

August 11, 2009

The Honorable Judge J. William McLafferty
Superior Court
1100 Anacapa Street, 2nd Floor
P.O. Box 21107
Santa Barbara, CA 93121-1107

Re: Response to Grand Jury Report: SBCAG – A Road Not Taken

Dear Judge Garcia:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the 2008 – 09 Grand Jury Report, “SBCAG – A Road Not Taken.” The following responses to the findings and recommendations were approved by the City Council of the City of Carpinteria.

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

Response: The City of Carpinteria agrees.

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

Response: The City of Carpinteria agrees.

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

Response: The City of Carpinteria partially disagrees. The finding is not specific as to what recommendations have not been implemented, nor does it specify whether the finding is directed to SBCAG, the local agencies, or both. The City of Carpinteria and the other SBCAG member agencies have implemented many recommendations from the reports cited in the Grand Jury Report.

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

The recommendation has been partially implemented. As noted under finding 1c, many recommendations regarding regional planning adopted by SBCAG have been implemented at the local level. The City of Carpinteria has participated and cooperated in regional efforts led by SBCAG. The City has adopted policies and practices to implement the recommendations from the various reports resulting from these regional planning efforts such as the Regional Housing Needs

Assessment, the Regional Growth Forecast, the Inter-Regional Partnership for Jobs, Housing and Mobility and the Congestion Management Plan. Some specific examples of the City's efforts include planning for housing for all economic sectors, ongoing coordination with MTD on transit issues, partnering with Caltrans and the south coast jurisdictions on Highway 101 improvements, working to provide open space and recreation, and supporting agricultural preservation within the Carpinteria Valley.

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: The City of Carpinteria agrees with the finding.

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

The recommendation will be implemented. Over the next several years, SBCAG and its member jurisdictions will be involved in responding to the state's regional land use planning requirements imposed by SB 375. This legislation requires the local Association of Governments to prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that will address the links between land use, housing and transportation. This regional effort is being mandated at the state level and all local jurisdictions will participate through the efforts coordinated by SBCAG. Already, SBCAG hosts a monthly Technical Planning Advisory Committee (TPAC) meeting that is attended by planning staff from each of the local cities, the county and the Air Pollution Control District. These meetings provide a forum for regional planning and coordination among the local jurisdictions involved in land use planning.

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

Response: The City of Carpinteria agrees with the finding.

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

We agree; SBCAG should pursue funding to support development of a comprehensive regional plan.

Thank you again for the opportunity to review and respond to the Grand Jury Report. We look forward to continuing to work with SBCAG and its member agencies on this important topic of regional land use planning.

Sincerely,

Gregg Carty, Mayor