



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:** Board of Supervisors  
**Department No.:** 001  
**For Agenda Of:** December 5, 2023  
**Placement:** Administrative  
**Estimated Time:** N/A  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

---

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Department Supervisor Das Williams  
Director(s)  
Contact Info: Darcel Elliott, Chief of Staff, 805-568-2182

**SUBJECT:** Resolution Authorizing a Conservation Easement with the City of Santa Barbara for the Barger Canyon Open Space (APN 055-020-34)

---

**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Risk Management**

As to form: Yes

**Recommended Actions: That the Board of Supervisors:**

- a) Approve and authorize the Chair to execute a conservation easement and all necessary related documents with the City of Santa Barbara for the Barger Canyon Open Space (APN 055-020-34).
- b) Authorize and direct the Clerk of the Board to execute the Certificate of Acceptance.
- c) Determine that the recommended actions are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.28.

**Summary Text:**

In May 2022, the City of Santa Barbara's Creek Restoration/Clean Water Manager contacted the First District Supervisor's office regarding a request to enter into a conservation easement with the County of Santa Barbara for one of a City-owned property located in the unincorporated region of the First Supervisor's District, Barger Canyon Open Space (APN 055-020-34).

The First District Supervisor's office has since worked with the General Services Department, County Parks, County Counsel, and the County Executive Office to find a path to resolve this issue for the City.

On November 7, 2023, the Santa Barbara City Council adopted a resolution authorizing the City's Sustainability and Resilience Director to execute a conservation easement and all related documents with the County.

This item is for the Board of Supervisors to approve and execute a similar conservation easement and all related documents with the City of Santa Barbara.

**Background:**

In December 2013, the City of Santa Barbara purchased the Barger Canyon Open Space to provide watershed protection and allow for creek restoration and water quality improvements along Arroyo Burro Creek. The 14.19-acre property outside the City boundary in the unincorporated jurisdiction of Santa Barbara County is zoned for agriculture and very low density (one single family) residential ranchette. Historically the parcel was used for agriculture, native plants were cleared, and the creek was straightened and narrowed with concrete and other failed erosion control structures. The City of Santa Barbara's Creeks Division recently completed a major creek restoration and water quality improvement project along the Arroyo Burro riparian corridor, which included removing concrete and debris from the creek channel, restoring the creek's natural meander and flood plain terraces, and planting thousands of native riparian plants and trees.

A conservation easement is in the nature of an encumbrance and restrictive covenant to maintain property for preservation of conservation values. On November 7, 2023 the Santa Barbara City Council adopted a resolution authorizing the Sustainability and Resilience Director to execute a conservation easement with the County to ensure that the purpose of the acquisition, protection and enhancement of watershed resources and conservation values can continue in perpetuity.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Entering into a conservation easement that prohibits future development of the property would allow for a reassessment of the property value. The property tax owed for FY 23/24 is \$10,499.62. The Assessor's office estimates the amount of property tax due for FY 24/25 would be approximately \$10,750.

Depending on the outcome of the reassessment of the property in light of the conservation easement, the reduction in property tax could be anywhere from the range of \$0 to the full amount.

**Fiscal Analysis:**

**Staffing Impacts:**

**Legal Positions:**

**FTEs:**

No new staffing impacts.

**Special Instructions:**

The Clerk of the Board should keep one original copy, record another original copy, and send the third original copy to the City of Santa Barbara care of the following information:

City of Santa Barbara  
c/o Cameron Benson, Creeks Division  
P.O. Box 1990  
Santa Barbara, CA 93102

**Attachments:**

Attachment A – Conservation Easement with the City of Santa Barbara for the Barger Canyon Open Space (APN 055-020-34).