

To Peter Imhof, Planning and Review Director, and Lisa Prasse, Planning Manager, Current Planning Division

After reading the Historic Context Statement, there is an area of history that seems to have been left off the document, that is the Oil Industry in Goleta during the 1950's, 60's and 70's, and the impact that industry has had, and continues to have on our community to the present day.

The Document ends the discussion on the industry on page 61, "Goleta's oil fields remained among largest in the United States from the 1920's to 1937, when oil production in Goleta began to decline". While it began to decline, it continued to have a major impact on the built and natural environment, both onshore and offshore in Goleta and continues to do so.

Pipelines, drilling rigs, the oil pier and the tank farm

The area around Haskell's Beach was a beehive of industry wells that slowly were replaced by the Ellwood Onshore Facility, two onshore rigs adjacent to Sandpiper Golf Course located on Sands Beach and three offshore drilling rigs built in the 1960's. The Ellwood Onshore Facility and Platform Holly located directly off of Ellwood have recently been closed as a result of the Venoco Company bankruptcy.

The two offshore platforms to the west of Goleta that are still operational (but not pumping due to pipeline issues?) continue to be serviced by oil industry boats operating out of the Haskell's oil industry pier. The boats also service Platform Holly, closed but currently maintained by the State Lands Commission (which is responsible for removing Platform Holly, Ellwood Onshore Facility, the oil industry debris left on Goleta's Sands and Haskell's beaches, as well as the tank farm on UCSB property adjacent to the Coal Oil Point Reserve).

The "Sandpiper" onshore drilling rigs and pipelines, in serious decay, have been recently in the newspapers as the industry explores the possibility of reopening these huge concrete and steel blocks and their attendant onshore pipelines.

Platform Holly

The Historical Context Statement does not mention the third largest oil spill in U.S. history, Exxon's Platform Holly spill off Ellwood, which happened exactly 50 years ago, spawning the environmental movement. The effect of the spill on Goleta, and the resulting community awareness regarding oil industry safety are of significant importance in Goleta's history.

The County of Santa Barbara has a comprehensive map of the wellheads which still exist under the City of Goleta, which could be reviewed before new development is proposed.

Much of the existing oil industry infrastructure (pipelines, Ellwood Onshore Facility, tankfarms, wellheads, on and offshore drilling rigs and the oil pier) could be mentioned in the Historical Context report as they date back at least to the 60's and 70's and continue to impact Goleta today.

Mineral rights and future development

The mineral rights of the oil industry is another area of historical importance as to impact on future development.

Recommendation

I am bringing this to your attention as a substantial amount of history that is of current and future importance and could be considered for inclusion in the Historical Context Statement.

Respectfully,
Anne Linn
Planning Commissioner