



General Plan Advisory Committee
October 13, 2010 | 6:00 – 8:30 pm
Encinitas City Hall

MEETING #4 SUMMARY

I. Introduction

The Encinitas General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) held its fourth meeting on October 13, 2010. Daniel Iacofano of MIG, Inc. facilitated the session. City staff managing the General Plan Update were also present.

The meeting began with an overview of the project schedule to date and confirmation that the project is on track for completion by the end of 2011. Following this, Daniel presented the results of the visioning process, giving a recap of the last several community meetings, community outreach, and the Vision Festival. Additionally, he summarized the key land use policy issues that the City must address:

- Meeting state housing requirements;
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020;
- Providing adequate visitor-serving uses and accessibility;
- Strengthening the City's fiscal and economic health; and
- Overall sustainability.

A brief discussion about housing requirements followed. Questions covered how housing numeric objectives are calculated, the percentage of affordable units, how ecological and infrastructure constraints will be considered, how population projections will be considered against housing numbers, and whether mixed use would be considered. With such interest in housing, Daniel suggested inviting Veronica Tam to the next meeting to answer questions.

Daniel also provided an overview of the evening's discussion topics: areas for potential physical improvements and areas of potential land use change.

II. Summary Notes from Discussion

The following is an overview of the key points of GPAC discussion. The discussion is organized according to geographic area, with comments summarized.

- Vision for the area, based on community, City, and GPAC input to date
- GPAC feedback on presented vision and potential land uses, and GPAC input regarding appropriate character and intensity of development

SANTA FE/I-5 INTERCHANGE

Vision: Create a mixed-use area with higher density and intensity of activity. Make the area more walkable and more transit-friendly. Potential uses include:

- *Entry level and market rate housing*
- *Retail/commercial/office*
- *Senior housing assisted living*
- *Expanded medical office uses*

GPAC Feedback

Land Uses:

- Medical office and senior assisted living housing makes sense, given the context of the hospital.
- Consider conflicts with nearby high school, as seniors may not want to mix with youth.
- Visitor-serving uses may also be a good choice for hospital patient visitors.
- Office uses would be okay, as there are already office uses in the area.
- Neighborhood mixed-use would be acceptable adjacent to existing residential uses.
- Be mindful of how new uses might relate to and be compatible with ongoing improvements to the area.

Character and Intensity of Development:

- Look to Downtown for examples of character.
- Avoid and/or minimize the impacts to views from nearby residences by limiting the height of new development. Consider elevated freeway and increasing slopes – this could provide for isolated opportunities to increase building height.
- Quality landscape/streetscape is critical for any new development.
- Consider compatibility with adjacent uses.
- Appropriate prototypes generally include:
 - Two- and three-story buildings with articulated facades and upper story setbacks
 - Onsite, indoor parking
 - Affordable housing
 - Mixed-use development
- Development character that is not appropriate includes small-scale buildings, such as the Capitola Hotel example

Other Comments:

- Improve the I-5 undercrossing (strong consensus)

ENCINITAS BLVD COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

Vision: Create mixed use pattern with higher density and intensity of activity. Make it more walkable, more transit-friendly. Consider an internal street grid and block structure. Potential land uses include:

- *Residential/retail/commercial/office*
- *Office/light industrial/live-work*
- *Hotels/restaurants*

GPAC Feedback

Land Uses:

- This is a unique corridor in the City and should be used to help reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), such as through a transit line.
- Establish as a live-work-play community.
- Allow residential uses (“acceptable” but should not be “too residential”).
- Allow limited hotel (bed and breakfasts).

Character and Intensity of Development:

- Establish as a primary gateway for the City.
- Could be more urban than rest of City.
- One of best opportunities within the City for the most intense developments.
- Topographic change might help mitigate views from higher buildings.
- Many nearby amenities to take advantage of.
- Image depicting two-story mixed-use is too small and the wrong character.
- Consensus: two stories with third offset (stepback) is perfect. However this area is an opportunity to test maximum building heights/stories.
- Plaza picture looks like wasted space.
- Like articulation and setbacks in buildings.

Other:

- Improve I-5 undercrossing (strong consensus).
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities and install protected bicycle facilities.

EL CAMINO REAL CORRIDOR

Vision: Create a vibrant, mixed use, walkable town center and a distinct identity for New Encinitas. Use the creek as an asset and amenity for surrounding development. Make better use of the existing county landfill site. Potential land uses for the corridor include:

- *An entertainment complex/center at the north end of the corridor*
- *Multifamily residential*
- *A high tech office/employment center*

GPAC Feedback

Land Uses:

- Consider as a possible good location to focus employment growth and add needed jobs in the City.
- Office park not appropriate.
- This area might currently be “over retailled” for local population.

- Allow/add housing to help revitalize local shops.
- Good location for a town center/walkable district.
- Bring back the theater.
- Consider alternate format for big box stores.

Character and Intensity of Development:

- Improve connectivity by tying this area to surrounding areas.
- Consider allowing higher density uses, building upon existing high density development .
- Views not likely a concern here.
- Height is not a big issue here, but building size/massing is.
- Four to five stories might be okay.
- Bring uses to street.

Other:

- Strong community concerns that mixed-use will further worsen traffic. Must demonstrate to the public that mixed-use may/will help improve traffic and traffic safety.
- This is an alternate route for commuters, which creates safety and traffic problems. Need to slow them down here.
- Consider loss of big boxes and increased leakage of sales tax. Consider the alternative types of uses that could fit these development patterns.

BIRMINGHAM/I-5 INTERCHANGE

Vision: Improve auto access and transit service. Increase walkability. Potential land uses include:

- *Affordable/entry-level/market-rate housing*
- *Local-serving retail*
- *Hotels*

GPAC Feedback: *No comments.*

MANCHESTER/I-5 INTERCHANGE

Vision: Create a gateway to the City. Maintain open space (agriculture if feasible). Potential land uses include:

- *General commercial/retail center*
- *Affordable/entry-level/market-rate housing*
- *Limited specialty retail*
- *Restaurants*
- *Bed and breakfast*
- *Park and ride lot*

GPAC Feedback

- Good opportunity for limited use agriculture/open space with small hotel or restaurant.
- Must preserve open space.
 - Big opportunity next to water to maintain majestic views.
 - Preserve more open space by constructing higher buildings.

NORTH HIGHWAY 101 CORRIDOR

Vision: Integrate auto-oriented commercial with pedestrian-oriented commercial uses. Make retail nodes more walkable. Potential land uses include:

- *Local-serving retail*
- *Entry-level/market-rate housing in suitable locations*
- *Boutique hotel*

GPAC Feedback

- Smaller scale buildings are appropriate.
- Larger scaled buildings are not appropriate.

LA COSTA/I-5 INTERCHANGE

Vision: Strengthen area as gateway to the City. Improve safety for bikes and pedestrians. Improve traffic flow and transit connections. Potential land uses include:

- *Entry-level/market-rate housing*
- *Hotel/visitor accommodations*

GPAC Feedback

- No not locate residential here.
- Encourage limited use agriculture to protect greenhouses.
- Consider what Carlsbad is doing with major development just north of this area.

LEUCADIA BLVD/I-5 INTERCHANGE

Vision: Increase landscaping. Improve auto access and pedestrian connectivity. Support agricultural uses. Potential land uses include:

- *Mixed-use residential*
- *Mixed-use commercial*
- *Visitor-serving uses*

GPAC Feedback

- Two stories is about the right scale.
- Vacant, residential-zoned property has been source of much contention. Locals want it to remain residential, but residential development is not financially feasible at this site. Need to find some alternative to commercial.

Two GPAC comments were received that related to all areas of development and change:

1. Big, blocky buildings are not appropriate, and
2. LEED Silver Certification or a similar equivalent should be considered as a condition of approval for all new development.

ENCINITAS COMMONS

Staff shared a summary of the Encinitas Commons vision with GPAC and sought input on how the City should proceed with this information. There was mixed feedback on whether the City should integrate this concept into its own planning. Generally, the GPAC felt they would need more time and information before they could give direction. This will be potentially referenced or discussed further at the December 15 GPAC meeting.

III. Next Steps and Public Comments

Daniel Iacofano noted that the information and discussion at GPAC Meeting #4 will be used to inform the Citywide Public Workshop on November 16. GPAC meeting #5 will be held on December 15 and will be an extra hour long, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Also, a January City Council session will be scheduled to focus on the General Plan Update.

At the end of the meeting, members of the public suggested that limiting traffic on El Camino Real would result in more traffic on I-5, and that less traffic would reduce sales on El Camino Real, thereby reducing City tax revenues. Also, a community member suggested that the Encinitas Commons vision, as well as the purpose of the vision, needs much more consideration by the GPAC before any decisions on how to respond to it are to be made.