

CHAPTER 2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The City of Goleta adopted the General Plan/Coastal Land Use Plan (GP/CLUP) in October 2006. The GP/CLUP is the primary means for guiding future changes in Goleta. Through the GP/CLUP, the City addresses decisions about growth, housing, environmental protection, neighborhood compatibility/preservation, public facilities/services, and transportation. Prior to the adoption of the GP/CLUP, the City of Goleta, acting as the lead agency, determined that the proposed GP/CLUP could result in significant adverse environmental effects, as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15064. Therefore, the City required the preparation of a program-level environmental impact report (EIR) to evaluate the potentially significant adverse environmental impacts of the proposed project, or the implementation of the GP/CLUP.

A Draft EIR, dated May 31, 2006, was prepared to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the Draft GP/CLUP released by the City of Goleta on March 20, 2006, for public and agency review. After further consideration by the Goleta City Council and in response to public and agency review comments received on both the Draft GP/CLUP and Draft EIR, the City made selected revisions to the GP/CLUP text and figures, which are reflected in the content of both the Final GP/CLUP and Final EIR, adopted October 2006.

In March 2007, the City Council initiated a process for reopening the GP/CLUP to consider the emergence of suggested amendments by City staff, the public-at-large, landowners, developers, and special interest groups. The re-opening of the GP/CLUP and its Final EIR was also influenced by the filing of multiple lawsuits against the City. Those lawsuits have been stayed while the process of evaluating optional text, policies, and implementing measures is analyzed, publicly reviewed, deliberated on, and adopted or rejected. Moreover, in its original adoption of the General Plan, the City Council in October 2006 acknowledged that several policies would, in the future, be re-opened for further refinement and possible reconsideration.

With that backdrop, the City-initiated amendments were subsequently grouped into five categories: *Track 1* for Housing Element revisions to respond to State Department of Housing and Community Development Department comments; *Track 2* for minor technical or editorial revisions presenting no new significant environmental impacts; *Track 3* for revisions meriting more detailed review as to their potential impacts; *Track 4* for project-sponsored amendments; and *Track 5* for Sphere of Influence.

The purpose of this Supplemental EIR is to document the CEQA review for those proposed amendments categorized as Track 3 revisions to the GP/CLUP. The CEQA lead agency for this Supplemental EIR is the City of Goleta.

The Track 2 and Track 3 policies were the subject of a series of four workshops hosted by the City between September 15, 2007, and October 17, 2007, to collect feedback from the public. Public comment was also received at public hearings held on January 17 and January 29, 2008. After considering public comment from these various workshops and hearings, the City Council decided which policies would proceed toward amendment under Track 3, as well as the scope and content of the proposed amendments. Since the January 2008 hearings, the City's environmental consultant, ICF Jones & Stokes, evaluated environmental impacts associated with the Track 3 amendments. Other amendments have been addressed under the Track 2

Addendum process. Track 2 was adopted following Planning Commission hearings on April 14, 2008; April 21, 2008; and May 12, 2008, and City Council hearings on June 3, 2008, and June 17, 2008, with Certification of a CEQA Addendum to the Final EIR and Adoption of the Track 2 General Plan Amendments on June 17, 2008 (CC Resolution # 08-30).

The Supplemental EIR will be considered for acceptance by the City of Goleta Planning Commission and the City Council. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15162(d), a Supplemental EIR shall be given the same notice and public review as required under Section 15087. The Supplemental EIR shall state where the previous document is available and can be reviewed and may be circulated by itself without circulating the previous Draft or Final EIR.

2.2 PROJECT LOCATION AND BACKGROUND

2.2.1 Location

The City of Goleta is located in southern Santa Barbara County, California, west of the City of Santa Barbara between the foothills of the Santa Ynez Mountains and the Pacific Ocean (see Figure 2-1, Project Vicinity Map). The City of Goleta and surrounding area is generally referred to as the *Goleta Valley*. Goleta is bisected by U.S. Highway 101 (US-101), which extends in an east-west alignment across the City. State Route 217 (SR-217) connects US-101 with the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB) to the south. Portions of the City are bordered by UCSB and by the City of Santa Barbara, including the Santa Barbara Airport. The southern portions of Goleta are within the California Coastal Zone subject to the jurisdiction of the California Coastal Commission (see Figure 2-2, Coastal Zone Boundary).

Access into and through the City of Goleta is provided primarily through US-101. Other major east-west arterials include Hollister Avenue and Cathedral Oaks Road. Major north-south arterials are Patterson Avenue, Fairview Avenue, Los Carneros Road, and Storke-Glen Annie Road.

The project location includes the entire territory within the geographic area of the incorporated city limits, and includes a population of approximately 30,000 people. This area encompasses approximately 7.9 square miles, containing a total of 5,075 acres. In developing the Draft GP/CLUP, the City studied an area of approximately 95 square miles where future development might impact the City or where City plans and policies might have effects outside the city boundaries. Potential future City service areas, filling the probable ultimate physical boundaries and service area of the City, are shown in Figure 2-2, Coastal Zone Boundary.

2.2.2 Background

California state planning law, at Section 65300 of the California Government Code, requires that cities adopt a general plan as a guide to their physical development. The role of the general plan is to act as the City's constitution for the physical use of resources, to express the community's preservation and development goals, and to establish public policy relative to the distribution of future public and private land use. The plan must contain the seven elements mandated by state law and may include other optional elements.

Prior to the City's incorporation in 2002, land use planning for the area encompassing Goleta was addressed through the Goleta Community Plan, a part of the County of Santa Barbara's General Plan. After incorporation, the City adopted interim General Plan policies. In October 2006, the City adopted its current GP/CLUP, which, as amended, establishes goals, policies,

and objectives for guiding future change in the City. The subject project comprises amendments to selected policies of the City's adopted GP/CLUP.

The California Coastal Act (California Public Resources Code Sections 30000 et seq) was enacted by the State legislature in 1976 to provide long-term protection of California's 1,100-mile coastline. The California Coastal Commission, in partnership with coastal cities and counties, plans and regulates the use of land and water in the coastal zone. The Coastal Act requires local governments in the California Coastal Zone to create and implement Local Coastal Programs (LCPs). Each LCP consists of a Coastal Land Use Plan and a Regulatory Plan (zoning). The City of Goleta's adopted GP/CLUP serves as the CLUP for coastal zone areas within the City boundaries. The CLUP has not been submitted to the Coastal Commission for certification. The Coastal Commission retains jurisdiction over projects in the Coastal Zone until such time that the City submits a complete LCP and receives certification. The City's certified GP/CLUP EIR, the addendum thereto, and this Supplemental EIR comprise the environmental review for policies presented in the GP/CLUP, as amended.

2.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE GENERAL PLAN/COASTAL LAND USE PLAN

The fundamental goals of the GP/CLUP are to: (1) ensure a high quality environment by protecting and conserving the community's cultural, historical, natural, and environmental assets, values, and resources; (2) provide a sustainable economy that is not solely dependent on growth, but provides for economic prosperity and well-being for current and future residents; (3) maintains adequate service standards, including level of service (LOS) on area highways; and (4) enables income group opportunities to meet current and future housing needs. These goals are retained as part of the Supplemental EIR and were used as a guide during the identification of the Track 3 policy revision process. The land uses associated with implementation of the GP/CLUP are included in Figure 2-3, Land Use Map and Existing Vacant Sites.

2.4 GENERAL PLAN / COASTAL LAND USE PLAN COMPONENTS

The GP/CLUP contains nine elements, including:

1. Land Use;
2. Open Space;
3. Conservation;
4. Safety;
5. Visual and Historic Resources;
6. Transportation;
7. Public Facilities;
8. Noise; and
9. Housing.

Proposed amendments categorized as Track 3 revisions to the GP/CLUP are presented in Table 2-1 and summarized in Section 2.6.

2.5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The 2006 Final GP/CLUP is available for review at City Hall and is posted on the City's website (www.cityofgoleta.org). Opportunities for public participation in the GP/CLUP process have been many and varied over the past three years. Activities have included:

- several public workshop series in 2003 and 2004, focusing on policy issues and a broad vision statement;
- a Discussion Draft General Plan Workshop Series in January 2005;
- new working drafts of General Plan elements released and discussed at Planning Agency meetings during Summer and Fall 2005;
- two community meetings on housing needs, issues, and strategies in August 2005;
- a traffic forecast and modeling presented at a Special Planning Agency meeting in December 2005;
- a Draft GP/CLUP released in March 2006 for the formal public hearing process;
- a Draft GP/CLUP EIR released on May 31, 2006, for public and agency review;
- a Final GP/CLUP released on August 25, 2006;
- a Final GP/CLUP EIR certified on October 2, 2006;
- City Council authorization to reopen the GP/CLUP in March 2007 to consider suggested amendments;
- City Council hearing to consider initiation of General Plan Amendments on April 16, 2007;
- City Council hearing to consider General Plan Amendments on July 16, 2007;
- City Council hearing to consider initiation of General Plan Amendments on August 6, 2007;
- a series of four workshops hosted by the City between September 15, 2007, and October 17, 2007, to collect feedback from the public;
- additional City Council hearings held on January 17, 2008, and January 29, 2008, to take a second look at proposed amendments;
- Planning commission hearings on April 14, 2008; April 21, 2008; and May 12, 2008, to consider a CEQA Addendum to the Final EIR and make recommendations to the City Council concerning proposed Track 2 General Plan Amendments;
- City Council hearings on June 3, 2008, and June 17, 2008, with Certification of CEQA Addendum to the Final EIR and Adoption of the Track 2 General Plan Amendments on June 17, 2008;
- a Notice of Preparation soliciting public and agency review of proposed Track 3 Amendments, released on July 29, 2008, and concluding on August 28, 2008;
- a Draft SEIR was released on January 29, 2009, for public and agency review;
- environmental hearings to receive public comment on the Track 3 Draft SEIR occurred on February 25, 2009, and March 16, 2009;
- City Council hearings on May 5, 2009, and May 19, 2009, with Certification of a CEQA Addendum to the Final EIR and adoption of Track 2.5 General Plan Amendments; and

- City Council hearings on May 5, 2009, and May 19, 2009, to consider the Haskell's Landing project with Certification of a CEQA addendum to previously certified EIRs and adoption of two General Plan Amendments (CE 2.2 and HE 11.5).

2.6 CHANGES TO THE GP/CLUP

As noted in Section 2.1, in response to further consideration by the Goleta City Council, as well as public and agency review comments received on both the Final GP/CLUP and Final EIR, the City authorized review of selected policies to be considered for amendment as Track 3 revisions. These policies are summarized below and detailed in underline-strikeout format in Table 2-1. In general, these revisions were made to improve or clarify the text of selected policies or subsections, to provide City staff with increased flexibility in policy implementation, or to refine policies with more succinct and appropriate wording based upon the observations and experiences of City staff implementation of the newly adopted GP/CLUP.

The policies evaluated in this Supplemental EIR have the potential to involve significant new environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified environmental effects. Accordingly, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15162, the appropriate form of CEQA documentation for these Track 3 revisions is a Supplemental EIR.

Policy amendments are organized by GP/CLUP element, and generally address the following topics:

2.6.1 Land Use Element

- Locations of large regional development
- Revision to growth management directives

2.6.2 Open Space Element

- Beach access
- Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHA) definition and designation

2.6.3 Conservation Element

- ESHA definition and designation
- ESHA protection and buffers
- ESHA development standards
- Width of streamside protection areas
- Allowable uses and activities in streamside protection areas
- Maintenance of creeks
- Definition of wetlands
- Protection of wetlands, both in and out of the coastal zone
- Protection of trees

2.6.4 Transportation Element

- Options if traffic mitigations are not fully funded

2.7 PROJECT AND ALTERNATIVES DESCRIPTION

Table 2-1, Track 3 Policies: Amendment Alternatives, provides a tabular summary of the policies that the City has initiated for review in this Supplemental EIR (Alternatives 2a and 2b) and an alternate proposal (Alternative 3) that was identified as a result of the preparation of the Supplemental EIR. All proposed revisions are to existing policies and related information in the GP/GLUP. No revisions are proposed to the guiding principles and goals of the overall Plan or individual elements, and no new policies are proposed.

The proposed revisions pertain to the Land Use, Open Space, Conservation, and Transportation Elements, and spread across 1 policy objective, 35 subpolicies, 2 implementation actions, 1 figure, 1 table, and 1 informational statement.

The following alternatives are presented in Table 2-1:

- **Alternative 1—No Changes:** This alternative is the “No Project” alternative as defined in CEQA. This alternative represents the continuation of the existing GP/CLUP policies. It provides the basis for comparing the impacts of not amending or amending the GP/CLUP. This alternative also expresses recommendations made at the workshops and public hearings urging no change to these sections of the GP/CLUP at this time.
- **Alternative 2a—City-Initiated Revisions:** This alternative is the *proposed project* as defined in CEQA and presents the text of policy revisions as initiated by the Goleta City Council. The precise wording of these revisions incorporates what was originally requested by advocates of the revision, as modified (where applicable) by the City Council during their public hearing deliberations.
- **Alternative 2b—Options Associated With City-Initiated Revisions:** This alternative presents the text of optional revisions to Alternative 2a for selected ESHA, wetlands, and related policies. This optional text concerns the development of plans and guidelines that would provide further guidance on policy implementation or could replace the existing policy. The precise wording of these options is based on suggestions to City staff regarding other ways to resolve issues associated with the ESHA, wetland, and related policies in the existing GP/CLUP.
- **Alternative 3—SEIR Recommended Revisions:** This alternative consists of revisions that the SEIR preparer (ICF Jones & Stokes) and City staff recommend in order to better reflect the intention of the initiated amendment, consistency with other applicable rules and regulations, and lessons learned during the environmental analysis process. The specific revisions are based on the materials circulated at the workshops and public hearings in fall 2007 and January 2008. In some instances, the wording combines similar versions of a proposed change or was developed in response to comments made at the workshops, hearings, and through the Notice of Preparation process.