



San Benito County 2035 General Plan

Adopted by Board
of Supervisors on
July 21, 2015

Prepared by:
San Benito County

In consultation with:
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Ascent Environmental
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TRA Environmental Sciences
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Photo by Rene Rodriguez

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July 21, 2015 BOS-Adopted

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Profile of Rene Rodriguez

The County would like to extend a special thanks to Rene Rodriguez for his incredible talent and willingness to let San Benito County showcase his work in the 2035 General Plan. Rene is an amateur photographer and resident of Hollister. He took many of the photos included in the 2035 General Plan. You can find more information about Rene and his photography by visiting: www.renerodriguezphotography.com.





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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

San Benito County is located in the Coast Range Mountains, south of San Jose and west of the Central Valley (Figure 1-1). The county is surrounded by Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties to the west, Santa Clara County to the north, and Merced and Fresno Counties to the east and south. The county encompasses over 890,000 acres (about 1,391 square miles). San Benito County is largely rural, with over 90 percent of land use for farming, ranching, forestry, or other public uses.

While San Benito County is defined as a part of the Monterey Bay Area, it is also heavily influenced by both the San Francisco Bay Area and the Central Valley. There are two incorporated cities in the county: Hollister, which is the county seat, and San Juan Bautista, which is home to the historic Mission San Juan Bautista, founded in 1797. There are several historic unincorporated communities in the county including Aromas, Paicines, Panoche, Tres Pinos, and the ghost town of New Idria.

The San Benito County 2035 General Plan sets a clear direction for the future of the county. This plan includes goals, policies, and programs necessary to achieve the community's vision and guiding principles. This plan also addresses issues of sustainability, including environmental protection, economic expansion and diversification, and equity. The plan was shaped over a three-year period by an extensive outreach process that engaged residents, businesses, stakeholders, developers, and decision-makers. This introduction answers the following seven questions about the 2035 General Plan:

- What is a General Plan?
- How is the General Plan Organized?
- How will the County Implement the General Plan?
- How Should the General Plan be Used?
- How Was the General Plan Prepared?
- How does the General Plan Relate to Other Planning Documents and Regulations?
- How Does the General Plan Address Recent State Mandates?



What is a General Plan?

The General Plan is the County's constitution for land use, development, and environmental quality. It provides a vision for how the county will grow and change in the future. The General Plan contains the County's official policies on land use, economic development, transportation, community design, housing, resource protection, public services, and health and safety. It describes the County's long-range goals for the community's future and guides day-to-day decision making. A comprehensive general plan provides a jurisdiction with a consistent framework for decision-making. The general plan and its maps, diagrams, and development standards form the basis for the County's zoning, subdivision, and public works decisions.

Legal Authority and Requirements

The 2035 General Plan was adopted in compliance with the requirements of California Government Code Section 65300 et seq. The General Plan is a legal document and much of its content is specified by State law. The legal adequacy of the General Plan is critical, since many County actions and programs are required to be consistent with the General Plan.

State law requires each city and county to prepare and adopt a comprehensive and long-range general plan for its physical development (California Government Code Section 65300 et seq.). Under California law no specific plan, zoning, subdivision map, or public works project may be approved unless the County finds that it is consistent with the

adopted General Plan. The State General Plan Guidelines recommend that general plans be updated every five to ten years to ensure that they remain relevant. This is important not only to reflect local physical and demographic changes, but also broader changes in culture and technology.

State Law requires that general plans address the seven topics (referred to as "elements") of land use, circulation, housing, open space, conservation, safety, and noise (California Government Code Section 65302), to the extent that the topics are locally relevant. A general plan may also include other topics of local interest, as chosen by the local jurisdiction (California Government Code Section 65303).

A local jurisdiction may adopt a general plan in the format that best fits its unique circumstances (California Government Code Section 65300.5). In doing so, the jurisdiction must ensure that the general plan and its component parts comprise an integrated, internally consistent, and compatible statement of development policies. San Benito County has chosen to adopt a general plan that consolidates some of the mandatory elements and includes several optional elements targeted at addressing the unique planning needs of the county. In addition to the mandatory elements described above, the 2035 General Plan addresses three additional topics: economic development, public facilities and services, and administration. These elements carry the same weight of law as those that are specifically mandated. The table on the following page illustrates how the General Plan addresses State mandated topics.

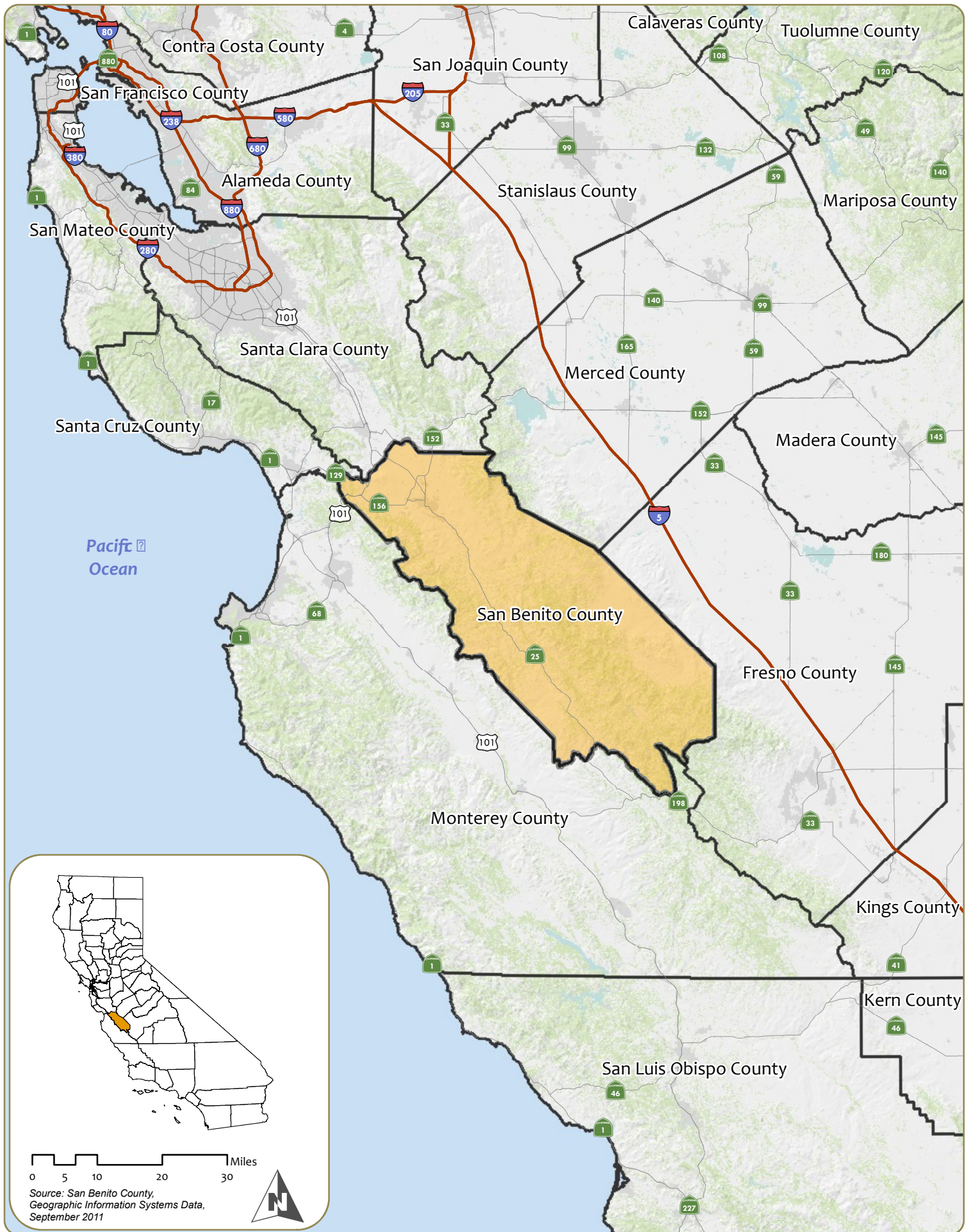


Figure 1-1
Regional Setting



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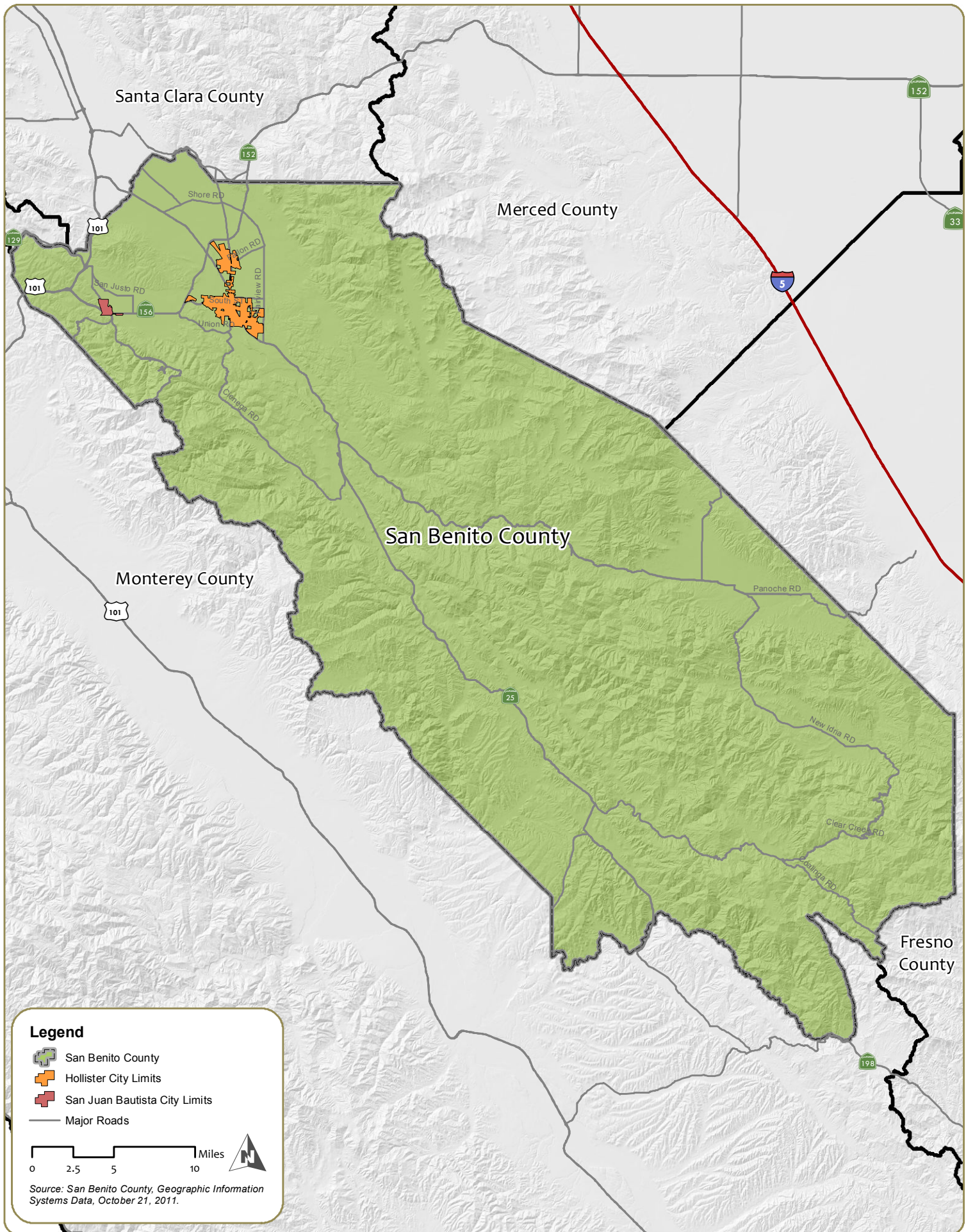


Figure 1-2
General Plan Boundaries



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San Benito County General Plan Elements	General Plan Elements Required by State Law								
		Land Use	Circulation	Housing	Conservation	Open Space	Safety	Noise	Optional *
	Land Use Element	✗							
	Economic Development								✗
	Housing Element			✗					
	Circulation Element		✗						
	Public Facilities and Services Element		✗						✗
	Natural and Cultural Resources Element				✗	✗			
	Health and Safety Element						✗	✗	
	Administration Element								✗

* State law allows jurisdictions to include optional elements in their general plans.

Planning Area

State law requires counties to adopt a general plan that addresses physical development within its boundaries. The 2035 General Plan includes goals, policies, and programs for development and environmental protection on land within the county boundary, excluding the area within the city limits

of Hollister and San Juan Bautista (Figure 1-2). Both of these cities have their own adopted general plans. (See Section 3: Land Use Element for policies related to development decisions within the city fringe areas).



How is the General Plan Organized?

The 2035 General Plan is divided into the following 10 topical sections:

Section 1: Introduction



This section describes how the plan is organized; explains what the plan is and how it should be used; summarizes the process that was used to develop the plan; and explains the plan's relationship to other local, regional, State, and Federal agency documents and regulations.

Section 2: Vision and Guiding Principles



This section presents the Vision and Guiding Principles that were developed by the County during the General Plan Update process conducted by the County in 2009-11. The Vision is a statement of the general desires or outcome to be achieved through implementation of the 2035 General Plan. It provides the foundation for the more specific guiding principles, goals, policies, and programs included in the General Plan. The Guiding Principles are fundamental ideas that represent the County's philosophy about future change, including new development, economic growth, and sustainability.

Section 3: Land Use Element



This section provides policy guidance for future County decisions regarding the overall pattern, composition, and timing of growth and development in San Benito County. This includes the Land Use Diagram, which identifies areas in the county for existing and future agricultural, residential, commercial, employment, and industrial development necessary to provide jobs and housing for county residents. Conversely, the diagram also identifies areas for conservation and public use, including parks and open space.

Section 4: Economic Development Element



This section provides policy direction on how the County will partner with the business community to expand existing businesses and retain new industries. This includes a strong emphasis on expanding the wine, hospitality, and tourism segments of San Benito County's economy in the next 25 years.



Section 5: Housing Element



This section provides policy direction on how the County will achieve local and State goals for the maintenance, improvement, and development of affordable housing in San Benito County.

Section 6: Circulation Element



This section provides the framework for County decisions concerning the countywide transportation system, including providing safe and efficient movement of people and goods in and around the county through a variety of transportation modes. This section includes the Circulation Diagram, which identifies future circulation system improvements necessary to support the Land Use Diagram.

Section 7: Public Facilities and Services Element



This section provides the framework for County decisions concerning public and private infrastruc-

ture, utilities, and services. This includes county operations, water supply and delivery, wastewater treatment, stormwater drainage, flood protection, solid waste disposal, utilities and telecommunications, parks and recreation, law enforcement, fire protection, and emergency medical services.

Section 8: Natural and Cultural Resources Element



This section includes the County's goals, policies, and programs related to the balanced management and conservation of open space, wildlife habitat, mineral, water, energy, scenic, recreation, cultural, and historic resources in San Benito County.

Section 9: Health and Safety Element



This section provides policy guidance for how the County will protect residents, workers, visitors, and properties from unreasonable risks associated with natural and manmade hazards. This includes fires, hazardous materials, floods, earthquakes, airport hazards, noise, air quality, and adaptation to climate change.



Section 10: Administration Element



This section provides guidance for how San Benito County administers the 2035 General Plan. This includes goals, policies, and programs related

How will the County Implement the General Plan?

The 2035 General Plan is the foundation for planning in San Benito County. All future development and planning decisions must be consistent with the General Plan. The policies within the plan are implemented through a broad range of actions and decisions by the County. While the General Plan sets out policies and identifies ways to put these policies into action, the actual implementation of the plan is a complex and lengthy process.

Local officials must take many separate but interconnected actions according to the direction set out in the General Plan. These various actions rest on two essential powers of local government: corporate and police powers. Using their "corporate power," local governments collect money through bonds, fees, assessments, and taxes, and spend it to provide services and facilities such as law enforcement, fire protection, roadway improvements and maintenance, water systems, and sewage disposal facilities. Using their "police power," local governments regulate citizens' use of their property through zoning, subdivision, and building regulations in order "to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the public." The General Plan provides the framework for the exercise of these powers by San Benito County officials.

to the development review and permitting process, environmental justice, interagency coordination, and general plan maintenance.

Appendix A: Glossary

The 2035 General Plan contains a Glossary, which includes a summary of abbreviations and acronyms used in the document, and definitions for planning and policy terminology.

To ensure that the policies and proposals of the General Plan are systematically implemented, State law since the early 1970s has increasingly insisted that the actions and decisions of each local government concerning both its own projects and the private projects it approves are consistent with its adopted General Plan. The courts have supported and furthered this trend through their interpretations of State law.

Revising and Amending the General Plan

The General Plan is intended to be a living document. As conditions and needs change, the County will need to amend the General Plan to eliminate or modify policies and programs or update the Land Use and Circulation Diagrams. Amendments may also be necessary to conform to State and Federal laws passed after adoption of the General Plan.

State law limits the number of times a county can amend its General Plan. Generally, no jurisdiction can amend its General Plan more than four times each year, although each amendment may include more than one change to the General Plan. Exceptions to this rule include amendments that allow development of affordable housing or comply with a court decision. (*See Section 10: Administration Element for policies related to General Plan amendments and updates*).



General Plan Maintenance and Monitoring

The County Planning and Building Inspection Services Department will annually review and report to the Planning Commission on the progress in implementing the goals and policies of the General Plan. This annual report will help ensure the County is moving forward to achieve the goals of the Plan. The report will describe the status of each implementation program and take into account the availability of new implementation tools, changes in funding sources, and feedback from plan monitoring activities. In addition, every five years the County will thoroughly review the General Plan and revise and update it as necessary. This review and update process will encompass the entire General Plan including the goals, policies, and implementation programs. *(See Section 10: Administration Element for policies and programs related to ongoing General Plan maintenance).*

Categories of Implementation Actions/Tools

The County will implement the policies and programs of the 2035 General Plan through many actions and tools. Each policy and program in the General Plan includes either one or more abbreviations. These abbreviations correspond to the following eight categories of implementation:

- Regulation and Development Review (RDR)
- Infrastructure and Service Master Plans, Strategies, and Programs (MPSP)
- Financing and Budgeting (FB)
- Planning Studies and Reports (PSR)
- County Services and Operations (SO)
- Inter-Governmental Coordination (IGC)
- Joint Partnerships with the Private Sector (JP)
- Public Information (PI)

Regulation and Development Review (RDR)

Many General Plan policies are implemented through regulations based on the County's "police power" to protect public health, safety, and welfare. County ordinances also create a development review process that provides for County review of individual project proposals and authorizes the County to approve, conditionally approve, or deny projects based on their consistency with the General Plan. The following is a list of plans, ordinances, and procedures commonly used to implement the General Plan:

- Community Plans
- Specific Plans
- Zoning Code
- Subdivision Code
- Building and other codes
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- Right-to-Farm Ordinance
- Development review process

Infrastructure and Service Master Plans, Strategies, and Programs (MPSP)

The County has adopted master plans, strategies, and programs for various County services and facilities, types of development, or geographic areas. These are prepared to provide more specific direction for County decision-makers, staff, and the public about how the General Plan will be implemented. They are not elements or components of the General Plan, rather they are tools for implementing the General Plan. Specific implementation programs of the General Plan call for the annual or periodic review of many of these master plans, strategies, and programs in addition to adoption of some new master plans and strategies.



Financing and Budgeting (FB)

The development, maintenance, and operation of public facilities such as parks and drainage facilities and the provision of County services require financial resources derived from various sources. Programming of County capital projects and their funding over time is outlined in the County's Capital Improvement Program, which is updated annually. The following is a list of revenue sources used by or available to the County to support de-

- State and Federal grants
- Other State and Federal funding

Planning Studies and Reports (PSR)

The County conducts studies and produces reports to collect and evaluate information related to specific issues. These studies and reports are undertaken at the direction of the Board of Supervisors as needed or are prepared annually to report on the status and implementation of the General Plan or a master plan.

County Services and Operations (SO)

The County provides a broad range of services to its residents, businesses, and visitors and manages and operates its facilities to meet community needs. How the County provides services and carries out its operations influences the effectiveness of General Plan implementation.

Inter-governmental Coordination (IGC)

The County must coordinate with numerous local, regional, State, and Federal agencies to implement the General Plan. These agencies provide services, facilities, or funding and administer regulations that directly or indirectly affect many issues addressed in the General Plan. The following is a partial list of public agencies that may play a role in implementing the General Plan:

velopment, maintenance, or operation of public facilities and services:

- Property tax revenue
- Sales tax revenue
- User fees
- Development impact fees
- Community facilities and special assessment districts
- Municipal bonds
- Special taxes
- Local agencies such as the Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista;
- Local water and wastewater providers such as the City of Hollister or the Sunnyslope County Water District;
- Regional agencies such as the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments and the Council of San Benito County Governments;
- State agencies such as Caltrans, General Services, State Parks, California Department of Fish and Game, and the California Environmental Protection Agency;
- Federal agencies such as U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, U.S. Park Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Joint Partnerships with the Private Sector (JP)

The County may coordinate its activities with private sector efforts to improve public service delivery, manage public sector assets, or leverage private sector investment. By exploring new partnerships with the private sector, the County can use its technical, management, and financial resources in creative ways to achieve the goals of the General Plan.

Public Information (PI)

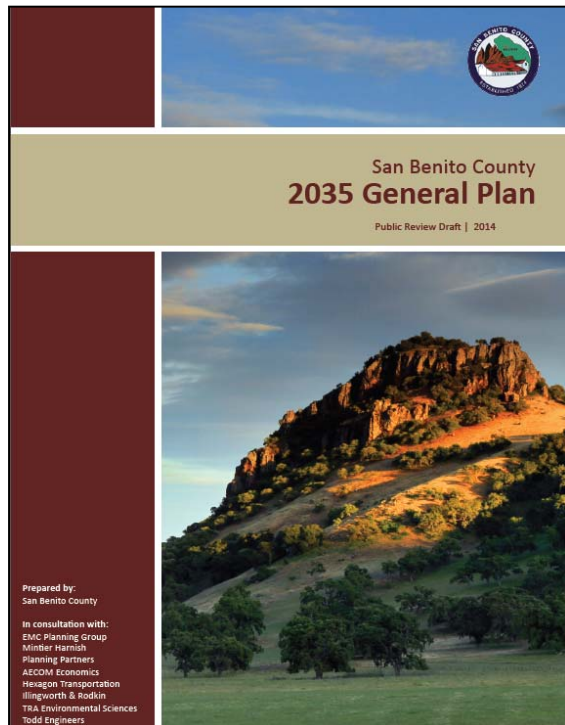
The County can use a wide range of tools to keep residents informed of County services or other



issues of current interest. Public information can be distributed through media such as brochures, pamphlets, the County's website, workshops, sem-

inars, public access television, radio, newspapers, public hearings, neighborhood and community meetings, and customer service hotlines.

How Should the General Plan Be Used?



The 2035 General Plan is intended to be used by all members of the community including residents, business owners, developers, County staff, and decision-makers. The organization of the document allows users to quickly find topics or sections that interest them and review county policies. Users should realize that all of the policies in this plan are interrelated. As such, they should be examined comprehensively and must be considered together when making planning and project decisions.

Residents

For San Benito County residents the General Plan indicates the general types of uses that are permitted around housing, the long-range plans and

changes that may affect neighborhoods, and the policies the County will use to evaluate development applications. The General Plan indicates how the County will attract businesses that provide goods and services to meet daily needs and new jobs that are closely matched to educational skills and that lessen the need to commute. The General Plan informs residents how the County plans to improve transportation infrastructure, continue to provide adequate public services, and protect valued open spaces and environmental resources. Cumulatively, the General Plan identifies the actions the County will take to achieve the community's Vision and Guiding Principles.

Business Owners

For San Benito County businesses the General Plan outlines the measures the County will take to protect investments and encourage future success. Expectations for county commercial and employment areas are spelled out, while policies ensure that business operations will be compatible with other businesses and nearby residential areas.

Developers

For developers within the county the General Plan introduces the community, provides background information, and outlines development regulations. It is important to review all maps and policies throughout the General Plan. In addition, developers should also review the Background Report and the San Benito County Code of Ordinances to get a complete perspective on how and where development may take place.



County Staff

County staff will use the 2035 General Plan to assess whether a proposed development or public facility project is consistent with County policies. The document establishes standards for internal County plans (e.g., infrastructure master plans) and operations. The document will also be used by County staff as the basis for making recommendations to decision-makers. The General Plan provides short- and long-term implementation programs that are used by County staff to achieve the community's Vision.

Decision-Makers

The Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission and other County boards and commissions will use the 2035 General Plan as a tool to help make land use, environmental, and public investment decisions. All development decisions and actions made by County decision-makers must be consistent with the 2035 General Plan. The document is also intended to help local (cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista, school districts), State (Caltrans), and Federal (Cal Fire, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. National Parks Service) public agencies as they contemplate future actions in the unincorporated areas of San Benito County.



Goals and Policies Readers' Guide

The topical sections of the General Plan (sections 3 through 10) contain numerous goals, policies, and programs that will be used by the County to guide future land use, economic development, and environmental protection decisions. A goal is a statement that describes in general terms a desired future condition or “end” state. Goals describe ideal future conditions for a particular topic and tend to be very general and broad. A policy is a clear statement that guides a specific course of action for decision-makers to achieve a desired goal. The following graphic identifies what the various components of each goal section mean.

Section 10
Administration Element


San Benito County
2035 GENERAL PLAN

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

The County Board of Supervisors is ultimately responsible for making land use and environmental decisions in the unincorporated parts of the county (e.g., areas outside of city limits). In order to be fair and efficient, the County must ensure the development review and permitting process is streamlined and applied consistently to all project applicants.

The County must also ensure that decisions do not disproportionately affect one segment of the community in a negative way. This is commonly referred to as environmental justice. Environmental justice, which is a State legal requirement, refers to the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of criminal and environmental laws, regulations, and policies. The intent of environmental justice is to ensure that all persons are able to live in a safe and healthy environment.

The focus of this goal section is to establish a development review process that is efficient for both the County and project applicants, while ensuring that land use decisions are fair and predictable.



San Benito County Administration Building. (Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

GOAL AD-1

To ensure that the development review process and the decisions made by the Board of Supervisors are efficient, fair, and to the greatest extent feasible, predictable.

AD-1.1 Equal Public Participation

The County shall ensure that all community residents, business owners, workers, and other stakeholders have meaningful opportunities to participate in the decision-making process. (RDR/SO/PI)

AD-1.2 Reducing Disproportionate Land Use Decisions

The County shall ensure the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of land use and environmental laws, regulations, and policies. The County shall strive to ensure that no part of the community suffers disproportionately from adverse human health or environmental effects, and that all residents live in a clean, healthy, and sustainable community. (RDR/SO)

AD-1.3 Equitable Distribution of New Public Facilities and Services

The County shall plan for the equitable distribution of new public facilities and services that increase and enhance the quality of life in unincorporated neighborhoods and communities. The County shall not burden one area or segment of the community disproportionately with necessary, but undesirable land uses. (RDR/MPSP)

AD-1.4 Development Review and Permitting Streamlining Process

The County shall maintain a development review and permit process that is cost and time efficient. The County shall ensure that permitting procedures and regulations are applied consistent manner to all project applicants. (RDR)

Subsection Introduction

Each subsection begins with an overview of the topic, a discussion of why it is important for the County, and a summary of the focus of the goals and policies in the subsection.

Goals

Each goal starts with the section abbreviation and is followed by a number identifier. Every goal has one or more policies. Each goal states the ultimate purpose of an effort in a way that is general in nature and immeasurable.

Policies

Each policy has a specific number that corresponds to the goal. Each policy contains a title in bold for a quick reference to the policy topic. Policy titles are not part of the policy direction.

Implementation Tags

Each policy title includes a set of letters in parentheses that identifies the type of tool or action the County will use to implement the policy. (See discussion above under “How the County will Implement the General Plan”)



Implementation Programs Readers' Guide

To help ensure that appropriate actions are taken to implement the General Plan, each topical section also includes implementation programs. Implementation programs identify the specific steps to be taken by the County to implement the goals and policies of the plan. They may include revisions of current codes and ordinances, capital improvements, programs, financing, and other measures that are assigned to different County departments after the General Plan is adopted. The types of tools or actions the County can use to carry out its implementation programs are explained later in this section under “How will the County Implement the General Plan?”

Section 10 Administration Element		San Benito County 2035 GENERAL PLAN			
Administration Implementation Programs		2015-2014	2015-2020	2020-2035	Annual Ongoing
Program AD-A: Development Review and Permit Streamlining The County shall review its existing development review and permitting process in order to improve the efficiency for both the County and project applicants. This may include, as necessary, the following components: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Use a triage system to minimize permit backlog during periods of high development demand. This can include identifying projects that will need considerable staff resource to review early in the process in order for them to be efficiently managed. Provide regular status reports on project review schedules to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors during public meetings. Use consistent processing procedures for all projects. Provide pre-application meetings to coordinate review of large or complex projects. (RDR) 					
Implements Which Policy(ies)	AD-1.4				
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services Department				
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works Department Housing and Economic Development Department				
Program AD-B: Digital Government The County shall identify and implement measures to expand the public digital access to County government functions. This should include providing online streaming meeting video, property searches, permitting, and administration services in order to provide the public greater access to information and more efficient services. (SO/PI)					
Implements Which Policy(ies)	AD-1.5				
Responsible Department(s)	Information Technology Department				
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services Department Public Works Department				
Program AD-C: City Annexation Agreements The County shall maintain annexation agreements with the Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista that clearly identify tax sharing and revenue neutrality agreements related to the provision of public services and facilities. (MPSP/SO/FB)					

Time Frame

Identifies an estimated time frame for when the implementation program will be carried out. Implementation programs may not be completed as indicated due to budget or resource constraints.

Implementation Tags

Each policy title includes a set of letters in parentheses that identifies the type of tool or action the County will use to implement the policy. (See discussion above under “How the County will Implement the General Plan”)

Supporting Policy(ies)

Identifies which policy(ies) the implementation program supports.

Responsible Departments/Supporting Departments

Identifies which County department(s) are responsible to see the specific implementation is completed and which County department(s), if necessary, will support the responsible department.



How was the General Plan Prepared?

The County initiated the General Plan Update process in 2007 and concluded the process with adoption of the 2035 General Plan by the Board of Supervisors on July 21, 2015. The General Plan Update program included an extensive public outreach process to solicit feedback on major concepts, alternatives, and proposals throughout the process. Over the multi-year update process, many county residents, property owners, business owners, and stakeholders representing all segments of this community participated by providing their ideas, passions, and energy to plan San Benito County's future. This input has directly shaped the 2035 General Plan. The following is a summary of the 2035 General Plan public outreach program.

Stakeholder Interviews

Early in the General Plan Update process the County conducted a series of interviews with key community stakeholders – actively involved individuals representing various segments of local business, development, conservation, and government. The stakeholders discussed long-standing concerns and emerging issues facing the county and shared ideas on how the General Plan might address these issues.

Community Survey

In 2008 the County mailed out a survey to approximately 14,000 households to solicit community input on a vision for the future of San Benito County. The survey asked questions related to residents quality of life, needed public amenities, and consumer preferences. The survey was used to help develop the Vision and Guiding Principles presented in Section 2 of the General Plan.

Community Workshops

The County held a series of community workshops at several points in the process to gain input on plan alternatives and the General Plan documents. Workshop topics included:

- Visioning and Issues Identification (October 2008)
- Alternatives (January 2011)



Workshop participants (photos by County staff and Mintier Harnish)



General Plan Advisory Committee



General Plan Advisory Committee Members (Photo by Mintier Harnish)

The Board of Supervisors established a General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) early in the update process to advise the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors on needs and concerns for the comprehensive revision of the San Benito County General Plan. The GPAC provided guidance to the decision-makers on community members' preferences for policies that need to be considered in the updated General Plan; examined the County's land use, circulation, housing, open space, conservation, noise, safety, economic development, sustainability, and agriculture needs; made formal recommendations; and assisted the County in encouraging the public to get involved in the process.

Project Website

The County also prepared a project-specific website in order to keep people informed about the process and have one place for all project documents.

Newsletters

The County periodically published newsletters during the General Plan Update process that informed the community on the progress of the Update and announced upcoming meetings and publications of milestone reports.

Email Updates

The County sent out periodic emails throughout the update process to keep the community current on the process, maintain their interest, and create greater turn-out for community workshops and other outreach efforts.

Planning Commission and Board of Supervisor Study Sessions

The Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission met a half dozen times during the General Plan Update process to review milestone products and provide feedback to County staff and Consultants.

Public Comment Period and Adoption Hearings

Once drafted, there was an extensive public review and comment period on the draft General Plan. This included a series of Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors meetings to get input from the community on the draft General Plan. At the end of the public comment period, the decision-makers held public hearings. These hearings also provided an opportunity for interested parties to provide feedback on the Draft 2035 General Plan and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prior to their adoption.



Milestone Documents

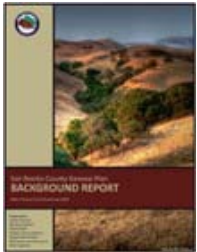
San Benito County prepared several milestone documents during the General Plan Update process. These documents served as the building blocks for the 2035 General Plan and analyzed the fiscal and environmental impacts associated with implementing the plan. These documents included (listed in chronological order):



2035 Vision and Guiding Principles

July 2010

This report summarized one of the first stages in the General Plan Update, which was the development of a vision for the future and guiding principles to help achieve that vision.



General Plan Background Report

November 2010

This report took a “snapshot” of San Benito County’s current (2010) trends and conditions. It provided a detailed description of a wide range of topics within the county. This report provided decision-makers, the public, and local agencies with context for making land use and policy decisions, and was intended to be objective and policy-neutral. The General Plan Background Report also served as the “Environmental Setting” section of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared for the 2035 General Plan.



Opportunities and Challenges Report

November 2010

This report was designed to focus the community’s attention on the major constraints, opportunities, and challenges facing the county that needed to be addressed during the General Plan Update process. This report synthesized and used information gathered from community workshops held in October 2007, a community survey conducted in early 2008, the draft General Plan Background Report, General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) input, and County staff and consultant observations. This report was intended to help stimulate discussion and provide context for the preparation of the land use alternatives, and ultimately, updated General Plan goals, policies, and implementation programs.



Alternatives Report

December 2010

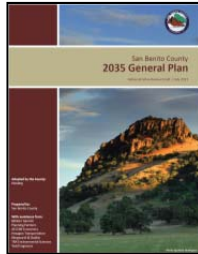
This report described and analyzed three alternatives for future change within San Benito County over the next 25 years. This analysis was used by the County staff, General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC), Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors, and the public to help select a preferred alternative for the future of San Benito County. The preferred alternative became the basis for developing the draft 2035 General Plan.



Fiscal Impact Analysis Report

January 2011

This report included a fiscal impact assessment of the Draft 2035 General Plan. This report was used by the Board of Supervisors to understand the potential revenue impacts associated with implementation of the 2035 General Plan. This included assumptions about the absorption of various future land uses.



Draft 2035 General Plan

February 2013

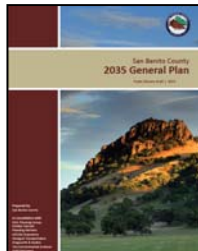
This plan contains all of the goals, policies, and standards that will guide future land use and environmental decisions within the county. It also identifies implementation programs that will ensure the goals and policies in the General Plan are carried out.



Draft Program Environmental Impact Report

February 2013

This report was prepared to fulfill the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as set forth in the CEQA Guidelines Act. The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors used this document during the General Plan Update process to understand the potential environmental implications associated with implementing the 2035 General Plan.



Revised Draft 2035 General Plan

May 2014

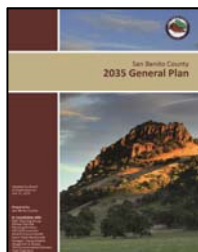
This revised version of the General Plan addresses goals, policies, standards, and programs, with revisions to the February 2013 draft, as directed by the County Board of Supervisors, with input from the community, that will guide future land use decisions within the county.



Recirculated Draft Program Environmental Impact Report

March 2015

This recirculated report was revised due to changes in the draft General Plan and peer reviews of the technical analysis in the report, largely in the air quality, global climate change, and transportation sections.



Final 2035 General Plan

July 2015

The County prepared a Final 2035 General Plan upon completion of the project, which included revisions to the Draft 2035 General Plan based on the Environmental Impact Report analysis, public hearings, and ultimately the direction from the Board of Supervisors.



SAN BENITO COUNTY POLICY AND REGULATORY HIERARCHY



How does the General Plan Relate to Other Planning Documents and Regulations?

There are several other local and regional plans that influence land use and other policy decisions in San Benito County. The following describes the 2035 General Plan's relationship to these other plans and regulations.

County Regulations

As discussed earlier, all County regulations must be consistent with this General Plan. Upon adoption of the 2035 General Plan, the County will conduct a review and update of existing regulations, ordinances, rules, and procedures to ensure they are consistent with the goals and policies of this plan.

AMBAG Blueprint Process

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) began a regional planning process in 2008 called *Envisioning the Monterey Bay Ar-*

ea. The goal of this project is to identify ways the region can become more environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable. This includes measures for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and urban sprawl.

While the Blueprint process is not legislatively binding upon the region or local communities, the Blueprint does identify practices which can be used by local governments in their own planning efforts. The Blueprint will, however, lay the foundation for the region's Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) in satisfaction of Senate Bill 375 (2008). Each Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in California is responsible for developing a SCS that demonstrates how, through more efficient coordination of land use decisions and transportation investments, each region can reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions from cars and light trucks.



City General Plans

The Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista have authority over the land use, environmental, and development decisions within their city limits. In

turn, both cities have their own adopted general plan to guide these decisions. Please contact the Cities directly to receive copies of their current adopted general plans.

How Does the General Plan Address Recent State Mandates?

As described earlier, the 2035 General Plan must comply with State requirements, most of which date to the 1970s or earlier. However, since 2006 the State of California has passed a series of laws that require regional and local governments to address sustainability, greenhouse gas reduction, and complete streets in their planning documents. These include the California Global Warming Solutions Act (Assembly Bill 32, 2006), the Redesigning Communities to Reduce Greenhouse Gases Act (Senate Bill 375, 2008), and the Complete Streets Act (Assembly Bill 1358, 2008). The following summarizes how the 2035 General Plan addresses these recent State mandates. (*See the Background Report for detailed summaries of these and other State laws and mandates.*)

Sustainability and Greenhouse Gas Reduction

Sustainability refers to the long-term social, economic, and environmental health of the community. A sustainable community grows and prospers while not compromising the ability of future generations to do the same. Sustainable communities are those that use resources efficiently and effectively, provide economic security, and distribute benefits evenly throughout the county.

Climate change refers to the change in the average weather of the earth that may be measured by changes in wind patterns, storms, precipitation, and temperature. Human activities associated primarily with the use of carbon-based fossil fuels have led to changes in the composition of the at-

mosphere. The combustion of carbon-based fossil fuels creates greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), and nitrous oxide (N₂O), which has caused the earth's atmosphere to absorb more heat from the sun.


In 2006 the California State Legislature took a proactive role in addressing the challenges of climate change with the adoption of the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32). AB 32 focuses on reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in California. AB 32 requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the State agency charged with regulating statewide air quality, to adopt rules and regulations that would achieve GHG emissions equivalent to 1990 statewide levels by 2020.

Finally, an emerging topic related to sustainability and climate change is adaptation to the expected impacts of climate change. In 2008 Governor Schwarzenegger issued Executive Order S-13-08 to prepare a statewide strategy to manage the anticipated impacts and challenges from climate change. The 2009 California Climate Adaptation Strategy summarizes the best known science on climate change impacts in specific sectors and provides recommendations on how to manage against those threats.

The 2035 General Plan includes policy standards for greenhouse gas reduction targets for both County operations and communitywide emissions consistent with AB 32. The cumulative effects of



the General Plan policies addressing greenhouse gas emissions result in measurable reductions in emissions consistent with the adopted standards. The General Plan also includes policies to mitigate the impacts that are expected to occur due to climate change.

Sustainability, greenhouse gas emissions reduction, and climate change adaptation are addressed by policies and programs throughout the General Plan, rather than in a single section. Each policy and program in the General Plan that promotes sustainability or addresses climate change is indicated with the  icon.

Complete Streets

The California Complete Streets Act of 2008 requires cities and counties to include complete streets policies as part of their general plans so that roadways are designed to safely accommodate all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, as well as motorists. It also requires Caltrans to fully consider the needs of non-motorized travelers in all programming, planning, maintenance, construction, operations, and project development activities and products on State highways. Beginning January 2011 any substantive revision of the circulation element in the general plan of a California local government must include complete streets provisions. The 2035 General Plan includes these provisions in Section 3: Land Use and Community Character Element and Section 6: Circulation Element.



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SECTION 2

VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This section summarizes two important components of the 2035 General Plan. The first is the community's vision for what San Benito County should be like in 25 years. The second is a series of guiding principles that represent the community's core values and provide direction to achieve the vision. The vision and guiding principles provide the framework for the 2035 General Plan. In turn, all goals, policies, and implementation programs build upon, and are consistent with, both the vision and the guiding principles.

2035 Vision for San Benito County

A vision statement is a summary of the general desires or outcome to be achieved through implementation of the 2035 General Plan. The vision provides the foundation for the more specific guiding principles, goals, policies, and programs included in the General Plan. The visioning process is valuable in identifying issues important to the community and setting the overall framework for what the County wants to achieve in the 2035 General Plan.

The County began the visioning process in mid-2009 as part of the General Plan Update. This process was led by the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC), which held a series of meetings between July and September 2009 to discuss and draft a vision and guiding principles for San Benito County. Their work included reviewing public input received from a community mail survey and community workshops held in 2008. The GPAC's draft vision and guiding principles were then reviewed and refined by both the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. The following page shows the 2035 Vision for San Benito County.

The vision, guiding principles, goals, policies, and implementation programs are intended to be interconnected and equal. They should be considered together when making consistency determinations.



2035 Vision for San Benito County

At pace with the changing world, but still rural in nature, our vision of San Benito County in 2035 is of a positive and prosperous future, in which balance has been attained between business and residential growth without surrendering our rich natural resources, valuable agricultural assets, active country character, or our historic heritage. To this end, the General Plan policies are flexible to enable San Benito County to maintain this important balance to foster a positive and prosperous future.

Neighborhoods, parks and public lands, business districts, and job centers are linked to one another by a sensibly-sized, well-maintained transportation network, suitable for foot, bicycle, auto, bus, or sometimes horse. Connection to distant destinations is readily available by auto, bus, train, or plane, or by way of enhanced virtual telecommunications.

Established local businesses, not just the buildings they inhabit, are understood to be important foundations to thriving prosperous downtowns. To ensure continued relevance of the downtowns, infill development containing compatible enterprises is supported. Visitors find ample retail and dining prospects, welcoming accommodations, and unmatched outdoor recreational opportunities.

The county continues to widen the spectrum of business and industry, enhanced educational opportunities, and broadened leisure time activities available for a population that is diverse in age, culture, education, and lifestyle. People are afforded the facilities needed for healthy lives. Environmentally-sustainable technologies are embraced, and businesses of any size are encouraged to put down roots here, hire local talent, and grow in the rich soil, clean water, beautiful climate, and rural atmosphere of San Benito County.



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.



Economic Growth and Prosperity

10. Expand and diversify the local economy by supporting businesses, supporting jobs for the diverse population, and capitalizing on the county's natural and human resources.
11. Support existing and establish new local businesses that are based on industries that are innovative, technology-based, and sustainable.
12. Support programs that educate the local workforce on conventional, productive, sustainable, and organic agriculture concepts; water conservation strategies; high-tech industries; and alternative energy production.
13. Support the county's growing tourism industry.

Transportation and Infrastructure

14. Encourage future growth near existing transportation networks such as the major roadways, State highways, airports, rail corridors, and other major transportation routes.
15. Encourage future growth near available water and sewer infrastructure to ensure improvements are economically feasible.
16. Encourage future growth that can be supported by adequate, long-term access to water, sewer, electric, gas, and other utilities.

Natural Resource Protection

17. Protect natural resources and open space areas from incompatible uses.
18. Preserve the county's environmental quality and diverse natural habitats.

Health and Sustainability

19. Encourage a healthy living environment that includes walkable neighborhoods, access to recreation and open space, healthy foods, medical services, and public transit.
20. Become a leader in the efficient use of resources, including renewable energy, water, and land.

Regional Coordination

21. Coordinate County planning efforts with those of the City of Hollister and the City of San Juan Bautista.



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 DESIGNATIONS

Generally speaking, land use designations are policy statements the County has developed to guide decisions about the type and intensity of development envisioned on each unincorporated parcel during the life of the General Plan. Unlike zoning districts, which are detailed regulations that identify permitted uses, building envelopes, setbacks, high limits, etc., land use designations are intended to be broad descriptions.

Ultimately, zoning districts must be consistent with land use designations included in the General Plan. However, the County may use one or more zoning districts to implement a single land use designation. The following describes the two main features of each land use designation: the description and the development standards.

Land Use Descriptions

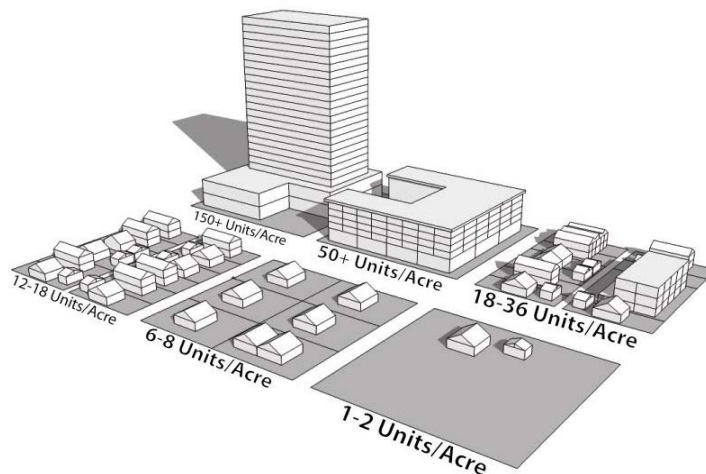
Each land use designation starts out with a text description. The description includes a summary of the purpose of the designation, generally where it is applied, and what the intended uses are. Table 3-1 provides a description of each land use designation appearing on the Land Use Diagram.

Development Standards

Each land use designation also includes a series of development standards. Standards are statements of allowed density and intensity, usually described in a range (e.g., four to eight dwellings units per gross acre). Standards operate in two ways, depending if they are describing residential or non-residential uses. Residential standards are described in terms of “density,” and non-residential standards in terms of “floor area ratio.”

Residential Density

Standards of building density for residential uses are stated as a range (i.e., minimum and maximum) of the allowable number of dwelling units per gross acre. Standards of population density for residential uses can be derived by multiplying the allowable number of dwelling units per gross acre by the average number of persons per dwelling unit assumed for the applicable residential designation. The diagram below shows various building configurations representing different density ranges from rural home sites to city neighborhoods.



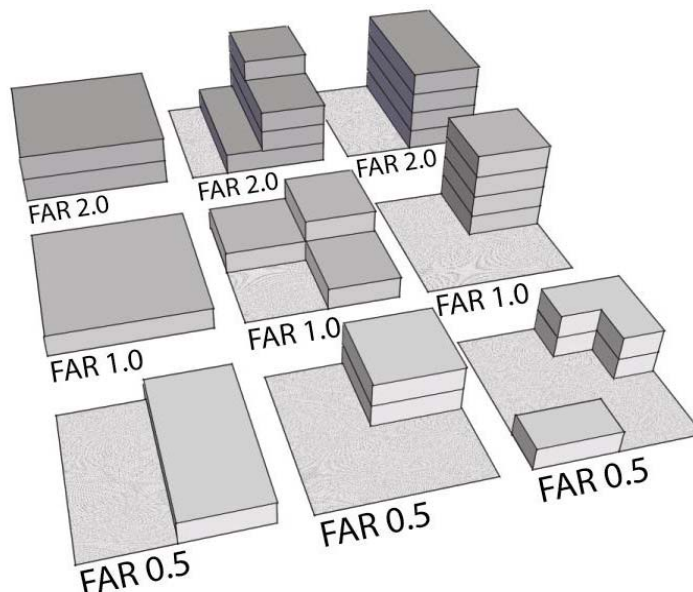


Non-Residential Floor Area Ratio

Standards of building intensity for non-residential uses such as commercial, industrial, public, or mixed-use development are stated as a range (i.e., minimum and maximum) of floor area ratio (FAR). The FAR is a ratio of the gross building area on a site, excluding structured parking, to the net developable area of the site. The net developable area is the total area of a site excluding portions that cannot be developed (e.g., right-of-way, public parks). A site includes all contiguous parcels that will share parking or access. For example, on a lot with 25,000 square feet of land area, a FAR of 0.50 will allow 12,500 square feet of useable building floor area to be built, regardless of the number of stories in the building (e.g., 6,250 square feet per floor on two floors or 12,500 square feet on one floor). On the same 25,000-

square-foot lot, a FAR of 1.00 would allow 25,000 square feet of useable floor area. The diagram below shows various building configurations representing FARs of 0.50 and 1.00. In the case of mixed-use developments that include residential uses, the FAR includes residential building square footage, and the density range is not applicable.

While FAR provides for the overall development size and intensity, it does not specify the form or character of the building. Different interpretations of the same FAR can result in buildings of very different character. Other County regulations such as zoning guide the form of buildings within a given FAR range. The diagram below illustrates how FARs can apply to a one acre parcel. Table 3-1 shows the development standards for each land use designation.





**Table 3-1
Land Use Designations and Standards**

Land Use Description	Development Standard(s)
<p>Rangeland (RG) The purpose of this designation is to maintain open space and grazing land on hills, mountains, and remote areas of the county. This designation is applied to areas that have minimal transportation access, high to very high fire hazard, and no public infrastructure (e.g., sewer, water, drainage). Most of these areas are located within remote parts of the county. This designation allows support uses that directly support agricultural operations and one principal residential dwelling unit per lot. Secondary dwellings are allowed for relative, caretaker/employee, and farm worker housing.</p>	<p><u>Maximum Density:</u> 1 dwelling unit per 40 acres</p> <p><u>Maximum FAR:</u> 0.1</p>
<p>Rangeland Management Area (RGMA) The purpose of this designation is to maintain open space and grazing land on hills, mountains, and remote areas of the county that are managed by a local, regional, state and/or federal agency. This designation is applied to areas that have minimal transportation access, high to very high fire hazard, and no public infrastructure (e.g., sewer, water, drainage). Most of these areas are located within remote parts of the county. This designation allows support uses that directly support agricultural operations.</p>	<p><u>Maximum FAR:</u> 0.1</p>
<p>Agriculture (A) The purpose of this designation is to maintain the productivity of agricultural land, especially prime farmland, in the county. This designation is applied to agriculturally productive lands of various types, including crop land, vineyards, and grazing lands. This designation allows agricultural support uses, such as processing, wineries, and other necessary public utility and safety facilities and one principal residential dwelling unit per lot. Secondary dwellings are allowed for relative, caretaker/employee, and farm worker housing. These areas typically have transportation access, but little to no public infrastructure.</p>	<p><u>Maximum Density:</u> 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres</p> <p><u>Maximum FAR:</u> 0.5</p>
<p>Parks (P) This designation applies to the land within San Benito County that is presently owned by Federal, State, or County agencies and used as active or passive parkland. The uses allowed within the Federal and State parks are dictated by those agencies. Permissible uses within the Parks, Public category are public recreation facilities such as public golf courses, community park, neighborhood park, local park, community center, campgrounds, recreation corridors, and trails.</p>	<p><u>Maximum FAR:</u> 0.1</p>
<p>Rural (R) The purpose of this designation is to allow very low-density residential development in areas that are not primarily suited for agricultural uses, but due to the lack of public infrastructure (e.g., water, sewer, drainage) or for geographical reasons are unsuited for higher density residential designations.</p>	<p><u>Maximum Density:</u> 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres</p>



Table 3-1
Land Use Designations and Standards

Land Use Description	Development Standard(s)
<p>Rural Transition (RT)</p> <p>The purpose of this designation is to allow traditional rural development as a transition between rural and urban areas. Development within this designation should be associated with rural standards and will typically lack public infrastructure (e.g., water, sewer, drainage). These transitional areas are intended to fulfill the need for buffering higher density residential development from exclusively agricultural areas, in order to minimize the conversion of agricultural lands to urban uses.</p>	<p><u>Maximum Density:</u> 1 dwelling unit per 2.5 acres</p>
<p>Residential Rural (RR)</p> <p>The purpose of this designation is to allow for large-lot rural residential homes within areas of the county that are generally unsuitable for productive agriculture because of existing small property sizes, multiple property owners, and proximity to other more intensive residential development. These properties will typically lack public infrastructure (e.g., water, sewer, drainage).</p>	<p><u>Maximum Density:</u> 2 dwelling units per acre</p>
<p>Residential Mixed (RM)</p> <p>The purpose of this designation is to allow areas of unincorporated urban uses where circulation and utility services exist. This will provide individuals with the opportunity to live in an unincorporated village or neighborhood atmosphere composed primarily of residential land uses with some commercial uses serving the residences. This designation applies to areas that are largely developed and have public infrastructure and services necessary to support the increased density.</p> <p>The intensity of development will be directly proportional to the level and availability of public infrastructure and services. A maximum of 20 dwelling units per acre can be achieved in those areas so designated. Thirty percent of new residential dwelling units with available public sewer and water shall include mixed residential types with an average development density of 8 units per acre. The exception shall be the Residential Multiple zoning category where densities of 8 to 20 units per acre are allowed. This designation also allows mixed-use developments that include residential, retail, and office uses.</p>	<p><u>Maximum Density:</u> Single-family up to 20 dwelling units per acre</p> <p>or</p> <p>Mobile home parks with an average of 8 dwelling units per acre</p> <p><u>Maximum FAR:</u> 0.8</p>
<p>Commercial Neighborhood (CN)</p> <p>The purpose of this designation is to provide convenience goods within or near communities or other concentrations of population. This designation intends to reduce unnecessary vehicular trips to commercial centers in the cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista and outlying cities in other counties, encouraging a focus on local businesses, with a destination retailer or restaurant. This designation also allows mixed-use developments that could include residential, retail, and office uses.</p>	<p><u>Maximum FAR:</u> 0.8</p> <p><u>Maximum Density:</u> Up to 20 dwelling units per acre</p>



**Table 3-1
Land Use Designations and Standards**

Land Use Description	Development Standard(s)
Commercial Thoroughfare (CT) The purpose of this designation is to provide commercial services for motorists near highway interchanges, along thoroughfares, and near Federal, State, and regional parks, and other tourist attractions to capture pass-through traffic, and to allow for commercial uses that serve the agricultural and rural unincorporated community. These uses could include small shopping centers, truck and automobile stations, and tourist-serving commercial uses.	<u>Maximum FAR:</u> 0.8
Commercial Regional (CR) The purpose of this designation is to provide areas that function as destinations for commercial activity serving the regional population. This designation intends to accommodate the location of such commercial uses at key intersections along Interstate 101 and other major State Routes. These uses could include shopping centers, truck and automobile stations, tourist-serving commercial uses, and hotels/motels.	<u>Maximum FAR:</u> 0.8
Industrial Light (IL) The purpose of this designation is to allow light industrial development near existing transportation systems (e.g., highways, rail, air). This includes: warehouses, contractor yards, nurseries, lumber yards, auto repair shops, light manufacturing and/or assembly, and research and development operations that do not cause significant environmental hazards or create major pollution.	<u>Maximum FAR:</u> 0.8
Industrial Heavy (IH) The purpose of this designation is to provide areas for heavy industrial activities that are not suitable for urban areas because of their size, noise, dust, traffic, or safety concerns. This could include large-scale manufacturing operations, mining and aggregate production facilities, recycling transfer centers, chemical and explosives manufacturing, or other similar uses.	<u>Maximum FAR:</u> 0.8
Public/Quasi-Public (PQP) The purpose of this designation is to provide for public and quasi-public uses, including public utility facilities and services. This designation applies to the following uses: schools, landfills, recycling, resource recovery, government lands (non-parkland), sewage treatment plants, fire stations, sheriff stations/substations, jails, religious meeting areas, libraries, energy generation and distribution, water distribution, and public meeting halls, and other similar uses related to the operation of County government services.	<u>Maximum FAR:</u> 1.0



**Table 3-1
Land Use Designations and Standards**

Land Use Description	Development Standard(s)
<p>Santana Ranch Specific Plan (SRSP) This designation applies to the Santana Ranch Specific Plan area. The plan area encompasses approximately 292 acres located east of intersections of Fairview Road with Hillcrest Road and Sunnyslope Road. Specific land uses in this area must be consistent with the Santana Ranch Specific Plan, which sets forth a comprehensive planning vision and regulatory framework for the project.</p>	Multiple (see SRSP) ²
<p>Fairview Corners Specific Plan (FCSP) This designation applies to the Fairview Corners Specific Plan area. The plan encompasses approximately 60 acres located adjacent to the proposed Gavilan College San Benito Campus, directly north of Airline Highway (State Route 25) and east of Fairview Road. Specific land uses in this area must be consistent with the Fairview Corners Specific Plan, which sets forth a comprehensive planning vision and regulatory framework for the project.</p>	Multiple (see FCSP) ³
<p>Planned Development (PD) This designation identifies areas where future development is anticipated to occur through preparation of a Specific Plan, which may also incorporate form-based zoning. General Plan land use designations will be applied to the area through a General Plan Amendment to incorporate the Specific Plan as a part of this General Plan, once more detailed planning is conducted and applicable CEQA environmental review is completed.</p>	N/A ⁴

Notes:

¹ FAR = Floor Area Ratio

² The Santana Ranch Specific Plan includes a total of 1,092 dwelling units of various housing types and densities, including 774 single-family residential units at densities of 1.0 to 5.0 units per acre, and 318 multiple residential units at 5.1 to 12 units per acre. It also includes 9.7 acres of commercial retail and 2.0 acres of office development.

³ The Fairview Corners Specific Plan includes a total of 57-acre single-family residential units located to the east of the City of Hollister, including 220 housing units and open space.

⁴ The San Juan Oaks Planned Development Area is adjacent to the existing San Juan Oaks Golf Course. A 186-unit residential and commercial development was approved in this location in 2004 but was not constructed. A formal proposal has been submitted to the County for a redesign of the previous plans, including additional development. For the purposes of the General Plan buildout analysis it is assumed there will be a development of approximately 815 single-family residential units and accompanying commercial uses in this Planned Development Area. Until a Specific Plan is approved by the County, the project area will remain designated "Rural Transitional" and "Commercial Thoroughfare" and retain its previous entitlements.



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)

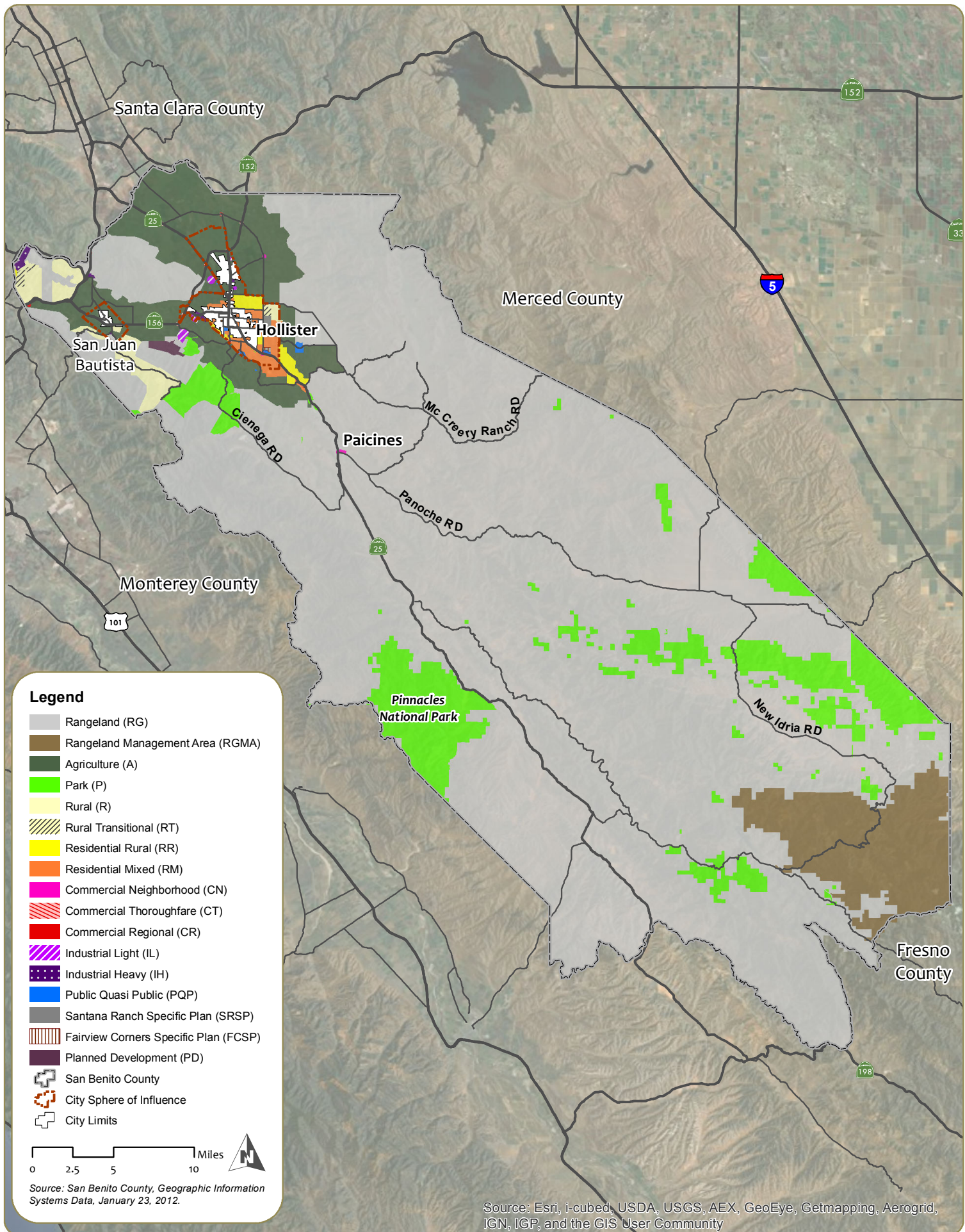


Figure 3-1
Land Use Diagram (Countywide)



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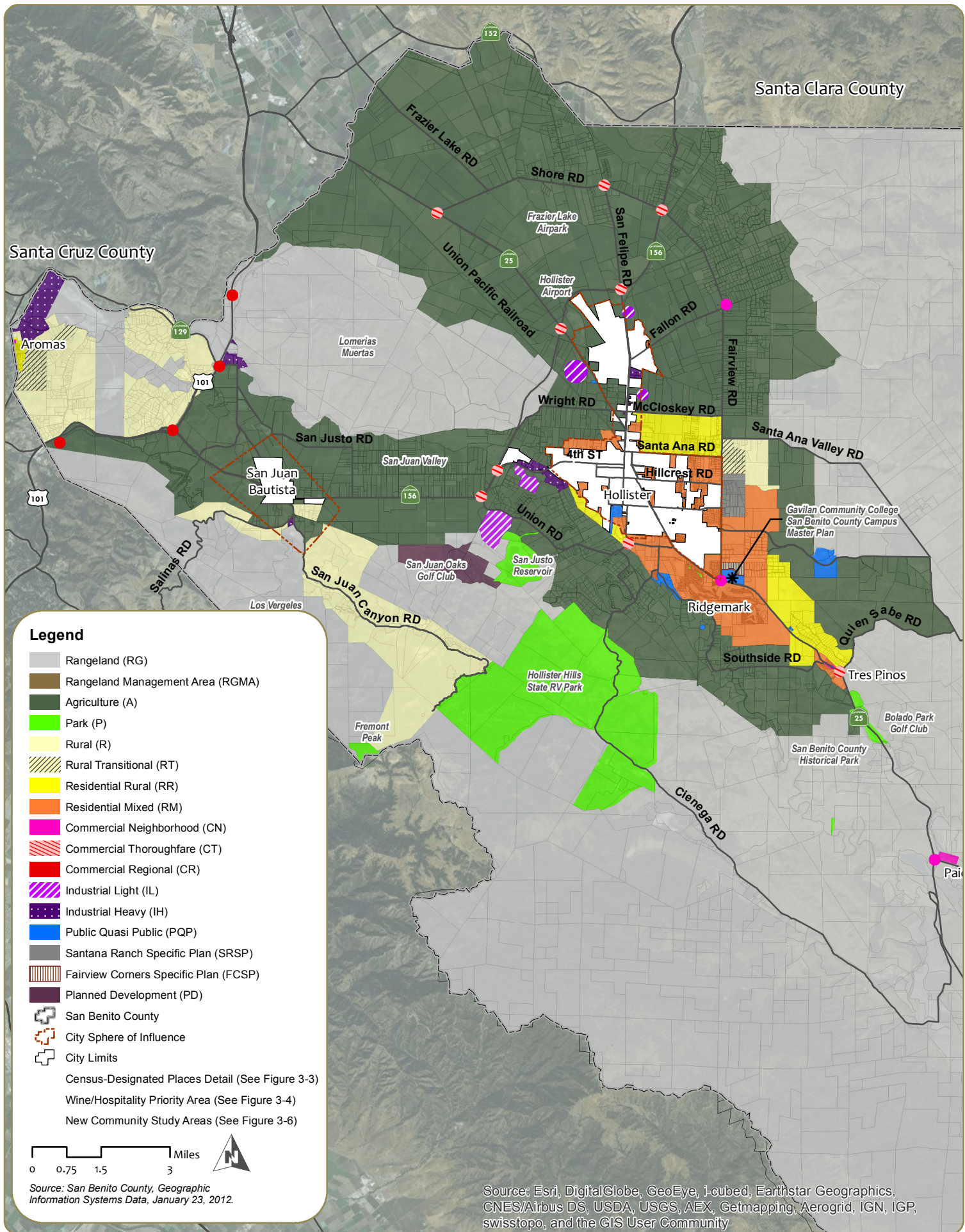


Figure 3-2
Land Use Diagram (North County Detail)



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Legend

- Rangeland (RG)
- Rangeland Management Area (RGMA)
- Agriculture (A)
- Park (P)
- Rural (R)
- Rural Transitional (RT)
- Residential Rural (RR)
- Residential Mixed (RM)
- Commercial Neighborhood (CN)
- Commercial Thoroughfare (CT)
- Commercial Regional (CR)
- Industrial Light (IL)
- Industrial Heavy (IH)
- Public Quasi Public (PQP)
- Santana Ranch Specific Plan (SRSP)
- Fairview Corners Specific Plan (FCSP)
- Planned Development (PD)
- Census Designated Places (CDP)
- San Benito County
- City Sphere of Influence
- City Limits

0 0.275 0.55 1.1 Miles



Source: San Benito County, Geographic Information Systems Data, January 23, 2012.

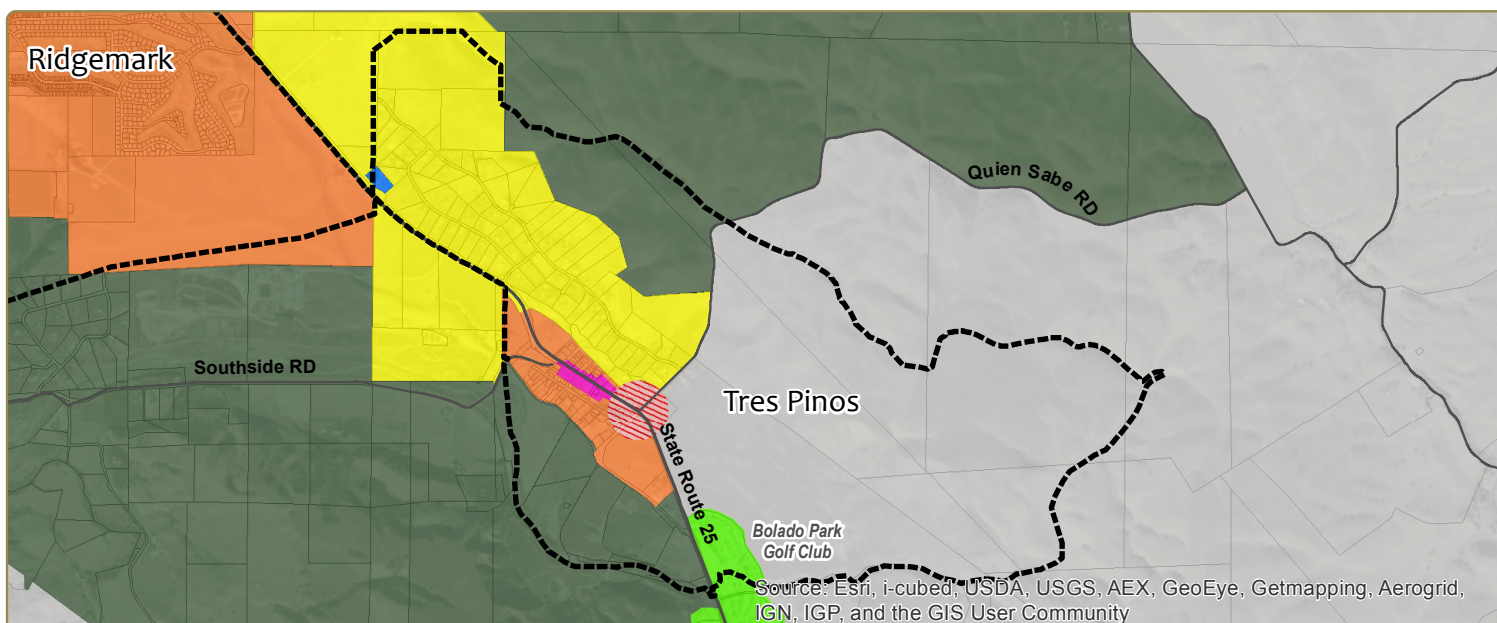
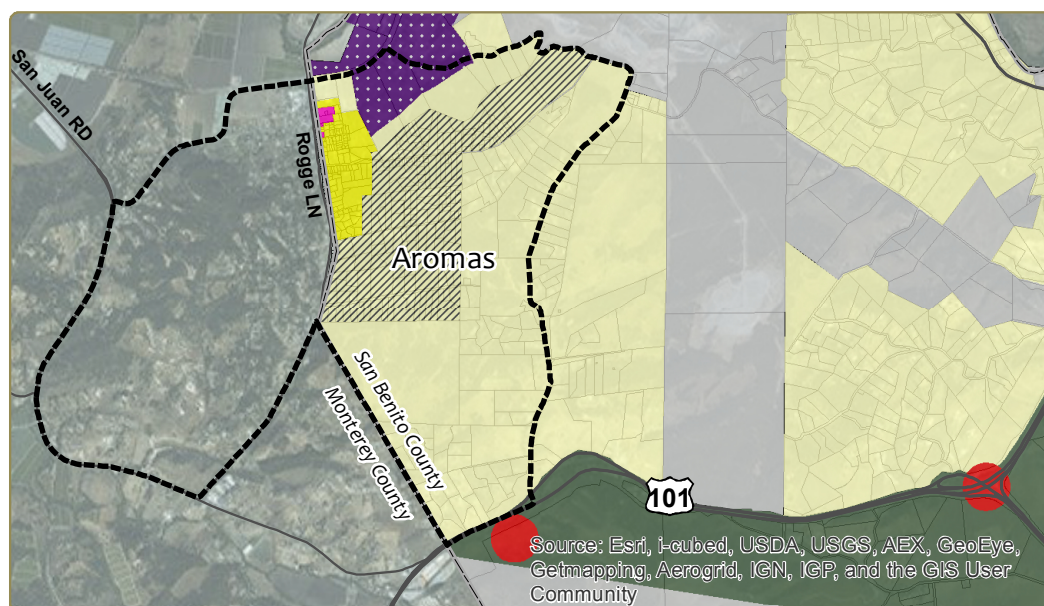
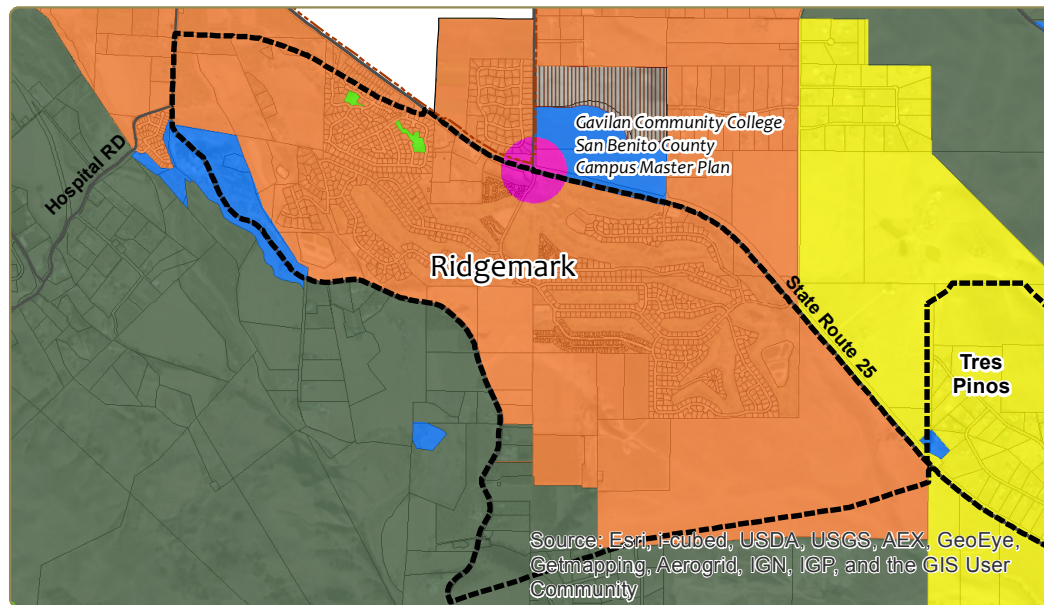


Figure 3-3
Land Use Diagram (Census Designated Places Detail)



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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, 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-



vide setbacks from creeks). The County shall require adequate mitigation for any development located on environmentally sensitive lands (e.g., wetlands, erodible soil, archaeological resources, important plant and animal communities). (RDR)

Sustainable and Energy Efficient Development

San Benito County is committed to promoting development that is sustainable and energy efficient. Efficient development can benefit the county in many ways. It helps reduce energy costs for home and building owners, and helps protect electrical delivery systems from being overburdened during times of high demand. Location can also impact efficiency. Development located in proximity to other major developments, major transportation corridors, or areas with public transportation accessibility can reduce travel demand. The focus of this goal section is to provide direction on the use of innovative building technologies, energy efficiency, and ways to achieve sustainable development practices.



A “whole system” approach is a way to design and construct buildings that consume less energy, water, and other resources; facilitate natural ventilation; use daylight efficiently; and are healthy, safe, comfortable, and durable.

GOAL LU-2

To promote energy efficiency through innovative and sustainable building and site design.

LU-2.1 Sustainable Building Practices 🌱

The County shall promote, and where appropriate, require sustainable building practices that incorporate a “whole system” approach to designing and constructing buildings that consume less energy, water, and other resources; facilitate natural ventilation; use daylight efficiently; and are healthy, safe, comfortable, and durable. (RDR)

LU-2.2 Green Sustainable Building Practices 🌱

The County shall encourage sustainable building practices that go beyond the minimum requirements of the Title 24 CalGreen Code (i.e., Tier 1 or Tier 2 measures) and to design new buildings to achieve a green building standard such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). (RDR)

LU-2.3 Energy Conservation Standards for New Construction 🌱

The County shall cooperate with the local building industry, utilities, and air district to promote enhanced energy conservation standards for new construction. (RDR/IGC/JP)

LU-2.4 Solar Access 🌱

The County shall encourage new residential subdivisions and new commercial, office, industrial, and public buildings to be oriented and landscaped to enhance natural lighting and solar access in order to maximize energy efficiency. (RDR)

LU-2.5 Energy Retrofits 🌱

The County shall promote the retrofitting of existing buildings with new and innovative energy and water efficiency technologies and encourage structures being renovated to be built to a green building standard such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). (RDR)



LU-2.6 Green Building Standard 🌱

The County shall require all new County buildings be constructed to green building standards, such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), and all existing County buildings to be retrofitted with energy efficient technologies. (MPSP/SO)

LU-2.7 Sustainable Location Factor 🌍

The County shall encourage new development in locations that provide connectivity between existing transportation facilities to increase efficiency, reduce congestion, and improve safety. (RDR)

Agricultural and Rangeland

Most of the non-urban land within the Hollister and San Juan valleys is used for productive agriculture (as defined in the Glossary). Agriculture is a major industry in the county and plays a critical role in the regional economy. Local agriculture and agricultural operations also benefit the community by providing accessible fresh produce. In addition, almost all of the land in the central, eastern, and southern parts of the county is designated as Rangeland. The County is determined to protect and support the agricultural and ranching industries in the county. See Figure 3-4, Wine/Hospitality Priority Area.



Panoramic view of agriculture in the San Juan Valley
(Photo by Mintier Harnish)

The focus of this goal section is to emphasize the importance of farming and ranching in San Benito County, identify ways to protect productive agricultural operations, and identify ways to promote

and sustain the industry. This includes balancing the needs of farmers and ranchers with the concerns of adjacent rural residential and urban uses. (Note: see Section 4: Economic Development Element for specific policies related to the expansion of the agricultural and ranching industries, wineries, and agritourism).

GOAL LU-3

To ensure the long-term preservation of the agricultural industry, agricultural support services, and rangeland resources by protecting these areas from incompatible urban uses and allowing farmers to manage their land and operations in an efficient, economically viable manner.

LU-3.1 Agricultural Diversification

The County shall support existing farms, vineyards, and other agricultural operations and encourage the agricultural industry to continue diversification that includes organic, value-added, small-scale, sustainable, and community-supported agricultural practices throughout the county. (RDR/MPSP)

LU-3.2 Agricultural Integrity and Flexibility

The County shall protect the integrity of existing agricultural resources, and provide for flexibility and economic viability of farming and ranching operations. (RDR)

LU-3.3 Increased Agricultural Sustainability and Energy Efficiency 🌱

The County shall encourage and support farms, vineyards, and ranches that seek to implement programs that increase the sustainability of resources, conserve energy, and protect water and soil in order to bolster the local food economy, increase the viability of diverse family farms and improve the opportunities for farm workers. (RDR)



LU-3.4 Lower-Impact Agricultural Practices 🌱

The County shall encourage and support farms, vineyards, and ranches that use lower-impact agricultural and/or organic practices and shall recognize the benefits that a flourishing organic sector industry can provide. (RDR)

LU-3.5 Locally-Grown and Produced Food 🌱

The County shall encourage the purchasing of locally-grown and produced food by county residents and public institutions, including schools, hospital, and jail. (PI)

LU-3.6 Agricultural Support Services

The County shall encourage services such as trucking, warehousing, and distribution centers in appropriate locations, to provide support for the economic viability of commercial agriculture. (RDR)

LU-3.7 Visitor Serving Uses in Agricultural Areas

The County shall encourage visitor serving uses in areas designated Agriculture (e.g., wine tasting rooms, hotels, and bed and breakfast inns), especially within the Wine/Hospitality Priority Area, as long as they do not adversely affect the agricultural production activities of the area. RDR/MPSP)

LU-3.8 Urban Residential Buffer Requirement

The County shall encourage the establishment of a buffer, by the residential developer, between new urban density residential development (i.e., greater than two dwelling units per acre) and existing conventional agricultural operations. (RDR)



LU-3.9 Right to Farm and Ranch

The County shall protect the rights of operators of productive agricultural properties (as defined in the Glossary) and ranching properties to commence and continue their agricultural and ranching practices (a “right to farm and ranch”) even though established urban uses in the general area may foster complaints against those agricultural and ranching practices. The “right to farm and ranch” shall encompass the processing of agricultural and ranching products and other activities inherent in the definition of productive agriculture and in ranching activities. The County shall require all parcel maps approved for locations in or adjacent to productive agricultural areas and ranching areas to indicate the “right to farm and ranch” policy. The County shall require the program to be disclosed to buyers of property in San Benito County. (RDR)

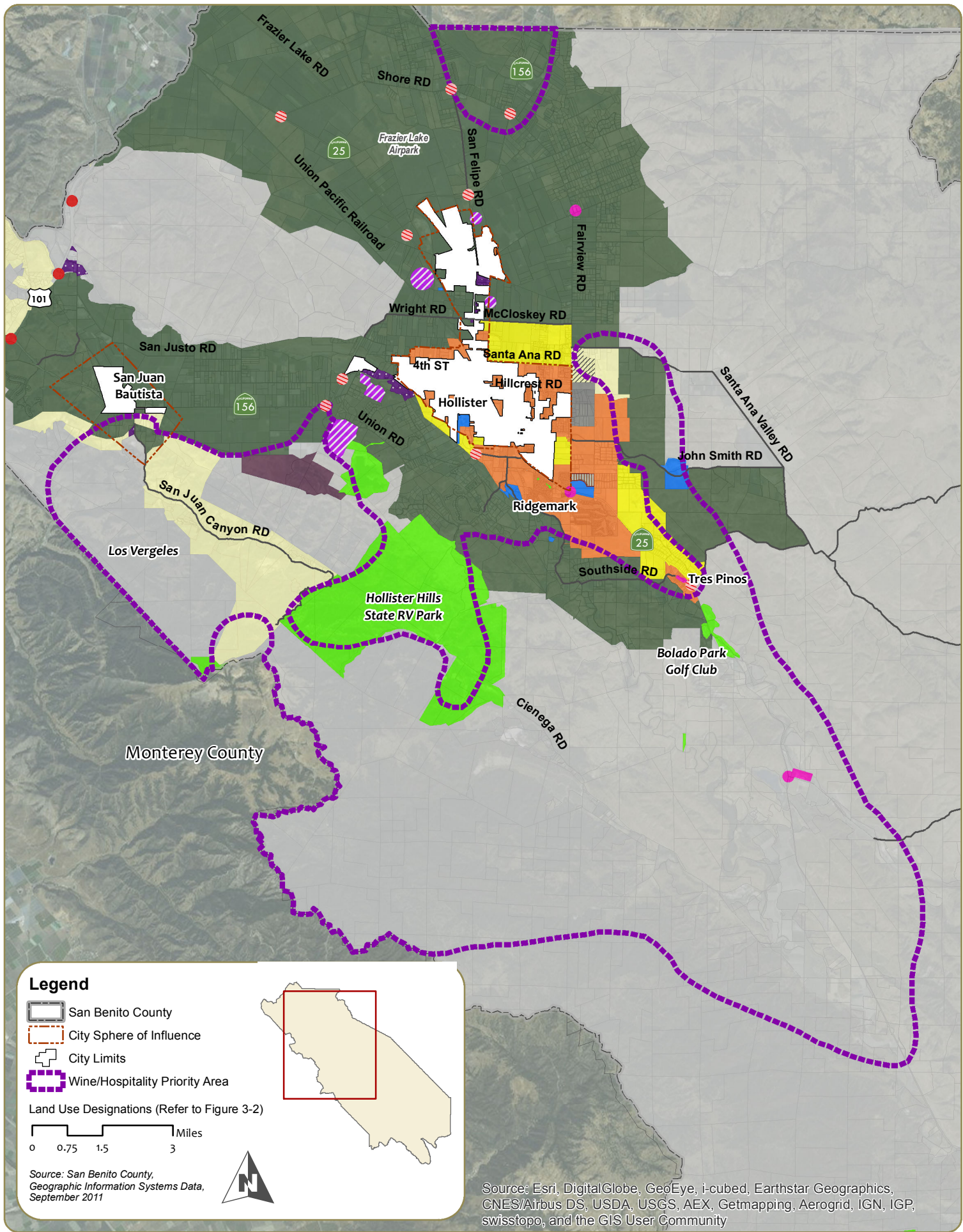


Figure 3-4
Wine/Hospitality Priority Area



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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.*



Ridgemark area residential clustered development.
(Photo by Google Earth Imagery)

GOAL LU-4

To encourage variety in new unincorporated residential development while also providing incentives for clustered residential as a means to protect valuable agricultural and natural resources.

LU-4.1 Housing Stock Diversity 🌐

The County shall encourage a balance of housing types, locations, and price ranges within the county to accommodate a variety of families from all socio-economic backgrounds. (RDR)

LU-4.2 Urban Residential Development 🌐

The County shall ensure new urban residential development (e.g., greater than two units per acre) occurs in areas that have, or can provide, adequate public facilities and services to support such uses, and are near existing and future major transportation networks, transit and/or bicycle corridors, pedestrian paths and trails, and employment centers. (RDR)

LU-4.3 Residential Density Reductions

The County shall consider reducing the base density of a proposed residential development project if a combination of environmental hazards (e.g., fire, seismic, flooding, greater than 30 percent

slope) and/or natural resources (e.g., sensitive habitat, wetlands) existing on the site, after consideration of the mitigations to be implemented to address those hazards, make higher densities less appropriate. (RDR)

LU-4.4 Multi-Family Residential 🌐

The County shall encourage, where feasible, multi-family housing to be located within walkable mixed-use neighborhoods that include uses such as employment centers, shopping districts, civic uses, and other forms of residential development, and have good automobile access and are near transit.. (RDR)

LU-4.5 Innovative Site Planning and Residential Design 🌐

The County shall encourage new residential developments to use innovative site planning techniques and to incorporate design features that increase the design quality, and energy efficiency, and water conservation of structures and landscapes while protecting the surrounding environment. (RDR)

LU-4.6 Clustered Residential Program 🌐

The County shall continue to encourage the clustering of residential uses and the use of creative site planning techniques to promote preservation of agricultural land and open space areas. (RDR)

LU-4.7 Clustered Residential Site Layout 🌐

The County shall encourage clustered residential development be designed to respect existing natural features (e.g., rivers and streams, hills and ridge lines, and substantial tree stands) as appropriate to the density and character of the development, and if applicable to use such features to separate clustered parcels from farming areas. (RDR)



LU-4.8 Conservation Easements Related to Clustered Residential Development

The County shall encourage new clustered residential development to provide agricultural and/or other appropriate open space easements on farming or open space parcel(s) at the time that the development occurs, or if a multi-phased Planned Development, according to an adopted specific plan. (RDR/MPSP)

LU-4.9 Transfer of Development Credit Program

The County shall maintain and implement the voluntary Transfer of Development Credit (TDC) program as an incentive to protect farmland and focus future development away from the most productive farmland. (RDR/MPSP)

Commercial and Mixed-Use Development

Historically residential growth in San Benito County has outpaced commercial and mixed-use growth. The County desires to promote commercial uses on strategic unincorporated parcels in order to accommodate commercial demand, promote economic development, and increase revenue. The focus of this goal section is to identify types and areas for future commercial and mixed-use development. Figure 3-5 shows the locations, Table 3-1 describes the land use designations, and Appendix A defines the new commercial nodes. (Note: see Section 4: Economic Development Element for policies related to countywide economic growth and diversifications, winery expansion, and new business promotion.)

GOAL LU-5

To promote the development of regional, thoroughfare, and locally-serving commercial uses at key opportunities sites in the unincorporated county.

LU-5.1 New Commercial Neighborhood Nodes

The County shall encourage new Commercial Neighborhood (CN) nodes, as shown on the Land Use Diagram, so long as they are located within a reasonable walking distance of a community, are centrally located to serve an unincorporated community that is lacking neighborhood commercial services, or where the need for expanded neighborhood commercial services can be demonstrated. The County shall encourage neighborhood commercial uses to connect to residential uses along transit corridors and bicycle and pedestrian paths, as appropriate to the context, and include appropriate transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. (RDR)

LU-5.2 New Commercial Thoroughfare Nodes

The County shall encourage new Commercial Thoroughfare (CT) nodes, as shown on the Land Use Diagram, serving travelers and tourists along state routes. The County shall require these uses to have adequate public services, be compatible with surrounding land uses, and respect the scenic character of the county. (RDR)

LU-5.3 New Commercial Regional Nodes

The County shall encourage new Commercial Regional (CR) nodes to be located at or near existing or future highway interchanges, major intersections, and along existing or future transit facilities. Facilities should be located consistent with Figure 3-5 (and exclude the intersection of U.S. Highway 101 and State Route 156). In order to respect the



scenic character of the county, new development at these commercial nodes shall be subject to design review before the County Planning Commission. Further, development within these commercial nodes is encouraged to contribute to the preservation of scenic areas along the designated scenic corridors within the County. The County shall also encourage additional access to new regional commercial centers through bicycle and pedestrian connections from residential uses as appropriate to the context. (RDR)

LU-5.4 New Commercial Nodes Vision

The County shall encourage developers to reflect a cohesive vision for node development in site plans submitted as a part of applications for discretionary approval that recognizes the importance of the County's scenic resources and local character and quality of life attributes. (RDR)

LU-5.5 Strip Commercial

The County shall discourage the creation of new strip commercial developments (e.g., non-cohesive commercial fronting a major arterial or state highway) in favor of centralized commercial node development that is located in the commercial nodes identified on the Land Use Diagram, and in Policies LU-5.1 to LU-5.3. (RDR)

LU-5.6 Visitor-Oriented Commercial Uses

The County shall encourage visitor-oriented commercial uses that promote the local history, local economy (e.g., agriculture, wineries, recreation), and market locally-produced agricultural products. (RDR)

LU-5.7 Mixed-Use Development

The County shall encourage both vertical and horizontal mixed-use development within community centers and near or along transportation and transit corridors, bicycle paths, and pedestrian and trail routes as a means of providing efficient land use, housing, and transportation options for county residents. The County shall ensure that mixed

use developments include appropriate transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. (RDR)

LU-5.8 Live-Work Development

The County shall encourage mixed-use developments to include live-work floor plans for residents who desire office, commercial, or studio space adjacent to their living space. (RDR)



The 2035 General Plan promotes the development of locally-serving commercial uses. (Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

Employment and Industrial Development

Most San Benito County residents currently (2011) commute outside of the county daily for work. This out migration of workers hurts the county by limiting economic growth and increasing energy consumption. The County is determined to help promote new employment opportunities within the county for residents. The focus of this goal section is to provide guidance for future employment and industrial uses in the county. These uses are vital to the economic health of the community. (Note: see Section 7: Public Facilities and Services Element for policies related to schools, community centers, libraries, airports, fire stations, and sheriff stations; and Section 4: Economic Development Element for policies related to business retention, expansion, and relocation).

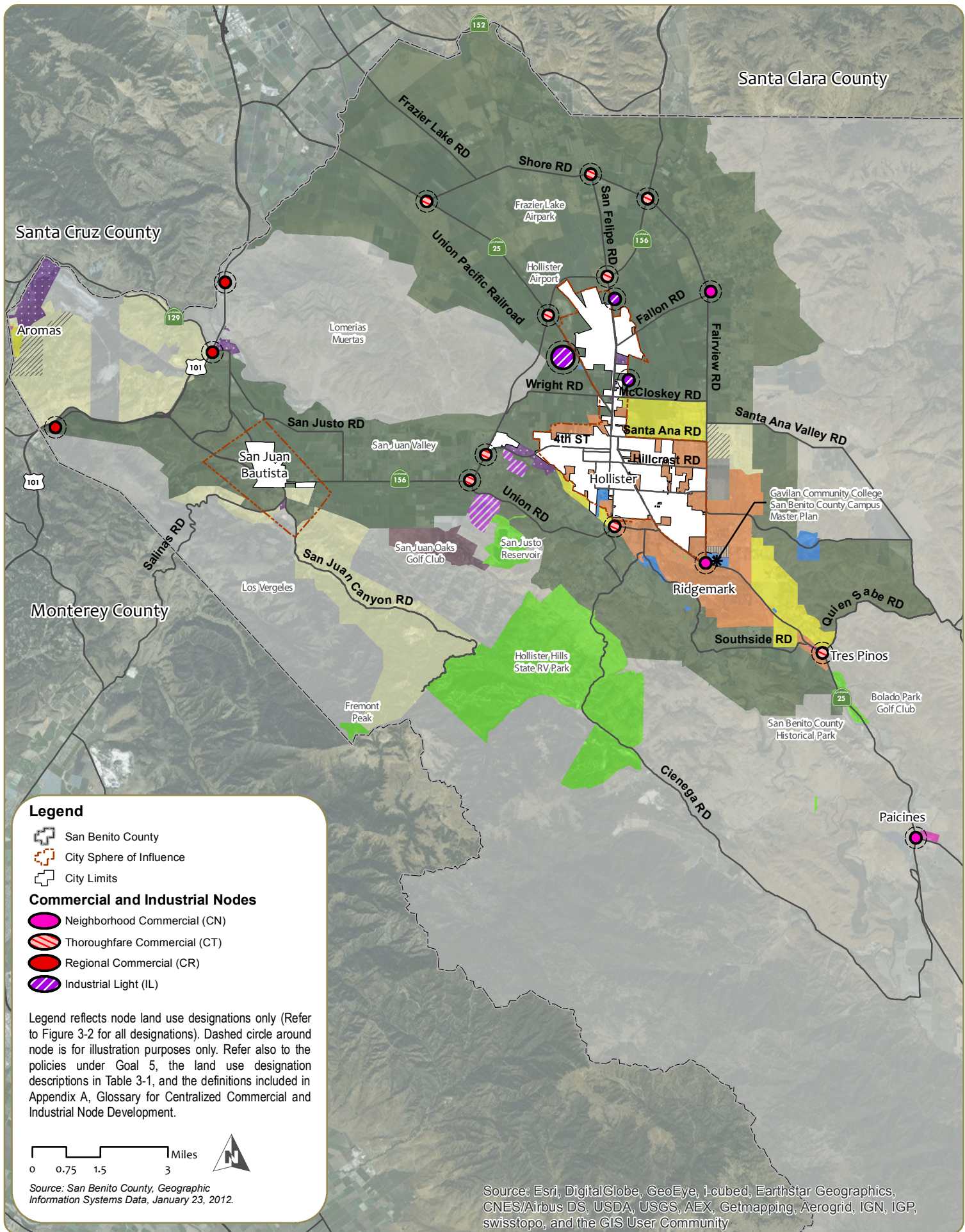


Figure 3-5
Commercial and Industrial Nodes



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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 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, allowing 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

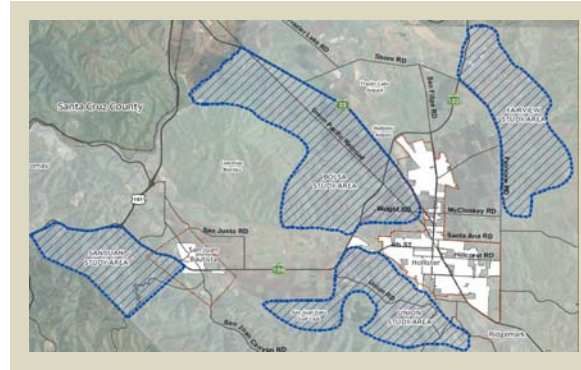


Figure 3-6 shows the general boundaries of the four identified New Community Study Areas. These include the Bolsa, Fairview, San Juan, and Union Study Areas.

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.

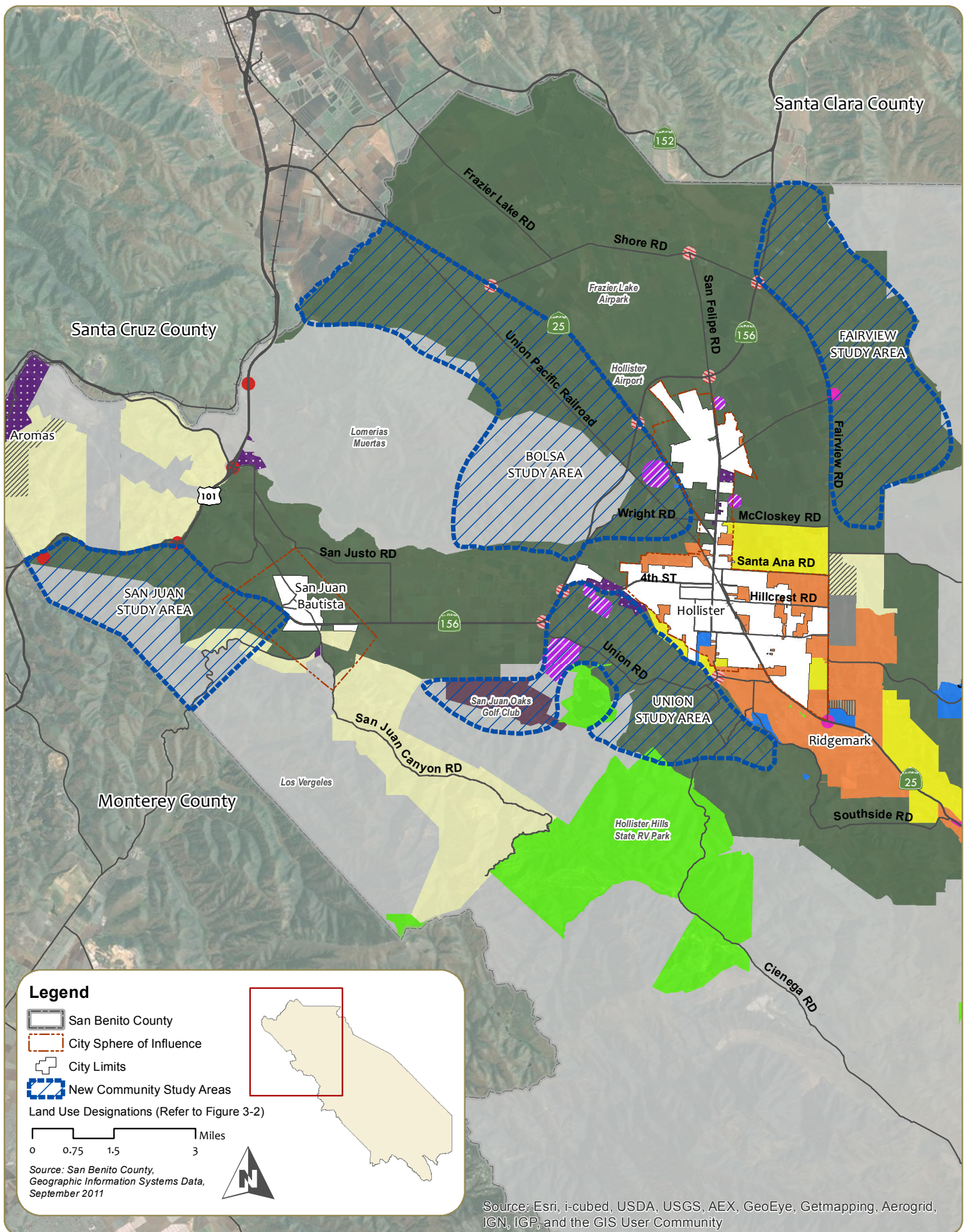


Figure 3-6
New Community Study Areas



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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 densi-

ties, 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.
- c. 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 spheres of influence. This area is unincorporated and under County jurisdiction until such time properties are annexed into either city. Determinations on annexations and sphere of influence boundaries are made by the Local Agency Formation Commission, which is an independent multi-agency governing body. While the County is



a member of LAFCO, the County does not make decisions on future annexations or sphere of influence boundaries.

The County coordinates planning efforts with the Cities under the assumption that eventually land within the city fringe areas may be annexed to the Cities. Consultation, coordination, and cooperation between the County and the Cities is important in order to ensure there is enough capacity for future growth, and that future growth develops in an orderly and efficient manner. The focus of this goal section is to identify ways for the County to work with the Cities to facilitate orderly, efficient growth in city fringe areas.



Development in eastern Hollister abutting city limits.
(Photo by Google Earth Imagery)

GOAL LU-9

To ensure that planning and development approvals within city fringe areas are coordinated between the County and the Cities in order to ensure future growth in these areas is orderly, efficient, and has sufficient and necessary public facilities and infrastructure.

LU-9.1 Orderly City Expansion

The County shall support the orderly expansion of urban uses within the spheres of influence of Hollister and San Juan Bautista, recognizing that the

Cities have primary responsibility for determining the type, intensity, and timing of future development in these areas. *(RDR/IGC)*

LU-9.2 City Sphere of Influence Expansion Proposals

The County will support spheres of influence expansion proposals only when the Cities sufficiently demonstrate the need for additional land to accommodate planned growth and document a good faith effort to implement an infill development program(s) to minimize the conversion of productive agricultural land and reduce impacts on environmental resources. *(RDR/IGC)*

LU-9.3 Sphere of Influence Area Coordination

The County shall coordinate with the Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista on all County planning and permit approvals for properties located within the City's adopted spheres of influence, and where appropriate, require a concurrent application for any general plan amendment on property located within the City's adopted spheres of influence. *(RDR/IGC)*

LU-9.4 New Annexation Timing

The County shall encourage the Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista to include in their annexation proposals to LAFCO only properties that are proposed for development in the near future. *(RDR/IGC)*

LU-9.5 Annexation Impacts on Adjacent Agricultural Land

The County shall encourage the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to consider the impacts of annexations on nearby agricultural lands. *(RDR/IGC)*

LU-9.6 County/City Cooperation

The County shall continue to cooperate with the Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista in order to promote cooperative planning of city fringe



areas, reduce fractured boundary lines, and identify mutually-beneficial solutions to development of unincorporated “islands” within city limits. *(RDR/IGC)*

LU-9.7 County General Plan Consistency Report

The County shall monitor and report to the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) regarding the consistency with the General Plan with any proposed changes in the sphere of influence or other urban boundaries for governmental entities that provide water or sewer services. *(RDR/IGC)*


LU-9.8 Sewer and Water Service Commitments

The County shall require new development within the spheres of influence of Hollister or San Juan Bautista to obtain sewer and water service commitments from either the Cities or appropriate special districts prior to project approval. *(RDR)*


LU-9.9 Special Needs Housing within Spheres of Influence Areas

The County shall cooperate with the Cities to protect land within adopted spheres-of-influence for future urban density. However, the County may allow development of unmet special needs housing for the following special need groups: lower-income households, seniors, farm workers, persons with disabilities, the local work force, persons in need of emergency shelter or transitional housing, and group homes for mentally disabled/substance abuse. *(RDR/IGC)*




 Land Use Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
LU-A: Urban/Agricultural Buffer Requirement The County shall prepare and adopt guidelines and regulations to assist in the determination of the appropriate location, type, and width of buffer areas necessary to minimize agricultural and urban-scale residential conflicts. Urban-scale residential refers to any residential uses greater than two units per acre. <i>(RDR)</i>		X				
Implements Policy(ies)	LU-3.8					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Agricultural Commissioner					
LU-B: Agricultural Mitigation Program If new development permanently converts Prime Farmland that is Class 1 soil to non-agricultural uses, the County shall encourage project applicants to preserve an equal number of acres (i.e. a 1:1 ratio) either on- or off-site. An applicant may pay mitigation fees for some or all of that mitigation as agreed in a development agreement. <i>(RDR/MPSP/IGC)</i>		X				
Implements Policy(ies)	LU-3.10					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Agricultural Commissioner					
LU-C: Right-to-Farm and Ranch Ordinance The County shall periodically review and update the Right-to-Farm and Right-to-Ranch Ordinance to describe normal farm practices expected to occur in agricultural areas and ensures the right of the farmer to continue such practices subject to appropriate health and safety standards. The ordinance shall specify that it applies only to areas in which agricultural and ranching activities are permitted and to lands adjacent to such areas. A summary of the ordinance shall be mailed annually to all property owners with tax bills. <i>(RDR)</i>						X
Implements Policy(ies)	LU-3.9					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Agricultural Commissioner					
LU-D: Agricultural Tax Assessment Incentives The County shall periodically review, update, and evaluate tax assessment policies in order to identify financial ways to promote the long-term preservation of agricultural activity while recognizing that agricultural land uses require a minimum of public expenditure for protection and servicing. <i>(FB)</i>						X
Implements Policy(ies)	LU-3.1 through LU-3.15					
Responsible Department(s)	County Assessor					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					



 Land Use Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
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>		X				
Implements Policy(ies)	LU-3.2, LU-3.6					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
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>						X
Implements Policy(ies)	LU-4.6, LU-4.7, LU-4.8					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
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>						X
Implements Policy(ies)	LU-4.9					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
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>			X			
Implements Policy(ies)	LU-7.8					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
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.			X			
Implements Policy(ies)	LU-8.1 to LU-8.9					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						



 Land Use Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
LU-J: County General Plan Consistency Report The County shall prepare a written report to the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) regarding the consistency with the General Plan of any proposed changes in the sphere of influence or other urban boundaries for governmental entities that provide water or sewer services. (PSR)						X
Implements Policy(ies)	LU-9.7					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
LU-K: Zoning Consistency The County shall review its zoning ordinance to ensure consistency with the goals and policies set forth in the Land Use Element of the General Plan.		X				
Implements Policy(ies)						
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Department					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					



SECTION 4

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

Improving the overall economic health of the county is a major objective of the 2035 General Plan. Economic growth and sustainability are critical to protecting existing businesses and jobs, encouraging new investment, and preserving the quality of life so many county residents value. While the county's proximity to the San Francisco Bay Area creates opportunities for economic development, it also represents a major competitive challenge. Since the early 1970s job growth has far outpaced housing growth in the Silicon Valley – the global center of technological innovation over the past half century. As a result, home prices have dramatically increased in the Silicon Valley. The relatively inexpensive land in San Benito County has increased the pressure for the county to serve as a bedroom community for workers in the Silicon Valley. At the same time, attracting high-tech, high-wage jobs to San Benito County is also a challenge, considering the strong competition from surrounding counties and the limited local housing supply.

The primary focus of the Economic Development Element is to achieve economic sustainability in the county. Economic sustainability recognizes the need for economic prosperity and resilience to maintain the health of the county for current and future generations. The concept encourages self-reliance, entrepreneurial activity, and the generation of wealth in a manner that does not degrade or burden future generations' ability to meet social, economic, and environmental needs. In San Benito County this means building on the base of successful existing economic sectors, diversifying the local economy, nurturing local entrepreneurs, improving infrastructure and public facilities, and encouraging innovative and green business that leverage and enhance the natural assets of the county.



General Economic Development and Diversification

San Benito County has historically had some of the highest unemployment rates in the region because of the county's limited job base and economic diversification. Unemployment strains both individuals and County government, which is responsible for providing unemployment and welfare services and support. Unemployment can also lead to mortgage defaults, bankruptcies, job skill loss, and homelessness. The current national and global economic downturn has exacerbated unemployment in the county, and it will likely take several years to recover. The focus of this goal section is to help grow and diversify the local economy.

GOAL ED-1

To sustain the long-term economic wellbeing of the county by promoting economic sustainability and diversification.

ED-1.1 Economic Development Strategy

The County shall develop, adopt, and maintain a comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, which shall be used as an operational guide to implement the economic development goals, policies, and programs of the General Plan, as well as fulfilling Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) requirements for a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to receive grant funding. *(MPSP/FB)*

ED-1.2 Jobs/Housing Balance

The County shall strive to improve the housing balance countywide by providing sufficient employment-based land uses. *(RDR)*

ED-1.3 Business Incubators

The County should partner with Gavilan College to establish business incubators that nurture and

expand businesses, including agricultural industries, tourism, green tech, food processing, and wineries. *(IGC)*

ED-1.4 Infrastructure Investment

The County shall direct future infrastructure investments to areas with the greatest potential for economic growth in an effort to obtain the greatest investment payoff. *(MPSP/FB)*

ED-1.5 Quality of Life Improvements

The County shall focus economic development efforts on creating positive change in the county relative to residents and workers' quality of life. This should include considering air quality, education opportunities, safety, water quality, scenic beauty, and recreational opportunities during economic development decisions. *(RDR/MPSP)*

ED-1.6 Agricultural Base Diversification

The County shall diversify the existing agricultural base by encouraging strong relationships between traditional agricultural industries and emerging agricultural-related industries, and emphasizing the expansion of value-added agricultural products in the county. *(MPSP)*

ED-1.7 Sustainable Business Development

The County shall encourage the development of environmentally-sustainable businesses that capitalize on green industry sector strengths, particularly new emerging green technologies such as solar energy. *(RDR/MPSP)*

ED-1.8 Commercial and Industrial Sites Database

The County shall coordinate with local real estate brokers to develop a comprehensive database of available commercial and industrial sites within the county in order to assist potential investors and employers looking to locate in San Benito County. *(MPSP/JP)*



ED-1.9 Hollister Airport Expansion

The County shall support efforts of the City of Hollister to expand and enhance operations at the Hollister Airport to create a catalyst for economic development and new jobs in the county. *(IGC)*

ED-1.10 Staff Resource Allocation and Coordination

The County shall allocate staff resources for economic development attraction and retention planning activities and coordinate with cities and appropriate organizations on related economic development and planning efforts. *(MPSP)*

ED-1.11 Economic Development Marketing Program

The County shall collaborate with the Economic Development Corporation of San Benito County, the San Benito County Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau, the San Benito County Business Council, the Hollister Downtown Association and interested public and private stakeholders to develop, adopt, and maintain a comprehensive marketing program that will enhance the county's image, support expansion of existing businesses, and encourage relocation of new businesses to the county, including satellite facilities for growing Silicon Valley technology firms. *(MPSP/IGC/JP)*

Existing Business Retention and Expansion

Existing businesses provide the foundation for the county's job base and constitute the most effective starting point from which to grow the local economy and promote more local jobs. The focus of this goal section is to support retention and expansion of existing businesses in San Benito County.

GOAL ED-2

To support and promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses within the county.

ED-2.1 Business Expansion

The County shall encourage local and regional businesses to expand their operations, increase their employment opportunities, and increase their competitiveness in the regional market. *(MPSP)*

ED-2.2 Renovation and Reuse of Existing Commercial and Industrial Sites

The County shall encourage the renovation and reuse of underutilized parcels, industrial sites, buildings, or shopping centers in order to promote economic development and improve the visual quality of commercial and industrial areas. *(RDR)*

New Business Attraction

In addition to supporting existing businesses, it is also important for the County to encourage new businesses and investment in San Benito County. This is partly done by identifying areas in the county where it is appropriate for future commercial, industrial, and employment growth, which are shown in the Land Use Diagram (Figures 3-1 to 3-3). It is also achieved by having policies in place to encourage new businesses to locate in San Benito County. Not only do new businesses support local workers, they also help ensure a long-term revenue base for the County. The focus of this goal section is to increase the number of local businesses in order to improve the local economy, improve the quality of life for local residents, and achieve economic sustainability.



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 Franscioni Wines
- San Benito Wine Co.
- Scheid Vineyards
- Summerayne Vineyard
- Teague Veinyard
- Wildeye Winery
- Vista Verde



Expanding the wine tourism industry is a major focus of the 2035 General Plan. (Photo of vineyards in the Paicines area, by Rene Rodriguez)

The continued expansion of the county's wine tourism industry will generate job growth and sales/hotel tax revenue for the County. Expansion of the industry, in particular the San Benito Wine Trail and wine-related events, is critical to continuing to attract visitors to the county's wine region. In addition, new tourist related accommodations are necessary to ensure San Benito County is truly a visitor destination in the future. The focus of this goal section is to encourage the expansion of the wine industry and related tourist hospitality.

Wine/Hospitality Priority Area

The purpose of Wine/Hospitality Priority Area is to identify areas of the county where expansion of the wine industry and wine tourism are encouraged while protecting the agricultural character of the area. Figure 3-6 shows the general boundary of the Wine/Hospitality Priority Area, which will be used as the basis for creating a Wine/Hospitality Combining District within the Zoning Ordinance (see Policy ED-4.1 and Program ED-E). Uses encouraged within the Wine/Hospitality Priority Area include vineyards, wineries, tasting rooms, hotels and other guest accommodations, restaurants, delis, related retail stores, and processing facilities related to the wine industry, as well as those allowed in the underlying General Plan designation. Figure 4-1 shows existing wineries and vineyards in the county.



The Wine and Hospitality Priority Area identifies areas of the county that are most appropriate for expanding the wine and hospitality industries. (Image of Pietra Santa Winery)

GOAL ED-4

To expand the county's wine and hospitality industries in order to ensure San Benito County becomes a regional leader in the wine industry and a premier tourist destination.

ED-4.1 Wine and Hospitality Combining District

The County shall support the expansion of the wine and hospitality industries by establishing and maintaining a Wine/Hospitality Combining District that identifies areas of the county appropriate for expanding the wine and hospitality industries. (RDR)

ED-4.2 Wine Industry Promotion

The County shall support the efforts of the San Benito County Winegrowers Association to promote the local wine industry, promote winery-related tourism, and expand the San Benito Wine Trail. (RDR/JP)

ED-4.3 Sustainable Wineries

The County shall encourage the wine industry to adopt sustainable winemaking practices. (MPSP/JP)

ED-4.4 Winery Special Events

The County shall update existing regulations to allow for permanent and temporary wine and winery-related events, including outdoor concerts,



wine festivals, harvest festivals, weddings, and corporate events. (RDR)

ED-4.5 Tourist Hotels and Resorts

The County should encourage the development of hotels and destination resorts that enhance community character, relate to the historical and physical features of the county, and create new opportunities for tourist attractions. This should include the creation of specialty hotels and resorts that cater to specific market segments, such as: winery/culinary tourism, outdoor recreation, adventure sports, dude ranches, ecotourism, and agritourism. (RDR)



Joshua Inn Bed and Breakfast located in Hollister
(Photo by Michael Kelly)

ED-4.6 Bed and Breakfast Inns and Boutique Resorts

The County shall encourage the development of bed and breakfast inns and boutique resorts located throughout the rural parts of the county, particularly near existing and future wineries and wine tasting facilities. (RDR)

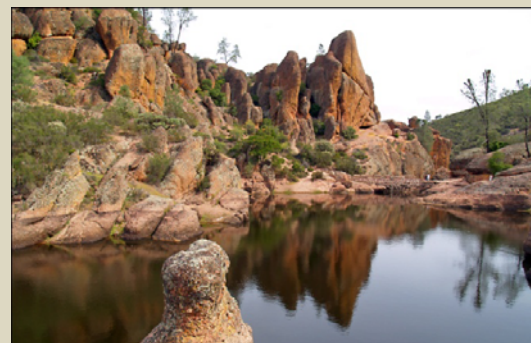
Tourism

San Benito County has a tremendous opportunity to expand its tourism industry. The county bene-

fits from being near major population centers in the Bay Area and world class tourist destinations on the Monterey Peninsula, yet remain rural and picturesque. Tourist spending can be significant, and this income will help maintain a high level of community services and amenities to the residents.

The county's tourism assets include its beautiful natural setting, the historic town of San Juan Bautista, a growing wine industry and organic farming industry, and scenic drives. The county also benefits from being home to several major National, State, and local parks and recreation areas, including Pinnacles National Park, Fremont Peak State Park, Hollister Hills State Vehicular Recreation Area, and Clear Creek Management Area.

The county would benefit from creating destination-type tourist attractions, in particular agritourism and ecotourism. The agricultural industry is also one of the county's distinctive features, providing the opportunity to develop and expand agritourism, such as the wine trail. The focus of this section is to identify ways the County can help expand the tourism industry as part of a comprehensive strategy for economic development.



Pinnacles National Park (Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

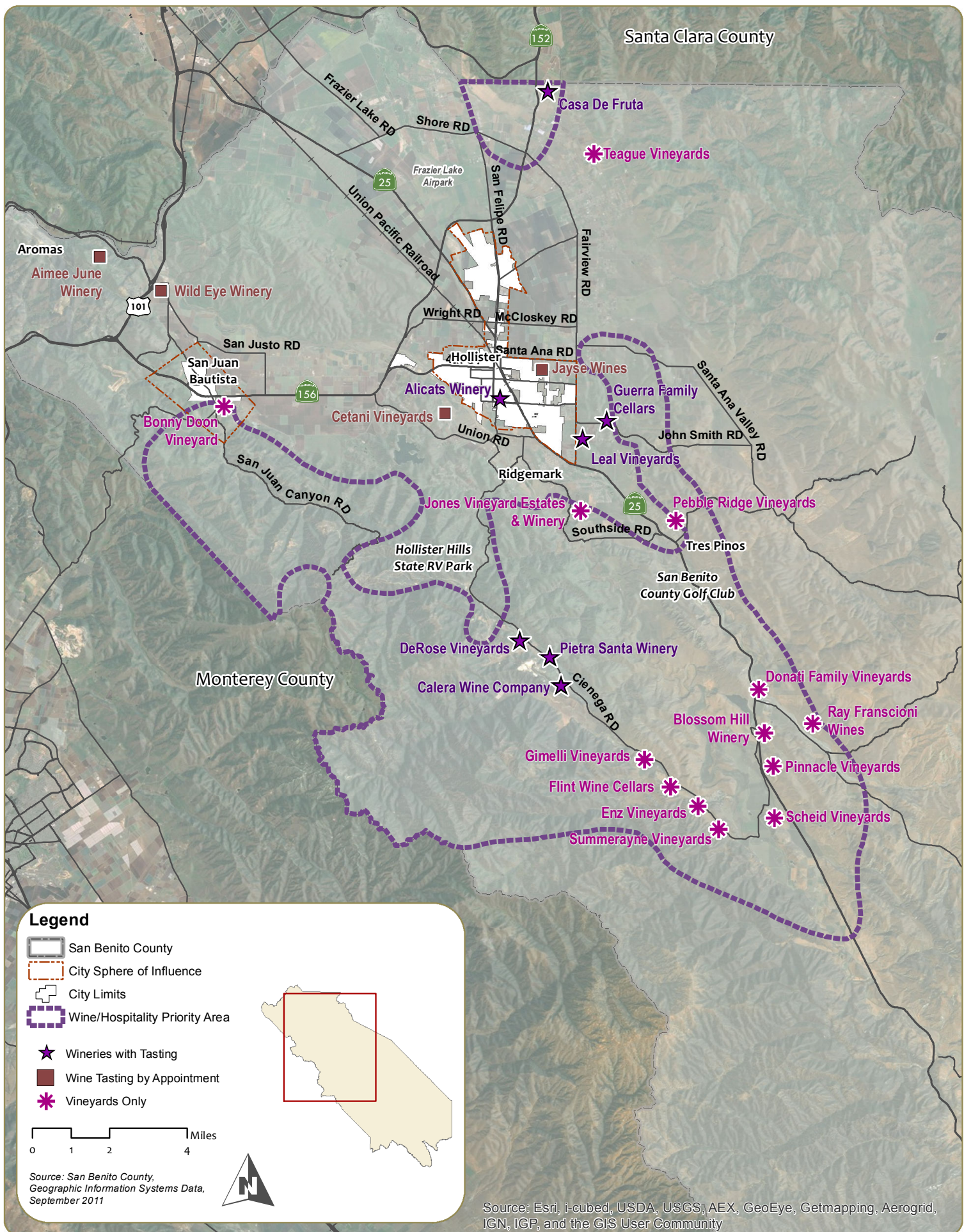


Figure 4-1
Vineyards and Wineries



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GOAL ED-5

To expand tourism opportunities in order to make the county a premier destination.

ED-5.1 Tourism Promotion

The County shall coordinate with the Economic Development Corporation of San Benito County, San Benito County Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau, the San Benito County Business Council, the Hollister Downtown Association and interested public and private stakeholders to market San Benito County as a premier ecotourism and agritourism destination. *(IGC)*

ED-5.2 Heritage Tourism Promotion

The County shall coordinate with agencies, organizations, property owners, and business interests to develop and promote heritage tourism opportunities in the county. Heritage tourism refers to experiencing the places, artifacts, and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. This can include cultural, historic, and natural resources. *(RDR/IGC/JP)*

ED-5.3 New Events

The County shall encourage the creation of sporting tournaments and entertainment events such as cycling, baseball, soccer, field hockey, tennis, golf, art and wine festivals, and outdoor concerts. *(RDR/MPSP)*

ED-5.4 Destination Attractions

The County should encourage the development of destination attractions that celebrate San Benito County's unique heritage, including contemporary and performing arts, winemaking culture, agritourism, and Spanish Mission history. *(RDR/MPSP)*

ED-5.5 Outdoor Recreational Venues

The County shall encourage the development of outdoor recreation for visitors and residents alike, such as mountain biking, mountain climbing, hik-

ing, horseback riding, camping, birding, hunting, and fishing. *(RDR/MPSP)*

ED-5.6 Long-Term Environmental and Economic Health of Public Recreational Resources

The County shall coordinate with Federal, State, and local agencies that own and operate public recreational resources in the county to ensure the long-term access and environmental/economic health of these public resources. *(IGC)*

ED-5.7 Safe and Convenient Tourist Travel

The County, in coordination with Council of San Benito County Governments (SBCOG), should enhance tourists' ability to travel safely and conveniently to different destinations throughout the county. This should include developing strategies to ensure tourists travel safely on rural roads and to promote an integrated, multi-modal transportation system that includes bike rental services, pedestrian connections, and hiking, biking and riding trails. *(RDR/MPSP/IGC)*

ED-5.8 Signage and Wayfinding Program

The County, in coordination with Caltrans, the Economic Development Corporation of San Benito County, the San Benito County Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau, the San Benito County Business Council, the Hollister Downtown Association, the San Benito County Winegrowers Association, and interested public and private stakeholders should develop, adopt, and maintain a comprehensive signage and wayfinding program that will help tourists easily navigate from one destination to another throughout the county. *(MPSP/IGC/JP)*

ED-5.9 Business-Traveler Lodging

The County shall encourage the development of hotels and other lodging facilities geared towards business travelers, concentrated near the cities of



Hollister and San Juan Bautista, and existing and future employment centers. (RDR)

Workforce Training and Education

San Benito County–Hollister in particular—currently (2011) has a very high unemployment rate. Educating the existing workforce on new or emerging industries is critical to establishing a sustainable economy for the county. The focus of this section is to promote workforce training and education programs.



Workers installing solar panels. (Source: San Benito Now)

GOAL ED-6

To improve the skills of the existing, local workforce in order to attract new investment and ensure future economic growth.

ED-6.1 Workforce Education and Training Promotion

The County shall support programs that educate the local workforce on: conventional, productive, sustainable, and organic agriculture concepts, including water conservation strategies; emerging high-tech industries; and alternative energy production. (MPSP/IGC)

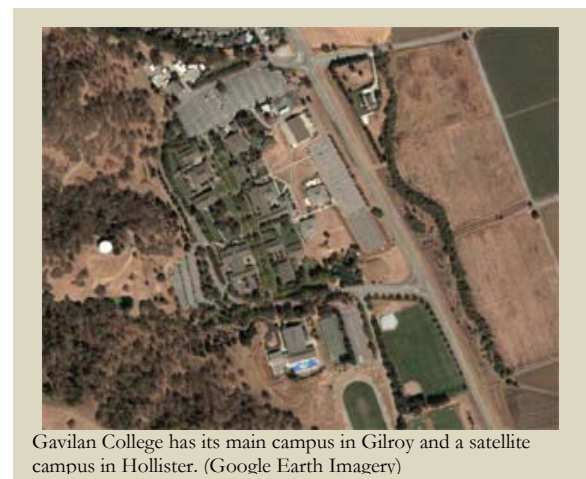
ED-6.2 Workforce Training

The County shall support workforce training opportunities by expanding vocational job training programs, encouraging private vocational training

opportunities, and working with Gavilan College to identify technologies, skills, and training needed to support emerging technologies, including value-added food processing, green technology, and logistics. (MPSP/IGC)

ED-6.3 Primary School Education

The County should encourage school districts to adopt the School-to-Work program, which better prepares students to enter the workforce by integrating learning and job-training skills, as a model for K-12 education and focus on the requirements of those industries targeted for future growth in the county. (MPSP/IGC)



Gavilan College has its main campus in Gilroy and a satellite campus in Hollister. (Google Earth Imagery)

ED-6.4 Local Agricultural Relationship Encouragement

The County should facilitate relationships between existing agricultural-related companies, Gavilan College, high school agricultural programs, and venture capital organizations. (JP)

ED-6.5 Local Graduate Retention

The County shall actively encourage businesses and employment opportunities that keep local high school and college graduates in the local workforce. (RDR/MPSP)



Partnerships

In order to help grow the local economy, create a long term sustainable economy, and promote local job creation, the County will need to partner with many private organizations and public agencies. Effective and meaningful partnerships are important to ensure the various players in San Benito County work together towards common goals. The focus of this goal section is to foster coordinated economic development efforts with other stakeholders in order to create mutually-beneficial outcomes.

GOAL ED-7

To establish meaningful partnerships between the County, other public agencies, and private organizations in order to ensure mutually-beneficial and long-term economic development and sustainability in the county.

ED-7.1 Economic Leadership

The County shall provide countywide and regional economic development leadership by coordinating public and private economic development resources with interested stakeholders. These stakeholders should include, but not be limited to, the Economic Development Corporation of San Benito County, San Benito County Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau, the San Benito County Business Council, the Hollister Downtown Association, the Small Business Development Center of Gavilan College, and the San Benito County One-Stop Career Center. *(IGC/JP)*

ED-7.2 Regional Cooperation

The County shall cooperate with regional economic development organizations and agencies to expand and improve the economic base of the county. *(RDR/MPSP)*

ED-7.3 Coordination Efforts

The County shall work with governmental and non-governmental groups—including chambers of commerce, industry associations, the cities, and economic development organizations—to maintain the economic viability of agriculture and improve the overall economic vitality of San Benito County. *(MPSP/IGC/JP)*

ED-7.4 Interagency Coordination

The County shall coordinate with the cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista to ensure the efficient and equitable distribution of the cost and benefits of economic development to local government jurisdictions in the county. *(IGC)*

ED-7.5 Infrastructure and Utility Improvements

The County shall partner with other public agencies and private organizations to identify, coordinate, and improve key infrastructure and utilities to ensure the long-term economic viability of the county. *(MPSP/IGC/JP)*

Quality of Life Attributes

Quality of life is a broad term that loosely conveys whether most people feel like a community is a great place to live. While numerous measures of quality of life exist, most consider some combination of the following factors as representative of quality of life: high levels of financial security and employment, attractive and functional built environment/urban design, high level of environmental quality and access to nature, good weather, good physical and mental health, access to quality education, access to health care, access to recreation and leisure opportunities, high level of political/civic engagement, and strong sense of social belonging/tolerance.

While counties need revenue from economic development to improve “quality of life”, they also



must invest in quality of life to attract and retain businesses. Quality of life is often cited as a top reason for the location decisions made by businesses. Business leaders want to live close to work in a great community. A key economic development strategy for the County will be to improve the County's overall quality of life and image to increase the confidence and pride of existing and potential future business owners, employees and residents.

While promoting quality of life is a key economic development strategy, the issue of quality of life is complex and interdisciplinary. This section of the Economic Development Element highlights a few key economic development related quality of life goals and policies.

GOAL ED-8

To improve access for all residents to a variety of high-quality, well-activated parks, green space, and recreational opportunities that enhance quality of life and connect to surrounding neighborhoods and businesses.

ED-8.1 Increased Park/Open Space Use and Connection

Create new park space, connect existing and future parks and open space areas/corridors, and encourage public art throughout the County. *(RDR/MPSP/JP)*

ED-8.2 Park and Recreation Maintenance and Establishment

Improve existing parks and recreational facilities, where feasible, in need of repair or upgrading, and acknowledge the positive impact on property values from building and maintaining high quality parks across the County. Establish, where applicable, a range of parks and open spaces, including tot lots, neighborhood parks, community parks, skate parks, sports fields and courts, organized sports complexes, plazas/greens and/or green-

ways/parkways within new neighborhoods, business districts and commercial areas. *(MPSP/PF/SO/IGC)*

ED-8.3 Park Financing Mechanisms

The County shall use a variety of financing mechanisms to acquire, develop, and maintain park, recreation, and other open space uses consistent with growth in County population and adopted land use policies and shall encourage the establishment of community service districts or other financing mechanisms to finance the maintenance and operation of private and public parks created in conjunction with new development. *(MPSP/FB)*

ED-8.4 Walking Distance to Parks

Strive to create development patterns such that the majority of residents are within a reasonable walking distance of a park, greenway, public plaza or recreation center. *(MPSP)*

GOAL ED-9

To improve the health of all County residents and reduce health inequities to ensure people can make productive contributions to the economy, their family, and their community.

ED-9.1 Health and Wellness Programs

Reduce disparities in life expectancy and diseases among different race/ethnicities and income levels by working closely with the San Benito County Health & Human Services Agency to track trends and support targeted prevention and wellness programs throughout the life course. *(SO/IGC/PI)*

ED-9.2 Health and Wellness Coordination

Collaborate with other public agencies and major institutions to create programs that elevate and support the health and wellness of employees. *(SO/IGC/JP/PI)*



GOAL ED-10

To ensure County residents have accessible and convenient opportunities to purchase and grow healthy, affordable, and culturally diverse foods with low concentrations of unhealthy food providers.

ED-10.1 Healthy Food Options

Work with the Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista to encourage healthy and culturally appropriate food retail establishments (including full-service grocery stores, farmers' markets, fruit and vegetable markets and small markets where a majority of food is healthy) to locate in underserved areas of San Benito County and the Cities within the County. Recognize food retailers and outlets in setting goals for local procurement. *(IGC/JP)*




Carrots at farmers market. (Photo by Ashley Hefner)


ED-10.2 Reduce Hunger

Reduce hunger and food insecurity, where feasible, through government programs, community education, urban agriculture, and emergency food resources. *(MPSP/SO/IGC/JP/PI)*




 Economic Development Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
ED-A: Economic Development Strategy The County shall prepare, adopt, and periodically update an Economic Development Strategy, which shall be used as an operational guide to implement the economic development goals and policies of this element of the General Plan. The strategy will also fulfill Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) requirements for a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to receive grant funding. The strategy should identify industry-specific goals and actions that build on the existing agricultural economy and industries, and clearly identify how the County will help achieve those goals (e.g., staff support, incentives, and permit streamlining, etc.). <i>(MPSP)</i>			x			
Implements Policy(ies)	ED-1.1, all Economic Development Element policies					
Responsible Department(s)	Housing and Economic Development					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services, County Administrative Officer					
ED-B: Economic Development Staff Resources The County shall allocate staff resources for economic development, including appointing an Economic Development Coordinator to oversee implementation of the County's economic development strategy. <i>(FB/SO)</i>			x			
Implements Policy(ies)	ED-1.10, all Economic Development Element policies					
Responsible Department(s)	Housing and Economic Development					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services, County Administrative Officer					
ED-C: Economic Development Marketing Program The County shall collaborate with the Economic Development Corporation of San Benito County and the San Benito County Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau, the San Benito County Business Council, the Hollister Downtown Association, and interested public and private stakeholders to prepare and adopt a comprehensive marketing program that will enhance the county's image, support expansion of existing businesses, and encourage relocation of new businesses to the county. The marketing program should target specific economic sectors that need to be expanded, including wineries, tourism, hospitality, organic agriculture, specialty food processing, medical and health services, research and development, renewable energy industries, green industries, and corporate and regional headquarters. <i>(MPSP/IGC/JP)</i>			x			
Implements Policy(ies)	ED-1.11					
Responsible Department(s)	Housing and Economic Development					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					



 Economic Development Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
ED-D: Commercial and Industrial Sites Database The County shall coordinate with local real estate brokers to prepare and maintain a comprehensive database of available commercial and industrial sites within the county in order to assist potential investors and employers looking to locate in San Benito County. The database should be maintained by the County and available online. <i>(PSR/JP)</i>			x			
Implements Policy(ies)	ED-1.8					
Responsible Department(s)	Housing and Economic Development					
Supporting Department(s)	Information Technology Department					
ED-E: Wine/Hospitality Combining District The County shall prepare and adopt a Wine/Hospitality Combining District in the Zoning Ordinance to provide a means through which the County can facilitate the development of vineyards, wineries, and wine-related tourist uses such as bed and breakfasts, hotels, spas, and other guest accommodations, restaurants, delis, related retail stores, and processing facilities related to the wine industry with the goal of establishing San Benito County as a premier wine destination. <i>(RDR)</i>			x			
Implements Policy(ies)	ED-4.1, ED-4.2, ED-4.4, ED-4.5, and ED-4.6					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Housing and Economic Development					
ED-F: Tourist Promotion Program The County shall collaborate with other public and private organizations to help market and promote local tourism, eco-tourism, agritourism, wine and culinary tourism, and locally-grown agricultural products. <i>(MPSP/IGC/JP)</i>			x			
Implements Policy(ies)	ED-5.1 and ED-5.2					
Responsible Department(s)	Housing and Economic Development					
Supporting Department(s)						
ED-G: Signage and Wayfinding Program The County shall coordinate with Caltrans, the Council of San Benito County Governments, the Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista, the San Benito County Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau, the San Benito County Business Council, the Hollister Downtown Association, the San Benito County Winegrowers Association, and interested public and private stakeholders to prepare, adopt, and periodically update a countywide signage and wayfinding program designed to help visitors and tourists easily and efficiently find cultural, historical, recreational, commercial, and winery destinations. <i>(MPSP/IGC/JP)</i>			x			



 Economic Development Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
Implements Policy(ies)	ED-5.8					
Responsible Department(s)	Housing and Economic Development					
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works, Planning and Building Inspection Services					
ED-H: New and Existing Business Support (SO) The County shall identify and develop financial incentives to attract new investment and support existing local businesses, particularly small locally-owned businesses. This should include pursuing funding for entrepreneurial entities, including private and venture capital funding; and supporting investment within Enterprise Zones. <i>(FB)</i>			x			x
Implements Policy(ies)	ED-2.1, ED-2.2, and ED-3.1 through ED-3.4					
Responsible Department(s)	Housing and Economic Development					
Supporting Department(s)						
ED-I: Economic Development and Revenue Agreement The County shall coordinate with the cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista to prepare, adopt, and maintain a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that establishes an efficient and equitable distribution of the costs and benefits of economic development to local government jurisdictions in the county. The program should include a countywide capital improvement plan and equitable tax sharing agreement(s) between the County and the cities. <i>(FB/SO/IGC/JP)</i>		x				x
Implements Policy(ies)	ED-7.4					
Responsible Department(s)	Housing and Economic Development					
Supporting Department(s)						



SECTION 5

HOUSING ELEMENT

California State law requires that general plan housing elements be updated every five years and approved by the Department of Housing and Community Development. In 2010, San Benito County adopted and the State certified an updated Housing Element that set forth housing goals, policies, and implementation programs for the period of 2007-2014. Since the update to the housing element is on a different time frame than the other elements of the General Plan, it is bound under a separate cover.



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SECTION 6

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

The Circulation Element provides the framework for decisions in San Benito County concerning the countywide transportation system. It provides for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in and around the county through a variety of transportation modes. While the Circulation Element strives to encourage a multi-modal transportation system that serves the mobility needs of all residents, it also reflects the rural nature of the county. Policies encourage public transit and pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements in appropriate areas of the county where they will be most beneficial for linking residents to work, shopping, and leisure destinations. In rural areas of the county, policies in this Element encourage an efficient and economical transportation system to move goods for the agricultural and manufacturing industries.

A significant share of county residents commutes to other counties for work. This indicates either a shortage of jobs or lack of acceptable wages within the county to serve the current population. Employee commuting places a significant burden on the highway system and principal arterial connections between San Benito County and adjacent counties. It also increases vehicle miles traveled, which in turn increases greenhouse gas emissions. Policies in the Economic Development Element that encourage increasing the local job base will alleviate some of the impacts of out-commuting.

In addition to goals, policies, and programs, the Circulation Element includes roadway classifications (Figure 6-1), a circulation diagram (Figure 6-2), and existing and planned bicycle facilities (Figure 6-3). The Circulation Element works closely with the Land Use Element of the General Plan to ensure that the county transportation system can accommodate growth anticipated during the General Plan planning period. This transportation system is shown on the diagram as a set of roadway classifications, developed to guide long-range transportation system planning and programming in San Benito County. Roadways are classified in this system based on the linkages they provide and their function in the hierarchy of roadways.



Roadway Classifications

A key element in managing the County's roadway system is the establishment of a functional roadway classification hierarchy. Roads are typically classified and defined by their function. The following paragraphs define the linkage and functions provided by each class of roadways as well as their general design and access control standards.

Freeways. Operated and maintained by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), these facilities are designed as high-volume, high-speed facilities for intercity and regional traffic. Access to these facilities is limited.

State Highways. These facilities are operated and maintained by Caltrans and serve primarily inter-regional traffic. Within San Benito County most State highways are rural two-lane facilities.

Expressways. These are high-speed facilities with no direct access to adjacent properties and local intersections, and are limited to providing access to freeways, arterials, and rural collector roads. These facilities are often operated and maintained by local agencies. However, in San Benito County, Caltrans also maintains expressways within the County, including State Routes 156 and 25.

Arterials. These facilities make up the principal network for through-traffic within a community and often between communities. Arterials have between two and six traffic lanes and provide connections between residential areas, shopping areas, places of employment, recreational areas, and other places of assembly.

Collectors. These are two-lane facilities that function as the main interior streets within neighborhoods and business areas and are designed to carry traffic between local roads and arterials.

Local. These facilities are two-lane streets that provide local access and service. They include residential, commercial, industrial, and rural roads.

Circulation Diagram

The Circulation Diagram (Figure 6-2) shows the circulation system for San Benito County. It supports existing and proposed development under the Land Use Diagram for the General Plan horizon year of 2035.

ROADWAYS

San Benito County is served by an extensive roadway network of freeways, arterials, collectors, and local roads. These roadways provide access to the surrounding counties and to local destinations, such as employment areas, shopping centers, schools, recreational opportunities, and residential communities. Planning for roadways near areas of new development can ensure that the roadway system maintains sufficient capacity and mobility. Policies in this section address improvements in the roadway system to facilitate the movement of people and goods on the highways and roads in San Benito County. Policies also plan for the development of complete streets that are designed to balance safety and convenience for all users of the road.



In rural areas, such as the unincorporated areas of San Benito County, providing wide shoulders can help pedestrians and bicyclists travel safely without needing a car. (Photo by Dan Burden, Walkable and Liveable Communities Institute)

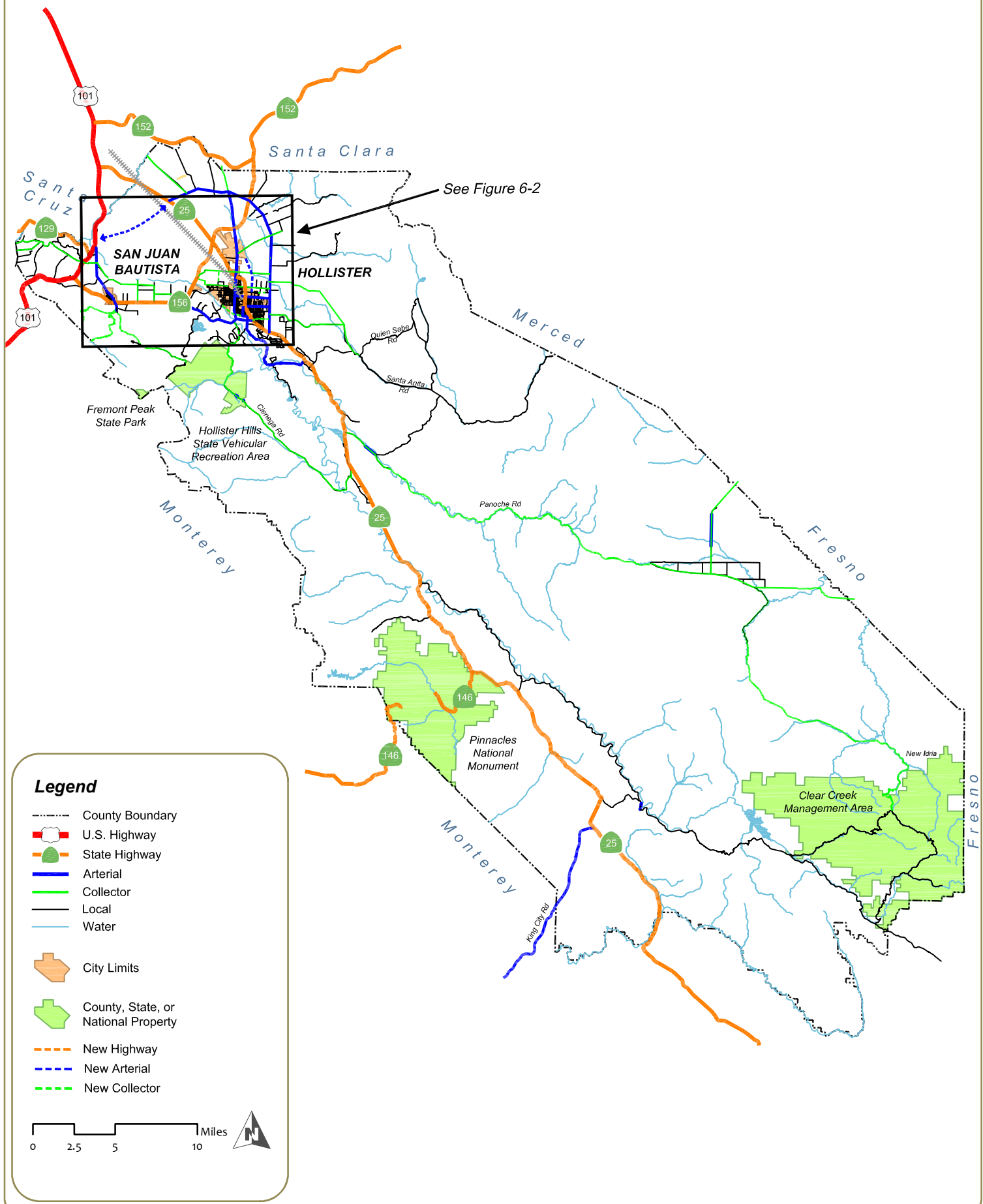


Figure 6-1
Circulation Diagram (San Benito County Roadway Classifications)



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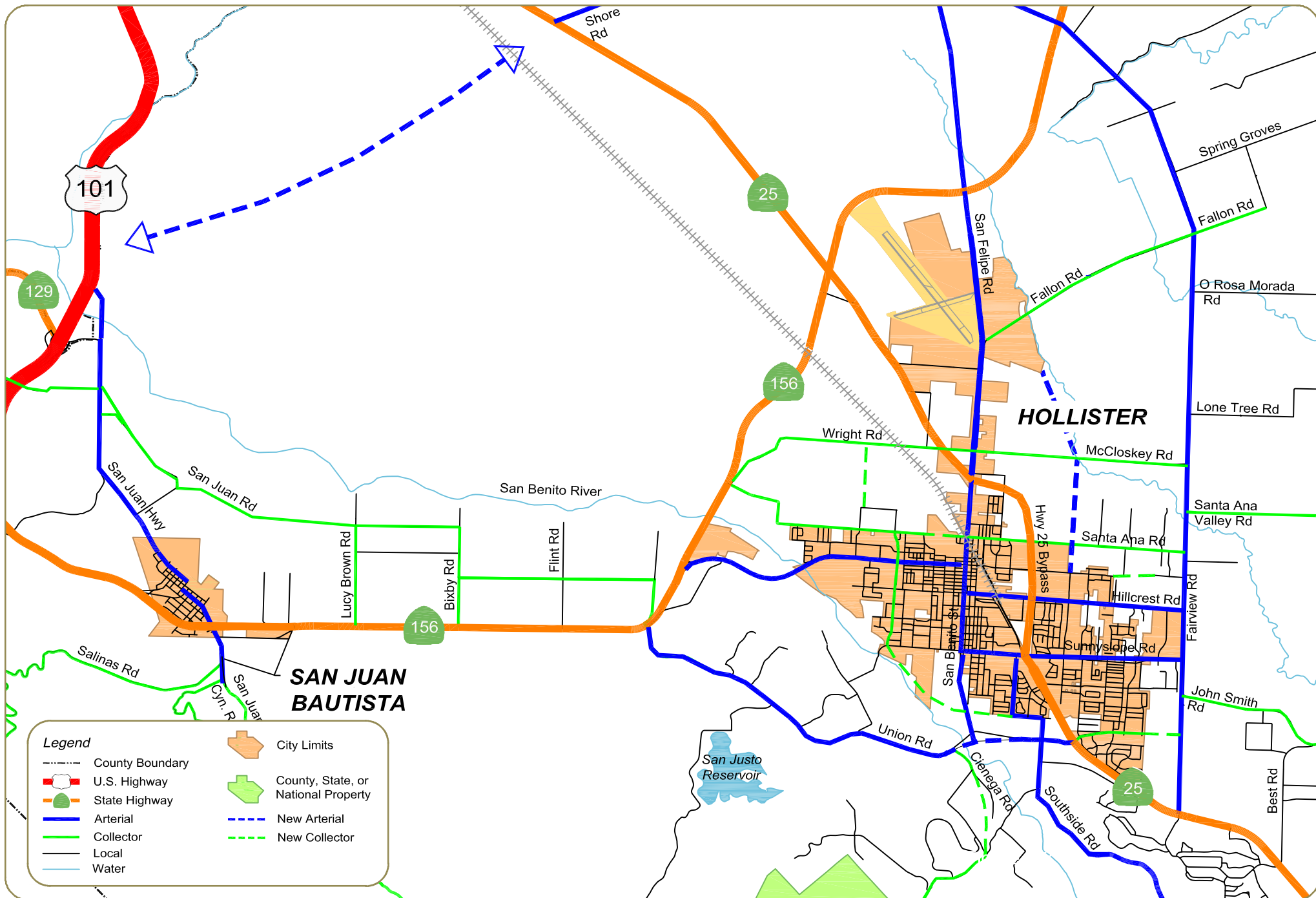


Figure 6-2
Circulation Diagram (Hollister and San Juan Bautista Roadway Classifications)



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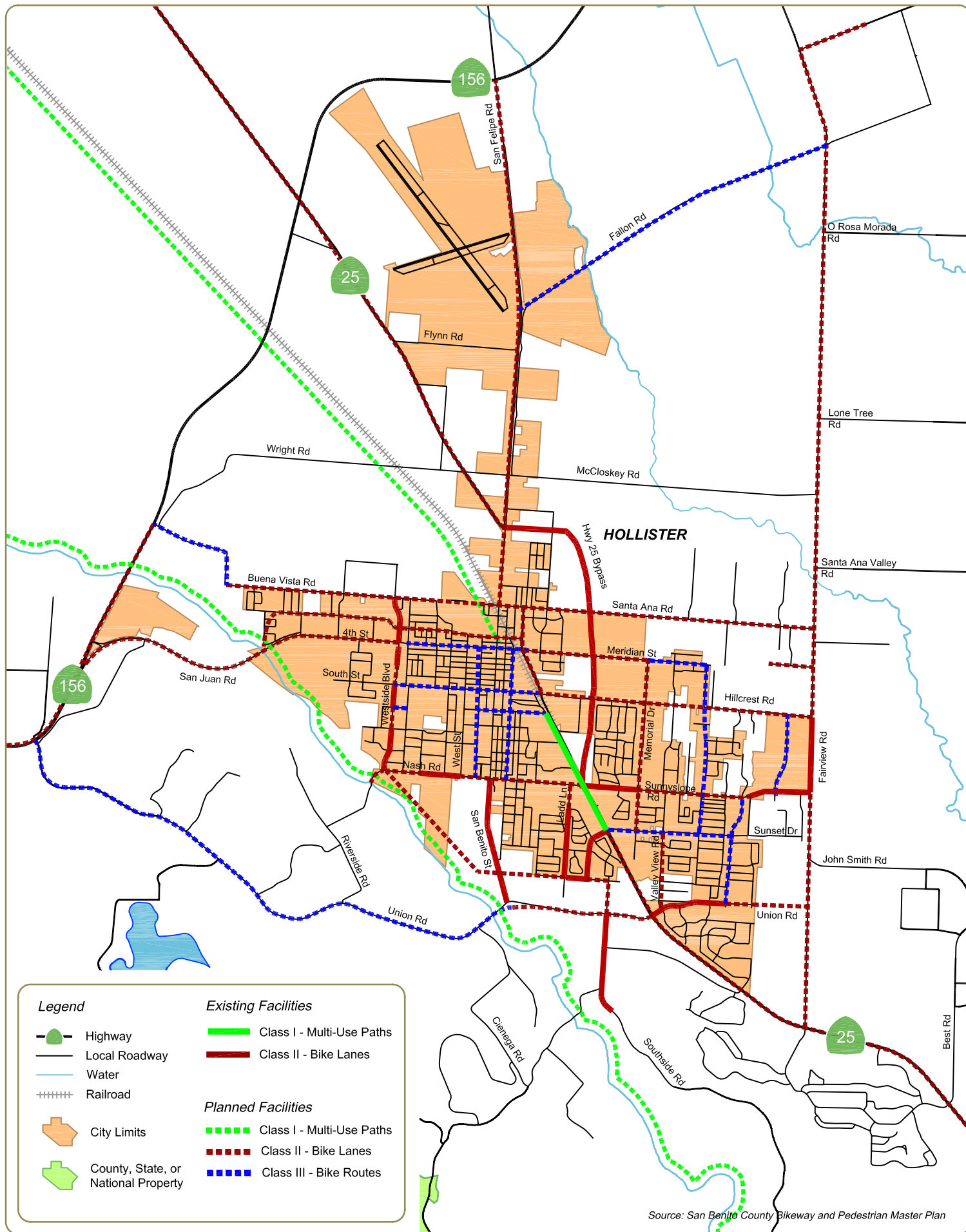


Figure 6-3
Hollister Area Existing and Planned Bicycle Facilities



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GOAL C-1

To provide an adequate road system that is safe, efficient, reliable, and within the County's ability to finance and maintain.

C-1.1 Intermodal Connectivity

The County shall ensure that, whenever possible, roadway, highway, public transit systems, and pedestrian and bicycle trails are interconnected with other modes of transportation. (RDR)

C-1.2 Complete Streets

To promote a road and street network that accommodates cars without requiring car-dependence, the County shall plan for use of roadways by all vehicle types and users, including automobiles, trucks, alternative energy vehicles, agricultural equipment, transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians, when constructing or modifying roadways. Additionally, the County shall plan its road and street network to reflect a context-sensitive approach to the design of thoroughfare assemblies, where the allocation of right-of-way and the facilities provided are based on the intended character, whether urban or rural, of a particular location (urban context). Roads and streets within communities shall be designed to support and encourage walkability as a response to their context, whereas roads in open areas of the County shall be designed primarily for vehicular circulation. As such, thoroughfares that serve both open areas and communities in the County shall change as the surrounding urban context varies. This includes:

- a. Encouraging thoroughfare designs that are context sensitive, such as those recommended in *Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach* by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE);

- b. Supporting urban design principles that promote walkability within communities to include:
 - i. A mix and variety of land uses designed to be relatively compact and in proximity to one another;
 - ii. Buildings that are oriented toward streets, with appropriately narrow setbacks and functional entries directly fronting onto sidewalks;
 - iii. Pedestrian-scaled architecture, landscape, and thoroughfares designed to provide engaging sidewalk views and comfort to pedestrians traveling at slow speeds; and
 - iv. Circulation networks that provide an interconnected system of streets and open spaces with relatively small block lengths;
- c. Creating multi-modal street connections in order to establish a comprehensive, integrated, and connected transportation network designed to avoid the construction of new roadways and rail lines that would cause the physical division of existing communities;
- d. Incorporating pedestrian and bicycle facilities, where appropriate and feasible, that promote safety and maximize access;
- e. Planting street trees adjacent to curbs and between the street and sidewalk or walking path to provide a buffer between the pedestrian and the automobile, where appropriate;
- f. Incorporating traffic calming devices such as roundabouts, bulb-outs at intersections, and traffic tables; and
- g. Coordinating with other agencies and cities to ensure connections are made between jurisdictions. (RDR/MPSP/IGC)



C-1.3 Roadway Improvement Aesthetics

The County shall require roadway improvements, such as roadway alignment and grading, landscaping, and/or other treatments, to reflect a context sensitive approach and be based on the intended character, whether urban or rural, of a particular location to be designed to conform to existing landforms and to include landscaping and/or other treatments to ensure that aesthetics are preserved, including the County's rural character. (RDR)

C-1.4 Funding Sources

Prior to approving new development, the County shall identify, develop, and/or maintain a variety of funding sources to implement the improvements on the Circulation Diagram or other improvements deemed necessary to accommodate the new development at applicable levels of service. These funding sources may include County capital funds as available, building and traffic impact fees for new development or designated benefit areas, developer/subdivider improvements, offers of dedication of rights-of-way, assessment/improvement districts, and gas taxes or other measures. (FB)



While this rural road does not contain sidewalks or bike lanes, the design and slow speeds make it fit for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. (Photo by Dan Burden, Walkable and Liveable Communities Institute)

C-1.5 Mitigating Transportation Impacts

The County shall assess fees on all new development to ensure new development pays its fair share of the costs for new and expanded transportation facilities, as applicable, to County, City, regional and/or State facilities. (RDR/FB)

C-1.6 Review of General Plan Amendments

The County shall submit all proposed General Plan amendments to SBCOG, Caltrans, and the cities of San Juan Bautista and Hollister for review and comment. (RDR/IGC)

C-1.7 Consistency with City Standards

The County shall require the street network for development proposals within the Sphere of Influence of the cities of Hollister or San Juan Bautista to be built to applicable city standards. (RDR)

C-1.8 Modeling Growth Impacts

The County should support the development of a computer model through regional agencies and in cooperation with the cities to monitor growth patterns and evaluate the effects of major projects and cumulative development on the transportation network (including impacts on automobiles, transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists) in the northern part of the county. (MPSP/IGC)

C-1.9 Dedicate Rights-of-Way

The County shall require project applicants with property fronting along planned road improvements, as a condition of project approval, to dedicate right-of-way and/or construct improvements in accordance with the Circulation Diagram when (1) a nexus can be established between the proposed project and the dedication and/or construction; and (2) the dedication and/or construction would be roughly proportional to the project's impacts. (RDR)



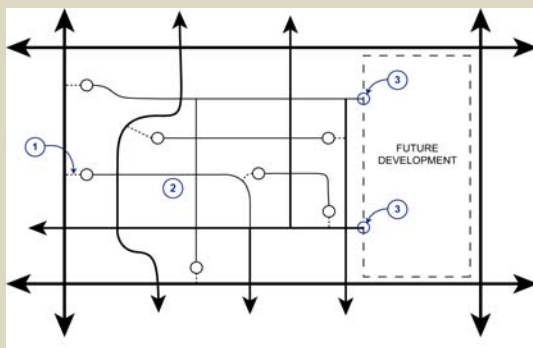
C-1.10 Street Network Plans

The County shall require project applicants to prepare a street network plan for any subdivision proposal located near existing, approved, or proposed development (county or city). The plan shall illustrate how adjoining properties will interconnect over the long-term and how the plan will improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity. The plan shall include an interim access plan and a long-term plan that consolidates vehicular access onto arterials/collectors (via street network design, or some other method). (RDR)

C-1.11 Discourage Cul-de-Sacs

The County shall encourage developers to minimize the use of cul-de-sac streets in new development. Cul-de-sac streets shall not exceed 800 feet in length and no portion of the cul-de-sac street shall be more than 400 feet from an intersecting street or public accessway unless physical constraints make it unfeasible. (RDR)

Ways to Improve Street Connectivity



- 1) Pathways connect ends of cul-de-sacs to adjacent roadways to promote better bicycle and pedestrian connectivity.
- 2) More traditional grid network increases route options, promotes bicycling and walking, reduces emergency response times, and distributes traffic more evenly throughout the network.
- 3) Preserve the potential for future road connections to adjacent developments.

C-1.12 Level of Service (LOS) Standard

The County shall endeavor to maintain a General Plan target goal of LOS D at all locations. If a transportation facility is already operating at an LOS D or E, the existing LOS should be maintained. Exceptions should be considered where achievement of these levels of service would cause unacceptable impacts to other modes of transportation, the environment, or private property. (RDR)

C-1.13 Upgrade Private Roads

The County shall require existing private roads to be upgraded to County standards as a condition of approval for any project that will be served by such roads. (RDR)

C-1.14 Driveway Siting

The County shall encourage driveways to be located on adjacent collector streets rather than on arterial streets. (RDR)

C-1.15 Street Networks that Enhance Neighborhood Character

The County shall encourage traditional interconnected street networks that provide alternate routes between neighborhoods and other measures that slow neighborhood traffic and enhance neighborhood character, such as those associated with Complete Streets. (RDR)

C-1.16 Roads on Hillsides

The County shall require that new public and private roads on hillsides minimize visual impact by blending with natural landforms and by following the natural contours of the land as much as possible and that driveway access in hillside areas be consolidated where possible and limited to areas where adequate sight distance is available for all approaches. (RDR)



C-1.17 Grades on Hillsides

The County shall require that new roads on hillsides do not exceed a 15 percent grade. The County may allow grades on hillsides of up to 20 percent for distances of up to 400 feet. Grades over 15 percent must have all weather surfaces, such as asphalt or concrete. (RDR)

C-1.18 Minimize Hillside Scarring

The County shall require new roads on hillsides and ridges that are visually prominent from County or State roadways to minimize scarring. (RDR)

C-1.19 Avoid Hazardous Areas

The County shall ensure that road development is minimized in hazardous areas (e.g. faults, flood plains, landslide areas, fire hazard areas) and that, if a hazard is present within a planned road alignment, the planned alignment is modified to the extent feasible to avoid the hazard. (RDR)

C-1.20 Design Standards

The County shall review the design standards for all roadway classifications every five years. (RDR)

C-1.21 Intra-County Transportation Coordination

The County supports opportunities to promote intra-county coordination that aids in meeting County, regional, or state goals to provide integrated and sustainable transportation systems.

Pedestrian, Equestrian, and Bicycle Trails

Bike, pedestrian, and equestrian trails provide opportunities for travel, as well as numerous recreational opportunities for county residents. Trails help promote healthy, active living and can reduce automobile dependence. Bicycle, pedestrian, and equestrian facilities in the unincorporated areas of county are generally discontinuous or non-existent due to insufficient funding and the rural nature of

most of the county. The policies in this section support a variety of bikeway, sidewalk or walking path, and trail improvement projects aimed at creating walkable, bikeable neighborhoods and interconnecting communities throughout the county. The policies also reflect the rural character of the county by balancing the need for safe and adequate sidewalks and bike lanes with the desire to retain the small-town character of rural communities. *(Note: see Section 8: Natural and Cultural Resources Element for policies related to trails for recreational use.)*

GOAL C-2

To provide a safe, continuous, and accessible system of facilities for bicycle and pedestrian travel in appropriate areas of the county.

C-2.1 Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Equestrian Systems

The County shall encourage complete, safe, and interconnected bicycle, pedestrian, and equestrian systems, as appropriate to the context, that serve both commuter travel and recreational use, and provide access to major destinations in the county. (MPSP/RDR)

C-2.2 Pedestrian and Bike Path Construction

The County shall plan, design, and construct pedestrian routes and bikeways consistent with the 2009 County Bikeway and Pedestrian Master Plan or its succeeding plan. Priority shall be given to bicycle commuting routes, routes to schools, bike lanes on all new streets classified as arterials or collectors, and bike lanes on or adjacent to existing heavily traveled roads. (RDR/MPSP)

C-2.3 Bicycle Parking Facilities

The County shall provide or encourage the provision of secure bicycle parking facilities at transit facilities, private and public facilities, and park-and-ride lots. (RDR/MPSP)



C-2.4 Bicycle Wayfinding Signs

The County shall work with SBCOG to support the installation of signs that identify designated bicycle routes and alert motorists to share the road to help bicyclists safely navigate the county. *(MPSP/IGC)*

C-2.5 Bicycle Detection at Intersections

The County shall work with SBCOG to support the installation bicycle-sensitive loop detectors at signalized intersections to improve safety for bicyclists and motorists and facilitate bicycle travel. *(MPSP/IGC)*

C-2.6 Development Along Planned Bikeways

The County shall require project applicants of new developments adjacent to designated bikeways to provide the portion of the planned bikeway within the development, including rights-of-way dedication and/or construction when (1) a nexus can be established between the proposed development and the dedication and/or construction; and (2) the dedication and/or construction would be roughly proportional to the development's impacts. *(RDR)*

C-2.7 Funding for Bikeway System

The County shall pursue additional State and Federal funding for the bikeway system. *(FB)*

C-2.8 Sidewalks or Pedestrian Paths in Subdivisions

The County shall encourage project applicants to provide sidewalks or pedestrian paths, or other safe and convenient accommodations for pedestrians (e.g., shared-space streets) on all new roads or modifications to existing roads, as appropriate to the context, in accordance with County roadway design standards. *(RDR)*

C-2.9 Safe Routes to School

The County shall support Safe Routes to School (SR2S) programs and pursue SR2S grant funding to encourage school-age children to bike and walk to school. *(MPSP/FB)*

C-2.10 Paths Through Cul-de-Sacs

The County shall encourage developments at a density of one unit per acre or greater to include paths for bicycle and pedestrian traffic through or near the ends of loop streets and cul-de-sacs over 500 feet in length and to facilitate bicycle and pedestrian travel. *(RDR)*

C-2.11 Curb Ramps

The County shall require developments to include curb ramps at new intersections, consistent with ADA requirements. *(RDR)*

C-2.12 Pedestrian Improvements

The County shall work with SBCOG to support the installation of roadway improvements that better accommodate pedestrians, such as count-down signals at signalized intersections, audible signals for the visually-impaired and pedestrian-friendly signal timing. *(MPSP/IGC)*

Public Transit

Effective public transit reduces traffic congestion, helps improve air quality, and provides essential services to youth, seniors, and persons with disabilities. Increasing the availability of public transit can also provide economic benefits to the county and its residents. San Benito County Express is the primary transit provider in the county, providing bus service in Hollister and countywide inter-city connections. The San Benito County Local Transportation Authority administers and operates County Express. While there are currently (2011) no passenger rail stops in San Benito County, commuter rail service to the Bay Area and



beyond is available at the Gilroy Transit Center. Policies in this section seek to improve bus service and support increased access to commuter rail service.



Early morning commuters at a Caltrain Station.
(Photo by Richard Masoner)

GOAL C-3

To promote a safe and efficient public transit system that provides a viable travel alternative to automobiles, maximizes mobility, and reduces roadway congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.

C-3.1 Transit-Supportive Land Use 🌐

The County shall encourage transit lines, stops, and facilities in locations where land uses and density would support transit use. (RDR/MPSP)

C-3.2 Future Connections to High-Speed Rail 🌐

The County shall pursue potential opportunities to connect transit to future high-speed rail if a high-speed rail station is built in Gilroy and ensure that proposed connection alignments are carefully planned to maximize accessibility and minimize related environmental impacts associated with visual obstructions and noise, as appropriate. (MPSP)

C-3.3 Connections to Gilroy Transit Center 🌐

The County shall encourage the use of shuttles/transit services at the Gilroy Transit Center to connect to appropriate and carefully planned locations that maximize use and minimize impacts to existing communities. The County shall also encourage the expansion of passenger rail between the Gilroy Caltrain Station and Hollister. (MPSP)

C-3.4 Commuter Rail in Hollister 🌐

The County shall support efforts to extend Caltrain service from Gilroy to Hollister to link San Benito County to San Jose and San Francisco. (MPSP/IGC)

C-3.5 Education about Public Transit 🌐

The County shall coordinate with the Local Transportation Authority to develop a mobility management program to inform transit-dependent citizens about the various public transit programs and services available to them. (MPSP/IGC)

C-3.6 Transit to Major Destinations 🌐

The County shall encourage transit service to all education and health care facilities in the county and to provide additional bus service to key commercial centers and major employment centers in the county and cities. (IGC)

C-3.7 Public Transit to Employment Centers 🌐

The County shall encourage major employment centers to work with the Local Transportation Authority to facilitate the provision of adequate public transit facilities. (RDR)

C-3.8 Transit in New Development 🌐

The County shall require new development at densities of one unit per acre or greater to provide funding for or construct transit stops and signs in appropriate locations and facilitate access to exist-



ing or future public transit through project design, consistent with the Local Transportation Authority Transit Design Guidelines. (RDR)

C-3.9 Consistency with RTP 🌐

The County shall require all new development proposals to be consistent with and implement the San Benito County Regional Transportation Plan transit policies. (RDR)

C-3.10 Transit to Recreational Areas 🌐

The County shall work with the Local Transportation Authority, Caltrans, and the State and Federal parks to establish transit access to recreational areas within the county. (RDR/IGC)

C-3.11 Fixed Bus Route Efficiency 🌐

The County shall encourage effective location and design of bus stops, transit centers, and complementary roadway projects that maximize the speed, efficiency, and passenger usability of fixed-route buses and are consistent with the Local Transportation Authority Transit Design Guidelines. (RDR)

C-3.12 Park-and-Ride Facilities 🌐

The County should cooperate with the cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista and Caltrans to establish park-and-ride facilities at appropriate locations. (MPSP/IGC)

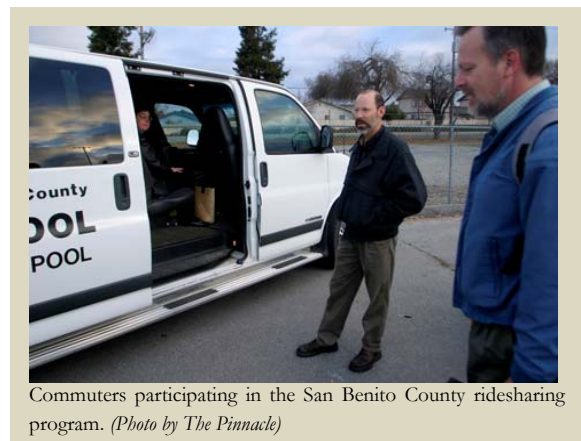
C-3.13 Addressing Unmet Transit Needs

The County shall encourage transit activities that are consistent with the SBCOG definitions of unmet needs. (MPSP)

Transportation Demand Management

Coordinating the many forms of transportation that use San Benito County's highway transportation system is critical to achieving maximum road efficiency and minimizing costly road expansion or construction. Transportation Demand Man-

agement (TDM) programs are strategies designed to reduce the demand for the automobile as a mode of travel. By encouraging the use of alternative transportation modes or alternative types of commuting, the vehicle demand on the existing roadway system is managed or reduced and system efficiency is improved. TDM strategies can also help reduce the need for capacity-enhancing improvement projects on county roadways.



Commuters participating in the San Benito County ridesharing program. (Photo by The Pinnacle)

GOAL C-4

To encourage alternative transportation modes to reduce the demand for vehicular trips, especially during congested commute times.

C-4.1 Transportation System Management 🌐

The County shall consider transportation system management (TSM) measures to increase the efficiency of the existing roadway network prior to constructing new traffic lanes. Such measures may include traffic signal synchronization and signal timing improvements. (MPSP)

C-4.2 Ridesharing Promotion 🌐

The County shall support SBCOG programs that promote the use of ridesharing, vanpooling, and carpooling to decrease vehicle trips on road systems in the county. (MPSP/IGC)



C-4.3 Employer Incentives 🌐

The County shall encourage employers to provide transit subsidies, bicycle facilities, alternative work schedules, ridesharing, telecommuting, employee education, and preferential parking for car-pools/vanpools. (RDR)

C-4.4 San Benito County Employee Incentive Programs 🌐

As a major employer, San Benito County shall demonstrate leadership in the implementation of programs encouraging the use of alternative modes of transportation by its employees. Example programs may include:

- Preferential carpool parking and other ridesharing incentives;
- Flexible working hours or telecommuting where consistent with job duties and customer service needs;
- Secure bicycle parking; and
- Incentives for using transit, such as discounted passes or tokens. (MPSP/SO)

Goods Movement

The movement of goods through the county, either via highway, rail, or air, is a key component of the economic vitality and growth of the region. The large majority of goods transported in and out of the county are moved by truck. Growing congestion on the State highway system, specifically on SR-25 and SR-156 between Hollister and US 101, pose potential problems for the efficient movement of goods. Truck traffic on local streets and rural roads in San Juan Bautista, Hollister, and unincorporated areas of the county is becoming a growing concern for area residents. Rail access in San Benito County is limited to two Union Pacific Railroad facilities consisting of a two-mile Coast Line segment near Aromas and the 12-mile-long Hollister Branch Line running from Hollister to

Carnadero in Santa Clara County. The policies in this section seek to support the efficient movement of goods through the county while reducing impacts on communities and sensitive land uses.



Agricultural operations, such as Earthbound Farms near San Juan Bautista, contribute significantly to the local economy. Ensuring the efficient movement of goods can strengthen economic vitality in the region. (Photo by Fresh Plaza)

GOAL C-5

To provide for the safe and efficient movement of goods to support commerce while maintaining safety and quality of life in the county.

C-5.1 Rail for Goods Movement 🌐

The County shall encourage commercial, industrial, and agricultural developments to use railroads for goods movement. (RDR/MPSP)

C-5.2 Rail Facilities 🌐

The County shall protect and enhance existing rail facilities and support opportunities to provide rail spurs to support transportation of agricultural and manufactured goods and other materials within and throughout the county. (RDR)

C-5.3 Future Rail Support Facilities 🌐

Where appropriate, the County shall encourage major industrial and commercial centers to be located and designed to accommodate future rail support facilities. (RDR)



C-5.4 Truck Routes

The County shall designate truck routes for the transport of goods throughout the County and shall adopt regulations for designated truck routes. (RDR/MPSP)

C-5.5 County Roads for Local Traffic

The County shall encourage inter- and intra-regional truck traffic to use State and Federal highways, to maintain the primary role of County roads as serving local and agricultural traffic. (MPSP)

C-5.6 Farm to Market Connectivity

The County shall facilitate farm-to-market transport by directing non-agricultural truck trips to targeted corridors, making other County roadways more available for the movement of agricultural goods. (RDR/MPSP)

C-5.7 Loading Facilities

The County shall require adequate loading facilities in commercial and industrial developments that require frequent loading and unloading of goods. (RDR)

Air Transportation

San Benito County has one public airport (Hollister Municipal Airport), one private airport (Frazier Lake Airpark), and several landing strips scattered throughout the county. Agricultural producers, fire fighters, emergency medical and private users all depend on aviation services in the county. Private aircraft also uses aviation facilities for commercial and recreational purposes. Airports in the county provide local access to the national aviation system, enabling the traveling public and freight and cargo movers to connect with airports in major metropolitan areas. Currently, the County's role in air transportation is limited to land use regulation through the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The County coordinates with the Air-

port Land Use Commission (ALUC), which makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors about development around the Hollister Airport in order to ensure orderly growth around the airport and protect the safety of nearby residents. State and Federal agencies have primary jurisdiction over airport facilities and operations. The policies in this section support and protect the continued use of airports by all users. (*Note: see Section 9: Health and Safety Element for policies related to airport safety and consistency with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.*)



Plane landing at Hollister Airport (Photo by Jared G.)

GOAL C-6

To promote the safe and efficient use of aviation facilities.

C-6.1 Private Airstrip Control

The County shall control the location, development, and use of private airstrips and agricultural landing fields. (RDR)

C-6.2 Protect Prime Farmland

The County shall not allow new air strips to be developed on prime agricultural land. (RDR)

C-6.3 Planes at Private Air Strips

The County shall limit the airplanes at any private air strip, except the Frazier Lake Airpark, to those of the air strip owners. (RDR)



C-6.4 Hollister Airport Expansion

The County shall support efforts of the City of Hollister to expand operations at the Hollister



Airport to increase options for air travel and create a catalyst for economic development. (RDR/IGC)

Circulation Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
C-A: Update Road Standards The County shall review and update the Road Standards within the Subdivision Ordinance to reflect the policies of the General Plan. (RDR)		X				
Implements Policy(ies)	C-1.2, C-1.3, C-1.11, C-1.13, C-1.15, C-2.6, C-2.8, C-2.10, C-3.1, and C-3.8					
Responsible Department(s)	Public Works					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
C-B: Monitor Intersections The County shall monitor unsignalized intersections for the potential need for signalization or other necessary improvements to maintain an LOS D. (PSR)		X				
Implements Policy(ies)	C-1.12					
Responsible Department(s)	Public Works					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
C-C: Thresholds of Significance The County shall develop and adopt thresholds of significant for the evaluation and identification of significant environmental impacts to the transportation system. (RDR)		X				
Implements Policy(ies)	C-1.12					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works					
C-D: Standards for Hillside Areas The County shall review and update the Subdivision Ordinance to ensure the following in hillside areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roads do not exceed a 15 percent grade (distances of no more than 400 feet are allowed at grades up to 20 percent); Grades over 15 percent have all weather surfaces such as asphalt or concrete; and New road development minimizes cut and fill and follows the natural contours of the land as much as possible. (RDR) 		X				
Implements Policy(ies)	C-1.17					
Responsible Department(s)	Public Works					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					



Circulation Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
C-E: Standards to Require Hazards Analysis The County shall review and update the Subdivision Ordinance to require applicants to analyze the seismic, flood, landslide, and fire hazard potential for proposed new road alignments and avoid such hazards to the extent feasible. <i>(RDR)</i>			x			
Implements Policy(ies)	C-1.19					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works					
C-F: Coordination with Local Agencies The County shall coordinate with SBCOG, AMBAG, the cities, adjacent counties, and Caltrans to monitor traffic volumes and congestion on the roadway system in San Benito County. <i>(PSR/IGC)</i>						x
Implements Policy(ies)	C-1.8					
Responsible Department(s)	Public Works					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
C-G: County Bikeway and Pedestrian Master Plan The County should review and update its Bikeway and Pedestrian Master Plan every 10 years. <i>(MPSP)</i>			x			
Implements Policy(ies)	C-2.2					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works					
C-H: Evaluation for Sidewalks and Bikeways 🌐 The County should collaborate with SBCOG to conduct a systematic evaluation of roadway networks around high schools and junior high schools to determine the need for sidewalk and bikeway facilities. The County should develop a capital improvements project list based on the findings of the evaluation. <i>(FB/PSR/IGC)</i>		x				
Implements Policy(ies)	C-2.9 and C-2.12					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works					
C-I: Information on Public Transit Services 🌐 The County should prepare and distribute information, as part of a mobility management program, to inform transit-dependent citizens about the various public transit programs and services available to them. <i>(MPSP/PI)</i>					x	
Implements Policy(ies)	C-3.5					



 Circulation Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
Responsible Department(s)	Public Works					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
C-J: Public Transit to Recreation Areas  <p>The County shall collaborate with officials of Caltrans, Fremont State Park, Pinnacles National Park, Hollister Hills State Recreational Vehicle Area, and Clear Creek Recreation Area to determine if interest for connecting these recreational areas via public transit exists. If interest does exist, the County shall work with officials from these agencies and any affected property owners to develop a feasibility study including how such a system would be administered and funded. (PSR/IGC)</p>			x			
Implements Policy(ies)	C-3.10					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works					
C-K: Identify Farm-to-Market Routes <p>The County shall identify farm-to-market routes and needed improvements and maintenance for those routes and seek funding to complete those improvements. (FB/PSR)</p>		x				
Implements Policy(ies)	C-5.6					
Responsible Department(s)	Public Works					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
C-L: Design Standards <p>The County shall review roadway design standards (SBC Code §23.31.023) every five years, in collaboration with Caltrans, SBCOG, and the Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista, to ensure updated and consistent standards are applied, taking into account speed limits (SBC Code §17.01.002), the Circulation Diagram, the <i>Monterey Bay Area Complete Streets Guidebook</i>, and other factors agreed upon to be relevant. (RDR)</p>		x				
Implements Policy(ies)	C-1.20					
Responsible Department(s)	Public Works					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					



SECTION 7

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES ELEMENT

This element provides the framework for decisions in San Benito County concerning public and private infrastructure, utilities, and services. Existing and planned development in the county is dependent on a complicated network of public facilities and services. At the same time, the provision of infrastructure and services to residents and businesses in San Benito County are covered by a range of public and private institutions, organizations, and activities. Many services provided in the unincorporated county are provided by independent special districts, such as fire protection and water service, or by private companies such as garbage service. Each type of facility and service has a unique set of challenges and must adapt to growth and change differently.

While the focus of this element is to ensure facilities and services meet the needs of all residents and businesses, the county's rural character and limited resources reduce the levels of community services that can be provided compared to urban service levels. However, new residents coming from more urban areas often have expectations for services that the County cannot provide. The County recognizes that it is responsible for providing and maintaining certain facilities and services necessary to maintain safe communities and to support the existing and future development planned for in the Land Use Element (Section 3). It is for this reason that the County includes this element in the General Plan.

The goals and policies in this element support the provision and maintenance of sufficient infrastructure and services in appropriate areas of the county and provide for their timely expansion. The goals and policies indicate where those facilities and services will be most beneficial to meet the needs of the county's communities, residents, and businesses. The element also includes policies, in coordination with the Health and Safety Element (Section 9), for the provision of facilities and services to ensure the safety and welfare of residents and visitors and the protection of property.



General Public Facilities and Services

San Benito County is responsible for providing many public services and facilities. There are several overarching strategies that are inherent to the provision of all types of public facilities and services, such as funding new services and maintaining existing infrastructure. Providing the necessary public facilities and services to meet the needs of existing and future residents and businesses is vital for a safe and prosperous county. The County must be responsive to meeting existing service needs, while also ensuring that new facilities are strategically located to maximize use and efficiency.

The focus of this goal section is to guide the overall provision of public facilities and services in the unincorporated areas of the county, ensuring that there is land available for new facilities, enough capacity to meet demand, and funding in place to construct and maintain facilities and services.

GOAL PFS-1

To provide residents and businesses quality, cost-effective, and sustainable public facilities and services.

PFS-1.1 Essential Facilities and Services

The County shall ensure that adequate public facilities and services essential for public health and safety are provided to all county residents and businesses and maintained at acceptable service levels. Where public facilities and services are provided by other agencies, the County shall encourage similar service level goals. *(RDR/MPSP)*

PFS-1.2 Facilities and Services Deficiencies

The County shall coordinate with other public facility and service providers, such as Cal Fire and

water districts, to identify and find solutions to key infrastructure deficiencies in the county. *(IGC)*

PFS-1.3 Efficient Infrastructure and Facilities

The County shall update and replace public facilities and infrastructure with technologies that improve energy efficiency and conserve water, when feasible. *(MPSP)*

PFS-1.4 Level of Service

The County shall preserve, improve, and replace public facilities as necessary to maintain adequate levels of service for existing and future development. Where public facilities and services are provided by other agencies, the County shall encourage similar service level goals. *(MPSP)*

PFS-1.5 Public Facility Security

The County shall site public facilities to minimize the potential vulnerability of the facilities to natural and human-made hazards and threats. *(RDR/MPSP)*

PFS-1.6 Adaptive Facilities and Services

The County shall monitor expected impacts of climate change on public facilities and services and make appropriate adaptive modifications and upgrades as needed. Where public facilities and services are provided by other agencies, the County shall assist with identifying impacts and solutions. *(PSR/MPSP)*

PFS-1.7 Public Facility Clustering

The County shall encourage public facilities to be clustered or made joint-use facilities (e.g., park and recreation uses incorporated into retention basins and schools) in order to improve efficiency and reduce public costs. The County shall encourage agreements for sharing costs and operational responsibilities among service providers. *(RDR/MPSP)*



PFS-1.8 Public Facility Sizing

The County shall ensure that public facilities are designed to meet the projected capacity needs of existing and planned communities in order to reduce the need for future replacement. For facilities subject to incremental sizing, the County shall require the initial design to include adequate space or right-of-way to accommodate foreseeable future expansion. *(RDR/MPSP)*

PFS-1.9 Development Review

The County shall evaluate facility capacity, levels of service, and/or funding needs during the development review process to ensure adequate levels of service and facilities are provided and maintained. *(RDR)*

PFS-1.10 Maximize Use of Existing Facilities 🌱

The County shall require new development projects to be designed and sited to use existing facilities and services to the extent practical and to the extent that such a design and site choice would be consistent with good design principles. *(RDR)*

PFS-1.11 Pay Fair Share

The County shall require new development to pay its fair share of public facility and service costs. *(RDR/FB)*

PFS-1.12 New Development Requirements

The County shall require new development, in compliance with local, State, and Federal law, to mitigate project impacts associated with public facilities and services, including, but not limited to, fire, law enforcement, water, wastewater, schools, infrastructure, roads, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities through the use of annexation fees, connection fees, facility construction/expansion requirements, or other appropriate methods. *(RDR/FB)*

PFS-1.13 Service Agency Notification

The County shall notify the appropriate agencies (e.g., cities, special districts, school districts, emergency service providers) of new development applications within their service areas early in review process to allow sufficient time to assess impacts on facilities and services. *(RDR/IGC)*

County Operations

California's counties provide a vast array of services, some of which are addressed in this element (e.g., parks, law enforcement, emergency response services, and libraries), and serve as a delivery channel for many State services, such as foster care, public health care, jails, and elections. Recently there has been greater emphasis on local governments, including counties, to use sustainability as an organizing principle to plan, carry-out, and evaluate their operations, services, and activities. Driving this initiative are State mandates (e.g., AB 32) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and plan for climate change impacts (Executive Order S-3-08). Efforts to promote sustainability in county operations include using Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) in procurement, reducing waste and increasing recycling, increasing energy efficiency, generating renewable energy, conserving water, and using more fuel efficient vehicles. There are additional benefits for the County when using more sustainable practices, including lower operating costs and improved employee health and productivity.

The Board of Supervisors governs unincorporated areas of San Benito County. The County Administrative Officer is the appointed general administrator of County operations, facilities, and services. The County has several other officials that oversee agricultural programs, property assessments, elections, and tax collection. County departments that provide general services include Housing and



Economic Development, Human Resources and Risk Management, Planning and Building, Public Works, Integrated Waste Management, Health and Human Services, Emergency Medical Services, and the Sheriff's Office.

The focus of this goal section is to identify ways to incorporate sustainability, energy efficiency, and water conservation practices into County facilities, operations, and activities.



San Benito County Administration Building in Hollister.
(Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

GOAL PFS-2

To increase efficiency of County facilities, services, and operations and conserve resources to serve as a leader in sustainability and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

PFS-2.1 Efficient Operations 🌍

The County shall maintain facilities and service standards and conduct operations in a manner that meets community needs in an efficient manner, conserves resources, and reduces the County's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions. *(MPSP)*

PFS-2.2 Sustainable Plans and Operations 🌍

The County shall integrate sustainability concepts, greenhouse gas reduction strategies, and climate

change resiliency planning into County facility and service plans and operations. *(MPSP)*

PFS-2.3 Reducing GHG Emissions 🌍

The County shall reduce GHG emissions from County facilities and activities. *(MPSP)*

PFS-2.4 Monitoring Efficiency and Conservation 🌍

The County shall monitor and regularly report on its progress in implementing energy efficiency, water conservation, and waste reduction measures and in meeting its greenhouse gas reduction targets and goals for County facilities and activities. *(PSR/PI)*

PFS-2.5 Sustainability Retrofits 🌍

The County shall increase energy efficiency in older County buildings through energy efficiency and retrofits (e.g., compact florescent light bulbs, motion-activated lighting, computerized HVAC systems), renewable energy generation (e.g., photovoltaic cells), and water conservation retrofits (e.g., low flow toilets and sinks, drip irrigation, water reuse). *(MPSP/SO)*

PFS-2.6 Sustainable New Buildings 🌍

In building new facilities and buildings, the County shall achieve a high standard (e.g., equivalent to LEED® certification) of energy efficiency and water conservation and employ renewable energy technologies. *(MPSP)*

PFS-2.7 New Fleet and Equipment Purchases 🌍

The County shall purchase lower-emission and/or electric vehicles and energy efficient equipment when purchasing new fleet vehicles and maintenance/construction equipment. *(SO)*

PFS-2.8 Energy and Fuel Sources 🌍

The County shall use available clean energy and fuel sources to operate its buildings, vehicles, and maintenance/construction equipment. *(SO)*



PFS-2.9 Fleet Operations 🌍

The County shall require County staff to reduce vehicle idling, reduce trips, establish efficient routing, and use public transportation, carpooling, and alternate modes of transportation when available to reduce energy consumption and costs. (SO)

PFS-2.10 Purchasing Preferences 🌍

The County shall use Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) when carrying out operations and activities, including giving preference to products that reduce or eliminate indirect greenhouse gas emissions and promote recycling. (SO)

PFS-2.11 Preference for Reduced-Emission Equipment 🌍

The City shall give preference to contractors using reduced emission equipment for County construction projects and contracts for services, as well as businesses which practice sustainable operations. (MPSP/SO)

PFS-2.12 County Recycling 🌍

The County shall expand opportunities for recycling at public buildings, increase recycling and waste diversion by County employees, and use recycled materials and products where economically feasible. (SO)

Water Supply and Conservation

Water is a critical resource for residents, businesses, farms, and municipal institutions. The current and future supply of water is critical to the future health and well-being of San Benito County's economy and residents. Water in San Benito County is provided from three main sources: the underlying groundwater basin, the Central Valley Project, and other surface water sources (e.g., Hernandez and Paicines Reservoirs). The San Benito County Water District has jurisdiction over water management throughout most of the coun-

ty. Groundwater is the largest source of water used in the county.

Water is a valuable resource in the county and its sources must be appropriately planned and managed. Water supply throughout the county must be assessed, per State law, for proposed developments of a certain size to ensure that adequate water supplies are available to serve the proposed use. This assessment must be considered when determining whether or not to approve a new development.

The focus of this goal section is to address water resource issues and water supply and reliability. *(Note: see Goal section PFS-4 for policies related to water treatment and delivery, and Section 8: Natural Resources Element for policies addressing water conservation and quality.)*



The current and future supply of water is critical to the future health and well-being of San Benito County's economy and residents. (Photo by Rene Rodriguez)



GOAL PFS-3

To ensure reliable supplies of water for unincorporated areas to meet the needs of existing and future agriculture and development, while promoting water conservation and the use of sustainable water supply sources.

PFS-3.1 Water District Support

The County shall support efforts of the San Benito County Water District to ensure that adequate high-quality water supplies are available to support current residents and businesses and future development projects. *(MPSP/IGC)*

PFS-3.2 Interagency Coordination

The County shall cooperate with public and private water agencies in order to help address existing and future water needs for the county. *(IGC)*

PFS-3.3 Water Rights Protection

The County shall support public and private water agencies in their efforts to protect their water rights and water supply contracts, including working with Federal and State water projects to protect local water rights. *(IGC)*

PFS-3.4 Drought Response 🌍

The County shall encourage all public and private water agencies to develop and maintain drought contingency and emergency services plans, emergency inter-ties, mutual aid agreements and related measures to ensure adequate water services during drought or other emergency water shortage. *(MPSP/IGC)*

PFS-3.5 Water Supply Development 🌍

The County shall support plans to develop new reliable future sources of supply, including, but not limited to, the expansion of surface water storage and conjunctive use of surface water and groundwater, while promoting water conservation and water recycling/reuse. *(RDR/MPSP/IGC)*

PFS-3.6 Conjunctive Use 🌍

The County shall support conjunctive use of groundwater and surface water to improve water supply reliability. *(MPSP/IGC)*

PFS-3.7 Groundwater Management 🌍

The County shall support cooperative, regional groundwater management planning by water resource agencies, water users, and other affected parties to ensure a sustainable, adequate, safe, and economically viable groundwater supply for existing and future uses within the county. *(MPSP/IGC)*

PFS-3.8 Integrated Management 🌍

The County shall support and participate in the integrated management of surface water and groundwater resources, wastewater, stormwater treatment and use, and the use of reclaimed water. *(MPSP/IGC)*

PFS-3.9 Sufficient Water Supply for New Development

The County shall require new developments to prepare a source water sufficiency study and water supply analysis for use in preparing, where required, a Water Supply Assessment per SB 610 and a Source Water Assessment per Title 22. This shall include studying the effect of new development on the water supply of existing users. The County encourages the development of integrated regional water management plans or similar plans. *(RDR)*

Water Treatment and Delivery

Water and the methods used to treat and transport it are a basic necessity of residents, businesses, farms, and public institutions. Water treatment and delivery includes the infrastructure and processes of making water acceptable for drinking and other uses (e.g., industrial/medical processes) and then transferring it to the end-user. Water infrastructure typically includes canals, dams, wells, pipelines, and treatment plants.



Most development in San Benito County is served by either public or private water purveyors, such as the City of Hollister, Sunnyslope County Water District, and over 100 other small local purveyors. Nearly three-quarters of these purveyors only have one or two wells that serve developments such as mobile home parks, homeowners associations, businesses, and parks. There are some communities and rural areas that are not served by either public or private water purveyors; instead they rely on individual wells.

The focus of this goal section is to address the treatment and delivery of water to residents, businesses, and other water users. *(Note: see Goal section PFS-3 for policies addressing water conservation and quality, and Section 8: Natural Resources Element for policies addressing water conservation and quality.)*



The City of Hollister is a public water purveyor. (Photo of the Water Reclamation Facility by Rene Rodriguez)

GOAL PFS-4

To maintain an adequate level of service in the water systems serving unincorporated areas to meet the needs of existing and future agriculture and development, while improving water system efficiency.

PFS-4.1 Adequate Water Treatment and Delivery Facilities

The County shall ensure, through the development review process, that adequate water supply, treatment and delivery facilities are sufficient to

serve new development, and are able to be expanded to meet capacity demands when needed. Such needs shall include capacities necessary to comply with water quality and public safety requirements. *(RDR)*

PFS-4.2 Water Facility Infrastructure Fees

As a condition of approval for discretionary developments, the County shall not issue approval for a final map until verification of adequate water and wastewater service has been provided, which may include verification of payment of fees imposed for water and wastewater infrastructure capacity per the fee payment schedule from the water and wastewater provider. *(RDR)*

PFS-4.3 Minimum Lot Size

The County shall require a minimum lot size for properties that have on-site septic systems to minimize adverse water quality impacts on groundwater. *(RDR)*

PFS-4.4 Single User Well Consolidation

The County shall encourage consolidation of single user wells into public water districts. *(RDR/MPSP)*

PFS-4.5 Water System Rehabilitation

The County shall encourage the rehabilitation of irrigation systems and other water delivery systems to reduce water losses and increase the efficient use and availability of water. *(RDR/MPSP)*

PFS-4.6 New Community Water Systems

The County shall require any new community water system, in the unincorporated area of the county, serving residential, industrial, or commercial development to be owned and operated by a public or private entity that can demonstrate to the County adequate financial, managerial, and operational resources. *(RDR/IGC)*



PFS-4.7 Consistent Fire Protection Standards for New Development

The County, in coordination with public and private water purveyors and fire protection agencies, shall ensure consistent and adequate standards for fire flows and fire protection for new development, with the protection of human life and property as the primary objectives. *(RDR/IGC)*

PFS-4.8 Water Supply Planning 🌍

The County shall encourage water purveyors to develop plans for responding to droughts and the effects of global climate change, including contingency plans, the sharing of water resources to improve overall water supply reliability, and the allocation of water supply to priority users. *(MPSP/IGC)*

Wastewater Treatment and Disposal

Wastewater treatment plants in San Benito County are operated by four service providers: City of Hollister, City of San Juan Bautista, Sunnyslope Water District, and Tres Pinos Water and Sewer District. All other treatment is provided by individual property owners who operate septic systems. In rural counties, such as San Benito County, large, multi-user wastewater collection and treatment facilities are limited primarily because they are expensive to maintain. For this reason the majority of residents and businesses in the unincorporated county rely on stand-alone septic tanks and in-ground disposal or small-scale treatment systems. As a result, prior to issuing permits, the County assesses whether soil and site conditions are favorable, whether maintenance of the system will be adequate, and whether or not a septic system can provide satisfactory service.

The focus of this goal sections is to address wastewater treatment and disposal requirements, treated water quality, and alternative treatment

methods to ensure wastewater is treated to an acceptable level and disposed of safely. *(Note: see Section 8: Natural Resources Element for policies addressing water conservation.)*



The Tres Pinos Water and Sewer District is one of four service providers treating wastewater in San Benito County. (Photo by Mintier Harnish)

GOAL PFS-5

To ensure wastewater treatment facilities and septic systems are available and adequate to collect, treat, store, and safely dispose of wastewater.

PFS-5.1 Water and Sewer Expansion

The County shall encourage public wastewater system operators to maintain and expand their systems to meet the development needs of the county. *(MPSP/IGC)*

PFS-5.2 Reclaimed Water 🌍

The County shall encourage public wastewater system operations to upgrade existing wastewater treatment systems to produce reclaimed water suitable for unrestricted reuse. *(MPSP/IGC)*

PFS-5.3 Adequate Water Treatment and Disposal

The County shall ensure through the development review process that wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal facilities are sufficient to serve



existing and new development, and are able to be expanded to meet capacity demands when needed. (RDR)

PFS-5.4 Developer Requirements

The County shall require that new development meet all County requirements for adequate wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal prior to project approval. (RDR)

PFS-5.5 Individual Onsite Septic Systems

The County shall permit onsite septic systems only when connection to an existing wastewater system or sewer system is not reasonably available. Approval, installation, and use of individual septic systems shall be consistent with Regional Water Quality Control Board regulations. (RDR)

PFS-5.6 Septic System Design

The County shall require individual septic systems to be properly designed, constructed, and maintained to avoid degradation of ground and surface water quality. (RDR)

PFS-5.7 Alternative Rural Wastewater Systems 🌐

The County shall investigate and recommend alternative rural wastewater systems for individual homes. Alternative systems could include elevated leach fields, sand filtration systems, evapotranspiration beds, osmosis units, and holding tanks. In addition, composting toilets should be considered for appropriate situations. For clusters of homes, alternative systems could include communal septic tank/leach field systems, package treatment plants, lagoon systems, and land treatment. (RDR/MPSP/PSR)

Stormwater Drainage

Stormwater drainage facilities prevent rain water from pooling or otherwise inundating areas with localized flooding. These drainage systems typically include a combination of constructed facilities

(e.g., gutters, pipes, ditches, canals) and natural features (e.g., swales) that capture runoff from impervious surfaces (e.g., paved streets, parking lots, sidewalks, and roofs) and then redirect it to a stream, river, or holding basin.

Runoff water often comes from areas with pollutants, such as roads, parking lots, and driveways that have residue from gasoline, motor oil, trash, and gardens and lawns that have high concentrations of fertilizers. These pollutants can become concentrated as they move through a drainage system and impact water resources and natural habitat areas. As a result, water quality controls are a major concern for stormwater drainage. A preferred method to decrease stormwater runoff volumes and quality is the use of Low Impact Development (LID) techniques. The purpose of LID is to reduce impervious surfaces and provide more opportunities for runoff to soak into the ground onsite or to unlined ditches and swales or to be used for irrigation and other uses. LID techniques rely on soils and hardy plants to cleanse pollutants from runoff water and restore groundwater levels.

Runoff in the county eventually flows to the San Benito, Pajaro, or Salinas Rivers, or to the Central Valley. Stormwater drainage systems serve very few areas of the county and are operated by five service providers and several County Services Areas that also provide water and/or wastewater service. Most residents and businesses in the unincorporated county rely on individual drainage solutions or small-scale drainage systems. Stormwater quality measures are advocated and required by the County as part of the development review process. Because of the low intensity of development in unincorporated areas, the construction of large stormwater drainage systems is not necessary.



The focus of this goal section is to address the provision of stormwater drainage facilities that capture and dispose of runoff in a safe, environmentally-friendly manner, and encourage the use of LID techniques.



The 2035 General Plan addresses the provision of stormwater drainage facilities that capture and dispose of runoff in a safe, environmentally-friendly manner. (Photo by Mintier Harnish)

GOAL PFS-6

To manage stormwater from existing and future development using methods that reduce potential flooding, maintain natural water quality, enhance percolation for groundwater recharge, and provide opportunities for reuse.

PFS-6.1 Adequate Stormwater Facilities

The County shall require that stormwater drainage facilities are properly designed, sited, constructed, and maintained to efficiently capture and dispose of runoff and minimize impacts to water quality. (RDR)

PFS-6.2 Best Management Practices 🌱

The County shall require best management practices in the development, upgrading, and maintenance of stormwater facilities and services to reduce pollutants from entering natural water bodies while allowing stormwater reuse and groundwater recharge. (RDR)

PFS-6.3 Natural Drainage Systems 🌱

The County shall encourage the use of natural stormwater drainage systems (e.g., swales, streams) to preserve and enhance the environment and facilitate groundwater recharge. (RDR)

PFS-6.4 Development Requirements

The County shall require project designs that minimize stormwater drainage concentrations and impervious surfaces, complement groundwater recharge, avoid floodplain areas, and use natural watercourses in ways that maintain natural watershed functions and provide wildlife habitat. (RDR)

PFS-6.5 Stormwater Detention Facilities

Where necessary, the County shall require on-site detention/retention facilities and/or velocity reducers to maintain pre-development runoff flows and velocities in natural drainage systems. (RDR)

PFS-6.6 Stormwater Detention Basin Design

The County shall require stormwater detention basins be designed to ensure public safety, be visually unobtrusive, provide temporary or permanent wildlife habitat, and where feasible, provide recreation opportunities. (RDR)

PFS-6.7 Runoff Water Quality

The County shall require all drainage systems in new development and redevelopment to comply with applicable State and Federal non-point source pollutant discharge requirements. (RDR)

PFS-6.8 Reduce Erosion and Sedimentation

The County shall ensure that drainage systems are designed and maintained to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation and maintain natural watershed functions. (RDR)



Solid Waste and Recycling

Solid waste includes non-soluble materials (including gases and liquids in containers) such as agricultural refuse, demolition waste, industrial waste, mining residues, municipal garbage, and sewage sludge. Most solid waste ends up in a landfill, which is a facility designed to confine waste in a small area, compact it to a reduced volume, and cover it to allow decomposition. California law requires 50 percent of all solid waste to be diverted from landfills (AB 939) through source reduction, recycling, and composting. Waste-to-energy processes use solid waste to create combustible fuel that is then burned to generate electricity. These methods help to limit the amount of solid waste that ends up in landfills.

Private companies collect garbage, recycling, and yard waste in unincorporated San Benito County and transport it to the John Smith Landfill, which is owned by the County and operated by a private company. Solid waste oversight is managed by the County's Integrated Waste Management Department. About half the waste received at the landfill is diverted to recycling. The landfill is expected to near capacity in 2016. The County is currently (2011) exploring the possible development of a Resource Recovery Park, which will operate in partnership with the landfill and provide recyclable materials and energy to nearby businesses.

The focus of this goal section is to support the appropriate siting and adequate capacity for landfills and transfer stations, promote a wide range of programs to reduce waste, use recycled building materials, and support the recycling and composting of construction, agricultural, and landscaping waste. *(Note: see Section 9: Health and Safety Element for policies related to the transport and disposal of hazardous materials and wastes).*



Recycling cans outside a store in downtown San Juan Bautista.
(Photo by Mintier Harnish)

GOAL PFS-7

To provide solid waste facilities that meet or exceed State law requirements, and use innovative strategies for economical and efficient collection, transfer, recycling, storage, and disposal of solid waste.

PFS-7.1 Adequate Capacity 🌐

The County shall ensure that there is adequate capacity within the solid waste system for the collection, transportation, processing, recycling, and disposal of solid waste to meet the needs of existing and projected development. *(MPSP)*

PFS-7.2 Transfer Stations 🌐

The County shall provide adequate transfer station facilities that meet local demands, including recycling facilities, and avoid conflicts with surrounding uses. *(MPSP)*

PFS-7.3 Onsite Facilities for Non-Residential Development 🌐

The County shall require that all new non-residential development has the necessary onsite facilities for temporary solid waste and recycling storage, handling, and collection prior to issuing building permits. *(RDR)*



PFS-7.4 Landfill Encroachment

The County shall ensure that landfills and transfer stations are protected from encroachment by incompatible uses such as schools and homes. (RDR)

PFS-7.5 Waste Diversion

The County shall require waste reduction, recycling, composting, and waste separation to reduce the volume and toxicity of solid wastes sent to landfill facilities and to meet or exceed State waste diversion requirements of 50 percent. (RDR)

PFS-7.6 Construction Materials Recycling

The County shall encourage recycling and reuse of construction waste, including recycling materials generated by the demolition of buildings, with the objective of diverting 50 percent to a certified recycling processor. The County shall encourage salvaged and recycled materials for use in new construction. (RDR)

PFS-7.7 Waste-to-Energy Projects

The County shall promote technologies, including biomass and biofuels, that use solid waste as an alternative energy source. The County shall support efforts to develop and install waste-to-energy projects in appropriate locations. (RDR)

Utilities

Utility service providers are important to support the expansion of the county's economic base, serve new development, and maintain and increase infrastructure capacity. Utility infrastructure typically includes facilities that provide energy (e.g., electricity and natural gas lines) to residential, commercial, institutional users. Adequate right-of-way is a fundamental requirement for all utilities. Land acquisition requirements can be significant to ensure that there is enough capacity and available connections to serve existing and future de-

velopment. A well maintained facility is also critical to ensure the safety residents and businesses located near utilities (e.g., gas lines).

The focus of this goal sections is the continued provision of electricity and natural gas services and opportunities to enhance facilities to provide better, more reliable services to San Benito County residents and businesses. (Note: see Section 8: Natural Resources Element for policies related to energy resources, renewable energy generation, and energy efficiency).



The policies in this section focus on the continued provision of utilities to San Benito County residents. (Photo by Mintier Harnish)

GOAL PFS-8

To ensure that all areas of the County are provided with gas and electric service and residents and businesses can connect renewable energy facilities to the electric-grid.

PFS-8.1 Appropriate Siting of Electric and Gas Facilities

The County shall coordinate with public utility providers to locate transmission facilities that minimize impacts to existing and future residents and businesses, the natural environment, and other impacts. The County shall encourage the use of parallel or existing rights-of-way for transmission lines. (RDR/MPSP/IGC)



PFS-8.2 Reservation of Rights-of-Ways

The County shall coordinate with public utility providers to reserve adequate rights-of-way to facilitate expansion of services in a timely manner. *(RDR/IGC)*

PFS-8.3 Transmission Corridors

The County shall require transmission corridors to be located to reduce health impacts on areas where people live, work, or gather, and to not impact the economic use of adjacent properties, to the extent feasible. *(RDR)*

PFS-8.4 Avoid Conflicts with Agricultural Operations

The County shall encourage utility transmission lines to follow field edges to minimize impacts on agricultural operations. *(RDR)*

PFS-8.5 Undergrounding of Utility Lines

The County shall require utility lines in subdivisions to be placed underground. During roadway construction or as other opportunities are presented, the County shall encourage utility providers to underground existing utility lines. *(RDR)*

PFS-8.6 Joint-Use Corridors

The County shall coordinate with public utility providers to develop joint-use utility easements/corridors to connect open space, link trails, supplement wildlife corridors, and link habitat areas. *(RDR/IGC)*

PFS-8.7 Renewable Energy Grid-Connections

The County shall coordinate with public utility providers to design their facilities so that private and public onsite renewable energy facilities (e.g., solar, wind, biomass, geothermal) can connect to the larger electricity grid. *(RDR/IGC)*

Telecommunications

Telecommunications facilities and services are critical to businesses for economic growth and job creation, since residents and workers rely on telecommunications for quality of life, education, research, and access to health care and government services. Telecommunications are also critical to ensure the safety residents and businesses in the event of a major disaster or emergency. Telecommunications facilities and services include basic telephone, wireless telephone, broadband internet, and cable television.

San Benito County relies on several private companies for these telecommunications services, such as AT&T and Charter, which provide telephone, mobile phone, cable television, and broadband internet services. One of the biggest challenges to utilities and telecommunications infrastructure in San Benito County is lack of broadband internet and wireless telephone service and issues of reliability in rural areas. The limited customer base and vast distances that must be covered to install necessary facilities requires investments that may not be profitable to private companies. While this physical limitation is an issue in the county today, advancements in technologies may reduce or eliminate this constraint in the future.

The focus of this goal section is to ensure the continued provision of telecommunications services and opportunities to enhance facilities to provide better, more reliable services to San Benito County residents and businesses.



Telecommunications tower on Fremont Peak.
(Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

GOAL PFS-9

To facilitate the orderly and appropriate development and expansion of telecommunications facilities to meet the needs of residents and businesses for comprehensive, reliable, and cost effective telephone, wireless telephone, broadband, and cable television service.

PFS-9.1 Telecommunications Service

The County shall support the development and expansion of telecommunication facilities and services to facilitate the use of the best available technology for businesses, households, and government. *(RDR)*

PFS-9.2 Telecommunications Access

The County shall work with telecommunications providers to ensure that all residents and businesses have access to telecommunications services. To maximize access to inexpensive service, the County shall encourage marketplace competition from multiple service providers. *(MPSP/JP)*

PFS-9.3 Service Reliability

The County shall support efforts to increase telecommunications service reliability through market development, installation of redundant facilities, diversification of providers, and system modernization. *(RDR/MPSP)*

PFS-9.4 Siting of Telecommunication Facilities

The County shall require that the siting of telecommunications facilities minimizes their visibility, prevents visual clutter, reduces conflicts with surrounding land uses, and meets the requirements of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The siting of telecommunications facilities shall:

- a. Use existing buildings, structures, poles, or other support structures;
- b. Avoid ridgelines unless screened from public views;
- c. Avoid views of scenic highways, public parks and recreation facilities, or other scenic view areas;
- d. Include setbacks from residential dwellings, public and private schools, and child daycare facilities; and
- e. Document why the selected site is the best way to accomplish the project. *(RDR)*

PFS-9.5 Telecommunications Design

The County shall require that the design of telecommunications facilities (e.g., cabinets, buildings, antennas, security fencing) integrate into existing adjacent conditions and minimize visibility through the use of: appropriate colors, existing buildings and structures, screening, disguising, landscaping, and compatibility with surrounding structures and natural environments. *(RDR)*



PFS-9.6 Facility Co-location

The County shall require telecommunication facilities be co-located to the greatest extent feasible. (RDR)

PFS-9.7 Subdivision Improvement Requirements

The County shall require new residential and commercial development projects to include the facility components necessary to support modern telecommunication technologies, such as conduit space within joint utility trenches. (RDR)

PFS-9.8 Telecommunications Facilities Right-of-Way

The County shall encourage telecommunications service providers to size new facilities to accommodate future expansion, changes in technology, and facilities of other telecommunications and utility service providers. (RDR)

PFS-9.9 Broadband Internet Backbone

The County shall support the development of fiber-optic lines through the county that connect nearby fiber backbone serving metropolitan areas. (RDR/MPSP)

PFS-9.10 Rural Broadband Service

The County shall support the development, expansion, and delivery of broadband service to rural and other remote areas of the county through all available technologies. (RDR/MPSP)

PFS-9.11 Wireless Hot Spots

The County shall encourage the installation of public-use wireless broadband antennas at every County-owned building and in other public gathering places. (MPSP/SO)

PFS-9.12 Expand Citizen Participation

The County shall continue to expand opportunities for all citizens to participate in County governance and stay informed of County operations

through use of improved telecommunication technologies. (SO/PI)

School and Library Facilities

While libraries are typically part of County operations and governed by County regulations, schools are managed by their own districts and boards. Deciding where to build or expand schools is dependent on where growth occurs and what funding and resources are available for education. Planning for and approving development is a function of the County, while providing funding and resources for education is a function of the school districts. In this way, schools and the County depend on each other to coordinate and work together to provide adequate education facilities.

San Benito County has a total of 11 school districts with 17 elementary schools, two middle schools, and two high schools. Public primary education is overseen by the San Benito County Office of Education, a countywide agency whose mission is to provide educational leadership, resources, and service to assist school districts to be effective facilitators of learning for all pupils. The San Benito County Office of Education also operates a Juvenile Hall/Community School and the San Benito County Opportunity School. The San Benito County Free Library provides a variety of resources and programs at one location in Hollister. The library also operates a Bookmobile, which brings library services to other communities in the county.

The focus of this goal sections is to coordinate on the development of new schools and provide for new libraries, commensurate with population growth, that are accessible and provide opportunities for life-long learning, enabling residents to obtain skills to meet the needs of evolving business sectors.



School districts and the County work together to provide adequate education facilities. (Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

GOAL PFS-10

To collaborate with school districts and other education providers to develop high quality education facilities and programs that serve existing and future residents.

PFS-10.1 Coordination with School Districts

The County shall coordinate with local school districts, other public and private education providers, and libraries to ensure that quality education and education resources are available for residents of all ages. *(IGC)*

PFS-10.2 School District Consultation

The County shall encourage early consultation between school districts and the County when proposing new, or modifying existing, school site locations. *(RDR/IGC)*

PFS-10.3 New School Location 🌐

The County shall encourage school districts to site new schools in locations that are consistent with current and future land uses. The County shall also encourage the siting of new schools near residential areas with safe access for students to walk or bicycle to and from their homes. *(RDR/IGC)*

PFS-10.4 Multiple-Use School Facilities 🌐

The County shall encourage multiple-use school facilities, including opportunities for civic and cul-

tural uses, recreation facilities, and service programs to efficiently provide for education, recreation, and community meeting space. *(RDR/IGC)*

PFS-10.5 School Impact Fees

The County shall support the efforts of school districts to obtain necessary funding, including school impact fees. *(FB/IGC)*

PFS-10.6 Incompatible Land Uses near Schools

The County shall coordinate with school districts to reduce the effects of incompatible land uses and noise adjacent to school facilities. *(RDR/IGC)*

PFS-10.7 Library Facilities and Services

The County shall assess existing and future need of county residents and expand library facilities and services as necessary to meet the needs of future growth. *(MPSP/PSR)*

PFS-10.8: New Land Uses Near Schools

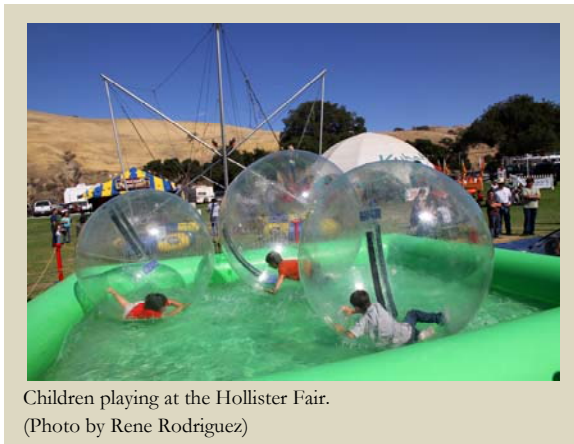
The County shall prohibit the siting of new land uses or facilities that use, store, emit, treat, or dispose of large quantities of hazardous materials within one-quarter mile of an existing public or private school facility.

Youth, Families, Seniors, and Special Needs Groups

There are many programs, services, delivery systems that provide needed services for youth, families, seniors, and other special needs groups. San Benito County, along with many other public and private service organizations, provide services for youth, families, seniors, and special needs groups. Faith-based organizations and community groups also provide a range of services to their congregations and their communities, including specific cultural and ethnic groups.



The focus of this goal section is to emphasize the importance of youth, families, seniors, and special needs programs and facilities, and improve the socio-economic conditions for families, seniors, and special needs groups. *(Note: see Chapter 5: Housing Element for policies related to housing for families, seniors, and special needs groups.)*



Children playing at the Hollister Fair.
(Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

GOAL PFS-11

To continue to place high priority on programs and facilities that serve youth, families, seniors, and other special needs groups.

PFS-11.1 Public Facilities and Services

The County shall strive to equitably distribute public facilities, improvements, and services throughout the County, with priority given to meeting the needs of youth, families, seniors, and other special needs groups. *(MPSP)*

PFS-11.2 Health Care Services

The County shall support efforts by the private and non-profit organizations to provide expanded health services and access to youth, families, seniors, and special needs groups throughout the county. The County shall provide information on health care services in the area, such as prenatal screening, hospice care, and home health care,

through newsletters, special pamphlets, and the County website. *(IGC/JP/PI)*

PFS-11.3 Collaboration

The County shall continually seek to establish new collaborations with other agencies and private non-profit organizations in order to meet the needs of youth, families, seniors, and the other special needs groups. *(IGC/JP)*

PFS-11.4 After School Programs

The County shall support, whether directly or in partnerships with other entities, after school and extended daycare programs year-round through before and after school care and day camps in the summer and during holidays and vacations. *(MPSP/IGC/JP)*

PFS-11.5 At-Risk Youth

The County shall assess and support the development of programs for at-risk youth. *(MPSP)*

PFS-11.6 Senior Health Care

The County shall pursue partnerships with local health service providers to provide programs such as health screening, medication monitoring, senior abuse education/prevention, adult day care/support for care givers, and in-home assistance. *(MPSP/IGC/JP)*

PFS-11.7 Senior Care Facilities

The County shall encourage the development of Active Adult Communities; continuing care, assisted living, and Alzheimer's facilities; as well as other appropriate facilities that support seniors in the County. *(RDR)*

PFS-11.8 Information Services

The County shall provide information about available social and community services through newsletters, special pamphlets, and the County website. *(PI)*



Law Enforcement and Crime Prevention

The County Sheriff's Department has primary responsibility for protecting the lives and property of the residents living in the unincorporated areas of San Benito County. The Sheriff's Department is also responsible for investigating all criminal activities occurring in unincorporated areas and apprehension of individuals who have violated the law. One of the biggest challenges to law enforcement in San Benito County is quickly responding to emergencies and criminal activities. The rural nature of the county and vast distances that must be covered to respond to calls create difficulty in providing adequate response in areas where residents are spread out.

The focus of this goal section is to maintain response times, identify needs for increased staffing, equipment, training, and emergency preparedness and building cooperative relationships with residents and businesses to promote crime prevention.



The 2035 General Plan includes provisions for ensuring the safety of residents and visitors and protecting private and public property. (Photo by Ashi Fachler)

GOAL PFS-12

To provide adequate law enforcement facilities and services to prevent crime, ensure the safety of residents and visitors, and protect private and public property.

PFS-12.1 Staffing Levels

The County shall encourage optimum staffing levels for both sworn Sheriff Deputies and civilian support staff in order to provide quality law enforcement services in the county. (MPSP/SO)

PFS-12.2 Sheriff Department Response Time Standards

The County shall strive to achieve and maintain appropriate Sheriff Department response times for all call priority levels to provide adequate law enforcement services for all County residents. (MPSP/SO)

PFS-12.3 Pursue Grant Funding

The County shall continue to pursue grants to fund additional staff positions, new law enforcement equipment and technology, educational programs for children and the public on the dangers of drugs, and for other law enforcement activities that enhance the safety and welfare of county residents. (MPSP/FB)

PFS-12.4 Fair Share

The County shall require new development to pay its fair share of the costs for providing law enforcement service facilities and equipment to new residents. (RDR/FB)

PFS-12.5 Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

The County shall include the Sheriff Department in the review of development projects, specifically for residential subdivision and commercial development, to adequately address crime and safety, and promote implementation of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles. (RDR)



Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services

San Benito County residents and property are at risks from both urban and wildland fires. San Benito County Fire protection service is provided by several agencies, including the San Benito County Fire Department, Aromas Tri-County Fire Department, Hollister Fire Department, and San Juan Bautista Volunteer Fire Department. CAL FIRE also assists the departments. Emergency medical services in San Benito County are coordinated by the County Emergency Services Department. The County contracts with private companies for paramedical services. Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital is a designated paramedic base station. Two of the biggest challenges to fire protection and emergency medical services in San Benito County are quickly responding to emergencies and fires in the more remote and less accessible southern end of the county and the availability of water to fight fires. According to the County's 2008 Annual Report, the County Fire Department's response times are below industry standards (i.e., 15 minutes for first responders) due to inadequate staffing and equipment, but because of aid from other responders, the County Fire Department was able to provide adequate services. For acute trauma injuries, patients must be taken to hospitals outside the county for treatment.

The focus of this goal section is to maintain response times; identify needed staffing, equipment, training, and facilities; and educational programs for residents and businesses on fire prevention techniques and suppression measures.



GOAL PFS-13

To coordinate with fire protection and emergency service providers to ensure adequate fire facilities, equipment, and services are available to protect county residents and property from fire.

PFS-13.1 Fire Staffing and Response Time Standards

The County shall strive to maintain fire department staffing levels and response times consistent with National Fire Protection Association standards. (MPSP/SO)

PFS-13.2 Mutual Aid Agreements

The County shall maintain mutual aid agreements between fire districts and emergency service providers to ensure residents and property are adequately served and to facilitate the efficient use of available resources. (MPSP)

PFS-13.3 Protection Service Expansion

The County shall strive to expand fire protection and emergency service in underserved areas of the county. (MPSP)

PFS-13.4 Adapting Emergency Facilities for Climate Change 🌍

The County shall anticipate and adapt its fire protection and emergency medical facilities and equipment to potential changes in frequency and



severity of wildfires and heat-related illness resulting from predicted effects of global warming. *(MPSP)*

PFS-13.5 Water Service Standards

The County shall require all development within unincorporated communities to have adequate water supply, pressure, and capacity for fire protection. *(RDR)*

PFS-13.6 Visible Signage

The County shall require that all roads and buildings are properly identified by name or number with clearly visible signs in order to promote faster response times. *(RDR)*

PFS-13.7 Fire Facility Fees

The County shall require new development to pay its fair share of fees for new fire station facilities, equipment, and staffing necessary to maintain the County's service standards in that area. New development may also be required to create or join a special assessment district or other funding mech-

anism, to pay the costs associated with the operation of a fire station. *(RDR/FB)*

PFS-13.8 Fire Station Locations

The County shall strive to locate new fire stations in areas that ensure the minimum response times to service calls. *(RDR/MPSP)*

PFS-13.9 Fire Safety Standard Compliance

The County shall ensure that all proposed developments are reviewed for compliance with the California Fire Code and other applicable State laws. *(RDR)*

PFS-13.10 Adequate Fire Flows for Agricultural Facilities

The County shall require all agricultural commercial facilities to have adequate water supply and fire flows to meet the State Fire Code and other appropriate State laws. *(RDR)*



Public Facilities and Services Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
PFS-A: Infrastructure Improvements and Funding The County shall prepare, adopt, and periodically update capital improvement programs for all County-owned and operated facilities and services to ensure consistency with the General Plan in order to maintain an adequate level-of-service. (FB)			X			X
Implements Policy(ies)	PFS-1.1 through PFS-1.13					
Responsible Department(s)	Public Works					
Supporting Department(s)						
PFS-B: Adopt Public/Quasi Public Zoning The County shall prepare and adopt a Public/Quasi Public Facilities Zoning designation, consistent with the Public/Quasi Public General Plan designation, to ensure adequate opportunities to accommodate needed public facilities within the county. (RDR)		X				
Implements Policy(ies)	PFS-1.1					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works					
PFS-C: Climate Change Impacts Monitoring 🌐 The County shall monitor and prepare regular reports on expected impacts on public facilities and services due to the results of climate change. Based on findings from these reports, the County shall make necessary updates to facility and services plans and operations to help the county adapt to the anticipated effects of climate change. (MPSP/PSR)		X				
Implements Policy(ies)	PFS-2.2					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works					
PFS-D: Sustainability Master Plan 🌐 The County shall prepare and adopt a Sustainability Master Plan that guides County efforts to incorporate sustainability strategies (e.g., energy efficiency, water conservation, waste reduction/recycling, purchasing preferences) into its facilities, operations, and activities. (MPSP)		X				
Implements Policy(ies)	PFS-2.1 through PFS-2.12					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works Department					



Public Facilities and Services Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
PFS-E: Groundwater Monitoring Program The County shall work with water purveyors, groundwater basin managers, and willing landowners to improve groundwater monitoring including quality, yields, and groundwater elevations. This should include identifying monitoring sites, installing monitoring wells, identifying gaps in the monitoring network, establishing monitoring protocols, and developing a groundwater budget. <i>(PSR/IGC)</i>						x
Implements Policy(ies)	PFS-4.1					
Responsible Department(s)	Environmental Health Division					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
PFS-F: Regional Planning Group The County shall participate in regional water, wastewater, and watershed planning groups designed to discuss and solve water supply, water quality, watershed, and other water/wastewater-related issues within the county, and to identify and pursue alternative funding sources for future projects. <i>(IGC)</i>						x
Implements Policy(ies)	PFS-4.1 through PFS-4.8, PFS-5.1 through PFS-5.6					
Responsible Department(s)	Environmental Health Division					
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works					
PFS-G: Wastewater System Standards The County shall review and update onsite septic system standards consistent with guidelines proposed by the State Water Resources Control Board under Assembly Bill 885. <i>(RDR)</i>		x				
Implements Policy(ies)	PFS-5.1, PFS-5.7					
Responsible Department(s)	Environmental Health Division					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
PFS-H: Best Management Practices 🌱 The County shall prepare and adopt revised and updated standards and best management practices for new development projects as part of its stormwater management and grading ordinance, project stormwater pollution preventions plans, and Non-Point Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) general construction permits, that encourage alternative storm water management systems, natural drainage systems and low impact development approaches to managing stormwater that improve water quality. <i>(RDR)</i>			x			
Implements Policy(ies)	PFS-6.2 through PFS-6.4, PFS-6.7, and PFS-6.8					



Public Facilities and Services Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
Responsible Department(s)	Public Works					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
PFS-I: Integrated Waste Management Plan The county shall coordinate with local agencies to prepare an update to the County's Integrated Waste Management Plan to determine existing and projected waste disposal needs, methods of disposable land characteristics suited for disposable sites, and anticipated locations. <i>(MPSP)</i>			x			
Implements Policy(ies)	PFS-8.1 through PFS-8.7					
Responsible Department(s)	Public Works					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
PFS-J: Sheriff Department Standards The County shall prepare a study to determine appropriate and feasible Sheriff's Department staffing ratios to provide adequate law enforcement services. Based on findings from the study, the County shall develop and adopt an appropriate Sheriff's Department staffing ratio standard. This study shall also include a determination on appropriate and feasible department response times for service in all areas of the county. Based on findings from the study, the County shall develop and adopt appropriate Sheriff's Department response time standards. <i>(MPSP/SO/PSR)</i>		x				
Implements Policy(ies)	PFS-13.1, PFS-13.2					
Responsible Department(s)	Sheriff's					
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works, Planning and Building Inspection Services					
PFS-K: Fire Department Standards The County shall prepare a study to determine appropriate and feasible Fire Department staffing ratios to provide adequate law enforcement services. Based on findings from the study, the County shall develop and adopt an appropriate Fire Department staffing ratio standard. This study shall also include a determination on appropriate and feasible department response times for service in all areas of the county. Based on findings from the study, the County shall develop and adopt appropriate Fire Department response time standards. <i>(MPSP/SO/PSR)</i>		x				
Implements Policy(ies)	PFS-14.1					
Responsible Department(s)	Public Works					
Supporting Department(s)	Cal Fire					



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SECTION 8

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

Natural and cultural resources play a defining role in San Benito County's identity. These resources enrich the lives of residents and draw visitors who enjoy unmatched recreational opportunities. The County is committed to protecting and preserving its rich natural and cultural resources, which contribute to the local economy and are a key element in the quality of life for San Benito County residents. This element supports the balanced management and conservation of the county's open space, wildlife habitat, minerals, water, energy, scenic amenities, recreational resources, and cultural and historic heritage.



Open Space

Nearly 80 percent of unincorporated land in San Benito County is in some form of public or private open space. The majority of the open space lands are in private ownership under Williamson Act Contract (about 65 percent), with the remainder in government ownership (13 percent). Over 90 percent of government land in the county is Federally-owned, the majority of which is located in the central and south parts of the county and held by the Bureau of Land Management and Pinnacles National Park.

The focus of this goal section is to provide the basis for open space preservation and the responsible use of open space resources in the county. This includes encouraging the use of tools such as conservation easements to maintain a connected and accessible system of open space that provides important habitat for plant and wildlife species and contributes to the scenic quality of the county. *(Note: see Section 3: Land Use Element for policies related to clustered residential development as a tool for open space preservation.)*



San Benito County landscape (Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

GOAL NCR-1

To preserve and enhance valuable open space lands that provide wildlife habitat and conserve natural, historical, archaeological, paleontological, tribal, and visual resources of San Benito County.

NCR-1.1 Maintenance of Open Space

The County shall support and encourage maintenance of open space lands that support natural resources, agricultural resources, recreation, tribal resources, wildlife habitat, water management, scenic quality, and other beneficial uses. *(RDR)*

NCR-1.2 Conservation Easements 🌍

The County shall support and encourage the use of conservation easements to protect open space that contains valuable natural resources. *(RDR/MPSP)*

NCR-1.3 Open Space Overlay District 🌍

The County shall continue to protect and preserve the rural landscape and implement open space policies for: public health, safety, and welfare; continued agricultural uses; scenic viewscape preservation, including scenic highway corridors; park and recreation uses; conservation of significant natural resources; the containment and definition of limits to urbanization; and the preservation of the natural habitat for threatened and/or endangered plant and animal species. *(RDR)*

Wildlife Habitat

San Benito County encompasses a wide variety of wildlife habitats that support a diverse array of species. Wildlife habitats provide food, shelter, migration corridors, and breeding opportunities for wildlife species. The majority of the county is made up of annual grassland, which includes rangeland and pasture, or tree-dominated habitats. The eastern part of the county, including the Panoche Valley, is a unique area with habitat more



characteristic of the San Joaquin Valley. This area supports a variety of special-status species, including the San Joaquin kit fox, giant kangaroo rat, blunt-nosed leopard lizard, and San Joaquin woolly-threads. The focus of this goal section is to protect and enhance wildlife areas that provide important habitat for the county's plant and wildlife communities.



Pinnacles National Park is a release site for the endangered California condor, and the birds can sometimes be seen from hiking trails throughout the park. (Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

GOAL NCR-2

To protect and enhance wildlife communities through a comprehensive approach that conserves, maintains, and restores important habitat areas.

NCR-2.1 Coordination for Habitat Preservation

The County shall work with property owners and Federal and State agencies to identify feasible and economically-viable methods of protecting and enhancing natural habitats and biological resources in the county. *(RDR/IGC)*

NCR-2.2 Habitat Protection

The County shall require major subdivisions within potential habitat of Federal- or State-listed rare, threatened, or endangered plant or animal species to mitigate the effects of development. Mitigation for impacts to species may be accomplished on land preserved for open space, agricultural, or natural resources protection purposes. *(RDR)*

NCR-2.3 Habitat Conservation Plan

The County shall consider working with federal and state agencies to develop and adopt a habitat conservation plan (HCP) and a Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) for listed and candidate species in San Benito County in order to manage their habitats and ensure their long-term protection. *(MPSP)*

NCR-2.4 Maintain Corridors for Habitat

The County shall protect and enhance wildlife migration and movement corridors to ensure the health and long-term survival of local animal and plant populations, in particular contiguous habitat areas, in order to increase habitat value and lower land management costs. As part of this effort, the County shall require road and development sites in rural areas to:

- a. Be designed to maintain habitat connectivity with a system of corridors for wildlife or plant species and avoiding fragmentation of open space areas; and
- b. Incorporate measures to maintain the long-term health of the plant and animal communities in the area, such as buffers, consolidation of/or rerouting access, transitional landscaping, linking nearby open space areas, and habitat corridors. *(RDR)*

NCR-2.5 Mitigation for Wetland Disturbance or Removal

The County shall encourage the protection of the habitat value and biological functions of oak woodlands, native grasslands, riparian and aquatic resources, and vernal pools and wetlands. The County shall require that development avoid encroachment and require buffers around these habitats to the extent practicable. The County shall further require mitigation for any development proposals that have the potential to reduce these habitats. Recreational trails and other features established within natural wetlands and aquatic and riparian buffer areas shall be, as long as such areas



are not required to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act, located along the outside of the sensitive habitat whenever possible to minimize intrusions and maintain the integrity of the habitat. Exceptions to this action include irrigation pumps, roads and bridges, levees, docks, public boat ramps, and similar uses. In all cases where intrusions into these buffers are made, only the minimum amount of vegetation necessary to construct the feature shall be removed. (RDR)

NCR-2.6 Regeneration of Oak Woodland Communities

The County shall promote the restoration, restocking, and protection of oak woodland habitat on public and private lands in the county through a combination of the habitat conservation planning, inter-agency coordination, and updated development review or tree preservation procedures. (RDR/MPSP/IGC)

NCR-2.7 Mitigation of Oak Woodlands

The County shall encourage development near oak woodlands to be clustered to avoid, where technically or economically practical, the loss of heritage oak trees. The County shall require transitional buffers to help maintain viable ecosystems where appropriate. Where removal of trees cannot be avoided, the County shall require project applicants to prepare a mitigation plan that identifies on- or off-site tree replacement. (RDR)

NCR-2.8 Pre-Development Biological Resource Assessment

The County shall require the preparation of biological resource assessments for new development proposals as appropriate. The assessment shall include the following: a biological resource inventory based on a reconnaissance-level site survey, and an analysis of anticipated project impacts to: potentially occurring special-status species (which may require focused special-status plant and/or animal surveys); an analysis of sensitive natural

communities; wildlife movement corridors and nursery sites on or adjacent to the project site; potentially jurisdictional wetlands/waterways; and locally protected biological resources such as trees. The assessment shall contain suggested avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures for significant impacts to biological resources.

NCR-2.9 Mitigation Funding and Site Protection

The County shall require that project applicants demonstrate that adequate funding can be provided to implement all required biological mitigation and monitoring activities. Habitat preserved as part of any mitigation and monitoring plan shall be preserved through a conservation easement, deed restriction, or other method to ensure that the habitat remains protected.

NCR- 2.10 Invasive Species

The County shall require that new developments avoids the introduction or spread of invasive plant species during construction by minimizing surface disturbance, seeding and mulching disturbed areas with certified weed-free native mixes, and using native or noninvasive species in erosion control plantings.



Roadrunner on Best Road. (Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

Recreational Resources

San Benito County is blessed with stunning and unique natural resources, many of which have



been preserved as local, State, and Federal parkland. These include Pinnacles National Park, which is managed by the National Park Service, Clear Creek Recreation Area, which is managed by the Bureau of Land Management, and Hollister Hills State Vehicular Recreation Area, which is managed by California State Parks. These large parkland and recreational areas are complemented by several County and city-owned parks, historical sites, and special use areas that also provide important recreational amenities for county residents and visitors.

While there are a significant number of State and Federal parks and recreational areas in the county, many residents feel that the county is deficient in passive parkland since most of the existing parkland requires advance reservations or other user agreements. There is also a lack of active parkland, such as sports fields, dog parks, and aquatic centers, and a lack of a connected, comprehensive trail network. The County does not provide recreation programming. Therefore, collaboration with the City of Hollister Park and Recreation Program, School Districts, non-profit groups, and other private sector program providers is critical to meet residents' recreation needs. The focus of this goal section is to support and protect existing parkland and recreational areas, and increase active parkland and a comprehensive trail network in order to enhance the outdoor experience of residents and visitors of San Benito County. *(See Section 4: Economic Development for policies related to tourism and Section 6: Circulation Element for policies related to a countywide trail system).*



Pinnacles National Park, connected by many narrow hiking trails, such as the one-mile Bench Trail to the seven-mile North Wilderness Trail, has spectacular pinnacles for rock climbing. Located near the San Andreas Fault, the park offers views of the unique geologic formations resulting from years of erosion and weathering of the exposed rocks. (Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

GOAL NCR-3

To develop and maintain a comprehensive system of parklands and protected public recreational areas that meet both the active and passive recreation needs of all age groups.

NCR-3.1 Comprehensive Park System

The County shall continue to acquire, develop, operate, and maintain a comprehensive system of parkland and recreational facilities that include active and passive recreation for a wide range of users. *(MPSP)*

NCR-3.2 Park Ratio Standard

The County shall encourage and support the development of recreational facilities to serve unincorporated communities at a ratio of five acres of recreation area per 1,000 persons. *(RDR)*

NCR-3.3 Private Recreation near Parks

The County shall encourage the development of private recreational uses near existing County, State, and Federal parks. *(MPSP)*

NCR-3.4 Interagency Coordination

The County shall coordinate the development of regional parks in cooperation with local, State, and Federal agencies, and shall seek to establish new partnerships to enhance recreation opportunities in the county. *(MPSP/IGC)*



NCR-3.5 Regional Trail System 🌐

The County shall coordinate with Santa Clara and Monterey Counties to identify ways to connect San Benito County trails to a larger regional trail system. *(MPSP/IGC)*

NCR-3.6 Optimal Use of Parks

The County shall provide the optimal level of service for each County park, based on its use and cost-effectiveness, recognizing that each individual facility has a different mission and a unique set of operating conditions. *(MPSP/SO)*

NCR-3.7 On-Site Recreation

The County shall require new major subdivisions to include on-site recreation facilities, with design and features appropriate to the size, type, and setting of each subdivision and with financing for long-term maintenance. *(RDR/FB)*

NCR-3.8 Trail Alignments 🌐

The County shall encourage the use of existing natural and human-made corridors such as creeks, railroad rights of way, and corridors when creating future bike path and pedestrian and equestrian trail alignments. *(RDR)*

NCR-3.9 Evaluation of New Development

The County shall require an evaluation of new development within existing communities to include an analysis of the individual and cumulative effect of the development on the recreational needs of the community and county. *(RDR)*

NCR-3.10 River Parkway 🌐

The County shall pursue the development of the San Benito River Parkway, including land acquisition through the entitlement process as well as development of connected trails from Bolado Park to San Juan Bautista. *(RDR/MPSP)*

NCR-3.11 Prepare Trails Master Plan

The County shall prepare a Trails Master Plan countywide to identify recreation opportunities for the community. *(RDR/MPSP/PI)*

NCR-3.12 Clear Creek Trail and Others

The County shall designate certain trails and county public roadways as publicly accessible, including Clear Creek Road, and other public access ways. *(RDR/MPSP)*



The Hernandez Reservoir, one of the two reservoirs operated by the San Benito County Water District, is used to manage water releases to downstream surface and groundwater recharge areas. *(Photo by Rene Rodriguez)*

Water Resources

The quantity, quality, and availability of water are vital to both natural processes and human activities. Like much of California, areas of San Benito County have experienced problems with water supply and quality. While groundwater is the major source of water supply in San Benito County, most local groundwater in the county is mineralized and of marginal quality for either drinking or agriculture. This is because of both natural conditions and the effects of agricultural activities and urbanization.

Conservation is becoming an increasingly important strategy to reduce water demand. The use of recycled water for agricultural and landscape irrigation is expected to increase in the future. The policies in this section seek to protect water re-



sources and conserve water for future generations. (See Section 7: Public Facilities and Services for policies related to water distributions systems, water treatment, and water-related infrastructure).

GOAL NCR-4

To protect water quantity and quality in natural water bodies and groundwater basins and avoid overdraft of groundwater resources.

NCR-4.1 Mitigation for Wetland Disturbance or Removal

The County shall consider implementing Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan policies to improve areas of low water quality, maintain water quality on all drainage, and protect and enhance habitat for fish and other wildlife on major tributaries to the Pajaro River (San Benito River, Pacheco Creek) and the Silver Creek watershed. (RDR/MPSP/IGC)

NCR-4.2 Water Quality Tests

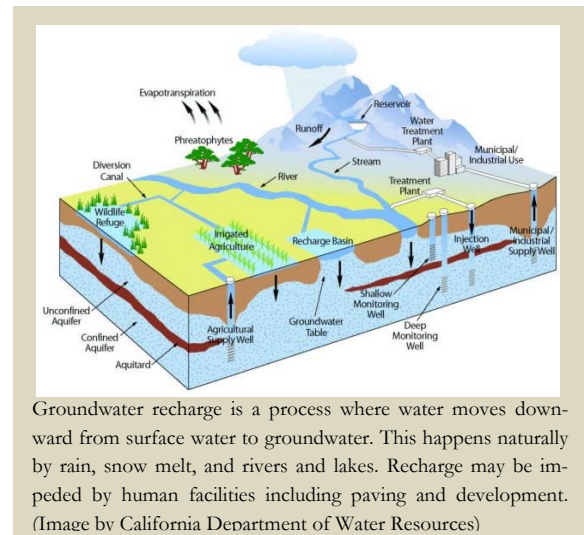
The County shall require new development to prepare water quality tests prior to project approval, demonstrating whether proposed domestic water supply will meet State primary and secondary drinking water standards. (RDR)

NCR-4.3 Agricultural Water

The County shall require well tests for non-agricultural development to provide evidence that 100 percent of the water needs may be met without connecting to the San Felipe Water system. (RDR)

NCR-4.4 Open Space Conservation

The County shall encourage conservation and, where feasible, creation or restoration of open space areas that serve to protect water quality such as riparian corridors, buffer zones, wetlands, undeveloped open space areas, and drainage canals. (RDR/MPSP)



NCR-4.5 Groundwater Recharge 🌍

The County shall encourage new development to preserve, where feasible, areas that provide important groundwater recharge and stormwater management benefits such as undeveloped open spaces, natural habitat, riparian corridors, wetlands, and natural drainage areas. (RDR)

NCR-4.6 Groundwater Studies for New Development

To ensure an adequate water supply, large-scale development projects that meet the criteria in California Water Code section 10912 shall prepare an analysis of the sufficiency of the groundwater from the basin or basins from which the proposed project will be supplied to meet the projected water demand associated with the proposed project in accordance with SB 610. (RDR)

NCR-4.7 Best Management Practices 🌍

The County shall encourage new development to avoid significant water quality impacts and protect the quality of water resources and natural drainage systems through site design, source controls, runoff reduction measures, and best management practices (BMPs). (RDR)



NCR-4.8 Water Education 🌍

The County shall encourage water districts to provide public education to encourage existing homeowners to adopt water conservation practices for landscaping and interior plumbing. *(IGC/PI)*

NCR-4.9 Water Conservation Plan 🌍

The County shall maintain and implement the San Benito County Water Conservation Plan as necessary to promote water conservation and efficient use. *(MPSP)*

NCR-4.10 Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance 🌍

The County shall develop, maintain, and implement a Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, consistent with the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance prepared by the California Department of Water Resources, to require greater use of regionally native drought-tolerant vegetation, limitations on the amount of turf in residential development, and other measures as appropriate. *(RDR)*

NCR-4.11 Reclaimed Water 🌍

The County shall require, where feasible, the use of reclaimed water irrigation systems in new development wherever possible. *(RDR)*

NCR-4.12 Rainwater Catchment 🌍

The County shall encourage homeowners to install roof catchment systems and use rainwater for non-potable uses in order to reduce the need for groundwater. *(RDR)*

NCR-4.13 Shared Water Systems 🌍

The County shall develop, maintain, and implement an ordinance to allow for shared water systems to facilitate the clustering of homes and preservation of agricultural land, where an entity is established to provide maintenance or financing for the maintenance of the water system. *(RDR)*

NCR-4.14 Wastewater Treatment

The County shall require wastewater treatment systems to be designed to promote the long-term protection of groundwater resources in San Benito County. Domestic wastewater treatment systems shall be required to use tertiary wastewater treatment as defined by Title 22. *(RDR/MPSP)*

NCR-4.15 Septic Systems

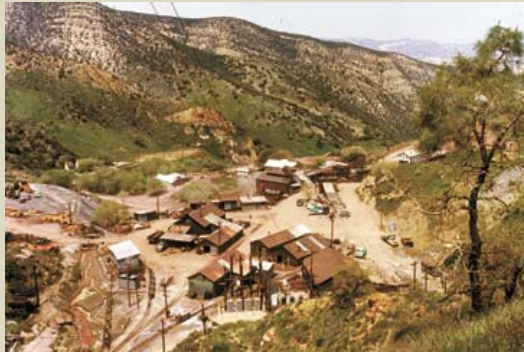
The County shall require septic systems to be limited to areas where sewer services are not available and where it can be demonstrated that septic systems will not contaminate groundwater. *(RDR)*

NCR-4.16 Develop in Existing Areas

The County shall encourage development to occur in or near existing developed areas in order to reduce the use of individual septic systems in favor of domestic wastewater treatment in an effort to protect groundwater quality. *(RDR)*

Mineral Resources

The county's vast mineral resources present both an opportunity and a challenge. For example, the New Idria Mine, which operated from the 1850s until the mid-1970s, was the second largest producer of mercury in the United States. Abandoned mines are an environmental hazard that require clean-up and abatement of discharged pollutants. The New Idria Mine in particular was listed as a Superfund site in September 2011, indicating opportunity for clean-up. At the same time, recognizing and documenting mineral resources is imperative to guarantee further economic development of county assets. The focus of this goal section is to encourage the efficient use of economically important mineral and aggregate extraction, while also protecting the community from the adverse effects of toxic historic mining.



The New Idria mine was the second largest producer of mercury during its heyday. Closed in 1971, the mine and its town have been abandoned. (Photo by File Photo, from the Pinnacle, 2006)

GOAL NCR-5

To protect and support economically viable mineral resource extraction while avoiding land use conflicts and environmental impacts from current and historical mining activities.

NCR-5.1 Mineral Resource Preservation

The County shall preserve for future use areas with potentially-important mineral resources by limiting residential or urban uses that would be incompatible with mining operations. (RDR)

NCR-5.2 Significant Mineral Resources

The County shall recognize areas classified Mineral Resource Zone 2 (MRZ-2) or Scientific Zone (SZ) pursuant to the Guidelines for Classification and Designation of Mineral Lands as mineral resources of statewide and regional significance and shall protect these mineral resources from premature development incompatible with mining. (RDR)

NCR-5.3 Notice of Nearby Mineral Resources

The County shall require a notice explaining the location of important mineral resources to be recorded on any parcel within one-half mile of an MRZ 2 or SZ designation. (RDR/PI)

NCR-5.4 Limit Adverse Effects of Mining on Infrastructure

The County shall ensure that the structural integrity and hydraulic capacity of bridges, pipelines, or other structures in the river are not affected by new or expanding sand and gravel mining operations in the floodplain of the San Benito River or Tres Pinos Creek. (RDR)

NCR-5.5 Hydrologic Report

The County may require developers of new or expanded mining operations to prepare a hydrologic report to evaluate the up-and down-stream effects of the proposed operations. (RDR)

NCR-5.6 Sedimentation Budget

The County shall require developers of new or expanding mine operations to prepare a sedimentation budget for mining operations. (RDR)

NCR-5.7 Mining Reclamation Program

The County shall require mining operators to prepare reclamation plans and implement reclamation programs to restore land for alternative uses consistent with: the Land Use Diagram; policies for wildlife, flood, and erosion protection; and the California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA). (RDR)

NCR-5.8 Mining Site Reclamation

The County shall implement State requirements for reclamation of mining sites to occur concurrently with extraction activities rather than after extraction has been completed. Additionally, the County shall ensure that reclamation is achieved in a manner that will protect public safety and enable lands to be put to subsequent beneficial use. (RDR/MPSP)

NCR-5.9 Adverse Environmental Effects Abatement

The County shall require applicants of any new or expanded mining operations to demonstrate, prior to approval, that the operation will not create significant nuisances, hazards or adverse environmental effects on neighboring land uses. (RDR)



NCR-5.10 Mineral Haul Routes

The County shall ensure that new mineral haul routes avoid areas with highly erodible soils, residential areas, and schools, when feasible. (RDR/MPSP)

NCR-5.11 Construction/Demolition Debris Recycling Facilities 🌐

The County shall encourage the installation and operation of construction and demolition debris recycling facilities as an accessory use to permitted (or otherwise authorized) mining facilities to increase the supply of available mineral resources. (RDR)

NCR-5.12 Mineral Resource Zoning

The County shall continue to apply "MR" zoning to selected mineral resource areas determined by the Board of Supervisors to require a special level of protection as an additional method of avoiding land use conflicts between mineral extraction and other incompatible uses with the following criteria:

- a. Lands classified as MRZ-2 or SZ by the State of California Division of Mines and Geology qualify for the "MR" zoning designation and/or;
- b. Evidence of the location, extent, and depth, and quality of mineral resources shall be submitted as part of the MR overlay zoning application. The material shall be reviewed by a geologist selected by the County for accuracy.

The County shall deny MR overlay zoning requests that do not provide evidence of significant mineral resources on site. (RDR)

NCR-5.14 Conservation Easements

The County shall allow the use of voluntary conservation easements on mineral lands and contiguous properties to protect significant resources. (RDR/MPSP)

NCR-5.15 Mining Activity Conservation Easements

Require mining or mineral or aggregate extraction projects to obtain agricultural conservation easements of similar quality to those Prime Farmland acres, that are Class 1 soil, converted at a minimum of 1:1 ratio, or as necessary to assure no net loss of agricultural productivity or value for each acre of productive agricultural land converted as a result of mining and not returned to agricultural production.



Energy Resources

Despite historically high gas prices, concerns over energy security, air quality, and climate change, energy demand continues to increase in California. In order to avoid the need to construct new, large-scale electricity generation facilities, both the State and regional energy purveyors have focused on reducing growth in energy demand through energy conservation and efficiency over the past decade. As such, there has been an increasing investment in a range of energy efficiency and conservation programs.

As traditional sources of energy are depleted, there is also a need to develop alternate methods of power generation. The focus of this goal section is to promote energy conservation and support a diversity of energy resource development in the county. The policies in this section can stimulate



local businesses and the economy and help the county meet greenhouse gas emission reduction targets by supporting new renewable energy facilities.

GOAL NCR-6

To increase energy independence and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the use of renewable energy sources and improved energy conservation and efficiency.

NCR-6.1 Local Renewable Energy

The County shall strive to increase the supply of locally-produced, renewable energy (e.g., solar, wind, geothermal, and biomass) in order to promote energy independence and efficiency. *(RDR/MPSP)*

NCR-6.2 Energy Facility Proposals and Removal of Barriers

The County shall provide for the thorough and expeditious evaluation of renewable energy facility proposals, including the siting and operation of such facilities in an environmentally sound manner and shall remove or otherwise address barriers to renewable energy production in the county (e.g., solar, wind, biomass). *(RDR)*

NCR-6.3 Energy Facilities

The County shall encourage the siting of energy facilities in a manner that is compatible with surrounding land uses and protects scenic and agricultural resources, such as Prime Farmlands. *(RDR)*

NCR-6.4 Large-Scale Alternative Energy Installations

The County shall encourage large-scale solar and wind energy production facilities in Rangeland designated areas, so long as they do not result in such major impacts as a tax burden to the County, result in permanent water transfers off of productive agricultural land, or pose a health or safety risk to existing residents. In addition, these facili-

ties should include dedications of agricultural land and habitat mitigation, measures to control erosion, and financial assurances for decommissioning. *(RDR)*

NCR-6.5 Public Education

The County shall coordinate with regional and local energy providers to increase energy conservation through public education programs. *(IGC/JP/PI)*

NCR-6.6 Oil and Gas Permits

The County shall require a special permit for drilling, sinking, or boring of any well, hole, or bore for oil or gas, or any other hydrocarbon substances. *(RDR)*

NCR-6.7 Bonds for Drilling

The County shall require project applicants to furnish a surety bond to the County prior to any test drilling or other exploratory activities related to oil and gas drilling. *(RDR)*

Cultural and Historic Resources

While only three percent of the land area of San Benito County has been surveyed for cultural resources, over 1,300 cultural sites have been documented, including over 500 prehistoric and historic archeological sites and over 850 historic buildings. The county's many historical resources showcase the area's rich history and provide significant attractions for residents and visitors. Preserving these resources is important and their protection needs to be considered during the planning, permitting, and construction of any new development. The focus of this goal section is to identify ways to protect, preserve, and enhance the valuable cultural and historic resources that are vital to the character of the county.



GOAL NCR-7

To protect, preserve, and enhance the unique cultural and historic resources in the county.

NCR-7.1 Historic Districts

The County shall establish historic districts for the communities of Tres Pinos and New Idria to preserve the character of these historic communities. (RDR)

NCR-7.2 Commercial Recreational Uses

The County shall promote commercial recreational uses in underutilized historic structures. (RDR)



The early history of San Benito County revolved around San Juan Bautista mission, which was founded in 1797. (Photo by Mintier Harnish)

NCR-7.3 Assemble Information

The County shall cooperate with the Historical Society and other organizations to assemble information on historic areas of the county that should be preserved. (PSR/IGC/JP)

NCR-7.4 Integrate Architectural Styles

The County shall protect existing historic structures by requiring nearby new development to use architectural styles that complement the historic

structures and by striving to ensure roadway improvements enhance and do not detract from nearby historic resources. (RDR)

NCR-7.5 Preservation of Structures

The County shall require development proposals that would remove structures 100 years or older to demonstrate why preservation of the structures and integration of the structures into the development proposal is inappropriate or infeasible. (RDR)

NCR-7.6 Historic Consultant

The County shall retain an historic consultant at the developer's expense to evaluate the historic merits of existing structures, make recommendations for the new development, and, if necessary, to review building elevations for new development. (RDR)

NCR-7.7 Resource Identification and Preservation

The County shall maintain a register of historic properties that will be used during the design review process to protect the character of historic communities in the county. (PSR)

NCR-7.8 Adaptive Reuse of Historic Structures

The County shall encourage the adaptive reuse (e.g., converting a historic building to residential use) of historic resources when the original use of the resource is no longer feasible and when the new use is allowed by the underlying land use designation and zoning district. (RDR)

NCR-7.9 Tribal Consultation

The County shall consult with Native American tribes regarding proposed development projects and land use policy changes consistent with the State's Local and Tribal Intergovernmental Consultation requirements. (RDR/IGC)



NCR-7.10 Cultural Resources Education

The County shall educate the public regarding laws, codes, and ordinances that forbid collecting items associated with tribal, archeological, historical, and paleontological sites, and unique geological formations, particularly artifacts or other objects found in association with human remains. *(PI)*

NCR-7.11 Prohibit Unauthorized Grading

The County shall prohibit unauthorized grading, collection, or degradation of Native American, tribal, archaeological, or paleontological resources, or unique geological formations. *(RDR)*

NCR-7.12 Archaeological Artifacts

The County shall require an archaeological report prior to the issuance of any project permit or approval in areas determined to contain significant historic or prehistoric archaeological artifacts and when the development of the project may result in the disturbance of the site. The report shall be written by a qualified cultural resource specialist and shall include information as set forth in the county's archaeological report guidelines available at the County Planning Department. *(RDR)*

Scenic Resources

The beautiful scenic qualities of the county are a major attraction to both residents and visitors. Views of mountains, undeveloped rangelands, large agricultural fields and croplands, natural ridgelines along the Diablo and Gabilan Ranges, and annual grasslands make up some of the prominent elements of the county's scenic landscape. Elevations in the county range from 80 feet near Aromas in the northwest portion of the county to 5,241 feet at the peak of San Benito Mountain in the southeast. There are also over 918 miles of public roadways within the county, of which 416 miles are County roads, including five County-designated scenic roadways. US Route 101 and State Routes (SR) 129 and 146 are all County-

designated scenic highways. State Route 146 is also eligible for State scenic highway designation, as are SRs 25 and 156. The focus of this goal section is to protect and preserve scenic resources in the county.



Scenic view of wild flowers in San Benito County. (Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

GOAL NCR-8

To enhance and preserve the attractive visual qualities of scenic vistas and corridors in the county.

NCR-8.1 Protect Scenic Corridors

The County shall endeavor to protect the visual characteristics of certain transportation corridors that are officially designated as having unique or outstanding scenic qualities. *(PDR)*

NCR-8.2 Sign Regulations within Scenic Corridors

The County shall require the elimination of signs within Scenic Corridors other than those identified in the permitted use section of the Zoning Ordinance. *(RDR)*

NCR-8.3 Grading within Scenic Corridors

The County shall review all projects involving grading within Scenic Corridors to protect valuable soil resources, preserve the natural environment, and avoid significant adverse impacts within scenic areas. *(RDR)*



NCR-8.4 Review Architectural Massing

The County shall review development proposals to ensure that the obstruction of views is minimized through architectural building massing and location that is compatible with scenic areas. (RDR)

NCR-8.5 Review Site Planning

The County shall review development proposals to ensure a reasonable and attractive appearance from the highway concurrent with a harmonious relationship with the existing landscape and shall require development that determined not to be in harmonious relationship with the existing landscape to be screened from view through planting or other forms of visual buffers. (RDR)

NCR-8.6 Regulate Building Height and Setback

The County shall regulate building height and setbacks to protect the field of vision within an officially designated Scenic Corridor. The County shall not approve building heights that exceed, nor setback requirements that are less, than those of the basic zoning district unless such variance has had the appropriate review and public comment. (RDR)

NCR-8.7 Native Landscaping in Scenic Corridors

The County shall encourage landscaping in Scenic Corridors to use indigenous plants and grasses compatible with local vegetation and ground forms and to reestablish the natural landscape. In addition to native vegetation, other acceptable vegetation in Scenic Corridors shall include: agricultural plants such as row crops, fruit trees and other agricultural species; and grasses and fairway trees of parks and golf courses. (RDR)

NCR-8.8 Underground Utility Lines

The County shall require all new electric and communication distribution facilities proposed

within the Scenic Corridor to be placed underground, whenever feasible. Where overhead utility lines are unavoidable, every effort should be made to reduce the visual impact through elements of design. (RDR)



Scenic view of ridgelines in San Benito County.
(Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

NCR-8.9 Hillside and Ridgeline Protection

The County shall use design review for development on hillsides and within Scenic Corridors to protect the hillsides and ridgelines that are a unique scenic resource in the County. The County shall prohibit development within 100 vertical feet of any ridgeline unless there are no site development alternatives. (RDR)

NCR-8.10 Sign Ordinance

The County shall maintain and implement the Sign Ordinance to control the locations and types of signs throughout the county in an effort to protect the county's scenic character. (RDR)

NCR-8.11 Landscaping in Areas Designated for Agriculture or Rural Land Uses

The County shall ensure that new development and structures, within areas that are not regulated by a Specific Plan, are screened and/or developed in a manner to appear similar to existing agricultural, rural, or low intensity uses in the vicinity.



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



 Natural and Cultural Resources Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
Ordinance 540, a park and recreation impact fee, to establish and maintain a source of revenue for the acquisition and development of park and recreation facilities. (RDR/MPSP/FB)						
Implements Policy(ies)	NCR-3.1 through 3.8, NCR-3.10					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Administrative Office					
NCR-D: San Benito County Water Conservation Plan 🌍 The County shall periodically review and update and implement the San Benito County Water Conservation Plan as necessary. As part of this effort, the County should pursue funding sources for resolution of water quality problems including Federal and State grants and assessment districts. The County should also continue to compile information on water bodies that have limited information including but not limited to Tequisquita Slough, Clear Creek, Laguna Creek, and Tres Pinos Creek. (MPSP/FB)			x			
Implements Policy(ies)	NCR-4.9					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works					
NCR-E: Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance 🌍 The County shall prepare, adopt, and periodically update, as necessary, a Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, consistent with the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance prepared by the California Department of Water Resources, in order to promote local, efficient plant selection in new development. (RDR)		x				
Implements Policy(ies)	NCR-4.10					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works					
NCR-F: Remove Barriers to Renewable Energy The County shall periodically review and update, as necessary, building and development codes and the zoning ordinance and remove or otherwise address barriers to renewable energy production. (RDR)						
Implements Policy(ies)	NCR-6.1, NCR-6.2, and NCR-6.7					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works					



 Natural and Cultural Resources Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
NCR-G: Historic and Archeological Resources Information The County shall prepare and distribute, as necessary, information related to inventories of historic resources in the county. This should include educational materials regarding the laws, codes, and ordinances that forbid collecting of items associated with archeological, historical, and paleontological sites, particularly artifacts or other objects found in association with human remains. <i>(PSR/PI)</i>		X				X
Implements Policy(ies)	NCR-7.3, NCR-7.7					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
NCR-H: Oak Woodland Inventory Program The County shall coordinate, as necessary, with neighboring counties where oak hardwood communities intermingle to inventory resources, educate private and public landowners, and develop programs for regeneration and maintenance of these significant plant communities. <i>(PSR/IGC)</i>			X			
Implements Policy(ies)	NCR-2.6, NCR-2.7					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
NCR-I: Scenic Corridor Combining District Ordinance The County shall review and update the Scenic Corridor Combining District Ordinance, as necessary, to enhance protection of scenic corridors. <i>(RDR)</i>			X			
Implements Policy(ies)	NCR-8.1 through NCR-8.3, NCR-8.7					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
NCR-J: Revise Sign Ordinance The County shall review and update the Sign Ordinance, as necessary, to improve interpretability and facilitate implementation. <i>(RDR)</i>		X				
Implements Policy(ies)	NCR-8.2, NCR-8.10					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						



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SECTION 9

HEALTH AND SAFETY ELEMENT

San Benito County is a relatively safe and healthy place to live. However, like all places in California, the county is subject to a variety of potential safety hazards. Some hazards, such as earthquakes and floods, are a result of the natural environment while others, such as airport hazards, noise, and hazardous materials, are caused by human activities. One of the primary functions of San Benito County is to anticipate these hazards and identify ways to protect people from potential dangers.

This element provides guidance for how to protect county residents, workers, visitors, and properties from unreasonable risks associated with natural and manmade hazards. One of the main strategies used by the County to maintain safety is to require distance between known hazards and places where people live, work, and congregate. In addition, the County also identifies ways to respond to disasters in an efficient and effective manner should they occur.



Emergency Preparedness

Emergency preparedness refers to the coordinated efforts by the County and other agencies to prevent, prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate natural and manmade disasters and emergencies. The San Benito County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services (OES) provides emergency management services for the county. OES works in cooperation with other entities within the county, including: local law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services; State and Federal agencies; utility providers; private industry; and volunteer groups.

Preparing for and adapting to the potential impacts of climate change is a relatively new area of focus for emergency preparedness planning. The County must prepare for potentially warmer and more extreme temperatures, decreased water supply, drought, flooding, increasing energy demand and declining public health. Over the next century the county and its residents and businesses may have to adapt to changing conditions by modifying farming practices, improving flood protection, identifying new water sources, conserving water and energy, expanding emergency services, and modifying development patterns. San Benito County can take measures to ensure the county is prepared to cope with the impacts of climate change. Strengthening infrastructure will allow the county to better manage extreme weather events, flooding, and increasing energy demand.

The focus of this goal section is to maintain a system for coordinated and efficient emergency response in case of natural or manmade disaster and to protect the county from the potential effects of climate change.



Maintaining a system for coordinated and efficient emergency response is a goal of the 2035 General Plan. (Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

GOAL HS-1

To maintain the necessary level of fire, EMS, law enforcement, and disaster preparedness for the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of people living, working, and residing in San Benito County.

HS-1.1 Fire and Life Safety Protection

Provide adequate fire and EMS protection based on current state and national standards to promote a safe and vibrant community with limited fire loss and loss of life. *(SO/IGC)*

HS-1.2 Fire and Life Safety Protection Coordination

Work with the Cities and fire protection agencies in the region to provide County residents with adequate fire and life safety protection to promote the general welfare and economy of the community and its citizens. *(SO/IGC)*

HS-1.3 Community Safety

Improve community safety to prevent injury and death and to protect families and neighbors from the negative emotional and financial stress of community violence and to promote safe walking, shopping, bicycling, transit, and after-school and week-end activities. *(SO/IGC/PI)*



Students walking to school. (Photo by San Benito Rideshare)

HS-1.4 Maintain State of Readiness

The County shall maintain local law enforcement, fire, and health services in a state of readiness to insure adequate protection during a disaster for the citizens of San Benito County. *(MPSP/SO)*

HS-1.5 Mutual Assistance Programs

The County shall continue its mutual assistance programs and work closely with the Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista, as well as State and Federal authorities, in assuring emergency preparedness and response in the event of a major disaster. *(MPSP/IGC)*

HS-1.6 Emergency Preparedness Exercises

The County shall coordinate with local and regional jurisdictions to conduct emergency and disaster preparedness exercises to test operational and emergency plans. *(SO/IGC)*

HS-1.7 Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan

The County shall develop, maintain, and implement a Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan to address disasters such as earthquakes, flooding, dam or levee failure, hazardous material spills, epidemics, fires, extreme weather, major transportation accidents, and terrorism. *(MPSP)*

HS-1.8 Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Plan

The County shall collaborate with the Bay Area Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) on a region-

al catastrophic preparedness plan as part of the Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program, which was created by Congress to develop all-hazard regional catastrophic event plans and preparedness for UASI urban areas and participating governments. *(MPSP/IGC)*

HS-1.9 Emergency Operations Center

The County shall continue to maintain the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) as the single point for centralized management and coordination of emergency response and recovery operations during a disaster or emergency. *(MPSP/SO)*

HS-1.10 Location of Critical Facilities

The County shall not approve critical and emergency facilities (e.g., hospitals, health care facilities, emergency shelters, Sheriff substations, fire stations) and their access routes in hazardous areas unless it is unavoidable or designed and constructed in a manner that minimizes or eliminates potential impacts. *(RDR/MPSP/SO)*

HS-1.11 Road Capacity

The County shall require roads to be of adequate capacity for use in times of emergency. *(RDR)*

HS-1.12 Disaster Volunteer Program

The County shall maintain the Volunteers for Disaster Response program for medical and non-medical professionals to help deliver volunteer resources during a public health disaster. *(MPSP)*

HS-1.13 Education Programs

The County shall sponsor and support educational programs regarding emergency response, disaster preparedness protocols and procedures, and disaster risk reduction. *(PI)*

HS-1.14 Development Restrictions in High Risk Areas 🌐

The County shall discourage development in areas that may be more severely impacted by climate



change, including areas at high risk of wildfire or flooding, unless proper design mitigation is included in the project. *(RDR)*

HS-1.15 Climate Change Monitoring and Adaptation 🌍

The County shall monitor the potential impacts of climate change and use adaptive management to develop new strategies and modify existing strategies to respond to the impacts of climate change. *(MPSP/PSR)*

HS-1.16 Public Awareness of Climate Change 🌍

The County shall support public awareness of water conservation measures, agricultural changes, storm and flood preparedness, forest/range fire protection, air quality issues, extreme weather events, and disease prevention to help prepare for the potential impacts of climate change. *(PI)*

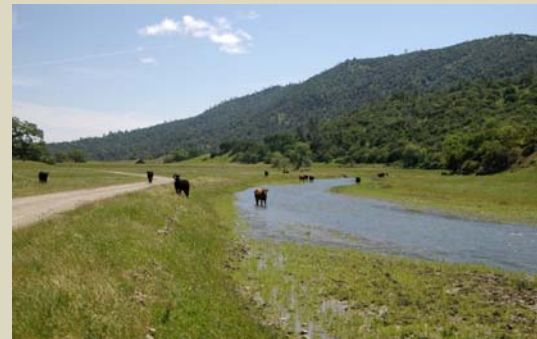
Flood Hazards

There are three potential sources of flood hazards in San Benito County: flooding along river and stream floodplains from excess storm runoff; flooding that might follow landslide blockage of stream canyons; and flooding of low-lying lands downstream of dams in the event of a dam failure. Roughly four percent of San Benito County is mapped within FEMA-designated high-risk (100-year) floodplains and less than one percent of the county is within low-risk floodplains (500-year).

Flood control facilities that are typically used to protect residents and businesses include dams, levees, overflow weirs, and drainage pumping plants. Flood management within San Benito County is primarily a local government function, since there are no major State or Federal flood protection systems or facilities within the county. As such, San Benito County is the responsible local agency for overseeing floodplain land use

decisions and for planning emergency preparedness and response measures. County flood control facilities are primarily used to manage water in rivers and streams that have been identified on FEMA floodplain maps. San Benito County enacted a Floodplain zoning designations as an additional flood management tool that restricts development within areas that have been identified as being subject to flooding.

The focus of this goal section is to address the maintenance and improvement of existing flood protection infrastructure to provide a minimum of flood protection, and requiring all new development to provide flood protection.



Cows by the San Benito River on Old Hernandez Road.
(Photo by Tom Schweich)

GOAL HS-2

To minimize the loss of life, injury, or damage to property as a result of floods in the county.

HS-2.1 Minimum Flood Protection

The County shall require a minimum 100-year flood protection for all new development in accordance with local, State, and Federal requirements to avoid or minimize the risk of flood damage. *(RDR)*



HS-2.2 Development in Dam Inundation Areas

The County shall encourage, to the extent feasible, new development located in dam inundation areas to consider and mitigate the risks from dam failure. (RDR)

HS-2.3 Floodwater Diversion

The County shall require new flood control projects or developments within areas subject to 100-year floods to be constructed in a manner that will not cause floodwaters to be diverted onto adjacent property or increase flood hazards to property downstream. (RDR)

HS-2.4 Climate Change Impacts to Flood Control Facilities 🌐

The County shall coordinate with local, regional, State, and Federal agencies to define existing and potential flood problem areas associated with expected impacts from climate change and develop and implement strategies to improve and maintain flood control facilities accordingly. (PSR/IGC)

HS-2.5 Minimize Facility Impacts

The County shall ensure that the upgrade, expansion, or construction of any flood control facilities will not adversely divert flood water or increase flooding. (RDR)

HS-2.6 Multi-Purpose Flood Control Facilities

The County shall encourage multi-purpose flood control facilities that incorporate recreation, resource conservation, preservation of natural riparian habitat, and scenic values of the county's streams, creeks, rivers, and lakes. (RDR)

HS-2.7 Flood Control Design

The County shall prohibit further channeling, straightening, or lining of waterways until alternative multi-purpose modes of flood control, such as wider berms and landscaped levees, in combi-

nation with recreation amenities, are studied. (RDR)

HS-2.8 Natural Designs

The County shall encourage flood control facility designs that retail natural contours and vegetation of waterways, while retaining dynamic flow and functional integrity. (RDR)

HS-2.9 Reduce Erosion and Sedimentation

The County shall ensure that flood control facilities are designed and maintained to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation and maintain natural watershed functions. (RDR)

Seismic and Geologic Hazards

Several major geologic features traverse San Benito County. The most significant is the San Andreas Fault Zone, a principal active fault identified by the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act. The fault is a right lateral strike slip fault and runs the length of the county. The fault has historically been very active. In addition to the San Andreas Fault, there are also a series of smaller fault zones in the county, including the Calaveras, Sargent, Paicines, Bear Valley, Zayante-Vergeles, and Quien-Sabe Faults.

The San Andreas and Calaveras Faults have the highest earthquake probability within the county. However, a major earthquake in the San Francisco Bay Area could also have significant direct impacts in the county including seismic shaking, liquefaction, and ground rupture.

San Benito County has a responsibility to guide the location and type of new development in the unincorporated county to minimize risks posed by seismic and geologic hazards. The focus of this goal section is to minimize the risk of damage from geologic and seismic hazards.



The San Andreas Fault, shown here in the Cienega Valley, spans the length of San Benito County. (Photo by Michael Rymer)

GOAL HS-3

To protect lives and property from seismic and geologic hazards.

HS-3.1 Earthquake Resistant Design

The County shall require earthquake resistant designs for all proposed critical structures such as hospitals, Sheriff substations, fire stations, emergency communication centers, private schools, high occupancy buildings, bridges, and dams. (RDR)

HS-3.2 Subsidence or Liquefaction

The County shall require that all proposed structures, utilities, or public facilities within recognized near-surface subsidence or liquefaction areas be located and constructed in a manner that minimizes or eliminates potential damage. (RDR)

HS-3.3 Geotechnical Database

The County shall strive to maintain and improve the geotechnical database to make information on seismic hazards available to both the public and County. (PSR/PI)

HS-3.4 Abatement of Unsafe Structures

The County shall identify and abate existing structures which will be hazardous during an earthquake event, especially high occupancy structures

that have the greatest potential effect on public safety. (RDR/PSR)

HS-3.5 Historic Structures

The County shall consider historic community resources in the abatement of unsafe structures and shall strive to preserve the essential qualities of historic buildings while improving structural safety. (RDR)

HS-3.6 Unstable Soils

The County shall require and enforce all standards contained in the current California Building Code related to construction on unstable soils, and shall make a determination as to site suitability of all development projects during the building permit review process. The County shall not approve proposed development sited within areas of known or suspected instability until detailed area studies are completed that evaluate the extent and degree of instability and its impact on the overall development of the area. (RDR)

HS-3.7 Setback from Fault Traces

The County shall require setback distances from fault traces to be determined by individual site specific surface rupture investigations. (RDR)

HS-3.8 Liquefaction Studies

The County shall require proposals for development in areas with high liquefaction potential to include detailed site specific liquefaction studies. (RDR)

HS-3.9 Seismic Safety Evaluations

The County shall require buildings three stories or higher, and locations zoned for multifamily housing, to include in development proposals measures to determine ground shaking characteristics, evaluate potential for ground failure, identify any other geologic hazards that might exist on the site, and mitigate for these hazards. (RDR)



Fire Hazards

Urban and wildland fire hazards in San Benito County create the potential for injury, loss of life, and property damage. Vegetation fires comprise the majority of fires in the county, and most of these fires are caused by human activities involving motor vehicles, equipment, operation, arson, and burning of debris.

The region's topography, type and amount of fuel, climate, and the availability of water for fire-fighting are the primary factors influencing the degree of fire risk. Approximately 38 percent of the county is within very high fire threat areas and another 38 percent of the county is within high fire threat areas. The majority of the county is within areas that have high to very high fire threat, which includes the central and southern portion of the county. The area north of Pinnacles National Park and the area along the western boundary of the county within Monterey County are also within a very high fire threat area.

As San Benito County continues to grow, the potential for wildland fires will increase. Proper land use planning and investment in fire protection resources in both urban and non-urban areas are key steps to reducing the potentially devastating effects of wildland fires, thereby safeguarding the people and property of San Benito County. The focus of this goal section is to address ways for protecting people and property from the catastrophic effects of natural and human-caused fire.



CAL FIRE and the Bureau of Land Management have primary wildland fire management responsibilities in the county. The San Benito County Fire Department, Aromas Tri-County Fire Department, Hollister Fire Department, and San Juan Bautista Volunteer Fire Department have lesser responsibilities for wildland fires. (Photo by CAL FIRE)

GOAL HS-4

To minimize the risk of wildland and urban fire hazards.

HS-4.1 Community Wildfire Protection Plan

The County shall maintain and implement the Community Wildfire Protection Plan as a mechanism for community input and identification of areas presenting high fire hazard risk. *(MPSP)*

HS-4.2 Fire Protection Water Standard

The County shall develop, maintain, and implement an appropriate fire protection water standard to be applied to all urban and rural development. *(RDR)*

HS-4.3 Improve Water Systems

The County shall coordinate with water purveyors to improve water systems in areas where sub-standard water supplies and/or flow currently exist. *(RDR/IGC)*

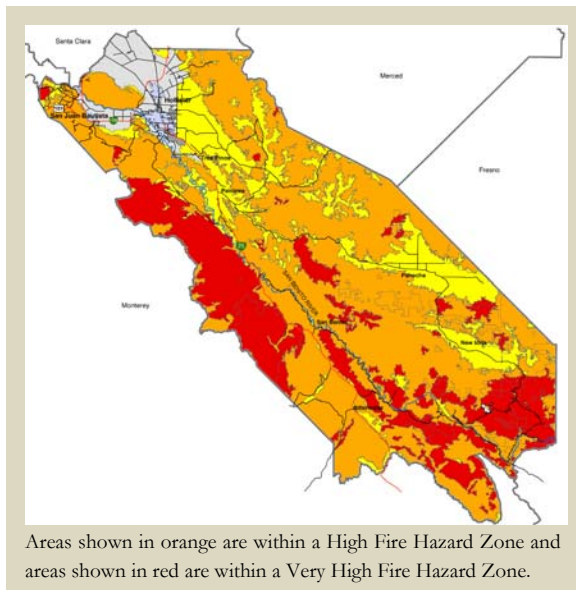


HS-4.4 Development in Fire Hazard Zones

The County shall require development in high-fire-hazard areas to be designed and constructed in a manner that minimizes the risk from fire hazards and meets all applicable State and County fire standards. (RDR)

HS-4.5 Fire-Resistant Vegetation

The County shall require development in high-fire-hazard areas to have fire-resistant vegetation, cleared fire breaks separating communities or clusters of structures from native vegetation, or a long-term comprehensive vegetation and fuel management program consistent with State codes 4290 and 4291 for wildland fire interface and vegetation management. (RDR)



HS-4.6 Clear Zones

The County shall encourage clear zones and weed abatement around new and existing residential structures in high-fire-hazard areas and assist property owners in identifying how clear zones should be maintained. (RDR/MPSP)

HS-4.7 Range Improvement and Vegetation Management Programs

The County shall actively support and cooperate with the California Department of Forestry's Range Improvement and Vegetation Management Programs with particular emphasis on their impact on water quality and production, resource management, range management, wildlife habitat management, fire defense improvements, and public safety where determined to be appropriate by the County. (MPSP/IGC)

Air Quality


Air quality is an important natural resource that influences public health and welfare, the economy, and quality of life. When inhaled, ozone and other air pollutants can impair normal functioning of the lungs in healthy people, as well as those with respiratory problems. Children and the elderly are most at risk from exposure to air pollution.

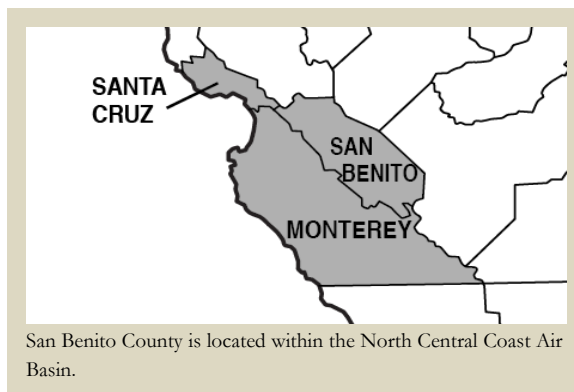
Air quality is a regional concern and San Benito County is affected by neighboring communities, such as Santa Clara County and Monterey County. The climate, wind, and rain patterns strongly influence air quality. San Benito County is located within the North Central Coast Air Basin. The basin is currently (2010) has a nonattainment status for ozone and particulate matter pollutants.

San Benito County is part of the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District. The District is responsible for air monitoring, permitting, enforcement, long-range air quality planning, regulatory development, education, and public information activities related to air pollution. The District has primary enforcement responsibilities for air pollution control and has established rules and regulations for the implementation and enforcement of Federal and State air quality standards. The focus of this goal section is to improve local



and regional air quality through best management practices and coordination with the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District.

This section also contains San Benito County's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets for the community at-large. Several policies and programs within each element of the General Plan assist in reducing GHG emissions within the county. These policies are indicated with the  icon. (*See Public Facilities and Services Element for GHG emissions reduction targets for municipal operations*).



GOAL HS-5

To improve local and regional air quality to protect residents from the adverse effects of poor air quality.

HS-5.1 New Development

The County shall use the CEQA process to ensure development projects incorporate feasible mitigation measures to reduce construction and operational air quality emissions, and consult with the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District early in the development review process. (RDR/IGC)

HS-5.2 Sensitive Land Use Locations

The County shall ensure adequate distances between sensitive land uses and facilities or opera-

tions that may produce toxic or hazardous air pollutants or substantial odors. (RDR)

HS-5.3 Early Coordination with the Air Quality Control District

The County shall notify and coordinate with the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District when industrial developments are proposed within the county to ensure applicants comply with applicable air quality regulations and incorporate design features and technologies to reduce air emissions. (RDR/IGC)

HS-5.4 PM10 Emissions from Construction

The County shall require developers to reduce particulate matter emissions from construction (e.g., grading, excavation, and demolition) consistent with standards established by the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District. (RDR)

HS-5.5 PM10 Emissions from Industrial Facilities

The County shall require industrial facilities to incorporate best management practices to reduce PM2.5 and PM10 emissions consistent with standards established by the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District. (RDR)

HS-5.6 New Construction Mitigation

The County shall work in coordination with the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District to minimize air emissions from construction activities associated with proposed development. (RDR)

HS-5.7 Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions

The County shall promote greenhouse gas emission reductions by supporting carbon efficient farming methods (e.g., methane capture systems, no-till farming, crop rotation, cover cropping); supporting the installation of renewable energy technologies; and protecting grasslands, open



space, oak woodlands, riparian forest and farmlands from conversion to urban uses. (RDR/MPSP)

HS-5.8 GHG Reduction Targets 🌍

The County acknowledges that the state endeavors to achieve 1990 greenhouse gas (GHG) emission levels, and establish a long-term goal to reduce GHG emissions by 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. The County will encourage projects that support these goals, recognizing that these goals can be met only if the state succeeds in decarbonizing its fuel supply. (RDR/MPSP)

HS-5.9 GHG Reduction Monitoring 🌍

The County shall monitor its greenhouse gas emissions and encourage appropriate adjustments to its programs and standards to further efforts to make progress towards achieving the state's GHG reduction targets. (RDR/MPSP)

HS-5.10 Vehicle Emissions Reductions 🌍

The County shall study alternatives for improving circulation (e.g., roundabouts, one ways, etc.), when feasible, to reduce idling motor vehicle emissions. (RDR/MPSP)

HS-5.11: Prepare and Implement a GHG Reduction Strategy

To reduce GHG emissions, the County shall prepare and adopt a greenhouse gas reduction strategy that meets the following CEQA Guidelines § 15183.5 standards:

1. Quantifies greenhouse gas emissions, both existing and projected over a specified time period, resulting from activities within a defined geographic area,
2. Establishes a level, based on substantial evidence, below which the contribution to greenhouse gas emissions from activities covered by the plan would not be cumulatively

considerable, i.e., in alignment with General Plan Policy HS-5.8,

3. Identifies and analyzes the greenhouse gas emissions resulting from specific actions or categories of actions anticipated within the geographic area,
4. Specifies measures or a group of measures, including performance standards, that substantial evidence demonstrates, if implemented on a project-by-project basis, would collectively achieve the specified emissions level, and
5. Be adopted in a public process following environmental review.

HS-5.12 Air Quality Management Plans

The County shall encourage regional planning agencies to consider the County's population projections during the preparation of future Air Quality Management Plans.

HS-5.13 Reduce Air Pollution from Wood Burning

No permanently installed wood-burning devices shall be allowed in any new development, except when necessary for food preparation in a restaurant or other commercial establishment serving food.

HS-5.14 Notify Project Applicants of Air District Requirements

The County shall work with the Air District to obtain materials to give to project applicants regarding relevant information about Air District requirements.

Hazardous Materials and Waste

Hazardous materials and waste are a reality for any community and can pose a significant public health and safety issue. The County has several industries closely associated with hazardous mate-



rials and risks of incidents. These include, but are not limited to, munitions plants, bulk storage facilities, pesticides and agricultural related chemicals. Other sources of hazardous materials include household cleaning products, closed landfills, mercury mining waste, and clandestine drug laboratories. San Benito County contains a total of 101 hazardous waste sites. The focus of this goal section is to address the problem of hazardous materials and wastes, as well as the location, storage, transportation, and safety of these materials.



The County sponsors Household Hazardous Waste Collection Days to help residents properly dispose of hazardous materials that cannot be sent to landfills. (Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

GOAL HS-6

To safeguard and protect the health and safety of people, the environment, and personal property from the potential dangers associated with a hazardous materials release.

HS-6.1 Hazardous Materials Storage and Disposal

The County shall require proper storage and disposal of hazardous materials to prevent leakage, potential explosions, fires, or the escape of harmful gases, and to prevent individually innocuous materials from combining to form hazardous substances, especially at the time of disposal. (RDR)

HS-6.2 Hazardous Waste Management Plan

The County shall maintain and implement the Hazardous Waste Management Plan. (MPSP)

HS-6.3 Consistency with Hazardous Waste Management Plan

The County shall ensure that all applicable land use decisions concerning zoning, subdivision, conditional use permits or variances granted for the operation or expansion of an off-site hazardous waste facility are consistent with the County Hazardous Waste Management Plan before approving a development application. (RDR/MPSP)

HS-6.4 Hazardous Materials Incident Response Area Plan

The County shall maintain and implement when necessary the Hazardous Materials Incident Response Area Plan. (MPSP)

HS-6.5 Transportation Routes

The County shall restrict transport of hazardous materials within San Benito County to designated routes. (RDR)

HS-6.6 Household Hazardous Waste Program

The County shall continue to sponsor household hazardous waste collection days to help residents lawfully dispose of household hazardous waste that is not accepted by the landfill. (MPSP)

HS-6.7 Small Business Hazardous Waste Program

The County shall continue to work with small businesses that generate, store, or accumulate hazardous waste to help them comply with regulations for the proper treatment, storage, and disposal of these wastes. (MPSP/JP)



HS-6.8 Information on Hazardous Waste Management

The County shall provide the public, industry, agriculture, and local government with the available information needed to enable them to take rational and cost effective actions to minimize, recycle, treat, dispose of or otherwise manage hazardous wastes within the county. *(PI)*

HS-6.9: Sensitive Uses near Industrial Facilities

A buffer shall be maintained between new sensitive land uses (such as residential subdivisions, schools, day care centers, hospitals and parks) and commercial facilities that conduct bulk-scale receiving, unloading, handling, blending and/or loading of industrial and/or agricultural chemicals regulated as potentially hazardous by state and/or federal environmental protection agencies. For facilities that handle bulk-scale amounts of methyl bromide (and its replacement such as Telon and chloropicrin), the buffer shall be at least 2.5 miles. For all other commercial facilities that handle bulk-scale amounts of regulated hazardous chemicals, the appropriate buffer shall be determined on a case-by-case basis. The buffer shall be established based on the degree of hazard associated with individual industrial facilities and based on recommendations of the County Fire Marshal and Environmental Health Department. This buffer does not apply to feed and supply stores, hardware stores, gas stations or similar facilities that handle such chemicals in retail trade.

Airport Hazards

There are two public-use airports, one permitted private airport, and three heliports in the county. While aircraft accidents are infrequent occurrences, it is necessary to avoid or minimize the risks associated with a potential airport accident that would harm people and property on the ground or the occupants of aircraft.

The basic strategy for minimizing risks to people on the ground near airports is to limit the number of people who might gather in areas most susceptible to aircraft accidents. Land uses of particular safety concern are those where the occupants have reduced effective mobility or are unable to respond to emergency situations. These uses include schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and other sensitive uses in which the majority of occupants are children, elderly, and/or handicapped or otherwise disabled. Airport safety standards also require a greater degree of protection for residential uses.

The San Benito Council of San Benito County Governments serves as the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) for San Benito County. The ALUC was established in 1989. It makes recommendations to the City of Hollister and the San Benito County Board of Supervisors regarding any commercial or residential development near public use airports in the county. The ALUC adopted an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) for the Hollister Municipal Airport and the Frazier Lake Airpark in 2001. More recently, in 2011, the ALUC adopted an updated Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan for the Hollister Municipal Airport only. The plans are intended to safeguard the safety of the residents and businesses around the airports, and to ensure that future development and land uses do not negatively impact the continued operations of the airports.

The focus of this goal section is to address general airport and aviation safety in the county and ensure County decisions are consistent with the adopted Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans.



The 2035 General Plan promotes the safe operation of public and private airports. Jets at Hollister Municipal Airport. (Photo by David Weekly)

GOAL HS-7

To promote the safe operation of public and private airports and protect the safety of county residents.

HS-7.1 Land Use Compatibility

The County shall prohibit land uses within unincorporated areas that interfere with the safe operation of aircraft or that would be exposed to hazards from the operation of aircraft. (RDR)

HS-7.2 Coordination with ALUC

The County shall coordinate with the ALUC on land use planning around airports and submit development proposals for land within the airport area of influence for review by the ALUC for consistency with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. (RDR/IGC)

HS-7.3 Compliance with FAA Regulations

The County shall require development within the airport approach and departure zones to be in compliance with Part 77 of the Federal Aviation Administration Regulations (FAA regulations that address objects affecting navigable airspace). (RDR)

HS-7.4 Locations for New Air Strips or for New Development Adjacent to Existing Air Strips

The County shall require sites for proposed air strips to be outside of air traffic control zones and a safe distance from existing airports (generally three miles), and to be a reasonable distance from residential areas and compatible with the surrounding uses. Similarly, the County shall encourage proposed residential uses or uses that result in a concentration of persons to be located at a reasonable distance from existing air strips to ensure safety. (RDR)

HS-7.5 Transmission Tower and Lines

The County shall review all proposed radio, television, power, or related transmission towers and lines for appropriate location and possible air travel conflicts during the discretionary application process. (RDR)

Noise

Noise is generally defined as unwanted sound that is disturbing or annoying. Exposure to excessive noise is often cited as a health problem in terms of general well-being and contribution to undue stress and annoyance. Sources of noise in the county include traffic on State highways and local roads, aircraft operations, commercial and industrial uses, agricultural operations, active recreation areas, and mining operations.

From a planning perspective, noise control focuses on two primary concerns: preventing the introduction of new noise-producing uses in noise sensitive areas; and preventing the encroachment of noise-sensitive uses into existing noise-producing areas. Places where people live, sleep, recreate, worship, and study are generally considered to be sensitive to noise because intrusive noise can be disruptive to these activities. Some facilities, such as airports and certain industrial operations, inher-



ently generate noise, and the encroachment of noise-sensitive uses can jeopardize their continued operation. The focus of this goal section is to summarize noise level standards that have been developed in order to quantify noise impacts in the county, and address ways to reduce or eliminate existing and future conflicts between land uses and annoying or unhealthy noise.

Noise Level Standards

Table 9-1 summarizes the noise level standards for noise-sensitive uses (e.g., residential development, transient lodging, hospitals, nursing homes, schools, day care centers) affected by non-transportation noise sources in the County. Table 9-2 presents the noise and land use compatibility standards for various land uses. In addition to these standards, the policies in this section address ways to reduce or eliminate existing and future conflicts between land uses and noise.

GOAL HS-8

To protect the health, safety, and welfare of county residents through the elimination of annoying or harmful noise levels.

HS-8.1 Project Design

The County shall require new development to comply with the noise standards shown in Tables 9-1 and 9-2 through proper site and building design, such as building orientation, setbacks, barriers (e.g., earthen berms), and building construction practices. The County shall only consider the use of soundwalls after all design-related noise mitigation measures have been evaluated or integrated into the project or found infeasible. (RDR)

HS-8.2 Acoustical Analysis

The County shall require an acoustical analysis to be performed prior to development approval where proposed land uses may produce or be ex-

posed to noise levels exceeding the “normally acceptable” criteria (e.g. “conditionally acceptable”, “normally unacceptable”) shown in Table 9-2. Land uses should be prohibited from locating, or required to mitigate, in areas with a noise environment within the “unacceptable” range. (RDR)

HS-8.3 Construction Noise

The County shall control the operation of construction equipment at specific sound intensities and frequencies during day time hours between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on weekdays and 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays. No construction shall be allowed on Sundays or federal holidays. (RDR)

HS-8.4 Off-Road Recreational Vehicle Use

The County shall limit the use of off road recreational motor vehicles to those areas specifically designated for that purpose, (i.e. Clear Creek and Hollister Hills State Vehicular Recreational Area) and shall maintain lands surrounding those areas in open space and agricultural use as a means of providing a noise buffer zone. (RDR)

HS-8.5 Aircraft Noise

The County shall prohibit new noise-sensitive development within the projected future 60 dB Ldn noise contour of any public or private airports and private airstrips, and require that new noise-sensitive development within the projected future 55-60 dB CNEL complete an acoustical analysis demonstrating how residential units have been designed to meet an interior noise level of 45 dB CNEL. (RDR)

HS-8.6 Vibration Screening Distances

The County shall require new residential and commercial uses located adjacent to major freeways or railroad tracks to follow the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) screening distance criteria. (RDR)



HS-8.7 Acceptable Vibration Levels

The County shall require construction projects anticipated to generate a significant amount of vibration to ensure acceptable interior vibration levels at nearby noise-sensitive uses based FTA criteria. (RDR)

HS-8.8 Noise Exemptions

The County shall support the exemption of the following noise sources from the standards in this element:

- a. Emergency warning devices and equipment operated in conjunction with emergency situations, such as sirens and generators which are activated during power outages. The routine testing of such warning devices and equipment shall also be exempt provided such testing occurs during the hours of 7:00 am to 10:00 pm.
- b. Activities at schools, parks, or playgrounds, provided such activities occur during daytime hours.
- c. Activities associated with County-permitted temporary events and festivals. (RDR)

HS-8.9 Interior Noise Standards

Adopt the State of California Code of Regulations' (Title 24) minimum noise insulation interior performance standard of 45 dBA Ldn for all new residential construction including hotels, motels, dormitories, apartment houses, and single-family dwellings.

HS-8.10 Reduction in Noise Levels at Existing Land Uses

Reduce traffic noise levels where expected to significantly impact sensitive receptors through the installation of noise control measures such as quiet pavement surfaces, noise barriers, traffic calming measures, and interior sound insulation treatments.

HS-8.11 New Project Noise Mitigation Requirements

Require new projects to include appropriate noise mitigation measures to reduce noise levels in compliance with the Table 9-1 and 9-2 standards within sensitive areas. If a project includes the creation of new non-transportation noise sources, require the noise generation of those sources to be mitigated so they do not exceed the interior and exterior noise level standards of Table 9-2 at existing noise-sensitive areas in the project vicinity, unless an exception is made by the County on a case-by-case basis. However, if a noise-generating use is proposed adjacent to lands zoned for residential uses, then the noise generating use shall be responsible for mitigating its noise generation to a state of compliance with the standards shown in Table 9-2 at the property line of the generating use in anticipation of the future residential development, unless an exception is made by the County on a case-by-case basis.

HS-8.12 Construction Noise Control Plans

Require all construction projects to be constructed within 500 feet of sensitive receptors to develop and implement construction noise control plans that consider the following available controls in order to reduce construction noise levels as low as practical:

- Utilize 'quiet' models of air compressors and other stationary noise sources where technology exists;
- Equip all internal combustion engine-driven equipment with mufflers, which are in good condition and appropriate for the equipment;
- Locate all stationary noise-generating equipment, such as air compressors and portable power generators, as far away as possible from adjacent land uses;



- Locate staging areas and construction material areas as far away as possible from adjacent land uses;
- Prohibit all unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines;
- Notify all abutting land uses of the construction schedule in writing; and

Designate a "disturbance coordinator" (e.g. contractor foreman or authorized representative) who would be responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise. The disturbance coordinator will determine the cause of the

noise complaint (e.g., starting too early, bad muffler, etc.) and will require that reasonable measures warranted to correct the problem be implemented. Conspicuously post a telephone number for the disturbance coordinator at the construction site and include it in the notice sent to neighbors regarding the construction schedule.

HS-8.13 Noise Control Regulation Consistency

The County shall review the noise control regulations every five years to ensure consistency. (RDR)

Table 9-1 Non-Transportation Noise Level Performance Standards for Noise-Sensitive Uses		
Noise Level Descriptor	Daytime (7:00 am – 10:00 pm)	Nighttime (10:00 pm – 7:00 am)
Hourly L_{eq} dB	55	45
Maximum Level, dB	70	65

Notes: These standards apply to new or existing residential areas affected by new or existing non-transportation sources.

Table 9-2 Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Community Noise Environments						
Land Use Category	Community Noise Exposure $L_{dn}/CNEL$, dB					
	55	60	65	70	75	80
Residential – Low Density Single Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes						
Residential – Multi. Family						
Transient Lodging – Motels, Hotels						
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes						
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters						
Sports Arenas, Outdoor Spectator Sports						
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks						
Golf Course, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries						
Office Buildings, Business Commercial and Professional						
Industrial, Manufacturing Utilities, Agriculture						



CLEARLY ACCEPTABLE

The noise exposure is such that the activities associated with the land use may be carried out with essentially no interference from aircraft noise. (Residential areas: both indoor and outdoor noise environments are pleasant.)



NORMALLY ACCEPTABLE

The noise exposure is great enough to be of some concern, but common building construction will make the indoor environment acceptable, even for sleeping quarters.





NORMALLY UNACCEPTABLE


The noise exposure is significantly more severe so that unusual and costly building construction is necessary to insure adequate performance of activities. (Residential areas: barriers must be created between the site and prominent noise sources to make the outdoor environment tolerable.)

CLEARLY UNACCEPTABLE


The noise exposure is so severe that construction costs to make the indoor environment acceptable for performance of activities would be prohibitive. (Residential areas: the outdoor environment would be intolerable for normal residential use.)

 Health and Safety Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
HS-A: Inventory of Unsafe Structures The County shall review and update its inventory of unreinforced masonry structures, which may be hazardous during an earthquake, and provide this information to the Office of Emergency Services. <i>(PSR)</i>			x			
Implements Policy(ies)	HS-3.4, HS-3.5, and HS-3.8					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Office of Emergency Services					
HS-B: Disaster Simulation Exercise The County shall conduct a biannual disaster simulation exercise to clarify and test staff emergency duties. <i>(SO)</i>		x				
Implements Policy(ies)	HS-1.3					
Responsible Department(s)	Office of Emergency Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Sheriff Department Cal Fire (San Benito County)					
HS-C: Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan  The County shall review the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan every two years to determine if updates are needed, and update the plan, as necessary. This review and update of the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan shall also address hazards associated with the potential impacts of climate change. <i>(MPSP)</i>		x				x
Implements Policy(ies)	HS-1.4					
Responsible Department(s)	Office of Emergency Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
HS-D: Regional Catastrophe Preparedness Plan The County shall prepare, adopt, and periodically update a Regional Catastrophe Preparedness Plan in coordination with local, regional, and State emergency response agencies. The County shall pursue grant funding through the Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program to fund the planning effort. <i>(MPSP/FB)</i>		x				x
Implements Policy(ies)	HS-1.5					



 Health and Safety Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
Responsible Department(s)	Office of Emergency Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
HS-E: Geotechnical Database The County shall maintain and regularly update the geotechnical database to make information on seismic hazards available to both the public and County. <i>(PSR/PI)</i>						x
Implements Policy(ies)	HS-3.3					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Office of Emergency Services					
HS-F: Supplement Building Code for Unsafe Structures The County shall prepare and adopt an Ordinance to supplement certain portions of the Uniform Building Code with regulations for dangerous buildings. The Ordinance should be applicable to a large number of older buildings, which do not have earthquake resisting structural systems, as well as to crumbling and dilapidated structures, which are manifestly unsafe. The Ordinance should include reference to parapets, marquees, appendages, and other non-structural or non-resistive construction, which constitute earthquake hazards. <i>(RDR)</i>		x				
Implements Policy(ies)	HS-3.1 through HS-3.8					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
HS-G: Elimination Program for Hazardous Buildings The County shall develop and adopt a long-range program for the elimination of existing hazardous buildings and develop equitable rules, which will eventually eliminate these structures without undue economic hardships and relocation problems. <i>(MPSP)</i>			x			
Implements Policy(ies)	HS-3.1 through HS-3.8					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
HS-H: Incorporate Fire Standards The County shall review and update the subdivision and other appropriate ordinances within the county to incorporate fire safe standards as delineated in the California Department of Forestry publication where they apply to San Benito County. <i>(RDR)</i>			x			
Implements Policy(ies)	HS-4.1 through HS-4.7					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Cal Fire (San Benito County)					



 Health and Safety Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
HS-I: Community Wildfire Protection Plan The County shall review the Community Wildfire Protection Plan every two years and update as necessary. <i>(MPSP)</i>		X	X	X		
Implements Policy(ies)	HS-4.1					
Responsible Department(s)	Cal Fire (San Benito County)					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
HS-J: GHG Monitoring Program The County shall conduct periodic greenhouse gas emissions inventories (e.g., every 3 to 5 years) to monitor progress in meeting its GHG reduction targets. <i>(MPSP)</i>			X			X
Implements Policy(ies)	HS-5.7 through HS-5.9					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
HS-K: Hazardous Waste Management Plan The County shall review the Hazardous Waste Management Plan every two years and update as necessary. <i>(MPSP)</i>		X				X
Implements Policy(ies)	HS-6.2 and HS-6.8					
Responsible Department(s)	Office of Emergency Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
HS-L: Hazardous Materials Incident Response Plan The County shall review the Hazardous Materials Incident Response Area Plan every two years and update as necessary. <i>(MPSP)</i>			X			
Implements Policy(ies)	HS-6.4					
Responsible Department(s)	Office of Emergency Services					
Supporting Department(s)						
HS-M: Hazardous Materials Transportation Routes The County shall coordinate with the City of Hollister to designate travel routes through San Benito County for vehicles transporting hazardous materials, in accordance with State and Federal regulations. <i>(RDR/IGC)</i>			X			
Implements Policy(ies)	HS-6.4					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Office of Emergency Services					
HS-N: Update Noise Ordinance The County shall review and update the Noise Ordinance to be consistent with the noise standards contained in Table 9-1, to include standards regulating noise from construction activities, and to facilitate a procedure for exemptions for special events, such as concerts and festivals. <i>(RDR)</i>		X				
Implements Policy(ies)						
Responsible Department(s)						
Supporting Department(s)						



 Health and Safety Implementation Programs		2015-2017	2017-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
Implements Policy(ies)	HS-8.1, HS-8.6					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)						



SECTION 10

ADMINISTRATION ELEMENT

The County Board of Supervisors is the local governing body for land use and environmental matters within the unincorporated parts of the county. The 2035 General Plan is the principal policy document that will guide their decisions. In order to stay current and be an effective and useful document for the County, the General Plan must be periodically reviewed, maintained, and implemented in a systematic and consistent manner. In addition to regular maintenance, the County must coordinate land use and environmental decision with other agencies and organizations. This element provides guidance for how San Benito County administers the 2035 General Plan. This includes the development review and permitting process, environmental justice, interagency coordination, and general plan maintenance.

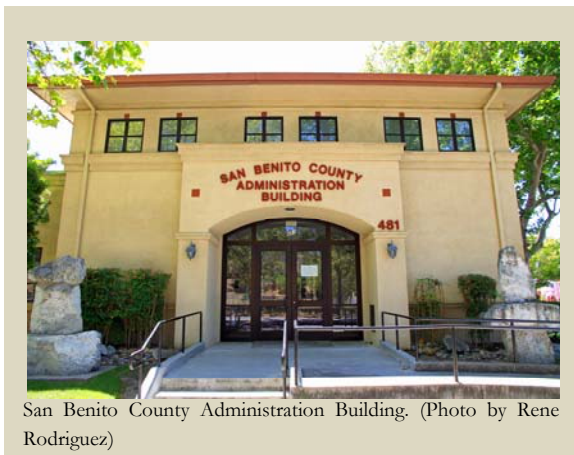


Development Review and Decision-Making Process

The County Board of Supervisors is ultimately responsible for making land use and environmental decisions in the unincorporated parts of the county (e.g., areas outside of city limits). In order to be fair and efficient, the County must ensure the development review and permitting process is streamlined and applied consistently to all project applicants.

The County must also ensure that decisions do not disproportionately affect one segment of the community in a negative way. This is commonly referred to as environmental justice. Environmental justice, which is a State legal requirement, refers to the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of criminal and environmental laws, regulations, and policies. The intent of environmental justice is to ensure that all persons are able to live in a safe and healthy environment.

The focus of this goal section is to establish a development review process that is efficient for both the County and project applicants, while ensuring that land use decision are fair and predictable.



San Benito County Administration Building. (Photo by Rene Rodriguez)

GOAL AD-1

To ensure that the development review process and the decisions made by the Board of Supervisors are efficient, fair, and to the greatest extent feasible, predictable.

AD-1.1 Equal Public Participation

The County shall ensure that all community residents, business owners, works, and other stakeholders have meaningful opportunities to participate in the decision-making process. (RDR/SO/PI)

AD-1.2 Reducing Disproportionate Land Use Decisions

The County shall ensure the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of land use and environmental laws, regulations, and policies. The County shall strive to ensure that no part of the community suffers disproportionately from adverse human health or environmental effects, and that all residents live in a clean, healthy, and sustainable community. (RDR/SO)

AD-1.3 Equitable Distribution of New Public Facilities and Services

The County shall plan for the equitable distribution of new public facilities and services that increase and enhance the quality of life in unincorporated neighborhoods and communities. The County shall not burden one area or segment of the community disproportionately with necessary, but undesirable land uses. (RDR/MPSP)

AD-1.4 Development Review and Permitting Streamlining Process

The County shall maintain a development review and permit process that is cost and time efficient. The County shall ensure that permitting procedures and regulations are applied consistent manner to all project applicants. (RDR)



AD-1.5 Digital Government

The County shall expand digital services, such as online streaming meeting video, property searches, permitting, and administration services in order to provide the public greater access to information and more efficient services. *(SO/PI)*

Inter-Agency Coordination

While the County has authority over land use and environmental decisions in the unincorporated parts of the county, there are many local, regional, State, and Federal agencies that also have some planning, permitting, or development review responsibilities in San Benito County. Coordination between the County and these agencies is critical to the successful implementation of the General Plan. The focus of this goal section is to promote inter-agency coordination during the planning and development review and approval process. *(Note: See the Land Use Element for policies specific to land use decisions in the City Fringe Areas, and the Public Facilities and Services Element for policies specific to school district coordination).*



Implementing the General Plan will require coordination with local, regional, State, and Federal agencies that have planning responsibilities in the county. (Photo of the Bureau of Land Management office in Hollister, by Rene Rodríguez)

GOAL AD-2

To cooperate and coordinate with applicable local, regional, State, and Federal jurisdictions and agencies in order to achieve mutually-beneficial development, environmental, and economic goals.

AD-2.1 City Policy Consultations

The County shall consult with the Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista in the early stages of preparing general plan amendments and other policy changes that may impact growth or the ability to provide urban services for land within the cities adopted spheres of influence. *(RDR/IGC)*

AD-2.2 Annexation Revenue Neutrality

The County shall maintain annexation agreements with the Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista to ensure revenue neutrality and account for, and fully reimburse, the County for maintenance and operation of all relevant programs and services. *(FB/SO/IGC)*

AD-2.3 Federal and State Agency Coordination

The County shall continue to coordinate discretionary project review and permitting activities with applicable Federal and State regulatory agencies as required by law. *(RDR/IGC)*

AD-2.4 State and National Park Coordination

The County shall continue to coordinate planning and preservation efforts with State and National Park agencies to ensure the long-term environmental and economic health of the parks. *(RDR/IGC)*



AD-2.5 Air Quality Management Coordination

The County shall continue to coordinate with the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD) and affected agencies and neighboring jurisdictions in the North Central Coast Air Basin to ensure regional cooperation on cross-jurisdictional and regional transportation and air quality issues, and to establish parallel air quality programs and implementation measures. *(RDR/MPSP/IGC)*

AD-2.6 Native American Tribe Consultation/Coordination

The County shall ensure effective inter-governmental review procedures with the Ohlone Indians and other legally-recognized Native American tribes regarding their landholdings and interests in San Benito County in order to achieve the best possible outcomes consistent with the General Plan. *(RDR/IGC)*

General Plan Maintenance

The effectiveness of the General Plan ultimately depends on how well it is implemented and maintained by the County over time. The General Plan is a dynamic document, and needs to respond to changing conditions and circumstances over the next 25 years. It should not simply be “kept on a shelf.” Rather, the document should be reviewed and updated as necessary in order to respond to changing conditions in the county and changes to State requirements.

State law requires most actions of local government affecting the physical environment be consistent with the general plan, and sets out guidelines for how the plan should be monitored, updated, and amended. The focus of this goal section is to ensure that the County maintains the General Plan and updates appropriate regulations and ordinances so they are consistent with the plan.



The 2030 General Plan will be updated as necessary to respond to changes in the county. (Photo of the view from Park Hill in Hollister, by Rene Rodriguez)

GOAL AD-3

To provide a clear framework for the ongoing administration, maintenance, and implementation of the San Benito County 2035 General Plan.

AD-3.1 General Plan Annual Reviews (PSR)

The County shall annually review the General Plan and report on its implementation status to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, as required by State law. *(RDR/PSR/PI)*



AD-3.2 Five-Year General Plan Reviews

The County should conduct a major review of the General Plan every five years from the date of adoption and revise the plan as deemed necessary to address changing conditions. As part of this review, the County shall update the goals, policies, and implementation programs to be consistent with appropriate changes in State law. *(RDR)*

AD-3.3 Housing Element Updates

The County shall update the Housing Element on a periodic basis as mandated by State law. These updates shall be coordinated with the State Department of Housing and Community Development to ensure the updated element will achieve

State certification upon adoption by the Board of Supervisors. *(RDR)*


AD-3.4 General Plan Amendments

The County shall amend the General Plan no more than four times per calendar year, except for additional amendments allowed by State law. Each amendment may include multiple changes as allowed by State law. *(RDR)*


AD-3.5 Ordinance Consistency

The County shall maintain all applicable County ordinances and regulations to ensure their consistency with the adopted 2035 General Plan. *(RDR)*




 Administration Implementation Programs		2012-2014	2015-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
Program AD-A: Development Review and Permit Streamlining The County shall review its existing development review and permitting process in order to improve the efficiency for both the County and project applicants. This may include, as necessary, the following components: <div><div>a.</div><div>Use a triage system to minimize permit backlog during periods of high development demand. This can include identifying projects that will need considerable staff resource to review early in the process in order for them to be efficiently managed.</div><div>b.</div><div>Provide regular status reports on project review schedules to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors during public meetings.</div><div>c.</div><div>Use consistent processing procedures for all projects.</div><div>d.</div><div>Provide pre-application meetings to coordinate review of large or complex projects. (RDR)</div></div>		x				
Implements Policy(ies)	AD-1.4					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works, Housing and Economic Development					
Program AD-B: Digital Government The County shall identify and implement measures to expand the public digital access to County government functions. This should include providing online streaming meeting video, property searches, permitting, and administration services in order to provide the public greater access to information and more efficient services. (SO/PI)			x			
Implements Policy(ies)	AD-1.5					
Responsible Department(s)	Information Technology					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services, Public Works					
Program AD-C: City Annexation Agreements The County shall maintain annexation agreements with the Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista that clearly identify tax sharing and revenue neutrality agreements related to the provision of public services and facilities. (MPSP/SO/FB)						x
Implements Policy(ies)	AD-2.2					
Responsible Department(s)	County Administrative Officer					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services, Public Works					



 Administration Implementation Programs		2012-2014	2015-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
Program AD-D: Annual General Plan Reviews The County shall review the General Plan annually, focusing principally on actions undertaken in the previous year to carry out the implementation programs of the plan. County staff shall provide a report to the Board of Supervisors that includes recommendations for amendments to the General Plan, if applicable. This review shall be used to satisfy annual reporting requirements to the Governor's Office of Planning and Research and mitigation monitoring program requirements of Public Resources Code §21081.6. (PSR)					X	
Implements Policy(ies)	AD-3.1					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	County Administrative Officer					
Program AD-E: Five Year General Plan Review The County shall conduct a major review of the General Plan beginning every five years from the adoption date of this 2035 General Plan. The review shall focus on amendments that are necessary for the plan to stay relevant with current issues and consistent with State legal requirements. (RDR)			X	X		X
Implements Policy(ies)	AD-3.2					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	County Administrative Officer					
Program AD-F: Periodic Housing Element Updates The County shall update the Housing Element on a periodic basis as required by Article 10.6 of the Government Code (§65580-65590). These updates shall be coordinated with the State Department of Housing and Community Development to ensure the updated element will achieve State certification upon adoption by the Board of Supervisors. (RDR)		X	X	X		
Implements Policy(ies)	AD-3.3					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Housing and Economic Development					
Program AD-G: General Plan Review and Updating Funding The County shall investigate and identify, as appropriate, financial mechanisms to be used for funding updates of the General Plan. (FB)			X			



 Administration Implementation Programs		2012-2014	2015-2020	2020-2035	Annual	Ongoing
Implements Policy(ies)	AD-3.1, AD-3.2, AD-3.3					
Responsible Department(s)	County Administrative Officer					
Supporting Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Program AD-H: Ordinance Consistency The County shall review and amend, as necessary, applicable ordinances and regulations to ensure consistency with the 2035 General Plan. These shall include at a minimum the following: Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, Building and Engineering Regulations, Land Use and Environmental Regulations, and Traffic Regulations. (RDR)		x				x
Implements Policy(ies)	AD-3.5					
Responsible Department(s)	Planning and Building Inspection Services					
Supporting Department(s)	Public Works, Housing and Economic Development					