



Shape the Future 2025 - Community Forum Summary Report

Meeting Information:

Meeting Date:	February 26, 2005
Organization Name:	League of Women Voters
Name of Contact:	Leonard Adler
Person (phone #):	LenAdler@aol.com
Location:	Ken Edwards
Duration of Meeting:	120 Minutes
Number of Participants:	30 (Approx)
STF2025 Staff:	Amanda Schachter, Planning Manager
Representation:	Jonathan Lait, AICP, Acting Principal Planner
City Council and/or Planning Commission:	None.
Members Present:	

General Comments:

Staff presented the Shape the Future 2025 project to the organization. A number of questions were raised regarding public participation, access to information, how that information will be synthesized, identification of emerging themes, and suggestions to improve the website. Staff noted some of the community forums that received similar presentations and where summary reports could be found on the project website. Also, responses to the Discover Santa Monica Guidebook are available and accessible from a map-based collage on the website. A suggestion was offered to review Guidebook returns to ensure that representative responses were provided from different parts of the City, and a concern that not everyone received a copy of the Guidebook. Staff continues to group the responses, and to date, has found that there is a fairly uniform response in the different areas delineated on the city map. More guidebooks are available online, at libraries and are delivered to all community forums.

Issues that the organization believes should be considered in the project include the following:

- The organization stressed the need for more public involvement opportunities. Groups that represent different parts of the City should be contacted. (NOTE: Representatives from the Friends of Sunset Park and Borderline Neighborhood Organizations were in attendance and tentative meetings have been scheduled with those groups since the meeting).
- Members noted that they enjoy Santa Monica's weather and small town atmosphere, but noted problems with traffic. Some spoke against parking restrictions in residential neighborhoods and suggested the City look at other alternatives for daily and guest permits.
- There was general agreement that any future development at Santa Monica Place should be consistent with other buildings in the area, and a suggestion not to exceed six stories in height. Members had mixed feelings on the integration of housing and commercial uses in the development, but many favored the retention of the existing department stores. A survey should be conducted to determine the appropriate types of shops that would be best in this area, if redeveloped.
- More affordable shopping opportunities, such as Target, are needed and are currently lacking in the City.
- There is relative ease to access useful stores, which doesn't always require commuting outside the City. Maintaining and improving on this situation should be encouraged.
- Some members expressed dissatisfaction with the Third Street Promenade, noting that it caters too much toward the youth and tourists, and it's too crowded.
- Homeless concerns were cited as a problem restricting access and enjoyment of City parks. More parks were encouraged, but not parks that are walled off, or located atop buildings that are less accessible to the public.
- It was also suggested by some that there be dedicated housing opportunities for the homeless as a quality of life matter and to compassionately address the issue of individuals sleeping on City streets.



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- Consideration should be given to small business owners. Large, big name stores that are not as well connected to the community may be more likely to leave the City during challenging economic conditions. Also, local business owners have a difficult time affording rent. More programs with the City's Economic Development Department should be explored to foster locally owned, unique shopping opportunities. Also, the entitlement process to start a small, local business is the same for larger stores. While the time and costs associated with the process can be absorbed by larger corporations, small business owners are less able to adjust to the financial strain caused by the process.
- The organization inquired about the Airport, but there was little discussion other than the City would be creating policies regarding that portion of the City as part of this project.
- The City's industrial core was discussed, but concern was expressed that the infrastructure (ability for streets to handle more cars) is not in place to accommodate development of this area beyond two stories. Particular traffic concerns were noted east of Lincoln Boulevard, south of Colorado Avenue, north of the freeway, and east toward Centinela Avenue.
- Members encouraged greater coordination with the City of Los Angeles regarding transportation policies and expressed concern that the Big Blue Bus, while providing great east/west transportation, needs to improve mobility north and south through the City.
- A suggestion was offered to compare, evaluate and identify other coastal communities, influenced by tourism to address similar transportation solutions.
- Support was offered for regional rapid transit and that this should be considered in the Circulation Element.
- Locally, traffic along Ocean Park Boulevard should be allowed to make left hand turns, which are currently obstructed by the road's center median. And, improvements are needed near the 26th Street freeway entrance.
- A larger discussion toward the end of the meeting was held with the organization regarding housing and the City's ability and/or legal need to accommodate more growth (population) within its boundary.

For more information on the League of Women Voters of Santa Monica, please visit their website at: <http://www.lwvsantamonica.org/about.html>

Follow – Up Issues:

Improve access to other Community Forum Summaries on the website.

Consider ways to encourage more use of the Internet-based survey – a possible solution offered was to provide greater advertisement in local newspapers.

Monitor Discover Santa Monica Guidebook returns and consider re-mailing to those areas with limited responses, as compared to other areas in the City.

Project team to explore ways to distribute information received from the public in ways other than from the website (make hardcopies available to the public).