



September 9, 2014

Santa Cruz City Council
809 Center Street, Room 10
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Re: 215 Beach Street – La Bahia Hotel – Application CP13-0059 (PL)

Mayor Robinson and Councilmembers:

The Santa Cruz County Business Council (SCCBC) strongly encourages you to approve the permit for a new luxury hotel and conference center at the La Bahia site at 215 Beach Street. Not only is there widespread consensus among those in the business community about the need for more conference center floor space, but this project fits well with the community vision outlined in the Beach/South of Laurel Plan. Additionally, the new facility would generate substantial new revenue in the form of \$1.4 million annually in TOT, which will contribute to improving local roadways and offsetting any new traffic impacts.

Furthermore, the project has demonstrated a commitment to mitigating and addressing major environmental and community impacts, and has undergone a thorough environmental review. The project has committed to preserve the historical character of the site, both by incorporation traditional Spanish Colonial-style architectural elements within the proposed design, and through historical documentation, which will lead to the development of a public exhibit. As outlined in the environmental impact report, the traffic generated by the project, while significant, would not cause surrounding intersections to perform below acceptable levels of service.

While we recognize that this site and previous proposals have been met with community resistance and controversy in the past, we believe this project has taken the appropriate measures to address any significant concerns. Specifically, in contrast to previous projects, this proposal has taken great consideration to stay within the City's desired height restrictions, requiring no additional special permits.

In summary, the benefits of moving forward with the development of this facility far outweigh any potential impacts, and directly serve to address the economic development goals of the City.

Respectfully,

Joe Foster
Executive Director