

Carson2040

GPAC Meeting #1 Notes – September 27, 2017

ATTENDEES

GPAC Members

- Berwyn Salazar
- Charles Nelson
- Diane Thomas
- Cedric Hicks Sr.
- Gil Smith
- Jesus Alex Cainglet
- Jovy Morales
- Katie Pandolfo
- Pilar Hoyos
- Ramona Pimentel
- Vera Robles DeWitt
- Weston LaBar

City of Carson Staff

- Saied Naaseh, Planning Manager
- Richard Rojas, Senior Planner
- McKina Alexander, Associate Planner
- Manraj Bhatia, Planning Intern

Consulting Team

- Rajeev Bhatia, Principal, Dyett & Bhatia
- Elizabeth Blanton, Associate, Dyett & Bhatia
- Meghan McNulty, Planner, Dyett & Bhatia

1. WELCOME

The Senior Planner introduced the GPAC to City Staff and Consulting Team. Dyett & Bhatia provided an overview of the meeting's agenda.

2. GPAC MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS

GPAC members gave quick introductions describing themselves, their affiliation with Carson, and why they are interested in serving on the GPAC. The City staff thanked GPAC members for their participation.

The City will send out a poll for the meeting time. Third Mondays at 4:00 or 5:00 p.m. may be a good time.

3. PROJECT PURPOSE AND PROCESS

- What is the General Plan?
 - Long-range plan
 - Constitution for local government
 - Requirements:
 - Comprehensive
 - Internally consistent
 - Vertically consistent implementation
 - Why update the General Plan?
 - There are pressing issues the City must contend with, including desire for new housing, environmental quality, and expansion pressures from the logistics industry.
 - The General Plan applies to the City of Carson as well as parts of unincorporated Los Angeles County, called the "Sphere of Influence."
- General Plan Elements/Topics
 - Land use (required)
 - Circulation (required)
 - Conservation (required)
 - Open Space (required)
 - Noise (required)
 - Safety (required)
 - Economic development

- Sustainability
- Public health
- Other topics may be added per the City’s request.
- Process
 - The General Plan Update process will take roughly two years.
 - The Zoning Code will be updated as part of this process.
- Community Outreach
 - Public outreach will include workshops, pop-up meetings, tribal outreach, online engagement, stakeholder interviews, and newsletters.
- The GPAC was given the opportunity to ask clarifying questions.
 - A GPAC member suggested the consultant team have an Arts and Culture Element in this General Plan.
 - City staff will send GPAC members a copy of the existing General Plan, per GPAC request.
 - A GPAC member asked a clarifying question concerning role of the GPAC. GPAC will provide big-picture direction to City staff and the consultant team, but will not wordsmith policies.

4. GPAC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Role of the GPAC
 - GPAC will provide recommendations at key stages, review projects, and serve as project ambassadors.
 - GPAC members are encouraged to remain a City-wide perspective and be respectful of other GPAC members’ ideas.
- Brown Act
 - GPAC meetings are posted and open to the public.
 - GPAC members are not allowed to correspond/discuss General Plan topics outside of a public meeting.
 - A quorum constitutes 9 people.
- GPAC Meeting Schedule
 - There will be nine meetings in total.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments.

6. VISIONING/KEY ISSUES BRAINSTORMING

Summarized in Three Parts:

- Post-It Activity
- Dot Activity
- Overall Vision

Post It Activity

GPAC members were asked to write responses to the following questions on post-it notes.

Question 1: What types of uses (retail, residential, office, industrial, etc.) would you like to see develop in Carson over the next 20 years and where?

- Residential
- Transit oriented
 - Mixed use w/ office/commercial
- Office
- Commercial
 - Technology Sector
 - Green Tech
- Balance community
- Improve Image
- Community involvement
- Costco
- Amusement park/basketball/baseball
- New uses + where
- Retail and entertainment
- Retail
- Main street
- Carson/Avalon
- Retail
- Mall
- Residential
- Vacant lots
- Hotels
- Figueroa + Torrance Blvd.
- Logistics -> Planned industrial areas and freight corridors
- Mixed use developments
- Main arteries
 - Carson

- Main
- Office
- Retail
- Retail
- Restaurants
- Offices

Question 2: What types of housing do you think will be needed in Carson in 20 years?

- Apartments/Townhomes
 - Student housing
 - Workforce housing
- Senior (housing)
- PUD
- Condos
- Affordable housing but low density
- Housing
- Housing
- Mixed-use
- Single-family
- Single family homes
- Multifamily condos
- Housing
 - Development of quality housing
 - Less congestion
 - Housing density
- Single family
- Condos
- Gated community
- Family housing
- Mixed use
- Single family
- Multifamily
- Housing types
- Affordable
- Multifamily
- High end
- Neutral

Question 3: What transportation improvements would you like to see (consider walking, biking, transit, shuttle services, and driving)?

- Transit

- Community bus
- Shuttle services
- All transportation
- Public transportation both bus + light rail
- Improved sidewalk + bikeways
- Reduce congestion
- Address conflicts between residents and industrial uses
- Balance is key
- Shuttle services
- Driving
- More mobility
- Biking
- Transit
- Walking
- More transit
- More protected biking lanes
- Shuttle services
- Transit
- Public transportation
- Transportation
- Improvements
- Shuttle services
- Driving
- Walking/biking shuttle services
- Public transit -> Rail
- Walkable + Bikeable Residential
- Truck Routes

Question 4: Is there a need for more public open space in the Planning Area? If so, what type (plaza, park, community center, pool, trail, etc.)?

- Yes, maintain and improve open space issues
- Plaza with entertainment
- Tail
- Not sure
- Need assessment how much do we have now
- Yes -> recreational activities & walking/nature trails
- Amusement Park
- Plaza
- Retail stores
- Yes!
- Open public places

- Farmer's markets
- Gathering places
- Think NYC
- Note
- 12 full service parks in a city of 20 sq miles
- Need for new public open space – what type?
- No “new” improve existing
- Open spaces
 - Less
- It should be county/state designating such
- Plaza?

Question 5: Please identify 2 economic development topics that will be most important to address over the next 20 years?

- Financial stability
- Business develop + retention
- Affordable housing
- Local business development + retention
- Development of vacant sites
- Affordable house family
- City of Carson financial stability
- Carson financial stability
- Local business development + retention
- Local business development & retention
- Tourism
- Financial stability
- Local business development & retention
- Green tech development
- Local business growth
- 2 economic development
 - Local business development & retention
 - Remove blighted conditions incompatible uses
- Key to community viability
- Service
- Access opportunities
- Relationships with surrounding areas
- Logistics facilities and truck routes
- Affordable/accessible housing (high, medium, low)

Question 6: Please identify 2 community health/sustainability topics that will be most important to address over the next 20 years?

- 2 community health/sustainability to address
 - Access to healthy food (grocery store)
 - Ground contaminated poison fields
- Access to medical services
- Air quality
- Brown field redevelopment
- Energy reliability and infrastructure
- Brown fields and redevelopment
- Ground contamination
- Air quality
- Air quality
- Access to medical services
- Water quality
- Ground contaminated + brown fields
- Community welfare
- Access to services
- Recognize population needs
- Trade offs
- Water quality
- Air quality
- Access to healthy food
- Access to schools to park

Question 7: Are there other ideas, inspirations, or concerns that you would like to share?

- Concern -> creation of incompatible uses
- Ideas, inspirations, concerns
- City's reputation perception
- City's fiscal stability
- Cooperation/coordination with neighboring jurisdictions
- Resiliency
- Make the whole city clean and beautiful
- Crime safety
- Future developments
- Community reputation
- Integrity
- Involvement
- Emergency management
- Deteriorating infrastructure maint. + repair

- City government & fiscal stability
- Political stability
- Addressing the diversity of our city, then economic development

GPAC members discussed overall responses:

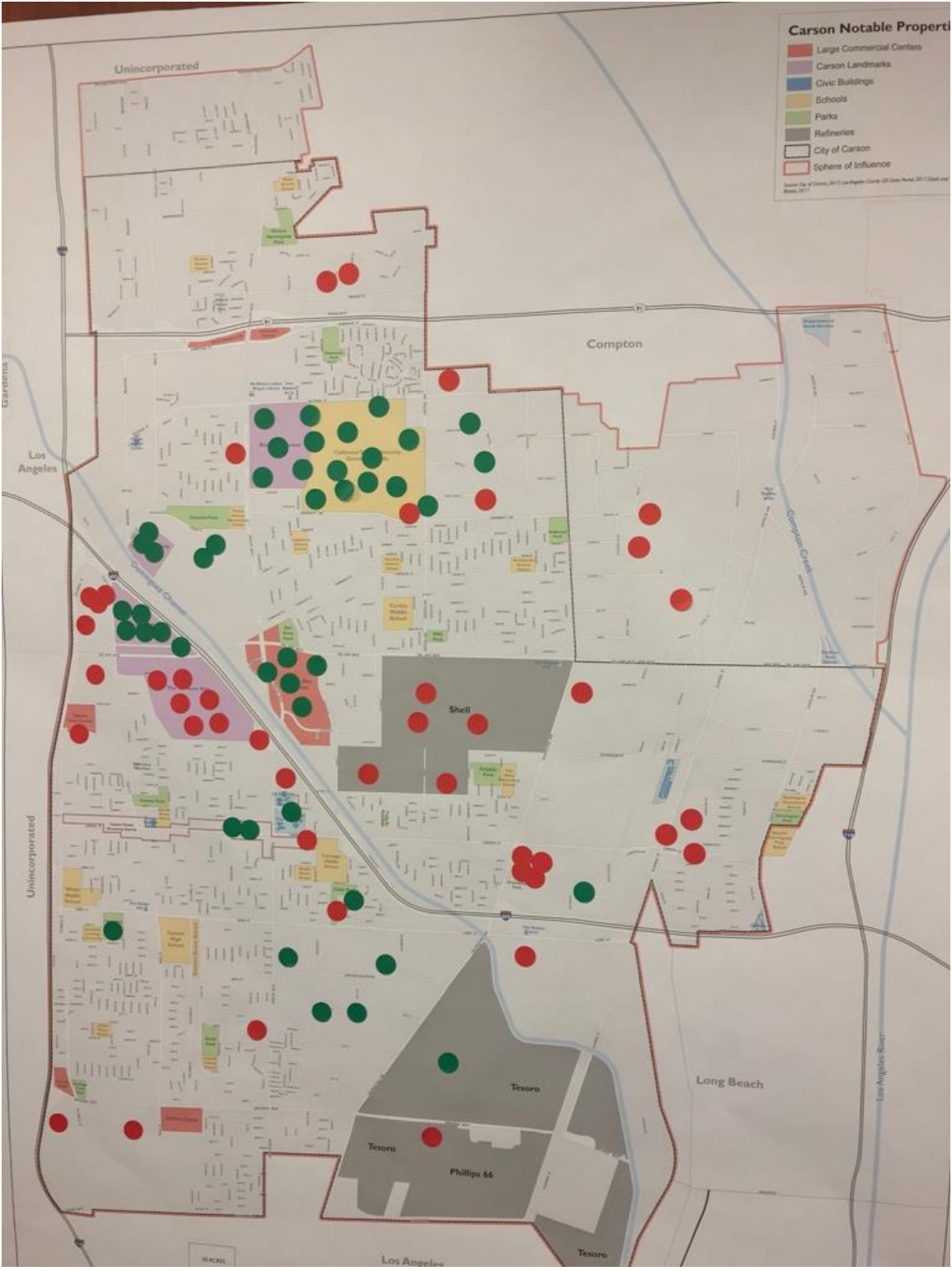
- GPAC members had varied responses to the questions.
- GPAC members would like to see discussion of diversity going forward.
- Surprised to see “amusement parks” pop up.
- Most GPAC members not surprised by responses.

Dot activity (photo of map is on next page)

- GPAC members were asked to place dots on a map of the Planning Area in the appropriate areas:
 - Green dots: favorite places/community assets.
 - Red dots: opportunity sites for change.
- Discussion of exercise:
 - The area around E. Gardena Boulevard is a forgotten area.
 - Main Street is a gateway to the city, but it gives a bad impression to people getting off the highway.
 - There were a lot of dots near S. Wilmington Avenue/220th Street. There is a blighted parcel in this area.
 - Where should new housing go?
 - Mixed-use housing should go near the university.
 - There are 60 acres of unused space on the south and east sides of the university.
 - High rises should go on Figueroa Street and Torrance Boulevard.
 - A lot of red dots near Scottsdale (Avalon/Sepulveda)
 - Contaminated sites are a problem.
 - Turn low-density housing into high-density housing.
 - Mobile home sites can be converted into dense uses.

DYETT & BHATIA

Urban and Regional Planners



Overall Vision + Priorities

- GPAC members discussed their overall vision for the Planning Area. Bullets below reflect individual GPAC members vision statements and elaborations on their visions:
 - Carson should grow and change with the times. There are younger generations living here due to new developments along Carson Street. Carson should continue in this direction.
 - Strategic, piece-by-piece improvement. Carson has a good foundation, but the City needs to take a fresh look at different areas of the community. Carson Street is a good example of strategic improvements.
 - Create opportunities in areas that will have the greatest impact and remove blighted uses. The City created a Vision Plan a few years ago that contained a discussion targeting certain areas for change. There are still incompatible and blighted uses in the city that need to be addressed. For instance, the Porsche Experience is adjacent to blighted uses. While there are changes happening that create a good image of the city, there are leftover blighted areas that create a negative impression.
 - Vision and energy from Carson Street needs to be infused throughout the whole city. Carson Street is beautiful, but these changes need to go all the way to the east part of town. The south part of town is also forgotten.
 - Community should continue to change, but the city does not need additional parks. Carson has 12 full service parks and does not need any more.
 - Support existing jobs base; ensure zoning does not create incompatible uses; and continue the work, live, play environment of Carson Street in other parts of the city. The existing jobs base—including industrial, retail, and refinery jobs—should be supported. City should improve brownfields for business and industrial uses. The density and atmosphere of Carson Street should be continued to other parts of the community
 - Embrace the best technology and transportation to move the city forward. Wifi should be available at every bus stop.
 - Put Carson on the map globally. Carson came close to this with the NFL stadium. Down the road, the community can do this by having a basketball team. Expand Carson Street throughout the whole community.
 - Bridge from generation to generation as Carson starts to change. Financial stability, economic development, and emergency management are important. The City needs to take everyone into consideration, and make sure planning decisions benefit residents, and not just visitors from across the region.
 - The city cannot move ahead it fully understands its past. In order to become a city, the residents of the community worked together with the business and industrial community to create a balance. This balance is extremely important. The City inherited these industrial and residential conditions that affect development and the environment. The image, reputation and the way in which

the City attracts others to the community is important, as are management and leadership. Trade-offs and compromise are important in order to achieve this balance. Involving the citizens of the community, no matter their ethnic background, is crucial.

- What are some of the key issues and challenges that the General Plan needs to address? Key issues and challenges are underlined, and elaboration follows.
 - Compromise. The GPAC will have to make compromises and set priorities.
 - Government fiscal resources. There are many frozen positions within the City due to budget challenges. If an emergency were to occur, the City is not prepared.
 - People who do not want change can stand in the way of development.
 - Logistics moratorium. This is a challenge for the City in terms of its economic stability and tax revenue, because the moratorium is sending a bad message to businesses. Companies are now looking for locations to do business other than Carson.
 - Housing affordability. The City needs to sustain affordable rental housing for middle-income families. Carson needs to stay affordable and make sure people are not homeless.
 - Transportation. Metro is not investing in Carson at the moment. The City should tap into Metro resources because doing so will create jobs and additional transportation options.
 - Business environment. There are too many taxes, which make Carson a challenging environment to do business. Industrial taxes are going to County park funds, but none of this is going back to Carson.
 - Maintain existing parks.
 - Infrastructure/green energy. City infrastructure is again. There is a huge need for solar and other alternative energy sources. The City should utilize green energy in planning.
 - Capitalizing on Carson's role in the regional economy. Carson is the 9th or 10th richest city in the County in terms of assessed valuation. This wealth should benefit the entire community. Carson needs to capitalize on what distinguishes the city regionally in order to attract investment. Its biggest asset is its regional location.

- What should the General Plans' key priority be (pick top option)?
 - Infrastructure
 - Affordable housing
 - Transportation (2)
 - Government financial stability (2)
 - Bring people together

- Economic development/jobs
- Sustainability (financially sustainable city, environmental, sustainable infrastructure)
- Other questions or concerns.
 - There is a huge need for housing in the South Bay, but there is community opposition to housing. This will be a big issue to contend with going forward.
 - Gentrification and traffic are also concerns associated with more housing.
 - Central/University parcel owned by Carson Companies. They have not been able to develop there due to neighborhood opposition. This is a good example of the type of opposition projects in Carson encounter.
 - Image/perception/trust
 - The City needs to build this in order to be seen by investors as a place to do business.
 - The City needs to improve its communication with businesses and residents.

7. NEXT STEPS AND ADJOURN

There will be a community workshop on October 23rd at the Community Center.

City will send meeting notes and scanned copies of the map and post-its to the GPAC members.