

Item No. B. 2  
May 23, 2022 - Planning Commission Meeting  
Discussion-Action Item- Draft 2023-2031 Housing Element Review  
Public Comment No. 1

From: BILL WOODBRIDGE <bill.woodbridge@verizon.net>  
Sent: Monday, May 09, 2022 9:31 PM  
To: Housing Element <housingelement@cityofgoleta.org>  
Subject: repeated approval of luxury complexes while ignoring lower cost housing needs

Dear Planners-

Thank you for your presentation on Channel 19 on May 9. I am retired, living on a fixed income, renting a \$2100 p/m apartment at Patterson Place. I would like to move back to Willow Springs where 1 bedroom apartments were renting for \$1900 18 months ago. Now the same apartments are renting for \$2668 p/m!! That is a 34% increase in 18 months. They only have a vacancy approximately every 2 months. The last one was rented within 40 minutes of coming on the market at 8:24AM on a Saturday morning when only the earliest of risers would have seen the email notification. I live upstairs with failing knees, so even if I were to move to a downstairs until at the same complex where I now live, my monthly rent would jump to market rates of \$2600 p/m which I cannot afford.

I am frustrated, dismayed, angry and disgusted that the City of Goleta has repeatedly approved construction of very large luxury apartment complexes while NO middle income or lower cost rental projects have been built for local retirees, essential workers, or even anyone who makes less than \$70,000 per year. First came "Arrive Los Carneros", then "Hollister Village", then "Arrive Los Carneros 2", then "Cortona Point". The LOWEST rent per for one bedroom units at these complexes is \$3750 p/m. That requires you to make \$135,000 a year to qualify for application (3 times the annual rent).

The problem is two fold:

1) You have most likely used up all of the Goleta Water District's available new water hookups. This was very short-sighted. There will probably be a new moratorium on new hookups due to the endless draught we are in, and 2) These large projects have consumed most or all of the remaining usable sites for apartment projects of these sizes or even half their size.

This has all been to satisfy the greedy developers and wealthy tech area tenants. Many local employees have to travel 80 - 100 miles round trip every day as they must live in Santa Maria or Ventura because they can't afford to live here. This is horrible for our environment. With gas prices where they are and probably will remain for a long time, essential employees will quit and find work out of town as their gas bill does not make it feasible for them to continue making the long drives every day. That will put a huge strain on local businesses. It already has. Families whose kids grew up here find that their kids cannot afford to live here. I graduated from UCSB and returned here 3 years ago to retire. Now I will soon be forced out. Is it any wonder that there are so many homeless people?

The situation with UCSB has been going on for over a decade and nothing has been done about it. Students can't afford \$3750 p/m for an apartment. So they are occupying all the less expensive apartments that other locals might otherwise have available to them.

This is a housing emergency. It will take us years to rectify it, even with all the new changes to the planning ordinances. I suggest that you DISAPPROVE ANY and ALL apartment complex

projects wherein the monthly rent for a one bedroom apartment (of NOT LESS THAN 650) square feet would exceed \$2000 for at least the first 3 years of occupancy and then increases of not more than 5% per year. A 2 bedroom apartment should rent for not more than \$2400 for the first 3 years. Stuffing people into cramped small apartments of less than 650 square feet with no storage or garage is like putting them in cages. It is not an enjoyable, mentally healthy or permanent way to expect people to live. So planning on constructing lower income apartment units of 500 square feet is NOT reasonable. Would you live a a space that small?

It will take thousands of apartments in this price range to solve this problem, so I suggest the City get to it with haste!

My feelings are probably shared by thousands of people in this City, most of whom will not speak up about it. But the above should be quite apparent.

Thanks for your consideration,

Bill Woodbridge  
56 S.Patterson Ave. #207  
Goleta, CA 93111

From: George Relles <grelles@gmail.com>  
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 4:02 PM  
To: Anne Wells <awells@cityofgoleta.org>  
Subject: Re: Housing Element letter

Goleta Planning Commissioners,

I am writing regarding the Draft Housing Element item scheduled for your upcoming Planning Commission meeting on Monday, May 9, 2022.

For purposes of this note, I am directing my comments only to Policy HE1\*(copied below,) and what seems like a recommendation to only "monitor the impact of short-term vacation rentals (STRs) on the existing housing stock" on annual basis and only then consider start considering changes. For reasons state below, this recommendation appears contrary to the objective stated in Policy HE1: "Maintain and Improve Existing Housing and Neighborhoods." In addition, this recommendation is counter to the unstated but important goal of clearly setting expectations for both neighbors and investors.

It is only a matter of time before Goleta faces an expansion of STRs and the challenges that come with them. Now is the time to anticipate and provide clear guidelines that will limit the ills that accompany Goleta's very lax STR ordinance.

Goleta fits the profile of cities whose objective to maintain and improve existing housing and neighborhoods has been sorely tested by the expansion of STRs. Such cities have the following in common with Goleta. They:

- Already have severe housing shortages
- Are located in places with ideal weather
- Are located in places with a high volume of tourism foreign and domestic
- Are located in places that have relatively high motel and hotel prices.

Goleta cannot wait to only monitor and should begin now, benefitting from the experience and measures other cities have taken.

**Goleta's STR current ordinance is contrary to "maintaining existing housing":**

- The current STR ordinance threatens Goleta's existing stock because it places no limits on how many houses can be converted to short term rentals, how near they can be to each other, and how many days they can be rented out as short term rentals. Nor does

the policy limit in any way how many STRs can be owned and operated by a single person or entity.

- The current policy provides little or no guidance spelling out the maximum occupancy for STR units.
- Because STRs are so lucrative, the current ordinance threatens to DECREASE existing housing for current and permanent residents in order to provide temporary housing for visitors. Other model ordinances have successfully reduced this threat by provisions such as requiring that the STR is either owner occupied or the owner's primary residence. Such measures prevent investors from converting one house after another into, in effect, creating a mini-hotel chain.

**Goleta's STR current ordinance is contrary to "maintaining existing neighborhoods:"**

- Goleta's neighborhoods that are zoned residential are intended to be occupied and enjoyed by longer term residents, as homeowners or tenants
- STRs are essentially commercial by their very nature, little hotels for visitors, with a very different character than permanent residences. To mitigate negative effects on the character of residential neighborhoods, model STR ordinances exist that control the amount of housing that can be converted to the commercial enterprise of short term rentals. Some ordinances include limiting the numbers of STR's, requiring them to be at least 500 feet from another STR, and/or specifying the number of days per year they can be occupied as STRs.

**It is also important to clearly setting expectations for neighbors, potential investors and hotels and motels.**

- The recommendation to wait and just monitor annually and then see if there is a problem, and only then consider changes is unfair to residents who are entitled to an expectation that their neighborhood is and will be a residential one and not an increasingly commercial district where a constantly revolving group of occupants have no stake in what goes on in the neighborhood.
- The recommendation to just monitor annually and then see if there is a problem is also unfair to investors who may be entitled to an expectation that the rules won't suddenly change. Many Goletans

can already anticipate problems with our current STR ordinance, given our housing shortage, our attractiveness as a regional destination, and the high profitability of conversions to STRs.

By waiting to see if monitoring identifies STR issues that are likely to arise, existing residents will increasingly find that their neighborhood has changed to semi-commercial, potentially reducing the property values of their homes.

And if the City waits to change the current ordinance to apply restrictions on STRs, will those who invested in and converted multiple STRs will feel the city is pulling the rug out from them. Will lawsuits result?

Similarly, it is only fair that local hotel and motel operators have some expectations of how much of their businesses might be affected by expansion of STRs.

**Recommendation:** In order to achieve the housing element's worthy objective to "Maintain and Improve Existing Housing and Neighborhoods," please change the recommendation from monitoring and waiting to taking action NOW to consider changes in Goleta's current STR ordinance.

For example you could recommend forming a sub-committee or task force that would review the current Goleta STR situation, review the work of other cities, and make recommendations to City Council on a new STR ordinance that will balance the interests of all. Ideally, this would happen with a date-certain deadline, so that the timing for possible changes and their consequences would not be a surprise to anyone potentially affected.

We can receive great benefits right now from other cities' challenges, experiences and their updated STR ordinances. Many updated ordinances have provided a better balance between protecting the expectations of current residents and permitting the "right" amount of STRs.

Please take a look at the websites below to see a wealth of information on what other cities are doing to deal with the STR issues I have mentioned.

The current and imminent challenges of short term rentals affect potentially affects every Goleta resident. As you review and make recommendations on the many important issues included in the Housing Element, I urge you to give this issue careful consideration. Thank you.

California

<https://cal.lawsoup.org/legal-guides/short-term-vacation-rentals-airbnb-vrbo/>

<https://www.rentbumper.com/short-term-rental-regulations-northern-california/>

Short-Term Rental Laws in Major U.S. Cities (Updated 2/5/2020)

<https://www.2ndaddress.com/research/short-term-rental-laws/>

Walla Walla, Washington

<https://www.wallawallawa.gov/government/development-services/short-term-rental-faq>

Colorado Springs, Co. <https://coloradosprings.gov/planning-and-development/page/short-term-rentals>

Monroe County, PA

<http://www.monroecountypa.gov/Dept/Planning/Documents/ShortTermRentalModelOrdinance.pdf>

Useful Communities Development <https://www.useful-community-development.org/short-term-rental-zoning.html>

\*Policy HE 1: Maintain and Improve Existing Housing and Neighborhoods. The objective of this policy is to protect, conserve, and enhance the City's existing housing stock. Seven programs implement this policy to address code compliance, housing rehabilitation, preservation of affordable housing units, preservation of mobile home parks, rental housing protection, rental assistance, and short-term vacation rental impacts on housing supply. Substantive changes to Policy HE 1 programs are summarized below.

- Short-Term Vacation Rentals: HE 1.7 is a proposed new program that requires the City to monitor the impact of short-term vacation rentals on the existing housing stock. Included are requirements for annual reporting to City Council and consideration of changes to the City's short-term vacation rental regulations, if needed, based on the annual monitoring.

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Public Comment No. 3

**From:** Goleta, CA <webmaster@cityofgoleta.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 10, 2022 10:15 AM  
**To:** Jennifer Smith <jsmith@cityofgoleta.org>

**Subject:** Yesterday's Commission Meeting

Message submitted from the <Goleta, CA> website.  
Site Visitor Name: Jason Chapman  
Site Visitor Email: chap0496@kettering.edu

Commissioner Smith,

Thank you for recognizing the divide between longtime homeowners and those who do not have such a privilege. Far too often, those in the latter category are the only voice in local politics. Because we do need to consider everyone, it's so important and I'm so grateful you've shined a light on and seek to try to address this disparity.

I'm a renter as well, and a relative newcomer to Goleta. I love this city and I want nothing more but to give more people the opportunity I've had to live and with here.

In that vein, I'm very glad you recognized the impact of redlining that's unfortunately touched our city as well. In order to reverse this, our housing policies need to give opportunities to those historically affected by redlining new opportunities in all of our neighborhoods.

I look forward to the next meeting regarding the housing element.

Best,

Jason Chapman

Goleta