

Section 2

Projections



Introduction

The first step in developing alternatives for where new growth should occur within the county is to identify the amount and type of growth that is anticipated. Typically, growth alternatives are defined by a “projected growth assumption” that holds constant the amount of population and employment growth that is expected to occur under each of the alternatives. This approach allows for a consistent comparison of the alternatives and more clearly defines the differences and impacts that may occur under each scenario.

Growth projections provide an estimate of the potential growth that is expected to occur based on migration, market demand, land use inventory, infrastructure, constraints, and other considerations. Projections are used only as a general guide on which to estimate demand for future development. The following section summarizes population and employment projections that were used as a starting point to develop the three Alternatives.

Existing Growth Management Policies and Programs

A starting point for looking at how future growth could occur in the county is to understand existing growth management policies and programs. The Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista both have established growth management ordinances or programs that limit the number of new residential units constructed each year. Hollister restricts the number of new residential units that can be constructed each year to 244, of which 40 need to be low- and very-low income housing. Similarly, San Juan Bautista implemented a Residential Development Control System in the 1970s to limit increases in the city’s housing stock based on a variety of factors such as infrastructure, public service availability, and projected growth rates.

The City of Hollister General Plan calls for the City to develop and adopt a San Benito County/City of Hollister urban growth management agreement. The objective of the agreement is to direct future growth to existing urban areas in an effort to enhance the viability of agriculture and to limit the premature conversion of agricultural land to other uses. The biggest issue that will be addressed by the County during the General Plan update is how to accommodate projected growth while preserving the quality of life in the county.

AMBAG Forecast

In 2008 the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) prepared a regional population and employment forecast called the Monterey Bay Area 2008 Regional Forecast (Forecast). The Forecast was developed using the best available State (Department of Finance) and Federal (US Census) data and projections, and took into account existing growth management policies.

AMBAG developed the population, housing, and employment estimates in two distinct stages. The first stage was to identify county-level forecast numbers through the use of widely accepted forecasting methodologies. The second stage was to disaggregate county-level numbers into Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) using land use data gathered from jurisdictions (*see*

AMBAG’s website for detailed information on the Forecast methodology: www.ambag.org).

The Forecast projects a countywide increase of 32,300 people and 4,320 jobs between 2010 and 2035 (see table below). On June 23, 2009, the Board of Supervisors directed County staff and the Consultants to use the AMBAG population projections as the estimate for 2035 population growth. Each of the three alternatives presented in this report are based on the Forecast estimates for population growth. However, Alternatives B and C include more job growth than the Forecast in order to maintain a 0.9 jobs-to-housing ratio countywide.

AMBAG 2008 FORECAST 2010 to 2035 Net New Growth		
Jurisdiction	New Population	New Jobs
Unincorporated County	8,990	1,250
Hollister	22,340	2,990
San Juan Bautista	970	80
Total	32,300	4,320

Please visit AMBAG’s website to view and download all available reports: www.ambag.org.

Jobs-Housing Balance

A significant portion of county residents commute to other counties for work. The diagram on the next page, prepared by AMBAG, shows a summary of where county residents work. This information indicates either a shortage of jobs and/or a lack of acceptable wages within the county to serve the existing population.

The concept behind a jobs-housing balance is to create housing opportunities to enable people to live close to their jobs if they so choose. Currently (2010), there are 0.9 jobs to every household in the county. However, there are an average of 1.5 workers in every household. AMBAG projections actually show this jobs-housing imbalance getting worse by 2035. According to the Forecast, the future 2035 jobs-housing ratio will be 0.7.

