

SECTION 13.0 COUNTY SERVICE AREAS

13.1 Overview

County Service Areas (CSAs) are established as a means in which to provide enhanced municipal services within unincorporated areas. CSAs are dependent special districts, governed by the County Board of Supervisors. For some CSAs, parcels within the CSA boundaries are assessed annually based on a budgetary amount. In some cases, it has not been sufficient to provide for asset replacement. Many of the CSAs have aging facilities and deteriorating roads, and future rate increases are anticipated. Within San Benito County, there are 30 active CSAs and seven inactive CSAs.

CSA #43 was to be formed as a countywide CSA for the provision of extended fire and police protection. It is a requirement of the County's Subdivision Ordinance that all new subdivisions are required to be annexed to CSA #43. In reviewing documentation provided for this service review, it appears that this has not occurred. CSA #43 is identified as inactive and having four parcels.

The management of the CSAs is shown below in *Table 13.1*. The CSAs, the services provided, and the financial history are summarized in *Tables 13.2* and *13.3*.

**Table 13.1
County Service Area Management**

Management Summary	
County Public Works Department	3220 Southside Road Hollister, CA 95023 (831) 636-4170 sbcpw@pw.co.san-benito.ca.us

Table 13.2
 County Service Areas
 • Active Service / X Inactive Service

Name	CSA #	# Parcels	Road Maint.	Drain Maint	Sweeping	Street Lights	Landscape	Water	Sewer	Recreation	Fire/Police
<i>Active CSAs</i>											
Ashford Highlands	38	51	•	•	•	•		•		•	•
Ausaymas Estates	34	7	•	•	•	•	X	X			•
Barnes Lane	11	12				•					•
Bonnie View	8	38				•					•
Cielo Vista	22	76	•	•	•	•			•		•
Comstock Estates	51	36	•	•	•	•	X	•	•		•
Dry Creek	48	19	•	•							•
Dunneville Estates	50	30	•	•		•		•		•	•
Heatherwood	28	48	•	•		•					•
Hillcrest – El Toro	5	85				•					•
Holliday Ranch/Santa Ana Est.	16	84	•	•		•					•
Hollister Ranch Estates	49	38	•	•		•				•	•
Lemmon Acres	42	28	•	•	•	•	X	X	X	X	•
Long Acres	21	22	•	•	•	•		X			•
Brown Magladry	29	4		•							•
McCloskey Estates	30	6	•	•	•	•					•
Oak Creek	47	89	•	•		•	•			•	•
Pacheco Creek Estates	54	5	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Quail Hollow	46	109	•	•		•	•				•
Rancho Larios	45	141	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•
Rancho San Joaquin/Tevis Trails	23	30	•	•		•					•

Table 13.2
 County Service Areas
 • Active Service / X Inactive Service

Name	CSA #	# Parcels	Road Maint.	Drain Maint	Sweeping	Street Lights	Landscape	Water	Sewer	Recreation	Fire/Police
Ridgemark	9	1054	X	•	•	•					•
Riverview Estates	53	56	•	•	•	•	•				•
Santa Ana Acres	24	27	•	•		•					•
Santa Rosa Acres	4	19				•					•
Springwood Estates	19	14		•	•	•		X			•
Stonegate	31	74		•	X	•		•			•
Torrano	33	9	•	•	•	•	X	X			•
Union Heights	35	24	•	•		•	X	X		X	•
Vineyard Estates	25	26	•	•	•	•		X			•
<i>Inactive CSAs</i>											
Hidden Valley Ranch	15	60									
La Colina de Pinos (Aromas)	10	6									
Montebello (Perkins Ranch)	52	19									
Ours Together, Inc.	43	4									
Rosa Morada Estates	12	23									
Silveira	44	1									
Woodside	6	32									

Table 13.3
County Service Areas
Financial Summary

Name	CSA #	# Parcels	Annual Parcel Charge (FY 2007/2008)	% Change from Prior Year	Fund Balance 06/30/2007	2007-2008 Revenues (est.)	2007-2008 Expenditures (budgeted)	Est. Fund Balance 06/30/2008
Ashford Highlands	38	51	\$0	0%	\$254	\$20	\$0	\$274
Ausaymas Estates	34	7	\$0	0%	\$25,865	\$1,250	\$1,432	\$25,683
Barnes Lane	11	12	\$0	0%	\$22,534	\$5,600	\$1,307	\$26,827
Bonnie View	8	38	\$0	0%	\$12,576	\$3,000	\$1,369	\$14,207
Cielo Vista	22	76	\$1,518	39.87%	\$35,760	\$83,460	\$97,497	\$22,523
Comstock Estates	51	36	\$246	189.39%	\$8,710	\$3,244	\$3,714	\$8,240
Dry Creek	48	19	\$270	100.0%	\$23,034	\$1,100	\$6,224	\$17,910
Dunneville Estates	50	30	\$2,985	68.64%	(\$9,621)	\$53,100	\$53,100	(\$9,621)
Heatherwood	28	48	\$0	0%	\$28,406	\$1,450	\$5,477	\$24,379
Hillcrest – El Toro	5	85	\$0	0%	\$61,589	\$14,000	\$2,552	\$73,037
Holliday Ranch/Santa Ana Est.	16	84	\$207	(0.09%)	\$44,403	\$19,373	\$14,668	\$49,108
Hollister Ranch Estates	49	38	\$0	0%	\$12,817	\$350	\$3,734	\$9,433
Lemmon Acres	42	28	\$0	0%	\$13,520	\$800	\$5,353	\$8,967
Long Acres	21	22	\$0	0%	\$29,075	\$2,000	\$3,859	\$27,216
Brown Magladry	29	4	\$0	0%	\$18,252	\$950	\$0	\$19,202
McCloskey Estates	30	6	\$0	0%	\$22,710	\$1,000	\$865	\$22,845
Oak Creek	47	89	\$361	0.04%	\$24,869	\$33,242	\$33,858	\$24,253
Pacheco Creek Estates	54	5	\$171	(0.01%)	\$6,707	\$2,181	\$3,666	\$5,222
Quail Hollow	46	109	\$373	0%	\$54,796	\$43,230	\$39,460	\$58,566
Rancho Larios	45	141	\$2,441	17.69%	(\$140,358)	\$296,582	\$263,205	(\$106,981)
Rancho San Joaquin/Tevis Trails	23	30	\$378	100.0%	\$16,231	\$1,100	\$7,448	\$9,883
Ridgemark	9	1054	\$0	0%	\$418,926	\$22,000	\$62,239	\$378,687

Table 13.3
County Service Areas
Financial Summary

Name	CSA #	# Parcels	Annual Parcel Charge (FY 2007/2008)	% Change from Prior Year	Fund Balance 06/30/2007	2007-2008 Revenues (est.)	2007-2008 Expenditures (budgeted)	Est. Fund Balance 06/30/2008
Riverview Estates	53	56	\$225	(0.12%)	\$30,150	\$13,935	\$13,506	\$30,579
Santa Ana Acres	24	27	\$0	0%	\$36,997	\$1,950	\$2,552	\$36,395
Santa Rosa Acres	4	19	\$0	0%	\$8,027	\$1,325	\$597	\$8,755
Springwood Estates	19	14	\$0	0%	\$5,788	\$300	\$436	\$5,652
Stonegate	31	74	\$3,108	2.81%	\$59,030	\$224,038	\$225,285	\$57,783
Torrano Estates	33	9	\$0	0%	\$39,990	\$2,000	\$1,205	\$40,785
Union Heights	35	24	\$466	100.0%	\$12,912	\$754	\$4,438	\$9,228
Vineyard Estates	25	26	\$0	0%	\$58,106	\$2,700	\$3,485	\$57,321

13.2 Growth and Population Projections

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) has adopted population projections through 2030 for San Benito County. Projected growth within the unincorporated area of the County is negligible, increasing from an estimated 18,099 residents in 2005 to 19,773 in 2030.¹ Population projections within individual CSAs are not estimated by the County or AMBAG.

The County of San Benito adopted a Growth Management System (Ordinance No. 751) that restricts population increases associated with new residential development to one percent per year. Nevertheless, continued pressure for development is expected, particularly due to the growth in southern Santa Clara County. CSAs are generally formed to serve areas that are developed or where development is imminent. The current CSAs are established, and it is unlikely that the voters would approve a significant expansion. It is more likely that another district would be created to provide services.

13.3 Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies

The County Public Works Department provides regular maintenance service to the CSAs. Staff is continuing to work with Stonegate (CSA #31) to assist them in establishing an emergency water system. Staff has also worked with Rancho Larios (CSA #45) to resolve the operating failures at the wastewater treatment plant. Staff is also working with Cielo Vista (CSA #22) to review the CSA's budget with respect to infrastructure needs.

Many of the CSAs have aging facilities and deteriorating roads. Projects are implemented subject to available funding. The County is assessing infrastructure needs within each CSA to determine the necessary revenues for current service costs and asset replacement costs. Future rate increases are anticipated.

13.4 Financing Constraints and Opportunities

County Service Areas are primarily funded through assessments approved by a simple majority of property owners in a CSA. The collection of taxes, assessments, and fees is subject to the requirements of Proposition 218.

CSAs are charged annually for administrative expenses, including the costs of any losses occurring within the CSA or establishment of a reserve for such losses.

¹ Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, Projections adopted by the AMBAG Board of Directors April 14, 2004.

13.5 Cost Avoidance Opportunities

The Public Works Department manages the CSAs; therefore, the management costs for the CSAs are minimized through the use of County staff.

13.6 Opportunities for Rate and Fee Restructuring

The annual benefit assessment rates for the CSAs are based on operating and maintenance costs plus infrastructure needs; they are set at the request of the community representatives and confirmed through a public process. In FY 2007/2008, the County is conducting an assessment of the infrastructure needs for each CSA. This will be used to determine which CSAs require an engineering report. This will establish standards to plan for capital improvements and contingency funding. Given that many of the CSAs have aging facilities and deteriorating roads, it is essential that the CSA assessments are adequate to cover service costs and provide for asset replacement.

The County should work with LAFCO to resolve the issue regarding CSA #43 to ensure that the requirements of the Subdivision Ordinance are being fulfilled and the appropriate revenues are being collected.

13.7 Opportunities for Shared Facilities

The County Public Works Department uses the services of other County departments that provide related services such as planning, finance, and legal.

13.8 Evaluation of Management Efficiencies

The County Service Areas are achieving management efficiencies through the shared management provided by the County.

13.9 Government Structure Options

CSAs are dependent special districts governed by the County Board of Supervisors. All CSAs are formed and operate pursuant to the County Service Area Law (Government Code Section 25210 et seq.). Alternatives to the current government structure for the local CSAs are limited given their relatively small size and the limited class of services they provide. In general CSAs can be reorganized as independent agencies, consolidated with other CSAs, merged with cities or dissolved.

The County should work with LAFCO to resolve the issue regarding CSA #43 to ensure that the requirements of the Subdivision Ordinance are being fulfilled.

The current government structure of the County Service Areas is serving the intended purpose of providing an enhanced level of services. Should adjacent areas continue to develop or land uses change, the means in which the services are provided should be evaluated to determine if there is a more beneficial government structure.

13.10 Local Accountability and Governance

The authority to establish and provide services through a County Service Area is granted to counties under the County Service Area Law (Government Code Section 25210 et seq.) CSAs are dependent special districts and are governed by the County Board of Supervisors of the principal county in which a CSA is located. The San Benito County Board of Supervisors has placed the responsibility of managing the CSAs under the County Public Works Department. The CSAs are addressed during regular Board meetings.

13.11 Determinations

13.11.1 Growth and Population

Purpose: To evaluate service needs based upon existing and anticipated growth patterns and population projections.

County Service Areas provide enhanced municipal services for communities in unincorporated areas. The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments' adopted population projections indicate that growth within the unincorporated area of San Benito County through 2030 will be negligible, increasing from an estimated 18,099 residents in 2005 to 19,773 in 2030. However, continued pressure for development is expected, particularly due to the growth in southern Santa Clara County.

13.11.2 Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies

Purpose: To evaluate the infrastructure needs and deficiencies in terms of supply, capacity, condition of facilities, and service quality.

The infrastructure needs within the County Service Areas are addressed by the County Public Works Department, as the managing agency. Many of the CSAs have aging facilities and deteriorating roads. Projects are implemented subject to available funding, and the County is assessing infrastructure needs within each CSA to determine the revenues needed for current service costs as well as asset replacement costs.

13.11.3 Financing Constraints and Opportunities

Purpose: To evaluate a jurisdiction's capacity to finance needed improvements and services.

County Service Areas are primarily funded through assessments approved by a simple majority of property owners in a CSA. The County is challenged to continue maintaining the aging infrastructure for some CSAs with limited financial resources. Assessment rate increases are anticipated following completion of the assessment of infrastructure needs.

13.11.4 Cost Avoidance Opportunities

Purpose: To identify practices or opportunities that may help eliminate unnecessary costs.

The Public Works Department manages the CSAs; therefore, the management costs for the CSAs are minimized through the use of County staff.

13.11.5 Opportunities for Rate and Fee Restructuring

Purpose: To identify opportunities to impact rates positively without decreasing service levels.

The annual benefit assessment rates for the CSAs are set at the request of the community representatives and confirmed through a public process. Future rate increases for some CSAs are anticipated.

The County should work with LAFCO to resolve the issue regarding CSA #43 to ensure that the requirements of the Subdivision Ordinance are being fulfilled and the appropriate revenues are being collected.

13.11.6 Opportunities for Shared Facilities

Purpose: To evaluate the opportunities for a jurisdiction to share facilities and resources to develop more efficient service delivery systems.

The County Public Works Department uses the services of other County departments that provide related services such as planning, finance, and legal.

13.11.7 Evaluation of Management Efficiencies

Purpose: To evaluate the internal organizational structure of the jurisdiction.

The County Service Areas are achieving management efficiencies through the shared management provided by the County.

13.11.8 Government Structure Options

Purpose: To consider the advantages and disadvantages of various government structures to provide public services.

The current government structure of the County Service Areas is serving the intended purpose of providing an enhanced level of services. Should adjacent areas continue to develop or land uses change, the means in which the services are provided should be evaluated to determine if there is a more beneficial government structure.

The County should work with LAFCO to resolve the issue regarding CSA #43 to ensure that the requirements of the Subdivision Ordinance are being fulfilled.

13.11.9 Local Accountability and Governance

Purpose: To evaluate the accessibility and levels of public participation associated with the agency's decision-making and management process.

County Service Areas are dependent special districts governed by the County's Board of Supervisors. The San Benito County Board of Supervisors has placed the responsibility of managing the CSAs under the County Public Works Department. The CSAs are addressed during regular Board meetings, which are open and accessible to the public.