

Sam Farr

Jane Parker
Monterey County Board of Supervisors
2616 1st Avenue
Marina, CA 93933

June 22, 2018

Dear Jane,

I am writing today to provide a history and comments regarding the City of Salinas' interest in annexing across Blanco and Davis roads.

The Board of Supervisors set down an iron firm urban limit line for Salinas on those roads. The first time, was in the mid 70's with the city annexing up to the corner of Blanco and Davis. LAFCO blocked it until the City adopted a Resolution stating that they didn't want to go beyond Davis Road. It is the best Ag soil in the world and should never be built on. See the editorial in the Salinas Californian admonishing the City to respond to LAFCO Chairman Farr's request for the City to set a limit line at Blanco and Davis. The City Council did.

The second time the Board took a tough stand, was soon after the above, when the Salinas Union High School District announced that they were going to build the new high school on the west side of Blanco where the sewage treatment plant was located. They had full legal authority to build it, and as a government entity they were exempt from county zoning restrictions. After shutting down the City, the Board of Supervisors was shocked by this proposal from the school district. They were going to abandon historical Salinas High on Main Street for the new campus west of Blanco. The Board discussed this and authorized County Counsel to let the District know that we would help locate other land such as Carr Lake, but we would fight like hell to prevent building west of Blanco. With the county opposition the School Board decided to revitalize the existing campus on Main Street. It proved to be a great success strongly supported by the alumni families of Salinas.

Twice, the Board of Supervisors stopped development west of Blanco.

More recently, the City admonished the County for purchasing the building on the edge of town near Blanco Circle. The City's argument, is they were trying to revitalize the downtown area and wanted the County to concentrate on city-centered growth. The worst thing that could happen now for encouraging redevelopment downtown would be more sprawl. Salinas grew up on Main Street. It got national attention when it opened the first "shopping center" with a big one stop parking lot behind the anchor store Sears. There was no North Main, nor South Main, just Main Street. The worst economic decision the City made was to sprawl out to the north sucking business out of Old Town Salinas. Decades of revitalization money couldn't save it. It wasn't until Bruce Taylor invested private resources, that there was any future for old Main Street.

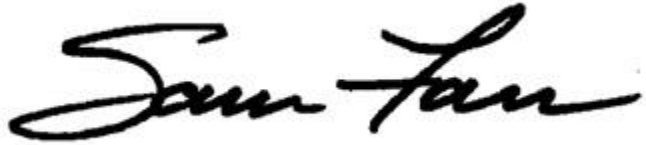
Lesson learned. The County should support urban limit lines in Monterey County. It forces cities to use developers money to revitalize run-down buildings and inner cities. Most big cities in California cannot annex more land, and it has lead to incredible revitalization - look at South of Market in San Francisco, Oakland waterfront, downtown Los Angeles. Locally, Carmel's limit of expansion of the commercial zone forced massive investments into alleyways and basements of the downtown area. The same thing

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occurred in Santa Cruz. Salinas should stop annexing and focus on internal improvements, and the County should resist supporting more urban sprawl in the Nation's richest agricultural county.

Please realize, in our desire to attract Fortune Five Hundred Companies here, that we already have them! They are in our agriculture which, fortunately for us due to our micro climate, can't move. Only the County can push them out. Support our largest employer and stop attempts for urban sprawl.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sam Farr". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sam" and last name "Farr" clearly distinguishable.

Sam Farr
Former Chair of Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)
Member of Congress (Retired)

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