



Public Comment Received for:
Item 1: Plaza De La Guerra
(PLN2019-00576)

Name of Sender	Distributed prior to hearing	Distributed after the hearing
1. John Kelley	x	
2. Paulina Conn	x	
3. Barbara Lyon	x	
4. Francesca Galt	x	
5. James Main	x	
6. Pamela Boehr	x	
7. Cars Are Basic	x	
8. Paulina Conn	x	
9. Robert Rickard	x	
10. Edwina Main	x	
11. Robert Teneyck	x	
12. Lanny Ebenstein	x	
13. Robert Friedman	x	
14. Anonymous	x	

Historic Landmarks Commission Meeting of: April 22, 2022

15. Bonnie Donovan	x	
16. Susan Chamberlin	x	
17. Paulina Conn	x	
18. Judy Cota	x	
19. Darcy and Bill Sylvester	x	
20. Bonnie Donovan	x	
21. Francesca Galt	x	
22. Richard Closson	x	
23. Mary Ellen Brooks, Citizen's Planning Association	x	
24. Paulina Conn		x
25. Anna Marie Gott		x
26. Andy Garcia		x

Public Comment #1

TO: De la Guerra Plaza Revitalization Committee, Historic Landmarks Commission, and Santa Barbara City Council
RE: De la Guerra Plaza Revitalization
VIA: EMAIL
DATE: April 12, 2022

We commend the service of the De la Guerra Plaza Revitalization Advisory Committee, City Staff, and RRM Design Group in developing the revitalization proposal that was recently reviewed by the Historic Landmarks Committee. We appreciate the three years of hard work, including much public input, that produced this thoughtful proposal.

We are offering the following suggestions to simplify the proposal, reduce its cost, and address concerns that have been expressed by some community members. We recommend focusing on the essential elements needed to make the Plaza a more attractive place for festivals and events, political rallies, concerts and entertainment, and leisure activities.

We believe the following elements are **essential**:

- Remove the streets and curbs from the Plaza and DLG Street to improve accessibility for all
- Eliminate grass and install level paving in the walkways and Plaza to improve function and appearance, and to reduce maintenance and water use
- Install the utilities and other infrastructure needed to accommodate community events and activities
- Install a prominent feature that celebrates the history of our people and our community, and is accessible for all (for example a kiosk)

We believe the following elements are desirable but **optional**:

- Public Restrooms
- Bubblers or Fountains
- Arcade/Stage at the East side of the Plaza
- Upgrading City Hall Frontage

De la Guerra Plaza has a long history as our central civic space with many design iterations over the years that have never come to fruition. Let's revitalize De la Guerra Plaza now!

Thank you for your consideration,

- Ellen Bildsten, AIA, LEED AP, *Former AIA-SB Chapter President*
- Brian Cearnal, AIA, LEED AP, *Former AIA-SB Chapter President*
- Alayna Fraser, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, *Current AIA-SB Chapter President*
- William Goldsmith, *Retired City Planning Professor, Cornell University*
- Michael Holliday, FAIA, LEED AP, *Former AIA-SB Chapter President*
- John Jostes, *Former Santa Barbara City Planning Commissioner*
- John D. Kelley, AIA, *Former AIA-SB Chapter President*
- Bill Mahan, FAIA, *Former AIA-SB Chapter President & HLC Member*
- Harvey Molotch, *Professor Emeritus, Urban Sociology, UCSB*
- Don Olson, *Former Santa Barbara City Planner*
- Dennis Thompson, FAIA, LEED AP, *AIA National Fellow*
- Bendy White, *Former member, Santa Barbara City Council*

Contact: John D. Kelley, AIA - email: jdkaia@cox.net

Public Comment #2

From: [Peter Conn](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#); [Nicole Hernandez](#)
Subject: Save De La Guerra Plaza and City Hall landscaping as is
Date: Monday, April 18, 2022 12:29:50 PM

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EXTERNAL

4-18-22

RE: Save all of De La Guerra Plaza as it is now. Save City Hall BACK Door entry garden along 735 Anacapa St. Do not replace any plants with stone walls.

Dear Historic Landmarks Commissioners and City Historian Nicole Hernandez,

Why are you having what seems to be an owners only meeting at the Faulkner Gallery on 4-22-22? This is the public's plaza. I hope owners reject the whole plaza reformation idea. The Plaza works well for everyone as is. None of this busy work serves the community.

Do not compromise with any of the RRM Design suggestions. None serves any purpose except to degrade what is there. This design concept by the highly respected City Engineer, George D. Morrison, was accepted by a vote of the City Council on July 17, 1924! **Why is this vote not stated anywhere for the community to know?**

RRM is WRONG to claim that Anacapa St. is the front entry to City Hall. It is the BACK entry.

Anacapa St. (735 address) IS NOT THE PUBLIC'S FRONT ENTRY to City Hall. It is the BACK DOOR! Look at the City Hall design. Chambers are on the second floor with a beautiful interiore staircase on the De La Guerraside of the building not to mention the wide stairs and arched entry to the building. The front is DLGP.

The SB News Press at 715 Anacapa St. also has its FRONT ENTRY on the Plaza NOT on Anacapa St.

Leave the green hedges and other plantings on the Anacapa St. side of City Hall. DO NOT replace with stone walls of any sort. We humans, other living creatures, and our planet need plants to thrive. This wall building etc. is a busywork project.

If a storage area is wanted (not needed now and never was needed) for chairs and Audio Visual equipment then put the stoorage shed along one edge of Storke Placita. Building walls are already there. The Placita will become narrower but still can have vegetative plantings and be a nice paseo to De La Guerra Plaza.

Leave DLGP alone. Repair the sidewalks and bring in consistency of color, design, and materials.

Keep the mountain view on the east side between City Hall and the News Press. NO grandiose, nonsensical massive arcade that RRM designed for the trumped up reason to hide

the parking lot that is not visible now.

This historic Harmer adobe wall, is a reminder of the families even farther back in time who participated in the building of our City and our State and who were the owner of property around the Plaza when it was dedicated a public plaza.

These owners are labeled on Santa Barbara's first official street map by Vitus Wackenreuder 1853.

These owners, who were on the Common Council, precursor to City Council, played a vital part in early California state government, were related, or prominent residents were José de la Guerra, Miguel De La Guerra, Octaviano Gutierrez, Ysabel Yorba, Carlos Ruiz, José Loperana(sp?), Carlos Antonio Carrillo, Pedro Carrillo, Gaspar Oreña, Maria de la Guerra, Francisco Leiba.

De La Guerra Plaza (DLGP) is a State Historic Landmark. The official state plaque in the Plaza since 1950 says so. It's also stated by the State of California in an email by Jay Correia, Supervisor, Cultural Resources Programs Registration and Project review Units, California Office of Historic Preservation. De La Guerra Plaza and Casa de la Guerra are both CA. Historic Landmark No. 307.

I'm appalled that DLGP is not a City Historic Landmark. Make it one now. You have all the documentation. If you don't, I do!

The City must bring the purple recycled water line into downtown as a priority. It is already at Vera Cruz Park and SBJHS and SBHS. It is time for recycled water to be used for the Courthouse, Alameda Park, De La Guerra Plaza, Mission Historical Park too.

City Council in 1924 voted for the current design concept that was presented to them with the plans of George D. Morrison, City Engineer. Grass is shown in photos from 1926.

Just scrap the whole RRM Design idea. There were great architects in the 1920s who designed lots of fountains, paths, gazebos, benches for the Plaza. All would interfere with the public use for celebrations, free speech and general civic business that is the purpose of De La Guerra Plaza.

I will try to send a pdf with photos but my Cox cable is supposed to be interrupted today for three days so I'm getting this out to not miss out on public comments for the April 22, 2022 meeting at the Faulkner Gallery if you are allowing Public Comments.

Thank you so much for your service. The City Council and the Transportation Department and Planning Department should be listening to you if we are to save the historical significance in design and landscaping of Santa Barbara.

Sincerely,

Paulina Conn
2612 Foothill Rd.
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

805-682-5183

Public Comment #3

From: [barbara lyon](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#); [Nicole Hernandez](#)
Subject: HLC Notice of Special Meeting April 22, 2022
Date: Monday, April 18, 2022 11:25:37 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from barbelyon@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL

Re: De La Guerra Plaza

1. Why are you holding the meeting for "only the owners" -- what does that entail and why?
2. The Front Entrance to DLP is NOT Anacapa but on De la Guerra STREET itself, as is the entrance to City Hall and the SBNP.
3. We do NOT want pavement and we do not need to "raise the sidewalk pavement" -- we are human being creatures who NEED empty space, green grass and green shrubs and plants and flowers or vines.
4. PLEASE adhere to the already voted upon plans, not the ersatz new architectural plans that will make DLP just one more plastic arena found all over southern California. Be honest, KEEP the hispanic feeling of SB!!!

Sincerely

Public Comment #4

From: [Francesca Galt](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: De La Guerra Plaza CA State Historic Landmark # 307
Date: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 9:35:38 AM

EXTERNAL

Dear Santa Barbara Historic Landmarks Commission,

Our Plaza is the primary public meeting place for the people of Santa Barbara.

It should remain an open, restful, green space in the midst of the city.

Maintain it properly. Don't clutter it up. Respect our special Santa Barbara heritage.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Francesca Galt

980 Andante Rd SB 93105

Public Comment #5

From: [James Main Fine Art](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: De La Guerra Plaza Project
Date: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 12:44:49 PM

[You don't often get email from mainfineart@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

EXTERNAL

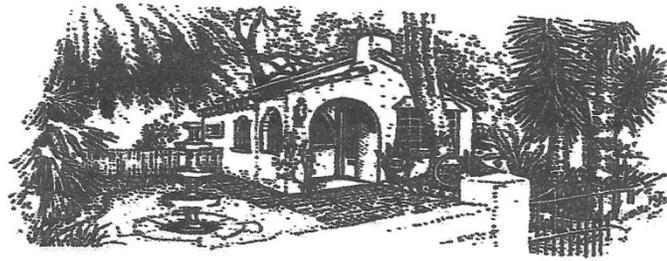
I am writing this email expressing my concern regarding the De La Guerra Plaza Project. As a local stakeholder and businessman, I am very much against this project in its entirety. There is no call for this kind of closure and it does not accommodate visitors to City Hall and the local businesses. If you're going to close down State Street, you shouldn't be closing down De La Guerra Street and loop. I believe the money should be spent on more police for the city of Santa Barbara. This project will hurt my business and force me to move after 40 years of business on the street. I believe the majority of the population of the city are not interested in this plan at all. It serves a small group of people involved with it Trust for Historic Preservation.

I have talked to other stakeholders regarding this project and they are all opposed. Removing access and egress to our properties and businesses is inconsiderate to say the least. We are currently discussing litigation against the city over this matter.

Sincerely,
James Main

James Main Fine Art
27 East De La Guerra St.
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
Ph: 805-637-8632
jamesmainfineart.com

Sent from my iPhone



The Gates Building
A Structure of Merit in *El Pueblo Viejo*
707 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

19 April 2022

Dear Historic Landmarks Commissioners:

De La Guerra Plaza is and has been one of the most important public spaces in Santa Barbara for almost a century. Please don't mess it up, spruce it up!

City Government has let the *Plaza* deteriorate and is now spending money to create something "fabulous." What is needed is to take care of the grass and hedges, get rid of the shack, maintain the whole area properly and leave everything else alone.

Please reject all RRM Design suggestions and tell the City to finally take care of the *Plaza* the way it should.

Sincerely,

Pamela Boehr

Juergen Boehr



Cars Are Basic™

Estab. 1998

19 April 2022

Historic Land Marks Committee (HLC)

To all named recipients:

Cars Are Basic, Inc™. is seriously concerned that once again with absolute fierce opposition to plans to change, close down De la Guerra Plaza, and potentially De la Guerra Street from State to Anacapa. The Staff and more importantly Council are willing to ignore both the wishes of the majority and the wisdom of years of and this hard opposition to changes.

Since when does the following of failed concepts of traffic management become more important than business success and the Historic Nature of Old Town.

CAB wishes to make it clear the City is using tired deceptive “out reach(?)” that is simple camouflage to do what the general public does not want. They (the public) feel they have no recourse and CAB repeatedly hears the statement that “You cannot fight City Hall” becomes unfortunate reality.

You are faced with the same opposition but this time the pragmatic public that opposes this is tired of the same fight. Different date and time.

They are angry. The history of the De la Guerra Plan is one of repeated review and public rejection. The current plan presented to Council by Community Development is the plan rejected five years ago. Local businesses and residents wondered how City would pay \$200K for a review of a plan that is now back before you reviewed and rejected by the public.

It was with some incredulity that CAB heard the statement that there is \$380,00 in un-allocated Measure C Funds that can be added to this project. How is this possible?

This is a not so subtle long term destruction of Historic Santa Barbara.

Leave the Street and Plaza open

Scott Wenz
President
CAB

1180 Eugenia Pl. #220
Carpinteria, CA 93013
cab@CarsAreBasic.org

From: [Peter Conn](#)
To: [Community_Development_HLCsecretary](#)
Cc: [Nicole Hernandez](#); [Santa Barbara City Council](#)
Subject: virtual meetings, recycle water, DeLaGuerraPlaza,Kikuyu grass,mental and planet health, emergency response
Date: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 3:09:47 PM
Attachments: [pastedGraphic.png](#)

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EXTERNAL

Dear Historic Landmarks Commission, Nicole Hernandez, Mayor and City Council,

Please have virtual access to De La Guerra Plaza discussion on 4-22-22.

The discussion about De La Guerra Plaza is too important to not have it virtual as well as in-person at this time in the Covid-19 process. CA is now one of the states with increased cases. Hospitalization, I guess, is not up yet in SB and if lucky won't be. Still I have heard from folks who want to participate at the Faulkner Gallery but are immune compromised and therefore are being denied their participation rights.

Please extend the purple recycled water line to all City Parks and the Courthouse.

Please consider expanding the purple recycled water line to all the City Parks including De La Guerra Plaza. It is money well spent and likely should have been done years ago and very likely while trenches were open just last year for upgrading of the regular potable water line. That is now a moot point.

Ortega Park seems to be the closest spot to De La Guerra Plaza that has recycled water, closer than SB High School by 0.2 mile (internet - via Canon Perdido to De La Guerra St.)

It is worth the estimated \$ 850,000+ to bring recycled water to De La Guerra Plaza and also Vera Cruz Park on the way.

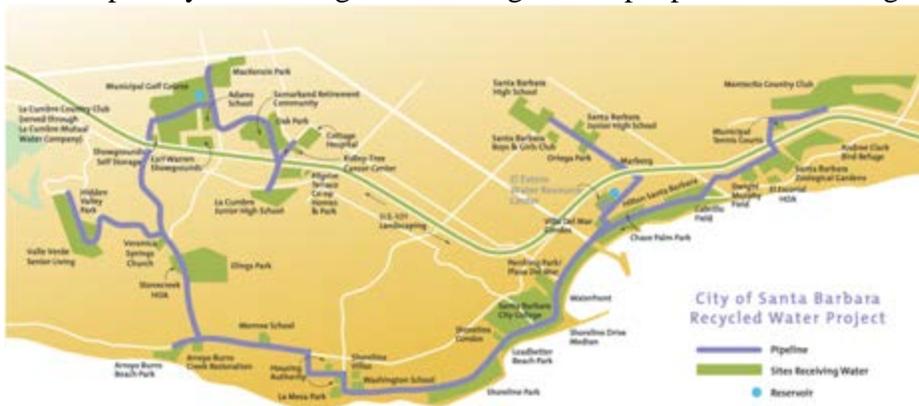
The south end of De La Guerra Plaza /City Hall is just 1 1/2 blocks on Anacapa St. to Cota St. (675linear ft.) plus it is five blocks from Anacapa St. on Cota to Salsipuedes (Ortega Park) (2,250 linear ft.). Total is 2,925 linear ft. if blocks are 450' long.

Let's make keeping Santa Barbara green with grass and shrubs for the well-being of people and the planet especially since the City Council allows for increased density and less landscaping by private owners.

The RRM Design water use regulation table by the City is very short sighted and detrimental to everyone's and the planet's wellbeing.

Kikuyu or St. Augustine grass is great for De La Guerra Plaza. It takes traffic well, needs less water than other grass and bounces back quickly after Fiesta, in weeks not months. With the thatch kept at 2" we have the maximum carbon sequestration as well. This is a win all the way around. People love the feel and smell of grass. None of us are fond of the feel of cement, pavers, or hardscape in general. We tolerate it. We do not embrace it with a feeling of happiness and enjoyment.

Want to better the mental health of all and perhaps reduce violence as well? Think about creating spaces that embrace nature - trees, shrubs, grass. The population will feel calmer. Hardscape may increase agitation - not good for people or other living things.



Continue the recycled water line for however much it costs to the Library, County Courthouse, Alameda Parks, and Alice Keck Memorial Garden. The end at Micheltorena St. is only seven (7) more blocks away. So the cost would be about \$1,000,000 more.

Thank you for thinking long term and not the faddishness nor short term which is what this De La Guerra Plaza Project is.

Please Make De La Guerra Plaza a City Historic Landmark.

De La Guerra Plaza deserves to be a City Historic Landmark with its current design maintained and repaired.

Please think about quick emergency responder access.

How much extra time and planning for emergencies will this De La Guerra Plaza reformation (not revitalization as this plan degrades) require?

How do you plan for emergency fire engines and police to get to the raised-to-sidewalk level and closed off De La Guerra St. and on to State St.? This crazy project increases time and cumbersomeness for emergency responders.

Sincerely yours,

Paulina Conn

Long time resident of Santa Barbara who went to local schools and whose kids were born here.

805 682-5183

From: [ROBERT RICKARD](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: Fwd: De La Guerra Plaza Revitalization
Date: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 3:15:11 PM

You don't often get email from r.w.rickard@sbcglobal.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: ROBERT RICKARD <r.w.rickard@sbcglobal.net>
Date: April 19, 2022 at 2:54:21 PM PDT
To: James Main <mainfineart@gmail.com>
Subject: De La Guerra Plaza Revitalization

To Staff.

My name is Bob Rickard. I represent the ownership of the Orena Adobe , located across De La Guerra st from both City Hall and De La Guerra Plaza. It has been brought to our attention that a task force of planners have been meeting regularly, to generate a revitalization plan for De La Guerra Plaza to present to the community for consideration.

First. Is this true?

If such a planning effort is taking place, how is it be financed, and from what sources?

Our City Government, ?

County Government?

State Government Involvement?

Private Donations? How?

Our concerns about such a campaign

Are these. .

The Plaza is need of serious and continued maintenance, which it has not received in years, That is the Revitalization that should be addressed.

All the roadways and parking around the plaza Need to be kept in place as legal access to businesses on the plaza as well as The News Press Entrance, The Orena Store , Orena Adobe and The Street of Spain. That last point is Vital to our building's, and other building's and businesses, very existence . Daily Commercial Vehicle Access and Emergency Access must be maintained at all times. Any proposed designs infringing on the items noted above raises, to our group , a legal flag that has to be investigated. Bob Rickard, Orena Adobe.

The Plaza has not been kept up for years and is in serious need of ongoing
True maintenance , watering,

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Edwina Main](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: De La Guerra Plaza
Date: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 3:15:17 PM

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EXTERNAL

I am opposed to the De La Guerra Plaza project, as are many of my friends. We use De La Guerra Plaza parking to access State St. for shopping, movies, restaurants, and even the post office. There are 75 revolving parking spaces in De La Guerra Plaza and the 1st. block of De La Guerra St. We cannot do without them. Parking is already difficult in Santa Barbara. Please do not make it worse.
Edwina Main

From: [Robert TenEyck](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: OPPOSED de la Guerra road closure
Date: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 3:20:09 PM

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EXTERNAL

I would like to register my strong OPPOSITION to closing the roadway on E. de la Guerra and de la Guerra plaza.
Thank you,
Robert TenEyck

Sent from my iPhone

From: lannyebenstein@aol.com
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: Special Meeting, 4/22/2022, DLG Plaza
Date: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 3:35:25 PM
Attachments: [DLG Plaza Statement.pdf](#)

EXTERNAL

To: Santa Barbara City Historic Landmarks Commission
Fr: Lanny Ebenstein, Ph.D.
Re: Special Meeting, 4/22/2022, De la Guerra Plaza

Dear Members of the Historic Landmarks Commission:

This letter is to encourage you to remain consistent with your comments at your January 19, 2022, meeting with respect to De la Guerra Plaza, when, as noted in the minutes of the meeting: "6. For the surface materials, all Commissioners prefer some grass."

De la Guerra Plaza is an absolutely unique historic resource and cultural landscape. It has existed mostly in its current, naturalistic form, and with current uses and activities, for more than two centuries.

Is there any other secular civic plaza, west of the Mississippi River and north of Mexico City, which has had such continuity of design and use for two centuries? If so, what and where is it?

I appreciate that modest improvements and enhancements to the Plaza can be made. I am not an advocate of no changes at all.

But the complete transformation proposed of De la Guerra Plaza would alter it beyond recognition and obliterate its historical connection to Santa Barbara.

The proposed plan to redesign De la Guerra Plaza would rip the historic heart out of our community.

Attached to this letter is a "Statement of Historic Significance" of De la Guerra Plaza that was prepared this past fall and which a number of people participated in drafting. It is intended to serve as a basis for local, state, and national nominations and designations of De la Guerra Plaza as a historic resource and historic cultural landscape. Post/Hazeltine in its 2011 Historic Structures/Sites Report found that De la Guerra Plaza is eligible for listing as a local, state, and national historic site and significant cultural landscape, including in the National Register of Historic Places.

The proposed redesign of De la Guerra Plaza is not merely inconsistent with its historic essence and does not possess community consensus, but it would not withstand challenge on the basis of its environmental-historical elements.

Thank you for your consideration. Santa Barbara is the beautiful community that it is because those who have come before have taken the time to do things right. It is now this generation's turn to do De la Guerra Plaza right. Please reject the proposed redesign and give guidance that future planning most more carefully and accurately reflect and personify Santa Barbara's irreplaceable and invaluable past.

Sincerely,
Lanny Ebenstein
Santa Barbara resident since 1961

attach: "De la Guerra Plaza: Statement of Historic Significance"

cc: Mayor and Council, City of Santa Barbara

DE LA GUERRA PLAZA

Statement of Historic Significance

- 1) De la Guerra Plaza is among the very most historic sites in Santa Barbara, California.
- 2) The history of De la Guerra Plaza precedes Santa Barbara's United States period and extends backwards in time to its Mexican, Spanish, and Chumash periods.
- 3) De la Guerra Plaza is about three-quarters of a mile from the site of the Chumash village *Syuxtun*, which had been inhabited for at least 800 years when the Spanish arrived. *Syuxtun* had a population of about 600 and was the residence of Yanonalit, the most significant Chumash leader at the time of contact between the Chumash and the Spanish. Yanonalit's cooperation was vital to the Spanish in building the Santa Barbara Presidio and other projects.
- 4) De la Guerra Plaza is located within 500' of the Presidio, which was founded in 1782 and from which the community of Santa Barbara is usually dated. The Presidio preceded the Santa Barbara Mission by four years and was originally the most important structure in Santa Barbara. There were only four presidios (military forts) in Alta (Upper) California. The Santa Barbara Presidio was the last major institution founded by Fr. Junipero Serra, who in 2015 was canonized as a saint by the Roman Catholic Church.
- 5) In the years after the Presidio's construction, adobe homes were built outside its walls, including adjacent to De la Guerra Plaza. A road, of which Presidio Avenue next to the Post Office is now the last fragment, connected the Mission to the harbor. The Presidio was just to the east of this road. The area to the west in the vicinity of De la Guerra Plaza was the most concentrated site of adobes in Santa Barbara and became the primary area of European settlement. George Vancouver, a British naval explorer, traveled past the Santa Barbara coast in 1793 and said of the community: "The buildings appeared to be regular and well constructed, the walls clean and white and the roofs of the houses were covered with a bright red tile. The Presidio excels all others in neatness, cleanliness, and other smaller though essential comforts" (in C. M. Gidney, *et al.*, *History of Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo and Ventura Counties*, vol. I [1917], p. 32).
- 6) The adobe homes surrounding De la Guerra Plaza included those of the most important Spanish and Mexican leaders in Santa Barbara, and, to only a slightly lesser degree, in Spanish and Mexican California. These included adobes of the De la Guerra and Carrillo families.
- 7) Jose Raimundo Carrillo was born in Baja California in 1749. He was a soldier in the expedition of Gaspar de Portola that visited and explored Santa Barbara and the rest of the California coast to San Francisco in 1769-1770. Jose Raimundo Carrillo was the third

commander of the Santa Barbara Presidio and founder of one of the leading families in California as well as Santa Barbara. He also served as commander of the Monterey Presidio.

8) Jose de la Guerra was born in Spain in 1779. His standing in Santa Barbara during the late Spanish, Mexican, and early American periods was second to none. Jose de la Guerra became commander of the Santa Barbara Presidio in 1815 and, according to Walker A. Hawley in *Early Days of Santa Barbara* (1910), his command “extended over a period of 24 years, during which the presidio passed through the best days of its existence. At the time he assumed command, the presidio was completed and was in the best condition of any in California; all of the Mission buildings had been erected, with the exception of the present stone church, which was founded the same year and completed five years later; the pueblo had begun to spring up around the presidio ... Santa Barbara had reached a position of dignity and importance among the settlements of the Pacific Coast. Although Monterey was the capital of Alta California, the governors frequently visited Santa Barbara, and several gubernatorial proclamations were made during their visits here.” The commander of the Santa Barbara Presidio was a “man of consequence in the affairs of the [California] coast” (pp. 62-63).

9) Santa Barbara was a leading center in Spanish and Mexican California. It is estimated that in 1838-39, there were about 10,000 to 12,000 Europeans in all of Alta California and about 20,000 Native Americans (William Heath Davis, *Sixty Years in California* [1889], p. 63). During Santa Barbara’s Spanish and Mexican periods, its European and Native American populations comprised as much as a tenth of the total population of each group in Alta California. According to C. M. Gidney, in the 1830s and 1840s: “The two most important towns in California ... were Santa Barbara and Monterey” (*History of Santa Barbara*, p. 65).

10) Jose de la Guerra’s residence--Casa de la Guerra--was constructed between 1819 and 1826, and anchored the northern side of Plaza de la Guerra. It was the largest and most prominent residence in Santa Barbara, and among the largest and most significant residences in California. Jose de la Guerra married Maria Antonia Juliana Carrillo, the only daughter of Jose Raimundo Carrillo. Laurance Hill and Marion Parks described Casa de la Guerra as “the center of the political and social life of the city whether he [Jose de la Guerra] held office or not. Every traveler to the port made it a point to call at his home ... Scene of so many resplendent gatherings, social, political, military, that have loomed large in the history of Santa Barbara, the stately De la Guerra mansion shelters not only the memory of this fascinating Comandante, but equally is redolent of the charm and kindness of its mistress, Dona Maria Antonia, ‘a fine, motherly, good woman, who had acquired by her deportment and affectionate manner toward strangers the esteem of all who knew her ... An American lady once observed, that there were in California two things supremely good, La Senora de la Guerra, and grapes!’” (*Santa Barbara: Tierra Adorada* [*The Adored Land*] [1930], p. 20).

11) Activities in Casa de la Guerra and its adjoining plaza were portrayed in early works on California, including Richard Henry Dana’s *Two Years Before the Mast* (1840). Dana

described the 1836 marriage of Dona Anneta de la Guerra, youngest daughter of Jose de la Guerra, “the head of the first family in California ... After supper the crew rowed ashore dressed in our uniforms and went up to the fandango. The bride’s father’s house was the principal one ..., with a large court in front, on which a tent was built capable of containing several hundred people. As we drew near we heard the accustomed sound of violins and guitars, and saw a great motion of the people within. Going in, we found nearly all the people of the town--men, women, and children--collected and crowded together, leaving hardly room for the dancers ... The great amusement of the evening--which I suppose was owing to its being carnival--was the breaking of eggs filled with cologne, or other essences, on the heads of the company ... A tall, stately Don with immense gray whiskers, and a look of great importance, was standing before me when I felt a light hand on my shoulder, and turning round, saw Dona Angustia [sister of the bride] with her finger on her lip, motioning me gently aside. I stepped back a little, when she went up behind the Don and with one hand knocked off his huge sombrero, and at the same instant with the other broke the egg upon his head ... The Don looked round in vain for some time, until the direction of so many laughing eyes showed him the fair offender. She was his niece, and a great favorite with him, so old Don Domingo had to join the laugh” (ch. 27).

12) Alfred Robinson, a United States citizen, was the groom of Anneta de la Guerra in 1836. He himself wrote a history of California, *Life in California* (1846), in which he described the later wedding celebration of his wife’s sister Angustia at Casa and Plaza de la Guerra, and Jose de la Guerra’s role in Santa Barbara and California affairs. Robinson said that after the marriage ceremony at the Mission: “The bride and bridegroom were escorted to the house of her father ... Dinner being over, part of the company retired to their homes, whilst some of the younger adjourned to a booth, which was prepared in the courtyard, sufficiently large to contain several hundred people. Here they danced a while ... Early in the evening, people, invited and uninvited, began to fill up the booth, and soon dancing commenced. The music consisted of two violins and a guitar ... During the evening all took active part in the amusement” (pp. 94-95). Like Dana, Robinson observed the activity of breaking eggs filled with cologne or scented water on the heads of participants, a custom similar to the breaking of confetti-filled eggs that continues to be practiced in De la Guerra Plaza during Fiesta Mercado to this day. Robinson noted other events in De la Guerra Plaza in which “four or five hundred persons were collected” (p. 135). Concerning the influence of Jose de la Guerra on Santa Barbara, Robinson wrote that he “filled the highest station in its political and military administration ... and possessed a wonderful influence over his townsmen; for nearly all had served under his command” (p. 87). When Jose de la Guerra died in 1858, Robinson considered it “one of the more important events in the early history of the State” (p. 169). With respect to the political and social place of Santa Barbara in California during its Mexican and Spanish periods, he wrote: “Santa Barbara is the central position in California, and holds the balance of power between the north and south; so that whatever side she favored, was sure to succeed” (p. 87).

13) Carlos Carrillo was a son of Jose Raimundo Carrillo. Carlos was born in the Santa Barbara Presidio in 1783, when his father was commander. Carlos Carrillo was a representative

to the Mexican Congress from Alta California. In 1837, Carlos was briefly governor of Alta California. Among several adobes owned by members of the Carrillo family, two were on the southern end of Plaza de la Guerra, approximately where the *Santa Barbara News-Press* building is now located, and the Carrillo adobes anchored the south side of the plaza.

14) Seven members of the De la Guerra and Carrillo families were elected mayor of Santa Barbara during the first decade of California statehood (the mayor's term was typically one year): Francisco de la Guerra (1850), Joaquin Carrillo (1851), Joaquin de la Guerra (1854), Pablo de la Guerra (1855), Jose Carrillo (1855), Antonio de la Guerra (1856), and Guillermo Carrillo (1858) (Hal Conklin, "City of Santa Barbara Leadership" [2012], pp. 8-9). The standing of the De la Guerra and Carrillo families is attested by the naming of two of the most important city streets for them in 1851. Neal Graffy writes that Pablo de la Guerra "helped draft the California Constitution and was a state senator, lieutenant governor, judge, county supervisor, and mayor. Antonio Maria de la Guerra was also a state senator, county supervisor, councilman, mayor, and Captain of the Native Cavalry during the Civil War. Still other sons were councilmen, mayors, judges, and sheriffs." Graffy also says, of the Carrillo family, that it is "regarded by many historians as the leading family of early California ... Carrillos were in the Mexican Congress, California (Mexican era) assembly, legislature, and, albeit for a very brief period, one was governor. During both the Mexican and American eras they were city councilmen of Santa Barbara and *alcaldes* and mayors of Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, and Santa Monica" (*Street Names of Santa Barbara* [2015], pp. 26, 29).

15) The De la Guerras and Carrillos were the leading families in Santa Barbara and among the very leading families in California during its Spanish, Mexican, and early American periods. Casa de la Guerra was the leading residence in the community and Plaza de la Guerra was the heart of community civic and social life. The almost continuous use of De la Guerra Plaza for community, civic, and social purposes extends for approximately two centuries: among the longest continuous use of a secular as distinct from religious venue for these purposes not merely locally or in California, but west of the Mississippi River and north of Mexico. Moreover, there is consistency in its use over these 200 years.

16) According to the Post/Hazeltine "Historic Structures/Sites Report and Cultural Landscape Report for Plaza de la Guerra" (2011): "By the 1840s, a number of adobe houses were located on either side of the plaza" (p. 9). In addition to those of the De la Guerra and Carrillo families, other adobes adjacent to Plaza de la Guerra included those of the Gutierrez, Yorba, Ruiz, Lorenzana, Leyva, Orena, and Ortega families. Some of these were significant structures, and most of their owners were important Santa Barbarans. Jose Francisco de Ortega was on the first Spanish land expedition, headed by de Portola, that reached Santa Barbara in 1769. Ortega is generally credited as the European discoverer of San Francisco Bay and was the first commander of the Santa Barbara Presidio in 1782-1783. He was married to a member of the Carrillo family, and many of his descendants were prominent local residents during the Spanish, Mexican, and early American periods. Octaviano Gutierrez served on the first Grand Jury under American rule

and was elected to the Santa Barbara Common Council in 1851. As would become the case in the twentieth century, De la Guerra Plaza was the power center of Santa Barbara during the 1800s.

17) The first reliable map of Santa Barbara was prepared by Vitus Wakenreuder in 1853, two years after Salisbury Haley surveyed the city and established the street and block grid. “Plaza de la Guerra” is clearly identified on the Wakenreuder map, extending from the De la Guerra to Carrillo adobes and flanked on both sides by other adobes.

18) Among the early ordinances passed by the Santa Barbara Common Council was no. 37 in April 1853 to preserve open spaces for community use:

Section 1. The following City property is hereby constituted and set aside forever and shall be known as City Squares and Promenades.

1. All that piece of land bounded on the North West by the actual street running in front of the house of Don Jose de la Guerra y Noriega; on the South East by the lots of the heirs of the late Don Carlos Carrillo and that of Don Pedro C. Carrillo; on the North East by the lots of Don Octaviano Gutierrez, Dona Isabela Yorba and Dona Maria del Carmen Rodriguez; and on the South West by the lots of Don Francisco Leyva, Don Gaspar de Orena and of Dona Maria Ortega, with the name of Plaza de la Guerra. [in Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, *Plaza de la Guerra Reconsidered* (2002), p. 5]

19) De la Guerra Plaza was the first city property established as a public square. Richard E. Oglesby writes of plazas generally: “As the plaza idea evolved over time, its place and function became so much a part of urban life that Philip II of Spain was moved to gather all the known ordinances and ideas regarding the creation and development of plazas and issue them in 1573 in a compendium of everything pertaining to city planning ... In 1789, Philip’s original compendium was modified and modernized for use in Spain’s overseas holdings as *The Plan of the Indies*, a complete set of instructions for the founding and building of cities in the Americas ... Fundamental to that *Plan*, and perhaps the greatest legacy to the cities derived from it, is the central plaza, the focus of urban life” (in *ibid.*, p. 6). A statement from Spanish instructions for development of settlements in the Americas in 1791 was:

The main plaza is to be the starting point for the building of the town ... [It] should be in the center of the town and of oblong shape, its length being equal to at least one and half times its width, as this proportion is the best for festivals in which horses are used and any other celebrations which have to be held. [in *ibid.*, pp. 21, 53-54]

20) According to Post/Hazeltine: “Initially, statehood brought few visible changes to Plaza de la Guerra, which continued to reflect its Spanish Colonial/Mexican era appearance, with

adobe houses extending in a somewhat irregular fashion around the four sides of the plaza and an informal network of pathways that linked the plaza with surrounding streets” (p. 11). The first Santa Barbara City Hall, fire building, and jail were erected in De la Guerra Plaza in 1874. Various adobes surrounding De la Guerra Plaza were demolished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, some after the 1925 Santa Barbara earthquake, or were converted to commercial use.

21) Interest in California’s and Santa Barbara’s Spanish and Mexican past started late in the nineteenth century. According to David Gebhard: “The early 1890s experienced an awakening of interest in California’s Hispanic past, and in Santa Barbara the remaining adobe houses were increasingly looked upon as romantic fragments that should be preserved” (*Santa Barbara--The Creation of a New Spain in America* [1982], p. 12). Frank Sands wrote in 1895: “The old adobes, those ‘Crumbling remains of Spanish glory,’ cannot but please one whose eye has been educated in the picturesque” (in *ibid.*). In 1896, S. E. A. Higgins published a volume in which, according to Gebhard, he “noted the continual loss of Santa Barbara’s adobes and that the remaining adobes should be lovingly restored and cared for so that those in the future would be aware of the City’s Hispanic background” (*ibid.*). “And so began,” Gebhard finished, “the effort to enhance the Hispanic atmosphere of the city by holding onto that which existed, but also to encourage the design of new buildings to reflect this inheritance” (*ibid.*).

22) In 1910, De la Guerra Plaza was described as having “retained a time-worn air, with its line of old adobes, crumbling though white-washed, slumbering in a row ... Long may they remain, they and their fellows, to shed the glamour of the past, with its mistakes and traditions, ... over the new spirit of California” (in *ibid.*, p. 13). Gebhard remarked that in the early twentieth century, Santa Barbara “remained the most Hispanic city in California” (*ibid.*, p. 16).

23) There was, according to Post/Hazeltine, also a “renewed interest in America’s earlier architectural heritage” in the early 1920s. “This was exemplified,” in Santa Barbara, “by an enthusiasm for the culture of California’s Spanish Colonial/Mexican past. One of the first manifestations of this was the creation of Old Spanish Days and Fiesta (inaugurated in 1924 to celebrate the opening of the new Lobero Theatre). This movement engendered considerable interest among community activists in recasting the City’s architectural vocabulary ... to one inspired by Santa Barbara’s surviving Spanish and Mexican period architecture and its Mediterranean antecedents. Among the most significant early projects were the construction of the retail complex, El Paseo (1922-1924), built adjacent to the Casa de la Guerra, and the *Daily Press* building, constructed on the periphery of Plaza de la Guerra (1922). Stimulated by these early examples, Mediterranean-inspired architecture soon became the preferred stylistic motif for many of the City’s commercial and institutional buildings” (p. 7).

24) In 1922, Santa Barbara city voters approved a bond measure by a six-to-one margin for the construction of the current City Hall. This allowed restoration of De la Guerra Plaza as a physically unencumbered open space. With respect to development in the plaza, Post/Hazeltine

states: “The open space was simply graded and planted with grass ... Additional landscaping was relegated to a number of small trees set near the south end of the plaza and two queen palms planted near East De la Guerra Street. Other improvements included the installation, in circa 1923-1924, of scalloped adobe walls ... While simple in design these walls provided an architectural motif that visually unified the plaza into a single architectural composition” (p. 14). A *Santa Barbara Morning Press* editorial in 1925 argued that a “combination of planting including smaller vegetation and flowers needed to be combined with a fountain or statue at its [the plaza’s] center, providing a ‘typical Spanish appearance suitable to its surroundings’” (in S.B. Trust, *Plaza de la Guerra*, p. 21). At several points in the early 1920s, a classical, Spanish-style fountain was proposed, including by George Washington Smith and Lutah Maria Riggs, for De la Guerra Plaza but these proposals did not come to fruition.

25) The major earthquake that struck Santa Barbara on June 29, 1925, placed plans for further development of De la Guerra Plaza on hold. Instead, the civic focus became reconstruction of the city, including creation of the first municipal Architectural Board of Review in the United States, which moved the architecture of the rebuilding city in a strongly Mediterranean-Spanish Colonial Revival direction. In order to retain this design specifically in the downtown and Santa Barbara Mission areas, El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District was later established.

26) In 1950, the following plaque was placed along De la Guerra Street on the northwestern side of De la Guerra Plaza:

DE LA GUERRA PLAZA
1850-1950

Near this site, August 26, 1850, two weeks before California statehood, duly elected Common Council, City of Santa Barbara, held first official meeting. Here in 1875, first city hall erected and area still center of city’s governmental activities. Plaza scene early Santa Barbara fiestas, and De la Guerra house set standards for Santa Barbara hospitality.

Marker erected by California Centennials Commission in cooperation with Old Spanish Days in Santa Barbara, and Santa Barbara Historical Society.

Dedicated August 26, 1950

27) Notwithstanding several attempts in the decades after World War II to renovate De la Guerra Plaza, no design to this point has attracted community consensus. De la Guerra Plaza remains highly used during Fiesta as a Mercado and for speakers’ and political events from all perspectives and with many prominent participants, now and historically, throughout the year. These uses have taken place in the plaza in close to its current configuration for almost a century, in addition to similar uses extending back another century.

28) De la Guerra Plaza meets “the definition of both a Historic Site and a Historic Designed Landscape,” according to Post/Hazeltine. “It meets the definition of a Historic Site because it has been the location of significant historic events since its inception during the early to mid nineteenth century and has been the location of the City’s municipal government since the 1870s as well as forming an integral part of the setting of the Casa de la Guerra ... Plaza de la Guerra also meets the definition of a historic Design Landscape because its current configuration and appearance represents the work, in part of James Osborne Craig [architect of El Paseo] and others.” Also according to the Post/Hazeltine report: “A Historic Designed Landscape is defined as follows: A landscape that was consciously designed or laid out by a landscape architect, master gardener, architect, engineer, or horticulturalist according to design principles, or ... in a recognized style or tradition” (pp. 31-32).

29) Post/Hazeltine also holds: “Today, the organization of the landscape continues to exhibit the overall spatial layout that has characterized the property since 1924. Changes have occurred, such as the removal of several buildings that once lined the east side of the plaza between City Hall and the *Santa Barbara News-Press* building and the reconfiguration of the south end of the plaza into a semi-circle ... Today, the plaza still functions, as it was intended to when it was designated in 1853, as a public plaza and community meeting place.” Post/Hazeltine states as well: “Since its creation in 1853 (as depicted on the 1853 Wackenreuder no. 1 map), the plaza has been relatively flat. This topography has been maintained to the current day”; “The structures surrounding the square, which are predominantly one to two stories in height, create the plaza’s sense of enclosure and modest, almost residential scale. These historic views and vistas remain intact”; and: “The property has functioned as a public plaza since 1853. It also has functioned as a community gathering place since circa-1826 when Jose de la Guerra completed his home” (pp. 32-34).

30) There are many historic designations already provided to historic resources in the vicinity of De la Guerra Plaza, including here only those immediately adjacent to the plaza:

Casa de la Guerra -- National Register of Historic Places,

California Historical Landmark, Santa Barbara City Historic Landmark

El Paseo -- National Register of Historic Places, California Register of

Historical Resources, Santa Barbara City Historic Landmark

Santa Barbara City Hall -- Eligible for California Register of

Historical Resources, Santa Barbara City Historic Landmark

City Hall Pepper Tree -- Santa Barbara City Historic Landmark

Santa Barbara News-Press Building -- Eligible for California Register of

Historical Resources, Santa Barbara City Potential Historic Structure/Site

Orena Store -- Eligible for California Register of Historical Resources,
Santa Barbara City Potential Historic Structure/Site

Orena Adobes -- Eligible for California Register of Historical Resources,
Santa Barbara City Potential Historic Structure/Site

La Placita Building -- Santa Barbara City Potential Historic Structure/Site

31) De la Guerra Plaza was determined to be eligible for national, state, and local historic landmark and historic cultural landscape designations by Post/Hazeltine. With respect to vegetation, Post/Hazeltine writes: “The plaza historically featured a restricted planting palette confined to Washingtonia and Queen palms, a pepper tree in front of City Hall and turf in the central section of the plaza,” and notes that since 1924: “The vegetation of the Plaza de la Guerra has retained its integrity of design, setting and feeling”; “the plaza’s historic pattern of land use has retained its integrity”; the “views and vistas of the plaza have retained their integrity of location, setting and feeling”; and: “As a cultural landscape, Plaza de la Guerra has preserved its integrity of spatial organization, circulation, topography, vegetation, land use, views and vistas.” Post/Hazeltine further states: “Plaza de la Guerra, along with Plaza Vera Cruz and Alameda Park, are the only three remaining parks, among a number of other public parks, first designated by the City of Santa Barbara’s Common Council in 1853 as public squares” (pp. 42-44, 47). According to Anne Petersen, executive director of the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation: “The restoration of the open plaza began in 1923 with the construction of the new City Hall designed by Sauter and Lockard, which returned the plaza to its original outline with buildings ringing a central open space”; she quotes Kurt Helfrich that “the open portion of Plaza de la Guerra ... was left as an open expanse of grass” (“A Summary History of De la Guerra Plaza” [2019], pp. 3-4). De la Guerra Plaza is one of the very few lawned areas in the heart of downtown.

32) De la Guerra Plaza meets all of the criteria for designation as a City Historic Landmark listed in Section 30.157.25 of the City of Santa Barbara Municipal Code:

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution in our past;
2. It is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
3. It embodies distinctive characteristics or a type, period, architectural style or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic or historic value, or represents a significant and distinguishable collection whose individual components may lack distinction;
4. It yields, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history; or
5. Its unique location or singular physical characteristic represents an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood.

33) “God gave us the country, the skill of man hath built the town,” is the Santa Barbara County Courthouse credo inscribed in stone over the doorway facing Anacapa Street adjacent to the arch. According to Charles Moore, a Gold Medal recipient of the American Institute of Architects, Santa Barbara is “a very special place among very special places” (in Rebecca Conrad *et al.*, *Santa Barbara: A Guide to El Pueblo Viejo* [2016]). Former Mayor Sheila Lodge quotes a nineteenth century editorial: “The old landmarks and most charming characteristics of Santa Barbara are disappearing before the march of ‘improvement,’ and though our practical people cannot move the mountains, nor change the scenes, nor spoil the climate, they are doing all they can to despoil the quaint beauty of the place and make it just a commonplace American town” (*Santa Barbara: An Uncommonplace American Town* [2020], p. 7). It is essential that De la Guerra Plaza is designated a Santa Barbara City Historic Landmark and preserved for this and future generations.

9/27/2021

Public Comment #13

From: [Robert Friedmann](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: De la Guerra plaza needs to be left alone.
Date: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 3:47:02 PM

[You don't often get email from mayor.witchwell@mac.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

EXTERNAL

Sent from my iPhone

Public Comment #14

From: [avoman202](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: closing de la guerra
Date: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 4:04:40 PM

You don't often get email from avoman202@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL

no way jose

From: [BONNIE DONOVAN](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: De La Guerra Plaza meeting 4-22-2022
Date: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 4:43:20 PM

EXTERNAL

Dear HLC commissioners

Why couldn't this meeting be held in a different location to be aired live?

Thank You

Bonnie Donovan

From: [Susan Chamberlin](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: April 22 De la Guerra Plaza HLC special joint meeting
Date: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 5:23:01 PM

You don't often get email from landscapehistory1993@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL

TO: City of Santa Barbara HLC
FROM: Susan Chamberlin
RE: April 22 special joint meeting on De la Guerra Plaza

As you know from my previous correspondence, De la Guerra Plaza (Plaza De la Guerra) is essentially unchanged since 1924 when the design by City Engineer Geo D. Morrison was approved by the City Council.

I am in favor of retaining the historic design of the Plaza (including the historic lawn) and not building the arcade (which would obscure the historic Harmer adobe wall.)

It seems if you are having this meeting, you are working on a compromise instead of rejecting the proposed remodel of the Plaza as so many citizens have asked you to do.

Have you considered retaining the access and parking from Anacapa Street all the way to the News-Press building? Autos would exit through the City Council Parking lot. This would permit continuity between the Plaza and the Casa De la Guerra and improve ADA access to City Hall.

Please keep the importance of this cultural landscape in mind as you consider options in your special joint meeting. The proposed remodel is wrong for our city.

Susan Chamberlin
93103

From: [Peter Conn](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: P.S. Staff collusion; De La Guerra Plaza meets all Landmark Criteria
Date: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 9:08:39 PM
Attachments: [New water use rules CitySB.png](#)

You don't often get email from pconnt43@icloud.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL

4-19-22

P.S. City Staff is colluding against you and the public process. This is authoritarianism! De La Guerra Plaza meets all City Criteria for Historic Landmark status.

Dear Historic Landmarks Commissioners,

The screen shot below taken from your Agenda shows that City Staff is colluding to influence your decision and giving you no options. They are circumventing the public's right to an honest public process.

We, the public, own De La Guerra Plaza.

We, the public, are the employers of City Staff. We pay their salaries.

They, City Staff, are supposed to do the public's bidding not the other way around.

It is our taxes that fund the water sources. If we want green grass, real grass and recycled water it is for staff to figure out how to get it. It is for the good of the planet and our City. Staff has an opinion that kills the City and kills the planet.

We have desal, we have recycled water, we can catch fog, we can conserve more, we can irrigate at night, we can plant drought tolerant grass. We do not have to have hardscape the way Staff says it has to be.

4 April 22, 2022 Advisory Committee / HLC Joint Meeting 

 DE LA GUERRA PLAZA REVITALIZATION 

Grass

City of Santa Barbara's Position on Grass in De La Guerra Plaza:

1. The City's **Landscape Standards for Water Conservation** require that the landscaped area of non-residential projects shall be designed without the use of decorative turf and with 100% water wise plants. The only exceptions would be for active recreation, such as sports fields.
2. The City's **Municipal Green Building Policy** states that new and renovated City facilities will be designed without the use of decorative turf unless approved for recreational purposes.
3. Water Wise Landscaping is supported by the **Guidelines for the El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District** and the **Historic Resource Design Guidelines**.
4. Recycled water is not in the area, the closest being a water main near SBHS (~3,370 linear feet) and the projected cost would exceed \$850,000 to bring recycled water to the Plaza.
5. Grass requires water, maintenance and time to regrow after major events, such as Fiesta (~3 months).
6. Based on the above, City Administration, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Community Development will **not** support grass in the proposed design.
7. Not having grass was unanimously agreed to by the Advisory Committee.

5 April 22, 2022 Advisory Committee / HLC Joint Meeting 

 DE LA GUERRA PLAZA REVITALIZATION 

Please reject the proposal for de la Guerra Plaza in its entirety.

Let's maintain and repair what we have. It is the best solution for the future.

De La Guerra Plaza meets all the criteria to be a City Historic Landmark. See below. It already is a state Historic Landmark along with Casa de la Guerra - #307. See official state plaque on the Plaza and documentation at State Historic Preservation Office.

Criteria for City Historic Landmark:

"De la Guerra Plaza meets all of the criteria for designation as a City Historic Landmark listed in Section 30.157.25 of the City of Santa Barbara Municipal Code:

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution in our past;
2. It is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
3. It embodies distinctive characteristics or a type, period, architectural style or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic or historic value, or represents a significant and distinguishable collection whose individual components may lack distinction;
4. It yields, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history; or
5. Its unique location or singular physical characteristic represents an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood."

From 32), page 9 of Lanny Ebenstein's "**De La Guerra Plaza, Statement of Historic Significance**", pdf. Details are also in Post/Hazeltine's 2011 Historic Sites and Structures Report, also in my letter to HLC of 4-18-2022 and letters by others.

Sincerely,

Paulina Conn
Santa Barbara
805 682-5183

Public Comment #18

From: [Judy Cota](#)
To: [Community_Development_HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: De la Guerra Plaza
Date: Wednesday, April 20, 2022 7:31:32 AM

[You don't often get email from judykota@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

EXTERNAL

To whom it may concern,

Historic De la Guerra Plaza must be preserved as it is. It is part of our history & precious to the citizens of Santa Barbara.

Please don't destroy it with a revitalization project. That money could be used instead to keep the landscaping well maintained.

Sincerely,
Judy Cota

Public Comment #19

From: [Densy](#)
To: [Community_Development_HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: De la Guerra Plaza
Date: Wednesday, April 20, 2022 8:59:28 AM

[You don't often get email from 4densy@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

EXTERNAL

For your consideration please add our names to the list of citizens who strongly oppose the closing of De La Guerra Plaza to vehicular traffic, and also closing De La Guerra Street itself between State St. and Anacapa. You as a committee is one we have always looked to as a sensible and well balanced group who would stand against drastic change to what has been long held tradition in Santa Barbara. Often the only group to whom we could turn to hold the line when those who would make our gentle town into something quite different. We are two citizens, born in Santa Barbara in the 1940's who've stayed and loved our city all these years. Our parents were natives also, and our children live here as well. There has been too much change happen too quickly, and this proposed change to De La Guerra is not welcome.

Sincerely,
Darcy and Bill Sylvester

From: [bonnie donovan](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: De La Guerra Plaza
Date: Wednesday, April 20, 2022 6:30:36 PM

EXTERNAL

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Dear HLC

The De La Guerra Plaza discussion on 4-22-22 needs to be aired live, and/or with virtual access, this would show us there is community outreach.

I have one comment regarding this claim of Global Warming/Climate Change. Why would you remove the grass with concrete, everyone knows that concrete and/or pavers are hotter than grass. If we can have a water feature when we are always in a drought, we can water and maintain the grass. The city hasn't maintained it.

Thank you for your time
Bonnie Donovan

Public Comment #21

From: [Francesca Galt](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Cc: [Nicole Hernandez](#)
Subject: De la Guerra Plaza
Date: Thursday, April 21, 2022 9:57:23 AM

EXTERNAL

Dear Historic Landmarks Commission,

Please consider this letter written after seeing the design plans that were submitted online.

I find the photos used are particularly unflattering and do not show the views of all the Historic buildings presently seen from inside the square.

These views are critical. They are quite remarkable and show the presence of a caring public in planning through the years.

Have you thought of opening the area to the De la Guerra home - extending it into the Plaza but keeping the road and parking - making it one way from the Anacapa side and around the curve in front of the N-P building and up the drive to exit left to State St. This would keep the Historic integrity of the site and also keep it open for much needed movement and parking.

There needs to be an acknowledgment that a design group comes with its own bias.

Please listen to the longtime residents and longtime private business owners. They have real time knowledge of the situation and values of the Plaza area.

Thank you.

Francesca Galt

93105

From: [Richard Closson](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: De La Guerra Plaza Special Joint Meeting
Date: Thursday, April 21, 2022 11:48:22 AM

EXTERNAL

Hello Commissioners and Committee Members,

I'd like to offer comments on the plan for De La Guerra Plaza as presented in the slide set for your meeting tomorrow.

1. I like the way you've outlined your Areas of Agreement. You started with a tremendous array of different ideas and perspectives and have whittled it down to a few. This shows good progress. I agree with all the "Things We Generally Agree On."
2. I agree with the eliminating the lawn for all the reasons presented.
3. I like the smaller and pushed-back arcade, but have heard comments from friends that it resembles stylistically neither the Mediterranean City Hall building nor the Spanish Colonial Revival News-Press building. Designers should pick one and go with it, not introduce a third style in the small space. Since the "Street in Spain" paving is suggested to run along the arcade, the design of the arcade arches might borrow from the SIS arches shown in slide 10.
4. I like the arcade because it can serve as a more intimate (even in the wide open) space for smaller rallies and public gatherings that would get lost in the full plaza as we have seen it used traditionally. The arcade should be outfitted with ample electric service and lighting.
5. I prefer the "Street in Spain" stone paving, but understand it could be expensive. The "decorative concrete" is obviously a cheaper alternative, but livable.
6. I like the look of a tile mosaic surface at the water feature when new or wet as shown, but wonder how it will look - crusty - with foot traffic and our hard water minerals. The water feature seems positioned at the end of the plaza away from the Casa as if to allow public gatherings and rallies as they currently occur - at the other end. I hope there is some plan to accommodate this large-group arrangement in the future with in-ground electricity access at the Casa end of the plaza.
7. I worry about placing the restrooms and water feature mechanics in Storke Placita. It becomes more of a passageway than a placita when narrowed. Overall, the full plaza is relatively hidden, being off our main commercial avenue, State Street. The placita offers the best introductory view corridor of the plaza from State Street. De La Guerra Plaza not being a center of its city's commercial and community activity is an unfortunate departure from most plaza traditions. We shouldn't allow our own constructions to keep it a "locals only" secret. The placita should be as open and welcoming as possible. Both the restrooms and the mechanicals could be relocated behind the arcade.
8. I like the attention given to the Anacapa side of City Hall, but think it still needs work. It's a difficult space to design and needs to announce, "Main Entrance," by its look and landscaping. Right now - aside from the lettering on the low wall - it reads like the staff entrance. If there was some way to design it more to resemble what's going on in the Plaza, that could help. The low wall along Anacapa should tie in better with the surrounding architecture. The forecourt is a nice idea that needs to suggest innately its purpose. Why is it there?
9. The aerial view of the plaza paving makes it look "busy" without any intent. The paving

could be better designed to define specific spaces or anticipated functions of a plaza. I don't see that now. The surface material of De La Guerra Street at Casa De La Guerra is undefined, but could be the same as the greater plaza by eliminating the transverse brick divider. In fact, both narrow brick divider pavements seem to have no purpose other than breaking up the larger area of the plaza. The need for three paving materials (maybe four if the Casa surface is extended as shown in slides 9 and 16) should be rethought.

Thanks for considering my thoughts,

Richard Closson, Pharm.D.
3308 Calle Fresno ([Google Map](#))
Santa Barbara, CA 93105-2605
Cell (voice & text) 805.202.6535



Citizens Planning Association

912 Anacapa Street,

Santa Barbara, CA 93101

April 21, 2022

HLCSecretary@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Re: de la Guerra Plaza, 20 de la Guerra St.

Dear Historic Landmarks Commission members:

Citizens Planning Association has been active in Santa Barbara since 1960, working for good planning, including the preservation of our historic resources for the present and future appreciation of Santa Barbara residents. The de la Guerra Plaza is central to the two or three blocks of our historic civic center, the heart of our city, and it deserves and needs careful and caring attention. And, finally, it's not a park but a plaza that has had a lot of study and praise over the years.

It's a balance: city commons are organic, not stuck in the past but responsive to present needs and designs, always keeping in mind the wishes of the residents

Recommendations for this hearing:

Landscaping: first and foremost, there needs to be a grassy center. In this period of a changing climate and the recognition of the value of greenery, to convert even a small Plaza into hardscape is not wanted, probably, by most Santa Barbarans increasingly few of whom have their own backyards. The 2011 plans brought the lawn from 17,307 sq. ft, 43.5% of the project area, down to 10,731 sq. ft; why, a little more than 10 years later, the urge to replace it completely! Best, as others have noted, to bring in purple-piped water and allow the grass to grow.

A proposed splash pad water feature should be abandoned. It would be better located in a neighborhood park than in front of City Hall. Even the questionnaire respondents voted against it: 51 disliking to 14 likes. The argument in favor was that it would attract families with toddlers or weary visitors from State Street. We think that if the Plaza were revitalized with cared-for grass, benches and seating, with art displays, and is used, as are many commons, for public gatherings, the public would return to enjoying it, as they used to not so long ago.

We also have concerns about adding trees, their water and nurture needs, the space they'd require taking away from an important usage, public gatherings. However, on the other hand, they would add pleasant shade for summer lounging. We think that the changes for the Anacapa Street entrance are positive and long overdue.

Not least in the landscaping, the venerable *Washingtonia filifera*, the California palm, should be allowed to live out its life in place. However, if it must be moved, then before that's done there should be an independent analysis by an arborist knowledgeable of such palms, skilled in such a move and able to assure Santa Barbarans via the HLC that the tree will survive.

Architectural features: the arcade: We don't understand its purpose: slide 8 of the PowerPoint pdf shows it to resemble a Potemkin Village gateway: nothing apparently behind and leading nowhere but looking good with its arches. Unless it is locked at night, it is likely to attract sleepers, as does the portico of City Hall; but to have a major feature of a commons be off limits, locked, is unfortunate.

We also don't understand the moving of the flagpoles and the apparent move of the major plaque, which commemorates Casa de la Guerra and the Plaza.

CPA is very grateful to the Historic Landmarks Commission for your dedication to protecting the historic character and charm of Santa Barbara. For this very important civic and historic site, surrounded by designated historic buildings, there's a need for more public participation in the "revitalization process" and a thorough environmental review.

Yours sincerely,

Marell Brooks, President of Citizens Planning Association

PLEASE BE ADVISED

The following public comment was not received in time to process. Distribution to the Historic Landmarks Commission occurred after the meeting.

Public Comment #24

From: [Peter Conn](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: Too many people can not attend the Faulkner gallery meeting about De La Guerra Plaza on 4-22-22 at 8:30 AM.
Date: Thursday, April 21, 2022 4:59:28 PM

[You don't often get email from pconnt43@icloud.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

EXTERNAL

Dear Historic Landmarks Commissioners and City Staff,

Too many people can not attend the Faulkner Gallery meeting on the De La Guerra Plaza issue.

I can not attend and seven others I alone have contacted can not attend.
People work, have appointments, commitments, are out of town, etc.

The general public does not have the luxury to stop everything they are doing on short notice to attend these important meetings.

Staff and Commissioners on the other hand, get lots of notice and set aside the monthly or bimonthly meeting commitment long in advance for whatever is on the agenda.

Fear of Covid is still high as well for meetings indoors.

Hope you will reconsider this meeting for another time when people are able to attend.

Sincerely,

Paulina Conn

From: [Anna Marie Gott](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: Fwd: 4/22/22 Meeting: Public Comment on De La Guerra Plaza
Date: Thursday, April 21, 2022 7:00:04 PM

EXTERNAL

Hi,

Can the public comment below, which I sent to the City Clerk, be added the public comment PDF that is posted to the Historic Landmark Commission's web page and distributed to the HLC and Committee Members?

Thank you,
A

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Anna Marie Gott** <anna.marie.gott@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Apr 21, 2022, 4:30 PM
Subject: 4/22/22 Meeting: Public Comment on De La Guerra Plaza
To: City Clerk <Clerk@santabarbaraca.gov>

Commissioners and Committee Members,

The City has recently had a number of instances where the Parks and Recreation Department fell short on community engagement. These instances include the recommendation to demolish the murals at Ortega Park and the substantial reduction in the size of the community gardens at Yanonali Park. In both instances, residents had the opportunity to attend multiple onsite workshops and meetings before the pandemic and on-line meetings and workshops once the pandemic hit. These workshops and meetings were conducted during the weekend and evenings. – Even then, the plans failed to meet the needs of residents and stakeholders and had to be revised because the community did not support the plans.

I believe the current plan for De La Guerra Park will displease the community. Why? Much has changed since the single onsite workshop which was held on March 9, 2019. We have lived through what we hope is the worst of the pandemic and it has changed how we view outdoor spaces. We have also increased the density in the Central Business District which will preclude any new grassy areas and removed virtually all of the State St. benches where pedestrians could sit and rest.

Today there are substantial changes proposed for De La Guerra Plaza which include the removal of the grass and the creation of a splash pad, both of which I object to, yet we have heard little from the general public for 3 years. Instead, most decisions have been made during online meetings. Further, this critical meeting is being held at 8:30am when most of the public cannot attend, where members of the public cannot make a remote public comment, and where the last onsite meeting was held in 2019.

For 200 years De La Guerra Plaza has been a gathering place for residents and has been primarily covered in grass.

For almost 100 years the Sunken Gardens have also been a gathering place for residents and been covered in grass.

There is no good reason the City of Santa Barbara should replace the grassy area of De La Guerra Plaza with pavement, stone, or crushed granite. This grassy area, which is the only public gathering place between the beach and Alameda Park for residents or tourists to relax, should remain grass. Why? The grassy area of De La Guerra Plaza is prized by residents and tourists alike – provided that the City maintains and does not kill it due to lack of water. Additionally, I doubt that anyone has considered that with the amount of housing desired downtown it would be short sighted to remove what may be the only grassy area for many city blocks.

As for the creation of a splash pad in De La Guerra Plaza I cannot locate a single splash pad that has been erected in a public square in Spain. They are found in other parks, but not in areas adjacent to a public square like the one at City Hall. This is simply the wrong place for a splash pad especially when there is substantial evidence that other cities that have built splash pads have had ongoing maintenance and policing issues concerning their use by the homeless to bathe and wash in.

I urge you to hold one or more well-advertised onsite weekend workshops and conduct a survey for the community prior to any further decisions. Further, I would like to recommend that any workshop or survey require substantial input from the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC), that the City provide plans that show a nicely landscaped grassy area for De La Guerra Plaza, that photos with green grass of De La Guerra Plaza be used in any displays or surveys, and that the HLC help to revise survey questions that make the survey unbiased towards removing the grassy area.

Thank you,
A

From: [Anna Marie Gott](#)
To: [Community Development HLCsecretary](#)
Subject: Fwd: Andi Gee's Public Comment on De La Guerra Plaza - 4/22/22 Meeting:
Date: Thursday, April 21, 2022 7:48:30 PM

EXTERNAL

See below.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Andi Gee <andig2@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Apr 21, 2022, 4:43 PM
Subject: Re: 4/22/22 Meeting: Public Comment on De La Guerra Plaza
To: Anna Marie Gott <anna.marie.gott@gmail.com>
Cc: City Clerk <Clerk@santabarbaraca.gov>

Dear City fo Santa Barbara,

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Signed,
Andi Garcia

On Thu, Apr 21, 2022 at 4:30 PM Anna Marie Gott <anna.marie.gott@gmail.com> wrote:
Commissioners and Committee Members,

The City has recently had a number of instances where the Parks and Recreation Department fell short on community engagement. These instances include the recommendation to demolish the murals at Ortega Park and the substantial reduction in the size of the community gardens at Yanonali Park. In both instances, residents had the opportunity to attend multiple onsite workshops and meetings before the pandemic and on-line meetings and workshops once the pandemic hit. These workshops and meetings were conducted during the weekend and evenings. – Even then, the plans failed to meet the needs of residents and stakeholders and had to be revised because the community did not support the plans.

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removal of the grass and the creation of a splash pad, both of which I object to, yet we have heard little from the general public for 3 years. Instead, most decisions have been made during online meetings. Further, this critical meeting is being held at 8:30am when most of the public cannot attend, where members of the public cannot make a remote public comment, and where the last onsite meeting was held in 2019.

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Thank you,
A