

Nathan MacBeth

From: Planning ZoningInfo
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 4:04 PM
To: Nathan MacBeth
Subject: FW: Thurber /Soquel, Item #241320, APN 025-351-19

Public Comment regarding Application 241320.

John Hunter

Planner – Development Review
Community Development & Infrastructure

Phone: 831-454-3170 / 831-247-4118
701 Ocean Street, Room 410

-----Original Message-----

From: Karen Gamell <kgamell@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 6:49 PM
To: Nathan MacBeth <Nathan.MacBeth@santacruzcountyca.gov>
Cc: Planning ZoningInfo <Planning.ZoningInfo@santacruzcountyca.gov>; Jerry Busch <Jerry.Busch@santacruzcountyca.gov>; Michael Lam <Michael.Lam@santacruzcountyca.gov>
Subject: Thurber /Soquel, Item #241320, APN 025-351-19

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Dear Friends,

I reside at 1989 Serenata Court, and the proposed five story, 67 foot tall, project for the corner of Soquel and Thurber is both unwelcome and objectionable for many reasons, but probably most importantly, is the unsuitability of this primarily riparian area for dense development.

Unsuitable, illconsidered and unsightly in this mainly low rise area.....even the Institutions, the nearby Sutter Hospital doesn't exceed the height of this monstrosity of a project. A project of this scale might be appropriate in New York City, or even San Jose, but certainly not in suburban Santa Cruz!

Not only is it very much overscale for that site, but there's inadequate provisions for parking. And one wonders where the water will come from, as I understand that this site lies within the Soquel Water District area?!

I also note there are no considerations at all for improvements to the very much increased traffic on Thurber "Lane"! A lane! Not a highway!

With the recently approved Sutter Cancer Center, across the street, (which is most welcome, and appropriately scaled,) this project will only contribute to the already overburdened traffic in this area.

I will personally be negatively impacted very much by this proposal, because I live across the street, and the parking situation here is already difficult, (from Dominican employees) so overflow parking from this project will necessitate the installation of a huge mechanical gate in order to protect what little parking is ours.

This tall overscale building will not only block our views, but will block out the morning sun! Not to mention, destroy the value of our properties, upon which we are taxed. (For which we'd expected protection by our representatives, from predatory out of town developers and owners!!)

Please explain how this project could possibly be exempt from review by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as this project is definitely detrimental to both the environment, as well as quality of life.

I believe that should the county, state and federal governments actually want to increase Santa Cruz housing (without destroying existing communities, and quality of life) they will work to expand the utility line in it's outlying areas, which would be heartily welcomed by residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Karen Gamell

Sent from my iPhone

Nathan MacBeth

From: Emma Turner <emmaroseturner99@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 9:53 PM
To: Donovan Arteaga
Cc: Nathan MacBeth; Manu Koenig
Subject: Santa Cruz Affordable Housing Approval

****CAUTION:This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.****

Dear Santa Cruz County Planning Commissioners:

I'm writing to express my strong support for the Anton Solana affordable housing project at Thurber Lane and Soquel Drive. We desperately need more housing for working families, seniors and young professionals in our community. Please support efforts to house our workforce by approving this important project.

Thank you for voting yes on this project!

Nathan MacBeth

From: Geoffrey Ellis <gneacc@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 21, 2025 9:08 AM
To: Donovan Arteaga
Cc: Nathan MacBeth
Subject: proposed Anton Solana development APN: 025-351-19

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Donovan Arteaga, county planner:

This is a public comment regarding the proposed Anton Solana development at the corner of Soquel Drive and Thurber Lane.

As a matter of fire safety for the residents of the Santa Cruz Gardens neighborhood, the proposed development should be scaled down from 173 residential units to 43 units. The issue is an emergency evacuation of Santa Cruz Gardens in the event of a fire. We already have more than 500 homes in the neighborhood. All of us would need to leave using Thurber Lane. Adding another 257 off-street parking spaces, as the developer proposes, would add at 257 vehicles between us and Soquel Drive, plus whatever additional vehicles the tenants parked on the street.

In principle, there is another evacuation route of us from upper Winkle Ave to upper Benson Ave to lower Winkle Ave to Soquel Drive. However, this route is obstructed by three locked gates. These gates are supposed to be unlocked in an emergency, however it is unclear whether that would happen. Even if it did happen, there is no way to notify the residents that the gates are open. So, in a situation where minutes count, we would all head for route that we know, Thurber Lane.

During the Camp Fire in 2018, 85 people died in the town of Paradise, most of them because they were unable to get away from the fire due to an inadequate road system. Let's not have such a disaster here. The proposed development needs to be limited to 43 residential units with a corresponding reduction in building height and parking spaces.

Geoffrey Ellis
212 Germaine Ave
Santa Cruz, CA 95065

Nathan MacBeth

From: Donovan Arteaga
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 8:23 AM
To: Nathan MacBeth
Subject: FW: Proposed bldg complex on Thurber lane



Donovan Arteaga

Planning Technician
Community Development & Infrastructure

Phone: 831-454-2801
701 Ocean Street, Room 400

From: dcswaterlily <danagorath@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 6:14 AM
To: Donovan Arteaga <Donovan.Arteaga@santacruzcountyca.gov>
Subject: Proposed bldg complex on Thurber lane

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Hello,

I live on Bobwhite Lane just off Thurber lane. Unfortunately I can not be there for the meeting on Wednesday morning. Please read my concerns about the building project.

Please be realistic about this area and what it can handle as far as extra traffic and extra cars parked out on the streets.

Please remember that there is a fire station on Thirber lane and the emergency vehicles need to get out and go to help fast.

Please understand that there are a large number of families that live up the hill. In the event of an emergency, these people will be trapped if there is too much congestion down at the bottom where the proposed building complex is planned.

I live at the very bottom of the hill, very close to Soquel, and it already takes me a long time to get out onto Thurber in the normal school mornings when everyone is dropping off at school and going to work, etc. This would be a disaster in the event of an emergency.

I saw that you guys studied the amount of car traffic on Soquel, but did you study the amount on Thurber lane above Sequoia to understand what really goes on over here? People need to go up the hill and then back down to travel kids to school and then go to work. This was not noted in the Soquel traffic report.

Please don't be greedy and build the proposed amount of living spaces on this land. Please be reasonable and knock the number down so that people will be safe.

Let's also be honest and know that many more cars than one per unit will be there. Just please look at the rest of the neighborhood and know this. When a family lives together, we each have cars so we can each go to work. And yes, older teens and young adults who still live at home also need to go to work. We each need places to park our cars. Please be honest about this in your calculations.

As you know, this is not a spot in the middle of rural California, it is already a congested area.

Please be as wise and generous and imagine that you and your family lived here.

Thank you,
Dana Gorath
2023 Bobwhite Ln, Santa Cruz, CA 95065

Nathan MacBeth

From: Donovan Arteaga
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 7:41 AM
To: Nathan MacBeth
Subject: FW: Expressing support for Anton Solana



Donovan Arteaga

Planning Technician
Community Development & Infrastructure

Phone: 831-454-2801
701 Ocean Street, Room 400

From: Caitlin Brune <cmbrune@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 8:05 PM
To: Donovan Arteaga <Donovan.Arteaga@santacruzcountyca.gov>
Subject: Expressing support for Anton Solana

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Dear Mr. Arteaga,

I am writing to express my unqualified and enthusiastic support for the Anton Solana project.

This 100-percent affordable rental housing development in the Live Oak Planning Area would provide 173 residential units - plus commercial space, an outdoor area and 257 parking spaces. It represents a significant and necessary investment in the future of our community and a model for other efforts to construct affordable housing.

Now is the time to fulfill the vision of a community where everyone - including working class people with lower incomes - can live comfortably in dignified housing.

Thank you for moving forward with this project.

Respectfully,
Caitlin Brune

Caitlin M. Brune (she/her/hers)

We plant seeds that will flower as results in our lives, so best to remove the weeds of anger, avarice, envy and doubt, that peace and abundance may manifest for all. ~ Dorothy Day

Schedule with me here: <https://calendly.com/caitlinbrune>

Pronouns: *she/her/hers* ** **Email:** cmbrune@gmail.com ** **Tel:** 831-345-1901 ** <https://www.homeconsulting.me> ** <https://lovingtheworld.substack.com/>

I live on the occupied unceded territory of the Awaswas-speaking Uypi Tribe. The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, descendants of indigenous people taken to missions Santa Cruz & San Juan Bautista during Spanish colonization of the Central Coast, is working hard today to restore traditional stewardship practices on these lands and heal from historical trauma. I recognize that I benefit from living and working on their traditional homeland and affirm their sovereign rights as First Peoples.

Please note: my working day may not be your working day. Please don't feel obligated to respond to my emails outside of your working hours.

Nathan MacBeth

From: Marie Coughlin <Littlemarie867@outlook.com>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 9:00 PM
To: Nathan MacBeth
Subject: Opposition/Concerns to Item#8. 241320
Attachments: CA Home insurance being dropped due to density.pdf; Take me to the river. article about water shortage in Santa Cruz.pdf; CA is willing to give special treatment to wealthy areas.pdf

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I live across the proposed project site off of Thurber Lane, on Serenata Court. I oppose this project, Item #8, 241320, APN: 025-351-19, and have listed my concerns:

Unsafe Lane Conditions

The main entrance for the largest parking lot is located on Thurber **Lane**. The definition of a **Lane** is a small narrow road, often found in rural areas, and provides access or movement but on a smaller scale than a street, whereas, the definition of streets are designed for significant vehicle movement, often with multiple lanes. Thurber **Lane** is a small, narrow, two paths **Lane** with no center turn lane and its narrowness only allows for street parking on one side of **Lane**. Having the one and only entrance to the large main parking lot for this project on Thurber **Lane** will create dangerous road conditions, as Thurber **Lane** was not designed for this type of traffic. There is no center turn lane, and all street parking is to be removed, and no loading zone, as this is a narrow **Lane** and not a street. I am concerned about the increase in traffic, as we will have an additional 237 plus cars using this same section of Thurber **Lane**, and for the safety of those who drive, walk, ride a bike, or attempt evacuation on this very narrow **Lane**.

Also, the Serenata Court HOA is looking into the process of obtaining a permit to purchase and install a gate for our private driveway, a costly expense that was unplanned and now we are saving for due to negative impacts from this project. The private Serenata Court driveway is directly across from proposed Building A & B, and there is an opening, walkway, breezeway between these two buildings and this opening aligns with our driveway, and we are concerned that with the lack of vehicle amenities on Thurber **Lane** (no center turn lane, no loading zone, and no parking, and increase in traffic) will result in tenants using this opening between the two buildings and trespass onto our private driveway to drop off/pick up folks and turnaround, instead of pulling into their parking lot do so.

Loss of Homeowners and our Renters Insurance due to Density

It is common knowledge that insurance companies are no longer writing renter's insurance policies or home owners insurance policies based on "density", where dwellings are too densely concentrated. You can read more about this in the "Insurance Being Dropped Due to Density" attachment. I am concerned that this highly DENSE housing project will result in the loss of both homeowners insurance as well as renters insurance, for those living in this neighborhood, due to this project.

Too high of a concentration of Affordable Housing for one neighborhood

This project is for 173, 100% Affordable housing apartments, instead of a mix of both affordable and market rate housing. Many Cities and Counties have passed Resolutions with the intent not to create one neighborhood with overly concentrated low income/affordable housing, as studies have shown highly concentrated low income neighborhoods can result in lower property values, higher crime rates, higher insurance rates for both home and auto. Our neighborhood within Live Oak where this proposed project is to be built, has done its part to provide affordable housing; we have a homeless shelter across the Chanticleer Pedestrian Walkway, Emerald Bay Apartments, Pacific Family Park, and the 253 below market rate (sec. 8) development proposed for 41st and Soquel Drive. Affordable housing should be available throughout the different neighborhoods with our County.

With the City of Santa Cruz, announcing plans to renovate and redevelop the Beach Flats neighborhood. I wonder will the existing affordable housing in Beach Flats be renovated and reallocated as high end market rate housing with ocean views, resulting in the displacement of current community members who will be priced out, and may relocate to another part of town that has below market rate/affordable housing like this project on Thurber **Lane** and Soquel Drive.

No description of project on project site

On September 11, 2025, I noticed the two project signs informing the neighborhood of this proposed project, one on Thurber **Lane** and the other on Soquel Drive have been removed. It is unclear if the proper timeline for these public signs to be in place occurred. Also, these two signs were blocked from public view by equipment, and supplies during the pumpkin patch set up.

Lack of Water

I am concerned that we do not have adequate water supply to support this highly dense project, and have attached a 2025 Santa Cruz Sentinel article titled "Take me to the river". With the State Community Housing and Development department constantly changing the numbers as to what Santa Cruz County housing goals are, how can one properly plan or adequately say we have an enough water to support a housing number that is always changing. I encourage the Santa Cruz Planning commission to look into this, as it seems to be an inherently flawed way of planning for water supply, when the housing number is always changing.

13 trees to be removed

Are any of these 13 trees Heritage trees? Is there a special permit that would need to be acquired to remove these 13 trees?

Loss of Sun

A majority of my solar panels are located on the North side of my roof resulting in a heavy reliance on the morning sun to generate power. The height of Building A & E, will block the morning sun, resulting in a significant reduction to the power generated by these existing solar panels on Serenata Court.

Lack of Privacy

Even though there will be a small narrow **Lane** between the units in building A & B and the condos on Serenata Court, the tenants will be able to directly look into our windows and backyards.

Santa Barbara parameters written into housing laws

Attached is an article from the San Francisco Chronicle highlighting how wealthy Santa Barbara County wrote in restrictions that appear to be applicable to their county regarding denying housing project.

P. Coughlin

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Californians' home insurance is being dropped due to 'density.' What does that mean?

MARCH 30, 2024

As posted at: [SF Chronicle](https://www.sfchronicle.com/california/article/home-insurance-density-renewal-19361963.php)

[_ \(https://www.sfchronicle.com/california/article/home-insurance-density-renewal-19361963.php\)](https://www.sfchronicle.com/california/article/home-insurance-density-renewal-19361963.php)

Last October, Marc Snyder's insurance company informed him it wouldn't be renewing his homeowners insurance this year for a reason he had never heard before: density.

WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT UP

"The disaster recovery provided helped our families."

The letter from Liberty Mutual said Snyder's home was "located in a region where the dwellings are considered to be too densely concentrated for us to continue to provide coverage."

Snyder was confused. After all, though he lives in San Francisco — the second-most densely packed major city in the United States — his single-family home on a quiet street in Noe Valley is hardly the image of closely packed housing.

I thought it made no sense," he said.

Brokers and industry experts say "density" is a relatively new term being tacked onto a familiar concept — one that may be affecting more homeowners across the Bay Area as California's insurance crisis worsens.

In an insurance context, density could mean two things, according to Amy Bach, executive director of the consumer advocacy group United Policyholders: either physical density or the concentration of a particular insurer's policies.

In the first instance, an insurance company might not renew a home in a physically dense neighborhood because it's worried about the risk of fire spreading quickly between tightly packed homes.

"You can do everything you can to make your home less likely to burn, but if your neighbor hasn't done anything, and they're right next

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Recipients

Renters insurance is being dropped in high-density areas because insurers perceive a high risk of widespread damage from incidents like fires, which can spread quickly through tightly packed buildings. This trend is part of a larger insurance crisis in California where insurers are withdrawing from high-risk areas to cut losses, leading to non-renewals and leaving renters with fewer options or facing significantly higher premiums for alternative coverage. [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]

- **Fire Risk:** Dense neighborhoods, especially those with older, wooden structures, increase the risk of a fire spreading rapidly and causing extensive damage to multiple properties. [2]
- **Rebuilding Costs:** The potential for widespread damage increases rebuilding costs for insurers. [2]
- **Market Strategy:** Some insurers are reducing their overall exposure to California's market due to these high risks, which contributes to the problem for renters in dense areas. [4, 5]

1. **Shop Around:** Contact other insurance companies to see if they offer policies in your area. [\[6\]](#)
2. **Use a Broker:** An independent insurance broker can help you find policies from lesser-known companies that may be an option. [\[6, 7\]](#)
3. **Contact the California FAIR Plan:** If you can't find a policy from a private insurer, the California FAIR Plan is a last resort for those who are rejected by the market. [\[6, 8\]](#)
4. **Seek Help from the California Department of Insurance (CDI):** Your 75-day notice from the insurer should include information about the CDI, which can review their decision. [\[9, 10\]](#)

- **Open Mail Immediately:** Act on all correspondence from your insurance company, as you may only receive 75 days' notice before your policy is canceled. [6, 9]

Photo | Take me to the river

By Shmuel Thaler

PUBLISHED: September 21, 2025 at 12:43 PM PT

A recent sunset paints the sky over the San Lorenzo River and downtown Santa Cruz in vibrant colors as the river flows to the Monterey Bay. According to a 2022 Santa Cruz Civil Grand Jury water report, "The average annual flow of the San Lorenzo River is about 30 billion gallons, though it can vary significantly from year to year. This is a substantial amount of water, with the City of Santa Cruz's water usage representing less than a tenth of the river's average flow. All of Santa Cruz's water is locally sourced from rainfall. Because there is insufficient storage to address periodic droughts, the County's water agencies have responded by stressing conservation. This has been extremely successful but is reaching practical limits." The report states that the city of Santa Cruz gross daily per capita water use declined from about 127 gallons in 2000 to 70 gallons-almost half-in 2015. Conservation measures continue to reduce water usage to less than 50 gallons per person in 2020, one of the lowest levels in California. During normal rainfall years, the water supply mostly meets the county's needs. However, demand during droughts, exceeds supply in parts of the county, resulting in a deficit. Over many years, this has led to chronic "overdrafting" of the basins and the lowering of the groundwater level causes saltwater intrusion to occur near the coast. Santa Cruz is one of only a few counties in California that does not receive any water from outside the county. (Shmuel Thaler – Santa Cruz Sentinel)





State Sen. Monique Limon inserted a specific provision in a housing bill that appears to target an apartment building in her Santa Barbara district.
Stephen Lam/S.F. Chronicle



Listen Now: A powerful California lawmaker wants to overturn the 'Holy Grail' of housing reform

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Two months ago, California passed what many described as the “Holy Grail” of housing reform: a law that exempts most urban infill projects from review under the California Environmental Quality Act, which interest groups often cynically leverage to delay or deny developments for reasons that have nothing to do with the environment.

Now, one of the state’s most powerful Democratic lawmakers is seeking to reverse that — seemingly for the lone purpose of undermining a single controversial project in her district. And her aggressive new strategy could define the next chapter of the NIMBY playbook in California.

Here’s what’s going on:

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This week was a frenzied one in Sacramento, as lawmakers raced to publish reams of lengthy and complex bills, hammer out deals and take final votes before the legislative session ends Saturday. On Monday night, the text of Senate Bill 158 dropped, and Jordan Grimes, a state and regional resilience manager at the nonprofit Greenbelt Alliance, began combing through it.

Grimes was hoping to find language he and other advocates had been pushing for to clarify environmental habitat protections in the CEQA reforms lawmakers had passed a few months ago.

Instead, he discovered something strange: a highly specific provision that applied CEQA to projects located in cities with more than 85,000 and fewer than 95,000 people and in counties of more than 440,000 but fewer than 455,000 people — as long as a piece of the project parcel was located on wetland and a regulatory floodway *and* was adjacent to a California historical landmark.

As far as Grimes could tell using 2020 Census data, **the only place in California that met these criteria was Santa Barbara** — an area represented by Democratic state Sen. Monique Limón, the incoming leader of the state Senate. Although Limón was originally set to take over in early 2026 from current leader Mike McGuire, the Senate abruptly voted Thursday to move the transition date to Nov. 17.

Within Santa Barbara, there was seemingly only one project that met the parcel criteria: a proposed eight-story apartment building with 270 units, including 54 reserved for low-income residents, located near the historic Santa Barbara Mission. The project had faced fierce local resistance, with Mayor Randy Rowse recently describing it as a “horrendous nightmare” and an “abomination.” The project’s developer, The Mission LLC, has sued both the city and county of Santa Barbara, including for alleged unlawful delays.

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For Grimes, the takeaway was self-evident.

"Here you have the incoming leader of the Senate ... and it appears to be that the first flex of her power is to stop an apartment project in her district," Grimes told me. "That's concerning on many levels."

Dave Rand, a prominent Southern California land-use attorney and CEQA expert, told me, "I have never seen a special targeted statute designed to specifically impose enhanced CEQA review requirements on a single housing project." Indeed, lawmakers have typically *exempted* individual projects from CEQA, including their own new Capitol office building.

"This is brutal, brutal targeted treatment by the Legislature," Rand added.

I repeatedly sought to talk with Limón by phone over the past week, but her office said she wasn't available. In response to an emailed list of detailed questions, her office sent a one-sentence statement saying Limón "provided feedback" on "a number of pieces" in the June CEQA reforms.

However, Limón's office acknowledged to CalMatters that she was responsible for the provision.

When I reached out to Louis Mirante, the Bay Area Council's senior vice president of public policy, he described Limón's action as "very, very unprecedented."

"When I look at that provision in that bill, I'm left wondering, 'What is this person's vision for California?'"

Limón's office denied to CalMatters that the provision is aimed at a specific project. But that's hard to believe, given how precise the criteria are.

Yet another example: The bill limits CEQA exemptions for housing proposed under the "builder's remedy" — which allows developers to bypass local zoning rules for projects with a certain percentage of affordable units

in areas without state-approved housing plans. In June, lawmakers exempted most builder's remedy projects 5 acres and under from CEQA review. Limón's provision, however, shrinks that to 4 acres.

Wouldn't you know it? The Santa Barbara project is roughly five acres and was proposed under the builder's remedy.

If SB158 passes the Legislature and is signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom, the project developer is certain to sue over Limón's provision.

"This bill is an example of the control of public policy by a few wealthy NIMBYs in an attempt to obstruct desperately needed low-income housing," The Mission LLC wrote in an unsigned statement. "We are confident that the courts will find it to be illegal as California prohibits legislation attacking a single project."

It's unclear what exactly motivated Limón to author the provision. Santa Barbara is denying involvement: City Administrator Kelly McAdoo told me in an email that none of the City Council members asked Limón for the language. However, the city has also argued that the project doesn't qualify for a CEQA exemption or other streamlining under the state's recent reforms.

Many Capitol observers told me they were willing to give Limón the benefit of the doubt, as her leadership style and legislative priorities have yet to be fully revealed.

I agree. But there's no doubt that Limón's secretive maneuver has raised serious questions about how she'll handle controversial housing policy in the Senate.

Who, for example, will she appoint to lead critical committees that help determine whether bills live or die? State Sen. Aisha Wahab of Fremont, the current leader of the Senate Housing Committee, strenuously opposed some of this year's most impactful housing bills.

Regardless of how Limón navigates her tenure, her attempt to target CEQA enforcement on a single project in her affluent district may have opened a door that can't be easily closed.

It sets a "terrible precedent," Rand told me, by injecting "a whole new level of uncertainty and unpredictability" into the already challenging development process. Now, developers don't just have to worry about changing tariffs and inflation rates — they have to worry about the Legislature unilaterally targeting their projects with terrifyingly precise bills crafted at the last minute behind closed doors.

Tactics like this will almost certainly have a chilling effect on development, even as lawmakers appear poised to pass other bills aimed at accelerating it — such as San Francisco state Sen. Scott Wiener's bill to pave the way for dense housing near transit.

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And it sends a disturbing message: that California is willing to give special treatment to wealthy areas represented by powerful lawmakers — which places like South Pasadena and Marin County have been all too happy to exploit.

The whole point of this year's CEQA reforms was to kick the politics out of housing as much as possible. But, with a wink, Limón's shady provision just rolled out the welcome mat again.

Emily Hoeven is a columnist and editorial writer for the Opinion section.

Sep 12, 2025



Emily Hoeven

COLUMNIST



Emily Hoeven is an Opinion columnist and editorial writer at the Chronicle. She won the Sacramento Press Club's award for best commentary (2024), placed second and third in the Best of the West contest for general interest column writing (2025 and 2024), and placed second in the California News Publishers Association's contest for best editorial comment (2024). Her columns have also sparked changes to San Francisco and California law.

She wrote CalMatters' daily WhatMatters newsletter on California politics and policy from March 2020 to January 2023 and makes frequent

Nathan MacBeth

From: Donovan Arteaga
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 7:42 AM
To: Nathan MacBeth
Subject: FW: Letter of Strong Support for the Proposed Anton Solana Mixed-Use Community



Donovan Arteaga

Planning Technician
Community Development & Infrastructure
Phone: 831-454-2801
701 Ocean Street, Room 400

From: Stacy Nagel <cagenagel@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 8:41 PM
To: Donovan Arteaga <Donovan.Arteaga@santacruzcountyca.gov>
Subject: Letter of Strong Support for the Proposed Anton Solana Mixed-Use Community

******CAUTION:**This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.****

I am writing today as a concerned resident of Santa Cruz and board member of the Santa Cruz County Business Council to express my enthusiastic support for the proposed Anton Solana mixed-use development.

This project represents a crucial step in addressing the pressing need for attainable workforce housing within our community. The proposal for 173 multi-family apartment homes, with specific provisions for rental rates aimed at households earning up to 70% of the Area Median Income, is essential for keeping our local workers, teachers, first responders, and service employees housed near where they work. This development is not just about increasing housing stock; it's about supporting the economic and social vitality of our entire city.

Beyond the vital housing component, the Anton Solana project offers substantial community benefits that will enhance the quality of life for current and future residents:

- **Neighborhood Commercial Space:** The inclusion of 1,800 square feet of commercial space will create a central gathering place, fostering community interaction and providing convenient local services for the neighborhood.

- **Connectivity and Open Space:** I strongly support the commitment to creating a pedestrian walking path along the riparian corridor. This path will safely connect residents to Winkle Park, Soquel Drive transit facilities, and the greater neighborhood, promoting walking and cycling. Furthermore, the preservation of approximately two acres of the riparian corridor as dedicated open space is a significant environmental benefit.
- **Community Amenities:** The planned amenities, including indoor recreational space, an outdoor community area, and a playground, ensure this development is a high-quality, sustainable community that invests in its residents.

The Anton Solana project is a well-designed, thoughtfully planned response to our community's needs. It successfully balances housing density with green space preservation and essential community integration. I urge the City Council to approve this project and allow this beneficial development to move forward quickly.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Stacy Nagel

Nathan MacBeth

From: Donovan Arteaga
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 7:41 AM
To: Nathan MacBeth
Subject: FW: proposed Anton Solana development Public Comments



Donovan Arteaga

Planning Technician
Community Development & Infrastructure

Phone: 831-454-2801
701 Ocean Street, Room 400

From: Thomas Sahakian <tom@tdsahakian.com>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 6:28 PM
To: Donovan Arteaga <Donovan.Arteaga@santacruzcountyca.gov>
Cc: Thomas Sahakian <tom@tdsahakian.com>
Subject: Fw: proposed Anton Solana development Public Comments

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From: Thomas Sahakian <tom@tdsahakian.com>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 6:25 PM
To: Donovan.Arteaga@santacruzcountyca.gov
Cc: Thomas Sahakian <tom@tdsahakian.com>
Subject: proposed Anton Solana development Public Comments

Donovan Arteaga, county planner:

This is a public comment regarding the proposed Anton Solana development at the corner of Soquel Drive and Thurber Lane:

No one that lives above the project site in Santa Cuz Gardens wants this area developed high-rise, high-density low-income housing.

My comments:

The number one concern is cars and emergency evacuations from the hills above Soquel Dr through Thurber Ln
Second is parking. 170 units is likely to bring double that number in vehicles and people to this area
Third is the idea of low-income or affordable housing as rentals tends to draw more scallywags than we can handle

Suggestions:

Lastly, if these were being built as owned town homes or condos for people who live and work within a couple miles, obviously less density and height, I would welcome this development. I think we need homes and development where folks have some skin in the game and not transient rental units.

Thank you
Tom Sahakian
408-806-6929

Nathan MacBeth

From: Donovan Arteaga
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 8:21 AM
To: Nathan MacBeth
Subject: FW: Thurber proposal



Donovan Arteaga

Planning Technician
Community Development & Infrastructure
Phone: 831-454-2801
701 Ocean Street, Room 400

From: Linda Smith <ljs41@att.net>
Sent: Saturday, September 20, 2025 3:19 PM
To: Donovan Arteaga <Donovan.Arteaga@santacruzcountyca.gov>
Subject: Thurber proposal

******CAUTION:**This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.****

Please keep the complex as small as possible
there are 500 homes up here in Santa Cruz Gardens
and a school
In case of an emergency all those units with not enough
parking will be blocking us out of the way down Thurber
Please have no street parking at that complex

Linda Smith

Nathan MacBeth

From: Donovan Arteaga
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 9:53 AM
To: Nathan MacBeth
Subject: FW: Questions about Anton Solana development



Donovan Arteaga

Planning Technician
Community Development & Infrastructure

Phone: 831-454-2801
701 Ocean Street, Room 400

From: Su Gatch <sugatch27@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 9:00 AM
To: Donovan Arteaga <Donovan.Arteaga@santacruzcountyca.gov>
Subject: Questions about Anton Solana development

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Hello Mr. Arteaga and the SC planning department —

As a resident of Santa Cruz Gardens, I have significant concerns about the size of this development, that I would like to see addressed in the meeting tomorrow.

Yes we need more housing, but the size of this development will impact an already strained infrastructure in the Soquel Drive/Thurber Lane area.

I suggest it be reduced to less than half the current size, with a corresponding reduction in the amount of parking. It will still add a decent amount of housing and lessen the pain on the traffic as well.

Have you ever tried to make a left turn from Soquel onto Thurber between 3 and 6pm, as the possible 257 cars in this development that would eventually need to? Or turn from Thurber onto Soquel in the morning? It's already gridlock in one direction or the other.

A lot of us in this neighborhood now time our trips to fall between commute hours, or we have to contend with sometimes a half-hour of sitting in traffic to get just to Soquel.

Hopefully some of the residents would choose public transport or bicycle travel as much as possible, but since there is a paucity of services such as grocery or other stores and services within a mile or two in either direction, I think most people would default to using a car.

And then there's the need to evacuate the almost 500 homes in Santa Cruz Gardens in case of a wildfire, an all-too-likely event!

There is at least one more high-density project about to start between Thurber and 41st Avenue and possible others as well. I can't see into the future, but I can't help but think the gridlock will only get much worse.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Su Gatch
831-278-0826
sugatch27@gmail.com
su@sugraphics.com

Nathan MacBeth

From: Donovan Arteaga
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 9:53 AM
To: Nathan MacBeth
Subject: FW: Thurber Development

Donovan Arteaga

Planning Technician
Community Development & Infrastructure

Phone: 831-454-2801
701 Ocean Street, Room 400

-----Original Message-----

From: Leslie Haverstock <lesliehaverstock@me.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 9:09 AM
To: Donovan Arteaga <Donovan.Arteaga@santacruzcountycalifornia.gov>
Subject: Thurber Development

****CAUTION:This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.****

Hello! I am writing to give my input for consideration as the county meets to discuss the development at the corner of Thurber and Soquel.

I live directly across from the empty lot that is being considered. The size of this development is way too large of a scale for this area. There is way too much traffic in this area already. It's really tough to get out of my driveway during commute times, especially when school is in session. This gridlock is also a safety risk if there were a need to evacuate. This gridlock will also have an impact on others in the community as access for emergency crews from the fire station or ambulances will have difficulty getting to those in need of help.

The lack of parking will also have an impact on this neighborhood. Down the street is the Emerald Bay facility. If you go past there in the evening or morning, you can see that those living in that complex park in the business lots, on other people's lawns, or even in red zones. It's a mess. There is not enough room for in this neighborhood to accommodate all the units proposed for this development.

This community does need housing, but the type of housing it needs is not the large scale of this project. Rentals from outside developers are money makers for the developer, but it is not a solution for our community. If you want our workforce to live in Santa Cruz county, give them a place to live for the long term. We need housing that is affordable to OWN! The lot at Thurber and Soquel is more suitable for townhomes that would allow workforce families to set down roots.

A smaller development would also allow the wildlife and water way in this area to continue to thrive. I don't care how much Anton says they are going to conserve the area and put in a "nature path" that goes to Winkle Farm Park, but even they note it is a stretch. Furthermore, has anyone on the county board actually gone to Winkle Farm Park? It's a huge gopher ridden plot of dead grass. There's not much for recreational activities at that park. It could use a bit of updating.

I would really hope that the county would take a minute to really think of the impact this development would have on those living in this area. The noise, environmental impact, parking, traffic, and the fact that this huge development does nothing to keep families in our community. Build affordable housing that people can own. This is how you build a community versus lining the pocket of some developer in Sacramento.

Sincerely,
Leslie Haverstock

Living at Serenata Ct across from this proposed development.

Nathan MacBeth

From: Donovan Arteaga
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 9:53 AM
To: Nathan MacBeth
Subject: FW: Support for Anton Solana at Thurber and Soquel



Donovan Arteaga

Planning Technician
Community Development & Infrastructure

Phone: 831-454-2801
701 Ocean Street, Room 400

From: J. D. Hillard <jd@eds.org>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 9:47 AM
To: Donovan Arteaga <Donovan.Arteaga@santacruzcountyca.gov>
Subject: Support for Anton Solana at Thurber and Soquel

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To Santa Cruz County Planning Commission:

From J.D. Hillard (Santa Cruz resident)

Please register my full support for the Anton Solana development. This is a rare opportunity. The development would enable hundreds of families to live in our community, helping reduce the constant exodus of people who don't have high paying jobs or inherited wealth.

September 22, 2025

To: Santa Cruz County Planning Commission

Re: Agenda item #8, September 24, 2025



Dear Commissioners,

We write in strong support of the proposed affordable housing development at Soquel Drive and Thurber Lane (Application #241320). This 100% affordable project will bring 173 homes to a vacant parcel identified as an opportunity site in the County's Housing Element and Sustainability Update. Importantly, it will provide multiple two- and three-bedroom apartments suited for families within walking or biking distance of major county healthcare employers like Dominican Hospital and Sutter Health, as well as schools, transit, parks, and shopping.

The project is an excellent example of infill housing. It is disappointing that the height was reduced and that 257 parking spaces are included, more than typically required for 100% affordable housing. We understand that these concessions were made to address community concerns expressed in April, but both changes mean fewer homes in a location so well suited for them.

We are glad to see strong investments in bike and pedestrian safety, including widening Thurber Lane, adding a separated sidewalk and bike lane, improving sidewalks and curb ramps, relocating the bus stop and creating a new crosswalk at Soquel and Chanticleer. These and other changes will make it safer to walk, bike, and take transit in this corridor. The plan also preserves the riparian corridor and adds a new public pathway to Winkle Park, giving residents and neighbors safe access to open space.

As an SB 330-vested project, this proposal is consistent with the County's housing, climate, and transportation goals. It will help meet the urgent need for affordable homes for local workers, especially those employed in healthcare, education, and local services.

Please support the staff recommendation and allow this much-needed project to move forward without delay, as required under state law

Sincerely,

Janine Roeth

Gavin Roth

Rafa Sonnenfeld

Ryan Meckel

Jocelyn Wolf

Volunteer leads, Santa Cruz YIMBY

Santa Cruz YIMBY Mission: We envision a community where our neighbors of all ages, cultures, abilities, and incomes, can make Santa Cruz County their home. In response to the ever-increasing cost of living, we advocate for more affordable housing to meet the needs of our growing population. Santa Cruz YIMBY is a chapter of YIMBY Action, a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization.