

## Californian

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**Section:** Page 1

**Page:** 1A

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The Salinas Californian

An area of farmland skirting the western edge of Salinas is slated for a 600-home development that would triple the number of homes in the **Boronda community**.

"This is the biggest property that is ever going to be built in **Boronda**," said Paul Schiveley, one of 14 members on a citizens advisory committee for the development.

According to Census figures, **Boronda** had 332 housing units in 2000.

Plans call for homes on what are now agricultural fields west of where Rossi Street and North Davis Road meet.

The development, which has yet to be named, would encompass 200 acres, half of which is developable. The land is divided among four owners, who are looking to sell their property to a developer, said Jim Cook, program manager for the county's Housing and Redevelopment Agency.

The agency and the **Boronda** Redevelopment Project Citizens Advisory Committee have spent nearly two years creating the development plan, which is nearly complete, Cook said.

On Dec. 14 the committee will present the plan to the Monterey County Board of Supervisors. If it's approved, the environmental-impact-report process will begin, Cook said.

Because the area is outside Salinas' city limits and **Boronda** residents voted not to annex to the city several years ago, the county governs the area.

The citizens committee worries that the bucolic character of **Boronda** will be compromised by the development, Schiveley said.

Now, **Boronda's** population of about 1,300 is sandwiched between spinach fields and big-box stores in the Westridge Shopping Center. Sheep and other barnyard animals are fenced up beside homes.

"We have rural living with big city shopping," Schiveley said Friday.

See **BORONDA**, Page 3A

**Boronda** residents plan 600 homes

**BORONDA/** Plan is to redirect traffic from Rossi Street

From Page 1A

Looking out to the bare acreage fresh with tractor tracks, Schiveley said, "It's one of the last areas of town that is open."

Rossi Street would be extended

If the area is developed, Rossi Street will be extended to **Boronda** Road on what is now a dirt road for tractors.

"We've been waiting for years to open that up," Schiveley said, referring to Rossi Street.

Calle del Adobe is the main point for traffic to enter **Boronda**, which forces industrial traffic from the Westridge Shopping Center through the **community**, Shiveley said.

With Rossi Street extended, the traffic would be redirected through the development, he said.

Extending the road also would relieve traffic congestion on North Davis Road and West Laurel Drive, Cook said.

At the same time, Schiveley and other **Boronda** residents are concerned about the traffic that 600 new homes would create.

"We don't want **Boronda** Road to become a thoroughfare to Westridge Shopping Center," he said.

Mixed-income housing offered

The development is envisioned to include mixed-income housing with homes affordable to very-low, moderate- and upper-income brackets, Cook said.

"A large segment of the **Boronda community** will be able to afford (the houses)," Cook said, referring to people with low and moderate incomes.

Because **Boronda** is considered a redevelopment area, a portion of the homeowners' property taxes will go to improving the **community's** infrastructure.

Schiveley said there are no sidewalks or crosswalks in **Boronda**, and the lack creates traffic safety concerns.

Construction is not expected to begin for at least another year, if not two, Cook said.

The committee's plan also features a park that would have soccer fields and walking trails, he said.

Because the committee had concerns about putting homes near the Union Pacific railroad tracks, a row of commercial buildings has been proposed as a sound barrier for residents.

The Salinas City Elementary School District is building two schools just north of the development's site on Davis Road.

The **Boronda** project is part of two different **community** development plans being directed by the county's redevelopment agency. The other is in Castroville.

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SCOTT MACDONALD/THE SALINAS CALIFORNIAN

Paul Schiveley, a member of the **Boronda** Redevelopment Project Citizens Advisory Committee, stands on a field Friday near South **Boronda** Road and West Market Street, just outside of Salinas.

#### WHAT'S NEXT

On Dec. 14, the **Boronda** Redevelopment Project Citizens Advisory Committee will present a plan to build more than 600 homes in the area to the Monterey County Board of Supervisors.