



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Submitted on:
(COB Stamp)

Department Name: Planning and Development
Department No.: 053
Agenda Date: March 11, 2025
Placement: Administrative Agenda
Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from: N/A
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Director(s):
Lisa Plowman, Director, Planning and Development Department
(P&D) (805) 568-2086
Contact Info:
Alex Tuttle, Deputy Director, Long Range Planning Division
(805) 568-2072

SUBJECT: 2024 Comprehensive Plan Annual Progress Report

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

Staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors (Board) take the following actions:

- a) Receive and file the *2024 Comprehensive Plan Annual Progress Report* (Attachment A);
- b) Determine that the County Planning Commission's actions regarding the *2024 Comprehensive Plan Annual Progress Report* are not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(3) and 15378(b)(5); and
- c) Direct staff to provide the *2024 Comprehensive Plan Annual Progress Report* to the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI), and California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), pursuant to Government Code 65400, and to the City of Santa Barbara, pursuant to the Board's action to adopt the Mission Canyon Community Plan (April 1, 2014).

Summary Text:

Government Code Section 65400(a) requires that the County Planning Commission provide by April 1 of each year an annual progress report to the Board, Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR), and the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) which includes the following:

(A) The status of the plan and progress in its implementation.

(B) The progress in meeting its share of regional housing needs ... and local efforts to remove governmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing ...

(F) The degree to which its approved general plan complies with the guidelines developed and adopted pursuant to Section 65040.2 and the date of the last revision to the general plan.

The County also submits the annual progress report to the City of Santa Barbara in accordance with policies in the Mission Canyon Community Plan.

The *2024 Comprehensive Plan Annual Progress Report* serves two key functions. First, it summarizes the projects that the Planning and Development Department (P&D) undertook in 2024 to maintain and implement the Comprehensive Plan, including the 2023-2031 Housing Element Update, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on December 5, 2023 and received its final compliance determination from State HCD on January 22, 2024. The 2023-2031 Housing Element Update contains 25 programs and 99 actions to help meet the housing goals and needs of the unincorporated county. The County made significant progress implementing several of these programs in 2024. The County also initiated updates to the Circulation Element and Open Space Element, and continued work on updates to the Seismic Safety and Safety Element, and the new Environmental Justice Element. The County also initiated and completed Energy Element updates, agricultural enterprise ordinance amendments, and various housing bill ordinance amendments in 2024.

Second, the *2024 Comprehensive Plan Annual Progress Report* discusses the County’s progress in meeting its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) in the second year of the current 2023-2031 planning period. The allocation for the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County for the 2023-2031 RHNA projection period is 5,664 housing units. For the first time, the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) apportioned the County’s RHNA into two sub-regions – South Coast and North County. The County must accommodate 74 percent (4,142 units) of its RHNA in the South Coast and 26 percent (1,522 units) of its RHNA in the North County. The County’s RHNA progress is discussed below and summarized by income level in Table 2 and Table 3.

Background:

Comprehensive Plan Implementation

The *2024 Comprehensive Plan Annual Progress Report* shows that the County continues to make progress toward maintaining and implementing the Comprehensive Plan. In 2024, the County continued to maintain and implement the 2023 – 2031 Housing Element Update, draft updates to the Safety Element, draft the new Environmental Justice Element, the 2030 Climate Action Plan and associated update to the Energy Element, initiated updates to the Circulation Element and Open Space Element, and prepared various zoning ordinance updates including the Agricultural Enterprise

Ordinance Amendments, the Airport Land Use Consistency Amendments, the Annual Zoning Amendments Package, the Cannabis Ordinance Amendments, the Childcare Facilities Zoning Ordinance Amendments Package, the Utility Scale Solar Ordinance Amendments, and the other zoning ordinance and amendments streamlining permit processes. For more information on the Comprehensive Plan updates, see Attachment A, *2024 Comprehensive Plan Annual Progress Report*.

In 2024, the County also made significant progress in implementing several of the 2023-2031 Housing Element Update’s programs and actions. In particular, the following table lists and summarizes the Housing Element programs and actions that the County initiated or completed in 2024:

Table 1		
Programs and Actions Initiated or Completed in 2024		
Program	Action	Status
1	Select County-owned sites to accommodate RHNA plus buffer.	Complete
1	Rezone sites to accommodate RHNA plus buffer.	Complete
1	Revise development standards to ensure maximum densities.	In Process
1	Establish minimum densities for residential rezones.	Complete
1	Develop RHNA/No Net Loss tracking tool.	In Process
2	Update zoning ordinances to allow use by right (GC 65583.2(c)).	Complete
3	Update inland zoning ordinances unit replacement requirements.	Complete
4	Update and amend Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (IHO).	In Process
4	Report (annually) the effectiveness of the IHO.	Ongoing
5	Tools and incentives for high-quality affordable housing.	In Process
6	Collaborate with developers and employers for workforce housing.	Ongoing
7	Coordinate with stakeholders to secure funds from Project Homekey.	Ongoing
8	Increase permanent units and rental subsidies for homeless persons.	In Process
8	Coordinate/improve scoring on multifamily funding applications.	Ongoing
8	Increase funding for housing and services, with healthcare partners.	In Process
8	Create potential site inventory for homeless housing projects.	Complete
8	Centralize landlord engagement to secure rental units with vouchers.	Complete
9	Amend definition, standards, procedures for emergency shelters.	In Process
10	Amend zoning ordinances to comply with new ADU laws.	In Process
11	Adopt ordinances to implement Senate Bill 9.	In Process
12	Select County-owned sites for development.	In Process
12	Prioritize County-owned sites for development.	In Process
13	Amend zoning ordinances to comply with new SDBL.	In Process
13	Consider a density bonus program for moderate-income housing.	In Process
14	Participate (annually) in Groundwater Sustainability Plan.	Ongoing
15	Provide the 2023-2031 HEU to public water and sewer providers.	Complete
16	Amend ordinances per new state laws; special care homes, shelters.	In Process
16	Amend MLUDC and CZO to provide ministerial approval per SB 35.	In Process
16	Add Objective Design/Development Standards to MLUDC and CZO.	Complete
16	Amend (annually) zoning ordinances to comply with new state laws.	Ongoing
16	Facilitate/streamline multifamily housing in commercial zones.	In Process
16	Suspend the Montecito Growth Management Ordinance	Complete

17	Promote (annually) fair housing choice and outreach programs.	Ongoing
17	Require (annually) fair housing legal services to include outreach.	Ongoing
17	Assist (annually) 75 residents with fair housing/dispute services.	Ongoing
18	Monitor (annually) the status of at-risk rental housing projects.	Ongoing
18	Pursue (annually) funding to extend adorability covenants.	Ongoing
18	Conduct outreach to acquire units aging out of low-income use.	Ongoing
18	Provide fact sheets on tenant rights and relocation assistance.	Ongoing
20	Process grant applications to maintain/rehab low-income housing.	Ongoing
20	Assist (annually) in the rehabilitation of 30 units.	Ongoing
21	Study the development of a local preference ordinance.	In Process
22	Adopt the Recreation Master Plan.	In Process
23	Complete a workforce housing study.	In Process
25	Implement (annually) the EJE, ATP, and Recreation Master Plan.	In process
25	Seek funding for revitalization of low-income communities.	Ongoing

In addition, the Community Services Department, Housing and Community Development Division, continues to coordinate with P&D to maintain and implement Housing Element programs. The County’s Housing and Community Development Division is assisting in the implementation of 50 actions for this eight-year cycle. In 2024, the division took steps to implement 11 programs. These programs include providing more housing and services to the unhoused and promoting affordable housing opportunities. Table D of Attachment A of this annual progress report provides information on this significant progress.

RHNA Progress

Annual progress reports track annual housing production to show the County’s progress in meeting its RHNA. Table 2 and Table 3 below list the number of building permits the County issued in 2024 for new residential units (organized by income category) within the unincorporated areas of the South Coast and North County. The final row of the table lists the County’s 2023-2031 RHNA.

The County issued building permits for 400 units in 2024. Of the 400 units, 290 were located in the South Coast and 110 were in North County.

Table 2 South Coast 2023 to 2031 RHNA Projection Period Residential Units by Income Category (Issued Building Permits)					
Year	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	Total
2023	0	0	0	85	85
2024	3	54	3	230	290
RHNA	809	957	1,051	1,321	4,142
Permits as % of RHNA	0.4%	5.6%	0.3%	23.8%	9.1%

Table 3 North County 2023 to 2031 RHNA Projection Period Residential Units by Income Category (Issued Building Permits)					
Year	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	Total
2023	0	68	9	80	157
2024	0	85	10	15	110
RHNA	564	243	229	486	1,522
Permits as % of RHNA	0.0%	63.0%	8.3%	19.5%	17.5%

Government Code Section 65913.4 Streamlined Ministerial Approval Process

In addition to amending annual progress report requirements, Government Code Section 65913.4 established a streamlined, ministerial approval process for qualifying housing developments in jurisdictions that have not met their pro-rata share of regional housing needs. In part, qualifying developments must be located on an urban infill site zoned for residential or mixed uses and provide at least 10 or 50 percent of the units for lower-income households.

As of June 2024, HCD determined that, based upon data from the *2023 Comprehensive Plan Annual Progress Report*, the County had not met its pro-rata share of very low- and low-income housing. As a result, the County is subject to the streamlining provisions for proposed developments with at least 50 percent affordability [Government Code Section 65913.4(a)(4)(B)(ii)]. In 2024, the County issued a building permit for a 24-unit affordable housing project subject to SB 35 (as of 2023 referred to as SB 423). The County remained subject to the streamlining provisions throughout 2024 and is expected to remain so through 2025.

Planning Commission Hearings

On February 26, 2025, the County Planning Commission voted 5-0 to receive, file, and recommend that the County Planning Commission provide the annual progress report to the Board, LCI, HCD, and City of Santa Barbara by April 1, 2025. The County Planning Commission staff report (Attachment B) and action letter (Attachments C) are enclosed.

Environmental Review:

CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c)(3) states that an activity is not subject to CEQA if the activity is not a project as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15378. Section 15378(b)(5) specifies that projects do not include organizational or administrative activities of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes to the environment. Preparation of the *2024 Comprehensive Plan Annual Progress Report* is an administrative activity that does not authorize new development or otherwise result in direct or indirect physical changes to the environment. Therefore, the report is not a project as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5) and is not subject to environmental review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c)(3).

Fiscal Analysis:

Funding for the *2024 Comprehensive Plan Annual Progress Report* is budgeted in P&D's Long Range Planning Budget Program on page 321 of the County of Santa Barbara Adopted Budget, Fiscal Year 2024–2025. There are no fiscal impacts.

Special Instructions:

The Clerk of the Board shall forward a copy of the minute order to P&D, attention: Breanna Alamilla, Long Range Planning Division.

Attachments:

Attachment A – *2024 Comprehensive Plan Annual Progress Report*

Attachment B – County Planning Commission Staff Report (dated February 18, 2025)

Attachment C – County Planning Commission Action Letter (dated February 26, 2025)

Authored by:

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