

To preserve large forms of open space areas, such as agricultural land and outdoor recreation areas, in order to serve as a means of delineating the urban/rural boundary.

OBJECTIVE:

1. To establish agricultural areas through a combination of the Williamson Act through the use of County agricultural and zoning districts.

POLICY 29 - Floodplain and agricultural areas

Where there is a coincidence of high agricultural productivity and 100-year flood plain/groundwater recharge area the land should be retained in agriculture to serve dual open space functions.

GOAL 5

To protect and preserve the agricultural identity of the County.

POLICY 30 - Legislative methods to protect agriculture and rural identity

It is the County's policy to use the Williamson Act, agricultural zoning, and legislative means, where appropriate, to preserve agricultural resources, maintain a rural identity, and to define and shape the urban form. Residential growth should be directed to where services are already provided and to the least productive agricultural lands.

ACTIONS:

1. The County should reaffirm and encourage the use of Williamson Act for the preservation of its agricultural resources. This should include those areas identified on Figure 4 and parcels adjacent to those already contracted into the Williamson Act.
2. The County should adopt the Agricultural zones which allow only agricultural and compatible uses as indicated in the Land Use Element.

WASTE SOURCE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING OBJECTIVES

1. Establish a variable disposal rate by 1995
2. Reduce generated solid waste by 25% by 1995
3. Achieve a 50% reduction in solid waste by 2000
4. To develop a recycling program consistent with the Integrated Waste Management Plan developed by the State.

POLICY 31 - Hazardous waste and waste source reduction

It is the policy of the County to implement the short-, mid-, and long-range goals and objectives outlined in the County of San Benito Final Source Reduction and Recycling Element and Household Hazardous Waste Element of 1992 or any future amendments.

ACTIONS

1. Require that new developments be reviewed for consistency with the Final Source Reduction and Recycling Element and Household Hazardous Waste Element.

2. Encourage the integration of areas for composting yard waste as a part of subdivision design.

POLICY 32 - Hazardous waste management plan

It is the policy of the County to implement the goals and objectives and policies of the San Benito County Hazardous Waste Management Plan, Volume I, July 1989.

GOAL 6 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

To continue agriculture as an industry in the County and to preserve present agricultural resources for future generations.

OBJECTIVE:

1. To encourage and protect agriculture as a viable industry in the County.
2. To provide financial incentives to protect the most productive soils resources.
3. Stabilize land values for persons interested in purchasing agricultural land while providing economic incentives to land owners to avoid conversion of row crop and orchard land.

Issue: Agriculture has been one of the leading industries in San Benito County. The industry also supports the local economy with secondary jobs in processing, marketing, supplies, pest control, shipping, etc.

POLICY 33 - Support agricultural industry

It is the policy of San Benito County to promote and support the location of new agriculture-related business and industry and support programs that promote local agricultural products and increase marketing opportunities.

POLICY 34 - Options for estate planning

It is the policy of the County to recognize that there are financial options to farmers/ranchers for estate planning purposes such as land trusts.

Issue: Lands used for the production of row, fruit, and nut crops comprise only 2.5% of the County but represented about 63% of the dollar value of agricultural products produced in 1992. For every dollar generated for agricultural production of row, fruit, and nut crops, another three are generated in local support services. Urbanization of these limited areas results in an irrecoverable loss of resources and jeopardizes one of the major industries in the County.

Issue: Agriculture has been the leading industry in San Benito County, yet over 90% of the Williamson Act contract cancellations for land categorized as prime are within the North County area. This bears evidence of the tremendous pressure to convert soil resources to other uses and

ACTIONS

1. New development within the Sphere-of-Influence of an incorporated city shall be designed to conform with fire safety and water supply standards of the city.
2. Subdividers/developers shall be financially responsible for measures to reduce fire hazards for the protection of persons, property, and natural resources.
3. New residential development and additions to existing homes within the SRA shall be required to conform at a minimum to Public Resources Code 4290, San Benito County Code Chapter 17, Uniform Fire Code, Uniform Building Code, and National Fire Codes as applicable.
4. Development within very high or high fire hazard areas shall be required to construct fuel modification zones that will be financed by a homeowner's association, service district, or other method.
5. Measures to reduce fire hazards for the protection of persons, property, and natural resources for existing and new development (e.g. fuel modification zones) shall provide evidence that they will implement policies for preservation of wildlife, reduction of soil erosion, watershed, and protect natural resources from fire hazards.
6. Major subdivisions approved outside refuse collection boundaries shall be required to provide a plan for disposal of flammable refuse.

POLICY 40 - Fire safety

New development will not be allowed where access is a fire safety risk.

POLICY 41 - Flood hazard

One of the County's prime responsibilities is for the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens and property. Because the County recognizes the inherent dangers of construction or development within a flood prone area, it shall be the County's policy to discourage development within areas identified as potential flood hazard areas. Furthermore, it is the County's policy to protect and preserve the 100-year flood plain on the most recent adopted FEMA maps or other maps as wetland resources, watersheds, and tributaries as natural resources for water supply, groundwater recharge, riparian habitat, and fishes.

ACTIONS:

1. The County recognizes that the flood prone areas make up only a small portion of the entire County lands, and therefore significant amounts of developable areas still remain. With this in mind, the County has enacted a Flood Plain zoning designation, which will preclude development within areas subject to flooding as identified on the FEMA maps.
2. If a parcel created before January 1994 is located entirely within the flood hazard area, one single-family residence will be allowed. Construction of a single-family residence shall be required to reduce the volume and velocity of storm water runoff to pre-development levels and to provide necessary measures to avoid impacts to off-site properties pursuant to Ordinance (flood plain).
3. Development of residential homes within the 100-year flood plain is considered a significant environmental impact and will require an environmental impact report (EIR).