

Santa Barbara Happenings

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More Stores in San Francisco's Largest Mall Continue to Close, Foreshadowing the Future of State Street.

San Francisco's largest mall, the San Francisco Centre, has lost a combined 14 businesses in the past few months. Customer flow was barren. The food courts were consistently empty and the lasting effects of the covid pandemic have done immense damage to the shopping industry. Currently, the mall still remains, but many expect more stores to close for good.



State Street, while not exposed to as many detrimental factors plaguing a city like San Francisco, also contains many vacant spots in prime locations, with more to come. This is evident by the city's failed tax

revenue projections vs. receipts for the most recent fiscal year. While many districts in Santa Barbara met their projects, the State Street promenade is one of the biggest misses, falling short of their projections by 6.1% for the year (8.4% for the most recent quarter). The State Street experiment is a failure. Time to open it back up to vehicles and provide free parking.

90 Unit Milpas Street Housing Project Approved By SB City Council.

A new project approved by the SB City Council containing 90 housing units is on its way to Milpas Street in Santa Barbara. The structure will have 29 studios, 46 one-bedroom, and 15 two-bedroom units with nine dedicated for very low-income individuals and six dedicated to moderate-income individuals. The development will be in the shape of an "L" and up to four stories. 65 parking spaces are currently dedicated to the development.

Santa Barbara is getting more housing, but not without a great cost. The project has faced strong opposition from members of the council and residents in the area, claiming the new building will cause more traffic congestion, create flooding hazards, block views, and more. The development has also forced current senior residents on the lot to search for new housing, as the new project will not

be able to serve their needs. The property owners will assist in relocating the residents.



Noozhawk image.

Goleta City Council Adds Increased Relocation Assistance Landlord Obligations.

Goleta City Council has amended their tenant protections ordinance, specifically increasing landlord's and property owner's duties during eviction and relocation. Landlords now must give notice of 120 days before a no-fault eviction. They must also pay the greater of two months of relocation assistance or \$8,000. Half must be paid during that 120-day notice period and the other half as the tenant moves out. The eviction of a tenant to take property off the market will result in a minimum of five years before the property may enter the market again. The council also added anti-harassment policies, restricting landlords from:

- Invading tenants' privacy
- Failing to make timely repairs
- Threatening tenants with harm
- Influencing tenants to move out through emission of facts
- Refusing to acknowledge rent payments
- Asking about or threatening to report a tenant's immigration status
- Reducing or removing housing services such as access to storage that was included in the lease
- Threatening or retaliating against tenants joining unions or exercising their rights

Restrictions of the landlord's ability to regulate their property and control its status on the market harms small, family-owned, owner operated landlords the most, meanwhile large property managers can sustain themselves. This ultimately results in the reduced availability of housing in the market generally and forces sympathetic mom and pops out of the business. (See page 21, SBRPA-SBAOR letter to Goleta City Council).

Project With 24 Three-Bedroom Units Approved in Isla Vista.

In an open lot near Camino Pescadero Road in Isla Vista, a 24-unit, three-story housing unit has been approved by the SB Planning Commission. Of the 24 three-bedroom units, three are dedicated for very-low-income individuals while three more are dedicated for moderate-income individuals. 37 parking spaces in addition to 144 bike spaces will be included.

Who Will Pick Our Food? AI Powered Robotic Harvesters to Replace and Reduce Farming Workforce.

The rapid improvement of artificial intelligence has brought many industries to work on the development of the technology into their workforce. With around 42% of farm workers estimated to be illegal immigrants, some American farmers are looking towards AI to fill these voids. AI programs and machines can separate certain crops from weeds, gathering acres of harvest in hours, cutting 70% of human work hours. Another farm has trialed a machine that can perform a day's work of 12 harvesters by itself, while saving 32% cost per acre. AI strawberry harvesters can perform the work of 25 workers in the same time frame. The average rate of human error during the harvest process is 10%, yet further development of these AI technologies can bring that number down to 0%.

There are certain downsides to the development of this technology. The average upfront costs of these technologies are very expensive, also there will be a demand for consistent and reliable human labor that possess the skills required for operating the machinery.

SB City Begins Negotiations With Developers for 313 Unit Housing Plan at Paseo Nuevo.



Image EDHAT

The first steps to negotiations have begun for a proposed 313-unit residential development on Paseo Nuevo. Of the 313 units, 80 will be dedicated for affordable

housing with the rest to be sold at the standard mar-

ket rate. The development would also include a public gym and specialty food market. The project has yet to be fully approved, though the City and property owners are looking to agree to something soon.

SB 2025 Rent Survey Shows "Affordability" on the South Coast.

The city has collected data representing the rent prices from April in the South Coast region of Santa Barbara. The median prices of a studio, one-, two-, three-, and four-bedroom apartment were \$2,275, \$2,841, \$3,850, \$5,500, and \$8,500, respectively. The data also revealed the varying costs of different unit sizes in the immediate area. For example, Santa Barbara and Montecito both had the most expensive studios at a median of \$2,350. Isla Vista's median cost of two- and three- bedroom units were nearly twice as much as the surrounding areas.

Looking Back on the Palisades Fire: Where Has the Aid Gone? Answer: Not to Those That Lost Homes in the Fire.

Eight months after the fire was officially contained, the aftermath of the Palisades fire demonstrates shady government practices. FireAid, a fundraising event that generated over \$100 million, was discovered to have given that money to the Annenberg Foundation. Upon further investigation of the foundation, critics are suspicious as to why this foundation was selected to help with aid. None of their organizations indicate expertise in fire aid. In addition, victims of the fire have consistently complained about the lack, or even absence of aid they have received from this supposed \$100 million charity. The chief communication director of the foundation recently confirmed that residents would not be receiving any of the money. Instead, all the money would be distributed to the various groups affiliated with the Annenberg Foundation themselves. Some of these groups focus on immigration policies, native communities, low-income families, and many more.

But, not even one NGO recipient focuses on residents of the Palisades fire. What was the point?

https://www.sbcurent.com/p/pacific-palisades-fire-six-month?img=https%3A%2F%2Fsubstack-post-media.s3.amazonaws.com%2Fpublic%2Fimages%2F-22c97c21-7028-4ea7-8d4c-1c673fcf-70ce_800x621.heic&open=false

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