



**TO:** Historic Preservation Commission Chair and Members

**SUBMITTED BY:** JoAnne Plummer, Neighborhood Services Director

**PREPARED BY:** Justin Wilkins, Recreation Manager

**SUBJECT:** Goleta Community Center Main Sign Rehabilitation

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Review and provide comments on the Goleta Community Center Sign proposal. The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is acting as an advisory body to the Design Review Board and City Council.

**BACKGROUND:**

The “Goleta Community Center” (Center) is a Spanish colonial revival building built in 1927 at 5679 Hollister Avenue. Noted as a historically significant resource, the building was originally designed as a schoolhouse. In 1977, after it was determined that it no longer met seismic standards for educational buildings, the property was leased to the County of Santa Barbara (County). Later, in 1984, the County sublet the building to a local group to operate a community center. The management group, the Goleta Valley Community Center (GVCC), subsequently assumed responsibility for operations and facility maintenance. The facility was known to the community as the Goleta Valley Community Center and branded as such under the direction of the organization. In 2013, the City of Goleta purchased the building from the Goleta Union School District but retained the GVCC organization as the day-to-day operator of the facility.

In January of 2023, the City of Goleta assumed control of all operations, maintenance, and programming from GVCC in anticipation of significant construction projects taking place at the facility. After this transition, the building was rebranded “The Goleta Community Center” (GCC) to demarcate new ownership and management.

Currently, the main sign is approximately 52” in height (at the center point), and approximately 105” in length (post to post). It is constructed of wood material, with the numbering and lettering being engraved on each side. It is painted in the consistent historical color scheme of the building, with the main color being off-white, and the trim being the historical teal. The sign is in an existing landscape bed and lit at night with existing, low watt accent lights. It is assumed that the current sign was installed sometime

between 1984 and the incorporation of the City of Goleta in 2002. See *Attachment 1: Current Goleta Valley Community Center Sign*.

When the City of Goleta purchased the building, a strategic plan for the facility and operations was developed and subsequently adopted by the City Council. Enhanced branding and signage were identified as needed to improve the visibility and identification of the building by the community. A “Goleta Community Center” logo was developed and adopted. The logo was created to identify the facility as belonging to the City of Goleta, using the historic teal color that is found within the building, and strived to match the existing font of the “Goleta Union School” that is engraved above the front entrance of the building.

Internal signage, program materials, and media have all been updated to reflect the name and new logo of the Goleta Community Center (GCC). In effort to continue to meet the objectives of the GCC Strategic Plan, and in recognition of the historical significance of the building, Parks and Recreation staff have developed a plan to rehabilitate the sign by having a custom high-pressure laminate inlay designed and manufactured. See *Attachment 2: Proposed Goleta Community Center Sign*.

The refurbished sign is designed to fit within the existing wood frame. The existing frame encompasses all aspects of Attachment 2, up to and including the existing wood trim, currently in the historically approved teal trim. The trim color pantone (5843) has been confirmed through the design process for the Goleta Community Center logo. The pantone has been matched to historical samples; however, it will be rendered electronically in variable format based on device and settings. Please note that digital renderings of the proposed sign match the CYMK (four color process) approved variables to match the existing structure.

The existing wood sign, which is approximately 28.28 square feet, is proposed to be replaced with a custom high-pressure laminate inlay. The inlay will cover the existing engraved woodwork inside the teal trim area and will be affixed into the existing space. The letters will be one dimensional and not etched into the laminate panel. The dimensions of the proposed inlay are outlined in pages 2-4 of Attachment 2. The width of the inlay will be approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$ ”, to mount flush with the existing trim. The benefits of manufacturing an inlay as opposed to creating an entirely new sign and structure are both for the purposes of cost to the City, as well as to preserve the character and history of the sign and building. There will be no change to the existing square footage of the sign, paint/color, location or overall dimensions, nor any changes to the existing landscaping or lighting.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **General Plan Policy**

Staff is providing a General plan, and Zoning ordinance consistency analysis regarding signage for the HPC’s knowledge and information. As part of the permit approval approved by City Council, staff will make appropriate findings of General Plan and zoning

consistency and include them in the permit approval document. The HPC is tasked in verifying that the appropriate standards in the Secretary of Interior Standards and the Goleta Old Town Heritage District Design Guidelines are applied appropriately.

**VH 4.13 Signage. [GP]** Signs shall maintain and enhance the city's appearance through design, character, location, number, type, quality of materials, size, height, and illumination. The following standards shall apply:

- a. Signs shall minimize possible adverse effects on nearby public and private property, including streets, roads, and highways.
- b. Signs shall be integrated into the site and structural design, shall be compatible with their surroundings, and shall clearly inform pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists of business names.
- c. Signs shall not detract from views or the architectural quality of buildings, structures, and/or the streetscape. Protrusion of signs and/or sign structures into the skyline should be minimized to avoid a cluttered appearance.
- d. Signs shall be of appropriate and high-quality style, color, materials, size, height, and illumination.
- e. Lighting is considered an integral part of sign design and shall be controlled to prevent glare and spillage onto adjacent areas.

**Policy VH 5.4 Preservation of Historic Resources states:** Historic resources and the heritage they represent shall be protected, preserved, and enhanced to the fullest extent feasible. The City shall recognize, preserve, and rehabilitate publicly owned historic resources and provide incentive programs to encourage the designation, protection, and preservation of privately owned historic resources. Various incentives or benefits to the property owner shall be considered, such as direct financial assistance, reduced permitting fees to upgrade structures, flexibility with regard to allowed uses, compliance with the State Historic Building Code rather than the Uniform Building Code, façade conservation easements, identification of grant 9 Historic Preservation Commission Historic Appropriateness Review August 21, 2023 Page 10 of 11 sources, provision of information regarding rehabilitation loan financing, and tax advantages.

Proposal: The proposed signage is consistent with this General Plan policy. No changes are proposed to the Center, but rehabilitated signage is within its historic boundary.

**VH 5.5 Alterations to Historic Resources. [GP]** Any proposed alterations to a designated historic resource or property listed in the City's Historic Resources Inventory shall respect the character- defining features of the building, its setting, and maintain architectural consistency with the original site or structure. Such proposals may require the submittal of an historic evaluation from a recognized professional as part of the design review process, that, depending upon the nature of the proposed alternation, may include review by the Historic Preservation Commission or Design Review Board prior to approval. To encourage rehabilitation, maintenance, and sensitivity in additions and remodels, the City encourages and supports adaptive reuse of structures listed on the Historic Resources Inventory and may consider allowing flexibility when applying building code regulations, including use of the California Historic Building Code, in order to

facilitate the retention of character defining features and maintaining historical significance. (Amended by Reso. 22-09, 4/5/22)

Proposal: Proposal: The proposed signage rehabilitation would not substantially impair the Center's integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. After completion of the project, the historic resource would maintain its status as a designated City of Goleta Historic Resource.

### **Zoning Ordinance**

The proposed signage complies with the respective signage requirements of Chapter 17.40, as outlined below, where applicable, and is located in the same place it has historically been.

#### 17.40.080.C Freestanding Signs

- 1. Where Allowed.** Freestanding signs are permitted only on a parcel of land with at least 125 feet of continuous street frontage and where the main building is set back at least 20 feet from the lot line. The base of the supporting structure must be set back at least five feet from the edge of the public right-of-way.

Consistency with Standard: The GCC parcel has approximately 475 feet of continuous street frontage and the base of the supporting structure is 2 feet away from the edge of the public right of way. The City is proposing to reuse the existing sign frame/support structure in its current location. The location and orientation allow for identification of the site and the sign does not affect driveway visibility.

- 2. Maximum Number.** One sign per street frontage. No more than two separate signs may be placed on each freestanding sign structure if grouped with a flag lot.

Consistency with Standard: There is only one sign per the Hollister Avenue street frontage.

- 3. Maximum Height.** The standard allowable height for freestanding signs is four feet. An increased height allowance may be approved as part of an Overall Sign Plan, but in no case exceed six feet in height. The existing height of the monument sign is 4 feet 4 inches, which was approved at the time the Community Center was erected.

Consistency with Standard: The height of the sign will not change and will remain 4 feet 4 inches in height. The sign is considered legal non-conforming.

- 4. Maximum Area.** 100 square feet. If two signs are placed on the same freestanding structure, the lower sign may not exceed 20 square feet and the areas of the two signs, added together, may not exceed 100 square feet in area.

Consistency with the Standard: The overall square footage of the sign is 28.28 square feet, which is less than the 100 sq. ft. maximum.

**5. Landscaping Required.** All freestanding signs require landscaping at the base equivalent to two times the area of the sign if the area is not otherwise part of an approved landscape plan.

Consistency with the Standard: Existing landscaping exists and there are no proposed changes to the landscaping at the base of the existing sign.

In addition to consistency with the zoning standards, the proposed rehabilitation is consistent with the below listed General Plan Policies in the Visual and Historic Resources Element.

**Goleta Old Town Heritage District Design Guidelines**

Further, it is found that the proposed sign rehabilitation adheres to the Goleta Old Town Heritage District Design Guidelines, in particular:

Per section II, Item K. Building Color, sign matches existing historical colors and style For signage;

Policy VIS-OT-8: Signs shall be used to maintain and enhance the overall charm and character of Old Town;

Policy VIS-OT-8.1: Distinctive, finely crafted signs oriented to pedestrians and automobiles shall be used;

DevStd VIS-OT-8.2: Sign styles and colors shall be in character of the related building and compatible with the signs of adjoining premises; and

DevStd VIS-OT-8.3: Business addresses shall be visible to pedestrians and automobiles along the Hollister corridor.

Additionally, the following materials are recommended for signs within the Goleta Old Town Heritage District:

- Wood-carved, sandblasted, etched and properly sealed, primed and painted or stained.
- Metal-formed, etched, cast, engraved and properly primed and painted or factory coated to protect against corrosion.
- High-density preformed foam or similar material – new materials may be very appropriate if properly designed in a manner consistent with these guidelines and painted or otherwise finished to complement the architecture.

- Unique materials and designs that are not identified here, but which are compatible with the objectives of the Design Guidelines, may be considered, subject to review and approval.

The project utilizes the existing wood frame and places a custom high-pressure laminate (high-density preformed foam) as allowable above.

### **Secretary of the Interior Standards and Historic Resources Report**

Pursuant to Section 17.33.080.D, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) should rely upon the relevant Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, since the City has not adopted design standards. In making a recommendation to the Design Review Board (DRB), the HPC will be asked to make the findings listed in Section 17.33.080.D.2.

The project proposes rehabilitated signage within the existing frame at the front of the GCC property, along Hollister Avenue. Under the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (Standards), this project is defined as rehabilitation.

The Standards define rehabilitation as follows:

*Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.*

The project has been evaluated against the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties, which are listed below:

- 1). A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
- 2). The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
- 3). Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
- 4). Changes to a property that has acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
- 5). Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
- 6). Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
- 7). Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

8). Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

9). New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10). New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

As stated in the findings, staff recommend that the proposed signage and lighting be found consistent with the above standards because:

- the property will continue to be utilized as a community center is permitted;
- the historic character will be maintained and preserved without removing defining characteristics;
- the City does not propose incorporating features or elements from other historic properties;
- no chemical or physical treatments are proposed; and
- the proposed development could be removed in the future without impairing the historic resource.

In conclusion, the proposed signage complies with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties.

**APPROVED BY:** Peter Imhof, Planning and Environmental Review Director

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Current Goleta Valley Community Center Sign
2. Proposed Goleta Community Center Sign

## **ATTACHMENT 1**

### **Current Goleta Valley Community Center Sign**



5679

GOLETA VALLEY  
COMMUNITY CENTER

HOLLISTER AVE

**ATTACHMENT 2**

**Proposed Goleta Community Center Sign**



please note discrepancy of 0.5"  
in your measurements provided



please note discrepancy of 0.5"  
in your measurements provided

GOLETA  
COMMUNITY CENTER

5679 HOLLISTER AVE.





