



HUGHSON SEEKS POLICY TO MANAGE ITS GROWTH - Modesto Bee, The (CA) - April 20, 1995 - page 4

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Bill Naron, outgoing chairman of the **Hughson** Planning Commission, wants a growth management **policy** so the city isn't flooded with hundreds of new houses all at once.

**Hughson** remains at the edge of growth. Water availability is the main problem for development, Naron said. Some 750 approved homesites can be built when the market and other conditions are ready, he said.

"What if the market turns around tomorrow," Naron said, "and 400 to 500 homes are built? The schools already are impacted. I'd like to see something in place so people here can have quality of life.

"I think there should be some kind of orderly growth so the city doesn't get flooded."

Still, city officials don't expect to see a growth flood anytime soon. Since 1989, five subdivisions with more than 600 lots have been ready to build.

By 1988, **Hughson** had completed its new sewage treatment plant after a 15-year growth moratorium. Then the falling groundwater table created another stumbling block.

City officials resolved at the time not to go into debt for new water wells beyond the two wells now supplying the city's water system. They said private development would have to pay for the new wells.

"We didn't have the funds to do it and didn't want to bond for it," said Ron Bremer, director of public works. "So one of the reasons our growth is a little slow is that developers don't want to pay for it (water wells) alone."

**Hughson's** newest subdivision plan, Santa Fe Estates, with 116 lots, requires owner-developer George Crabtree to provide a well and connect it to the city's system.

City Planner Lou Thanas said California cities are using at least three methods to manage growth.

\* A growth management ordinance can control the number of annual building permits, although the state says this can result in discrimination against low-income housing.

\* Agreements with a developer can establish a specific number of building permits the city will issue to the developer each year.

\* A general plan amendment can set a growth rate and formulas.

**Hughson's** population is approximately 3,500; the general plan calls for a city of 8,000 people by the year 2020.

Planning commissioners will take a look at growth management during a 7 p.m. public meeting today at City Hall, 7018 Pine St.

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