

SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL EDITORIALS

Area Development

In the past 15 years, there has been a vast program of public improvements in the Santa Cruz area which we sometimes overlook in our approach to government.

Naturally, the cost of government is a frequent and popular subject for lament, particularly at the local level.

And because in government we did not list the assets of growth and capital development, there is a tendency to forget the improvements which have been made.

As an example, let's look at some of the public investments which have been made in the Santa Cruz area in the past 15 years by various segments of government.

They constitute a multi-million dollar program, designed to make the area a better place in which to live. They represent an investment of more than \$50 million—some of which are totally paid while others are being paid by the people in the form of local bond issues.

Because they occur gradually, the magnitude of the projects may not be appreciated by the citizenry.

In order to get some idea of the public investments, we have made some of the public projects here in the post-war era.

Some of the projects are co-operative ventures between various agencies of government, federal, state and local. The largest joint project in recent years was the San Lorenzo river flood control project which was undertaken after the disastrous Christmas flood of 1955 in which the total damage was set at \$10 million.

This project cost about \$6.5 million with the federal government picking up the tab for more than 50 per cent of the cost while the state acquired the majority of the right-of-way needed in the flood protection work. The city's cost was about \$500,000.

Similar financing is providing for the construction of the Twin Lakes small craft harbor, now under way. This, too, is an army engineers development.

The federal government will pay for the construction of the jetties for the harbor and the outer harbor costs while the interior development is being financed through a state loan of about \$2 million to the Santa Cruz Port district. Harbor revenue will be used to amortize the loan. Land acquisition was handled by the state division of parks and beaches who has leased the property to the port district.

Another federal-state-city project which may also include some county participation in the future is the beach and cliff erosion project, also under the direction of the corps of engineers.

The state division of highways has spent about \$18 million or so in state highway construction in the county, principally developing an outstanding system of freeways.

So far about \$7 million has been spent on the Watsonville freeway plus \$2 million for the Morrissey by-pass, more than \$1 million for the business district by-pass, about \$3 million on the Oceanshore highway (in which Santa Cruz county participated with slightly more than \$500,000), about \$4 million on the Los Gatos expressway plus another \$1 million or so in smaller projects.

The City of Santa Cruz recently completed a \$5.5 million water improvement program including the construction of Newell Creek dam and reservoir. The city has also expended about \$500,000 in improvements to the city sewer system.

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Other city developments include the creation of Harvey West municipal park, largely due to the contributions of Harvey West and the community project of the Junior Chamber of Commerce in providing funds for the swimming pool.

The county has made major improvements at the county hospital plus the health center.

School improvements run more than \$12 million, including the \$6.6 million Cabrillo college campus to be opened this fall along with the \$2 million Soquel high school.

The San Lorenzo valley built a fine high school plant as well as elementary schools. New schools have been constructed at Capitola, in Live Oak and Aptos, in Bonny Doon and Happy Valley with improvements at Scotts Valley and other elementary school districts. The city schools built Branciforte junior high, Bay View and Westlake elementaries as well as bringing Santa Cruz high school and Branciforte elementary up to Field Act standards.

Sanitation systems have been built from Twin Lakes and Live Oak to Aptos in the mid county area in multi-million dollar improvements.

It's a rather impressive record.