

Santa Barbara Happenings



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Santa Barbara City Council to Fund Rent Control Analysis

Data from the South Coast Rental Housing Survey Report shows the 2021 average cost of a 1-bedroom is approximately \$2,000, \$2,800 for a two-bedroom, \$3,993 for a three-bedroom, and \$5,000 for a four-bedroom. The South Coast averages Santa Barbara, Goleta, Isla Vista, Carpinteria, Montecito and Summerland.

Homelessness

The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors approved a lease agreement and services agreement with the Good Samaritan Shelter for managed homeless housing. The project consists of 33 prefabricated modular housing units to be located at 1016 Santa Barbara Street downtown for “individuals experiencing homelessness” and will cost a whopping \$3.5 million. Each unit will include a bed, desk and chair, heating and air conditioning, lighting and electricity, a window, and a lock for the door. Bathrooms will likely be communal.

Redistricting in South Coast Cities for Future Elections

Local cities are now beginning the process to finalize new district boundaries for the City Council elections. In Santa Barbara, three maps were presented to the City’s Independent Redistricting Commission. Each option kept the Eastside in District 1, the Mesa in District 2, the Westside in District 3, the Rivera in district 4, upper State in District 5, and the downtown area in District 6. The Commissioners will continue to meet during February and March, and are expected to select a final map on April 12, 2022.

The City of Goleta reviewed over 50 draft maps submitted by the public and Goleta’s Public Engagement Commission recommended four maps to the City after assessing factors including age, income, homeownership, language, and education. The Goleta City Council is expected to select a map during the March 1, 2022 City Council meeting.

The Carpinteria City Council will also be reviewing

draft maps in the next few weeks and is expected to hold a final hearing in March.

If you are interested, participate! It is these seemingly small decisions that have huge real-world impacts.

Santa Barbara’s Commercial Real Estate Sales Hit Record High for 2021/Leasing Not So Much

In a recent report released by Santa Barbara’s Hayes Commercial Group, commercial sales for the fourth quarter of 2021 reached a record high totaling \$770 million. Notable sales contributing to this total include the sale of Hotel Santa Barbara for \$41.9 million, Hotel Indigo for \$18.7 million, the previous Nordstrom building for \$13 million, and the Macy’s building and surrounding parking areas for \$63 million. It is rumored that the Nordstrom building will be converted to office space.

Leasing volume is still trailing pre-pandemic numbers. Only eight retail leases were signed on State Street, which is the lowest number in the last ten years. Storefront vacancies have again topped 10%. No doubt Santa Barbara retail downtown has hit the skids.

Rancho Estates Mobile Home Park in Goleta Sold

The Rancho Estates Mobile Home Park in Goleta was recently sold to a Southern California investment group.

The Rancho Estates Mobile Home Park has previously been the center of debate surrounding rent control laws. After the Court ruled that the Park must uphold rent control laws, the previous owners decided to subdivide the property under California’s condominium conversion rules. Any subdivision sales are limited in a development agreement the previous owners reached with the City of Goleta.

It is expected that the new owners will encourage resident ownership of the divided lots. Park residents will have the option to purchase the lot under their homes at a discounted priced with some financing assistance from ownership. Recent

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home sales show values around \$300,000. Current Park rents run between \$400 and \$800 a month. The property will remain under both City and State rent control rules and the subdivision project likely eliminates any talk of closing the park.

Election Coming for a Congressional State Assembly Seat and for Santa Barbara 2nd District Supervisor

The redistricting on State and County levels resulted in a new State Assembly District which includes all of Santa Barbara County. Gregg Hart has indicated he will run for the new Assembly seat and if he prevails, the 2nd District Supervisor seat will open.

The 2nd County Supervisorial District now includes almost all of the City of Santa Barbara, Isla Vista and parts of Goleta. Laura Capps appears to be the only candidate to express interest in running. Capps is currently serving her second term on the Santa Barbara School Board. The deadline to file for the Supervisorial seat election is March 11, 2022.

California Looks to Decrease Retail Theft but It Looks Like a Long Road

In 2014, Proposition 47 changed California law for the worse. Advertised to voters as "The Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act," Proposition 47 reclassified certain theft and drug possession offences from felonies to misdemeanors. Under Proposition 47, shoplifting and certain petty theft under \$950 became classified as misdemeanors and not vigorously prosecuted as crimes. To no surprise, retail theft has increased in response. Retailers are shutting down or leaving the state because they can't afford to pay theft insurance anymore and are tired of watching their merchandise walk out the door.

Assemblymember Jim Patterson hopes to change these laws. He introduced Assembly Bill 1599 to overturn some of the Proposition 47 provisions. If Assembly Bill 1599 makes its way through the Assembly, it would qualify as a referendum for the ballot and require a majority vote from the citizens in order to be approved statewide.

Santa Barbara Unified School Board Election Districts

In a 4-0 vote, the Santa Barbara Unified School District's Board of Trustees approved a map that will keep a 5-member board. The new map was created to transition from at large elections to trustee-area elections. The map will be utilized in November board elections.

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