

INFORMATION ITEM

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers
FROM: Andy Agle, Interim Director, Planning and Community Development
SUBJECT: Land Use and Circulation Elements Project Update

INTRODUCTION

This report responds to the Council's direction to establish goals to guide the Land Use and Circulation Elements (LUCE) project. The report identifies draft goals, based on public input and policy direction on the project to date, and identifies a public process that will be used to refine and evaluate the draft goals. Once refined and approved by the Planning Commission and Council, the goals will provide a framework for evaluation of project alternatives, trade-offs and implementation efforts.

BACKGROUND

The proposed process to establish goals builds on the efforts completed in earlier phases of the project and supports and complements upcoming phases of the project. The first phase, Initial Outreach and Analysis, is complete and the second phase, Alternatives and Trade-offs, will continue forward once initial goals have been approved. Preliminary work has also begun toward the task of rewriting the City's Zoning Ordinance.

The initial phase of updating the LUCE involved a comprehensive public outreach effort. This community-engagement process generated a significant outpouring of visions and ideas for what Santa Monica could look and feel like in 20 years and how improvements could be made to the way people move around the city. This feedback was received from several Citywide workshops, dozens of community forums, telephone, internet and transportation surveys, and walking tour guidebooks that over 900 people who live and work in Santa Monica completed and mailed back to City Hall. This and other information was posted and remains available on the project websites (www.shapethefuture2025.net and <http://motion.santa-monica.org>).

The input from the initial outreach efforts was documented in the April 2005 Emerging Themes Report (<http://www.shapethefuture2025.net/pdf/EmergingThemesReport.pdf>). Following the initial outreach efforts, the Planning Commission and City Council accepted twelve Emerging Themes (Attachment A) as a reflection of public sentiment, understanding that ideas and concepts may be further refined as the planning process progresses. These twelve themes are similar to goals in that they express the community's vision for the future.

The July 2005 Opportunities and Challenges Report followed the release of the Emerging Themes Report and concluded the project's first phase. Presenting and analyzing data and trends related to land use, transportation, and environmental conditions, the report establishes a framework for analysis and evaluation of community ideas and expectations in relation to data and other information about the City and

region. For example, the report highlights the challenge of providing affordable work-force housing in a community with high property values. The report also identifies well established neighborhoods as an opportunity to maintain and further define Santa Monica's uniqueness and create a stronger sense of community. The fifteen policy questions identified in the first chapter of the Opportunities and Challenges Report are intended to frame public discussion. The Opportunities and Challenges Report is available online (http://www.shapethefuture2025.net/pdf/oc_report_web.pdf); the policy questions are also included with this report as Attachment B.

The community outreach and data analysis presented in these reports set the stage for the second phase of the update process, consideration of Alternatives and Trade-offs. During this project phase, policy issues and land use distribution concepts are analyzed to support public dialogue and debate about Santa Monica's future, such as integrated transportation systems, housing diversity and sustainable economies, to name a few.

The second phase will be supported by an Alternatives Workbook, which is intended to assist the community and decision-makers in understanding the interrelationships, consequences and trade-offs of potential policy decisions. Each planning alternative will be evaluated against the goals and objectives confirmed through the forthcoming outreach process, thereby providing a framework for assessing the merits of different concepts and approaches.

Questions regarding how much new growth the City will plan for, and where, will be illuminated through an active public discussion based on analysis, understanding of consequences and trade-offs, and innovative problem-solving. Understanding how changes in density or circulation policy can strengthen or weaken the community is a significant component of the debate, but not the only one. Also important is to understand how the plans can preserve places that contribute to the cultural fabric, how design and transportation solutions can reduce our dependence on limited resources, and how we can provide more usable open space for passive and active recreational use. These are just a few of the issues that will be explored in the workbook and illustrated by example with three distinct land-use alternatives, so that the impacts of certain policy decisions are better anticipated.

The Alternatives Workbook will be used in a series of public outreach events designed to stimulate this public discussion and to develop a consensus as to a preferred vision for Santa Monica's future. This vision may take the form of one of the alternatives, but will more likely be some blend of the various conceptual plans and perhaps other ideas. The results of this effort will be communicated to and reviewed by the Planning Commission and City Council, where it is anticipated a preferred conceptual plan will be identified and approved. The concepts will then be translated into language appropriate for a general plan, i.e., a series of forward-looking objectives and policies that will implement the community's goals for the future. Approval of a preferred conceptual plan will also allow for the continued effort on the Zoning Ordinance, which will provide the implementing regulations to carry out that vision.

DISCUSSION

In many ways, project goals have been articulated through the initial outreach effort and expressed in part through the Emerging Themes. The list of twelve themes, however, is somewhat incomplete and duplicative, and combines elements of goals, objectives, policies and implementing programs. While it was originally envisioned that precise goals would emerge after the community's consideration of alternatives and trade-offs, establishing preliminary goals at this stage is expected to help narrow the range of options to study and better focus the discussion; it will also help reduce some of the uncertainty about project direction.

The draft goals for the Land Use and Circulation Elements (included as Attachment D) reflect a staff effort to distill the community aspirations and policy direction expressed in the initial project effort into statements of what the community would like to achieve through its land use and circulation elements. Three months have been programmed for the community to respond to and offer suggestions for modifying, eliminating or adding to the draft LUCE goals. The proposed outreach effort includes a Citywide workshop, an interactive display to be set up at the Main Library and used at the Santa Monica Festival in May, and a feedback forum on the City's web site. Presentations will be made to the Planning Commission before and after the outreach process and to City Council after the outreach process.

In order to frame the discussion and support the continued development of the plan, the outreach program will include a discussion of the role of goals, objectives and policies

within the context of a General Plan. Attachment C explains and illustrates these roles. The vast amount of public input received during the initial project phase addresses not only goals, but also objectives and policies. To facilitate the establishment of goals, staff will not only present draft goals, but also objectives and policies that might derive from the goals. By seeing the goals in this context, participants can better understand whether the goals support the kinds of objectives, policies and programs that are important for Santa Monica's future. These efforts will be illuminated by reference to draft Common Elements and Common Options (Attachment E). The Common Elements list identifies objectives and policies that were commonly expressed during initial public outreach and policy direction. The Common Options list identifies objectives and policies that have been expressed frequently, but do not appear to have yet gained consensus support.

Project Timeline

The LUCE project was originally intended to be a two-year effort which started in Fall 2004. Since project initiation, additional time has been added to expand the opportunity for public input on milestone work products, to create separate hearings for Planning Commission and City Council (rather than joint hearings), to accommodate heavy Commission and Council agendas, and to maximize public involvement. Most recently, the time period during which the consideration of Alternatives and Trade-offs was expected to occur is now being used for consideration of goals. Individually, these changes to the timeline are relatively minor. Collectively, however, they do effect the project's completion date. Attached to this report are two revised schedules; a short-

term schedule for goal-setting and consideration of alternatives and trade-offs (Attachment G), and an estimated long-range schedule with a revised completion timeframe (Attachment H).

Next Steps

In April, the Planning Commission will consider the specific elements of the outreach process for the LUCE goal-setting effort. A goal-setting community workshop is expected to occur in late April, followed by the Library, Internet, and Santa Monica Festival feedback efforts.

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cc: Planning Commission

Attachments:

- A. Emerging Themes (Excerpted from the Emerging Themes Report)
- B. Policy Questions (Excerpted from the Opportunities & Challenges Report)
- C. Role of Goals, Objectives and Policies in a General Plan
- D. Draft Goals: Land Use and Circulation Elements
- E. Draft Common Elements and Common Options
- F. Land Use and Circulation Elements: Process To Date
- G. Short Term Project Schedule (Through Phase 2 – Alternatives)
- H. Long Range Project Schedule (Through Project Completion)

Attachment A

Emerging Themes

A unique city with a strong sense of community. Santa Monica of the future should build on characteristics that endow its uniqueness and a sense of place: a small, beachtown ambience, walkability, diversity, and innovation. Santa Monica of the future should be an interconnected town where people can get to know their neighbors, with citizen involvement and ownership in the future of the city. The city's neighborhoods should be vital, with tree-lined streets, and common places where people come together to share in cultural pursuit, celebration, and leisure.

A city rich in amenities, within walking distance to shops and services from neighborhoods. While in its outlook and character Santa Monica should be a small town, it should offer a sophisticated array of amenities, including stores, restaurants, transit, arts, and culture. Most critically, Santa Monica should be a walkable town, with neighborhood shopping, cafes, local and public services, and parks and open spaces, within easy reach of every neighborhood.

A diverse and inclusive city. Santa Monica should be a diverse place, both socially and physically, and with opportunity for all. Santa Monica should be affordable to households of diverse incomes, and home to a variety of small and large businesses. The city should provide workforce, middle income, and senior housing, artist and live/work residences, as well as places for families and children. In terms of its physical character, Santa Monica should support a mix of design styles and creative architecture while remaining cognizant of its history through conservation and preservation of historic buildings and neighborhoods. This will also help foster an experientially rich setting.

A community built at an appropriate town-scale. Reinforcing the theme of a small and unique town, the height and scale of new buildings should complement the existing fabric of neighborhoods and commercial areas. Existing height limits should be maintained, and high rise buildings are not appropriate in any part of Santa Monica. Smaller-scale, locally owned stores will further the city's character and Santa Monica's pursuit of its vision as a small and unique town.

A city of strong neighborhoods, protected from commercial and industrial uses. Neighborhoods should be protected from encroachment of commercial and industrial uses, and have slow and safe traffic. New development should be in keeping with the existing scale of neighborhoods.

A pedestrian and bicycle-friendly place. Streets and connections between various activity areas shall be improved to create comfortable and safe environments for pedestrians. Development should be friendly and engaging to pedestrians. Santa Monica should have a comprehensive bikeway network connecting neighborhoods,

schools, shopping areas, and the beach. Popular bike routes should be redesigned to offer more safety and convenience for cyclists, including supporting facilities such as additional bike parking/storage and transit connections.

A city rich in its array of transit offerings. The need to support transit enjoys overwhelming community support. Santa Monicans want to see high-quality regional transit services, such as light-rail and rapid bus, at a level that offers advantages over private autos for regional trips, as well as local services that are safe and fast and convenient enough to compete with autos for local trips. Santa Monicans especially support environmentally-friendly transit vehicles and continue to express specific support for light rail (with a terminus in downtown and a route along Exposition).

A city where traffic and parking work. Automobile traffic should flow smoothly, without disrupting neighborhood living. Park and ride lots, shuttles, and free or permitted parking by residents should be explored to facilitate easy movement. Transportation and land use patterns should be designed to work synergistically.

A city of balanced growth. Santa Monica's growth should be modest, with new development keeping with existing scale and character, and moderate increases in intensity in selected appropriate locations where reuse opportunities are present, where infrastructure can serve growth, and in places where transit is present or planned to foster transit-oriented development patterns. Many opposed growth that would lead to, expand, or worsen auto congestion in the City, particularly in residential neighborhoods.

A city with attractive boulevards. The city's major boulevards should be improved with increased landscaping, enhanced sidewalks, and additional parking. Mixed-use centers combining shopping and new housing replacing aging uses along the city's major corridors may help meet multiple objectives, including promoting neighborhood accessibility to shops and services, housing affordability, aesthetic renewal, and jobs and homes in proximity to transit. Residents would like to see the boulevards in walking distance from their homes developed with the kinds of shops and restaurants they like to frequent.

A safe and secure community. The city's neighborhoods should be secure; people, including children, should be safe walking or bicycling to schools or work. The City should address homeless issues so that public areas, including, parks, streets, and transit vehicles can be pleasantly enjoyed.

An environmentally sustainable place. Santa Monica should continue to emphasize "green" development, recycling, development patterns that encourage walking and cycling, clean air and water, and reuse of older buildings.

Attachment B

Policy Questions

1. How can Santa Monica plan for the regional aspects of its economy, medical and education institutions, and locational draw to create balanced growth and enhance the quality of life for residents?
2. What role can visitor-servers play in Santa Monica's future?
3. How much new housing should Santa Monica plan for to maintain inclusive and opportunities for affordable housing and yet retain an "appropriate town scale"?
4. What types of new development could fulfill the City's diversity and quality of life objectives?
5. How best can the existing industrial areas meet Santa Monica's needs?
6. How best can the character and quality of Santa Monica's residential neighborhoods be preserved while promoting neighborhood-serving amenities on adjacent commercial streets?
7. What is the appropriate scale and mix of uses for boulevard commercial corridors?
8. What is the appropriate scale and character of specialty commercial corridors?
9. How can the City maintain its economic vitality and protect economic advantages?
10. How can the City foster small businesses and establishments to maintain its uniqueness?
11. How can facilities that support a properly balanced transportation system be created?
12. How much parking is the appropriate amount for the community and what is the City's role in facilitating its availability?
13. How best can transit-oriented development be promoted?
14. What is the appropriate scale, intensity and character of new development, particularly in areas that are likely to experience change over the coming 20 years, such as the industrial areas, along corridors, and public spaces?

15. Other than policies directing new development, what resources are available to the City to implement the Community's vision? Which strategies are the most important? Are there resources that might be overlooked by a traditional land use and circulation plan?
16. How best can Santa Monica promote greater connections between different parts of the city? How could the priorities of the Circulation Element integrate and support the city's land use and how can urban design be best used as a tool in this integration?

Attachment C

Role of Goals, Objectives and Implementation Policies in a General Plan

Understanding the roles of and differences between goals, objectives and implementation policies is critical to shaping a general plan. While all are components of a general plan document, each has a different purpose.

Goals: Goals are broad statements which set general direction. They express an ideal for the future, rather than a specific action, and are rarely quantifiable or time-dependent.

Objectives: Objectives represent a finer level of specificity and serve as an intermediate step toward attaining a goal. Objectives can be measured and achieved within a specific timeframe. Because an objective seeks to bridge a goal's broader meaning into real action, several objectives are generally identified for each goal.

Policies: Policies are specific action statements, which guide the decision-making process once the plan is adopted.

The following example illustrates the relationship between goals, objectives and policies. At this stage we are establishing draft goals. Objectives and policies can be contemplated, but are not the focus of this part of the process; these more action-oriented statements can be more fully realized following the consideration of alternatives and trade-offs.

Example Illustrating the Relationship Between Goals, Objectives and Policies:

Draft Goal	Sample Objectives	Key Policy Considerations
A diverse and inclusive community supported by balanced growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a balanced and diverse economy that serves all income levels and preserves and enhances the City's economic well-being. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable retail • Sustainable economies • Local availability of goods and services (keep dollars w/in city) • Retain small business • Enterprise / Incubator industries or Districts • Clean industry • Tourism • Entertainment • Dining • Auto dealers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide affordable housing opportunities that support all income levels, age groups, household size and special needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable housing: workforce housing • Household size/type: Family, senior, mixed use, single family homes, multi-family buildings • Needs: Transitional, homeless, senior, assisted living
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the retention and creation of quality jobs for people with varied skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs that support a variety of housing opportunities • Skilled and unskilled job opportunities • Preserve and support small businesses (enterprise and incubator sites) • Professional jobs in retail, service, office, industry, visitor accommodations, technology, research and development, etc.) • Require workforce housing for large developments • Job training and advancement opportunities • Incentives to higher local residents
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for a range of land uses and activities that support the needs and desires of local residents, workers and visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing typologies • Commercial typologies (retail, service, entertainment, office, technology) • Industrial typologies (manufacturing, distribution, storage, building supplies, etc.) • Institutional typologies (medical, education, government, research) • Open space and parks typologies • Social service typologies (child care, elderly care)

Attachment D

Draft Goals: Land Use and Circulation Elements

Draft Land Use Element Goals

- **Balanced Growth:** A diverse and inclusive community supported by balanced growth
- **Local Identity / Regional Context:** A distinct local identity within the regional context
- **Enjoyment of Resources:** The continued enjoyment of and access to natural and cultural assets
- **Great Design:** Sustainable and innovative buildings and places with quality urban design
- **Connected Neighborhoods:** A community of safe, secure, and connected neighborhoods with quality public spaces and amenities

Draft Circulation Element Goals

- **Effective System:** A balance of transportation choices for residents, employees, and visitors to easily get around
- **Universal Safety:** A secure environment for pedestrians, cyclists, transit-riders and drivers
- **Great Public Spaces:** Well-designed public spaces that support travel, recreation and social interaction
- **Regional Integration:** A local transportation system that is integrated within the regional context
- **Environmental Responsibility:** A transportation system that minimizes pollution and motor vehicle congestion and preserves the natural environment

Attachment E

Draft Common Elements and Common Options

Common Elements: Elements that will be included in the preferred alternative regardless of elements chosen from alternative choices

- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation:** including connections between existing activities
- **Historic Preservation:** integrate the community's historic qualities to maintain its scale and character; seek to preserve structures and neighborhoods that contribute and honor Santa Monica past, and structures that have significant architectural, historic and cultural significance
- **Sustainability:** incorporate land use and transportation policy that promotes environmental and economic sustainability
- **Building Reuse:** maximize opportunities to reuse existing structures
- **Housing:** preserve existing housing while pursuing objectives for diversity
- **Neighborhoods:** Preserve the scale and character of existing residential neighborhoods
- **Education:** support educational opportunities for all Santa Monicans including the needs of schools and students
- **Open Space:** support goals of the Open Space element, including the concept of all public property as open space opportunities
- **Public Safety:** reinforce sense of community through neighborhood safety
- **Childcare:** continue to prioritize quality early education for children and their families
- **Active Living:** promote healthy communities through design and programs
- **Arts and Culture:** including support for a growing creative community
- **Economic Vitality:** including opportunities for local and community retail
- **Partnerships:** meet community goals through strong relationships with organizations, including medical and educational institutions

- **Existing Plans:** accommodate Santa Monica plans for a provision of city services, such as fire stations, libraries, solid waste, etc.
- **Regional Context:** acknowledge influence on housing market, economy and travel demand and participate in greater regional solutions
- **Quality Design:** enhance streetscapes, commercial and residential areas through quality urban design, including private property design standards

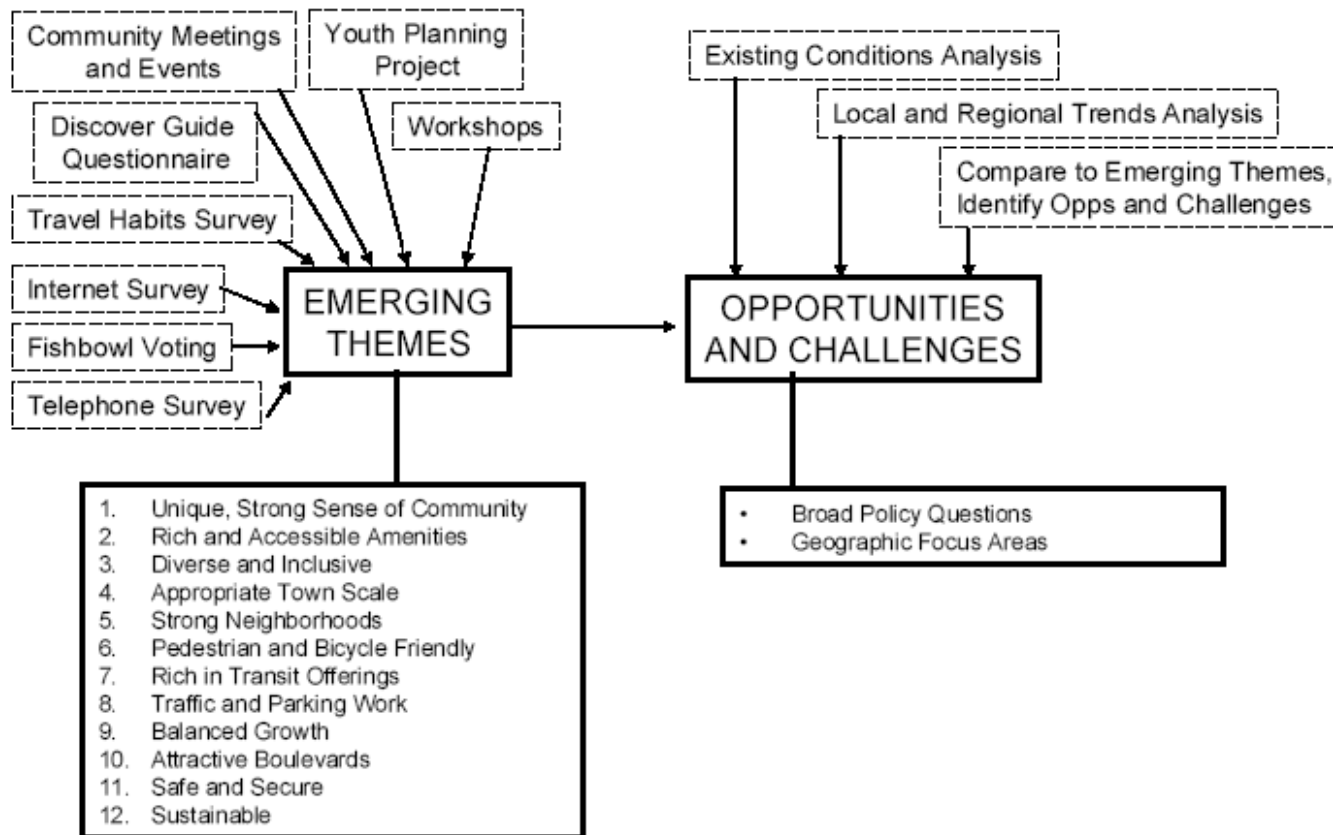
Options: Options that must be resolved regardless of Common Elements or Plan Alternative

- Incentives for sustainable business practices
- Incentives for preservation of residential neighborhoods
- Incentives for preservation of rent-controlled housing
- Incentives to support preservation of historic resources
- Incentives to support preservation and expansion of open space
- Incentives for preservation and expansion of childhood education facilities
- Incentives for preservation and expansion of local and local-serving businesses
- Incubator districts for sustainable industry and/or small business
- Incentives for adaptive reuse of existing buildings
- Degree of integration to strengthen other General Plan policies and city goals / objectives
- Annual growth caps
- Local shuttle system
- Shared parking districts
- Feasibility of an additional Exposition light rail stop near 14th or 17th Streets
- Transition of areas around proposed light stops/stations prior to the construction of light rail
- Conversion of existing rights-of-way to bike lanes, widened sidewalks, transit lanes
- “Woonerf” style mixed-use streets
- Parking pricing strategies to maximize parking efficiency and encourage alternatives
- Parking requirement modifications to reflect use and encourage alternatives
- Second dwelling units in R1 zones
- Transfer of Development Rights to preserve historic or existing buildings

- Rate and type of change of units in multifamily districts
- Diversity of housing
- Accommodations for single-occupancy vehicles
- Small neighborhood markets in multi-family residential districts
- Transportation impact fee

CIRCULATION AND LAND USE ELEMENTS PROCESS TO DATE

Attachment F
Process to Date Flow Chart

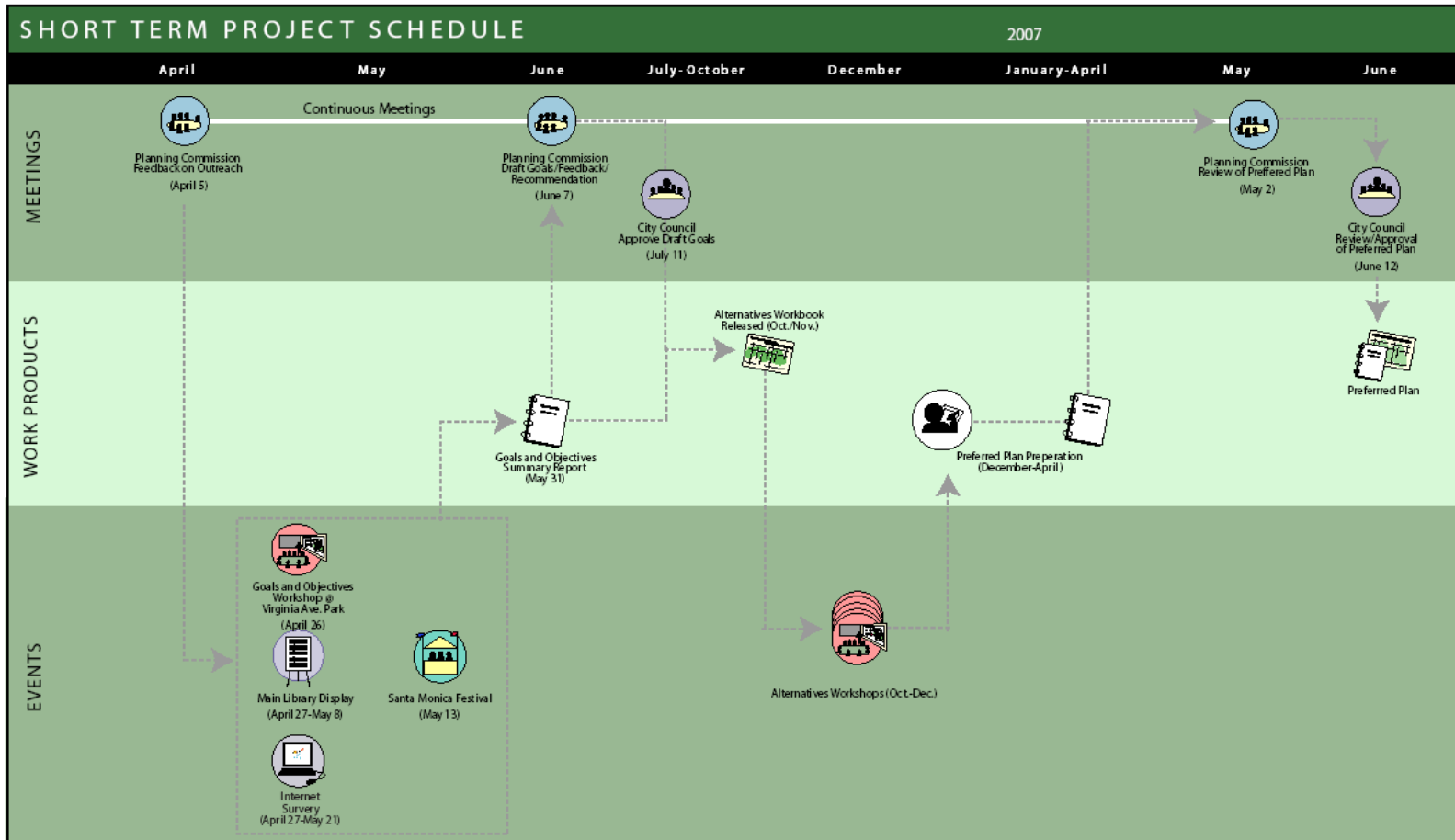




Santa Monica Land Use and Circulation Element Update



Attachment G Short Term Project Schedule





Santa Monica Land Use and Circulation Element Update



Attachment H Long Range Project Schedule

