

Travel Characteristics

As the data in the first section of this report demonstrate, average daily traffic volumes have generally increased countywide. Regional modeling completed by AMBAG predicts more of the same. The increase in vehicle miles traveled is expected to be evenly distributed between peak hours (AM-morning, and PM-evening) and off-peak hours, as shown in **Figure 10**, below. The projected increase in peak hour demand will result in longer peak period congestion on highways and the local road system.

Figure 10: Projected Vehicle Miles of Travel for Santa Cruz County

	AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour	Off-Peak	Total
2000	539,201	563,899	4,956,419	6,059,519
2030	686,896	720,650	6,356,532	7,764,079
% change	27.4%	27.8%	28.2%	28.1%

Source: Table III-10 of the draft 2005 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (prepared by AMBAG on March, 2005)

Commute Patterns

Despite the extent and variety of work opportunities available within Santa Cruz County, a substantial number of county residents have historically commuted to other counties to take advantage of generally higher-paying jobs or opportunities unavailable locally. It is estimated that, in the year 2000, more than 25,000 workers drove to jobs in counties north of Santa Cruz County on a daily basis. Santa Cruz County residents also commute to Monterey County for job opportunities on the Monterey peninsula and in Moss Landing and Salinas. More than 13,000 people commuted into Santa Cruz County each day in the year 2000. The number of commuters heading outside of Santa Cruz County is expected to increase between the years 2000 and 2020.

Figure 11 below shows that total out-commuting from Santa Cruz County rose by 30.4% from 1990 to 2000, while in-commuting rose only 9.7%. The complete commute pattern data table in **Appendix E** shows that even commuting between Santa Cruz and Monterey counties, an exchange that has historically favored Monterey, followed this trend. In 1990, nearly twice as many Monterey County residents (6,821) commuted to work in Santa Cruz as Santa Cruz County residents to Monterey County (3,650), but by 2000, this gap was narrowed substantially as Santa Cruz-Monterey commuting rose 41.5% and Monterey-Santa Cruz commuting rose only 11.4%.

Figure 11: Santa Cruz County Commute Patterns

<i>County of Residence</i>	<i>County of Work</i>	<i>Total Commuters 1980</i>	<i>Total Commuters 1990</i>	<i>Total Commuters 2000</i>	<i>% Change 1990-2000</i>	<i>Absolute Change 1990-2000</i>
Santa Cruz	Santa Cruz	65,000	89,628	93,084	3.9%	3,456
Other counties	Santa Cruz	3,669	11,899	13,053	9.7%	1,154
Santa Cruz	Other counties	16,628	24,568	32,029	30.4%	7,461

Source: AMBAG