

Attachment B

This page intentionally left blank.

DISCUSSION:

Overview of the County's Williamson Act Program

A Williamson Act Agricultural Preserve (AGP) Land Conservation Contract (LCC) and Farmland Security Zone (FSZ) and corresponding Williamson Act contracts are contracts between a property owner and the County whereby the landowner may receive a reduced property tax assessment by agreeing that their property is to be utilized solely for commercial agricultural production of food or fiber and a limited number of "compatible uses." The County of Monterey (County) provides two options for landowners who wish to restrict their land to commercial agricultural uses: AGPs and FSZs and corresponding contracts. Entering into these contracts is entirely voluntary for both the landowner and the County. The minimum initial term for an AGP and/or FSZ contract in the County of Monterey is 20 years. Contracts renew annually on each succeeding January 1, unless either party files a "notice of nonrenewal." If a notice of nonrenewal is filed, the property taxes begin to rise as the contract runs out during the remaining years of the term. Historically, local governments receive an annual subvention of forgone property tax revenues from the State through the Open Space Subvention Act of 1971. Unfortunately, subvention payments were suspended in Fiscal Year 2009-2010 because of the State's fiscal constraints. Regardless of the availability of subvention funds, Williamson Act contracts between landowners and local governments, which provide for a reduced property tax valuation, remain in force.

The following Board of Supervisors' Resolutions authorize the County to enter into Williamson Act contracts with private landowners:

- *Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 01-485, "Amending Procedure for Agricultural Preserves"* as amended by *Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 03-383 (Attachment E)*; and
- *Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 01-486, "Amending Procedure for the Creation of Farmland Security Zones (FSZ) and Contracts" (Attachment F).*

The two programs share the following qualifications:

- The parcel or group of contiguous parcels must consist of 100 or more acres. However, land of 40 acres or more may be eligible if the Board finds that smaller preserves are necessary due to the unique characteristics of the agricultural enterprises in the area and that the establishment of preserves less than 100 acres is consistent with the general plan of the County.
- Having a history of being used primarily for the commercial agricultural production of food or fiber for three of the past five years.
- The property must generate at least \$8,000 annually in agricultural gross income during three of the past five years *or* recently improved land must have the potential for generating \$8,000 of gross income during the next succeeding year.
- The land must be consistent with the County's General Plan.
- If the property is within one mile of a city, that city shall be notified of their right to protest the application.

The FSZ Program, commonly referred to as the Super Williamson Act Program, has an additional requirement that the land under contract must be at least 51% “predominantly prime, Farmland of Statewide Importance or Unique” farmland. Land which qualifies for an FSZ pursuant to the additional criteria typically consists of agricultural land utilized for row crops. Under this program, a property owner receives a greater tax reduction. Lastly, the FSZ Program requires that if an application is within the sphere of influence of a city, the County requires the applicant to provide a Resolution by the City of their approval of the application before the County can process the application.

2026 Round of Williamson Act Applications

This year, 16 Williamson Act applications will be considered for 2026, consisting of 15 applications for the creation of FSZs and one application to establish an Amendment to an existing AGP and LCC. The 16 applications under consideration total 31 parcels and approximately 4,652 acres.

On October 15, 2025, each application was reviewed by the Agricultural Preservation Review Committee (APRC), consisting of staff from the Housing and Community Development-Planning Department, Assessor-Recorder’s Office, Agricultural Commissioner’s Office and the Office of the County Counsel, to assess if each application had completed materials and met the program criteria. Three (3) of the applications lie within one mile of a city, including the City of King City (FSZ Application No. 2026-03 [Rava]), City of Gonzales (FSZ Application No. 2026-14 [Breschini Ranch LLC]), and the City of Salinas (FSZ Application No. 2026-15 [R2 Hunter, LLC]). A notification letter was mailed to all three cities on October 22, 2025 (**Attachment G**). No applications are within the sphere of influence of a city.

On October 16, 2025, the 2026 Williamson Act Applications came before the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) for recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. The AAC recommended approval of the following applications: Amendment to an existing AGP-LCC (No. 77-17) pursuant to Application No. 2026-01 (Kester); and 14 FSZ applications: Applications Nos. 2026-02 (Richardson), 2026-03 (Jerry and Suzanne Rava Family LLC, a California limited liability company), 2026-04 (Breschini Ranch LLC), 2026-05 (Pisoni et al; 2026-06 (Rava), 2026-08 (RCT Land Company), 2026-09 (RCT Land Company,), 2026-11 (Blanco Fields, LLC, and AMMA Farms, LLC), 2026-12 (Bonifacio Gardens, LLC,), 2026-13 (Palmero Greens, LLC), 2026-14 (Amma Farms, LLC), 2026-14 (Amma Farms, LLC,), and 2026-16 (Beverly Joan Morgantini, Trustee of the 1996 Morgantini Revocable Trust Under Declaration of Trust dated August 16, 1996). The AAC recommended continuing without prejudice to the 2027 round of applications FSZ No. 2026-10 (John Edward Doud and Jane Devine Doud, Trustees of The Doud Family 1997 Revocable Trust established on February 18, 1997) to preserve the application fees submitted with this application to allow the owner-applicants time to work through issues affecting their application.

On November 20, 2026, Williamson Act Application No. 2026-03 (Jerry and Suzanne Rava Family LLC, a California limited liability company) was returned to the AAC pursuant to the APRC's recommendation for a continuance to the 2027 round of application fees without prejudice to preserve the application fees submitted with this application and the owner-applicant's request for a continuance to the 2027 round of applications to allow the owner-applicants time to work through issues affecting their application.

The APRC recommendations for each of the applications are summarized below:

AGP-LCC Application No. 2026-01 – Kevin D. Kester & June E. Kester, Trustees of the Kevin & June Kester Family Revocable Trust, U/D/T November 18, 2003; APNs 423-141-053-000 and 423-141-054-000. This application for an Amendment to existing AGP-LCC No. 71-17 adds 160 acres to the current AGP- LCC No. 71-17 (recorded February 26, 1971). Recommendation by the APRC: **Approve the application meeting the minimum qualifications for a Williamson Act AGP-LCC Contract and an Amendment thereto.**

FSZ Application No. 2026-02 – Donald B. Richardson, Jr. and Marilyn DeC. Richardson, Trustees of the Donald B. and Marilyn DeC. Richardson 1992 Living Trust; APN 183-011-012-000; and 267-044-016-000. Recommendation by the APRC: **Approve the application meeting the minimum qualifications for a Williamson Act FSZ Contract.**

This application includes 65 acres comprised of two (2) parcels on the intersection of Arroyo Seco and Paraiso Springs Roads outside the City of Soledad city limits. The property meets the primarily Prime Soils designation and the financial commercial agricultural requirements for an FSZ contract. Although the property is less than 100 acres in total, there are more than 40 acres included in the application which meets the intent of the special Board of Supervisors finding to allow smaller preserves to enter into Williamson Act contracts if these lands demonstrate unique characteristics of the agricultural enterprises of the area. The APRC and the AAC found the subject parcels' soil content is fundamentally rich and exceptionally productive and critically important to preserve in agriculture, especially since the land yields two to three harvests per year for iceberg and romaine lettuces, broccoli, carrots, leeks and baby lettuces/spring mix. This finding is consistent with the circumstances of other Williamson Act AGP and FSZ lands and corresponding Contracts which consist of less than 100 acres and are at least 40 acres or more.

FSZ Application No. 2026-03 – Jerry and Suzanne Rava Family LLC, a California limited liability company; APNs 231-052-015-000, 231-052-020-000, 231-052-021-000, 231-052-022-000, 231-052-024-000, and 235-101-045-000. Recommendation by the APRC: **Continue without prejudice to the 2027 round of applications.**

Reason for recommendation for continuance: In reviewing the application for the purpose of completing the Financial Impact Report by the County Assessor's Office, it was discovered that this application has many issues that require additional time to gather, analyze, and make adjustments to the factored base year value under Proposition 13. While reviewing the property to confirm the current factored base year value is

accurate, it was discovered that there were many physical changes to the property over the years that were unreported to the Assessor's Office. Somewhere between October 2007 and June 2009, per "Google Earth" imagery, there was a new levee constructed along the entire eastern border of Bella Vista Ranch, and a few hundred acres were converted from non-productive land into row crops. In the conversion of the new row crop ground, it appears that some existing productive ground may have been enhanced with new or better topsoil. All these changes constitute "new construction" as per California Revenue & Taxation Code section 70. It also appears that the majority of the vineyard on the Bella Vista Ranch has been removed (over the years). Once those vines were removed, it appears as though the ground was worked and the soil may have been enriched with new topsoil, unreported to the Assessor's Office. The Assessor's Office has asked the owner-applicant for verification of any new soil that has been added to the previous vineyard ground. The Assessor's Office needs to go through the books of this property from early 2000 to 2025 to assess unreported new construction, assess the new value of the land with the removal of the vineyards, and ascertain that the Assessor's Office has accurate values going forward. This level of detailed analysis will require additional time for the owner-applicant for data gathering and submittal to the Assessor's Office, where staff will then begin analysis of the information and make corrections to bring forward an accurate Proposition 13 value for the property.

FSZ Application No. 2026-04 – Breschini Ranch LLC; APN 223-034-009-000.

Recommendation by the APRC: **Approve the application meeting the minimum qualifications for a Williamson Act FSZ Contract.**

This application includes 99 acres comprised of one (1) parcel just outside of the city limits of the City of Gonzales. The property meets the primarily Prime Soils designation and the financial commercial agricultural requirements for an FSZ contract. Although the property is less than 100 acres in total, there are at least 40 acres or more included in the application which meets the intent of the special Board of Supervisors finding to allow smaller preserves to enter into Williamson Act contracts if these lands demonstrate unique characteristics of the agricultural enterprises of the area. The APRC and the AAC found the subject parcels' soil content is fundamentally rich and exceptionally productive and critically important to preserve in agriculture, especially since the land is in an area that has a higher threat of urban expansion as it is located very close to the city limits of Gonzales. This finding is consistent with the circumstances of other Williamson Act AGP and FSZ lands and corresponding Contracts which consist of less than 100 acres and are at least 40 acres or more.

FSZ Application No. 2026-05 – Bruce Pisoni, Successor Trustee, of the Pisoni Family Trust - Exemption Trust, Under Declaration of Trust Dated December 20, 2001; Alisa A. Pura, a married woman as her sole and separate property; Albert Andrew Pura, as Trustee, or any Successor Trustee, of the Albert Andrey Pura Trust, Dated June 11, 2020; Stanley A. Braga and Valerie A. Braga, Trustees of the Braga Revocable Living Trust U.T.A dated July 30, 2001; Clifford D. Corda and Nancy A. Corda, Trustees of the 199 Corda Revocable Trust UDT dated September 8, 1999; Chris William Corda, Trustee of the Chris William Corda Trust dated March 26, 2001;

Kathryn L. Torres, Trustee, The Kathryn L. Torres Family Trust of 2023, U.D.T. 6/26/24; All as their interest may appear or record; APN 223-011-012-000. Recommendation by the APRC: **Approve the application meeting the minimum qualifications for a Williamson Act FSZ Contract.**

FSZ Application No. 2026-06 – Jerry and Suzanne Rava Family LLC, a California limited liability company; APN 422-111-046-000. Recommendation by the APRC: **Approve the application meeting the minimum qualifications for a Williamson Act FSZ Contract.**

FSZ Application No. 2026-07 – RCT Land Company, LP, a California limited partnership; APNs 417-151-027-000 and 257-021-013-000. Recommendation by the APRC: **Approve the application meeting the minimum qualifications for a Williamson Act FSZ Contract.**

FSZ Application No. 2026-08 – RCT Land Company, LP, a California limited partnership; APN 257-021-029-000. Recommendation by the APRC: **Approve the application meeting the minimum qualifications for a Williamson Act FSZ Contract.**

FSZ Application No. 2026-09 – RCT Land Company, LP, a California limited partnership; APN 257-021-004-000. Recommendation by the APRC: **Approve the application meeting the minimum qualifications for a Williamson Act FSZ Contract.**

FSZ Application No. 2026-10 – John Edward Doud and Jane Devine Doud, Trustees of The Doud Family 1997 Revocable Trust established on February 18, 1997; APN 419-501-002-000. Recommendation by the APRC: **Continue without prejudice to the 2027 round of applications.**

Reason for continuance recommendation: This application is for the creation of an FSZ and FSZ Contract for an existing vineyard. However, during the APRC's site visit to the property, the owner-applicant reported that the vineyard will be removed on or about December 2025 due to the changing wine market. Although the application currently meets the primarily Prime Soils designation, minimum acreage, commercial agricultural production and financial requirements for an FSZ, once the vineyard and structures and irrigation system that support the vineyard are removed, the land will no longer qualify for an FSZ. Therefore, it is recommended that the application be continued to the 2027 round of applications to allow the owner-applicant time to determine whether or not any future agricultural use of the land will be viable to qualify for an FSZ or AGP-LCC, or to withdraw their application and request a refund or a partial refund of the nonrefundable application fees from the Board of Supervisors.

FSZ Application No. 2026-11 – Blanco Fields, LLC, a limited liability company and AMMA Farms, LLC, a limited liability company; APNs 135-091-007-000, 135-101-004-000, 135-101-012-000). Recommendation by the APRC: **Approve the application meeting the minimum**

qualifications for a Williamson Act FSZ Contract.

FSZ Application No. 2026-12 – Bonifacio Gardens, LLC, a limited liability company; APNs 135-111-007-000 and 135-111-009-000. Recommendation by the APRC: **Approve the application meeting the minimum qualifications for a Williamson Act FSZ Contract.**

FSZ Application No. 2026-13 – Palmero Greens, LLC, a California Limited Liability Company; APNs 135-112-004-000 and 135-112-001-000. Recommendation by the APRC: **Approve the application meeting the minimum qualifications for a Williamson Act FSZ Contract.**

FSZ Application No. 2026-14 – Amma Farms, LLC, Limited Liability Company; APNs 135-042-004-000; 135-043-005-000. Recommendation by the APRC: **Approve the application meeting the minimum qualifications for a Williamson Act FSZ Contract.**

FSZ Application No. 2026-15 – R2 Hunter, LLC, a California Limited Liability Company; APNs 177-081-005-000; 177-081-006-000; and 177-081-007-000. Recommendation by the APRC: **Approve the application meeting the minimum qualifications for a Williamson Act FSZ Contract.**

This application includes 83 acres comprised of three (3) parcels on Hunter Lane between the City of Salinas and the town of Spreckels. The property meets the primarily Prime Soils designation and the financial commercial agricultural requirements for an FSZ contract. Although the property is less than 100 acres in total, there are more than 40 acres included in the application which meets the intent of the special Board of Supervisors finding to allow smaller preserves to enter into Williamson Act contracts if these lands demonstrate unique characteristics of the agricultural enterprises of the area. The APRC and the AAC found the subject parcels' soil content is fundamentally rich and exceptionally productive and critically important to preserve in agriculture, especially since the land is in an area that has a higher threat of urban expansion as it is located between the City of Salinas and the town of Spreckels. This finding is consistent with the circumstances of two (2) other existing FSZs and FSZ contracts on Hunter Lane that are less than 100 acres and at least 40 acres or more: Martin Ranch (FSZ 2022-05; 59.61 acres) and the Scattini Ranch (FSZ 99-009; 45.8 acres).

FSZ Application No. 2026-16 – Beverly Joan Morgantini, Trustee of the 1996 Morgantini Revocable Trust Under Declaration of Trust dated August 16, 1996; APNs 111-021-005-000 and 111-021-007-000. Recommendation by the APRC: **Approve the application meeting the minimum qualifications for a Williamson Act FSZ Contract.**