

December 10, 2020

Mayor Paula Perotte and City Council
130 Cremona Dr # B
Goleta, CA 93117

Please read this letter in the City Council budget workshop meeting on December 10th.

Thank you Mayor Perotte and City Council members,

First I would like to thank the City Council for supporting the increased funding from \$2 Million dollars annually for street paving to \$5.6 million dollars annually.

I do want to put this all in perspective though. Under current estimated costs, replacing just Cathedral Oaks from Los Carneros to Hollister is projected to cost at least \$15 million dollars alone and this does not include the repairs to the crib wall at the west end. CalTrans has already projected these costs as being significantly higher as construction costs keep escalating. This \$15 million does not include the major reconstruction and repairs needed to Calle Real, Fairview, and the network of other streets that make up Goleta's greatest asset. It is also important to note: If the City only did the Cathedral Oaks road surface replacement (little else), at \$5.6 million dollars budgeted per year, it would not be completed until the year 2024 at best.

As the City budget team points out, the \$3.3 million dollar budget increase is not actually funded and results in a budget deficit. As I understand it, the total cost of restoring the City of Goleta's decaying roads is really well over \$60 million dollars. This figure will continue to grow as long as time passes (due to cost increases) and they continue to be neglected.

I am sorry City Council missed the opportunity (3 yes and 2 no votes) to let the residents of Goleta decide in the November election on whether or not to increase the **sales tax** by 1%. That increase could have been targeted to restoring our infrastructure and some of the revenue would have come from nonresidents shopping in our big box stores. As pointed out in the presentation, Goleta currently has one of the lowest sales tax rates in the County. Our roadway deterioration did not happen overnight. It has been an escalating problem for 18 years. Our roads were not built for the traffic volume they carry and we have not kept up with the necessary maintenance that would have prolonged their useful life.

We have reached a critical juncture – do we keep sending work crews out with buckets of cold mix asphalt, shovels, and heavy boots for stomping the material into holes in the roadway **OR** do we step up to the reality that the City needs a significant infusion of funds to address the situation. I realize that the pandemic has seriously impacted the City's income so the challenge is even greater.

The answer is clear though – **we need to step up to the funding issues**. There may not be just one solution. It may require a combination of funding sources. The presentation made tonight lists several options: Cannabis tax increases, bonds, loans, sales tax increase, Revenue Neutrality Agreement renegotiation, and others. NTGS strongly supports a multi-option solution to get adequate funding in place to restore our infrastructure. Doing so also provides the opportunity for road redesign and improved striping to incorporate, at little to no additional cost, the improved bicycle lanes and pedestrian safety solutions identified in the City's Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan.

I, on behalf of New Town Goleta Safety, am asking you to be creative, fiscally responsible, and identify the best solutions to addressing this critical safety and economic issue. Our deteriorating roadways impact everyone

living in or visiting the City of Goleta. We cannot let this problem continue. We are looking to you to do the right thing and restore our City's greatest asset and our quality of life here in The Goodland.

Thank you,

Steve George

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