CITY OF
GOLETA

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Michelle Greene, City Manager

CONTACT: Lisa Prasse, Interim Planning and Environmental Review Director

SUBJECT: Planning and Environmental Review Department Organizational Assessment Report

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive a report on the organizational assessment of the Planning and Environmental Review (PER) Department conducted by Citygate Associates.

BACKGROUND:

In June of 2016, staff prepared a Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify a qualified consultant to review and assess the PER Department's organizational structure, operational functions, and levels of staffing. The purpose of the assessment was to have a consultant make recommendations for improvements and enhancements to department operations, workflows, and coordination and collaboration with the other City departments. Four proposals were received by the August 10, 2016, deadline.

The proposals were vetted by a team of staff members. The review team was charged with identifying which proposals best met the needs of the City. In-person interviews were conducted by staff with two of the four firms. Following the interviews, client references provided by the top proposers were consulted.

Citygate Associates, LLC, was awarded the contract on October 3, 2016. Citygate was recommended for award of this contract due to: 1) their responsiveness to the Request for Proposals; 2) the qualifications and experience of their project team; 3) their extensive record of conducting similar studies for cities across California; 4) the methodology and approach to the project; 5) the proposed timeline for project completion; and, 6) total project cost. Citygate Associates, LLC, has over 25 years of public sector and planning department specialization and was well qualified to conduct the requested assessment.

DISCUSSION

Citygate conducted extensive review and analysis of the PER department, and produced the report of their findings that is provided as Attachment 1. Citygate interviewed elected officials, management and key staff both within the Planning Department and from other departments, collected data through an anonymous questionnaire, and conducted various external stakeholder meetings. Through this process Citygate: inventoried primary inputs, outputs, and processes; analyzed processing systems; assessed organizational and operational issues; evaluated information technology; and determined operational findings and conclusions. Jane Chambers, Senior Associate with Citygate, will present the findings of the assessment and will be available to answer questions about the study and the final report.

The process of the study was impacted by significant staff changes that have occurred during the course of the study, including the vacancy of the PER Director position. Citygate worked with the City Manager to adapt the original project scope so the final product could be effective and useful in the face of these changes.

Citygate has provided the City with recommendations that can be implemented now. They have also focused on best practices deemed essential to the Department's future. Within the report, Citygate provided recommendations for actions to assist the incoming PER Director in assuming leadership of the department that also can serve as a roadmap as the department and City organization moves forward. Citygate will return in twelve months to evaluate the progress made in implementing their recommendations, and will provide an action plan update.

The final report of Citygate's organization assessment of the PER Department contains a large amount of information, analysis and recommendations. The City Council requested that agenda items with a significant amount of information be released early to allow the public to ample time to review the material. Therefore, the report was released in advance of the other items on the June 20, 2017 City Council meeting agenda.
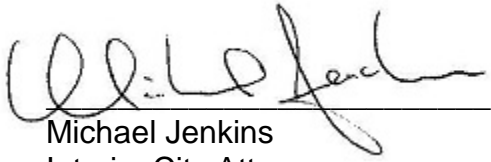
FISCAL IMPACTS:

The City Council authorized a maximum contract amount of $60,000 for the Citygate operational assessment. This included a base contract amount of $54,571 and an approximate contingency of 10%. The work conducted by Citygate was within the base contract amount. The FY 2016-17 budget includes an allocation of $65,000 for professional services in Account No. 101-5-1200-500 for this activity. No further allocation is needed at this time to cover the cost of the services provided.
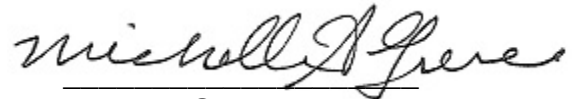
ALTERNATIVES:

The City Council could request that the consultant undertake further review and analysis, which would require a cost estimate by the consultant and an additional allocation to fund a modified scope of work.

Legal Review By: **Approved By:**

_____   _____
Michael Jenkins   Michelle Greene
Interim City Attorney   City Manager

ATTACHMENT:

1. Organization Assessment of PER Department Final Report.

ATTACHMENT 1:

Organization Assessment of PER Department Final Report

CITYGATE ASSOCIATES, LLC
MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW DEPARTMENT

CITY OF GOLETA, CA

JUNE 1, 2017

CITY OF GOLETA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Tables

Table of Figures

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

Citygate Associates, LLC (Citygate) is pleased to present this operational and organizational assessment of the City of Goleta (City) Planning and Environmental Review (PER) Department. Citygate was retained by the City to perform this assessment in October 2016 and conducted the fieldwork between November 2016 and March 2017.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT

This report is organized into the following sections:

Executive Summary and Strategic Action Plan

Section 1   **Introduction**

Section 2   **City of Goleta's Unique Situation**

Section 3   **What Internal and External Stakeholders Say about the Planning and Environmental Review Department**

Section 4   **Department Organizational Structure and Related Data**

Section 5   **Nine Strategic Recommendations**

Section 6   **Other Important Findings and Recommendations**

Section 7   **Review of Literature Sources**

ADVICE TO THE READER: HOW BEST TO HANDLE PEER REVIEW

Citygate does not intend to offend anyone; however, Citygate believes that the City is best served by frankness. The characteristics of the City's PER Department and, more importantly, the overall development review permitting process and the PER Department's relationships with its stakeholders have evolved over an extended period because of many factors. The process has both good and bad characteristics, none of which are caused by any one person. This also applies to non-PER departments and programs involved with applications moving through the development review permitting process, such as the City Public Works Department, and outside agencies, such as sanitation and water utilities and the Santa Barbara County Fire Department.

To the extent improvements need to be made, it is due to process problems as opposed to personnel problems. The attitudes and skills of the PER Department's employees are professional and courteous overall, as was corroborated by the numerous stakeholders Citygate encountered. The City staff involved in the development review permitting process are, more often than not, working very hard and conscientiously to do what is in the best interest of the City of Goleta in the context

of the greater Goleta community. Their affection for the City and community is deep and abiding. Many of them labor under difficult circumstances due to time pressures, the complex regulatory environment, and the high level of community involvement and expectations.

REPORT SUMMARY

At the time Citygate was retained for this study, the City was already anticipating changes that would be faced by the PER Department in the next three to five years. Market-driven demand for housing and commercial structures translated into a heavy workload for Goleta's planning and building services when the economy emerged from the Great Recession of 2008. Many of the projects under consideration had been proposed prior to the recession or shortly after the end of the recession. The workload experienced by the PER Department was in addition to ongoing work necessary to establish practices, procedures, and ordinances from incorporation in 2002. Elected officials and staff alike anticipated a transition into different types of work and skillsets for the PER Department as the community moves toward build-out, and the operational and organizational assessment was to provide a professional third-party perspective to assist the PER Director, City Manager, and elected officials as they prepared for future needs.

Citygate began work on this project in the fall of 2016, before the November 2016 elections resulted in two new members of the City Council and prior to the departure of the incumbent PER Director and, later, the Deputy City Manager. These events led to the expansion of the interview process and the decision to conduct a series of focus groups inclusive of large and small permit applicants and community members.

The focus of this report shifted slightly to provide a guide for the new PER Director as that person is hired and begins tenure with the City of Goleta. As Citygate recognized the existing workload challenges facing the PER Department, City Manager, and elected officials, with the absence of a permanent Director of Finance, Deputy City Manager, and PER Director, the focus was to make strategic recommendations that are the most urgent and most achievable given the many pressures and time constraints currently being experienced in the Goleta organization.

Citygate recognizes that very recent strategic planning efforts by the City Council, budget deliberations, and discussions surrounding moving forward with adoption of the proposed zoning code have each contributed to raising concerns and questions about future long-term staffing needs in the PER Department. It is Citygate's understanding that these staffing needs have been raised regarding implementation items in the General Plan that Advance Planning is responsible for carrying out, the impacts on planning staff that will occur with implementation of the new zoning code, as well as how best the City can move forward with its new sustainability efforts. Citygate has provided a series of recommendations and an approach that will allow the City to establish the metrics, priorities, and cycle times necessary for it to assess these future workloads and transition staffing skills to meet that future workload. These recommendations also assist the Department in

10

organizing the work it currently faces in a manner that will accomplish the most urgent items that, if left unaddressed, will continue to hamper the Department's ability to perform regardless of staffing composition.

Current staffing levels are sufficient, with the limited-term planner position extended into the next fiscal year, to allow the City to engage a new PER Director and take advantage of the new Director's talents and skills as the City addresses the PER Department's next several years. Citygate's recommendations allow the new Director to step in with a road map to follow, with room to shape the destination to which the Director will lead, and to make future staffing recommendations to the City Manager and City Council that fit the City's needs once priorities are established, the zoning code is adopted and implementation begins, and new technology is implemented for managing land use applications and processing. The nine strategic recommendations that are contained within the Strategic Action Plan, and the other recommendations that follow, cover the organizational and operational elements the City wanted to be addressed. At the same time, they provide opportunity for participation and collective wisdom as the PER Department moves forward under new leadership.

The City of Goleta has an opportunity to create the PER Department it would like to have at its 20th birthday, beginning now at year 15 of its incorporation. It can become a department celebrated for its ability to provide clarity and guidance to everyone involved in the project review cycle, be they applicants, community members, planning or design review board members, elected officials, or other City staff members, as projects are considered and prepared for policy determinations.

FIVE IMPORTANT CONTEXTUAL THEMES

To best understand the PER Department's current challenges and opportunities, Citygate has identified contextual themes during this organizational assessment. These five contextual themes provide a narrative background upon which the Department operates and thus also impact Citygate's findings and recommendations.

Theme One: Goleta enjoys a healthy community identity separate from the City of Santa Barbara and other central coast cities.

Theme Two: Goleta is in an enviable position to support community vitality by leveraging local, regional, and national economic development opportunities.

Theme Three: Goleta is a young city that has pre-incorporation, legacy organizational systems that limit its efficiency and effectiveness.

Theme Four: Goleta has a political history of shifting between growth-oriented and preservation-oriented development policies that requires the City's PER Department to be agile and adaptable.

Theme Five: Goleta benefits from a strong, high-tech, educational and industrial economy.

NINE STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Citygate identified nine Strategic Recommendations during this study, as well as other important recommendations. The nine Strategic Recommendations are important for the City to continue reshaping the organization, to build upon its current successes, and to make real organizational improvements that will be visible and meaningful. Put another way, if the Department implements all the "Other Recommendations" set forth in this study but does not implement the nine Strategic Recommendations, the overall improvement program is likely to end in failure. The list of nine is not intended to reflect an order of priority. These nine Strategic Recommendations are as follows:

Strategic Recommendation #1: Establish a direct link between the City's Strategic Plan and the day-to-day efforts of the PER Department to implement the General Plan. This will include linking mission, objectives, performance measures, goals, and expectations to achieve best-practice standards.

Strategic Recommendation #2: Establish professional development plans and identify mentoring opportunities and support for all Department employees.

Strategic Recommendation #3: Prioritize establishment of an electronic permit tracking system (EPTS) inclusive of building records once the new Zoning Code is adopted based on the timetable provided by the City Council. Continue to image records in accordance with the adopted Records Retention Schedule.

Strategic Recommendation #4: Improve communication with customers and community members by adding purpose, process, and project update pages to the PER Department website.

Strategic Recommendation #5: Pursue customer service improvements that support economic vitality opportunities for local business expansion.

Strategic Recommendation #6: Pursue customer service improvements that support Old Town vitality.

Strategic Recommendation #7: Rebalance the planning skillsets and position allocations in the Department to improve organizational efficiency, enhance long-range environmental planning, and increase the effectiveness of the City's Old Town economic development

12

program through increased collaboration with the Neighborhood Services Department.

Strategic Recommendation #8: Continue the process of clarifying the policy-setting roles and duties of the City Attorney and City Councilmembers relative to the operational role of the Department.

Strategic Recommendation #9: Strengthen the development review committee (DRC) and make better use of cycle-time standards.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the nine Strategic Recommendations, Citygate includes important "Other Recommendations" to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the PER Department. These recommendations are wide-reaching in their scope and are designed to support the Strategic Recommendations within the realities of the contextual themes previously described. These additional recommendations are as follows:

Recommendation #10.1: Institutionalize continual improvement of the adopted Zoning Code.

Recommendation #10.2: Direct the new PER Director to improve the efficiency of the City's EIR processing system.

Recommendation #10.3: Strengthen the transparency and accountability of the Department's Trust Fund Deposit system.

Recommendation #10.4: Eliminate "multiple bites at the apple" during the development permit review process.

Recommendation #10.5: Strive to distribute agenda packets on the Wednesday before Planning Commission and City Council meetings.

Recommendation #10.6: Consider revising the staff report format to provide a one-page executive summary.

Recommendation #10.7: Place access to public meeting agendas and staff reports in a prominent position on the City's homepage to ensure single-click access for the public.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

A list of recommendations and a blueprint for their implementation are presented in the Strategic Action Plan. This Plan contains:

1.   The responsible party/parties

2.   The priority of each recommendation

3.   Relative resource requirement

4.   The suggested implementation timeframe

5.   The anticipated benefits of each recommendation.

The legend at the bottom of each page of the Strategic Action Plan defines the level of each priority indicated by the letters "A" through "C." It is important to note that priorities have been established independent of the suggested timeframe. For example, a recommendation may have the highest priority (indicated by the letter "A") but may require an estimated six months to implement. Conversely, a recommendation with the letter "B" priority, which indicates that the recommendation is important and will improve operations, may have a two-month timeframe, since the estimated implementation effort would not require an extended period.

It is also important to note that an "A" priority, which indicates that the recommendation is deemed mandatory or critical, should not be interpreted to mean that the recommendation is mandated by a statute or regulation—it is simply an urgent recommendation of the highest priority.

The timeframes indicated in the Strategic Action Plan do not necessarily mean the anticipated completion dates for the implementation of each recommendation.

Table 1—Strategic Action Plan

Recommendation	Priority	Responsible Party/Parties	Relative Resource Requirement	Timeframe for Implementation	Anticipated Benefits
Strategic Recommendation #1: Establish a direct link between the City's Strategic Plan and the day-to-day efforts of the PER Department to implement the General Plan. This will include linking mission, objectives, performance measures, goals, and expectations to achieve best-practice standards.	B	City Manager, Interim PER Director, New PER Director	Fit this into 2017/18 Budget Document.	Begin within 60 days of new fiscal year.	The PER Department will be able to focus on priorities that are connected to the City Council's strategic goals. Establishment of objectives and performance measures will provide the ability to measure and evaluate outcomes.
Strategic Recommendation #2: Establish professional development plans and identify mentoring opportunities and support for all Department employees.	C	New PER Director, HR Manager	Use existing training resources; make additional budgetary requests as identified when plans are complete.	Begin within 180 days of new PER Director tenure.	The PER Department will increase its ability to retain an engaged staff that can adapt to changing conditions. The PER Department can become an attractive employer with the reputation of being a good place to practice the planning profession.
Strategic Recommendation #3: Prioritize establishment of an electronic permit tracking system (EPTS) inclusive of building records once the new Zoning Code is adopted based on the timetable provided by the City Council. Continue to image records in accordance with the adopted Records Retention Schedule.	A	City Manager, Interim PER Director, New PER Director	Use existing resource allocations.	Build on timeline direction from City Council on the Zoning Ordinance, permit tracking system to follow, and IT strategic plan findings. Report status 60 days into new fiscal year.	The PER Department's adoption of the new Zoning Code provides basic information necessary for an EPTS. Electronic systems provide opportunities for customer self-service and allow planning staff to spend professional time and attention solving planning issues.

LEGEND
A Recommendation mandatory or critical
B Strongly recommended
C Recommended

Recommendation	Priority	Responsible Party/Parties	Relative Resource Requirement	Timeframe for Implementation	Anticipated Benefits
Strategic Recommendation #4: Improve communication with customers and community members by adding purpose, process, and project update pages to the PER Department website.	C	New PER Director, PER staff, Community Relations Manager	Use existing resource allocations; identify additional resources needed, if any.	Begin within 180 days of new PER Director tenure.	By improving the PER Department website to help users access information, including information about the purpose of a requirement, processes, and project updates, both customers and community members will be able to self-serve and find complete answers.
Strategic Recommendation #5: Pursue customer service improvements that support economic vitality opportunities for local business expansion.	C	New PER Director, Economic Development Coordinator, Community Relations Manager	Use existing resources.	Begin within 180 days of new fiscal year.	Streamlining processes, including providing for administrative reviews and approvals, where appropriate, for tenant improvements, office relocations, and business park occupancies, will help the City maximize local job growth and business retention.
Strategic Recommendation #6: Pursue customer service improvements that support Old Town vitality.	B	New PER Director	Use existing resources.	Begin within 180 days of new fiscal year.	The PER Department can support Old Town vitality by providing clear expectations for older building requirements.

<u>**LEGEND**</u>
A Recommendation mandatory or critical
B Strongly recommended
C Recommended

Recommendation	Priority	Responsible Party/Parties	Relative Resource Requirement	Timeframe for Implementation	Anticipated Benefits
Strategic Recommendation #7: Rebalance the planning skillsets and position allocations in the Department to improve organizational efficiency, enhance long-range environmental planning, and increase the effectiveness of the City's Old Town economic development program through increased collaboration with the Neighborhood Services Department.	A	City Manager, New PER Director, HR Manager	Use existing resources.	The City Manager shall establish a date within 90 days of the new PER Director's tenure for the Director to provide to the City Manager an initial assessment of the existing PER Department skillsets and position allocations.	The new PER Director will have the opportunity to evaluate existing Department resources and skillsets prior to beginning collaborative Department process.
Recommendation #7.1: Collaborate on the development of an *18-month PER Organizational Transition Plan* to redeploy planning staff to address the City's shift away from vacant-land development; reorient workforce skillsets toward Old Town development activities.	A	City Manager, New PER Director, HR Manager	Use existing resources; make recommendations for additional resources dependent upon rebalance plan.	The City Manager shall establish a date within 120 days of the new PER Director's tenure for the Director to organize a collaborative PER Department process to develop an 18-month PER Organizational Transition Plan.	This will allow for improved group dynamics and problem-solving.

LEGEND

A Recommendation mandatory or critical
B Strongly recommended
C Recommended

Recommendation	Priority	Responsible Party/Parties	Relative Resource Requirement	Timeframe for Implementation	Anticipated Benefits
Recommendation #7.2: Designate an interim "Old Town Opportunity Group" Team Leader to facilitate collaboration on development of the _18-month PER Organizational Transition Plan_; the Group should submit the Plan to the City Manager within 45 days.	A	City Manager, New PER Director, Neighborhood Services, Economic Development Coordinator, Community Relations Manager, Public Works	Use existing resources.	Within 120 days of new Director tenure, Director shall designate an interim "Old Town Opportunity Group" Team Leader and work with that leader to assure delivery of an 18-month PER Organization Transition Plan within 45 days that work begins on the plan.	The "Old Town Opportunity Group" Team Leader can focus on assuring that the team delivers a written transition plan to the City Manager.
Strategic Recommendation #8: Continue the process of clarifying the policy-setting roles and duties of the City Attorney and City Councilmembers relative to the operational role of the Department.	C	City Manager, New PER Director, City Attorney, City Councilmembers	Use existing resources.	Begin within 60 days of new PER Director tenure.	Clarity for these roles will assist community members and stakeholders in their efforts to provide comments and concerns as projects are deliberated. It will also improve the ability of planning staff to conduct their work, to provide their professional judgement and recommendations, and to meet the service needs of applicants and stakeholders.
Strategic Recommendation #9: Strengthen the development review committee (DRC) and make better use of cycle-time standards.	A	Interim PER Director, New PER Director, Public Works Director	Use existing resources.	Begin within 30 days of new fiscal year.	A mature DRC will continually heighten awareness of timeframes, produce consistent and clear development standards, and deliver reliable fee cost estimates for the City's customers.

LEGEND
A Recommendation mandatory or critical
B Strongly recommended
C Recommended

Recommendation	Priority	Responsible Party/Parties	Relative Resource Requirement	Timeframe for Implementation	Anticipated Benefits
Recommendation #9.1: Establish a formal DRC agenda.	A	Interim PER Director, New PER Director, Public Works Director	Use existing resources.	Begin within 30 days of new fiscal year.	Highly effective DRCs are the backbone of a city's development review permitting process. Meetings will begin and end on time. If there are no pending or future development applications, then the DRC meeting is used to update staff on important issues, to train staff for purposes of consistency, and/or work on interdepartmental processing issues.
Recommendation #9.2: Establish, synchronize, and widely publicize cycle-time standards for all steps in the development review permitting process for all project types.	A	Interim PER Director, New PER Director, Public Works Director	Use existing resources.	Begin within 60 days of new fiscal year.	Planning departments that strive to achieve best practices for their development review permitting process do so by placing a strong emphasis on cycle-time standards. This will provide accountability and transparency for staff and the public alike.
Recommendation #9.3: Establish cycle-time standards for processing development plans through the Public Work's Development Engineering Division; resource the function to achieve the cycle-time standard.	A	Interim PER Director, New PER Director, Public Works Director	Use existing resources and identify additional resources, if any, necessary to maintain cycle-time standard.	Begin within 60 days of new fiscal year.	Best-practice cities commit to cycle-time standards that will continually lead to increased customer satisfaction.

LEGEND
A Recommendation mandatory or critical
B Strongly recommended
C Recommended

SECTION 1—INTRODUCTION

Citygate Associates, LLC (Citygate) was retained by the City of Goleta (City) to perform an operational and organizational assessment of the City of Goleta (City) Planning and Environmental Review (PER) Department. Citygate conducted the fieldwork for this study between November 2016 and March 2017.

This introductory section includes the goals of the report, Citygate's approach and assessment factors, and advice for the reader regarding how best to handle this peer review. Citygate also discusses the reality and complexity of the community setting in which the City resides. These unique community characteristics shape the opportunities and constraints that are available to the City and the PER Department as a whole.

1.1 STUDY SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the study is to provide an independent, objective, rigorously analytical, third-party analysis of the policies, procedures, management, and operations of the PER Department as it now exists and to design a constructive, forward-looking, and creative Strategic Action Plan for improvement, as needed. Citygate analyzed the current organizational structure and service delivery of the PER Department, as well as, to the extent necessary, the associated land development services provided by other departments of the City (e.g., the Public Works Engineering Development Review Division, Economic Development Program, and the City Manager's Office).

As set forth in the scope of this engagement, Citygate solicited input from residents, customers, stakeholders, and employees to help define the goals and priorities that the City will consider in analyzing potential alternatives for improvement.

A key purpose in the design of a general performance analysis, such as this engagement, is to ensure that sufficient flexibility is provided to the consultant and the City to pursue issues that are most rewarding, while functioning within an agreed-upon contract budget. To accomplish this objective, the early analytical efforts were designed for Citygate to establish a familiarity with the PER Department's overall planning and development review permitting processes, and the systems and procedures that support it, and to "scan" for issues that are material to the study in its early stages. This was done to ensure that the study was outcome-driven, as opposed to simply being task-driven. As a result of these early analytical efforts and discussions with the City leadership team, Citygate was able to focus time and attention on issues identified in the Department and the actual issues identified by the City's employees, customers, and stakeholders during Citygate's one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and online employee survey.

NOTE: Several of the deliverables set forth in the original Scope of Work for this study were modified to be more responsive to changed conditions at the City. Most notably, in January 2017,

the PER Department Director accepted a position with a city in Northern California. After consulting with the City Manager, the Scope of Work was modified so that Citygate's report could better equip the new PER Director for success and so that the Director would have the latitude to make key decisions regarding organizational structure, workload distribution, and the allocation of personnel.

1.2   WORK CONDUCTED

In varying degrees, Citygate examined the following:

1. Communication among staff and customers

2. Current and future performance measures

3. Support systems such as information technology, human resources, and accounting

4. Management structure and effectiveness

5. Customer satisfaction

6. Allocation of employees and other resources

7. Personnel management, supervision, and reporting

8. Staffing, budgeting, and the systems by which the organization routinely reassesses its key programs and activities

9. Workload trends

10. Physical layout of building and workspace.

The scope of Citygate's engagement included neither a financial audit nor a compliance audit.

Citygate also set a goal of providing realistic recommendations that can be implemented to help improve the PER Department, as well as the overall effectiveness of the development review permitting process, while meeting the needs of the Goleta City Council and the citizens whom they serve.

In executing this study, Citygate performed the following activities:

1. Conducted interviews with the Mayor and City Council, City Manager, Deputy City Manager, City Attorney, Finance Department Manager and staff, Public Works Director, Public Works staff that participate in the development permit review process, Neighborhood Services Department staff, a Planning Commissioner (former City Councilmember), and the PER Director.

21

2. Conducted focus groups with external customers, such as small project "mom and pop" applicants, larger development applicants, non-applicant organizations, and community members.

3. Conducted a web-based survey of PER Department employees and employees from Public Works that participate in the development permit review process.

4. Conducted interviews with all levels of the PER Department staff.

5. Reviewed available documents and records relating to the management, operation, and budgeting of the PER Department

6. Considered best practices in comparable agencies for applicability in Goleta.

Throughout this process, it was Citygate's policy to review findings of the study with multiple sources for validation. The data also was presented and discussed with the City Manager to allow an opportunity to provide evidence concerning aspects of the report that the City felt were unclear or needed further input.

1.3   CITYGATE'S APPROACH AND ASSESSMENT FACTORS

Citygate analyzed the goals of the City's PER Department and overall philosophy. Citygate assessed the congruence of these critical guidelines with the orientation of the Goleta City Council. Once this important step was completed, Citygate examined the profile of processes to evaluate organizational structure and management systems, organizational relationships, allocation of employees and other resources, performance variables, budgeting and training, workload trends, communications systems, information technology, facilities and equipment, relationships with citizens, comparability to other jurisdictions, and related aspects to determine if these were in alignment with the PER Department's mission and policies.

In conducting this study, Citygate used the following assessment factors:

Figure 1—Citygate's Profile of Assessment Factors

Service to the Public	Mission, Goals and Objectives	Policies and Procedures
Service to Business and Development Communities	**Optimal Performance**	Performance Measures: Efficiency, Effectiveness and Quality
Staffing, Supervision, and Training		Management Structure and Leadership
Financial Performance, Control, and Contracting	Tools and Technology	Workload Distribution
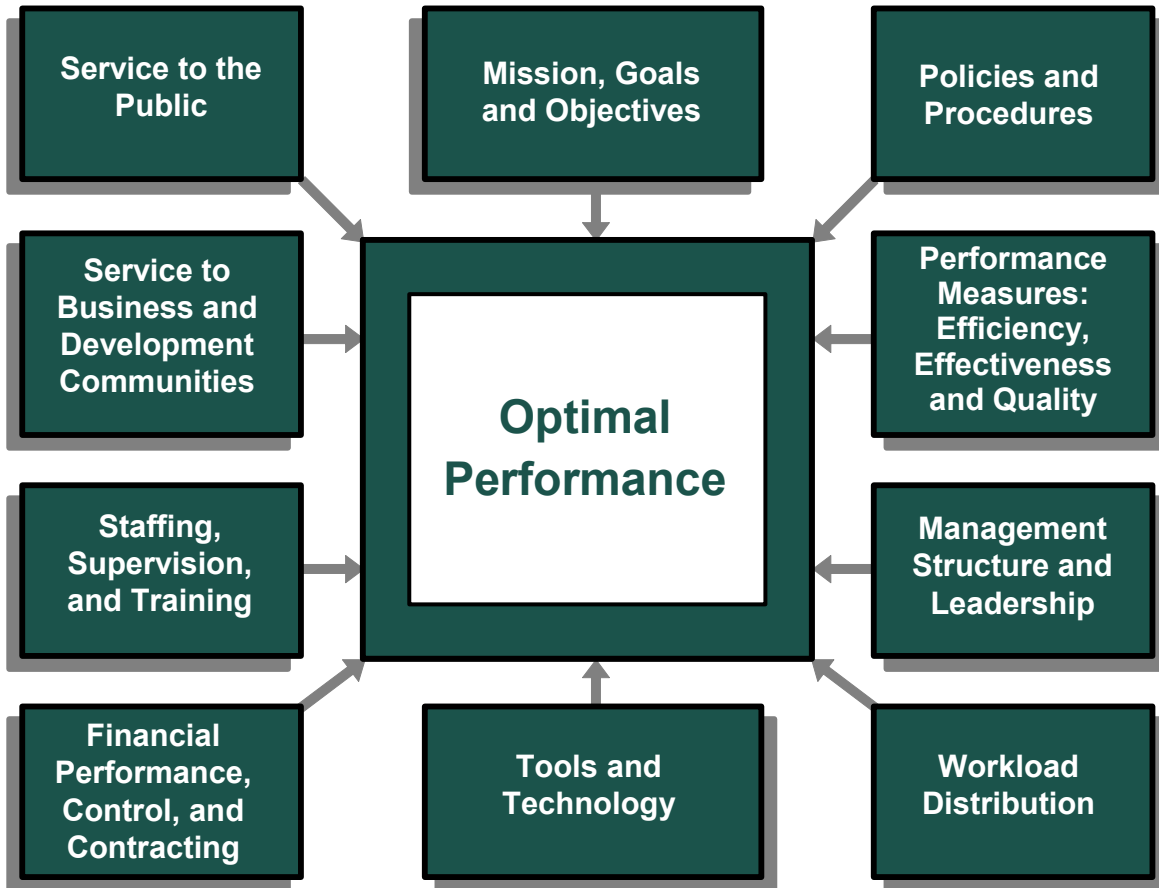
SECTION 2—CITY OF GOLETA'S UNIQUE SITUATION

2.1 FIVE IMPORTANT CONTEXTUAL THEMES

To best understand the PER Department's current challenges and opportunities, Citygate identified contextual themes during this organizational assessment. These five contextual themes provide a narrative background upon which the Department operates and thus also impact Citygate's findings and recommendations.

2.1.1 Theme One

Goleta enjoys a healthy community identity separate from the City of Santa Barbara and other central coast cities.

Goleta's citizenry enjoys living in Goleta for many reasons. The City is separate and apart from the Los Angeles megalopolis and all its congestion and urban problems. The City has its own personality and identity. The City is both laid-back and ambitious. The City has a strong educational and industrial economy that is world-class. Residents can work during the day at an advanced-technology research and manufacturing facility and go surfing during off hours in the middle of the week. The City is a popular place for students and young families.

2.1.2 Theme Two

Goleta is in an enviable position to support community vitality by leveraging local, regional, and national economic development opportunities.

Located in a region referred to as the South Coast, the City's neighbors include the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB) and the City of Santa Barbara, each thriving in their own vitality, generating tourism, technology, health, and service industries. Large employers in the area include UCSB, Raytheon, Sansum Clinic, Tecolote Research, LogMeIn, the Bacara Resort and Spa, FLIR Commercial Vision System, Deckers Outdoor, Yardi Systems, and Jordano's food and beverage distributor, providing over 15,000 jobs. The County of Santa Barbara and the Goleta Union School District bring that total to over 19,000. This strong jobs-base drives demand for local retail, health, and housing services, which also supply additional jobs within the area.

The synergy between UCSB's mission as a public research university and the resultant spin-off start-up technology firms generates demand for jobs and services. Science and technology growth has been part of the worldwide and national economic recovery since 2008 and appears to be a solid growth sector in the future. Demand for quality health services, recreational access, dining, transportation (air, rail, and bus), and retail services accompanies the location of quality technology jobs. There is also a corresponding demand for availability of both rental and single-family housing. These demands are combined in the region with tourism related to the established

24

Santa Barbara and California coastline, along with proximity to the growing wine country in the Santa Ynez Valley.

2.1.3 Theme Three

Goleta is a young city that has pre-incorporation, legacy organizational systems that limit its efficiency and effectiveness.

Goleta incorporated in 2002. As a young city organization, it faced challenges establishing itself and developing the foundational instruments of policies, procedures, ordinances, staff, and operations required to render services to its population. The establishment of these tools and instruments, along with staffing, required significant start-up expense and expertise. The City contracted for services and expertise, as a preferred model, over hiring a full cadre of employees to deliver services. In the PER Department, permanent City staff included a Planning Director and staff in current planning, advance planning, sustainability, code compliance, and administrative. Services of a Building Official, Inspection, and Plan Review were contracted and have been provided by Willdan Engineering, a planning and engineering company. Since incorporation, the City has used contracted planners to augment its planning staff in times of high process demand.

Goleta adopted the Zoning Ordinance which the County of Santa Barbara developed prior to the City's incorporation, which allowed it to process land use applications and requests with incorporation. The County's Zoning Code has a unique approach, as described from a previous land development review process study, conducted by Management Partners, Inc., in 2008. From page 3 of the study, it states:

> *"Following incorporation the City deemed it necessary to quickly put in place land use policies and land use codes. Goleta found it expeditious and sensible to adopt existing Santa Barbara County regulations and land use processes. While new cities commonly adopt County regulatory procedures, the situation in Goleta was somewhat unusual due to the fact that the County of Santa Barbara developed an unusual and complicated land use regulation approach, based on environmental impact in response to a variety of large scale land use proposals, including oil drilling, that shaped the land use planning agenda in the 1970's and 1980's when modern (CEQA compliant) planning policies were developed. Such policies while arguably appropriate for consideration of undeveloped property, are problematic for a suburban / urban area such as Goleta, especially for areas that were developed haphazardly prior to the development of the current County system."*

Although Goleta's incorporation in 2002 makes the City approximately 15 years old, the Old Town area includes streets, sidewalks, neighborhood housing areas, retail, commercial, and water infrastructure that dates to the World War II era. As previously mentioned from the 2008 Management Partners study, some of the City's development was more haphazardly accomplished

as part of the rural unincorporated County area rather than by use of suburban/urban land development practices and standards more commonly used in incorporated settings.

It took the City several years to develop a General Plan, and, after its adoption, the City itself initiated steps to amend elements of the plan. Meanwhile, the Zoning Code, with its unique approach as previously described, has remained in use and is not easily relatable to the City's General Plan. As the previous study stated, the current Zoning Code, which was referred to by local individuals in interviews with Citygate as an "umbrella" type code, is based on an approach that requires a high degree of interpretation and customization for each individual project rather than providing for specific types of development utilized in most cities.

2.1.4 Theme Four

Goleta has a political history of shifting between growth-oriented and preservation-oriented development policies that requires the City's PER Department to be agile and adaptable.

From the history that Citygate researched and heard described over the course of this study, it appears that the PER Department's first 15 years can be divided into three periods, not necessarily equal in years.

The first would be the period of incorporation and establishment, roughly the first four years after incorporation. This period can be characterized as a time when preservation-oriented, slow-and/or no-growth policy prevailed as the City was engaged in efforts to hire staff and establish services. During these early years, the City Council acted in the capacity of a planning agency, and the Design Review Board was active in review of most projects and applications, regardless of size and scope. During this timeframe, the PER Department conducted its business using many of the practices and procedures borrowed from the County of Santa Barbara, with the use of the adopted Santa Barbara County's Zoning Code. The City's General Plan was adopted in November of 2006.

A second period, roughly the next seven years in the life of the City, occurred at a time when the City Council responded to concerns it heard from the community about the pace and complexity of review for residential remodel applicants and other "mom and pop" type proposed developments for smaller commercial and residential developments. During this timeframe, the City Council established the Planning Commission while the Design Review Board (DRB) continued in its review of projects. A priority was given by the City Council for City staff to move applications through the development review process, in response to complaints and concerns expressed by customers of the PER Department. The City's General Plan was adopted in late 2006, and in 2007, the City undertook to modify five elements of that General Plan with various ultimate outcomes.[1] The land use functions (i.e., services performed by the PER Department and other City departments) of the City were reviewed, with a study conducted by Management Partners in March

---

[1] City of Goleta General Plan (web).

2008. This study recommended practices and procedures for the new City to adopt, including development and adoption of a new Zoning Code. During this timeframe, some development proposals were caught in the nationwide economic downturn, with its major impact felt in late 2008 and lasting for several years. Projects that had been under discussion and in the development pipeline became unfeasible due to a lack of financing and/or other effects of that severe recession. The result of this was that many proposed projects stalled out due to economic reasons.

A third period, roughly four years, occurred as the economy recovered and projects that had been in the development review process pipeline or put on hold were renewed by owners and applicants. It became a priority of the City Council for these applications to be reviewed and presented for consideration by the Planning Commission, DRB, and Council as appropriate. At this time, the City Council was also interested in creating inroads to provide an improved jobs and housing balance within the City where the number of jobs available outpaced the number of housing units available. Also during this period, the City sought to develop a Zoning Code that would conform to the City's General Plan. As applications were being approved, environmental review processes completed, and entitlements given for the new housing, commercial retail, and hotel projects, community members expressed concern and disapproval for the volume of construction and development occurring on remaining parcels of undeveloped land in the City. Amidst the concerns was the increased traffic during morning and evening commute times at major intersections in the City.

2.1.5 Theme Five

Goleta benefits from a strong, high-tech, educational and industrial economy.

Few, if any, small cities in California can compete with Goleta's rich and highly desirable work, life, and play environment. Fundamental to this unique environment are the employment opportunities that spring from the symbiotic relationship between UCSB and the City's high-tech business parks. Numerous businesses operate in the City specifically because of the research and manufacturing talent that exists in the local workforce. These companies include, for example, Raytheon, Citrix Online, Cisco, AppFolio, FLIR Commercial Vision System, Orbital ATK, and InTouch. The City enjoys a level of intellectual and human capital that is disproportionate to its size.

SECTION 3—WHAT STAKEHOLDERS SAY ABOUT THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW DEPARTMENT

Citygate conducted one-on-one interviews, four focus group meetings, and an online employee survey through which Citygate developed a strong sense of how various stakeholders viewed the PER Department, its leadership, and staff. The PER Department staff enjoys a healthy measure of respect and support. That is not to say that challenges and areas for growth and improvement do not exist; they do. However, Citygate believes the attitudes, skills, will, and political leadership support to improve the Department's performance for the community are very promising. The following subsections summarize the most salient recurring sentiments and issues that were heard throughout stakeholder communication.

3.1 ELECTED OFFICIALS

Each City Councilmember was individually interviewed. These interviews included five members in office prior to the November 9, 2016, election and two new members elected, so that a total of seven elected officials were interviewed.

The following summaries represent stakeholder observations and opinions, and not necessarily the findings or opinions of Citygate Associates.

Elected officials noted that the current planning staff is a good staff and expressed appreciation for the leadership of the recent PER Director.

Elected officials desire for Goleta to build on its advantages to further strengthen the local economy and grow funds available for local services. For some, preserving open space and providing parks and bike pathways are important future goals. For others, assuring that local employers can expand their businesses and operations within the City to continue a strong jobs base is extremely important. Elected officials acknowledged that residents are expressing concerns about use of water resources, the impacts of traffic congestion, and the ability of the City to provide services as the community has experienced development over the last several years.

A need to manage and plan for the future skillsets and processes necessary in the PER Department was expressed, as elected officials noted that the community will soon be transitioning into a time in which most project proposals will focus on renovation of existing structures, adaptation of existing structures for business uses, and renovation of older housing stock. Concerns were expressed about providing a more transparent path for both customers and the public to follow as projects go through the review process, as well as a need to clarify the role of the Design Review Board (DRB).

Elected officials also expressed a desire for Old Town to become a vital part of the community's center. This will include slowing traffic and providing bike lanes and public parking.

Elected officials noted that Old Town currently provides the most affordable housing in the community and pointed out the need to provide affordable housing and workforce housing in the City, as well as the need to work on meeting state regional housing requirements.

3.2 COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Two separate focus groups were held to include community members. The first focus group was open to members of the community, of which approximately 40 attended. The invitation specified that community members could send comments within an established deadline if they were unable to participate. Nine written comments from this meeting were received, and one request for additional communication was accommodated by an in-person conversation following the first evening focus group meeting. A second focus group was performed, and participants were selected by invitation to ensure that environmentalists and growth management members were specifically invited to participate.

The following summaries represent stakeholder observations and opinions, and not necessarily the findings or opinions of Citygate Associates.

Comments included noting that the PER Department staff is great; specifically, they are receptive, well-meaning, and customer-service-driven.

Community members expressed concerns about a lack of clarity with the timing of the City's development review permit processes and the lack of citations of ordinances, codes, and regulations pertaining to that process in staff reports so that the public can follow and review proposed developments. Staff report graphics need improvement because they are often unreadable when shown in public meetings. There is inadequate time allowed between the Thursday agenda posting and the Tuesday evening meeting for the public to have its questions answered. Recommendations were made that staff reports should contain an executive summary, site plans, and photos as a way for people to see the project's design and features.

Community members also expressed concerns that the City's image is changing due to the current developments that have been approved and it is on a fast track for the high-density construction seen in Los Angeles with big-box shopping centers, hotels, condominiums, and apartments, seemingly coupled with growth of UCSB. Members expressed concerns that developers are given a pass when they should be held to higher standards. An example was given that a community group was able to obtain a creek setback that the City was not going to require. Community members want to see development analyzed for its fiscal impact on the City and the cumulative impacts of development considered by the City when projects are proposed.

Community members expressed concern that the City has no town center, and there was discussion that the lack of appropriate and flexible zones within the community is driving business away from

the City. It was noted that current zoning does not provide for sufficient small manufacturing and research and development space.

According to community members, current notification practices, such as the practice of contacting homeowner associations, do not ensure that information is passed along to residents in a timely fashion. Representatives of regional interests expressed concerns that comments submitted by these regional interests have not been taken seriously during the review process. It is unclear to members how the PER Department is performing future planning and what strategic goals have been adopted related to sustainability and future energy use. Members commented that the Bicycle Master Plan, Climate Action Plan, and Energy Efficiency Plan do not appear connected to one another or to an overall strategic plan. Members expressed concerns that the City's California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) thresholds manual and its environmental review guidelines should include best practices and be updated on a regular basis, including consultation with groups representing environmental interests.

3.3 PERMIT APPLICANTS

Permit applicants included representatives who have brought numerous projects into the PER Department, as well as one-time applicants. Some were interviewed and others participated in a focus group. Permit applicants include private sector planning professionals, engineers, architects, land owners, and contractors.

The following summaries represent stakeholder observations and opinions, and not necessarily the findings or opinions of Citygate Associates.

Permit applicants expressed that the City has hired some great staff and note that staff are accessible, friendly, and helpful to the smaller and one-time developers. Applicants thought staff are responsive and proactive, but not necessarily pro-growth. Permit applicants expressed appreciation for the Over-the-Counter (OTC) approvals and plan intake processes for building plans. Since 2002, there have been several directors of the PER Department, and industry users recognize that the Department has had to manage challenges since incorporation, including a heavy workload and a significant amount of staff turnover. Permit applicants expressed concerns that the City is currently not staffed to perform the work necessary.

Applicants report that they must champion their own projects through the process, tentative timeframes are not adhered to as agreed upon, and the PER Department should have standard practices, dates, and accountability for processing of permit applications. Applicants report having to respond to multiple review comments during third and fourth reviews rather than having all comments made earlier in the process. An example was given of a Public Works development review where eight rounds of review were performed, with new comments every time. This took course over 18 months, and City staff took no ownership over the changes made.

Permit applicants noted that the PER Department lacks some basic documents, such as a local coastal development plan, necessary for applicants to understand the City's policies and processes, and that the inherited Zoning Ordinance and current zoning process is convoluted. The example given was that biotech and university spin-offs are consistent with the General Plan, but inconsistent with the current Zoning Code. Applicants also noted that the Department also lacks current technology; microfiche records are incomplete, and building applications are still carbon copy triplicates at beginning and end of the building permit process.

Applicants noted that the City should try to fast-track tenant improvements, especially for tenant improvements in existing business park buildings. Improvements that contribute to economic vitality like these should be streamlined for businesses. Applicants suggested that Goleta could establish liberal criteria for voluntary conceptual plan review and redefine the scope and limits of the DRB. They noted that championing the review process is not the same as being pro-applicant, and they would like to see the PER Director meet monthly with both developers and environmentalists.

Applicants noted that the City has some of the highest fees in the region, yet the deposit fee system used by the City is slow in billing and can include unanticipated amounts of attorney fees. Applicants noted that a reliable backup on trust fund billings does not exist.

It was noted that scoping for Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs) takes too long (e.g., two to four years). Applicants would like to see the PER Department provide consultant choices from a group of approved EIR consultants. Permit applicants also noted that the City should be more like Santa Barbara and make greater use of Categorical Exemptions, Negative Declarations, and Mitigated Negative Declarations, and should make use of Determinate Processing Agreements.

3.4 CITY STAFF

City staff members interviewed included members from the PER Department and Public Works, the Deputy City Manager, members from the Finance staff, Neighborhood Services, the City Manager, and the City Attorney.

The following summaries represent stakeholder observations and opinions, and not necessarily the findings or opinions of Citygate Associates.

Staff members are pleased that, over the last four years, a backlog of project applications, some of which were in the pipeline for a decade, have been processed for consideration by the DRB, Planning Commission, and City Council. The Department has moved forward on key initiatives such as the preparation of the new Zoning Code currently under consideration, processing a heavy workload during a time of significant staff turnover.

Staff members expressed concerns about the processes in use, noting that problems are not structural; they are procedural. Staff members would like to see the City adopt its own (Zoning

Code) regulatory process. Staff expressed concerns that there should be consistent application of the Zoning Code with the General Plan and consistency in direction on major projects. Staff would like to see trust fund management policies that avoid planners having to work as bill collectors. Staff would like to see an improved consistency in the contract process and a development checklist with established turnaround times.

Staff members expressed concerns that the PER Department should stop accepting incomplete submittals. Staff members would like to have the role of the Development Review Committee (DRC) examined, as there is no clear procedure map for these functions. Staff members identified the need for an electronic permit tracking system (EPTS). They would also like to see a regular process established to update the General Plan and Zoning Code. Staff members also noted that they must rely on microfiche records to research development records prior to incorporation. They commented that use of these records can be difficult and time-consuming because parcels within the City are in high demand and there are many requests for historical information about parcels.

Staff members indicate that they observe conflicting demands from the public, including desires for housing that is affordable, development of restaurants, and commercial retail, but at the same time, staff observes community complaints about the current development in the City. Staff members anticipate that the PER Department will still be busy after the Zoning Code is finalized because of the demand in housing, the demand for use of existing structures in the City, as well as recognizing that Old Town still needs to be renovated.

Staff members expressed concerns about perceived uneven case load assignments amongst planning and senior planning staff members. They also expressed a desire for improved inter-departmental working relationships, particularly with Public Works. PER Department staff members also noted that at times they felt a lack of control over their projects. Staff members expressed a desire for improved professional development opportunities.

3.5 EMPLOYEE SURVEY

Citygate conducted a confidential, internet-based employee survey of PER Department employees and Public Works employees associated directly with development review. A total of 15 employees were invited to participate in the survey via direct email, and survey responses were received from nine employees, for a completion rate of 60 percent.

The survey mostly consisted of closed-ended "degree-of-agreement" statements. For each "degree-of-agreement" statement, respondents were directed to rate their agreement with 11 statements from "Strongly Agree" (5) to "Strongly Disagree" (1). The survey also provided an option for "Neutral" (3) and "Not Applicable or Don't Know." Additionally, three open-ended requests were made to provide employees with an opportunity to fully express their opinions, concerns, and suggestions.

Table 2 summarizes employee responses to the 11 "degree-of-agreement" statements.

Table 2—Employee Survey Response Summary

Statement	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
1. The established goals and objectives of the PER Department have been clearly communicated to me.	22%	56%
2. I believe the workload within the PER Department is equally divided among my co-workers.	22%	56%
3. There is an effective flow of information between management and staff within the PER Department.	22%	56%
4. I believe the PER Department functions proactively, and does not simply react to crises.	22%	67%
5. The City has an effective process for listening to citizen or customer concerns.	33%	44%
6. I receive sufficient training for the effective completion of my job responsibilities.	22%	44%
7. The performance evaluations I have received have been completed in a timely manner and according to schedule.	22%	57%
8. There is a good teamwork and communication between the different departments conducting the development review, plan checking, and inspection in the City.	22%	56%
9. Staff has positive interactions working with other City departments.	33%	33%
10. The management efforts of the PER Department enhance its productivity.	22%	44%
11. I receive clear and specific direction from my supervisor(s) regarding my work assignments.	22%	56%

3.5.1 Open-Ended Request #1

The following is the first open-ended request provided in the survey, followed by the actual responses provided by employees and one summary of additional responses.

Please provide at least one suggestion or recommendation for improvement related to the PER Department or your Division.

◆　　"Goleta still feels like a new City, because many systems and procedures have not yet been put in place. City needs new or updated regulations, CEQA thresholds, procedures manual, and a permit tracking system to mature the Department, along

with a written flow chart for processing discretionary projects, and more site visits with City staff to comment on a project."

◆ "It would help to have more thoughtful assignments of projects, more of a team approach, and a better distribution of workload within the Department. Collaboration and efficiency could be enhanced by planning for future assignments and allowing planners on a variety of projects, such as allowing participation on the new Zoning Ordinance Project, or on major development projects requiring EIRs."

◆ "There is no need for supervising senior planner positions, and it would be helpful to embrace a more flexible perspective than the 'County mindset.'"

◆ Comments also suggested that the sustainability coordinator position and the sustainability program should be in the City Manager's office, as is being done within the industry.

3.5.2 Open-Ended Request #2

The following is the second open-ended request provided in the survey, followed by a summary of the responses provided by employees.

What are you most proud of in relation to the PER Department or your Division?

Respondents expressed pride in the professional level of the Department; the amount of work that has been completed, including work related to oil and gas operations; the ability to work together; responsiveness to public and applicants; perseverance; and professional dedication. It was indicative they felt the achievements had been accomplished despite a lack of training and clear direction provided by those in Department management and supervisory roles.

3.5.3 Open Ended Request #3

The following is the third open-ended request provided in the survey, followed by a summary of the responses provided by employees.

Please add any additional specific comments or suggestions you may have for improving services in the PER Department overall?

Respondents expressed that frequent communication, more training, and established procedures, applied to all staff equally, would help improve Department functions. Respondents expressed that there needs to be an improved case assignment process so that all planners and supervisors share the workload, with everyone accountable for their hours worked, and all personnel resources available to the Department are fully utilized. Respondents expressed that the Department needs to become proactive.

SECTION 4—DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND RELATED DATA

The PER Department is comprised of five functional divisions with individual responsibilities and activities.

4.1 CURRENT PLANNING DIVISION

The Current Planning Division assists the community and the City Council with land use issues. The Division:

◆ Evaluates all development applications to ensure compliance with the City's General Plan, zoning regulations, subdivision standards, design review standards, and other development regulations.

◆ Facilitates communication between the various City departments and outside agencies involved in the development review process.

◆ Provides permit compliance review to ensure that development projects are constructed in a manner that is consistent with the City's Conditions of Approval and ongoing environmental impact mitigation measures, if required.

◆ Serves as staff to the City Council, Planning Commission, Design Review Board, Zoning Administrator, Environmental Hearing Officer, and Director in various public hearings, meetings, and workshops on project applications.

The Current Planning Division is presently comprised of a Current Planning Manager, two Supervising Senior Planners, three Associate Planners, one Assistant Planner, a Planning Technician, and a Code Compliance Officer. In addition, two contract planners working less than 20 hours per week supplement the full-time staff. The Code Compliance Officer is a position that has been added to the PER Department during the current fiscal year. At the time Citygate reviewed City materials and conducted its on-site interviews, the Code Compliance Officer position was presented as located within the Neighborhood Services Department and Citygate did not have the opportunity to review this new activity.

4.2 BUILDING AND SAFETY DIVISION

The Building and Safety Division implements the adopted construction codes and other state and local laws that regulate building construction and use, including the California regulations pertaining to Building Code, Residential Code, Electrical Code, Plumbing Code, Mechanical Code, and Energy Code, as well as disabled access compliance and wild and urban interface regulations. The Division implements the CALGreen energy efficiency code, the City's Energy

Reach Code, and other standards and practices that may stem from the City of Goleta's Green Building Program efforts.

The Division reviews building plans, issues building permits, inspects construction projects, provides interpretations of the Code, coordinates with other departments and divisions on applications, and provides staff assistance for all construction-related issues. The Building and Safety Division also conducts community outreach regarding Code requirements, safe construction practices, accessibility requirements, and energy-efficient best practices.

The Division is comprised of the Chief Building Official, a Permit Coordinator, a Plans Examiner, and two Building Inspectors. The entire Building and Safety Division is provided by way of a Contract Services Agreement with Willdan Engineering.

4.3 ADVANCE PLANNING DIVISION

The Advance Planning Division guides the City's growth and participates in regional growth-planning efforts. The Division develops, maintains, and administers various plans that are fundamental to creating and advancing the City's unique and balanced community environment. These plans include the following:

◆ General Plan

◆ Climate Action Plan

◆ Community Wildfire Protection Plan

◆ Monarch Butterfly Habitat Management Plan

◆ Ellwood Mesa Open Space and Habitat Management Plan.

◆ Local Coastal Plan

◆ Zoning Ordinance.

In addition, the Advance Planning Division oversees the City's habitat conservation programs, processes oil and gas project permits, and conducts California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews for related Advance Planning projects.

The Advance Planning Division also provides environmental review analysis and support, as needed, for the City's Capital Improvement Program.

The Advance Planning Division includes an Advance Planning Manager and two Senior Planners.

4.4   PLANNING COMMISSION AND DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

The five-member Planning Commission and seven-member Design Review Board sit as decision-making bodies on land-use functions for the City. They review and approve discretionary development permits. They conduct hearings, meetings, and workshops under authorities and assignments delegated to them by the City Council. Staffing is provided by the PER Department. The Planning Commission and Design Review Board provide input to the City Council on programs that pertain to growth, housing, transportation, agriculture, open space, environmental protection, economic development, revitalization, and neighborhood compatibility.[2]

4.5   SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM

Sustainability Program staff develop and implement community engagement strategies to inform City residents and businesses about sustainability programs that advance energy efficiency and green building best practices. Program staff serve as the City's liaison to regional bodies integrating the City's sustainability efforts into public and private sustainability efforts within Santa Barbara County and the State of California. Program staff pursue funding opportunities, including grants, to create and implement sustainability programs. Sustainability projects have included:

◆   Upgrading lighting at City Hall.

◆   Upgrading lighting at Goleta Valley Community Center.

◆   Replacing all intersection highway safety lighting with more efficient LED technology.

◆   Installing an electric vehicle (EV) charging station at Camino Real Marketplace.

◆   Creating a Commuter Benefit Program that has been used as a model within Santa Barbara County.

◆   Co-sponsoring greywater and rainwater harvesting classes.

◆   Establishing local energy efficiency standards that surpass the State's minimum standards.

Program staff provide principal support to the City Council Energy and Green Issues Standing Committee. The Sustainability Program is staffed by a Sustainability Coordinator.

---

[2] City of Goleta Two Year Budget Plan Fiscal Years 2015/16 and 2016/17, page 74

4.6 PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION CHART

Figure 2 depicts the PER Department's current organizational structure and position allocations.

Figure 2—PER Department Organizational Chart
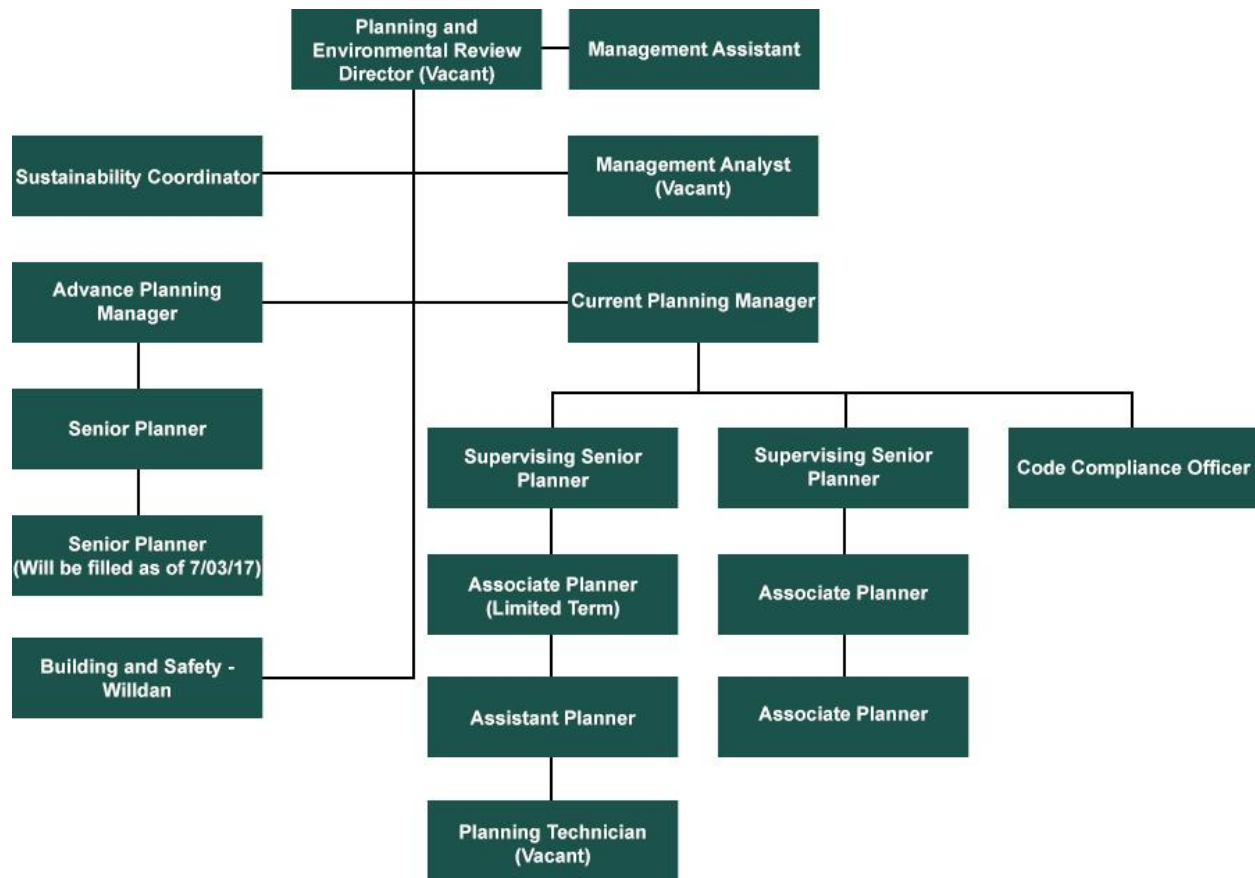

Table 3 depicts the basic steps in the PER Department's development review permitting process as applied to all applicants.

Table 3—Application Processes in the Planning and Environmental Review Department

Step	Workflow Component			Timeframe
1	Receive application.			-
2	Application sent to Public Works and other agencies to review for completeness.			30 Days to Complete
3	Application reviewed by Development Review Committee (DRC) and Project Review Team (PRT), if project warrants.			
4	PER Department staff sends a letter to the applicant stating the application has been deemed complete.	If not deemed complete, PER Department staff sends a letter to the applicant outlining deficiencies in the application, including those identified by Public Works and other agencies, and restarts the application review clock (without DRC or PRT unless significant changes have been made).		
5	The City makes a preliminary CEQA determination.			30 Days After Completed Application
6	If Categorical Exemption, action is required on the project within 60 days of making the preliminary environmental determination.	If Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration, action is required on the project within six months of making the preliminary environmental determination.	If Environmental Impact Report, action is required on the project within one year of making the preliminary environmental determination.	60 Days / 6 Months / 1 Year
7	PER Department requests Conditions of Approval from Public Works and other agencies (County Fire Department, Air Pollution Control District, Goleta Water District, and Goleta Sanitary District).			60 Days Before Project Will Be Acted Upon
8	PER Department staff prepare and submit staff report.			Variable
9	Either the Director or the Zoning Administrator makes staff-level decisions as outlined in the Zoning Ordinance.			Variable
10	The Planning Commission is the decision maker for Conditional Use Permits, Development Plans, stand-alone Modifications, Parcels Maps (four or fewer), and appeals of Design Review Board actions as outlined in the Zoning Ordinance / Municipal Code. Planning Commission is a recommending body to the City Council on any legislative action, such as General Plan amendments, Zone changes, changes to the Zoning Code, and Subdivision Maps (five or more parcels).			Variable
11	The City Council is the decision maker for General Plan amendments, Zone changes, Zoning Code changes, Subdivision Maps, and appeals of Planning Commission decisions as outlined in the Zoning Ordinance.			Variable

4.7 *DEPARTMENT DATA*

The City provided Citygate with narratives from the FY 2016/17 budget document that included charts representing a variety of data related to the PER Department. The City also provided 22 months of building permit and inspection data for the year 2015 and 2016. Data for 2016 was provided for 10 months only.

For the purposes of this report, Citygate reviewed the data most relevant to the PER Department's transition over the course of the next three to five years as Goleta transitions from a community with available parcels to be developed to a built-out community in which buildings are being renovated for new and existing uses. Building Division activity indicates projects that have received review and approval to proceed to the construction phase. Current planning numbers relate to all applicants and projects regardless of whether those applicants and projects proceed to the construction phase.

4.7.1 Building Division Activity

The valuation for building permits over the course of these 22 months is $157,684,901, which is an average valuation of $7,167,496 per month. Fees charged for permits totaled $1,502,447 for the 22-month period, or $68,293 monthly. There was an average of 47 building permits issued per month, 24 plumbing permits, 39 electrical permits, and 20 mechanical permits, while grading permits averaged just under one per month.

Over the course of the 22 months in 2015 and 2016, there were an average of 395 inspections conducted per month by the Building and Safety Division. Of these inspections, an average of 185 were building inspections, 84 were plumbing inspections, 78 were electrical inspections, one was a grading inspection, and 47 were mechanical inspections.

4.7.2 Current Planning

Under the Current Planning Division, a record was provided indicating the actual number of residential units approved was 177 for FY 2014/15. No additional residential units were shown approved, but the budget indicated that 656 residential units were pending for FY 2014/15, 480 for the FY 2015/16 adopted budget, and 513 were projected pending for the FY 2016/17 budget.

SECTION 5—NINE STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Citygate identified nine Strategic Recommendations during this study. These Strategic Recommendations are important to understanding the way to continue reshaping the organization, to build upon its current successes, and to make real organizational improvements that will be visible and meaningful. Put another way, if the Department makes all the "Other Recommendations" set forth in this study but does not implement the nine Strategic Recommendations, the overall improvement program is likely to end in failure. The numerical order of the Strategic Recommendation is not intended to imply order of priority.

5.1   STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #1

> **Strategic Recommendation #1:**   Establish a direct link between the City's Strategic Plan and the day-to-day efforts of the PER Department to implement the General Plan. This will include linking mission, objectives, performance measures, goals, and expectations to achieve best-practice standards.

> **Finding #1.1:** Although the Department makes a strong effort to implement the General Plan, there is currently no linkage between the City's Strategic Plan and the Department's work as it implements the General Plan.

In interviews with 36 individuals comprising elected officials, employees, and stakeholders, individuals did not talk about a connection between the City of Goleta's adopted Strategic Plan to the work of the PER Department. Understanding that an essential part of the Department's work is to implement the City's General Plan, there still needs to be a shared understanding about the common mission, goals, and expectations of the PER Department as those are linked to the City's Strategic Plan and objectives. Within Department members, there was a variety of expectations expressed about priorities and goals for the Department, often reflecting the immediate workload and/or concern in which the individual interviewed was involved. A lack of common understanding for the established goals and objectives of the PER Department was also reflected in the employee survey. Of those taking the survey, 56 percent either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the established goals and objectives of the PER Department had been clearly communicated to them. About 22 percent agreed that they had been communicated, and 22 percent were neutral.

As is true for many cities of Goleta's size and scope in California (serving a population of about 30,000), elected officials and staff can be overwhelmed by the variety of demands and deadlines.

State and federal legislative cycles bring new demands to provide training, conduct tests and studies, expand notices and services, and administer records. These requirements sometimes exempt smaller cities, but cities with a population of approximately 30,000 are usually included. Larger cities can sometimes provide additional staff, but even this option is becoming less viable as municipal revenue gains are currently behind expenditure increases in many areas. An example of recent mandates that have impacted cities are new State of California storm water requirements, adding new local mandates and oversight responsibilities. Cities of Goleta's size find working together regionally with larger entities is one of the methods of addressing new regulatory workloads without needing to add new staff.

The City has accomplished much in its first 15 years to establish many of the foundational documents, policies, and practices necessary to do business; it began providing services to its residents, and managed new State and Federal requirements as they were added. For the PER Department, this meant processing land development, remodels, and commercial and tenant improvements (TI) from day one. The demand for services of the PER Department, as it does in all cities, ebbs and flows with the California coastal economy, as well as state and national economic cycles. This ebb and flow impacts the ability of the PER Department staff to address development of long-term policies and procedures while providing service and information to the many customer requests that occur during an economic boom cycle. The boom time leading into the FY 2008/09 recessionary period was followed by the severe downturn, followed again by another boom period. These times also included dealing with the State's severe drought conditions, loss of redevelopment, and the severe effects of the recessionary cycle on City revenues.

The recent two-year budget cycles for FY 2013/14–2014/15 and FY 2015/16–2016/17 indicate aggressive work objectives and several accomplishments for the PER Department. During this timeframe, the Department has sought to:

◆ Implement a digital document imaging service and a web-based permit tracking system.

◆ Complete improvements to the land use permitting function.

◆ Take on new work of in-house permitting and other activity related to oil and gas production.

◆ Implement fire management, butterfly habitat, and conservation and restoration programs.

◆ Prepare and implement a Green Program Strategic Plan.

◆ Prepare and implement the City's own land use regulations and tools with emphasis on a Zoning Ordinance, Sign Ordinance, and Local Coastal Program.

During this time, the PER Department:

◆ Adopted a Housing Element certified by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (Advance Planning).

◆ Commenced the new Zoning Ordinance project (Advance Planning).

◆ Received a grant for preparation of the first Local Coastal Plan (Advance Planning).

◆ Adopted a Climate Action Plan (Advance Planning).

◆ Adopted the Cabrillo Business Park Specific Plan (Current Planning).

◆ Completed land use entitlements for five long-standing major development application projects – Rincon Palms Hotel, Cortona Apartments, Islamic Center, Marriott Residence Inn, and Villages at Los Carneros (Current Planning).

◆ Entitled over 650 units of residential housing (Current Planning).

◆ Began construction on 360 new residential units (Building Division).

◆ Commissioned the first publicly available Level 3 DC Fast Charger for electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids (Sustainability).

◆ Completed imagining of legacy planning records and conversion of microfiche data as Phase 1 of a digital archive project (Current Planning).

This list represents only a portion of the work being performed in the PER Department, but is representative of the variety and number of major tasks the Department is facing. Goleta's PER Department experienced a 22-month period between 2015 and 2016 that generated an average valuation of over $7 million per month of projects proceeding to the building permit phase, average associated fees at nearly $69,000 per month, and an average of 395 building inspections per month. Residential units pending consideration exceeded 1,600 for a three-year period. This level of activity is anticipated to decrease, and will require careful monitoring as this current building cycle subsides to accurately project both the Department's revenues and expenditures for the next several years.

New initiatives, such as the Green Program Strategic Plan, are being undertaken at the same time the Department is establishing foundational documents such as the Zoning Code and Local Coastal Plan, digitizing and converting its records (which will be an ongoing process as new applications are forthcoming), and processing significant development proposals. This list of objectives and accomplishments represents an aggressive workload for a small city planning department in comparison to the workload that would exist in a city with less economic vitality and more established tenure.

One of the important tools and best practices a planning department can use to stay on course through inevitable economic cycles, and a heavy demand workload, is to be tied closely to the goals and strategies established by the City Council. The PER Department's contribution to achieving the goals that the City Council has established should be well defined.

A City of Goleta 2015/17 Strategic Plan was adopted by the City Council in June 2015. The mission statement at the beginning of that plan states "Goleta is a beautiful and safe community with family-friendly neighborhoods that values the environment, agriculture, and open space while encouraging housing, recreation and business opportunities." The Citywide plan strategies are to:

◆ Preserve and enhance quality of life in Goleta.

◆ Ensure financial stability.

◆ Support economic vitality.

◆ Strengthen infrastructure.

◆ Return Old Town to be the vital center of the City.

◆ Maintain a safe community.

The six plan strategies can be directly or indirectly applied to the work product of the PER Department through stated objectives and accomplishments.

Each division of the PER Department (Current Planning, Advance Planning, Building and Safety, Planning Commission / Design Review Board, and Sustainability) have a program description in the City of Goleta budget. The PER Department has a department description outlining the services and work it performs. There are Department goals and objectives for each of the programs.

It is recommended that the PER Director work with PER Department staff and the City Manager to develop a mission statement that describes how the PER Department's efforts to implement the General Plan are linked to the achievement of Goleta's Citywide plan strategies. Along with that mission statement, the PER Department can establish performance measurements related to achieving those strategies, connecting the measures to the Department goals and program objectives adopted in the City's budget. Ideally, the work to develop a mission statement, performance measurements, and program objectives would include a team-building retreat for Department members.

The benefits of the PER Department mission, goals, and objectives related to achieving strategies adopted by the City Council are:

◆ Prioritization of work tasks amongst competing demands for staff time and attention.

◆　　　　Ability to measure service delivery and evaluate that service delivery against achieving the overall strategies established by the City Council.

◆　　　　Ability for both managers and staff to work together to achieve common purposes instead of lacking direction and understanding of what they individually and collectively are trying to achieve.

◆　　　　Provides data and information that clarifies for the public and stakeholders the work priorities for the PER Department, also connecting the Department's work product to the City's strategic and service goals.

◆　　　　Provides an evaluative connection between what the City is spending on planning and environmental review services and its impact on Goleta residents.

5.2　STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #2

> **Strategic Recommendation #2:**　Establish professional development plans and identify mentoring opportunities and support for all Department employees.

Along with an improved common understanding and linkage to Citywide strategies, staff in the PER Department (City and contract employees) would benefit from improvements in staff support as well as professional development opportunities.

The Department has had three directors over the course of its first 15 years, one of which served over eight years, one of which served about three years, and the most recent served about four years. Interviews indicated that retirements and resignations amongst planning staff over the last several years have been disruptive for several members of the Department. The vacancy periods have been perceived as having resulted in increased project assignment workloads and interruption of previously assigned project schedules. The employees interviewed expressed concerns about how newer employees can be integrated into the Department, along with concerns about how institutional knowledge was being retained as turnover occurs. Employee responses to the survey question that read "The performance evaluations I have received have been completed in a timely manner and according to schedule" indicated 56 percent strongly disagreed with the statement. Another 22 percent agreed with the statement, and 22 percent indicated "Not applicable or don't know." Subsequent to the time the survey was administered, it is Citygate's understanding that all evaluations for Department members have been completed and are now current.

Goleta is operating with a planning staff of City employees supplemented with two limited-hour contractors and contracted building and inspection services. The current market for planning professionals is competitive both for public and private employers. Cycles of turnover in city

45

planning departments are occurring as baby boomers leave the market, and cities find themselves competing for the limited number of experienced and new planning professionals.

Goleta's position in the marketplace to retain talent and compete for quality planning professionals would be enhanced by establishing strong mentorship practices and professional development activities for its staff members. Goleta can begin to encourage staff members to develop their skillsets and apply them in Goleta long term, and can initiate a succession plan so that the sense of disruption and lack of cohesiveness experienced by turnover can be minimized. Best practices in use by cities to mentor and develop planning staff include:

◆ Continue to conduct periodic performance evaluations that include professional development goals.

◆ Continue to provide opportunities for staff members to participate in web-based seminars and trainings, and provide as wide a range of opportunities and choice as is feasible. To accomplish this, consider joining with other regional employer training opportunities.

◆ Continue to provide for attendance at professional conferences and trainings.

◆ Allow for cross-training opportunities and short-term job exchanges to expose staff members to other City processes.

◆ Acknowledge employees who undertake continuing education efforts.

◆ Develop clear guidelines regarding skillsets and requirements for promotional opportunities within the Department when these occur due to retirements or staff departures.

Goleta has an opportunity to develop a regional reputation as one of the best places to learn and grow in the practice of the planning profession. It offers a wide range of project types and active sustainability practices in an environmentally conscious community. The benefits of doing so can be retention of high-performing staff members, staff members who are engaged professionally, as well as staff capable of adapting in a changing environment.

5.3   STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #3

Strategic Recommendation #3:	Prioritize establishment of an electronic permit tracking system (EPTS) inclusive of building records once the new Zoning Code is adopted based on the timetable provided by the City Council. Continue to image records in accordance with the adopted Records Retention Schedule.

Efforts have been made over the last several years to allocate resources and undertake projects necessary to bring the City's land use records into an electronic format. The digitization of historic records is necessary for the implementation of an EPTS, and the commitment of doing so in perpetuity as new records are created will help ensure that the database remains useful. However, the creation and implementation of an EPTS is dependent upon adoption of a new Zoning Code. Completion of these three essential steps is necessary for Goleta to offer the community digital customer interaction, self-service, and information retrieval.

> **Finding #3.1:** The Department is overly dependent upon inefficient, paper-based analog application and permit tracking systems which causes unnecessary expense and frustrations for City customers.

The development application process and permitting process in Goleta currently utilize a mixture of analog and digital systems. Permit research for properties is split between a paper-based folder for actions since incorporation in 2002, and microfiche records from the County of Santa Barbara. Once a contractor and/or developer is ready to submit plans for review and building permits, the architect has the choice of submitting electronic or paper plans through the City's contractor, Willdan Engineering. However, only paper building plans are used to issue building permits. Electronic plans are only used for plan check purposes.

Although residents and customers can search for current property information online, research for information from pre-incorporation requires staff assistance. Pre-incorporation information is obtained through an aged and unreliable microfiche system that is labor-intensive. Newer, inexperienced staff members can overlook the microfiche records due to lack of knowledge and experience with the retrieval system, thereby providing incomplete information to customers.

The development permit review process in California cities is, by its very nature, highly complex. It is difficult to provide application reviews that are quick, inexpensive, and high in quality. This is especially true in communities that place a high value on transparency and citizen participation. The customer experience that cities can offer can be radically different than that experienced through private-sector companies. This is especially the case where a service process remains paper- and hard-copy-based rather than digital.

5.4   STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #4

> **Strategic Recommendation #4:**   Improve communication with customers and community members by adding purpose, process, and project update pages to the PER Department website.

> **Finding #4.1:** The Department's development permit application forms and procedures are robust and consistent with best practices.

Goleta's PER Department is in business to assist and inform residents, business owners, and members about adopted City policies and regulations, including State Building Code regulations. Some of what the Department must communicate to its customers is corrective in nature. To offset this inherent negative reality, it is important for the City to provide clear application forms and a clear development review permit process.

The Department has successfully developed and perfected its application forms and procedures to a level of sophistication that is commendable, particularly for a small, young city such as Goleta. Notwithstanding this fact, applicants remain frustrated that they cannot understand the process, particularly because it takes so long. Planning development application forms are available at the public counter and online via the City's website. The planning applications available online, which are the most commonly used applications, include the following:

◆ Land Use Permit / Design Review

◆ Coastal Development Permit / Design Review

◆ Development Plan / Conditional Use Permit / Variance

◆ Sign Certificate of Conformance

◆ Subdivision Maps

◆ Lot Line Adjustments

◆ Appeal Application and Procedures.

The Department's Building and Safety Division (the work of which is largely provided by contract with Willdan Engineering) has a robust webpage consistent with best practices in cities comparable in size and scope to Goleta. The plan submittal requirements are clear and well-illustrated. Numerous well-illustrated construction details are provided, including the following:

◆ Accessibility Requirements

◆ Block Walls

◆ Detached Garage

◆ Furnace Installation – Attic

◆ Furnace Installation – Closet/Alcove

◆ Grading Notes

◆ Kitchen Appliance Island

◆ Notching and Boring

◆ Patio Covers

◆ Pool Barrier

◆ Residential Single-Story Framing

◆ Retaining Walls

◆ Shower Receptor

◆ T-Bar

◆ Waste Vent Requirements

◆ Water Heater

◆ Windows.

> **Finding #4.2:** The City and PER Department websites have a lot of information available, but the presentation can be improved.

There has been an obvious effort on the part of the PER Department to make information available on its website, but the information presented lacks context and, in some cases, linkage. For instance, under the General Plan, an index of the General Plan is listed, and links are provided to each section of the General Plan; however, there is no explanation regarding the purpose the General Plan serves. During the interview and focus group processes, Goleta staff and the public expressed numerous different views regarding the purpose of the General Plan. The purpose of the General Plan and General Plan Amendments could be placed on the City and PER Department website.[3]

Although an effort has been made to list current major projects under review, Goleta's current website information is presented in a static matrix. It is not linked to further information about these projects. The City's website front page is currently linked to the Community View map. This map is apparently not generated from the City's GIS, and may be similar to one in use by the City of San Juan Capistrano, but utilizes software that is not as robust.

---

[3] The planning websites for City of Long Beach and the City of Pasadena could serve as examples of the way this could be achieved:
http://www.lbds.info/planning/advance_planning/general_plan.asp
http://www.cityofpasadena.net/Planning/CommunityPlanning/General_Plan_and_Amendment_Information/

One way to improve service includes providing a page for each project complete with project photos and possibly linked to GIS mapping (depending upon funding resources). This would allow customers and residents to readily find one-stop information related to the project. An example of this functionality can be found at the website of the City of San Juan Capistrano (http://www.sanjuancapistrano.org/index.aspx?page=743).

More extensive use of the Community View software in which the City has invested may be cost prohibitive, but the City should consider improving the use of the existing Community View tool by linking it more prominently to the PER Department. This would ensure that residents and customers are aware this tool is available. As the Department considers information to be provided by the IT Assessment and Strategic Plan that is currently underway, it may want to evaluate using GIS capabilities for the purpose of providing electronic parcel views.

Website information should be presented to provide as complete an answer as feasible for those searching for information. Goleta's PER Department website could be improved by viewing it from the perspective of one unfamiliar with the steps and processes of both Current and Advance Planning, and by providing links to further information that provides context to the information.

5.5   STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #5

Strategic Recommendation #5:   Pursue customer service improvements that support economic vitality opportunities for local business expansion.

The City of Goleta enjoys economic diversity and growth opportunities being generated from the presence of the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), tourism, and regional retail and commerce. One of the basic components of local business expansion often includes relocation to new offices and/or expansion of existing office and lab spaces.

Currently, PER Department staff struggle to provide local business owners and their representatives with information about existing structures as information before incorporation is available only through a microfiche system, which is an antiquated technology subject to breaking down. Further, Santa Barbara County did not issue building permits consistently prior to 1955. Information since incorporation is more readily available, but the Department remains in a phased process of digitizing the information. Staff work between hard-copy files and electronic files to provide information about existing structures.

In addition, until the new Zoning Code is adopted, interpreting the current Zoning Codes is complex and labor-intensive. Current Zoning Codes were adopted from the County of Santa Barbara, and do not necessarily align with the City of Goleta General Plan. These preliminary inquiry and information exchanges can involve a lot of time investment on both the part of the business owner and City staff for what is typically a simple inquiry. These inquiries can also lead

to frustration for both staff and applicants when there is inconsistency in the way the Zoning Codes are interpreted to be in alignment with the General Plan.

Goleta lacks a robust, self-help system available for customers to research the history associated with a property; the result is that this effort is currently a staff-intensive exercise. Efforts are underway to digitize information and to institute an electronic permitting system, which will greatly aid both customers and staff members alike.

A focus on streamlining processes that are required for tenant improvements, office relocations, and business park occupancies will help Goleta maximize local job growth and retention within existing structures. The PER Department's ability to offer information, outline the steps needed to receive approval and building permits for those projects, and to do so in a timely and predictable manner is an essential part of Goleta welcoming the retention and expansion of local businesses.

5.6   STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #6

> **Strategic Recommendation #6:**   Pursue customer service improvements that support Old Town vitality.

Based on the comments offered, and Citygate's review of the City's General Plan and Strategic Plan, it is clear that the City of Goleta hopes to assist with, and not create roadblocks to, renovation efforts in the Old Town area. Adapting Old Town infrastructure to a more pedestrian- and bike-friendly area, while dealing with the inherent traffic issues of Hollister Avenue as a main traffic corridor through the City, is a challenge for renovating the area.

An important catalyst to Old Town vitality efforts will be the ability of the PER Department to answer questions and facilitate private project proposals for the area. As is the case with local business retention and expansion, the ability of the PER Department to coordinate and collaborate with Neighborhood Services and Public Works Departments when talking with project owners, evaluating project proposals, and working through parking and infrastructure barriers that discourage investment in the area will be key to the City's efforts. Planning staff members are hampered in answering questions and providing information about older structures in Old Town as no building permit records exist prior to the late 1950s (the County of Santa Barbara did not begin issuing permits consistently after 1955). Permits issued during the period between the late 1950s to incorporation is hampered due to the same microfiche limitations that apply to researching permits and buildings completed prior to incorporation. Researching records and evaluating proposals for Old Town are labor intensive and currently require individual interpretation throughout multiple steps of review that can be discouraging to owners proposing renovation. Adopting the new Zoning Code should also help to clarify allowed uses for the area.

Best practices for encouraging development and renovation proposals for areas like Old Town include providing predictable processes of the review and application procedures. It is also essential for the planning and building and safety functions to be able to provide clear expectations regarding that which will be required to provide parking, exterior design, fire sprinklers, and seismic safety, as well as that which will be required for older buildings to be brought into current building code compliance. These elements can be barriers to renovation of older structures. Cities that have successfully undertaken renovation of older downtown areas can be a resource for Goleta. Two similar California cities engaged in downtown renovation activities are Dana Point and Manhattan Beach. Each of these communities is involved in efforts to address downtown revitalization needs, including traffic speeds, bike lanes, and pedestrian walkways. See the Downtown Manhattan Beach Defined Specific Plan at www.citymb.info/city-services/community-development/planning-zoning/downtown-plan. See the Dana Point Town Center Plan at http://www.danapoint.org/businesses/town-center.

5.7   STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #7

Strategic Recommendation #7:   Rebalance the planning skillsets and position allocations in the Department to improve organizational efficiency, enhance long-range environmental planning, and increase the effectiveness of the City's Old Town economic development program through increased collaboration with the Neighborhood Services Department.

Finding #7.1: The Department's current organizational structure is not well suited to meet the changing demands of the City's planning, environmental review, and economic development programs.

The level of new development on vacant land in Goleta is expected to decrease over the next three to five years according to staff and the various stakeholders interviewed in this study. This is in stark contrast to the past three to five years during which the City experienced a very visible increase in new residential and commercial development. The majority of these projects were conceived prior to The Great Recession and then delayed until market conditions improved. As a result, the high demand for permit processing has, quite rightly, shaped the PER Department organizational structure and levels of staffing.

On the other hand, the level of development in the City's Old Town area and other existing developed areas is expected to accelerate over the next three to five years as vacant land for new development becomes less available. Moreover, the City continues to value economic vitality in this important part of the community.

Development in existing developed areas will be of a fundamentally different nature then the post-recession, vacant-land development experienced in the recent past. This anticipated shift in development will, to a greater extent than in the past, involve more projects and activities that will include, for example:

- Infill development

- Building rehabilitations

- Building expansions

- Repurposing old uses

- Employment retention and expansion

- Mixed-use developments

- Façade improvement easements

- Residential density bonuses

- Public parking facilities

- Pedestrian friendly transit solutions

- Special assessment districts

- Public/private partnerships

- Capital improvement projects for downtown

- Traffic slowing urban design

- Walkable urban design

- Historical preservation.

As vacant-land development applications and construction slow down, the Department will need to redeploy its current workforce talent and modify its organizational structure to meet this new reality.

> **Finding #7.2:** The Current Planning Division organizational structure is too hierarchical to meet future workload demands.

Most cities in California, particularly small cities, have current planning organizational structures that are much "flatter" than the organizational structure in place in Goleta. Figure 3 illustrates the current structure in place.

Figure 3—Existing Current Planning Division Organizational Structure
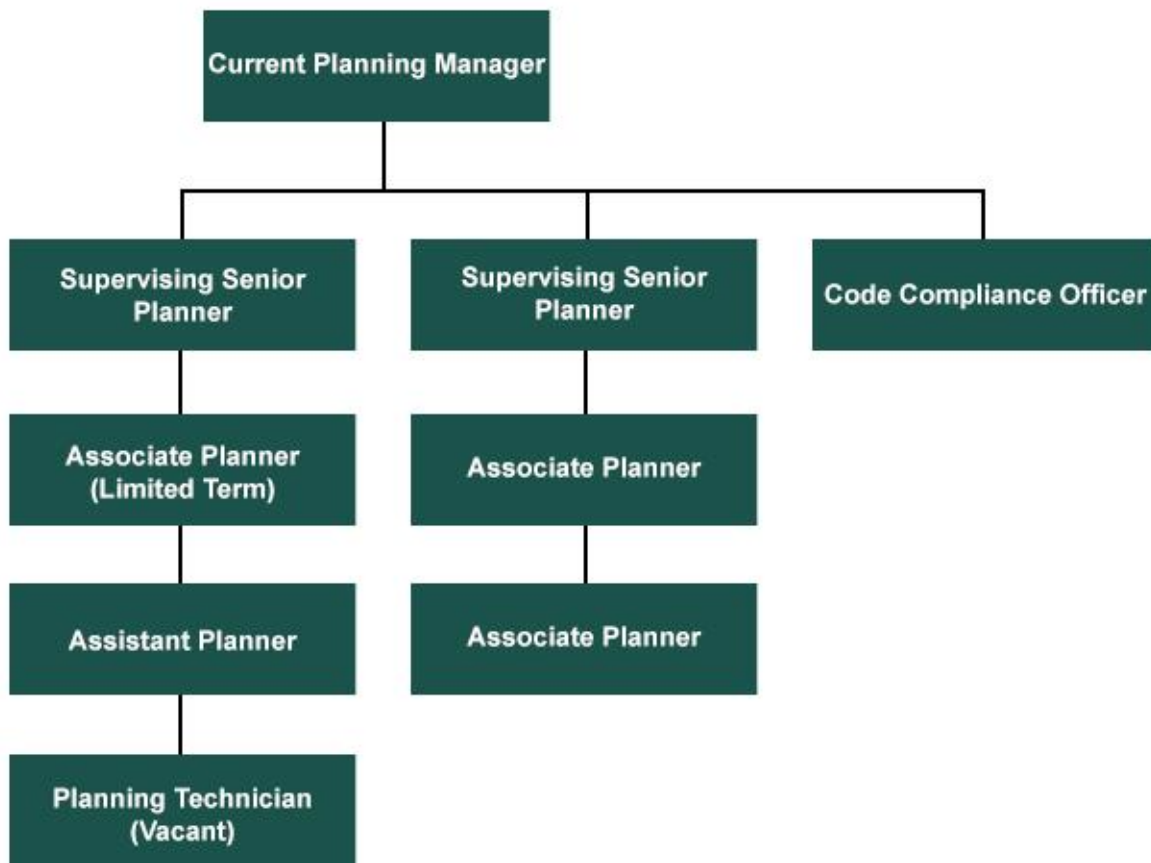
> **Finding #7.3:** The Current Planning Division organizational structure creates dysfunctions.

Notwithstanding the notable talents and dedication of the planning staff and the excellent work that continues to be produced, Goleta's current planning structure creates a level of dysfunction that results in unnecessary personnel complications and frustrations. These areas for improvement were identified and corroborated during our interview process. These issues should be addressed as the Department adjusts to the changing workload demands that are sure to come in the near future. These issues, in part, include:

◆ Inequitable distribution of workload

◆ Lines of authority misaligned with individual skills and experience

◆ Limited job enrichment opportunities

◆ Development permit review process inconsistencies

◆ Existing silos between Current Planning and Advanced Planning

◆ Morale problems.

Goleta's existing Current Planning Division organizational structure is analogue in design. Modern organizations are built more around teams and tasks and less around hierarchical structure. This is particularly evident in the private sector, but is also true in best-practice, public-sector organizations. Flat organizations tend to be more dynamic, fluid, and hyper-responsive to customer needs. They also create a more satisfying and enjoyable workplace for most employees, especially high-performing employees.

> **Recommendation #7.1:** Collaborate on the development of an *18-month PER Organizational Transition Plan* to redeploy planning staff to address the City's shift away from vacant-land development; reorient workforce skillsets toward Old Town development activities.

Citygate believes the PER Department would be more functional and responsive to the anticipated shift away from vacant-land developments and toward Old Town developments if it created a new interdisciplinary working group that is flat and team-oriented in its organizational design. Figure 4 illustrates this suggested approach.

Figure 4—Old Town Opportunity Group Team Member Composition
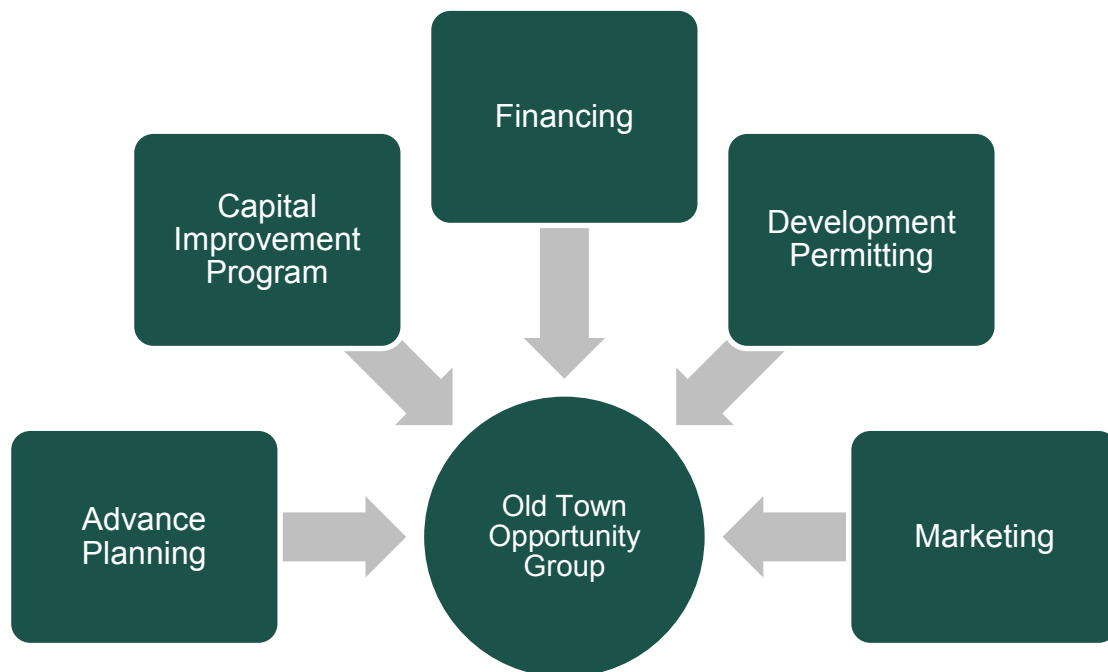
The precise details of the recommended ***18-month PER Organizational Transition Plan*** should be the product of an open and collaborative process among the urban planning staff within the Department. In addition, the active participation of the Public Works, Finance, Neighborhood Services, the Community Relations Office, and City Manager's Office should be encouraged and facilitated. At a minimum, the transition plan, which should be produced in writing, should address the following questions:

◆   What is the mission of the "Old Town Opportunity Group?"

◆   What are the values that will guide the Group's business practices?

◆   What are the outcome metrics that will be used to measure the Groups success?

◆   How and when will the Group report its outcomes to the Director, City Manager, City Council, and the community?

◆   What specific skillsets should the Group possess?

◆   Who among current staff possess the required skillsets?

◆   How can the Group acquire the skillsets that might be weak or non-existent?

◆   Who among current staff might desire to serve on the Group team, and at what level of involvement?

◆   What are the immediate and ongoing training needs of the new working Group?

◆   What is the best approach to managing and supporting individual staff members through the changes in their roles and responsibilities?

◆   What is the "go-live" target date for the new working Group?

◆   What human resource and budget actions need to take place to advance the Group's success?

Citygate suggests that the activities of the "Old Town Opportunity Group" become a regular item on the Development Review Committee's (DRC) weekly agenda.

> **Recommendation #7.2:** Designate an interim "Old Town Opportunity Group" Team Leader to facilitate collaboration on development of the *18-month PER Organizational Transition Plan;* the Group should submit the Plan to the City Manager within 45 days.

5.8   STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #8

> **Strategic Recommendation #8:**   Continue the process of clarifying the policy-setting roles and duties of the City Attorney and City Councilmembers relative to the operational role of the Department.

One of the narratives shared almost universally by those in focus groups and individual interviews consisting of elected officials, employees, and stakeholders was a sense of confusion about the roles and duties within the PER Department. It appears that these roles and duties have not been collectively agreed upon consistently since Goleta's incorporation. Some perceive that it is the duty of the Department staff to promote slow growth, and others perceive it is the duty of Department staff to promote development interests. This confusion extends to the policy-setting roles and duties of the City Attorney and City Councilmembers in the processing and review of development proposals. The result of this confusion, as expressed amongst those interviewed, is a lack of transparency and questions about how some individual project decisions are made.

Goleta has struggled to lay its basic foundational processes since incorporation, and that fact may contribute to the sense of confusion shared about roles and duties around the planning function, approval of projects, and adoption of Environmental Impact Report (EIR) documents. Another contributing factor may be the variety of development types that the Department processes, including new residential construction of both single family and multiple family types, mixed use retail and housing developments, office parks, and high-tech tenant renovations throughout the City. When a community has such a variety in that which it needs to process, it requires a greater depth of expertise and experience than if projects within the community are limited to only a few types.

The policy-setting roles and duties of the City Attorney and City Councilmembers relative to the operational role of the Department and the processes outlined for application review can be clarified with flow charts and stated in staff reports outlining the policy decisions to be determined by the City Council. The City Attorney can provide legal recommendations and advice as the legal professional providing service to the City Council and City staff members, but should not take on the role of a professional planner in determining design and site issues. Clarity for these roles will assist community members and stakeholders in their efforts to provide comment and concerns as projects are deliberated. It will also improve the ability of planning staff to conduct their work, to provide their professional judgement and recommendations, and to meet the service needs of applicants and stakeholders.

5.9   STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #9

> **Strategic Recommendation #9:**   Strengthen the development review committee (DRC) and make better use of cycle-time standards.

The PER Department has a Development Review Committee (DRC) that meets to discuss and review pending development review permit applications. The DRC is led by the Department Director. Many cities and counties do not have development review committees; fortunately, one is already in place in Goleta. The DRC members include representatives from the City's Public Works and Planning Department, and outside agencies including, but not limited to, the Santa Barbara County Fire Department, the Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control Board, the Goleta Water District, the Goleta Sanitary District, the Goleta West Sanitary District, the Santa Barbara Municipal Airport, etc. The meetings occur on an as-needed basis when a development application has been submitted during the 30-day-completeness review period, and then again on larger projects before hearings are scheduled to review conditions of approval. Attendance is not mandatory.

> **Finding #9.1:** PER Department customers and staff would benefit from having a more robust Development Review Committee.

A best-practice DRC, at a minimum, has ten basic functions, which include the following:

1.   Monitoring <u>customer service</u> through all aspects of the development review permitting program; reminding staff that customers include applicants, stakeholders, and other interested parties in the community.

2.   Placing conditions of approval on discretionary entitlement applications.

3.   Tracking development applications to ensure they are processed in a timely manner in accordance with the Department's cycle-time standards.

4.   Holding pre-application conferences with applicants and institutionalizing criteria for priority projects.

5.   Managing items going to the Design Review Board, Planning Commission, and City Council.

6.   Monitoring consistent application of planning, engineering, and building standards.

7.   Identifying and resolving development review permitting problems.

8.   Effectively managing the map finalization and the certificate of occupancy process.

9.   Disseminating information regarding development review policies and procedures to other staff members in the City, and providing training as needed.

10.   Celebrating successes.

Highly effective DRCs are the backbone of a city's development review permitting process. Meetings begin and end on time. Attendance for City staff is mandatory. Outside agencies should be invited and encouraged to attend, as needed. The meetings are never cancelled. If there are no pending or future development applications, then the DRC meeting is used to update staff on important issues, to train staff for purposes of consistency, and/or work on interdepartmental processing issues.

A mature DRC will continually heighten awareness of timeframes, produce consistent and clear development standards, and deliver reliable fee cost estimates for the City's customers.

Goleta's DRC is collegial and unstructured relative to teams Citygate has observed and advised in other cities. For example, the Goleta DRC has no formal agenda, nor is there a rigorous project tracking system in place. Each planner tracks his or her own projects and reports orally to the DRC regarding where the application is in process.

Goleta's DRC could be more efficient and effective if it employed the best-practice functions listed previously. These improvements would serve to broaden its scope and accountability and strengthen its customer-orientation for both applicants and community members.

> **Recommendation #9.1:** Establish a formal DRC agenda.

The DRC should establish a formal agenda for its weekly meetings, identifying categories of permits, existing timelines for each permit type, and mechanisms for streamlining the review process for each permit category to meet cycle-time standards. As an example, Figure 5 shows a sample DRC agenda.

Figure 5—Sample DRC Weekly Meeting Agenda

DRC Weekly Meeting Agenda

1. Review conditioning of pending projects and action items from last meeting

2. Discussion of upcoming Design Review Board, Planning Commission, and City Council action items

3. Review of new projects

4. Review of Old Town Opportunity Group action items

5. Review of Pre-Applications for priority projects

6. Status of DRC continual improvement items

7. Status of Department budget and Trust Fund Deposits

8. Around-the-table comments and requests for help

9. Meeting action items: due dates, required coordination, etc.

10. Adjourn.

The precise agenda that would work best in Goleta should be refined and developed collaboratively by the DRC members and the Department Directors.

In short, the DRC should be the "center stage" for development coordination and problem-solving in the City. It should work across departmental lines and eliminate organizational silos.

Recommendation #9.2: Establish, synchronize, and widely publicize cycle-time standards for all steps in the development review permitting process for all project types.

California state law dictates the amount of time a city can take to deem a development application complete. Notwithstanding, cities have sole discretion to determine what constitutes a complete application. It is not uncommon in Goleta for an application to be reviewed several times before it is "Deemed Complete." State law also dictates how long a city can take to act upon a development application once it has been deemed complete. These statutory time limits vary depending upon the environmental impact of the project; however, cities also have discretion during the application

review process to determine that a project has been redesigned such that the processing "clock" starts again.

Based on Citygate's observations and interviews, PER Department staff and Public Works Development Engineering staff have a low-level awareness of their processing times for discretionary permits. When Citygate asked staff about these matters, staff were unsure or could not answer at all. Upgrading the City's electronic permit processing system will go a long way towards helping Public Works and Planning staff monitor processing times. A heightened awareness of cycle-time standards and processing times is essential to achieving best practices. A robust DRC team will also foster a greater awareness of processing times.

Planning departments that strive to achieve best practices for their development review permitting process do so by placing a strong emphasis on cycle-time standards. It is difficult to deliver high-quality customer service if staff does not diligently monitor and report on the time it is taking to move applications through the development permit review process; the applicants want to know, staff needs to know, other departments need to know, the City Council deserves to know, advisory bodies want to know, and community activists and other stakeholder groups need to know. Without this knowledge of cycle-times, the process will be inherently unfair, out of balance, less than efficient, and of questionable effectiveness and credibility.

The Department, as a group, should dedicate whatever time is necessary to identify the key steps in the development permit review process and to assign reasonable cycle-times for each step in the process. These steps would typically include, <u>at a minimum</u>:

1. Application submitted

2. Application deemed complete

3. Environmental assessment completed

4. Planning staff evaluation completed

5. Public Works Development Engineering evaluation completed

6. Outside agencies (Fire, Sewer, Water) evaluation completed

7. Advisory body review(s) completed

8. Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission action completed.

The measurement of cycle-time and turnaround time results should be reported publicly to the City Manager, City Council, and all customers and interested stakeholder groups on a regular basis. Everyone involved in the development permit review process, including community activists, should be aware of the time it is taking to process permits.

> **Recommendation #9.3:** Establish cycle-time standards for processing development plans through the Public Work's Development Engineering Division; resource the function to achieve the cycle-time standard.

Citygate observed, and corroborated during the interview process, that delays and frustrations often occur as a result of the City's review of engineering plans and the preparation of civil engineering conditions of approval. This is a common problem in California cities and by no means is unique to Goleta.

In terms of processing development applications in a fair and timely fashion, best-practice cities commit to cycle-time standards that will continually lead to increased customer satisfaction. After establishing the desired standards or level of service, they then add staff accordingly. Unfortunately, many cities first decide the level of staffing they wish to afford in their Development Engineering program and then hope for the best when it comes to meeting customer expectations, which is backward. The City and its customers are better served if the City establishes and closely monitors cycle-time standards for engineering review, and then provides the resources to meet the standard. Developers, as a rule, are willing to pay trust fund deposit fees if they know they will get timely and predictable review of their applications and plans.

The City should achieve the established cycle-time standard at least 90 percent of the time. If, after monitoring the cycle-times closely over a period of time, this target is not achieved, then additional staff or consultant resources need to be added to the Development Engineering program.

SECTION 6—OTHER IMPORTANT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are not strategic in nature, but are nonetheless important improvements that should be made as part of managing the Planning and Environmental Review Department as soon as is practical. The recommendations are based on Citygate's on-site observations, interviews with staff, review of the budget, personnel, workflow documentation provided by staff, and interaction with customers and stakeholders.

6.1 THE ZONING CODE

The City has been struggling for many years to correct and adopt its Zoning Code. As a result, the perfect has become the enemy of the good. Citygate recommends that the City prioritize adoption of the Zoning Code as soon as possible. The Zoning Code is holding up other action items that are critical to the success of the Department.

Cities often struggle with updating and improving their Zoning Code because it can be a tedious and time-consuming process.

> **Recommendation #10.1:** Institutionalize continual improvement of the adopted Zoning Code.

Cities following best practices recognize that the Zoning Code, as opposed to the General Plan, needs to be continually improved as technical imperfections are identified and resolved. This is normal and healthy.

Citygate recommends that, after adoption of the Zoning Code, the City institutionalize a continual improvement program for the Zoning Code. This can be achieved by scheduling amendments to the Zoning Code on a regular basis. Citygate suggests the City establish a schedule for biannual Zoning Code amendments. The amendments should be presented as a package.

6.2 USE OF VENDORS

Building: Citygate examined the PER Department's use of venders for contract services such as building plan check. Cities often want to provide the building plan check services "in house" because they covet the fee revenue, which can be substantial. Providing plan check services can be cost-effective in mid- and large-size cities that are experiencing a high volume of growth and development over a sustained period; such is not the case in Goleta. Moreover, the City would not be able to recruit or retain the level of expertise and flexibility that Willdan Engineering currently provides. During the stakeholder interviews, Citygate observed a high level of customer satisfaction regarding the City's current building plan check services. Customers were particularly

appreciative of Willdan Engineering's state-of-the-art electronic plan submittal and review systems.

> **Finding #10.1:** The City's current approach to providing building plan check services is consistent with best practices.

Engineering: Citygate recommends that cycle-time standards be established and rigorously monitored and enforced in the City's Development Engineering program. Civil engineering contract services should be purchased, if needed, to meet the established cycle-time standards. Fees should be adjusted accordingly to ensure full cost recovery.

> **Finding #10.2:** The City's Development Engineering Program, at the time of this study, was not meeting customer expectations as a result of inadequate resource management.

It is Citygate's understanding that the City has recently hired two new employees to strengthen the Public Works Department's Development Review program. Citygate views this as a very positive move in the right direction in terms of improving customer service.

Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs): During stakeholder interviews and focus group meetings, Citygate observed a high level of customer frustration regarding the way the City manages the production of EIRs and the costs that are incurred by the applicant. Applicants believe the EIR process takes too long. Moreover, under the current system, the City contracts directly with the EIR consultants and passes the bills on to the applicant. As a result, there is little to no incentive to manage costs. Applicants describe the system as an "open checkbook."

During focus group meetings, community members expressed their concerns that the City's EIR process takes too long. They reported that, oftentimes, they must monitor a project's EIR for years.

This type of customer frustration over EIRs is not unique to the City; it happens in cities throughout California. The new PER Director will be given the opportunity to work with both applicants and community members to devise a EIR processing strategy that is more timely and efficient, while at the same time being fair and balanced.

> **Recommendation #10.2:** Direct the new PER Director to improve the efficiency of the City's EIR processing system.

6.3   USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS)

The City of Goleta undertook an IT Assessment and Strategic Plan study subsequent to engaging Citygate for this study. Citygate has deferred its review of technology to this study, recognizing that assessing the PER Department needs in the context of the overall City technology will be invaluable to the Department's ability to move forward in its use of electronic data and resources. The Department has a strong component of using electronic data through the contract with Willdan Engineering. Throughout the interviews and focus groups, very little was mentioned about Willdan Engineering's building permit and plan review process, which would appear to indicate that, for the most part, this portion of the Department's work is going well for customers. There is strong need for the use of the electronic permit system as a foundation to improving other electronic outreach, so the implementation of this system has been classified a strategic recommendation. The City's use of GIS and mapping through the Community View software has been limited, but can be made more effective dependent upon the resources the City makes available to expand these uses. This may be a topic for the five-year review as the City evaluates its overall technology use.

6.4   FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Citygate observed a high level of customer dissatisfaction regarding the Department's Trust Fund Deposit billing system. According to applicants, it is not uncommon to receive a letter from the Department wherein they are instructed to make large, unanticipated Trust Fund cash deposits. Often, they are informed that the City has halted processing of their permit application until the funds are received. The City provides little to no accounting documentation regarding the incurred costs.

Best-practice cities that use Trust Fund Deposits employ systems to ensure that these kinds of surprises are minimized. These systems include:

◆   Continued use and improvement of daily time sheets to accurately document hours spent on an application.

◆   Providing the applicant with accurate <u>monthly</u> billings of the charges made against the Trust Fund Deposit.

◆   Utilizing a red-flag system to notify the applicant when 80 percent of the Trust Fund Deposit has been expended.

> **Recommendation #10.3:**   Strengthen the transparency and accountability of the Department's Trust Fund Deposit system.

6.5   MULTIPLE BITES AT THE APPLE

During interviews and stakeholder focus groups, Citygate was told that it is common practice for the City to add totally new requirements to a project during the second, third, or even fourth round of an application review, even though the project is unchanged.

Best-practice cities provide supervision to ensure that, to the extent possible, the applicant does not suffer from so-called "multiple bites at the apple." On the other hand, it is not at all uncommon for applicants to knowingly submit incomplete applications or to make significant changes to their original submittal. The key to managing this problem is to ensure applications are fully complete before they are accepted into the development permit review process.

Best-practice departments have a policy that requires planning, engineering, and building staff to provide a thorough first-plan review of applications that have been Deemed Complete. Staff are not allowed to add new requirements during subsequent reviews unless the project has changed substantially. A supervisor must approve new requirements added during subsequent reviews. The only exception to this policy would occur when staff missed "life-safety" requirements during the initial plan review.

> **Recommendation #10.4:** Eliminate "multiple bites at the apple" during the development permit review process.

6.6   INFORMATIONAL AMBUSHES

Customer frustrations were expressed repeatedly regarding the manner in which the Department releases staff reports, the way it manages written comments from concerned citizens, as well as submission of "late information" from applicants and staff after the staff report has been released. In most instances, the public receives the agenda and staff report package on Thursday or Friday for a public meeting held on the following Tuesday. This forces the concerned citizens and community activists to rush just to get their comments to the decision-making body. Moreover, it does not allow time for the decision makers to review and digest the written comments provided by concerned citizens.

To make things worse, staff sometimes hand out revisions or additional information to the decision makers after the staff report has been released or at the beginning of the public meeting.

Best-practice cities adopt policies to minimize late handouts to ensure that all parties have sufficient time to thoughtfully review and contemplate the issues and technicalities of an application before acting.

> **Recommendation #10.5:** Strive to distribute agenda packets on the Wednesday before Planning Commission and City Council meetings.

6.7   STAFF REPORT FORMAT

Citygate recommends that City staff revise staff reports to feature an executive summary for the Planning Commission, placing information at the front of the report to identify what policy (or General Plan) issues are involved. These should be readily available for both customers and community members and would help focus attention on the policies in question as these items are considered by elected officials and appointed commission/board members.

> **Recommendation #10.6:** Consider revising the staff report format to provide a one-page executive summary.

6.8   ACCESS TO STAFF REPORTS VIA THE CITY'S WEBSITE

It was suggested at the stakeholder focus group meeting that the City make it easier to access agendas and staff reports. Citygate concurs with this suggestion. Notwithstanding Citygate's significant experience at touring municipal websites, it was very difficult to ascertain information regarding upcoming Design Review Board, Planning Commission, and City Council meetings.

> **Recommendation #10.7:** Place access to public meeting agendas and staff reports in a prominent position on the City's homepage to ensure single-click access for the public.

6.9   DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

During interviews and stakeholder focus group meetings, Citygate observed confusion and disagreement regarding whether the Design Review Board should review and act on a project before or after the Planning Commission reviews and acts on a project. It is unlikely that Citygate can resolve this debate; however, the current approach used by the City is consistent with best practices; thus, Citygate is not recommending any changes in this regard.

6.10   THEY KEY TO SUCCESS: THERE IS A ROLE FOR EVERYONE

Citygate attempted to produce a report that can be owned by as many of the City's employees as possible. Ownership of change is the key to bringing about real and lasting change. Most people

are not averse to change; they just do not like <u>being</u> changed. People, generally, do not want to be told what to do and how to do it. If an improvement is not an individual's idea, that individual may be resistance to it, lack effort to implement it, or sometimes even opposes the suggested improvement.

The degree to which the recommendations in this report reflect the information and ideas suggested by the City's employees, customers, stakeholders, elected officials, residents, and administrative leaders will determine the extent to which lasting changes and improvements will be made. Great things can happen for the City if everyone takes an active role in owning and implementing the recommended solutions. There is an essential, supporting, participatory role for everyone.

6.10.1 Elected Officials

In the early years of Goleta's incorporation, elected officials took a hands-on role in many areas of the organization. For example, the City Council served as a planning agency until a Planning Commission was established after approximately five years of incorporation. The City Council currently assigns a member to represent the City on 12 regional agencies, 11 different standing committees, and five ad-hoc committees. In total, Councilmembers must divide the workload to serve on 28 different boards or committees in addition to the meetings they attend as City Councilmembers. City staff are responsible for supporting these 28 different boards or committees with information, agendas, and staff reports related to these activities, as needed.

As the City celebrates its 15th year of incorporation and looks forward to how best to align its planning and development functions to achieve the goals desired by the City Council, it may well be a good time to review these obligations and prioritize the time of both elected officials and staff to focus on regional agencies and standing committees that most impact the City Council's priorities. It is also a time when the Council can affirm its role in establishing policy for planning and development and, having outlined that policy, hold City staff members accountable for working to achieve those policy objectives, focusing on outcomes rather than operational steps. The provision of adequate staffing resources and time allotted to achieving the implementation of the electronic permit tracking system is also within the City Council's purview.

6.10.2 Customers and Stakeholders

Customers and stakeholders can do their part regarding the City's future planning and development by recognizing that there are no perfect processes or plans and that the City is required by law to honor certain property rights of owners and applicants as it reviews project proposals. Should the City establish a conceptual review process as suggested in this report, customers and stakeholders should participate in the process, recognizing there will be limits to design changes, site settings, and land use options that can be provided for either customers or stakeholders as the community together works through various projects.

6.10.3 City Manager's Office

The City Manager's office can be helpful in implementing the nine Strategic Recommendations, and addressing the other findings and recommendations, through interaction with the PER Department Director on a regular basis to ensure progress is being made on these items and to assist the PER Director, as necessary, by ensuring adequate resources are available to achieve these goals. The Manager's Office can provide review of staff reports from the standpoint of both the City Councilmembers and the public to assist the PER Department in its outreach and informational efforts.

6.10.4 Planning and Environmental Review Staff

Planning and Environmental Review staff can see themselves as champions of process rather than having to identify themselves as being for or against development. Their goal is to achieve the best outcome for the community in keeping with the strategic objectives adopted by the City Council and development plans as outlined in the General Plan. They also need to provide consistency as they process the variety of applications and projects with which they are tasked, offering their best professional planning assessment at all times.

6.10.5 Key Staff in Other City Program Areas

Key staff members in other City program areas can support the work of the PER Department by being prompt to return requested information or to review requested material. They need to identify the time and resources necessary to assist the PER Department, whenever those are lacking, and be proactive in providing updates, information, project deadlines, finance information, or other data that is necessary for the PER Department to serve its customers. Particular assistance is needed by the PER Department to implement the electronic tracking and database resources necessary to automate customer services.

SECTION 7—REVIEW OF LITERATURE SOURCES

The purpose of this section is to augment the City's knowledge on current development review practices through Citygate's survey and literature search efforts. A variety of published sources are listed that provide national data on various benchmarks and operational norms, as well as case studies on the results of experimental and state-of-the-art Planning and Environmental Review practices and other relevant issues. The results of Citygate's experience with comparable agencies, relevant literature in the profession, and Citygate's collective knowledge of best practices have been integrated into this study to maximize opportunities for defining the most contemporary and useful recommendations possible.

7.1 ARTICLES

McClendon, Bruce W. "Putting a Bias for Action into Planning Agency Management: A Practitioner's Perspective." *Public Administration Review* Vol. 46, No. 4 (July/Aug. 1986): 352–355.

Carson, Richard H. "Changing the Culture of 'No' (Planning Practice) and Keys to a Successful Performance Audit." *Planning Magazine* (Dec. 2004): 16–19.

Carson, Richard H. "Connected at Last in CoolTown." *Planning Magazine* (July 2003).

Knack, Ruth Eckdish. "Inspiring the Troops." *Planning Magazine* (Jan. 1998).

7.2 BOOKS

Goodman, William I., and Eric C. Freund. *Principles and Practice of Urban Planning*. Institute for Training in Municipal Administration, 1968.

Hoch, Charles. *The Practice of Local Government Planning (The "Green Book")*. International City Management Association, latest ed.

Slater, David C. *Management of Local Planning*. International City Management Association, 1984.

McClendon, Bruce W., and Anthony James Catanese. *Planners on Planning: Leading Planners Offer Real-life Lessons on What Works, What Doesn't, and Why*. Jossey-Bass, 1996.

McClendon, Bruce W., and Ray Quay. *Mastering Change: Winning Strategies for Effective City Planning*. APA Planners Press, 1988.

McClendon, Bruce W. *Customer Service in Local Government: Challenges for Planners and Managers*. APA Planners Press, 1992.

Begg, Iain. *Urban Competitiveness: Policies for Dynamic Cities*. The Policy Press, 2002 (written from perspective of British agencies).

Duncan, James, and Arthur Nelson. *Growth Management Principles and Practices*. APA Planners Press, 1995.

Zucker, Paul. *ABZs of Planning Management*. West Coast Publishing, 1983.

Branch, Melville. *Urban Planning Theory*. Dowden, Hutchinson & Ross, 1975.

Chapin, Stuart, and Edward Kaiser. *Urban Land Use Planning*. University of Illinois Press, 1979.

Blair, Fredrick. *Planning Cities*. APA Planners Press, 1970.

7.2.1 General Public Agency Management

Radin, Beryl. *Challenging the Performance Movement: Accountability, Complexity, and Democratic Values (Public Management and Change)*. Georgetown University Press, 2006.

Stenberg, Carl W., and Susan Lipman Austin. *Managing Government Services: A Practical Guide, 3rd ed.* ICMA Press, 2007.

Agranoff, Robert, and Michael McGuire. *Collaborative Public Management*. Georgetown University Press, 2003.

Bryson, John M. *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*. Jossey-Bass, 1995.

7.2.2 Management

A few interesting books for the manager:

Gardner, Howard, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, and William Damon. *Good Work: When Excellence and Ethics Meet*. Basic Books, 2002.

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. *Good Business: Leadership. Flow, and the Making of Meaning*. Viking, 2003.

Susskind, Lawrence, and Patrick Field. *Dealing with an Angry Public: The Mutual Gains Approach to Resolving Disputes*. The Free Press, 1996.

7.2.3 Fiction

Fiction has innumerable lessons for the manager. The following is a list of two metaphorical guides to managing human assets that are also enjoyable reads.

Asprin, Robert Lynn. *Phule's Company*. The Berkley Publishing Group, 1990.

Asprin, Robert Lynn. *Another Fine Myth*. The Berkley Publishing Group, 1978.