



**Promoting responsible
land-use planning &
environmental
protection in Santa
Barbara County**

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*Above photo: Santa Barbara
City Council Candidates
answer the community's
questions at CPA
co-sponsored forum*



Santa Barbara Independent.

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Citizens Planning Association Co-Sponsors a 21st Century City Council Forum

Santa Barbara residents were invited to experience a truly 21st Century political debate when candidates for Santa Barbara City Council took part in "The People's Forum." The live, interactive event was video streamed from a studio over the Internet and onto computers everywhere.

This was all-access, nonpartisan, participatory democracy at its purest, as approximately 200 citizens watched online and were able to ask questions directly to the candidates via a chat board. 60 people actively commented and asked questions on the live chat board!

This was a perfect debate for those unable or too busy to make it to a forum in-person, and perhaps the best chance for some Santa Barbarans to ask direct questions to those vying to become the city's next leaders.

The forum success was apparent it attracted a far greater number of citizens than any of the more than one dozen traditional in-person candidate debates that occurred for this year's election.

The event was produced by California Streamin', a Santa Barbara-based live Internet streaming company and co-sponsored by Citizens Planning

Association and The Santa Barbara Independent. Pam Brandon, CPA board member, initiated the concept and was one of the forum producers. The forum was moderated by Catherine Remak, the popular morning show host at KLITE. The chat room moderators were Matt Kettmann, Senior Editor at The Santa Barbara Independent, and Dominique Blocker, Communications Coordinator for Citizens Planning Association.

One major goal of Citizens Planning Association is to educate citizens and encourage them to get involved in the direction of their community. This forum was an excellent example of one way CPA enabled education and involvement this year.

Citizens Planning Association also benefited by receiving some good PR as The Santa Barbara Independent and the morning show hosts at KLITE advertised and talked about the event including CPA as the co-sponsor.

The success of the forum was expressed by comments from people on the chat board: "This kind of forum is intense from this side, and revelatory." "This is a really fine way to help us voter folk at home." "Thanks for a good job. Tough crowd. Democracy rules."