



Planning and Development Department
Long Range Planning Division
Transmittal Memorandum

DATE: January 20, 2011

TO: GavPAC Members

FROM: David Lackie, Supervising Planner
Brian Tetley, Planner

CC: Supervisor Doreen Farr, 3rd Supervisorial District

SUBJECT: GavPAC Meeting No. 26

The items listed below have been included as part of the meeting materials for GavPAC Meeting No. 26, to be held Wednesday January 26, 2011, 6:30 p.m. in the Vista de Las Cruces School auditorium:

1. **Meeting Agenda:** Meeting No. 26 Agenda for natural resources and open space and transportation, energy, and infrastructure deliberations (Attachment 1).
2. **Draft Meeting Minutes:** Staff has provided draft meeting minutes from the January 12, 2011 GavPAC meeting for review and approval (Attachment 2).
3. **LOSSAN Railroad Improvement Planning Documents:** Staff has provided excerpts from the LOSSAN North Corridor Strategic Plan and the full text of the CEQA Notice of Preparation (Attachment 3) to help inform the GavPAC regarding this railroad improvement planning process.
4. **Natural Resources and Open Space Discussion Outline:** Chair Kimbell has prepared an outline to guide Committee deliberations on natural resources and open space. This outline was utilized during meetings 24 and 25. Staff has attached a revised outline in this packet with direction to staff noted on the five areas resolved during the last two meetings (Attachment 4).
5. **Transportation, Energy, and Infrastructure Discussion Outline:** Chair Kimbell has prepared the attached outline (Attachment 5) to guide Committee deliberations on transportation, energy, and infrastructure issues.
6. **Planning Issue Summary & Worksheets:** Staff has attached a copy of the Transportation, Energy, and Infrastructure planning issue summary chart and worksheets (Attachment 6) for your reference.
7. **Updated To-Do List** (Attachment 7).
8. **Long-Term Schedule** (Attachment 8).

In addition to this packet, please bring the GavPAC documents binder with you to the meeting.

All GavPAC materials are also available for download from the following webpage:
<http://longrange.sbcountyplanning.org/planareas/gaviota/gaviota.php>

Discussion and Comments on LOSSAN Railroad Improvement Planning (Agenda Item 5)

Caltrans, in cooperation with The Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor Agency developed the *LOSSAN North Strategic Plan* for the rail corridor between Los Angeles and San Luis Obispo in October 2007. The Strategic Plan identifies improvements that would facilitate the best use of the rail corridor, add capacity, reduce delays, and increase the speed of train travel.

LOSSAN is comprised of elected officials representing rail owners, operators, and planning agencies. The agency's objective is to promote programs that increase ridership, revenue, reliability, and safety on the rail line.

In order to apply for federal grant money, the Federal Railway Administration requires a certified programmatic environmental document for proposed improvements. The Notice of Preparation (NOP) for a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) was recently released for the improvements proposed in the 2007 Strategic Plan. Caltrans is the lead agency under CEQA and environmental review is scheduled to be completed in March 2013.

Staff has attached an excerpt from the 2007 Strategic Plan that lists proposed improvements in Santa Barbara County and the NOP released by Caltrans. Project descriptions of the proposed improvements will be further refined as part of the environmental review. These projects are currently unfunded, so the likelihood of their completion is uncertain. LOSSAN will generally prioritize improvements to areas south of Goleta, as the ridership and frequency of train services is far larger than north of Goleta. In addition, the aging and outdated rail infrastructure north of Goleta increases the likelihood that funding would be secured for signal and switch upgrades first, then for long term, more expensive projects such as curve realignments.

Planning Issues Deliberations (Agenda Item Nos. 6-8, 9-11)

This meeting continues the deliberative phase of the land use planning process for the Gaviota Coast. The deliberative phase builds upon previous GavPAC work to identify core planning issues, and will provide an opportunity to discuss these issues in greater detail, and explore different planning options and approaches. Keep in mind that the goal in the deliberative stage is not to fully write or vet policy or ordinance language, but to develop consensus or at least refinement of GavPAC policy preferences which can be used by staff to craft draft policy statements and implementing tools. The review and revision to draft policy or ordinance language will occur later in the process after all of the deliberative meetings and a period of time for staff to develop the language.

The first portion of this meeting will conclude deliberations on the natural resource and open space issues of wildlife corridors and cultural resources. Then the GavPAC will consider the planning issues associated with Transportation, Energy, & Infrastructure, with an emphasis on the County's existing policy framework and the unique characteristics of the Gaviota Coast Plan Area. This discussion will hopefully result in a more refined list of planning issue priorities that are important to the committee and are within the reach of local land use policy.

Once priorities have been expressed, staff can help initiate the discussion on appropriate planning tools for consideration by the committee. These planning tools can run the gamut from ordinances, policy language refinements or clarifications, the application of planning overlays, new or existing, etc. In addition, staff's research into the approaches taken by other jurisdictions in addressing similar planning issues may be helpful. Once the GavPAC has formulated goal statements, Staff can utilize these to help develop the Plan.

Attachments:

1. Meeting 26 Agenda
2. Draft Meeting Minutes
3. LOSSAN Railroad Improvement Planning Documents
4. Revised Discussion Outline for Resources Stewardship & Open Space
5. Revised Discussion Outline for Transportation, Energy, & Infrastructure
6. Planning Issue Summary & Worksheets
7. To-Do List
8. Long-Term Schedule