

Santa Barbara LAFCO

Commission Handbook Revisions Section 7

August 3, 2023

Background

- LAFCO is required to have written policies
- May 4, 2023 directed that staff return with revisions to Section 7 – “Policy Guidelines & Standards”
- Addresses SOI revisions to existing agricultural parcels
- Addresses extension of urban utility services to AG parcels

Proposed Amendment

LAFCO

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Formation Commission

Section 7 (II)(10). SOI POLICIES Attachment A

Agricultural resources and support facilities should be given special consideration in sphere of influence designations. High value agriculture areas, including areas of established crop production, with soils of high agricultural capability should be maintained in agriculture, and in general should not be included in an urban service sphere of influence unless the area resides in the Carpinteria Valley and contains greenhouses that demonstrate agricultural uses can remain viable while addressing Regional Water Quality Control Board regulations and Orders.

Business Item No 3

Proposed Amendment

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Section 7 (V)(3). POLICIES ENCOURAGING CONSERVATION OF PRIME AGRICULTURAL LANDS AND OPEN SPACE AREAS **Attachment A**

A sphere of influence revision or update for an agency providing urban services where the revision includes prior agricultural land shall be discouraged, [unless the sphere of influence revision would comply with Section 7 \(II\) above](#). Development shall be guided towards areas containing nonprime agricultural lands, unless such action will promote disorderly, inefficient development of the community or area.

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Section 7 (XII). EXTENDING URBAN UTILITY SERVICES TO AGRICULTURAL PARCELS

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It is the policy of the Commission to protect and preserve agriculture by avoiding the extension of potable water or wastewater services (sewers) to agriculturally zoned land ~~because this~~ that will foster uses other than agriculture.

Any LAFCO approval of a change of organization or out of agency service agreement that allows the extension of potable water or wastewater services to a parcel zoned for agricultural use will only be approved, if at all, if the approval is the area within the Carpinteria Valley that contains greenhouses that demonstrate agricultural uses can remain viable while addressing Regional Water Quality Control Board regulations and Orders, and/or limited to that portion of the parcel that includes an approved use that needs potable water or wastewater services, provided the use does not compromise agricultural viability.

This policy shall not be construed as indicating the Commission will approve proposals that lead to non-agricultural uses on agricultural parcels but rather indicates that should such approval be granted it is to be restricted to the specific area in which an approved land use requiring potable water or wastewater services is to occur or within the Carpinteria Valley that contains greenhouses that demonstrate agricultural uses can remain viable while addressing Regional Water Quality Control Board regulations and Orders.

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Public Comments

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- 5 Public Agencies (County AG, P&D, Cities of Santa Maria & Lompoc and Carpinteria Sanitary District submitted comments)
- Some suggested revisions, others suggested more information or input needed
- Grower-Shipper Association submitted comments suggesting the use of OASA

Business Item No 3

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Commission:

- Review and Discuss the attached Policies amendments
- Provide any feedback and/or direction about the policies
- Review and Approve the proposed changes
- Find that the proposed actions are not a "project" under California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines §15378(b)(5); or
- Direct the matter be reviewed by the Agricultural Advisory Committee