



**AGENDA NO: I**

**MEETING DATE: November 10, 2021**

**AGENDA CORRESPONDENCE  
RECEIVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL FOR  
PUBLIC REVIEW PRIOR TO THE MEETING**

**From:** [Karen Robert](#)  
**To:** [Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Scott Collins](#)  
**Subject:** City Council Special Meeting November 10 - Agenda Item #I - Addressing Housing Needs  
**Date:** Saturday, November 6, 2021 8:22:53 AM

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Dear Mayor and City Council:

Re: City Council Goals and Action Items Adoption – Agenda No. I – Addressing Housing Needs

On October 24, we shared with you our concerns with 3 neighbor stories, highlighting why we felt affordable housing was a problem in our City. Councilmember Addis contacted us and let us know that affordable housing was one of the main city goals that would be addressed at the November 10 meeting and we needed to present our concerns at that time. We are grateful that Councilmember Addis shared this with us, and we are pleased that the Council has not backed away from the importance of this issue for our town. We are also grateful for Councilmember Ford's willingness to share with us her perspective as a current renter and how this issue has affected her personally.

We would once again like to include our neighbor stories.

**Neighbor Story #1:** A few years ago our well-respected, quiet neighbor across the street was evicted so that the owners could turn the home into a vacation rental.

**Neighbor Story #2:** A dear friend of ours second home in Morro Bay has become a full-time AirBNB at \$300 a night. If it rents each night, the potential income could be about \$9,000/month.

**Neighbor Story #3:** Last month our long time amazing gardener just let us know that he and his fiancé would not only be leaving Morro Bay, but would be moving out of state. Reason: because they do not see the possibility of ever being able to afford to purchase a home in this area, and the rent continues to rise beyond affordability. (Please note: he grew up here, he went to school here, including university and his parents still live here.)

We feel these neighbor stories are particularly important now considering that the city's #3 proposed city council goal is to address housing needs. Which includes under the same header #8: *'identify the opportunities for additional housing options and/or explore partnerships to support these efforts.'*

We also believe the City would benefit by being creative with some of their existing policies, and possibly implementing some new policies to help meet housing needs. We include below some of our concerns that were not addressed in the staff's report, and some of our ideas for possibly meeting those needs. (One thing - please include within your goal the word "affordable" housing needs. Because, it isn't just about finding or creating housing – it is about housing being affordable within our community – which, for the most part, it is not.

Most of us, have already read about how some local employers are having difficulty staying open normal or extended hours because they cannot find employees. We also hear about the many people leaving the area because they cannot afford to live in our community – not just our gardener and his fiancé.

Please understand that we do not fault the landlords for finding creative ways to make additional income. However, we need to think seriously about the impacts of how this affects our community and what the city can do to alleviate the pressures those decisions create for its residents and our local businesses.

One possibility...the City can and should do everything to find ways to ensure that no vacation rental is ever grandfathered or no new vacation rental applications are approved within our residential neighborhoods while these affordable housing challenges exist. So perhaps, one way to address housing needs would be for the city to create an emergency ordinance moratorium on grandfathering vacation rentals and/or issuing any new vacation rental applications.

We have plenty of motels and hotels within our city limits that can provide housing for tourists. As an aside, aren't there at least three more hotels being built in our town currently? One by Morro Bay High School, one on Main Street near Spencer's Market and one at 205 Harbor Street? It would seem that we are providing enough locations within our community for tourists to stay.

Why should our city be encouraging mass neighbor/potential neighbor exoduses from our communities when it is obvious there are few if any affordable rental spaces? Or giving landlords vacation rental options. Including allowing for vacation rental grandfathering options.

We appreciate that the city is investing in finding low-income housing opportunities – but what about mid-range housing opportunities, as well? Not everyone is capable of affording the rates that Morro Bay landlords are demanding, recently – to purchase or to rent.

And because the city has opted to allow for a vacation rental policy which has removed 175 homes from being available to rent citywide, would the city be open to considering implementing a rent control ordinance similar to what has been provided typically in mobile home parks in other cities?

Consider how many families in our community are barely getting by on one or more incomes—especially as they are attempting to recover from this pandemic period (which we are still in). A stable population of renewing, responsible renters is a good thing for landlords, who then save on the costs of reletting their properties and avoid the risks that come with adding new, unknown tenants. Also, keeping rental rates predictable and in check makes it easier for tenants to budget successfully and pay on schedule. Without rent control, landlords continue to increase rents by a more substantial margin than general inflation, pricing stable tenants out of a home, and forcing good people to leave the area. Which as we continue to see is exactly what is happening now on an ongoing basis. Which goes back to our local businesses ability to retain employees. This in turn can and will and has had an effect on our local economy.

We realize that the subject of affordable housing can be a difficult, sensitive and at times, emotional issue. We are hopeful that it will be an ongoing one that will be addressed often to meet the changing needs of our community. Thank you for listening.

Regards,

Karen Robert and Rick Gilligan

Residents



**AGENDA NO: II**

**MEETING DATE: November 10, 2021**

**AGENDA CORRESPONDENCE  
RECEIVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL FOR  
PUBLIC REVIEW PRIOR TO THE MEETING**

**From:** [Lynda Merrill](#)  
**To:** [Council](#)  
**Subject:** Special Meeting Nov. 10th:  
**Date:** Saturday, November 6, 2021 11:53:51 PM

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*Dear Mayor and Council Members,  
I do hope you will approve this contract with Townsend Public Affairs group, as our City employees need help with all of the many complex developments that have come our way. thank you for your hard work. I believe our City Manager, Scot Collins, to be the best we have ever had and I trust his judgment bringing this forward.  
Sincerely, Lynda Merrill*

RECOMMENDATION Staff recommends the Council authorize the City Manager to execute an 8-month retainer agreement (November 2021 – June 30, 2022) with Townsend Public Affairs, in a form reviewed and approved by the City Attorney, to: 1) Support efforts to gain state support and funding for the City’s goals, 2) Support offshore wind development and other economic development initiatives beneficial to Morro Bay, 3) Seek state grants for the Wastewater Reclamation Facility (WRF) project, OneWater infrastructure projects, and other infrastructure projects, and 4) Keep the City apprised of other relevant state legislation and funding opportunities.