

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers
Gary Halbert, Interim City Manager
Shawn Hagerty, City Attorney

FROM: James Jeffries, City Clerk

DATE: September 24, 2025

SUBJ: Updated Meeting Materials – September 24, 2025 City Council Meeting

PUBLIC HEARING:

- (8) **Public Hearing for a Tentative Map (TM-2024-0001) and Development Review Permit (DR-2024-0001) for a Multi-Family Residential Development Consisting of 285 Units and Related Site Improvements on a 22.17 Acre Parcel Located at the Terminus of Park Center Drive and West of Cottonwood Avenue (APN 381-051-18-00) in the R-14 (Medium High Density Residential) Zone and Finding the Project is Subject to California Environmental Quality Act Sections 15162 and 15164 Addendum to an EIR (Applicant: City Ventures Homebuilding, LLC). (Planning and Building – Sawa)**

The attached correspondence for the above-mentioned Item was received and is provided for your consideration.



From: [Angela Louise Tiangco](#)
To: [Wendy Stratton](#); [Clerk](#)
Subject: YIMBY Law Correspondence re: Project at Park Center Drive and West of Cottonwood Avenue (9.24.2025 Meeting)
Date: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 6:44:12 AM
Attachments: [YIMBY Law Letter of Support for Terminus of Park Center Drive and West of Cottonwood Avenue.cleaned.pdf](#)

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Good morning,

Please find the attached correspondence from YIMBY Law regarding the proposed project at Park Center Drive and West of Cottonwood Avenue ahead of today's hearing (Sept. 24, 2025).

Best,

Angela Tiangco *she/her/hers*

Research Attorney

571-499-1556



[Check out everything we achieved in 2024!](#)



9/23/2025

Santee City Council
10601 Magnolia Ave
Santee, CA 92071

WStratton@cityofsantee.ca.gov
clerk@cityofsantee.ca.gov

Via Email

Re: Terminus of Park Center Drive and West of Cottonwood Avenue
APN 381-051-18-00

Dear Santee City Council,

YIMBY Law is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, whose mission is to increase the accessibility and affordability of housing in California. YIMBY Law sues municipalities when they fail to comply with state housing laws, including the Housing Accountability Act (HAA). As you know, the City Council has an obligation to abide by all relevant state housing laws when evaluating the above captioned proposal, including the HAA. Should the City fail to follow the law, YIMBY Law will not hesitate to file suit to ensure that the law is enforced.

The project consists of 44 two- and three-story buildings arranged in 3-plex through 11-plex buildings on a 22.17-acre lot. The project will have 285-units, which each range from 1,342 to 2,074 square feet and include two to four bedrooms. In addition, each unit will have its own two-car garage with separate space for storage and individual trash receptacles. The project will also provide street improvements along the project frontages including Cottonwood Avenue and Park Center Drive and including the addition of a new Park Center Drive roundabout.

California Government Code § 65589.5, the Housing Accountability Act, prohibits localities from denying housing development projects that are compliant with the locality's zoning ordinance or general plan at the time the application was deemed complete, unless the locality can make findings that the proposed housing development would be a threat to public health and safety.

The City has identified the project site in its Housing Element Rezone Program Implementation Project (Housing Element Rezone) and has designated it in the Medium High Density Residential (R-14) zone. The R-14 designation allows 14 to 22 dwelling units per gross acre. The project is proposing 285 units which results in 15.20 dwelling units per developable acre, meeting the density requirements.

The above captioned proposal is zoning compliant and general plan compliant, therefore, your local agency must approve the application, or else make findings to the effect that the proposed

project would have an adverse impact on public health and safety, as described above. Should the City fail to comply with the law, YIMBY Law will not hesitate to take legal action to ensure that the law is enforced.

I am signing this letter both in my capacity as the Executive Director of YIMBY Law, and as a resident of California who is affected by the shortage of housing in our state and would be eligible to apply for residency in the proposed housing development project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sonja Trauss". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, decorative flourish at the end of the last name.

Sonja Trauss
Executive Director
YIMBY Law

From: [James Lloyd](#)
To: [John Minto](#); [Rob McNelis](#); [Ronn Hall](#); [Laura Koval](#); [Dustin Trotter](#)
Cc: [Wendy Stratton](#); [Shawn Hagerty](#); [Clerk](#); [planning](#)
Subject: public comment re agenda item 8 for tonight's Council meeting
Date: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 10:46:12 AM
Attachments: [Santee - Park Center and Cottonwood - HAA Letter - CC.cleaned.pdf](#)

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Dear Santee City Council,

The California Housing Defense Fund ("CalHDF") submits the attached public comment re agenda item 8 for tonight's Council meeting, the proposed 285-unit housing development project at the terminus of Park Center Drive and West of Cottonwood Avenue (APN 381-051-18-00).

Sincerely,

James M. Lloyd
Director of Planning and Investigations
California Housing Defense Fund
james@calhdf.org
CalHDF is grant & donation funded
Donate today - <https://calhdf.org/donate/>



Sep 24, 2025

City of Santee
10601 Magnolia Ave
Santee, CA 92071

Re: Proposed Housing Development Project at the Terminus of Park Center Drive and West of Cottonwood Avenue (APN 381-051-18-00)

**To: jminto@cityofsanteeca.gov; rmcnelis@cityofsanteeca.gov;
ronnhall@cityofsanteeca.gov; lkoval@cityofsanteeca.gov;
dtrotter@cityofsanteeca.gov**

**Cc: WStratton@cityofsanteeca.gov; shawn.hagerty@bbklaw.com;
clerk@cityofsanteeca.gov; planning@cityofsanteeca.gov**

Dear Santee City Council,

The California Housing Defense Fund (“CalHDF”) submits this letter to remind the City of its obligation to abide by all relevant state laws when evaluating the proposed 285-unit housing development project at the terminus of Park Center Drive and West of Cottonwood Avenue (APN 381-051-18-00). These laws include the Housing Accountability Act (“HAA”) and California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) guidelines.

The HAA provides the project legal protections. It requires approval of zoning and general plan compliant housing development projects unless findings can be made regarding specific, objective, written health and safety hazards. (Gov. Code, § 65589.5, subd. (j).) The HAA also bars cities from imposing conditions on the approval of such projects that would reduce the project’s density unless, again, such written findings are made. (*Ibid.*) As a development with at least two-thirds of its area devoted to residential uses, the project falls within the HAA’s ambit, and it complies with local zoning code and the City’s general plan. The HAA’s protections therefore apply, and the City may not reject the project except based on health and safety standards, as outlined above. Furthermore, if the City rejects the project or impairs its feasibility, it must conduct “a thorough analysis of the economic, social, and environmental effects of the action.” (*Id.* at subd. (b).)

Furthermore, the project is exempt from further state environmental review pursuant to sections 15162 and 15164 of the CEQA Guidelines. Caselaw from the California Court of

2201 Broadway, PH1, Oakland, CA 94612
www.calhdf.org

Appeal affirms that local governments err, and may be sued, when they improperly refuse to grant a project a CEQA exemption or streamlined CEQA review to which it is entitled. (*Hilltop Group, Inc. v. County of San Diego* (2024) 99 Cal.App.5th 890, 911.)

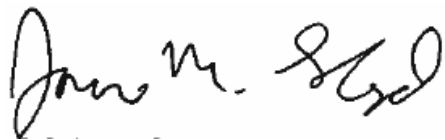
As you are well aware, California remains in the throes of a statewide crisis-level housing shortage. New housing such as this is a public benefit: it will increase the city's tax base; it will bring new customers to local businesses; and it will reduce displacement of existing residents by reducing competition for existing housing. While no one project will solve the statewide housing crisis, the proposed development is a step in the right direction. CalHDF urges the City to approve it, consistent with its obligations under state law.

CalHDF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation whose mission includes advocating for increased access to housing for Californians at all income levels, including low-income households. You may learn more about CalHDF at www.calhdf.org.

Sincerely,



Dylan Casey
CalHDF Executive Director



James M. Lloyd
CalHDF Director of Planning and Investigations

From: Leora Tanjuatco Ross <leora@yimbyaction.org>

Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 9:14 PM

To: John Minto <JMinto@CityofSanteeCa.gov>; Rob McNelis <RMcNelis@CityofSanteeCa.gov>;
Laura Koval <LKoval@CityofSanteeCa.gov>; Dustin Trotter <DTrotter@CityofSanteeCa.gov>

Subject: Support: Cottonwood Ave. & Park Center proposal

Dear Mayor Minto & Santee City Council:

Please find attached our letter of support for the ParkVue proposal. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Leora

--

Leora Tanjuatco Ross *she/her*
California Director

650-201-9889





YIMBY Action advocates for welcoming communities where everyone can thrive.
yimbyaction.org

City Council

City of Santee

10601 Magnolia Avenue

Santee, CA 92071

September 22, 2025

**RE: Support for proposed development ParkVue at Cottonwood Avenue
and Park Center Drive**

Dear Mayor Minto & Santee City Council:

I am writing to express my support for the proposed 285 unit for sale townhome community on the 22.17 acre site within Santee's R14 Medium High Density Residential zone. This project offers an exciting opportunity to add significant new housing while celebrating the natural character of Santee.

Meeting Housing Needs

Our region faces a persistent housing shortage, and increasing the supply of for sale homes is essential to provide attainable options for families and first time buyers. By delivering 285 new residences consisting of two story row homes, three story interlock townhomes, and three story row homes, this project directly addresses that need and advances the City's housing production goals.

Benefits of the Project

The design blends with Santee's natural landscape and improves community access to the outdoors. Residents will have about ten open lawns with seating, picnic tables, BBQs, and natural play areas. The project expands the existing Walker Trails network, creating stronger pedestrian connections and encouraging walking and biking. Pocket parks, a main playground, and a recreation center with cabanas and social seating further support an active lifestyle.

All homes are eco-friendly, built with all-electric systems and solar power included in the purchase price, with no added costs to homeowners. These features cut emissions, lower energy bills, and advance the city's sustainability goals.

The site's location close to schools, shopping, jobs, and transit makes it an ideal place for a thriving, walkable neighborhood. Bicycle parking, shaded seating, and pet-friendly amenities ensure the development is welcoming to a wide range of households.

Zoning and Smart Growth

The proposal is fully consistent with the R14 Medium High Density Residential zone and reflects smart growth principles by concentrating new housing near existing services, protecting open space, and minimizing sprawl.

I encourage the City Council to approve this project as it advances Santee's housing goals, strengthens the city's trail and open-space network, and supports a well-designed neighborhood that integrates with the surrounding landscape.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Leora Tanjuatco Ross

YIMBY Action, California Director



YIMBY Action advocates for welcoming communities where everyone can thrive.
yimbyaction.org