

SANTA MARGARITA COUNTY SERVICE AREA 23 ADVISORY GROUP

Promoting civic discussion in Santa Margarita about water management, traffic-safety, lighting,
to advise the County Board of Supervisors

January 11, 2025

Members of the Local Agency Formation Commission
1042 Pacific St Suite A
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Subject: LAFCO FILE NO 2-R-23: SPHERE OF INFLUENCE AMENDMENT/ANNEXATION NO. 1 TO CSA 23

Dear Commissioners;

The CSA 23 Advisory Board has discussed this annexation at their regular agenda for several years. We have had presentations from the Ranch Owners and County Public Works on numerous occasions. While the CSA 23 Advisory Board generally supports the annexation, we have concerns that should be clarified, resolved and documented in the record;

1. Ensure that the existing water supply to the town will not be adversely impacted by the annexation. This would include rates, fees and operational infrastructure. It appears that the annexation would be beneficial to the towns water supply and infrastructure. This should be confirmed by the County Public Works and LAFCO staff at the public hearing.
2. The Annexation Agreement states that County Public Works "intends" to establish a Zone of Benefit for the Annexation area. To isolate the costs of the annexation, LAFCO should adopt a condition of approval that "requires" the zone of benefit to be established for the annexation. The Zone of Benefit for the annexation is a key condition that protects the town from service rate increases associated with the annexation area and should be established prior to the annexation for phase one being finalized.
3. Please ensure in the record that the wells and infrastructure to serve the Annexation will become part of the CSA's water system through the offers to dedicate found in the Annexation Agreement. This issue should be clarified for the record.
4. Additionally, residents have commented that the existing town system (CSA 23) should not be held liable for any accidents or mishaps associated with the new system. This may be part of the annexation agreement, or the annexation agreement could be amended to include this protection.
5. Traffic mitigation in the 2008 EIR called for lights to be embedded at Encina and El Camino to mitigate additional traffic generated by the project. Since that approval, the hazardous situation at that intersection and in town has been documented through an Advisory Board Resolution and Community petition with over 400 signatures. It is likely that the current 16 year old EIR and mitigation is out of date and should be updated.
6. Fire mitigation in the 2008 EIR calls for the construction and operation of a CALFIRE station closer to town. This would help protect the annexation and increase fire protection for the town as well. Given the increased fire risk (since 2008) to life and property because of the fire hazard, this mitigation should be expedited prior to any additional structures being built. Our volunteer Fire Department does an outstanding job of responding to the emergencies when called, but can be stretched when other incidents in the area occur.

Thank you for considering our comments. If you have any questions, please contact us at SMCSA23@Gmail.com

CSA 23 Advisory Board

Connie Hanretty-Church, President (On Leave)
Simone Smith, Representative

Cynthia Lambert, Secretary
Scott Sterling, Representative