Santa Barbara County

2016—A YEAR IN REVIEW

Highlights of Board of Supervisors' Policy Actions

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ABOUT THE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors serves as the legislative and executive body of Santa Barbara government. The Board is comprised of five elected officials representing each of the five supervisory districts in the County. Each board member is elected for a four-year term. The position of Chairperson rotates annually among the five members.

The Board generally convenes in regular session on several Tuesdays each month, with the second Tuesday meeting of the month held in Santa Maria. The Board sets policy for County departments, oversees the County budget, and adopts ordinances on local matters and establishes land use policies that affect unincorporated areas.

County departments make recommendations to the Board and implement its actions. The Sheriff-Coroner, District Attorney, Clerk-Recorder-Assessor, Treasurer-Tax Collector-Public Administrator, and Auditor-Controller are independently elected offices.

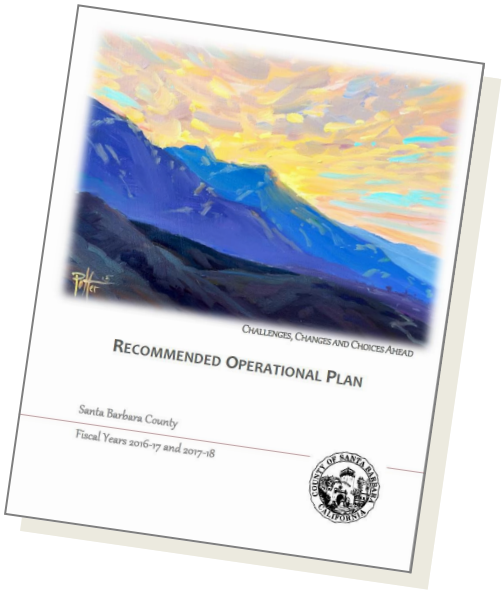
In 2016, 37 meetings of the Board of Supervisors were held with hundreds of items coming before the Board for a vote.

Enclosed are highlights of the major policy decisions made by the Board of Supervisors during their regularly scheduled meetings and department achievements authorized by the Board of Supervisors, grouped by the County's general policy goals.

Efficient & Responsive Government

Maintain an efficient professionally managed government able to anticipate and effectively respond to the needs of the people.

- Adopted a balanced budget for FY 2016-17 with few service reductions, and increased funding for critical services such as mental health and jail operations, and fully funded the Strategic Reserve or County's General Fund at $30.9 million.
- Key leadership positions were filled this year:
  - Janette Pell was appointed to General Services Director.
  - The Board appointed Robert Lewin to lead the Office of Emergency Management. As a former Fire Chief of San Luis Obispo County, Lewin brings strong relationships with state, regional and local fire and public safety officials.
  - With a 24-year career in criminal-defense law, Tracy Macuga was appointed the new public defender for the County assuming the role from Interim Public Defender Kenneth Clayman.
  - Appointed in December 2015, Lori Gentles began serving as Human Resources Director in January.
  - Following the retirement of County Auditor-Controller Bob Geis in March, the Board of Supervisors appointed Deputy Auditor-Controller, Theo Fallati, to serve the remaining three years of Geis' term.
- Successful advocacy resulted in providing Santa Barbara County with $1.8 million of federal funding for the Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program, a 12.5 percent increase.
- An ad-hoc subcommittee of the Board and staff continued meeting to discuss land use and financial issues, and other matters of mutual concern with the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians.



- In October 2016, the Santa Barbara County Employee Retirement System (SBCERS) Board voted to lower the assumed rate of return by 50 basis points from 7.5 percent to 7 percent significantly increasing County pension contributions. Pension costs had largely stabilized in the past two years, but this recent change, combined with the need to make up for shortfalls in the fund's investment earnings, created an anticipated $13.6 million General Fund shortfall next year. Staff has begun to develop the FY 17-18 budget and determine where major savings can be found. The Board and the public will be updated in January and February before budget workshops in April and budget hearings in June 2017. The public may address the Board and comment at each of these public meetings, as well at regular sessions of the Board of Supervisors in Santa Barbara and Santa Maria.
- Placed Measure B on the November 8 ballot to increase the Transient Occupancy Tax by 2 percent, raising it from 10 to 12 percent, was approved by a majority of the voters and took effect on January 1, 2017. An estimated $1.8 million in annual General Fund Revenue may result from the increase.
- Successfully opposed significant funding cuts to Federal housing and economic development funding streams, including the Community Development Block Grant program.

- Delivered a Resolution of the Board that urges the state of California to provide adequate and sustainable funding of state and local transportation infrastructure, which as a result would increase job growth for the County.
- In conjunction with California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and National Association of Counties (NACo), successfully supported increased funding for the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP).
- Successfully opposed legislation that would have mandated cities and counties that provide residential collection and disposal of solid waste to meet an unspecified diversion requirement for household hazardous waste (HHW) collection. The legislation would have made local jurisdictions solely responsible for collecting HHW.
- Adopted a Resolution establishing a Revised Classification and Salary Plan for Unrepresented Executive and Management employees. The Plan creates a fiscally responsible salary and classification structure that attracts and retains quality and diverse talent, enables the County to be competitive with the labor market, addresses internal equity, enables flexibility and movement through the salary band, and reinforces performance management and accountability.
- Established a countywide monthly new employee orientation program intended to create Empowered, Positive, Informed and Confident (EPIC) employees and provide broad context to what it means to be a public servant in county government.
- Directed a hiring review process that fosters critical examination of all staffing needs to ensure we meet mandated service delivery within budgetary constraints.
- County Surveyors Division performed more than 650 project reviews for compliance with the state laws and local ordinances, and recorded or filed more than 330 maps, corner records and documents.
- Expanded and improved the Public Health Department's Compliance Program, including multi-agency collaborations for privacy, security, and staff training to reduce liabilities and audit risks.

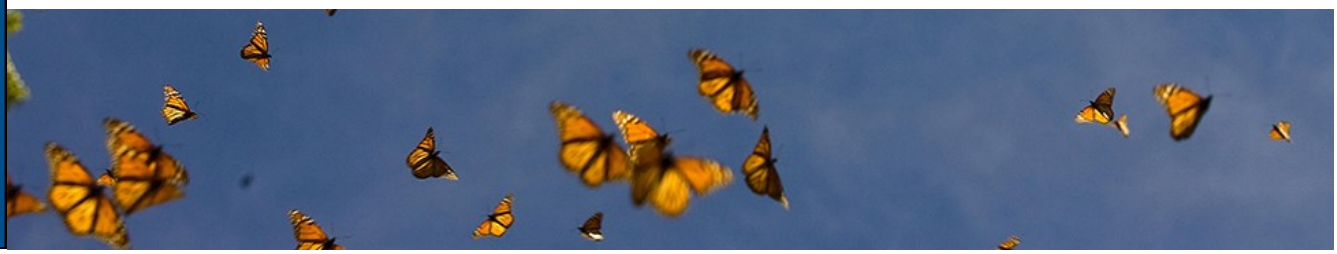
Health & Safety

Provide safe and healthy communities in which to live, work and visit.

- Awarded the contracts to construct the 376-bed North Branch Jail in Santa Maria. The new facility will house male and female inmates in high security, medium security and isolation cells. Additionally, it will include thirty-two special beds for mental health and medical purposes along with a medical clinic. This is the largest public works project in the county of Santa Barbara's history.
- Adopted monthly resolutions to re-ratify the Proclamation of a Local Emergency for Drought and Water Supply Conditions that exist in Santa Barbara County until such a time that weather and water supply conditions dictate otherwise.
- Staff completed the Long Term Supplemental Water Supply Alternatives Report, a study of local water supply options available now and into the future. A member of the Board and staff toured the Carlsbad Desalination Plant that produces 50 million gallons per day (MGD) or 56,000 acre-feet per year.

- Staff is leading ongoing collaboration with the water purveyors, and local, state and federal policy makers to achieve water conservation goals, mitigate the impacts of future severe droughts and develop projects and partnerships that result in locally controlled supplies of sustainable, high quality water.
- Approved and authorized execution of the term sheet to support the Central Coast Water Authority and its participating members to reacquire more than 13,000 acre-feet of Santa Barbara County's allocation of water that had been suspended for payment in the 1980s. This water is supplied by the state's Department of Water Resources.
- Issued a Request for Proposals to design and rebuild Cuyama Fire Station 41, and entered into an MOU with the City of Goleta to construct Fire Station 10 in western Goleta.
- Committed to the Stepping Up initiative, a collaborative, county-wide effort to divert the mentally ill from jail.
- Awarded grant funding totaling more than $1.3 million over a three-year period from the United States Department of Justice Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking.
- County Fire completed the installation of a new alert system in the fire stations and Battalion Chiefs' quarters that improves response times.
- Approved a renegotiated MOU between the Sheriff's Office and Fire Department for the combined Sheriff/ Fire Air Support Unit.
- Through the Sheriff's Office, approved and executed a contract for enhanced public safety services with the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians for a five-year term.
- Private donations completely funded a new stable for the Sheriff's Mounted Enforcement Unit.
- Adopted an ordinance to provide for the safe, sustainable and convenient disposal of household medications, for which the County received an Outstanding Policy/Legislative Advancement Award from the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle).
- The Public Health Department completed a Community Health Assessment of our community to identify priorities for improving health. Information from the Assessment provides insights into local health problems, identifies resources to improve health outcomes, and informs policy decision making. The Assessment included surveys from more than 3,000 residents, a department Strategic Plan and a Community Health Improvement Plan. The purpose of the Assessment is to better understand the current health status of our community so we can target areas for improvement, areas of strength for enhancement, and focus our energies towards common health goals.

- Proactively responded to the Zika virus with community education, surveillance, testing and coordination of care for those impacted.
- Adopted a comprehensive Behavioral Wellness Capital Needs Study.



- Probation increased fine, fee and restitution collections and payments; and implemented video conferencing to allow Probation officers to interview jail clients from their desktop, therefore saving time, traffic and fuel costs.
- Probation established procedures for inclusion of risk assessments in sentencing reports and use of the information to formulate case plans consistent with the risks and needs of individuals.
- Implemented Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) case management, programming and supervision geared to strengthen services and programming.
- Continued to support the agriculture industry through the Agriculture Commissioner's coordination of a multi-agency effort to combat invasive pests.
- An agreement was executed with the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR) for the Agricultural Commissioner's Office to be reimbursed for pesticide enforcement expenditures not previously covered in the pesticide use enforcement program of the SBCAC for the period of July 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 in the amount of $39,600.06.
- Executed an agreement with the California Department of Food and Agriculture for services related to enforcement of the California Sudden Oak Tree Death Program in Santa Barbara County.
- The Board and several departments collaborated with local, state and federal agencies to successfully protect human and animal lives, and real property as a result of the Sherpa and Rey fires. The Board also adopted a County Resolution for the Proclamation of a Local Emergency in response to the Sherpa Fire.
- Improved consistency of emergency radio communications coverage from Buellton to Orcutt by upgrading radio equipment and adding additional command communication channels.
- Final steps were completed to proceed with building and implementing the Tajiguas Resource Recovery Project.

Quality of Life

Provide a high quality of life for all residents.

- With the Board's support, Highway 101 along the Gaviota Coast was officially designated State Scenic Highway. The landmark designation includes a segment that travels through one of the longest remaining rural coastlines in Southern California along 21 miles of Highway 101 from the City of Goleta's western boundary to Route 1 at Las Cruces.
- Adopted the Gaviota Coast Plan to provide guidelines and regulations for agriculture, development and public access across the picturesque front-country between western Goleta and Vandenberg Air Force Base.
- Several infrastructure projects were completed in Isla Vista to improve safety, pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle access, lighting, and reduce chronic flooding.

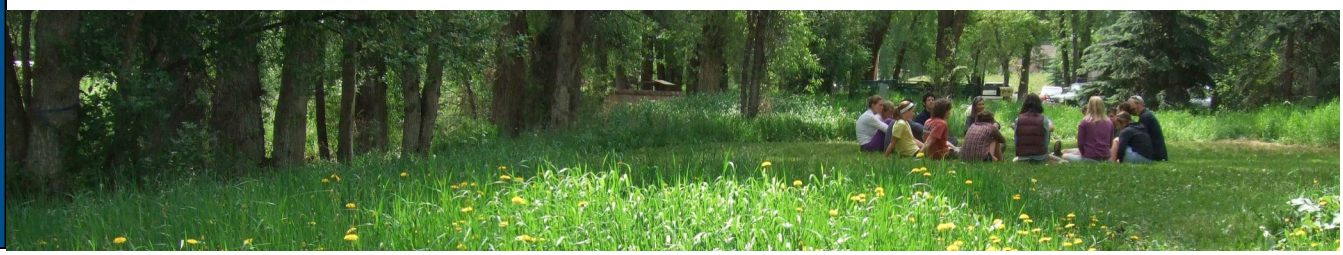
- Awarded a contract to construct a new bridge crossing at the entrance to Goleta Beach Park. Construction began in July on the $4.86 million, 13-month project that is being funded by the Federal Highway Administration Bridge Program ($4.3 million) and Caltrans' California Toll Credits ($560,000). Goleta Beach Park is the most often visited park in the County and this bridge provides necessary access.

- The Public Works Transportation Division delivered more than $10 million of capital projects to construction in 2016.
- Completed the award-winning San Pedro/Las Vegas Creek Capacity Project to reduce flooding. The multi-agency project was 10 years in the making with the cities of Goleta and Santa Barbara, Union Pacific and Caltrans. The project was awarded Project of the Year by the American Public Works Association.
- Prior to approving revised land use policies as they apply to short term rentals, the Board directed staff to conduct research on several items and return with recommendations as indicated by additional fact finding. Staff will report recommendations to the Board in 2017.
- Enhanced overall public safety and promoted the protection of the Isla Vista community during "Deltopia" and Halloween through strategic enforcement, amendments to County codes, and increased public engagement and signage.
- Several infrastructure projects were completed in Isla Vista to improve pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle access, lighting, and reduce chronic flooding.
- Reviewed jail medical and mental health services and implemented improvements and appropriate staff for the delivery of inmate services.
- The County Parks Division upgraded irrigation systems and reduced watering for a water use savings of 30 percent to 74 percent at Cachuma Lake.
- Completed reconstruction and reopened the Cuyama swimming pool that provides recreation for the community during summer months, as well as the renovations to the Orcutt Community Park Play Field including $400,000 in turf renovations.
- The California Arts Council awarded the County's Office of Arts & Culture the highest level of funding support in county history, receiving more than $77,000. The office is lauded as a model partner by the state arts agency.
- The Santa Barbara County Agricultural Commissioner and Director of Weights & Measures was appointed the 2016/17 President of the California Agricultural Commissioner and Sealers Association.
- The Agricultural Commission/Weights & Measures Department developed a regional approach to pest exclusion to better protect County agriculture, while the Department's newly implemented Detector Dog Team found 21 pests of significance in 2016. The department also tested and certified the first Hydrogen fuel dispenser unit in Santa Barbara County.

Families and Children

Establish a community that fosters the safety and wellbeing of families and children.

- Awarded grant funding from the United States Department of Justice Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking totaling more than $1.3 million over a three-year grant period. The grants will bolster the county's Human Trafficking Task Force. The county is especially vulnerable to human trafficking as a tourist destination with migrant labor and a transitory population.
- Implemented Laura's Law assisted mental health outpatient treatment pilot program for 10 persons with a launch of the program in January 2017.
- Worked with county and community partners to implement the "Health for all Kids Act" that extended Medi-Cal coverage to all children under the age of 18, reducing the rate of children without health insurance to its lowest level in decades.
- Awarded more than $1.75 million from HUD for 17 homelessness assistance projects operating throughout the county, an increase of $60,000 from the previous fiscal year's programs.
- Approved the Child Welfare Safety Net Task Force Response Report that will be followed up with an annual report and action plan to achieve the goals of the task force.
- The Board received a 2016 CSAC Challenge Award for the Central Coast Collaborative on Homelessness (C3H).
- The Board and many County departments supported the 2016 Santa Barbara County Veterans Stand Down held at Santa Maria Fairpark. The event reached a record number of veterans with a wide range of services, including readjustment and crisis counseling, employment and housing assistance, medical screenings, veterinary assistance for pets, and more.
- More than 250 new preschool and child care spaces were created in 2016 through First 5 matching grants that encouraged other funders to invest in these critical services for 0-5 year olds and their families. More than $350,000 was leveraged from other funders to make these projects happen.
- Increased the number of nationally accredited preschool and child care providers thought the county to 41 percent compared to the state and national average of 6 percent.
- First 5 funded countywide organizations serving more than 1,800 children age 0-5 and their families who present risk factors affecting kindergarten readiness.
- Celebrated Child Support Awareness Month by collecting and donating five shopping carts' worth of school supplies to United Way's "Stuff the Bus" campaign to benefit needy children.



- The County's CalFresh program sought to reduce food insecurity by improving our community partnerships, client communication and business processes so that food aid can reach more of our residents in need. This effort resulted in a 16 percent increase in participation between January 2015 and March 2016.
- Adult and Children Services launched a Resource Family Recruitment campaign, increasing program participant families from 10 to 36.
- Initiated a Senior Assessment Program to support seniors living at home safely.

Citizen Involvement

Ensure that County government is accessible, open and citizen friendly.

- Directed and launched the Board of Supervisors Digital Historical Archives project, for which the County was recognized with the 2016 Innovation Award from the California County Information Services Directors Association (CCISDA). The digitized records date from 1850 to the present.
- Conducted budget workshops in April and June to receive public input and provide the Board and the public with an opportunity to review and discuss proposed budgets, special issues, and staffing plans. The FY 16-17 budget was finalized and approved by the Board on June 15, 2016.
- The County's Welfare to Work program applied innovative tools to improve workforce participation rates, including distance learning for soft skills, electronic tablets loaded with apps for job seekers, and a new Job Retention program.
- Technology upgrades were made in several departments to improve customer service, reduce phone hold times, and aid reservations for County Parks. Parks' new reservation system helped increase department revenues by $250,000.
- Achieved a 100 percent success rate for electronically filing all legal documents with the Family Court, saving staff time and increasing responsiveness on an average of 500 court transactions per month.
- The Workforce Development Board completed its transformation of the publicly-supported workforce system with a new Board, strategic plan, service improvements, and regional planning unit. It was also awarded a $2 million federal grant to boost jobs for Santa Maria's youth, and a $340,000 state grant to serve the formerly incarcerated.

- Launched a new software platform on *www.CountyofSb.org* with information about the County's 70 Boards, Commissions and Committees. Through the dedicated work of hundreds of citizen volunteers, these deliberative bodies assist the Board in the development of critical policies that impact our quality of life in a myriad of ways including health and human services, public safety, land use, parks and public facilities.

Contact Your Supervisor

If you have questions about how to participate in a Board of Supervisor's meeting, how meetings are conducted, or how to contact your Supervisor, visit www.countyofsb.org/bos/home.c.

Learn More and Connect With Us

For a directory of County departments, email and phone numbers, go to www.countyofsb.org/deptlist.sbc.

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We look forward to a productive and successful 2017!