PRESS ADVISORY

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Board Approves Parking Ordinance to Provide Relief to Mountain Businesses

SAN BERNARDINO—March 13, 2012—On Tuesday, Supervisors unanimously approved an ordinance changing parking standards for some mountain businesses in recognition of the unique development issues mountain business owners face, including smaller lot sizes, steep slopes, and narrow streets.

"The change approved today brings some common sense to the development standards the County applies to mountain businesses," said Second District Supervisor Janice Rutherford, who worked closely with County staff to ensure the ordinance addressed mountain business owners' concerns. "The ordinance adopted today is a first step. This Board needs to continue listening to our local business owners and finding policy solutions that make it simpler for them to do business here in San Bernardino County."

The ordinance approved by the Board reduces the parking space requirement for mountain restaurants from a minimum of 10 to a minimum of four spaces. The standard remains the same for restaurants with more than 5,000 square feet of gross leasable area (GLA).

In addition, the ordinance allows the conversion of mountain businesses used for retail sales to restaurants without invoking additional county development code requirements. County Planning Staff supported the change because restaurant and retail uses generate a similar demand for parking in the village-type commercial enclaves in the mountain region.

Under the prior rules, a retail business in the mountains that was converted into a restaurant would need additional parking spaces to comply with development requirements for restaurants. The ordinance does not apply to conversions of businesses with more than 5,000 square feet of GLA nor does it apply to restaurants that provide entertainment or those that primarily serve alcoholic beverages.

The San Bernardino County Planning Commission considered the ordinance changes on Feb. 23 and recommended approval. The ordinance will come back to the Board on March 27 for a second reading and will become effective 30 days later.

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