

TO: Santa Barbara Planning Commission
FROM: Judy Orias, President, Allied Neighborhoods Association
SUBJECT: Information Critical to the General Plan Update
DATE: January 3, 2008

Dear Chair Jacobs and Planning Commissioners:

Santa Barbara has a long history of citizen participation in the planning process. Whether as members of boards, such as yours, or in citizen organizations, such as the Citizens Planning Association, League of Women Voters, and our own, we think that citizens have played a valuable role in developing and maintaining the character of our city.

Allied Neighborhoods Association is committed to continuing to help in the process of developing the General Plan Update. However, a number of important questions need addressing but currently remain unanswered. We consider this missing information critical to informed decision making in developing the GPU. In the following list, some of the questions are straight forward while others are more difficult, but nonetheless equally important.

1. How much growth can be developed assuming a build out of the current general plan?
2. How much residential development can be done in mixed-use projects in non residential zones?
3. How does such mixed-use development impact our policies regarding noise, air Quality, sewage capacity, water supply and traffic flow/congestion? In other words how does this potential build out affect the existing residents' quality of life?
4. What are our infrastructure capacity constraints?
5. What are the economic impacts on the city of the increased demand for services with additional build out? How much growth in staff at the city level and private sector level will be required to support the increased demand?
6. What is the economic impact on city revenues from sales tax leak associated with shopping shifting out of town?
7. What is an appropriate mix of retail and residential units within the city and its potential to meet the needs of residents?
8. How does the state of the current real-estate market impact city revenues, considering that other cities have found that the resulting loss of income has necessitated drastic cuts in programs?

We note that the Impacts of Growth Study provided valuable information neighborhood by neighborhood. i.e., listing the conditions and assets of each neighborhood.

9. Where in the process today is there an update of this information?

10. Where in the process does neighborhood planning enter?

Allied considers it important to recognize individual neighborhoods because they require planning as well as other parts of the city. Existing residents want to be considered in the process of the planning of their areas as well as the entire city.

Above all, we are concerned with how the charter mandate of Living Within our Resources is to be actualized. We need clear facts indicating what resources we have.

In considering the City Council Goals we would like to see the development of concrete policies to affect these goals. Some stated policy goals which appear not to be implemented are:

Policy Goal 1.1.2 – Develop a floor area ratio by zone/area as one of the standards implementing the 3 million square foot growth cap.

Policy Goal 1.1.3 – Establish a long-term potential for build out of vacant properties.

Policy Goal 1.1.9 – The goals, policies and implementation procedures in the General Plan shall be reviewed in 1995 and 2005.

Policy Goal 1.3 – Any new or pending non-residential project may be constructed only if it will not cause a significant and unmitigated adverse impact on traffic. A finding shall be made that resources will be available and traffic improvements will be in place at the time of the project is ready for occupancy. For example, Cottage Hospital was required to do a \$100,000 study. Where are the results of this study? What methods did the study recommend to mitigate the impacts on the 101/Modoc/Calle Real intersections?

Allied Neighborhood Association is composed of representatives of the neighborhoods of our city. They are eager to review accurate information and weigh the pros and cons of decisions. They recognize that the GPU decisions affect the everyday lives of our selves and neighborhoods. We have an obligation to inform ourselves with an accurate assessment of where our city is in regard to its constraints and what the cost will be in the future of various proposals that are developed. Time is of the essence. The longer we delay in getting the facts; we are concerned that critical options will not longer be available.