
I'm a local who wants more density

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To PLANNING COMMISSION <planningcommission@ci.capitola.ca.us>

Hi,

My name is Carlos Izquierdo and I've lived in Santa Cruz for 26 years. I understand that technically the city of Santa Cruz isn't in the jurisdiction of your commission but I feel like both cities are obviously linked both physically and both directly affect the other.

To keep it simple and brief, I wanted to attend tonight's meeting but have a commitment to one of my kid's events. In place of my voice in person, I'd like to share my thoughts on this topic here:

For whatever it's worth to Capitola from a Santa Cruz resident of over a quarter century, I'd like to see our towns find a middle ground of protecting our environment and culture while also taking an honest look in the mirror and adapting to our needs. Point blank, Santa Cruz and Capitola simply are NOT the sleepy surf towns of the 80's & 90's. Yes, we do have certain elements and areas where this feel can be preserved in pockets, but by and large we have only shot ourselves in the foot by denying the reality that as our population grows, so too must our infrastructure. Should we protect greenspaces like Lighthouse field in SC? Absolutely. But denying density across the board is not taking an honest approach to a problem that is approaching us as surely as a tide that will erode a cliff over years.

The only alternative to density is urban sprawl. If locals think higher density will only cause more congestion, imagine what SC & Capitola will feel like in 50-100 years when, by default, the greenspace between San Jose and Santa Cruz is one big connected suburban megalopolis. We need to be responsible to our future by thinking of the best way to solve **today's** problems in a way that is mindful of the consequences of foolishly trying to preserve yesterday's image. I hope we can find a responsible way to strategically increase density across the county.

Population increase is a force of human nature and we can either ignore it and complain, or adapt and better prepare for it. This includes linking transit solutions that are sustainable and help get cars off the street. Denying the development of housing may keep residents out but will actually only increase traffic as more people drive into town rather than live local and ride their bike around as I do.

Carlos Izquierdo