



Association of  
REALTORS® *Conejo Simi Moorpark Association of REALTORS®*

# HOT ISSUES

## Accessory Dwelling Units - Background

The Conejo Simi Moorpark Association of Realtors® (CSMAR) boundaries contain five cities, Thousand Oaks, Simi Valley, Moorpark, Westlake Village, Agoura Hills and two counties, Ventura County, and Los Angeles County. We also have three (3) MAC areas; Oak Park, Santa Rosa Valley and Casa Conejo.

In January 2017 a new state law went into effect allowing the development of another dwelling unit on all residentially zoned properties in California. This was done to provide more housing opportunities because of the severe shortage of residential units. This law set general guidelines for the development of these accessory dwelling units. Local cities and municipalities were encouraged to adopt the state law but provided for each city or municipality to create an ordinance for their local community. The new law permitted accessory dwelling units up to 1200 feet.

The five cities and two counties which are in our service area have been reviewing and adopting ordinances in response to the new state law. CSMAR have reviewed these ordinances, as well. None of the ordinances are the same and have different size restrictions and requirements in order to develop an accessory dwelling unit. We expect that none of the ordinances for the two counties and each of the cities will be the same. This would mean seven different ordinances in our service area with different rules and regulations and size restrictions.

## Accessory Dwelling Units - Position

CSMAR is in support of the state law interpreted in the broadest sense. 1200-foot accessory dwelling units should be encouraged on those properties which can accommodate that size. The least amount of restrictions and regulations are encouraged since that will provide the most additional housing units which was the intention of the new state law.

## Why CSMAR is in favor of Cities and Counties implementing Ordinances that do not change the law's intent

- The new state law was enacted because of a severe shortage of housing.
- This new accessory dwelling unit would allow family members to have an affordable option and housing.
- The 1200-foot unit described in the new law would allow children and their family to reside on the same property as parents or other family members.
- This is one of the fastest ways to increase housing availability in most areas.
- These units would be much more affordable because of no land cost.
- These units would diminish overcrowding in existing homes.
- There is a component in the new law which looks to reduce homelessness.
- A critical shortage of affordable housing is projected to increase.

***WE URGE ALL OUR MEMBERS AND ELECTED OFFICIALS  
TO SUPPORT ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS***

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## **Affordable/Expansion of Market Rate Housing - Background**

The Conejo Simi Moorpark Association of Realtors® (CSMAR) boundaries contain five cities, Thousand Oaks, Simi Valley, Moorpark, Westlake Village, Agoura Hills and two counties, Ventura County, and Los Angeles County. We also have 2 MAC areas; Oak Park and Santa Rosa Valley.

Housing affordability is always at the forefront of discussions at the city, county, and state level. This discussion has taken place during each economic cycle for the past 50 years. A housing Affordability Crisis occurs when housing cannot be purchased by the average person in a community. Housing that is affordable can take many shapes. It can be single-family homes, condominiums, townhomes, mobile homes, apartments, even “granny flats” which meet the needs of the community. Local government often looks at affordable housing as programs that they create. These programs usually target specific income groups (e.g. low income). Subsidizing apartments or rental housing for some residents is also the government’s perception as providing affordable housing. However, these programs do not provide enough housing for the entire community. We now have a severe shortage in the marketplace for people who need housing and are not in a preferred income group or high-paying profession.

Our government supports programs that provide assistance to individuals and families of lower income groups. Escalating home prices in our area, due to a lack of housing supply to fill needs, are excluding the vast majority of people who want to live in our area.

## **Affordable/Expansion of Market Rate Housing - Position**

CSMAR is in support of an expansion of Market Rate housing, which is “housing that is affordable to those who live and work in the communities that CSMAR represents”. Over-regulation and restrictive zoning are the major contributors to our housing crisis. The market should determine what is needed in terms of housing size/type, as it relates to single-family homes, condominiums, or rental units.

## **Why CSMAR is in favor of Supporting Market Rate Housing**

- Cities and the State of California have labeled the housing shortage a crisis.
- Since the recession, in our area, we have a severe shortage of market rate homes and condominiums.
- Prices for existing homes and condominiums affordability has fallen to almost pre-recession values.
- The number of occupants, per household, has continued to increase over the past 10 years.
- Home ownership has dropped to the lowest level since the 1960’s.
- Businesses are not expanding when workers do not have adequate, market rate housing.
- New businesses are not relocating to our area if they have no housing for their employees.
- Unless the current restrictions for ‘affordable’ housing, such as low income or work in a specific profession/occupation are eliminated, potential buyers will be left with no housing alternatives.
- The Housing shortage is increasing traffic and congestion because workers have to commute longer distances, to their jobs, in areas that do not offer ample housing opportunities.
- Unless change can occur to provide more Market Rate housing, growth control ordinances and regulations will continue to keep the imbalance in our local housing market.

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## California State Water Project - support

The Conejo Simi Moorpark Association of Realtors® Board of Directors supports the completion of the California State Water Project. Having a stable water supply is critical in maintaining the standard of living and property values within our service area. We have communicated and had presentations by local water districts who service our areas. Most of our water for all of our communities is imported using the California aqueduct and Colorado River water. The large projects to complete the California State Water Project were in essence suspended in 1963 and we are now living with infrastructure built prior to that suspension. Water companies have adapted to using more recycled water, groundwater resources, and making use of equipment to purify substandard groundwater to drinking water specifications. Without completion of the California water project we will be in constant jeopardy of inadequate supply.

## Why CSMAR is in favor

- Quality of life and property values will be affected in our service area if we do not complete the California State Water Project.
- Local wildlife, trees and fauna are all affected and stressed.
- Increased fire danger because of this will be a constant threat.
- The original California water project was envisioned as a statewide plan to supply Southern California with additional water resources and minimize flooding in Northern California during very wet periods. We also face a potential that an earthquake could damage existing canals and cut off our water supply to Southern California. Finishing the California State Water Project should be engineered with that in mind.
- Our local water providers would like to see the California State water project completed.
- More than 70% of the water falling on California drains to the ocean.
- 2 years ago voters approved \$7.5 billion to solve our water shortage. That would be enough to make a huge difference in supply to Southern California. We just need to do it.

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## Business License Tax/Fee - opposed

Conejo Simi Moorpark Association of REALTORS® Board of Directors opposes any tax/fee of Realtors® individually as independent contractors. Business license tax/fees should be solely on the broker of each office which is the case today based upon where the office is located. It has only been recently that some cities have sent individual agents a notice requiring that an individual agent secure a separate business license. We oppose a business license tax/fee on both individual agents and employing brokers.

## Why CSMAR is opposed

- Brokers carry a business license tax/fee for their office and agents. The tax/fee is based on gross proceeds which includes all agent commissions. To ask an agent to pay for an individual business license is double taxation/fees.
- Business tax only in the city where the actual office is located.
- Under the Professions Code, only Brokers, not individual agents, can sell real estate.
- The Bureau of Real Estate licenses all licensees to conduct business anywhere in the state of California.
- It is only recently that some cities have instituted a policy for business license tax/fee for individual agents.
- The California Association of Realtors® has a position opposing business tax license fee for individual agents.

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## Open House Sign Sticker Requirement - opposed

Conejo Simi Moorpark Association of REALTORS® opposes a city's requirement to purchase stickers for open house signs. The city's rationale for selling stickers is that it would indicate that the sign has been approved. All other signs on public right of ways are deemed not approved and subject to being removed; causing the owner of the sign to try and retrieve them from the city offices.

## Why CSMAR is opposed

- Most companies have spent considerable funds in order to design a good recognizable sign. Defacing signs with stickers does not convey the professional presentation that is desired.
- If multiple cities required stickers for each open house sign, they would significantly detract from the purpose of the sign.
- Currently, sticker fees are on an annual basis adding marketing costs without any benefit.
- If the requirement for a sticker was to show approval of the sign then the fee should be a one-time fee. Requiring an annual fee indicates revenue generation rather than approval of open house signs.

## REVIEW of Growth Ordinance - support

Conejo Simi Moorpark Association of REALTORS® is in favor of the review of growth control ordinances that passed 20 years ago. These ordinances were passed in most cities and Ventura County. Those ordinances will have a severe impact on the number of new homes that can or will be built. This impacts the young people in our community and children who are now in school who may want to stay in the community as adults. It will also impact employers who will not have housing choices for their employees. There will be a severe obstacle in attracting new businesses.

## Why CSMAR is in favor

- Measure E in Thousand Oaks appears to limit the number of new residential units in the future to around 400 in total, not annually. This build out number is too low.
- We support increasing the number of residential units that can be built. We want those who grew up here to be able to stay here.
- The development process has been severely impacted by new rules, fees, reviews, and multiple approvals by different departments in the same city. To get a final approval for development permits this process needs to be streamlined and made efficient.

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