

From: [Ashley Nagaoka](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: Anthem Chapel project on Los Carneros Road
Date: Monday, June 15, 2026 8:49:43 AM

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Hello,

My name is Ashley Nagaoka and I live at 6570 Covington Way. Please accept this email as my objection to the Anthem Chapel project on Los Carneros Road.

There are a multitude of reasons as to why the city of Goleta should not allow this project to move forward. First is safety. While the project states they are building an adequate number of parking spaces for the 500 person congregation, I do not believe this to be true. Currently at music at the ranch (stow house summer concert series) there is too much traffic which creates an unsafe environment on Los Carneros Rd. Repeatedly, there is backed up traffic and therefore cars trying to pass will actually drive into the oncoming traffic lane in order to bypass the backed up cars. Also, cars park on Los Carneros Rd which is not wide enough to accommodate parking plus moving vehicles. Additionally the overspill of cars park in the Covington neighborhood. Our driveway has been nearly blocked and/or there is low visibility to back out of our driveway due to the numerous cars parked along the street. These same safety concerns happened during the pandemic, when Anthem Chapel held their tent service at the same location as the proposed project. This suggests that once the church is built that the same things will occur. Also, once the church is built there will not be any parking for music at the ranch. So during summer all of those cars will only be able to park in the Covington neighborhood streets, adding to more congestion. Just yesterday 6/14 there was an event at Stow House which had an overflow of cars (cars parked in the Anthem dirt lot and overflow parked on covington way). This event was on a Sunday. How does the City plan to accomodate all of these cars when there is also a church service in progress therefore eliminating Stow House parking in the Anthem lot?

Also, the proposed building is quite large, exceeding the standard height limits. Due to its size, it also encroaches on the Monarch habitat. I am quite shocked that the City would approve a building to not follow the standard building code, as you are setting precedent for future builds to encroach into wildlife/protected habitats. The Lake Los Carneros and Stow House environment is quiet and peaceful, full of natural wildlife. This building would be the largest thing in the area and take away from the natural surroundings that are so beautiful as is.

I do hope the city reconsiders this project. I am in no way against the church or their desire to have a dedicated space. I am in opposition of that space being here in Los Carneros Rd.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ashley Nagaoka
360-961-9111

From: [Carter Morgan](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: Anthem Chapel Project
Date: Sunday, June 7, 2026 2:04:58 PM

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Dear Members of the Goleta Design Review Board:

We recently attended the Design Review Board meeting on May 26, 2026, which dealt with the Anthem Chapel project on Los Carneros and Covington Way. We were impressed with the drawings and the plans for a beautiful building, just not in this location. The designers have made changes to go along with the suggestions from the DRB and input from the community. And yet, we were dismayed by an aspect of the presentation. It was clear that there was familiarity and a prior relationship between the architects and members of the DRB. As they greeted one another and shared light-hearted humor, it appeared that there could be bias toward approving this design. We realize that Goleta is a small city, yet as community members we found this to be disconcerting.

Additionally, having attended two DRB meetings, we now believe that the approval process is flawed. We recognize that as members of the DRB, you are all hard-working, knowledgeable, and looking out for the interests of our community. That being said, it would make more sense to us if the DRB did not consider aesthetics until the Planning Commission has determined the building footprint, setbacks, parking, circulation, biology, drainage, lighting, size, bulk and scale. Once these essentials are decided, the DRB can then determine if the architecture and landscaping are appropriate and compatible with the neighborhood. We believe this current city approval process is backwards. Once the DRB has (prematurely?) given its seal of approval, it makes it much more difficult to question and revise any of a project's negative impacts. We wonder if there has ever been a time where the PC has overridden City staff and DRB findings and therefore recommended project denial to the City Council. We cannot recall an instance of this happening.

As homeowners in the adjacent neighborhood, we are unhappy with this proposed building project. There are several reasons for this, the most important being neighborhood compatibility. The drawings displayed made it seem to fit with the Lutheran Church building next door, but it is quite clear from the story poles set up on the property that the new buildings will be massive and out of scale with the neighborhood. We invite planning commissioners and city council members to view the story poles from the public parking lot next to the fire station. You may then agree with us that the scale of these buildings is not compatible with this neighborhood.

Another major issue for this project is traffic. As you well know, Los Carneros is a two-lane road with bicycle lanes on either side, with no room to add a left-turn lane into the lot. These bike lanes provide opportunities for many bicyclists to travel somewhat safely and are well-used. As we listened to the presenter at the DRB meeting, he assured us all several times that the parking lot usage would be Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings, with the lot generally being unused during the week. After stating this at least three times during the presentation, he then amended his statement, after the public comments. There was a quick one-sentence addition of preschool and daycare use happening Monday through Friday. We feel this was disingenuous to those of us listening, as there was no chance to respond. (A mid-week women's Bible study group was not even mentioned; nor was the request in Anthem's Conditional Use Permit to allow 26 weddings, 30 memorials, and an unstated number of "special events" throughout the year.) The traffic on Sundays alone could bring 100 cars or more each time for their three services. This is a safety concern for sure, especially in light of the death of a commuter in the bike lane on his way to work just recently on Los Carneros in that very area. Los Carneros is used by many junior high and high school students as a way to their respective schools. We are worried for the safety of these students.

Another major community safety issue has to do with emergency response. The parking lot is planned for 117 cars at a time. This means there could be over 100 cars flooding Los Carneros as they enter or exit the parking lot six specific times each Sunday morning. We recognize this road congestion will make for a very unsafe condition for any emergency vehicles leaving the fire station, where seconds count for responding to an emergency. We want to note that Los Carneros is an evacuation route for residents living in this "very high fire hazard severity zone."

To be clear, we think Anthem Chapel and its congregation deserve to have a facility. They have beautiful plans which should be sited elsewhere. We are not against building on this lot, but we would prefer to see much-needed affordable housing rather than this mega church.

To reiterate, we are concerned that the Goleta Planning Commission and the City Council will be swayed to approve this project because of the DRB's positive response to the efforts of the designers in making the previously suggested changes. Regardless of these revisions, we and many neighbors still feel that a building of this size with so much usage and traffic is not compatible in this location. If approved, this could set a dangerous precedent, opening the way for other projects of this large scale in various Goleta neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

Wendy and Carter Morgan
6542 Camino Caseta
(805) 453-5799
morganfamily1@cox.net

Cc: Goleta City Planning Commission
Mayor Paula Perotte and members of the Goleta City Council

I understand that the property at 6595 Covington Way is currently under review for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a 22,038 square foot sanctuary designed to accommodate three Sunday services of up to 500 people each, along with daily programming, a preschool, and 60 or more annual special events including weddings and conferences. A subdivision application has also been filed to split the current parcel, creating a 1-acre lot for Christ Lutheran Church and a 2-acre lot for Anthem Chapel.

The scale, frequency, and intensity of the proposed use are fundamentally incompatible with the residential character, physical infrastructure, public safety, and environmental conditions of the Lake Los Carneros corridor and surrounding neighborhood.

The Planning Commission must make affirmative findings that the proposed use is consistent with Goleta's General Plan, protects the health, safety, and welfare of the community, and that the site is adequate to accommodate the use as proposed. The concerns outlined below demonstrate that those findings cannot be made on the current record.

1. Parking and Neighborhood Streets

Anthem proposes 117 parking spaces for a facility with three Sunday services of 500, weddings and memorials of 300 guests, memorials of 300, and daily programming throughout the week. Independent car counts at Anthem's current location recorded 208 cars on August 31, 2025 and 290 cars on June 22, 2025 — at a site with significantly more parking than proposed.

Overflow Parking

I am concerned that public school reservation records show Anthem's weekly operational footprint at Goleta Valley Junior High more than doubled in a single year, and their summer youth program grew fourfold — all while this CUP application was being filed and pursued. I request that the Planning Commission use this independently verifiable third-party record, not applicant self-reporting, when evaluating congregation size and future growth.

I am concerned that 117 parking spaces is inadequate for three Sunday services of 500, weddings AND memorials of 300, and daily programming. I request that the Planning Commission require an independent parking study based on observed attendance before any vote.

I am concerned that flexible seating allows attendance to exceed 500 with no change to the building and no additional parking required. I request that the Planning Commission require an enforceable attendance cap tied to available parking.

I am concerned that overflow parking will fall on residential streets. I request that the Planning Commission identify the specific streets that will absorb that demand before approving this use.

I am concerned that the parking and traffic analysis submitted with this application was based on weekday office staff, not on the hundreds of people driving to Sunday services each week. I request that the Planning Commission require an independent traffic and parking study based on actual peak attendance before any vote.

I am concerned that while the applicant describes peak attendance of 300 to 500 people, public school reservation records show Anthem has consistently booked venues with a combined weekly capacity exceeding 1,000 seats, and Christmas venues approaching 2,000 seats, every year since 2022. I request that the Planning Commission require independently verified attendance figures before accepting the applicant's self-reported numbers as the basis for parking, traffic, or site adequacy findings.

2. Stow House, the Railroad Museum, and Shared Parking

Anthem's application states they are "not obligated" to share their parking lot with the Goleta Valley Historical Society and will do so only at their own discretion. Stow House events, Railroad Museum visitors, and the surrounding neighborhood all rely on this overflow lot today. The Islamic Center's approval required conjunctive parking agreements, adding additional stress to an already strained corridor.

Shared Parking

I am concerned that Anthem has explicitly stated they are not obligated to share their parking lot with Stow House or the Railroad Museum, and I request that the Planning Commission require a binding shared parking agreement as a condition of any approval.

I am concerned that no calendar analysis has been done comparing Stow House event permits with Anthem's full operating schedule — three Sunday services, 26 weddings, 30 memorials, and multiple seasonal events annually. I request that the Planning Commission require that analysis before any vote.

I am concerned that if the overflow lot becomes unavailable, Stow House guests and Railroad Museum visitors will park on residential streets, and I request that the Planning Commission assess what that displacement means for both residents and the long-term viability of these community venues.

I am concerned that no cumulative parking analysis has examined the combined demand from Stow House, the Railroad Museum, the Islamic Center, Christ Lutheran Church, and future Stow Park visitors all competing for the same corridor. I request that the Planning Commission require that analysis before any vote.

3. Fire Safety and Emergency Access

Both proposed driveways open onto Los Carneros Road directly adjacent to Fire Station 14. Los Carneros Road is a designated Potential Evacuation Route in the City's draft General Plan Safety Element, and the State Fire Marshal has mapped a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone along this corridor. The traffic study submitted with this application analyzed weekday trips only — Sunday, Anthem's peak demand day, was never studied.

Safety

I am concerned that three back-to-back Sunday services, 26 weddings, 30 memorials, and 4 annual conferences will repeatedly concentrate hundreds of vehicles on a designated evacuation route directly adjacent to an active fire station, and I request that the Planning Commission require an independent analysis of how this recurring traffic interacts with emergency dispatch and evacuation demand on this corridor.

I am concerned that the traffic study analyzed weekday trips only and never studied Sunday, Anthem's peak demand day. I request that the Planning Commission require a peer-reviewed Sunday traffic study before any vote.

I am concerned that the VMT analysis was run using weekday office staff rather than the hundreds of people driving to services each week, and I request that the Planning Commission require an independent traffic and parking study based on actual peak attendance before any vote.

I am concerned that no formal fire department consultation is documented in this application. I request that the Planning Commission provide documentation of any fire department review and any conditions that resulted before this application moves forward.

I am concerned that Los Carneros Road is designated as a Potential Evacuation Route in the City's own General Plan Safety Element, and that no analysis examines how hundreds of vehicles

concentrated there every Sunday — and for 26 weddings, 30 memorials, and 4 conferences annually — would affect the ability of residents to evacuate in an emergency. I request that the Planning Commission require that analysis before any vote.

4. Monarch Butterfly Habitat and the ESHA Buffer

Anthem is asking the Planning Commission to cut the required monarch butterfly buffer in half, from 100 feet to 50 feet. The City's General Plan sets 100 feet as the minimum for a reason: monarch roost sites are unpredictable year to year and require a protective margin. Anthem's own application acknowledges that the buffer area on their property is currently used for parking and events and is composed of gravel and dirt. Stow Grove Park's Site 72 monarch roost is directly adjacent to this property.

ESHA

I am concerned that approving a 50-foot buffer reduction would set a precedent for weakening General Plan habitat protections citywide, not just at this site. I request that the Planning Commission deny the buffer reduction request and require the project to be redesigned within the full 100-foot buffer.

I am concerned that the buffer area has already been degraded by parking and event use, and that no restoration plan has been submitted. I request that the Planning Commission require full documentation of existing ESHA impacts and a restoration plan as a condition of any approval.

I am concerned that no independent biological assessment has been conducted on the potential impact of this project on the Site 72 monarch roost. I request that the Planning Commission require that study before any vote.

I am concerned that concentrating hundreds of vehicles, amplified sound, and year-round event activity within 50 feet of protected habitat will cause ongoing cumulative harm to the roost that cannot be mitigated after the fact. I request that the Planning Commission require an independent assessment of noise and activity impacts on the monarch habitat before any vote.

5. Scale, Growth, and Cumulative Corridor Impact

The applicant describes a congregation of 300 to 500 people seeking a neighborhood church. Public school reservation records tell a different story. From 2023 through 2025, Anthem has booked a 630-seat auditorium as their regular weekly Sunday home, combined with a cafeteria, library, and additional classrooms bringing total weekly reserved capacity to over 1,000 seats. Christmas services have required venues of nearly 2,000 combined seats every year since 2022. This record was compiled while this CUP application was being filed and pursued.

Church Growth

I am concerned that while the applicant reports peak attendance of 300 to 500 people, public school reservation records show Anthem has consistently booked venues with combined weekly capacity exceeding 1,000 seats and Christmas venues approaching 2,000 seats. I request that the Planning Commission require independently verified attendance figures before accepting applicant self-reporting as the basis for parking, traffic, or site adequacy findings.

I am concerned that Anthem's weekly operational footprint at Goleta Valley Junior High more than doubled in a single year, and their summer youth program grew fourfold, all while this CUP application was being filed. I request that the Planning Commission consider this growth trajectory when evaluating whether a 500-seat sanctuary and 117 parking spaces will be adequate beyond opening day.

I am concerned that no survey or study has established a baseline of current parking and traffic demand across the corridor — including Lake Los Carneros visitors, Stow House events, Railroad Museum visitors, Islamic Center services, and neighborhood residential use. I request that the Planning Commission require an independent corridor survey documenting existing Sunday conditions before any vote.

I am concerned that no cumulative analysis has examined the combined demand from Stow House, the Railroad Museum, the Islamic Center, Christ Lutheran Church, Fire Station 14, and future Stow Park visitors all competing for the same streets and parking on the same days. I request that the Planning Commission require a full corridor cumulative impact analysis before any vote.

I am concerned that a facility of this scale — over 22,000 square feet, three Sunday services, 26 weddings, 30 memorials, 4 conferences, a preschool, and daily programming — is not a neighborhood church. It is a regional event facility proposed for an RS-8 residential zone adjacent to a community park. I request that the Planning Commission make an affirmative finding, supported by independent evidence, that this site is adequate before approving this use.

From: [Dusty Baker](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: Support for Anthem Chapel: 6595 Covington Way
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2026 8:47:12 PM
Attachments: [65B6638CBB3D445D8CFDEC90741D117D.png](#)
[2EAE1E7402D444798EDEB0532353CA59.png](#)
[1990F9FD8D034A16B7D078E3812A188D.png](#)
[833AB8926D55471AB1C79CAF2B58F8B5.png](#)
[46C11D46A2EE44E1B5CA4C1480B90F6B.png](#)
[7F072D93B4F24335AA1B3DC91E13E447.png](#)
[210385224B064320988A583FE5A26C2A.png](#)
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[E0E92F182352494AB17C65F110B983C0.png](#)
[9F093AB6576E4761A0F78DFAEFB4E9A9.png](#)
[EDA648DBB5B498DB6B2A31CAED9DD97.png](#)

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Dear Chair and Planning Commissioners,

My name is Dusty Baker, and I grew up in Goleta just a few blocks from the proposed Anthem Chapel project at 6595 Covington Way. In fact, my parents still live in that home. I support this project because a local church provides valuable community services. Anthem Chapel has already been blessing the neighborhood kids, teenagers, and families for years — and a permanent location would allow them to be even more effective. From my perspective as a member of the local real estate community, churches are a conforming and low-impact use that contribute positively to a neighborhood.

I appreciate your consideration and hope you approve this project.

Regards,

-Dusty



DUSTY BAKER
Sotheby's International Realty

📍 Montecito - Coast Village Road Brokerage

📍 [1165 Coast Village Road, Suite A | Montecito CA, 93108](#)

DRE: 01908615 ☎ [805.570.0102](#)

✉ Dusty@DustyBakerGroup.com

🌐 DustyBakerGroup.com



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From: [Karyn Penniman](#)
To: [Jennifer Fullerton](#); [Anne Miller](#); [Katie Maynard](#); [Cary Penniman](#); [Rita Serotkin](#)
Cc: [City Clerk Group](#)
Subject: Proposed Anthem Chapel Building Project
Date: Friday, June 12, 2026 9:11:03 PM

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Dear Members of the Goleta Planning Commission,

My name is Karyn Penniman and I have been a resident in the Lake Los Carneros neighborhood since 2006. I am writing to you to express my opposition to the proposed Anthem Chapel project.

While I support Anthem Chapel's desire to build their own sanctuary and facility, I do not feel that the location at 6595 Covington Way is the appropriate location.

- There is an existing neighborhood church located on the property and there are already two preschools located in the neighborhood: the inclusive preschool offered at La Patera Elementary and the Wild Roots Forest School located at Lake Los Carneros.
- The potential for significant and detrimental impact to community access to some of Goleta's popular historical, scenic and open space resources: Stow House, Goleta Depot, Lake Los Carneros and the surrounding woodlands.
- It does not fit the character of the surrounding residential neighborhood as defined in *Goleta's Vision: The Good Land (City of Goleta General Plan: Chapter 1.0 Introduction and Overview , 1.2)*. including:
 - "That maintains scenic vistas by protecting open spaces and ensuring that its built environment is designed to be sensitive to its setting.
 - That promotes a sense of place based on a heritage of respect for the natural environment, small town values, and neighborhood cohesiveness.
 - That values the integrity of residential neighborhoods by protecting their character, quality, and diversity.
 - That seeks sustainability by not sacrificing tomorrow's resources for today's needs."

The proposed building site is located within the identified Community Sub-Area of *Central Resource Area*: "Areas with significant environmental values and/or resources are required to be maintained in a natural condition. Encroachment of uses that would compromise the existing integrity of this area is prohibited." The bordering neighborhood is identified as Community Sub-Area: *Northeast Residential Community* which states that "The plan restricts intrusion of uses that would be detrimental to the preservation of the existing character of the neighborhoods, including nonresidential and other uses that generate substantial traffic." (*City of Goleta General Plan: Chapter 1.0 Introduction and Overview, 1.4 Overview of the Plan (GP), Community Subareas. City of Goleta General Plan Figure 1-2: City Sub-Areas Map*).

In Anthem Chapel's *A Letter to Our Neighbors Regarding Our Building Project*, there is a section titled: *Parking - 125 On-Site Parking Spaces*. This section contains a bullet point

that attempts to lessen the impact of spillover parking: "Our parking lot will be essentially empty during the majority of week [sic] and used mostly on Sunday." (<https://www.anthemchapel.com/building-project>). However, there is potential for significant impact on neighborhood parking on Saturdays and Sundays specifically regarding the community's access to Goleta's Historical resources. Potential impact not only by the proposed multiple services on Sundays, but the proposed expectation of approximately 26 weddings/year and other large weekend events.

The Stow House and Goleta Depot standard hours of operation for the public occur ONLY on Saturday and Sunday and both landmarks host events (many of which are provided at no cost to the community) including, but not limited to:

- Stow House:
 - Museum Store and Visitor Center open Saturdays and Sundays 1-4pm
 - Stow House Tours: Saturdays and Sundays at 2pm and 3pm
 - Sundays at the Ranch 11-2pm
 - First Sunday of the Month Concerts: 2-4pm
 - Local Wedding and Event Venue (Old Time Fiddlers Festival, Holiday at the Ranch, etc.)
- Goleta Depot:
 - Train Museum open Saturdays and Sundays 12-4pm
 - Goleta Short Line train rides 12-4pm
 - Venue for birthday parties, private events and/or club meetings
 - Picnic areas

These identified sites provide activities and resources for not only the immediate neighborhood, but all of Goleta and the surrounding communities. According to the *City of Goleta General Plan: Open Space Element: Open Space, Recreation, and Coastal Access (OS) OS 6.7 (c)*: "Regional open spaces should be easily accessible from the surrounding neighborhoods and easily accessible by automobile for visitors from more distant locations. Since these areas may attract people from distant locations."

With Anthem Chapel being a relatively new church originating from Calvary Chapel roots and their desire and need to build their own sanctuary and facilities, it would be a likely expectation that their congregation would grow with their own permanent facilities. If spill over onto residential streets does occur, it could prohibit or even prevent community access to local historical, scenic and open space resources. Driving past their current place of worship, Goleta Valley Junior High, the parking lot is already near or at capacity during Sunday service (including vehicles parked in areas designated as drop off lanes and/or bus parking areas).

There are two other popular area churches: Community Church and Calvary Chapel that offer multiple Sunday Services and could provide a glimpse into what Anthem Chapel's congregation could one day grow to become. Both Community Church and Calvary Chapel provide a significantly larger number of on site parking spaces. However, if you were to visit either of those churches during a Sunday Service, you would likely see spill over into the surrounding neighborhood area. In fact, Calvary Chapel has even provided shuttle service for attendees that have to park in overflow lot parking.

There is already a church in this location. It does not fit the neighborhood's character to build

another in its backyard. The building proposal looks and feels like something trying to fit itself into a limited space rather than find a location better suited for their design and needs.

For these reasons, I oppose the proposed Anthem Chapel project and implore you to do the same.

Thank you for your time and public service,

Karyn Penniman

From: [Kayla M. Galli](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: Support for Anthem Chapel: 6595 Covington Way
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 1:07:38 PM

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To the Members of the Goleta Planning Commission,

My name is Kayla Galli. I am a Goleta resident, a mother, and a dedicated member of Anthem Chapel, where I have attended for the past three years and volunteered in the children's ministry for two and a half years. I am writing to express my strong support for Anthem Chapel's application for a permanent home in Goleta.

I first discovered Anthem Chapel when my son was just a few months old, back when the congregation was meeting outdoors under a tent on Covington Way. Even in that temporary setting, the strength of the community was undeniable. I chose to make Anthem our church home specifically to ensure my son could grow up surrounded by a supportive, values-driven community. Since then, I have deeply invested in that vision by volunteering in our nursery, two-year-old, and three-year-old classrooms.

The children's program at Anthem provides a loving, safe, and joyful environment for local families. While Goleta Valley Junior High has been a wonderful temporary partner, operating a high-quality youth program that requires complete setup and teardown every single week presents significant operational challenges.

Securing a permanent space will allow Anthem to shift its resources, energy, and volunteer hours away from weekly logistics and redirect them toward expanding our community outreach. A permanent home will enable us to better serve not just our congregation, but the broader Goleta Valley community.

Anthem Chapel has consistently proven that it is a deeply responsible organization that takes excellent care of the spaces it occupies. Our commitment to Goleta is demonstrated through our actions:

- **Community Outreach:** We host free, accessible family events designed to bring neighbors together. Last Christmas, Anthem hosted a community-wide holiday event featuring children's carnival games and a real sledding hill at the Restoration Church lot, providing a safe, joyful space for local families.
- **Civic Stewardship:** We believe in giving back to the places that host us. Last year, Anthem mobilized teams for a beautification project at Goleta Valley Junior High. Volunteers spent their day spreading mulch, cleaning the theater space, and power-washing sidewalks to leave the campus better than we found it.

Anthem Chapel is comprised of people who truly love Goleta. A permanent facility will allow this church to deepen its roots, continue its dedicated service to local children, and remain an exemplary steward of our neighborhood's spaces.

I respectfully urge the Planning Commission to approve this project and allow Anthem Chapel to establish a permanent home in our community.

Thank you for your time and your service to Goleta.

Sincerely,

Kayla Galli

Goleta Resident & Anthem Chapel Member

From: ssmaxwell@cox.net
To: [Brian Hiefield](#); [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: New Anthem Chapel Development and Subdivision (APN: 077-160-022)
Date: Thursday, June 11, 2026 7:11:14 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

RE: Public Comment and Objections to Proposed Notice of Exemption for the Anthem Chapel Project (6595 Covington Way; Case Nos. 24-0002-SUB, 24-0004-CUP, 24-0010-DP, 24-0030-DRB, 24-0009-DP, & 24-0005-CUP

Dear Mr. Hiefield and Members of the Planning Commission:

Please accept these formal comments regarding the proposed reliance on a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Notice of Exemption (NOE) for the Anthem Chapel project located at 6595 Covington Way. I am writing to strongly object to the City's determination that this project qualifies for **Class 15 (Minor Land Divisions) and Class 32 (Infill Development)** categorical exemptions. The City must revoke the proposed NOE and order a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or Mitigate Negative Declaration (MND).

The proposed exemptions are legally invalid due to the following critical environmental factors:

1. Invalidation of Class 32 Infill Exemption Due to ESHA Impacts

- **Critical Habitat Encroachment:** The project site directly borders the highly sensitive Lake Los Carneros Open Space
- **Buffer Zone Halving:** The applicant requests a reduction of the Monarch Butterfly ESHA buffer from 100 feet to 50 feet.
- **Regulatory Contradiction:** CEQA Guidelines Section 15332(c) explicitly bars the infill exemption if a project threatens habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species.
- **Impact of Development:** Constructing a massive 22,038 square-foot, two-story structure within a historical insect buffer introduces noise, artificial lighting, and urban runoff.

2. Failure to Meet Core Class 32 Infill Criteria

- Severe Parking Deficit:** The planned 117-space parking lot is drastically inadequate for a 500-seat sanctuary and a 110-student daycare and preschool.
- **Traffic Overflow:** This parking shortfall creates public safety hazards by forcing major vehicle congestion into residential streets.

3. Application of the “Unusual Circumstances” Exception

- **Exception Triggered:** Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2(c), a categorical exemption cannot be used if unusual circumstances create a reasonable possibility of a significant effect.
- **Unprecedented Scale:** Forcing a massive commercial assembly facility and a dual church/campus arrangement into a single-family residential zone is highly unusual.
- **Compounded Threats:** This scale, paired with a 50% environmental buffer reduction, establishes a significant risk of severe ecological damage.

Conclusion and Request for Notice

The City of Goleta cannot legally approve this project via a Notice of Exemption. Substantial evidence shows that the project triggers multiple mandatory CEQA exceptions. The City must fulfill its legal obligations by requiring a robust, transparent environmental review process.

Respectfully,

Kerri Maxwell
6597 Camino Venturoso
317 409-9706
ssmaxwell@cox.net

From: [Lee Heller](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: Anthem Chapel item
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 1:29:10 PM

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Dear Planning Commissioners,

RE: the item you are considering regarding Anthem Chapel, I wanted to let you know that Anthem Chapel has been an important support to many non-profit organizations holding events at Stow Park and needing extra parking. Without their generosity, where would our group have found parking for our event other than on the streets around Stow Park?

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lee Heller
Event Coordinator
Tails of Hope
tailsofhope4sbcas@gmail.com

From: ssmaxwell@cox.net
To: [Brian Hiefield](#); [PER Meetings](#); [Anne Miller](#); [Rita Serotkin](#); [Jennifer Fullerton](#); [Katie Maynard](#); [Cary Penniman](#); [Paula Perotte](#); [Stuart Kasdin](#); [Luz Reyes-Martin](#); [James Kyriaco](#); [Jennifer Smith](#)
Subject: New Anthem Chapel Development and Subdivision (APN: 077-160-022)
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 2:59:57 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

RE: Public Comment and Objections to the Proposed Anthem Chapel Project (6595 Covington Way; Case Nos. 24-0002-SUB, 24-0004-CUP, 24-0010-DP, 24-0030-DRB, 24-0009-DP, & 24-0005-CUP)

Dear Mr. Hiefield and Members of the Planning Commission,

I am writing to strongly object to the Anthem Chapel project located at 6595 Covington Way. I feel the project will have a negative impact on the area immediately adjacent to the site, of which I am a neighbor, as well as be detrimental to the city of Goleta as a whole. The project as presented will violate Goleta's General Plan and safety standards.

The Parking and VMT Study prepared by Associate Transportation Engineers (ATE) on January 5, 2026, is inherently flawed and must be corrected for the following reasons:

- 1. The employee table is the VMT input – and it's a fraction of the actual site activity.** The City of Goleta's Sketch VMT Tool has three land use categories: Work Only (employees as the primary trip source), used by ATE for the church component; Residential (not applicable); and Local Serving Retail (screened out as less than significant if under 10,000 SF), which was used by ATE for the preschool/daycare. The Sketch VMT Tool is explicitly described as appropriate for "most residential and office projects." The following weekly and annual trip generators are entirely absent from the VMT discussion:
 - Three Sunday services, with a 500-seat sanctuary
 - One weekday evening service
 - Youth groups of 50-100 children Tuesday and Thursday evenings
 - Daily bible study, approximately 75 people
 - Weddings – 26 per year, up to 300 people each
 - Fall Festival, 450 people
 - Christmas Launch, 450 people
 - All-Church BBQ – 10 times per year after Sunday services

- Vacation Bible School – up to 400 children over 15 days
- Religious conferences – up to 4 per year, around 300 people each

None of these are employee trips. All of these generate VMT. None appear in the VMT analysis. There is no assembly/religious institution category in the Sketch VMT Tool – because the tool was never designed for this use type. Counting only the small number of church, daycare/preschool employees toward the VMT calculations vastly underestimates the actual impact on traffic.

2. **The trip generation numbers don't account for peak operations.** The peak hour trips and weekday trips cited are weekday figures. They capture preschool drop-off and office staff. Three Sunday services with up to 500 seats each – the highest traffic generating activity on the site – produce zero trips in this analysis because Sunday is not a weekday peak hour period. The VMT study appears to have been structured around weekday Level of Service (LOS) analysis, which is entirely the wrong lens for a church. By failing to model VMT during actual peak deployment days, the analysis relies on an artificially deflated baseline.
3. **The parking analysis internally contradicts the VMT conclusion.** Weekend church use shows the highest number of required parking spaces. If weekend use is the parking peak, it is by definition also the VMT peak. The study can't simultaneously acknowledge that Sunday is the highest-demand period for parking and then exclude Sunday from VMT analysis.
4. **The preschool screening argument is weak on the facts stated.** ATE screened out preschool and daycare as “local-serving uses which do not increase VMT.” But they also say the preschool and daycare serve “the congregation and the Goleta neighborhood” – not just residents within walking distance. Anthem's own SBUSD rental data shows a regional draw, not a neighborhood one. A use that draws from Goleta and beyond does not qualify for the local-serving screen under the City's guidelines.
5. **Geographical Assumptions and Underestimated Trip Lengths.** The study utilizes highly localized, city-wide averages assuming members live within immediate walking or biking radius of the Los Carneros corridor. However, regional assemblies do not pull attendees solely from immediate boundary lines. Substantial evidence indicates that Anthem Chapel's congregation draws from broader regional boundaries across Santa Barbara County. Because the analysis severely understates the actual trip length (geographical pull) of the 500-seat

assembly, the total calculated VMT are significantly lower than what will occur in reality. **The City must mandate an actual zip-code survey of the active congregation to establish an accurate travel demand model.**

6. **The HCS Two-Way Stop-Control Report conducted by ATE was on a date not representative of typical traffic.** The report was generated from information collected (or inputted) on December 19, 2025. This was a Friday, and City offices were closed. UCSB was not in session for Winter Break. Attendance at local schools may have been lower than typical because it was the day before break. **The City must ask for an updated report averaging data collected on two separate weekdays, and ideally during different seasons for an accurate report.**
7. **Induced VMT from severe parking deficiencies and circulating traffic.** The project provides only 110 parking spaces for a maximum capacity of 500 sanctuary seats and a 110-child school. This severe parking deficit will force hundreds of vehicles to overflow onto local residential street and Los Carneros Road. The analysis completely ignores the “induced VMT” caused by frustrated drivers circling nearby neighborhoods searching for parking. This localized gridlock will delay emergency responses from the adjacent Fire Station 14 and compromise pedestrian safety along the sensitive Lake Los Carneros Open Space boundaries.
8. **The VMT analysis has no connection to fire safety documents.** The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and the General Plan’s Public Facilities Element (Policy PF 3.4) address fire safety separately – two routes of ingress/egress, fire access standards, etc. The draft Safety Element designates Los Carneros Road as a potential evacuation route. These fire safety documents don’t feed into the VMT calculation at all. The VMT Tool applied measured only commute-based employee travel, completely ignoring the traffic surge from 500 attendees on Sundays on a designated evacuation corridor. Los Carneros does not have a dedicated left-turn lane onto the property. There is no curb-cut to facilitate safe right-hand turns onto the property without impeding through traffic on Los Carneros. The close vicinity to Fire Station 14 risks blocking emergency vehicles from responding quickly when needed. **Under the Goleta General Plan, public safety and emergency access are paramount. The Commission cannot legally approve a high-occupancy assembly use that compromises emergency vehicle access and evacuation routes during a wildfire event. The local fire marshal should review the property layout and access driveways and prepare a safety report.**

Based on the preceding information, I strongly encourage the Planning Commission to reject the flawed VMT analysis as submitted by the applicant. A more accurate analysis of VMT as it relates to a high-occupancy assembly must be conducted before any approval of the Anthem Chapel development. I respectfully request that the Planning Commission require the applicant to prepare a full Environmental Impact Report with verifiable regional tracking and mandatory traffic and safety studies.

Respectfully,

Kerri Maxwell
6597 Camino Venturoso
ssmaxwell@cox.net
(317)409-9706

From: [Terry Hurt](#)
To: [Brian Hiefield](#)
Cc: [Jennifer Fullerton](#); [Katie Maynard](#); [Anne Miller](#); [Cary Penniman](#); [Rita Serotkin](#)
Subject: My letter in opposition to the Anthem Chapel project
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 4:46:37 PM

Goleta Planning Commission
City of Goleta
130 Cremona Drive, Suite B
Goleta, CA 93117

RE: Strong Opposition to Proposed Anthem Chapel Project & ESHA Buffer Reduction

Dear Chair and Planning Commissioners,

I am writing as a resident living 1,300 feet from the proposed project site to express my strong opposition to the Anthem Chapel development. This project represents an incompatible "megachurch" use that will cause significant, unavoidable impacts to the quiet suburban character of our neighborhood, the historic uses of the Stow House area, and the adjacent natural open space. I respectfully urge the Commission to deny the requested Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) buffer reduction and require a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR) under CEQA.

I. Inadequate Environmental Review & ESHA Buffer Threats

I strongly urge the Commission to deny the request to reduce the ESHA buffer for the Anthem Chapel Project and instead require a full CEQA review to protect the critical Stow House monarch butterfly overwintering site. The applicant's current evaluation downplays the habitat's importance due to low recent counts—ignoring the broader regional decline—and relies on inadequate municipal standards to measure biological threats. Specifically, the project's plan to remove mature trees and rely on immature landscaping will immediately degrade the ESHA by introducing disruptive artificial light, unvetted noise pollution, and open canopies that invite avian predators. Furthermore, because this site is a vital link in the larger Los Carneros ecological corridor, reducing this buffer threatens regional conservation efforts and directly conflicts with Goleta's recent \$3.9 million state grant for monarch protection. Per California environmental law (*Friends, Artists and Neighbors of Elkhorn Slough v. California Coastal Commission*), the City cannot legally approve a shrunken buffer based on deferred, post-approval mitigation plans; the ecological efficacy of this project must be rigorously and scientifically vetted through a comprehensive CEQA EIR before any approvals are considered.

II. Severe Noise Impacts and Incompatible "Megaphone" Design

Anthem Chapel operates as a "praise church" featuring loud, heavily amplified services with full bands, vocals, drums, and heavy bass. The neighborhood has already experienced the reality of these operations. During the COVID-19 pandemic, when Anthem held services in an outdoor tent on this property, they proved to be unneighborly and entirely non-responsive to the community. Despite repeated requests from residents to turn down the volume, the disruptive noise continued unabated, with loud band rehearsals starting as early as 7:00 AM multiple days a week. Even with my doors and windows completely closed 1,300 feet away, the bass vibrations and music were clearly audible.

The proposed permanent building will drastically worsen this issue. The architectural design features roll-up doors and a standing-room-only layout meant to maximize congregation capacity and allow services to spill outdoors. Structurally, the building is shaped like a giant megaphone aimed directly at the Stow House and Lake Los Carneros property. Rather than mitigating sound, this building will actively project high-decibel, amplified noise into a public natural area valued for its peace and solitude, fundamentally destroying the public's ability to enjoy the local natural environment.

III. Significant and Unavoidable Parking & Traffic Crisis

The lack of adequate parking is an un-mitigable flaw that will overwhelm local streets and create public safety hazards. The surrounding area—which includes Lake Los Carneros Park, the Stow

House museum, the South Coast Railroad Museum, Fire Station No. 14, and the Islamic Community Center—already suffers from a severe parking deficit during peak times. A recent example occurred just a few weeks ago during the Environmental Defense Center's (EDC) annual fundraiser at the Stow House. With 600 attendees, parked vehicles completely overflowed into the neighborhood because the small City lot and the current Lutheran property lot could not accommodate the crowd. The City must fully assess the cumulative, worst-case traffic and parking conflicts that have been completely ignored in the current planning documents:

Existing Historic Events: The Stow House regularly hosts high-attendance events (weddings, the summer music series, Old Rancho Days) that already saturate neighborhood parking.

Surrounding Institutional Needs: The Islamic Community Center was approved with an incredibly small lot, forcing attendees to walk long distances from street parking. The Railroad Museum needs parking, and Fire Station No. 14 may expand into its current lot, further reducing public parking spaces.

Park Visitors: Everyday hikers, birdwatchers, and nature enthusiasts will be entirely displaced from public parking access.

Emergency Safety Risks: The City has failed to conduct a realistic traffic safety and emergency evacuation assessment for scenarios where an Anthem service directly coincides with a major Stow House or regional event.

The Planning Commission must look upon Anthem's congregation size and event frequency estimates with extreme skepticism. Adding a massive event center to an already overburdened, constrained parking ecosystem is entirely incompatible with public safety.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The existing Lake Los Carneros area functions collectively as a historic, cultural, and environmental sanctuary for Goleta. Introducing an exceptionally loud megachurch facility into this delicate balance will cause permanent, unavoidable degradation to our neighborhood and natural spaces.

For these reasons, I request that the Planning Commission deny the proposed ESHA buffer reduction and the project as currently proposed. Furthermore, I urge the City to explore purchasing this property from the Lutheran Church to permanently preserve the solitude of Lake Los Carneros Park and prevent the exacerbation of an already critical traffic and parking situation. Thank you for your time, leadership, and consideration of the neighborhood's serious concerns.

Sincerely,
Terry Hurt
Goleta, CA

From: [Nicholas Norman](#)
To: [Nicholas Norman](#)
Subject: FW: Anthem mega church near the lake
Date: Thursday, June 18, 2026 8:47:32 AM

From: Barbara Rose McCaffrey <brmccaffrey@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2026 11:21 PM
To: planningmeetings@cityofgoleta.gov <planningmeetings@cityofgoleta.gov>
Subject: Anthem mega church near the lake

This project is totally inappropriate to the amount of land that is currently used by many groups such as Stow House, wedding parties, the Muslim worship group, Fiddlers, Dam Dinner, etc. as a parking lot. Junk accumulation noted and piles of dead leaves and debris. There are frequent loud gatherings day and night. It would be a fire and emergency hazard area as this neighborhood is already designated as high fire hazard. How would all the people get out in a flood or fire? How would emergency personnel get in to assist? A young man was recently hit by a car across from this site at 6:30 am and passed away in the hospital. This small site could not possibly accommodate a full time preschool, church, church outreach, youth groups, plazas, walkways, gates, landscape, counseling hours, office staff, storage, along with special or routine services many times and days of the week and all hours of the day and night. Where will people park as they are already parking in the red zone, also double parking and parking in front of driveways and mail boxes for Mega services at GVJH. There is harsh lighting during the evening. Youth groups are seen and heard along the periphery of the parking lot. Six large storage bins, parked motor home and three box car trucks are already stationed there without moving. Children will be around a lot and there are more and more persons coming out of the wooded areas just to stand around the buildings. Our fire fighters deserve peace and quiet without lights and voices and cars and music and congestion. The natural lake surroundings and ESHA are already being compensated by this group's storage and activities and neglect. This church is currently conducting mega services and events and camp days at GVCH that draw hundreds of people. GVCH lot is full and cars parked up and down the neighborhood streets on a regular basis during their assemblies. Their holiday gatherings are so immense that they use DPHS too for holidays and invite everybody in the congregation to bring guests.

Respectfully submitted:

Barbara Rose McCaffrey

From: [Christopher Jerde](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: New Anthem Chapel Development and Subdivision (APN: 077-160-022)
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 6:35:11 PM
Attachments: [Jerde Planning Commission ESHA Letter.pdf](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

RE: Public Comment and Objections to the Proposed Anthem Chapel Project (6595 Covington Way; Case Nos. 24-0002-SUB, 24-0004-CUP, 24-0010-DP, 24-0030-DRB, 24-0009-DP, & 24-0005-CUP)

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

I am writing (see attached PDF) to strongly object to the Anthem Chapel project at 6595 Covington Way. This project violates the existing Goleta Code for ESHA protections and buffer reduction for overwintering Monarch Butterflies. My attached letter details these violations and the incompleteness of the environmental assessment and city review.

Please do not allow the ESHA buffer to be reduced. And please require that a formal CEQA review be completed to better evaluate the impacts of this project on overwintering Monarchs and to allow for more informed decision-making. In a time when Overwintering Monarch Butterflies are under evaluation for Endangered Species Act protections, it is inappropriate to further reduce critical ESHA habitat and protections.

Thank you for considering my letter in opposition to this proposed development.

Sincerely,
Dr. Christopher Jerde
389. N La Patera LN
Goleta, CA 93117

christopher.jerde@gmail.com

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I respectfully urge the Commission to deny the request to reduce the Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) buffer associated with the Stow House monarch butterfly overwintering site and to require a full CEQA review of the Anthem Chapel Project. The available information indicates substantial uncertainty about the ecological consequences of reducing the ESHA buffer, while multiple lines of evidence indicate that the buffer plays a vital role in maintaining the habitat conditions necessary for overwintering monarch butterflies (OMB).

ESHA buffers for OMB are critical for maintaining the environmental conditions necessary for this population. Historically low OMB counts make it impossible to adequately evaluate the current functioning of this ESHA or to reliably predict the impacts of reducing the ESHA buffer (Fig 1.). Because populations are currently at historically low levels¹, the absence of large numbers of butterflies cannot be taken as evidence that the habitat is no longer important². *Rather, the current understanding of the OMB population, which is historically small, limits our ability to assess how the Stow House ESHA may contribute to future population recovery.*

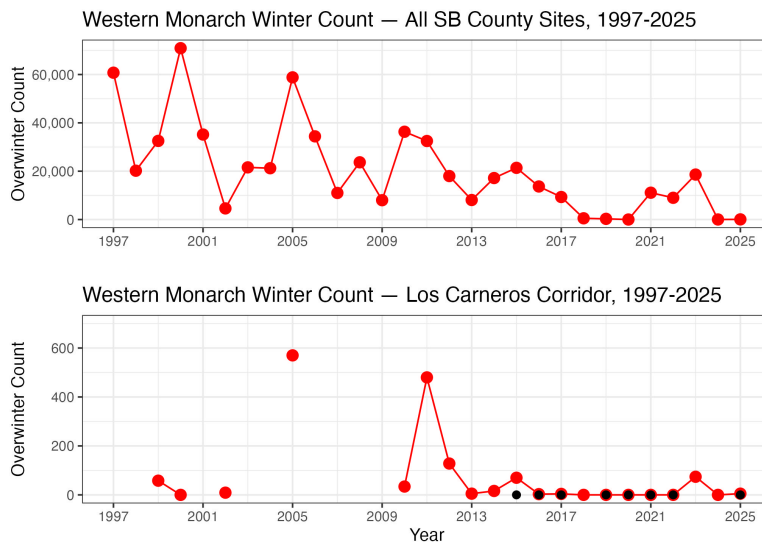


Figure 1: Overwinter Monarch Butterfly (OMB) Population Trends. All data provided by the Xerces Society ([here](#)) and accessed 14 June 2026. Top: The OMB population recorded across all known and observed roosting sites in Santa Barbara County (SBC) from 1997 to 2025 mirrors the national population decline. Bottom: In the five Los Carneros Corridor sites (red) OMB observations have been nearly as high as 600

¹ Thogmartin, W. E., Wiederholt, R., et al. (2017). Monarch butterfly population decline in North America: identifying the threatening processes. *Royal Society open science*, 4(9), 170760.

² Van Horne, B. (1983). Density as a misleading indicator of habitat quality. *The Journal of Wildlife Management*, 893-901.

individuals in 2005, but due to sporadic and incomplete monitoring, the trend is only observable after 2010. The black dots represent the Stow House ESHA site, where no OMB have been recorded. Please note the site has been observed only eight times in the last 10 years, and when the population of OMB was at its lowest nationally, regionally, and locally. There is insufficient data to conclude that this ESHA is not a critical habitat for OMB.

Under the Goleta City code ([here](#)), the Anthem Chapel Plan does not meet the standards to reduce the ESHA buffer from 100 to 50 feet. As stated, § 17.30.180 Protection of Monarch Butterfly ESHA:

Required ESHA Buffer. *A buffer of a sufficient size is required to ensure the biological integrity and preservation of the monarch butterfly ESHA, including aggregation sites and surrounding grove of trees.*

1. Buffers shall not be less than 100 feet around existing and historic aggregation and roost sites, as measured from the outer extent of the tree canopy. The required buffer area must include native vegetation and provide physical barriers to human intrusion.

2. The required buffer may be reduced to 50 feet only in circumstances where the trees contribute to the habitat but are not considered likely to function as an aggregation site, such as along narrow windrows.

The code mandates that the ESHA buffer shall be at least 100 feet and provide physical barriers to human intrusion. In its current condition, this ESHA does not have barriers to human intrusion. *If the buffer is reduced, the Anthem Chapel Plan's landscaping will invite human intrusion and violate city code.* Under the code a buffer reduction to 50 is possible ONLY in circumstances where trees contribute to the habitat. The problem here is that there are very few trees in this area to begin with, and the landscaping plan will remove existing trees and replace them with immature trees that do not contribute to the habitat for 20-30 years. *The buffer reduction does not meet Goleta's City code.*

The western OMB is currently being considered for listing under the Endangered Species Act³. Reducing a critical habitat area while the species faces potential federal protection could further compromise recovery efforts and may expose both the City and the project developer to future legal and regulatory liabilities if habitat supporting overwintering monarchs is degraded or functionally destroyed⁴. This ESHA has likely remained suitable for OMB for many years despite its proximity to an aesthetically unappealing parking lot, as it provides the environmental conditions monarchs require. Specifically, the site has historically been relatively dark, quiet, sheltered from wind, and protected from predators. These habitat characteristics, rather than visual aesthetics, are what determine the suitability of overwintering habitat⁵ when the area was designated as part of the Los Carneros corridor ESHA.

³ <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Invertebrates/Monarch-Butterfly>

⁴ James, D. G. (2024). Monarch butterflies in western North America: A holistic review of population trends, ecology, stressors, resilience and adaptation. *Insects*, 15(1), 40.

⁵ <https://www.coastal.ca.gov/recap/slo/slo-ch4.pdf>

The Anthem Chapel Project's evaluation of lighting impacts is inadequate. While *the City of Goleta has adopted stringent outdoor lighting regulations intended to reduce light pollution, protect nocturnal wildlife, and preserve dark skies, those standards were developed to regulate urban development and are not designed to evaluate impacts to sensitive ESHA habitat.* Furthermore, the landscaping plan relies heavily on immature vegetation to mitigate future light intrusion. Newly planted trees will require decades to achieve the size and canopy structure necessary to provide meaningful light screening (California Sycamore, 2-3 ft per year)⁶, while the removal of existing mature trees will immediately increase light exposure within and adjacent to the ESHA. Overwinter darkness is a critical environmental factor associated with monarch roost formation and the long-term functionality of overwintering habitat⁷. Scientific studies have shown that nighttime light exposure can disrupt monarch butterfly circadian rhythms, interfere with their sun-compass navigation, and cause disoriented flight behavior⁸. Artificial lighting can also increase energy depletion by forcing monarchs to burn critical fat reserves needed to survive overwintering⁹. Light pollution is a cumulative impact specifically recognized under CEQA, and the nearby Stow House and Fire Station likely contribute to it. *Given the well-documented biological effects of artificial light, this issue's cumulative impacts alone warrant a full CEQA review.*

The Anthem Chapel Project's evaluation of noise impacts is similarly inadequate. *Although the City regulates noise through municipal performance standards and noise ordinances, those standards were developed for human land-use compatibility and are not appropriate measures of biological impacts to sensitive habitat.* In addition, the applicant's sound modeling relies on assumptions that may not reflect actual site conditions, including closed doors and windows and controlled interior sound levels. During winter events, including mid-week services and special gatherings, these assumptions may not be met. Sound generated at building entrances and outdoor gathering areas can propagate directly into the ESHA buffer. Scientific studies have documented that anthropogenic noise can influence monarch butterfly development, behavior, and seasonal movements¹⁰, indicating that noise impacts should be more thoroughly evaluated under realistic conditions.

The Anthem Chapel Project proposes removing mature trees and replacing them with newly planted ones. *Even if replacement trees survive and grow as intended, they will require approximately twenty to thirty years to reach the size and structure necessary to*

⁶ <https://sactree.org/trees/california-sycamore/>

⁷ Griffiths, J., & Villablanca, F. (2013). Management of Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) overwintering habitat: recommendations based on patterns of tree use.

⁸ Parlin, A. F., Stratton, S. M., & Guerra, P. A. (2022). Oriented migratory flight at night: consequences of nighttime light pollution for monarch butterflies. *iScience*, 25(5).

⁹ Julick, C. (2022). *Energetic Causes and Consequences of Reproductive Diapause and Migration in Monarch Butterflies (Danaus plexippus L.)* (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Nebraska-Lincoln).

¹⁰ Davis, A. K., Schroeder, H., Yeager, I., & Pearce, J. (2018). Effects of simulated highway noise on heart rates of larval monarch butterflies, *Danaus plexippus*: implications for roadside habitat suitability. *Biology Letters*, 14(5), 20180018.

support overwintering monarch butterfly roosts. During this extended period, the habitat value currently provided by mature trees would be lost. The proposed tree palette lacks sufficient diversity and includes only a limited number of species that are suitable for supporting overwintering monarch butterfly roosts. This raises concerns regarding the long-term resilience and habitat value of the landscaping within the existing buffer. As pointed out by Griffiths, J., & Villablanca, F. (2013), “In groves that are dominated by Eucalyptus, native conifers such as Monterey cypress (*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*) and pitch canker-resistant Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*) should be planted around the perimeter, and in any areas where trees have fallen or are likely to fall.” This is a critical omission from the landscaping plan and would be impossible to implement in time for mature trees to protect the OMB ESHA at Stow House, given the proposed reduction of the buffer and the removal of mature trees.

The native plant and landscaping components of the project appear to be designed primarily to benefit migratory monarch butterflies rather than overwintering monarch butterflies. Throughout the planning documents, references to monarch butterflies often fail to distinguish between migratory habitat requirements and the unique habitat requirements of overwintering populations¹¹. These ecological functions are not interchangeable, and habitat improvements for one life-history stage do not necessarily compensate for impacts to another¹². The plant community for any plantings in or nearby the ESHA buffer should include plants for winter periods identified by the Xerces Society ([here](#)). The landscaping design is inadequate for the needs of OMB and could potentially even be detrimental to the functioning of the ESHA¹³.

The Stow House ESHA is part of the larger Los Carneros corridor of overwintering monarch butterfly habitat. The concept of a corridor implies that multiple habitat patches function collectively to support the persistence of overwintering monarch populations. However, *no analysis has been provided regarding whether the degradation or loss of this ESHA could have cascading effects on neighboring overwintering sites within the corridor*¹⁴ network, and Santa Barbara OMB are known to move between sites overwinter¹⁵. CEQA should address not only the functioning of the Stow House ESHA but also its importance within the ESHA OMB corridor.

The proposed landscaping within the ESHA buffer would create a more open and

¹¹ Sánchez-Tlacuahuac, N., Pimentel-Equihua, J. L., Espinosa-Hernández, V., & Vibrans, H. (2023). What do monarchs feed on in winter? Nectar sources at hibernation sites. *Journal of Insect Conservation*, 27(1), 181-191.

¹² Tuskes, P. M., & Brower, L. P. (1978). Overwintering ecology of the monarch butterfly, *Danaus plexippus* L., in California. *Ecological Entomology*, 3(2), 141-153.

¹³ Faldyn, M.J., Hunter, M.D. and Elder, B.D. (2018), Climate change and an invasive, tropical milkweed: an ecological trap for monarch butterflies. *Ecology*, 99: 1031-1038.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/ecy.2198>

¹⁴ Simberloff, D., & Cox, J. (1987). Consequences and costs of conservation corridors. *Conservation biology*, 1(1), 63-71.

¹⁵ Tuskes, P. M., & Brower, L. P. (1978). Overwintering ecology of the monarch butterfly, *Danaus plexippus* L., in California. *Ecological Entomology*, 3(2), 141-153.

manicured environment that may increase habitat suitability for bird species that prey upon monarch butterflies. While the existing parking lot may not be visually appealing, it also provides limited habitat value for avian predators¹⁶. By contrast, the proposed landscape design may attract species such as Black-headed Grosbeak, Bullock's Oriole, California Scrub Jay, Northern Mockingbird, American Robin, Towhees, and Common Sparrows, all of which have been documented within the Los Carneros area¹⁷. *If the landscaping enhances habitat suitability for these species, it will increase predation pressure and functionally reduce the ESHA's suitability for overwintering monarch butterflies; particularly if in combination with an open canopy from immature trees.* Ultimately, this impact could justify prohibiting any landscaping within the existing ESHA buffer.

The City of Goleta has received approximately \$3.9 million in funding, originally authorized through the California State Budget and distributed through the California State Coastal Conservancy, to support monarch butterfly conservation and habitat restoration. Denying the request to reduce the ESHA buffer would be a no-cost action for Goleta that directly supports this significant public investment in OMB conservation. *It would be difficult to justify restoration expenditures intended to enhance monarch habitat in one part of Goleta while simultaneously authorizing the reduction or degradation of existing habitat elsewhere. Such actions could raise concerns among funding agencies and potentially affect future conservation funding opportunities.*

Finally, reducing the size of an ESHA buffer is a discretionary governmental action that should trigger CEQA review. *The Anthem Chapel Project, the environmental analyses prepared on behalf of the applicant, and the City's existing environmental review do not adequately address most of the concerns outlined above.* Significant questions remain regarding lighting impacts, noise impacts, habitat structure, predator dynamics, corridor functionality, and the long-term consequences of replacing mature habitat features with immature landscaping. Because substantial evidence supports the possibility of significant environmental impacts, further analysis is necessary to allow decision-makers and the public to make an informed decision regarding the proposed reduction of the ESHA buffer.

Under California law, a lead agency cannot legally approve a project with a reduced Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) buffer based on promises of future mitigation or deferred planning. In *Friends, Artists and Neighbors of Elkhorn Slough v. California Coastal Commission* (2021) 72 Cal.App.5th 466, the California Court of Appeal reaffirmed the foundational CEQA principle that complete environmental review and specific mitigation strategies must precede project approval. Consequently, an agency is prohibited from approving a reduced buffer under the condition that it will figure out how to mitigate resulting biological impacts on the ESHA through a future, post-approval habitat management plan. *Instead, the actual efficacy and protective capacity of the proposed,*

¹⁶ Brower, L. P., & Calvert, W. H. (1985). Foraging dynamics of bird predators on overwintering monarch butterflies in Mexico. *Evolution*, 39(4), 852-868.

¹⁷ <https://ebird.org/>

shrunk buffer must be scientifically proven, analyzed, and thoroughly vetted for environmental impacts before the final CEQA determination is legally adopted.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Planning Commission deny the proposed reduction of the ESHA buffer and require a thorough CEQA review that addresses the many concerns in this letter and those raised by public input before any further action is taken.

Sincerely,
Christopher L. Jerde

Goleta, CA

From: [Emili Robeson](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: Support for Anthem Chapel: 6595 Covington Way
Date: Thursday, June 18, 2026 9:22:57 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Chair and Planning Commissioners,

My name is Emili Robeson and I live in Goleta. I support the proposed Anthem Chapel campus at 6595 Covington Way because Anthem serves kids, teenagers, and young families in this neighborhood. A permanent space would allow them to do this even more! I have seen firsthand what this church does for people in Goleta and I think they have earned a home here. I hope you will approve this project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Blessings,

Emili Robeson
Goleta

From: [Jimmy Robeson](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: Support for Anthem Chapel: 6595 Covington Way
Date: Thursday, June 18, 2026 9:13:30 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Chair and Planning Commissioners,

My name is James Robeson and I live in Goleta. I support the proposed Anthem Chapel campus at 6595 Covington Way because Anthem serves kids, teenagers, and young families in this neighborhood. A permanent space would allow them to do this even more! I have seen firsthand what this church does for people in Goleta and I think they have earned a home here. I hope you will approve this project.

Thank you for your consideration.

James Robeson, Goleta

Sylvia King
410 Covington Pl, Goleta, CA 93117
sylvia.ellen.king@gmail.com

June 17, 2026

City of Goleta Planning Commission
c/o Planning and Environmental Review Department
130 Cremona Drive
Goleta, CA 93117
Submitted via PERmeetings@cityofgoleta.gov

Re: Agenda Item B.1 (Case Nos. 24-0002-SUB, 24-0004-CUP(AM), 24-0010-DP(AM), 24-0005-CUP, 24-0009-DP, 24-0030-DRB) — 6595 Covington Way (Anthem Chapel); June 22, 2026 Public Hearing; Request for an Independently Verified Attendance Baseline and Objection to the Proposed Notice of Exemption

Dear Chair Miller and Members of the Planning Commission:

I have lived at the corner of Covington Place and Covington Way for more than ten years, 0.2 miles from 6595 Covington Way. I write regarding Item B.1 on your June 22, 2026 agenda, in which staff recommends that the Commission adopt a Notice of Exemption and approve the Parcel Map, Conditional Use Permit, Development Plan, and related adjustments for the Anthem Chapel project. I ask the Commission to consider the evidence below before taking either action, and I respectfully request that this letter and the attached exhibits be entered into the administrative record.

I. Every Technical Study in the Record Is Keyed to One Unverified Number

Parking, traffic, VMT, air quality, and noise all depend on the same input: the size of Anthem's congregation, as Anthem itself has reported it. The Project Description sizes the sanctuary at 500 seats; the ATE traffic and parking study sizes 117 parking spaces and a 101-space weekend requirement to that same 500-capacity, 5,042-square-foot assembly area. No party other than Anthem has supplied a congregation figure, and the record contains no independent verification of it. The attached exhibits speak directly to that gap.

II. Independently Verified Room Capacity Documents a Larger, Growing Operation (Exhibits A-1 and A-2)

Santa Barbara Unified School District facility reservation records show which rooms Anthem booked and when. Room capacities are not figures Anthem supplied; I verified each one independently on Facilitron, the facility-management platform the District uses to publish and book its venues. Cross-referencing the two sources shows that since January 2023, Anthem has booked the Goleta Valley Junior High School auditorium, with a Facilitron-published capacity of 630 seats, as its primary Sunday venue for approximately 50 of 52 Sundays per year, every year through at least October 2025. The proposed replacement sanctuary seats 500 — fewer seats than the room Anthem currently uses weekly. That comparison does not depend

on attendance figures recorded by anyone; it is a comparison of one room, independently measured, to another.

The footprint has also grown. In early 2023, Anthem's regular Sunday booking covered the auditorium and cafeteria alone, a combined 970 seats. By 2024, the booking had expanded to four rooms — auditorium, cafeteria, library, and a classroom — totaling 1,030 to 1,073 seats, a pattern that has held through October 2025. For Christmas services, Anthem has required progressively larger venues each year from 2019 through 2024, moving from a single 1,200-capacity theater to a combined 1,948 seats across two facilities booked over two days. Exhibit A-1 reproduces the underlying SBUSD reservation records for every Anthem booking on file; Exhibit A-2 is my detailed written analysis of those records, with capacities cross-checked against Facilitron's published listings.

Period	Event	Facilities Reserved	Combined Capacity
Jan 15, 2023	Sunday Morning	Auditorium	630
Jul–Aug 2023 (Sundays)	Sunday Mornings	Auditorium, Cafeteria, Library	1,043
Jan–Jun 2024 (Sundays)	Sunday Mornings	Auditorium, Cafeteria, 2 Classrooms	1,030
Aug–Oct 2025 (Sundays)	Sunday Mornings	Auditorium, Cafeteria, Library, Room 301	1,073
Dec 22–23, 2024	Christmas Services	PAC; PAC + Gym	up to 1,948
Nov 2, 2025	Women's Event	Auditorium	630
Sep 14, 2025	Prayer & Worship Night	Auditorium	630

None of these figures come from Anthem's application. They are set by the facilities themselves and are reproducible by anyone with access to Facilitron's public listings. A congregation that has required a 630-to-1,073-capacity footprint every week for three years, and up to 1,948 seats at Christmas, is the operative comparison point against a proposed 500-capacity sanctuary — not the other way around.

III. Cumulative Corridor Loading Has Never Been Studied (Exhibits B-1 and B-2)

6595 Covington Way sits on a corridor that already hosts Stow House, the Railroad Museum, the Islamic Society, Fire Station 14, and Lake Los Carneros recreational access, all reached by the same two roads, Los Carneros Road and Covington Way. None of the traffic, VMT, or noise studies in this record models concurrent demand from these existing uses. To illustrate the gap with real, dated, non-holiday data rather than a hypothetical, I documented the corridor's public event calendar for the week of July 13–19, 2026 — an ordinary summer week, not a peak event.

Day	Event	Category	Start	Finish
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<i>Mon 7/13</i>	<i>Daycare/preschool/office baseline</i>	<i>Anthem</i>	<i>7:00 AM</i>	<i>6:00 PM</i>
Mon 7/13	Camp Stow	Existing corridor	9:00 AM	4:00 PM
Mon 7/13	Doc Flanigan Time Trial bike race	Existing corridor	6:00 PM	8:15 PM
<i>Tue 7/14</i>	<i>Tuesday Morning Prayer Meeting</i>	<i>Anthem</i>	<i>6:30 AM</i>	<i>7:30 AM</i>
<i>Tue 7/14</i>	<i>Daycare/preschool/office baseline</i>	<i>Anthem</i>	<i>7:00 AM</i>	<i>6:00 PM</i>
Tue 7/14	Camp Stow	Existing corridor	9:00 AM	4:00 PM
Tue 7/14	Music at the Ranch	Existing corridor	5:30 PM	7:30 PM
<i>Tue 7/14</i>	<i>Youth Group</i>	<i>Anthem</i>	<i>undisclosed</i>	<i>undisclosed</i>
<i>Wed 7/15</i>	<i>Daycare/preschool/office baseline</i>	<i>Anthem</i>	<i>7:00 AM</i>	<i>6:00 PM</i>
Wed 7/15	Camp Stow	Existing corridor	9:00 AM	4:00 PM
<i>Wed 7/15</i>	<i>Junior High (Zion)</i>	<i>Anthem</i>	<i>6:30 PM</i>	<i>8:30 PM</i>
<i>Wed 7/15</i>	<i>High School (Vintage)</i>	<i>Anthem</i>	<i>7:00 PM</i>	<i>9:00 PM</i>
<i>Thu 7/16</i>	<i>Daycare/preschool/office baseline</i>	<i>Anthem</i>	<i>7:00 AM</i>	<i>6:00 PM</i>
Thu 7/16	Camp Stow	Existing corridor	9:00 AM	4:00 PM
<i>Thu 7/16</i>	<i>Youth Group</i>	<i>Anthem</i>	<i>undisclosed</i>	<i>undisclosed</i>
<i>Fri 7/17</i>	<i>Daycare/preschool/office baseline</i>	<i>Anthem</i>	<i>7:00 AM</i>	<i>6:00 PM</i>
Fri 7/17	Camp Stow	Existing corridor	9:00 AM	4:00 PM
Fri 7/17	Islamic Society Jumu'ah Prayer	Existing corridor	1:20 PM	1:50 PM
Sat 7/18	Museum Store & Visitors Center	Existing corridor	1:00 PM	4:00 PM
<i>Sun 7/19</i>	<i>Sunday Service #1</i>	<i>Anthem</i>	<i>9:30 AM</i>	<i>11:00 AM</i>
<i>Sun 7/19</i>	<i>Sunday Services #2</i>	<i>Anthem</i>	<i>undisclosed</i>	<i>undisclosed</i>
Sun 7/19	"Sundays at the Ranch"	Existing corridor	11:00 AM	2:00 PM
Sun 7/19	Museum Store & Visitors Center	Existing corridor	1:00 PM	4:00 PM
<i>Sun 7/19</i>	<i>Sunday Services #3</i>	<i>Anthem</i>	<i>undisclosed</i>	<i>undisclosed</i>

By itself, that week already includes eleven scheduled corridor events independent of Anthem, once the Stow House Museum Store and Visitors Center's posted Saturday and Sunday hours are counted alongside Camp Stow, the bike race, Music at the Ranch, and Friday prayer. Layering in Anthem's disclosed weekday baseline (daycare, preschool, office staff, daily Bible study) and weekly schedule (a Tuesday morning prayer meeting, Tuesday/Thursday evening youth groups, a Wednesday Junior High gathering, and three Sunday services) adds full-day operations on every day of the week, before counting private events or weddings at Stow House or Anthem's 26 weddings, 30 memorials, four conferences, or additional special events per year. The Sunday overlap is the clearest example: the only Anthem service time published anywhere — 9:30–11:00 AM, the Junior High breakout published on Anthem's own website — falls directly inside Stow House's "Sundays at the Ranch" window (11:00 AM–2:00 PM) on the

same two roads, and that is only the first of three services Anthem discloses occurring somewhere within an 8 AM–9 PM Sunday window. The other two services' times are not published anywhere in the record.

IV. The Record Cannot Support the Notice of Exemption Recommended for Adoption at This Hearing

A categorical or statutory CEQA exemption requires that the record contain no substantial evidence the project may have a significant effect. The gaps above are themselves that evidence. Specifically:

The church component's VMT analysis classifies Anthem as “Work Only,” modeling weekday office-style commuting and excluding Sunday services, weddings, memorials, and youth groups entirely. The result, 13.71 VMT per employee against the City's 14.26 threshold, clears by less than 4 percent — a margin this thin cannot absorb a misclassification of this scale. The air quality and greenhouse gas analysis compounds the problem by applying the same trip count, 428 vehicle trips, to an ordinary weekday and to a three-service Sunday alike.

The preschool/daycare VMT screening relies on the assumption that the use draws from a small, local geographic area. A congregation that has required venues seating up to 1,948 for Christmas services draws regionally, not locally — undermining the basis for that screen.

The parking analysis is sized to the same 500-capacity, 5,042-square-foot assembly area discussed above. If Anthem's demonstrated venue use is the better predictor of actual demand, the 117-space lot is undersized from the day it opens.

The City's draft General Plan Safety Element (submitted to the State Board of Forestry, May 2025) designates Los Carneros Road as a Potential Evacuation Route and identifies the corridor north of Cathedral Oaks Road within the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. No fire safety document and no traffic study in this record models evacuation capacity on this corridor under concurrent-event conditions — the exact conditions documented in Exhibits B-1 and B-2.

The applicant separately requests reducing the Monarch Butterfly ESHA buffer from 100 feet to 50 feet, on a parcel adjacent to Lake Los Carneros habitat.

Each of these gaps bears directly on the findings the Commission must make to approve this Conditional Use Permit: that the use is consistent with the General Plan; that it will not be more injurious to the health, safety, and general welfare of the surrounding neighborhood than uses otherwise allowed in the district; that the site is adequate in size, shape, location, and physical characteristics to accommodate the use; and that significant environmental impacts are mitigated to the maximum extent feasible. On this record, I do not believe the Commission can affirmatively make all four findings.

V. Requested Action

I ask the Commission to decline to adopt the Notice of Exemption as currently structured and to direct staff to prepare an Initial Study that addresses an independently verified congregation

size and attendance trajectory, actual Sunday and event-day trip generation rather than a weekday-only proxy, cumulative corridor loading with Stow House, the Railroad Museum, the Islamic Society, and Lake Los Carneros, and evacuation capacity on Los Carneros Road under concurrent-event conditions.

If the Commission proceeds to a vote on this record, I ask that any approval be conditioned on independent post-occupancy attendance and parking monitoring, a formal parking-sharing agreement with the Goleta Valley Historical Society rather than the current unenforceable informal arrangement, and a corridor-wide cumulative traffic and evacuation study within a defined period following occupancy.

I ask that this letter and the attached exhibits be entered into the record so that these issues are preserved.

Respectfully submitted,

Sylvia King

Resident, 410 Covington Way, Goleta, CA 93117

Enclosures:

Exhibit A-1 — Santa Barbara USD Active Reservations Records, 2019–2025 (original source)

Exhibit A-2 — Santa Barbara USD Active Reservations_Room Capacity, findings: third-party evidence of congregation size and growth trajectory (author's analysis of Exhibit A-1, capacities cross-checked via Facilitron)

Exhibit A-3 — Facilitron Rental Website, facility rental information for Goleta Valley Junior High School and Dos Pueblos High School (room capacity data, compiled by author)

Exhibit B-1 — Competing_Events_Corridor_v27, Los Carneros corridor events comparison spreadsheet (full corridor events data, compiled by author)

Exhibit B-2 — Corridor_Load_Pivot_Analysis, cumulative load summary, week of July 13–19, 2026 and week of August 10–16, 2026 (pivot analysis, compiled by author)

cc: Lisa Prasse, Current Planning Manager; Darryl Mimick, Supervising Senior Planner; Brian Hiefield, Senior Planner

From: [Brian Hiefield](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: FW: Opposition to Proposed Anthem Chapel Project & ESHA Buffer Reduction
Date: Sunday, June 21, 2026 4:24:42 PM

Additional public comment.

Brian Hiefield
Senior Planner
City of Goleta
Planning & Environmental Review Department
Current Planning Division
805-961-7559
bhiefield@cityofgoleta.gov

-----Original Message-----

From: Aaron Young <youngaaron11@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 19, 2026 1:24 PM
To: Brian Hiefield <bhiefield@cityofgoleta.org>
Cc: Jennifer Fullerton <jfullerton@cityofgoleta.org>; Katie Maynard <kmaynard@cityofgoleta.org>; Anne Miller <amiller@cityofgoleta.org>; Cary Penniman <cpenniman@cityofgoleta.org>; Rita Serotkin <rserotkin@cityofgoleta.org>
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Anthem Chapel Project & ESHA Buffer Reduction

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Chair and Planning Commissioners,

After hearing the pro's and con's of the Anthem Chapel Project, I strongly support the letters of opposition to this project that were sent from Christopher Jerde, Terry Hurt and Kerri Maxwell, Goleta residents.

Respectfully,
-Aaron Young
Goleta

From: [Cara Goldsworthy](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Cc: bheifield@cityofgoleta.org
Subject: Anthem Chapel at 6595 Covington Way
Date: Sunday, June 21, 2026 7:22:47 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi!

My family calls Anthem Chapel home, and we support building a permanent home at 6595 Covington Way. My husband and I are life long Goleta residents, born and raised in Goleta, and we are raising our kids here. Anthem Chapel has given our family community, Friends and an older generation to help guide us and look up to.

My husband wakes up at 530am on Sundays to set up church at GVJH. Having a permanent home would mean we can spend our Sunday mornings together before going to church.

Please allow this project to move forward!

Best,
Cara & Josh Goldsworthy

From: [Brian Hiefield](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: FW: 6595 Covington Way
Date: Sunday, June 21, 2026 4:01:37 PM

Additional public comment.

Brian Hiefield
Senior Planner
City of Goleta
Planning & Environmental Review Department
Current Planning Division
805-961-7559
bhiefield@cityofgoleta.gov

From: Cheryl Knudsen <cheryllknudsen@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2026 4:38 PM
To: Brian Hiefield <bhiefield@cityofgoleta.org>
Subject: 6595 Covington Way

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Brian Hiefield,

My name is Cheryl Knudsen, and my husband and I have been attending and serving at Anthem Chapel since 2020. We wholeheartedly support Anthem Chapel having a permanent home in Goleta.

Anthem Chapel is deeply invested in serving the families of Goleta by providing resources, community service, meals for those in need, and numerous free outreach events that offer wholesome and meaningful opportunities for children, youth, college students, families and grandparents.

We have been able to accomplish all of this while operating out of shipping containers at Goleta Valley Junior High, portable sheds, and a rented office on the Lutheran church property. Imagine the greater contributing impact we could have with an established beautiful residence.

The Design Review Board unanimously approved this project, and we respectfully ask the Planning Commission to support that decision by approving Anthem Chapel's permanent home. This project will allow our congregation to continue and expand our service to the Goleta community for years to come.

Thank you,

Cherryl Knudsen

From: [Brian Hiefield](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: FW: Objections to the Proposed Anthem Chapel Project
Date: Sunday, June 21, 2026 3:58:41 PM

Additional public comment.

Brian Hiefield
Senior Planner
City of Goleta
Planning & Environmental Review Department
Current Planning Division
805-961-7559
bhiefield@cityofgoleta.gov

From: Clint Nelson <scubaclint@ucsb.edu>
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2026 4:37 PM
To: Brian Hiefield <bhiefield@cityofgoleta.org>
Cc: Cary Penniman <cpenniman@cityofgoleta.org>
Subject: Fwd: Objections to the Proposed Anthem Chapel Project

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr. Hiefield and Members of the Planning Commission,

As a 20-year resident of Goleta, I strongly urge you to deny the Anthem Chapel expansion and the requested Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) buffer reduction. This project introduces an incompatible "megachurch" use into a quiet residential area, relying on flawed safety and environmental studies. At a minimum, a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be required.

The project should be denied based on the following three critical flaws:

1. Severe Public Safety and Traffic Risks

The intersection of North Los Carneros Road and Covington Way is a proven danger; a fatal pedestrian collision occurred there on March 31, 2026. Adding hundreds of vehicles for a 500-seat sanctuary creates a catastrophic risk. Furthermore, the applicant's traffic study ignores Sunday peak operations. With only 110 parking spaces for 500 seats and a 110-child school, overflow traffic will stall wildfire evacuation routes and block access to Fire Station 14. Viable alternatives exist in nearby vacant office

buildings along Calle Real and Coromar Drive, which have the necessary infrastructure to handle this volume safely.

2. Disruption of Peace and Open Space

Anthem's permanent design includes roll-up doors that will project amplified music directly into the neighborhood and the Lake Los Carneros Open Space. The applicant has historically been unresponsive to community concerns regarding noise, having ignored neighbors' pleas to mitigate loud early-morning rehearsals during previous outdoor services.

3. Destruction of Protected ESHA Habitat

The project threatens a vital monarch butterfly overwintering site. Replacing mature trees with immature landscaping violates CEQA standards, as the City cannot legally approve a reduced buffer based on vague, post-approval mitigation promises. Additionally, approving this reduction would contradict the goals of the \$3.9 million state grant Goleta recently accepted for monarch conservation.

The Lake Los Carneros and Stow House area is an environmental and cultural sanctuary. Forcing an under-parked, loud event center into this delicate ecosystem compromises public safety and destroys our community. I respectfully request that you deny this project and mandate a full EIR.

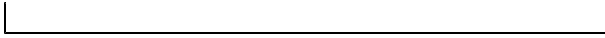
Sincerely,

Clint Nelson

Clint Nelson

[Specialist IV, SBC-LTER Lab Manager](#)
[Unit Dive and Boat Safety Officer](#)

Marine Science Institute
BLDG 520 Room 3003L
Mobile: 1-805-717-4794
Email: j.clinton.nelson@ucsb.edu



From: [Dale Gehr](mailto:Dale.Gehr@cityofgoleta.org)
To: bhiefeld@cityofgoleta.org; [PER Meetings](#); [Anne Miller](#); [Rita Serotkin](#); [Jennifer Fullerton](#); [Katie Maynard](#); [Cary Penniman](#); [Paula Perotte](#); [Stuart Kasdin](#); [Luz Reyes-Martin](#); kkyriaco@cityofgoleta.org; [Jennifer Smith](#)
Subject: Letter opposing the construction of Anthem Chapel at 6595 Covington Way, Goleta
Date: Thursday, June 18, 2026 3:36:15 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

RE: Public comment and objections to proposed Anthem Chapel project located at 6595 Covington Way in Goleta,

Members of the Planning Commission.

I strongly object to this project located at 6595 Covington Way. I feel that this project will have a negative impact on the neighboring community as well as anyone attending events at Stow House, and the Railroad Museum. This project has been flawed from the beginning with attendance numbers of Anthem Church and their proposed School which are not accurate. These numbers have not been verified by a non-biased party. I ask that the City of Goleta substantiate the numbers of those who would be in attendance for the Church services, the school, the child care, and the school in general, and not just take the numbers given by Anthem Church. I further object to all the exceptions that Anthem Chapel is requesting for itself as well the existing Christ Lutheran Church. If anyone else were proposing a build, it would be mandatory to bring build or remodel to city code. Why would Anthem Chapel and Christ Lutheran Church not need to follow these same laws? Can I ask for exceptions on size and scope with my remodel/build? This building is too large for the area, too tall for the area and due to all the exceptions they are asking for, really means they actually need a larger space to accommodate a "Mega Church" which intends to kill off anything existing in the ESHA. Anthem Chapel has said that they will have 55 children for childcare. Per California State law they are required to have 75 sq. feet of fenced, dedicated outdoor space for each child, which cannot be hallways. Is this why they want the ESHA buffer area to be reduced from 100 ft. to 50 ft? This would still not comply with California State restrictions, of which there can be no exceptions even for a church. There are plenty of empty commercial buildings, which would be large enough for their "large noise worship" Church along Hollister Avenue. If exceptions can be made for the project Anthem Church is proposing then city codes should also be changed to accommodate the general public. Anthem Church could get everything they are wanting without requesting exceptions if they looked elsewhere for property large enough to handle their Church/School/Business. Is the City of Goleta ready to accommodate ALL requests by anyone regardless of the impacts it may have?

There are plenty of large buildings sitting empty where there would be no objections to noise levels, parking, and not further endangering protected open areas. There is the Santa Barbara News Press building that is sitting empty, the lemon packing plant, again sitting empty, the old Clenet Coachworks building, empty as well, and I am sure others. Please do not allow this monstrosity to be built at 6595 Covington Way, Allowing this build will FOREVER change the overall landscape of our community and contribute negatively to the safety of our residential neighborhood. There have been over 300 petitions submitted to the City of Goleta from people that enjoy the benefits of the area as it is and would not like to see such a huge overbearing structure along with the parking and traffic safety issues it will bring.

Thank You

Nancy Gehr
9597 Camino Venturoso
Goleta, Ca..

From: [Dale Gehr](#)
To: [Brian Hiefield](#); [PER Meetings](#); [Anne Miller](#); [Rita Serotkin](#); [Jennifer Fullerton](#); [Katie Maynard](#); [Cary Penniman](#); [Paula Perotte](#); [Stuart Kasdin](#); [Luz Reyes-Martin](#); [James Kyriaco](#); [Jennifer Smith](#)
Subject: RE: Public comment and RE: Public comment and objections to proposed Anthem Chapel project located at 6595 Covington Way in Goleta,
Date: Sunday, June 21, 2026 1:05:44 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear [Recipient Name],

As someone who was born in Santa Barbara and lived for many years in the area of Stow House, I am writing to express that I strongly oppose the construction of Anthem Chapel at 6595 Covington Way. My wife and I moved to our current home just across the street from Christ Lutheran to retire and enjoy the peace and quiet this neighborhood provides; however, the proposed chapel, day care, and pre-school would negatively affect the serenity and calm of the area.

As a Lutheran myself, I am deeply concerned that this project will result in the overwhelming loss of Christ Lutheran Church and drive their congregation away. Anthem has consistently underestimated the size of their congregation to city officials, and the proposed development is already too small for their actual needs. While the applicant argues the area needs another church, the point is invalid because Christ Lutheran is already located on the same lot and there are 20 other religious institutions within a six-mile radius.

The size and scope of the proposed buildings are far too large for the area. I am particularly concerned by the severe parking deficiency; the proposed construction provides only 117 spaces, which is woefully inadequate for a 500-seat sanctuary and 110-child preschool. On August 10, 2025, I personally observed that the parking lots at Goleta Valley Junior High School and the Charter School next door were completely full during Anthem's services. We counted over 300 vehicles, which utilized every available space and even spilled onto Stow Canyon and Amhurst streets.

Furthermore, Anthem proposes to hold three services on Sundays without any clear procedure on how this would be mandated to prevent overlap. This resulting heavy increase in traffic and lack of on-site parking will create dangerous conditions for bicycle riders and children playing in the neighborhood. These factors would also cause insurmountable problems in the event of a wildfire emergency evacuation, as Los Carneros Road is a designated potential evacuation route in the draft General Plan Safety Element.

I appreciate your time and consideration of my concerns regarding this development in our community.

Best regards,

Dale Gehr

BENTLEY
420 Covington Place
Goleta, Ca. 93117

June 19, 2026

Re: Public Comment and Objections to the Proposed Anthem Chapel Project (6595 Covington Way; Case Nos. 24-0002-SUB, 24-0004-CUP, 24-0010-DP, & 24-0005-CUP)

Dear Mr. Hieffield and Members of the Planning Commission,

I am writing in opposition to the proposal to subdivide the lot currently occupied by Christ Lutheran Church on the corner of Covington Way and Los Carneros Road and creation of an additional Conditional Use Permit for a large church, childcare and educational facility on the currently unoccupied area. I have been a resident of the Lake Los Carneros neighborhood since 1988. The neighborhood, including the proposed subdivision, has been designated single family residential in the Goleta General Plan. The designation is designed to protect and maintain low-density residential environments such as our neighborhood. The proposal, if approved, will challenge that environment by increasing the density of use, not only of the lot but the surrounding neighborhood and area. The main attraction of our neighborhood and the adjacent Lake Los Carneros area is tranquility. Such tranquility is an important part of our lives and the lives of the wildlife in the surrounding habitat. Introducing such a large number of individuals on a regular basis to such a precious area for an organization that could be located in a less sensitive area is inappropriate.

I request that you not approve the proposed project at the location requested and advise the organization to identify a more suitable location.

Sincerely,



Edward Bentley

From: [Greg Knudtson](#)
To: [Jennifer Fullerton](#); [PER Meetings](#); [Anne Miller](#); [Katie Maynard](#); [Cary Penniman](#); [Rita Serotkin](#); [Brian Hiefield](#); [Lisa Prasse](#)
Cc: [Greg](#)
Subject: Concerns Regarding the New Anthem Church Development Project and Neighborhood Impact
Date: Thursday, June 18, 2026 3:03:39 PM

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June 18, 2026

City of Goleta Planning and Environmental Review Department 130 Cremona Drive, Suite B Goleta, CA 93117

RE: Concerns Regarding the New Anthem Church Development Project and Neighborhood Impact

Location: 6595 Covington Way, Goleta (Parcel 077-160-022)

To the Planning Commission and City Representatives

I am writing to you today as a long-time resident and concerned homeowner in Goleta to formally voice my strong objections to the proposed Anthem Church building complex in our neighborhood.

Having owned my home and lived in this community for many years, I have always valued our neighborhood for its quiet, peaceful, and family-oriented character. The scale of the proposed construction project threatens to fundamentally alter the quality of life for everyone who lives here.

A development of this magnitude will inevitably introduce several severe issues to our quiet streets:

Significant Traffic Congestion: Our local residential streets are not designed to handle the heavy volume of vehicles a massive congregation will bring. The influx of traffic, particularly during weekend services and mid-week events, will create gridlock and pose safety risks for pedestrians, cyclists, and neighborhood children.

Severe Parking Shortages: Large congregations frequently exceed their on-site parking capacities, forcing attendees to overflow onto residential streets. This will restrict street parking for residents, block access for emergency vehicles, and overcrowd our quiet neighborhood blocks.

Elevated Noise Pollution: The sheer volume of people, increased vehicular traffic, and large-scale church operations will generate substantial noise, shattering the peace and tranquility that current homeowners have invested in and enjoyed for years.

While I understand the importance of community gatherings, a massive complex of this scale simply does not align with the zoning and quiet nature of this residential area. I urge the City of Goleta to carefully consider the long-term negative impacts on tax-paying homeowners, thoroughly review the traffic and environmental impacts, and reconsider approving this construction project.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and dedication to protecting the integrity of Goleta's residential neighborhoods. I look forward to your response and to learning about upcoming public hearings regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Greg Knudtson

544 Sussex Ct, Goleta, CA 93117

A Concerned Goleta Homeowner

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Greg Knudtson** <nexxii@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Jun 18, 2026, 2:55 PM
Subject: Concerns Regarding the New Anthem Church Development Project and Neighborhood Impact
To: Greg <nexxii@gmail.com>

June 18, 2026

City of Goleta Planning and Environmental Review Department 130 Cremona Drive, Suite B Goleta, CA 93117

RE: Concerns Regarding the New Anthem Church Development Project and Neighborhood Impact

Location: 6595 Covington Way, Goleta (Parcel 077-160-022)

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A development of this magnitude will inevitably introduce several severe issues to our quiet streets:

- **Significant Traffic Congestion:** Our local residential streets are not designed to handle the heavy volume of vehicles a massive congregation will bring. The influx of traffic, particularly during weekend services and mid-week events, will create gridlock and pose safety risks for pedestrians, cyclists, and neighborhood children.
- **Severe Parking Shortages:** Large congregations frequently exceed their on-site parking capacities, forcing attendees to overflow onto residential streets. This will restrict street parking for residents, block access for emergency vehicles, and overcrowd our quiet neighborhood blocks.
- **Elevated Noise Pollution:** The sheer volume of people, increased vehicular traffic, and large-scale church operations will generate substantial noise, shattering the peace and tranquility that current homeowners have invested in and enjoyed for years.

While I understand the importance of community gatherings, a massive complex of this scale simply does not align with the zoning and quiet nature of this residential area. I urge the City of Goleta to carefully consider the long-term negative impacts on tax-paying homeowners, thoroughly review the traffic and environmental impacts, and reconsider approving this construction project.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and dedication to protecting the integrity of Goleta's residential neighborhoods. I look forward to your response and to learning about upcoming public hearings regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Greg Knudtson

544 Sussex Ct, Goleta, CA 93117

A Concerned Goleta Homeowner

From: Sylvia King <sylvia.ellen.king@gmail.com>
To: PERmeetings@cityofgoleta.gov jfullerton@cityofgoleta.org kmaynard@cityofgoleta.org amiller@cityofgoleta.org cpenniman@cityofgoleta.org rserotkin@cityofgoleta.org
bliefeld@cityofgoleta.org lprasse@cityofgoleta.org dmimick@cityofgoleta.org

Regards,

Greg



June 18, 2026

City of Goleta Planning Commission
130 Cremona Drive
Goleta, CA 93117

Submitted via email: PERmeetings@cityofgoleta.gov, CC: bheifield@cityofgoleta.org

Re: Support for Anthem Chapel Conditional Use Permit — 6595 Covington Way

Dear Chair and Members of the Planning Commission:

My name is John Mullen. I am managing partner at Franciscan Development, and I have spent decades working on residential development projects throughout Santa Barbara County. I write to you today in two capacities: as a housing developer who can speak directly to what the realistic alternatives to this project look like, and as a member of the local faith community who understands what Anthem Chapel means to the families it serves.

The No-Project Alternative Is Not Realistic

The no-project alternative the Commission may consider is not a neutral outcome. If the church use is not approved on this site, the most viable path forward — and the one most consistent with current market conditions and state law — is residential development. That is what I do. I can tell you with confidence that a developer acquiring this parcel would seek to maximize the land's highest and best use. That means housing, and as much of it as the site can support, including ADUs and JADUs.

A housing project on this site would result in continuous 24-hour occupancy by multiple families. The neighborhood impacts associated with that level of use, in terms of traffic, parking, noise, and activity, would be substantially greater than what the Commission is evaluating today. Peak-hour vehicle trips for a residential project would exceed those generated by a church with multiple staggered services. In the current legislative environment, such a housing project would be largely exempt from CEQA review and local design oversight. The City would have far less ability to shape the outcome than it does right now.

Community Benefits Associated with the Project

The proposed Anthem Chapel campus also includes childcare and preschool programming, community gathering space, and intergenerational programming, all of which benefit our community. They reflect the character of what Anthem Chapel already provides to Goleta families, now with a permanent home to do it from.

Additionally, the project includes 117 parking spaces, with the possibility that some of those spaces could serve Stow House and the South Coast Railroad Museum. A housing development on this parcel provides no such benefit. The parking stays private, the site is unavailable to the community, and a long-term neighborhood asset disappears.

Multiple Services Are Standard Practice

As a member of the faith community, I have experience with churches that are similar in structure to Anthem Chapel. Multiple worship services each Sunday are standard practice for any growing, active church. It is an efficient and responsible way to steward a facility of this type. Staggered service times distribute traffic, reduce parking demand at any single point in time, and minimize neighborhood impact. From a planning standpoint, multiple services are a feature of good design, not a liability.

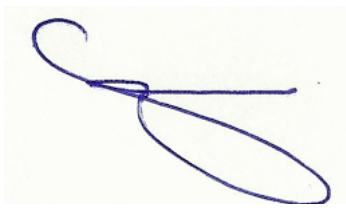
Highest and Best Use Includes Community Balance

A healthy, thriving community requires a balance of uses to serve its population. This site has carried a church designation for more than 60 years. Christ Lutheran Church has been its steward, and now Anthem Chapel intends to be a part of its vibrant future.

I would ask the Commission to weigh that history alongside the alternatives. The highest and best use of this property is not simply the use that generates the most units or the most square footage. It is the use that best serves the community's long-term needs. On this site, with this history, and with this congregation ready to put down roots, that use is a permanent church campus as envisioned by County planners decades ago.

I have watched Anthem Chapel grow. I know these families. And I know that what they are asking for is reasonable, well-designed, and long overdue. I respectfully urge the Commission to approve this project.

Respectfully submitted,



John D. Mullen, RCE 38,528
Managing Partner
Franciscan Real Estate, LLC
360 S. Hope Ave, Suite C-300
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
(805) 705-3341
john.mullen@jmdi.com

From: [Brian Hiefield](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: FW: Comments on Anthem Church Project Proposal on Los Carneros Road
Date: Sunday, June 21, 2026 4:39:58 PM

Additional public comment.

Brian Hiefield
Senior Planner
City of Goleta
Planning & Environmental Review Department
Current Planning Division
805-961-7559
bhiefield@cityofgoleta.gov

From: John O'Donovan <jodmail@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 19, 2026 5:32 PM
To: Brian Hiefield <bhiefield@cityofgoleta.org>; Katie Maynard <kmaynard@cityofgoleta.org>; Anne Miller <amiller@cityofgoleta.org>; Cary Penniman <cpenniman@cityofgoleta.org>; Rita Serotkin <rserotkin@cityofgoleta.org>
Subject: Comments on Anthem Church Project Proposal on Los Carneros Road

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Commissioners,,

I am writing to you regarding the proposed development at Anthem Chapel on Los Carneros Road in Goleta. I'm a local of the Lake Los Carneros area. This note is to highlight my frustration with the planned construction of a large church venue at the lake. There are dangerous road conditions at LaPatera and Calle Real, but nothing has been done to fix them. I have witnessed three serious accidents at the corner in the last four years. Please don't add this extra volume to our roads, and please be respectful of the noise levels in the area. I can hear Anthem's amplified noise from the far end of the lake today. Finally, the proposal will negatively impact an environmentally sensitive habitat area. (The coyotes at the lake ate my pet cat yesterday. I am not joking. we found a jawbone with an airtag attached. I was devastated, but still feel strongly enough to send this note to protect their sensitive habitat.). Birds, butterflies etc, will also suffer from removal of mature trees in the proposal. There is not enough parking or other infrastructure to support such a large scale project in this neighborhood. Please make a sensible decision and review this one more carefully.

Respectfully,

John O'Donovan, B.Sc, M.Sc, Ph.D
6295 Shamrock Avenue, Goleta

June 18, 2026

Members of the Planning Commission

City of Goleta

Meeting of June 22, 2026

Re: Anthem Chapel Conditional Use Permit and Development Plan — Opposition

As a homeowner living immediately adjacent to the proposed Anthem Chapel facility, I strongly urge the Planning Commission to **deny** this project. The residents of this neighborhood have repeatedly and unequivocally expressed their opposition, citing serious and well-founded concerns regarding parking overflow, traffic congestion, excessive noise, inappropriate scale, and numerous other impacts. I fully endorse these objections.

However, the core issue is even more fundamental: **Anthem Chapel has demonstrated a consistent disregard for the surrounding residential community.** Their outdoor events have already produced unacceptable noise levels, and their pattern of behavior makes it clear they cannot be trusted to comply with any conditions or restrictions the City might impose. Past conduct is the best predictor of future conduct, and their past conduct shows a lack of respect for the neighborhood.

Anthem Chapel has shown, through its actions, that it does not care about the impacts it imposes on its neighbors. Granting this permit would reward that disregard and permanently burden the residents who live here.

For these reasons, I respectfully but firmly request that the Planning Commission **reject** the Anthem Chapel Conditional Use Permit and Development Plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joyce Wolever', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Joyce Wolever

6510 Camino Venturoso

Goleta

June 18, 2026

Members of the Planning Commission

City of Goleta

Meeting of June 22, 2026

Re: Anthem Chapel

Conditional Use Permit and Development Plan

Public Participation

As a homeowner in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Anthem Chapel facility, I am writing to urge the Planning Commission not to approve the Anthem Chapel project. Local homeowners have clearly and forcefully voiced their objections to the project citing reasonable concerns about parking, traffic, scale, noise, and numerous other issues which I endorse.

However, the larger issue from my perspective is one of disregard for our community. Anthem Chapel has demonstrated a lack of concern for the adjacent residential community in terms of noise from their outdoor events. Furthermore, they cannot be relied upon to conform to any restrictions that might be placed on how they use their facility and their surrounding property.

Anthem Chapel simply does not care about their impacts on the neighbors.

Please do not allow this project to proceed.


John Wolever

6510 Camino Venturoso

Goleta

From: [Kelhia Castillo](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Cc: bheifield@cityofgoleta.org
Subject: 6595 Covington Way
Date: Sunday, June 21, 2026 1:31:15 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

Our names are Travis and Kelhia Fultz, and we are writing in support of the proposed Anthem Chapel project.

We are both fifth-generation Santa Barbara residents, and together we are raising our three children in the same community that our families have called home for generations. Because of our deep roots here, we care deeply about preserving the values that make Santa Barbara and Goleta such special places to live and raise a family.

Anthem Chapel has been our church home for nearly three years and has become an important part of our lives. What makes Anthem Chapel unique is that it is not an outside organization coming into the community. It is made up of local families, friends, and neighbors who live, work, volunteer, and raise their children here.

As parents of three young children, we are especially excited about the child-care and preschool opportunities this project would provide for local families. We have also seen firsthand the church's commitment to serving others through family support, youth programs, and community outreach.

We appreciate the thoughtful planning and collaboration that have gone into this project over the years. Anthem Chapel has worked to address concerns while creating a campus that will benefit both the congregation and the broader community. We believe it will be a beautiful addition to the area and a lasting community asset for future generations.

We respectfully encourage you to support this project and allow Anthem Chapel to establish a permanent home in the community it has faithfully served for many years.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Travis and Kelhia Fultz
Anthem Chapel Members

From: [Keith Erickson](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Cc: bheifield@cityofgoleta.org
Subject: 6595 Covington Way
Date: Friday, June 19, 2026 9:28:39 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To Whom it May concern,

My name is Keith Erickson, I am a local accountant and live very close to this proposed building plan. I live with my wife and three children in "The Village" off of Los Carneros. I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed Anthem Chapel project at 6595 Covington Way.

As a community member and attendee of Anthem Chapel, I appreciate the prospect of having our church within walking distance of our home. In my experience living in various communities, I have found that an active local church provides a positive environment for people of all ages and fosters a spirit of service and neighborly support. Establishing this permanent location would offer our youth a constructive place to engage with their community and stay on a positive path.

The definition of a Christian is someone who believes in Jesus Christ and follows his teachings. Jesus instructed His followers to "Love your neighbor as yourself," and this simple teaching hits at the very core of our beliefs. We strive to foster a community characterized by selfless love and mutual care. While we are not perfect, our foundation is rooted in serving and supporting those around us.

I respectfully encourage the Planning Commission to support this thoughtfully designed project and allow this local congregation to establish a permanent home in Goleta.

Sincerely,
Keith Erickson
6560 Calle Koral

From: [Lurana Stewart](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Cc: [Brian Hiefield](#)
Subject: Anthem Chapel Project
Date: Saturday, June 20, 2026 4:32:34 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

My name is Jerry Stewart. My wife and I are residents of Goleta. I'm writing this letter as I strongly support the proposed Anthem Chapel project for it would provide a permanent home for our congregation which is deeply rooted in this community.

We are not an outside organization coming into Goleta and our families work, volunteer and send our children to school here. This project would not only be a long term asset for our congregation, but also a valuable asset to the community as a whole.

This project would also provide a child care and preschool which would be very beneficial to working families in the area. Anthem chapel has proven to be a successful community outreach for youth, family programs, and neighborhood service projects, Anthem Chapel has been an active and positive community partner, not just a Sunday morning gathering place, The proposed campus creates opportunities for intergenerational community connection, education, and support. Overall, this project represents an aesthetic improvement to the property and fits appropriately with the existing community structures.

Anthem Chapel has worked very hard to address community concerns and has worked diligently to address these concerns. We sincerely believe this project would not only benefit Anthem Chapel in providing them with a permanent home, but would benefit the community as well. We encourage the planning commission to carefully look at this well designed project and allow Anthem Chapel to have a permanent home in Goleta and for the surrounding community to experience the benefits that this structure could offer.

Thank you for your consideration,
Sincerely,
Jerry and Lurana Stewart

From: [Michaela Jorgensen](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#); bheifield@cityofgoleta.org
Subject: 6595 Covington Way
Date: Friday, June 19, 2026 8:12:07 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Commissioners,

My name is Michaela Jorgensen and I am writing to express my support for the proposed Anthem Chapel project.

Anthem Chapel is not an outside organization coming into Goleta. It is made up of local families who live, work, volunteer, and raise their children in this community. The congregation is already deeply rooted here, and this project would provide a permanent home for a church that has long been part of the fabric of Goleta.

This project is about more than a church building—it is about creating a long-term community asset that will serve both the congregation and the broader neighborhood. One of the most significant benefits is the inclusion of a much-needed child-care and preschool program that will support working families in our community.

Anthem Chapel has a proven record of community service through youth outreach, family programs, and neighborhood service projects. The church intends to continue being an active and positive community partner, not simply a place that gathers on Sundays. The proposed campus will create opportunities for education, support, and meaningful intergenerational connections that strengthen the community as a whole.

In addition, the project represents an aesthetic improvement to the property and is thoughtfully designed to fit within the surrounding community context.

This proposal reflects years of refinement, collaboration, and responsiveness. Throughout the process, Anthem Chapel has demonstrated a willingness to adapt and address community concerns while still fulfilling an important community need.

I am a mom of 4 and my children have been positively impacted by the community involvement of Anthem Chapel. From the amount that the church contributes to both La Patera and Goleta Valley Jr. High to the safe alternative events that they put on, Anthem Chapel has played a large role in the development of my children's character. Imagine how much more they could do with a building to host in.

For these reasons, I respectfully encourage the Planning Commission to support this thoughtfully designed project and allow this local congregation to establish a permanent home in Goleta.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Michaela Jorgensen

From: [Dale Gehr](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#); [Anne Miller](#); [Rita Serotkin](#); [James Kyriaco](#); [Katie Maynard](#); [Cary Penniman](#); [Paula Perotte](#); [Stuart Kasdin](#); [Luz Reyes-Martin](#); [Jennifer Smith](#); [Brian Hiefield](#)
Subject: RE: Public comment and RE: Public comment and objections to proposed Anthem Chapel project located at 6595 Covington Way in Goleta,
Date: Sunday, June 21, 2026 12:28:35 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I strongly object to this project located at 6595 Covington Way. I feel that this project will have a negative impact on the neighboring community as well as anyone attending events at Stow House, and the Railroad Museum. This project has been flawed from the beginning with attendance numbers of Anthem Church and their proposed School which are not accurate. These numbers have not been verified by a non-biased party. I ask that the City of Goleta substantiate the numbers of those who would be in attendance for the Church services, the school, the child care, and the school in general, and not just take the numbers given by Anthem Church. I further object to all the exceptions that Anthem Chapel is requesting for itself as well the existing Christ Lutheran Church. If anyone else were proposing a build, it would be mandatory to bring build or remodel to city code. Why would Anthem Chapel and Christ Lutheran Church not need to follow these same laws? Can I ask for exceptions on size and scope with my remodel/build? This building is too large for the area, too tall for the area and due to all the exceptions they are asking for, really means they actually need a larger space to accommodate a "Mega Church" which intends to kill off anything existing in the ESHA. Anthem Chapel has said that they will have 55 children for childcare. Per California State law they are required to have 75 sq. feet of fenced, dedicated outdoor space for each child, which cannot be hallways. Is this why they want the ESHA buffer area to be reduced from 100 ft. to 50 ft? This would still not comply with California State restrictions, of which there can be no exceptions even for a church. There are plenty of empty commercial buildings, which would be large enough for their "large noise worship" Church along Hollister Avenue. If exceptions can be made for the project Anthem Church is proposing then city codes should also be changed to accommodate the general public. Anthem Church could get everything they are wanting without requesting exceptions if they looked elsewhere for property large enough to handle their Church/School/Business. Is the City of Goleta ready to accommodate ALL requests by anyone regardless of the impacts it may have?

There are plenty of large buildings sitting empty where there would be no objections to noise levels, parking, and not further endangering protected open areas. There is the Santa Barbara News Press building that is sitting empty, the lemon packing plant, again sitting empty, the old Clenet Coachworks building, empty as well, and I am sure others. Please do not allow this monstrosity to be built at 6595 Covington Way, Allowing this build will FOREVER change the overall landscape of our community and contribute negatively to the safety of our residential neighborhood. There have been over 300 petitions submitted to the City of Goleta from people that enjoy the benefits of the area as it is and would not like to see such a huge overbearing structure along with the parking and traffic safety issues it will bring.

Thank You
Nancy Gehr
9597 Camino Venturoso
Goleta, Ca..

From: [Roman Tkachuk](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Cc: bheifield@cityofgoleta.org
Subject: 6595 Covington Way
Date: Thursday, June 18, 2026 3:36:08 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Commissioners,

Our names are Roman and Anastasiia Tkachuk, and we are writing to share our support for the proposed Anthem Chapel project.

We have been part of Anthem Chapel for the past seven years. We have a three-year-old daughter and a one-year-old son, and Anthem has become a very important part of our family's life. It is where we have built friendships, found encouragement, and felt supported through many different seasons.

We also live about a minute away from the proposed project site, so this is not just something we care about as church members. It is also something we would see often as part of our daily life in the neighborhood. After seeing the renderings, we are genuinely excited for the project to be completed. The design looks beautiful, and it would be wonderful to see that property become something attractive, cared for, and useful instead of the dirt lot that is there now. As neighbors who drive by regularly, we think it would be a very positive improvement to the area.

For us, this project is not just about a building. It is about a church community that has already been serving families in Goleta for years finally having a permanent home where it can continue to do that in a better and more stable way.

As parents of young children, we are especially excited that the project includes a child-care and preschool program. We know personally how important it is for families to have safe, loving, dependable care for their children. This is a real need for many families in our area. A program like this would be a huge blessing not only for parents, but also for children who need a warm, caring place to learn, grow, play, and build friendships.

One of the reasons Anthem means so much to us is that we have seen what kind of community it is. It is not just a place people go on Sundays. It is a church made up of local families who care deeply about people here in Goleta and in other parts of the world.

We are American-Ukrainian, and when Russia began its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, we went to Poland to help Ukrainian refugees who were fleeing the war. During that time, we saw Anthem Chapel come alongside the Ukrainian community in a very real and practical way.

People from Anthem donated money, supplies, and medical items. But it went far beyond simple donations. Anthem helped pay for buses, gas, drivers, and other transportation needs so rescue teams could go into cities that were actively being bombed and bring families to safety. These were real people - families, children, elderly people - trying to escape places

where their lives were in danger.

Because of Anthem's generosity, hundreds of people were able to escape dangerous areas and get to safety, and in many cases that help literally saved lives. Once families arrived in Poland, Anthem also helped provide housing and cover basic daily needs while they got settled. For people who had just escaped war, that meant safety, stability, and a chance to breathe.

Anthem was also very helpful to Ukrainian refugees who arrived here locally. Many families came to the United States overwhelmed, unsure where to begin, and needing community, guidance, and practical help. Anthem helped welcome them, connect with them, and walk alongside people who were trying to rebuild their lives in a completely new place.

That experience showed us the heart of Anthem in a way we will never forget. And Ukraine is just one example. We have also seen Anthem support needs in places like Thailand, Turkey, and Mexico, while continuing to care for families here locally.

We have seen Anthem strengthen families through children's programs, marriage nights, family events, and community service. We especially appreciate the way Anthem cares about marriages and families. Strong marriages help create stronger families, and stronger families help build a healthier community.

For our own family, Anthem has been a place of belonging, encouragement, and support. For our children, it has been a place where they are loved and cared for. We believe this project would allow Anthem to keep serving families in Goleta in a more meaningful and lasting way.

We respectfully ask the Planning Commission to support the proposed Anthem Chapel project. Thank you for taking the time to consider what this project would mean for families like ours and for our neighborhood.

Sincerely,
Roman and Anastasiia Tkachuk

From: [Sarah Daniel](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Cc: bheifield@cityofgoleta.org
Subject: 6595 Covington Way
Date: Friday, June 19, 2026 9:02:32 AM

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Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

My name is Sarah Daniel, and I am writing to express my support for the proposed Anthem Chapel project. This project provides a permanent home for a congregation that is already deeply rooted in our community.

Anthem Chapel is not an outside organization coming into Goleta. We are local families who live here, work here, volunteer here, and send our children to school here. This project is about creating a long-term community asset that will serve both the congregation and the broader neighborhood for years to come.

The proposed project offers several meaningful benefits to the community. It will provide a much-needed child-care and preschool program that will support working families in Goleta. Anthem Chapel has a proven record of community service through youth outreach, family programs, and neighborhood service projects. The church seeks to be an active and positive community partner, not simply a place for Sunday gatherings.

In addition, the proposed campus will create opportunities for intergenerational connection, education, and support. It will serve as a welcoming place where people of all ages can build relationships, access resources, and participate in community life. The project also represents an aesthetic improvement to the property and fits appropriately within the surrounding community context.

This proposal reflects years of refinement, collaboration, and responsiveness. Anthem Chapel has consistently demonstrated a willingness to adapt and improve the project in response to community feedback while continuing to fulfill an important local need.

For these reasons, I respectfully encourage the Planning Commission to support this thoughtfully designed project and allow this local congregation to establish a permanent home in Goleta.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sarah Daniel

From: [Ursula Ferrall](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Cc: bheifield@cityofgoleta.org
Subject: 6595 Covington Way
Date: Thursday, June 18, 2026 6:16:28 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Chair and Planning Commissioners:

We are writing in support of the proposed project at 6595 Covington Way. My husband and I live in Goleta and have attended Anthem Chapel since its inception. During these past seven years we have seen Anthem grow into an established and appreciated part of the Goleta community. People of all ages feel welcomed and accepted here. There is a place for children, families, and those of us of a more mature age!

We encourage you, the members of the planning Commission, to support this well thought out and carefully planned project and allow Anthem Chapel to build and establish a permanent home in Goleta. All of us in this community will benefit.

Sincerely,
Richard and Ursula Ferrall
5530 Berkeley Road
Goleta

From: [Valerie Erickson](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Cc: bheifield@cityofgoleta.org
Subject: 6595 Covington Way
Date: Friday, June 19, 2026 9:22:24 PM

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To whom it may concern,

My name is Valerie Erickson. I was born and raised in Goleta. After college, I returned to become a teacher at Coastline Christian Academy. I live in Goleta with my husband and our three children.

I support the building project for Anthem Chapel. As much as Goleta is my home, Anthem Chapel also represents my home. Many of the people I attend with I have known my whole life. It represents an uplifting community who shows love and a welcoming spirit to the community.

There are many benefits and outreach opportunities that Anthem Chapel provides, such as youth programs, service to those in need, and a place for those who may be in search of meaning in life.

For me personally, Anthem Chapel provides a place of belonging and spiritual well-being, as we learn about and serve God together. It is also a place where I can bring my children, knowing they are also learning the truth in a loving environment.

This project will benefit all people in the community. I respectfully request that the Planning Commission approve this project, so we can have a place for our congregation to call home.

Sincerely,
Val Erickson

June 22, 2026

TO: Brian Hiefield, Senior Planner, and Members of the Planning Commission, City of Goleta
FROM: Sheryn and Duane Sears, 6224 Aberdeen Avenue, Goleta
RE: **6595 Covington Way (Anthem Chapel)**

Dear Senior Planner Hiefield and Members of the Planning Commission:

My husband and I have lived in Goleta's Lake Los Carneros neighborhood for almost 50 years – with three generations of our family having enjoyed the “wild oasis” that the lake and surrounding area provide with abundant birds and other fauna, a bounty of native plants, unparalleled views across the lake to the mountains in every season, and a chance to meet and greet neighbors and their children and grandchildren in walks around the lake and at Stow House events. This very special area is truly a treasure for our neighborhood and the greater Goleta (and Santa Barbara) communities. If you have not personally experienced the joys of Lake Carneros, you may not appreciate just how much it means to us. I invite you to do so soon!

We remember (though not the date!) when there was a proposal to “civilize” Lake Carneros with paved walkways, landscaping, picnic areas, etc. The County abandoned that development plan, as we recall, when there was an outpouring of strong community support to leave “as is” this wild space in the midst of our suburban community. Over the ensuing years, we have been grateful for that decision as we – and so many others – have continued to find peace and beauty in this natural area so close to home.

So what will we lose if the Anthem Chapel project comes to fruition on land adjacent to the lake park, Stow House, and the Railroad Museum?

- The sounds of nature will be drowned out by the very loud amplified music of this large church. Sunday morning is a popular time for “a walk around the lake,” as we say in the neighborhood. While the church's music may be a joyful sound, it is NOT the same as the sounds (or silence) of nature, and it may not speak to the broader community (whose interest we ask you to prioritize) as it does to the church congregation (a subset of the larger community). The houses nearest the proposed church tolerated the very loud and percussive music during the pandemic when the church was allowed to worship in a large tent, but that time of emergency has passed, and the families who live nearby deserve to enjoy the domestic peace and tranquility that was restored to their homes, patios, and yards once the tent came down. If the Anthem Chapel project goes through, it will transform the neighborhood into a County Bowl-type audio experience that is inconsistent with the character of the neighborhood.
- Wildlife health and numbers will likely be negatively affected. We are not qualified to evaluate the effect of loud amplified music on the wildlife inhabiting or passing through the park, but this impactful proposal could cause a decrease in wildlife and/or other deleterious effects. We need to have a scientific study of this before any decision is made to move this project forward!
- Parking limitations will cause safety issues. The parking needs of the church for their many and varied events and activities will far exceed the availability of parking, as documented by others. With too few parking spaces to accommodate park visitors and congregants, many people will park on Los Carneros, undoubtedly presenting major safety issues when pedestrians – including children -- dart across Los Carneros. That street is a major artery, even on a Sunday morning, for

Goletans, and the extra vehicles and pedestrians will present major safety hazards. Less likely, but still a concern: This community already has serious apprehensions about potential evacuation gridlock in the event of an emergency, and a severely congested Los Carneros will further narrow options for safe and efficient evacuation, if needed.

- The number of park visitors will likely decline, and with fewer visitors, vandalism may increase. Seniors and others who may need to drive in order to visit the lake will not be able to find parking – or will find the loud audio environment does not resonate with their planned nature walk -- and will abandon their visits to Lake Los Carneros or Stow House. Again, there is not a scientific measure of this, but we have always thought that the amount of foot traffic at the lake park has been a factor in the relatively low incidence of vandalism and other misuses of the natural environment there. We neighbors keep an eye out for this beloved area – and we strongly believe the more eyes looking out to protect this resource, the better.
- The financial health of the Goleta Historical Society and the Railroad Museum may suffer. Lower attendance at both Stow House and the Railroad Museum – and that will happen with severe parking issues – could seriously impact two beloved Goleta non-profit organizations and negatively affect part of Goleta’s community identity.
- There could very well be negative effects on real estate offerings in the nearby neighborhood. Homes that are close to the proposed Anthem Chapel will suffer significant disturbances from the loud music, traffic congestion, and crowded parking that overflows into their streets, some of which are cramped cul de sacs. We would assume that these conditions might have to be “disclosed” in real estate transactions, and if open houses coincide with a church event, they would be immediately observable. Our neighbors who live in those homes have always valued their proximity to a wild, open space – never anticipating that a large and loud event center could be plunked down in the middle of that refuge. Its presence would be inconsistent with the character of the neighborhood.

We implore you to work with all parties to find solutions that will support the church in finding a permanent home elsewhere WHILE HONORING YOUR COMMITMENT TO SERVE THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE LARGER COMMUNITY THAT HAS A LONG-STANDING AND MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIP WITH THIS LAND. Once developed, this cannot be undone, and we stand to lose a lot if the Anthem Project is realized on this land.

Can the land owned by the Lutheran Church be purchased through fund-raising efforts and then turned over to Goleta and/or the County for management that preserves the current usage of the lake park, Stow House, and the Railroad Museum? Can the church find a more suitable (and welcoming) space for a permanent house of worship and praise, a location that can absorb large-capacity crowds and their vehicles; a full calendar of daily, weekly, and seasonal events; and loudly amplified music without impinging on others’ need for peace and quiet AT HOME or respite in a nearby natural environment that they have enjoyed for DECADES? Let’s get creative here and keep The Goodland the good land for everyone.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns and those of many, many of our neighbors.

22 June 2026

Dear City of Goleta Planning Commissioners,

I urge the Planning Commission to deny the requested reduction of the Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) buffer associated with the Western Monarch butterfly overwintering habitat and to require full CEQA review of the Anthem Chapel Project. The proposed buffer reduction raises substantial unresolved questions about impacts to Western Monarch butterfly habitat, consistency with the City's own ESHA protections, cumulative effects on the Los Carneros overwintering corridor, and public safety during wildfire evacuation.

Goleta's municipal code requires a 100-foot buffer around existing and historic monarch butterfly aggregation and roost sites, measured from the outer extent of the tree canopy, and requires that the buffer include native vegetation and physical barriers to human intrusion. A reduction to 50 feet is allowed only where trees contribute to habitat but are not considered likely to function as an aggregation site, such as narrow windrows. That exception does not appear to fit the Stow House ESHA. The available record does not show that this habitat can be treated as a marginal windrow, nor does it demonstrate that a reduced buffer would preserve the biological integrity of the ESHA. To the contrary, the project would remove mature trees, rely on immature replacement trees that may take decades to provide comparable structure, and introduce lighting, noise, landscaping, and human activity closer to sensitive overwintering habitat.

This is especially important because western monarch butterfly populations in Santa Barbara County (and the City of Goleta specifically) remain in severe decline. In that context, the absence of large numbers of monarchs at a site during a historically low population period cannot reasonably be treated as evidence that the habitat is unimportant – rather, it is an indicator that reduced and degraded habitat has likely contributed to the species local demise. Scientific literature shows that overwintering monarchs depend on highly specific microclimate conditions, including wind shelter, filtered light, darkness at night, predator protection, and suitable roosting structure. The Stow House ESHA is part of the broader Los Carneros corridor of overwintering habitat. The City has not adequately analyzed whether degrading or shrinking one component of that corridor could reduce the resilience or recovery potential of the larger habitat network.

Further, the requested buffer reduction is also inconsistent with substantial public investment in monarch conservation in Goleta. Publicly available materials provided by the City of Goleta document *at least* \$5.6 million in state funding for the Ellwood Mesa monarch butterfly habitat effort: \$3.9 million from the California State Coastal Conservancy for design and implementation of the Monarch Butterfly Habitat Management Plan and \$1.7 million from Cal Fire for fuel reduction and fire safety measures. The City describes that work as intended to improve monarch habitat, reduce wildfire risk, and repair public infrastructure. It would be contradictory for the City to invest millions of public dollars to

restore and protect monarch habitat at Ellwood Mesa while simultaneously allowing existing monarch ESHA elsewhere in Goleta to be reduced or functionally degraded. Denying the Stow House buffer reduction would be a no-cost action that aligns with, rather than undermines, those public investments.

Quoted from the [City of Goleta's website](#): ***"The City of Goleta is positioned to be a leader in western monarch butterfly conservation."*** If reducing monarch butterfly habitat is the chosen methodology for western monarch butterfly conservation leadership, then City of Goleta managers and elected officials need to reconsider their conservation approach, as well as their roles in service to the public. Using taxpayer dollars to sidestep the state of California's Environmental Quality Act requirements, reduce western Monarch butterfly habitat, and reduce raptor habitat, seems to be in direct conflict with what the voters of the state of California have chosen as due process and desired environmental protections.

The project also raises serious **wildfire evacuation safety concerns**. The Anthem Chapel Project would intensify use near a known high-fire-risk landscape and could add vehicles, events, drop-offs, pedestrians, and turning movements to an area where safe and timely evacuation is already critical. A project that increases congestion or creates additional choke points near evacuation corridors can reduce the margin of safety for nearby neighborhoods. The memorandum provided by Santa Barbara County Fire Department relevant to this project does not address evacuation routes. The City of Goleta Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) also does not address evacuation routes. The significance of evacuation egress for neighborhoods located in high risk of hazard areas is clearly addressed in recent state law: Senate Bill 99 (2019) amended California Government Code Section 65302 to require residential developments in high fire hazard severity zones to have at least two emergency evacuation routes in order to enhance egress safety. Similarly, ***Senate Bill 571 (2023) amended California Government Code Section 65040.25 to require state and local agencies to evaluate and improve evacuation egress and ingress in the event of a natural disaster, specifically addressing evacuation travel capacity associated with an area.*** The evaluation of evacuation egress and ingress is incomplete not only for the City of Goleta, but for the Anthem Chapel project. Who is going to be responsible for public safety and emergency response when the next wildfire strikes?

For these reasons, substantial evidence supports a fair argument that the project may have significant environmental and public safety impacts. The City should not approve a reduced ESHA buffer based on deferred mitigation, or assumptions that have not been tested under realistic biological, ecological, and wildfire evacuation conditions. A full CEQA review, as well as Santa Barbara County wildfire evacuation assessment is necessary to evaluate lighting, noise, tree removal, habitat structure, corridor function, predator dynamics, cumulative impacts, and wildfire evacuation safety.

Sincerely,
Marion Wittmann, Ph.D.
Resident, Lake Los Carneros Neighborhood, Goleta, CA

From: [Mollie Moore](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: Written comment for 6/22 meeting
Date: Monday, June 22, 2026 9:28:39 AM

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Hello! My name is Mollie Moore and I am writing in support of the proposed development in Goleta, Anthem Chapel's new building on Los Carneros. My family and I (husband, myself, and three young kids) have lived in Goleta since 2008, and have been an active part of Anthem Chapel since it began in 2018, when my middle son was born. Anthem Chapel, despite not having a building, has been a second home for us- our children are involved in youth activities, my husband and I attend events and Bible studies, and we serve there as well. One of the sweetest parts of being a part of Anthem is that it's not a closed-door club in any way. I have brought neighbors and friends to services and events like the Christmas family snow night, Easter services, and 5/6 grade game nights, and they all say how welcomed they felt. I've lead a girls scouting group for five years and Anthem has hosted it at that property for four of those years, never asking for money in return. There's no "becoming a member" at Anthem, you just come and are accepted, as Jesus demonstrated when He had his ministry on earth. Our Goleta community has already benefitted tremendously from Anthems dedication to creating a safe and inclusive place to belong. Please consider allowing us to have a real building- the inclusiveness that our church body embraces will only grow with the ability to have some dedicated spaces that don't need to be set up and torn down by a team every time we use them.

Thank you for considering!!

From: [Jacob Garnica](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: Support for Anthem Chapel: 6595 Covington Way
Date: Monday, June 22, 2026 10:19:25 AM

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Dear Chair and Planning Commissioners,

My name is Jacob Garnica and I attend Anthem Chapel in Goleta. I support the proposed Anthem Chapel campus at 6595 Covington Way. A permanent home in Goleta would allow us to serve the community in a greater capacity by relieving us of logistical, time, and availability challenges of our current location.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jacob Garnica

From: [Brian Uhl](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Cc: bheifield@cityofgoleta.org
Subject: 6595 Covington Way
Date: Monday, June 22, 2026 11:08:15 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of the Goleta Planning Commission,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed Anthem Chapel project in Goleta.

I have lived and worked as a First Responder in Goleta and the surrounding area for nearly 20 years and have developed a strong connection and sense of responsibility for ensuring it remains a safe, welcoming, attractive and inclusive paradise.

Anthem Chapel is not an outside organization seeking to establish itself in our community. The congregation is already deeply rooted here. Its members are local families who live, work, volunteer, and raise their children in Goleta. They have a vested interest in this community and recognize that this project provides a permanent home for a congregation that is already an active part of the community and is committed to serving it for generations to come.

As I am sure you know, places of worship provide far more than weekly religious services. They serve as gathering places that strengthen community connections, support families, encourage volunteerism, and provide opportunities for service, counseling, youth activities, charitable outreach, and assistance to those in need.

As a member of the congregation since it first opened, I can attest that Anthem Chapel embodies an array of positive and fruitful ideals and has already become a positive and lasting asset not only to its congregation, but to the surrounding neighborhood and the greater Goleta community.

Just one example of this is the current and planned inclusion of a child-care and preschool program, which will provide a valuable service for working Goleta families and help address an important community need. Examples like this is why I believe that the proposed project represents a long-term community asset, benefitting the broader neighborhood and the greater community.

What's more, Anthem Chapel has consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to community service through youth outreach, family programs, and neighborhood service projects, making the church an active and positive community partner rather than simply a place of worship used only on Sundays. And the proposed campus will create opportunities for intergenerational connection, education, support, and service that will benefit people of all ages.

Furthermore, the project design is absolutely beautiful and represents an aesthetic improvement to the property and fits appropriately within the surrounding community context. The building design is thoughtful, very attractive, and sensitive to the character of the area. In

sum, the architecture and landscaping design will absolutely complement the unique natural beauty of Goleta and contribute positively to the visual character of the neighborhood.

Lastly, this project reflects years of refinement, collaboration, and responsiveness. Anthem Chapel has demonstrated a willingness to adapt the proposal and address community concerns while continuing to fulfill an important community need. This thoughtful approach deserves recognition and support.

For these reasons, I respectfully encourage the Planning Commission to approve this well-designed project and allow this local congregation to establish a permanent home in Goleta. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Brian Uhl, CEM
Santa Barbara County First Responder

From: [Collins, Jay F](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Cc: [Jay Collins](#)
Subject: Anthem Chapel - 6595 Covington way planning commission input
Date: Monday, June 22, 2026 11:05:28 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello Planning commission. I'm very torn by the proposed anthem chapel church building and planned activities. I can't support it as planned.

The size and scope of the building is very large for the lot and does not have nearly enough planned parking to support the activities. 500 ish people and the limited parking will impact those of us living within a short walk from the church. The reduction of the roof square footage (covered indoor walk way) will have little impact to the parking issues which also netted less parking spaces on the property plans... by the rules, but not supporting logical impacts to the neighborhood.

The small set of activities from the existing CLC adds to the quiet nature of the neighborhood. Anthem church will add a large number of visitors to the neighborhood nearly daily based on plans with growth desired by the church... but little to no ability to handle additional parking load on the neighborhood. During COVID we had regular issues with safety related parking impacting our neighborhood. Parking right up to the corners and in front of fire hydrants. Comments and complaints had little effect on the issues/behaviors.

I'm curious where outdoor ball activities will be held that currently happen where the building and parking lot are planned?

Will the storage continue for trailers of various size that currently occupy what will be parking? and if so where? Impacting parking?

How can we address parking safety issues with planned parking likely less than half of what's needed every Sunday for Church services? Having multiple services will just spread out the impact over a larger amount of time potentially.

Please find a way to minimize the impacts to our quiet neighborhood.

Jay F Collins
6594 Camino Ventouroso
Goleta CA

Allyson Biskner

Email: allysoncarp1@gmail.com

6269 Avenida Ganso, Goleta, CA 93117

Home: (805) 692-5229

Cell (805) 452-4240

June 22, 2026

Dear City of Goleta Planning Commissioners

Re: 6595 Covington Way -Anthem Chapel Goleta requests Development Plan with Adjustments to landscaping, parking, a reduced rear setback, a reduction from the required ESHA Buffer for Monarch Butterflies and Exemption from CEQA guidelines

I send this form generated letter to you today to discuss concerns I have with the above referenced project. I have spoken previously at the Design Review Committee meetings. My previously presented concerns are well covered in this letter.

- I attend Stow House events

- I live in the neighborhood
- I enjoy Lake Los Carneros
- I visit the South Coast Railroad Museum
- Other: Use the site every day for peaceful relaxation and exercise, enjoy the quiet

I understand that the property at 6595 Covington Way is currently under review for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a 22,038 square foot sanctuary designed to accommodate three Sunday services of up to 500 people each, along with daily programming, a preschool, and 60 or more annual special events including weddings and conferences. A subdivision application has also been filed to split the current parcel, creating a 1-acre lot for Christ Lutheran Church and a 2-acre lot for Anthem Chapel.

The scale, frequency, and intensity of the proposed use are fundamentally incompatible with the residential character, physical infrastructure, public safety, and environmental conditions of the Lake Los Carneros corridor and surrounding neighborhood.

The Planning Commission must make affirmative findings that the proposed use is consistent with Goleta's General Plan, protects the health, safety, and welfare of the community, and that the site is adequate to accommodate the use as proposed. The concerns outlined below demonstrate that those findings cannot be made on the current record.

Select all the items that concern you the most, below. You will also have an opportunity to send a personal message at the end of this form.

1. Parking and Neighborhood Streets

Anthem proposes 117 parking spaces for a facility with three Sunday services of 500, weddings and memorials of 300 guests, memorials of 300, and daily programming throughout the week. Independent car counts at Anthem's current location recorded 208 cars on August 31, 2025 and 290 cars on June 22, 2025 – at a site with significantly more parking than proposed.

Overflow Parking

I am concerned that public school reservation records show Anthem's weekly operational footprint at Goleta Valley Junior High more than doubled in a single year, and their summer youth program grew fourfold — all while this CUP application was being filed and pursued. I request that the Planning Commission use this independently verifiable third-party record, not applicant self-reporting, when evaluating congregation size and future growth.

I am concerned that 117 parking spaces is inadequate for three Sunday services of 500, weddings AND memorials of 300, and daily programming. I request that the Planning Commission require an independent parking study based on observed attendance before any vote.

I am concerned that flexible seating allows attendance to exceed 500 with no change to the building and no additional parking required. I request that the Planning Commission require an enforceable attendance cap tied to available parking.

I am concerned that overflow parking will fall on residential streets. I request that the Planning Commission identify the specific streets that will absorb that demand before approving this use.

I am concerned that the parking and traffic analysis submitted with this application was based on weekday office staff, not on the hundreds of people driving to Sunday services each week. I request that the Planning Commission require an independent traffic and parking study based on actual peak attendance before any vote.

I am concerned that while the applicant describes peak attendance of 300 to 500 people, public school reservation records show Anthem has consistently booked venues with a combined weekly capacity exceeding 1,000 seats, and Christmas venues approaching 2,000 seats, every year since 2022. I request that the Planning Commission require independently verified attendance figures before accepting the applicant's self-reported numbers as the basis for parking, traffic, or site adequacy findings.

Other: Impacts to the Los Carneros Corridor use for emergency services, utility services, agricultural equipment and normal neighborhood traffic, during emergency evacuation events. The cumulative impacts of new residential developments already approved and up for approval, is far too much for this area. It requires a transportation study and public safety analysis, especially during times of multiple events occurring

2. Stow House, the Railroad Museum, and Shared Parking

Anthem's application states they are "not obligated" to share their parking lot with the Goleta Valley Historical Society and will do so only at their own discretion. Stow House events, Railroad Museum visitors, and the surrounding neighborhood all rely on this overflow lot today. The Islamic Center's approval required conjunctive parking agreements, adding additional stress to an already strained corridor.

Shared Parking

I am concerned that Anthem has explicitly stated they are not obligated to share their parking lot with Stow House or the Railroad Museum, and I request that the Planning Commission require a binding shared parking agreement as a condition of any approval.

I am concerned that no calendar analysis has been done comparing Stow House event permits with Anthem's full operating schedule — three Sunday services, 26 weddings, 30 memorials, and multiple seasonal events annually. I request that the Planning Commission require that analysis before any vote.

I am concerned that if the overflow lot becomes unavailable, Stow House guests and Railroad Museum visitors will park on residential streets, and I request that the Planning Commission assess what that displacement means for both residents and the long-term viability of these community venues.

I am concerned that no cumulative parking analysis has examined the combined demand from Stow House, the Railroad Museum, the Islamic Center, Christ Lutheran Church, and future Stow Park visitors all competing for the same corridor. I request that the Planning Commission require that analysis before any vote.

Other:

3. Fire Safety and Emergency Access

Both proposed driveways open onto Los Carneros Road directly adjacent to Fire Station 14. Los Carneros Road is a designated Potential Evacuation Route in the City's draft General Plan Safety Element, and the State Fire Marshal has mapped a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone along this corridor. The traffic study submitted with this application analyzed weekday trips only — Sunday, Anthem's peak demand day, was never studied.

Safety

I am concerned that three back-to-back Sunday services, 26 weddings, 30 memorials, and 4 annual conferences will repeatedly concentrate hundreds of vehicles on a designated evacuation route directly adjacent to an active fire station, and I request that the Planning Commission require an independent analysis of how this recurring traffic interacts with emergency dispatch and evacuation demand on this corridor.

I am concerned that the traffic study analyzed weekday trips only and never studied Sunday, Anthem's peak demand day. I request that the Planning Commission require a peer-reviewed Sunday traffic study before any vote.

I am concerned that the VMT analysis was run using weekday office staff rather than the hundreds of people driving to services each week, and I request that the Planning Commission require an independent traffic and parking study based on actual peak attendance before any vote.

I am concerned that no formal fire department consultation is documented in this application. I request that the Planning Commission provide documentation of any fire department review and any conditions that resulted before this application moves forward.

I am concerned that Los Carneros Road is designated as a Potential Evacuation Route in the City's own General Plan Safety Element, and that no analysis examines how hundreds of vehicles concentrated there every Sunday — and for 26 weddings, 30 memorials, and 4 conferences annually — would affect the ability of residents to evacuate in an emergency. I request that the Planning Commission require that analysis before any vote.

Other:

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Anthem Church requests a reduction of 50ft to the 100 ft buffer, however they identify plantings and moisture retention in native grass, keeping with Monarch attraction. They also plan for a small paving area within this reduced 50 ft buffer.

✓ Other: Makes no sense, they retain a 100 buffer and also encourage Monarch habitat elements outside of the 100 ft Buffer. It is common knowledge that Monarchs have substantially dropped in population numbers statewide. Why give exception to existing ESHA, and at the same time the City of Goleta is undergoing a major Monarch Restoration at Ellwood. Anthem Church should join in the efforts of expanding future habitat, not request an reduction.

5. Scale, Growth, and Cumulative Corridor Impact

The applicant describes a congregation of 300 to 500 people seeking a neighborhood church. Public school reservation records tell a different story. From 2023 through 2025, Anthem has booked a 630-seat auditorium as their regular weekly Sunday home, combined with a cafeteria, library, and additional classrooms bringing total weekly reserved capacity to over 1,000 seats. Christmas services have required venues of nearly 2,000 combined seats every year since 2022. This record was compiled while this CUP application was being filed and pursued.

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Other:

I Have Additional Concerns I Would Like the Planning Commission to Consider

I request that the designation of being exempt to CEQA not be granted by the City Planning Commission, the proposal is NOT consistent with the General Plan, it does not protect the existing ESHA, and presents substantial parking, traffic and public safety issues. The current zoning is for RS-8, of which "Assemblies" can be an approved use. However, If this was truly a RS-8 development, the traffic, parking assessment would be substantially lower than providing for 117 parking spaces, and 300-500 residents. Maximum amount of cars for a residential development of this zone would likely be up to 25 cars or so, not 117 parking spaces needed for multiple times on Sundays, and or other special events. Has the Albedo effect of such a parking lot been evaluated.? Yes there are trees being proposed for planting, however, there is yet another request made to reduce the number being planted from 43 or 41...and is there a required container size with a determined canopy size being required. It will take at least 10 years to reduce the reflective heat from a paved lot this size. Unless fast growing natives are used. This is not what has been proposed in the Landscape Plan. There are other Wildlife considerations as well. Bobcat sightings, a recent mountain lion sighting, increased Raptor use, Horned Owl and Barn Owls are regular users. Has a nighttime wildlife assessment been performed.? Lighting, even as stated is downwards facing should not be allowed 24/7, there must be a time of total dark.

Thank You,



Allyson Biskner, District 1

From: [Laurie Whalley](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: Support for Anthem Chapel 6595 Covington Way
Date: Monday, June 22, 2026 4:10:43 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Chair and Planning Commissioners,

My name is Laurie Whalley and I live in Goleta. I support the proposed Anthem Chapel campus at 6595 Covington Way because this congregation has been a real anchor for us in Goleta. Anthem serves all ages and families in the neighborhood with valuable programs. A permanent space would let them do even more for the community of Goleta. I have seen firsthand what this church does for people in Goleta by offering programs such as for the homeless, college, youth, schools, singles and families and provide many others needs that enrich Goleta. They have earned a home here. This is a project that will benefit the city of Goleta in many ways. I hope that you approve this project.

Thank you,
Laurie Whalley
Goleta

Sent from my iPhone

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Email *

[REDACTED]

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The scale, frequency, and intensity of the proposed use are fundamentally incompatible with the residential character, physical infrastructure, public safety, and environmental conditions of the Lake Los Carneros corridor and surrounding neighborhood.

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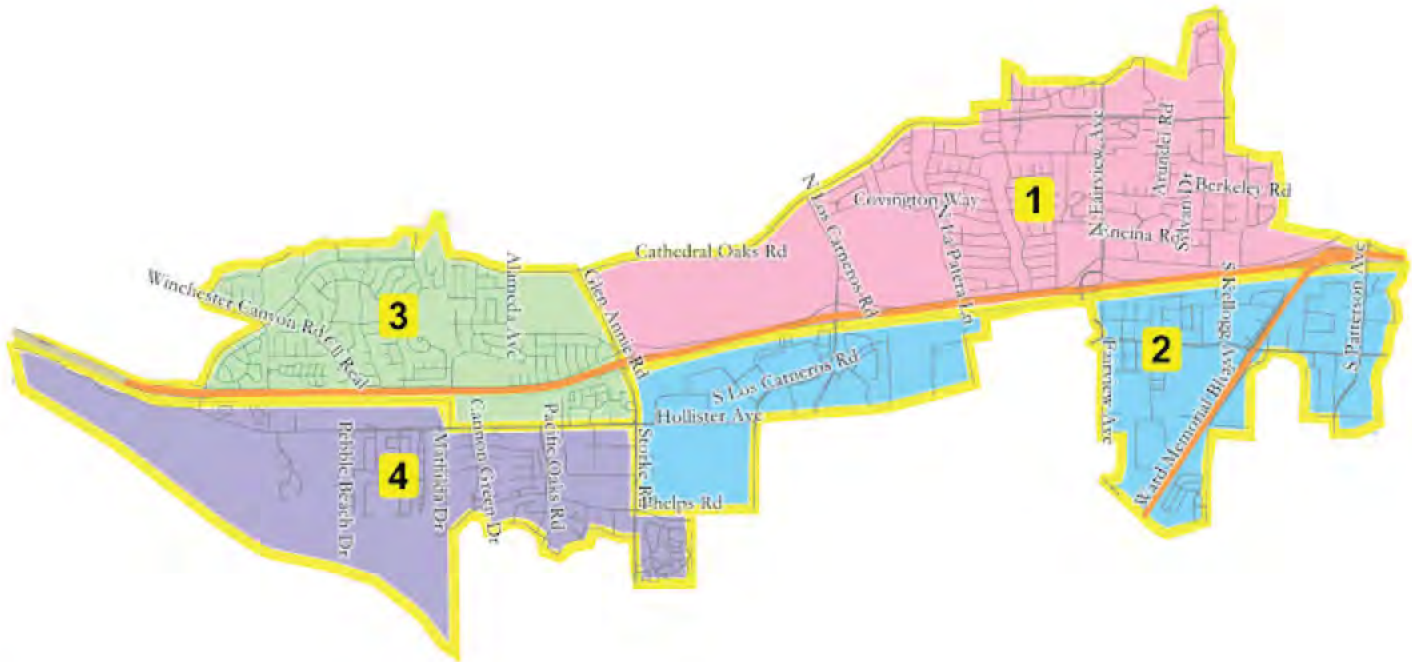
First Name *

Jen

Last Name *

Bowman

My district



- District 1 (Northeast/Fairview area)
- District 2 (Southeast/Old Town area)
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I'd like to receive email updates about this project

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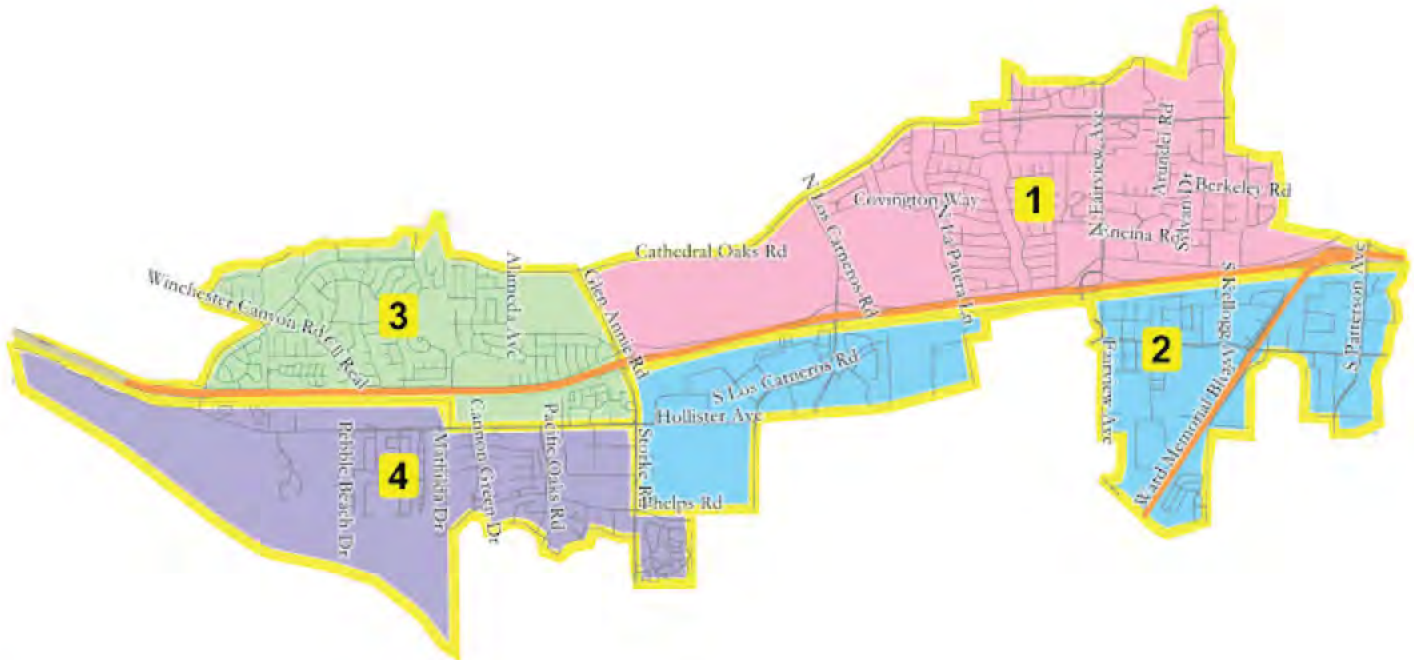
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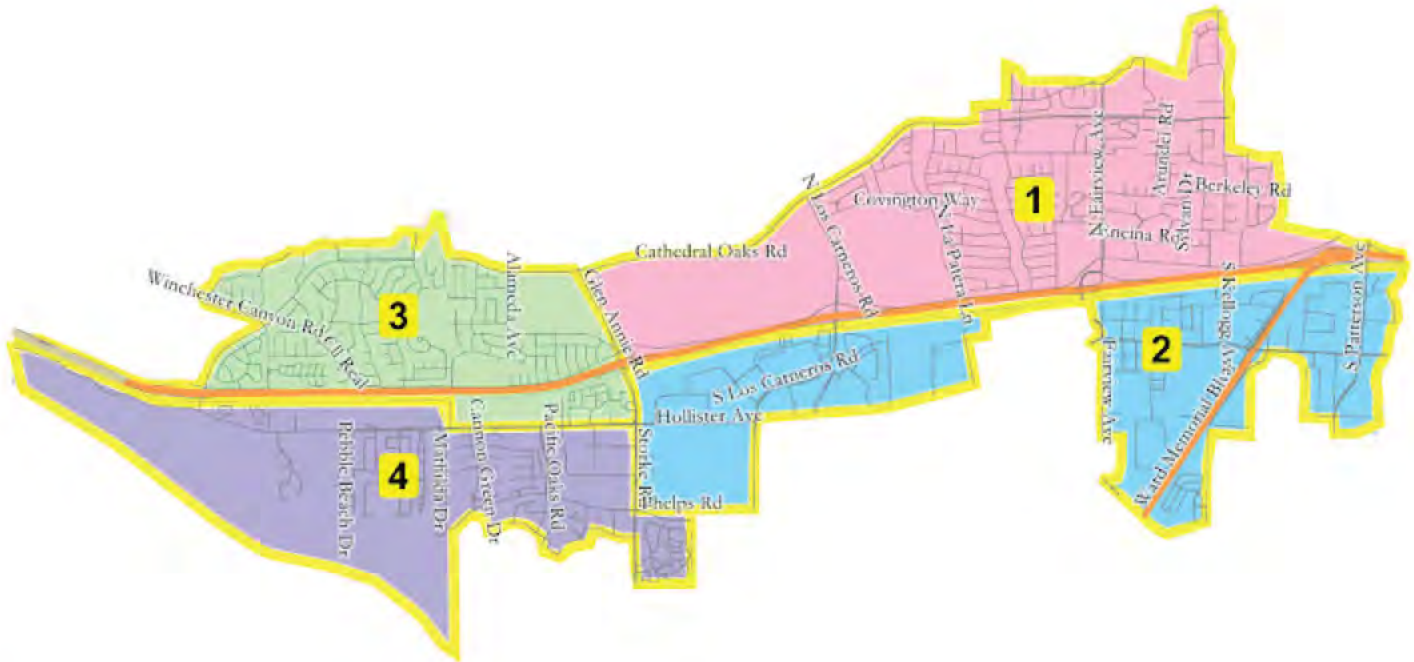
First Name *

Ashley

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Nagaoka

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The core issue is parking vs. actual use capacity. The building and congregation are simply too big for the site. And based on my reading of the Design Review Board updates, parking doesn't appear to be getting addressed at the level of actual proposed use. The project proposes less than a third of the parking needed based on their current weekly attendance, without credible data to support that reduction (no honest attendance modeling, peak demand analysis, or overflow plan).

If the building operates anywhere near its implied capacity, the parking will completely overwhelm the Lake Los Carneros neighborhood and put the safety of residences and our children at risk.

Before this moves further, there should be:

- real, data-backed – and honest – demand assumptions
- justification for reduced parking
- a clear, enforceable overflow plan

Otherwise, our neighborhood and the children who use Covington for safe passage are at serious risk.

Thank you,

Jeremy

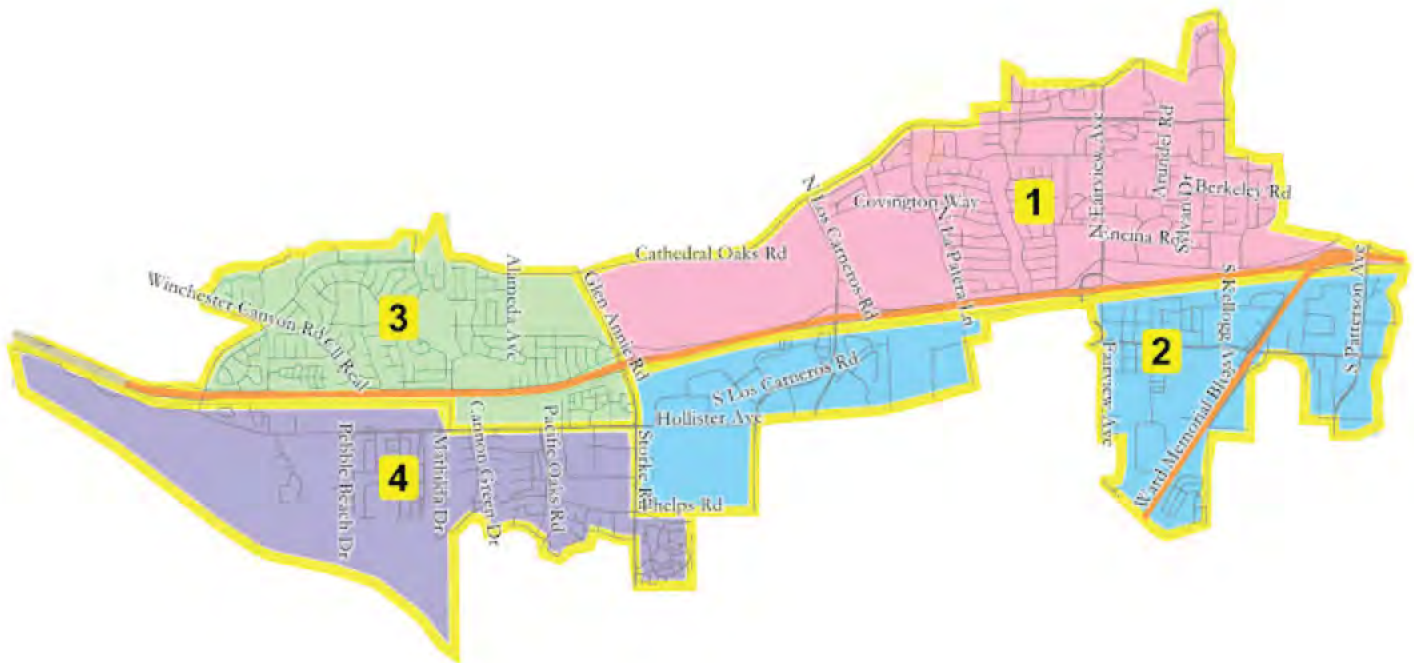
First Name *

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I am most concerned that is is dangerous and a safety hazards to the walking of humans and pets and bikers in this neighborhood which connects to Lake Carneros walking paths. The crowded streets and not being able to see on Covington and kids weaving through parked cars is so dangerous I'm scared someone will get hit.

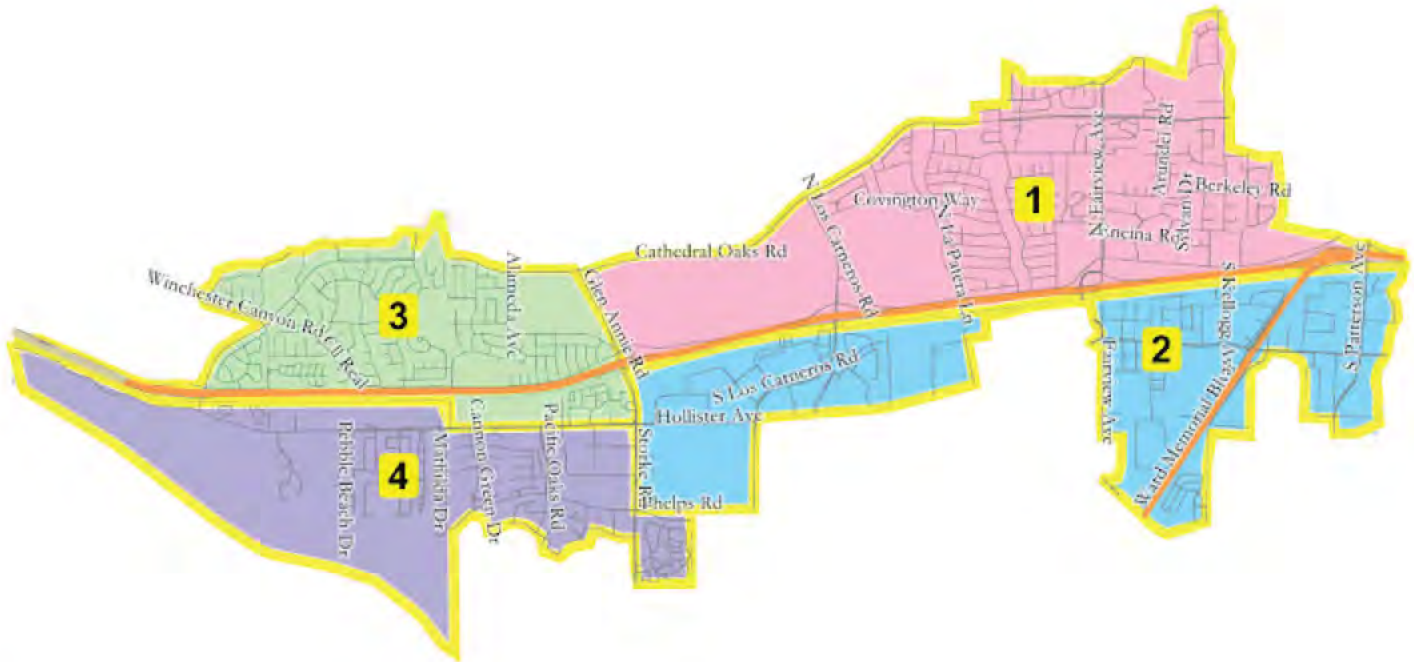
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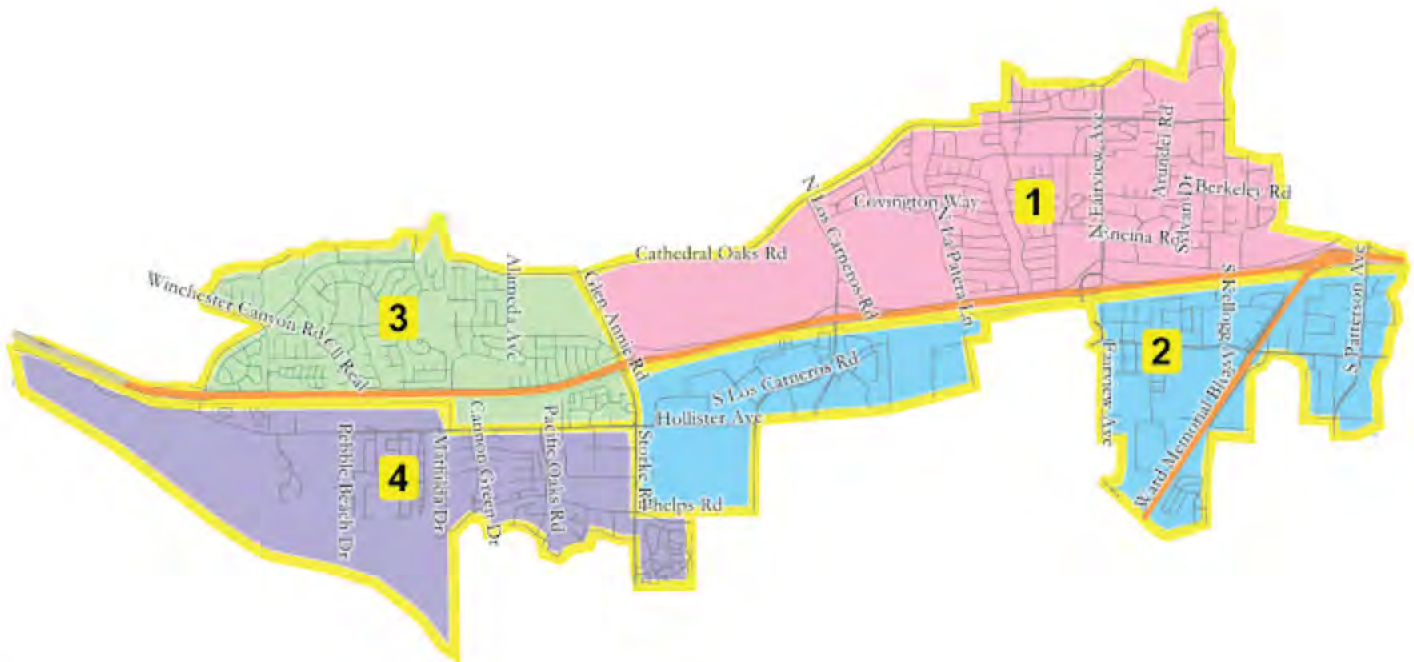
Lisa

.....

Last Name *

Bellefeuille

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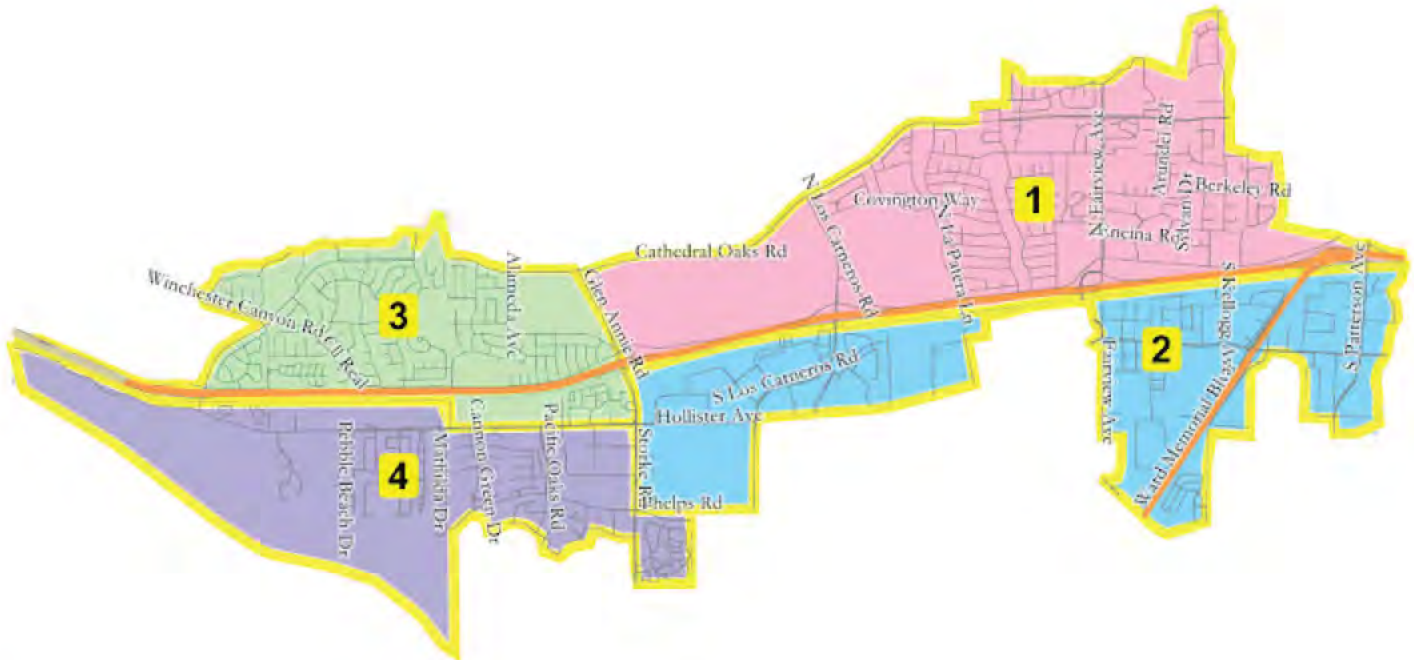
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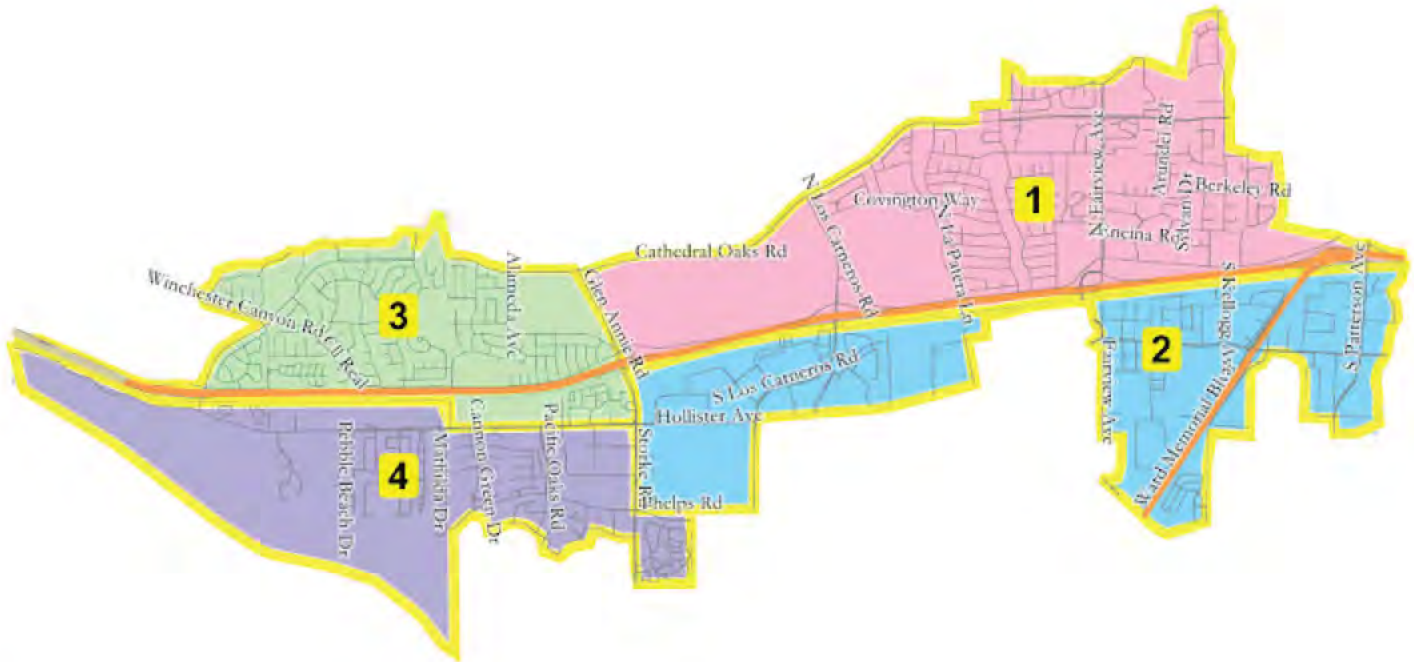
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This will become a big preschool and social service center. That is the character of Cavalry churches

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- Other: Mega building in high fire zone. Cars are double parking now at GVJH.

4. Monarch Butterfly Habitat and the ESHA Buffer

Anthem is asking the Planning Commission to cut the required monarch butterfly buffer in half, from 100 feet to 50 feet. The City's General Plan sets 100 feet as the minimum for a reason: monarch roost sites are unpredictable year to year and require a protective margin. Anthem's own application acknowledges that the buffer area on their property is currently used for parking and events and is composed of gravel and dirt. Stow Grove Park's Site 72 monarch roost is directly adjacent to this property.

ESHA

- I am concerned that approving a 50-foot buffer reduction would set a precedent for weakening General Plan habitat protections citywide, not just at this site. I request that the Planning Commission deny the buffer reduction request and require the project to be redesigned within the full 100-foot buffer.
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- Other: Keep this natural butterfly habitat and peaceful neighborhood.

5. Scale, Growth, and Cumulative Corridor Impact

The applicant describes a congregation of 300 to 500 people seeking a neighborhood church. Public school reservation records tell a different story. From 2023 through 2025, Anthem has booked a 630-seat auditorium as their regular weekly Sunday home, combined with a cafeteria, library, and additional classrooms bringing total weekly reserved capacity to over 1,000 seats. Christmas services have required venues of nearly 2,000 combined seats every year since 2022. This record was compiled while this CUP application was being filed and pursued.

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I am concerned that a facility of this scale – over 22,000 square feet, three Sunday services, 26 weddings, 30 memorials, 4 conferences, a preschool, and daily programming – is not a neighborhood church. It is a regional event facility proposed for an RS-8 residential zone adjacent to a community park. I request that the Planning Commission make an affirmative finding, supported by independent evidence, that this site is adequate before approving this use.

Other: Totally nonsense and incompatible to size of land available.

I Have Additional Concerns I Would Like the Planning Commission to Consider

You have not seen the crowd that gathers even now on this small space when they have get-togethers and morning meetings and women's bible study mornings and that's not even considering Sundays and Stow House events.. Fire station needs peace and quiet for our first responders. They are parking in red zone and double parking at the junior high. Stow House needs their parking very often.

Their congregation is totally white people and pastor has been in trouble and was recently put on leave for serious misbehavior and then came back. Blasting outdoor music and speakers during COVID. Parking in front of mail boxes and leaving litter on the streets. Currently property has six big standard size storage bins, two large box trucks, motor home that doesn't move, run down props and weeds and worn out items that look like trash, truck with attached box storage unit, rundown portable classroom with unsafe walkway, maze of security fencing, bright lights when they had night evrnts.

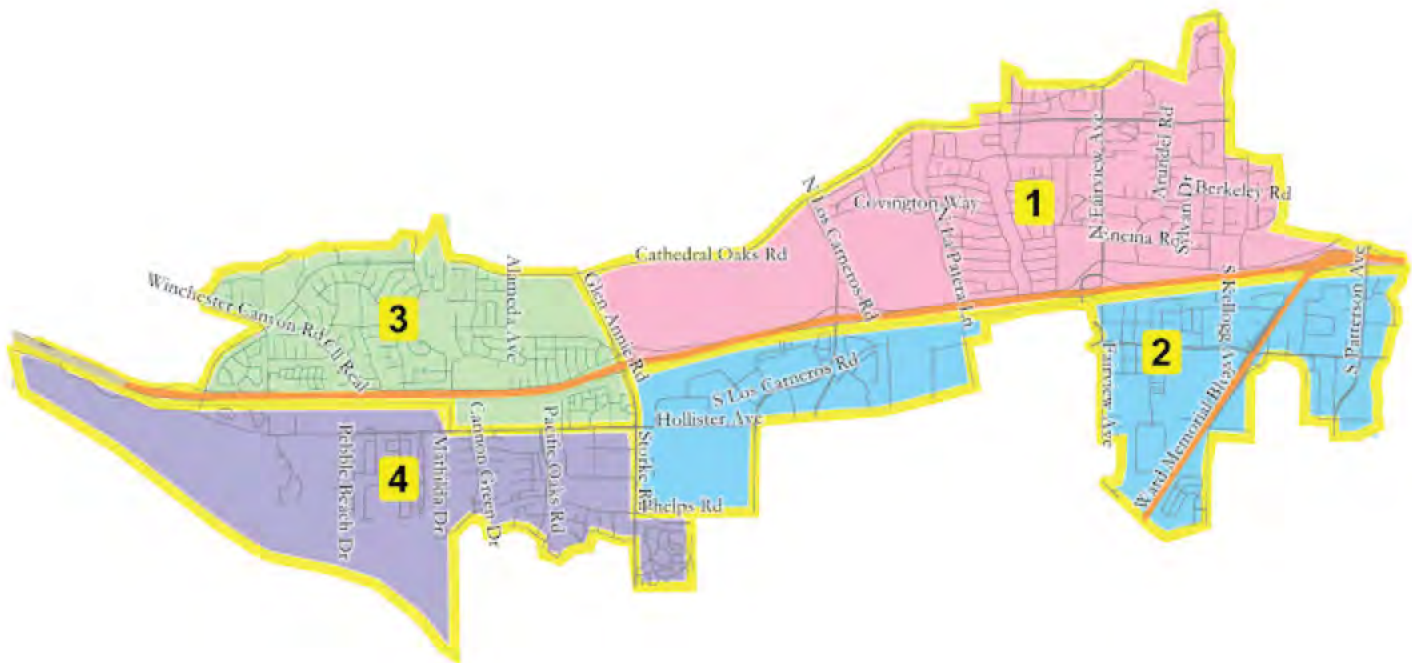
First Name *

Barbara

Last Name *

MCCaffrey

My district



- District 1 (Northeast/Fairview area)
- District 2 (Southeast/Old Town area)
- District 3 (Northwest/Winchester area)
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I'd like to receive email updates about this project

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Google Forms

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Email *

[REDACTED] _____

Select all that apply

- I attend Stow House events
- I organize Stow House events
- I live in the neighborhood
- I enjoy Lake Los Carneros
- I visit the South Coast Railroad Museum
- Other: I am a docent at Stow House and my husband drives the Tractor on Sundays for the kids.

I understand that the property at 6595 Covington Way is currently under review for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a 22,038 square foot sanctuary designed to accommodate three Sunday services of up to 500 people each, along with daily programming, a preschool, and 60 or more annual special events including weddings and conferences. A subdivision application has also been filed to split the current parcel, creating a 1-acre lot for Christ Lutheran Church and a 2-acre lot for Anthem Chapel.

The scale, frequency, and intensity of the proposed use are fundamentally incompatible with the residential character, physical infrastructure, public safety, and environmental conditions of the Lake Los Carneros corridor and surrounding neighborhood.

The Planning Commission must make affirmative findings that the proposed use is consistent with Goleta's General Plan, protects the health, safety, and welfare of the community, and that the site is adequate to accommodate the use as proposed. The concerns outlined below demonstrate that those findings cannot be made on the current record.

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I am concerned that overflow parking will fall on residential streets. I request that the Planning Commission identify the specific streets that will absorb that demand before approving this use.

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Other:

I live by GVJH and am witness to the traffic and parking issues caused by Anthem's Sunday services. They want to grow their congregation at the new location? That's nuts!

2. Stow House, the Railroad Museum, and Shared Parking

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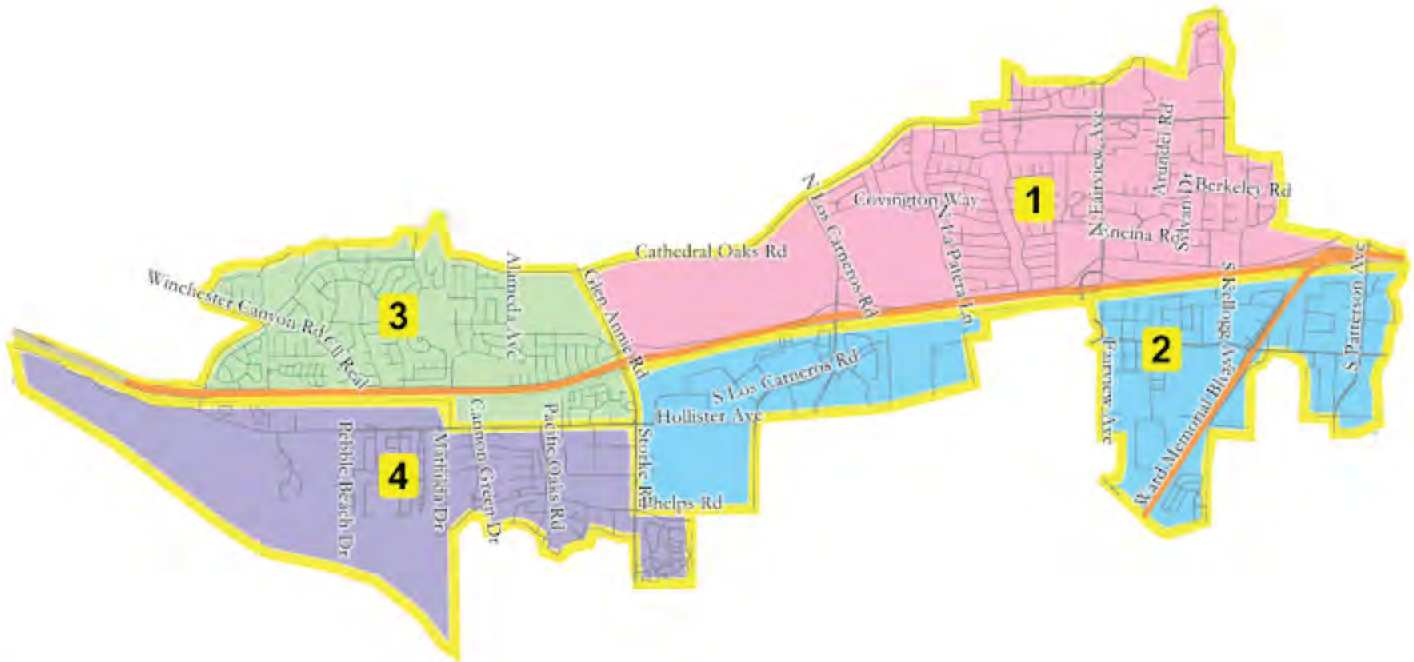
Cheryl

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Everett

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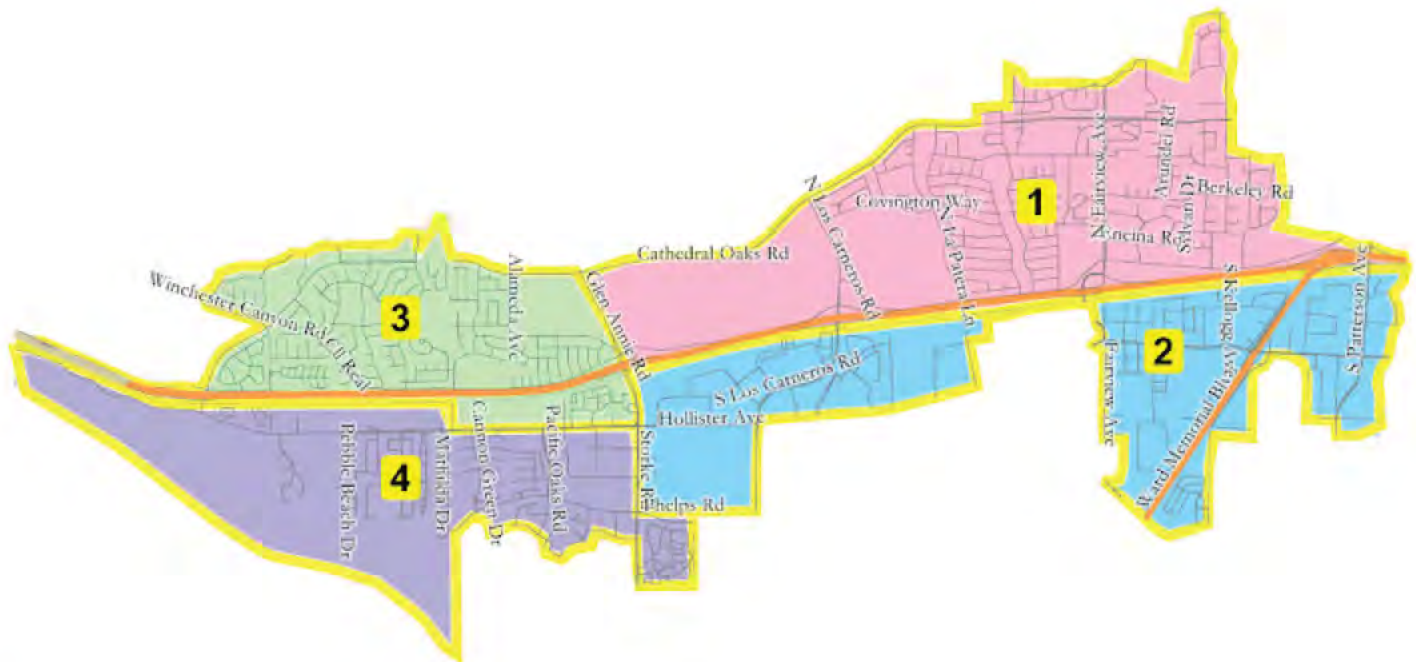
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Other:
This proposed development is not in keeping with the general atmosphere of the neighborhood, will destroy open space.

I Have Additional Concerns I Would Like the Planning Commission to Consider

Please prevent this monstrous development from moving forward

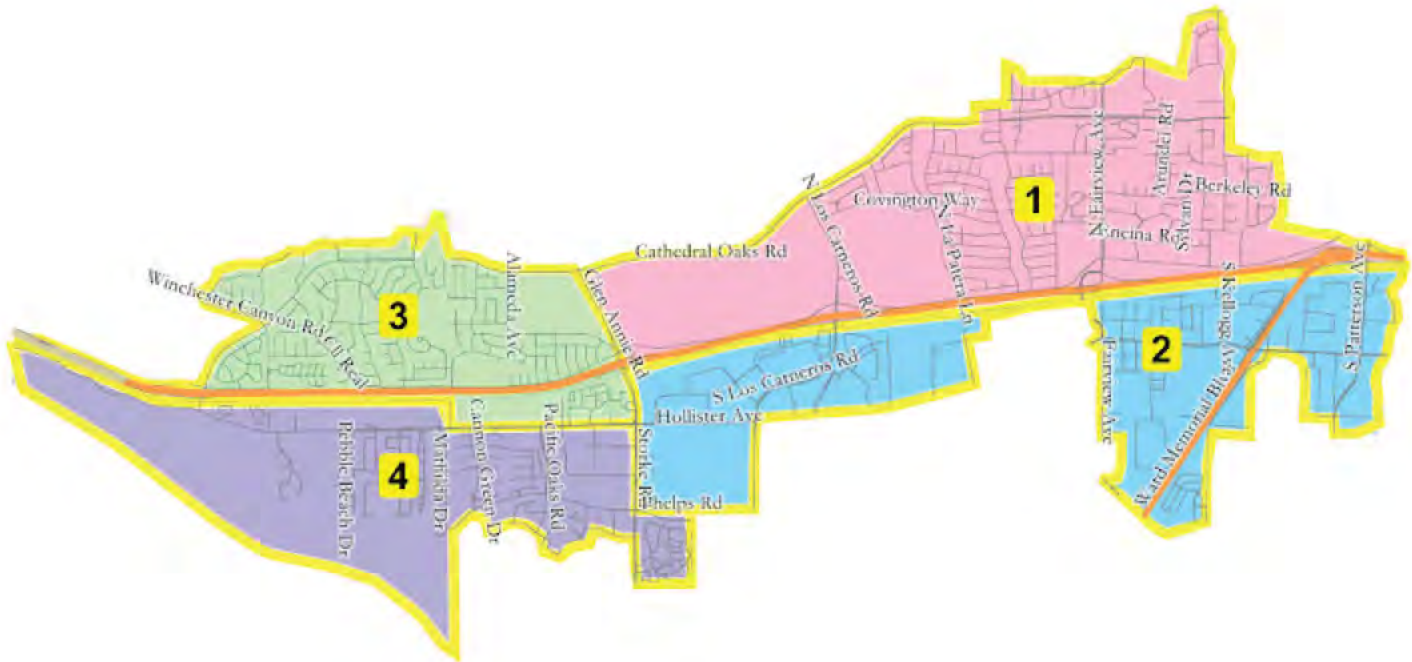
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Other:

I am concerned about bike safety with all the extra cars/traffic on Sundays and during the week.

I understand that the property at 6595 Covington Way is currently under review for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a 22,038 square foot sanctuary designed to accommodate three Sunday services of up to 500 people each, along with daily programming, a preschool, and 60 or more annual special events including weddings and conferences. A subdivision application has also been filed to split the current parcel, creating a 1-acre lot for Christ Lutheran Church and a 2-acre lot for Anthem Chapel.

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Other:

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I am strongly opposed to this project for all the reasons above. We have lived on Covington Way for 25 years and regularly see the impact that events at the Stow House have on parking and safety. Adding a church project of this size takes that concern to a level that is unacceptable. In addition, and most importantly, I am respectfully requesting that the Planning Commission deny the proposed reduction of the ESHA buffer and require a thorough CEQA review that would address the concerns listed above under "Monarch Butterfly Habitat and the ESHA Buffer" before any final decision is made.

.....

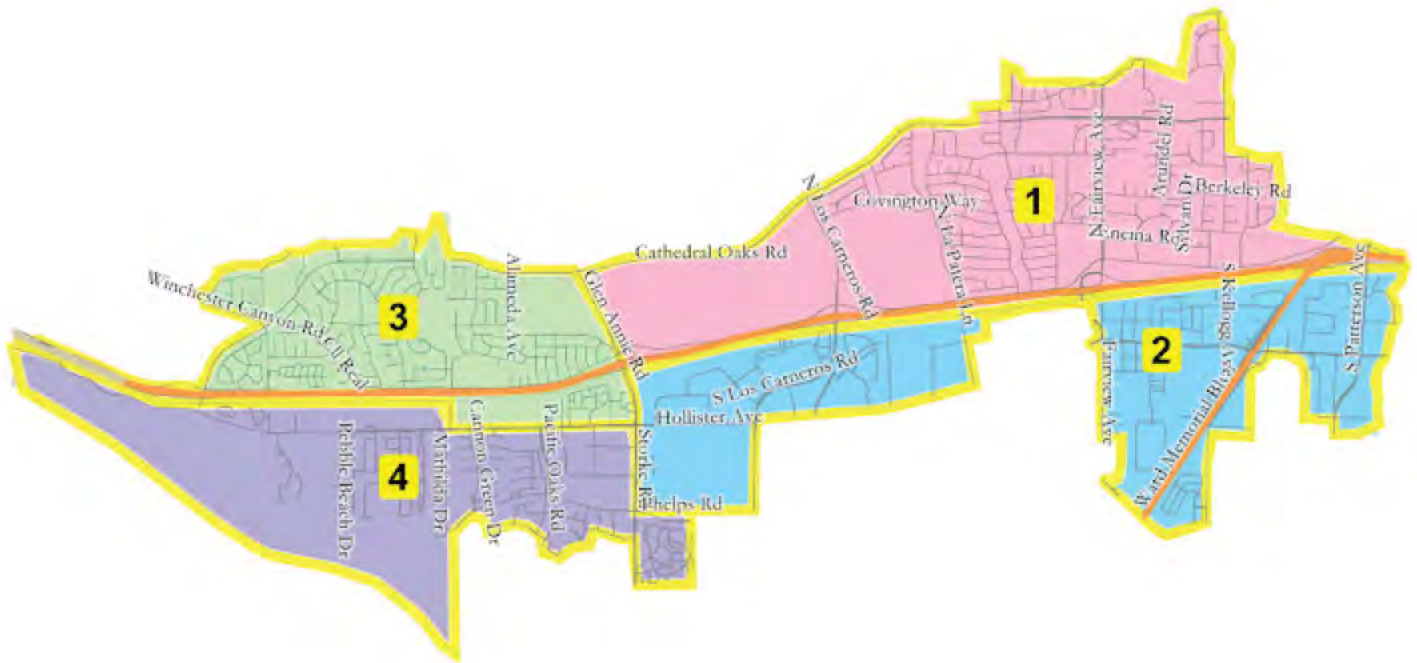
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Other:

My wife and I are recreational cyclists and we frequently ride our bikes on Sunday morning when there is less traffic. We often times ride on Los Carneros when returning home during the time Anthem traffic will be the heaviest. We absolutely would have to avoid that stretch of road for our safety. With three services that means the traffic will be heavy six times. That is unacceptable for a two lane road! Based on just that fact alone should be enough to deny approving this project among countless other reasons. Please do not approve this massively oversized project!

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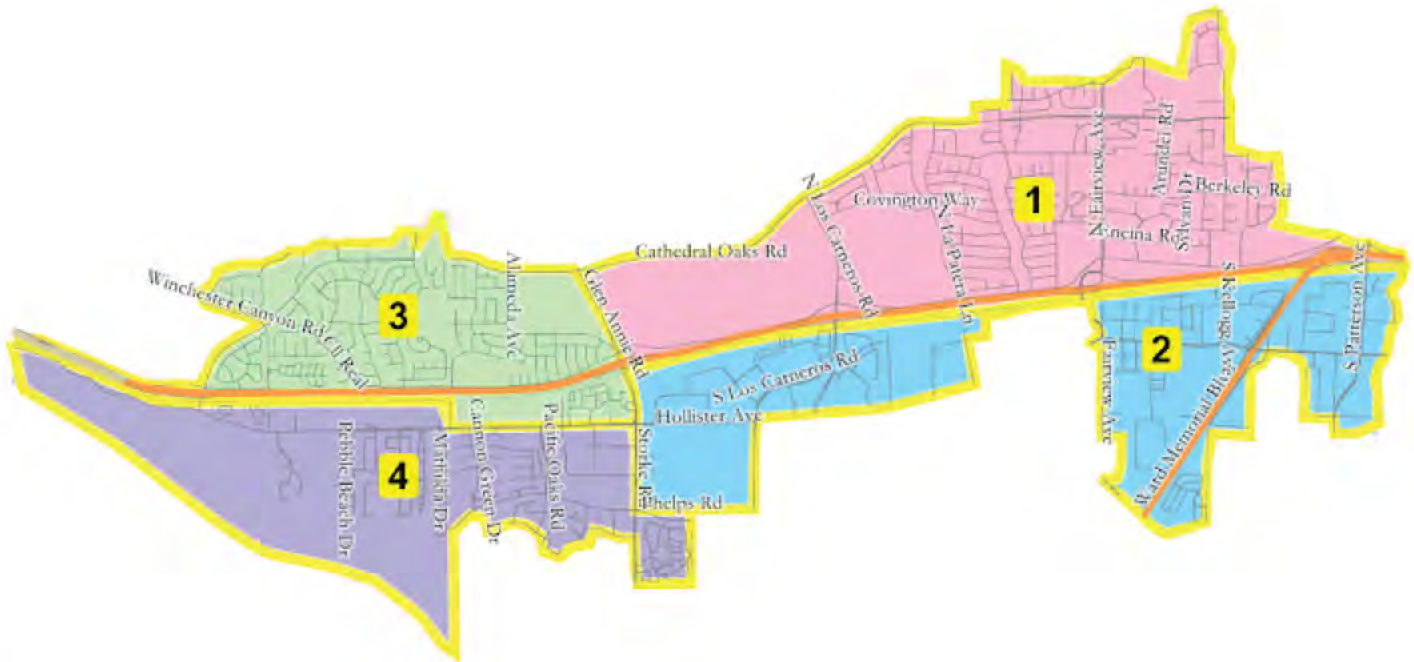
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Other:

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First Name *

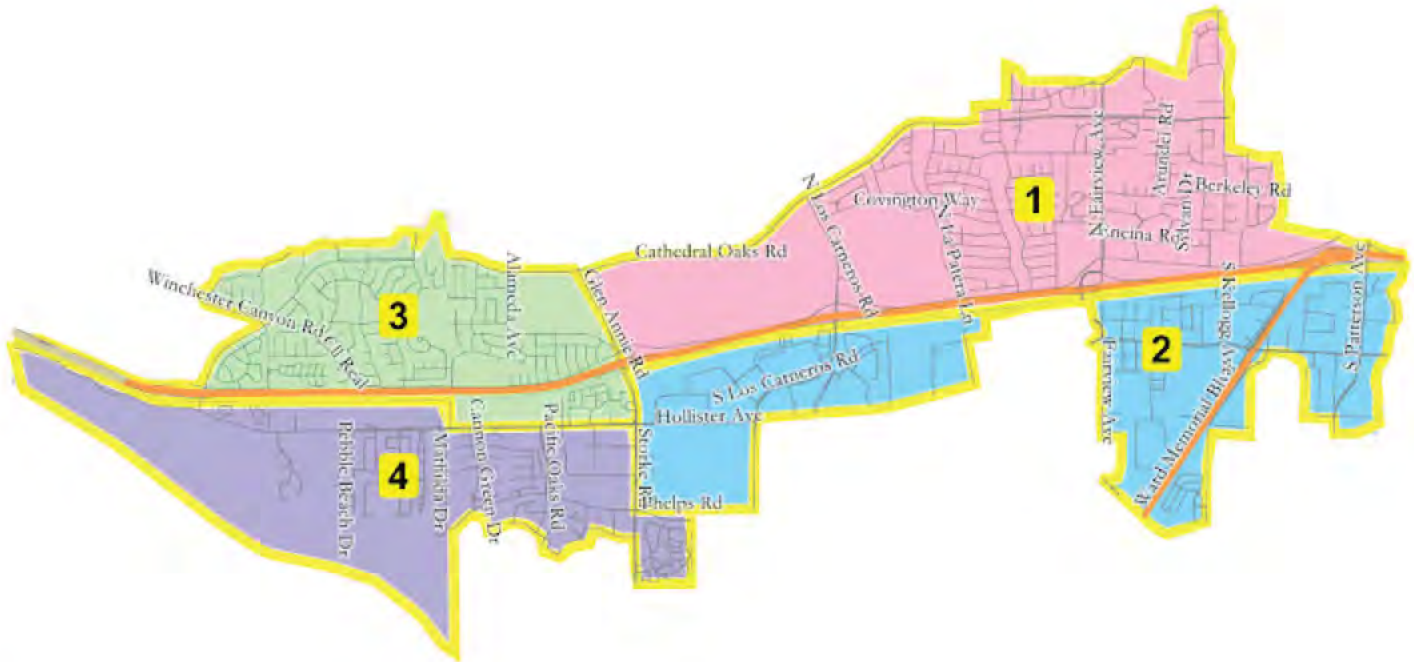
Jonathan

.....

Last Name *

Maile

My district



- District 1 (Northeast/Fairview area)
- District 2 (Southeast/Old Town area)
- District 3 (Northwest/Winchester area)
- District 4 (Southwest/Ellwood area)

I'd like to receive email updates about this project

- Sign me up

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Email the Planning Commission

Submit your concerns about the proposed Anthem Chapel expansion at 6595 Covington Way to the Planning Commission by noon on June 22. Your response will be emailed to the City of Goleta Senior Planner, Planning Commission and City Council.

The respondent's email ([REDACTED]) was recorded on submission of this form.

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Select all that apply

- I attend Stow House events
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I understand that the property at 6595 Covington Way is currently under review for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a 22,038 square foot sanctuary designed to accommodate three Sunday services of up to 500 people each, along with daily programming, a preschool, and 60 or more annual special events including weddings and conferences. A subdivision application has also been filed to split the current parcel, creating a 1-acre lot for Christ Lutheran Church and a 2-acre lot for Anthem Chapel.

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The Planning Commission must make affirmative findings that the proposed use is consistent with Goleta's General Plan, protects the health, safety, and welfare of the community, and that the site is adequate to accommodate the use as proposed. The concerns outlined below demonstrate that those findings cannot be made on the current record.

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- Other: No paving ie: concrete on ESHA

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✓ Other: This is also a business with a preschool and daycare and offices using this area for profit.

I Have Additional Concerns I Would Like the Planning Commission to Consider

The MATH: 1. size of sanctuary 6512 sq ft x 50 sq Ft/ parking space = 130 spaces PROPOSED only 117! Does not meet the requirement for parking.

2. Actual # of cars counted on 3 Sunday's at current facility- 209, 267, 290.

3. Space for 209 - 1.5-1.9 acres

for 267 - 2.0 - 2.4 acres (TOTAL LOT SIZE for whole project 2.542 including ESHA encroachment)

for 290 - 2.2-2.5 acres

4. This project needs at least a 5 acre parcel to adequately accommodate their needs and growth. IT IS NOT AN ACCEPTABLE PROJECT FOR THIS SMALL AREA.

THE NEGATIVE IMPACT ON WE WHO LIVE IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD IS VERY DISTURBING. IF GIVEN APPROVAL THERE IS NO PUTTING THE GENIE BACK IN THE BOTTLE WHEN OVERSTEPS ARE DONE, NOISE BECOMES (inevitable) AN ISSUE, TRAFFIC/PARKING SEVERELY AND CONTINUALLY IMPACTED, OUR SAFETY ON THE ROAD AND POTENTIAL EVACUATION CONGESTION, ABILITY TO ENJOY THE PEACE AND QUIET OF LOS CARNEROS PARK/ STOW HOUSE/ TRAIN MUSEUM.

The OTHER: 1. ESHA boundary 100', project will permanently covered over 1/2 with concrete, play yards with apparatus, fences, etc.

*per CA Coastal Comm. - "Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of values, and only uses dependent on those resources shall be allowed within those areas."

Rules: Under the California Coastal Act, ESHAs are strictly protected against significant disruption. Only developments or uses that directly depend on the resources are allowed inside these areas. [1, 2]

Requirements: Any new construction or development adjacent to an ESHA must include natural buffer zones or setbacks (often 100 feet or more) to prevent degradation of the habitat. [1, 2]

** Furthermore: per CA Costa Comm.: California State Portal | CA.gov

Here is how these restrictions specifically impact property owners:

1. Limits on New Development

Under the California Coastal Act and certified Local Coastal Programs, only development that depends directly on the habitat (like nature trails or restoration projects) is allowed within an ESHA. Non-resource-dependent development—such as building a new home, deck, or pool—is generally prohibited directly on the ESHA portion of your property.

2. Mandatory Setbacks and Buffers

To prevent human intrusion and degradation of the habitat, commissions often require an unbuildable buffer zone around the ESHA. These buffers typically range from 50 to 100 feet. This means that even if your proposed structure is just adjacent to the ESHA, its size, placement, and design will be strictly regulated.

2. The OTHER continued: A. I have noticed inconsistencies, Per Fire Department letter dated 12/3/2024 "Notify of changes" "Driveway minimum 26' width" Currently on plans 24". do not see updated approval from Fire Department.

B. Sanctuary for 500 people- actual #at present using 630 seat auditorium.

C. Project requests extending over height limit of 25' to 27' 8" - this is unacceptable for the scenic byway that is Los Carneros Road.

D. Anthem states-"serve surrounding neighborhood", "We are good neighbors" Actually few persons in our neighborhood are served by this church and no, I do not consider them good for our QUIET, RESIDENTIAL community.

SUGGEST OPTIONS FOR THEIR CHURCH: Talk to sharing Elks Building (huge and lots of parking) , the RiteAid building on Fairview. Parcels of undeveloped land along Hollister Avenue.

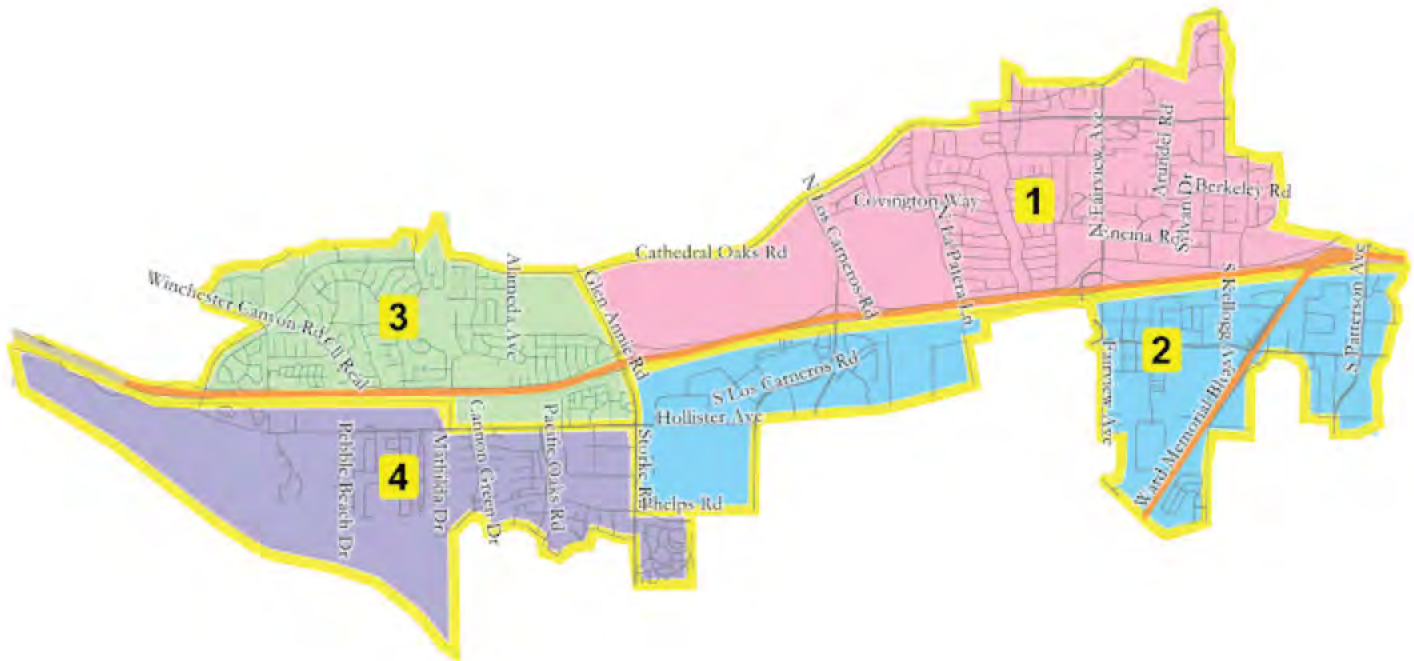
First Name *

Judy

Last Name *

Salviolo

My district



- District 1 (Northeast/Fairview area)
- District 2 (Southeast/Old Town area)
- District 3 (Northwest/Winchester area)
- District 4 (Southwest/Ellwood area)

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Google Forms

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Other:

Anthem Chapel has indicated in their statements and with signs posted on the property that parking is at their generous allowance. Guarantees need to be part of any approval for this project and not at their mercy. In their actions they have consistently shown little interest in impacts on others and of our neighborhood. This was clearly displayed by them during the pandemic.

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See above. Also, I strongly request independent analysis be done. Not an analysis conducted by someone hired by Anthem.
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I am also concerned about additional congestion on top of what we already are experiencing on Calle Real and near the round about. And what about when all these kids are on site for school programs and need to be dropped off and picked up by multiple families?
-

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In addition to this project there is also the development coming on Calle Real near the round about. How anyone thinks a single lane corridor in each direction on Los Carneros and on Calle Real can handle the additional Church traffic (daily school commutes, services, events) and these other developments is simply ridiculous and irresponsible. It will greatly impact everyone in our neighborhood and the wildlife with noise, traffic, parking, etc. I urge you to insist these issues be addressed before moving forward with this project. A comprehensive plan of all these projects needs to be reviewed and the church's assertions need to be independently verified. They have not been a respectful neighbor to us. This location seems all wrong to me. I know their members are speaking to you in favor of this project, but clearly they don't live in our neighborhood as even they acknowledge a great need for parking. Do they even live in the City of Goleta? I think most do not. Why will we, the neighbors and Goleta residents, be the ones bearing the costs and impacts of this project? This area, the park, Stow House, has always been open to all groups to enjoy. Why not expand on that by purchasing this site and allowing it's use to build upon the natural beauty and uses already established and loved by all. I encourage the City of Goleta to buy it and believe our community would help to fundraiser toward that purchase. There are many better locations for the Anthem Chapel that already have parking and streets that are more than one lane and could better handle the traffic and other impacts. One such site is where the Rite Aid was at Fairview. The City needs to support the residents of Goleta who voted to form a City hoping for for less and smarter development. This project is clearly not that. Finally, I'm sorry to be out of town and not able to attend the planning commission meeting tomorrow. I strongly urge you to not allow this project to proceed on this site. It would be sad to lose this site when it could be such a wonderful and lovely natural resource for all to enjoy. The development of Goleta has proceeded on and on, and we have often been told the State has dictated that or these projects were approved before our Cityhood. Well this is a site the City can save for us now and for the future. Given all the open space we have lost, the Los Carneros park, Stow House, wildlife, natural beauty, isn't it worth the investment? Anthem Chapel should find a site that is more compatible to its needs. It's not that we do not support that, just not on this site.

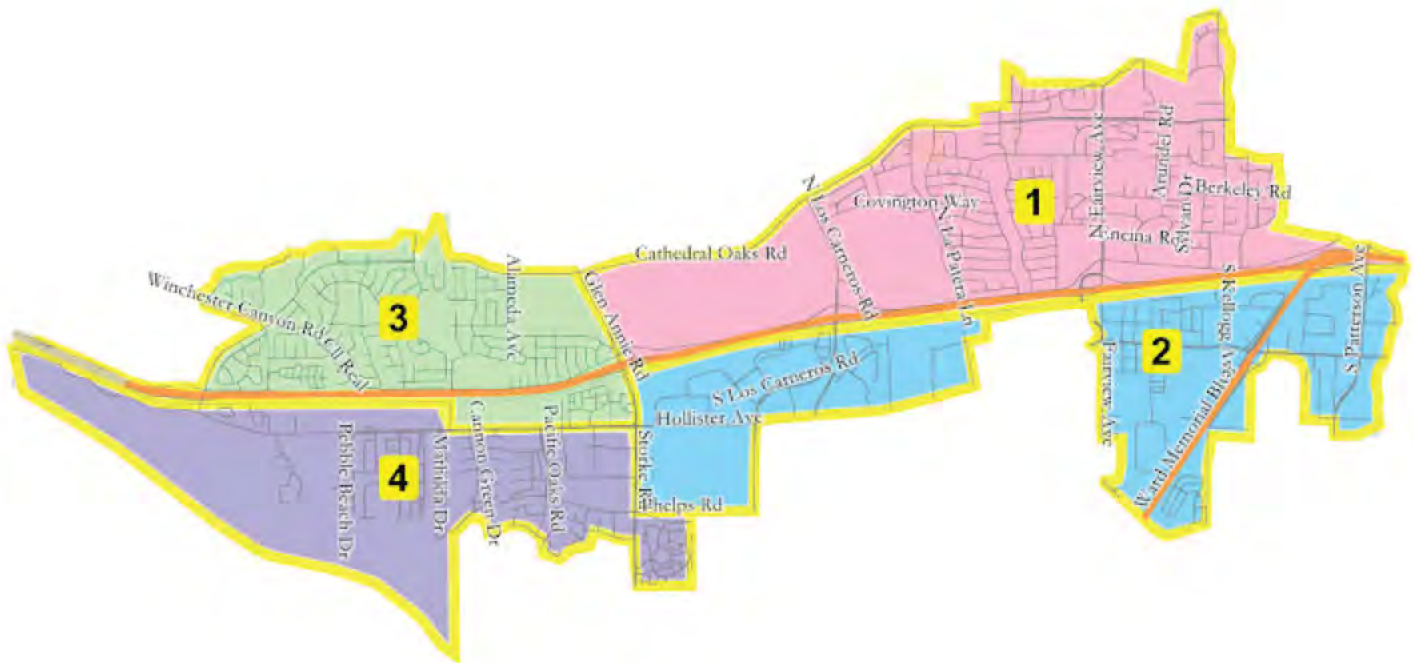
First Name *

Stacey

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I am concerned. That is a very good way to put my feelings about the Anthem project. My family and I have lived in this neighborhood for over 10 years and love it so much that when the time came for more space we chose to only look at houses in this same neighborhood. But I am very concerned that this project could change the calm neighborhood feel and safety of this area of the neighborhood. Anyone who lived nearby during the pandemic can attest to the intense impact the outdoor services had on both Covington, Camino Venturoso, and Los Caneros each Sunday or when special events were held. I specifically remember watching cars choosing to bypass the long line of cars waiting to park by using the oncoming traffic lane, neighborhood streets packed with cars week after week, etc. I think the neighborhood understand at the time, the church had no other choice, but now they have a choice and they are choosing to change the character of the neighborhood and potentially put our safety at risk too.

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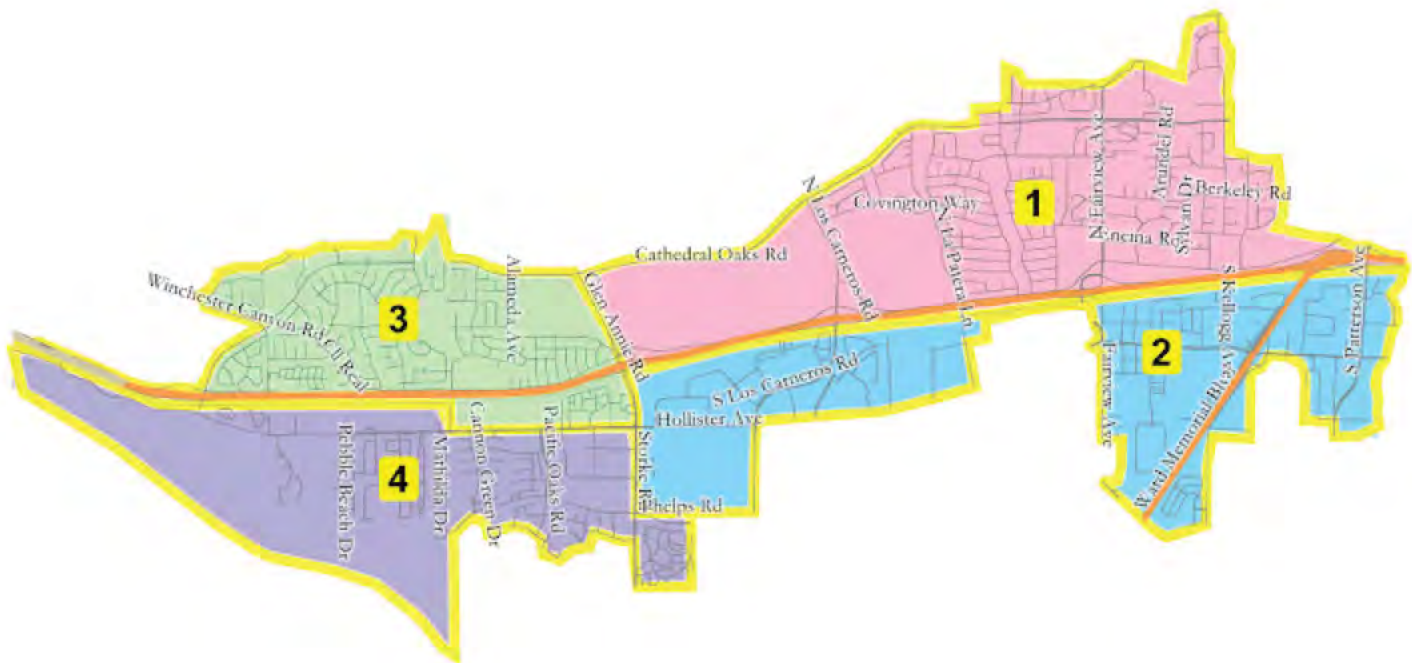
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I strongly oppose this project moving forward.

The proposed project is not a local community, neighborhood organization. Anthem Chapel is already a large congregation and continues to grow. It appears interested in becoming, if not is already is, a mega church which will be pulling people in from a large geographic radius and concentrating them in our small residential area without the infrastructure to mitigate parking needs, traffic, safety, noise, light pollution, and impacts to wildlife. Anthem Chapel needs a larger, commercial space, with a lot of parking and supporting road infrastructure. The proposed site although approved for a church likely did not imagine one of this scope and with these impacts. This site is not adequate to accommodate the proposal and needs as described by Anthem Chapel and as indicated by their current, existing activities.

Independent assessments of attendance (averages and maximums) at regular activities such as Sunday services and other events and activities (holidays, school operations), traffic impacts to all surrounding streets including Los Carneros, the small roundabout at Los Carneros and Calle Real, to Covington, Cathedral Oaks, and La Patera must be required.

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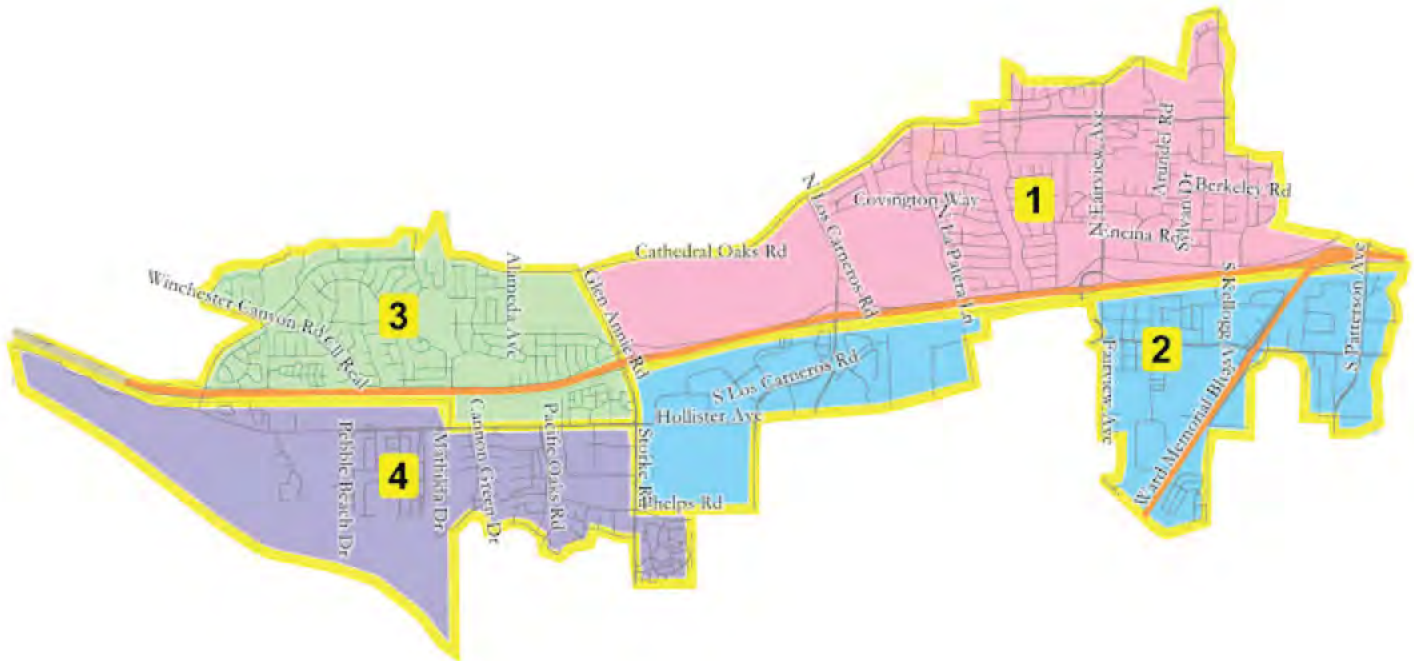
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First Name *

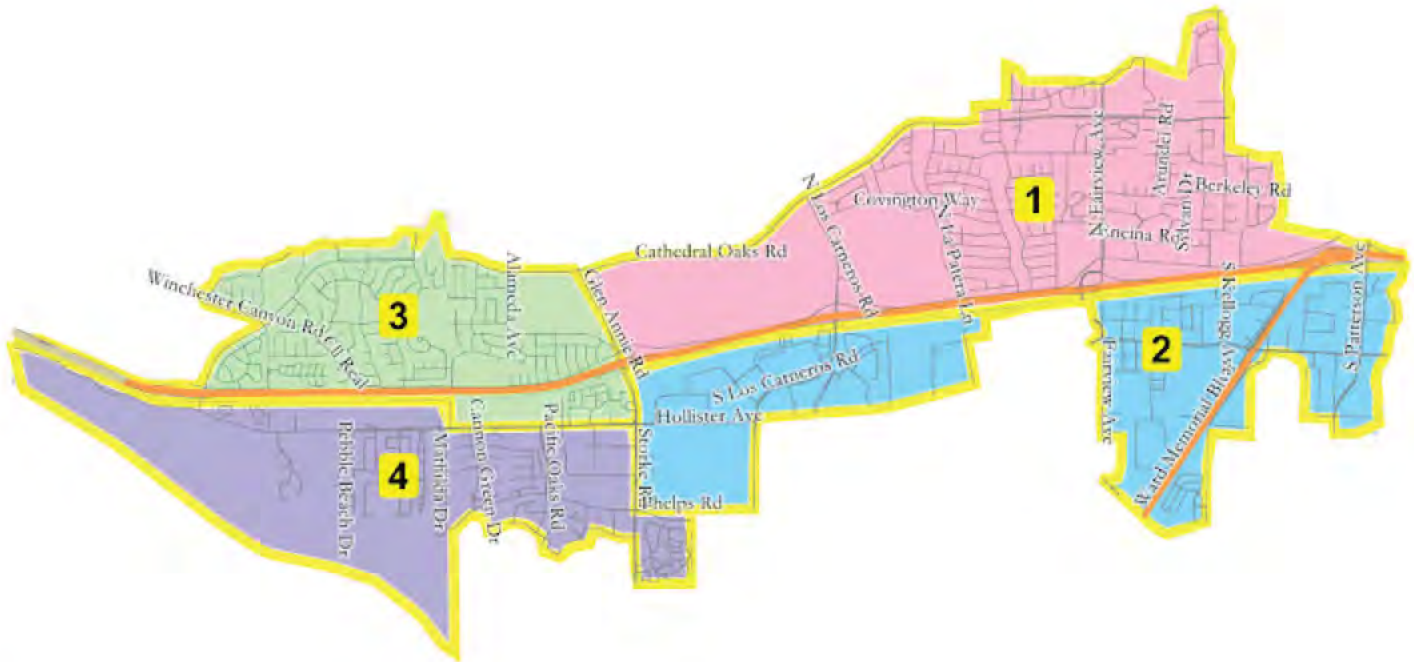
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.....

Last Name *

Mumm

My district



- District 1 (Northeast/Fairview area)
- District 2 (Southeast/Old Town area)
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- Sign me up

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The respondent's email ([REDACTED]) was recorded on submission of this form.

Email *

[REDACTED]

.....

Select all that apply

- I attend Stow House events
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- I enjoy Lake Los Carneros
- I visit the South Coast Railroad Museum

Other:

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Other:

I'm concerned about the traffic this will create on Los Carneros Road and Covington way. I'm a biker and traffic safety in the neighborhood is very important to me. Those streets have not been designed for that many cars. During Covid, I have seen how many cars came in, parked on the streets and sometimes in dangerous places, despite having many parking spots on the field already. The traffic they created on both streets was dangerous. On Los Carneros road, it created several backups of cars because of the absence of a shoulder to turn into the parking space. On Covington Way, it created an overload of cars, doing U-turns on Covington Way, creating backups with through traffic dangerously swerving around them, etc. Not safe for bikers, not safe for pedestrians, not safe for other cars. This is what happens when the infrastructure is not adapted to the requirements, which is the case here.

2. Stow House, the Railroad Museum, and Shared Parking

Anthem's application states they are "not obligated" to share their parking lot with the Goleta Valley Historical Society and will do so only at their own discretion. Stow House events, Railroad Museum visitors, and the surrounding neighborhood all rely on this overflow lot today. The Islamic Center's approval required conjunctive parking agreements, adding additional stress to an already strained corridor.

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Other:

I'm concerned about the increased traffic this will create on Los Carneros Road and Covington Way. As a biker, traffic safety in the neighborhood is very important to me, and these streets were not designed for this volume of cars. During Covid, I saw the impact of increased traffic despite the existing parking on the field: cars parked in unsafe locations, backups on Los Carneros Road due to the lack of a turn lane, and congestion on Covington Way with U-turns and vehicles swerving around stopped traffic. This created unsafe conditions for bikers, pedestrians, and drivers. These problems occur when the infrastructure is not designed to handle the level of traffic being introduced, which appears to be the case here. Why would the city approve this?

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I have seen the size of their services during the Covid times. I didn't count them, but it for sure didn't feel like a neighborhood church. Will the church share their current member base size, and how many unique attendees they have every Sunday? Will they commit to moving to another place as soon as they reach a size that is larger than the 300 people neighborhood church they are claiming to be or want to be? If they want to be a neighborhood church, what neighborhood do their members come from? Certainly not this one, or they wouldn't be 200+ cars driving in for each service.

I Have Additional Concerns I Would Like the Planning Commission to Consider

I generally don't understand the logic of putting a mega church there. Clearly this is way too big of a church for this space, this space (a nature preserve), and this neighborhood. There are many other spaces that this church could go to, and they should find a bigger space that is more in line with the size of their church and the operations they run. The tell signs are real: they are trying to reduce the butterfly buffer zone, it seems that they are under reporting the true size of their congregation, etc. All signs are just showing to the point that it's not a good fit, and there are no ways to fix it given the space and the size of the building they want.

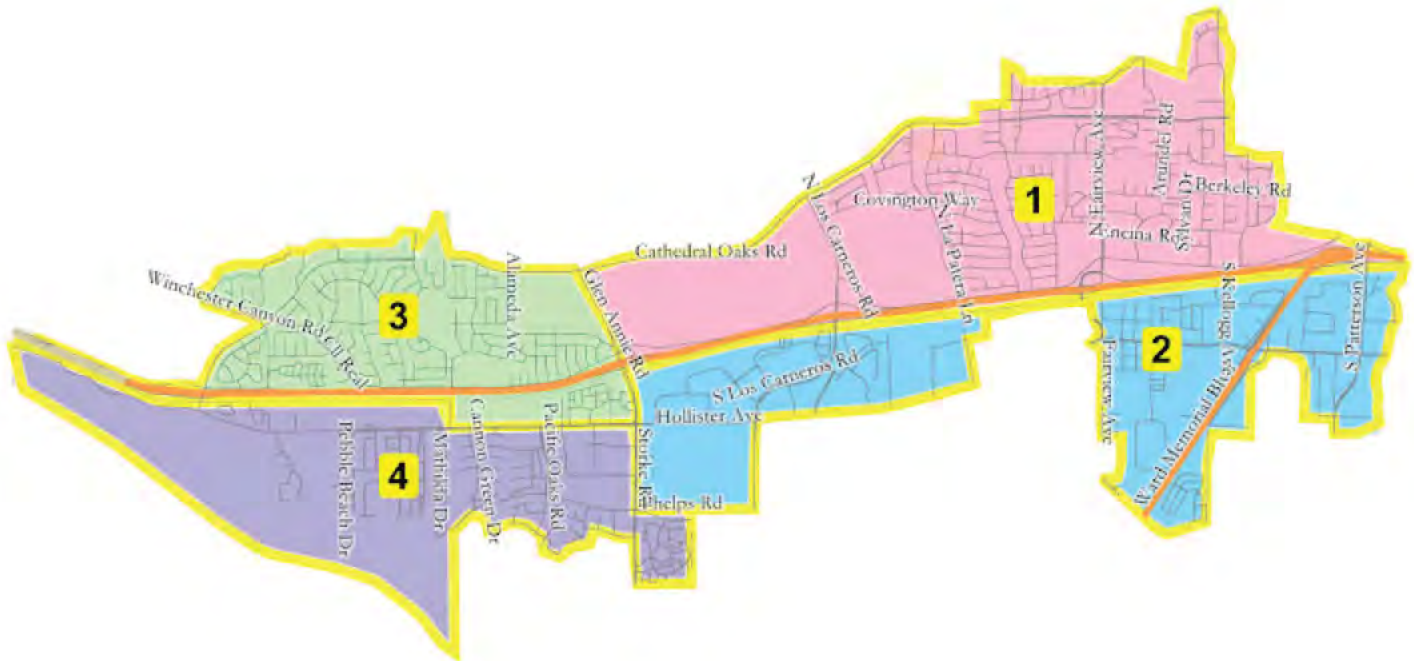
First Name *

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Last Name *

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Email *

[REDACTED]

Select all that apply

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 - I organize Stow House events
 - I live in the neighborhood
 - I enjoy Lake Los Carneros
 - I visit the South Coast Railroad Museum
 - Other: Alexandra Hamill
-

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Please consider the neighborhood in this decision. Many are against this!
.....

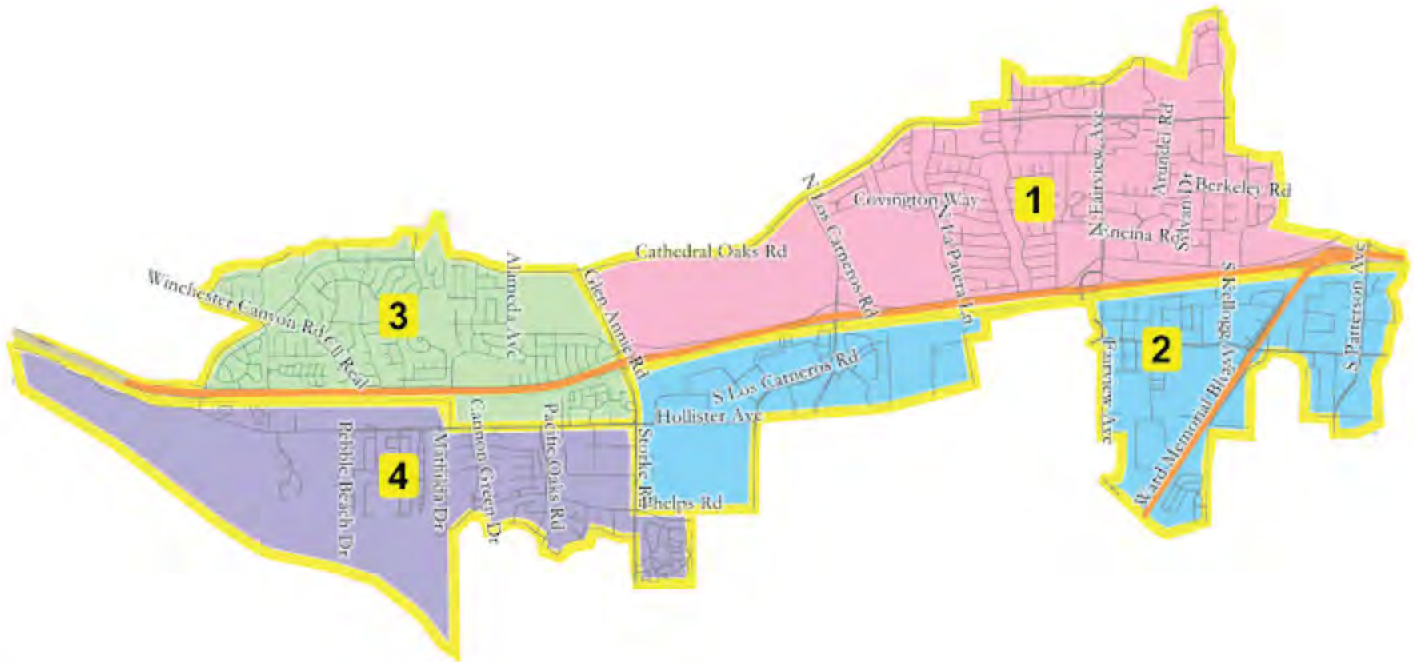
First Name *

Alexandra
.....

Last Name *

Hamill

My district



- District 1 (Northeast/Fairview area)
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- Other: Use the site every day for peaceful relaxation and exercise, enjoy the quiet

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Impacts to the Los Carneros Corridor use for emergency services, utility services, agricultural equipment and normal neighborhood traffic, during emergency evacuation events. The cumulative impacts of new residential developments already approved and up for approval, is far too much for this area. It requires a transportation study and public safety analysis, especially during times of multiple events occurring

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- I am concerned that if the overflow lot becomes unavailable, Stow House guests and Railroad Museum visitors will park on residential streets, and I request that the Planning Commission assess what that displacement means for both residents and the long-term viability of these community venues.
- I am concerned that no cumulative parking analysis has examined the combined demand from Stow House, the Railroad Museum, the Islamic Center, Christ Lutheran Church, and future Stow Park visitors all competing for the same corridor. I request that the Planning Commission require that analysis before any vote.
- Other:

3. Fire Safety and Emergency Access

Both proposed driveways open onto Los Carneros Road directly adjacent to Fire Station 14. Los Carneros Road is a designated Potential Evacuation Route in the City's draft General Plan Safety Element, and the State Fire Marshal has mapped a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone along this corridor. The traffic study submitted with this application analyzed weekday trips only – Sunday, Anthem's peak demand day, was never studied.

Safety

I am concerned that three back-to-back Sunday services, 26 weddings, 30 memorials, and 4 annual conferences will repeatedly concentrate hundreds of vehicles on a designated evacuation route directly adjacent to an active fire station, and I request that the Planning Commission require an independent analysis of how this recurring traffic interacts with emergency dispatch and evacuation demand on this corridor.

I am concerned that the traffic study analyzed weekday trips only and never studied Sunday, Anthem's peak demand day. I request that the Planning Commission require a peer-reviewed Sunday traffic study before any vote.

I am concerned that the VMT analysis was run using weekday office staff rather than the hundreds of people driving to services each week, and I request that the Planning Commission require an independent traffic and parking study based on actual peak attendance before any vote.

I am concerned that no formal fire department consultation is documented in this application. I request that the Planning Commission provide documentation of any fire department review and any conditions that resulted before this application moves forward.

I am concerned that Los Carneros Road is designated as a Potential Evacuation Route in the City's own General Plan Safety Element, and that no analysis examines how hundreds of vehicles concentrated there every Sunday – and for 26 weddings, 30 memorials, and 4 conferences annually – would affect the ability of residents to evacuate in an emergency. I request that the Planning Commission require that analysis before any vote.

Other:

4. Monarch Butterfly Habitat and the ESHA Buffer

Anthem is asking the Planning Commission to cut the required monarch butterfly buffer in half, from 100 feet to 50 feet. The City's General Plan sets 100 feet as the minimum for a reason: monarch roost sites are unpredictable year to year and require a protective margin. Anthem's own application acknowledges that the buffer area on their property is currently used for parking and events and is composed of gravel and dirt. Stow Grove Park's Site 72 monarch roost is directly adjacent to this property.

ESHA

- I am concerned that approving a 50-foot buffer reduction would set a precedent for weakening General Plan habitat protections citywide, not just at this site. I request that the Planning Commission deny the buffer reduction request and require the project to be redesigned within the full 100-foot buffer.
- I am concerned that the buffer area has already been degraded by parking and event use, and that no restoration plan has been submitted. I request that the Planning Commission require full documentation of existing ESHA impacts and a restoration plan as a condition of any approval.
- I am concerned that no independent biological assessment has been conducted on the potential impact of this project on the Site 72 monarch roost. I request that the Planning Commission require that study before any vote.
- I am concerned that concentrating hundreds of vehicles, amplified sound, and year-round event activity within 50 feet of protected habitat will cause ongoing cumulative harm to the roost that cannot be mitigated after the fact. I request that the Planning Commission require an independent assessment of noise and activity impacts on the monarch habitat before any vote.
- Other:
Anthem Church requests a reduction of 50ft to the 100 ft buffer, however they identify plantings and moisture retention in native grass, keeping with Monarch attraction. They also plan for a small paving area within this reduced 50 ft buffer. Makes no sense, they retain a 100 buffer and also encourage Monarch habitat elements outside of the 100 ft Buffer. It is common knowledge that Monarchs have substantially dropped in population numbers statewide. Why give exception to existing ESHA, and at the same time the City of Goleta is undergoing a major Monarch Restoration at Ellwood. Anthem Church should join in the efforts of expanding future habitat, not request an reduction.

5. Scale, Growth, and Cumulative Corridor Impact

The applicant describes a congregation of 300 to 500 people seeking a neighborhood church. Public school reservation records tell a different story. From 2023 through 2025, Anthem has booked a 630-seat auditorium as their regular weekly Sunday home, combined with a cafeteria, library, and additional classrooms bringing total weekly reserved capacity to over 1,000 seats. Christmas services have required venues of nearly 2,000 combined seats every year since 2022. This record was compiled while this CUP application was being filed and pursued.

Church Growth

I am concerned that while the applicant reports peak attendance of 300 to 500 people, public school reservation records show Anthem has consistently booked venues with combined weekly capacity exceeding 1,000 seats and Christmas venues approaching 2,000 seats. I request that the Planning Commission require independently verified attendance figures before accepting applicant self-reporting as the basis for parking, traffic, or site adequacy findings.

I am concerned that Anthem's weekly operational footprint at Goleta Valley Junior High more than doubled in a single year, and their summer youth program grew fourfold, all while this CUP application was being filed. I request that the Planning Commission consider this growth trajectory when evaluating whether a 500-seat sanctuary and 117 parking spaces will be adequate beyond opening day.

I am concerned that no survey or study has established a baseline of current parking and traffic demand across the corridor – including Lake Los Carneros visitors, Stow House events, Railroad Museum visitors, Islamic Center services, and neighborhood residential use. I request that the Planning Commission require an independent corridor survey documenting existing Sunday conditions before any vote.

I am concerned that no cumulative analysis has examined the combined demand from Stow House, the Railroad Museum, the Islamic Center, Christ Lutheran Church, Fire Station 14, and future Stow Park visitors all competing for the same streets and parking on the same days. I request that the Planning Commission require a full corridor cumulative impact analysis before any vote.

I am concerned that a facility of this scale – over 22,000 square feet, three Sunday services, 26 weddings, 30 memorials, 4 conferences, a preschool, and daily programming – is not a neighborhood church. It is a regional event facility proposed for an RS-8 residential zone adjacent to a community park. I request that the Planning Commission make an affirmative finding, supported by independent evidence, that this site is adequate before approving this use.

Other:

I Have Additional Concerns I Would Like the Planning Commission to Consider

I request that the designation of being exempt to CEQA not be granted by the City Planning Commission, the proposal is NOT consistent with the General Plan, it does not protect the existing ESHA, and presents substantial parking, traffic and public safety issues.

The current zoning is for RS-8, of which "Assemblies" can be an approved use. However, If this was truly a RS-8 development, the traffic, parking assessment would be substantially lower than providing for 117 parking spaces, and 300-500 residents. Maximum amount of cars for a residential development of this zone would likely be up to 25 cars or so, not 117 parking spaces needed for multiple times on Sundays, and or other special events.

Has the Albedo effect of such a parking lot been evaluated.? Yes there are trees being proposed for planting, however, there is yet another request made to reduce the number being planted from 43 or 41...and is there a required container size with a determined canopy size being required. It will take at least 10 years to reduce the reflective heat from a paved lot this size. Unless fast growing natives are used. This is not what has been proposed in the Landscape Plan.

There are other Wildlife considerations as well. Bobcat sightings, a recent mountain lion sighting, increased Raptor use, Horned Owl and Barn Owls are regular users. Has a nighttime wildlife assessment been performed.?

Lighting, even as stated is downwards facing should not be allowed 24/7, there must be a time of total dark.

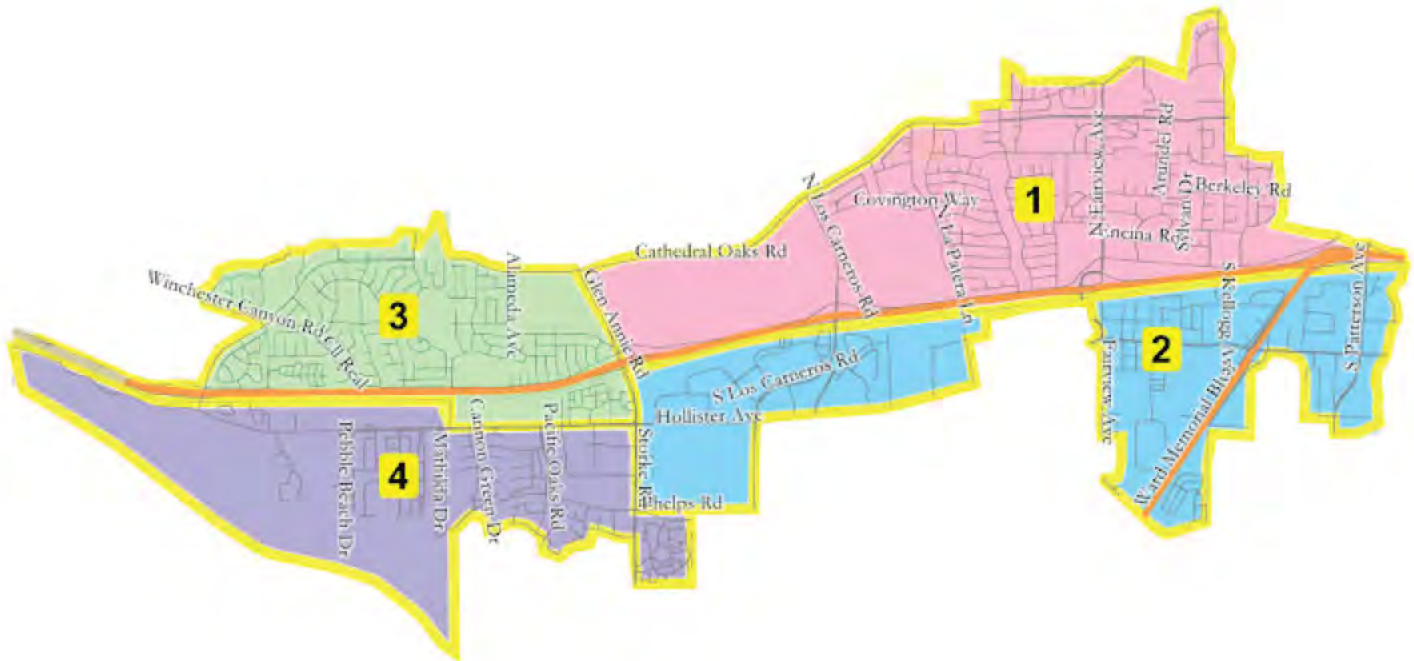
First Name *

Allyson

Last Name *

Biskner

My district



- District 1 (Northeast/Fairview area)
- District 2 (Southeast/Old Town area)
- District 3 (Northwest/Winchester area)
- District 4 (Southwest/Ellwood area)

I'd like to receive email updates about this project

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From: [Betsy Cleary](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Subject: Anthem Chapel
Date: Monday, June 22, 2026 4:45:25 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Chair and Planning Commissioners:
My name is Betsy Cleary, and I live in Goleta. I support the proposed Anthem Chapel campus at 6595 Covington Way. My family has greatly benefited from Bible application, youth and adult programs, and lifelong friendships. I hope you will approve this project, it makes better citizens. Thank you for your consideration. Betsy Cleary, Goleta

From: [Shaun Cleary](#)
To: [PER Meetings](#)
Cc: [Betsy Cleary](#)
Date: Monday, June 22, 2026 4:45:16 PM

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I am writing in support of the Anthem Chapel Church Building Project. Anthem is an incredibly valuable contributor to our community especially our youth! Please approve the project as submitted.

Shaun Cleary
410 Vereda Leyenda, Goleta, CA 93117