



General Plan Advisory Committee
May 12, 2010 / 6:30 – 8:30 pm
Encinitas City Hall

MEETING #3 SUMMARY

I. Introduction

The Encinitas General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) held its third meeting on May 12, 2010. The role of the GPAC is to advise City of Encinitas staff and consultants over the course of the General Plan Update process and provide on-going feedback to the groups they represent. Daniel Iacofano of MIG, Inc. and Matt Raimi of Raimi + Associates facilitated the May 12, 2010 session.

Mr. Iacofano and Mr. Raimi welcomed GPAC began the meeting by reviewing the key discussion points from the previous meeting (Meeting #2). They explained that the main goals of the meeting were to, walk through and review the results of the Vision Festival (held on May 1, 2010), confirm overall direction, and brainstorm potential changes to the areas for future discussion and visioning.

II. Community Character Survey

At the Vision Festival, one of the introductory exercises was a “community character preference survey.” The survey was used to help kick-off the workshop and establish the images that best represent the character of the Encinitas community. Participants were asked to rate a series of thirty images based on the following:

- Whether or not the participant liked what the image portrays.
- If they believed the image represents the character and identity of Encinitas.
- If the image represents a use or style they would want to see or see preserved in the future.

GPAC members were asked to take the community character survey, review the results from the Vision Festival and then discuss the outcomes and/or compare survey responses.

The following is a summary of GPAC member discussion of the community character survey:

- Overall, the GPAC thought that the preferences expressed by the community at the Vision Festival were an accurate representation of the opinions of the overall community.

- GPAC members expressed that what the community desires in the future is not clearly delineated from what they like about Encinitas now. This was not clearly delineated in the survey results.
- GPAC members would like to get people's opinion on housing, as this was not covered enough in the survey.
- Specifying the location of the photograph is important because survey responses may vary depending on where a character example is located. It is also difficult to distinguish between what it is about the photo that is making people rate it differently. This is something that should be considered in future surveys and could be done at future workshops.
- Parks and education were missing from the survey.
- Participants would like to have seen a category for rural vs. non-rural roads.

III. Goals, Issues and Opportunities

Goals, issues and opportunities were consolidated into six different topic areas: (1) Where we live, work, and shop; (2) How we get around; (3) Our unique community; (4) Our parks, services and facilities; (5) Our natural environment; and (6) Areas for community discussion and visioning. Areas for community discussion and visioning are discussed below.

GPAC members generally confirmed all of the stated goals, issues and opportunities for each topic area and confirmed that workshop results generally reflect the community's issues, concerns and values.

IV. Areas for Community Discussion and Visioning

GPAC members provided comments related to each focus area for community discussion and visioning. The following is a summary of new comments for each focus area.

Area 1 – Manchester/I-5 Interchange

- Improve transit options to churches along Manchester.
- Create new paths from San Elijo Lagoon to beaches.
- Solve upzoning in the area to ensure that the area is rural.

Area 2 – Downtown Cardiff

- There seems to be some concerns from the community over potential future development. The community wants limited new development in Cardiff and the development should not be more than 2 stories.
- The update should reflect all the work that was done in developing the new Cardiff Specific Plan. Do not re-open the discussion on development in Cardiff.

Area 3 – Birmingham/I-5 Interchange

- Study access across the freeway and look for fixes that are real improvements.
- Provide conditions to Caltrans for widening highway interchanges; the City should determine what it wants from Caltrans as part of the widening rather than respond to the Coast Corridor Project and/or future suggestions from Caltrans.
- Make ramp crossings pedestrian-friendly. They are currently dangerous.

Area 4 – Four Corners

- Overall, people are resistant to change but would accept small changes.
- Improve pedestrian access to the retail area.
- Add appropriate retail and housing scaled to the character of the area; nothing too intense.
- Design landscaping to compliment buildings.
- Do not widen roads.
- Improve traffic control.

Area 5 – Santa Fe/I-5 Interchange

- This is the worst area from a traffic and aesthetic point of view.
- Establish this area as a gateway to the city.
- Address blighted housing through increased code enforcement.
- Make interchange more pedestrian friendly (this is a Safe Routes to School area).
- Add landscaping and shading to improve the pedestrian environment.
- Clean up and improve use of City-owned land in this area; the City-owned land is some of the most blighted in the area.
- Commercial area does not address the needs of pedestrians.
- Reconfigure shopping center to allow better parking access; improve pedestrian conditions.
- The City should capitalize on the hospital expansion.
- Determine the right mix of retail for this area – some retail could serve hospital workers and some could be for the community.

Area 6 – Downtown Encinitas

- Take out old trees (ficus) and put in new trees.
- Enhance and increase parking areas; more parking is needed.
- Consider the impact of a potential increase in density on the character and identity of Downtown.
- Re-purpose the school site for senior affordable housing.

- Consider increasing height in some areas of Downtown but be careful to understand how this would impact existing character.
- Consider the potential negative impacts like an increase in parking demand.

Area 7 - Encinitas Blvd./Hwy. 101

- There are failing stores and restaurants that need help.
- The area is visually unattractive and needs a lot of help.
- Improve the pedestrian environment to encourage more pedestrian traffic into and out of the Downtown.
- The area should be a major gateway to Downtown.
- Add public art.

Areas 8 & 9 – NW Encinitas Blvd./I-5 Interchange & Encinitas Blvd. Commercial Corridor

- This area has potential for new uses – office, retail and other businesses.
- This is an area where the City could add jobs (in office and tech).
- Improve the character of the area to capitalize on its proximity to Downtown and the freeway.
- This area needs more thought, as there is potential for change/improvement.
- Address steep slopes in the area.
- Need to improve traffic conditions in the area – this area is highly congested.
- Create pedestrian improvements to make stronger ties to the Downtown and the beach.

Area 10 – El Camino Real Commercial Corridor

- Add mixed-use with housing.
- Potential to increase heights (up to 5 stories): need more than 2 stories.
- Better connect and reconfigure parking.
- Improve internal circulation.
- Need to allow room for creativity through flexibility in density/intensity and design.
- Encinitas can diversify economy by making changes in this area.
- There is flexibility in terms of land use (possible to add more jobs here).
- Add new public use commercial areas.
- Establish a community art center.
- Increase transit use to and within this area.
- Add recreational uses (bowling, theaters, etc.) targeted especially for youth.

*Areas 11, 12 & 13 - N. Hwy. 101, South of Leucadia Blvd., Leucadia Blvd/
Hwy 101 and Leucadia Blvd/ 1-5 Interchange*

- Railroad crossings are an infrastructure issue that needs to be addressed in the General Plan update.
- Consider the need to conduct a roundabout study.
- Re-envision these areas.

*Areas 14, 15 & 16 – N. Hwy. 101, North of Leucadia Blvd., La Costa Ave./Hwy. 101, & W.
La Costa Ave./I-5 Interchange*

- Leucadia Specific Plan needs to be updated.
- Put sidewalks on major streets, not residential streets; some residential streets in the area are rural in character and adding sidewalks will change this character.
- Area needs to be evaluated. Consider beautification. The streetscape improvements will help but some buildings are also in need of repair.
- Address circulation issues.
- Make streetscape Improvements on major arterials.
- Improve traffic flow.

V. Vision Themes

GPAC members reviewed the “vision themes” that were developed by staff and the consultant team following the Vision Festival. GPAC comments on the themes are presented below. Some of the comments may be incorporated directly into the vision themes while others may be included as goals in the General Plan.

- Add concept of “the arts” and/or artistic creativity.
- Highlight that the City is world-renowned for its surf, skate and boarding culture.
- Promote innovative and creative developments.
- Create a sustainable housing stock for the population.
- Pursue an innovative transportation system.
- Preserve the legacy of flowers and address the horticultural industry.
- Consider adding a concept that the City is known for healing arts/holistic healing and spirituality and that this should be fostered in the future.
- Visitor serving uses and tourism are important vision themes but we need to come up with the right way to phrase that will be acceptable to the residents.
- Change the word “shops” to “businesses” to be more inclusive of all types of businesses in the City.

