

Attachment A

This page intentionally left blank.

DISCUSSION

The City of Soledad updated its General Plan in 2005, and, after years of stagnant growth, will be submitting an application to LAFCO to amend their Sphere of Influence (SOI) to allow future annexations that would accommodate the planned growth outlined in their General Plan. As required by state law, the City and County have met to discuss the effects of growth and development resulting from the proposed Sphere of Influence amendment.

The MOA details agreement reached on a number of topics, subject to future environmental review and legal processes with respect to future actions, including the specific sections described below. A summary of the terms of each section is explained following the section title:

Section 1 Logical and Orderly Development

This section describes the adoption of the City's General Plan, that the plan has set the basis for orderly growth and a recognition that urban growth needs to occur in the City, that the County has a desire to implement its 2010 General Plan goals of city centered growth and agricultural preservation, and that the City General Plan helps those goals by providing certainty to farmers and ranchers. The City General Plan is long-term, designating growth areas beyond the typical 20-year growth period to allow master planning of the growth areas.

Section 2 Direction of Future Development

This section details agreement that the land use plan describes the areas to be developed in the long term. It further describes the City's commitment to encouraging infill development, compact and sustainable growth patterns, establishing permanent urban edges to the northwest and southeast, adoption of agricultural buffers, and mitigation of converted agricultural land. It also states that the County will work with the City to manage growth, consult with the City on development projects in the nearby unincorporated area, and preserve agricultural land to maintain physical separation between Gonzales and Soledad (and the prison) to the north and Greenfield to the south.

Section 3 Specific Planning Action

This section describes areas where certain unique circumstances exist and describes agreement on how the City and County will address those areas. The MOA identifies the following specific planning actions: 1) provision of city services, if needed, would be discussed by separate agreement in the Dole/Camphora area, 2) possible expansion of the Los Coches Adobe site to allow economically viable use of the site by the City, 3) possible annexation of the Heavy Industrial area southeast of the Soledad Correctional facilities and along McCoy Road, 4) possible annexation of any future agricultural processing facilities close to the City, and 5) efforts by the County to attempt to direct commercial and industrial growth to vacant City parcels, with some exceptions. Further, the parties agree to discuss any proposed modifications to these land use designations/permanent agricultural edges with the Board of Supervisors. In addition, this section describes a commitment to ensure that San Vicente Road accommodates free flow of both city and agricultural traffic.

Section 4 Development Phasing and Annexations

This section describes phasing provisions described in the City General Plan. The City desires to provide planning for large neighborhoods, through preparation of Specific Plans, to ensure financial capability for infrastructure and orderly growth. LAFCO will analyze

the proposal and ultimately decide how much land to include in the SOI as part of a public hearing process.

Section 5 Agricultural Land Compatibility

This section describes the City's commitment to: 1) maintain agricultural land, within its growth boundaries, in production as long as possible, 2) implement the City's General Plan policies emphasizing land use compatibility, 3) consider amending the City Zoning Ordinance to require recordation of a Right-to-Farm Notice, and 4) work with the County to separate agricultural truck traffic from local traffic. Of note is a commitment for the County and City to work cooperatively on a new alignment for Highway 146, as conceptually shown on Exhibit "A."

Section 6 Agricultural Land Conservation Program

This section states the intention of both parties to preserve agricultural land around the city to ensure viability of the agricultural economy and discusses permanent agricultural easements as a tool to assist in that goal. The section further provides guidance on how and when the program will be implemented, and describes establishment of a Committee to oversee the use of the mitigation fees. This section also allows the cessation of the program if permanent agricultural easements are established on the City's northwest, southwest and east boundaries.

Section 7 Traffic Mitigation Fees

This section states that the County will prepare a Traffic Impact Fee program for this area within 18 months of LAFCO adoption of the Sphere of Influence and require consultation on development projects in the unincorporated area. The City will consider adopting the County's impact fee program and charge the appropriate fee to development within the City for impacts to the County road network covered by the fee program. In the interim, both parties agree to require new development to pay pro rata fees to fund impacts to County and City roads. The County, likewise, will analyze impacts of projects in the unincorporated area on city infrastructure and require development to pay a fair share to the City as mitigation for impacts to City roads.

Section 8 Tax Sharing

This section describes that the parties agree to discuss the existing Master Tax Sharing Agreement prior to any annexation, except all land within the existing Sphere of Influence. The parties also agree that all local taxes, for any annexation that is not consistent with the MOA, shall not accrue to the benefit of the City, to the extent allowed by law.

Section 9 Environmental Review, Public Hearing and Local Decision-Making

This section recognizes the need for California Environmental Quality Act review, public hearings, public outreach, and other approvals prior to any binding decisions. It recognizes that the MOA is a document that states tentative policy commitments until all legal steps have been completed.

This draft agreement is consistent with the County's General Plan requirements for city centered growth and the preservation of agricultural land. It establishes policy commitments of the City and County to do all that they can to preserve the agricultural uses surrounding the City and to ensure cooperation in how growth is to occur in the area. Staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors approve the MOA and authorize the Chair to sign the Memorandum of Agreement on behalf of the County.