

Land Use

This technical report reviews the baseline land use context for the General Plan Update, providing a snapshot of the land use patterns that contribute to Soledad’s identity, including its Downtown along Front Street, surrounding farmland, and planned future development.

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REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This section summarizes regulations for land use at the State, regional, and City level.

STATE REGULATIONS AND PROGRAMS

General Plan Law

California Government Code, Section 65300, regulates the substantive and topical requirements of general plans. 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 bears relation to its planning.” The California Supreme Court has called the general plan the “constitution for future development.” It expresses the community’s development goals and embodies public policy for the distribution of future land uses, both public and private.

Since the general plan affects the welfare of current and future generations, State law requires that it take a long-term perspective (typically 15 to 25 years). The general plan anticipates future conditions and needs and establishes long-term policy for day-to-day decision making. Planning is a continuous process, and the general plan should be reviewed regularly, regardless of its horizon. State guidance recommends revisiting the general plan every five years to revise specific elements as mandated by state law or as new information becomes available and community needs and values change.

In addition, Section 65301 of the California Government Code requires a general plan to address the geographic territory of the local jurisdiction and any other territory outside its boundaries that is of interest to the planning of the jurisdiction. The jurisdiction may use judgment in determining what areas outside of its boundaries to include in the planning area. The State of California General Plan Guidelines state that the planning area for a city should include (at minimum) all land within the city limits and all land within the city’s sphere of influence (SOI). “Sphere of influence” refers to the land outside the city’s boundaries that is subject to its planning and zoning regulations.

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Specific Plan Law

California Government Code, Section 65451, regulates the substantive and topical requirements of specific plans. A specific plan is a tool for the systematic implementation of the general plan to a geographic subarea of the city, similar to zoning regulations, and establishes a link between implementing policies of the general plan and individual development proposals. A specific plan differs from zoning in that it applies to a defined geographic area and has tailored development regulations.

Cortese-Knox Act

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 establishes a Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) in each county in California and authorizes these commissions to review, approve, or deny proposals for boundary changes (annexations) and incorporations for cities, counties, and special districts. The Miramonte Specific Plan is an example of an annexation currently in progress in Soledad. The LAFCO establishes an SOI for cities within their jurisdiction that describes the city's probable future physical boundaries and service area. LAFCO of Monterey County is charged with regulating Soledad's growth and the SOI. The Soledad SOI is shown on Figure 1 of this report.

To revise the SOI, it is the policy of LAFCO that applications requesting a change to the SOI include planned, well-ordered, efficient urban development patterns that take into account open space and agricultural lands. Among other requirements, the application must discuss how the revised boundary will balance the preservation of open space and prime agricultural lands with the need for orderly development.

Senate Bill 330 and Senate Bill 8

Senate Bill (SB) 330 is a comprehensive bill aimed at ensuring zoning-compliant affordable housing projects are approved by streamlining project approvals and preventing local actions that reduce housing capacity. SB 8 is a follow-on bill to SB 330 that was passed in 2021. It extended the sunset date of SB 330 provisions from 2025 to 2030. This section discusses General Plan–related portions of SB 330, as amended by SB 8.

SB 330 prohibits down-zoning in “affected” cities and counties across the entire state of California. Affected cities are any city, including a charter city, that is in an urbanized area designated by the US Census Bureau. This includes Soledad and 445 out of the 482 cities in the state. This means city councils, planning commissions, zoning boards, and the electorate (by means of a referendum) in these cities are all prohibited from: (1) reducing the allowed intensity or number of units for residential land uses/parcels individually or cumulatively; (2) imposing or enforcing a moratorium on housing development; (3) imposing any new nonobjective design standards on proposed developments; or (4) implementing or enforcing limits on the number of residential building permits issued, subject to certain exceptions. In certain cases, reductions in density/intensity are allowed, provided that those reductions are cancelled out by an increase elsewhere.

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The California Natural Resources Agency, part of the California Department of Conservation (DOC), provides technical services and information to promote informed land use decisions and sound management of the state's natural resources. As part of this duty, the DOC manages the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), which supports agriculture throughout California by developing maps and statistical data for analyzing land use impacts to farmland. Every two years, FMMP publishes a field report for each county. The most recent field report for Monterey County was published in 2018; FMMP information for the Planning Area is provided in the Agricultural Resources part of this report. The FMMP categorizes land by agricultural production potential for Monterey County according to the following classifications:

- **Prime farmland** has the best combination of physical and chemical features to sustain long-term agricultural production. Prime farmland has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for irrigated agriculture production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Farmland of statewide importance** is similar to prime farmland, but with minor shortcomings, such as steeper slopes or less ability to store soil moisture. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Unique farmland** consists of lesser-quality soils used for the production of the state's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated but may include unirrigated orchards or vineyards, as found in some climatic zones in California. Land must have been farmed at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Farmland of local importance** is land that is important to the local agricultural economy but does not meet the definitions of prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, or unique farmland.
- **Grazing land** is the land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock.

The FMMP categorizes other land in the following classifications:

- **Urban and built-up land** is land occupied by residential, industrial, commercial, construction, institutional, public administration, and other developed land. Land that falls within this category has a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel.
- **Other land** is land that does not fall within any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural developments, confined livestock, and vacant nonagricultural land that is greater than 40 acres and surrounded on all sides by urban development.

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Williamson Act

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, better known as the Williamson Act, conserves agricultural and open space lands through property tax incentives and voluntary restrictive land use contracts administered by local governments under state regulations. Private landowners voluntarily restrict their land to agricultural and compatible open space uses under minimum 10-year rolling term contracts, with counties and cities also acting voluntarily. In return, restricted parcels are assessed for property tax purposes at a rate consistent with their actual use, rather than potential market value.

Senate Bill 9

SB 9 passed in 2021 and requires that most single-family residential zones, regardless of city zoning, allow for up to four homes in the lot area that is typically used for one single-family home. Property owners are able to split their existing single-family lot and develop two homes on both subdivided lots. Under SB 9, cities are required to review proposed projects at the staff level without a public hearing. This law is new, and full interpretation of the law still needs to be determined. For example, this law overrides city zoning regulations but not homeowners' association (HOA) regulations. Therefore, HOA regulations prohibiting development of four units per parcel would not be superseded by SB 9.

REGIONAL REGULATIONS

Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and council of governments (COG) for Monterey County, San Benito County, and Santa Cruz County. Note that the San Benito County Council of Governments is a subregional COG and is one of three regional transportation planning agencies in the AMBAG area. AMBAG is responsible for taking the overall Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) provided by the State and preparing a formula for allocating that housing need by income level for Monterey and Santa Cruz counties. AMBAG produces growth forecasts on four-year cycles so that other regional agencies, including the San Benito County Council of Governments, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, the Transportation Agency for Monterey County, and the Monterey Bay Air Resources District, can use the forecast to make project funding and regulatory decisions.

The AMBAG projections are the basis for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which is discussed in the Circulation section of this report. AMBAG projections have practical consequences that shape growth and environmental quality, and the general plans, zoning regulations, and growth management programs of local jurisdictions inform the AMBAG projections. The AMBAG projections are also developed to reflect the impact of "smart growth" policies and incentives that could be used to shift development patterns from historical trends toward a better jobs-housing balance, increased preservation of open space, and greater development and redevelopment in urban core and transit-accessible areas throughout the AMBAG region.

Monterey County General Plan

The most recent comprehensive update of the General Plan for Monterey County was adopted in 2010. It includes a Land Use Element, Circulation Element, Conservation and Open Space Element, Safety Element, Public Services Element, Agriculture Element, Economic Development Element, Housing Element, and 10 area and master plans. Of the 10 area and master plans in the County's 2010 General Plan, the Central Salinas Valley Area Plan is the most relevant and related to Soledad's General Plan Update because it regulates the county lands outside of the city limits. Policies in the County General Plan require establishing regulations for a number of land use categories, including Agriculture, Commercial, Industrial, and Residential. These policies apply to the three main designations in the unincorporated areas outside of Soledad in the Central Salinas Valley Area Plan, as follows:

- **Farmlands 40 Acre Minimum.** Per Policy LU-3.1, the Farmlands designation allows a range of uses to conserve and enhance the use of the important farmlands in the county while providing an opportunity to establish necessary support facilities for those agricultural uses.
- **Permanent Grazing 40 Acre Minimum.** Per Policy LU-3.1, the Permanent Grazing designation allows a range of land uses to conserve and enhance the productive grazing lands in the county.
- **Rivers and Water Bodies.** The Salinas River that runs by Soledad is identified as "rivers and water bodies" in the Central Salinas Valley Area Plan.

There are also a few small areas in the unincorporated lands outside of Soledad in the following County land use categories:

- **Residential-Low Density.** Per Policy LU-2.34 in the 2010 General Plan, the Low Density Residential category is appropriate for residential (1 to 5 acres/unit), recreational, public, and quasi-public, and limited agricultural activities that are subordinate to the residential use.
- **Commercial.** The Central Salinas Valley Area Plan identifies an area near Soledad along Highway 101 as Commercial. Per Policy LU-4.1 in the 2010 General Plan, the commercial areas will be designated Light Commercial, Heavy Commercial, or Visitor Accommodations/Professional Office. The County's Zoning Map designates this area as Heavy Commercial, which allows the development of modern industry, research institutions, and administration facilities.
- **Industrial.** The Central Salinas Valley Area Plan identifies an area near Soledad along Highway 101 as Industrial. Per Policy LU-5.1 in the 2010 General Plan, the industrial areas will be designated Agricultural Industrial, Light Industrial, and Heavy Industrial. The County's zoning map designates this area as Heavy Industrial, which allows the development of modern industry, research institutions, and administration facilities.
- **Agricultural Industrial.** Per Policy LU-5.1 in the 2010 General Plan, the Agricultural Industrial designation will accommodate a balanced development of agriculturally oriented industrial uses that support existing and future agricultural activity and provide a broad spectrum of agricultural industrial uses that contribute to the enhancement of agriculture as a major industry of Monterey County.
- **Affordable Housing Overlay.** The 2010 General Plan established an Affordable Housing Overlay Program (Policy LU-2.11) to encourage the development of affordable and workforce housing in

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the county. If a property within the overlay meets all of the suitability criteria established in the Land Use Element, owners may voluntarily choose to develop an Affordable Housing Overlay project rather than a project with a use otherwise allowed by the underlying land use designation. There is one property outside of Soledad’s city limits, next to the Salinas Valley State Prison, that includes the Affordable Housing Overlay per the Central Salinas Valley Area Plan, and a 44-unit affordable housing project has been built on this site.

The County 2010 General Plan also includes the supplemental policies listed in Table 1 for the Central Salinas Valley Area Plan, including policies that mention two properties near Soledad but outside the SOI: the Old Mission School house on Foothill Road; and the Paraiso Hot Springs lands in the foothills to the southwest.

TABLE 1. 2010 MONTEREY COUNTY GENERAL PLAN: CENTRAL SALINAS VALLEY AREA PLAN POLICIES

Policy Number	Policy Description
CSV-1.1	<p>Special Treatment Area: Paraiso Hot Springs. The Paraiso Hot Springs properties shall be designated a Special Treatment Area. Recreation and visitor-serving land uses for the Paraiso Hot Springs Special Treatment Area may be permitted in accordance with a general development plan and other discretionary approvals such as subdivision maps, use permits, and design approvals. The Special Treatment Area may include such uses as a lodge, individual cottages, a visitor center, recreational vehicle accommodations, restaurant, shops, stables, tennis courts, aquaculture, hiking trails, vineyards, and orchards. The plan shall address cultural resources protection, fire safety, access, sewage treatment and disposal, water quality, water quantity, drainage, and soil stability issues. (APNs 418-361-004, 418- 361-009, 418-381-021, 418-381-022) The Paraiso Hot Springs properties are near Soledad in the foothills to the southwest of Soledad, outside of the city limits and SOI.</p>
CSV-1.2	<p>All recreation and visitor-serving commercial land uses shall require a use permit. Said uses on sites greater than 10 acres shall require a comprehensive development plan that addresses hydrology, water quantity and quality, sewage treatment and disposal, fire safety, access, drainage, soils, and geology.</p>
CSV-1.3	<p>Special Treatment Area: Spence/Potter/Encinal Roads. The area generally along Potter, Spence, and Encinal Roads, excluding large properties under cultivation between Spence and Potter Roads, shall be designated as a Special Treatment Area to permit on-site soil-dependent agricultural operations such as greenhouses. The minimum parcel size in this area shall be 10 acres, and subdivision of land may be approved only if the following conditions are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential uses are allowed only on parcels of 40 acres or more. • A drainage management plan to mitigate run-off to adjoining farmlands must be prepared for the entire Special Treatment Area. • One caretaker unit per 10 acres may be allowed. • No uses other than agriculture, agricultural support services, labor contracting businesses, and agricultural equipment rental and maintenance businesses will be allowed on subdivided parcels.
CSV-1.4	<p>Study Area: Spence/Potter/Encinal Road. The Spence/Potter Road area, including the Special Treatment Area described in Policy CSV-1.3, is designated a study area for alternative land uses to support the agricultural industry. Prior to new development other than those consistent with the underlying land use designation, in the Spence/Potter Road study area, the following must be completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cumulative impact analysis of industrial buildout of the study area, including road capacity, highway access, drainage, and viewshed impacts from Highway 101. • Recommended changes to the STA boundaries or allowable uses within the STA, as necessary, to address the impacts identified. • A drainage management plan to mitigate runoff to adjoining farmlands for the entire study area. • Amendments to the General Plan, as necessary, and ordinance amendments to address revised landscaping and screening standards.

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Policy Number	Policy Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An implementation plan to fund and construct the identified infrastructure improvements. <p>The studies and plans identified in this policy may be paid for by the County or interested property owners.</p>
CSV-1.5	<p>Special Treatment Area: Old Mission School. The Old Mission School property shall be designated a “special treatment area.” Winery-related facilities, including a food service, gift shop, and a reception hall, may be conditionally allowed by use permit in the special treatment area. The facilities shall be subject to the review and requirements of the Monterey County Public Works Department, Director of Environmental Health, Water Resources Agency, and Director of Planning. (APN 165-033-002, 165-073-016) The Old Mission School property is near Soledad along Foothill Road but outside of Soledad’s city limits and SOI.</p>
CSV-3.1	<p>Within areas designated as “sensitive” or “highly sensitive” on the Scenic Monterey County General Plan Central Salinas Valley Area Plan October 26, 2010 Page, CSV-3 Highway Corridors and Visual Sensitivity Map, landscaping or new development may be permitted if the development is located and designed in such a manner that public views are not disrupted.</p>
CSV-3.2	<p>The development and utilization of renewable energy sources such as solar, wind generation, and biomass technologies in the Central Salinas Valley are encouraged.</p>
CSV-5.1	<p>Development shall be designed to maintain groundwater recharge capabilities on the property. To protect and maintain areas for groundwater recharge, preservation of riparian habitats, and flood flow capacity, the main channels of the Arroyo Seco River and the Salinas River shall not be encroached on by development.</p>
CSV-5.2	<p>Recreation and visitor-serving commercial uses shall only be allowed if it can be proven that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas identified by the Water Resources Agency as prime groundwater recharge areas can be preserved and protected from sources of pollution, as determined by the Director of Environmental Health and the Water Resources Agency. Proposed development can be phased to ensure that existing groundwater supplies are not committed beyond their safe, long-term yields where such yields can be determined. Floodways associated with the main channels of either the Arroyo Seco River or the Salinas River will not be encroached on by development because of the necessity to protect and maintain these areas for groundwater recharge, preservation of riparian habitats, and flood flow capacity, as determined by the Water Resources Agency. The proposed development meets both water quality and quantity standards expressed in Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations and Title 15.04 of the Monterey County Code, as determined by the Director of Environmental Health. The proposed development meets the minimum standards of the Regional Water Quality Control Board’s Central Coast Basin Plan when on-site wastewater treatment systems are proposed and also will not adversely affect groundwater quality, as determined by the Director of Environmental Health. The proposed development will not generate levels of runoff which will either cause erosion or adversely affect surface water resources, as determined by the Water Resources Agency.
CSV-6.1	<p>Energy-efficient business and agricultural practices are encouraged.</p>

Source: Monterey County, 2010 Monterey County General Plan.

Memorandum of Agreement Between the City and Monterey County

In 2016, the City of Soledad and the County of Monterey entered into an agreement to work cooperatively on common planning, growth, and development issues to provide more certainty in the direction of future urban development, reduce conflicts and costs for future development such as affordable housing, and provide for the long-term protection of the valuable agricultural land in the region. The agreement divides initiatives into 10 sections, as shown below. An associated SOI amendment was approved by LAFCO in 2022 in anticipation of the future annexation of land subject to the 2018 Miramonte Specific Plan (described on page 19 of this report).

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- **Logical and Orderly Development.** Determines that development will be “logical and orderly,” meaning that both the City and County acknowledge the need to conserve agricultural land and limit urban development impacts on agricultural operations. The County takes a “city-centered growth” approach, which relies on the City to accommodate housing and other urban growth needs.
- **Direction of Future Development.** Outlines the agreement regarding the direction of future development and emphasizes that growth remains within the urban growth boundary (UGB), which is shown on Figure 1.
- **Specific Planning Actions.** Notes specific areas and actions that the City and County intend to implement if the SOI amendment that was proposed by the City at the time of the agreement is adopted.
- **Development Phasing and Annexations.** Acknowledges the phasing of development in the UGB will be accomplished through the use of Specific Plans to ensure proper services are provided for new residential uses. The City will share plans with the County for informal review and comment regarding potential impacts to unincorporated areas; environmental documents will also be referred to County for formal review.
- **Agricultural Land Compatibility.** The City agrees to maintain agriculture as the core of the local economy by conserving and protecting agricultural lands and operations within its planning area boundary; if land must be converted, the City agrees to keep land in production until the conversion time.
- **Agricultural Land Conservation Program.** The City agrees to maintain agricultural open space around the city and implement an agricultural land conservation program that would include securing the dedication of agricultural land easements, purchase of banked mitigation credits, and/or levying a mitigation fee that could be used to purchase easements on lands outside of the UGB.
- **Traffic Mitigation Fees.** The County agrees to prepare and consider a traffic impact fee for a zone that includes the Greater Soledad Area within 18 months of the adoption of the amended SOI by LAFCO.
- **Tax Sharing.** The City and County agree to discuss the Master Tax-Sharing Agreement prior to annexing any territory in the City’s UGB, except for in the SOI.
- **Environmental Review, Public Hearing, and Local Decision-Making.** The City and County agree to other processes that are necessary for this multistep process of expanding the SOI, such as the environmental review process, the need to hold public hearings, and obtaining approvals from the applicable agencies.
- **Amendment.** Amendments to the agreement must be approved by the County’s Board of Supervisors and the City Council for Soledad.

LOCAL REGULATIONS

Planning Boundaries

Growth in Soledad is guided by several planning boundaries, including the Planning Area, City Limits, SOI, and UGB. These planning boundaries encompass land inside and outside the city limits. Planning boundaries are summarized in Table 2, shown on Figure 1, and described below.

TABLE 2. SOLEDAD PLANNING BOUNDARIES

Boundary	Acres
City Limits	2,995
Sphere of Influence	710
Urban Growth Boundary	4,084
Planning Area	5,422

Source: City of Soledad, 2023; Monterey County, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2023.

General Plan Planning Area

State law refers to the Planning Area as “any land outside [the city] boundaries which in the [City’s] judgment bears relation to its planning.” The Planning Area does not give the City any regulatory power, it signals to the County and to other nearby local and regional authorities that Soledad recognizes that development in this area has an impact on the future of the city and its residents.

For the General Plan update, the City will define an updated Planning Area. The current proposed Planning Area (shown on Figure 1) is 5,422 acres, larger than the UGB, the SOI, and the city limits. Through the General Plan update process, the Planning Area may be revised to reflect current conditions and community needs.

City Limits

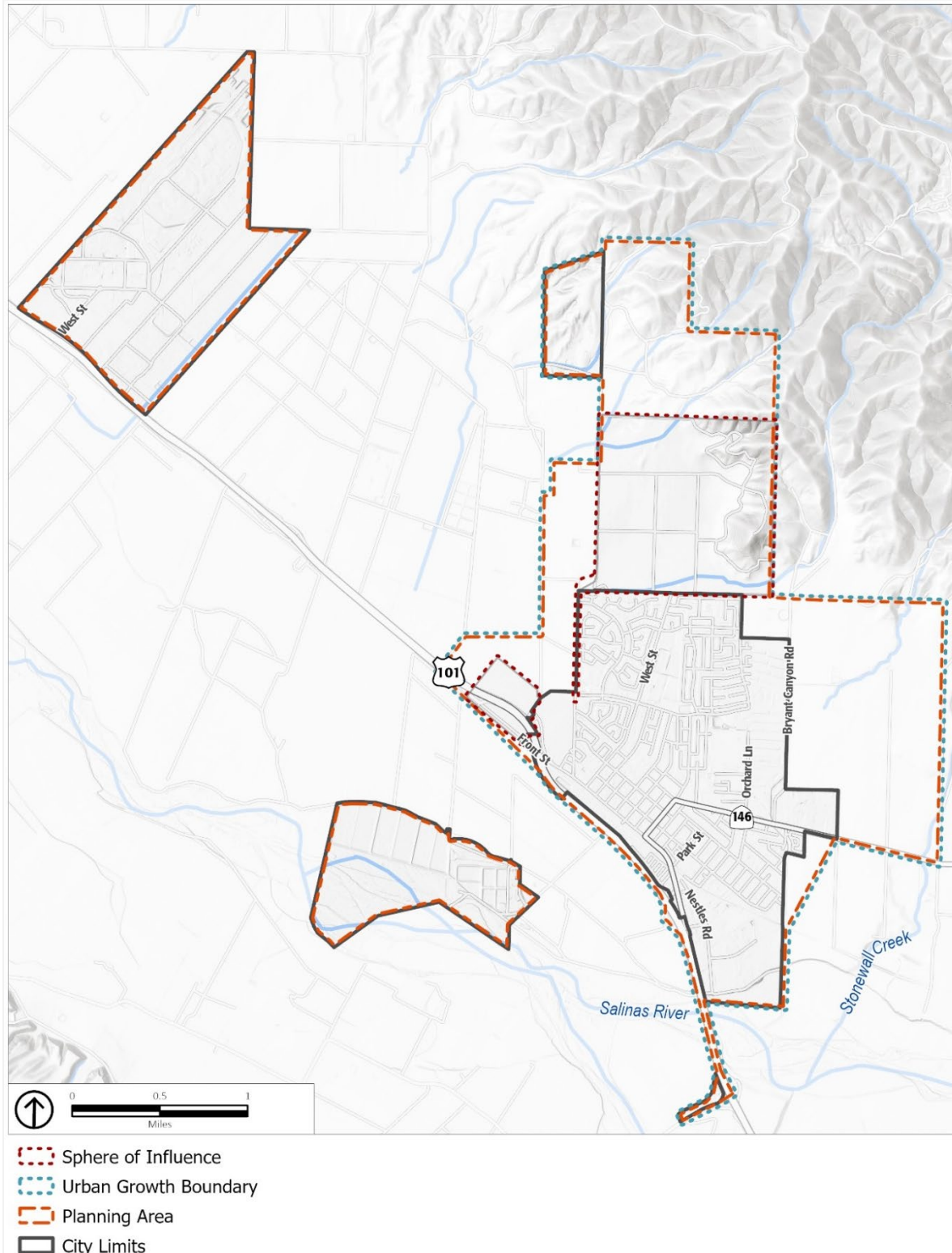
The city limits of Soledad are the legal boundaries that define the geographical area within which the city government has jurisdiction and authority. The city limits are formed and regulated through a formal process that involves multiple levels of government and community input. The use of land within the city limits is controlled by the City of Soledad through its General Plan, zoning code, building code, land subdivision process, environmental regulations, and other regulations. The current city limits incorporate 2,995 acres and include two islands that are outside of the core city area—the Salinas Valley State Prison and Correctional Training Facility, the Soledad Water Reclamation Facility, and Los Coches Adobe.

Sphere of Influence

Soledad’s SOI was established through a process of the Monterey County LAFCO involving a comprehensive study of the city’s infrastructure, services, and land-use needs. The process resulted in the identification of areas that are likely to be annexed by Soledad in the future and the establishment of policies and guidelines for the orderly growth and development of these areas. The SOI was last updated in 2022 with the conditional annexation of land comprising the Miramonte Specific Plan. The current SOI is 714 acres.

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Figure 1. General Plan Planning Boundaries



Source: AMBAG, 2022; ESRI, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2023.

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Urban Growth Boundary

Soledad’s UGB defines the area that can accommodate long-term growth and development. The UGB was established in 2016 as part of the Memorandum of Agreement between the City and County and is meant to preserve valuable agricultural lands surrounding Soledad. Farmers and ranchers outside of the UGB can invest in and continue farming with the certainty that the land will remain agricultural and without pressure to convert their lands to urban development. The City’s current UGB is 4,106 acres. An amendment to the Memorandum of Agreement between the City and County would be required to revise the UGB. The agreement would need to be approved by the County Board of Supervisors and the City Council.

Soledad General Plan

This section describes the existing General Plan land use designations and the expansion areas that were identified in Soledad’s 2005 General Plan. As shown on Figure 2 and in Table 3, the existing General Plan land use map designates most of the land within the city limits for urban uses. General Plan land uses are primarily single-family residential and public facility uses concentrated throughout the city. A State prison, the Salinas Valley State Prison and Correctional Training Facility, is also in Soledad. Commercial land uses are concentrated along Front Street, which is Soledad’s Downtown, and through other areas of the city. Medium- to high-density residential land uses, agriculture, and industrial land uses can be found in small pockets in the rest of city. The existing built land use of a property may or may not be consistent with the existing General Plan land use map designation shown on Figure 2. Furthermore, some land use designations may change as part of the General Plan update.

Table 3 shows the comparative acreages of General Plan land use designations on the current General Plan land use map.

TABLE 3. SOLEDAD 2005 GENERAL PLAN LAND USE CATEGORIES AND ACREAGES

General Plan Land Use Category	Acres	Percentage of Total
Single Family Residential	527	19.8%
Medium Density Residential	98	3.7%
High Density Residential	60	2.2%
Downtown Commercial	21	0.8%
Service Commercial	9	0.4%
Neighborhood Commercial	6	0.2%
General Commercial	105	3.9%
Public Facility	740	27.8%
Industrial	156	5.9%
Agriculture	38	1.4%
Other (Soledad State Prison Area)	907	34.0%
TOTAL	2,668¹	100.0%

Source: City of Soledad General Plan, 2005.

Note:

1. The General Plan land use mapping data differ from the AMBAG place types data, resulting in differing total acreage from Table 4.

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Land use designations represent the intended future use of each parcel of land. They provide a vision of the future organization of uses in the city and a flexible structure to allow for changes in economic conditions, community vision, and environmental conditions. In other words, designations generally state what the future use should be, but are not intended to be so rigid as to prohibit changes in the future. The existing General Plan land use designations include the following designations.

Single Family Residential

The Single Family Residential designation encourages single-family development and allows a range of other uses, including schools, churches, and public facilities. This designation allows one to six units per acre. Properties with this designation can generally be found throughout the city north of Monterey Street. A substantial amount of land in Soledad (approximately 20 percent) falls under this designation.

Medium Density Residential

The Medium Density Residential designation encourages the development of multifamily housing such as apartments, condominiums, and townhouses. This designation allows 7 to 12 units per acre and is incorporated throughout the city. A small amount of land in Soledad (approximately 4 percent) falls under this designation.

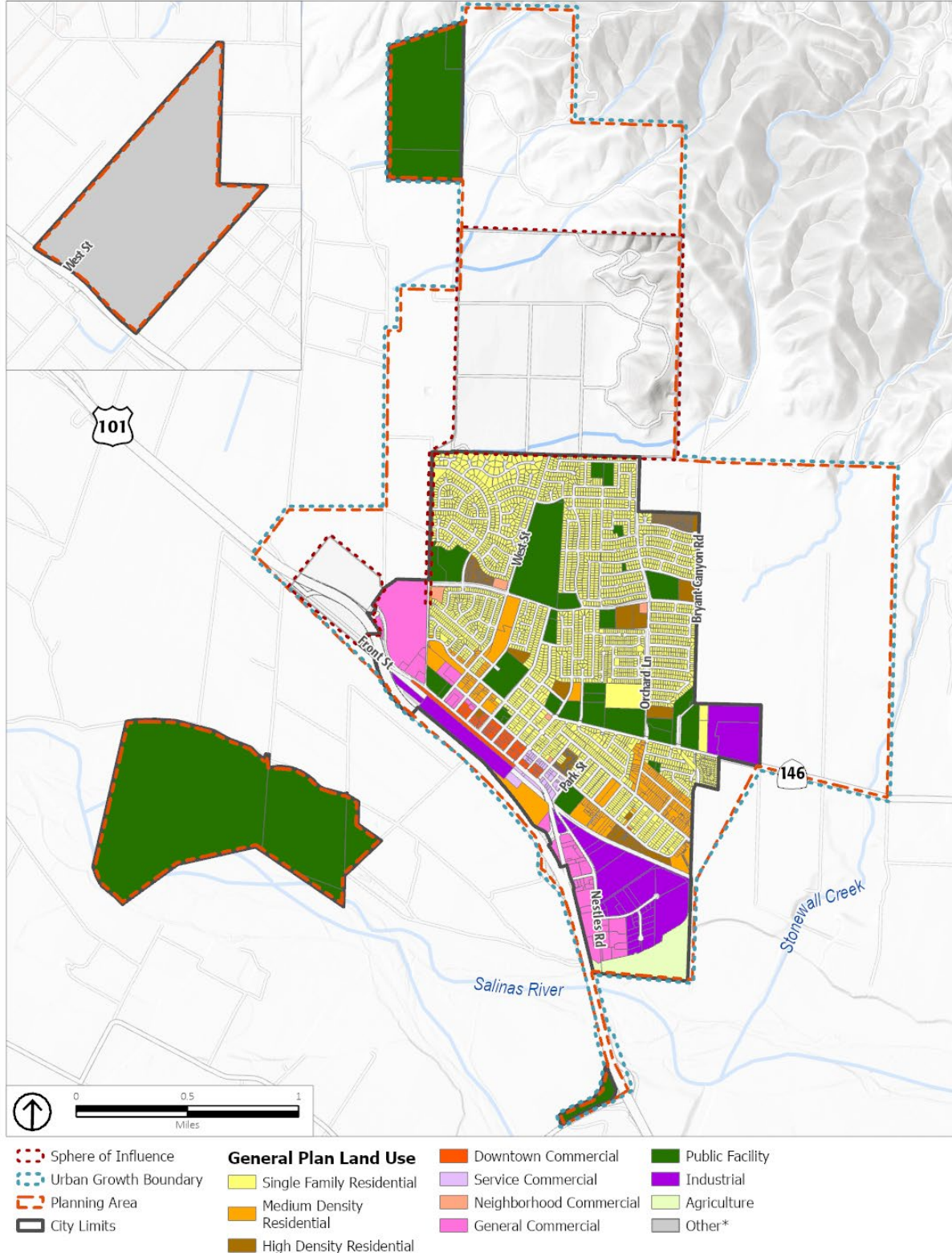
High Density Residential

The High Density Residential designation encourages the development of multifamily housing such as apartments, condominiums, and townhouses. This designation allows 13 to 20 units per acre and is incorporated throughout the city. A small amount of land in Soledad (approximately 2 percent) falls under this designation.

General Commercial

The General Commercial designation allows a variety of commercial uses to serve the needs of the community and visitors. This designation appears along the western side of the city and along Highway 101 and is mostly comprised of highway-serving uses, such as hotels, food stores, restaurants, and gas stations. Examples of existing General Commercial uses in Soledad include fast food restaurants, gas stations, self-storage facilities, and the Soledad Marketplace, which is currently in the process of being constructed (as of May 2023) and will include mix of retail stores and restaurants. A small amount of land in Soledad (approximately 4 percent) falls under this designation.

Figure 2. General Plan Land Use Map



Source: AMBAG, 2022, City of Soledad, 2023; ESRI, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2023

* "Other" includes areas designated for the Salinas Valley State Prison and Correctional Training Facility.

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Neighborhood Commercial

The Neighborhood Commercial designation provides goods and services for a specific neighborhood. This includes convenience stores, food stores, and drug stores. The majority of this designation can be found along Gabilan Drive. An example of an existing Neighborhood Commercial area is Gabilan Plaza, which has a bank, nail salon, pizzeria, and other uses. A small amount of land in Soledad (approximately 0.2 percent) falls under this designation.

Downtown Commercial

The Downtown Commercial designation provides a mix of retail, office, and other service uses in the Central Business District and allows the potential for residential uses on the second floor. This designation is concentrated along Front Street in Soledad's Downtown. Examples of existing uses in the Downtown area include restaurants, discount stores, and offices. A small amount of land in Soledad (approximately 0.8 percent) falls under this designation. Downtown is also governed by the Downtown Specific Plan, which includes Downtown-focused zoning districts (described further on page 18).

Service Commercial

The Service Commercial designation allows wholesale and retail stores and shops with a heavy commercial or business park character. Business in this designation can be conducted inside a building or outside, such as auto repair shops and farm equipment repair and sales. This designation can be found near Downtown along Front Street and Monterey Street. Some examples of existing Service Commercial uses include a mechanics shop, car wash, and an auto center. A small amount of land in Soledad (approximately 0.4 percent) falls under this designation.

Industrial

Located in a conventional industrial or business park setting, this designation caters to manufacturing, processing, repair, storage, and/or agricultural-related industries. The Industrial designation is generally in the three areas around Soledad: 1) north of Highway 101 and south of Front Street, 2) north of Los Coches Drive and south of the railroad tracks, and 3) on the most eastern edge of town along State Route 146. Some examples of existing Industrial uses include an agriculture supply store, a self-storage facility, and a winery. A limited amount of land in Soledad (approximately 6 percent) falls under this designation.

Public Facility

Appropriate uses for the Public Facility designation include schools, government buildings, a library, and churches. Most of these areas are located throughout the city, including north of Front Street, concentrated around single-family designations. Some examples of existing Public Facility uses include Soledad High School, Gabilan Elementary School, and the Soledad Water Reclamation Facility. This designation also includes parks and recreational uses, such as Blas Santana Park, Peverini Park, and Jesse Gallardo Park. A large amount of land in Soledad (approximately 28 percent) falls under this designation.

Agriculture

Agriculture-designated areas are intended to preserve and protect soil-dependent uses. This designation is in one area on the southernmost edge of the city. A small amount of land in Soledad (approximately 1 percent) falls under this designation; however, Soledad is mostly surrounded by agricultural uses, and many of the agricultural lands are outside the city limits.

Other

The area designated Other applies to the Salinas Valley State Prison and Correctional Training Facility, which is north of the core city area but within the city limits. State prison facilities are regulated and managed by the State of California. A large amount of land in Soledad (approximately 34 percent) falls under this designation.

Expansion Areas

This section describes the five expansion areas that were identified in Soledad's 2005 General Plan. These areas were designated by the City as the locations where expansion and growth could potentially occur. As part of the General Plan update process, the areas below may be revised or removed to reflect current conditions and community needs.

- **Northwest Expansion Area.** The Northwest Expansion Area was envisioned in the 2005 General Plan as an industrial park surrounding the Dole plant that included commercial uses, a linear park, low-density residential or estate lots, and medium- to high-density residential housing. The expansion area was identified to the northwest of the city along Highway 101 and near Camphora Gloria Road. The development identified for this area has not occurred yet.
- **North Entry Commercial.** The North Entry Commercial Expansion Area was envisioned as a regional commercial retail center with other uses such as offices, neighborhood parks, and higher density housing. This expansion area was identified to the west of Downtown Soledad and along Highway 101 near the freeway interchange. The development identified for this area has not occurred yet.
- **San Vicente West.** This expansion area was intended for low- and medium-density residential, retail, and neighborhood parks. Medium-density multifamily uses were planned next to anticipated shopping, services, and employment opportunities. This area is to the west of San Vicente Street and north of Gabilan Drive. The development identified for this area has not occurred yet.
- **Mirassou.** The Mirassou expansion area was envisioned to become a major future growth area for Soledad in the 2005 General Plan. Some of the objectives identified in the General Plan were to preserve the scenic hills; provide a range of residential housing types, commercial uses and office spaces; create an 18-hole golf course; and provide locations for public and quasi-public land uses. This expansion area is directly north of Soledad and is now the subject of the Miramonte Specific Plan.

LAND USE

- **Miravale II.** This expansion area was envisioned to have residences at a variety of densities, with complementary neighborhood commercial uses. Other envisioned uses included neighborhood parks, the expansion of the Soledad Cemetery, and an attractive open space corridor along Bryant Canyon Road. This expansion area is north of State Route 146 along the eastern edge of the city. The majority of this area is currently developed with residential uses.

EXISTING BUILT LAND USE

This section describes existing built or “on-the-ground” land uses in Soledad. The existing land use of a property does not carry any regulatory significance and may or may not be consistent with the current General Plan designation or zoning but can be useful for comparison with the General Plan Land Use Map distribution of land uses (see Figure 2). In some cases, existing land uses were established prior to adoption of the current 2005 General Plan and zoning map. Geographic information system (GIS) databases from AMBAG inform the land use data presented here. There may be inconsistencies between what the mapping data report as the existing use and what is actually on the ground today.

Figure 3 and Table 4 show the distribution of existing land uses across 13 categories. The categories and percentages of existing land uses in Table 4 are different from the General Plan land use designation percentages in Table 3, which show what could be built on the property, not what currently exists.

- **Single Family Residential.** Single-family land uses are distributed throughout the city. Single-family uses mostly include a single unit on a parcel, but they could also include single-family homes with accessory dwelling units or duplexes. Single-family uses account for approximately 19 percent of land in Soledad.
- **Low Density Residential.** Low-density residential land uses, such as single-family homes and lower-density multifamily land uses, are concentrated along or near Vosti Avenue. This area accounts for 0.7 percent of land in Soledad.
- **Medium Density Residential.** Medium-density residential uses, such as multiplexes and apartments, can be found in small pockets throughout the city and along Monterey Street and West Street. This area accounts for approximately 4 percent of land in Soledad.
- **High Density Residential.** High-density residential uses, such as apartments and townhomes, can be found in small pockets throughout the city and along Monterey Street. This area accounts for approximately 1.5 percent of land in Soledad.
- **Commercial – Community.** Community commercial uses are in two areas of the city along Gabilan Drive, and this designation accounts for 0.1 percent of Soledad. Gabilan Plaza is one of the community commercial areas and it includes a bank, nail salon, and pizzeria.
- **Commercial – Convenience.** Convenience commercial uses are located along Front Street and include the railroad tracks, a church, a hair salon, the Soledad Corporation Yard, among other commercial uses. This area accounts for approximately 1 percent of land in Soledad.
- **Commercial – General.** General commercial uses, including ice cream shops, restaurants, retail stores, and banks, are concentrated along Front Street in Soledad’s Downtown. This area accounts for approximately 0.8 percent of land in Soledad.

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- **Commercial – Highway.** Highway commercial uses are concentrated in two areas, along the western edge of the city and along Highway 101. This area accounts for 3.6 percent of land in Soledad. Existing uses in this area include a storage facility, shopping center, and restaurants.
- **Commercial – Residential.** Residential commercial uses are mainly located along Monterey Street. This area accounts for approximately 0.1 percent of land in Soledad and includes residential homes that are near commercial uses.
- **Open Space/Wildlife Habitat.** Open space land that currently appears to be used for agricultural purposes is in one area on the southern edge of the city, and its use accounts for 1 percent of land in Soledad.
- **Public/Institutional/Recreation.** Public, institutional, and recreational uses including parks, schools, and public facilities are located throughout the city and are mainly concentrated around existing residential homes. This area accounts for approximately 28 percent of land in Soledad.
- **Industrial.** Industrial uses, such as warehousing and manufacturing, can generally be found in three areas in Soledad, the most prominent of which is north of Highway 101 and south of Front Street. The industrial area accounts for approximately 5 percent of land in Soledad.
- **Other.** This area, which accounts for approximately 34.5 percent of land in Soledad houses the Salinas Valley State Prison and Correctional Training Facility, which is managed and regulated by the State of California.

TABLE 4. EXISTING BUILT LAND USE

Land Use Types	Acres (City Limits)	Percentage of Total
Commercial - Community	4	0.1%
Commercial - Convenience	30	1.2%
Commercial - General	20	0.8%
Commercial - Highway	95	3.6%
Commercial - Residential	4	0.1%
Single Family Residential	504	19.1%
Low Density Residential	17	0.7%
Medium Density Residential	106	4.0%
High Density Residential	40	1.5%
Open Space / Wildlife Habitat	38	1.4%
Public / Institutional / Recreation	726	27.6%
Industrial	142	5.4%
Other (Soledad State Prison Area)	907	34.5%
TOTAL	2,633¹	100.0%

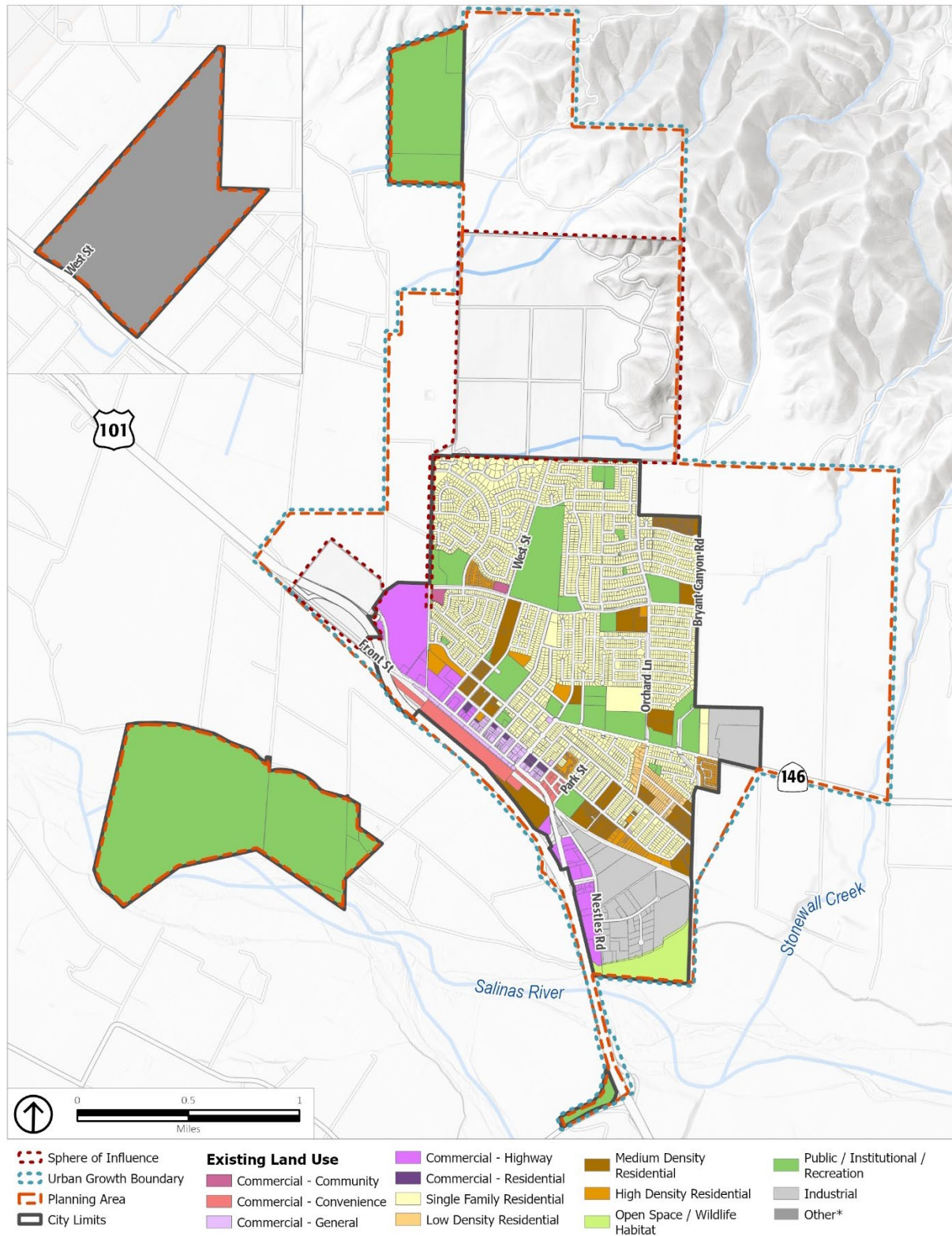
Source: AMBAG place types data, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.

Note:

1. The existing land use mapping data differ from the AMBAG place types data, resulting in different acreages from Table 3.

LAND USE

Figure 3. Existing Built Land Uses



Source: AMBAG, 2022, City of Soledad, 2023; ESRI, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2023

* "Other" includes area designated for the Salinas Valley State Prison and Correctional Training Facility.

Soledad Zoning Code

The city of Soledad is also regulated by the Soledad Municipal Code (SMC). The SMC is a collection of ordinances, that is, “laws” related to the governance of Soledad and the protection of its residents. The SMC is organized by title, chapter, section, and subject matter (revenue and finance, public services, zoning, etc.). The SMC establishes governmental regulatory processes (sales tax regulations, City Council decision making, etc.) that allow the City to maintain day-to-day functions, and the zoning code dictates the physical fabric of the community.

The City of Soledad Zoning Ordinance is a component of the SMC and the primary tool that regulates physical development in Soledad. The Zoning Ordinance identifies zoning districts, site development regulations, and other general provisions that ensure consistency between the General Plan and proposed development projects. The primary purpose of the Zoning Ordinance is to “implement the general plan, provide rules and regulations for the development and use of land in an orderly manner, and promote and protect the public health, safety, peace, morals, comfort and general welfare” of the residents and businesses in Soledad. The Zoning Ordinance contains the zoning map and development standards for the zoning districts shown on Figure 4. The purpose of the zoning districts is to implement the land use designations established by Soledad’s General Plan.

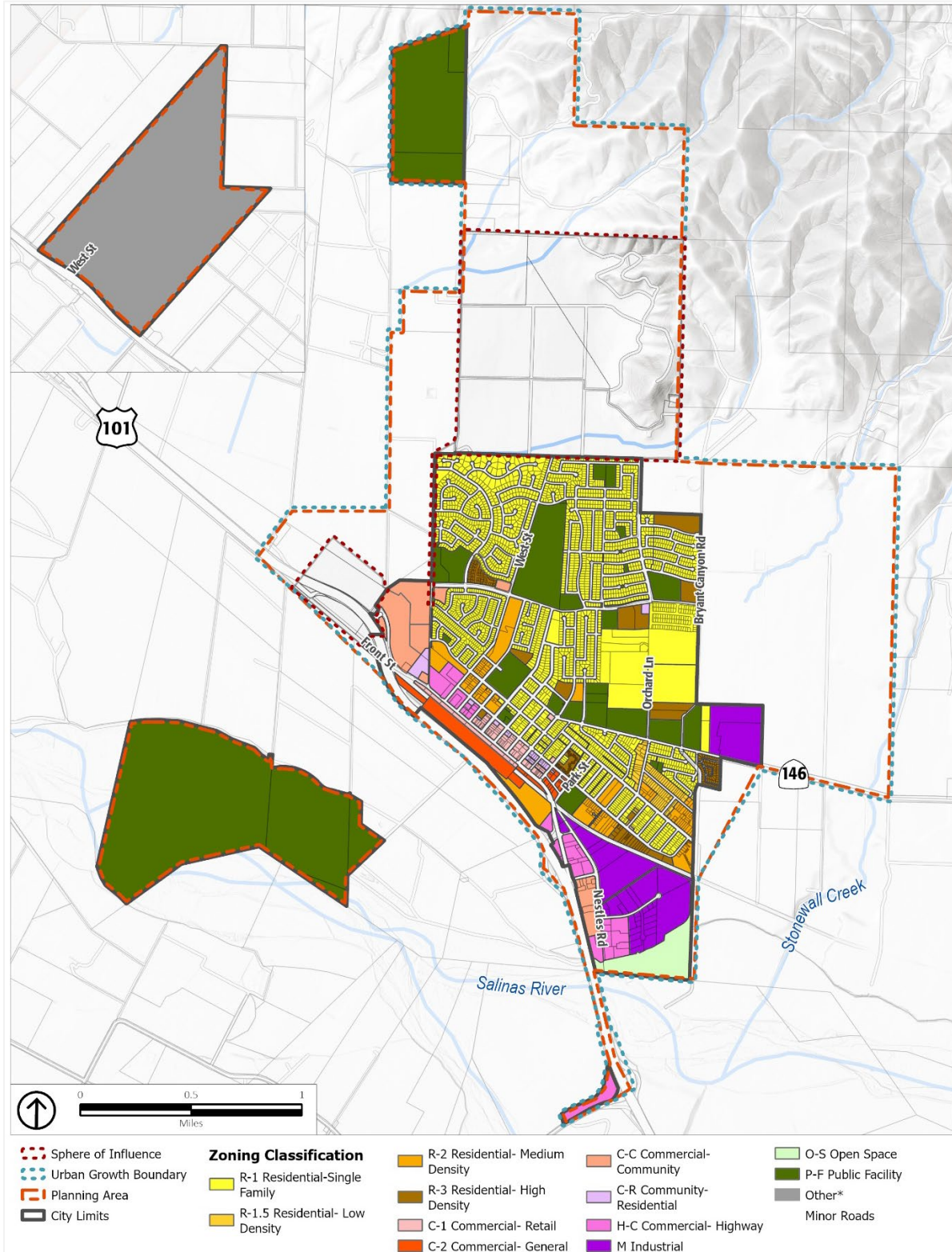
The following paragraphs provide brief summaries of the zoning districts in Soledad, including examples of the allowable uses in each zone.

- **R-1 Single-Family Residential District.** This district promotes and provides for the development of single-family residential homes on lots greater than 5,000 square feet. In this district, no more than one dwelling unit is permitted for each 6,000 square feet of lot area, except within planned developments.
- **R-1.5 Low-Density Residential District.** This district is intended to protect the quality of the residential environment. The homes in this district cannot exceed two dwelling units for each lot, or one dwelling unit for each 4,500 square feet of lot area. The types of dwelling units that can be built are single-family homes and duplexes.
- **R-2 Medium-Density Residential District.** This district is intended to protect the quality of the residential environment. The homes in this district cannot exceed 12 dwelling units for each acre of the building site, or one dwelling unit for each 3,500 square feet on a site of less than one acre. The types of dwelling units that can be built are single-family homes, duplexes, and triplexes.
- **R-3 High-Density Residential District.** This district is intended to protect the quality of the residential environment. The homes in this district cannot exceed 16 dwelling units for each acre of the building site, or one dwelling unit for each 3,000 square feet on a site of less than one acre. 22 dwelling units per acre are conditionally allowed in this district. The types of dwelling units that can be built are single-family homes, duplexes, and triplexes.
- **C-1 Retail Central Business District.** This district implements the Downtown Specific Plan and also preserves and enhances older architectural styles, provides an increased variety and density of development, and promotes pedestrian-oriented uses where feasible. Some of the permitted uses in this district include department stores, artist supply stores, bakeries, bookstores, and restaurants.

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- **C-2 General Commercial District.** This district is intended for vehicle-oriented uses, with architectural and landscaping controls to protect the amenities of the area and to allow for the heavier types of commercial and semi-industrial uses. Permitted uses in this district include print shops, automobile upholstery shops, large appliance repair and sales stores, secondhand goods sale, and highway-oriented uses like hotels, food stores, restaurants, and gas stations. Residential uses are not permitted.
- **C-C Community Commercial District.** This district is intended to ensure major and smaller neighborhood commercial shopping centers are well planned. Some of the permitted uses in this district include department stores, artist supply stores, bakeries, bookstores, and restaurants. Residential uses are not permitted.
- **C-R Commercial Residential District.** This district provides both residential and light commercial activities within the Downtown Specific Plan area and in neighborhood commercial zoning districts as an overlay zone. Commercial uses such as bookstores, boutiques, and specialty shops are permitted. Residential uses, including multifamily dwellings, are allowed with approval of a conditional use permit. The density cannot exceed one dwelling unit for each 3,000 square feet of lot area, subject to the limitation that any lot smaller than 4,000 square feet may not be used for residential purposes.
- **H-C Highway Commercial District.** This district is intended to provide a district for vehicle-oriented uses with sufficient architectural and landscaping controls to protect the amenities of the area. Some conditional uses in this district include banks, lodges, cocktail lounges, grocery stores, and small animal veterinary hospitals. Residential uses are not permitted.
- **M Industrial District.** This district allows a broad range of light industrial and commercial service-type uses, including manufacturing, processing, wholesale distribution and warehousing, and similar uses. Live-work units are allowed with approval of a conditional use permit. The maximum allowable floor area ratio is 0.6.
- **O-S Open Space District.** This district was created to preserve and protect the rural and natural atmosphere of Soledad. Some permitted uses in this district include crop and tree farming and pasturage for livestock. Residential uses are not permitted.
- **P-F Public Facility District.** This district is intended to provide for a wide range of public uses and complementary private and commercial uses that provide a benefit to the public. Some conditionally allowed uses include parks, schools, government offices, libraries, churches, wastewater treatment plants, and hospitals. Residential uses are not permitted.
- **Other.** The area designated “Other” applies to the Salinas Valley State Prison and Correctional Training Facility, which is managed and regulated by the State of California.

Figure 4. Zoning Map



Source: AMBAG, 2022, City of Soledad, 2023; ESRI, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2023

*Other includes area designated for the Salinas Valley State Prison and Correctional Training Facility.

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Specific Plans

This section describes the two specific plans that provide additional land use and design guidance for subareas of Soledad. A Specific Plan is a stand-alone document that replaces the general plan and zoning policies and regulations for a designated area. A specific plan may be general, setting broad policy concepts, or highly detailed, providing direction on the type, location, and intensity of uses and the design and capacity of infrastructure.

Downtown Specific Plan

The City of Soledad Downtown Specific Plan, adopted in 2012, regulates approximately 200 acres of land that constitute Soledad’s Downtown. The specific plan area is bounded by Market Street to the north, Highway 101 to the south, Park Street to the east, and the off-ramp for Highway 101 to the west. The 2005 General Plan land use designations that overlap with the Downtown Specific Plan boundary include Downtown Commercial, Industrial, Service Commercial, General Commercial, Public Facility, High Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, and Single Family Residential. The plan establishes policies for land use, circulation, infrastructure, development, and a financial strategy for 25 years. It includes a development program describing the buildout potential for the Downtown and provides an overview of the vision and overall design for five key subareas—the Downtown Core, Monterey Street, Vosti Park, South Gateway, and the Railroad District.

Four goals comprise the vision of the plan and are focused on establishing a memorable, vibrant hub for commercial activity that is compact and pedestrian oriented and that capitalizes on existing resources and the unique historic character of the Downtown area. The vision calls for significant infill development in this area over the next 20 years or more. The plan area may accommodate up to 570 new housing units; over 480,000 square feet of commercial space, including retail, hospitality, office, education, and public facilities; and over 40,000 square feet of industrial space. Table 5 summarizes the potential buildout of the Downtown Specific Plan as of 2012.

TABLE 5. DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN

Land Use Types	Estimated Buildout (square feet)
Residential	570
Retail	153,041
Hospitality	127,760
General Office	113,466
Education	83,100
Public Facility	10,570
Industrial	41,749

Source: City of Soledad, Sargent Town Planning, and Lisa Wise Consulting, Downtown Specific Plan, 2012.

The Downtown Specific Plan establishes a development code, called the Downtown Code, to ensure that new development in the plan area is consistent with the plan’s vision. It identifies zoning districts and provides regulations for land use, building design, frontages, signs, parking, and streets and streetscapes. All applicable provisions of the SMC and Zoning Ordinance that are not identified in the Downtown Code continue to apply.

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- **Downtown Core (DTC).** The Downtown Core zone is applied to the central blocks of Downtown that are intended to be the shopping, entertainment, and civic core of Soledad.
- **Downtown Edge (DTE).** The Downtown Edge zone is applied to areas north and south of the downtown core to provide a transition between the more intense areas of downtown and adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- **Monterey Street (MS).** The Monterey Street zone is applied to areas along Monterey Street to serve as a transition from the lower-intensity neighborhood to the east and downtown.
- **Railroad Corridor (RR).** The Railroad Corridor zone is applied to areas west of the railroad to provide area for an expansion or to accommodate large-format buildings that would benefit the Downtown.
- **Gateway (GW).** The Gateway zone is applied to areas near and surrounding the Front Street exit off of Highway 101 to provide convenient highway-related retail and service uses.

Informed by an extensive public engagement process, the plan provides guiding principles for street design, addresses pedestrian facilities and safety, and includes standards for bikeways as well as recommendations for public transit. The plan also outlines an implementation program that identifies the department or agency primarily responsible for implementation, the estimated time frame for completion, and potential funding and financing mechanisms.

Miramonte Specific Plan

The Miramonte Specific Plan, adopted in 2018, covers 647 acres adjacent to the northern edge of the city in the SOI. The purpose of the specific plan is to implement the 2005 Soledad General Plan land use and development provisions pertaining to the Mirrasou Specific Plan Area. The plan includes guidance on land use, circulation, parks and recreation, and public services and facilities in the specific plan area. The implementation section of the plan addresses the challenges and phasing of development of the specific plan and provides the timing and funding of public facilities. The specific plan also provides information relevant to the expansion of the City’s SOI, which was necessary to approve the plan. Table 6 summarizes the potential buildout of this specific plan.

TABLE 6. MIRAMONTE SPECIFIC PLAN

Residential (Units)	Commercial (square feet)
2,392	75,000–120,000

Source: City of Soledad, Miramonte Specific Plan, 2018.

The existing land of the Miramonte Specific Plan area consists primarily of agricultural uses (vineyards, row crops, and grazing). As shown in Table 7, the proposed plan for the area will consist mainly of residential land uses with two schools, public services, parks and open space, and a commercial center. The specific plan will contribute significantly to the region’s housing supply by providing a range of moderate-income housing types as well as senior and workforce housing. Affordable housing will be provided subject to the City’s inclusionary housing ordinance. The plan includes a variety of residential types, including apartments, townhouses, and detached homes on small and large lots.

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TABLE 7. MIRAMONTE SPECIFIC PLAN LAND USE SUMMARY

Land Use	Acreage	Residential Units	Commercial (square feet)
Low Density Family Residential	296.1	1,318	
Medium Density Residential	31.3	626	
Senior Housing	6.7	134	
Residential Study Area	35.9	314	
Neighborhood Commercial	8.6		100,000
Schools and Public Facilities	22.0		
Parks and Open Space	196.4		
Collector Streets	32.2		
San Vicente Road	14.1		
Total	647.0	2,392	75,000–120,000

Source: City of Soledad, Miramonte Specific Plan, 2018.

To support the increase in housing, the plan recommends neighborhood-oriented development with ample parks and open space as well as commercial opportunities. Residential land uses will be arranged around a core area of neighborhood commercial and higher-density residential or mixed-use areas. In providing for commercial development, the plan strives to help maintain a local jobs/housing balance. The plan also proposes two elementary schools and a fire/police substation to support the increased residential development.

The Miramonte Specific Plan establishes zoning districts that are consistent with the SMC. The zoning designations are prefaced with Miramonte Specific Plan (MMSP) to indicate their applicability to the specific plan area. Development is regulated by the design guidelines and development standards in the specific plan.

- **Low Density Residential (MMSP-R-1).** This designation provides for low-density detached and small-scale attached housing in neighborhoods with attractive, high-quality architecture and landscaping.
- **Village Residential Medium Density (MMSP-R-V).** This designation allows a variety of detached and attached lots for apartment buildings, townhomes, triplexes, and condominiums.
- **Village Commercial (MMSP-C-V).** This designation provides centrally located neighborhood retail shops, outdoor gathering areas, restaurants, services, and/or business-professional-medical uses to support the daily needs of residents.
- **Mixed Use Opportunity (MMSP-MU overlay zone).** This designation is intended to encourage blending of commercial and medium- to high-density residential in the specific plan core area.
- **Open Space and Public Facility (OS and PF).** This designation is for lands that will be kept lightly developed with public or quasi-public uses such as utilities, parks, schools, and fire/police stations.

The circulation component of the specific plan outlines pedestrian and bicycle routes to the schools, parks, and commercial center, with a focus on complete streets. A trail system will weave throughout the adjacent hillside open space. The parks and open space component of the plan seeks to provide interconnected public parklands to serve the recreational needs of the new development and the existing community of Soledad.

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In 2022, LAFCO approved an SOI amendment in anticipation of the annexation of land in the Miramonte Specific Plan area. The annexation will be completed after successful implementation of the ag mitigation requirements. Currently, there is no estimated time of construction for development in the specific plan area.

Special Districts

There are three Special Districts in Soledad which include the Soledad Mission Recreation District, Soledad Cemetery District, and Soledad Health District. Special Districts receive a portion of the property taxes paid by property owners to the County. The funds are used to operate programming or make capital improvements within the district.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

This section discusses the existing conditions related to known projects that will be developed in the foreseeable future and vacant and underutilized parcels in the city.

PENDING DEVELOPMENT

As shown in Table 8, there are a number of residential projects going through the development process in Soledad, including townhomes, condominiums, apartments, and new single-family homes. As of March 2023, there are approximately 2,675 housing units in the residential development pipeline for Soledad.

There are also several commercial projects pending, as shown in Table 9. There are five commercial projects in the pipeline and two projects that have been completed. These projects are part of the Soledad Marketplace, a new commercial center on the southern edge of the city. A newly constructed Grocery Outlet and movie theater recently opened at Soledad Marketplace, and another four stores, totaling 74,353 square feet, are in the works. A container village planned for the west side of Front Street is expected to provide needed incubator space for new restaurants and stores, as well as adding to the vitality of downtown.

TABLE 8. MAJOR RESIDENTIAL PENDING PROJECTS (AS OF MARCH 2023)

Project Name	Location	Units	Housing Type	Status
Miramonte Specific Plan	North of Soledad	2,392	Mix of unit types	SOI Amendment and Master Plans Approved.
Orchard Villas Phases 20-23	Vintage Estates	28	Single-family residential	Tentative Map approved in 2004.
230 8th Street Project	230 8th Street	42	Apartments	Affordability agreement recorded, expected to be completed in 2024.
Miravale Parcel B	Miravale Parcel B	61 ¹	Mix of unit types	Awaiting action by developer.
Santa Clara Street Project	Santa Clara Street	132	Apartments and Townhomes	Affordability Agreement recorded. Not yet under construction.
Soledad Unified School District (SUSD) School Housing Project	183 Soledad Street	20	Multi-family	Awaiting action by developer.

Source: City of Soledad, 2023.

Note:

1. Total units known, but affordability program not yet received. Estimated affordable units based on Inclusionary Zoning Requirements.

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TABLE 9. NONRESIDENTIAL PENDING PROJECTS (AS OF MARCH 2023)

Project Name	Location	Size (Square Feet)	Type	Status
Soledad Marketplace				
Grocery Outlet	Southeast corner of Nestles Road and Los Coches Road	16,000	Grocery	Completed March 2023
Premiere Cinemas		28,523	Commercial	Completed December 2022
Ross		18,163	Retail	Building Permit Issued
Tractor Supply		43,240	Retail	Planning Process
DaVita		12,000	Medical	Building Permit Issued
Dutch Bros		950	Restaurant	In Civil Review
Panda Express	Northeast corner of Nestles Road and Los Coches Road	2,699	Restaurant	Planning Process

Source: City of Soledad, 2023.

VACANT AND UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTIES

The County Assessor has identified 1,850 acres as vacant within the Planning Area. These vacant properties present opportunities for new development that supports a sustainable development pattern. There are other infill opportunities in the city on parcels that are considered underutilized because they have not been developed to their full potential. To identify underutilized properties, the improvement-to-land (I/L) ratio for each parcel was calculated based on County Assessor data. The I/L ratio is the relationship of a property's improvement value to its land value. Table 10 and Figure 5 show vacant and underutilized land in the Planning Area based on an I/L ratio of 0.5, which means, for example, that a lot worth \$100,000 and improved with a building worth less than \$50,000 is considered underutilized.

The majority of vacant and underutilized land is outside the city limits, and although farmland outside the city is categorized as vacant or underutilized land, that does not indicate that these areas are appropriate for conversion to nonagricultural uses.

TABLE 10. VACANT AND UNDERUTILIZED LAND

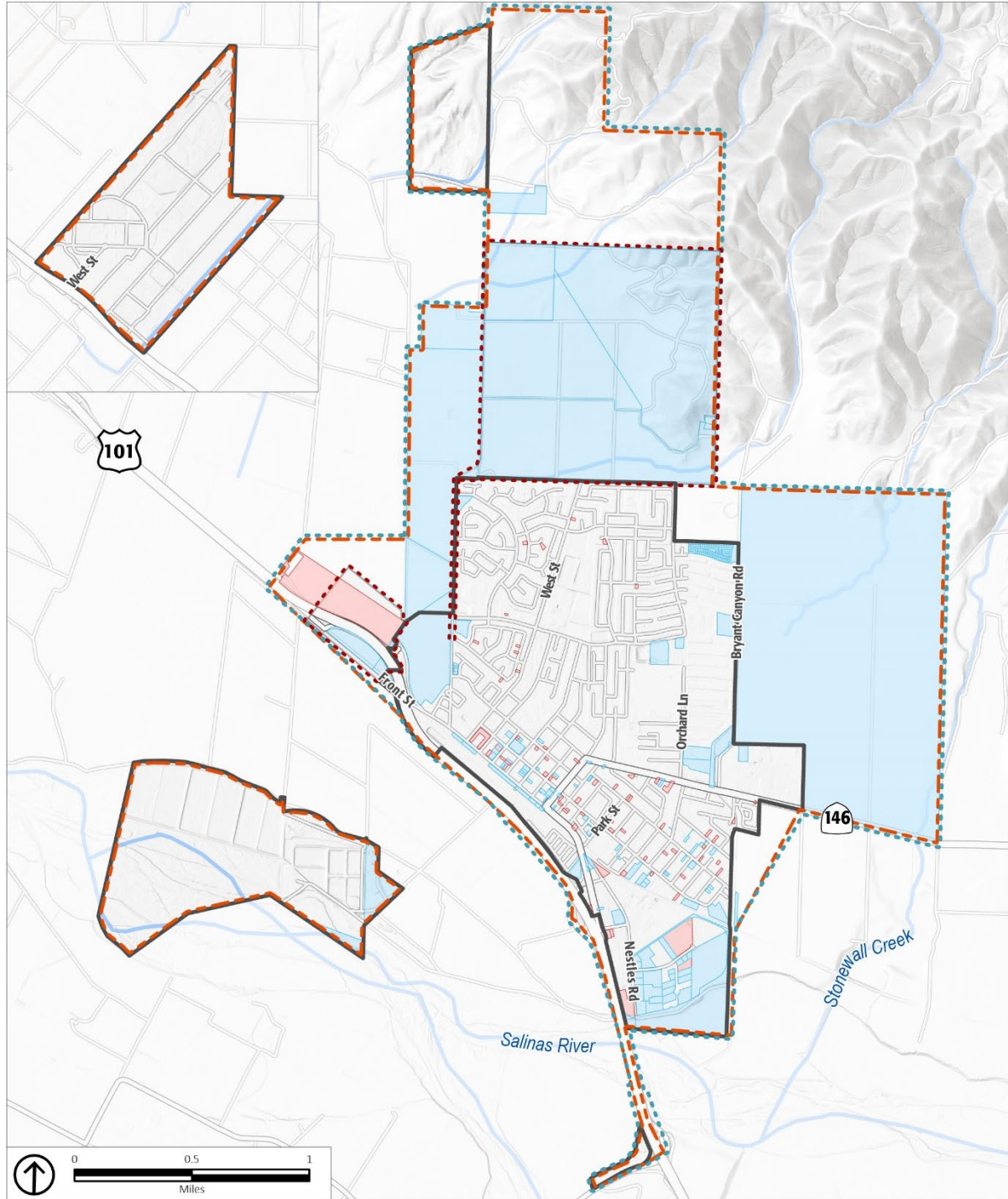
Land Type	City Limits (Acres)	SOI (Acres)	Urban Growth Boundary (Acres) ¹	Planning Area (Acres) ²
Underutilized	27	28	75	75
Vacant	228	651	1,827	1,850
Total Acres	255	679	1,902	1,925

Source: AMBAG, 2022; Monterey County Assessor, 2019.

Note:

1. Includes SOI and City Limits
2. Includes SOI, City Limits, and Urban Growth Boundary

Figure 5. Vacant and Underutilized Properties



⋯⋯⋯ Sphere of Influence
⋯⋯⋯ Urban Growth Boundary
- - - - Planning Area
 City Limits

Parcels by Utilization Status
■ Underutilized (I/L ≤ 0.5)
■ Vacant (I/L = 0)

Source: AMBAG, 2022; ESRI, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2023.

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AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

As described earlier in this report, the California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) classifies and rates agricultural land according to soil quality and irrigation status. The FMMP separates farmland classifications include prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, unique farmland, farmland of local importance, and grazing land. (These classifications are described in more detail under “Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program” on pages 2 and 3.) The program classifies a minimal amount of agricultural land within Soledad’s city limits, but extensive agricultural resources surround the city.

Table 11 provides the acreage of each agricultural land classification within each planning boundary. The As shown on Figure 6, the majority of the agricultural land in the Planning Area is classified prime farmland, which accounts for approximately 1,633 acres. While agriculture is an important economic driver for the city and region, there is concern over pesticides coming into the city from surrounding agricultural fields, which can impact sensitive receptors including homes and Frank Ledesma Elementary School.

TABLE 11. FARMLAND ACREAGES

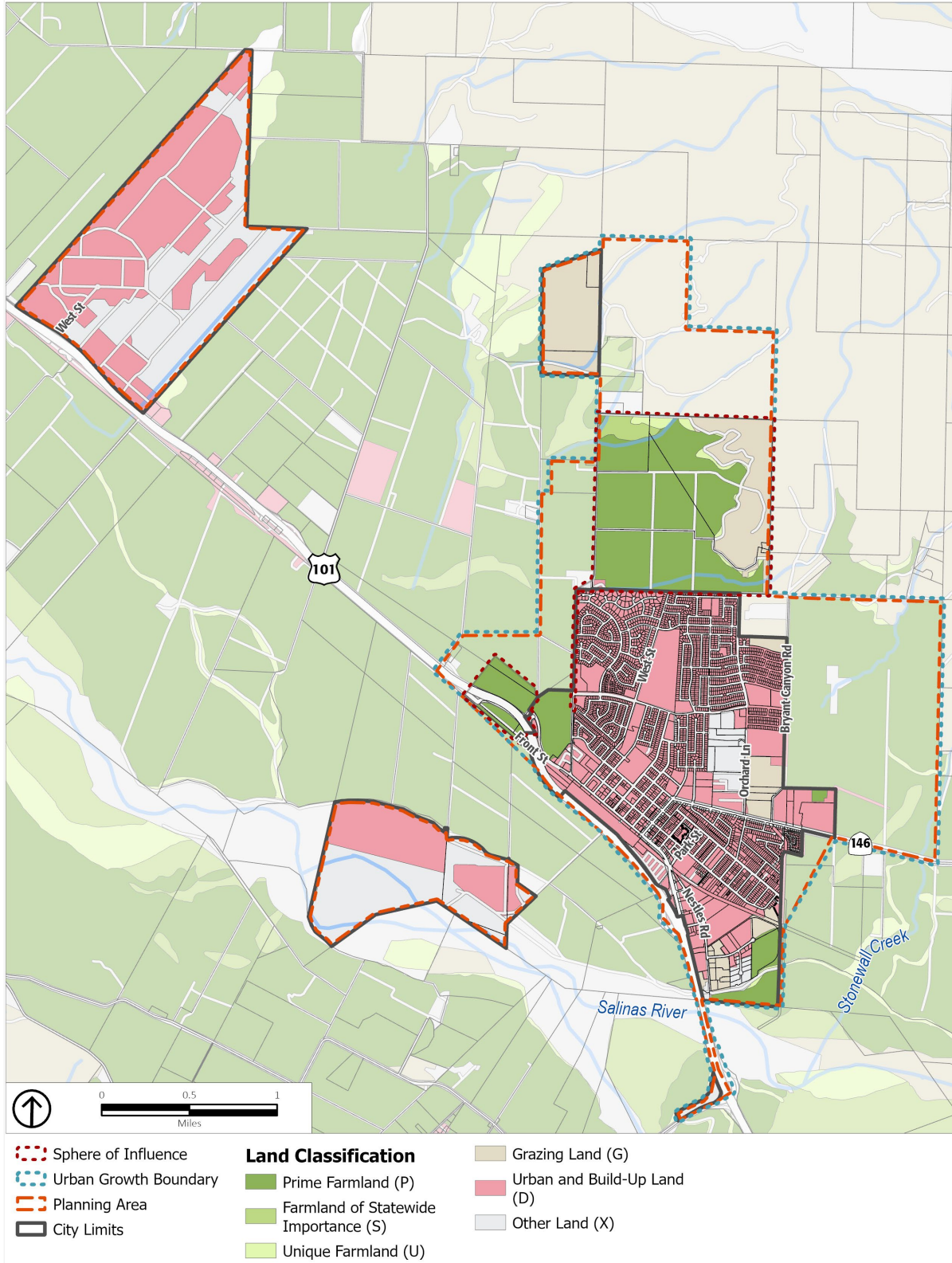
FMMP Classification	City Limits (Acres)	SOI (Acres)	Urban Growth Boundary (Acres) ¹	Planning Area (Acres) ²
Agricultural				
Prime Farmland (P)	103	497	1,611	1,633
Farmland of Statewide Importance (S)	1	22	69	70
Unique Farmland (U)	5	24	41	43
Grazing Land (G)	224	150	850	850
Nonagricultural				
Urban and Built-Up Land (D)	1,990	8	1,341	2,058
Other Land (X)	671	9	172	768
TOTAL ACRES	2,995	710	4,084	5,422

Source: California Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, 2018.

Note:

1. Includes SOI and City Limits
2. Includes SOI, City Limits, and Urban Growth Boundary

Figure 6. Agricultural Resources in Soledad



Source: AMBAG, 2022; California Department of Conservation FMMP, 2018; ESRI, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2023.