City of Santa Ana General Plan Advisory Group  
Minutes of the Regular Meeting  
City Hall, Ross Annex  
20 Civic Center Plaza, Room 1600  
Wednesday, March 1, 2017  
5:00pm - 7:00pm

MEETING NOTES

1. Welcome

Executive Director of the Planning and Building Agency Hassan Haghani welcomed the General Plan Advisory Group to the meeting and gave a brief introduction to the topic of community outreach. Mr. Haghani mentioned the 40+ public meetings and “pop-up” events conducted as a part of the General Plan Update outreach efforts and stressed the importance of discussing raw feedback that the community provided through these events.

2. Community Outreach Overview

Principal Planner Verny Carvajal introduced and showed the Santa Ana General Plan video, which was utilized as a tool during community outreach efforts.

After the video, Mr. Carvajal further discussed the Citywide public meetings and events mentioned by Mr. Haghani. A map was shown that depicted the locations of the meetings as well as where the attendees resided in Santa Ana. Mr. Carvajal noted that over 485 contacts were established through the outreach efforts, and many of the participants had not attended a public outreach meeting in the past. Mr. Carvajal also provided a short summary of the youth-based General Plan outreach, which had over 160 participants throughout the City via pop-ups, social media, and after-school events.

Mr. Carvajal then gave a snapshot of some of the comments received during the outreach efforts. The comments centered around ten emerging themes: Arts & Culture, Business & Economic Development, Community Facilities, Community Safety, Health & Sustainability, Human Services & Social Justice, Housing & Neighborhoods, Mobility, Youth Development, and Visual Character & Design. These comments were consolidated into an Executive Summary made available for both GPAG members and the general public.
3. **"Extract the Juice" Group Exercise One**

Mr. Carvajal explained the first group exercise of the evening, which aimed to process the comments received through the public meetings and events in order to hold GPAG members and staff alike accountable for discussing and addressing what the community shared with their views in mind. GPAG members were divided into five small groups; each group was assigned two community outreach theme or topics to consider. Each GPAG member individually completed a handout identifying **three compelling** words or phrases related to their assigned topic. Facilitated by a City staff member, each individual shared their respective comments in the small group setting.

4. **“Affirming What We Heard” Group Exercise Two**

The second group exercise was also conducted in the same small groups of 3 to 4 GPAG members. Individually, each GPAG member was tasked with converting their **three compelling** phrased into Affirmative Statements, resulting in the statements below:

**Subgroup 1**

**Community Facilities and Programs**

- The infrastructure has been improved to allow for state-of-the-art communication, transportation, etc.
- There are many community spaces in the city for seniors and youth
- Promote sustainability through the revitalization and reuse of existing facilities
- The park system provides plentiful spaces that are easily accessible, safe, and well maintained
- The senior services provided by the City in the many community spaces are activities such as games, bingo and reading
- Create programs between local businesses and school districts for student programs
- All segments of the population (i.e. seniors, youth, and special needs) have resources appropriate for their situation
- So much fun going to the concerts and movie nights at parks
- Invest in intervention programs for youth—education, art and culture

**Community Safety**

- Provide the public with the tools to understand how to reduce gang activity and the accompanying anxiety
- Provide appropriate tools and education for community policing to build trust between the community and police
- Establish intervention and support programs to reduce the number of youth in juvenile justice systems
- Promote positive police and citizen interactions that result in mutual respect and a safe city
- Provide more resources and facilities for the homeless
- Community work in partnership with the police to provide proactive (not reactive) programs
• Reduce the homeless population by quickly moving them to housing with or without wraparound services, as appropriate
• Make our infrastructure safe for pedestrians and find workable solutions
• Use more sustainable and preventative approaches to tagging

**Subgroup 2**

**Youth Development**
• Unify the community through education
• Programs are available and everyone needs access to them
• Create job training partnerships
• Bring more community partners into the “Education Equation”
• Prevention/Intervention = Pre-K
• Increase the amount of resources for both early childhood education and health needs
• Increase the resource, programs for youth: recreation and cultural
• Establish a “youth council”

**Visual Character**
• Preserve and maintain Santa Ana’s visual character and architectural diversity
• Increase and create educational and recreational programs through new and existing partnerships
• Preserve historical design
• Promote/preserve unique neighborhoods and historic architecture
• I love my neighborhood and we’re keeping it clean
• Maintain clean streets
• Enjoy Santa Ana’s historic Downtown buildings
• Maintain visual character of city and enhance existing property
• Invest in new development
• Celebrate Santa Ana’s unique character
• The architecture diversity needs to be preserved

**Subgroup 3**

**Human Services and Social Justice**
• Encourage City Council to be more involved in neighborhoods they represent
• Proactive advertisement of cultural events/festivals closer together
• Concerted efforts tackling poverty/racism strengthens community as a whole
• City Council members will be invited to speak in ward neighborhoods every quarter
• Neighborhood associations will collaborate with residents
• Come up with top three areas of concern and take them to City Council meetings
• Elected officials invited to provide update on State and Federal matters at City Council meetings every six months
• Seek help from Police Department and work together to free neighborhoods from gangs and drugs
• Provide cooperation with Police Department to keep City parks and centers secure
• Provide communication with school officials and ensure safe pedestrian mobility
Mobility
- Establish a parking commission to remediate problems arising from density and intrusion into neighborhoods
- Structure a better permit parking system
- Planning Commission and Development Agreement guidelines established to resolve issues and increase Downtown commerce
- City will work with police to inform the community about pedestrian safety
- City to communicate with residents regarding street closures
- Management companies will work with Code Enforcement, informing them about zoning laws
- Create collaborative efforts between neighborhood leaders to address parking solutions
- Promote neighborhood involvement to effectuate changes—positive
- Identify key City contracts to resolve applicable issues and find solutions

Subgroup 4

Housing & Neighborhoods
- Knowing your neighbors keeps our community safe
- Create diverse neighborhoods with state-of-the-art 21st century sustainable and safe infrastructure
- Allowing access to convenient, economical homes for entire communities
- Provide more economical housing that is mixed in with market rate housing
- Our City is blessed with a variety of housing—respect it!
- Provide opportunities for neighbors to collaborate and come together creating a strong sense of community
- Creating shelter accessibility to resources for homeless
- Create more varied housing options to reduce overcrowding and strengthen neighborhoods
- Provide a variety of housing options offering more choices for all of the community
- Local government and being involved and accessible to neighborhoods

Health & Sustainability
- Make it easier to grow and purchase healthy food than it is to purchase JUNK
- Provide access to HEALTHCARE for overall health
- Advance sustainability through reusing, reducing, recycling, revitalizing and resolving resources
- Urban gardens are examples of AFFORDABLE FOOD options
- Ensure healthcare is available and accessible to all residents from 1 to 100
- Repurposing buildings for better communities
- Provide quality healthcare support system
- The reuse of existing buildings maintains our uniqueness
- Provide incentives and opportunities to revitalize and reuse existing buildings and vacant lots
- Establish policy to limit access to UNHEALTHY FOOD and Big Chains
- Provide a safe, sustainable open space framework for all neighborhoods
- Provide access to affordable options to HEALTHY food.
Subgroup 5

Business and Economic Development
- Offer Business outreach seminar (like Santa Ana Business Expo—how to open business in Santa Ana)
- City participation in expos/trade shows to market City
- Identify opportunity sites for upscale venues for retail complexes, sports centers, and hotels ($)
- Create incentive to achieve specific customer service goods to help start-up businesses (pro-business friendly image)
- Support City incentives ($ or land) that promote the City’s economic development goals
- Foster economic development that directly improves the quality of life for residents
- Proactively attract investment and employers that provide living wages for existing youth and family to thrive
- Proactively mitigate the negative consequences of revitalization efforts on low income residents and businesses
- Fund programs via loans and grants to assist new and unique businesses
- Continue leadership role in O.C. in providing quality affordable housing

Arts and Culture
- We will make our existing vibrant, diverse arts and culture infrastructure more accessible throughout the city
- We will embed more arts and culture into our neighborhoods through youth programming and physical landscape
- Foster more opportunities to celebrate diverse cultural heritage through accessible experiences rather than commodity
- Go back to the roots—“Foundation”
- Have a City reward/grant program for every high school senior that enrolls into college
- Open parks, community centers, schools greens, to the private sector for “after school” programs

The second exercise was concluded by asking each group of GPAG members to report out of one or two of their Affirmative Statements to the rest of the group.

5. Next Steps and Vision

Planning Manager Candida Neal briefed the group on future meeting, and GPAG meeting materials.

Meeting adjourned.
List of GPAG Member Attendees:

Claudia Arellanes, Downtown Business Owner
Marlene Buitron, Youth Commission
Richard Chiarini, Industrial Business Owner
Ekta Naik, Alliance Development
Barry Cottle, C & C Development
Kathi Davis-Bowman, WisePlace
Lynette Guzman, Parks and Recreation Board
Peter Katz, Santa Ana Communication Linkages Forum
Tish Leon, Senior Advocate-Downtown Neighborhood
Nancy Mejia, Latino Health Access
Beatriz Mendoza, Planning Commission
Laura Morfin, Former Community, Redevelopment and Housing Commission
Ken Nguyen, Planning Commission
Gilad Salmon, Environmental and Transportation Advisory Committee
Soledad Valentin, Multi-Family Housing Representative
Orin Williams, Santa Ana Unified School District
Isaac Michaca, Santa Ana Building Healthy Communities

Absent: Phil Bacerra, Planning Commission

Note: the PowerPoint presentation used by Mr. Carvajal, Mr. Haghani and Ms. Neal is available at http://www.santa-ana.org/generalplan/default.asp