

VANDENBERG VILLAGE COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

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April 28, 2026

Mike Prater, Executive Officer, and Commissioners
Santa Barbara County Local Agency Formation Commission
105 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Business Item No. 2 – Confirm City SOIs

Vandenberg Village Community Services District (VVCSD) was established in 1983 pursuant to California Government Code § 61000 to provide potable water and wastewater services to the community of Vandenberg Village, an unincorporated area of Santa Barbara County north of the City of Lompoc. VVCSD is governed by a five-member Board of Directors elected by Vandenberg Village residents.

Vandenberg Village is a planned residential community of approximately 8,000 residents, developed primarily during the 1960s and 1970s by William Ebbert. The community is geographically constrained by protected chaparral lands on three sides and federally owned property on the fourth, resulting in clearly defined physical boundaries and limited opportunities for outward expansion. The Village is therefore approaching build-out, with only three remaining parcels totaling approximately 87 acres identified for future residential development. VVCSD's existing water and wastewater infrastructure has been evaluated and confirmed to have sufficient capacity to serve these remaining developments.

VVCSD's existing service configuration is efficient, financially self-supporting, and consistent with the statutory purposes of California community services districts. Infrastructure has been planned, constructed, and financed to meet local needs without creating excess capacity. Service boundaries reflect District-owned infrastructure, established development patterns, and the absence of integrated municipal service networks, thereby avoiding duplication of City systems.

VVCSD provides direct accountability to its residents and ratepayers through locally elected governance. Rates, capital investment decisions, and operational priorities are tailored to local conditions and infrastructure, and VVCSD has demonstrated sustained compliance with state and federal water and wastewater regulatory requirements independent of municipal governance or operational control.

VVCSD's current Sphere of Influence appropriately reflects the limits of its infrastructure, service responsibilities, and planning authority. Potable water service is entirely independent of the City

of Lompoc, and wastewater collection and system operations are locally owned and managed by VVCSD. Wastewater treatment capacity is secured through a long-standing contractual arrangement for regional treatment and disposal services, and does not constitute municipal wastewater service delivery, shared governance, or integrated operational control by the City.

No evidence has been presented indicating that annexation, consolidation, or expansion of the City of Lompoc's Sphere of Influence would improve service efficiency, reduce duplication, enhance public accountability, or provide a demonstrable public benefit beyond existing arrangements. To the contrary, the current configuration provides effective, locally governed services consistent with the principles of orderly growth and efficient service delivery.

Accordingly, VVCSD's existing Sphere of Influence is consistent with the factors set forth in Government Code § 56425, including: (1) **present and planned land uses**, as the Village is a largely built-out residential community with clearly defined boundaries and limited remaining development; (2) **present and probable need for public facilities and services**, which is fully met by existing District water and wastewater systems with adequate remaining capacity; (3) **capacity and adequacy of public services**, as demonstrated by autonomous operations, regulatory compliance, and infrastructure specifically designed for community needs; (4) **social and economic communities of interest**, reflected in long-standing, locally governed service delivery directly accountable to District residents and ratepayers; and (5) **physical and economic constraints**, including geographic containment by protected open space and federal lands and the absence of integrated municipal infrastructure. Together, these factors support infrastructure-based boundaries, continued local accountability, and the reliable and efficient provision of essential public services without the need for annexation, consolidation, or expansion of municipal influence.

Response to City of Lompoc Sphere of Influence Expansion Justifications

The City of Lompoc's correspondence to Santa Barbara LAFCO dated December 19, 2025 relies primarily on long-range planning objectives, future housing projections, and participation in ongoing policy and grant-funded planning processes to support potential expansion of its Sphere of Influence. While such initiatives may inform future municipal planning, they do not establish a factual or legal basis for expanding municipal influence into areas that are already effectively served by independent special districts and for which no present or probable service need has been demonstrated.

Government Code § 56425 requires that Spheres of Influence be based on existing conditions and a demonstrated, probable need for public facilities and services. Speculative growth scenarios dependent upon future General Plan updates, anticipated RHNA allocations, or post-census projections do not satisfy this standard. The City's stated intent to plan for growth several decades into the future does not constitute evidence of an imminent or foreseeable need to expand municipal service responsibility in a geographically constrained, largely built-out community that already receives adequate local services.

While the City references regional housing demand associated with Vandenberg Space Force Base and RHNA obligations, neither RHNA law nor state housing policy requires Sphere of Influence expansion, annexation, or consolidation of local service providers. Housing need alone does not supersede the statutory factors governing SOI determinations, nor does it substitute for required findings regarding service efficiency, infrastructure capability, avoidance of duplication, or preservation of established communities of interest. No evidence demonstrates that inclusion of Vandenberg Village within the City's Sphere of Influence would materially advance housing delivery or improve public service outcomes.

The City's reliance on participation in the Sustainable Agricultural Land Conservation (SALC) grant program and prospective Memoranda of Agreement discussions likewise does not provide a basis for SOI expansion. The SALC process is exploratory and policy-oriented, intended to evaluate long-range coordination strategies, and does not relieve the Commission of its obligation to base Sphere of Influence determinations on existing infrastructure conditions and demonstrated public benefit, as required by law.

Assertions that Sphere of Influence expansion would reduce vehicle miles traveled, greenhouse gas emissions, or other environmental impacts are unsupported in the absence of project-level analysis. Sphere of Influence determinations are jurisdictional planning tools rather than land use entitlements or environmental mitigation measures, and such claims fall outside the scope of evidence properly considered in an SOI reaffirmation absent accompanying CEQA review.

Consistent with LAFCO policy and practice, the burden of demonstrating a public benefit from Sphere of Influence expansion rests with the proponent of change. In this instance, no evidence has been presented that expanding the City of Lompoc's Sphere of Influence into or around Vandenberg Village would improve service efficiency, reduce duplication, enhance accountability, or better serve the public interest than the existing configuration of locally governed, infrastructure-based service delivery.

Sincerely,

VANDENBERG VILLAGE COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT



Cynthia Allen, Ph.D.
General Manager



Richard Gonzales
President, Board of Directors

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