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*California's Central Valley—Confluence
of Change*, Harold O. Carter &
Carole Frank Nuckton, Editors

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University of California Agricultural Issues
Center

Room for Whom?

Ed Blakely:

The great Central Valley has been no stranger to change. The Valley's first great change was the conversion of its natural habitats to agriculture. For most of California's history the Central Valley has been the world's premier irrigated garden, as its agriculture became the economic backbone for about one-sixth of the state's population.

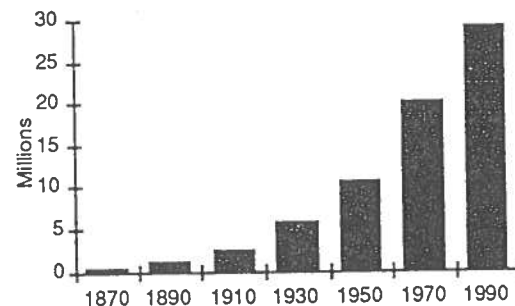
Today the Valley is undergoing a second great change—the transformation of an agricultural base to urban domination. The first change civilized it; the second change brings confusion with respect to how the peoplescape will continue to develop. We don't want to destroy the Valley, we want to create it. And in creating a new Valley, there will be an essential interplay among agriculture, the people, the place, and the resources.

We begin by describing the current and expected population growth patterns of the Valley. We then discuss the valley's diversity. There are three groups of people living in and moving to the Valley—the traditional base, including Anglo and Hispanic populations; new immigrants, including many from South East Asia; and the commuters. Each of these groups experiences and contributes to the Valley's growth in different ways. We conclude by proposing some alternative scenarios for urban growth and development in the Valley. The goal is to choose a scenario that will help shape the Valley for the better for both its natural and human resources.

Population growth has been the dominant factor shaping the character of California since statehood. The population of this state doubled just about every 20 years until it slowed in the 1970s. This rate of population growth provided a continuing renewal of the economy and infrastructure.

The state has also had a history of increasing ethnic diversity. The early Chinese were key in developing the railroads and other infrastructure. Other minority groups, particularly the Hispanics, have played important roles. Minorities will soon become the majority. And that new forged majority will bring new life blood as well as change the character of the state. These new people are

Population Growth In California



Source: Dept. of Finance

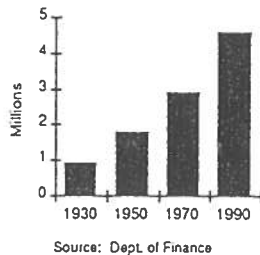
Dan Walters:

More than any other region, the Valley's ethnic proportions and its voter registration and voting patterns most nearly represent those of the state as a whole. The Valley is a microcosm of the state in many respects, particularly political ones. So one might accurately say that in politics, as goes the Valley, so goes California.

Central Valley: Confluence of Change

competing for that space and are competing to guide the development of California's future.

Population Growth in the Central Valley



The Valley's growth rate was slower than that of the state from the 1950s through the 1970s. Now the Valley rate is increasing—keeping up, keeping pace with the state. Today the Valley has about 4.5 million people. Forecasts are notoriously difficult to make, in part because the prediction of a population level sets in motion policies to try to change it. But, assuming that the current acceleration of growth will continue, a conservative estimate developed by the California Department of Finance suggests that by 2010 there will be nearly 7 million persons in the Valley, an increase of almost 3 million. It is just as possible that the Valley population will

Dan Walters:

The state can continue to expect relative prosperity in economic terms. We'll probably add another three million new jobs in the 1990s and probably another six or seven million people. One estimate is that our population is now about 29 million and that it's going to be 32 and maybe 35 by the end of the century. More realistically we are probably 30 million already and will be 36 or 37 million by the end of the century. And we'll continue to add more cars to our roads because of those extended commuting patterns and because of the advent of two-income families, both workers requiring commuter vehicles. Our traffic will probably get worse before it gets better.

So all the tensions and all the changes we experienced in the 1980s will be continued to be experienced during the 1990s. The Central Valley will be the confluence of that change. The middle Valley, Sacramento, which has an urban syndrome all its own and its own set of satellite communities, will continue to expand. It is one of the fastest growing urban areas in the country right now, tetering on the edge of big-city status.

The lower Valley, the Bakersfield area and environs, will begin experiencing spill-over from the Los Angeles area. It is already starting to feel it just a little bit. In the 1990s it will probably feel it a lot because there is the same kind of pattern going on as population pushes northward into the upper San Fernando Valley area of Los Angeles—jobs flow out, and home prices go up. There is then a greater and greater economic incentive to move over the hill, over the Tehachapi, into the Valley. It has already happened in the Antelope Valley and the most southern regions of the San Joaquin Valley.

The Sacramento Valley will continue to experience pressure from San Francisco—squeezed in between San Francisco and Sacramento. Along the I-80 corridor from San Francisco, what is the last outpost of Bay Area development? It's a subdivision just a little this side of Vacaville. And what is the first indication of the Sacramento urban area? It is right around Dixon. And the space between those two is 7 miles. So there is going to be essentially one urbanized or one suburbanized highly developed area from San Francisco to Sacramento. It is inevitable; nothing is going to stop it, because driving this thing is continued economic growth and continued population growth. Two thousand people a day have to go some place!

double in the next 20 years as the state population has done for over 100 years, for a total of 9 million persons. Such an increase can mean inevitable disaster—or new opportunities. That's the crux of the problem that we face today.

Donald Swartz:

We are faced with an onslaught of immigration. We can either take that energy and channel it into appropriate ways or be closed and defensive and try to thwart it.

Grantland Johnson:

We cannot afford to allow ourselves to grow into a two-tier society. If 65-75 percent of our new workforce entrants by the year 1995 are going to be people of color and foreign born, that says something about our potential competitiveness. The changes in demographics require us to adopt a new attitude toward cultural diversity and linguistic diversity. We must appreciate the strong entrepreneurial impulse that many of our new immigrants bring to the United States. They also revitalize our economy and keep our population young.

Hugo Morales:

We are going through a rapid transition. Even within the minority communities, the recognized leadership often no longer represents the interest of large numbers of the community. And I venture to say that our institutions, including the University of California, no longer represent the interests of large segments of our population. For example, Fresno Unified, the third largest school district in the state, has an increasing problem with dropouts—about 25-30 percent across the board. Among the white population it is probably around 20 percent, and among blacks probably a little higher, but among the Mexicans it is about 50 percent. One of the solutions always suggested is more parent participation. Come to the school board meetings, go the P.T.A., get involved. However, how many of us feel comfortable letting these parents who have kids enrolled in Fresno Unified vote for school board members? Many of us do not feel very comfortable because these people are not U.S. citizens.

People Pressures

Estimated Central Valley Population

(in thousands)

State	28,662	36,277
Central Valley	4,581	6,557
		728
Northern	525	
Middle	2,254	3,192
Southern	1,802	2,637
	1989	2010

Source: Dept. of Finance

Beverly Kees:

We're engaged here in a great experiment. We're pulling people together from every continent to try to create what is culturally, economically and environmentally a model for the world. It's a lot more fun being a creator than a caretaker. It's also a lot harder because we're taking risks.

Central Valley: Confluence of Change

Dan Walters:

All these demographic changes have an interesting political impact, particularly on the Central Valley. One might have expected that population growth with its diversity would be reflected in the political realm, as earlier social changes were. But so far that has not occurred, for the newcomers to California have not yet become politically active. The result is a growing tension between this dynamic, fast changing, fast growing population and political California—those who vote. This latter group is not changing very much; they are about the same number and have about the same characteristics. Voters are about 85 percent Anglo, relatively affluent, and relatively well-educated. They are a group of home owners and, most interestingly, a relatively aged group. The Anglo population is aging and the non-Anglo population is not because it is replenished by young immigrants and high birth rates.

Between the two groups—voters and nonvoters—there are not only ethnic and economic differences but also an age difference—a generation's difference. Half of California's voters are over 50 years old. The Anglo population already has a median age of 10 years over the non-Anglo population.

There is a continuing tension between the needs, the wants, the desires of one group and the tolerances and restrictions imposed by the other group—the voters of California.

Ed Blakely:

Valley City Structure

Valley cities stand in contrast to the old city system that brought people together in high density around urban cores, where all transportation went into the city, where the jobs and opportunities were based in the city. These old cities were relatively self contained, described by concentric rings around the downtown commercial and business district. Residential districts were on the outside in gradually decreasing density. In between were manufacturing and warehouse districts.

Now, we see a new city system emerging—the sluburb. This new city system is wasteful in that sprawled suburban areas use up resources, create transportation and other overlapping problems. So we have to come up with yet another city system for the Valley—one that represents neither the old city system that is no longer viable nor the latest creation of sprawl that is wasteful. How we come up with something new is very important to the development of the Valley.

In this sense, the Central Valley is a laboratory—a crucible where over the next 20 years, California's new city will emerge. This will be a new city form designed to share both natural and physical resources within a new urbanized system.

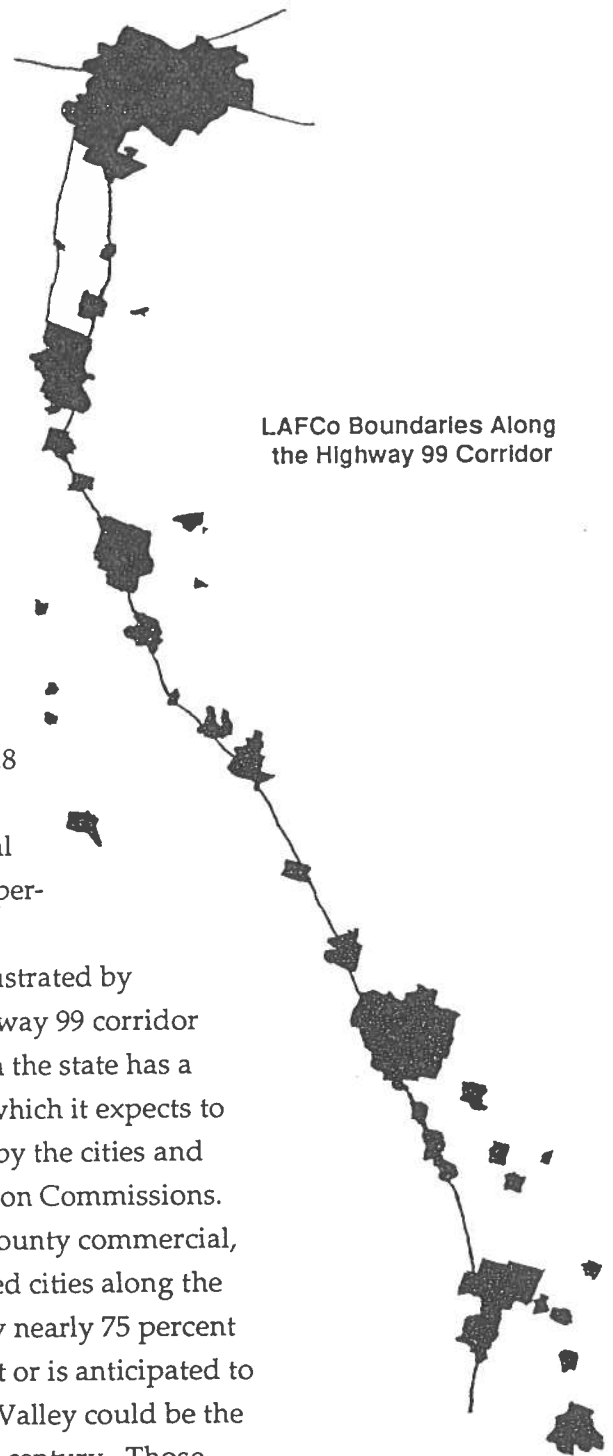
What is developing in the Valley so far is a long, continuous urban system made up of some 95 cities and several hundred more unincorporated, somewhat wastefully spread out. They're being formed out of communities once dominated almost solely by agriculture. They string along the valley. They string along because the best land drew the settlements and transportation linkages developed to serve those settlements. In contrast, Kentucky, a state about the same size and population as the Central Valley, has 425 cities

and a dense uncounted backdrop of small places. Kentucky represents a very different kind of development pattern.

The 95 cities are strung out mainly along the highway 99 corridor. Some 62 percent of highway 99 is already devoted to commercial, industrial and residential uses; 75 percent of this emerging linear city will be devoted to urban uses in the next 20 years. But the Valley cities are no longer a chain of small and medium places that are distinctive entities clearly separated from each other. Now, the urban area from Sacramento to Tulare is rapidly becoming one continuous 225 mile long urban belt.

So far this population base takes up a relatively small proportion of the Central Valley land. Data are hard to come by, but our best sources show that in the Central Valley as a whole, urban areas consumed 560,000 acres out of a total 20 million, or 2.8 percent of land. However if one assumes that urban development is largely on irrigable cropland, the total rises to 7 percent. And it may even occupy a higher percentage of the prime agricultural land in the Valley.

The urban dynamic that is evolving can be illustrated by mapping the urban limits of each city along the highway 99 corridor and its sphere of influence. Each incorporated city in the state has a "sphere of influence" the boundary of the area into which it expects to grow in 20 years. These areas have been negotiated by the cities and counties through LAFCo boards, Local Area Formation Commissions. Some 62 percent of highway 99 is in a LAFCo area; county commercial, industrial, and residential growth and unincorporated cities along the way account for another 10-20 percent. Thus already nearly 75 percent of this emerging linear city is in urban development or is anticipated to be urbanized within the next 20 years. The Central Valley could be the world's longest single urban system early in the 21st century. Those who would value this corridor for agriculture, wetland preservation, and open space may have as little as 25 percent remaining.



LAFCo Boundaries Along
the Highway 99 Corridor

Central Valley: Confluence of Change

Much of the growth that the Central Valley is experiencing is in this urban strip. A probable development pattern is for these cities to compete with one another and agriculture, and spread out using the suburban sprawl pattern. For without planning, cities compete with each other for resources and growth resulting in a fragmented sprawling urban form that is both dysfunctional and destructive.

Will the Valley follow the pattern of Santa Clara and Los Angeles where urbanization has absorbed virtually all the important farmland? Moreover, these and other counties grew so rapidly during the 1980s, they are finding it increasingly difficult to continue to grow, for growth requires undeveloped land, and that is increasingly rare in the south and along the coast. One of the few places left to grow is in the Central Valley. Thus we can conclude that *the issue is not whether the valley urbanizes but how*.

The way these people come together in this space will determine how the Valley can share its resources. Currently, Valley cities have low density and a dispersed population. Increasing dispersal of urban settlements generally creates cities with much lower densities, but that take up much more land for building and transportation—much of the land that once supported agriculture.

Is it possible to contain this growth pressure within a continuous development where agriculture and urban uses can coexist in the Valley? Any new urban form must place a premium on planning. Conflict and competition are not necessary. Complementary growth is possible—growth that preserves the most important values.

Three Population Groups

The emerging linear Central Valley city is likely to differ in another way too: Its population will be a much more diverse mix. Thus, we turn to look at the people shaping the Valley's development. Three distinct groups have sharply contrasting reasons for living in or coming to the Valley, differing opportunities within the Valley, and contrasting economic prospects:

- Traditional Valley base
- New immigrants
- Commuters

The traditional Valley population mainly consists of white and Hispanic people who settled there. The Hispanic population is increasing as more migrate from Mexico and other Latin American countries. This population has had agriculture as its focus. More recently we have an Asian population coming as immigrants and refugees from their countries. And, finally, another set of immigrants—new commuters who have come to the Valley for other reasons.

Traditional Valley Base

The majority white population is still heavily involved in agriculture and related enterprises but that is changing. The importance of agricultural employment varies by region in the Valley. The northern Sacramento Valley has twice as much agricultural industry employment as the central portion of the Valley; the southern San Joaquin has twice as much as the Sacramento Valley. But the proportion of farm to total employment has declined in the Valley as a whole, as other sectors have increased faster. In just one decade, farm sector employment in the San Joaquin Valley declined 14 percent with respect to the overall employment base. And gross personal income (adjusted for inflation) from farming has fallen substantially. Especially in the urbanizing areas of the Valley, agriculture as a proportion of total personal income is dropping. For example in San Joaquin County in one decade the contribution from the farm sector fell from 14 to 5 percent.

Charles Hess:

California agriculture is an important component of the state and national economy, and it contributes to a positive balance of international trade in agricultural commodities. Agriculture is producing something of value which in turn has a great multiplier effect in the state's economy. In contrast, in the service industries which currently represent 75 percent of our economy, dollars are exchanged, but no new value is created. Agriculture is essential to a sound economy so that service industries can exist and prosper.

Agriculture is critical in terms of food security. USDA's Economic Research Service expects that the world's population will reach 7.2 billion by 2010. For a secure environment for future generations, we must preserve prime agricultural lands for the production of food and fiber in the Central Valley, in other parts of California and throughout the nation and the world.

Agriculture provides an economically viable way to maintain open space. Rather than convert the Valley to range-to-range urban sprawl, with all the pollution that would go with it, let's plan to keep agriculture as a major component of land use plans to keep California economically and environmentally green.

Agriculture may have a new role to play in enhancing the environment and the economy. There is growing concern about what we may be doing to our global environment, along with considerable controversy about whether or not we will experience global warming. Agriculture and forestry can play a very positive role in sequestering carbon dioxide through the process of photosynthesis. In addition, agriculture could become an important source of carbon-based chemicals for industry and help recycle carbon dioxide rather than using fossil fuels and adding to the carbon dioxide burden in the atmosphere. We already have a number of important oilseed crops in California which is a good start in the industrial use of agricultural commodities.

There is no question that agriculture has been, and will continue to be, an indispensable component of the future of the Central Valley. It is essential as both an economic and an environmental force. We have to continue to work to ensure agricultural sustainability and to reduce or eliminate adverse environmental impacts. And we must not overlook the *positive* environmental benefits agriculture provides.

Central Valley: Confluence of Change

Between 1973 and 1986, primary sector employment (agriculture, forestry, mining) lost about 15,000 jobs, while services (including sectors such as trade, personal and professional services, government) gained 450,000 and manufacturing and construction gained 75,000. Service employment increased from 68 percent to 72 percent of employment in that period. These new jobs are bringing new population; some jobs service the existing population and others are brought by that population. Emerging new industries (high tech) account for some 12 percent of the state's new jobs and about 5 percent of the Valley's new jobs. People are the new resource; human resources will develop the new employment.

While its agricultural past still dominates the Central Valley, growth and its future clearly lie with an expanded economic base. This change apparently comes by direct spillover from other urban areas seeking lower prices and good labor availability more than from a new industrial nexus tied to world markets.

The Valley's economic growth is not painless, however. Like many developing bases, population increases outstrip the economy's ability to absorb all the people. At the same time that jobs are being created, unemployment is rising. This is a result of a bad fit between jobs and skills. People have a hard time making a transition between jobs. We've had double digit unemployment in most of the Central Valley in spite of the economic upturn.

The gap between Valley and state unemployment figures is widening. In 1975 unemployment in the Valley was almost the same as the state as a whole with the exception of northern Sacramento Valley counties. By the mid-1980s state unemployment was on a steep decline while in the northern and southern parts of the Valley it increased. Although unemployment has decreased in the Valley the last few years, the gap with the state remains wider than in the past. Disaggregating the Valley unemployment figures shows that Hispanics constitute about 60 percent; the white population, 30 percent; Asians, 6 percent of the unemployed.

Hugo Morales:

The history of agricultural labor in California demonstrates that farmers have always found a way to have cheap labor. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 passed only after effective legal means were added to guarantee a cheap supply of labor for farmers. The situation is economic: People from Mexico will come here, legally or illegally—otherwise they would be starving.

Farm Workers

The agricultural workforce is largely Hispanic with some 80 percent born abroad. An estimated three-quarters of these workers now have green cards. Many work only part of the year, thus unemployment compensation is an important supplement. Average annual earnings for a family of four in 1983 were just \$10,000, still below the poverty level.

Average agricultural employment in the Central Valley is about 175,000, with only about 125,000 employed at the low season, including about 40,000 farmers and 40,000 regular hired workers. At the peak,

because of shifting seasons and diverse crops, between 40,000 and 180,000 more workers supplement the regular work force. The peak employment during 1989 was 280,000 workers.

The agricultural work force has also provided an entry for Hispanics into other sectors of the California work force. A seemingly unlimited supply of willing workers lives south of the border and comes to California farms both legally and illegally. These workers come for several years, often returning to Mexico between seasons even if they entered legally. Attracted by the chance of employment as well as better wages than they can get in Mexico, they have made available a willing pool of workers, postponing the necessity of improving farm wages and working conditions.

In some areas, though, farmers have improved the duration and condition of work in order to stabilize their work force, using techniques such as granting workers year to year seasonal work security and seniority, arranging for some off farm employment during winter, increasing diversity of crops to utilize the work force more fully, selectively using technology, and taking advantage of the state unemployment insurance that now covers most farm work. Also, the type of work available and changing technologies in agriculture may accommodate new entrants to agriculture, such as more female workers, but they are also changing the structure of the labor market and influencing the lifestyles of the agricultural workforce.

The amnesty program under IRCA (the Immigration Reform and Control Act) has legalized the status of many workers—perhaps 150,000 or more of whom are in Central Valley agriculture. However, growers are uncertain if and how

Hugo Morales:

The power to change the situation does not lie with the workers; the power to change lies within our institutions. And this becomes a moral issue. Here is a population with no health insurance, inadequate housing, in many cases no housing. Here is a population that has no provision for pensions, not to mention low wages. So, the whole issue of farm labor is really a difficult moral one—one we have to answer as a society. Do we really want to support that kind of subclass or underclass within our midst and ignore it?

Ed Blakely:

As my colleague John Mamer said, these on-farm adjustments to stabilize the workforce cannot match the profound impacts of a series of court rulings and laws. These structured changes for agricultural labor create new market pressures on farm wages and working conditions. For example, since separate hiring facilities for agricultural labor are no longer permitted, potential on-farm workers now have access to the entire job market. And most recently, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) was designed to stem the tide of the "willing pool of workers" from Mexico. However, many of these advancements continue to be threatened by the rising use of farm labor contractors and the huge pool of illegal immigrants.

Central Valley: Confluence of Change
Hugo Morales:

To eliminate the food subsidy on the back of farm workers, farmers would have to organize and charge more for their product. If they could set a price to maintain their profit and, at the same time, improve the housing conditions, wages, and working conditions of workers, that would be wonderful. But we live in a world of fiction when it comes to farm workers. When they get injured, they have no health insurance so they end up at a county hospital where they are not treated as dignified individuals who are supplying food for our tables; rather they are treated as some kind of public charge.

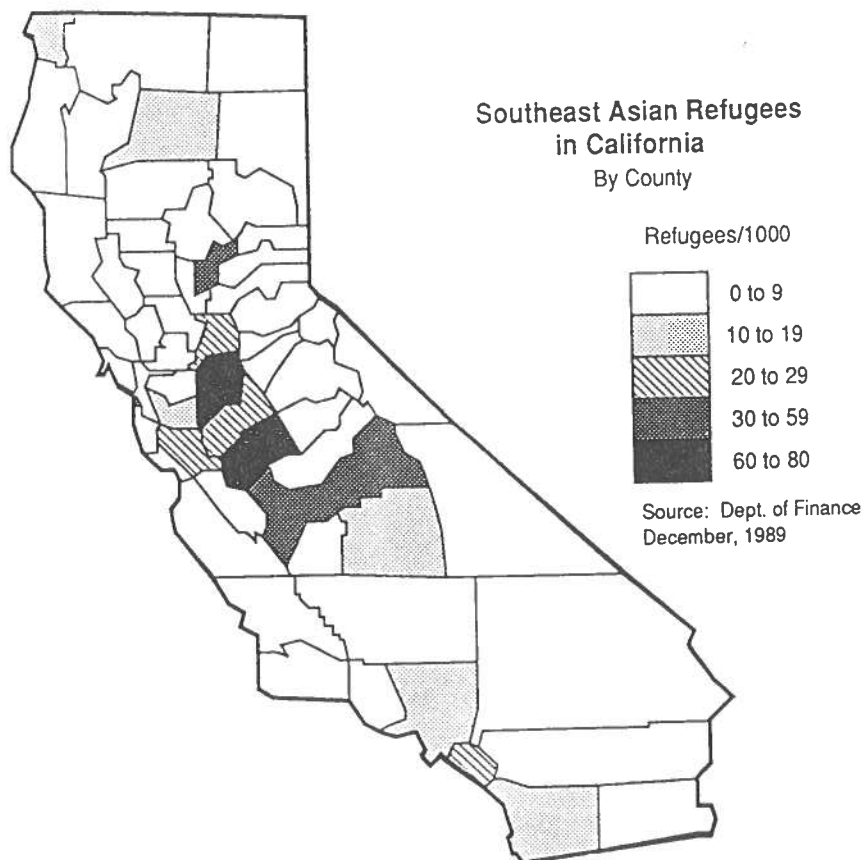
long these newly legalized workers will remain in agriculture. Many of these willing workers who are coming across the border are not just coming into farm work. They are going into the garment industry, they are going into our factories, they are becoming landscapers, and gardeners. They are the new service workers in America.

**Recent Immigrants,
Including Many From South East Asia**

California's location on the Pacific Rim and its historic ethnic diversity makes it a choice location for Asian immigration. Data are limited on the number of immigrants who are in the Central Valley, but about one-third of all South East Asian refugees who came to the United States settled initially in California. Today there is a massive resettlement in California; it is estimated that over

half of all South East Asian refugees are in this state.

Between 1980-88 one in every nine migrants to California (including those from other states) was a South East Asian refugee. Most are in Los Angeles and Orange counties, but many are coming to the middle part of the Valley. By 1988, the Central Valley had over one-fourth of all these refugees to California, over 110,000. The majority of these refugees are young, have growing families, and need time to adjust to the California economic and urban systems.



Merced County is one of the most dramatic, with its influx of some 11,000 Hmong, now constituting about 20 percent of the city's population. This rapid and extensive of an increase in the Hmong population has led to serious service delivery problems.

Interview with Merced Officials on the Refugee Situation There

John B. Cullen, Director, Human Services Agency, Merced County:

When you realize that 10 years ago we had no Southeast Asians in Merced County and today we have 11 or 12,000 people you can guess the tremendous impact that it has on all our systems. We have right now about 8,300 of these 11-12,000 Southeast Asians on some form of public assistance in Merced County.

Lee Pevsner, Housing Program Manager, Merced City:

Ever since the arrival of the Southeast Asians we have had double digit unemployment in Merced County. Look at where people are employed and the kinds of employment opportunities we have here—we just don't have the capacity to absorb people with low-language abilities. Our job market is flooded with unskilled and low-skilled workers.

Ronald Danganan, Superintendent, Merced City School District:

Out of 1,000 school districts in the State of California, we are ranked 60th in terms of need and yet the Title VII monies we are receiving from the federal government are really very small—almost insignificant.

John Cullen:

Why should Merced County have to spend \$1,000,000 more per year than our neighboring counties because refugees have chosen to live here?

Houa K. Vang, Branch Director, Lao Family Community, Inc.:

You have a hard time to find someone so they can drive around San Francisco. Our people are scared of driving, even in Sacramento—there is more traffic and they're scared of driving. How can we live in San Francisco and drive there? There is *no way*. We cannot go shopping either, and we cannot afford the rent. If you could just have a small factory or something around here, around the county here, we could work better.

Lee Pevsner:

The city of Merced is like many communities in that we have an extreme problem with low-income housing. The problem expanded geometrically when the refugees started to increase here, going from zero in 1982 to maybe 10 or 12,000 now. In fact, Southeast Asians comprise 16 percent of Merced's population.

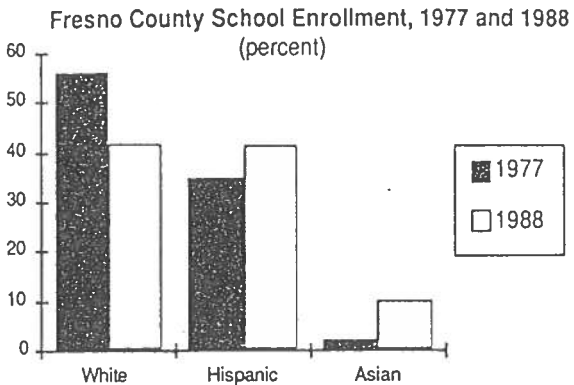
Houa K. Vang:

The refugee people come from large families, and bigger family cannot qualify for housing. There is *no way* you can break out because you cannot afford to rent a house or an apartment with your cash from AFDC—so you have to join more than one family together.

John Cullen:

The federal government picks up the full cost only for the first four months that a refugee is in our country on public assistance. The assumption is that a refugee only needs four months of public assistance in order to become self-sufficient. If you talk to anybody in the field right now, especially in California, you will find that our Southeast Asians demand a long-term connection with public assistance in order to acquire the educational skills, the survival skills, the job skills that took all of us at least 12 years of elementary school and possibly college to achieve. It is not realistic to think that a Southeast Asian coming from a 13th or 14th century culture can come up to speed in our country in four months. We need to have federal support on top of what we already get to deal with this new population—and an understanding that at least our refugee community, the Hmong primarily, are not like every other immigrant or refugee group that has come to this country. It is going to take new strategy, not the traditional approaches, to deal with their unique needs.

Central Valley: Confluence of Change



Ed Blakely:

Together the increasing Hispanic and Asian populations statewide and in the Valley mean that in a number of counties, non-Hispanic whites are no longer a majority. School enrollment data give a glimpse of the changing ethnic mix. (Later we will have a more accurate picture from as the 1990 census becomes available.) Although the school population of Central Valley as a whole still has a non-Hispanic white majority, in the southern San

Joaquin Valley that group has dropped to 49 percent; 39 percent of the school population is Hispanic (compared to 31 percent for the state). The graph for Fresno County shows this change over time. A similar pattern is observed in Kings, Merced, Tulare and other counties.

Commuters

Good data are lacking on who the commuters are and how many they are. They come to the area searching for lower cost housing, a better lifestyle, other opportunities, but they work elsewhere. One measure is to look at the traffic patterns on roads known to carry commuters from the Central Valley towns to the San Francisco Bay Area to work. Perhaps the highway with the heaviest impact is route 205 feeding into 580 near Tracy. During 1985-88, traffic increased 42 percent on Interstate 205, while Interstate 80 increased 25 percent and all other state highways increased 15 percent.

Unfortunately we do not know much about the employment patterns of these "over-the-hillers." By anecdote they have young families, and work as school teachers, fire fighters, factory foremen, technical draftsmen, personnel managers, executive secretaries and in sales. Skilled and semi-professional workers dominate. Dual income families are typical, and in new commuter housing developments few people are around during the day. Their choice to commute is motivated largely by differential housing prices between the San Francisco Bay Area and other coastal locations and the Central Valley.

Most would like to have jobs without the commute, but Valley wages are consistently below those of the Bay Area. The difference varies from a few percentage points to as much as 25 percent or more. The gap varies by sector. For example, coastal union construction jobs pay considerably more than in the less unionized Valley, while the difference is smaller in technical jobs because that labor market is statewide.

Commuters are thought to have a relatively weaker attachment to the communities in which they live. There are a number of signs of this weak attachment:

People Pressures

- Commuters tend to be *absentee residents*. They tend to not actively participate in civic affairs and may not even vote. Thus they don't develop close attachments to the place and cannot help build community. There is strain and stress as people have to go a long ways to work and home again.
- Many of their children are *latch key*, coming home from school with no one there. Without strong parental supervision other problems are created for the community, such as drug abuse.
- Many commuters don't develop strong *loyalty to the community*. Since they don't work there, they don't feel much allegiance to the place.
- Nor do they *shop* there. Many shop instead near where they work.
- There is an occupational segregation created in a community when only service jobs are available locally to serve those who work elsewhere. This creates a *growing inequality* in incomes and results in tension between the people who commute and those who remain behind.

The commuter problem originates in the urban context where jobs are created but not housing. Estimates of a housing shortfall in the Bay Area range up to one-half million. The Bay Area Economic Forum estimates a job growth of 1.1 million in next 15 years to 2005, but a shortfall of 165,000 housing units. The Association of Bay Area Governments estimates a shortfall of about 200,000 resident employees. These projected shortfalls in Bay Area housing will necessarily be filled by commuters. This means we'll have more growth pressure in the Valley, since the housing for these workers will have to be created in the Valley, if anywhere. This will mean increased competition for land. Growth management problems will arise; growth control becomes the next big issue.

Managing Growth

In order to contain growth some suggest growth control measures, either by initiative or city ordinance. But these efforts don't control growth, they just rearrange it. They put people in other places; they politicize the issues, rather than dealing with them. They lead to increasing segregation of jobs, of housing, and of opportunities. They don't pull together the opportunities needed to plan the Valley intelligently. An intelligent urban plan is one which seeks to develop jobs, which offers opportunity and which creates its own economic momentum to ultimately contribute to the value and the development of the state. We have to make new room for new people and new opportunities. That room can be in the Valley—if we plan it intelligently.

Bill Jirsa:

Growth control for whatever reason—and there are legitimate reasons—will harm the people who need the housing the most.

Housing Price Pressures

Peggy Mensinger:



In the early or even late 1970s, none of us anticipated that Stanislaus County and particularly Modesto would be called upon to solve the Bay Area's housing failure. The Bay Area encouraged commercial and industrial use of land, and they had land for luxury housing projects, but they told their workers, sorry there is no room. The Valley is being called upon to provide land and air and water and services to people in search of affordable housing who are willing to drive incredible distances. It is quite overwhelming.

If we just leave it to short-range market forces, the tremendous demand from the Bay Area will convert farmland to houses, while the local citizenry will be priced out of the housing market. We need to balance those short-range market forces with some long-range vision by the government and its citizens.

Bill Jirsa:

In Fresno we are seeing an in-migration of people from the Bay Area and Southern California, but these people are retirees, not commuters. These people have a couple of suitcases full of cash and can actually buy almost anything that the Fresno market has to offer.

If we're going to provide housing for all the people moving to the Valley, we'll experience Bay Area prices pretty soon. In Fresno County, land prices in the areas that can be developed have gone from about \$30,000 an acre two years ago to \$60,000 an acre this year. Higher land prices dictate development of high-end housing. Unless county governments allow development in a free market without constraints, the "affordability factor" in this Valley will disappear.

Tom Hazlett:

The reason that housing is so expensive, relative to food and other commodities, is to some extent due to the power of the homeowners' cartels in these communities, exercising their veto authority over high density, low-priced housing. It's a great thing that Americans have to pay so little for food. Hopefully they'll be treated to some enlightened housing policies that make it possible to pay less for housing too.

Grantland Johnson:

We have to not only construct *affordable* houses which really are for middle and moderate income families, but we have to provide for very low income families. We have 24,000 people in Sacramento County who are paying 50 percent or more of their income for housing. The reality is that if we dedicated 10 percent of the housing stock in each new subdivision to low and moderate income folks, we would make a tremendous advance toward housing those persons who don't have the ability right now to afford decent shelter. It is clear to me that here is a case where the state must step in and leadership, for there are very few cities and very few counties that have the courage to tackle this problem.

Hugo Morales:

We need to change our values about housing. We really need to think about new ways of living, which do not involve a big house, with 12 bedrooms and a huge lawn, with one or two people living in it.

Ed Blakely:

Alternative Development Patterns

We are obliged to plan a city system that makes sense for the 21st Century rather than one which made sense in this last century. Current Valley city systems have created a sprawling set of *competing nodes* where cities and counties compete with each another in an uncontrolled way.

Another type of development is to create new communities. Planned new cities are being created to solve the housing crisis in the Bay Area. Sometimes hailed as a panacea, their value is yet unknown. They lack the stability of history; they are without a core; many are on prime land, even if built above the Valley floor.

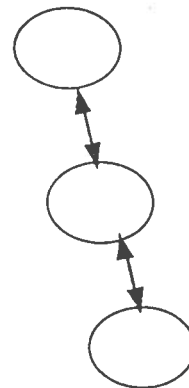
Another system we could have is strip development with growth occurring along the various roads. This is a type of sprawl, leading to an uneven and opportunistic patchwork of unattractive development.

A fourth kind of development might be pursued which incorporates known and desirable characteristics: A pattern that builds in an intelligent transportation system by controlling development along an already existing corridor. It could consolidate our already linear set of communities, pulling them together so as not to encroach upon the land. A linear development with designed integration offers potential of a better system for the Valley.

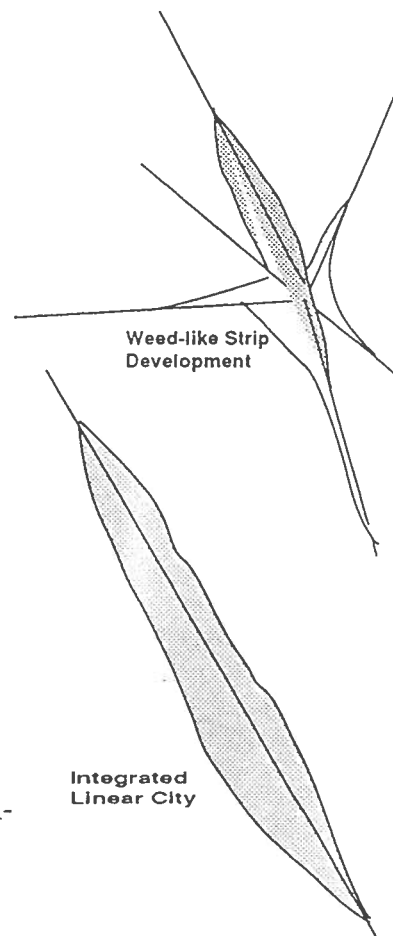
The goals of such a planned system are several:

- Attempt a better balance between housing and jobs and, using the existing transportation system, make the needed connections.
- Establish a more desirable infrastructure for the corridor; for example, plan within it greenbelts and wetlands.
- Provide an organized and stronger commercial/industrial system.
- Provide a rational transportation system, integrating highway, air and rail in a more logical way—buses and rail could link the Valley cities.

People Pressures



Competing Nodes



Central Valley: Confluence of Change

These are the kind of plans that could make a better place, a place where we all might live. But we need to think about how we would plan such a system.

Deena Sosson:

My main concern is the seemingly ready acceptance of the state's inactivity and passiveness in the whole issue of managing growth. There should be an overall state interest in defining and articulating growth management goals. The state's proper function is to provide incentives for regional planning and to provide disincentives for areas that do not participate in a regional cooperative network. The state needs to reorder its fiscal system to remove the fiscal imperative that seems to be driving so many land use decisions.

Hugo Morales:

When we talk about collaboration and plans for the future, we must bring to the table the new population—including the underclass, whether they be white, yellow, brown or black.

Options

In planning for development, there are a number of options. Some are very good; others are unsatisfactory. The first way is the *bureaucratic option* by which we use rules and regulations to try to control development. We've been doing this for over 40 years. This option is no longer viable simply because planners can no longer direct development toward desired goals. Rules and regulations won't get us where we want to be.

The second way is *collaborative options* whereby cities and counties work together. Collaboration and cooperation are very tough words, implying a willingness to work under set of agreed-upon rules without a higher power to enforce them.

The third option is the *ballot box*. This is also an option we're using now—voters determining how their community should be developed. Whether voters know anything about planning or not, they certainly know what they don't want. Thus, they are voting against things they don't want to have happen rather than voting for what they do want to have happen. The ballot box is no place to plan.

However, there are intelligent ways to plan and we need to start using more intelligent plans. Intelligence suggests that we need to have more *regional planning* solutions—solutions that bring together all the forces to design a better community across a larger space.

In the Central Valley, we have to design tomorrow today. But we can't design tomorrow merely by reaction to today. Rather, we must think about what tomorrow should be—what the critical elements for tomorrow are. This task will take careful planning with legislators, other policy makers, other professionals, and concerned citizens.