

**Santa Barbara County
General Plan Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2005 - 2006**

September 2006



**County Executive Office
Comprehensive Planning Division**

Santa Barbara County General Plan Annual Report Fiscal Year 2005 - 2006

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1. Purpose of the Annual Report

California law [Government Code Section 65400(b)(1)] requires all jurisdictions to submit to their legislative bodies an annual report on the status of the general plan and progress toward its implementation. The Planning Agency, who is responsible for investigating and recommending reasonable and practical means for implementing the general plan or elements of the general plan, submits the annual report to the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) and the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) each year after it is endorsed or adopted by the legislative body. Santa Barbara County's Planning Agency is the *Planning Commission*, which is comprised of a Commissioner appointed by the Board of Supervisors for each of five Districts in the County.

The intent of this law is to ensure that the jurisdiction's general plan serves as "an effective guide for orderly growth and development, preservation and conservation of open-space land and natural resources, and the efficient expenditure of public funds relating to the subjects addressed in the general plan" [Government Code Section 65400(a)]. The Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan is the County's general plan. The Comprehensive Plan includes thirteen elements: seven mandated elements, the Local Coastal Plan, and five optional elements. In addition, there are fourteen major implementation plans to ensure that adopted goals, objectives and action plans are actually carried out. (See Table 1 on page 3 and Figure 1 in Attachment 1). The Comprehensive Planning Division of the County's Executive Office maintains the Comprehensive Plan and monitors its implementation.

The Planning Commission and the County Board of Supervisors oversees the effectiveness and relevancy of the Comprehensive Plan, and its implementation activities, through its annual review, and adoption of the Comprehensive Planning Division's Three-Year Work Program (Attachment 1). This Three-Year Work Program is a "rolling" three year work program in that it identifies, for each year, what projects the division will seek to complete, initiate and make significant progress on over the next three years. Because it is tied to the division's budget, the work program is measured in "Fiscal Years". A fiscal year spans a period of time from July 1 to June 30th of the following calendar year. The Three Year Work Program provides a summary of division work items that will update and improve the Comprehensive Plan and its implementing actions. As such, the Three Year Work Program has satisfied the requirements of Government Code Section 65400(b)(1).

This Annual Report also describes the County's progress in meeting its regional housing needs over the current reporting period and describes local efforts to remove government constraints to the maintenance, improvement and development of housing to satisfy Government Code Section 65400 (b) (2). The 2003-2008 Housing Element Update (Revised May 2006) provides a detailed analysis of the County's housing production and related efforts to remove or ameliorate a variety of constraints to housing development, particularly in the affordable housing category.

2. Structure of the Comprehensive Plan and Supporting Documents

The existing structure of the County's Comprehensive Plan is based upon the requirements of State law and the direction of the County Board of Supervisors over the last two decades. State law provides the basic framework for the seven mandated elements of the Plan and the Local Coastal Program, the minimum required contents for these elements, and the implementing zoning ordinances. However, over the last decade the County, based upon extensive public input, technical recommendations from staff, and Board and Planning Commission direction, has created a much more detailed approach than minimum state requirements.

The current Comprehensive Plan includes thirteen elements, (seven mandated, five optional) the Local Coastal Program, six adopted community plans plus two in progress, and over twenty major implementation plans to ensure that adopted goals, objectives and action plans are carried out. Five separate zoning ordinances also play a key role in providing detailed guidance on implementing the Plan. Substantial public involvement is emphasized in the drafting and adoption of all of these elements and implementing documents.

During the 1980s the various elements of the Comprehensive Plan became outdated and some drawbacks in its structure (topical elements with countywide scope) became apparent. In particular, this structure didn't lend itself well to reflecting some of the differing values and planning concerns of various unincorporated communities, and made it difficult to give detailed guidance in the form of specific policies and development standards. As a result, the updating of the Comprehensive Plan took place through the development and adoption of Community Plans that covered the full range of topical "elements" (issues) within defined geographic areas. Community Plans have been adopted for Summerland, Montecito, Goleta, Los Alamos, Orcutt, and the Toro Canyon area and are in-progress for the Santa Ynez Valley and Isla Vista (being prepared by the County Redevelopment Agency). Additionally, a long-range visioning process is underway for the Goleta area as a first step toward an update to the Goleta Community Plan.

Table 1: Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan Elements

Elements	Type	Year Adopted
Scenic Highways Element	Optional	1975
Conservation Element	Mandated	1979
Seismic Safety & Safety Element	Mandated	1979
Open Space Element	Mandated	1979
Noise Element	Mandated	1979
Land Use Element	Mandated	1980
Environmental Resource Management Element	Optional	1980
Air Quality Supplement to the Land Use Element	Part of Land Use Element	1981
Coastal Land Use Plan (Local Coastal Plan)	Mandated Coastal Plan	1982
Hazardous Waste Element	Optional	1990
Agricultural Element	Optional	1991
Circulation Element	Mandated	1991
Housing Element	Mandated	2004
Energy Element	Optional	1994
Groundwater Resources Section	Part of Conservation Element	1994
Area Plans		
Montecito Community Plan	Part of Land Use and Circulation Elements	1992
Summerland Community Plan		1992
Goleta Community Plan		1993
Los Alamos Community Plan		1994
Orcutt Community Plan		1997
Toro Canyon Area Plan		2002 - Inland 2004 - Coastal

3. Comprehensive Plan Amendments and Implementation Activities For FY 2006-2007

The Comprehensive Planning Division of the County Executive Office maintains the Comprehensive Plan and oversees its implementation. The Division also works with communities to develop new Community Plans, as necessary, to reflect distinct community characteristics and development patterns and goals. The Division's main programs and ongoing work efforts over the FY 2005-2006 reporting period are described below.

2003 – 2008 Housing Element

The 2003 – 2008 Housing Element was adopted in March 2004 and submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development for their review. Subsequently, the State Housing and Community Development Department found that a number of revisions to the document were required before certification would be granted. In September 2005, proposed revisions to the Housing Element were submitted to HCD for review. In December 2005 State HCD notified the County that the draft revised Housing Element, if adopted by the Board of Supervisors, would be found in conditional compliance with State housing law. Accordingly, the Board of Supervisors adopted the revised Housing Element in May 2006 and it was conditionally certified by State HCD in August 2006. The FY '06-'07 work program will focus on implementation of the Housing Element's Action Phase. This phase includes completing a comprehensive environmental review of the Housing Element action items. Further details are provided in Section 4, Housing Element Activity.

Agricultural Preserve Uniform Rules

The County's Agricultural Preserve Uniform Rules are being updated to ensure consistency with the State Williamson Act and amendments to the County's Grading Ordinance. Environmental review was initiated in FY '04-'05. In FY '05-'06 environmental review continued and was nearly completed. Uniform Rules amendments along with the environmental document will be considered for adoption in FY '06-'07.

Ordinance 661 Consistency Rezone – Phase I

Ordinance 661, adopted in the 1960's, was replaced by Article III zoning ordinance in 1983; however, there are numerous parcels in the rural areas of the County still subject to this outdated ordinance. The consistency rezone would implement the Agricultural Element by replacing antiquated Ordinance 661 zoning in the rural areas with modern Article III zoning designations. The benefits of the consistency rezone include simplifying the zoning and permitting process and reducing permitting costs and time delays for applicants. Additionally, an Existing Developed Rural Neighborhood (EDRN) subproject was added during FY '05-'06 to focus on potential modifications to zoning requirements in limited areas; primarily in eastern Santa Maria. The FY '06-'07 work effort will focus on completing environmental review and bringing the project to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan

The Division is in the process of updating the existing Comprehensive Plan for the Santa Ynez Valley area. The plan will modify existing land use and zoning designations and set forth new goals, policies, objectives and actions specific to the Santa Ynez Valley. Numerous community meetings involving a project advisory committee and the Planning Commission were conducted over the past year. A draft plan is currently being considered by the Board of Supervisors. The FY '06-'07 work effort will focus on completing environmental review of the draft community plan.

Goleta Community Plan Update/Visioning Process

This first phase of the Goleta Community Plan Update will focus on key issues of land use, circulation, open space, agricultural and community facilities. The visioning process will culminate with Goleta Visioning Committee recommendations to be used by staff to develop language for the Goleta Community Plan update process. The Division anticipates bringing the draft community plan update and recommendations to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors during the FY '06-'07. The Goleta Community Plan Update will then continue with environmental review, adoption at the local level and Coastal Commission review.

Isla Vista Master Plan

The Board of Supervisors approved an extension of the Isla Vista Redevelopment Agency (RDA) in FY '00-'01 which included the initiation of an Isla Vista Master Plan process involving extensive public participation. This public planning effort continued in FY '05-'06 with the completion of a Draft Master Plan and the initiation of an EIR for the Draft Plan. The RDA, which is now contained within the CEO's office, will complete environmental review of the Draft Plan in fall 2006. It is anticipated that the plan will be submitted to the Coastal Commission for their review in late-FY '06-'07. The Isla Vista Master Plan will constitute a supplement to the Goleta Community Plan, an element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Orcutt Community Plan Implementation

The Orcutt Old Town Revitalization Program provides incentives for commercial development and historic preservation of Old Town Orcutt. In fall 2004, a package of zoning ordinance and community plan amendments designed to begin revitalization in Old Town were adopted. The amendments focus on reducing on-site parking requirements, eliminating front setback requirements, requiring that parcels fronting Clark Avenue and Broadway take their vehicular access from side streets or alleyways, and reducing lot coverage limitations. The Division and the County Public Works Department are collaborating to create a new striping design for Clark Avenue that focuses on improving pedestrian safety and comfort while increasing the number of on-street parking spaces. In FY '05-'06, the Division completed work on the Old Town Orcutt Streetscape and Design Guidelines for public and private improvements within Old Town Orcutt. Implementation of the Streetscape Plan is scheduled for FY '06-'07.

Goleta Residential Design Guidelines

In FY '05-'06, the Division in coordination with a public Oversight Committee began a process of creating design guidelines for the residential portion of the Goleta community, with an emphasis on additions, alterations, and redevelopment of existing residential developments as well as new development. The Division will bring the design guidelines to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for adoption during FY '06-'07.

Regional Planning Work

Regional planning includes work on county-wide and inter-county planning issues through participation on numerous task forces/advisory groups such as SBCAG's Technical Planning Advisory Committee and Transportation Advisory Committee, County HCD's Housing Advisory Committee, and the South Coast Homeless Advisory Committee of Santa Barbara County. The Division's work with these groups and a multitude of others ensures that the County has an opportunity to address a variety of issues that have regional importance, including jobs/housing balance, regional transportation and municipal sewer and water planning in coordination with new housing growth centers. This fiscal year the Division will primarily focus on participating in municipal service reviews conducted by LAFCO and reviewing annexations to special districts and to cities.

Major Project Review / Responsible Agency Review

The Division works closely with other departments, agencies and jurisdictions to ensure that new projects are consistent with the County's approved General Plan and that action items approved in various community plans are implemented. Examples of specific projects include the implementation of Highway 101 Design Review Team process, participation in the periodic update of transportation improvement plans and general plan consistency review. During FY '05-'06, the Division focused on general plan consistency review for several major projects, including Orcutt key sites, affordable housing projects, review of University of CA projects, Isla Vista Parking, and the County's Annual Capital Improvement Program.

4. Housing Element Activity

Housing Element Amendment

The 2003 – 2008 Housing Element is designed to address the existing and projected housing needs across all economic segments of the community. The Board of Supervisors adopted the 2003-2008 Housing Element in March 2004. Subsequently, State HCD informed the County that several revisions were necessary prior to certification. A Draft Revised Housing Element was submitted to HCD in September 2005. In December 2005 State HCD notified the County that the draft Revised Housing Element, if adopted by the Board of Supervisors, would be found to comply with State housing law. The Board of Supervisors adopted the revised Housing Element in May 2006. The State granted conditional certification in August 2006.

During FY '06-'07, the division's housing team will continue implementation of the Housing Element's Action Phase. This phase includes completing a comprehensive environmental review of the Housing Element's identified action items and processing a number of zoning and ordinance changes to meet the County's RHNA requirements.

Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA)

The current Santa Barbara County RHNA plan was adopted by the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) Board in December 2002. Under the RHNA Plan, each of the eight incorporated cities and the unincorporated area of the County received an allocation of new housing units of which they are expected to facilitate construction during the 2003 – 2008 assessment period. There are many ways to “facilitate” construction of these units. At a minimum, each jurisdiction is expected to provide land zoned to accommodate housing at the densities required to provide the total number of units and meet the affordability requirements mandated by state law. Pursuant to Government Code 65400 (b) (2), Table 2 identifies the residential development projects approved in the unincorporated County between January 1, 2001 and July 31, 2006, categorized by income category.

Table 2: Approved Residential Development Projects by Income Category					
	Very-Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	Total
Approved Housing Projects Jan 1, 2001- September 30, 2005	86	309	113	1,575	2,083
Approved Housing Projects Aug 1, 2005- July 31, 2006	51	32	43	326	452

Affordable Housing Categories and Income Limits

Affordable housing is broken down into four categories. Each category is based upon a percentage of median income for Santa Barbara County (\$65,800), adjusted for household size. The income limits are updated annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and form the income eligibility limits used by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). These household income limits, as defined by California Housing Element law, are:

- Very Low: Households earning less than 50% of median household income
- Low: Households earning 51% to 80% of median household income
- Moderate: Households earning 81% to 120% of median household income
- Above Moderate: Households earning over 120% of area median income.

Qualifying income limits for each group are based on household size. State HCD determined annual gross income limits for Santa Barbara County households in 2006 are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Santa Barbara County Household Income Limits as of April 6, 2006					
	Number of Persons in Household				
	1	2	3	4	5 +
Very Low Income	23,050	26,300	29,600	32,900	35,550
Lower Income	36,850	42,100	47,400	52,650	56,850
Moderate Income	55,250	63,150	71,050	79,850	85,300
Above Moderate Income	92,100	105,300	118,450	131,600	142,150

Source: California Housing & Community Development Department

Housing Production in context with County Housing Policy

Production of affordable housing is facilitated by means of several specific County policies and the State Density Bonus Program. The general long term development goals within the Housing Element also encourage the production of non-profit housing and private-sector employee housing. This inclusive category also includes the important sub-category of farmworker housing. Primary County policies include the Inclusionary Housing Policy (IHP), Farmworker Housing Policy and Residential Second Unit Policy. All residential development projects producing 5 or more net new units are subject to either the State Density Bonus Program or the County's IHP.

2001-2006 RHNA Production Summary:

During the current RHNA period, 2535 total units have been approved. 634 of those units (25%) fall within the affordable categories. During the current reporting year (2005-2006), 452 new units have been approved. 126 (28%) of these newly reported units are in the affordable categories.

2006-2008 Housing Production Expectations

Efforts over the remaining two years in the present RHNA cycle will focus on completion of the Housing Element Action Phase. Specifically, the County is proceeding with a program EIR studying the rezone feasibility of parcels selected as potential housing sites. Successful rezone of 62 of 87 identified acres will provide the sufficient land necessary to meet the current RHNA mandate. The rezone process, and corresponding community plan and ordinance updates, are anticipated to produce approximately 1250-1750 units. Combined with other affordable development efforts, such as farmworker housing programs, residential second unit construction, non-profit projects and employee housing, the County is capable of meeting the established RHNA target prior to the start of the next housing cycle.

5. Three Year Work Program Management: Proposed Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Implementation Activities

The Planning Commission and the County Board of Supervisors oversees the effectiveness and relevancy of the Comprehensive Plan, and its implementation activities, through its annual review, adoption, and funding of the Comprehensive Planning Division's Three Year Work Program (Attachment 1). The 2006 - 2009 Work Program outlines projects that have been determined by the community, Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors as timely, strategic and which represent an efficient use of limited resources. Table 1 on page 3 above identifies the existing Comprehensive Plan Elements and the year of their adoption. The attached 2006 – 2009 Work Program identifies the schedule proposed for updating the Comprehensive Plan.

ATTACHMENT 1

Comprehensive Planning Division 2006 – 2009 Work Program

Please Note:

A copy of the Comprehensive Plan Division Work Program has previously been distributed to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors and is on file with Hearing Support at the Planning & Development Department office and the Clerk of the Board. While not included here, the final report filed with the State OPR and HCD will contain the Work Program in the attachment.