



# REPORT TO DEVELOPMENT OVERSIGHT COMMISSION City of Sacramento

# 6

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2671

STAFF REPORT  
November 6, 2006

Members of the Development Oversight Commission:

**Subject:** General Plan City Leadership Workshop

**Location/Council District:** Citywide

**Recommendation:** Receive and File

**Contact:** Tom Pace, Interim Principal Planner, 808-6848

**Presenters:** Tom Pace, Interim Principal Planner, 808-6848

**Department:** Planning

**Division:** Long Range

**Organization Number:** 4912

**Description/ Analysis:** The City of Sacramento is in the process of its most important planning activity: creating an all-encompassing new General Plan. A key component of this process is obtaining input from City leaders to ensure the plan reflects the vision and values of the City. The City will be hosting the City Leadership Workshop on Tuesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007, from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Tsakopoulos Library Galleria at 828 I Street. The workshop will bring together approximately 100 participants including the Mayor and Council, advisory boards and commissions, the City Manager's Office and Department Heads.

The objective of the City Leadership Workshop is to give City leaders the opportunity to provide input in the continuing process to build consensus on the preferred land use alternative for the City's new General Plan. At the workshop, staff will provide participants with the community's preferences regarding growth, based on the results of the citywide town hall forums and a citywide public opinion survey. During the town hall forums and the polling, participants indicated how they think Sacramento should grow and what that growth should look like through the year 2030. City leaders will be asked to contribute their views based on their informed perspective combined with an understanding of the community's input and staff's technical analysis.


In addition, staff will present visual simulations showing how future development might look for mixed use corridors, sub-regional centers (or “mini-downtowns”), and the downtown. Staff and consultants will present key tradeoffs that represent the choices that need to be made in Sacramento, such as when to develop the Natomas Joint Vision area. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss issues in small groups and express their opinions on these issues.

**Policy Considerations:** The General Plan envisions:

- Vibrant Downtown and Town Centers
- Energized Commercial Corridors
- Expanded Transportation Choices
- Safe and Livable Neighborhoods and
- Sustainable Development

The DOC’s participation in this event will help ensure this vision can be realized.

**DOC Goals and Recommendations:** The General Plan’s vision, outlined above, will help achieve the DOC’s goals of streamlining the process and promoting an appropriate regulatory environment by removing inconsistent policies and multiple layers of land use designations that are in conflict with these goals. The General Plan will also help direct infrastructure investments to facilitate the City’s infill and redevelopment goals.

Respectfully submitted by:   
Tom Pace  
Interim Principal Planner

Recommendation Approved:

  
Carol Shearly  
Director of Planning

Attachments:

- 1 Summary report of the Phase 2 Town Hall Forums
- 2 Adopted *Vision and Guiding Principles*
- 3 *Snapshot* General Plan Update newsletter

**SACRAMENTO GENERAL PLAN AND  
SOUTH SACRAMENTO COMMUNITY PLAN  
PHASE II - TOWN HALL FORUM SUMMARY  
AUGUST 11, 2006**

**INTRODUCTION**

The City of Sacramento is conducting a comprehensive community participation program as part of the City's new General Plan and the South Sacramento Community Plan process. Public participation and input throughout the planning process are crucial in creating a plan for growth that truly reflects the community's visions and values.

As part of this commitment to including the community in the planning process, a series of 13 town hall forums were held throughout neighborhoods within Sacramento from May 31 to June 28, 2006. These forums represent the second of three phases of community outreach for the City's General Plan and South Sacramento Community Plan.

The main purposes of these forums were to inform the public of the growth challenges facing the City over the next 25 years and solicit input on the public's views of where growth should occur and how it should look. Input from these forums will help shape the preferred land use alternative that will form the basis for further policy development, impact analysis and preparation of the draft General Plan.

At each of the forums, participants heard a brief presentation on the three growth scenarios that included the existing general plan, a "Compact Reinvestment" scenario and a "Multi-centered, City Expansion" scenario, key development opportunity areas and new types of places and urban forms that could accommodate significant new development. Following the presentation, participants discussed growth scenarios in small groups and provided input through the use of interactive map exercises. In the first exercise, participants identified their scenario preferences for nine key growth areas throughout the City and recorded their individual responses on scorecards. In the second exercise, participants were asked to focus on their local community. A large table map was provided that showed an aerial photograph of the local community planning area with the various development opportunity sites highlighted and a menu of urban form types including neighborhoods, centers, corridors and special districts. Participants were asked to discuss the urban form types suggested by the various scenarios and to come to a consensus on the urban form types for each opportunity area within the community.

Over 1,000 persons (1,272) attended the forums, representing an average of 98 participants per forum. This represents more than a 25% increase in attendance over the Phase I forums, which had 1,004 attendees. The following table shows attendance at each forum:

<b>Forum Location</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Natomas Charter School	110
Freemont Presbyterian Church	85
George Sim Center	48
Clunie Center	87
Kennedy High School	220
Pannell Center	98
Oak Park Community Center	90
Ben Ali Shriners Center	85
Barbara Comstock Morse School	40
Natomas High School	83
Robertson Community Center	160
Charles Mack School	26
McClatchy High School	140
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1272</b>

In total, 894 of the attendees turned in demographic surveys. Of these, 64% reported an ethnicity of Caucasian, 10% African American, 6% Asian American, 6% Hispanic, 2% Native American, 0.2% South Asian and 4% Other, while 9% did not respond to the ethnicity question. Forty-nine percent of the respondents are male, while 45% are female, and 6% did not respond. Nearly three-quarters of the respondents are over the age of 45, with 24% aged 26-45 and 4% under age 26. In addition to the 13 Town Hall Forums, the City of Sacramento hosted a High School Summit and College Summit on March and April, 2006. Over 125 High School students from 17 public and private schools participated. At the College Summit there were over 80 students that were educated on the process of creating a new General Plan. These young adults completed interactive planning exercises and shared their vision for the future of Sacramento. The High School and College Summit bring the total involvement of young adults under the age of 26 to nearly 20%

For the Town Hall Forums over a third of the respondents have household incomes between \$51,000 and \$100,000 and 27% have household incomes over \$100,000, while 10% reported incomes less than \$30,000.

### **Multiple Attendees**

It should be noted that a number of people attended multiple town hall forums, and this will have an effect on the nature of the demographic survey responses and the exercise results, although it may not be possible to accurately determine the extent of this effect. However it can be determined that the people who attended multiple town hall forums account for a disproportionate number of the 1,272 votes for the selection of preferred

growth scenario. Overall 81 people attended multiple town hall forums. From these multiple attendees there are 18 people who attended over half (7 or more) of all the town hall forums. The participants that attended multiple town hall forums account for 27% of the votes to identify a preferred growth scenario.

## **GENERAL TRENDS**

The following trends represent common themes agreed to by numerous tables at multiple town hall forums:

Key infrastructure concepts:

- Improve access to the rivers.
- Expand access to public transit.
- Enhance bicycle and pedestrian facilities and make neighborhoods walkable.
- Provide more parks and open spaces.
- Improve flood protection.

Key land use concepts:

- Locate higher density downtown, near transit stations, along commercial corridors and in sub-regional centers.
- Develop infill areas and commercial corridors more intensively before expanding the City outwards.
- Require transitions in building scale between larger/higher buildings to smaller/lower buildings and adjacent homes.
- Plan multiple employment centers throughout the City to expand access to jobs.
- New buildings should be oriented to pedestrians, not cars.
- Distribute affordable housing throughout the community.
- Public safety and security should be considered in design of new development.
- Promote green buildings and sustainability.
- Locate regional parks in the Richards Boulevard area and in Delta Shores.
- Preserve the airport use of Executive Airport.
- Locate a hospital in the north area.

## **Interactive Map Exercises**

### Citywide

In the first exercise, which focused on the City as a whole, participants were asked to select the scenario that they preferred for the following key opportunity areas throughout the City:

- Major New Growth Areas:

- Natomas Joint Vision
- Delta Shores
- East Area New Growth
- Executive Airport
- Centers:
  - Downtown Core
  - Railyards and Richards Boulevard
  - Sub-Regional Centers
  - Employment Centers
  - Commercial Centers
- Corridors:
  - Mixed Use Corridors

In the major new growth areas, the results indicate widespread support for either keeping the Natomas Joint Vision area as predominantly open space or designating it an urban reserve, developing a significant job center in Delta Shores, annexing the East Area and developing it with a moderate density, and retaining the airport use of Executive Airport.

In the centers, participants favored significantly densifying the Downtown Core and the Railyards and Richards Boulevard, creating several smaller sub-regional centers rather than two major ones, and maximizing revitalization of commercial centers with new housing and retail. The results were close on employment centers, with slightly more participants opting to increase the number of employment centers while converting some Natomas employment center land to housing, while nearly as many participants favored a greater emphasis on employment centers that would not convert some Natomas employment center land to housing.

In the corridors, the preference was for maximizing revitalization of the corridors through use of higher density mixed use development, followed closely by those who favored more moderate revitalization of the corridors.

### Community-specific

In the second exercise, each table of participants was asked to come to a consensus on which urban forms they preferred for each local opportunity area. Detailed data are found on the following pages. For those local opportunity areas that were covered by more than one town hall forum, the results of all applicable forums have been aggregated. In comparing those local opportunity areas that corresponded to the areas reviewed in Exercise 1, areas such as CBD-Railyards-Richards and Executive Airport had a high degree of correlation between local and Citywide views, while the Natomas Joint Vision, Eastern Study Area and Delta Shores areas revealed varying degrees of divergence between local and Citywide preferences.

For example, in the Natomas Joint Vision area 39% of the Citywide Exercise 1 respondents felt that the area should remain open space (Scenario 1) and 32% preferred an urban reserve (Scenario 2) for the area, while less than a third favored some kind of development for the area. At the two Natomas town hall forums, 13% supported open space, 26% opted for urban reserve and 56% opted for various mixes of development by selecting either Scenario 3 (village-type development) or creating new scenarios often characterized by limited development and open space. In this area, a key difference was the way the NJV area was broken into five sub-areas on the Exercise 2 maps, while it was presented as a single area in Exercise 1. As a result, some of the sub-areas such as Greenbriar and the area south of San Juan Road and north of I-80 tended to have more development-oriented responses in the Natomas forums, while those forums tended to favor more open space or rural development in the area north of North Natomas (Area A).

In the Eastern Study Area, 46% of the Citywide Exercise 1 respondents supported Scenario 3 (slightly less intense village-type development with a sub-urban center), while 36% opted for Scenario 2 (a bit more intense village-type development). However, the combined results of the town hall forums at the Oak Park and George Sim Centers showed almost the reverse, with 42% supporting Scenario 2 and 25% supporting Scenario 3.

For Delta Shores, over half of the Citywide Exercise 1 respondents favored the employment center proposal in Scenario 2, while 38% (a plurality) of those who attended the four Pocket/South Area forums made this selection.

Nearly half (47%) of the Citywide Exercise 1 respondents favored a greater density in the Downtown Core and Richards Boulevard/Railyards area as suggested in Scenario 2, while about the same percentage (46%) of the Clunie Center forum attendees had the same view.

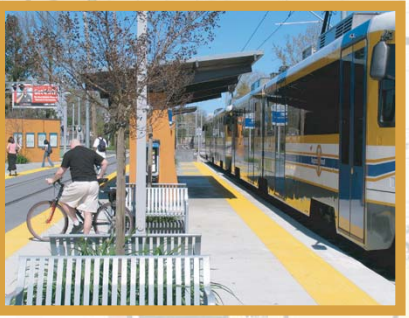
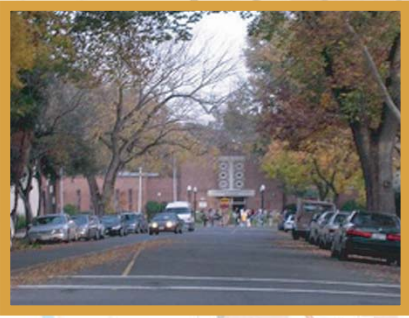
Likewise, the results for Executive Airport were highly consistent between the Citywide and local community responses. Sixty percent of the Citywide Exercise 1 respondents favored Scenario 3, which keeps the airport open with a slight increase in employment over the next 25 years, while the Pocket/South Area respondents had nearly the same preference (61% for Scenario 3).

Additional analysis of the community-specific data will be provided in the coming months.

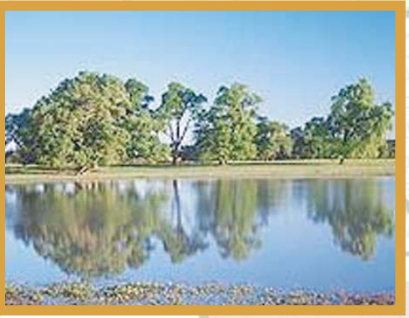
## **CONCLUSION**

While additional evaluation of the data is needed, three initial conclusions can be drawn. First, the results of the second round of community outreach forums largely confirmed staff's recommended opportunity areas as being appropriate places to accommodate future growth. Second, significant public education was provided regarding the types of

choices the City will have to make as a part of the planning process and members of the public have been able to use this information to articulate their own views on the City's future. Finally, a majority of residents support reinvestment in existing communities as a key strategy for making Sacramento America's most livable community.



**Vision and Guiding Principles**  
**SACRAMENTO GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**  
**Defining Sacramento's Future**  
**Adopted**



**November 22, 2005**



# Vision and Guiding Principles

## SACRAMENTO GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

Defining Sacramento's Future

Adopted November 22, 2005

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to set out a vision that captures the City's key values and aspirations for Sacramento's future. The Vision Statement paints a picture of what Sacramento will be twenty-five years from now. The second part of this document sets out Guiding Principles that flow from the Vision Statement. These principles establish policy benchmarks for the rest of the General Plan Update process. The principles, along with the issues identified in the *Planning Issues Report*<sup>1</sup>, will be used to help define how growth will occur, as well as direct the development of land use alternatives and updated General Plan policies. The alternatives will be defined at a citywide scale and for targeted "areas of opportunity."

The Vision and Guiding Principles are applicable to the context of the city as a whole as well as its community plan areas and neighborhoods. The Vision and Guiding Principles is informed by recently adopted City policy related to smart growth and sustainable development and an extensive community



involvement program that includes public input from the first phase of town hall forums, focus group interviews, and the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC), a 25-member citizen's committee appointed by the Mayor and City Council.

### VISION STATEMENT

The guiding vision of the General Plan is that **Sacramento will be the most livable city in America.**

As California's capital, Sacramento will continue to play its traditional role in the region as the primary center of government, employment, and culture. Downtown Sacramento will vibrate with arts, culture, entertainment, and a 24-hour population.

The city's economy will continue to strengthen, diversify, and play a larger role in the global economy. Building on the skills of our workforce, Sacramento's economy will provide a broad range of jobs in all industry sectors, including those related to small and local businesses.

<sup>1</sup> *The Planning Issues Report identifies major issue categories to be addressed in the new General Plan. Copies of the document are available from the Planning Division or on the Internet at [www.sacgp.org](http://www.sacgp.org).*

Every neighborhood will be a desirable place to live because of its walkable streets, extensive tree canopy, range of housing choices, mixed use neighborhood centers, great schools, parks and recreation facilities, and easy access to Downtown and jobs.

Sacramento will be linked to the rest of the region by an extensive, efficient and safe network of roadways, bridges, mass transit, bikeways, pedestrian trails, and sidewalks. It will be linked to the rest of California and the world by an international airport, conventional and high-speed passenger rail, interstate highways, and high-speed communication systems.

Sacramento will continue to celebrate its cultural and ethnic diversity and ensure the equitable treatment of all neighborhoods and groups. Sacramento will protect its historic and cultural resources and its natural environment and will increase access to its riverfront and open spaces for the enjoyment of its growing population.

Sacramento will promote the health and well-being of the community and will plan for the long-term safety of its citizens.

Finally, to help address the causes of global warming and the urban heat island effect, Sacramento will be a model of sustainable development in its planning, its use of urban heat island reduction measures, and its conservation of energy, water, and other natural resources.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### Land Use



to transit stations, along transit corridors and commercial corridors, near job centers, and in strategic opportunity areas throughout the city.

- Use the existing assets of infrastructure and public facilities to increase infill and re-use, while maintaining important qualities of community character.

- Provide a diversity of neighborhood environments, from the *traditional*<sup>2</sup> downtown core to well-integrated new growth areas.
- Create a vibrant downtown that serves as a regional destination for the arts, culture, and entertainment while accommodating residents that live, work, and gather in the city center.
- Focus higher density developments and mixed-use projects in areas adjacent



<sup>2</sup> The term "traditional" refers to the urban grid pattern that is characteristic of older central cities.

- Promote livable and well-designed neighborhoods that are walkable and complete, with a mix of uses and services to support improved health and the needs of families, youth, seniors, and a growing population.
- Utilize *sustainable development*<sup>3</sup> and land use planning practices that provide for the needs of existing residents and businesses while preserving choices for future generations.

## **Community Design**



- Create vibrant public places that serve as gathering places, town centers, and villages for the community.
- Protect the development of complete neighborhoods both in infill and new growth areas that foster a sense of place.
- Protect and replicate the pattern and character of Sacramento's unique and traditional neighborhoods.
- Promote designs for development that are compatible with the scale and character of Sacramento's existing neighborhoods.
- Locate and design buildings, streetscapes, and public spaces that contribute to walkable neighborhoods.
- Promote developments that foster accessibility and connectivity between areas and safely and efficiently accommodate a mixture of cars, transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians.
- Recognize and preserve those areas of the City with a "sense of place" that are based largely upon their historical and cultural resources.



## **Housing**

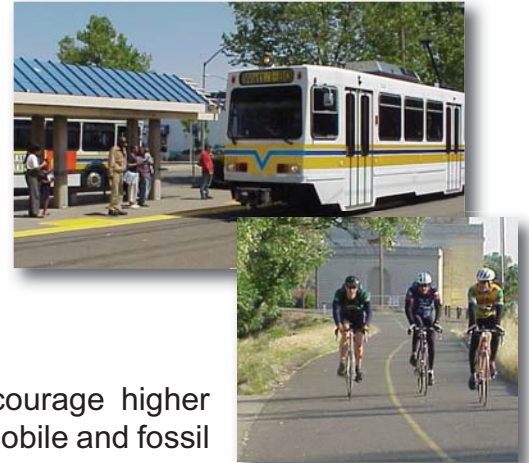


- Provide a mix of housing to meet the needs of current and future residents, including an equitable distribution of affordable housing, throughout the city.
- Include a mix of housing types within neighborhoods to promote a diversity of household types and housing choices for residents of all ages and income levels in order to promote stable neighborhoods.
- Work to end homelessness in Sacramento by providing affordable housing opportunities and services.

<sup>3</sup> *Sustainable development practices refer to the use of architectural and planning methods that address the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Specific examples include the use of solar panels for energy conservation, placing jobs near housing to reduce vehicle trips, and infill development in urban areas to reduce the consumption of agricultural land.*

## **Mobility**

- Develop a balanced, integrated, multi-modal transportation system that is efficient and safe with frequent service connecting every neighborhood to the rest of the city and the region.
- Provide a variety of transportation choices that promote accessible alternatives to the automobile including walking, bicycling, and taking transit.
- Expand and improve existing transit systems to encourage higher ridership that will lead to less dependence on the automobile and fossil fuels, and to better air quality.



## **Economic Development**

- Promote the City as the civic, cultural, and economic hub of the region and the Central Valley.
- Promote strategic development of vacant, underutilized, and infill land, especially along transportation and commercial corridors, to improve the city's economic outlook.
- Create and maintain a broad range of jobs that are accessible to all residents that provide opportunities for advancement.
- Improve the jobs-housing balance by siting housing near employment centers.
- Develop a vibrant 24-hour downtown that is a destination for the region and California.
- Work with educational institutions to promote the skill and talent of Sacramento's workforce in order to attract high quality jobs.
- Develop the city's waterfront to provide a world-class urban experience for residents, workers, and visitors.
- Focus investment and revitalization in distressed neighborhoods.



## **Public Safety**

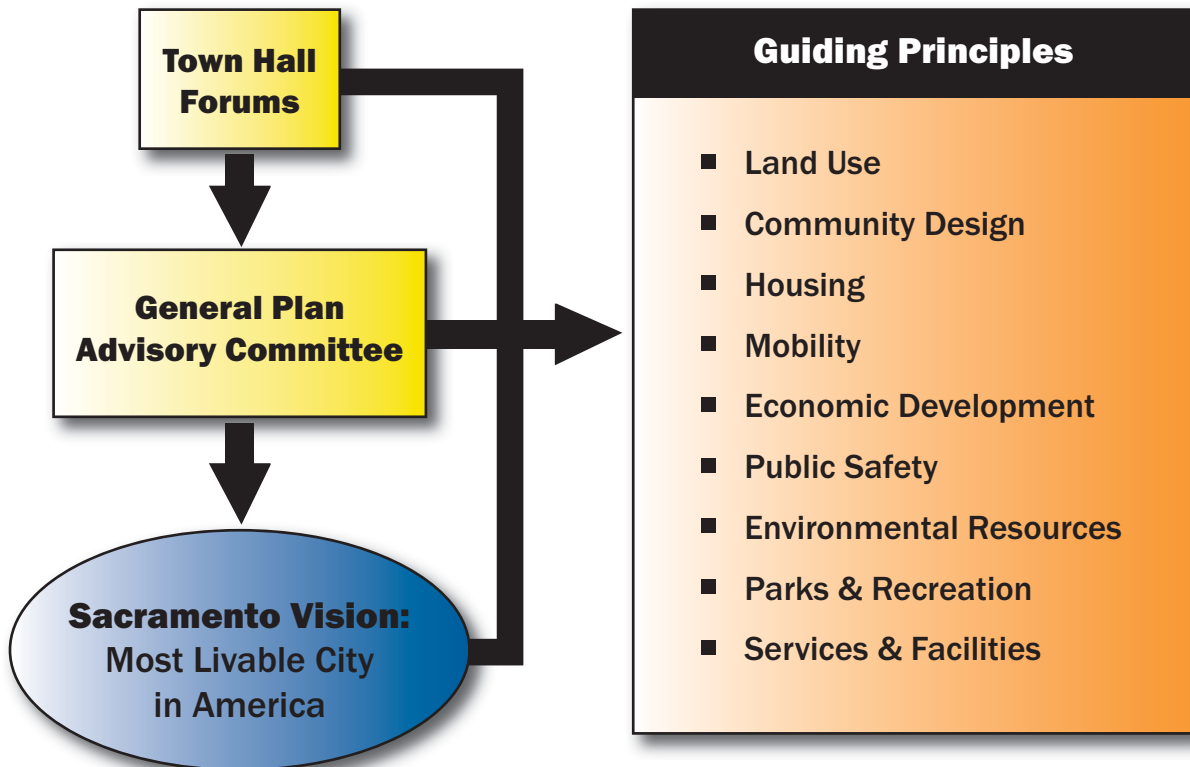
- Foster safe neighborhoods through good community and environmental design that promotes a mix of uses, active streets, improved air quality, and security.

- Improve coordination among residents and businesses and police, fire, planning, transportation, and other City departments to address security issues and achieve safe neighborhoods.
- Minimize Sacramento's vulnerability to natural and manmade disasters and strengthen the City's emergency response capabilities including improving flood protection through the strengthening of our levees and modernizing Folsom Dam.



- Promote exercise and activity by all age groups through the development of walkable neighborhoods and recreational facilities and programs.
- Promote opportunities for community education and involvement through volunteerism and civic engagement.

## The Development of the Vision and Guiding Principles



## **Environmental Resources**



- Encourage sustainable levels of energy and resource consumption through efficient land-use, transportation, building design, construction techniques, waste management, and other infrastructure systems.
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural resources, and environmentally-sensitive areas to maintain community identity.
- Preserve and protect important historic and cultural resources that serve as significant, visible reminders of the City's social and architectural history.
- Improve and expand the urban forest that contributes to the uniqueness of Sacramento: the City of Trees.
- Continue to improve air and water quality to ensure a healthy community and region.
- Continue to ensure the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

## **Parks and Recreation**

- Maximize public access to and use of the Sacramento and American Rivers and the City's other open space resources.
- Expand and improve existing pedestrian paths and bikeways to promote health, recreation, and connectivity between neighborhoods.
- Provide innovative parks and recreational and sports facilities for all of Sacramento's existing and new neighborhoods.
- Promote Sacramento as a cultural destination with arts and open space amenities throughout the city.



## **Services and Facilities**



- Provide quality public services, facilities, and infrastructure that are distributed equitably throughout the city.
- Support high quality education and schools.
- Promote joint-use of public facilities to optimize the use of public funds.
- Develop facilities, services, and partnerships to help end homelessness.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The initial public participation components of the General Plan Update (GPU) process, which includes the GPU Focus Group interviews, GPAC interviews, and the first round of Town Hall Forums, have engaged a broad representation of Sacramento's public in thinking about what Sacramento's future can be and ways to achieve it. The Town Hall Forums provided participants an opportunity to identify on survey forms what they felt are the five most important issues to be addressed in the updated General Plan. In addition to issues, public input also provided insight to what participants in the process value.

Across all 14 forums, the five most highly ranked issues are as follows (note that issues 4 and 5 were ranked the same):



1. Safe neighborhoods
2. Mixed-use and higher density developments around light rail stations and along commercial corridors
3. Distribution of affordable housing throughout the City
4. Protection of agricultural land and open space, and improving streetscape quality
5. Amount of affordable housing; improving air quality; and expanding the light rail system

A Planning Issues Report was also prepared that defined key issues brought forward in the first phases of the General Plan Update. The report was based on early input from Focus Group interviews, GPAC Interviews, the Town Hall Forums, the Technical Advisory Committee, Planning Staff, and the Technical Background Report (TBR). The Planning Issues Report and other General Plan documents are available at the General Plan website ([www.sacgp.org](http://www.sacgp.org)). The issues Report identifies 14 key issues to be addressed in the update. These issues include:



- Smart growth
- Sustainability
- Affordable housing
- Mixed-use, higher density development/infill
- Economic development
- Level of service for roadways
- Service standards for public facilities
- Alternative transportation modes
- Public safety/crime/police service
- Air quality
- Open space/farmland protection
- Natural resource protection
- General Plan implementation
- Streamlined permit processing



Many of the top issues and values identified in the Town Hall Forums were also key ones identified in other sources. All of these issues and values are reflected in the Vision for Sacramento's future or as Guiding Principles.

The Vision and Guiding Principles also reflect recently adopted City policy. These include such policy statements as the City's Strategic Plan (2005), Infill Strategy (2002), Smart Growth Principles (2001), Civic Standards (2001), Economic Development Strategy Framework (2000), and existing General Plan (including the Preservation Element, 2000, and the Housing Element Update 2003).

Thus, the Vision Statement and Guiding Principles have been informed by public input during the first phase of Town Hall Forums, by key information in the Planning Issues Report, and by existing City policy.