

ATTACHMENT H

SANTA MARIA 2045 GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

Statement of Overriding Considerations

CEQA requires the decision-making agency to balance the benefits of a project against its significant unavoidable impacts when determining whether to approve a project. If the benefits of the project outweigh its unavoidable adverse environmental effects, those effects may be considered acceptable (CEQA Guidelines Section 15093(a)). CEQA requires the agency to state in writing the specific reasons for considering a project acceptable when significant impacts are not avoided or substantially lessened. Those reasons must be based on substantial evidence in the Final EIR or elsewhere in the administrative record (CEQA Guidelines Section 15093(b)).

Having reduced the adverse significant environmental effects of the Santa Maria 2045 General Plan ("Project") to the extent feasible by adopting mitigation measures, and having considered the entire administrative record on the project, the City Council has weighed the benefits of the Project against its unavoidable adverse impacts after mitigation in regard to Agricultural Resources, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Noise, and Transportation and Traffic. While recognizing that the unavoidable adverse impacts are significant under CEQA thresholds, the City Council nonetheless finds that the unavoidable adverse impacts that will result from the Project are acceptable and outweighed by specific social, economic and other benefits of the Project.

The City Council of the City of Santa Maria adopts and makes this Statement of Overriding Considerations regarding the significant unavoidable impacts of the Project and the anticipated benefits of the Project as required by Section 21081(b) of the California Environmental Quality Act. The City Council finds that each of the benefits set forth below in this Statement constitutes a separate and independent ground for finding that the benefits of the Project outweigh the risks of their potential significant adverse environmental impacts. The benefits of the Project, which constitute the specific economic, legal, social, technological and other considerations that justify the approval of the Project are as follows:

1. The Project considers and plans for future growth in the City of Santa Maria through the year 2045 based on the City's historic growth patterns, current and potential land available for development, and current and future economic and social conditions in Santa Maria. The growth projections were informed by job and population projections from the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) and three cycles of potential Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).
2. The Project plans for future growth within existing City boundaries and future planned annexation areas while balancing the need for adequate infrastructure, housing, and economic vitality with the needs for resource management,

environmental protection, and preservation of quality of life for Santa Maria residents.

3. The Project provides a Land Use Policy Map that accounts for existing development, physical constraints, future growth areas including proposed annexation areas, economic development, hazards, and incompatible uses, and assigns densities and use types accordingly to enhance the safety, livability, and economic vitality of Santa Maria.
4. The Project implements principles of sustainable growth by concentrating intensification of existing urban uses primarily along key commercial and transportation corridors (ex. Main Street and Broadway), thereby providing opportunities for a diverse mix of uses while maintaining the City's existing single family residential neighborhoods.
5. The Project enhances the local economy and provides opportunities for future jobs and business development commensurate with forecasted growth by planning for a mix of residential and commercial development near existing urbanized areas and transportation corridors.
6. The Project improves mobility options through the development of a multi-modal transportation network that enhances connectivity, supports community development patterns, limits traffic congestion, promotes public and alternative transportation methods, and supports the goals of adopted regional transportation plans.
7. The Project is the product of a comprehensive planning effort driven by members of the general public, members of the Technical Advisory Committee, city stakeholders, the Planning Commission and the City Council through numerous surveys, public meetings, hearings, and workshops that resulted in a thoughtful balance of community, economic, social, and environmental interests.