

SOAR and Development

FACT

SOAR DOESN'T STOP DEVELOPMENT; IT GIVES VOTERS A CHOICE ON URBAN SPRAWL PROPOSALS.

The SOAR laws, created through a series of popular citizen initiatives, require voter approval before agriculture and open space can be rezoned for development.



SOAR and Affordable Housing

FACT

SOAR ALLOWS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECTS AND ENCOURAGES FARMWORKER HOUSING. [1]

SOAR exempts affordable and farmworker housing when it can't otherwise be built in a city and there is infrastructure next to a city to accommodate it, and it is needed in order to comply with State housing laws. The San Fernando Valley is an example of how indiscriminately paving over farmland didn't solve the tremendous housing affordability crisis.



SOAR and Housing Supply

FACT

WITH SOAR, TENS OF THOUSANDS OF HOUSES CAN STILL BE BUILT IN VENTURA COUNTY.

Ventura County and its ten cities have identified in their General Plans more than 24,000 housing units that can be built on existing residentially zoned land in the next six years. [2]



SOAR and Housing Costs

FACT

COMPACT DEVELOPMENT IN CITIES IS LESS EXPENSIVE THAN SUBURBAN SPRAWL DEVELOPMENT.

SOAR fights sprawl development. Studies show that sprawl development is more expensive than developments built within cities. [3] Counties that don't have SOAR, such as Orange County, once had thriving farmland but they paved it over. [4] They now have more than three times the population of Ventura County, yet their housing costs are higher with less affordability than Ventura County. [5] It shows that paving over agricultural land and open spaces does not ensure lower housing costs.



SOAR and the Economy

FACT

SOAR PROTECTIONS BENEFIT OUR LARGEST EMPLOYERS, ADDING CERTAINTY AND ATTRACTING NEW BUSINESSES.

SOAR's protection of farmland adds certainty to the agricultural industry to invest in the long term and the industry's viability in turn contributes to a stronger, more diversified economy. SOAR protections also allow for a buffer of protected farmland around one of the region's largest employers, Naval Base Ventura County, enhancing Base security and its ability to remain operational. Additionally, SOAR's protection of open space results in less traffic and smog, attracts home buyers, and motivates CEO's to move their businesses to the area. [6]



SOAR and Agriculture

FACT

SOAR'S PROTECTION OF FARMLAND HAS HELPED SUSTAIN A THRIVING AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY.

Ventura County's agricultural industry remains one of the largest sectors of our economy with values for crops exceeding \$2 billion. Compared to counties (such as Los Angeles, Orange and San Bernardino) that have developed most of their farmland, SOAR protections help sustain a thriving agricultural industry.



[1] Ventura County Counsel's summary of SOAR's most recent initiative passed by the voters in 2016 states the following: "the measure (SOAR) would make the following changes to the General Plan, among others: (1) eliminate voter approval requirements for redesignations needed to comply with state housing laws for all economic segments of the community (e.g., for low and very low income housing); ... (4) add a goal to promote infrastructure for farmworker housing."
 [2] Ventura County and its cities identified existing residentially zoned land that can accommodate an additional 24,452 housing units. Source: Ventura County 2021-2029 Housing Element, October 2021, pg 5-129, 2021-2029 Regional Housing Needs Allocation.
 [3] Compact development in cities is 38% less expensive than suburban sprawl development. Source: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2013-05-21/quantifying-the-cost-of-sprawl>
 [4] Orange County has paved over 78% of its farmland compared to 10% in Ventura County between 1984 and 2016. Source: California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping & Monitoring Program.
 [5] September 2023, the median home sold for \$859K in Ventura County and \$1.1M in Orange County (Realtor.com)
 [6] "Many entrepreneurs have launched their business start-up in Ventura County because of its affluent community that attracts high-quality talent with a special combination of ideal climate and beautiful surroundings."—Business Forward Ventura County <https://businessforwardvc.com/business-start-up-at-ventura-county/>