



NORTH RIVER FARMS REFERENDUM

Staff Recommendation:

SUPPORT

Rationale for Position: SDCTA position on Ballot Box Land Use Planning

Title: North River Farms Referendum

Jurisdiction: City of San Diego

Type: Referendum

Vote: Simple Majority

Status: On the November 3, 2020 ballot

Issue: To affirm the City of Oceanside's support for the North River Farms development

Description: The referendum would allow the North River Farms development project to proceed.

Fiscal Impact: Increases in Development Impact Fees (DIF), increases in property tax revenue.

Background

North River Farms is a development that was initially proposed in 2016 when an application was filed seeking to amend the city's current land use and zoning designations on 176.6 acres of property with between 680 and 985 residential units.

Several revisions were made to the project including reducing the number of homes from 656 to 585, giving the city one acre of land for a fire station and funding for apparatus and personnel, as well as preserving land, sewer improvements and a bike trail. On November 6, 2019, the Oceanside City Council voted 3-2 to support the revised North River Farms project.

After the vote, opponents gathered signatures to referend the decision and place the development on the November 2020 ballot.

Proposal

Uphold the City Council's vote and not support the referendum based on the SDCTA adopted definition of Ballot Box Land Use Planning.



Fiscal Impact

Fiscal impacts are taken on by both parties in the referendum process. Costs to gather signatures and to launch campaigns on both sides are costly mostly to the parties themselves. Added costs will be passed on to taxpayers who purchase the homes if they are developed. Some costs are associated with printing of ballot materials on both sides of the issue, which is a direct taxpayer expense.

Governance Impact

SDCTA has supported a definition of Ballot Box Land Use Planning. This item is a direct definition of Ballot Box Land Use Planning where a group of people have taken a proposed development decision and collected signatures to overturn the vote of the elected representatives.

Public processes have been established when development projects differ from current zoning allowances and changes in zoning are proposed for development. Proposed changes must go to local planning groups, to a city or county Planning Commission before coming to the elected

body, i.e. City Council or Board of Supervisors. Ballot Box Land Use Planning directly takes away this public process.