

# Opinion

Sentinel Editorial

## Growth Management

Growth management is much in the news these days, especially in Santa Cruz County where the subject is almost in constant conversation.

Actually the term is the source of considerable difference of opinion. If you are a "no growth" advocate, growth management becomes a tool for uncontrolled development.

If you prefer growth, growth management becomes the approach used by folks who want to prohibit any growth.

From a practical standpoint, one might conclude that growth management will provide for some type of controlled growth under reasonable circumstances.

Unfortunately, it is unlikely that a state of reason will become dominant in the controversy.

The norm in the county is that if you propose a project, you become an immediate "real estate speculator" while if you oppose a project, you are against everything and anything.

While we have our doubts if there is a place somewhere in between which might become acceptable to a majority of the people, one could hope that a more reasonable approach might be in the offing.

Correctly handled, there is nothing wrong with growth management even though in the best of circumstances the goal might test the ability of man.

The real key is the capability of management plus the opportunity to do something in the best interest of all the people.

For all practical purposes there have been efforts to control growth in Santa Cruz County without a great deal of success.

In recent years the efforts have been more negative than positive.

Water is a fairly good example. We have not been able to improve our water facilities sufficiently to maintain an adequate reserve.

The current drought reflects the importance of an improved system of water storage so that we will be able to sustain periods of drought.

The area has experienced marked improvements in the water distribution system, especially in the Mid County area where the Soquel Creek County Water District has made major improvements.

Unfortunately, we still need to enhance the program with a superior system of interties between existing districts, but most of all we need to provide facilities to store water from the wet years to serve the people during the dry years.

Local government entities have not been able to reach a spirit of co-operation which would make some essential services available to more people.

Sanitation, for example, is an area where a great deal more co-operation is imperative if we are to adequately serve the citizenry.

In some instances we have failed to realize the needs of the people who are already here than worrying about the people who may come here in the future.

And during the past few years there has been some growth in area without adequate facilities to serve the people, a problem that may well become even more difficult in the years ahead.

It could well be appropriate if we could devote more attention to good management so that we are better prepared to meet the demands of good government.

Good management could become the key to resolve both our differences and our problems in the years ahead.