

# Agricultural Conservation Mitigation Program (REF220044)



**Agricultural Advisory Committee**

**August 25, 2022 – Continued July 28, 2022, Workshop**

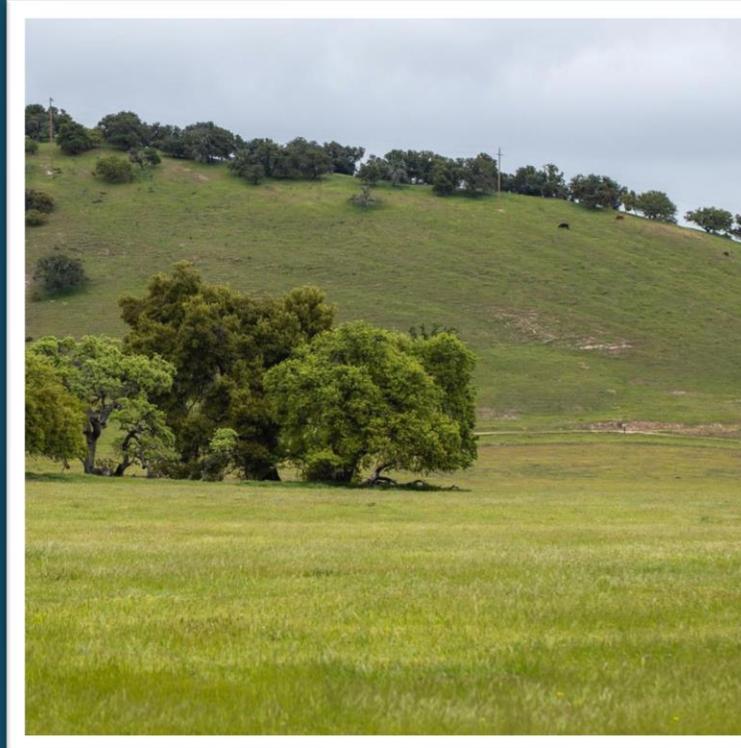
**Agenda Item No. VI.C**

# Action

- Conduct a second workshop to continue the discussion from the July 28, 2022, AAC meeting
- Provide direction to staff for developing draft ordinance(s) related to mitigating the loss of agricultural lands to development in the inland portions of unincorporated Monterey County.

# Timeline

- Meetings & Workshops
  - 5/26 - AAC
  - 7/5 – North County
  - 7/14 – Salinas Valley Cities
  - 7/18 – South County (Sp)
  - 7/28 – AAC Workshop
  - 7/29 – Countywide (Sp)
  - 8/3 – Building Industry Association
  - 8/9 – USDA NRCS
  - **8/25 – AAC Workshop**
  - 8/26 – Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency
  - 8/26 – Grower-Shipper Association
  - 9/8 – Monterey County Farm Bureau
- Planning Commission Workshop (Sp) – 10/2022



# 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 Special Considerations
- ✓ Alternative Protection Measures

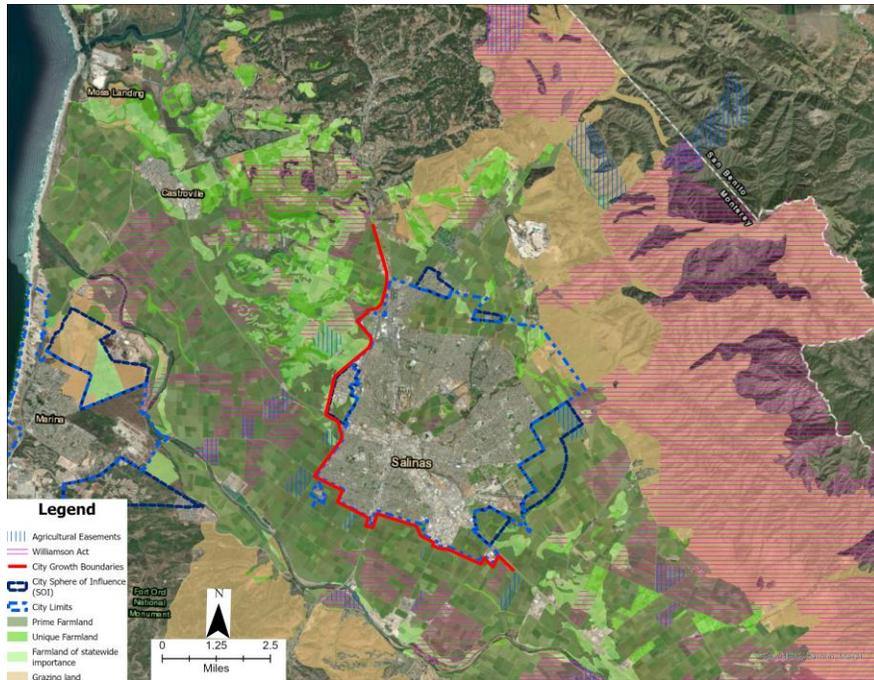
# Policy Input

- Meaningful Measure or “Value” of Loss of Agricultural Land
  - Fair Market Value
    - Easement diminution value as agricultural conservation (appraisal)
    - Methods that account for water availability, soil conditions, and crop production
  - Gradient of Farmland
    - Prime Farmland-Blanco Drain Area
    - Prime Farmland-Other
    - Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland and Locally Important
    - Grazing/Rangeland
  - Gradient of Mitigation Ratios

Farmland Category	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Prime – Blanco	2 : 1	>2 : 1	>2 : 1
Prime - Others	2 : 1	2 : 1	>2 : 1
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, except
      - Blanco Drain Area – mitigate within the Blanco Drain Area
      - Or within a certain radius – 5 miles? 25 miles? Other?
    - Prioritize at or near the urban/ag boundary
      - SOI/Growth Boundary
        - Within 1/4 mile? 1/2 mile? 1 mile? Other?
      - Adjacent to non-agricultural parcel



# Policy Input

- Eligibility Criteria of Mitigation Receiving Site con't

- Water

- Adequate water supply & quality for agricultural use
- LESA Water Resource Availability Scoring

- Other Site Characteristics

- Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) Model
  - Dept. of Conservation developed for California (1997)
  - Develop specific for Monterey County

**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

**Table 8. Final LESA Scoresheet**

A	B	X	C	=	D
Factor Name	Factor Rating (0-100 points)		Factor Weighting (Total = 1.00)		Weighted Factor Rating
<u>Land Evaluation</u>					
1. Land Capability Classification	<Line 1> _____	X	0.25	=	_____
2. Storie Index Rating	<Line 2> _____	X	0.25	=	_____
<u>Site Assessment</u>					
1. Project Size	<Line 3> _____	X	0.15	=	_____
2. Water Resource Availability	<Line 4> _____	X	0.15	=	_____
3. Surrounding Agricultural Lands	<Line 5> _____	X	0.15	=	_____
4. Protected Resource Lands	<Line 6> _____	X	0.05	=	_____
Total LESA Score (sum of weighted factor ratings)					<Line 7> _____

# Policy Input

- Exceptions or Special Considerations
  - Exemptions - Required by AG-1.12
    - Acreage within project/annexation utilized 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)
  - For Consideration
    - Exempt acreage in required agricultural buffer?
    - Exempt public benefit portions of development, such as regional roads, parks, or open space?
    - Consider limiting the size of exempted development (e.g., “larger” projects mitigate)?

# Policy Input

- Exceptions or Special Considerations Con't
  - Thresholds for Requiring Easement (“good faith”) versus In-Lieu Fees versus Other
    - Easement Required (“good faith offer(s)”) – 20 acres minimum? 40 acres?
    - In-lieu Fee -
      - Projects smaller than required easement minimum acreage
      - For balance of what unable to acquire via easement, up to what acreage or %?
    - Size Exempt from mitigation - None

	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

# Join the Discussion

To follow the policy development, provide comment and feedback:

Sign In today – include your email & check the box

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

Questions?

Contact Melanie Beretti, AICP, Principal Planner

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