

Carlsbad TOMORROW

Growth Management Citizens Committee

QUALITY OF LIFE CONCERNS & RECOMMENDATIONS APRIL 2023



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Introduction

In March 2022, the City Council established the Carlsbad Tomorrow Growth Management Citizens Committee with the mission to “...promote balanced consideration of a range of perspectives on issues affecting the future growth and quality of life in Carlsbad and to identify the key elements of a new plan to manage growth in Carlsbad in a way that maintains an excellent quality of life while also complying with state law.”

During the committee’s conversations and deliberations through a series of 15 meetings from March 2022 to April 2023, the committee decided on recommendations for key elements of a new plan to manage growth (provided in a separate report to the City Council). The committee also identified topics that are of importance to Carlsbad’s quality of life but are not recommended to be included as standards in a growth management program. The committee recommends that the City Council consider these topics in decisions that affect the future of Carlsbad.

This Quality of Life Concerns and Recommendations document reflects the committee’s recommendations, developed based on consensus, to the City Council on important topics that affect Carlsbad’s quality of life but are not recommended to be included as standards in a growth management program.

QUALITY OF LIFE CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee recommends the City Council consider the following quality of life concerns and recommendations on topics that are not directly associated with a growth management standard but are tied to the quality of life within the city.

ARTS AND CULTURE

- ▶ The arts are fundamentally intertwined with the City of Carlsbad's quality of life as they give the city a defining character and create a sense of place through aesthetics and culturally enriching programs and events for all residents. A culturally thriving community is directly related to economic growth; hence, the arts should be given higher priority by the City Council in the Strategic Plan and Operating Budget.
 - ▶ The committee believed that a 750-seat cultural performing arts center would enhance the quality of life in Carlsbad and believed serious consideration should be given by the City Council to incorporate this in either the plans for a new city hall complex or to look at other potential appropriate locations in the city to construct such a facility.
 - ▶ For more information about the committee's discussion on arts and culture, see the committee's minutes for meetings held on Nov. 30, 2022, Jan. 26, 2023, and March 23, 2023. Additionally, the [City of Carlsbad Arts & Culture Master Plan](#) and the [City of Carlsbad Library & Cultural Arts programs and services](#) have information on existing programs.
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CARLSBAD ENERGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- ▶ The committee recommended the creation of a group of 5-7 citizens charged with providing the Mayor and City Council with an annual summary of all energy-related activities impacting the city's residents and businesses. Topics included but are not limited to:
 - Electric commodity providers
 - Energy reliability and safety
 - SDG&E undergrounding programs
 - Carlsbad's peaker-style power plant operations
 - Renewable energy production (new solar installations, quantity of energy produced, new technological advancements)
 - Feasibility of microgrids
 - Energy storage

QUALITY OF LIFE CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

April 20, 2023

- Energy cost and sources
 - ▶ See the committee's minutes for meeting held on Feb. 23, 2023.
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COASTLINE

- ▶ It is recognized that Carlsbad's beaches and beach-front areas are being impacted by both man-made and environmental conditions that are severely depleting those resources at a time when demand for such recreational space is increasing rapidly. Shoreline preservation, beach erosion, sea-level rise and continuing adverse weather-related influences are all causing great impacts for beach use and access, as witnessed during the winter and spring storms that batter our coastline periodically and as recently as 2023.
 - ▶ The committee strongly recommends that the City Council give top priority to the expansion, protection, and enhancement of public access to, and community use of, the shoreline at beach level and on the bluffs overlooking the beach in decisions concerning active and passive park use, open space, enhanced pedestrian and bike trails, periodic sand replenishment, a dog beach area, park and/or outdoor venue areas for community events, parking, lifeguard coverage, beach showers, and public restroom facilities. Commercial/residential development, if permitted for such areas, should be planned to return substantial public recreational benefit.
 - ▶ See the committee's minutes for the meeting held on April 20, 2023.
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FEES

- ▶ The committee recommended the city evaluate all public facility impact fees on a regular basis (no more than every five years) and update as needed. See the committee's minutes for meeting held on Dec. 15, 2022.
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HOMELESSNESS

- ▶ Homelessness is an important issue that impacts the quality of life for the residents of Carlsbad and should remain a priority for the City Council in the Strategic Plan and Operating Budget. The committee recognized the complex challenges of addressing the impacts of homelessness and supports the continued efforts of the city's Homeless Outreach Team and affordable housing programs, as well as the [Homelessness Action Plan](#).
 - ▶ See the committee's minutes for the meeting held on Oct. 12, 2022.
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OPEN SPACE

- ▶ The committee has made a recommendation to modify the existing Growth Management Open Space Standard (provided in a separate report).
 - ▶ Additionally, the committee recommended the City Council elevate the topic of open space by adding it to the purview of the Parks & Recreation Commission to address open space needs throughout the city; including updating the list of candidate properties for proactive open space acquisition and by developing a plan that prioritizes zones with less unconstrained open space or that are subject to loss due to sea level rise.
 - ▶ Adopt a policy that discourages exceptions to development standards that would decrease open space.
 - ▶ See the committee's minutes for meetings held on Sept. 22, 2022, Jan. 11, 2023, Feb. 23, 2023, and March 23, 2023.
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PROPOSITION H

- ▶ During committee deliberation it was discussed that the Proposition H limit of \$1 million on general fund expenditures, as implemented by Carlsbad Municipal Code Chapter 1.24, has not been updated since it was passed by voters in the 1982. The committee recommended the City Council consider a ballot measure increasing the expenditure limit due to increased project costs, and indexing it to something like the Consumer Price Index so it can increase over time.
 - ▶ Additionally, the committee recommended the city set aside funding for public safety capital improvement projects, such as fire stations, and specify in a future ballot measure that certain types of projects don't require voter approval to exceed the spending limit (\$1 million).
 - ▶ See the committee's minutes for meetings held on Oct. 12, 2022, and Jan. 26, 2023.
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SENIORS/AGING COMMUNITY

- ▶ The quality of life and needs of Carlsbad's senior community and aging population is important. The committee recognized and supported the city's continued efforts to ensure the needs of seniors are met, such as through the [City of Carlsbad Age-Friendly Action Plan](#), [City of Carlsbad Parks & Recreation Department senior programs and Senior Center](#) and the [City of Carlsbad Senior Commission](#).
 - ▶ Carlsbad's senior community and aging population should remain a priority for the City Council in the Strategic Plan and Operating Budget.
 - ▶ See the committee's minutes for the meeting held on Oct. 12, 2022.
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TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

- ▶ The committee has made a recommendation to retain the existing Growth Management Circulation (Mobility) Standard (provided in a separate report).
- ▶ Additionally, on Jan. 26, 2023, the committee by consensus recommended that a statement be added to this quality-of-life document to recommend that the city:
 - Leverage the [Sustainable Mobility Plan](#) and Multimodal Transportation Impact Fee to implement future multimodal transportation projects that provide the greatest benefit to the community;
 - Review of current facilities,
 - Relationship between existing traffic operations, changing commute patterns, regional traffic volume growth, traffic safety and new disruptive trends in mobility technologies, and
 - Development of standards and a fee structure for private development to provide a fair share to partially fund the buildout of the city's multimodal transportation network.
 - Require new development to conduct intersection Level of Service and Multimodal Level-of-Service analysis to determine direct project impacts in accordance with the city's Local Mobility Analysis Guidelines.
 - Complete the city's typology-based street network, as described in the General Plan Mobility Element.
 - Update the Multimodal Transportation Impact Fee and include Local Mobility Assessment with Level of Service for all modes.
 - Improve traffic signal synchronization to improve vehicle mobility and reduce the potential environmental impacts from vehicle emissions related to the stop-and-go and idling at intersections.
- ▶ See the committee's minutes for meetings held on July 28, 2022, Aug. 25, 2022, Dec. 15, 2022, Jan. 26, 2023 and March 23, 2023.