

# Executive Summary

## Overview and Context

This final compilation of the Conditions, Trends and Issues (CTI) reports culminates the first phase of information gathering for the General Plan Update (GPU) 2030. The CTI reports:

- Describe City resources, public services and facilities;
- Highlight trends, policy conflicts or constraints; and
- Identify questions for discussion during the public participation phase of GPU 2030.

As we begin the process of looking forward to the next planning horizon (2010 – 2030), the most pressing and fundamental questions go right to the core of our community values. These questions involve the community's overall desires and expectations about the character and quality of life of our city and region. Further, the City Charter policy to effectively utilize but not exhaust our resources is a continuing, overarching theme that requires that policies that promote environmental stewardship and livability. This must be a paramount consideration as the General Plan continues to evolve through the GPU 2030 process.

## Key Land Use Issues

While current physical development trends achieve a great many of the objectives of the City's General Plan Housing and Circulation Elements, the escalating price of newly constructed residential units is causing many to question whether these objectives

need to be revisited. Questions are also being raised as to how well the existing policy framework is guiding the development review process. Some of these include:

- How to reconcile the need for housing as articulated by the Housing Element with the constraints of our street and circulation system without regrading neighborhoods and quality of life?
- How to locate development and encourage redevelopment in a manner that takes advantage of transit and other transportation alternatives?
- What are appropriate development standards for residential development in commercial zones given that the majority of new housing is being built Downtown and along commercial corridors?
- How to provide additional park, open space and public service needs in those areas of the city most likely to accommodate future residential development?
- How to provide clear policy guidance for future land use decisions and still provide flexibility for special needs and circumstances?

## Themes and Inter-Relationships

These CTI baseline reports also begin to reveal common themes and inter-relationships, such as:

- Charter Section 1507 calls for land use decisions that reflect the need to "live within our resources." Is a continuation of Measure E the best way to

determine which projects can move forward given limited public service and resource capacity?

- Increasing housing prices continue to impact socioeconomic conditions (e.g. job recruitment and retention) as well as traffic conditions along Highway 101, as more of the local workforce chooses to live outside the South Coast. Given market realities, how can the GPU respond to these changing conditions on both a local and regional level?
- The large majority of multi-family housing being proposed and approved is located in non-residential zones, particularly in the Downtown and Outer State Street areas. Much of the new housing is not affordable to people who live and work in those areas. What are the intended and unintended consequences of continuing this trend and how should the General Plan Update respond?
- The community clearly supports improved water quality, clean beaches and sound watershed planning, as evidenced by the passage of Measure B. Further, the federal Clean Water Act now mandates closer regulation and monitoring of non-point source pollution. How can the GPU process better integrate water quality monitoring, creek restoration efforts, and storm water infrastructure planning, and promote private landowner stewardship?
- The City is beginning to explore “green building” techniques. In addition to energy efficiencies, “green buildings” also conserve water, minimize air pollution, reduce the use of hazardous materials, and maximize waste reduction. In short, “green building” techniques are not only consistent with the policy of “living within our resources” but also promote sustainable development. Should the GPU establish a more comprehensive sustainable development program that also addresses the economic effects of implementing such a program?
- The increasing cost of maintaining public infrastructure and providing adequate public services will continue to underpin the quality of life in Santa Barbara. How can the GPU address the need for new revenue sources to address unmet capital and service needs?

Over the past decade, the City’s non-residential growth management program has effectively focused development on the re-use and revitalization of existing buildings as well as the development of new housing in commercial areas. However, this approach

to growth management has not necessarily limited job growth and creation. Further, impacts of growth from outside the city & region exacerbate strains on our infrastructure and resources. While the CTI reports found that most resources and public services have adequate capacity today, across-the-board fiscal constraints are significant current and future issues.

The charter policy to “live within our resources” points to need for increased stewardship and more sustainable policies. Future growth alternatives for the 2010 — 2030 planning period will need to be tested for impacts on resources and inter-relationships. These issues and more will be discussed during the GPU public participation process in 2005-2006.

### **Resource & Public Services Assessment - Summary Chart**

The following chart summarizes the major findings and issues of the GPU 2030 CTI Reports. These reports compile information on existing resource and public service conditions in the City. The reports provide an assessment of the current supply and demand for resources and services. The assessment sets the stage for the GPU 2030 discussions of future growth and development alternatives.

The charts provide a summary assessment of each topic on resource availability, major findings & issues as well as fiscal considerations. The topics are presented in the order that they appear in the final CTI report compilation and include:

#### **RESOURCES**

- Air Quality
- Creeks & Storm Drain System
- Land Use & Housing
- Noise
- Parks and Recreation
- Sanitary Sewer
- Solid and Hazardous Waste Management
- Transportation & Circulation
- Water Supply

#### **PUBLIC SERVICES**

- Fire Protection Services
- Library Services
- Police Services
- Public Buildings & Facilities
- Schools