



April 21, 2026

Supervisor Bob Nelson, Chair
Supervisor Joan Hartmann, Vice-Chair
Supervisor Roy Lee
Supervisor Laura Capps
Supervisor Steve Lavagnino
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Item D1) Local Housing Marketing Program, New County Code

Dear Chair Nelson and Supervisors,

The Santa Barbara Association of REALTORS® (SBAOR) represents more than 1,200 REALTORS® across the South Coast who live and work in the communities they serve. Our members help families and businesses navigate housing and real estate decisions, and we work closely with local governments and community partners to advance practical, community-focused housing solutions. We share the City's goal of ensuring Santa Barbara remains a place where people can live, work, and thrive.

On behalf of the Santa Barbara Association of REALTORS® (SBAOR), we write to express our support for the proposed Local Housing Marketing Program.

We appreciate the County's thoughtful and creative approach to addressing the longstanding imbalance between local workers and available housing. This program reflects a meaningful effort to think outside the box, creating a framework that prioritizes awareness and access for local residents while remaining mindful of Fair Housing requirements. That balance is not easy to achieve, and we commend staff for developing a program that advances local opportunity without imposing rigid occupancy mandates.

By focusing on early and targeted outreach, the program provides local workers and residents with increased visibility into new housing opportunities at the front end of the process. This is a practical and measured step that can help improve access without discouraging housing production, an important consideration as we continue to face significant supply challenges across the South Coast.

We also appreciate that the program is structured to work within the realities of the market, encouraging, but not requiring, local preference when applicants are similarly qualified. This approach helps avoid unintended legal and financial complications while still advancing the County's broader housing goals.

As the County moves forward, we encourage consideration of one refinement. The required outreach methods, while well-intentioned, may be somewhat rigid and, in some cases, a bit dated relative to how prospective renters and buyers search for housing today. Allowing for greater flexibility in how outreach requirements are met, potentially through performance-based standards rather than prescribed media types, could improve effectiveness over time while ensuring the program remains adaptable to evolving technology and consumer behavior.



Overall, we believe this program represents a positive step forward. It is a balanced, forward-thinking policy that supports local access to housing while maintaining a feasible development environment. We appreciate the opportunity to support this effort and look forward to its successful implementation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Berger". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer Berger, 2026 President