

PCA Reveals Plans For Big Expansion

By Don Righetti
Sentinel Staff Writer

Plans for the largest single expenditure of funds in the history of Santa Cruz county were unveiled at a press conference this morning as Pacific Cement and Aggregates company outlined plans for a mammoth expansion and improvement project on its Davenport facilities.

While the company refused to make a definite cost estimate of the project, they did say the improvements would cost 5 to 10 times the original construction of the Davenport plant (\$3 million). On this basis, the new investment would be between \$15 and \$30 million with forecasts the total expansion cost would be above the latter figure during the five-year period.

Don Fultz, Chamber of Commerce manager, pointed out that PCA's project would expand the local tax base substantially. "This investment will provide local government agencies with revenue equivalent to three or four new industrial plants, without the corresponding demand or calls for municipal service," he said.

The company already is the highest taxpayer in the county, outside of public utilities.

But the project won't mean any more local jobs, except during the construction period. Automation is a cornerstone of the project, and it is only through vast expansion of the plant's capacity that the employment level won't be lowered.

The plant's current capacity of three million barrels of cement a year will be increased by approximately 50 per cent.

Another feature of the project will be the virtual elimination of dust. A blanket of dust has covered the Davenport area almost since the plant was first constructed in 1906, but electrostatic precipitators, some of which are already in operation, will cut the dust output to one-half of one per cent of the normal volume.

Basically, the program calls for extensive modernization and landscaping to hide the homelier aspects of the operation from public view. Through automation, the physical plant will actually be smaller than the existing one.

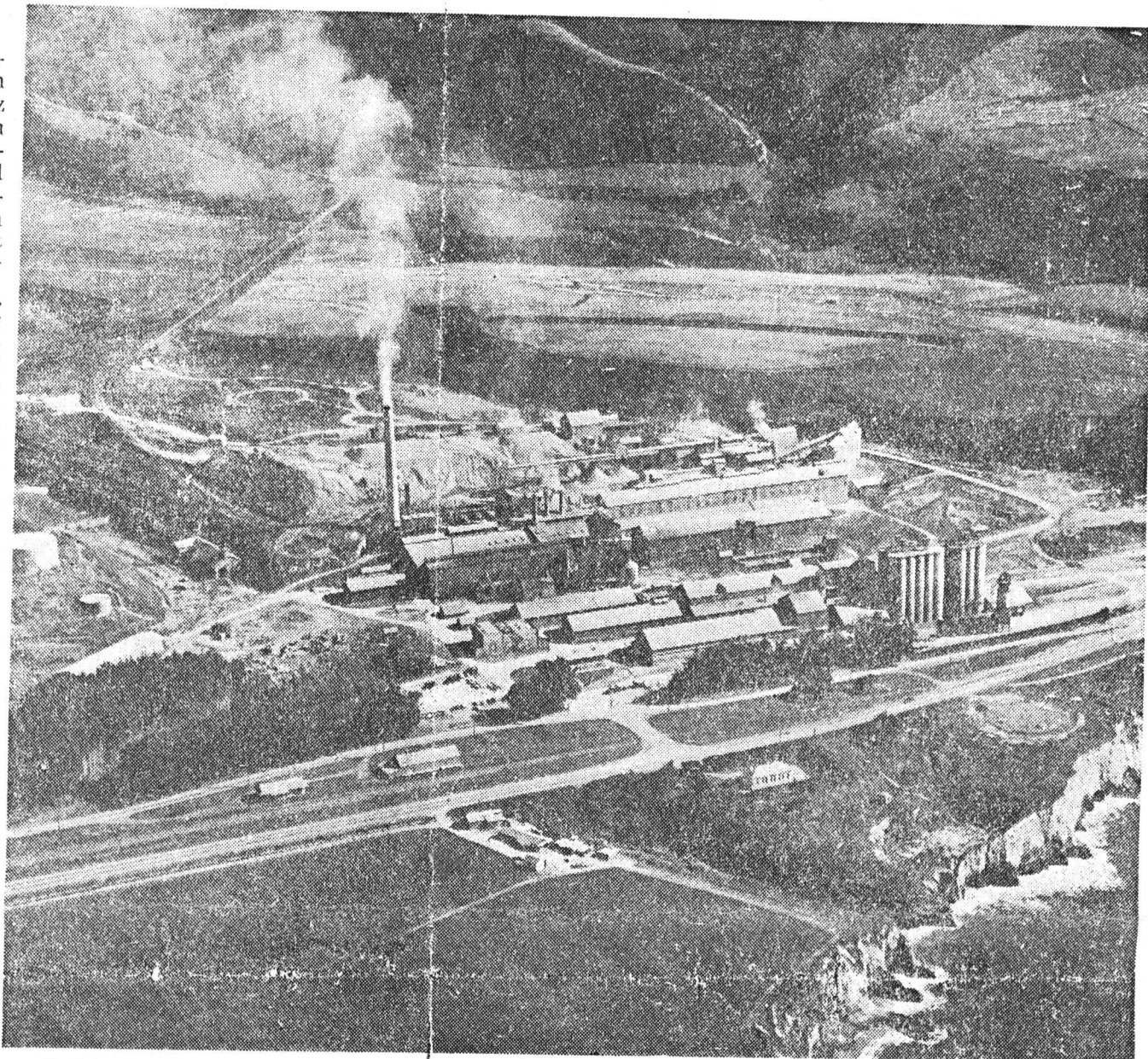
One of the largest single expenditures will be \$6 million for a three-mile covered conveyor belt to bring limestone from the company's Bonny Doon quarry to the plant. The conveyor, too, will be dust free and will be landscaped to conceal it from public view.

The company applied yesterday to the county board of zoning adjustment for an amendment to a use permit it secured in 1964. The amendment covers expansion of the firm's quarry area, establishment of a shale quarry and realignment of a mile of Bonny Doon road. The realignment would remove the quarry area from public view from the road and would also provide greater quarry area.

The zoning board is expected to act on the application on April 14. After granting of amended permit, it is anticipated that engineering of the project will require some 12 to 18 months. Construction bids will be let immediately after engineering is completed, company officials said. The project is slated for completion in 1972.

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Pacific Cement and Aggre-



Pacific Cement and Aggregates' Davenport plant will undergo almost total change in a multi-million-dollar modernization program disclosed yesterday by company officials. The famous 235-foot smokestack at center left will cease to function, although it will remain as a navigation guide. The old

company hospital at center right below Highway 1 will be turned into a museum. An extensive landscaping program will hide most of the operation from public view. Some of the old buildings may be left standing as a state historical monument. (See other pictures on Page 4.)

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Pacific Cement and Aggregates acquired the company in 1956. The latter firm became a division of Lone Star Cement corporation in 1965.

The Davenport plant has played an historic role in the building of northern California. It supplied materials for construction of Golden Gate Bridge, the Bay Bridges, Panama Canal and Grace Cathedral in San Francisco.

PCA, one of California's pioneer cement producers, owns and operates many properties throughout northern California and Hawaii, including 23 batch plants, 14 rock, sand and gravel plants and four asphaltic concrete plants in addition to an 8000-acre tree farm in Santa Cruz county.