



**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: December 4, 2007.  
 TO: Land Use and Housing Committee of the San Diego City Council  
 FROM: Murtaza H. Baxamusa, AICP  
 SUBJECT: Economic Prosperity Element of the General Plan

**SUMMARY**

When adjusted for the cost of living in San Diego, San Diegans earn the lowest wages per job in comparison to other metropolitan areas. Economic prosperity for all San Diegans cannot be achieved when low-wage jobs are being created in the region at a rate 24 times that of high-wage jobs. This leads to a widening economic gap and increased hardship as families struggle to make basic ends meet.

Our land-use decisions directly affect the kinds of jobs we create. There have been over 10,000 hotel rooms approved in the City of San Diego since 2000. Leisure and Hospitality is one of the fastest growing industries in San Diego, with employment of over 150,000, and that industry has the lowest annual wage (\$21,632) and the lowest rate of employer-provided health insurance (20%). For every 100 jobs created in hotels, almost 80 jobs will not pay a living wage.

The Economic Prosperity Element is the appropriate document to address citywide socio-economic issues. In fact, the Action Plan of the Strategic Framework adopted by the City Council in 2002 incorporated these issues. The current strategy of economic development for the city, which centers on incentivizing good quality jobs, is being reversed with the Mayor’s September 2007 edits. The edits take a biased view, promoting the tourism industry in order to make it eligible for water-sewer hookup fee waivers and other incentives.

Therefore CPI proposes restoring the draft to its pre-September version in these three key areas:

Page	Topic	CPI Proposal to Restore October 2006 draft	September 2007 draft
EP-24	Employment Development - Policies	EP-E.1. Support the creation of higher quality jobs in low-paying industries (such as visitor, entertainment and amusement).	EP-E.1...Deleted
EP-25		EP-E.3. Support measures to increase wages and provide advancement opportunities in low wage industries.	EP-E.2. Support the creation of higher quality jobs with advancement opportunities.
EP-30	Visitor Industries - Policies	EP-I.2. Provide business incentive programs for private, tourist-related development projects which offer living wages and demonstrate use of training/programs resulting in career ladders for its employees.	EP-I.2. Provide business incentive programs for private, tourist-related development projects which offer good employment opportunities, training, and demonstrate use of training/ programs resulting in career ladders for its employees.

## I. ECONOMIC PROSPERITY FOR ALL?

The Economic Prosperity Element should be concerned with the kinds of jobs being created by land-use decisions. Total employment in the City of San Diego is expected to grow 26% by 2030.<sup>1</sup> Thus about 200,000 jobs will be created during this period. About 4,050 acres of vacant developable land will be developed for commercial, industrial and office uses. Employment choices to a great extent determine choices in other quality-of-life issues. And employment choices are created, regulated and sustained by land-use development.

SANDAG is currently developing a Regional Economic Prosperity Strategy, and has done extensive analysis of the challenges faced by the region. The region's most important economic challenge is to raise the standard of living for all San Diegans, given the widening income distribution gap. According to SANDAG:

Over the past several decades the rate of increase in the region's standard of living has not kept pace with the nation. Our research shows that this trend has been occurring for two reasons: first, the San Diego region has been adding proportionally more jobs at the low end of the pay scale than jobs at the high end of the pay scale. Second, this "unbalanced job growth" problem has been exacerbated by a widening gap between wages received at the high and low end of the pay scale. The combination of these two trends is affecting the standard of living in the region.

In a SANDAG comparison of 24 metro areas in the country,<sup>2</sup> some key features of our economy are:

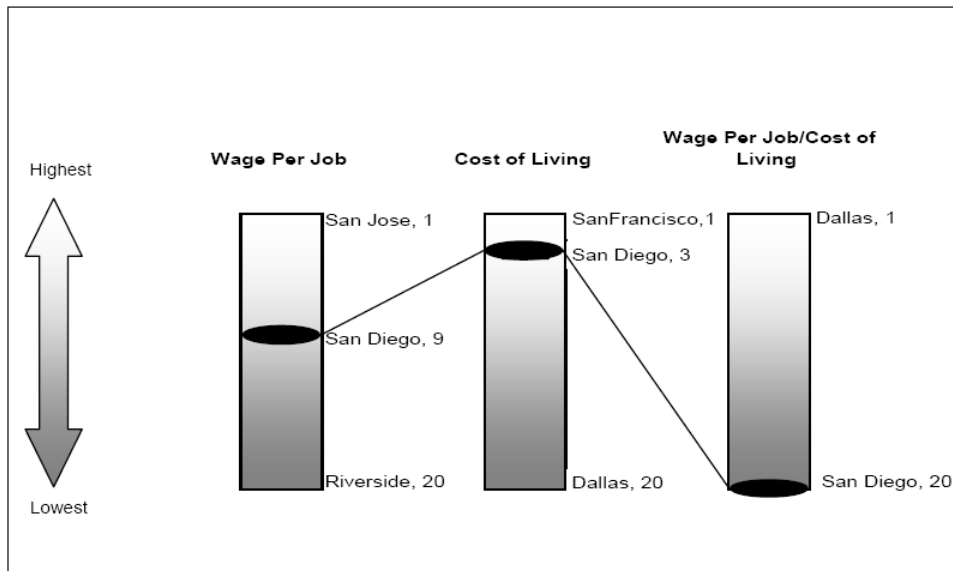
- San Diego has the lowest average wage per job, when adjusted for cost of living. (Fig. 4) This real average wage has lagged behind both the state and the nation since 1970. (Fig. 10)
- Even though San Diego has a relatively high per capita personal income (Fig. 5), it has not kept pace with inflation. Cumulative growth of per capita personal income has trailed both the state and the nation since 1970. (Fig. 6)
- San Diego has one of the highest ratios of output per worker to wages, which also means that the gap between worker productivity and wages is among the highest in the nation. (Fig. 9)
- The number of jobs at the low end of the pay scale has increased nearly 24 times more than the number of jobs at the high end of the pay scale between 1990 and 2004. (Fig. 12) In that period, 110,500 low-paid workers were added and 4,600 high-paid workers were added. In other words, for every one high-paid worker, the region has added 24 low-paid workers (pg. II-33). More than half (56%) of the region's jobs in 2004 were in low-paying industries (Table B-1.16).

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<sup>1</sup> SANDAG 2030 Population/Housing/Employment Forecast by Jurisdiction.

<sup>2</sup> May 2007 Draft, SANDAG Regional Economic Prosperity Strategy

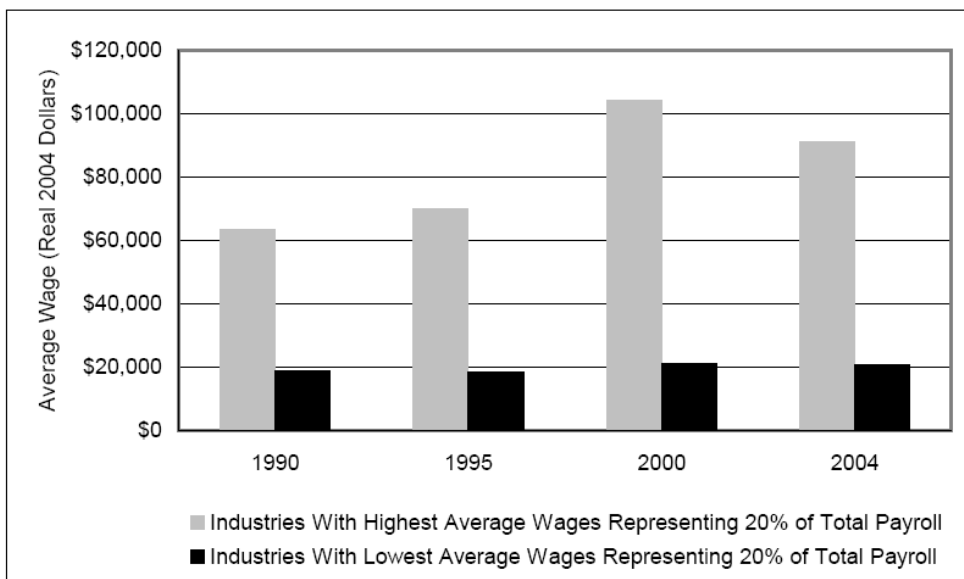
**San Diego Has the Lowest Average Wage Per Job,  
When Adjusted for Cost of Living**



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis; CNNMoney.com (data provided by ACCRA)

Draft SANDAG REPS 2007

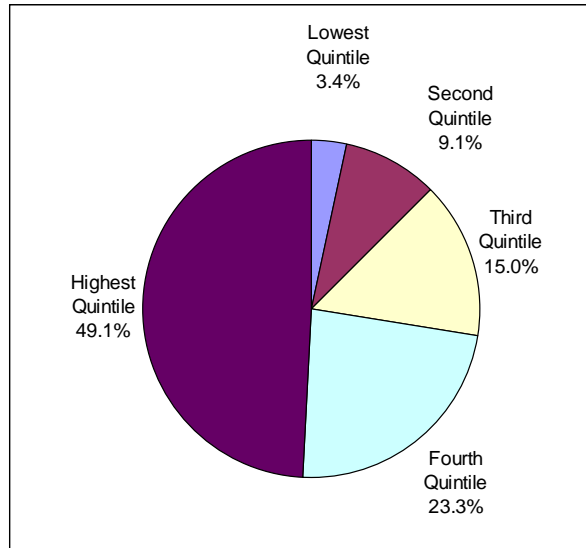
**Average Wage of Industries in Top 20 Percent of Total Payroll Is Three and  
One-Half Times the Average Wage of Industries in Bottom 20 Percent**



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages; SANDAG

As wage gap widens, this is also reflected in income distribution. For the first time, US Census allows us to track income inequality in cities. The City of San Diego has a Gini coefficient of 45.6, which results in an income distribution skewed toward the top. The lower the coefficient, the more equally income is distributed. Most European nations score between 25 and 33. Latest Census data shows that half of the city's aggregate income goes to the top quintile, and more than a fifth of all income goes to the top 5% in the county.

### Half of the City's Income Pie goes to the Top 20 Percent



Source: *Distribution of Aggregate Income by Quintile, US Census, 2006 American Community Survey, data for the City of San Diego.*

The General Plan will considerably impact low-income families in employment, housing, mobility and livability. The Plan either explicitly, or through its silence, will determine the economic well-being of city residents. In order to afford to live in San Diego, with a "bare bones" existence, with expenses like housing, childcare, transportation, food, healthcare and taxes, a single adult needs to make \$13.56 an hour and a single mother needs to make \$28.08 an hour.

### Basic Family Wage by Family Type for San Diego and Imperial Counties

Family Type	Basic Family Wage*
Single Adult	\$13.56
Single Parent Family	\$28.08
Two Parent Family (One Working)	\$23.62
Two Working Parent Family	\$16.98

\* Hourly. Assumes 40 hours/week, 52 weeks/year of work. Two working parent wage is the hourly wage for each individual parent working full-time.

Source: *California Budget Project, Making Ends Meet: How Much Does it Cost to Raise a Family in California, October 2007.*

In San Diego County, the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,205. In order to afford this level of rent and utilities, without paying more than 30% of income on housing, a household must earn \$48,200 annually. Assuming a 40-hour work week, 52 weeks per year, this level of income translates into a Housing Wage of \$23.17 an hour.<sup>3</sup> In addition, an average household spent \$9,161 on transportation in 2000/01 (\$4.40 per work hour).<sup>4</sup> For lower-income families, the expense of transportation poses an even greater burden, inhibiting wealth creation, hindering home ownership, and dangerously straining already tight family budgets.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> National Low Income Housing Coalition, *Out of Reach* 2006.

<sup>4</sup> US Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Consumer Expenditures Survey, 2000-01.*

<sup>5</sup> Surface Transportation Policy Project, *The American Dream*, 2003.

## II. THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

According to the latest data from the state's Economic Development Department, the Leisure and Hospitality industry has an average employment of over 150,000 in San Diego County. It has the lowest annual wage (\$21,632, including tips and gratuities). Within this industry, there are 29,323 workers employed in 514 hotels and motels in the region, who get paid an average \$536 per week.<sup>6</sup> Also in this major industry are 102,033 workers employed in restaurants and eating places who get paid \$311 per week.<sup>7</sup> And finally, included in this major industry are 15,399 workers employed at 571 concessions, theme parks, golf courses, fitness and recreation centers who get paid \$423 per week.<sup>8</sup>

### Employment by Industry

Major Industry Title	Number of Establishments	Average Monthly Employment <sup>a</sup>	Total Quarterly Payroll (\$1,000) <sup>b</sup>	Average Weekly Pay <sup>c</sup>	Annual Wage
<b>Private</b>	<b>91,982</b>	<b>1,088,602</b>	<b>\$13,022,781</b>	<b>\$920</b>	<b>\$47,840</b>
<i>Goods-Producing:</i>	<i>11,303</i>	<i>200,850</i>	<i>\$2,818,068</i>	<i>\$1,079</i>	<i>\$56,108</i>
Natural Resources and Mining	770	10,635	\$70,988	\$513	\$26,676
Construction	7,255	87,497	\$1,080,043	\$950	\$49,400
Manufacturing	3,278	102,717	\$1,667,037	\$1,248	\$64,896
<i>Service-Providing:</i>	<i>80,679</i>	<i>887,751</i>	<i>\$10,204,713</i>	<i>\$884</i>	<i>\$45,968</i>
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	14,682	220,648	\$2,138,164	\$745	\$38,740
Information	1,312	37,603	\$974,590	\$1,994	\$103,688
Financial Activities	10,055	81,466	\$1,442,232	\$1,362	\$70,824
Professional and Business Services	16,504	213,667	\$3,152,231	\$1,135	\$59,020
Education and Health Services	8,080	125,464	\$1,325,954	\$813	\$42,276
<b>Leisure and Hospitality</b>	<b>6,901</b>	<b>153,984</b>	<b>\$832,237</b>	<b>\$416</b>	<b>\$21,632</b>
Other Services	23,132	54,898	\$339,180	\$475	\$24,700
Unclassified	13	19	\$126	\$501	\$26,052
<b>Public</b>					
Federal Government	259	40,424	\$615,471	\$1,171	\$60,892
State Government	427	36,769	\$488,263	\$1,021	\$53,092
Local Government	582	144,653	\$1,714,351	\$912	\$47,424

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) Major Industry Level, 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2007.

<sup>a</sup> The average of the monthly employment for the time period. Employment is the number of filled jobs for the pay period that includes the 12th day of each month as reported by the employer and it includes full and part-time workers.

<sup>b</sup> The total compensation paid by an employer during the time period, regardless of when the services were performed. Wages include bonuses, stock options, the cash value of meals and lodging, tips and other gratuities.

<sup>c</sup> The result of dividing the Total Payroll by the Monthly Average Employment and then dividing by the number of weeks in the year (52) or quarter (13). Average annual pay is affected by the ratio of full-time to part-time workers; the number of workers who worked for the full year; and the number of individuals in high-paying and low-paying occupations. For example,

<sup>6</sup> Private employment in Accommodation (NAICS 721) in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2007 for San Diego County.

<sup>7</sup> Private employment in Food Services and Drinking Places (NAICS 722) in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2007 for San Diego County.

<sup>8</sup> Private employment in Amusements, Gambling and Recreation (NAICS 713) in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2007 for San Diego County.

industries characterized by high proportions of part-time workers will show average wage levels appreciably less than the pay levels of regular full-time employees in these industries.

A clearer picture of the employment distribution emerges when we go deeper into occupations within the tourism industry. This gives us the entire range of occupations from managers to dishwashers. Based on median wages by occupation, for every 100 jobs created in the hotel industry, 80 jobs will be below the living wage of \$12.41 an hour.

**Top 10 Occupations in the Accommodation Industry  
(sorted by number of jobs)**

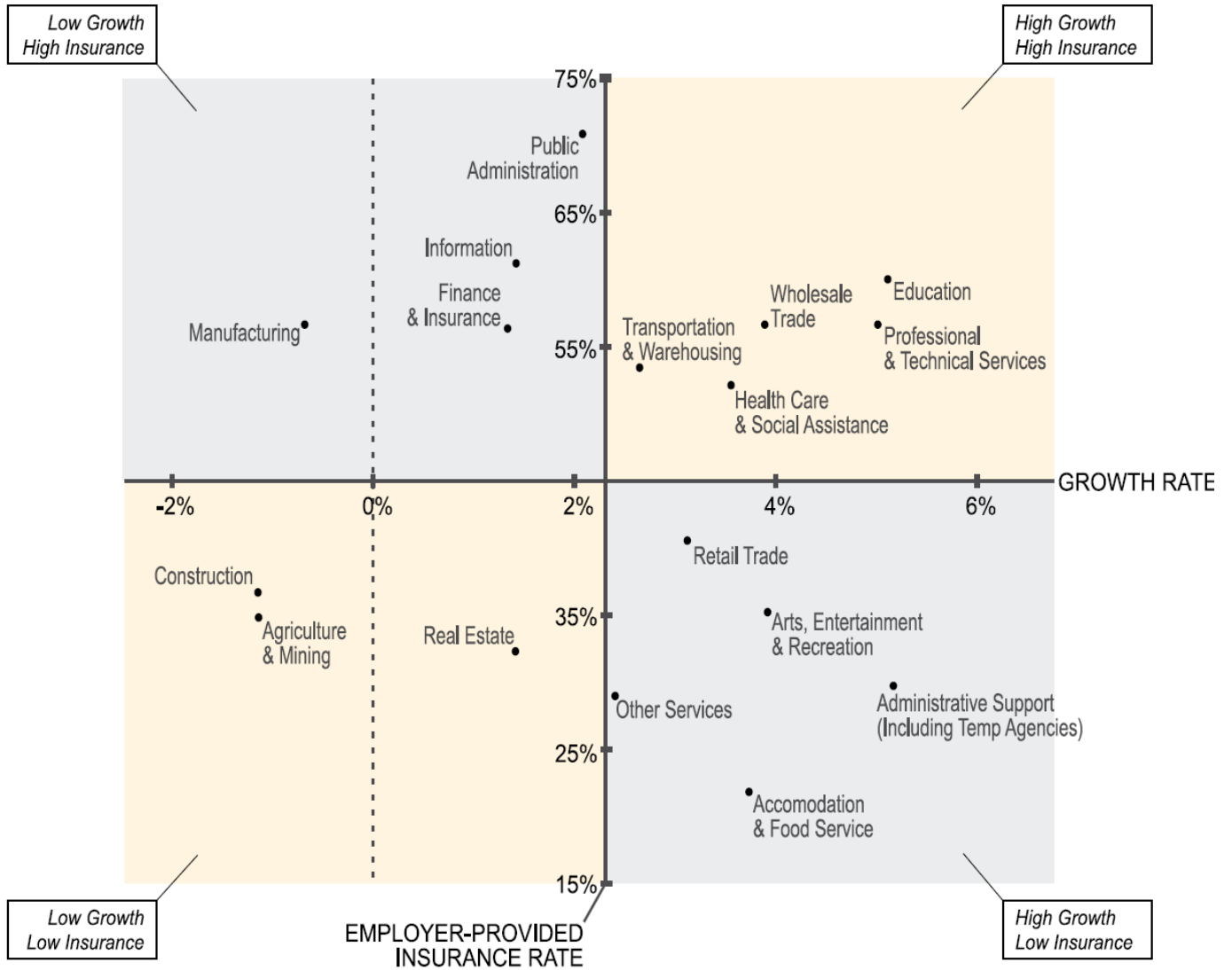
	<b>Total Jobs (per 100)</b>	<b>Median Hourly Wage</b>	<b>Mean Annual Wage</b>	<b>Mean Annual Wage '06 (Inflation adj)</b>
Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	25.6	\$8.62	\$18,533	\$20,429
Desk Clerks	9.5	\$9.72	\$20,641	\$22,753
Waiters & Waitresses	8.9	\$8.05	\$17,765	\$19,582
Food Servers (Non-restaurant)	4.5	\$8.43	\$20,721	\$22,841
General Maintenance & Repair Workers	3.9	\$16.00	\$35,263	\$38,870
Dining Room Cafeteria Attendants & Bartender	3.1	\$8.03	\$16,799	\$18,518
Restaurant Cooks	3.0	\$10.21	\$21,663	\$23,879
Janitors & Cleaners	2.6	\$9.10	\$21,690	\$23,909
Bartenders	2.4	\$8.16	\$18,357	\$20,235
Dishwashers	2.2	\$8.07	\$16,852	\$18,576

*Methodology: Proprietary CPI model using cross-walks between NAICS, SIC and SOC. Assuming 100 jobs in NAICS 72111.  
Source: Wages from Occupational Employment (May 2005) & Wage (2006 - 1st Quarter) Data for San Diego County,  
California Economic Development Department.*

In our July 2007 report, *The Working Uninsured*, CPI analyzed worker health insurance among California industries. The report found a clear disparity among California industries in the proportion of workers with employer-provided health coverage. Only 20% of workers in the Accommodation & Food Services industry had job-based insurance, the fewest among the state's 17 major industries. Another 14% in this industry obtain insurance through a partner's or relative's employer, and 9% buy insurance independently, leaving 56% of workers in this industry uninsured or relying on government programs. As a result, the uninsurance rate in Accommodation & Food Services (35.6%) is the highest among any of California's major industries.

Creation of jobs in industries with high growth rates and low insurance rates can be expected to have a negative impact on the rate of employment-based health insurance.

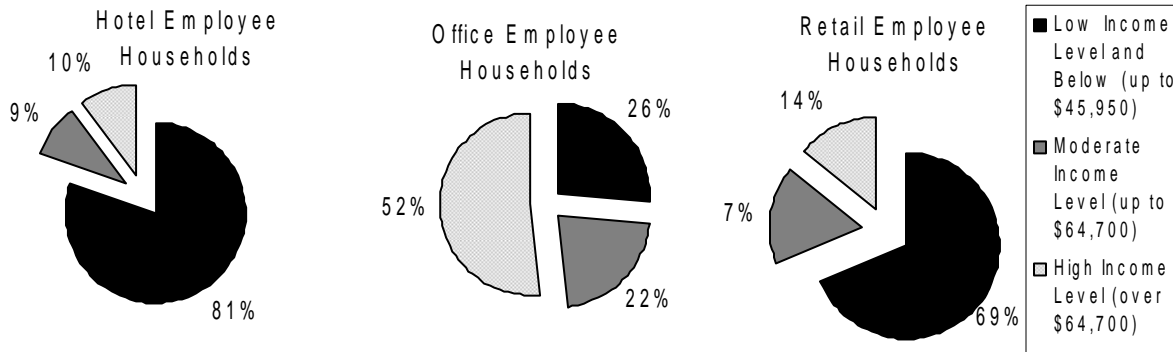
## Industry Employment Growth by Level of Health Insurance Coverage



Source: Employment Development Department Industry Employment Projections 2005-4th Quarter to 2007-4th Quarter California and 2005 California Health Interview Survey, UCLA Center for Health Policy Research

Thus, growth of jobs in certain industries rather than others affects the quality of jobs, both in wages and health benefits. This translates into direct outcomes for San Diego residents in terms of their economic prosperity and quality of life. Over 10,000 hotel rooms have been approved within the City of San Diego since 2000. These decisions have usually been guided by land-use documents, negotiations and public approvals.

### Land Use Decisions Impact the Quality of Jobs Created



Source: Data from the Keyser Marston Associates' Jobs Housing Balance report for the Centre City Community Plan Update, Table 1 (2005).

### Over 10,000 hotel rooms approved within the City of San Diego since 2000

Project	Rooms
Ballpark Omni	511
Hotel Solemar	235
W Hotel	265
Estancia Hotel	210
Hilton Convention Center Hotel	1,190
Spinnaker Conrad Hilton	250
Nickelodeon Resort Hotel NTC 7	650
Pickwick The Sofia	227
Westfield Horton Plaza Westin Hotel	450
Manchester Grand Hyatt	1,625
Westfield Horton Plaza	461
Tarsadia Hard Rock	775
Diegan Hotel House of Blues	180
Gaslamp Renaissance	344
KUSI Rosewood	123
Tower 23	250
Hilton Gaslamp Quarter	252
Navy Broadway	1,500
NTC Unit 8 Marriott Residence Inn	200
NTC Unit 8 Hilton Garden Inn hotel	150
Ivy Hotel	180
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,028</b>

### III. INCLUSION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES IN GENERAL PLAN

This section highlights key arguments and substantial issues about including economic prosperity in the General Plan.

(1) State law requires economic issues to be addressed in General Plans.

Local governments get their planning authority from police power conferred by the state.<sup>9</sup> The California Supreme Court has described the general plan as “a charter for future development”. *Leshar Communication Inc. v. City of Walnut Creek (1990) 52 C3d 531, 540, 277 CR 1* and *Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors (1990) 52 C3d 553, 570, 276 CR 410*. It is statutorily established that the General Plan is not just a land-use map, but has broad authority to guide the quality, distribution and impacts of development (see Government Code Section 65300 et seq).

California State Planning and Zoning law specifically states that social and economic development factors should be included in the planning process (Government Code Section 65030.1). State law in fact requires that the planning process address economic implications:

It is further the policy of the state and the intent of the Legislature that land use decisions be made with full knowledge of their *economic and fiscal implications*, giving consideration to short-term costs and benefits, and their relationship to long-term environmental impact as well as long-term costs and benefits.

(Government Code Section 65030.2)

State guidelines recommend that economic issues are central to land-use decisions:

...The general plan serves to: Identify the community’s land use, circulation, environmental, *economic, and social goals and policies* as they relate to land use and development.

(General Plan Guidelines, 2003, The Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, pg. 10)

(2) The Economic Prosperity Element must be consistent with the Strategic Framework Plan.

The Economic Prosperity Element is required to follow the implementation program laid out by the Action Plan of the Strategic Framework:

The Five-Year Action Plan is an implementation program for updating the General Plan, amending community plans, and identifying other steps necessary to execute the City of Villages growth strategy.

(Strategic Framework Action Plan, page 1.)

The Action Plan approved by the City Council in June 2002 explicitly calls for “high quality employment opportunities”:

Action Plan Goal 7: Promote Economic Prosperity and Regionalism

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<sup>9</sup> Dillon’s Rule.

Retain and attract businesses that diversify the economic base and offer high quality employment opportunities.

Goal 7d: Adopt Living Wage, or similar legislation, as a way to achieve a higher standard of living for all San Diegans.

Goal 7e: Economic Impact: Consider the economic and fiscal impacts of major development projects for use in the decision-making process.

- Consider wage levels of jobs created and new development impact on viability of existing uses in the community.
- Prepare economic impact statements for selected projects.
- Define "major development project" and identify what impacts should be addressed through the economic impact statements.

**(3) Economic development principles are an integral part of Smart Growth.**

A “smart growth” approach must integrate economic issues into planning:

Smart Growth is development that serves the *economy*, the community, and the environment. (*California Planning Guide, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, 2005, page 8*)

Smart growth means using comprehensive planning to guide, design, develop, revitalize and build communities that:

- have a unique sense of community and place;
- preserve and enhance valuable natural and cultural resources;
- *equitably distribute the costs and benefits of development;*
- *expand the range of transportation, employment and housing choices in a fiscally responsible manner;*
- value long-range, regional considerations of sustainability over short term incremental geographically isolated actions; and
- promote public health and healthy communities.

(*American Planning Association, Policy Guide on Smart Growth, adopted 2002*).

**(4) Addressing socio-economic issues is critical to comprehensive planning.**

The State of California Governor’s Office of Planning and Research defines the planning process as:

The planning process involves analyzing the environmental and *socio-economic impacts* of development and infrastructure projects.

(*California Planning Guide, The Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, 2005, page 1*)

Addressing broad socio-economic impacts in comprehensive community planning is a routine professional practice in planning:

The American Planning Association and its chapters support a sustained and focused initiative in federal, state and local public policy to reverse the general decline of urban neighborhoods and the

trend toward isolated, concentrated poverty through strategies that promote reinvestment within urban communities.

*(American Planning Association, Policy Guide on Smart Growth, Policy D1, Adopted 2002)*

The standard textbook for local planning also referred to as the *Green Bible for Planners* calls for “socially conscientious planning.” It describes community development and economic development as integral to planning as zoning and urban design. *(Linda C. Dalton, Charles Hoch and Frank S. So, 2000, Practice of Local Government Planning)*

Comprehensive planning should include employment issues related to low- and moderate-income households such as self-sufficiency wage levels, career ladders, access to healthcare, affordable housing, and childcare.

#### **IV. CURRENT STRATEGY FOR ECONOMIC PROSPERITY IS BEING REVERSED**

The Business & Industry Incentive Program was adopted by the San Diego City Council in 1993 in response to the severe economic recession of the early 1990s. To retail businesses generating jobs and revenue, the city has provided an array of incentives including water and sewer hookup fee waivers (which are valued at \$7,171 per equivalent dwelling unit). The guiding policy for staff to give these incentives is Council Policy 900-12.

The City Council adopted a Community and Economic Development Strategy to implement Council Policy 900-12 in 2001. This is the current economic development strategy for the city, which will need to be updated if it is inconsistent with the newly adopted Economic Prosperity Element.

The strategy lays out the following guidelines for giving business incentives:

1. Continue to provide business development incentives authorized under City Council Policy 900-12 and through the Enterprise Zone Program for businesses and projects that provide middle income job opportunities (manufacturing, R&D, and wholesale trade and distribution) and for the targeted clusters of biotechnology and pharmaceuticals, communications, and computer and electronics manufacturing.
2. Discontinue business development incentives under City Council Policy 900-12 for retail sales and industry clusters not identified in this strategy, unless such firms are provided assistance consistent with the economic opportunity, smart growth, energy independence, or revenue enhancement provisions of this strategy described below.

*(Community and Economic Development Strategy, pg. 8)*

The thrust in current policy is clearly to subsidize businesses that generate high-wage jobs, and to only give subsidies to other businesses conditional on providing other benefits such as economic opportunity:

1. Authorize business development incentives as provided under City Council Policy 900-12 to firms which make a written commitment to hire at least ten full-time employees through the One-Stop Career Centers; to pay employees a wage that will meet a family’s self-sufficiency needs, as defined by the San Diego Consortium Policy Board’s “Self-Sufficiency Definition for Employed Adults and Dislocated Workers,” (January 12, 2001); and to provide family health care benefits.
2. Collaborate with the San Diego Workforce Partnership to implement businesses’ written commitments to hire employees through the One-Stop Career Centers at defined family self-sufficiency levels and with family health care benefits.

*(Community and Economic Development Strategy, pg. 11)*

Partly as a result of these provisions not a single hotel has received business incentives.

The Mayor’s proposed revisions to the Economic Prosperity Element incentivize tourism employment regardless of the quality of jobs:

- EP-I.1. Develop a priority ranking system for Transient Occupancy Tax projects and programs which best implements the City of Villages strategy, provides directly benefits San Diego residents, and benefits the tourism workforce and industry.
- EP-I.2. Provide business incentive programs for private, tourist-related development projects which offer good employment opportunities, training, and demonstrate use of training/programs resulting in career ladders for its employees.

The first policy institutes a new type of subsidy program to give TOT revenue to hotels. The second allows the Mayor to provide existing subsidies (such as water-sewer hookup waivers) to hotels, some of which can occur without City Council approval. This is a clear reversal of existing city strategy on economic prosperity. The difference between “good employment” and “good *quality* employment” is that any job is a good job, where as any job is *not* a good *quality* job.

**V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CITY COUNCIL**

The Mayor’s revisions effectively remove any mention of low-wage workers in the economic prosperity element. The general plan aims to create middle-income job opportunities, but is blind to the plight of almost half of San Diego’s workforce working in low-paying industries. The Mayor’s revisions also meticulously avoid mentioning job quality in the employment being created, and sidestep raising the living standards for the working poor.

<b>Page</b>	<b>Mayor’s Edit</b>	<b>Issue</b>
EP-3	Substitute “average income” instead of “livable wages”	Average income can rise when the rich get richer and the poor get left behind.
EP-11	Remove the policy of encouraging creation of housing “consistent with wages earned” and instead make it “accessible to all employment areas”	If there is no link between the price of a home and income, housing will continue to be unaffordable for San Diegans.
EP-22	Delete the mention of declining wages in the tourism industry and replace it with “significant source of fiscal revenue and work for unskilled, semi-skilled and part-time workers”	This establishes a biased view of the tourism industry, laying the foundation for tourism incentives.
EP-24	Delete policies to “support the creation of higher quality jobs in low-paying industries”	The rapid growth of low-wage industries in San Diego has resulted in a declining standard of living.
EP-30	Delete the discussion of wages in the visitor industry and replace it with the industry’s ability to generate fiscal revenue.	Distorts analyses by SANDAG and the City’s own staff.
EP-30	Delete the policies incentivizing creation of middle-income employment with living wages in the tourism industry.	Subsidies will be handed out without regard to the quality of jobs.

The City Council can restore the document to the pre-September version, which was developed by staff after rigorous analysis and years of public input.

Specifically the following changes should be made:

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Thank you.

Sincerely,

Murtaza H. Baxamusa, AICP