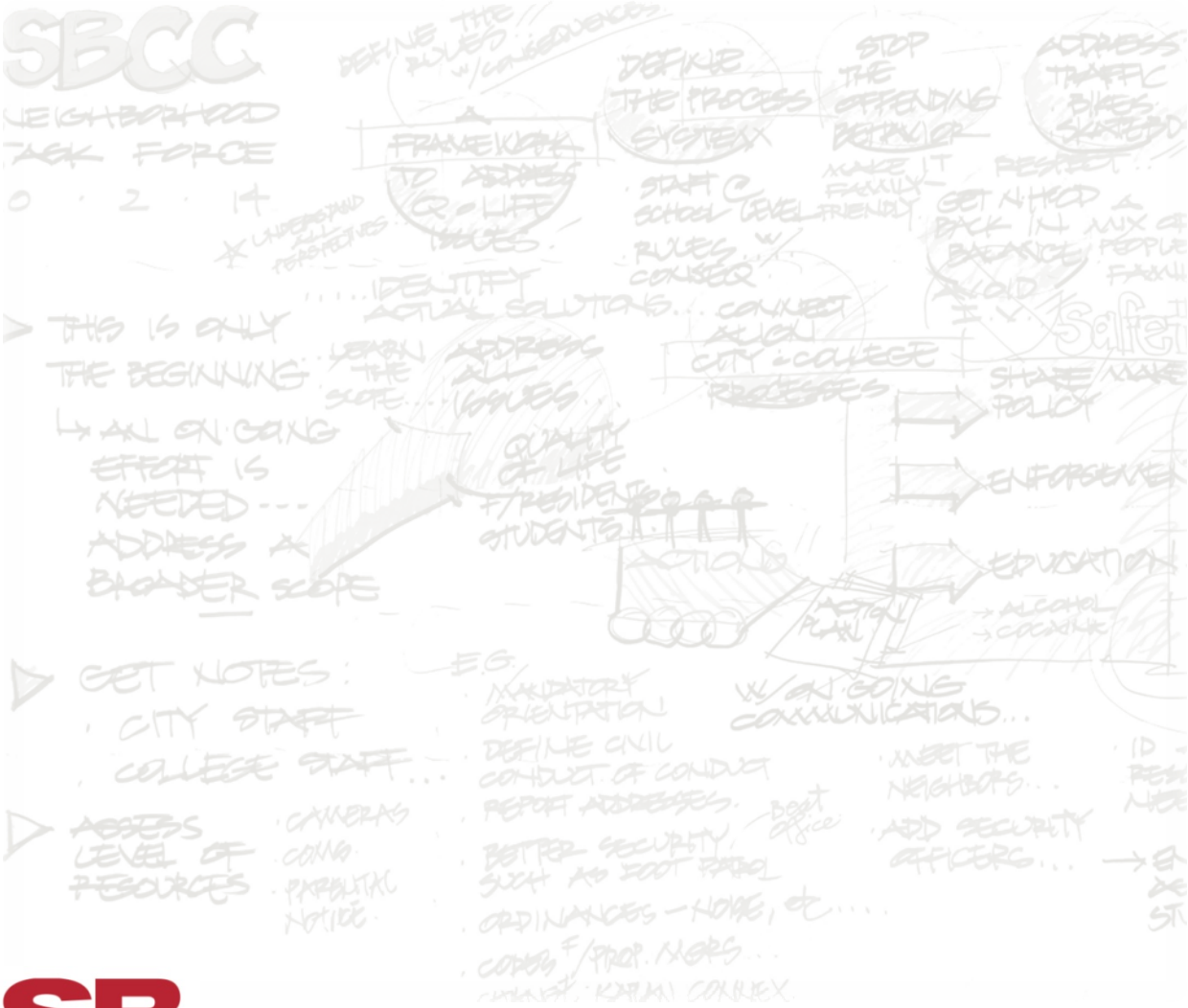
SANTA BARBARA CITY COLLEGE (SBCC) NEIGHBORHOOD TASK FORCE:

RECOMMENDATIONS



February 23, 2015

MIG, Inc.

SANTA BARBARA CITY COLLEGE (SBCC) NEIGHBORHOOD TASK FORCE:

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OVERVIEW

The purpose of the SBCC Neighborhood Task Force (NTF) is to identify and institute long-term and sustainable strategies to address issues stemming from the rise in inappropriate student behaviors with the goal of promoting civility, neighborhood well being, community responsibility and good citizenship.

The Task Force is co-chaired by Dr. Marianne Kugler and Marty Blum, members of the SBCC Board of Trustees.

The Task Force is comprised of representatives from varied aspects of SBCC's campus life including staff, faculty, and administrators, representatives from several neighborhoods surrounding SBCC's campus, and members of the City of Santa Barbara Police Department and City administration.

The NTF met over a period of four months from October 2014 through January 2015 in a series of six meetings. In addition, the NTF sponsored a series of seven focus groups to gain additional perspectives and potential solutions to the identified issues. The seven focus groups included: the City of Santa Barbara Department Heads and administrators; members of the SBCC Academic Senate; the SBCC Classified Consultation Group; the SBCC Advanced Leadership Committee; the SBCC Student Senate; a group of neighborhood residents from the Oceano area; and a group of neighborhood residents from the West Side.

All meetings of the NTF and all focus groups were facilitated by Daniel Iacofano, PhD, of MIG, Inc., on behalf of SBCC and the NTF.

Throughout this process, NTF members and focus group participants were asked to: (i) identify the issues and challenges that exist in the relationship between students and the neighborhoods surrounding the SBCC campus; and (ii) suggest potential strategies and solutions for addressing the identified issues and challenges.

The following pages summarize the results of these discussions.

PART I: KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The key issues and challenges listed below are a composite of all the NTF and focus group discussions. Most items were repeated in many of the group discussions.

- **Party disturbances.** Residents report constant and repeated occurrences of excessive partying, loud noises, loud music blaring at all hours of the day and night, trash and garbage strewn along neighborhood streets, high consumption of alcohol and drugs by the student population, and other related unruly conduct.
- **Rude behavior.** Residents report that students use offensive and foul language sometimes in the presence of children. They often ignore requests from neighbors to tone things down – they even respond by cursing at neighbors while continuing the obnoxious behavior. In general some (not all) students display signs of utter disrespect for neighbors and their right to a peaceful and safe environment.
- **Highly frustrated community members.** Residents near SBCC are experiencing high levels of frustration and are losing patience. They perceive that SBCC and the City are unable or unwilling to provide the necessary enforcement of laws and codes of conduct. Residents actually feel sleep-deprived due to the repeated incidences of late night partying. Residents also expressed concern about the excessive amount of City of Santa Barbara police resources that is being used to manage student behavior.
- **Lack of Student Supervision.** Unlike a university dormitory setting, students living in apartments and homes are separated from any type of mature adult supervision. This makes it easy for students to feel "invisible", outside the purview of responsible adults and free to act as they please with little or no regard for their impact on surrounding neighbors.
- **Sexual assault.** Residents are keenly aware of the dangers posed especially to young women and note incidents of sexual assault which have occurred in the area and elsewhere such as Isla Vista near UC Santa Barbara, thus heightening fears of potential tragic events which may occur.
- **Burglaries and other criminal behavior.** Residents expressed concern about actual and potential burglaries and criminal behavior in general.
- **DUI.** Residents noted instances of students (young people) driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- **Pedestrian safety (lack of crosswalks).** The areas surrounding the SBCC campus would benefit from enhanced pedestrian safety controls and other improvements.

- **Traffic congestion, conflict among modes of travel and overflow parking.** There is heavy auto congestion experienced throughout the area especially at the Castillo interchange. Large numbers of bike and skateboard users create conflicts among all transportation modes. Large numbers of bike and skateboard users create a challenge for residents getting in and out of their properties. Drivers often speed down residential streets. Cars are often parked on lawns contributing to a general sense of disorder and clutter. Again, some students seem oblivious to residents' concerns in this regard.
- **Unscrupulous landlords and poorly maintained properties.** Residents note the presence of unscrupulous landlords who ignore requests from neighbors to clean up their properties. A handful of these bad landlords create unsafe conditions for students and residents alike. It appears to residents that the City is powerless to stop these unsavory practices.
- **Building code violations and overcrowded housing.** Crowded conditions exist in many student apartments. Many students share living quarters to counter the high prices charged by property owners taking advantage of the high demand and limited supply of housing in the area. A few unscrupulous landlords attempt to maximize profit, effectively turning their properties into a student ghetto, slum or pseudo dorm.
- **Unmet housing need.** SBCC generates a large housing need that is currently unmet, particularly in the lower west side of the city.
- **Zoning limitations.** Existing zoning places legal limits on what can be done to address the housing crunch.

PART II: RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS

The recommended strategies and solutions were developed by NTF members. The level of agreement among NTF members for moving forward with these recommendations is very high.

The recommended strategies and solutions are organized according to the following categories:

- Noise Abatement (N)
- Neighborhood Quality of Life (Q)
- Traffic and Transportation (T)
- Code of Conduct (C)
- Housing (H)
- On-Going Issue Management and Communications (O)
- Follow-Up Actions (A)

NOISE ABATEMENT (N)

N1: Adapt the Cal Poly San Luis Obispo Noise Abatement Ordinance Model or a model acceptable to the City of the Santa Barbara City Attorney. **Careful attention must be paid to the details of program design, implementation and enforcement given that the ordinance will apply to the City as a whole.**

- Form a **College/City Staff working group** to design and implement the program.
- Engage the **City Attorney** in this process to ensure enforceability across the City of Santa Barbara.
- Impose **fines on an escalating basis** for both students and landlords who do not follow the rules.
- Provide landlords and students with a **model lease** incorporating the agreed upon rules of conduct and good neighbor policies.

N2: Implement a Student Neighborhood Assistance Program (SNAP) following the Cal Poly-SLO Model. Hire students to work in the program.

- Increase the **visible presence** of SBCC through occasional neighborhood walk-throughs by SBCC personnel.
- Identify **additional resources** which may be needed to operate a successful program. SBCC is committed to sharing in the initial funding of the Student Neighborhood Assistance Program (SNAP) and will work with the Santa Barbara Police Department to coordinate the effort.

NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY OF LIFE (Q)

Q1: **Enforce existing ordinances** to address the neighborhood quality of life issues identified above (e.g., noise, public drinking and intoxication, trash cans, no parking on lawns, etc.).

- Conduct **neighborhood meetings to test ideas** and obtain feedback on priorities and preferences.
- Use **administrative remedies** as much as possible.

Q2: Build and strengthen relationships between students and long term residents.

- Ensure that students **understand the importance of the code of conduct,** thereby promoting positive relations with neighborhood residents surrounding the campus and ensuring healthy relationships among fellow students; define civil behavior and set clear expectations for student behavior; ensure that first year students "get the message."
- Encourage students to meet their neighbors and **develop positive relationships.**
- **Organize clean-up days** with student volunteers; provide course credit for student participants wanting to fulfill service learning objectives; consider performing a complete "sweep" of neighborhoods at least once per year.
- Seek involvement of the **student senate and student clubs** in a search for solutions.
- Organize **social events** (e.g., BBQs, block parties, etc.) involving neighbors and students.
- Conduct neighborhood **walk-throughs** (announced and unannounced) involving campus neighbors, students, faculty, staff, etc.
- Involve **other schools** (i.e., EF, ELS, Kaplan, etc.) that have students living in the surrounding neighborhoods.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION (T)

T1: Study the feasibility of establishing traffic calming devices in neighborhoods surrounding the campus.

- Engage **city traffic engineer** to determine the potential application of traffic calming measures such as speed bumps, enhanced street lighting, stop signs, etc.
- Conduct **neighborhood meetings to test ideas** and obtain feedback on priorities and preferences.
- Ensure **safety for all modes of travel** including automobiles, pedestrians, bicyclists, skateboarders, etc.
- Develop a **traffic calming action plan** with solutions that are considered technically feasible and acceptable to the surrounding neighbors.
- Hold more **classes on Fridays and Saturdays** to reduce the peak congestion which occurs on Mondays through Thursdays thereby reducing the incentive for Thursday night parties.
- Upgrade **lighting** throughout SBCC's surrounding neighborhoods especially on Coronel and Oceano Avenue.
- Address **pedestrian safety** issues at Loma Alta and Oceano as well as along all neighborhood streets; ban skateboards on Oceano if feasible.
- Address traffic issues associated with the **entryways to SBCC's East and West campus.**

CODE OF CONDUCT (C)

C1: Enforce the code of conduct to guide student behavior.

- **Re-design the mandatory student orientation program** to place greater emphasis on the issues of civility and respect for campus neighbors; incorporate these issues and topics in other classes.
- Ensure that students know that there are **consequences** for their failure to adhere to the code of conduct.
- Provide a reliable means for **enforcing the code** of conduct.
- Ensure that SBCC takes a **leadership role** on all these issues.
- Increase the messaging of SBCC's Code of Conduct and **raise awareness** of violations and consequences.

- Include **parental notice** as a consequence of bad behavior to the extent allowed by the State Ed Code.
- Ban skateboarding on the SBCC campus.
- Identify **options** without violating students' legal rights.
- Provide the **orientation program every semester** to ensure continuity and consistency over time.

C2: Develop a protocol for responding to instances of unruly student behavior.

- Identify a staff person at SBCC to establish and maintain an **on-going communication process** involving the College, the City and the community to provide a predictable and reliable means to report bad behavior as it occurs.
- Study the feasibility of instituting a **hotline** for the reporting of incidents with a means of tracking the status of all reported instances in a user-friendly database and smart phone app.

C3: Recognize that neighbors deserve a family friendly neighborhood and a safe and secure environment for their children.

- Address **offensive student behavior.**
- Do what we can to maintain a **mix of families, adults and workers as well as students** in our surrounding neighborhoods.
- Change the neighborhood reality – **make it a viable neighborhood** with a true sense of community.

C4: Coordinate City and College policies, education and enforcement actions.

- **Align College and City processes** to ensure the adoption of shared and consistent policies, educational programs and enforcement procedures.
- **Address all relevant issues** including alcohol and drug use, sexual relations, neighborhood behavior, etc.
- **Raise student awareness of issues** (such as sexual assault, alcohol and drug use, civility etc) by strengthening existing SBCC programs and services; **use classes at SBCC as a vehicle** to provide this training when appropriate.
- **Invite the SBPD to patrol the campus.**

HOUSING (H)

H1: Engage landlords and property owners surrounding the campus.

- **Engage landlords and property owners** in solutions.
- Create a **voluntary opt-in set of principles** for landlords with regard to student housing.
- Devise a **rating system** for landlords similar to YELP or Air BNB; qualify landlords as acceptable or unacceptable based on observed practices and number of violations.
- **Report addresses of landlords** who do not live up to established norms for owning and managing student housing.
- Develop programs to **improve working relationships** with all landlords around campus.
- Tap into **City resources** to address chronic housing issues.
- Provide a **model lease** including parental notification provisions; indicate fines and rules in the leases.
- Consider designations of rental properties as **"non-party" buildings.**
- **Respect neighbor privacy.**
- Consider adopting a **"just cause" eviction ordinance.**

H2: Provide students with tools and resources to help them manage their housing conditions.

- Provide students with the **contact informatio**n for the City's mental health and housing mediation task force including phone numbers, web sites, etc.
- Study the feasibility of establishing a **housing mediation program** (or ombudsperson position) at SBCC.
- Consider establishing a **tenants union.**
- **Hand-out tenant rights information** to student tenants; re-activate legal services for students on campus.
- **Share housing information** using social media, student newspaper, etc.
- Provide **complaint data on rental properties** from the Santa Barbara Police Department to students and/or parents.

H3: Find ways to increase adult supervision.

- Examine the feasibility of establishing a **resident advisor program** to support and counsel students living off-campus to educate and supervise students, encouraging adherence to the code of conduct.

ON-GOING ISSUE MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS (O)

O1: Research best practices for policies and tools that might be applicable to Santa Barbara.

- Examine **other agencies' ordinances and best practices** for ideas on addressing over-crowding and parking problems in residential neighborhoods.
- Continue to investigate **best practices** and solutions.

O2: Create an action plan and an on-going management and communication mechanism.

- Create an **action plan** with specific actions, targets and timelines for addressing unruly student behavior.
- Establish **an on-going mechanism for SBCC, its surrounding neighbors and the City of Santa Barbara to manage and maintain communication and work cooperatively** to improve neighborhood quality; recognize that this Task Force is just the beginning and that the work of the Task Force will continue beyond the scheduled meetings.
- Use this **SBCC process as a springboard** for neighbors and the City of Santa Barbara to work together on the full range of neighborhood quality issues (see item O6). Note that well-established neighborhood associations have been working on these issues for some time and that each neighborhood has a set of unique issues as well as those in common with the others.

O3: Monitor student behavior and quantify results.

- Establish a means to **monitor student activities and a means to measure results** of behavior management strategies quantitatively.
- Use results to **hold students accountable** and to achieve a shift in student behavior.

O4: Establish a long range development plan and growth management strategy for SBCC.

- Use the **on-going facilities master planning process** to identify a long term management strategy for SBCC, addressing such issues as location of new facilities, parking, housing, etc.
- Consider a **multi-site strategy** to accommodate future SBCC students.
- Look at utilizing the campus on a **Monday through Saturday basis** - this will spread peak load, achieve better utilization of facilities and reduce the incentive for students to party on a Thursday night.
- Give **priority to regular education students** and limit outside programs such as Kaplan with students who have no buy-in to the rules or long range education plans at SBCC (consider this type of action as vendor contracts come up for renewal).

O5: Work with the State of California to address institutional constraints.

- Initiate **dialogue with the appropriate State agencies** (e.g., the State Chancellor's Office) to address limitations experienced by community colleges in what they can or cannot do to address student behavioral issues.

O6: Initiate a joint College/City joint planning effort to develop solutions for chronic traffic and housing issues [an on-going, long term planning effort].

- Analyze **potential adjustments to the City's zoning ordinance and housing policies** that may help address the housing, traffic and quality of life issues identified in this report.
- Find ways to alleviate, reduce and **manage traffic congestion.**
- Encourage **mutual respect** among users of all modes of travel in and around campus and through the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Examine all feasible **traffic management options** such as shuttles, car share, satellite parking, etc.
- Continue to promote **public transit** as a viable option; lobby for additional levels of service; coordinate with the alternative transportation task force; note the existing MOU for City and College joint use of waterfront parking as an example of cooperative problem solving around this issue.
- Study the potential for **off-campus housing** and parking lots with shuttles.
- Study the feasibility of addressing **student housing** in areas west and south of campus, the western end of which offers the strongest potential for construction of dormitories and/or parking lots.

- Study the potential of the **Earl Warren Show Grounds** for accommodating these uses.
- Develop **a housing strategy** to further meet the housing needs of the whole community.
- Look into the **feasibility of providing on-campus dormitories** to address a portion of the student housing demand possibly for international students.
- Address **crowding** and its impact on housing, parking and neighborhood quality of life.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS (A)

A1: Create a **timeline and assign responsibilities for implementation** of each action item; indicate short, medium, long term and on-going timeframes for each item.

A2: Set date for **Joint City Council/Board of Trustees presentation** and study session on this Draft Recommendations Report.

A3: Form an **implementation task force** to pursue top priority actions (N1, N2 and Q2).

A4: Commit **to progress on N1, N2 and Q2 by Fall 2015.**

A5: **Monitor and report on progress** to the surrounding neighborhoods within 6 months of adoption of these priority recommendations.

APPENDICES

SBCC Neighborhood Task Force Members (Updated 2/23/15)

Co-chairs:

1. Marty Blum: Vice President, SBCC Board of Trustees
2. Dr. Marianne Kugler: President, SBCC Board of Trustees

Neighborhood Representatives:

1. Dianna Bottoms: Oceano
2. Jeff King: Mesa Architects
3. Beebe Longstreet: Lower Westside
4. Cathie McCammon: La Mesa Neighborhood Association
5. Sue Mellor: Loma Alta
6. Bill Oliphant: Oceano
7. Mark Taylor: Oceano

City of Santa Barbara Representatives:

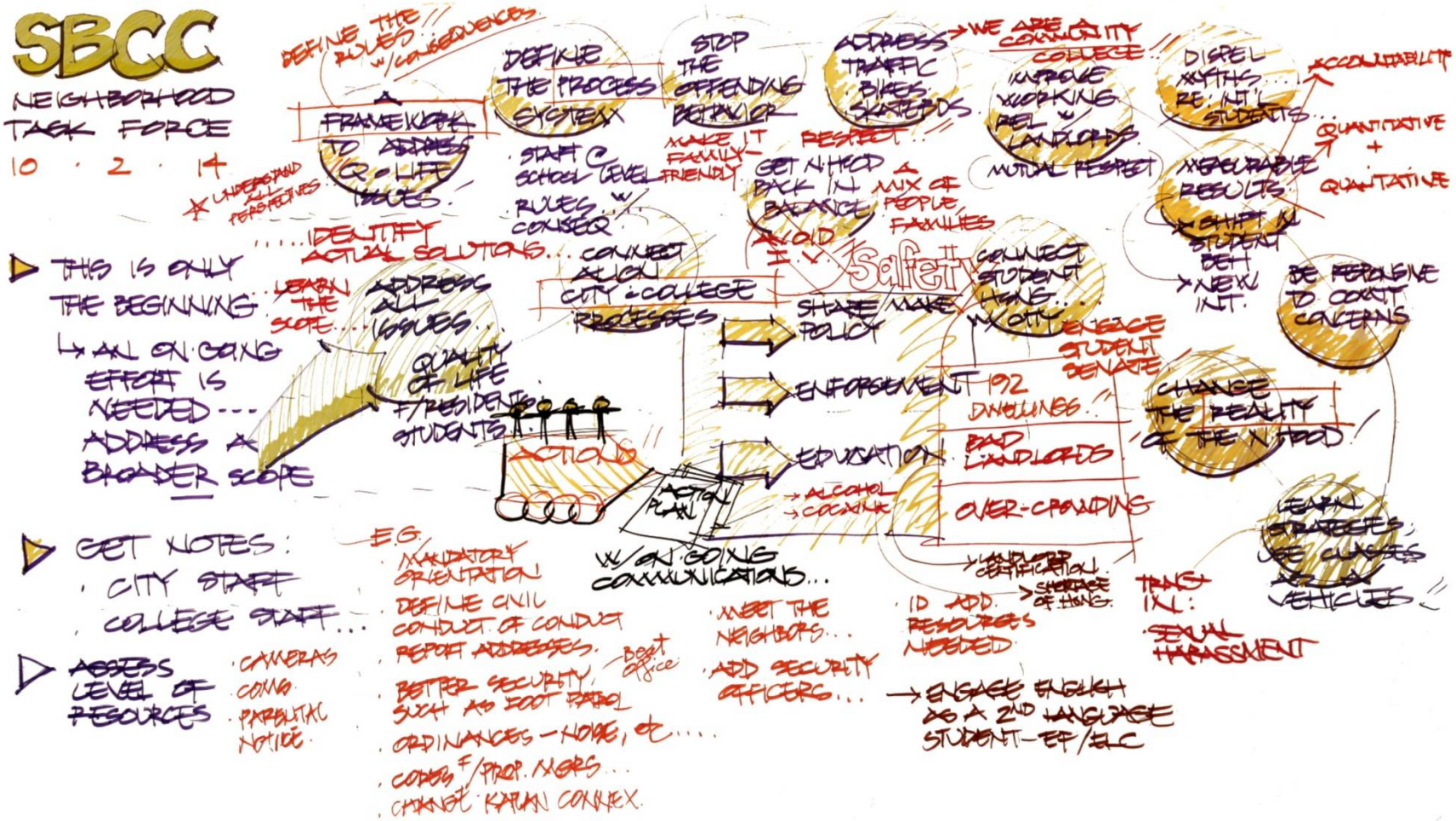
1. George Buell: Director, Community Development
2. Paul Casey: City Administrator
3. Sgt. Riley Harwood: Community & Media Relations, Police Department
4. Officer Jonathan Reyes: Beat Coordinator, Police Department
5. Helene Schneider: Mayor
6. Officer Kent Wojciechoski: Beat Coordinator, Police Department

SBCC Representatives:

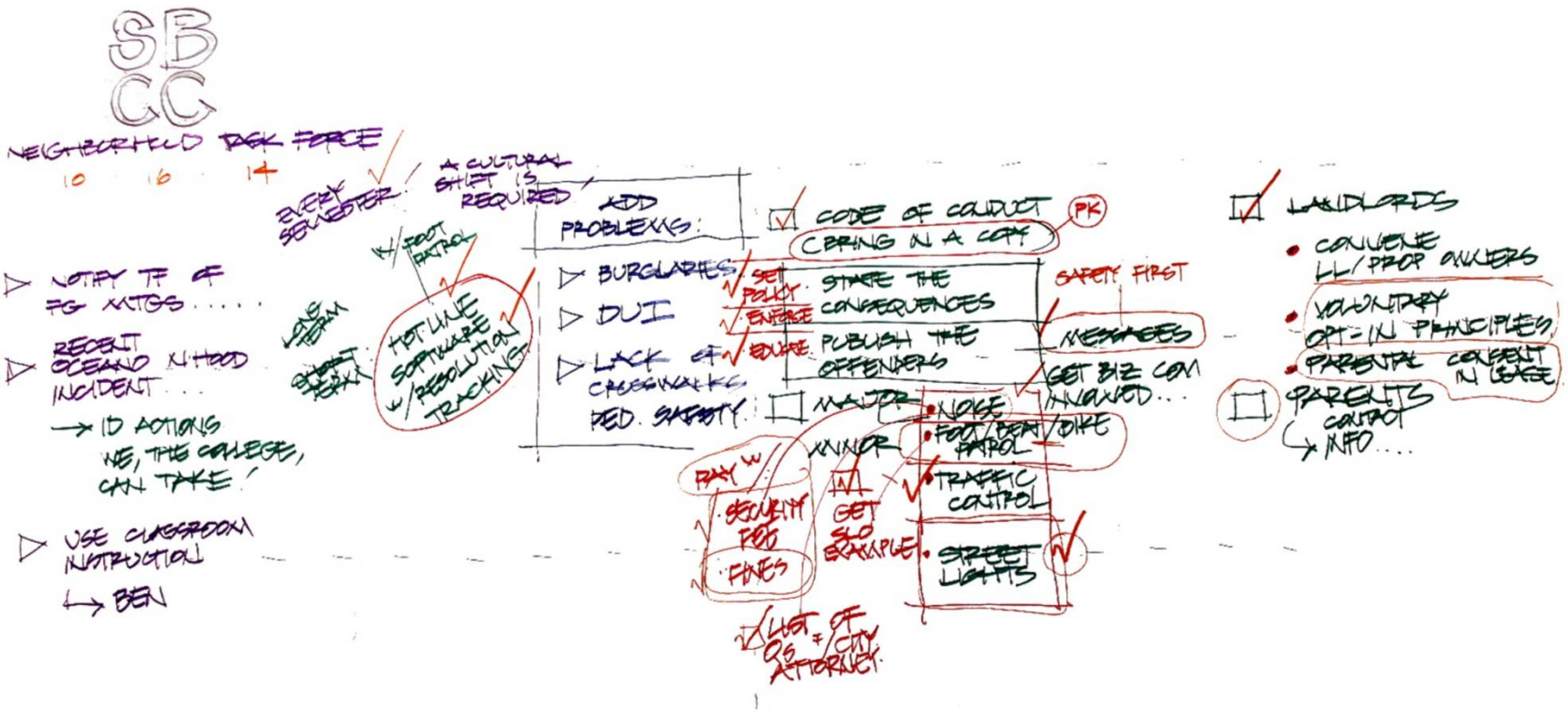
1. Michele Britton Bass: Faculty
2. Erik Fricke: Director, Security
3. Darin Garard: Faculty
4. Ben Murphy: Program Advisor, Alcohol and Drug Program
5. Dr. Ben Partee: Dean, Educational Programs
6. Carola Smith: Senior Director, International Programs
7. Oscar Zavala: Faculty

APPENDICES

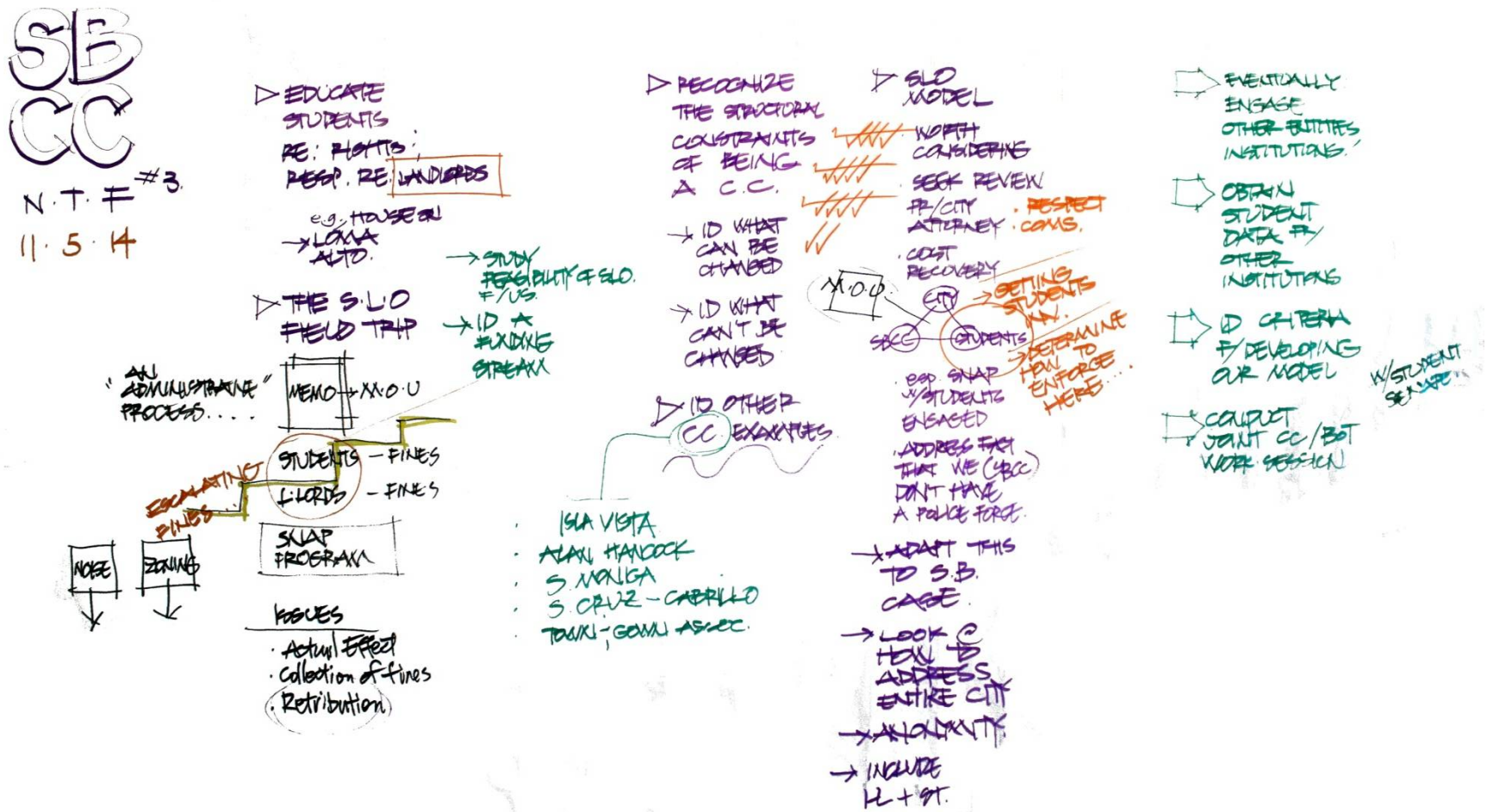
Wallgraphic Reductions from the Neighborhood Task Force and Focus Group Meetings are presented on the following pages.



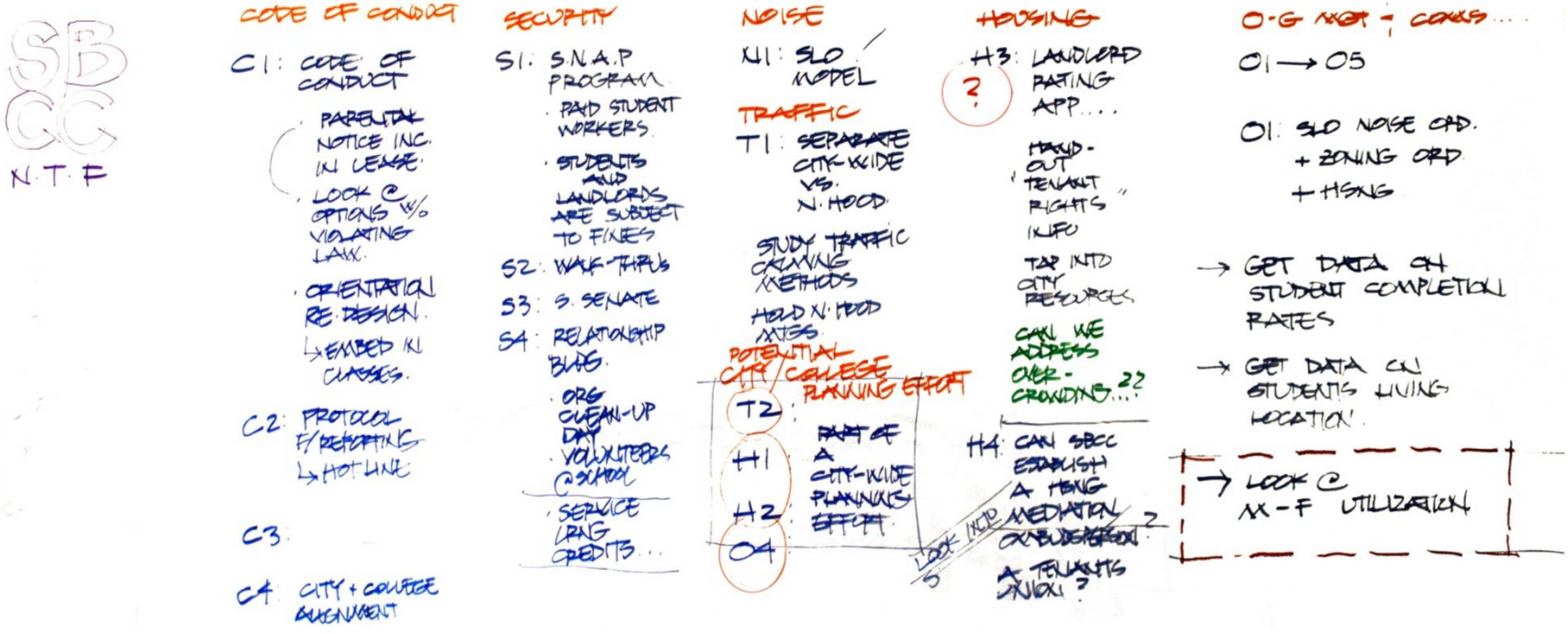
Santa Barbara City College (SBCC)
Neighborhood Task Force Meeting #1
October 2, 2014



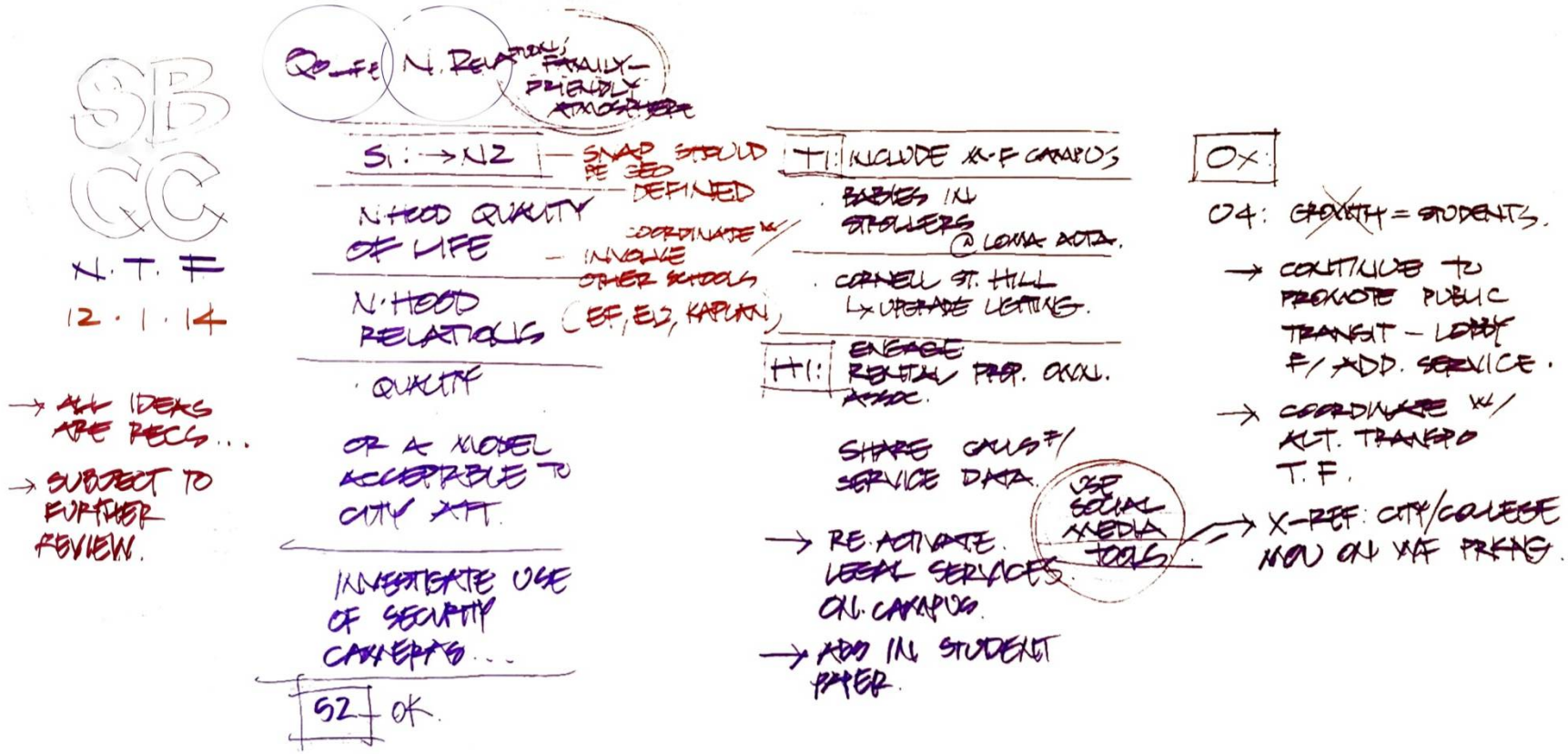
Santa Barbara City College (SBCC)
Neighborhood Task Force Meeting #2
October 16, 2014



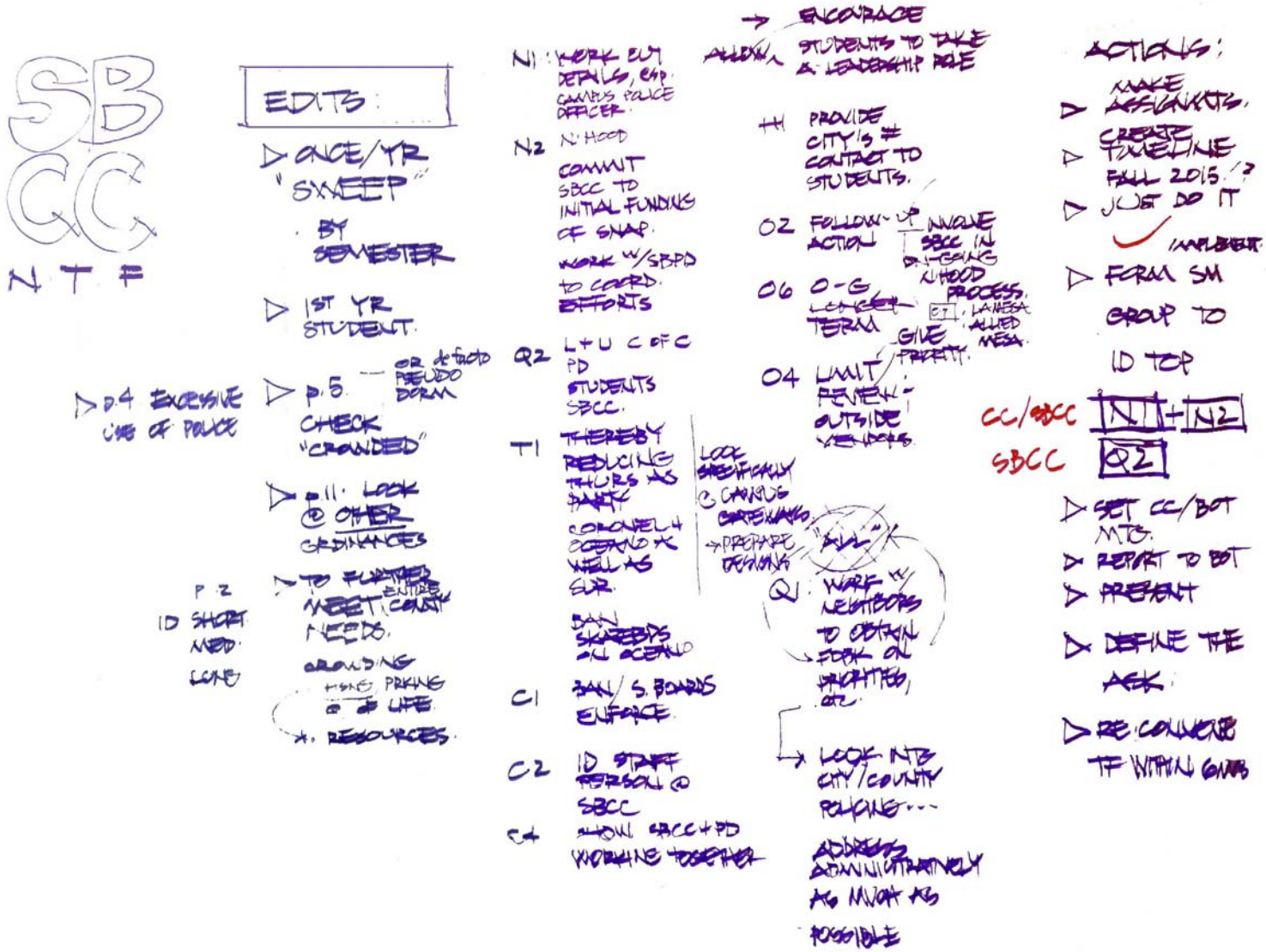
Santa Barbara City College (SBCC)
Neighborhood Task Force Meeting #3
November 5, 2014



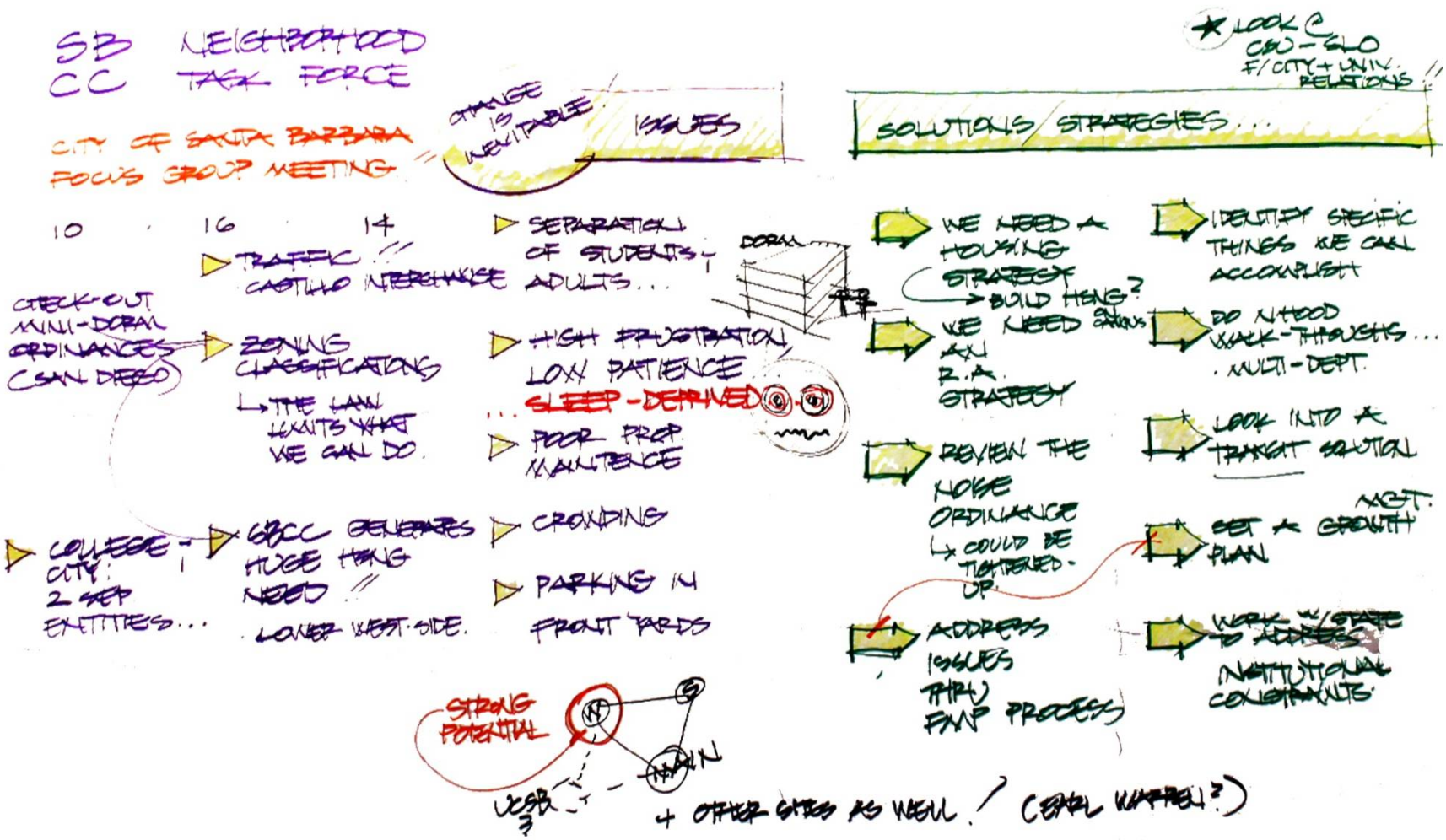
Santa Barbara City College (SBCC)
Neighborhood Task Force Meeting #4
November 20, 2014



Santa Barbara City College (SBCC)
Neighborhood Task Force Meeting #5
December 1, 2014

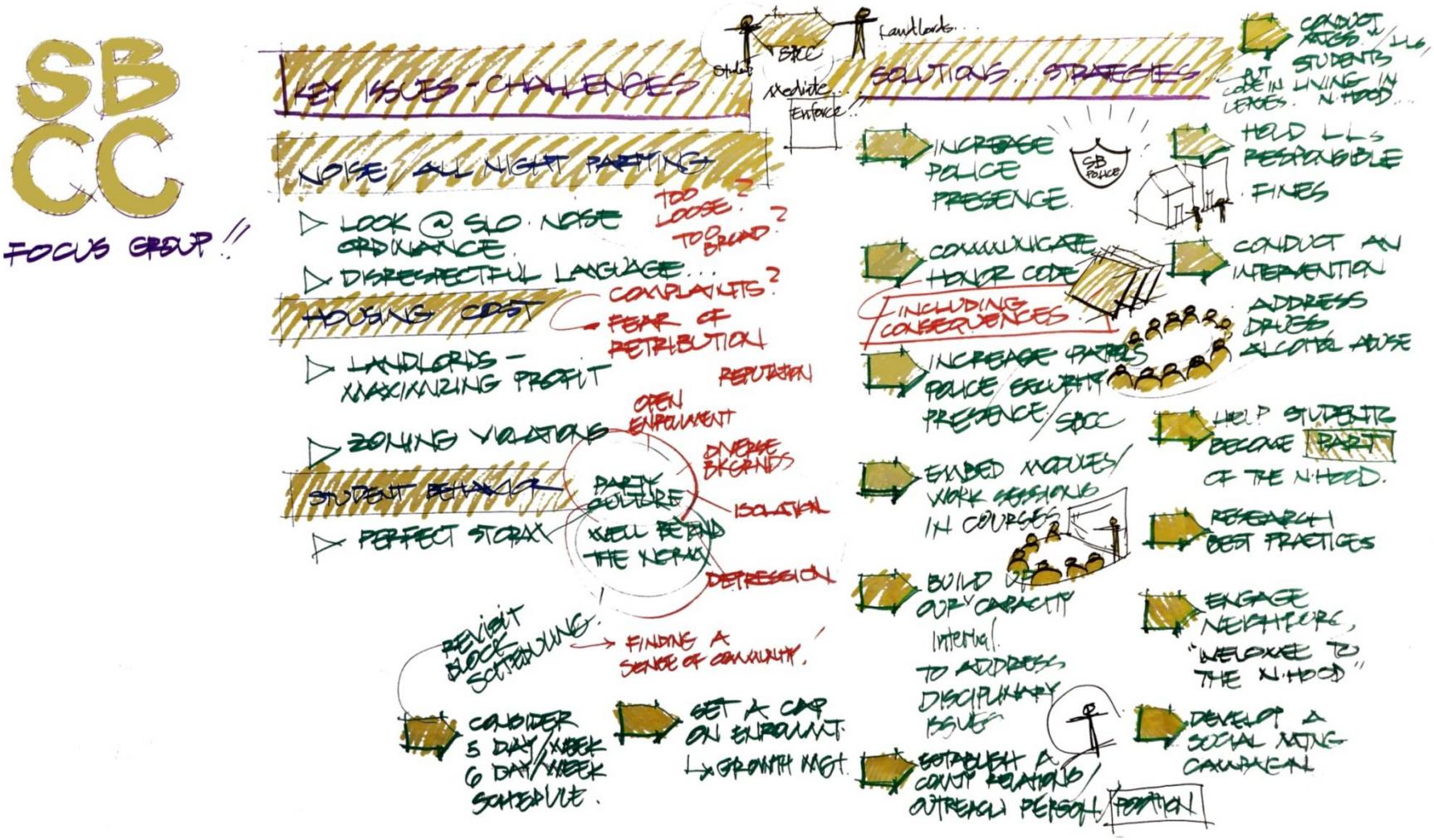


Santa Barbara City College (SBCC)
Neighborhood Task Force Meeting #6
January 14, 2015



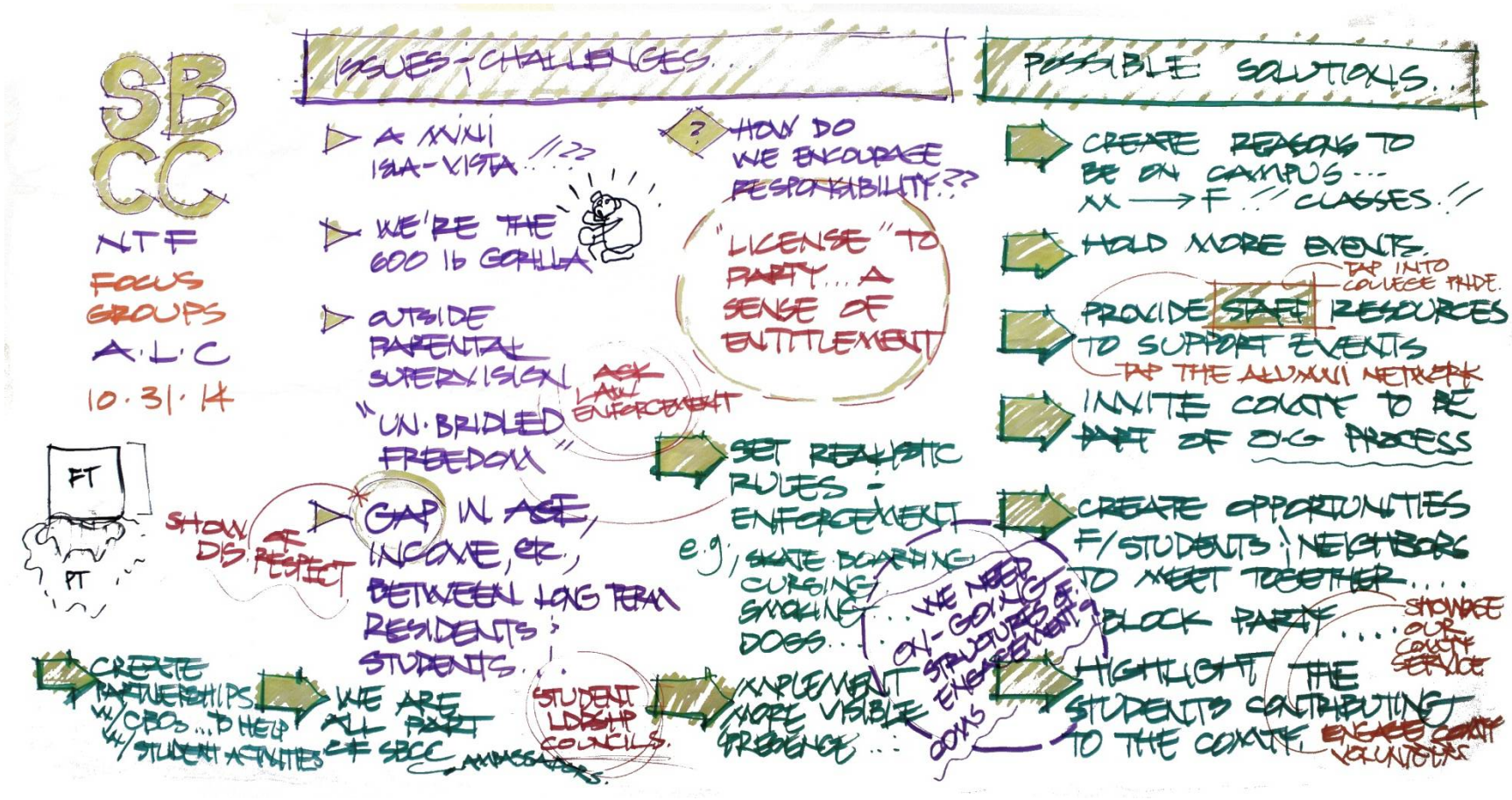
Santa Barbara City College (SBCC)
Focus Group Meeting #1 – City of Santa Barbara
October 16, 2014

Santa Barbara City College (SBCC)
Focus Group Meeting #2 – Classified Consultation Group (CCG)
October 27, 2014



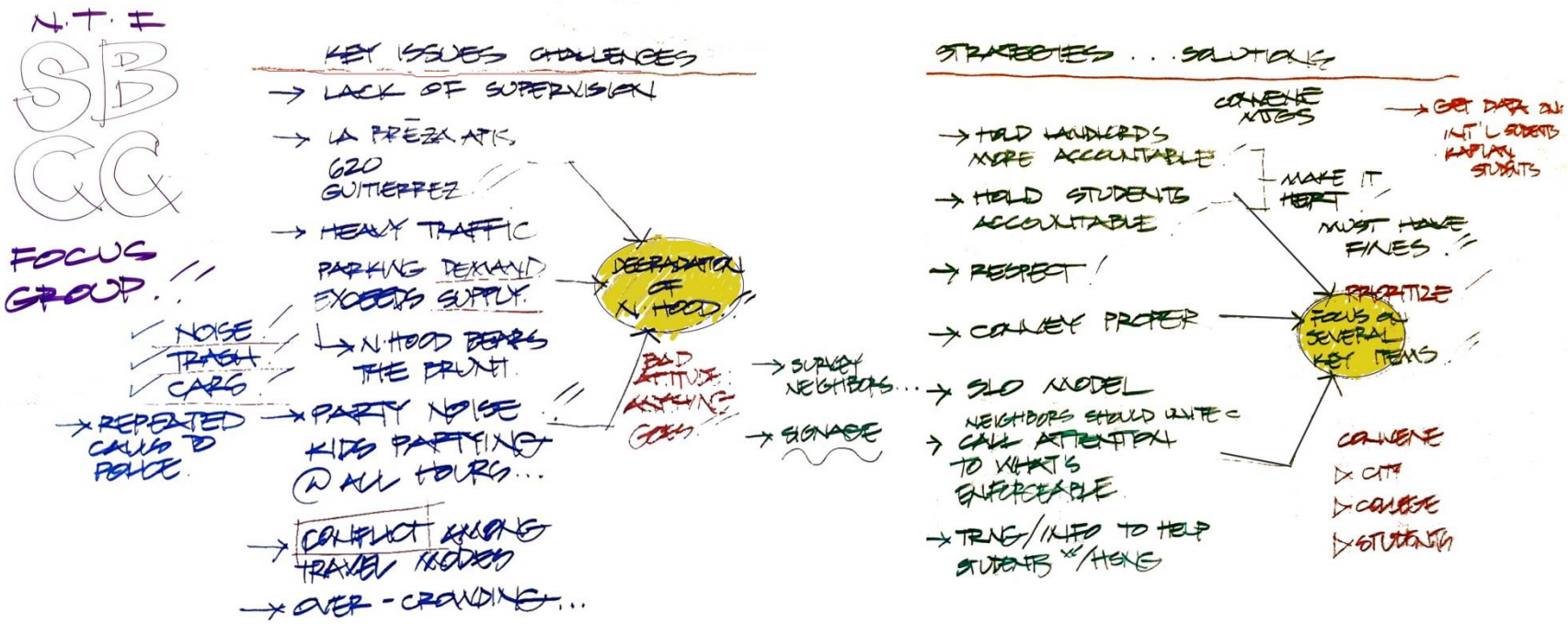
Santa Barbara City College (SBCC)
Focus Group Meeting #3 – Faculty
October 27, 2014

Santa Barbara City College (SBCC)
Focus Group Meeting #4 – Student Senate
October 31, 2014



Santa Barbara City College (SBCC)
Focus Group Meeting #5 – Advanced Leadership Committee (ALC)
October 31, 2014

Santa Barbara City College (SBCC)
Focus Group Meeting #6 – Neighborhood Residents
November 20, 2014



Santa Barbara City College (SBCC)
Focus Group Meeting #7 – Neighborhood Residents
December 1, 2014