

Sheila de la Guerra

Public Comment



From: Mona Miyasato
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 8:08 PM
To: sbcob
Subject: Fwd: SB County General Plan Update - Housing Element
Attachments: SB Co Housing Element Letter 12_5_23 (1).pdf

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From: Melissa James <melissa@reachcentralcoast.org>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 7:59:23 PM
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Subject: SB County General Plan Update - Housing Element

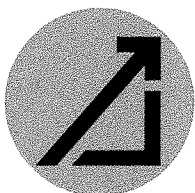
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Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors,

Please find the attached letter re: the urgent need for expanded housing accessibility and affordability in Santa Barbara County. While this issue is one that each of you are well acquainted with and the discussion can often feel redundant, important things bear repeating, and the need for additional housing and focused planning to that end is something that we all must work towards collaboratively.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working in partnership in the weeks and months ahead.

Best,
Melissa



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Ideas + Action for a Thriving Central Coast

December 4, 2020

Subject: Economic Imperative for Housing in Santa Barbara County

Dear Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors,

As the County and its cities move through the important process of updating their general plans, we urge decision makers to move forward plans that will change the trajectory of workforce housing availability on the Central Coast. Ambitious housing plans as well as enhanced collaboration between regional agencies and employers are essential to support the economic prosperity for our community and residents.

As an economic impact organization serving SLO and Santa Barbara Counties, REACH has a mission to increase economic prosperity on the Central Coast of California through big thinking, bold action and regional collaboration. The north star of our work is collaboration with business, education, government and nonprofit partners to create good paying jobs and provide current and future generations the opportunity to thrive. Across all of our community based work there is no larger point to achieving this vision than the accessibility and affordability of housing.

As you consider the update of your housing element, we urge you to keep the following in mind:

- REACH in partnership with the Counties of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo and the Economic Development Administration is finalizing a comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) which identified housing as a top priority.
- A key workstream in the CEDS is an adjacent workforce development strategy for target industries which will be released in 2024. Based on industry feedback in every engagement housing was underscored as a critical need to the economic health and vibrancy of our economy.
- REACH has also partnered with the County under the Vandenberg MOU, which developed a Master Plan in 2021 including a focus on regional housing, and which expanded in 2023 to include the Cities of Lompoc and Santa Maria to expand regional housing collaboration as housing was identified as critical to the viability of space ecosystem on the Central Coast.

Additionally, it is clear that greater regional efforts and collaboration are urgently needed. There have been preliminary engagements to bring interagency collaboration but it's clear that we are only scratching the surface. Some key discussions have included:

- In February 2023 Congressman Carbajal held an interagency meeting alongside REACH and Vandenberg Space Force Base to jumpstart a housing conversation in the Northern

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County region to accommodate the projected growth in and around the base, leading to the expansion of the Vandenberg MOU to facilitate greater collaboration to address this growing need.

- Later in May, County, City, State, and Federal partners met to advance a dialogue on opportunities for interagency collaboration to address regional housing needs examining best practices and a model for a countywide Housing and Infrastructure Plan to address the intersectionality of housing planning along jurisdictional boundaries.

As you plan for the future of the County and the housing needs in the unincorporated area, please keep these critical economic and workforce needs top of mind in your planning, and ultimately implementation of housing plans, priorities and procedures in the County while also working towards greater regional interagency collaboration to build the homes and neighborhoods our communities and region need.

We appreciate the County's efforts as it reaches this important milestone in its housing planning process and look forward to supporting it in the days and weeks ahead.

Sincerely,



Melissa James
President + CEO
REACH