



environmental
DEFENSE CENTER

June 5, 2020

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

Re: EDC Comments on the FY 2020-2021 Budget for the Planning and Development Department

Dear Chair Hart and Supervisors,

The following comments are submitted by the Environmental Defense Center (“EDC”) regarding the budget for the Planning and Development Department. EDC is a non-profit, public interest law firm that protects and enhances the environment in Santa Barbara, Ventura, and San Luis Obispo Counties through education, advocacy, and legal action. EDC has a forty-three year history of representing community organizations on a wide variety of land use and planning issues. We urge the Board of Supervisors to support the proposed budget with the addition of continued funding for the Utility Grade Solar Ordinance and Policy Amendments (“Solar Ordinance”).

We recognize the budgetary challenges facing the County, and the need for the Planning and Development Department to scale back some of its projects. We realize that the County is not in the position to address some of the policy recommendations that we presented earlier this year, including the development of ordinances that would ensure fiscal responsibility for onshore oil operators. While we support many of the projects identified in the Long Range Planning Budget Program, including work on the Energy and Climate Action Plan, we are concerned that some projects have been eliminated. In particular, we urge the Board to consider continued funding for the Solar Ordinance.

The Solar Ordinance would help the County meet its renewable energy goals, implement the 2019 Strategic Energy Plan, support the County’s commitment to Community Choice, and bring new jobs and revenue to the County. The County has already conducted a significant amount of work on this project. We therefore urge the Board to support continued funding so that this project can be completed in a timely manner.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Krop".

Linda Krop
Chief Counsel