

Soledad General Plan 2045

Siempre Soledad

General Plan Advisory Committee

October 5, 2023



Agenda

- **General Plan Presentation**
 - » Existing Conditions
 - » Implications for General Plan Update
 - » Next Steps
- **Clarifying Questions**
- **Public Comment and GPAC Discussion**
- **Next Steps & Adjourn**



Objectives for Tonight

- Provide overview of existing conditions in Soledad that will serve as the baseline for the General Plan Update
- Receive public comments
- GPAC discussion and feedback

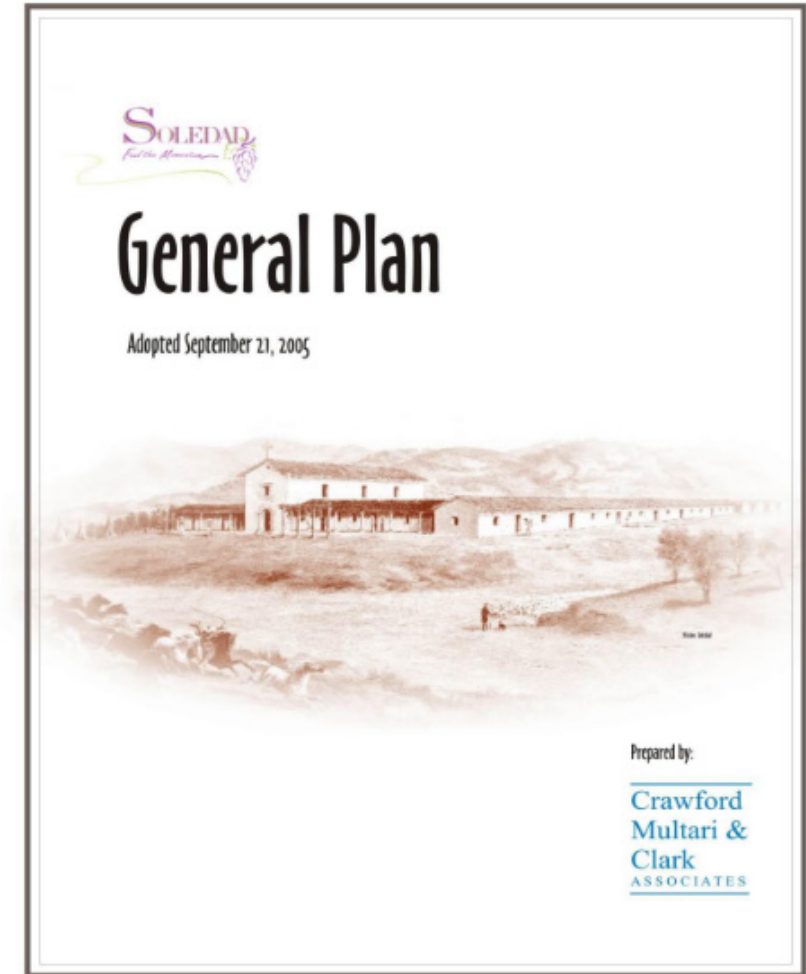




General Plan Update

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 (on a faster schedule due to State law)
- » Open Space and Conservation (includes Parks & Recreation)
- » Noise
- » Safety
- » Environmental Justice

- **Custom for Soledad:**

- » *Community & Economic Development*
- » Climate Change (will be integrated into multiple elements)

- **Last Full Update 2005**



Siempre Soledad Process



Project Components

- Existing Conditions Memos and Briefing Book
- Vision and Values Statement
- Policy Development
- Draft Alternatives
- Housing Element
- Draft General Plan document
- Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- Final General Plan and Adoption



Website and Online Activities

<https://www.soledadgeneralplan2045.com>

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

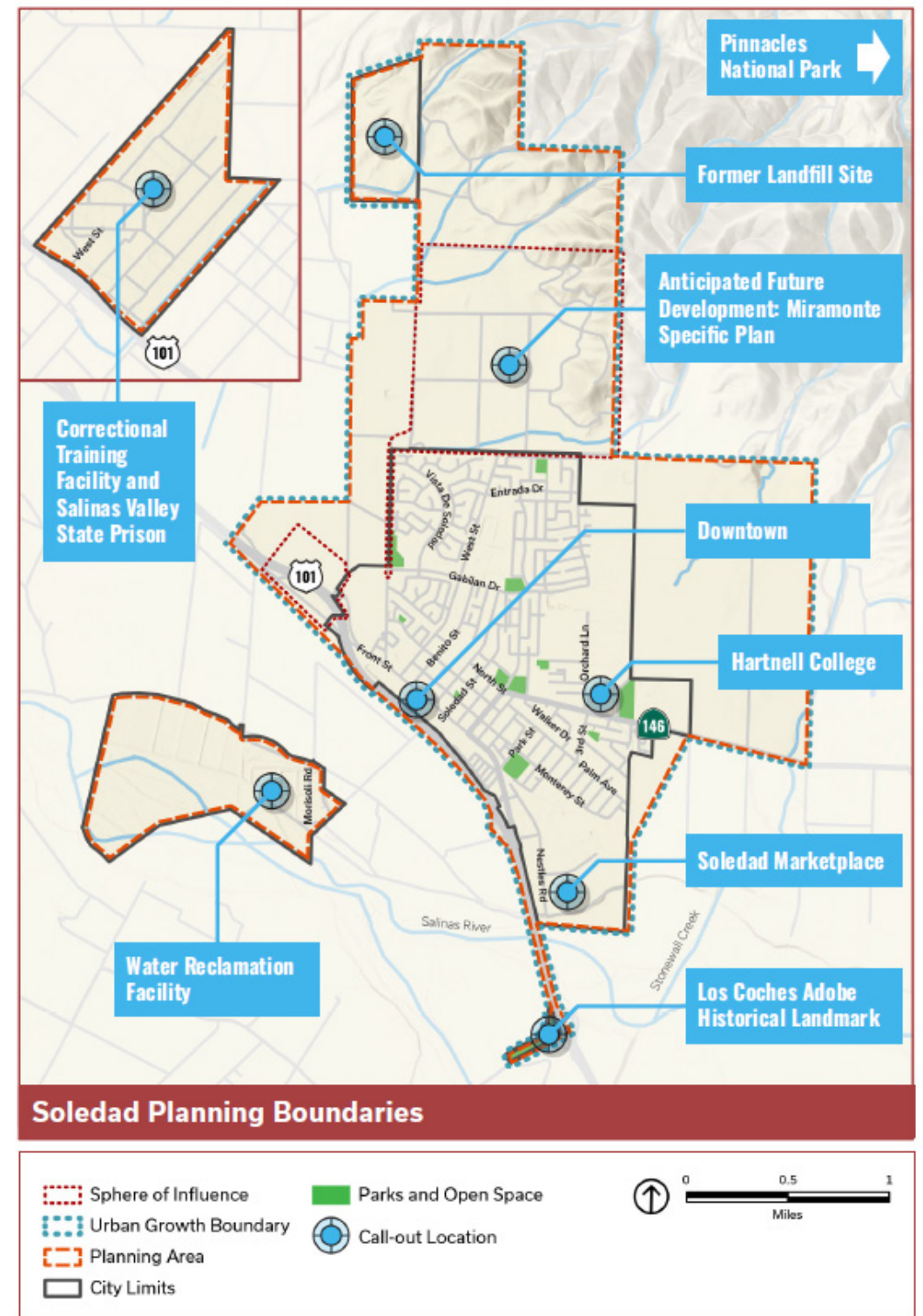


Existing Conditions



Planning Boundaries

- **City Limit.** The area where the City of Soledad has authority over land use and other decisions.
- **Sphere of Influence.** Designated area of land that might be annexed into the city in the future.
- **Urban Growth Boundary.** A limit on urban development per a 2016 Memorandum of Agreement between the City and Monterey County, meant to preserve valuable agricultural lands surrounding Soledad.
- **Planning Area.** The broadest area outside Soledad where the City Council desires to influence decisions about growth and conservation.



Soledad Community

- Population in Soledad is growing
- Large and increasing Hispanic/Latino population
- Average age in Soledad is 30
- There is a growing proportion of older residents
- Median household income is lower than county and state
- Education and income levels lower than surrounding region
- Imbalance between resident skills and those required for available local jobs
- Need for employment opportunities and vocational training programs



Soledad's Population Soledad has a population of 26,230 people, including the incarcerated population at the Correctional Training Facility (commonly referred to as Soledad State Prison) and the Salinas Valley State Prison. Excluding these facilities and other group quarters populations, Soledad's household population was 18,800 residents as of 2020.

Housing

Soledad is made up of mostly "family" households, each with more than one occupant.

Educational Attainment and Household Income

The average education level and household income in Soledad is slightly lower than the surrounding region. Currently, Soledad only has one school district.

Age

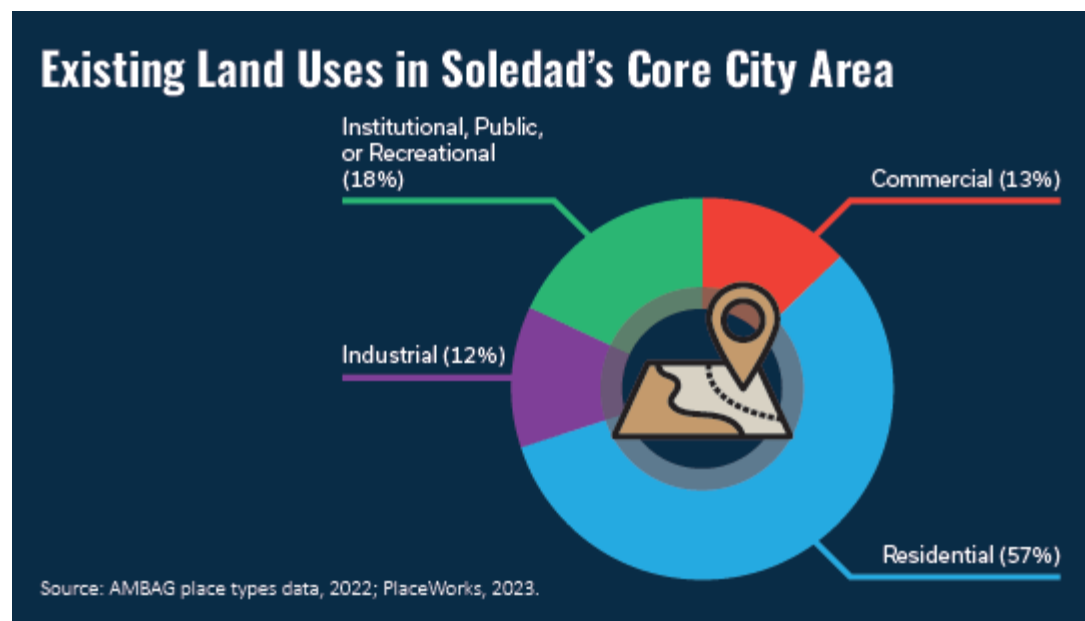
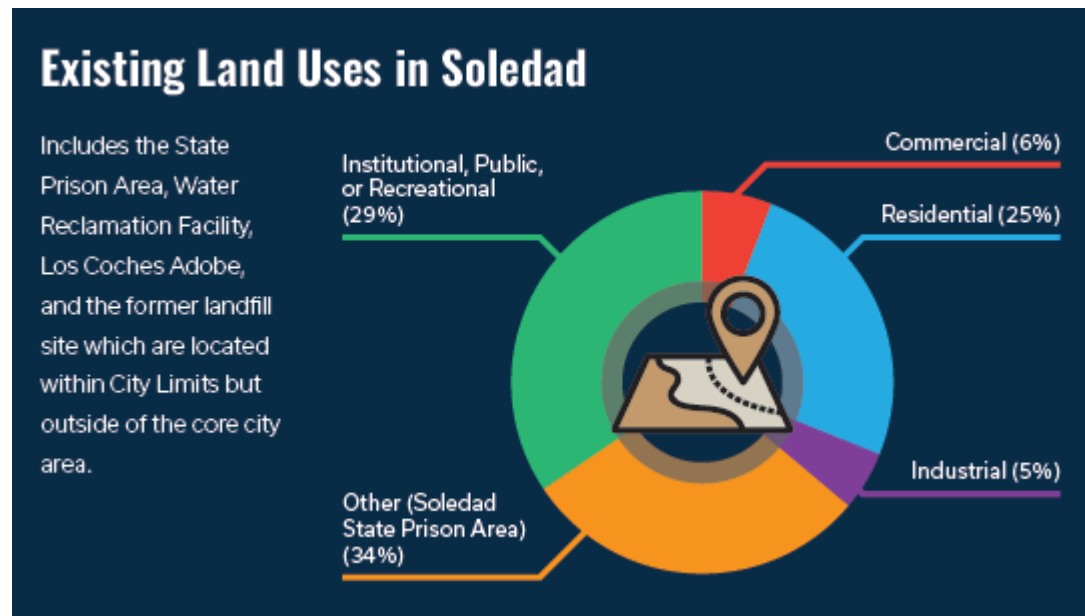
The average age of Soledad residents is approximately 30 years old, which is significantly younger than the average resident in Monterey County (35) and the state of California (38).

Race and Ethnicity

Soledad has a large and growing Hispanic/Latino population, 90 percent of the non-incarcerated population identifies as Hispanic or Latino.

Existing Land Use and Future Growth

- Single-family homes account for a large amount of land
- Range of businesses
 - » Office, Commercial, Restaurant, Industrial
 - » Agriculture is outside city limits
- Imbalance between number of jobs and employed residents
 - » Significant in- and out-commuting
- Real estate forecasts indicate likely demand is sufficient to absorb up to 1,765 new housing units in Soledad by 2045
- Employment forecasts project modest growth for retail, office, and industrial uses by 2045



Development Projects

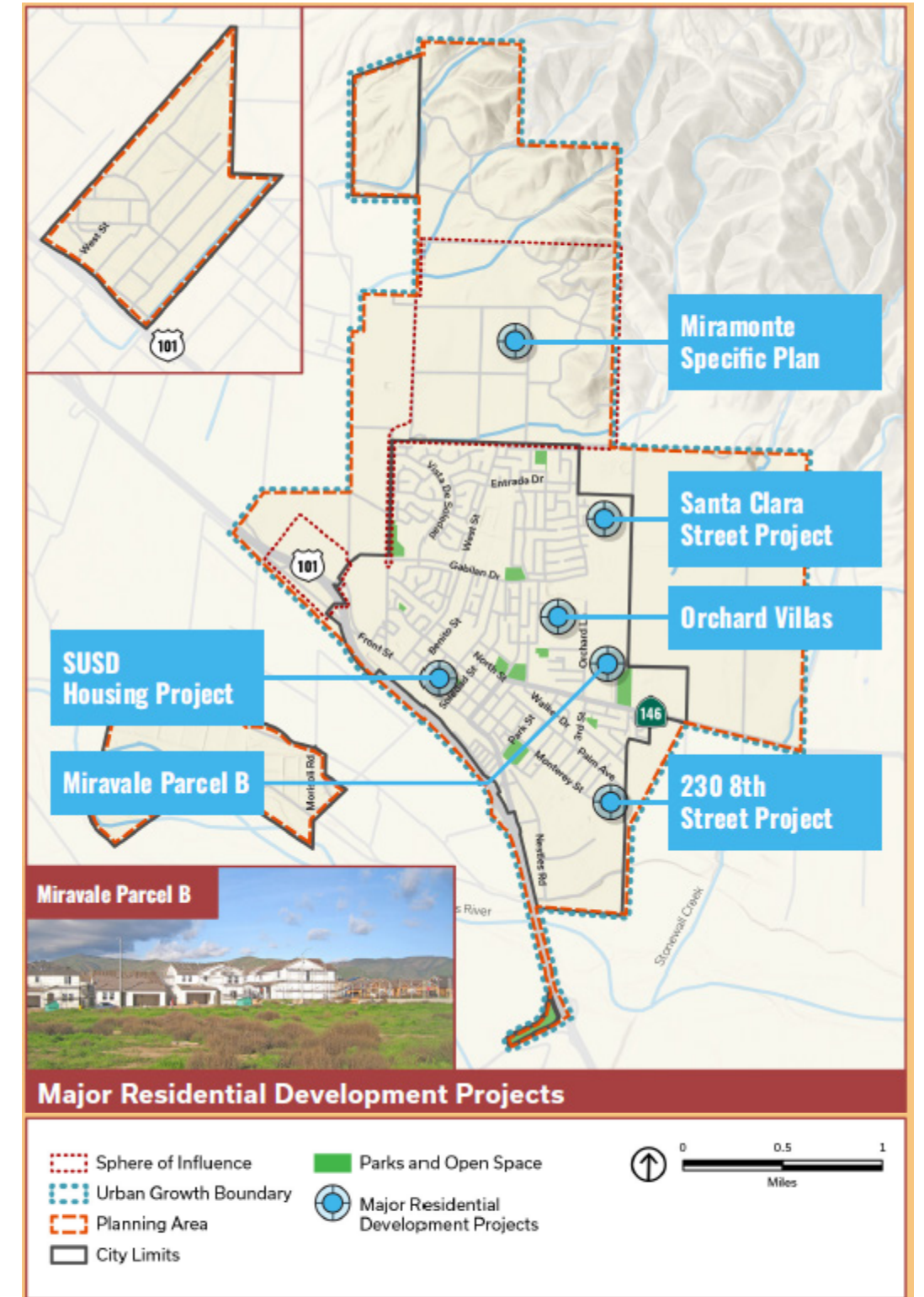


■ Residential Projects

- » Miramonte Specific Plan
- » Orchard Villas
- » Santa Clara Street Project
- » SUSD Housing Project
- » Miravale Parcel B

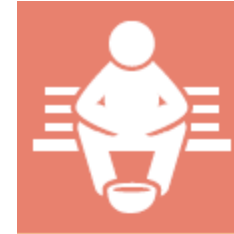
■ Commercial

- » Soledad Marketplace
- » Container Village on Front Street



The Soledad Economy

- **Economy relies on government and agriculture industries**
- **Major out-commuting: 30% of employed residents work in Soledad**
- **Potential for Soledad to become a prominent regional hub for retail, eating and drinking, services, and lodging**
- **Opportunities for collaboration with nearby cities and the County**



Soledad consistently experiences higher rates of unemployment than the surrounding county and state, in part due to the seasonal nature of the agriculture sector. As of 2022, unemployment rates were 10 percent in Soledad, which was 4 percent higher than Monterey County and 6 percent higher than the state.

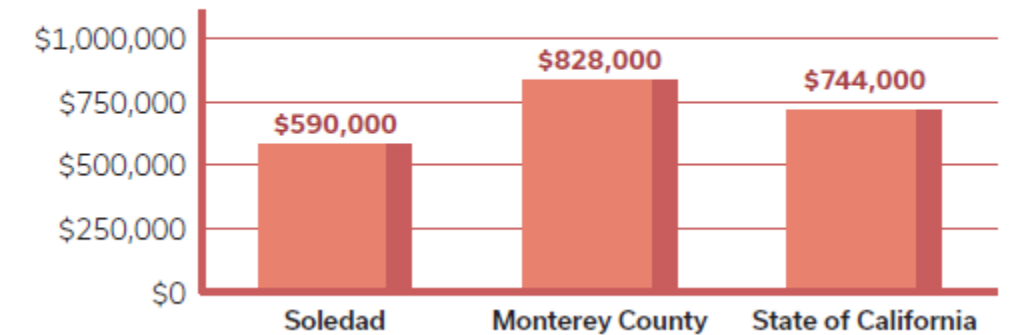
Employment (Jobs) Per Sector (2021)

51.5%	Government
28.2%	Agriculture
6.1%	Manufacturing, utilities, transportation / warehousing, wholesale trade
4.6%	Retail trade
3.9%	Arts, entertainment, accommodation, and food services
2.5%	Education, health care, and social assistance
0.7%	Administrative / support / waste management / remediation services
0.7%	Real estate
0.6%	Finance and insurance
0.4%	Construction
0.5%	Other and unclassified
0.3%	Information, professional services, and business management

Real Estate Market Conditions

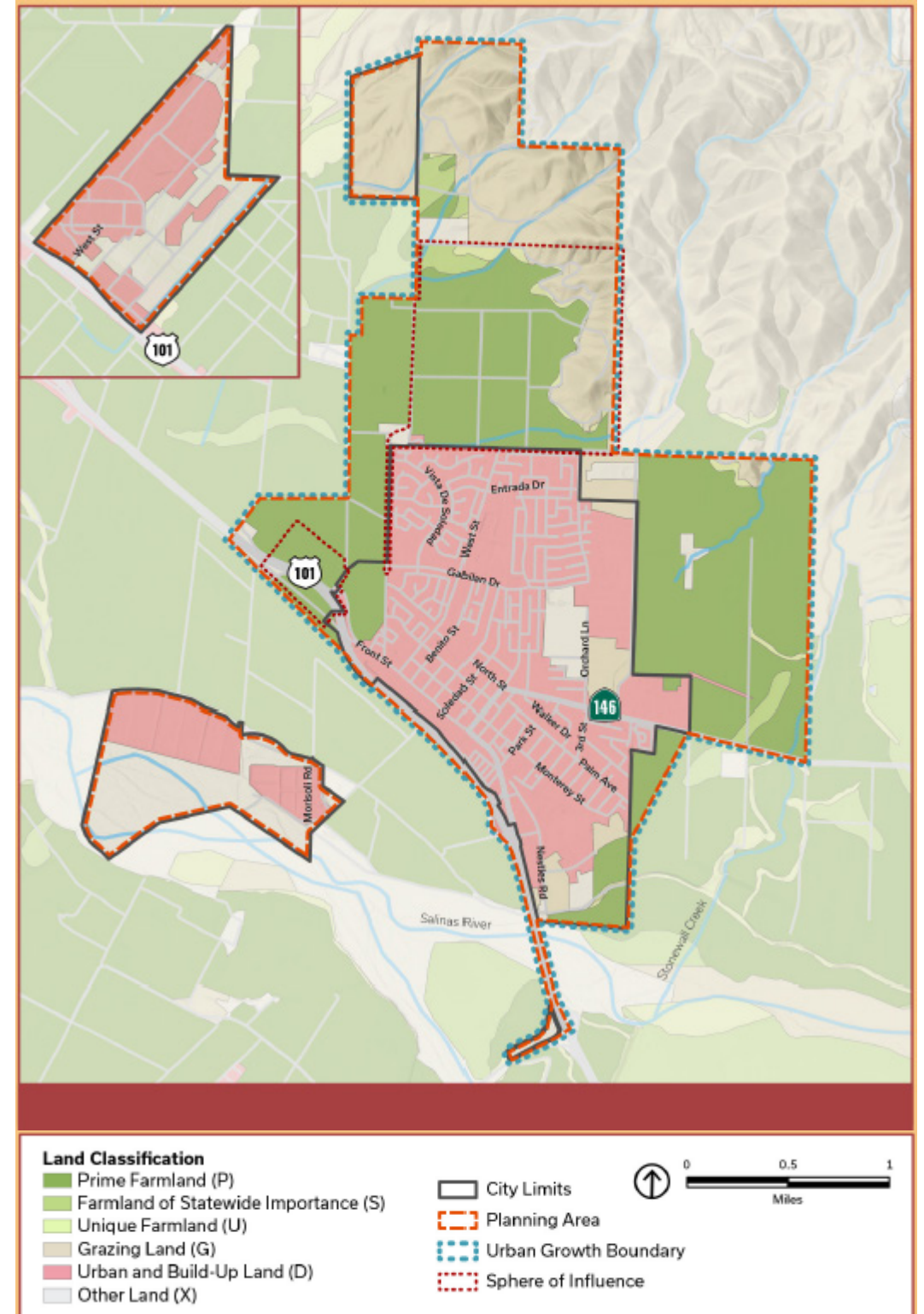
- Strong market for single-family homes
- Housing stock does not meet diverse needs
 - » Low-income individuals
 - » Seniors
 - » People with special needs
- Retail market dominated by gas stations, restaurants, and food and beverage stores
 - » Need for other retail types: home furnishings, appliances, clothing
- Opportunity for increased industrial development
- Construction cost has been noted as a barrier to building

Median home value; single-family home (2023)



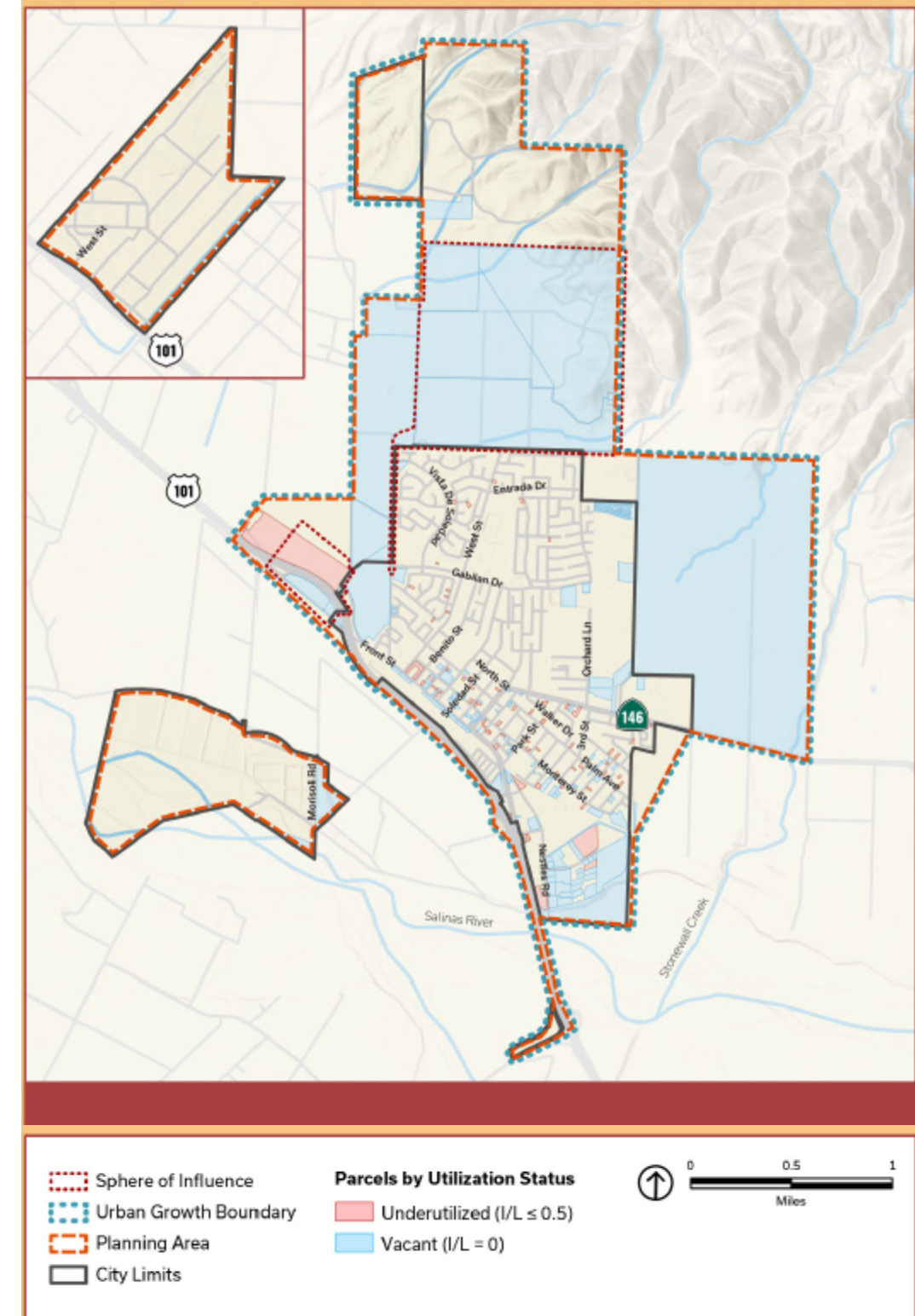
Agricultural Resources

- Agriculture is a major economic driver in Soledad and one of the largest industries in Monterey County
- Most land in City Limits is developed
- Surrounding land remains mainly in agricultural use
 - » Approximately 1,633 acres in the Soledad Planning Area are classified as prime farmland
 - » City of Soledad and Monterey County Memorandum of Understanding to cooperate on long-term protection of valuable agricultural land in the region



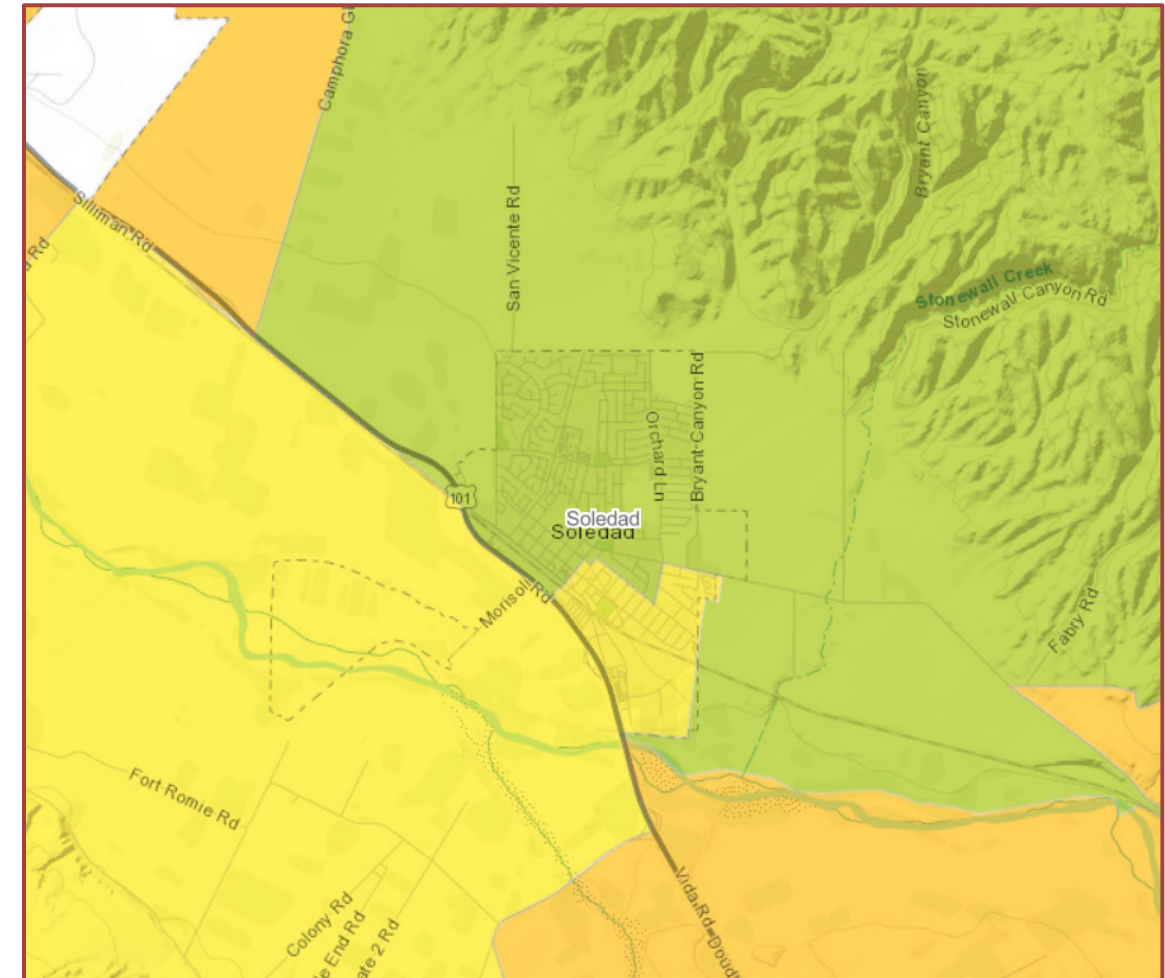
Vacant/Underutilized Land

- Vacant land present an opportunity for sustainable development
- Infill development opportunity on underutilized land
- Majority of vacant and underutilized land in the Planning Area is outside city limits and will require annexation before development can occur



Environmental Justice

- SB 1000 requires general plans to address Environmental Justice
- General Plan Update will identify any historically underserved communities in Soledad
- Involves community outreach
- Addresses:
 - » Pollution exposure and air quality
 - » Access to public facilities
 - » Access to fresh and health food
 - » Safe and sanitary housing
 - » Physical activity
 - » Community engagement in local planning processes



What is Environmental Justice?



"The fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies."

- California Government Code, Section 65040.12(e)

Circulation System

- Grid system of roads that connect to regional roadway network and Pinnacles National Park
- Half of daily car trips in Soledad are internal
- Bicycling is a viable option given flat topography, minimal local traffic, and compact city form
- Well established pedestrian network
- Access to and from Soledad is provided by two US 101 exits/entrances
 - » Opportunity to improve access



Commuter Mode Choice Soledad residents commute to work in a variety of ways, but traveling via car is the most popular method. Approximately 92 percent of trips to and from Soledad are automobile trips, 7 percent are walking trips, 1 percent are bike trips, and less than 0.5 percent are transit trips.




Infrastructure

- **Water supply from Salinas Groundwater Basin**
- **Recycled water use planned for 2026**
- **Wastewater collection at Water Reclamation Facility**
- **Storm drain collection system includes curbs and gutters, catch basins, storm drain pipes and covers, culverts, ditches, and channels**
- **Expected water supply projects**
 - » Improve the Soledad Street, Kidder Street, East Street, and Dixi Street pipelines
 - » Upgrade two key wells (7 and 10)
 - » Construct a new well (pending annexation and construction at Miramonte)
 - » Phase in recycled water for non-potable purposes



Public Safety

- **Emergency services in Soledad are provided by:**
 - » Soledad Fire Department
 - » Soledad Police Department
 - » Mission Soledad Rural Fire Protection District
 - » Monterey County Medical Services System
- **Police and Fire Departments respond to calls for service within core city limits in 5 minutes or less**
- **Community mental health, trash, and vandalism present challenges**
- **Upcoming safe routes to school plan**
- **City is updating Parks and Recreation Master Plan**



The Soledad Fire Department has the ability to respond to calls for service anywhere within city limits in less than 5 minutes, and the Police Department can usually respond in 3 to 5 minutes, depending on traffic.

The nationwide structured fire response times are generally less than 5 minutes and several studies have established that responding to a police call in under 5 minutes increases the chances of making an arrest.

Implications for General Plan Update



Key Findings for General Plan

- **Future Land Use.** Define city's character, diversify economy, balance jobs and housing
- **Economy and Jobs.** Job growth, attract visitors, collaborate with regional partners
- **Gathering Spaces.** Comfortable and welcoming spaces to support engaging, culturally-rich, family-friendly activities
- **Opportunities for Infill.** Identify and facilitate infill development, particularly Downtown
- **Safety and Services.** Support police and fire protection, sustainable water and wastewater treatment
- **Circulation and land use.** Substantial level of cross-commuting, need for nonresidential uses to provide employment opportunities and services for residents



Next Steps

Next Steps

- **Continue to ask the community for feedback for Soledad community Vision**
- **Community Event on November 2nd**
- **GPAC Meeting anticipated end of November**
- **Joint Planning Commission/City Council meeting to confirm Vision Statement anticipated in December**
- **Start Land Use and Circulation Alternatives Process**



Thank you!