

State of Monterey County 1999

Land Use, Environment, and Infrastructure: Status and Recommendations

Executive Summary



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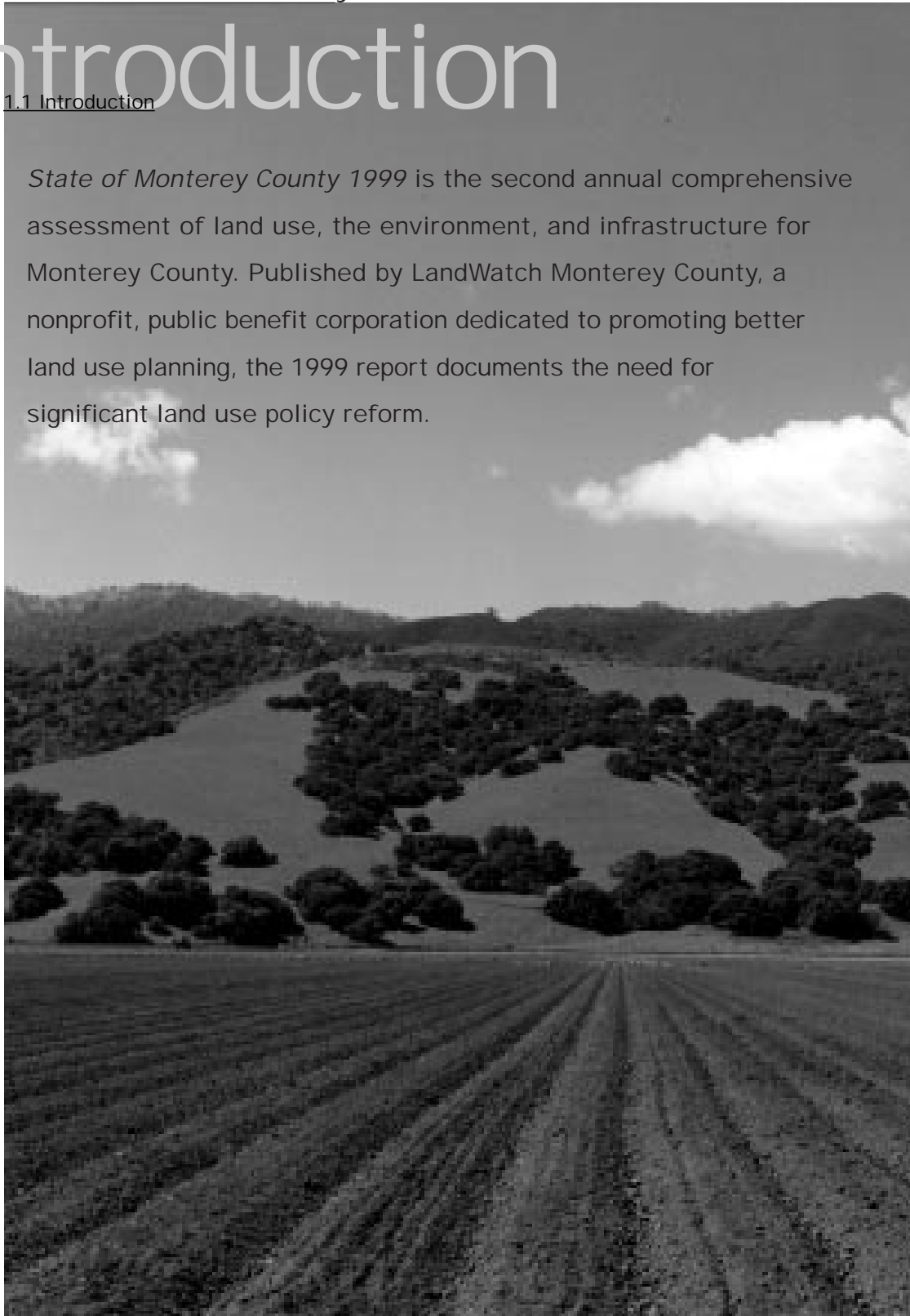
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1.0 Executive Summary

introduction

1.1 Introduction

State of Monterey County 1999 is the second annual comprehensive assessment of land use, the environment, and infrastructure for Monterey County. Published by LandWatch Monterey County, a nonprofit, public benefit corporation dedicated to promoting better land use planning, the 1999 report documents the need for significant land use policy reform.



findings

1.2 Findings

1. Monterey County's growth rate is the third highest in the state.

Monterey County's population is projected to rise dramatically in the next 20 years, increasing by 39%. In 1997 alone, Monterey County's population grew approximately 4.7%, making it one of the fastest growing counties in California.

2. Monterey County will experience dramatic growth even if no new projects are approved.

New data provided by local governments reveal even more projected growth than estimated in *State of Monterey County 1998*. Even if no new projects were approved, already-approved and unconstructed projects in Monterey County will add 8,167 dwelling units, 4.98 million square feet of commercial and industrial space, and 701 hotel and motel rooms. Pending projects, if approved, would almost double these numbers. The traffic, water supply, and school impacts from approved and pending development projects will degrade Monterey County's quality of life, lead to significant losses of agricultural land, and threaten its long-term economic vitality.

3. Growth is very poorly planned and will increasingly lead to urban sprawl.

Current development patterns are resulting in an increasingly inefficient use of land. New data show that the expansion of urban land is occurring at a rate of 159 acres per 1,000 new residents. If current trends continue through the year 2020, urban land uses will consume an additional 23,800 acres.

4. Housing needs are not being met.

The rapid growth occurring in Monterey County is not leading to the production of housing that can be afforded by ordinary working families, much less by persons who have low or very low incomes. Very little progress has been made in addressing housing needs over the past year.

5. New developments will significantly worsen already inadequate infrastructure, particularly roads.

Current infrastructure cannot support existing levels of development in many parts of Monterey County. In particular, there is a serious lack of road and highway capacity, water supply, and schools. Consequently, it becomes increasingly important for land use decisions to recognize funding constraints. If current growth trends continue, existing problems will significantly worsen.

Of the funds available for capacity-increasing road and highway projects in the next 20 years, the Transportation Agency for Monterey County has programmed 88% for the Prunedale Bypass and Route 101 interchanges as well as operational improvements near Prunedale. There is no funding for improvements to Route 1 north of Castroville, Route 1 near Seaside, Route 68 west and east of Highway 1, Route 183 north of Salinas, Route 218 from Highway 1 to Fremont, as well as Fremont Boulevard, Blanco Road and Reservation Road. All these roads are at Level of Service (LOS) D or below.

recommendations

1.3 Recommendations

Current trends never tell us what “must” or “will” happen in the future—they only describe what is happening now. What will happen in the future depends on our actions today. If we make no changes and do nothing new, then the trends documented in this report will define the future reality of Monterey County.

The current pattern of development in Monterey County is putting the future of both the economy and environment at risk. Significant land use reforms are necessary. LandWatch urges local governments to adopt the following five-point program to guide development of their general plans:

- ▼ Land use policy should encourage the efficient use of land and the conservation of valuable natural resources through the designation of urban growth boundaries.
- ▼ The economic vitality of our local communities should be enhanced by directing new growth and investment inside designated urban growth boundaries and away from open space and productive farmlands.
- ▼ Land use policy should maximize social and economic opportunity by integrating affordable housing within mixed-income neighborhoods.
- ▼ Adequate public facilities and services—including police, fire, schools, parks, transportation facilities, and a reliable water supply—must be in place prior to, or concurrently with, new development.
- ▼ The land use regulatory system should be made more effective, efficient, and accountable, thus providing increased certainty for developers, landowners, and the public, and eliminating unnecessary regulations and delay.

Now is the time to make these public policy changes. Many Monterey County jurisdictions are in the process of amending their general plans, or will soon begin doing so. The urgent need to incorporate these basic land use policy changes into the general plans of the county and the various cities within Monterey County should be clear from this report.

Monterey County citizens are becoming mobilized to address land use issues. With the success of citizen referendum campaigns on Rancho San Carlos, Rancho Chualar II, and Mountain Valley, there is a growing sense that serious land use reforms are necessary. Current trends indicate that land use conflicts will continue to be resolved at the ballot box unless local governments recognize the need for reform and adopt sound land use policies.



report card

1.4 State of Monterey County 1999—Report Card

Begun last year, the *State of Monterey County 1999—Report Card* tracks Monterey County’s progress on land use, the environment, and infrastructure by providing a broad qualitative assessment of how well Monterey County and the cities are planning our future. The report card ratings are based on a comparison of established standards, goals, or needs to data compiled in this report. An “A” indicates Monterey County excels in relation to a local, state, or federal standard; a “B” indicates we are above average; a “C” is average; a “D” is below average; and an “F” connotes failure.

Don’t be misled by attempting to “average” scores across different categories. Each parameter is unique and has its own value. For example, Monterey County generally has excess wastewater treatment capacity, good air quality, large expanses of agricultural land, and plenty of parks and open space. High rankings in these areas do not offset the serious problems we have with roads and highways, water supply, and affordable housing; indeed, these parameters indicate constraints on future development.

There are two new indicators in this year’s report: land use efficiency and urban growth boundaries. Both of these indicators tell us whether or not existing policies protect one of our most limited resources—the land. Here is the 1999 Monterey County report card:

Indicator	Excels Fails				
	A	B	C	D	F
Affordable Housing					F
Agricultural Land			C		
Air Quality		B			
Land Use Efficiency					F
Open Space and Recreational Lands	A				
Roads and Highways					F
School Capacity			C		
Up-to-Date General Plan — Cities		B			
Up-to-Date General Plan — County				D	
Urban Growth Boundaries					F
Wastewater Treatment		B			
Water Quality				D	
Water Supply					F



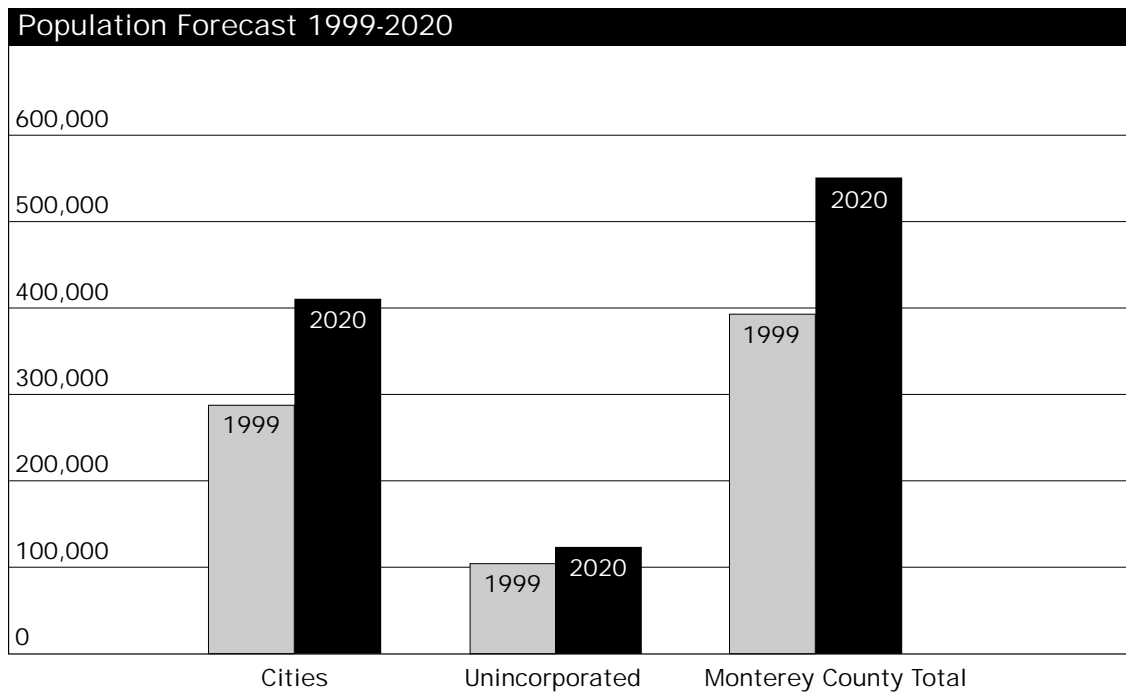


trends

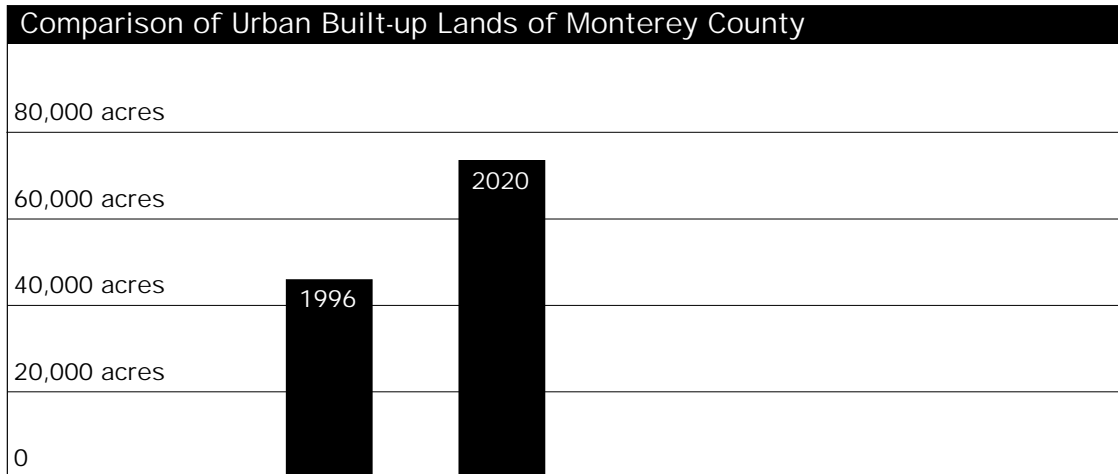
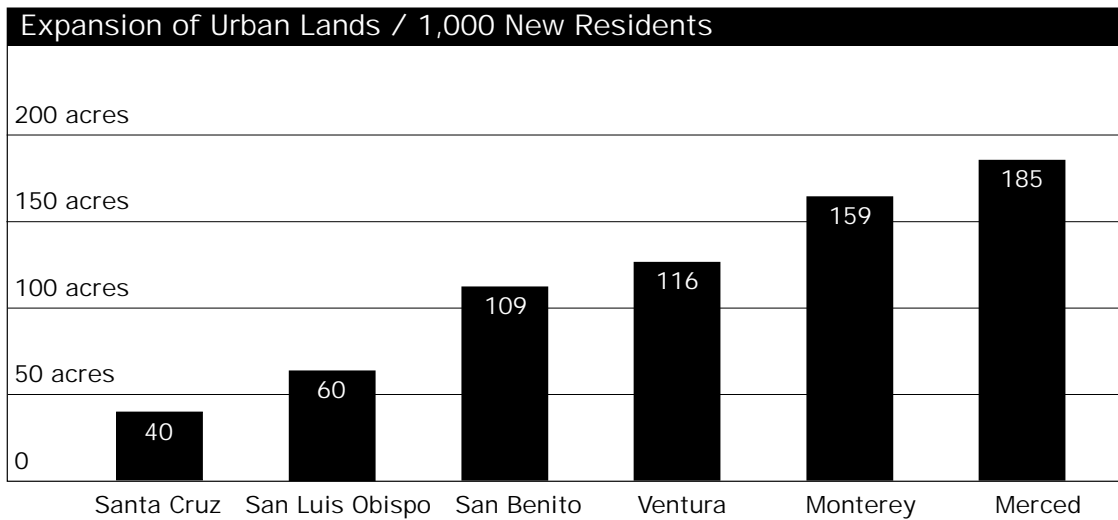
1.5 Trends

The following trends are documented in this 1999 report:

- ▼ **Population.** Monterey County's population is projected to rise dramatically in the next 20 years, increasing by 37%, from a current population of 391,300 to a projected population of 537,000 in the year 2020. In 1997, Monterey County's population grew approximately 4.7%. The County's 1998 growth rate was 2.7%, making Monterey County the third fastest growing county in California. Much of this population growth is projected to occur in the Salinas Valley.



▼ Urban Sprawl. Existing planning practices encourage the inefficient use of land. Currently, 159 acres of land are converted to urban uses for every 1,000 new residents. If this rate remains constant through the year 2020, an additional 23,800 acres of land will be committed to urban development. Monterey County's rate of urban land expansion is significantly higher than in neighboring San Benito, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Cruz counties.



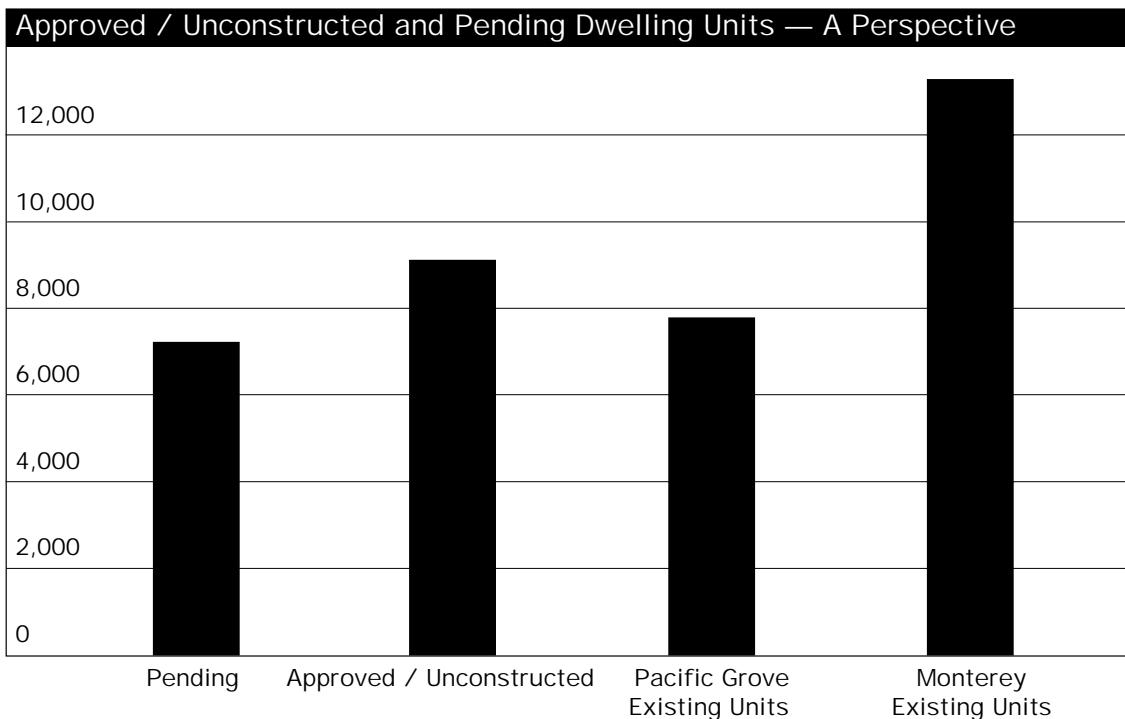




- ▼ Approved and Pending Projects. Monterey County and the cities either have approved or are considering approval of 15,410 residential units, 8.6 million square feet of commercial/ industrial projects, and 1,418 hotel/motel units. Development of 1,226 lots of record on the Monterey Peninsula (included in the 15,410 residential units) depends on the availability of additional water. The project list includes projects not previously documented in the *State of Monterey County 1998* —an additional 3.6 million square feet of commercial/industrial projects. The project list excludes the projected buildout of the general plans, the reuse of Fort Ord, and facilities for 6,800 students at California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB). The water and traffic impacts resulting from the CSUMB facilities are included because the facilities have been approved or are pending.

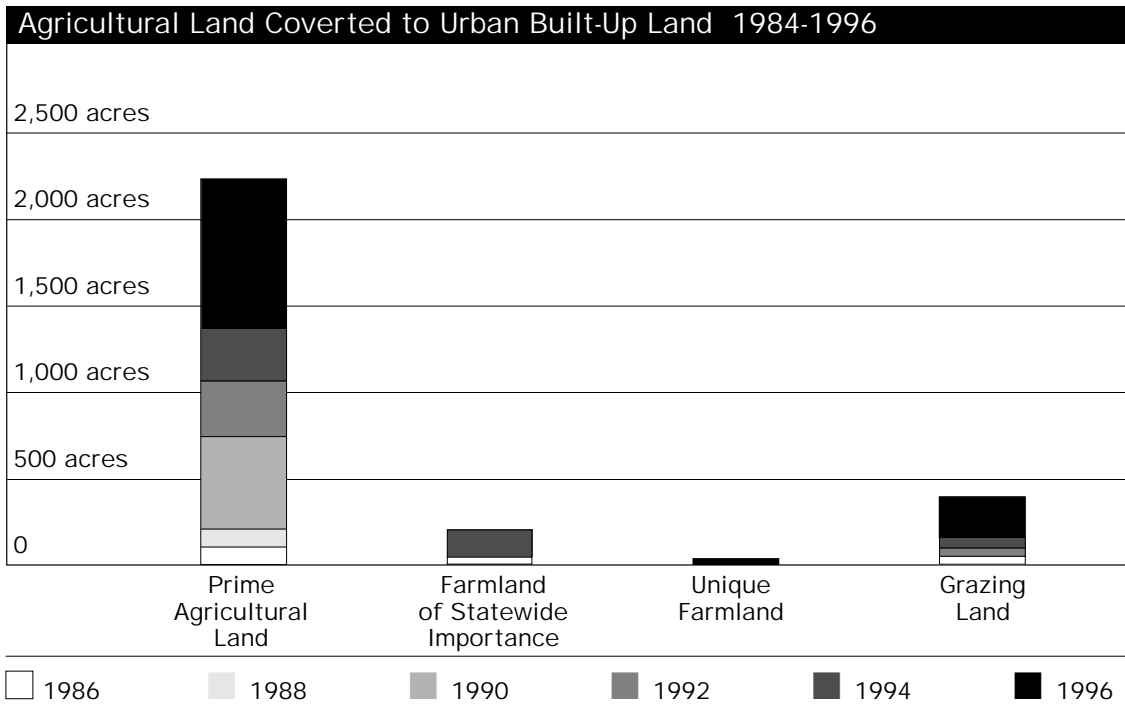
Total Approved / Unconstructed and Pending Projects			
Project Status	Dwelling Units	Commerical/ Industrial Sq. Ft.	Hotel Rooms
Approved/Unconstructed	8,167	4,975,099	701
Action Pending	7,243	3,688,488	717
Total	15,410	8,663,587	1,418

The approved/unconstructed and pending projects throughout the county will add more dwelling units than those which have already been built within the City of Monterey and 28 times more commercial and industrial square footage than the Edgewater Shopping Center in Sand City.

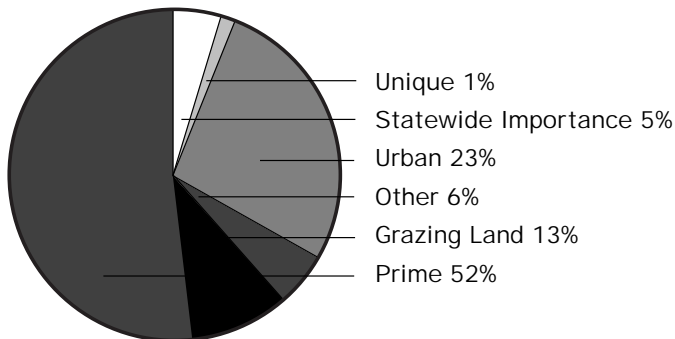




- ▼ Loss of Agricultural Lands. Existing planning practices encourage the conversion of agricultural land to urban uses. Between 1984 and 1998, 3,348 acres of agricultural land, including over 2,300 acres classified as prime, were converted to urban land uses. At risk of conversion to urban land uses are 2,250 acres of agricultural land, including 1,650 acres classified as prime, which are within the spheres of influence of the five Salinas Valley cities.



Spheres of Influence of the Salinas Valley Cities by Land Use Type



Approved but unconstructed projects

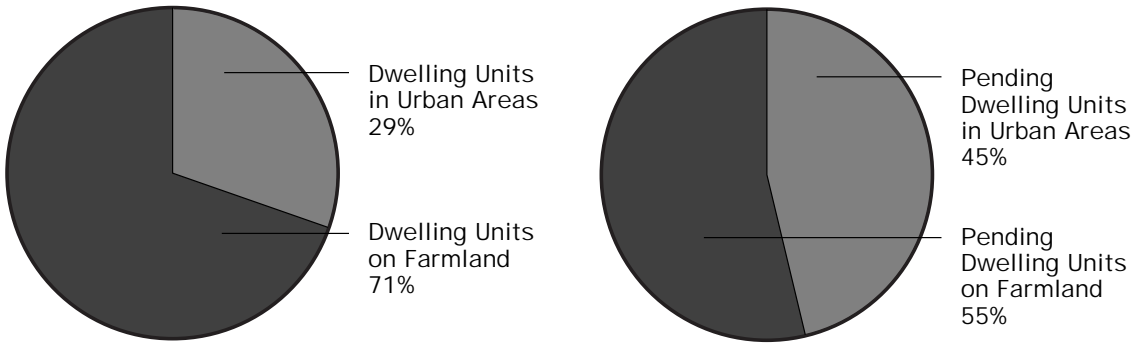
The approved/unconstructed projects have either removed, or will soon remove, over 1,400 acres of land from agricultural production. Of the 8,167 dwelling units in the approved/unconstructed category, 71% will be built on farmland. Of these units, 99.5% will be on farmland within cities, and .5% will be on farmland within the unincorporated area.

Pending projects

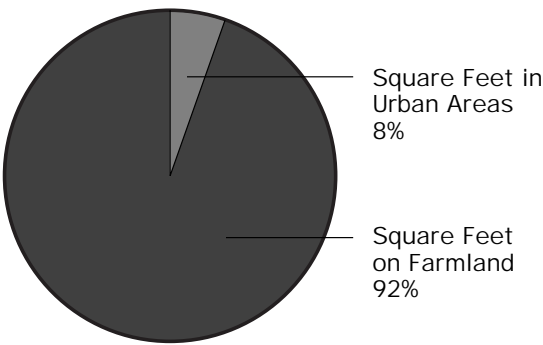
The dwelling units in the pending category, if approved, would convert 1,200 acres of productive agricultural land to urban built-up uses. Of the 7,243 dwelling units under consideration but not yet approved, 55% would be built on farmland. Of these, 22% are in the cities, and 78% are in the unincorporated area.

Almost 7.9 million square feet or 92% of the commercial and industrial projects on the approved/unconstructed and pending lists would be on farmland.

Approved / Unconstructed Dwelling Units Pending Dwelling Units



Commercial / Industrial Square Feet on Farmland

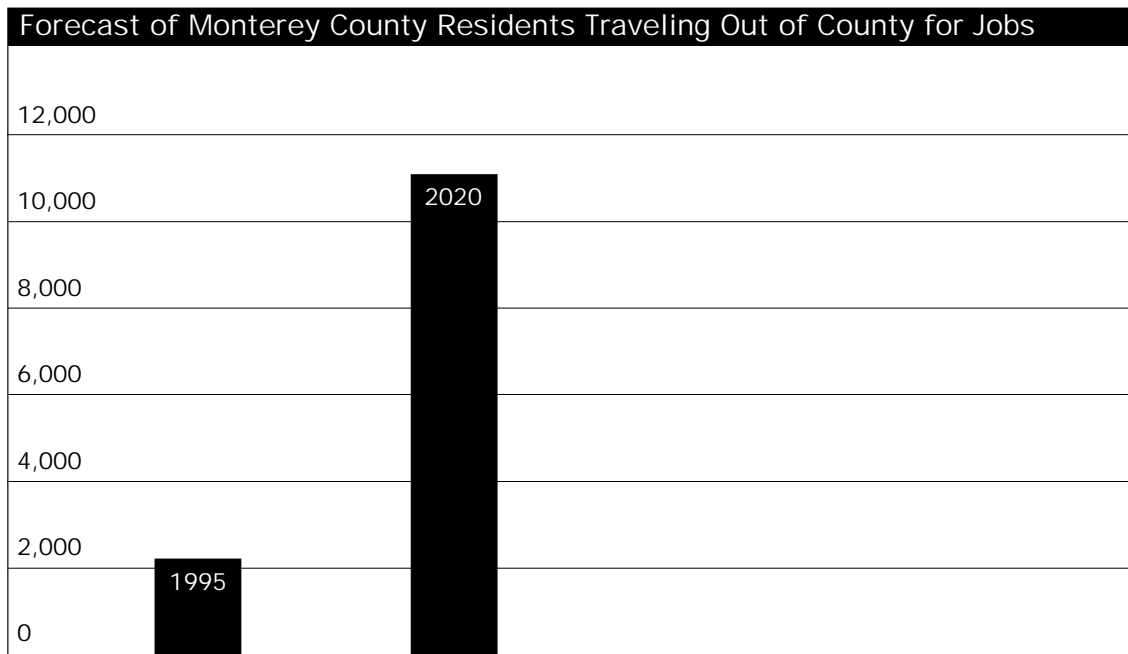






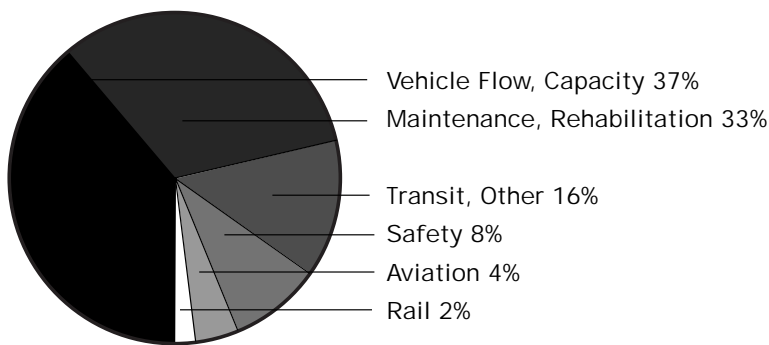
- ▼ **Traffic Congestion.** Traffic congestion on local and state roadways is getting worse. Highway congestion is measured on a scale of Level of Service (LOS) A to F, with F being the worst. Of the 15 state highway segments evaluated, four are at LOS D, one is at LOS E, and seven are at LOS F. Of the 18 local arterials evaluated, nine are at LOS C, seven are at LOS D, and one is at LOS F. Approved and pending dwelling units, expected growth at CSUMB, and visitor-serving projects would add 157,046 daily trips to already congested highways, an increase of 15% over 1997 daily trips.

In 1995, measuring on a “net” basis (in-commuters minus out-commuters), about 2,600 employed residents, representing 1.6% of the total county workforce, commuted to jobs outside Monterey County. By 2020, again on a “net” basis, about 11,000 residents, or 4.9% of the total workforce, are expected to commute to work outside of the county.

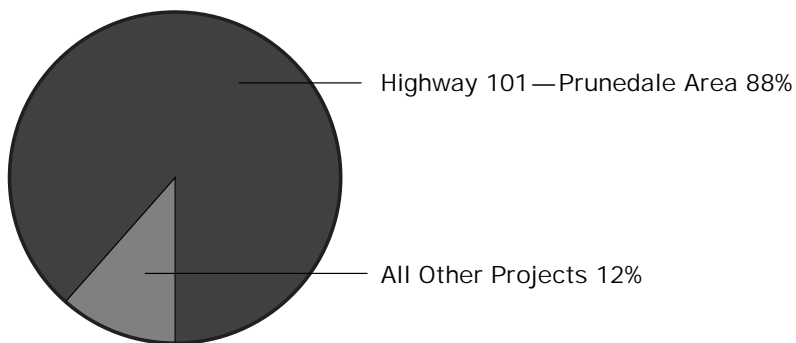


- ▼ **Transportation Funding.** Of the \$388,645,000 estimated to be available for capacity increasing road and highway projects in the next 20 years, the Transportation Agency for Monterey County has programmed 88% for the Prunedale Bypass and Route 101 interchanges and operational improvements near Prunedale. There is no funding for improvements to Route 1 north of Castroville, Route 1 near Seaside, Route 68 west and east of Highway 1, Route 183 north of Salinas, Route 218 from Highway 1 to Fremont, as well as Fremont Boulevard, Blanco Road, and Reservation Road. All these roads are at LOS D or below. Consequently, it becomes increasingly important for land use decisions to recognize transportation funding constraints.

Distribution of Transportation Funding, Monterey County 1999

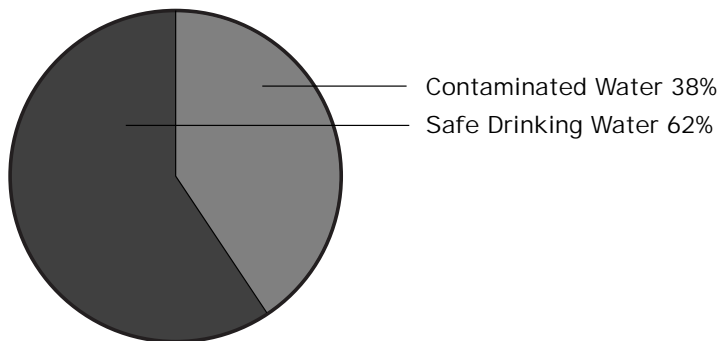


Major Capacity-Increasing Projects, Monterey County 1999



- ▼ **Water Supply.** The major population areas of the county have serious water supply problems. Population growth on the Monterey Peninsula surpassed the number of people who can be served under California American Water Company's (Cal-Am) production limits in the early 1990s. The Salinas Valley Ground Water Basin is overdrafted by 40,000 to 50,000 acre-feet per year, or approximately 10% of the basin's safe yield. In North Monterey County, annual water extractions exceed average annual recharge by 100%. Approved and pending developments would require 1,065 acre-feet of water per year from Cal-Am, between 4,762 and 6,204 acre-feet per year from the Salinas Valley Ground Water Basin, and 736 acre-feet per year from other sources. Aside from 850 acre-feet per year for CSUMB, most of the projects requiring water from the Salinas Valley Ground Water Basin would consume less water than the agricultural uses they are replacing. However, once water is committed to urban growth, a long-term entitlement is created, and dry-year demand is increased.
- ▼ **Water Quality.** Groundwater use in the Salinas Valley is adversely affected by nitrate contamination. A 1998 report from the Monterey County Water Resources Agency states that of 262 water wells sampled, 100 wells (38%) had nitrate concentrations exceeding the safe drinking water standard. Nitrate concentrations are expected to rise in future years because of the 40- to 60-year time lag between changes in nitrate loading at the surface and corresponding changes in groundwater.

Nitrate Contamination in the Salinas Valley / 262 Wells Sampled



- ▼ Affordable Housing. All available data indicate that the supply of housing for lower-income persons is extremely limited, and adequate affordable housing is not being constructed as growth proceeds. No agency is responsible for tracking affordable housing countywide. No consistent method is in place to quantify the construction of affordable housing by the various jurisdictions over a specified period of time. The Monterey County and the twelve cities must collaborate to develop a consistent method to track the construction of affordable housing and the accomplishments of existing programs.

- ▼ General Plans. State law requires planning agencies to “prepare, periodically review, and revise, as necessary, the general plan.” Numerous cities in the county are in the process of updating their general plans. The cities of King City, Marina, Salinas, and Sand City are at various stages of the update process. The cities of Carmel, Monterey, and Soledad will consider initiating a general plan update during the 1999/2000 Fiscal Year. The County of Monterey has hired a consultant to develop a work program to define the scope of a general plan update, and it is anticipated that the County of Monterey will initiate a general plan update during the 1999/2000 fiscal year. The Monterey County General Plan is 16 years old and most of its area plans are ten or more years old.

Jurisdiction	Date Current Plan Adopted	Advisory Date For Comprehensive Update	Date Comprehensive Update Scheduled
Monterey County	1982	1987	1999
Carmel	1989	1994	1999
Del Rey Oaks	1997	2002	None Scheduled
Gonzales	1996	2001	None Scheduled
Greenfield	1981	1986	None Scheduled
King City	1999	2004	1998
Marina	1982	1987	1998
Monterey	1988	1993	2000
Pacific Grove	1994	1999	None Scheduled
Salinas	1988	1993	1999
Sand City	1989	1994	1999
Seaside	1996	2001	None Scheduled
Soledad	1993	1998	1999

“We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.”

—Aldo Leopold

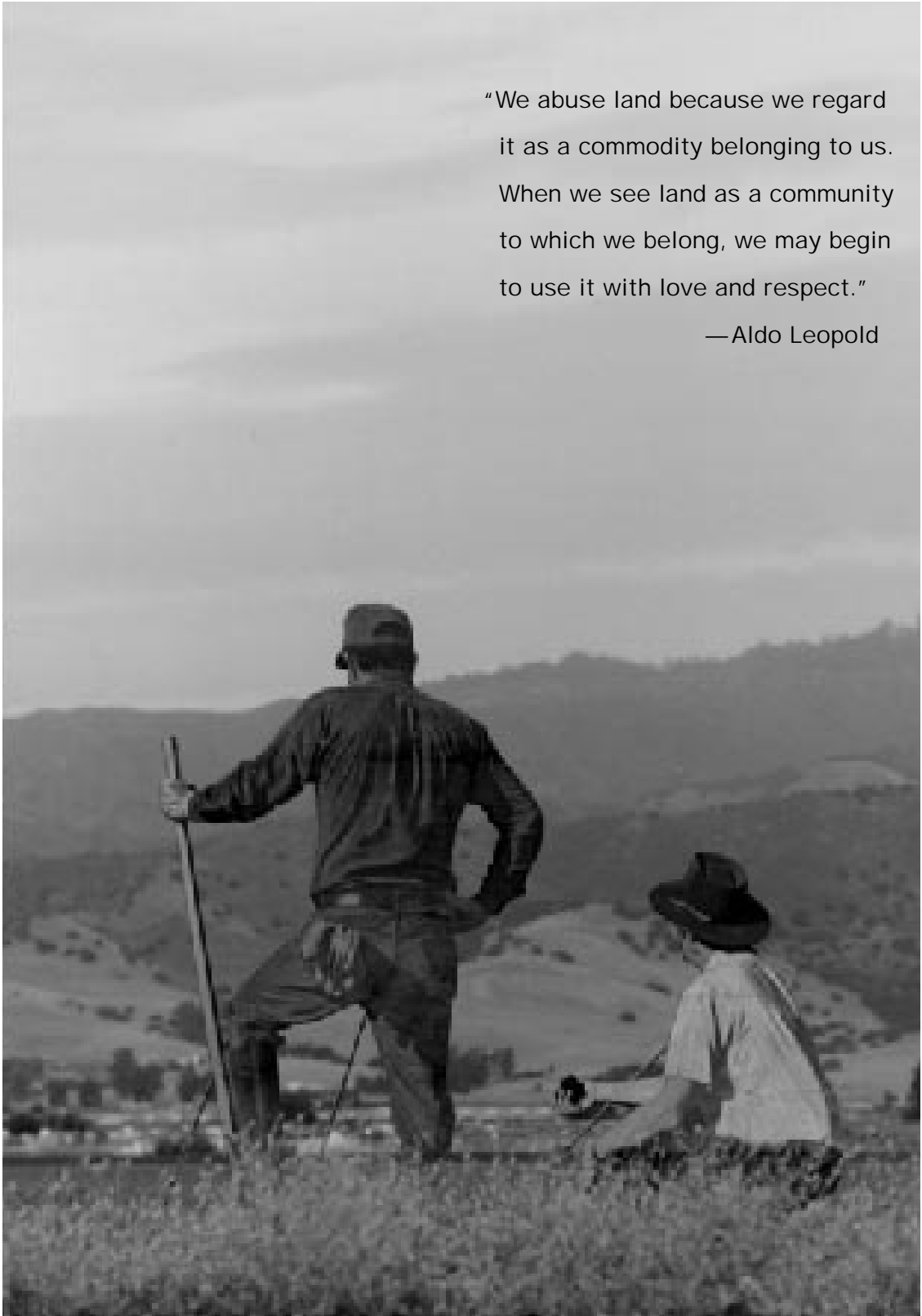


Table 1 — Approved and Unconstructed Projects by Jurisdiction

Project	Jurisdiction	Dwelling Units	Hotel Rooms	Commercial/ Industrial Sq. feet	Average Daily Trips	Water Acre Ft/Yr	Status
Cañada Woods North and Cañada Woods	County	108		80,000	1,037	147	Approved/ Unconstructed
Las Palmas Phase II	County	515			4,944	123*	Under Construction
Monterra	County	247			2,371	62*	Approved/Phase I Under Construction
Moro Cojo	County	365			2,891	131	Approved/Under Construction
Moss Landing Marine Lab	County			52,000			Approved/Under Construction
Oakhills	County	47			451	11*	Approved/Under Construction
Pajaro Commons	County	64			11	19*	Approved/Under Construction
Pasadera	County	254			3,039	162	Approved/Under Construction
Quail Meadows	County	65	40		921	43	Approved/ Unconstructed
Rancho San Carlos	County	350			1,214	272	Approved/ Unconstructed
September Ranch	County	94			835	61	Approved/ Unconstructed
Triple M Ranch	County	31			300	16*~	Approved
Vista Vente	County	35			336	9	
Yanks Air Museum	County		150		1,440	~	Approved/ Unconstructed
CSUMB Master Plan	CSUMB				15,650	850	FEIR Completed
Retail	Del Rey Oaks			57,860		7	Approved/ Unconstructed
California Sea Breeze III	Gonzales	317			3,043	159*~	Approved/ Unconstructed
Canyon Creek	Gonzales	224			2,128	112*~	Approved/ Unconstructed
Arroyo Seco	Greenfield			1,916,640		~	Approved/Under Construction
Camino El Paraiso	Greenfield	94			922	47*~	Approved/Near Completion
Green Leaf Estates	Greenfield	75			720	38*~	Approved/Under Construction
331 Reservation Road	Marina		32	3,100	192	3*	Approved/Building Permits Not Issued
374 Reservation Road	Marina	27			311	9*	Approved/ Unconstructed
485/497 Reservation Road	Marina			50,000		4*	Approved/Under Construction
HAMC Farmworker Housing	Marina	56			18		Approved/Under Construction
Marina Dunes Resort	Marina		63		624	91*	Approved/Under Construction
Marina Landing	Marina			113,000			Approved/ Unconstructed

Table 1 — Approved and Unconstructed Projects by Jurisdiction, continued

Project	Jurisdiction	Dwelling Units	Hotel Rooms	Commercial/ Industrial Sq. feet	Average Daily Trips	Water Acre Ft/Yr	Status
Shelter Plus-Homeward Bound	Marina	27				9	Approved/Unconstructed
330 Alvarado Street	Monterey	30			216	7	Approved/Under Construction
Lower Ragsdale Ryan Ranch	Monterey			92,425		6*	Approved/Unconstructed
Arcadia	Salinas	200			1,920	100*~	Approved/Part Constructed
Creekbridge	Salinas	1,980		17,600	16,236	990*~	Approved/Unconstructed
David/Rossi	Salinas	95			760	48~	Approved/Unconstructed
Harden Ranch	Salinas	1,000		215,000	4,200	500*~	Approved/Under Construction
Mountain Valley Shopping Center	Salinas			89,000		~	Approved/Under Construction
Abott/Work Street Industrial Park	Salinas			77,474			Approved/Under Construction
Salinas Auto Center	Salinas			447,000		~	Approved/Unconstructed
Westridge Center Hotel	Salinas		280	652,500	2,408	59*~	Approved/Unconstructed
Westridge Self Storage	Salinas			40,000		3*~	Approved/Unconstructed
Williams Ranch	Salinas		1,150	310,000	4,830	575*~	Approved/Under Construction
Sterling Center	Sand City		136		1,306	41*	Approved/Unconstructed
California Highlands	Soledad	28			322	14*	Approved/Under Construction
Las Jicamas	Soledad	53			371	27*	Approved/Under Construction
Vista Soledad Community	Soledad	636		761,500	5,724	318*~	Approved/Under Construction
Total		8,167	701	4,975,099	81,672	5,089	

* Calculated using standard trip rates and water demand factors. Water demand is calculated for dwelling units and hotel rooms.

Water demand is not calculated for industrial/commercial projects.

~ Project would consume less water than existing agricultural uses which they are replacing.

Table 2 — Pending Projects by Jurisdiction

Project	Jurisdiction	Dwelling Units	Hotel Rooms	Commercial/ Industrial	Average Daily Trips Sq. feet	Water Acre Ft/Yr	Status
Capuro & Sons	County			67,000		2	Application Filed
Pebble Beach Lot Program	County	403			3,800		FEIR
Tavernetti Subdivision	County	409			3,926	98*	Application Filed; DEIR pending
435 Reservation Road	Marina			56,000			Pending
Cypress Knolls	Marina	570			1,881	188*	Pending
Marina Knolls	Marina		300		2,580	63*	Pending
Cannery Row Market Place	Monterey	47		115,771	8,422	32	DEIR Circulated
Senior Housing	Pacific Grove	50			330	8	Pending
Legal Lots of Record MPWMD	Peninsula Cities & County	1,226		556	10,156	730	Pending water Availability
Monterey Bay Shores	Sand City	133	217		4,831	99	Appealed to California Coastal Commission
Hayes Housing Project	Seaside	400			3,860	152	DEIR circulated
Merritt Manor	County	88			845	44*~	Application Filed
Pajaro Valley Golf Course	County	146			1,460	44*~	Application Filed
Rancho San Juan	County	2,893	200	3,406,392	28,351	1,950*~	DEIR public review completed
Industrial Project	Salinas			42,769		~	Pending
Miravale	Soledad	878			4,931	439*~	Pending
Total		7,243	717	3,688,488	75,374	3,817	

* Calculated using standard trip rates and water demand factors. Water demand is calculated for dwelling units and hotel rooms. Water demand is not calculated for industrial/commercial projects.

~ Project estimated to consume less water than existing agricultural uses which they are replacing.