

Short Term Rentals in Big Sur must be examined in the context of the BSLCP, its intent certified by the California Coastal Commission, and its implementation entrusted to Monterey County.

The Citizens Advisory Committee of the 70's and 80's met for years to craft the document that would carry the protection and preservation of the Big Sur coast into the future. It took years and hundreds of hours and was lauded upon its completion as a most forward sighted plan of its type. It still serves well these 30 years later.

But how times have changed since the quiet lifestyle sought by residents and visitors alike. It has been called a "social contract" between the community, the California Coastal Commission and Monterey County. There have been many organizations and individuals who have participated in that process. But the three main responsible constituents provided the structure to make this commitment a success into the future.

The functional component of this contract was agreed: the critical viewshed of this coast for its scenic beauty was to be the highest value to the greatest number of people. A commitment in this spirit was that Highway One would remain a two-lane scenic road from which the traveling public could enjoy the untrammelled beauty. In response to the physical limitations, protections were designed to prevent becoming a vacation destination.

Downzoning reduced residential potential to honor this critical view shed goal and the commitment of highway capacity was calculated. These restrictions did make private property expensive . The change of ownership over the years has also changed the community.

Community cohesiveness and participation in the essential services of health, safety and quality of life changed. But these community services were and are still provided by the resident community - volunteer fire & rescue, fund-raising, environmental protection, restoration and education. A new component by second and third homeowners replacing resident families entered the equation ...and still created viable community. The dynamic of community and neighbors widely dispersed up canyons and ridges proved flexible to a point.

Short Term Rentals have been prohibited from the start. The CAC wisely recognized that the fabric of community and its ability to sustain all the services that a rural community and neighborhoods must provide for itself would be destroyed by any commercialization of the residential "home" sector. Commercial was defined and limits were set to try to establish a viable carrying capacity for resident and visitor alike.

This matter of carrying capacity is the essence of viability into the future. As times, and visitation, and social media have brought overwhelming numbers, the subsequent health , safety & enjoyment of this coast and its established protections have been challenged in every sense of that word.

The participants in the "social contract" are urgently called upon to serve each its function:

The California Coastal Commission needs to recognize the limits of this one coastal area ...and that those limits have been exceeded to the detriment of all. It needs to respect and recognize the essential function of the resident community to provide all the services necessary to community and the visiting public. And the finite capacity must be recognized and defended. The resident community needs support as not only the life-force of the visiting public but the historic heart and soul of an extraordinary coast. The intrinsic qualities of a community in such a place as Big Sur are unique and irreplaceable. It will take a collective effort to sustain this balance between resident and visitor. With respect to STR, the prices that are commanded by the private homes here do not constitute affordable accommodations. It represents yet one more high end attraction for the very wealthy at the expense of the community.

Monterey County has the essential role of implementing the policies. It has failed to implement the STR prohibition. It has allowed commercial interests to sell the private enclaves of our community to

the highest bidder. It is a very lucrative business and these interests find it worth hiring lawyers to attempt to override the protections designed into the Local Coastal Plan. This public hearing represents the battlefield of the commercial forces and the preservation of the rural community that sustains the Big Sur coast. The prohibition of **Short Term Rentals** in Big Sur is essential to its viability. The county has collected TOT on these illegal practices instead of enforcing the prohibition.

Big Sur Community is struggling for its very existence. Less than 30 % of its workforce can be housed in the community. The travel expense and burdening of the limited highway capacity is an emergency in itself. A community renews itself with the younger generation ..they need to have the basic security of a living place to become the responsible community of the future. And the community is not just a workforce to the commercial efforts. Viability is based on diversity. Big Sur is renown for its artists, thinkers, nature lovers/sustainers, environmental research and psychological exploration ...and just people who love this place and want to LIVE here.

Looking to the future, the community and the public agencies are facing overwhelming challenges that need our collective efforts. Those efforts include:

Carrying Capacity: health, safety, road, services, maintenance of ecological health ..all have gone beyond sustainable numbers and patterns. It is an emergency and is the #1 priority for the participants of the "social contract" the BSLCP and its constituents represent.

Cumulative Effect: the sheer numbers of tourists have exceeded sustainability of the natural beauty and ecological health of this coast.

Quality of Experience: given recognition in management plans of the public agencies for years. That quality is essential for visitor and resident alike and should remain the priority in evolving ways into the further.

The California Coastal Commission still recognizes the Big Sur Local Coastal Plan as the standard of excellence. The social contract required from all responsible parties needs the integrity of those entities , both political and land use, to maintain that standard of excellence.

Short Term Rentals represent a destruction of community and the balance required to achieve a viable future for this coast. It is the responsibility of the county to implement the land use policies, and to continue the prohibition on STR's and enforce it effectively.