



January 23, 2009

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors  
105 East Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93121

**RE: 2003-2008 Housing Element Focused Rezone Program**

Dear Chair Centeno and Honorable Supervisors,

The Santa Barbara County Action Network (SB CAN) is a county-wide grassroots non-profit dedicated to creating sustainable communities. SB CAN advocates a holistic approach to community planning that integrates housing, open space, and transportation to meet the needs of all members of our community and future generations.

SB CAN supports the Planning Commission's and County staff's recommendation to rezone portions of Orcutt Key Sites 3 and 16 to meet the Housing Element requirement for an additional 370 high-density multiunit residences.

KS 16 is preferable to its alternative site, KS 30, for this purpose. As the staff report states, "Due to its location to Old Town Orcutt, proximity to existing and future residential areas, and lack of significant environmental or physical constraints, [key site 16] a prime location for pedestrian oriented high density residential development."

In creating sustainable communities, housing should be located in urban areas near community and commercial services. Key Site 16, located at gateway of Old Town Orcutt, is within a short walking distance of basic urban services needed by residents of high-density, low-income housing. In addition, multi-story units would be compatible in an area that already includes multi-story buildings. Rezoning this site for high-density multi-family units would create a more vibrant, compact Old Town, helping to support current and future businesses. An underground parking garage envisioned for this site could easily be incorporated into a high-density multi-story residential facility.

In addition, the owner of KS 16 is very much interested in developing a housing project on this site, and the removal of the underground oil sumps does not present a problem for development.

On the other hand, Key Site 30 is located under a no-build flight-path for the airport. Placing high-density housing at the end of a no-build flight zone would be irresponsible. In light of recent airplane crashes in Lompoc, San Diego, and the Hudson River, and the fact that aircraft have been forced to make emergency landings near KS 30 in the recent past, the Board should err on the side of caution when approving high-density development within or at the end of flight paths.

We urge you to approve the proposed focused rezones for Key Sites 3 and 16 as recommended by the Planning Commission and County staff to meet the 2003-2008 Housing Element requirements.

Sincerely,

Deborah Brasket  
SB CAN Executive Director

Delivered by email 1-23-09

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