



Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy

# CAUSE

*regional power in action*

August 24, 2021

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Honorable Clint Lorimore

President, Regional Council

Southern California Association of Governments

900 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1700

Los Angeles, CA 90017

Re: SoCal Greenprint

Dear SCAG President Lorimore,

CAUSE is an organization that works to support environmental restoration efforts to enhance equitable access to green space in “park-poor” communities like Oxnard and Santa Paula facing severe health and environmental disparities. Accessing data about existing green space access in our communities is vital to our work. Furthermore, as a community in Ventura County which has been hard-hit by wildfires in recent years, engaging our residents to understand risk and build resilience to natural disasters is more important than ever.

Following the July 1 discussion about the future of the SoCal Greenprint, we urge the SCAG Regional Council to keep the project on track and ensure that the free, interactive, easy-to-use resource is completed in time to make it possible to plan for the sustainable growth needed to build a healthy and vibrant Southern California.

We appreciate the SCAG Regional Council’s efforts to ensure that there is rigorous debate and substantive public input for the launch of the informational resource tool that will make more than 100 publicly available data sources available via interactive maps to make it easier to integrate nature into the future growth and development of the region. We represent one of the more than 60 organizations from across the six counties that have provided feedback and input to get the SoCal Greenprint to where it is today.

The data layers chosen were selected based on feedback provided on what information is essential to the five primary stakeholders that will be building the future of the region: developers, planners, government agencies, community organizations and conservation professionals. Data such as the location of essential infrastructure like sewage lines, where wildfires have historically occurred, groundwater sources and

where tree canopies are located are among the maps that will make it clear what the most efficient locations are for building new housing, what natural resources need to be protected and the climate change impacts that need to be considered to build resilient communities.

Access to information will make it easier to build the housing needs required to sustain an economically dynamic region, and that is what the SoCal Greenprint offers. It does not establish new rules, create new regulations or alter existing data, as some opponents have claimed. It was built by experts on environmental stewardship and data, with transparent input from a diverse number of stakeholders, including the building industry, to make it a free, useful and optional resource to protect the environmental assets of the region.

We are eager for the opportunity to reiterate our support for the project and listen to other stakeholders who may have additional feedback to strengthen the usefulness of the tool. However, we hope that the Aug. 24 public hearing and subsequent action serve as a way to improve the tool and process and not derail it. At a time when the threats of climate change – including drought, wildfire, environmental degradation and air quality – are clearer than ever, now is not the time to ignore the information that will empower us to make smarter decisions.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maricela Morales". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "M".

Maricela Morales, Executive Director

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