

# Agricultural Conservation Mitigation Program (REF220044)







Monterey County Farm Bureau  
September 8, 2022

# Housing and Community Development Advanced Planning

- Housing & Community Development (HCD) provides a range of land use services.
- Advanced Planning oversees long-range planning for unincorporated Monterey County.
- By April 1<sup>st</sup> each year, adopt a 5-Year Long-Range Planning Work Program
- Team of 9 – currently 4 with 2 starting Monday

## 2021 General Plan Implementation And Housing Element Annual Progress Report And Five-Year Long-Range Planning Work Program 2022-2027 (REF220014)

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Description: 

- On April 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, the County is required to submit an Annual Progress Report for the 2010 General Plan Implementation (GPI) and Housing Element Progress to the State. Concurrently, HCD staff prepares a Five-Year Long-Range Planning Work Program.

Location: 

- County-wide unincorporated areas

Project Lead: 

- Melanie Beretti, AICP, Principal Planner, 831-755-5285, [berettim@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:berettim@co.monterey.ca.us)

Current Status: 

- [Long-Range Planning Work Program FY 2023-2027 as approved by the Board](#)
- [2021 General Plan Implementation and Housing Element Progress Report submitted to State](#)

Environmental Information: 

- Not a project per Sections 15060(c)(1) and 15378(b)(4) of the CEQA Guidelines.

Key Dates and Documents: 

- [Board of Supervisors Staff Report and Attachments – March 22, 2022](#)
- [Planning Commission Staff Report and Attachments – March 9, 2022](#)

# Housing and Community Development Advanced Planning

- Key Active Projects:
  - Community Climate Action Plan (CAO Sustainability)
  - Agricultural Conservation Mitigation Program Inland (REF 220044)
  - Vacation (Short-Term) Rental Ordinances (REF130043& REF100042)
  - General Plan - 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element (REF 220020)
  - General Plan - Environmental Justice Element (REF 220017)
  - General Plan - Safety Element (REF 220018)

# Join the Discussion

To provide comments and feedback:

Or email - [hcdcomments@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:hcdcomments@co.monterey.ca.us)

Questions?

Contact Melanie Beretti, AICP, Principal Planner

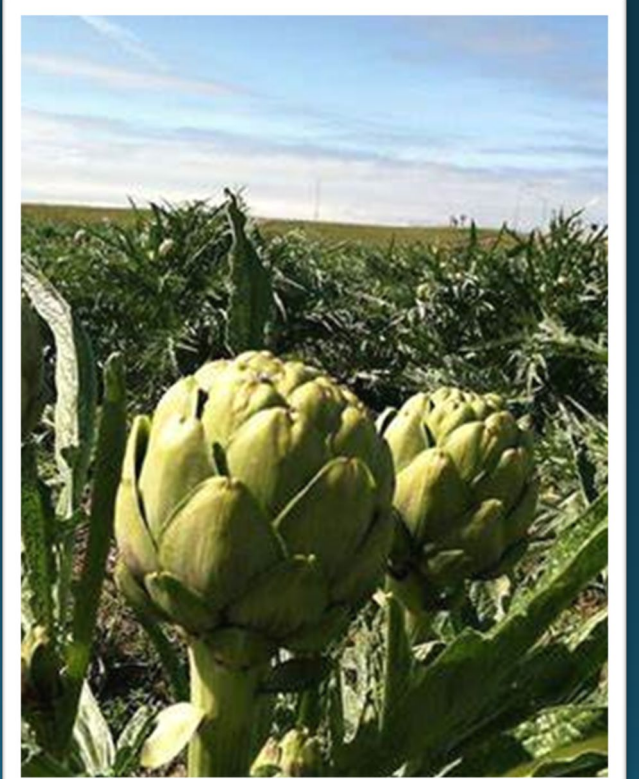
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# Agricultural Mitigation Program

- Agricultural Land Mitigation Ordinance
  - Research & Outreach – Underway to be complete September 2022
  - Policy Workshops & Policy Drafting – October to December 2022
  - Final Ordinance – Early 2023
- Agricultural Buffer Ordinance – Pending Ag Mitigation Ordinance drafting

# Policy Framework

- 2010 General Plan: Preserve, protect, and enhance farmland in order to maintain the productivity and viability of the County's agricultural industry.
- Agricultural Element: Promote the long-term protection, conservation and enhancement of productive and potentially productive agricultural lands.
- Agricultural Conservation Mitigation Program: Mitigate loss of farmland to development





# Policy Input

- Agricultural Conservation Mitigation Program Purpose (Draft)
- Key Definitions to be Developed
  - Prime Farmland
  - Development and Conversion
- Meaningful measure or “Value” of Loss of Agricultural Land
- Eligibility Criteria of Mitigation Receiving Site
- Exceptions or Other Considerations





# Program Purpose & Goals (Draft)

## Purpose

- Provide clear and consistent policies to mitigate the loss of agricultural land due to development or conversion to non-agricultural uses

## Goals

- Promote the long-term protection, conservation, and enhancement of productive and potentially productive agricultural lands
- Ensure the commercial viability of Monterey County's agricultural industry
- Support growth management policies that encourage growth in or near developed or developing areas and away from valuable agricultural land

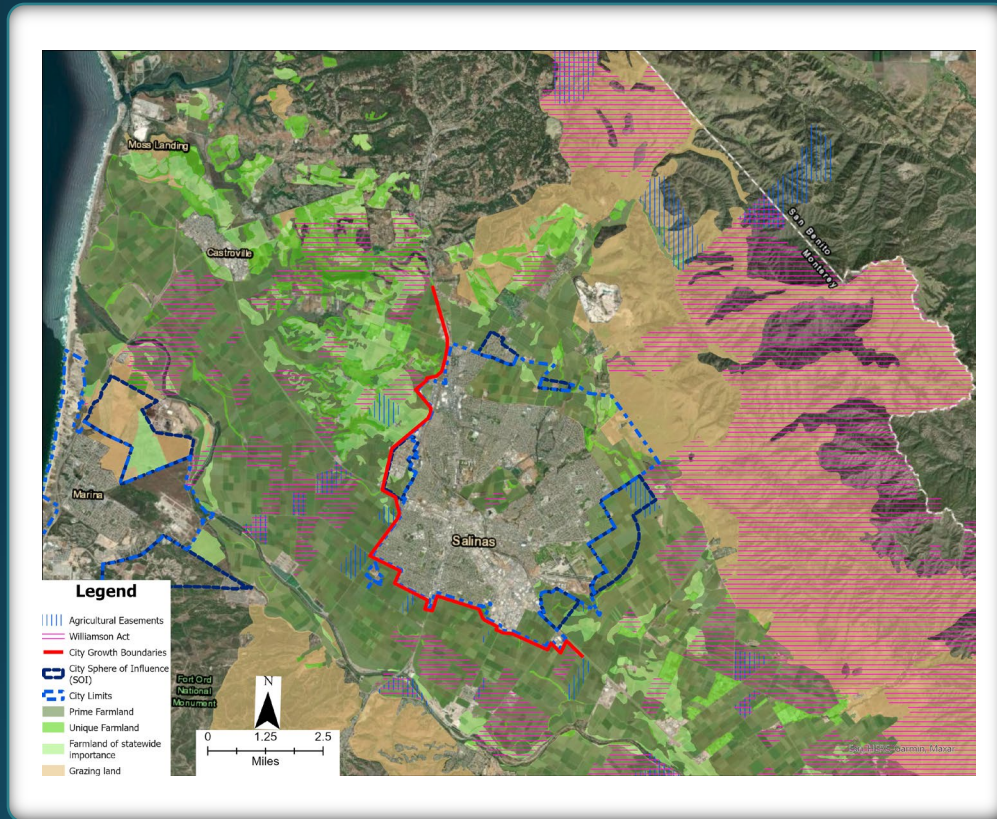
# Policy Input

- Meaningful Measure or “Value” of Loss of Agricultural Land
  - Fair Market Value
    - Difference between the parcel’s value with development rights compared to an agricultural conservation easement without development rights.
    - Appraisal method(s) that account for water availability, soil conditions, and crop production
  - Gradient of Farmland
    - Prime Farmland-Other
      - Prime Farmland-Blanco Drain Area (?)
    - Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland and Locally Important
    - Grazing/Rangeland
  - Gradient of Mitigation Ratios

Farmland Category	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Prime	2 : 1	> 2 : 1	> 2 : 1
Prime – Blanco(?)	> Prime(?)	> Prime(?)	> Prime(?)
State/Unique/Local	1.5 : 1	1.5 : 1	> 1.5 : 1
Grazing/Rangeland	1 : 1	1 : 1	> 1 : 1

# Policy Input

- Eligibility Criteria of Mitigation Receiving Site
  - Like for Like Classification (or better)
  - Location
    - **Mitigate within Planning Area**
      - If an edge property is near the Planning Area boundary, allow for a distance boundary as well?
      - If infeasible within the Planning Area allow for mitigation but with higher ratios?
    - Prioritize at or near the urban/ag boundary
      - SOI/Growth Boundary
      - Adjacent to non-agricultural parcel



# Policy Input

- Eligibility Criteria of Mitigation Receiving Site continued

- Water

- Adequate water supply & quality for ongoing agricultural use
- Accounted for in the 'valuation' of the site?
- LESA Water Resource Availability Scoring?

**Table 5. Water Resource Availability Scoring**

Option	Non-Drought Years			Drought Years			WATER RESOURCE SCORE
	RESTRICTIONS			RESTRICTIONS			
	Irrigated Production Feasible?	Physical Restrictions ?	Economic Restrictions ?	Irrigated Production Feasible?	Physical Restrictions ?	Economic Restrictions ?	
1	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	100
2	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	95
3	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	90
4	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	85
5	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	80
6	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	75
7	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	65
8	YES	NO	NO	NO	--	--	50
9	YES	NO	YES	NO	--	--	45
10	YES	YES	NO	NO	--	--	35
11	YES	YES	YES	NO	--	--	30
12	Irrigated production not feasible, but rainfall adequate for dryland production in both drought and non-drought years						25
13	Irrigated production not feasible, but rainfall adequate for dryland production in non-drought years (but not in drought years)						20
14	Neither irrigated nor dryland production feasible						0

# Policy Input

- Exceptions and Other Considerations
  - Exemptions – Required by AG-1.12
    - Acreage within project/annexation used for inclusionary housing
    - Community Plan or Rural Center Plan that includes a mitigation program
  - Exemptions – Other
    - Agricultural Support Services/Facilities
    - Agricultural Worker and Families Housing
    - Do not exempt solar/renewable energy projects (except supporting ag operation)
  - Exemptions – For Consideration
    - Exempt acreage in required agricultural buffer?
    - Exempt public benefit portions of development, such as regional roads, parks, or open space?
    - Exempt acreage with water conservation/improvement projects that benefits ag?

# Policy Input

- Exceptions and Other Considerations Continued
  - Thresholds for Easement (“good faith”) versus In-Lieu Fees
    - Easement Required (“good faith offer(s)”) – 5 acres or 20 acres minimum?
    - In-lieu Fee -
      - Projects smaller than the required direct conservation easement acre threshold
  - Easement Cannot be Acquired
    - For projects unable to acquire an easement (within the planning area or at all), should mitigation ratios or thresholds be increased?

	Acre Threshold	
Location	In-Lieu Fees	Direct Conservation Easements
Butte County	5 acres or less	5 acres or more
Yolo County	20 acres or less	20 acres or more
City of Woodland	20 acres or less	20 acres or more

# Policy Input

- Exceptions and Other Considerations Continued
  - Timing of Mitigation
    - At time of entitlement
    - When development begins
- Other Complimentary Options to Help Meet Mitigation Requirements
  - High-density developments can reduce mitigation requirements by some amount?
  - Topsoil to improve or create new prime farmland at another site
  - Water conservation/improvement project that benefits ag – off site