

# Climate and Agricultural Preservation Plan

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## Technical Panels

### Initial Findings – *Santa Clara Valley Farming Trends* *Agricultural Support Programs*

**February 8, 2017**



# Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions
2. SALC / CAPP / Program Context
3. Meeting Objectives
4. Takeaways & Initial Findings
  1. **Farming Trends in Southern Santa Clara County –**
    - \* Agricultural Land Conversions, Agricultural Economy, Sub-regions
  2. **Agricultural Support Programs from other regions**
5. Discussion and next Steps

# Introductions

- \* Share your
  - \* Name
  - \* Farm/ranch or organization
  - \* Where you are located



# SALC & CAPP

- \* **CAPP – Climate and Agricultural Preservation Program**

- \* New Regional program for sustaining farming and farmland in Southern Santa Clara County
- \* County of Santa Clara & Open Space Authority

- \* **Funded by SALC Grant– Sustainable Agricultural Land Conservation**

- \* Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds / Strategic Growth Council
- \* Agricultural Land Preservation to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

# Overall CAPP Program

- \* Two Year Program – 2016 – 2017
  - \* November 2016 – Introductory Meeting
  - \* **February 2017 – Initial Findings – Santa Clara Valley Farming Trends and Agricultural Support Programs**
  - \* May / June 2017 – Draft Program
  - \* September / October – Final Program

# Initial Findings

- First Understand trends in Santa Clara Valley Farming
- Identify Resources and Challenges
- Build Future program based on Initial Findings
- Identify best practices and most applicable tools from other Agricultural Support Programs
- **Trends in Farming and Farmland in Southern Santa Clara County– 1984 to present**
  - Farmland Conversions
  - Agricultural Economy
  - Sub-regional characteristics
  - Trends going forward



# Southern Santa Clara County Agriculture - Then & Now

## 1984 Agriculture

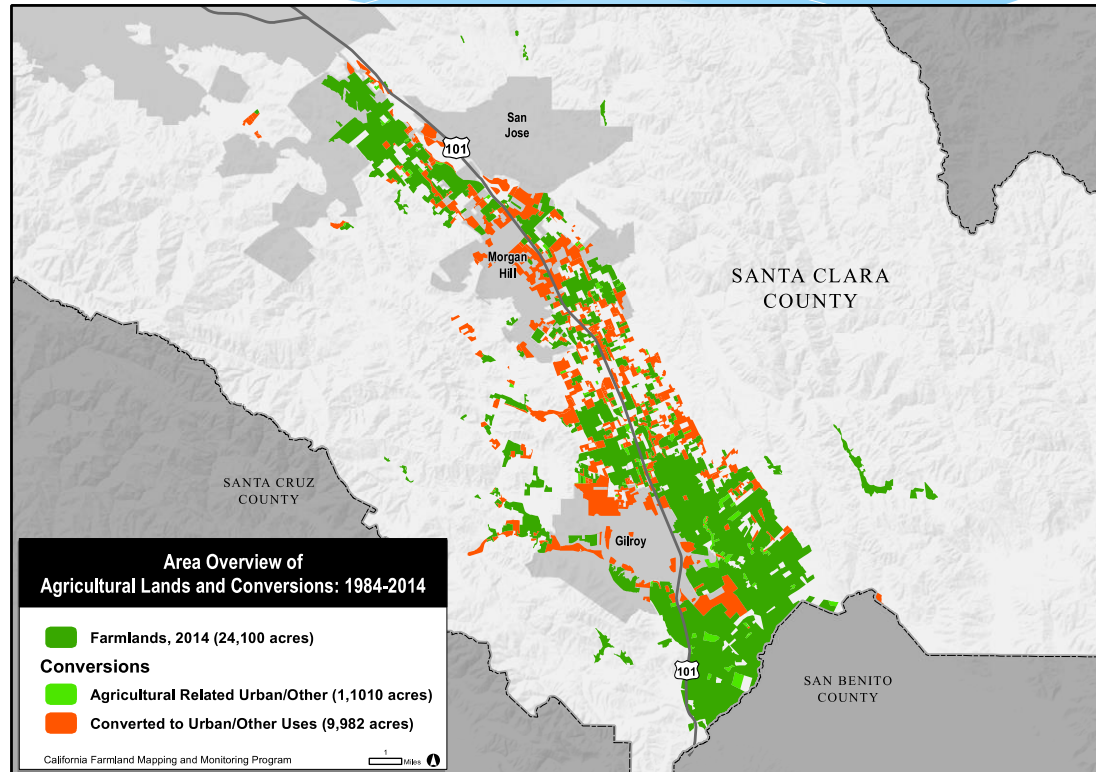
- \* 40,000 acres in Farmland Production <sup>1</sup>
- \* Gross Production Value of \$139,451,505
- \* Top Value Crops –
  - \* Cut Flowers \$26m
  - \* Nursery Crops \$17m
  - \* Mushrooms \$15m
- \* 11,600 acres in veg. crops
- \* 7,000 acres in fruit & nuts
- \* 26,888 acres field crops

## 2014 Agriculture

- \* 24,000 Acres in Farmland Production
- \* Gross Production Value of \$279,162,600
- \* Top Value Crops:
  - \* Nursery \$65m
  - \* Mushrooms \$64m
  - \* Bell Peppers \$19m
- \* 13,486 acres in veg. crops
- \* 2,700 acres in fruits and nuts
- \* 4,888 acres in field crops

# Agricultural Land Conversions 1984-2014

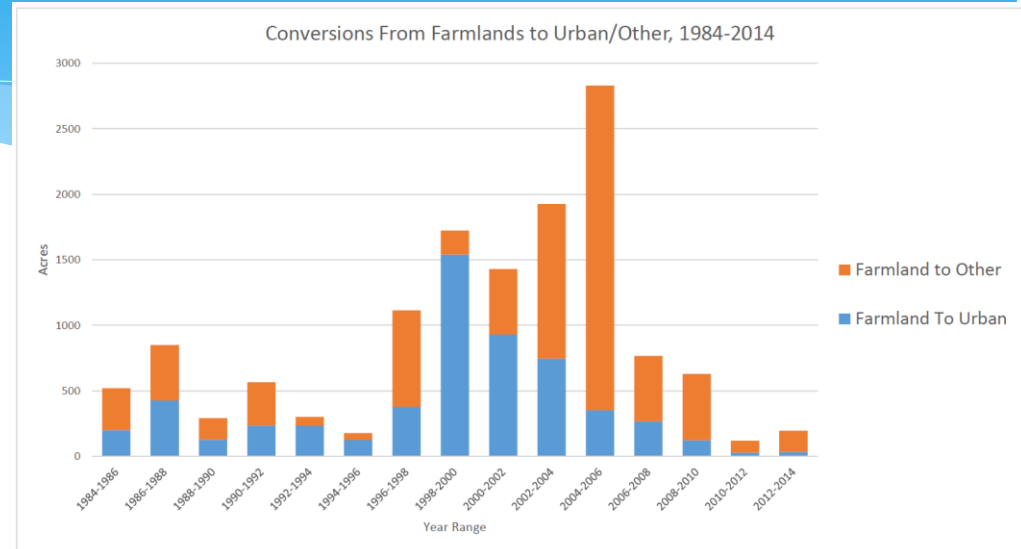
- \* 9,980 acres of agricultural land converted to other uses
- \* 4,225 acres (42%) due to city annexations
- \* 5,755 acres (58%) due to rural development



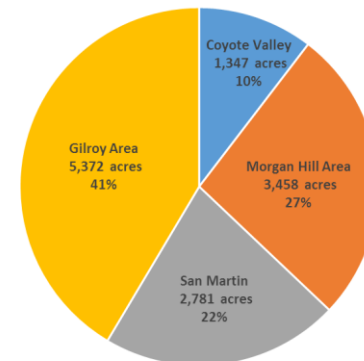


# Agricultural Land Conversions

- \* Rate of Conversions peaked from 1998-2006
- \* Majority of Conversions in Gilroy, Morgan Hill and San Martin areas



Conversions From Farmlands to Urban/Other by Focus Area, 1984-2014



The acreage numbers shown in these graphs do not correspond directly with the data shown in slide 8, as a different, but similar methodology was used for calculations. However, the graphs accurately portray the nature and trend of land conversions with respect to location and timeframe

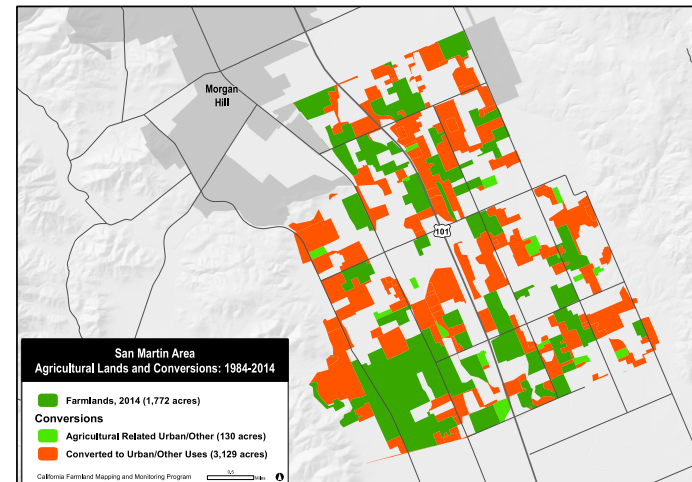
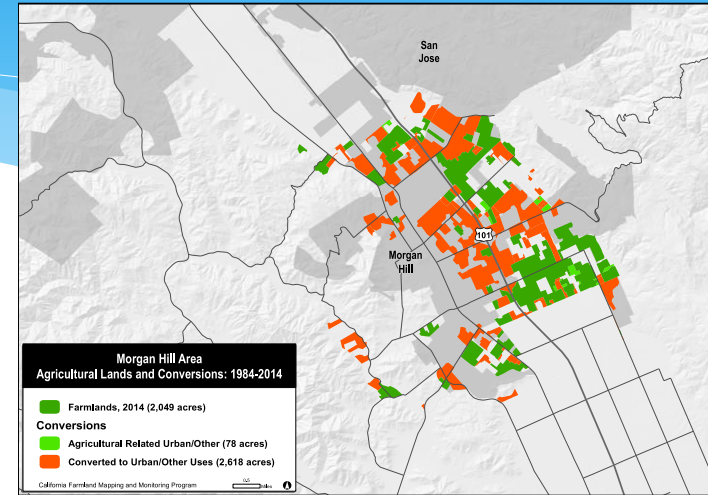
## City Annexations

- \* Majority Gilroy / Morgan Hill
- \* Peaked in 2000, decline since

# Agricultural Land Conversions

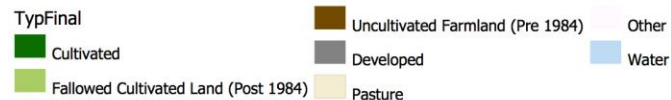
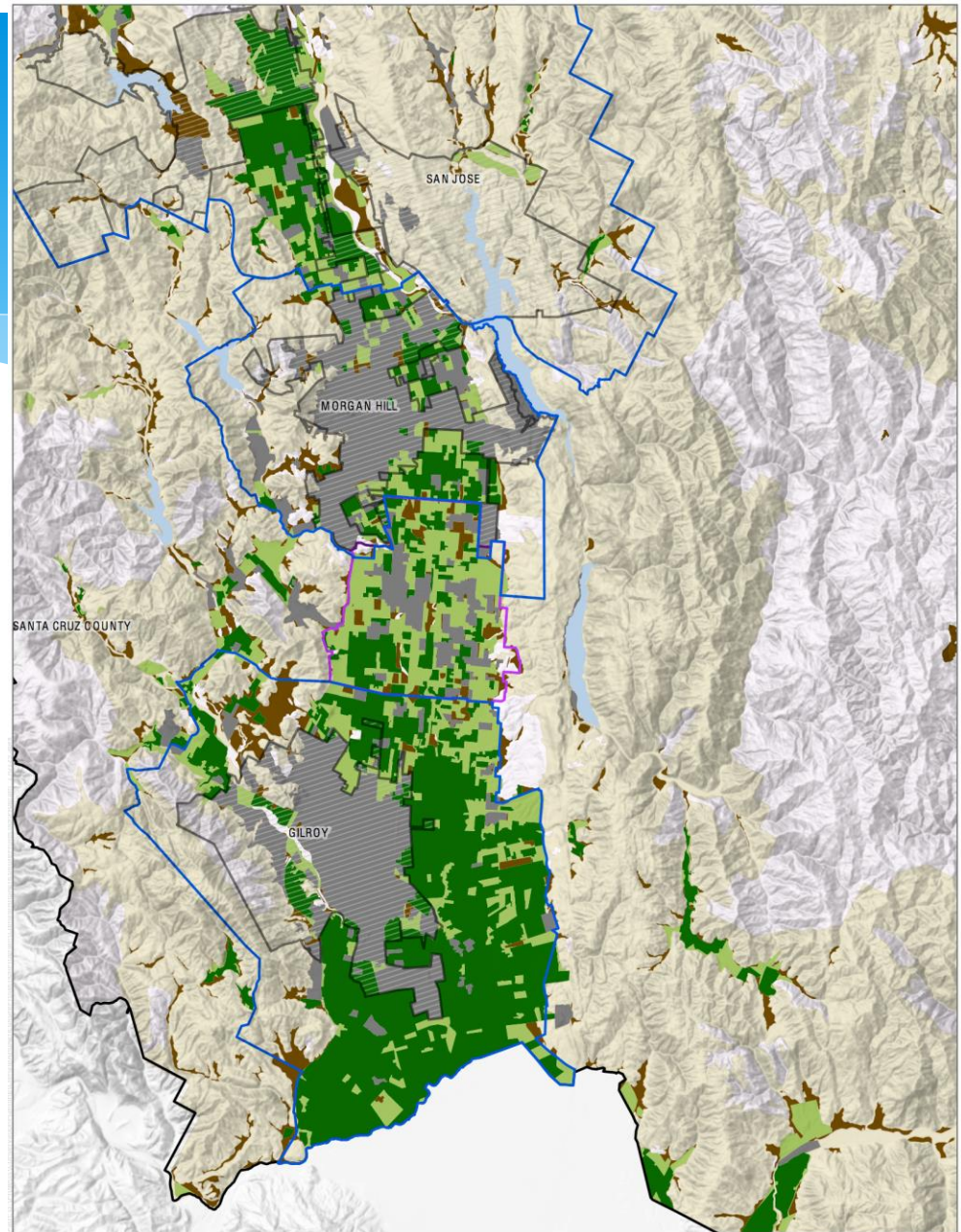
## Rural Development

- \* Over 83% of rural conversions on parcels of 10 acres in size or less
- \* Majority of rural conversions in Morgan Hill and San Martin Area
- \* Majority single family homes on existing lots.



# Agricultural Lands Today

- 24,000 acres cultivated farmland
- Additional 20,700 acres fallow or uncultivated



# Changes in Agricultural Economy

- \* Increase in production value and efficiency - value per acre and employee
- \* Higher value crops, specialization
- \* Agriculture moving north to south

Figure 2. 1980 - 2013 Harvested Irrigated Acreage and Production Value per Acre

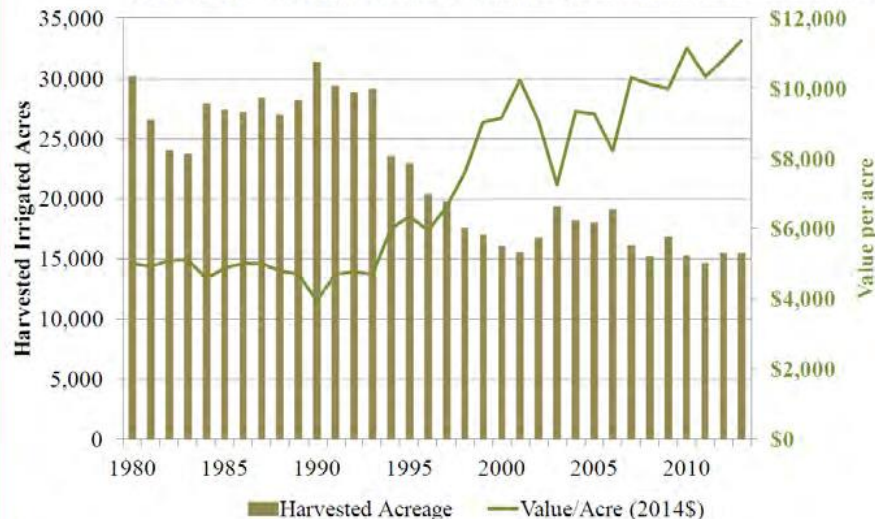
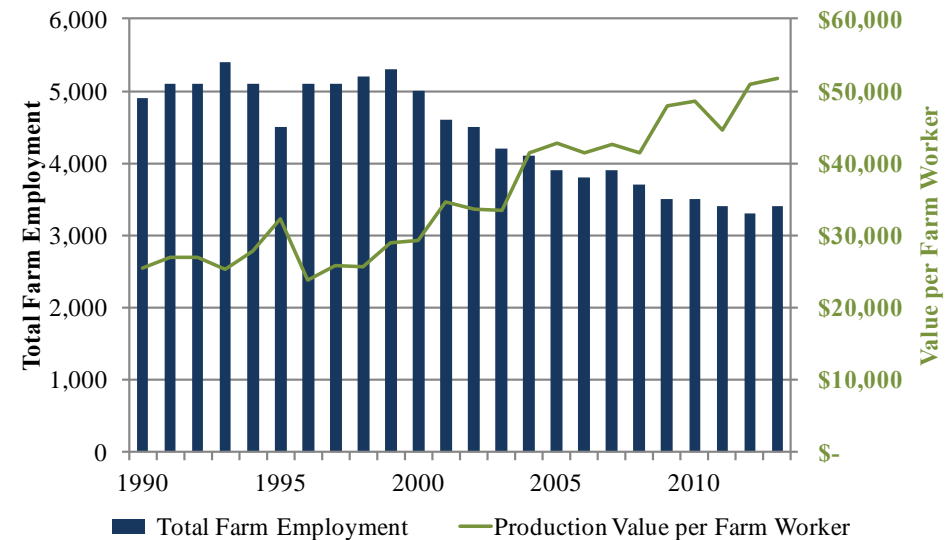


Figure 3. 1990 - 2013 Direct On-Farm Employment and Production Value per Worker





# Farming - Resources & Challenges

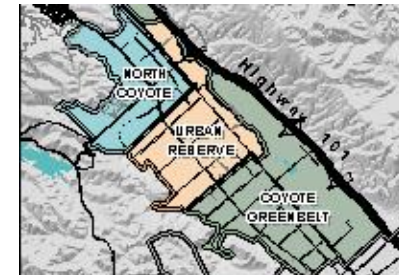
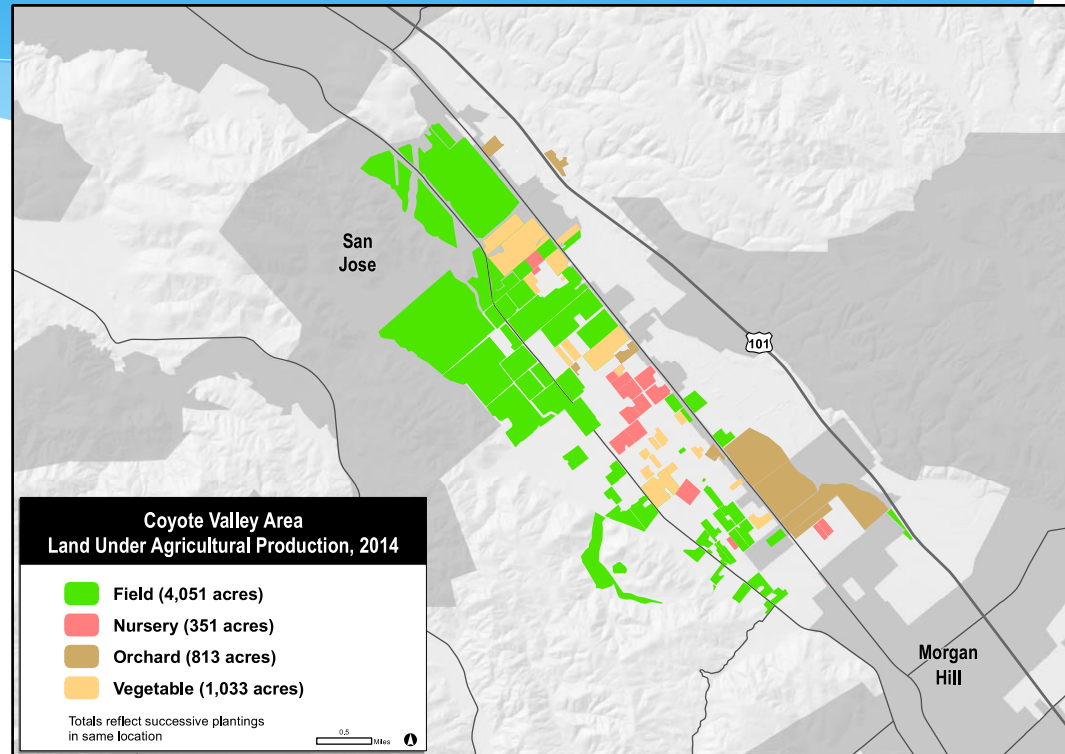
- \* **Water** - Well managed regional water system versus other regions – need to maintain rates and access
- \* **Labor** – challenges with affordable housing in region and specifically seasonal labor.
- \* **Infrastructure** - Well developed regional packing, distribution, processing in some sectors (vegetables) but not others (orchard)
- \* **Urban Interface** – Commuters, complaints about spraying, dust, odors, new school notification regulations
- \* **Weather, Disease, Pests**

# A Tale of Regions

- \* Coyote Valley
- \* Morgan Hill
- \* San Martin
- \* Gilroy
- \* Rangelands

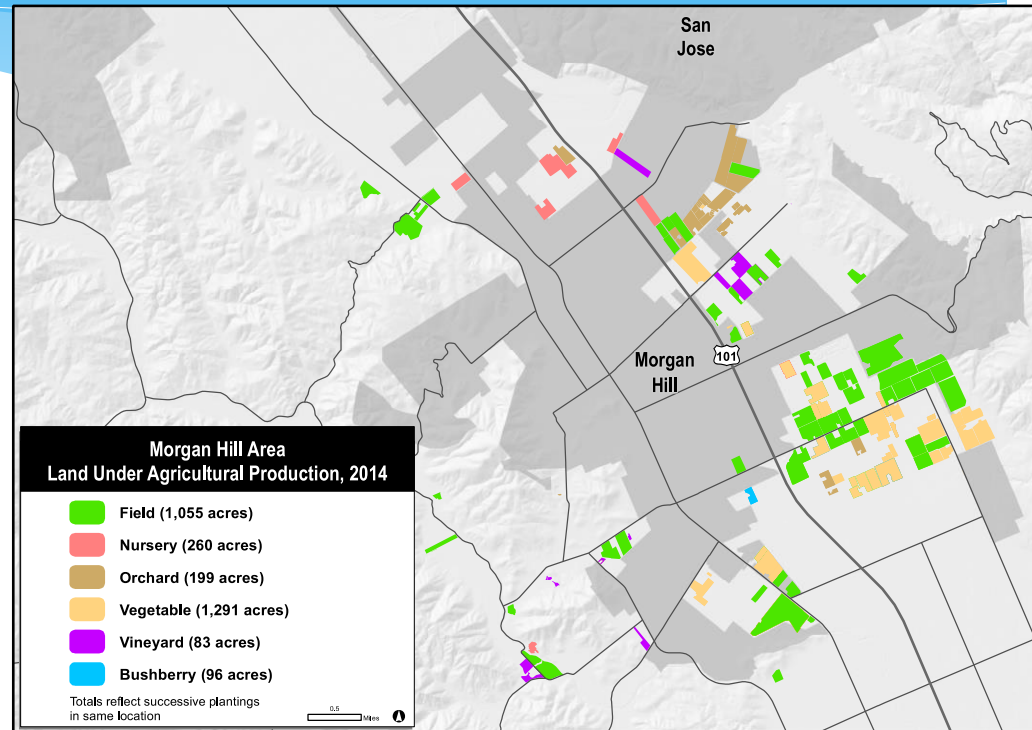
# Coyote Valley

- \* North Coyote in City, Middle / Lower Coyote in County
- \* Large lots in Middle / Upper Coyote
- \* Majority Field Crops – Hay – minimal long term investment
- \* Asian Vegetables, Nursery crops
- \* Interface with Commuter Traffic / Residential
- \* Question over future City annexation



# Morgan Hill Area

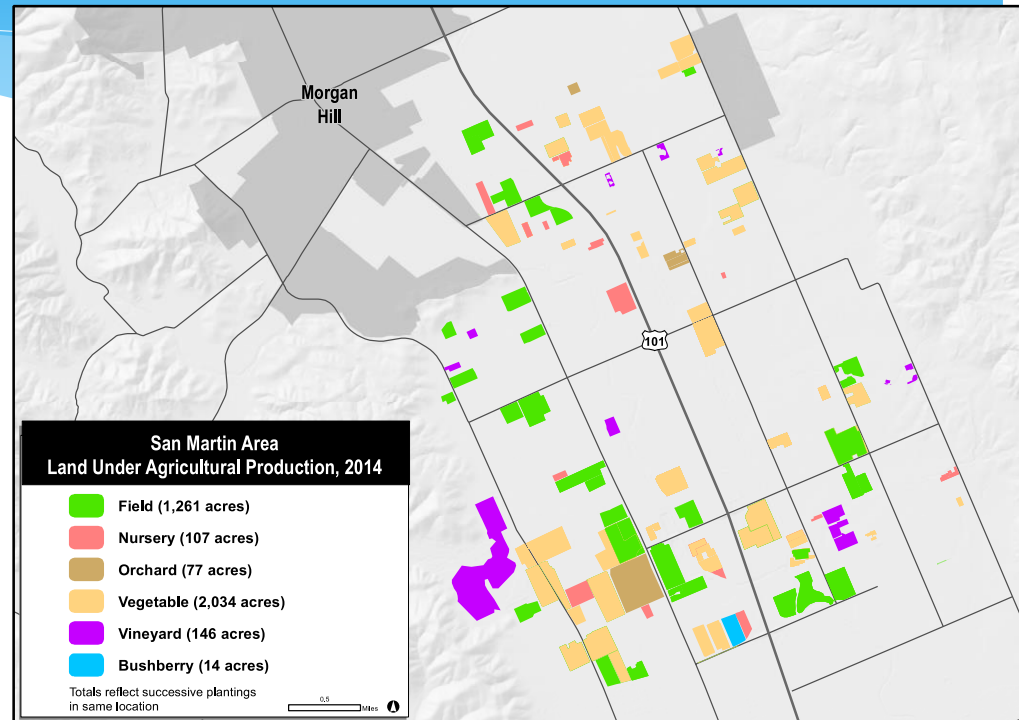
- \* Smaller Parcels (most under 10 acres)
- \* Agricultural land conversions –
  - \* City Annexation
  - \* Rural Ranchettes (legal lots)
- \* Higher Land Values
- \* Urban / Rural Interface – Nuisance
- \* Agriculture Infrastructure– Chiala processing plant.





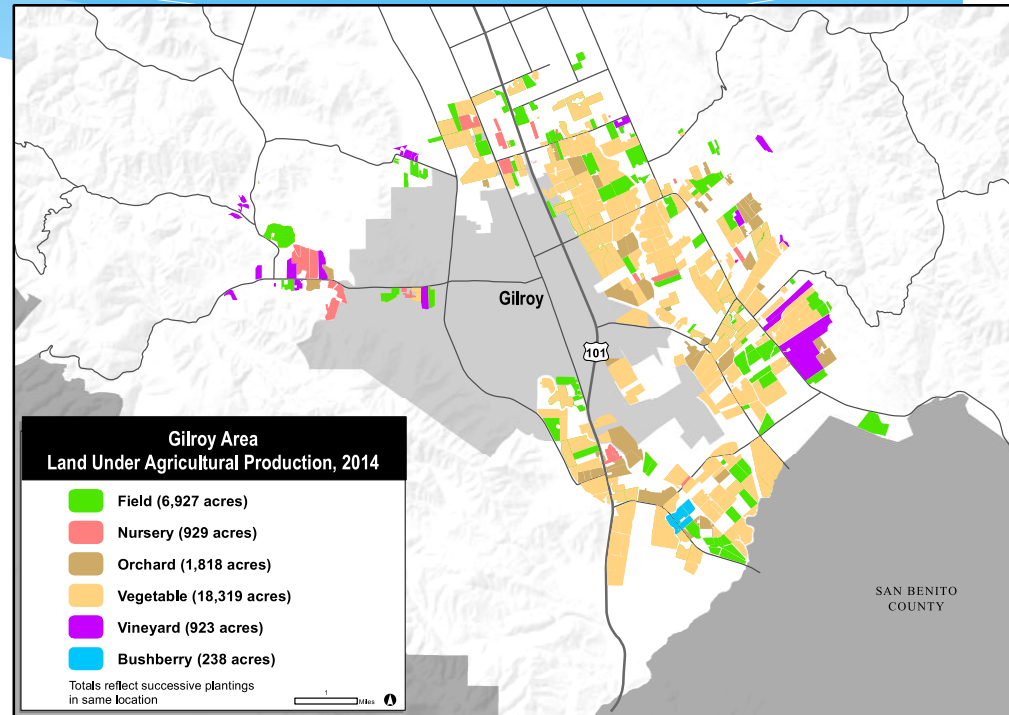
# San Martin Area

- \* Rural Residential Community
- \* County General Plan – Priority not Agriculture
- \* Agricultural land conversions to rural ranchettes
- \* Some larger parcels with agriculture in southwest
- \* Examples of rural residential clusters with agriculture (Cordevalle / Martin)



# Gilroy Area – Agricultural Preserve

- \* Large Lots - over 20 & 40 acres
- \* Majority of past agricultural land conversions – city annexations
- \* Lower property values, less land speculation and urban interface
- \* Integration with San Benito County Agriculture
- \* Good Infrastructure / Distribution– Vegetables – Uesugi Farms, Christopher Ranch
- \* Nurseries, Wineries



# Summary

## Agricultural Land Conversions

- \* Annexations peak by 2000, Cultivated lands stable since.
- \* **City Annexations** – Gilroy, Morgan Hill – slowed rate in past 10 years
- \* **Rural Development** – Majority existing legal lots of 10 acres or less in Morgan Hill / San Martin Area, legacy of prior land use policies

## Agricultural Economy

- \* Increase in Specialization, Production Value, Efficiency – Vegetable Crops, Nursery, Mushrooms
- \* Agriculture moving north to south
- \* Difficulty in North – Higher land values, urban interface, smaller lots, less infrastructure
- \* Seasonal Agricultural Workers – limited housing – all coming from south / central valley
- \* Water – well managed – ongoing challenge – maintain supply and prices

# Challenges, Resources & Opportunities

## Challenges

- \* Pre-existing small lots Morgan Hill / San Martin Area- ongoing rural ranchette development
- \* Potential future city annexations in Coyote / Morgan Hill
- \* Urban / Ag interface challenges in North Valley – new school notifications
- \* Seasonal Agricultural workers
- \* Little direct local market access (farmers markets, schools)
- \* Little awareness of agriculture, food systems in North County urban areas
- \* Lack of local infrastructure for some crops (orchards)

# Challenges, Resources & Opportunities

## Resources

- \* Specialization, efficiency in certain sectors with infrastructure support (packing, distribution, processing)
- \* Regional water availability – highly efficient water usage

## Opportunities

- \* Increasing interest in local food / regional agriculture, new interest in farming
- \* Potential investment / farming of fallow lands (OSA)

# Information still to come

- \* Mapping of Agricultural Viability
- \* Mapping of Land Conversion Threats, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- \* Mapping of business as usual going forward (conversions)
- \* Economic development / Enterprise zone opportunities
- \* Co-benefits of Farming and Agricultural Lands –
  - \* Groundwater protection
  - \* Flooding
  - \* Habitat

# Discussion

- \* Questions and reactions from the presentation
- \* Did we capture the dynamics in the County?
- \* What is missing?
- \* What is important to underscore?



# Next Steps

- \* Summary of Feedback from the Technical Panels
- \* Draft Program – Climate and Agricultural Preservation Program
  - \* Agricultural Conservation Easement Program
  - \* Agricultural Enterprise Program
  - \* Land Use Tools (Zoning / General Plan)
- \* **May / June** – Review with Technical Panels



# Thank You!!



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More information -

<https://www.sccgov.org/sites/dpd/PlansOrdinances/Studies/Pages/SustainableAgLands.aspx>