

BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN BENITO

RESOLUTION 2024-11

A RESOLUTION OF THE SAN BENITO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO ADOPT A GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT FOR DELETION OF NEW COMMUNITY STUDY AREAS FROM THE SAN BENITO COUNTY 2035 GENERAL PLAN.

WHEREAS, at the regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of September 13, 2022, in accordance with §19.29.003 and §25.01.011(E) of the Code of San Benito County, California, the Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution 2022-103 to initiate a General Plan amendment process to eliminate from or modify the New Community Study Areas (NCSAs), including but not limited to emphasis on eliminating residential development other than that permitted for agricultural parcels under current AP (Agricultural Productive) and AR (Agricultural Rangeland) zoned densities in the Bolsa New Community Study Area in the 2035 San Benito County 2035 General Plan; and

WHEREAS subsequently, at the County Planning Commission regular meeting of April 19, 2023, after receiving a presentation regarding the NCSAs and their physical, environmental, and real property characteristics and constraints, Planning Commission members expressed interest in removal of all NCSAs from the 2035 General Plan; and

WHEREAS subsequently, at a special meeting on June 6, 2023, the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission jointly received a presentation on several planning topics including the NCSAs and generally expressed support for removing all of the NCSAs from the 2035 General Plan and to address this without delay; and

WHEREAS the current project, now known as County Planning file REF230001, would amend the San Benito County 2035 General Plan to remove map and text references to New Community Study Areas (NCSAs) and text references to New Community policy more generally, said changes being detailed within **Exhibit C**; and

WHEREAS the four NCSAs (Bolsa, Fairview, Union, and San Juan) are defined in mapping and policy text within the 2035 General Plan Land Use Element and as mapped contain a collective area of approximately 28,757 acres; and

WHEREAS the 2035 General Plan designates the NCSAs as being mostly within the Agriculture (A) land use designation, with a maximum residential density of 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres, and the Rangeland (RG) land use designation, with a maximum residential density of 1 dwelling unit per 40 acres; and

WHEREAS the General Plan states that the “purpose of identifying the New Community Study Areas is to provide the opportunity for San Benito County to accommodate some future growth in new unincorporated communities, while protecting productive agricultural lands, preserving open space, and creating a sustainable land use pattern in the county”; and

WHEREAS the General Plan Land Use Element Policy LU-8.4 specifies that any implementation of an NCSA would require a General Plan amendment and Specific Plan application, together with compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), through public hearings before both the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors; and

WHEREAS, since the 2035 San Benito County was adopted in 2015, it has become apparent that a number of policies and resource constraints may cause residential development in the New Community

Study Areas to be undesirable, including inadequate transportation infrastructure until such time as State Route 25 and other county arterial road capacity can be constructed and conditions improved, and that a need exists to provide better jobs–housing balance in the county, currently with approximately 44 percent of workers age 16 or over commuting to jobs outside San Benito County,¹ and to establish measures to preserve and protect significant areas of important productive farmland from development; and

WHEREAS the adopted 6th cycle Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) goals emphasize that residential growth should occur predominantly within the City of Hollister and not in areas of productive farmland of the unincorporated County; and

WHEREAS on July 21, 2015, the County Board of Supervisors certified² the General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR), which, pursuant to CEQA, evaluated potential environmental impacts of adopting the 2035 General Plan both with and without the NCSAs, and in certifying the EIR the Board adopted mitigation measures corresponding to the EIR’s study of a scenario omitting NCSAs despite subsequently adopting on the same date the 2035 General Plan with NCSAs included³; and

WHEREAS the 2035 General Plan was adopted as a comprehensive update of the County’s previous General Plan (adopted in 1982, then amended periodically), including the continuation of many existing policies, the modification or deletion of others, and the addition of new policies such as those of the New Community Study Areas; and

WHEREAS no New Community has yet been implemented, with the exception of one project⁴ concurrently in planning at the time of the EIR’s preparation; and

WHEREAS County staff, in accordance with State Government Code §65352, referred the proposed General Plan amendment to the relevant agencies listed in §65352(a) for a 45-day period to provide comment on the proposed action; and

WHEREAS County staff, pursuant to State Government Code §65352 and §65352.3, made available a 90-day period for Native American tribal representatives to request consultation regarding the proposed General Plan amendment; and

WHEREAS the Planning Commission of the County of San Benito reviewed and considered the proposed General Plan amendment along with all written and oral testimony presented at a regularly scheduled public hearing held on December 13, 2023; and

WHEREAS the Planning Commission, based on the foregoing findings and evidence in the record, has recommended under Planning Commission Resolution 2023-17 that the Board of Supervisors adopt the proposed General Plan amendment together with necessary findings and CEQA analysis; and

WHEREAS the current proposal if adopted by the Board of Supervisors would be the first amendment to the General Plan during the calendar year of 2024; and

WHEREAS real property within all the NCSAs together is owned by approximately 1,200 unique property owners; and

¹ American Community Survey 2022 1-Year Estimates Table S0801 (Commuting Characteristics by Sex).

² Under Board Resolution 2015-58.

³ Under Board Resolution 2015-59.

⁴ San Juan Oaks (General Plan Amendment 13-14, Specific Plan 006-13, Zone Change 13-179, and Tentative Subdivision Map 13-86), approved in November 2015, four months after 2035 General Plan adoption.

WHEREAS notice of the public hearing before the Board of Supervisors was given pursuant to State Government Code §65090 *et seq.*, especially §65091(a)(4-5), by a one-sixth-page newspaper display advertisement published in the Hollister *Free Lance* edition of January 26, 2024; and

WHEREAS the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Benito reviewed and considered the proposed General Plan amendment along with all written and oral testimony presented at a regularly scheduled public hearing held on February 6, 2024; and

WHEREAS, at the conclusion of the public testimony, the Board of Supervisors closed the public hearing, deliberated, and considered the merits of the current proposal,


NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that, based on the evidence in the record, the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Benito hereby adopts the findings regarding amendment of the General Plan and attached as **Exhibit A**, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors hereby adopts an addendum to San Benito County 2035 General Plan Environmental Impact Report to declare pursuant to CEQA that conditions do not exist that would require preparation of a subsequent or supplemental EIR for the current action, said addendum being attached as **Exhibit B**, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, based on the foregoing findings and evidence in the record, the Board of Supervisors hereby adopts the presently proposed General Plan amendment, its map edits and text edits being detailed in **Exhibit C**.

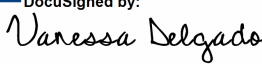
PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN BENITO THIS 6TH DAY OF FEBRUARY 2024 BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES 4	Supervisor(s): Curro, Sotelo, Zanger, Kosmicki
NOES 1	Supervisor(s): Gonzales
ABSENT 0	Supervisor(s): None
ABSTAIN 0	Supervisor(s): None

DocuSigned by:

 By: _____
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 Angela Curro, Chair of the Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM

DocuSigned by:

 By: _____
 38EF8C2E3828430...
 Vanessa Delgado, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors


 By: _____
 Sean Cameron, Assistant County Counsel

Date: 02-06-2024

Date: January 30, 2024

Exhibit A to Board of Supervisors Resolution

General Plan Amendment Findings

Finding 1: The approval of the General Plan amendment is deemed to be in the public’s interest, and compelling reasons exist to amend the General Plan to address changes in State or federal law and problems and opportunities that were unanticipated at the time of adoption or the last amendment.

Evidence:

- *The amendment removes a policy allowing development discontinuous from existing developed areas. Multiple policies and resource constraints may cause residential development in the New Community Study Areas to be undesirable, including inadequate transportation infrastructure until such time as State Route 25 and other county arterial road capacity can be constructed and conditions improved. A need exists to provide better jobs–housing balance in the county, currently with approximately 44 percent of workers age 16 or over commuting to jobs outside San Benito County,⁵ and to establish measures to preserve and protect significant areas of important productive farmland from development.*
- *Adopted 6th-cycle Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) goals emphasize that residential growth should occur predominantly within the City of Hollister and not in areas of productive farmland of the unincorporated county.*
- *Much potentially available land within the Fairview NCSA largely coincides with Prime Farmland and Grade-1 soil. Approximately half of the Bolsa NCSA flatlands contain Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance, and the majority of the remaining flatlands are farmland recognized for other levels of importance.*
- *The Union and Fairview NCSAs are too fragmented into rural-styled residential developments and other lots of 40 acres or smaller to accommodate a coherent, properly scaled community with a self-contained “mix of residential, commercial, employment, parks, and open space centered around community cores” as envisioned by the Land Use Element.*
- *Hillier portions of the Bolsa NCSA, most of the Union NCSA, and the great majority of the San Juan NCSA have slopes requiring high-intensity and large-volume earthmoving with potentially excessive environmental effects.*
- *The San Juan NCSA especially has terrain constraints, with few areas distant from slopes over 30 percent and few physical possibilities of reaching lands within the NCSA beyond those adjacent to Rocks Road, including those already developed as part of the Rancho Larios subdivision. Much of this NCSA is also set aside with open space, habitat, and agricultural conservation easements or similar title limitations and is therefore unavailable to the New Community concept.*

Finding 2: The General Plan amendment substantially complies with requirements of State Government Code §65302, regarding the required contents and topics to be included in General Plan mandatory elements.

Evidence: *The 2035 General Plan was a comprehensive update adopted in July 2015 and amended subsequently. Among elements mandated by State Government Code §65302, the current amendment modifies the 2035 General Plan’s Land Use Element and, serving as the mandatory open space and conservation elements, the Natural and Cultural Resources Element. While the General Plan presently does not contain an Environmental Justice Element, revision of two or more elements necessitates a finding of compliance with State law on this mandatory element.*

- **Land use per Government Code §65302(a)** — *The revision removes the central policy basis for New Community Study Areas from the Land Use Element. The change maintains all mandatory land use planning details including distribution, location, and extent of land uses and standards of population density and building intensity.*

⁵ American Community Survey 2022 1-Year Estimates Table S0801 (Commuting Characteristics by Sex).

Exhibit A to Board of Supervisors Resolution (Findings, continued)

- **Conservation** per Government Code §65302(d) — *The revision deletes reference to New Community Study Areas within a policy requiring visual screening for such development. The change affects no conservation planning details mandated for inclusion.*
- **Open space** per Government Code §65302(e) — *Deletion of New Community Study Areas, in addition to removing policy allowing urban or suburban densities of development in locations away from established communities with similar densities, makes no changes diminishing compliance with mandates for open-space planning details, including those of Government Code §65560 et seq., regarding open-space lands.*
- **Environmental justice** per Government Code §65302(h) — *The General Plan presently does not contain an Environmental Justice Element. Revision of two or more elements concurrently from 2018 onward requires adoption or review of this element if the jurisdiction has a disadvantaged community. For the purposes of Senate Bill 535 (2012) and Assembly Bill 1550 (2016), the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) has identified disadvantaged communities based on “geographic, socioeconomic, public health, and environmental hazard criteria” and has found no such disadvantaged communities in San Benito County. Therefore, while the present General Plan amendment revises two or more elements concurrently, no Environmental Justice Element adoption is currently required.*

Exhibit B to Board of Supervisors Resolution

**Addendum to San Benito County 2035 General Plan
(General Plan Amendment 09-42)
Environmental Impact Report
(State Clearinghouse No. 201111016) for
New Community Study Areas Map/Text Deletion**

**County of San Benito
February 6, 2024**

The current project proposes to amend the San Benito County 2035 General Plan (2035 General Plan) to remove New Community policy including map and text references to New Community Study Areas (NCSAs). (The project is also known as County Planning file REF230001.) A program-level environmental impact report (EIR) was prepared for the 2035 General Plan in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and included study of effects from actions equivalent to those of the current project. Having not triggered the conditions in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 and 15164, the current action requires no analysis under a subsequent or supplemental EIR, and an addendum to the EIR represents sufficient CEQA review of the action.

Triggers for Further Environmental Review Under CEQA

To provide a degree of finality, CEQA requires that, once an EIR has been completed and certified, the lead agency may not require preparation of a subsequent or supplemental EIR unless one of three triggering conditions exists as described below by State CEQA Guidelines Section 15162(a)(1–3):

(a) When an EIR has been certified or negative declaration adopted for a project, no subsequent EIR shall be prepared for that project unless the lead agency determines, on the basis of substantial evidence in light of the whole record, one or more of the following:

(1) Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects;

(2) Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or

(3) New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the negative declaration was adopted, shows any of the following:

(A) The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR or negative declaration;

(B) Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR;

(C) Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found not to be feasible would in fact be feasible and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the project, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative; or

Exhibit B to Board of Supervisors Resolution (Addendum to EIR, continued)

(D) Mitigation measures or alternatives which are considerably different from those analyzed in the previous EIR would substantially reduce one or more significant effects on the environment, but project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15164 states, in relevant part: “The lead agency or responsible agency shall prepare an addendum to a previously certified EIR if some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for the preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred.” Furthermore, although not required under the law, a lead agency may prepare an addendum to a previously certified EIR to evaluate changes to a project, changes in circumstances, or new information, and to document the agency’s determination that an environmental review under CEQA is not required. See Section 15164.

Previous Documentation Under Prior Certified Environmental Impact Report

The San Benito County 2035 General Plan (2035 General Plan) was considered under the project file known as General Plan Amendment 09-42, for which a program-level environmental impact report (EIR) was prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines §15161 and §15168. The San Benito County (County) Planning Commission at a public hearing on July 1, 2015, adopted Resolution 2015-04 to recommend that the County Board of Supervisors certify the EIR. The County Board of Supervisors subsequently, at a public hearing on July 21, 2015, adopted Resolution 2015-58 to make findings pursuant to CEQA and to certify the EIR and adopted Resolution 2015-59 to adopt the 2035 General Plan.

The EIR examined and disclosed all environmental impacts of the project as compared to the existing environment across San Benito County from both a local and regional perspective. At its public hearing on July 21, 2015, the Board of Supervisors considered the EIR along with the recommended mitigation measures, the mitigation monitoring and reporting program, the statement of overriding considerations, and all findings required by CEQA. The public hearing resulted in the Board’s adoption of Resolution 2015-58, certifying the EIR, adopting findings required by CEQA including a statement of overriding considerations, and adopting a mitigation monitoring program.

Among other things, the 2035 General Plan contemplates a significant amount of residential development that is anticipated to occur during the planning horizon to address the County’s housing needs for all economic segments and, in particular, to satisfy the County’s regional housing needs in accordance with State housing law. The EIR analyzed the environmental consequences of implementing the 2035 General Plan, including the planned growth described therein as well as the various programs and policies (including, without limitation, Program LU-8) set forth in the 2035 General Plan that are designed to guide that planned growth.

Prior to approval of subsequent actions under the 2035 General Plan that constitute a “project” under CEQA, the County is required to determine whether the environmental effects of such actions are within the scope of the project covered by the EIR, and whether additional environmental analysis is required. If the agency finds that none of the triggers set forth in State CEQA Guidelines §15162 has occurred, then no further environmental review shall be required, and the County may document these conclusions in an addendum pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines §15164(e).

Addendum Pursuant to Section 15164 (Analysis of Current Proposal in Relation to Prior EIR)

The Revised Draft EIR (RDEIR), a programmatic and non-project-level analysis circulated in March 2015, described two growth scenarios. Scenario 1, the Hollister-Centered Growth Scenario,

Exhibit B to Board of Supervisors Resolution (Addendum to EIR, continued)

“envision[ed] that the majority of new population growth [through 2035] would occur in the unincorporated area of the County in and around the City of Hollister SOI [sphere-of-influence].” Scenario 2, the New Community Study Areas Plus Hollister General Plan Growth Scenario, pictured the same as in the other scenario but with the same 2035 population distributed in both Scenario 1’s area and in New Community Study Areas. In adopting the 2035 General Plan with New Community Study Areas (NCSAs) included, the County effectively adopted Scenario 2, while removing NCSAs from the 2035 General Plan would enact Scenario 1.

The RDEIR described New Community Study Areas in its Introduction to the Environmental Analysis:

The 2035 General Plan identifies New Community Study Areas to indicate the County’s interest in studying the potential for development of new urban communities The boundaries of these study areas are illustrated ... [as] diagrammatic and is not intended to be precise. The underlying land use designations in areas shown as New Community Study Areas are not proposed to be changed as result of the 2035 General Plan Update and instead will continue to be designated as they are today ... unless and until proponents of a proposed new community propose and obtain approval of a General Plan amendment to change those designations. ...

... As set forth in the 2035 General Plan and in compliance with CEQA, any proposal for a new community would require preparation of a specific plan, including infrastructure and financing plans, as well as a completion of a project-level environmental review, which would be the vehicle to assess any potential environmental effects attributable to a specific proposed project.

At the time this RDEIR was prepared, the location, size, configuration, or range of uses of any potential future new communities cannot be known, and thus it would be speculative to evaluate the specific potential environmental impacts that could be caused by development in a New Community Study Area. For this reason, this RDEIR does not provide detailed environmental analysis of any particular new community proposal since none has been presented at this time. Nonetheless, the RDEIR provides a broad-brush evaluation of a potential growth scenario (Scenario 2 in this document) that could result if, after study, further environmental evaluation, and adoption of a specific plan, a sustainably designed new community were developed within the unincorporated County as set forth in the 2035 General Plan goals and policies.

The topical analysis in the RDEIR considered both scenarios and mostly found the same mitigation suitable in both cases for reducing the severity of impacts:

- **Agriculture and Forestry Resources.** Analysis on agriculture and forestry resources identified a significant and unavoidable conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses as Impact AG-3. The analysis concluded that Scenario 1, the Hollister-Centered Growth Scenario, required more intensive mitigation than Scenario 2 and its NCSA effect required. However, despite adopting Scenario 2, the Board of Supervisors adopted Impact AG-3-Scenario 1’s greater mitigation⁶ in Resolution 2015-58 anyway. For the remaining agriculture and forestry resources impacts, the chapter concluded that each scenario was adequately mitigated by the same mitigation measures.
- **Transportation and Circulation.** Identified impacts to transportation and circulation systems resulted in differing mitigation for the two scenarios, with conclusions informed by analysis of both level of service and vehicle-miles traveled. Upon EIR certification, despite including NCSAs in the plan, the Board of Supervisors adopted mitigation responding to the Hollister-centered Scenario 1 and not Scenario 2. Therefore, the currently proposed removal of NCSAs that are the basis of

⁶ The greater mitigation added or changed drafted General Plan policy text to increase attention to agricultural effects from mining activity (Policy NCR-5.15) and energy facilities (Policy NCR-6.3).

Exhibit B to Board of Supervisors Resolution (Addendum to EIR, continued)

Scenario 2 and shifting instead toward an equivalent of Scenario 1 is adequately mitigated by measures already adopted.

- **Other Environmental Topics.** All other topical sections of the EIR concluded that both Hollister-centered Scenario 1 and NCSA-incorporating Scenario 2 were adequately addressed by the same mitigation measures.

Board of Supervisors Resolution 2015-58 then certified the EIR. The resolution

- acknowledged mitigable effects and unavoidable significant effects,
- identified project alternatives including the Hollister-centered growth alternative as environmentally superior but rejected these for infeasibility and failure to achieve stated project objectives, and
- concluded with a statement of overriding considerations justifying approval of the project including its significant and unavoidable effects based on social, economic, and other benefits.

When the project's CEQA process was completed, the result of adopting Scenario 2 and its NCSAs was, following EIR certification, practically indistinguishable from the hypothetical alternative of having adopted Scenario 1, this being effectively equivalent to the present proposal to remove NCSAs.

For this reason, the County has determined that none of the triggers under Section 15162 has occurred in connection with the County's consideration of the current proposal.

CEQA Addendum Finding: Pursuant to Sections 15162 and 15164 of State CEQA Guidelines, the County finds, based on substantial evidence in light of the whole record, that:

(a) The proposed General Plan amendment does not propose such substantial changes to County policy as to require major revisions to the environmental impact report due to new or substantially more severe significant environmental effects than previously analyzed in the environmental impact report.

(b) There have been no substantial changes in circumstances under which County policy would be exercised and implemented that will require major revisions to the environmental impact report due to new or substantially more severe significant environmental effects than previously analyzed in the environmental impact report.

(c) No new information of substantial importance as described in subsection (a)(3) of Section 15162 has been revealed that would require major revisions to the environmental impact report.

Evidence: *The environmental impact report (EIR) analyzed the effects of adopting the San Benito County 2035 General Plan. Among the mitigation measures were modifications to the plan from how it had been drafted prior to the EIR, with the changes forming policy more responsive to environmental sensitivity.*

The analysis contemplated the effects of two scenarios, one a planning policy document that included New Community Study Areas (NCSAs) and one that omitted NCSAs. The EIR evaluated the distribution of population, housing, and employment under both scenarios, and the document concluded that the two required mostly the same mitigation. Where mitigation differed, the County Board of Supervisors adopted mitigation more relevant to the scenario omitting NCSAs, effectively equivalent to the current proposed action, than to the scenario including NCSAs. Upon certifying the EIR in July 2015, the Board of Supervisors acknowledged that mitigating some of the noted significant environmental impacts would be infeasible and adopted a statement of overriding considerations expressing that benefits of the project would justify approval of the project despite significant effects.

Exhibit B to Board of Supervisors Resolution (Addendum to EIR, continued)

With the scenario omitting NCSAs having already been analyzed and its associated mitigation measures having already been adopted, the effect of the present proposed change equivalent to that scenario is already known to the public and to County decision-makers. The current project will not require major revisions to address new or substantially more severe significant environmental effects.

The inclusion of New Community Study Areas (NCSAs) policy and mapping in the 2035 General Plan did not in itself entitle any development, whether such development could effectuate environmental impacts or not. An amendment to delete the NCSAs, likewise, does not entitle any development. Each future individual development application subject to the 2035 General Plan as amended will be required to comply with CEQA including the appropriate level of environmental review under State law. The same CEQA compliance would be required of proposed development applications without this amendment. No New Community has yet been implemented, apart from San Juan Oaks (General Plan Amendment 13-14, Specific Plan 006-13, Zone Change 13-179, and Tentative Subdivision Map 13-86), a project concurrently in planning at the time of the EIR's preparation and approved in November 2015, four months after 2035 General Plan adoption.

Since initial adoption the 2035 General Plan has been amended multiple times, all in ways not affecting the policy requirements of planning and implementing NCSAs. Other development and land use changes have occurred according to 2035 General Plan policy components that would remain in effect after the proposed plan amendment. Neither substantial change in circumstances around County policy exercise and implementation nor appearance of new and substantially important information has occurred that would indicate new or substantially more severe significant environmental effects requiring major revisions to the environmental impact report.

As stated in the CEQA Addendum Finding, no further environmental review has been triggered pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines §15162(a-c) in consideration of the New Community Study Areas map and text deletion (County Planning file REF230001), with no potentially severe environmental effect derived from substantial policy change not already contemplated under CEQA, from substantial change in circumstances around County policy, or from new and substantially important information. Therefore, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15164, this Addendum to the previously certified environmental impact report is appropriate to document the County's conclusions that further environmental review is not required with regard to the current action.

Exhibit C to Board of Supervisors Resolution

General Plan Amendment Map and Text Edits

The following 23 pages detail the New Community policy edits to the 2035 General Plan hereby adopted by this Board resolution. These edits modify the

- Table of Contents (2 pages),
- Vision Statement (1 page),
- Land Use Element (18 pages),
- Economic Development Element (1 page), and
- Natural and Cultural Resources Element (1 page).

Changes are denoted by underlining and strikeout text.

These pages are intended to illustrate only substantive changes to General Plan content, including maps and policy text, and are not intended to specify other elements such as page numbers, footers, and precise layout of text and graphics.



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Guiding Principles

Guiding principles are fundamental ideas that represent the County's philosophy about future change, including new development, economic growth, and sustainability. The following guiding principles expand on the main ideas contained in the vision so that important concepts are given more weight. They are also organized based on specific topics of importance to the community.

Land Use and Community Character

1. Encourage new growth in existing unincorporated communities, ~~new communities~~, or clustered developments in order to preserve prime farmland and rangeland, protect natural habitats, and reduce the financial, social, and environmental impacts of urban sprawl.
2. Ensure that there is a mix of residential, commercial, employment, park, open space, school, and public land uses in order to create a sense of place by supporting condensed, pedestrian accessible, and transit-oriented development.
3. Promote higher residential densities in existing unincorporated urban areas ~~and new communities~~ while encouraging mixed-use development.
4. Ensure new development complements and preserves the unique character and beauty of San Benito County.
5. Establish defined boundaries to separate cities and unincorporated communities from prime agricultural land and important natural resources, using such features as agriculture buffers, greenbelts, open space, and parks.

Housing

6. Ensure a full range of housing options are available to accommodate residents of all income levels and life situations.
7. Balance housing growth with employment growth in order to provide local, affordable housing choices so people can live and work in the county.

Agriculture

8. Ensure that agriculture and agriculture-related industries remain a major economic sector by protecting productive agriculture lands and industries, promoting new and profitable agricultural sectors, and supporting new technologies that increase the efficiency and productivity of commodity farming.
9. Encourage agriculture that is locally-produced, profitable, and attracts related businesses.



SECTION 3

LAND USE ELEMENT

San Benito County has land use regulatory authority over all unincorporated land in the county, which includes everything except land within the city limits of Hollister and San Juan Bautista, or land owned/managed by either the State or Federal governments (e.g., State Parks, National Parks, Bureau of Land Management areas, and tribal lands). The County's jurisdiction covers roughly 83 percent of all land in the county, the vast majority of which is designated either Rangeland (RG) or Agriculture (A). However, there are more intensive residential and urban uses within the San Juan and Hollister valleys, particularly surrounding the two cities.

The purpose of the Land Use Element is twofold. First, this element includes a series of land use designations that identify the type and intensity of uses permissible on unincorporated property in the county. This includes the Land Use Diagram, which graphically illustrates where land use designations are applied. Second, this element includes a series of goals and policies identifying the County's philosophy for future change, development, and resource protection in the county over the next 25 years. The focus of this element is to identify ways the County can encourage growth in existing unincorporated communities, ~~new communities~~, or clustered residential developments in order to preserve prime farmland and rangeland, protect natural habitats, and reduce the financial, social, and environmental impacts of urban sprawl.



Land Use Diagram

The Land Use Diagram depicts the boundaries of land uses for San Benito County through the year 2035 and beyond. The boundary lines between land use designations are delineated as specifically as possible, in most cases following parcel lines. For larger parcels, particularly outside of the Hollister and San Juan valleys, the boundary lines between land use designations are indicated more generally. These boundaries will be more clearly delineated by subsequent general plan amendments as more detailed planning is undertaken for these areas in the future (e.g., community plans, specific plans).

The 2035 General Plan includes three diagrams that collectively comprise the Land Use Diagram (shown on the following pages). These include:

- **Figure 3-1: Land Use Diagram (County-wide).** This diagram shows land use designations for the entire county.
- **Figure 3-2: Land Use Diagram (North County Detail).** This diagram is a detail of the land use designations in the northern part of the county, primarily the Hollister and San Juan valleys and surrounding areas.
- **Figure 3-3: Land Use Diagram (Census-Designated Places Detail).** This diagram is detail of the land use designations of the Census-Designated Places in the county: Aromas, Ridgemark, and Tres Pinos.

Countywide Growth and Development

The County has a direct role in shaping the character of rural and urban development as it manages growth in the unincorporated county. At the same time, the County seeks to support and encourage the cities in their land use planning efforts to ensure that a quality living environment is provided for all existing and future county residents.

The focus of this goal section is to identify general countywide growth and development patterns envisioned in the unincorporated parts of San Benito County that will be able to sustainably accommodate the county's projected growth. (*Note: see city General Plans for land use policies within city limits.*)



View from Park Hill in Hollister. (Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

GOAL LU-1

To maintain San Benito County's rural character and natural beauty while providing areas for needed future growth.

LU-1.1 Countywide Development 🌍

The County shall focus future development in areas around cities where infrastructure and public services are available, within existing unincorporated communities, ~~and within a limited number of new communities~~, provided they meet the requirements of goal section LU-7 and demonstrate a fiscally neutral or positive impact on the County and any special districts that provide services to the project. (RDR)



LU-1.2 Sustainable Development Patterns



The County shall promote compact, clustered development patterns that use land efficiently; reduce pollution and the expenditure of energy and other resources; and facilitate walking, bicycling, and transit use; and encourage employment centers and shopping areas to be proximate to residential areas to reduce vehicle trips. Such patterns would apply to infill development, and unincorporated communities, ~~and the New Community Study Areas. The County recognizes that the New Community Study Areas comprise locations that can promote such sustainable development.~~ (RDR)

LU-1.3 Future Development Timing

The County shall ensure that future development does not outpace the ability of either the County or other public/private service providers to provide adequate services and infrastructure. The County shall review future development proposals for their potential to reduce the level of services provided to existing communities or place economic hardships on existing communities, and the County may deny proposals that are projected to have these effects. (RDR/MPSP)

LU-1.4 Identifiable Community Boundaries

The County shall encourage defined boundaries between communities (e.g., cities and unincorporated communities). (RDR/IGC)

LU-1.5 Infill Development

The County shall encourage infill development on vacant and underutilized parcels to maximize the use of land within existing urban areas, minimize the conversion of productive agricultural land and open spaces, and minimize environmental impacts associated with new development as one way to accommodate growth. (RDR/IGC)

LU-1.6 Hillside Development Restrictions

The County shall prohibit residential and urban development on hillsides with 30 percent or greater slopes. (RDR)

LU-1.7 Community Plans

The County should consider the development and adoption of Community Plans for existing unincorporated communities in order to maintain/establish a community identity, coordinate traffic and circulation improvements, promote infill development where public services are already in demand, identify recreational needs, and ensure coordinated development. (RDR)

LU-1.8 Site Plan Environmental Content Requirements

The County shall require all submitted site plans, tentative maps, and parcel maps to depict all environmentally sensitive and hazardous areas, including: 100-year floodplains, fault zones, 30 percent or greater slopes, severe erosion hazards, fire hazards, wetlands, and riparian habitats. (RDR)

LU-1.9 Airport Land Use Coordination and Consistency

The County shall coordinate planning and zoning with the San Benito County Airport Land Use Commission and ensure that all land uses and regulations within the Hollister and Frazier Airports areas of influence are consistent with the adopted San Benito County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. (RDR/IGC)

LU-1.10 Development Site Suitability

The County shall encourage specific development sites to avoid natural and manmade hazards, including, but not limited to, active seismic faults, landslides, slopes greater than 30 percent, and floodplains. Development sites shall also be on soil suitable for building and maintaining well and septic systems (i.e., avoid impervious soils, high percolation or high groundwater areas, and pro-



LU-3.10 Agricultural Land Mitigation

If new development permanently converts Prime Farmland that is Class 1 soil to non-agricultural uses, the County shall encourage project applicants to preserve up to an equal number of Prime Farmland acres (i.e. up to a 1:1 ratio) either on- or off-site. An applicant may pay an in lieu mitigation fee(s) for some or all of the converted Prime Farmland that is designated Class 1 soils to non-agricultural uses as agreed in a development agreement. The funds collected shall be used for agricultural protection and/or affiliated programs within San Benito County. Further, the County shall work with the City of San Juan Bautista and the City of Hollister to encourage them to adopt a similar agricultural conversion mitigation ratio. *(RDR/MPSP/IGC)*

LU-3.11 Williamson Act Contract Non-Renewal on Small Parcels

For parcels not operated as part of a larger farming operation, the County shall consider not renewing current Williamson Act contracts on small parcels that are not devoted to commercial agriculture. *(MPSP)*

LU-3.12 Agricultural Viability of Small Parcel Sizes

The County shall require project applicants seeking to subdivide agriculturally-zoned parcels to demonstrate the continued viability of lots less than 40 acres for commercial agriculture operations. *(RDR)*

LU-3.13 Illegal Dumping

The County shall work with property owners, waste collection providers, and law enforcement to find solutions to illegal dumping on agricultural properties such as offering free trash drop-off days and increased penalties for illegal dumping. *(MPSP)*

LU-3.14 Land Trusts and Financial Incentives

The County shall consider land trusts and financial incentives to preserve agricultural soil resources and to protect the integrity of important agricultural areas for future use. *(MPSP/FB)*

LU-3.15 Williamson Act Minimum Parcel Size

For parcels not operating as part of a larger farming operation, the County shall encourage larger parcel size minimums (40 or more acres) and/or evidence of commercial agricultural use for entering new Williamson Act contracts.

Residential Development

San Benito County contains a wide array of housing types – from urban multi-family complexes near Hollister to rural residential uses surrounding Aromas. The various densities of residential development in the county not only provide housing choices, but their location and design play a critical role in the character and quality-of-life of county residents. Table LU-1 identifies the various residential land use designations used in San Benito County. The County is committed to protecting existing residential development rights, while also providing guidance on the location, design, and components of new subdivisions.

The focus of this goal section is to guide residential development in the county. This includes establishing requirements for new subdivisions, providing incentives for clustering residential units, and providing incentives for transferring development credits away from important agricultural and natural resources. *(Note: see Section 5: Housing Element for policies related to affordable and special needs housing, and see Goal Section LU-8 for policies related to New Communities.)*



Promoting the development of new employment uses in the unincorporated parts of the county is a major goal of the 2035 General Plan.

GOAL LU-6

To promote the development of new industrial and employment uses in the unincorporated parts of the county that are compatible with surrounding land uses and meet the present and future needs of county residents.

LU-6.1 Employment Centers

The County shall encourage the development of visually attractive, carefully planned employment centers and industrial uses in areas with suitable topography and adequate public infrastructure, including water, sewer, and transportation access. ~~The County shall encourage New Communities to contain employment centers as well as other uses.~~ (RDR)

LU-6.2 Employment Center Access

Where appropriate, the County shall encourage new employment centers and industrial developments near existing or future highway interchanges and major intersections and along existing or future transit, bicycle, and pedestrian and trail corridors, and include transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. The County shall ensure that industrial uses and employment center developments include appropriate transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. (RDR)

LU-6.3 Industrial Uses

The County shall encourage industrial land uses to locate in areas that would not pose significant land use conflicts and in a manner appropriate to the type of industrial activity proposed, such as industry in direct support of agricultural operations in agricultural areas and general light industrial services nodes near existing and proposed major transportation infrastructure (e.g., highways like State Route 25 corridor in the North County, arterial roads, rail, and airports). Figure 3-5 shows the locations, Table 3-1 describes the land use designation, and Appendix A, Glossary defines “Centralized Industrial Node Development”. (RDR)

LU-6.4 Sustainable Technologies

The County shall encourage all employment and industrial projects to incorporate sustainable technologies including energy and water efficient practices. (RDR)

LU-6.5 New Industrial Heavy Areas

The County shall require a general plan amendment for the establishment of new heavy industrial uses, not located within Industrial Heavy (IH) designated lands. Applicable CEQA environmental review shall be required for consideration of any such general plan amendment to minimize near- and long-term effects on the environment. In some limited situations, the County may allow new small-scale isolated industrial operations or quarries as overlay zoning in other land use designations, if not located within Industrial Heavy (IH) designated lands, at the discretion of the Planning Director. New or expanded heavy industrial uses on Industrial Heavy (IH) designated lands shall require a use permit and applicable CEQA environmental review. (RDR)

Community Character

One of San Benito County’s distinguishing characteristic is its rural, small town character. Surround-



ed by large open spaces composed of agrarian landscapes and natural areas, the county's traditional communities and residential settlements were relatively compact and self-contained. Unincorporated communities, including the census-designated places of Aromas, Ridgemark, and Tres Pinos, and the community of Paicines, have a historical land use pattern and historical structures. Preserving this community character requires both the preservation of historical structures and development patterns, as well as the preservation of the surrounding agricultural land and open space. It also requires promoting infill development within existing communities that fosters the maintenance and improvement of community character, in addition to the development of new neighborhoods ~~and new communities~~ that reflect traditional development patterns.

The focus of this goal section is to protect and enhance the county's historic communities and structures, and promote an attractive and safe design in new buildings, neighborhoods, and communities in order to preserve and enhance the quality of life in the county.



The 2035 General Plan strives to preserve San Benito County's historic identity and rural community character.
(Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

GOAL LU-7

To preserve San Benito County's historic identity and rural community character.

LU-7.1 Historic Communities and Structures

The County shall protect historic communities and structures by requiring new or remodeled development to respect their architectural and historical significance. (RDR)

LU-7.2 Historic Preservation

The County shall coordinate with property owners, neighborhood associations, and preservation groups to improve building facades and exteriors consistent with each community's unique history and visual character. (RDR/IGC/JP)

LU-7.3 Adaptive Reuse

The County shall encourage the adaptive reuse of historic structures in order to preserve the historic resources, so long as the reuse of the structure is consistent with the individual history of each community. (RDR)

LU-7.4 New Development in Historical Areas

The County shall require new development in historical areas to be compatible with existing historic structures. (RDR)

LU-7.5 Crime Deterrence through Design

The County shall require public open space areas, bicycle and pedestrian systems, and multi-family housing projects to be designed so that there is as much informal surveillance by people as possible to deter crime. (RDR)

LU-7.6 Minimizing Parking Impacts

The County shall minimize the visual impact of public and private parking by requiring it to be located at the rear and/or side of buildings and screened with landscape, where feasible, in order



to preserve character and promote human-scale development. (RDR)

LU-7.7 Screening

The County shall require screening of storage, trash receptacles, loading docks, and other building or site features to reduce visual impacts from public areas. (RDR)

LU-7.8 Signage Program

The County should develop, adopt, and maintain a unified signage and way-finding program that identifies historic communities and structures and directs residents and visitors to points of interest. (MPSP)

LU-7.9 Art in Public Places

The County shall encourage the placement of art in public places such as social gathering spaces, plazas, bicycle/pedestrian areas, commercial shopping centers, and employment centers. (RDR/MPSP)

LU-7.10 New Development Design

The County shall encourage the design of new development to complement its surroundings, including nearby development, nearby open landscapes, and gateways into populated areas, as well as to show coherence within itself, including with regard to architectural style, human-scale development, and street layout. (RDR)

New Communities



~~The County shall encourage New Communities to be planned and designed in a balanced fashion, considering both agricultural and environmental impacts.~~

~~New Communities provide an opportunity for San Benito County to accommodate future growth in new, balanced communities that provide urban infrastructure and services, employment generating land uses, and institutional facilities (e.g., schools, libraries, community centers, fire stations). The creation of New Communities can provide the County with the opportunity to meet its goals of locating future growth in areas that minimize both agricultural and environmental impacts. Since infill development alone is not likely to be able to accommodate projected future population growth, New Communities may be necessary as well as desirable to accommodate the anticipated population growth in San Benito County. In addition, by minimizing the number of per capita vehicle miles traveled, New Communities can help the County lower its carbon footprint as effectively, and sometimes more effectively, than infill development.~~

~~The County recognizes that there will be different ideas, concepts, and proposals in the future for what constitutes a New Community, and that project applicants will need to design communities that meet both the County's desires and economic realities. New Communities can include a range of~~



possibilities from new towns to mixed-use master planned communities. As such, rather than trying to define the specific components of each New Community, the policies in this goal section allow flexibility.

New Communities are typically master-planned communities. The primary reason for this is that in order to create a complete community, it is necessary to have a comprehensive plan that can be implemented sequentially over a given period of time. Typically, residential uses will develop first followed by commercial and employment uses. As such, a Specific Plan is required for all New Communities in order to create a unified project, identify land uses, densities, design standards, circulation, infrastructure, project phasing, and identify short-term and long-term project financing.

New Communities may develop and, through the Specific Plan, use a form-based code as a means of regulating development as an alternative to the standards set forth in the County zoning codes and in other subsections of the general plan or that are otherwise implemented. Typical zoning codes regulate land use uniformly, regardless of their context in relation to the adjacent land uses in a community. Form-based codes regulate a wide range of development criteria, including land use, with the goal of achieving various desirable urban forms by applying the appropriate criteria to regulate land uses in different County contexts. These criteria regulate a range of topics, including building function or use, the placement of a building on its lot, setbacks from public frontages, height, frontage requirements and access, service and parking requirements to the design of community thoroughfares, civic spaces, lighting, and landscaping. The use of form-based codes as an alternative to conventional zoning is consistent with California Government Code 65302.4, allow-

ing communities to regulate development through form and design.

The focus of this goal section is to allow the possibility of New Communities in the future by identifying where they should be located, what application materials need to be submitted before the County considers any proposals, and the level of financial and infrastructure commitment the County will need before approving any proposals. *(Note: while the concept of New Communities is included in the 2035 General Plan, every future proposal is a stand-alone project that will need to be evaluated by the County on a case-by-case basis.)*

New Community Study Areas

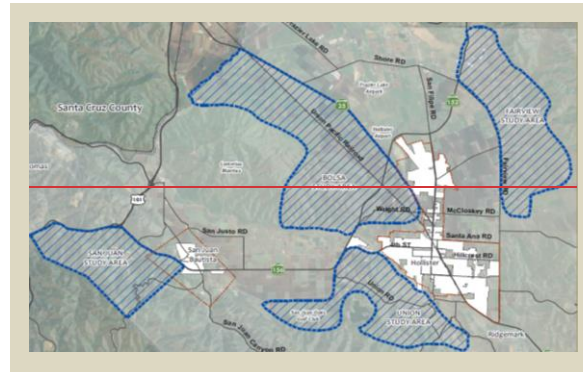


Figure 3-6 shows the general boundaries of the four identified New Community Study Areas. These include the Bolsa, Fairview, San Juan, and Union Study Areas.

The purpose of identifying the New Community Study Areas is to provide the opportunity for San Benito County to accommodate some future growth in new unincorporated communities, while protecting productive agricultural lands, preserving open space, and creating a sustainable land use pattern in the county.

Land within the New Community Study Areas has been identified as potentially appropriate for more



~~intense development for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to: proximity to existing job centers, good access to existing transportation corridors, opportunities to provide public transit, opportunities for reducing vehicle miles traveled and traffic congestion, fewer impacts to high value agricultural land, opportunities for permanent preservation of open space, and fewer impacts to environmental resources. Areas within the boundaries identified on Figure 3-6 have some or all of these attributes and therefore merit consideration.~~

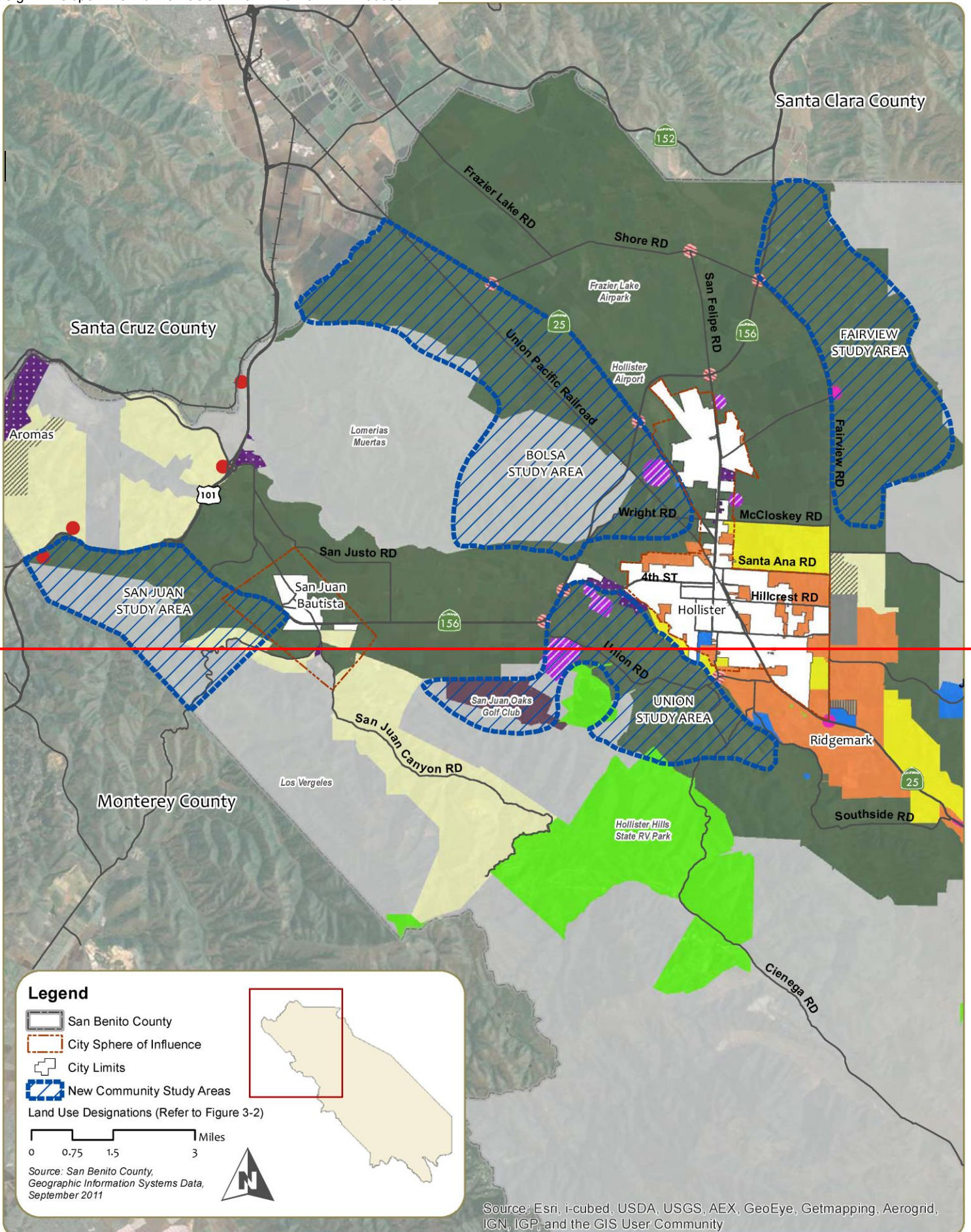


Figure 3-6
New Community Study Areas



|



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~~The definition of a New Community is intentionally flexible in order to allow proposals for a variety of project types that would generally increase development intensity (e.g., dwelling units per acre, jobs per square foot, etc.) above the underlying land use designation. New communities should include a mix of residential, commercial, employment, parks, and open space centered around community cores.~~

~~The intent of the New Community Study Areas are to generally identify areas where the County would encourage new communities to locate on a case by case basis, relative to the policies of the Land Use Element; however, the boundaries of the New Community Study Areas are soft (i.e. flexible) and could be smaller or larger. New communities are also not limited to these areas and the County would consider proposals for new communities in other parts of the county so long as they are planned in accordance with the policies in this section.~~

~~This section includes a brief description of existing conditions and background information for each New Community Study Area.~~

SAN JUAN STUDY AREA

~~This area is generally located in northwest San Benito County along a portion of the Monterey County line. The area is bordered by Highway 101 and State Route 156 to the north, San Juan Bautista to the east, and Monterey County to the west and south. The area is comprised primarily of grazing land with some limited rural residential development, the Rancho Larios residential subdivision, and Rocks Ranch in the westernmost portion of the area. This area is identified as a New Community Study Area for the following reasons:~~

- ~~• The northern boundary of the area is defined by Highway 101 and State Route 156, two major~~

~~transportation corridors that provide opportunities to attract regional serving commercial and/or hospitality uses at the location of the new San Juan Road interchange at Highway 101 and the Highway 101/State Route 156 intersection.~~

- ~~• Providing a regional commercial presence along the transportation corridors in the study area would capture sales tax dollars that neighboring counties currently enjoy; provide additional commercial opportunities that would not compete with existing businesses in the county; utilize existing and planned infrastructure (including the recently improved San Juan Road interchange); and provide amenities to attract and inform tourists about San Benito County and draw them into the county.~~
- ~~• Most of the lands within the area are undeveloped grazing lands that could provide middle to higher end housing with access to major roads; in addition to the existing Rancho Larios residential development.~~
- ~~• The study area has been configured to avoid the prime farmland of the San Juan Valley that is located east of the area between the Cities of San Juan Bautista and Hollister.~~

BOLSA STUDY AREA

~~This area is generally located in northwest San Benito County, between the Santa Clara County line to the north, a segment of State Route 25 (from the Santa Clara County line to the City of Hollister) to the east, the City of Hollister to south, and the steeper topography of the Lomerias Muertas Mountains (Flint Hills) and San Juan Valley to the west. A segment of State Route 156 between State Route 25 and the City of Hollister's Domestic Wastewater Treatment Plant bisects the southeastern portion of the area. The area also includes a 12-mile segment of the Union Pacific railroad line, which travels west of Bolsa Road~~



~~running north to south. This area is identified as a New Community Study Area for the following reasons:~~

- ~~• The area has good access to three major regional transportation routes and corridors, Highway 101 and State Routes 156 and 25, which provides opportunities to attract region-serving commercial uses and to reduce vehicle miles traveled for workers commuting to jobs in other counties. The Union Pacific railroad line runs along the State Route 25 corridor providing an opportunity for future transit connections between the Cities of Hollister, San Jose and San Francisco. Development of a New Community in the area could result in the County's first major transit oriented development.~~
- ~~• Development in the area would connect existing and future development to nearby transportation corridors, state and regional public transit, bike, and trail systems.~~
- ~~• The area avoids the large contiguous Farmlands of the San Juan and Hollister Valleys.~~
- ~~• The area has fewer sensitive biological resources and natural open space areas than other areas in the County.~~

UNION STUDY AREA

~~This area is generally located southwest of the City of Hollister between the State Route 156/Union Road intersection and the Ridgemark residential subdivision and golf course, north of the foothills of the Gabilan Mountain Range, San Justo Reservoir, the Hollister Hills State Vehicular Recreation Area and east of the agricultural lands in the San Juan Valley. The area is comprised of a range of land uses, including an existing industrial complex south of Union Road, the San Juan Oaks Golf Course, the proposed Del Webb planned development area, and various rural residential and agricultural uses along Union Road. This area is~~

~~identified as a New Community Study Area for the following reasons:~~

- ~~• The area has an access connection to State Route 156 on the west side of the study area and State Route 25 on the east side of the study area via Union Road, an east/west arterial roadway.~~
- ~~• The area has existing residential development along Union Road, mostly within the Census-Designated Place of Ridgemark; but also has existing rural residential development east of the State Route 156/Union Road intersection.~~
- ~~• The area lacks the same degree of significant natural resources, such as the large area of Prime Farmland of the San Juan Valley and sensitive biological resources as other geographic areas of the County.~~
- ~~• Development of a New Community in the area would avoid impacting significant recreational and open space resources in the County, including the nearby San Justo Reservoir and Hollister Hills, which are located to the south.~~

FAIRVIEW STUDY AREA

~~This area is generally located in the north central portion of San Benito County south of the Santa Clara County line near the intersection of State Route 156 and 152, east of State Route 156 and Fairview Road, west of the foothills of the Diablo Range and north of McCloskey Road. The area is comprised of mainly rural residential and agricultural uses. This area is identified as a New Community Study Area for the following reasons:~~

- ~~• Much of the area is currently developed and has good access to an existing local roadway network, including Fairview Road and a segment of State Route 156, which form the study area's western boundary, and numerous~~



~~local collector streets that access Fairview Road.~~

- ~~The area can be served by existing public water and sewer services, and extensions of those existing services, as much of the area is currently developed with county service areas that provide utility and infrastructure services.~~
- ~~As much of the area is developed, it has less Prime Farmland and fewer areas with significant natural resources than other areas in the County. (The northern portion of the area does contain existing agriculturally productive lands that are currently designated as Prime Farmland.)~~
- ~~Much of the area has been designated by the County, for more than two decades, as a special study area for residential uses. The area is near approved growth along the east side of Fairview Road, including the Santana Ranch and Fairview Corners Specific Plan areas.~~

GOAL LU-8

To provide the option for New Communities to be considered as a way of accommodating planned growth in the unincorporated parts of San Benito County.

LU-8.1 — New Community Purpose

~~The County shall consider applications for New Communities on a case-by-case basis in order to accommodate future growth in new, balanced communities. (RDR)~~

LU-8.2 — New Community Threshold

~~The County shall consider any proposed development project that is a unique, self-contained new development a New Community, and as such, subject to the policies of this goal section. The Director of Planning and Building Inspection Services will have the discretion to determine~~

~~which projects constitute a New Community, but they would generally be projects that cannot be developed under existing allowed residential densities, even with clustered residential incentives, and contain a variety of proposed uses, including residential, employment, neighborhood retail, as well as an emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle circulation and recreational opportunities. The County would especially like to further the development of any project that would provide significant connection to and expansion of the county and regional trail network. (RDR)~~

LU-8.3 — New Community Location Requirements

~~The County shall only accept applications for the establishment of New Communities if:~~

- a. ~~They are accessible to existing major transportation routes and corridors, such as State highways, and/or provide opportunities for public transit.~~
- b. ~~They are accessible to employment centers. (RDR)~~

LU-8.4 — New Community Application Content Requirements

~~The County shall require all project applicants for New Communities to provide the County with the following information:~~

- a. ~~A **Project Summary** that includes: a project description, site history, discussion of the roles of the applicant and County in preparation of the Specific Plan and applicable CEQA environmental review, identification of the anticipated planning issues that will need to be addressed through the application process, and an estimated project schedule.~~
- b. ~~Completed **General Plan Amendment** and **Zone Change** applications.~~



- e. ~~A **Specific Plan** consistent with State specific plan requirements, including the location and intensity of planned land uses and circulation system. The plan should result in a more dense land use pattern than would normally be allowed under existing General Plan designations and zoning, provide the opportunity for a mix of land uses and densities (e.g., residential, commercial, mixed-use, employment-generating, and public facilities), ensure access and efficient movement by multiple modes of transportation (e.g., car, transit, bicycle, and pedestrians); and provide for energy efficiency and water conservation.~~
- d. ~~An **Infrastructure Master Plan** that identifies public and private infrastructure needs; service district or assessment area formation details; a development phasing plan; and a strategy for the installation, operations, and ongoing maintenance of infrastructure required to support the new community. The Plan should include facility designs and operation techniques that promote energy efficiency and water conservation. The plan shall be consistent with all applicable private, local, regional, State, and Federal infrastructure regulations and programs related to transportation, sewage and wastewater treatment, water quality and quantity, drainage, parks and open space, and any other public facilities, infrastructure, and services.~~
- e. ~~A **Fiscal Impact Analysis** that includes an assessment of projected tax revenues compared to projected County service costs in order to demonstrate that the community will have a fiscally neutral or positive impact on the County and any special districts that provide services to the project.~~
- f. ~~A **Water Supply Assessment** that demonstrates access to adequate existing and future water supply for the project.~~

- g. ~~A **Public Service Financing Program** to ensure that upon buildout the New Community will provide or fund a full range of needed public services, including fire protection, law enforcement, parks, library, community center, and other necessary public services.~~
- h. ~~A commitment to enter into a **Reimbursement Agreement** requiring deposits into a Trust Fund with San Benito County for all, or an agreed upon portion, of the estimated staff costs for processing the application, including the costs for preparing the applicable CEQA environmental review. (RDR)~~

~~LU-8.5 Sustainable New Communities~~

~~The County shall encourage New Communities to be planned and designed to reflect the spirit and intent of sustainable growth strategies, such as providing, as appropriate to the site and scale of the proposed New Community:~~

- a. ~~easy access to major transportation links, transit, and bicycle networks;~~
- b. ~~a balance between jobs and housing;~~
- c. ~~good internal connectivity and good connectivity to the community at large;~~
- d. ~~a reduced parking footprint; a transportation demand management program;~~
- e. ~~institutions such as schools within walking distance from residences;~~
- f. ~~distinct, compact, walkable neighborhoods, each with a recognizable center;~~
- g. ~~walkable streets with shade trees and sidewalks or walking paths;~~
- h. ~~habitat avoidance and conservation plans; and~~
- i. ~~restoration of resources such as riparian corridors; and permanent preservation of open space. (RDR)~~



LU-8.6 — New Community Infrastructure Commitments

~~The County shall require project applicants for New Communities to study and commit to the County, through a development agreement, that water, wastewater, transportation, and other necessary infrastructure needs can be provided as part of the approval of any New Community. (RDR/MPSP)~~

LU-8.7 — New Community Public Services Commitments

~~The County shall require project applicants for New Communities to study and commit to the County, through a development agreement, that necessary long-term public services funding can be provided as part of the approval of any New Community. (RDR/FB)~~

LU-8.8 — Transportation Efficiency of New Communities

~~The County shall encourage New Communities to be designed to maximize internal transportation efficiency through designs that minimize trip generation. Design features could include higher density residential uses near employment uses, schools, and neighborhood retail, as well as enhanced pedestrian, bicycling, and transit opportunities. (RDR)~~

LU-8.9 — Conservation of Land

~~The County encourages project applicants for New Communities to use conservation techniques, such as the techniques contained in policies under Goals 3 and 4 of the Land Use Element, as an incentive to protect farmland and focus future development away from the most productive farmland. (RDR/MPSP)~~

LU-8.10 — New Community Connectivity Requirements


~~To support integrated land use planning that fosters connectivity between land uses and the circulation system in New Communities, the County shall encourage the following parameters to reduce barriers to connectivity:~~

- ~~1. Limit the use of fences and walls around New Communities or Planned Developments, or public thoroughfares that create barriers for multi-modal travel and an integrated circulation system;~~
- ~~2. Design parking areas near mixed-use, multi-family, and other high density housing planned developments to be well-connected, and to accommodate pedestrian routes, as appropriate to the context;~~
- ~~3. Provide multiple access points (roadways, bicycle paths through cul-de-sacs) for multi-modal types of transportation (vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian) so that the new communities are well-connected and provide a comprehensive network of traffic without undue concentration;~~
- ~~4. Discourage sound walls within New Communities and instead encourage other design solutions to address noise issues, that may include traffic distribution across a well-connected and configured network, narrower roadways, and traffic calming measures, as appropriate to the context; and~~
- ~~5. Encourage additional trail and street connections between proposed New Communities and Planned Developments and established neighborhoods, as appropriate to the context.~~

City Fringe Areas

The “city fringe area” is generally defined as the area outside of the city limits of either Hollister or San Juan Bautista, but within their adopted



Land Use Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
 <p>LU-E: Agricultural-Industrial Zoning The County shall consider adopting a new zoning designation to apply to agricultural-related industrial uses in agricultural areas in order to meet the evolving needs of the agricultural industry. <i>(RDR)</i></p>		X				
Implements Policy(ies)	LU-3.2, LU-3.6					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
<p>LU-F: Clustered Residential Program The County shall periodically review and update the Clustered Residential Program to identify additional incentives to encourage any new residential development proposals in rural areas to use a cluster design in order to preserve the maximum amount of agricultural and open-space land. <i>(MPSP)</i></p>						X
Implements Policy(ies)	LU-4.6, LU-4.7, LU-4.8					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
<p>LU-G: Transfer of Development Credit Program The County shall periodically review and update the voluntary Transfer of Development Credit (TDC) program as an incentive to preserve farmland and focus future development away from the most productive farmland. <i>(MPSP)</i></p>						X
Implements Policy(ies)	LU-4.9					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
<p>LU-H: Signage Program The County shall prepare, adopt, and periodically update a comprehensive Signage Program which includes standards for signs and wayfinding in the county. The Planning Commission shall be responsible for enforcing the Signage Program. <i>(MPSP)</i></p>			X			
Implements Policy(ies)	LU-7.8					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
<p>LU-I: New Community Review Factsheet The County shall prepare a factsheet to assist applicants in preparing application materials for development within new communities consistent with applicable general plan policies.</p>			X			
Implements Policy(ies)	LU 8.1 to LU 8.9					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						



GOAL ED-3

To attract new high quality businesses and investment that complement the county's rural character and provide high wage jobs for local residents.

ED-3.1 New Job Quality

The County shall focus business expansion and industry attraction efforts on companies and institutions that bring quality jobs to the county that provide benefits and self-sufficiency wages for county residents. *(MPSP)*

ED-3.2 New High-Tech Economy

The County shall strive to keep pace with the new high-tech economy by supporting businesses that incorporate new technologies, and stay at the forefront of market changes. *(MPSP)*

ED-3.3 New Business Development

The County shall encourage entrepreneurial development and business incubators to grow and support start-up businesses, including those in high growth sectors, emerging technologies, and green industries. *(RDR/MPSP)*

ED-3.4 Physical and Social Infrastructure Development

The County shall develop and maintain physical and social infrastructure as a means of attracting new businesses and investment to the county. This should include strengthening quality of life features (e.g., access to education, public facilities, urban design, public safety), providing a diversity of housing choices (e.g., workforce, executive housing), and working with telecommunication providers to expand services. ~~New Communities could also play a role in attracting new business and investment to the County.~~ *(RDR/MPSP)*

Wine and Hospitality Industry Promotion and Expansion

San Benito County has a long history in the wine industry dating back to the 1850s. Almaden Vineyards dominated the county's wine industry in the 1970s, prior to their relocation to the Central Valley. There are several American Viticultural Areas (AVAs) within the County, including the San Benito AVA, which is part of the larger Central Coast AVA. Subregions of the San Benito AVA include the Cienega Valley, Lime Kiln Valley, and Paicines AVAs.

More recently smaller wineries have had success in the county's six viticulture areas of Paicines, Cienega Valley, San Benito, Mt. Harlan, Lime Kiln Valley, and Pacheco Pass. Existing wineries in operation at the time of this update include:

- Aimee June Winery
- Alicats Winery
- Blossom Hill Winery
- Bonny Doon Vineyard
- Calera Wine Company
- Casa de Fruta Winery
- Cetani Vineyards
- Circle S Vineyards
- DeRose Winery
- Diageo Chateau & Estate Wines
- Donati Family Vineyards
- Enz Vineyards
- Flint Wine Cellars
- Gimelli Vineyards
- Guerra Family Cellars
- Jayse Wines
- Jones Vineyard Estates & Winery
- Leal Vineyards
- Pebble Beach Vineyards
- Pessagno Winery
- Pietra Santa Winery
- Pinkerton Wine Company
- Pinnacle Vineyards
- Ray Francioni Wines
- San Benito Wine Co.
- Scheid Vineyards
- Summerayne Vineyard
- Teague Veinyard
- Wildeye Winery
- Vista Verde



NCR-8.12 Landscaping in ~~New Community Study Areas~~ and Wine/Hospitality Priority Areas


To the greatest extent feasible, the County shall require that new development within these areas be screened from existing agricultural, rural, or low-intensity uses in the vicinity by using existing topography and vegetative screening.

GOAL NCR-9

The County shall promote the preservation of dark skies necessary for nighttime astronomical viewing at local observatories.

NCR-9.1: Light Pollution Reduction

The County shall continue to enforce the development lighting ordinance (SBC Code Chapter 19.13) and restrict outdoor lighting and glare from development projects in order to ensure good lighting practices, minimize nighttime light impacts, and preserve quality views of the night sky. The ordinance shall continue to recognize lighting zones and contain standards to avoid light trespass, particularly from developed uses, to sensitive uses, such as the areas surrounding Fremont Peak State Park and Pinnacles National Park.

 Natural and Cultural Resources Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
NCR-A: Habitat Conservation Plan The County shall consider working with the State and federal agencies to prepare and adopt a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for listed and candidate species in San Benito County. The County shall collect fees to finance the preparation of the plan through the provisions of Ordinances 532 or 541 or any amendments. <i>(MPSP/FB)</i>			X			
Implements Policy(ies)	NCR-2.1 through NCR-2.5					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
NCR-B: Park and Recreation Master Plan 🌐 The County shall periodically review and update, as necessary, the countywide Park and Recreation Master Plan that identifies long-range recreational needs of the county, potential trail corridors, and areas for potential recreational-tourist services/programs. This should include an inventory of recreational facilities in existing communities and an analysis of needed additional facilities. <i>(MPSP/PSR)</i>			X			
Implements Policy(ies)	NCR-3.1 through 3.8, NCR-3.11					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
NCR-C: Park and Recreation Facility Financing The County shall pursue funding for acquisition and development of needed recreational facilities through alternatives including Mello-Roos Assessment Districts, private contribution of land, improvements from service clubs, and County impact fees pursuant to Ordinance 541. In addition, the County shall implement		X				X