

Ms. Rachael Nixon

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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
CLERK OF THE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

June 6, 2026

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Santa Barbara County Public Works Department
123 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Dear Board of Supervisors and Public Works Leadership,

Prioritizing a Walkable Commercial Corridor with an Integrated Tree Canopy in the Los Alamos ATP Grant Application

As a resident of Los Alamos, I am writing to urge the County to prioritize pedestrian walkability and the inclusion of a robust street tree canopy in its upcoming Active Transportation Program (ATP) grant applications for our community. The commercial corridor along Bell Street (State Route 135) is the economic and social heart of our town, but it currently lacks the physical infrastructure needed to make it a safe, comfortable, and inviting environment for people on foot.

A truly walkable town center requires more than just sidewalks; it requires a protective and cooling (urban) canopy. I request that the County explicitly integrate comprehensive street tree planting and green infrastructure into the scope of the Los Alamos ATP project. Prioritizing trees within this active transportation framework is critical for several reasons:

- **Pedestrian Comfort and Climate Resilience:** Shade trees dramatically lower ground-level temperatures on hot days, shielding walkers, families, and elderly residents from extreme heat and making active travel viable year-round.
- **Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Safety:** A well-designed tree canopy creates a visual narrowing effect on the roadway. This naturally encourages drivers to slow down as they pass through our commercial center, directly improving safety for people crossing Bell Street.
- **Economic and Community Vitality:** Beautiful, shaded streetscapes encourage foot traffic, inviting visitors and locals to linger longer, shop at local businesses, and experience our town safely without relying solely on vehicles.
- **Cost-Effective and Enduring Project Design:** Incorporating tree wells, tree planting, and irrigation into the project scope at the outset is much more cost-effective and less disruptive to the community, the visitors, and the traffic flow through the area. Early design inclusion eliminates the need for later rework and additional construction projects further impacting the community.

Active Transportation funding is designed to transform communities into healthier, human-scaled spaces. By ensuring that street trees are treated as essential infrastructure rather than an afterthought, the County can deliver an enduring, transformative project that protects pedestrians, supports local business, and honors the unique character of Los Alamos.

Thank you for your leadership, your dedication to our community, and your commitment to building a greener, more walkable Los Alamos.

Sincerely,



Ms. Rachael Nixon