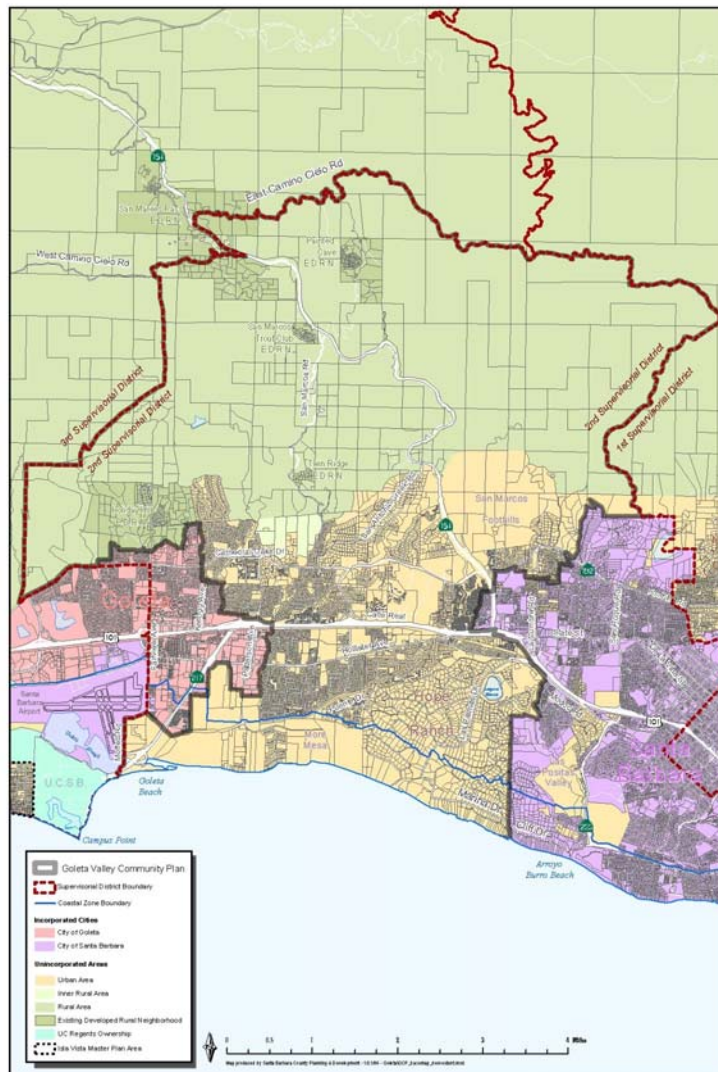


## SANTA BARBARA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION Staff Report for Goleta Vision Committee GVC 20/20 A Comprehensive Vision for the Eastern Goleta Valley

**Hearing Date:** November 1, 2006  
**Staff Report Date:** September 29, 2006  
**Case No.:** N/A

**Director:** John McInnes  
**Division:** Comprehensive Planning  
**Project Manager:** Derek Johnson  
**Staff Contact:** 805-568-2072

**Environmental Document:** Exempt, CEQA Section §15262,  
**Feasibility & Planning Studies**



Goleta Valley Community Plan Update 2006

Eastern Goleta Valley Vision Area Map

## **1.0 REQUEST**

Hearing on the request of the County Executive Office to receive and review *GVC 20/20 A Comprehensive Vision for the Eastern Goleta Valley* prepared by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Supervisorial District's appointed Goleta Vision Committee, forward the document to the Board of Supervisors and accept the Notice of Exemption pursuant to CEQA Section 15262, project involving only feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION AND PROCEDURES**

Follow the procedures outlined below and recommend that the Board of Supervisors receive *GVC 20/20 A Comprehensive Vision for the Eastern Goleta Valley* prepared by the Goleta Vision Committee.

The Comprehensive Planning Division recommends that the Planning Commission:

1. Receive and review *GVC 20/20: A Comprehensive Vision for the Eastern Goleta Valley prepared by the Goleta Vision Committee (Attachment A)*.

The Commission's motion should include the following:

1. Recommend that the Board of Supervisors:
  - a. Receive and file the *GVC 20/20: A Comprehensive Vision for the Eastern Goleta Valley*; and
  - b. Accept the Notice of Exemption for the project pursuant to CEQA Section §15262 (Attachment B).

Please refer the matter to staff if the Planning Commission takes actions other than those recommended.

## **3.0 ISSUE SUMMARY**

### **3.1 Background**

In late 2005, the Board of Supervisors approved the development of a vision document as the first step in the process of updating the 1993 Goleta Community Plan. After public outreach efforts, 13 community members were chosen by 2<sup>nd</sup> District Supervisor Susan Rose to serve on

the Goleta Vision Committee (GVC) from a list of over 50 applicants. Since that time, two members withdrew<sup>1</sup>, replaced by one, for a total of 12 community members.

The GVC was established to reflect a geographically diverse cross section of residents who live within the unincorporated Eastern Goleta Valley, articulate a statement of community values, analyze major trends affecting the community, and develop a comprehensive vision to serve as a guiding document and point of reference for an update to the 1993 Goleta Community Plan. Accordingly, the committee was tasked with crafting a vision of how the Eastern Goleta Valley should evolve over the next 15 years, providing their collective perspectives on four key elements:

- ◆ A community profile (Where are we now?)
- ◆ A trend statement (Where are we going?)
- ◆ A vision statement (Where do we want to be?) and,
- ◆ An action plan (How do we get there?)

In accepting this role, the GVC understood that their work would be utilized by the County and an as yet to be designated General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) to update the Goleta Community Plan, which was originally prepared in 1993.

### **3.2 Document Preparation Process**

The GVC began their work in January 2006. After agreeing on ground rules as their “terms of engagement”, a series of evening meetings and full-day workshops were organized by the Comprehensive Planning Division, which were facilitated by John Jostes of Interactive Planning and Management. Initially, the GVC was tasked with identifying sites and/or criterion for selecting sites within the planning area for analysis in the Housing Element Environmental Impact Report (EIR). After much deliberation and public debate, the preponderance of GVC members concluded that selecting sites at this early planning stage was premature and should not be part of the visioning process. During these initial months of discussion, the GVC was presented with information related to community visioning processes in general, the framework for updating the Community Plan and Housing Element, and other information considered important to the visioning process. Citizen participation in these early meetings was frequent and passionate.

Between March and May 2006, the GVC received presentations from the County, the Cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta, University of California, Santa Barbara, and from external professionals on topics relevant to planning in the Eastern Goleta Valley. These presentations included an overview of trends and issues related to water and waste water services, parks and open space, law enforcement and emergency planning, economics and demographics, air pollution, adjacent jurisdictions planning efforts, agriculture, affordable housing, growth and

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<sup>1</sup> One member withdrew due to the time commitments anticipated to be required by membership on the Committee, the other withdrew based upon differences of opinion over the vision process itself.

development and transportation. The GVC was presented with a considerable amount of written material on these planning-related matters.

After the information gathering and presentation phase, the GVC developed 11 vision statements, which are the foundation of the document. The GVC also developed a document outline that they felt would convey its perspectives and recommendations. The GVC selected a writing sub-committee to work with County staff and the facilitator to develop the specific chapters articulated in more detail that included specific recommendations, and action steps to implement its overarching goals. The Writing Subcommittee worked countless hours to draft and refine chapters of the vision document for full committee review. Between June and October 2006, the GVC, with input from members of the public, worked towards refining the document. The final document, *GVC 20/20 A Comprehensive Vision for the Eastern Goleta Valley*, is the result of 23 meetings and public workshops and thousands of hours of effort on the behalf of the GVC.

### **3.3 Staff Input**

As noted above, County and outside agency staff provided a significant amount of data for the GVC to consider in the writing of their document. Staff assisted the GVC in formatting and editing the document but the document's substance was produced solely by the GVC. It is important to note that the document before the Commission was crafted by the GVC; not County staff or the facilitator. The GVC maintained full editorial control over the document since it includes their signatures as proof of their support of the document.

#### Process Challenges

When the GVC adopted their ground rules, they agreed to operate by consensus. They also agreed that if consensus could not be reached, they would forward a summary of their areas of agreement and areas of disagreement. This definition of consensus proved particularly challenging to the group throughout the process. In the final analysis, the document was not able to achieve a full consensus (i.e., unanimity) of its membership. While a preponderance of its members felt that the document reflected the broader community's goals and perspectives on the range of issues of importance to the community, two members were not willing to sign the document because of what they felt were internal inconsistencies that would not produce the desired outcomes listed in the 11 core "vision statements." While both the majority and minority of committee members were able to articulate a number of common interests and goals for the community, in the end, there was disagreement as to whether certain recommendations specific to growth and development would be realized over time. Valiant efforts were undertaken to reconcile these differing perspectives, including the idea of including a minority opinion viewpoint to reflect areas of agreement and disagreement. Near the end of the process, a majority of the GVC chose to revisit the interpretation of the term "consensus" and defined it as "broad majority" instead of unanimity. Prior to the last meeting, the committee rejected the minority opinion presented by two of its members, thus precluding a summary of the areas of disagreement as part of the Vision Document. As such, two minority members did not sign the GVC document and developed a rebuttal, which is included herein as Attachment C.

### Substantive Issues

The GVC proposes constraints on residential development in the Eastern Goleta Valley, such as a residential growth management ordinance to limit market rate housing developments and density restrictions on parcels proposed for rezoning to residential. At the same time, the GVC proposes significant increases in infrastructure improvements and service levels in the planning area, including more bike paths, highway interchange improvements, new retention/detention basins, underground electrical and communication wires, increased parks and open space, etc. While the GVC proposes that the County form a Benefit Assessment District, which must be voter-approved, to fund some of the proposed infrastructure and service improvements, it is unlikely that many improvements can take place if development were to proceed either at status quo pace under current zoning, or with constraints placed on future residential development as the GVC proposes. As the County Executive Officer noted in the March 29, 2006 Board Letter for the 2005 Strategic Scan Follow up Presentation, the status quo development trend does little to address the critical issues facing the County, indeed, this approach allows for the slow deterioration of the transportation system, service delivery and health and human services. Staff notified the GVC that either maintaining the status quo or adding development constraints would restrict the ability to maintain service levels, notwithstanding the request to increase services and infrastructure. Nonetheless, the GVC feels very strongly about a slow level of growth for their area and is confident that funds can be raised in alternative ways, such as Benefit Assessment Districts or other voter approved funding mechanisms to meet their enhanced infrastructure and service level goals.

County staff and the Facilitator wish to thank each of the members of the Goleta Vision Committee and those members of the public who provided input and advice throughout the process. The vision document will be very useful in updating the 1993 Goleta Community Plan.

## **4.0 PROJECT ANALYSIS**

### **Environmental Review**

Staff has determined that the document is statutorily exempt from CEQA on the basis that it is a planning study for possible future actions which neither the Planning Commission nor the Board has approved, adopted, or funded (CEQA Guidelines section 15262). Environmental factors considered in the vision document include Hydrology/Water Quality, Biological Resources, Air Pollution, Population/Housing, Aesthetics, Transportation/Traffic, Land Use/Planning, Agriculture Resources, Recreation, Utilities/Service Systems, and Public Services. There are no environmental impacts resulting from the vision document because it is simply the basis for potential future updating of the 1993 Goleta Community Plan and has no legally binding effect on current activities (e.g., development project application review) or later activities (i.e., the Goleta Community Plan update). Environmental factors will be thoroughly analyzed during the Goleta Community Plan update process, scheduled to begin in early 2007.

## **5.0 APPEALS PROCEDURE**

This document is forwarded the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors for information purposes and therefore not subject to appeal.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. GVC 20/20: *A Comprehensive Vision for the Eastern Goleta Valley* (Planning Commission packet only)
- B. Notice of Exemption
- C. GVC 10-18-06 Meeting Statement and Appendices

**ATTACHMENT A: GVC 20/20 A Comprehensive Vision for the Eastern Goleta Valley**

**ATTACHMENT B: DRAFT NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Comprehensive Planning Division  
Derek Johnson, Project Manager (805) 568-2072

The project or activity identified below is determined to be exempt from further environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as defined in the Public Resources Code and the State and County Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA.

APN(s): Not applicable

Case No.: Not applicable

Location: Eastern Goleta Valley

Project Title: GVC 20/20 A Comprehensive Vision for the Eastern Goleta Valley.

Project Description: A profile of the unincorporated Goleta area, articulation of a statement of community values, and a comprehensive vision to guide future updating of the Goleta Community Plan

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Santa Barbara

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Comprehensive Planning Division

Exempt Status: (Check one)

- Ministerial
- Statutory Exemption
- Categorical Exemption
- Emergency Project
- Declared Emergency

Cite specific CEQA or CEQA Guideline Section: Guidelines §15262 (Feasibility & Planning Studies)

Reasons to support exemption finding: CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15262 states, “A project involving only feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions which the agency, board, or commission has not approved, adopted, or funded does not require the preparation of an EIR or Negative Declaration but does require consideration of environmental factors. This section does not apply to the adoption of a plan that will have a legally binding effect on later activities.” The Goleta Valley Visioning meets these criteria because it is a planning study that would serve as a basis for potential future updating of the Goleta Community Plan and has no legally binding effect on current activities (e.g., development project application review) or later activities (i.e., the Community Plan Update). The Board has considered the environmental factors associated with the potential alternatives for future updating of the Goleta Community Plan, and recognizes that future environmental review for any such plan will be required in compliance with CEQA. Therefore, the Board of Supervisors determines that CEQA Guidelines §15262 applies to the project.

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Department/Division Representative

Date

Acceptance Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***Note: Upon project approval, this form must be filed with the County Clerk of the Board and posted by the Clerk of the Board for a period of 30 days to begin a 35 day statute of limitations on legal challenges.***

Distribution:      Hearing Support Staff

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Date Filed by County Clerk

**ATTACHMENT C: GVC 10-18-06 Meeting Statement and Appendices**