



MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: Jessica Matson, Legislative & Information Services Director/City Clerk

SUBJECT: Supplemental Information
Agenda Item 12.b. – July 25, 2023 City Council Meeting
Discussion and Consideration of Support for the Regional Housing
and Infrastructure Plan

DATE: July 25, 2023

Attached is correspondence received for the above reference item.

cc: City Manager
Assistant City Manager
Community Development Director
City Attorney
City Clerk
City Website and Public Review Binder

Enc

From: betty winholtz <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Tuesday, July 25, 2023 12:05 PM

To: Caren Ray Russom <crayrussom@arroyogrande.org>; Kristen Barneich <kbarneich@arroyogrande.org>; Lan George <lgeorge@arroyogrande.org>; Jim Guthrie <jguthrie@arroyogrande.org>; Kate Secrest <ksecrest@arroyogrande.org>

Subject: agenda item 12b

Dear City Council:

As a former city council member in Morro Bay 2002-2010, I understand that pressures and rules on city governments have changed, and to a large extent not for the better in terms of maintaining our Cities' individuality and local control. The most notable are the housing mandates from the State.

To that end, I want to express my concerns about your agenda item #14, Regional Housing & Infrastructure Plan or HIP. This presentation was made to the Morro Bay City Council at the end of June. I want to share the comments I made then with you.

This document is a game changer.

As you listen to this presentation, you will hear phrases like "accelerate"

housing of all types, "resilient infrastructure" projects, and "regional conditions;" however, you won't hear phrases like community identity, citizen input, and local prioritization.

The document says **stakeholders** have agreed to this plan. Who are the stakeholders? City/county staffs, builders, developers, chambers of commerce, REACH, and maybe some of you, elected officials. However, not we who live, vote, pay taxes and fees here, regular people.

Who prepared this plan?

ECONorthwest (Seattle): "Our staff are top-notch: seasoned economists, savvy analysts, creative policy wonks, exceptional evaluators, talented communicators."

BKF Engineers (Redwood City): Vision: "be the most sought-after and valued consulting firm for clients and employees by virtue of our reputation and work culture."

Koble Collaborative (SLO): "We facilitate complex conversations by forging strong partnerships built on trust, communication, and reciprocity."

This report is built on the assumption that "the housing, infrastructure and economic challenges that the region [County] faces are larger than any one entity can solve alone." Specifically, what? How are we not handling those challenges now? How does it make it less of a challenge to align [mimic] our housing elements; how is it less challenging for consultants and other government agencies to direct what Grover builds? Every city in the nation has challenges. Every City in the County has challenges. Let our individual cities not become suburbs of SLO or SLO County.

The document states that what is proposed is "voluntary." Yet, HIP wants to be a factor in future "grant programming cycles" through SLOCOG who distributes money to the County and 7 cities within the County.

This is not a "receive and file" presentation. City Councils are asked to "comment and seek general support of regional collaboration moving forward." City Councils are being asked for a "recommitment" to letting HIP take charge. The "SLOCOG Board of Directors will consider adoption of the HIP on August 2, 2023."

I strongly urge you to **not recommit** to this document as is. The agreement makes the City of Arroyo Grande dependent on outside values, outside economic standards, directs our housing program, and turns us generic. I believe in County cooperation. Your City already partners with the other city governments through SLOCOG, APCD, WRAC, and other programs. However, I don't believe in being **co-opted**. In fact, some of the details of the **HIP won't be finished until July**, so you are being asked to approved something you haven't seen in its completion.

At the least, **suggest some modifying language**. Has your planning

commission seen this document? You are not alone in your concern.
Atascadero raised questions at its council meeting last week.

Thank you for your time,
Betty Winholtz