

**LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION**  
SAN BENITO COUNTY

2301 Technology Parkway  
Hollister, CA 95023  
Phone: (831) 637-5313

August 28, 2014 (Agenda)

Local Agency Formation Commission  
2301 Technology Parkway  
Hollister CA 95023

**Aromas Tri-County Fire Protection District - Sphere of Influence Update**

Dear Members of the Commission:

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended the Commission receive this report, accept all public testimony and adopt the enclosed resolution updating but not revising the Aromas Tri-County Fire Protection District Sphere of Influence.

DISCUSSION

Spheres of Influence are LAFCO's plan for the future organization of local government boundaries.

As explained last October, State law requires the Commission to adopt a Sphere of Influence for each city and special district by January 1, 2008 and every five years the commission shall, as necessary, review and update each sphere of influence.

The law further requires LAFCO to prepare a Municipal Service Review to help inform the adoption of Spheres of Influence. As part of our overall work plan the staff has undertaken a coordinated program to prepare Municipal Service Reviews and update Spheres of Influence.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,



BOB BRAITMAN  
Executive Officer

# 1. MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW

## Description of District

The Aromas Tri-County Fire Protection District was formed in 1952. It is located in three counties: the eastern portion is San Benito County, the northern portion is Santa Cruz County and the western portion is Monterey County. See attached map.

Since Monterey County contains the greater portion of the entire assessed value of the District it is the “principal county” as that term is defined in Section 56066.

The District serves the unincorporated community of Aromas which is located at the intersection of the three counties. The fire station is located in San Benito County.

The District is governed by a five-member Board of Directors. The members are elected at large from throughout the District for four-year terms.

Since 1993 the District contracts with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) for services; there are no District employees.

## District Services

The District was formed and operates pursuant to the Fire Protection District Law of 1961 (Health & Safety Code Section 13800 et seq.).

The District provides fire suppression, fire prevention, emergency medical response, rescue and hazardous materials first responder services. The District serves approximately 5,500 residents throughout its boundaries.

The District appears to exhibit the characteristics of a well-managed agency operating efficiently and serving its customers effectively.

# 2. MSR DETERMINATIONS

This portion of the report addresses the factors specified in the statute for Municipal Service Reviews found at Government Code Section 56430.

## **Growth and Population Projections for the Affected Area**

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) includes Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz Counties. It has adopted population projections through 2030 for San Benito the County.

Not much growth is projected within the unincorporated portion of San Benito County, increasing from an estimated 18,099 residents in 2005 to 19,733 in 2030. The 2010 US

Census estimated the population of the San Benito County portion of the Aromas Community at 2,650 residents.

### **Location and Characteristics of any Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities**

Senate Bill 244 (Wolk), effective July 1, 2013, concerns “Land Use, General Plans and Disadvantaged Communities.”

While it has ramifications for some Municipal Service Reviews and Sphere of Influence Updates, it is not relevant to this District. Specifically, SB 244 applies to a proposed city annexation involving more than 10 acres when it is located contiguous to a “disadvantaged unincorporated community”

### **Present and planned capacity of public facilities, adequacy of public services, and infrastructure needs or deficiencies including needs or deficiencies related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, and structural fire protection in any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence.**

The District has one fire station at Carpenteria Road and Seely Avenue in Aromas. It has identified the need for a second fire station in the eastern portion of the District, in San Benito County. This project has been delayed due to financial constraints; there are no current plans for the construction of a second station.

### **Financial Ability to Provide Services**

Most of the District’s revenues come from ad valorem property taxes. Other revenues are received from inspections and fire mitigation fees for new construction. The District has created specific reserves to replace needed equipment and buildings.

The District maintains a fund balance to accommodate future needs.

The District maintains an ISO Public Protection Classification of 5 for properties within five road miles of a station where there is a credible source of water.

### **Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities**

The District shares administrative and management resources with the other contract fire protection agencies serviced by CAL FIRE’s San Benito-Monterey Unit. The District also participates in mutual aid agreements throughout the State, and maintains automatic aid agreements with the City of Watsonville, North Monterey County Fire Protection District and Pajaro Valley Fire Protection District.

There are no pending or proposed applications to consolidate the District with local fire protection agencies or to expand the District boundaries.

**Accountability for community service needs including governmental structure and operational efficiencies.**

The District Board of Directors is elected by voters within the District. It therefore has direct accountability to the resident-voters with respect to the services provided.

The District encourages public participation. Board meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the District website and at community locations including the Aromas Post Office, fire station and local stores. District information and documentation is available to the public and District Board meetings are open and accessible to the public

**3 . SPHERE OF INFLUENCE REVIEW AND UPDATE**

Description of Current Sphere of Influence

The attached map illustrates the existing District boundaries and its Sphere of Influence, which are coterminous.

No Proposed Sphere Changes

The District feels its Sphere of Influence is correct at this time and proposes no changes in the Sphere nor does the LAFCO staff recommend any changes.

Sphere of Influence Determinations

**Present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space lands.**

District territory within San Benito, Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties contain a combination of residential, commercial, open space and agricultural uses. No significant change in planned land use is proposed.

**Present capacity of the public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide**

The District is able to provide adequate fire protection and emergency medical services from its existing facilities and through mutual aid agreements.

**Existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the Commission determines that they are relevant to the agency**

The District is a central public agency within the general Aromas community.

**For an update of a sphere of influence of a city or special district that provides public facilities or services related to sewers, municipal or industrial water, or structural fire protection, the present and probable need for those facilities and services of any disadvantaged unincorporated community within the existing Sphere of influence.**

This determination is not relevant to this District. Any such communities are already included within the existing District Sphere of Influence.

#### 4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & REFERENCES

This draft Municipal Service Review / Sphere of Influence Update was prepared by the San Benito LAFCO staff. Responsibility for any errors or omissions rests with those who prepared the report.

Phillip Matteson, Assistant Chief of the Aromas Fire Protection District, provided much of the data on which the evaluation is based and has cooperated in the preparation of this report.

The staff also reviewed the 2012 Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Update for Districts Providing Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services prepared for the Monterey LAFCO and adopted by that Commission in March 2012.

##### Background Documentation

The following additional documents have been reviewed in compiling this report:

- Aromas Tri-County Fire Protection District Strategic Plan (May 2002).
- CDF Training Guides for Assistant Chief, Battalion Chief, Fire Captain, Fire Apparatus Engineer, Firefighter II, Firefighter I and Manager.
- FCC Radio Station Authorization for Aromas Tri-County Fire Protection District
- Monterey Bay Unified APCD Permit to Operate Gasoline Dispensing Facility
- California OSHA Permit to Operate Air Pressure Tank

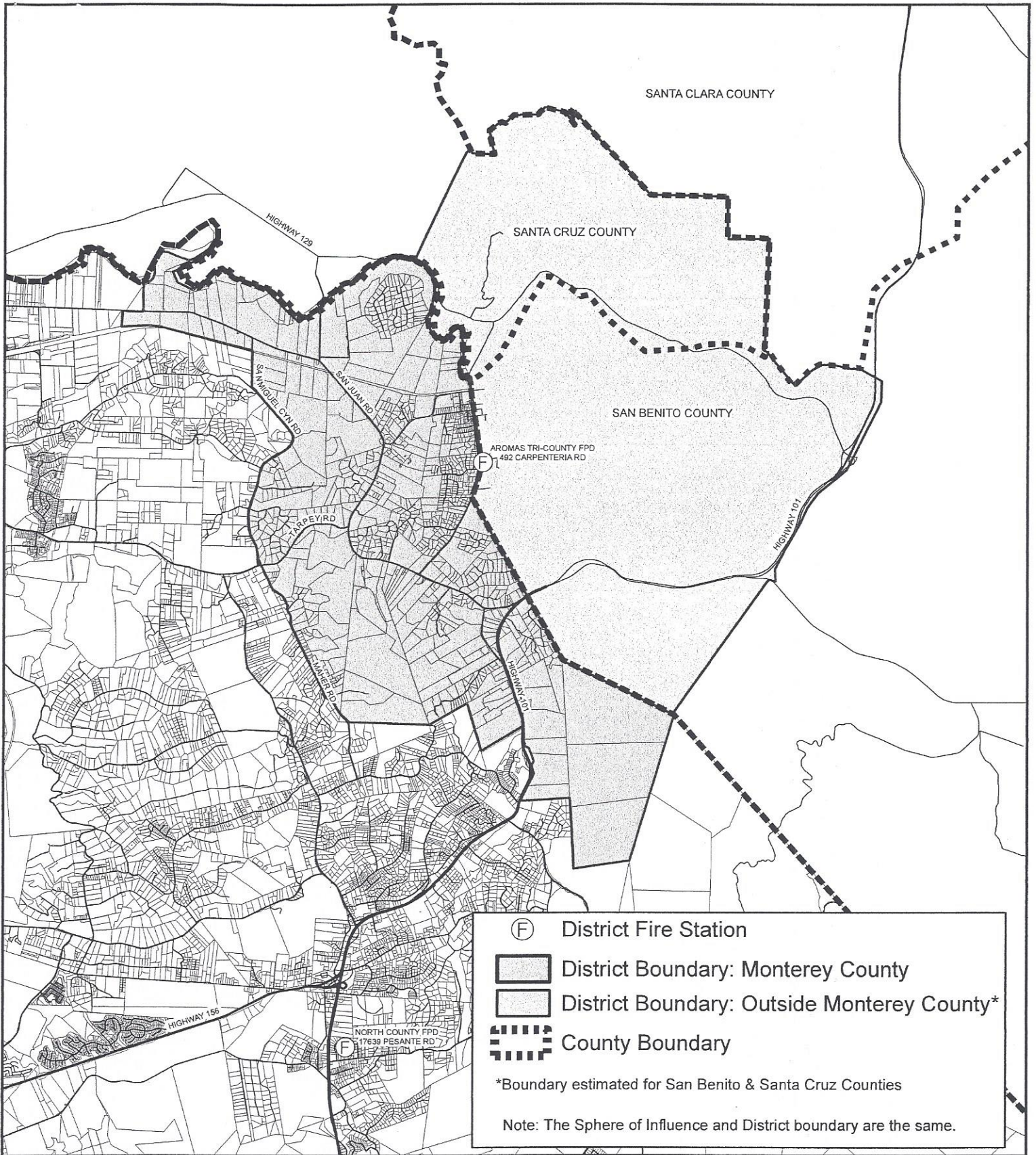
These referenced documents are considered part of this report and are available in the LAFCO office.

#### 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

In consideration of information gathered and evaluated during the Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Update it is recommended the Commission:

- A. Receive this report and accept public testimony regarding the proposed Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Update.

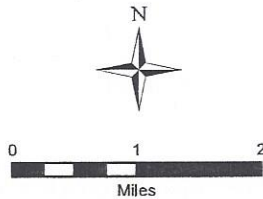
- B. Determine that since there is no change in the District Sphere of Influence the action is exempt from CEQA.
- C. Approve the recommended Municipal Service Review determinations, together with any changes deemed appropriate.
- D. Adopt the enclosed resolution updating but not revising the Sphere of Influence.



**LAFCO of Monterey County**  
 LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

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**FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICTS**

**AROMAS TRI-COUNTY  
 FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

2012 Municipal Service Review  
 Map Produced on 10/10/2011

RESOLUTION OF THE SAN BENITO LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION  
MAKING DETERMINATIONS AND UPDATING THE SPHERE OF INFLUENCE  
OF THE AROMAS TRI-COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Cortese/Knox/Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act (Government Code Section 56425 et seq.) the Commission must review and update, as necessary, adopted spheres of influence not less than once every five years, and

WHEREAS, Government Code Section 56430 directs the Commission in updating spheres of influence to conduct a review of municipal services not later than the time it is considering an action to establish or update as sphere of influence, and

WHEREAS, the Commission has conducted a municipal service review and sphere of influence study of the Aromas Tri-County Fire Protection District, and

WHEREAS, in the manner required by law, the Executive Officer has given notice of the public hearing by the Commission on the proposal; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has heard, discussed and considered all evidence regarding this matter, including but not limited to, the Executive Officer's report, the environmental consideration, applicable general and specific plans and all testimony, correspondence and exhibits received for the public hearing, all of which are included herein by reference.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED, DETERMINED AND ORDERED as follows:

1. The project before the Commission is a Sphere of Influence Update and Municipal Service Review for the Aromas Tri-County Fire Protection District.

2. The Commission as the lead agency finds the Sphere of Influence Update to be categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) inasmuch as no change is being made to the existing Sphere of Influence.

3. The Sphere of Influence of the Aromas Tri-County Fire Protection District is hereby updated without any modification to the existing Sphere of Influence boundaries as shown on the attached map labeled "Exhibit A."

14. This resolution was adopted on August 28, 2014 and is effective on the date signed by the Chair.



AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAINS:

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

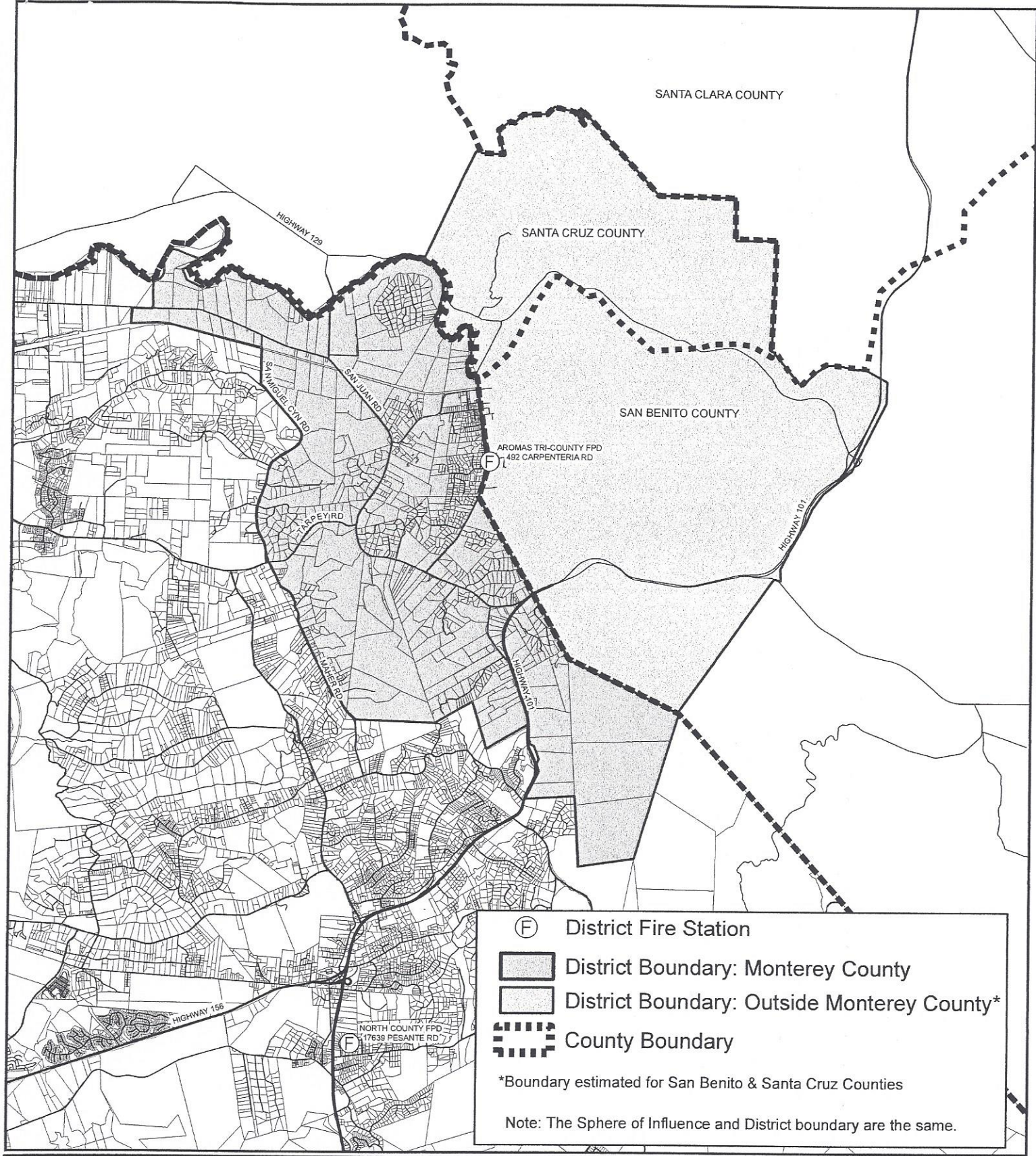
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Chair

San Benito Local Agency Formation Commission

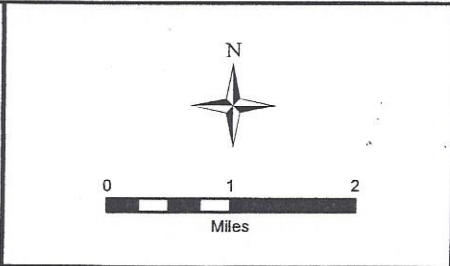
ATTEST

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bob Braitman, Executive Officer  
San Benito Local Agency Formation Commission



(F) District Fire Station  
 [Shaded Box] District Boundary: Monterey County  
 [Light Shaded Box] District Boundary: Outside Monterey County\*  
 [Dashed Line] County Boundary  
 \*Boundary estimated for San Benito & Santa Cruz Counties  
 Note: The Sphere of Influence and District boundary are the same.

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