



San Benito County General Plan Update



Photo by: Rene Rodriguez

General Plan Advisory Committee Meeting #19

June 2, 2011 | Board of Supervisors Chambers

Meeting Objectives

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1. Review status of the General Plan Update
2. Review Board of Supervisor direction on the Preferred Policy Alternative
3. Discuss and provide input on the Winery/ Hospitality Overlay
4. Discuss and provide input on Existing General Plan Land Use Policy #31
5. Discuss project and GPAC next steps



1. General Plan Update Status

General Plan Update Status

Stage	Status	Schedule
1. Reconnaissance and Organization	Completed	Winter 2009 – Spring 2009
2. Existing Conditions	Completed	Spring 2010 – Fall 2010
3. Opportunities and Challenges	Completed	Spring 2010 – Fall 2010
4. Alternatives	Completed	Summer 2010 – Winter 2011
5. Preferred Alternative Selection	Completed	Winter 2011 – Spring 2011
6. Fiscal Impact Assessment	In Process	Spring 2011 – Summer 2011
7. Draft Goals and Policies	In Process	Spring 2011 – Summer 2011
8. Environmental Impact Report	In Process	Summer 2011 – Fall 2011
9. Public Review and Adoption		Fall 2011
10. Final Documents		Winter 2011/2012



2. Board of Supervisors Direction

Board of Supervisors Direction

- Staff/consultants met in a joint study session with the Commission and Board to discuss the GPAC Preferred Alternative and major policy issues on April 5, 2011.
- Planning Commission subsequently met and provided recommendations on April 13, 2011.
- Board of Supervisors received Planning Commission recommendations and provided direction back to staff/consultants on April 26, 2011.



Question 1

Are the Draft 2035 Vision and Guiding Principles accurate as written or should they be modified?

Planning Commission Recommendation

The Planning Commission supported the Draft 2035 Vision and Guiding Principles. They recommended a series of modifications in order to provide flexibility and focus on the unincorporated parts of the county. The Planning Commission also expressed concern that the County should not try to set policy for the cities. On the other hand, the Planning Commission wanted to see County planning efforts closely coordinated with the city planning efforts.

Board of Supervisors Direction

Note: The revised 2035 Vision and Guiding Principles are attached.

- Remove the word “village” from both the Vision and Guiding Principles. Instead, they suggested using another term such as “master planned community” or “community study area.” (*Note: County staff and consultants recommend the term “new communities”*)
- Include additional language on how the County General Plan relates to the planning efforts of the two cities, in particular Hollister.
- Make sure the Vision and Guiding Principles allow flexibility and do not get too specific on County policy, which will be developed and included under each element of the General Plan.

Question 2

Should the concept of encouraging/allowing new villages be carried forward in the 2035 General Plan?

Planning Commission Recommendation

The Planning Commission supported the concept, but questioned the feasibility of new villages. In particular, how much commercial could a village support and how much of a financial burden would there be on the County (e.g., public services, infrastructure, taxes). They recommended that the 2035 General Plan should not identify specific locations for new villages. Instead, that recommended staff develop detailed performance criteria for the location, size, and components of new villages.

Board of Supervisors Direction

- Include the village concept, but do not use the word “village.” Instead, use a term similar to “master planned community” in order to maintain flexibility for what these new communities could be and where they could be located. (*Note: County staff and consultants recommend the term “new communities”*)
- Develop a series of criteria to help guide the location and size of new communities. Similar criteria has been adopted and used successfully by San Joaquin and Merced counties.

Question 3

Should the Clustered Residential Program be continued in the 2035 General Plan?

Planning Commission Recommendation

The Planning Commission supported the program as written and did not recommend any changes. They were interested in exploring the feasibility of allowing ½ acre parcels on septic, assuming it can be engineered correctly and is allowed by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. The Planning Commission would also like to see clustering discouraged on prime agricultural land, but does not want to identify specific target areas in the 2035 General Plan.

Board of Supervisors Direction

- Keep the program as adopted.

Question 4

Should County staff and the consultants develop options to the Clustered Residential Program to make the program a more effective incentive for developers?

Planning Commission Recommendation

The Planning Commission supported the program as written and did not recommend any changes.

Board of Supervisors Direction

- Keep the program as adopted.

Question 5

Are there aspects of the Transfer of Development Credit (TDC) program that need to be further addressed in the 2035 General Plan?

Planning Commission Recommendation

The Planning Commission supported the program as written and did not recommend any changes. Specifically, the Planning Commission does not want the 2035 General Plan to further define sending and receiving areas.

Board of Supervisors Direction

- Keep the program as adopted.

Question 6

Does the Board agree with the overall themes of the GPAC Preferred Policy Alternative?

Planning Commission Recommendation

The Planning Commission supported the overall theme of the GPAC Preferred Policy Alternative.

Board of Supervisors Direction

- The Board agreed with the overall themes of the GPAC Preferred Alternative.

Questions 7 and 8

Does the Board agree with the location/ types of uses depicted on the GPAC Preferred Policy Alternative? Does the Board agree with the changes recommended by the Planning Commission?

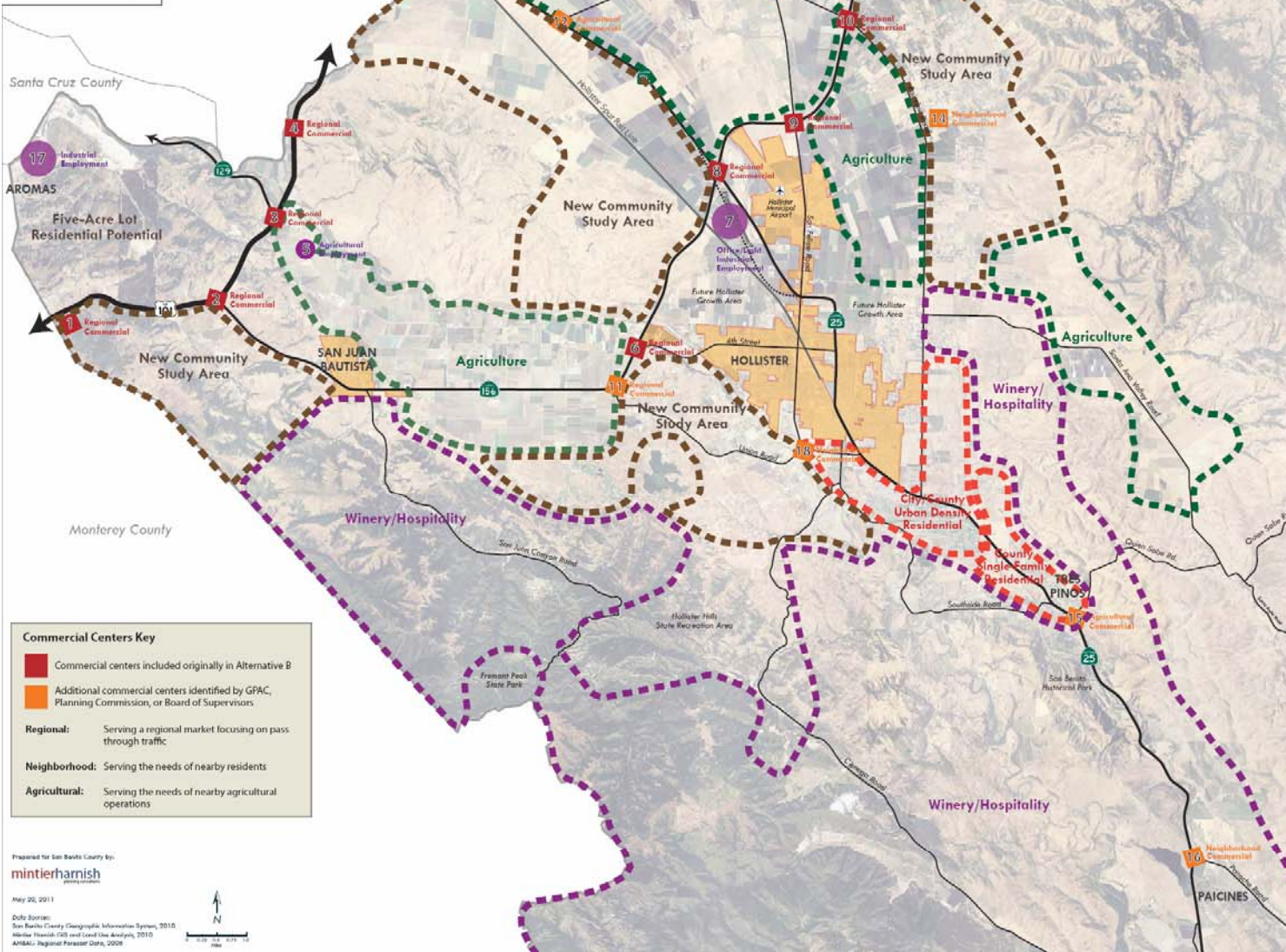
Planning Commission Recommendation

The Planning Commission did not support showing specific areas for future clustering/villages. The recommended instead that future project be handled on a case-by-case basis based on detailed performance criteria. In addition, the Planning Commission recommended including some agriculture-related industrial uses in agricultural areas, recognizing the former Rancho San Benito site in some fashion (possible new village area), and encouraging more opportunities for regional commercial growth (particularly along 101 and at the intersection of 156/25). They also recommended adjusting the boundary of the agricultural area directly northeast of Hollister to take into account the City's Industrial general plan designation for this area, including a wine industry/tourism overlay on Cienega Road and San Juan Canyon Road, and including an industrial/employment area in the northwest corner of the county near quarry and railroad tracks.

Board of Supervisors Direction

Note: The revised Preferred Policy Alternative is attached.

- Rename the areas currently identified as “Villages” to “Master Planned Community Study Area.”
(Note: County staff and consultants recommend the term “new communities”)
- Expand the village nodes at Rocks Ranch and the former DMB site as “Master Planned Community Study Areas.”
- Expand the Wine/Hospitality overlay to cover more of the county around San Juan Canyon Road, Cienega Road, and Highway 25 south of Hollister.
- Include the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) concept in the updated General Plan, but do not necessarily show locations on the land use diagram.
- Include a commercial node at the intersection of Union Road and San Benito Street. This has already been approved, and the Board would like to expand uses if possible.



Commercial Centers Key

- Commercial centers included originally in Alternative B
- Additional commercial centers identified by GPAC, Planning Commission, or Board of Supervisors

Regional: Serving a regional market focusing on pass through traffic

Neighborhood: Serving the needs of nearby residents

Agricultural: Serving the needs of nearby agricultural operations

Prepared for San Benito County by:
mintierharnish
 planning consultants

May 20, 2011

Data Source:
 San Benito County Geographic Information System, 2010
 Altimira Health GIS and Land Use Analysis, 2010
 AMBAG Regional Forecast 2010

Preferred Policy Alternative

Description
 The Board of Supervisors selected this alternative as the Preferred Policy Alternative during their April 26, 2011, meeting. This alternative is similar to "Alternative B" that was presented in the Alternatives Report (12/2010), however it was subsequently modified to reflect public input received during Community Workshop #4 (01/26/11), GPAC input (02/17/11), Planning Commission Recommendations (04/13/11), and Board of Supervisors direction (04/26/11).

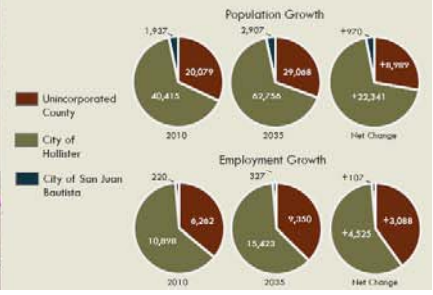
This alternative was selected by the Board of Supervisors because it protects productive farmland in the Hollister and San Juan Valleys, identifies appropriate areas for clustered/village residential development, and promotes unincorporated commercial and employment growth near key highway interchanges and intersections.

Population and Employment Trends
 This alternative assumes the same countywide 2035 population growth as the AMBAG Forecast (94,731), but includes more employment growth than is projected in the AMBAG Forecast (25,100 vs. 21,700). This was done in order to promote economic development, reduce out-of-county commuter trips, and maintain a 0.9 jobs-to-housing ratio countywide. This alternative also allocates more future commercial and employment growth to the unincorporated county than is anticipated in the AMBAG forecast. The pie charts below show how future population and employment would be distributed between the unincorporated county, city of Hollister, and city of San Juan Bautista.

Growth Assumptions
Residential Growth
 Under this alternative five acre residential subdivisions would be discouraged on productive farmland in the unincorporated county in favor of new communities or clustered residential development in areas with few constraints. This would primarily be achieved through a Transfer of Development Credit program and/or Clustered Residential Incentive programs. The County would also adopt more restrictive agriculture protection policies for the Hollister and San Juan Valleys. This alternative also includes urban density single-family residential along the SR 25 corridor south of Hollister.

Commercial and Employment Growth
 This alternative promotes more unincorporated commercial and employment growth than is anticipated in the AMBAG forecast. The purpose of this is to attract regional-serving commercial uses at key highway interchanges and intersections along US 101, SR 156, and SR 25, attract general commercial uses in areas convenient for county residents, and attract agricultural-serving commercial uses near productive farmland. This alternative also includes a large employment center at the intersection of SR 156 and SR 25 near the existing rail line.

Agricultural Preservation and Expansion
 This alternative would establish greater protection for productive agricultural land in the Hollister and San Juan Valleys than the existing General Plan. This would be achieved through the Transfer of Development Credits program and/or the Clustered Residential program. The County also intends to develop specific criteria for the consideration of new communities in the unincorporated county.

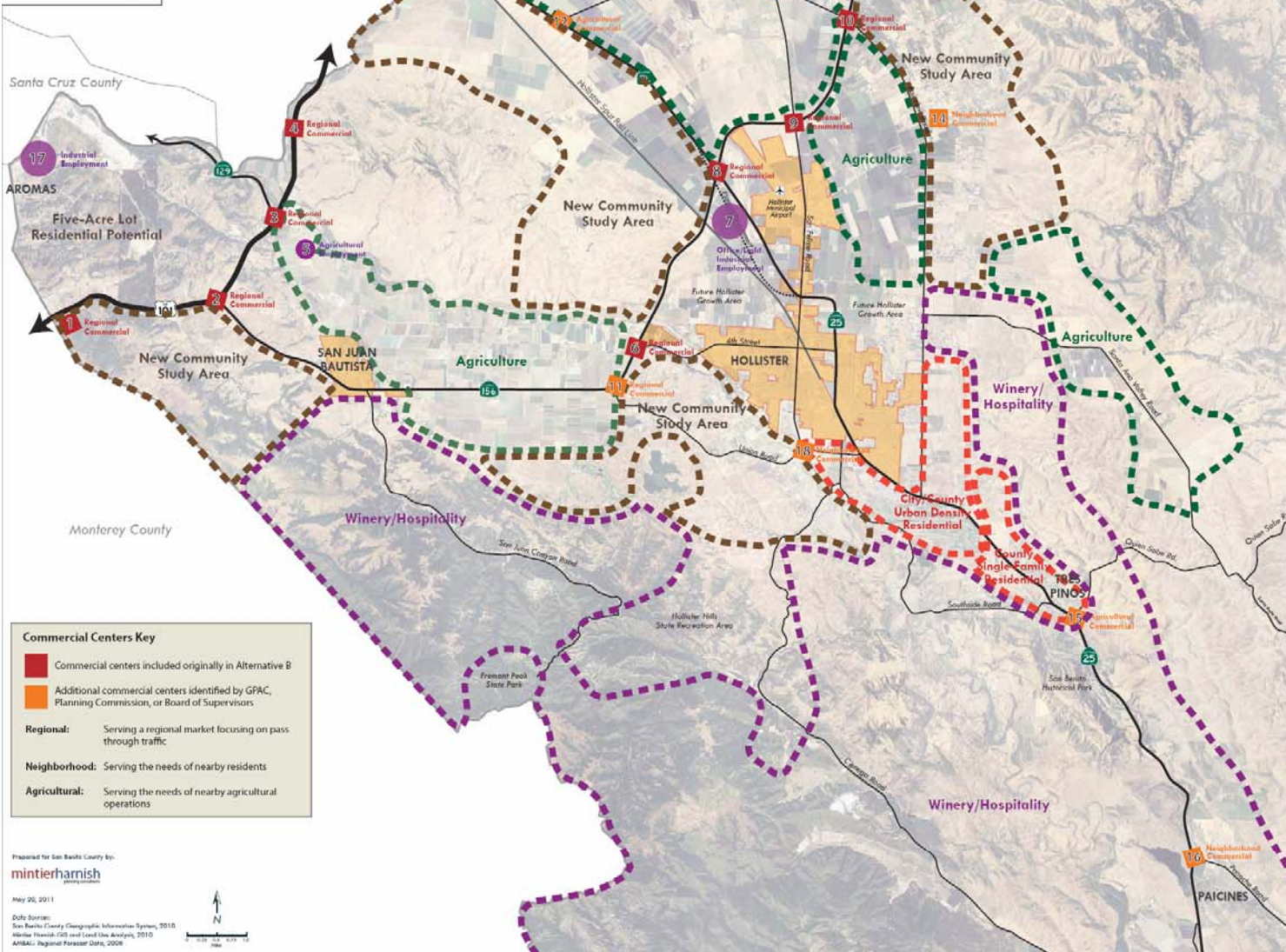


3. Winery/Hospitality Overlay

Winery/Hospitality Overlay

- The Preferred Policy Alternative includes a revised Winery/Hospitality overlay, expanded from its earlier focus on Cienega and San Juan Canyon Roads to include area southwest toward the county boundary and northeast beyond Route 25, almost reaching Santa Ana Valley.
- Staff/consultants would like the GPAC to discuss/make a recommendation on the overlay area and possible uses (e.g., wineries, hotels, special event areas).





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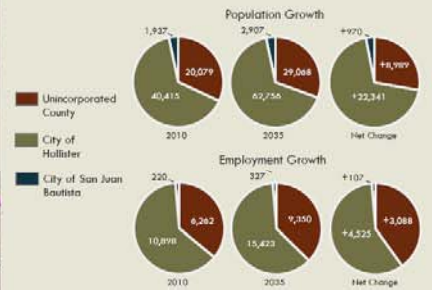
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4. Existing Land Use Element Policy #31

Existing Land Use Element Policy #31

- The attached letter was enclosed with the GPAC agenda of April 29, 2010.
- Staff/consultants would like the GPAC to discuss/make a recommendation on whether to require a General Plan amendment for quarry proposals outside existing designated Mineral-Resource Zones (MRZ).



5. Discuss Next Steps

Next Steps

- Staff and the consultants will use the input received today to help prepare the draft 2035 General Plan.
- Commission or Board may request GPAC to review materials in the future; however, there are no additional GPAC meetings scheduled.
- Draft 2035 General Plan and EIR will be reviewed by the Commission and Board later Summer.





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