



GOLETA CHAMBER NEWS & EVENTS

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A PUBLICATION OF THE GOLETA VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Looking to California's Future

The Goleta Chamber traveled with a delegation of 44 members of the Regional Legislative Alliance (RLA) to Sacramento for the annual legislative program of the State Chamber. The goal of the annual trip is to bring a business message to elected officials and members of the Governor's administration at the Capitol. Combining our efforts with the RLA gave elected officials a chance to meet with us as a group and therefore address the entire region from Goleta to Simi Valley through the Chambers of Commerce. We met with the new Director of Housing and Community Development Lynn Jacobs, Assemblyman Pedro Nava, State Senator Tom McClintock, State Senator Keith Richman, the legislative director for Assemblywoman Fran Pavely, Dan Dunmoyer, Deputy Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor for Policy Development, the senior staff of the League of Cities and others.

Key among the discussions was the infrastructure bond measure that was being crafted at that time. The Strategic Growth Plan, the Governor's plan for reinvesting in education, transportation and housing for the state was the hot topic for almost everyone we met with. Since our return, the legislature and Governor have come to an agreement for a \$37 billion bond measure to be placed on the November ballot.



KRISTEN AMYX
President & CEO

It is important that money be spent to rebuild California's infrastructure and that these projects move forward to address our growing state and our aging infrastructure, but I think something else is just as important about this event.

The leadership of our state is now discussing the future; a vision for our collective future; a big-picture dream of who we want to be as a state in the next 10-20 years. Much still needs to be included in the dialog, including a long-term vision about immigration, education, vocational training, economic vitality, high housing costs, agriculture and more. But at least the conversation has turned from a service-oriented government bureaucracy to a pro-active, investment-oriented, forward-thinking discussion.

The other hot-topic in Sacramento seemed to be the ever-present partisan gridlock. Most whom we met with agreed that it is still a strictly numbers game with committee votes adhering to party lines most of the time. While this is a discouraging thought, it was still impressed upon us how important it is to keep representing business to government in Sacramento. Pro-business legislators work hard to protect the business environment in the State, but when it comes to issues of conflict between business and the various lobbying groups, they report being between a rock and a soft place.

ONTHE SIDE

THE GAS COMPANY EXPANDS ENERGY REBATES AND INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Southern California Gas Company (The Gas Company) has expanded its energy-efficiency programs for business customers by allowing more customers to qualify and by increasing the benefits on some programs, which offer as much as \$300,000 in rebates and incentives per customer per year. For the first time, The Gas Company's energy-efficiency programs are also open to its largest business customers consuming the greatest amount of natural gas.

The Gas Company's new Energy-Efficiency Grant Program provides up to \$300,000 per customer per year for eligible large business customers that complete custom energy-efficiency projects saving at least 250,000 therms of natural gas-enough energy to serve about 500 homes for a year.

For smaller projects by eligible business customers, The Gas Company continues to offer incentives of up to \$25,000 per customer per year through the Process Equipment Replacement Program and the Custom Process Improvement Program.

The Gas Company has also expanded its Express Efficiency Program, which offers rebates on more than a dozen types of new energy-efficient appliances and measures - including commercial boilers, process boilers and commercial pool heaters.

For more information on these programs, businesses can log on to socialgas.com/business, contact their representatives from The Gas Company, or call 1-800-GAS-2000.



At the CA Chamber hosted breakfast with Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger April 25th: Zoe Taylor, Ventura Chamber of Commerce, Lynn Jacobs, California Director of Housing and Community Development, Dick Castner, Regional Director US Chamber of Commerce, Kristen Amyx, Goleta Valley Chamber of Commerce and David Press, Camarillo Chamber of Commerce volunteer business leader.



Goleta's General Plan

Hearings have begun for public comment on the finalized version of the Draft General Plan. Public Hearings are the final step before the Council adopts the General Plan and submits it to the State for certification.

Overall, the Draft General Plan gets a mixed review from the Goleta Valley Chamber of Commerce. Professionally executed, well organized and thorough, the plan sets the city of Goleta on a path of minimal housing production, very targeted commercial industry growth and scarce new business retail opportunities - essentially maintaining the status quo for existing neighborhoods and traffic - with a further tightening of environmental restrictions. The Chamber has commented on several of the elements so far. Our review of the upcoming conservation element is important.

Protecting the environment is one of the most important policies a City can pursue, and the Chamber of Commerce supports and participates in that goal. Protecting our natural environment is key to our future and preserving the natural surroundings in Goleta is a priority for anyone who lives here, so that we can maintain the beautiful environment we all enjoy.

The City's proposal in the General Plan basically takes the County's standards and "doubles them" somewhat arbitrarily. It is important, however, that the policies which protect our environment are sound. They cannot be rigid or superficial, and must be scientifically sound, make sense and encourage habitat enhancement. We believe most biologists would concur that habitat must be evaluated qualitatively, not just quantitatively.

Habitat that is larger in size and is pristine is more valuable, and more

deserving of protection, than is fragmented or poor quality habitat. Similarly, requiring that all habitat, regardless of its extent or integrity, be protected will likely mean that there is no incentive or nexus to require that property owners expand or enhance good quality habitat that is on-site.

While the City may feel that protecting all habitat regardless of quality or extent is a worthwhile goal, such policies will likely prevent the achievement of other equally valuable goals, such as building quality homes for local employees, redeveloping Old Town along the San Jose Creek corridor, or implementing critical transportation projects, much less maintaining a vital local economy.

The draft policies basically state that, once environmental sensitive habitat is found on a site, it must be preserved regardless of whether it is of poor quality, fragmented, or

degraded. A mandatory 100 foot setback is required.

These "preserve no matter what the quality" standards will likely have two very serious consequences. First, they may well prevent development of the major parcels with housing that the Land Use element says will be built. If a site has small habitat areas scattered over the entire parcel, application of the setback may prevent much development at all.

Second, most roadway/intersection improvements included within the Circulation Element and transportation plan that require widening will potentially affect "wetlands" (i.e. ditches at the side of the road). Incidental or marginal habitat areas commonly exist along roadsides in Goleta because of pooling water in roadside ditches.

Application of these policies will likely prevent most of the transportation projects from being completed.

GENERAL PLAN SCHEDULE

May 17, 2006 (Wednesday) Continued Hearing - Safety, Public Facilities, & Noise Elements	May 31, 2006 (Wednesday) Initial Hearing - Draft EIR	June 26, 2006 (Monday) Close Public Hearings on Draft EIR (including Agency/Council Comments) and on Draft Plan + Begin Final Agency/Council Deliberations on Draft Plan
May 22, 2006 (Monday) Preliminary Agency/Council Direction - Safety, Public Facilities, & Noise Elements	June 7, 2006 (Wednesday) Continued Hearing - Draft EIR	June 28, 2006 (Wednesday) Final Agency/Council Deliberations and Direction on Draft Plan
May 24, 2006 (Wednesday) Continued Hearing - Open Space & Visual/Historic Resources Elements	June 13, 2006 (Tuesday) Continued Hearings - Conservation Element	July 10, 2006 (Monday) (If Needed) Conclude Agency/Council Deliberations and Direction on Draft Plan
May 25, 2006 (Thursday) Preliminary Agency/Council Direction - Open Space & Visual/Historic Resources Elements	June 14, 2006 (Wednesday) Preliminary Agency/Council Direction - Conservation Element	
	June 21, 2006 (Wednesday) Continued Hearing - Draft EIR + Agency/Council Comments on DEIR	

ON THE CHAMBER CALENDAR

Old Fashioned BBQ

WHO: The Goleta Valley Chamber of Commerce, along with sponsors Venoco, Inc and the Goleta Valley Historical Society together invite its members and guests to our monthly Business After Hours Mixer.

WHAT: This month's Business After Hours features live music with Foggy Dew, great raffle prizes, and good 'ol fashioned BBQ.

WHEN: Wednesday, May 24th, 2006
5 pm to 7 pm

WHERE: Rancho La Patera/Stow House
304 N. Los Carneros Rd

COST: Chamber Members - \$5
Non-Chamber Members - \$10

May

23 - Issue & Policy Roundtable
Chamber Conference Room
271 N. Fairview, Ste. 104
12:00 pm - 1:15 pm

24 - Business After Hours Mixer
Goleta Historical Society/Stow House
304 N. Los Carneros Rd.
Goleta, CA 93117
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

26 - Executive Committee Meeting
Chamber Conference Room
271 N. Fairview, Ste. 104
12:00 pm

June

1 - Board Meeting
Chamber Conference Room
8:00 am - 9:00 am

5 - Ambassadors Meeting
Chamber Conference Room
271 N. Fairview, Ste. 104
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

13 - Issue & Policy Roundtable
Chamber Conference Room
271 N. Fairview, Ste. 104
12:00 pm - 1:15 pm

Save the Date

July 19 - Goleta Economic Forecast Tabletop Expo
Bacara Resort & Spa
8301 Hollister Ave.

ON THE SIDE



The Goleta Chamber welcomes Grayson Peters to the position of Communications Director. The post was formerly held by Lance Johnson who moved to North Carolina, at the end of April. Grayson brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Chamber and is a welcome asset to our team. His experience in web design, electronic communication, and photography design will enhance the Chamber's communication materials and content.

Grayson has lived in the Santa Barbara/Goleta area for 6 years and is currently enrolled in the Graphic and Animated 3D Design curriculum at Santa Barbara City College where he is a straight-A student.

"I look forward to joining the team at the Goleta Chamber and continuing the great work they do in hopes of a better future for everyone."

Please be sure to welcome Grayson and introduce yourself to him at the next Chamber event!