



Memo

To:	Goleta Vision Committee Members	From:	John C. Jostes, AICP, MPA
Re:	Writing Subcommittee	Date:	5/1/06
		CC:	Derek Johnson, John McInnes, Rosie Dyste

Urgent **For Review** **Please Comment** **Please Reply** **Please Recycle**

Committee Members:

Since our last meeting on April 5th, I received a number of suggestions for individuals who might serve on a writing subcommittee. For efficiency's sake, we wanted to keep the group small – 3 or 4 individuals. The folks who were suggested most often by GVC members were

- Lauren,
- Ted,
- Hal
- Valerie.

I have spoken to all four of them and all have an interest in serving, albeit, Valerie is currently on Jury Duty, which will consume most of her time until mid May. I thought it might be helpful to lay out some thoughts on how the Writing Subcommittee might work most effectively.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Writing Subcommittee is tasked with working closely with the facilitator and County staff to craft chapters and/or sections of a preliminary draft of the recommendations to be considered by the full Vision Committee. The Subcommittee is advisory to the full Vision Committee and cannot make decisions on behalf of the full committee.

As noted in the Ground Rules, the writing subcommittee is the intended to address specific information needs, refine options and resolve differences of opinions outside of the regular meetings of the GVC. The subcommittee may also bring in resources from outside of the GVC itself, including members of the public, and agency staff members as it determines is necessary to complete its task.

It is important to note for the subcommittee as well as the full GVC committee that neither group is intended to function as a General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC). A GPAC is appointed by the Board of Supervisors and is a formal advisory committee tasked with providing oversight to the drafting and

DISPUTE RESOLUTION
MEETING FACILITATION
STRATEGIC PLANNING
PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Notice: *This memorandum is intended for the recipient(s) named above and may be protected by the confidentiality provisions of California Evidence Code Sec. 1152.5. If you receive this document by mistake, please telephone us at the above voice number (collect) to let us know of the error. If this memo contains privileged or otherwise legally protected information, disclosure of the information to anyone other than the named recipient is not authorized.*

finalization of an actual general or community plan. The GVC is a precursor to that entity, providing more general, “big picture” guidance via recommendations that will be later be used as a reference tool to develop a preliminary draft of the community plan. Much of what the GVC comes up with will likely be integrated into the community plan update itself (albeit more specific and written as policies and goals), but the group is not tasked with the actual drafting of the plan itself.

The Writing Process

During the first February workshop we provided an overview of what a Vision Process is intended to accomplish – namely to respond to four clear-cut questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where are we going?
- Where do we want to be?
- How do we get there?

Since the February Workshop and the distribution of a preliminary table of contents that might guide the writing effort, the group has been presented with a significant amount of information on community conditions and trends from managers within local agencies and departments addressing issues the group felt were important to developing a vision. As we approach the end of this initial information gathering process, individuals on the GVC are becoming more and more interested in starting the process of actually sitting down and articulating a vision and a set of recommendations that will guide the Goleta Community Plan Update. However, it is evident that the group is unclear on what is expected of it and what the final product might look like.

The basic process that we are suggesting be used is one where the Facilitator consolidates material from the committee’s discussion and meeting notes into rough drafts of each of the chapters outlined in the “Tentative Framework and Table of Contents” distributed to the committee on February 22nd, starting with Chapter II – Unincorporated Goleta Valley Today and Tomorrow, and then proceeding to Chapter III, and so forth. The Writing Subcommittee would then review and refine the chapter to suit its preferences and what it senses might be the preferences of the GVC as a whole. The facilitator and/or staff would then make the suggested refinements and distribute the revised draft to the GVC for its review. Where there is a difference of opinion on the writing subcommittee as to particular wording, the facilitator would indicate the two perspectives within the draft so that the GVC as a whole could resolve the issue as a full group. Depending upon the substance of the materials being discussed, one or more meetings may be necessary to address a given “chapter”. It is expected that the Subcommittee might need to meet two times on each chapter prior to getting it to the full committee.

A vision document contains a series of brief statements that provides the big picture of the growth and the renewal that a group wishes for a community. Vision statements and documents present a future oriented comprehensive picture of the desired future of the community. In contrast, a community plan puts forward the big and small picture, and follows up with specific policies and/or action plans on how to realistically implement the vision. It is considered a good practice to develop a long term vision and broad reaching goals as a precursor to initiating a community planning or update process.

Based upon previous policy dialogues and negotiated rule making efforts, I have found that the most compelling vision statements and policy recommendations include some introductory language that provides a compelling argument for prescribing a particular set of recommendations or community futures. Therefore, in summarizing ‘where we are now’ and ‘here we’re going’ it is important to frame the implications of the status quo in a manner that motivates change. Some of the ingredients of a vision statement are:

- Positive, present-tense language;
- Qualities that provide the reader with a feeling of the planning area’s uniqueness;
- Inclusiveness of the area’s diverse population;
- A depiction of the highest standards of excellence and achievement;



- A focus on people and quality of life; and,
- Addresses a specific time period.

The group may wish to craft one overarching vision statement for the planning area, or it may want to craft one or more vision statements for each topical issue area. Where specific vision statements are articulated for each issue area, they are typically referred to as goals, as in the Santa Ynez Valley Blueprint. Once a vision statement has been crafted, what follows is typically a set of issue-specific recommendations that provide guidance on how to achieve the vision. Whereas an overarching vision statement might be one or two paragraphs, issue-specific goals are typically one or two sentences.

The following are general definitions that apply to the development of a general or community plan. They are offered to provide context.

Vision- A brief statement indicating the growth and renewal a group wishes to experience. A vision statement is future oriented and presents a comprehensive picture of the desirable future.

Goal - A goal is an ideal future end, condition or state related to the public health, safety or general welfare toward which planning efforts are directed. A goal is a general expression of community values and therefore is abstract in nature (e.g., “An aesthetically pleasing community,” or “Quiet residential streets”).

Objective - An objective is a specific end, condition or state that is an intermediate step toward attaining a goal. It should be achievable and, when possible, measurable and time-specific (e.g., “One hundred affordable housing units for low-income households by 2000”).

Policy - A policy is a specific statement that guides decision making that is based on a general plan’s goals and objectives as well as the analysis of data. Policies should be clear and unambiguous (e.g., “Infill development at specified densities shall be encouraged, and scattered urban development shall not be allowed”).

Action - An action is a one-time action, program, procedure or development standard that carries out General Plan policy. Not all policies require actions.

Programs - Programs are actions that are primarily administrative functions, such as the development of an ordinance or study to address a goal (e.g., “A Park Preservation Ordinance shall be drafted”).

Next Steps

Given the schedule that calls for a GVC Workshop on June 10 and discussion of presentation of Chapters II and III to the GVC on July 12, the Writing Subcommittee would need to begin scheduling its meetings in early May. The facilitator in collaboration with County staff will be providing initial draft language to the subcommittee during the first week in May. This approach will allow the facilitator and staff to make the necessary refinements so that some preliminary language could be discussed at the July 12th meeting of the GVC.

Please feel free to call me with any questions that arise from this memo.



John C. Jostes
Program Facilitator

JCJ/



