

## Alexander, Jacquelyne

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**Subject:** FW: Business Item No. 1 - Review of SBLAFCO Agricultural and Open Space Policies

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**Sent:** Tuesday, July 9, 2019 1:12 PM

**To:** Email Lafco

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**Subject:** Business Item No. 1 - Review of SBLAFCO Agricultural and Open Space Policies

On Thursday, the Commission will review the Open Space Policies. The City of Lompoc has responded with comments to that review.

The City's comments veil its financial viability (lack of) and need to expand or more housing. The City does not have the financial means to grow, particularly into agricultural land.

So, what is the motive of Lompoc's comments in the letter to LAFCO. It is this that is most intriguing:

"The Legislature also recognizes that providing housing for persons and families of all incomes is an important factor in promoting orderly development.  
(Emphasis added)

"Therefore, the Legislature further finds and declares that this policy should be effected by the logical formation and modification of the boundaries of local agencies, with a preference granted to accommodating additional growth within, or through the expansion of, the boundaries of those local agencies which can

## EXHIBIT E

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best accommodate and provide necessary governmental services and housing for persons and families of all incomes in the most efficient manner feasible."  
(Emphasis added)

What is in these paragraphs is not a Lompoc need or rationale for expansion.

Lompoc has the highest level of low income housing, 30%, in the entire county. The average income is \$21,151 per year. Median housing cost is \$270,000.

Most that live in the city cannot afford a house of five hundred thousand dollars and that will be the starting price for Purisima Hills (formally Summit View Homes). Purisima Hills is currently preparing the ground to build 44 new homes at the north end of the city and those will be sold at a starting price above \$500K.

The poverty level is above 20% for the City.

According to the most current city data, most of the population of Lompoc work out of the city. Those that do work in Lompoc are mostly government employed, city, county and federal including the air force base.

Over 500 homes are planned to be built at the north end of the city. That development, Burton Ranch, has been through environmental studies, city approval and waiting for construction to begin.

So, what is motivating the city to want more land? That motivation is based on the belief that housing will solve Lompoc's economic woes. With that belief, the City Government has tried several times to expand into the agricultural land to the west. Two attempts were considered by the City council, 2016 and 2017.

The last effort, 2017, was an application to LAFCO for a Sphere of Influence and Annexation to the area of Bailey Avenue. The city staff prepared a staff report in July 2017 containing the controversial plan to expand.

<http://www1.cityoflompoc.com/councilagenda/2017/170718/n05.pdf>

That plan was reviewed by LAFCO and returned to the city as incomplete. The response from LAFCO explained the reason for return:

“Prior to a city submitting an application to the commission to update its sphere of influence, representatives from the city and representatives from the county shall meet to discuss the proposed new boundaries of the sphere and explore methods to reach agreement on development standards and planning and zoning requirements within the sphere to ensure that development within the sphere occurs in a manner that reflects the concerns of the affected city and is accomplished in a manner that promotes the logical and orderly development of areas within the sphere.”

Now is the City's attempt is to persuade their SOI and Annexation application through this policy review. Essentially, the City of Lompoc is making an argument against restricting their annexation with statements as this:

“LAFCO's enabling statute does not say 'preserve prime agricultural land and open space' at all cost to the detriment of other necessary land uses.”

In this letter from the City of Lompoc The City did not present an annexation that would promote “orderly development with available resources.”

To make LAFCO aware, at the May 28th City Council Budget Meeting, fire captain. Anthony Hudley stated that the City lacks staff and financial resources to cover public safety services (other services as well) and those services cannot support further expansion and justification of build out to the Bailey Avenue Corridor.

Expansion into agricultural land west of the City would be a further cost that could not be covered by current or future City revenue. The City council has yet to decide if it will support a 1% sales tax. If there was a build out to the west of the City, developers would have to subsidize cost for repair of city roads, schools and other maintenance that has long been deferred. One of those subsidies may have to be a new fire station. Fire station #1 has been declared seismically unfit, according to Mr. Hudley.

In reading Exhibit E, there are many comments about the financial malaise of the City of Lompoc and comments not supporting expansion. Those should be duly noted.

When and if the City of Lompoc has a viable expansion plan, then at that time a thorough review and decision can be made of the benefits for expansion. In addressing this policy by LAFCO, it should not be persuaded by the economic woes of Lompoc and should look at the continuation of the benefits of preserving open space and prime agricultural land. Once open space is taken, it will never be open space again. LAFCO should not permit growth without sound verifiable reasons for that expansion.

Thank you,

Terry Hammons