

Understanding The Power of Creating a City Vision by The People

(Citizens, Organisations and Other Stakeholders)

Preface: I was asked to build this process as a first step of how to create and distill a clear city vision by the people. I refer to Laguna Beach (the “City”) as sample because I live there. The City has a cultural history but since there is no overall vision, creating a even the most appealing cultural vision is no more than a hit or miss.

The Power of a Vision: I just heard that there are two developers suggesting new village entrance projects (in discussion since the 1960’s), with 350 plus parking spaces each, for Laguna Beach (the “City”). The City also agreed on a new cultural plan with 41 goals. This plan is similar to the “Vision 2030” document of 16 years ago with almost nothing being implemented. Why does it seem we are not

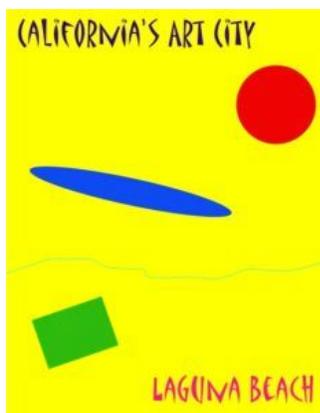
moving forward like we supposed to. This is a great opportunity to demonstrate the value of a future vision/direction to all the people that love their City enough to getting involved. Today, we have too many problems to fix that we forgot to look to the future and this keeps us from moving forward. Without an overall vision there is no common ground/direction with which we can all agree. This leads to dividing and stalling a community from moving forward. Who is really ready for another decade of focusing on different ideas guessing to see what sticks, or fighting them?

What Is
The Vision For
Laguna Beach’s
Future?

The Overseen Flaw: Without a future vision of the City, it seems we are trapped and have lost our ways by giving all attention to current problems, or to what we don’t want. Our motivation comes from fear-choices born of losing our quality of life. This dance

makes us powerless, creating a purgatory of uncertainty, indifference and stagnation. It is much more beneficial to decide what we want in the future and how this elected future affects solving our problems and its priorities now. I am in hope to motivate people to discuss this matter and start to see other solutions to move on.

Remember A Wiser Solution: Each Council member usually runs on different platforms, but as a whole, most politicians have forgotten that creating a future vision is the heart and soul of a city's quality of life. Not choosing is a choice that keeps everyone in limbo, forcing the involved to act by guessing a direction (where there is none).



Let's Step off the Game Board and Create a New Game. City residents and stakeholders would be wise to present what they want their future city to look and feel like. Present those futures to City Council to have it declare a clear future vision/direction for the City for the next 5, to 15 years. For example, if the Council decides the City should be a tourist trap then the aforementioned 350 parking spots might not be enough. On the

other side, if the City wants to be a culturally relevant player, we might not need this project and could think up alternatives. Do you see how much impact the lack of our leader's clear vision/direction has? A vision influences the potential of how much time and resources are wasted, what we all do, and how relevant we all can and can not become for the City we love.

Fixing Problems Without Direction: Each Council member usually runs on different platforms, focusing on fixing problems. Most politicians have forgotten that creating a future vision/direction outside of special interests is the heart and soul of a city's quality

of life. Not choosing is a choice that keeps everyone in limbo, forcing the involved to act by guessing a direction (that is not there). I want to unite all interested stakeholders to combine their efforts to help City Council create a vision that supplies a direction for the future. This includes defining our feelings and the conveniences we would like to experience living in this city in years to come.

An Overall Vision is Declared by the City Council. A vision conjures up feelings of a future that citizens can relate to. It is a people's' common motivator, without attached details or execution plan. Only a weak vision needs to be promoted by selling its details or projects. Voting for singled out issues got us in the many uncomfortable experiences we got us in the past. John F. Kennedy did not give details on how to get us to the moon, but people could align with his vision, understood the direction and created solutions united by this higher goal.

The Flow of Execution: Vision – Function – Form.

Vision is a feeling of a direction people can relate to that reaches beyond gender, race, lifestyle or political affiliation. It is not dependent on a certain amount of money. Obama's CHANGE campaign, even though not complete because of the lack of direction (where to change to), most people resonated and united behind the word "change." Laguna College of Art and Design's ("LCAD") vision is to become the "Juilliard of the Visual Arts." If LCAD raises \$5,000 or one million, it will always move toward the direction of its visioned goal, either slower or faster.



A Mission is the Function of a Vision. It is an action plan to execute/fulfill certain goals that support and are aligned with the overall vision. For example, LCAD hires every year three guest Artists from around the world to teach rare master painter techniques to be implemented in LCAD's curriculum. It creates a fund raiser to pay for the guest lecturers.

Form determines what fits best to the function and vision. Form supports function and the overall vision. For example, Established guest artists teach rare painting techniques is a more suitable form to support LCAD becoming the "Juilliard of the Visual Arts," than having a creative experiment of a group of students dismantling a car.

History Does Not Feed Us Forever. The City still has a high "cool factor" but most is a remnant of the past. No matter what the City chooses, I hope I can stimulate your passion to create something outstanding that connects us all in our beloved City.

I hope I could help getting a sense of what there is to do. Creating a future vision is not brain science, especially when we keep it simple. All it needs is people to take a second to think and follow the steps. Even without a final vision we have thought about our City and in this process we gained clarity to do what we all have to do with more insights and impact. Please share if you agree that a vision would support the City's quality of life.

The next step would be getting together and discuss and clarify this document that everyone interested aligns to its process.

For a the Step by Step Process of a City Vision [click here](#)

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