



February 27, 2012

Santa Clara County Planning Commission
70 W Hedding St # 7
San Jose, CA 95110-1768

Re: Review of Winery Regulation Ordinance

Dear Chairman Lefaver and Honorable Commissioners,

Southern Santa Clara County has the perfect ingredients - climate, soil, and rural, picturesque communities - to create a regional and national agri-tourism industry with its vineyards. Greenbelt Alliance commends the County for placing value on the growing wine industry and recognizing the pivotal role the County can play in supporting agri-tourism and viable County wide agricultural enterprises. We thank you for allowing Greenbelt Alliance to participate in the conversation and provide comments during this process.

Due to the short release of the preliminary draft in advance of the Planning Commission meeting and the staff focus on the Working Winery Group's recommendations more than ordinance language we are providing overarching considerations regarding the recommendations. We hope to provide further detailed comments on the draft ordinance when the Planning Commission gives this further consideration.

Greenbelt Alliance recommends the County take an approach to the ordinance revisions that successfully and creatively promotes agriculture while striking a balance with the communities' best interest as expressed in the General Plan. The ordinance revision is a needed planning exercise to increase support and regulation of wineries as a part of the County's need to cultivate a wide array of agri-tourism activities in the urban-edge interface.

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As the County considers the Winery Working Group recommendations, Greenbelt Alliance asks the County to be attentive to changes that maximize economic opportunity without unintended consequences, such as water quality and habitat impacts. It is important that these intensive uses, when allowed by right, also preserve the ecosystem and quality of life that rural residents of Santa Clara County have sought.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to providing further comments in the future.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erin Munning". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Erin Munning
South Santa Clara County Campaign Manager
Greenbelt Alliance