



# General Plan Advisory Committee Meeting #4

Community Services Main Hall | July 29, 2021



# Meeting Overview

- Introductions and Ice Breaker Activity
- Consultant Team and Role
- General Plan Update Process and Work Plan Overview
- Project Schedule and Future GPAC Meetings
- Community Engagement Plan Overview
- Input on Vision, Priorities, and Challenges
- Next Steps

# Welcome/Introductions

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# Introductions

- Please introduce yourself and identify any groups or organizations you are representing
- Pretend your showing out-of-town guests around San Marcos for the day. **Where is one spot that you want to take them?**



# Purpose of the General Plan

- Define a long-term vision for future growth and resource management within the City over the next 10-20 years
- Reflect the goals and values of the City
- Build on recent City planning efforts
- Include extensive public outreach and community participation
- Balance growth, conservation, and quality of life

# Consultant Team Role

## DE NOVO PLANNING GROUP

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- Facilitation of all public meetings, workshops, and hearings
- Primary author of all key planning, environmental and background documents
- Provide expertise, suggestions, and a “toolkit” to draft a plan that meets the needs of San Marcos
- Adhere to the project budget and schedule
- Manage team of subconsultants (transportation, econ/fiscal, noise, cultural)

## Subconsultant Team

- Kearns & West: Community Outreach
- Kittelson: Transportation and Mobility
- EPS: Economics and Fiscal
- MD Acoustics: Noise
- Duke CRA: Cultural Resources
- SWA: Community Design
- West Yost: Infrastructure
- T.Y. Lin: Civil Engineering

# Planning Case Study Activity

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## City of San Marcos | General Plan Update

### Case Study – Affordable Housing vs. Open Space Requirements



The City of Deville recently updated their General Plan to include policies to promote the development of housing affordable to a variety of income levels and background, including for lower income households, seniors, and people with disabilities. Their General Plan also promotes developing more public and private open space throughout the community, with specific policy direction for new development to provide open space on-site, and the City's Zoning Ordinance sets specific open space requirements (see following page for hypothetical example). The

City is growing and housing costs are rising; more affordable housing is needed.

A well-respected local developer proposes an affordable housing project to meet the City's housing needs. However, the proposed project site **cannot** accommodate the number of housing units to make the development financially feasible while also meeting the open space requirements.

#### Notes and Food for Thought:

*What is important for you to know about this project?*

*What questions do you have?*

*What other factors might influence your opinion of the project?*

*What General Plan Elements would you look at to get policy direction on how to consider the merits of this project?*

# Refer to Handout and Facilitated Activity



# Consultant Presentation Part 1: Work Program

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# Progress to Date

- City launched comprehensive General Plan Update in late 2019
- In April 2020, the City placed the comprehensive General Plan Update on hold as it addressed the public health impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic
- The City continued to move forward with an update to its Housing Element and Safety Element and prepared a new Environmental Justice Element, in accordance with State law
  - The City Council adopted the updated Housing Element on July 13
  - The updated Safety Element and new Environmental Justice Element have been drafted and will be circulated for public review in Fall 2021
- Bilingual community engagement has been ongoing throughout the process and included virtual surveys, open houses, videos, briefings, and public hearings

# Where are we Headed?

Public Participation

Existing Conditions Report



Identify Community Priorities



Land Use Alternatives Reports

General Plan Goals, Policies, and Programs

Draft General Plan Update

Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

Public Hearings on General Plan and EIR

# Community Engagement Plan

- **Ongoing Engagement:**
  - GPAC
  - Website
  - Video
  - Social Media
  - Emails/ Newsletters
  - Partner Communication
  - Informational Materials
- **In-person Engagement**
  - Workshops
  - Pop-up events
  - Focus Groups
  - Stakeholder Interviews
  - Planning Commission Meetings
  - City Council Meetings
  - Scoping Meeting
- **Digital Engagement**
  - Website
  - Social Media
  - Online Survey – Visioning
  - Online Survey – Land Use

# General Plan Content: Elements

## Required Elements

- Land Use/Community Character
- Mobility
- Housing
- Conservation
- Open Space
- Safety
- Noise

## Optional Topics the City may Include

- Economic Development and Fiscal Sustainability
- Community Services and Facilities
- Community Health
- Sustainability/Climate Change
- Environmental Justice
- Implementation

# General Plan Content: Element Organization

## Goals

Broad statements of community desires, preferences, and the General Plan's purpose

## Policies

Guides to decision-makers with respect to development proposals, future growth and resource allocation

## Programs/Actions

Implementation steps to ensure goals and policies are carried out

# Each Element Will:

- Address requirements of state law
- Seek to avoid or mitigate environmental impacts
- Be grounded in sound community planning techniques
- Reflect the goals and priorities of the community
- Ensure internal consistency with other elements



# Environmental Review

- The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prior to adoption of the General Plan
- The EIR will be prepared concurrently with the General Plan
- The EIR will identify possible environmental impacts
  - Measures will be incorporated into the General Plan to make it a “self-mitigating” document



# Public Review and Adoption

- Once the General Plan and EIR have been completed in draft form, they will be circulated for a public review and comment period
- Public workshops will be conducted
- The Planning Commission and City Council will consider public input
- Following any directed revisions, the General Plan and EIR will be adopted via a series of public hearings



# Consultant Presentation Part 2: GPAC

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# GPAC Purpose

## The GPAC will:

- Serve as a sounding board for the General Plan team
- Provide guidance on high-level vision, goals and policies
- Review and provide input on land use and transportation alternatives
- Represent the community's interests and serve as "ambassadors" for the General Plan



## The GPAC will NOT:

- Resolve issues of detailed policy
- Make final decisions on any issue
- Take positions on issues not brought before the committee



# Decision-Making Process

- Staff and consultants will facilitate meetings
- Operate in spirit of consensus
  - 100% consensus not needed
  - No roll-call votes, but straw polls may be conducted
  - Differing points of view will be presented to the City Council



# Basic Courtesies

- Share responsibility of ensuring the success of the process and quality of recommendations
- Make good faith effort to reach agreement
- Ask questions for clarification during meetings
- Acknowledge others' perspectives
- Refrain from side conversations
- Respond to questions put before the committee

# GPAC Responsibilities

## All Members

- Attend all GPAC meetings
- Prepare for each meeting by reviewing the agenda packet, reading the attached materials, and completing any assignments
- Participate in meetings
- Communicate with constituent groups
- Attend public workshops
- Alternatives are encouraged, but not required, to attend all meetings, and will join the conversation when the primary member is not in attendance

# GPAC Expectations

- 7 days prior to each meeting an agenda and reading assignments will be provided
  - Existing Conditions Report Sections
  - Issue papers
  - Land Use Alternatives Report
  - Select portions of the existing General Plan
- Please come to each meeting having read the materials, and have thoughts and ideas to discuss with the group for each topic

# GPAC Goals

*The result of the GPAC's time together will be a Draft General Plan that is prepared and submitted to the Planning Commission and City Council for further review, input, and refinement. The City Council will have the final word regarding the content of the General Plan Update.*



# Validate Vision, Priorities, and Challenges

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# Validate Assets, Challenges, and Vision

## **ASSETS**

- What do you value most about San Marcos?
- What makes this a special place to live or work?

## **CHALLENGES**

- What issues are facing the city that need to be addressed in the General Plan?

## **VISION**

- What ideas do you have for the future of San Marcos?
- What would make your community better?
- What three things would you like to see accomplished by 2040?

# Assets

- Moderately priced neighborhoods and quality amenities
- Safe neighborhoods, response of fire and sheriff
- Thoughtful planning in integrating green spaces for all communities
- Small town feel on the urban edge of North City
- Hometown feel, even as San Marcos has grown
- Educational hub; partnership and collaboration among schools is a good model.
- Parks but also open space: Open space parks, trails, and areas provide indirect general revenue for the City through recreational spending and by increasing property values and property taxes.
- Families live here for generations.

# Challenges

- Parks and open space are valued but do not bring money to the City; need economic activity to have them.
- Traffic
- Student growth and the accompanying need for housing and street maintenance
- Field allocation of sports fields; not enough space to actively participate in sports
- Economic contractions and expansions
- Clarify downtown identity; many of the homes are in the hills and the flat area is an underutilized opportunity.
- Relationship with the State of California and San Diego Associations of Governments
- Affordable and senior housing
- Overcrowding in schools
- Dwindling land
- Traffic congestion and mitigation of it
- Opportunities for young people to find homes and jobs

# Vision

- More pedestrian and bike connections to neighborhoods and schools and different parts of the City.
- More thoughtful development that appreciates and uplifts cultural identity into the character of the whole City.
- Open-ended General Plan: Priorities in 20 years are unknown.
- More sustainable water use, especially by residents
- Improved availability of the arts
- More forward thinking
- Added flexibility in future uses of retail spaces

# Next Steps

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# Tentative GPAC Schedule

GPAC Meeting No.	Topic	Month	Date	Year	Status
4	Relaunch Kickoff	July	29	2021	Confirmed
--	<i>Deliver Existing Conditions Report (Pick-up at City Hall)</i>	<i>October</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>2021</i>	Confirmed
5	Transportation and Circulation	October	TBD	2021	Proposed
6	Economic Development and Fiscal Sustainability	November	TBD	2021	TBD
7	Land Use and Community Design	December	TBD	2021	TBD
8	Public Facilities and Services, Safety and Noise	January	TBD	2022	TBD
9	Land Use Map Alternatives Discussion Part 1 - Alternatives	April	TBD	2022	TBD
10	Land Use Map Alternatives Discussion Part 2 - Preferred Plan	June	TBD	2022	TBD
11	Conservation, Air Quality, and Open Space	July	TBD	2022	TBD
12	Community Health and Wellness and Environmental Justice	August	TBD	2022	TBD
13	Presentation of Draft General Plan Elements	November	TBD	2022	TBD
14	Review of Draft General Plan Elements Round 1	January	TBD	2023	TBD
15	Review of Draft General Plan Elements Round 2	February	TBD	2023	TBD

# Public Comment Opportunity

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