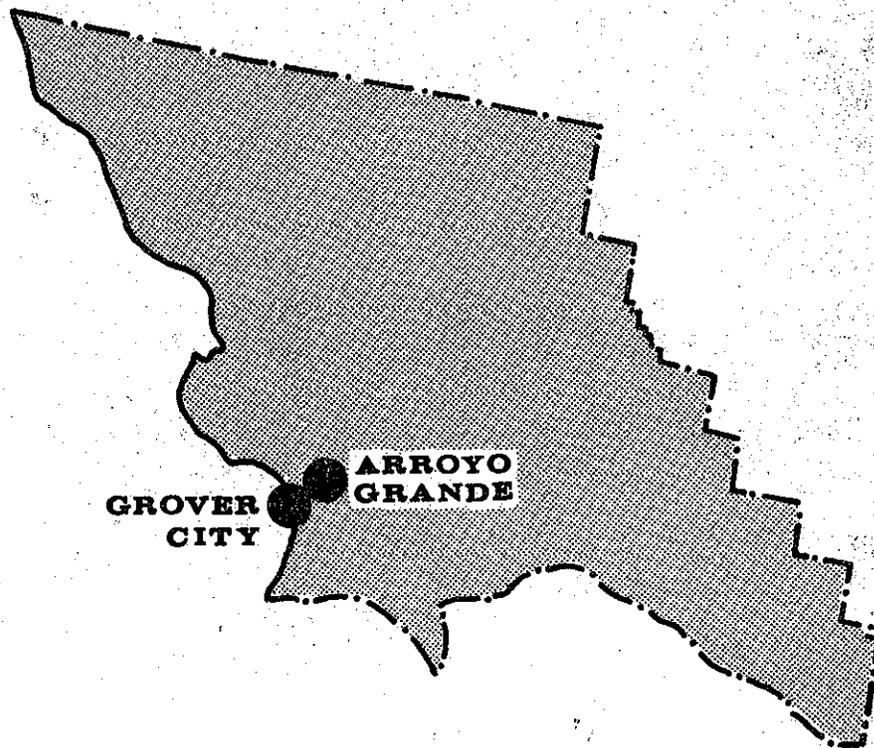


TOM SULLIVAN  
OFFICE COPY

# OPEN SPACE - CONSERVATION ELEMENT

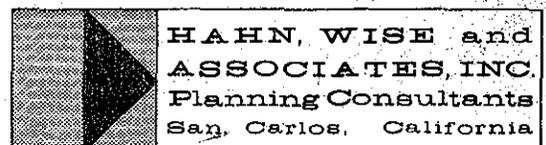
# GENERAL PLAN

CITIES OF  
ARROYO GRANDE  
GROVER CITY



San Luis Obispo County,

California



RESOLUTION NO. 1045

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ARROYO GRANDE ADOPTING THE OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION ELEMENTS OF THE ARROYO GRANDE CITY GENERAL PLAN.

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission of the City of Arroyo Grande has prepared a general plan report, together with general plan maps, entitled the "Open Space" plan required by Government Code Section 65561, and the "Conservation" plan required by Government Code Section 65302(d), and did all things legally and technically required by law to develop reports and maps adequate in scope and authority to serve the purposes of a general plan; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Government Code Section 65501 et seq. the City Council gave required notice and did hold a public hearing on June 26, 1973, for the purpose of considering the adoption of the Open Space and Conservation Elements of the General Plan report and maps, and at which public hearing the Open Space and Conservation Plans, report and maps were displayed, explained and reported upon; and

WHEREAS, said Open Space and Conservation Elements of the General Plan report and maps thereof are necessary for sound future community development, the preservation of community values, and the promotion of the general health, safety, convenience and welfare of the citizens of the City of Arroyo Grande;

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ARROYO GRANDE DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The City Council of the City of Arroyo Grande does hereby find and determine that the public interest, convenience and necessity require that the Open Space and Conservation Elements of the General Plan, as amended, be adopted.

Section 2. The City Council of the City of Arroyo Grande does hereby adopt the Open Space and Conservation Elements of the General Plan, as amended by Addendum No. 1, dated June 19, 1973, together with the maps and descriptive material.

On motion of Councilman Millis, seconded by Councilman de Leon and on the following roll call vote, to wit:

AYES: Councilmen Millis, Talley, de Leon and Mayor Schlegel

NOES: None

ABSENT: Councilman wood

the foregoing resolution was passed and adopted this 26th day of June, 1973.

s/ Calvin H. Schlegel  
Mayor

ATTEST: s/ Ines A. del Campo

I, Ines A. del Campo, City Clerk of the City of Arroyo Grande, County of San Luis Obispo, State of California, do hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution No. 1045 is a true, full and correct copy of said resolution passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Arroyo Grande at a regular meeting of said Council held on the 26th day of June, 1973.

WITNESS my hand and seal of the City of Arroyo Grande affixed this 27th day of June, 1973.

s/ Ines A. del Campo  
City Clerk of the City of  
Arroyo Grande

(SEAL)

RESOLUTION NO. 73-304

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE  
CITY OF ARROYO GRANDE ADOPTING THE OPEN SPACE  
AND CONSERVATION ELEMENTS OF THE GENERAL PLAN.

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission of the City of Arroyo Grande has prepared a general plan report, together with general plan maps, entitled the "Open Space" plan required by Government Code Section 65561, and the "Conservation" plan required by Government Code Section 65302 (d), and did all things legally and technically required by law to develop reports and maps adequate in scope and authority to serve the purposes of a general plan; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Government Code Section 65501 et seq. the City Planning Commission gave required notice and did hold a public hearing on June 19, 1973, for the purpose of considering the adoption of the Open Space and Conservation Elements of the General Plan report and maps, and at which public hearing the Open Space and Conservation Plans, reports and maps were displayed, explained and reported upon; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission of the City of Arroyo Grande has a responsibility to plan for the desirable future growth and development of the City of Arroyo Grande;

NOW, THEREFORE, THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF ARROYO GRANDE DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The Planning Commission of the City of Arroyo Grande does hereby find and determine that the public interest, convenience and necessity require that the Open Space and Conservation Elements of the General Plan, as amended, together with the maps be adopted.

Section 2. The Planning Commission of the City of Arroyo Grande does hereby adopt the Open Space and Conservation Elements of the General Plan, as amended by Addendum No. 1, dated June 19, 1973, together with the maps and descriptive material.

Section 3. The Planning Commission Chairman is authorized and directed to certify this approval upon the Open Space and Conservation Elements of the General Plan as amended and forward to the City Council for consideration.

On motion by Commissioner Pope, seconded by Commissioner Spierling, and by the following roll call vote, to wit:

AYES: Commissioners Calhoon, Goulart, Pope, Spierling  
and Chairman Jones  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: Commissioners Gullickson and Porter

the foregoing Resolution was adopted this 19th day of June, 1973.

ATTEST: s/ Pearl Phinney  
Secretary

s/ Raymond E. Jones  
Chairman

THE OPEN SPACE ELEMENT  
AND  
THE CONSERVATION ELEMENT  
OF THE  
GENERAL PLAN  
FOR  
ARROYO GRANDE  
GROVER CITY  
CALIFORNIA

Adopted June, 1973

Hahn, Wise & Associates, Inc.  
Planning Consultants

## Preface

The Open Space and Conservation Elements presented herein includes the basic data developed in the Open Space Element prepared and adopted by San Luis Obispo County. Also included is the basic data for the Conservation Element.

The Plan also uses the same guidelines and objectives as the County Open Space Plan where applicable.

The first four sections deal with the principles, objectives, recommendations, and basic data followed by the two specific planning areas which include Arroyo Grande and Grover City.

An Open Space and Conservation Plan is set out for each of the Planning Areas as well as a review of basic data, existing conditions, principles and objectives, Open Space and Conservation requirements and the need for both Open Space and Conservation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARROYO GRANDE - GROVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. SUMMARY & OBJECTIVES	1
A. Open Space	1
B. Conservation	4
II. OPEN SPACE - GENERAL	6
A. State Open Space Requirements	6
B. Other State Laws Related to Open Space	9
C. The Need for Open Space	11
D. Land for Parks	12
E. Obstacles to Open Space	12
III. CONSERVATION - GENERAL	16
A. State Conservation Requirements	16
B. Other State Laws Related to Conservation	17
C. The Need for Conservation	22
D. Apathy to Conservation Practices	24
E. Coordination with Other Agencies	25
F. Coordination between the City and County	25
IV. OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION CONSIDERATIONS	26
A. Location	26
B. Climate	26
C. Geologic	28
D. Topography	28
E. Soil Types	31
F. Vegetation	33

G.	Natural Resources	33
H.	Hydrology	35
	1. Water Supply	36
I.	Hazard Lands	38
	1. Seismic Hazards	38
	2. Landslides	40
	3. Flooding	41
J.	Fish, Wildlife and Natural Habitat	41
K.	Existing Public Lands	42
L.	Agricultural Lands	43
M.	Recreation and Park Land	45
N.	Inter-relationship of Open Space Considerations	47
V.	THE OPEN SPACE PLAN - COUNTY	50
	A. Agricultural Lands	50
	B. Recreational Lands	53
	C. Scenic & Sensitive Lands	58
	D. Multi-Use Lands & Wildlife Habitat	62
	E. Rural Lands	64
	F. The County Plan	67
VI.	THE OPEN SPACE PLAN - PLANNING AREAS	69
	A. Agricultural Lands	69
	B. Recreation Lands	70
	C. Wildlife Habitat	71
	D. Natural Resource Lands	72
	E. Watershed & Water Recharge Lands	72
	F. The Plan	73

VII.	THE ACTION PROGRAM FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OPEN SPACE PLAN	78
	A. Need for Open Space Implementation	78
	B. Current Methods of Open Space Implementation and Results	78
	C. Other Open Space Implementation Possibilities	82
	D. Possible Methods of Financing Open Space	85
VIII.	THE CONSERVATION PLAN	87
	A. Watershed and Water Recharge Lands	87
	B. Natural Vegetation	88
	C. Soil Types	89
	D. Natural Resource Lands	90
	E. Wildlife Habitat	90
	F. Recreational Lands	91
	G. Flood Control	92
	H. Scenic Lands	93
	I. The Plan of the Two Cities	95
IX.	THE ACTION PROGRAM FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONSERVATION PLAN	98
	A. Need for Conservation Plan Implementation	98
	B. Conservation Plan Implementation and Results	98
	C. Other Conservation Implementation Possibilities	100

TABLE OF MAPS

	Page
1. Location Map	27
2. Geology	29
3. Topography	30
4. Soil Types	32
5. Vegetation	34
6. Hydrology	37
7. Hazard Areas	39
8. Agricultural Land	44
9. Recreation and Parks	49
10. Open Space and Conservation Plan	76-77

References and Acknowledgements

## I. SUMMARY & OBJECTIVES

### A. Open Space

As indicated in the Open Space Element of the General Plan for San Luis Obispo County, agricultural lands supply a great source of income in San Luis Obispo County. It is imperative that this source of income be protected by the Cities as well as the County.

The first objective of the Open Space Element is:

To preserve and protect the good and productive agricultural land and agricultural economy of the areas surrounding the Cities, particularly in Arroyo Grande Valley.

Recreational land is an important amenity of San Luis Obispo County and the Planning Area of the two Cities. The prime objective in the preservation of open space is:

To preserve land for recreational facilities, encourage private recreational development and other open uses in categories characteristic and beneficial to the residents of the Planning Areas of the two Cities and the County as well as to meet the tourist's needs.

An environment which includes a variety of wildlife is an enjoyable place to live. The preservation of habitat is the key to abundance and well being of all fish and wildlife species.

The objective of this section is:

To preserve and maintain open space within the Planning Area as a means of providing natural habitat for all species of wildlife compatible with urban living.

Scenic lands are a prized asset to the Planning Area of the two Cities as manifested by efforts to guard them by zoning. The variety of scenic interests are one of the principle attractions

to tourists and are, therefore a commercial asset.

The prime objective of the two Cities is:

To conserve, preserve and maintain the scenic lands of the Planning Areas of the two Cities and steeper lands to the east.

Continued care must be taken to protect open space lands that are also valuable watershed areas such as the Lopez Dam and its watershed. This objective of the Open Space Element is:

Along with San Luis Obispo County to preserve the quality of existing water supply and adequately plan for the expansion and retention of valuable water supplies for future generations.

The Open Space Element of the General Plan is a compilation of the foregoing sections reflecting existing conditions and the objectives of the two Cities to preserve and protect open space in their respective Planning Areas.

Implementation of the Plan will depend largely on coordination between the Cities and the County of San Luis Obispo. Presently the County is using or proposes many methods of implementation. These include:

Agricultural Zoning and Agricultural Preserves.

Open Space Zoning including Open Space Districts-

Scenic Area Zoning.

Flood Plain Zoning.

The County also implements open space planning in the area through their subdivision regulations. The County Subdivision Ordinance also requires recreation facilities in any residential development or in-lieu fees.

The County Open Space Plan recently adopted recommendation for the preservation of open space; namely open space eligible for the Open Space Subvention Act to be put under contract.

Other methods of implementation adopted as policy by the County are scenic easements and encouragement of private open space development through the use of development of land for golf courses, hunting and fishing preserves, private campgrounds, bicycle ways, public footpaths, and other uses that add to the recreational opportunities for the County and more particularly the Planning Area of the two Cities.

Other Open Space implementation possibilities are:

Public land ownership and control, road abandonment, State excess lands, deed restrictions, tax increment financing.

There are also many methods of financing open space, such as:

Taxation through user fees, motel "bed" tax, real estate transfer tax, property taxes, gasoline tax, building and construction tax.

Federal funds for open space grants either through HUD or Land and Water Conservation Fund or Wildlife Restoration Fund.

Private funds can sometimes be obtained through private conservation organizations, such as the Nature Conservancy groups and philanthropic individuals.

B. Conservation

The first objective of the Conservation Element is:

To preserve and protect and enhance the natural vegetation.

The natural vegetation in the Planning Area of the two Cities is enhanced by climate and location of topographic features. Grass is a prevailing ground cover in the low lands of the area. Scattered oaks in the hills give some portions the appearance of a park. It is important that this natural vegetation be preserved in as far as it is feasible to prevent the loss of soil in the hillside areas, as well as to preserve the rural atmosphere.

The objective of this portion is:

To preserve and maintain the natural vegetation as a means of providing natural habitat; maintain the rural atmosphere of the Planning Area and to protect the slopes from erosion of soils on the hillsides.

Approximately twenty-five (25%) percent of the good soil, as rated by the Soil Conservation Service, in the planning area occurs immediately around Arroyo Grande. The high quality of the soil results from runoff from Arroyo Grande Creek.

The soils in the planning area vary from good cultivable soil, fairly good soil to soil suitable only for grazing.

The prime objective of the two Cities is:

To conserve, preserve and maintain the good soils in and around the Planning Area and to preserve them for one of the major natural resources of the County which is agriculture.

Riparian habitat, and wetland habitat have been greatly reduced in the past and are now in short supply. Most of the

natural habitat for fish and game is in the foothills and the mountains to the east of the Planning Area. Habitat is the key to abundance and well being of all fish and wildlife species compatible with urban living.

While agriculture is one of the primary resources of the Planning Area of the two Cities, there are other natural resources, such as sand and gravel deposits. Harvesting of many of these is and will be detrimental to the scenic beauty of the area and must be accomplished with great care.

The objective of this section is:

To preserve and protect the good and productive agricultural land of the Arroyo Grande Valley area and to protect the natural resources of the Planning Areas and at the same time protect the scenic resources of the Planning Area.

Water supply is also a great resource of the area. The construction of Lopez Dam with its large watershed, as far north as Avila and south to the Nipomo Mesa area, provides for domestic water and serves to prevent saltwater intrusion. It is imperative that the watersheds be protected by the Cities and the County.

The objective of this section of the Conservation Element is:

To preserve and protect the source of the water supply and the various streams supplying that water.

## II. OPEN SPACE GENERAL

### A. State Open Space Requirements

The Government Code of California clearly sets forth the intent of the Legislature in adopting open space requirements. Section 65561 reads as follows:

"The Legislature finds and declares as follows:

(a) That the preservation of open-space land, as defined in this Article, is necessary not only for the maintenance of the economy of the State, but also for the assurance of the continued availability of land for the production of food and fiber, for the enjoyment of scenic beauty, for recreation and for the use of natural resources.

(b) That discouraging premature and unnecessary conversion of open space land to urban uses is a matter of public interest and will be of benefit to urban dwellers because it will discourage noncontiguous development patterns which unnecessarily increase the cost of community services to community residents.

(c) That the anticipated increase in the population of the state demands that Cities, Counties, and the state at the earliest possible date make definite plans for the preservation of valuable open-space land and take positive action to carry out such plans by the adoption and strict administration of laws, ordinances, rules and regulations as authorized by this chapter or by other appropriate methods.

(d) That in order to assure that the interests of all its people are met in the orderly growth and development

of the State and the preservation and conservation of its resources, it is necessary to provide for the development by the State, Regional agencies, Counties and Cities, including charter cities, of State-wide coordinated plans for the conservation and preservation of open-space lands.

(e) That for these reasons this article is necessary for the promotion of the general welfare and for the protection of the public interest in open-space lands."

Section 65560 further defines the following terms as they relate to open-space:

"(a) 'Agricultural land' means land actively used for the purpose of producing an agricultural commodity for commercial purposes. Land may be considered to be 'actively used' notwithstanding the fact that in the course of good agricultural practice it is permitted to lie idle for a period up to one year.

(b) 'Local Open-Space Plan' is the Open-Space Element of a County or City General Plan adopted by the board or council.

(c) 'Natural resource land' is land deemed by the legislative body to possess or encompass natural resources, the use or recovery of which can best be realized by restricting the use of the land as provided by this chapter.

(d) 'Open-space land' is any parcel or area of land or water which is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open space use as herein defined, and which is designated on a local, regional or State open-space plan as any of the following:

- (1) Natural resource land, as defined herein
- (2) Agricultural land, as defined herein
- (3) Recreation land, as defined herein
- (4) Scenic land, as defined herein
- (5) Watershed or ground water recharge land, as defined herein
- (6) Wildlife habitat, as defined herein.

(e) 'Open-space use' means the use of land for (1) public recreation, (2) enjoyment of scenic beauty, (3) conservation or use of natural resources, or (4) production of food or fiber.

(f) 'Recreation land' is any area of land or water designated on the State, or any regional or local open-space plan as open-space land and which is actively used for recreation purposes and open to the public for such purposes with or without charge.

(g) 'Scenic land' is land designated on the local Open Space Plan as open-space land which possesses outstanding scenic qualities worthy of preservation.

(h) 'Watershed or ground water recharge land' is land designated on the State or any regional or local open-space plan as open-space land which is important to the State in order to maintain the quantity and quality of water necessary to the people of the State or any part thereof.

(i) 'Wildlife habitat' is any land or water area designated on the state or any regional or local open-space plan as open-space land which is unusually valuable or

necessary to the preservation or enhancement of the wildlife resources of State."

Section 65563 also requires:

"Every City and County shall, by January 1, 1974,<sup>(1)</sup> (as amended) prepare and adopt a local Open Space Plan for the comprehensive and long-range preservation and conservation of open space land within its jurisdiction."

B. Other State Laws Related to Open Space

There are currently several other laws which are directly related to the preservation and protection of open space lands.

They are as follows:

1. Section 65910, Government Code

"Every City or County by January 1, 1974,<sup>(1)</sup> shall adopt an Open Space Zoning Ordinance consistent with a local Open Space Plan adopted pursuant to Section 65563" above.

2. Section 65302 (d), Government Code

Each General Plan shall include "a Conservation Element for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources including water and its hydraulic forces, forests, soils, rivers and other waters, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals and other natural resources."

3. Section 11546, Business and Professions Code

"The governing bodies of a City or County may by ordinance require the dedication of land, the payment of fees in lieu thereof, or a combination of both, for park or recreational purposes as a condition to the approval of a final subdivision map...."

---

(1) SB594 Amended Requirements

4. Section 11610.5, Business and Professions Code

"No City or County shall approve either the tentative or the final map of any subdivision fronting upon the coastline or shoreline which subdivision does not provide or have available reasonable public access by fee or easement from public highways to land below the ordinary high-water mark on any ocean coastline or bay shoreline within or at a reasonable distance from the subdivision."

5. Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act)

Article XXVIII of the State Constitution now permits farmlands, lands within scenic highway corridors, wildlife habitat areas, timberlands, salt ponds, managed wetland areas, and submerged areas to be assessed on the basis of actual use (capitalized value), rather than on sales of comparable properties which in many instances reflect their potential value for possible urban development. As a condition for qualifying for this tax relief, which is essentially a stabilization of property taxes, the land must be restricted in one of two ways. The owner must enter into a contract, as specified in the Williamson Act, to maintain his land in agricultural use for a specified term, or he must grant an open space easement.

6. Open Space Subvention Act

Section 14112 of the Open Space Subvention Act, Title 14, provides for subventions to counties which have open space agreements on private property and have adopted an open space plan and ordinance.

The Secretary of the Resources Agency of the State is the final judge on whether non-prime lands devoted to open space is

of state-wide significance.

The minimum length of any agreement must be ten years and must be designated for open space use in the open space plan and be of state-wide significance to be eligible for payment. These include areas of outstanding scientific, scenic or recreation value and areas to preserve wildlife and fish habitat; forest areas of importance to provide food and fiber, hazard areas; areas serving as connecting links between major recreation areas, such as electric or gas utility easements; and areas of historic interest.

7. Proposition 20 - A Coastline Protection Initiative

Provides for the establishment of the Coastal Commission to prepare a plan for the development of the California coastline, such plan to protect, restore and enhance the environment and ecology of the coastal zone. The Planning Area is located in the South Central Coast Region which includes San Luis Obispo County, Santa Barbara and Ventura County.

C. The Need for Open Space

Open space usually means the things the individual liked about the area when he chose it as a place to live.

Open space means: The broad expanse of the coastline and the uncluttered view from the mountains to the ocean.

The mountains and the foothills to hike in.

Enough parks, golf courses and other open space so that everyone can enjoy recreation outdoors, close to home and without having to make a reservation.

Farmlands and grazing land continuing in agricultural productivity.

Green space separating each community from the other so that you can find the countryside within a few minutes of your home.

Preserving open space means the kind of area that the people want in 1990 and 2000.

D. Land for Parks

The Federal, State and County park system provides for the facilities needed for regional parks. However, an urban park system should be established and maintained to supplement the regional facilities. City parks can provide for visual relief as well as areas for active play and cultural experience. These parks also provide for community identity. City parks should be focused upon accessibility and usage. These should include passive as well as active recreation areas and should provide facilities for all ages from scrambling children to senior citizens.

E. Obstacles to Open Space

Today, urban growth, technological advancements and sometimes government policies place open space lands in jeopardy. Listed below are some of the more urgent obstacles to open space facing the Planning Area of the two Cities and more particularly San Luis Obispo County.

1. Urban Sprawl

The population of the Planning Area of the two Cities was 13,393 in 1970 with a projected population to 20,000 by 1990. These numbers are significant when they are related to the location of these new residents and the services they will require.

Generally new residential development will occur around and in close proximity to the existing Cities. Prime agricultural land in the areas adjacent to the Cities will be under

tremendous pressure to give way to the demands of the growth of the two Cities. More and more of our valuable open space will be taken away from the Arroyo Grande Valley. The growth of our Cities cannot be completely stopped, but specific open space provisions can give direction to this growth and allow for the aesthetic amenities which provide relief to typical urban sprawl.

## 2. The Automobile

The automobile has given the American his greatest mobility, but has also caused several of today's most serious problems. The automobile and its necessary transportation network requires great amounts of land. The automobile is the primary polluter and generates large scale noise pollution when measured near highways and freeways. The greater part of U. S. 101 which bisects the Planning Area in a north-south direction and U. S. 1, the coast highway, tranverses relatively hilly terrain and has left some of the ugly scars which are left as remainders of new roadways in more hilly terrain. Unfortunately the high volumes of inter-County and inter-State traffic, much of which is tourist-oriented, virtually eliminate many of the pleasures which originally made the automobile so attractive and popular. The number of automobiles cannot be controlled; however, the automobile itself can be controlled through the sophistication of the transportation networks required. Automobile access should be based on the intensity of use desired, therefore controlling the auto by the scale and condition of the roadway. To accomplish this requires close coordination and intergration of all Elements of the General Plan and particularly the Open Space and Circulation Element.

### 3. Land Taxation

It is usually the tax payer who must assume the burden of acquiring or preserving open space. The resident is the individual who provides the bulk of City and County services and any additional tax increases upon the citizens whether they be owners or renters is becoming increasingly burdensome. The traditional form of utilizing property tax funds for land acquisition for parks and open space is becoming extremely limited. New methods of equitable taxation must be explored including Federal and State assistance in grant form resulting from new priorities placed upon the State and Federal taxing system. It is true that most people pay taxes and most people appreciate the need for open space, but new funding sources must be developed so as to not place any additional strain on the citizens of the communities.

### 4. Jurisdictional Confusion

Many open space conflicts occur between jurisdictions and governmental agencies. The responsibility for certain lands often create confusion between the City, County, State and Federal governments. Different departments within the same agency often operate under different land use policies on the same issue. The California Planning and Conservation Law is continually being updated and expanded, making many documents in planning literature ineffective or incomplete. Careful programming of work is necessary to assure that planning remain comprehensive without needless and expensive overlap or duplication.

#### F. Coordination with the County

It is necessary, for the effective implementation of the open space element that the Cities and the County coordinate

their planning decisions both in the planning area and in the corporate limits of the City so as to eliminate any conflicting proposals on land use in the planning areas.

Fortunately there is close coordination between the Cities and the County and it is the intent of this Open Space Plan to be in full coordination with the County Open Space Plan.

Open Space Elements of the two Cities are consistent with the projections set forth in the San Luis Obispo County Open Space Element. Minor differences may occur where two jurisdictions make proposals on one land area, but what is important is that the two City Plans have the same fundamental theme as the County Plans. Close coordination between the two Cities and the County will result in a framework of harmonious recommendations close to and around the corporate Cities.

III. CONSERVATION - GENERAL

A. State Conservation Element Requirements

Section 65302(d) clearly sets forth the intent of the Legislature in adopting Conservation Element requirements. The Conservation Element must include a plan for the conservation, and development and utilization of the following is mandatory:

1. Water.
2. Forest.
3. Soils.
4. Rivers and Waters.
5. Harbors.
6. Fisheries.
7. Wildlife.
8. Minerals.
9. Other natural resources.

Components that are permissive as far as inclusion in the Conservation Element are:

1. Land and Water Reclamation.
2. Flood Control.
3. Water Pollution, prevention and control.
4. Regulation of the use of land in the stream channels and other areas.
5. Prevention, control and correction of soils, beaches and shores.
6. Protection of watersheds.
7. The location, quantity and quality of rock, sand, and gravel resources.

Section 65302(d) was amended to require that a Conservation Element shall be prepared and adopted no later than June 30, 1973.

That portion of the Conservation Element, including waters, shall be developed and coordinated with any County water agency and with all District and City agencies which have developed, served, controlled or conserved water for any purpose for the County or City for which the Plan is prepared.

B. Other Laws Related to a Conservation Element

There are currently many other laws which are directly related to conservation, they are as follows:

1. State Subdivision Map Act

Under the Subdivision Map Act the authority over design and layout of subdivisions is generally vested in local government bodies. Local government has the responsibility of approving tentative and final subdivision maps.

2. State Subdivided Lands Act

The Subdivided Lands Act, administered by the Department of Real Estate, is concerned with consumer protection. Before a developer can sell a subdivision lot, he must obtain a public report from the Real Estate Commission. This report informs prospective buyers about their rights and obligations, the provision, if any, that has been made for public utilities, warns of hazards, and provides other useful information.

3. Environmental Quality Act of 1970

The Legislative policy and Environmental Quality Act of 1970 requires that it is the policy of the State to "take all action necessary to provide the people of the

State with clean water and air, enjoyment of the aesthetic, natural, scenic and historical environmental qualities, and freedom from excessive noise."

In addition it declares that it is the policy of the State to "create and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony to fulfill both social and economic requirements of present and future generations."

In the implementation of this policy, State agencies, boards and commissions, and local agencies are required to prepare and submit environmental impact reports on significant Federal, State and local projects.

4. Office of Planning and Research

This office was established to assist in the formulation, evaluation, up-dating of long range goal and policies for land use, population growth and distribution, urban expansion, open space, resource preservation and utilization. Environmental goals and land use policy to be developed by this office will be a major step toward programming urban developments so as to protect the environmental quality in the State.

5. Water Quality Control Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Control Act of 1970 charges the State Water Resources Control Board with protecting the quality of all State waters for the beneficial uses and enjoyment of the people. In discharging this responsibility the Regional Boards have the authority to establish waste discharge requirements. Through the

exercise of this authority the size, location, density, design and construction practices of urban development are affected.

6. Fish and Game Laws

The State Fish and Game Code declares that the fish and game belong to the people of the State and charges the Department of Fish and Game with the responsibility for protection of these resources. In addition to regulating hunting and fishing, the Fish and Game Laws prohibit the destruction of fish and wildlife habitat.

These laws prohibit the pollution of the State's water by any material injurious to fish, plant or bird life. Sediment originating from any development would be considered such a pollutant.

Alteration of a stream or lake bed by public agencies or private individuals is prohibited until the Department is notified and makes recommendations for measures to protect fish and wildlife. The recommendations of the Department must be followed or disagreements submitted to an arbitrator. Vehicular crossings of stream beds are covered by this law.

7. Soil Conservation Provisions of the Public Resources Code

Soil conservation districts, organized under Division 9 of the Public Resources Code, concern themselves with the prevention of erosion and control of water.

The Department of Conservation, acting through the State Soil Conservation Commission and the Division of Soil Conservation administers the Soil Conservation Program

at the State level. Working through Soil Conservation Districts at the local level, the State also assists local agencies on soil conservation matters, conducts special studies on soil and vegetation problems, develops plans for local projects for soil and water conservation.

8. Forest Practice Division of the Public Resources Code

A permit must be obtained from the State Forester for the conversion of timber land for purposes other than growing timber, such as urban development.

Erosion control measures specified in Forest Practice Rules apply to timber land conversion permits for urban use. If logging takes place, periodic inspections are made by the California Division of Forestry to check on the operator for compliance with the Forest Practice Rules.

9. Fire Prevention Provisions of the Public Resources Code

The Public Resources Code defines hazardous fire areas, restrictions on use, and minimum protection requirements, administration of which is carried out by the State Division of Forestry.

The Public Resources Code sets forth provisions for the reduction of fire hazards around buildings located on land which is covered with flammable material. A fire break of at least thirty (30) feet is required to be maintained around buildings by removing all flammable vegetation or other combustible growth. Additional widths of fire break may be required under extra hazardous conditions. Fire break clearance is also required around electric

transmission poles and towers.

Burning in dumps as well as in other areas is regulated by permits issued by the State Forester.

Provisions must be to control erosion in areas where vegetation has been removed for fire breaks.

#### 10. Local Laws

The most important plans and ordinances that influence urbanization and its impact on conservation practices include the following:

1. General Plans.
2. Zoning Ordinances.
3. Subdivision Ordinances.
4. Grading Ordinances.

#### 11. Federal Agencies

Federal agencies who's programs have the most significant relation to the impact of urbanization of lands are:

1. Soil Conservation Service (USDA)

The Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture provides information and technical assistance to private land owners in soil conservation districts and State and local entities. While the assistance has been primarily concerned with the erosion control and agricultural land use through State-organized Soil Conservation Districts, the Soil Conservation Service does assist local government in reviewing from a soil standpoint, County subdivision plans and proposals as well as other types of development.

This agency makes basic soil surveys and provides soil maps which should be the foundation of local Land Use Plans. In Addition, generalized interpretive maps are provided showing critical areas of soil erosion, soil shrink-swell behavior, land capability, suitability for septic tanks and many other interpretations that are useful.

## 2. Environmental Protection Agency

The urgency for cleaning up streams, lakes and other water areas requires more finances than the local agency's area will provide. The Federal Water Pollution Control Act provides funding for projects important to environmental aspects of urbanization.

Through the Environmental Protection Agency, communities can get financial help in the construction of municipal waste treatment plants with a Federal grant of at least 30% of construction costs. The Federal share may be higher under certain conditions, such as when more quality standards in comprehensive basic compliance have been developed.

### C. The Need for Conservation

Frequently natural resources are not adequately considered in determining the suitability of land per urban type development and in regulating development. This results in detrimental impacts on the soil mantle and the vegetative cover and other environmental factors. Problems are created not only at the site of the development but also in adjacent areas.

To prevent further degradation of the environment, legislation and administrative actions are necessary at both the State and local levels. Local government must develop and implement improved techniques to effectively plan and regulate development of lands within the Planning Area and to protect the soil mantle and vegetative covering.

Conservation means:

1. To identify, to assess, and quantify the impact of urbanization on the soil, vegetation and related environmental factors.
2. To educate the public on the environmental consequences of urbanization throughout the Planning Area through documentation of facts and illustrate methods of preserving environmental amenities.
3. To identify and assess Federal, State, County and City regulations and their enforcement as they relate to impacts of development on the environment.
4. To make regulations which would minimize the detrimental impact of development on soil and vegetation.
5. To encourage erosion control techniques which local agencies may employ to prevent or minimize erosion.

D. Apathy to Conservation Practices

As described in the Open Space Element, today, the flow of metropolitan areas is to the smaller cities and more rural counties, governmental policies have not encouraged conservation practices; therefore, urban sprawl, the automobile and the influx of people have caused detrimental environmental impacts.

Major factors of urbanization causing environmental impacts are:

1. Removal or damage of vegetation on construction sites.
2. Grading of land for homesites, roads and utilities.
3. Alteration of natural drainage patterns.
4. Creation of impervious surfaces by construction of roads, parking areas and homes.
5. Pre-emption of land use.
6. Introduction of more people and vehicles.
7. Disposal of solid and liquid waste.

Detrimental environmental impacts from urbanization are:

1. Accelerated erosion and sedimentation.
2. Loss of vegetable cover.
3. Polluted water.
4. Loss of fish and wildlife habitat.
5. Over-use of recreational areas.
6. Diminished surface water.
7. Reduced ground water recharge.
8. Increased flood hazard.
9. Diminished grazing lands.

10. Greater fire hazard.
11. Lack of access to public lands, streams and lakes.
12. Intensified air pollution.

There is considerable opposition to establishment of strict environmental and conservation practices because they run counter to providing areas for urban developments and excessive concentration of people in the foothill areas along streams and beaches.

E. Coordination with Other Agencies

It is an absolute necessity that the various departments of the two Cities and the County coordinate their planning decisions. It is also an absolute necessity that they coordinate their decisions with other levels of government. Coordination in accordance with the California Division of Forestry, the U. S. Soil Conservation Service, and with any Water Agency in the area and with all District and County Agencies where the question of water is involved.

F. Coordination between the City and County

Although the County government is responsible for all unincorporated lands, it should also be its responsibility to serve as a coordinating agency in conservation matters. The Cities will adopt their own Conservation Element but close coordination between the Cities and County will result in the framework of harmonious conservation practices in the Planning Area.

#### IV. OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS - PLANNING AREA

The following conservation, environmental and open space considerations were researched and analyzed as a basic foundation on which the Open Space Plan is designed. Items of major significance are included in this section of the Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan for the planning areas of the two Cities involved.

##### A. Location

The two Cities are located fifteen (15) miles southerly of San Luis Obispo and immediately south of Pismo Beach. Grover City abuts the Pacific Ocean and Arroyo Grande lies just east of Grover City. State Highway 101 serves both Cities with connections to Santa Barbara and Los Angeles to the south and San Luis Obispo and San Francisco to the north. The City of Grover City is also served by State Highway 1 and the main line of the Southern Pacific Railroad.

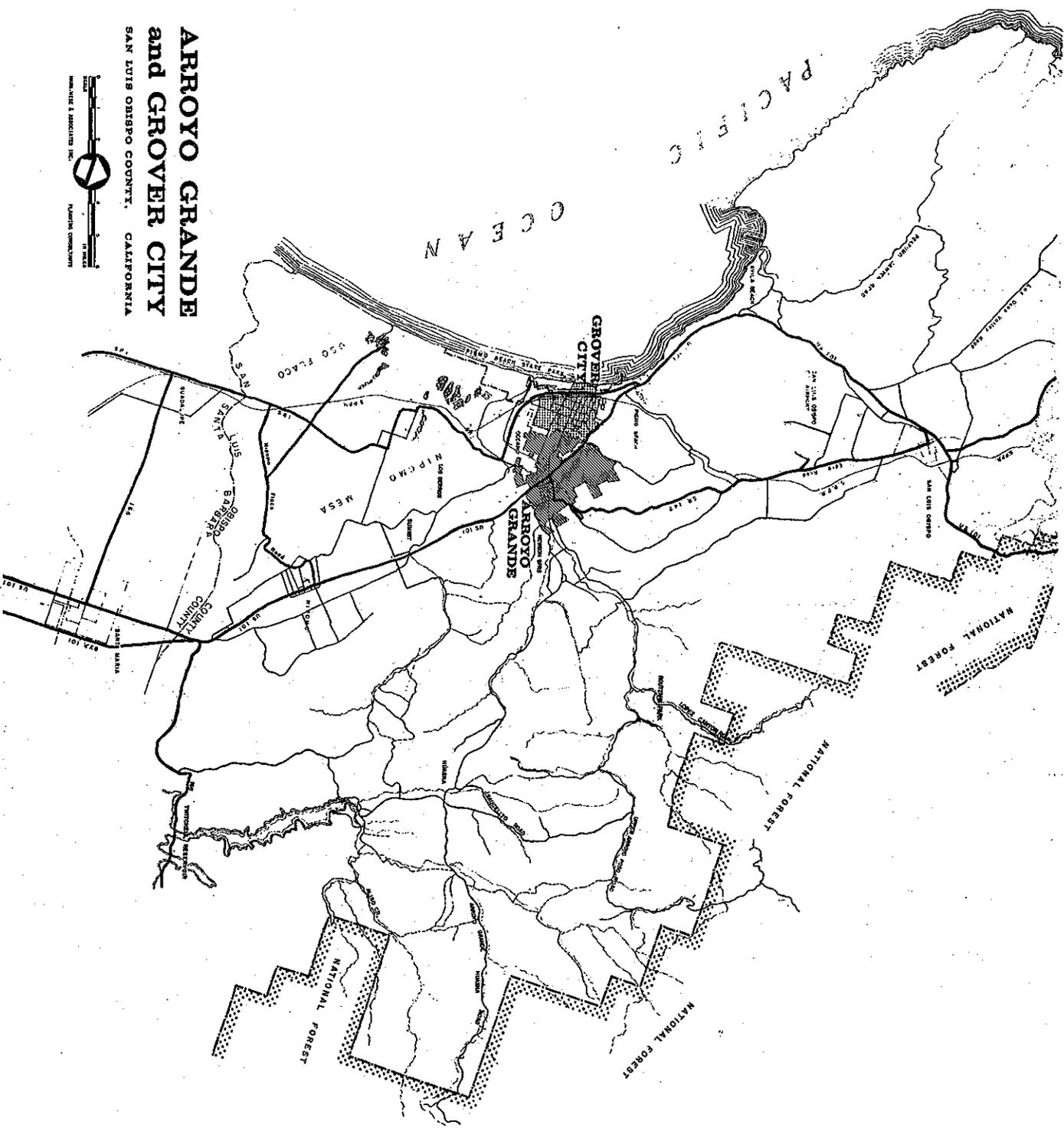
Both Cities lie a short distance from the rich agricultural lands of the upper Arroyo Grande Valley. Much of the economy of the area is dependant upon agriculture and tourism.

##### B. Climate

The climate of the Planning Area which is adjacent to the Arroyo Grande Valley, the Nipomo Mesa and waters of San Luis Obispo Bay and the Pacific Ocean on the west has a moderate climate. The summers are long and dry with a narrow range of temperature and frequent fogs typical for coastal areas.

Winters are only moderately wet. The south coastal area averages between 12 and 16 inches of rain per year. Killing

# LOCATION MAP



**ARROYO GRANDE  
and GROVER CITY**  
SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA



frosts are rare in the Arroyo Grande Valley and the climate permits double and triple cropping practices.

C. Geologic Regions

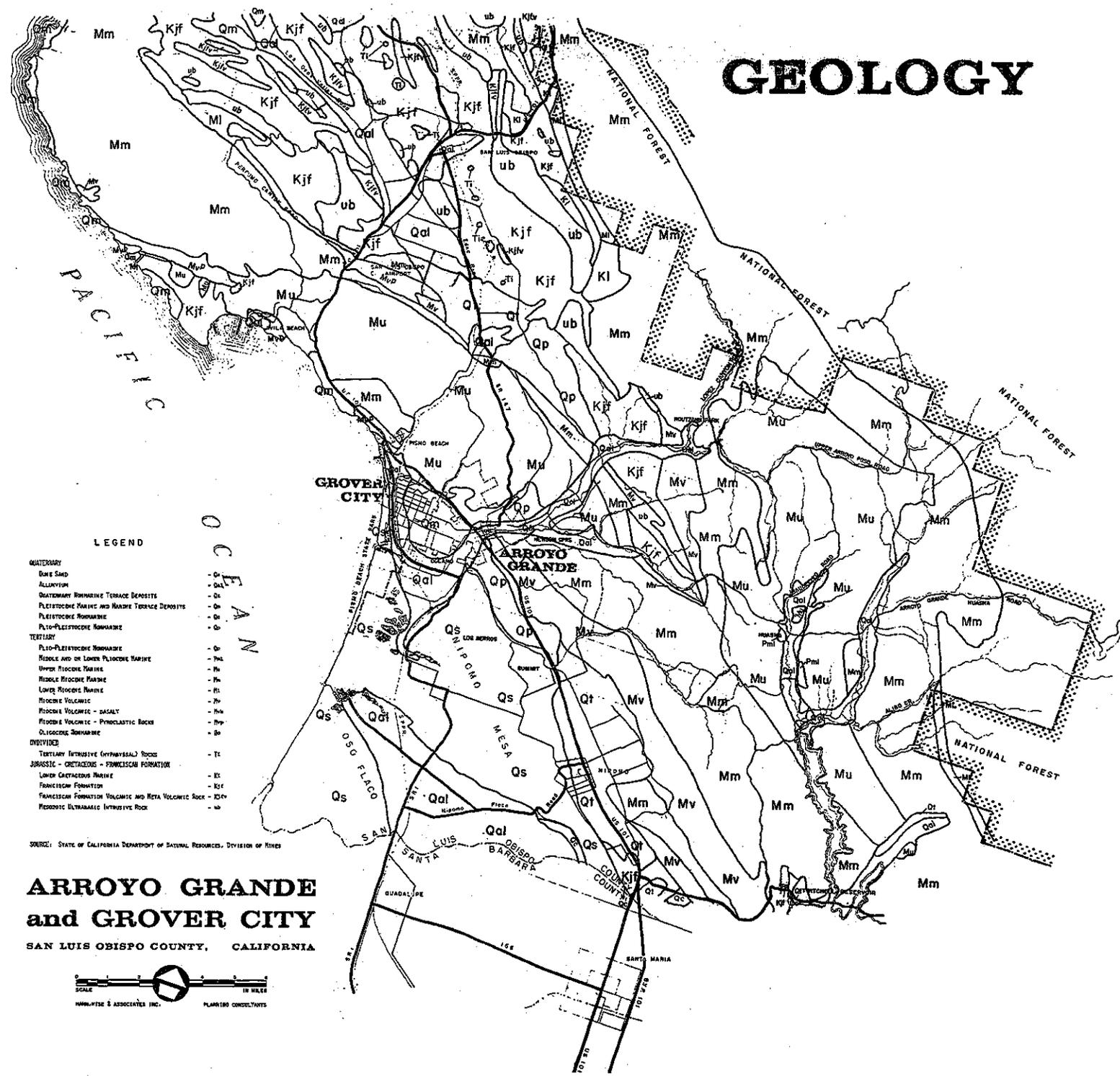
The Arroyo Grande Valley, Arroyo Grande Creek and San Luis Obispo Bay have a significant effect on the geology of the area. The deposits of alluvium soil in and around Arroyo Grande are significant. The hilly areas northerly of Arroyo Grande are primarily sedimentary rocks non-marine in character. On the southerly side of the City the hills are composed primarily of middle miocene marine rock. Grover City and Oceano on the other hand is primarily marine terrace deposits and of coarse dune sand along the San Luis Obispo Bay. The portion of the alluvium deposits rise southerly of Oceano and particularly along the east-west portion of Highway 1 and easterly of Highway 1 as it swings northerly toward Pismo Beach. This formation provides some of the good agricultural ground in the County similar to San Luis Valley.

Arroyo Grande Creek bisects Arroyo Grande in an east-west direction and then swings south-westerly of Highway 101, southerly of the Grover City limits into the Oceano area and finally into the San Luis Obispo Bay.

D. Topography

The topography map of the Planning Area is shown following this section. It indicates that the elevations run from sea level to approximately five hundred (500) feet. In the major portion of the Planning Area the slopes are relatively gentle. The primary differences in elevation are indicated as north and south of the built up areas in Arroyo Grande and north easterly from Grand Avenue and northerly in the City of Grover City.

# GEOLOGY

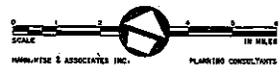


- LEGEND**
- QUATERNARY
    - Loose Sand - Qa
    - Alluvium - Qal
    - Quaternary Riverine Terrace Deposits - Qd
    - Pleistocene Marine and Marine Terrace Deposits - Qm
    - Pleistocene Nonmarine - Qn
    - Pliocene Nonmarine - Qp
  - TERTIARY
    - Pliocene Nonmarine - Qp
    - Middle and/or Lower Pliocene Marine - Qm
    - Upper Pliocene Marine - Qn
    - Middle Pliocene Marine - Qo
    - Lower Pliocene Marine - Qp
    - Pliocene Volcanic - Basalt - Qv
    - Pliocene Volcanic - Pyroclastic Rock - Qw
    - Oligocene Nonmarine - Qo
  - DIPTERYGON
    - Tertiary Intrusive (dykes) - Td
    - JURASSIC - CRETACEOUS - FRANCONIAN FORMATION - Jc
    - Lower Cretaceous Marine - Jm
    - Franconian Formation - Jf
    - Franconian Formation Volcanic and Meta Volcanic Rock - Jv
    - Pretertiary Ultramafic Intrusive Rock - Ub

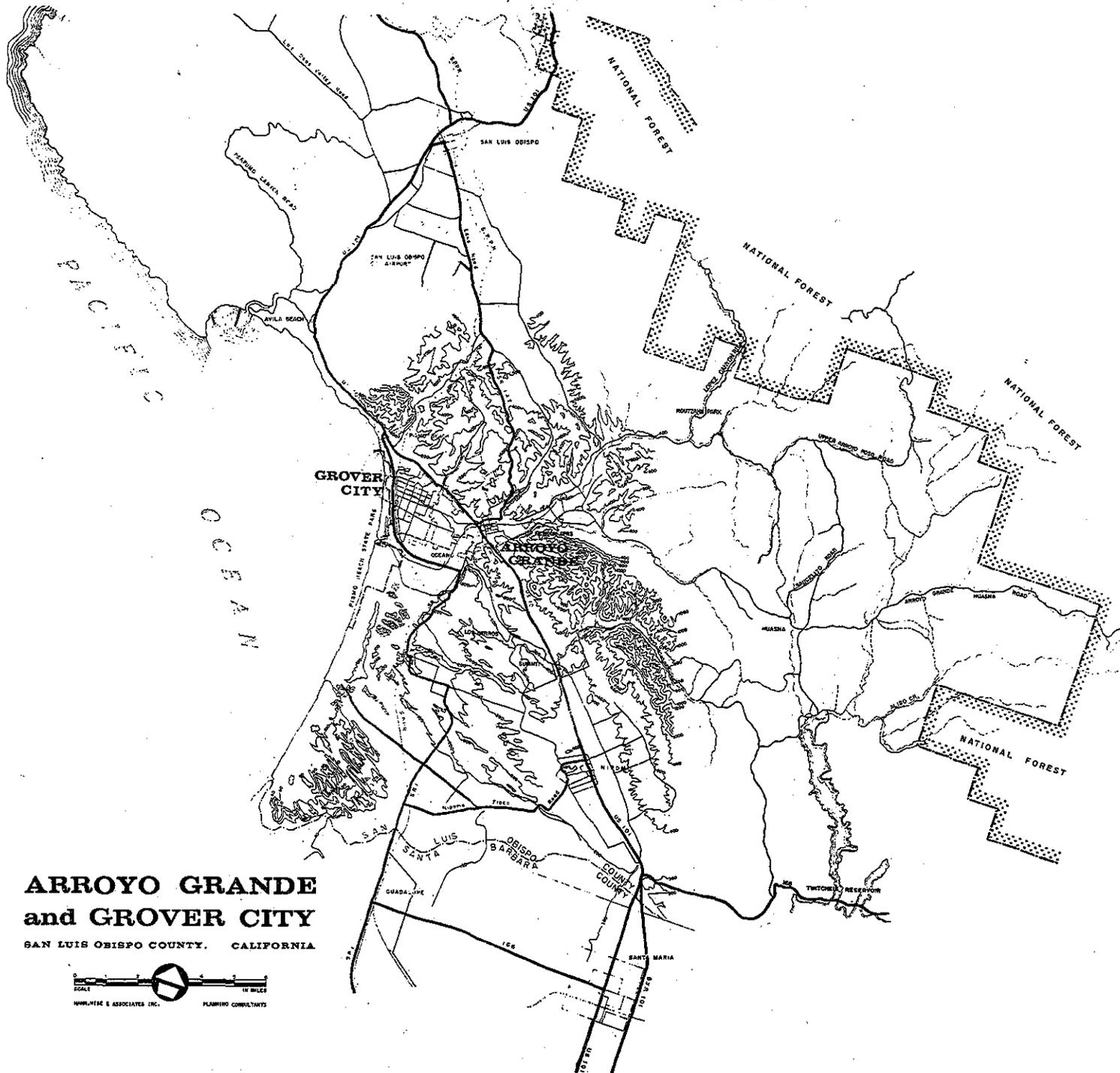
SOURCE: STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, DIVISION OF MINES

## ARROYO GRANDE and GROVER CITY

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA



# TOPOGRAPHY

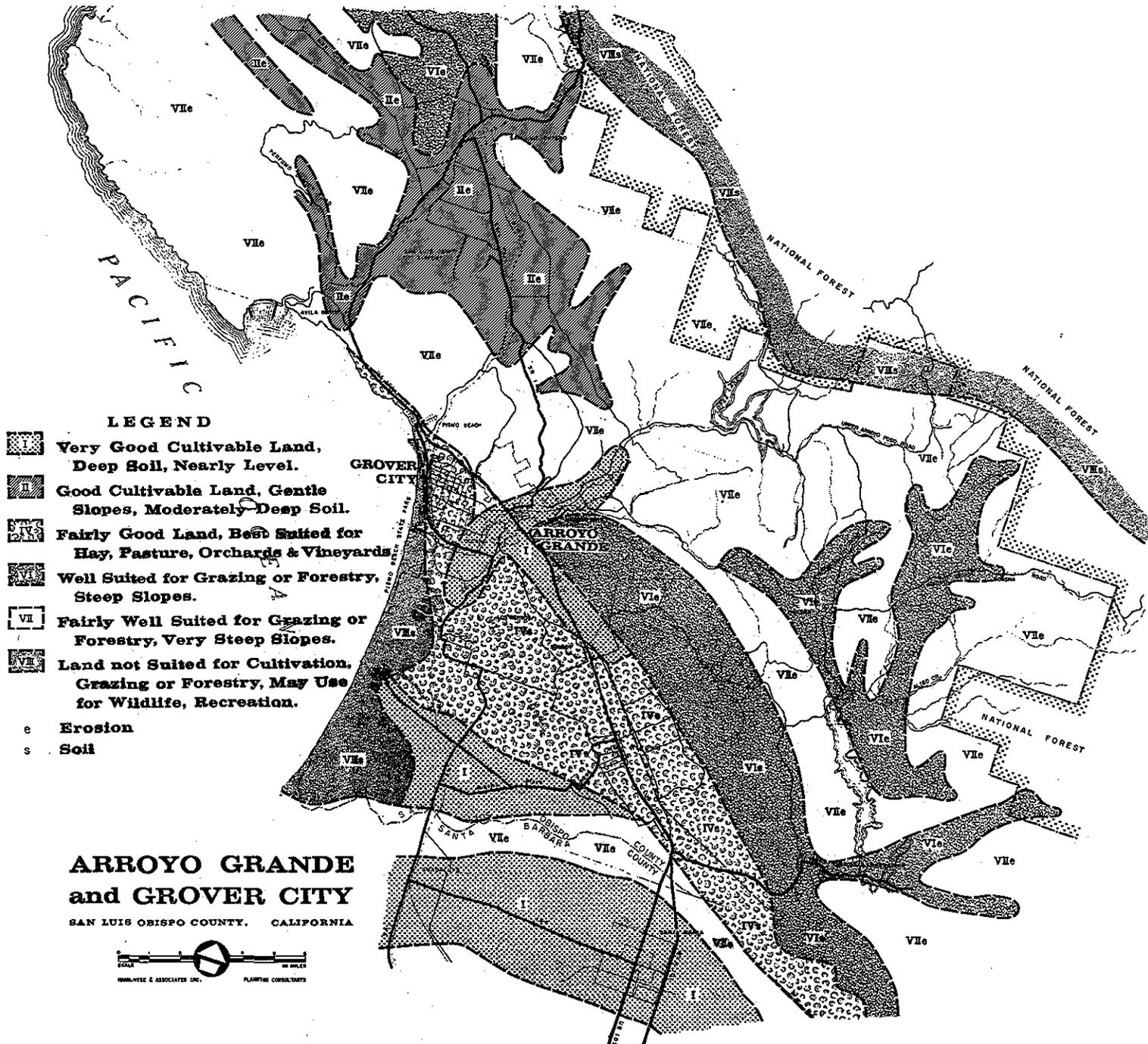


Because of the prevalence of relatively gentle slopes there will probably be considerable competition for the land particularly in the areas of less than ten (10%) percent cross slope. As indicated in the County report this is a major land use problem because desirable land use patterns are frequently sacrificed for economic profit and may result in inefficient use of land resources. This occurs particularly when the best agriculture land lying within the Planning Area is used for urban expansion.

E. Soil Types

There are four (4) distinct soil types in the Planning Area. The soil northeasterly and southwesterly of Arroyo Grande is Class 1 soil and is very good cultivable land. It has deep soil, relatively level with little or no erosion. It is adaptable to a wide variety of agricultural uses. To the southeast of Arroyo Grande is Class 6 soil which is well suited for grazing. It is not arable because of the steeper slopes and this area is susceptible to erosion with its shallow soils. This area requires more careful management than Classes 1 through 5. This class is not considered suitable for cultivation. Surrounding Arroyo Grande Valley to the north and east of the Planning Area is Class 7 soil which is only fairly well suited for grazing. It has limitations for use because of steep slopes, shallow soils and excessive erosion. This area requires careful management practices. Portions of Arroyo Grande and Grover City are in Class 4 land which is considered fairly good land suitable for occasional cultivation. It is perhaps best suited for pasture lands or orchards. There is a narrow band

# GENERAL SOIL TYPE



of Class 8 land along San Luis Obispo Bay which is not suited for cultivation or grazing; however, it may be used for wildlife habitat and recreation.

F. Natural Vegetation

The natural vegetation in the Planning Area of the Two Cities is influenced by climate and location of topographic features.

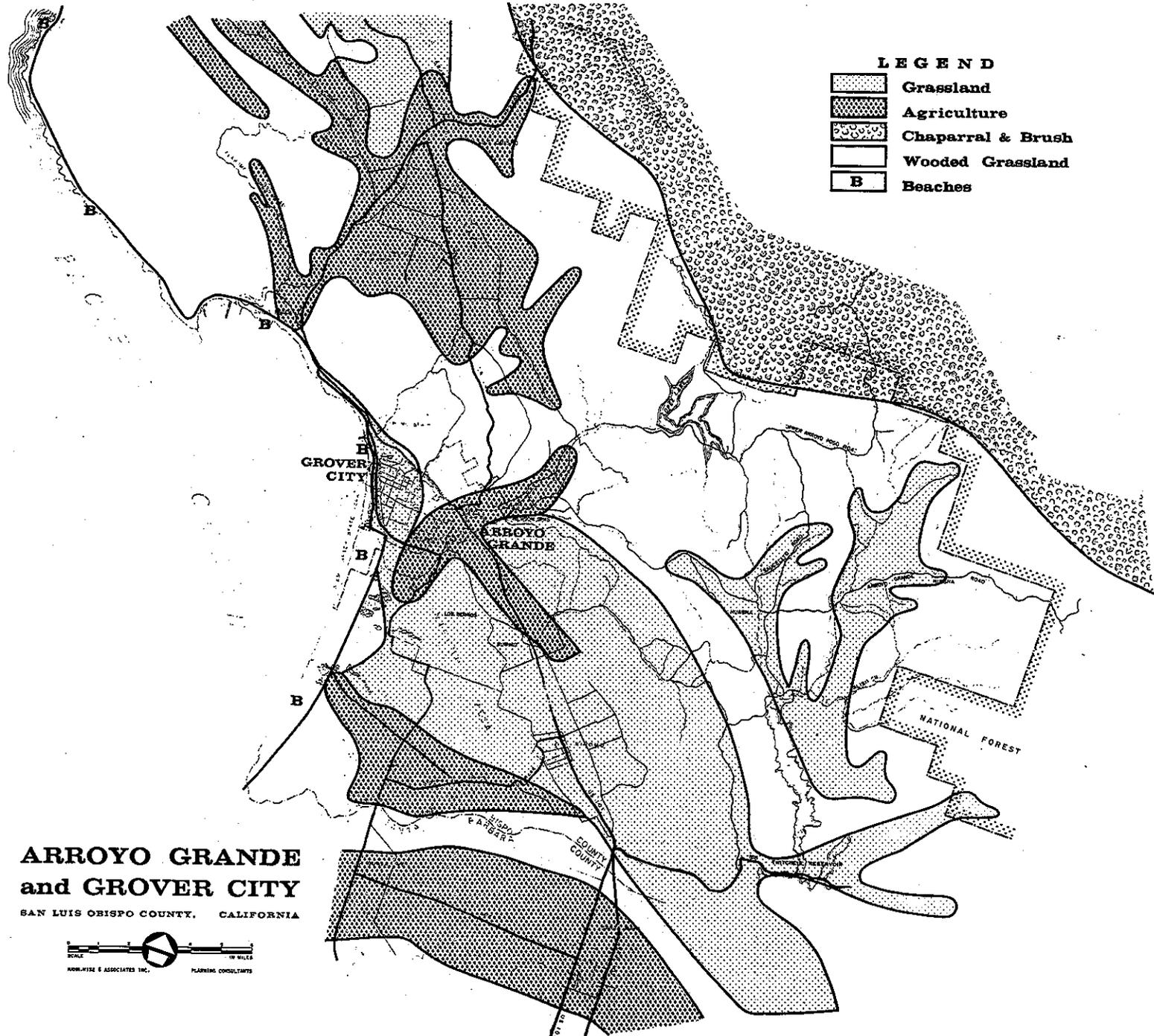
Grass is the prevailing ground cover in the lowlands of the area. Scattered oaks give some portion of the steeper areas the appearance of a park. Chaparral is found in the hills above the wooded sections. Typical use for these areas is grazing. The major areas of Class 1, or cultivable land, is in the Arroyo Grande Valley. The U.S. Soil Conservation Service Vegetation Classifications were used for the graphic presentation shown following this page.

G. Natural Resources

The primary natural resources within the Planning Area are the agricultural soils in the Arroyo Grande Valley and the beaches along San Luis Obispo Bay. The soils of the Arroyo Grande Valley are generally well suited for truck farming and are triple cropped annually rotating such vegetables as beans, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, lettuce, celery and peppers.

The natural land forms and unique features of the areas to the east of the Planning Area and the areas along the coast are of great value as a natural resource. The mountains provide enjoyment and recreation to millions of people annually. Conservation of both the beaches and the mountain areas is of major benefit to every citizen of the County and State and can be considered a prime natural resource.

# VEGETATION



#### H. Hydrology

Three considerations have a primary effect on land use. Ground water resources, water quality and flood control.

The Arroyo Grande Creek roughly bisects the Planning Area of the two Cities running from the Lopez Reservoir through Arroyo Grande, Grover City and Oceano and finally emptying into San Luis Obispo Bay.

In the South County area, Lopez Reservoir water releases serve the urban areas and replenish the ground water basin. The water supply has been estimated to be adequate to accommodate projected urban and agriculture demands until the year 1990. However, both Arroyo Grande and Grover City have contracts for water from the Lopez Project. Grover City's contract calls for 800 acre feet, the total requirement for the City is 950 acre feet, the necessary balance is pumped from the ground water basin.

Arroyo Grande's per year entitlement is 2,290 acre feet. The total requirement of the City can be supplied from this source.

Not all of the communities in the water district have contracted for Lopez water in sufficient quantities to serve their immediate or future needs. As indicated above, Arroyo Grande has contracted for ample water to meet anticipated needs until 1990. However, Grover City and Pismo Beach have exceeded their contract allotments and are presently looking for supplemental water to meet growth requirements.

It is estimated by the State Department of Water Resources Bulletin No. 18, that there is an annual safe yield of sixty-five hundred (6,500) acre feet. The water users within the Arroyo Grande basin have not made a determination of ground water rights and the water users have not pursued water allocations.

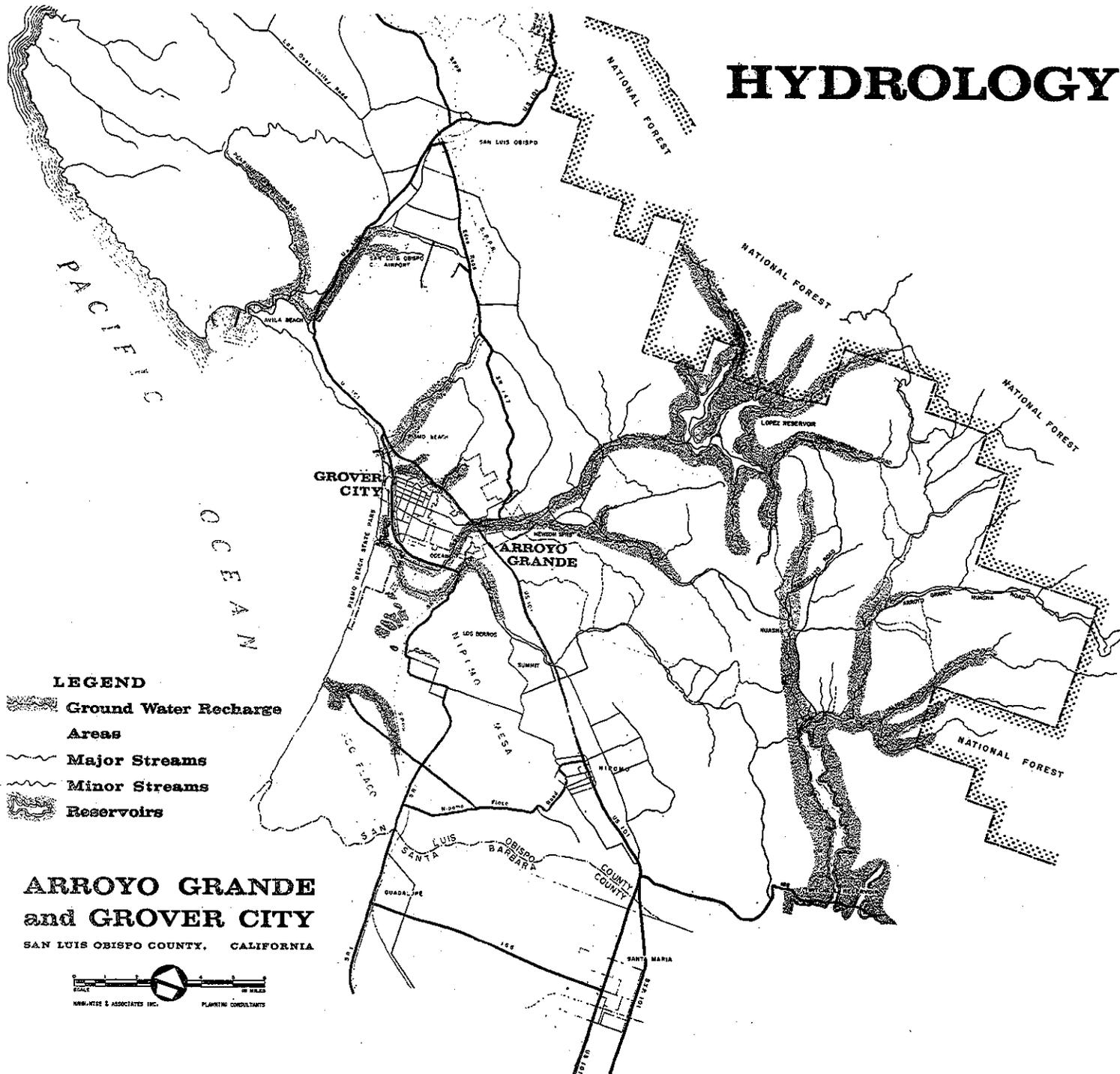
Occasional flooding in the area is due primarily to the heavy rains. There are no permanent flood areas. The majority of them, except along the creek areas and natural drainage areas will be solved with adequate drainage structures. The primary flood area is along Arroyo Grande Creek. There are other occasional flood areas easterly of Valley Road and a portion of the Valley Road High School campus; northerly of Newsome Springs Road and along a portion of Cobert Canyon Road. A map of hydrologic features follows.

In Grover City, the principal problem areas are along the north side of Grand Avenue from 2nd Street to 12th Street where surface flow often overflows the curbs. There is also heavy storm water flow on Mentone Avenue from 4th Street to 13th Street where it often nearly tops the gutters and dikes. South on 4th Street to Grand Avenue also has a heavy flow of storm waters. There is also some flooding along Front Street in the southerly part of the City.

1. Water Supply

The Planning Area could have an adequate water supply from the Lopez Water Supply Project and ground water supplies if they enter into contracts for an adequate allotment of water.

# HYDROLOGY



The City of Arroyo Grande is the only major water purveyor in San Luis Obispo County to have a current supply of water adequate for continued growth during the next thirty years.

The Cities in the Planning Areas are also eligible for water from the State Water Project in the year 1980. Each of the present Cities will be eligible for approximately one thousand (1,000) acre feet per year with an increasing amount each year until 1990 when the full entitlement would be delivered them. The County and Cities in the Planning Area have been paying their share of this supplemental source of water through taxes levied by the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

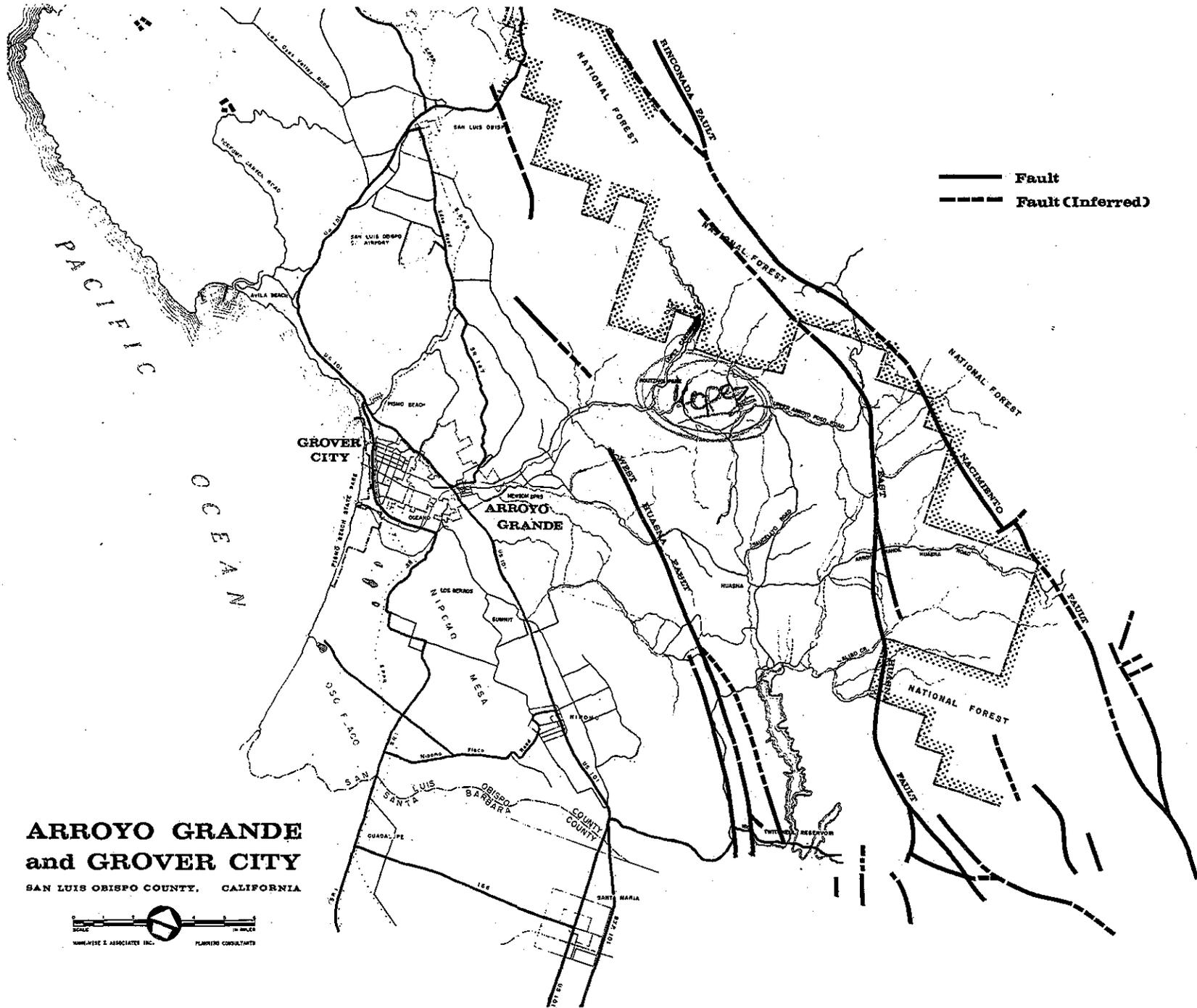
I. Hazard Lands

Within the Planning Area there is only one basic hazard and this is hydrologic. The other two basic hazards which are present in the County are geologic and land slide hazards. Because of their basic unstable quality, these hazard areas should often become open space or agriculture lands and development of structures should not be encouraged. The three major hazards in the County are:

1. Seismic Hazards

As indicated on the following map, the Planning Area does not seem to have fault occurrences. The primary earthquake faults with the greatest potential of activity, are the San Andreas and the Nacimiento. There are other

# GEOLOGIC HAZARDS



**ARROYO GRANDE  
and GROVER CITY**  
SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA



faults indicated on the geologic map. They are the Huerhuero Fault and the East and West Huasna Faults. The West Huasna Fault is approximately five miles easterly of Arroyo Grande; the West Huasna and Nacimiento Faults are from twenty to twenty-five miles easterly of the Planning Area. All the faults run in the same general direction as the San Andreas Fault - northwesterly throughout the County.

## 2. Land Slide Areas

Data on land slide areas within San Luis Obispo County are incomplete. However because of the topography and type of soil it does not seem to be susceptible to land slides except for possibly the hilly or mountainous areas to the east of the Planning Area.

Areas where concentration of known land slides exist in the County are in several small canyons extending northeast of the Estrella Rive; along fault traces of the Nacimiento Faults just west of Atascadero Los Tablas region; and southwest of Santa Margarita. There are also concentrations of slides in the zone of clayey material overlying igneous and shale bedrock along the coastal slopes of the Santa Lucia Range, Port San Luis in the hills behind Cayucas.

In general, younger sedimentary and fairly consolidated rocks of pleistocene and pliocene age are more subject to erosion and land sliding than some of the relatively hard and sedimentary rocks of the tertiary

or older periods.

The Franciscan formation of the mountainous coast area of the County is a zone of both weak and resistant rock. Land slides are common in the sandstones and shales of the Franciscan terrain and the shore line has been deeply etched into these rocks wherever erosion is active along the coast.

### 3. Flooding Hazards

The Planning Area is subject to spot flooding when heavy rainfall occurs as indicated in the hydrology portion of this section. The Cities are not considered within the primary flood plain.

### J. Fish, Wildlife and Natural Habitat

As stated previously most of the natural habitat for the fish and game is in the mountain areas to the east of the Planning Areas; there are varying amounts of wildlife in the foothills surrounding the Planning Area. Retention of this habitat, therefore, is basic when planning for fish and wildlife.

Development and reclamation projects have a pronounced effect on fish and wildlife. The effects range from entirely detrimental to enhancement. In planning any alteration to the present environment, consideration should be given to the effects on fish and wildlife. Even though most of this habitat is not within the Planning Area it is vital to the surrounding area.

Riparian habitat, and wetland habitat have been greatly reduced in the past and are now in short supply. Any alteration, except for fish and wildlife enhancement should not be

supported by the two Cities in the Planning Areas. Environment which includes a variety of wildlife even though not directly in the Planning Area still makes a more enjoyable place for people to live.

Present land uses which result in siltation and pollution of streams or coastal waters should be carefully monitored and if necessary, corrected, to assure clean and productive habitat.

K. Existing Public Lands

Of the 2,122,248 acres in San Luis Obispo County, some 14.53% are in Federal ownership and 0.96% in State ownership, 0.98% in County ownership and 0.10% in City ownership. School Districts and special districts account for 0.04%. Total government ownership is 16.61%. The public owned lands within the Planning Area outside of local government ownership are the State beaches and the State-owned golf course westerly of Highway 1. The following map indicates the present Pismo State Beach, the golf course and possible future acquisition westerly of Highway 1. Existing ownership at the present time is 969 acres. Proposed future acquisition is 857 acres. There is presently 30,400 feet of ocean frontage; the proposed acquisition would add 7,000 additional feet.

In addition to these holdings there are, of course, the County Camp Ground at Oceano Beach itself running several miles on the westerly edge of the Planning Area. The park and recreation facilities in each of the Cities and the Planning Area is also shown on the map on page 49.

L. Agricultural Lands

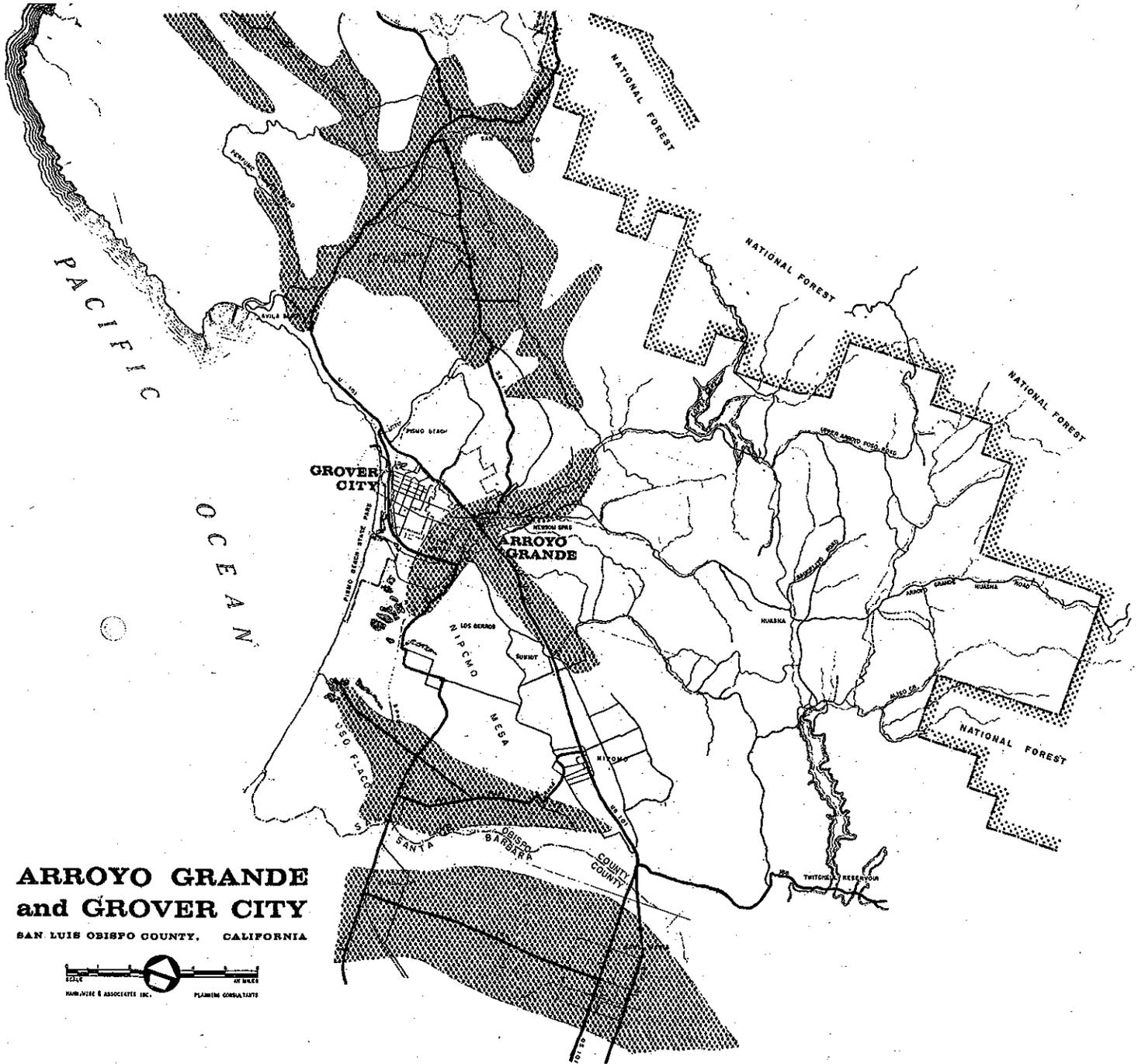
Agriculture is the most important economic activity in the Arroyo Grande Valley and the Nipomo Mesa. The areas in the large valley bottom land west of the Santa Lucia Range which are under the moderating influence of the Ocean are valuable crop lands. The soils are very deep, well drained and inherent fertility is very high. There is a very long growing season with water available and the area is presently beyond urbanizing factors.

Agricultural use of suitable land has been and is expected for some time to remain a valuable and desirable use of open space. It is a use, which unlike many other uses, is capable of functioning without expensive government services. Its aesthetic values are well known and its environmental impact for the most part, is less detrimental than most other uses.

Numerous secondary benefits to the public are provided to the public through agricultural use. It provides visual relief from urban areas and serves to dissipate the air pollution emanating from such areas. Of benefit to the agriculturists is the possibility of utilizing his land for other compatible uses. Such activities and camping and horse ranches can provide additional income to ranchers as well as relieving some pressures on public recreation.

Up to the present time six (6) agricultural preserves have been established in the County amounting to approximately 400,000 acres or 20% of the County. The current program has been successful in eliminating the speculative value for many agricultural properties; however, it has yet to preserve either those areas adjacent to the Cities and communities or the better agricultural lands. New efforts are being made to rezone or create preserves in both the

# AGRICULTURAL AREAS



**ARROYO GRANDE  
and GROVER CITY**  
SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA



upper and lower Arroyo Grande Valley. It appears that some of these efforts will be successful.

The agricultural uses of San Luis Obispo County as a whole are divided into six (6) categories, each with uses of the same approximate size; crop land, marginal crop land, orchards, vineyards, dry farm and range land and marginal range land. The categories or classifications all depend on the type of soil, the steepness of terrain and the availability of water.

M. Recreation and Park Land

San Luis Obispo County is recognized as an outstanding area for year-round outdoor recreation. The County's forests, beaches, lakes and parks offer limitless activity for those who enjoy swimming, tennis, picnicking, golfing, boating, fishing, hunting or scenic excursions.

Most of the public recreation facilities are on the westerly fringe of the Planning Area but are within reach of all residents of the two Cities and their Planning Areas.

As stated previously, the Pismo Beach State Park and golf course are westerly of Highway 1 in the Grover City-Oceano area along with the County Camp Grounds. Each of the Cities, of course, have a Park and Recreation Program locally. In addition there are many thousands of acres of public and private recreation land in the mountains to the east of the Planning Area.

Much of the recreation planning has emanated from the County. Arroyo Grande also has a Park and Recreation Element and a Beautification Element. The County Recreation Plan of 1966 sets vital guidelines for the basis of recreation planning in the the County. However it dealt primarily with recreational

activities, in contrast to the emphasis on open space needs and conservation.

In 1965 the County approved an extensive program of acquisition and management of over six thousand (6,000) acres of BLM property throughout the County. Much land will be acquired for open space, while other parcels will have a minimum development. Under joint powers agreement with Monterey County an extensive recreational study of Nacimiento-San Antonio Basins was undertaken in 1969. This study involved an evaluation of the two lakes as a State-wide recreational resource and set standards and principles for their development.

The County has undertaken two other recreational studies which are currently in progress. The first involves the Tri-County study (San Luis, Monterey, Santa Cruz) environmental study of the coast line and coastal zone. The second involves a comprehensive environmental study of Morro Bay and its watershed. A multi-agency task force, composed of all levels of government, will make an extensive study of the ecology and recreation and development potential of this very sensitive watershed.

Each of the two Cities in the Planning Area have also developed studies indicating their recreational needs and have made some progress toward actually providing these facilities.

The State Department of Parks and Recreation has acquired several large properties in the County and are negotiating for additional lands for open space preservation and recreation development. Other State and Federal agencies have developed recreation facilities in connection with reservoirs. The U.S.

Forest Service has developed camping and other recreation facilities within the National Forest. The County has developed major regional recreational facilities at Lopez Lake easterly of the Planning Area, Nacimiento and Santa Margarita Lakes.

Gradual County acquisition of BLM property has been programmed over a period of fifteen years. The yearly allocation of funds has been set aside for this program. In future years some recreational facilities will be established within these remote parcels. The State Department of Parks and Recreation is planning acquisition of additional lands along the coast on the western fringe of the Planning Areas as has been indicated on the section of Public Lands.

Private recreation facilities play a key role in the San Luis Obispo leisure time activities and the activities of the residents of the two Planning Areas. Each of the Cities has some recreation facilities within the incorporated areas and are contemplating additional areas devoted to passive and active recreation.

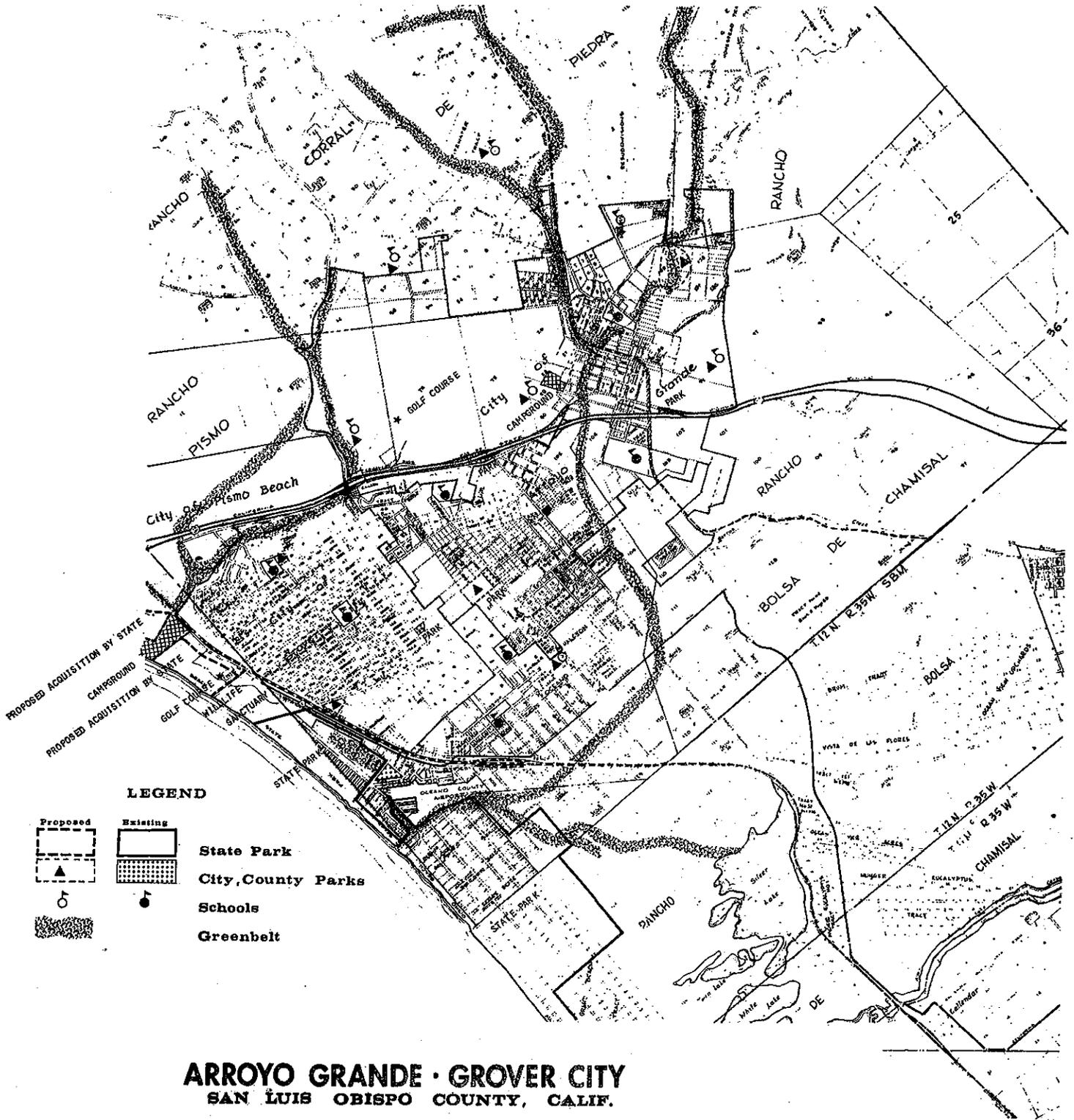
A description of the City, County and State facilities in those areas will be given in the City section of the Plan. The Planning Area recreation facilities are indicated on the map following this section.

#### N. Inter-Relationship of Open Space Considerations

All relevant considerations have been summarized in this portion of the Open Space Element. Topic by topic, each component of the natural and human environment has been explored and analyzed in terms of its relationship to planning open space needs.

It is necessary at this point to restate the fact that, although each consideration is unique and can be studied independently, they must now be tied into a workable system of environmental necessities which will result in a functional Open Space Plan. The following are recommendations on the major considerations and coordinations of these independent solutions into a manageable Open Space Plan.

# RECREATION PLAN



## V. THE COUNTY'S OPEN SPACE PLAN

The Open Space Plan of San Luis Obispo County is composed of recommendations for agricultural land, wildlife habitat, natural resource land, scenic land, wildlife watershed, watershed and water recharge lands, multi-use land, rural land and hazard lands. The composite of all these topics form the Open Space Plan for San Luis Obispo County. The following are the specific items discussed:

### A. Agricultural Lands

The preservation of the County's agricultural resources is paramount and current efforts must be devoted to changing the trends acting to degrade the agricultural economy. Agricultural use of suitable land has been and is expected for some time to come to remain a valuable and desirable use of open space. It is a use which, unlike most other uses is capable of functioning without extensive government services. Its aesthetic values are well known and its environmental impact for the most part, is much less detrimental than most other uses. It is a use of land worthy of encouragement and preservation. Not only is agriculture important to the County, but to the State and to the Nation. This is evident not only from the economic gains of agricultural production but from the primary and secondary benefits to the public which are provided through agricultural use including providing valuable and desirable open space, visual relief from urban areas and serves to dissipate air pollution emanated from urban areas.

As stated previously six agriculture preserves have been established, accounting for approximately 400,000 acres

(20% of the County). Although the current program has been successful in eliminating the speculative value from many agricultural properties, it has yet either to preserve those areas adjacent to the Cities and communities or much of the better agricultural lands.

The minimum criteria to qualify for agricultural preserves status should be established and all owners of commercial agricultural land should be encouraged to participate in the program. The safeguarding of agricultural lands is essential as a protection afforded other types of land use.

Objective:

To preserve and protect the productive agricultural lands and agricultural economy of San Luis Obispo County.

Recommendations:

1. Continuation of agricultural uses in designated flood hazard and geologic hazard areas of the County should be encouraged. Agricultural preserve contracts should be available for viable farming operations in these hazard areas, even if they are within urban reserve lines.
2. The extension of agricultural uses into marginal areas, where severe erosion and siltation would result should be discouraged.
3. The depletion of existing underground water resources should be supplemented by serving urban water needs through importation, desalinization or surface water impounds.
4. The exploitation of underground water supplies should be discouraged and a program of supplementing and recharging aquifers should be studied. Available Lopez Water, both surface and underground supplies, should be adjudicated to

provide for equitable and fair distribution of available water.

5. Precise agricultural zoning should be established for all commercial agricultural land. Appropriate lot sizes should be included to protect rural lands from premature and detrimental land division.
6. Rural ranch properties should be encouraged to establish allowable compatible uses complimentary to agricultural uses of the property.
7. The County should be divided into designated agricultural areas and thereafter applications for agricultural preserves should be accepted from owners' of qualified agricultural property.
8. Prime agricultural lands wherever possible, should be separated and protected from other uses and only those uses related to agriculture should be located on prime or good agricultural lands.
9. Agricultural uses should be encouraged as a means of providing open space.
10. Prime agricultural land must be recognized as an equal to other major land uses and given the protection it deserves as a developed use.
11. Annexation policies should be considered and the County requested to establish greenbelts on the periphery of Cities to prevent unreasonable expansion into prime areas.

B. Recreation Land

Once taken for granted but now recognized as a priceless possession, the Recreation Plan, adopted in 1968, emphasized that San Luis Obispo County was endowed with a combination of unique and varied natural resources. It recognized the importance of our recreational resources as an economic asset. The objectives of that document were founded upon using the recreation resources. The report prescribed a comprehensive program of resource development and protection so that all could derive maximum benefits from the County's assets without destroying them.

The broad category of recreation land includes the wide range of uses, ranging from heavily developed sports facilities to isolated regions for hunting. Each category of recreational uses has a different impact on the land, separate conflicts with other land uses and distinct land use requirements.

Intensive recreation includes day-use activities, organized sports facilities, travel-trailer parks, and other high density activities. If they destroy natural values and have the characteristics of urban development, intensive recreation activities should not be considered as open space. Intensive recreation use has a moderate to severe impact on the environment, and fragile ecological zones should be avoided. However, unique natural features, if protected, can be a prime factor in determining location of intensive recreational land. Caves, water falls, coast line promontories, striking land forms and other unusual features provide important focus of interest for a recreational area. Land use for intensive recreation, if well

managed, can retain scenic watershed and limited wildlife value, but is incompatible with agricultural use.

Extensive recreation on the other hand includes low intensity activity such as hunting and hiking, which have a low environmental impact. Land uses for extensive recreation can have steep slopes and geologic instability - it is not a major problem. Such uses can be somewhat compatible with agricultural uses; however, problems of maintenance, vandalism, fire hazard and agricultural damage may result unless adequate policing is provided.

Wilderness areas are a special form of extensive recreation areas. Open space designated for wilderness classification must be virtually untouched by roads and other signs of civilization. Only those modifications, such as trails, which involve very little environmental impact can be allowed. Wilderness areas are highly compatible with scenic, watershed, and wildlife values.

Water-oriented recreation may be intensive or extensive, but is considered separately because of its dependence on water access. Included are swimming, fishing and boating activities. Except for access considerations, shore facilities associated with water recreation have the same characteristics and needs as intensive recreation uses.

San Luis Obispo's enormous potential for recreation is both a valuable asset and a serious problem. The County has a virtually unparalleled opportunity for recreation. However, the County also has the responsibility for keeping key recreational land and open space. Another problem involving County recreation land is its uneven distribution. Because of the pressing

needs of preserving coast line property, interior portions of the County are left with inadequate recreational services. Recreational facilities are distributed unevenly. For example, coast line communities may have an abundance of beach area, but a deficiency of other park land.

The County has approved an extensive program for acquisition and management of over 6,000 acres of BLM property throughout the County. Much land will be required for open space while other parcels will have minimum development.

The State Department of Parks and Recreation has park land westerly of the Arroyo Grande-Grover City Planning Area and is considering extension of those facilities at the present time. The U. S. Forest Service has developed camping and other recreational facilities within the National Forest.

More parks and other forms of recreational facilities will be required not only to satisfy the increased population, but also the increasing amount of leisure time. Increasing care must be taken to retain the natural beauty of San Luis Obispo County. All proposed recreational facilities will be carefully implemented to allow maximum use without damage to the environment so that future generations will be able to enjoy existing amenities.

Objective:

To reserve land for recreational facilities, encourage private recreational development and other open uses in categories characteristic and beneficial to the residents of San Luis Obispo County as well as to meet tourist's needs today and in the future.

Recommendations:

1. Provide for the orderly acquisition and development and control of the comprehensive recreation system for San Luis Obispo County, including the Planning Area.
2. Recreation resources should be protected for the future as those resources are largely irreplaceable natural assets.
3. Encourage or provide recreational facilities and other open uses in central locations near all the living and working areas and in areas of outstanding beauty sufficient to meet the needs of the people to be served.
4. Proper commercial recreational uses should be encouraged to augment the public recreational programs.
5. A priority system of acquisition and improvement of recreation lands should be established by the County through adoption of Part 2 of the Recreation Plans.
6. Specific plans should be formulated and adopted by the Board of Supervisors for each County owned property.
7. Revenues derived from recreation or tourism should be made a part of the County's capital improvement program.
8. A committee, advisory to the Board of Supervisors, should be established to concentrate upon implementing an orderly program of recreation and park expansion and development.
9. Scenic and open space easements, park land, and open space

dedication should be acquired through subdivision and development process including, but not limited to: creek reservations, wooded areas, flood plains, scenic and historic sites, shore land and other suitable areas. Park lands should be evaluated upon their practical usability and open space and its environmental quality.

10. Standards for recreation improvement, maintenance and operation should be established and uniformly administered throughout the County. A County plant nursery should be established and maintained to keep landscape and forestation supplies current with park land needs.
11. Donations and dedications of recreation lands and open space easements should be encouraged by the County. Special assistance procedures should be prepared for those wishing to donate or dedicate their property.
12. Easements should be acquired for the County trail system. Trail links should be included to all major communities and the National Forest. Provisions should be made to insure the proper maintenance and policing of any proposed trail prior to its establishment.
13. Public access to shore line should be assured and implemented at every opportunity.
14. A recreation zone should be adopted as a portion of the open space zoning ordinance, implementing preservation of recreational resources. Strict grading and development standards should be enforced. All open space designated as potential recreational land should be protected by proper application of zoning districts.

15. The County Subdivision Ordinance should be ammended to include park land dedication. The fee, levied on a per-lot basis, should be designated as an alternate to dedication in order ot avoid the creation of small uncoordinated park properties.

16. Subdivision of immediate shore line area should be prohibited in favor of public shore line easements or dedications and beneficial public uses. Adequate beach access should be a condition of map approval.

17. The implementation and operation of any future recreational programs should be coordinated with all levels of government and local organizations.

C. Scenic Lands

In San Luis Obispo County, the entire County is considered as scenic land. Scenic lands are in general, areas which are visible to the general public and considered visually attractive. Scenic lands may involve corridors along particular highways. They also may be prominent natural land marks and they may include other unusual features of the landscape.

Sensitive lands include areas with fragile ecological characteristics. Disturbing the natural balance in these areas may mean that a rare plant life species would be destroyed, or that other unique features would be obliterated. Natural landmarks such as the Morros between San Luis Obispo and Morro Bay, include mountains or other natural features with high scenic value. Scenic backdrops include hillsides and ridges which rise above urban areas or major highways. Scenic vistas are points, accessible to the general public, which provide a sweeping view of the countrysie or coast line.

Most scenic and sensitive lands in the County have over-lapping

values as well. Land use for watershed protection is compatible with scenic and sensitive values. Properly managed grazing land can retain its scenic beauty, some damage to fragile wildlife species may be inevitable.

Many land uses however can eliminate or weaken the scenic and sensitive values of an area. Urban uses would greatly alter the landscape, destroying ecological values, although some scenic value may be re-established. Large road cuts and power transmission lines can ruin the scenic beauty of an area. Mining and quarrying uses are also incompatible with scenic and sensitive values. Billboards can hide or spoil scenic views. All of these uses must be controlled if scenic value in the County is to be preserved.

A scenic highway study of Route 41 and 101 over the Questa Grade has been prepared by the Planning Department.

The County recently adopted into the Scenic Highway System, Lake Nacimiento Drive and Interlake Road around Nacimiento Lake, the first County highway so designated. Two additional routes under consideration are from Avila to Oceano and from the coast to Lopez Lake.

Agricultural zones have been used in the past to protect scenic values of an area. Agricultural zones have been applied to several scenic corridors. This zone does not allow industrial or other uses which would destroy scenic values. New billboards are prohibited in these zones as well.

The Zoning Ordinance also provides for abatement of nonconforming billboards in these zones, with an amortization period of five years.

Problems in preserving scenic and sensitive areas have developed because of lack of coordination among various government and quasi-

public agencies. Primarily, problems have arisen because no public agency or commission has taken the role of spokesman for scenic values.

Objective:

To conserve, preserve, and maintain the scenic and sensitive lands of San Luis Obispo County and each of its Cities.

Recommendations:

1. Prepare a more detailed scenic analysis of the County to identify areas of prime scenic value. The study should establish precise corridors for proposed scenic highways and roads in the County. Natural landmarks, scenic rivers and streams, and other scenic landmarks should be identified.
2. An inventory of ecologically sensitive areas should be made.
3. Implementation of the existing ordinances causing billboard abatement should be undertaken.
4. Provisions for scenic preservation should be adopted as a part of the open space zoning ordinance. This zone should include two levels of restrictions. A restrictive zone, applying to scenic backdrops, should include strict grading and tree removal restrictions, including prompt replacement of natural vegetation on cuts and fills. Second, a prohibitive zone should be designed for key scenic landmarks, allowing only grazing use, with no grading, mining, quarrying, or transmission lines allowed. Scenic easements should be acquired in conjunction with zoning in this area.
5. The subdivision review process should be revised to include more emphasis on scenic values. The subdivision and lot division ordinances should provide for preservation of

trees or other scenic features.

6. A County and City Scenic Road System, supplementing State Scenic Highways should be established. Emphasis should be placed on the use of these roads for recreation travel rather than for commercial or high-speed arterial use. Separate paths for non-motorized traffic should be included within the right-of-way. Land use controls similar to those for scenic highways should be applied to the system.
7. All sizeable marsh areas and lakes in the County should be preserved. Warden Lake and Eto Lake should be purchased by the County. The City of San Luis Obispo should purchase remaining marshland on the perimeter of Laguna Lake. Pismo Beach, Grover City and the State should cooperate in purchasing Soda Lake which should be preserved as a wildlife refuge, with additional purchase of small parcels to round out BLM land. A scenic easement should be established for the Dune Lakes and Oso Flaco to insure their preservation.
8. The Morro Peaks should be acquired as scenic landmarks, with a continuous trail, linking San Luis Obispo and Morro Bay. Chimney Rock, near Lake Nacimiento, should be protected by scenic easement.
9. Ontario Ridge, between Sycamore Hotsprings and Cave Landing should be protected by a scenic easement.
10. The County and State should cooperate in acquiring scenic easements or purchasing undeveloped shoreline property.
11. Scenic easements should be acquired for private properties within the Lopez Lake watershed.

D. Multi-Use Land and Wildlife Habitat

Multi-use open space land generally includes the remote, mountainous areas of the County. This land has several important functions and values; property in this category should not be thought of as "Leftover land".

Multi-use open space land has several typical natural characteristics. These areas usually have steep slopes (over 30% is common) and are geologically unstable. Vegetation consists of forest or chaparral. Soils are poor and subject to severe erosion if the land is disturbed.

Land ownership is a mixture of private and public domain; National Forest and BLM land make up a large percentage of the multi-use open space land. Private land is usually in large parcels, although there is an increasing breakdown of lot sizes in many areas. Access to most land in this category is limited to unpaved roads or trails.

The need for preservation of multi-use open space land lies in its long-term, intrinsic value to the public. Conversely, such land has low value for intensive, private use for several reasons. The poor soil and heavy vegetation restrict the agricultural value of the land. Other uses are limited by (a) difficulty of access, (b) remoteness from public services, and (c) frequent lack of private water.

Multi-use open space land has high conservation values. These values are extensive in nature, applying to broad areas rather than specific locales, but this does not mean that they are less important. The remoteness and vegetative cover provide good wildlife habitat, although there is a problem of

forage and water for larger animals. A wide variety of plant species, some unique to the County, are present in these areas. Since headwaters of most of the County's streams are located in this land category, these areas have water management value. Much of this area, particularly the National Forest and BLM land, has value for extensive recreation uses such as hunting and fishing. While the scenic value of the multi-use open space land is often limited by its remoteness, therein lies some of the most spectacular scenery in the County.

Floor hazards are also caused by development in multi-use open space lands. These hazards may affect the development directly, in the form of flash floods. There is also an adverse effect on down-stream properties because of the increased runoff caused by development. Geologic and erosion hazards are present in these areas as well. Erosion caused by grading scars may permanently mar the scenic value of an area and cause siltation downstream. Mountainous areas of the County are particularly plagued with earthquake faults, many of which remain undiscovered but could cause great damage at any time.

Several State and National agencies, as well as the County, are involved in control of multi-use open space land. The bulk of these areas are included in the Los Padres National Forest. The National Forest boundaries include some private land as well as public domain. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management has jurisdiction over sizable portions of the County, including the Caliente Wildlife Management Area and numerous smaller parcels throughout the County.

Objective:

Protect the multi-use open space lands of San Luis Obispo County and preserve these areas for wildlife habitat, managed recreational facilities such as hunting, and the scenic values of the area.

Recommendations:

1. Develop specific land use plans for all public lands in the multi-use open space category.
2. The County should proceed with planning all BLM properties scheduled for acquisition.
3. The U.S. Forest Service should be encouraged to undertake further studies, considering possible boundary changes to reflect watershed limits and other natural characteristics.
4. No land should be removed from public domain without careful study to determine possible value to any government agency or the general public. All parcels with existing or potential value for recreation, water conservation, wildlife management, historical or scenic value should be retained. All BLM land adjoining the National Forest should be kept in public ownership.
5. Public domain classified for retention should be rounded into larger units to provide for better management and utilization.
6. Public access to large units of public land, particularly in the National Forest, should be improved, provided that sufficient policing and maintenance can be provided. Emphasis should be placed on trail access rather than additional roads.

E. Rural Residential Land

Rural residential land is all that land which is used for residential purposes and which is outside the Urban Reserve Lines or existing communities. These are included as an Element of Open Space because

of their rural nature and their relatively low density. To be designated as a rural residential area, the concentration of residential structures must be such that it is obviously the dominant use in relation to surrounding land uses.

Areas which are concentrations of smaller parcels and are dominated by other than residential uses should be designated according to that use. It is important to recognize the forms of land use in order to the further fractionalization of the County. It is a general goal of the County to discourage further proliferation of small parcel sizes or residential settlement in the rural areas of the County. This is to prevent both the creation of areas incapable of supporting the required public services and the unnecessary conversion of adjacent lands due to the pressures of incompatible uses.

Rural residential land uses may be divided into two broad categories. The first type is a rural residential area in close proximity to and adjoining an existing urban community and at least partly dependent upon the urban area for services. In most cases, these areas are the first phase in the breakdown of predominately rural lands into urban land uses. The densities required for inclusion in this land use vary depending upon their location in relation to physical features, topography and the suitability of land for other uses.

The second type of rural residential lands are those pockets of development which are isolated from all urban areas and services. In some cases they are isolated and outdated subdivisions. In others they are pockets of rural residential lots which have been fractured due to their desirable residential characteristics.

Most of these occur in the hill areas with one acre parcels.

Rural residential areas may be characterized by either permanent or second homes which may be standard single family dwellings or mobile homes. These residences may not be connected with commercial agriculture or commercial recreational enterprises. There is an increasing occurrence of these types of residences on both existing parcels and newly created small parcels. There are large areas of fractured rural lands and most of these are the location for the new residences.

It has been firmly established that rural residential lands have a negative impact on adjacent uses, property taxes, property services and aesthetic values, but neither the point at which this type of land use becomes negative nor the extent of their influence has been accurately measured.

Objective:

Protect the County and its Cities from premature and inadvisable rural subdivisions. It is a widely held objective that present rural residential development should be confined to current locations and further breakdown of rural property should be avoided.

Recommendations:

1. No additional zoning should be considered which would tend to create more isolated rural residential pockets or allow further growth of these existing areas.

2. A continuing program of rural zoning around urban communities should be pursued by the County Planning Commission.

3. Minimum lot sizes for isolated rural residential areas should be established at their present average ownership size until such time that the most desirable minimum acreages can be

determined.

4. Assign special holding zones for rural residential areas subject to geologic hazards until thorough engineering investigations can determine whether development is safe, and, if so, establish appropriate lot sizes and adequate safeguards.

5. Maximum effective lot sizes should be assigned to all other rural lands preventing their breakdown until proper open space programs can be applied.

6. Re-zoning which would tend to create new areas of undeveloped fractured rural land or to allow expansion of the existing areas must be prohibited in both flat land and hill areas.

7. Areas of undeveloped fractured rural lands which are under multiple ownership, and are in proximity to designated urban areas should be assigned a minimum lot size which would prevent further land division into lots less than ten acres. Large lot slope density standards should be employed in these areas.

8. Areas of undeveloped fractured rural lands which are under multiple ownership and isolated from existing urban centers and services should be classified according to their most suitable use and should be zoned for the enforceable minimum lot size.

F. The County Plan

The foregoing sections are general discussions of the various and varying facets of the Open Space Plan of San Luis Obispo County.

This Plan as well as the rest of the text is only one part of the San Luis Obispo General Plan and should not be considered out of this context.

Although this Element of the General Plan is designed to discuss open space in San Luis Obispo County it provides for areas to be set aside for human settlement consistent with realistic growth projections.

It must be recognized that land will be needed for urban expansion, primarily, for residential, commercial and industrial growth and steps should be taken to direct this growth.

Adequate open space must be set aside in developing urban areas.

Easements and rights-of-way for public utilities, power transmissions and transportation are necessary for future populations but the intrusion upon natural landscape should be negligible.

Open space in the County may be achieved in many different ways, from scenic easement to outright dedication, and it is the diversification of usage that makes it most effective. The National Forests provide broad expanses of open space, while the careful planning of densely populated residential areas make for a proportional amount of open space of relief in contrast. Open space may be used advantageously in conjunction with all types of land use as well as unused land. In a County such as San Luis Obispo, where there is a desire to retain the natural beauty and rural atmosphere, knowledgeable application of open space in planning is of utmost importance.

VI. THE OPEN SPACE PLAN - TWO CITIES PLANNING AREA

Following are the recommendations for various facets which link together to form the Open Space Plan for the Cities of Arroyo Grande-Grover City and their respective Planning Areas.

A. Agricultural Lands

Good productive agricultural lands lie easterly, southerly and southwesterly of Arroyo Grande. It has good cultivable land and is adaptable to a wide variety of agricultural uses. To the southeast of Arroyo Grande are lands which are valuable for extensive grazing. Surrounding Arroyo Grande Valley to the north and the east of the Planning Area is fair grazing land. It has severe limitations because of the steep slopes, shallow soils and excessive erosion. The Two Cities are located in an area where the land is considered fairly good land which is perhaps best suited for row crops, orchards and pasture lands.

The continued increase in population, the accompanying growth in industry, and other urban land uses is a continuing threat to the retention of agricultural lands for agricultural purposes. The safeguarding of agricultural lands is as essential as afforded other types of land uses.

Objectives:

To preserve and protect good agricultural lands within the Planning Area by requiring all future development and extension of urbanized uses and in the direction of the less productive land.

Recommendations:

1. Good agricultural lands should be protected from other uses, and only those uses related to agriculture located

on good agricultural land.

2. Agricultural uses should be encouraged as a means of providing open space for the Planning Area.
3. Good agriculture land must be recognized as an equal to other major land uses and given the protection it deserves as a developed use.

B. Recreation and Park Land

More parks and other forms of recreational facilities will be required, not only to satisfy the increased population, but also the increasing amount of leisure time.

Additional subdivision developments should include a requirement that recreation and park facilities be provided as a part of that development to provide the necessary recreation and park facilities for the future populations of each of the Planning Areas. Arroyo Grande now requires such facilities.

Objective:

To require recreation and park land to be set aside as a part of any new subdivision development, encourage private recreation development and other uses in categories characteristic and beneficial to the present and future residents of the Planning Area. Encourage the State Division of Beaches and Parks to add additional facilities along San Luis Obispo Bay in addition to their recent acquisitions, but not so restrictive as to prevent use by local residents.

Recommendations:

1. To provide for the orderly acquisition, development and control of a comprehensive recreation system for the Planning Area.

2. Recreation development should be provided as a part of any future residential subdivision.
3. Encourage and provide recreational facilities whether passive or active in locations near all living and working areas to meet the varying needs of the people to be served.
4. Encourage the Division of Beaches and Parks to proceed with acquisition of additional land to enlarge the present State Parks and to increase the State Beach frontage.
5. Proper commercial recreational uses should be encouraged to augment public recreational programs.
6. Proposed sites for recreation should be evaluated to assure they have maximum flexibility and adaptability and adequacy to provide for the constantly changing recreation needs.
7. Encourage full cooperation with the County of San Luis Obispo in coordinating the local and County recreation programs.

C. Wildlife Habitat

The Planning Areas of the two Cities have limited habitat for wildlife; however, such areas as Arroyo Grande Creek, Arroyo Grande Valley, Nipomo Mesa and the foothills surrounding the areas do provide habitat for wildlife. Other habitat particularly for migrating fowl is Pismo Lake north of Grover City and the several lakes southerly of Grover City which should be protected because of their importance to wildlife.

Objective:

To preserve and maintain open space as a means of providing

natural habitat for all species of wildlife including access to the ocean beaches and to the water impounding reservoirs.

Recommendations:

1. All present wildlife habitat should be protected for their intrinsic and ecological values as well as their direct benefits to the present and future populations.
2. Acquisition of Pismo Lake as well as other lakes southerly of Oceano should be considered as a possible joint Cities-County venture.
3. The banks of Arroyo Grande Creek should be protected from encroachment by development.

C. Natural Resource Lands

The primary natural resource in the Planning Area is agriculture. Agriculture should be protected as the basic land use of the area.

Objective:

Protect the good agriculture crop lands which are not absolutely necessary for the expansion of the two Cities.

Recommendation:

Continue to promote a program along with the County of agricultural land preservation to assure good food supplies for all time.

E. Watershed and Water Recharge Lands

Arroyo Grande has an adequate water supply from the Lopez Water Supply Project and ground water supplies presently existing. Grover City does not have an adequate allocation. The Arroyo Grande Creek which runs through the good soils of the Arroyo Grande Valley also provides water for these soils which have excellent

recharge capabilities. Consideration should be given to joint land acquisition for water shortage and groundwater recharge. The Lopez watershed has an area of 67.4 square miles. The land ownership is 2,476 acres with a water surface of 960 acres.

Care must be taken to keep the present supply of usable water at a quality which is safe for human consumption and free from long range pollutants. Every effort must be made to keep agricultural irrigation run-offs, industrial as well as human waste, from lowering the water quality below permissible standards.

Objective:

To preserve the quality of existing water supply in the Planning Area and adequately plan along with the County for expansion and retention of valuable water supplies for future generations.

Recommendations:

1. Provide for the safety and welfare of the residents of the area by the continued efforts toward flood control.
2. Continue to share the high quality of water and take every precaution to eliminate the danger of any pollution to the Arroyo Grande Creek and its recharge areas through agricultural, industrial or human waste.
3. Encourage the County to continue a program of developing future water sources and to establish the need for future facilities.
4. Encourage utilization of the latest scientific techniques toward reclamation and recycling of waste water.

F. The Plans

The foregoing discussion has combined into broad categories the Open Space and Conservation Plan for the Planning Areas of Arroyo

Grande and Grover City. These Elements of the General Plan are designed to discuss Open Space and Conservation in the Planning Area. It must however provide for areas to be set aside for residential development contiguous to existing development.

It is recognized that land will be needed for urban expansion, primarily in residential, commercial, tourist-commercial, and industrial growth; however, steps should be taken to make sure that this growth is an extension of existing development. Consideration should be given to adoption of a philosophy related to growth patterns should increased density within the Cities be permitted or continued urban sprawl.

Adequate open space must be set aside in any new development.

Easements or rights-of-way must be provided for access to any development along San Luis Obispo Bay or the Pacific Ocean.

Easements and rights-of-way for public utilities and transportation are necessary for future development but their intrusion upon the natural landscape should be kept to a minimum.

Objective:

To retain the character and natural beauty of the Planning Area by the preservation and control of Open Space and enhancement of the area.

Recommendations:

1. To define the limit of areas of urban growth in the Planning Area of each of the two Cities.
2. To encourage the development of recreational facilities which will provide open space.
3. To encourage the State Division of Beaches and Parks to add to the present State Parks lands in the Planning

Area, in addition to their recent purchase.

4. To encourage incorporation of open space and all types of development including residential, commercial and industrial.
5. To retain the rural atmosphere of the Planning Area through the use of open space.
6. Cooperate with the County to retain agricultural lands for open space and discourage any non-contiguous development of housing, commerce, tourist-oriented commercial, or industry.
7. To cooperate with the County in the acquisition of important flyways north and south of the Planning Area.
8. Encourage open space through the clustering of development with passive and active recreation areas.
9. To support the definition and establishment of the use of the primary and secondary flood plains as open space.
10. Those areas within the City which have requested and have been granted withdrawal from the Sewer District assessment area should be placed in Open Space Zoning along with the existing Agricultural Zoning to maintain these areas as agricultural areas.

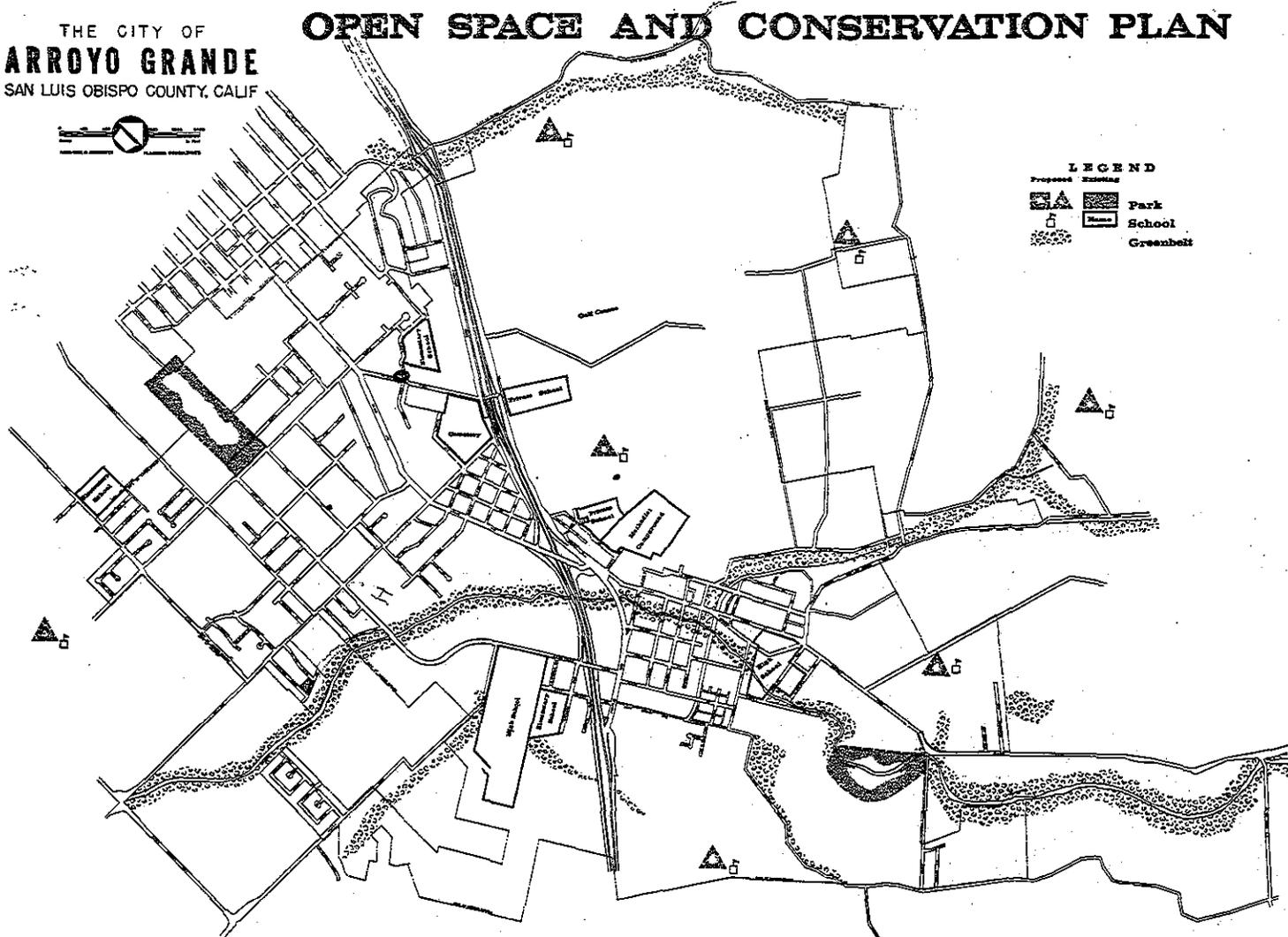
Following are the Open Space Plans of the individual Planning Areas of the two Cities. Each Plan is illustrative of matters concerning Open Space that are discussed in the text.

THE CITY OF  
**ARROYO GRANDE**  
SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY, CALIF



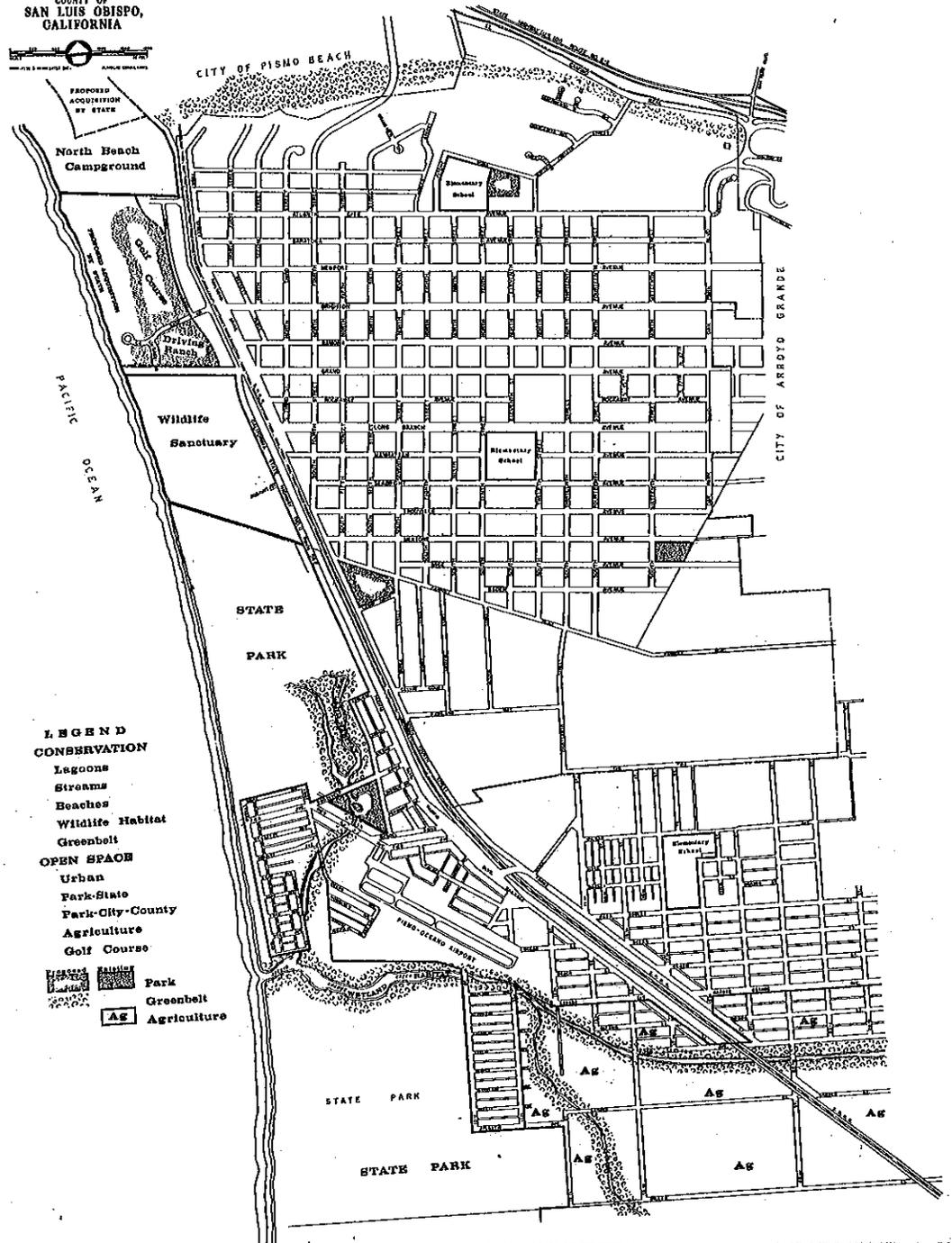
# OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION PLAN

**LEGEND**  
Proposed Existing  
Park  
School  
Greenbelt



# OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION PLAN

CITY OF  
**GROVER CITY**  
 COUNTY OF  
 SAN LUIS OBISPO,  
 CALIFORNIA



- LEGEND**
- CONSERVATION**
- Legoons
  - Streams
  - Beaches
  - Wildlife Habitat
  - Greenbelt
- OPEN SPACE**
- Urban
  - Park-State
  - Park-City-County
  - Agriculture
  - Golf Course
- Other Symbols:**
- Elementary School
  - Junior High School
  - High School
  - Park
  - Greenbelt
  - Agriculture (Ag)

## VII. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OPEN SPACE PLAN

### A. Need for Open Space Implementation

Emphasis has been made throughout this report of the great benefit that can be gained from a vital and active open space program. A plan for open space maintenance and development will remain just a paper plan unless accurate practical means of implementation are given to show how such a plan will "work" and prove to be practical.

It was discussed earlier that the property owner now absorbs most of the burden in terms of tax payments for community facilities and amenities. The tax payer has reached the saturation point where additional taxes for purchase of open space lands becomes totally impractical. If the acquisition of additional land is needed to implement the open space and parks and recreation plans, then various new methods of obtaining this land must be found. The following brief statements highlight some of the current, practical methods of effectuating open space maintenance and acquisition as well as control which should be carefully evaluated as to their parts in the implementation program. Other methods should also be carefully considered and utilized where appropriate.

### B. Current Methods of Open Space Implementation and Results

The following methods have been attempted and found to be quite successful, if implemented, in obtaining open space. It is recommended that these be continued and enlarged.

#### 1. Zoning and Subdivisions, General

These two forms of regulatory mechanisms give the County and its City the power to promote the public health, safety,

morals and general welfare. The two powers are essentially a result of the realization of the importance of the whole community's rights being more valuable than the right of an individual doing what he wishes with his land. Zoning and subdivision regulations are the primary method of land use regulation without the use of land purchase with compensation. Because there is not payment or land purchase involved, these two forms of land regulations are limited to the extent which they may be used. However, inverse condemnation must be avoided in all instances.

a. Zoning Regulations

(1) Exclusive Agricultural Zoning

The County has been engaged in a relatively successful effort to protect its highly productive land through an exclusive agriculture program which has been calculated as an implementation of the County's total Planning Program. It continues to be the County's position that agricultural zoning must continue to play an important role in the protection of agricultural lands. This, backed by the Cities, can be an effective tool which cannot be overlooked in accomplishing the desired goals set forth in the Open Space Element.

b. Subdivision Regulations

Subdivision regulations help to guide development on land which is not yet a part of the urbanizing pattern. Specific subdivision regulations can effectively guide development by the control and placement of lots, streets, utilities, sewerage and water systems. The regulations can also require open space or recreation lands to be set aside as part of a development. Therefore, areas of valuable open space can be deterred from development

by utilizing this type of regulation.

The Arroyo Grande Subdivision Ordinances adopted seven years ago has a provision to allow "optional design" when the Planning Commission and City Council finds that a proposed development will:

"(1) produce a more desirable and livable community that would be affected otherwise, and

(2) create a better community environment through dedication of public areas, or setting out open space lands whether dedicated or owned in common".

The Subdivision Ordinance of Arroyo Grande, as adopted, also has a provision "to provide for adequate and appropriate public recreation facilities for the subdivision by the dedication of land therein or the payment of fees in lieu thereof".

Results - Arroyo Grande will require new development to provide for either public recreation facilities, private recreation facilities held in common or open space land held either for the benefit of the person in the development or dedicated to the public.

The City of Grover City will incorporate these provisions in their ordinance in the future; however, a Recreation Element must be adopted prior to implementation.

## 2. Scenic Easements

Section 51050 of the California Government Code establishes that "any City or County which has adopted a General Plan may accept grants of open space easements or open space agreements on privately owned land lying within the City or County".

The purpose of such easements is for the preservation of land as open space in the best interest of the State, City or County and is important to the public for the enjoyment of scenic beauty, for the use of natural resources, for recreation, or for the production of food or fiber and specifically that its potential is for future generations.

The State presently has an open space reimbursement program (Section 14112, Open Space Subvention Act). The County should investigate this program and determine the best way to proceed in initiating open space agreements within the County.

Results - The Planning Commission is currently considering the requirement of dedications of scenic easements along County roads designated as Scenic County Roads.

The following guidelines are suggested for review and acceptance of scenic easements by both the County and the Two Cities:

- a. A substantial portion of the property must be within sight of a public road, park or other significant open space which is in the ownership of the State, County or other public agency.
- b. Its relationship to adjacent parcels under scenic easement should be considered and its proximity to other areas of scenic community value should be determined.
- c. The impact of reduced tax revenue on the City should be evaluated.
- d. The land must have true scenic beauty to have some community value.
- e. The compatibility of the parcel with the General Plan should be evaluated.

f. The possibility of any portion of scenic easement land being required for City or State Highway purposes or for any other purpose that might require condemnation.

g. Compatible uses that may be allowed on scenic easement lands. Uses that may be considered are those that will not mar the landscape, such as riding and hiking trails.

Where scenic easements are accepted they shall be:

1. Dedicated for a period of not less than ten (10) years and shall be irrevocable during that period. They shall be automatically extended at the end of each year.

2. Existing dwelling units on the property must be removed from scenic easement boundaries.

3. Encouraging Private Open Space Development:

There are a number of privately oriented uses of open space which add substantially to the enjoyment of natural resources of the area. Privately used golf courses, open space, cluster or condominium development, private recreation campgrounds, all add to the usable open space and allow a greater variety of recreation facilities. It shall be the policy of the Cities to encourage and stimulate additional private open space development.

C. Other Open Space Implementation Possibilities

1. Acquisition

These jurisdictions should continue to acquire those lands which are significant to each one's level or responsibility. If it is really the intent to preserve open space, there must be a total mobilization of effort by all agencies and all levels of government. For only through the pooling of concentrated action can implementation be effective.

2. Road and Public Land Abandonment

All public land should be carefully evaluated as to their relationship to the Open Space Element and no right should be relinquished until the review indicates there are no open space values involved.

3. Lease Excess Roads Lands from State

Section 14012 of the Government Code provides:

"the director may lease non-operating right-of-way areas to municipalities or other local agencies for public purposes, and may contribute toward the cost of developing local parks and other recreational facilities on such areas. The director may accept as all or part of the consideration for such lease or for such state contribution any substantial benefit the state will derive from the municipality or other local agencies undertaking maintenance or landscaping costs which would otherwise be the obligation of the State. Such leases shall contain a provision that whenever the leased land is needed for state highway operating purposes the lease shall terminate. The department is authorized to classify portions of State highway right-of-way as non-operating."

All property declared to be excess by the Division of Highway should be carefully analyzed to determine if a lease arrangement might be of benefit to the County.

4. Full Fee Acquisition

This is essentially the total acquisition of property by purchase, condemnation under the power of eminent domain, tax foreclosure or gift. The voluntary purchase agreement would mean paying the prevailing real estate prices; condemnation would also involve just compensation to acquire open space.

5. Less Than Fee Acquisition

Less than fee acquisition is different from outright purchase of property in that only certain property rights are purchased. The land ownership is a combination of rights to use the land, for example, the right to develop the land, the right to mineral exploration, and other possible mineral surface uses. In less than fee acquisition, only certain desired rights are purchased, such as the right to prohibit tree removal, road construction, or building structures.

Less than fee acquisition, is therefore, the purchase of a portion of a private land owner's rights in order to retain or deter certain types of land uses. This could be an effective open space control.

6. Land Exchange

It is currently possible for governmental agencies to exchange public land for privately owned land for the purpose of obtaining needed open space in proper locations. As an example, the Bureau of Land Management can exchange land which is scheduled for disposition.

7. Purchase of Surplus Public Lands

Local agencies are often offered the opportunity to purchase surplus State and Federal lands. A discount of 50% is usually provided if the land is to be used for parks and recreation purposes. Also the Bureau of Land Management administers large amounts of surplus land which can be purchased at a very low price by the County or exchanged.

8. Deed Restrictions

Contracts, covenants and restrictions are often

created by the private developer as one tool for controlling the type of development which might occur on that property. These restrictions might take the form of use restrictions, open space, setback requirements, preservation of natural vegetation, architectural style, or other provisions which might add to the open space of the developing area.

D. Possible Methods of Financing Open Space

1. Taxation

Listed below are several examples of special taxes which might be utilized to gather revenue for open space acquisition if deemed necessary:

a. User Fees and Taxes - Within controlled and extensively used areas (such as parks and shorelines). A fee can be imposed upon a user to aid in the maintenance and development cost.

b. Motel "Bed" Tax - By use of a tourist overnight tax upon guest hotels and motels, large scale funds are available to finance programs which are constantly designed to draw the tourists in the first place.

c. Real Estate Transfer Tax - A minor tax can be imposed upon the transfer of real estate to be utilized for the development of open space and park lands related to such real estate development.

d. Horse Tax - The acquisition of designated riding trails can be financed through a tax placed on riding horses and horse rentals as provided for in the Article 14 of the Government Code under the Pleasure Riding Tax Law.

e. Gasoline Tax - A definite portion of the gasoline tax can be designated for scenic highway construction and

beautification.

f. Construction tax on new development including residential, commercial and industrial.

2. Federal Funds

a. HUD Open Space Grants - Although current funding of this program is over-subscribed, it could essentially provide fifty-fifty matching funds for acquisition of open space and park improvements. However, this program emphasizes open spaces nearer to urban areas.

b. Land and Water Conservation Fund - This is a fifty-fifty matching fund program currently available in limited amounts for the purchase of open space lands.

c. Wildlife Restoration Fund - The acquisition, development and preservation of major wildlife areas are funded under this program administered by State Wildlife Conservation Board.

d. Other Federal funds are available in limited amounts under many minor programs for the maintenance and acquisition of open space lands.

3. Private Funds

Recently there has been a surge in the number of private conservation groups willing to purchase valuable open space lands for the benefit of the community and environment. This should be encouraged as an effective means of acquiring land that might otherwise not be obtainable through governmental action or as a holding action until governmental funds can become available.

## VIII. THE CONSERVATION PLAN - TWO CITIES

The following are the recommendations for the various facets which link together to form the Conservation Plan.

### A. Watershed and Water Recharge Lands

Water supply is a great resource of the area. The construction of Lopez Dam with its large watershed, as far north as Avila and south to Nipomo Mesa Area provides for domestic water and serves to prevent periodic salt water intrusion. Periodic releases from Lopez Reservoir help recharge the underground basins.

The most economical future water plan for the County, according to the current County Water Resources Studies, appears to be a combination of redistributed surface reservoir waters, the State Water Project and underground water supplies.

In the South County Area, which includes the Two City Planning Area, Lopez Reservoir water releases to serve the urban areas and to replenish the ground water basin have been estimated to be adequate to accommodate projected urban and agricultural demand to the year 1990. Anticipated agricultural expansion in the citrus field in the Nipomo Mesa will place a greater demand on the ground water basin that now exists. While the present safe yield of the basin can not sustain this expansion, the safe yield of the larger Nipomo area is five and one-half (5½) times as great. This fact suggests that proper distribution of the underground water resources could facilitate desirable land uses in the area.

Care must be taken to preserve the presence of usable water at a quality which is safe for human consumption and free from long-range pollutants. Every effort must be made to keep agricultural irrigation run-offs, and industrial as well as human waste from

lowering the water quality below permissible standards.

Objective:

To preserve the quality of the existing water supply and adequately plan along with the County for expansion and retention of valuable future water supplies for future development whether urban or agricultural.

Recommendations:

1. Provide for the safety and welfare of the residents of the area by continued expansion of the water supply.
2. Provide for continued expansion of flood control efforts on a regional scale.
3. Continue to insure the high quality of water and take every precaution to eliminate the danger of any pollution to the ground water supply and its recharge areas through agricultural human and industrial wastes.
4. Encourage the County to continue their present program of research into the future water demands of the County to establish the need for any future urban growth and agricultural expansion.
5. Encourage the County to plan for future expansion of water storage facilities, water from the State Water Project and possible desalinization plant at Diablo Canyon.

B. Natural Vegetation

Grass is the prevailing ground cover in the low lands of the area. Scattered oaks exist in the steeper areas along the hillsides. Chaparral is found in the steeper sections above the wooded areas.

Objective:

To protect the vegetative cover and tree areas which are not absolutely necessary for the expansion of the Cities of Arroyo Grande and Grover City.

Recommendation:

Continue to promote a program, along with the County of protection of the vegetative cover and the forest lands to insure adequate wildlife habitat for all time.

C. Soil Types in The Planning Area of The Two Cities

A high percentage of the good soil as rated by the Soil Conservation Service occurs in the Arroyo Grande Valley. The good quality of soil in the Valley results from run-off in the higher areas. The soil northeasterly and southwesterly of Arroyo Grande is Class 1 soil and is very good agricultural land. To the southeast of Arroyo Grande is Class 6 soil which is well suited for grazing. It is not arable because of the steeper slopes and this area is susceptible to erosion with its shallow soils. Surrounding Arroyo Grande Valley to the north and east of the Planning Area is Class 7 soil which is only fairly well suited for grazing. It has severe limitations for use because of its steep slopes, shallow soils and excessive erosion. Portions of Arroyo Grande and Grover City are in Class 4 land which is considered fairly good land suitable for occasional cultivation. Perhaps its best use is for pasture land or orchards. The area along San Luis Obispo Bay is Class 8 land and is not suitable for cultivation or grazing; however, it may be used for wildlife habitat and recreation.

Objective:

Protect the good soils in the Arroyo Grande Valley and

surrounding fair soils and discourage expansion of development into the good agriculture lands except where absolutely necessary for the expansion of the Two Cities.

Recommendations:

1. Continue to promote and support a program encouraging both exclusive agricultural zoning and agricultural preserve contracts for good and fair soil areas whether devoted to crop land or grazing.

D. Natural Resource Lands

The primary natural resources within the Planning Area are the agricultural soils in the Arroyo Grande Valley and the beaches along the San Luis Obispo Bay. Agriculture should be protected as a basic land use of the area.

Objective:

Protect the good agricultural crop lands and grazing lands which are not absolutely necessary for the expansion of the Two Cities.

Recommendation:

Continue to promote, along with the County, a program of agricultural land preservation to assure the preservation of the good agricultural lands.

E. Wildlife Habitat

San Luis Obispo County has numerous wildlife species some of which are still abundant. Federal, State and County-owned and managed open space lands assure the continued natural habitat that most species need.

Most of the natural habitat for fish and game is in the mountain areas to the east and the wetlands south of the Planning Areas. There are also varying amounts of wildlife in the foothills.

surrounding the Planning Area. Control of access through prohibition of vehicles in the mountainous and hill areas, preservation of grass lands and chaparral covered hillsides and growth along the Arroyo Grande Creek preserves the natural environment necessary for wildlife to exist.

Objective:

To preserve and maintain wildlife habitat, both dry land and wetland areas, as a means of providing the natural habitat for all species of wildlife.

Recommendations:

1. To maintain dry land and wetland areas of habitat for all species of fish and wildlife for their intrinsic and ecological values.
2. To provide for the diversified recreational use of wildlife and fish.
3. Provide for scientific and educational use of fish and wildlife.
4. In planning any alteration to the present environment careful consideration should be given to the effects on fish and wildlife.
5. Present land uses which result in siltation and pollution of inland waters should be carefully monitored.

F. Recreational Lands

Other natural resources are the recreational land, the scenic beauty of the County and the open space areas which have been preserved for posterity. The County has been fortunate in its many natural attributes, including sandy beaches, rolling hills, lakes and parks which offer limitless activity for those who enjoy

swimming, fishing, hunting, boating, hiking, picnicking, and many other activities. The County is fortunate too that over 260,000 acres of these lands are owned and controlled by the various governmental agencies and are open to the public in many cases for a vast variety of recreational purposes. The State of California has over 21,000 acres for public use and enjoyment. The County of San Luis Obispo has approximately the same area in County ownership. In addition, it has the Nacimiento and Lopez Reservoir and their recreational facilities.

Objective:

To reserve land for recreation facilities, encourage private recreation development and other uses in categories characteristic and beneficial to the residents of the County and the area.

Recommendations:

1. To provide for the orderly acquisition and development and control of a comprehensive system in the County as well as the Planning Area.
2. Recreational resources should be protected for the future as these resources are largely irreplaceable natural assets.
3. Plan carefully to retain the scenic and natural beauty of San Luis Obispo County. All proposed recreational facilities will be carefully implemented to allow maximum use without damage to the environment. Conservation of these resources will be the watchword of the Planning Area and the County.

G. Flood Control

The man-made reservoirs within San Luis Obispo County constructed as flood control and water conservation facilities are as follows:

1. Lopez Reservoir.
2. Salinas Reservoir.
3. Twitchell Reservoir.
4. Whole Rock Reservoir.
5. Nacimiento Reservoir.

Nacimiento and Twitchell are the primary flood control reservoirs. All reservoirs serve as water recharge supplies and also provide valuable irrigation water for the County. The Planning Area, while having localized flood areas, is not classified as a primary flood zone.

Objectives:

To preserve the quality of the existing water supply, as well as to adequately plan for flood control in all areas of the County, and more particularly the Planning Area.

Recommendations:

1. Provide for the safety and welfare of the residents of the Planning Area by continuing the expansion of flood control efforts on a regional scale.
2. Promote the Plan for future expansion of flood control facilities as well as water storage reservoirs to be utilized as water supply and recreation facilities.

H. Scenic Lands

The entire County is considered as scenic land. Scenic lands are in general, areas which are or can be made, visible to the general public and considered visually attractive. Scenic lands also involve corridors along particular highways. They also may be prominent natural landmarks and they may include many other natural features of the landscape.

Sensitive lands include areas with gradual ecological characteristics. Disturbing the natural balance of these areas may mean that a rare plant or species would be destroyed or that other unique features would be obliterated. Scenic backdrops include hillsides and ridges which arise above urban areas or major highways. Scenic vistas are points that are accessible to the general public, which provide a sweeping view of the countryside or coast line. Most scenic lands in the County have other uses as well. Land use for water should be protected as compatible with scenic values. Properly managed grazing land can retain its scenic beauty.

Other land uses can eliminate or weaken the scenic values of an area. Urban uses greatly alter the landscape, destroying ecological values, although some scenic value may be re-established. Large road cuts, power transmission lines, quarrying and mining, can ruin the scenic beauty of an area. All of these uses must be controlled as the scenic values in the County are to be preserved.

Objectives:

To preserve, conserve and maintain the scenic and sensitive lands of the Planning Area and encourage conservation of these sensitive areas throughout the County.

Recommendations:

1. Provide a detailed analysis of areas of scenic and sensitive lands throughout the Planning Area.
2. Identify areas of prime scenic value and establish precise corridors for protection of scenic lands along proposed scenic highways.
3. Provide for preservation of natural landmarks, scenic rivers and streams and other scenic points and areas

throughout the Planning Area. Provide for trails and access corridors to areas of scenic value and greenbelts.

4. Protect ecologically sensitive areas within the Planning Area.

5. Provisions for scenic preservation should be adopted as part of the Open Space Zoning Ordinance. This Zoning District should include a restrictive zone applying to scenic backdrops and second, a prohibition zone should be designed for key scenic landmarks allowing only grazing use, with no grading, mining, quarrying or transmission lines allowed.

6. The subdivision review process should be revised to include more emphasis on scenic values.

7. A strong grading ordinance should be adopted which strictly controls cut and fill as well as removal of trees and other scenic features.

8. All sizeable marsh areas and lakes within the Planning Area should be preserved.

9. Areas set out for catch basins for storm water runoff, such as the present one at Ash and Elm Streets, should be preserved as Open Space Area (Arroyo Grande).

#### I. The Plan of the Two Cities

The foregoing discussion is combined into broad categories in the Conservation Plan for the Planning Areas of Arroyo Grande and Grover City.

This Element of the General Plan discusses conservation in the Planning Area. It must, however, provide for areas to be set aside for additional urban development contiguous to existing development.

As in the Open Space Plan it is recognized that land will be needed for urban expansion, primarily in residential, commercial, tourist-commercial and industrial growth; however, steps should be taken to make sure that this growth is an extension of existing development in order to preserve and conserve the assets of the Planning Area.

Conservation must be the prime objective in consideration of any new development.

Rights-of ways, public utilities, roads and other methods of transportation are necessary for future development but approval of the alignment of any of these features should reflect conservation practices in the area.

Objectives:

To conserve the natural resources, vegetative cover, soils, the wildlife habitat, both dry and wetlands, the agriculture resources and all other natural resources in the area.

Recommendations:

1. To define the limit of areas of urban growth in the Planning Area for each of the two Cities and their Planning Areas.
3. In as far as feasible, discourage urban development on good agricultural land and in good wildlife habitat, whether wet or dry.
4. To retain the rural atmosphere of the Planning Area through good conservation practices and maintenance of open space.
5. To cooperate with the County to retain agricultural lands and wildlife habitat and discourage any non-contiguous development of housing, commerce or industry.

6. To support the definite establishment of the use of primary and secondary flood plain areas, if any, within the Planning Area.

The Conservation Plan maps of the individual Planning Areas of the Cities of Arroyo Grande and Grover City are shown on Pages 76 and 77. Each Plan is illustrative of matters concerning conservation that are discussed in this text.

## IX. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONSERVATION PLAN

### A. Need for Conservation Implementation

Emphasis has been made in this report of the vital need for conservation of the natural resources of the area, including the water, the vegetation, the soils, the wildlife habitat and the other natural resources. Any plan for conservation would remain just a paper plan unless practical means of implementation are given to show how such a plan would work and prove to be practical.

As discussed in the Open Space Plan, the property owner now absorbs most of the burden in terms of tax payments for community facilities and amenities. In some cases acquisition of additional land will be required to implement the conservation plans. The following statements, which are similar to implementation of the Open Space Plan, indicate some of the current, practical methods of effectuating conservation plans and controls which should be carefully evaluated as to their parts in the implementation program.

### B. Current Methods of Conservation Implementation and Results

The following methods have been found quite successful in conservation practices. It is recommended that these be continued and enlarged.

#### 1. Zoning in the Subdivision - General

As indicated in Open Space Implementation these two forms of regulatory mechanisms give the County and its Cities the power to promote the public health, safety, morals and general welfare.

Zoning and subdivision regulations are the primary method of land use controls without the use of land purchases, with compensation. These two forms of land regulation are limited to the

extent that they may be used.

a. Zoning Regulations

(1) Exclusive Agricultural Zoning

As stated previously the County has engaged in relatively successful efforts to protect its highly productive land through an exclusive agricultural zoning program which has been calculated as an implementation to the County's total Planning Program. It should continue to be the County's position that agriculture zoning must continue to play an important role in the conservation of prime agricultural lands. This, backed by the Cities can be an effective tool in accomplishing the desired goals set forth in the Conservation Element.

The County also proposes to implement conservation throughout the County with scenic conservation districts and design control districts which will help to preserve and protect areas that should be preserved.

b. Protection of Flood Plains

Flood Plain Zoning is desirable in areas where protection from annual inundation is a basic requirement. Prohibition or more strict regulation of development in these areas is a concern to the Two Cities in the Planning Area through the use of flood plain regulations or correction of the problem areas.

c. Subdivision Regulations

Specific subdivision regulations can effectively guide development into good conservation practices as a condition of approval of such development. The regulations can

References and Acknowledgements

San Luis Obispo Open Space Element

Arroyo Grande General Plan

Grover City General Plan

Department of Parks and Recreation - State of California

Laws Relating to Conservation and Planning

State of California, Resources Agency  
United States Geological Survey  
Soil Conservation Service

Credits

Staff - San Luis Obispo County

Staff - Arroyo Grande and Grover City