



**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

**Department Name:** Planning and  
Development (P&D)  
**Department No.:** 053  
**For Agenda Of:** May 20, 2025  
**Placement:** Departmental  
**Estimated Time:** 25 minutes  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Department Lisa Plowman, Director, Planning and Development Department  
Director(s) (805) 568-2068  
Contact Info: Alex Tuttle, Deputy Director, Long Range Planning, (805) 568-2072

**SUBJECT: Emergency Shelters Zoning Ordinance Amendments**

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: N/A

As to form: N/A

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: N/A

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors (Board) consider the recommendations of the County Planning Commission and approve Case Nos. 24ORD-00021 and 24ORD-00022 to comply with new State laws and implement Program 9 of Chapter 5 of the 2023-2031 Housing Element Update (HEU).

The Board's action should include the following:

- a) Make the required findings for approval, including CEQA findings, for the Emergency Shelters Zoning Ordinance Amendments, Case Nos. 24ORD-00021 and 24ORD-00022 (Attachment A);
- b) Determine that the ordinance amendments (Case Nos. 24ORD-00021 and 24ORD-00022) are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) and 15265 (Attachment B);
- c) Approve the Emergency Shelters Zoning Ordinance Amendments by taking the following actions:

1. Adopt an Ordinance amending Section 35-1 (Case No. 24ORD-00021) of Chapter 35, Zoning, of the Santa Barbara County Code; and
  2. Adopt an Ordinance amending Article II, the Coastal Zoning Ordinance (Case No. 24ORD-00022) of Chapter 35, Zoning, of the Santa Barbara County Code.
- d) Adopt a resolution (Attachment H) authorizing P&D to submit the Emergency Shelters Zoning Ordinance Amendments (Attachment C, Case No. 24ORD-00021 and Attachment D, Case No. 24ORD-00022) to the California Coastal Commission (CCC) for review and certification as an amendment to the Santa Barbara County Local Coastal Program; and
- e) Direct the P&D Department to transmit the adopted resolution to the Executive Director of the CCC.

**Summary Text:**

The County of Santa Barbara (County) proposes to adopt the Emergency Shelters Zoning Ordinance Amendments (Project). The purpose of the proposed Project is to comply with new and existing State laws regarding emergency shelters and to implement Program 9 of the 2023-2031 Housing Element Update (HEU). In part, new State law requires that jurisdictions demonstrate that they have sufficient capacity to accommodate their need for emergency shelters throughout the current housing element cycle.

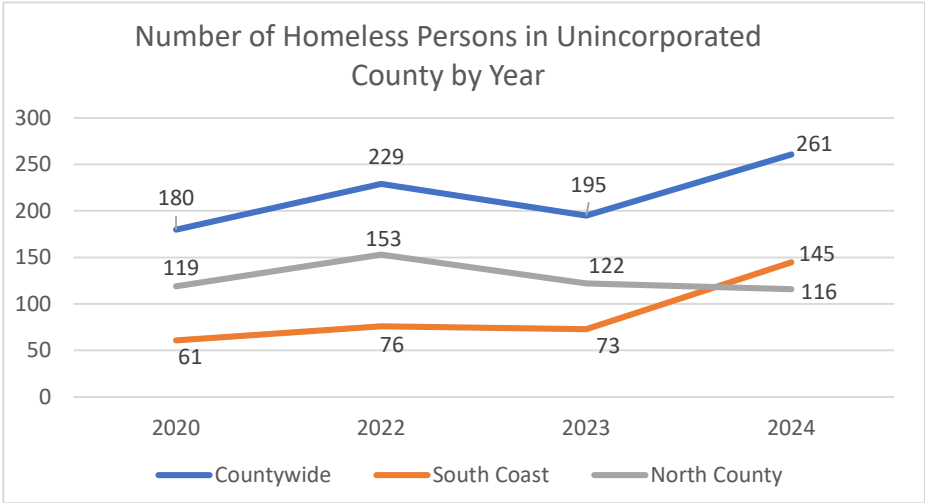
The County Planning Commission held two public hearings on the Project before making their recommendation to the Board (January 29 and March 12, 2025). At the hearing on January 29, 2025, staff initially recommended that the County comply with State law by expanding the zone districts where emergency shelters would be allowed and streamlining the permit process. Based on feedback from the County Planning Commission, staff re-examined existing and new State laws concerning emergency shelters and found that cities and counties may forgo allowing emergency shelters with a ministerial permit in zones that allow residential uses if existing emergency shelters within their jurisdiction have sufficient capacity to accommodate their need to house homeless persons. Based on an assessment of existing emergency shelter facilities, at the hearing on March 12, 2025, staff recommended that the County fulfill the State requirements for emergency shelters through existing emergency shelters, rather than amending the LUDC and CZO to allow emergency shelters with a ministerial permit. As a result, the Project is limited to amendments to the Land Use and Development Code (LUDC) and Article II, the Coastal Zoning Ordinance (CZO) to update the definitions of “emergency shelter” and “low barrier navigation center” and add objective development standards for new emergency shelters.

**Background:**

As explained in the County Planning Commission staff report for January 29, 2025, new State law requires that jurisdictions demonstrate they have sufficient emergency shelter capacity to meet their most recent homeless point-in-time (P-I-T) count throughout the 2023-2031 housing element cycle.

The 2024 P-I-T count shows that the homeless population in the unincorporated county totals 261 persons. Table 1, below, displays the number of homeless persons in the unincorporated county over time and by subregion (i.e., North County and South Coast).

**Table 1 – Santa Barbara County Point-in-Time Count (2020 - 2024)**



Government Code (GC) Section 65583(a)(4)(A) states that the County may accommodate its most recent P-I-T count by allowing emergency shelters with a ministerial permit in zoning designations that allow residential uses. State law also includes two alternative means to meet the most recent P-I-T count without allowing emergency shelters with a ministerial permit:

- “The existence of one or more emergency shelters within its jurisdiction ... that can accommodate that jurisdiction’s need” (GC Section 65583(a)(4)(F)), and
- “On sites owned by the local government if it demonstrates with substantial evidence that the sites will be made available for emergency shelter during the planning period, are suitable for residential use, and are located near amenities and services” (GC Section 65583(a)(4)(J)).

**Existing Emergency Shelter Capacity**

At the hearing on January 29, 2025, staff recommended that the County comply with State law by allowing emergency shelters with a ministerial permit in certain zones, pursuant to GC Section 65583(a)(4)(A). Upon further review of the existing facilities and the current P-I-T count, Staff altered its recommendation. Staff now recommends that the County fulfill the State requirements for emergency shelters through existing emergency shelters, rather than amending the LUDC and CZO to allow emergency shelters with a ministerial permit, pursuant to GC Section 65583(a)(4)(F).

As shown in Tables 2 and 3, below, P&D and Community Services Department (CSD) staff compiled an inventory of the following:

- Existing emergency shelters on sites owned by the County within incorporated cities and unincorporated areas, and
- Existing emergency shelters owned/managed by non-governmental organizations (e.g., Good Samaritan and Santa Barbara Street Village) within unincorporated areas.

**Table 2**  
**Existing Emergency Shelters on Sites Owned by the County**  
**within Incorporated Cities and Unincorporated Areas**

<b>Operator/Manager</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>City/ Unincorporated Area</b>	<b>Contract Termination Date</b>	<b>Beds</b>
Good Samaritan Shelter	Santa Barbara Street Village	City of Santa Barbara	06/30/2025 <sup>1</sup>	34
Good Samaritan Shelter	Hope Village	City of Santa Maria	12/31/2028	97
Good Samaritan Shelter	Hedges House of Hope	Isla Vista (unincorporated)	-	45
Good Samaritan Shelter	Rainbow Village (at Bridgehouse)	Lompoc Area (unincorporated)	-	20
Good Samaritan Shelter	Bridgehouse	Lompoc Area (unincorporated)	-	70
Good Samaritan Shelter	La Posada	Goleta Valley (unincorporated)	03/31/2029	80
Total				346

**Table 3**  
**Existing Emergency Shelters Owned/Managed by Non-governmental Organizations**  
**within Unincorporated Areas**

<b>Owner/Manager</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Unincorporated Area</b>	<b>Contract Termination Date</b>	<b>Beds</b>
Domestic Violence Solutions for Santa Barbara County	Santa Barbara Emergency Shelter	Goleta Valley (unincorporated)	-	25

<sup>1</sup> On May 13, 2025, the Board of Supervisors will hear a request to extend the contract termination date for Santa Barbara Street Village to June 30, 2027.

The seven existing emergency shelters listed in the tables above operate year-round and have a total capacity of 371 beds, which exceeds the County's 2024 P-I-T count by 110 beds. However, Santa Barbara Street Village is scheduled to close by June 30, 2025, unless extended. Excluding Santa Barbara Street Village, the six remaining emergency shelters have a capacity of 337 beds, which exceeds the County's 2024 P-I-T count by 76 beds.

Hope Village and La Posada are scheduled to close by December 31, 2028, and March 31, 2029, respectively. By December 31, 2028, the remaining five emergency shelters would have a capacity of 240 beds, at which point the County would have a shortfall of 21 beds. By March 31, 2029, the remaining four emergency shelters would have a capacity of 160 beds, at which point the County would have a shortfall of 101 beds.

To comply with State law and its need for emergency shelters throughout the housing cycle, staff recommends that the Board, through P&D, review its emergency shelter capacity by June 30, 2028, and take one or more actions if it lacks sufficient capacity to fully accommodate its 2024 or later P-I-T count from December 31, 2028, through February 15, 2031. These actions may include, among others, the following:

1. Identify one or more County-owned sites for an emergency shelter(s); to comply with GC Section 65583(a)(4)(J), the County will ensure any site(s) "... will be made available for emergency shelter during the planning period, they are suitable for residential use, and the sites are located near amenities and services that serve people experiencing homelessness ...";
2. Extend existing contract(s) for emergency shelters located on County-owned sites; and/or
3. Amend the LUDC and/or CZO to allow emergency shelters in a select zone(s) with a ministerial permit; to comply with GC Section 65583(a)(4)(A), the County will ensure that the selected zone(s) "allow residential uses and ... are suitable for residential uses."

### ***Definitions and Objective Standards***

The County Planning Commission staff report for January 29, 2025, explains that the County must update the definitions of "emergency shelter" and "low barrier navigation center" to match new definitions in State law. The County may also apply up to eight objective development standards to new emergency shelters in GC Section 65583(a)(4)(B). Therefore, the proposed LUDC and CZO amendments include the following:

- Amend the definition of "emergency shelter" to include other interim interventions, such as navigation centers, bridge housing, and respite or recuperative care (GC Section 65583(a)(4)(C));
- Amend the definition of "low barrier navigation centers" to allow them to be non-congregate and relocatable (GC Section 65660); and
- Add the following four objective development standards that would apply to new emergency shelters in addition to other existing development standards that apply to residential development within the same zone: (1) sufficient parking, (2) size/location of waiting/client intake areas, (3) onsite management, and (4) proximity to other emergency shelters. (Note – staff determined that

the other four potential objective standards were unnecessary or already addressed through existing regulations).

### ***Environmental Review***

The proposed LUDC and CZO amendments are exempt from environmental review pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15061(b)(3) and 15265. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) provides an exemption for projects that will have no possibility of significant effect on the environment. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15265 statutorily exempts local agency activities involving the preparation and adoption of Local Coastal Program amendments from environmental review. Please see Attachment B for more details.

### **Planning Commission Recommendations**

On March 12, 2025, the CPC voted 3-1 (Martinez no, Cooney absent) to recommend the Board adopt the LUDC and CZO amendments, with no recommended changes.

### **Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

#### **Budgeted: Yes**

The County Adopted Budget FY 2024-2025, page 321, includes funding for zoning ordinance amendments and maintenance as part of P&D's Long Range Planning Division Budget Program. There are no facilities impacts.

### **Special Instructions:**

Planning & Development will fulfill noticing requirements.

The Clerk of the Board shall provide a copy of the signed ordinance and resolution, and minute order, to Planning & Development, attention: David Villalobos and Eva Marrero.

### **Attachments:**

- A. Findings for Approval
- B. CEQA Notice of Exemption
- C. County Land Use and Development Code Ordinance Amendment for Adoption (Case No. 24ORD-00021)
- D. Article II, the Coastal Zoning Ordinance Amendment for Adoption (Case No. 24ORD-00022)
- E. County Planning Commission Action Letter and Resolutions
- F. County Planning Commission Memorandum, dated March 4, 2025
- G. County Planning Commission Staff Report, dated January 21, 2025
- H. Resolution Authorizing Submittal of LCPA to CCC

Emergency Shelters Zoning Ordinance Amendments

Board of Supervisors

Hearing Date: May 20, 2025

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**Authored by:**

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