

Sarah Mayer *Public Comment - City of Goleta Councilmember*



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From: PAD LRP Housing Element
Sent: Thursday, April 25, 2024 10:34 AM
To: sbcob
Subject: FW: Comment Letter for Planning Commission Hearing April 1 2024
Attachments: PC Comment letter HEU 3 28 2024 signed.pdf

From: James Kyriaco <jkyriaco@cityofgoleta.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 28, 2024 2:42 PM
To: PAD LRP Housing Element <housingelement@countyofsb.org>; Villalobos, David <dvillalo@countyofsb.org>
Cc: Laura Capps <lcapps@countyofsb.org>; Joan Hartmann <jHartmann@countyofsb.org>; Gina Fischer <gFischer@countyofsb.org>; Chris Henson <chenson@countyofsb.org>
Subject: Comment Letter for Planning Commission Hearing April 1 2024

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Good afternoon,
Please find attached a comment letter for the Planning Commission to consider for the South County Rezone Hearing this upcoming Monday.

I do not have email addresses for individual Planning Commission members and would ask that this be forwarded to each of them at your earliest convenience.

Best Regards,
James Kyriaco
City Councilmember, District 2
City of Goleta
jkyriaco@cityofgoleta.org
(805)961-7535



March 28, 2024

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Vincent Martinez, Chair
Santa Barbara County Planning Commission
County of Santa Barbara Planning & Development Department
123 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Rezone Site Selection bordering Goleta City Council District 2

Dear Chair Martinez and Members of the Commission,

As the Goleta City Council representative for areas bordering the South Patterson Agriculture Block, including the Rancho Goleta Mobile Home Park and Old Town Goleta I would like to share a few thoughts ahead of your Monday April 1st hearing.

The combined North and South County Unincorporated area RHNA requirement mandated by the State of California and assigned by SBCAG was 5,664 units for an area stretching from Cuyama to Carpinteria.

According to the South County Balancing Act Tool, the rezones proposed by your staff would lead to as many as 3,634 new units on the City of Goleta's border, and 2,634 of them on the border of Goleta City Council District 2.

- St. Athanasius: 300 units
- Caird (Caird 1-3 + Ekwil): 876 units
- Scott: 246 units
- Giorgi aka The Orchard: 1212 units

Total: 2,634 units or 46.5% of the Countywide RHNA requirement

That's nearly 47% of the entire county unincorporated area requirement, located on sites next to my district, all of which are placed in a state designated SB 535 disadvantaged area.

That would most assuredly affect city roads, infrastructure and

disproportionately my constituents.

By contrast when Goleta completed its own housing element process in early December of 2023, our City Council placed no housing sites on county borders that would affect county roads or infrastructure.

Done right, you can plan in a way that helps my community and provides them with a diversity of housing choices and community benefits. We need more housing and better housing, but especially affordable housing.

Done wrong, and choices will disproportionately impact one of the few working class, diverse communities we have on the South Coast, Old Town Goleta.

I would ask for Planning Commissioners to consider location but also two other factors – Affordability and Community Benefit – when deciding which properties to rezone, recognizing you don't have the flexibility promised earlier in this process.

Affordability. There is a significant gap between what the County is planning for, in terms of affordability, and what developers suggest is feasible. A compromise is in order.

I would suggest challenging developers in the Goleta area to at least match the 30% low and very low-income housing provided at Heritage Ridge in the City of Goleta. Heritage Ridge is a new 332-unit housing project that will provide affordable housing and a new public park.

Instead of a 20% affordability ceiling there should be a 30% affordability floor, with a mix of that being for both lower income and moderate-income households. For every two units that are priced for as much as the market will allow, developers should be willing to provide one housing unit for our teachers, nurses, public safety personnel and other members of our workforce that make this community so special.

Community Benefit:

Rezoning will lead to new projects contributing millions – perhaps tens of millions - of dollars in development fees to the county. The county will receive millions more in new property tax and new sales tax revenues. Meanwhile the City of Goleta will receive no property tax revenue from this new housing, and little if any sales tax benefit because of the County/City Revenue Neutrality Agreement.

A provision of Goleta's own Housing Element calls for us to follow principles of Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, making needed financial investments in services and infrastructure to disadvantaged areas of our city when adding housing in these areas. In that spirit I would ask that developments approved by the County that are located in the South Patterson Ag Block in a Disadvantaged Area should be prioritized based on their willingness to provide benefits for the surrounding community not just the new residents these developments will attract.

Goleta's Project Connect, which is just beginning construction, will add new roundabouts, multi-modal bike pedestrian paths, a new east-west route through Old Town, and a bridge replacement across San Jose Creek. These improvements are being paid for by city funds, with support from State and Federal partners. I am not aware at this time of any promises from any of these developers to contribute towards this new infrastructure or to provide enhancements. One project (The Orchard) has openly touted the roundabouts as being a reason to pick their site.

The roundabout was supposed to serve communities like the seniors living at Rancho Goleta Mobile Home Park on Ward Drive, and the low-income residents living at Sumida Gardens across from the Ag Block on the North side of Hollister, or the Villa La Esperanza apartments on South Kellogg Avenue.

The Giorgi Family – the landowners behind the Orchard Project saw the roundabout as an opportunity for themselves. Rather than offering to contribute towards the costs of constructing the roundabout adjacent to their property, and knowing the City of Goleta was under tight deadlines to begin construction they took advantage, leading Goleta to pay \$162,500 along with conveyance of some extra land so we could complete the roundabout, which their representatives now tout as a key reason to pick their project. We had to pay them to make their project more feasible.

The Orchard is located on Prime Agricultural Soils and is home to lemon orchards that are an important but increasingly diminishing part of Goleta's identity.

The Orchard is disproportionately, compared to the other projects, benefiting from the city's soon to be constructed infrastructure without contributing towards it. The commercial offerings on their site along Hollister - a market, a bakery, and a coffee shop would compete with existing Old Town businesses like Goleta Bakery, Santa Cruz Market and Old Town Coffee. I had hoped the Giorgi representatives would at least agree to use some of their Hollister Avenue frontage to put in a pharmacy, something Old Town lacks. They told me a pharmacy would be too big and would require too much parking.

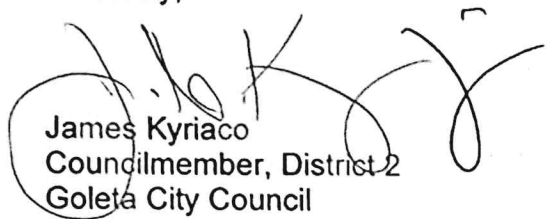
As of right now I would ask that this one project come out, which would still place as many as 1,422 units of development from other projects on my city council district border, or 25% of the countywide 5,664-unit requirement. While still a lot of housing for such a small area, the other projects provide community benefits and diverse housing options that will enhance and support Old Town without as much risk of gentrification.

The sites you select for rezones will in effect become your partners in planning. I would take care in choosing who you select as your future partners. I would urge you to go forward with the other projects bordering my district – such as the Caird project - that offer the most community benefits and needed housing while withholding for now the Orchard Project in favor of other non-Builder's Remedy Projects.

Time is short, and both precision and fairness are critical. Failure to plan properly in either South or North County can lead to loss of local control for the entire

unincorporated county. Please plan carefully and fairly for the entire county, including the disadvantaged communities I represent.

Sincerely,



James Kyriaco
Councilmember, District 2
Goleta City Council

cc: Laura Capps, 2nd District Supervisor; Joan Hartmann, 3rd District Supervisor