

Public Comments
Study Session – Economic
Opportunities Study

Written Comments Received By 12pm on 01/23/2023



January 23, 2023
City Council Meeting

From: Suzanne Moore [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 23, 2023 10:35 AM
To: Public Comment; _City Council; _Planning Commission Group
Cc: Suzanne Moore
Subject: Public comment on Economic Opportunities Study 1/23/23

[CAUTION: External Email]

Thank you, Kosmont Consultants, for providing this report of potential economic opportunities. And thank you, City staff, council members, and commissioners, for seeking public input on next steps.

I want to start with the conviction that economic opportunities and housing are intimately connected for community stability. I also want to state that, to date, Pacifica (like many communities in our state), has failed to protect Pacificans from displacement due to rising housing costs, has failed to preserve low-income housing, and failed to build desperately needed below market-rate housing.

The impact is visible: an increase of homelessness in which 70% report being priced out of existing housing, an increase in Pacificans who pay more than 50% of household incomes on housing and are therefore at risk for displacement, low-income residents disproportionately impacted by the economic downturn of COVID and seeking CORE agency aid in record numbers, and an increase of evictions (due to inability to pay) related to that COVID downturn.

If we accept the premise of interdependency of economic and housing stability and accept that many Pacificans are in need of safe, affordable housing, we must commit to actions that will protect against displacement, preserve existing low-income housing, and build desperately-needed below market rate housing.

I suggest that Pacifica:

1. Reach out quickly to nonprofit developers about the Beach Boulevard site and the intention to proceed with the State Surplus Lands Act process. Find out how our community can work with these developers to create a plan that provides low-income housing and best serves our community.
2. Other communities are successfully utilizing a dedicated housing fund with monies from a variety of sources including a vacancy tax, title transfer fees, and in-lieu fees (which should be increased to \$750,000 to pay for the cost of a single unit of housing). Pacifica should create a dedicated housing fund and financial support.
3. Similar to successes in other communities, develop policies that promote opportunities to work with housing preservation and non profit developers.

Housing stability is needed for economic stability; more importantly, housing is necessary for health, life, and community resilience. Please consider these recommended next steps.

Thank you.

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Suzanne Moore



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From: Cherie Chan [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 23, 2023 12:02 PM
To: Public Comment
Subject: Subject: 5:30 PM - OPEN JOINT STUDY SESSION OF CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION

[CAUTION: External Email]

Dear Planning and City Council Members,

Thank you for taking the time to hear the concerns and suggestions of our citizens as we review economic development opportunities to help our City.

I heartily agree that Pacifica has an unmet potential to attract more visitor-serving commercial opportunities. However, the Kosmont report makes a small error.

On page 41, it notes that there are “No suitable sites available for commercial development.” This is an error, which conflicts with the existing, certified Local Coastal Land Use Plan, conditions on the ground, and neighborhood sentiment.

The Pedro Point Community Association has long-advocated for visitor-serving commercial recreational opportunities such as outdoor dining, beer gardens, bike and kayak rentals, which would be consistent with the Coastal Act of 1976.

The Kosmony Report further errs on page 86: “Vacant 5-acre parcel behind shopping center possible **residential development site**, but subject to complicated permitting processes with Coastal Commission and City jurisdictions.” This recommendation for a land use designation change conflicts with the Coastal Act.

Thank you for considering.

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Public Comments

Agenda Item 6 – City Council Rules and Code of Ethics

Written Comments Received By 12pm on 01/23/2023



January 23, 2023
City Council Meeting

From: Dinah Verby [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 23, 2023 11:23 AM
To: Public Comment
Cc: Dinah F Verby
Subject: Comments re 1/23/2023 Agenda Item 6 - Council Rule Changes

[CAUTION: External Email]

Honorable Councilmembers:

I oppose some of the proposed changes to Section 11.3, which create new restrictions on a Councilmember's currently unfettered right to have an item placed on the City Council Agenda. I have no problem with the 10-day advance notice requirement. However, I object to the mandatory two-step/two-meeting process for agenda items proposed by individual Council members (but not for other Agenda items). It states that the initial City Council meeting for items that are "potentially controversial" (undefined) or which consume more than one hour of staff time would be limited to a discussion of whether "staff time should be spent on preparing a report on the proposed item." In other words, a fully informed discussion on the merits of an item could only occur at a subsequent meeting, and only if a majority of the Council permits it. The Council majority's ability to "kill" an item could result in procedural abuse (too much control by the majority), as well as substantive ignorance, as the CC would lack all the facts and information to inform their votes. This renders every Councilmember's right to agendize an item illusory or, at best, hollow.

While I appreciate staff's suggestion of eliminating the "potentially controversial" language, I am still concerned that this proposal delegates too much authority to the City Manager to unilaterally determine which items will be given "full" consideration versus the limited one-hour of staff input. The voters elected the City Council to represent them – not the City Manager.

Furthermore, the requirement of a majority to fully agendize an item is anti-democratic. This is an unprecedented departure from the decades-long rule and practice in Pacifica. It perpetually takes power away from individual CC members and devalues their authority to represent constituents. It disenfranchises the public and alienates constituents – citizens expect to be able to talk to an individual CC member and to have that CC member represent their interests, without having to forge alliances with other CC members. The current rule 11.3 was enacted precisely to avoid "tyranny by the majority," and to allow fair opportunity for minority viewpoints to be expressed and deliberated in public.

The majority requirement also undermines the intent of district elections, which is to ensure that each neighborhood has an elected representative who will advocate for that neighborhood's interests. If we, the public, want to bring an item to the Council, we contact our district Councilmember. The proposed rule would make it harder for our concerns to be considered.

The proposed rule is anti-democratic in another, less obvious way. If approved, a MINORITY of two Council members could quash public debate on an item they don't agree with, *apparently without informed input from staff and the public on the merits of the issue*. The rule is not specific as to how many Council members must vote to agendize an item. Is it a majority of the entire Council (3+ members) or a majority of the members in attendance? If the latter, and only 3 or 4 Councilmembers are in attendance, this means that as few as two Council members – a minority --can prevent an item from being fully discussed. It is unfair to the voters and the Councilmembers to squelch a fulsome discussion of important issues in this manner.

For those who don't know or recall, a similar rule was attempted in November of 2015 when Lorie Tinfow was the City Manager. It was ultimately abandoned due to widespread public opposition. The historical context was the mass evictions of tenants and residents of the mobile home park. Councilmember Keener wanted to place a temporary just cause eviction ordinance on the Agenda, but was prevented from doing so because other Councilmembers who opposed

the ordinance wouldn't agree to put it on the Agenda (despite the rule allowing him to do so). Instead, there was a limited Agenda item to discuss whether to have an ordinance on a future Agenda, which was voted down by a majority. As a result of this improper process, the Council and the public were deprived of the opportunity to review a draft ordinance, to have input from the City Attorney, to have a fully informed discussion of the pros and cons, and to possibly modify the ordinance. Not to mention the fact that it disregarded the plight of the tenants, who deserved at least an up or down vote on the merits. This is the heart of the matter – the majority can suppress the minority's ability to bring forth an issue for public discussion.

It is also inefficient and counter-productive to enact a rule that mandates a minimum of two City Council meetings for every Council-member generated item. The proposed two-step/two-meeting process requiring two separate Council meetings, two staff reports, and two opportunities for public input for every item. This is a waste of valuable staff, Council and the public's time and resources. The two meeting scenario makes the remedy worse than the supposed problem of limited staff and Council time and resources, and produces the opposite result. It's cumbersome, overly complicated, and anti-democratic, all in the service of preventing minority council members from putting items on a future agenda.

The proposed rule also singles out Council-generated Agenda items, but does not similarly limit Agenda items for other matters that may come up and need Council deliberation, even though they are not in the CC's work plan. Why discriminate against Council-initiated items in this way?

Finally, I question whether this change in rules is even necessary. In prior communications, the City Manager stated that it hadn't really been a problem because all the CC members are courteous and have not abused their right to request Agenda items. Why fix something that isn't broken? The City Council needs to be aware that such Draconian changes apply across the board for all topics – why tie your hands this way?

Please reject this rule change.

Respectfully,
Dinah Verby

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