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**From:** Cortney Hebert <cortney@goletachamber.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 5, 2019 10:07 AM  
**To:** Williams, Das; Hart, Gregg; Hartmann, Joan; Adam, Peter; Lavagnino, Steve; sbcob  
**Cc:** Kristen Miller  
**Subject:** Letter from the Goleta Chamber of Commerce - Cannabis in Santa Barbara County  
**Attachments:** BOS\_Cannabis.pdf

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Honorable Chair and members of the Board:

Please see the attached letter from the Goleta Chamber of Commerce regarding cannabis in Santa Barbara County.

Thank you,

Cortney Hebert Rintoul  
*Vice President*

Goleta Chamber of Commerce  
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# GOLETA

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

July 5, 2019

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors  
105 East Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Cannabis in Santa Barbara County

Honorable Chair and members of the Board:

Cannabis in Santa Barbara County has become a major concern in our community, and therefore of the Goleta Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber's Public Policy Committee met recently to discuss the issue, particularly the concerns over permit requests to grow cannabis on parcels in western Goleta — close to our residential neighborhoods and just downwind of The Ritz-Carlton Bacara.

Goleta and cannabis also have been in the news as a result of our historic South Patterson Avenue agricultural block and newly converted cannabis operations sprouting alongside our community's long-time, prized nurseries.

Our committee has observed Carpinteria struggle with the consequences of cannabis-related public policy decisions that are causing distress for many residents and businesses in that community. We want to learn from Carpinteria and help create a better future for Goleta as we face changes traced to California's legalization of marijuana.

Committee members studied data and documents, and heard from experts. Right now, it looks as if the effects of cannabis growing are detrimental to our quality of life, there do not seem to be enough safeguards to protect our neighborhoods from the inevitable odors of cannabis growing, and there are reputational risks of being known as a cannabis capital.

The Chamber's concerns are for Goleta's neighborhoods, our tourism economy, and the negative economic impacts of this new agricultural industry on our quality of life and economy.

## Neighborhoods

The problem with outdoor cannabis growing is the smell. Scientific research is emerging on the noxious nature of the odor and its irritant effect on eyes, nose and skin. It also is a recognizable odor associated with marijuana smoking and the perception is extremely negative.

Goleta's neighborhoods are carefully designed to be outdoor-friendly, nature-centric places with an emphasis on the landscape. "The Goodland" is known for its environmental sensitivity.

What safeguards are in place to make sure that permits issued in the foothills and canyons outside Goleta city limits will prevent drifting odors into Goleta? How large should a buffer be to ensure the smell does not drift to our coast? What technology exists to eliminate the harmful odors from this newly legalized crop?

Currently, the City of Goleta and residents already are dealing with noxious odors from a western Goleta agricultural water well that periodically releases a gas-like smell.

## **Tourism**

Goleta is heavily invested in our local tourism economy. Nearly 1,200 jobs are connected with the hospitality industry in Goleta, and the city relies on transient-occupancy taxes, or bed taxes, as its largest revenue source, before sales taxes and property taxes.

The Ritz-Carlton Bacara generates a large amount of bed, sales and property taxes, and employs more than 500 people. What mitigation should be required of a new industrial crop that inevitably will have a negative impact on the Goleta tourism industry?

In previous sphere of influence discussions, the neighboring Santa Barbara Airport and UC Santa Barbara have followed detailed plans to ensure their operations do not negatively affect the local Goleta economy. What is being studied at that county level to ensure Goleta is protected?

## **Economic Development**

The committee is unclear if Santa Barbara County is pursuing, or allowing, permits for large amounts of cannabis grows as an economic development plan to fund the county's deficit.

Previous economic development plans related to the county have been rebuffed — development, events, oil and gas, and even entrepreneurial partnerships have not been embraced by the county as solutions to its revenue challenges. If cannabis is the county's solution to creating more revenue, it must not be at Goleta's expense.

A loss in revenue for Goleta, due to a decline in tourism and lower property values in residential neighborhoods, should be factored and incorporated into the county's revenue neutrality agreement with the City of Goleta.

## **Benchmarks**

The committee cites two regions for examples — one to emulate and one to avoid.

Carpinteria is suffering from the effects of cannabis grows. Overall, that community's situation is different from Goleta's, but we are concerned that some of the circumstances and challenges are a harbinger for what Goleta can expect.

San Diego, however, seems to have a model program for enacting policies that address new state laws regarding cannabis while protecting neighborhoods and existing agriculture businesses.

What other jurisdictions have Santa Barbara County officials studied and benchmarked to define some best practices in this emerging industry?

Goleta has a long-held policy for protecting urban agriculture and preserving the rural nature outside its urban limit line. Consideration must be granted to existing avocado and lemon orchards, and the community's coffee farm, when approving new cannabis grows in the region. Are there Third District agriculture policies that need to be amended to keep a fair playing field for our existing agriculture businesses?

Are there community workshops and economic development meetings that can be convened to help shape a better future for Goleta residents' quality of life and the health of our business community? It may be that the policies the county has adopted so far are adequate for individual land use and permitting, but a larger scope of benefits and safeguards for our community is warranted.

We ask the County to work with the City, the public and the business community on a program that adds appropriate regulations to ensure the minimum impacts to our community from cannabis grown in the county.

Thank you,

Kristen Miller  
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