

TO: SCCBC Government Affairs and Infrastructure Committees

FROM: SCCBC Staff, Government Affairs and Infrastructure Committee Chairs Charlie Wilcox and Peggy Dolgenos

RE: Consideration of Separate Committee Meeting for Government Affairs and Infrastructure Committees

Background:

Prior to the departure of Joe Foster as the SCCBC Executive Director in 2015, the Government Affairs and Infrastructure and Transportation Committees met separately. Government Relations was primarily focused on hosting guest speakers, considering new policies, and managing public correspondence; while Infrastructure and Transportation was focused on specific projects, and transportation planning and programs.

The Committee Chairs and members of the Business Council Executive Committee decided to merge the two committees, temporarily, during the transition from one Executive Director to the next both to cut down on the required preparation time and work, but also given the significant issue overlap. When the committees were meeting separately attendance varied from 8-16 members fairly consistently, for each committee.

Now, having transitioned to another Executive Director and having an additional staff person to help support more work, staff has approached the Committee Chairs with the possibility of separating the Committees into their respective focus areas. Furthermore, given that attendance has been on average significantly higher than last year, it might make more sense from an engagement and logistical perspective as well.

Discussion:

The following are a series of questions for Committee members to think about when considering the structure of our committees moving forward:

Should the Government Affairs and Infrastructure Committees meet separately?

Would having a smaller group of people make it easier to engage on topics?

What do people find more valuable, guest speakers or policy discussions?

Are committee members will to play a more active role in defining programming for the Committees?

What can we do to get more SCCBC members to participate on our committees?

The following are two **sample scenarios** for how the Committees could be split:

Scenario 1: Return to the prior structure and model of the Committees

Under this scenario the Government Affairs and Infrastructure Committees would meet separately and would have unique functions and charters.

Government Affairs core programming would be to host guest speakers that talk broadly and generally about various topics. Some examples include hosting key staff members (City Planning Director, Soquel Creek Staff, City Managers), hearing from specific program directors (Downtown Streets Team, Bike Santa Cruz County, New Wave Homes), and receiving topical reports (state of local agriculture or tourism, California housing crisis, homelessness, etc.). The GA committee could also hear report back from members serving on other committees and commissions throughout the County, some examples include Planning Commissioners, Public works commission, County Housing Advisory Commission, etc.).

Infrastructure and Transportation's core programming would be centered around specific policies and projects, and potentially recommending official stances on said policies/projects to the SCCBC Board of Directors. Some examples include SB35, the Pure Water Soquel Project, the Wharf Master Plan, or any specific housing project.

Scenario 2: Maintain joint structure but organize committees geographically

Under this scenario both committees would maintain their dual functions of education and general engagement, and more specific policy discussions and stances; but would be split geographically. For instance, the "North County and San Lorenzo Valley" Committee could hear from a guest speaker about a general topic and also weigh in on a specific policy or project, but these would both be constrained based upon the committee's area. It follows that the "Mid and South County" Committee would have a similar form and function, but would again focus on issues directly relevant to those areas.

Issues encompassing the whole County could be taken up by both Committees if the overlap is strong enough, or referred directly to the Board.

Recommendation:

That the Committee make a recommendation in the form of a motion to either 1) Continue to keep meeting as one larger Joint Committee, or 2) Separate into two separate committees with specific functions and charters?