

From: [Dale Helvig](#)
To: [Chairman PC - Tom Morrissey](#); [Alderete, Eric](#); [Pham, Bao](#); [Calderon, Miguel](#); [Ramos, Isuri](#); [McLoughlin, Mark](#); [Woo, Alan](#); [eComment](#); [eComment](#)
Cc: [Ridge, Kristine](#); [Carvalho, Sonia R.](#); [Thai, Minh](#); [Zelaya Melicher, Fabiola](#); [Rudloff, Lisa](#); [McCann, Melanie](#)
Subject: 2021-11-08 Planning Commission - COMMENTS ON GENERAL PLAN UPDATE
Date: Monday, November 8, 2021 3:07:58 PM
Attachments: [2021-09-20 GP Comments - 06 Open Space Element.pdf](#)

Dale Helvig
2536 N. Valencia St. Santa Ana CA 92706
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November 8, 2021

Planning Commissioners
City of Santa Ana

Although a tremendous amount of effort has been spent on this project, I see the General Plan as a blueprint for development rather than a vision for the City of Santa Ana. The vision of the city to strive to maintain the parkland space is not met by this plan. With the buildout population increase of over 96,000 people, just to maintain the current deficient ratio of 1 acre per 1000 residents we need to have a vision of 192 of additional parkland space. **Notice the 2045 vision (this General Plan) has an increase in parkland space is ZERO acres.**

The introduction to the Open Space Element states:

“Open space is so important that its presence (or absence) can profoundly shape the physical, social, mental, and economic health and well-being of our communities.”

Let’s live by those words. The new General Plan should reflect the vision of the community and not read so much as a developer’s handbook. We deserve the “*Shared Vision*” for Santa Ana.

State Sen. Dave Min (D- Irvine) was quoted as saying^[1],

“Open space preservation is smart policy, which not only supports our sustainability efforts but also improves the quality of life for our residents and brings our community together.”

Irvine has the right idea and we can benefit if we copy them. Too much emphasis is being placed on the focus areas and not enough on the rest of the City.

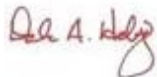
I just don't see how we can have a vision for development and have zero vision for any new park space. Rooftop areas are NOT public open space or parkland space that existing and future residents deserve. Don't let this happen. Reject the plan until it is balanced with residents' health and wellbeing requirements met.

I have attached a previous email I sent in September regarding the Open Space Element.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration. Stay safe, stay healthy.

Santa Ana's "Golden City Beyond: A Shared Vision" General Plan is a policy document that will guide the City's development and conservation for the next 25 years through 2045. Keep this in mind when you vote tonight.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads "Dale A. Helvig". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Dale A Helvig
Resident, Santa Ana

Dale Helvig

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September 20, 2021

Minh Thai, Executive Director, Planning
City of Santa Ana
20 Civic Center Plaza
PO Box 1988
Santa Ana CA 92702

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KEEP THIS IS MIND

Subject: COMMENTS ON GENERAL PLAN UPDATE – OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

The purpose of the Open Space Element is to identify and preserve open space areas that provide value to the community and enrich the quality of life. [page OS-1].

GOAL OS-1: Parks, Open Space, and Recreation

ITEM 1

POLICY OS-1.3 PARK STANDARD

If you compare the previous General Plan and even the draft that was circulated in 2020, you will see that the vision for the next 25 years has been diluted. We are moving backwards by saying "**Strive** to attain a minimum of two acres of park land per 1,000 residents in the City" versus the old language of "**Achieve** a minimum park standard of two acres per 1,000 residents in the city." The 25-year plan will not be effective if we start off with weak language.

ITEM 2

POLICY OS-1.4 PARK DISTRIBUTION and POLICY OS-1.5 PARK AND OPEN SPACE TYPES

These two policies have the same exact text. This appears to be a block and copy error and it should be corrected.

ITEM 3

POLICY OS-1.8 LAND ACQUISITION AND EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION

Proposed policy statement reads in part: "Explore options for the acquisition of available lands...". I suggest the city add language so the existing parks, open space, greenways and trail corridors areas are preserved. The city can't move forward if they don't protect these already limited resources. While reference to "No-net-loss of parkland" can be found in the implementation it also be a part of the policy. **Concerning Willowick, where will the city acquire land to ensure no-net-loss of parkland should it be sold?**

ITEM 4

POLICY OS-1.11 FUNDING SOURCES

*“Set aside park funding to have monies on hand **to acquire and develop parkland when opportunities arise** and to leverage grant options.”* The city should take a proactive step and identify areas within the city that can be earmarked for parkland areas. Saying this will be covered by the Park Master Plan is not the same as having something in the General Plan. One can have vast amounts of funds but it means nothing if we allow commercial and residential development to buy up all available space.

ITEM 5

Table OS-1. OPEN SPACE RESOURCES [page OS-8]

The Note at the bottom of the table states: *“**The list of parks and acreage figures are accurate as of August 2020. All figures are subject to rounding.**”* I recommend you take another look at the numbers. All areas are shown with two significant digits yet the subtotals are shown with either one or two significant digits. Check your math, the total parks/rec facilities acreage adds up to 409.65 acres versus the 409.2 acres shown, not much of a difference but every bit is important for a park deficient city.

ITEM 6

Figure OS-2 WALKING DISTANCE TO PARK FACILITIES

The key at the bottom of the page says: *“Walking Distance From Existing or Proposed Park”*. **Where are the proposed parks?** Additionally, the area depicting the ¼ mile around parks is inaccurate [look at Portola Park and Santiago Park].

ITEM 7

GOAL OS-2: Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Opportunities

POLICY OS-2.4 URBAN AGRICULTURE AND HEALTHY FOODS

*“**Expand urban agriculture opportunities in private development and public spaces.**”* Language could be added to establish community gardens, or other public benefit use, on vacant/abandoned city property.

ITEM 8

GOAL OS-3: Park Maintenance, Stewardship, and Sustainability

POLICY OS-3.8 NATURALIZING THE SANTA ANA RIVER

Request this be expanded to include the Santiago Creek.

ITEM 9

Table OS-2. RELATED GENERAL PLAN POLICIES [page OS-15]

TYPO. “Goal OS-1, for example, is supported not only by the policies listed in this element (OS-1.1 through OS-3.6)”. Should be “...through OS-**3.8**)”

TYPO. Open Space Goal OS-1 is not accurate, it has the words found in the 2020 draft versus what is listed in the 2021 draft. It should say. *“**Provide an integrated system of accessible parks, recreation facilities, trails, and open space to serve the City of Santa Ana.**”*

ITEM 10

Table OS-3. OPEN SPACE ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

There should be at least a one-to-one correlation between a policy and an implementation action. This should be clearly identified in Table OS-3. **Example:** POLICY OS-1.6 PARK ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY says it will “Create a Safe Routes to Parks program that establishes and enhances access to existing and new parks and recreation facilities through safe walking, bicycling, and transit routes.” This has nothing to do with implementation item 1.6. which is listed as “**Development fees.** Evaluate the fees required by the City’s Residential Development Fee Ordinance and adjust them to better reflect current costs and needs. Update requirements regarding where fees are spent. **I consider this a fatal flaw in the process that needs to be fixed in all elements.**”

ITEM 11

Table OS-2. RELATED GENERAL PLAN POLICIES

OS-3: Park Maintenance, Stewardship, and Sustainability lacks any input/link to the Land Use Element.

ITEM 12

OS-1.4 Implementation Action [page OS-16]

Is Parks, Recreation and Community Services Agency really the correct agency to make this happen? Action 1.4 states: *“No-net-loss of parkland. Establish land use provisions in the Municipal Code that prevent a net loss of public parkland in the city. Require at least a 1:1 replacement if there is any loss of public parkland due to public or private development.”*

ITEM 13

OS-1.7 Implementation Action [page OS-17]

“...Consider allowing developers a reduction in on-site open space by giving credits for park development or the provision of private park land. Incentivize the creation of public parks that exceed City requirements, especially within park deficient and environmental justice areas.

This is written for developer’s consideration rather than the residents of Santa Ana.

GENERAL COMMENTS

ITEM 14

1. Why were areas north of the I-5 Freeway excluded from the environmental justice consideration? Homes next to the freeway in the communities of Mabury Park, Grand Sunrise and Park Santiago are inedited with black particulate and noise as much as other areas that are impacted by the freeway.

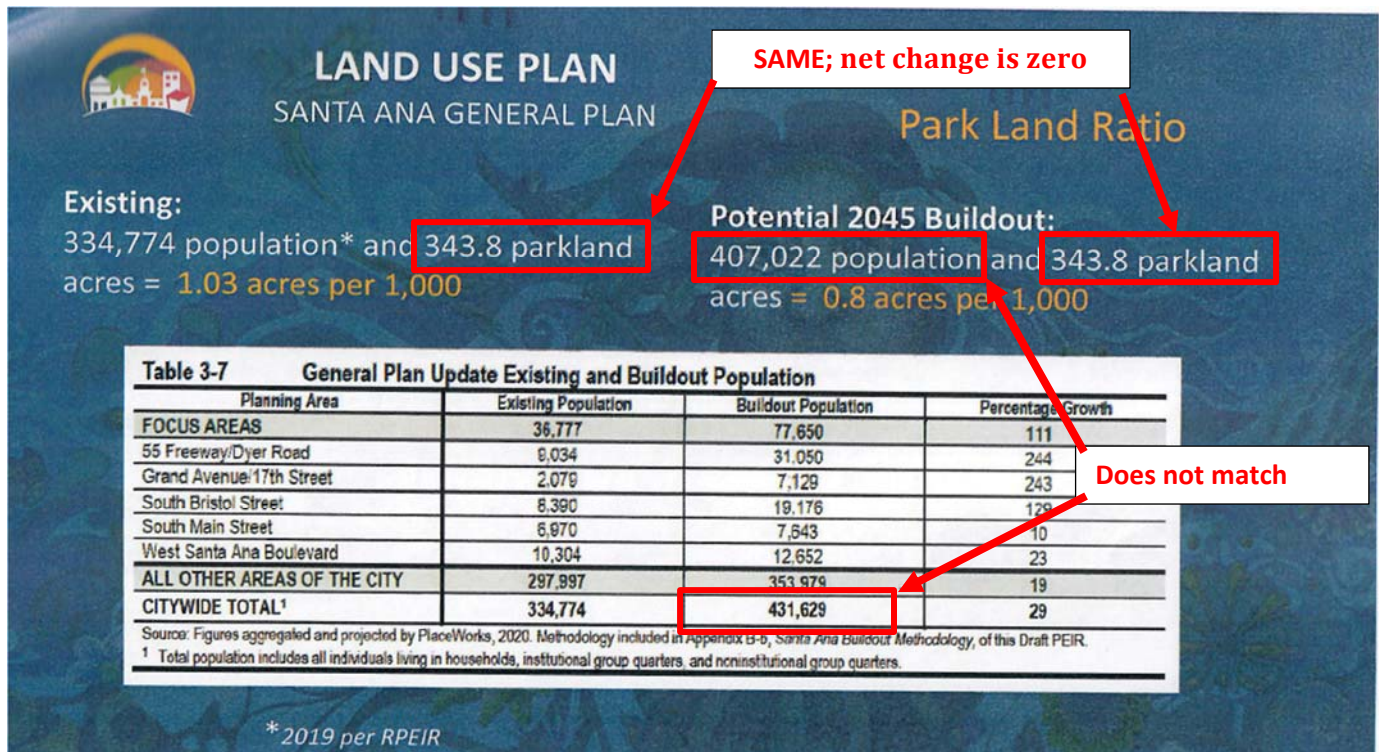
ITEM 15

2. Having words like consider, strive and in policy statements leaves a lot of wiggle room in trying to meet the objectives.

ITEM 16

3. A small sampling of these changes revealed that errors exist between the PEIR and the General Plan Update. For me personally, I don’t know which document to believe. This must be corrected so the Planning Commission, the public and eventually the City Council understand what is correct:

In summary, I see don't see much meat in General Plan. Although a tremendous amount of effort has been spent on this project, I see the General Plan as a blueprint for development rather than a vision for the City of Santa Ana. The draft vision of the city to strive to maintain the parkland space is not even met. With the buildout population increase of over 96,000 people, just to maintain the current deficient ratio of 1 acre per 1000 residents we need to have a vision of 192 of additional parkland space. **Notice the 2045 vision for increased parkland space is ZERO.**



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¹ SUNDAY, AUGUST 15, 2021, Times OC

Dale Helvig

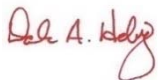
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Respectfully,



Dale A Helvig

Resident, Santa Ana

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Santa Ana City Council

Santa Ana Planning Commissioners