

4/29/2024

Chair Lavagnino and Supervisors
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA, 93101

RE: 2023-31 Housing Element Rezone Amendments

Dear Chair Lavagnino and Supervisors:

The Santa Barbara South Coast Chamber of Commerce continues to prioritize workforce housing solutions as one of our central pillars due to the impact the local housing supply crisis has on our local businesses and economy. Which is why we are proud to continue our work on the Employer Sponsored Housing Consortium program. The Consortium will allow multiple employers to enter a partnership under an LLC for the purpose of acquiring or master leasing property which they can provide to local employees. The Consortium LLC will then manage the relationship between the employers, employees, and property owners, reducing the administrative burden for each party. All while ensuring that a portion of new housing projects that partner with a consortium goes to the local workforce.

While the Chamber would prefer to have seen all our partners on this effort included, we were glad to see that the Planning Commission recommendation included three of our four partner projects. The initial success of this program relies heavily on the successful rezoning of sites who have agreed to partner with the early Employer Sponsored Housing Consortium and put in the work required to do so. Once we have proof of concept with our initial partnerships, we expect that interest in this collaborative model will only continue to grow. Once our partner properties are rezoned, we can move forward with the creation of the administrative and legal entities needed to manage the relationships between the employers and properties.

As of now the Chamber has partnered with four of the projects under consideration for rezone: Glen Annie, San Marcos Ranch, Homes at the Caird Family Property, and the Orchard Project (Giorgi). The Chamber is grateful to the Glen Annie team and owners, without whom we would not have gotten this far. The Glenn Annie project is acting as the Chamber's pilot program. They have worked with us since the beginning, providing critical details to employers on housing product estimates, furthering the discussions about the formation of the Consortium. We remain engaged with each of the previously named projects, each of which has demonstrated an interest and commitment to partnering with the Employer Sponsored Housing Consortium as we begin the formation process.

Throughout the Employer Sponsored Housing Consortium process we have remained engaged with just over 20 local employers of varying sizes, the majority of which have expressed a desire to participate in an Employer Sponsored Housing Consortium. The employers we have been in discussion with represent approximately 26,000 local employees (just over 10% of the current Santa Barbara County labor force).

Additionally, while we would prefer to see the rezone of each of our partner projects, we are also supporters of the Bailard Project. While the Bailard Project is not currently a partner of the Employer Sponsored Housing Consortium effort (largely due to its focus on income restricted housing – which will also help to alleviate the workforce challenges caused by the housing supply crisis), we were disappointed to see their omission from the Planning Commission recommendation. The Chamber has been a supporter of the Bailard Project for years. The project has gone before our Public Policy Committee of business

representatives several times, and each time it has received the formal support of the Chamber. This project is part of the Chamber's Road Home document which outlines 10,000 units to solve our workforce housing needs.

We ask that you please support the formation of this statewide example of a workforce housing solution by supporting the rezones of our pilot project, Glen Annie, and our other partner projects San Marcos Ranch, Homes at the Caird Family Property, and the Orchard Project (Giorgi), as well as the Bailard Project, and continue to prioritize workforce housing throughout Santa Barbara County.

Sincerely,



Kristen Miller
President & CEO
Santa Barbara South Coast Chamber of Commerce