:

1. The development will be compatible with the distinctive architectural character of Santa Barbara and the surrounding neighborhood;
2. The height, scale and massing of the development will be compatible with adjacent developments;
3. The development will have sufficient open space and landscaping; and
4. The development will be consistent with the City's Urban Design Guidelines.

# Community Design

## San Luis Obispo

- ◆ Proposing to require projects to meet multiple policy objectives (paseos, open space, design amenities, views, historic preservation or affordable housing) for approval;
- ◆ Development policy context very different –current 2-story maximum building height;
- ◆ They have decided to allow an increase in building height and intensity only if projects meet multiple policy objectives.



# Community Design

**Application of this approach in Santa Barbara, would require include either:**

**Reduce Heights & Densities** - to two stories (downzone), and adopt policy objectives establishing conditions projects would be allowed to build to four stories, 60 feet for example; or

**Increase Heights and Densities** - amend City Charter, General Plan, & Zoning Ordinance to allow buildings to exceed four-story 60 feet maximum as long as multiple policy objectives are met.