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P.O. Box 2495
Santa Barbara, CA 93120
805.875.3562
www.coast-santabarbara.org

COALITION FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

March 16, 2009

Joseph Centeno, Chair
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, Ca 93101



Re: 2009-2010 Annual Work Program and Mid-Year Report For Land Use Planning Projects and Policy Initiatives

Dear Chair Centeno and Members of the SB County Board of Supervisors:

The Coalition for Sustainable Transportation (COAST) supports the designation of the **Climate Action Strategy** and the **Gaviota Rural Plan** as top priorities in the County's Office of Long Range Planning, as proposed by the County Planning Commission and the Environmental Defense Council (EDC). These two planning efforts are related, as the Climate Action Strategy will give the County tools to deal with the uncontrolled sprawl that currently threatens the Gaviota Coast. As the pressure to develop Gaviota is clear and present, the County needs to start these planning efforts immediately. We concur with EDC that the Office of Long Range Planning may be getting bogged down by a plethora of neighborhood plans, while neglecting its most vital mandate – long range planning for the county as a whole.

To be effective, the Climate Action Strategy and the Gaviota Plan need to be adequately funded. The strategies offered by EDC - namely a) Auditing the Office of Long Range Planning for efficiency with an eye toward freeing up possible funds, and b) Aggressively pursuing grant funding - make sense in these times of tight budgets. We urge you to pursue them.

A Climate Action Strategy will integrate land use and transportation planning and focus development on land within existing urban boundaries, thus preventing sprawl. This will reduce our energy and greenhouse gas footprint, helping implement the legal mandates of AB 32 and SB 375. It will also help preserve agricultural land and priceless natural resources like the Gaviota Coast.

If Santa Barbara County is to meet the challenges of transportation and climate change, it needs to make a strong and well funded effort to develop a strategy that looks at land use and transportation options, commute patterns, housing, economic development and protection of natural resources in a holistic way. We urge you to embark on this effort now.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eva Inbar".

Eva Inbar, President