



**City of Santa Barbara**  
Community Development Department

**Planning Commission Staff Report**

**DATE:** September 2, 2010  
**TO:** Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Danny Kato, Senior Planner   
**SUBJECT:** Webinar: Form Based Coding

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We will be showing a 90 minute "webinar" (web-based seminar) entitled, "Learn How Form Based Coding can Transform Cities and Towns." This webinar was produced by the Form-Based Codes Institute (FBCI), which is an organization that was created in October 2004 for the purposes of: setting standards for the practice of Form-Based Coding, education and outreach about Form-Based Coding to various audiences, and creating a forum for discussion about and advancement of Form-Based Coding.

The FBCI's description of the webinar is as follows:

Form-Based Codes can help to realize the full potential of communities as desirable and walkable places. This recorded webinar provides viewers with the information needed to assess the applicability of a form-based code for his or her situation. The 90-minute session is an ideal introduction for anyone within municipal government or who serves on a city council or commission. It will also be beneficial to private-sector developers, builders, and consultants interested in creating places of high value.

Instructors include Bill Spikowski, a pioneer in form-based codes and veteran advisor to local governments; Dan Parolek, a Berkeley-based architect and community designer; and Sam Poole, attorney with 15+ years experience in new urbanism development issues.

Topics covered:

- Why Use Form-Based Codes?
- The Rise of Conventional Zoning and Decline of Urbanism.
- How Form-Based Codes Differ from Conventional Zoning.
- Where Form-Based Codes are Typically Used.
- The Process for Preparing a Form-Based Code.
- Components of a Typical Form-Based Code.
- How Form-Based Codes Can Be Integrated with Conventional Zoning.
- Legal issues of Form-Based Codes

The proposed Land Use Element (part of Plan Santa Barbara) includes Implementation Strategy LG 13.2.c. regarding Form-Based Codes:

Form Based Codes (FBC). Develop FBC for non-residential and high density residential areas of the City, with particular attention to protecting the City's historic resources. Consider locations within commercial areas, historic districts, streets, or even blocks with unique qualities.

- i) Overlay Areas. Develop FBC as overlays to work in conjunction with other zoning regulations, and consider replacing the Average Density Program with the FAR and FBC programs, once established;
- ii) Priority Implementation. Initiate implementation in the center of El Pueblo Viejo District where there is the greatest concentration of historic resources.

The purpose of this webinar is to familiarize viewers with the concepts behind both conventional zoning and form-based codes, and to prepare the Planning Commission and other interested parties for future discussions about how to implement Form-Based Codes.

The implementation phase of the General Plan Update will take place over many years. Form Based Codes and design overlays are not expected to be initiated as a priority in the first 2 years. This informational "webinar" and Planning Commission discussion is for general purposes and is not a formal initiation of Form Based Codes.

For more information on Form-Based Codes, please see the FBCI's website at:  
<http://www.formbasedcodes.org>.