

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER, Room 370 • SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA 93408-2040 • 805.781.5450



10/26/98

LAURENCE L. LAURENT
SUPERVISOR DISTRICT TWO

Robert G. Carr
Department of Transportation
District 5
50 Higuera Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-5415

Dear Mr. Carr:

At long last, I am pleased to submit the County of San Luis Obispo's formal request for Scenic Highway designation for Highway One from the Monterey County line to the San Luis Obispo city limits. The formal request packet includes:

- Visual Assessment Survey of the route
- Video of the route
- Resolution of Intent from the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors
- Resolution of Intent from the City of Morro Bay
- Applicable ordinances and land use policies for corridor protection
- Maps
- Letters of support

As we agreed earlier, the topographic maps called for in the Designation Handbook were not feasible in this case due to their scale. Rather than using topo maps with overlays, our Planning Department has created separate, color-coded maps showing land-use zoning, visual intrusions and natural features. Because our mapping system is not equipped to detail the zoning designations within the urban areas, these are indicated in the accompanying ordinance package.

I want to thank you for your assistance over the last year in preparing this request. Your technical support and willingness to work with staff has been critically important. Assuming that Caltrans' DTAC Committee will look favorably upon this request, you and my Administrative Aide, Sarah Christie, can be proud to have played important roles in helping to complete Scenic Highway designation for both ends of the Big Sur corridor and its gateways. This recognition is long overdue, and I'm very happy to have worked with you on this.

Sincerely,


Laurence L. Laurent
District 2 Supervisor

CALTRANS HIGHWAY ONE SCENIC HIGHWAY PROPOSAL

San Luis Obispo County Portion

Visual Assessment

I. INTRODUCTION

The "Southern Big Sur/San Luis Obispo Scenic Highway" is a 57-mile proposed state scenic highway route within San Luis Obispo County along Highway One from the Monterey County line to the San Luis Obispo city limits. The section has already been designated as "eligible" by Caltrans. The purpose of this visual assessment is to initiate consideration by Caltrans of a proposal to upgrade this section of highway from its current "eligible" status to full-fledged "scenic" designation within the California Scenic Highway Program.

In Monterey County, 78 miles of Highway One currently enjoy Caltrans Scenic Highway designation along the Big Sur coast from State Route 68 to the northern San Luis Obispo County line. Obviously, the scenic and historic value of this popular roadway does not end there. The coastal area of northern San Luis Obispo county includes a variety of superb scenery and sweeping views worthy of recognition and protection. It follows the route taken by the Spanish explorer Juan Gaspar de Portola, on the first European expedition of California in 1769. Extending the scenic designation into San Luis Obispo would provide continuity within the Caltrans Scenic Highway Program, and officially recognize the unique aesthetics of the region.

Caltrans guidelines require a visual assessment as a first step in the nomination process. Section III of the guidelines states:

"The local jurisdiction is to prepare a brief visual assessment, in the form of a written summary, to familiarize themselves and Caltrans' staff with the proposed scenic highway. The purpose of the visual assessment is to inventory the natural landscape (e.g., landform, vegetation, water features) and the type and amount of visual intrusions along the proposed scenic highway".

The proposed scenic highway is located entirely within the county of San Luis Obispo, and passes through the unincorporated towns of San Simeon, Cambria, Harmony and Cayucos, as well as the city of Morro Bay. A representative from each of these areas has been involved in the creation of this visual assessment.

Assistance in preparing this visual assessment was provided by San Luis Obispo County Supervisor Bud Laurent, Economic Advisory Council, Morros Advisory Group, San Luis Obispo County Planning Department, North Coast Advisory Council, Cayucos Advisory Group, Los Osos Advisory Council and the Morro Bay City Council.

II. VISUAL ASSESSMENT

The description of the proposed Southern Big Sur/San Luis Obispo Scenic Highway is given from the perspective of a traveler driving south on Highway One from the Monterey County/San Luis Obispo County line to the San Luis Obispo city limits.

County Line to San Simeon Creek (Length-21.3 miles)

Percentage Visual Intrusions:

Minor Intrusions, Less than 5%

Major Intrusions, Less than 1%

This open expanse of wild coastline is the southern gateway to the internationally famed Big Sur Coast. The 2-lane highway hugs the precipitous mountain sides in this area and provides unobstructed and sometimes dizzying views of the rugged shoreline typical of the route to the north. The steep mountains feature native coastal chaparral and wildflowers in season, as well as stands of Monterey cypress and pine. There are only a few, unobtrusive wooden telephone poles on the inland slope. The ocean views in this area are vivid and memorable in the extreme, and free from any visual intrusions. The striking contrast between the crashing surf directly below and the vast expanse of the Pacific ocean leaves a lasting impression. On a clear day, seals, otters and migrating whales are often sighted from this vantage point.

A mile below the county line is Ragged Point Inn, the southern most visitor serving facility along the Big Sur coast. Recently remodeled, its rustic craftsman architectural style of redwood and native stone blends well with the surrounding landscape. It is situated on the west side of the highway, overlooking the ocean, and does not impede coastal views.

From Ragged Point, the highway continues its steep descent for approximately 2 more miles to San Carpoforo Creek. It was here that Portola's expedition had to abandon their coastal route in 1769 and turn inland, unable to traverse the imposing cliffs of Big Sur.

At San Carpoforo, the creek empties out into a large lagoon and long, sandy beach with rock outcroppings. The ranch's turn-of-the-century home and outbuildings, in immaculate repair, are immediately adjacent the highway on the east side. The road levels out along the rolling coastal terrace which characterizes much of the route to the south. The predominant vegetation includes low grasses and shrubs with occasional stands of Monterey cypress, oak and pine. The traditional land use is pastoral grazing of cattle and horses, and the property owner has fenced the cattle in with a fence made from wooden posts and barbed wire. Other agricultural uses include cultivation of row crops and hay.

The visual integrity of this area is underscored by the distance and range of views, as well as the diversity of coastal characteristics. Wooden telephone poles on the east side of the highway are set well back from the road right-of-way. The winding nature of the highway along the contours of the coast provides the viewer with sweeping views of the coastline as far south as San Simeon Point, with distant views on clear days of Montana de Oro State Park near Los Osos. The undeveloped Santa Lucia Mountains provide a seasonally changing backdrop of color as they turn from spring green to golden in the summer. This portion of the route is bisected by several creeks and corresponding wetlands rich in plant and animal life. It also contains many scenic coves and sandy beaches such as Arroyo de la Cruz (a 3-mile long crescent-shaped beach and lagoon with year-round creek) and San Simeon Creek Lagoon which are popular beaches for public access.

The Piedras Blancas Motel, a small inn and gas station 9 miles south of the County Line is a visitor-serving outpost constructed in 1940's motor-court style. The single-story, blue and white building is on the west side of the highway, with the owners' house immediately adjacent.

A newly constructed Vista Point 12 miles south of the County Line is a popular turn-out for motorists to safely park for beach access and viewing of the elephant seals which haul out on this and many other area beaches. Signs directing motorists to the parking area occur about 1/4 mile to the north.

With the above exceptions, development between the County Line and San Simeon, 20 miles to the south, is very limited. The few exceptions include occasional wooden telephone poles, livestock fencing, some period ranch homes and outbuildings on the east side of the highway, and a handful of sensitively designed contemporary homes below the level of the road along the Big Sur portion of the highway which constitute very minor visual intrusions and do not impede coastal views.

Notable historical sites visible along the way include the Piedras Blancas Lighthouse, built in 1878 to warn ships away from the treacherous cliffs, now used by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as an observation and research facility. Hearst Castle, a State Historical Monument, commands a prominent view of the coast and can be seen on clear days high on the mountain behind the entry to the facility. The village of old San Simeon, 16 miles from the county line, features a cluster of traditional adobe buildings designed by castle architect Julia Morgan to store the castle's furnishings, and a rebuilt fishing pier, originally used for whaling and merchant ships. The small-scale Spanish architecture structures are well maintained, set well back from the road, and visually complement surrounding land forms and vegetation. The Sebastian Store, built in the 1860s, a State Historic Landmark is barely visible through the trees and accessible via San Simeon Road. The newly refurbished Pacific Schoolhouse, built in 1881, sits on a grassy knoll just east of the store. These historical and architectural elements are pleasing cultural characteristics of the village. Signs directing the public to both the historical monument and W.R. Hearst Memorial State Beach picnic area are located adjacent to the village.

Between the village of Old San Simeon and the residential/tourist serving town of San Simeon Acres is an 8-mile stretch of open grazing lands and coastal terrace with continuous ocean and mountain views.

San Simeon Acres is a resort-commercial and residential area between Old San Simeon Village and Cambria. For motorists driving south on Highway One from Big Sur, San Simeon Acres is the first area where major services and facilities are available. The development is visible and readily accessible from Highway One, which divides the village. While the viewshed through this 1/2 mile stretch is dominated by motels, restaurants and retail shops, one never loses sight of the village's spectacular backdrop of rolling hills and open grazing lands which define the viewshed to the east, and the ever-present Pacific Ocean to the west. The community has plans to beautify this area in the near future with landscaping and possible traffic calming measures.

San Simeon Creek to Cayucos (Length-15.5 miles)

Percentage Visual Intrusions:

Minor Intrusions, 5%

Moderate Intrusions 5%

Visual resources of this area include the forested hillsides of Cambria, and the open farm and grazing lands of Green Valley and Harmony Valley. The coastal bench narrows substantially in this area, giving way to rolling hills covered with stands of Monterey pine, the southern-most native stand and one of only five native Monterey pine forests left in this state. The town of Cambria is situated along a two-mile stretch,

with commercial facilities on the east side of the highway, and residential development nestled well into the forest to the west. Its scenic physical setting is highly valued by residents as well as visitors to the area. Visitor-serving facilities are accessed via Main Street, so most of the town's facades are not visible from Highway One. Arriving in Cambria, a stop light at the northern edge of town directs tourist traffic to the town core. The rear of shops and signs are visible on the east side of the highway for approximately 1/4 mile. The route follows the Santa Rosa Creek corridor along the edge of town, with the corresponding riparian vegetation of sycamores, bay laurels, willows and low-growing native shrubs and brush. In addition to the aforementioned stoplight at the intersection of Main Street, there is another at Burton Drive, and a third at the southern end of town at Ardat.

South of Cambria the rural vistas resume, with the rolling coastal valley dotted with livestock. A high ridge separates Highway One from the ocean, and the first of many interesting granite outcroppings begin to appear in this area. These grow larger and more dramatic as we proceed south. The area is free from visual intrusions, with the exception of a flashing yellow light at the intersection of Highways One and 46 (Green Valley Road).

Seven miles south of Cambria, the tiny town of Harmony is nestled in a small draw on the east side of the highway. Harmony was once a co-op dairy and creamery for the surrounding ranches, built in the 1880s. The historic adobe structures now house a post office, small church, artists' studios and shops. A wine tasting facility designed in the style of an old barn was recently built on a bluff just above the town. There are just two residences in the town of Harmony, traditional turn of the century bungalows.

South of Harmony the highway reconnects with the coastal terrace at Villa Creek. Ocean views resume along with occasional wetlands. The lack of man-made structures on the west side of Highway One creates a scenic vista of Estero Bay all the way to the community of Cayucos with distant views of the famed Morro Rock. This is the predominant scenic element of the area, combining the near views of the meandering Villa Creek channel and lagoon and the open coastal bluffs. The coastline features extensive kelp beds and offshore rock outcroppings used as habitat for marine mammals and birds. The coastal terrace is undeveloped all the way to Cayucos, except for one partially completed single family residence on the west side of the highway, and a solitary windmill for stock water. Old farm houses, barns, corrals and windmills support the historic agricultural use on the rolling farmlands primarily to the east of the highway.

Visual intrusions along this portion of the highway include four billboards, power lines, a flashing yellow light at the intersection of Highways One and 46, and a prefab single family residence on the coastal bluff just north of Cayucos. Just south this structure, the highway widens from 2 lanes to 4, and remains 4 lanes all the way to the city limits.

Cayucos to Toro Creek (Length-4 miles)

Percentage Visual Intrusions:

Moderate Intrusions 15%

The Cayucos segment of Highway One skirts the town itself, and leaves the coastal terrace. The road climbs above the town, providing elevated views of the Estero Bay all the way south to Morro Rock. Cayucos is a small town of about 2,500 residents, and urban development here has been compact. There are some two- and three-story homes on the hillsides to the east, but most residences are on the west side are single-story, some screened from view by landscaping and natural topography, allowing continued

public coastal views. The historic Cayucos pier, originally built by Captain Cass in the 1870s, is visible from the north end of town, as is the Cayucos Creek valley. Estero Bay is an area of visual contrast between the development of Cayucos and Morro Bay.

Very little commercial development is visible from Highway One through Cayucos, and there is only a single traffic light at the intersection of Highway One and Old Creek Road. There are a few older residences and commercial shops in the immediate vicinity. At the southern end of Cayucos, open coastal views of sandy beaches and rolling hills resume, and stretch southward to the city of Morro Bay, making a clear delineation between the two communities. The beach in this area is readily accessible from the highway, and is popular with walkers, joggers, fishermen and surfers.

Toro Creek to South Bay Blvd. (Length-4.6 miles)

Percentage Visual Intrusions:

Minor Intrusions, 5%

Moderate Intrusions, 15%

Major Intrusions, 10%

After leaving the urban boundary of Cayucos, open vistas resume again for approximately 4 miles until the motorist reaches the outskirts of Morro Bay. The initial coastal view features a prominent profile of Morro Rock, and the urban development of Morro Bay. This city is the most densely populated area along the route, although it still retains much of the small-scale nature of a beach and fishing village. The three industrial concrete smoke stacks of the PG&E power plant are the most obvious visual intrusions. Billboards, traffic signals, commercial development and accompanying signs, residential neighborhoods and trailer parks are all evident along this portion of the corridor, although glimpses of the ocean are readily apparent. Power lines are found on both sides of the highway. Prominent natural features of this area include the Morro Bay, Morro Rock, and the open, undeveloped hillsides to the east of the highway. Leaving Morro Bay, pastoral agricultural lands resume once again, along with views of sandy beaches and coastal dunes. The highway descends gradually into the Chorro Valley, and is characterized by dramatic views of the Morros, the Coastal Range and the valley below.

South Bay Blvd to San Luis Obispo City Limits (Length-11 miles)

Percentage Visual Intrusions:

Minor Intrusions, 5%

Moderate Intrusions 15%

The Chorro Valley provides for a variety of agricultural pursuits, mostly seasonal row crops and flowers. The lower stretch of Chorro Creek is currently being freed from its man-made channel and returned to its original course across reclaimed farmlands. This environmental enhancement project will result in a portion of that valley being restored to its pre-agricultural wetland condition. The most vivid and memorable natural feature of this area is the string of distinct granite hills known as the Morros: Morro Rock, Black Hill, Cerro Cabrillo, Hollister Peak, Cerro Romauldo, Chumash Peak, Bishop Peak, Cerro San Luis and Islay Hill. These impressive geologic landmarks are considered one of San Luis Obispo's most treasured natural features. They jut abruptly out of the surrounding pastoral landscape like spy-hopping whales, and are favorite subjects of local and visiting artists. Their sheer granite walls and craggy outlines silhouetted against the sky are one of the most memorable sites along the entire route. They provide magnificent contrast with the open views of the Santa Lucia mountains, and usher the southbound traveler into San Luis Obispo proper.

As the motorist approaches San Luis Obispo, urban development is notable at the half-way point along Chorro Valley. It is in this area we begin to see some of man-made visual intrusions. A public shooting range facility located on the east side of the highway is visible but entirely contained within two single-story modular structures, well set back from the highway. Dairy Creek Golf Course, the County's newest public golf facility, was designed and constructed to cause as little site disturbance as possible. Only a small portion of it is visible from the highway, just before Cuesta College. The college is the first large development south of Morro Bay located on the west side of the highway. It has typical academic-style architecture, with low buildings and playing fields, and two traffic signals to facilitate the flow of traffic onto the campus. Immediately adjacent to the east of the college is Camp San Luis, a well-maintained and regularly used training facility built in 1927 by the California National Guard. As the oldest facility of its type in California, Camp San Luis, with its whitewashed bungalows, officers' quarters and irrigated training fields has substantial historic and nostalgic significance, particularly to World War II veterans and military historians. California Mens Colony, is set well back from the road on the east side of the highway, and the 3-story buildings are well-screened by mature sycamore and eucalyptus trees which line the highway on the east side. Telephone poles are evident on either side of the road in many areas, although they are not a dominant feature.

Bishop's Peak is the last of the Morros along the route before entering the city limits of San Luis Obispo. Perhaps the most cherished of all the seven sisters, Bishop's Peak straddles the city limit line. At this time Bishop's Peak is undeveloped and accessible only by foot trail. The community is currently raising funds to purchase the landmark, to preserve it in perpetuity from residential development and dedicate it as public open space. At its base, the historic Mail Pouch barn, another cherished community landmark, is slumped in picturesque disrepair. The San Luis Obispo Historical Society has plans to renovate and maintain the beloved structure.

California State Polytechnic University agricultural fields and dairy are the final visual element before leaving the unincorporated area and entering the city limits. The dairy barns and corrals are clustered and almost entirely screened from view. The University, with its strong agricultural curriculum, maintains several hundred acres of grazing land for livestock as well as the production of row crops, vineyards, orchards and dryland hay. These fields provide dedicated open space around the campus, and help create a smooth transition from the rural hinterlands to the vibrant urban development of San Luis Obispo City. It is here, at the grand entrance to San Luis Obispo, that the proposed scenic highway designation terminates

III. CURRENT ZONING AND FUTURE LAND USE

The majority of undeveloped land within the scenic corridor (over 95%) is zoned Agriculture. Isolated pockets of Recreational zoning exist at Ragged Point, San Simeon Point and San Simeon State Park. The North Coast Area Plan, (NCAP) which includes the northern half of the scenic corridor proposes a change of zoning at the Monterey County line from Rural Lands to Agriculture. It also allows for resort development near San Simeon Point, and expanded Commercial Retail activity at Old San Simeon Village. The extent and exact nature of this proposed development is currently under review by the County and the California Coastal Commission.

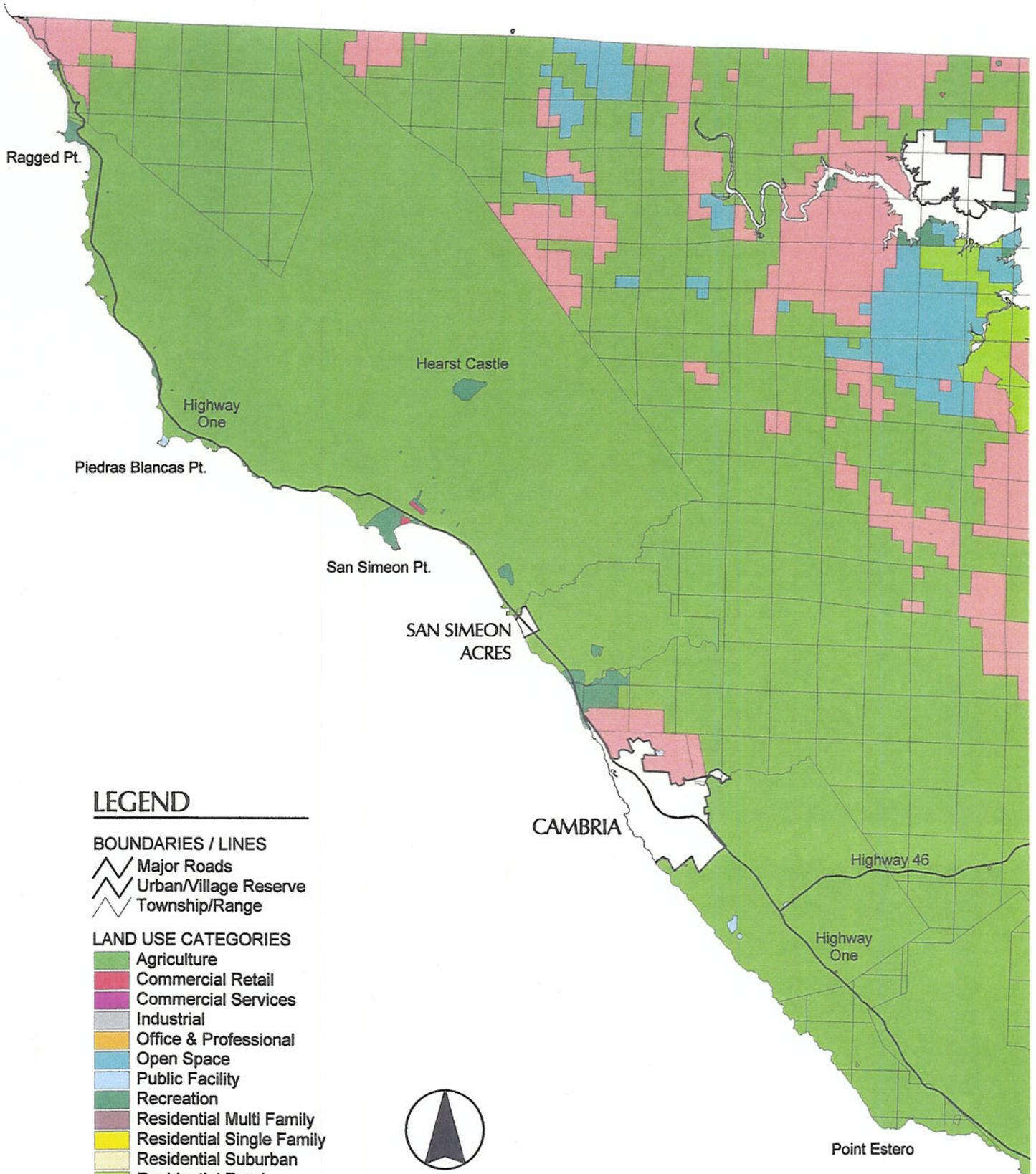
The hillsides around Cambria are zoned Residential Single Family, and if all legal lots were developed, the total population for that town of 5,600 residents would be 26,000. However, the NCAP update includes measures which will reduce build out by 20%. The community is actively working to further reduce build out through their Transfer Development Credit program and lot retirement. Limited water resources restrict the rate of new home construction to 75 homes annually.

The coastal terrace north of Cayucos is owned by a Southern California development consortium. Like previous owners, they have sought a zoning change from the county which would allow them to subdivide and develop their 276 acres of Ag land. The county rejected their latest attempt in February, 1998. The property will soon be listed for sale, and a local land trust is working with several state and federal agencies to obtain funding to purchase the land for open space.

The Cayucos hillsides east of Highway One are zoned Rural Lands with a minimum parcel size of one acre. The county considers this area to be unbuildable, and has been acquiring these lots through tax default sales. The county's policies discourage any development of these hillsides due to their geologic instability and lack of urban services.

North Morro Bay is a mixture of low- to medium-density residential and strip commercial development. This area is approaching maximum build-out, with little opportunity for new construction. The remainder of the scenic corridor through Morro Bay is zoned Public Facilities (Morro Bay High School), Industrial, Commercial, Visitor Serving, Industrial (light and heavy) and low- to medium-density Residential. The only significant undeveloped open space parcels within the city limits along the corridor are the 37-acre property on the east side of the highway currently used for cattle grazing. Thirteen acres are zoned commercial, and the owners have approval for a shopping center on the site. An alternative proposal including a golf course, convention center and hotel project has yet to undergo public review. The remaining 24 acres will retain the existing Ag zoning. An adjacent 18-acre parcel is zoned Rural Residential, although it is currently supporting grazing uses. The city of Morro Bay has not received a development proposal for this property.

Ag zoning resumes south of Morro Bay through the Chorro Valley. Cuesta College, Camp San Luis and the California Mens Colony occupy land zoned Public Facilities, and Rancho El Chorro and Dairy Creek Golf Course are zoned Recreational. No new development is currently proposed for these areas. The corridor reverts again to Ag zoning from the golf course to the city limits. This is Cal Poly's orchards, row crops and range land, which support the large agricultural curriculum at that public institution.



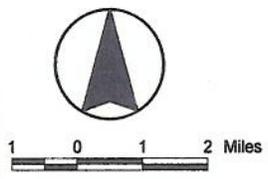
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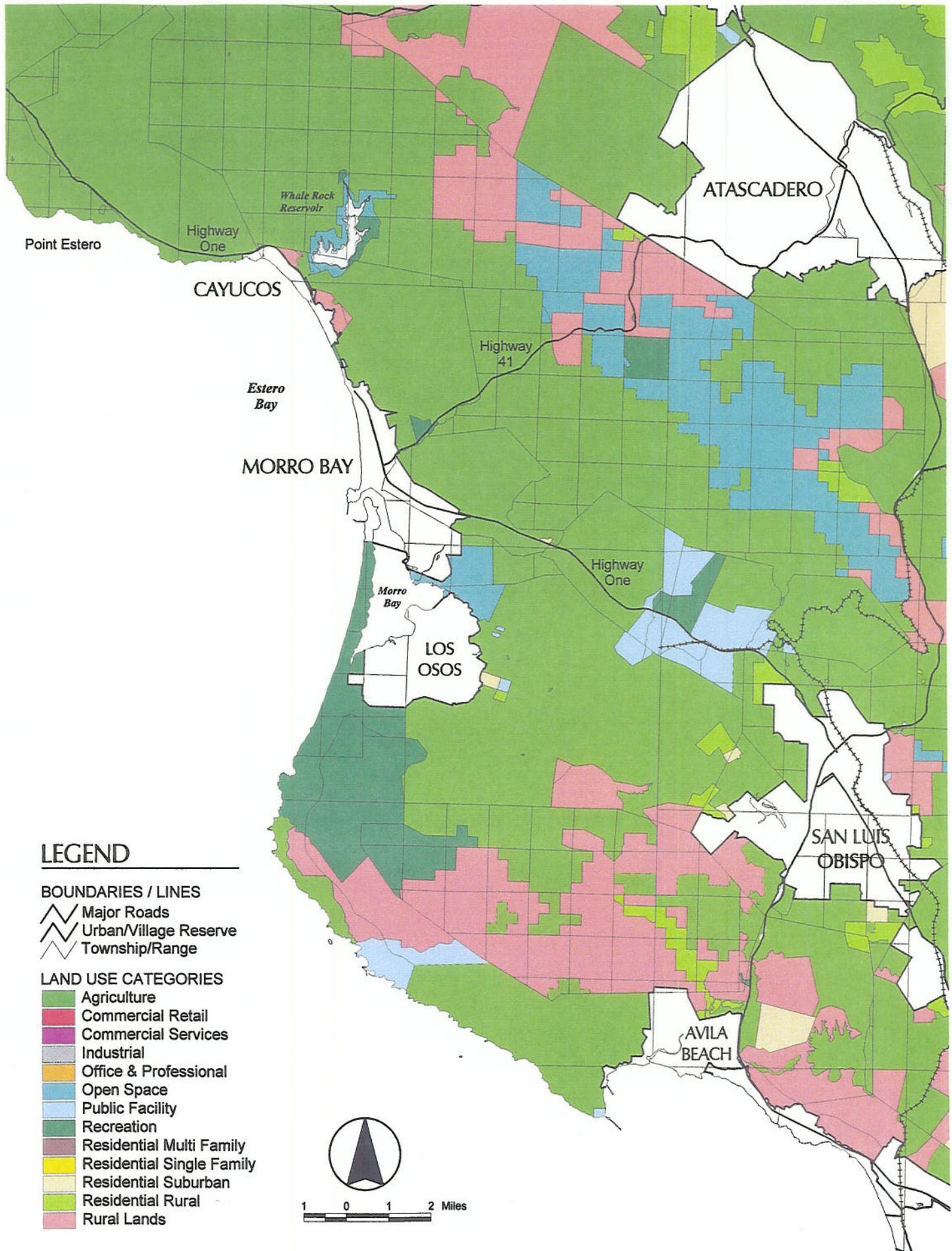
BOUNDARIES / LINES

- Major Roads
- Urban/Village Reserve
- Township/Range

LAND USE CATEGORIES

- Agriculture
- Commercial Retail
- Commercial Services
- Industrial
- Office & Professional
- Open Space
- Public Facility
- Recreation
- Residential Multi Family
- Residential Single Family
- Residential Suburban
- Residential Rural
- Rural Lands





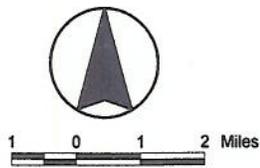
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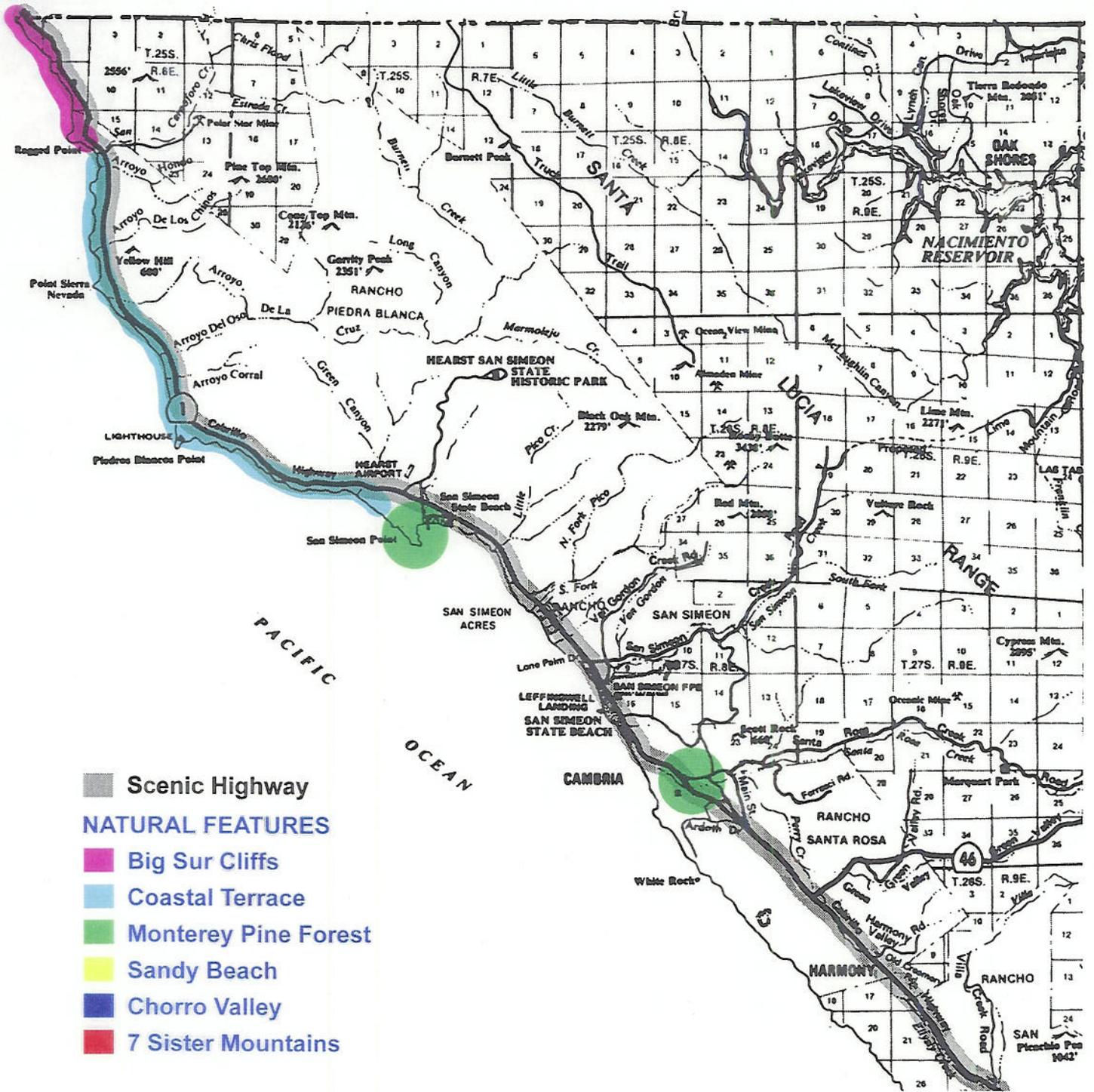
BOUNDARIES / LINES

-  Major Roads
-  Urban/Village Reserve
-  Township/Range

LAND USE CATEGORIES

-  Agriculture
-  Commercial Retail
-  Commercial Services
-  Industrial
-  Office & Professional
-  Open Space
-  Public Facility
-  Recreation
-  Residential Multi Family
-  Residential Single Family
-  Residential Suburban
-  Residential Rural
-  Rural Lands







- Scenic Highway
- Visual Intrusions
- Minor Intrusion
- Moderate Intrusion
- Major Intrusion

SCENIC HIGHWAY CORRIDOR PROTECTION PLAN

For California State Highway One, San Luis Obispo County

On November 20, 1998, the Departmental Transportation Advisory Committee (DTAC) voted unanimously to approve the County of San Luis Obispo's Resolution Package, submitted as part of the process for obtaining State Scenic Highway designation for Highway One from the San Luis Obispo City limits to the Monterey County Line.

In order to proceed with the designation process, the County is now submitting a Corridor Protection Plan, consisting entirely of currently existing county-wide and coastal zone land-use ordinances, as well as existing land use ordinances and policies within the city limits of Morro Bay. The five areas addressed in this protection plan, as required by *Caltrans' Guidelines for the Official Designation of Scenic Highways* are:

- Regulation of Land Use (density and allowable land uses)
- Site Planning (review authority for proposed developments)
- Prohibition of off-site outdoor advertising, and control of on-site advertising
- Control of earthmoving and landscaping (grading ordinances, landscaping requirements)
- Design and appearance of structures and equipment (utility structures, etc.)

In 1972, the voters passed Proposition 20, known as the Coastal Initiative, which established the California Coastal Act. Among other things, the Coastal Act designated a "Coastal Zone," along the coastal fringe from Oregon to Mexico. The Coastal Zone is subject to more stringent guidelines having to do with development patterns and visual resources.

As a result of the Coastal Act, local jurisdictions were required to prepare Local Coastal Plans (LCPs) containing a Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance (CZLUO) to incorporate state mandated coastal protections, into local General Plans. Once a local jurisdiction's LCP is certified by the Commission, it is deemed to be in compliance with these stricter guidelines. Following certification, local jurisdictions assume permitting authority from the Commission. However, most building permits issued by the County or the City within the Coastal Zone is appealable to the Commission.

Both the County of San Luis Obispo and the City of Morro Bay have certified Local Coastal Plans. This means their zoning and allowable land use ordinances have been deemed to be in compliance with the spirit and the letter of the Coastal Act. The section of Highway One proposed for Scenic Highway designation is therefore protected by the most stringent land use requirements in the state. (See Attachment A 1-4)

COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

•Regulation of Land Use (density and allowable land uses)

Approximately 99 percent of the land within the scenic corridor is zoned Agricultural. Within the County, the minimum parcel size is 320 acres, with one residence allowable per parcel. Special circumstances such as irrigated orchards or vineyards may qualify for a 20 acre minimum parcel size. Allowable uses on Ag land are outlined in the Coastal Zone Framework for Planning Table "O." They include, Crop Production and Grazing, Ag processing, Ag Accessory Structures, Nurseries, Specialized Animal Facilities, Coastal Access ways, Passive Recreation, Farm Support Quarters, Home Occupations, Bed & Breakfasts, Single Family Dwellings, Temporary Dwellings, Game Preserves, Water Wells and Impoundments, Forestry and Accessory Equipment Storage.

A small portion of the route is zoned Rural Lands. The minimum parcel size for Rural Lands is also 320 acres, but two residences are allowed per parcel, and special circumstances can allow parcels of 10 acres in size. Allowable uses on Rural Lands include all allowable uses under Ag zoning, plus the addition of a single Caretaker's Residence per parcel.

Land along the scenic corridor within the Urban Service Lines of San Simeon, Cambria and Cayucos, and the City Limits of Morro Bay, is variously zoned Residential Single Family, Residential Multi-family, Commercial Retail, Commercial Service, Commercial Retail and Public Facilities.

Because many different types of zoning are frequently found in a relatively small area, and because virtually all of the communities have some combination of all types of zoning (with the exception of San Simeon Acres and Cayucos, which have no Public Facilities zoning visible from the highway), it makes sense to consider the allowable uses in all of these categories together.

Single family dwellings, temporary dwellings, apartment houses, condominiums, mobile homes, mobile home parks, retail businesses, service stations, restaurants, consumer repair services, health care services, hotels, motels, bed & breakfasts, and warehouses are the most common uses permitted.

Less than one percent of the route is zoned Open Space or Recreational. The only allowable uses of Open Space are utility lines, game preserves, water impoundments, coastal access ways, passive recreation crop production, grazing, and mines (any mine proposal would be subject to the highest level of review, a Development Permit, and would require an environmental impact report be prepared). Recreational zoning may support crops and grazing, coastal access, libraries, marinas, drive-in theaters, outdoor sports and recreation, passive recreation, camping, forestry operations, and single family dwellings. Other uses are allowable in all land use categories if special conditions are met. See Attachment B, Table "N" from the CZ Framework For Planning for a complete listing.

•Site Planning (review authority for proposed developments)

The review process for approving new development in the Coastal Zone is as follows:

1) Minor Use Permits (MUPs) are issued directly from the County Planning and Building Department. Before issuance, County Planning staff evaluates the proposed project for compliance with local zoning and building ordinances. If a project application is deemed complete and in compliance, the MUP is publicly noticed in the newspaper. If no member of the public requests a hearing, the MUP is issued to the applicant. If a member of the public does request a hearing, a hearing is scheduled before a hearing officer. If the decision of the hearing officer is appealed, the MUP will be reviewed by the Planning Commission. If the decision of the Planning Commission is appealed, the project will be considered by the Board of Supervisors. If the project is in the Coastal Appealable zone, the Board's decision may be appealed to the Coastal Commission. Single family residences, certain types of fences, and remodels are typical developments which qualify for a MUP.

2) Development Plans are required by the Planning Department for more complex or larger projects. These require the applicant to produce an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) which documents all the changes which will take place as a result of development. Mitigations to those impacts are also detailed in an EIR. Development Plans and their accompanying EIRs are considered by the Planning Commission in fully noticed public hearings. The Planning Commission reviews the project's compliance with General Plan policy, local Advisory Council input, and compliance with the LCP. If the decision of the Planning Commission is not appealed by either the applicant or a member of the public, a permit will be issued. If the decision is appealed to the Board of Supervisors, it is considered by the Board in a fully noticed public hearing. The Board's decision is appealable to the Coastal Commission if the project is within the appealable zone.

3) General Plan Amendments and Area Plan Updates require comprehensive EIRs, fully noticed public hearings, and must be approved by the Board of Supervisors. Updates and amendments require Coastal Commission certification before taking effect.

4) The California Coastal Commission is the final permitting authority in the Coastal Zone. The Commission, made up of 12 members appointed by the Governor, the Speaker of the Assembly and the President Pro Tem of the Senate, reviews the project for compliance with the Coastal Act. Section 30251 of the Coastal Act states: "The scenic and visual qualities of the coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance the visual quality in visually degraded areas. New development in highly scenic areas such as those designated in the California Coastline Preservation and Recreation Plan prepared by the Department of Parks and Recreation and by local government shall be subordinate to the character of its setting."

•Prohibition of off-site outdoor advertising, and control of on-site advertising

The County of San Luis Obispo has a county-wide moratorium on off-site billboard advertising. In section 23.04.306 (c), the CZLUO cites County Ordinances 2715 and 2740 as prohibiting:

“Any off-premise sign that directs attention to a business, service, product, or entertainment not sold or offered on the premises on which the sign is located, including but not limited to billboards and other off-premise outdoor advertising signs.”

On-site advertising within the Coastal Zone is limited as well. No lighted (including neon) or flashing signs are permitted. Commercial signs are limited in dimension to no more than 15% of the building face, up to a maximum of 80 square feet. Marquee signs have a maximum area of 40 square feet. Maximum height for freeway identification signs is 50 feet above grade. A copy of CZLUO section 23.04.310 is attached (See attachment C 1-10).

•Control of earthmoving and landscaping (grading ordinances, landscaping requirements)

Any grading in the Coastal Zone which takes place on slopes greater than 10% and/or moves more than 5,000 cubic yards of earth requires a grading permit. All grading permit applications are reviewed by the Environmental Coordinator for a determination pursuant to CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act). The Environmental Coordinator makes the determination whether the project warrants a negative declaration or an EIR. This determination is returned in writing to the Planning Department. CZLUO section 23.05.030 (e.3) states one of the four conditions of approval is that “The proposed grading will not create substantial adverse long-term effects visible from off-site”. The County’s Grading Standards in the Coastal Zone further limit grading for new development to slopes no greater than 30%, and state that grading shall not occur within 100 feet of any environmentally sensitive habitat. Special attention is given to public view corridors in section 23.05.034, which states:

“Grading, vegetation removal and other land form alterations shall be minimized on sites located within areas determined by the Planning Director to be a public view corridor from collector or arterial roads. Where feasible, contours of finished grading are to blend with adjacent natural terrain to achieve consistent grade and appearance.”

A complete copy of this section of the CZLUO is attached (See Attachment C 11-18).

•Design and appearance of structures and equipment (utility structures, etc.)

In section 23.08.286 of the CZLUO, development standards of electric transmission lines is discussed. Sub-section d.(4) states:

“Where feasible, utility lines shall be undergrounded when their placement would limit or detract from views of the ocean from collector or arterial roads. In all other cases, they shall be sited to minimize their visibility from public roads.”

Public Utility Structures for other than electric and communications transmission and natural gas distribution require a Development Plan. Unless the Environmental Coordinator determines the project is exempt, this triggers the need for an Environmental Impact Report which must be certified by the Planning Commission or, on appeal, the Board of Supervisors. Pursuant to CZLUO section 23.08.288, the permit application shall include, among other things, a proposed design of the facility, revegetation, screening and landscaping during construction. Once constructed, Public Utility Facilities shall:

“...be screened on all sides. An effective barrier will be established through the use of a solid wall, fencing and/or landscaping. The adequacy of the proposed screening will be determined during the land use permitting process.”

A copy of the complete section is attached. (See Attachment C 19-21).

CITY OF MORRO BAY
Scenic Highway Corridor Protection Plan

- **Regulation of Land Use (density and allowable land uses)**

The City of Morro Bay is the only incorporated city and the most densely populated area along the route. The land use designations along the scenic corridor within the city limits include residential, commercial, industrial and agriculture, with a portion of the southern area of the City zoned Open Space Recreation. The City is almost entirely within the Coastal Zone. The City's land use regulations contained within its General Plan, certified Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan and implementing ordinances must be consistent with the California Coastal Act. The City's General Plan and Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan are contained in two (2) documents, with the policies and programs within the General Plan Elements mirroring those within the Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan. Morro Bay Municipal Code Section 17.24 (Primary Districts) contains the Zoning District standards for the land use designations. The district standards are attached as Exhibit "A".

- **Site Planning (review authority for proposed developments)**

All new development within the City of Morro Bay must receive an approved Coastal Development Permit prior to issuance of a building permit. The California Coastal Commission has direct permit authority up to the mean high tide line, with the remaining land within the Coastal Zone under the City of Morro Bay's permit authority. Developments within the Coastal Commission's appeal jurisdiction (generally those areas within 300' of the first public road or within 100' of an environmentally sensitive habitat area) are appealable to the Coastal Commission. Morro Bay Municipal Code Chapters 17.58 (Coastal Development Permits and Procedures) and 17.60 (Use Permit Procedures, Notices and Variances) require discretionary review of detailed land and site plans for new development that must be found consistent with the General Plan, Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan and the California Coastal Act. The review process for approving new development within the City of Morro Bay is as follows:

1. **Administrative Coastal Permits:** New residential construction on sites located outside of the Coastal Appeal jurisdiction and minor commercial construction require Administrative Coastal Permit approval. Administrative permits are issued directly by the Planning Department following the required ten (10) day noticing period, and are conditioned to meet all applicable codes and ordinances. Administrative actions are appealable to the Planning Commission within ten (10) days of the action approving the permit. Appeals are heard by the Planning Commission at a noticed public hearing. Planning Commission actions are appealable to the City Council. The City Council has final permit authority over projects which are not appealable to the Coastal Commission pursuant to Coastal Act Section 30603.

2. **Regular Coastal Permits:** New residential construction on sites within the Coastal Appeal Jurisdiction and new commercial projects require Regular Coastal Permit approval. Regular Coastal Permits are reviewed by the Planning Commission at duly noticed public

hearings. The Planning Commission reviews the project's compliance with General Plan, Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan and applicable Zoning Codes. The Planning Commission's action is appealable to the City Council and if the site is located within the Coastal Appeal Jurisdiction or meets the criteria with Coastal Act Section 30603, the Council's action is appealable to the Coastal Commission.

Applicable Zoning Ordinance Code Sections, General Plan and Local Coastal Program Land Use Policies and Programs which govern site planning within the City of Morro Bay are listed as follows, and attached as Exhibit "B":

1. Morro Bay Municipal Code Chapter 17 (Zoning Ordinance) Section 17.48.190: Protection of Visual Resources and Compatible Design.
2. Visual Resources and Scenic Highways Element Policies and Programs:
 - a. Policy VR-1;
 - b. Policy VR-2, Programs VR-2.1 and VR-2.2;
 - c. Policy VR-3, Programs VR-3.4, VR-3.5, and VR-3.6.
3. Safety Element Policies and Programs:
 - a. Policy S-6, Programs S-6.1, S-6.2, and S-6.3;
 - b. Policy S-7, Programs S-7.1, S-7.2, and S-7.3.
4. Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan Policies Chapter X Hazards:
 - a. Policies 9.04, 9.05, 9.06, 9.07, 9.08, 9.09;
5. Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan Policies Chapter XIII Visual Resources:
 - a. Policy 12.04, 12.06, 12.07, 12.08, 12.09, 12.10 and 12.11

- **Prohibition of off-site outdoor advertising, and control of on-site advertising**

Morro Bay Municipal Code Section 17.68 contains the City's sign regulations which prohibits new billboards within our City limits and governs the size and height of on-site outdoor advertising visible from the highway. Section 17.68 is attached as Exhibit "C".

- **Control of earthmoving and landscaping (grading ordinances, landscaping requirements).**

Grading within the Coastal Zone is considered "development" under the Coastal Act and requires a Coastal Development Permit. General Plan Safety Element Program S-6.2 states that plans for development shall minimize cut and fill operations. Plans showing excessive cutting and filling shall be modified or denied if it is determined that the development could be carried out with less alteration of the natural terrain. Program S-6.3 states that all development shall be designed to fit the site topography, soils, geology, hydrology, and other existing conditions and be oriented so that grading and other site preparation is kept to an absolute minimum. To accomplish this, structures shall be built to existing natural grade whenever possible. Natural features, landforms,

and native vegetation, such as trees, shall be preserved to the maximum extent feasible. S-7.1 notes that for permitted grading operations on hillsides, the smallest practical areas of land shall be exposed at any one time during development, and the length of exposure shall be kept to the shortest practicable amount of time. Local Coastal Program Land Use Policies 9.05, 9.06 and 9.07 mirror the General Plan programs. These programs and policies are attached as part of Exhibit "B".

- **Design and appearance of structures and equipment (utility structures, etc.)**

Morro Bay Municipal Code Section 17.48.050 sets the standards for undergrounding of utility lines and states "all utility service lines to all new development, except single family residences, on vacant lands (including the demolition and replacement of individual structures), and to major redevelopment projects, shall be undergrounded. For any project 1.5 acres or larger, all electric distribution and communication lines located on or immediately adjacent to the project site shall be undergrounded in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations of the California Public Utilities Commission." Morro Bay Municipal Code Section 17.30 (Special Uses) requires a Special Use Permit for locating public utility facilities with special findings which address the routes of all new lines. This section states that the routes of all new lines shall, to the maximum extent feasible, avoid important coastal resources such as recreation and environmentally sensitive areas, including the undergrounding of utility facilities. Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan Chapter VII (Energy/Industrial Development) Policy 5.08 states "The City will require that new pipelines and transmission lines are installed with suitable mitigation measures such as erosion control, revegetation, and other measures necessary to protect all scenic resources and habitat values.