

SANTA BARBARA LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION
EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

September 6, 2001 (Agenda)

LAFCO 01-7: Goleta Valley Annexation to County Service Area No. 3

PROPONENT: Board of Supervisors, by resolution.

ACREAGE & LOCATION Approximately 2,770 acres (384 Assessor's Parcels) located primarily within the urban limit line of the Goleta Community Plan.

PURPOSE: To equitably share the costs of County Service Area No. 3 services by annexing lands within the urban limit line of the Goleta Community Plan.

GENERAL ANALYSIS

Description of County Service Area No. 3

County Service Area No. 3 (CSA 3) is a County-governed special district. It was formed in 1962 and operates pursuant to the County Services Area Law (Government Code §25210.1 et seq.).

Located in the Goleta Valley, CSA 3 funds several services: (a) street lighting; (b) acquisition and maintenance of parks and open space; (c) support for the Goleta Valley Community Center and (d) enhanced library services. CSA 3 energizes more than 2,800 streetlights and maintains in excess of 223 acres of open space in 51 separate locations.

The voters in CSA 3 approved in June, 1990 a special tax to fund "Extended Library Facilities and Services." The votes in favor were 12,085; opposed 2,646. Street lights are financed in part by special assessments that are based on "benefit factors" for each parcel. These differ with the type of existing land use.

For FY 2001-2002 it is projected that CSA taxes and assessments will generate \$290,529 for library services and \$149,000 for street lighting. The current annual assessment for a single family residence is \$15.75 for libraries and \$8 for street lighting. For vacant or agricultural land the current annual per parcel assessment is \$7.86 for libraries and \$8 for street lighting.

Lands included in CSA 3 are subject to the special library and street lighting services assessments previously approved by the voters. Therefore, the lands proposed for this annexation will contribute their proportionate share of support to CSA 3 services. No other taxes or fees are included or will result from this proposal.

Description of CSA 3 boundaries and proposed annexation

CSA 3 includes most of the Goleta Valley, extending generally from the City of Santa Barbara on the east to the Hollister Avenue intersection with Highway 101 on the west. Parcels in the Goleta Community Plan area were annexed to CSA 3 as development occurred but many residential or commercial parcels were not included (See Attachment A).

While only those properties in CSA 3 fund the district, CSA 3 services such as street lighting at intersections, the Goleta library, the Goleta community center and open space management may benefit other parcels to the same extent as properties that are within the district.

The proposed annexation area is located in three sub-areas:

- Sub-Area A is south of Highway 101 and extends from Storke Road on the east to and including the Bacara Resort on the west. This area has approximately 11 parcels.
- Sub-Area B is south of Highway 101 and extends from Hope Ranch on the east to the Santa Barbara Airport on the west. This area has approximately 185 parcels, many of which are developed with homes while some are used for agriculture.
- Sub-Area C is north of Highway 101. It includes ten separate areas identified below:
 1. Approximately 133 parcels on either side of San Antonio Creek Road, south of its intersection with San Marcos Pass Road.
 2. One parcel north of and adjacent to Cathedral Oaks Road, west of Via Campobello.
 3. Three parcels on both sides of Camino Real Road, west of Patterson Avenue.
 4. Two parcels east of Kellogg Avenue, just south of Cathedral Oaks Drive.
 5. Five parcels north of and adjacent to Cathedral Oaks Drive between Fairview Avenue and Arundell Road.
 6. Three parcels south of and adjacent to Cathedral Oaks Drive between Windsor Avenue and Carlo Drive.
 7. Three parcels between Cathedral Oaks Drive on the north, Highway 101 on the south, Glen Annie Road on the west and Los Carneros Road on the east.
 8. Westfield parcel located north of Cathedral Oaks Drive at Glen Annie Golf Course.
 9. Three parcels south of and adjacent to Cathedral Oaks Drive at Evergreen Drive.
 10. Six parcels north of and adjacent to Cathedral Oaks Drive at Ellwood Ridge Road.

Relationship of CSA 3 to proposed City of Goleta

The patchwork of CSA 3 boundaries came to light in negotiations regarding the proposed City of Goleta. A large portion of CSA 3 is within the proposed city and under California law, if a city is created, lands within the city are automatically detached from any County Service Areas and the city becomes responsible within its boundaries for services that are funded and provided by the district.

Having the proposed city entirely within CSA 3 prior to incorporation will make it easier for the new city to assume CSA 3 responsibilities and levy assessments. It will not be necessary for the City to create a separate zone or area of benefit to isolate the special tax. The schedule for the current annexation will expand CSA 3 prior to the effective date of the incorporation, which is February 1, 2002.

Should the city be created, it is important that the remaining portion of CSA 3 be large enough to continue as a viable service district. For this reason, this proposal includes annexation to CSA 3 of lands not only in the proposed incorporation, but within the Goleta Community Plan area that will remain unincorporated. In this way, all similar properties will be treated equally. Eliminating pockets of territory that are surrounded by but are not included in CSA 3 will create a more logical, orderly and understandable boundary.

Enclosed for the Commission's information is the Proposal Questionnaire submitted by the County of Santa Barbara (Attachment B).

Exclusion of Agricultural Land Uses

The County Planning & Development staff has raised concerns regarding the proposed annexation boundaries. The first concern is including agricultural lands and is discussed in the attached August 27 memorandum from Heather Baker (Attachment C).

The County staff is recommending that agricultural lands outside of the proposed City of Goleta, specifically those situated in the South Patterson Avenue area, be excluded from the annexation. Appended to the memorandum from Ms. Baker are excerpts from documents such as the County Agricultural Element, Goleta Community Plan, Coastal Land Use Plan, Agricultural Preserve Uniform Rules and LAFCO Guidelines and Standards that may support this position.

The justification given for excluding these lands from the annexation is that "inclusion of agricultural land in urban services districts such as CSA#3 can be a step towards potential future urbanization of the agricultural areas."

The LAFCO staff shares a concern with preserving agricultural lands. In adopting spheres of influence for cities and urban-service districts the Commission has directed urban uses away from prime agricultural resources. However, the LAFCO staff is not as concerned as the County staff with this particular annexation for at least two reasons. First, CSA 3 services are not the types of services that typically lead to urban development.

Street lighting is a "public safety service." Well-lit intersections benefit the entire community and significant traffic is generated by agricultural uses. The other CSA 3 services such as the support for the library or community center also benefit the entire community. These are different than services upon which urban development is dependent, such as sewers.

Second, the special assessments charged by CSA 3 will not be a significant burden on agricultural lands. The annual charge for vacant or agricultural land is \$7.57 per each Assessor's Parcel.

The CSA Law, specifically Government Code §25210.1, states that before agricultural land can be annexed to a CSA either the Board of Supervisors must find that the land will be benefited by any of the types of services proposed to be provided within the area or the owners of the agricultural land must request inclusion in to the district.

In its resolution of application, the Board of Supervisors states that one reason for the annexation is to include territory "that benefits from the services funded and provided by CSA 3." We think the Board of Supervisors has made the necessary finding.

The staff understands the arguments on both sides of this issue. The decision whether to include or exclude agricultural parcels is a matter for the Commission. We have provided a map of agricultural parcels that can most easily be excised from the annexation and still maintain reasonable boundaries and have described these in a map and list of APNs (Attachment D)

Inclusion of Hope Ranch

The County Planning & Development staff is concerned that Hope Ranch, a residential area should be included in this annexation since it is within the Goleta Community Plan.

Possibly Hope Ranch is not included in this proposed annexation because it is in the sphere of influence of the City of Santa Barbara. Even if Hope Ranch should ideally be included in CSA 3, that would significantly delay this annexation to re-notice the hearing. The staff is reluctant to make that recommendation since Hope Ranch was not included by the Board of Supervisors and it is hoped to complete the annexation prior to the effective date of the proposed incorporation.

If the Board of Supervisors wants to include Hope Ranch in CSA 3 it would be appropriate to submit a subsequent annexation to the Commission.

Also not included in the annexation, although they are within the Goleta Community Plan, are Isla Vista and UCSB. CSA 31 provides streetlighting for Isla Vista and the University provides its own streetlighting and library services.

PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Land Use, Planning and Zoning - Present and Future:

The annexation area is within the District's Sphere of Influence. It consists of a variety of residential, commercial, recreational, agricultural and open space uses. There will be no change in land use as a result of this annexation.

The proposal is consistent with Goleta Community Plan zoning designations for the area, which vary and include residential, commercial, recreational, agricultural and open space uses. No change in planning or zoning is proposed.

Surrounding uses are primarily residential and commercial to the east, low density residential and open space to the north, open space to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the south.

2. Topography, Natural Features and Drainage Basins:

The annexation area consists generally of level to gently sloping areas. There are no other significant natural boundaries affecting the proposal.

3. Population:

There are currently about 300 dwelling units within the proposal area. No change in the number of residential uses is proposed in conjunction with this annexation.

4. Governmental Services and Controls - Need, Cost, Adequacy and Availability:

The initiating agency's "Plan for Providing Services Within the Affected Territory" is on file in the LAFCO office as required by the Government Code.

5. Assessed Value, Tax Rates and Indebtedness:

The proposal is presently within numerous tax rate areas. Overall tax rates will not be affected by this change, nor will there be an effect on the assessed value of the area.

6. Environmental Impact of the Proposal:

LAFCO is the lead agency. There is a question as to whether the annexation is a "project" under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), since no foreseeable change in land use is proposed and no physical change in the environment will occur. CSA 3 does not provide services upon which development is dependent.

This annexation has no effect on land use plans or zoning and future changes in planning and zoning will require CEQA compliance at the time that changes are proposed. Forecasting future changes in governmental regulation is not required by CEQA.

It appears that the annexation may be categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15319, which refers to annexations to a city or special district of existing facilities and lots for exempt facilities that are developed to the density allowed by the current zoning.

The most appropriate environmental documentation may be to refer to the incorporation of Goleta for which an Initial Study and Negative Declaration were prepared. They concluded that the city will have no adverse significant environmental impacts.

The proposal before the Commission is an annexation whose boundaries are restricted to land that was considered for incorporation and for which a negative declaration was prepared. The Final Negative Declaration for the incorporation of the City of Goleta is therefore included herein by reference as documentation for this proceeding.

7. Boundaries, Lines of Assessment and Registered Voters:

The territory is inhabited; namely, there are more than 12 registered voters residing in the annexation area.

The proposed annexation is described in Attachment D. The boundaries are definite and certain. There are no conflicts with lines of assessment or ownership. The property is contiguous to the existing District boundary.

A map sufficient for filing with the State Board of Equalization has not yet been received from the proponent.

ALTERNATIVES FOR COMMISSION ACTION

After reviewing any testimony that is submitted, the Commission should take one of the following actions:

OPTION 1 – APPROVE the proposal.

- A. Certify it has reviewed and considered the information contained in the Negative Declaration as prepared and certified by the Commission for the incorporation of the City of Goleta (LAFCO 99-20) as being adequate to describe the environmental consequences of this annexation.
- B. Adopt this report and approve the proposal, to be known as the Goleta Valley Annexation to County Service Area No. 3, conditioned upon the territory being liable for any existing or authorized taxes, charges, fees or assessments comparable to properties presently within the District.
- C. Determine appropriate annexation boundaries, either as proposed in the County's application or by excluding specific parcels that are devoted to agricultural uses as listed in Attachment D.

OPTION 2 - DENY the proposal.

Certify it has reviewed and considered the information contained in the Negative Declaration, adopt this report and deny the proposal.

OPTION 3 - CONTINUE the proposal to a future meeting for additional information.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Approve OPTION 1.

BOB BRAITMAN
Executive Officer
LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Map of CSAs 3 and 31 (LAFCO Directory of Local Agencies)
- B. Proposal Justification Questionnaire submitted by the County of Santa Barbara (8-3-01)
- C. Memorandum from Heather Baker, County Planning & Development (8-27-01)
- D. Map of proposed annexation submitted by the County.
- E. Map of agricultural parcels for possible exclusion from the annexation

AGRICULTURAL ASSESSOR PARCELS THAT CAN BE EXCLUDED FROM THE PROPOSED ANNEXATION TO
COUNTY SERVICE AREA NO. 3

065-09-31 Ronald & Patricia Caird (Nursery)
065-23-12 Ronald & Patricia Caird
071-19-36 Ronald & Patricia Caird

065-09-36 Ekwill properties c/o Meeker Dev. Co., 132 Via Oakee Ave, Acadia
Warehousing

065-23-14 Diane Jane Miller, 103 S. Sandpiper, Santa Barbara 93110, SFH

065-25-25 Barbara Lowry, Sagitta Way, Cota de Caza CA
Ornamental

065-25-44 Ocean View Nursury
065-25-45 Ocean View Nursery

071-14-48 Austin-Hollister Co c/o James Black, 14114 State St #272

071-14-64 Giorgi Family Ltd Partnership, 7275 Alameda, Goleta

071-14-71 Scott Property Associates, 1364 Cravens Lane, Carp.

071-14-72 St. Anasuses Orthodox Church

71-19- 4 Pozzato Ezzelino, 44 Camino Alto, Santa Barbara

BISHOP RANCH AREA

077-020-045	University Exchange Corporation PO Box 8507 Goleta CA 93118
077-080-022	Cardio/Pulmin Med Group Inc.
077-160-053	Stow Land Company

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COUNTY SERVICE AREA NO. 3

065-09-31

065-09-36

065-23-12

065-23-14

065-25-25

065-25-44

065-25-45

071-14-48

071-14-64

071-14-71

071-14-72

71-19-04

71-19-36