

Santa Barbara Happenings



Terry A. Bartlett – Reetz, Fox & Bartlett LLP

Keep Local Black Gold in the Ground: Santa Barbara County Supervisors Deny Oil Trucking Permit

The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors, in a split voted, denied ExxonMobil's permit request for a restart of its Santa Ynez Unit. Since ExxonMobil has an existing vested right to operate the Santa Ynez Unit, what they need is a permit to temporarily use public roads to transport the oil out of Santa Barbara County until a replacement pipeline is available. The proposed route would be from Las Flores Canyon in southern Santa Barbara County north to the Santa Maria Valley and Kern County. The restart would also bring back high-paying jobs and millions of dollars of local spending.

With gas prices at an all-time high because of government restrictions on energy production, the benefit of local production means less reliance on foreign supplies from bad actors like Russia and other overseas producers with few, if any, environmental or safety concerns.

Mike Stoker Announces Run for California's 37th Assembly District Seat

Former Santa Barbara County Supervisor Mike Stoker announced his run for California State Assembly. Just one day after this announcement, Gabe Escobedo suspended his campaign, leaving Stoker to run against Gregg Hart. In addition to his time served as County Supervisor, Stoker served as chairman of the California Agricultural Labor Relations Board, and served as the Region 9 administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency. Stoker intends to vigorously oppose every proposal to increase taxes in the state.

The primary election will be held on June 7, 2022. Stoker and Hart are expected to face off on November 8, 2022 for the Assembly seat.

Santa Barbara Native Michelle Weslander Quaid Runs for U.S Congress

On March 10, 2022, Santa Barbara resident Michelle Weslander Quaid announced her candidacy for the

24th Congressional District seat. Quaid is running as an independent and will be up against current representative Salud Carbajal.

Quaid's background is in government, serving as a senior executive in defense intelligence then Intelligence Community Deputy Chief Information Officer. She then worked for Google Inc. before founding her own company in 2015.

Quaid's principles include individual liberty, limited government, a secure southern border, support for first responders and veterans, fiscal responsibility and lower taxes, excellence in education, and energy independence.

Santa Barbara County Superior Court Lifts Order Suspending Trials

On March 14, 2022, the Santa Barbara County Superior Court Order suspending trials came to an end. This order applied to both criminal and civil jury trials. Several cases have been awaiting their time in court ever since the Court initially suspended trials in 2020.

Santa Barbara City to Resume Cruise Ship Program

Since March of 2020, Santa Barbara's cruise ship program has been stalled due to the "no sail" order issued by the CDC. Now, two years later, the City Council has moved to end the ban.

Prior to the ban, the cruise ship program generated hundreds of thousands of dollars in direct revenue annually and millions of dollars in tourist spending. The Waterfront Department already has 31 calls scheduled for 2022, and 27 scheduled for 2023. According to City officials, without these visits, the waterfront department would need to make up for the lost revenue, which could mean higher parking prices and/or slip fees.

Santa Barbara County Tax Revenue Projections

Santa Barbara County is projecting a \$2.7 million increase in property transfer taxes over what was

Continued on page 33

forecasted in the 2021-2022 budget. Bed taxes are projected to be \$2.6 million higher than what was expected last June, likely due to the public's long delayed urge to travel. The County is also projecting a year-end surplus of \$2 million in sales tax compared to forecasts.

Santa Barbara County to Expand Cannabis Industry

The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors voted to remove processing buildings from the acreage caps on cultivation. Currently, cannabis cultivation is capped at 1,575 acres outdoors in North County and 186 acres in greenhouses in Carpinteria Valley. Removing processing buildings from the caps will free up additional acres for cultivation and likely increase the number of stand-alone processing buildings. The City of Carpinteria opposed this amendment, citing previous issues with size and odor control.

The Board of Supervisors hope this will increase cannabis tax revenue, which is projected to be \$6 million less than what was forecasted in the 2021-2022 budget due to locally-grown cannabis being moved elsewhere for processing. Additionally, none of the six storefront locations in the County's unincorporated areas are up and running yet, as they are still in the process of getting their zoning permits and business licenses. Only one is expected to open by July of 2022.

In the same breath, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a 25,000 square foot processing building at Glass House Farms in the Carpinteria Valley. The processing building will be equipped with 19 carbon filters to decrease the smell of cannabis.

Get Your Cowboy/Cowgirl On: Santa Maria Elks Rodeo Ready to Ride in June

The 79th Santa Maria Elks Rodeo will return June 2nd-5th at the Santa Maria Elks/Unocal Events Center.

This year, there are three candidates seeking the Elks Rodeo queen crown. The crown is given to the top fundraiser. The campaign kicks off April 16, 2022 and lasts 12 weeks. Typical fundraisers include golf tournaments, raffles, and dinners. The 2021 Elks Rodeo queen raised \$550,000. All money raised goes towards scholarships, youth recreation, and other community programs.

Santa Maria has also been asked to host the

California Circuit Finals Rodeo semi-annual conference and the Miss Rodeo California Clinic. These events will bring representatives from other Rodeos in the state and new visitors to Santa Maria.

Santa Barbara Unified School District Forced to Adjust to State Mandated Pre-K

As part of the California Comeback Plan, Governor Newsom signed legislation that requires all public schools, by 2025, to implement universal transitional kindergarten (or Pre-K). The legislation calls for a 12-to-1 student to adult ratio (compared to the current 24-to-1 ratio) and expands the eligibility for 4-year-olds who have missed the cut off for kindergarten. All this while teachers and district staff across the country have been leaving their positions since the start of the pandemic, resulting in a national shortage of teachers.

Accessory Dwelling Units Continue to Grow in Tri-County Region

According to data from the Department of Housing and Community Development, accessory dwelling units ("ADUs"), often referred to as "granny flats" are growing in popularity, with 952 units permitted for construction in 2020 in Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo counties. In 2016, only 74 units were permitted. ADUs are independent living facilities on an existing parcel. This increase is likely be attributable to the 2020 ADU laws, allowing the construction of ADUs inside existing multifamily buildings. This includes the conversion of garages and storages rooms, for example, into housing. The 2020 law also prohibits any lot size requirements when building ADUs.

ADUs can also be a source of additional income for property owners, or extra space for a parent or child in college. The increased density, however, also results in less parking and more congestion.

SAN ROQUE REALTY



"A Friend on Your Side"®

Ed Fuller

Broker/Owner

GRI, ABR, BPOR, SRES, e-Pro, GREEN
Selling Santa Barbara Real Estate Since 1979
Office 805.687.1551 Cell 805.570.6988
55 Hitchcock Way Suite 202
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
CalBRE Lic #00661695
Ed@SanRoqueRealty.com