Questions I’d like you to be able to answer by the Midterm

1. What is the central challenge for planners in California? What are the two basic questions about growth in California – past and future?

2. What is the legal basis for planning, the concept that all planning activities refer back to?

3. What are the two primary traditions of planning? In which of the traditional planning tools are they imbedded? Which tradition is having a resurgence in planning today?

4. What were the two different solutions to the problems of the city within the design tradition? What unexpected ill effects did each lead to? What movements are associated with each?

5. How does today’s view of city vs. suburb differ from that of most of the 20th Century? Do you think today’s planners are right?

6. What level of government has the power to regulate land use? Why? How do the other levels of government fit in?

7. Why is regional planning a good idea? What types of regional planning agencies do we have in California?

8. What role do the different branches of government play in land use planning? What is the planning commission and what role does it play?

9. What are the primary boundary decisions a LAFCO makes? Why are these decisions important? What are the objectives of the LAFCO, as established by the state?

10. How are responsibilities for land use planning divided between counties and cities? How do planning requirements differ for them?

11. What is the purpose of the General Plan? Why do cities put so much time and effort into developing and adopting them?

12. What are the seven required elements of the General Plan in California? What are the key components of the Land Use element? What is the function of the Housing element?

13. Where in the plan is one likely to find the issue of sustainability?

14. What are the state requirements about adopting and updating a general plan?

15. What roles does the public play in the planning process?

16. In general, how do planning requirements differ in other states?

17. How does the “community visioning” approach work?

18. What is the relationship between the general plan and the zoning ordinance?

19. How does cumulative zoning work? What type of land use was cumulative zoning used to protect?

20. How does Euclidean zoning work? What are the goals – explicit or implicit? What has been its effect on our cities?
21. What are the two components of a zoning ordinance? What are the two types of restrictions specified for each zoning category?

22. What happens if a proposed development is inconsistent with existing zoning? What are the three possible actions, who approves them, and what are the conditions?

23. What happens if a proposed development is consistent with existing zoning? Does the developer then for sure get the approval to build it?

24. What happens if there is an existing use that doesn’t conform to the current zoning code?

25. How is the zoning code enforced?

26. How can a city use zoning to achieve its goals? Give an example.

27. Why did Professor Handy say that zoning is “reactive” and not “proactive”? What does she mean?

28. What is the purpose of form-based codes? How do form-based codes differ from traditional zoning codes?

29. What is the purpose of the subdivision ordinance? What does it regulate?

30. What is the approval process for a development of five or more lots? At what point in the process does the city do an intensive review of the development? Under what conditions is the city supposed to deny approval?

31. What is the role of a specific plan? How does it relate to the General Plan? How does it relate to the zoning code?

32. What are development agreements and why are they important?

33. How do CC&Rs (codes, covenants, and restrictions) fit into all of this?

34. What is CEQA all about? What functions does CEQA serve?

35. What constitutes a “project” under CEQA? What kinds of CEQA “projects” are found in the realm of local land use planning?

36. Under what conditions does a project NOT have to have an EIR prepared for it?

37. What does an EIR contain?

38. What if the EIR identifies significant environmental effects? What can a lead agency do?

39. What are the standards by which impacts are judged “significant”?

40. How is CEQA enforced? What aspects of the environmental review process can be challenged? What are the consequences of this system?

41. What is “environmental justice”? How does it relate to CEQA?