

5. Priorities

- Priority #1 should be maintaining Santa Barbara's small-city ambiance and its qualities of life. Such a preservation agenda will serve the interests of the majority of our present and future residents, commuters, and visitors.
- Other important community priorities exist, such as traffic, an adequate level of affordable housing, and economic concerns. Hard choices will have to be made as to which priorities take precedence over, and are to be protected at the expense of, any other. To deny that many of the priorities compete, or believe that we can "have it all", is clearly a delusion.
- Measures intended to promote secondary priorities should be implemented only if (a) they promise benefits that substantially outweigh any potential negative impacts upon priority #1 (community preservation), (b) they are backed by substantial evidence of a high probability that they can attain their objectives, and (c) they represent the will of the majority of current residents.

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Conclusion

- **Santa Barbara does not have the resources to accommodate everyone who would like to live here.**
- **Top priority should be given to maintaining the small-city ambiance of Santa Barbara.**
- **Stability is the best policy to**
 - ✓ **Preserve our small-city heritage,**
 - ✓ **Protect our current quality of life, and**
 - ✓ **Secure our long-term sustainability.**
- **The character, charm, and charisma of Santa Barbara can't be replaced – let's keep them!**

Allied Neighborhoods Assn.

Allied Neighborhoods Association, an alliance of neighborhood associations, has been working for almost four decades to preserve and protect the City and its neighborhoods through conservation and good planning. Read more about the current General Plan Update at sb-allied.org/PlanSantaBarbara.html.



Attractive, low-density, public housing projects, such as the Castillo Cottages, maintain the small-city ambiance of Santa Barbara while providing needed housing.

Plan Santa Barbara: The Case for Stability



Three- and four-story projects such as Paseo Chapala violate the small-city ambiance of Santa Barbara while providing mostly up-scale luxury residences.

1. Community Vision

- Visions for Santa Barbara's future were surveyed by Allied Neighborhoods Association and the Citizens Planning Association and gauged from comments collected during City-sponsored workshops in the summer of 2007.
- While a variety of views were manifest, the desire to maintain Santa Barbara's small-city ambiance and its qualities of life was almost universally expressed.
- Growth and its impacts on traffic congestion, views, air quality, and other aspects of the environment continue to be the major concern of most residents.



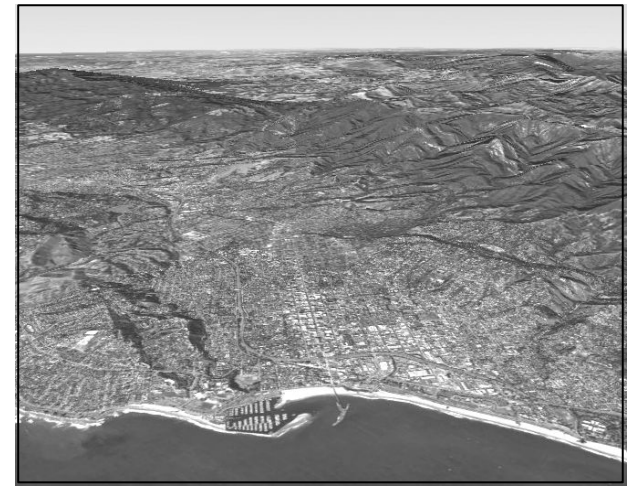
Traffic on Upper State Street is already becoming severely impacted.

2. Living Within Our Resources

- Santa Barbara's precious natural beauty and urban environment endure precariously, given our limited space, water, air basin, and other resources.
- Growth is the number one factor threatening the natural environment and the sustainability of communities.
- The Charter provision "Living Within Our Resources" will continue to be a mere platitude of limited practical utility until it is implemented with specific policies and code mandates.

3. Affordability

- Housing costs are inevitably higher in attractive communities such as Santa Barbara.
- Growth and increased densities tend to impose increased costs on a community without generating compensating revenues.
- Since Santa Barbara can't affordably house everybody, we must make sensible decisions as to the appropriate extent and limits of our efforts to do so.



GoogleEarth/NASA imagery shows Santa Barbara filling the narrow strip between the Pacific Ocean and rugged Los Padres Forest.

4. Stability is Possible

- Santa Barbara has been relatively stable for the last several decades of the 20th century, thereby protecting its historical, cultural, architectural, and environmental heritage.
- Other California cities have also taken tough stands against transformative growth. A prime example is Alameda's recent defense of its 1973 charter amendment limiting residential density.
- Stability does not mean stagnation. It does mean sustainable evolution and better utilization of the built environment: **better not bigger.**