

From: Natalie Cope Phillips <ncope.phillips@csa-arch.com>

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To: General Plan Updates <GeneralPlanUpdates@cityofgoleta.org>

Subject: General Plan Amendments - Comments & Suggestions

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To the City of Goleta Planning Staff and Planning Commission,

While there is ongoing debate surrounding the re-districting of open space for new residential development, I would like to propose an alternative approach to increasing our housing stock—one that is likely to generate less controversy and could be implemented incrementally throughout the city.

Rather than concentrating a large number of new residential units in a single area, consider a distributed strategy by utilizing existing office and industrial zones. Specifically, I propose a minor but impactful change to the “Allowable Uses and Standards for Office & Industrial Use Categories,” as outlined in Table 2-3 of the Draft General Plan and detailed in Section 17.09.020 of the Title 17 Zoning Ordinance.

Currently, the Office District Zoning is comprised of Business Park (BP) and Institutional Office (OI) classifications. While these two designations share many similarities in their permitted uses, there is one key difference: under the “Commercial Uses” category, the OI zone allows for live/work units, whereas the BP zone does not.

This distinction is significant. Allowing live/work units in BP zones could provide a practical and flexible solution to address our housing shortage. It would not displace existing businesses but instead could revitalize underutilized or vacant business parks—particularly in light of the shift toward remote work since the COVID-19 pandemic, which has reduced the need for traditional office spaces.

Live/work units would allow people to live and operate their businesses within the same space, potentially reducing traffic, supporting local economic activity, and making better use of existing infrastructure. Moreover, business parks typically already provide ample parking, open spaces such as plazas and courtyards, and are often located near residential neighborhoods and key amenities like public transportation, shops, and restaurants.

It’s important to note that allowing live/work units as a permitted use does not guarantee approval for every project. Each proposal would still be subject to review and must meet all applicable standards and regulations. However, updating the zoning ordinance to include

this option citywide within the Office Districts would provide a flexible and creative tool to gradually increase our housing supply while supporting economic resilience.

In conclusion, I respectfully request that the City consider amending the Business Park (BP) zoning designation to allow live/work units as a permitted use.

This small change could have a meaningful impact on our community by promoting smart, adaptive growth that balances business and housing needs.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Natalie Cope Phillips, Architect, AIA

CSA Architects

1055 Tisha Ct.

Santa Barbara, CA. 93111

[\(805\) 962-4575](tel:8059624575)

ncope.phillips@csa-arch.com