

Green belt

✓ SC Council extends greenbelt

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SANTA CRUZ — The City Council on Tuesday took action to extend Greenbelt growth-control and open-space provisions until the end of 1992.

Approved by voters as Measure O in 1979, the Greenbelt initiative was due to expire at the end of December. It has set the city's average annual growth rate at 1.4 percent or the state average, whichever is greater, and has pre-

served vacant lands surrounding the city as a greenbelt.

The council decided to extend the limit up to two years because the Oct. 17 earthquake disrupted work to incorporate key aspects of the initiative in a general plan update.

Final approval on the extension will be required at the Sept. 25 council meeting. At that time, the council also will approve a general-plan work schedule to be presented by the Planning Commission. Councilman Joe Ghio said Tuesday

he wants regular status reports from the Planning Commission.

Mayor Mardi Wormhoudt said Wednesday that the Planning Commission expects to complete the revision by the end of next September. The additional time provided by the two-year extension will be needed because the plan then must be approved by the Coastal Commission. How much time that will take, she said, is out of the city's hands.

The extension has been opposed by property owners, whose lands

are included in the Greenbelt.

The council's action Tuesday came on a 6-1 vote, with Councilman John Mahaney dissenting. He questioned the need for a two-year delay, saying most of the work on the general-plan update should have been concluded long before the earthquake. He said he feared setting a two-year delay would only insure that nothing would be done until the last minute and it would indeed take two years.