

Santa Fe Depot

Specific Plan Update

Public Workshop #1

Vision, Opportunities, and Constraints

Thursday, July 20, 2006 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Questions Posed by the Public

Workshop Questions and Answers

1. _____ has changed for the worse, smaller homes taken down and 3-4 story condos put in place creating more traffic problems. Why replicate the problem in Orange?

The goal of this study is to determine what is appropriate/ feasible for the area around the Santa Fe Depot, not to replicate the planning efforts of other cities. In addition, many of the homes in the historic district are considered “contributing structures” and cannot be randomly demolished to make way for new development.

Development in the Santa Fe Depot Specific Plan area will adhere to the Old Towne Design Standards and any supplemental design guidelines associated with the Depot Specific Plan.

2. **Why is there no mention of problems caused by Chapman University expansion?**

The Depot Specific Plan will address parking constraints and all other identified constraints caused by all factors within the boundary. The Depot Specific Plan will provide for possible solutions. The Depot Specific Plan will also address the opportunities within the Depot Specific Plan boundaries.

3. **Is there a need for structured parking? Couldn't the \$28 million be used for better amenities-Quiet Zones?**

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) funding is specifically earmarked to mitigate the additional parking demand from the future increase in Metrolink service. Other improvements may also be included such as quiet zones if authorized by OCTA. OCTA Board approval is needed before cities can act on the funding. Parking will adhere to the Old Towne Design Standards and any supplemental design guidelines associated with the Depot Specific Plan.

4. Since we showed Omega Burgers twice, does that mean we are recommending getting ready to get rid of it?

No. The opportunity sites were identified as underutilized and selected for the sole purpose of providing guidance for their potential future development or redevelopment. Any redevelopment would likely be in coordination with the property owner.

5. Why no mention of single-family homes?

The City must diversify its housing stock to meet the existing and future housing needs of the community for all types of housing. The Depot area is unique in its ability to support transit-oriented development such as multi family housing. Many households are looking for housing near transit for improved work commutes, seniors with driving limitations, and people who enjoy living in a compact environment where transportation, goods, and services are conveniently accessible. Because of this regional vision of creating transit-oriented development, the City was awarded funding specifically to develop a land use plan that improves the relationship between land uses and transportation.

The Depot Specific Plan will also provide for additional design guidelines to preserve the integrity of single-family homes within the Santa Fe Depot Specific Plan area.

6. When we put higher density housing, what guarantee do we have that it would not turn into a slum like _____ and _____?

The City can guarantee that it will and has always strived for high quality living environments in all capacities. Higher density in the Santa Fe Depot area will be limited to Old Towne Design Standards and any supplemental design standards associated with the Depot Plan.

The current allowable density in the Old Towne- Mixed Use area ranges from 6 to 24 dwelling units per acre (DU/AC) and 0.5-1.0-floor area ratio (FAR). The proposed Mixed-Use land use designation in the Old Towne area per the General Plan update is proposed at a maximum of 15 DU/AC with a 1.5 FAR.

At the revised 15 DU/AC for the Mixed-Use land designation, this would be at the low end of the spectrum for a multi-family project. As a reference point, the multi-family projects under construction at west Chapman have a density in the range of 40-60 units per acre.

7. Would the City use eminent domain on any of the Opportunity sites?

In the past twelve years the City has only used eminent domain for redevelopment once and has generally been reluctant to use eminent domain for redevelopment purposes.

8. How was the boundary determined? It's too large.

The boundary was determined by the proximity to the Depot area and the potential opportunities that may result from being included in the Depot Plan area. The proximity was determined by the walkability to the Depot station, typically a ten-minute walk or ¼ mile used as a rule of thumb.

9. Are we changing the R-1 designation in the General Plan Update?

There are many areas within the Old Towne Orange District boundary that have a current R-2 zoning designation that are being proposed to change to an R-1 zoning designation. R-1 and R-2 correspond to a General Plan land use designation of Low Density Residential (LDR) and Low Medium Density Residential (LMDR), respectively. As part of the General Plan Update, the City intends to establish a more uniform land use pattern in the neighborhoods of Old Towne, and in some cases, where there is a preponderance of historic single family structures, return areas with higher density residential designations to the Low Density Residential (LDR) designation. The next step would be to change the zoning to be consistent with the General Plan, which in many cases will mean a return to R-1 (Single Family).

There are areas within the Old Towne Orange District boundary that are proposed to change to a Mixed-Use designation but none of these are currently designated as R-1.

10. Demographics do not address seniors, families with children, etc. Could we get some information?

Demographic trends show that Seniors, baby boomers, empty nesters, members of the “Creative Class”, and households without children seek housing near transit, and walkable environments where goods and services can be obtained like Old Towne. Trends show some Seniors prefer to live in housing with lower maintenance costs, and families’ are preferring to work in the community they live in.

11. With Chapman doubling in size over the next several years and Metrolink service increasing, how can this plan address the traffic impacts? Quality of life issues are paramount.

The Santa Fe Depot Plan will account for traffic sources generated by these and other factors. In addition, prior to the adoption of the Depot Specific Plan an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared which will identify sources of potential growth and provide mitigation measures if needed. The EIR will also look at existing and potential development in the surrounding area as part of the cumulative impact analysis. The completion of the EIR will help City decision makers to understand the potential impacts of the Depot Specific Plan.

12. How is the Barrio being addressed?

The City has met with the Orange Barrio Historical Society to understand their concerns. It is believed that Orange Barrio Historical Society can be better served by not being included into this plan but through a tailored study and much coordination with the group.

13. Is there a City limit of a population here?

There is not a City limit for population. The proposed General Plan update will identify the number of potential housing units that can be built in the City.

In addition, the General Plan Update will take into consideration population and household growth expected to occur based on projections and growth trends developed by regional planning agencies such as the Southern California Association of Governments. The City's population is expected to increase over time but at a slower rate than in the past years due to the fact that vast areas of vacant land are no longer available, and that new development will occur gradually over time through redevelopment of individual properties.

14. Does this conflict with the Chapman Specific Plan?

The proposed Santa Fe Depot Plan boundaries will not conflict with the Chapman Specific Plan boundaries. It is the City's intent for the Depot Specific Plan to capitalize on the positive elements that the University brings into the area while protecting the integrity of the Depot and its environs.