

## The Proposed Las Colinas Jail Expansion

On July 17, 2007, the City of Santee held a press conference to bring public attention to serious implications of the County's proposed Las Colinas Jail Expansion project. The County has selected a site at the center of Santee's premier urban center. The use of this land will cost taxpayers throughout San Diego County over \$165 million in lost revenue and devalued public property in Santee.

We encourage you to contact your local representatives to express your concern about the County's plans to expand Las Colinas at its current site and suggest that they consider more appropriate locations as part of their analysis. For your convenience, contact information is listed for public officials at the end of this article. Our community has made great strides in our efforts to attract more commercial and retail businesses, but the proposed jail expansion threatens to discourage future real estate development and business locating to Santee, and devalue surrounding property.

At the press conference, the City presented a fiscal study performed by The London Group that demonstrated how the County's plan would have a dramatic negative fiscal impact on County taxpayers. The report included an appraisal review by Jones, Roach & Caringella and a jail consultant report by Michael Lombardo of Criminal Justice Consultancy. The study team concluded overwhelmingly that an expanded jail was not the "highest and best use" of the County's land in Santee Town Center.

The complete study can be found at [www.ci.santee.ca.us](http://www.ci.santee.ca.us). The following are highlights from the report.

- The 45 acres the County has chosen for the Las Colinas Women's Jail expansion in Santee are much too valuable to be used as a jail.
- This property is valued at (approximately) \$1-2 million per acre and could be sold and developed commercially, providing the County with \$89 million in immediate revenue.
- The fiscal impacts of locating the expanded jail in Santee will devalue the County's adjacent property holdings in Santee by up to \$75 million. This includes devaluation of the County's 104-acre RiverView corporate office park project, and reduced market value for County property slated to be sold for revenue purposes.
- Contrary to what County staff maintains, the proposed jail project is not the "highest and best use" of the County's 45 acres in Santee. This same property could yield over \$89 million in revenue if sold and commercially developed for much-needed housing.
- The jail consultant's report identifies four alternative sites within the County that could be far superior to the Santee location.
- One of the alternative sites is adjacent to the County-owned Otay Mesa Jail. Construction of the Las Colinas Women's Jail on this property would result in significant operational and administrative cost savings to County taxpayers. By contrast, the Santee alternative would cost taxpayers \$89 million in lost revenue and \$75 million in public property devaluation.

The Las Colinas Jail desperately needs to be replaced, but Santee's thriving Town Center redevelopment area is the wrong place for a sprawling jail compound with barracks and guard towers, as proposed by the County. The County owns many other sites that would be more appropriate, and they could recoup millions of dollars by selling or leasing their Santee land.

We practice fiscal responsibility in our own businesses. Shouldn't we demand that the County do the same, especially when their funding comes from our region's taxpayers? Please help protect Santee's future and let our elected officials know that the proposed plan is unacceptable.

County Supervisors  
Dianne Jacob  
Ph. (619) 531-5522  
e-mail: [dianne.jacob@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:dianne.jacob@sdcounty.ca.gov)

Greg Cox  
Ph. (619) 531-5511  
e-mail: [greg.cox@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:greg.cox@sdcounty.ca.gov)

Pam Slater-Price  
Ph. (619) 531-5533  
e-mail: [pam.slater@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:pam.slater@sdcounty.ca.gov)

Ron Roberts  
Ph. (619) 531-5544  
e-mail: [ron-robrts@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:ron-robrts@sdcounty.ca.gov)

Bill Horn  
Ph. (619) 531-5555  
e-mail: [bill.horn@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:bill.horn@sdcounty.ca.gov)

Sheriff  
William B. Kolender  
Box 939062, San Diego, CA 62193-9062  
Ph. (858) 974-2222

State Elected Officials  
Assembly Member Joel Anderson  
District 77  
e-mail: [assemblymember.Anderson@assembly.ca.gov](mailto:assemblymember.Anderson@assembly.ca.gov)

Senator Dennis Hollingsworth  
District 36  
e-mail: [Senator.Hollingsworth@senate.ca.gov](mailto:Senator.Hollingsworth@senate.ca.gov)