

Excerpts from General Plan Land Use Element

Goals

- *Resource Allocation:* Achieve a balance in the amount, location and type of growth within the context of available resources including water, energy, food, housing, and transportation.
- *Character:* Maintain the small town character of Santa Barbara as a unique and desirable place to live, work, and visit.
- *Design:* Protect and enhance the community's character with appropriately sized and scaled buildings, a walkable town, useable and well-located open space, and abundant, sustainable landscaping.
- *Historic Preservation:* Protect, preserve and enhance the City's historic resources.

.....

Community Design Policies

LG12. Community Character. Strengthen and enhance design and development review standards and process to enhance community character, promote affordable housing, and further community sustainability principles.

LG13. Multi-Family Design Guidelines. Develop multi-family residential design guidelines and standards to address unit sizes, setbacks, open space, landscaping, building size, bulk and scale, and site planning (e.g., pedestrian-friendly design, front porches facing the street or courtyard, and parking located out of sight).

Community Design

What constitutes Santa Barbara's physical character? It is its street layout, and how its buildings and structures relate to the city's setting of mountains, hills and coastline, and to each other. It is the scale, thematic architecture and historic sites of the Downtown. It is its public open spaces and landscaping. It is its distinctive architecture and neighborhoods. Community Design considerations focus on what people see, and how they experience the interrelationship between buildings, the city's setting, and public spaces, be these streets, sidewalks, parks and parkways, plazas or paseos.

Part of being a sustainable community is preserving, enhancing, and building on the desirable qualities enshrined in existing private and public land uses. Preservation and adaptive reuse combined with energy efficiency can benefit the environment. These considerations are addressed in the Environmental Resources Element and Historic Resources Element policies. From the perspective of design, enhancing public spaces can increase pleasure, health and economic benefits for people using these spaces. Focusing not only on the quality and character of buildings, but also on their

relationships to each other and to their public access is critical to Santa Barbara’s identity.

.....

During the *Plan Santa Barbara* General Plan Update process, the City and community explored new approaches and measures, and existing processes and requirements, in order to preserve and enhance Santa Barbara’s visual character, while attaining an acceptable balance with sustainability goals.

For Community Design the City’s visual achievements will be retained through a combination of new and old planning tools.

.....

Design Review

The mainstay of community design is the City’s design review process and the roles played by the Architectural Board of Review, the Historic Landmarks Commission, the Single Family Design Board and the Sign Committee. This review process increasingly has a broader perspective beyond simply the buildings and the landscaping, to include the relationship of a project to the streetscape and how it influences a person’s use of the adjoining public space, be they driving, walking or bicycling, or sitting on a park bench or at a sidewalk cafe. Importantly, a proposed project’s relationship to adjoining or nearby historic resources, including public views to and from these resources, will continue to require careful consideration.

To help achieve this expanded review, new approaches including Floor Area to Lot Area Ratios (FARs) will be applied in combination with existing tools.

.....

Regulatory Ordinances

There are a number of tools that apply to land use development in the city and that help shape community character. These include: standards that apply based on zoning designations, district or land use; design guidelines that guide the aesthetic quality of the built environment; and, plans that dictate allowed land uses and regulations of an area. Many of these are either incorporated in or provided in support of regulations included in several ordinances.

.....

Design Guidelines

While permitted land uses are designated in the Land Use Element and the Zoning Ordinance, the character of a neighborhood is largely defined by design features of the built environment and physical characteristics of the surrounding geography. New developments are subject to a number of city guidelines that are used to evaluate the

physical design of an individual project. Some apply to development city-wide; others to specifically delineated districts.

- Architectural Board of Review Guidelines
- Chapala Street Guidelines
- El Pueblo Viejo District Guidelines
- Haley-Milpas Design Guidelines
- Harbor Master Plan Design Guidelines
- Lower Riviera Special Design District Guidelines
- Outdoor Lighting Design Guidelines
- Pedestrian Master Plan
- Single Family Residence Design Guidelines
- State Street Landscaping Guidelines
- Upper State Street Guidelines
- Urban Design Guidelines
- Waterfront Area Design Guidelines

Design Guidelines in the future may include Design Overlay areas and Floor Area Ratios (FARs) that will more effectively control the size of structures.