

Planning and Zoning Commission Briefing
Albany 2035
General Plan Update

March 27, 2013

Work Session Overview

- Purpose and legal requirements for the General Plan
- Summary of work program and schedule
- Overview of the existing Albany General Plan
- Commissioner discussion and comments
- Public forum

General Plan Basics

- Required since 1937
- Expresses City's policy on land use
- "Comprehensive" =
 - covers entire city
 - covers all topics related to physical development
- "Long-range" (15-25 years)
- Includes narrative ("elements") and diagrams (maps)
- Subject to CEQA

Legal Requirements

A legally sufficient general plan must:

- Be up to date
- Be internally consistent
- Be consistent with State policy
- Be readable and accessible to the public
- Be realistic and implementable
- Meet the criteria statutorily required by State law
- Be adopted following proper protocol, including CEQA review
- Be followed as needed by zoning changes for consistency

Plan Elements

Mandatory Elements

- Land Use
- Circulation
- Housing
- Open Space
- Conservation
- Safety
- Noise

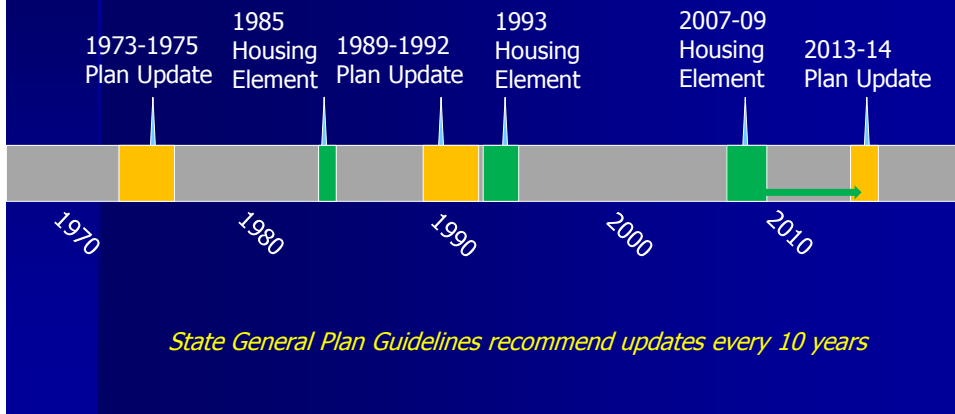
Optional Elements (examples)

- Community Services and Facilities
- Parks and Recreation
- Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Historic Preservation
- Community Design

General Plan Basics

- Goal
 - “A range of transportation choices for Albany residents.”
- Policy
 - “Maintain a connected system of bike routes and lanes that make it possible to travel around Albany without a private automobile.”
- Action
 - “Provide additional bike racks at City Hall by 2015.”

Albany General Plan History



Why Update the Plan?

- Existing Plan is now 20+ years old
- Does not reflect recent city plans, studies, programs
- Does not reflect new legal mandates and requirements
- Does not reflect new issues or changing philosophies since 1992
- Many of the action programs have been completed
- Document itself is not "user friendly"--lacks compelling graphics and has a dated quality

Overview of Work Scope

1. Project Start-Up
2. Community Participation and Outreach
3. Policy Audit
4. Collection and Analysis of Baseline Data
5. Study Sessions on Policy Issues
6. Preparation of Draft Plan
7. Preparation of 2014-2022 Housing Element
8. Environmental Review
9. Plan Adoption

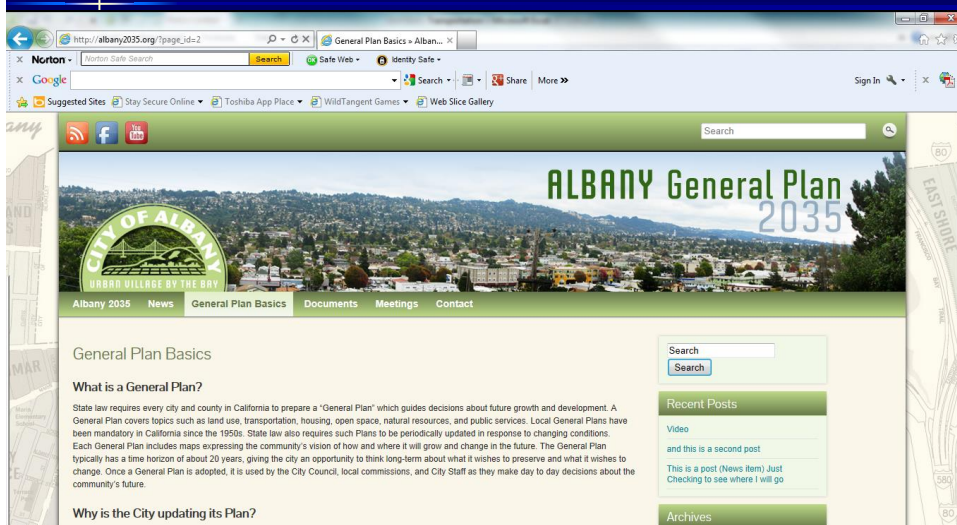
Existing Plans to Incorporate

- Voices to Vision
- 2009 Housing Element
- Active Transportation Plan
- Public Arts Master Plan (2010)
- Albany Hill Creekside Master Plan
- Parks Master Plan (2004)
- Climate Action Plan (2009)
- Residential Design Guidelines
- San Pablo Av Vision Plan (1997)
- Eastshore State Park Plan
- Complete Streets documents
- Plans for UC Berkeley landholdings

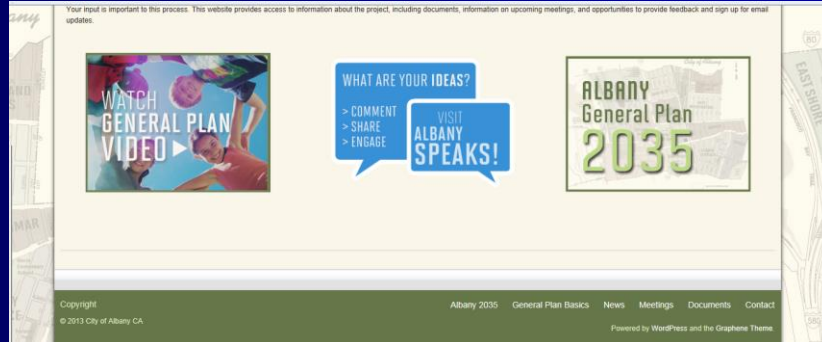
Engaging the Community

- Planning/ Zoning Commission Study Sessions
- City Council Briefings
- Study Sessions with other Commissions
- General Plan “display” for special events
- Press releases and media outreach
- Outreach to established organizations and neighborhood groups
- Project website and feedback links

Engaging the Community: www.albany2035.org



Engaging the Community: www.albany2035.org



Proposed Plan Structure

Current Structure

- Introduction
- Summary
- Land Use
- Circulation
- Housing
- Open Space, Recreation, and Conservation
- Community Health and Safety
- Implementation

Proposed Structure

- Introduction
- **Framework**
- Land Use
- Transportation
- *Housing (summary)*
- Recreation and Open Space
- Conservation/ Sustainability
- Environmental Hazards
- **Community Services and Facilities**
- **Shoreline**
- Implementation

General Plan Environmental Impact Report

- Evaluates impact of General Plan 20-year “buildout” on roads, environment, services, aesthetics, etc.
- Focuses on land use map changes
- Includes setting, impacts, mitigation measures
- Considers alternatives to the proposed Plan, including “no project”
- General Plan is designed to be “self-mitigating”

Typical EIR Topics

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biologic Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gases
- Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology
- Land Use
- Noise
- Population/ Housing
- Public Services/Rec
- Transportation
- Utilities

The Existing Plan

- Introduction
- Plan Summary
- Five Elements
- Implementation
- References and Glossary
- EIR
- Technical Appendices

1. Land Use
2. Circulation
3. Housing
4. Conservation, Recreation, and Open Space
5. Community Health and Safety

Plan Summary

- Recap of major “policy features”
 - Community Character and Housing
 - Protection of the Natural Environment
 - Concern for Public Health and Safety
 - Circulation
- Relationship to Local Agency Plans
- Summary of Goals, Policies, and Programs

Land Use Element Highlights

- Color-coded map identifies allowable uses and development densities on all properties in the city
- Provides foundation for zoning
 - Low Density Single Family
 - Medium Density Multi-Family
 - High Density Multi-Family
 - Planned Residential/Commercial
 - Albany Hill Planned Residential
 - San Pablo Avenue General Commercial
 - Solano Avenue Community Commercial
 - Light Industrial
 - Public/Quasi-Public
 - Private Open Space
 - Public Open Space

Land Use Element Highlights

Provides policy directives to:

- Maintain city's residential character
- Encourage and upgrade San Pablo Ave
- Restrict conversions along Kains and Adams
- Maintain and promote Solano Ave
- Protect neighborhoods from commercial impacts
- Increase industrial vitality
- Ensure compatible uses on UC land
- Maintain educational system and public services
- Conserve physical characteristics of the city

Circulation Element Highlights

- Defines street classifications and design standards
- Documents existing (1992) conditions for buses, bikes, and pedestrians—including trails
- Addresses parking (circa 1992)
- Includes traffic projections (for 2010)

Circulation Element Highlights

Provides policy directives to:

- Preserve residential areas near arterials
- Protect residential areas from excessive parking demands
- Maintain adequate circulation and improve Solano and San Pablo parking
- Support public transit
- Ensure that I-80 reconstruction meets City goals
- Improve bike routes and paths

Housing Element Highlights

- Profile of housing characteristics in Albany
- Population and employment trends
- Special needs
- Fair share
- Assessment of potential housing constraints
- Development and redevelopment opportunities
- Energy conservation
- Progress Evaluation
- Goals, policies, and programs

Conservation, Recreation, and Open Space Element Highlights

- Geology
- Hydrology and water quality
- Climate and air quality
- Vegetation and wildlife
- Archaeology
- Creeks
- Waterfront
- Albany Hill
- Parks and recreation

Conservation, Recreation, and Open Space Element Highlights

Provides policy directives to:

- Enhance natural features of creeks
- Increase tree planting
- Preserve the crest of Albany Hill
- Preserve the waterfront as place of scenic beauty
- Develop as much parkland as possible
- Balance private and public uses at waterfront
- Increase child care and senior services
- Provide for public art

Community Health and Safety Element Highlights

- Flooding
- Seismic
- Fire
- Emergency Preparedness
- Hazardous Materials
- Crime Prevention
- Noise

Community Health and Safety Element Highlights

Provides policy directives to:

- Minimize flood, seismic, and geologic hazards
- Strengthen emergency preparedness programs
- Reduce exposure to hazardous materials
- Prevent exposure to high noise levels and BART noise

Implementation

Provides directives to:

- Amend zoning ordinance
- Review subdivision ordinance
- Modify development review procedures
- Special studies, including new specific plans, parking, etc
- Park master plan update
- Capital improvements
- Other programs
- Monitor the General Plan

Adding It All Up

	Goals	Policies	Actions
Land Use	9	34	0
Circulation	6	26	0
Housing	4	12	18
Cons/OS	10	33	0
Safety/Noise	5	21	0
Implementation	--	--	35
TOTAL	34	126	53

Background Documents: Technical Reports

- A. Final EIR
- B. Seismic Safety
- C. Noise
- D. California Archaeological Inventory
- E. Land Use Inventory
- F. Public Workshop Summaries
- G. Policy Direction Report
- H. Resolution 92-87
- I. Resolution 92-88

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Questions and Comments