

Perry Lieber Comments on Commercial Construction Growth and Challenges in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties

VENTURA, CA, UNITED STATES, July 29, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Perry Lieber](#), a construction contracting consultant and construction manager based in Santa Barbara, California, has offered commentary on the current state of [commercial construction](#) activity across [Santa Barbara and Ventura](#) counties, noting measurable growth in several sectors alongside persistent obstacles that continue to slow project timelines.

Lieber, who tracks construction activity across both counties through his work detailed at [perryliebersonsb.com](#) and [perryliebersonventura.com](#), identified healthcare, mixed-use retail and residential development, and light industrial facilities as the sectors generating the most commercial construction volume in the region at present.

"Healthcare has been a steady driver for a while now," Lieber said. "You're seeing clinic expansions, outpatient facilities, medical office buildings — there's real demand there, and it hasn't let up. On the industrial side, the push for more local warehousing and distribution space picked up after the supply chain disruptions a few years back and it hasn't really slowed down."

Lieber attributed part of the broader uptick in commercial activity to population retention in both counties, as well as ongoing investment from regional employers expanding their physical footprints. Mixed-use developments, he noted, have drawn particular interest from developers working within walkable corridors in cities like Ventura and Santa Barbara.

"There's been a shift in how some developers are thinking about commercial space," he said. "They're not just building stand-alone retail or office anymore. Combining commercial ground floors with residential units above has become a more viable model, especially where land is limited."

Despite the activity, Lieber pointed to several factors complicating project delivery across both counties. Permitting timelines remain a significant concern, with local approval processes adding months to project schedules in some cases. He also noted that labor availability and subcontractor capacity continue to affect the pace at which projects can move from planning to construction.

"Getting permits through the system is still one of the bigger friction points," Lieber said. "That's

true in a lot of California markets, but in smaller jurisdictions it can be particularly pronounced. The staffing at some planning departments just hasn't kept pace with the volume of applications coming in."

Material costs, while somewhat stabilized compared to the volatility seen in 2021 and 2022, remain elevated above pre-pandemic levels, which Lieber said continues to affect project budgets and, in some cases, feasibility calculations for smaller developers.

"The numbers on some projects that made sense two or three years ago don't necessarily work the same way today," he said. "Developers are having to look more carefully at cost structures before committing."

Lieber said overall commercial activity in both counties remains above historical averages, with pipeline activity suggesting continued demand through the remainder of 2026.

ABOUT PERRY LIEBER:

Perry Lieber is a construction contracting consultant and construction manager based in Santa Barbara, California. He works on commercial and residential construction projects across Santa Barbara and Ventura counties.

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