



# City of Santa Barbara

Office of the Mayor

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Marty Blum

**Mayor**

August 5, 2009

City Hall  
735 Anacapa Street  
Santa Barbara, CA  
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The Honorable Judge J. William McLafferty  
Superior Court  
1100 Anacapa Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
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Dear Judge McLafferty:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the report of the 2008-09 Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury entitled "SBCAG – A Road not Taken". This is an area of great interest to me personally and I think the Grand Jury did a very good job of highlighting appropriate concerns about regional planning in the County of Santa Barbara.

The following are my responses to the findings and recommendations of the Grand Jury:

**Finding 1a:** Santa Barbara County Association of Governments has authority to do regional land use planning through its Joint Powers Agreement.

Response – Agree

**Finding 1b:** The staff has developed recommendations for regional land use planning approved by Santa Barbara County Association of Governments

Response – Agree

**Finding 1c:** The regional land use planning recommendations adopted by Santa Barbara County Association of Governments have not been implemented

Response – Partially agree. This finding may be a bit too broad for the point the Grand Jury is trying to make. A number of the reports make recommendations that are to be implemented at the local level, and a number of the local agencies have implemented recommendations from some of the studies referenced in the Grand Jury report.



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As an example, the 2007 Regional Growth Forecast recommended phasing new commercial growth with residential development to minimize future impacts to the jobs/housing balance issues in the County. The City of Santa Barbara, since 1990, has had a commercial growth control ordinance called Measure E which restricts the amount of new commercial development in the City in favor of promoting additional housing development. The City has also participated in a number of regional task forces dealing with water quality, affordable housing, and other issues, which has been recommended in a number of reports.

**Recommendation 1:** That Santa Barbara County Association of Government and each respective jurisdiction implement already adopted recommendations that deal with regional land use planning

Response: I agree with this recommendation. The City of Santa Barbara's General Plan and past practices have always supported regional collaboration and planning. As the Grand Jury Report outlines, the issues of transportation, housing, and open space are regional issues, with regional concerns, that do not respect existing political boundaries. Collaborative and informed regional decision making is necessary and important, and the City of Santa Barbara will support such efforts as we have done in the past.

**Finding 2:** Santa Barbara County Association of Governments has not developed a fully integrated regional plan coordinating jobs, housing and transportation that includes all the County's jurisdictions.

Response – Agree

**Recommendation 2:** That the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments develop a fully integrated regional plan.

Response – Agree. I have spoken in favor of developing a fully integrated regional plan at SBCAG Board meetings in the past, and continue to think it is a good idea. Over the next few years, recently adopted State Legislation (SB 375) will require SBCAG to prepare such a plan. I believe such a plan will be beneficial for the County and will be supported by the City of Santa Barbara.

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**Finding 3:** Santa Barbara County Association of Governments refused to apply for state funds for comprehensive regional planning

Response – Agree. As the City’s representative to the Board, I spoke in support of applying for these funds. Although I missed the actual vote when the SBCAG Board voted to not apply for these funds, I am sorry the Board decided not to pursue the opportunity at that time.

**Recommendation 3:** That Santa Barbara County Association of Governments aggressively pursue funding for comprehensive regional planning.

Response – Agree. SBCAG should pursue any and all opportunities to receive funding to support the development of a comprehensive regional plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marty Blum".

Marty Blum  
Mayor

cc: City of Santa Barbara Councilmembers  
Jim Armstrong, City Administrator  
SBCAG Board Members