PRINCETON AREA STUDY

REVISED BACKGROUND REPORT - AUGUST, 1986

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
SAN MATEO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

INTRODUCTION

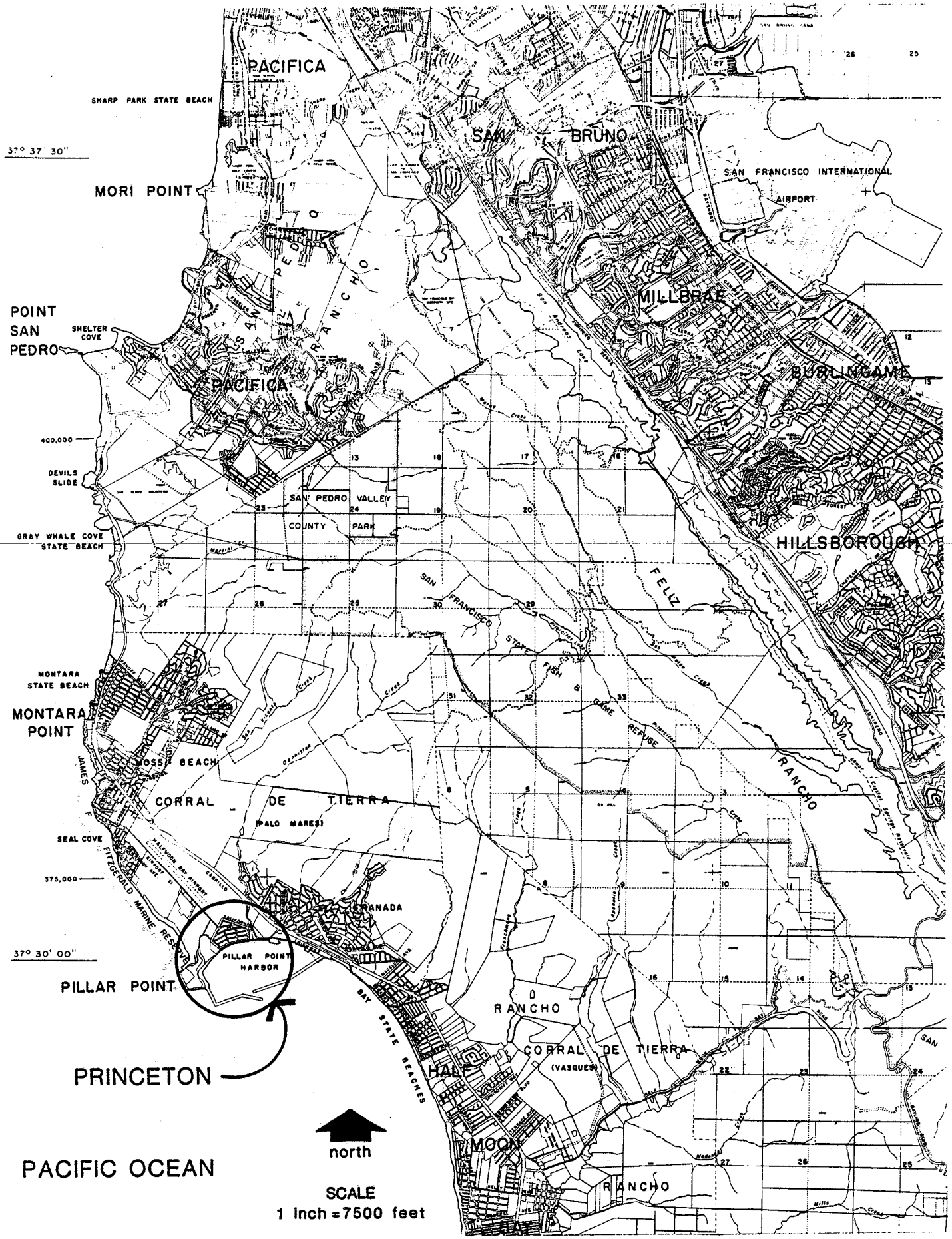
In March 1985, residents and property owners of the Princeton area appeared before the Board of Supervisors and presented various concerns affecting their coastside neighborhood. To address the issues identified by the coastal residents and landowners, the Board adopted several measures aimed at solving the most immediate and pressing problems in the area. The Board further determined that a focused study of the Princeton area would be a desirable means of evaluating long term solutions to the issues unique to the Princeton area.

The purpose of the Princeton Area Study is threefold: First, the Study will summarize relevant background information and identify the existing land use, health and safety issues in the area; second, the Study will assess the adequacy of existing County Plans, Ordinances and Programs to address the identified issues and; third, the Study will develop a set of alternative approaches which could be taken in order to address the problems in the area.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AREA

Princeton is a small unincorporated community, west of Highway 1 within the urban mid-coastal area of San Mateo County. The Vicinity Map on the following page illustrates Princeton's regional setting. The study area is generally bounded by Half Moon Bay Airport on the north, Highway 1 on the east, the inner shoreline of Pillar Point Harbor and Half Moon Bay city limits on the south, and Pillar Point, a promontory jutting approximately 150 feet above the ocean, on the west.

The study primarily focuses on two distinct sub-areas within Princeton: (1) the entrance-harbor area, and (2) the industrial area. The entrance-harbor area includes land fronting Capistrano Road and the Pillar Point Harbor facility which is owned and operated by the San Mateo County Harbor District. Restaurants and other visitor-serving land uses are clustered along Capistrano Road. The Harbor area contains a range of recreational and visitor-serving uses, including a break water, a public pier, boat launching and landing facilities and a restaurant. The industrial area lies between Denniston Creek and Pillar Point Marsh, and is primarily used for marine



REGIONAL LOCATION

industrial (boat building and repair) and storage activities, although several single family residences are also located in this area. The Study Area Map illustrates the Study Area boundaries.

PRINCETON AREA STUDY

SAN MATEO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

STUDY AREA

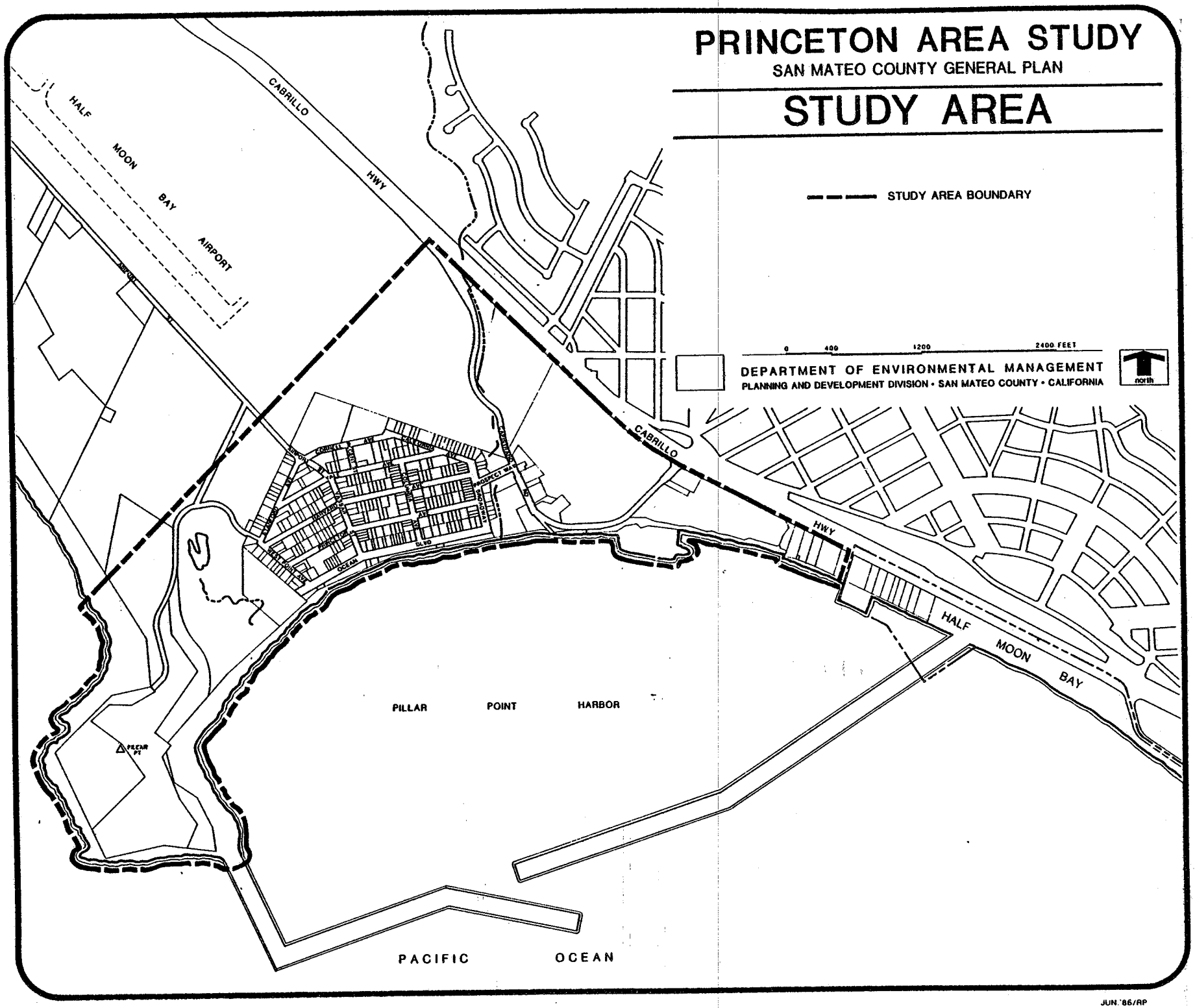


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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1

Natural Resources

Background ▪ Issues ▪ Alternatives

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

I. VEGETATIVE, WATER, FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES

The natural setting of the Princeton Study Area contains several significant natural resources of local and regional importance: Denniston Creek, Pillar Point Marsh and the ocean shoreline.

A. RIPARIAN CORRIDOR - DENNISTON CREEK

Riparian corridors include the plant and animal habitats within and along fresh water bodies such as streams and lakes. These corridors are characterized by the presence of vegetation that requires a wet environment such as cattails, cordgrass, dogwood and elder.

The Princeton Study Area lies in the Denniston Watershed which is drained by Denniston Creek, a perennial stream which runs from the coastal foothills through the study area into the ocean. Denniston Creek supports considerable riparian vegetative, fish and wildlife species, in spite of habitat damage incurred by stream water diversions and unmanaged public access. Of the 24 riparian corridors in the mid-coast, only two, Denniston and Pilarcitos, still contain important habitats for vegetation, fish and wildlife.[1]

B. WETLAND - PILLAR POINT MARSH

Wetlands are those areas where the fresh or salt water has saturated the land, creating hydric soils and plant and animal communities which thrive in water or wet ground.

Pillar Point Marsh, located west of the industrial area of Princeton, is a brackish water marsh, consisting of a mix of salt water from the ocean and a pooling of fresh ground water. Despite their placid appearance, brackish water marshes such as Pillar Point are among the most biologically productive habitats, supporting both fresh and salt water plant and animal species, as well as aquatic and terrestrial habitats. Pillar

Point Marsh houses a wide variety of vegetative, fish and wildlife species. Animals typical of the marsh environment include mice, rabbits, raccoons, heron, egrets, ducks, sandpipers, salamanders and toads. Vegetation in the marsh includes cattails, cordgrass, thistles and pickleweed. These plants grow very rapidly and densely due to the abundance of nutrients in the water.

C. MARINE HABITATS - FITZGERALD MARINE RESERVE

Coastal waters in the Princeton and Pillar Point Harbor vicinity also contain biologically important and productive habitats. Rock outcropping and islets along this portion of the coast support large plant and marine animal populations.

Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, which extends north along the shoreline from Pillar Point to Montara Point, constitutes one of the richest intertidal rocky shore areas in Central California. Rock formations along the shoreline provide a variety of tidal reefs, channels and tide pools which support abundant and diverse marine vegetative, fish and wildlife populations, including three endemic species of marine plants and invertebrates which occur only at the Reserve.[2]

D. RARE, ENDANGERED OR UNIQUE SPECIES

The terms "rare" and "endangered" refer to plant and animal species which have become restricted in numbers, distribution, breeding ability or other factors which impact the continued existence of the species. Unique species have scientific or historic value, few indigenous habitats or are locally uncommon.

The California black rail, a bird considered to be rare, has been sighted in the area during the winter months. The bird appears to nest in coastal marsh environments. The coastal waters in the Pillar Point area contain sea mammals which are considered unique species. Whales, dolphins, seals and sea lions are the mammals known to occur in offshore waters and islands of San Mateo County.

II. SOIL RESOURCES

The Princeton Study Area is underlain by slightly dipping sedimentary rock covered by a thin mantle of alluvium deposits, primarily Class III soils characterized as moderately to well drained, with loamy subsurfaces and moderate permeability. Land adjoining the industrial area to the north has been identified as containing productive soil resources capable of supporting dryland farming operations.[3]

III. MINERAL RESOURCES

Pillar Point Harbor lies on the edge of the Santa Cruz Basin, an underground oil deposit which extends in a northwesterly direction off the San Mateo County Coast. The United States Geological Survey estimates the most probable amount of recoverable oil and gas resources in the Santa Cruz Basin to be 119 million barrels of oil and 119 billion cubic feet of gas.[4]

ISSUES

I. INTRODUCTION

Princeton is surrounded by significant natural resources important to the local area as well as the bay region. Marine habitats in the area are biologically productive and contain a diversity of species not found in other areas of the State. These productive habitats also support a thriving local commercial fishing industry. Pillar Point Marsh and Denniston Creek are important wetland and riparian habitats for a number of aquatic and terrestrial plant and animal species. The proximity of these resources to urbanized areas creates educational, economic and visual benefits for the local residents, as well as particularily difficult resource management problems.

II. OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS FOR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN THE PRINCETON AREA

Disruption of Princeton's natural resources has primarily resulted from unrestricted access of vehicles, trampling, vandalizing, and littering the beach and marsh areas. The recent construction of a cable barrier surrounding Pillar Point Marsh, which blocks shoreline access points, has successfully halted vehicular trespassing and correspondingly restricted access to pedestrian traffic. This abuse of the marsh and beach illustrates the critical need to manage sensitive habitats, particularily those located near urbanized areas.

The Princeton area contains several designated shoreline access trails emanating from Princeton Avenue. From the beach, Denniston Creek and Pillar Point Marsh are accessible. Management of public access along these designated trails could protect these areas from unecessary damage, as well as more effectively implement key coastal plan objectives of providing shoreline access. Improvement of these designated trails would also complement nearby coastal commercial recreation and visitor-serving facilities.

III. EVALUATION OF EXISTING PLANS, POLICIES AND REGULATIONS MANAGING NATURAL RESOURCES IN THE PRINCETON AREA

A. EXISTING REGULATIONS

Local Coastal Program Policies

The Sensitive Habitats Component of the LCP contain explicit quantitative performance criteria for protecting sensitive habitats from development-induced impacts. The Sensitive Habitats Policies also specify actions to be taken to protect the marsh and enhance its biological potential. Protective measures include restricting groundwater extraction in the aquifer to a safe yield that will not impair the health of the marsh.

Managing public access is addressed by the policies of the Shoreline Access Component of the LCP. These policies contain site-specific recommendations for access trails in the Princeton area which are protective of the riparian and wetland habitats.

B. EVALUATION

The LCP Sensitive Habitats Policies have been generally successful in protecting habitat areas from the adverse impacts of development. It is certain, however, that Pillar Point Marsh has sustained damage, perhaps worse than would be typically caused by adjoining development, induced by vandalism and trespassing. Restraining such activities is the responsibility of the law enforcement agencies and private property owners. Implementation of the shoreline trails recommended in the Coastal Plan require a concerted planning effort to develop specific site plans and pursue funding.

PRELIMINARY IDENTIFICATION OF ALTERNATIVES

The following section presents possible alternatives that could be employed to address the identified resource management issues in Princeton:

A. PREPARE A WATERFRONT RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

A specific plan for the Princeton waterfront which could increase shoreline access, enhance Denniston Creek and Pillar Point Marsh and possibly provide recreational improvements such as trails, viewing platforms, picnic areas and interpretive centers. Such a specific plan could control public access, which has been one of the primary causes of damage to the marsh and beach areas. A specifc plan also has the advantage of being tailored to the recreational and natural resource needs of the area.

B. ENCOURAGE OR CONSIDER THE ACQUISITION OF PILLAR POINT MARSH

The acquisition of Pillar Point Marsh by a public or semi-public organization with the purpose of restoring and managing the marsh could also provide improved resource protection. Again, managing public access is the key to preventing further damage.

C. REALIGN WEST POINT ROAD

The realignment or construction of a bridge over Pillar Point Marsh would enable tidal flushing of the northern portion of the marsh.

NATURAL RESOURCES FOOTNOTES

[1]San Mateo County Planning Department, Local Coastal Program, Sensitive Habitats Background Report, January 1979, Table 1.

[2]Ibid., p. 21.

[3]San Mateo County Planning Department, San Mateo County General Plan, Soil Resources Chapter, Map of Productive Soil Resources (as derived from State Department of Conservation Important Farmland Map of San Mateo County, August 1984), August 1984.

[4]San Mateo County Planning Department, San Mateo County General Plan, Mineral Resources Chapter, August 1984, p. 3.7.

2

Visual Quality

Background ▪ Issues ▪ Alternatives

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

I. INVENTORY OF EXISTING VISUAL QUALITY

A. NATURAL SETTING

Vegetation in the study area is primarily grassland, contributing to the open, airy feeling characteristic of the area. A variety of shoreline features occur in the Princeton area. A small sandy cove on the eastern coast of Pillar Point is the site where whalers came to render the blubber of their humpback and California grey whale catches in the 1800's. East of Pillar Point, the bluffs give way to a narrow sandy beach that extends to the mouth of Denniston Creek. Continuing east from the creek mouth through the harbor, the shoreline becomes rocky and reinforced by a man-made seawall.

Two significant water bodies are located in the study area. Pillar Point Marsh is located at the foot of Pillar Point, extending inland from the shoreline. The coastal marsh vegetation and wildlife, including cattails, tules and waterfowl, give the marsh area an open, secluded character. The Princeton study area is bisected by Denniston Creek, an important perennial stream. Through the Princeton area, Denniston Creek is covered by dense riparian vegetation, making the creek itself generally not visible.

Due to the beauty of Princeton's natural setting, most of the study area falls within a County-designated scenic corridor for Highway 1. A scenic corridor is the view visible from a designated scenic road which has been identified as possessing scenic qualities which require special protective measures. All of the study area, with the exception of the industrial area, is included in the scenic corridor.

B. HARBOR-ENTRANCE AREA

The harbor area of Princeton contains many features which contribute to a pleasing visual environment. Traveling along Capistrano Road, broad

views of Pillar Point Harbor dominate the area revealing a breakwater and sheltered marina for commercial fishing and recreational boats. Harbor features including a pier, docks, launching ramps, boat masts and rigging capture the viewer's attention and invite closer observation of the harbor activity.

Structural development along Capistrano Road appears orderly and well planned. Through the County's design review efforts, a nautical architectural theme is being established. One structure, the Princeton Inn, dates back to 1908, and is a reminder of Princeton's colorful past. Originally constructed as a resort hotel, the Inn became a center for illegal liquor during the Prohibition era. Today, the building has been remodeled for restaurant use. The Princeton Inn, a mission revival style building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Granada Ocean Shore Railroad Station at the intersection of Cabrillo Highway and Capistrano Road, is another local historic structure. Turn of the century visitors to Princeton and El Granada were conveyed from San Francisco via the Ocean Shore Railroad. The Granada Station marked the gateway to these coastal communities. Originally constructed in a Mediterranean style with tile roof, stucco walls, and arched openings, the structure today has been so remodeled and altered that it bears little resemblance to its original design.

C. INDUSTRIAL AREA

The character of the industrial area west of Denniston Creek is markedly different from the harbor area. This area is dominated by marine industrial uses, including boat building, sales and repair, marine supply stores, and fish processing operations. Dry docked boats in various states of repair are prevalent throughout this area. The uses in the industrial area become visibly less marine oriented in the interior away from the shoreline. Much of the industrial area appears blighted and run down, due to a proliferation of uncontained debris stored on many lots. Roadways which lack paving and sidewalks and often inadequate or non-existent parking areas also contribute to the visual chaos in the industrial area.

Structural development in this area ranges from small single family residences to large one and two-story warehouse buildings. Most of the private residences are older wood structures with fence enclosed yards. Warehouses are generally constructed of corrugated metal building materials.

ISSUES

I. INTRODUCTION

The visual image of a community provides significant psychological, social, and physical and economic benefits. Communities which are orderly, well planned, maintained and developed with attractive structures are pleasant areas to live and work and create a sense of well being and community affiliation for local residents and visitors. Attractively developed areas can also stimulate economic investment in the community. The Princeton area contains both areas which are of high visual quality and areas which are less visually appealing. In planning for this area, it is important to preserve the appearance of the attractive areas and enhance the appearance of the less attractive areas.

II. OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS AFFECTING VISUAL QUALITY IN PRINCETON

A. NATURAL SETTING

Princeton's shoreline setting is an attribute which enhances the overall visual quality of the area. All new development along the shoreline, in the harbor, around the marsh, or on Pillar Point will be highly visible from the commercial and industrial areas. Because of the sensitive nature and existing high visual quality of these features, new development in these areas should be carefully sited and designed to preserve their natural appearance.

B. HARBOR-ENTRANCE AREA

The harbor-entrance area of Princeton is what a visitor first sees when entering Princeton. The area is unquestionably the most visually prominent in the study area. Upon entering Capistrano Road at the Cabrillo Highway, there is a strong sense of entering or passing through a gateway into a community. Continuing along Capistrano Road, broad views of Pillar Point Harbor unfold and reveal the ocean marina, Pillar Point, and vistas of the commercial and industrial areas of Princeton.

The development character of this area is appropriate with its seaside location. Structures are small in scale and oriented toward the ocean. While there are several architectural styles, compatible building colors and materials give the area a unified, orderly appearance. Future development should be consistent with the established scale, site design and architectural features which have created this visually pleasing environment.

C. INDUSTRIAL AREA

The industrial area of Princeton presents the most challenging visual quality problems. A proliferation of outdoor storage in the area creates an overall blighted appearance. Miscellaneous debris is strewn over most of the lots. Some lots are fenced; however, the predominant use of chain link fencing does little to screen the negative visual impacts created by the deteriorating debris. The structures in the area range from relatively small, single family structures built of wood to large groups of corrugated metal storage warehouses. Private residences are located next to industrial enterprises. The streets are rough with ruts and potholes, and there are no sidewalks or streetlights. These factors collectively create visual chaos in this area.

III. EVALUATION OF EXISTING PLANS, PROGRAMS AND REGULATIONS AFFECTING VISUAL QUALITY IN PRINCETON

The Design Review District is the primary regulation affecting visual quality in Princeton. This district is an overlay zone that establishes design standards for all new exterior construction or remodeling of residential, commercial or industrial structures. The entire Princeton Study Area is within the Design Review District. All application for planning, building or grading permits in the area must be approved by the Design Review Administrator.

The Design Review District has been instrumental in establishing the visual unity among the structures in the commercial recreation area.

These regulations have achieved compatible construction materials, colors and architectural features.

The regulations have been less effective in the industrial area. Design concerns characteristic of the industrial area, such as parking lots, screening, industrial site planning and architectural design, are not fully addressed by the Design Review District. The Design Review District, however, was not developed as a means to transform blighted areas. Rather, this district was conceived as a tool to control the appearance of new development, particularly in areas where it is desirable to protect the natural environment. The regulations need to more specifically address development issues in urban areas, such as Princeton.

PRELIMINARY IDENTIFICATION OF ALTERNATIVES

The following are possible alternative approaches to addressing the identified Visual Quality Issues in the area.

A. AMEND THE DESIGN REVIEW DISTRICT

The Design Review District could be amended to more specifically address the visual quality problems in urban areas such as Princeton's industrial area. Areas needing improvement include parking standards, landscaping, screening, industrial site planning, and architectural design.

B. DEVELOP DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR PRINCETON

Design guidelines for new development which are tailored to the Princeton community could also be developed. Princeton, having an image and character unlike any other urban unincorporated area, could benefit by more specific urban design standards which are developed to address only the visual quality needs of the Princeton area.

3

Public Services And Facilities

Background • Issues • Alternatives

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

I. INTRODUCTION

Public Services are provided to the Princeton area by a variety of different governmental agencies and special districts. Table 3.1 lists the Primary Service Providers in the Princeton Study Area. Because of their critical role in facilitating new development, roads, water supply and wastewater services are discussed in detail in the following sections of this report.

II. ROADS

Streets generally fall into three categories: (1) arterials, or major regional highways; (2) local streets, which provide access to residential and commercial areas; and (3) collectors, which connect the two. As shown on the Map of the Existing Road System, all streets in the Princeton Study Area, with the exception of Capistrano Road, are local streets. Capistrano Road is classfied as a collector and has the highest level of road improvements: a paved right-of-way with curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and landscaped berms and median strip. In contrast, the road system in the industrial area is largely unimproved. In the case of Yale and Regent Streets, large portions of the roads delineated on subdivision maps simply are not there, and have been subsumed into the surrounding lots. A barricade located on Vassar Street just south of the Harvard Street intersection prevents through traffic on that street. The responsibility for maintaining streets in the study area rests with the County.

Traffic flows in the area were also studied and are likewise indicated on the Map of the Existing Road System. The heaviest traffic flow is along Capistrano Road between Cabrillo Highway and the entrance to Pillar Point Harbor. Traffic flow generally decreases moving away from Highway 1 into the interior of the Study Area.[1]

PRINCETON AREA STUDY
SAN MATEO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

EXISTING ROAD SYSTEM

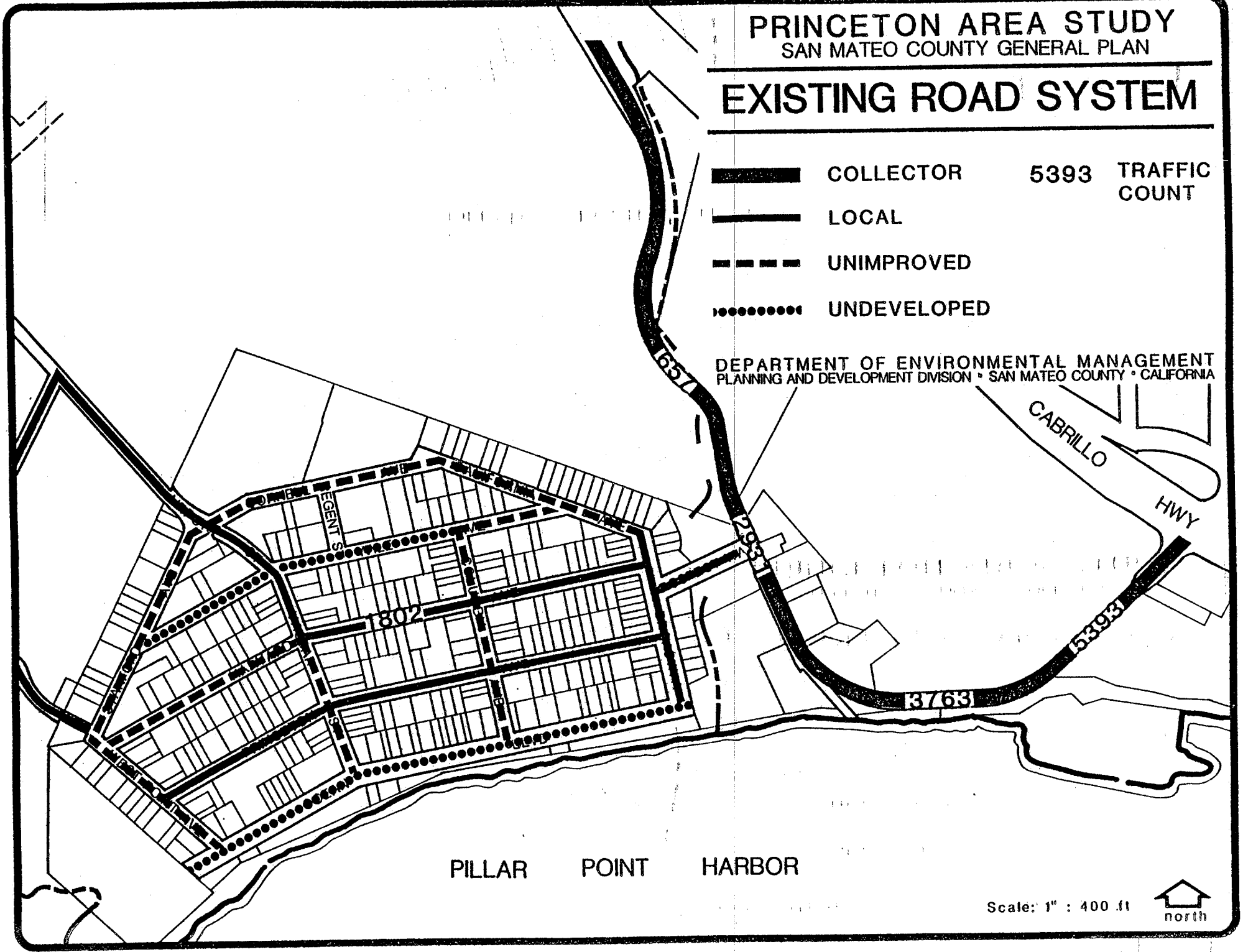

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TABLE 3.1

PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDERS
PRINCETON AREA

Service	Provider
Roads	San Mateo County Department of Public Works
Water Supply	Coastside County Water District County
Sewage Collection	Granada Sanitary District
Sewage Treatment and Disposal	Sewer Authority Mid-Coast
Fire Protection	Half Moon Bay Fire Protection District
Street Lighting	County Service Area No. 6 (Portion)
Harbor Facilities	San Mateo County Harbor District
Public Transportation	SamTrans

III. WATER SUPPLY

A. EXISTING SERVICE PROVIDERS

The Princeton Study Area falls within the service area boundaries of two water utilities: Coastside County Water District (CCWD) and Citizens' Utility Company (CUC). The harbor-entrance area and the industrial area are served by the CCWD. Pillar Point and the marsh are within the CUC District boundaries; however, CUC does not have water supply pipelines in these areas; instead, these areas are supplied by wells.

B. EXISTING WATER SOURCES AND USE

The CCWD is a special district which obtains 42.5% of its water supply from the Pilarcitos Lake Reservoir, part of the Hetch-Hetchy water system, via contracts with the San Francisco Water Department. The Denniston Reservoir and San Vincente Creek provide 36.5% of the district's water supply and the remaining 21% comes from coastside wells. Financing is produced through a combination of user fees, property tax revenues and hook-up fees.[2]

C. EXISTING AND PROJECTED CAPACITY

During years of normal precipitation, the CCWD system can supply 879 mg, well in excess of the 600 mg currently consumed annually. However, the system's safe yield falls at least 200 mg below normal consumption requirements.[3] Transmission pipelines are also in ill repair and lack the capacity to accommodate increased demand. In 1976, the CCWD imposed a moratorium on water connections, creating a large waiting list. To alleviate pressure on the current system, the CCWD is now implementing the Crystal Springs Water Supply project, a three phase project designed to provide enough water to meet current and future demands. The first two phases of the pipeline project involve the construction of the intake facilities at Crystal Springs lakes, and the pipeline required to convey water to Half Moon Bay. Expansion of the

Half Moon Bay Water Treatment Plant is also included in these initial phases. The third phase of the project consists of replacing the pumps at Crystal Springs Reservoir and additional expansion of the Water Treatment Plant to add more capacity to the system. Phases I and II are expected to be completed in two to five years; Phase III will be implemented as needed.

D. PRINCETON AREA REQUIREMENTS

As Table 3.2 illustrates, there is a substantial amount of undeveloped land in Princeton that requires water service in order to accommodate most land uses. Under the current land use plan, an additional 30 acres of commercial recreational uses and 20 acres of marine related industrial uses could be developed in Princeton. Such development would require approximately 92,000 gallons of water per day. The capacity of the existing water distribution system cannot meet this demand. Over the next several years, however, improvements to be made during the first two phases of the Crystal Springs water supply project should be adequate to meet buildout water requirements for Princeton over the next several years.

IV. WASTEWATER

A. EXISTING SERVICE PROVIDERS

The sewerage system in the Princeton Study Area is made up of two major components: the collection system and the treatment and disposal facility.

1. Collection System

The collection system is the system of pipes designed to collect wastewater and transport it to a treatment facility. In the Princeton Study Area, wastewater collection service is provided by the Granada Sanitary

TABLE 3.2

WATER SUPPLY AND WASTEWATER CAPACITY REQUIRED TO ACCOMMODATE BUILDOUT

PRINCETON AREA, 1986

LAND USE	UNDEVELOPED ACREAGE	WATER GENERATION FACTOR[1]	WATER CAPACITY REQUIREMENTS (GPD)	WASTEWATER GENERATION FACTOR GAL./ACRE	WASTEWATER CAPACITY REQUIREMENTS (GPD)
Commercial Recreation	30	2,700 Gal./Acre/Day	81,000	2,250 Gal./Acre/Day	67,500
Marine Related Industrial	20	560 Gal./Acre/Day	11,200	465 Gal./Acre/Day	9,300
TOTAL			92,200		76,800

NOTES: 1. Water consumption factors developed as a relative proportion of wastewater generation factors.

2. Wastewater generation factors taken from Mid-Coast Sewer Allocation Study, Thomas Reid Associates, 1986.

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District (GSD). The entire Study Area is within the Granada Sanitary District boundaries; however, sewer collection pipelines are in place only within the entrance-harbor area and the industrial area. Some of the sewer pipelines in the Study Area are in need of repair or replacement due to age.[4]

2. Treatment and Disposal System

Once the wastewater is collected and transported to treatment facility, it is processed to remove as much waste as possible before being discharged into receiving waters. Two final products are created as part of this process: the treated wastewater or effluent, and the removed solids or sludge.

Wastewater generated in the Princeton area is transported to the Sewer Authority Mid-Coast Regional Treatment Plant for treatment and disposal. The wastewater receives secondary treatment and the effluent is discharged into the Pacific Ocean. The sludge is disposed of at the Ox Mountain Landfill.

B. EXISTING AND PROJECTED CAPACITY

Wastewater capacity is evaluated at both the collection system and the treatment plant.

1. Granada Sanitary District

The Granada Sanitary District maintains a contractual agreement with the Sewer Authority Mid-Coast for wastewater treatment capacity. The Granada Sanitary District has been allocated 30% of the plant's treatment capacity, which amounts to 600,000 gallons per day (average dry weather flow). Current wastewater flows in the Granada Sanitary District are 349,000 gallons per day, indicating an unused capacity of 251,000 gallons per day.[5]

C. SEWER AUTHORITY MID-COAST

The design capacity of the Sewer Authority Mid-Coast Treatment Facility is 2.0 million gallons per day (MGD) average dry weather flow (ADWF). Existing flows through the Sewer Authority Mid-Coast plant is 1.3 MGD, indicating unused capacity of .7 MGD.

D. PRINCETON AREA REQUIREMENTS

As previously mentioned, the Princeton area contains substantial undeveloped acreage. As indicated on Table 3.2, the wastewater capacity required to serve the buildout of the Princeton area is 76,800 gallons per day. While there appears to remain sufficient capacity within the Granada Sanitary District allocation to accommodate this demand, its availability is dependent upon the amount of development in the remainder of the GSD service area.

ISSUES

I. INTRODUCTION

The existing public facilities serving the Princeton area constrain the development opportunities in the area. Overall, improvements to the infrastructure, particularily the water supply and road systems, are required in order to accommodate the higher levels of development planned for the area.

II. PROVIDING ADEQUATE PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES TO ACCOMMODATE FUTURE DEMAND

A. WATER SUPPLY

Presently, water service is the factor constraining development in the Princeton area. Due to the current inability of the Coastside County Water District to meet demands for water service, water connections are generally not available for new development in Princeton. The Crystal Springs Pipeline Project, now underway, will alleviate this situation by providing additional capacity to the water distribution system. The capacity added during the initial phases of the project will be adequate to meet the first phase of buildout of the Mid-Coast, which is estimated to be approximately 70% of the total buildout allowed by the LCP Land Use Plan in the Princeton-El Granada area.[6]

B. WASTEWATER

Wastewater capacity is adequate to meet present needs but inadequate to meet the long term buildout requirements for the service area. Service connections are currently available; and the policy for allocating sewer connections in the Granada Sanitary District is on a first come, first served basis. 23 to 36 percent of the wastewater capacity allocated to the Granada Sanitary District, approximately 760,000 to 1,000,000 GPD[7], is reserved for priority land uses, as specified in the LCP. Priority land uses include marine related industrial and commercial recreation

uses. Most future development in the Princeton area will be priority land uses, and therefore eligible for the reserved capacity.

C. ROADS

Roads in the Princeton industrial area are largely unimproved and will require upgrading to meet the development planned for the area. Several means of financing local road improvements are available; however, each mechanism generally requires property owner contributions. Currently, property owners have expressed an unwillingness to pay for road improvements due to the lack of water service which limits the development potential of their property.

III. EVALUATION OF EXISTING PLANS, POLICIES AND REGULATIONS AFFECTING PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

With the development of the Crystal Springs Pipeline Project in the next several years, water supply and wastewater capacity on the Mid-Coast will be able to serve additional development. Competition for service connections can be expected, however, as a response to pent up demand and a relatively limited capacity. In Princeton, where priority land uses are planned, Local Coastal Program policies have set aside water and wastewater capacity to insure that other development does not preclude their development.

The priority allocation system developed in the LCP appears to be a generally effective means of providing for the development of priority land uses. Due to the infrastructural constraints, however, growth of priority uses has been slow, making it difficult to fully assess the adequacy of the capacity allocation system.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES FOOTNOTES

[1]Traffic flow measurements calibrate average weekday traffic. Traffic flow measurements taken July 1986.

[2]San Mateo County Local Agency Formation Commission, Sphere of Influence Study for Mid-Coastside, San Mateo County, December 1984, p. 17.

[3]Environmental Impact Planning Corporation, Final Environmental Impact Report Addendum Proposed Crystal Springs Water Supply Project, Coastside County Water District, March 1983, p. 8.

[4]Conversation with Mr. Azoury, Granada Sanitary District Engineer, July 1986.

[5]Conversation with Al Dittman, Sewer Authority Mid-Coast Engineer, July 1986.

[6]San Mateo County Planning Department, Local Coastal Program, Public Works Component, November 1975, p. 2.26.

[7]San Mateo County Planning Department, Local Coastal Program Policies August 1980 (as amended through July 1984), Table 2.7.

PRELIMINARY IDENTIFICATION OF ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives which address public service issues in Princeton generally involve financing system improvements. Alternative approaches for funding improvements are discussed below:

A. ASSESSMENT DISTRICTS

The formation of Special Assessment Districts is one means of funding infrastructure improvements. Assessment District proceedings are initiated when a petition with signatures of 60% of affected land owners is collected and presented to the Board of Supervisors. At that time, a financing mechanism is established.

1. County Assistance

In Princeton, where there are a large number of undeveloped lots, a funding arrangement in which the County pays for 'future connections' and is subsequently reimbursed at the time a lot is developed is possible. In this manner, the owners of existing developed lots do not bear the cost of service improvements that are used by all properties in the area.

2. User Fees

User fees are another funding option. Services, particularly road improvements, can be paid as properties are developed. This method can lead to piecemeal improvements, however.

4

Natural And Man-Made Hazards

Background ▪ Issues ▪ Alternatives

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

I. NATURAL HAZARDS

A. GEOTECHNICAL

1. Geotechnical Setting

San Mateo County contains some of the most extensive geotechnical hazards found in the State of California, including sections of two major earthquake fault zones. One of these, the Seal Cove-San Gregorio Fault, passes directly through the western portion of the study area. Faults are zones of fracture along the surface and subsurface of the earth along which rocks on one side are displaced in relation to the other. Earthquakes result from the build-up and sudden release of stress along these faults.

Due to the presence of the Seal Cove-San Gregorio Fault, approximately half the Princeton area is within an Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone[1], as defined by the California Division of Mines and Geology. Thus, a site-specific analysis of geotechnical hazards is required for any development proposed within this zone. Among these potential geotechnical hazards are surface rupture, ground shaking, seismically induced ground failure (such as landsliding and liquefaction), tsunamis, and coastal cliff and beach erosion.

2. Surface Rupture

West of the industrial area, Princeton is traversed by two suspected traces of the Seal Cove-San Gregorio Fault. Faults can cause surface rupture during an earthquake, which could have disastrous consequences for any structures built across them. However, in this area, any habitable structure proposed within the Alquist/Priolo Special Studies Zone is required to have a detailed geotechnical analysis prior to building permit approval. This analysis normally results in such measures as setbacks from fault traces or other recommendations for structural or foundation design.

3. Ground Shaking and Potential Ground Failure

In a major earthquake, any area of the County could experience ground shaking. The extent of damage from ground shaking is dependent on several variables, including distance from earthquake epicenter, amplitude of shock waves, earthquake intensity, and local geologic and soil conditions.

In certain granulated soil conditions where ground water is high, an additional hazard known as liquefaction can occur. This is the temporary transformation of soil to a liquefied state as a result of ground shaking.

Studies conducted by USGS[2] indicate that the Princeton area would receive "very strong" ground shaking intensity from an earthquake on the San Andreas or Hayward Faults. Ground shaking could be greater if the earthquake occurs along the Seal Cove-San Gregorio Fault. Other USGS studies indicate that Princeton is entirely in an area of moderate potential for liquefaction.[3]

There are no major landslide hazards in the Study Area. However, there are problems with coastal cliff stability and erosion, as discussed below.

4. Tsunamis

Much of Princeton is within a tsunami inundation area, as defined by USGS maps.[4] Tsunamis, also known as tidal or seismic sea waves, pose a hazard to the entire coast of the Study Area, although the probability of the occurrence of ideal tsunami conditions is very low. They are caused by large displacements of the ocean bottom, the result of offshore or distant earthquakes or other seismic activity. The breakwater enclosing Pillar Point may provide some protection during a tsunami, but its effectiveness is subject to the size of the wave and the tide level at the time of inundation.

5. Shoreline Stability

The shoreline in Princeton is located in the "least stable" category according to USGS evaluation, mainly due to erosion caused by the breakwater at Pillar Point Harbor. One natural process that maintains sandy beaches is littoral drift. Littoral currents transport sand parallel to the coast. The breakwater at Pillar Point Harbor disturbs this process, preventing the current from delivering sand to points south of the structure. Its construction resulted in an increase in erosion rates from approximately one foot per year to six feet per year[5]. The breakwater's interference with littoral drift leaves cliff erosion as the only natural mechanism of sand replenishment south of the structure. Cliff erosion is accelerated by the diminished capacity of the shrinking beach to dissipate wave energy. Finally, the breakwater concentrates wave energy in the region where cliff erosion rates are highest.[6] Rapid natural cliff erosion also continues locally, inside Pillar Point Harbor, where cliffs are unprotected.

B. FIRE

Fire can result from natural or man-made causes. In Princeton, the fire hazard is primarily man-made, since there are few open areas of potentially flammable grasslands or chaparral areas. Fire protection for the Princeton area is provided by the Half Moon Bay Fire Protection District. The nearest fire station is located at Obispo Road and Portola Avenue across Highway 1 in El Granada. Response time from this station is approximately one minute to Princeton.

C. FLOODING

1. One Hundred Year Flood

The regions surrounding the Pillar Point Marsh (west of the industrial area) and Denniston Creek (the entrance-harbor area) are indicated as "areas of special flood hazard" on the County's Flood Insurance Rate

Maps. These are areas which are subject to a one percent chance of flooding from surface runoff. A one percent chance is also termed a "one hundred year flood," although it does not necessarily occur only once in one hundred years. New development proposed in these areas is subject to the County's recently-adopted Flood Hazard Ordinance.[7]

2. Rising Sea Level

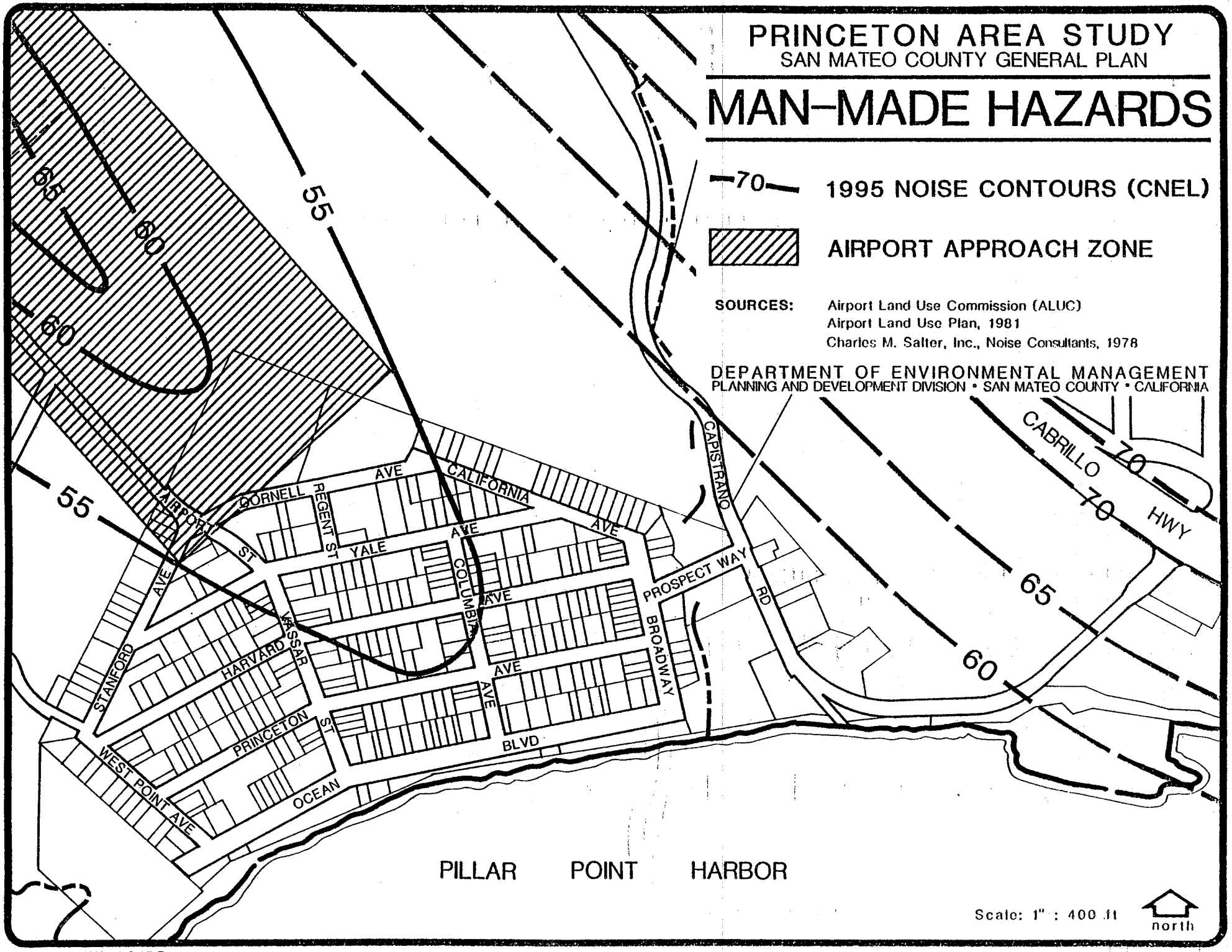
As a consequence of climatic changes due to the accumulation of gases in the earth's atmosphere, scientists predict a rise in the sea level of two to eight feet over the next one hundred years. The present rate of sea level rise is one-half foot per century. Because there is considerable uncertainty in these estimates, the Environmental Protection Agency has suggested a middle range estimate of four feet per one hundred years for planning purposes.[8]

A four foot rise in the sea level will have a multitude of impacts on coastal areas. Many of these potential impacts are beginning to be studied. Available source information indicates the rise in the sea level will increase flood hazards and cause a significant loss of marshes and mudflats, and cause higher levels of salinity into inland water ways.[9]

II. MAN-MADE HAZARDS

A. NOISE

Noise is associated with aircraft operations from nearby Half Moon Bay Airport, and traffic from Highway 1 can impact Princeton residents. The Map of Man-Made Hazards illustrates the noise environment of the Princeton Study Area, indicating the areas where noise levels are 60 decibels (CNEL) or greater. This level is considered by the State as the maximum threshold for typically constructed single family residential development.


PRINCETON AREA STUDY
SAN MATEO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN
MAN-MADE HAZARDS
70
1995 NOISE CONTOURS (CNEL)
AIRPORT APPROACH ZONE
SOURCES: Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC)
Airport Land Use Plan, 1981
Charles M. Salter, Inc., Noise Consultants, 1978
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION • SAN MATEO COUNTY • CALIFORNIA
55
60
65
70
AIRPORT
CORNELL AVE
REGENT ST
CALIFORNIA AVE
YALE AVE
COLUMBIA AVE
VASSAR AVE
HARVARD AVE
STANFORD AVE
PRINCETON AVE
BROADWAY
PROSPECT WAY
CAPISTRANO RD
CABRILLO HWY
WEST POINT AVE
OCEAN BLVD
PILLAR POINT HARBOR
Scale: 1" : 400 ft
north

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1. Half Moon Bay Airport

Although not within the study area, the Half Moon Bay Airport, located northwest of Princeton, contributes to its ambient noise level. The most recent study (1978) shows that the 60 decibel contour is located mostly within airport boundaries[10]; but by 1995 is projected to extend into the northern portion of the industrial area, reaching the corner of Stanford and California Avenues.[11]

2. Cabrillo Highway

Cabrillo Highway, which forms the northwest border of the study area, is a major traffic corridor with typical noise levels of 55 to 75 decibels.[12] 1995 projections for noise generated by Highway 1 indicate noise levels of 60 decibels extending into the Princeton area.

B. AIRPORT SAFETY

To reduce the degree of hazard present at the end of airport runways, approach zones have been designated and must remain free of structural development. As illustrated on the Map of Man-Made Hazards, the Half Moon Bay Airport's approach zone extends southwest into the northern portion of Princeton's industrial area, just beyond the corner of Stanford and Cornell Avenues. Non-structural uses, parking, and open storage may be permitted in approach zones provided certain maximum population density requirements are not exceeded. The County has purchased a majority of the land in designated risk areas adjoining Half Moon Bay Airport to maintain as a safety buffer area.

C. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Although reliable data is not available regarding actual concentrations of hazardous materials in Princeton, it can be expected that due to the nature of the marine associated industries, concentrations of certain hazardous materials, such as solvents, resins, and large quantities of fuel, are stored and used in the industrial area of Princeton.

ISSUES

I. INTRODUCTION

The primary function of local government is to provide for the health, safety, and general welfare of its citizens. A means of accomplishing this is through the regulation of land use and development so that the risks from natural hazards (geotechnical, fire, and flooding) and man-made hazards (noise, airport safety, and hazardous materials) are minimized and/or mitigated to the greatest extent possible. Since a number of these hazards are present in Princeton, certain strategies for addressing them could be appropriate, as discussed below.

II. OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS FOR REDUCING THE IMPACT OF NATURAL AND MAN-MADE HAZARDS IN PRINCETON

A. NATURAL HAZARDS

1. Geotechnical

The primary geotechnical hazards in Princeton are related to the presence of the Seal Cove-San Gregorio Fault. Any new development that occurs within the Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone for this fault must receive geotechnical analysis of the potential for surface rupture, ground shaking, and other related hazards. This is already built into County review requirements. A related hazard, the remote possibility of inundation due to earthquake-induced tsunamis, does not generally receive consideration during the development review process. Special assessment of these hazards, along with appropriate mitigation suggestions, could be considered during development review.

B. FLOODING

The presence of two "areas of special flood hazard" within Princeton adds an additional constraint to any new development proposed. Development should generally be avoided in these areas. When this is not

possible, requirements for elevating foundations and designing structures so that they do not increase the flooding hazard to downstream areas need to be incorporated into the development review process.

III. MAN-MADE HAZARDS

A. NOISE

Noise is the presence of annoying, harmful, or unwanted sound. Policies aimed at providing an environment that is to the maximum extent free from harmful and annoying levels of noise are the goals of the County's regulatory efforts. This can include measures for insulating residential land uses from noise, reducing noise levels at their source, and separating noise generating activities and sources from noise sensitive land uses. In Princeton, the primary noise sources are the Half Moon Bay Airport and nearby Cabrillo Highway (Highway 1). There may also be noise generating activities in industrial enterprises currently located in Princeton.

B. AIRPORT SAFETY

A portion of Princeton is located within the approach zone of Half Moon Bay Airport. Most of the land within this zone is owned by the County, and the land has been placed in the "AO" overlay zone. Due to airport safety concerns, this zoning district allows for very limited uses.

C. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Certain of the marine industrial and storage land uses that are predominent in Princeton have the potential to generate hazardous materials. The County may wish to increase efforts to inform Princeton residents and business people of the potential hazards of certain materials, and of the methods and location for proper disposal of them. Additionally, the County may wish to monitor water quality more frequently to determine the scope of the hazardous material problem.

IV. EVALUATION OF EXISTING REGULATIONS AFFECTING NATURAL AND MAN-MADE HAZARDS IN PRINCETON

A. NATURAL HAZARDS

1. Existing Regulations

Because of the prevalence of natural hazards in San Mateo County, several regulatory mechanisms have been developed to reduce the risks to life and property resulting from improper land uses and activities in identified hazard areas.

a. Local Coastal Program Policies

The Local Coastal Program contains a hazards component which sets forth policies addressing areas with geotechnical, fire and flooding hazards. Key Policies of this component regulate development on coastal bluffs and other geologic hazard areas, prohibit development in flood hazard areas, and limit the development of shoreline structures such as retaining walls, groins, revetments and breakwaters.

b. Geotechnical Review Procedures

The western third of Princeton is within the boundaries of the State-defined Alquist-Priolo special studies zone for the Seal Cove-San Gregorio Fault. Within this zone, mandatory geotechnical reports must be prepared in conjunction with any new proposal for development.

Geotechnical reports, if warranted, may also be required for any development proposed outside of the special studies zone. However, the scope of the hazards may make this unnecessary for most of Princeton with the exception of the unstable shoreline areas.

c. County Flood Hazard Ordinance

Within the areas of special flood hazard defined by the County's Flood Insurance Rate Maps, any structural development must conform to strict design and engineering requirements in order to avoid exacerbating downstream flood conditions and to ensure that habitable areas of structures are elevated above worst-case flooding scenarios.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is currently preparing Coastal High Flooding Hazard Maps for the San Mateo Coast. The areas covered by these maps will be subject to the review criteria of the County Flood Ordinance once they are officially adopted. It would be useful to monitor the status of the FEMA efforts and to integrate them into Princeton planning efforts, especially as they pertain to tsunami flooding areas and areas experiencing beach erosion.

2. Evaluation

The Policies of the Local Coastal Program and the provisions of the Geotechnical Review Procedures and the Flood Hazard Ordinance have been effective in directing development away from areas with identified hazards, and where no alternative exists, incorporating measures which would mitigate the impact of the hazard. In addition to regulations on development, the San Mateo County Office of Emergency Services has a plan for responding to emergencies created by natural disasters. Increased efforts to inform the Princeton community, as well as other hazard areas in the County, of appropriate procedures to be taken in an emergency situation could undoubtedly increase the effectiveness of the Emergency Response Plan.

B. MAN-MADE HAZARDS

1. Existing Regulations

a. Airport Land Use Plan

The San Mateo County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) is charged with developing a land use plan for the area surrounding the County's three airports to protect the public from aviation hazards. In March 1981, the ALUC adopted its Airport Land Use Plan, establishing policies for noise compatibility, height of buildings and airport approach zones.

The ALUC Plan establishes criteria to determine the appropriateness of new land uses according to CNEL noise impact levels. Residential uses are considered more noise sensitive than commercial or industrial uses. Residential development adjoining the Half Moon Bay Airport is only permitted where the noise level does not exceed 60 CNEL.

The ALUC Plan also requires that designated "approach zones" be kept free of structures. Non-structural uses may be permitted in approach zones if they do not cause a concentration of more than ten people per acre on a regular basis. Other public or private uses may be considered appropriate by the ALUC based on an evaluation of the impact of the proposed use on public safety. ALUC height restrictions prohibit structures from penetrating, "approach surfaces," as defined by Federal law.

b. Airport Overlay (A-O) District

The Airport Overlay (A-O) District was developed to provide a margin of safety at the end of airport runways where the hazard potential is the greatest. The Overlay District: (1) includes aircraft sensitive areas in Moss Beach and Princeton beyond the designated approach zone for Half Moon Bay Airport; (2) requires a use permit

approval for all development; (3) restricts building height to 36 feet; and (4) prohibits new residential construction.

2. Evaluation

ALUC airport safety protections applied at the County's three airports reflect current standards established by the Federal Aviation Administration. In the majority of cases, the restrictions are considered adequate and effective to avoid aircraft accident. The additional margin or safety provided by the A-O District in the Princeton area is also considered an effective mechanism to reduce the potential hazards associated with aircraft take-offs and landings. The Overlay District use requirements are consistent with the intent of the ALUC approach zone concept, while the height limit is more restrictive than a standard based upon actual flight path or approach surface. The A-O District has implications for the land uses in Princeton's industrial area. The land use concerns are discussed in the Land Use Chapter.

PRELIMINARY IDENTIFICATION OF ALTERNATIVES

A. RE-EVALUATE THE AIRPORT OVERLAY DISTRICT

The effectiveness of Airport Overlay District as an airport safety mechanism could be evaluated. The Airport Overlay District could be compared to airport safety techniques used by other land use agencies with airports having similar operational characteristics as Half Moon Bay Airport.

B. REVIEW PLANNING OPTIONS FOR RISING OCEAN LEVELS

The County could consider various planning programs which address rising ocean levels as more information becomes available. At the present time, available information on this subject is limited and estimates of probable impacts vary greatly. As more reliable information becomes available, the County could review what actions could be taken to address the problem.

G4P07608
8/19/86

NATURAL AND MAN-MADE HAZARDS FOOTNOTES

[1]The Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones Act of 1972 required the State Geologist to delineate these zones around all potentially and recently active fault traces in California. Normally the zones are one-quarter mile or less in width. The law requires cities and counties to adopt special review procedures for any new development proposed within the defined zone.

[2]Borcherdt et al, Maximum Earthquake Intensity Predicted in San Mateo County for Large Earthquakes on the San Andreas and Hayward Faults, United States Geological Survey, Map MF-709, 1976.

[3]Youd et al, U.S.G.S. Circular 688 and Open File Reports, 1973.

[4]Ritter and Dupre, U.S.G.S. Basic Data Contribution 52, 1972.

[5]County of San Mateo, Department of Environmental Management, Geotechnical Hazards Synthesis Maps, 1976.

[6]Brown, Robert D. and Kockelman, William J., Geologic Principles for Prudent Land-Use - A Decisionmaker's Guide for the San Francisco Bay Region, U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 946, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1983, p. 20.

[7]Ordinance No. 3002, amending various sections of the San Mateo County Ordinance Code, adopted by the Board of Supervisors, July 3, 1984.

[8]Philip Williams and Associates, An Overview of the Impact of Accelerated Sea Level Rise on San Francisco Bay, December, 1985.

[9]Ibid.

[10]County of San Mateo Department of Environmental Management, Planning and Development Division, General Plan Hearing Draft, 1985, p. 16.7.

[11]Ibid., Community Noise Map, p. 16.11, 1985.

[12]Ibid., p. 16.9.

G4P07608 - 8/19/86

5

Regulatory Compliance

Background • Issues • Alternatives

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

I. DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING SITUATION

Land use and environmental health violations have been a problem in the Princeton area for a number of years. The nature of the violations fall into three general categories: (1) accumulation and open storage of debris on lots; (2) habitation of inoperative boats, campers and vehicles; and (3) establishment of land uses, primarily boat storage and junk yards, without securing required permits. Conservative estimates of the existing situation indicate approximately 40 cases of open storage of debris, 10 cases of habitation within abandoned or stored vessels, and 20 use permit violations.[1]

Problems with regulatory compliance are centered in the industrial area of Princeton west of Denniston Creek. Here, the multitude of vacant lots and absentee ownership patterns create an environment which harbors these illegal activities. In addition, the nature of the businesses established in the industrial area are generally not oriented to visitors or customers which are discouraged by the blighted appearance of the area. Other industrial areas in the County with higher levels of development or businesses which depend on the 'comfort' of the customer doing business in the area have a built in 'patrol' mechanism in the form of landowners, proprietors or customers who recognize and often move to rectify questionable activity. In Princeton, however, there is a relatively small daytime and nighttime population. The vast majority of property owners reside outside of Princeton; and a significant number, approximately one third, reside outside of San Mateo County, and are not as likely to see their property on a regular basis.

II. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The County Department of Environmental Health, charged with enforcing County Health Codes, has pursued illegal living arrangements and debris control problems in Princeton's industrial area. Over the last ten years, the situation has become progressively worse, until May 1985,

when the Board of Supervisors adopted several measures to redress this situation, including the additional enforcement staff, the construction of physical improvements and the preparation of an area study.[2]

PRELIMINARY IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES

I. INTRODUCTION

The desire for a living and working environment which is clean, safe and decent is common to most; and is further the foundation for most health, safety and land use planning regulations. A number of State and local mechanisms which provide for basic environmental health and safety are in place in Princeton; but due to a combination of institutional constraints and conditions characteristic of the Princeton area the regulations are difficult to enforce.

II. PROVIDING EFFECTIVE REGULATORY ENFORCEMENT

A. DEVELOPMENT AND OWNERSHIP PATTERNS

As mentioned previously, Princeton's industrial area is relatively undeveloped and subdivided into small lots, generally 2,500 to 3,500 square feet in area, which are individually substandard for most development. In addition, over 60 percent of the property owners do not live on the coastside and are less likely to see their property on a regular basis. Such conditions create a situation which impedes enforcement efforts, primarily regarding illegal habitation. Gathering data on the violations is a time consuming process involving surveying vacant lots to pinpoint responsible property owners and contacting the owners who are frequently not local residents. In pursuing illegal habitation cases, County officials generally agree that the results are superficial--the deposed residents can easily move to another vacant lot or locate another abandoned vehicle to inhabit. Agency representatives most familiar with this population agree that the illegal residents in the Princeton area choose this type of life-style. Departmental staff working with the population have been given local resource information to dissiminate (emergency food, public assistance, mental health services).[3]

B. INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS: MULTIPLE RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES

The violations in the Princeton area have been primarily pursued by the County Department of Environmental Health, because of sanitation problems associated with illegal dwellings and the accumulation of refuse and debris. However, many of the violations in the area are also zoning and building violations under the purview of the Planning and Development Division. The criminal and vagrancy problems in the area must be handled by the Sheriff's Office and the abatement and prosecution procedures are handled by the District Attorney's Office. Coordination between the various responsible agencies could be improved.

II. EVALUATION OF EXISTING REGULATIONS AFFECTING CODE ENFORCEMENT IN PRINCETON

The primary regulations which are being violated in the area are the Housing Code, which contains minimum standards for dwelling units, and Health and Safety Codes which control the accumulation of refuse and debris. While these regulations clearly define and provide abatement procedures for abandoned vehicles, the regulations controlling refuse and debris are vague and do not contain clear regulatory definitions and procedures to abate nuisances and hazards caused by open storage of debris. In the Princeton area, it is also difficult to prove which vehicles, primarily boats, are permanently inoperative and which vehicles are being legitimately repaired. Because these vessels are the primary means of shelter for transient residents, clear regulatory definitions and abatement procedures could assist enforcement efforts. Finally, it is very difficult to gather sufficient evidence to prove that people are inhabiting abandoned vehicles. To do this, inspectors must observe the activity on the property during different times of the day and night and enter the property to find evidence of permanent living arrangements. Before inspecting a property, advance notice must be given. Illegal arrangements are often temporarily cleaned up and disguised for the inspectors official visit. There is no means to issue citations during routine site visits.[4]

PRELIMINARY IDENTIFICATION OF ALTERNATIVES

A. AMEND ZONING REGULATIONS TO INCLUDE LAND USE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The existing zoning regulations, particularly the Marine Related Industrial District (MAR) regulations, could be amended to include standards which control outdoor storage, screening, excessive noise, light, glare, etc. To be enforceable, such standarads would require quantified limits.

B. ESTABLISH AUTHORITY TO ISSUE CITATIONS

As a means to expedite the abatement of land use, health and safety violations, the County could consider establishing the authority to record citations against the property, similar to a lien. This approach could be used when other approaches fail.

C. ESTABLISH A CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The formation of a committee of Princeton area landowners, merchants and residents could be instrumental in advising the County staff on problems in the area. Committee members would be generally familiar with key regulations and procedures, and could also serve as an information resource for the community.

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8/20/86

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE FOOTNOTES

[1]Estimates based on data collected by the County Office of Environmental Health and Planning and Development Division.

[2]San Mateo County Board of Supervisors hearing, May 7, 1985.

[3]Office of the County Manager Staff Report, April 30, 1985.

[4]Conversations with Office of Environmental Health representatives, July 1986.

G4P07608A
8/20/86

6

Land Use

Background ▪ Issues ▪ Alternatives

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

I. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

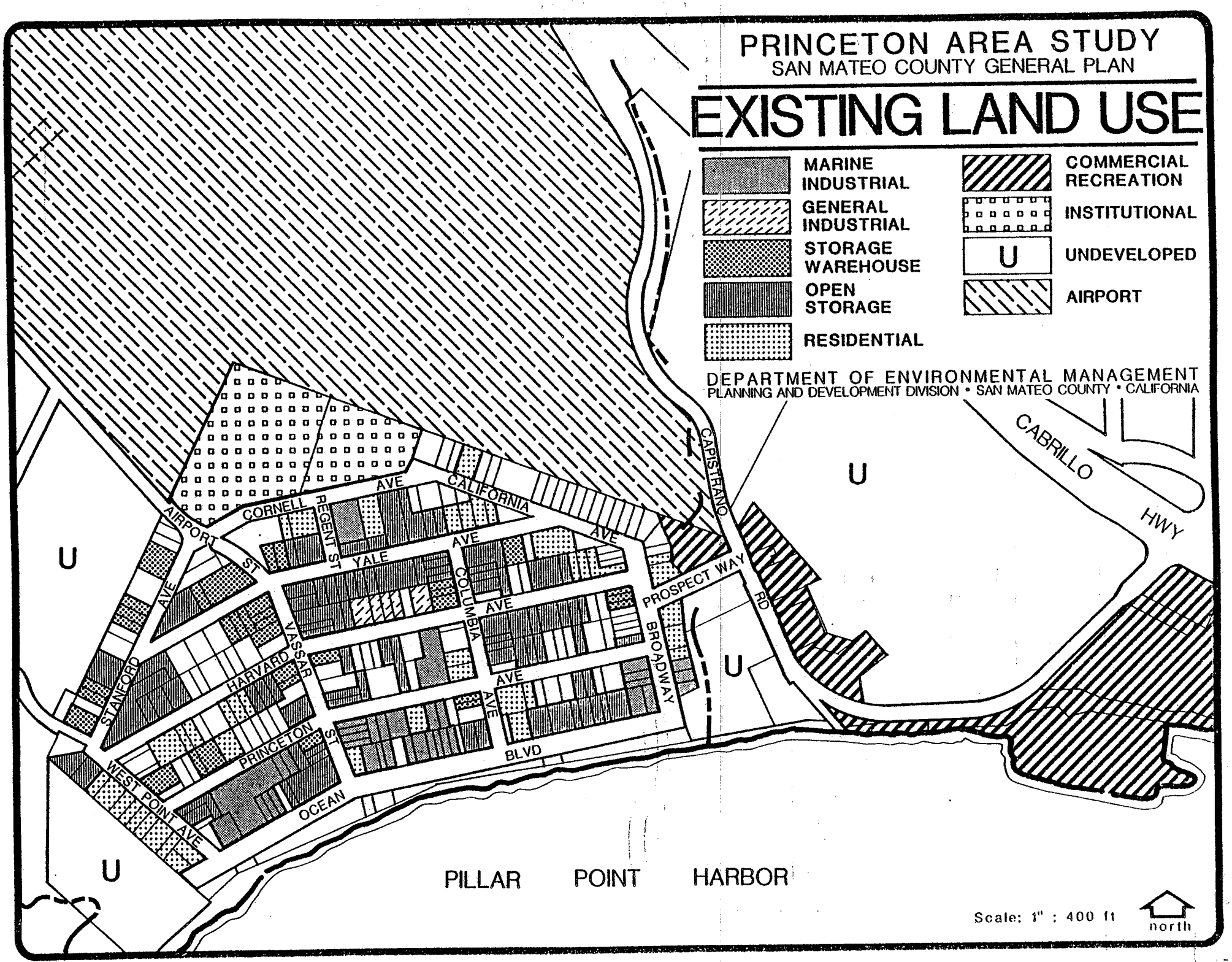
Princeton has a mixture of land uses which reflect a history of changing market forces and public policy in the community. Princeton was originally planned and subdivided as a residential resort in 1908, the same year the Ocean Shore Railroad opened its line running between San Francisco and Half Moon Bay. Land owners and speculators envisioned grandiose resort development along the coast, but the grand plans for the future failed to lure people to the coast. Princeton remained undeveloped for several decades. A boom in the fishing industry during the 1930's and 1940's provided the impetus for the development of fishing related uses in Princeton. A public pier and breakwater were constructed in the 1960's which, in turn, fostered the demand for marine related and commercial recreation uses. In the 1970's, because of the neighboring airport, public policy encouraged the development of noise tolerating uses such as warehousing and industry. At the same time, constraints on water and sewer service gave rise to unserviced dry and open storage facilities. Today, all of these land uses are found within the Princeton Study Area. This history is reflected by the changing zoning regulations, illustrated in Table 6.1.

II. CURRENT LAND USE PATTERN

A. ENTRANCE-HARBOR AREA

The Map of Existing Land Use illustrates the current land use pattern in Princeton. Land uses in the harbor-entrance area of Princeton along Capistrano Road are dominated by restaurants and visitor-serving uses. Most of the existing uses in the harbor area are clustered in two areas: along the intersection of Capistrano Road and Prospect Way and in the harbor facilities south of Capistrano Road. A large portion of the commercial area is undeveloped.

Pillar Point Harbor is the focus of the Princeton Study Area. The uses and activities established in the area are generally related in some


PRINCETON AREA STUDY
SAN MATEO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN
EXISTING LAND USE
MARINE INDUSTRIAL
GENERAL INDUSTRIAL
STORAGE WAREHOUSE
OPEN STORAGE
RESIDENTIAL
COMMERCIAL RECREATION
INSTITUTIONAL
U
UNDEVELOPED
AIRPORT
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CABRILLO HWY
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BROADWAY
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STANFORD AVE
HARVARD
VASSAR
PRINCETON
WEST POINT AVE
OCEAN BLVD
PILLAR POINT HARBOR
Scale: 1" : 400 ft
north

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manner to the harbor and activity therein. The productive marine habitats along the coast support local commercial and sport fishing activity. Over the past 25 years, commercial fishing in San Mateo County has been concentrated at Pillar Point Harbor. Approximately 80% of the boats moored at Pillar Point Harbor are commercial fishing boats.[1] Commercial boats working out of Pillar Point Harbor include salmon and albacore trawlers, bottom fish trawlers, and boats carrying abalone and sea urchin divers. In 1981, commercial fish landings at Pillar Point Harbor were valued at $1.5 million.[2] Chinook salmon, dungeness crab and red abalone are the most important fish stocks in the County.[3].

B. INDUSTRIAL AREA

As described above, land uses in the industrial area of Princeton are mixed, ranging from single family residential to industrial boat building and warehousing. The industrial area is dominated by industrial uses. Along Princeton Avenue, the industrial uses are primarily marine dependent, including boat building and repair, marine supply stores and fish processing. Storage warehousing uses dominate the northern half of the industrial area. Open storage of miscellaneous debris permeates the entire industrial area, creating land use conflicts and health hazards in the area. Like the harbor area, a large proportion of the industrial area remains undeveloped.

The harbor entrance area and the industrial area are bounded by land in open space uses, agricultural land to the east, the Half Moon Bay Airport Runway Clear Zone to the north, and Pillar Point Marsh to the west. The United States Air Force operates a radar tracking facility on Pillar Point.

The Half Moon Bay Airport adjoins the northern tip of Princeton's industrial area and has a major impact on the Study Area. The airport was originally constructed during World War II as a military airfield. The County acquired the facility in 1947 and presently operates it as a general aviation airport.

1. Existing Facilities and Operations

The airport facilities consist of one paved, lighted runway 5,000 feet long by 150 feet wide, two large Hangars, 33 T-Hangars, and an administration building.[4] Tiedown spaces are available for 80 aircraft. Presently, 84 aircraft are based at the airport.

There are an estimated 70,000 takeoffs and landings annually at the Half Moon Bay Airport. Peak month operations are estimated at 10,000 takeoffs and landings.[5] Over the past year and a half, there have been four aircraft accidents at the Half Moon Bay Airport.[6]

2. Projected Demand

Current projections estimate that takeoffs and landings at the Half Moon Bay Airport to be as high as 150,000 by 1995. This projection is based on a number of factors including planned airport improvements, capacity limits at other Bay Area airports, and funding availability improvements to smaller airports.

III. CURRENT ZONING

The harbor entrance area of Princeton is uniformly zoned Coastside Commercial Recreation (CCR). The entire industrial area is zoned Marine Related Industrial (MAR), while about half this area is additionally zoned Airport Overlay (AO). Pillar Point and Pillar Point Marsh are within the Resource Management Zoning District. One parcel of land situated between Pillar Point Marsh and the industrial area is also zoned Coastside Commercial Recreation. The entire Princeton area is additionally zoned Design Review (DR) and Coastal Development (CD). The Map of Existing Zoning depicts current zoning district boundaries.

TABLE 6.1

ZONING HISTORY OF PRINCETON

	HARBOR-ENTRANCE AREA	INDUSTRIAL AREA
1940	Neighborhood Commercial (C-1)	One Family Residential (R-1)
1950	Neighborhood Commercial (C-1) Highway Frontage Commercial (H-1)	Heavy Industrial (M-2) Light Industrial (M-1 One Family Residential (R-1)
1973		Light Industrial (M-1) One Family Residential Boat Building (R-1-B)
1978		Marine Related Industrial (MAR) Design Review Overlay (DR)
1980	Coastside Commercial Recreation (CCR)	Airport Overlay (Portion) (A-O)

PRINCETON AREA STUDY
SAN MATEO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

EXISTING ZONING

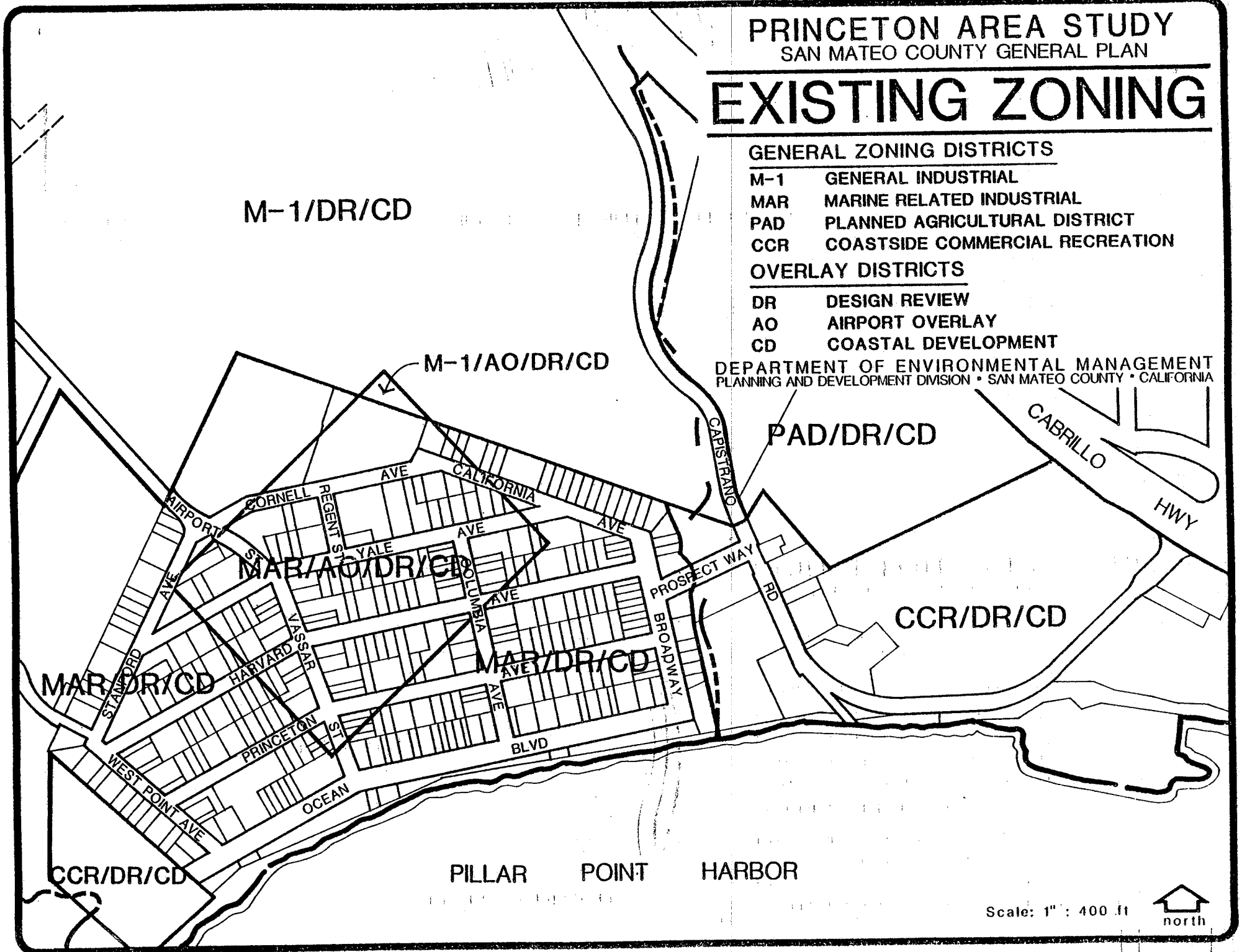
GENERAL ZONING DISTRICTS

M-1	GENERAL INDUSTRIAL
MAR	MARINE RELATED INDUSTRIAL
PAD	PLANNED AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT
CCR	COASTSIDE COMMERCIAL RECREATION

OVERLAY DISTRICTS

DR	DESIGN REVIEW
AO	AIRPORT OVERLAY
CD	COASTAL DEVELOPMENT

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION • SAN MATEO COUNTY • CALIFORNIA



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IV. DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The Princeton Study Area contains a substantial amount of undeveloped acreage. Under current land use plans, an additional 26 acres of commercial recreational uses could be developed in the entrance harbor area, and approximately 20 of marine related industrial uses and four acres of commercial recreational uses could be developed in the subdivided area west of Denniston Creek.[7]

PRELIMINARY IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES

I. INTRODUCTION

The Princeton area is at a watershed point in its development. The Study Area contains a substantial amount of undeveloped land along the coastline. Within the next few years sewer and water constraints which have previously limited new development in the area will be removed, creating new opportunities for growth in the area. At this time, it is appropriate to review the current planning objectives for the Princeton area and determine if they are responsive to the area's needs.

II. OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS FOR LAND USE PLANNING IN PRINCETON

The primary consideration in planning for the Princeton area is its coastline setting; the hub or nucleus of the area is Pillar Point Harbor. Current planning policy provides for both the visitor-serving recreation and working waterfront functions of the Harbor. Local Coastal Program Policies have directed the development of commercial recreational uses to the area adjoining the Harbor along Capistrano Road, while maritime support facilities, such as boat building and repair, marine supply, boat sales, and ocean product processing have been directed to a discreet area west of the visitor-serving area.

A. ENTRANCE HARBOR AREA

1. Land Use Pattern

Land uses in the entrance harbor area, including restaurants, lodging, shops, and the harbor facilities, are generally compatible and mutually reinforce each other by providing a variety of facilities and uses that would be desired by visitors to the area. The existing uses, set along the coastline, collectively provide a draw to the area.

Land Use Supply and Demand

At the present time, about 26 acres of undeveloped land planned for commercial recreational uses is located in this area. The land is in two major blocks: approximately two acres along the shoreline and another 24 acres adjoining the harbor facilities. While the existing infrastructural constraints make it difficult to assess the actual market demand for these uses, the overall trends of larger numbers of visitors to the coastside each year and the recent establishment of several new uses in the area over the past year indicate a growing market demand for coastal recreational uses. The Princeton area is the only major commercial coastal recreational center between Santa Cruz and San Francisco.

B. INDUSTRIAL AREA

1. Land Use Pattern

The land use pattern in the industrial area is less cohesive than the harbor area, consisting of a mixture of industrial and residential land uses. Some of the industrial uses are marine dependent, such as boat building and repair, boat sales and marine supply; however, a large proportion of the existing uses are storage--either open or within a warehouse. While some of these uses are clearly ocean dependent, others are not.

2. Land Use Supply and Demand

At the present time, there are about 20 acres of undeveloped land designated for marine related industries and 30 acres of undeveloped land designated for commercial recreation. About three acres of the undeveloped industrial land is situated along the coastline. All of the undeveloped land in the industrial area is divided into small lots which creates a need to consolidate parcels in order to accommodate most land uses. Like the harbor area, the industrial area is also subject to infrastructural constraints, making it difficult to judge the recent development in the area as indicative of the market demand for marine

support uses in the area. In general, however, the Pillar Point Harbor generates the demand for most of the boat building repair and supply needs in Princeton. While a harbor of this size requires a certain amount of support uses, the needs are relatively fixed. In light of these considerations, it could be inferred that the working boat yards, sales, and supply enterprises currently established in Princeton are able to meet the local demands; and, likewise, the market could not support a significant number of competing uses.

III. EVALUATION OF EXISTING PLANS, POLICIES AND REGULATIONS AFFECTING LAND USE IN PRINCETON

A. EXISTING PLANS

Local Coastal Program

The County's Local Coastal Program (LCP) is the primary Land Use Policy document for the Princeton area. The LCP directs commercial recreational land uses and marine industrial land uses into two discreet areas in order to eliminate land use conflicts that may occur if these two uses were not separated. The land use objectives of the Local Coastal Program are primarily implemented through the provisions of two zoning districts: the Coastside Commercial Recreation District (CCR) and the Marine Related Industrial District (MAR). These districts are discussed below:

B. ZONING

1. Coastside Commercial Recreation District (CCR)

The CCR District was adopted to promote commercial areas on the coast which are primarily oriented toward meeting the service and recreational needs of coastside visitors, boat users, and coastside residents, while at the same time protecting coastal resources. The CCR District recognizes the unique land use opportunities that ocean front land provides and restricts uses along the shoreline to those which are primarily

coastal dependent (i.e. marinas, boat building and repair, harbor administration offices, and fish processing and purchasing). Uses permitted in other parts of the CCR District away from the shoreline include, but are not limited to, small retail shops, residences above the first floor of a mixed use building, recreational equipment rental and sales establishments, restaurants and bars. All uses in the CCR require a use permit.

2. Marine Related Industrial District (MAR)

Similar to the CCR District, the MAR District was designed to address the special land use opportunities along the coast for marine related industrial uses. Like the CCR, the MAR district regulations restrict uses along the shoreline to those which are coastal dependent (i.e. boat chandleries and boat building, repair, storage, and sales). Away from the shore line, other uses such as storage warehousing, nurseries and greenhouses, and agricultural equipment repair and storage are allowed. Only boat building, repair, storage, and sales uses require a use permit.

C. EVALUATION

1. CCR District

The current CCR zoning regulations have been effective in implementing the objectives of the LCP in reserving sites for coastal dependent land uses along the coast. In addition, the CCR regulations have produced a healthy and vital mix of uses in the harbor entrance area. There appears to be general public agreement that the area is developing in accordance with public policy and that the regulations do not need to be modified.

2. MAR District

In the industrial area, however, several problems with the MAR regulations have emerged. The MAR lacks an adequate number of development and

performance standards to assure that the development and use of the land protects the public health, safety, and welfare. For instance, the regulations could require screening open storage areas or setting maximum limits on the amount of debris that can be stored out of doors. In addition, standards could be set for setbacks, noise, dust, glare, parking, working hours, etc. Specific standards addressing these problems could assist enforcement efforts.

A great amount of land in Princeton is used for the open storage of a wide variety of materials. Only boat storage is permitted in the MAR. It appears that much of the storage on these parcels, which contributes to blight, is not permitted. These uses are generally not marine related uses. The prevalence of open storage uses in the MAR seems to contravene the original intent and objectives of the zoning regulations.

3. AO District

The AO District, which covers about half of the industrial area, was developed to provide a margin of safety at the ends of airport runways. The AO District regulations try to limit concentrations of people in areas where there are aircraft hazards. The AO District tries to attract uses which attract no more than ten persons per net acre at any one time (i.e. storage warehousing).

These zoning overlay regulations seem to preclude most land uses permitted in the MAR, except storage warehousing. The AO regulations, then, seem to comprise the objectives of the MAR zoning district regulations.

PRELIMINARY IDENTIFICATION OF ALTERNATIVES

A. AMEND ZONING REGULATIONS TO ALLOW ADDITIONAL WATERFRONT RELATED LAND USES

The existing Marine Related Industrial (MAR) and Coastside Commercial Recreation (CCR) zoning district regulations could be amended to allow additional marine related commercial, industrial, and recreational uses consistent with current planning goals and land use plans for the area. Such land uses might include marine research; aquaculture; commercial fishing support uses, such as fish freezing and processing; sail makers; tour operations; and boat rentals.

B. AMEND THE GENERAL PLAN AND THE ZONING REGULATIONS TO ALLOW ADDITIONAL USES

Additional land uses which are not marine-related, such as residential or general office uses, would require amending the land use plan for the area. Changing zoning district boundaries would likewise require a General Plan amendment.

C. ESTABLISH A REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

A Redevelopment District could be established to revitalize the Princeton area. The advantage of establishing a Redevelopment District is largely economic--tax revenues generated in the Princeton area can be reinvested in the area through public improvements or financing arrangements for desired land uses which may not otherwise be able to secure conventional financing.. Such improvements, in turn, stimulate private investment and revitalization of the area. A Redevelopment District could be done in conjunction with Alternatives A or B.

D. EXPLORE OPTIONS FOR NON-CONFORMING STRUCTURES

Explore options which provide increased opportunities for existing non-conforming residential structures within the Study Area.

LAND USE FOOTNOTES

[1]Conversation with Ray Farnow, San Mateo County Harbor District, July 1986.

[2]San Mateo County Planning Department, San Mateo County General Plan, Vegetative, Water, Fish and Wildlife Resources Chapter, August 1984, Table 1.3.

[3]San Mateo County Planning Department, Local Coastal Program, Commercial Fishing Background Report, January 1979, p. 4

[4]San Mateo County General Plan, Transportation Chapter, p. 12, 21, 1982.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Because there is not an FAA Control Tower at Half Moon Bay Airport, precise additional data are not available.

[7]Acreages based on planimeter measurements and data on file in the Planning Division Offices.

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