

Katherine Douglas

Public Comment - Lotusland

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From: Rebecca Anderson <randerson@lotusland.org>
Sent: Friday, November 1, 2024 11:20 AM
To: sbcob
Subject: Support for Music Academy of the West Case Numbers: 21-RVP-109; 21 CDP-129

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Dear Chair Lavagnino and Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors,

On behalf of Ganna Walska Lotusland, I am writing to express our support for the Music Academy of the West and its efforts to achieve reasonable and supportive operating conditions within Santa Barbara County. As a peer arts and cultural institution dedicated to serving the community, Lotusland shares the Academy's mission to enhance the quality of life in our region through enriching programs and events. However, like the Music Academy, we too face the challenges imposed by restrictive operations requirements that complicate our capacity to thrive within the economic and logistical realities of running an organization today.

The extraordinary benefits provided by the Music Academy of the West, Lotusland, and other valued nonprofit organizations greatly contribute to the distinctiveness of Santa Barbara County. Each of these organizations bring unique national and international acclaim to our community, and yet, stringent permit and operational limitations create significant financial barriers to our long-term viability. The path to survival is paved with our ability to balance community needs and economic sustainability, and we urge the Board to recognize and support this critical balance.

Without the understanding and endorsement of our neighbors and the County, we risk losing the arts, culture, and beauty that enhance Santa Barbara's reputation and economy. Both our institutions and the many others like us provide programs that are not only educational and inspirational but also essential to our local economy, drawing visitors and enriching the lives of residents. However, only through measured and reasonable regulations can we continue to serve our community with resilience and sustainability.

We respectfully encourage the Board of Supervisors to work with the Music Academy of the West to adopt flexible operating standards that will protect the organization's capacity to succeed while fostering an environment where arts and culture continue to flourish in Santa Barbara County. With such support, our community can remain the vibrant, world-renowned destination we all cherish.

Thank you for considering this important matter, and please know that Lotusland stands ready to work alongside the Music Academy and our local leaders to preserve the unique cultural treasures of Santa Barbara County.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Anderson

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