



City of Santa Barbara

Community Development Department

SantaBarbaraCA.gov

October 30, 2025

Director's Office

Tel: (805) 564-5502

Fax: (805) 564-5477

Administration

Tel: (805) 564-5470

Fax: (805) 564-5477

Building & Safety

Tel: (805) 564-5485

Fax: (805) 564-5476

Community Vitality

Initiatives

Tel: (805) 564-5470

Fax: (805) 564-5477

Housing

& Human Services

Tel: (805) 564-5478

Fax: (805) 564-5477

Planning

Tel: (805) 564-5578

Fax: (805) 564-5477

Rental Housing

Mediation Program

Tel: (805) 564-5420

Fax: (805) 564-5477

630 Garden Street

PO Box 1990

Santa Barbara, CA

93102-1990

Ben Eilenberg, THE MISSION LLC
socalindustrialequities@gmail.com

**Re: 1609 Grand Avenue
HAA Notice Regarding Alleged Project Disapproval**

Dear Mr. Eilenberg:

On August 1, 2025, you provided the City with a written notice via email ("**HAA Notice**") asserting that you believe the City has "disapproved" your proposed housing development project at 1609 Grand Avenue ("**Project**") under the Housing Accountability Act ("**HAA**") by failing "to cease a course of conduct undertaken for an improper purpose." (Gov. Code § 65589.5(h)(6)(D).)

Specifically, on August 1, 2025, the City informed you that the Project does not appear to qualify for an exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act ("**CEQA**") under Public Resources Code section 21080.66, also known as "**AB 130**," because the Project is not consistent with the City's General Plan or zoning ordinance. In the HAA Notice, you assert your position that the Project "shall be deemed consistent, compliant, and in conformity with" applicable plans and standards because your application has invoked the builder's remedy. Therefore, you believe that the Project is exempt from CEQA under AB 130 and assert that the City's efforts to comply with CEQA constitute Project disapproval under the HAA.

As an initial matter, it is not clear that the HAA Notice you provided complies with Government Code section 65589.5(h)(6)(D)(i), which requires an applicant to "provide written notice detailing the challenged conduct and why it constitutes disapproval." The HAA Notice fails to identify – let alone detail – an improper purpose behind the City's conduct or allege any facts that would show the City's conduct is intended to "harass or to cause unnecessary delay or needless increases in the cost of the proposed housing development project."

Regardless of the deficiencies in your HAA Notice, the City complied with your request to follow the procedures established within Government Code section 65589.5(h)(6)(D) as follows:

- Within five working days of receiving your August 1, 2025, HAA Notice, the City posted the notice on the City's internet website, provided a copy of the notice to any person who has made a written request for notices, and filed the notice with the county clerk. (See Gov. Code § 65589.5(h)(6)(D)(ii).)
- After posting the notice, the City received nearly 300 public comments raising various concerns about the Project. The City has considered all objections, comments, evidence, and concerns about the Project and the HAA Notice. (See Gov. Code § 65589.5(h)(6)(D)(iii).)

- This letter serves as the required written findings pursuant to Government Code section 65589.5(h)(6)(D)(iv), issued not less than 60 days but within 90 days of your HAA Notice.
1. **The City's Challenged Course of Conduct is Necessary.** The City finds that its course of conduct does not constitute a disapproval of the Project and that the challenged course of conduct is necessary.

The sole basis of the alleged Project disapproval identified in the HAA Notice is the fact that the City determined that the Project was subject to CEQA. The HAA states that “nothing . . . shall be construed to relieve the local agency from complying with . . . [CEQA].” (Gov. Code § 65589.5(e).) Thus, the City has an obligation to consider if CEQA applies to the Project and, assuming that the Project is not exempt, analyze and disclose the Project's environmental effects.

Furthermore, the HAA expressly states that “[a] local agency's action in furtherance of complying with the California Environmental Quality Act . . . shall not constitute project disapproval under this subparagraph.” (See Gov. Code § 65589.5(h)(6)(D)(vi).) However, the only bases for the alleged disapproval in your HAA Notice are the actions the City has taken to analyze your project in accordance with CEQA. Accordingly, the City's actions cannot constitute a Project disapproval under Government Code section 65589.5(h)(6)(D).

Regardless, the City's actions are also necessary, because the Project objectively conflicts with general plan and zoning standards, and therefore it is not CEQA exempt. A project must be consistent with the applicable general plan and zoning ordinance to qualify for the AB 130 CEQA exemption. (Pub. Res. Code § 21080.66(a)(4).) You have asserted that because the Project is eligible for the builder's remedy, it shall be deemed to be consistent with applicable City plans and standards “for all purposes” pursuant to Government Code section 65589.5(f)(6)(D)(iii) within the HAA. However, as detailed in the City's August 1, 2025, letter to you, the referenced provision of the HAA does not apply to the Project. To be deemed consistent with applicable standards, a project must comply with the provisions of paragraph (6) of Government Code section 65589.5(f) and be a “builder's remedy project” as defined by Government Code section 65589.5(h)(11). The Project does not satisfy these requirements.

Government Code section 65589.5(h)(11)(C)(i) defines the maximum density for a builder's remedy project as the greater of: (I) Fifty percent greater than the minimum density deemed appropriate to accommodate housing for that jurisdiction as specified in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) of subdivision (c) of Section 65583.2 [*here, this would equal a density of 30 du/ac, which is 1.5 x the default density of 20 du/ac*]; (II) three times the density allowed by the general plan, zoning ordinance, or state law, whichever is greater [*here, this would equal 36 du/ac, which is 3 x the General Plan density of 12 du/ac*]; and (III) the density that is consistent with the density specified in the housing element [*not applicable here, as the site is not included in the housing element*].

Therefore, the Project would be allowed a maximum density of 36 du/ac to meet the “builder’s remedy” definition in Government Code section 65589.5(h)(11). The Project proposes a density of 104 du/ac, far in excess of the density allowed under the HAA’s definition of a builder’s remedy project.

Thus, the Project conflicts with the objective definition of a “builder’s remedy” project in Government Code section 65589.5(h)(11), and it is not eligible to be deemed consistent with the City’s applicable plans and standards pursuant to Government Code section 65589.5(f)(6)(D)(iii).¹ Therefore, the Project is not eligible for the AB 130 CEQA exemption, because it is inconsistent with the City’s general plan and zoning standards.

Public comment received in response to the HAA notice provides further evidence as to why CEQA review of the Project is required. Copies of each comment received are included as an attachment to this letter and are incorporated by this reference. The comments identified potential environmental effects caused by the Project such as wildfire risk due to the Project’s location near a very high fire severity zone, emergency evacuation, adequacy of emergency services, traffic and traffic safety, increased vehicle miles traveled, parking, circulation related to limited parking, stormwater drainage, seismic issues, noise during construction, impacts to biological resources such as birds, aesthetic concerns and impacts to viewsheds, and impacts to tribal cultural resources, among others. Public comment in response to the HAA Notice included the following:

- “The Project is inconsistent with the General Plan Safety Element, S37, which requires a Project adhere to “Fire Hazard Reduction Design Requirements.” (SAGE Letter, p. 5.)
- The Project site and location, adjacent to CalFire’s 2007 designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and on a designated emergency evacuation roadway, subject the Project and its occupants to substantial risks of loss, injury and death [in the event of a wildfire]. Additionally, Project-related traffic creates risks during evacuations to others seeking to evacuate on roads adjacent to the Project and on roads impacted by Project-related traffic.” (SAGE Letter, p. 6.)
- “The narrow, steep, and winding nature of these streets means vehicles often struggle to pass one another safely, requiring one car to reverse to let the other pass. Adding dozens of new daily vehicle trips will likely lead to greater congestion and unsafe maneuvering.” (M. Upton Email.)
- “California Street is purported to be the steepest street in the City, likely exceeding the 16% grade that I understand is the maximum that a fire truck can traverse without fire hoses and other equipment falling off the truck. A comprehensive review of how police, fire and medical personnel would access the

¹ Although the Project is not a “builder’s remedy” project as defined by Government Code section 65589.5(h)(11), the City acknowledges that the Project was deemed complete before January 1, 2025 and is therefore subject to the provisions of Government Code section 65589.5 that were in place on the date the preliminary application was submitted. (Gov. Code § 65589.5(f)(7).)

site and neighboring properties, both during emergency and in non-emergency situations, needs to be provided.” (P. Saley Email.)

- “The Project proposes to add 53 residential units on a narrow hillside road (Grand Avenue) that serves as an evacuation route, as identified by the City’s Community Wildfire Protection Plan (‘CWPP’) and the County. The Project is inconsistent with CWPP Policy 7, which requires an ‘Increase in evacuation safety for residents and the general public in a High Fire Hazard Area.’ The City must consider the Project’s increase in evacuation times for the community.” (SAGE Letter, p. 7.)
- “The City of Santa Barbara’s Master Environmental Assessment Guidelines for Transportation Analysis provide guidance for determining the potential transportation impacts of development . . . The Project does not meet any of the criteria for these assumptions of less-than-significant impacts . . . A project that does not meet screening criteria would require further study to determine potential significant impacts.” (SAGE Letter, pp. 16-19.)
- “The Project if built would sit atop a hillside in the Rivera, where its size, bulk, and scale will block public scenic views of the ocean and lower elevations of the City.” (SAGE Letter, p. 20.)
- “The project site is likely habitat for the protected candidate species of the Crotch’s bumblebee. Biologist Mike Gonella, PhD has performed research and site observations of the site.” (SAGE Letter, pp. 20-21.)
- “Passerine birds have been observed using tree canopy on site as habitat (M. Chytilo, pers. observation) and thus bird surveys are required to determine the significance of population present. (SAGE Letter, p. 21.)
- “The Project may impact Tribal Cultural Resources” and the “Project is Inconsistent with the City of Santa Barbara General Plan’s Historic Resources Element.” (SAGE Letter, pp. 21-22.)
- “The Project entails excavation of major volumes of soils from the steep site. The effect on the stability of surrounding structures and potential for landslides must be addressed.” (SAGE Letter, p. 24.)
- “The Project introduces extensive impervious surfaces to a currently undeveloped site. . . The Project may thus substantially increase the rate and amount of surface runoff in a manner that could result in flooding both onsite and off-site, and exceed the capacity of existing stormwater drainage systems.” (SAGE Letter, p. 25.)
- “The Project will introduce substantial unplanned population growth to the Riviera. . . The massive increase in density on the site creates imbalances, incongruities and potentially significant impacts.” (SAGE Letter, p. 25.)
- “The construction noise, legal from 6 am – 10 pm daily except Sunday, with excavators, jackhammers and other heavy equipment, will disrupt sleep [and] work.” (G. Rubsam Email.)

The City has a duty under CEQA to analyze the Project’s environmental effects, including those identified in the attached public comments.

2. **The City's Challenged Course of Conduct is Reasonable.** The City finds that its challenged course of conduct is reasonable because the City does not have any evidence indicating that the Project is eligible for a CEQA exemption. As detailed in the City's August 1, 2025, letter and explained above, City staff has determined that the Project does not appear to qualify for the AB 130 statutory infill exemption (Pub. Resources Code § 21080.66).

To the extent inconsistency with the applicable general plan and zoning ordinance is considered a "single condition," the Project may be eligible for SB 131's streamlined review. However, the City has not yet determined whether SB 131 applies to the Project. Even assuming that the Project were covered by SB 131, the Project's inconsistency with the applicable general plan and zoning ordinance has the potential to cause environmental effects in nearly all topic areas. The City will continue with its review to determine which topic areas are affected, and prepare CEQA review of those topics. As noted by the many public comments submitted on this Project, several CEQA topic areas require consideration. The City is continuing to work with its environmental consultant to determine the appropriate level of environmental review as the Project progresses. Because the City is diligently pursuing a path to CEQA compliance for the Project, because such CEQA compliance takes time, and because CEQA compliance expressly does not constitute project disapproval under the HAA, the City's challenged course of conduct is reasonable.

3. **Instructions for Next Steps.** In order for the City to make a final determination regarding the Project, CEQA review will need to be completed. (See Gov. Code § 65589.5(h)(6)(D)(iv)(II).) To help with this process, the City anticipates working with a CEQA consultant to prepare the following technical studies: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Report; Traffic Operations/ Emergency Access and Evacuation Study; Construction Health Risk Assessment; Energy Analysis; Paleontological Resources Assessment; and Noise and Vibration Study.

To facilitate the City's review of the Project, you may wish to prepare, and submit for peer review, the following technical studies: Biological Assessment; Geologic Hazard Assessment; Phase I Environmental Site Assessment; an updated Phase 1 Archaeological Report; and Utilities and Infrastructure Capacity Analysis.

In addition, please provide responses and/or Project updates in response to the City's latest consistency determination, which was sent to you on March 27, 2025.

In sum, the City has not "disapproved" the Project by causing an unreasonable delay, as the City continues to work with its environmental consultant to determine and complete the appropriate level of environmental review as the Project progresses. Moreover, actions taken to comply with CEQA are expressly excluded from the HAA's definition of "unreasonable delay" that can constitute a project disapproval.

If you have any questions or further information that may influence this determination, we encourage you to contact the City for further discussion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alli DeBusk".

Allison DeBusk
Community Development Director

From: Steve Forsell <gard24@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 7:27 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue project

You don't often get email from gard24@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

City Council Members

The proposed project at 1609-1615 Grand Avenue is a completely inappropriate project for that area. A 6 story 53 unit project in that area raises serious questions. The streets are narrow so construction would be difficult. However, more importantly it raises serious questions regarding wildfire evacuations for an area which has been evacuated in recent years due to wildfires. The traffic impacts on these narrow streets would be significant. The 6 story building will be out of character for the area and cause serious issues for view corridors. In general, although I support creating new housing, I feel that this is not the project for this lot in this area.

Thanks

Steve Forsell
gard24@aol.com

From: Ginger Rubsam <ginger93103@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 12:49 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue and its garage request for CEQA report

You don't often get email from ginger93103@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live in the High Fire Zone on the Riviera within 1/2 mile of the 53-unit, 6-story apartment building and its garage proposed for a site at 1609 Grand Avenue.

I am writing to ask that you require the applicant to conduct a full environmental impact (CEQA) report for this project and garage based on the following criteria:

Public Safety. I have fled my home on the Riviera with flames on both sides of the road **I experienced the Sycamore Canyon fire in 1977 and many other fire evacuations since then. I have seen how many cars are on the roads just trying to find a route to safety.** Evacuation routes can change in a minute, and drivers will search for alternate ways to flee. There will be much confusion, with cars changing direction as the roads clog up or routes change.

The project is in the high fire zone. If a fire comes up the hill, residents would need to go up either Grand or California to Oramas to get to APS. If the fire comes from above, they would need to go down California to Micheltorena to get to safety. If it comes from the West, Grand Ave. is the only escape route. From the East there is only California Street going up or down. Two-way traffic on all of these streets is almost impossible under normal conditions, and all it would take is one poorly parked or abandoned car to completely block the escape route for hundreds of people. The residents of the building trying to evacuate their cars from the garage would be trapped because both Grand and California would be filled with escaping cars that won't stop for those exiting. (Just look at the cars leaving the Granada garage after a concert, and how slow it is).

Traffic: California Street already has parking on one side. Grand Ave has parking on two sides. Both are narrow. Two-way traffic on both of these streets is almost impossible under normal conditions. With months of excavation and grading needed before construction, the 400 trucks for dirt removal will clog up the already very narrow roads and make travel almost impossible. Construction workers and delivery trucks will take up most of the already limited street parking, and further exacerbate vehicle movement.

Noise. The project is in a neighborhood where people live, work and play. The construction noise, legal from 6 am – 10 pm daily except Sunday, with excavators, jackhammers and other heavy equipment, will disrupt sleep, work, and the peace and pleasure of the lives of all the neighbors within a radius several blocks **FOR TWO YEARS OR MORE!**

Aesthetics. The size and mass are incompatible with the neighborhood, and exceed height standards to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. It will be the tallest and most massive structure on the Riviera.

A 6-story structure will block ocean views from the homes uphill from the project. It will destroy any privacy for the downhill structures, with the 3rd floor and higher apartments being able to look into the backyards and windows of the homes below.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

From: Ginger Rubsam <ginger93103@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 12:59 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand and garage project - correction

You don't often get email from ginger93103@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Virginia T. Rubsam
1072 Garcia Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93103
410-271-4874

September 17, 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live in the High Fire Zone on the Riviera within 1/2 mile of the 53-unit, 6-story apartment building and its garage proposed for a site at 1609 Grand Avenue.

I am writing to ask that you require the applicant to conduct a full environmental impact (CEQA) report for this project and garage based on the following criteria:

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Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Sincerely,

Virginia T. Rubsam
1072 Garcia Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93103
410-271-4874

From: Anne-Marie Castleberg <acastleberg@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 6:06 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 1609 Grand avenue

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I drive Grand Avenue multiple times a week. It's already a mess. How can you possibly consider adding dense housing to that neighborhood.

Several years ago the entire area above Grand Avenue had to evacuate. It was a mess.

Just imagine how fire engines going up Valerio to Grand avenue will impact people trying to evacuate. It's impossible.

Certainly APS can't handle a ton of traffic.

Escape routes will be blocked.

I live in this area. This project is not safe.

Anne-Marie Castleberg

From: Lisa C <lisacarlosq@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 8:05 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand & Fire Safety
Attachment(s): "CEQA Grand Ave Request (final).pdf"

You don't often get email from lisacarlosq@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City Planning Department -

Please see the attached letter regarding the project proposed on 1609 Grand Ave.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter,
Lisa Carlos

September 17, 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara Planning Department:

I strongly urge the City to conduct a comprehensive environmental impact study of **1609-1615 Grand Avenue**, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). There are many obvious environmental impact reasons, including land use/planning, traffic/circulation, geology and soils, utilities and service systems, and storm water and drainage, but by far the most important is the public safety issues associated with wildfires which are especially prone to that area.

In the summer of 1977, I stood with my family on Stearns Wharf, holding our two dogs and watching in terror as the homes on the Riviera on the eastern side went up in flames and then burned to the ground. That night is forever etched in my memory—**the night the Sycamore/Coyote Fire tore through Santa Barbara's historic Riviera hillside** leaving behind nothing but smoldering debris, brick fireplaces and cement foundations.

Having grown up in Santa Barbara, I am no stranger to the risks of wildfire. But this fire was especially scary given the speed at which it moved and the level of destruction. Months of drought and then **90-mile-per-hour** "Sundowner" winds created the perfect conditions for an especially dangerous fire. Ignited by a kite tangled in electrical lines up by West Mountain Drive, flames raced down Sycamore Canyon, climbed the hillsides, and crested at the top of the Riviera near Hillcrest Road. Within hours, fire swept down Las Alturas, jumped Alameda Padre Sierra, and advanced within 4-5 blocks of Franklin School and Santa Barbara High School and Junior High.

Our evacuation was chaotic. I cried as we left our chickens behind. My father cursed the congestion as we inched along the only passage out through West Mountain Drive and Foothill Road, the car packed tight with what little we could grab in the 15 minutes we had. My sister and I watched terrified as the sky behind us went from orange and then a glowing red. The only other road out—Sycamore Canyon Drive—was already swallowed by fire and unpassable.

Friends and neighbors later told us of their desperate escapes, some having to abandon cars on the Riviera's narrow, winding streets because other abandoned cars blocked passage so people had to flee on foot. One even recalled passing a fire truck engulfed in flames on Sycamore Canyon road, its crew nowhere to be seen.

In the end, Santa Barbara was spared not just by firefighters but by sheer luck in a turn of the weather. A cold, heavy fog rolled in during the early morning hours, pushing the winds back uphill. That shift saved the city's heart and we narrowly escaped a fate similar to the Palisades Fire. Even so, more than **250** structures were destroyed in **just 3 to 4** hours and about **100 people** suffered injuries.

The lesson is clear: the Riviera is a tinderbox and high density housing has no business being built on it. Fire moves fast here, and evacuation routes can trap as much as they save. Fire

trucks accessing one-lane Riviera streets will mean people won't have room to escape and vice versa. Therefore, I hope the City will pursue a comprehensive evaluation of all the issues CEQA is allowed to cover, especially public safety and traffic/circulation issues, such as egress and ingress issues.

Attached are two maps that show the history of wildfire around the City of Santa Barbara and Riviera. **At least 6 wildfires have happened in the last few decades less than a mile of where the Grand St project is proposed.**

Please help us make wise land use decisions and keep Santa Barbara residents out of harm's way. We need more housing but not on fireprone hillsides and at the expense of public safety.

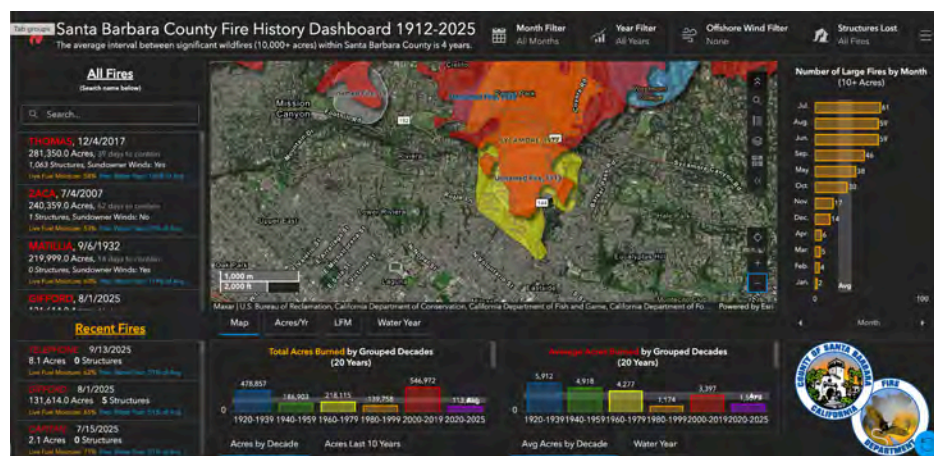
Best,

Lisa Carlos

1703 Paterna Road

Santa Barbara, CA 93103

Attachments - Fire History Maps



From: Robert Wachtenheim <rwachtenheim@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 8:39 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>

Subject: Grand Avenue

[You don't often get email from rwachtenheim@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

I am writing as a concerned citizen of S. B. concerning the Grand Avenue project that has been going on for so long.

I am 75, love the Mission area, but have been concerned in recent years with the traffic pattern and traffic itself. I feel like I am playing dodge ball. The thought of this project adding to the already prominent congestion is appalling. There is a need for housing in S. B, but in the appropriate locations.

I hope you will be mindful of concerned citizens.

Best,

Robert Wachtenheim

From: Kate edwardson <kedwardson49@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 7:41 AM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 1609 Grand Ave project

[You don't often get email from kedwardson49@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

I am deeply worried about how this project will negatively impact my neighborhood. Fire and emergency evacuation is a major concern with such narrow streets. I demand that the city conduct a comprehensive analysis of the project and its likely impact on my neighborhood, through a California Environmental Quality Act review. This project will impact evacuations from a high fire hazard zone and likely impede fire and emergency response due to narrow roads. I live at 616 E Valerio Street and I am concerned for people in the neighborhood as well as the lives of the First Responders.

Sincerely, Catharine Edwardson

Sent from my iPhone

From: Tessel Adams <tessel.adams@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 9:55 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Concern about 1609 Grand Avenue

[You don't often get email from tessell.adams@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear Sir/Madame,

I live in downtown Santa Barbara, and am writing to express my deepest concern about the effects on traffic circulation, particularly regarding fire evacuation, that would be created by the proposed building at 1609 Grand Avenue. Our community has already seen the tragic loss of life due to evacuation issues in previous fires, and we know that fires are now a year-round possibility. As we have experienced, every fire takes different routes, so that even the best-laid plans for evacuation may not be sufficient for any one incident. But with the congestion that is guaranteed by this proposed building, the potential for loss of life is very high. Please register my deep concern.

Thank you,

Ann Jensen Adams

From: Jim Knecht <jimknecht@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 10:00 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; info@sagesb.cim <info@sagesb.cim>
Subject: 1609 Grand Project

You don't often get email from jimknecht@sbcglobal.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

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Traffic: California Street already has parking on one side. Grand Ave has parking on two sides. Both are narrow. Two-way traffic on both of these streets is almost impossible under normal conditions. With months of excavation and grading needed before construction, the 400 trucks for dirt removal will clog up the already very narrow roads and make travel almost impossible. Construction workers and delivery trucks will take up most of the already limited street parking, and further exacerbate vehicle movement.

Noise. The project is in a neighborhood where people live, work and play. The construction noise, legal from 6 am – 10 pm daily except Sunday, with excavators, jackhammers and other heavy equipment, will disrupt sleep, work, and the peace and pleasure of the lives of all the neighbors within a radius several blocks **FOR TWO YEARS OR MORE!**

Aesthetics. The size and mass are incompatible with the neighborhood, and exceed height standards to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. It will be the tallest and most massive structure on the Riviera.

A 6-story structure will block ocean views from the homes uphill from the project. It will destroy any privacy for the downhill structures, with the 3rd floor and higher apartments being able to look into the backyards and windows of the homes below.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Sincerely,

Jim and Beckie Knecht

16 Rubio Rd.

Santa Barbara, CA

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 10:45 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

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Sender: tessell.adams@gmail.com

Subject: Concern about 1609 Grand Avenue

Date: 9/18/2025 4:55:13 PM

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From: Maya Upton <mayauputon@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 11:25 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609-1615 Grand Avenue Project Concerns

You don't often get email from mayauputon@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I am writing as a concerned resident of Santa Barbara, regarding the 53-unit development proposed for 1609-1615 Grand Avenue.

I strongly urge the City to require a comprehensive environmental impact review (CEQA) for this project. Given the unique challenges of our area, the proposed scale and location of this project warrant a full and transparent analysis of its potential impacts.

Here are the issues I am most concerned about, which a full CEQA review should address:

1. Traffic Flow and Infrastructure Capacity.

The project proposes a significant increase in vehicle trips for a two-story parking garage accessed from California Street. I frequently walk and drive in this very hilly neighborhood, and navigating this area is already challenging. The narrow, steep, and winding nature of these streets means vehicles often struggle to pass one another safely, requiring one car to reverse to let the other pass. Adding dozens of new daily vehicle trips will likely lead to greater congestion and unsafe maneuvering. A CEQA report must fully evaluate the capacity of these old streets to handle this new traffic load and propose specific, verifiable mitigation measures.

2. Public Safety, especially Fire Evacuation.

My family and I have evacuated during past wildfires, which can be stressful and terrifying. The threat of fire in the high-risk Lower Riviera is a constant concern. A CEQA report is essential for confirming that this project, with its high density and location, does not create a hazardous bottleneck for residents evacuating. The current road layout, already strained during normal circumstances, could become a significant liability during a fast-moving emergency. We need a thorough and transparent evaluation of the evacuation risks and potential solutions, rather than a limited analysis.

3. Construction and Operational Noise.

The project is planned for a quiet, established residential neighborhood. The excavation required for the two-story underground garage alone will create a significant and prolonged noise disturbance from truck traffic and heavy machinery. A full CEQA review would properly assess the impact of both construction and ongoing operational noise—from garage traffic and building ventilation—on the quality of life for long-term residents.

4. Neighborhood Aesthetics and Environmental Impact.

The proposed size and scale of this 53-unit, six-story building appear to be incompatible with the character of the surrounding Lower Riviera neighborhood. I am concerned that such a prominent structure will negatively alter the visual landscape and block cherished views of our natural surroundings. A CEQA analysis would evaluate this aesthetic impact and ensure the project aligns with the city's established design standards and environmental goals, which are vital to preserving Santa Barbara's unique beauty.

Thank you for your consideration of my concerns. As a resident, I trust that the City will carefully scrutinize a project with such significant, unexamined environmental and safety risks. Please require the developer to conduct a full CEQA report to ensure a thorough and transparent review process that genuinely considers the well-being of the community.

Sincerely,

Maya Upton

From: Barbara Lindemann <bliveoaks@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 4:05 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Comment letter

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Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I write with serious concerns about dangers to public safety of the 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The plans include a 2 level parking garage underlying the apartments, with access on California Street.

I live 2 miles away from the proposed site. My daily traffic patterns and view shed are not affected by this project. My deepest concern is with the ever present threat of urban/wildland interface fires to the public safety of people renting the apartments, the people living in the highly congested neighborhoods within a one mile radius, and those most affected by wildland fires, such as my family and neighbors, living north of Grand Avenue.

My neighborhood, Mission Canyon, established the Mission Canyon Association 75 years or so ago to address the dangers of wildland fires. Over twenty years ago the MCA wrote a Fire Safe plan, and twenty years ago I was part of the MCA group that worked with the County Planning Department to establish the Mission Canyon Community Plan. I am well aware of how interconnected are urban density, hillside construction, road conditions and traffic patterns when assessing the dangers of wildland/urban interface fires.

We bought our house 4 years after the devastating Coyote Fire in 1964, when much of our neighborhood was burned. Since then we have been under evacuation orders for repeated fires in the foothills, one of which, the Jesusita fire of 2009, swept over our house and raced down Mission Canyon. A central part of all this planning and these experiences has been the study of evacuation routes, the calculation of the numbers of cars that are involved in evacuating each neighborhood, and the times required to move residences to safety. Any proposed increase in the numbers of housing units MUST take into account existing road conditions, total numbers of existing households using the evacuation routes, road access from city and county fire units, etc.

Fire planning in Mission Canyon involved close attention to the

"Oakland Hills firestorm or the East Bay Hills fire. The fire ultimately killed 25 people and injured 150 others. The 1,520 acres (620 ha) destroyed included 2,843 single-family dwellings and 437 apartment and condominium units. The economic loss from the fire was estimated at \$1.5 billion (\$2.99 billion in 2024 dollars))." (Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oakland_firestorm_of_1991)

The more recent devastation of the Pacific Palisades and Altadena fires provide important lessons of their own.

The potential damage of an urban/wildland interface fire extends to evacuees from the north and into the densely populated and narrow streets of the Grant Avenue neighborhood of the lower Riviera. It is unconscionable To proceed without EVEN a CEQA REVIEW to build a dense apartment complex in an area that shares evacuation routes with fire vulnerable neighborhoods north of Grant avenue.

Thank you for your careful deliberation about this difficult proposal.

Sincerely,

Barbara Lindemann

1470 Tunnel Rd.

Santa Barbara CA 93105

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 6:35 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

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Sender: bliveoaks@gmail.com

Subject: Comment letter

Date: 9/18/2025 11:05:05 PM

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From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Friday, September 19, 2025 2:32 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

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Sender: katie.castleberg.storm@gmail.com
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Development at 1609 & 1615 Grand Avenue – CEQA Impact Concerns
Date: 9/19/2025 2:21:08 AM

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From: Anne-Marie Castleberg <acastleberg@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, September 19, 2025 12:25 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: Fwd: 1609 Grand avenue

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I'd like to add to my concerns about the proposed project at 1609 Grand Avenue.

What happens if there is an earthquake or fire?. How will mass evacuation work with the addition of yet one more large building.

1. **Fire Truck Access** – Large emergency vehicles would struggle to reach a building of this size, severely limiting the ability of first responders to contain a fire.
2. **Evacuation Safety** – Adding a substantial number of new residents to this hilltop neighborhood would clog the sole evacuation route. In the event of wildfire, this would put lives at risk and exacerbate already difficult evacuation conditions.

3. **Traffic Congestion** during construction will cause significant problems to all motorists and most likely total chaos in case of an emergency.

I urge this City Council to deny or significantly reduce the size of this project.

Anne-Marie Castleberg

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Anne-Marie Castleberg** <acastleberg@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Sep 17, 2025 at 6:06 PM

Subject: 1609 Grand avenue

To: <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

I drive Grand Avenue multiple times a week. It's already a mess. How can you possibly consider adding dense housing to that neighborhood.

Several years ago the entire area above Grand Avenue had to evacuate. It was a mess.

Just imagine how fire engines going up Valerio to Grand avenue will impact people trying to evacuate. It's impossible.

Certainly APS can't handle a ton of traffic.

Escape routes will be blocked.

I live in this area. This project is not safe.

Anne-Marie Castleberg

From: Tara Frimat <tefrimat@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 19, 2025 3:46 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: Development at 1609 Grand Avenue

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Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. Traffic. I am a renter on Loma Street and the passage of traffic and the parking situation are already very challenging. The development of such a large property will cause immense demands on the roads in this area. In addition, the roads are simply too narrow for traffic to flow in both directions without alternating cars. I urge the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic on the old, steep, narrow streets in this neighborhood.

2. Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern that must be considered. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.

3. Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to constructions noise, the increase in residents, traffic and services to accommodate said residents will cause a significant increase in noise pollution. This is yet another impact the City should require the developer to address.

4. Aesthetics. While I am not yet aware of the proposed design of the apartment building, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the neighborhood and City. The City is known for its beauty, and for taking the necessary precautions to preserve the look, feel and size of its development. We request that you factor this into your decision making as well.

Once again, I urge you to please strongly consider the impact this building will have on the look, feel and livability of this neighborhood for its residents and the surrounding Santa Barbara community.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Best,
Tara Frimat

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Friday, September 19, 2025 4:27 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

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Sender: tefrimat@gmail.com

Subject: Development at 1609 Grand Avenue

Date: 9/19/2025 10:47:10 PM

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From: Renata Valladares <renata4green@gmail.com>

Sent: Saturday, September 20, 2025 12:01 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 1609 Grand Ave concerns

[You don't often get email from renata4green@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

To City of Santa Barbara,

As a long-time resident of Santa Barbara, I realize that there is a housing shortage and I support specific projects that make sense for our community, such as the new apartments and townhouses on Upper State and the proposed developments at La Cumbre plaza.

But I have serious concerns about 1609 Grand Ave.

Traffic circulation and parking would be negatively affected. Both Grand Ave and California St are narrow streets. In California two cars can't even pass at the same time. What's the estimated impact of all the new cars, not to mention the heavy equipment during construction?

And then of course, wildfire evacuation is something we need to take very seriously. We've had to evacuate twice from our Mission Canyon home so I speak from experience. It seems like the high density and narrow and limited exit options would be a danger to the neighbors and the residents of the project.

These issues need to be well investigated, including through a CEQA review process.

Thank you for considering my input and keeping the safety of our SB community top of mind.

Best regards,

Renata Valladares
2280 Las Canoas Rd
SB 93105

From: stu.sherman100@gmail.com <stu.sherman100@gmail.com>

Sent: Saturday, September 20, 2025 2:40 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; Eric Friedman <EFriedman@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Kristen Sneddon <KSneddon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Meagan Harmon <MHarmon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Mike Jordan <MJordan@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Oscar Gutierrez <OGutierrez@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Randy Rowse <rrowse@santabarbaraca.gov>; Wendy Santamaria <WSantamaria@santabarbaraca.gov>

CC: City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>

Subject: 505 East Los Olivos and 1609 Grand Avenue proposed housing projects

You don't often get email from stu.sherman100@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Santa Barbara City Council and Planning Commission:

I strongly oppose the housing projects proposed for 1609 Grand Avenue and 505 East Los Olivos Street. These two projects create significant cumulative negative impacts on our community, especially regarding public safety.

When multiple conditions of a proposed project cause impacts, comprehensive CEQA analysis is required:

- Projects likely to impact evacuations from a very high fire hazard zone
- Risks to projects occupants and nearby residents seeking to evacuate
- Risks to First Responders moving towards fires
- Other CEQA impacts

I urge the City to conduct the required CEQA studies and deny these projects based on the concerns stated in this letter. A CEQA transportation study will identify the large extent to which these projects will worsen the existing perilous evacuation corridors.

Although these projects were filed under the state's "builder's remedy" housing provision, the City of Santa Barbara can disapprove them if they cause an unmitigable public health or safety impact, based on objective, written public safety standards.

Both projects will cause a significant negative public safety impact regarding wildfire evacuation. The 1609 Grand Avenue project is located along a narrow road near a fault line in a Cal Fire identified "very high fire hazard severity zone." The 505 East Los Olivos project will significantly increase vehicle density and congestion on the narrow evacuation routes, thereby impeding residents and firefighters.

The main driveway of the proposed 505 East Los Olivos project will create a massive traffic problem at the intersection of Los Olivos, Mission Canyon and Alameda Padre Serra. This intersection is already a safety hazard.

The death of 85 people in the Paradise CA wildfire evacuation was almost entirely due to vehicular congestion on the narrow evacuation route. The evacuation routes for the areas that would be impacted by these two proposed projects are more constricted than the main Paradise evacuation route. Additional vehicle volume and density in high-fire zone evacuation routes caused by these two projects is inviting a similar calamity in Santa Barbara.

University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) and its Wildfire Resilience Initiative have conducted several studies on wildfire evacuation (<https://wri.ucsb.edu/research>). UCSB's Wildfire Resilience Initiative created spatial analytics to identify potential evacuation bottlenecks in the Santa Barbara area. These bottlenecks endanger public safety and will be exacerbated by the 1609 Grand Avenue and the 505 East Los Olivos projects. Current development codes now include wildfire evacuation standards, which cannot currently be met.

The top priority for the Santa Barbara City Council must be public safety. You were elected to serve the people of Santa Barbara, which includes upholding public safety. Santa Barbara residents rely on our City Council to uphold the public safety and environmental standards that define our city and prevent us from becoming an over-built, congested mini-Los Angeles. To approve either of these projects would be a calamitous and irreversible betrayal of the residents of our precious city.

Regarding the specious argument claiming that the City is engaging in an illegal "taking" from the developers: the developers are taking from the people of Santa Barbara! Property values of the homes in proximity to, and with a view of, these proposed monstrosities will be negatively impacted. The carefully cultivated and protected aesthetic ambiance of our community, the safety net of unimpeded evacuation corridors, and the sanctity of our community as a pleasant place to live will be taken from us if either of these two projects gets built.

The amount of "affordable housing" included in these projects is the minimum needed for the project to technically qualify under builder's remedy and therefore does not provide enough gain for the community compared to the amount of permanent severe damage inflicted on the community in the areas of ambiance, traffic, neighborhood character, and wildfire evacuation. The developers of these two proposed projects have no interest in our city other than to extract a large profit from projects which have massive community opposition.

These two projects do not conform to the City's General Plan standards and policies and therefore must be denied.

I implore the City to stand firm with the developers of these projects and require a robust review, considering:

- Fire and Emergency Access & Evacuation, particularly given the narrow roadways that serve the affected areas
- How the projects will impact evacuation times
- How the projects will directly impact the City and County Emergency Response Plans
- The 1609 project directly abuts the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,

Stu Sherman
420 Northridge Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
(805) 455-6954

From: Jacqueline Greenshields <jkgreenshields@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 20, 2025 4:21 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Grand Avenue Project

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September 18, 2025

**To: Members of Santa Barbara City Council;
Santa Barbara Planning Commission: 1609Grand@SantaBarbaraCA.gov**

Dear Santa Barbara City Council and Planning Commission:

I strongly oppose the housing projects proposed for 1609 Grand Avenue and 505 East Los Olivos Street. These two projects create significant cumulative negative impacts on our community, especially regarding public safety.

When multiple conditions of a proposed project cause impacts, comprehensive CEQA analysis is required:

- Projects likely to impact evacuations from a very high fire hazard zone
- Risks to projects occupants and nearby residents seeking to evacuate
- Risks to First Responders moving towards fires
- Other CEQA impacts

I urge the City to conduct the required CEQA studies and deny these projects based on the concerns stated in this letter. A CEQA transportation study will identify the large extent to which these projects will worsen the existing perilous evacuation corridors.

Although these projects were filed under the state's "builder's remedy" housing provision, the City of Santa Barbara can disapprove them if they cause an unmitigable public health or safety impact, based on objective, written public safety standards.

Both projects will cause a significant negative public safety impact regarding wildfire evacuation. The 1609 Grand Avenue project is located along a narrow road near a fault line in a Cal Fire identified "very high fire hazard severity zone." The 505 East Los Olivos project will significantly increase vehicle density and congestion on the narrow evacuation routes, thereby impeding residents and firefighters.

The main driveway of the proposed 505 East Los Olivos project will create a massive traffic problem at the intersection of Los Olivos, Mission Canyon and Alameda Padre Serra. This intersection is already a safety hazard.

The death of 85 people in the Paradise CA wildfire evacuation was almost entirely due to vehicular congestion on the narrow evacuation route. The evacuation routes for the areas that would be impacted by these two proposed projects are more constricted than the main Paradise evacuation route. Additional vehicle volume and density in high-fire zone evacuation routes caused by these two projects is inviting a similar calamity in Santa Barbara.

University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) and its Wildfire Resilience Initiative have conducted several studies on wildfire evacuation (<https://wri.ucsb.edu/research>). UCSB's Wildfire Resilience Initiative created spatial analytics to identify potential evacuation bottlenecks in the Santa Barbara area. These bottlenecks endanger public safety and will be exacerbated by the 1609 Grand Avenue and the 505 East Los Olivos projects. Current development codes

now include wildfire evacuation standards, which cannot currently be met.

The top priority for the Santa Barbara City Council must be public safety. You were elected to serve the people of Santa Barbara, which includes upholding public safety. Santa Barbara residents rely on our City Council to uphold the public safety and environmental standards that define our city and prevent us from becoming an over-built, congested mini-Los Angeles. To approve either of these projects would be a calamitous and irreversible betrayal of the residents of our precious city.

Regarding the specious argument claiming that the City is engaging in an illegal "taking" from the developers: the developers are taking from the people of Santa Barbara! Property values of the homes in proximity to, and with a view of, these proposed monstrosities will be negatively impacted. The carefully cultivated and protected aesthetic ambiance of our community, the safety net of unimpeded evacuation corridors, and the sanctity of our community as a pleasant place to live will be taken from us if either of these two projects gets built.

The amount of "affordable housing" included in these projects is the minimum needed for the project to technically qualify under builder's remedy and therefore does not provide enough gain for the community compared to the amount of permanent severe damage inflicted on the community in the areas of ambiance, traffic, neighborhood character, and wildfire evacuation.

The developers of these two proposed projects have no interest in our city other than to extract a large profit from projects which have massive community opposition.

These two projects do not conform to the City's General Plan standards and policies and therefore must be denied.

I implore the City to stand firm with the developers of these projects and require a robust review, considering:

- Fire and Emergency Access & Evacuation, particularly given the narrow roadways that serve the affected areas
- How the projects will impact evacuation times
- How the projects will directly impact the City and County Emergency Response Plans
- The 1609 project directly abuts the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Greenshields
336 Northridge Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

From: Daniel Crocker <crockerdt@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 20, 2025 5:53 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue development - letter of concern attached
Attachment(s): "Letter to City re 1609 Grand Sept 2025.pdf"

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Please see attached letter.

Regards,
Daniel Crocker

Daniel Crocker
1708 Paterna Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

301-326-6782
crockerdt@gmail.com

20 September 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I am a resident and owner of 1708 Paterna Road, a house that was added in 2024 to the City's list of Structures of Merit. Over the last year and a half, I have been repairing and renovating this historic property in close consultation with multiple offices in the City. As a resident who lives within walking distance of the proposed apartment building at 1609 Grand Avenue, I have grave concerns about the development.

I studied advanced transportation and logistics optimization for a master's degree in engineering at MIT and used that knowledge professionally over a career spanning decades to design and manage fulfillment in e-commerce, consumer retail, and global U.S. government operations. It is not only as a resident but also as a system-level engineering logistics professional therefore that I am writing to you.

My understanding is that the proposal contemplates the construction of six stories, containing fifty-three units. It apparently includes a two-story parking garage with entry and exit on California Street. The project as currently scoped fails spectacularly to address several interrelated concerns, quite aside from its outsized appearance in a neighborhood of modest multi-unit and single-family dwellings.

Traffic concerns. I drive, ride a bicycle, and walk my dog on both California and Grand at multiple times of the day throughout the week. Both roads are narrow and designed for an earlier era of low levels of car ownership and size. Moreover, much of the road is taken up by parking, as residents seek to maximize their housing space, do not have garages, or have increased housing availability in Santa Barbara by renting out on-site ADUs.

Even outside of commuting hours, cars are simply unable to pass one another driving on either Grand or California at and near that juncture. It beggars belief, therefore, to imagine adding not just fifty-three cars but logically double that number to the traffic flow on a daily basis. And it is not realistic to hope that residents will not be using their cars to get to work, to get their children to school, and to go shopping. The City will need to manage an expected surge in traffic density, congestion (adding to local and global pollution) if one hundred or more additional cars are added to the mix at multiple times during the day, and especially during high-demand chokepoints during commuting hours.

Wildfires and First Responders. This level of congestion – with cars parked all along both streets and stacked at two levels in the proposed garage – may be manageable within a steady state daily situation. But the City needs to protect and serve its current residents with service level response times measured in minutes, both for health emergencies on an ongoing basis and most particularly in the event of fires that can spread out of control equally as quickly. Access to all residences will be critical in the event of a wildfire – but a concentrated surge in density of egress at the juncture of a critical escape route for Riviera residents can be a matter of life and death, not to mention loss of property. Santa Barbara has suffered runaway wildfires and will do so again. And the recent massive losses of property in Los Angeles in January 2025 serve as a sobering reminder that prompt access and clear, low-density roadways are critical in hilly neighborhoods with few exits.

Water access and sufficient pressure in the inevitable event of a wildfire are also considerations. In LA, lack of sufficient water pressure has been cited as a contributing factor. But a surge in density necessarily taxes the water infrastructure. For several years I was posted to Panama, where the construction of high rises without a

commensurate increase in water and other city infrastructure led to shortages and a chronic problem with water pressure.

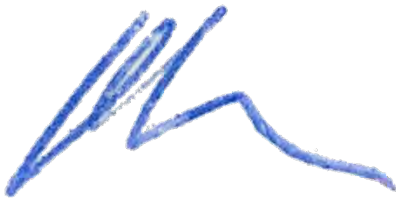
The City should be challenging the developers of this proposal as follows:

- Give a full assessment of the impact of adding over one hundred cars and trucks to the narrow streets of Grand and California for traffic flow and congestion.
- Explain how a surge in density of over one hundred additional residents at this critical juncture will impact first responder services on a weekly basis and, in the event of a wildfire spreading throughout the Riviera, will affect timely evacuations.
- A study of the impact of water pressure and other possible critical infrastructure changes required for a project of this magnitude.

Since it is easier to envision an infill high density development in another area of the city that already has the support infrastructure in place, I believe that 1609 Grand Avenue is an obviously bad place to add so many housing units to our city. I can only assume that the City has a housing development plan that is designed to look holistically at locations where infill with higher density units, perhaps with a mix of commercial properties at the ground level, makes much more sense. So an outsized development proposal that is at odds with that housing development plan seems designed to create more problems than it solves. And I believe that the City should put the burden squarely on the developers to justify how they will mitigate those problems. If they can't, surely there are other locations where the City would welcome their collaboration in developing more housing units.

I appreciate the invitation the City has made to comment on this and other developments. I trust that you will be acting in the City's best interests in full compliance state and local law and will be following this issue closely in the coming weeks and months.

Regards,



Daniel Crocker

From: Lisa O'Connell <lisaconnell123@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 20, 2025 7:21 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: CEQA Impact on 1609 Grand Ave

You don't often get email from lisaconnell123@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

As a resident of East Valerio Street, I am writing to urge you not to permit the construction of 1609 Grand Ave in Santa Barbara. We all watched in horror as Malibu and Pacific Palisades turned to ash in January of this year. People were trapped in homes and streets with limited access and insufficient water to fight the wildfire flames. We have been evacuated from this neighborhood by threat of fire at least three times in the 43 years I've lived in here, and the potential CEQA impacts from this projected building site are a danger to the neighborhood.

Some points I ask you to consider:

1. Aesthetically, the enormous size of the project will negatively impact the quality of life, the views, and the property values of long-established homes in this historic neighborhood.
2. There is little (if any?) bus service up to Grand, so there will be more cars. Some visitors to residents of the proposed construction will have to park on the street, in an area already impacted by scarce street parking. Street sweeping days are especially challenging.
3. East Valerio Street is one of the few streets to connect with Grand Avenue and up to Alameda Padre Serra, and the speed of increased cars revving up that hill, coupled with the sheer number of additional cars, will make a once quiet street a major thoroughfare and potentially dangerous for children walking to Roosevelt School or to neighbors out walking dogs or enjoying a breath of fresh air.
4. Although there is a fire station on East Sola, the fire trucks heading to the Riviera drive up Olive and turn up Valerio. The narrow streets beyond that intersection are difficult enough to navigate by car and with increased population in that area, will be even more difficult for fire engines and support vehicles to navigate.
5. There is little doubt that so many new residents would increase the noise in the neighborhood. But in the event of another evacuation - whether because of wildfire or heavy storm water drainage - this area would potentially be a disaster. Would First Responders be able to help residents of the projected homes? Would they be able to reach and assist others in the neighborhood? There are not many ways to evacuate and the size and scope of this proposed project would compound the difficulties of getting people to safety.
6. I wonder about the impact of such increased water usage, too. Is there enough water to add so many residents? Especially in case of quickly spreading wildfire, flooding or earthquake?

Again, my thoughts turn to Pacific Palisades and the tragedy of the fire last January. I urge you to deny approval for this huge project. Our lives depend upon you.

Sincerely,
Lisa O'Connell
430 E Valerio St
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 20, 2025 8:16 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

[Microsoft](#)

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Sender: lisaconnell123@gmail.com

Subject: CEQA Impact on 1609 Grand Ave

Date: 9/21/2025 2:22:11 AM

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From: adrienne jones <adriennejones0801@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, September 21, 2025 10:13 AM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: Housing project proposal

To Whom It May Concern,

As a resident of Santa Barbara for 40 years, I must strongly oppose the proposed developments at 505 E. Los Olivos Street and on Grand Avenue. The Los Olivos project in particular is deeply concerning: it would overwhelm fragile traffic infrastructure, compromise the historical and environmental character of our city, and most critically, create a severe wildfire evacuation hazard. During the Tea Fire evacuation, I witnessed firsthand the city's inability to move residents safely out of Mission Canyon—traffic was backed up for miles, taking nearly an hour to travel only two. We were spared by chance when the fire hit a previous burn scar, but with hundreds of additional residents and vehicles in that same corridor, a future evacuation would almost certainly be disastrous. The Grand Avenue proposal is equally inappropriate, with even less suitable road access to handle emergency situations.

These projects serve developer profits far more than the safety and well-being of Santa Barbara's residents. Presenting them as "affordable housing" while dismissing community concerns as NIMBYism is disingenuous. If the city is serious about addressing housing needs, it should prioritize smart infill development downtown—where residents have access to public transportation, essential services, and are out of immediate wildfire danger. Meanwhile, large portions of the Riviera sit as vacant mansions or timeshares, often shielded from fair taxation under Prop 13. Redirecting resources from these underutilized properties would be a more responsible and equitable way to build safe, sustainable, and truly affordable housing.

For the sake of Santa Barbara's safety, heritage, and future, I urge you to reject both proposed developments.

Sincerely,

Adrienne Jones

From: Bob Maloy <bob@bobmaloy.com>

Sent: Sunday, September 21, 2025 11:46 AM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Eric Friedman <EFriedman@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Kristen Sneddon <KSneddon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Meagan Harmon <MHarmon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Mike Jordan <MJordan@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Oscar Gutierrez <OGutierrez@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Randy Rowse <rrowse@santabarbaraca.gov>; Wendy Santamaria <WSantamaria@santabarbaraca.gov>

CC: Bob Maloy <bob@bobmaloy.com>

Subject: 505 E. Los Olivos St and 1609 Grand Avenue

Attachment(s): "Builder's Remedy Letter RRM.docx"

Dear Santa Barbara City Council members and City Clerk,

Please see my letter attached and address the issues raised.

Thank you,

Bob Maloy (Retired CPA)

Retired from Bartlett, Pringle, & Wolf after 47 years there

1123 Chapala Street

Santa Barbara, CA 93101

C 805-637-7010

September 21, 2025

**To: Members of Santa Barbara City Council
Santa Barbara Planning Commission**

Re: 1609Grand@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Dear Santa Barbara City Council and Planning Commission:

I strongly oppose the housing projects proposed for 1609 Grand Avenue and 505 East Los Olivos Street. These two projects create significant cumulative negative impacts on our community, especially regarding public safety.

When multiple conditions of a proposed project cause impacts, comprehensive CEQA analysis is required:

- Projects likely to impact evacuations from a very high fire hazard zone
- Risks to projects occupants and nearby residents seeking to evacuate
- Risks to First Responders moving towards fires
- Other CEQA impacts

I urge the City to conduct the required CEQA studies and deny these projects based on the concerns stated in this letter. A CEQA transportation study will identify the large extent to which these projects will worsen the existing perilous evacuation corridors.

Although these projects were filed under the state's housing provision "builder's remedy," the City of Santa Barbara can disapprove them if they cause an unmitigable public health or safety impact, based on objective, written public safety standards.

Both projects will cause a significant negative public safety impact regarding wildfire evacuation. The 1609 Grand Avenue project is located along a narrow road near a fault line in a Cal Fire identified "very high fire hazard severity zone." The 505 East Los Olivos Project will significantly increase the vehicle density on the narrow evacuation routes, thereby impeding residents and firefighters.

The death of 85 people in the Paradise CA wildfire evacuation was almost entirely due to vehicular congestion on the narrow evacuation route. The evacuation routes for the areas that would be impacted by these two proposed projects are more constricted than the main Paradise evacuation route. Additional vehicle volume and density in high-fire zone evacuation routes caused by these two projects is inviting a similar calamity in Santa Barbara.

University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) and its Wildfire Resilience Initiative have conducted several studies on wildfire evacuation (<https://wri.ucsb.edu/research>). UCSB's Wildfire Resilience Initiative created spatial analytics to identify potential evacuation bottlenecks in the Santa Barbara area. These bottlenecks endanger public safety and will be exacerbated by the 1609 Grand Avenue and the 505 East Olivos projects. Current development codes now include wildfire evacuation standards, which cannot currently be met.

The top priority for the Santa Barbara City Council must be public safety. You were elected to serve the people of Santa Barbara, which includes upholding public safety. Santa Barbara

residents rely on our City Council to uphold the public safety and environmental standards that define our city and prevent us from becoming a mini-Los Angeles. To approve either of these projects would be a calamitous and irreversible betrayal of the residents of our precious city.

Regarding the specious argument claiming that the City is engaging in an illegal "taking" from the developers: the developers are taking from the people of Santa Barbara! Property values of the homes in proximity and with a view of the proposed monstrosities will be negatively impacted. The carefully cultivated and protected aesthetic ambiance of our community, the safety net of unimpeded evacuation corridors, and the sanctity of our community as a pleasant place to live will be taken from us if these two projects get built.

The amount of "affordable housing" included in these projects is the minimum needed for the project to technically qualify under builder's remedy and therefore does not provide enough gain for the community compared to the amount of permanent severe damage inflicted on the community in the areas of ambiance, traffic, neighborhood character, and wildfire evacuation. The developers of these two proposed projects have no interest in our city other than to extract a large profit from projects that has massive opposition.

These two projects do not conform to the City's General Plan standards and policies and therefore must be denied.

I urge the City to stand firm with the developers of these projects and require a robust review, considering:

- Fire and Emergency Access & Evacuation, particularly given the narrow roadways that serve the affected areas
- How the projects will impact evacuation times
- The 1609 project directly abuts the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone
- How the projects will directly impact the City and County Emergency Response Plans

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert R Maloy". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the "Sincerely," text.

Robert R Maloy (Retired CPA)
1300 Mission Canyon Place
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
(805) 637-7010

From: Carol Olson <Carol@CASA-FINANCIAL.COM>

Sent: Sunday, September 21, 2025 1:32 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue

You don't often get email from carol@casa-financial.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Sirs, I live a little more than a quarter mile from the project on Grand Avenue and used to work on Arrellega next to the project. I know that area well as I often parked near there for work and walk the area frequently. My experience is that the traffic and parking in the area is already extremely congested with little room for 2 cars to pass each other let alone delivery vehicles and garbage collection. Often these vehicles have to back down a street to let other cars through. I am very concerned about the scope of the project due to the traffic, egress during rapid evacuations due to fire or rapid rainfall. There is very limited routes to take to get out of the area and harm's way.

I would like the City to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the project and its likely impacts on our neighborhood, through a California Environmental Quality Act, "CEQA" review. After seeing what happened in Pacific Palisades, we all need to be very concerned for the citizens and first responders.

Santa Barbara is a beautiful place and the scope, aesthetics, and architectural integrity are what makes the city desirable. The mountain view is just as important as the view out to the ocean for the city. The project as I understand it to be would be an eyesore. Please don't let the greed and short sightedness of one group ruin the city for all of its inhabitants or our city officials who have helped to make the city so beautiful.

Yours sincerely,

Carol Olson
1816 Garden Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

From: Michael McCaskey <mmccaskey@pemresourceslp.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 21, 2025 3:45 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Michael McCaskey <mmccaskey@pemresourceslp.com>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave Monstrosity

[You don't often get email from mmccaskey@pemresourceslp.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear City of Santa Barbara: We live at 1620 Grand Avenue. We greatly oppose the proposed 6-story monstrosity of a project to build a 53-unit apartment complex on the tiny lot at the end of the street. The project most certainly would not survive any CEQA environmental impact analysis under a full EIR or a reduced EIR mitigated impact analysis.

The proposed project is idiotic and only the vision of complete money-grubbing obsessed out-of-town developers. The size of the lot might be able to house only a 4 to 6 unit townhouse project. The project and the communications to the City meant to circumvent Santa Barbara permitting with legal maneuvering through the State of CA bypass housing ordinances is rubbish. Every person living on Grand Avenue and the nearby streets will fully fight this project. It is completely incompatible with the neighborhood and would cause massive traffic and construction disruption to the standard of living in the area. As proposed, no one in their right mind would want to live within a 1/2 mile radius.

This letter will be one of many that you will receive that will notify the City of our intent to fight this.

Michael McCaskey
1620 Grand Ave
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

From: Ian McFarlane <ianlmcfar@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 21, 2025 4:34 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Builder's Remedy Abuse

You don't often get email from ianlmcfar@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

As a resident of the Lower Riviera, I would like to voice my strong opposition to this opportunistic abuse of the builder's remedy. These developers come from out of town citing the needs of our community as rationale for this project, when in reality they just want to build as many ocean view units as possible with no consideration for the community or existing infrastructure. Zoning exists for a reason, and in this case, there is no practical rationale for such a project in this area. For example, all roads that would serve this building (Grand, California, and Valerio) are already nearly single lane. How is this area supposed to support 100s of new residents? Santa Barbara has plenty of space that can be rezoned or similar to support large developments like this.

We cannot allow out of town developers to reshape the face of Santa Barbara without the consent of Santa Barbarians under the false pretense of affordable housing. Like the project behind the Mission, this is NOT the way forward!

Thank you,
Ian McFarlane

From: Jillian Voegel <jillianvoegel@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 21, 2025 4:49 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Grand Avenue project

You don't often get email from jillianvoegel@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I strongly oppose the proposed project at 1609 Grand Avenue. This development would harm the character and culture of our neighborhood, creating traffic congestion and diminishing the charm and beauty that make this area special. Please do not allow an outside developer to disrupt the integrity of our small community.

Jill Voegel

317-525-0582

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 21, 2025 6:28 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

[Microsoft](#)

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Sender: info@sagesb.org

Subject: RE:

Date: 9/21/2025 9:21:39 PM

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From: Jennifer Sills <jsills66@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 21, 2025 6:51 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: 1609 letter
Attachment(s): "1509 Grand .pages"

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FROM THE DESK OF

JENNIFER SILLS

September 21, 2025

City of Santa Barbara

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live on Loma St directly above the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. **Traffic.** I daily travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home in order to get downtown for work and everything else. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Loma, Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
1. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have lived here since 1980 and have had to evacuate from at least 4 big fires. It was already a mess. Everyone above APS also comes down these streets to get downtown. It's ridiculous to put a 6 story apartment complex in a space for 2-3 homes and not know that that's a HUGE hazard in this old neighborhood. As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in

their cars. We've seen it time and time again in the news with these big fires and it's not a matter of if it happens but when it happens. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.

1. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address. Not only the noise but the structure of the streets. This will cause massive damage to these very small, old neighborhood roads.
2. **Plumbing.** The pipes in these neighborhood are usually very old. I know mine are. What happens when you put at least 66 people (at just a 2 person household, most will be larger). Is the City prepared to come in and pay for the kind of damage that this could cause.
3. **Aesthetics.** Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Jennifer Sills

1603 Loma St

Santa Barbara, CA. 93103

(805)451-3550

jsills66@gmail.com

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 2:30 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

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Sender:

jsills66@gmail.com

Subject:

1609 letter

Date:

9/22/2025 1:52:02 AM

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Sender:

jsills66@gmail.com

Subject:

1609 Grand

Date:

9/22/2025 2:04:13 AM

Review Message

Release

Block Sender

Sender:

fehguy@gmail.com

Subject:

Concerns about 1609 Grand

Date:

9/22/2025 2:31:58 AM

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Release

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From: Dan Biederman <daniel.s.biederman@icloud.com>

Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 5:32 AM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 505 E Los Olivos St

[You don't often get email from daniel.s.biederman@icloud.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

To whom it may concern:

I have lived in Santa Barbara since 1984 in Mission Canyon. I can't believe as a citizen of this city I am having to write asking that this project not be built. It's location near our beautiful mission. It's height compared to every other building in this city. If this passes I question what this council purpose is in representing the citizens of Santa Barbara. This isn't a threat, but a promise. If this passes, I will do everything in my power to help make sure none of you are re-elected.

Dan Biederman

From: STEPHANIE FLEMING <steffuds@cox.net>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 8:23 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SageSB.org <info@SageSB.org>
Subject: 1609-1615 Grand Ave

Dear City of Santa Barbara

I have been a resident of the Lower Riviera neighborhood since 1982. I am the property manager for a fourplex located on the corner of Loma Street and California Street (directly above the proposed Grand Avenue project), which has been owned by the same person since the 1960s. In recent decades, the neighborhood has seen much development, much of which has made parking and driving on Loma St., Grand Ave., and California St. dangerous and difficult.

It has gotten so crowded with cars and reckless driving behavior that the neighboring streets should be one-way. Cars are constantly running stop signs and racing down incredibly narrow roads with barely enough space for parking on one side of the street. An additional 53-unit complex (plus cars and guests) would further strain our already clogged, damaged, and chaotic roads. The intersections of California St., Loma St., Grand Ave., and Micheltorena St. lack proper and consistent signage leading to near accidents daily. Adding several dozen cars (anywhere from 50 to over 100 cars) to this area will only increase the likelihood of a fatal accident. Not only will the increase in traffic raise the likelihood of an accident, it also exponentially heightens the fire danger that comes from living in a neighborhood with few exit routes, paving the way for a potential tragedy.

Any amount of construction would burden the neighborhood's already fragile roads, plumbing, water, and electricity infrastructures. The poorly maintained roads cannot handle heavy construction vehicles or an increase in traffic. The noise created by the construction of this project will disturb every household in the neighboring area for months before the actual constructions even begins. Digging and removing that amount of earth from the construction site not only will cause damage to the old surrounding roads but will also cause damage to the surrounding homes foundations from vibrations of the large equipment.

We do need accessible housing in Santa Barbara—especially low income—but not a 50 plus unit, six story building in an already overcrowded historical neighborhood. It is entirely unsustainable. After the Cottage housing complex was built on the property below, this neighborhood cannot handle any more people. The roads are already cracked from the large trucks driving on the streets due to construction and deliveries. These roads were not built for this high volume and heavy traffic. Additionally, the old stone walls are crumbling and being destroyed by the vibrations every time large trucks travel up and down the streets daily, especially during construction. If there is anything we can do to help stop this problematic project from going forward, please let me know. Every one of my neighbors is perplexed at how this multi-story building in a historical neighborhood got approved to begin with.

The area this project is to be built on was zoned for 4 units, not over 50 additional units. This project disrupts the vernacular architecture of this neighborhood. To preserve the integrity of this historic neighborhood and protect all its residents from overcrowding and the potential for disasters like the one in Lahaina, Hawaii, during a fire or earthquake, please do not allow this project to proceed. This project creates a huge hazard for evacuation and emergency access if the need arises. We have already been evaluated from our home over four times in the past 20 years. Every time during these evacuations, it has been very chaotic and dangerous trying to get out of the already congested roads.

Stephanie Fleming
1607 Loma Street
Santa Babara, CA 93103
(805) 729-0642

From: Christine Purcell <christinefpurcell@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 8:32 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue Project

You don't often get email from christinefpurcell@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

September 22, 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live across the street from 1609 Grand Avenue where there is currently a proposal under consideration for a 53-unit, 6-story apartment building. I understand the access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments would be immediately below us on California Street.

I am extremely concerned about a number of aspects about this project:

1. **Traffic.** I regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home in order to get downtown. As it is now, without any additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. I am a recent resident of the Pacific Palisades, and witnessed the extreme difficulties that community experienced as residents attempted to evacuate during the devastating fire in January of this year. Close personal friends were forced to abandon their cars and walk to safety because automobile traffic was at a complete standstill on streets far wider than Grand Avenue and California Street. No one could have imagined the chaos that ensued. Here in Santa Barbara there will doubtless be future fire emergencies. I am deeply concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck for so many residents, trapping us in our cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will disrupt the ability of myself and so many other neighbors to conduct our normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. **Aesthetics.** Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City of Santa Barbara is known now for its beauty! That is why I moved here, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Sincerely yours,

Christine F. Purcell
1616 Grand Avenue
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

From: Stevie D <surf wonderer@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 11:07 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Do not approve please

You don't often get email from surf wonderer@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

This project will forever destroy the flow and vibe of the neighborhood it is proposed in. Said neighborhood happens to be a huge attraction for locals and visitors alike.

Thank you for your concern and consideration.

All the best,
Stephen J Donahue
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

From: Lalla Brutoco <lalla@shangrilagroup.net>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 12:59 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Randy Rowse <rrowse@santabarbaraca.gov>; Kristen Sneddon <KSneddon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Subject: disgusting proposal for building on Riviera

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from lalla@shangrilagroup.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

To whom it may concern:

As a resident of the Riviera, I have seen the proposed building structure on Grand Ave. It is a black eye on the beauty of our neighborhood. I am shocked and revolted by this deplorable development.

Please VOTE NO!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Lalla Brutoco
1920 Mission Ridge Rd.
Santa Barbara, Ca.

From: Jeff McFarlane <jlm97@cox.net>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 2:04 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SAGESB.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: "Builders Remedy" Project at 1609 Grand

This project should be denied on so many levels:

- All of the neighborhood streets that access this property are essentially one lane roads, constricted by cars parked either side.
- Adding traffic from 53 additional units will gridlock the neighborhood.
- Fire truck access is already sub-par.
- Six stories in a two story neighborhood is out of scale by magnitudes. There is no equivalent anywhere on the East-side or Riviera residential neighborhoods.
- Sewer, water, gas, electricity and storm water infrastructure will not support.

I support the City of Santa Barbara in their efforts to fight and stop this development.

I am fine with spending tax dollars to fight this in court.

Please use every tool to kill this project.

Thank you,

Jeff McFarlane
3007 Hermosa Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 2:47 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

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Sender: surfwonderer@gmail.com

Subject: Do not approve please

Date: 9/22/2025 6:07:30 PM

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[Block Sender](#)

Sender: ann@heuserdesign.com

Subject: Urgent: Fire Evacuation and Safety Concerns with Proposed Projects

Date: 9/22/2025 8:55:51 PM

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[Block Sender](#)

From: ALISON COUTTS <acouttsjor@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 6:22 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Development on Grand

You don't often get email from acouttsjor@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Sent from my iPhone

live within a mile (or insert relevant info) of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. **Traffic.** As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use Grand Avenue at once. On Grand, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. **Aesthetics.** Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Alison Coutts-Jordan

2117 State Street

Santa Barbara, CA 93105

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 10:42 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

[Microsoft](#)

Review These Messages

2 messages are being held for you to review as of **9/23/2025 5:22:49 AM (UTC)**.

Review them within **30 days of the received date** by going to the [Quarantine page](#) in the Security Center.

Prevented spam messages

Sender: gokllani@revsdr.com

Subject: This needs to Stop

Date: 9/23/2025 4:16:37 AM

[Review Message](#)

[Release](#)

[Block Sender](#)

Sender: efallon421@gmail.com

Subject: Public comment: 1609 – 1615 Grand Avenue

Date: 9/23/2025 4:43:42 AM

[Review Message](#)

[Release](#)

[Block Sender](#)

From: Kevin Samuels <kevinsamuels@icloud.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 9:39 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand SB

You don't often get email from kevinsamuels@icloud.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I reside within 3 blocks of the proposed housing project and travel past it numerous times daily.

I am vehemently voicing my opposition due to the following reasons:

Grand Ave is already exceptionally narrow, congested and dangerous, and this construction would make it exceedingly worse, especially in a fire evacuation. I have personally witnessed and experienced near misses with bicycles, pedestrians and autos.

Grand Ave, as well as surrounding neighborhood streets, are very steep and already poorly maintained- filled with potholes, and buckled concrete. The heavy machinery required to construct this project will quickly worsen their condition.

The nefarious backgrounds and history of the builders. <https://www.independent.com/2023/05/31/lipodiesel-weed-wars-whos-behind-santa-barbaras-first-builders-remedy-project/>

This housing project is also not acceptable for the area due to its size and height. It will obstruct the views and degrade home values of any nearby homes. There are no other existing properties of this height in the neighborhood.

All of these concerns demand further evaluations and considerations by the city.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter. I will continue to follow all news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notices or updates.

Kevin Samuels
1741 Loma St. SB 93103

From: Cecilia Harris <cecilia.harris6@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 9:52 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Concerns regarding the proposed 6-story apartment project for 1609 Grand Avenue

You don't often get email from cecilia.harris6@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

Having seen the artist's rendition of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue and having read about the plans, I was compelled to write this letter.

The design and size of the building is completely at odds with everything that Santa Barbara has required to date to maintain our beautiful community, since the days of Pearl Chaseto now. The size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would tower over neighboring buildings and dramatically change the look of the neighborhood and the City. I don't understand how, if the city won't allow orange benches downtown, it would consider this structure and design? There has to be a better way. Santa Barbara is known for its beauty and that contributes to our economic outcomes (e.g., tourism) and our quality of life.

I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does not damage the City's reputation for beauty and balance. Please require that their proposal stays consistent with our requirements without exceptions.

I am concerned about more than just the aesthetics. I am very concerned about future traffic issues. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street. I live less than a mile away and try to avoid driving through this already congested area but occasionally I must trek down that route. I cannot imagine the traffic issues that will occur with even more people and traffic. This concerns me greatly. Even without the additional traffic, it is nearly impossible for two way traffic to use these local streets. On Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass. I have even had to back up to pull aside. In the area, it is not uncommon to have residents trying to get out of their small parking areas in the middle of this, causing an actual traffic stall. At night, this all becomes even more treacherous.

Please require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our narrow streets with blind curves and potholes, and have them provide a thorough analysis of broader effects to the local streets, adjoining, and main streets like APS, and all intersections.

The traffic challenges cause me even greater concern with Public Safety. Having experienced the need for an evacuation in the past, and seen the current difficulty for police and fire services to access our narrow streets, I can't imagine, with the added people and cars, what will happen in the future when there are fires, heavy rains, or personal 911 emergencies - when timely services are critical to life and death situations. How will these emergency vehicles be able to navigate the area?

Please require a thorough evaluation of the likely impact on Public Safety essential services and what could possibly mitigate these concerns.

The project is proposed for an established residential neighborhood. It proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I read that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before construction begins. In addition to worsening the traffic situation, trucks and construction will disrupt the ability of neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities. This causes real issues, more than just a nuisance. Whenever there is even minor construction in many of the Riviera areas, my street included, you cannot get in and out of your driveway and your street, safety personnel are required to manage traffic flow to one lane causing delays, and the noise is so disruptive, one must close doors and windows, and deal with dust and air quality issues.

Please require the developer to address these concerns in detail as to how this can possibly be managed and the length of time and disruption that will occur.

Thank you for considering and addressing these genuine concerns about safety, traffic, noise, pollution and the overall aesthetics that this project would cause for the area and our city in the short and long term, and the totality of mitigation actions that it would take to make this proposal acceptable.

We all share the responsibility, but especially entrust in you, the stewardship of our City. It is an awesome responsibility. We respect and appreciate the many difficult decisions that you must make in balancing many needs for our beautiful community. Thank you for all you do to keep our city beautiful, safe and growing in ways that will be treasured now and in the future.

Respectfully,

Cecilia Harris, PhD
1140 Garcia Road
Santa Barbara CA
93103

From: Rich Appelbaum <richappelbaum@ucsb.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 10:12 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: 609 Grand Avenue proposed project

You don't often get email from richappelbaum@ucsb.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

On Tue, Sep 23, 2025 at 9:34AM Rich Appelbaum <richappelbaum@ucsb.edu> wrote:

Dear Mayor Rowse and City Council members,

For once I am writing as an individual concerned citizen, and not on behalf of CLUE-SB (which might well take my position). I am writing instead as a concerned citizen who has lived in the Riviera area since 1973 – initially as a renter in a small fourplex on Loma Street, then as a homeowner on Sherman Rd (off Conejo), and – since 2009 – in the Cielito area (1525 Las Canoas Rd, to be precise!). Karen and I bought our current home in Las Canoas because we lost our home on Sherman Rd in the Tea Fire – as did everyone else on Sherman Rd, and almost everyone else who lived on Conejo. We were out of town at the time, so were spared the horrors of fleeing the fast-moving fire – unlike a UCSB colleague, who faced a harrowing escape from her home near the top of Conejo.

I mention all this just to highlight what you all know – that the proposed project, a 53-unit, 6-story apartment building at the intersection of Grand Avenue and California Street, lies in a highly-congested fire prone area. I know this from having lived on the area forever, having experienced wildfires, and because my regular route downtown is along Grand Avenue. That route already is impacted. Grand Avenue, where residents must use on-street parking, is effectively a one-lane road. Navigating it requires that I, or any approaching car, pull into an open parking space so the other can safely pass. While this reveals the community spirit of Santa Barbara, it is not a good solution if there is a disaster, or a driver who is unwilling or unable to concede space. You don't need to be a highway engineer to know what would happen if a fast-moving fire came over the hill, and a 53-unit building has been added to the mix at a crucial exit choke point.

You all know that I champion affordable housing and am working with others (including at the City's Strategic Plan meetings) to try to find locations and funding that will enable the City to meet its RHNA requirements. Opposing 1609 Grand is simply a bad idea in an extremely dangerous location. I urge you to insist on a CEQA review that will highlight these and other concerns that fall under CEQA's purview. Builder's Remedy should not allow projects that create dangerous conditions in our congested and fire-prone hills.

Many thanks,

Rich Appelbaum

Richard P. Appelbaum, Ph.D.

Distinguished Professor Emeritus and former MacArthur Chair in Sociology and Global & International Studies
UCSB Campus Lead & University Council Rep, University of California Disaster Resilience Network

University of California at Santa Barbara

Santa Barbara, CA 93106 || phone: (805) 886-7820 || email: rich@global.ucsb.edu

<https://www.global.ucsb.edu/people/richard-appelbaum>

<https://ucdrn.org/>

From: Chris Fossekk <chrisfossek@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 12:01 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: CEQA review

You don't often get email from chrisfossek@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I'm writing out of my concern for the 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for 1609 Grand Avenue. I'm not concerned just about the aesthetics, but the more significant public safety factors of this historic residential neighborhood. Although this neighborhood is zoned R-4, none of the multi-family structures have more than two stories. The addition of a 53-unit building would add a giant, multistory structure and at least 106 more vehicles to the one lane streets of this neighborhood.

I live on the upper Riviera where the only access to downtown Santa Barbara is via Pedregosa St., Valerio St., California St., Grand Ave., Moreno Rd. and Jimeno Rd. With the exception of Valerio St., these are all one-lane two-way streets. On normal days, drivers on these streets are obligated to graciously take turns wiggling through the narrow passages of the roadway. CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT THESE STREETS WOULD BE LIKE IF THERE WERE A NEED FOR EVACUATION FROM WILDFIRE, FLOOD, EARTHQUAKE OR ANY ANOTHER DISASTER?!

Santa Barbara is admired worldwide for its architectural beauty and serene neighborhoods. I can't imagine that our Architectural Board of Review would consider approving such a colossal structure in this historic neighborhood.

As the father of a two-generation Santa Barbara family, I sincerely hope that the City of Santa Barbara can conduct a comprehensive analysis of the project and its likely impacts on our neighborhood, through a California Environmental Quality Act, "CEQA" review and find its way to preventing this and similar future projects from destroying the ambience of our unique community.

Thank you for all you have done and will continue to do to make Santa Barbara the fabulous community it currently is.

Sincerely,

Chris Fossekk
1415 Hillcrest Road

--

Chris Fossekk - Flamenco/Mediterranean Guitar

performer, composer & recording artist

cell: (805) 455-1005

www.chrisfossek.com

<https://open.spotify.com/album/4JeAHo1OsjSyo2dzXSVIHx>

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/artist/chris-fossekk/1002151409>

<https://geo.itunes.apple.com/us/album/camino-cielo/1208777572?mt=1&app=music>

From: jaynejohann10@gmail.com <jaynejohann10@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 12:04 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Eric Friedman <EFriedman@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Kristen Sneddon <KSneddon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Meagan Harmon <MHarmon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Mike Jordan <MJordan@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Oscar Gutierrez <OGutierrez@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Randy Rowse <rrowse@santabarbaraca.gov>; Wendy Santamaria <WSantamaria@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: New Building Proposals

You don't often get email from jaynejohann10@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Santa Barbara City Council and Planning Commission:

I am writing about the two housing projects that are being proposed at 1609 Grand Avenue and 505 East Los Olivos Street. Both projects would impact public safety and do not meet the current building standards. You CAN reject these proposals.

I strongly urge the City to carry out the necessary California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) studies and reject these projects based on the already dangerous evacuation corridors in a high fire hazard zone. While these projects are being pursued under the state's "builder's remedy" housing provision, the City of Santa Barbara has the authority to reject them if they pose a risk to public health or safety, based on established, written public safety standards.

During the Jesusita Fire, my friends barely escaped because of traffic jams. Trying to evacuate a six-story building while the neighborhood is trying to evacuate would be life threatening. First responders would have difficulty navigating the area at the same time people are evacuating.

The new buildings do not meet the height requirements of the City General Plan standards and policies. Placing them in the heart of neighborhoods or near historic landmarks would drastically alter the character of our city. I have friends who've told me they've stopped visiting because Santa Barbara has changed so much. If six- or eight-story buildings begin to reshape our cityscape, we risk losing the tourist economy that has been a cornerstone of our community.

The amount of affordable housing included in these projects only meets the bare minimum required for them to qualify under the builder's remedy, so the benefit to the community is minimal. In contrast, the permanent harm these projects would cause, especially increase in traffic, neighborhood character, and wildfire evacuation, far outweighs any potential gain. Why not discretely build housing in smaller vacant buildings downtown?

I urge you to stand up to these developers and conduct a CEQA review that would allow the City to ~~reject~~ the proposals based on building in high fire zones, the impact on emergency access and **evacuation on narrow roads**, as well as an increase in traffic in already congested areas.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,

Jayne Johann and Tom Phillips
131 Northridge Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93015

From: Carell Jantzen <carell@egan.org>

Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 12:12 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: Inquiry

[You don't often get email from carell@egan.org. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Why would this enormous building add anything positive to our small town?

We can't continue to pack people into this small town without clogging every street with cars?

Carell Jantzen

From: Jan Everote <deneige@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 12:43 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SAGESB.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: 1609:Grand Ave. project

City of Santa Barbara,

I am a 30 plus year resident of the Riviera and within a mile of this proposed project.

It clearly makes no sense at all in a number of areas...all of which are critically important.

Fire, Traffic and emergency response:

I drive these streets daily and both Grand and California are narrow and often require jockeying around moving and parked cars to travel up or down the street. They also happen to be fire evacuation routes for a large number of homes and adding this massive building and large number of inhabitants is unconscionable.

This is a high fire risk area and we have had to evacuate several times. Often there were traffic jams during those evacuations. . It makes no sense to amplify a difficult situation.

The traffic involved in routine travel in our established neighborhood would be negatively impacted as well. This is simply not an area to support this massive a building with the narrow streets and necessary evacuation routes.

The aesthetics from the standpoint of scale are beyond ridiculous. This building is far too massive and tall on this small lot and effectively ruins the views from downtown towards the riviera, and on the riviera itself it would block homes and stick out as incompatible with its neighbors. Even allowing for a good design, the scale is way off. Our goal should be to not lose sight of the beauty of this city. This project adds nothing positive.

This massive project would disrupt the neighborhood for some time. It is on a hillside and includes subterranean parking requiring removal of tons of dirt. Hillside work is and should be highly scrutinized. Again, the massive size is a concern from a construction standpoint, drainage, access and noise.

The city must require a full CEAQ review of this project. To not do so invites disaster. I urge the city to take action.

Sincerely,

Jan Everote
1844 E las Tunas Rd
Santa Barbara, CA
805-403-0726

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPad](#)

From: Lukas Kvilekval <kviluk@lbsstudents.org>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 3:09 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: HOUSING PROJECT

You don't often get email from kviluk@lbsstudents.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

YOU SHOULD NOT DO THIS!!

THIS IS WILL NEGATIVELY IMPACT SB FOREVER

LET ME RESTATE, YOU SHOULD NOT DO THIS!!!!

DON'T DO IT I'M SERIOUS

From: Jim Bangs <jwbangs@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 3:23 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

CC: info@sagesb.org <info@SAGESB.org>; Mary Ellen Bangs <emme99@bigthunder.com>

Subject: 1609 Grand Project

Attachment(s): "Bangs Letter on 1609 Grand.pdf"

[You don't often get email from jwbangs@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear City of SB.

Attached please find a letter that summarizes our concerns for the 1609 Grand Project. It is signed by both myself and my wife.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you for your help with this matter.

Sincerely,

Jim and Mary Ellen Bangs

Jim and Mary Ellen Bangs
1841 Loma St.
Santa Barbara CA 93103
Sept. 23, 2025
jbangs@bigthunder.com
Re: 1609 Grand Ave Project

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

We live within 1,600 ft of the proposed "1609 Grand Project", which we understand to be a 6-story 53-unit apartment complex. We further understand the access to these proposed 53 unit apartment will be on California St., which is one of the steepest and narrowest streets in our city.

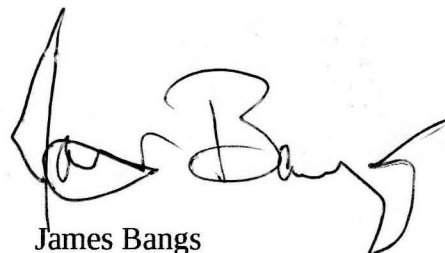
Several aspects about the project concern us greatly:

1. Public Safety. Fire safety is a very serious concern. Grand Ave. and California St. are one of only a handful of fire evacuation routes for a large fraction of the Riviera and Lower East Side residences above Grand Ave.. As it is, evacuation of this area would be chaotic due to narrow streets. The additional 53 family units from the 1609 Grand Project, with car access on California St. will add 53 families trying to return home to rescue pets or family members, coupled with the rest trying to evacuate. It is unimaginable how this would work on California St. (or Grand).
2. Traffic. We regularly use Grand Ave. and California St. to get to and for from our home to downtown. I personally ride my bike down Grand to California St., and shudder to think of having to deal with the extra cars that 53 families added from the 1609 Grand project would bring. We encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden to both cars and bicycles on our neighborhood's steep and narrow streets.
3. Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. We understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. Aesthetics. Although we do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, we do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City should require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of our city's reputation.

Thank you for considering our concerns. We will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Sincerely,


Mary Ellen Bangs


James Bangs

From: Greg Giloth <greg.giloth@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 3:50 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Greg Giloth <greg.giloth@gmail.com>; info@sagesb.org <info@SageSB.org>
Subject: Development Project at 1609 Grand Avenue
Attachment(s): "Dear City of Santa Barbara.docx"

[You don't often get email from greg.giloth@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

Attached is my letter in opposition to the proposed developmental 1609 Grand Avenue:

Sincerely,

Greg Giloth
2336 Santa Barbara St
SB, CA. 93105

September 19, 2025
Greg Giloth
2336 Santa Barbara Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within a mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. Traffic. In traveling along Grand Avenue and on to California Street to get downtown without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. Aesthetics. Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Regards,

Greg Giloth

Cell: 805-689-5100

E-mail: greg.giloth@gmail.com

From: Ellen Easton <elleneaston4@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 4:16 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info @sagesb.org <info@SageSB.org>
Subject: Development Project at 1609 Grand Avenue
Attachment(s): "Dear City of Santa Barbara.2 2.docx"

[You don't often get email from elleneaston4@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

Attached is my letter in opposition to the proposed development at 1609 Grand Avenue:

Sincerely,

Ellen Easton
2336 Santa Barbara Street
SB, CA 93105

2.docx
IN

, □ ^6

mB

From: Sally Brandon <sbrandon@rebalance360.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 7:16 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: Grand Avenue Project Concerns

You don't often get email from sbrandon@rebalance360.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building at 1609 Grand Avenue, which is near my home on Micheltorena Street.

My primary concern is the potential impact on traffic. The existing conditions on California Street already make it challenging for two cars to pass simultaneously. The additional traffic generated by this development would exacerbate these issues on our narrow, steep streets. I urge the City to require a comprehensive traffic impact assessment from the developer.

I am also concerned about the project's potential impact on public safety. California Street serves as a critical evacuation route for high-fire-risk areas. This project could create dangerous bottlenecks during evacuations, potentially trapping residents. The City must mandate an evaluation of this impact and explore mitigation strategies.

Lastly, the proposed building's size is incompatible with the character of the neighborhood and will negatively impact Santa Barbara's aesthetic. I urge the City to require the developer to re-evaluate the proposal to ensure it does not compromise the City's reputation for beauty.

Thank you for considering these concerns. I will continue to monitor this project closely.

Sincerely,
Sally Brandon



Sally Brandon

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, CLIENT SERVICE AND ADVICE

- EMAIL sbrandon@rebalance360.com
- DIRECT (650) 396-3902
- SCHEDULE Sally's Calendar
- FILES Secure Upload



From: Christine M Eveland <spikesmum@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 8:29 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Christine Eveland <spikesmum@yahoo.com>
Subject: Grand St project

You don't often get email from spikesmum@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom It May Concern at the City of Santa Barbara:

I live on the street above the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for 1609 Grand Avenue, at or near California Street.

This project concern me greatly, and I am not sure what the planners are thinking to put this monstrosity, completely out of touch with the surrounding area and the aesthetic in general of Santa Barbara.

The increase in traffic, on this narrow street and the one above it - Loma Street, where cars going in opposing directions must pull over to allow one to pass, would make things much worse that they are now on these long-ago paved streets. Surely any assessment would confirm this. These streets are narrow and steep.

In the event of fire, the risk of not getting out of this area would be greatly compounded. Again, the City must seriously consider this.

Needless to say, and not in any way a small matter, this enormous building would create an eyesore visible all over the City, completely out of character with the City's beauty.

And of course, the actual construction would create a nightmare of logjams and noise pollution, which would go on for too long, considering how construction projects drag on and on.

Please consider these issues and reject this misbegotten and incredibly thoughtless project.

Christine Eveland
1632 Loma St
415/624-9375

From: Joanne Cryan <joanneinsb@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 12:49 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Jake Cryan <jakecryanphotography@gmail.com>
Subject: 1609-1615 grand ave.

[You don't often get email from joanneinsb@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

To whom it may concern,

I am deeply troubled by the builders remedy proposed project for 1609-1615 Grand ave. I have lived around the corner on East Valerio for 21 years and have had ample time to observe the traffic patterns, evacuation routes and emergency service vehicles routes in the area and specifically on the 1600 block of grand. The road is narrow and often blocked in one direction due to a delivery truck, parked cars, any construction or emergency vehicle. Fire trucks going to fires in the high fire zone just above use Valerio to grand as their route. When we have been evacuated for fires such as the Jesusita fire or the tea fire the area fills with cars and becomes congested, aggravated by road closures. With 60 units are added to a narrow road with 0 public transportation options, flanked by steep hills impossible for anyone with a disability to navigate safely, you will get a situation with more potential risk than pacific palisades.

My friends from the Palisades evacuated their home loading their most precious belongings into their car only to be told to abandon their car and run because of the traffic jam and fast moving fire. The car burned to ashes and they got out on foot because they were able bodied enough to flee on foot. The similarities in the neighborhoods are undeniable and you only have to look at getting home owners insurance to understand the fire risk. I recently was threatened with non renewal by my insurance company and I live below this site with less potential fire danger.

This project is literally courting tragedy. Taking a lot that was zoned for 4 units for a reasons both esthetic and safety related and putting 60 units on it is insanity. Understanding the need for housing, I would support a 8-10 unit project as long as it had some parking and some affordable units. That would be a reasonable compromise without turning the area into a traffic clogged safety nightmare.

Thank you for considering this input,
Joanne Cryan

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 10:53 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

[Microsoft](#)

Review These Messages

1 messages are being held for you to review as of **9/24/2025 5:21:58 PM (UTC)**.

Review them within **30 days of the received date** by going to the [Quarantine page](#) in the Security Center.

Prevented spam messages

Sender: roallan@yahoo.com

Subject: Santa Barbara Planning Division - 1609 Grand Avenue

Date: 9/24/2025 1:48:26 PM

[Review Message](#)

[Release](#)

[Block Sender](#)

From: Maria Black <mariablack1@me.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 11:22 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Housing projects
Attachment(s): "Dear City of Santa Barbara.docx"

[You don't often get email from mariablack1@me.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I am appalled by the proposed development projects at **1609 Grand Avenue** and **505 East Los Olivos Street**. The fact that the City missed the filing deadline for its Housing Element—thereby allowing these projects to be submitted under the "Builder's Remedy"—is a travesty. This failure has opened the door to developments that are entirely inappropriate for these historically significant and environmentally sensitive neighborhoods.

Santa Barbara residents deserve better leadership. We pay a premium to live here and expect our elected officials and city staff to protect both the **safety** of residents and the **integrity** of our historic neighborhoods.

These projects raise serious safety concerns. The proposed increases in density and traffic on narrow, winding streets—already difficult to navigate—pose significant risks, especially in the event of a wildfire evacuation. As someone who has been evacuated during **four wildfires over the past four decades**, I know firsthand how chaotic and dangerous these situations can become. Adding more residents and vehicles to these areas, both of which are classified as **Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones**, is reckless.

Furthermore, the **Riviera and Mission districts** are among Santa Barbara's most cherished and historically rich neighborhoods. They are already developed to capacity. These areas should be **designated as historic districts**, and future development should be limited to the scale and character of existing single-family homes. While there is a clear need for multi-family housing, such development must be thoughtfully located—**not** forced into fragile, inappropriate areas under the guise of housing mandates.

I urge the City to prioritize **safety**, **historical preservation**, and **common sense** in planning decisions. Please do everything in your power to oppose or mitigate these ill-conceived projects, and ensure that future housing efforts are aligned with both our community's needs and its long-term resilience.

Sincerely,

Maria Black

1915 Coyote Cir. Santa Barbara

Mariablack1@me.com

From: Bill Phelps <bphelps@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 11:48 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: admin@sagesb.org <admin@sagesb.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue Project

You don't often get email from bphelps@icloud.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within one mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street. Several aspects of the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. **Traffic** - I regularly travel along California Street from my home to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, two opposing cars can't use the street at once due to legally parked cars. On both Grand and California, one car must pull over to the side to allow an oncoming car to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on these old, steep, narrow streets
2. **Public Safety** - Safety is a significant concern, along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies. I am concerned that the project, as proposed, would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations
3. **Aesthetics** - Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation
4. **Noise** - The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2 stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Bill Phelps
1242 Dover Lane

From: Michael Vilkin <mgvilkin@me.com>

Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 12:29 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

CC: info@sagesb.org <info@SAGESB.org>

Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue - Please don't approve the project.

Attachment(s): "NMD work roof 25 09 24 means methods revised 1.pdf"

[You don't often get email from mgvilkin@me.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]



Rent Stabilization Division
455 N. Rexford Dr.
Beverly Hills, CA 90210
Tel: (310) 285-1000
Email: bhrent@beverlyhills.org

MEANS AND METHOD PLAN FOR TENANT PROTECTION DURING CONSTRUCTION / 10-DAY NOTICE TO TENANTS

If a property is tenant-occupied and, as determined by the City of Beverly Hills, the construction work could last longer than one day and impact the habitability of any unit on the property, the applicant shall submit this Construction Means and Method Plan to the City Building Official for review and approval prior to the issuance of a permit to alter, repair or rehabilitate the property. A copy of this Means and Method Plan shall be provided to all tenants within ten (10) days following the issuance of the permit, and no work may commence under the permit until ten (10) days after all tenants are notified (10-Day Notice).

1. MEANS AND METHOD PLAN

Refer to BHMC § 9-1-108 (L) for additional information.

1A. Review the following questions to determine if a Means and Method Plan is required.

- Does this structure have one or more dwelling unit(s) that is tenant-occupied? Yes ☒ No ☐
If "NO", do not proceed to the next MMP question, **STOP HERE**, a Means and Method Plan is not required. If "YES", proceed to the next MMP question.
- Will the work take more than one day? Yes ☒ No ☐
If "NO", **STOP HERE**, a Means and Method Plan is not required. If "YES", a Means and Method Plan may be required.

1B. Property & Applicant Information

Submittal Date:	9-24-25	☒ Initial Plan	☐ Revised Plan
Property Address:	304 S. DOTTENY DR, BH, CA 90211		
APN #:	4331-25-33	Associated Permit #(s):	Roofing
APPLICANT			
Name:	MICHAEL VILKIN	Email:	M6VILKIN@ME.COM
Address:	PO Box 3738	Phone:	310.351.5549
City:	SANTA BARBARA	State:	CA Zip: 93105
PROPERTY OWNER			
Owner:	NMDOH, LLC	Representative:	MICHAEL VILKIN
Address:	PO Box 3738	Phone:	310.351.5549
City:	SANTA BARBARA	State:	CA Zip: 93130 Email: MGVILKIN@ME.COM
CONTRACTOR			
Name:	CLIFF CLIFF ROOFING	License:	923436
Address:	827 GRAYCLIFF AVE	Phone:	323.309.6536
City:	LA BENTE	State:	CA Zip: 90063 Email: B.I.Roofing@yahoo.com



1C. Description of Work

Work will occur in (check all that apply):			
☐ Occupied Unit(s) Please Specify Unit #(s): <u> </u>	☐ Vacant Unit(s) Please Specify Unit #(s): <u> </u>	☒ Common Area(s) Please Specify Location(s): <u>New Roof</u>	
Project Valuation if Related to Seismic Retrofit (labor & materials): <u>NA</u>			
Estimated Duration of Work (weeks, months): ↓	Estimated Start Date: → <u>Oct 6</u>	Estimated End Date: <u>Oct 10</u>	
BPMC §5-1-205: Construction work hours are: Monday - Friday (8:00 am - 6:00 pm)			

Describe the scope of work and construction process in detail, organized sequentially and include information regarding the periods in which services such as laundry, parking, elevators, water, and power will be unavailable; attach additional description as necessary:

new roof. ① remove old roof ② deliver roofing materials & new gutter materials ③ install new roof + gutters.

1D. Construction Impact to Tenants

Instructions: Please check all that apply. All times are estimates:

	Duration Time:		Duration Time:
☒ Noise/ Vibration	<u>8-5, M-F</u>	☐ Loss of Laundry	<u> </u>
☐ Dust	<u> </u>	☒ Loss of Parking	<u>8-5, M-F ONE SPACE</u>
☐ Sandblasting/Power Washing	<u> </u>	☐ Inoperable Toilet	<u> </u>
☐ Fire Safety Interruption (Sprinkler/ Alarm)	<u> </u>	☐ Inoperable Kitchen Sink (No Cold/Hot Water)	<u> </u>
☐ Scaffolding	<u> </u>	☐ Inoperable Heater	<u> </u>
☐ Electricity Shut Off	<u> </u>	☐ Inoperable Sink/Tub/Shower	<u> </u>
☐ Gas Shut Off	<u> </u>	☐ Egress / Path of Travel	<u> </u>
☐ Water Shut Off	<u> </u>	☐ Inoperable Elevator	<u> </u>
☐ Blocked / Removal of Windows	<u> </u>	☐ Hazardous Material (incl. without limitation, asbestos removal and lead abatement)	<u> </u>
☐ Other (Please describe in detail or attach additional description as necessary): ↓			Duration Time:

If the Building Official determines that a Means and Method Plan is required, it shall be posted next to the building permit in a conspicuous place at the property for the duration of the construction and shall be exhibited to any authorized representative of the City or any public officer upon demand.

1E. Mitigation Measures (Please check all that apply):

☒ Close Windows / Doors ☒ Regularly Sweep & Vacuum ☐ Air Scrubbers & Purifiers	☒ Temporary Warning Signage ☒ Restrict Work Hours ☐ Backup Power	☐ Install Plastic/Containment Barriers ☐ Backup Water ☒ Obtain Residential Parking Permit
☐ Other (Please describe in detail or attach additional description as necessary): <u>I will get a parking pass if necessary for one tenant. However one apt. is vacant. If not filed, I will just use that parking space.</u>		
☐ Relocation of Tenant(s) or Tenant's personal property - Refer to the following Relocation Plan information.		



2. RELOCATION PLAN

Tenant(s) will need to be temporarily relocated if the conditions of the property or the construction work will render the premises unsafe for continued occupancy. If this Means and Method Plan demonstrates, as determined by the City, that the work being performed on the property may require that tenant(s) be temporarily relocated or that tenant's personal property be temporarily relocated, the applicant shall also prepare a Relocation Plan by completing this Section 2 for approval by the City Rent Stabilization Department prior to issuance of a permit. This Relocation Plan must show that fair and reasonable relocation benefits will be provided to all displaced tenants. In addition to the required 10-Day Notice referenced in Section 1, all tenants required to be relocated must be provided notification of the displacement, on a form provided by the City, to the extent practicable, at least thirty (30) days prior to the commencement of construction (30-Day Notice) (**BHMC§ 9-1-108 (O)**).

2A. If no tenant relocation or relocation of tenant's personal property is required, check the box below, and move ahead to Tenant Notice (Section #3):

☒ Work will not create untenable conditions, and the tenant(s) and tenant's personal property will remain in place

2B. If tenant relocation is required, fill out the following fields: *NO*

Check all that apply:

- ☐ Tenant(s) will be relocated to a comparable unit(s). Please specify affected unit #s: _____
- ☐ In lieu of relocating tenant(s) to a comparable unit(s), tenant(s) have entered into a mutual agreement(s) with the landlord. Please specify affected unit(s) _____ and submit fully signed agreement(s) to the City.
- ☐ In lieu of relocating tenant(s) to a comparable unit(s), tenant(s) have made their own arrangements. Please specify affected unit #s _____

Check all that apply

- ☐ Same Building
- ☐ Another Building Name/Address: _____
- ☐ Hotel/Motel Name/Address: _____
- ☐ Other: _____

Check here if:

- ☐ Providing additional information beyond this form. Please attach.

Start of Relocation Period: _____

Approximate End of
Relocation Period: _____

Please describe moving costs covered by the landlord:

\$

\$

2C. If relocation of tenant's personal property is required, fill out the following: *NO*

If work areas must be cleared of tenant's furnishings or other property, please describe, and explain actions by landlord (such as provide boxes, and help tenants to relocate, etc.):

If tenant's furnishings and other property will be exposed to theft, elements, or other hazards, please describe, and explain mitigation measures to protect the tenant's property:



3. TENANT NOTICE

The applicant must certify that all tenants of the property will receive the 10-Day Notice (a copy of this completed form) within ten (10) days following the issuance of the building permit and that no work will commence under the building permit until ten (10) days after all tenants are notified (10-Day Notice). If any tenants will be relocated, the applicant must also certify that all tenants who will be relocated have received the 30-Day Notice (using a form provided by the City), to the extent practicable, at least thirty (30) days prior to the commencement of construction. This 10-Day Notice and the 30-Day Notice, if applicable, shall either be hand delivered to each tenant of the property or sent by certified mail, return receipt requested. To ensure timely receipt of notices that are mailed, allow five days for mailing. (e.g., deposit the 10-Day Notice in the mail within five (5) days following the issuance of the permit). **A copy of the 10-Day Notice and the 30-Day Notice, if applicable, must be returned to the Rent Stabilization Department office with a Declaration of Proof of Service (on forms provided by the City) no later than 24 hours from the date of service (BHMC§ 9-1-108 (O)(2)).**

Current Address: 304 S. DOHENY DR., BH, CA 90211

3A. Tenants should contact the following individual(s) for tenant inquiries, complaints, and requests for mitigation of nuisance conditions:

Owner/Management:	
Name/Title:	TRACY TAEF
Phone:	818 484 6193
Email:	TAEFCDPM@OUTLOOK.COM
Contractor:	
Name/Title:	SALVADOR LEON of B+I Roofing
Phone:	323 309 6536
Email:	B+I Roofing@yahoo.com

3B. Tenant Notification Disclaimer:

- The construction being undertaken at the property will not terminate your tenancy.
- You have the right to seek mitigation from the property owner for nuisance conditions at the property, including, but not limited to, noise, dust, vibrations, utility shut offs, and other construction impacts. Mitigation measures may include, but are not limited to, temporary rent reductions, quiet office space for tenants working at home, and temporary accommodations.
- You have the right to review and receive free copies of the owner's construction means and method plan.
- If relocation is required, you have the right to review and receive free copies of the owner's relocation plan.
- If the construction activity may require displacement, to the greatest extent practicable, no tenant lawfully occupying the property will be required to move without at least thirty (30) days' written notice from the owner.
- If you consider conditions at the property to be unsafe, in violation of the City's Technical Codes, or in violation of the applicant's construction means and method plan, please immediately contact City Building and Safety at (310) 285-1141.
- If the construction project exceeds thirty (30) days in duration, as measured from the date that construction commences, the applicant will provide twice-monthly notices to the tenants regarding the progress of construction and will schedule monthly meetings to address the construction progress and obtain tenant input and feedback regarding the construction.
- Emergency Repairs. Where equipment replacement and repairs must be performed in an emergency, a complete permit application shall be submitted within the next working business day to the City Building Official.
- Security. Before receiving a permit for a project which requires an applicant to prepare a construction means and method plan, the applicant shall furnish security to the City sufficient to ensure the timely and faithful performance of all work included within the scope of the permit and the payment of all relocation assistance necessitated by the temporary displacement of the tenants, if any. The City Building Official may exempt a project from the security requirements if the City Building Official determines such security is unnecessary based on an analysis of the following factors: size of project, duration of project, potential for impact on tenant safety, and invasiveness of project.



If required, Cash Bonds are acceptable forms of security (BHMC§ 9-1-108(P)).

- General. No person shall erect, construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, improve, remove, sandblast, or convert the use of any building, structure or building service equipment regulated by the Beverly Hills Municipal Code without complying with all conditions of any required construction means and method plan (BHMC§ 9-1-108 (Q)).
- Owner's Responsibility. The property owner shall remain responsible for any violation of the construction means and method plan regardless of the responsibility of any other person for the violation or any contract or agreement the owner entered into with a third party concerning the owner's property or the construction that necessitated the preparation of the means and method plan (BHMC§ 9-1-108(Q)).

3C. This 10-Day Notice must be provided to all tenants at the property within ten (10) days following the issuance of the permit for the proposed construction work and at least ten (10) days prior to the commencement of any proposed construction work via one of the following options:

☒ Hand Delivered Notification Date: 10 days Before work Delivered By: TRACY TAFT, mgr
☐ Mailing Service Mailing Date: _____ Delivered By: _____

If applicable, the 30-Day Notice shall have been provided to all tenants at the property who must be relocated, to the extent practicable, at least thirty (30) days prior to the commencement of any proposed construction work via one of the following options:

☐ Hand Delivered Notification Date: NA Delivered By: _____
☐ Mailing Service Mailing Date: _____ Delivered By: _____

4. MEANS & METHOD PLAN CERTIFICATION

- ☒ I certify that storage facilities required to temporarily store each tenant's personal belongings during the period of construction will be provided by the landlord. For the security of personal belongings, storage for each tenant's personal belonging shall be independent from other relocated tenant's property.
- ☒ I certify the housing facilities identified in 2.B provide accommodations comparable to the tenant's regular housing. This includes, but is not limited to, laundry facilities, exercise facilities, balconies, kitchens, pet housing/care, and parking.
- ☒ I certify that I understand that approval of this Means and Method Plan is not a permit to begin construction, and that I must obtain an issued building permit from the Beverly Hills Development Services Program prior to starting construction.
- ☒ I certify that this 10-Day Notice shall either be hand delivered to each tenant, or sent by certified mail (return receipt requested) to each tenant within ten (10) days following the issuance of a permit and at least 10 days prior to the commencement of construction (BHMC § 9-1-108 (O)).
- ☒ I certify that if tenant relocation is required, to the extent practicable, that at least thirty (30) days advanced written notice, using a form provided by the City, has been provided to all tenants who will be relocated (BHMC § 9-1-108 (O)).
- ☒ I certify that I will provide twice monthly notices to tenants regarding progress, and schedule monthly meetings if the work exceeds thirty (30) days.
- ☒ I certify that the construction being undertaken at the property will not terminate the tenant's tenancy.
- ☒ I certify that this Means and Method Plan shall be posted next to the building permit in a conspicuous place at the property for the duration of the construction and shall be exhibited to any authorized representative of the City or any public officer upon demand.
- ☒ I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of State of California that the information provided in this form is true and correct.

I am (select one): ☐ Owner ☐ Contractor ☒ Owner's Representative ☐ Property Manager

MICHAEL VILKIN
Print Name

[Signature]
Signature

9-24-25
Date



PROOF OF SERVICE

10-Day Notice to Tenants Pursuant to Beverly Hills Municipal Code Section 9-1-108 (O)

I, TRACY TAFT, declare:

I am a resident of the State of California and over the age of eighteen years. I provided the attached 10-Day Notice to the tenants of the apartment building located at 304 S. DOTTENY DRIVE. in the City of Beverly Hills as follows:

☐ BY CERTIFIED MAIL RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED, in a sealed envelope postage prepaid, addressed to following tenants at the address set forth above, and deposited in the United States mail on the dates set forth below (add additional pages if necessary):

_____	Date: _____
_____	Date: _____
_____	Date: _____
_____	Date: _____
_____	Date: _____



BY HAND DELIVERY to the following tenants on the dates listed below (add additional pages if necessary):

<u>DiTOMO</u>	Date: _____
<u>SONG</u>	Date: _____
<u>USTENER</u>	Date: _____
<u>Hall</u>	Date: _____
<u>HAND</u>	Date: _____
<u>Burke</u>	Date: _____

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on _____, _____, at _____, California.

(Signature)

From: judidsb@yahoo.com <judidsb@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 12:30 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Info@sagesb.org <Info@sagesb.org>
Subject: 1609 threat to safety as well as inappropriate for neighborhood

[You don't often get email from judidsb@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

I live at 1734 1/2 grand ave, santa barbara CA 93103 . In this block of Grand vehicles must stop to let cars go through one by one because the street is so narrow Cars going in opposite directions requires one driver to pull over into a driveway space to let the car going in the opposite direction pass. This is a major route up to and down from the Riviera. The number of people living and visiting this block has so increased in the 45 years I have lived here that I must now park almost a block away. If there were to be a fire on the Riviera fire engines trying to go up and cars going down would be a bottleneck. Micheltorena is another closest route down. Anything that would impede this route would also be critical. Having that many people with inevitable visitors would also create a bottleneck.

Looking at the illustration of the proposed building, I do not see how it could be appropriate for the lot. It would be like sticking that monstrosity on the beach totally taking away from the other low lying hotels. Judith Duncan

From: Susan <sms1513@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 12:54 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: letter regarding Grand Street project
Attachment(s): "Grand St project.pdf"

You don't often get email from sms1513@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Susan M. Spector
sms1513@gmail.com
601 E. Micheltorena St. #95
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

September 25, 2025

To: City of Santa Barbara

From: Barry and Susan Spector

Re: Public Comment Response for 1609 Grand Avenue (PLN2024-00181)

As residents of the “Bella Riviera” complex we are writing to urge you to require the applicant for the above project to conduct a full environmental report (CEQA). Although our mailing address is 601 East Micheltorena Street, Unit 95, Santa Barbara 93103, the location of our house is on California Street. It is directly across the street from 720 California Street and **two doors downhill from the proposed building**. Our house, our neighbors on California Street, and the entire neighborhood would be directly impacted by this project.

Before looking at the impact, understand the nature of Bella Riviera. It is a diverse neighborhood, home to some 115 families with young children to retirees like us. Many are Cottage Hospital employees who, as first responders, need and flourish under the tranquility, safety, and privacy available to them here. All of us are appalled that these attributes would vanish the project is implemented.

Of special concern are the following:

Increased **traffic, noise, and air pollution** during and after construction would impede one of the key attractions of living here— walking. Many children walk or ride bikes to Roosevelt Elementary School. After school they walk or to each other’s houses and to the designated play areas on the periphery of the complex. Teens walk or bike to Santa Barbara High School. Adults thrive on walking, especially the challenge of the California Street steep slope. Our common private driveway would likely become a more frequently used cut-through from Arrellaga to California Street than it already is. Residents like us whose driveways exit onto California Street would have difficulty making the turn onto this already busy thoroughfare.

Our **safety** during emergencies such as fire is of special concern. From our windows we have often seen fire engines at the foot of the California Street hill forced to pause for oncoming downhill traffic. Even now the downhill traffic rarely heeds the uphill right of way. We are also aware that California Street is a designated emergency route during fires. Additionally, there are always cars parked on the uphill side of the street, creating a one-way situation. These belong to residents whose homes do not include driveways or garages.

Note also that in heavy rainstorms California Street becomes a treacherous and fast-moving river from Oramus to the Micheltorena intersection. What would it be like with the inevitable mud from construction?

Aesthetically, a multistory building would be totally out of character in a community of modest one and two-story homes, some of historic significance.

With full awareness of the need for additional housing in Santa Barbara, we join our neighbors in asking the City to conduct a comprehensive environmental analysis of this shockingly thoughtless project.

Susan and Barry Spector

From: Jayne Sigman <jayne.sigman@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 1:57 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand OPPOSAL

You don't often get email from jayne.sigman@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please consider evacuation and fire safety with this new development in our lower mission canyon. I believe this will negatively affect city and county emergency response times and congest any evacuation plans. I strongly object to this plan/development.

Thank you,

--

Jayne Sigman
Camp Canine, Inc
General Manager
www.campcaninesb.com

From: Gloria Fletcher <glofletch@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 2:31 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609-15 Grand and 505 E Los Olivos

You don't often get email from glofletch@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Planning,

My name is Gloria Fletcher. My address is 1618 Gillespie St, Santa Barbara, CA 93101. Please conduct a thorough analysis of CEQA Impact Issues for 1609 Grand and 505 E Los Olivos.

I drive past the mission and up Mission Canyon Road weekly. I am a member of the SB Botanic Gardens and attend events at the SB Museum of Natural History regularly. I also hike Rattlesnake Canyon and relax at Skofield Park and the Mission Rose Gardens. The route is heavily trafficked with runners, bikers, dog walkers and cars. Crossing the narrow, stone bridges can be dicey, without increased traffic.

These proposed housing projects include the minimum amount of affordable housing units to qualify for the builder's remedy. Two reasons that the 1609 Project should be rejected are: Cal Fire has identified the area as a "very high fire hazard severity zone" and there is a geologic fault nearby. Both projects would increase wildfire evacuation times for residents in the area and impede first responders' access.

These projects do not conform to the City's General Plan and Standards. The aesthetics and ambiance of these neighborhoods would be destroyed. Air quality, traffic, noise and recreational pursuits would all suffer. These projects would also mar the beautiful and iconic Riviera view, which characterizes Santa Barbara.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Gloria Fletcher

From: vpmpllc@aol.com <vpmpllc@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 5:33 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Don't destroy our town

You don't often get email from vpmpllc@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

I would like to voice my strong opposition to this opportunistic abuse of the builder's remedy. These developers come from out of town citing the needs of our community as rationale for this project, when in reality they just want to build as many ocean view units as possible with no consideration for the community or existing infrastructure. Zoning exists for a reason, and in this case, there is no practical rationale for such a project in this area. For example, all roads that would serve this building (Grand, California, and Valerio) are already nearly single lane. How is this area supposed to support 100s of new residents? Santa Barbara has plenty of space that can be rezoned or similar to support large developments like this.

We cannot allow out of town developers to reshape the face of Santa Barbara without the consent of Santa Barbarians under the false pretense of affordable housing. Like the project behind the Mission, this is NOT the way forward!

Thank you,
John Voegel

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 6:36 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

[Microsoft](#)

Review These Messages

1 messages are being held for you to review as of **9/25/2025 1:20:46 AM (UTC)**.

Review them within **30 days of the received date** by going to the [Quarantine page](#) in the Security Center.

Prevented spam messages

Sender: sms1513@gmail.com

Subject: letter regarding Grand Street project

Date: 9/24/2025 7:55:10 PM

[Review Message](#)

[Release](#)

[Block Sender](#)

From: Béla N <bel1901@proton.me>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 9:05 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: comment on 1609 Grand Ave.

You don't often get email from bel1901@proton.me. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom It May Concern at the City of Santa Barbara:

I live on the street above the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for 1609 Grand Avenue, at or near California Street.

This project concern me greatly, and I am not sure what the planners are thinking to put this monstrosity, completely out of touch with the surrounding area and the aesthetic in general of Santa Barbara.

The increase in traffic, on this narrow street and the one above it - Loma Street, where cars going in opposing directions must pull over to allow one to pass, would make things much worse that they are now on these long-ago paved streets. Surely any assessment would confirm this. These streets are narrow and steep.

In the event of fire, the risk of not getting out of this area would be greatly compounded. Again, the City must seriously consider this.

Needless to say, and not in any way a small matter, this enormous building would create an eyesore visible all over the City, completely out of character with the City's beauty.

And of course, the actual construction would create a nightmare of logjams and noise pollution, which would go on for too long, considering how construction projects drag on and on.

Please^{consider} these issues and reject this misbegotten and incredibly thoughtless project.

Béla Nuss

From: Alan Jones <pajonessb@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 9:33 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Building Project at 1609 Grand Avenue

You don't often get email from pajonessb@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I am writing to encourage the rejection of this proposed new building development. As a six story building it is way, way too large for Santa Barbara housing in this neighborhood. Allowing this project to proceed as planned will begin a slide to undermine the character and charm that the city has worked so hard to preserve. Santa Barbara is unique in the charm of its neighborhoods and I suggest that it is important to defend what makes this city so unique and beautiful.

If this project somehow gets past the Architectural Review Board as a large multi-story building then I urge the city to be the last line of defense and reject it outright.

Thank You,
Alan Jones
56-year Santa Barbara resident

From: Mary Ellen Brooks <maryellenbrooks84@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 7:08 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue
Attachment(s): "CPA 1609 Grand final .docx"

You don't often get email from maryellenbrooks84@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Staff: Please find attached a comment letter from Citizens Planning Association for the 1609 Grand Avenue project. Please send me a quick e-mail so I know you received the letter and were able to add it to the packet for decision-makers. Thank you. Marell Brooks, CPA



To City of Santa Barbara: 1609Grand@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

The Citizens Planning Association has been advocating for good planning in Santa Barbara County since 1960. Over the past 65 years, CPA has stood for safe planning that meets the needs of our community. The proposed project at 1609 Grand Avenue consists of a proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

Both California Street and Grand Avenue are narrow, substandard streets. They clearly cannot handle the proposed quantity of new traffic.

Our members regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street. As it is now, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. We encourage the City to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets and perform a proper environmental review.

Fire Hazards & Public Safety. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara's Riviera and Mission Canyon, must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. We are concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars, as they were on the narrow roads in Pacific Palisades. Again, we believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.

Construction Impacts/Noise: The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. We understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.

Stormwater runoff and drainage also needs to be studied on this steep hillside.

CPA believes in full disclosure. It makes no sense that the actual plans are not available to the public! While CPA understands copyright issues, this is a major project, and the public has a right to know what is proposed. So, although CPA does not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, we do know that its size, bulk and scale are incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds the city's height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City from almost every area of the downtown and Riviera. The City is known now for its beauty, and we believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering our concerns. CPA will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add CPA to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Marrell Brooks for Citizens Planning Association

From: Kiki Ander <kiki@kikianderconsulting.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 9:44 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SAGESB.org <info@SAGESB.org>; ryan ander <anderrp@yahoo.com>; Kiki Ander <kiki@kikianderconsulting.com>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue Project
Attachment(s): "Kathryn and Ryan Ander City of Santa Barbara Letter_Grand Project.pdf"

You don't often get email from kiki@kikianderconsulting.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,
Please see attached for our letter.
Best,
Kathryn and Ryan Ander

September 25, 2025

Ryan and Kathryn Ander

1627 Loma Street

Santa Barbara, CA 93103

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

My family (Ryan and Kathryn Ander + our 10-year-old son) live within a ½ mile (1627 Loma Street) of the proposed 53-unit, 6 story apartment building proposed for a site on the lower riviera at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the 2-story proposed garage underlying the apartments is on California street.

Several aspects about the project concern my family greatly, which are outlined below:

Traffic:

We regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from our home on Loma Street to get downtown and cross town to upper State Street. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the city to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets. There is constant confusion on streets within a one block radius (Grand, Loma, Oramas) if the streets are one way or two ways. The current traffic load is cumbersome, let alone additional traffic that would be generated from this large development.

Public Safety:

Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation from our home several times in the past 17 years that we have lived in the neighborhood, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies. We are concerned that the project, as proposed, would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, we believe the city must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.

Noise:

The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. We understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the city should require the developer to address.

Aesthetics:

Although we do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, we do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically

change the look of the city. Thie city of Santa Barbara must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that the project does not damage the city's reputation nor sightlines from neighbor views.

Thank you for considering our concerns.

Sincerely,
Kathryn and Ryan Ander

From: Treloggen Abby <atreloggen@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 10:04 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: 1609Grand@SantaBarbaraCA.gov
Attachment(s): "To 1609Grand@SantaBarbaraCA.gov.pdf"

[You don't often get email from atreloggen@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Sent from my iPhone

To: 1609Grand@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

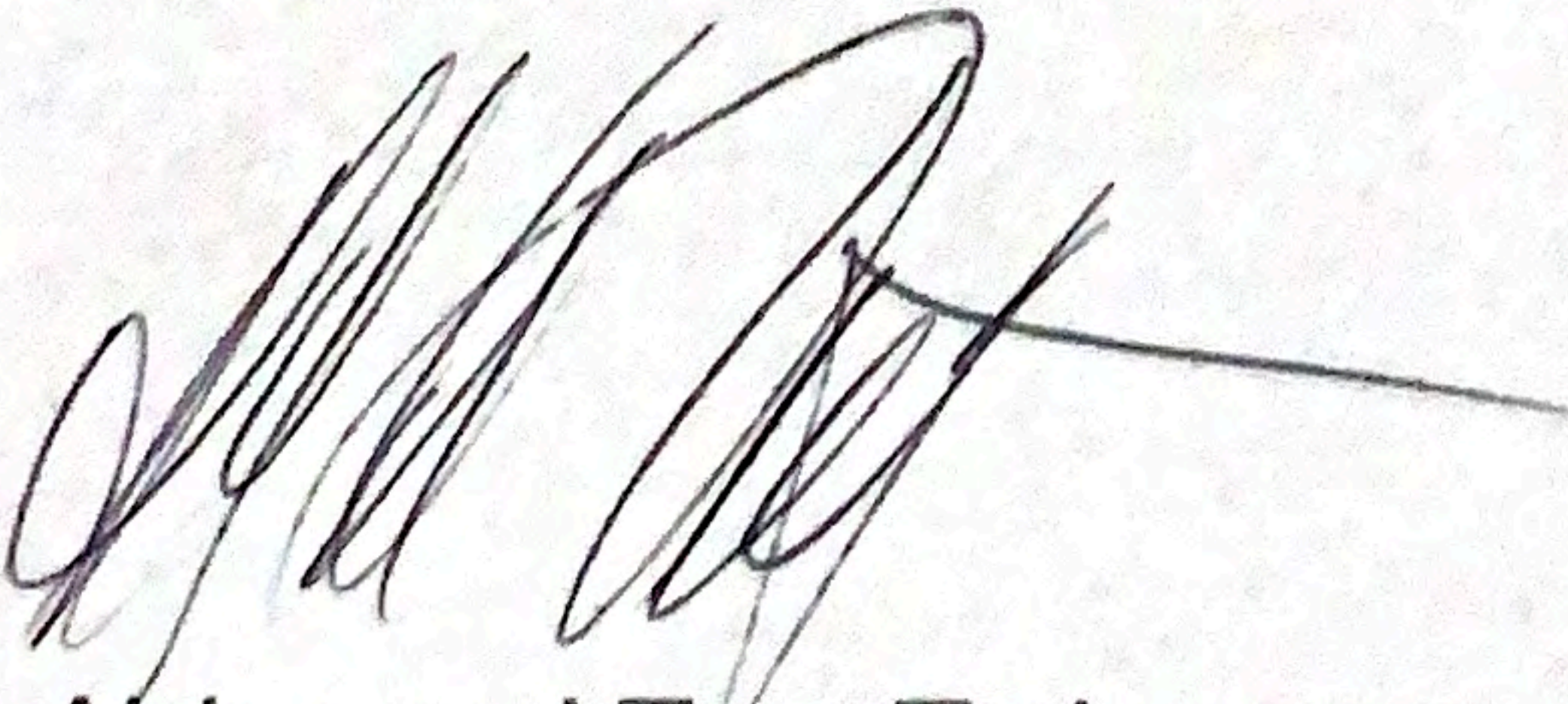
Please don't let Santa Barbara become Little LA.

Intensifying density in Santa Barbara is incongruous with its typography and dangerous to the citizens' well-being. We live .8 of a mile from this project and know exactly what happens in fires and other emergency situations. Our city can barely handle the size that we are.

Santa Barbara is a unique and cozy historic seaside town with a proud Mission and Spanish flair and a culture that honors its past. Now we are at risk of becoming just one more overcrowded California beach town.

This project isn't safe, it isn't attractive and it doesn't belong.

We request a California Environmental Quality Act, "CEQA" review.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Abby and Tom Treloggen', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Abby and Tom Treloggen

atreloggen@gmail.com

322 East Padre Street, Santa Barbara 93105

From: Jake <jakecryanphotography@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 11:56 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609-1615 Grand Ave

You don't often get email from jakecryanphotography@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear sirs/madams,

I am writing to express serious concerns about the proposed "builder's remedy" project at 1609-1615 Grand Ave. My wife and I have lived on East Valerio, just around the corner, for 20 plus years, I am very familiar with the traffic patterns, evacuation challenges, and emergency vehicle access along the 1600 block of Grand.

This stretch of road is extremely narrow and is often obstructed by delivery trucks, parked cars, or construction vehicles. It also serves as a critical route for fire engines responding to incidents in the high-fire zone above. During past evacuations, such as the Jesusita and Tea fires. The area quickly became gridlocked, worsened by road closures and the limited capacity of the streets. Adding 60 residential units on this constrained roadway, with no public transportation options and steep surrounding hills that are unsafe for anyone with mobility challenges, creates an unacceptable level of risk.

Rezoning a parcel intended for four units into a 60-unit complex is not only disproportionate but dangerous. While I support the creation of more housing, this simply is not the correct path to take.

A concerned neighbor,

Jake Cryan

From: Lorraine Lindberg <lorrainelindberg9@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 12:42 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

CC: info@SAGESB.gov <info@SAGESB.gov>

Subject: CEQA request for 1609 Grand

Attachment(s): "Lorraine Lindberg.docx"

[You don't often get email from lorrainelindberg9@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Please see attached request for a CEQA review 1609 Grand.

>

>

Lorraine Lindberg
929 Arbolado Rd
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

September 25, 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live about 1½ miles from the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Ave. As this is one of the city's most iconic sites (behind the Old Mission) I respectfully request a California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") review. The specific areas of analysis in a CEQA review should include:

- Wildfire evacuation: for the project residents and neighbors
- Traffic Impacts: external circulation
- Parking: internal circulation
- Aesthetics
- Stormwater and drainage
- Noise and additional traffic problems during construction
- Public Safety

Once a CEQA review is required, will the city make public a docket # for the concerned public in order for complete transparency to monitor any filings, the process and progress?

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Lorraine Lindberg
713-206-1242

From: Jane Sweeney <mrsjane@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 12:52 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 - 1615 Grand Ave

You don't often get email from mrsjane@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Your authority in the review and recommendations for the Grand Ave Projects is monumental! Please consider this matter with the big picture and future of our city in mind. Please, know that the size, bulk, scale of the project is outrageous especially when considering human life in the event of a fire. Further, it does not harmonize with the neighborhood. Careful planning is what makes our city so beautiful and known worldwide.

Jane Sweeney

From: Bill Urbany <billurbany@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 1:12 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue - Building Project

You don't often get email from billurbany@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

September 25, 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within ½ mile (or insert relevant info) of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. **Traffic.** I regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home in order to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. (insert any personal experience with evacuation or other relevant statement). As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. **Aesthetics.** Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Bill Urbany
851 Cheltenham Rd
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

From: Timpcal <timpcal@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 1:25 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Neighbor input

[You don't often get email from timpcal@aol.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

It truly seems incomprehensible that the city would even entertain a development of this size and scope at this location. This is clearly a residential area which would impact the current residents, forever changing the nature of their homes and living conditions. Considering the extent of regulation the city imparts on residents for the improvement of their own homes I find myself incredulous that this would not be rejected straight away. I live about a half mile from this project and completely reject the idea that this should be approved.

Sincerely,

Concerned Citizen of the Riviera

Sent from my iPhone

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 1:39 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

[Microsoft](#)

Review These Messages

1 messages are being held for you to review as of **9/25/2025 8:20:31 PM (UTC)**.

Review them within **30 days of the received date** by going to the [Quarantine page](#) in the Security Center.

Prevented spam messages

Sender: jakecryanphotography@gmail.com
Subject: 1609-1615 Grand Ave
Date: 9/25/2025 6:56:48 PM

[Review Message](#)

[Release](#)

[Block Sender](#)

From: Dr Suzanne Rapley <drsuzannerapley@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 2:02 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: FEEDBACK ON 1609 Grand Ave. AND. 505 LOS OLIVOS. Santa Barbara

You don't often get email from drsuzannerapley@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

From the desk of:

Suzanne E Rapley, PhD
3015 FOOTHILL ROAD, SANTA BARBARA, CA 93105

September 25, 2025

City of SB Planning Division
Santa Barbara, CA.

To Whom It May Concern,

May this letter serve as my formal REQUEST TO DENY both building projects located at the following addresses : Behind the SB Mission at 505 Los Olivos St. (two eight-story buildings with a total of 270 units and 445 parking spaces) AND on the Lower Riviera at 1609 Grand Avenue (a building of massive bulk and weight, 53-units, 6 story apartment building with a proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments on California St.)

I have been living within 1 mile of both of these proposed projects for over 40 years. I have seen the foot, bicycle and vehicle traffic increase to the current year 2025. Early morning traffic, midday traffic and end of workday traffic has increased tenfold as you can imagine as the population of SB has become more dense. I had to evacuate 4 times from this area (Mission Canyon and Foothill area) and the stress, fear, and moving at a slow speed in bumper to bumper traffic was overwhelming. To add hundreds of more people AND cars and animals to an area prone to fire, flood and disaster down windy, narrow streets seems like a disaster waiting to happen.

The impact of these two projects taken to completion would cause more traffic congestion, more evacuation hazards from high fire hazard zones, challenges to emergency vehicles moving through narrow streets, noise pollution, and air pollution in a historic part of Santa Barbara that I feel should be protected, maintained and respected for future generations. The beauty of the Mission Canyon district is the historical nature of the area. The SB Mission, the aqueduct, the rose garden, the creek and the SB Natural History Museum already populate this location to the max, all with keeping with the SB tradition. We must keep this area SAFE and not be persuaded to prostitute our City and its beauty for the sake of monetary gain that promotes high density living within an area of Santa Barbara that is a fragile eco-system and one of the city's treasures.

I ask for a comprehensive analysis of the potential CEQA Impact issues.

I ask for the city council to make field trips out to these proposed building locations at various times of the day and on weekends to gain a view of what is at stake if these projects get approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Suzanne E Rapley, PhD
3015 Foothill Road
Santa Barbara, Ca 93105
Resident for 40 years
Licensed Psychologist

From: Robert Claycomb <robclay93103@cox.net>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 2:50 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609-1615 Grand Ave

Santa Barbara City:

I read about the huge multi story project that the Builders Remedy builder is wanting to construct at 1609-1615 Grand Ave.

I live on the Riviera, .49 miles as the crow flies or .95 miles on the surface streets from 1609-1615 Grand Ave.

First it is a beyond horrible 6 story design, it is in no way in keeping with the neighbor hood homes and its blocks the views of many homes however, if one puts the views and aesthetics aside, there is the serious issue of limited evacuation routes in our area.

Over the past several years using the two routes that I commonly use to drive down the hill and or to return home, I have noticed that virtually all of city streets up to APS are parked solid with cars.

I have lived on the Riviera for 29 years. Since 1996, we have been required to evacuate our East Las Tunas home on several occasions due to nearby fires.

From 1974 to 2001, I was a law enforcement officer, first with the Los Angeles PD and later with the Santa Barbara PD.

As a prior law enforcement officer with first the LAPD and then with the SBPD and long time resident on the Riviera , I have assisted in evacuations for fire, and or had to evacuate our home.

Examples of involved fires.

1975 Sunland Tujunga Fire

1990 Paint Fire

2009 Jesusita Fire

2017-2018 Thomas Fire

Plus several fires in 2018 which caused evacuations

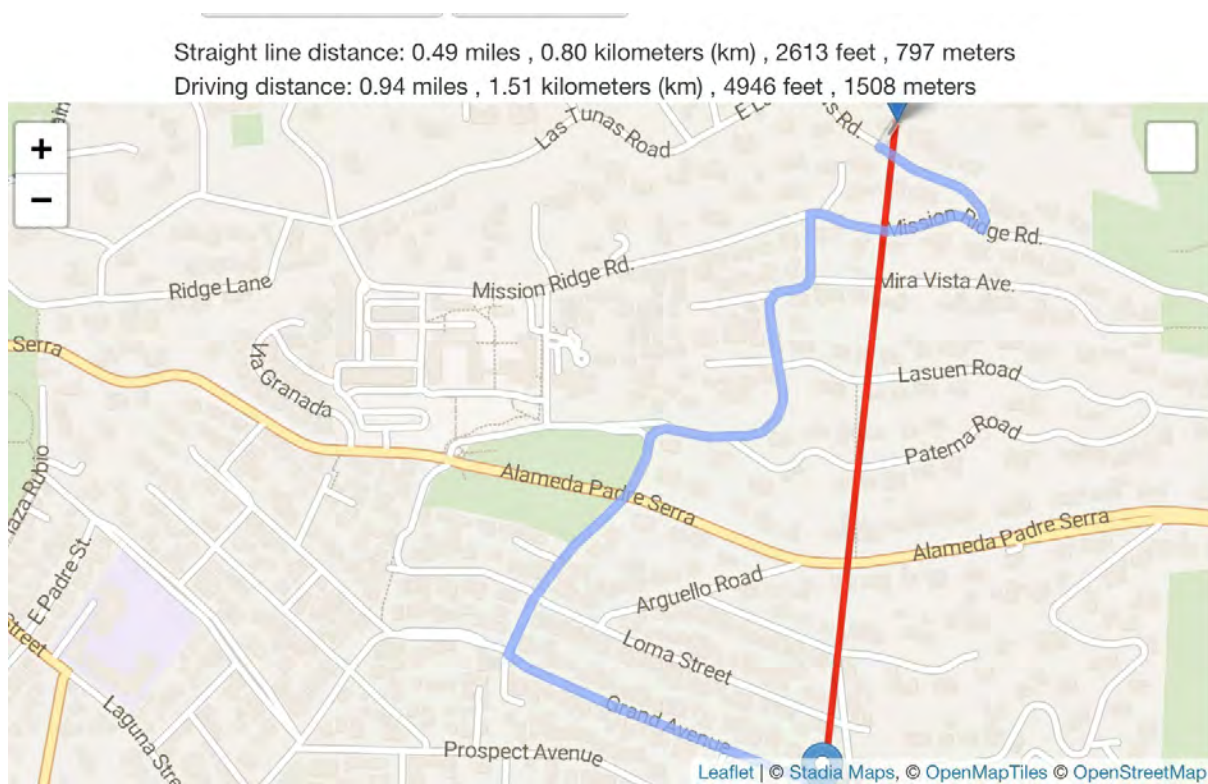
What I witnessed in each of these evacuations is, absolutely nothing goes according to a plan.

Several streets below Mission Ridge are narrow, due to roadway width and parked cars. This reduced roadway width requires one car at time in order to get down a street. The congestion is compounded when emergency vehicles and personnel are trying to get to the source.

During mandatory evacuations, people are in either in a hurry up mode, or in a panic mode and try to save their cars, pets and other possessions. Add in wind, thick smoke, falling embers and ash, and as a result traffic moves at either an extremely slow pace or complete grid lock is a common occurrence. One traffic accident can close off a possible evacuation route.

In regards to the 1609- 1615 Grand Avenues 53 unit project, in the event of a fast moving wild fire or other major incident, adding about 100 or more people and about the same number of cars to an evacuation will add to more congestion and to more confusion.

So how are the people who not only live on or above Grand Ave going to be able to escape?



As a long time resident of this area, and a participant in more than a few evacuations, all of which were chaotic, I want to express my sincere opposition to this project. I have grave concerns as to what might happen in the future if it goes forward.”

Sincerely,

Robert Claycomb
1844 East Last Tunas Rd
SB. Ca. 93103
805-403-8873

From: Cody Cammbell <1stcodala@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 3:29 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand

You don't often get email from 1stcodala@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom It May Concern:

I live in close proximity of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building presently under consideration for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. Access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about this project concern me greatly :

1. Traffic.

I, along with many many other drivers, regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home to downtown and to other areas of the city. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at the same time. On both Grand Avenue and California Street, one car must pause and pull over to the side to allow an oncoming vehicle to pass. It is a precarious situation and more often than not, sets up a condition where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on Santa Barbara's charming old, steep, narrow streets.

2. Public Safety.

Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent **high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas** of Santa Barbara **must** take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is NOT hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and all residents in this area know from recent fire tragedies that we will have future emergencies. It is a matter of deep concern that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. The City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.

3. Noise. The site of the project is in an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2 stories of underground parking. According to reports, this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal! Even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will disrupt the ability of anyone in the vicinity to conduct their normal day-to-day activities.

The City should require the developer to address this important impact.

4. Aesthetics. Although the proposed design of the apartment building is unknown, it is known that its size is incompatible with the ambience of the neighborhood. It certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the appearance of our town. Our city is known for its beauty, and the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that dominant aspect of Santa Barbara.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I shall continue to avidly follow news and announcements about this project.

Sincerely,

--

Cody Cammbell

From: Barbara Burkhardt <bburkhardt@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 3:40 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: FW: Resident Letters re: Project at 1609 Grand Ave
Attachment(s): "Resident Letters re 1609 Grand Project.pdf"
For the record.

Barbara Burkhardt

Project Planner
CITY OF SANTA BARBARA, Community Development
(805) 560-7587 | bburkhardt@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

From: Holly Perea <hperea@santabarbaraca.gov>
Date: September 24, 2025 at 2:18:36PM PDT
To: Mayor & City Council <mayor&council2@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Resident Letters re: Project at 1609 Grand Ave

Hi all – today we received 3 hard-copy letters in the mail regarding the project at 1609 Grand Ave. I’ve attached copies and the originals are at my desk if you’d like to see them.

Best,
Holly



Holly Perea
Assistant to Mayor & City Council
CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
(805) 564-5318 | hperea@santabarbaraca.gov
SantaBarbaraCA.gov

21 September 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for the site on the Lower Riviera at 1609 Grand Ave.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will suggest a few.

1. **Traffic** I regularly travel from my home along Grand Ave. and on to California St. from my home in order to get downtown. At one of the recent (I have done 4) fire evacuations, the traffic from Grand Ave. was backed up across APS to Marymount school. The confusion and stress were overwhelming. Traffic burden on our old steep narrow streets has to be a consideration for this proposed project.

2. **Public Safety**: Grand Ave and California Streets are routes taken from adjacent high-fire and high-risk areas in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This is a REAL concern! The possibility of trapping evacuees in their cars and creating a dangerous bottleneck is a reality.

3. **Noise**: I can't image the noise factor on the neighborhood. The months of on-going noise and congestion will certainly impact the mental health and quality of life in the neighborhood.

4. **Aesthetics**. I know from the size of the building that it is Incompatible with the look of the neighborhood and the (6 stories) would loom over neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. I urge the City to require the developer to evaluate its proposal so that the project does no damage to the aspect of the City's reputation.

I am also enclosing a photo of a 6-story building for scale and reflection.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Thank you,
Cathy Conrad
(city resident 35 yrs)
1537 W. Valerio St
93101



Handwritten text, mostly illegible due to fading. Some words like "The" and "and" are visible.

Handwritten text, mostly illegible due to fading. Some words like "The" and "and" are visible.

Handwritten text, mostly illegible due to fading. Some words like "The" and "and" are visible.

Handwritten text, mostly illegible due to fading. Some words like "The" and "and" are visible.

21 September 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for the site on the Lower Riviera at 1609 Grand Ave.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will suggest a few.

1. **Traffic** ^{My friend, her} regularly travel from my home along Grand Ave. and on to California St. from my ^{her} home in order to get downtown. At one of the recent ^{of} (I have done 4) fire evacuations, the traffic from Grand Ave. was backed up across APS to Marymount school. The confusion and stress were overwhelming. Traffic burden on our old steep narrow streets has to be a consideration for this proposed project. ^{flood,}

2. **Public Safety**: Grand Ave and California Streets are routes taken from adjacent high-fire and high-risk areas in the event of a wildfire ^{or other} evacuation. This is a REAL concern! The possibility of trapping evacuees in their cars and creating a dangerous bottleneck is a reality.

3. **Noise**: I can't image the noise factor on the neighborhood. The months of on-going noise and congestion will certainly impact the mental health and quality of life in the neighborhood.

4. **Aesthetics**. I know from the size of the building that it is Incompatible with the look of the neighborhood and the (6 stories) would loom over neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. I urge the City to require the developer to evaluate its proposal so that the project does no damage to the aspect of the City's reputation.

I am also enclosing a photo of a ^{similar} 6-story building for scale and reflection.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

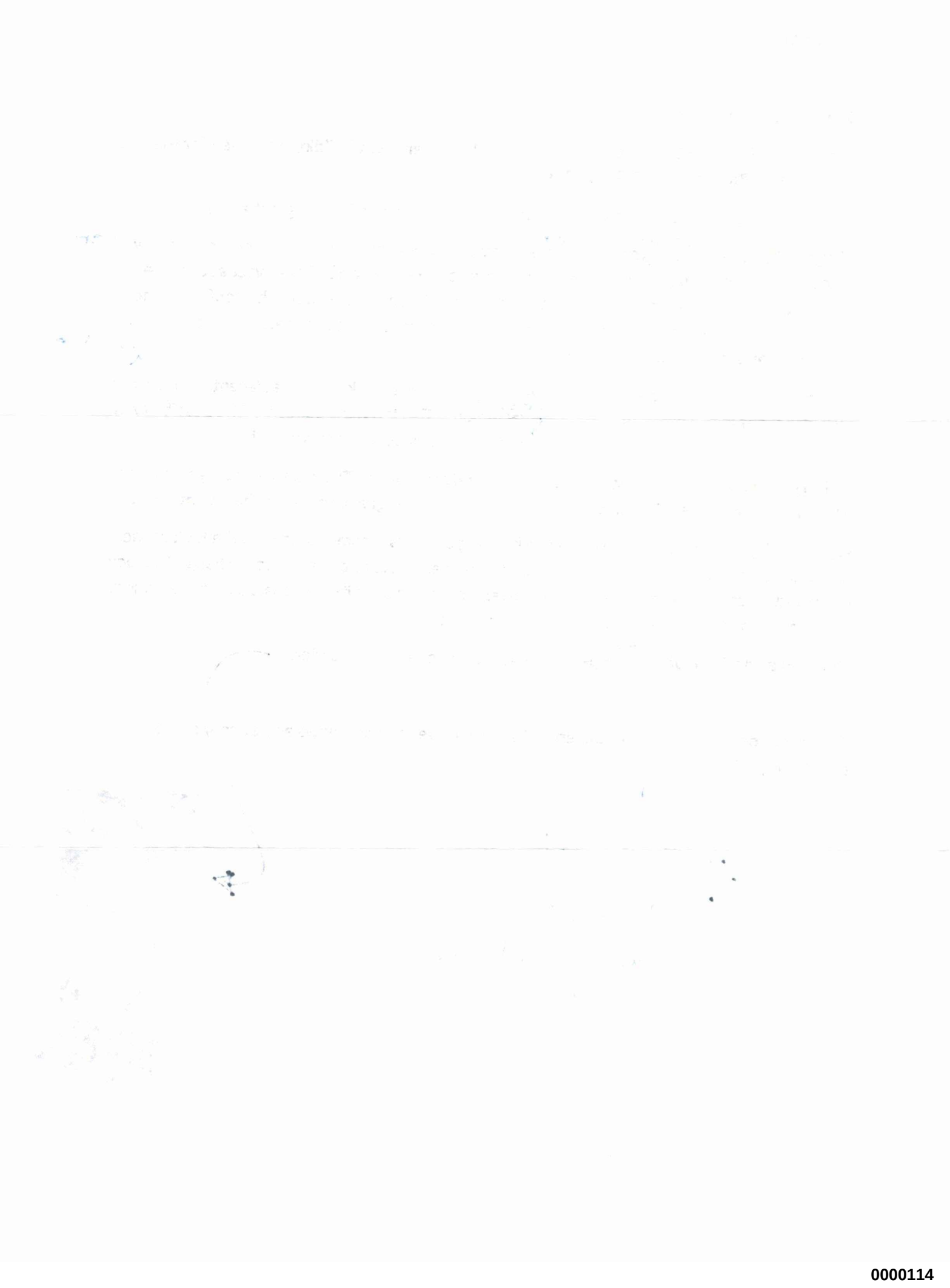
Mary Frink

P.O. Box 2

Santa Barbara

CA 93102





21 September 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for the site on the Lower Riviera at 1609 Grand Ave.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will suggest a few.

1. **Traffic** I regularly travel from my home along Grand Ave. and on to California St. from my home in order to get downtown. At one of the recent (I have done 4) fire evacuations, the traffic from Grand Ave. was backed up across APS to Marymount school. The confusion and stress were overwhelming. Traffic burden on our old steep narrow streets has to be a consideration for this proposed project.

2. **Public Safety**: Grand Ave and California Streets are routes taken from adjacent high-fire and high-risk areas in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This is a REAL concern! The possibility of trapping evacuees in their cars and creating a dangerous bottleneck is a reality.

3. **Noise**: I can't image the noise factor on the neighborhood. The months of on-going noise and congestion will certainly impact the mental health and quality of life in the neighborhood.

4. **Aesthetics**. I know from the size of the building that it is Incompatible with the look of the neighborhood and the (6 stories) would loom over neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. I urge the City to require the developer to evaluate its proposal so that the project does no damage to the aspect of the City's reputation.

I am also enclosing a photo of a 6-story building for scale and reflection.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Sincerely,
Marlene Zollner
(SB City resident
for over 40 years)
1708 Calle Boca del
Canon
SB, CA. 93101



1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes the need for transparency and accountability in all financial dealings.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods and procedures used to collect and analyze data. It includes a detailed description of the sampling process and the statistical techniques employed to interpret the results.

3. The third part of the document presents the findings of the study, which show a significant correlation between the variables being investigated. These results are discussed in the context of existing research and theory.

4. The fourth part of the document discusses the implications of the findings for practice and policy. It suggests several ways in which the results can be used to improve organizational performance and inform decision-making.

5. The final part of the document concludes the study and provides a summary of the key points. It also includes a list of references and a bibliography of the sources used in the research.

6. The document also includes a section on the limitations of the study, which acknowledges the constraints of the research design and the potential for bias or error in the data collection process.

7. Finally, the document includes a section on the future research agenda, which identifies areas for further investigation and suggests potential directions for future studies.

From: Barbara Burkhardt <bburkhardt@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 3:41 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: FW: Opposition to the Housing Projects at 505 East Los Olivos & 1609-1615 Grand Avenue

For the record

Barbara Burkhardt

Project Planner
CITY OF SANTA BARBARA, Community Development
(805) 560-7587 | bburkhardt@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

From: George Fink <gkfink@protonmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 7:49 PM
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; Holly Perea <hperea@santabarbaraca.gov>
Cc: Jessica Schoendienst <jess.schoendienst@gmail.com>
Subject: Opposition to the Housing Projects at 505 East Los Olivos & 1609-1615 Grand Avenue

You don't often get email from gkfink@protonmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

September 24, 2025

Mayor and City Council
City of Santa Barbara
735 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Opposition to the Housing Projects at 505 East Los Olivos & 1609-1615 Grand Avenue

Dear Mayor and Esteemed City Council Members,

I am writing to you not only as a concerned citizen but as someone who treasures the extraordinary beauty and enduring traditions that make Santa Barbara a place unlike any other. I urge you to reconsider the proposed housing project at 505 East Los Olivos & 1609-1615 Grand Avenue, developments that threatens the very essence of our city's character and the values we have carefully preserved through generations.

Preserving Santa Barbara's Beauty and Tradition

Santa Barbara's charm is woven into every historic street, every elegant building, and every vista that opens to the sea and mountains. The proposed structure would loom over our beloved Mission and iconic Riviera neighborhoods, disrupting the harmonious architectural landscape that defines our community. Our city's aesthetic is not merely about appearance—it is an expression of our shared history and values. Allowing such towering projects would undermine a legacy cherished by residents and admired by visitors worldwide.

Protecting Uniqueness and Historic Preservation

Santa Barbara is celebrated for its uniqueness, a blend of Spanish Colonial heritage and coastal tranquility. The scale and design of the proposed developments are incompatible with the surrounding historic sites and neighborhoods. We must honor our responsibility as stewards of this city—not just for ourselves, but for future generations who deserve to experience Santa Barbara as we have. Sacrificing our distinctive character for short-term gains risks erasing what makes Santa Barbara special.

Addressing Safety and Infrastructure Concerns

A project of this magnitude poses genuine concerns for public safety and the integrity of our infrastructure. Increased traffic congestion, strains on emergency services, wildfire risk, evacuation congestion, and overburdened utilities would compromise the well-being of current residents. Our city's thoughtful planning must prioritize safety and livability for all—not just the interests of developers.

Safeguarding Our Tourist Economy

Tourism is the lifeblood of Santa Barbara's economy, sustaining countless local businesses and supporting jobs for our citizens. Visitors travel from around the world to experience a city that feels both timeless and welcoming. The addition of imposing buildings in a cherished neighborhoods threaten our reputation as a haven for relaxation, beauty, and culture. We must ask: will tourists continue to come if we allow our cityscape to be altered so drastically?

Protecting the Interests of Voters and Local Businesses

The decisions you make affect every voter, every business owner, and every family who calls Santa Barbara home. Local businesses are deeply intertwined with the community's identity, and many stand to be directly impacted by changes to our city's fabric. The voices of residents and business owners must matter most in shaping our future. As elected representatives, your duty is to preserve that which makes Santa Barbara vibrant, prosperous, and unique.

I urge you to **reject** the proposed housing projects at 505 East Los Olivos & 1609-1615 Grand Avenue. Let us stand together in defending the beauty, tradition, and spirit of Santa Barbara. Let our city remain a place where history is honored, safety is paramount, visitors are enchanted, and local businesses flourish.

Please protect our community for today and for generations to come.

Respectfully,

George Fink & Jessica Schoendienst
2932 Serena Road, Santa Barbara
Santa Barbara Residents and small business owners

Sent with [Proton Mail](#) secure email.

From: Emily Cohen <ecohensb@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 4:20 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand

[You don't often get email from ecohensb@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

> Hi, I am writing to express my strong objection to the 1609 Grand project going through the approval process without a thorough review of the traffic impacts from the project and safety issues related to traffic. Loma, Grand, and California all effectively function as one-way streets that require huge cooperation from residents and drivers to navigate the neighborhoods. This is an accepted part of life on the lower Riviera but adding 50+ cars would create significant challenges especially in event of an emergency.

>

> We would also like to see third party visual simulations of the planned project from various viewpoints, story poles, and other items conventional of such a development.

>

> Thank you for your consideration.

>

> Emily & Noel Cohen

> 1611 Loma Street

>

From: Addison Thompson <as.thompson@cox.net>

Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 5:48 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 1609 Grand Ave

The project proposed at that address is too massive for the location.

Traffic issues, particularly during wildfire evacuation, would be significant.

I lost my home in the Tea Fire and that evacuation, with a smaller population evacuating, resulted in massive traffic jams.

In the any potential future fires, forcing City residents to be caught in a traffic backup and dying due to over-controlling and poor planning by the state of CA is unthinkable.

This project must be denied.

Regards,
Addison Thompson
2109 Stanwood Drive
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 6:34 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

[Microsoft](#)

Review These Messages

1 messages are being held for you to review as of **9/26/2025 1:10:42 AM (UTC)**.

Review them within **30 days of the received date** by going to the [Quarantine page](#) in the Security Center.

Prevented spam messages

Sender: ecohensb@gmail.com

Subject: 1609 Grand

Date: 9/25/2025 11:20:48 PM

[Review Message](#)

[Release](#)

[Block Sender](#)

From: Padric Davis <padricdavis@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 8:30 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: East Los Olivos and Grand Avenue construction projects
Attachment(s): "Riviera projects letter to SB City Council.docx"

You don't often get email from padricdavis@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Santa Barbara City Council,

Please find attached the letter regarding the two proposed construction projects. One on 505 East Los Olivos Street and the other on 1609 Grand Avenue.

Sincerely,

Padric and John Davis

Padric and John Davis
2270 Santiago Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93103

Dear City of Santa Barbara City Council/Planning Division,

We are writing our letter of concern and disapproval for the two large projects submitted to the City of Santa Barbara. One at 505 East Los Olivos and the other 1609 Grand Avenue. Both projects are too big for the two area addresses. Not only are they out of character in size and aesthetics, they are a major safety hazard for traffic and fire evacuation, and for city and County Emergency Responders. I see a 'disaster-in-the-making' in the event of a 'fire emergency' requiring evacuation from the surrounding homes.

I see other options in the city for development that would not endanger the safety of the surrounding homes should an evacuation be necessary.

The size of both projects would alter the look, quality, and aesthetics of the surrounding buildings! To look at the majestic Mission and see to the right that proposed huge ugly monstrosity of a building instead of the mountains is unacceptable! The size of the Grand Avenue project is too large for the area. The narrow streets surrounding the building would be jammed with first responders and evacuation traffic in a disaster, causing horrible results.

The City of Santa Barbara needs to understand their responsibility for the safety of the existing homes in the area of both addresses. Traffic at both sites would be affected in a very negative way even without an evacuation/fire event.

We urge you to consider the negative consequences if these two projects move forward...

Sincerely,

Padric and John Davis,
(neighbor to both projects)

From: Cathy Garcia <cathypgarcia48@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 9:08 AM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: New development

[You don't often get email from cathypgarcia48@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

I drive this road everyday. It is a nightmare to get through. The road is very narrow and cars are parked bumper to bumper on the side of the road. I can't imagine the insanity when a hundred more cars are added. Forget an emergency, everyone is going to be stuck there and will probably die. Deny this project please.

Cathy Garcia
306 Argonne Circle
SB93105
Sent from my iPhone

From: Ruth Yi-Redmond <ruthie.red@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 9:09 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Devin Redmond <devin.redmond@gmail.com>
Subject: 1609-1615 Grand Ave Project

You don't often get email from ruthie.red@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City Council Members of Santa Barbara,

We are homeowners, living at 1618 Grand Ave, and we are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed 53-unit apartment complex development, on 1609 and 1615 Grand Ave.

While we understand the need for more housing in our city, including affordable housing, this is not a beneficial solution for the city, those in need of affordable housing, nor current residents.

Aside from the fact that there is very little actual affordable housing in this proposed complex, the extreme impact on the wildfire evacuation route, environmental impact and noise should provide a key foundation to combat the exploitation of the Builders Remedy that the developers are using.

First, neither California Street nor Valerio are adequate for the increase in traffic this will create, but California in particular is already prone to daily congestion and often risky situations for vehicle and pedestrian traffic. Additionally, Grand cannot support the increase in vehicle traffic and parking that this will create.

Beyond the very real and negative environmental impact from traffic, this proposed complex will have a significant and detrimental noise impact to the care facility it is being crammed next to. Between the highly impactful and lengthy construction required for the proposed apartment complex and the subsequent, significant ongoing increase in population density, traffic, and the related proximity of both, it will impact all residents.

It is a project that is ill conceived and will only exacerbate our already overburdened infrastructure, leading to increased traffic congestion, parking issues, noise pollution, and strain on our public services. Given that the existing multi-dwelling residential complexes on Micheltorena, California and Grand Ave already greatly burdens the existing traffic flow, adding another high density development in this neighborhood would be too great of a burden.

Finally, there are clearly better options to create far more actual affordable housing units versus this developers' attempt to use the minimum unit count required for affordable housing in a larger complex. This is clearly NOT an attempt to address affordable housing needs versus a profit-seeking development that will negatively impact the environmental quality and value of the neighborhood.

In conclusion, we strongly urge you to reconsider and oppose this proposed housing development. Thank you for your attention and support to this matter.

Sincerely, Devin and Ruth Redmond

From: niklbee@duck.com <niklbee@duck.com>
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 10:46 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand
Attachment(s): "Grand Letter.pdf"

To: City of Santa Barbara

September 26, 2025

Re: 1609 Grand Project

To Whom it May Concern:

As a resident of the impacted area where this project is to occur, I have various concerns:

Foremost would be **SAFETY**. Having lived through fire evacuations in this area and flooding from very heavy rainfall, I speak from experience when I say this neighborhood already faces serious issues which will only be aggravated. Grand and California are the main evacuation route for residents in adjacent high fire areas. The additional vehicles will create an even more dangerous situation at the bottom of California and for the residents below. The City must require an evaluation of the impact and possible mitigation for the safety of all residents above and below the project.

On a daily basis **TRAFFIC** will become even more of an issue. Grand and California are so narrow that two cars going in opposite directions are unable to pass each other. Alta Vista is also steep and narrow with blind intersections and the addition of two roundabouts which make it more difficult to maneuver. In addition, this street is a main route to Santa Barbara High. Additional traffic in these areas will only create more congestion and more unsafe conditions. The City should require an assessment and possible mitigations for the effects added traffic will have above and below the project.

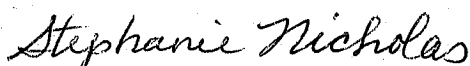
Construction and Noise are also areas of concern. The vehicles and equipment for this project will only be able to access the site via California. That means the street will be practically unusable for residential traffic during work hours. We are talking about trucks hauling dirt in and out (400 approx.) cement trucks, equipment – back hoes, cranes- supply delivery, workers vehicles, etc. This work will disrupt a quiet residential neighborhood resulting in residents being unable to conduct normal activities not only because of the noise and traffic, but vibrations, and dust as well. The City should require the developer to address this.

Since this area will now be covered with hardscape where will the **WATER** go. Will it be dumped into Mission Creek at the end of Grand or run down California to the drain at the corner of Micheltorena. The catch basin can only handle so much in heavy storms and depending on how additional runoff is handled, it could have deleterious consequences for the downhill residents. Again, this is another critical issue the City needs to see that the developer addresses.

ASTHETICALLY no matter what the architectural style or design, the building will stand out like a sore thumb. It's placement in that location is totally out of character with its environment looming large over neighbors and changing the look of the City. The size and height of the structure are completely out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood and our traditional Riviera. Thus, degrading the reputation of our beautiful area. The City should be protective of that reputation and see to it that this developer does not harm it.

Please add me to any notice lists as I will be following the news and announcements of this project.

Thank you for considering my concerns,



Stephanie Nicholas
627 Colina Ln.
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

From: RHONDA WASH <washfun@cox.net>
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 11:50 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SAGESB.org <info@SAGESB.org>; gary villalba <gvill@verizon.net>
Subject: Grand Avenue Project

September 27,2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

We live at 710 California Street, a block away from the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

This project is a major concern to us. We have owned our home since 1997 and went through the demolition of St. Francis Hospital and the building of Bella Riviera. The only reason we supported that project was because it was beautifully built, fit into the neighborhood, was built with ample parking for residents, and **most importantly** was built for our local hospital employees to be able to afford to work and live in Santa Barbara.

Some of our issues we have with this massive, proposed project are as follows:

1. **California Street.** This street is steep, old, and very narrow. Our front door is on the bottom of California Street and there is constant stopped traffic in front of it as cars await downhill traffic. There is not room for two cars to pass on this street at the same time going in opposite directions, even without this project that proposes to exit onto California Street. The sharp turn at California Street and East Micheltorena Street is already a dangerous location where there have been multiple accidents over the years which have affected our property. This street cannot accommodate the back up of multiple cars trying to travel up and down it, let alone exit and enter onto it. The City must assess this traffic safety issue.
2. **Public Safety in an emergency evacuation situation.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. We are concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars, not to mention the neighbors who live on California Street unable to exit their homes in an emergency due to high traffic. We believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. **Noise.** The site is in the middle of a neighborhood full of small bungalow style homes. Many people work from home these days and the noise that this project will make over months with large trucks traveling up and down these small streets will be disruptive to families and workers in the neighborhood. The large construction style vehicles and dump trucks traveling these narrow, old streets will be a major problem. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. **Size and scope of this project.** This neighborhood cannot possibly accommodate the size of this project. Nothing in our neighborhood is more than 1-2 stories tall. It will stick out like a sore thumb amongst our beautiful, classic, historic family sized homes. It will be an eye sore in our Lower Riviera neighborhood. It is offensive and shocking that the city might allow something so large and obtrusive in the place we call home.

Thank you for considering our concerns. We will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add us to any notice lists.

Thank you,

KC and Rhonda Wash

710 California Street

From: Mary Lee <martin.ml@cox.net>
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 12:00 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SageSB.org <info@SageSB.org>
Subject: 1609-1615 Grand Ave., Santa Barbara, CA

To Whom This Matter Concerns:

This proposed building is a huge and monstrous boondoggle of a project to put a 6 story apartment building in a residential neighborhood. Fire and emergency evacuations are a major concern. Public health and safety is at risk. The city must conduct a comprehensive analysis through a "CEQA" review and decide it does not belong there.

Thank you for considering our concerns. Mary Lee and Jerry Martin.

Sent from my iPhone

From: Ronald Hays <ronaldhays@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 12:09 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Santa Barbara City Council <SBCityCouncil@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; John Thyne Esq. & Olesya Thyne III <jthyne@ttfhlaw.com>
Subject: Grand Avenue AND Mission Canyon projects.

[You don't often get email from ronaldhays@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

I am befuddled and dismayed that politicians in Sacramento are able to create legislation that so deleteriously impacts our precious quality of life in beautiful Santa Barbara. Both of these proposed projects, one on Grand Avenue and the other behind the Old Mission, represent the very worst of bureaucratic ineptitude. Unfortunately, I am not politically informed enough to determine exactly which politicians initiated and support this poorly thought out legislation; but they deserve to be called out and publicly chastised.

Santa Barbara is a rare, irreplaceable, exceptional jewel due to the geography, climate and small population. It is no surprise that almost EVERYONE wants to live here to enjoy this special quality of life which we know today. Unfortunately, that is obviously not possible.

The legislation that dictates the State of California has eminent authority over local planning is just wrong. This egregious legislation must be changed. It is patently un American to endorse, much less support such lopsided, unfair legislation which unconstitutionally takes away the rights of citizens to govern themselves.

How can self governance be so irreparably compromised without the ability of Santa Barbara citizens to speak in defense of our rights to control planning and development in our own neighborhoods?

I just feel so helpless as I watch the continuing destruction of the beautiful city I have lived in as a 3rd generation resident while I watch my 4th and 5th generation offspring being denied the quality of life benefits I knew growing up.

Won't somebody in a position of authority please take a stand to protect what is left of our precious quality of life? PLEASE!

Ronald Hays
Upper Riviera

"On occasion, we meet people we can't forget. They are known as friends."

From: Cathy Rose <mizzcathy34@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 12:29 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: info@SAGESB.org

You don't often get email from mizzcathy34@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To whom it may concern:

I am writing about the proposed development at 1609-1615 Grand Avenue in Santa Barbara. I live on Loma Street, which is parallel to and just above Grand, so I am particularly concerned about projects affecting my neighborhood.

I cannot imagine more traffic on Grand, Loma, and California Streets. All three are two-way streets, but because of on-street parking these streets are effectively one lane. This situation creates a game of "chicken" which is especially dangerous on the steep part of California Street, the very place where access to the proposed development would be. If traffic is an issue now, what would it be like with dozens more cars?

A NIGHTMARE.

Recently Cottage Hospital replaced the old St. Francis Hospital with a project of houses for hospital employees. Located just below the proposed development, it consists of attractive buildings and landscaping with modest surface parking. It would be sad indeed if an outsize building were to be placed in the midst of this low-level neighborhood. It would be an eyesore, and it would infuriate the owners of houses that now enjoy views of the city.

Of course fire is a major concern in Santa Barbara. I have been evacuated twice from my house on Loma Street. I cannot imagine the snarl that would occur if evacuation were ordered with additional cars. It would be impossible to move fire trucks through the neighborhood or even to get homeowners out safely.

People who know and love Santa Barbara have worked for generations to make and maintain this city as a beautiful and livable place. Is all this effort to be rewarded with an inappropriate development plunked down in the middle of a

neighborhood, all to benefit out-of-town developers who have little understanding of Santa Barbara and the aesthetic ideal its citizens aspire to?

I hope a complete environmental review (CEQA impact report) of the Grand Avenue property takes place. We need a very thoughtful assessment of the implications of creating a large development in such an inappropriate location. Surely there are better solutions.

Sincerely yours,

Cathy Rose

1642 Loma Street

From: Jamie Considine (via Google Docs) <jamieconsidine@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 1:05 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave Letter
Attachment(s): "1609 Grand Ave Letter.pdf"

You don't often get email from jamieconsidine@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Jamie Considine attached a document



Jamie Considine (jamieconsidine@gmail.com) has attached the following document:

Hi-

Please see my attached letter about my concerns of this proposed project. Thanks!

Jamie

 1609 Grand Ave Letter

Does this item look suspicious? [Report](#)

Google LLC, 1600 Amphitheatre Parkway, Mountain View, CA 94043, USA
You have received this email because jamieconsidine@gmail.com shared a document with you from Google Docs.

Google

September 26, 2025

To: The City of Santa Barbara

From: Jamie Considine

Subject: Public Comment – 1609 Grand Avenue (PLN2024-00181)

Dear City Officials,

I am writing in response to the proposed development at 1609 Grand Avenue. As a resident who lives just below the project site and someone who frequents this area often, I want to express my deep concern about the scope and potential impact of this project. I have personally experienced the challenges of fire and flood evacuations in our region and know several friends who have lost their homes and livelihoods due to these disasters. It is a painful reality that cannot be overlooked.

The size and scale of this development, proposed in the middle of a residential neighborhood, raise serious safety and environmental concerns. I strongly urge the City to require a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR) under CEQA for the following reasons:

1. The site borders a designated high fire zone (as shown clearly on fire hazard maps).
2. The steep, hilly terrain is already prone to flooding under current conditions.
3. Local streets are narrow and already experience regular congestion.
4. Emergency evacuation of existing—and future—residents would be extremely difficult in a crisis.
5. Emergency vehicles may struggle to access the area under both normal and emergency circumstances.
6. The aging street and utility infrastructure may not support the increased load.
7. The scale and height of the proposed structure are out of character with the surrounding residential area.
8. Approving such a project sets a concerning precedent for future oversized developments in residential zones.

After reviewing CEQA criteria, it appears this project may significantly impact at least five, and possibly all eight, of the following areas:

- Public Safety

- Traffic
- Noise
- Aesthetics
- Land Use Planning
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Utilities and Service Systems

Given the increasing frequency and intensity of wildfires and floods across California—and Santa Barbara County’s own recent history—it is critical that we make thoughtful, community-centered decisions when it comes to new development.

I respectfully request that the City require a full Environmental Impact Report to ensure this project is properly evaluated and that long-term consequences are considered. Our community deserves a thorough and transparent review process—let’s get this one right.

Thank you for your time and commitment to our city.

Sincerely,

Jamie Considine

601 E. Micheltorena Street, Unit 55

Santa Barbara, CA 93103

(619) 857-4832

jamieconsidine@gmail.com

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 2:22 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

[Microsoft](#)

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Sender: mizzcathy34@gmail.com

Subject: info@SAGESB.org

Date: 9/26/2025 7:30:12 PM

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Sender: michael82124@gmail.com

Subject: Urgent: Santa Barbara Residents Unite to Protect Our Neighborhoods and Safety

Date: 9/26/2025 8:56:15 PM

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From: Rick Stein <xcpatrl@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 3:27 PM PDT

CC: Eric Friedman <EFriedman@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Kristen Sneddon <KSneddon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Meagan Harmon <MHarmon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Mike Jordan <MJordan@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Oscar Gutierrez <OGutierrez@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Randy Rowse <rrowse@santabarbaraca.gov>; Wendy Santamaria <WSantamaria@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: Eight Story Apartment Building behind Santa Barbara Mission

You don't often get email from xcpatrl@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Governor Newsom:

The construction of the large apartment building behind the Santa Barbara Mission would create more than 250 housing units, and I am seriously concerned about the impact it would have on our ability to evacuate when the next wildfire rages through our neighborhood. Since we took up residence in Rattlesnake Canyon (Las Canoas Rd), we have been endangered by and evacuated for 3 wildfires in the last 15 years. One of them burned everything but our home on our 1 acre property, which (luckily) was saved by firefighters.

The most concerning impact of this project is the increased congestion caused by the added 250 residents (and their cars) evacuating from the next wildfire. The main driveway of the proposed 505 East Los Olivos Los Olivos project will create a massive traffic problem at the intersection of Los Olivos, Mission Canyon, and Alameda Padre Serra. This intersection is already a safety hazard. The 1609 Grand Avenue project is located along a narrow road near a fault line in a CalFire-identified "very high fire hazard severity zone."

I hope you will vote to approve Monique Limone's bill SB 158, which will clear the path for denying the construction of this building (Note: The members of the senate will ultimately approve or deny this project), and vote to deny the approval of the 8 story buildings that are proposed by the developers.

Thank you,
Richard Stein, Las Canoas Road Resident

From: Kendra Feshbach <kendra.feshbach@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 3:39 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Eric Friedman <EFriedman@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Kristen Sneddon <KSneddon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Meagan Harmon <MHarmon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Mike Jordan <MJordan@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Oscar Gutierrez <OGutierrez@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Randy Rowse <rrowse@santabarbaraca.gov>; Wendy Santamaria <WSantamaria@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 505 E. Los Olivos and 1609 Grand Ave proposed projects. Santa Barbara

You don't often get email from kendra.feshbach@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

The construction of the large apartment building behind the Santa Barbara Mission would create more than 250 housing units, and I am seriously concerned about the impact it would have on our ability to evacuate when the next wildfire rages through our neighborhood. We have been endangered by and evacuated for 3 wildfires in the last 15 years. One of them burned everything but our home on our 3 acre property, which (luckily) was saved by firefighters.

The most concerning impact of this project is the increased congestion caused by the added 250 residents (and their cars) evacuating from the next wildfire. The main driveway of the proposed 505 East Los Olivos Los Olivos project will create a massive traffic problem at the intersection of Los Olivos, Mission Canyon, and Alameda Padre Serra. This intersection is already a safety hazard. The 1609 Grand Avenue project is located along a narrow road near a fault line in a CalFire-identified "very high fire hazard severity zone."

Public safety is a huge liability here.

The city of Santa Barbara, at the very least, should require the applicants to conduct a full environmental impact report.

Thank you,
Kendra Feshbach
Mission Canyon resident

From: Barbara Ruh <ruhskis9713@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 4:10 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Bobbie Ruh <bobbie@ruhskis.com>
Subject: 1609-1615 Grand Avenue Project

You don't often get email from ruhskis9713@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To City of Santa Barbara:

My wife and I just bought a house at 637 E. Micheltorena and we will move into it shortly. We have had a home in Santa Barbara since 1997 and we have always appreciated the City's efforts to preserve consistency in residential neighborhoods.

Our new home is several blocks from the proposed project on Grand Avenue. While we appreciate the need for more housing, particularly "affordable" housing, in Santa Barbara the proposed project on Grand Avenue is totally inconsistent with the neighborhood surrounding it.

Having only 11 "affordable" units does little to solve the lack of "affordable" housing in Santa Barbara. In addition, the lower Riviera is one of the neighborhoods that makes Santa Barbara so charming and desirable. Allowing high rise apartment or condominium projects in the lower Riviera would be inconsistent with what makes the lower Riviera, and thus, Santa Barbara so desirable.

In addition, having had a home in Santa Barbara for 28 years and having owned rental property in the lower Riviera I'm very familiar with the traffic in that neighborhood. It is challenging now and a 53 unit high rise is going to make it even worse and more dangerous for people who live in the single family homes there. The streets are narrow and are made even narrower by cars lining the curbs on both sides of the neighborhood streets. Parking is also very problematic in that neighborhood. Even though the proposal is to add underground parking for residents some residents will park on the street and obviously their visitors will as well.

A project like the proposed Grand Avenue Project will do little to solve the problem of a lack of "affordable" housing. Furthermore, even if it would help alleviate the housing shortage in Santa Barbara, it should be in an area other than a neighborhood of predominately single family homes.

I hope the City will seriously consider not approving a six story housing project in the 1600 block of Grand Avenue.

James C. Ruh

James Ruh

1643 La Vista del Oceano
Santa Barbara CA 93109
970 479-7333 home
303 886-4707 Cell
jcr@ruhskis.com

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 6:39 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

[Microsoft](#)

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Sender: xcpatrl@gmail.com
Subject: Eight Story Apartment Building behind Santa Barbara Mission
Date: 9/26/2025 10:27:24 PM

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From: Penny Clemmons <clemmonsjd@cs.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 9:51 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; info@SAGESB.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue Project
Attachment(s): "1609 Grand Avenue Project.docx"

You don't often get email from clemmonsjd@cs.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please see attached letter.

Penny Clemmons, Ph.D.,J.D.
P O Box 90814
Santa Barbara, Ca. 93190
805.403.6215

PENNY CLEMMONS
Attorney at Law
P.O. Box 90084
Santa Barbara, Ca. 93190
TELEPHONE: (805) 403-6215
clemmonsjd@cs.com

September 27, 2025

RE: 1609 Grand Avenue Project

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. Traffic. I regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home in order to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.

2. Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.

3. Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.

4. Aesthetics. Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City.

The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Respectfully submitted,

Penny Clemmons

**Penny Clemmons
Attorney at Law**

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 10:41 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

[Microsoft](#)

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Sender: quatrecoin@gmail.com

Subject: Re: developmental Abomination --

Date: 9/27/2025 4:53:12 PM

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[Block Sender](#)

From: alastair winn <alastairwinn@msn.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 11:02 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Concern about Grand Avenue high density housing project

You don't often get email from alastairwinn@msn.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

As a Santa Barbara native and former 25year resident of Mission Canyon, I would like to encourage the City of Santa Barbara to require the applicant to conduct a full environmental impact (CEQA) report for the proposed Grand Avenue project. Please do the right thing.

Alastair Winn
475 Santa Rosa Lane
SB, CA 93108

From: Laura Rhoads <ltmrhoads@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 11:10 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Concerns about proposed development

You don't often get email from ltmrhoads@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I am writing to express my strong concerns about the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building **at 1609 Grand Avenue**. As someone who lives less than 1/4 of a mile from this location, the proposal will directly impact the neighborhood I live in and care about so deeply.

My concerns are as follows:

- **Traffic and Public Safety:** The streets around the project, particularly Grand Avenue and California Street, are already too narrow for two cars to pass at the same time. This is a significant daily inconvenience, and with the added traffic from 53 new units, it will become a dangerous bottleneck. This is especially concerning during a wildfire evacuation, as these streets are critical evacuation routes for residents in high-fire risk areas. I urge the City to require the developer to assess this impact on both daily traffic and emergency evacuations.
- **Noise and Aesthetics:** This project is incompatible with our established residential neighborhood. The excavation for a two-story underground garage will cause major noise disruption from hundreds of truckloads of dirt removal. Furthermore, a 6-story building would dramatically change the neighborhood's character, exceed height standards, and block views, impacting home values and quality of life. The City should require the developer to address these impacts on the community.

Thank you for your consideration. Please add my name and address to any notice lists for this project.

Sincerely,

Laura Rhoads

1624 Olive St.

From: PAULA GOODWIN <paulagoodwin@yahoo.com>

Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 11:20 AM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 1609 Grand project

You don't often get email from paulagoodwin@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within 1-2 miles of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. Traffic. I regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home in order to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are **routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical.** We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. Aesthetics. Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow any and all information available about this project.

Paula Goodwin
2680 Todos Santos Lane
SB, CA 93105

From: Nicole Dennis <nicole0685@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 11:32 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Keith Dennis <kdd5003@gmail.com>; Amber Gonzalez <alwade46@gmail.com>; autumntolmei@gmail.com <autumntolmei@gmail.com>; Caitlin Natale <caitnatale@gmail.com>; Jesse Natale <jessenatale@gmail.com>; Brian Staley <brianstaley1@gmail.com>; Kori Staley <korijolley@gmail.com>
Subject: Concerns with Apartment Building Proposal in the Lower Riviera

You don't often get email from nicole0685@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

My home is within ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. I have raised my family here, on California Street, for the past 10 years. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street. A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. Traffic. My children and I regularly travel, by car, foot and bike, along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Our neighborhood is home to beautiful parks and many schools. Many children, and families, bike and walk to and from Roosevelt Elementary School, Santa Barbara Jr. High, and Santa Barbara High School. I am concerned that the additional traffic population density will put pedestrians and cyclists at risk. In addition, Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address. Once completed, the noise of an additional 53 families and their cars in our already saturated neighborhood should also be considered.
4. Aesthetics. Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Nicole Dennis
Resident at
601 E Micheltorena St Unit 73

From: Kit Johnson <katzchen2010@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 11:50 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SAGESB.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue Project

You don't often get email from katzchen2010@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I am a tax preparer and have delivered completed returns to clients on Grand Avenue and neighboring streets and am shocked the City would consider building a project of this size in this neighborhood!! I myself drive up and down this street carefully with my little Honda, and to think of the traffic this project will engender is just frightening!

Secondly, the aesthetics of Santa Barbara—when I moved here 51 years ago instead of San Diego where I also had a job opportunity, I thought I would try it out and could always move to San Diego if I didn't like it. Well, to no surprise I have never left. This is a beautiful city in every way. My daughter is a proud Dons graduate, so we have been very familiar with this old St. Francis neighborhood for many years. To put a project of this size at this location would trash the beauty of this neighborhood!

I am concerned also for evacuation in case of fire or other disaster and can't imagine the turmoil additional traffic of this magnitude would create to residents of the Riviera above this site! It would be devastating; it would be a death trap!

Please do not approve this project! Save our city, its people, and its beauty!

Thank you for considering the concerns of myself and other local residents!

A concerned Santa Barbaran,

Mary K. Johnson
3535 Madrona Drive
Santa Barbara, CA 93105-2655

From: Gregory Stevens <gregorystevens805@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 12:25 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave Project Comments
Attachment(s): "1609GrandAve.docx"

You don't often get email from gregorystevens805@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please find my comments in the attached file.
Thanks

--

Inhale Love.....Exhale Gratitude

September 27, 2025

Subject: Proposed 1609 Grand Avenue Building Project

Greetings City Leaders,

We want to stress that we emphasize “Leaders” in my greeting to you. Our City finds itself in a very difficult situation that will demand your determination and creativity to literally save the character of our City. Our State’s “Builder’s Remedy Law” has provided access to greedy and uncaring builders who propose projects that neither address our need for substantial new affordable housing all the while negatively impacting our citizen’s safety, traffic congestion, neighborhood character, and city skyline. Please find a way to legally stop them. You have our support. We will not tolerate this desecration of our home.

We have written to you also about the proposed 505 East Los Olivos project with many of the same concerns. Now another project, at 1609 Grand Ave, has appeared and is equally out of step with our city’s need to provide more affordable housing in a careful and considered manner. First, just look at the project’s rendering. It’s ridiculous! An abomination! It shouts loopholes, greed, and everything bad about development. More specifically, in an evacuation scenario the traffic could prove to be deadly. This is a critical issue! Do I need to go on? Yes, if built, the day-to-day traffic would be horrible for anyone living nearby. The construction would take years and be a total nuisance with near impossible traffic and excessive noise. And for what: more overpriced living space for rich people?

We need more housing. We need more affordable housing. This is not it! Here is an opportunity to earn the gratitude of your constituents. Shut this project down.

Thank-you,

Gregory S. Stevens

Ivy Macia-Stevens

6 Francisco Drive Santa Barbara, CA

From: John Paul Sekulich <johnpaulsekulich@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 12:33 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Grand St project

You don't often get email from johnpaulsekulich@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom It May Concern at the City of Santa Barbara:

I live on the street above the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for 1609 Grand Avenue, at or near California Street.

This project concern me greatly, and I am not sure what the planners are thinking to put this monstrosity, completely out of touch with the surrounding area and the aesthetic in general of Santa Barbara.

The increase in traffic, on this narrow street and the one above it - Loma Street, where cars going in opposing directions must pull over to allow one to pass, would make things much worse that they are now on these long-ago paved streets. Surely any assessment would confirm this. These streets are narrow and steep.

In the event of fire, the risk of not getting out of this area would be greatly compounded. Again, the City must seriously consider this.

Needless to say, and not in any way a small matter, this enormous building would create an eyesore visible all over the City, completely out of character with the City's beauty.

And of course, the actual construction would create a nightmare of logjams and noise pollution, which would go on for too long, considering how construction projects drag on and on.

Please consider these issues and reject this misbegotten and incredibly thoughtless project.

John Paul Sekulich
1632 Loma St
805-819-1025

From: kmwlaw@cox.net <kmwlaw@cox.net>
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 1:46 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SAGESB.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue Application
Attachment(s): "kmw.grandavenue.ltr.docx"

Please see the attached letter in opposition to the 1609 Grand Avenue apartment project.

Thank you.

Kathleen Wilson

KATHLEEN M. WILSON
420 Alameda Padre Serra
Santa Barbara, California 93103
kmwlaw@cox.net

September 27, 2025

Via email to:1609Grand@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

To the decisionmakers of the City of Santa Barbara:

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the proposed 53 unit, six-story apartment complex proposed at the above address. The reasons for my concern and opposition are many, but I will limit this letter to those I feel are most pressing.

As a resident of the Riviera for decades, I am well acquainted with the potential for fire in the area and have personally been required to evacuate from my home several times in the past. Evacuations are, by nature, stressful, unplanned events, giving rise to panicked reactions by many of the evacuees. Given the dense population of the Riviera, the narrow streets, and the existing congestion, it is irresponsible to add more than 100 people in one development to an already overburdened location. This project also doesn't begin to address the access needs of the fire department and other first responders, who face an already extremely difficult situation with any emergency on the Riviera. Grand Avenue is no place of a development of this size and permitting this project to be built puts everyone in the area in danger.

The citizens of Santa Barbara voted to adopt a city charter many years ago with the intention of retaining local control over planning and development matters. While recent state legislation has unfairly usurped much of this authority, the underlying purpose of a charter city cannot be ignored. The citizens have a right to express their concerns about planning issues, including neighborhood compatibility, height, design, and impact on local resources, both environmental and structural. Construction on steep hillsides must respect the natural and built landscape, consider the limitations of the existing infrastructure, and take into account the impacts of the development on the overall character of the neighborhood and the City as a whole. A six-story apartment complex visible from much of the City

1609 Grand Avenue
September 27, 2025
Page two

in an area of single family and duplex homes is the antithesis of sound community planning.

There is no doubt that additional housing is needed in Santa Barbara, but if Santa Barbara is to retain its reputation as a jewel of the south coast, and indeed a worldwide destination, unbridled growth in completely inappropriate locations cannot be sanctioned. While the “builder’s remedy” exception gives broad license to a developer, it is not a blank check. Impacts to public safety and public services, including fire protection, traffic, and infrastructure capacity cannot be exempt. This is simply too much development in the wrong location. I urge you to deny this application.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal.

Sincerely,

Kathleen (Weinheimer) Wilson
Former Assistant City Attorney for the City of Santa Barbara

From: Maureen McFadden <momcfadden51@gmail.com>

Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 2:29 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: No building on Grand Ave

[You don't often get email from momcfadden51@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Grand avenue is not a good place to put an oversized building. The Riviera is steep and unforgiving in its tight spaces. Renovate the houses there if the builders want to make affordable living.

Thank you!

Dancing across the ether to itsyou from my iPhone.

Dancing across the ether to you from my iPhone.

From: maryotoole <maryotoole@cox.net>
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 2:39 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grande Avenue

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

My husband and I reside at 1400 Mission Ridge Road. We drive on Grand Avenue (Grand) daily on our way into or from downtown. Grand is generally composed of residential structures that have limited parking; therefore the residents park on the street. The street is packed with parked cars and it is very difficult for two cars of modest size to pass each other. SUVs and other larger vehicles have to stop to let other cars pause before they can continue driving.

A few years ago, we were driving our car down Grand Ave when we encountered a furniture moving truck parked on the street; we couldn't make our way around the truck, so we backed up the hill in order to detour and nearly backed into an oncoming car. We can't imagine how bad the traffic will be if the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building at 1609 Grand is constructed. The city needs to take a careful look at the effects of the additional **traffic** on that steep, clogged street.

We have been evacuated three times for various wildfires (Tea, Gap, Thomas), and it was evident that people were very stressed when they were driving away from their homes during evacuation. The steep narrow streets of this area pose potential bottlenecks, which will be negatively impacted by the high density housing proposed for the project at Grand Avenue. **Safety** of the residents in this high fire risk area should be the city's top priority.

In addition to the residential traffic situation, the trucks and construction vehicles during the excavation phase of the project will disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their daily activities because of the traffic and **noise**. This is another negative impact the City should study.

The images of the project as presented are not consistent with the character of the existing residential neighborhood. Due to its size, the proposed project is of a scale/density that is incompatible with the **aesthetics** of the lower Riviera. This area of the Riviera has some of the most charming and varied architecture in Santa Barbara... Pearl Chase would turn over in her grave if this project were built as proposed!

Thank you for considering our concerns. We will continue to follow news and announcements about the project. Please add us to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Mary O'Toole and Jim Thweatt

1400 Mission Ridge Road

From: Stephanie Sneddon <stephaniesneddon9@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 4:03 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: Grand Avenue Project

You don't often get email from stephaniesneddon9@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

Thank you for considering input on this project from local Santa Barbarans. I have lived in SB nearly my entire life and the community is incredibly important to me. I've also evacuated for the Sycamore Canyon fire in 1976, the Tea Fire, and sheltered evacuees from the Thomas Fire.

When I was a child my family home burnt in the Sycamore Canyon Fire. Although I was young, I well remember trying to get out of our neighborhood on a single lane road wedged between a wall of fire on one side of our canyon, a hill and homes on the other. Large firetrucks were everywhere and unfortunately so were people trying to see the action, blocking the narrow road. It was terrifying.

For this Grand Avenue project, please require a thorough analysis of Potential CEQA Impact Issues such as:

- Wildfire evacuation: for project residents and neighbors
- Traffic impacts: external circulation
- Parking: internal circulation
- Aesthetics
- Stormwater and drainage
- Cumulative Impacts

Thank you for taking the time to protect our community.

Best,

--

Stephanie Sneddon
stephaniesneddon9@gmail.com
(805) 896-6421

From: lena pousette <lplifeisgreat@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 4:09 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: 1609 project

You don't often get email from lplifeisgreat@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

This is insane! I live on the 1700 block on Grand and traffic already backs up on the steep hill at that corner. You can only drive ONE CAR up OR down because of cars parked there. I've been evacuated because of fires three times since I moved here. Even when I haven't been and there are fires in SB, we know the embers can flow miles on the strong wind and we all have a fear that all these wooden houses and the palm trees will catch fire. The Santa Ana winds come up quick and the danger is real. The evacuation routes are not here. The fatalities would be catastrophic!

Parking is hard at times already because of El Encanto and the Bowl and the fact that a lot of people are forced to get roommates because of these trying times. I had a one bedroom short term rental and most of my guests had either one car or no cars. Still, I was forced to stop because of "parking" problems according to the city. HOW do you explain that? Again, this is insane!

And WHY would you allow that HUGE building to destroy the neighborhood? I'd hate to be one of the home owners who will lose their view and therefore the value of their homes.

The charm with Santa Barbara and what draws a lot of people here is not just the ocean but the sweet neighborhoods, no tall buildings and no billboards.

If this goes through - it's all gone!

Lena

--

Lena M Pousette
805 680 8230
www.lenapousette.com



Virus-free. www.avast.com

From: Stacey Rook <staceynrook@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 5:14 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 – 1615 Grand Avenue
Attachment(s): "1609 Grand Ave.docx"

You don't often get email from staceynrook@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

Please see attached for my comments on the building project 1600 block of Grand Ave.

Thank you,

Stacey Rook

September 27th, 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I live within a block and a ½ of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. I have lived in Santa Barbara most of my life. I grew up here and feel very blessed to live in such a beautiful city and I really hope it stays beautiful for generations to come.

I recently learned about this project and there are many aspects of it that are of great concern:

Public Safety:

The City needs to assess the effects of the additional traffic a 50-unit housing project would have on this already high-density area. Public safety would be at risk if an evacuation was necessary, which is likely in this high-fire risk area.

Adding that much traffic would be dangerous on the narrow streets of this neighborhood, both for drivers and pedestrians. We walk in the area daily and feel it would bring down the safety of our daily walks.

How safe is it to dig up 400 truck loads on such a steep incline? We are downhill from this and that concerns me, especially during the high-flood risk season, considering the recent flood disasters.

Another issue will be the addition of deliveries for 50 units. We already have an issue with delivery trucks blocking traffic, we don't need at least 50 more residents receiving deliveries.

Parking:

The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street. There is no parking on California street. This would very likely mean they would be parking on our street.

I know from personal experience. An apartment building went up across the street from us at our last residence. They provided the required amount of off-street parking, but as soon as tenants moved in they started parking on the street. That was just a few units and yet it had a big impact on parking on our

street. Not only did that mean more noise from cars parking in front of our house, there were several instances when someone blocked our driveway because so little spaces were available in our neighborhood. So this in fact can be a public safety issues, as well. If parking gets bad enough other issues will arise.

I can't imagine what a 50-unit complex would do, as that would likely mean 50 more cars on the street. Even if it was $\frac{1}{2}$ of that or a quarter of that, it would still be too much for this neighborhood where street parking is already limited. We already have an issue with not enough street parking in the area and don't need it to become problematic.

Noise:

The extra 50-100 cars would make the traffic noise much worse, as well as all of the car alarms.

The size of the construction project sounds like a noise nightmare. How many years of construction noise would we have to endure with a building project of that size?

A building that size will reflect noise and the parking garage would amplify it. We know as we live next to a 3-story medical building with a parking garage. I hear the freeway at night and we are over 5 blocks from the freeway. (We used to live right next the freeway, on Castillo street, and we didn't hear it like we do here.)

Parking garages are a huge amplifiers of all the noise of the cars that park in it as well as all of the other noises in the neighborhood. We experience this daily. With a 6-story unit the whole neighborhood would be affected by it.

Property Value:

This size of a building is not in line with the aesthetic of this neighborhood. We pay a lot of money to live in this beautiful neighborhood. If the City allows the development of giant apartment complexes in sweet little neighborhoods it will pave the way to the demise of this beautiful place we all call home.

Not only would we lose our beautiful city but property values and rent values would drop.

Quality of Life:

Yes, we will always have the ocean and the mountains and beautiful climate, but it won't be the same if we lose our sky-lines and our ocean views.

We especially enjoy walking on the 1600 block of Grand Avenue to enjoy the spacious ocean view it offers to all residents of this neighborhood. This is why we pay what we do to live where we do.

As well as the ocean views we can enjoy which are only steps away. We also really enjoy all of the beautiful homes we see on our walks. We would hate for a huge apartment buildings to block the ocean views and take away the charm of this neighborhood.

This project would also take away a natural space for birds and wild-life. We need more sounds of nature, not more sounds of traffic, car alarms and huge construction projects.

This project would go against what we all love about Santa Barbara and open the door for its ruin.

Please don't let developers ruin our beautiful town.

Thank you for considering my concerns. Please add me to any notice lists as I would like to follow any announcements.

Thank you,

Stacey Rook
524 E. Arrellaga St. Cottage A
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

From: Dika Golovatchoff <digolov@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 5:38 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Objection

You don't often get email from digolov@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I live on valerio st. My concern about a project of this size is that it would heavily impact traffic on this already busy street. Such a high rise building is out of character for this low density neighborhood. Regards,

Dika Golovatchoff
320 e. Valerio st.

<https://japanimages2016.wordpress.com/>
<https://onwingsofsongblog.wordpress.com/>

From: Nick B. <nickbinsb@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 9:03 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: High density would compound the safety risk of the area

You don't often get email from nickbinsb@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I have lived in Mission Canyon for over thirty years, and I am extremely concerned about the proposed high-density development in this area. While the evacuation bottlenecks are a major concern, I am also very alarmed that hundreds of new residents would also need to be accounted for and potentially assisted in the event of an evacuation. I care for my elderly mother, and I know that falls, confusion, or other health emergencies are a constant danger for our senior citizens.

Emergency personnel would be forced to devote precious time and resources to searching and rescuing from a massive apartment complex, putting everyone's lives on the line with additional delay. The result is that long-time residents like my family are effectively pushed to the back burner while scarce emergency personnel are diverted to handle the burden such large projects would create. An ambulance dispatched to a high-density complex could be the difference between life and death for someone who resides in the kind of low-density housing this area was designed for. Individual homes would inevitably become a secondary priority as large apartment buildings consume our limited resources.

The area is already designated by Cal Fire as a severe safety risk, and it logically follows that adding any further development only increases that risk. I refuse to believe that the Builder's Remedy was ever intended to be so punitive and draconian that it requires us to accept projects that put lives directly in harm's way.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Berti

2895 Spyglass Ridge Road

Santa Barbara, CA 93105

805-455-8156

From: David Beavers <drbeavers@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 9:21 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand CEQA Requirments

You don't often get email from drbeavers@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

September 28, 2025

To: The City of Santa Barbara

From: David Beavers

Subject: Public Comment Response for 1609 Grand Avenue (PLN2024-00181)

I live about 1 mile from the proposed project and frequent this area often. I have personal experience involving fire and flood evacuations and have several friends who have lost their homes and livelihood under these conditions. It is devastating. I am deeply concerned about the subject project. The size and enormity of this project in the middle of a residential neighborhood is dangerous on many levels.

In response to your request, I am writing you to ask that you require the applicant to conduct a full environmental impact (CEQA) report for this project given:

- 1) the adjacent proximity to a high fire zone (look at the fire map),
- 2) the hilly and steep sloped terrain that is conducive to flooding today,
- 3) narrow streets that currently congest today,
- 4) the inability to evacuate current and future building residence under an emergency evacuation order,
- 5) the inability for emergency vehicles and services to access current and future population in normal and emergency conditions,
- 6) the aging infrastructure of the street and utilities
- 7) the gargantuan aesthetics of the massive building structure and height in a residential neighborhood,
- 8) the precedence established by allowing the enormous building height and mass in a residential neighborhood.

After reviewing the CEQA criteria in detail, this project appears to significantly violate the following CEQA criteria categories:

- 1) Public Safety
- 2) Traffic
- 3) Noise
- 4) Aesthetics
- 5) Land Use Planning
- 6) Population and Housing
- 7) Public Services
- 8) Utilities and Service Systems

Changing weather conditions have resulted in fire and floods across northern, central and southern California, devastating and destroying communities. Santa Barbara County has a recent history of fire and floods. Please support our community with smart actions for growth. Please require the applicant to conduct a full environmental impact so we can get this one right!

Thank you,

David Beavers
2436 State Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
805-280-8670
drbeavers@gmail.com

From: Sarah Gill <sarahcngill@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 10:03 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: In Support of 53-unit multi-unit development at 1609-1615 Grand Avenue

You don't often get email from sarahcngill@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi,

I am a long time resident of the City of Santa Barbara and am in support of housing and increased density in the city. This project seems to be in alignment with the City's urgent need for more local housing.

I am reaching out in support of this project because I saw a flyer in my neighborhood posted by SAGE (<https://sagesb.org/1609-1615-grand-avenue/>) which presents what seems like a very misleading representation of the project (a large grey box), so I am concerned that community members may write you in opposition of the project based on this misleading visual representation and that that could give a false impression of overall public sentiment.

Best,

Sarah Gill

Master of Public Policy

The University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy

From: Katie Upton <katieuptonartist@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 1:43 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Mission Canyon Projects
Attachment(s): "mission cyn project.docx"

You don't often get email from katieuptonartist@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Governor Newsom and fellow legislators,

It is with dire concern that I write this letter regarding the proposed giant apartment building projects at 505 East Los Olivos Street and 1606 Grand Avenue in the historic Mission Canyon areas of Santa Barbara.

Aside from the obvious issues, like traffic congestion, evacuation quagmire, environmental impact, building on fault lines and in floodplains etc., these projects are blatantly egregious, ugly and frankly a slap in the face of long-time Santa Barbara residents who have fought and voted to keep the vision for our town cohesive and esthetically appropriate. No developer should be above our building regulations. Just because we have a housing shortage does not mean we have to lower our standards.

Please pass Senator Monique Limon's bill (SB 158) to hold all developers accountable

Sincerely,

Katie Upton

(67-year resident of Mission Canyon) (second generation Santa Barbara)

From: Thomas Rollerson <thomasrollerson@me.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 1:58 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand

You don't often get email from thomasrollerson@me.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I moved here in 1989 and remember how fiercely this city fought to protect its Spanish-style charm. California Avenue from APS to Micheltorena is one of our steepest, narrowest streets. Today, two-way traffic already forces cars to stop or back up at Grand Avenue. Adding a 53-unit, six-story building with a two-story parking garage at 1609 Grand will create a dangerous choke point and overwhelm our fragile streets. And an eyesore.

This route is also a wildfire evacuation corridor for high-risk neighborhoods. More cars and construction trucks mean slower, riskier evacuations and increased noise and disruption for residents. The proposed project would remove more than 400 truckloads of dirt, loom over its neighbors, and erode the lower Riviera's character—turning our historic hillside into a Hollywood Hills-style skyline.

I urge the City to require a full, independent evaluation of traffic, safety, evacuation, and neighborhood impacts before approving this project. Please protect the safety, beauty, and heritage that make Santa Barbara unique.

I am FULLY aware of our housing crisis but this makes no common sense in my opinion.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Thomas Rollerson

From: Raymond Smith <ray@eri.ucsb.edu>
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 2:26 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Ray Smith <ray@eri.ucsb.edu>; info@sagesb.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: 1069 Grand Ave

You don't often get email from ray@eri.ucsb.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

City of Santa Barbara:

I have lived in Upper Mission Canyon since 1986. Living in Mission Canyon has long fostered a strong sense of community. Soon after the Jesusita Fire in May 2009 the Mission Canyon Association, working with County Fire, published the Mission Canyon Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP July 2011). This CWPP identified potential areas for hazardous fuel reduction and evaluated traffic flow and evacuation.

Also at that time, the County Board of Supervisors appointed a nine member Mission Canyon Planning Advisory Committee to create a Community Plan. I was elected Chair of this committee. Over the next several years our Planning Advisory Committee held numerous meetings with the Mission Canyon community and relevant stakeholders. In February 2013 the County of Santa Barbara (Planning & Development Long Range Planning Division), coordinating with our committee, published a draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Soon after, The Mission Canyon Community Plan was adopted by the County Board of Supervisors in April 2014.

In discussing use and development within the canyon, these documents emphasized that “due to the existing extreme fire hazard, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable”. This assessment remains true today. As noted in the MC Community Plan, key challenges facing Mission Canyon residents then were: how best to reduce fire hazards associated with fuel loading in the area and necessary roadway improvement to enhance community emergency egress and first responder ingress.

Today, emergency egress and ingress from and to the Canyon and the surrounding areas are of even greater concern, due to increased population and traffic. For public safety it is essential, that prior to the proposed 1609 Grand Avenue project, that a full EIR (CEQA) review and new traffic studies be conducted, and possible mitigations be evaluated.

Thank you for your consideration,

Raymond Smith, 1330 Tunnel Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93105

From: Jill McLemore <jillmclemoreemail@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 2:59 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SAGESB.oeg <info@SAGESB.oeg>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave Concerns

You don't often get email from jillmclemoreemail@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City,

I live about a ½ mile from the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building on Grand Ave. and have several concerns I'd like to share:

1. **Traffic:** Grand Avenue and California Streets are already too narrow for two cars to pass without one pulling aside. This situation often requires cars to reverse in active lanes. Adding more traffic will only make this worse. I ask that the City require a traffic impact assessment, especially considering the steep and narrow nature of our streets.
2. **Public Safety:** Grand Avenue and California Street are also key evacuation routes for nearby high fire-risk areas. In a wildfire, the added congestion could create dangerous bottlenecks. Given our region's fire history, this is a real concern. I urge the City to study the impact on emergency evacuations and require mitigation measures.
3. **Noise and Construction Impact:** The project includes two levels of underground parking, which would mean hundreds of truck trips to remove dirt—before construction even begins. This will add to traffic and bring significant noise to the peaceful and quiet neighborhood. This impact should also be addressed.
4. **Neighborhood Compatibility:** While I haven't seen the final design, a 6-story building does not fit with the character or scale of this neighborhood. The City should ensure the project aligns with existing height standards and the aesthetic of the community.

Thank you for considering these concerns.

Sincerely,
Jill McLemore

511 E Anapamu St. Apt B.

Santa Barbara, CA 93103

From: Joseph Pisano <jmpisano1925@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 4:32 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Comment on 1609-1615 Grand Avenue Project

You don't often get email from jmpisano1925@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

September 28, 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

Sent via email to 1609Grand@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

I am writing to express concerns regarding the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building project for Grand Avenue by Industrial Partners Group under Builders Remedy provisions of the State's Housing Accountability Act. I live on the Lower Riviera about 3 blocks from the proposed site.

My primary concerns have to do with the negative impacts on public safety, traffic, neighborhood character, and construction noise associated with a six-story, 53-unit complex at 1609-1615 Grand Avenue in our neighborhood.

Public Safety:

Safety is the most significant concern. Our neighborhood is in a very high-fire risk area. Grand Avenue and California Street and other currently congested surface streets in the area are already inadequate evacuation routes in the event of an emergency. I am already concerned about the ability of Fire Safety personnel and their equipment to access parts of the neighborhood, and the proposed project would make the situation much more dangerous. I believe the City must require an evaluation of public safety impacts and any possible mitigations.

Traffic:

The proposed project is in an established neighborhood of old, narrow, crumbling streets already overburdened by vehicle traffic and very limited parking. Arguello Road is the congested and dangerous artery from APS that connects Oramas Road, Loma Street, and Grand Avenue to California Street. These streets have become de facto one-way streets due to the current number of parked cars. California Street, where the entrance to the proposed 2-story parking garage would be situated, is the primary route from the upper Riviera and APS, and the lower Riviera, to all parts of Milpas Street, downtown, and the 101. Currently area residents are parking on California Street, a very narrow road, making it impossible for two cars to pass at the same time. The City should require the developer to assess and mitigate the effects of the increased additional traffic that will inevitably come with this oversized proposed development.

Neighborhood Character:

How can anyone think to cram 53 residential units in one behemoth building in a space currently zoned for 4 units?

This proposed project is completely incompatible with the character of our neighborhood and the City. It would negate all the steps and care taken over the years to maintain the natural beauty of Santa Barbara and to keep it a desirable place to visit and to live. I encourage the City to require the developer to evaluate the proposal to ensure that this project does not damage the City's reputation in this regard.

Noise:

I have read that the two stories of underground parking as proposed would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, which is already highly congested, noise from the trucks and construction will disrupt the normal day-to-day activities of those of us who live in the neighborhood. The City should require an environmental impact report and insist the developer address noise impacts.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Joseph M. Pisano
1585 Oramas Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

From: Greg Rech <awgreg@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 5:29 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave. concerns
Attachment(s): "1609 Grand Ave concerns.pdf"

You don't often get email from awgreg@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello City of Santa Barbara,

Attached is my letter regarding concerns at 1609 Grand Ave.

Greg Rech
(805) 252-4754

Greg Rech
5278 Rhoads Ave.
Santa Barbara, CA 93111

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I am very concerned about the 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on the steep California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. Traffic. I have friends that live on Grand Avenue and travel via California Street to see them. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We all know people personally that have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Not only current residents, but I am also concerned for the lives of these potential new residents and all of our first responders. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. Aesthetics. Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the neighborhood. It's incompatible with any area of the city aside from our downtown area which is the only area where projects of this size should be built. It certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. It would stick out like a sore thumb and it's significant mass will be visible

from most of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Sincerely,

Greg Rech

From: Angela F <angelafoote53@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 7:45 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Grand Avenue and E. Los Olivos

[You don't often get email from angelafoote53@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

To the City of Santa Barbara—

There is not one good reason to allow these developments to proceed.

SAFETY is paramount. Evacuation because of a fire, earthquake, or flooding would be a nightmare. Thousands would be trapped. That's a given.

TRAFFIC would be another nightmare on a daily basis.

They would be UGLY.

Please don't let simple greed win the day.

Angela Foote
817 Cieneguitas Road
SB 93110

From: Peg Phelps <peg@me.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 8:08 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: Grand Avenue Request Full CEQA Review
Attachment(s): "Grand Avenue Letter.pdf"

You don't often get email from peg@me.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

September 28, 2025

Subject: 1609-1615 Grand Avenue

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I am writing on behalf of the *Riviera Association representing over 2,300 households in Santa Barbara*, regarding the proposed 1609-1615 Grand Avenue project on the lower riviera. This proposed building lies in our district and we have grave concerns that this project will impact public health and safety including fire safety and evacuation, traffic ingress and egress and have negative aesthetic impacts. We urge the City to require a thorough CEQA review for Grand Avenue due to the following major concerns:

- **Public Safety** is a significant concern. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies. We are concerned that the proposed project would create a dangerous bottleneck, potentially trapping evacuees in their cars. Public safety is the number one priority for our residents and the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations
- **Traffic** - I regularly travel along California Street from my home to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, two opposing cars can't use the street at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pull over to the side to allow an oncoming car to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on these old, steep, narrow streets
- **Stormwater & Drainage** - the potential impacts on stormwater and drainage must also be evaluated. This project is on a hillside and there can be unanticipated, deleterious impacts created by this large, dense structure on a zoned R2 lot.

On behalf of the Riviera Association, I respectfully request that the City **stand firm and require a thorough analysis of potential CEQA impacts** of the Grand Avenue project.

Sincerely,
Peg Phelps
President
Riviera Association
Rivieraassociation.org



The Riviera Association

September 28, 2025

Subject: 1609-1615 Grand Avenue

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I am writing on behalf of the *Riviera Association* representing over 2,300 households in Santa Barbara, regarding the proposed 1609-1615 Grand Avenue project on the lower riviera. This proposed building lies in our district and we have grave concerns that this project will impact public health and safety including fire safety and evacuation, traffic ingress and egress and have negative aesthetic impacts. We urge the City to require a thorough CEQA review for Grand Avenue due to the following major concerns:

- **Public Safety** is a significant concern. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies. We are concerned that the proposed project would create a dangerous bottleneck, potentially trapping evacuees in their cars. Public safety is the number one priority for our residents and the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations
- **Traffic** - I regularly travel along California Street from my home to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, two opposing cars can't use the street at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pull over to the side to allow an oncoming car to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on these old, steep, narrow streets
- **Stormwater & Drainage** - the potential impacts on stormwater and drainage must also be evaluated. This project is on a hillside and there can be unanticipated, deleterious impacts created by this large, dense structure on a zoned R2 lot.

On behalf of the Riviera Association, I respectfully request that the City **stand firm and require a thorough analysis of potential CEQA impacts** of the Grand Avenue project.

Sincerely,

Peg Phelps
President
Riviera Association
Rivieraassociation.org

From: Erin Riley <erin.yak@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 8:53 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Concerns

You don't often get email from erin.yak@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I work and play near the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street. A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. Traffic. I regularly travel along Grand Avenue on my way to work. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On Grand one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. Aesthetics. Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation. Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

With Gratitude,
Erin Riley

From: Vasanti Fithian <mimos.hula@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 9:24 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue development

You don't often get email from mimos.hula@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Honorable Mayor Randy Rouse and City Councilmembers:

As current owners and former residents of a home on Grand Avenue we were surprised that an apartment building the size of the above development would be permitted in this neighborhood. As you know, the neighborhood is a maze of narrow streets winding up and down hills that is already intensely built up. We have witnessed several evacuations of the Riviera, Mission Canyon, and the Cheltenham neighborhoods due to major fires. Traffic slows to a crawl, intersections are clogged. The fires I refer to took place some years ago. Our population has since increased as have the number of cars and trucks. One stalled vehicle could halt the evacuation of a number of streets.

Please make your primary concern in your decision- making for this development that of the safety of all those (people and pets) who live in the Grand Avenue neighborhood. Let us try to avoid a potential tragedy in this already crowded neighborhood.

Vasanti and Joel Fithian
1918 Grand Avenue
316 East Los Olivos Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

From: dave everett <davempt@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 9:35 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 grand proposed housing project- I am opposed!

You don't often get email from davempt@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

As a resident of Loma st, which sits immediately behind Grand Avenue, I am concerned with the size of the housing project.

The neighborhood has very limited parking as it is, it is already highly congested during busy hours, and the street widths are incompatible with a project of this size.

This is a quiet family neighborhood that should not have projects anywhere near this size. Please deny the project in its current form and only allow projects that are compatible with this neighborhood.

Regards,

Dave Everett

From: Teresa Jamison <tjamison123@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 9:47 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: Addressing Safety and Infrastructure Concerns

You don't often get email from tjamison123@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

Regarding the project proposed at 1609-1615 Grand Avenue- I have been a lifelong resident of Santa Barbara. I was born at St Francis Hospital, as were my children, and I work just above the project site at Santa Barbara Middle School. I know this area well and know that it is already dense and congested simply because of the terrain.

A project of this magnitude poses genuine risk for public safety. Increased traffic congestion, strains on emergency services, reduced access for first responders, wildfire risk and evacuation congestion, and overburdened utilities will compromise the well-being of current residents. Natural disasters- fire or earthquake- are not a matter of if, but when, and approving a project of this scale in this location is irresponsible.

Our city's thoughtful planning must prioritize safety and livability for all. Please do not approve this project.

With concern,
Teresa Jamison

From: Suzanna Everett <suzannaeverett@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 10:55 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: I'm opposed to 1609 Grand Ave project

[You don't often get email from suzannaeverett@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I am opposed to the proposed housing project on Grand Avenue.

A building of that size is sure to obstruct the views of the residents living above Grand, of which I am one. Such obstruction will not only decrease our enjoyment and appreciation of the city and neighborhood, but I fear will also decrease property values.

In addition, I worry about increased traffic, lack of parking (both of which are already a bit of a challenge on our narrow streets), and noise levels during construction as well as with the increase in tenancy.

Please do not permit this project to move forward as proposed.

Thank you for taking our opinions into consideration!

Sincerely,

Suzanna Everett

A resident of Loma Street, Santa Barbara

From: stu.sherman100@gmail.com <stu.sherman100@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 8:54 AM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; Eric Friedman <EFriedman@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Kristen Sneddon <KSneddon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Meagan Harmon <MHarmon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Mike Jordan <MJordan@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Oscar Gutierrez <OGutierrez@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Randy Rowse <rrowse@santabarbaraca.gov>; Wendy Santamaria <WSantamaria@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 505 E. Los Olivos and 1609 Grand Ave. proposed housing projects -- ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

You don't often get email from stu.sherman100@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Members of Santa Barbara City Council,

I previously emailed to you my statements opposing the housing projects proposed for 505 E. Los Olivos Street and 1609 Grand Avenue and am now expressing additional comments and concerns.

Communications I have received from some councilmembers stated that there is nothing the city can do to modify or deny these projects due to the builder's remedy provisions of state law. In this email, I remind the council that the city may legally deny these projects after the city conducts the required CEQA environmental review AND IF the review finds that either project will cause an unmitigable public health or safety impact based on objective, written public safety standards.

I ask you to realize that although there is WIDESPREAD strong public opposition to these two horrific monstrous development projects, many people are not letter writers. Whether the City Council receives 300 letters urging denial of the projects or 3,000 letters, the same widespread opposition exists. Whether numerous identical "form letters" are sent to Council in opposition or whether most letters are individualized does not diminish the validity of the stated reasons for denying these horrific projects. People's submission of the same letter of opposition is an appropriate means of declaring, "I COMPLETELY AGREE!!" with someone else's compelling and detailed statements. I have seen various letters of opposition that people have posted on Nextdoor, or have shared with me, and the letters are comprehensive and immensely compelling. Council must recognize that multiple submissions of the same letter must be viewed as a strong united effort to express the compelling reasons to deny these projects.

The notification given to the public of the September 30 deadline for submitting statements to the city re the 1609 Grand Avenue project was made with little advance notice. Why?? This has unfairly deprived the public of due process!

If City Council allows either of these nightmare projects to be built, the council members will have on their individual consciences a most egregious betrayal of the city and its inhabitants. If either project is built, and a wildfire evacuation results in deaths due to the added congestion on the evacuation corridors from these projects and due to the constricted ingress of fire personnel, the council members will have to live with these calamities on their consciences.

Sincerely,

Stu Sherman

From: Rob Dunton <robertdunton@ucsb.edu>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 9:40 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Rob Dunton <rdunton@gmail.com>
Subject: Concerns with 1609-15 Grand Avenue Development

You don't often get email from robertdunton@ucsb.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live a ½ mile from the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site at 1609-15 Grand Avenue. One of the primary access routes to the proposed 2-story parking garage is E. Valerio, one block from our home. As more homes in this historic section of town have been converted to apartments and condos over the decades, as more people add ADUs, more and more cars end up getting parked on our narrow streets that were designed before the invention of the automobile, and create uncomfortable passing scenarios and crowded streets.

A number of aspects about the project concern me. I think the city should require greater review by the developer, and I am confident that a review of the impact and safety of this project must result in a significant reduction in the height/size/density of this project:

1. Traffic. I regularly travel along Islay, Valerio and Micheltorena. As it is now, in certain sections it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California specifically, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets, and if necessary, force the developer to purchase easements on all neighboring properties and cover the cost of expanding the streets to resolve these issues.
2. Scale/Aesthetics. Although I have not been able to find a copy of the proposed design of the apartment building, I do know that the proposed 6-story size is incompatible with the area, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of neighboring homes. The proposed structure will stand out as an abhorrent eye-sore. Also, with rare exception, in new developments within the historic/older parts of Santa Barbara, inadequate parking is provided so residents end up parking cars on the street (work trucks, cars for teenagers and young adults living with parents, two car families...). The overflow parking will impact the area for blocks.
3. Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.

Thank you for considering these concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Best,

Rob Dunton
35 E. Islay Street
(805) 456-9616

Rob Dunton
Senior Director of Development, Foundation & Corporate Relations
(C) 805-456-9616 |(O) 805-893-2925 |robertdunton@ucsb.edu
UC Santa Barbara – GGSE 4203H
Santa Barbara, CA 93106-6150
giving.ucsb.edu
UC SANTA BARBARA

From: Alison <alisondilleluth@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 9:59 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609-1615 Grand Ave

You don't often get email from alisondilleluth@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I am against the proposed projects for these reasons: unsightliness and fire evacuation hazards. The limited amount of actual affordable housing will qualify under the state California builders remedy provision, however, will not provide enough benefit to our community; there will be permanent severe damage, which will be inflicted on the community affecting neighborhood, character, wildfire, evacuation, and ambience.

I vote NO.

Alison
1506 la Vista Del Oceano, SB

"There is one lawgiver and judge who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?" James 4:12

From: Brad Parks <brad@silcom.com>

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 10:32 AM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 1609 Grand Ave. : response to proposed development

[You don't often get email from brad@silcom.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear Santa Barbara Mayor and City Council Members,

I have lived in the Lower Riviera Design District for over forty years, very near where the Riviera starts to level out toward State Street. During these decades I have routinely walked and driven California Street and Grand Avenue, as well as Valerio Street and Pedregosa Street. I always enjoy walking up to the Riviera Theater for a movie or making the climb to Franceschi Park to absorb the stunning view of our city and coastline. The neighborhoods along the way are rich with history and style. I have a special affection for the property immediately next to the proposed project for 1609 Grand Avenue, as my mother spent the last four years of her life in the licensed residential care facility there which offered her an empathic and conscientious caregiving environment.

The houses along Grand Avenue are not only beautiful but are also extremely vulnerable during fires which predictably and with increasing frequency threaten to burn down homes and businesses within the city. As residents of Santa Barbara, we can each generate a list of recent fires and the destruction they bring. Many of us have family or friends who have lost their homes and possessions as a result. The proposed six-story 53-unit apartment or condo building at 1609 Grand Avenue suggests that we do not remember any of these tragic fires, during which individuals and families must evacuate under highly stressful conditions. Fear, chaos and poor judgment inevitably reign at such times.

California Street and Grand Avenue are two of the narrowest streets in the entire city of Santa Barbara, and California Street — like Pedregosa Street at the other end of Grand Avenue — is extremely steep. I mentioned that I enjoy walking on these streets, but I do not enjoy driving on them. On each of the streets immediately adjacent to the proposed project, only one car can pass long the street at a time, which can be a frightening adventure at the best of times, with impatient drivers engaging in a game of 'chicken' to evaluate who will yield. Residents of the neighborhood are generally considerate and pull over into the sparse spaces amongst the vehicles already parked on the street, but people in a hurry are not always so gracious. Please imagine what this scenario will look like in the face of an advancing fire, with panicked people trying to escape the smoke and flames.

Driving downhill along California Street or Pedregosa Street is also daunting even under the best of circumstances. Drivers race up and down these steep hills, and the lower end of California Street takes a steep turn where it veers sharply right to merge with high end of East Micheltorena Street. Cars parked legally along the street require drivers to pull over the side to let oncoming vehicles pass. It's far from ideal even without an evacuation order for the whole neighborhood. The Cottage Hospital housing project with over a hundred homes has its primary exit for vehicles at the midsection of California Street between E Micheltorena Street and Grand Avenue. Adding the vehicles from 53 more units to this volatile traffic mix strikes me as ... insane.

I have been and remain a passionate advocate for the development of affordable housing in our city. I am retired from my career as a social worker and I recognize how essential it is to build apartments, condos and private homes which are affordable to the people who live in, work, teach and serve the community in Santa Barbara. I am not entirely clear about how many 'affordable units' (or how 'affordable' would be calculated) would be available if this proposal is approved, but I suspect it is just a small percentage of the total units — I'm guessing five or ten units. The rest, of course, would be sold to wealthy individuals or families who might or might not reside permanently there, but who in any event would have other options if the proposal is not approved. Adding a few units to the City's affordable housing doesn't justify the risks and damage which this proposed development would create.

Aside from the multiple risks already mentioned here, there is the very real aesthetic damage which this particular building would inflict on the neighborhood and, as a result, on the City as a whole. Anyone who has spent any time walking or driving along Grand Avenue can attest to its charm and architectural interest. The homes are generally modest and small and the architecture is diverse but possesses the continuity of a neighborhood built close to a hundred years ago. The homes are beautiful and distinctive. The proposed six-story building would be monstrous in that context, and would be visible across a wide swath of the downtown area. The 'size, bulk and scale' of the proposal are starkly inconsistent with the neighborhood and, in fact, with the history of the city in that location.

In my view, this proposal calls out for a CEQA review in order to fully evaluate its potential impacts on: community safety, aesthetics, transportation and traffic, cultural resources, and public services. Did I mention SAFETY?!

Thank you for the opportunity to share my personal observations with the City Council on this inappropriate and dangerously conceived proposal for development.

Brad Parks
510 E Sola St.
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

[This email was created without the assistance of artificial 'intelligence' — aka, AI.]

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 10:41 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

[Microsoft](#)

Review These Messages

1 messages are being held for you to review as of **9/29/2025 5:20:25 PM (UTC)**.

Review them within **30 days of the received date** by going to the [Quarantine page](#) in the Security Center.

Prevented spam messages

Sender: mcorrigan@corrigan-co.com

Subject: This project

Date: 9/29/2025 1:52:48 PM

[Review Message](#)

[Release](#)

[Block Sender](#)

From: Jennifer Granger brown <jennifer.granger@icloud.com>

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 11:07 AM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 1609 Grand Ave- proposed project

[You don't often get email from jennifer.granger@icloud.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I live within two blocks of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for 1609 Grand Ave, on the lower riviera of Santa Barbara.

There are many aspects of the project that greatly concern me. See below:

1. The construction of a 6-story building in our neighborhood will completely change the look and feel of the neighborhood with this huge building standing out above all other structures, blocking sunlight, blocking views, and creating congestion from cars.
2. Pollution and Safety: Grand Avenue is not accessible from Arrellaga and therefore many cars will cut through Bella Riviera, creating unsafe conditions for our residents. Currently we experience many cars using our complex as a cut through to California Street and they speed through the complex. This will only get worse with 100-200 new residents with limited access to their apartments. There is no public transportation available, forcing private cars into the neighborhood. In addition, California Street is narrow and steep and only one car can pass at once. The addition of 100 cars in this small neighborhood will likely cause high levels of traffic, pollution, and public safety issues when evacuations are necessary. The additional cars will create more air pollution and street parking will become much more of an issue for the community.
3. Noise and Air Pollution: the noise created for an extensive timeframe to allow a 2-story underground parking structure plus 6 stories above ground will create years of noise and air pollution. The construction vehicles will create additional noise and traffic issues that will greatly impact our community. It is already difficult to use California Street due to its narrowness and steepness which only allows one car to pass at a time. Our neighborhood is robust with families and children and this noise and air pollution will significantly impact children's' right to play outside for more than 1 year.
4. Aesthetics: this project will be incompatible with the neighborhood and stick out like a sore thumb being 6-stories high. Furthermore, it will ruin the look of the whole city, being visible from every angle and every scene. Santa Barbara is known for its beauty and peaceful look. This building will change all of that and will encourage further destruction of the cities aesthetics should it be approved.

Thank you for considering my concerns and for reviewing this project from an environmental perspective. I look forward to hearing more announcements regarding this project.

Regards,
Jennifer Granger Brown
601 E Micheltorena St, unit 89
Santa Barbara, CA 93013.
Sent from my iPhone

From: Tava Ostrenger <TOstrenger@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 11:17 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: FW: Constituent Letters re: Projects on Grand
Attachment(s): "1609 & 1609 Grand Avenue and 505 East Los Olivos projects.msg", "Constituent Letter re 1609 Grand-Burke.pdf", "Constituent Letters re 1609 Grand-Hoffman Zimmer.pdf"
FYI

Tava Ostrenger
Assistant City Attorney
Santa Barbara City Attorney's Office
P.O. Box 1990
Santa Barbara, California 93102
Direct Tel.: (805) 564-5405
Fax: (805) 564-5426
Pronouns: She, Her, Hers

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From: Holly Perea <hperea@santabarbaraca.gov>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 11:09 AM
To: Mayor & City Council <mayor&council2@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Tava Ostrenger <TOstrenger@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Subject: Constituent Letters re: Projects on Grand

Good morning,

I've attached multiple constituent letters regarding the project on Grand Ave.

Best,
Holly

From: Gordon Brewer <gordonbrewer100@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 10:01 PM PDT
To: Holly Perea <hperea@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 & 1609 Grand Avenue and 505 East Los Olivos projects
Attachment(s): "1609 & 1615 Grand Avenue.pdf"

You don't often get email from gordonbrewer100@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please see the attached document . . .

Sincerely,
Gordon Brewer AIA LEED AP

Gordon Brewer
gordonbrewer100@gmail.com

Re: 1609 & 1615 Grand Avenue and 505 East Los Olivos Projects

Dear Mayor and Santa Barbara City Council Members,

Besides being far out of scale for their neighborhoods and locations on the Santa Barbara Riviera, these projects will not satisfy the goal of the "Builder's Remedy" process to provide "affordable by design" housing in Santa Barbara.

I have been designing affordable and market housing in Santa Barbara for almost 40 years and my observations have been that many of the market rate units have been purchased by out of town parties for vacation homes or speculation. The remaining market rate unit prices have skyrocketed due to competition from very wealthy buyers from all over the world - looking for a piece of Santa Barbara.

Unfortunately, due to Santa Barbara's intrinsic desirability, I believe the only way to provide affordable housing here is through public and private non-profit housing providers who are able to tailor unit pricing to local buyers' income levels. The more well off still get a bite of the apple by participating in the tax-credit funding sources for these affordable projects.

Finally, concerns over emergency exiting are very real and should be heeded to avoid repeating the disasters we have experienced all over the State and beyond.

Sincerely,
Gordon Brewer AIA LEED AP

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

23 September, 2025

I live within ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for the site on the Lower Riviera at 1609 Grand Ave.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will suggest a few.

1. Traffic I regularly travel from my home along Grand Ave. and on to California St. from my home in order to get downtown. At one of the recent (I have done 4) fire evacuations, the traffic from Grand Ave. was backed up across APS to Marymount school. The confusion and stress were overwhelming. Traffic burden on our old steep narrow streets has to be a consideration for this proposed project.

2. Public Safety: Grand Ave and California Streets are routes taken from adjacent high-fire and high-risk areas in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This is a REAL concern! The possibility of trapping evacuees in their cars and creating a dangerous bottleneck is a reality.

3. Noise: I can't image the noise factor on the neighborhood. The months of on-going noise and congestion will certainly impact the mental health and quality of life in the neighborhood.

4. Aesthetics I know from the size of the building that it is Incompatible with the look of the neighborhood and the (6 stories) would loom over neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. I urge the City to require the developer to evaluate its proposal so that the project does no damage to the aspect of the City's reputation.

I am also enclosing a photo of a 6-story building for scale and reflection.

Pamela Lowell-Burke

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Please reconsider this proposal.

Santa Barbara, Ca.93103

hollynonna@gmail.com



21 September 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for the site on the Lower Riviera at 1609 Grand Ave.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will suggest a few.

1. **Traffic** I regularly travel from my home along Grand Ave. and on to California St. from my home in order to get downtown. At one of the recent (I have done 4) fire evacuations, the traffic from Grand Ave. was backed up across APS to Marymount school. The confusion and stress were overwhelming. Traffic burden on our old steep narrow streets has to be a consideration for this proposed project.

2. **Public Safety**: Grand Ave and California Streets are routes taken from adjacent high-fire and high-risk areas in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This is a REAL concern! The possibility of trapping evacuees in their cars and creating a dangerous bottleneck is a reality.

3. **Noise**: I can't image the noise factor on the neighborhood. The months of on-going noise and congestion will certainly impact the mental health and quality of life in the neighborhood.

4. **Aesthetics**. I know from the size of the building that it is Incompatible with the look of the neighborhood and the (6 stories) would loom over neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. I urge the City to require the developer to evaluate its proposal so that the project does no damage to the aspect of the City's reputation.

I am also enclosing a photo of a 6-story building for scale and reflection.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Thank you
Cathy Conned
1537 W. Valerio St.
93101



21 September 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for the site on the Lower Riviera at 1609 Grand Ave.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will suggest a few.

1. **Traffic** I regularly travel from my home along Grand Ave. and on to California St. from my home in order to get downtown. At one of the recent (I have done 4) fire evacuations, the traffic from Grand Ave. was backed up across APS to Marymount school. The confusion and stress were overwhelming. Traffic burden on our old steep narrow streets has to be a consideration for this proposed project.
2. **Public Safety:** Grand Ave and California Streets are routes taken from adjacent high-fire and high-risk areas in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This is a REAL concern! The possibility of trapping evacuees in their cars and creating a dangerous bottleneck is a reality.
3. **Noise:** I can't image the noise factor on the neighborhood. The months of on-going noise and congestion will certainly impact the mental health and quality of life in the neighborhood.
4. **Aesthetics.** I know from the size of the building that it is Incompatible with the look of the neighborhood and the (6 stories) would loom over neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. I urge the City to require the developer to evaluate its proposal so that the project does no damage to the aspect of the City's reputation.

I am also enclosing a photo of a 6-story building for scale and reflection.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Please consider the above objections carefully!

Mary Hoffman
3340 McCaw Ave #108
93105



21 September 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for the site on the Lower Riviera at 1609 Grand Ave.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will suggest a few.

1. **Traffic** I regularly travel from my home along Grand Ave. and on to California St. from my home in order to get downtown. At one of the recent (I have done 4) fire evacuations, the traffic from Grand Ave. was backed up across APS to Marymount school. The confusion and stress were overwhelming. Traffic burden on our old steep narrow streets has to be a consideration for this proposed project.

2. **Public Safety**: Grand Ave and California Streets are routes taken from adjacent high-fire and high-risk areas in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This is a REAL concern! The possibility of trapping evacuees in their cars and creating a dangerous bottleneck is a reality.

3. **Noise**: I can't image the noise factor on the neighborhood. The months of on-going noise and congestion will certainly impact the mental health and quality of life in the neighborhood.

4. **Aesthetics**. I know from the size of the building that it is Incompatible with the look of the neighborhood and the (6 stories) would loom over neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. I urge the City to require the developer to evaluate its proposal so that the project does no damage to the aspect of the City's reputation.

I am also enclosing a photo of a 6-story building for scale and reflection.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Maud Zimmer
SB Resident

[Signature]



From: Marie Flores <mariekflores77@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 11:21 AM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Eric Friedman <EFriedman@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Kristen Sneddon <KSneddon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Meagan Harmon <MHarmon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Mike Jordan <MJordan@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Oscar Gutierrez <OGutierrez@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Randy Rowse <rrowse@santabarbaraca.gov>; Wendy Santamaria <WSantamaria@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: Housing developments at Grand Avenue and Los Olivos Street

You don't often get email from mariekflores77@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Santa Barbara City Officials,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed large-scale housing developments at Grand Avenue and Los Olivos Street.

While it is undeniable that Santa Barbara, California, and communities across the nation face a profound housing crisis, the scale and design of these particular projects are deeply inappropriate for our city. Growth is necessary, but it must be thoughtful, balanced, and consistent with the character, history, and livability of Santa Barbara. These developments, as currently proposed, fail to meet that standard.

Many community members and experts have already provided detailed and persuasive reasoning against these projects. In the interest of time, I will not restate those points here, but I want to make clear that I have reviewed them, I fully support them, and I stand firmly with those who oppose these developments in their current form.

The impact of such projects will reverberate well beyond Santa Barbara's borders—affecting traffic, the environment, and the shared quality of life for all of us in the region for generations to come.

I urge the City to reject these proposals and instead pursue housing solutions that are appropriately scaled, environmentally responsible, and in harmony with the unique character of Santa Barbara.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to our community.

Sincerely,

Marie Flores

31 W. Calle Crespis, Apt. A

Santa Barbara, CA 93105

From: Tiffany DiMarco <dimarco@mac.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 11:34 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609-1615 Grand Avenue proposed project
Attachment(s): "Ltr regarding 1609-1615 Grand SB.pdf"

[You don't often get email from dimarco@mac.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

1809 Mira Vista Avenue
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

September 29, 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

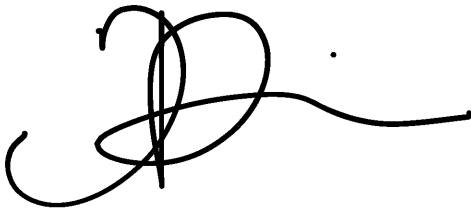
I live proximate to the apartment building proposed at 1609-1615 Grand Avenue.

Several aspects of the project concern me and I think it is imperative that the City conduct further analysis and initiate a CEQA review. Public safety, specifically with regard to fire evacuations and accessibility for emergency vehicles on the narrow surrounding streets, stands out as a chief concern. This area of Santa Barbara is vulnerable and we've all experienced those scary days when we were evacuated or on heightened alert. If this project is allowed to develop as proposed, it isn't a matter of if but when we will feel the impact and the density should be thoroughly scrutinized. I also believe the size and scope of the proposed project is incompatible with the neighborhood. It's my understanding the height will exceed existing standards that are in place to protect and preserve the more conservative natural setting of the area.

For the record, I am not opposed to denser development in Santa Barbara and I do believe we desperately more housing to serve all income levels of our community. That said, the location of this project deserves extra examination due to its location and the proposed scale.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I will be closely monitoring this project as the City and developer work to bring forth a plan that better suits the unique topography and lessons the impact on the surrounding neighborhood.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Tiffany DiMarco', with a stylized, flowing script.

Tiffany DiMarco

From: Sharon Metsch <mplsyrp451@outlook.com>

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 11:46 AM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; Please also send a copy to <info@SAGESB.org>

Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue

You don't often get email from mplsyrp451@outlook.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within 1 mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I have abbreviated them here:

1. Traffic.

2. Public Safety.

3. Noise.

4. **Aesthetics.** The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements.

Sláinte,

Sharon Metsch

No one has ever successfully painted or photographed a redwood tree. The feeling they produce is not transferable."

— *John Steinbeck*

From: Todd Yancey <todd@hartfordstreet.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 12:22 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Street Objection
Attachment(s): "Grand Street.pdf"

You don't often get email from todd@hartfordstreet.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom it may concern:

Please accept my attached statement of objection to the proposed project at 1609 – 1615 Grand Street.

Best regards,

Todd J. Yancey, MD
todd@hartfordstreet.com
+1.415.298.4808

Todd J. Yancey, MD
1930 Mission Ridge Road
Santa Barbara, California 93103

September 29, 2025

City of Santa Barbara

735 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re: 1609 – 1615 Grand Street Proposed Project Objection

To whom it may concern:

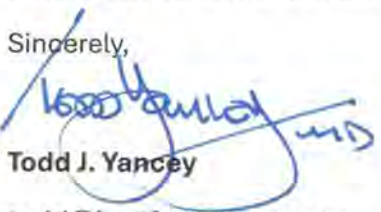
I am a resident of the Riviera neighborhood in Santa Barbara and, having reviewed the proposal for the large, proposed development at 1609 – 1615 Grand Street, I am writing to strongly object. This project is neither practical nor reasonable and will create an increasingly unsafe situation on Grand Street and on California Street as well as Micheltorena Street.

I routinely travel down these streets and the current, effectively one way travel on the two former roads is already dangerous. The road is too narrow. Drivers, bicyclists, dogs, children must hold their breath and hope that there are safe and courteous fellow travelers who will spontaneously and voluntarily slow and/or move over to allow a single vehicle to pass. To add insult to injury, not only is this a major travel path from the Riviera to the Upper East and Downtown, but it is already magically supposed to be a fire ingress and egress route. It is a catastrophe waiting to happen. Why would we place our citizens and first responders at this increased risk?

I urge you to rigorously review these proposals through all appropriate and rationale lenses. It is my understanding that a CEQA impact assessment is one of those options.

If I can provide further context, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,



Todd J. Yancey

todd@hartfordstreet.com

+1. 415. 298.4808

From: Catherine Kaufmann <catekaufmann@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 12:36 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 1609 Grand Project

You don't often get email from catekaufmann@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

This letter is to protest the proposed development on the grounds of fire safety and evacuation feasibility.

I always support growth permits in my San Roque neighborhood, because growth equals more resources for existing residents.

But this project is outrageous for this area and WILL lead to evacuation issues in the event of wildfire!

We will not forget the names of its supporters and we will vote out incumbents who do not heed our concerns.

Sincerely and with grave concerns,

Catherine Kaufmann
340 E. Calle Laureles

From: Maria Zate <mtzate@icloud.com>

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 12:38 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 1609 Grand Ave. proposed development

Attachment(s): "1609 Grand Ave. Proposed Development.docx"

[You don't often get email from mtzate@icloud.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

> To City of Santa Barbara: Please see my letter with grave concerns about this proposed development at 1609 Grand Ave. in Santa Barbara. Thank you.

-Maria Zate

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live a one block away (my address is 601 E. Micheltorena St.) from the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street. My home is at the corner of Micheltorena and California St.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them below.

1. **Traffic - Very narrow street at California!**

My home faces California Street, right at the turn onto Micheltorena St. I have a close-up view of the vehicle traffic using California St. and everyday I see cars having to carefully navigate this area to avoid accidents.

As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets. This street cannot accommodate the traffic that will result from having 53 units (likely more than 100 cars, plus the traffic generated from deliveries and services to these units).

2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.

3. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct

their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.

4. **Aesthetics.** Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Maria Zate

601 E. Micheltorena St. Unit 20, SB, CA 93103

From: Joe Campanelli <1joecampanelli@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 12:46 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: builder remedy Grand Ave.
Attachment(s): "Grand ave blder remedy ltr.docx"

You don't often get email from 1joecampanelli@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

attached is my letter regarding Builder Remedy projects impacting our community.

September 26th, 2025

Grand Ave Builder Remedy

Dear City Leaders - I have been following the issues regarding the proposed Builder Remedy projects on Grand Ave and Los Olivos. I live on the Riviera and have a property on Grand Ave and one on Tremonto Rd. I am a retired builder and developer. I do not support developments that are solely driven by profits with no regard for negative impacts their projects have on the communities they build in, especially when it comes to public safety, noise, traffic, deterioration of infrastructure, and incompatibility with the established aesthetic of the city.

I understand the state need for housing and the failure some communities have made to not work with the state to address the need forcing the States' hand. But the Builders Remedy program is poorly drafted, in that it is open to unscrupulous abuse at the expense of communities for the sake of profits.

I would expect city and county leaders, fire departments, health and safety agencies and transportation departments to band together and take a strong united stance to stop those developments.

The 1609 Grand Ave project is one of those developments and sets the tone for the Los Olivos development and others to follow, leaving long lasting negative impacts for generations to come. You will need to be strategic and vigilant to find the weak points in the Builder Remedy program that gives you leverage to defeat it and bad developers.

Key issues:

Traffic - independent 3rd party traffic studies need to show historic norms for traffic on Grand Ave and the surrounding roads and the new loads that will be put on them. This will also include annual costs for infrastructure maintenance and how it will increase. Engineering that shows capacity that the roads can handle and those that already are too narrow and incapable of increased use and access for Fire and emergency vehicles. Grand Ave is such a road.

Public Safety – We have been evacuated 3 times. Grand Ave already struggles to meet evacuation needs. Can we afford to add more demand to this? We must avoid what happened in Paradise and other communities where people died in their cars trying to evacuate. If we fail here the resulting legacy will be something you will never heal from in Santa Barbara.

Noise – The current base line levels of traffic and other noise in the neighborhood will increase exponentially during construction and the trucking will breakdown the road infrastructure. After completion will the developer repair those roads? The sound level baseline will increase from the added units with one or two added cars on a daily basis. The neighborhood will never be the same.

Aesthetics – The Builders Remedy program deliberately takes the aesthetics conversation off the table and is harsh in the resulting impacts that will blight the crafted ambiance the SB neighborhoods are known for. Size, bulk, scale, and neighborhood compatibility are road blocks for developers that take time and money to do right. I believe the state was heavily lobbied to keep this out of the Builder Remedy guidelines. It should be argued to the state that some provision should be made when extreme situations occur.

Community Remedy – Santa Barbara is at a crossroads that will define its future. You are its stewards and need to muster the courage to not be bullied by the state or federal regulation with threats of legal action, liability and fines. If you are not all in, you will be steamrolled into

submission but if you commit to right this wrong you will have grassroots support backing you from the people of Santa Barbara. You will need to be strategic and diligent in harnessing resources to overcome bureaucratic challenges, something you have tools and experience in already. You may find some remaining leverage in CEQUA. You will work on your front and people of Santa Barbara will do their part on their front. You can galvanize this city to overcome this issue without violating state law. It may take legal action and civil disobedience. Looking for solutions not thought of, like a land trust buying the site outright, or trading other properties that are better suited and less impacted to trade with the developer. There are ways when one is committed to finding them.

If these projects, go through the developers will take their profits and leave collateral damage as the city's problem to live with. If you and the people of Santa Barbara succeed a message will be sent. I know much of what I've said may not be new. I hope it will help you find a path that may have been overlooked at this critical time to protect Santa Barbara's future.

Respectfully

Joe Campanelli

From: Lisa Schomer <lisa.schomer6@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 12:48 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SAGESB.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: 1609-1615 grand ave

[You don't often get email from lisa.schomer6@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

To whom it may concern:

I am a resident at 1740 Grand Ave.

I am very concerned of the proposed project. Grand Avenue already has a huge parking problem. It is already difficult to park on the street because of a narrow road and over-housed area.

In addition, this is a neighborhood and a multi story project would ruin the neighborhood and take away the charm of being a neighborhood.

I am adamantly against this. Please take all this into consideration.

Blessings,
Lisa Schomer

From: MAGGIE WALL <mkw4@cox.net>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 1:10 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Dear City Officials,

I'm writing to object to the building at 1609 Grand Ave.

This building is completely unsuitable for this location. The area is filled with small one story cottages and a large multi-storied building will not only be an eyesore, blocking views of the people living near it, but it also presents safety concerns in an area that is prone to evacuation orders during every wildfire that threatens the City of Santa Barbara. The streets are narrow and congested in the middle of any day, as passenger cars struggle to pass each other on streets that were built before there was street parking on them. With everyone trying to evacuate at the same time, this is a recipe for disaster.

In addition, the water needs and environmental impact are tremendous.

I urge you to insist upon an environmental impact review on this project,

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,
Maggie Wall
56 year resident of Santa Barbara

From: susan johnson <susanclearyjohnson@yahoo.com>

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 1:16 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: Grand Avenue Project

You don't often get email from susanclearyjohnson@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Susan C. Johnson and Patrick J. Murray

1717 Olive Avenue

Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re: 1609 Grand Avenue.

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

We live within one-half mile of the 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street. Several aspects of the project concern us, and we will outline them below.

1.Traffic. We regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street to and from our home. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often creates a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.

2.Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern because of the traffic problem that would be created (See No. 1). Grand Avenue and California Streets are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuations several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies. We are concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, we believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigation necessary.

3. Home Values and Aging Although we do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, we do know that its size is incompatible with the neighborhood and certainly exceeds height standards developed to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. In addition to changing the views, the potential for creating such a "blight" in the neighborhood could well impact our home values and ability to sell our property. Many of us who are older need the funds from a home sale to fund a move to a retirement facility. Loss of property value may seriously damage our ability to receive care as we age

4.Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes two stories of underground parking. We understand this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.

Thank you for considering our concerns. We will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Sincerely,

Susan Johnson and Patrick Murray

Santa Barbara, CA 93101

805-636-4101

From: Michael O'Connell <oconnell@english.ucsb.edu>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 1:37 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave
Attachment(s): "Grand Avenue project.doc"

You don't often get email from oconnell@english.ucsb.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

29 September, 2025

Mayor and City Council of Santa Barbara, CA

I write out of deep concern about the project to build a 53 unit, six story apartment building at 1609 Grand Avenue on the Lower Riviera. I have been a resident of Santa Barbara for 55 years and have lived at 430 East Valerio since 1974. I deeply love this neighborhood and indeed this whole corner of Santa Barbara. The building of this project will, I believe, adversely affect East Valerio and the entire area below Alameda Padre Serra. Grand Avenue is narrow, frequently requiring traffic to give way to oncoming; this whole area was laid out over a hundred years ago, before automobile traffic impacted the area, and contains numerous winding roads and lanes.

The Grand Avenue project is simply disproportionate with the character of the entire area.

What I worry most about, after the disruption that will be caused by the construction, is the threat of wildfire and the need for consequent evacuation. I have been evacuated during wildfire on the Riviera and remember the confusion and danger. If fire broke out on or near Grand Avenue the need for evacuation would be critical. How this would happen for a building of this size, and for visitors to its inhabitants, probably well over a hundred persons, all driving cars, is simply unimaginable. The streets are simply too narrow to accommodate such sudden traffic, even without considering the emergency vehicles coming up in the opposite direction. Santa Barbara would repeat the horror we saw in January of this year in Pacific Palisades, Malibu, and Altadena.

The impact of ordinary traffic to Grand Avenue should also be considered. The project includes a two story underground garage, which would mean over a hundred cars coming and going on a daily basis. These streets simply cannot handle this traffic. Moreover, the Lower Riviera has no reasonable prospect of public transport; there is no bus service there now, and I cannot imagine busses ever navigating those streets.

While no drawings of architectural projections have been released, it is hard to believe that a six-story building could possibly be consistent with the current neighborhood of one- and two-story houses. It would simply loom over the entire area and block sightlines and views for dozens of nearby neighbors. It would have a disproportionate aesthetic effect on this whole part of the city.

This is particularly unfortunate given the dozens of recently built houses and apartments that conform intelligently to the traditional style of Santa Barbara's upper and middle Eastside. It is possible to build attractive buildings that fit gracefully into our neighborhoods.

I want to emphasize that I am not opposed to growth in Santa Barbara. I believe that those who serve Santa Barbara, municipal workers, police, fire personnel, teachers, nurses and other medical people as well as university faculty and workers should be able to live where they work. This mix of occupations and classes in a city of Santa Barbara's character is what I prize. And there is no reason why this cannot be done in a way that continues to express that.

But the Grand Avenue project does not advance the beauty, character, safety, and livability of our city.

Sincerely yours,

Michael O'Connell
430 East Valerio Street

29 September, 2025

Mayor and City Council of Santa Barbara, CA

I write out of deep concern about the project to build a 53 unit, six story apartment building at 1609 Grand Avenue on the Lower Riviera. I have been a resident of Santa Barbara for 55 years and have lived at 430 East Valerio since 1974. I deeply love this neighborhood and indeed this whole corner of Santa Barbara. The building of this project will, I believe, adversely affect East Valerio and the entire area below Alameda Padre Serra. Grand Avenue is narrow, frequently requiring traffic to give way to oncoming; this whole area was laid out over a hundred years ago, before automobile traffic impacted the area, and contains numerous winding roads and lanes.

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I want to emphasize that I am not opposed to growth in Santa Barbara. I believe that those who serve Santa Barbara, municipal workers, police, fire personnel, teachers, nurses and other medical people as well as university faculty and workers should be able to live where they work. This mix of occupations and classes in a city of Santa Barbara's character is what I prize. And there is no reason why this cannot be done in a way that continues to express that.

But the Grand Avenue project does not advance the beauty, character, safety, and livability of our city.

Sincerely yours,

Michael O'Connell
430 East Valerio Street

From: Henri Albert <cyberspouse@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 2:09 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: Fwd: Comment on 1609 Grand

You don't often get email from cyberspouse@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

We live at 801 Jimeno Road. Our lot is bounded to the south by Grand Avenue and to the east by the seasonal creek that runs in the canyon behind the west side of California Street. The six-story apartment building proposed for 1609 Grand Avenue will have a significant and detrimental effect on the safety and aesthetic of our neighborhood.

The proposed structure destroys the character of the Santa Barbara foothills. It is absolutely out of scale for the neighborhood, or for that matter, anything else in the city. It will not only ruin the setting and view of many existing homes, it will ruin the view of everyone accustomed to gazing north to the beauty of the foothills. At 6 stories, it will dwarf the iconic silhouettes of the Arlington, the Courthouse, and the Granada while offering none of their charm or civic purpose. It will be a colossal pimple looming over the city.

The project will adversely affect the traffic safety of adjacent roads. For us, the route downtown is to drive south on Alta Vista or turn west on Micheltorena. We pass through this intersection many times a day. From a one-way stop at California & East Micheltorena, one must be able to judge the oncoming traffic of Micheltorena, which has no stop sign for those heading east, and the cars coming down California Street, which also have no stop sign. Those drivers might turn right, away from us, or left into our path. When Santa Barbara High School is in session, this intersection becomes even more dangerous as inexperienced teen drivers and harried parents come barreling down California Street to Alta Vista. Alta Vista, narrowed by parking on both sides of the street, gets backed up with many drivers trying to get to school on time. When heading north up California Street, we must contend with a narrow, steep street where few drivers obey the signs yielding right-a-way to uphill drivers. How many more drivers will the proposed 53 new units add to these already burdened roads?

Aside from daily traffic, there is a pressing concern about wildfire. We are designated high fire zone. Many have been forced onto California Fair Plan because insurance companies have declined to renew. Should a large wildfire come sweeping down from Los Padres, many of the residents already near this project will be forced to use the same winding, narrow streets to evacuate. The Thomas Fire in 2018 burned within 2 miles of our location. No planner would think it a good idea to add so many new residents/drivers to this mix.

The unique and characteristic architecture of Santa Barbara neighborhoods that has been preserved by past City Councils for nearly 100 years draws many tourists to our city who appreciate its beauty. This building, if allowed to go forward, will be a monument to the irresponsibility of the current leadership of the City for all to see.

For aesthetic, traffic, and wildfire safety reasons, we urge you to do all you can to stop this project.

Sincerely,

Henri Albert
Stan Tsunoda
801 Jimeno Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

From: Kathy Langsam <kathylangsam@yahoo.com>

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 2:25 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 1609 Grand-Letter of Concern

You don't often get email from kathylangsam@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I'm a homeowner in the Bella Rivera Development-601 E. Micheltorena, Unit 110; the following are areas of concern regarding the proposed 50-unit development:

1. Traffic - I live at the top of development, regularly enter and exit on California street which is an extremely narrow street with vehicles often parking on the right side of street, allowing only 1 vehicle to pass. With the increase of more vehicles, the situation will only get more complicated, resulting in vehicles stopping to allow one vehicles at a time to pass, vehicles will be backed up on California Street and Grand Avenue. Additionally, non-residents often cut through Bella Rivera, utilizing our internal lanes to gain access to California Street and Arrellaga Street. This will likely increase with an additional 50+ vehicles. This is no Public Transportation in our neighborhood. This is already an issue in Bella Rivera. How will the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets?

2. Public Safety - In addition to increased traffic on both California Street and Grand Avenue, safety is another concern since our neighborhood is adjacent to both high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas areas of Santa Barbara in the event of a wildfire evacuation. Our neighborhood has been evacuated in the past. As noted above, the situation would be impacted due to the increased bottleneck on both California and Grand Avenue. How will the developer and City address additional safety concerns, including possible mitigations in the event of a fire or other emergency issues?

3. Noise - The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking, which would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. How will the developer to address/mitigate this situation?

4. Aesthetics - I've only seen a rendering of the proposed project, it's clear that based on the size and height, it would dramatically change the aesthetics of our neighborhood. The height of the development will also block sunlight from all units on the the top of Bella Rivera, which is where my unit is located. How will the developer ensure that the natural setting of our neighborhood wouldn't be impacted?

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Kathy Langsam

From: Anne Chen <anniehchen@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 2:33 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Eric Friedman <EFriedman@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Kristen Sneddon <KSneddon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Meagan Harmon <MHarmon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Mike Jordan <MJordan@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Oscar Gutierrez <OGutierrez@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Randy Rowse <rrowse@santabarbaraca.gov>; Wendy Santamaria <WSantamaria@santabarbaraca.gov>; Brian McWilliams <brian@sbms.org>; bianca@sbms.org <bianca@sbms.org>

Subject: Letter Opposing Projects behind the SB Mission & on the Lower Riviera

You don't often get email from anniehchen@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within ½ mile of the proposed sites behind the SB Mission at 505 E. Los Olivos St. (two eight-story buildings) and the 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street. I work at Santa Barbara Middle School on Alameda Padre Serra and live near the intersection of Pedregosa St. and Anacapa St.

Many aspects of the project concern me greatly, and I will outline the main ones here:

1. **Public Safety.** I am very concerned about the **safety of our students at Santa Barbara Middle School on Alameda Padre Serra** in the event of a wildfire evacuation. Alameda Padre Serra, Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This limits our school's routes to safety. I am concerned that the projects as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, potentially trapping student evacuees in school vans and many other evacuees in their cars. In addition, **Riviera Ridge School is located directly above our school on Mission Ridge** and could dangerously be slowed down during an evacuation. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
2. **Traffic.** I regularly travel up Pedregosa and along Grand Ave. on my way to work at Santa Barbara Middle School on Alameda Padre Serra. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use Grand Ave. at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming car to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
3. **Aesthetics.** Although I do not know what the proposed designs of the buildings are, I do know that **their size is incompatible with the look of my neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting.** The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Sincerely,
Anne Chen
1917 Anacapa St.
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

From: David de L'Arbre <davidd@sbtravel.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 3:20 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SAGESB.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave and 505 East Los Olivos

You don't often get email from davidd@sbtravel.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Mayor Rouse and Councilmembers,

I don't know anyone who is in favor of these projects so my email one of a cascade of voices in opposition to them. I grew up in Mission Canyon and currently live in Mission Canyon. I've gone through multiple evacuations dating back to the Coyote Fire in 1964 through the Tea, Jesusita, and Thomas fires. With each fire the evacuation issues became far more complicated and dangerous. As people stream out of the foothills they get funneled down Mission Canyon Rd, Foothill, Mountain Drive and APS into choke points where traffic comes to a halt. Residents can't get out and first responders can't get in. Adding 2 more dangerous traffic variables into a known problem area would be negligent for both the developer and the city.

The inappropriateness of both the size and style of both developments is another major drawback. For a hundred years Santa Barbara has been honoring and protecting its Spanish revival architecture. If Pearl Chase saw these plans she'd roll over in her grave. NIMBY has nothing to do with these projects. Neither of these fit in anywhere in the city much less than in one of the most sensitive historical areas of our community.

And putting either of these in an area of creek or a steep grade with storm water runoff is a recipe for either environmental damage or property damage.

All of the people who oppose these projects have similar or better reasons than I. But, the bottom line is that are incompatible with the architectural nature of the neighborhoods, public safety in the event of fire or flood, and will create traffic impacts in areas where the street infrastructure is already deficient for the volume of vehicles.

I don't think any of you need much urging to oppose this project. Common sense dictates that both of them are woefully wrong and would be a visual and functional blight on our beautiful city.

Sincerely Yours,

David M. de L'Arbre, C.O.O.
Santa Barbara Travel Bureau, Inc.
1028 State Street
Santa Barbara, CA. 93101
Direct: 805 869-1107
Mobile: 805 698-8750



From: Kathleen Benelli <kathleenbenelli@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 3:34 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: 1609-1615 Grand Avenue Project

You don't often get email from kathleenbenelli@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,
I am a resident living at 656 E Valerio St which is at the corner of Valerio and Grand. I travel Grand and Micheltorena streets daily and personally experience the difficulty navigating our neighborhood in its current state. We have to take turns on Grand, Micheltorena, and Valerio because cars are parked on both sides of the street leaving traffic lanes that are too narrow for most cars to pass each other. If you add a large building, this situation will become worse and the few spaces we have now to pull into so another can pass will be gone. Our streets will virtually be impassible. Why the fire department hasn't shut this idea down is a complete mystery to me. Even if the developer did put enough parking in or under the building for the occupants, they would still park on the street like everyone else in Santa Barbara does and there wouldn't be a thing you could do to stop them. All of the people parking on the street today, have driveways and garages. Besides being a serious safety risk, this is not the place to put a huge apartment building. It will ruin the view of many residents and create an eye sore in the area. There are better places to put apartment buildings. Nothing more than two stories should be built on that property. I am not kanti-progress and I do realize Santa Barbara is growing but we MUST maintain that which makes our town special and it is the charm and beauty of the town. Placing big clunky things where they don't belong will ruin it. If you have been to Malaga, Spain you might understand. Malage used to be charming and now it is ugly with huge white buildings everywhere. All the charm is gone except for one street. We can't let that happen. I do not support this apartment project at all.
Kathleen Benelli

From: Tom Jacobs <ejdtom@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 3:41 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: admin@sagesb.org <admin@sagesb.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand Av
Attachment(s): "Grand Ave. AI-I Revision.2 TomJacobs.docx"

You don't often get email from ejdtom@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Mayor and Council,
Please see attached letter in opposition to the above project.

--

Tom Jacobs, Architect
Ensberg Jacobs Design Inc
805.455.5857
ejdtom@gmail.com

Tom Jacobs, Architect

September 29, 2025

To: Mayor and Members of the Santa Barbara City Council

Re: Public Comment Letter: Proposed 1609 – 1615 Grand Avenue Multifamily Development

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

As a former resident of both Loma Street and Tornoe Road at the base of Mission Canyon, I am deeply familiar with this neighborhood, where my family and I lived and contributed to the community for more than 15 years. During that time, our neighborhood was twice evacuated due to wildfire. These lived experiences, combined with my professional training as an architect and my service as Chair of the Mission Canyon Architectural Development Review Committee, inform my grave concern about the proposed six-story, 53-unit multifamily development at 1609- 1615 Grand Avenue.

Public Safety Concerns

The site's location in a steep, fire-prone area makes safe evacuation and emergency response paramount. Existing emergency access routes are already narrow and overburdened; introducing such a large project would increase the likelihood of gridlock during an emergency. The tragic lessons of past urban fires, such as Oakland, demonstrate what can happen when development proceeds without sufficient regard for fire safety and emergency access.

Impacts on Infrastructure and Quality of Life

Beyond safety, the project would place disproportionate strain on local infrastructure:

- **Traffic and Parking:** The steep, narrow streets cannot absorb the influx of vehicles this project would bring. Lack of adequate on-site parking will push overflow into nearby neighborhoods, compounding existing challenges.
- **Schools and Services:** Our local schools—already operating at capacity—will be further strained without corresponding investment in resources. Police, fire, and ambulance services in this difficult terrain will struggle to meet increased demand.
- **Waste and Noise:** Years of grading, deliveries, and construction activity will erode quality of life for nearby residents and place additional burden on waste and recycling services.

Scale and Compatibility

Santa Barbara has long balanced growth with respect for its historic neighborhoods and architectural character. This proposal—six stories in the heart of a predominantly two-story neighborhood—is grossly out of scale and inconsistent with both the bungalow style and the Spanish-inspired architecture that define our community. If approved, it sets a dangerous precedent for similar out-of-scale projects on the Riviera and beyond.

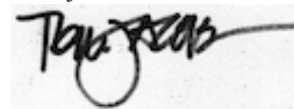
Call for Responsible Planning

Our city has a proud tradition of thoughtful planning, valuing quality of life, historic character, and environmental safety alongside responsible growth. This project, whether pursued under the “Builder’s Remedy” or any other legal framework, fails that test. It should be rejected outright or reconfigured to conform with the scale, safety, and character of its surroundings.

Santa Barbara deserves growth that is sustainable, safe, and respectful of its history and natural setting. I urge you to exercise your responsibility as stewards of this city and deny this proposal in its current form.

Respectfully,

Tom Jacobs



Architect & Former Chair, Mission Canyon Architectural Development Review Committee

Tom Jacobs, Architect
885 Veronica Springs Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

0000224

From: Victoria and Tom Ostwald <vandtostwald@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 4:21 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave. Apartment complex. Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov.

You don't often get email from vandtostwald@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

My wife and I have lived for 44 years on California Street, one house from Grand Ave and two houses from the proposed housing development. We have seen it all!

Parking is scarce and crowded on the Lower Riviera. When driving, it is normal that we wait for on-coming traffic to pass, as two cars cannot get by each other. Large vehicles frequently give up and retreat to a route that is less steep. Mapping programs sometimes direct traffic up California to Alameda Padre Serra—but they don't directly connect.

This is all to say that an addition of 50 more units is not tenable! As I read the plans, there will be only one parking space underground for each unit. But 2 cars per family is common. (When Cottage Hospital built their affordable housing, they allocated 2.2 spaces per family). So we could have 50 additional cars with almost no place to park.

This is not just bad for residents below Alameda Padre Serra. In an emergency requiring evacuation of people living below Mission Ridge, there are surprisingly few routes to escape off the hill. Emergency vehicles could rapidly cause gridlock.

As you evaluate this proposed apartment complex on Grand Avenue and imagine a 6-story, 50-unit building, please come drive our broken concrete streets with an eye toward safety in a high-fire zone.

Tom Ostwald

From: John Harley <john@jcharley.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 4:42 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Eric Friedman <EFriedman@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Kristen Sneddon <KSneddon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Meagan Harmon <MHarmon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Mike Jordan <MJordan@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Oscar Gutierrez <OGutierrez@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Randy Rowse <rrowse@santabarbaraca.gov>; Wendy Santamaria <WSantamaria@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Lisa Parks <lisa.parks@ucsb.edu>
Subject: FW: Letter to SB Mayor & City Council Member re 505 E. Los Olivos Development Plan
Attachment(s): "Letter to SB about 505 E Los Olivos.pdf"

Some people who received this message don't often get email from john@jcharley.com [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello to all

My wife, Lisa Parks, and I are strongly opposed to the proposed housing developments at 505 E. Los Olivos St. We had previously composed and sent this letter, but received no acknowledgment. We are submitting it again to you, so as to ensure that it is included in your consideration of plans for this project.

Kind regards,

John Harley and Lisa Parks
28 Mountain Dr.
Santa Barbara, CA 93103
805-452-5669

From: Lisa Parks <parks.lisa1@gmail.com>
Date: Sunday, October 20, 2024 at 1:54 PM
To: HPerea@santabarbaraca.gov <HPerea@santabarbaraca.gov>
Cc: shelley@riveraassociation.org <shelley@riveraassociation.org>, John Harley <john@jcharley.com>
Subject: Letter to SB Mayor & City Council Member re 505 E. Los Olivos Development Plan

Dear Holly Perea,

We would greatly appreciate it if you could please forward the attached letter to Mayor Rouse and all of the SB City Council members. Can you also confirm with us once this has been done?

Many thanks,

Lisa Parks and John Harley
28 Mountain Drive
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

Letter sent via email to Holly Perea (HPerea@SantaBarbaraCA.gov) for distribution to Mayor Rouse and all City Council Members

October 19, 2024

To: Randy Rouse, Mayor of Santa Barbara & All City Council Members

We are writing to express opposition and grave concern relative to the proposed residential development at 505 E. Los Olivos Street in Santa Barbara.

We are homeowners and residents who live in close proximity to the proposed building site. We regularly use the traffic corridors and recreational areas nearby, including Rocky Nook Park, Mission Canyon, and the Mission Park and Rose Garden.

We strongly support the development of affordable housing projects in the city of Santa Barbara and in the county, yet we are dismayed by the proposal to site a new large apartment building project on the grounds of the Mt. Calvary Monastery at 505 E. Los Olivos St. for the reasons outlined below.

First, the proposed site is directly adjacent to the most historic Mission-era buildings in all of Santa Barbara. Even if Mt. Calvary Monastery is not designated as an historic site itself, building at or near this site should be subject to special building permits and regulatory processes as a result of proximity to the Santa Barbara Mission, the Mission waterworks, and other features of great historic significance. Many homeowners in the area have had to go through such permit processes themselves and it is unfair (and possibly illegal) to allow an outside developer be exempt from them.

Second, the city should be very concerned about significant additional traffic impacts near the proposed development site. The site is adjacent to the Santa Barbara Mission and there is already constant traffic to the Mission as well as areas around it. The road infrastructure on the Mission Creek side of this property is simply insufficient to support the traffic of an additional large residential complex. Currently, it is almost impossible to turn left onto Los Olivos Street from Mountain Road between 7:30 and 9am and 5 and 6pm given the traffic density. In addition, there have been regular crashes into the historic bridge at Mission Creek due to the narrow roadway, speeding, and poor lighting in the area. Why would the city authorize additional residential traffic impacts to an already over-impacted area?

Third, the city should be concerned about public safety. The pedestrian walkways and crossings are poorly marked along Los Olivos Street, though the recent relocation of the crosswalk near the Santa Barbara Natural History Museum has helped. In addition, bicyclists struggle for space on this road, and often face danger. Adding over one hundred more residential units in this area will

make traffic much worse and jeopardize public safety of pedestrians, dogs, bicyclists, and drivers as well.

Fourth, the city should be concerned about other infrastructure considerations. The Mission Creek almost flooded in early 2024 due to the heavy rains. The bridge along Los Olivos Street above the creek held, but as mentioned above, drivers crash into this bridge all the time, making it a precarious infrastructure site that should be carefully inspected and reinforced before a large building project is authorized in the area. What would it be like for massive construction equipment to be moving across a bridge that might be unsafe?

Fifth, the city should consider that the proposed development site is within or adjacent to a high fire hazard area. Adding one hundred residential units in such an area is not prudent for a variety of reasons. New homeowners will likely have challenges finding affordable homeowners' insurance in this area. Adding a large residential building will exacerbate existing pressures to already congested fire evacuation routes. It is impossible for us to believe that this has not been considered carefully by the developers and our elected officials given the wildfires and tragedies in residential districts that have occurred in Santa Barbara and throughout the state of California over the past two decades.

Sixth, and related to the first point, the architectural designs that have circulated are incongruous with the architectural style of the historic Mission and surrounding district. The project is also entirely out of scale with other structures in the area and would fundamentally alter the view shed around a site which is the pride and joy of many in this city and beyond, namely, the Santa Barbara Mission. For these reasons, we strongly urge the city of Santa Barbara to begin exploring alternative locations for the siting of this residential building project. Should this prove impossible due to state mandates for additional housing, the proposed development must be drastically scaled back, so as to not have a devastating negative impact on this historic district and neighborhood.

In closing, we want to reiterate our support for affordable housing in Santa Barbara. Our strong objections to the proposed residential development are primarily related to 1) the already over-impacted and neglected infrastructure around the site; 2) fire hazards in the area; and 3) the legal requirements for maintaining the historic Mission district. We realize the state of California submitted a mandate to cities to enhance provision of affordable housing, but it seems the city of Santa Barbara should be more proactively involved in investigating and regulating the siting, impact, and density of such projects and should not accept problematic proposals in the final hour without doing its due diligence. We need more leadership, action, and collaboration from the city in locating appropriate housing development sites.

Thank you very much for considering our input and please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Parks and John Harley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lisa Parks and John Harley

28 Mountain Drive

Santa Barbara, CA 93103

cc: Shelley Bookspan, President, The Riviera Association (shelley@rivieraassociation.org)

From: Ronald Falasca <rfalasca@accoes.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 4:48 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Grand Avenue SB Project
Attachment(s): "SB Grand Avenue Project.pdf"

You don't often get email from rfalasca@accoes.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please see attached letter regarding the proposed Grand Avenue project.

Thanks,
Ron

Ron Falasca | Senior Vice President | ACCO Engineered Systems

888 East Walnut Street | Pasadena, California | 91101
www.accoes.com | 818.730.5838 Cell | 818.244.6571 Office



1609Grand@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

City of Santa Barbara

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I live within ¼ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. Traffic. I regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane to pull aside. I encourage the City of Santa Barbara to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City of Santa Barbara must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City of Santa Barbara should require the developer to address.
4. Aesthetics. Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the city. The City of Santa Barbara is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's

818-730-5838

ronaldfaldasca@gmail.com

RONALD FALASCA

reputation. Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Warm regards,

Ronald Falasca
HOMEOWNER BELLA RIVIERA

v

From: Shane <editpro805@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 5:05 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609-1615 Grand Ave Project letter of concern

You don't often get email from editpro805@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I have lived in Santa Barbara for roughly 40 years. I have lived all over town, but currently live in the family home on East Loma St., a quarter-mile from the proposed project at 1609-1615 Grand Ave. My mother owns the house, which has views of downtown and the ocean. Needless to say, the proposed project at 1609-1615 would block those views—and the views of the majority of homes on Loma Street—which were unquestionably a factor in the sale price of the house when she bought it. Losing the views would certainly be a factor if she sold it. It was my understanding that the City had rules limiting building heights—rules designed to protect views and the overall architectural plan of the city, and to safeguard lives following the earthquake of 1925. I urge the City to require the developers to assess the impact their project would have on safety, views and property values throughout the neighborhood.

In looking at the proposed plan, it's difficult not to conclude that the developers have little respect, if any, for the history of Santa Barbara, its culture, values, community—and natural beauty. And certainly none for the neighborhood. Their conceptual representation is so comically jarring, so outrageously out-of-place and antithetical to the character of both the city and the neighborhood, they may as well have proposed to build a slaughterhouse next to a maternity ward. I'm reminded of teenagers trying to beer with obviously fake IDs. It feels like they are trying to put one over on all of us—making paeans to affordable housing with dollar signs spinning in their eyes.

For no one who loves this city—who would hold its interests before their own—would ever imagine erecting, a half-mile from the Mission, the architectural equivalent of a giant middle finger pointed at the face of each and every one of its residents. Together with the other absurdity proposed behind the Mission, the project would irrevocably mar the beauty of this city—the very thing we love most about it, and which so many, since at least Pearl Chase, have tirelessly fought to preserve for future generations to enjoy, forever. It's at once shocking and laughable that this would need to be defended or explained as something—the essential thing—worth preserving at all costs to developers who claim to champion our community's interests. That the architects themselves who collaborated to design something so grotesque, so wildly inappropriate, incongruous, and ugly, demur to stand forth and take credit for their handiwork, with all the pride and satisfaction normally taken and bruted by such firms, makes it all the more plain that the project all these have planned, and every disingenuous word they speak in its defense, is an affront to us all.

In 2012, Cottage Hospital completed “Bella Riviera,” a 114-unit workforce housing development on the site of the historic St. Francis Hospital, directly adjacent to the proposed project. They built Spanish-style townhomes, villas and cottages—none more than three stories. In so doing, Cottage proved that attractive, fitting, and affordable housing for working families in our community can be built with minimal impacts and while preserving the character and beauty of our neighborhoods and city. One of my best friends, a nurse at Cottage, bought one of the workforce units there. It was a dream come true for her—someone who grew up in Santa Barbara who had all but given up on owning a home here. So it is not that I am against building more housing in Santa Barbara or in the Riviera neighborhood. On the contrary.

It is this project that is objectionable on its face—a blatant, sleazy, underhanded scheme to exploit a loophole to make off like bandits at an entire community's expense. Besides the irreparable damage to the reputation of the City of Santa Barbara as one of the most beautiful cities in the country (if not *the* most)—the value of which is beyond measure—there are grave impacts to the neighborhood and to the project's future residents that demand a thorough CEQA review.

1. **Traffic.** Where Bella Riviera placed 114 units on six acres, this project proposes to place nearly half as many—54—on a fraction of the space. Indeed the land was originally zoned for three lots of two units each, as I understand it. So the developer is proposing to place nine times more units than were originally zoned for the land. Bella Riviera has 254 parking spaces—about two cars per unit. This project would then presumably add another 100+ cars to a neighborhood where parking is already hard to find, and where two-lane streets built more than a century ago for horse-traffic (there are still hitching posts on Grand) are practically one-lane streets by virtue of the fact that cars parked on both sides make two-way traffic all-but impossible. My parked car has been struck twice—a clipped mirror and a dented headlight—since I moved here. Driving up California Street, Grand Avenue, Loma Street, and Moreno Street, is a daily game of chicken with oncoming traffic. Cars and bikes barrel up and down California Street—perhaps the steepest street in town. The last thing California Street needs is another garage entrance with a hundred more cars trying to enter and exit it daily. I urge the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, busy, crammed and narrow streets.

1. **Fire Safety.** In the event of a fire, the situation is already fraught without the addition of 54 more households to evacuate. In an emergency, it's difficult to see how Grand Avenue, Loma Street, and California Street would not become instantly and impossibly jammed. Many of the houses in the neighborhood are old craftsman-style homes rented to multiple people—each with cars. I have evacuated at least once if not twice because of fire danger since I moved to the neighborhood. In fact no private insurer will insure us for fire, given our location. That is doubtless the case with every single house on the Riviera. The threat of fire is, as we all know, all too real, and I fear that the proposed project would make a bad situation exponentially worse, endangering lives. I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact on fire safety and any possible mitigations.

1. **Earthquake.** Moreover, it would be folly to allow the construction of a six-story building in an area that was severely damaged in the 1925 earthquake. Mission Ridge and the Riviera are in a hot zone for earthquakes, as is all of Santa Barbara. The Riviera was in fact created—pushed up—by the underlying Mission Ridge and More Ranch earthquake faults, which crisscross the entire neighborhood. According to a recent geological report, the heaving of the ground surface, or “ground roll” from the 1925 quake, estimated to have been magnitude 6.5 to 6.8 on the Richter scale, was followed by “sharp jerks that shook side to side” on Mission Ridge. The shaking buckled and broke the concrete pavement on the ridge and severely damaged the St. Francis Hospital on California Street, leaving only the steel framework and the foundation intact. Scientists believe that Santa Barbara may experience a magnitude 6.7 earthquake such as the 1994 Northridge quake as a result of a partial rupture on the Mission Ridge fault system; and they say a magnitude 7.0 quake or worse may occur if the entire system ruptures. More than 50 years ago, the voters of Santa Barbara amended the city charter to set a 60-foot height restriction for all buildings. It confounds common sense that the state Legislature with a stroke of a pen could abolish this rule, so critical for the safety of city residents, and thumb its nose at the democratic process that came up with it. The risk to the lives of the people who would live in the proposed building would be arguably greater than in any other building in the city. What price are these developers willing to pay for their shameless greed and shortsightedness—and who will pay for it?

I hope the city will do everything in its power—I know our community will—to stop this appalling, ill-conceived, shortsighted, reckless, irresponsible, and unsafe scheme to permanently desecrate and disfigure our city for the sole benefit of out-of-town developers and shareholders with no stake or roots in or love or even basic respect and consideration for the place and community we all call home.

Sincerely,

Shane Amaya
1741 Loma St.

From: Gregory Dahlen <gregorydahlen@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 5:12 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Subject: 1609-1615 Builders Remedy Project

You don't often get email from gregorydahlen@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Re: 1609-1615 Grand Avenue Project

Dear Mayor and Santa Barbara City Council Members,

My Background:

I have been a Santa Barbara resident since 1957. By far, the most threatening local disasters have been those inflicted by wildfires.

Coyote Fire:

In 1964 at the age of 10, my father had me on the roof of our home (3615 Foothill Road) watering down the cedar shake while looking up at the 300 foot flames leaping about the San Roque Bridge. We were eventually forced to evacuate and upon our return several days later, I found cavities in the cedar shake where embers had charred out the shake roof, but not ignited the home. Remaining at the property as long as possible while hosing down the roof more than likely saved the family home.

Sycamore Canyon Fire:

My next experience was in August 1977 when the Sycamore Canyon fire burned homes on the Eastern side of the Riviera, including the home of my partner on Loma Media.

Painted Cave Fire:

Next, I was caretaking my father's home at 4230 Cresta Ave when the Painted Cave fire erupted. The intensity of the wind and atmospheric blackness cannot be relayed to anyone who was not there. That fire incinerated my former ideas that sundowners could be contained within the City boundaries. If the wind had not died down at 9PM, the fire would have burned to the beach and destroyed Hope Ranch.

Jesusita Fire:

My home of the past 36 years (1821 Laguna Street) was threatened and I was forced to evacuate during the Jesusita Fire.

Main Point:

The current development in Mission Canyon and on the Riviera is already dangerous with densely packed residences. Anyone who has driven the roads on Mission Canyon and APS knows that traffic is intense during the 4-6PM rush hour and frequently backs up with lines of cars. If a fire of the intensity of the Painted Cave Fire were to hit the Mission Canyon/Riviera, the evacuation situation in such a short time (recall the speed of the Painted Cave Fire) would be right out of a horror movie. Adding yet more high density housing in this already critical area is like sitting petroleum storage tanks in our foothills.

We have neither the roads to egress nor sufficient access for fire crew during an evacuation (In particular, I believe the situation up Cheltenham Road is already a ticking time bomb).

Summary:

In the last 70 years, we have been remarkably fortunate in the relatively low numbers of deaths due to sundowners (although tragic, Painted Cave was a miracle with two deaths). Due to our changing climate, these fires are becoming more frequent, and concurrently, we are increasing our population density. I believe we could easily have a Painted Cave intensity fire that would kill hundreds of stranded motorists trying to evacuate the Mission Canyon/ Riviera locations. After such a tragedy, the public will ask why additional, very high density structures were added to this already vulnerable area.

Sincerely,
Gregory A. Dahlen, III

--

Gregory A. Dahlen, PhD
1821 Laguna St.
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
M: 805.689.8305
E: gregorydahlen@gmail.com

From: woodmanlb@gmail.com <woodmanlb@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 5:15 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SAGESB.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: Comments on 1609 Grand Ave.

You don't often get email from woodmanlb@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I strongly object to the proposed project at 1609 Grand Avenue. It is incompatible with the General Plan and zoning designations for this site, and it violates General Plan policies calling for maintaining the quality and character of residential neighborhoods. I am pleased that the City has indicated it will conduct a thorough environmental review under CEQA. Among the issues that should be addressed are the following:

- Noise: Construction, including the extensive excavation that would be required, would cause considerable disturbance to the surrounding neighborhood. Permanent impacts from the increased density and added traffic should be considered, as well.
- Safety: I worked on an EIR a number of years ago, during which the City Fire Department indicated that they had concerns about fires in that general area because the roads are narrow and winding, leading to difficulties evacuating residents and difficulties for fire equipment to access the area. This issue should be thoroughly evaluated.
- Traffic: Truck trips would impede local traffic during construction, and the project would be expected to generate hundreds of long-term trips each day, which would adversely affect local traffic, as well, particularly given the narrow roads.
- Aesthetic Resources: The facility would be wildly incompatible with the surrounding area, in a particularly visible and aesthetically pleasing part of the city.
- Land Use Planning: Address the project's consistency with the City's plans and policies adopted for the purpose of avoiding environmental impacts.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Lorraine Woodman, PhD

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 5:19 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

[Microsoft](#)

Review These Messages

1 messages are being held for you to review as of**9/30/2025 12:02:52 AM (UTC)**.

Review them within **30 days of the received date** by going to the [Quarantine page](#) in the Security Center.

Prevented spam messages

Sender: nmkim97@hotmail.com

Subject: Objection to Grand Avenue Construction

Date: 9/29/2025 9:40:09 PM

[Review Message](#)

[Release](#)

[Block Sender](#)

From: Liz Bush <lizbush4@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 5:42 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Subject: Let's Stop The Madness, Shall We?

[You don't often get email from lizbush4@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Esteemed Representatives,

I am a lifelong resident, a homeowner, a landlord and a property manager. Until recently, I was a runner and know the Riviera well, having weaved up and down many miles over the years for hill workouts. I loved driving those same weaving roads on my way home to Montecito when I was a young driver.

You'll likely have received dozens, if not hundreds, of letters and emails outlining the various regulatory arguments against the project, so I won't belabor them here. I'll keep it simple.

The proposal for 1609 Grand can only be described in one way: insane. But it is probably more important to note how unspeakably dangerous a proposal of this size and scope is. Frankly, I have no idea how they will even be able to get the thing insured.

There is only one right play here. I sure hope you make it.

Liz Bush

From: Catherine Bastug <maililebas2@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 5:48 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Grave Concerns about 1609 Grand Avenue

You don't often get email from maililebas2@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

9/29/2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I am a (former) resident of the Lower Riviera (410 1/2 Montgomery St) and a (former) employee of Roosevelt Elementary School. Both locations are within a few short blocks of the proposed 53 unit, 6 story apartment building currently slated for construction at 1609 Grand Avenue on the Lower Riviera. Access to a proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments on California Street is, in my opinion, dangerously problematic.

Indeed there are a number of aspects about this project which concern me greatly. I'm listing them below:

1. Traffic. When I was living on the Lower Riviera I regularly walked through neighborhood along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home in order to get to downtown. Those particular streets were cramped, even back in those days without the new project's proposed addition of more cars and trucks. Two drivers going in opposite directions would be unable to use the street simultaneously. One car would be obliged to pull to the side to allow the oncoming one to pass; often creating a situation where one of the drivers would have to back up in the travel lane in order to pull aside. These hilly neighborhood streets are already very challenging it will only be worse with the addition of more of today's significantly larger cars and trucks especially during rush-hour and school dismissal time.

The City should require the developer to assess the negative effects of the additional numbers of drivers that will be funneling through this already densely populated neighborhood's old, steep labyrinth of narrow winding streets.

2. Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic.

Grand Ave and California St are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk-areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical:

Picture hundreds of panicked Roosevelt Elementary School Parents jockeying around trying to park in order to pick up their kids where they usually drop them off early in the morning - on exceedingly narrow Emerson Ave at the back gate opening onto Roosevelt Elementary School's grassy playground.

As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies and I am concerned that the project as proposed would create dangerous bottlenecks throughout the twisted network of streets of the Lower Riviera trapping children and parents trying to evacuate in their cars. I believe the City MUST require an evaluation of this likely negative impact and any possible mitigations.

3. Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that even before actual construction could begin this would require removal of more than 400 truckloads of dirt, not to mention excavation of huge sandstone boulders so abundant in this area that one nearby street carries Pedregosa « *Rocky St* » as it's name.

In addition to exacerbating the traffic circulation situation, the trucks, excavation and construction noise will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.

4. Aesthetics. Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment buildings, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and charm and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Catherine 'Lily' Bastug (Vincenti)
1511 Chino St
Santa Barbara
California 93101

maililebas2@gmail.com

Sent from my iPhone

From: Mary Louise Days <mldays@cox.net>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 6:03 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Mary Louise Days <mldays@cox.net>
Subject: Concerns and Comments

To the City of Santa Barbara,

Please consider my concerns about the potential impacts involving the extremely tall, large, and dense multi-family project proposed at 1609-1615 Grand Avenue in the Lower Riviera neighborhood.

Except for East Valerio Street, the streets and lanes in the area are narrow, steep and congested. Many single-family residences have been converted to two-family dwellings, especially after the state teachers college was built in the early 20th century. Students lived in the area. When the Riviera Campus became Santa Barbara State College, additional apartments were developed and the campus continued in educational use until the mid 20th century. Later I lived in a studio that had been added onto a single family dwelling, and I encountered traffic circulation limits each day. This proposed project would seriously impact vehicular traffic, offstreet parking and circulation, in addition to necessary evacuation in case of disaster. First responders would also be in danger.

The aesthetics of the 1609-1615 Grand project show no recognition of the City's General Plan elements or City Charter provisions. There are many inconsistencies. Air quality would be unfavorably affected, as well as public services, emissions and drainage.

Please fully examine its CEQA impacts with a thorough review, especially in the high fire hazard zones, and act accordingly. This is not a "Santa Barbara" proposal.

Thank you.

Mary Louise Days, city resident, historian and retired planner

2833 Puesta del Sol Road, Santa Barbara 93105

From: karen yoon <yoonraph@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 6:28 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Grand Ave project

[You don't often get email from yoonraph@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Sent from my iPhone

Looks like an eyesore to me. In an already heavily populated neighborhood, who is trying to crowd in multiple housing .Seriously out of touch with existing water shortages , overtly crowded streets and our three story maximum highth building codes etc.

From: Lisa White <lisawhite5@me.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 7:39 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Demand for Full CEQA Review – 1609 Grand

You don't often get email from lisawhite5@me.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

This project represents exactly the kind of overdevelopment that is harming our city. It is driven by profit and greed, not by any genuine connection to our community or respect for the people who live here.

The proposed development is an eyesore and a direct detriment to residents in the area. There are very real concerns that remain unaddressed:

- **Public safety:** What are the evacuation plans in the event of a fire?
- **Parking:** Our streets are already overburdened—where will additional cars go?
- **Water usage:** With limited resources, how can we support the excessive strain of hundreds more residents?

The truth is simple: the only ones who win here are the developers. Our city does not benefit. We already have ample open space downtown that should be developed and revitalized first before cramming in more dense apartment complexes that destroy neighborhood character.

This project is wrong for our community.
My answer is clear: NO—absolutely NO!

Lisa White - Santa Barbara Resident and Homeowner
Mobile: (714) 397-2130
lisawhite5@me.com

From: Albert DiPadova <albert@rivieratowel.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 7:39 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Shannon DiPadova <shannon@rivieratowel.com>
Subject: Demand for Full CEQA Review – 1609 Grand Avenue Project
Attachment(s): "smime.p7m"

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I am writing to strongly oppose moving forward with the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment project at 1609 Grand Avenue without a full and thorough CEQA review.

This project poses unacceptable risks to our community, and the City has a responsibility to hold the developer accountable.

Traffic □

The streets in this neighborhood are already overburdened, narrow, and unsafe. On Grand Avenue and California Street, cars regularly have to pull over or even back up just to pass one another. Adding the traffic load from a massive apartment complex with a two-story parking garage would make an already dangerous situation worse. Without a full traffic impact analysis, this project should not move forward.

Public Safety □

This is more than inconvenience—it is about life and death. Grand Avenue and California Street are evacuation routes for residents in high-fire and very-high-fire hazard zones. Anyone who has lived through Santa Barbara's wildfires knows these threats are not hypothetical. Approving this project without understanding its evacuation impacts is reckless. The City must not allow residents to be trapped in gridlock when the next wildfire strikes.

Noise and Construction Impacts

□ The excavation alone—hundreds of truckloads of dirt—would choke our streets with diesel trucks, disrupt daily life, and fill the neighborhood with constant noise long before a single unit is built. CEQA exists to require accountability for exactly these kinds of impacts, and the community deserves answers before construction begins.

Aesthetics and Community Character

□ A six-story building of this size would tower over the neighborhood, block views, and forever alter the character of Santa Barbara's Lower Riviera. The City's identity is built on its natural beauty and architectural harmony. Allowing this project to proceed unchecked would set a dangerous precedent and damage what makes Santa Barbara unique.

This project is simply too large and too risky to ignore. The City must require a full CEQA review to protect residents, preserve safety, and maintain the integrity of our community. Anything less would be a betrayal of the people who live here.

I urge you to take action now, demand accountability from the applicant, and require a CEQA review of this project.

Please add me to the notification list for all updates.

Respectfully, □
Albert DiPadova

925 Garcia Rd.
Santa Barbara, 903103
145-310-1637

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I am writing to strongly oppose moving forward with the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment project at 1609 Grand Avenue without a full and thorough CEQA review.

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I urge you to take action now, demand accountability from the applicant, and require a CEQA review of this project.

Please add me to the notification list for all updates.

Respectfully,
Albert DiPadova

925 Garcia Rd.
Santa Barbara, 903103
145-310-1637

From: Jill Byron Salzman <jillbyronsalzman@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 7:43 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: andrew salzman <austinsalzman@gmail.com>
Subject: Demand for Full CEQA Review – 1609 Grand Avenue Project

You don't often get email from jillbyronsalzman@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I am writing to strongly oppose moving forward with the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment project at 1609 Grand Avenue without a full and thorough CEQA review. This project poses unacceptable risks to our community, and the City has a responsibility to hold the developer accountable.

Traffic

The streets in this neighborhood are already overburdened, narrow, and unsafe. On Grand Avenue and California Street, cars regularly have to pull over or even back up just to pass one another. Adding the traffic load from a massive apartment complex with a two-story parking garage would make an already dangerous situation worse. Without a full traffic impact analysis, this project should not move forward.

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This project is simply too large and too risky to ignore. The City must require a full CEQA review to protect residents, preserve safety, and maintain the integrity of our community. Anything less would be a betrayal of the people who live here.

I urge you to take action now, demand accountability from the applicant, and require a CEQA review of this project. Please add me to the notification list for all updates.

With concern,
Jill Byron-Salzman
Lower Riviera Resident

From: Laura Feinsinger <laurafeinsinger@icloud.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 8:06 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Subject: 1609 grand

You don't often get email from laurafeinsinger@icloud.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live less than a mile from the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly:

1. **Traffic.** As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical, we were here during tea fire evacuations, it was incredibly congested and slow. As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. **Aesthetics.** Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and it absolutely exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Thank you,

L Feinsinger

1005 East St

From: Julien Nordstrand <julien.nordstrand@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 8:15 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Firm Opposition to 1609 Grand Avenue Project

You don't often get email from julien.nordstrand@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I am writing to express my **strong and unequivocal opposition** to the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment project at 1609 Grand Avenue. This development is fundamentally incompatible with the character, safety, and infrastructure of our neighborhood and should be **rejected outright**, not merely delayed for further review.

Traffic and Evacuation Risks

The proposed location is served by narrow, already overburdened streets—Grand Avenue and California Street—that frequently cannot accommodate two-way traffic. These roads also serve as critical evacuation routes for residents living in high- and very-high-fire hazard zones. Adding significant new traffic from a project of this scale would put lives at risk during emergencies. This is not just a planning oversight—it is a public safety hazard that cannot be mitigated with minor adjustments or studies.

Scale, Aesthetics, and Community Impact

A six-story structure with a two-story parking garage would be wildly out of scale with the surrounding homes, blocking views, creating visual blight, and setting a precedent that would erode the architectural harmony Santa Barbara is known for. This project would fundamentally alter the Lower Riviera in ways that cannot be undone.

Environmental and Construction Disruptions

The scale of excavation alone—requiring hundreds of truckloads—would overwhelm local streets, generate unacceptable levels of noise and pollution, and create serious disruption for residents long before any potential benefit is realized. These impacts are not hypothetical and go far beyond what is appropriate for this part of the city.

Conclusion

CEQA review is the legal minimum. But the core issue is not just that this project needs more scrutiny—it is that the project, as proposed, simply does not belong here. It is too large, too risky, and too out of place for this neighborhood.

I respectfully urge the City to **deny this project in its current form**, not merely delay it. The community deserves thoughtful, appropriate development—not reckless overreach.

Please add me to the notification list for all updates related to this project.

Sincerely,

Julien Nordstrand

From: rubicube@cox.net <rubicube@cox.net>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 8:17 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Project should have CEQA review

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

As a Riviera resident living within a few blocks of the 1609-1615 Grand Avenue Project I ask you to require the applicant to conduct a full environmental impact (CEQA) report in light of the negative impacts described below.

Traffic Impact: I ask the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets. Cars are frequently parked on one side of California St and when a car is going the opposite direction from me, one of us must find a space with enough room to pull over in order for the other to pass. The underground parking only accessible from California St compounds the chances of gridlock on this very steep street. On Grand Ave cars are always parked on both sides of the street forcing opposing traffic to find a space to pull over or slow to a crawl to avoid clipping side view mirrors or side swiping the other vehicle. During construction the vehicles of the workers exponentially increases the traffic and parking congestion for an extended period of time.

Public Safety Impact: I ask the City to require an evaluation of the safety impact and possible mitigations. I frequently go downtown for shopping, entertainment, and SB Courthouse Docent duties. The intersection of Micheltorena St and California St has an almost 90 degree turn, without a stop sign for California traffic, onto Micheltorena St. My most common route is through this intersection. In order to see traffic coming downhill on California St from Micheltorena St I have to almost pull into California St. I have experienced my own and seen numerous close calls. During an evacuation or other high traffic event, such as Fiesta or a concert at the SB Bowl, the additional traffic from this project is like pouring gasoline on a fire.

Noise Impact: I ask the City to require the developer to address noise impact. My understanding is that advance land preparation will need about 400 truckloads of dirt removed, which will be noisy, thus negatively impacting the existing residents of the neighborhood. I have lived through various remodels on my street which interfered with my daily life. This project will be like many concurrent new builds in this peaceful residential neighborhood.

Aesthetics Impact: I ask the City to require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure the project does not damage nor undermine our reputation for beauty. My understanding is the proposal is 6 stories which is bulky and out of character with the neighborhood. Visually it would mar the view of the hillside and block the view of the neighbors across the street.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Leslie Jones

From: Vivian Kaslow <olsensolvang@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 9:07 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue, SB

[You don't often get email from olsensolvang@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

I strongly oppose the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment project at 1609 Grand Avenue without a full and thorough CEQA review. This project poses risks to our community and neighborhood. The streets are small and can barely accommodate the existing traffic. In an emergency, the streets would hardly, if at all, be able to manage the existing residents in the neighborhood. The Riveria IS Not the area to build multiple home structures. The City has a responsibility and obligation to ensure safety.

Additionally, a significant charm to SB is its beauty. On the Riveria, each home is unique and particularly the lower Riveria, modestly sized and nestled up against the mountain. The proposed building is a monstrosity. Allowing this structure changes the culture of SB Riveria architecture. For a city that works so hard to retain craftsmanship and beauty, those responsible for approving this project, if approved, will have single handedly changed it. A precedent will be set and it will forever be remembered as the turning point.

I support the building of additional housing. I support housing for all. I DO NOT support doing it at the expense of changing a culture or in an area that is too risky to accommodate it.

Please please do not approve this project.

From: Mark Cavalier <mcavalier805@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 9:09 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Enough is enough!

You don't often get email from mcavalier805@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Mark Cavalier <mcavalier805@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Sep 29, 2025, 9:05 PM
Subject: Enough is enough!
To: <Clerk@santabarbaraca.gov>

Hello, We are a group of Santa Barbara residents who are opposing the proposed apartment complex at 1609 Grand Avenue. We have lived in the Riviera for decades, and have become very familiar with the Riviera neighborhood, and specifically the area surrounding 1609 Grand Avenue. We were here during the Thomas Fire and witnessed first hand the life threatening problem that over-developing 1609 Grand Avenue will cause, in addition to the daily problems it will cause. A very clear and concise explanation with examples can be seen on the linked video. The video includes: (1) An explanation of what happened during the Thomas Fire (2) An emergency evacuation traffic route study for the Riviera (3) An emergency response route study (4) Detail of the current problem that area experiences with on street parking (5) How the proposed development conflicts with Santa Barbara's General Plan and CEQA General Plan Conflicts (1) The Safety Element is one of the seven required elements of the General Plan. It states "By limiting development density in areas subject to geologic, fire, flooding and other safety hazards, the risk of loss of life, injury and property damage can be reduced. (2) Development projects located in the Extreme Foothill and Foothill High Fire Hazard Zones shall be evaluated to determine if the project would have the potential to substantially affect emergency evacuation. This development at its proposed size would absolutely interfere with evacuation capabilities, and add substantial additional evacuees to routes with limited capacity. (3) The General Plan allows for preserving important public views and viewpoints. Grand Avenue and California Street are two of the most popular walking and driving routes in the Riviera. This proposed development would absolutely block the historic views. CEQA Conflicts (1) Wildfire Section: CEQA prevents project designs that will substantially impair emergency response and emergency evacuations. At the time the project was submitted, it was on the boundary of the Very High Fire Zone (CA Assembly Bill 38: Fire Hazard Severity Zones). The street parking for the complex will be in the Very High Fire Zone designation. CEQA's wording states that a project does not have to be in a Very High Fire Hazard zone, only that it is located in or near a VHFZ. (2) Transportation Section: CEQA prevents proposed project designs that will create a traffic hazard. The project's only driveway exits onto California Street, a narrow 2 lane street with parking on one side creating a single lane on one of the steepest and narrowest streets in the city. (3) Cumulative Effect: CEQA states that the project has to consider the cumulative effect with neighboring properties. The multi-unit residential building at 1621 Grand Avenue is currently vacant, yet is scheduled to be re-opened utilizing 20 units which will require street parking on that block of Grand Avenue. The cumulative effect would impede both emergency escape and emergency response routes. Just to be clear, it is not a situation that additional off-street parking would correct. It is the density of housing at that specific location that is the problem. We urge the city to restrict the development to the R-2 zoning it is designated with for good reason, to keep the neighborhood and Santa Barbara safe. Infuriated,
Mark Cavalier

From: Keith Dennis <kdd5003@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 9:40 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Building proposal

You don't often get email from kdd5003@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

My home is within ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. I have raised my family here, on California Street, for the past 10 years. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street. A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. Traffic. My children and I regularly travel, by car, foot and bike, along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Our neighborhood is home to beautiful parks and many schools. Many children, and families, bike and walk to and from Roosevelt Elementary School, Santa Barbara Jr. High, and Santa Barbara High School. I am concerned that the additional traffic population density will put pedestrians and cyclists at risk. In addition, Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address. Once completed, the noise of an additional 53 families and their cars in our already saturated neighborhood should also be considered.
4. Aesthetics. Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 10:40 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

[Microsoft](#)

Review These Messages

1 messages are being held for you to review as of **9/30/2025 5:22:46 AM (UTC)**.

Review them within **30 days of the received date** by going to the [Quarantine page](#) in the Security Center.

Prevented spam messages

Sender: olsensolvang@gmail.com

Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue, SB

Date: 9/30/2025 4:07:34 AM

[Review Message](#)

[Release](#)

[Block Sender](#)

From: Erin Gorrell <eringorrell333@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 11:00 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Eric Friedman <EFriedman@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Kristen Sneddon <KSneddon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Meagan Harmon <MHarmon@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Mike Jordan <MJordan@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Oscar Gutierrez <OGutierrez@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Randy Rowse <rrowse@santabarbaraca.gov>; Wendy Santamaria <WSantamaria@santabarbaraca.gov>

CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>

Subject: I strongly oppose the proposed Apartment structure on Grand Ave

You don't often get email from eringorrell333@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Planning Commission,

As someone who lives near 1609 Grand Avenue, I am deeply concerned about the proposed apartment development and urge you not to approve it in its current form.

Streets and Traffic

Grand and California are already challenging to navigate. Cars frequently need to pull over for one another, and the situation becomes even worse when delivery trucks or service vehicles are involved. Adding the traffic load from over 50 new units will only exacerbate the danger.

Public Safety Risks

This project directly threatens wildfire evacuation routes. Grand and California are lifelines for residents above this site, and the additional cars will put evacuees at risk during emergencies. This is an unacceptable compromise to public safety. Has due diligence been conducted on the environmental impact of this project and its public safety implications?

Construction Noise

The noise and congestion from excavation, dirt hauling, and construction will disrupt the daily lives of neighbors for months. The volume of truck trips required is staggering and incompatible with the location.

Neighborhood Scale

Santa Barbara has long been recognized for protecting its architectural charm and natural beauty. A six-story building would clash with that character, overwhelming its surroundings and obstructing views.

I strongly encourage the City to require major revisions or deny this project altogether. Please include me on the notification list for any updates.

Respectfully,

--

Erin Gorrell
(916)801-1450

From: Betsy R C <betsrc@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 11:38 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue letter
Attachment(s): "1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov.rtf"

You don't often get email from betsrc@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Attached

1609grand@santabarbaraca.gov
Also: cc for the City Council to: Clerk@santabarbaraca.gov

PO Box 40166, Santa Barbara, CA 93140
September 29, 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

This 1609 Grand Avenue, a six-story apartment building! is an outrageous proposal for a treasured residential neighborhood with its narrow, sometimes one-laned streets. It's in or close to high fire zones and with, apparently, sole egress to downtown via California Street, probably the steepest street in the City. Please require that this proposal meets all, city and state, safety requirements where now fire season is a 10-12-month-long concern. We have fires alternating with flooding rains!

I rented on Prospect Avenue, had friends on the 1640 block of Grand Avenue where for years we'd visit frequently and regularly. Access, especially leaving after special events (fireworks!) down California Street was challenging. Grand Avenue is also an access street to APS for the Riviera Theatre as well as the El Encanto.

Jamming in 53 units in such an established and geographically-limited neighborhood is a danger to all. Surely, it would not be allowed under regular city zoning?!

Those of us who've lived here for a while, and I've been in the city for more than 60 years, treasure Santa Barbara and how the houses fit into the hillside areas and individual ones do not dominate. This apartment development would be visible from the waterfront to APS. Yes, housing or, actually, low and lower-incomed housing is needed. But, as the saying goes, location-location-location: and this 1609 Grand Avenue is not the right location for a dense set of probably market rate units, each demanding parking, often more than required.

Consideration must be given to present residents as well as the would be 1609 Grand Avenue newcomers who may not appreciate the aggravated fire dangers of the last years, as shown by the Thomas Fire, as well as the more recent ones in LA.

And, not least maybe: something is very wrong that the plans are not available for present and past neighbors, as I, caring city residents! Please require public accessibility so we all can know what is threatened and what precautions are being made to respond to the impacts of increased traffic, storm water drainage, for instance, and especially fire protection for all.

Thank you for your attention to these issues,

Elizabeth R. Cramer
(PO Box 40166, Santa Barbara 93140; I hesitate to share my City street address but do want to be kept informed via email, betsrc@gmail.com.)

From: hurdlefreak14 <hurdlefreak14@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 7:21 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Do Not destroy the Santa Barbara Riviera

I am writing this letter condemning the monstrous housing development proposed for the Riviera.

Not only is this development unsightly and too tall for the location, it is situated on two of the most narrow streets on the Riviera. California Street has a very steep incline and with residential cars parked on both sides of Grand Avenue two cars cannot drive down the street at the same time.

This neighborhood has been preserved with single family homes and a sprinkling of small multi unit complexes that fit into the beauty and charm of Santa Barbara. This proposal will not only impede views from the Riviera, but it will look like a huge cancerous growth from all angles.

People come from all over the world because of the beauty and historical preservation of our town. Building proposals such as this one steal current and future residents the opportunity of enjoying the same tranquility.

Please do not allow this to happen to our city.

Thank you for putting on your Pearl Chase hats and making the right decision for Santa Barbara.

A VERY concerned resident of Santa Barbara,
Julie Churchman

From: Kelley Clay <kelleyclay65@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 7:41 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Do not build that building in my neighborhood!

You don't often get email from kelleyclay65@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed housing development on the Riviera.

This project's excessive height and scale are entirely inconsistent with the existing character of our neighborhood. Its placement on already narrow and challenging streets, such as California Street and Grand Avenue, raises serious concerns about traffic congestion and public safety. California Street that leads to Grand Ave is essentially one way due to how steep and narrow it is. Construction would be a nightmare and once residents reside there...Don't get me started!

The Riviera is cherished for its distinctive single-family homes and modest multi-unit complexes, which contribute significantly to Santa Barbara's unique charm and preserved aesthetic. The proposed development would severely obstruct iconic views and fundamentally alter the beauty and tranquility that defines our city.

Preserving Santa Barbara's unique allure and historical character for future generations is paramount. I urge you to uphold these values and reject this inappropriate proposal.

Sincerely,
Kelley Clay Brymer

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: Sue <sbsuecap@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 7:42 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave Proposal

You don't often get email from sbsuecap@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara: I live within ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street. A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here: 1. Traffic. I regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home in order to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets. 2. Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.

3. Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address. 4. Aesthetics. Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation. Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

The wording in this letter is suggested, but please know that I believe in and support its message wholeheartedly.

Thank you!

Sue Cappiello

--

Susan F. Cappiello, Esq.
943 Alameda Padre Serra
Santa Barbara, CA 93103
805-730-1202 land line
805-705-3889 cell
sbsuecap@gmail.com

From: Max robin <maxrobins55555@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 8:22 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Building a dense housing complex

You don't often get email from maxrobins55555@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To the City of Santa Barbara:

I am all for additional housing that makes sense and does not impact traffic, safety, noise levels or the historic essence of Santa Barbara.

It seems there is ample space for large housing projects at the North /West end of town, Noleta or Goleta if need be.

After 20 years of being away, I moved back to the town I love, SB, and moved here for the relative safety and peace of our town.

I pay a very high tax rate just to live here. And it's not easy. But I do it so I can live because I trust the Santa Barbara will stay much the same, and I can live peacefully in this lovely community.

The proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building in the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue makes little sense. It seems the strategy for this building was "empty lot, build on it" with not enough study or consideration of the following:

1. **Traffic.** I travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street regularly.

As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both these streets, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. Has the city and/or the developer assessed the effects of the additional traffic burden that would be caused by the proposed building on our old, steep, narrow streets.

2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. Take the Palisades Fire as an example!!!! I lived in Topanga Canyon adjacent to the Palisades, and from personal experience, I know that over building and over populating in a hillside community spells disaster.

Please do not allow what happened in the Palisades happen here, in other words: potential traffic jam dangerous bottleneck, trapping Santa Barbara evacuees in their cars.

3. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.

4. **Aesthetics.** Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Thank you,
Molly Kronberg
1108 Plaza Del Monte
Santa Barbara
CA. 93101

From: Ana G <anagortiz@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 8:44 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue

You don't often get email from anagortiz@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

My husband and I are writing about the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

This project concerns us greatly for the following reasons:

1. **Traffic.** As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. We encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. We are concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, we believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. We understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. **Aesthetics.** Although we do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, we do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom starkly over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and we believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering our concerns. We will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Ana G. Ortiz and John R. Jaworski

402 Vista de la Playa

From: Bill Prainito <bprainito@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 9:30 AM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>

Subject: Grand Avenue Project

You don't often get email from bprainito@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street. A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. Traffic. I regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home in order to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.

2. Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.

3. Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.

4. Aesthetics. Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Bill Prainito
417 Calle Palo Colorado
Santa Barbara

From: McBride, Richard <Richard.McBride@colliers.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 9:36 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SAGESB.ORG <info@SAGESB.ORG>; Son McBride <son.mcbride@gmail.com>; McBride, Richard <Richard.McBride@colliers.com>
Subject: City of Santa Barbara Grand Ave 9.30.25
Attachment(s): "City of Santa Barbara Grand Ave 9.30.25.pdf"

You don't often get email from richard.mcbride@colliers.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

We live several blocks from the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

There are a number of features about the project that greatly concern us, including:

1. **Traffic.** We regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. We encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical, as we know from recent fire tragedies in our region. There may be no certainty in life but we are certain that there will be future emergencies. We are concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, we believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. We understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal during excavation. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. **Aesthetics.** Although we do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, we do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and we believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering our concerns. We will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add us to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Son & Richard McBride

326 E. Arrellaga Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
Son.McBride@gmail.com
Richard.McBride@colliers.com

September 30, 2025

City of Santa Barbara

Re: Grand Avenue Project

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

We live several blocks from the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

There are a number of features about the project that greatly concern us, including:

1. **Traffic.** We regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. We encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical, as we know from recent fire tragedies in our region. There may be no certainty in life but we are certain that there will be future emergencies. We are concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, we believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. We understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal during excavation. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. **Aesthetics.** Although we do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, we do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and we believe the City

must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering our concerns. We will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add us to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Son & Richard McBride

326 E. Arrellaga Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
Son.McBride@gmail.com
Richard.McBride@colliers.com

From: Karen Taylor <karentaylor2000@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 9:42 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: LOS OLIVOS & GRAND AVE PROJECTS

You don't often get email from karentaylor2000@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

This idea is so beyond obnoxious it borders insanity. Not only will it disrupt the esthetics with the Mission being one of the #1 tourist attractions in SB but it will also disrupt the daily lives of those living in the area!!! Not to mention the environmental impacts. I'm appalled that this has even been considered, seriously, shame on those involved. There are plenty of abandoned spaces in downtown SB, why not use those?!?!
Please, stop trying to destroy our beautiful town, find another more reasonable & low impact alternative/solution.

Signed, a humble resident since 1957~ K. Aiello Taylor

From: Terri Minshull <toughloveangel@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 9:55 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave development - Opposed

You don't often get email from toughloveangel@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

I'm opposed to the proposed apartment complex at 1609 Grand Avenue. I've live on De La Vista for the last 12 years (2 blocks from this proposed development). Before that I lived at Pedregosa and Grand Ave for years so I know the area well. I drive up California St to Grand Ave at least once a week and most times encounter a car coming down, where one of us must pull over to let the other through. I can't imagine what it would be like during an emergency or forced evacuation!

It is really hard to imagine, in a world with even rudimentary regulations, that this would be allowed to be built in this location. I would have thought that our safety laws would prevent a project of this size and scope in an area of such narrow streets, with parked cars everywhere on the streets.

I've watched the video and read through the bullet points (listed below) from a group of Riviera residents. No surprises; just further verification of what I've experienced by living here.

Please don't allow this project!

Thank you for your time and consideration,
- Terri L. Minshull
805-696-8593

Supplied by Riviera residents:

General Plan Conflicts

- (1) The Safety Element is one of the seven required elements of the General Plan. It states "By limiting development density in areas subject to geologic, fire, flooding and other safety hazards, the risk of loss of life, injury and property damage can be reduced.
- (2) Development projects located in the Extreme Foothill and Foothill High Fire Hazard Zones shall be evaluated to determine if the project would have the potential to substantially affect emergency evacuation. This development at its proposed size would absolutely interfere with evacuation capabilities, and add substantial additional evacuees to routes with limited capacity.
- (3) The General Plan allows for preserving important public views and viewpoints. Grand Avenue and California Street are two of the most popular walking and driving routes in the Riviera. This proposed development would absolutely block the historic views.

CEQA Conflicts

- (1) Wildfire Section: CEQA prevents project designs that will substantially impair emergency response and emergency evacuations. At the time the project was submitted, it was on the boundary of the Very High Fire Zone (CA Assembly Bill 38: Fire Hazard Severity Zones). The street parking for the complex will be in the Very High Fire Zone designation. CEQA's wording states that a project does not have to be in a Very High Fire Hazard zone, only that it is located in or near a VHFZ.
- (2) Transportation Section: CEQA prevents proposed project designs that will create a traffic hazard. The project's only driveway exits onto California Street, a narrow 2 lane street with parking on one side creating a single lane on one of the steepest and narrowest streets in the city.
- (3) Cumulative Effect: CEQA states that the project has to consider the cumulative effect with neighboring properties. The multi-unit residential building at 1621 Grand Avenue is currently vacant, yet is scheduled to be re-opened utilizing 20 units which will require street parking on that block of Grand Avenue. The cumulative effect would impede both emergency escape and emergency response routes.

Just to be clear, it is not a situation that additional off-street parking would correct. It is the density of housing at that specific location that is the problem.

We urge the city to restrict the development to the R-2 zoning it is designated with for good reason, to keep the neighborhood and Santa Barbara safe.

For a clear and concise explanation of these concerns, please watch the video on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/pl-cRYUVZPk?si=fmid7GCFXvGGjZLP>

The YouTube Channel is Riviera Residents, <https://www.youtube.com/@RivieraResidents>

From: J'Nelle Holland <jnelle.holland@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 10:34 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sage.org <info@sage.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave Project

You don't often get email from jnelle.holland@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please don't allow the 1609 Grand Ave Project to be built. It will ruin our Rivera look because it is way too big, will cause major parking issues, and will be way out of proportion with the surrounding structures.

The Architectural Board of Review has put many restrictions on local building. How can they allow this monstrous building to be built in our lovely community?

--

J'Nelle Holland & Stephen Holland
Home owners in Hidden
Valley

From: Emma Hamilton Malina <emmamalina@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 10:49 AM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 1609 Grand

You don't often get email from emmamalina@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I'm writing as a concerned neighbor about the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment project at 1609 Grand Avenue. I live nearby and drive this stretch daily, often multiple times, so I see firsthand the challenges this area already faces.

First, I want to be clear: I absolutely recognize the urgent need for more housing in Santa Barbara. We need thoughtful, well-planned projects that expand access without compromising safety or quality of life. Unfortunately, this particular site is not the right location for a development of this size and scale.

Traffic & Safety

Grand Avenue and California Street are steep, narrow, and already difficult to navigate. Cars constantly have to pull over or back up to let others pass. Adding the daily trips generated by 53 new units plus a two-story parking garage would push these streets past their limits. More importantly, these roads are vital evacuation routes for residents in the high-fire risk areas above. On a normal day, more traffic is frustrating. In an emergency evacuation, it could be catastrophic - a deadly bottleneck.

Noise & Construction Impact

The plan to excavate two levels of underground parking means hundreds of truckloads of dirt hauled through the neighborhood before construction even begins. The noise, congestion, and disruption would have major impacts on daily life here for years, not months.

Neighborhood Character

A 6-story building on this site would tower over the surrounding homes, blocking views and dramatically altering the character of the neighborhood. Santa Barbara has always been known for its human-scale beauty, and I worry this project would set a precedent that undermines that. I don't understand why we aren't actively pursuing more high density homes of this style around the Milpas corridor vicinity. This area desperately needs more affordable housing and has far easier access to the freeway, groceries, public transportation and other services. With the recent addition of Starbucks and great food options like Bossie's, The Shop, Trader Joe's and Sprouts this area has so much potential for first time homebuyers and long-term residents alike.

A Better Approach

While I strongly oppose this site for such a large project, I encourage the City to guide new housing to more appropriate locations: flatter areas with direct freeway access, places where height and density would blend in more seamlessly with the existing environment. That way, we can meet our housing needs while protecting safety, traffic flow, and the unique character of our hillside neighborhoods.

Thank you for considering my concerns. Please add me to the notification list for all future updates on this project.

Sincerely,

Emma Malina

1530 Hillcrest Road - SB, CA 93103

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 10:53 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

[Microsoft](#)

Review These Messages

2 messages are being held for you to review as of **9/30/2025 5:20:15 PM (UTC)**.

Review them within **30 days of the received date** by going to the [Quarantine page](#) in the Security Center.

Prevented spam messages

Sender: maria.charles.sb@gmail.com
Subject: Please STOP Proposed Developments on Grand and Los Olivos
Date: 9/30/2025 2:49:17 PM

[Review Message](#)

[Release](#)

[Block Sender](#)

Sender: cdetwiler52@gmail.com
Subject: Proposed housing on 1609 Grand Ave
Date: 9/30/2025 3:41:11 PM

[Review Message](#)

[Release](#)

[Block Sender](#)

From: BART GOLDSTEIN <bgoldstein200@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 11:10 AM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 1609 Grand Ave response

Attachment(s): "1609 Grand Ave 12.pdf"

You don't often get email from bgoldstein200@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

The attached document is our reply to Santa Barbara's request for comment on the 1609 Grand Ave project.

Sincerely,
Bart
Bart Goldstein

984 Cheltenham Rd
Santa Barbara, Ca. 93105
Sept 29, 2025

Planning Division
City of Santa Barbara
Santa Barbara, California

To Whom it May Concern,

Although more housing is needed in California, my wife and I suggest that the proposed 1609 Grand Ave multi-family housing project be carefully reviewed for suitability to its intended location with a CEQA study.

Figure 1 indicates that the existing neighborhood is primarily single-family houses that are two and three stories tall. There are some commercial buildings and apartment buildings, but they don't exceed three stories. The site of the proposed apartment building is circled in red.

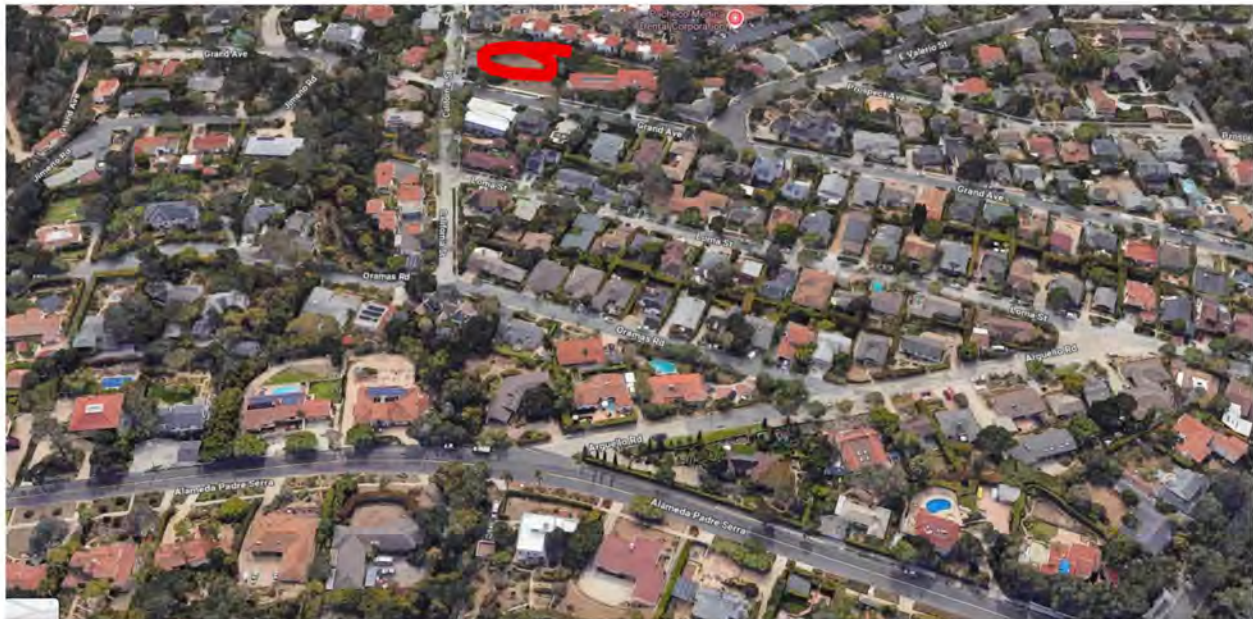


Figure 1 The proposed building site is circled in red.

Figures 2 and 3 show Grand Ave within a block of the proposed building site on the same street. The area is residential and nothing exceeds 3 stories tall.



Figure 2 View on Grand Ave a block away from the proposed building site. It is primarily single family housing of one or two stories.



Figure 3 The proposed building site is a half-block down this road. Structures are 1, 2 and 3 stories.

We suggest the proposed plans be carefully reviewed through a complete CEQA impact report which includes the following concerns:

1. **Density of Housing:** The proposed 53 apartment building may create daily traffic delays in the narrow residential streets designed primarily for single family residences. The site is in a high-risk wildfire area and swift evacuation of residents may be imperiled by increased population. Ambulances, police and fire trucks may in an emergency be delayed by traffic, especially during the work week in the morning and evening. Will the building include additional parking space underground for guests as well as residents? Such a large building may alter how rain water drains in the area adversely affecting neighboring structures.
2. **Noise:** Construction will require several years, during which trucks will bring material to and from the site to add to the general commotion of construction. Even after construction, fifty-three new apartments will create considerable additional traffic noise, especially within several blocks of the proposed building.
3. **Architectural Integration:** Six stories may not integrate well with the architecture of the neighborhood, even if the building is designed with the red tile, Spanish design familiar in the area. Some peoples' view may be eclipsed to their aesthetic detriment and with an attendant fall in the value of their properties.

Santa Barbara is well known for the beauty of the town, and a consistent architecture throughout a neighborhood is an essential component in achieving a pleasing urban environment. Unfortunately, this is rare in the United States, which has prompted several generations of Santa Barbara's citizens to fight hard to preserve what they inherited. I grew up in a town in which this type of planning was largely absent. Once bad architecture is erected, it is difficult to improve so it affects multiple generations.

Most importantly, the cumulative effects of the proposed structure may adversely affect the neighborhood and city. The construction of a six story building may set a precedent for removing older buildings to erect larger, more profitable structures. The cumulative effect on air quality, water resources, emergency services, traffic and quality of life may significantly change the character of the neighborhood and city. The proposed 1609 Grand Ave apartment building will provide only 11 "affordable housing" apartments, which seems a small benefit to pay for its potential disadvantages.

The intended building site is lovely with views of the city and ocean. Perhaps the proposed plan for 1609 Grand Ave can be altered to be more in keeping with the

neighborhood's safety requirements and architectural style. A CEQA review might be a useful step in that direction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bart Goldstein". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "B".

Bart Goldstein

From: Tava Ostrenger <TOstrenger@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 11:20 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: FW: More Constituent Letters re: Projects
Attachment(s): "Constituent Letters re Grand & Los Olivos projects.pdf"

Tava Ostrenger
Assistant City Attorney
Santa Barbara City Attorney's Office
P.O. Box 1990
Santa Barbara, California 93102
Direct Tel.: (805) 564-5405
Fax: (805) 564-5426
Pronouns: She, Her, Hers

NOTE: THIS IS CONFIDENTIAL ATTORNEY WORK PRODUCT MATERIAL OF THE CITY ATTORNEY OF THE CITY OF SANTA BARBARA. IT IS NOT TO BE COPIED, FILED OR TRANSMITTED TO OTHERS. IF FOUND, PLEASE RETURN TO THE CITY OF SANTA BARBARA, CITY ATTORNEY. THERE IS NO INTENTION TO WAIVE ANY PRIVILEGE THAT APPLIES TO THIS COMMUNICATION.

From: Holly Perea <hperea@santabarbaraca.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 11:15 AM
To: Mayor & City Council <mayor&council2@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Tava Ostrenger <TOstrenger@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Subject: More Constituent Letters re: Projects

Hi all – We received a few more letters in the mail about the Grand Ave and/or Los Olivos projects (attached). The hard copies are at my desk if you'd like to review them. ~ Holly

26 September, 2025

Mayor, Mr. Randy Rouse
City Staff ✓

Dear Mr. Mayor and City Council, Planning Commission...

To make this short, I merely express my hope that ALL will be done to avert some of the presently pending uncontrolled building projects, especially

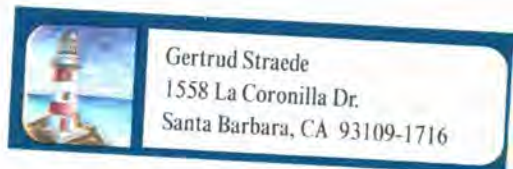
1609 Grand and

1505 E. Los Olivos.

All the the most important reasons like evacuation problems in case of earthquake or fire, etc. have been publicized sufficiently. State policies should not disregard the safety concerns of city dwellers, particularly where geography is concerned.

Thank you for your diligence.

Gertrud Straede



21 September 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for the site on the Lower Riviera at 1609 Grand Ave.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will suggest a few.

1. **Traffic** I regularly travel from my home along Grand Ave. and on to California St. from my home in order to get downtown. At one of the recent (I have done 4) fire evacuations, the traffic from Grand Ave. was backed up across APS to Marymount school. The confusion and stress were overwhelming. Traffic burden on our old steep narrow streets has to be a consideration for this proposed project.

2. **Public Safety:** Grand Ave and California Streets are routes taken from adjacent high-fire and high-risk areas in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This is a REAL concern! The possibility of trapping evacuees in their cars and creating a dangerous bottleneck is a reality.

3. **Noise:** I can't image the noise factor on the neighborhood. The months of on-going noise and congestion will certainly impact the mental health and quality of life in the neighborhood.

4. **Aesthetics.** I know from the size of the building that it is Incompatible with the look of the neighborhood and the (6 stories) would loom over neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. I urge the City to require the developer to evaluate its proposal so that the project does no damage to the aspect of the City's reputation.

I am also enclosing a photo of a 6-story building for scale and reflection.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Hula Aldrich
Santa Barbara Resident



From: Gisela Kommerell
2934 Valencia Drive
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

September 25, 2025

To: Mayor & City Council
P.O. Box 1990
Santa Barbara, CA 93102-1990

RE: Opposition to the Housing Projects at 505 East Los Olivos and 1609-1615 Grand Avenue

Dear Mayor and Esteemed City Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to reconsider the two housing projects at 505 East Los Olivos and 1609-1615 Grand Avenue.

I have been living in Santa Barbara for 35 years, and I love this city's peaceful and down-to-earth character. These two buildings would completely overpower the neighborhoods for which they are proposed and destroy the charm and integrity of our city.

I live close to 505 East Los Olivos, and I know from experience that traffic around the Mission is already a problem, so I can barely imagine how the addition of hundreds of residents to this neighborhood would affect the situation, especially in case of an emergency or a natural disaster.

Please preserve our beautiful city for the people living here now and in the future, and consider the safety of Santa Barbara's residents.

Respectfully,



Gisela Kommerell

From: Wolf Kittler
2934 Valencia Drive
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

September 25, 2025

To: Mayor & City Council
P.O. Box 1990
Santa Barbara, CA 93102-1990

Re: Opposition to the Housing Projects at 505 East Los Olivos and 1609-1615 Grand Avenue

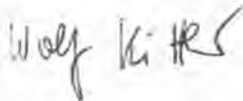
Dear Mayor and Esteemed Members of the City Council,

I am writing to express my concern about the two new housing projects which are currently being planned. While I do understand that there is an urgent need for affordable housing in Santa Barbara, I do not think the size, shape, and structure of these two projects is compatible with the beautiful urban spaces and the atmosphere of our city. These buildings will be eyesores from every point of view. One of them will ruin the traditional outline of the Santa Barbara Mission, and the other one will create an ugly scar in the serenity of the Riviera.

I am also worried about the impact such huge housing complexes will have on the traffic situation in both locations.

I am not a city planner, but I cannot see why it should not be possible to solve the housing crisis with less offensive and less brutal means. I am sure there are architects who can design houses that fulfill both the need for housing and the necessity to preserve and foster the architectural beauty of our city.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Wolf Kittler". The signature is stylized with a large "W" and "K".

Wolf Kittler

From: Michael Wilson <mwilson@spaceklabs.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 11:29 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue Development
Attachment(s): "Letter Re Development of 1609-1615 Grand Ave SB CA.docx"

You don't often get email from mwilson@spaceklabs.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

Please accept my attached letter regarding our concerns of the development at 1609 Grand Avenue in Santa Barbara.

Regards,
Michael Wilson

Spacek Labs, Inc. | www.spaceklabs.com
An ISO 9001:2015 Certified Company
212 East Gutierrez Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101
Tel: (805) 564-4404 | Fax: (805) 966-3249
mwilson@spaceklabs.com

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

My wife and I live in the San Roque/Samarkand neighborhoods and we own a small business in downtown Santa Barbara. To avoid worsening traffic, our daily commute takes us nearby the neighborhood of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue.

We are regular users of the streets around this project – picking our kids up from Santa Barbara Junior High School, attending events at the Santa Barbara Bowl, travelling to businesses in the Milpas Street corridor, and of course commuting to our office daily.

A number of aspects regarding this project concern us greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. **Traffic.** Traffic has already overburdened our existing streets which were never designed for the kind of traffic this project will add to the neighborhoods.
2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. It is clear that the local streets that would be used as routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation could be a potential death trap. This concern is not hypothetical. We have lived in Santa Barbara for over 25 years (my wife being born here) which is long enough to experience multiple fires requiring mandatory evacuations. As we know from these recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies. We are concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. **Aesthetics.** Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering our concerns. We will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add us to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Michael and Alexandra Wilson
416 Samarkand Drive
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
Email: wdesign1@cox.net

From: Dave Mendro <dave@nmaarchitects.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 11:35 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Mary Andrulaitis <mary@nmaarchitects.com>
Subject: ATTN: City of Santa Barbara - Opposition Letter – 1609 Grand Avenue Development
Attachment(s): "NMA Letter of Opposition 1609 Grand Ave Project.pdf"

You don't often get email from dave@nmaarchitects.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom It May Concern,

Attached please find our letter of opposition to the proposed development project at 1609 Grand Avenue.

We would appreciate your confirmation of receipt.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Dave Mendro



Dave Mendro AIA, LEED AP
Desk 805.684.8885 Pocket 805.895.5922
117 West Micheltorena Street, Suite C, Santa Barbara CA 93101
www.nmaarchitects.com

Creating your sense of place.™

Dave Mendro & Mary Andrulaitis
Neumann Mendro Andrulaitis Architects, LLP
117 West Micheltorena Street, Suite C
Santa Barbara CA 93101

September 30, 2025

ATTN: City of Santa Barbara
1609Grand@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Re: Concerns Regarding Proposed Development at 1609 Grand Avenue

To Whom It May Concern:

We live and work less than a mile from the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building at 1609 Grand Avenue. As long-standing residents of Santa Barbara and architects by profession, we are strongly opposed to the project as currently planned for the following reasons:

Traffic & Safety

Grand Avenue and California Street are already narrow for two cars to pass. Adding traffic from a development of this scale will worsen congestion and create hazards. More importantly, these streets are vital evacuation routes for nearby high-fire areas. Increased congestion could put lives at risk during an emergency.

Noise & Construction Impacts

Excavating for two levels of underground parking—requiring hundreds of truckloads of soil removal—will generate excessive noise, dust, and traffic, significantly impacting both immediate neighbors and our broader community.

Scale & Neighborhood Compatibility

A 6-story structure of this size is completely out of scale with the neighborhood, would obstruct views, and would negatively affect the city's historic character and beauty.

We urge the City to require a thorough evaluation of these impacts and to reconsider allowing a project of this scale in this location. Please add us to all notice lists for updates on this proposal.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Mendro", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dave Mendro, Architect AIA, LEED AP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Andrulaitis", with a horizontal line above the last part of the name.

Mary Andrulaitis, Architect AIA

From: James Merritt <jmerritt15@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 11:46 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SAGESB.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave

[You don't often get email from jmerritt15@verizon.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within 5 miles of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

Traffic. I regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home in order to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.

Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. (insert any personal experience with evacuation or other relevant statement). As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.

Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.

Aesthetics. Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Thank you,

James and Kelly Merritt
4445 La Paloma Ave.
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

From: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 12:13 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: FW: Letter to the SB City Council Re 1609 Grand Avenue Project
Attachment(s): "Letter Re Development of 1609-1615 Grand Ave SB CA.docx"

Attached please find letter re: 1609-1615 Grand Avenue, Which I believe may have been sent to the Mayor/Council instead of the dedicated comment line.
I apologize if this is a duplicate.

Thank you.
SageSB.or

From: Michael Wilson <mwilson@spaceklabs.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 11:39 AM
To: Clerk@santabarbaraca.gov
Cc: info@sagesb.org
Subject: Letter to the SB City Council Re 1609 Grand Avenue Project

Dear Mayor Rouse, Council members Gutierrez, Santamaria, Friedman, Jordan, Sneddon, and Harmon,

Please accept the attached letter explaining our objections to the development at 1609-1615 Grand Avenue in Santa Barbara.

Thank you,

Michael Wilson
CEO
Spacek Labs, Inc. | www.spaceklabs.com
An ISO 9001:2015 Certified Company
212 East Gutierrez Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101
Tel: (805) 564-4404 | Fax: (805) 966-3249
mwilson@spaceklabs.com

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

My wife and I live in the San Roque/Samarkand neighborhoods and we own a small business in downtown Santa Barbara. To avoid worsening traffic, our daily commute takes us nearby the neighborhood of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue.

We are regular users of the streets around this project – picking our kids up from Santa Barbara Junior High School, attending events at the Santa Barbara Bowl, travelling to businesses in the Milpas Street corridor, and of course commuting to our office daily.

A number of aspects regarding this project concern us greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. **Traffic.** Traffic has already overburdened our existing streets which were never designed for the kind of traffic this project will add to the neighborhoods.
2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. It is clear that the local streets that would be used as routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation could be a potential death trap. This concern is not hypothetical. We have lived in Santa Barbara for over 25 years (my wife being born here) which is long enough to experience multiple fires requiring mandatory evacuations. As we know from these recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies. We are concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. **Aesthetics.** Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering our concerns. We will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add us to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Michael and Alexandra Wilson
416 Samarkand Drive
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
Email: wdesign1@cox.net

From: Tava Ostrenger <TOstrenger@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 12:59 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: FW: Opposition to proposed project at 505 E. Los Olivos

Tava Ostrenger
Assistant City Attorney
Santa Barbara City Attorney's Office
P.O. Box 1990
Santa Barbara, California 93102
Direct Tel.: (805) 564-5405
Fax: (805) 564-5426
Pronouns: She, Her, Hers

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From: Holly Perea <hperea@santabarbaraca.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 12:07 PM
To: Mayor & City Council <mayor&council2@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Tava Ostrenger <TOstrenger@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Subject: FW: Opposition to proposed project at 505 E. Los Olivos

Forwarded message, below. If you'd like to respond, please contact Susanne Wood at billandsusanne@yahoo.com. ~ hp

-----Original Message-----

From: BillandSusanne <billandsusanne@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 10:28 AM
To: Holly Perea <hperea@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Opposition to proposed project at 505 E. Los Olivos

To the Mayor and City Council Members,

I am writing to voice my opposition to the proposed housing project behind the Santa Barbara Mission. I'm sure you're aware of all the concerns about strains on infrastructure and resources, safety, etc., issues for any large project in our small town.

But in this case, I want to implore you, as stewards of this beautiful historic town, to FIGHT to preserve the beauty, history and tradition of our town and it's iconic sacred Mission, beloved by all Californians, by stopping this grotesque project. Please do the right thing and find a way.

Sincerely,
Susanne Wood

Sent from my iPad

From: Chris Field <chrisfield2000@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 1:01 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue (PLN2024-00181)

You don't often get email from chrisfield2000@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

September 29, 2025

City of Santa Barbara

re: Public Comment Response for 1609 Grand Avenue (PLN2024-00181)

I own 601 E. Micheltorena St., unit 91 in the Bella Riviera Condominium development which is located approximately 300 feet from the proposed project at 1609 Grand Avenue. I am personally aware of the high fire hazard nature of the surrounding area and know about the existing emergency evacuation risks. I am deeply concerned about the proposed 1609 Grand Ave. project. The size and enormity of this project in the middle of an already highly constrained neighborhood is dangerous on many levels and presents too many environmental impacts to qualify for the streamlined CEQA analysis allowed through SB 131.

I specifically request the City require a complete CEQA analysis to properly analyze the extreme impacts related to this proposal so grossly out of character with the existing developments in the area, specifically in the following CEQA categories:

1. Public Safety,
2. Traffic,
3. Noise,
4. Aesthetics,
5. Land Use Planning,
6. Population and Housing,
7. Public Services, including emergency services, and
8. Utilities and Service Systems

My own personal observations can confirm the following facts contributing to the impacts in the above stated CEQA categories:

1. proximity to a high fire zone,
2. lack of public transit causing increased personal vehicle traffic throughout the Riviera neighborhood,
3. steep sloped terrain prone to flooding,
4. narrow streets already causing dramatic congestion, sometimes single lane traffic only,
5. additional impact on already strained residential emergency evacuation routes,
6. additional impact on already strained emergency vehicle access into and out of the neighborhood,
7. aging infrastructure of existing streets and utility systems,
8. size, bulk and scale of the massive building, totally out of character with the neighborhood, and
9. precedent established by allowing the enormous building height and mass in a relatively understated single-family residential neighborhood.

One example of how grossly oversized the proposal is for the property is the fact that the applicant has proposed tandem parking as a solution, because there is no other way to squeeze the required basic parking capacity onto such a small area. Please support our community with smart actions for growth. Please require the applicant to conduct a full environmental impact analysis so our neighborhood is not only protected, but enhanced with a project that compliments the surrounding area and doesn't put lives at risk.

I hope that I have made my opposition to this proposed development clear.

Sincerely yours,

Christopher C. Field
601 E. Micheltorena St. Unit 91
Santa Barbara, California 93103

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: bikertom@cox.net <bikertom@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 1:12 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue Development

Dear City of Santa Barbara

I live within 1 ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. Traffic. I regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home in order to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. Aesthetics. Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Thomas P. Riederer

From: Jean McCourt <jeanbmccourt@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 1:22 PM PDT
To: City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 505 East Los Olivos and 1609-1615 Grand Ave. Porposed Projects

You don't often get email from jeanbmccourt@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

RE: Opposition to the Housing Projects at 505 East Los Olivos & 1609-1615 Grand Avenue

Dear Mayor and Esteemed City Council Members,

We are writing to you not only as concerned citizens but as oneswho treasure the extraordinary beauty and enduring traditions that make Santa Barbara a place unlike any other. We urge you to reconsider the proposed housing project at 505 East Los Olivos & 1609-1615 Grand Avenue, developments that threatens the very essence of our city's character and the values we have carefully preserved through generations.

Preserving Santa Barbara's Beauty and Tradition

Santa Barbara's charm is woven into every historic street, every elegant building, and every vista that opens to the sea and mountains. The proposed structure would loom over our beloved Mission and iconic Riviera neighborhoods, disrupting the harmonious architectural landscape that defines our community. Our city's aesthetic is not merely about appearance—it is an expression of our shared history and values. Allowing such towering projects would undermine a legacy cherished by residents and admired by visitors worldwide.

Protecting Uniqueness and Historic Preservation

Santa Barbara is celebrated for its uniqueness, a blend of Spanish Colonial heritage and coastal tranquility. The scale and design of the proposed developments are incompatible with the surrounding historic sites and neighborhoods. We must honor our responsibility as stewards of this city—not just for ourselves, but for future generations who deserve to experience Santa Barbara as we have. Sacrificing our distinctive character for short-term gains risks erasing what makes Santa Barbara special.

Addressing Safety and Infrastructure Concerns

A project of this magnitude poses genuine concerns for public safety and the integrity of our infrastructure. Increased traffic congestion, strains on emergency services, wildfire risk, evacuation congestion, and overburdened utilities would compromise the well-being of current residents. Our city's thoughtful planning must prioritize safety and livability for all—not just the interests of developers.

Safeguarding Our Tourist Economy

Tourism is the lifeblood of Santa Barbara's economy, sustaining countless local businesses and supporting jobs for our citizens. Visitors travel from around the world to experience a city that feels both timeless and welcoming. The addition of imposing buildings in a cherished neighborhoods threaten our reputation as a haven for relaxation, beauty, and culture. We must ask: will tourists continue to come if we allow our cityscape to be altered so drastically?

Protecting the Interests of Voters and Local Businesses

The decisions you make affect every voter, every business owner, and every family who calls Santa Barbara home. Local businesses are deeply intertwined with the community's identity, and many stand to be directly impacted by changes to our city's fabric. The voices of residents and business owners must matter most in shaping our future. As elected representatives, your duty is to preserve that which makes Santa Barbara vibrant, prosperous, and unique.

We urge you to reject the proposed housing projects at 505 East Los Olivos & 1609-1615 Grand Avenue. Let us stand together in defending the beauty, tradition, and spirit of Santa Barbara. Let our city remain a place where history is honored, safety is paramount, visitors are enchanted, and local businesses flourish. Please protect our community for today and for generations to come.

Respectfully,

Mike and Jean McCourt
1919 Las Tunas Rd.
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

From: Roe Anne White <sdraw@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 1:33 PM PDT
To: info@SAGESB.org <info@SAGESB.org>; 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 - 1615 Grand Avenue

To Whom it May Concern:

It is hard for me to believe we are discussing the advisability of a six-story building in the middle of the Riviera. The safety issue alone, in an emergency, would seem to negate the advisability. The unstable weather patterns we now experience and the possibility of fire and mud slides, are dangers to our city and all the residents on the riviera, as well as our first responders.

Many of the streets in that area are narrow and windy without enough parking to begin with. Add friends and family of additional residents and that creates additional problems. There is already incredible traffic coming into and out of town from the Riviera with people enroute to and from work and school. De La Guerra feels like a freeway twice a day now.

There are also the aesthetic aspects of this development to consider. A six-story building in the middle of the riviera would be a blight on the view from below and above destroying the charm of the neighborhoods on the hillside.

I hold the city leaders responsible for the future of our city and insist they conduct a comprehensive analysis of the project and its likely impacts to the neighborhoods affected by this proposal through a California Environmental Quality Act, "CEQA" review.

Sincerely,

Roe Anne White

From: Catherine Gautier-Downes <gautierdownes@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 2:06 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>

Subject: Expression of concerns with and opposition to the development the proposed apartment complex at 1609 Grand Avenue

You don't often get email from gautierdownes@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I, Catherine Gautier, as a member of a group of long-term Santa Barbara residents united oppose the proposed apartment complex at **1609 Grand Avenue**. Having lived in the Riviera for one and a half decades, I know this neighborhood intimately—its character, its challenges, and especially the risks that further development at this site would bring.

The neighborhood witnessed firsthand the dangers during the **Thomas Fire**, when evacuation routes were overwhelmed and lives were put at risk. Adding a high-density project at 1609 Grand Avenue would exacerbate these dangers, while also creating new daily problems for residents.

Having lost my previous house in the Jesusita Fire, I am particularly sensitive to all the issues associated with local fires, in particular those related to blocked evacuation routes and difficulty with emergency response.

Furthermore, the proposed development conflicts with Santa Barbara's General Plan and CEQA from several perspectives, including safety elements, high fire hazard zones and preservation of public views.

For these reasons, I together with other local residents, urge that the proposed project at **1609 Grand Avenue** not move forward in its current form. It poses unacceptable risks to public safety, violates the guiding principles of Santa Barbara's General Plan, and threatens the natural and historic character of the Riviera.

Catherine Gautier

1637 Loma St

From: Virginia Holt <vrholt@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 2:11 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave Project

You don't often get email from vrholt@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here: Traffic. I regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home in order to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets

Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.

Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.

Aesthetics. Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for consideration.

Virginia Holt

From: Cristi Walden <cristiwalden@icloud.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 2:17 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
CC: info@SAGESB.org <info@SAGESB.org>; Cristi Walden <cristi@seacrestnursery.com>
Subject: 1609 - 1615 Grand Ave.

You don't often get email from cristiwalden@icloud.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Mayor and Santa Barbara City Council Members:

I am writing to besiege you conduct a comprehensive analysis of the proposed Builder's Remedy project at 1609-1615 Grand Ave. and its likely impact on my neighborhood. Specifically please require a CEQA report to study this projects effect on -

1. Wildfire evacuation
2. Traffic impacts - I live on APS and the traffic is increasing worse all during the day.
3. Parking internal circulation - Public Safety - Grand Ave is a narrow street surrounded by narrow and windy streets with tight parking. Cars often need to pull over to allow oncoming traffic to pass.
4. Aesthetics - It will be the "sore thumb" of the Riviera and will mar the beautiful hillside of the Riviera.
5. Stormwater and drainage - I live on the downside of APS and I have drainage issues into my driveway from APS and it runs down into my neighbors yard below me. I know that this is an issue for many who live in the Riviera.
6. Cumulative Impacts - will set a precedent for other developers/builders who will want to build similar, size inappropriate buildings.

These 2 huge developments, in the high fire area of an already congested neighborhood, will put undue stress on both homeowners and firefighters.

I grew up in Pacific Palisades and have lived in the Riviera section of Santa Barbara for 10 years. Prior to that I lived at the top of Toro Canyon Rd. in Montecito and was evacuated during the fire and debris flow. At one point I was told, incorrectly, that my house had burned down.

In the 1970's my father purchased a burned out lot in the Riviera to build his house on. Since then has had been evacuated many times with fire threats.

In January, both of my childhood homes in the Palisades burned in the 23,500 acre fire, along with many of my friend's homes. Several of them had very short notice to leave and were stuck on Sunset Blvd. near the Highlands, where many locked cars were abandoned and blocking the streets allowing no exit and forcing people to flee on foot. It was a terrifying, devastating and exhausting experience for them as they lost their worldly goods and homes and have had to start over. I understand that many fire survivors have relocated to Santa Barbara. Every year our California brush fires become more devastating and unpredictable. It is our local leaders responsibility to protect the safety and best interests of the majority of the people that they represent.

I understand that we need more low income housing and housing in Santa Barbara but this location and the Los Olivos / Mission location are inappropriate for the massive and incongruent buildings that are being proposed.

Thank you for your time and support,

Cristi Walden
Sea Crest Nursery
615 Alameda Padre Serra
Santa Barbara, CA 93103
805-868-8654

From: Patricia Saley <patriciawsaley@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 2:17 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: Environmental review for 1609-1615 Grand Ave BR project

You don't often get email from patriciawsaley@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Ms. Burkhardt,

I have several environmental concerns that I believe warrant a focused environmental impact report (EIR) on the proposed project at 1609-1615 Grand Avenue. These comments are intended to provide decision-makers with information so they are aware of potentially significant environmental impacts and mitigation measures before they consider approving the proposed project.

Emergency access - I have been a Santa Barbara resident since 1973. Most of that time I lived in the foothills where we were evacuated during the Sycamore, Tea and Jesusita fires, among others. We were also subject to evacuation warnings many times over the thirty years we lived there. The Tea fire burned within 10' of our home and we had to evacuate without taking our animals as it was an extreme emergency. Driving out of our neighborhood on severely congested roads was one of the scariest things I've ever experienced. While our property had fire and smoke damage, thankfully our family and pets were fine. That was not the case for some of my neighbors who also had a difficult time fleeing the fires.

While we all love the Mediterranean look of our Riviera, it is likely that it would not be developed today in the same dense manner given concerns about public safety, especially in an emergency. Adding 53 units in this location, with vehicle access on very narrow streets, would severely exacerbate existing congestion that occurs on a daily basis, not to mention during an emergency. Given the Riviera's complex fire history, narrow streets, density and residents' use of Grand and California as evacuation routes, this project could result in significant public safety impacts. These environmental issues need to be thoroughly studied.

Fire and Police access and public safety - I now live Downtown, about three blocks from the project site. I am an avid walker and have walked by the project site on several occasions. I tend to avoid both Grand Avenue and California Street as both are narrow and traffic tends to go too fast for the conditions. California Street is purported to be the steepest street in the City, likely exceeding the 16% grade that I understand is the maximum that a fire truck can traverse without fire hoses and other equipment falling off the truck. A comprehensive review of how police, fire and medical personnel would access the site and neighboring properties, both during emergency and in non-emergency situations, needs to be provided.

Traffic impacts during construction and if constructed and occupied - As I noted above, I have lived through several fires in my neighborhood. While our house fortunately did not burn, others in our neighborhood did and we went through over two years of reconstruction. Initially we politely asked if the workers could park elsewhere and shuttle in, but the reality is they needed their trucks as they had tools, equipment and materials in their trucks that they needed during the day. The number of construction vehicles associated with rebuilding one single family home was considerable, and neighbors were even more impacted when two or more homes were under construction in the same area. Imagine the number of construction vehicles a project of this size would require? How many large vehicles removing fill and delivering materials would be required and how would the two narrow streets accommodate them, in addition to on-street parking by neighbors and visitors? How would neighbors get in and out of their properties and how would emergency responders access the area with so many additional vehicles? This is another public safety issue that needs to be studied.

Aesthetics - The Riviera is visible from much of the City and is reminiscent of cities and towns along the Mediterranean. However, none of them has a large 6-story building that would dominate the view from the beach, parks and State Street, all public areas. The focused EIR should provide detailed photo simulations from major public vantage points that would help the analysis of potentially significant impact to aesthetics.

Cumulative impacts - Given the narrowness of both Grand and California, the use of both streets for daily access and in emergencies and the congestion that the long construction period would cause, I believe that a finding of cumulative traffic circulation and public safety impacts can be made.

Mandatory finding of significance - Based on my experience as a land use planner, long-time resident affected by fires and nearby resident, there is no question that mandatory findings of significance should be made in all the categories outlined above.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Pat Saley, AICP
1517 Olive St.
Santa Barbara, CA. 93101

From: Toni <mizqueen456@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 2:20 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Subject: 5 story Apartment Proposal

[You don't often get email from mizqueen456@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

I would like to object to this project currently under review. It is completely out of place in the neighborhood. The surroundings are small single family homes and duplexes not 6 story apartments. Grand Ave. is very narrow, in many places not wide enough for 2 cars to pass.

Which leads to the problem of emergency evacuation. It's hard to imagine how congested those streets would be and adding another 100 or so cars is not going to help. The safety of the nearby residents must be considered.

The developers are not local and despite their claims of providing housing for the City, have not shown good faith in either this project or the Mission monstrosity. They have increased the scale of the original project in the face of much public opposition

The small number of affordable units does not justify approval of a project this large. Please use the resources of the planning department to thoroughly investigate the safety, aesthetic and seismic issues involved and put a stop to it.

Toni McQueen

Sent from my iPad

From: gordon.benelli@gmail.com <gordon.benelli@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 2:54 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SageSB.org <info@SageSB.org>
Subject: Concerns about the 1609 Grand Avenue project

You don't often get email from gordon.benelli@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

This is to express personal concerns about the proposed 53-unit apartment project at 1609 Grand Avenue, and to request you do everything possible to make sure any development there fits safely and appropriately in our residential neighborhood.

I live in the house on the corner of Grand Avenue and Valerio Street, immediately on the other side of the Villa Riviera facility from the proposed apartment building. As such, I am quite familiar with this area and will be directly affected by development of the vacant lot at 1609 Grand Avenue. Though I do not object to housing development of the currently vacant lot, I am strongly concerned the scale of the proposed apartment project will exacerbate several existing problems in the area. These issues include:

- **Traffic.** Our neighborhood streets are narrow. Street parking often requires vehicle traffic on our streets to take turns using a single lane down the middle. The steepness of California Street makes this particularly difficult. Adding scores of extra vehicles, making multiple trips daily, will greatly worsen this traffic situation.
- **Parking.** Though the proposed project includes two stories of parking for tenants, I anticipate visitors, long-term guests, and multiple car ownership will cause overflow onto adjoining streets. Our neighborhood streets already strain to accommodate existing parking demand.
- **Noise.** I am not eager to hear construction equipment and vehicles during the building phase; but that will be temporary. Longer term, our home and many others which are barely set back from the street will have to tolerate a significant increase in traffic noise.
- **Safety.** I see many reports about safety issues regarding potential/likely negative impact on evacuation and emergency vehicle routes. Given this area's high fire risk classification and history, these seem to be very reasonable concerns.
- **Aesthetics.** It is impossible to believe any six-story design can be made to fit in, let alone enhance the Riviera's appearance. This makes the proposed project not just a neighborhood issue, but one of concern for all of Santa Barbara. And it is an issue which can/will impact housing values for all of us.

Again, I am not against appropriate development of the vacant lot at 1609 Grand Avenue. However, the scale of the proposed apartment project is wholly inappropriate to the location and will damage the quality of life, housing values, and safety in our neighborhood.

Thank you for considering my concerns. Please do not let the proposed six-story, 53-unit apartment building project move forward. Santa Barbara deserves a better solution.

Sincerely,

Gordon Benelli

Gordon Benelli
656 E. Valerio St.
Santa Barbara, CA 93103



Virus-free www.avg.com

From: jackie d <jackiedearth@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 2:55 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand

You don't often get email from jackiedearth@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I, Jacqueline Le Guellec, résident of Loma Street (the street just above Grand), oppose the proposed apartment complex at 1609 Grand Avenue.

This project is an aberration and will pose many problems to the neighborhood. We live in a high fire hazard part of town and bringing a high density complex will, certainly, render evacuation more difficult. What about parking in a street already congested? And public views? And the historic character of the Riviera?

Please, would you review your plan, in the name of common sense, safety and beauty?

Thank you and best regards.

Jacqueline Le Guellec

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: Virginia McFerran <vmcferran@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 3:06 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand St.

You don't often get email from vmcferran@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

Regardless of cost, the city must prevent the approval and construction of the proposed developments at **1609 / 1615 Grand Avenue** and **505 East Los Olivos Street**. While I recognize the urgent and legitimate need for more affordable housing in Santa Barbara, these projects represent poor planning and would impose lasting financial, environmental, and social costs on our community.

Santa Barbara's housing strategy must focus on solutions that are **sustainable, equitable, and aligned with our planning principles**. The current proposals fail to meet these criteria for several critical reasons:

1. **Location and Safety Risks:** These sites are in areas vulnerable to wildfire and constrained by limited evacuation routes. This creates unnecessary public safety hazards and contradicts the City's obligation to prioritize resilient, safe housing.
2. **Transportation and Infrastructure Strain:** Locating high-density projects away from major arterials, transit hubs, and essential services places additional strain on infrastructure and increases reliance on automobiles. This leads to more congestion, greater emissions, and higher long-term costs for road and freeway maintenance.
3. **Community Compatibility:** The proposed mass, scale, and bulk are incompatible with the surrounding neighborhoods and with Santa Barbara's established design standards. This threatens the city's character while doing little to address affordability in a meaningful way.
4. **Missed Opportunity for True Affordability:** These developments do not reflect the type of **well-situated, high-density affordable housing** that is urgently needed—housing close to services, transit, and employment centers, designed to foster long-term community health and inclusivity.

While a CEQA review is essential, it is equally critical that the city **lead proactively** by guiding development toward projects that genuinely advance affordability while safeguarding public safety, environmental sustainability, and quality of life. If necessary, the city should consider acquisition or other measures to prevent projects that undermine these goals.

Santa Barbara has an opportunity to demonstrate leadership by supporting **responsible growth**: compact, affordable housing in appropriate locations that strengthen our economy, reduce emissions, and ensure equitable access to city services. These proposed projects are in direct conflict with that vision.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this matter. I urge the city to take decisive action to ensure that future development aligns with both the immediate and long-term interests of our community.

Sincerely,
Jerry and Virginia McFerran

805.252-0578.m

From: Kathleen Leer <kathleenleer@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 3:11 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand & 505 E. Los Olivos projects

You don't often get email from kathleenleer@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I urge you to not accept the two above-mentioned projects. The 1609 Grand Avenue project is near a fault line that Cal Fire identified as a "very high fire hazard severity zone". And, the 505 E. Los Olivos project will significantly increase vehicle density and congestion on the narrow evacuation routes, therefore impeding the residents and the firefighters.

Also, the main driveway of the proposed 505 E. Los Olivos project will create a massive traffic problem at the intersection of Los Olivos, Mission Canyon and APS, which is already a safety hazard.

These two projects do not conform to Santa Barbara's General Plan standards and policies, and therefore must be denied.

Thank you,

Kathy Leer

From: christine feldman <christinefeldmansb@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 3:38 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: Grand ave

You don't often get email from christinefeldmansb@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please do not build such a large building in this area. The traffic and the safety of people in a evacuation would be horrific! Streets wouldn't be able to handel it.

On another note, it would be an eye soar! to big for the proposed sight! way to high, out of place! If this is built it will ruin the American Rivera as we know it. This then could be a trend and others will follow! Views will be obstructed! beauty will be

destroyed. **Don't let this happen to our beautiful city!**

From: Regina Kammer <rkammer@pacbell.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 3:40 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Concerns re: 1609-1615 Grand Avenue proposed development

You don't often get email from rkammer@pacbell.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I am an owner of a house within 1 mile of, and within walking distance to the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609-1615 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

I encourage the City of Santa Barbara to require the applicant to conduct a full environmental impact (CEQA) report for the proposed Grand Avenue project. A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, as stated below:

1. Public Safety During Emergencies and Evacuations.

Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. Santa Barbarans have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, including in places with steep and narrow roads such as the Tea Fire and Jesusita Fire. Especially with climate change, Santa Barbara will face future fire emergencies. The project as proposed would create a dangerous traffic bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars and preventing emergency vehicles from accessing the area.

In the 1991 Oakland Hills Firestorm, in an area with equally steep and narrow streets, twenty-five people died trying to flee their homes. Some died trapped in their cars while trying to escape down narrow streets. I was living in Oakland at the time of this fire. It was absolutely horrific.

Fire is not the only issue. Emergency vehicles responding to a health emergency will be impacted by a substantial increase in traffic and residents. Earthquakes will also lead to residents trying to flee and encountering impediments.

The City must require an evaluation of the impacts this development will have on fire and other public safety emergencies and require proposed mitigations. The mitigations must go through substantial review as to their effectiveness and practicable implementation. "What-ifs" will be reality one day and the City must take emergency situations seriously.

2. Traffic.

Downtown access from the Grand Avenue neighborhood is via travel across Grand Avenue and down California Street. Both Grand Avenue and California Street are so narrow it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the street at once. On both Grand and California one car must pull to the side to allow an oncoming car to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside.

I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on these old, steep, narrow streets. I mentioned emergency vehicles in point 1; their access must not be impeded.

3. Noise.

The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation – especially on California Street -- the trucks and construction will disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. Noise is another impact the City should require the developer to address.

4. Aesthetics and Scale.

Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is out of scale and incompatible with the look of the neighborhood. The proposed building certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City of Santa Barbara. The City is known for its beauty – Pearl Chase made sure of this. An out-of-scale development would ruin this legacy.

The City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that this project does no damage to the

aesthetic aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Sincerely,
Regina Kammer
2205 Mission Ridge Road

From: Carole Kennedy <kenncarn@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 3:40 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Concerns building behind the Mission
Attachment(s): "letter_Riviera 6 story building.pdf"

[You don't often get email from kenncarn@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within 2 miles of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. This whole development is crazy. It's hard for me to believe that our concerned government elected officials are actually sacrificing the beauty and culture of this community in this way.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. **Traffic.** As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. It's just crazy to think about all the infrastructure and dollars this will take in order to work. It just won't work. Why even begin to waste our tax dollars?
2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. My house burned to the ground in a wildfire. I wouldn't want anyone else to go through the trauma of losing everything. Even today, when fires are close to Santa Barbara, I have panic attacks which are basically PTSD from the fire I was involved in many years ago. As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. **Aesthetics.** The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The area is a neighborhood where

families live everyday and this atrocity of a building has no place in this community.....anywhere! The City is known now for its beauty and it's distinctive architecture, and I believe the City must robustly deny any building in this area. It's right behind the Mission. What is more iconic in Santa Barbara than our precious heritage which the Mission symbolizes. I'm not sure what you are thinking....or maybe you are just not thinking and not willing to put in the time to find another solution. This is not the solution.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Carole Kennedy

A very concerned citizen.

From: lisa.irwin <lisa.irwin@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 4:00 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I live 2 blocks below the proposed monstrosity at 1609 Grand Ave. This is my childhood home and my family has lived in this area for 5 generations with one of my great great grandmothers building one of the first houses on Grand near the corner of Valerio Street.

Incidentally there are old photos from her front porch showing a graveyard at the proposed site but I realize the area has been disturbed multiple times in the past with the building of St Francis Hospital and subsequent building of the housing development up there. Interesting that it is still a vacant lot.

My reason for writing and true concern is the impact of this development on the neighborhood.

The roads (Grand, California Street, Upper Valerio) are far too narrow to support such a huge influx of traffic. With cars parked on both sides, they become basically one lane roads. One car must pull over to make way for the on coming traffic.

This leads to another main concern which is safety. We have lived through so many fires and the whole east side having to be evacuated. Adding possibly over 100 cars to the mix even on a normal day will be a disaster!

We take such pride in the beauty of our city. It would be a huge ugly building that would be seen all over town as you look at our beautiful riviera. It would be an eyesore! The project does not work in this area. Please do not allow this project to move forward.

Thank you for your consideration!

Lisa Lennon Irwin

From: Jann Olsen <jjelectricsb@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 4:11 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 - 1615 Grand avenue
Attachment(s): "1615 Grand Avenue -JO.pdf", "1609 Grand Avenue.pdf"

You don't often get email from jjelectricsb@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

My Concerns:

--

Jann Olsen

Dum spiro, spero
While I Breathe, I Hope

Sept. 28, 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within walking distance of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street. A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. Traffic. I regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home in order to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.

2. Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.

3. Noise. The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.

4. Aesthetics. Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

I am including an emotion, personal letter that I also had written when I learned of this Project.

Please; Do the Right Thing.

Sept 23, 2025

To Whom it May Concern;

I'd like to voice my objections to this Housing plan for 1609 -1615 Grand Avenue.

My background in Sta Barbara; I have lived at 533 E. Micheltorena from 1972-1982 , when St Francis Hospital was next door to me.

I then moved to 1707 Grand Avenue (The 'Pagoda House') from 1982 – 2000, after which I moved to 1759 Prospect, (Next to the Greene and Greene Craftsman), from 2000 – 2012 – Now living on 1905 APS at the corner of E. Pedregosa.

My point being, that I consider this area my long time neighborhood –

My 533 E Micheltorena home was next to St. Francis Hosp. was sold, to be torn Down for a Medical Building – actually I believe 4 houses were actually torn down below on the 500 Block of Micheltorena. Later, when the Hospital was torn down, I was surprised, and sad, but the Housing that went in was All low profile, and good looking, I thought it a nice project – it wasn't a High Rise, it looked like a NEIGHBORHOOD, and , the patch of land behind St. Francis, where the proposed bldg. is to go, had been a community Garden – a That last block of Grand Avenue, which runs into California Street, is a sweet spot, but NOT FOR A HIGH RISE. I could feature a single family home there. All the logistics are tight.

I ask you all to drive over there and really look at this Site. This is a quiet neighborhood with a LOT of cars on all streets, just about every house had turned a garage into an ADU, or have multiple cars attached to each house,

Have you driven up E. Valerio OR down Grand Avenue lately??? (or Up California Street?)

I simply can not feature that multi level building, going in on that small patch of land,

And the chaos to do the building there – where will all the construction people park? it's SUCH A BAD IDEA – I'm literally despondent and disappointed.

So, not only do I want to know exactly what the Emergency Exit plan could be with thousands of people on the Upper Riviera, needing to evacuate during a Fire (and I've lived thru (3) evacuations in my time on the East Side) And you know; Fire is to be expected in our area, and we know it.

I'm also just wondering about the role of WATER in the continued building in our City. We all know that water is such a commodity –, and to have this enormous project on that particular location – just seems ill advised. I feel a need to know much MORE about this

project – and I want to express my objections to it going forward. PLEASE consider the impact on this current Neighborhood.

Yours sincerely;

Jann Olsen

1905 Alameda Padre Serra

From: Paasha Mahdavi <paasha.mahdavi@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 4:18 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>; Megan Mahdavi <meganbmahdavi@gmail.com>
Subject: Concerns about the proposed project at 1609 Grand Avenue

You don't often get email from paasha.mahdavi@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

Our family lives within a quarter-mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street, which is the main thoroughfare to get to our home on Oramas Road.

A number of aspects about the project concern us greatly, and we will outline them here:

1. **Traffic.** We regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from our home in order to get downtown and to get to work. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. We encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. **Child safety.** There are also concerns for pedestrians going up and down the hill on California Street if this project is built, as it will greatly increase the traffic turning onto Grand Avenue. For example, we walk this path everyday with our two children (3 and 7 years old) to get to the Kids World park on Micheltorena. Increased traffic on the road will likely pose a higher risk for children walking to parks and walking to school along California Street and Grand Avenue. We encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of additional traffic on childrens' safety and walking patterns to get to neighborhood schools and parks.
3. **Wildfires and emergency access.** Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies – and this will only accelerate as global temperatures rise and precipitation patterns become more volatile because of climate change. We are concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, we believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
4. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. We understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
5. **Aesthetics.** Although we do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, we do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and we believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering our concerns. We will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add us to any notice lists.

Thank you,
Megan and Paasha Mahdavi
1553 Oramas Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

From: Mike McKinniss <mmckinniss@westmont.edu>

Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 4:28 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 1609 Grand Ave

You don't often get email from mmckinniss@westmont.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

To whom it may concern with the City of Santa Barbara:

I live within 3 miles of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. **Traffic.** I regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home in order to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. **Aesthetics.** Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Mike McKinniss

[1112 Del Mar Ave, Santa Barbara CA 93109](#)

--

Mike McKinniss, MDiv

Sr. Director of Admissions, PDSO
955 La Paz Road • Santa Barbara, CA 93108
805•565•6819

From: Howard Zisser <hzisser@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 4:30 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>

Subject: Grand Ave Project Objection

You don't often get email from hzisser@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

While I do agree that this project will cause major disruptions in the areas of safety/noise etc, my main objection is that it just doesn't make any sense. It is a bad idea. Plain and simple. It just doesn't fit for so many reasons.

I have lived in this area for over 3 decades and I can say - this project should not progress. Many thanks

Howard Ziiser MD

From: Tava Ostrenger <TOstrenger@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 4:38 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: FW: Proposed Development 1609 Grand Ave

Tava Ostrenger
Assistant City Attorney
Santa Barbara City Attorney's Office
P.O. Box 1990
Santa Barbara, California 93102
Direct Tel.: (805) 564-5405
Fax: (805) 564-5426
Pronouns: She, Her, Hers

NOTE: THIS IS CONFIDENTIAL ATTORNEY WORK PRODUCT MATERIAL OF THE CITY ATTORNEY OF THE CITY OF SANTA BARBARA. IT IS NOT TO BE COPIED, FILED OR TRANSMITTED TO OTHERS. IF FOUND, PLEASE RETURN TO THE CITY OF SANTA BARBARA, CITY ATTORNEY. THERE IS NO INTENTION TO WAIVE ANY PRIVILEGE THAT APPLIES TO THIS COMMUNICATION.

From: Holly Perea <hperea@santabarbaraca.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 4:21 PM
To: Mayor & City Council <mayor&council2@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Tava Ostrenger <TOstrenger@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Subject: FW: Proposed Development 1609 Grand Ave

Forwarded message. If you'd like to respond, please contact LYN PROCTOR at lynproctor@cox.net. ~ hp

From: LYN PROCTOR <lynproctor@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 10:17 AM
To: Holly Perea <hperea@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Fw: Proposed Development 1609 Grand Ave

Please forward to Mayor and City Council Members:

To All Concerned Stakeholders and Decision-Makers,

I am writing to articulate my strong opposition, as a resident of 1627 Mira Vista, to the proposed permit application currently under consideration, which seeks approval through the framework of the Builders Remedy Act. While recognizing state-level directives, it is paramount that our City Council and planning bodies prioritize the safety, welfare, and explicit will of the Santa Barbara community above a generalized application of state mandates that demonstrably fail to account for critical local conditions and established community character.

The assertion that a development of this scale and nature is appropriate for this specific location is fundamentally flawed. Santa Barbara County possesses numerous alternative sites that could accommodate a project of this size without imposing severe, unwarranted risks and burdens upon existing neighborhoods. Approving this permit would signify a disregard for the unique attributes of our area and force an incompatible development into a place where it inherently does not belong.

My most significant and urgent concerns revolve around public safety, particularly given the distinct vulnerabilities inherent to the Mira Vista locale. Our residential streets are notably narrow; this characteristic would be catastrophically compounded by the amplified traffic volume and parking demands generated by a high-density, multi-story structure. The inevitable overflow of vehicles attempting to park on these already constrained streets would render crucial arteries impassable. This is far more than a mere inconvenience; it represents a direct and immediate threat to life and property.

Consider the grave implications during an emergency event:

* **Emergency Response Accessibility:** The Mira Vista area is unequivocally situated within a designated high-fire risk zone. In the dire event of a wildfire, earthquake, or other disaster, any obstruction to access for fire apparatus, ambulances, and other essential emergency services would have devastating, potentially irreversible consequences, endangering not only future residents of the proposed development but every single existing home and family in the surrounding community.

* **Mass Evacuation Pathways:** A high-rise building, coupled with the inevitable surge in congestion, would critically compromise established evacuation routes, transforming vital escape pathways into perilous bottlenecks. Current residents, myself included, live with the very real fear of being trapped in our homes should a disaster unfold. This project, if approved, would demonstrably imperil the lives of hundreds of our neighbors.

Before any further consideration or decision, I unequivocally demand an immediate and comprehensive delay in this permit process. It is absolutely essential that rigorous due diligence is undertaken, including, but not limited to, a thorough and independent environmental impact study. To proceed without such a critical assessment

would constitute an egregious failure of responsible governance and a clear dereliction of duty to the citizens you serve.

I urge the City to profoundly consider the immense legal and financial liabilities it would inevitably incur should this project move forward and a preventable tragedy occur, directly attributable to compromised safety standards and inadequate infrastructure. As a committed taxpayer, I expect our municipal leadership to proactively safeguard the lives and substantial investments of its constituents, rather than passively capitulating to state directives without rigorous local evaluation.

The collective voice of our community on this critical issue is clear and resolute. We implore you to uphold your fundamental responsibility to the residents of Santa Barbara. Please deny this permit and actively seek genuinely appropriate alternative locations for development that align with sound urban planning principles and unequivocally prioritize the safety, well-being, and cherished character of our established neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

LYN PROCTOR
1627 Mira Vista Avenue
[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: denisecutbirth@aol.com <denisecutbirth@aol.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 4:43 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 1609 Grand

You don't often get email from denisecutbirth@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I am writing to strongly oppose moving forward with the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment project at 1609 Grand Avenue without a full and thorough CEQA review.

This project poses unacceptable risks to our community, and the City has a responsibility to hold the developer accountable.

I drive these streets daily. Grand and California are particularly narrow and difficult, proven by the number of rear view mirrors that are constantly knocked off of parked cars on these streets. It's always a hassle as drivers negotiate who is going to pull over or back up to let the other by. Adding to the traffic load from a massive apartment complex with a two-story parking garage would make an already dangerous situation worse. Honestly, I cannot imagine it. Without a full traffic impact analysis, this project should not move forward.

This is more than inconvenience, it is about life and death. These streets are in high-fire zones. Anyone who has lived through Santa Barbara's wildfires like I have knows these threats are not hypothetical. Approving this project without understanding its evacuation impacts is reckless. This is a thoroughfare for me and I fear for my and my family's safety. The City must not allow residents to be trapped in gridlock when the next wildfire strikes.

The excavation alone would choke our streets and disrupt daily life long before a single unit is built. These streets already prove difficult to drive. I cannot imagine taking my student to SBHS day after day in this mess. CEQA exists to require accountability for exactly these kinds of impacts, and the community deserves answers before construction begins.

And I cannot imagine what this is going to do to the aesthetics of this quaint neighborhood. A SIX-story building would tower over the neighborhood, block views, and forever alter the character of Santa Barbara's Lower Riviera. The City's identity is built on its natural beauty and architectural harmony. Allowing this project to proceed unchecked would set a dangerous precedent and damage what makes Santa Barbara unique.

This project is simply too large and too risky to ignore. The City must require a full CEQA review to protect residents, preserve safety, and maintain the integrity of our community. Anything less would be a betrayal of the people who live here.

I urge you to take action now, demand accountability from the applicant, and require a CEQA review of this project.

Please add me to the notification list for all updates.

Respectfully,
Denise Cutbirth
2522 Foothill Lane
805 451 7735

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: DaAnne Smith <daanne.smith@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 5:01 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue Project

You don't often get email from daanne.smith@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

The Bella Riviera Development is home to many residents who are essential workers: medical and support staff of Cottage Hospital. We all live adjacent to the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue.

The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street. A number of aspects about the project concern us, and we outline them here:

1. **Traffic.** Many in the community regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from our homes in order to get downtown or to the freeway using Milpas Avenue. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. We encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. Again, our community is home to many of our city's emergency responders. We are concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. We believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. We understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. Several homeowners in our unique community work the night shift at the hospital and this is another impact the City should require the developer to address.

Thank you for considering our concerns. We will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Sincerely,

The Bella Riviera Homeowners Association Board of Directors
DaAnne Smith, Secretary

From: Adams <adams@teamslack.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 5:14 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SAGESB.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: Grand Avenue Proposed Apartment Building

[You don't often get email from adams@teamslack.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

As a citizen of Santa Barbara I find many aspects of the proposed 6 story apartment building of concern. I am concerned about safety and traffic but what upsets me most is the aesthetic of such a tall building. Santa Barbara is well known throughout the world for its special small town beauty - thanks to Pearl Chase and others. Please don't allow an oversized building to ruin the town's aesthetics!

Sincerely,
Rebecca B Adams

Sent from my iPhone

From: DAVID IRWIN <dmi95@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 5:25 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue Proposal

Dear City of Santa Barbara,

I live 2 blocks below the proposed monstrosity at 1609 Grand Ave, at 410 E Arrellaga St, Santa Barbara CA, where I have resided since 1991. This is my wife's childhood home and her family has lived in this area for 5 generations, with one of her great great grandmothers building one of the first houses on Grand near the corner of Valerio Street.

The proposed building site has been vacant for as long as I can remember. Probably because it was originally the site of a graveyard (likely Chumash), which we know because we have pictures showing it there back when my Great Great Grandmother lived on Grand Ave. Just below it was the Saint Francis Hospital, which was only about 2 stories near it's upper entrance from Arrellaga St. THAT facility, had a fairly small population of Workers, plus the transient population of patients and their visitors. Since then, the hospital area has been replaced with a great deal of housing which has increase the traffic in this area, and on our street, significantly compared to when the hospital was there. And THAT is true even though the new housing units have THREE points of ingress and egress; from/to Salsipuedes Street, Arrellaga Street, and Micheltorena Street via California Street.

NOW, you are proposing to ADD MORE density in this same general area without doing a CEQA study or review to evaluate the impacts to the neighborhood. AND this high density building will only have one or two proposed points of ingress and egress.

From an aesthetic point of view, this project is both ridiculous and horrible. In a town that prides itself in it's visual beauty, and who's main source of income is the tourism that beauty creates, this projects will be an absolute eyesore and makes NO SENSE. WE do not want to see it sticking out like a sore thumb from our perspective, and I can't imagine ANYONE coming to this town and thinking behemoth of a building is completely out of place on the "riviera" of Santa Barbara. The scale of this project doesn't fit at this location, and you can't possibly make it look like it does.

Additionally, This massive, 8-story obilisk is going to completely (and unfairly) destroy the coveted view from so many houses located upslope of it, which was (a) likely the primary reason the people bought those houses, and (b) the reason those same people were willing to pay ridiculously high prices for those houses. And the minute tis project is approved, ALL of us will see a significant decrease in the values of our properties (typically our PRIMARY INVESTMENT!).

This project is also down-right dangerous! The roads (Grand, California Street, Upper Valerio) are far too narrow to support such a huge influx of traffic. With cars parked on both sides, they become basically one lane roads. One car must pull over to make way for the on coming traffic. And since so many of the houses along this street depend on the limited on-street parking, this problem won't change. This leads to another main concern which is safety: We live in a fire-prone area and have had to undergo emergency evacuations regularly over the past two decades. Something is is reportedly likely to get worse/not better in the future. As such, adding possibly over 100 cars to the mix even on a normal day will be a disaster! In an emergency, (a) the evacuation of just this building through Grand Ave and California Street will be difficult and too slow, and (b) adding these additional cars exiting at these two points will create a dangerous choke point to everyone else trying to escape from uphill locations, as there are only a finite number of escape routes for them as well. People may die because of this.

In summary, this proposed building makes no sense at all at this location: it would be a huge eyesore that would be seen all over town as you look at our beautiful riviera; it will be devastating to most of the views and land values for those who live here; it will add significant traffic congestion to an area that is already packed to the gills with limited traffic routes; and, it will be a danger to the occupants and the surrounding population in the event of a fire or other emergency requiring evacuation or emergency response. In short - This project does not work in this area.

I am against this project for the reasons stated above. And at a minimum, as an impacted, tax-paying resident of this town, I DEMAND THE CITY DO IT'S JOB AND REQUIRE A THOROUGH CEQA REVIEW of this project before letting it move ahead one more step in the approval process.

David M. Irwin
Resident

From: Mary Couch <marycouch1@me.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 5:36 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave Project

You don't often get email from marycouch1@me.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

Disappointing to see our precious town sell off portions to big developers.
This is not the reason why we moved to Santa Barbara twenty years ago, purchasing a beautiful one hundred year old house which is deemed a Structure of Merit on State Street.

A number of aspects about the 1609 Grand Avenue project are of great concern.

1. I walk my dogs to Rocky Nook Park everyday as part of our daily loop. Already, the traffic is dangerous at Alameda Padre Serra, Mission Ridge and East Los Olivos St. There IS no safe way to access the park for ANY pedestrian. During morning and evening rush hour, it is almost impossible to cross those two streets, safely.

How is this going to look with an added 100+ residents coming to and from their home on a daily basis?
How is this going to work when there is an actual emergency?

In the case of an emergency, I would imagine people would need to simply abandon their cars and run.

2. Water and utility concerns. Why do I have to keep converting my property and my garden and change my usage of water and power, which already sees significant change and sacrifice to accommodate MORE housing? Not affordable housing, but expensive housing for probable second home buyers. This seems irresponsible and unfair to me.

3. I can't even imagine the size and scope of this building and how it could ever enhance or fit in to the lower Riviera's aesthetics.

Whatever happened to the strict ruling, adhering to architectural details which define our city? With a keen eye, Pearl Chase worked very hard with so many others to develop this town in to what it is today.

Santa Barbara is a small town, yet sought by many. It's architecture, parks, trees and defining neighborhoods have been developed and nurtured for well over one hundred years. People from all over the world come to relish in her beauty.

Why ruin it??

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Mary Couch
3 W. Los Olivos St
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
(310) 850.9333

From: Matthew Kay <mattckay@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 5:53 PM PDT

To: City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>; info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>

Subject: Fwd: Letter of opposition to proposed development at 505 E Los Olivos (and 1609 Grand Ave)

Attachment(s): "Opposition to 505 Los Olivos.pdf"

You don't often get email from mattckay@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Apologies,

Corrected version attached. Please reference the letter attached to this email.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Matthew Kay** <mattckay@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Sep 30, 2025 at 5:39 PM

Subject: Letter of opposition to proposed development at 505 E Los Olivos (and 1609 Grand Ave)

To: <ADebusk@santabarbaraca.gov>, <Clerk@santabarbaracity.gov>, <info@sagesb.org>

Dear City Staff,

Attached, please find my letter of strenuous objection to the proposed development at 505 E Los Olivos (and 1609 Grand Ave).

Thank you for honoring code-abiding and productive citizens of Santa Barbara in opposing this project.

Gratefully,
Matt Kay

To: City of Santa Barbara
From: Matthew Kay, Santa Barbara Resident
Date: 30 September 2025
RE: Opposition to proposed developments at 505 E. Los Olivos Street and 1609 Grand Avenue

Dear City Santa Barbara Planning Department and appropriate officials

I am writing to voice, in the strongest possible terms, my **opposition to the development of an eight story and 250-unit structure at 505 E. Los Olivos Street**. (Note: This letter also applies to the proposed development at 1609 Grand Avenue, and for the same reasons). If you share my common-sense opposition to this proposed project, then I am writing to support you in representing our city as you oppose this project. Thank you – keep fighting.

The body of this letter is comprised of two sections:

- 1) Who I am, and why I oppose this project
- 2) Reasons I oppose this project: a) public safety, b) neighborhood function and compatibility, c) environmental impact, and, d) aesthetics and commitment to the citizens of Santa Barbara.

1) Who I am, and why I oppose this project

I am a life-long member and the Santa Barbara Community. I was born here in 1973 (Cottage Hospital; delivered by former SB City Councilman and OBGYN Dr. Dan Secord). I was raised here, and I was educated in local schools: SBHS class of 1991, PhD from UCSB in 2011. During my PhD, I worked collaboratively with local fishermen (commercial and sport) and resource managers from California Fish and Wildlife to advance sustainable management of fisheries in the Santa Barbara Channel. This led to a leading role in sustainable management supported by our community, and a community-based vision for management that I authored into the current fisheries management plan for CA spiny lobster. This work helps ensure a working harbor that provides locally-sourced sustainable seafood, good jobs for working families, and a charismatic waterfront to be cherished by locals and visitors.

My parents, as active and giving members of this community, instilled in me an ethic of community awareness and contribution. This is reflected in my PhD work, and also evident in my current career as a tenured Professor of Biology at SBCC. Much of our work at SBCC is directed to low-income and first-generation college students. All of our work provides an high-quality education for any student who walks through our doors. Most of our students are local to Santa Barbara. Additionally, my current teaching places me in contact with local agencies (e.g., City, County, and Federal fire services) and researchers as I teach botany-related courses and develop a collaborative course on fire ecology at SBCC. It also places me in contact with various community organizations where I provide pro-bono educational seminars and training for groups such as Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, Lotusland, SB Horticultural Society, and the Santa Ynez Valley Natural History Society.

Finally, I am a father, resident, and home owner in Mission Canyon. I have lost a residence here to wildfire (Tea Fire), been married and been widowed here, and maintain strong community partnerships and friendships here. I love Santa Barbara for its natural beauty, art and architecture, engaged community, and civic integrity. My daughter and I live less than 1 mile from the Mission and my daughter attends Roosevelt Elementary School in the shadow of this proposed project. As such, we are

intimately familiar with Santa Barbara, and more specifically the project area and its many negative consequences.

2) Reasons I oppose this project

There are many and lengthy reasons to oppose this project, but in the interest of sanity and brevity I attempt to summarize them here.

a) Public Safety.

The **proposed project threatens life and property in the inevitable event of wildfire**. I study and teach about wildfire, I lost a residence in the Tea Fire, and I have been evacuated from the wildland rural interface (WUI) in other fires (Thomas, Jesusita, Rey). These experiences, in addition to my experiences living in Mission Canyon and transiting through the project area on a daily basis, equip me to issue the following warning: **the proposed project will cause dangerous congestion in the inevitable event of wildfire. This congestion will impede emergency response, fire suppression, and egress, thereby increasing risk of loss of life and property.** For this reason, **this project is reckless and irresponsible**. A primary responsibility of government is public safety. This project, if approved, is a breach of that responsibility.

b) Neighborhood function and compatibility

Neighborhoods are more than spaces that people occupy. They are places that have character, and they are places that function in a way that is compatible with their surroundings. Neighborhoods have a carrying capacity that, if exceeded, fundamentally changes both the character and ability to function as a place where people live their lives in a way that honors the residents' investments of time, dreams, money, creativity, and hard work to build *community* in local spaces. **The scale of the current project is completely incompatible with the character and functionality of lower Mission Canyon.** It will cause daily congestion and a strain on services, and it will change the character of the neighborhood that reflects the investment of generations of Santa Barbara citizens and elected officials. It is an assault on the character of our neighborhood, and a vile offense to the history and future of Santa Barbara.

c) Environmental Impact

The current project will have large and **detrimental impacts to the environment**. It likely violates key provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). **A CEQA review must be demanded, at the very least.**

d) Aesthetics and commitment to the citizens of Santa Barbara

This project is completely out of character with the aesthetics of Santa Barbara and Mission Canyon, and thus is a betrayal to code-abiding and contributing residents of Santa Barbara. The City of Santa Barbara has a long history of onerous architectural review, and this has maintained the charm and character of our city. I have been on the losing end of this process when proposing modest renovations or additions to my small (780 square foot) home in Mission Canyon. The cost and time have been prohibitive, and so I continue to share a small home with my daughter. As a widowed father on a single income, I am certainly not wealthy. We are doing fine but hanging on as best we can, and the city has been no friend to supporting this working-class family in our quest to follow the rules (codes) and create a modest and responsible space to raise a family.

Given the above, the applicant's characterization of Mission Canyon residents as "wealthy" is ludicrous and clueless. Doing so reflects their ignorance of this community, and a myopic pursuit of their own self-interest. It is also hypocritical. The applicant is almost certainly vastly wealthy, and interested in this development in the name of money. The lives of most Santa Barbara residents involve some commitment and/or service to our community. My daughter attends Roosevelt with households led by nurses, firefighters, teachers, doctors, builders, mechanics, and other contributors who are woven into the fabric of our community. Meanwhile, these faceless developers are here for one reason: money. It is they, not us, who are the wealthy class here, and their interest is only in money. To get more, they impose a soulless and greedy project under the false pretense of "affordable housing" that undermines our safety and neighborhoods.

The notion that we, the people of Santa Barbara and residents of Mission Canyon who oppose this project, are motivated by selfish NIMBYism is mindless in many regards. The essence of NIMBYism is selfishness. But look! It is the developers of 505 E. Los Olivos who are selfish, because they do not honor community. Nor do they contribute to our community. They only pursue their own self-interest. **The accusation of NIMBYism is a tired rhetorical device used by developers whose hideous projects draw responsible opposition from local residents.** Of course we oppose projects that destroy our neighborhoods! We will continue to do so, and **we expect our elected officials and City Staff to uphold the constraints on development that are imposed upon the productive and contributing members of our community, and which preserve the charm and character of Santa Barbara.**

Please join me, and the vast majority of the Santa Barbara community, in resisting the project at 505 E Los Olivos Street (and also the project at 1609 Grand Avenue – for the same reasons). It is dangerous, reckless, selfish, destructive, aesthetically atrocious, and a betrayal of loyal Santa Barbara citizens who adhere to building codes and who contribute to our community. Opposition is not from the "wealthy" or "NIMBY" class. It is from the responsible and working class who make Santa Barbara home. We live, dream, work, raise families, create, and build lives and community here. The proposed projects at 505 E Los Olivos Street and 1609 Grand Avenue are not acceptable and must be opposed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "matt c kay", on a light blue background.

Matthew C Kay, PhD

Las Canoas Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
mattckay@gmail.com

*This letter emailed to: (clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov; 1609Grand@SantaBarbaraCA.gov; info@sagesb.org.)

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 6:46 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

[Microsoft](#)

Review These Messages

5 messages are being held for you to review as of**10/1/2025 1:22:18 AM (UTC)**.

Review them within **30 days of the received date** by going to the [Quarantine page](#) in the Security Center.

Prevented spam messages

Sender: elaine@birdrockca.com

Subject: Concerns re 1609 Grand Ave

Date: 9/30/2025 7:45:00 PM

Review Message

Release

Block Sender

Sender: its4junior@gmail.com

Subject: Opposition to the new proposed Grand development

Date: 9/30/2025 10:07:00 PM

Review Message

Release

Block Sender

Sender: gary@innertunespublishing.com

Subject: 1609-1615 Grand Avenue Project

Date: 9/30/2025 11:11:49 PM

Review Message

Release

Block Sender

Sender: erinbeck721@gmail.com

Subject: NO to 1609 Grand Avenue

Date: 10/1/2025 12:13:13 AM

Review Message

Release

Block Sender

Sender: ppagan2010@gmail.com

Subject: 1609 Grand Ave opposition

Date: 10/1/2025 12:45:42 AM

Review Message

Release

Block Sender

From: Bonnie R. <bonnie.ryan.805@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 6:56 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Proposed grand Avenue Project
Attachment(s): "Re - Proposed Grand Avenue Project.pdf"

You don't often get email from bonnie.ryan.805@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

September 29, 2025

To: City of Santa Barbara
Re: Proposed Grand Avenue Project

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT

Height: 6 stories

Density: 53 Proposed Units + Parking Garage

Traffic Impacts: 53 proposed units x two cars (supposing that there will be two individuals per unit each owning a car.)
A minimum of 106 cars entering and exiting the property per day.

Safety: The streets are narrow and congested. Look at a map of Grand Ave. and adjacent California Street. California St. resembles a street in San Francisco. Up up up..steep steep steep. All it lacks is a cable car!!!!

Public Safety/Firefighter Access: Look at the map. The existing streets are narrow. A large apartment building with hundreds of cars entering and exiting the garage will lead to accidents and provide little access for firefighters.

Aesthetics: A JOKE. Six story building looming over the horizon!!

Noise: 53 Proposed units. Large parking garage. Cars/Traffic!!!!

Tell the City Council How You Feel!!

Say No to Greedy Developers Looking to Make a Fast Buck

SANTA BARBARA IS NOT FOR SALE !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Yours Truly,
Bonnie Ryan

September 29, 2025

To: City of Santa Barbara

Re: Proposed Grand Avenue Project

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT

- 1. Height: 6 stories**
- 2. Density: 53 Proposed Units + Parking Garage**
- 3. Traffic Impacts: 53 proposed units x two cars (supposing that there will be two individuals per unit each owning a car.)
A minimum of 106 cars entering and exiting the property per day.**
- 4. Safety: The streets are narrow and congested. Look at a map of Grand Ave. and adjacent California Street. California St. resembles a street in San Francisco. Up up up..steep steep steep. All it lacks is a cable car!!!!**
- 5. Public Safety/Firefighter Access: Look at the map. The existing streets are narrow. A large apartment building with hundreds of cars entering and exiting the garage will lead to accidents and provide little access for firefighters.**
- 6. Aesthetics: A JOKE. Six story building looming over the horizon!!**
- 7. Noise: 53 Proposed units. Large parking garage. Cars/Traffic!!!!!!**

Tell the City Council How You Feel!!

Say No to Greedy Developers Looking to Make a Fast Buck

SANTA BARBARA IS NOT FOR SALE !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

From: Andrea Ellickson <bobcatpretzel53@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 8:44 PM PDT
To: City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 505 East Los Olivos and 1609-1615 Grand Ave. Proposed Projects

You don't often get email from bobcatpretzel53@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Mayor and Esteemed City Council Members,

We are writing to you not only as concerned citizens but as ones who treasure the extraordinary beauty and enduring traditions that make Santa Barbara a place unlike any other. We urge you to reconsider the proposed housing project at 505 East Los Olivos & 1609-1615 Grand Avenue, developments that threaten the very essence of our city's character and the values we have carefully preserved through generations.

Preserving Santa Barbara's Beauty and Tradition

Santa Barbara's charm is woven into every historic street, every elegant building, and every vista that opens to the sea and mountains. The proposed structure would loom over our beloved Mission and iconic Riviera neighborhoods, disrupting the harmonious architectural landscape that defines our community. Our city's aesthetic is not merely about appearance—it is an expression of our shared history and values. Allowing such towering projects would undermine a legacy cherished by residents and admired by visitors worldwide.

Protecting Uniqueness and Historic Preservation

Santa Barbara is celebrated for its uniqueness, a blend of Spanish Colonial heritage and coastal tranquility. The scale and design of the proposed developments are incompatible with the surrounding historic sites and neighborhoods. We must honor our responsibility as stewards of this city—not just for ourselves, but for future generations who deserve to experience Santa Barbara as we have. Sacrificing our distinctive character for short-term gains risks erasing what makes Santa Barbara special.

Addressing Safety and Infrastructure Concerns

A project of this magnitude poses genuine concerns for public safety and the integrity of our infrastructure. Increased traffic congestion, strains on emergency services, wildfire risk, evacuation congestion, and overburdened utilities would compromise the well-being of current residents. Our city's thoughtful planning must prioritize safety and livability for all—not just the interests of developers.

Safeguarding Our Tourist Economy

Tourism is the lifeblood of Santa Barbara's economy, sustaining countless local businesses and supporting jobs for our citizens. Visitors travel from around the world to experience a city that feels both timeless and welcoming. The addition of imposing buildings in a cherished neighborhood threaten our reputation as a haven for relaxation, beauty, and culture. We must ask: will tourists continue to come if we allow our cityscape to be altered so drastically?

Protecting the Interests of Voters and Local Businesses

The decisions you make affect every voter, every business owner, and every family who calls Santa Barbara home. Local businesses are deeply intertwined with the community's identity, and many stand to be directly impacted by changes to our city's fabric. The voices of residents and business owners must matter most in shaping our future. As elected representatives, your duty is to preserve that which makes Santa Barbara vibrant, prosperous, and unique.

We urge you to reject the proposed housing projects at 505 East Los Olivos & 1609-1615 Grand Avenue. Let us stand together in defending the beauty, tradition, and spirit of Santa Barbara. Let our city remain a place where history is honored, safety is paramount, visitors are enchanted, and local businesses flourish. Please protect our community for today and for generations to come.

Best,
Andrea Ellickson
1035 Miramonte Dr Apt 5
Santa Barbara, CA 93109

From: Larry Marks <skramml@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 9:31 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@SAGESB.org <info@SAGESB.org>
Subject: 1609 Grand Avenue

[You don't often get email from skramml@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

I am strongly opposed to the proposed development of a 6 story 53 unit apartment building at 1609 Grand Avenue, Santa Barbara, CA. In my opinion the proposed building is out of proportion with the surrounding homes in the area and also the architectural design of the apartment building is out of character with the neighboring properties.

Larry Marks

Sent from my iPad

From: Vinson Kelley <vinson.kelley@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 10:26 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Subject: 1609-1615 Builders Remedy Project

Dear Mayor and Santa Barbara City Council Members,

I have been a Santa Barbara resident since 1983. Worked here since 1976. By far, the most threatening local disasters have been those inflicted by wildfires.

Painted Cave Fire:

I live in Mission Canyon. One of my co-workers arrived unexpectedly because he was evacuated. The intensity of the wind and atmospheric blackness cannot be relayed to anyone who was not there. That fire incinerated my former ideas that sundowners could be contained within the city boundaries. If the wind had not died down at 9PM, the fire would have burned to the beach and destroyed Hope Ranch.

Jesusita Fire:

I was forced to evacuate for 1 week during the Jesusita Fire.

Tea Fire:

1 night

Thomas Fire:

Also evacuated for 1 week.

Main Point:

The current development in Mission Canyon and on the Riviera is already dangerous with densely packed residences. Anyone who has driven the roads on Mission Canyon and APS knows that traffic is intense during the 4-6PM rush hour and frequently backs up with lines of cars. If a fire of the intensity of the Painted Cave Fire were to hit the Mission Canyon/Riviera, the evacuation situation in such a short time (recall the speed of the Painted Cave Fire) would be right out of a horror movie. Adding yet more high density housing in this already critical area is like sitting petroleum storage tanks in our foothills.

We have neither the roads to egress nor sufficient access for fire crew during an evacuation (In particular, I believe the situation up Cheltenham Road is already a ticking time bomb).

Summary:

In the last 70 years, we have been remarkably fortunate in the relatively low numbers of deaths due to sundowners (although tragic, Painted Cave was a miracle with two deaths). Due to our changing climate, these fires are becoming more frequent, and concurrently, we are increasing our population density. I believe we could easily have a Painted Cave intensity fire that would kill hundreds of stranded motorists trying to evacuate the Mission Canyon/ Riviera locations. After such a tragedy, the public will ask why additional, very high-density structures were added to this already vulnerable area.

Sincerely,

Vinson Kelley
900 Cheltenham Rd CA 93105
Mobile: 805-448-9822
Email: vinson.kelley@ieee.org

From: Pete Feldman <feldman.pete@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 10:31 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Christine Feldman <christinefeldmansb@gmail.com>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave Project

You don't often get email from feldman.pete@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I own the house at 1730 Grand Avenue and have owned it since 1996. We had our first child at this house and he was born at St Francis Hospital when it was still there on Micheltorena Street. Our home is within a block of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue.

I have significant concerns about the proposed project at 1609 Grand Ave. including the following:

1. Traffic.

a. Grand Avenue is extremely narrow and even today there is really only room for one car at a time to go up and down the hill with the existing density of housing in the area. Add a 53-unit, six story building to the mix and you will create a significant traffic and safety problem not only on Grand Ave but on all the surrounding streets as well that are just as narrow if not more so as Grand Ave. (California St, Valerio, etc). The City should require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets and I am sure they will find that the infrastructure is not capable of accommodating the increased traffic burden of the proposed project.

2. Public Safety.

a. Grand Ave is already a pretty unsafe street to be on either in a car, a bicycle or walking. I have significant safety concerns for these reasons as well as the fact that I have lived through three fire driven evacuations since while living on the Riviera and with a 53-unit, six story building added to the mix, evacuation routes would be significantly compromised and lives will be put in danger in the event of a wildfire evacuation. The City must require an evaluation of this likely impact.

3. Size and Scope:

a. When St Francis was closed and demolished I thought that the land adjacent to Grand Ave was to be preserve as open space. Jamming a 53-unit, six story building into this historic neighborhood not only risks destroying the quality of life for current and existing homeowners and families but also erodes the quality of the overall area of Santa Barbara by replacing open space with high density buildings that do not conform to the historic nature of the area. Really, 53-unit, six story building next to 2 and 3 bedroom Craftsman homes, that's ridiculous.

4. Execution:

a. I hope this project never gets built but if it does, the noise and disruption that will occur during the construction of this 53-unit, six story building will be a huge imposition on existing residents. Trucks, excavation, drilling, hammering, etc will be continuous and disruptive. Grand Ave might be one of the more affordable spots in Santa Barbara today and young people trying to start a family or raise young children should not be subject to the negative impacts of this project including the noise, dirt and environmental hazards that will occur.

The proposed 53-unit, six story building dramatically change the look of the City. We love Santa Barbara and its beauty both natural and architectural and the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage what all of us love about our city including the City's reputation.

Please considering my concerns and the concerns of my neighbors and fellow Santa Barbara residents.

Regards,

Peter C. Feldman

From: Debra Teton <deteton@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 10:40 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Do not go forward with 1609 – 1615 GRAND AVENUE Project

You don't often get email from deteton@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I have two friends I visit who live the the site of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. **Traffic.** When I travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street to visit my friends, just as things are now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. My in-laws owned property in the area where the Paradise Fire tragedy occurred. While they were not effected, we were quite shaken to realize the loss of life that occurred in a community they knew. As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. **Aesthetics.** Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Thank you,
Debra & Andrew Teton
2916 Paseo Del Refugio
Santa Barbara CA 93105
45 year residents of Santa Barbara

From: margaret matson <melizmatson@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 10:54 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: info@sagesb.org <info@sagesb.org>; Patricia Lambert <patsl@cox.net>
Subject: Monster Proposal For 1609 Grand: CEQA REVIEW

You don't often get email from melizmatson@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Mine,

I can imagine that all letters you receive will address the many obvious objections and concerns regarding this proposed project. It would appear that it is obvious *to you as well* that this project is a land grab by an investor taking advantage of a most unfortunate dictate that wants us to skirt the norms of serious considerations for well planned placement and considerate design of new and necessary housing structures, and all with the intention of their money grab in the end. We can all agree that the proposed siting of this building in the intended surrounding neighborhood is terribly wrong, terribly out of scale, and imposing beyond comprehension.

It is exhausting to make a case for its exclusion, its objectionability is legion at every level.

Onward with the CEQA REVIEW.

Thank you,
Sincerely,
Margaret Matson
2653 Puesta Del Sol
Santa Barbara
93101

From: quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com <quarantine@messaging.microsoft.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 01, 2025 12:46 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: Microsoft 365 security: You have messages in quarantine

[Microsoft](#)

Review These Messages

1 messages are being held for you to review as of**10/1/2025 7:32:06 AM (UTC)**.

Review them within **30 days of the received date** by going to the [Quarantine page](#) in the Security Center.

Prevented spam messages

Sender: slordy1@gmail.com

Subject: Objection to the 53 unit multi unit project

Date: 10/1/2025 3:03:33 AM

[Review Message](#)

[Release](#)

[Block Sender](#)

From: Deb Horne <dhorne@thermal.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 01, 2025 10:34 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Ave

You don't often get email from dhorne@thermal.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within 3 miles of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. **Traffic.** I regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home in order to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. **Aesthetics.** Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Debra Horne

1172 Palomino Road Santa Barbara CA 93105

Sent from my iPhone

Debbie Horne, SPHR, SHRM-SCP

Vice President, Human Resources

From: cwillow1027@gmail.com <cwillow1027@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, October 01, 2025 4:47 PM PDT

To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>

Subject: 1609 Grand

[You don't often get email from cwillow1027@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

We apologize for sending this one day late. As seasonal residents of Santa Barbara we are deeply disappointed that a project of this scope can potentially be built in our beautiful, quiet neighborhood. The area around the Mission specifically the roadways from that corner to the Riviera Theatre and offices, are already a traffic nightmare that is subjected to many near misses for pedestrians, bikers and car travelers alike. The density of the area is already getting increasingly congested and is in risk of losing its charm and beauty. A project of this scope along with its sister project will negatively change this area for ever. We implore you to act on this with speed and efficiency and deny the permitting.

Nancy and Harvey Solway

Sent from my iPad

From: Barbara Ruh <ruhskis9713@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 02, 2025 11:24 AM PDT
To: City Clerk <Clerk@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand Street

You don't often get email from ruhskis9713@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I am a Santa Barbara resident who is opposing the proposed apartment complex at 1609 Grand Avenue. I have lived in Santa Barbara for decades, and have recently purchased a home in the Riviera neighborhood, and specifically in the area one block from 1609 Grand Avenue. I was here during the Thomas Fire and witnessed first hand the life threatening problem that over-developing 1609 Grand Avenue will cause, in addition to the daily problems it will cause. A very clear and concise explanation with examples can be seen on the linked video. The video includes: (1) An explanation of what happened during the Thomas Fire (2) An emergency evacuation traffic route study for the Riviera (3) An emergency response route study (4) Detail of the current problem that area experiences with on street parking (5) How the proposed development conflicts with Santa Barbara's General Plan and CEQA General Plan Conflicts (1) The Safety Element is one of the seven required elements of the General Plan. It states "By limiting development density in areas subject to geologic, fire, flooding and other safety hazards, the risk of loss of life, injury and property damage can be reduced. (2) Development projects located in the Extreme Foothill and Foothill High Fire Hazard Zones shall be evaluated to determine if the project would have the potential to substantially affect emergency evacuation. This development at its proposed size would absolutely interfere with evacuation capabilities, and add substantial additional evacuees to routes with already limited capacity. (3) The General Plan allows for preserving important public views and viewpoints. Grand Avenue and California Street are two of the most popular walking and driving routes in the Riviera. This proposed development would absolutely block the historic views. CEQA Conflicts (1) Wildfire Section: CEQA prevents project designs that will substantially impair emergency response and emergency evacuations. At the time the project was submitted, it was on the boundary of the Very High Fire Zone (CA Assembly Bill 38: Fire Hazard Severity Zones). The street parking for the complex will be in the Very High Fire Zone designation. CEQA's wording states that a project does not have to be in a Very High Fire Hazard zone, only that it is located in or near a VHFZ. (2) Transportation Section: CEQA prevents proposed project designs that will create a traffic hazard. The project's only driveway exits onto California Street, a narrow 2 lane street with parking on one side creating a single lane on one of the steepest and narrowest streets in the city. (3) Cumulative Effect: CEQA states that the project has to consider the cumulative effect with neighboring properties. The multi-unit residential building at 1621 Grand Avenue is currently vacant, yet is scheduled to be re-opened utilizing 20 units which will require street parking on that block of Grand Avenue. The cumulative effect would impede both emergency escape and emergency response routes. Just to be clear, it is not a situation that additional off-street parking would alleviate. It is the density of housing and the narrowness of the streets at that specific location that is the problem. I urge the city to restrict the development to the R-2 zoning it is designated with for good reason, to keep the neighborhood and Santa Barbara safe. For a clear and concise explanation of these concerns, please watch the video on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/pl-cRYUVZPk?si=fmid7GCFXvGGjZLP> The YouTube Channel is Riviera Residents, <https://www.youtube.com/@RivieraResidents> Riviera Residents can provide you with the video file if you would like to use it within a presentation or if you are unable to view the video on YouTube. Thank you,

--

Bobbie Ruh

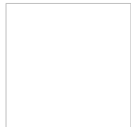
1643 La Vista del Oceano
Santa Barbara CA 93109
970 479-7333 home
303 8880209 Cell
bobbie@ruhskis.com

**. . . Defenseless under the night our world in stupor lies;
Yet, dotted everywhere, ironic points of light
Flash out wherever the Just exchange their messages:
May I, composed like them of Eros and of dust,
Beleaguered by the same negation and despair,
Show an affirming flame.**

W.H. Auden-September 1, 1939

From: Barbara Burkhardt <bburkhardt@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 02, 2025 4:27 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand public comment
Attachment(s): "SA2906_City25100216240.pdf"

For the record



Barbara Burkhardt

Project Planner

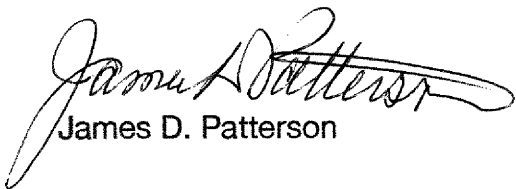
CITY OF SANTA BARBARA, Community Development
(805) 560-7587 | bburkhardt@SantaBarbaraCA.gov
SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

We have now completed 37 years living in this quiet, peaceful city and do not want it to change it's character. The need for more housing is truly legitimate but it can be done with out building massive structures that are out of character with the surrounding homes and buildings.

The proposed project at 1609 Grand Avenue is clearly not in character with this long time residential area. It is clearly an albatross that will impact the other residences in the area. Packing more people into the space available will create more traffic and noise and challenge public safety.

Please preserve this neighborhood and the culture that Santa Barbara has built over the generations of its history. Thank you for reading our concerns about this proposed project.



James D. Patterson



Judith Patterson

From: Barbara Burkhardt <bburkhardt@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 02, 2025 4:28 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand public comment.
Attachment(s): "SA2906_City25100216241.pdf"

For the record

Barbara Burkhardt
Project Planner
CITY OF SANTA BARBARA, Community Development
(805) 560-7587 | bburkhardt@SantaBarbaraCA.gov
SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Sept. 28, 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

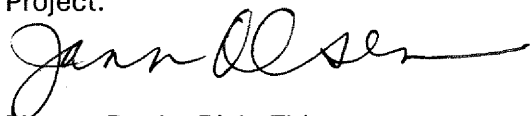
I live within walking distance of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street. A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. Traffic. I regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home in order to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.

2. Public Safety. Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. We have been subject to evacuation several times in the past, and as we

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

I am including an emotion, personal letter that I also had written when I learned of this Project.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jann Olsen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Please; Do the Right Thing.

From: Barbara Burkhardt <bburkhardt@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 02, 2025 4:28 PM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
Subject: 1609 Grand public comment..
Attachment(s): "SA2906_City25100216242.pdf"

For the record

Barbara Burkhardt
Project Planner
CITY OF SANTA BARBARA, Community Development
(805) 560-7587 | bburkhardt@SantaBarbaraCA.gov
SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Sept 23, 2025

To Whom it May Concern;

I'd like to voice my objections to this Housing plan for 1609 -1615 Grand Avenue.

My background in Sta Barbara; I have lived at 533 E. Micheltorena from 1972-1982 , when St Francis Hospital was next door to me.

I then moved to 1707 Grand Avenue (The 'Pagoda House') from 1982 – 2000 , after which I moved to 1759 Prospect, (Next to the Greene and Greene Craftsman), from 2000 – 2012 – Now living on 1905 APS at the corner of E. Pedregosa.

My point being, that I consider this area my long time neighborhood –

My 533 E Micheltorena home was next to St. Francis Hosp. was sold, to be torn Down for a Medical Building – actually I believe 4 houses were actually torn down below on the 500 Block of Micheltorena. Later, when the Hospital was torn down, I was surprised, and sad, but the Housing that went in was All low profile, and good looking, I thought it a nice project – it wasn't a High Rise, it looked like a NEIGHBORHOOD, and , the patch of land behind St. Francis, where the proposed bldg. is to go, had been a community Garden – a That last block of Grand Avenue, which runs into California Street, is a sweet spot, but NOT FOR A HIGH RISE. I could feature a single family home there. All the logistics are tight.

I ask you all to drive over there and really look at this Site. This is a quiet neighborhood with a LOT of cars on all streets, just about every house had turned a garage into an ADU, or have multiple cars attached to each house,

Have you driven up E. Valerio OR down Grand Avenue lately??? (or Up California Street?)

I simply can not feature that multi level building, going in on that small patch of land,

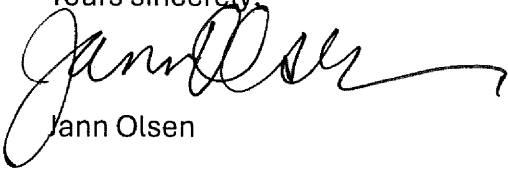
And the chaos to do the building there – where will all the construction people park? it's SUCH A BAD IDEA – I'm literally despondent and disappointed.

So, not only do I want to know exactly what the Emergency Exit plan could be with thousands of people on the Upper Riviera, needing to evacuate during a Fire (and I've lived thru (3) evacuations in my time on the East Side) And you know; Fire is to be expected in our area, and we know it.

I'm also just wondering about the role of WATER in the continued building in our City. We all know that water is such a commodity –, and to have this enormous project on that particular location – just seems ill advised. I feel a need to know much MORE about this

project – and I want to express my objections to it going forward. PLEASE consider the impact on this current Neighborhood.

Yours sincerely:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jann Olsen", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Jann Olsen

1905 Alameda Padre Serra

From: Tava Ostrenger <TOstrenger@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Sent: Monday, October 06, 2025 10:20 AM PDT
To: 1609Grand <1609Grand@santabarbaraca.gov>
CC: Barbara Burkhart <bburkhart@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Phillips, Eric S. <ephillips@bwslaw.com>
Subject: FW: More Constituent Letters re: Building Projects
Attachment(s): "Constituent Letters re Bldg Projects.pdf"

Note that these emails were received after the due date.

Tava Ostrenger
Assistant City Attorney
Santa Barbara City Attorney's Office
P.O. Box 1990
Santa Barbara, California 93102
Direct Tel.: (805) 564-5405
Fax: (805) 564-5426
Pronouns: She, Her, Hers

NOTE: THIS IS CONFIDENTIAL ATTORNEY WORK PRODUCT MATERIAL OF THE CITY ATTORNEY OF THE CITY OF SANTA BARBARA. IT IS NOT TO BE COPIED, FILED OR TRANSMITTED TO OTHERS. IF FOUND, PLEASE RETURN TO THE CITY OF SANTA BARBARA, CITY ATTORNEY. THERE IS NO INTENTION TO WAIVE ANY PRIVILEGE THAT APPLIES TO THIS COMMUNICATION.

From: Holly Perea <hperea@santabarbaraca.gov>
Sent: Monday, October 6, 2025 9:59 AM
To: Mayor & City Council <mayor&council2@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>; Tava Ostrenger <TOstrenger@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>
Subject: More Constituent Letters re: Building Projects

Good morning and happy Monday,

I've attached another batch of letters we received in the mail regarding building projects. The hard copies are at my desk.

Holly



Holly Perea
Assistant to Mayor & City Council
CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
(805) 564-5318 | hperea@santabarbaraca.gov
SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live ~~near~~ ^{near} of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for a site on the Lower Riviera, at 1609 Grand Avenue. The access to the proposed 2-story parking garage underlying the apartments is on California Street.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will outline them here:

1. **Traffic.** I regularly travel along Grand Avenue and on to California Street from my home in order to get downtown. As it is now, without the additional traffic, it is not possible for two opposing cars to use the streets at once. On both Grand and California, one car must pause to the side to allow an oncoming one to pass; this often sets up a situation where one car must back up in a travel lane in order to pull aside. I encourage the City to require the developer to assess the effects of the additional traffic burden on our old, steep, narrow streets.
2. **Public Safety.** Safety is a significant concern along with traffic. Grand Avenue and California Street are routes that residents of the adjacent high-fire and very-high-fire risk areas of Santa Barbara must take in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This concern is not hypothetical. (insert any personal experience with evacuation or other relevant statement). As we know from recent fire tragedies, we will have future emergencies, also. I am concerned that the project as proposed would create a dangerous bottleneck, trapping evacuees in their cars. Again, I believe the City must require an evaluation of this likely impact and any possible mitigations.
3. **Noise.** The site of the project is an established residential neighborhood. The project proposes 2-stories of underground parking. I understand that this would require more than 400 truckloads of dirt removal even before actual construction could begin. In addition to exacerbating the traffic situation, the trucks and construction will likely disrupt the ability of the neighbors to conduct their normal day-to-day activities because of the noise. This is another impact the City should require the developer to address.
4. **Aesthetics.** Although I do not know what the proposed design of the apartment building is, I do know that its size is incompatible with the look of the neighborhood, and certainly exceeds height standards developed in order to protect views of our natural setting. The proposed structure would loom over its neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. The City is known now for its beauty, and I

(over)

believe the City must require the developer to evaluate its proposal to ensure that its project does no damage to that aspect of the City's reputation.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements of the project. Please add me to any notice lists.

Thank you,

Rose Herrell

In addition, RE: 505 E. Los Olivos St. Notice that all four streets i.e. Mission Canyon Rd, Los Olivos St., Mountain Dr., & Alameda Padre Serra converge to a central point. Along w/ the Developer Smith's 8 story towers apt/condo Bldgs - think of fire evacuations of major/dire proportions.

these properties in question do not stand w/ Santa Barbara beauty & tranquility. Do not turn our coastal haven into a Los Angeles basin.

Again, thank you for your consideration,

Rose Herrell

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for the site on the Lower Riviera at 1609 Grand Ave.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will suggest a few.

1. **Traffic** I regularly travel from my home along Grand Ave. and on to California St. from my home in order to get downtown. At one of the recent (I have done 4) fire evacuations, the traffic from Grand Ave. was backed up across APS to Marymount school. The confusion and stress were overwhelming. Traffic burden on our old steep narrow streets has to be a consideration for this proposed project.

2. **Public Safety**: Grand Ave and California Streets are routes taken from adjacent high-fire and high-risk areas in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This is a REAL concern! The possibility of trapping evacuees in their cars and creating a dangerous bottleneck is a reality.

3. **Noise**: I can't image the noise factor on the neighborhood. The months of on-going noise and congestion will certainly impact the mental health and quality of life in the neighborhood.

4. **Aesthetics**. I know from the size of the building that it is Incompatible with the look of the neighborhood and the (6 stories) would loom over neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. I urge the City to require the developer to evaluate its proposal so that the project does no damage to the aspect of the City's reputation.

I am also enclosing a photo of a 6-story building for scale and reflection.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Diane Charlotte Gould
DCG

please do not destroy our
beautiful city!!!



21 September 2025

Dear City of Santa Barbara:

I live within ½ mile of the proposed 53-unit, 6-story apartment building proposed for the site on the Lower Riviera at 1609 Grand Ave.

A number of aspects about the project concern me greatly, and I will suggest a few.

1. **Traffic** I regularly travel from my home along Grand Ave. and on to California St. from my home in order to get downtown. At one of the recent (I have done 4) fire evacuations, the traffic from Grand Ave. was backed up across APS to Marymount school. The confusion and stress were overwhelming. Traffic burden on our old steep narrow streets has to be a consideration for this proposed project.

2. **Public Safety:** Grand Ave and California Streets are routes taken from adjacent high-fire and high-risk areas in the event of a wildfire evacuation. This is a REAL concern! The possibility of trapping evacuees in their cars and creating a dangerous bottleneck is a reality.

3. **Noise:** I can't image the noise factor on the neighborhood. The months of on-going noise and congestion will certainly impact the mental health and quality of life in the neighborhood.

4. **Aesthetics.** I know from the size of the building that it is Incompatible with the look of the neighborhood and the (6 stories) would loom over neighbors and dramatically change the look of the City. I urge the City to require the developer to evaluate its proposal so that the project does no damage to the aspect of the City's reputation.

I am also enclosing a photo of a 6-story building for scale and reflection.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I will continue to follow news and announcements about this project.

Laurie Robinson
Mission Ridge Road, 93103





ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

700 SOUTH FLOWER ST., SUITE 1000
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90017
TEL: 213-482-4200

September 30, 2025

VIA EMAIL TO:

1609Grand@SantaBarbaraCA.gov
BBurkhart@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Ms. Barbara Burkhart
Project Planner
City of Santa Barbara
Community Planning Division
630 Garden Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

**RE: Comments concerning the City's Govt Code §65589.5(h)(6)(D) notice and
CEQA review of proposed development at 1609-1615 Grand Avenue
(PLN2024-00181)**

Dear Ms. Burkhart:

We are writing on behalf of our client, Smart Action for Growth & Equity – Santa Barbara (“SAGE”), to provide comments on the development application submitted for 1609-1615 Grand Avenue (hereinafter the “Project”) and specifically pursuant to the City’s website notice entitled, “Housing Accountability Act Notice of Environmental Delay for 1609 Grand Ave.”¹ SAGE is a Santa Barbara community-based organization dedicated to promoting safe and equitable housing and development, supporting affordable and workforce housing, and taking action to safeguard a sustainable, resilient and equitable community.

SAGE asserts that the developer’s notice under Government Code Section 65589.5(h)(6)(D) was defective, and submits the following comments on the proposed scope of the Project’s environmental impact report (“EIR”) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Pub Res Code §21000, *et seq.*

¹ <https://santabarbaraca.gov/services/construction-land-development/development-activity/environmental-documents/housing>

I. The Applicant's August 1, 2025 Notice is Defective, and The City's CEQA Actions are Exempt from Being Deemed a "Disapproval" of the Project

The City must consider public comments concerning the applicant's notice under Govt Code §65589.5 (h)(6)(D). (Govt Code §65589.5(h)(6)(D)(iii) ["The local agency shall consider all objections, comments, evidence, and concerns about the project or the applicant's written notice." [emphasis added].) In an email on August 1, 2025 to the City from Ben Eilenberg, the applicant for the proposed development at 1609-1615 Grand Avenue (hereinafter "Applicant") stated:

As you are aware, this is a Builder's Remedy project. As per Government Code Section 65589.5(f)(6)(D)(iii): "[A]ll of the following apply to a housing development project that is a builder's remedy project...(D)(iii)Any project that complies with this paragraph shall be deemed consistent, compliant, and in conformity with an applicable plan, program, policy, ordinance, standard, requirement, redevelopment plan, and implementing instruments, or other similar provision for all purposes, and shall not be considered or treated as a nonconforming lot, use, or structure for any purpose."

Therefore, as there is no issue that exists, the CEQA analysis is now complete and there is no further CEQA action necessary.

Please confirm in writing by Wednesday, August 6, 2025 that you will come into compliance with Government Code Section 65589.5(f)(6)(D)(iii). If not, please consider this our notice that we are invoking Government Code Section 65589.5(h)(6)(D) as of today.

Government Code Section 65589.5(h)(6)(D) provides that a local agency's actions on a project may be deemed a "disapproval" if the local agency, "Fails to cease a course of conduct undertaken for an improper purpose, such as to harass or to cause unnecessary delay or needless increases in the cost of the proposed housing development project, that effectively disapproves the proposed housing development without taking final administrative action if all of the following conditions are met: (i) The project applicant provides written notice detailing the challenged conduct and why it constitutes disapproval to the local agency established under Section 65100."

The Applicant's notice did not detail the challenged conduct nor detail why the City's conduct (in asserting CEQA applies to the Project) constitutes disapproval, thus violating Government Code Section 65589.5(h)(6)(D)(i). The plain meaning of "detailing" in a notice would include facts and circumstances relevant to the underlying purpose of the notice, as the plain meaning of "detail" is to "describe item by item; give the full particulars of." (*See Jackpot*

Harvesting Co., Inc. v. Superior Court (2018) 26 Cal.App.5th 125, 142 [court looks to plain meaning of statute]; Oxford Languages, English Edition.) A bare or conclusory notice would undermine legislative intent to limit arbitrary and improper disapprovals. The requirement to “detail” the challenged conduct must at least require enough factual specificity to permit the City and public to understand the basis for the alleged “disapproval.” Here, the Applicant failed to identify let alone “detail” what conduct by the City was undertaken for an improper purpose.

Additionally, the City’s conduct was clearly not undertaken for an improper purpose, but to comply with CEQA and, through the environmental review process, identify, consider, and seek to avoid or mitigate the Project’s potentially significant adverse impacts, including impacts to the safety of prospective Project occupants and others that utilize the nearby and connected road network for both routine circulation and emergency ingress and egress.

The Applicant also fundamentally misapplied Government Code Section 65589.5(f)(6)(D)(iii), which is relevant to when a city attempts to require an applicant to apply for a general plan amendment. The City has expressly stated in the past that it will not do so. Govt Code Section 65589.5(f)(6)(D) provides:

- (D)(i) The project shall not be required to apply for, or receive approval of, a general plan amendment, specific plan amendment, rezoning, or other legislative approval.
- (ii) The project shall not be required to apply for, or receive, any approval or permit not generally required of a project of the same type and density proposed by the applicant.
- (iii) Any project that complies with this paragraph shall be deemed consistent, compliant, and in conformity with an applicable plan, program, policy, ordinance, standard, requirement, redevelopment plan and implementing instruments, or other similar provision for all purposes, and shall not be considered or treated as a nonconforming lot, use, or structure for any purpose.

The Applicant impliedly argued that (D)(iii) applies as a sort of blanket waiver of all general plan inconsistencies, including CEQA review of plan inconsistencies. However, subdivision (D)(iii) cannot be read to waive CEQA obligations. The Housing Accountability Act itself states that “nothing... shall be construed to relieve the local agency” of CEQA compliance (Govt. Code § 65589.5(e)). CEQA Guidelines § 15125(d) independently requires disclosure and analysis of any inconsistencies with applicable plans and policies. At most, subdivision (D)(iii) operates to prevent a project from being deemed “nonconforming” for local entitlement purposes. It does not amend CEQA or excuse the City from disclosing, analyzing, and mitigating environmental impacts arising from policy inconsistencies. Any contrary reading would conflict with CEQA’s mandatory requirements and the Legislature’s explicit retention of CEQA in §

65589.5(e). (*City of Ontario v. Superior Court* (1993) 12 Cal.App.4th 894, 902 [“We must assume that the Legislature knew how to create an exception if it wished to do so; nothing would have been simpler than to insert [language creating an exception].”].)

The applicant further ignores the timing and sequencing of the Legislature actions, contending in essence that the earlier AB 1893 changes preempt the subsequent AB 130 changes to the CEQA exemption. While AB 1893 contains “deemed consistent” language to allow Builders Remedy projects that conflict with applicable objective General Plan policies, zoning ordinance requirements and development standards, AB 130 and SB 131 were enacted later, and specifically required General Plan consistency as a condition of the revised Builders Remedy CEQA exemption.

Finally, the Applicant stated its notice is to “invoke” Government Code Section 65589.5(h)(6)(D). However, the City’s actions taken in furtherance of CEQA compliance is not subject to the (h)(6)(D) process. Government Code Section 65589.5(h)(6)(D)(vi) provides: “A local agency’s action in furtherance of complying with the California Environmental Quality Act (Division 13 (commencing with Section 21000 of the Public Resources Code), including, but not limited to, imposing mitigating measures, ***shall not constitute project disapproval under this subparagraph.***” (Emphasis added.) Therefore, there has been and cannot be a “disapproval” under (h)(6)(D) since the City is simply and properly subjecting the Project to CEQA’s environmental review process.

We assert that the applicant’s notice is defective, and does not legally invoke the (h)(6)(D) process because the City’s actions under CEQA are not subject to that process. As such, any process undertaken pursuant to (h)(6)(D) is inappropriate and legally defective.

Nevertheless, because the City issued a notice specifically pursuant to Government Code Section 65589.5(h)(6)(D), we submit the following comments regarding the Project and CEQA’s application to it. The Housing Accountability Act expressly provides that nothing in its provisions relieves a local agency from making the required CEQA findings or otherwise complying with CEQA. (Gov. Code § 65589.5(e).) No CEQA exemption applies here—including AB 130—and SB 131 offers no streamlining. Accordingly, the City’s notice should be treated as initiating a CEQA scoping process, and the public’s comment should be considered in identifying the topics to be addressed in the environmental review document. (See CEQA Guidelines, §15083.)

II. The Scope of the Project's EIR Must Include All Potentially Significant Environmental Impacts.

SB 131 allows for streamlined CEQA review of housing projects that narrowly miss qualifying for an exemption due to a “single [disqualifying] condition.” (Pub Res Code §21080.1(b)(1).) The City has identified one disqualifying condition (inconsistencies with the City's General Plan and zoning code). However, the Project is also disqualified from AB 130's exemption due to the Project site containing habitat for a protected species, the Crotch's bumblebee (*Bombus crotchii*). In order to qualify for the AB 130 exemption, a Project must comply with Government Code §65913.4(a)(6)(J), which requires that the development cannot be located on a site that is habitat “for protected species identified as candidate, sensitive, or species of special status...” (Pub. Res. Code §21080.66(a)(6).) The Crotch's bumblebee is listed as a candidate species under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (Chapter 1.5 (commencing with Section 2050) of Division 3 of the Fish and Game Code). There is substantial evidence that the Project site provides habitat for the Crotch bumblebee. (Exhibit A [Gonella Report].) Thus, neither AB 130 nor SB 131 apply to the Project. (Pub. Res. Code §21080.66(a)(6); Pub. Res. Code §21080.1(b)(4).)

Nevertheless, even assuming, *arguendo*, SB 131 applies, the scope of the Project's EIR must not be unnecessarily narrowed. Under SB 131, a “condition” is defined as “a physical or regulatory feature of the project or its setting or an effect upon the environment caused by the project.” (Pub Res Code §21080.1(b)(1).) Given this broad definition of “condition,” all potentially significant impacts flowing from a Project's failure to meet that condition must be fully addressed in an EIR.

A. The EIR Must Study, Analyze, Disclose And Mitigate Or Avoid The Project's Impact On Public Safety And The Safety Of Its Occupants Relating To Emergency Evacuation.

The Project is inconsistent with the General Plan Safety Element, S37, which requires a Project adhere to “Fire Hazard Reduction Design Requirements.” S37 states, “Project designs shall adequately address fire hazard, providing for appropriate site layout; building design and materials; fire detection and suppression equipment; landscaping and maintenance; road access and fire vehicle turnaround; road capacity for evacuation; and water supply.” Thus, the EIR must fully address all impacts related to fire hazards, including evacuation.

The CEQA threshold for determining impacts related to wildfire evacuation is located in Section XX of Appendix G of CEQA Guidelines, which asks whether a project would

“[s]ubstantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation,” and Section IX(g) of the [CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G] which directs lead agencies to determine whether a project will “expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires”.

Regrettably, California and many other parts of the world have experienced conditions where the flame front of fast-moving wildfires overtakes vehicles containing persons that are attempting to evacuate, exposing those people, and any others that instead shelter or remain in structures, to potential loss of life and injury. Mass casualty events from these conditions include the Oakland Hills fires of 1991, Camp/Paradise fire in 2018, the Alta Dena/Eaton and Pacific Palisades in January, 2025. Santa Barbara’s 1990 Paint Fire, 2008 Tea Fire,² 2009 Jesusita Fire, 2018 Thomas Fire, and 1964 Coyote Fire, each created conditions that directly threatened City residents and other residents in foothill communities. Persons seeking to evacuate fire-prone areas during each of these episodes experienced, at various times and locations, extreme traffic conditions, bottlenecks, queueing, and uncertainties regarding both road and fire conditions. Roads serve both as collectors and arterials during evacuation conditions. The Project site and location, adjacent to CalFire’s 2007 designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone³ and on a designated emergency evacuation roadway⁴, subject the Project and its occupants to substantial risks of loss, injury and death. Additionally, Project-related traffic creates risks during evacuations to others seeking to evacuate on roads adjacent to the Project and on roads impacted by Project-related traffic.

The California Attorney General—who has previously joined lawsuits that challenged development projects regarding their evacuation impact studies—released guidance in October 2022 for assessing and mitigating a project’s impact on wildfire ignition risk, emergency access, and evacuation for both new and existing developments.⁵ The guidance recommends more

² The Tea Fire burned 1,940 acres and destroyed 210 homes within a matter of hours. It was fueled by high winds, and warm weather giving citizens only moments to evacuate. The fire injured 25 people. Citizens evacuated from Alameda Padre Serra 0.4 miles away from 1609 Grand Avenue. The western evacuation boundary reached Mission Canyon which is only 1.1 miles away from Grand Avenue. Sources:

<https://www.independent.com/2008/11/20/brief-but-violent-life-tea-fire/>
<https://keyt.com/news/santa-barbara-s-county/2023/11/13/santa-barbara-county-reflects-on-15th-anniversary-of-2008-montecito-tea-fire/>
Google Maps.

³ City of Santa Barbara 2021 Community Wildfire Protection Plan (“CWPP”) Figures 2 and 14.

⁴ Id., Figure 9

⁵ State of California Office of the Attorney General, Rob Bonta, *Best Practices for Analyzing and Mitigating Wildfire Impacts of Development Projects Under the California Environmental Quality Act*, (hereinafter “Attorney General Guidance”).

analysis of projects located in wildfire-prone areas for EIRs compared to the general “good faith effort at full disclosure” standard outlined in Section 15151 of the CEQA Guidelines. The Attorney General advised local agencies to specifically analyze how a project affects evacuation capabilities: “Local jurisdictions should consider whether *any* increase in evacuation times for the local community would be a significant impact.”⁶

According to the Attorney General Guidance, evacuation modeling and analysis should evaluate: how the addition of new development affects the evacuation of project residents; the capacity of roads to accommodate evacuations while also allowing access for emergency responders; the timing for community evacuation during emergencies; alternative plans for evacuations depending upon the location and dynamics of the emergency; how new projects will impact existing evacuation plans and the existing population; and local traffic to quantify travel times under various likely scenarios. The City must analyze the Project’s potential impacts to each of these issue areas and disclose them in the EIR for the Project.

Given the Project’s proposed placement of a high-density residential complex on an already compromised evacuation route (by the City’s own determination), the Project poses significant impacts. The Project proposes to add 53 residential units on a narrow hillside road (Grand Avenue) that serves as an evacuation route, as identified by the City’s Community Wildfire Protection Plan (“CWPP”) and the County.⁷ The Project is inconsistent with CWPP Policy 7, which requires an “Increase in evacuation safety for residents and the general public in a High Fire Hazard Area.” The City must consider the Project’s increase in evacuation times for the community. Specifically, Grand Avenue, where the Project’s traffic will flow to and from, is located directly abutting the Very High fire hazard severity zone⁸ (as depicted below) and thus will be impacted by the Project’s increase in traffic and parking features.

⁶ *Id.* at p. 12. (emphasis added.)

⁷ The CWPP map for evacuation routes listed Santa Barbara County as its source.

⁸ <https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/ebc26205-512c-48d7-bca7-cfa0a18faa24>



The City’s Riviera neighborhoods are characterized by narrow, steep, twisty roadways. The ability to evacuate this area is constrained by these narrow, steep, and twisty roadways; compromised lines of sight; parked and oversize vehicles that narrow roadways and create pinch-points; and uphill traffic. Wildfire evacuation conditions typically entail extremely high temperatures, strong and erratic gusty winds, and dense smoke obscuring visibility. For an adequate CEQA analysis and assessment of Project risks, the City must commission a comprehensive evacuation study of the Project area and roadways both “upstream” and “downstream” of the Project.

The EIR must fully address the Project’s setting, and fully analyze the effect of the Project on the safety of residents in the nearby Very High fire hazard severity zone.

Evacuation for Santa Barbara⁹ would be severely impacted by this Project, if built, threatening the health and safety of area residents. Santa Barbara County Hazard Mitigation Plan¹⁰ acknowledged as such:

“...emergency access and evacuation can be constrained in hillside neighborhoods and rural communities where limited ingress and egress can slow and prevent the efficient movement of people and vehicles. This is particularly true in denser communities with larger populations served by narrow local roads *such as the Riviera* in the City of Santa

⁹ The City of Santa Barbara has 321 fire threat acres in Very high zone, 746 acres in the high wildfire threat zone (County HMP, at p. 6-34.)

¹⁰ AB 747 (Gov. Code §65302.15) provides that the City must update its Safety Element to identify evacuation routes and their capacity, safety and viability. The City has yet to comply with Gov. Code §65302.15. The City’s current CWPP relies on the County’s evacuation route mapping.

Barbara, the Goleta foothills, and areas of the Santa Ynez Valley and Orcutt. This vulnerability may be exacerbated in the future under changing housing laws in California that incentivize additional density within existing neighborhoods, including allowances for accessory dwelling units (ADUs), as well as urban lot splits and duplexes under Senate Bill 9, which increase the service population.

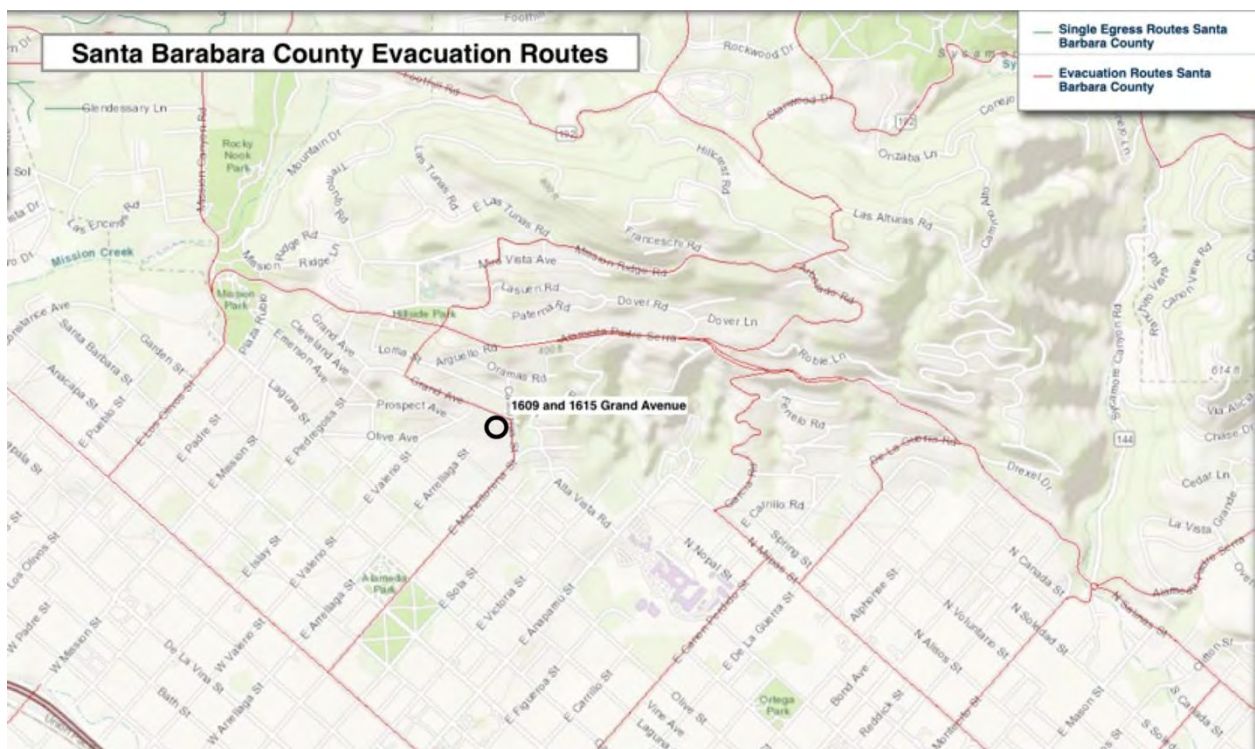
During an evacuation, additional residents would depend on the existing roadway network to flee and emergency responders would have additional residents to protect and serve. Further, in most cases, the same roads used for civilian evacuation to leave an area are also used by emergency responders to access the incident area.

(Santa Barbara County Hazard Mitigation Plan [“County HMP”] p. 6-41 [emphasis added][attached by reference as Exhibit 3].)

The Project site is located within the Lower Riviera Neighborhood (a neighborhood particularly susceptible to fire and called out above by the County Hazard Mitigation Plan), on the southern portion of Grand Avenue that is bordered by East Valerio Street to the west and California Street to the east. The Grand Ave Project sits alongside a designated evacuation route that serves as a primary egress route for portions of the Foothill Very High Fire Hazard Area. The Evacuation Route directs evacuating traffic down Moreno Road, across APS, to Grand Avenue, turns right onto California Street directly past the proposed Project driveway and then onto Micheltorena to get into the urban grid. The 1605 Grand Ave Project’s traffic is likely to

impact the intersections of Grand Avenue and Valerio Street, Grand Avenue and California Street, and California and Micheltorena. The following image depicts the area evacuation routes:

Other development (including past, pending and future residential development) within the High Fire Zones and the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones would depend upon the use of Grand Avenue, California Street and other area evacuation roads for emergency access to and evacuation from the Project. The EIR must assess cumulative impacts from past, present and future residential projects on evacuation capacity.



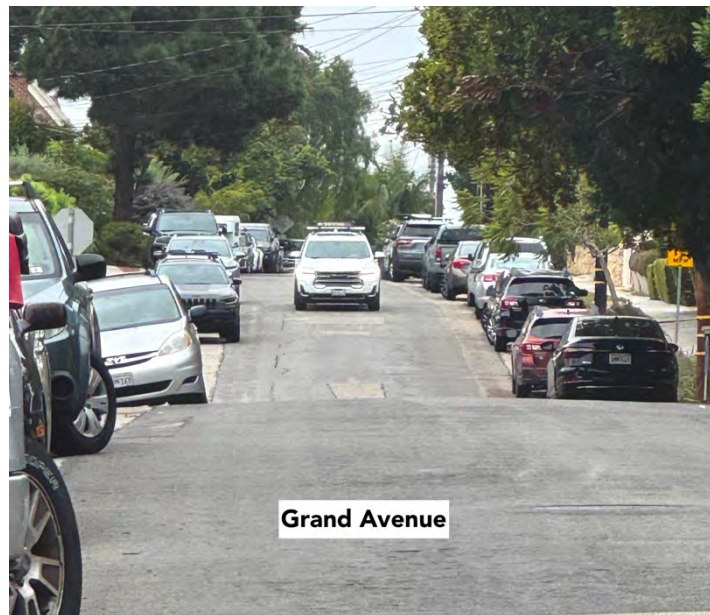
Source: SBC HMP; see also CWPP, Figure 9

In addition to the Project's individual and cumulative increase in vehicle traffic on California Street, the City's Project inconsistency analysis evidences other circulation hazards posed by the Project, including violation of objective requirements for parking spaces which will force residents to use Grand Avenue to park, further constraining Grand Avenue's evacuation capacity and emergency vehicle access. The Project's circulation hazards that could impact evacuation capacity and access include:

Lack of parking

The Project's proposed parking spaces do not meet the objective 98-space requirement and the site does not meet long term bike rack requirements. The Project thus conflicts with policies regarding the use of public transit, making infeasible the connection for residents without cars to access public transit. The Projects' violation of the space requirement also makes it less safe for residents and the community as residents and their visitors will be forced to park on the sides of Grand Avenue, which is an evacuation route.

The Project is inconsistent with the City's General Plan Circulation Element: Development, section C8, which is entitled "Emergency Routes" and states: "It shall be a high priority to keep all emergency evacuation, response and truck routes free of physical restrictions that may reduce evacuation/response times." The Project's lack of parking will physically restrict Grand Avenue due to residents needing to park there, and will reduce evacuation access/response times.



On-site turnaround of proposed parking stalls

The Project plans currently do not indicate whether a vehicle, including emergency response and large delivery vehicles, can complete an onsite turnaround. The proposed parking stalls require multiple maneuvers and cannot complete ingress/egress in one forward movement as required by SBMC 30.175.090 and the City's Access and Parking Design Standards. This threatens increase hazards, such as possible accidents, a lack of ability to evacuate during an emergency, and an inability for emergency vehicles to access the site. This would result in inadequate emergency access and a significant impact.

Tandem and parallel parking

Tandem parking is not reported to be assigned to the same residential unit and parallel parking spots do not allow for ingress/egress in one forward movement. Due to this, there would most likely be excess Project occupant reliance on street parking which would constrain and conflict with the evacuation route. The parallel parking spots which require multiple movements would result in a lack of traffic flow and a possible pile up. Emergency vehicles may be blocked by a person pulling their car in and out of a spot. Additionally, tandem stalls are simply not compatible with swift evacuation, and create a material risk that residents' escape vehicles may become trapped, which would result in a failed evacuation in emergency situations and potential injury and loss of life. Tandem parking creates potentially significant impacts in this project that must both be prepared to evacuate on short notice under Tea Fire conditions, and whose emergency egress is constrained by the location on a major designated emergency evacuation corridor.

Loading and unloading and driveway apron

The Project's loading zones may not be able to accommodate anticipated vehicles. This means that traffic will be backed up during an evacuation on Grand Avenue. Emergency vehicles could have trouble reaching residents. The proposed 17.43% driveway slope exceeds the maximum allowed slope of 16% specified in SBMC 30.175.030 and the City's Access and Parking Design Standards. The driveway apron is not proposed to be large enough, possibly making maneuvering more difficult for exiting vehicles and emergency services, and impeding the current traffic circulation of the area. An analysis of the lines of sight for all vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists is needed to determine whether the site may be safely evacuated.

The Applicant proposes to place low-income renters in harm's way by situating them on an evacuation route that will predictably clog and bottleneck in an emergency due to the addition of high-density residential projects. Moreover, the Project violates general plan requirements for

turning radius and residents' ability to ingress and egress from the property safely, further exacerbating an already fraught evacuation scenario.

Violation of State Fire Safety Codes

Article 2 of the State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations, Section 1273 pertains to the standards for "Ingress and Egress" roads and driveways. The intent of these standards is clearly stated: "Roads, and Driveways, whether public or private, unless exempted under 14 CCR §1270.03(d) shall provide for safe access for emergency wildfire equipment and civilian evacuation concurrently, and shall provide unobstructed traffic circulations during a wildfire emergency consistent with 14 CCR §§1273 through 1273.09."

For "roads," Section 12.73.01(a) of the Regulations require the following:

(a) All roads shall be constructed to provide a minimum of two ten (10) foot traffic lanes, not including shoulder and striping. These traffic lanes shall provide for two-way traffic flow to support emergency vehicle and civilian egress, unless other standards are provided in this article or additional requirements are mandated by Local Jurisdictions or local subdivision requirements. Vertical clearances shall conform to the requirements in California Vehicle Code section 35250.

Given the above violations of objective standards impacting circulation (apron, parking spaces, etc), the Project will create conditions that could potentially violate ingress and egress state fire safety codes. The Project's driveway ingress/egress is on California Street, which is so narrow that stopping or parking is disallowed on the Project side of the street. It is questionable whether California Street meets these standards even with parking only on one side of the street. If fire or emergency apparatus cannot adequately access the Project, it will likely be parked in the single lane of travel on either California Street or Grand Avenue, blocking all traffic flow. The City must address this violation as a potentially significant impact in the EIR.



Looking uphill



California Street, looking downhill, near Project's proposed driveway

In addition, the City has stated that, “The entire length of Grand Avenue has areas where its width is less than the required access routes that run along it,” and that “The entire length of Grand Avenue is considered existing non-conforming, in that street parking is allowed on both sides, which reduces its width to less than the required 20 feet, constraining the evacuation and emergency access routes that run along it.” Given Grand's proximity to the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, this could very well be a violation of Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 14§1273.01(a) which requires 20-foot-wide roadways.

The EIR must fully address the Project's impacts on community and resident safety regarding wildfire evacuation route demand and capacity.

B. The Project Poses Significant Individual and Cumulative Impacts Relating to Traffic and Circulation

The area hillside winding roads serving the Project are not designed to accommodate high-density residential projects. The Project is nine times the zoning-allowed density, which if approved would cause an increase in traffic that must be studied and mitigated or avoided. Moreover, the nearby Bella Riviera (at 601 E Micheltorena St) includes approximately 111 residential units. The cumulative traffic impacts of the Project plus Bella Riviera alone would be significant and must be addressed in an EIR.

The Project Meets The City Traffic Thresholds' Significance Criteria

The City of Santa Barbara's Master Environmental Assessment Guidelines for Transportation Analysis provide guidance for determining the potential transportation impacts of development. It states:

"Consistent with OPR guidance, project conditions that may be presumed to have less than significant CEQA transportation impacts include the following:

- Small projects
- Projects located within ½ mile of an Existing Major Transit Stop or ¼ mile of an Existing High-Quality Transit Corridor
- Neighborhood serving retail
- Affordable housing
- Accessory building or Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) (MEA Guidelines for Transportation Analysis, Attachment 4, p. 3)"

The Project does not meet any of the criteria for these assumptions of less-than-significant impacts. The Project is not neighborhood serving retail, nor is it an ADU. While affordable housing is a component of the Project, it does not meet the exemption requirements of 100% affordable housing and remains above the threshold of the definition of a 'small project' when the number of affordable units are discounted.

"Affordable Housing

Projects that consist of 100% affordable housing may be presumed to have a less than significant CEQA transportation impact. If a project contains affordable housing units, the affordable housing units can be removed from the VMT assessments for the purposes of determining project size under the small project screening. For example, if a 40-unit project includes 10 affordable housing units, then the project's potential for small project screening would be based on the remaining 30 (market rate) units. (MEA Attachment 4, p. 7)"

Trip Generation

The MEA defines a small project as one that generates 250 or fewer daily net vehicle trips (MEA Guidelines for Transportation Analysis, Attachment 4, p. 3). Table A-1 of the MEA Guidelines for Transportation Analysis provides a daily trip generation rate of 6.74 trips per dwelling unit for multifamily dwellings in the City of Santa Barbara. The Project's proposed 53 units, even discounted to 42 for the 11 affordable housing units, exceed the maximum threshold for a small-sized project. These 42 units are projected to add 283.08 daily trips to an already congested neighborhood with potentially substandard road widths and emergency egress.

APPENDIX A – TRIP GENERATION RATES

The following are average daily trip generation rates for several land use types. These rates are to be used as a preliminary guide to determine a project's potential trip generation, for screening purposes. In the case of mixed-use developments, discounts for internal trip capture may be applied.

Table A-1: Daily Trip Generation Rates

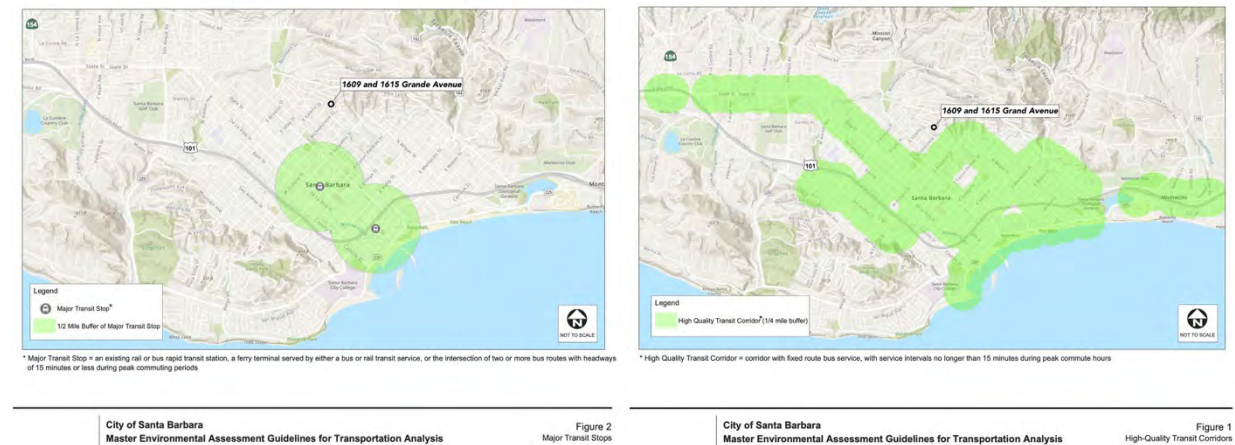
Land Use	Daily Trip Generation Rate	Maximum Threshold for Small-sized Project	Maximum Threshold for Medium-sized Project
Single-family Detached Housing	9.43 trips/du	26 units	106 units
Multifamily Housing	6.74 trips/du	37 units	148 units
Affordable Housing	4.81 trips/du	51 units	207 units
General Office	10.84 trips/tsf	23 tsf	92 tsf
Medical-Dental Office	36.00 trips/tsf	6 tsf	27 tsf
Retail (small plaza)	54.45 trips/tsf	4 tsf	18 tsf
Fast-food Restaurant (no drive-through)	450.49 trips/tsf	Does not qualify for small project exemption	2 tsf
High-Turnover (Sit-Down) Restaurant	107.20 trips/tsf	2 tsf	9 tsf
Supermarket	93.84 trips/tsf	2 tsf	10 tsf
Coffee/Donut Shop (no drive-through)	93.08 trips/tsf	2 tsf	10 tsf
Hotel	7.99 trips/room	31 rooms	125 rooms
Industrial	4.87 trips/tsf	51 tsf	205 tsf
Athletic Club	~45.00 trips/tsf*	~5 tsf	~22 tsf
Gas Station	172.01 trips/fueling station	1 fueling station	5 fueling stations
Drugstore/Pharmacy (no drive-through)	90.08 trips/tsf	2 tsf	11 tsf

du = dwelling unit; tsf = thousand square feet

* Daily trip rate estimated based on ITE peak hour rates, as no daily rates are provided for this land use category

The Project is not located within a half-mile of an existing major transit stop, nor is it within a quarter-mile of an existing high-quality transit corridor as identified in the 2023 MEA update. A

review of SBCAG's Regional Transportation website showed no changes to these locations since that date.



CEQA Analysis Required

MEA Guidelines for Transportation Analysis clearly state that should a project not meet these exemptions further study is required to comply with CEQA:

“A CEQA Transportation Analysis is required for any project undergoing review pursuant to CEQA, that is not otherwise exempt. A project may be presumed to have a less than significant impact on transportation if it meets one or more screening criteria. A project that does not meet screening criteria would require further study to determine potential significant impacts (MEA Attachment 4, p. 7)”

Potential traffic safety impacts of additional traffic on Grand Avenue and California Street can be identified through proper study, such as both streets are important corridors for both Roosevelt Elementary School located a half-mile to the west of the Project, and Santa Barbara High School located a third of a mile to the east. Children on e-bikes routinely use these narrow and congested routes for school transportation, and run serious risks of injury with additional vehicular traffic.

The EIR for the Project must address impacts related to the violation of traffic standards, including but not limited to the impact of the proposed 283 additional vehicle trips on city's circulation and the extent of a lack of evacuation capacity for Grand Avenue and other nearby evacuation routes.

C. The Project Would Block Protected Scenic Views and Degrade the Visual Character of the Site

As currently proposed, the project consists of a new 6-story, 53-unit, multi-family residential development, with a two-level partially subterranean parking garage. The Project is **over three times the height** allowed under City Charter Section 1506 and the SBMC, TABLE 30.20.030.A. The allowable height is 30 feet. The Project proposes a height of over 92 feet. The Project is nearly **9 times the density allowed**. The General Plan's maximum density for the project site is 12 units per acre. The Project proposes to build at a density of **106 units per acre**. The Project would also violate SBMC TABLE 30.20.020, which limits multi-unit housing to 2 units per building. The Project proposes 53 units in one building. Moreover, the Project is inconsistent with General Plan Conservation Element, Policy 3.0 requiring that "New development shall not obstruct scenic view corridors, including those of the ocean and lower elevations of the City viewed respectively from the shoreline and upper foothills, and of the upper foothills and mountains viewed respectively from the beach and lower elevations of the City". The Project is inconsistent with the Environmental Resources Element, Aesthetics and Visual Resources, ER29: requiring that "New development or redevelopment shall preserve or enhance important public views and viewpoints for public enjoyment, where such protection would not preclude reasonable development of a property."

Under CEQA Guidelines, a project would have significant impacts if it would have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista or substantially degrade the existing visual character or qualify of the site and its surroundings.

The Project if built would sit atop a hillside in the Rivera, where its size, bulk, and scale will block public scenic views of the ocean and lower elevations of the City. At three times the allowable height and nine times the allowable density, the Project will stick out as a monolithic eye sore in a neighborhood known for its natural slopes, trees, and harmony between open space and development. Views from other parts of the city towards the Riviera hillside will be interrupted by a 6-story hulk of a building jutting up from over the tree-line.

The City must fully address these aesthetic impacts in an EIR.

D. The Initial Study must include a full, multi-season survey for habitat for the Crotch's Bumblebee

As addressed above, the project site is likely habitat for the protected candidate species of the Crotch's bumblebee. Biologist Mike Gonella, PhD has performed research and site

observations of the site and determined that “[g]iven the nearby recent observations of Crotch's bumblebee (upper Mission Canyon, Sept 1, 2025; and less recently in Parma Park), and the semi-natural grassland dominant on site that houses many rodent burrows which are prime niches for Crotch's bumble bee nests, it is in my opinion likely that this area is/was or will be used by this species; likely enough that a full, multi-season survey is needed.” Dr. Gonella’s letter-report is attached as Exhibit 1. Thus, the City must require such a survey to determine the Project’s potential impacts to the bee and its habitat.¹¹

Passerine birds have been observed using tree canopy on site as habitat (M. Chytilo, pers. observation) and thus bird surveys are required to determine the significance of populations present.

E. The Project may impact Tribal Cultural Resources

Cultural Resources Are At Risk

Despite the Project’s assertion in its Letter Report that no cultural resources exist on site, appropriate documentation of this claim is lacking. No reports of previous site disturbance, development or grading were provided, nor references provided within existing archaeological reports on neighboring properties. Surface survey alone of this location is inadequate, and a Letter Report insufficient for this Project and an EIR is warranted to properly ascertain the extent and type of potential cultural heritage resources.

Site Investigation Requirements

The City of Santa Barbara’s Master Environmental Assessment Guidelines for Archaeological Resources details the level and types of reports required for any project. Determination of the level of review report is stated to be “dependent on the Archaeological Resources Area in which the project site is located, **and the extent of vertical and horizontal ground disturbance** [emphasis added] (p. 12). Also, “The City has determined that 2,000 square feet of proposed ground disturbance generally represents the division between small projects, and medium or large projects (MEA, Table 1, #4, p. 13). The Project at 1609-1615

¹¹ See California Department of Fish and Wildlife Survey Considerations for California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Candidate Bumble Bee Species.

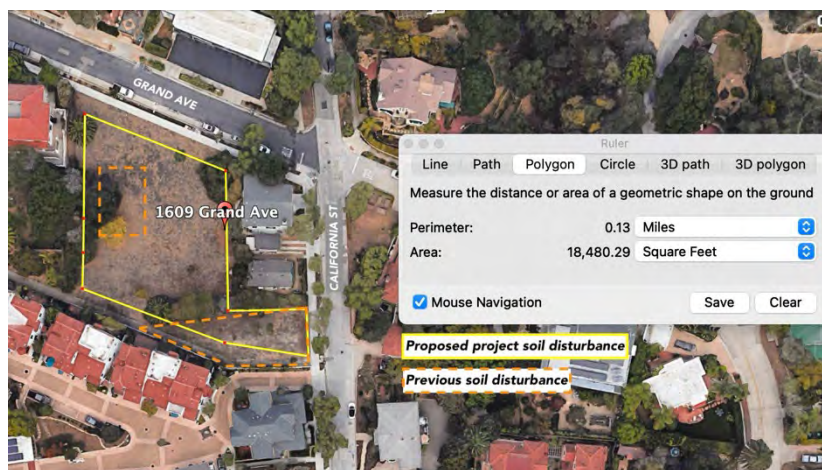
Grand Ave. proposes more than 18,000 square feet of surface disturbance and greater than 8,000 cubic feet of cut.

Previous Site Disturbance Does Not Exempt Project From Rigorous Review

Table 1 of the MEA Guidelines for Archaeological Resources allows for a Letter Report to suffice in place of a Phase 1 Archaeological Report in some circumstances:

“In some scenarios, a Letter Report may replace the requirement for a Phase 1 Report. Prior land modification, the amount of proposed disturbance, and the results of prior archaeological investigations should be considered in determining the appropriate report requirement... (MEA, Table 1, #3, p. 13)”

As seen below, the Project’s proposed graded soil disturbance is extensive, whereas the prior area of disturbance, identified through historic aerial photography, is significantly smaller.



A small house formerly occupied the northwestern portion of the Project and was present in a 1929 aerial photograph. As noted in Mr. Arredondo’s letter dated September 28, 2025, homes and structures of this time period were constructed with raised pier or perimeter foundations which preserve much of the soil strata and buried resources as opposed to modern concrete slab floors with extensive soil grading.

Inadequate Basis of Letter Report

The MEA Guidelines for Archaeological Resources waives the need for a Phase 1 Archaeological Study if:

- “• The proposed project’s parcel size is 5,000 square feet or smaller, and one or more Phase 1 Reports completed within 50 feet of the proposed project’s parcel yielded negative results; and/or
- The applicant obtains a letter from the CCoIC confirming that the previous Phase 1 Report on an adjacent property did not identify any archaeological resources. (p. 15)”

Neither of these conditions have been met.

The redevelopment of the neighboring former St. Francis Hospital into the Bella Riviera/St. Francis Workforce Housing Project predicated an EIR in 2006 and the creation of a Phase 1 Archaeological Report. As Mr. Arredondo pointed out, this report clearly identified areas of prehistoric significance even on lands with prior extensive disturbance, as project conditions stipulated the need for an archaeological monitor to be present for “all ground disturbing activities associated with the project...in the areas identified in the Phase 1 Archaeological Resources Report...dated 1992...” (Condition 6, City of Santa Barbara Planning Commission Resolution # 039-06).

A Letter Report, while brief in comparison to a Phase 1 Report, is still required to perform basic archival research to ascertain the likelihood of encountering archaeological resources:

“Letter Report. A letter report format may be appropriate for projects that are not expected to result in impacts to archaeological resources. A Letter Report includes background research consisting of archival research and literature review, fieldwork, and confirmation that archaeological resource impacts are anticipated to be less than significant...(MEA, Step 3., Determine the Archaeological Report Type and Requirements, p. 12)”

Mr. Arredondo noted the Letter Report did not identify or provide documentation to the extent of previous grading or soils modification as is required by the MEA, such as old grading plans, building plans, subdivision improvements, and the like. Further, no reference was made to any of the previous archaeological reports produced during the redevelopment of the adjacent St. Francis property.

Project is Inconsistent with the City of Santa Barbara General Plan’s Historic Resources Element

The City’s Historic Resources Element (2012) states:

Goal: Protection and Enhancement of Historic Resources

Continue to identify, designate, protect, preserve and enhance the City's historical architectural and archaeological resources. Ensure Santa Barbara's "sense of place" by preserving and protecting evidence of its historic past, which includes but is not limited to historic buildings, structures, and cultural landscapes such as sites, features, streetscapes, neighborhoods and landscapes.

Protection of Buildings, Structures, Sites and Features Policies

Policy and Implementation Strategies:

HR 1. Protect Historic and Archaeological Resources. Protect the heritage of the City by preserving, protecting, and enhancing historic resources and archaeological resources. Apply available governmental resources, devices, and approaches, such as the measures enumerated in the Land Use Element of this Plan to facilitate their preservation and protection.

Possible Implementation Actions to be Considered

HR 1.5 Protect archaeological resources from damage or destruction.

- b.** When making land use decisions, potential damage to archaeological resources shall be given consideration along with other planning, environmental, social, and economic considerations.

These parcels, largely undeveloped throughout the City's history, has the distinct probability that undisturbed cultural resources are located beneath the soil surface. The Project's construction of 53 apartment units with a subterranean parking structure will involve extensive land disturbance, both horizontally and vertically. Fragile archaeological resources cannot be replaced or reproduced, and as such, the goals, policies and actions noted above are best implemented through Project conditions and mitigation measures identified through an EIR.

F. The Project may impact Geology and Soils

The Project entails excavation of major volumes of soils from the steep site. The effect on the stability of surrounding structures and potential for landslides must be addressed. Guidelines App. G, § VII a-c.

G. The Project May Impact Hydrology and Water Quality

The Project introduces extensive impervious surfaces to a currently undeveloped site. The existing stormwater management facilities that gather and direct stormwater from the parcel to two small outfalls on California Street are undersized to manage site runoff, and it is unclear whether the downstream stormwater facilities are competent to manage the increased flows from the site in its proposed developed state. The Project may thus substantially increase the rate and amount of surface runoff in a manner that could result in flooding both onsite and off-site, and exceed the capacity of existing stormwater drainage systems. Guidelines App. G, § X c.

H. The Project May Impact Population and Housing

The Project will introduce substantial unplanned population growth to the Riviera. Guidelines App. G, § XIV a. The City's General Plan, infrastructure and facilities (including roads) were developed with an expectation of population growth in accordance with zoning standards. The massive increase in density on the site creates imbalances, incongruities and potentially significant impacts.

III. The Preliminary Application Was Defective and the Project Is Not Qualified as a Builders Remedy Project.

The Applicant submitted an incomplete Preliminary Application for the Project that lacked the required minimum elements of a Preliminary Application, and as such, the application is void and of no effect. Since the HCD has since approved the City Housing Element, a new Builders Remedy project Preliminary Application may no longer be filed.

Gov. Code § 65941.1 establishes the seventeen minimum, mandatory requirements for a complete Preliminary Application. Gov. Code § 65941.1(a)(13) requires the consent of the property owner if the applicant does not own the property. Gov. Code § 65941.1(a)(17) requires "the location" of any recorded public easement, such as easements for storm drains, water lines, and access.

The Project proposes to take access across lands they do not own for sewer and the sole vehicular access location. The Sale Trust 6/22/20 is the likely owner of record of the adjacent parcel, across whose lands the Project driveway is proposed. If access is proposed to be taken by easement, the applicant failed to timely provide the location of such easement as required by the

express terms of the statute. § 65941.1(a)(17). The applicant further failed to provide, as a required element of its preliminary application, the consent of the adjacent property owner, across whose lands vehicles will travel and under which sewage will be conveyed. § 65941.1(a)(13). The City's March 27, 2025 Consistency Review noted that the Project proposes to connect across other individuals' lands and connect to a private sewer system, rather than the sewer main directly, yet neither the easements nor the consent of the property owners was included in the preliminary application. See *id.*, Item # 22. Gov. Code § 65941.1(e) requires "all of the information required by subdivision (a)" while subdivision (a) only allows a preliminary application to be deemed submitted "upon providing all of the following information". The applicant's failure to provide all such information with their preliminary application renders such application incomplete and invalid. The adequacy of a preliminary application is entirely the applicant's prerogative and responsibility, no City determination of adequacy is involved, Gov. Code § 65941.1(e)(3), and subsequent application completeness determinations and City processing of the application cannot cure this defect.

IV. Conclusion

For the reasons stated above, SAGE requests the City reject the applicant's contentions that the City's orderly procedures intended to achieve compliance with CEQA are not a bad-faith delay tactic, and further, to commence a process to scope the Project's EIR broadly to fully disclose all potentially significant impacts including those relating to, *inter alia*, wildfire evacuation, transportation impacts, aesthetics, biological resources, tribal cultural resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, population and housing, and cumulative impacts in each of these categories.

Sincerely,



Marc Chytilo
Law Office of Marc Chytilo, APC



Emilee Moeller
Venskus & Associates, APC

Exhibits

1. Letter-Report, Dr. Mike Gonella, local field biologist, September 30, 2025
2. Comment Letter, Frank Arredondo, Ksen~Sku~Mu, MLD, September 30, 2025
3. Santa Barbara County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, February 2023, at <https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/ebc26205-512c-48d7-bca7-cfa0a18faa24>

Biological Assessment 1609-1615 Grand Avenue, Santa Barbara

Background

The proposed project site at 1609-1615 Grand Avenue entails a multi-family residential building housing 53 units and underground parking. This highly concentrated human habitation building would effectively eliminate the existing oak woodland and grassland that is likely an important habitat for the Crotch's bumble bee, listed as endangered by the State of California's Endangered Species Act (listed in 2022). Due to the nature of the sensitive oak woodland and grassland on site, and their importance to the Crotch's bumble bee, significant impacts to biological resources are likely and a full CEQA EIR is required that assesses the Project site for this species and others.

Habitat

This urban, empty lot is a mixture of native and non-native species, dominated by semi-natural grassland, oak woodland and ornamental plants. The property is significantly sloped, with a mostly south-southwestern aspect, receiving all day sun. There is a retaining wall $\frac{4}{5}$ of the way down the property, above which is a line of mostly ornamental and a few invasive plant species, some of which are the main flowering plants on site. The grassland areas are filled with rodent burrows, active and abandoned.

Survey Date

September 20, 2025

Species of Concern

- Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*) is native to California, being mainly observed in coastal areas of southern California. It is listed as a candidate species for listing under the California Endangered Species Act (2022) and according to the IUCN is declining and imperiled in its historic habitat.
- Coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) woodland/grassland ecotonal edge, is a relatively diverse edge on the perimeter of environmentally sensitive habitats (ESH) and important as forage habitat for Crotch's bumble bee. In addition, neighboring grasslands to oak woodlands are prime nesting habitats.

Potential Direct Negative Impacts to Crotch's Bumble Bee

Crotch's bumble bee is a candidate species for listing under the California Endangered Species Act (2022) and is likely to either be on site or utilize this site seasonally. The survey revealed high quality habitat for nesting, with over 75% of the site covered with an open sunny semi-natural grassland (*Avena* sp.-*Bromus* sp. alliance), 10% cover of weeping bottlebrush (*Melaleuca viminalis*), 5% cover of coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) and 5% of assorted non-native species (listed below).

- **Potential Negative Impacts to Nesting Habitat:** The proposed building site contains a semi-natural grassland housing numerous old rodent burrows and

cavities in loose, well-drained soils—these burrows serve as prime nesting habitat for Crotch’s bumble bees. Given the high quality habitat conditions for Crotch’s bumble bee on site and recent sightings on nearby Palomino Road (Sept 3, 2025 and April 11, 2025; and similar records from 1910) approximately 1.5 miles away, well within their known foraging flight abilities of 1.2-7 miles, there is solid potential that this site is utilized. To determine the extent of use of this site by the Crotch’s bumble bee, a multi-season study is required.

- Potential Negative Impacts to Foraging Habitat: The numerous flowering weeping bottlebrush plants, with their flower-dense inflorescences of nectar producing flowers are prime sources of forage for Crotch’s bumble bee. Removal of these during development may restrict the ability of this sensitive species to forage and reproduce within this region.

Potential Indirect Negative Impacts to Crotch’s Bumble Bee

Further reduction of open parcels of grasslands and habitat for the Crotch’s bumble bee, by development will no doubt accelerate their apparent decline, which goes directly against the mandate of the California Endangered Species Act, and would be considered “take” by modifying the habitat that could result in both population decline and the direct killing of individuals that are likely to occupy the site.

Potential Direct Negatives Impacts to Coast Live Oak Woodland

The understory plant community in oak woodlands observed on the proposed project site often includes native wildflowers and other shrubs that *Bombus crotchii* visits, including native and non-native forbs that frequently occur in or near oak woodland and grassland edges that provide prime floral foraging. Oak woodland protection (especially at the edges and in sunny openings) can benefit Crotch’s bumble bees by conserving floral resources and proximal habitat for nesting.

Native Plant Species Observed

Coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*)
Catalina Island Cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia* ssp. *lyonii*)
Doveweed (*Croton setiger*)

Non-Native Plant Species Observed

Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*)
Big leaf periwinkle (*Vinca major*)
California pepper (*Schinus molle*)
Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*)
Cheatgrass (*Bromus* spp.)
Cheeseweed (*Malva parviflora*)
Chinese elm (*Ulmus parviflora*)
Crassula sp. (*Crassula*)
Creeping fig (*Ficus pumila*)
English ivy (*Hedera helix*)
Lemon gum (*Corymbia citriodora*)

Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*)
Weeping bottlebrush (*Melaleuca viminalis*)
Wild lettuce (*Lactuca* sp.)
Wild oats (*Avena* sp.)
Wisteria (*Wisteria* sp.)
Wormwood (*Artemisia absinthium*)
Yellow bamboo (*Phyllostachys aurea*)

Animals Observed

Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*)
Common buckeye butterfly (*Junonia coenia*)
Honeybees (*Apis mellifera*)
Native bees (unidentified)
Skipper butterfly (*Hesperia comma*)
Western pygmy blue butterfly (*Brephidium exilis*)

References

Bumblebeewatch.org

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County of Santa Barbara Zoning Administrator's Staff Report, March 2018.

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Hatfield, R. et al. (2015). *Bombus crotchii* Species Profile. Xerces / IUCN Red List.

Santa Barbara County, Article II Coastal Zoning Ordinance, Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan, County of Santa Barbara Planning Commission, February 2018.

Supplement, Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan, County of Santa Barbara Planning and Development, May 2009.

Thorp, R.W., Horning, D.S., & Dunning, L.L. (1983). *Bumble Bees and Cuckoo Bumble Bees of California (Hymenoptera: Apidae)*. University of California Press.

Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation (2018). *Petition to list four bumble bee species as Endangered under the California Endangered Species Act*.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Gonella

Michael P. Gonella, Ph.D.
Biological Consulting
466 El Sueno Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93108
gonella@sbcc.edu
805-680-0496

Michael Gonella–Personal Qualifications

- B.S. Botany, U.C. Davis, 1985
- M.S. Environmental Studies, San Jose State University, 1992
- Ph.D. Botany, Miami University, Ohio, 2007
- Reviewed numerous EAs, EIRs, EISs as Public Lands Analyst, The Wilderness Society, 1990-91
- Implementation of Land Resource Management Plan & EIS mitigation plans, U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Big Bear Ranger District, 1992-96.
- Conducted botanical surveys in order to create numerous Environmental Assessments related to public use of Forest Service lands (Movie Sets, Off-Highway Vehicle Races, etc.), U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Big Bear Ranger District, 1992-1996.
- Conducted numerous botanical surveys and restoration plans for the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, Miami, Oklahoma, 2002-Present.
- Conduct impact analyses reports for the Law Office of Marc Chytilo, 2016-Present.



Ksen' SKu' Mu' Chumash

Ksen~Sku~Mu
Frank Arredondo ~Chumash MLD~Tribal Chair
Po Box 161
Santa Barbara Ca, 93102

September 28th 2025

Barbara Burkhardt
Project Planner
Julia Pujo, AICP
Project Planner, Environmental Analyst

RE: 1609 & 1615 Grade Ave.

Dear Barbara Burkhardt, please accept this comment letter in regards to the proposed project at 1609 & 1615 Grade Ave.

The initial Archaeological study is a flawed preliminary analysis that fails to meet the overall objectives, which can compromise the entire research project and the preliminary environmental review for this project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The CEQA process, an Initial Study (IS) is a preliminary analysis to determine the potential environmental impact of a project. A poor initial study fails to provide a good-faith, objective evaluation, which can trigger additional scrutiny and legal challenges. The specific signs of a poor CEQA initial study for this project include:

- Unsupported conclusions: The study checklist is filled out, but there is no substantial evidence or supporting data to justify its findings.
- Incomplete data: The initial data collection strategies are incomplete, leading to a major challenge with missing data later on.
- Provincialism: The study's scope is too narrow—for instance, a limited geographic area or sampling method—which restricts the ability to produce meaningful and transferable results.
- Lacks sufficient evidence- This study cannot be fully determined without further testing to determine true and full environmental impact, before it can be approved as proposed project.

A fair argument can be made that not enough has been done to determine if the proper Letter report has been submitted for this project qualifies as Letter Report Confirming No Archaeological Resources. The current field surface studies are inconclusive for potential buried cultural resources. The current development proposal will remove all surface soils for the proposed project and avoidance or preservation will not be an option if this goes forward. So therefore, all preliminary efforts should be taken to fully determine if there is a potential for buried cultural resources.



Ksen' SKu' Mu' Chumash ksen_sku_mu@yahoo.com / facebook.com/ChumashMLD
Exhibit 2 to Sage



We provide for you the sections of the previous MEA, prior to the newly updated version. The same MEA version the current project would have used for its Archaeological studies report.

MEA- Page 15 – Step 4- Prior Reports Map-

“Check the Archaeological Resources Reports Location Map to ascertain whether previous archaeological reports have been completed within the same project area)i.e. on the same site). If previous archaeological reports have been completed within the same project area and similar impacts were proposed and the report included and the report indicated no archaeological resources were likely to be impacted, the case planner, in consultation with the Environmental Analyst, may determine that a Phase I Archaeological Resources Report will not be necessary.”

The current Letter Report Confirming No Archeological Resources does not specifically identify any reference to **Archaeological Resources Reports**, Step 4 of the MEA. It does mention Archaeological Resources Sensitivity Map (1997), City of Santa Barbara Planning desk. Archeological resources report Location Map.

MEA, Page 18 - Prior Landform Modification.

“If the applicant believes that the proposal project site has had extensive landform modification, the applicant is responsible for submitting appropriate documentation (in the form of old grading plans, building plans, subdivision improvements plans, etc) of the landform disturbance for the case planner to review.”

“ If documentation of prior landform modification is lacking, then a Phase I Archaeological Resources Report or Letter Report Confirming No Archaeological Resources may be required. Proceed to step 6.

The Current Letter Report Confirming No Archeological Resources does not include any appropriate documentation in the form of old grading plans, building plans, subdivision improvements plan for any review. We contend that the majority of the parcel is undisturbed from any development based on Aerial photo graph history. The only structure located on the parcel North/Western corner was a single-family home from the mid-century where foundation construction would have used a pier block system that leaves the ground surface untouched to extensive grading. This in terns leaves the heighten potential of buried subsurface resources.

Based on this specific reasoning the proposed project current assessment cannot assure that the proposed development will not encounter archaeological resources without further investigations.





MEA- Page 17 –Step 4- Prior Reports Map.

“In some instances where no-previously prepared archaeological resources reports cover the same area of disturbance for the currently proposed project, but adjacent areas have been surveyed the requirement for a Phase I Archaeological Resources Report may be waived under certain conditions.”

“An archaeological resources report or reports were completed for the areas within 50 feet from any side of the proposed projects’s parcel property lines and yielded negative results.

According to the 2006 FEIR Conditions of approval, a reference to a survey was conducted by Larry Wilcoxon and used as support for Archaeological Monitoring for the demolition of the St. Francis Hospital. The parcel that is located directly adjacent south of this proposed project property.

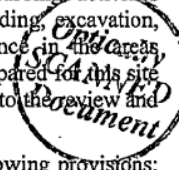
City of Santa Barbara Planning Commission Resolution # 039-06 required that;

“The all-ground disturbances activities associated with the project, including, but not limited to, grading, excavation, trenching vegetations or paving removal and ground clearances in the areas identified in the Phase I Archaeological Resources Report for the site by Larry Wilcoxon, dated 1992.”

This indicates that there was an initial reason for having specific locations monitored for that project. Not to mention “specific areas” requiring monitoring. The St. Francis Hospital was a developed parcel and would have various areas of disturbance, yet even with that, Larry Wilcoxon saw reason for Archaeological Monitoring to take place.

6. **Archaeological Monitoring Contract.** Submit to the Planning Division a contract with an archaeologist from the most current City Qualified Archaeologists List for monitoring during all ground disturbing activities associated with the project, including, but not limited to, grading, excavation, trenching vegetation or paving removal and ground clearance in the areas identified in the Phase I Archaeological Resources Report prepared for this site by Larry Wilcoxon, dated 1992. The contract shall be subject to the review and approval of the Planning Division.

The archaeologist’s monitoring contract shall include the following provisions: If cultural resources are encountered or suspected, work shall be halted or redirected by the archaeologist immediately and the Planning Division shall be notified. The archaeologist shall assess the nature, extent and significance of





Ksen' SKu' Mu' Chumash

In addition, the projects conditions included that an Archaeological Monitoring report be submitted to the Planning Commission within 180 days of completion of the Monitoring. This information is missing from the current Letter Report Confirming No Archeological Resources does not include any of this information.

8. **Archaeological Monitoring Report.** A final report on the results of the archaeological monitoring shall be submitted to the Planning Division within 180 days of completion of the monitoring or prior to the issuance of the Final Inspection, whichever is earlier. (CUL-1f)

This indicates that there are at least two archaeological reports that should be referenced in all future development projects for this location. The Phase I Archaeological Report by Larry Wilcoxon 1992 and the final monitoring report that would have been prepared by Larry Carbone.

(We know from firsthand knowledge that Larry was the archaeologist for the St. Francis Hospital demolition project because we had been working with Larry at the same time on the Goleta Slough restoration project for the Trust of Santa Barbara. In addition, Native Monitor Michael Lopez was also working on the project).

We feel that to provide an adequate assessment of the potential of archaeological resources for this project location further identification practices need to be carried out. They include a review and assessment of past archaeological reports, The Phase I Archaeological Report by Larry Wilcoxon 1992 and the final Monitoring report by Larry Carbone. After such, the use of subsurface techniques for all spaces areas of the project parcel for the determination of sensitive buried resources, and or presence or absence of buried resources to a discovery depth that exceeds to a stratigraphy level that predates potential prehistoric occupation. In this way adequate mitigation measure can be constructed to the specifics of any find.

I thank you in advance for your time.

Best wishes, Frank Arredondo
Ksen~Sku~Mu - Chumash
Chumash MLD- Tribal Chair
Po Box 161
Santa Barbara, Ca 93102

Email Ksen_Sku_Mu@yahoo.com



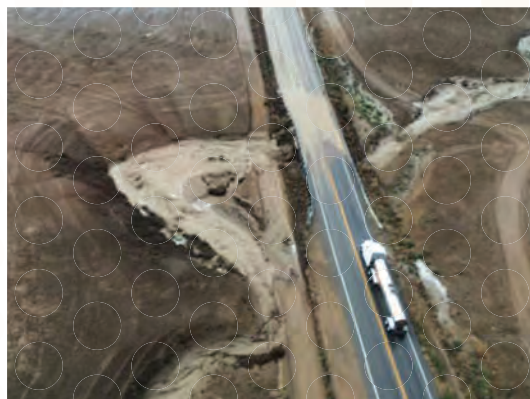
Ksen' SKu' Mu' Chumash ksen_sku_mu@yahoo.com / facebook.com/ChumashMLD
Exhibit 2 to Sage



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN (MJHMP)

County of Santa Barbara, City of Buellton, City of Carpinteria, City of Goleta, City of Guadalupe, City of Lompoc, City of Santa Barbara, City of Santa Maria, City of Solvang, Cachuma Operations and Maintenance Board, Carpinteria Valley Water District, Montecito Fire Protection District, Montecito Water District, Santa Maria Valley Water Conservation District, Goleta Water District

February 2023



Prepared by:
**County of Santa Barbara Office of
Emergency Management (OEM)**
4408 Cathedral Oaks Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

wood.

With Assistance from:
**Wood Environment &
Infrastructure Solutions, Inc.**
104 West Anapamu Street, Suite 204A
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Exhibit 3 Excerpts - Sage

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN (MJHMP)

County of Santa Barbara, City of Buellton, City of Carpinteria, City of Goleta,
City of Guadalupe, City of Lompoc, City of Santa Barbara, City of Santa Maria, City of Solvang,
Cachuma Operations Maintenance Board, Carpinteria Valley Water District,
Montecito Fire Protection District, Montecito Water District,
Santa Maria Valley Water Conservation District, Goleta Water District

Submitted to CalOES and FEMA by:



County of Santa Barbara Office of Emergency Management (OEM)
4408 Cathedral Oaks Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

Prepared with assistance from:

wood.
Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions, Inc.
104 West Anapamu Street, Suite 204A
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

February 2023

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN (MJHMP)

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Sections 5.3 through 5.6 contain detailed hazard profiles for the identified hazards. This plan does not omit any natural hazards that are commonly recognized to affect Santa Barbara County. Each hazard profiled includes the following subsections:

- **Description of Hazard** – This section gives a description of the hazard and associated issues followed by details on the hazards specific to Santa Barbara County.
- **Location and Extent of Hazard in Santa Barbara County** – This section gives a spatial description of the potential location or areas of Santa Barbara County that the hazard is expected to impact. This section also describes the potential strength or magnitude of the hazard as it pertains to Santa Barbara County.
- **History of Hazard in Santa Barbara County** – This section contains information on historical incidents, including impacts where known. The Plan Update Guide worksheets provided by the MAC and LPT were used to capture the latest information from participating jurisdictions on past occurrences of hazards.
- **Probability of Occurrence** – The frequency of past events is used in this section to gauge the likelihood of future occurrences. Where possible, the frequency was calculated based on existing data. It was determined by dividing the number of events observed by the number of years on record and multiplying by 100. This gives the percent chance of an event happening in any given year (e.g., three droughts over 30 years equates to a 10 percent chance of a drought in any given year). The likelihood of future occurrences is categorized into one of the following classifications:
 - **Highly Likely** – Near 100 percent chance of occurrence in next year or happens every year.
 - **Likely** – Between 10 and 100 percent chance of occurrence in the next year or has a recurrence interval of 10 years or less.
 - **Occasional** – Between 1 and 10 percent chance of occurrence in the next year or has a recurrence interval of 11 to 100 years.
 - **Unlikely** – Less than 1 percent chance of occurrence in the next 100 years or has a recurrence interval of greater than every 100 years.
- **Climate Change Considerations** – This section describes the potential for climate change to affect the frequency, intensity, and location of the hazard in the future.

5.3 NATURAL AND DESTRUCTIVE HAZARDS

5.3.1 Wildfire

Description of Hazard

A **wildfire** is an unplanned fire that is fueled by natural areas or wildlands, such as the Los Padres National Forest, larger state parks, such as Gaviota State Park, or undeveloped rangeland, particularly in the Santa Ynez Mountains or San Rafael Mountains. Of critical concern is the wildland-urban interface (WUI), where wildfire can burn buildings and infrastructure. According to the National Fire Plan issued by the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Interior, the WUI is defined

as “...the line, area, or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels.” In WUI fires, the fire is fueled primarily by naturally occurring vegetation in the wildland and urban areas as well as the urban structural elements themselves. Wildfire directly threatens structures, vegetation, and life when ignition occurs in a WUI and also indirectly threatens human health from smoke and particulates, even when wildland fires are not a direct threat to a community.

In the county, this area of transition exists between open undeveloped public and private lands that support flammable vegetation and the county’s cities and unincorporated urban communities and small towns that support potentially vulnerable homes and businesses. WUIs vary in character throughout Santa Barbara County. WUI areas in the county include developed single-family neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the foothills of the Santa Ynez Mountains in the communities of Santa Barbara and Goleta and the Solomon Hills in Orcutt. Additional examples of WUIs include larger estate homes within the wildland areas in Montecito, Toro Canyon, and Carpinteria or ranchettes and larger ranches along the Santa Ynez Valley’s WUIs. A wildfire in the WUI could burn from wildlands into the urban area, which has happened during several prior fires in Santa Barbara County.

The majority of wildfires are caused by humans or lightning; however, once burning, wildfire behavior is based on three primary factors: fuel, topography, and weather. Fuel will affect the potential size and behavior of a wildfire depending on the amount present, its burning qualities (e.g., level of moisture), and its horizontal and vertical continuity. Topography affects the movement of air, and thus the fire, over the ground surface. The terrain can also change the speed at which the fire travels, and the ability of firefighters to reach and extinguish the fire.

The county’s mountainous terrain and limited road access to these areas can sometimes prevent easy access by firefighting equipment. Weather as manifested in temperature, humidity, and wind (both short- and long-term) affects the probability, severity, and duration of wildfires. High winds, in particular, can cause a wildfire to rapidly advance through already dry vegetation posing a major challenge to fire fighting and may even at times limit the safe use of aircraft, which can greatly reduce firefighting capacity. Certain conditions are typically present for a wildfire hazard to occur: a large source of fuel must be present, the weather must be conducive (i.e., generally hot, dry, and windy), and fire suppression sources may be unavailable or insufficient to easily suppress and control the fire, although in some instances of high winds (e.g., sundowner winds) and dry fuels such suppression may not be able to provide full protection.

Table 5-3 provides a summary of fire loss in dollars in Santa Barbara County in 2020. State fire suppression expenditures are expected to increase from \$691 million in the 2019-2020 fiscal year to an estimated \$1.3 billion for the 2020-2021 fiscal year (CAL FIRE 2021). Michele Steinberg, director of the Wildfire Division at NFPA, notes that “money spent on suppression means less money for prevention efforts, which is key to addressing the problem of wildfire losses,” (Roman et al. 2020). The popular weather forecasting service AccuWeather has predicted that costs for the 2020 wildfire season could total between \$130 and \$150 billion (Roman et al. 2020). Less understood are wildfire’s indirect costs associated with environmental cleanup, lost business and tax revenue, and property and infrastructure repairs

Table 5-3. Fire Loss (in Dollars) Within the County of Santa Barbara in 2020

Property Type	Loss in Dollars to Fire
Property or Structure	\$1,552,900
Vehicles and Vehicle Contents	\$199,600
Miscellaneous Property	\$110,867
Total Dollar Loss	\$1,863,367

Source: Santa Barbara County Fire Department 2021.

Note: The year 2020 is the only year for which this information is available although it should be noted that 2020 was a relatively calm fire year, and these losses are insignificant compared to fire losses from the Tea, Jesusita, and Paint fires.

Location and Extent of Hazard in Santa Barbara County

Wildfires are a regular occurrence in the state and county. The Mediterranean-type climate, topography, and vegetation of Santa Barbara County make the county especially prone and conducive to wildfires. Since 2012, Santa Barbara County has experienced drought and dry periods with only limited wet years. In addition to the 2012 through 2017 statewide drought emergency, the county is currently identified in the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) as an area in D3 – Extreme Drought condition (see Section 5.3.2, *Drought & Water Shortage*; NOAA 2021a). This drought condition dries out vegetation and exacerbates wildfire risk in the county.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) provides high-quality spatial data, maps, and online data viewers which provide critical information on the health and risk factors associated with forest and range lands within the State of California. These maps include but are not limited to Fire Hazard Severity Zones, Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI), Communities At Risk, Fire Threat, and Fire Perimeters. Fire Hazard Severity Zones are areas of significant fire hazards based on fuels (vegetation), terrain, weather, and other relevant factors. These zones define the application of various mitigation strategies to reduce the risk associated with wildland fires. The most current Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps were created in 2007. Figure 5-1 shows the Fire Hazard Severity Zones located in Santa Barbara County. CAL FIRE's FRAP also developed data that displays the relative risk from wildfire in areas of significant population density, known as the WUI. This data is created by intersecting residential housing unit density with proximate fire threat to give a relative measure of potential loss of structures and threats to public safety from wildfire. Figure 5-2 was generated using this data and shows the WUI areas in Santa Barbara County. This figure depicts areas where potential fuels treatments (e.g., controlled burns, vegetation thinning) should be prioritized to reduce wildland fire threats to population centers.

Figure 5-1. Santa Barbara County Fire Hazard Severity Zones

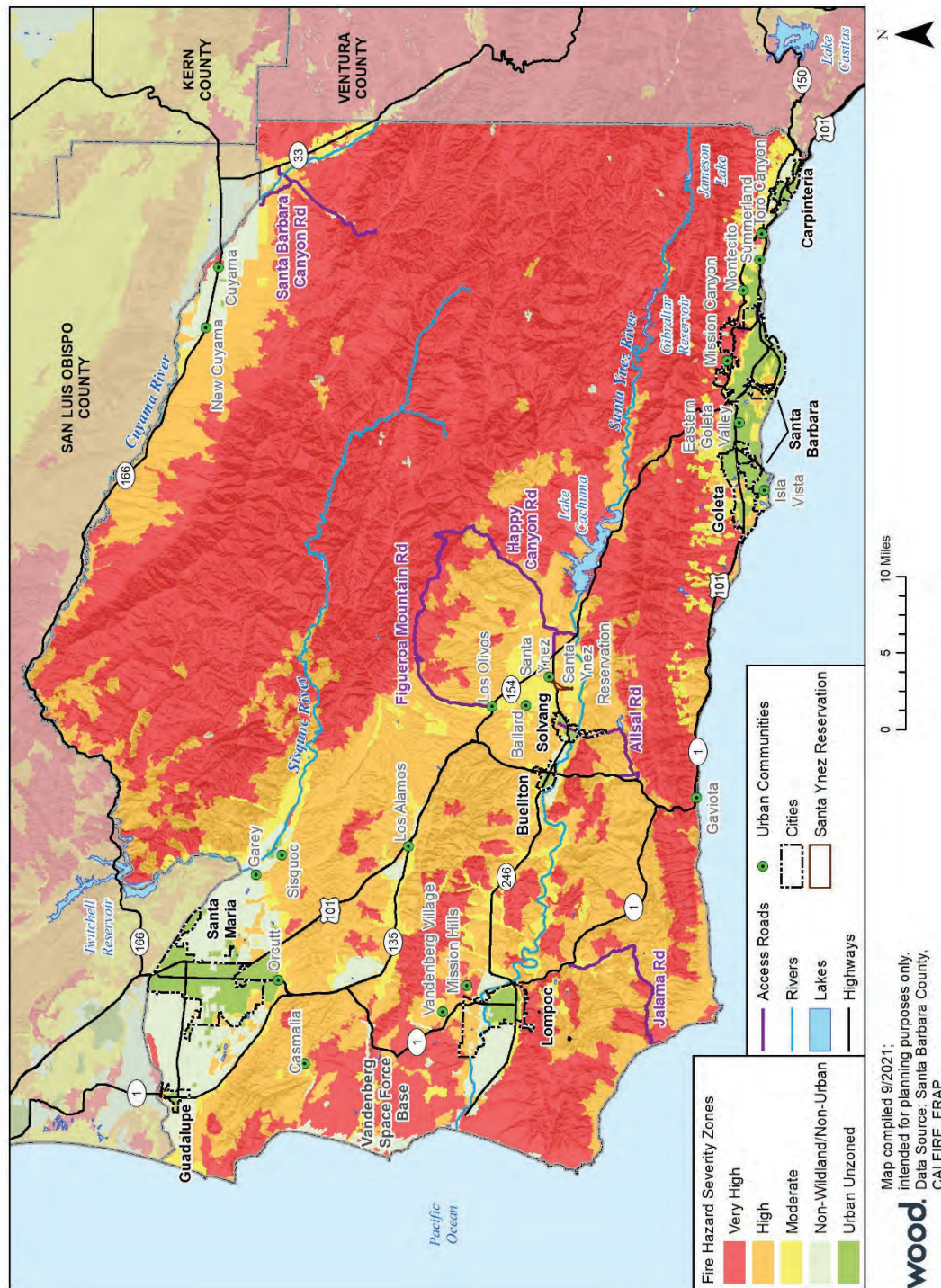
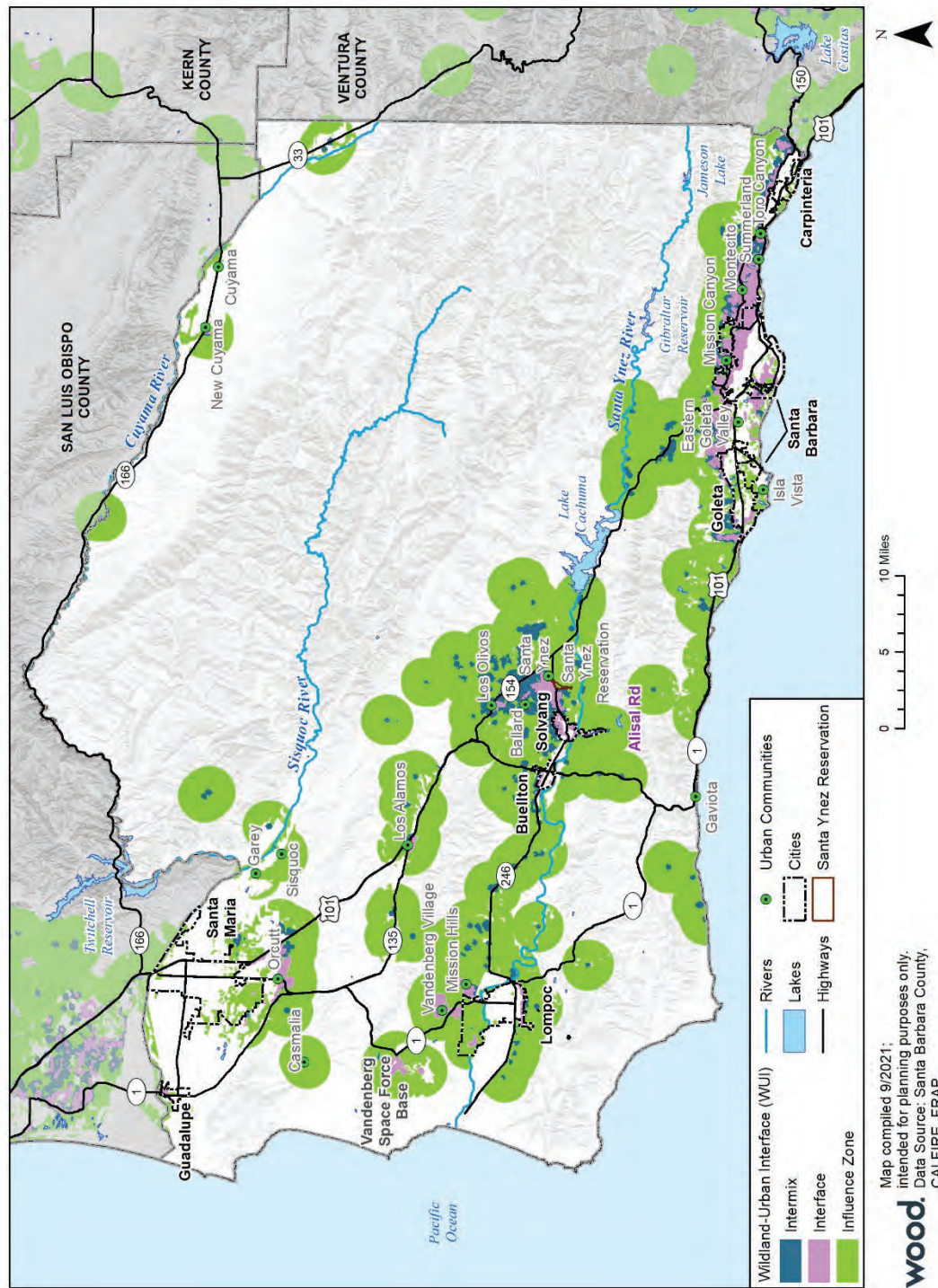


Figure 5-2. Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI)



WUI data shown in Figure 5-2 was developed on a statewide basis and does not consider the precise location of local neighborhoods within or adjacent to these hazard zones. To account for this, the Santa Barbara County Fire Department has synthesized the data at a more local level to convey communities at risk. Further, to help protect people and their property from potential catastrophic wildfire, the National Fire Plan recommends that funding be provided for projects designed to reduce the fire risks to communities. A fundamental step in achieving this goal was the identification of communities that are at high risk of damage from wildfire. These high-risk communities identified within the WUI were published in the Federal Register in 2001. At the request of Congress, the Federal Register notice only listed those communities neighboring federal lands. The list represents the collaborative work of the 50 states and five federal agencies using a standardized process, whereby states were asked to submit all communities within their borders that met the criteria of a structure at high risk from wildfire. Beginning August 17, 2001, no new updates were being made to the Federal Register with states assuming responsibility for continued updates to their lists.

The following list contains the federally identified communities which adjoin federal lands most at risk within Santa Barbara County; however, risks between and within these communities vary substantially, with the WUI of Goleta, Santa Barbara, and Carpinteria along the foothills of the Santa Ynez Mountains perhaps having the greatest risk due to often dense highly flammable chaparral vegetation, steep topography, and exposure to sundowner winds:

- Carpinteria
- Casmalia
- Cuyama
- Gaviota
- Goleta
- Lompoc
- Mission Hills
- Orcutt
- Santa Barbara
- Tajiguas
- Vandenberg Space Force Base (SFB)
- Vandenberg Village

With the county's extensive WUIs bordering multiple communities, the list of communities extends beyond just those adjacent to Federal lands. After the 2000 fire season CAL FIRE, working with the California Fire Alliance, developed a list of communities at risk from wildfire using 1990 Census and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Geographic Names Information System data to identify populated places and CAL FIRE's FRAP fuel hazard data. In addition to the already-mentioned communities, they designated the following as WUI Communities at Risk. As with the above list, risks between and within these communities vary substantially, with communities such as forested Montecito being bordered by dense highly flammable chaparral vegetation, steep topography, and exposure to sundowner winds:

- Buellton
- Garey
- Los Olivos
- Isla Vista
- Los Alamos
- Santa Ynez
- Montecito
- Santa Maria
- Summerland
- Sisquoc
- Solvang
- Ventucopa
- Guadalupe

Combining both lists, there are 25 communities on the Communities at Risk List in Santa Barbara County. The California State Forester (CAL FIRE Director) has assigned the role of managing the list to the California Fire Alliance. In addition to the 25 state and federally recognized communities, the Santa Barbara County Fire Department identifies an additional 16 neighborhoods or small communities (Santa Barbara County Fire Department 2021) at risk of wildfire:

- Cebada Canyon
- Woodstock
- Miguelito Canyon
- Painted Cave
- Jalama
- Gobernador
- Toro Canyon
- Jonata Ranch/Bobcat Springs
- Mission Canyon
- Rosario Park
- Tepusquet Canyon
- El Capitan
- Hope Ranch
- Trout Club
- Refugio Canyon
- Paradise

Many of the communities at risk listed above contain relatively old homes that reflect the building materials and/or codes in effect at the time of construction. As such, large numbers of homes are at increased risk of ignition due to structure vulnerabilities (e.g., wood shake roofs and siding, open eaves, unscreened crawlspace, and attic vents), which research has shown to be important in most home losses during wildfires. In addition to hazard reduction through fuel reduction, education of homeowners and mitigation of structure ignition vulnerabilities is therefore recognized as an important priority in these Communities at Risk. Programs that support retrofits to existing structures, combined with building codes that make future structures more fire-resistant, are needed in many fire-prone areas. Figure 5-3 provides an overview of the location of the Communities at Risk as well as the federal, state, and local wildfire responsibility areas.

History of Hazard in Santa Barbara County

Because Santa Barbara County is prone to wildfires, there is a long history of wildfires in the county. Table 5-4 lists the major wildfires (1,000 acres or greater) in Santa Barbara County from 1932-to 2021.

CAL FIRE's FRAP also compiles fire perimeters of wildfires and has established an ongoing fire perimeter data capture process. Figure 5-4 shows wildfire perimeters of significant wildfires (i.e., fires that burned more than 5,000 acres) within the last ~50 years (1970-2021) in Santa Barbara County. Some recent fires (e.g., Cave Fire) may not be shown on this figure if the total burned area was less than 5,000 acres. Fire perimeters provide a reasonable view of the spatial distribution of past large fires. These historic fires are organized by decade to show the evolution of fire behavior over the years. For example, over the last 10 years, Santa Barbara County has experienced nine major fires. Four of these fires (i.e., Thomas, Cave, Sherpa, and Whittier) directly threatened the heavily populated Santa Barbara front country. Three of these fires (i.e., Thomas, Sherpa, and Whittier) resulted in destroyed structures, with over 1,000 structures destroyed in the Thomas Fire, including many in Ventura County.

Figure 5-3. Santa Barbara County Fire Responsibility Areas and Communities at Risk

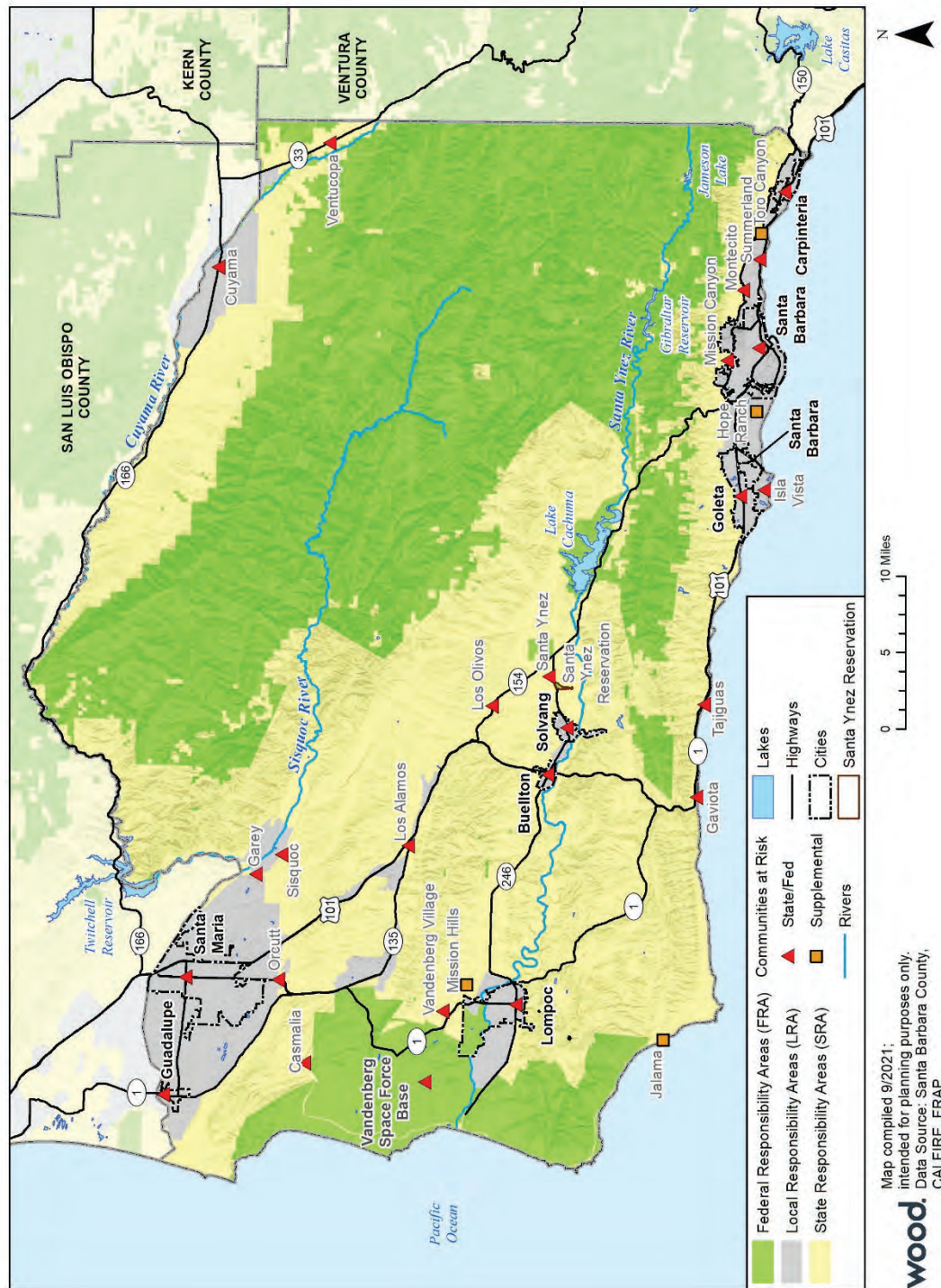
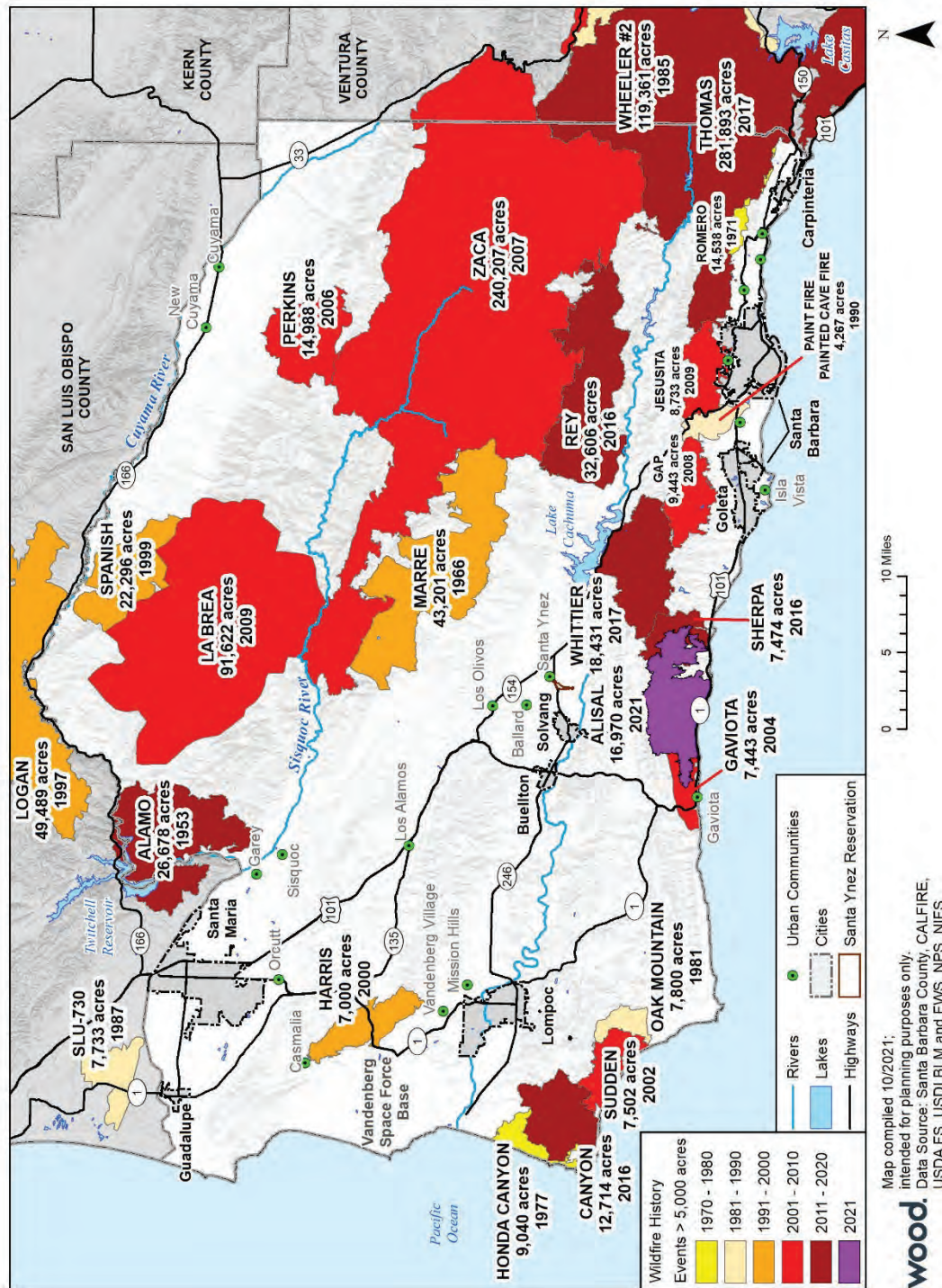


Figure 5-4. Santa Barbara County Fire History (1970-2021)



Recent fires have been burning faster and bigger due to drier vegetation related to recent drought conditions, potentially exacerbated by climate change (NOAA 2021a). These conditions allow for intense fires that can spread quickly and threaten urban areas (see *Climate Change Considerations* below for further discussion regarding the impact of climate change on wildfire within the county).

Table 5-4. Major Wildfires in Santa Barbara County

Year	Fire Name	Acres Burned	Year	Fire Name	Acres Burned
1932	North Shore	7,576	2002	Sudden	7,500
1971	Cielo	2,010	2004	Gaviota	7,197
1971	Romero	14,538	2004	Cachuma	1,115
1975	--	1,527	2006	Bald Fire	4,332
1977	Cachuma	2,250	2006	Perkins	14,923
1977	Hondo Canyon	8,526	2007	Zaca	240,807
1979	Wasioja	2,006	2008	Gap	9,443
1981	Rey	1,638	2008	Tea	1,940
1981	Oak Mountain	8,688	2009	Jesusita	8,733
1984	Minuteman	1,187	2009	La Brea	89,489
1985	Wheeler	122,687	2010	Bear Creek	1,252
1989	Cocheo	1,233	2013	White	1,984
1990	Paint	4,424	2016	Rey	32,606
1993	Marre	43,864	2016	Sherpa	7,474
1994	Aliso	3,244	2017	Alamo Fire	28,834
1996	Wasioja	2,812	2017	Whittier Fire	18,430
1996	Cuyama	1,400	2017	Thomas Fire	281,893
1997	Logan	49,490	2018	Front Fire	1,014
1997	Azaela	1,351	2019	Cave Fire	3,126
1997	Halloween	1,129	2020	Scorpion Fire	1,395
1998	Ogilvy	4,029	2021	Alisal Fire	16,970
2000	Harris	8,684			

Source: National Interagency Fire Center 2021.

Notes: Acreage represents total burned by fire; however, a number of these fires such as the Thomas Fire burned in other counties as well (e.g., Ventura County) so acreages burned in Santa Barbara County would be lower in some instances.

While more extensive discussion of previous wildfires in Santa Barbara County is available, the following information provides an overview and the location of the significant events (greater than 3,000 acres burned) since 2016:

- The **Alisal Fire** in 2021 burned 16,970 acres, shut down Highway 101, and forced dozens of people to evacuate. The fire destroyed 12 homes and damaged one other. OEM published the evacuations orders on behalf of the Sheriff's Office for about 300 residents in the Alisal Fire burn area (CBS Los Angeles 2021).
- The **Cave Fire** in 2019 burned over 3,000 acres near Painted Cave in the Los Padres National Forest for 21 days (National Interagency Fire Center 2021). Approximately 2,400 homes were placed under evacuation orders for areas north of Cathedral Oaks Road between Patterson

Avenue and Highway 154 and areas of Foothill Road between Highway 154 and North Ontare Road. A unified command consisting of multiple County agencies was assembled to assist with the fire (County Fire Department 2021). No homes were damaged (Santa Maria Times 2021).

- Before even larger fires in recent years, the **Thomas Fire** in 2017 was the largest California wildfire in modern California history, engulfing 281,893 acres, destroying or damaging more than 1,063 structures, primarily within Ventura County, and resulting in two fatalities. The Thomas Fire began on December 4, 2017 and was reported 100 percent contained on January 12, 2018 by the U.S. Forest Service. The fire was ignited north of Santa Paula in Ventura County and burned into Santa Barbara County through the Santa Ynez Mountains and parts of the upper Santa Ynez River watershed. It was one of the first wildfires to burn from inland Ventura County into the Santa Barbara front country of the Santa Ynez Mountains. The fire was active for 40 days and at one time involved more than 8,500 firefighters, 800 fire engines, and dozens of aircraft (National Interagency Fire Center 2021; Santa Maria Times 2021).

Incident Profile: The Thomas Fire

The 2017 Thomas Fire burned approximately 281,893 acres in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, making it the largest California wildfire in modern history at the time. The fire was started by power lines coming in contact during high winds and remained active for 40 days. At one point, over 8,500 firefighters from all across the western U.S. were working the fire. The fire resulted in the destruction of 1,063 structures and the loss of one civilian and one firefighter.



Source: CALFIRE 2021; Ventura County Fire Department 2019. Photo: SB Bucket Brigade

- The **Alamo Fire** in 2017 started in San Luis Obispo County near Twitchell Reservoir off Highway 166. Due to hot weather, winds, and dry grass, the fire quickly grew and spread into Santa Barbara County, lasting a total of 15 days. The Alamo Fire burned nearly 29,000 acres in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties (National Interagency Fire Center 2021). The fire caused the evacuation of approximately 200 homes (CAL FIRE 2017). Thanks to a total of 1,664 firefighters, four fixed-wing planes, five helicopters, four bulldozer teams, 10 hand crews, and five water tankers, one home was destroyed and one additional building was damaged in the Alamo Fire. One of the factors that made fighting this fire so difficult was that the Whittier fire described below was going on at the same time, so resources were stretched thin. Fire crews from Los Angeles and Orange counties jumped in to help (Santa Maria Times 2021; The Tribune 2017).
- The **Whittier Fire** in 2017 burned over 18,000 acres above Camp Whittier on the north slope of the Santa Ynez near Lake Cachuma primarily within the Los Padres National Forest and

private ranchlands. The fire was active for 167 days. In total, 16 homes and 30 outbuildings were destroyed. One home and six outbuildings were damaged. Thousands of campers in and around the Cachuma Lake Recreation area and nearby Paradise Road had to flee, leaving eerie ghost towns of pitched tents and picnic lunches on the tables as they fled (Santa Maria Times 2021).

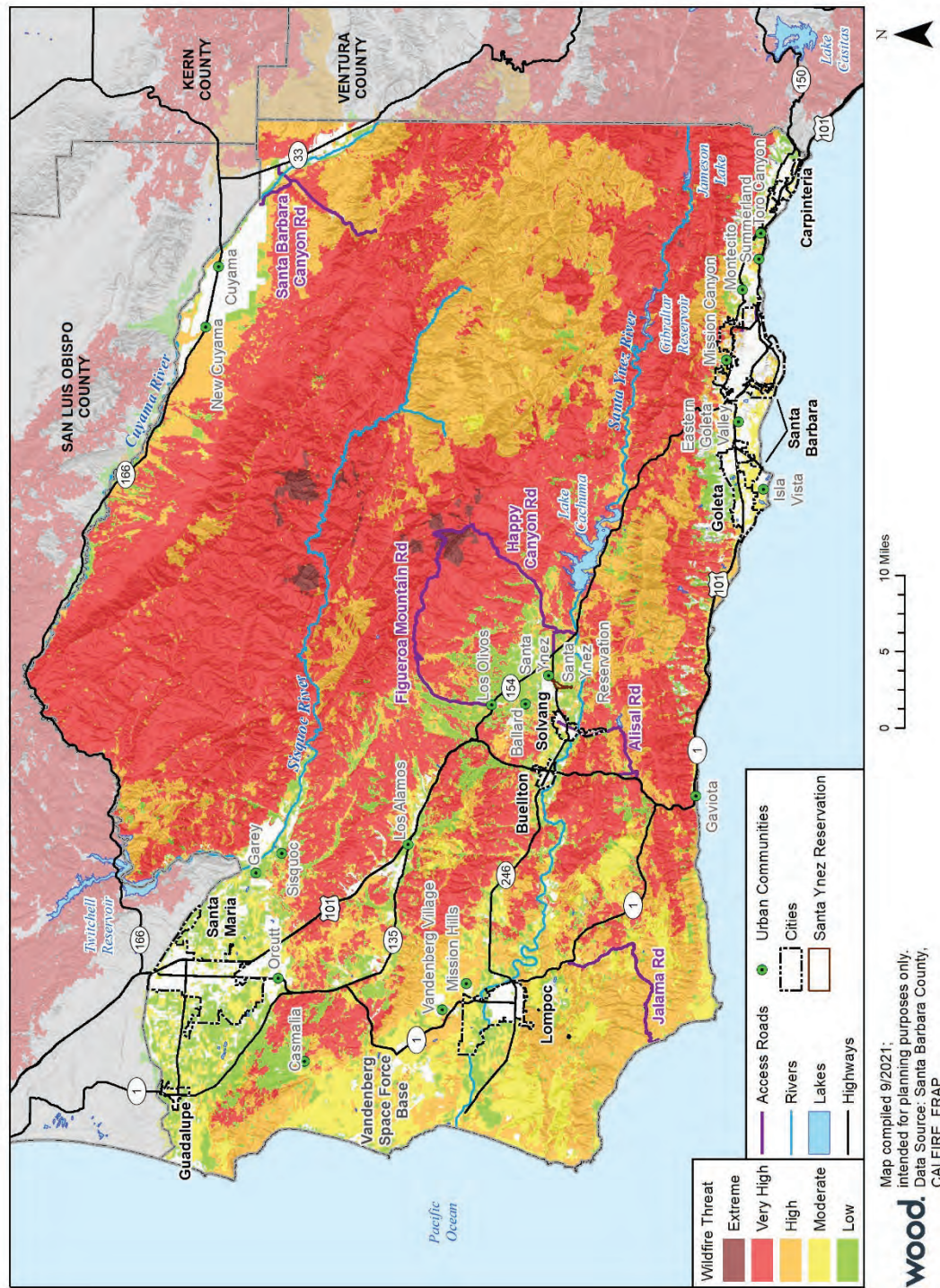
- The **Rey Fire** burned over 32,000 acres off of Highway 154 and Paradise Road, north of Santa Barbara for 29 days, requiring emergency evacuations (National Interagency Fire Center 2021). Over 10,000 of those acres were on Rancho San Fernando Rey itself and 19,752 were in the Los Padres National Forest. Over 300 people had to be evacuated from their campsites and residences. The fire was fought by 1,260 firefighters, 28 crews, 48 engines, 11 aircraft, two helicopters, and numerous bulldozers. No structures or homes were burned (Santa Maria Times 2021).
- The **Sherpa Fire** burned over 7,400 acres in Santa Barbara County, west of Goleta, for 27 days (National Interagency Fire Center 2021). The blaze prompted evacuation orders for El Capitan and Refugio State Beaches as well as for the ranches in El Capitan Canyon. The fire destroyed the water system for El Capitan State Beach, which remained closed for weeks. At the peak of the fire, 2,000 firefighters were on site to try to contain the fire (Santa Maria Times 2021).

Probability of Occurrence

Highly Likely - Vegetation and topography are significant elements in the identification of the fire threat zones, as well as areas subject to high winds such as sundowners (see Section 5.4.2, *Windstorm*). Santa Barbara supports extensive tracts of chaparral vegetation, a shrubland habitat of dense and scrubby brush that has evolved to persist in a fire-prone habitat. Chaparral plants will eventually age and die; however, they will not be replaced by new growth until a fire rejuvenates the area. Chamise, manzanita, and ceanothus are all examples of chaparral vegetation that are quite common in Santa Barbara County, particularly in the Santa Ynez Mountains, San Rafael Mountains, and even the Solomon Hills and Casmalia Hills.

Santa Barbara County was subject to 42 major wildfires over 88 years, resulting in a 48 percent chance of occurrence in any given year. In addition, Figure 5-5 shows the threat of fire to Santa Barbara County as mapped by CAL FIRE. Fire threat is a combination of two factors: 1) fire frequency or the likelihood of a given area burning, and 2) potential fire behavior. These two factors are combined to create four threat classes ranging from moderate to extreme.

Figure 5-5. Santa Barbara County Wildfire Threat



Climate Change Considerations

Based on research performed by the State of California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) and as noted by fire protection specialists, climate change is now playing a significant role in increasing the frequency and severity of wildfires (Office of Governor 2019). Growing amounts of greenhouse gases (GHGs) coupled with population growth and development are expected to continue impacting California forests, natural resources, and residential neighborhoods. Likewise, the effects of climate change have the potential to impact wildfire behavior, the frequency of ignitions, fire management, and fuel loads. Increasing temperatures may intensify wildfire threat and susceptibility to more frequent wildfires in the county. The County's CCVA estimates that the annual average acres burned is expected to increase to 23,040 acres per year (30 percent increase) by 2030, 25,782 acres per year (46 percent increase) by 2060, and 24,050 acres per year (36 percent increase) by 2100 due to higher annual average temperatures and the increased frequency and intensity of droughts.

Exactly how climate change will affect total precipitation is not clear, but models suggest that there is a tendency for wetter conditions in the northern part of the state and drier conditions in the south. Results are also likely to vary across the substantial precipitation gradient from south to north along the Central Coast, including the county. More northern higher precipitation areas may see decreased fire return intervals and higher severity, while areas to the south may ultimately see the opposite as warming increases climatic water deficit but also reduces vegetation growth rates and fuel loads. (California Natural Resources Agency 2018). The projected changed conditions from alternating wet years to more frequent, extended, and severe drought can create more fuel (vegetation) during wet years, followed by extending drying of such vegetation, increasing fuel loading and the flammability of such vegetation. Studies noted in California's Fourth Assessment report note climate change impacts on wind patterns may trigger a conversion of forested areas to other types of vegetation (California Natural Resources Agency 2018). There is some evidence that increasing fire frequencies can cause coastal sage shrubs and chaparral to shift to grasses, including exotic grasses, and these shifts in ecosystems can have feedback on fire regimes since grasslands tend to promote more frequent fires. Climate impacts, particularly precipitation, also alter post-fire behavior, including the recovery trajectories and the rate of vegetation recovery following a fire, although these effects vary with fire severity, pre-fire species, and landscape characteristics. Forests and woodlands are also sensitive to variable precipitation events, as the 2012-2017 drought contributed to widespread tree mortality as warmer temperatures stressed trees and made them more susceptible to pests and pathogens (California Natural Resources Agency 2018).

Current scientific models expect California will be affected by increased numbers of wildfires with added intensity due to longer warmer seasons, reduced the distribution of biodiversity, lack of moisture, changes in ecosystems, drought impacts (e.g., pest diseases, and continued spread of invasive species), and other impacts in coming years. Wildfire behavior appears to be becoming more severe with fires burning hotter, moving more quickly, and even creating their own weather which in turn can cause firestorms that are difficult to contain. While wildfires are a natural part of California's ecology, the fire season is getting longer every year—with most counties now experiencing extended fire seasons (e.g., 6 to 9 months) and several counties facing fire danger year-round. Warmer temperatures, variable snowpack, and earlier snowmelt caused by climate

change make for longer and more intense dry seasons, leaving forests more susceptible to severe fire.

The extension of the wildfire season into the winter months, coinciding with seasonal high wind patterns, has contributed to severe fires in recent years. Fifteen of the 20 most destructive wildfires in the state's history have occurred since 2000; 10 of the most destructive fires have occurred since 2015 (Office of Governor 2019). Anticipated growth and development in the county can also be expected to amplify these effects. As seen with the 2017 - 2018 wildfires, more damage occurred in developed areas like Montecito in Santa Barbara County, the City of Ventura in Ventura County, Santa Rosa in Sonoma County, and Paradise in Butte County.

The Thomas Fire also exhibited such increased wildfire severity with a total burn area of 281,893 acres; destroying 1,063 structures and resulting in one civilian and one firefighter fatality (Ventura County Fire Department 2019). The Thomas Fire, which occurred in December, was fueled by dry brush, 10 years of drought, and strong sundowner winds. More than 8,500 firefighters were assigned to the fire. Over 2,000 were in the South Coast communities and had been for three days prepping houses, laying lines, scouting escape routes, and becoming familiar with the landscape (Community Environmental Council 2020). Furthermore, large wildfires that burn hotter remove all vegetation and can melt surface soils creating hydrophobic soils which do not allow rainfall to percolate, increasing the threat of other disasters such as flooding and mud or debris flows. For example, the Thomas Fire was followed by the 2018 Montecito debris flows which severely damaged the community of Montecito, killed more than 20 residents, damaged or destroyed 400 or more homes, and led to a 3-week closure of Highway 101 and the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR), severing connections between Santa Barbara and the rest of Southern California. Similarly, the Whittier Fire near Lake Cachuma exhibited extreme behavior and was followed by a strong downpour across the burn scar of the Whittier Fire which triggered a debris flow in Duval Canyon, clogging and damaging a culvert beneath Highway 154, shutting down this key north-south arterial for a month. Both of these fires illustrate the cumulative effects of climate change increasing wildfire severity lined with increased rainfall intensities to cause severe infrastructure damage. Fires in northern California, such as the Camp Fire which burned more than 153,330 acres and destroyed 19,000 homes and other structures as well as much of the Town of Paradise, also exemplify this trend of extreme fire behavior (Office of Governor 2019).

Large wildfires also have several indirect effects beyond those of a smaller, local fire. These may include air quality and health issues, road closures, business closures, and other forms of losses.

5.3.2 Drought & Water Shortage

Description of Hazard

A **drought** occurs when climactic and weather conditions are drier than normal for a long period, making less water available for people, agricultural uses, and ecosystems. Drought and water shortages are a gradual phenomenon and generally are not signified by one or two dry years. California's and the county's extensive system of water supply infrastructure (e.g., reservoirs, groundwater basins, and interregional conveyance facilities) generally mitigates the effects of short-term dry periods for most water users. However, drought conditions are present when a region receives below-average precipitation over an extended multiple-year period (e.g., 3 to 4 or more

Guadalupe (and surrounding communities) near the Garey Fault and Lions Head and the Cuyama Valley near the South Cuyama Fault, identified by the Center for Disease Control's (CDC's) Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). Some of the "frontline" communities identified by the County's Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA) are also located near quaternary and late quaternary faults, including Isla Vista, Eastern Goleta Valley, El Sueno (a neighborhood in Eastern Goleta Valley), and western Carpinteria in the South Coast, near the Mission Ridge – Arroyo Parida Fault; southern Santa Ynez Valley near the Santa Ynez River Fault; and areas northwest of Santa Maria (near City of Guadalupe) (CDC/ATSDR 2021).

Populations most vulnerable to earthquake hazards would be those that rely on specific services or electrical power, which may not be available during or after a quake, such as health care patients, ADFN community members, and the elderly. Some residents would likely have a difficult time receiving emergency notifications or evacuating due to age or disability, houselessness, language barriers, or impact on energy and communications infrastructure. Such socially vulnerable and sometimes financially disadvantaged households may not have the financial resiliency to cope with both short-term post-earthquake issues such as paying for lodging and clean up as well as potentially lacking resources to address longer-term issues such as major structural repairs or replacement.

Historic, Cultural, and Natural Resources. Earthquake effects on the environment, natural resources, and historic and cultural assets could be very destructive depending on the type of seismic activity experienced and secondary/cascading effects from an event (e.g., wildfire). The biggest impact would likely be on older properties such as wooden or masonry buildings, though reinforced masonry structures would be much more resilient during earthquakes. However, an earthquake-triggered event such as a rockslide could impact natural foothill or mountain habitats.

Future Development. Future development in the county is not anticipated to significantly affect vulnerability to earthquakes when designed according to modern building codes. However future development would result in a slight increase in exposure of the population, building stock, and related infrastructure to earthquakes.

6.3 NATURAL AND DESTRUCTIVE HAZARDS

6.3.1 Wildfire

As described in Section 5.3.1, *Wildfire*, the county has extensive areas within mapped Fire Hazard Severity Zones and Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) areas. These hazard areas generate vulnerability for life and structures, including critical facilities, throughout the county, but most severely within rural foothills areas where dry vegetation, steep slopes, and difficult access combine to create a high probability of wildfire.

Three measures were evaluated to assess wildfire vulnerability for critical facilities in the county:

- The first measure for wildfire vulnerability is whether a critical facility is within the Fire Hazard Severity Zone, as mapped by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE).

- The second measure for wildfire vulnerability is whether a critical facility is within the WUI. For this analysis, “within the WUI” represents those critical facilities that are in the geographical area where the three factors of “threat to people”, “communities at risk”, and “distance to developed areas” intersect. Therefore, the WUI is the potential treatment zone where mitigation could be implemented to reduce wildland fire threats to people
- The third measure for wildfire vulnerability is “Fire Threat.” Fire Threat is a combination of the factors of fire likelihood/frequency and potential fire behavior, which includes factors such as vegetation density and flammability (e.g., old-growth chaparral), topography, and susceptibility to high wind events (e.g., “sundowners”). The two factors are combined to create five threat classes ranging from “Little or No Threat” to “Extreme” (see Tables 6-26 and 6-27 for summaries of the total acreage of exposure to these three measures).

Table 6-26. Fire Threat by Planning Region

Threat Level	Planning Region	Fire Threat Acres	Total Planning Region Acres	Percent
Extreme Wildfire Threat	South Coast	1.1	77,020	0.001%
	Total	1	77,020	0.001%
Very High Wildfire Threat	Cuyama Valley	44,555	112,783	39.51%
	Lompoc Valley	38,169	195,287	19.55%
	Santa Maria Valley	37,949	178,146	21.30%
	Santa Ynez Valley	118,355	252,907	46.80%
	South Coast	13,604	77,020	17.66%
	Total	252,633	816,143	30.95%
High Wildfire Threat	Cuyama Valley	33,479	112,783	29.68%
	Lompoc Valley	72,430	195,287	37.09%
	Santa Maria Valley	35,500	178,146	19.93%
	Santa Ynez Valley	63,651	252,907	25.17%
	South Coast	8,668	77,020	11.25%
	Total	213,728	816,143	26.19%
Moderate Wildfire Threat	Cuyama Valley	2,418	112,783	2.14%
	Lompoc Valley	38,118	195,287	19.52%
	Santa Maria Valley	17,475	178,146	9.81%
	Santa Ynez Valley	6,411	252,907	2.53%
	South Coast	5,115	77,020	6.64%
	Total	69,538	816,143	8.52%
Low Wildfire Threat	Cuyama Valley	10,752	112,783	9.53%
	Lompoc Valley	28,814	195,287	14.75%
	Santa Maria Valley	35,015	178,146	19.66%
	Santa Ynez Valley	45,175	252,907	17.86%
	South Coast	6,524	77,020	8.47%
	Total	126,281	816,143	15.47%

Table 6-27. Fire Threat in Unincorporated Areas

Threat Level	Fire Threat Acres	Percent
Extreme Wildfire Threat	14,762	1.02%
Very High Wildfire Threat	704,633	48.51%
High Wildfire Threat	482,094	33.19%
Moderate Wildfire Threat	103,726	7.14%
Low Wildfire Threat	147,329	10.14%
Total	1,452,545	100.00%

Table 6-28. Fire Threat by City

Threat Level	Planning Region	Fire Threat Acres	Total Planning Region Acres	Percent
Extreme Wildfire Threat	Total	None	None	0%
Very High Wildfire Threat	Buellton	9	1,026	0.90%
	Carpinteria	1	1,643	0.07%
	Goleta	4	5,049	0.08%
	Santa Barbara	321	12,614	2.55%
	Santa Maria	41	15,002	0.27%
	Solvang	46	1,561	2.96%
	Total	423	36,895	1.15%
High Wildfire Threat	Buellton	63	1,026	6.12%
	Carpinteria	35	1,643	2.12%
	Goleta	52	5,049	1.02%
	Guadalupe	21	848	2.53%
	Lompoc	684	7,488	9.13%
	Santa Barbara	746	12,614	5.91%
	Santa Maria	427	15,002	2.84%
	Solvang	127	1,561	8.13%
	Total	2,154	45,231	4.76%
Moderate Wildfire Threat	Buellton	77	1,026	7.50%
	Carpinteria	148	1,643	9.04%
	Goleta	599	5,049	11.86%
	Guadalupe	68	848	8.04%
	Lompoc	1,666	7,488	22.25%
	Santa Barbara	942	12,614	7.47%
	Santa Maria	1,554	15,002	10.36%
	Solvang	99	1,561	6.37%
	Total	5,154	45,231	11.39%

Table 6-28. Fire Threat by City (Continued)

Threat Level	Planning Region	Fire Threat Acres	Total Planning Region Acres	Percent
Low Wildfire Threat	Buellton	99	1,026	9.64%
	Carpinteria	8	1,643	0.49%
	Goleta	267	5,049	5.28%
	Guadalupe	71	848	8.40%
	Lompoc	919	7,488	12.28%
	Santa Barbara	94	12,614	0.74%
	Santa Maria	2,317	15,002	15.45%
	Solvang	181	1,561	11.59%
	Total	3,956	45,231	8.75%

Table 6-29. Santa Barbara County Properties at Risk to Fire Threat

Jurisdiction	Property Type	Extreme Parcel Count	Very High Parcel Count	High Parcel Count	Moderate Parcel Count	Low Parcel Count	Total Improved Parcel Count	Total Value	Population
Buellton	Agricultural	0	0	0	1	0	1	\$31,648	
	Commercial	0	0	0	5	3	8	\$20,234,206	
	Exempt	0	0	0	1	0	1	\$3,030	
	Industrial	0	0	0	3	9	12	\$68,976,330	
	Mixed Use	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0
	Residential	0	0	0	115	62	177	\$165,242,040	487
	Improved Vacant	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	
	Total	0	0	0	125	74	199	\$254,487,254	487
Carpinteria	Agricultural	0	0	0	2	0	2	\$325,500	
	Commercial	0	0	0	1	0	1	\$130,660	
	Exempt	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	
	Industrial	0	0	1	0	0	1	\$138,693	
	Mixed Use	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0
	Residential	0	0	47	80	28	155	\$88,158,491	425
	Improved Vacant	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	
	Total	0	0	48	83	28	159	\$88,753,343	425

Table 6-29. Santa Barbara County Properties at Risk to Fire Threat (Continued)

Jurisdiction	Property Type	Extreme Parcel Count	Very High Parcel Count	High Parcel Count	Moderate Parcel Count	Low Parcel Count	Total Improved Parcel Count	Total Value	Population
Goleta	Agricultural	0	0	0	1	2	3	\$1,126,116	
	Commercial	0	0	0	12	0	12	\$132,850,720	
	Exempt	0	0	0	3	2	5	\$2,520,690	
	Industrial	0	0	0	6	0	6	\$24,089,715	
	Mixed Use	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0
	Residential	0	0	1	624	1	626	\$716,067,794	1,709
	Improved Vacant	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	
	Total	0	0	1	646	5	652	\$876,655,035	1,709
Guadalupe	Agricultural	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	
	Commercial	0	0	0	1	0	1	\$1,050,296	
	Exempt	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	
	Industrial	0	0	0	1	0	1	\$1,134,365	
	Mixed Use	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0
	Residential	0	0	7	74	20	101	\$32,554,110	397
	Improved Vacant	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	
	Total	0	0	7	76	20	103	\$34,738,771	397
Lompoc	Agricultural	0	0	0	0	1	1	\$4,214	
	Commercial	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	
	Exempt	0	0	1	1	1	3	\$4,206,432	
	Industrial	0	0	0	0	3	3	\$17,281,255	
	Mixed Use	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0
	Residential	0	0	59	49	63	171	\$62,617,740	498
	Improved Vacant	0	0	0	0	4	4	\$100,000	
	Total	0	0	60	50	72	182	\$84,209,641	498
Santa Barbara	Agricultural	0	1	0	0	0	1	\$90,528	
	Commercial	0	0	1	6	0	7	\$48,704,948	
	Exempt	0	0	1	3	0	4	\$4,194,834	
	Industrial	0	0	0	1	0	1	\$69,301,580	
	Mixed Use	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0
	Residential	0	60	198	253	33	544	\$562,254,207	1,333
	Improved Vacant	0	0	3	1	0	4	\$2,935,184	
	Total	0	61	203	264	33	561	\$687,481,281	1,333

Table 6-29. Santa Barbara County Properties at Risk to Fire Threat (Continued)

Jurisdiction	Property Type	Extreme Parcel Count	Very High Parcel Count	High Parcel Count	Moderate Parcel Count	Low Parcel Count	Total Improved Parcel Count	Total Value	Population
Santa Maria	Agricultural	0	0	0	0	2	2	\$2,495,160	
	Commercial	0	0	5	25	12	42	\$551,198,784	
	Exempt	0	0	0	5	4	9	\$12,167,656	
	Industrial	0	0	2	12	27	41	\$297,281,323	
	Mixed Use	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0
	Residential	0	0	77	267	720	1,064	\$542,399,237	3,969
	Improved Vacant	0	0	0	2	4	6	\$3,401,194	
	Total	0	0	84	311	769	1,164	\$1,408,943,353	3,969
Solvang	Agricultural	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	
	Commercial	0	0	0	2	1	3	\$184,772	
	Exempt	0	0	0	1	1	2	\$5,250,202	
	Industrial	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	
	Mixed Use	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0
	Residential	0	0	55	62	139	256	\$217,296,242	612
	Improved Vacant	0	0	1	1	1	3	\$482,770	
	Total	0	0	56	66	142	264	\$223,213,986	612
Unincorporated	Agricultural	0	332	327	120	304	1,083	\$1,977,259,482	
	Commercial	0	5	10	12	12	39	\$90,536,808	
	Exempt	0	7	15	21	15	58	\$425,171,014	
	Industrial	0	0	0	2	7	9	\$16,238,123	
	Mixed Use	0	0	0	1	1	2	\$1,538,294	6
	Residential	1	767	1,496	1,102	1,635	5,001	\$6,115,866,432	14,403
	Improved Vacant	0	24	43	28	37	132	\$69,033,442	
	Total	1	1,135	1,891	1,286	2,011	6,324	\$8,695,643,595	14,409
	Grand Total	1	1,196	2,350	2,907	3,154	9,608	\$12,354,126,258	23,837

The majority of properties that occur in Fire Hazard Severity Zones are residential, however, properties in unincorporated territories also include agriculture properties. For example, 767 unincorporated residential properties and 332 unincorporated agricultural properties are located in Very High fire hazard zones. In the county's unincorporated territory, there are also 1,496 residential properties and 327 agricultural properties that are located in High fire hazard zones. The City of Santa Barbara is similarly vulnerable to wildfire, with 60 residential properties located in the Very High fire hazard zone. 198 residential properties in the City of Santa Barbara are located in High fire threat zones. The City of Carpinteria and City of Lompoc are both also vulnerable with 47 and 59 residential properties, respectively, located in the High fire hazard zone.

As shown in Table 6-30, 466,361 acres within the county are located within a High or Very High fire threat area, and one acre and one residential facility in unincorporated South Coast territory are located within an Extreme fire threat area. Table 6-31 shows the total number of properties located within fire hazard severity zones and estimated values. As shown therein, unincorporated territory and the City of Santa Barbara have the greatest number of parcels within High and Very High fire threat zones.

Table 6-30. Critical Facilities with Very High Fire Threat by Planning Region

Planning Region	Communications	Energy	Food, Water, Shelter	Hazardous Material	Health and Medical	Safety and Security	Transportation	Total Count	Total Value
Cuyama Valley	1	-	-	-	1	1	2	5	\$309,420
Lompoc Valley	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	\$0
Santa Maria Valley	3	-	-	-	-	-	5	8	\$0
Santa Ynez Valley	2	-	1	-	-	1	4	8	\$228,047
South Coast	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	4	\$1,208,931
Unincorporated	26	-	1	-	-	-	5	32	\$500,000
Total	33	0	2	0	1	3	21	60	\$2,246,398

Note: Unincorporated areas include Vandenberg SFB and Los Padres National Forest

Table 6-31. Critical Facilities with Very High Fire Threat by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Communications	Energy	Food, Water, Shelter	Hazardous Material	Health and Medical	Safety and Security	Transportation	Total Count	Total Value
Buellton	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	\$228,047
Carpinteria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	\$0
Goleta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	\$0
Guadalupe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	\$0
Lompoc	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	\$0
Santa Barbara	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	\$0
Santa Maria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	\$0
Solvang	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	\$0
Unincorporated	33	-	1	-	1	3	20	58	\$2,018,351
Total	33	0	2	0	1	3	21	60	\$2,246,398

Table 6-32. Critical Facilities with High Fire Threat by Planning Region

Planning Region	Communications	Energy	Food, Water, Shelter	Hazardous Material	Health and Medical	Safety and Security	Transportation	Total Count	Total Value
Cuyama Valley	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	\$0
Lompoc Valley	6	-	1	1	-	8	17	33	\$1,346,760
Santa Maria Valley	1	1	1	-	-	5	5	13	\$3,929,072
Santa Ynez Valley	3	-	6	-	-	8	24	41	\$11,316,148
South Coast	1	1	1	-	-	1	8	12	\$1,167,943
Unincorporated	10	-	-	-	1	1	7	19	\$0
Total	21	2	9	1	1	23	61	118	\$17,759,923

Note: Unincorporated areas include Vandenberg SFB and Los Padres National Forest

Table 6-33. Facilities with High Fire Threat by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Communications	Energy	Food, Water, Shelter	Hazardous Material	Health and Medical	Safety and Security	Transportation	Total Count	Total Value
Buellton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	\$0
Carpinteria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	\$0
Goleta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	\$0
Guadalupe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	\$0
Lompoc	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	\$0
Santa Barbara	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	\$0
Santa Maria	-	1	1	-	-	5	1	8	\$3,929,072
Solvang	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	\$535,623
Unincorporated	21	1	7	1	1	18	59	108	\$13,295,228
Total	21	2	9	1	1	23	61	118	\$17,759,923

Table 6-34. Facilities with Moderate Fire Threat by Planning Region

Planning Region	Communications	Energy	Food, Water, Shelter	Hazardous Material	Health and Medical	Safety and Security	Transportation	Total Count	Total Value
Cuyama Valley	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	\$0
Lompoc Valley	3	-	-	-	-	2	5	10	\$2,838,203
Santa Maria Valley	4	1	-	1	-	1	4	11	\$0
Santa Ynez Valley	-	-	1	-	-	-	5	6	\$736,483
South Coast	-	-	4	-	4	11	10	29	\$17,423,053
Unincorporated	5	-	1	1	1	-	2	10	\$0
Total	12	1	6	2	5	14	26	66	\$20,997,739

Note: Unincorporated areas include Vandenberg SFB and Los Padres National Forest

Table 6-35. Facilities with Moderate Fire Threat by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Communications	Energy	Food, Water, Shelter	Hazardous Material	Health and Medical	Safety and Security	Transportation	Total Count	Total Value
Buellton	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	\$0
Carpinteria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	\$0
Goleta	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	\$2,000,000
Guadalupe	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	\$0
Lompoc	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	\$0
Santa Barbara	-	-	1	-	1	-	4	6	\$0
Santa Maria	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	\$0
Solvang	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	\$0
Unincorporated	11	-	5	2	4	11	20	53	\$18,997,739
Total	12	1	9	2	5	11	26	66	\$20,997,739

As shown in the tables above, 60 critical facilities are located in very high fire hazard severity zones, 33 of which are communications and 21 are transportation, which include facilities such as cell towers, local roads, and state highways (e.g., SR 192). As shown in the tables above, 118 critical facilities are located in High fire threat zones, 61 of which are transportation, 23 are safety and security and 21 are communications. As shown in the tables above, 66 critical facilities are located in Moderate fire threat zones, 26 of which are transportation and 21 are communication. Critical facilities most at risk of damage in the event of a wildfire are communication facilities (e.g., FM Tower, Cellular towers, Paging towers) and transportation facilities, such as the State Route (SR) 1 at Ytias Creek Bridge and SR-154 at Alamo Pintado Creek bridge. All transportation critical

facilities that occur in High and Very High fire threat zones are bridges, the majority of which are located in unincorporated areas, including South Coast, Santa Ynez Valley, Santa Maria Valley, Lompoc Valley, and Cuyama Valley.

Figure 6-6 depicts the location of the county's critical facilities relative to Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Figure 6-7 depicts critical facilities and WUI Zones within the county. Figure 6-8 depicts the location of critical facilities relative to wildfire threat zones. Figure 6-9 depicts the location of critical facilities relative to emergency evacuation routes.

As depicted in Figures 6-6 and 6-8, the majority of Santa Barbara County is located within Very High or High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and Very High and High fire threat zones, meaning that in addition to critical facilities described above, homes and residential structures across the county are vulnerable to wildfire threat, especially those in Santa Ynez Valley, Cuyama Valley, and the South Coast, which are identified as high or severe vulnerabilities (Santa Barbara County 2021).

Further, as indicated by Figure 6-9, emergency access and evacuation can be constrained in hillside neighborhoods and rural communities where limited ingress and egress can slow and prevent the efficient movement of people and vehicles. This is particularly true in denser communities with larger populations served by narrow local roads such as the Riviera in the City of Santa Barbara, the Goleta foothills, and areas of the Santa Ynez Valley and Orcutt. This vulnerability may be exacerbated in the future under changing housing laws in California that incentivize additional density within existing neighborhoods, including allowances for accessory dwelling units (ADUs), as well as urban lot splits and duplexes under Senate Bill 9, which increase the service population. During an evacuation, additional residents would depend on the existing roadway network to flee and emergency responders would have additional residents to protect and serve. Further, in most cases, the same roads used for civilian evacuation to leave an area are also used by emergency responders to access the incident area.

County jurisdictions have established various communication pathways to inform the public of emergencies and recommended protective actions, such as evacuations and sheltering in place (see also, Chapter 4.0, *Community Profile and Capability Assessment*). These pathways are frequently used concurrently to amplify emergency information throughout the community and reach vulnerable individuals who may need additional information and resources to take action, including people with disabilities, access and functional needs, and commuters and visitors. Emergency notifications are primarily disseminated using Everbridge, a web-based mass notification platform that supports alerting through phone calls, text messages, email, TTY/TTD (for the deaf and hearing-impaired), Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs), and Emergency Alert System (EAS) messages.² Notifications may also be delivered directly to residents via door knocks and/or evacuation sirens on law enforcement vehicles. Incident information can also be posted on the County's emergency preparedness website www.ReadySBC.org, shared on social media platforms (e.g., Twitter,

² In acute or extreme hazard scenarios, notification using the FCC's Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) system is possible. WEA is a public safety system that allows customers who own compatible mobile devices to receive geographically targeted, text-like messages alerting them of imminent threats to safety in their area such as dangerous weather, missing children, and other critical situations. The EAS is a national public warning system commonly used by state and local authorities to deliver important emergency information, such as weather and AMBER alerts, to affected communities.

Figure 6-6. Critical Facilities in Fire Hazard Severity Zone

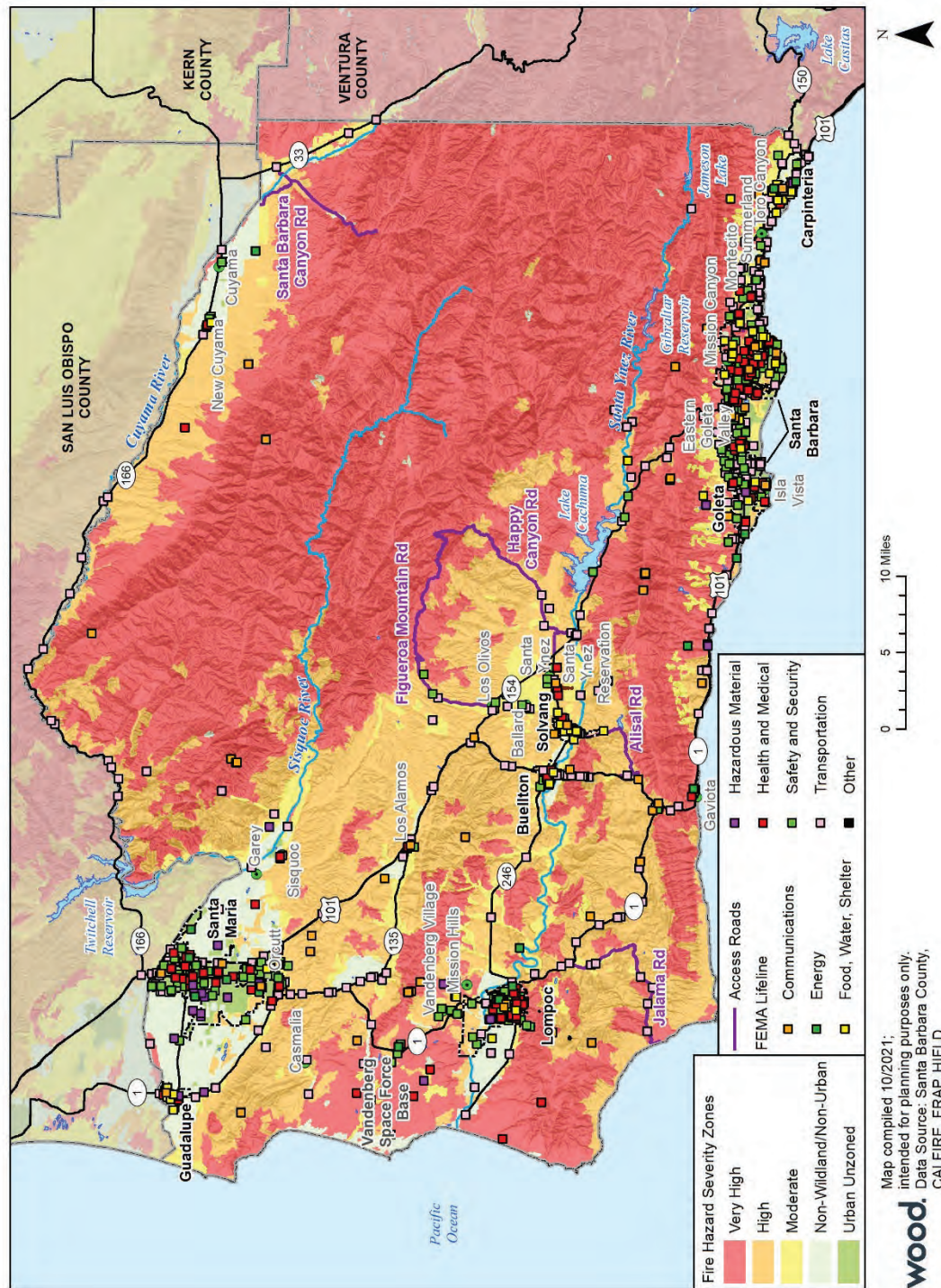


Figure 6-7. Critical Facilities in Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)

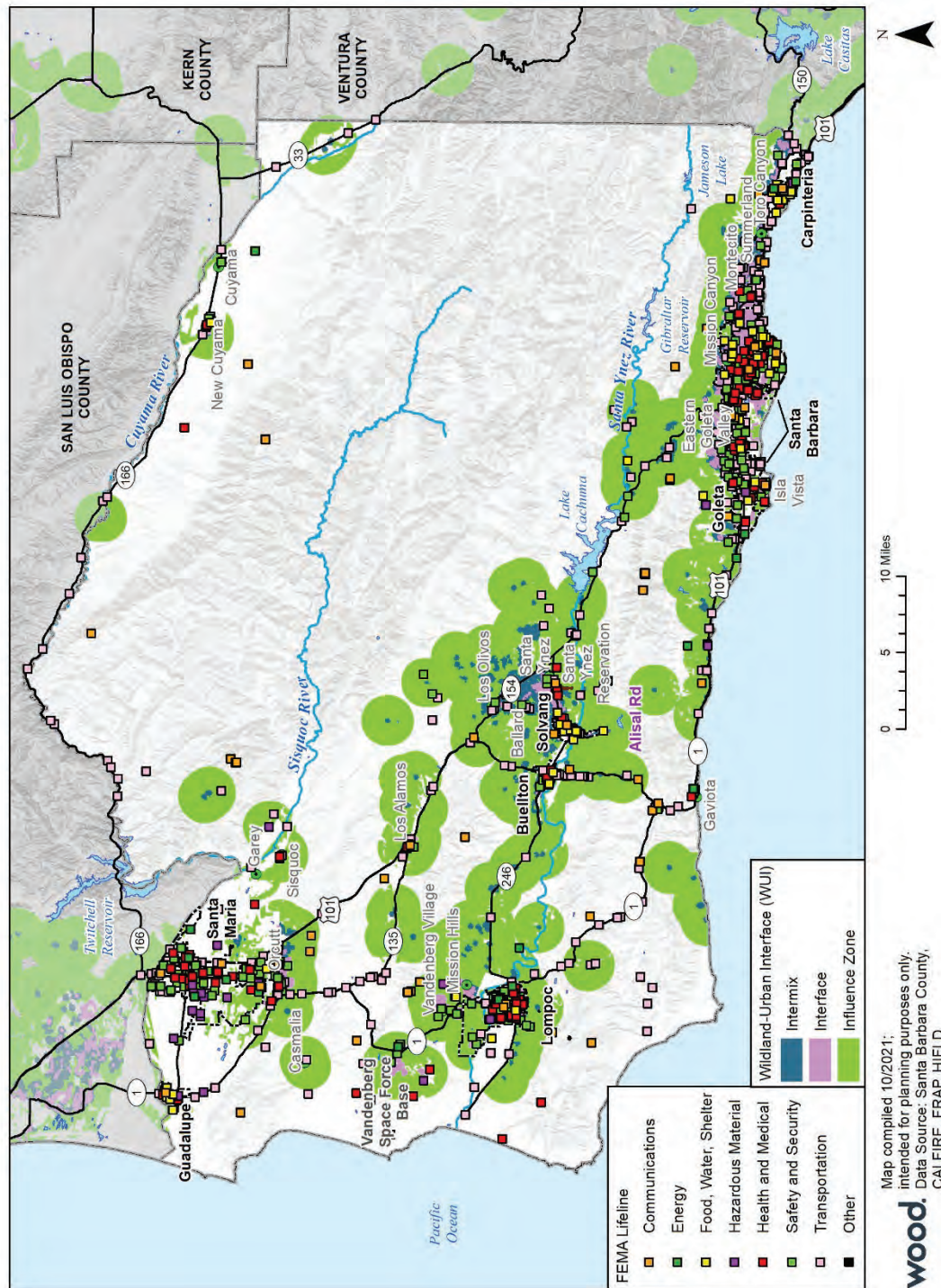


Figure 6-8. Critical Facilities in Fire Threat Zones

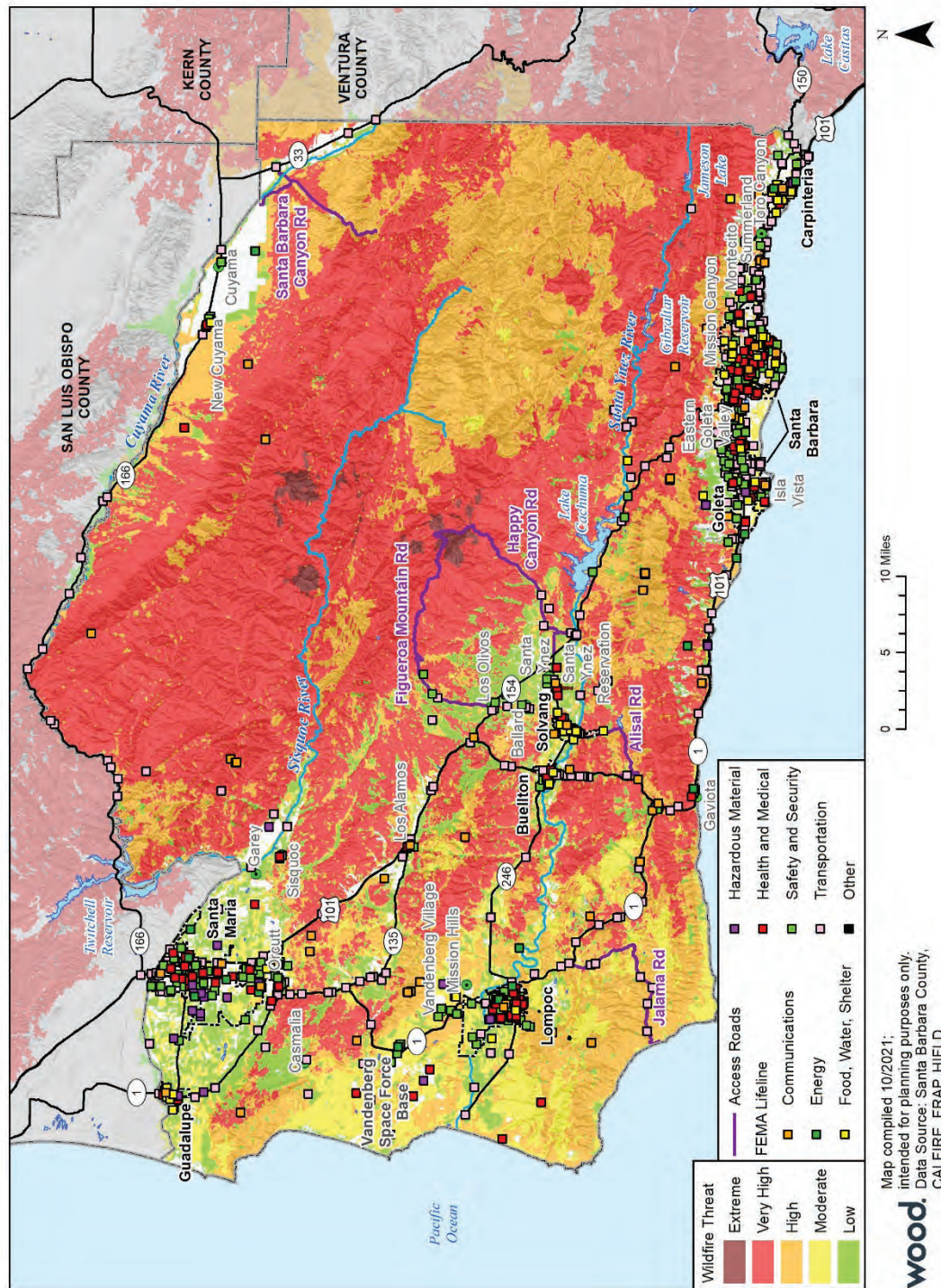
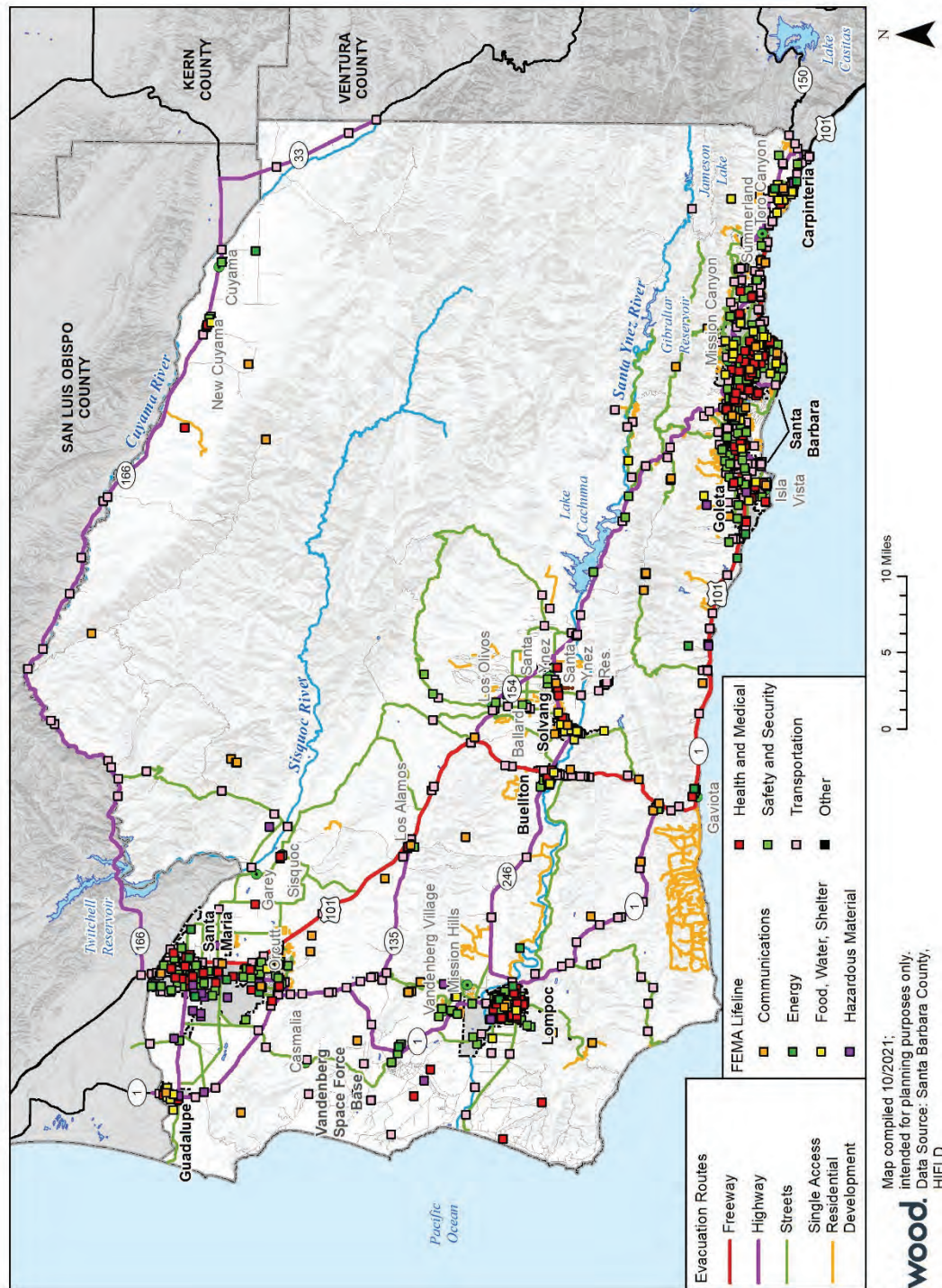


Figure 6-9. Evacuation Routes, Residential Areas with Single Access, and Critical Facilities



Facebook), through print, radio, and TV media, and accessed through 2-1-1 and Call Center hotlines. Most of these concepts rely on the availability of communications infrastructures, such as the internet, cell phones, landlines, and broadcast media; all of which can be impacted by natural hazards, such as wildfires. Additionally, populations with limited resources, existing social or economic disparities, language and communication barriers, may not have access to all the methods utilized for notifications, or may not trust messages from government programs, staff and officials, putting these populations at greater risk.

6.3.2 Drought & Water Shortage

As described in Section 5.3.2, *Drought and Water Shortage*, drought occurs cyclically in Santa Barbara County and is expected to become more frequent and severe under changing climate conditions. Recently, the historically severe 2012-2017 statewide drought was followed by limited wet years and several very dry years. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, an estimate 423,895 people reside in drought areas in Santa Barbara County, including 297,824 residents in Extreme Drought areas (D3), 125,765 residents in Severe Drought areas (D2), and 304 residents in Moderate Drought areas (D1) as of September 2022.

The effects of drought affect both local surface water supplies and deliveries from the State Water Project. While such effects on surface water supplies are most visible in Santa Barbara County when looking at the current capacity and maximum storage of the water supply reservoirs, droughts can severely reduce or even halt deliveries from the State Water Project. Locally, drought can impact water reservoirs along the Santa Ynez River, particularly Lake Cachuma, the largest reservoir in the County. As of November 9, 2021, Cachuma Reservoir, a key water supply for the entire South Coast, was reported to be at 48.1 percent capacity, the Gibraltar Reservoir that supplies the City of Santa Barbara at a capacity of 4.3 percent, and the Jameson Reservoir that supplies the community of Montecito at a capacity of 58.6 percent (refer to Table 5-6). Information on Twitchell Reservoir capacity, which does not provide long-term storage but plays a key role in recharging the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin, is unavailable currently (Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District [County Flood Control District] 2021).

During droughts, groundwater basin overdraft (when groundwater recharge cannot keep up with groundwater extraction) can occur in the county. While sustained groundwater overdraft is related to long-term trends in the balance between groundwater withdrawals and recharge, droughts increase demand on groundwater basins while decreasing or even eliminating recharges and replenishment, sometimes for multiple years. Such droughts can delay the recovery of groundwater basins even during wet years and cause problems such as declines in water quality, drying of surface creeks and wetlands, etc. As described in Section 5.3.2, *Drought & Water Shortage*, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) has identified five groundwater basins in the county as High or Medium priority basins subject to critical conditions of overdraft (refer to Table 5-6; DWR 2017):

- Carpinteria Groundwater Basin
- Montecito Groundwater Basin
- Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin
- San Antonio Creek Valley Groundwater Basin