

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
BOARD AGENDA LETTER**



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
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Agenda Number:
Prepared on: March 13, 2002
Department: Planning & Development
Department No.: 053
Agenda Date: March 26, 2002
Placement: Departmental
Estimate Time: 1½ hours
Continued Item: YES
If Yes, date from: 2/5/02 (Set Hearing only)
Document FileName:

TO: Board of Supervisors

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SUBJECT: Comprehensive Planning Division Five Year Work Program

Recommendation(s):

That the Board of Supervisors review and accept the Comprehensive Planning Division 2002 – 2007 Five Year Work Program (Work Program) and direct the Planning and Development Department to:

- A. Continue work on completion of on-going work including the Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan, Isla Vista Master Plan and Rural Resource Protection Program and begin the environmental analysis of those Plans and Programs;
- B. Delay start of Williamson Act Uniform Rules Update until after (1) the FY 2001-2002 Housing Element effort which will seek to identify ways to facilitate on- and off-site farm worker and ranch worker housing; and (2) the Division completes, or makes substantial process on, identifying agricultural management practices and permit streamlining strategies which would protect valuable and vulnerable natural resources while insuring viable agricultural production; and
- C. As discussed in the attached Work Program, increase the Division's level of effort in Regional Planning, particularly in public transit, housing, sewer service, open space conservation and resource protection activities which would further the goal of facilitating jobs/housing balance within the County.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

The recommendation is primarily aligned with Goal No. 1. An Efficient Government Able to Respond Effectively to the Needs of the Community; Goal No. 2. A Safe and Healthy Community in Which to Live, Work, and Visit; Goal No. 4. A Community that is Economically Vital and Sustainable; and Goal No. 5. A High Quality of Life for All Residents.

Executive Summary and Discussion:

The attached Work Program provides an overview of the status of current and proposed Division work efforts which seek to maintain an up-to-date *Comprehensive Plan*, associated implementing documents and projects, and to maintain our overall mission of providing research, public information and outreach, interdepartmental and regional planning coordination, and quality customer service. The purpose of the work program is to help focus the Division's *Comprehensive Plan* priorities, making it more responsive to emerging trends, issues and community values. This is the third year of the Division's work program, which is a "rolling" five year projection of work efforts; each year the work program is updated, completed projects are reported and new projects are proposed for initiation. The following discussion briefly summarizes the work program accomplishments and upcoming issues.

Background: The *Comprehensive Plan* (or General Plan) is the County's "constitution" for land use, development, and related *Plan* implementation and decision-making. The *Plan* has been updated numerous times, to a greater or lesser extent, since the County adopted its first General Plan in 1965. Today, the *Plan* consists of twelve separate topical or "functional" elements plus the Local Coastal Plan, five community plans (plus the Toro Canyon Area Plan awaiting approval by the Coastal Commission), and numerous related documents such as design guidelines, transportation improvement plans, redevelopment plans, specific plans and resource management plans. A more complete overview of the Plan's history and structure is provided in the attached Work Program (see Attachment A).

The first five year work program for Comprehensive Planning efforts was prepared and reviewed by the Board in 1989-90, but its periodic updating was put aside during the subsequent recession. During the latter 1990s the economy improved, development activity accelerated, and a substantial number of ongoing comprehensive planning projects were brought to completion. However, the list of newly-directed and prospective work items grew at a faster pace than the staffing and budgets allocated to do the work. This, in conjunction with losses of experienced staff, temporary reassignments to handle workload emergencies, and the extended duration of some major projects, has led to the current situation where the Comprehensive Planning Division is more than fully subscribed. This situation was addressed in the work program brought before the Board approximately one year ago by programming work, given available resources and Board priorities, over a five year period. Emerging community issues which demand attention, other agencies embarking on projects, litigation, new funding, grant opportunities, changing priorities of the Board of Supervisors, staffing levels and underestimated levels of effort required

for programs has affected the ability of the Division to fully implement the current 2001 Five Year Work Program. The attached work program includes refinements from the current work program to reflect this. These changes are identified in an annotated table of projects, by year, in Attachment B.

Discussion of Work Program Recommendations: Although substantial progress has been made on clearing the Division's backlog of work, the following work efforts are proposed for Division staff resources in the FY '02-'03:

- (1) Final completion of older active projects (e.g. the Oak and Rural Resource Protection Programs);
- (2) Work on previously programmed new projects (e.g. Housing Element Update and Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan);
- (3) Follow-up implementation of recently completed Community Plans in Orcutt and Toro Canyon, and the Carpinteria Greenhouse Study;
- (4) Completion of grant-funded current capital improvement projects (bicycle paths, trails);
- (5) Completion of grant-funded resource management studies (California Tiger Salamander and Snowy Plover management programs);
- (6) Strategic and regional planning efforts with particular emphasis on balancing the competing needs of population growth (housing, public transit, sewers and other infrastructure) and the needs of agriculture, resource protection and open space conservation; and
- (7) Improving the Division's efficiency and effectiveness by adding capabilities to the Department's GIS program and strengthen our public outreach and education program.

Summary of Five Year Work Program: As discussed in more detail in the attached work Program, the Comprehensive Planning Division is currently working on over 40 projects. The FY '02-'03 Work Program concentrates on completing on-going projects including 12 major projects. We propose to begin 4 grant-funded projects which would complete a multi-phase resource research and management program. In addition, we would begin a small effort to seek funding for a FY 2003-2004 regional planning effort to connect public transit services to new housing nodes identified in the Housing Element Update effort. The Division's FY '02-'03 work will range from continuing work on major plans such as the Isla Vista Master Plan, the Joint Proposal for Ellwood-Devereux Coast, and the Santa Ynez Community Plan, to finalization (Coastal Commission adoption) of such long-standing efforts as the Carpinteria Greenhouse Study and Toro Canyon Area Plan. Implementation of recently adopted plans and programs such the Orcutt Community Plan and Old Town Goleta Redevelopment Plan (if under contract with the City of Goleta) will require substantial effort. Finally, ongoing work to maintain and obtain funding for the County's Plans and programs remains critical. Five main work areas are discussed briefly below:

Community Plans/Implementation Programs: This includes developing the Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan, as well as related special studies for those plans (traffic, sewerage, biology), and various implementation actions of the Carpinteria Valley Greenhouse Study, Toro Canyon Area Plan, and Orcutt Community Plan. This will require about 21% of the Division's staff.

Should the Joint Proposal Ellwood-Devereux Coast study continue forward, this may involve additional work for this section.

General Plan Element Updates/ Implementation Programs: This includes the Housing Element Update and a major effort to support implementation of the Agricultural Element as part of the Rural Resources Protection Program. Combined, these efforts will require about 30% of the Division's staff.

Revitalization Plans: This includes the Isla Vista Master Plan and Redevelopment Plan Update and the Old Town Goleta Redevelopment Plan Implementation activities and related studies (such as the Highway 217/Ekwill Road improvements). The Isla Vista planning efforts will require about 16% of the Division's staff. Depending upon the City of Goleta's interest in contracting with the Division for redevelopment management and planning services, more staff support would be required.

Resource Management Studies and Implementation: The Division will undertake a number of resource studies and implementation projects, including a number of grant-funded coastal studies, restoration projects and trail design programs. In some cases, Division staff seeks and receives grant funds and passes the funds to other Departments for implementation or shares the coordination of these capital projects. These activities are expected to consume about 13% to 15% of the Division's staff.

Support of the Division's Mission/On-going Work: On-going work includes activities that help the Division function efficiently, provide public information and outreach, and provide interdepartmental and regional coordination of planning and implementation efforts. This will require about 18% to 20% of the Division's staff.

Division Accomplishments FY 2001-02: The Division expects to complete the following seventeen projects in Fiscal Year 2001-2002.

- Draft Ordinance and EIR for the Interim Housing Element Update
- Draft Ordinance and EIR for Oak Protection (which may be combined with a larger Rural Resources/Agricultural Element Implementation effort in FY '02-'03)
- Orcutt Community Plan Amendments
- Goleta Urban Agriculture Newsletter
- Carpinteria Valley Greenhouse Program
- Toro Canyon Area Plan
- Publish Draft Joint Proposal for the Ellwood-Devereux Coast
- Snowy Plover Protection Plan and Management Program
- Annual Countywide Fee Update
- Complete marketing of 40 affordable housing units
- Gaviota Coastal Trail Study (part 1)
- Complete studies to enable the formation of the Orcutt Community Facilities District
- Gaviota Resource Study
- Highway 101 Landscape Plan
- Goleta Growth Management Ordinance Amendments
- Old Town Goleta Design Guidelines
- 2030 Open Space Newsletter

In addition to those projects which we expect to complete, we have made major progress on 28 projects which will “roll-over” into FY ‘02-‘03, including:

- Santa Ynez Community Plan
- Preparing Zoning Standards and Permit Review Procedures for Wine Industry Issues such as winery permits, special events, signage, retail and food service activities and visitor accommodations related to winery-related “ag-tourism”.
- Rural Resource Protection Program
- Agricultural Commercial Zoning Program – Pending Board acceptance of Coastal Commission changes
- Burton Mesa Management Plan – State has deferred work, re-start date unknown
- Coal Oil Point Dune Pond Restoration
- Coal Oil Point Reserve Enhancement Projects
- Comprehensive Plan Five Year Work Program Update - Annual Updates
- County Three Year Transportation Funding Plan
- Gaviota Coast Resource Study – Phase 2
- Gaviota Coastal Trail – Part 2
- Goleta Slough Restoration Project
- Goleta Slough Enhancement Project
- Highway 101 Design Review Team – Ongoing program
- Isla Vista Bluff Park Planning
- Isla Vista Master Plan – New planning effort; adoption projected FY '03-'04
- Planning & Development GIS System – Ongoing technical enhancements
- Snowy Plovers Management Plans and Beach Access Studies
- San Jose Creek Bike Trail (for portions not in the City of Goleta)
- TEA-21/STIP Transportation Project Funding Plan
- California Tiger Salamander Project

Projects entirely within the Goleta Old Town area which may be conducted by Division staff under contract with the City of Goleta

- Old Town Goleta Redevelopment Project
- Goleta Brownfields
- Goleta Valley Community Center Trail
- Hollister Reconstruction
- Mixed Use Development Study

In addition to the “roll-over” major projects, and our on-going efforts in support of our Mission, we propose to commence 4 new “Phase 2” grant-funded projects related to current projects and one new project related to a larger project proposed for FY ‘03-’04, including:

- Snowy Plover Management Program—Monitoring and Implementation (grant-funded, follow-up project)
- Workforce Housing Study (grant funded, follow up to Housing Element effort)
- Gaviota Coast Trail Study, Part 2 (grant funded, follow-up to Part 1)
- Gaviota Coast Resource Study, Phase 2 (grant funded, follow-up to Phase 1 study)
- Using General Fund support for our Grants Acquisition Team, seek grant funds for a regional public transit service study to begin FY ‘03-’04, which would link new housing areas identified in the Housing Element Update effort with employment centers to improve air quality, traffic safety, commuter quality of life and to reduce traffic congestion and resource degradation.

Emerging Issues and New Projects: There are a number of emerging issues will be addressed by projects programmed in the FY ‘02-’03 work program, including:

1. Balancing Agricultural Economic Viability With Resource Protection. The proposed consolidated Oaks Protection Program and Rural Resources Protection Program would seek to identify standard operating practices of the various agricultural sectors of the County and would identify strategies to facilitate their viability and expansion, when applicable, while protecting natural resources. As part of this effort, staff would continue to work with vineyard and winery industry representatives, and affected neighborhood representatives, to address the needs of vineyard and winery expansion while mitigating or ameliorating potential negative effects.
2. Regional and Alternative Transportation: The County has no regional transportation plan or any clear vision or strategy for dealing with regional transportation congestion, particularly with regard to public transit. An essential element to providing affordable housing throughout the County is, at a minimum, the identification of a public transit network or transit corridors. Housing at densities that support transit (and affordability) could then be located near these corridors. In FY '02-'03, Division staff will increase its efforts to work with the County Public Works Department and the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) to guide the development of a regional transportation plan, with particular focus on transit and other alternatives to the private automobile for journey-to-work travel connecting residential neighborhoods to employment destinations within the County.
3. Gaviota Coast: After publication of the Gaviota Coast Resource Study, staff will focus on: 1) monitoring ongoing National Seashore and other planning efforts; 2) addressing pending Lot Line Adjustment related developments and the potential Naples project; and 3) pursuing construction of the Gaviota Coast bikeway. Other issues of concern may be identifying county priorities for resource protection and public access. The County's future role in Gaviota planning remains unclear.
4. Geographic Information Systems (GIS): Staff has begun to make substantial progress on establishing GIS based databases and mapping systems. Initial efforts include converting all land use designation and zoning information to a GIS based system and retaining a consultant to compile a three-year work program for full conversion to GIS.

Mandates and Service Levels:

State law requires cities and counties to have a current and internally consistent general plan. Seven elements are mandatory – Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Open Space, Conservation, Noise, and Safety – as is the Local Coastal Program. Each mandated element has some minimum degree of required topical coverage. The Comprehensive Plan meets or exceeds minimum legal requirements, but could benefit from various levels of updating and enhancement as described in the Five Year Work Program. The items described in the Work Program would ensure continued compliance with legal mandates, and would maintain or improve existing levels of public service through the comprehensive planning function.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

The proposed FY '02-'03 Division budget (expenditures) is expected to be approximately \$3 million, of which about \$2.1 million would be available to support Division staff efforts. About \$1.5 million is proposed to be supported by discretionary General Fund County contributions, of which \$1.38 would support Division staff efforts (\$120,000 would be available for essential consultant studies). About \$625,000 is expected to be derived from task-specific grant allocations from local, state and federal agencies, of which about \$234,000 is available to support Division staff work efforts on the specific projects (the remainder is "pass through" monies to the implementing agency). Isla Vista Redevelopment Agency will have a budget of about \$773,000 from tax-increment monies to support planning work, of which about \$225,000 would support staff efforts (the remainder would support consultant studies, capital improvements and debt retirement). The City of Goleta may contract with the Comprehensive Planning Division to continue managing the Goleta Old Town Redevelopment Project Area (RDA) work; if so, this would represent an additional \$200,000 to support staff work on these projects.

The loss of revenue to support current staff levels and consultant funds is due to (1) the loss of General Fund contributions which would go to the City of Goleta as part of the County's revenue sharing agreement associated with Goleta's incorporation; (2) the loss of grant monies for projects lying wholly within Goleta which will be transferred to the new City; and (3) extraordinary increases in the cost of public liability and workers compensation insurance premiums.

The loss of about \$300,000 needed to offset the public liability and workers compensation insurance premium increases is significant in that it reduces the Department's ability to fund a full complement of staff to complete research and community outreach in a timely fashion as well as to fund consultant work for specialized studies for which the Department does not have expertise. In order to keep a viable staff level (albeit at a slower pace than is our standard), the Division has chosen to eliminate most funding for consultant work and do as much of the needed research "in house". However, there are some needed studies that require certain expertise that cannot be done by staff (traffic studies, engineering studies). As such, limited funding for those essential studies have been programmed in order to keep the project moving forward. Lack of consulting funds for basic research and EIR preparation will delay the Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan, the Housing Element Update, and the Oaks/Rural Resources/Agricultural Element Implementation Program.

Planning Commission Recommendations and Public Comments:

On February 27, 2002, the Planning Commission reviewed the draft 2002 to 2007 Five Year Work Program. The Commission received two written comments from members of the public, both seeking support from the Commission and Board of Supervisors to instruct the Department to commence the Lompoc Community Plan effort in the coming FY '02-'03 instead of FY '03-'04,

as approved in the current five year work program. They suggested that development was occurring at such a fast pace that a later planning effort would be less effective, as most of the development would already have been permitted. Commissioner Farr supported this request and recommended that the Department “bump up” the Lompoc Community planning effort to the coming fiscal year. Chairman Valencia felt that waiting until fiscal year 2003-2004 would not be too late and recommended that the schedule remain as is.

The Department held two Department “Open Houses” in which many of the Department’s efforts were displayed and discussed. The Division’s Five Year Work Program was showcased and the Department received one comment at the North County Open House by a member of the public seeking staff support for an effort to find a large, active recreation facility in Orcutt. Staff responded that the work program proposed to begin an Orcutt Parks Master Plan study, along with the Parks Department, is in fiscal year 2003-2004 and that we could not properly do a recreation facility study without the participation of the Parks Department. Should the Board support the suggestion to accelerate the Orcutt parks effort, staff would suggest that the Board substitute the staff hours that are now programmed for Old Town Orcutt Revitalization for this recreation facility planning effort and provide resources for the Parks Department to also allocate staff resources to that effort.

Attachments:

- A. Proposed Comprehensive Planning Division 2002 to 2007 Five Year Work Program
- B. Annotated Five Year Work Program Changes from 2001 to 2002 to 2007
- C. Letters from the Public received at the February 27, 2002 Planning Commission hearing