



Santa Cruz County Women's Commission

701 Ocean Street, Fifth Floor, Room 510
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 454-2772 (F) 831-454-2411 TTY/TDD: 711
commissions@santacruzcountyca.gov
www.sccwc.org

Notice of Public Meeting and Agenda

Date: Thursday, April 16, 2026
Time: 6:00 to 8:00 PM
Location: County Govt Building, 701 Ocean Street, Fifth Floor Redwood Conference Room
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

*As a courtesy to those affected, kindly attend the meeting **scent-free** and **smoke-free**.*

AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Agenda Review
2. Approve *March 19, 2026 Meeting Minutes*
3. Public Comment:
Any person may address the Commission for a period not to exceed five minutes on matters within the jurisdiction of the Commission.
4. New/Continuing Business/Action Items:
 - 4.1. Your Area Rapid Response (YARR) 101: Framed as a Network of Women Supporting Women for and with Our Community – Stephanie Barron (YARR Co-Chair)
 - 4.2. Consider 2026 Legislative Advocacy Priorities
 - 4.3. Officer Elections
 - 4.4. Consider 2027 Meeting Schedule
5. Ad Hoc Subcommittee Reports
 - 5.1. Ad Hoc 2026 Status of Women and Girls Report Subcommittee Update (Albert, Gordon)
 - 5.2. Ad Hoc Legislative Priorities Subcommittee Update (Albert, Michaelis-Ow, Doty)
 - 5.3. Ad Hoc Resource Directory Subcommittee Update (Rogers, Gordon)
 - 5.4. Ad Hoc EEO/CR Advocacy Subcommittee Update (Doty, Sanchez)
6. Priority Reports
 - 6.1. CEDAW Recommendation Implementation Status Report (Staff)
 - 6.2. Social Media Outreach Report (Gordon)
 - 6.3. Immigration Enforcement Activity Report
7. Staff Report
8. Correspondence
9. Emerging Matters
10. Adjournment

The next scheduled regular meeting will be on Thursday, May 21, 2026 at 6:00 PM

The County of Santa Cruz does not discriminate on the basis of disability, and no person shall, by reason of a disability, be denied the benefits of its services, programs, or activities. If you require special assistance to participate, please call (831) 454-2772 (TTY/TDD: 711) at least 72 hours in advance to make arrangements.



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Meeting Minutes

DATE: Thursday, March 19, 2026
TIME: 6:00 PM
LOCATION: County Government Building, 701 Ocean Street, 5th Floor Redwood Conference Room
PRESENT: Paige Gordon (1st District), Brenda Rogers (2nd District), Gail Michaelis-Ow (2nd District), Suzanne Doty (3rd District), Allison Albert (3rd District), Rita Sanchez (4th District), Kate McGrath (5th District)
EXCUSED: Ariel Young (5th District)
ABSENT: None
STAFF: Kaite McGrew (Commissions Manager)
GUESTS: No member of the public were present.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Agenda Review
Meeting convened at 6:03 PM.
2. Approve February 19, 2026 Meeting Minutes
Motion to approve February 19, 2026 Meeting Minutes as written
Motion/Second: Gordon/Michaelis-Ow
Motion passed unanimously.
3. Public Comment: None
4. New/Continuing Business/Action Items:
 - 4.1. Consider Advocacy Letter in Support of the Pleasure Point Female Surfer Statue
Commission reviewed a letter to the Zoning Administrator in support of the Pleasure Point Female Surfer Statue.
Motion to approve the advocacy letter in support of the statue.
Motion/Second: Gordon/Michaelis-Ow
Motion passed unanimously.
 - 4.2. Consider Advocating in Support of the Latino Affairs Commission's Recommendations
Commission reviewed and discussed the Latino Affairs Commission's February 4, 2026 letter to the Board of Supervisors offering potential solutions to strengthening County protections for immigrants. The item concluded without a motion.
 - 4.3. Consider Establishing an Ad Hoc Women's Equality Day Subcommittee
Motion to establish an Ad Hoc 2026 Women's Equality Day Subcommittee.
Motion/Second: Sanchez/Rogers
Motion passed unanimously.
Chair appointed Doty and McGrath to the subcommittee.

- 4.4. Consider Establishing an Ad Hoc Community Outreach Subcommittee
Commission discussed establishing an ad hoc subcommittee to represent the Commission at community partner functions and encourage public attendance at Commission meetings.

Motion to establish an Ad Hoc Community Outreach Subcommittee.

Motion/Second: Michaelis-Ow/Albert

Motion passed unanimously

Chair appointed Sanchez, Doty and Gordon.

5. Ad Hoc Subcommittee Reports

- 5.1. Ad Hoc 2026 Status of Women and Girls Report Subcommittee Update (*Albert, Gordon*)
Subcommittee has begun research on the education section.

- 5.2. Ad Hoc Legislative Priorities Subcommittee Report (*Albert, Michaelis-Ow, Doty*)
Subcommittee has begun research and will meet soon to establish priorities.

- 5.3. Ad Hoc Resource Directory Subcommittee Report (*Rogers, Gordon*)
Subcommittee is collecting resources and Staff is updating the Commission's website with links.

- 5.4. Ad Hoc EEO/CR Advocacy Subcommittee Report (*Doty, Sanchez*)
Subcommittee is reviewing the 2024-2027 EEO/CR report to provide feedback.

6. Priority Reports

- 6.1. CEDAW Recommendation Implementation Status Report
The CEO's is scheduled to to the Board of Supervisors at the March 24 regular meeting.
Commissioners are encouraged to review meeting materials to provide individual public comment.

- 6.2. Social Media Outreach Report
Gordon is actively posting on Commission social media. Engagement insights include: 670 followers on Instagram and 643 followers on Facebook.

- 6.3. Immigration Enforcement Activity Report
YARR (Your Area Rapid Response) is scheduled for the April meeting, but the Western Service Workers Association representative has not responded. Albert will follow up with Western Service Workers, and Staff will reach out to Indivisible to invite them to speak at the April meeting.

7. Staff Report: None

8. Correspondence: None

9. Emerging Matters: None

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:29 PM.

Respectfully submitted by: Kaite McGrew, *Commissions Manager*



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April 16, 2026

Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors
701 Ocean Street, Room 500
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Re: Support for the 2026 Women's Commission Legislative Priorities

Dear Chair Martinez and Members of the Board of Supervisors,

On behalf of the Women's Commission, we write to respectfully request that the Board submit formal letters of support to our state legislative delegation for the **2026 Women's Commission Legislative Priorities** itemized herein.

As you know, in February 2024, the Board formally reaffirmed Santa Cruz County's commitment as a *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)* County and directed the Women's Commission to identify priority areas to advance gender equity and make recommendations related to those priorities. In September 2025, the Women's Commission presented to the Board, identifying key local CEDAW priorities and recommended potential solutions to address inequities and barriers.

The 2026 legislative priorities identified below align closely with the previously identified CEDAW priorities—particularly in the areas of economic equity (Articles 11 and 13), healthcare access (Article 12), childcare and economic supports (Articles 11 and 13), support for justice-involved women (Articles 15 and 9), and addressing systemic disparities through policy and funding decisions (Articles 3, 5, 10, and 13).

Methodology

The Commission identified these legislative priorities using the following criteria:

1. Alignment with priority legislation advanced by either the *California Legislative Women's Caucus* (a bipartisan coalition of women legislators in the State Assembly and Senate that advances policy solutions to improve the lives of women, children, and families) or the *American Association of University Women (AAUW)* (a national organization advocating for gender equity through research and policy);
2. Consistency with the Commission's 2025 CEDAW priorities and recommendations; and
3. Relevance to the most pressing challenges currently facing women and families in Santa Cruz County.

To that end, the Women’s Commission has identified and respectfully requests your formal support for the following legislation:

- **AB-65 – The Pregnancy Leave for Educators Act (Aguiar-Curry)**
Provides up to 14 weeks of fully paid leave for California public school employees for pregnancy, miscarriage, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or recovery, without deducting from other available leave. High housing costs in Santa Cruz, combined with relatively low teacher pay, make recruitment and retention challenging. Because the workforce is typically women and unpaid pregnancy leave disproportionately affects them, support for this legislation addresses gaps in employment protections (CEDAW Article 11) that disproportionately affect women and aligns with the Commission’s priority to address gender disparities in workforce conditions and compensation. Additionally, it advances not only the interests of women educators and their families, but their students and the school system at large by facilitating teacher recruitment and retention.
- **AB-788 – Rehabilitation and Safety for Incarcerated Women (Quirk-Silva)**
Strengthens safety and gender-responsive policies for incarcerated women (CEDAW Article 15). This aligns with the Commission’s previously identified CEDAW priority related to gender-specific, trauma-informed support for justice-involved women, including implementation of the recommendations from Susan Greene’s 2017 report and the priorities identified in the Justice and Gender 2023-2025 Biennial Report, both of which emphasize gender-responsive care, safety, and successful reentry.
- **AB-1570 – Healthcare Coverage: Diagnostic Imaging (Wilson)**
Requires health plans to provide coverage for medically necessary diagnostic imaging without cost-sharing in cases where follow-up testing is needed after an abnormal screening (CEDAW Article 12). While many preventive screenings (such as initial mammograms) are covered without cost, patients are often subject to significant out-of-pocket costs for diagnostic follow-up imaging, which can delay or deter timely diagnosis. This creates a critical gap between preventive and diagnostic care and potentially contributes to less favorable health outcomes for low-income individuals. Support for this bill aligns with the Commission’s healthcare priorities by addressing both access to timely services and the affordability barriers that disproportionately impact Santa Cruz County women in vulnerable communities.
- **AB-1755 – Ending CalWORKs Work Hour Restrictions (Sharp-Collins)**
Removes the “100-hour rule,” which limits CalWORKs eligibility for families whose parents work more than 100 hours per month, regardless of how little they earn (CEDAW Articles 11 and 13). By shifting eligibility to be based on income rather than hours worked, this bill ensures that low-income families are not excluded from assistance simply for working more. This supports the Commission’s priority to reduce poverty among women-led households, particularly in Santa Cruz County’s high-cost economy where increased work hours do not necessarily translate to economic stability.
- **AB-1981 – The True Cost of Child Care Act (Aguiar-Curry)**
Updates childcare reimbursement rates and methodology to better reflect the actual cost of providing care, rather than relying on outdated market-based rates (CEDAW Articles 11 and 13). By increasing provider reimbursement, this bill supports the financial sustainability of childcare providers which, in turn, increases the availability of subsidized childcare slots for working parents.

This directly advances the Commission’s priority to expand affordable childcare access, a critical issue in Santa Cruz County where both providers and families face significant financial strain.

- **AB-1876 – Equitable Care for All Act (Addis)**
Strengthens California law to prohibit discrimination in health coverage based on sex, pregnancy, or gender identity. It ensures reproductive and gender-affirming care is accessible, protected, and free from discriminatory exclusions. This helps to advance equitable healthcare for women, LGBTQ+, and underserved residents in Santa Cruz County (CEDAW Article 12) and aligns directly with the Commission’s 2025 CEDAW priority to protect and expand access to reproductive and gender-affirming healthcare, particularly in the face of funding instability and policy threats.
- **AB-2066 – Pregnancy – Qualifying Life Event (Rodriguez; coauthored by Wahab)**
Designates pregnancy as a qualifying life event, allowing individuals to enroll in health coverage outside the standard enrollment period. This helps prevent delays in prenatal care and reduces financial barriers for low-income Latinas and other women in Santa Cruz County. By improving timely access to coverage, the bill aligns with the Commission’s CEDAW priorities to address barriers to OB/GYN care in South County and prenatal substance use disparities, thereby advancing healthcare for women (CEDAW Articles 12 and 14).
- **SB-1237 – Pay Equity Enforcement (Blakespear)**
Strengthens enforcement of equal pay laws by requiring detailed employer pay data reporting and increasing penalties for noncompliance, helping to identify and address persistent wage disparities (CEDAW Article 11). This aligns directly with the Commission’s 2025-identified priority of gender pay equity. Locally, wage disparities—particularly for women of color—remain a significant concern. Support for this bill allows the Board to advance gender pay equity not only within the County workforce, but across private employers in the community as well.

These legislative priorities reflect the same core issues the Commission identified in its 2025 CEDAW priorities and recommendations to the Board, including healthcare access, childcare, economic security, and support for vulnerable populations. Advancing these bills at the state level is a critical complement to the County’s local efforts to uphold its commitments as a CEDAW County.

Thank you for your continued leadership in advancing gender equity in Santa Cruz County. We appreciate your consideration and stand ready to support the Board’s advocacy efforts as needed.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Doty, *Commission Co-Chair*

Paige Gordon, *Commission Co-Chair*



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Scheduled Meetings

Unless otherwise specified below, regularly scheduled Women's Commission meetings are generally held as follows:

DAY: Third (3rd) Thursday*
MONTH: Every month except July and December
TIME: 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
LOCATION: **Santa Cruz County Government Building ***
5th Floor Redwood Conference Room
701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

*Unless noted otherwise below

Locations may vary for outreach, town hall meetings, special meetings, changes of location, or meeting cancellations. Changes to the schedule will be listed on the website at www.sccwc.org as soon as information becomes available.

2027 MEETING DATES		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION
January 21, 2027	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
February 18, 2027	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
March 18, 2027	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
April 15, 2027	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
May 20, 2027	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
June 17, 2027	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
August 19, 2027	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
September 16, 2027	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
October 21, 2027	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
November 18, 2027	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm

Public Participation

- Please check the meeting agenda to learn details about how to participate in the commission meeting.
- If you need special accommodations, please call 454-2935 or TDD: 711 (California Relay Service) at least 48 hours before the meeting.

27. Accept and file report on the County's current activities and potential costs, timelines and operational considerations to implement the Women's Commission Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) recommendations ()



County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors

Agenda Item Submittal

From: County Executive Office

Subject: Report on the Women's Commission Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Recommendations

Meeting Date: March 24, 2026

Formal Title: Accept and file report on the County's current activities and potential costs, timelines and operational considerations to implement the Women's Commission Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) recommendations

Recommended Actions

Accept and file the report on the County's current activities and potential costs, timelines, and operational considerations to implement the Women's Commission Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) recommendations.

Executive Summary

On September 9, 2025, the Board of Supervisors (Board) received the Women's Commission's recommended priorities to advance gender equity in alignment with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). At that meeting, the Board directed staff to return with an assessment of the operational considerations, estimated costs, and potential implementation timelines associated with advancing those recommendations.

This report responds to that direction. In coordination with relevant County departments, the County Executive Office reviewed each recommendation and assessed the extent to which the recommendation is already addressed through existing County programs, policies, or partnerships. For recommendations that would require new or expanded efforts, this report outlines potential approaches, operational considerations, and preliminary resource implications should the Board wish to pursue further action.

Overall, several recommendations align with ongoing County initiatives and collaborative efforts already underway, while others would require additional policy direction, staffing capacity, or funding to implement. Attachment A provides a detailed summary of each recommendation and the corresponding departmental response.

Discussion

At the September 9, 2025 Board meeting, the Women's Commission presented its recommended priorities for advancing gender equity in Santa Cruz County as part of the County's ongoing commitment as a CEDAW County. The recommendations span a range of issue areas, including health care access, housing, justice system involvement, economic opportunity, workforce equity, and data practices.

Following that presentation, the Board directed the County Executive Office, in coordination with Human Resources and other relevant departments, to review the recommendations and return with an assessment of fiscal and operational considerations. County departments were consulted to evaluate each recommendation

within the context of existing programs, legal requirements, operational capacity, and available resources.

Staff review indicates that several recommendations are already being advanced through existing programs, partnerships, and cross-sector convenings, including efforts related to perinatal health, childcare access, federal funding impact assessment, and services for justice-involved individuals. Other recommendations could be incorporated into existing workplans with additional direction, such as enhanced monitoring of housing disparities or expanded data reporting practices. A subset of recommendations would require new initiatives, additional staffing capacity, or dedicated funding to implement.

Table 1 below provides a high-level summary of the recommendations, lead departments, and key considerations. Detailed responses are included in Attachment A. In addition, Recommendation 11, which proposes the development of a CEDAW ordinance, is currently under review in coordination with County Counsel. Staff anticipate returning to the Board with a separate item on this topic in August 2026.

Table 1: Summary of CEDAW Recommendations and Staff Responses

Rec.	Topic	Lead Dept(s).	Summary of Response
1	Workforce Compensation	Human Resources (HR) / County Executive Office (CEO)	Structured pay system in place; staff recommend internal review of workforce and payroll data; full independent study would be costly
2	OB/GYN Access	Health Services Agency (HSA)	Existing Birth Equity Action Group addressing issue; staff recommend continuing to leverage this forum
3	Reproductive & Gender Care	HSA	Existing services and non-discrimination practices in place; staff recommend continuing current approach
4	Prenatal Substance Use	HSA	Expanded services and funding already in place; staff recommend continuing and monitoring existing efforts
5	Federal Funding Impacts	CEO / HSA / Human Services Department (HSD)	Ongoing monitoring, analysis, and partner convenings underway; staff recommend continuing current approach
6	Incarcerated Women	Sheriff / Probation / Public Defender's Office (PDO) / Commission on Justice and Gender (JAG)	Programs largely in place; JAG provides ongoing oversight and is recommended as primary forum
7	Housing Disparities	HSD	Monitoring could be incorporated into existing programs; staff recommend ongoing monitoring within legal frameworks
8	Childcare Access	HSD	Existing capital program; limited operational funding for expansion; staff recommend leveraging external funding opportunities
9	Immigration & Justice	PDO / partners	Legal support exists; staff recommend building on SHIELD and existing efforts; broader expansion would require resources
10	Gender Data	CEO / HSD / HSA	Data collected; staff recommend alignment with DataShare standards; expanded reporting requires additional standards and privacy considerations
11	CEDAW Ordinance	CEO / County Counsel	Under development; staff recommend continuing review and returning to Board with options (anticipated August 2026)

As an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors, the Women's Commission's recommendations are intended to inform policy discussions. This report is provided to support the Board's consideration of these recommendations and to identify areas where further direction may be warranted.

Financial Impact

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with accepting and filing this report.

Strategic Initiatives

Equity Framework - Workplace & Workforce, Leadership, Operations & Services
Operational Plan - Operational Excellence

Submitted By:

Nicole D. Coburn, County Executive Officer

Recommended By:

Nicole D. Coburn, County Executive Officer

Artificial Intelligence Acknowledgment:

ChatGPT, an Artificial Intelligence (AI) large language model tool, significantly contributed to the development of this agenda item, including Staff Report, in compliance with the County of Santa Cruz AI Appropriate Use Policy.

Attachment A: Women’s Commission CEDAW Recommendations and Departmental Responses

The following provides the Women’s Commission recommendations and corresponding departmental responses, including current County activities and potential implementation considerations.

1. Gender Analysis of County Workforce Compensation (Article 11)

Recommendation: Direct the County Administrative Office to commission an independent consultant to conduct a comprehensive gender analysis of County workforce compensation to identify and address pay disparities.

County employee compensation is generally determined by negotiated salary schedules tied to job classifications, which establish standardized pay ranges and step progressions. These structures help promote consistency in compensation for employees performing comparable work. In addition, the County currently monitors workforce diversity and representation through its Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR) Plan, which includes periodic review of workforce utilization data by gender and race/ethnicity.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend conducting a preliminary internal review of existing workforce and payroll data to identify indicators of potential disparities. This review could examine areas such as step placement at hire, time to promotion, representation across classifications and salary levels, and internal versus external hiring into higher-level positions. Human Resources estimates that such an internal review could be completed through limited custom reporting at an estimated cost of approximately \$2,000 to \$10,000, depending on the level of analysis required.

Additional Option for Board Consideration

Conducting a comprehensive Countywide gender pay equity study through an independent consultant would likely require a significant financial investment. Based on preliminary estimates provided by the Human Resources Department, a full workforce compensation study could cost approximately \$15,000 to \$100,000 or more, depending on the number of classifications analyzed, the complexity of the County’s job structure, and the methodology used. For context, a recent Mid-Management Compensation Study reviewing 23 classification benchmarks cost approximately \$16,000. Santa Cruz County currently maintains approximately 626 job classifications, and a comprehensive pay equity analysis covering the entire workforce would therefore require substantially greater resources, as well as staff time to prepare and validate employee data.

If the internal review identifies areas warranting further examination, the Board could consider authorizing a more targeted independent compensation analysis focused on those issues.

2. Ob/Gyn Care Shortages in South County (Articles 12 and 14)

Recommendation: Establish a task force of County Health Services Agency staff and community partners to examine the root causes of the scarcity of OB/GYN providers in South County and propose solutions that address those systemic root causes (such as provider compensation, cost of living, and the lack of affordable housing).

Beginning in June 2025, the Health Improvement Partnership (HIP) convened a Birth Equity Action Group to address perinatal equity and the shortage of obstetric providers in the community, particularly in South County. This group meets quarterly. According to HIP, the Women’s Commission’s recommendations align closely with the Birth Equity Action Group’s work, particularly regarding limited OB/GYN access in South County. Staff from the Health Services Agency (HSA) Public Health Division’s Children and Family Health (CFH) Branch participate in this group.

Although HSA Health Centers do not provide OB/GYN or prenatal care directly, they support the Birth Equity Action Group's efforts. Because HIP has already convened a collaborative, multi-sector group to assess obstetric provider shortages in the county, with active participation from the Health Services Agency, it may be most effective to leverage and build upon the work of this existing group to promote alignment and avoid duplication of efforts. HIP will also be inviting the Women's Commission to participate in the Birth Equity Action Group.

Every two years, the HSA Public Health Division publishes a birth report. The 2022 Birth Report is attached, and the 2024 Birth Report is expected to be published by the end of 2025. Both the 2022 and forthcoming 2024 reports show a declining birth rate in the county.

While the HSA Behavioral Health Division does not provide OB/GYN or prenatal care, access to timely and high-quality OB/GYN and prenatal care has a direct impact on the mental wellbeing of pregnant and birthing individuals. The Behavioral Health Division provides mental health and substance use services to support individuals during pregnancy and the postpartum period. The physical and mental wellbeing of those who are pregnant or caregiving is critical to supporting healthy child development. Additionally, postnatal care is essential for addressing conditions such as postpartum depression.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend continuing to support and engage in the existing Health Improvement Partnership Birth Equity Action Group as the primary forum for addressing OB/GYN access challenges in South County, including coordination with community partners and incorporation of the Women's Commission into ongoing efforts.

3. Protecting Access to Reproductive and Gender-Affirming Health Care (Article 12)

Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution to Protect Reproductive and Gender-Affirming Health Care Rights to:

o Establish a County Health Equity Fund to offset the impact of federal and state restrictions by supporting community-based organizations and providers that offer reproductive health services (e.g., elective abortion, contraception), gender-affirming care (e.g., hormone therapy, mental health services), as well as health education and direct services.

o Prioritize grants and contracts with health care providers who continue to offer comprehensive reproductive and gender-affirming care despite funding threats.

The Health Services Agency (HSA) is a trauma-informed, equity-focused organization. HSA's standard contracts include language requiring contractors not to discriminate against individuals based on protected characteristics, including sex, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, and other protected classes. As an organization, HSA does not tolerate discrimination in any form and seeks to prioritize partnerships with providers who demonstrate respect for gender identity and expression.

The HSA Health Centers Division provides gender-affirming medical care and integrated behavioral health services.

The HSA Behavioral Health Division administers Santa Cruz County's Specialty Mental Health and Drug Medi-Cal plans. The Behavioral Health Division recently contracted with the Diversity Center to provide a mandated training for all staff on Gender-Inclusive Care to ensure services are delivered in a manner that enhances access to care for transgender, gender-diverse, and intersex persons. This training is required every two years to ensure that Behavioral Health Division staff remain current on data-driven, evidence-based, and trauma-informed practices for providing gender-inclusive services.

The HSA Public Health Division hosts a monthly Clinician Resource Call for local healthcare providers. The October 2025 webinar focused on gender-affirming care access and treatment and was presented by a Clinical

Professor from the University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine Department of Family and Community Medicine. The presentation also addressed the impacts of national and federal policy changes on gender-affirming care.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend continuing to implement and strengthen existing HSA policies, contracting practices, and service delivery models that promote equitable access to reproductive and gender-affirming health care, including prioritizing partnerships with providers that offer inclusive and comprehensive care.

4. Addressing Prenatal Substance Use Disparities (Article 12)

Recommendation: Support legislation, policies, and programs that address Santa Cruz County's disproportionately high prenatal substance use affecting women and fetuses. Allocate additional funding to the Health Services Agency's behavioral health budget to address substance use and mental health issues in women and children.

HSA provides services to address substance use and mental health needs among women, children, and families.

The health and wellbeing of pregnant individuals is critical to healthy child development, as maternal health can impact fetal growth, birth weight, and long-term physical and mental health outcomes. The HSA Behavioral Health Division has prioritized support for perinatal and maternal substance use treatment. Current divisional contracts with Janus of Santa Cruz provide a range of substance use disorder treatment services for perinatal and parenting individuals. These services include Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), intensive outpatient programs, and residential treatment programming tailored to perinatal-specific populations. Over the past four years, the Behavioral Health Division has expanded funding for perinatal and parenting substance use treatment services by approximately 67%, increasing from \$600,000 in FY 2021-22 to approximately \$1.1 million in FY 2024-25. The Behavioral Health Division will also support Janus' planned expansion by contracting for services at a new facility currently under development that will include 25 residential substance use disorder treatment beds and withdrawal management services for perinatal and parenting individuals.

Additionally, the Behavioral Health Division has provided \$218,917 in Opioid Settlement funding to the Health Improvement Partnership (HIP) to partially support the establishment of a Perinatal MAT convening. This convening focuses on improving access to care and prescribing practices of Medication Assisted Treatment for perinatal individuals struggling with substance use disorders.

Behavioral Health Division staff also meet quarterly with the California Department of Health Care Services to discuss the strengths and challenges within the County's perinatal system of care and to advocate for additional support. The Behavioral Health Division receives federal funding through the Substance Use Block Grant, a portion of which directly supports perinatal substance use treatment and outreach efforts; however, continuation of these funds remains uncertain due to potential federal funding changes.

The Health Centers Division also contracts with Janus of Santa Cruz for substance use treatment services, including services for pregnant patients. Health Centers Division providers offer Medication Assisted Treatment, including services in Spanish; however, the Health Centers Division does not currently provide prenatal care.

Santa Cruz County Family and Children's Services of the Human Services Department (HSD) has initiated the Infants with Prenatal Substance Exposure (IPSE) Workgroup in partnership with the HSA Public Health Division, First 5 Santa Cruz County, and HIP. The purpose of this group is to clarify roles and expectations related to Plans of Safe Care and ensure that infants with prenatal substance exposure and their parents are connected to appropriate services and supports.

HIP has also convened a Perinatal Medication Assisted Treatment Subgroup through the SafeRx Program. This group focuses on improving community collaboration and care coordination, expanding provider education and training, and strengthening community outreach and access to services. HSA staff participate in this effort.

Additionally, the Public Health Division's Children and Family Health (CFH) Branch administers two home visiting programs that serve the perinatal population and families with children up to five years old. Approximately 25% of program participants experience substance abuse challenges. Both programs have experienced steady increases in caseloads, particularly for higher-acuity cases involving substance use, and currently maintain wait lists.

A recent UCSF assessment of the Trauma-Informed Public Health Nursing Program found that 47% of participating families were experiencing housing insecurity and 26% reported past or current substance use. Home Visiting Public Health Nurses (PHNs) regularly participate in rounds at Watsonville Community Hospital and Dominican Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Units. The CFH Branch also facilitates the Perinatal Mental Health Coalition and provides education, training, and resources to providers on best practices in addressing perinatal substance use disorder.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend continuing to support and expand existing behavioral health, public health, and cross-sector initiatives addressing perinatal substance use, while monitoring funding stability and evaluating opportunities to sustain and enhance services within available resources.

5. Mitigating the Impact of Federal Funding Losses Due to DEI Policies (Articles 5, 10, 11, 13)

Recommendation: Direct the County Administrative Office to work with County departments to assess potential funding shortfalls resulting from federal withdrawal of funds from DEI-aligned programs and identify alternative sources of support. Establish a community task force to identify which community partner safety net services for women and children will be most impacted and identify alternative sources of support.

The County is actively assessing and responding to potential federal funding reductions that may affect safety-net services, including those historically aligned with equity-focused programs. Through ongoing work led by the County Executive Office in coordination with the Health Services Agency and Human Services Department, the County is monitoring federal and State policy changes, evaluating fiscal impacts across departments, and identifying areas of potential service disruption. Initial estimates indicate significant potential reductions in federal funding, with continued analysis informing budget development and mitigation planning.

In parallel, the County is engaging a broad network of community partners to understand impacts on residents and service providers, particularly those serving vulnerable populations, including women and children. These cross-sector convenings function as a coordinated forum to identify service gaps, share information, and develop collective strategies to sustain critical safety-net services.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend continuing the current coordinated, cross-departmental approach to monitoring funding risks, engaging community partners, and identifying mitigation strategies, including advocacy, resource alignment, and exploration of alternative funding sources, rather than establishing a new task force at this time.

6. Gender-Specific, Trauma-Informed Support for Incarcerated Women (Article 15)

Recommendation: Direct the Sheriff's Office/Corrections to revisit the recommendations made in the 2017 report by Susan Greene, "Gender Matters: A Profile of Women in Santa Cruz County Jail", to determine if they have been implemented, assess the effectiveness of those that have been, and evaluate opportunities to

implement outstanding recommendations. Additionally, ask the Sheriff's Office, Public Defender's Office, and Probation Department to implement and fortify gender-responsive, trauma-informed policies and reentry support programs for incarcerated women in Santa Cruz County.

Many of the recommendations from the 2017 Gender Matters report are currently reflected in existing programming and oversight efforts across the County's criminal justice system.

The Commission on Justice and Gender (JAG) serves as an ongoing forum for evaluating gender-responsive practices and improving outcomes for justice-involved women. JAG's 2023–25 Biennial Report, which is scheduled to be presented to the Board of Supervisors on March 24, 2026, includes an assessment of services and programming for incarcerated women and addresses several of the recommendations outlined in the Gender Matters report.

Programming and services currently available to women in custody at the Blaine Street Women's Facility include trauma-informed substance use disorder treatment, cognitive behavioral therapy curricula tailored to justice-involved women, and a range of educational and rehabilitative programming such as horticulture, culinary classes, employment development through Cabrillo College, yoga, mindfulness programming, and library services. The Women's Recovery and Reentry Program (WRRP) provides a 12-week program focused on substance use recovery, health, and reentry planning and offers continuity of services after release.

The County has also expanded efforts to support reentry and reduce recidivism among women leaving custody. For example, Monarch Services Safe Release Cards are distributed to women prior to release, providing crisis contact information and access to supportive services. In 2024 and 2025, 101 women received Safe Release Cards and were provided a total of 183 bed nights through the program.

Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) is also available for incarcerated individuals, including women, as part of evidence-based treatment for substance use disorders. As of January 2026, 11 women in custody were receiving MAT either as continuation of community-based treatment or following medically supervised detoxification. In addition, incarcerated individuals are released with a 30-day supply of prescribed medication to support continuity of care after release. This practice will align with forthcoming CalAIM requirements for justice-involved individuals beginning in October 2026.

In addition to these efforts, the Blaine Street Women's Facility reopened in May 2023, and the County has been working to expand visitation opportunities and programming that support family connections and rehabilitation. The JAG Commission's forthcoming 2026–27 workplan will include continued collaboration with women with lived experience and system partners to evaluate current resources, identify service gaps, and develop recommendations for future improvements.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend continuing to utilize the Commission on Justice and Gender (JAG) as the primary forum for evaluating and advancing gender-responsive, trauma-informed practices, including incorporating any remaining or relevant recommendations from the 2017 Gender Matters report into JAG's ongoing and future workplans.

7. Expanding Affordable Housing for Women and Women-Led Households (Article 13)

Recommendation: Direct the Housing for Health Division to conduct a comprehensive analysis of housing trends to identify any disparities disproportionately impacting women (particularly unhoused women) and women-led households, and implement housing programs that prioritize support for women and families.

The Housing for Health Division currently administers housing programs in compliance with federal and state fair housing laws, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender and other protected characteristics.

Consistent with these requirements, Housing for Health could incorporate periodic monitoring of program access and outcomes to identify any disparities affecting women or women-led households and evaluate whether program design or outreach strategies could be adjusted to improve equitable access.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend continuing to administer housing programs in compliance with fair housing requirements while incorporating ongoing monitoring of program access and outcomes to identify and address any disparities, as appropriate within existing legal and programmatic frameworks.

8. Enhancing Affordable Childcare Access (Articles 11 and 13)

Recommendation: Work with the Human Services Department to expand funding for affordable childcare programs, particularly for single-income, women-led households, and explore additional state and federal grant-funding to expand such program

The County currently supports access to affordable childcare through programs administered by the Human Services Department, including the Child Care Developer Fee (CCDF) loan program, which provides forgivable loans to expand childcare capacity through facility improvements. This program prioritizes projects that increase access to high-quality childcare, including those serving low-income families, and is funded through dedicated developer fee revenues rather than the General Fund. In addition, the County collaborates with regional partners, including First 5 and the Child Care Development Resource Center, to support childcare system planning and resource alignment.

While existing funding sources are primarily restricted to capital investments and do not support ongoing program operations, the County continues to explore additional state and federal funding opportunities, including grants and reimbursement programs, to expand childcare access.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend continuing to support childcare access through existing programs, partnerships, and external funding opportunities, while exploring additional state and federal resources to expand availability and affordability within existing funding constraints.

9. Support for Justice-Involved Women Affected by Immigration Policies (Articles 9 and 15)

Recommendation: Establish a task force to consider how best to support women and their families who have become justice-involved due to their immigration status. The task force should evaluate the feasibility of and monitor implementation of the following elements among others: Public Defender's Office intervention, County funding for legal representation, and County monitoring of the status of County residents who have been deported or removed due to immigration policies.

The Public Defender's Office currently provides legal representation to individuals accused of crimes in state court, including noncitizen clients whose involvement in the criminal legal system may carry potential immigration consequences. While immigration status itself typically does not create criminal liability in state court, criminal convictions can have significant impacts on an individual's immigration status.

As part of its intake process, the Public Defender's Office identifies clients who are noncitizens and evaluates potential immigration consequences related to their cases. When appropriate, those clients are referred to the office's immigration attorney for legal analysis regarding how criminal charges or convictions may affect immigration status. The Public Defender's Office also assists eligible clients with post-conviction relief and record clearance efforts, including dismissals, sealing, expungement, and motions to vacate convictions that may have been entered without full understanding of potential immigration consequences.

The Public Defender’s Office does not represent individuals in immigration court or removal proceedings. As a result, the office does not track data related to deportation or removal outcomes for County residents.

The Public Defender’s Office also noted that its current staffing resources are fully dedicated to meeting its statutory and constitutional obligations to provide criminal defense representation. Additional responsibilities, such as convening or facilitating a new task force, would require additional capacity and resources.

The County has also recently convened the SHIELD subcommittee to examine issues related to immigration enforcement and community impacts. The work of this subcommittee includes engagement with community partners, assessment of current practices, and identification of potential policy and programmatic responses. The outcomes of this effort may help inform future strategies to support impacted populations, including women and families who are justice-involved.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend building on existing efforts, including the work of the SHIELD subcommittee and current partnerships with legal service providers and community-based organizations, to assess needs and identify potential strategies, rather than establishing a new task force at this time. The Women’s Commission may also consider engaging with or building upon the findings of the SHIELD subcommittee as that work progresses.

10. Collection and Use of Gender-Disaggregated Data

Recommendation: Require County departments to collect and report gender-disaggregated data in all submissions to the Board, ensuring Board awareness of any gender-based disparities when making funding and policy decisions.

County departments currently collect demographic data, including gender, across a range of programs to support service delivery, program planning, and the identification of disparities, while maintaining compliance with applicable privacy and confidentiality requirements.

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The Health Services Agency (HSA) collects gender and demographic data across its divisions to inform program planning, identify health disparities, and promote equitable access to services. The HSA Behavioral Health Division collects demographic information, including gender, as part of patient records and adheres to strict privacy standards for protected health information. The HSA Health Centers Division also collects gender as part of patient demographic information, although considerations remain regarding the collection and storage of gender data due to potential risks faced by transgender and non-binary individuals. The HSA Public Health Division collects self-reported gender and sex data across major health surveillance systems, including communicable disease reporting, immunization records, vital statistics, and community health surveys, and routinely analyzes this data alongside other demographic factors to assess disparities in health outcomes.

The Human Services Department (HSD) similarly collects demographic data, including gender, across its programs to support program administration, evaluate service delivery, and identify disparities in outcomes. HSD publishes certain disaggregated program data, including gender, on its public-facing website. However, many HSD programs operate under federal and state laws that limit the disclosure of applicant and recipient information. Data sharing and reporting must comply with statutes such as the California Information Practices Act and Welfare and Institutions Code §10850, and the Department applies a “minimum necessary” standard when sharing information.

The County also participates in DataShare Santa Cruz County, a cross-sector data initiative that promotes accessible, reliable, and equity-focused data to inform decision-making. DataShare emphasizes the use of disaggregated data to identify disparities while adhering to established standards for data governance, privacy, and confidentiality, including aggregation and suppression of small cell sizes to protect individual identities.

Expanding gender-disaggregated data reporting in Board submissions would require the development of clear Countywide guidance regarding definitions, reporting standards, and privacy protections. Any such reporting would need to follow established data de-identification practices to ensure individuals cannot be identified, particularly in small populations or specialized programs. State guidance generally recommends reporting data in aggregate form and suppressing small cell sizes (e.g., fewer than 11 individuals) to protect confidentiality. The feasibility of including gender-disaggregated data in all Board submissions may vary depending on the nature of the item, available data, and applicable confidentiality requirements.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend continuing to collect and analyze demographic data, including gender, within existing programmatic and data systems, and aligning any expanded reporting efforts with established County data governance practices, including those used by DataShare Santa Cruz County, to ensure consistency, equity, and protection of individual privacy.

11. Strengthen the 2024 CEDAW Resolution by establishing a CEDAW Ordinance (Article 7)

Recommendation: Draft and adopt a CEDAW ordinance to further formalize the County's commitment and enhance accountability, transparency, and alignment with community partners, to ensure ongoing commitment to gender equity goals.

This recommendation is currently under review by the County Executive Office in coordination with County Counsel. Staff is evaluating potential approaches, legal considerations, and implementation options.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend continuing this review process and returning to the Board of Supervisors with a future item outlining options, considerations, and potential next steps. A separate item is anticipated to return to the Board of Supervisors in May 2026 for further consideration.



Santa Cruz County Women’s Commission

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March 26, 2025

Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors
701 Ocean Street, Room 500
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Re: Women’s Commission Recommendations to the Board on CEDAW Priorities

Dear Chair Hernandez and Members of the Board,

On behalf of the *Santa Cruz County Women’s Commission*, we write in response to the Board’s February 27, 2024, resolution reaffirming Santa Cruz County’s status as a *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) County* and directing the Women’s Commission to develop recommendations to the Board on CEDAW priorities to further gender equity throughout both the community and the County government workforce.

The urgency of this work has only increased in the wake of the new federal administration’s recent executive orders that threaten residents based on their immigration status, access to reproductive healthcare and gender-affirming care for women and the LGBTQ+ community, and Federal funding for County programs and community partners with diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. These federal actions exacerbate existing disparities and create new barriers to equity making it imperative that the County take proactive steps to protect and support women and marginalized communities.

Therefore, the Women’s Commission requests that you consider implementing the following recommendations that address critical issues affecting women in our community and propose actionable steps within your jurisdiction to effect lasting and meaningful change in these areas:

1. Gender Analysis of County Workforce Compensation (Article 11)

Recommendation: Direct the County Administrative Office to commission an independent consultant to conduct a comprehensive gender analysis of County workforce compensation to identify and address pay disparities.

2. Ob/Gyn Care Shortages in South County (Articles 12 and 14)

Recommendation: Establish a task force of County Health Services Agency staff and community partners to examine the root causes of the scarcity of OB/GYN providers in South County and propose solutions that address those systemic root causes (such as provider compensation, cost of living, and the lack of affordable housing).

3. Protecting Access to Reproductive and Gender-Affirming Health Care (Article 12)

Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution to Protect Reproductive and Gender-Affirming Health Care Rights to:

- Establish a County Health Equity Fund to offset the impact of federal and state restrictions by supporting community-based organizations and providers that offer reproductive health services (e.g., elective abortion, contraception, etc.), gender-affirming care(e.g., hormone therapy, mental health services, etc.), as well as health education and direct services.
- Prioritize grants and contracts with health care providers who continue to offer comprehensive reproductive and gender-affirming care despite funding threats.

4. Addressing Prenatal Substance Use Disparities (Article 12)

Recommendation: Support legislation, policies, and programs that address Santa Cruz County’s disproportionately high prenatal substance use affecting women and fetuses. Allocate additional funding to the Health Services Agency’s behavioral health budget to address substance use and mental health issues in women and children.

5. Mitigating the Impact of Federal Funding Losses Due to DEI Policies (Articles 5, 10, 11, 13)

Recommendation: Direct the County Administrative Office to work with County departments to assess potential funding shortfalls resulting from federal withdrawal of funds from DEI-aligned programs and identify alternative sources of support. Establish a community task force to identify which community partner safety net services for women and children will be most impacted and identify alternative sources of support.

6. Gender-Specific, Trauma-Informed Support for Incarcerated Women (Article 15)

Recommendation: Direct the Sheriff’s Office/Corrections to revisit the recommendations made in the 2017 report by Susan Greene, “*Gender Matters: A Profile of Women in Santa Cruz County Jail*”, to determine if they have been implemented, assess the effectiveness of those that have been, and evaluate opportunities to implement outstanding recommendations. Additionally, ask the Sheriff’s Office, Public Defender’s Office, and Probation Department to implement and fortify gender-responsive, trauma-informed policies and reentry support programs for incarcerated women in Santa Cruz County.

7. Expanding Affordable Housing for Women and Women-Led Households (Article 13)

Recommendation: Direct the Housing for Health Division to conduct a comprehensive analysis of housing trends to identify any disparities disproportionately impacting women (particularly unhoused women) and women-led households, and implement housing programs that prioritize support for women and families.

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Recommendation: Work with the Human Services Department to expand funding for affordable childcare programs, particularly for single-income, women-led households, and explore additional state and federal grant-funding to expand such programs.

9. Support for Justice-Involved Women Affected by Immigration Policies (Articles 9 and 15)

Recommendation: Establish a task force to consider how best to support women and their families who have become justice-involved due to their immigration status. The task force should evaluate the feasibility of and monitor implementation of the following elements among others: Public Defender’s Office intervention, County funding for legal representation, and County monitoring of the status of County residents who have been deported or removed due to immigration policies.

10. Collection and Use of Gender-Disaggregated Data

Recommendation: Require County departments to collect and report gender-disaggregated data in *all* submissions to the Board, ensuring Board awareness of any gender-based disparities when making funding and policy decisions.

11. Strengthen the 2024 CEDAW Resolution by establishing a CEDAW Ordinance (Article 7)

Recommendation: Draft and adopt a CEDAW ordinance to further formalize the County’s commitment and enhance accountability, transparency, and alignment with community partners, to ensure ongoing commitment to gender equity goals.

We appreciate the Board’s leadership in reaffirming its commitment to gender equity through its recent resolution, and we welcome the opportunity to collaborate further on these priorities. We look forward to working together to implement these recommendations and make a lasting impact in Santa Cruz County.

Respectfully,

Signed by:

B02EF0EE4E0A45D...
Suzanne Doty, *Commission Co-Chair*

Signed by:

500150CB608D42F...
Claire Protti, *Commission Co-Chair*

April 16, 2026

Social Media Outreach Report

Metric	Facebook	Instagram
Current Followers	644	677
Previous Followers	643	671
Difference	1	6
Current Engagement	6	17
Prior Engagement		
Difference		
Current Reach	299	307
Prior Reach		
Difference		



County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors

Agenda Item Submittal

From: Board of Supervisors - Fifth District and Fourth District

Subject: First Report and Recommendations of the S.H.I.E.L.D. Ad Hoc Board Subcommittee

Meeting Date: March 10, 2026

Formal Title: Consider first report and recommendations of the ad hoc Board Subcommittee to Safeguard Health, Inclusion, Essential Services, and Local Defense (S.H.I.E.L.D.), approve in concept an “Ordinance of the Board of Supervisors Adding Chapter 10.07 to the Santa Cruz County Code to Prohibit the Use of County Property for Civil Immigration Enforcement”, and take related actions

Recommended Actions

1. Accept and file a report from the ad hoc subcommittee of the Board to Safeguard Health, Inclusion, Essential Services, and Local Defense (S.H.I.E.L.D.) on its preliminary findings and recommendations; and
2. Approve in concept an “Ordinance of the Board of Supervisors Adding Chapter 10.07 to the Santa Cruz County Code to Prohibit the Use of County Property for Civil Immigration Enforcement”; and
3. Direct the Clerk of the Board to schedule the ordinance for second reading and final adoption on March 24, 2026; and
4. Direct the Clerk of the Board to publish the Notice of Proposed Ordinance Summaries in a newspaper of general circulation at least five days prior to the scheduled second reading and final adoption, no later than March 19, 2026, pursuant to Government Code Section 25124; and
5. Direct the S.H.I.E.L.D Subcommittee to report back to the Board of Supervisors on or before May 19, 2026.

Executive Summary

On January 27, 2026, the Board of Supervisors authorized the establishment of an ad hoc Board subcommittee to Safeguard Health, Inclusion, Essential Services, and Local Defense (S.H.I.E.L.D.) in the context of increased federal immigration enforcement actions and federal budget cuts to services that disproportionately impact our immigrant community.

The S.H.I.E.L.D. Subcommittee was directed to report back to the Board of Supervisors on or before March 10, 2026, with preliminary findings, identified near-term actions, and a proposed workplan and timeline for any policy items requiring further analysis or Board consideration. Accordingly, the Board of Supervisors will receive a report from Subcommittee members Supervisor Martinez and Supervisor Hernandez and consider the initial recommended actions of the S.H.I.E.L.D. Subcommittee.

Discussion

The S.H.I.E.L.D. Ad Hoc Subcommittee was established to support Santa Cruz County's coordinated, lawful, and timely preparedness in response to increased federal immigration enforcement actions. Its focus is on internal County preparedness, including:

- Reviewing and strengthening County department protocols related to immigration enforcement encounters in County facilities.
- Identifying legal, operational, and policy gaps that may affect service access or County compliance with state and federal law.
- Assessing continuity of essential services, including health, social services, and public benefits.
- Exploring funding strategies and resource needs related to service access and community stabilization.
- Coordinating with other local jurisdictions, school districts, and regional partners on preparedness and response.
- Developing potential policy recommendations for Board consideration.

The Subcommittee will not:

- Replace or direct community based rapid response networks.
- Conduct or coordinate field response to immigration enforcement activity.
- Serve as a public reporting or emergency response hotline.
- Adopt new County policy without Board action.

Since its approval on January 27, 2026, the S.H.I.E.L.D. Subcommittee has conducted an initial review of County policies and operational protocols and has identified both near-term administrative actions and longer-term policy considerations, as outlined below.

Reviewing and Strengthening Department Protocols

1. Department Protocols and Level of Preparation

In 2025, the six County departments most likely to be impacted by federal immigration activity developed and/or updated policies and procedures on how to prepare for and interact with immigration enforcement officers. The S.H.I.E.L.D. Subcommittee reviewed these protocols from the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office, Probation Department, Public Defender's Office, District Attorney's Office, Health Services Agency, and Human Services Department.

The County Executive Office is currently working with the Safety Officer in the Human Resources Department to finalize clear procedures for all County staff when approached, questioned, or observed by external parties (including immigration or other federal law enforcement agents, protesters, and independent journalists) during work duties, to help protect employee and client safety and ensure interactions are handled in a legally appropriate, consistent manner. Upon finalization, this policy will apply to all Santa Cruz County departments and sites except those operated by the Sheriff's Office and Probation Department. The Safety Officer will also implement Countywide training to ensure all employees understand and consistently apply these protocols.

2. Data Collection and Privacy

Over the last year, the County has heard from many members of the public who expressed concern about what data the County collects and how that data is shared. On December 17, 2024, the Board adopted Resolution 279-2024 reaffirming the County is a welcoming community and a place of trust and safety for all immigrants and ordering that:

- Santa Cruz County resources are not used to enforce federal immigration law that targets individuals simply based on their immigration status, gather or disseminate information regarding the immigration status of individuals, or collect personal information unless explicitly required by federal or state statute, regulation, or court decision; and
- County departments review their confidentiality policies to prevent eligible individuals from being discouraged from seeking services or engaging with County resources based on immigration status.

Pursuant to this resolution, County staff do not inquire into an individual's immigration status for immigration enforcement purposes. County staff avoid inquiring into immigration status unless it is legally required and/or used to provide services addressing unique challenges, needs and goals. When such information must be collected, staff explain how it will be used and protected under applicable confidentiality laws.

Many Santa Cruz residents expressed particular concern about the possibility that data collected by Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) cameras – such as FLOCK cameras – is being shared with the federal government. The County of Santa Cruz does not utilize ALPR cameras within its jurisdictional boundaries. However, the Sheriff's Office does have access to a state intelligence center that includes data collected by ALPRs in other districts, including cities within Santa Cruz County. The data accessed through the state intelligence center is subject to the restrictions imposed by California Senate Bill 54, which prohibits sharing ALPR data with federal authorities, for immigration enforcement purposes. Access to the data by the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office is strictly limited to a right-to-know basis directly related to investigations.

Given the level of concern about how law enforcement is using data – whether created by the County or not, the County Executive Officer has requested that our Inspector General perform an audit of the Sheriff's Office policies on accessing the statewide intelligence center and compliance with those policies. Such an audit falls within the scope of work contemplated by the existing agreement with the Inspector General.

3. Use of County Owned or Controlled Property for Immigration Enforcement Action

In 2025, federal guidance rescinded prior limitations on immigration enforcement at or near "sensitive locations" where people access essential services¹, including schools, courts, and medical facilities. Over the past year there has been an increased tendency for these spaces to be used by federal agents as staging areas and operation bases as they carry out immigration enforcement actions. Many of these spaces are owned or controlled by local government.

¹ Rebecca Santana. *Trump Administration Throws Out Policies Limiting Arrests of Migrants at Sensitive Locations*. AP News. (Jan. 21, 2025) Available at: <https://apnews.com/article/immigration-enforcement-sensitive-locations-trump-ab0d2d2652e9df696f14410ebb52a1fc>

The Board of Supervisors has repeatedly taken the position that the detention and deportation of Santa Cruz residents solely on the basis of their immigration status interferes with the mission and values of the County of Santa Cruz³ to cultivate a healthy, safe and more affordable community that is culturally diverse, economically inclusive, and environmentally vibrant. A relationship of trust, respect, and open communication between County staff and residents is essential to advancing the County's mission of delivering efficient public services and cultivating a prosperous economic environment, opportunities, and high quality of life for all residents. Civil immigration enforcement activities undermine community trust, spread fear, and create barriers to accessing essential services.

Across the Country and California, other jurisdictions that also find civil immigration enforcement actions to be counterproductive to their goals have made efforts to prevent the use of their property for that purpose. The S.H.I.E.L.D. Subcommittee reviewed a half dozen examples of such policies and ordinances and recommends taking similar action by adopting the proposed "Ordinance of the Board of Supervisors Adding Chapter 10.07 to the Santa Cruz County Code to Prohibit the Use of County Property for Civil Immigration Enforcement" referenced in **Attachment A**. County resources should not be used in ways that undermine service delivery or public trust.

The proposed ordinance would prohibit the use of County-owned or County-controlled parking lots, open spaces, and buildings as staging areas, processing locations, or operations bases for federal civil immigration enforcement activities to the extent permissible by law. It would not prevent the lawful discharge of duties in compliance with a lawfully issued judicial warrant or other order evidencing a judicial determination of probable cause on or in County-owned or County controlled property.

This policy would direct the County Executive Office to develop protocols to ensure that, wherever appropriate, physical barriers such as locked doors and gates are used to limit access to County-owned and County-controlled parking lots, open spaces, and buildings.

Potential costs may include staff time to identify County-owned and County-controlled sites appropriate for signage and access controls. The County Executive Office will return to the Board of Supervisors with a cost estimate for consideration and approval if necessary.

Approval of this proposed ordinance would be consistent with prior Board positions asserting that Santa Cruz County resources shall not be used to enforce federal immigration law targeting individuals based solely on immigration status⁴; the *California Values Act* (SB 54); and Resolution #26-09, adopted by the County Office of Education on February 19, 2026, which prohibits the use of education facilities and parking areas for civil immigration enforcement activities.⁵

³ Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors. *Resolution 279-2024: Resolution Establishing the County of Santa Cruz's Commitment to Maintaining Trust and Safety for Local Immigrants*. (Dec. 17, 2024) Available at <https://santacruzcountyca.ig2.com/Citizens/FileOpen.aspx?Type=4&ID=59435>

⁴ Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors. *Resolution 279-2024: Resolution Establishing the County of Santa Cruz's Commitment to Maintaining Trust and Safety for Local Immigrants*. (Dec. 17, 2024) Available at <https://santacruzcountyca.ig2.com/Citizens/FileOpen.aspx?Type=4&ID=59435>

⁵ Santa Cruz County Office of Education. *Resolution 26-09: Prohibiting Use of Santa Cruz County Office Of Education Indoor and Outdoor Facilities and Parking Areas for Any Forms of Civil Immigration*

Together, these actions reflect a structured approach to strengthening internal County systems, reinforcing legal compliance, and maintaining uninterrupted access to essential services.

Working with Our Community Partners in an Ongoing Evaluation of Service Continuity Risks

In addition to reviewing internal County policies and protocols, the S.H.I.E.L.D. Subcommittee has initiated engagement with community-based organizations, legal service providers, educational partners, and local jurisdictions to assess service continuity risks and coordination needs.

This engagement is intended to ensure that County administrative actions are informed by on-the-ground conditions and that County efforts complement, rather than duplicate, existing community-led response structures.

1. Convening on Federal Impacts

On February 27, 2026, the County convened community-based organizations (“CBOs”), legal service providers, education representatives, health providers, and local jurisdiction partners to assess the impacts of federal policy on Santa Cruz County residents, including impacts that disproportionately affect immigrant communities.

The Subcommittee sought input regarding:

- Community level impacts and barriers to accessing services;
- Gaps in communication, outreach, and service delivery;
- Input on potential policy and operational approaches; and
- Coordination between County efforts and community based responses.

Key themes that emerged from the convening included:

- The need for a centralized, publicly accessible source of information clarifying County policies, facility protocols, and legal boundaries.
- The importance of uniform signage and consistent messaging across County and city facilities to reduce confusion.
- Concerns regarding declining utilization of medical, dental, food distribution, and public benefit services due to fear and misinformation.
- Interest in ensuring safe and accessible public spaces where community members can assemble and organize.
- Requests for clearer understanding of what guidance, if any, dispatch systems can provide when individuals encounter federal agents in the field.
- The importance of non-digital communication channels and dissemination of information through trusted community-based partners.

County departments have begun assessing service utilization trends and related indicators to identify potential early warning signs of service avoidance or disruption.

Enforcement Staging, Processing, or Bases for Operations. (Feb. 19, 2026) <https://santacruzcoe.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Resolution-26-09-Prohibiting-Use-of-Santa-Cruz-COE-Indoor-and-Outdoor-Facilities-and-Parking-Areas-for-Any-Forms-of-Civil-Immigration-Enforcement-Staging-Processing-or-Bases-for-Operations.pdf>

2. Other Outreach Efforts

In addition to the February 27 convening, Supervisors Martinez and Hernandez and their staff have engaged with advisory bodies, rapid response networks, and service coordination groups to ensure alignment between County administrative actions and community-based response efforts.

These engagements have included attending meetings of the Latino Affairs Advisory Commission, Your Allied Rapid Response (YARR), the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD), the South County Triage Group, and the Santa Cruz Immigration Coalition communications team.

The purpose of this engagement is to:

- Clarify the County's role and boundaries;
- Identify areas where County policy alignment can reduce confusion;
- Avoid duplication of community-led rapid response efforts; and
- Surface emerging service access concerns.

Input from these discussions continues to inform the Subcommittee's near-term and long-term priorities.

3. Interagency Coordination

While the Subcommittee's initial focus has been internal policy review and administrative alignment, effective preparedness requires coordination across jurisdictions.

Future work will include structured communication with cities, school districts, the County Office of Education, higher education institutions (including UC Santa Cruz and Cabrillo College), the Pajaro Valley Health Care District, Monterey County, and relevant special districts.

Interagency coordination will focus on:

- Promoting consistency in facility protocols and public messaging;
- Sharing best practices and lessons learned;
- Identifying cross-jurisdictional service continuity risks; and
- Reducing duplication of effort in a resource-constrained environment.

Strengthening these relationships in advance of potential operational challenges enhances clarity, stability, and coordinated service delivery across the region.

Working with Our Regional Partners

Federal immigration activity and related policy shifts do not stop at jurisdictional boundaries. For that reason, the S.H.I.E.L.D. Subcommittee has prioritized regional coordination to promote consistency, share best practices, and reduce cross-county confusion.

Since its formation, Supervisors Martinez and Hernandez, County Executive Officer Coburn, and support staff have participated in regional discussions focused on preparedness, service continuity, and interagency alignment.

1. Coordination with Federal and State Representatives

On January 29, 2026, both Supervisors' offices participated in a regional roundtable

convened by Congressman Jimmy Panetta, which included law enforcement leaders, health and human service providers, and employers from Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties. The discussion focused on operational impacts, service continuity concerns, and coordination across agencies serving immigrant communities.

Participation in these conversations ensures that local conditions and service delivery realities are reflected in broader policy discussions.

2. *Latino Caucus of California Counties*

Supervisors Hernandez and Martinez are active members of the Latino Caucus of California Counties, which convenes regularly to share information and coordinate responses among counties facing similar impacts. These discussions provide opportunities to exchange policy approaches, identify legal considerations, and assess emerging statewide trends.

3. *Belonging to the Bay Regional Convenings*

Santa Cruz County has participated in multi-county convenings involving Bay Area and Central Coast jurisdictions to share strategies related to federal immigration activity and service continuity planning.

These convenings are focused on:

- Comparing facility protocols and ordinance approaches;
- Aligning communication strategies;
- Sharing lessons learned from jurisdictions experiencing federal presence; and
- Identifying areas for regional collaboration.

Pursuant to Board direction on January 27, 2026, the County Executive Officer has designated key staff to participate in upcoming regional meetings and interim working groups to ensure sustained coordination.

The engagement and policy review described above reinforce that preparedness requires both internal clarity and coordinated external communication. Community partners have emphasized the importance of consistency, transparency, and clearly defined County roles.

Next Steps

The Subcommittee's next phase of work will build on the internal policy review and stakeholder engagement described above. Actions will proceed in phases based on legal review, operational readiness, and available resources.

1. Internal Readiness and Training

- Finalize and implement the Countywide protocol governing staff engagement with immigration enforcement officers.
- Begin department-level training to ensure consistent application of deescalation procedures, documentation standards, and legal boundaries.
- Develop a Concept of Operations (CONOP) to clarify County roles, interdepartmental coordination, and communication pathways in the event of significant federal immigration activity. The framework will adhere to state and federal law, incorporate community-informed perspectives, and focus on mitigating service disruption without interfering with federal authority.

2. *Safeguarding Access to Services and Facilities*

- Advance the proposed ordinance regarding use of County-owned and County-controlled property, together with fiscal analysis and implementation guidance.
- Assess facility-level signage and access protocols to ensure consistency and clarity following Board direction.
- Monitor service utilization trends across health, public benefits, behavioral health, and food distribution programs to identify potential early indicators of service avoidance or disruption.

3. *Community-Focused Stabilization Measures*

- Formalize a recurring Community Roundtable structure to maintain direct communication with trusted service providers and to assess evolving service continuity risks.
- Develop outreach materials for small businesses to clarify their rights and responsibilities in relation to federal immigration enforcement activity on private property.
- Explore options to support community-based partners who provide direct services to impacted residents, including coordination on capacity needs and potential funding strategies.
- Identify non-digital methods for disseminating accurate information through trusted community channels.

4. *Interagency and Regional Coordination*

- Continue structured coordination with cities, school districts, higher education institutions, special districts, Monterey County, and regional partners to promote consistency in facility protocols and public messaging.
- Engage appropriate law enforcement leadership and dispatch partners to review emergency response considerations and clarify life-safety priorities during federal operations.
- Participate in ongoing multi-county convenings to share best practices and assess emerging operational impacts.

The Subcommittee will provide updates to the Board as implementation progresses and will return with additional policy or funding recommendations as warranted.

Financial Impact

The financial impact of implementing the proposed “Ordinance of the Board of Supervisors Adding Chapter 10.07 to the Santa Cruz County Code to Prohibit the Use of County Property for Civil Immigration Enforcement” is not known at this time, but is expected to be limited. Potential costs may include staff time to identify applicable County-owned and County-controlled sites, develop and install signage where appropriate, and implement related administrative protocols.

Strategic Initiatives

Operational Plan - Comprehensive Health & Safety

Submitted By:

Monica Martinez, Fifth District Supervisor, and Felipe Hernandez, Fourth District Supervisor

Recommended By:

Nicole D. Coburn, County Executive Officer

Artificial Intelligence Acknowledgment:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) did not significantly contribute to the development of this agenda item.



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060-4073
(831)454-2000 | www.santacruzcountyca.gov
Nicole D. Coburn, County Executive Officer

News Release

Date: March 6, 2026

Contact: Jason Hoppin

Jason.Hoppin@santacruzcounty.us

S.H.I.E.L.D. SUBCOMMITTEE PROPOSES ORDINANCE PROHIBITING USE OF COUNTY PROPERTY BY FEDERAL IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS

On Tuesday, March 10, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors will consider initial recommendations from the Safeguarding Health, Inclusion, Essential Services, and Local Defense (S.H.I.E.L.D.) Ad Hoc Subcommittee. The subcommittee was established in January to evaluate how federal immigration enforcement actions and federal budget changes may affect access to services and community stability in Santa Cruz County.

The Board will review the subcommittee's first report and consider an ordinance that would prohibit the use of County-owned or County-controlled property as staging areas or operational bases for federal civil immigration enforcement activities.

"The County's ability to deliver health care, public benefits, and other essential services depends on trust between residents and public agencies," Board Chair Monica Martinez said. "Policies that reinforce clarity, consistency, and lawful boundaries ensure residents continue to access the services they need."

"Santa Cruz County has long affirmed that our community is stronger when residents can access services without fear," said Supervisor Felipe Hernandez. "These actions help reinforce the policies, protocols, and partnerships needed to keep our systems functioning and responsive to the needs of the community."

Composed of Martinez and Hernandez, the S.H.I.E.L.D. Subcommittee was tasked with reviewing County protocols, identifying operational gaps, and coordinating with community organizations and regional partners to assess potential impacts of federal immigration enforcement activity.

The report describes several areas of work that are already underway. These include strengthening County department protocols for interactions with immigration agents, establishing Countywide procedures for staff when approached by federal agents, monitoring trends in service use to identify potential disruptions in access to health care,

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social services, and public benefits, and collaborating with community organizations, legal service providers, and local partners not only to assess risks to the continuity of services, but also to work jointly on solutions that protect and support our most vulnerable communities.

The Board will meet in the basement community room, 701 Ocean St., beginning at 9 a.m. To view the Board item and proposed ordinance in English and Spanish, please visit www.santacruzcountyca.gov/Sanctuary or www.santacruzcountyca.gov/Santuاريو.

ORDINANCE NO. _____

ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ADDING CHAPTER 10.07 TO THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CODE TO PROHIBIT THE USE OF COUNTY PROPERTY FOR CIVIL IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

The Board of Supervisors of Santa Cruz County hereby finds and declares the following:

WHEREAS, the County of Santa Cruz has long asserted itself as an inclusive, welcoming, safe home for all its residents, regardless of national origin or immigration status; and

WHEREAS, the County of Santa Cruz recognizes that immigrants significantly contribute to our economy, workforce, community, and families; and

WHEREAS, a relationship of trust, respect, and open communication between County staff and residents is essential to advancing the County's mission of delivering efficient public services and cultivating a prosperous economic environment, opportunities, and high quality of life for all residents; and

WHEREAS, civil immigration enforcement activities undermine community trust, spread fear, and create barriers to accessing essential services; and

WHEREAS, the use of the limited resources of the County of Santa Cruz should not be used for purposes that do not advance or interfere with the County's mission and values; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 the *California Values Act* (SB 54) went into effect, preventing state and local law enforcement resources from being commandeered by the federal government; and

WHEREAS, on December 17, 2024, the County of Santa Cruz adopted Resolution 279-2024: *Resolution Establishing the County of Santa Cruz's Commitment to Maintaining Trust and Safety for Local Immigrants*, reaffirming that County resources shall not be used to enforce federal immigration law targeting individuals on the basis of immigration status;

NOW THEREFORE the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz ordains as follows:

SECTION I

Chapter 10.07 is hereby added to the Santa Cruz County Code, to read as follows:

**Chapter 10.07
USE OF COUNTY PROPERTY FOR CIVIL IMMIGRATION
ENFORCEMENT PROHIBITED**

Sections:

10.07.010 Purpose.

10.07.020 Definitions.

10.07.030 Use of County property for civil immigration enforcement prohibited.

10.07.040 Remedies.

10.07.050 Severability.

10.07.010 Purpose.

The Board of Supervisors finds that the detention and deportation of Santa Cruz residents solely on the basis of their immigration status interferes with the mission and values of the County of Santa Cruz to cultivate a healthy, safe and more affordable community that is culturally diverse, economically inclusive, and environmentally vibrant. Accordingly, the purpose of this chapter is to ensure that the limited resources of the County of Santa Cruz are not used for the counterproductive purpose of civil immigration enforcement.

10.07.020 Definitions.

(A) “Immigration Enforcement Action” means any investigation, search, inquiry, or action undertaken to enforce Federal immigration law, whether civil or criminal, regarding a person’s entry or reentry, presence, or employment in the United States on the basis of immigration or citizenship status.

(B) “Staging Area” means an area that is used to assemble, mobilize, and deploy vehicles, equipment, or materials, and related personnel, for the purpose of carrying out civil immigration enforcement operations.

(C) “Processing Location” means an area that is used for activities such as the identification, intake, processing of documentation, detention, arrest, or temporary holding of individuals.

(D) “Operation Base” means an area that is used to plan, coordinate and execute activities.

10.07.030 Use of County property for civil immigration enforcement prohibited.

(A) Use of County property for civil immigration enforcement is prohibited as follows:

(1) No County-owned or County-controlled parking lot, open space, or building shall be used as a Staging Area, Processing Location, or Operations Base for Federal civil immigration enforcement activities.

(2) No County department, agency, officer, or employee shall give consent for Federal officials to use a County-owned or County-controlled parking lot, open space, or building as a Staging Area, Processing Location, or Operations Base for Federal civil immigration enforcement activities, and no such purported consent by a County department, agency, officer, or employee shall be deemed consent by the County for any such use.

(3) No County department, agency, officer, or employee shall give consent for Federal officials to access or use non-public areas of County facilities for purposes of civil immigration enforcement without a valid warrant signed by a Federal or State judicial officer, or other signed writ or order from a Federal or State judicial officer authorizing such access, and any purported consent by a County department, agency, officer, or employee without such a warrant shall be deemed consent by the County for any such access or use. "Administrative warrants" issued by a person or entity other than a Federal or State judicial officer are not considered to be valid warrants within the meaning of this section. However, nothing in this section shall prevent the County, including any agency, department, officer, employee, or agent of the County, from lawfully discharging their duties in compliance with and in response to a lawfully issued judicial warrant or other order evidencing a judicial determination of probable cause.

(B) Exemptions. The above prohibitions shall not apply to any actions taken by a Santa Cruz County law enforcement official acting within the scope of their official duties or to property subject to their exclusive control.

(C) The County Executive Office shall develop procedures necessary to implement this ordinance. The procedures must provide that any County employee who becomes aware of the attempted or actual use of a County-owned or County-controlled parking lot, open space, or building for a Staging Area, Processing Location, or Operations Base for the purpose of civil immigration enforcement shall immediately report such to their supervisor, who will communicate with the County Executive Office and County Counsel.

(D) The County Executive Office shall ensure that, wherever appropriate, physical barriers such as locked doors and gates are used to limit access to County-owned and County-controlled parking lots, open spaces, and buildings consistent with this policy.

(E) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as restricting or interfering with:

- (1) The execution of valid judicial warrants or court orders from Federal or State judicial officers.
- (2) The investigation or enforcement of criminal law.
- (3) The rights of any person or entity under Federal or State law.

(F) Nothing in this ordinance shall be interpreted or applied so as to create any County requirement, power, or duty in conflict with Federal or State law.

10.07.040 Remedies.

(A) Civil Action. Any interested person may initiate a civil action against any person or entity that uses County property for any unlawful or unauthorized purpose in violation of the provisions of SCCC 10.07.030(A)(1).

(1) No civil action may be initiated against the County of Santa Cruz or its departments, agencies, officers, or employees for any alleged violation of this Chapter.

(B) Penalties. If a person or entity in such civil action is found to be in violation of SCCC 10.07.030(A)(1), such person or entity shall be required by the court to pay a civil fine in an amount not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for a first violation and in an amount not to exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for a second or additional violation. Such civil fines shall be payable to the County Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector. Any person initiating civil action pursuant to this section shall file a copy of the complaint with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors within ten (10) calendar days of filing with the court.

10.07.050 Severability.

The provisions of this chapter are severable. If any section, paragraph, sentence, phrase, or word of this chapter is declared invalid for any reason by a court of competent jurisdiction, such determination of invalidity shall not affect the validity of any other portion of this chapter, which shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION II

This ordinance shall take effect on the 31st day after the date of final passage.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this ___ day of _____ 2026, by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz by the following vote:

AYES: SUPERVISORS
NOES: SUPERVISORS
ABSENT: SUPERVISORS
ABSTAIN: SUPERVISORS

MONICA MARTINEZ
Chairperson of the
Board of Supervisors

Attest: _____
JULIETTE REZZATO
Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Office of the County Counsel



Santa Cruz County Women’s Commission

701 Ocean Street, Fifth Floor, Room 510
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 454-2772 (F) 831-454-2411 TTY/TDD: 711
commissions@santacruzcountyca.gov
www.sccwc.org

March 19, 2026

Santa Cruz County Planning Department
Attn: Zoning Administrator
701 Ocean Street, Fourth Floor
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Re: Permit Application 251522 – Proposed Women Surfer Statue

Dear Zoning Administrator,

On behalf of the Santa Cruz County Women’s Commission, we write in support of Permit Application 251522 for the proposed women surfer statue in the East Cliff area.

Public art plays an important role in shaping the stories a community tells about itself. In a county internationally recognized for its surf culture, the visible representation of women in that history and identity matters. A statue honoring a woman surfer reflects both the lived experience of countless women who have contributed to this culture and the next generation who deserve to see themselves reflected in public space.

We are particularly encouraged by the strong community support indicated in the results of a recent District 1 survey. Of 668 total responses, 78.29% indicated full support for the project. Among verified local respondents (259 addresses), 75.68% expressed full support

The accompanying geographic heat map further reflects meaningful engagement from residents in the immediate Pleasure Point area.

We also note that the project is privately funded, reducing fiscal impact while contributing to the cultural landscape of the county.

We view this project as aligned with our mission to promote equitable representation in civic spaces. Public monuments stand as lasting symbols of whose contributions a community chooses to honor. Ensuring that women’s contributions are recognized in these symbols is both timely and appropriate.

Consistent with the County’s stated commitment to equity, we respectfully recommend approval of Permit Application 251522. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Signed by:



B62EF9EE4E8A45D...
Suzanne Doty, Commission Co-Chair

Signed by:



0246B636044F486...
Paige Gordon, Commission Co-Chair

Cc. Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors
Enc. *Survey Results*
Heat Map

East Cliff Surfer Statue Results

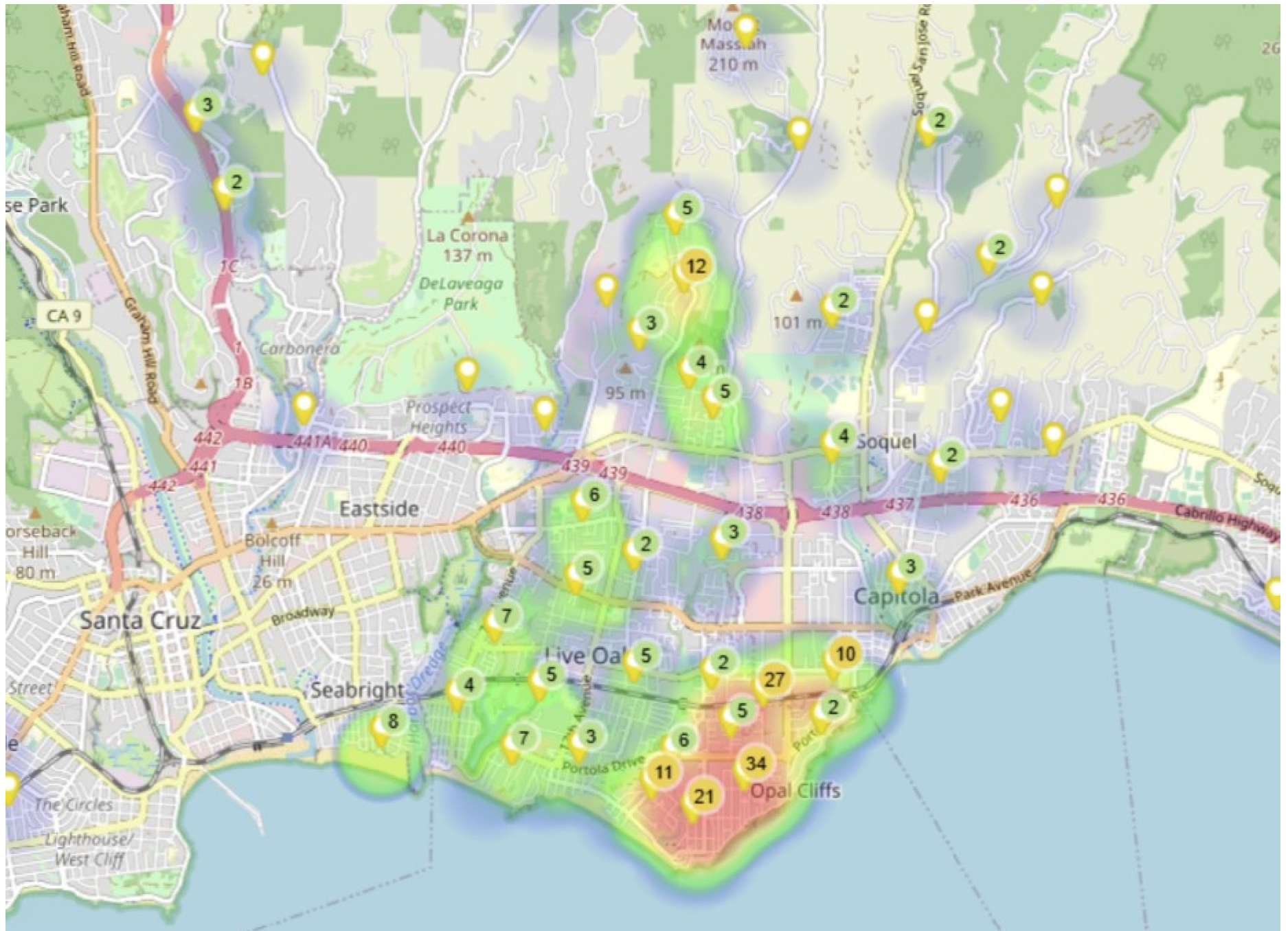
Date Range

02/09/26

2/23/26

Responses with Addresses		
Yes, I fully support the project	196	75.68%
I like the project, but I am concerned about the location	14	5.41%
I like the location, but am unsure about the design	9	3.47%
No, I dislike the project	40	15.44%
Total	259	100.00%

Total Responses		
Yes, I fully support the project	523	78.29%
I like the project, but I am concerned about the location	33	4.94%
I like the location, but am unsure about the design	20	2.99%
No, I dislike the project	92	13.77%
Total	668	100.00%





Santa Cruz County Women’s Commission

701 Ocean Street, Fifth Floor, Room 510

Santa Cruz, CA 95060

(831) 454-2772 TTY/TDD: 711

commissions@santacruzcountyca.gov

www.sccwc.org

Scheduled Meetings

Unless otherwise specified below, regularly scheduled Women’s Commission meetings are generally held as follows:

DAY: Third (3rd) Thursday*
MONTH: Every month except July and December
TIME: 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
LOCATION: **Santa Cruz County Government Building ***
5th Floor Redwood Conference Room
701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

*Unless noted otherwise below

Locations may vary for outreach, town hall meetings, special meetings, changes of location, or meeting cancellations. Changes to the schedule will be listed on the website at www.sccwc.org as soon as information becomes available.

2026 MEETING DATES		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION
January 15, 2026	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
February 19, 2026	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
March 19, 2026	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
April 16, 2026	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
May 21, 2026	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
June 18, 2026	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
August 20, 2026	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
September 17, 2026	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
October 15, 2026	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm
November 19, 2026	6:00 – 7:30 PM	County Bldg – Redwood Rm

Public Participation

- Please check the meeting agenda to learn details about how to participate in the commission meeting.
- If you need special accommodations, please call 454-2935 or TDD: 711 (California Relay Service) at least 48 hours before the meeting.