



Note: Many responses are verbatim but duplications have been eliminated. The headings have been added to group common themes.

What makes Santa Ana special?

- Downtown
 - Unique to Orange County; urban environment, eclectic
 - Unique city
 - Vision – changing downtown, affects the whole city
 - Centerpiece for urban and youth; center for arts; stimulates creativity for all people
- Santa Ana's role as County leader
 - Central Orange County, historic role as leader
 - County seat
 - Capital of Orange County
 - History of the city
 - Santa Ana is a city – has soul, organization, businesses; heart of Orange County
- Community
 - Passion of residents
 - Involved neighbors, preservation
 - Engaged long-term residents
 - Hard working, powerful families
 - Community pride
 - Diversity of community groups
 - Intersection of diverse cultures and ethnicities
 - Community groups looking for positive change
 - Diversity
 - City of immigrants
 - The people
- Other
 - Cultural destination
 - Potential
 - Destination – shopping, entertainment and education
 - Schools
 - Vibrant
 - Young

What do you see as the strengths of the City of Santa Ana?

- Youth
 - Young demographics
 - Young city – strong educational opportunities
 - Youngest city in the country (demographically)

- Community
 - Immigrant community – deep culture, hardworking/strong work ethic
 - Community pride
 - Starting to “like ourselves” as a community
 - New leaders that come from community engagement – transformative leadership from within the community
 - Grass roots community organizations are making a difference
 - Breaking down silos – understanding that there is much common ground – new alliances
 - Retains residents – long time living here
 - Leadership among residents
 - Social capital – big resource
 - Strength of communities/families creating positive change
 - Ingenuity/creativity of residents
 - Neighborhood association structure
 - Faith-based community
 - Impact of non-profits on residential communities/city investment in positive activities – community focus
 - Distinct neighborhoods – tree canopies, architectural identity, established neighborhoods
 - City liaison for neighborhoods

- Economic development
 - Noticing Santa Ana (regionally in positive way)
 - Small local businesses
 - Diversity of businesses – large corporations to small businesses, manufacturing to offices
 - Attractive workforce
 - Entrepreneurial spirit
 - Empty office space – open to new businesses, progress – re-use as housing? Live/work?
 - Density – Fourth most in the US – ripe for successful businesses
 - Growth potential
 - Young demographics – investment opportunity
 - Surrounded by attractions
 - Opportunity
 - Big community institutions attracting those outside Santa Ana – draws – destination (e.g., Bowers, Mater Dei, DSC, Mall)
 - Momentum

- Downtown
 - A true downtown
 - Residents rediscovering downtown

- Successful downtown results in a successful city – downtown speaks for the whole city
- Rebirth of our city/downtown
- Architecture
- History
- Santa Ana role as County leader
 - Central location in Orange County
 - County seat– draws people in
 - Huge government structure
 - Employment base of Civic Center
 - Historic buildings, resources
- Safety
 - Police department – see the city as being much safer than prior perception
 - Police – out in neighborhoods
 - Community policing helped tremendously
 - Neighborhood watch
- Arts
 - Growing creative arts – professional arts presence
 - Artist community has strong heritage
- Other
 - Positive relationship between Santa Ana and Santa Ana Unified School District
 - Freeway proximity
 - Council support for bringing the community together
 - Push towards transparency
 - Culture
 - Collaboration/innovation is possibility
 - Green city promotion from Mayor

What do you see as the limitations of the City of Santa Ana?

- Santa Ana role as County seat
 - Government seat involves “wear and tear” of providing broad services (e.g., release of probation population into Santa Ana)
 - County seat – patient dumping downside
- Image
 - City doesn’t realize its own potential
 - For many, Santa Ana is not perceived as a good place to live
 - Branding issue: Santa Ana’s reputation creates self-fulfilling prophecies; the city doesn’t have enough interest in turning this around
- Infrastructure
 - Street system – congestion

- Lack of bike lanes – bikes serve as primary transportation for many
- More pedestrian amenities – share, safety from vehicles
- Economic development
 - Perception/reality of not being business friendly – uncertainty of development approvals, consistency of information
 - East First Street and South Main – major entries to city that need attention
 - Lack of strategic plan to take advantage of community assets – i.e., visitors and donors visit Discovery Science Center, then leave
 - Need to reinvest revenue to get stronger foundation
 - Opposition to logical development – i.e., Santa Ana train station area
 - Difficult business process
 - No tourism/visitors bureau, arts commission or film commission (represents many business opportunities)
 - Higher business license fees, time required to get permits
 - No convention center
 - Current zoning doesn't allow progress
 - Lack of downtown hotels
- Community
 - Denial of/ignoring critical data (i.e., Rockefeller report)
 - Not enough systemic conversation among/between community/civic organizations
 - Major projects like Bristol serve as façade/mask real community issues – the neighborhoods behind the improvements
 - Unbalanced, inequitable growth – poor people have not been a priority
 - Large undocumented population and lack of trust with government – need to acknowledge, embrace and find ways to incorporate into the community
- City organization
 - Community of kids are being neglected by City leadership
 - Lack of trust in undocumented community with Police Department due to legal status
 - Entrenched power structure in City government
 - Need transparency of information
 - Crime concentrated in certain areas; Police Department response lacking
 - Lack of enforcement of laws and ordinances (e.g., code enforcement)
 - Not using money for revitalization, enforcement
 - City doesn't look after businesses to make sure they're keeping clean, kept up (lack of businesses taking responsibility)
 - City stifles innovation
 - Money for community development not used properly
 - Budget issues – 70% (or more) goes to public safety
- Housing
 - Affordable housing issues/high rents – many people living in one unit; crime issues result; issues need fixes – what quality of life can people expect?; involve council members – otherwise, years go by
 - Landlord/tenant issues (abuse)
 - Not enough downtown housing

- California law curtailing enforcement regarding occupancy per unit
- Tenants don't understand their rights
- Lack of live/work housing – nowhere for artists to live
- Reputation as slum housing
- Other
 - Lack of open space
 - Gangs/safety issues
 - Lack of community ownership
 - Outside influences brought in (need local, place-based influences for development and arts)
 - Impacted city population
 - Constant cleaning needed – graffiti, building upkeep/maintenance
 - Lack of evidence-based strategies
 - Artists need industrial areas that allow for traffic
 - City hasn't invested in youth – they rely on the strength of non-profits
 - Lack of green space, open space, parks
 - City perpetuates the concept of an impoverished population – use it to our advantage to gain grants, etc
 - Lack of jobs
 - Basic needs exist – food, housing. Makes it hard to tackle some of the other things we've talked about Crime, education, participation

What do you see as the opportunities the City can build on in the future?

- Community
 - Faith-based community – potential to get involved
 - Tap potential of second-generation immigrants
- Economic development
 - Tap into civic center employment
 - Concierge/best practices for City development process
 - Have major destination on which to capitalize – lack synergy/holistic approach
 - Can be more business friendly
 - Make commitment to responsible development – ensure that development connects to community/improves community
 - Increase marketing as great place to live, work, grow (example: book by Caribou)
 - Have great opportunity to expand City revenues
 - Opportunity to market/enhance Santa Ana as a Mexican cultural center
 - Potential of the city, particularly in the arts
 - Restart the façade program
 - Zoning deregulation – allow vertical development
 - Green properties – jobs for younger people will keep costs down
 - Empty industrial areas – convert to live/work spaces (see Pomona, who took half of Santa Ana's artists)
 - Supplemental office space

- Downtown
 - Potential to become Downtown Orange County, arts center
 - Draw more businesses, light up downtown
 - Empty spaces – convert to downtown boutique hotels

- Youth
 - Provide opportunities for youth to start businesses
 - Support excellent NGO work in town for youth
 - Create reason for youth to return and stay in Santa Ana
 - Education opportunities – more people going to college, career training
 - City policies on youth development – businesses hiring youth results in rewards, incentivize/promote internships
 - Increase High School Inc – phenomenal program, prepares kids
 - More city investment in youth

- Community Health
 - Be healthiest city in OC in a real, creative way – address “sickness by design”
 - With General Plan update, must include attention to health impacts of all policies and equity

- Housing
 - Well-planned affordable housing
 - Increase housing stock – coordinate with County Health, improve housing conditions

- City organization
 - Opportunity to think big, transformative thoughts – no more Band-Aid approaches
 - Enhancing the City/School District relationship
 - Intentional, equitable decision making
 - Rethink budget priorities – i.e., can safety be achieved in ways other than with Police Department personnel?
 - Identify top three or four priorities to address – establish clear, measurable goals; hold our leadership accountable; be realistic about issues/solutions
 - Use the strategic plan to sustain the conversation, hold more forums
 - Covert the jail to productive space

- Open Space
 - Increase open space/community facilities – include as development requirements
 - Plazas/parks – improve, enhance to take 60% effort to 100%

- Other
 - Focus on low income areas
 - Address vulnerable population – quality of life issues
 - Celebrate Santa Ana’s history
 - Integration – find creative ways to measure – e.g., perception of safety

Vision

- Business friendly

- Respectability
- Safe
- Diverse/diversity
- Upward mobility/opportunity
- Welcoming to all
- Downtown Orange County
- Healthy, active, peaceful, opportunity for all, equitable
- Youth empowerment
- Good citizenship
- Engagement in community
- Open space
- Prominence
- Thriving
- Active/pedestrians
- Mass transit/light rail
- Beautification
- Progressive
- Good reputation
- Proud
- Transparent
- Participation
- Accountability
- Less impacted
- Jobs
- Parks
- Neighborhoods
- Safety
- Economics
- Youth flourishing
- Safe for all
- Positive change
- Desirable – want to live there
- Inclusion
- Social justice
- Organizational oversight
- Opportunity in growth
- Landmarks/identity
- Community
- Cultural destination
- Santa Ana proud