CITY OF SOLEDAD
JOINT CITY COUNCIL/SUCCESSOR AGENCY/HOUSING AUTHORITY AND SUCCESSOR HOUSING AGENCY SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2025

CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS

6:00 PM

https://cityofsoledad.zoom.us/j/81794476748
Or Call:
1-669-900-6833 and use Meeting ID: 817 9447 6748

Welcome to your City of Soledad City Council/Successor Agency Meeting. Your City Councilmembers/Agencymembers are:

Mayor Anna Velazquez
Mayor Pro Tem Fernando Cabrera
Councilmember Fernando Ansaldo-Sanchez
Councilmember Evarista Banuelos
Councilmember Ben Caldera

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. ADDITIONS/MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA

Items of business may be added to the agenda upon a motion adopted by a minimum 2/3 vote finding that there is a need to take immediate action and that the need for action came to the attention of the City subsequent to the agenda being posted. Items may be deleted from the agenda upon request of staff or upon action of the Council.

V. PUBLC COMMENT

At this time any member of the public may address the City Council on items not appearing on the agenda and items of interest to the public that are within the jurisdiction of the Council. A public comment card should be filled out completely to ensure the speaker is called upon to give comment. Public comments are generally limited to three (3) minutes; the mayor may further limit the time for public comments depending on the agenda schedule. Please be brief and to the point.

No action or discussion shall be taken on an item not appearing on the agenda.

VI. BUSINESS

1. Status Report on the 2025 Siempre Soledad General Plan Update and Request for Direction on the Draft Land Use and Circulation Maps

Attachments:
Staff Report
Exhibit A- 2045 Land Use and Circulation Map
Vision and Guiding Principles
Planning Commission DRAFT Minutes for 6.12.25
Land Use and Circulation Map Presentation

COUNCIL ACTION: _____

VII. ADJOURNMENT

In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact Deputy City Clerk Darlene Noriega at (831) 223-5014. Notification of at least 48hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (RCRF 35.102-35.104).

Any writing or documents provided to a majority of the City Council regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at City Hall located at 248 Main Street, Soledad, California during normal business hours.

En caso que usted necesite ayuda en leer o en entender este aviso de Junta Publica, usted puede ponerse en contacto con la oficina del Edificio Municipal en 248 Calle Main o llamar al número (831) 223-5014, y el aviso será traducido para usted.

Cualquier escrito o documento proporcionado a la mayoría del Concejo Municipal con respecto a cualquier asunto en esta agenda se pondrá a disposición para inspección pública en el Ayuntamiento ubicado en 248 Main Street, Soledad, California durante el horario laboral.

Advanced submittal of public comments via email are due by 2:00 P.M. on the day of the scheduled meeting to the Deputy City Clerk at darlene.noriega@cityofsoledad.com Comments are limited to 250 words or less and effort will be made to read your comment into the record, but some comments may not be read due to time limitations. The City Clerk will read email comments, provided that the reading shall not exceed three (3) minutes. The email comments submitted shall become part of the record.

La entrega anticipada de comentarios públicos por correo electrónico debe presentarse antes de las 2:00 p.m. del día de la reunión programada a la Secretaria Municipal al email darlene.noriega@cityofsoledad.com. Los comentarios están limitados a 250 palabras o menos y se hará un esfuerzo para leer su comentario en el registro, pero es posible que algunos comentarios no se lean debido a limitaciones de tiempo. La Secretaria Municipal leerá los comentarios del correo electrónico, siempre que la lectura no exceda los tres (3) minutos. Los comentarios enviados por correo electrónico pasarán a formar parte del registro.
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CERTIFICATION

I, Megan Hunter, City Clerk of the City of Soledad, do hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing Joint City Council/Successor Agency Special Meeting Agenda was posted at City Hall by Monday, June 23, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

Megan Hunter, City Clerk/Manager 06/23/2025

CITY OF SOLEDAD
STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: **Status Report on the 2025 Siempre Soledad General Plan Update and Request for Direction on the Draft Land Use and Circulation Maps**

TO: **Honorable Mayor Velasquez and City Council**

FROM: **Beatriz Trujillo, Community and Economic Development Director, and Ariana Mora, Senior Planner**

THROUGH: **Megan Hunter, City Manager**

MEETING DATE: **June 24, 2025**

Recommendation

It is recommended that the City Council, by minute motion, (1) accept the General Plan Update Land Use and Circulation Maps as proposed by City Staff (including any changes to the maps recommended today by the City Council), and (2) authorize Staff to proceed with preparation of the environmental documentation for the General Plan Update in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

Executive Summary

The City of Soledad and Placeworks Inc. is currently in the process of updating its General Plan, known as "2045 Siempre Soledad." The City has produced a draft land use and circulation map which are essential components of a General Plan because they serve as the spatial framework for a City's long-term vision and development strategy. At the June 12, 2025, regular Planning Commission meeting, the Soledad Planning Commission recommended that both maps be presented to the City Council for acceptance to support the preparation of the full draft 2045 General Plan and associated environmental documents. As part of its recommendation, the Commission also provided specific direction to staff, including the need to ensure flexibility between the two maps, to prioritize major access points into and out of the City, to create land use designations to allow future adaptability, and to continue robust community engagement through the next phase of the Siempre Soledad 2045 process. In response to this direction, City staff is now presenting the draft 2045 Land Use and Circulation Maps to the City Council for review and consideration of acceptance via minute motion.

Background

California state law requires each city and county to adopt a general plan "for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning" (Gov. Code § 65300). Most cities update their General Plans approximately every 15 to 20 years to guide long-term growth and development.

The City of Soledad is currently updating its 2005 General Plan through a comprehensive effort titled 2045 Siempre Soledad, with completion anticipated by early 2026. The City has contracted with PlaceWorks to assist in this effort, which has resulted in the development of an Existing Conditions and Briefing Book, adoption of the Vision and Guiding Principles, adoption of the 2023–2031 Housing Element, and approval of Draft Land Use Alternatives. These steps have been informed by community input, as well as direction from the Steering Committee, Planning Commission, and City Council.

Review & Analysis

The City has reached a key milestone in the 2045 General Plan Update: the preparation of the Draft Land Use Map and Circulation Map. These maps are grounded in both community input and technical analysis, and they play a critical role in shaping Soledad's future. They identify where key land uses, such as residential, commercial, industrial, and parks, should be located, while also guiding long-term transportation improvements. Once accepted by the City Council, these maps will provide the foundation for developing the full Draft General Plan and its accompanying Environmental Impact Report ("EIR"). Together, they will help translate the community's vision into a practical and coordinated strategy for future growth, conservation, infrastructure investment, and resilience.

Development of Land Use Alternatives and Their Importance
The City of Soledad began its 2045 General Plan Update in 2023, launching a comprehensive initiative to guide the City's long-term growth, infrastructure planning, and community development. Since the project's inception, City staff have collected extensive data and community feedback and have presented key milestones to the Planning Commission ("Commission") and City Council ("Council") for review and input. In April 2024, the Commission recommended approval of the General Plan Vision and Guiding Principles. These principles, which outline the City's long-term priorities and values, were adopted by the City Council in May 2024. They served as the foundation for the preparation of Land Use Alternatives, which were further refined through community workshops and engagement activities held between July and October 2024.

Land Use Alternatives are conceptual growth scenarios that explore how Soledad could develop over the next 20 years. They help assess the impacts of different land use patterns and guide policy direction related to:

- Housing and neighborhood development
- Economic growth and job creation
- Conservation of natural and agricultural lands
- Transportation systems and connectivity
- Environmental sustainability and public services

As a core component of the EIR, required by the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), these alternatives allow the City to compare and evaluate the trade-offs of various land use strategies. Based on community input and technical analysis, City staff and planning consultant PlaceWorks developed two preliminary land use alternatives:

Alternative 1: Downtown-Focused Growth
- Emphasized reinvestment in the Downtown Area
- Included small-scale multi-family housing and mixed-use development
- Proposed improvements to downtown gateways and public streets
- Focused on enhancing both vehicle and pedestrian circulation downtown

Alternative 2: Regional Hub Expansion

- Positioned Soledad as a regional commercial and employment center
- Included big-box retail and large commercial shopping centers
- Provided for new single-family neighborhoods and neighborhood-serving retail
- Included light industrial uses and improved regional transportation access

Land use alternatives play a crucial role in the planning process, providing the community and decision-makers with an opportunity to evaluate the benefits and impacts of each scenario. During public workshops and meetings, community members expressed strong support for a combined approach that incorporates elements from both alternatives. Key themes from the feedback included:

- Expanding both big-box and neighborhood retail opportunities
- Improving transportation safety and connectivity—especially near schools, along major roads such as West Street, and by extending 8th Street to Los Coches Road
- Offering a wider range of housing types to meet local needs
- Revitalizing Downtown with more restaurants, shops, and entertainment options

In response, staff and PlaceWorks developed a Land Use and Circulation Map that combines key elements from both Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. This integrated approach reflects the community's priorities and serves as the foundation for the 2045 General Plan, which is now being presented to the City Council for acceptance.

Community Engagement for the 2045 Land Use and Circulation Maps

Staff generated the first draft of the land use and circulation map for review on February 11, 2025 to the Soledad General Plan Steering Committee, which includes representatives from local agencies and organizations such as the Soledad Unified School District, TAMC, Soledad Healthcare District, Cemetery District, and community members. When the draft Land Use and Circulation Maps were presented to the Steering Committee, several concerns were raised. The maps were found to be difficult to interpret for the general public, and the land use categories were not clearly understood. In response, staff created a simplified handout explaining the land use designations, now included as Exhibit A. The Steering Committee also recommended that the Circulation Map prioritize pedestrian safety around schools, address traffic issues during peak hours, and directed staff to look into why multiple roundabouts were proposed in the circulation map.

Additional public input was gathered during a Traffic and Safety Workshop held by the Public Works Department on May 29, 2025. Community members reiterated the importance of traffic safety near schools and improvements to the Downtown area. There was also discussion about the proposed annexation of the Miramonte Specific Plan Area ("MSP"), which will bring new development and necessitate traffic improvements, especially at the City's northern entrance. These upcoming changes were considered in shaping the draft Circulation Map and were already contemplated when the City Council approved the Miramonte Specific Plan.

2045 Land Use Map

The Draft Land Use Map reflects a thoughtful analysis of current conditions, community input, and long-term planning goals. As part of this effort, City staff evaluated existing land uses, identified vacant and underutilized sites for potential infill development, and proposed strategic expansions of both neighborhood-serving and regional commercial areas.

A new Downtown land use designation is proposed to allow a broader mix of housing and commercial

uses that are compatible with a vibrant, walkable downtown. Additionally, to improve clarity, Public Facility and Parks/Open Space designations were separated into distinct categories. Also, new land use categories, such as Southern Gateway and Northern Gateway, were introduced to reflect areas targeted for future economic development and regional commercial opportunities. These updates are designed to guide growth in a way that maximizes the use of existing land resources, supports the community's vision into a clear development framework, with a focus on expanding housing supply to meet state requirements and supporting economic vitality, particularly in the Downtown core and in areas at the north and south ends of Soledad, where big-box retail and commercial centers are envisioned.

2045 Circulation Map

The Draft Circulation Map outlines key transportation enhancements designed to improve mobility and access for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and those without access to a vehicle. The map establishes baseline standards that the City should consider when planning future circulation-related improvements, ensuring consistency and connectivity across all modes of travel. Importantly, the Circulation Map is aligned with the proposed Land Use Map to ensure that the transportation network supports both existing development projects and future growth. By identifying key roadway extensions and multimodal improvements, the map aims to improve traffic flow, enhance safety, and support broader sustainability goals, particularly by reducing vehicle dependence in areas such as Downtown Soledad. The proposed Circulation Map introduces several key improvements:

- Enhanced bike and pedestrian access, with a focus on improving east-west connections and providing safer, more active routes through the Downtown underpass and toward the southern areas of Soledad.
- A new railroad crossing at Los Coches Road, supporting future projects such as the Pinnacles Parkway Trail and future Complete Streets improvements.
- Installation of new traffic signals at key intersections to improve traffic management and safety - specifically around schools.
- Roundabouts and intersection upgrades to enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety while improving traffic flow.
- Generalized circulation labels to provide flexibility in determining the most appropriate transportation improvements for specific areas throughout the city.

The proposed circulation enhancements are essential to creating a safe, connected, and resilient transportation system that supports Soledad's long-term goals for growth, equity, and sustainability. A well-planned circulation network not only facilitates efficient travel for vehicles but also ensures that walking, biking, and transit are viable and attractive options for residents and visitors. These improvements aim to reduce traffic congestion, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and support healthier, more active lifestyles, while also reinforcing vision and guiding principles previously adopted for the 2045 Siempre Soledad General Plan Update.

Planning Commission Review of Draft Land Use and Circulation Maps

During a regular Planning Commission meeting, the Draft Land Use and Circulation Maps were presented for review and recommendation to the City Council for acceptance. Commissioners raised several important points, particularly the need for expanded public outreach to inform and engage the community more effectively. In response, staff will collaborate with the Community Engagement team to enhance outreach efforts across multiple platforms during the next phase of the 2045 Siempre Soledad General Plan process. The Commission emphasized that this phase should focus on raising awareness about upcoming programs and policies, while maintaining a transparent and inclusive planning process.

A major area of discussion between Staff and the Commission focused on the Circulation Map, specifically the lack of flexible transportation connections within the Miramonte Specific Plan (MSP) area, particularly between West Street, Orchard Lane, and San Vicente Road. Commissioners directed staff to explore the feasibility of adding an alternative roadway to improve local circulation. Although the MSP annexation is conditionally approved pending completion of the agriculture conservation easement, it was noted that the developer will be responsible for the traffic improvements in the Environmental Impact Report's (EIR) Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program to address circulation impacts from future development. Some key improvements, such as roundabouts in the northern part of Soledad, have already been incorporated into the Circulation Map as a result of the MSP. The fair share responsibility for offsite impacts is currently being analyzed and will be included in a future Development Agreement to be presented to the Planning Commission and City Council for review at a later date.

The Commission also highlighted the need to improve and prioritize entry and exit routes in and out of Soledad to strengthen regional connectivity and emergency preparedness. While specific new ramps or access points are not yet reflected on the Draft Circulation Map, this remains a City priority. Staff continues to pursue funding and coordinate with outside agencies to support this effort. As part of the 2045 General Plan, staff will incorporate related policies and programs aimed at planning for an additional entrance or exit to improve mobility and ensure reliable evacuation routes during emergencies. However, the high costs of building an additional ramp, the challenges of securing prime farmland for this purpose, and the lack of support from CALTRANS may make this improvement infeasible in the future. Therefore, the Draft Circulation Map combined with General Plan Update policies and programs (currently in development) will balance the community's desires and what is realistically achievable.

Lastly, regarding the Draft Land Use Map, the Commission urged staff to maintain flexibility in land use designations and ensure consistency with the Circulation Map. Commissioners supported strategies to maximize available land and encouraged creative approaches to land use planning that support Soledad's housing goals and economic development opportunities for the benefit of the broader community.

Conclusion and Recommendation
In conclusion, the draft Land Use and Circulation Maps have been developed over nearly two years through technical analysis and community engagement. These maps outline the expected future development patterns and are crucial for the upcoming CEQA analysis, as well as for long-term infrastructure planning related to transportation. Upon Council approval, staff and PlaceWorks will prepare the full Draft 2045 General Plan and the necessary environmental documentation according to State CEQA requirements. The finalized General Plan Update, including the maps, will be presented to the Planning Commission for recommendation and later to the City Council for adoption.

Staff recommends that the Council review the proposed maps, offer modifications, and accept the recommendation from the Planning Commission to proceed with the preparation of the final 2045 General Plan Land Use and Circulation Map and the preparation of the environmental documentation for the General Plan Update under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Financial Considerations

The City entered into a contract with PlaceWorks for an amount not to exceed $1,153,201 to prepare the 2023–2031 Housing Element and the 2045 General Plan Update for Soledad. A portion of this cost was offset by regional planning grants, including LEAP and REAP 1.0. In December 2024, the City Council

approved a scope amendment for $79,900 to include Housing Element implementation efforts, funded through a REAP 2.0 grant awarded by AMBAG. This brought the total contract amount to $1,233,101. At this time, no additional amendments are anticipated, and the final 2045 General Plan is expected to be certified by January 2026.

Alternatives

- Accept the Land Use and Circulation Maps and proceed with the environmental documentation as recommended.
- Modify the Land Use and Circulation Maps.
- Provide other direction to Staff.

Planning/CEQA

The General Plan Update will undergo an environmental review in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Accepting the Land Use and Circulation Maps as part of the drafting process for the General Plan does not qualify as a project under CEQA Section 15378. Adopting the Land Use and Circulation Map is a crucial step in defining the scope of the General Plan Update needed to carry out the required environmental review and ensure compliance with CEQA. By clearly identifying land use patterns and transportation networks, the City can evaluate and recommend mitigations for potential impacts related to traffic, water, sewer, schools, and other public services as part of this environmental review process.

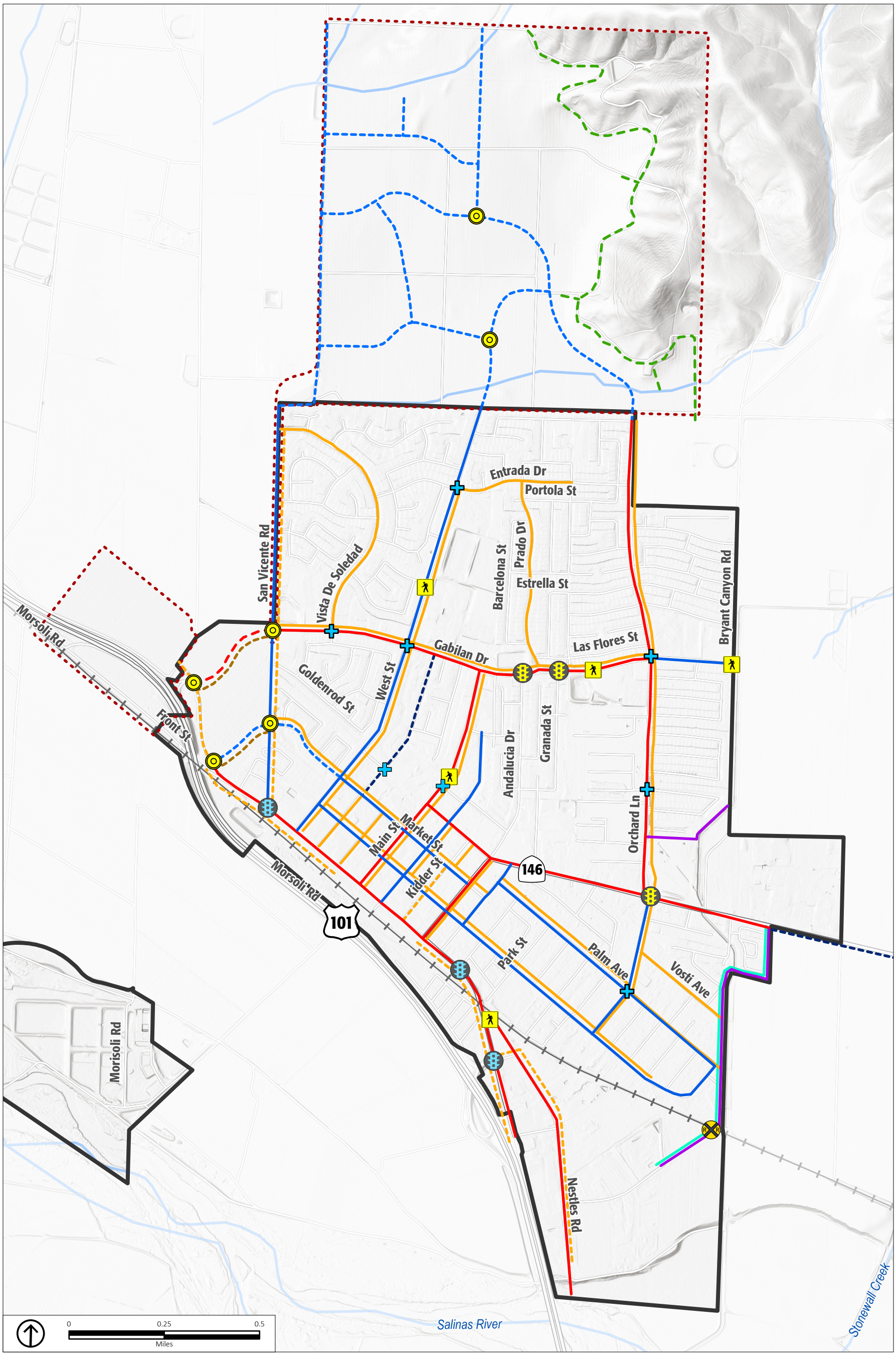
Public Notice Requirements

None required at this time.

Attachment(s):
Exhibit A- 2045 Land Use and Circulation Map
Vision and Guiding Principles
Planning Commission DRAFT Minutes for 6.12.25
Land Use and Circulation Map Presentation

EXHIBIT A

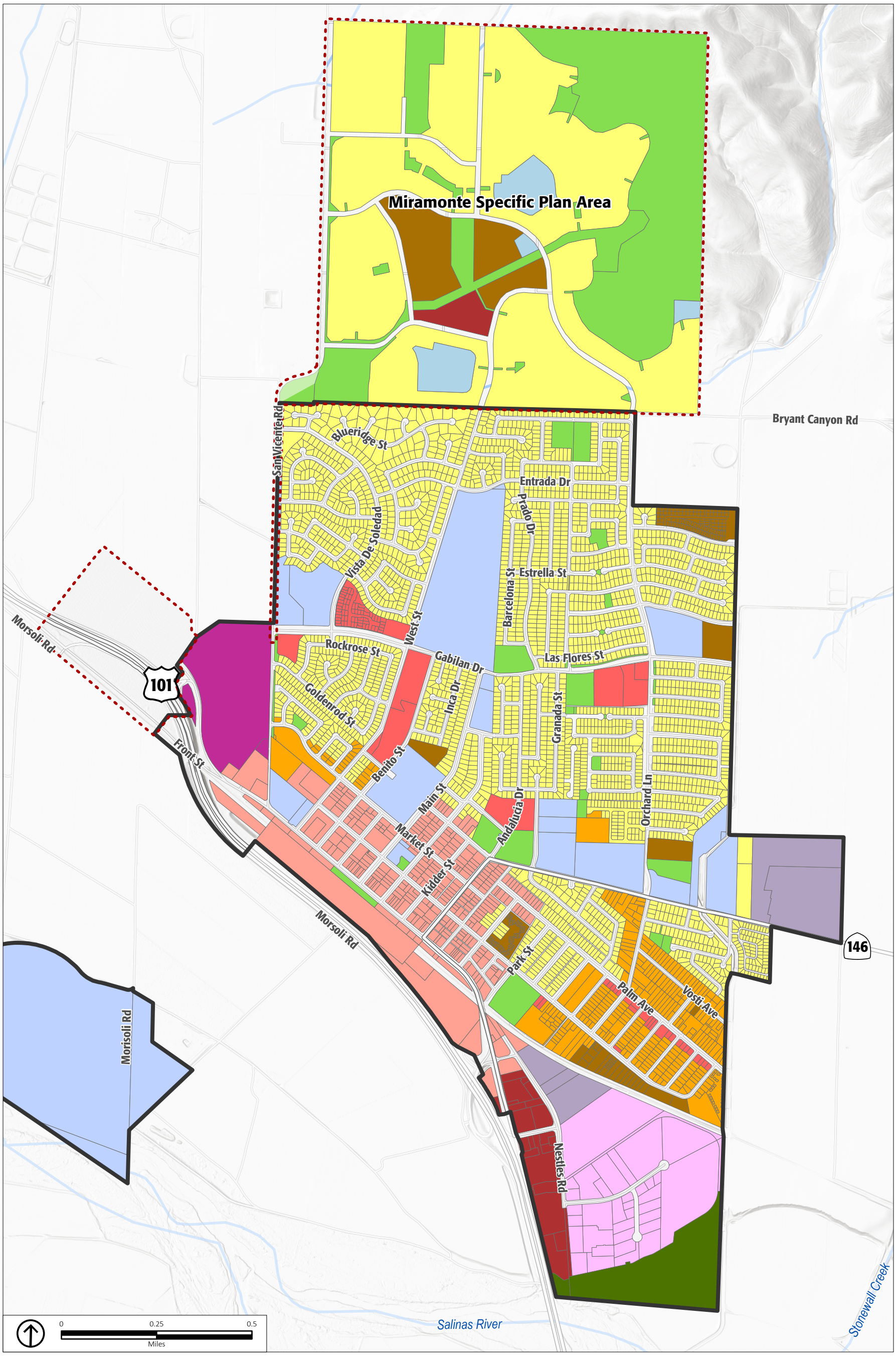
CITY OF SOLEDAD



- Sphere of Influence
- City Limits
- Railroad
- Proposed Roundabout
- Proposed Intersection Improvements
- Proposed Pedestrian Improvements
- Proposed Traffic Signal Improvements
- Future Traffic Signal
- Railroad Crossing
- Future Multi-Use Path
- Existing Bike Lane - Class II
- Proposed Bike Lane - Class II
- Class II Extension Along Future Roads
- Proposed Bike Route - Class III
- Unpaved Trail
- Existing Collector
- Existing Arterial
- Future Collector
- Future Arterial
- Future Complete Street (Pinnacles Parkway)

Source: AMBAG, 2022; ESRI, 2024; Kimley-Horn, 2025; PlaceWorks, 2025

Soledad General Plan 2045
Draft Circulation Map



Soledad General Plan 2045 Draft Land Use Map

Source: AMBAG, 2022; ESRI, 2024; City of Soledad, 2024; PlaceWorks, 2024

PLANNING COMMISSION-RECOMMENDED NEW SOLEDAD LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Siempre Soledad
General Plan 2045

PLANNING COMMISSION-RECOMMENDED LAND USE DESIGNATION	LAND USE DESIGNATION DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE IMAGES
Traditional Neighborhood (formerly Single Family Residential)	These established neighborhoods include primarily detached single-family homes, accessory dwelling units, and small multifamily structures. Supporting uses include schools, neighborhood-serving parks, community centers, and places of worship.	 
Blended Residential Neighborhood (formerly Medium Density Residential)	These residential areas generally have a mix of housing types, including duplexes and triplexes, small apartment buildings, courtyard bungalows, and townhomes. Supporting uses include schools, neighborhood-serving parks, community centers, and places of worship.	 
Multifamily Neighborhood (formerly High Density Residential)	These areas feature apartment buildings large enough to support on-site community spaces, such as playgrounds and gardens, with neighborhood parks and commercial districts nearby, often along major roads.	 
Neighborhood Center	These key intersections include commercial uses that provide a variety of services and a social hub for nearby residents. Buildings are encouraged to provide retail, dining, and service uses on ground floors with residences above, and horizontal mixed use with offices, personal services, and small-scale retail.	 
Northern Gateway	The Northern Gateway designation is intended to foster an attractive entry to the City of Soledad featuring a variety of commercial and service-oriented businesses that cater to both local and regional customers.	 
Southern Gateway	The Southern Gateway designation accommodates a wide range of commercial and light industrial facilities to serve residents and visitors from the surrounding region, such as shopping centers that include theaters, banks, and large-format retail; travel-related services such as gas stations, hotels and restaurants; and manufacturing, warehousing, and/or distribution facilities.	 
Parks and Open Space	This land use provides a flexible designation for publicly- and privately-owned active recreation areas. Parks can range from neighborhood tot lots to large multipurpose sports facilities, with many active recreation uses in between.	 

Vision: Serving as the gateway to Pinnacles National Park, Soledad is a small town with big ideas, that celebrates our rich cultural heritage and diversity. We are a welcoming and inclusive community that is committed to advancing equity, sustainable growth, and environmental stewardship, improving quality of life, supporting businesses, and being a safe and healthy city where everyone thrives.

Guiding Principles



Economy

We cultivate a thriving economy that supports quality retail for our residents' shopping needs, small businesses, and regional tourism. We aim to provide our residents with secure and well-paying jobs that will serve as the backbone of their livelihoods. Residents are able to shop locally for their essential needs.



Housing

We ensure access to quality, safe, and diverse housing near schools, jobs, retail, and parks that is affordable to residents of all income levels.



Environmental Justice and Equity

We improve the health and well-being of our local community by addressing environmental, social, and economic obstacles. We are committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion and believe everyone has a voice in shaping Soledad. We engage together as equal partners in local decision-making processes to reduce inequalities and disparities in our community.



Community Places

We value parks, public gathering spaces, recreation, cultural events, and vibrant community places that are comfortable and welcoming to all regardless of age or abilities. We advance our beautiful park and recreation system with amenities that offer moments of play and connection with our neighbors.



Mobility

We have high-quality road and public transit systems that help prevent traffic fatalities and severe injuries, minimize traffic congestion, and allow convenient access to daily destinations. We are proud of our safe, walkable, accessible, and bikeable neighborhoods that promote non-automobile modes of transportation.



Safety

We prioritize a safe and open community with streets that have ample lighting, well maintained sidewalks and roads, highly visible crosswalks, protected bike lanes, and convenient freeway access that accommodates routes for emergency evacuation. Our safety and law enforcement providers are our partners in preventing crime, developing community-based intervention programs, and preparing for emergencies. We are committed to building long-term resilience and embracing environmental sustainability to protect all residents from negative environmental impacts.



Youth

We invest in our youth by providing safe communities, access to health care, workforce development, educational pathways, quality housing, and parks and recreational opportunities for their well-being and growth.



Health

We promote both physical and mental health services through our infrastructure, facilities, stores, and services. This includes walking, biking, and access to healthy and safe foods. Healthcare and social services are plentiful and accessible to everyone in the community.



Education

We foster the prosperity of our community by investing in and expanding a range of educational opportunities including higher education and vocational training and resources that prepare our workforce for well-paying jobs. We are proud to provide educational and vocational services in Spanish, English, and other languages spoken locally.

PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY JUNE 12, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Sergio Diaz called the regular meeting of the City of Soledad Commission to order at 6:02 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice-Chair Sergio Diaz led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

The following commission members were present during the Roll Call:
Vice-Chair Sergio Diaz
Commissioner Sandy Fuerte
Commissioner Roberto Cruz

Commissioners absent:
Chair Josie Perez-Aguilera
Commissioner Lorenzo Sanchez

PUBLIC COMMENT

Vice-Chair Sergio Diaz opens Public Comment. There are no public comments. Co-Chair Diaz closed Public Comment.

MODIFICATION TO THE AGENDA

The meeting minutes for the following Planning Commission were moved to the next Regular Planning Commission meeting.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

Status Report on the 2025 Siempre Soledad General Plan Update and Request for Direction on the Draft Land Use and Circulation Maps.

Ariana Mora, Senior Planner presented the staff report and presentation and asked if Commissioner's had any questions through the presentation, they can be asked.

Commissioner Fuerte asked how the maps were developed and why the information gathered from the community being presented to the Planning Commission.

Senior Planner Mora explained the land use alternative process and the extensive engagement done to obtain input and how it resembles the maps being presented to the Commission.

Senior Planner Mora continued the presentation of the staff report.

Vice-Chair Diaz commented on the circulation map and questioned why there isn't a connection between San Vicente to Orchard Lane being proposed through the Miramonte Specific Plan Area. Senior Planner Mora explained the status of Miramonte and how it related to the proposed circulation map.

Senior Planner Mora continued the presentation of the staff report.

Commissioner Fuerte commented on circulation improvements around Andalucia Drive and how the proposed map does not show any traffic calming improvements for one of the biggest senior residential neighborhoods in Soledad. Commissioner Fuerte recommended adding improvements in that part of town. Senior Planner Mora noted the recommendation down.

Senior Planner Mora continued the presentation of the staff report.

Commissioner Cruz questioned why some ongoing street improvements are reflected on the proposed circulation map if the map is intended to reflect the future circulation needs. Senior Planner Mora explained that some improvements are based on timelines. The general plan intends to be adopted by January 2026, and some improvements may not be implemented before then.

Commissioner Cruz commented on attending the Public Works Traffic Safety forum and speaking with the City Traffic Engineer about traffic simulations that indicate where improvements should be made. However, Commissioner Cruz believes that the city should also consider the human factor when analyzing these improvements. Senior Planner Mora explained that through the adoption of a circulation map, goals, policies, and programs may be able to help with his concern.

Community and Economic Development Director (Director) Beatriz Trujillo commented on the goals, policies, and programs, mentioning that it is essential to keep those in mind through this process, so the city becomes more competitive with grants.

Commissioner Cruz expressed his concerns to the City Council regarding the need to prioritize additional entrances and exits to and from Soledad. He urged the City to maintain focus on this issue, particularly with the development of the Miramonte Specific Plan Area. Commissioner Fuerte supported Commissioner Cruz's position and emphasized the importance of emergency preparedness. Commissioner Cruz highlighted the need to have more community members involved in the conversation. Vice-Chair Diaz also commented in support of prioritizing an entrance and exit to Soledad and commented that a new entrance would benefit Miramonte and the city.

Commissioner Fuerte questioned the staff about why the proposed circulation map establishes a minimum baseline. Senior Planner Mora responded that the circulation map is determining the baseline for the goals, and that the policies and programs will be more specific in outlining what a

city needs and wants. Director Trujillo commented that the General Plan serves as a comprehensive framework outlining the City's long-term vision and goals. Director Trujillo emphasized the importance of assessing the feasibility of achieving these goals, particularly because it plays a crucial role in staff time and securing grant funding from the State of California.

Senior Planner Mora continued the presentation of the staff report.

Vice Chair Diaz questioned if the Downtown Land Use is being proposed on the other side of the existing railroad line on Front Street. Senior Planner Mora confirmed. Commissioner Cruz and Fuerte commented on the chances of the development of that site and how other cities have developed around rail lines. Director Trujillo stated that the City has been in communication with other regional agencies regarding the planning process for the rail lines. Vice Chair Diaz questioned the feasibility of adding another entrance from Main Street, through the railroad, to Hwy 101, but acknowledged that another location would be a better option.

Commissioner Cruz asked staff in any of the proposed land uses have the potential for residential or commercial purposes. Senior Planner Mora clarified that the Neighborhood Center land use is proposed for mixed-use development, and the Downtown land use will also provide that use.

Commissioner Cruz questioned if the lot on the corner of Gabilan Drive and San Vicente Road is publicly or privately owned. Senior Planner Mora responded that it is publicly owned.

Senior Planner Mora added that the land use map will define individual uses for development, and the new land uses were generated through the community feedback staff has received through the general plan process.

Senior Planner Mora continues the presentation of the staff report.

Commissioner Diaz acknowledged that the draft circulation map should be flexible so that if new traffic issues arise, new improvements should be proposed. Commissioner Fuerte agreed with Commissioner Diaz, especially around schools. Senior Planner Mora commented that the staff's goal was to make sure flexibility was offered between the circulation and land use maps.

Commissioner Fuerte asked where members of the public can get informed about the proposed changes and provide input. Director Trujillo announced that the City will create a more comprehensive outreach plan in partnership with the Community Engagement Department to reach various age groups within the community regarding its initiatives.

Vice-Chair Diaz also commented on the need to have a strong outreach plan through the community. Commissioner Fuerte stated examples of engagement.

Staff concluded the presentation of the Staff Report.

Vice-Chair Sergio Diaz opened for public comment at 7:44pm.

Administrative Secretary, Andrea Navarrete, read a public comment from Michelle Overmeyer, Monterey-Salinas Transit District (MST) Director of Planning and Innovation.

Vice-Chair Dias closed for public comment at 7:45 pm.

Vice Chair Dias opened for Commission discussion.

Commission Fuerte stated that the proposed land use is a flexible model, and flexibility should also be prioritized in the circulation map, ensuring that both maps are aligned with one another. Additionally, Commissioner Fuerte acknowledged the letter provided by MST and the importance of having flexible options for public transportation.

Commissioner Cruz asked staff if MST is part of the general plan process. Director Trujillo and Senior Planner Mora clarified that they have been part of the process and will look into general plan programs that include MST.

Commissioner Cruz emphasized the flexibility of the circulation map, while Senior Planner Mora clarified that the proposed improvements are described in general terms to maintain that flexibility. Vice-Chair Diaz concurred with Commissioner Cruz, noting that the City's growth will ultimately dictate the specific types of improvements needed when analyzed individually.

Vice-Chair Diaz added that although the Miramonte Specific Plan Area circulation is still being worked on, the City Council should consider additional routes to and from Miramonte, in particular to San Vicente Road, West Street, and Orchard Lane, like how Gabilan Road currently is. Senior Planner Mora stated that some sections of the street network have been approved through previous actions, and staff is working on final traffic improvements that the developer will be responsible for and will be coming to the Planning Commission and City Council at a later date.

Vice-Chair Diaz reemphasized the need for the City Council to prioritize entrances and exits to Soledad.

Senior Planner Mora clarified the direction from the Planning Commission, where the Commission is recommending acceptance of the proposed maps with the conditions that the City Council consider the Miramonte Specific Plan Area, prioritize Citywide Access Points, have consistency between both maps and increase community engagement efforts for the next phase of the general plan.

Motion:

Commissioner Roberto Cruz motions to recommend that the City Council of the City of Soledad: (1) accept the General Plan Update Land Use and Circulation Maps as proposed by City Staff (including any changes to the maps recommended today by the Commission), and (2) authorize Staff to proceed with preparation of the environmental documentation for the General Plan Update in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). With Consideration of the Miramonte Specific Plan, Citywide Access Points, Consistency between both maps, and increased community engagement. The motion was seconded by Co-Chair Sergio Diaz.

AYES: Vice-Chair Sergio Diaz, Commissioner Sandy Fuerte, Commissioner Roberto Cruz

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Chair Josie Perez-Aguilera, Commissioner Lorenzo Sanchez

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Community and Economic Director Beatriz Trujillo provided an update on various city projects and events in Soledad. Director Trujillo discussed the upcoming Music in the Park event organized by Soledad Parks and Recreation, shared updates on the Homeless Encampment Site, and mentioned developments related to the Soledad Marketplace, among other topics.

Vice-Chair Diaz questioned staff about the Reel Rock Brewery and staff and Commission Fuerte provided an update on the project.

COMMISSIONERS REPORT

Commissioner Fuerte gave an update on the Soledad Chamber of Commerce and the Night Market hosted every other Friday at the Grocery Outlet parking lot.

Commissioner Cruz questioned how the Homeless Encampment Site will affect development on city property. Staff explained it is a temporary project. Director Trujillo provided project details and timeline to the Commission.

Commissioner Cruz spoke to the public, asking them to stay engaged, attend meetings, and ask questions.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair adjourns this meeting at 8:31 PM.

_____

SERGIO DIAZ, Vice-Chair

ATTEST:

_____

BEATRIZ TRUJILLO, Commission Secretary

Soledad General Plan 2045

Siempre Soledad

Special City Council Meeting

June 24, 2025

Agenda

- General Plan Summary
- Project Steps
- Circulation and Land Use Maps
- Next Steps
- Clarifying Questions
- City Council Discussion

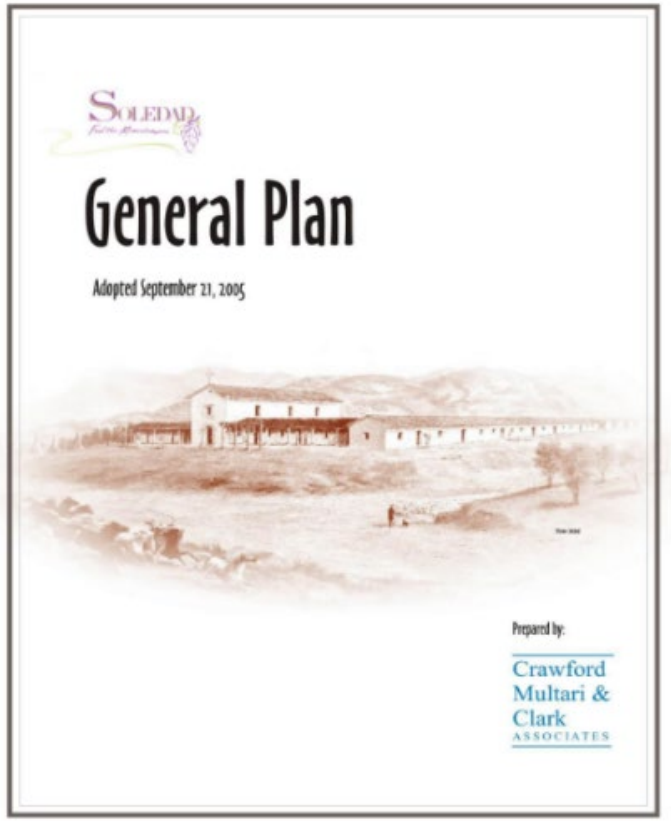


General Plan Summary



What is the General Plan?

- Required by State Law
- Fundamental land use and development policy document
- Shows how the city will grow and conserve resources
- Establishes community vision for the physical form of the city
- Identifies important community issues
- Basis for fair and consistent local land use decisions and related policies



General Plan Elements

- **Required**
  - **Land Use**
  - **Circulation**
  - **Housing (amended in 2024)**
  - **Conservation, Open Space & Recreation**
  - **Noise**
  - **Safety**
  - **Environmental Justice** *(integrated into multiple elements)*
- **Custom for Soledad**
  - **Economic Development**
  - **Climate Change** *(integrated into multiple elements)*
- **Last Full Update 2005**

Project Steps



Where Are We Now?

- Existing Conditions Memos and Briefing Book
- Vision and Guiding Principles
- Policy Development
- Housing Element
- Draft Alternatives
- **Circulation and Land Use Maps** We Are Here!
- **Draft General Plan document**
- **Environmental Impact Report (EIR)**
- **Final General Plan and Adoption**

Recent Project Timeline

May 2024

Vision and Guiding Principles
Approved by City Council

July-October 2024

Draft Alternatives Review
- Hot Summer Days
- Online Survey
- Alternatives Workshop

February 2025

GP Steering Committee Review
First Draft Circulation & Land Use Maps

June 2025

Public Draft Circulation & Land Use Maps



Alternatives Phase

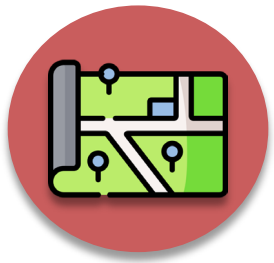


Thinking about the needs and wants of Soledad



Proposing alternative scenarios
to the Community (this or that)





Showing the community what
the alternatives mean and look like

Alternative 1:
Downtown-Focused Growth

Alternative 2:
Regional Hub Expansion

Key Input on Alternatives

- Majority of commenters preferred combination of the two alternatives
- More commercial options throughout the city, both big-box and neighborhood retail
- Continue to improve connectivity and transportation safety within Soledad and the region
- New railroad crossing
- Diverse housing options: single-family, missing middle, multi-family, senior
- Build out Downtown as an activity center with retail, restaurants, entertainment

Circulation and Land Use Maps

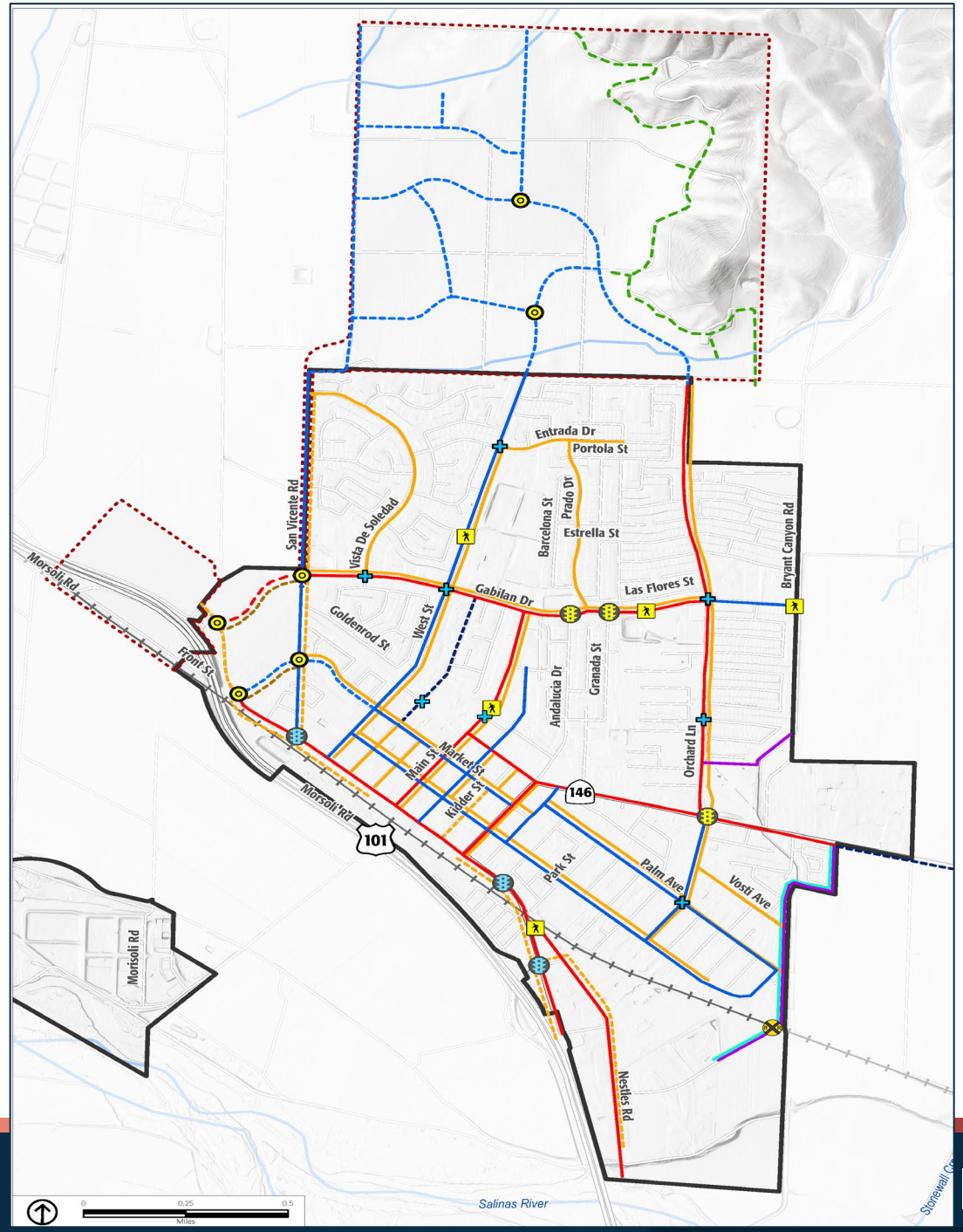


Circulation Map

Legend

- Future Multi-Use Path
- Existing Bike Lane - Class II
- Proposed Bike Lane - Class II
- Class II Extension Along Future Roads
- Proposed Bike Route - Class III
- Unpaved Trail
- Existing Collector
- Existing Arterial
- Future Collector
- Future Arterial
- Future Complete Street (Pinnacles Parkway)
- Sphere of Influence
- City Limits
- Railroad
- Proposed Roundabout
- Proposed Intersection Improvements
- Proposed Pedestrian Improvements
- Proposed Traffic Signal Improvements
- Future Traffic Signal
- Railroad Crossing

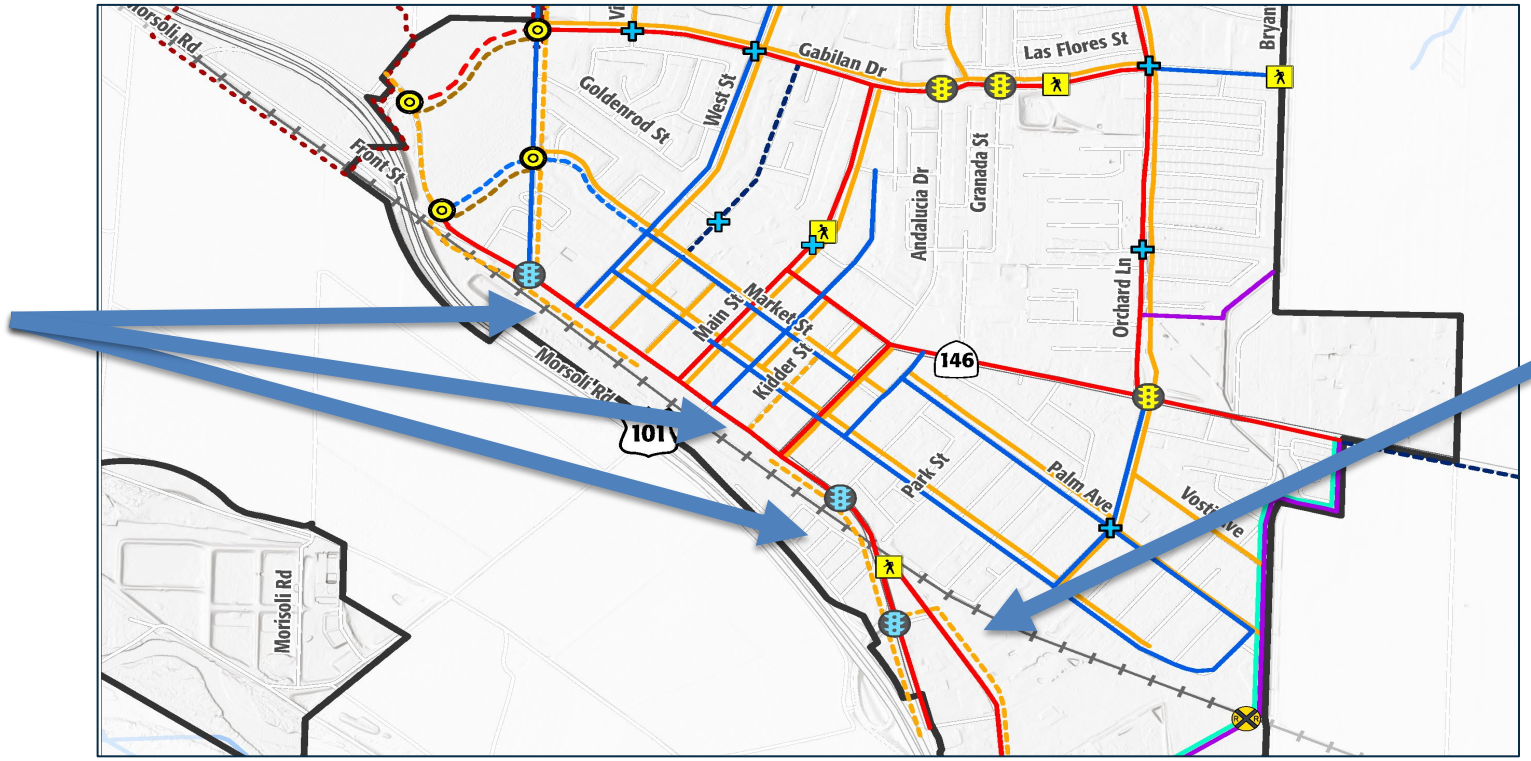
Source: AMBAG, 2022; ESRI, 2024; Kimley-Horn, 2025; PlaceWorks, 2025



Summary of Circulation Map Updates

- **Improved bike and pedestrian access, including east-west and through the downtown tunnel**

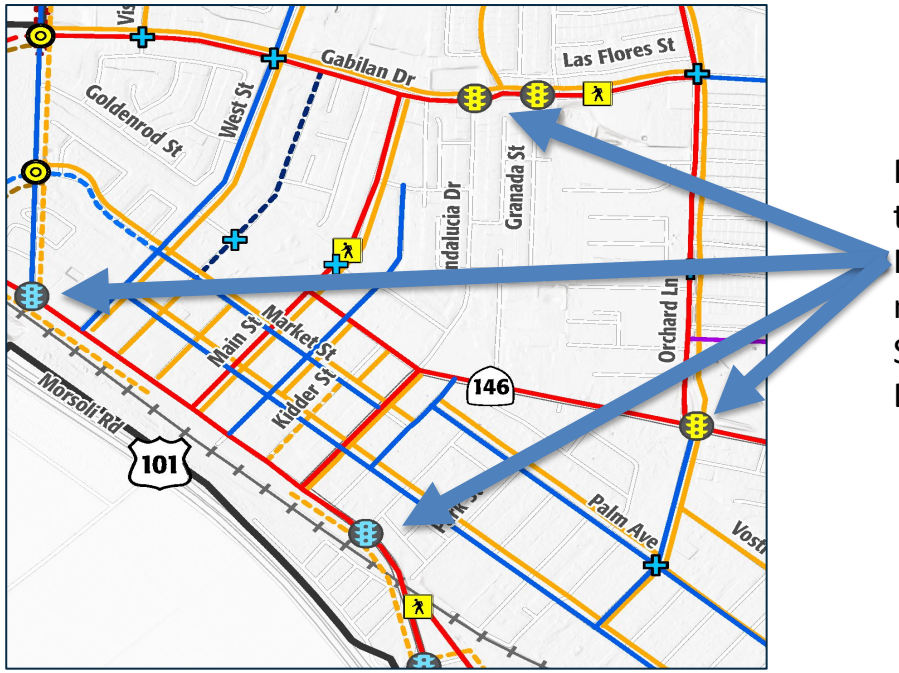
New Proposed Bike Lanes



New Proposed Bike Lanes And Pedestrian Safety Improvements

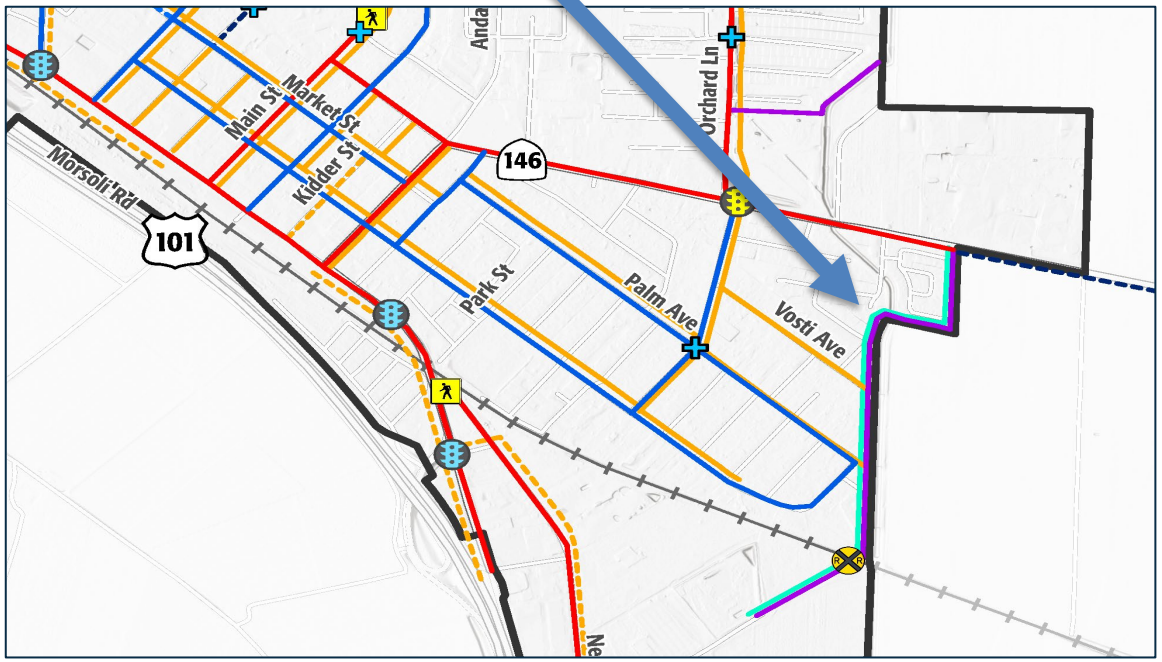
Summary of Circulation Map Updates

- **Railroad crossing at Los Coches (Future Pinnacles Parkway Trail and Complete Street)**
- **Traffic signal upgrades**



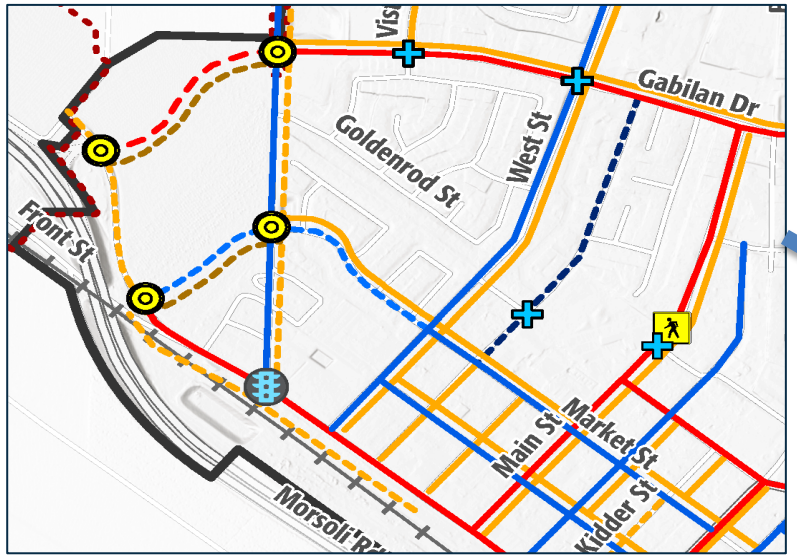
Proposed traffic signal Improvements near Schools or Downtown

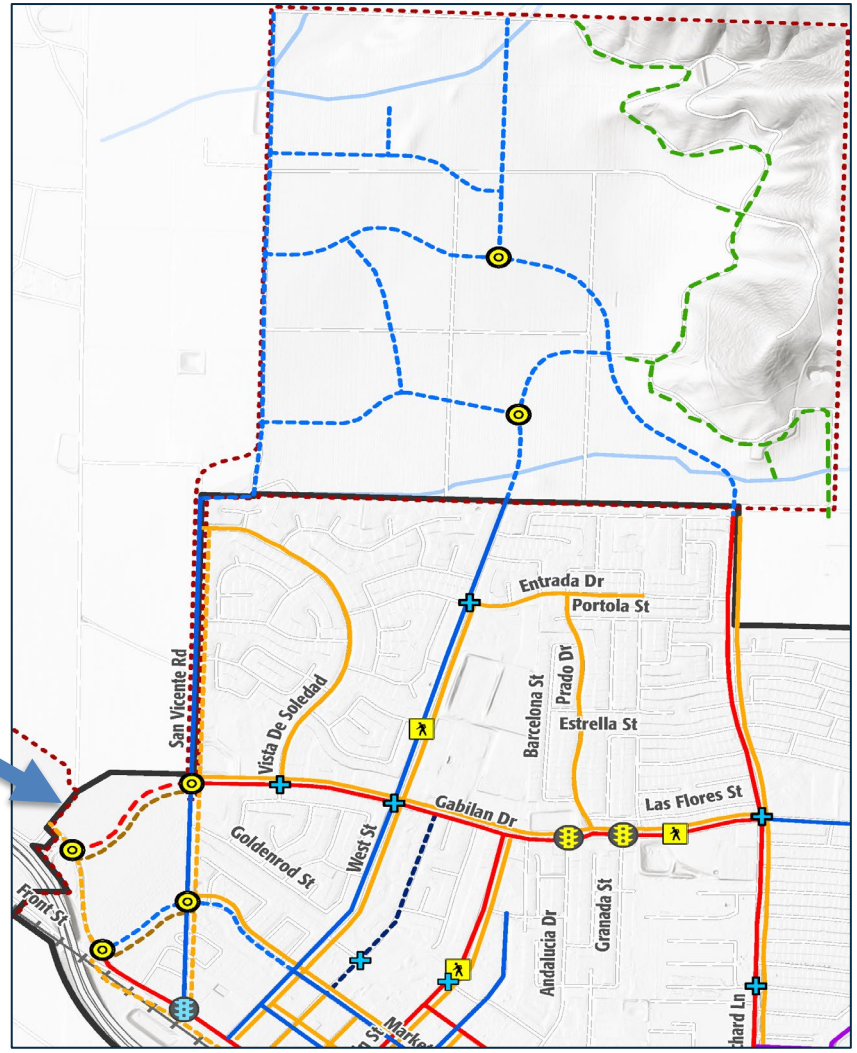
Complete Street / Future Pinnacles Parkway



Summary of Circulation Map Updates

- **Roundabouts and intersection improvements for bikes and pedestrians**





Land Use Map

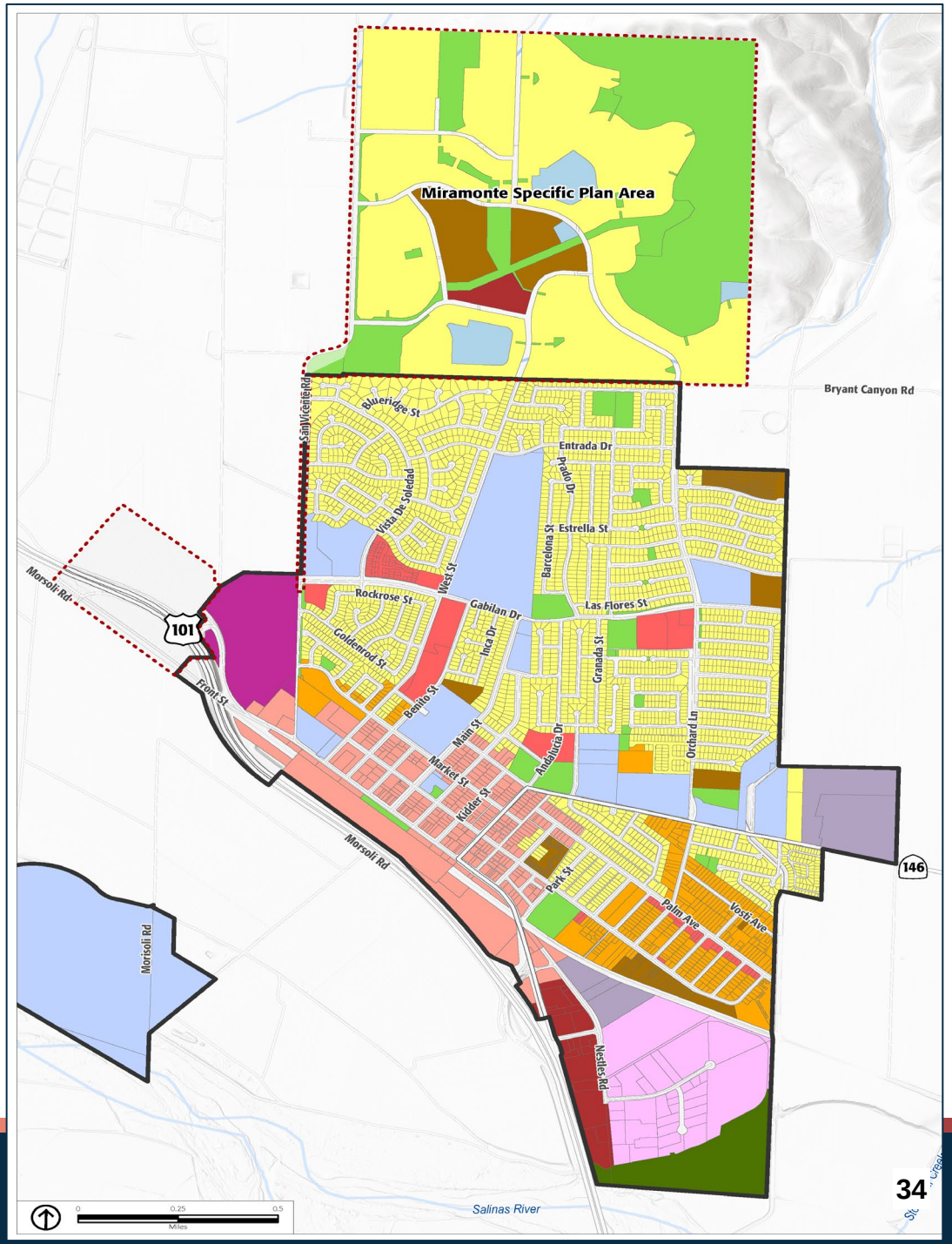
Legend

- Sphere of Influence
- City Limits

Land Use Designations

- Traditional Neighborhood
- Blended Residential Neighborhood
- Multifamily Neighborhood
- Downtown
- Neighborhood Center
- General Commercial
- Northern Gateway
- Southern Gateway
- Parks and Open Space
- Public Facility
- Industrial
- Agriculture

Source: AMBAG, 2022; ESRI, 2024; City of Soledad, 2024; PlaceWorks, 2024



New Land Use Designations

PLANNING COMMISSION-RECOMMENDED NEW SOLEDAD LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Siempre Soledad
General Plan 2045

PLANNING COMMISSION-RECOMMENDED LAND USE DESIGNATION	LAND USE DESIGNATION DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE IMAGES
Traditional Neighborhood (formerly Single Family Residential)	These established neighborhoods include primarily detached single-family homes, accessory dwelling units, and small multifamily structures. Supporting uses include schools, neighborhood-serving parks, community centers, and places of worship.	
Blended Residential Neighborhood (formerly Medium Density Residential)	These residential areas generally have a mix of housing types, including duplexes and triplexes, small apartment buildings, courtyard bungalows, and townhomes. Supporting uses include schools, neighborhood-serving parks, community centers, and places of worship.	
Multifamily Neighborhood (formerly High Density Residential)	These areas feature apartment buildings large enough to support on-site community spaces, such as playgrounds and gardens, with neighborhood parks and commercial districts nearby, often along major roads.	
Neighborhood Center	These key intersections include commercial uses that provide a variety of services and a social hub for nearby residents. Buildings are encouraged to provide retail, dining, and service uses on ground floors with residences above, and horizontal mixed use with offices, personal services, and small-scale retail.	
Northern Gateway	The Northern Gateway designation is intended to foster an attractive entry to the City of Soledad featuring a variety of commercial and service-oriented businesses that cater to both local and regional customers.	
Southern Gateway	The Southern Gateway designation accommodates a wide range of commercial and light industrial facilities to serve residents and visitors from the surrounding region, such as shopping centers that include theaters, banks, and large-format retail; travel-related services such as gas stations, hotels and restaurants; and manufacturing, warehousing, and/or distribution facilities.	
Parks and Open Space	This land use provides a flexible designation for publicly- and privately-owned active recreation areas. Parks can range from neighborhood tot lots to large multipurpose sports facilities, with many active recreation uses in between.	

New Designations *(continued)*

- **Traditional Neighborhood (formerly Single Family Residential):** These established neighborhoods include primarily detached single-family homes, accessory dwelling units, and small multifamily structures. Supporting uses include schools, neighborhood-serving parks, community centers, and places of worship.





New Designations *(continued)*

- **Blended Residential Neighborhood (formerly Medium Density Residential):** These residential areas generally have a mix of housing types, including duplexes and triplexes, small apartment buildings, courtyard bungalows, and townhomes. Supporting uses include schools, neighborhood-serving parks, community centers, and places of worship.





New Designations *(continued)*

- **Multifamily Neighborhood (formerly High Density Residential):** These areas feature apartment buildings large enough to support on-site community spaces, such as playgrounds and gardens, with neighborhood parks and commercial districts nearby, often along major roads.





New Designations *(continued)*

- **Neighborhood Center:** These key intersections include commercial uses that provide a variety of services and a social hub for nearby residents. Buildings are encouraged to provide retail, dining, and service uses on ground floors with residences above, and horizontal mixed use with offices, personal services, and small-scale retail.





New Designations *(continued)*

- **Northern Gateway:** The Northern Gateway designation is intended to foster an attractive entry to the City of Soledad featuring a variety of commercial and service-oriented businesses that cater to both local and regional customers.





New Designations *(continued)*

- **Southern Gateway:** The Southern Gateway designation accommodates a wide range of commercial and light industrial facilities to serve residents and visitors from the surrounding region, such as shopping centers that include theaters, banks, and large-format retail; travel-related services such as gas stations, hotels and restaurants; and manufacturing, warehousing, and/or distribution facilities.





Updated Land Use Designation

- **Parks and Open Space:** This land use provides a flexible designation for publicly- and privately-owned active recreation areas. Parks can range from neighborhood tot lots to large multipurpose sports facilities, with many active recreation uses in between.

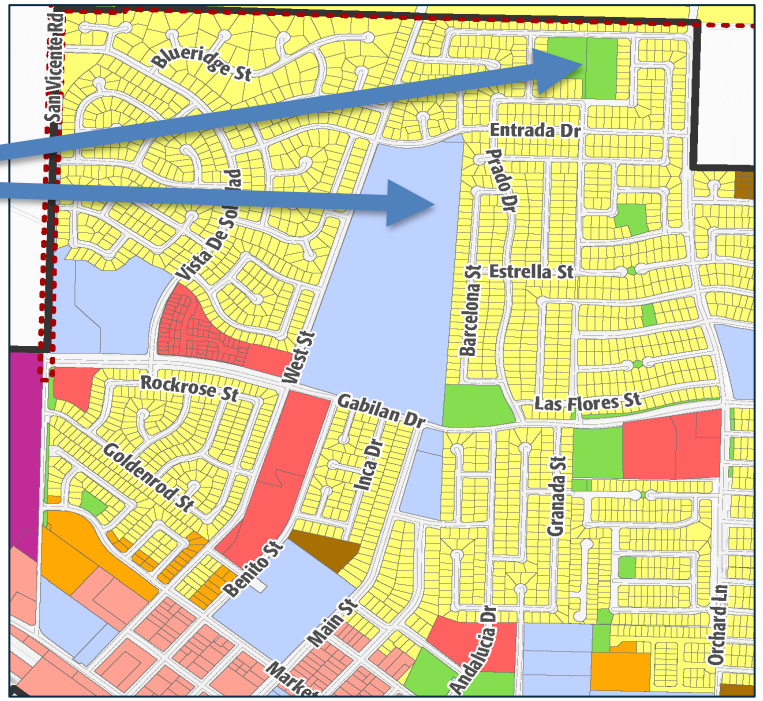


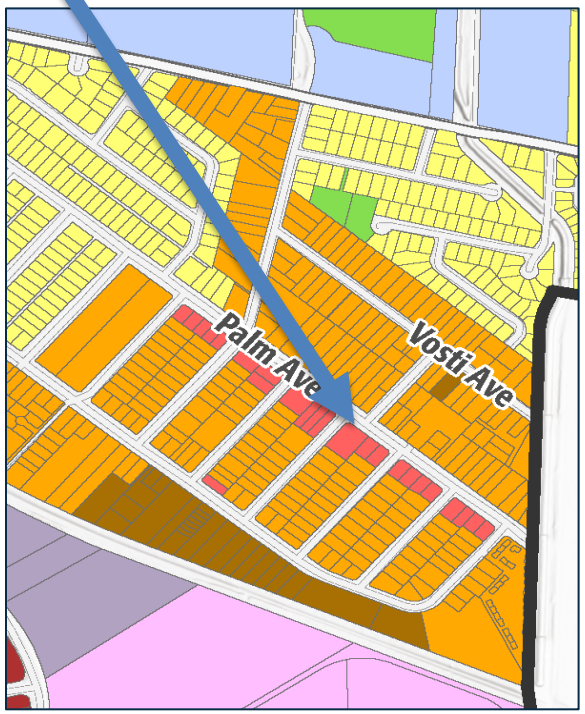


Summary of Land Use Map Updates

- **Completed consistency analysis to reconcile on-the-ground uses with General Plan designations**
- **Separated Public Facility and Parks and Open Space designations**

Neighborhood Centers, previously Single-Family

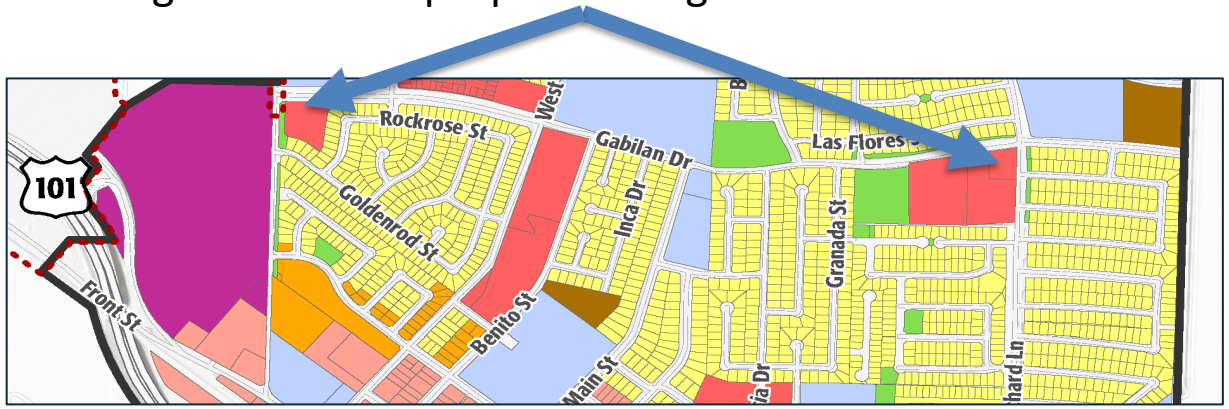


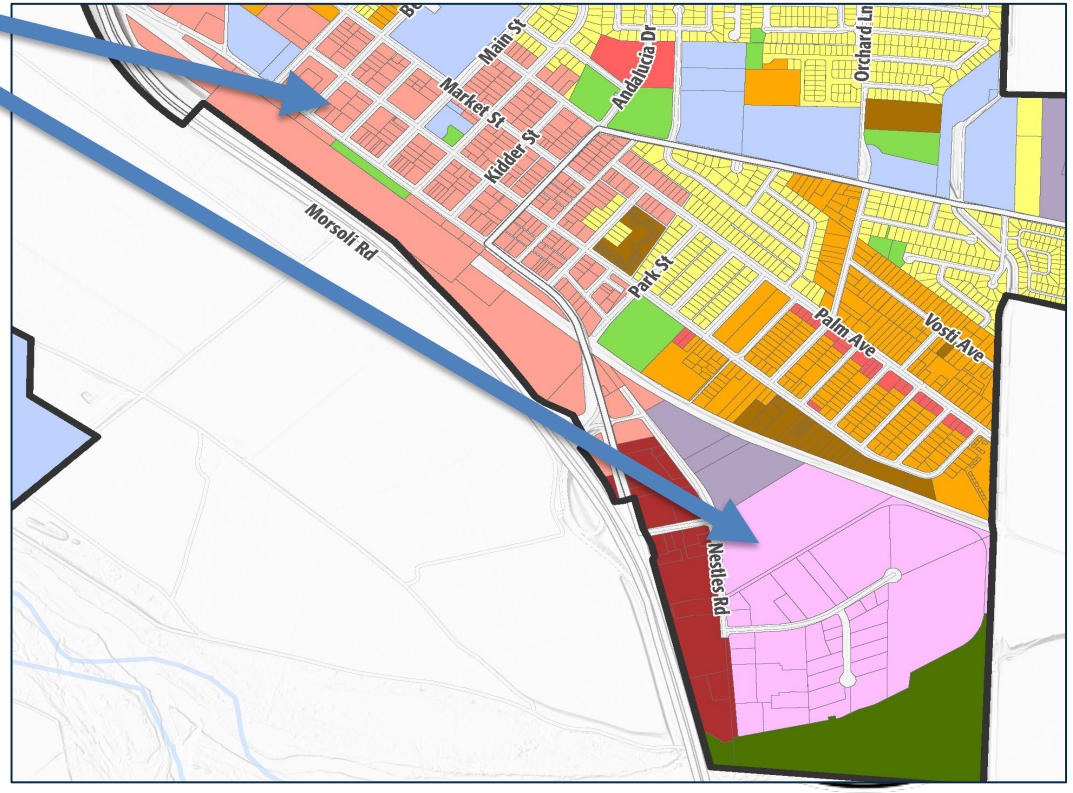


Summary of Land Use Map Updates

- **Looked at vacant sites throughout the city to identify areas for denser housing, commercial, and mixed use**
- **Expanded neighborhood and regional commercial areas**

Existing vacant sites proposed Neighborhood Commercial





Planning Commission Recommendation



Planning Commission Meeting Overview

- **Commissioners emphasized the need for expanded public outreach to better inform and engage the community.**
- **Discussion on Circulation Map**
  - Commissioners noted a lack of flexible transportation connections within the MSP area
  - Regional Connectivity and Emergency Preparedness
- **Draft Land Use Map Feedback**
  - Flexibility in land use designations and alignment with the Circulation Map
  - Supported creative land use strategies for housing and economic development goals

Next Steps



Next Steps

- Full Draft General Plan
- Community Comment on Draft General Plan
- State-required Environmental Review Process



Website and Online Activities

https://www.soledadgeneralplan2045.com

- **Website includes:**
  - Background information
  - Public engagement opportunities
  - Events calendar
  - Links to documents
- **Future potential online activities**



Any Questions?



City Council Discussion



PLACEWORKS

Thank you!