

**COMMUNITY ISSUES**

**I. THE PROCESS**



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This section of *The Calabasas General Plan: Community Issues* report explains the techniques used to generate interest in the General Plan program and to solicit public input at the beginning of the program. For each of the items listed below, a brief description of the activities is presented.

- General Plan Program Press Information
- Targeted Interviews
- The Visioning Charette
- Citywide Workshop
- Community Attitude Survey
- General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) Meetings
- Research Survey

The results of these exercises have been summarized and are included in the appropriate sections of this report. Detailed documentation of the results of public participation exercises is presented in the appendices of this report.

A. GENERAL PLAN PROGRAM PRESS INFORMATION

To promote community involvement in the City of Calabasas' General Plan program, a press information kit was prepared and distributed to representatives of the local media. The package begins with historical information on the City and a description of previous planning efforts. It then describes the purpose of a general plan: explaining what a general plan is, the role of a general plan, and the contents of a general plan. The description of the General Plan is followed by a discussion of the General Plan process: preparing a plan and adopting one. The community participation program is then described. The press kit concludes with a discussion of the organization of the General Plan documents.

A copy of the press information package along with the distribution list of local media is included in Appendix A of this report.

B. TARGETED INTERVIEWS

At the onset of the public participation program, interviews were conducted with individual City Council members. The purpose of these one-on-one sessions was to allow for an uninhibited discussion of local issues. The questions in these interviews addressed the following major topics: community character, growth and development, homes, public services, infrastructure and public facilities, circulation, and jobs and shopping. These questions were also used to prepare a community issues questionnaire which was distributed to the General Plan Advisory Committee.

Findings from the interviews with City Council members and the questionnaires completed by the General Plan Advisory Committee are summarized and presented in Appendix B of this report.

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**C. THE VISIONING CHARETTE**

Within the City of Calabasas, many issues relate to how residents visualize their community. To help residents describe how they see their City now, and what they would like to see in the future, a visioning charette was held. Participants included City Council members, Planning Commissioners, members of the General Plan Advisory Committee and residents appointed by the City Council from the community at-large. During the Visioning Charette a series of exercises exploring community design issues were held. In addition, participants were asked to complete a community design survey.

A summary of the Visioning Charette, an explanation of the Visioning Charette exercises, and the results of the community design survey are presented in Appendix C of this report.

**D. CITYWIDE WORKSHOP**

Throughout the General Plan program, a series of citywide workshops will be held. The purpose of these workshops is to solicit input from the community at-large at key points during the Calabasas General Plan program.

The first workshop was designed to explain the General Plan process and to work with members of the community to identify and prioritize issues currently facing the City. To do this, a technique called issues identification was used. The first part of the process was a "brainstorming" session. Participants were asked to come up descriptions of their community: what they liked about it; what they didn't like about it; what they would like to change and what they would like to preserve. Ideas were proposed, without making any critical assessments. Each new idea was recorded on a large tablet as it was proposed. When one sheet was full, it was hung on the wall and another sheet started. When the ideas were exhausted, each participant was given five adhesive dots and asked to place them next to the issues that they felt were the most important.

The results of the first Citywide Workshop are included in Appendix D.

**E. COMMUNITY ATTITUDE SURVEY**

To gather information from a broad cross-section of Calabasas residents on issues that will affect the General Plan, a community attitude survey was conducted. The survey was a mail-out/mail-back questionnaire and was sent to approximately 1,200 randomly selected residents. The surveys were mailed out late September of 1992. Responses were due October 23, 1992. The results of the community attitude survey are presented in Appendix E.

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**F. GENERAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GPAC) MEETINGS**

The General Plan Advisory Committee is a group of Calabasas residents appointed to work on the General Plan. Their job includes identification and resolution of issues; formulation of a vision of Calabasas' future; review and selection of alternative strategies for the City's future; and review and selection of General Plan policies and programs. They will provide feedback on a regular basis through each stage of the General Plan development process. During their first three sessions, the Committee worked on identifying issues, prioritizing issues, and developing a vision of Calabasas.

**General Plan Advisory Committee Meeting No. 1** -- At the October 12, 1992 General Plan Advisory Committee meeting, the group met to define the issues that have shaped their community. To facilitate the process, a wall-size timeline was unveiled which illustrated community milestone dates. As part of the evening's discussion, committee members were asked to identify critical events that have affected their community. The events were then recorded on the timeline.

The results of this exercise present a clear picture of the events that led to the City's incorporation and the history of the issues the community currently faces.

**General Plan Advisory Committee Meeting No. 2** -- At the meeting on Monday, October 26th, the General Plan Advisory Committee reviewed significant characteristics about their community and looked at major issues facing the City. These characteristics and issues were grouped into three general topics: Community Development and Design, Municipal Facilities and Services, and Environmental Management. Participants were assigned to one of the three topics. They then reviewed the items in the context of their general topic and prioritized them using the following classifications: Past; Current, Critical; Current, Moderate; Future, Critical; and Future, Moderate.

In addition, participants were asked to select three issues that they felt were important and to write a brief summary of each issue selected. The summaries describe what individual committee members believe is the ideal resolution of the issue and any constraints to achieving that ideal.

**General Plan Advisory Committee Meeting No. 3** -- During the third General Plan Advisory Committee meeting, participants were asked to define their vision of the future in an exercise called Headlines for 2012. Keeping in mind the issues, how the committee prioritized them, and suggestions for resolving the issues, committee members wrote headlines for a fictitious newspaper. These headlines describe what the committee members would like to read in their morning paper in the year 2012.

The results of first three GPAC meetings are presented in Appendices F, G, and H of this report.

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G. RESEARCH SURVEY

In addition to the community participation efforts, a research survey was conducted to describe the physical, economic and social characteristics that make up the community. This information provides the factual background and understanding necessary to meet the State's data and analysis requirements for general plans. It is presented in its entirety in *The Calabasas General Plan: Community Profile* report. However, the information is summarized and included in the Issues sections of this report.