

LAFCO

Santa Barbara Local Agency Formation Commission
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March 6, 2003 (Agenda)

Local Agency Formation Commission
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara CA 93101

Request to Expand the Sphere of Influence of the City of Santa Barbara to Include Eastern Goleta Valley, Submitted by the Committee for One

Dear Members of the Commission:

RECOMMENDATION

The staff placed this matter on the agenda to inform the Commission of the application and to obtain direction as to any additional matters the Commission would like to see addressed with regard to processing the application.

It is recommended the Commission receive the enclosed proposal from the Committee for One and direct the staff to schedule a public hearing at such time as (1) the proper environmental documentation is prepared, (2) the Commission complies with requirements to prepare Municipal Service Reviews and (3) all interested parties have an opportunity to comment on the proposal.

DISCUSSION

The Committee for One, a citizen's group, has submitted the enclosed proposal to expand the City of Santa Barbara's sphere of influence to encompass the eastern Goleta Valley, essentially from the City of Santa Barbara to the City of Goleta.

Statutory Procedures to Amend Spheres of Influence

Since 1971 LAFCOs have been required by the Legislature to develop and determine spheres of influence. Given the following statutory language they are central to LAFCO's overall purposes:

“In order to carry out its purposes and responsibilities for planning and shaping the logical and orderly development and coordination of local governmental agencies

so as to advantageously provide for the present and future needs of the county and its communities, the commission shall develop and adopt the sphere of influence of each local governmental agency within the county. . . “ (Gov.C. §56425)

Government Code Section 56428 allows “any person or local agency” to file a request with the Executive Officer to amend a sphere of influence. The request must state reasons for the proposed change, include a map of the proposed amendment and provide other required information. The Committee for One completed the sphere a questionnaire and paid the requisite processing fee based on the Commission’s adopted schedule of fees.

The statute requires the Executive Officer to review requests for sphere amendments and prepare a report and recommendation for consideration by the Commission. Section 56428 directs that, after complying with CEQA, the Executive Officer must place the request on the agenda of the next meeting for which notice can be given.

To comply with CEQA the LAFCO staff must conduct an initial study. If, however, the City of Santa Barbara prezones the proposed sphere expansion area the City will be the lead agency to comply with CEQA.

Preparation of Municipal Service Reviews

Assembly Bill 2838 in 2001 created a new obligation for LAFCOs to prepare Municipal Service Reviews. New Section 56430 states:

“The Commission shall conduct a service review before, or in conjunction with, but not later than the time it is considering an action to establish a sphere of influence . . . or to update a sphere of influence pursuant to Section 56245.”

“In order to prepare and to update spheres of influence in accordance with Section 56425 the Commission shall conduct a service review of the municipal services provided in the county or other appropriate area designated by the Commission.

“The Commission shall include in the area designated for service area the county, the region, the subregion, or any other geographic area as is appropriate for the analysis of the service or services to be reviewed. . .

“In conducting a service review the Commission shall comprehensively review all of the agencies that provide the identified service or services within the designated geographic area.”

Considerations in Expanding the City’s Sphere of Influence

Before amending the City of Santa Barbara’s sphere of influence in this major way a number of potential public service issues will need to be evaluated.

The staff is working with representatives of the County, cities, special districts and SBCAG to develop the best method to prepare Municipal Service Reviews. A report and recommendation on how to proceed will be presented to the Commission as a future meeting.

Based on that the approved Municipal Service Review process the request by the Committee for One will be included in an overall review of spheres of influence for the Goleta Valley.

Knowing what land uses will be allowed by the City within the proposed sphere expansion area is an important issue. It raises the question of whether LAFCO should require that land to be included in a city’s sphere must be included in the city’s general plan. That would ensure that the Commission, other agencies, landowners, residents and the public are aware of the potential types of land uses that would be permitted by the city.

We have forwarded the Committee for One’s request to the City of Santa Barbara for its review and have also provided copies to local agencies that include the area, i.e., Goleta Sanitary District, Goleta Water District, County Fire Protection District and the County itself, and we forwarded a copy to the City of Goleta. We will obtain information from all interested and potentially affected agencies prior to the scheduling a hearing on the proposed sphere change.

Prior Proposal to Expand the City’s Sphere

When the Commission was considering incorporating the City of Goleta, the City of Santa Barbara submitted a proposal to expand its sphere and annex the Goleta Valley, including the territory in the Committee for One’s application.

When the City proposed the annexation it favored adopting the existing County General Plan designations for the annexation area, with the understanding that a general plan amendment might be considered in the future, following completion of the annexation.

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The proposed sphere expansion and annexation were truncated due to the lack of a property tax exchange agreement between the City and County, and the City neither completed the general plan amendment nor rezoned the area.

Conclusion

The request from the Committee for One will be placed on the agenda for a public hearing when appropriate environmental documentation is prepared and the requirements for Municipal Service Reviews have been completed.

Please contact the LAFCO office if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

BOB BRAITMAN
Executive Officer

cc: Harriet Phillips, Chair, Committee for One
Jim Armstrong, City Manager, City of Santa Barbara
Kamil Azoury, General Manager, Goleta Sanitary District
Mike Brown, Administrator, County of Santa Barbara
Gerry Hesse, Director Governmental Relations, UCSB
Chief John Scherrei, County Fire Protection District
Fred Stouder, City Manager, City of Goleta
Kevin Walsh, General Manager, Goleta Water District