

# Pacifica Community Interviews Summary Report



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# Pacifica Community Interviews

## Summary Report

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# 1 Introduction

The City of Pacifica is updating its General Plan, the comprehensive local policy document that guides development, public investment, and resource conservation over the next 20 years. The initial stage of the General Plan update process involves gathering information about the city from a wide variety of sources. To supplement the input from City staff, elected officials, and workshops for the general public, interviews were conducted with members of the community representing a broad range of local interests: public agencies, citizen committees, business and property owners, environmental organizations, and advocacy groups.

## 1.1 INTERVIEW PROCESS

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Interviews were held over a two-day period on April 8th and 9th, 2009; some additional interviews were conducted on April 15th and 16<sup>th</sup>. Participants were interviewed individually or in groups of two to four, in sessions generally lasting between 30 minutes and one hour. A total of 35 stakeholders participated. Participants were provided with a brief summary of the General Plan update project and were asked three basic questions, which served as starting points for conversation. The questions asked interviewees to identify what they thought were (1) Pacifica's greatest assets and successes over the last 20 years; (2) important achievements or improvements for the next 20 years; and (3) issues and challenges facing Pacifica now and in coming years. These questions form the organizational structure of this report. However, the interview questions served as "conversation starters," and many participants spoke at length on issues specific to their areas of expertise. A few more interviews remain to be scheduled. The interview questions and a list of participants are included as an Appendix.

## 2 Pacifica's Assets and Successes

Interviewees were asked to identify what they considered to be Pacifica's greatest assets and its greatest successes in recent years. There was considerable agreement on these questions, though actions cited by some as successes were not mentioned across the board, due to the wide range of perspectives.

### 2.1 PACIFICA'S ASSETS

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Almost everyone we spoke with identified Pacifica's natural setting – its coastal location and its open space – first among its assets. The setting was appreciated for its scenic quality, for the recreational opportunities it affords, and for the economic potential it carries. Certain coastal amenities – Linda Mar Beach, the Pier and promenade - were singled out as important assets from both a recreational and economic point of view. Some described an intangible quality: a feeling of inspiration or tranquility that is renewed with each return from “over the hill.” This leads to the second major asset described by most interviewees: Pacifica's proximity to San Francisco, to the airport, and to jobs-rich areas in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. Such proximity was understood to be both convenient and to have implications for real estate value. And though Pacifica is only a short drive from downtown San Francisco, it retains a “small-town feel;” this combination was seen as a great asset. Finally, Pacifica's natural beauty and location were seen as a magnet for a certain group of residents, for whom conservation of the environment is an important value. This in itself was regarded as an asset.

### 2.2 RECENT SUCCESSES

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Many of the successes identified by interviewees had to do with preservation of natural areas and open space in Pacifica. Specifically, the acquisition of Mori Point and its transfer to the Federal government as part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) was cited, as were efforts currently underway to preserve land on Cattle Hill and Pedro Point. Protection of open space through development regulation and review also was recognized, described by one participant as “Pacifica's unwillingness to allow inappropriate development.” Examples included the preservation of a majority of a large Milagra Ridge development parcel as open space, and the current effort to restrict “mega-homes.” A parallel record of success in stopping or limiting the impact of highway projects, including the proposed 380 freeway, was also mentioned in the interviews.

Investments in public spaces and infrastructure were also lauded. Specifically, many spoke of the successful improvement and clean-up program for Linda Mar Beach, which involved land acquisition, improved visitor facilities and restored vegetation. Progress on the Coastal Trail was also commented on. More than one person recognized the new Wastewater Treatment Plant and its solar array as a very important but easily overlooked project.

Community interview participants also spoke very positively of a number of community-driven initiatives which were impressive both for the commitment behind them and the results they achieved. These efforts included the new playground at Frontierland Park, the learning garden at Linda Mar School, and the restoration of San Pedro Creek.

## 3 Achievements to Work Toward

Those we interviewed were full of ideas for achievements that would have important positive impacts in Pacifica over the coming decades. There were a few issues where opinions differed, perhaps most notably the question of whether Pacifica could or should support more residential development. Some sites were the subject of differing opinions about whether or in what form development should proceed. But despite the broad range of viewpoints represented by interviewees, there was considerable agreement about many areas of achievement, differing only in details or emphasis. These areas are described in the following paragraphs, organized by theme.

### 3.1 FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

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Many of the persons we interviewed in Pacifica directly addressed the city's poor fiscal condition as a serious problem. From city and school district personnel, open space advocates, and business owners we heard that the city needs a "viable economic structure" or a "stronger revenue base" to maintain facilities and services.

### 3.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Generally, interviewees focused on increasing economic development and activity as the means to reaching fiscal stability in Pacifica. Many people pondered what types of businesses would succeed in Pacifica, and under what circumstances. They also considered which types would be most helpful in expanding the city's economic base while also reinforcing its identity or quality of life.

#### NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Pacifica was characterized as a "bedroom community," and there was general agreement that the town would be helped by a greater balance of commercial activity. Retail and visitor services received the most attention. Some simply expressed the need for Pacifica to have more retail activity: to capture a larger share of the city's retail spending, to improve quality of life with more local shopping opportunities, to create more shopping near where people live and reduce automobile trips.

Some focused on the location and built form of commercial development, and tended to believe that Pacifica needs more concentrated retail. One participant felt Pacifica may have too much commercial space spread too thinly. Others commented on the potential benefits of redeveloping certain existing commercial areas at a higher density, with a mixture of uses. The benefits to both commercial viability and quality of life of achieving a "critical mass" at certain locations was noted by several participants. (Discussions of shopping center redevelopment, the potential development of a downtown, and specific locations, follow later in this report.)

Some believed that while Pacifica may not be able to realistically support more general local retail, there are untapped niches that could be exploited in Pacifica. Others felt that the only retail category that would reasonably succeed here and expand the city's economic base is

destination retail. This category might include an outlet mall, an antiques district, or economic activities related to Pacifica's natural setting, cultural life, or history.

### **MAKING PACIFICA A TOURIST DESTINATION**

There was a widely shared sense among people we interviewed that Pacifica would benefit from attracting more tourists, and from enticing more of the ones who already drive through to stop and spend money. Tourism would serve to "backfill" local retail demand and support additional commercial development; more profoundly, it could become a part of a more high-profile identity for Pacifica.

Many people focused on enhancing and capitalizing on the tourist experience of Pacifica's natural setting and amenities – the beaches, ridges, and trails. More hotels, especially right along the coast, were seen as potentially viable, and palatable if their design was sensitively attuned to the landscape, embodied "green" design, and featured a world-class conference center. Most attention was paid to creating a coordinated overall package of environmental amenities, described in the following section. A common theme emerged: Pacifica has the potential to develop an "ecotourism" niche which is both well-suited to the town's values, and can improve its vitality.

Some participants talked of the potential for a similar approach to Pacifica's historic resources. We were told that a restored Ocean Shore Railroad car could be housed alongside the Little Brown Church, creating a place where the town's early history would be embodied. The experience of other sites, like the Sanchez Adobe and the Portola Discovery Site, could be brought together through guides, signage, and promotion. Sharp Park Golf Course, designed by the architect of the Pebble Beach course, has potential to be a tourist attraction in a way it isn't now.

By all accounts, an important component of any effort to make Pacifica a destination would be to use marketing, guides, and similar means of raising the city's profile. Pacifica needs to "get the word out" about what it has to offer, including its stunning environmental assets and its cultural attractions.

## **3.3 QUALITY OF LIFE**

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### **CREATING A BETTER TOWN WITH MORE THINGS TO DO**

To some, Pacifica would become a more desirable destination by improving its qualities as a town. Following in the footsteps of places like Half Moon Bay and Capitola, which also have scenic natural settings, Pacifica would have public gathering spaces and concentrated areas with unique shopping, dining, and entertainment. Boosting entertainment and dining in Pacifica would be good for tourism and for local quality of life, as well as the City's fiscal condition. The need for more shopping and entertainment for youth was given particular attention.

### **AGING IN PLACE**

Some people noted that the population in Pacifica was aging, yet there was a shortage of flexible housing options, and few areas where seniors could walk or take transit easily to shopping areas. Making the town work well for an aging population emerged as a potential achievement.

### **3.4 ENVIRONMENTAL AMENITIES**

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#### **SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING**

While ongoing progress in adding interpretive signs at Pacifica State Beach was noted, several people suggested that a coordinated program of signs and kiosks could help to present Pacifica's coastline in a unified way, and would help to create a strong identity for Pacifica. Interpretive signage for environmental and cultural sites should also be incorporated, along with consistent signage for the trail system.

Signs for drivers were also discussed. Signage along Highway 1 promoting Pacifica to motorists was recommended, and the designation of Palmetto Avenue as Business Route 1 was suggested.

Comprehensive guides and maps for the city – as mentioned above – would help round out a coordinated wayfinding program.

#### **COMPLETE TRAIL SYSTEM**

Pacifica has extensive trails in the GGNRA lands on Sweeney and Milagra Ridges and in San Pedro Valley State Park, a segment of the regional Bay Area Ridge Trail, and a Coastal Trail that has grown incrementally. But there is only weak connectivity between trails, poor signage, and little in the way of formal guidance. Interviewees also identified a need for more hiker amenities, from bathrooms and parking to the potential for food kiosks, cafes, and huts for overnight camping. The creation of a new trail on the current right-of-way of Highway 1 on San Pedro Mountain will add a spectacular feature to Pacifica's open space network, and many agreed that, with a bit more development and coordination, the city's trail system could become a great asset.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FACILITIES**

Certain interpretive attractions were seen as potential centerpieces for an ecotourism economy: an "Ocean Discovery Center," and a visitor's center for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. People stated that GGNRA plans to build a visitors' center on Montara Mountain south of Pacifica, but that there may be a chance for Pacifica to make a strong case and change the location to Pacifica. Potential locations mentioned included the Pedro Point area, the quarry site, and the Sharp Park clubhouse. There was also discussion of an idea to augment GGNRA trails in and around Pacifica with hikers' huts, cafes and beer gardens, and educational facilities. The recent initiative to create an environmental learning garden at Linda Mar School attests to the community's support for such facilities.

#### **OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION**

People spoke of the recent public acquisition of Mori Point and transfer to the GGNRA as a success, and look hopefully toward similar outcomes on Cattle Hill and San Pedro Mountain, where processes are underway. These pieces will help connect the high ridges with the ocean at several points along Pacifica's coastline, creating value for wildlife as corridors, and for people as a scenic resource and a potentially interconnected trail system. Some additional land, most notably the former quarry, are within GGNRA's legislative boundaries, and most participants felt that a portion of that site would likely need to be protected. The Pacifica Land Trust and

the Golden Gate Parks Conservancy are likely to play important roles in open space preservation in Pacifica.

### **3.5 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND PRACTICES**

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#### **ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION**

Two potential environmental restoration projects were mentioned by several people interviewed. First, there was support for restoring Calera Creek for fish passage and as a natural corridor, connecting the improvements adjacent to the new Wastewater Treatment Plant with the stream's higher elevations.

Another participant pointed to the bluffs along Esplanade Avenue and northward as a place where the City could provide trails and access to the ocean while helping to stabilize the environment.

#### **PROTECTION FROM ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS**

Some interviewees emphasized that the Seismic and Safety Element of the General Plan would need thorough updating. In particular, the adequacy of the circulation system in an emergency, and the possibility of flooding and landslide risk in the case of a serious earthquake were noted. Others pointed out that the impacts of potential sea level rise would be an important area of analysis and subject of planning.

#### **GREEN PRACTICES**

Interviewees recognized that the environmental values of Pacifica make it an obvious place for "green" development practices to be required or encouraged with incentives. Berkeley's successful green building program was cited as an example. Indeed, Pacifica is well on its way, with the new Wastewater Treatment Plant and its solar array and waste oil recycling facility, and the initiative to create infrastructure for recycled water. Some made the connection between innovative green development practices and an ecotourism economic niche, saying that the General Plan should help to reinforce a coherent overarching identity.

### **3.6 TRAFFIC, TRANSIT, AND WALKABILITY**

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#### **FIXING THE HIGHWAY 1 BOTTLENECK**

Many reported that Highway 1 between Rockaway Beach Avenue (Fassler) and Reina del Mar Avenue is a chronic traffic bottleneck during peak periods, and that fixing this would be a necessary achievement. Caltrans and the San Mateo Transportation Authority are evaluating the environmental impact of potential solutions. Persons we spoke with seemed inclined to look for "non-invasive" approaches, like staggering school hours and encouraging carpooling at Vallemar School, as well as alternative designs, including a roundabout or grade-separated interchange. There was broad support for fixing the problem.

#### **BETTER TRANSIT**

Many people we spoke with acknowledged that Pacifica is a highly auto-dependent city, with a great majority of its residents traveling to and from work and most other day-to-day activities

by car. Most people interviewed want to see change in this area, but recognize that it is difficult to justify better transit service in Pacifica, due to its decentralized pattern, its low density, and its location in the region. They would like Samtrans to at least adjust its express bus schedule to better match the needs of potential riders, and hope for more effective service connecting destinations within Pacifica. Some suggested a private jitney service to provide in-town circulation. More transportation options for teenagers and seniors were of particular concern.

## **WALKABILITY**

While some talked about the goal of tying together the city's network of trails, others noted the need for people – and especially children and adolescents – to be able to walk from one neighborhood to another. An improved bike/pedestrian trail along Highway 1 would be an important element.

## **ROAD CONDITION**

The poor condition of roads, in the Pedro Point and East Sharp Park neighborhoods especially, was identified by several people as an obvious and important maintenance priority.

### **3.7 HARMONIZING LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION**

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#### **TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT**

A number of interviewees came to the conclusion that better transit service might be justified if it went hand-in-hand with pockets of higher-density development. While those who brought this up tended to support it, they wondered whether higher density could be accepted by Pacificans overall, especially if it were to include housing. Some people pointed out that mixed-use development near transit would be a good form of “green development.”

#### **JOBS/HOUSING BALANCE**

The traffic discussion, meanwhile, led at least one person we interviewed to note the benefits of pursuing more office development in Pacifica. In addition to boosting the City's tax base, offices would improve the city's jobs/housing balance, and take cars off the limited routes into and out of Pacifica during commuting hours.

### **3.8 CITY FACILITIES AND CITY CENTER**

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#### **NEW RECREATION FACILITIES**

Some interview participants believe that Pacifica is lacking adequate recreation facilities, particularly athletic fields, and particularly in the northern part of the city. The upper part of Sharp Park was seen as a potential location for playing fields, if a partnership could be worked out with the City and County of San Francisco. An indoor/outdoor recreation center was also identified as a desirable amenity. The provision of better recreation facilities was also discussed in the context of providing more things to do for young people. And while an off-leash dog park was noted as something that was contentious in the community, it was favored by individuals who brought it up.

## **NEW CIVIC FACILITIES**

Some interview participants made a point of the poor condition of City Hall and the city's administrative offices, and expressed support for a new "civic center" in which city offices would be brought together. The civic center could also include other uses, and two possibilities were referred to in particular: a new library, and a performing arts center. Others suggested that existing cultural facilities and players be clustered, and become part of a viable entertainment district.

## **CREATING A DOWNTOWN**

Many of those we spoke with felt that Pacifica's lack of a true "downtown" was a real shortcoming, and that the creation of a downtown would be an important achievement. They look at other towns in San Mateo County and the region with popular and attractive downtown areas, and want that for Pacifica. A downtown was discussed in the context of new commercial and mixed-use development, in the context of a new civic center, and in the context of specific sites. Some preferred the quarry site, others Palmetto Avenue; some felt there was room for two centers with different identities.

## **CITY IDENTITY**

Participants focused on the way a downtown could provide a common gathering place for Pacifica, and the way it could help to give the city a unified identity. Several persons feel that Pacifica is a set of discrete neighborhoods that lack cohesion. Some made the connection between physical fragmentation and lack of common progress, saying "we need to get out of the five-valley mentality."

## **3.9 REDEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION**

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### **UPGRADING OR REDEVELOPING SHOPPING AREAS**

To several community members we spoke with, more commercial development (discussed earlier) would involve both the partial redevelopment of the quarry site (discussed below) and the physical transformation of existing shopping areas. To some, what is needed are renovations, new signs, and some new stores, to improve appearance and increase retail vitality. Others look toward a more complete transformation. Manor and Linda Mar shopping centers were both mentioned as possible candidates for pedestrian-oriented redevelopment, with a mixture of uses and transit access.

Adding vitality to the "main street" district on Palmetto Avenue was also named as a priority by many of those we spoke with.

### **IMPROVING GATEWAYS**

A number of community members were bothered by the service commercial and industrial activities along northern Palmetto Avenue, and the adjacent mobile home park, and felt that these areas should be redeveloped. To some, redevelopment should occur to bring the land, with its spectacular oceanfront location, into its "highest and best use" and increase revenues to the City. Others were concerned that the current uses, highly visible from Highway 1 on the approach into the city, create a poor gateway and detract from the city's image.

### **3.10 RESOLVING APPROACH TO KEY SITES**

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#### **OLD WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT**

The old Wastewater Treatment Plant occupies a relatively large site bordering the retail district along Palmetto Avenue on the east, and the beach promenade on the west. Many interviewees identified this site as a critical development opportunity, but one with a disappointing history. We were told that a public planning exercise some years ago resulted in consensus that the city should seek to sell the site for the development of a hotel/conference center. A developer was selected, but did not complete the project. The City has explored using the site for civic facilities. The site is perceived to be prime for commercial development, but its actual value and best use are not clear. Ideas included a boutique hotel, conference facilities, wedding chapels, housing, a library, and city hall, or a combination of various of these elements. Whatever is developed here should take advantage of the beachfront location, strengthen the connection between the beach promenade and Palmetto Avenue, and provide an anchor for the Palmetto retail district.

#### **SHARP PARK GOLF COURSE**

Sharp Park comprises 420 acres in the center of Pacifica; about one third of it is occupied by a public golf course, and much of the rest is undeveloped coastal foothills. The park is owned and maintained by the City and County of San Francisco's Recreation and Parks Department, which was given the property as a bequest on the condition that it be used for public recreation.

The golf course is currently the subject of a threatened lawsuit that would allege taking of the endangered San Francisco garter snake and the red-legged frog. The golf course's pump system has recently been repaired, and it is hoped this will solve the flooding problem at the root of the golf course's habitat issues, but there is also a movement to close the golf course and restore it as natural habitat.

Several members of the community indicated that they would like to see the City of Pacifica somehow gain control over Sharp Park; at the very least, they would like San Francisco to make its intentions known.

In general, people were supportive of preserving the golf course. Some persons felt that the golf course had the potential to be more profitable, and to be a more powerful attraction in Pacifica, if it were privately operated. Others saw the potential for GGNRA to use the park and golf course as the central gathering point for its trail system on the Peninsula. The clubhouse was envisioned as a visitors' center, or a conference center. Others were interested in the possibility of developing playing fields in the eastern part of the park, or possibly on the site of the golf course.

#### **QUARRY SITE**

No site was discussed more in our interviews than the former Rockaway Quarry, an undeveloped tract of land in the geographic center of Pacifica, between Highway 1 and the coast. The quarry is part of Pacifica's Redevelopment Area, and development there is currently governed by the existing Specific Plan (in this case also a Redevelopment Plan) prepared in

1986. The Plan requires that any proposal that includes residential development must go to a public vote, and two development proposals have been voted down in the past decade.

Several people we spoke with suggested that the quarry was the best site for a new downtown to be created. Its centrality, its adjacency to the Rockaway Beach district, and the fact that it doesn't "belong" to any existing neighborhood help to make this case. We also heard repeated variations on the idea that the quarry could support an extension of the Rockaway Beach district – creating a "critical mass" of visitor-serving retail, restaurants, and so on, in a mixed-use, village-like setting – balanced by a civic use, a visitor's or interpretive center, and/or a conference center/hotel. Some believe that a limited amount of housing could be supported by the public, but that it should not be the dominant use. In all cases, it was expected that some proportion of the site will be preserved as open space or habitat. A few believe that the site should not be developed at all. The potential for ownership by GGNRA was discussed; it was thought that GGNRA ownership wouldn't necessarily exclude commercial uses such as a hotel/conference center on the site.

### **3.11 REGULATORY REFORM AND HEALTHY POLITICS**

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#### **REGULATORY REFORM**

Certain ordinances – the Hillside Preservation ordinance and the Density Transfer ordinance – were identified as having been difficult to apply or having been misapplied. These and any other such rules should be clarified. Certain parking regulations were brought up as being inappropriate and in need of re-thinking. Land use designations were questioned for a few locations, notably the industrial and service commercial zoning on northern Palmetto Avenue; commercial zoning on Gypsy Hill; and agricultural zoning on Linda Mar Boulevard.

#### **WORKING TOGETHER**

We heard again and again that Pacifica has entrenched political factions which have hardened over time. Heated conflicts arise over small issues, seemingly unrelated to the sources of difference. Some felt it was imperative for people in Pacifica to learn to work together more constructively.

#### **MAKING PACIFICA ATTRACTIVE FOR QUALITY INVESTMENT**

It was generally agreed that development regulations and conflict-ridden review processes have had the effect of "chilling" private investment in Pacifica. The prime example was the requirement for a public vote on residential use at the quarry site. While some would count it as a success that developers have steered clear of Pacifica, more might say that regulations and processes should be better tailored to attract the kind of development Pacifica wants. One interviewee wanted Pacifica to draw "progressive, forward-looking development," and to have regulations that set the bar high but welcomed those who wanted to bring worthy projects. Others we spoke felt it was important for the City to improve its reputation among the development community in general.

## 4 Issues and Challenges

We asked participants to identify what they thought were the main issues and challenges Pacifica will face over the next 20 years. Not surprisingly, most of the responses were the reverse of the desired achievements discussed above. This report will not go into detail about challenges that have been adequately covered as potential areas of achievement. The “challenges” question did tend to amplify certain issues. The following section briefly covers issues roughly in order of the frequency they came up.

### 4.1 POOR FISCAL HEALTH

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Many of those we interviewed identified Pacifica’s poor tax base as a serious challenge. Some worried about the City’s ability to pay for basic services like roads, sewers and city offices, and saw this failing infrastructure as a major issue in itself. Others wondered how the City could pay for valued amenities like trails and signage. Often they brought up the fiscal problem after talking about improvements they’d like to see Pacifica make – adding new recreation or civic facilities, for example.

### 4.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

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#### POLITICAL CONFLICT AND DEVELOPMENT REPUTATION

Many people lamented the state of conflict that has divided Pacificans for “generations.” Pacificans were likened to “the Hatfields and McCoys,” fighting not only over the fundamental balance between development and environmental conservation, but over any and every issue – most currently, whether to create off-leash areas for dogs. Political conflict has played a major role in prolonging, and in some cases blocking, development projects. We were told of developers who were no longer willing to do anything in Pacifica that would require them to go before the Planning Commission.

#### COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Nearly everyone we interviewed agreed that the City needed more commercial development to bring in tax revenue, and they also recognized the difficulties Pacifica faces in trying to expand its commercial tax base. Several people noted that Pacifica is simply not well-positioned for major commercial development. It has low population density, is at the edge of the region, and is in the shadow of the highly developed and successful retail market in Daly City. Slow lease-up rates, high vacancies, and low rents in existing shopping centers are additional deterrents to major retailers, and evidence that there is not excess demand for everyday retail products.

Many people saw more hope in a tourism-based economic development strategy for Pacifica, and saw the key challenge to be leveraging Pacifica’s coastal and open space resources for cash. People wondered how Pacifica could attract more through travelers to stop; how to get those who do stop and enjoy the free public resources to spend money; and finally, how to capitalize on assets without compromising quality of life.

### **4.3 APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT OF LIMITED AVAILABLE SITES**

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Pacifica, with its extensive public land holdings and the environmental sensitivity of the land that remains undeveloped, offers very few good development sites. Certain key sites were brought up repeatedly: the quarry site, the old Wastewater Treatment Plant, and Sharp Park. All have been and are expected to continue to be subjects of heated debate, with unique issues pertaining to each site. At the old Wastewater Treatment Plant, the community hopes to see revenue-generating commercial development, but this has not been forthcoming. Sharp Park generates strong feelings but its future is fundamentally out of Pacifica's control. And the quarry exemplifies the tension between habitat and open space preservation and development.

### **4.4 TRAFFIC AND TRANSIT**

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Most who brought up the traffic bottleneck on Highway 1 between Reina del Mar and Fassler Avenue did not see an obvious solution, and saw this as a persistent challenge for some time to come. Many people believed that the current level of transit service in Pacifica did not create a good enough alternative to travel by car, and recognized that it will be a challenge to get better transit service, considering Pacifica's low density and edge location.

### **4.5 OTHER ISSUES**

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#### **ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS**

Some of those we interviewed were conscious of the particular risks posed to Pacifica by natural hazards, and singled out the potential for sea level rise as something the city is not prepared for.

#### **LACK OF ACTIVITIES**

Some community interview participants felt that creating a richer set of things to do, especially for youth, was an important issue for Pacifica to tackle. While the great wealth of public open space provides for a range of outdoor activities, entertainment and shopping are lacking, as are adequate athletic facilities. Filling this gap is complicated by Pacifica's topography, and by the difficulty of coming into good shared-use agreements with the school districts and with San Francisco's Recreation and Parks Department, which manages Sharp Park.

#### **LACK OF A CENTER**

Finally, it was felt that Pacifica lacks a central core. This issue has implications for commercial revenue, for tourist attraction, for adequate public facilities, and perhaps most importantly, for Pacifica's sense of identity and common purpose.

## Appendix A: Interview Materials

<b>PACIFICA GENERAL Plan and Local Coastal Plan: Community Interviews – April 8th And 9th 2009</b>
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### **PURPOSE**

The City of Pacifica is starting to prepare an update to its General Plan and Local Coastal Plan. The purpose of the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan Update project is to create a comprehensive vision and policy framework that will guide the City's development and enhancement over the next several decades. The Plan will address major issues such as: the character of new development, business attraction, coastal access, and fiscal stability of the City. It will build upon the foundation of the existing General Plan, Local Coastal Access Plan, and other City plans and projects.

As part of initial information gathering for this process, we are interviewing community members – individuals of knowledge, influence, and investment in the area – to gain insight into their priorities, desires, and issues of concern. Your role is to be an information resource and provide observations and suggestions. You will also be notified about future meetings and the release of draft documents.

Below is a list of general interview questions. However, we plan to keep the interview informal, asking follow-up questions and inviting you to share any opinions or comments relevant to the Plan update. We will be preparing an overall summary memo about the stakeholder interviews, but no quotes or names will be used, and no specific comments will be attributed to any individual.

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. What are the major assets of Pacifica, which the City should preserve and build upon for the next 20 years? Give specific examples of neighborhoods, parks, shopping areas, public facilities, etc.
2. What types of major achievements and improvements would you like to see the City accomplish over the next 20 years? Some possible categories include:
  - Community facilities
  - Design character
  - City fiscal stability
  - New shops and restaurants
3. What are the main issues and challenges that Pacifica will face over the next 20 years? Which of these do you think should be top priorities for the General Plan update, and why?

## **TRANSPORTATION QUESTIONS**

1. Please tell us about any studies or analysis that is relevant to transportation in Pacifica. Do you know about any planned transportation improvements in San Francisco or San Mateo County that would affect Pacifica?
2. What are the major transportation issues facing Pacifica and the surrounding areas within San Francisco and San Mateo Counties over the next twenty years?
3. What should be the priorities for transportation improvements within Pacifica? Transportation is defined broadly to include auto, carpool, shuttles, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and other modes of travel.

## **FINANCE QUESTIONS**

1. How would you describe the overall fiscal health of Pacifica? Talk about the total budget, total expenses, and total revenues. What is the basic breakdown of revenue sources for the City? How has it changed over the past 5-10 years?
2. What are the biggest financial issues facing Pacifica in the future? Has there been any evaluation of how the downturn in housing prices will affect City revenues in future years?
3. What are the major service needs that the City has trouble meeting? For example - fire/police staffing, roadway maintenance, parks and rec programming?
4. What are the City Council's priorities in the budget? What types of funding requests come from the City Council to meet their priorities?
5. What strategies should the City use to improve its financial health?

## **Appendix B: List of Participants**

### **City Council**

Julie Lancelle, *Mayor*

Sue Digre, *Mayor Pro Tem*

TBD, *City Council*

### **Planning Commission**

BJ Nathanson, *Chair, Planning Commission*

Thomas Clifford, *Vice Chair, Planning Commission*

### **Parks, Beaches and Recreation Commission**

Michael Brown, *Chair, Parks, Beaches and Recreation Commission*

Bruce Banco, *Chair Pro Tem, Parks, Beaches and Recreation Commission*

### **Environmental Committees and Task Forces**

Samuel Casillas, *Co-Chair, GGNRA Liaison Committee*

Paul Jones, *Co-Chair, GGNRA Liaison Committee*

Charles Evans, *Chair, Open Space Committee*

JoAnne Arnos, *Co-Chair, Open Space Committee*

Richard Campbell, *Vice Chair, Green Building Task Force*

Remi Tan, *Vice Chair, Green Building Task Force*

### **Business Owners and Groups**

Jeff Greathouse, *Gorilla BBQ*

Don Eagleston, *President, Pacifica Chamber of Commerce*

Vasu Narayanan, *Owner, Foodtown*

### **Development and Real Estate Professionals**

Brian Grey, *Grey Appraisal Associated*

Steve Thomas, *Thomas Pacifica LLC*

### **Community Organizations**

Bob Pilgrim, *Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter*

Beverly Kingsbury, *POOCH (dog rights advocacy group)*

Tim Duff, *Pacifica Beach Coalition*

Kathleen Manning, *Pacifica Historical Society*

Nancy Hall, *Pacificans for Sustainable Development*

### **Other Community Leaders**

Dan Murphy, *Resident*

Todd Bray, *Resident*

Clorinda Campagna, *Property Owner*

### **Public Agencies**

Michael Crilly, *Superintendent, Jefferson Union High School District*

Susan Vickrey, *Superintendent, Pacifica School District*

Sean Sweeney, *Golf Program Director, San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department*

Joseph Hurley, *Program Director, San Mateo County Transportation Authority*

Kevin O'Connell, *Director, North Coast County Water District*

TBD, *Golden Gate National Recreation Area*

### **City Staff**

Stephen Rhodes, *City Manager, City of Pacifica*

Ann Ritzma, *Finance Director, City of Pacifica*

Sandra McClellan, *Assistant Finance Director, City of Pacifica*

Van Ocampo, *Public Works Director, City of Pacifica*