

# SANTA BARBARA COUNTY BOARD AGENDA LETTER



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
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**Agenda Number:**  
**Prepared on:** 3/2/02  
**Department Name:** CAO  
**Department No.:** 012  
**Agenda Date:** 4/9/02  
**Placement:** Departmental  
**Estimate Time:** 3 hrs. each, 4/9&16/02  
**Continued Item:** NO  
**If Yes, date from:**

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Michael F. Brown  
County Administrator

**STAFF CONTACT:** Scott Ullery, Deputy County Administrator  
568-2243

**SUBJECT:** County Strategic Scan

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## **Recommendations:**

That the Board of Supervisors receive the annual County Strategic Scan presentation from all participating departments, as follows:

### April 9

- Introduction to the Strategic Scan (County Administrator's Office)
- Community Services and Public Facilities (Agriculture & Cooperative Extension; Parks; Planning and Development; and Public Works)
- Law and Justice / Public Safety (District Attorney; Public Defender; Courts; Fire; Probation; Sheriff)

### April 16

- Health and Public Assistance (Alcohol, Drug, & Mental health; Child Support Services; Public Health; Social Services, Children & Families Commission)
- Support Services (Auditor-Controller; Clerk-Recorder-Assessor; General Services; Human Resources; Treasurer-Tax Collector-Public Administrator)

## **Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:**

The annual Strategic Scan is an integral part of the County's overall strategic planning process.

## **Executive Summary and Discussion:**

This year's Strategic Scan marks the fifth year that County departments have presented to the Board a broad overview of their strategic assessments and activities. The format and content of the Scans have varied over the years, with their primary purpose being to describe some of the major conditions and trends in our County and region that define the constraints and challenges facing County government. An addition to last year's presentation was the "Introduction to the Strategic Scan," which provided a broad overview of demographic, economic, and social trends and conditions. In general, most of the major trends and

conditions identified in previous Scan presentations continue without significant change. Many of these are summarized below in the Critical Issues section of this report, and will be briefly reviewed on April 9<sup>th</sup>.

The major focus of this year's Strategic Scan presentations will be on significant programs, projects, and initiatives (i.e., "Strategic Actions") that departments are undertaking in support of the two major components of the Board's Strategic Plan, the "General Goals and Principles" and the "Critical Issues." Department presentations will demonstrate the substantive linkages between the Strategic Plan and the County Budget. The Fiscal Year 2002-2003 Budget document will include narrative sections identifying the strategic actions of most County departments. Preceding the presentations by the four department teams, the County Administrator's Office will present an "Introduction to the Strategic Scan," comprising an overview of the Strategic Plan, a summary of selected strategic support activities in the County Administrator's Office, and a small selection of data from the "Strategic Scan" data bank.

### Santa Barbara County's Strategic Plan

Santa Barbara County's Strategic Plan provides an overarching guide to defining and measuring the expected outcomes of County government services, and allocating the resources to the various programs and projects that deliver those services. Through its ongoing strategic planning process, the County examines the key conditions and trends that affect the way it conducts business, frames the critical strategic issues and mandates that must be addressed, and fashions its multiple missions, programs, and projects to fulfill its overall mission and address the critical issues.

Several ongoing strategic processes and activities support the various layers of this strategic structure. Among these are the annual Strategic Scan presentations, periodic retreats devoted to brainstorming critical issues and the strategies for managing those issues, department strategic plans, department impact and program performance measures, project tracking, information technology assessments, and the annual budget. Other projects that support the County Strategic Plan are as follows:

1. A data bank of charts and graphs entitled "Strategic Scan" is under development with the assistance of the UCSB Economic Forecast Project. To date, more than 200 charts and graphs pertaining to Santa Barbara County have been created and will soon be available on the web site for use by departments and the community. A small selection from the Strategic Scan data bank is included as an attachment to this report, and will part of the "Introduction to the Strategic Scan" presentation by the County Administrator's Office.
2. The Data Inventory Project is a companion project to the data bank project and an outgrowth of the 2001 Grand Jury report on Data Sharing. The project is being carried out by the Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC), under the executive direction of the Information Services Advisory Committee (ISAC),
3. Preliminary planning is underway for a citizen survey in response to your Board's direction that the Strategic Plan incorporate citizen input. Survey options are being investigated, and staff will return to the Board at a later date with a recommendation. The FY 2002-2003 Recommended Budget will include \$30,000 for a survey.
4. A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is under development by the Economic Development Advisory Committee. A CEDS is a prerequisite to qualify for federal government Economic Development Administration's (EDA) grant programs.
5. Implementation of the "Community Discussion on Regional Governance," (adopted by the Board of Supervisors on January 2, 2001) is underway. Community discussion on regional governance has

commenced on a number of levels. The County Administrator's Office is working closely with SBCAG on the implementation of a 3-year grant for the Inter-regional Partnership Project. Early steps have included the initiation of a three county commuter survey and preliminary discussions with Ventura County. A second initiative is the establishment of the Multi-Jurisdictional Solid Waste Task Group to address regional solid waste issues with the cities and special districts. In addition, the County Administrator is now meeting regularly with city managers to discuss regional approaches to issues such as fire service and housing allocations.

### General Goals and Principles

The County's General Goals and Principles articulate the broad, long-term, direction and purpose of the government underlying all the County's programs, projects, and initiatives. General Goals and Principles remain relatively constant. Virtually everything the County does, from providing basic public services to taking on special projects, should contribute to fulfilling these goals and principles.

The Board of Supervisors adopted the following on April 21, 1998:

- I. EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT: An Efficient Government Able to Anticipate and Respond Effectively to the Needs of the Community.
- II. COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SAFETY: A Safe and Healthy Community in Which to Live, Work, and Visit.
- III. ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS: A Strong, Professionally Managed County Organization.
- IV. ECONOMIC VITALITY: A Community that is Economically Vital and Sustainable.
- V. QUALITY OF LIFE: A High Quality of Life for All Residents.
- VI. CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT: A County Government that is Accessible, Open, and Citizen-Friendly.
- VII. INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES AND CHILDREN: A Community that Fosters the Safety and Well-Being of Individuals, Families and Children.

### Critical Issues

While everything the County does contributes toward attaining its General Goals and Principles, the County also faces specific critical issues that may change over time. The five critical issues identified in the Strategic Plan are matters of urgency the County must manage while it also provides myriad basic services.

Underlying all five of the Critical Issues is the question of how the County should respond to the anticipated levels and rate of population growth and other significant demographic changes. As an ongoing concern, the County must ensure that the demands of a growing and changing population do not exceed its long-term ability to deliver basic public services and function in accordance with the General Goals and Principles. In addition, however, the rapidity and intensity of anticipated demographic change will exert considerable pressure on maintaining basic physical, economic, social, and institutional conditions that define Santa Barbara County's quality of life.

The 2000 Census established Santa Barbara County's population at 399,347. The California Department of Finance, taking into account a probable Census undercount, estimates the current County population at approximately 406,000. Various projections estimate the number of County residents will grow to between 576,000 and 658,000 by 2030. If this population is to be accommodated, as many as 50,000 to 86,000 new housing units will be needed. The rate of growth is expected to continue to be slightly higher in the North County than in the south.

During the decade of the 1990's, foreign immigration and a birth rate in excess of the death rate fueled the County's 8% population increase. Approximately 60% of births are to foreign-born mothers. Growth patterns are producing a significant change in the ethnic composition of the population, with Hispanics making up an ever-greater proportion of the population. Hispanics currently comprise approximately 34% of the County's total population, and by 2030 are expected to comprise 57%.

The age profile of the population is also changing, and by 2030 the proportions of children, teens, and elders are projected to be significantly greater than they are today. These age differences, coupled with growing poverty levels, will place particularly heavy demands on all public safety and social support services. For example, the high-crime prone age group of 15-25 years old is increasing at a rate greater than the general population growth.

The five Critical Issue areas presented below – Land Use, Economic Development, Education, Health Care & Social Services, and Governance Structures – were identified on September 18, 2000 at a special half-day meeting of Board Members, County staff, and others, and were adopted by the Board of Supervisors on October 3, 2000 and modified by the Board on October 2, 2001.

I. LAND USE: What should the County's land use policy be to manage anticipated population changes?

The current distribution of the County's 1.6 million acres is 4% urban, 48% agriculture (the vast majority of which is in agricultural preserve), and 48% government owned (94% of which is owned by the federal government). Santa Barbara County has not (yet) experienced full-blown "California sprawl." Past trends and current conditions suggest that there is significant public resistance to both increased density of development and the development of agricultural land. A corollary critical issue, therefore, is: how much more infill development can be accomplished before developing agricultural lands and open spaces become the only options for siting new developmen

The remaining vacant land zoned for residential use is running low. Depending on the density of the homes and actual population growth, approximately 7,000 to as much as 17,000 additional acres will be needed by 2030, which will exert pressure to develop more agricultural land. Many more acres will be needed for commercial and industrial development, schools, parks and other urban infrastructure. The state Department of Housing and Community Development recently set the Countywide target for new housing units at 17,531 over the next seven years. Housing is increasingly unaffordable throughout the County, but particularly in the south. The housing supply has not kept pace with demand, resulting in dramatic increases in median home prices throughout the county, as well as increased household size.

The combination in the North County of relatively inexpensive housing and a shortage of high wage jobs has resulted in increased commuter miles, and greater traffic congestion. The capacity of the road system will not meet projected use. From 1988 to 1998, vehicle miles traveled increased at a rate (18%) greater than the population increase (15%). Moreover, over the past 20 years, the percentage of commuters driving alone (more than 70% in 2000) has steadily increased, and the percentage in carpools (less than 15%) has decreased.

Competing demands for land use are central also to concerns about water quality and water supply. Municipal versus agricultural rights to groundwater are most salient in North County, while urban runoff,

creek contamination, and beach closures are of particular concern on the South Coast. Jurisdictional control of the water supply in the Cachuma Lake reservoir has also emerged as an aspect of the proposed County split.

## II. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: How can economic development be encouraged to create a diversity of stable and high-wage jobs?

Job growth between 1993-2001 has replaced the net loss in 1992 of nearly 3.5% of countywide jobs, but job growth over the past year has been relatively flat. Beginning in 1994 and into 2001, the number of unemployed workers has been generally on a downward trend (although there is high seasonal variability due to agricultural unemployment in the North County and holiday retail workers), but local unemployment was up slightly at the beginning of 2002. The jobs lost in the early 1990's were high-wage manufacturing jobs (especially in the aerospace industry) and the subsequent job growth has occurred in relatively low-wage industries (services, retail trade, and agriculture), whose jobs frequently have no employee benefits. The recent small rise in unemployment has been attributed to the downturn in the high-tech sector and 9/11. California's economy has been weathering the recession better than much of the nation, and employment in Santa Barbara County has fared better than the state average.

Prior to 1996, the county's real median family income levels exceeded the statewide average. Since 1993, family income has run behind the State and Nation, and the gap is increasing. The County's real (1996 dollars) median annual family income is approximately \$48,800 (compared to approximately \$50,900 for the state) and has decreased approximately \$3,500 over the past twelve years.

The high cost of housing in the County, particularly in South County, accentuates the employment problem. While South County generally has higher paying jobs and a more highly educated workforce than the North County, many of the employees in the South County cannot afford to live near their workplaces. In January 2002, houses in Santa Barbara County were ranked by the California Association of Realtors as the least affordable in California. Only 14% of local households (32% statewide) could afford the median priced home, which reached \$407,900 locally. An income of approximately \$105,000 is needed to qualify for a loan on a house of the price.

## III. EDUCATION: How can the education of our population be improved to meet the level and scope of education required for individuals to succeed in the economy?

An individual's educational level is strongly correlated to his or her employment prospects and income. Over at least the last thirty years, the real wages of individuals with less than a college degree have fallen. Current educational conditions in Santa Barbara County have not been conducive to upward mobility for those at the lower end of the income scale. While student performance in Santa Barbara County schools compares well with statewide averages, California's national rankings on several key indicators are very low.

Many children, especially those living in poverty, are often insufficiently prepared to succeed in school. It has been estimated that between 1990 and 2000, the number of poor children in Santa Barbara County increased at a rate approximately twice that of the increase in total population. The total number of children in poverty, currently and projected, is disproportionately Hispanic. Of the more than 66,000 students enrolled in County schools, approximately 19,000 (28%) lack English language proficiency

The educational attainment of parents, particularly mothers, is a key factor in academic success. The current grade level achievement of Hispanic adults runs well behind all other adults in the County. Compounding the situation is a high proportion of births, and low access to prenatal services, to mothers with low levels of education.

**IV. HEALTH, SAFETY, AND HUMAN SERVICES:** How can our residents' health and safety be sustained and improved, and human services needs be met?

Continued population growth fueled by immigration, and larger proportions of children, teenagers, and elderly, will place increasing demands for health and other public assistance services. Moreover, changing lifestyles, more single parent families, and more children raised in "non-traditional" families, present service delivery challenges. Despite these changes, there is no assurance of stable, ongoing State and Federal funding support.

The anticipated demographic changes and increased poverty have strong public safety implications as well. Conditions of low income, low educational attainment, and deficient health care correlate highly with substance abuse, child and spousal abuse, and crime.

The number of families receiving CalWORKs cash assistance decreased from 6,262 in December 1996 to 3,831 as of the end of June 2000. All areas in the county have experienced decreases, but the North County communities continue to have a higher proportion of their populations on CalWORKs cash assistance. Unemployment rates have also been lower in the South than in the North County. After nearly four years of a downward trend in the County's CalWORKs and General Relief caseloads, with the recent weakening of the National and State economies, there are several indicators that these caseloads could be trending upwards.

A recent Census Bureau report estimated that more than 14% of County residents are in poverty, and more than 22% of children ages 5-17 are in families of poverty. During the 1990's, the number of poor children increased from an estimated 13,400 to 18,300, which represents a rate of increase roughly twice that of total population growth. Moreover, the number and growth rate of poor children is disproportionately high for Hispanics. Without significant change in poverty rates, immigration trends, and educational outcomes, the trends will continue.

The percent of population with no health insurance is estimated at 29% and continues to climb. As the economy weakens, the number of people with no health insurance will continue to climb. Nearly 40% of Hispanic residents and 13% of non-Hispanics have no health care coverage. Santa Barbara County has not met the "Healthy People 2000" Objectives in the categories of drug-related deaths, child immunizations, tuberculosis incidence, first trimester prenatal care, low birth-weight births, and stroke deaths.

There are an estimated 3,000 to 4,000 homeless individuals in Santa Barbara County. Shelter beds are available for fewer than 300 people during the coldest months (November – March), and even fewer the rest of the year.

**V. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES** What are the most effective divisions of government responsibilities for serving the public and facilitating intergovernmental relations within Santa Barbara County?

Santa Barbara County has no method to coordinate growth and service delivery among the cities, special districts, and the County. The governance structure, within which local governments are mandated to operate, is fragmented. Moreover, the County's delivery of many substantive services is determined in large part by State program requirements, and the County's fiscal condition is significantly affected by the State government's mandates and fiscal health. The allocation of responsibilities and resources for providing public services does not always result in the most efficient and effective delivery of services. Objectives and strategies for addressing certain complex critical issues such as poverty or the jobs-housing balance are disjointed and incremental. For example, there is no mechanism for agencies to coordinate regarding the type and amount of housing to build, and how to balance job creation with new housing and transportation system. SBCAG and the County are the two existing agencies with Countywide jurisdictions, but neither have sufficient mandate and authority to coordinate policy among the seven cities and several special districts.

Some issues and services are best addressed and delivered on a County-wide or regional level, while others are better addressed and delivered at a subregional level, or by local communities, cities, and towns. A substantive discussion and analysis of the most effective structures and locus of responsibilities is difficult to conduct. Cities and service districts are suspicious of the County and the topic of regionalism, and distrust of the County government is particularly strong in the North County. Cities generally do not want to surrender their independence, resources, and prerogatives to other cities, the County or to regional and State entities, but they can benefit from better coordination, particularly in addressing issues of transportation, workforce housing, and economic development. The levels of coordination that prevail in the delivery of fire services and library services may be transferable to other service areas. The level of structural fragmentation that currently prevails for such services as solid waste and emergency dispatching may not be in the best interest of taxpayers and customers.

Local governments and public agencies do not have a broadly shared forum or incentives for coming together to substantively discuss critical regional issues and analyze the most effective governance structures for managing issues and delivering public services. A one and one-half year process aimed at building countywide consensus around key regional issues and solutions has been approved by the Board of Supervisors, and is in its initial stages of implementation.