

January 11, 2011

To: GVPAC Members Ted Adams, Thomas Elliott, Kenan Ezal, Bonnie Freeman, Kenneth Mineau, Valerie Olson, and Kimberly True

Dear Members of the Goleta Valley Planning Advisory Committee,

I sincerely thank you for the time you continue to dedicate to the process of updating our community plan. In recent years, I have found little time to stay as informed and as active in this process as I'd like to be. I acknowledge your sacrifice of personal time to serve our community.

I know that this is a public comment period. But I also understood this planning process to be a dialogue between the community and those who craft the plan. As members of the community, I and others respectfully request a response to the concerns brought forth at these meetings. We do not come here to only speak, but to participate.

As we all know, the issue that lies before us now is the highest point of concern for active community members. That is the level of density in our neighborhoods. Traffic, pollution, noise, loss of green space, loss of natural views all share one main contributing factor: density of living units per acre.

With regards to growth management, The GVC 20/20 Vision for the Eastern Goleta Valley (which I refer to as The Vision Document) states clear goals and some very explicit steps for achieving them. I do not see these steps reflected in the first draft of the community plan. In fact, the proposed land use map directly defies them.

One glaring example can be found on page 17 of the Vision Document:

Goal: Housing development is limited to infill projects and non-contiguous (leap frog) development is discouraged.

Page 17, steps 4 and 5 read as follows:

4. Maintain existing residential zoning.

5. On parcels of two acres or larger being considered for rezoning to residential, limit density to a maximum of 7 units per acre. (This density cap includes base zoning plus any inclusionary housing bonuses.) Also require that, on these parcels, 50% of the land is reserved for public open space, green belts, parks and recreation.

Yet, on the proposed land use map, I see large properties marked for rezones up to 20 units. One of these properties is located adjacent to agricultural land. This is just one example. I have not had time to fully review the vision Document and the Plan Draft side by side. I believe it is the duty of the county staff and committee to do so.

A detailed review and edit of the proposed land map should be done to make sure it follows the guidelines directed by the Vision Document. This should be a straightforward, albeit lengthy, task to attain the next version of the draft. I propose that this be done before the planning process moves forward. To do anything less would be to disregard the Vision Document at the most critical point.

I have included a copy of page 17 of the Vision Document, an article and excerpt of a public survey that shows an overwhelming majority of residents do not want more high-density housing in our community, and a graph that illustrates how market rate housing is becoming more affordable.

Thank you again for your time.

Sincerely,
Kelly Travers

Vision Statement

Our community is a place where change comes purposefully, and when we grow, we grow slowly and in a manner that preserves the character of our neighborhoods, be they rural, semi-rural or suburban.

Goal: Housing development is limited to infill projects and non-contiguous (leap frog) development is discouraged.

Steps to Achieve Goal

1. Adopt a residential growth management ordinance for the planning area that restricts market rate residential development to 50 units per year.
2. Maintain the County Inclusionary Housing Program (IHP).
3. Make the EIR standards more stringent to rigorously evaluate projects in the context of the cumulative effects of development.
4. Maintain existing residential zoning.
5. On parcels of two acres or larger being considered for rezoning to residential, limit density to a maximum of 7 units per acre. (This density cap includes base zoning plus any inclusionary housing bonuses.) Also require that, on these parcels, 50% of the land is reserved for public open space, green belts, parks and recreation.¹
6. In the event that all efforts to use any agriculturally-zoned parcel as a viable agricultural business or to sell it for that use have been exhausted, and the County chooses to rezone that parcel, equivalent value should be returned to the community in the form of public open space and other significant extractions.

Steps to Achieve Goal Continued

7. Encourage the use of attached housing to provide for open space and view corridors.
8. Maintain the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).

We Will Recognize Success When:

1. The Goleta Community Plan is adopted based on the vision statements in this document.
2. The General Plan map has been revised accordingly.
3. Leap frog development has not occurred.
4. A growth management ordinance has been adopted that establishes a limit on the number of market rate residential units that can be built each year and the maximum density of residential units allowed in any development.
5. The County enforces the growth management ordinances.

¹ For example, on a 10 acre plot, 5 acres would be open space and the remaining 5 acres could be developed at a maximum density of 14 units per acre, yielding 70 units total.

UCSB survey says: Santa Barbara high-density housing unpopular

By WILL McGOUGH -- OCT. 5, 2010

The findings of the **2010 Central Coast Survey**, a periodic telephone assessment of the local community that aims to gauge public opinion on a variety of issues pertaining to the region's quality of life, were released on Monday.

"Some of the interesting findings were widespread support for agriculture, support for the environment, with support for local and organic food in both of those," said Garrett Glasgow, a researcher and associate professor of Political Science. "And then some interesting findings on housing."

The study was produced by a team of researchers from the Social Science Survey Center at UC Santa Barbara, who conducted more than 800 interviews. Participants were all over 18 years old and included both English and Spanish speakers. Similar studies were produced in 2008, 2007 and 2006.

Although the survey was random, the researchers made sure to take a sample that was representative of the County's demographics.

This year's focus was to determine the people of Santa Barbara County's attitude towards issues of land use and development, agriculture and environmentalism.

"From a policy perspective, there's a lot of discussion about what the future of Santa Barbara County should be, particularly the development and workforce housing structure," said Glasgow.

The survey found that residents throughout the County strongly support agriculture and the Williamson Act, which reduces farmers' property taxes if they maintain their land for agricultural use. Supporting local farmers is also a top priority – nearly half said they buy local produce at least once a week.

Glasgow said that the study also proved that environmentalism is popular in both the northern and southern parts of the County.

"We've often heard that people (in the South County) are environmentally friendly and the North is pro-development," Glasgow said. "In the survey, we found that wasn't the case at all. Both on average could be categorized as environmentally friendly."

Regarding future development plans, a majority of respondents were opposed to the idea of high-density housing. Surprisingly, the group that gave the lowest support was low-income families (household income of \$35,000 or less).

"High-density housing is pretty unpopular with most residents, even with low-income residents

and people who can't afford to buy a house," said Glasgow.

Joining in Glasgow's surprise was John Mohr, Professor of Sociology and Director of the Social Science Survey Center.

"You might think that the folks who are at the lower income level in the community would say, 'Yea, let's have some action to put in high-density housing at an affordable rate,'" Mohr said. "You might have guessed that, but their dream is to get a house. They don't want to live in a high rise or condo. They're the ones pushing more than anyone else, saying, 'Let's bring the price of (individual houses) down so we can get into that.'"

Mohr said part of the survey's purpose was to dispel rumors and hearsay regarding politics in the county.

"These are important issues that need to be debated and talked through, but it would be great if people could stick to the facts," said Mohr. "What we try to do is bring high-level social science research into the conversation instead of blowing smoke around in a debate."

The survey also posed continuing or follow-up questions from previous years, most significantly regarding the effect of the poor economy. Most respondents believe their economic conditions have declined since 2008.

Thirty-seven percent said their families are worse off in 2010 than they were in 2008, while only 24 percent made the same assessment in 2008 when comparing to 2007.

"People in this county have been hurting directly from the national economic downturn," said Mohr. "And we might have figured that, but here's some definite proof of it."

As for how the results will be used, Glasgow said he hopes policy makers will discuss the findings with community members and consider the issues when making future decisions. He won't be banging down any doors, however.

"I don't want to cross the line to being any kind of activist, I'm a researcher and an impartial scholar," Glasgow said. "Right now the plan is to just get it out there and publicize it, to make the findings public and start to think about it and ask questions."

Mohr made it clear that the purpose of the survey was to allow the community to express their beliefs about the future of Santa Barbara County.

"We really welcome public interest and engagement around this," Mohr said. "We'd really love for people to pull the survey off the Web and ask us questions. We want to do this survey every year, and the more we can be actively involved in the conversation with the community, the more effective we'll be and the happier we'll be."

To view the complete report, visit the Central Coast Survey Web site at <http://www.survey.ucsb.edu/ccs>.

EXCERPT FROM 2010 CENTRAL COAST SURVEY

(1st of 2 pgs)

agricultura hagan a un lado los amortiguadores entre las viviendas y la agricultura para proteger a los agricultores de las quejas de los propietarios de casas nuevas. Estaría usted a favor o en contra de dicha ley en el Condado de Santa Barbara?

- 66.4% Favor/a favor
- 3.9% Neither favor nor oppose
- 21.3% Oppose/opondria
- 6.7% Don't know
- 1.6% Refuse

QL11. How do you think water prices should be set in Santa Barbara County? *Cómo cree que los precios del agua deberían establecerse en el Condado de Santa Barbara?*

- 44% Farmers should be charged lower rates for water than city dwellers and industry / Los agricultores se les debería cobrar tarifas más bajas por el agua que los habitantes de la ciudad y de la industria
- 37.8% Farmers should be charged the same rates for water as city dwellers and industry / Los agricultores se les debería cobrar las mismas tarifas por el agua que los habitantes de la ciudad y de la industria
- 8.3% Farmers should be charged higher rates for water than city dwellers and industry / Los agricultores se les debería cobrar tarifas más altas por el agua que los

habitantes de la ciudad y de la industria

- 7.5% Don't know
- 2.4% Refuse

QL12. Over the years several different plans for building housing in Santa Barbara County have been proposed. Assuming the following three plans were the only alternatives, which would you most prefer?

¿Atravez de los años se han propuesto varios planes para la construcción de viviendas. Suponiendo que los tres siguientes planes son las unicas alternativas, usted cual preferiria mas?

- 22.7% Build higher density housing, such as multistory apartment buildings and condominiums, in undeveloped open spaces within existing city limits / La construcción de viviendas de mayor densidad, tales como edificios de apartamentos de varios pisos y condominios, en espacios aun no desarrollados dentro de los límites existentes de la ciudad
- 38.5% Build lower density housing, such as single family homes, in undeveloped open spaces outside of existing city limits / Construcción de viviendas de baja densidad, tales como viviendas unifamiliares (para solo una familia), es espacios abiertos aun o desarrollados fuera de los

31.9% Do not build more housing
(see next page)



EXCERPT FROM 2010 CENTRAL COAST SURVEY

(2nd of 2 pgs)

- límites existentes de la ciudad
- 31.9% Do not build more housing / No construir más viviendas
- 4.1% Don't know
- 2.8% Refuse

densidad, tales como viviendas unifamiliares (para solo una familia), es espacios abiertos aun no desarrollados fuera de los límites existentes de la ciudad.

QL13. What if instead of building in undeveloped open spaces, the plans called for building housing on agricultural land currently being used for farming? In that case, which of these three plans would you most prefer? *¿Qué si en vez de construir en espacios abiertos sin desarrollar, los planes requirieran la construcción de viviendas en tierras agrícolas que actualmente se utilizan para la agricultura? En ese caso, cuál de estos tres planes es el que mas preferiría?*

- 13.8% Build higher density housing, such as multistory apartment buildings and condominiums, on agricultural land within existing city limits / La construcción de viviendas de mayor densidad, tales como edificios de apartamentos de varios pisos y condominios, en tierras agrícolas dentro de los límites existentes de la ciudad
- 23% Build lower density housing, such as single family homes, on agricultural land outside of existing city limits. / Construcción de viviendas de baja

- 57.7% Do not build more housing / No construir más viviendas
- 3.4% Don't know
- 2.2% Refuse

QC_QL7. Overall, do you think growth and development in your area is happening too fast, too slow, or just about right? *En general, ¿Piensa usted que el crecimiento y desarrollo de su zona está ocurriendo demasiado rápido, demasiado lento, o a buen ritmo?*

- 30.9% Too fast/demasiado rápido
- 12.5% Too slow/demasiado lento
- 53.9% Just about right/a buen ritmo
- 1.8% Don't know
- 0.8% Refuse

QL14. What percentage of households in Santa Barbara County would you estimate do not have access to enough food to meet basic needs? *¿Qué porcentaje de los hogares en el Condado de Santa Barbara usted piensa que no tienen acceso a alimentos suficientes para satisfacer las necesidades básicas? [PROBE: your best estimate is fine/Su mejor estimación es suficiente]*

- 5.9% 0 percent
- 25.2% 1-10 percent
- 18% 11-20 percent
- 12.7% 21-30 percent
- 5.1% 31-40 percent



Market Rate Housing Becoming More Affordable

Zillow Home Value Index shows that median home values here have decreased approximately 33% in the past five years.

(calculated using data from 93110 area where:
 \$1,120,000 = ~median value as of January 2006
 \$ 750,000 = ~median value as of November 2010)

Zillow Home Value Index

Mid-point of Zestimate valuations for 93110. Half the Zestimates are above this number and half are below it.

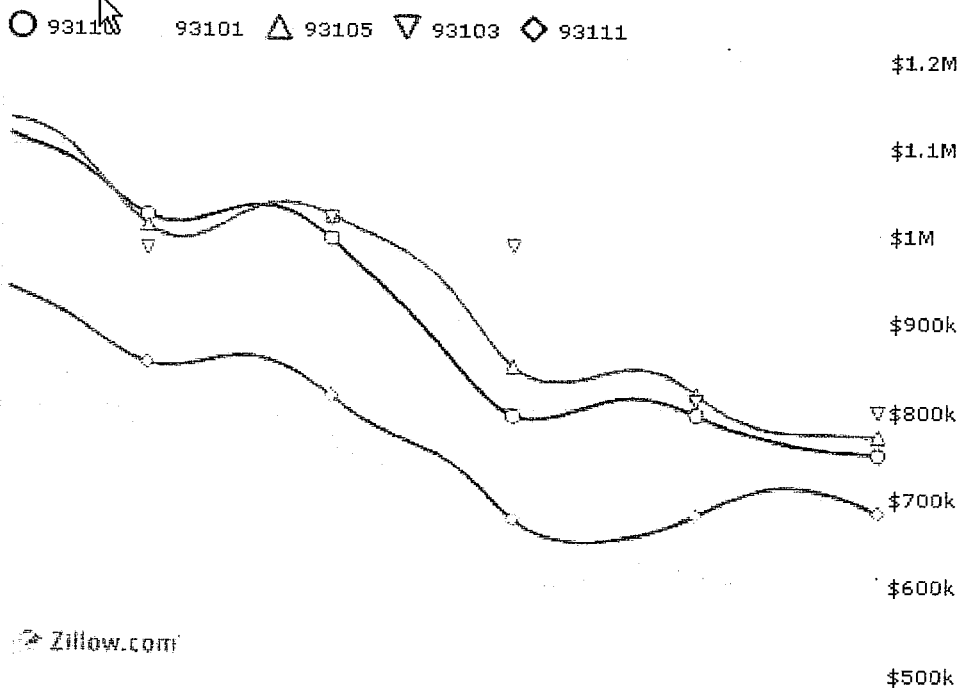
93110 Home Prices and Home Values

Zillow Home Value Index ^[?]

\$750,300 ▼ -5.5 % Y-o-Y

Calculated 01/05/2011*

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	2007	2008	2009	2010	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Region		M-o-M	Q-o-Q	Y-o-Y	Nov 2010
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 93110		▼ -0.2%	▼ -0.5%	▼ -5.5%	\$750,300
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 93101		0.0%	▲ 0.3%	▲ 1.4%	\$620,500
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 93103		▲ 0.1%	▲ 0.5%	▼ -1.3%	\$798,900
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 93105		▼ -0.1%	▼ -0.2%	▼ -5.7%	\$771,700
<input type="checkbox"/> 93108		▼ -1.1 %	▼ -3.3 %	▼ -21.2 %	\$ 1,955,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 93109		0.0 %	▲ 0.3 %	▼ -1.8 %	\$ 803,400
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 93111		▼ -1.1%	▼ -2.9%	▲ 0.7%	\$683,800

*Includes data and transactions through 11/30/2010