

LAFCO

Santa Barbara Local Agency Formation Commission

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November 1, 2007 (Agenda)

Local Agency Formation Commission

105 East Anapamu Street

Santa Barbara CA 93101

Population Projections for Santa Barbara County

Dear Members of the Commission

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended the Commission receive a presentation by Mike Powers, Deputy Director for Planning of the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments.

DISCUSSION

I have asked the Association of Governments staff to explain to the Commission how population projections are developed and enacted in Santa Barbara County. Since you are called upon to render decisions regarding sphere expansions and resulting growth it is important there be an understanding of the underlying population projection process.

Among the questions we have posed to the SBCAG staff are the following:

- What process is used to prepare population projections, for what geographical areas are they prepared and for what time periods into the future?
- In this process, how are the figures initially generated and by whom?
- How are population projections refined to become a Countywide projections and what organization or group has jurisdiction to approve, modify or deny the projections?
- How are local projections are related to RHNA projections. Are those prepared by the State and if so, which agency and on what basis? Must local population projections be consistent with RHNA projections? If so, how is that implemented or enforced?

- In what ways do population projections for the various areas in the County relate to each other and to Countywide projections?

This question is motivated by issuance by the City of Santa Maria of a Notice of Preparation for the Bradley Ranch East Project. If approved this annexation and resulting development will significantly increase the City population in coming years.

How do population projections for this potential new growth area relate to existing population projections for the City of Santa Maria, the community of Orcutt or perhaps elsewhere?

This question is also motivated by a request to the City of Lompoc to approve housing north of the City in the project referred to as PXP. How would that plan impact population projections for the rest of the City, the Lompoc Valley and other areas in the County?

Likewise, the County recently considered considering the “North Hills” proposal for a “new community” between Orcutt and Los Alamos. How would the population for that area relate to existing population projections for other incorporated and unincorporated areas?

- To what extent is there internal consistency between population projections and General Plan Amendments or land use decisions? For example, to what extent do the County’s plans for the Orcutt area, eastern Goleta Valley and the Santa Ynez Valley relate to each other and to Countywide population projections?
- If population projections are increased for one area is there a corresponding reduction in other areas in order to maintain consistent Countywide totals?

City and county members of the Commission are probably more conversant with these issues than the special district or public members but I thought this would be an interesting and useful topic of interest to the entire Commission.

The Regional Growth Forecast 2007 Summary provided by Mr. Powers is enclosed.

Sincerely,

BOB BRAITMAN
Executive Officer

cc: Mike Powers, Deputy Director – Planning, SBCAG