

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Santa Paula Citywide Visioning process was initiated in September 2003 as an effort to bring the community together to create a vision of where it wants to be in the future and a plan to make that vision a reality. An intensive community-based process yielded thousands of ideas and thoughts about Santa Paula from both adults and youth in the City. As a result of these efforts, a vision statement and a series of goals and action steps that support the values, challenges, and visions expressed by the Santa Paula community are provided in this Vision Plan. The Plan, presented to the Santa Paula City Council on June 21st, 2004, should be used to help guide future decisions, set new City priorities and policies, and implement projects that are important to the community.

The Citywide Vision

The Vision Statement crafted by the Santa Paula community expresses a desired future for the City: “Santa Paula is a beautiful, safe, and economically thriving community that maintains its small town atmosphere and retains agriculture as an important part of its community and economy. Santa Paula honors its heritage, culture, and diversity; offers excellence in education, housing, and health care for all community members; and is a City where people from all backgrounds live, work, shop, and play in harmony, and are open to change for the greater good. Santa Paula believes that its youth represent the future and supports them through meaningful activity and mentorship.”

Throughout the process, several key priorities emerged as important elements of the Vision for Santa Paula. They include the following:

- ◆ Small Town Character
- ◆ Educational Excellence
- ◆ Meaningful Youth Activity and Participation
- ◆ Parks and Recreation Opportunities
- ◆ Vibrant and Strong Economy
- ◆ Diverse Housing Opportunities
- ◆ Protected Natural Environment
- ◆ Celebration of Local Art, Architecture, History, and Culture
- ◆ Engaged Community and Responsive Government
- ◆ Access to Affordable and High Quality Health Care
- ◆ Beautification and Architectural Integrity of the City
- ◆ Enhanced Mobility and Quality Infrastructure
- ◆ Safe and Secure City

The Vision Plan

The Santa Paula Citywide Vision Plan is designed and organized to be a tool for City government; existing organizations, clubs, and groups; public agencies; and, community members and residents. It is organized into three chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Santa Paula Citywide Vision Plan

Chapter 1 provides the foundation of the Santa Paula Citywide Vision. It describes the activities included as part of the community-based visioning process and how they helped the community create their vision. Chapter 1 also briefly discusses a number of different factors influencing the Vision, including history, economics, and regional growth. A variety of the outreach materials that were developed for the project are provided in the Appendix.

Chapter 2: A Citywide Vision for the Future of Santa Paula

Chapter 2 provides a more detailed description of the vision for the future. It includes not only the vision statement and key priorities as identified earlier, but also outlines a series of community goals and action steps important to implementing each priority area. In addition, a Spanish and English summary/poster that was distributed to the community through the Santa Paula Times is included in this Chapter.

Chapter 3: Implementing the Citywide Vision for Santa Paula

Chapter 3 focuses on implementing the Vision. It puts forth key organizing steps, identifies priority projects to be initiated early, and provides a long list of potential resources that can and should get involved in implementation. To assist in the implementation process, the Chapter provides a Vision Implementation Matrix that matches action steps with potential resources, as well as action planning worksheets to devise responsibilities and tactics.

Conclusion

Achieving the Citywide Vision for Santa Paula will take the combined effort and partnership of the entire community. It will require supporting and getting involved in the existing activities and missions of local organizations; it will require establishing and volunteering for new projects and programs; and, it will require strong leadership and commitment. There is a role for every Santa Paulan, young and old, to get involved in building a strong future for their City. You can make a difference.