



Cars Are Basic™

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Planning Commission.
City of Santa Barbara

General Plan Update Framework: -Draft Policy Preferences Revised - Nov. 2008

Chair and Board:

Cars Are Basic, Inc.™ (CAB™) is a transportation advocacy organization and has commented on the General Plan Update process over the past year (2008 three submitted comments).

Reviewing the "Draft Policy Preferences Revised November 2008" (DPR-Nov. 2008) this organization can only express its amazement at the tunneled vision of both Staff and this document. This is a polished version of the express intent, **announced last year and confirmed at the beginning of 2008, as to the outcome of the plan, ignoring any and all facts that would stop this predetermined process.**

The vast majority of citizens in Santa Barbara have clearly stated this is not the type of plan (a) desired or (b) participated in and objected to during public comment including the traffic circulation plan envisioned in this document. It is note worthy to point out the stated lofty goals of "medical epidemics" remediation through social planning, without referencing the last 30-40 years of transportation reality or citing the specific "studies" Staff and Council repeatedly refer to in this and previous reports/papers associated with the General Plan changes is fraudulent.

This organization directs you to a few areas in the Revised Draft Policy as examples of the problem and lack of foresight in the preparation of this document.

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Public Health

"A clear causal relationship has been established between the built environment and public health issues, especially in relation to epidemics such as **obesity, respiratory disease and diabetes**. Health professionals maintain that where we locate our housing, how we get from Point A to Point B, and what kind of access is available to open space and healthy food are key deterrents of such epidemics. Planning decisions need to acknowledge the link between the physical environment and public health, and include consideration of public health in preparing plans and project review."

CAB™ Comment:

As with this entire document Staff Paints With a Broad and Indiscriminate Brush. It would be interesting to see the reports by which public health professionals and the epidemiological methodology used to come to these conclusions. Most recent scientific reports are devastating to this cure-all approach (within the past 3 years). The DPR-Nov. 2008 report states **Santa Barbara is built out, which by definition means the access to open space is in fact limited.** It will be further limited by high density infills already favored by staff and the council. CAB membership includes Medical Doctors, Exercise Physiologists, and Personal Trainers. We acknowledged long before staff, the issues related to food intake including, high density caloric intake. This single issue overrides most attempts to solve obesity and related disease.

The most salient issue is compliance! Here are two examples of the problem:

(1) Cardiac transplant, cardiac arterial replacement, and heart attack victims were given every opportunity with fully paid (a) post event physical therapy and (b) either personal trainer or gym membership with cardiac care support. The results after a 5 year period was disappointing to say the least. **Patients, who experienced severe and debilitating pain and condition at onset of the disease, dropped out of these programs with only 10% of the participants still active at the end of the 5 years** (Am. College of Sports Medicine Nashville, TN meeting).

(2) Rand Corporation recently completed a 10 year contract / study for Los Angeles and presented the results at the Am. College of Sports Medicine meeting 2008. The results devastated the social service and "professional" proponents of this aspect of "Smart Growth." **After 10 years and \$10 Million Dollars spent on park facilities there was a decline of use, that continues to this day.** \$10 Million Taxpayer Dollars were spent on the following: Park physical upgrades including play areas, grass & landscaping, community meeting and activity buildings including fully outfitted and professionally staffed exercise facilities ~free or nominal fees~, and the program paid for increased security including surrounding neighborhood police presence.

Staff continues presenting utopian goals without presenting hard statistics of success over decades. Staff states severe potential implications of not designing the "built environment" with public health issues in the fore, including:

".. Obesity, respiratory disease, and diabetes will continue to affect an increasing proportion of the population."

".. Less opportunity will be provided for people to change their lifestyles in a healthier manner.

.. The community overall will suffer in decreases in productivity and quality of life. .. The cost of healthcare will continue to skyrocket."

CAB™ Comment:

They appear to have a ongoing, and continued lack of understanding of this



issue based upon available national statistics (epidemiology) and hard science. (e.g. asthma has risen in the past 15 years as air pollution has dramatically dropped.)

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"By 2020, the remaining increment of growth and redevelopment will have provided social, physical and spatial connections that result in a City where walk-ability and livability are the intrinsic characteristics of urban life. Land uses will have been oriented in such a manner that all local **services are accessible without the need for the automobile.**" (CAB emphasis)

"The City serves as a regional transportation hub with attractive, timely and functional linkages that preclude the need for the traditional automobile. **Four and six-lane streets and highways have evolved into connectivity corridors that share space for all modes of travel** with urban gardens and open space. The majority of parking lots have been replaced by car share facilities." (CAB emphasis)

CAB™ Comment:

The additional **cost to residents of this type of land use is substantial without a reasonable return to the community.** The loss of high volume sales centers, at centralized located shopping centers increases the cost to the customer. (1) The issues of small grocery stores being unable to provide a wide array of goods, including butcher shops, is a fine example. After W.W.II "supermarkets" attracted shoppers and the neighborhood butcher and grocery faded away because they are unable to compete in both variety and cost. (2) Atlanta, Georgia 30 year transportation experiment is another example of a failed regional transportation hub policy. Atlanta is currently undergoing an expensive and gut wrenching redo of their street system and transportation priority. As reported by the Santa Barbara City Council staffed investigation committee, Portland, OR is in the process of finding out 30 years of planning has been mainly a failure, again costing the taxpayer. Refer above to CAB™ comments about Los Angeles and the Rand Corp. report at the 2008 Am. College of Sports Medicine.

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"Support the amendment of speed limit restrictions to permit the wider use of electric vehicles."

CAB™ Comment:

Electric car manufacturers have addressed acceleration for the past 5 years. **The acceleration issue has been solved.** The new Prius has city street acceleration equal to average combustion engine acceleration. Only those drivers breaking the law with excessive speed are any different with acceleration over the average car driver. A high end performance all electric car called the Tesla, accelerates from 0 to 60 in 4.5 Seconds. This is an intentional non-issue, smoke screen used to obscure the truth.



Page 57**OBJECTIVES**

Objective

"C1: Public transit service and facilities, and miles of sidewalks, trails, bicycle paths and lanes have increased and/or been upgraded, and convenient links between the various modes are available.

Objective

C2: A 50/50 mode share between the single occupant automobile and all other modes of travel within the City is achieved by the year 2020.

Objective

C3: Traffic congestion has not increased or is less than the 2008 baseline study. "

POLICIES

"The draft framework policies for the Circulation Element comprise mainly minor revisions to existing policies. The proposed revisions are intended to further integration of circulation policies with the sustainability focus of new or revised framework policies in other elements, by giving greater emphasis to alternative modes of transportation and reassessing parking requirements to complement a people-oriented community."

CAB™ Comment:

Objectives in 12 years?! After 35+ years of policy and implementation, more than 90% of all travel is completed in private vehicles. Item C2 states. a goal of 40% reduction in auto use. History has seen auto use increase along with single passenger trips, and a decrease in bicycle and other alternatives. A City of Santa Barbara paid study determined -virtually all dollars spent in the Downtown shopping district is from customers that drive to the location. The City of Santa Barbara has set, and implemented anti car policies for this 35+ years. How do they come to this conclusion with this historical perspective?

The statement "comprise mainly minor revisions to existing policies" should instead read "minor revisions to existing **failed** policies."

Page 58, of the Policy preference Report, at item C8. **Once again Staff and Council is attempting to create by code a definition of a multi-lane street (one lane in each direction) as excess capacity.** The one lane would be converted to a dedicated bus lane or a bike lane creating massive city wide congestion. This prejudiced position is derived from the concept that intentional congestion of traffic patterns will force people to give up their cars regardless of the economic results, social outcomes, or destruction of personal choice.

Conclusion:

The General Plan Update Framework:-Draft Policy Preferences Revised -



Nov. 2008 is hypocritical, and lacking in sincerity of its supposed objectivity. The predetermination of this report can be traced directly back to anti car, anti personal choice pronouncements by Staff and certain Council members before the process was begun. The failure to produce "reports" often quoted but without statistical data or names, the failure to include the historical street accident & travel data (both federal and city), and the intentional misdirection of "neighborhood" meetings, petitions, and elections that went against the City of Santa Barbara policy direction is damning to say the least. This is not Camelot set in a imaginary book.

CAB™ urges the Planning Commission to reject this General Plan Update.

On behalf of the Board and Members,

Scott Wenz
President, CAB

