



General Plan

Adopted September 27, 2005



Mission Soledad

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CITY OF SOLEDAD

GENERAL PLAN

Adopted September 21, 2005

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PREFACE

The Soledad General Plan is a blueprint for the orderly growth and development of the City for the next twenty to fifty years. The Plan envisions substantial growth for the City during this timeframe. Complete buildout of the City and its sphere of influence in accordance with this General Plan would accommodate about 58,000 residents (not including the State prison population). The Plan provides policies and programs to manage the location and pace of new development so that it may be accommodated without financial hardship to the community, and so that the quality of life enjoyed in Soledad is preserved and enhanced. The primary focus of the Plan is to foster a climate conducive for expanded economic development in Soledad, including expanded opportunities for shopping and tourism, the provision of more and better paying jobs, and affordable housing.

Another important component of the General Plan is the *Front Street Improvement Plan and Downtown Specific Plan*. In keeping with the goal of improving business and attracting tourism, the Front Street Improvement Plan provides a framework for the revitalization of downtown Soledad as the social and business center of the community. The goal of the *Front Street Improvement Plan* is to create an attractive and inviting place to gather and shop by providing amenities to the downtown such as street trees and benches and by developing open plazas and walkways that provide protection from the heat and wind.

The General Plan must accurately reflect the needs and desires of Soledad residents if the goals and objectives the Plan are ever to be achieved. For this reason, public participation was a key component of the process of preparing the General Plan. Continued public input, with four public workshops followed by public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council, shaped the Plan to reflect the community's shared vision for the future City.

The General Plan must also be founded on a thorough understanding of the community, its history and environmental setting, and previous actions that have helped shape the present development pattern. This information has been assembled in the *General Plan Background and Environmental Setting Report* which is published separately as an appendix to the General Plan.

INTRODUCTION

SOLEDAD GENERAL PLAN

I. INTRODUCTION

I. INTRODUCTION

THE CITY OF SOLEDAD

The City of Soledad is located in southern Monterey County about 25 miles south of the City of Salinas in the heart of the fertile Salinas Valley, an agricultural region of Statewide and even national importance. To the east is the Gabilan Range and Pinnacles National Monument. To the west is the Coast Range and the Los Padres National Forest; beyond lies the rugged Big Sur Coast.

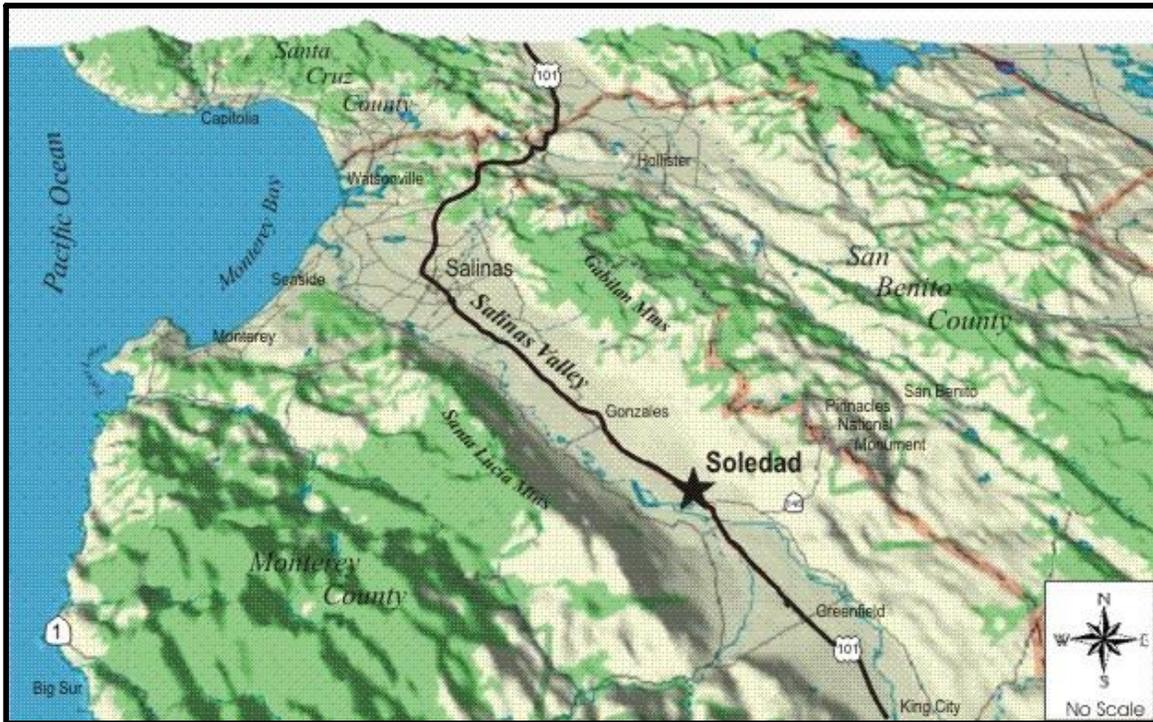


Figure I-1: Regional Location

Soledad incorporated as a City in 1921 and derives its name from the Mission Nuestra Señora de la Soledad (Soledad meaning "solitude") established by Father Fermin Lasuen in 1791 on land west of the Salinas River.

GENERAL PLAN CONTEXT

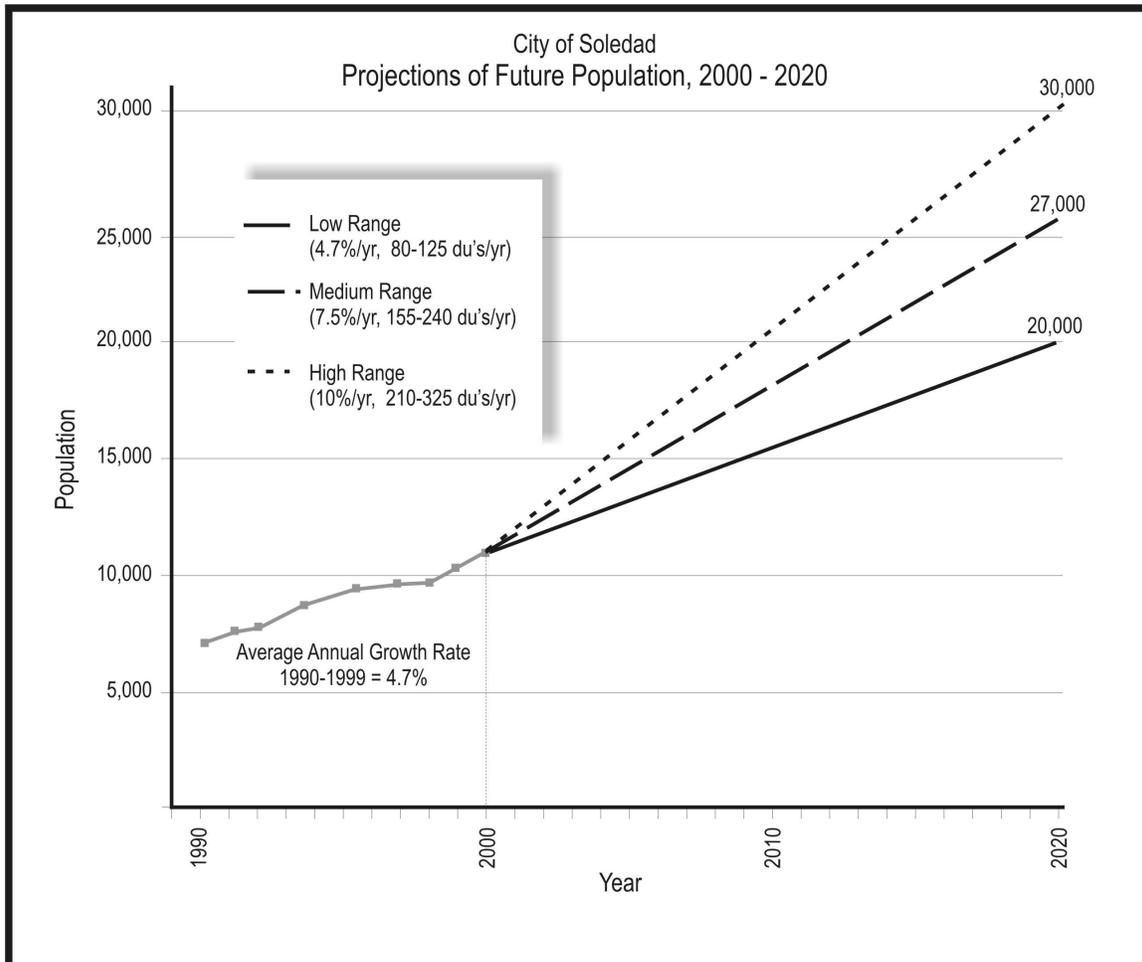
Soledad, along with the other small towns of the Salinas Valley (King City, Gonzales, and Greenfield) has traditionally provided housing and support services for the surrounding agricultural operations that dominate the regional economy. However, that traditional role may be changing. According to data published by the

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California Department of Finance, Soledad ranked eight among the fastest growing cities in the State in 2003, based on the percentage of population increase from the previous year. While this may be partially explained by the desirability of Monterey County when compared with surrounding areas, it may also be the result of skyrocketing housing costs in the southern San Francisco Bay area prompting residents to seek more affordable housing in the outlying communities.

Although the additional development has brought much needed housing, opportunities for hopping and better paying jobs have not yet materialized.



Moreover, the quality of new development and the rapid influx of newcomers have raised concerns among civic leaders about how to manage the growth of the City in a manner that preserves the best qualities of the City while providing for the present and future needs of its residents.

One measure of a General Plan's effectiveness is whether it continues to provide meaningful guidance to decision-makers in their efforts to respond to changing circumstances and opportunities relating to land use planning. The unprecedented economic growth in central California which began in the mid-1990s could not be foreseen by the policies of the previous General Plan, which anticipated more

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modest economic growth similar to preceding years. While the pace of new development may be partly explained by the “spill over” of demand from high-technology industries located in the nearby Santa Clara Valley, what is clear is that current economic conditions offer opportunities that did not exist at the time the 1993 Plan was adopted.

In Soledad, evidence of the growing economy can be seen in the accelerating pace of residential development that has occurred since 1997, in which an average of about 200 new dwelling units have been constructed each year. Although new housing helps satisfy an unmet need, the absence of commensurate growth in the number of jobs and shopping opportunities has raised concerns that Soledad is fast becoming a “bedroom” community in which residential development occupies a disproportionately large percentage of the local economy. Evidence has shown that stable economies provide a greater degree of balance among residential, employment-producing and commercial land uses.

By the end of the 1990s, civic leaders concluded that the 1993 General Plan was of limited value in helping the City meet its economic development goals in the wake of the growing economy. To help address these concerns, the City retained a consultant team in the spring of 1999 under the direction of Crawford Multari & Clark to undertake a comprehensive revision of the City's General Plan.

SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE GENERAL PLAN

A General Plan is a requirement of State Law and serves as a community's blueprint for the use and development of land within its jurisdiction. To provide a consistent framework to address these issues, State law requires that the general plan contain seven interrelated sections, or *elements*:

Land Use. The Land Use Element describes the various uses to which land within the City may be committed, and designates areas where these uses may take place. In this sense, the Land Use Element is the most basic of the elements. It must be closely coordinated with the other elements to provide consistent policy guidance that results in orderly and logical development.

Housing. The Housing Element describes the manner in which safe, affordable housing will be provided to present and future City residents anticipated through the time frame of the General Plan. The Housing Element also provides incentives for the production and rehabilitation of affordable housing within the City.

Circulation (transportation). The Circulation Element describes how the transportation needs of the city will be met during the time frame of the General Plan. The Circulation Element identifies where new roadways will be constructed to support the land uses contained in the Land Use Element, and also contains provisions for the use of alternate modes of transportation, including bicycle and pedestrian circulation plans, and transit.

Conservation and Open Space. The Conservation and Open Space Elements are two separate elements required by state law but are often combined as one.

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These elements describe the diverse natural and human-made resources in and around Soledad, and how these resources will be preserved and protected during the time frame of the General Plan.

Safety. The Safety Element inventories seismic, geologic, flood, and fire hazards in Soledad, and discusses how the effect of these hazards can be minimized.

Noise. The Noise Element describes the existing and projected noise environments for the City and establishes land use compatibility guidelines for various noise levels. On the basis of expected population and traffic growth, the Noise Element establishes policies and standards to protect residents from exposure to excessive noise.

Other elements may be added as needed to address specific issues. The Soledad General Plan contains three such elements: Parks and Recreation, Public Services and Facilities, and Economic Development.

Parks and Recreation. The Parks and Recreation Element provides policies and standards for the development of additional parks and the expansion of recreation programs to meet the needs of Soledad residents.

Public Services and Facilities. This element summarizes the infrastructure and public facilities needs of the City through buildout of the General Plan.

Economic Development. This Element includes a generalized discussion of expected costs of operating the future city, and potential revenue sources likely to be available to cover those costs. Among other purposes, this element will assist the City in determining whether new development should be subject to different fees or exactions than are currently in place to better cover the costs of growth to the community.

Two other documents, while not part of the General Plan, provide important guidance with regard to development.

Downtown Specific Plan/ Front Street Improvement Plan. The Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Improvement Plan (FSIP) provides specific goals, policies and programs for the revitalization of the City's traditional commercial center along Front Street. The main goal of the FSIP is to create an attractive and inviting place to gather and shop by providing street trees, benches and other amenities, and by developing open plazas and walkways that provide protection from the heat and wind.

Community Design Guidelines. Another important component of the City's development regulations is a set of design guidelines for new development. The design guidelines are intended to supplement the policy and development guidance provided by the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance by describing the City's expectations for the quality and character desired of new development.

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Each element of the General Plan contains *goals, policies and programs* that provide guidance to decision-makers and the public when questions arise about the appropriate use of individual parcels of land and other resources. A **goal** is a desirable future condition or state towards which the community will work to achieve. **Policies** are statements of the community's position regarding a particular issue that provides guidance for decision-making. A **program** is an action or series of actions, procedures or techniques that the City will employ or undertake to implement the policies contained in the General Plan. The implementation programs specify the agency, department or other party responsible for carrying out and monitoring the actions described, the funding source (when one can be identified) and a time frame for its accomplishment.

Quantified objectives are measurable milestones that can be used to judge the effectiveness of the implementation of the Plan. For example, the Housing Element provides quantified objectives for the number of dwelling units the City expects to be constructed over the next five years.

The General Plan must be a comprehensive, long-term document. The Soledad General Plan provides a framework for the orderly growth and development of the City for the next twenty or more years from our vantage of today. The General Plan, however, will certainly be amended from time to time to keep pace with the changing needs of the community.

ORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN

The Soledad General Plan is composed of six sections:

Introduction. This section provides an introduction to the General Plan, its scope and purpose, and the process through which it was prepared. Public participation played a key role in the preparation of the Soledad General Plan. The introductory section also discusses prior planning efforts in the area, and the relationship between the Soledad General Plan and other relevant plans and regulations.

Community Development. This section consists of the Land Use, Housing, Circulation, Parks and Recreation, Public Services and Facilities, and Economic Development Elements.

Natural Resources. The Conservation and Open Space Elements are combined in this section.

Hazards. This section contains the Noise and Safety Elements.

Implementation. The Implementation section outlines the steps necessary to implement the goals, policies and programs of the General Plan. A timeline is established through which these various steps should be implemented. The Implementation section also contains a list of 5-year and 10-year objectives which are measurable outcomes by which the success of the General Plan can be assessed.

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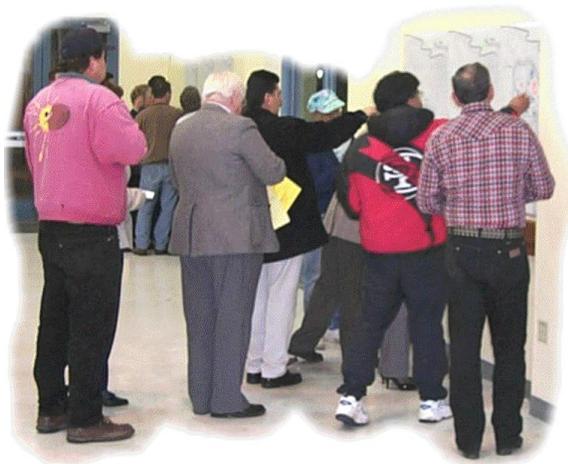
Appendices. For the policies and programs of the General Plan to provide effective guidance for future land use decisions in Soledad, they must be founded on a thorough understanding of the town's setting and historical development pattern, and of the factors which have shaped the present land use and population of the town. These issues are discussed in greater detail in the *General Plan Background Report*, which has been prepared separately as an appendix to the General Plan (Appendix A). Other information contained in the appendix include standards for specific plan preparation, recommended street sections and standards for bicycle paths.

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I. INTRODUCTION

THE PROCESS OF PREPARING THE GENERAL PLAN

A general plan reflects a community's shared vision for the future. Therefore, before the Soledad General Plan could be written, it was essential to understand the public's ideas about what they would like Soledad to be. To help with this process, the City hired a consultant team with expertise in consensus building, land use planning, and community design. To obtain input directly from residents, the consultants conducted four public workshops. At the first workshop participants were asked to identify potential problems in Soledad and to describe their vision for the future of the community. The



Soledad residents helped create the Urban Fabric Diagram which served as the basis for the updated

workshop was well attended and led to the development of a set of "planning principles" which became the guideposts for the preparation of the Plan. Based on this input, the consultant team prepared a series of land use alternatives depicting different visions for the future of the community. These in turn were shared with the community at a second workshop at which participants were asked to rate the different alternatives to express a preference. The preferred land use plan served as the starting point for the preparation of the general plan update.

Further along in the plan preparation process, the City was approached by the owners of property to the north between the existing City limits and Camphora-Gloria who expressed interest in being a part of the City's long-range development plans. The City's consultants prepared additional land use alternatives for these areas which were shared with the public at two additional workshops before the final preferred land use plan was derived.

The planning consultants and city staff also held discussions with certain "key informants", persons with particular expertise and/or knowledge about growth and development in Soledad. Key informants include property owners, realtors, representatives of local, County and state governments and planning agencies, representatives of the school district, and others. Public participation was a continuous and vital component to the process of preparing the Soledad General Plan.

General Plan Background Report

The General Plan must be based on a thorough and accurate understanding of the existing conditions in Soledad if the goals of the Plan are ever to be achieved. To provide this basic information, a *General Plan Background Report* was prepared which covers such diverse topics as the physical characteristics of the City, relating

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to both the natural and built environments, social and economic characteristics, the type and responsibilities of other government agencies and districts, and the nature of existing government policies, such as those in the previous general plan. The Background Report provided critical information about the issues to be addressed by the General Plan, and also provided environmental baseline information for preparation of the General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Issues and Options Report

The information contained in the *Background Report*, when considered within the context of the planning principles derived from public participation, raised a number of important issues to be resolved by the General Plan. These issues were summarized in a series of *Issues and Options Reports* which identified the most critical land use issues confronting the City and provided a range of possible General Plan strategies to address them. The *Issues and Options Reports* were considered by the Planning Commission and City Council at joint study sessions held in February and May, 2001. The study sessions were also an opportunity to review previous land use decisions and reaffirm the direction the City wanted to take with the General Plan.

By the summer of 2004, a final draft General Plan was completed and reviewed by the Planning Commission, which considered various alternatives for the outward expansion of the City. Recommendations from the Planning Commission were forwarded to the City Council, who conducted public hearings before adopting the Plan.

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The impacts and mitigation measures identified in the Final EIR were considered by the City Council before the Plan was adopted.

PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS IN SOLEDAD

1965 General Plan

The community of Soledad incorporated as a city in 1921 and prepared its first general plan in 1965. The plan provides broad guidance for land use and development, circulation, recreation and schools, as well as implementation. No specific timeframe is discussed; however, the plan accommodates a buildout population of 12,000.

Although fairly simple by today's standards, several aspects of the 1965 general plan could be considered visionary. For example, the authors conducted a fairly extensive survey to gauge community preferences on a variety of topics, including employment, housing, schools and recreation. The land use plan designates areas for housing, industrial and commercial development that extend eastward in concentric bands around the downtown, a theme that would be repeated in subsequent plans for the City. The Land Use chapter provides an illustration for the

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preferred configuration of residential neighborhoods that incorporates pedestrian circulation, open space and a variety of housing types.

1981 General Plan

In 1981, the City adopted a comprehensive update to the 1965 general plan. The revised plan was intended to supplement the Central Salinas Valley General Plan prepared by Monterey County which addresses regional planning issues, such as open space, conservation (of agricultural land) and hazards separately from the plans for individual towns. Thus, the 1981 general plan focuses on land use, circulation and housing for Soledad, covering a planning area of about 570 acres and accommodating a population of 10,250 residents by the year 2000.

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1993 General Plan

In the early 1990s, the City prepared a comprehensive revision of the 1981 General Plan. The 1993 General Plan contains policies and programs covering eight sections (elements) that include land use; circulation; housing; conservation; open space; safety; noise; and scenic highways. The Plan identifies a planning area and expanded sphere of influence covering about 1,300 acres that extends to the east and north of the existing developed city. The Plan covers a timeframe of twenty years and accommodates a non-prison buildout population of about 21,332. The main focus of the plan is to accommodate additional residential and commercial development, to improve the number and quality of jobs within the City and the revitalize the downtown – themes that continue today.

Soledad Redevelopment Plan

In 1983 the City adopted a Redevelopment Plan in accordance with Section 33000 et seq. of the California Health and Safety Code. Redevelopment affords broad powers to the Redevelopment Agency to alleviate "blight" that is affecting the redevelopment project area. Revenues from tax increments that accrue to the Agency must be used to alleviate these blighting conditions. In addition, at least twenty percent of the tax increments must be set aside for the purpose of improving the supply of affordable housing within the community.

The Soledad Redevelopment Project Area covers a substantial portion of the City, including all of Front Street and the existing downtown area, extending to the east and south to include the residential neighborhoods surrounding the downtown and the Los Coches Industrial Park. The primary goal of the Redevelopment Plan is to eliminate constraints to the full utilization of land and buildings within the Project Area and to foster a climate conducive to economic growth and vitality.

The Redevelopment Plan has been amended twice to bring it into conformity with changes to the Community Redevelopment Law that have occurred since its adoption. Among the redevelopment projects identified in the Plan are:

- Economic development programs to attract and retain commercial and industrial businesses.
- Downtown revitalization programs to address the needs of downtown businesses.
- Improvement of public facilities and infrastructure.
- Housing programs to improve the supply of affordable housing.

Downtown Specific Plan (1981) and the 1995 Downtown Specific Plan and Front Street Rehabilitation Plan

The Downtown Specific Plan and Front Street Rehabilitation Plan expands upon the principles contained in the first Downtown Soledad Specific Plan adopted in 1981. As the name implies, the Plan combines the requirements for a specific plan, as described in Government Code Section 65450, with a rehabilitation plan that can be implemented with funds from the Soledad Redevelopment Agency. The Plan provides a conceptual design plan and design guidelines for the development and

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rehabilitation of properties in the downtown which, for purposes of the Plan, is an area bounded by Front Street, Park Street, the Front Street/US 101 interchange to the north and Market Street to the east (see Figure II-2). The Plan also provides an estimate for the costs of individual rehabilitation projects. Land uses designated by the Specific Plan are consistent with those identified by the 1993 General Plan.

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RELATIONSHIP OF THE GENERAL PLAN TO OTHER PLANS

The Soledad General Plan governs land use decisions within the incorporated boundaries of the city. Lands outside the city are governed by Monterey County.

Another important regional planning agency is the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), which was formed to provide a framework for addressing issues of regional importance among its twenty member cities, which are:

City of Capitola	City of Carmel-by-the-Sea	City of Del Rey Oaks
City of Gonzales	City of Greenfield	City of Hollister
City of King City	City of Marina	City of Monterey
City of Pacific Grove	City of Salinas	City of San Juan Bautista
City of Sand City	City of Santa Cruz	City of Scotts Valley
City of Seaside	City of Soledad	City of Watsonville
County of Monterey	County of Santa Cruz	

The primary emphasis of AMBAG's work involves the preparation of plans and technical studies to address transportation and air quality problems.

Other planning documents that affect Soledad include the *Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP)* recently adopted by MBAG to comply with State and federal Clean Air laws, and the *Congestion Management Plan (CMP)* which is intended to reduce traffic on the county's highways. The Soledad General Plan contains policies and programs to supplement the requirements of each of these plans.

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

In addition to the City, there are two special districts closely involved with shaping Soledad's future: the Soledad Unified School District and the Mission Soledad Rural Fire Protection District. The School District provides education facilities and services for elementary through high school aged children. A new high school in Soledad opened in the fall of 1999.

The Mission Soledad Rural Fire Protection District was formed in 1951 and contracts to the City for fire protection services. The fire district is roughly 42,000 acres in size bounded by the foothills of the Gabilan Range and the Santa Lucia Mountains. (A more complete discussion of public services is provided in the Public Services and Facilities Element beginning on page VII-1.)

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Community Development section of the General Plan establishes goals, policies and programs to guide the growth and development of the City. The Community Development section is divided into six general plan elements:

- Land Use
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Circulation
- Parks and Recreation, and
- Public Services and Facilities

The elements of the Community Development chapter must work in concert with other elements of the General Plan to determine the location, rate, and timing of growth and to plan for the development of new housing, public facilities and services.

 **!. LAND USE**

A Vision Of the Future

Soledad is a vibrant, economically sound and culturally diverse community of about 58,000 residents in the heart of the Salinas Valley wine industry. Soledad residents know their neighbors as well as the neighborhood in which they live, and take pride in both. New neighborhoods are distinct and recognizable and possess a uniquely pedestrian character in which schools, parks and shopping are all within easy walking distance. And yet each new neighborhood is integrated with the fabric of the town.

Most of the everyday shopping needs of Soledad residents are provided by local businesses, along with stable, well paying jobs. The downtown area along Front Street attracts locals and visitors alike with its eclectic mix of traditional markets, restaurants and open plazas, and the numerous festivals held there each year. Residential overcrowding is thing of the past, the result of housing opportunities affordable to all incomes. Lastly, Soledad is a City that continues to look to the future while embracing the diversity and character of its past.

INTRODUCTION

When considering the seven topics, or elements that a general plan is required to cover (land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise and safety), the issue of land use is probably of greatest interest to the public. The Land Use Element determines the locations within the City and its planning area where residential, commercial, industrial, public, and open space land uses may occur at present and in the future. The Land Use Element also works with the other parts of the plan to determine the location, rate and timing of new growth and development.

LAND USE ISSUES ADDRESSED BY THE GENERAL PLAN

- ❑ *To achieve the vision articulated by the General Plan, additional residential land will be needed.*

The City's population experienced steady growth throughout the 1990s and the pace accelerated between 1997 and 2001. If population growth trends experienced over the past three years continue into the future, the City could have as many as 27,000 non-prison residents by the year 2020. To meet the future demand for urban land, additional residential acreage will be needed.

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II. LAND USE

- ❑ *The outward expansion of the City will need to be managed in a manner that preserves maximum flexibility for the City to respond to the future demand for urban land while preserving the most productive soils for agriculture.*

All of the land surrounding the City is composed of productive agricultural soils. As a result, the outward expansion of the City may only occur at the expense of converting these lands to an urban use. To achieve the vision embodied in the General Plan, the management of land within the City's planning area will need to provide maximum flexibility for the City to meet its land use needs while protecting the remaining productive agricultural lands.

- ❑ *In order to protect the most productive agricultural lands, non-soil dependent land uses should be accommodated within the City, or within an agricultural/industrial business park developed in conjunction with Monterey County.*

Monterey County and the cities of the Salinas Valley have adopted the principle of city centered growth in which urban development is concentrated in the cities where urban services are available to support such uses. The General Plan incorporates city centered growth principles to guide land use decisions within its proposed sphere of influence in a manner that preserves productive agricultural lands and enables both the City and the County to achieve its economic and land use management objectives. To that end, the expansion of non-soil dependent land uses must be accommodated in the City's industrial business park or perhaps in an industrial business park developed near the existing Dole processing plant as a joint venture with the County.

- ❑ *The City needs to grow in a manner that helps achieve a better balance among residential, commercial and industrial land uses.*

At first glance, the City's ratio of jobs to housing is enviable due in large part to the large number of jobs at the prisons. Although the prisons are part of the City, they are physically disconnected by more than two miles of farmland and the majority of employees do not live, shop or even visit Soledad during the workweek. Moreover, the City does not generate property tax or sales tax revenues from the prisons, as it would from private industry or commerce located elsewhere in the City. For these reasons, the General Plan needs to accommodate additional employment generating land uses.

- ❑ *Residents of Soledad desire additional goods and services, including more convenience shopping.*

Soledad residents want a greater variety of local shopping opportunities, such as a grocery store, drug store and department stores. When residents travel to other towns to shop, not only is it inconvenient, but the sales taxes and other revenues generated by these expenditures are lost to Soledad and are said to "leak" to surrounding communities. If Soledad is to capture these revenues and achieve a measure of fiscal health and stability, a wider range of retail opportunities must be provided.

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- ❑ *The City's location makes it well suited to take advantage of opportunities for additional visitor-serving uses.*

Soledad is located in the heart of a burgeoning wine industry and is a short drive to the Monterey Peninsula. Soledad is also literally the gateway to Pinnacles National Monument which lies some fifteen miles to the east. These attractions provide opportunities for the City to capture additional "bed" tax, sales tax and other revenues derived from visitors.

- ❑ *The Downtown area needs to be revitalized.*

The area along Front Street and the blocks immediately to the east constitute the City's downtown. The future role of the downtown, as envisioned by the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan, is to continue as the cultural, dining and entertainment center of the City. Considerable progress has been made toward implementation of the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan, especially as it relates to streetscape improvements along Front Street. However, one issue that needs to be resolved is the appropriate use of the properties owned by the Union Pacific Railroad on the west side of the tracks.

The railroad provides an opportunity for Soledad residents to use the train as a viable option to the automobile for trips to surrounding areas for work, shopping or pleasure. Although daily commuter rail service is not presently provided, passenger service does pass through Soledad daily and the potential exists for daily commuter service to be provided sometime in the future. In 1994 the State legislature passed the *Transit Village Development Planning Act* (Government Code Section 65460) to promote residential and commercial development in close proximity to transit centers with the goal of facilitating the use of the State's substantial rail infrastructure. The Act allows local jurisdictions to adopt a *transit village plan* with a range of complementary residential, commercial and employment land uses in proximity to a transit center to make transit use a convenient and viable alternative transportation mode. The downtown could be revitalized in a way that incorporates provisions for transit use as one of its main goals.

- ❑ *The timing and location of new development will need to be closely coordinated with the extension of public services.*

The future development of the City can only be accommodated if sufficient infrastructure capacity (services and facilities) is provided concurrently or in advance of new development.

- ❑ *The General Plan needs to provide guidance with regard to the City's expectations for the quality and character of new development (urban design).*

The rapid pace of residential development over the past few years has raised concerns about the quality of the design of new neighborhoods. Because the General Plan applies throughout the City and its planning area, it is usually more concerned with the larger-scale issues of neighborhood design and ensuring that new development is integrated with the existing town in a complementary way.

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Accordingly, policy guidance is provided to help articulate the community's expectations. A separate set of detailed community design guidelines has also been prepared to augment this broad policy guidance.

- *Residential overcrowding remains a serious problem in Soledad.*

Although considerable residential development has occurred over the past few years, the average household size has gradually been increasing, from about 4.5 in 1990 to about 4.83 in 2000. The alleviation of overcrowding can be addressed in a number of ways by the General Plan, starting with the designation of sufficient land for different residential products (e.g., apartments, townhouses, etc.) affordable to the full range of incomes in Soledad.

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CITY OF SOLEDAD PLANNING AREA AND SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

Planning Area

The area covered by the general plan is often referred to as the City's *planning area* which includes the incorporated limits as well as "...any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgement bears a relation to its planning" (Government Code Section 65300). The City's planning area is shown on Figure II-1 and covers an area generally defined by the ridge line of the Gabilan Range to the east and the foothills of the coast range to the west, extending north past the Soledad prison, and to the south about mid-way between Soledad and Greenfield. In addition to identifying areas into which the City plans to eventually grow and provide services, the city's planning area makes an important statement to other jurisdictions - most notably the County - regarding the City's expectations for land use surrounding its borders.

Sphere of Influence

The Cortese-Knox Act defines a *sphere of influence* as a "...plan for the probable ultimate physical boundaries and service area of a local agency..." (Government Code Section 56076). In practice "ultimate" is often defined as twenty years. Under Section 56080, a sphere of influence may include an *urban service area* which identifies portions of a city's sphere of influence where urban services are provided, or where services are expected to be provided during the first five years of an adopted capital improvement program.

Spheres of influence and other changes to the organization of local governments are decided by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), which consists of representatives from member jurisdictions within the County. In addition to establishing and amending spheres of influence, LAFCo exercises jurisdiction over annexations (adding land to a city or special district), detachment from a city or district, and the incorporation of new cities, among others. Accordingly, LAFCo policies are key to identifying areas for future City expansion.

In establishing or revising a sphere of influence, LAFCo is guided by policies aimed at fostering orderly growth. The two overriding concerns of Monterey County LAFCo with regard to the expansion of spheres of influence are 1) the ability of the local jurisdiction to provide public services in a timely and cost-effective manner, and 2) minimizing the premature conversion of prime agricultural lands. At a minimum, these two factors must be addressed in order for the sphere to be amended.

With regard to agricultural land, Monterey County LAFCo policies discourage annexation or incorporation proposals which would allow, or would likely lead to, the conversion of prime agricultural land unless the affected jurisdiction has demonstrated that effective measures have been adopted to preserve the remaining prime lands identified within its planning area/proposed sphere of influence. Such measures could include:

- T Establishing agricultural preserves;
- T Designating land for agricultural use in the general plan (as in Soledad);

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- T Adopting a growth management plan or specific plan which clearly identifies areas to be preserved;
- T Adopting an agricultural element to the general plan;
- T Acquiring prime agricultural land in fee which is then leased back to farmers;
- T Acquiring development rights on farmland.

Overall, LAFCo policies favor strategies for the preservation of agricultural land that offer the greatest degree of permanent protection.

General Plan Area

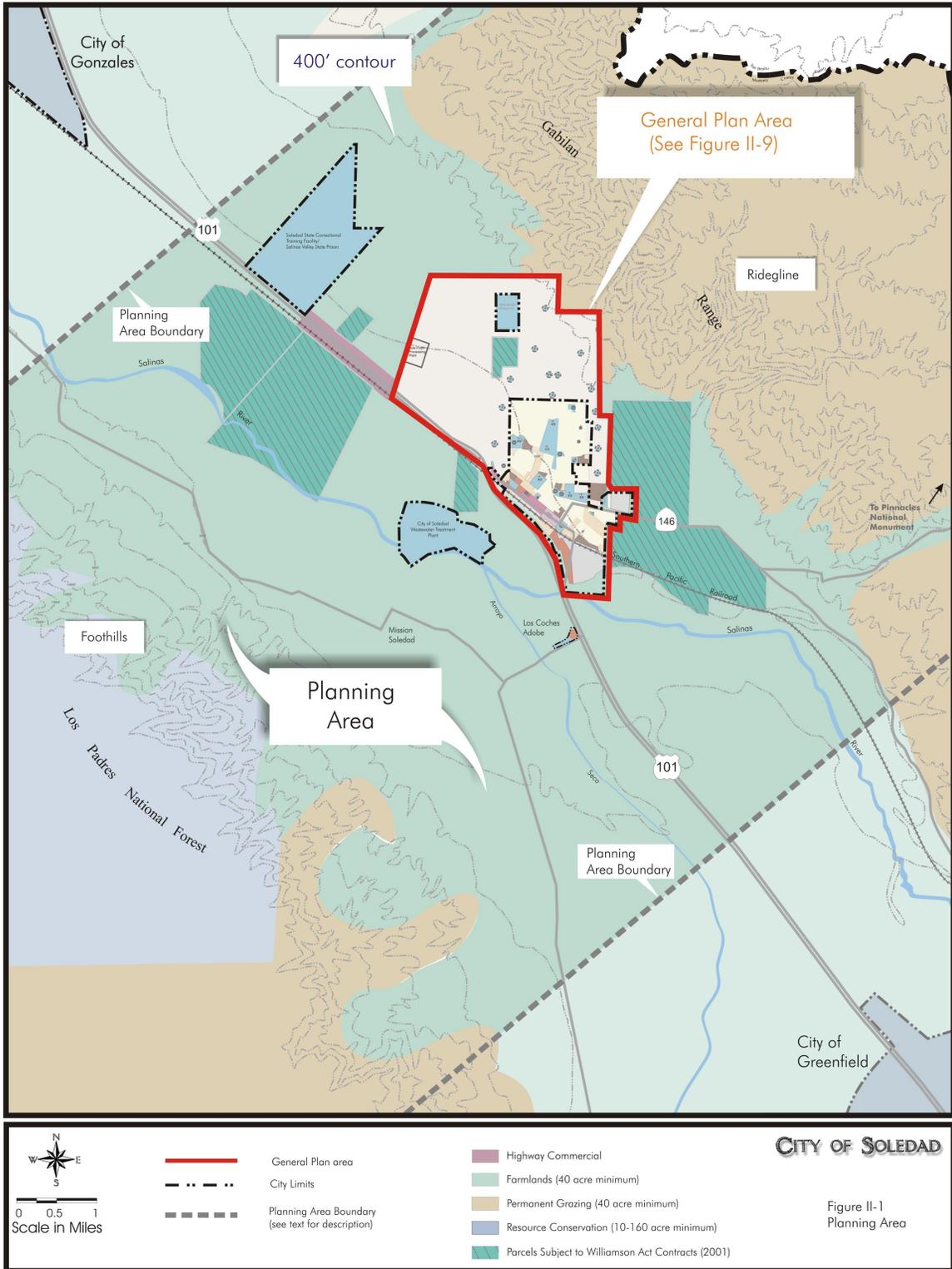
The Soledad General Plan is intended to guide land use decisions for the next twenty to fifty years. Although there is no requirement that general plans adhere to this or any other timeframe, most plans look no further than twenty years into the future because our ability to reliably predict conditions relevant to land use planning diminishes quickly the further out in time they go. Nonetheless, the need to effectively manage land and resources does not suddenly end when "buildout" is achieved under the general plan. Moreover, circumstances may be such that buildout conditions are reached much sooner than anticipated. The value of taking a long-term perspective to land use planning is akin to steering a ship by aiming at a distant landmark: although unforeseen obstacles may arise which cause the course to be altered from time to time, the goal remains constantly in view.

To help provide this long-term perspective, the Soledad General Plan provides for the long-term (ie, greater than twenty years) growth and development needs of the City. Although there is no legal requirement for a general plan to look that far into the future, it makes a powerful statement about the long-term direction of City growth and development. And just as the general plan itself should be looked upon as a "living" document that changes in response to circumstances and opportunities, the same flexibility should be applied to the long-term plan.

The long-term plan shows future urban development proceeding generally north between the 101 freeway and the foothills and between the existing City limits and Camphora Gloria Road. Additional land for industrial development is designated between the existing Dole processing plant and the freeway, with additional commercial land along the freeway proper.

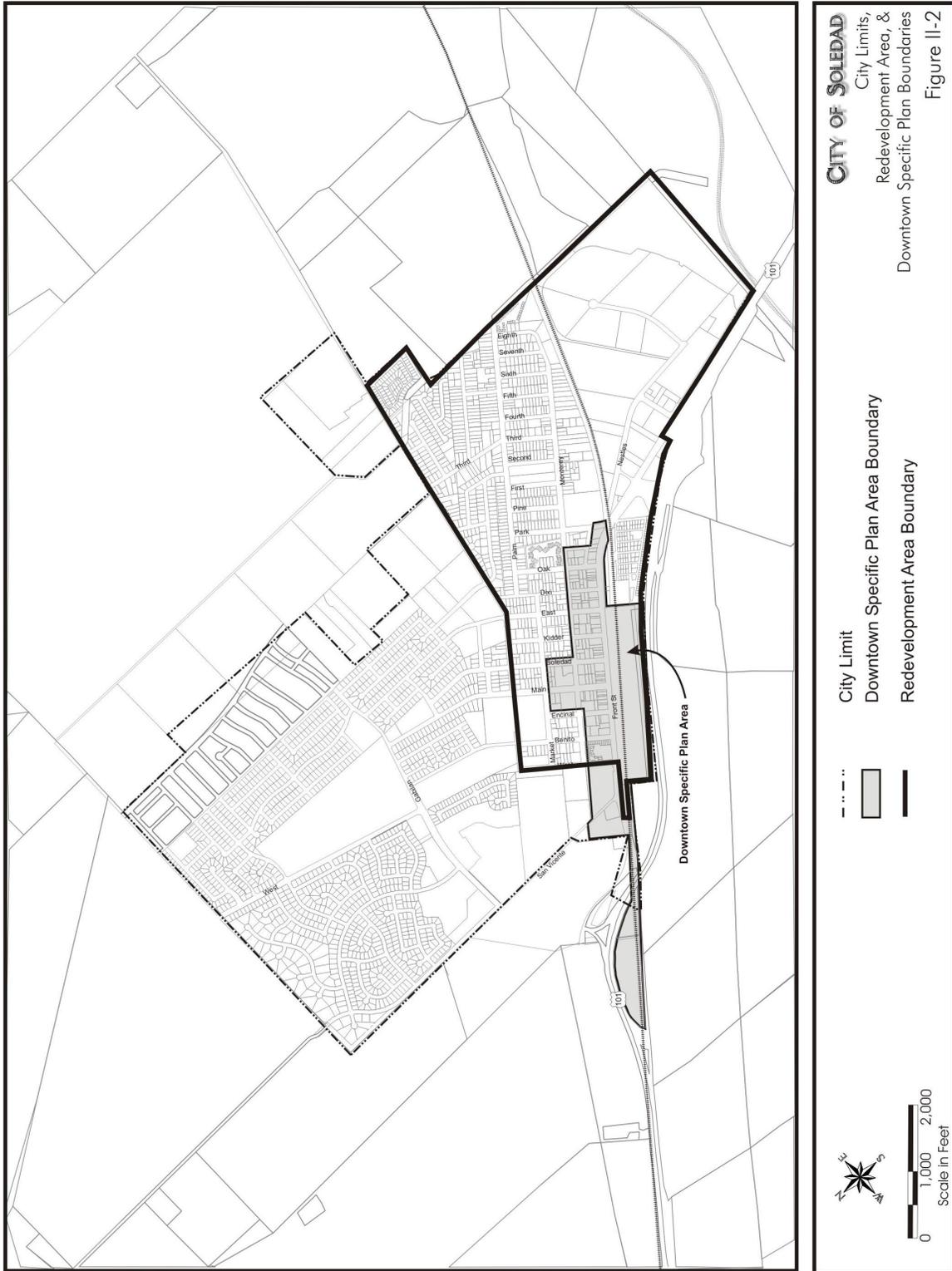
SOLEDAD GENERAL PLAN II. LAND USE

Figure II-1: The City's Planning Area



**SOLEDAD GENERAL PLAN
II. LAND USE**

Figure II-2: Soledad Redevelopment Project Area and Downtown Specific Plan Boundaries



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LAND USE DIAGRAM

Background

Defining the future size of the City, both in its aerial extent and in population, was the focus of the initial community outreach efforts leading to the preparation of a Draft General Plan. A number alternatives were presented to workshop participants to conceptually illustrate a range of possibilities for the future growth and development of the City. The alternative preferred by workshop participants shows future urban expansion to the north and east between the existing City limits and Camphora-Gloria Road and supporting a long-term buildout population of about 58,000 residents (excluding the prisons).

The initial preferred land use plan, or “urban fabric diagram” (see Figure II-3), was intended to help the community identify a preferred vision for the future of the City. Although it was deliberately conceptual, it provided an important bridge between the community’s vision for the City and the provisions of State law which require the Land Use Diagram (Figure II-9) to be property-specific. Accordingly, the boundary lines between land use designations shown on the Land Use Diagram are drawn as specifically as possible, and generally follow property lines.

Land Use Designations

The Land Use Diagram for the City of Soledad is shown on Figure II-9 and assigns a land use designation to all property within the City, both public and private, and properties within the City’s sphere of influence (see Figure II-1 and the discussion above). When questions arise regarding the land use designation for a particular parcel of land, the map should be interpreted by the Planning Commission. The individual land use designations are described below:

Single Family Residential residential (1 - 6 units per acre)	This land use designation allows for single family development with up to six dwellings per acre, and allows a range of other uses which includes schools, churches and public facilities.
Duplex Residential (two (7 - 12 units per acre) clusters.	This designation allows for the construction of duplexes attached units on the same lot) and attached housing clusters.
Multiple Residential (13 - 20 units per acre)	The Multiple Residential designation allows for the development of multi-family housing such as apartments, condominiums and townhouses.
General Commercial	The General Commercial designation is intended to support uses of a community retail nature such as

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appliance stores, food stores, offices, banks and other uses for the community as a whole.

Neighborhood Commercial	Neighborhood Commercial land uses provide goods and services for a specific neighborhood, such as convenience stores, food stores, drug stores, etc.
Downtown Commercial	A mix of retail, office, and other service uses appropriate for the Central Business District, also potentially including some residential uses on upper floors.
Service Commercial	Uses such as wholesale and retail stores and shops of a heavy commercial and business park character conducted inside or outside a building, such as auto repair shops, farm equipment repair and sales, etc.
Industrial	Manufacturing, processing, repair, storage and/or agricultural related industries in a conventional industrial or business park setting.
Public/Institutional hospitals, etc.	Schools, government buildings, libraries, churches,
Recreational	Open space lands that provide active recreation areas, with maintained landscaping and facilities.
Open Space/Grazing Land	Undisturbed open space uses that maintain scenic and natural habitat values as well as flood zone safety and safety from other hazards. Grazing land is generally located on hillsides above the 400 foot contour elevation.
Agriculture	Agricultural lands intended for soil-dependent uses.

**SOLEDAD GENERAL PLAN
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Figure II-3: Urban Fabric Diagram



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Expansion Areas

The Land Use Diagram designates areas adjacent to the City where it will eventually grow and extend public services over the next twenty or more years. These areas are designated *Expansion Area/Specific Plan Required* and are primarily residential in nature, but will also provide the range of complementary land uses necessary to support liveable neighborhoods that are integrated with the fabric of the community.

A *specific plan* will be required in advance of annexation and development of each sub-area identified on the Land Use Diagram (Figure II-9). A specific plan is a planning tool authorized by State law (Government Code Section 65450) that can be used to identify appropriate land uses for an area and establish development guidelines in greater detail than provided by the General Plan. However, a specific plan is not as detailed as an individual development plan or subdivision proposal, and will be used to bridge the gap between the broad land use policies contained in the General Plan, and the detailed development guidelines found in the City's Zoning Ordinance.

The General Plan provides standards for the preparation of specific plans for new expansion areas in Appendix B on page XII-2. Standards are provided for the allowable mix of land uses and for the overall objectives to be achieved through the specific plan process.

The following is a description of each specific plan sub-area along with a brief discussion of development constraints and opportunities and the overall objectives to be achieved.

NORTHWEST EXPANSION AREA

The Northwest Expansion Area designates commercial, industrial and residential land uses that would serve the City's long term development needs. The properties in this area are owned primarily by the Braga and Silva families (in 2004) and consist of about 1,548 acres south of Camphora-Gloria Road, and north of Highway 101. To the south and west lie the San Vicente West, North Entry Commercial and Mirrasou Specific Plan areas. The Dole food processing plant lies within this specific plan area north of Highway 101 on Camphora-Gloria Road.

The Northwest Expansion Area is envisioned as a source of land for the City's long-term industrial and commercial development needs. In addition, this specific plan area is intended to support additional residential neighborhoods with parks, schools, neighborhood serving commercial development and a range of housing products. The main focus of development within the Northwest Expansion Area is an industrial park surrounding the Dole plant which could be developed as a joint effort between the City and the County. The industrial park would provide suitable sites for large-scale agricultural support industries similar to Dole that would provide jobs for the City and region.

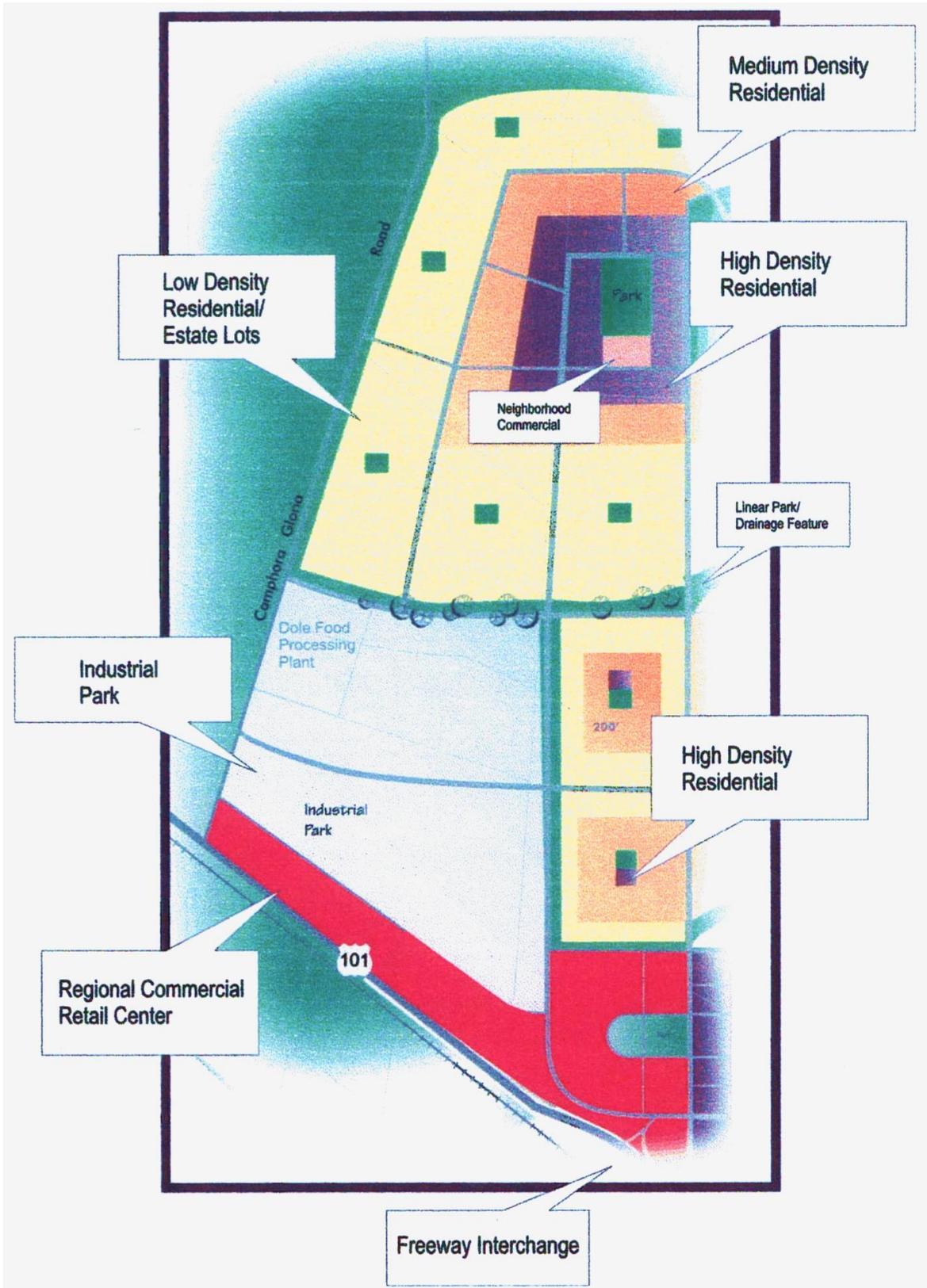
SOLEDAD GENERAL PLAN
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Northwest Expansion Area
Estimated Development Potential At Buildout

Land Use Category	Acres	Units	Floor Area
Residential			--
Low Density	725	3,600	
Medium Density	200	1,400 - 2,400	
High Density	25	325-500	
Commercial/Office	68	--	1,000,000 sq.ft.
Neighborhood Serving Commercial	9	--	135,000 sq.ft.
Industrial Park	400	--	8,500,000 sq.ft.
Public/Quasi-public	10	--	--
Parks/Open Space	114	--	--
Total:	1,550	5,900	9,635,000 sq.ft.

**SOLEDAD GENERAL PLAN
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Figure II-4: Northwest Expansion Area



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NORTH ENTRY COMMERCIAL

The North Entry Commercial area consists of the properties designated for commercial development adjacent to the Highway 101 interchange at the north entrance to the City. The properties in this area are owned primarily by the Braga and Moranda families and consists of approximately 146 acres. The current land use consists of irrigated row crop cultivation. To the north and northeast is highly productive agricultural land. To the east are residential, recreational and commercial uses within the City of Soledad east of San Vicente Road. At the southerly end of the Moranda property is the confluence of Front Street and San Vicente Road which provides the northerly entrance to the downtown commercial core area.

The North Entry Commercial area's high visibility, and its proximity to the freeway interchange and future growth areas in the City make it ideally suited for future large scale commercial development. Accordingly, new development must be designed with sensitivity to the area's visual prominence, and incorporate elements that reflect positively on the City.

Uses envisioned for this area include a major regional shopping center and other retail uses such as offices, neighborhood parks, and higher density housing that will benefit from proximity to the anticipated shopping, services and employment opportunities.

**North Entry Commercial Specific Plan Area
Estimated Development Potential At Buildout**

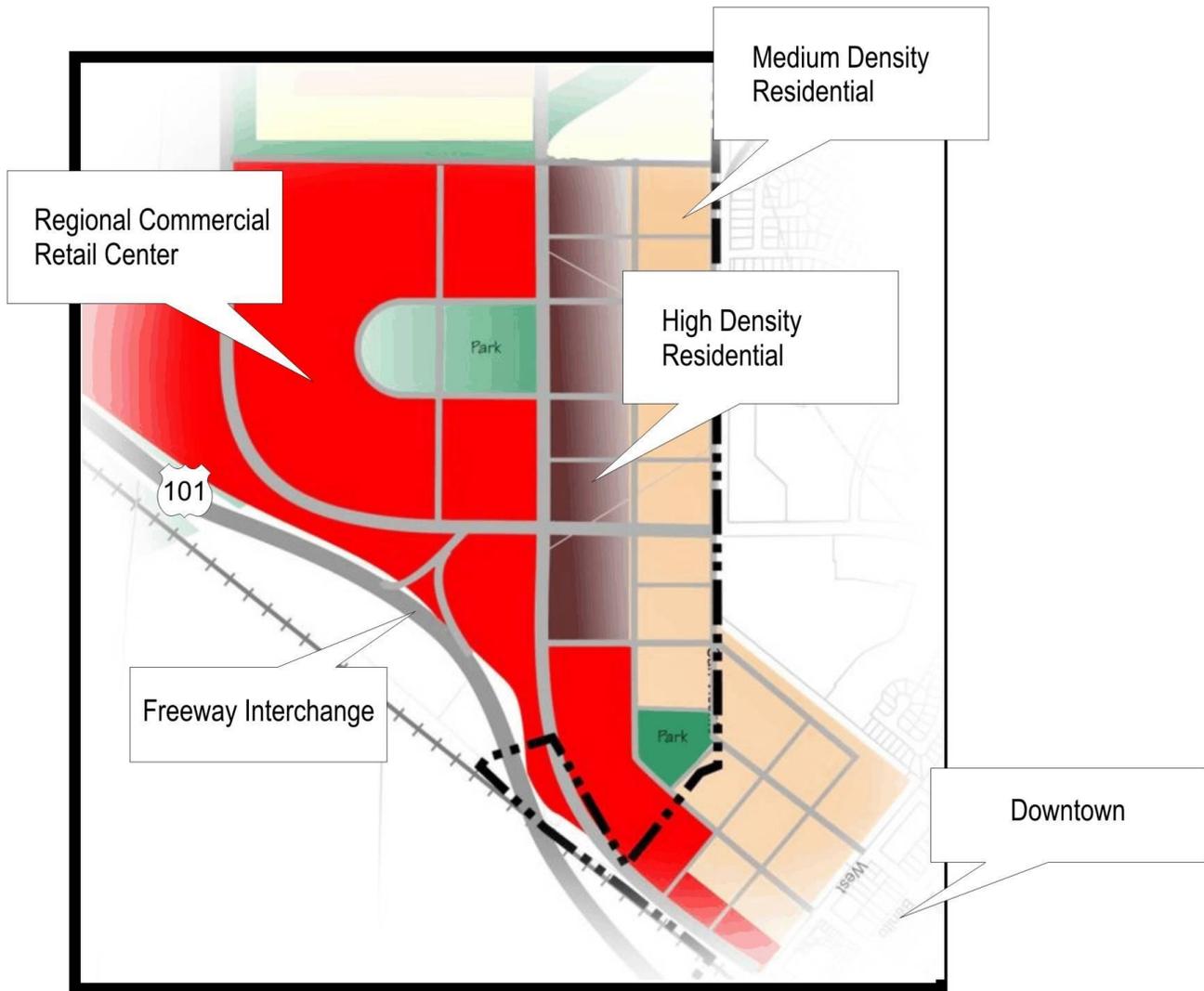
Land Use Category	Acres	Units	Floor Area
Residential	39	180-220	--
Commercial/Office	100	--	1,220,000 sq.ft.
Parks/Open Space	7	--	
Total:	146		

Vehicular traffic is anticipated to be high when this area reaches full development, which emphasizes the need for a well planned circulation system. This specific plan area will be served by an arterial road system including Gabilan Drive, and a future north-south roadway as shown on the Circulation Diagram (Figure V-2). The street system serving the residential and office areas should continue the grid system of streets originating in the downtown area and to allow multiple access points to the commercial area.

The conceptual illustration provided below shows how this area might be developed. It should be noted that this is an illustration, only, and depicts only one of many possible design solutions that may arise through the preparation of the specific plan required for the area.

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Figure II-5: North Entry Commercial Specific Plan Area



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SAN VICENTE WEST

The San Vicente West area is located west of San Vicente Street and north of Gabilan Drive and consists of approximately 179 acres. Current land use consists of irrigated row crops. To the west and north is agricultural land; to the east are residential neighborhoods within the City of Soledad. This specific plan area lies adjacent to the Mirassou property (Section 16) to the east and adjoins the North Entry Commercial Area to the south. San Vicente West is also at the most westerly end of the natural drainage system that originates in the Gabilan Range northeast of the City.

Uses envisioned for this area include low- and medium-density residential, retail, and neighborhood parks. Medium density multi-family uses will benefit by proximity to anticipated shopping, services and employment opportunities. Retail and offices are appropriate in the southern portion of the specific plan area adjacent to the North Entry Commercial area described above.

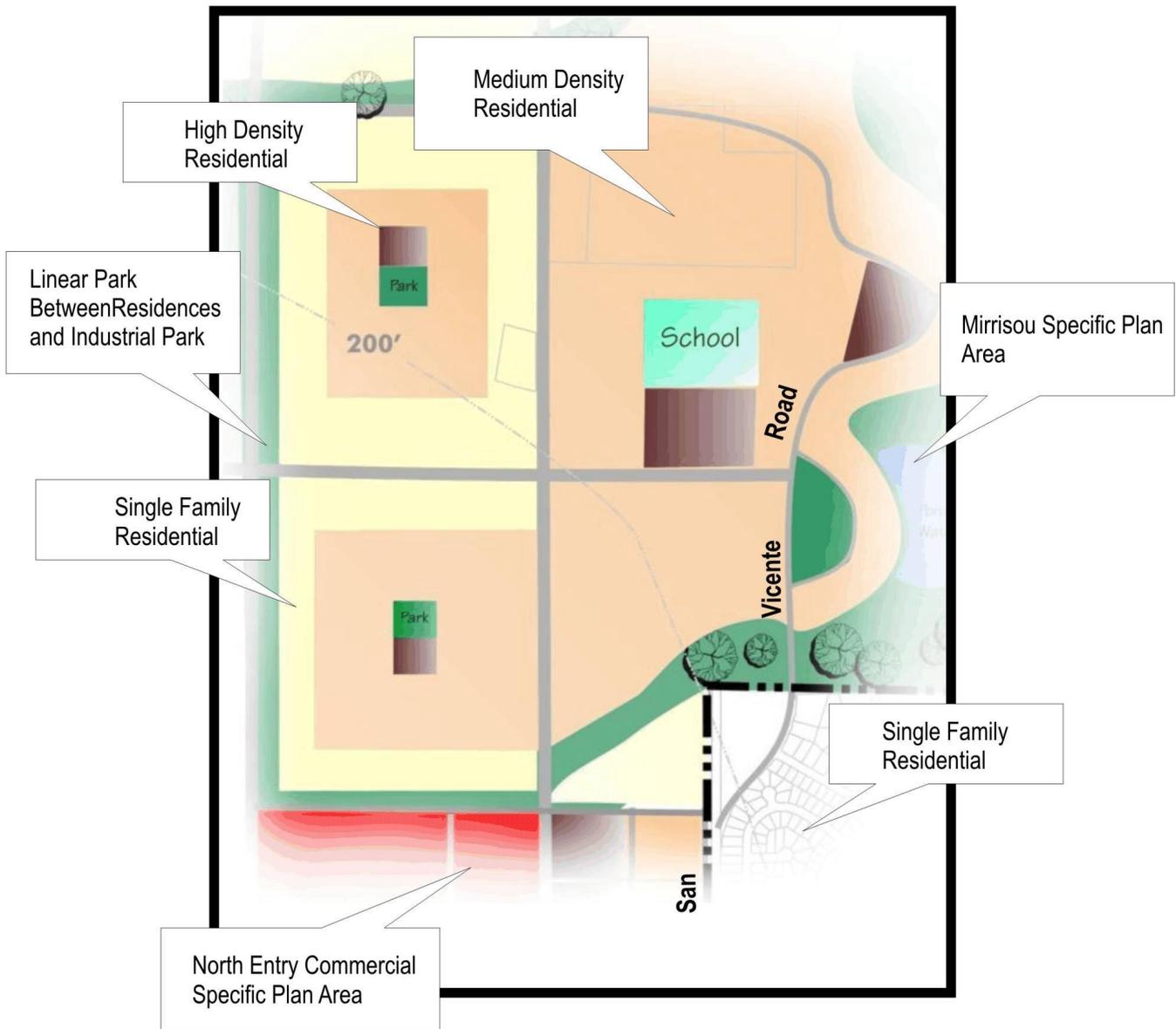
**San Vicente West Specific Plan Area
Estimated Development Potential At Buildout**

Land Use Category	Acres	Units	Floor Area
Residential	155	680-780	--
Commercial/Office	5	--	48,000 sq.ft
Parks/Open Space	10	--	--
School Site	10	--	--
Total:	180		

Figure II-6 provides a conceptual illustration of how this area might develop. It should be noted that this is an illustration, only, and depicts only one of many possible design solutions that may arise through the preparation of the specific plan required for the area.

**SOLEDAD GENERAL PLAN
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Figure II-6: San Vicente West Specific Plan Area



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MIRASSOU

The Mirassou specific plan area is comprised of 650 developable acres (section 16 and several adjoining parcels) and is currently used for various agricultural operations including vineyards and grazing. Topography is gently undulating to the west and becoming hilly and steep toward the east in the foothills of the Gabilan Range.

The Mirassou Specific Plan area is envisioned as one of the City's major future growth areas. A number of objectives have been identified for this area including:

- T Preserve the scenic hills above the 400-foot contour as grazing land or accessible open space.
- T Provide a range of residential product types that include multi-family and estate lots, as well as conventional single family development;
- T Incorporate a nine-or 18 hole public golf course;
- T Provide drainage and open space to solve the chronic flooding problem associated with the westerly portion of the plan area;
- T Provide neighborhood serving commercial development and limited office space;
- T Provide locations for public and quasi-public land uses that include schools, parks and public safety facilities;

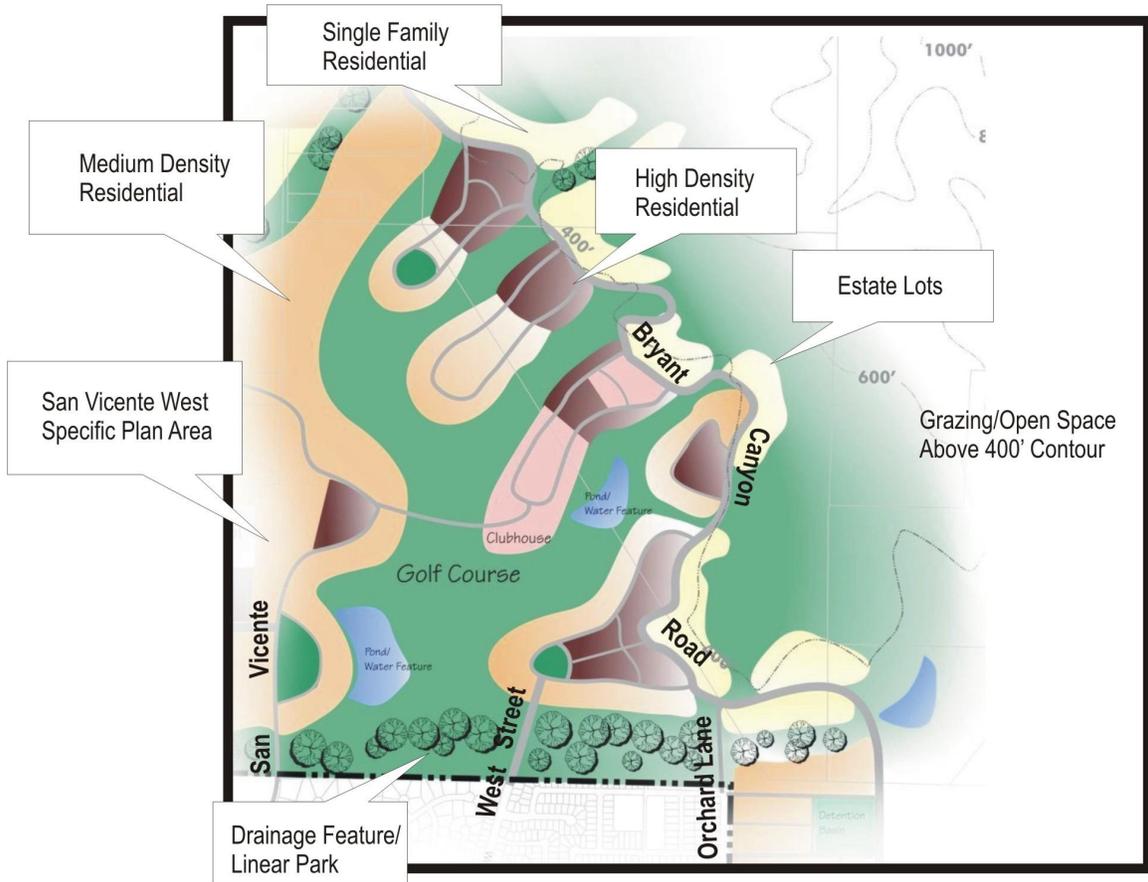
**Mirrasou Specific Plan Area
Estimated Development Potential At Buildout**

Land Use Category	Acres	Units	Floor Area
Residential	383	1,650-1,900	--
Commercial/Office	10	--	122,000 sq.ft.
Parks	50	--	--
Public/Quasi-Public	10	--	--
Open Space	515		
Total:	1,165 (650 developable acres)		

Figure II-7 provides a conceptual illustration of how this area might develop. It should be noted that this is an illustration, only, and depicts only one of many possible design solutions that may arise through the preparation of the specific plan required for the area.

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Figure II-7: Mirrisou Specific Plan Area



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MIRAVALE II

Miravalle II includes several large parcels east of the area known as Miravale I, and the Orchard Lane Estates area (an area of County lands immediately east of Granada Street). Development of this area would complete the east side of the City which adjoins the Estancia Vineyards (to the east) which is currently encumbered by a Land Conservation Act contract with the County of Monterey. Bryant Canyon flood channel is a significant feature, providing a separation between the specific plan area and the adjoining vineyards. The channel provides an opportunity for use as an open space buffer between the urban and agricultural areas, and as a corridor for a future public trail system around the City's eastern flank.

Vehicular circulation connections to Miravale II have largely been determined by the development of Miravale I. Orchard Lane provides access from the south and Gabilan Drive from the west. Metz Road (State Highway 146) borders the specific plan area on the south. Additional access to the specific plan area will be provided by the northerly extension of Bryant Canyon Road and Orchard Lane north from Metz Road. Gabilan Drive provides the most direct access to the City's north and northwest areas (i.e., North Entry Commercial area, Soledad High School and Highway 101 north), and by Metz Road, which will provides access to South Monterey County via Metz Road and/or Highway 101. It may be appropriate to consider ceasing the use of portions of Bryant Canyon Road for vehicular access and to utilize Orchard Lane as the primary arterial road in the area. This could reduce development and maintenance costs and enable the use of Bryant Canyon Road right of way as a pedestrian trail.

The primary land use envisioned for this area is residences at a variety of densities, with limited complementary neighborhood commercial uses fronting Metz Road. Other uses envisioned for this area include neighborhood parks, expansion of the historic Soledad Cemetery, and provision of an attractive open space corridor with a pedestrian trail along the edge of Bryant Canyon Road.

Although Miravale II is an expansion area, development of the area has already undergone environmental review and will not be subject to the preparation of a specific plan

**Miravale II Expansion Area
Estimated Development Potential At Buildout**

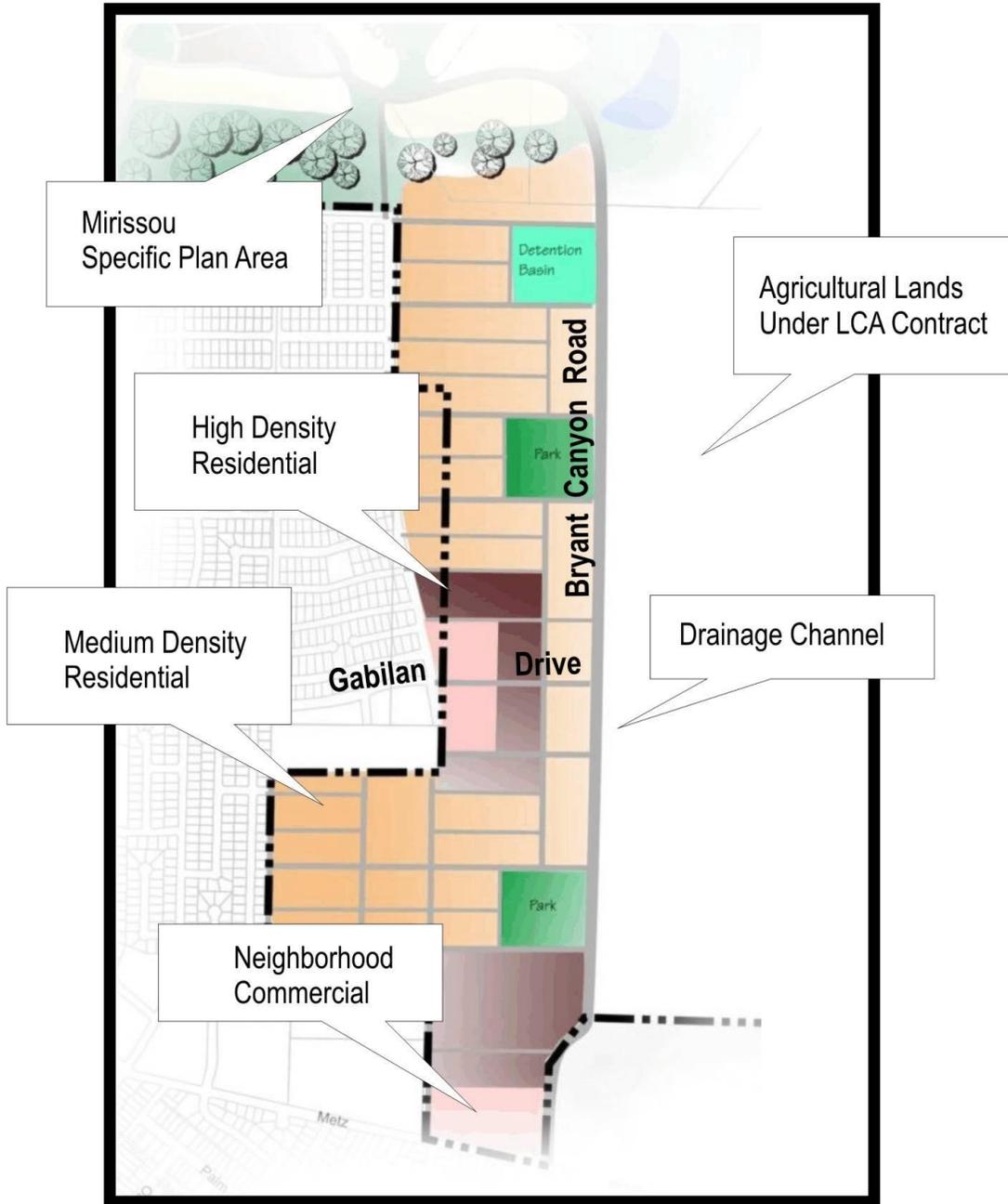
Land Use Category	Acres	Units	Floor Area
Residential	186	815-950	--
Commercial/Office	5	--	48,000 sq.ft.
Parks/Open Space	26	--	--
Total:	217	--	--

Figure II-8 provides a conceptual illustration of how this area might develop. It should be noted that this is an illustration, only, and depicts only one of many possible

**SOLEDAD GENERAL PLAN
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design solutions that may arise through the preparation of the specific plan required for the area.

Figure II-8: Miravale II Expansion Area



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General Plan Holding Capacity

Table II-1 summarizes the acreage designated for various land uses by the General Plan, and their corresponding maximum theoretical development potential. Table II-1 shows that the General Plan could accommodate a non-prison population of between 53,000 - 61,000 residents at full buildout, in addition to about 10 -12 million square feet of commercial and industrial development. It should be noted that these figures represent an estimate of conditions at full buildout of the land designated for these uses inclusive of existing development.

Table II-2 provides a summary of the General Plan "holding capacity", which is the number of dwelling units, commercial and industrial floor space, etc., that can be accommodated based on the amount of land designated for these uses. Due to market forces, the size and shape of parcels and other factors, the maximum development potential is rarely achieved. For this reason, holding capacity is expressed as 80 percent of the gross development potential (acres x building intensity). However, the actual buildout population achieved by the general plan will likely be much less because existing residential neighborhoods are developed at densities much less than 80% of their maximum allowable density, and the residential density of new expansion areas will likewise be constrained by slope, irregularly shaped lots and preferences reflected in the marketplace.

According to the 2000 Census, the City had about 2,472 dwelling units, not counting dwellings approved or under construction. Since then, about 600 additional units have been constructed, which brings the total in the City to about 3,072. This leaves a remaining development potential of 6,600 to 8,600 units that could be constructed within the City's general plan area in accordance with the General Plan.

**Table II-1
General Plan Development Potential**

Source: CMCA and City of Soledad

	Single Family	Medium Density	High Density	Commercial	Industrial	Public/Parks	Agriculture	Open Space/Grazing
GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATIONS WITHIN THE EXISTING (2002) CITY LIMITS								
Total Acres Within City Limits	601	97	38	78	146	278	35	
Dwelling Units Per Acre/FAR	5	7 to 12	13 to 20	0.35	0.50			
Existing Units/Floor Area ⁴	2,100	372	200	762,300 sq.ft.	1,241,460 sq.ft.			
Potential Infill Units/Floor Area	230	307-792	294-560	189,000 sq.ft.	1,258,540 sq.ft.			
Holding Capacity of Current City Limits (Units/Floor Area)	2,330 units	679-1164 units	494-760 units	951,350 sq.ft. ⁵	2,500,000 sq.ft.			
EXPANSION AREAS								
North Entryway								
Acres	29	5	5	100	0	7	0	0
Units/Floor Area	115 units	23-40 units	43-66 units	1,219,680 sq.ft.				
San Vicente West								
Acres	128	15	12	5	0	19	0	0
Units/Floor Area	507 units	69-119 units	103-158 units	50,000 sq.ft.				
Mirrasou								
Acres	328	30	25	10	0	253	0	515
Units/Floor Area	1,299 units	139-238 units	215-330 units	100,000 sq.ft.				
Miravale II ³								
Acres	152	20	14	5	0	26	0	0
Units/Floor Area	602 units	92-158 units	120-185 units	50,000 sq.ft.				
Northwest Expansion Area								
Acres	725	200	25	77	400	124	0	0
Units/Floor Area	3,600 units	1,400-2,400 units	325-500 units	1,135,000 sq.ft.	8,500,000 sq.ft.			
TOTAL MAXIMUM POTENTIAL AT BUILDOUT:	8,400 units	2,400 -4,100 units	1,300-2,000 units	3,500,000 sq.ft.	11,500,000 sq.ft.	580 acres	35 acres	515 acres

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1. Residential acres are net acres (total acres minus roadways). All other acreages are gross acres.
2. Assumes an average of 4.0 persons per dwelling unit for all single family residences at buildout, and 4.52 persons per household for all multi-family households.
3. Miravale II is included as an expansion area but will not be subject to a specific plan.
4. The Mirrasou Specific Plan area includes 200 acres for a golf course.
5. Includes Los Coches Adobe.
6. As of August, 2002.

**Table II-2
Summary General Plan Holding Capacity**

Potential Dwelling Units At Buildout of Plan Area ¹ :	9,680 - 11,600
Potential Commercial Floor Area At Buildout ¹ :	2,800,000 sq.ft.
Potential Industrial Floor Area At Buildout ¹ :	9,200,000 sq.ft.
Potential Non-Prison Population at Buildout:	53,500 - 62,000
2000 Prison Population:	11,200
Total Acres in Plan Area:	4,750

1. 80 percent of maximum potential.

LAND USE INTENSITY STANDARDS

In accordance with State law, the General Plan must specify standards of population density and building intensity for each land use designation. Standards for building intensity for residential designations are stated in terms of the maximum number of dwelling units allowed per gross acre and the allowable range of dwelling units per gross acre. Standards for population density for residential land uses are derived by multiplying the maximum number of dwellings allowed per gross acre by the average number of persons per dwelling unit, which for purposes of this General Plan is assumed to be 4.55 based on the 2000 US Census. For example, the maximum population standard for Low Density Residential development is about $6 \times 4.55 = 27.3$ persons per acre.

For non-residential land uses, building intensity standards are expressed in terms of maximum allowable floor-area ratios (FARs). A floor-area ratio is the ratio of building size to lot area:

$$\text{Floor Area Ratio} = \frac{\text{Maximum Building Area Allowed}}{\text{Net Area of Lot}}$$

The FAR is most often used to determine the maximum allowable building size for a particular lot, as follows:

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Maximum Building Area Allowed = Net Area of Lot X Floor Area Ratio

For example, a 5,000 square foot lot with a FAR of 1.00 will allow a building of 5,000 gross square feet, regardless of the number of stories in the building (e.g., 2,500 square feet on two floors, or 5,000 square feet on one floor). The same lot with a FAR of 0.50 would allow a 2,500 square foot building, or a 10,000 square foot building with a FAR of 2.00.

Table II-3 lists the standards for the allowable range of dwelling units per gross acre, and the maximum allowable floor-area ratio for non-residential land uses.

Table II-3 Building Intensity Standards

Land Use Category	Building Intensity
Residential Single Family Multi-family	6 units/acre 20 units/acre
Commercial	FAR* of 0.4
Industrial	FAR of 0.6
Public/Institutional	FAR of 0.4

* Floor Area Ratio (FAR), is the ratio of building area to the area of the lot. For example, a floor area ratio of one on a one acre lot results in a building floor area of 43,560 square feet.

Corresponding Zoning Designations

The land use designations contained in the General Plan describe the general uses to which land may be committed in the City of Soledad. They do not imply the appropriate land use for a given parcel of land, which will vary based on a variety of factors, such as the location, size and shape of the property, and market conditions for particular land uses. Site-specific development standards are provided in the *Soledad Zoning Ordinance* which divides the City into districts, or zones. By law the zoning districts must be consistent with the land use designations shown on the Land Use Diagram.

Table II-4 summarizes the various zoning districts that may be used to implement the land use classifications shown on the Land Use Diagram (Figure II-8). In addition to these base zoning districts, there are a number of combining districts that provide additional standards applicable to specific areas of the City.

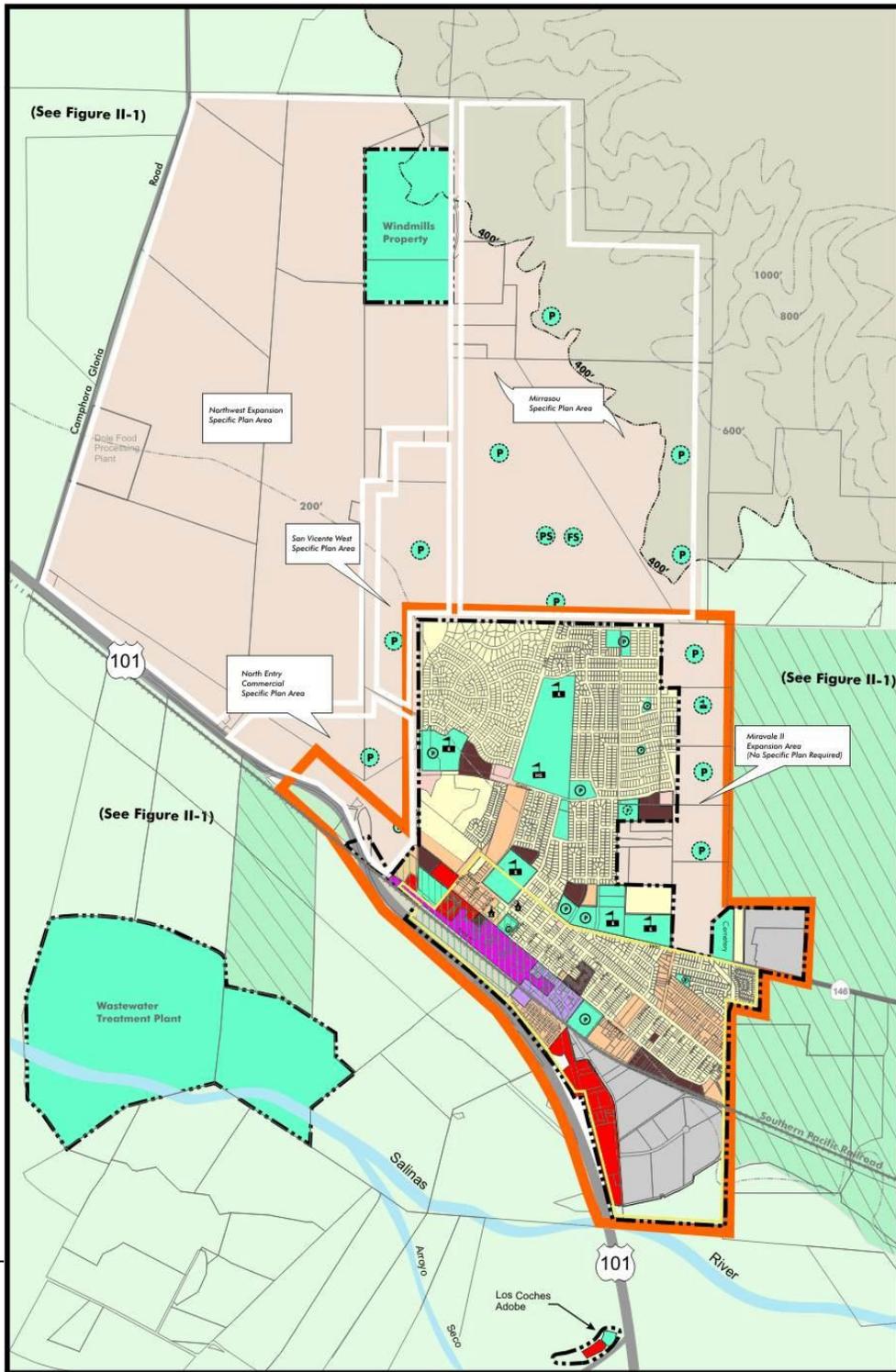
Table II-4

Land Use Designations and
Corresponding Zoning Districts

Land Use Designation	Consistent Zoning Districts
[Refer to Latest Official Zoning Map on File In the Community Development Department]	

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Figure II-9: Land Use Diagram



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LAND USE ELEMENT GOALS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goals

1. To provide effective standards for the location, amount, rate, type and quality of new development so that the local economy remains healthy, attractive residential neighborhoods can expand, the small town character of the town is preserved, and the natural environment is protected.
2. To manage the growth of the town so that adequate facilities and services can be provided in pace with development.
3. To maintain and support a healthy and diverse local economy that meets the present and future employment, shopping, recreational, public safety, and services needs of Soledad residents.

Policies

General

- L-1 The Soledad general plan area is shown on Figure II-9. The land use designations and policies of this General Plan apply to the general plan area. Within the City's planning area, the City will support the following:
- a. Apply the City Centered Growth Principles as recommended by the City Centered Growth Task Force;
 - b. Preserve agriculture on large lots outside the City's sphere of influence as it may be amended by the updated general plan;
 - c. No new Land Conservation Act contracts to be entered into within the sphere of influence;
 - d. No expansion of non-soil dependent land uses;
 - e. No urban services from the City unless an equitable cost and revenue sharing agreement between the City and the County is executed;
 - f. Execution of a Memorandum of Understanding with Monterey County formalizing the land use management strategy for the City's sphere of influence embodied in the items listed above.
- L-2 Further annexations to the City may occur when a) a substantial portion of the development capacity within the existing city limits has been developed, b) a substantial public benefit can be realized through the annexation, such as the provision of public open space, additional parkland, or the protection of scenic vistas, or natural resources, or c) a special type of use is proposed that cannot be practically accommodated in the existing city limits, and d) the project can be found to provide a financial benefit to the City or to be fiscally neutral. The Planning Commission shall review the merits of a request for annexation based on these criteria, and make a recommendation to the City Council.

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- L-3 A specific plan shall be required for all annexations and development of properties designated *Expansion Area*. Specific plans shall be prepared in accordance with the standards provided in Appendix B.
- L-4 The City shall promote patterns of development that allow for the efficient and timely extension of infrastructure and services.
- L-5 New development shall not be allowed unless adequate public services are available to serve such new development, or that can be provided at the time of development.
- L-6 New development shall pay its fair share of providing additional public services needed to accommodate such development.
- L-7 Master plans for sewer, water, roads, drainage and other public improvements shall be required for new development on large undeveloped parcels and may be included in the specific plan required by policy L-3, and as determined by the City.
- L-8 The City shall permit only low-intensity land uses in areas where natural conditions such as floodplains and steep hillsides are likely to pose a threat to public safety or produce excessive maintenance costs.
- L-9 To help maintain the beauty of the City, property owners shall be encouraged to maintain their property in a neat and orderly manner. The City will continue to enforce the property maintenance standards of the Soledad Municipal Code.

Jobs/Housing Balance

- L-10 The City shall monitor development and adjust land use designations and new residential project approvals as needed to promote a reasonable balance between employment-generating land uses and housing.
- L-11 The City shall encourage large residential development projects to be phased or timed with development that will provide primary wage-earner jobs.

Residential Development

- L-12 The City shall maintain an adequate supply of land in appropriate designations to accommodate projected household growth, maintain affordability to moderate and below moderate income groups, and maintain acceptable vacancy rates.
- L-13 The City shall require that residential projects be designed to reflect and consider the relationship of the project to surrounding uses. Residential densities and lot patterns will be determined by these and other factors. As a result, the maximum density specified by the General Plan land use designations or zoning for a given parcel of land may not be realized.

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- L-14 The maximum allowable residential density for new residential subdivisions or development projects shall be computed based on the gross area of the lot before dedications for highway setbacks, parks, streets, or other requirements.
- L-15 The City shall require new subdivided lots to be adequate in size and shape for the range of primary and accessory uses designated for the area.
- L-16 The pace of new residential development should be such that new residents can be absorbed into the fabric of the town and existing residents are not overwhelmed by newcomers. This can be accomplished in part by requiring phasing of larger residential projects and by ensuring that adequate infrastructure and public improvements are in place concurrently, or in advance of new development.
- L-17 Major new residential development is appropriate in the areas on the east and north sides of the developed portions of the City.
- L-18 The infill of existing residential lots shall be encouraged.
- L-19 In general, higher densities of residential development shall be located in areas served by the widest range of urban services, and shall be preferred along collector and arterial streets, within walking distance of schools, city parks and transit stops.
- L-20 The approval of new residential subdivisions shall incorporate provisions to ensure that an appropriate amount of new multi-family development is constructed concurrently, or in advance of, new single family residences.

Commercial Development

- L-21 New commercial development shall be encouraged in Soledad near the freeway interchanges with Highway 101. Limited new neighborhood commercial development will be allowed within areas designated *Expansion Area*, and/or at specified nodes to provide for the everyday needs of the surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- L-22 The City will ensure that adequate commercial land is designated to meet the present and future needs of residents of the City and maintain economic vitality.
- L-23 In general, new retail commercial development should provide a wider range of shopping opportunities for the community.
- L-24 New commercial development shall be designed to encourage safe and efficient pedestrian circulation within and between commercial sites and nearby residential neighborhoods.
- L-25 New commercial development shall be designed to minimize the visibility of parking areas from public roadways.

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- L-26 The visitor-serving sector of the local economy shall be maintained and expanded. New motels/hotels shall especially be encouraged in areas within walking distance of the downtown. Visitors to the nearby Pinnacles National Monument offers another potential market for visitor-serving land uses.
- L-27 Residences shall be allowed in conjunction with compatible commercial development on land designated Downtown Commercial.
- L-28 Offices and medical facilities may be located in areas designated for office development and within the Downtown.
- L-29 A Service Commercial land use designation shall be established to accommodate businesses that require large amounts of floor area, such as lumber yards, home improvement outlets, agriculture and ranch-related businesses and other similar uses.

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The Downtown

- L-30 The Downtown shall be developed in accordance with the design standards contained in the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Improvement Plan.
- L-31 The Downtown area along Front Street shall be developed into the physical and social center of Soledad in accordance with the vision captured by the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Improvement Plan. As outlying areas develop with commercial businesses, the role of the downtown should be the focus of community events and gatherings, entertainment and dining. Pedestrian and bicycle access to the downtown shall be improved.

Public-Quasi-Public/Office Development

- L-32 The City shall designate adequate, appropriately located land for the development of City and County facilities and offices, schools, medical facilities, water facilities, and public safety facilities.
- L-33 The expansion of government offices shall be encouraged on land near the present City Hall and in the Downtown. The post office should be retained in the downtown.
- L-34 When considering plans for large-scale development, the City shall designate adequate, appropriately-located land for the development of quasi-public land uses, such as, hospitals, churches, private schools, cemeteries, and utility uses.
- L-35 The City shall promote the clustering of public and quasi-public uses such as schools and parks, libraries, child care facilities, and community activity centers. Joint use of public facilities shall be promoted, and agreements for sharing costs and operational responsibilities among public service providers shall be encouraged.
- L-36 The City shall encourage efforts to locate adequate emergency services and other types of health care facilities in Soledad to meet the present and future needs of its residents.
- L-37 Health care and dental care services, including residential care facilities and senior care services, shall be expanded to meet the needs of the City's population.

Industrial Development

- L-38 The City and Redevelopment Agency shall promote the development of clean industries that do not generate large amounts of air pollution, have the potential to pollute groundwater resources, or that store, use or produce large volumes of hazardous materials.
- L-39 The City and Redevelopment Agency shall promote the expansion of light industrial and business park development in the Los Coches industrial park.

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- L-40 Access to the Los Coches industrial park from the US 101 freeway shall be improved to reduce potential conflicts of truck traffic with neighboring uses, to improve safety and to improve access efficiency.
- L-41 The City will work with Monterey County to establish an industrial park aimed primarily at agriculture support businesses along Camphora-Gloria Road between the existing Dole processing plant and the 101 freeway.

Expansion Areas/Specific Plan Areas

- L-42 The City shall use *Community Design Guidelines* as a decision-making tool to ensure that new development incorporates the qualities and character desired by Soledad residents.
- L-43 Specific plans prepared for major expansion areas shall incorporate the standards described in Appendix B – Standards for Specific Plans. In general:
- a. New residential projects should be designed to integrate with existing neighborhoods to ensure that they do not destroy the established character. Subdivisions in City expansion areas should be designed so that individual, separately developed projects work together to create true neighborhoods with a sense of identity, instead of disjointed or isolated enclaves.
 - b. Subdivision design should emphasize pedestrian connectivity within each project, and to adjacent neighborhoods, and nearby schools and parks. All streets and walkways should be designed to provide safe and pleasant conditions for pedestrians. Streets within neighborhoods should be no wider than needed to accommodate parking and two low-speed travel lanes. Sidewalks should be separated from curbs by parkway strips of at least four feet in width; and the parkways should be planted with canopy street trees.
 - c. Specific plans should provide a range of residential housing types affordable to the widest range of income groups, consistent with the goals, policies and programs of the Housing Element of the General Plan.
 - d. Subdivisions should be designed to provide usable public open spaces in the form of parks, linear bicycle and pedestrian trails, squares, and greens, as appropriate.
- L-44 The City shall require that all new development be designed to complement the scale and character of existing development. Views of the surrounding hills and mountains shall be preserved through such means as design review, sign control, undergrounding of utilities, grading and tree removal standards.
- L-45 The City shall require all new development to be planned and designed in a manner which employs design, construction and maintenance techniques that:
- a. Avoids locating structures along ridgelines and steep slopes.
 - b. Incorporates design and screening measures to minimize the visibility of

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- structures and graded areas.
- c. Maintains the character and visual quality of the area.
- L-46 New development on hillsides shall employ design, construction and maintenance techniques that:
- a. Ensure that development near or on portions of hillsides do not cause or worsen natural hazards such as erosion, sedimentation, or fire hazards.
 - b. Minimize risk to life and property from slope failure, landslides and flooding.
 - c. Include erosion and sediment control measures including temporary vegetation sufficient to stabilize disturbed areas.
 - d. Maintain the character and visual quality of the hillside.
- L-47 The City may, where appropriate, require new development to provide pedestrian amenities along public sidewalks, such as seating and 'pocket parks'.
- L-48 The entrances to Soledad from the north and south by way of Highway 101 are the community's "gateways". New public and private development in these locations shall include elements such as signage, landscaping and landscaped center medians, and appropriate architectural detailing that announce that one has arrived in Soledad.
- L-49 The form, scale and character of new residential development shall emulate the best characteristics of the existing residential neighborhoods, such as single and two-story dwellings with adequate off-street parking, landscaped front yards with trees, and sidewalks.
- L-50 Multi-family development shall include usable open space for each dwelling and shall be designed to be integrated with the surrounding neighborhood.
- L-51 All exterior lighting in new development shall be located and designed so as to avoid shining directly onto nearby residential properties, and shall minimize offsite glare. Proponents of commercial or industrial projects on property adjacent to residential areas shall submit a lighting plan to the City for review and approval; said plan shall incorporate features such low level, downward-directed exterior lights to achieve the intent of this policy.
- L-52 Historically or architecturally significant buildings shall not be demolished or substantially changed in outward appearance in a way that diminishes the historical character, unless doing so is necessary to remove a threat to health and safety and other means to avoid the threat are infeasible.

Programs

- 2.1 The City will pursue an application to the Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission for an amendment of its sphere of influence consistent with this General Plan.

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Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development
Department

Timeframe:

Funding: General fund

Monitoring: Community Development
Department

:

- 2.2 The City shall work with Monterey County to adopt a memorandum of understanding regarding future development within the City's planning area consistent with policy L-1.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development
Department

Timeframe:

Funding: General fund

Monitoring: Community Development
Department

- 2.3 The City will amend its zoning ordinance and district map to reflect the land use designations and related policies of this General Plan. Where necessary, new zoning districts and standards applicable to Soledad shall be created.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development
Department

Timeframe:

Funding: General fund

Monitoring: Community Development
Department

- 2.4 The City will amend the zoning ordinance to include provisions for incentives for projects and land uses that provide a substantial economic or other direct benefit to the community.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development
Department

Timeframe:

Funding: General fund

Monitoring: Community Development
Department

- 2.5 The City will use redevelopment and other funding mechanisms to help revitalize the Downtown and other portions of the City.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development
Department/Redevelopment
Agency

Timeframe: Ongoing

Funding: General fund, redevelopment

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- | | | | |
|------|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | Monitoring: | Community
Department | Development |
| 2.6 | The City shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, specific plans as deemed necessary for areas designated <i>Expansion Area</i> . | | |
| | Responsible Agency/Department: | Community
Department | Development |
| | Timeframe: | Ongoing | |
| | Funding: | Private Development | |
| | Monitoring: | Community
Department | Development |
| 2.7 | The City shall establish a land use and development database to monitor the jobs/housing balance in Soledad. | | |
| | Responsible Agency/Department: | Community
Department,
Agency | Development
Redevelopment |
| | Timeframe: | | |
| | Funding: | General fund | |
| | Monitoring: | Community
Agency | Redevelopment |
| 2.8 | The City shall implement the provisions of the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Improvement Plan. | | |
| | Responsible Agency/Department: | Community
Department | Development |
| | Timeframe: | Ongoing | |
| | Funding: | General fund, redevelopment | |
| | Monitoring: | Community
Department | Development |
| 2.9 | The City shall work with the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations such as the downtown merchants to develop strategies to market Soledad to prospective businesses and to promote tourism. | | |
| | Responsible Agency/Department: | Administration | |
| | Timeframe: | Ongoing | |
| | Funding: | General fund | |
| | Monitoring: | Administration | |
| 2.10 | The City shall prepare and adopt Community Design Guidelines as a decision-making tool to ensure that new development incorporates the qualities and character desired by Soledad residents. | | |
| | Responsible Agency/Department: | Community
Department | Development |

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Timeframe: Ongoing
Funding: General fund, redevelopment
Monitoring: Community Development
Department

- 2.11 The Downtown Specific Plan shall be revised to incorporate a Transit Village Development Plan in accordance with Government Code Section 65460.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development
Department
Timeframe: 2004
Funding: General fund, redevelopment
Monitoring: Community Development
Department

- 2.12 The City will prepare an inventory of historically significant buildings and places within the City and its planning area.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development
Department
Timeframe: 2006
Funding: General fund, redevelopment
Monitoring: Community Development
Department

III ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A Vision Of the Future

The City is fiscally sound, economically diverse and financially stable. Soledad businesses provide most of the day to day needs of its residents. The Los Coches industrial park is nearly built-out with small incubator businesses as well as larger, well established firms that provide stable, well paying jobs. An agriculture industrial park, created as a joint venture between the City and Monterey County, is occupied by several large businesses that offer quality employment for Soledad residents and strengthen economic cooperation between

INTRODUCTION

Economic development refers to policies and programs to help increase the community's economic activity in order to create more and better jobs, and to provide greater choice and more competitive prices for goods and services. A healthy economy also tends to increase revenues to the local government through more property tax and through additional sales tax. Economic vitality and land use policies are closely linked. Encouraging commercial and industrial growth is at the root of a successful economic development strategy. Many of the land use policies are, effectively, economic development policies. Similarly, as discussed earlier in this section, fiscal impacts are also closely tied to economic growth. Thus, policies and programs to enhance the city's fiscal position overlap many of those aimed at more general economic development.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

- ❑ *New commercial and industrial development is needed to help improve the City's fiscal condition.*

One way to improve the City's finances and enable improved and expanded levels of services, is to encourage new commercial and industrial development which will expand the City's tax base and revenue stream.

- ❑ *A healthy economy is essential to generate taxes and related revenues, to provide desired public facilities and services, and to provide higher-paying jobs.*

The City derives revenues from a variety of sources, including sales taxes, bed taxes on motel rooms, and fees for new development. In order to provide a desirable level of services during the time frame of the General Plan, revenues must be generated to pay for the needed improvements to facilities and increased operating costs.

- ❑ *Many residents have low wage jobs. Thus, providing local jobs, and especially higher paying jobs, is important.*

Soledad has limited industrial or professional businesses that provide high paying jobs. For this reason, most of the employed residents work outside the community. Providing more and better jobs in Soledad would have a number of benefits. For example, as fewer persons commute to other towns to work, less traffic will be generated on local highways and air quality will be improved. In addition, a work force that lives, works and shops locally would greatly increase local sales taxes and other revenues to the City. Attracting more and better jobs to Soledad will require that office vacancies be filled, retail businesses recruited and light industrial and service oriented industries pursued aggressively.

- ❑ *The Los Coches Industrial Park remains largely vacant.*

A recent study completed by Applied Development Economics recommends a number of strategies to help revitalize the business park, including re-configuring the size and shape of the lots, adding landscaping along street frontages and continuing the City's marketing efforts. The City has begun implementing several of the study's recommendations. In addition, the City must recruit and work with developers including partnering through funding assistance to bring the Park up to developable standards in a competitive marketplace.

- ❑ *Retail sales "leakage" caused by residents purchasing day-to-day items such as groceries, clothing, and prescription drugs in surrounding communities is of particular concern.*

Achieving a greater degree of balance among housing, shopping and employment opportunities provides diversity to the local economy, which in turn fosters stability over the long term. Studies have shown that the City could support a retail center of 100,000 square feet or more which would capture a sizeable portion of the "leaked" expenditures. The Mission Soledad shopping center has been constructed near the southerly interchange with Highway 101 which will help capture a greater portion of the 'leaked' expenditures.

The City must expedite these plans and partner with developers to clear land, build requisite infrastructure, signage, provide beautification and landscaping and bring sites up to developable standards competitive in today's marketplace. The City must simultaneously recruit and provide requisite partnership and incentives to tenants and end users, particularly those businesses most desired by residents. These include restaurants that provide a more diverse cuisine; fast food; convenience stores; service and gift shops; and clothing/shoe stores.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Economic development strategies tend to focus on three broad components: 1) "locality" development, 2) business development, and 3) labor force enhancement.

Locality development refers to efforts to make the community more conducive to economic growth. Examples include enhanced municipal services and

infrastructure, improved community aesthetics and safety, and quality schools. All of these features tend to attract businesses and their workers.

Business development encompasses those efforts most typically associated with economic development, policies and programs to improve business opportunities and the business climate. Examples include zoning adequate land for commercial and industrial uses, permit streamlining, tax or fee relief for desirable business development, land banking, low interest loans, incubator strategies, and many more programs.

Labor force enhancement includes those programs to increase the skills of the local workers and to better match those skills with desirable employers. If, for example, a community wants to attract "high tech" businesses, then it must have a work force with the education and training to supply the workers for those businesses. Examples of labor force enhancement strategies include training programs (often in conjunction with a local community college or adult school), job hotlines to match workers with employment opportunities, and mentoring or apprenticeship programs.

Any economic development program must realistically acknowledge the constraints inhibiting business growth and build on the community's opportunities. While the City has engaged in programs within all of these general strategies with mixed success, the future emphasis will likely be on locality enhancement and business development.

Redevelopment

In 1983 the City adopted a redevelopment plan in accordance with Section 33000 et seq. of the California Health and Safety Code. Redevelopment affords broad powers to the Redevelopment Agency to alleviate "blight" that is affecting the project area, including economic conditions of blight such as vacant or underutilized buildings. Tax increments accrued to the Agency provide a funding mechanism for redevelopment programs that must be used to alleviate these blighting conditions. In addition, at least twenty percent of the tax increments must be set aside for the purpose of improving the supply of affordable housing within the community.

The Soledad Redevelopment Plan has been amended twice to bring it into conformity with changes to the Community Redevelopment Law that have occurred since its adoption. However, the boundaries of the redevelopment project area have remained the same. Redevelopment goals identified in the Plan include:

- Economic development programs to attract and retain commercial and industrial businesses.*
- Downtown revitalization programs to address the needs of downtown businesses. The City has nearly completed implementation of the Front Street Improvement Plan/Downtown Specific Plan which is aimed at revitalizing the Downtown. In addition, the Downtown is home to numerous special events such as the farmers market, the Christmas festival, and the Wind and Wine Festival all of which add to the vitality of Downtown.*
- Improvement of public facilities and infrastructure.*
- Housing programs to improve the supply of affordable housing.*

Efforts to implement these projects have been funded mostly through tax increments on new development and other sources. For example, redevelopment funds were used to prepare an update of the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Revitalization Plan. A portion of the Specific Plan's streetscape improvements have been installed at the north entrance to town.

Other Economic Development Opportunities

There are several opportunities which the City can incorporate into its economic development strategies.

- ' The city is located relatively near Pinnacles National Monument. This may provide opportunities for the creation of a staging area into the Monument and could be a stimulus for associated visitor-oriented development and tourism revenues.
- ' Wine grapes and wineries are becoming a larger portion of the agricultural economy of the Salinas Valley. In addition to Estancia and Golden State Vintners currently located within the City, a number of large, corporate wineries have also located near Soledad (Mondavi and Kendall Jackson). As the wine industry continues to expand it is possible that another large winery or similar business could locate in Soledad, and/or that the local wine industry could be promoted with a tasting room/retail outlet.
- ' The City is located within a short drive of the Monterey Peninsula which is a major tourist destination.

As noted before, there is significant leakage of sales in certain sectors, including those that cater to furniture, building materials, appliances, autos and other goods that require larger buildings for retailing.

In terms of improving the city's attraction for business generally, several opportunities exist. First, the ongoing efforts to upgrade the city's image through redevelopment is important for attracting investment. Requiring improved levels of ongoing property maintenance and revitalization reinforces these other efforts. Other opportunities exist for streetscape improvements and the creation of public parks which can improve the city's image and leverage greater private investment.

Providing higher paying jobs is a difficult challenge. Continued promotion of clean industries (policy L-38) and the efforts to develop the industrial park (policy L-40) are clearly aimed in this direction. The prisons are the largest single full-time employer in Soledad and are likely to remain so into the future; regional employment, however, continues to be dominated by seasonal agriculture. Factors that could affect future employment in Soledad include:

- ' Prison expansion or contraction
- ' The location of large-scale agricultural processing operations in Soledad.
- ' Regulatory changes (such as City-centered growth) in other communities or in the unincorporated county.
- ' Introduction of an unknown and unanticipated industry or quasi-public use.

Economic development can be encouraged by providing incentives for desirable new projects and by streamlining the development review process.

The problems Soledad faces in terms of economic vitality are significant but there are opportunities for improvement. The successful approach must be long term and incremental, starting with the items discussed above.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goals

1. To improve the City's overall economy and fiscal condition.
2. To ensure that new development does not impose a substantial financial burden to the City.
3. To provide good local jobs for Soledad residents.

Policies

- E-1 The City will work with local business groups, such as the Soledad Chamber of Commerce and the Old Town Merchants Association to promote Soledad businesses and to explore new business opportunities. Among the possibilities warranting additional study include:
- <More visitor-serving uses catering to visitors to Pinnacles National Monument;
 - <Community shopping center including major chain grocery and drug stores;
 - <A wine tasting boutique showcasing local wineries;
 - <A train depot and train services;
 - <Restoration of the Los Coches (Richardson) Adobe and development of a hotel and restaurant at the property;
 - <Recruitment of agricultural processing and support industries;
- E-2 When deemed appropriate by the City, fiscal impact analyses may be required to determine the possible fiscal effects of new development on the City and other public agencies. These studies may be used to formulate conditions of approval for new projects, if deemed appropriate, and will be utilized to recruit and expedite development of sought-after projects and businesses of most benefit to the community.
- E-3 The City shall encourage efforts to attract and retain commercial and office tenants to Soledad. Efforts shall focus on those sectors that are presently undersupplied in the community and for which there may be local demand, and on regional markets that may be attracted to Soledad by locations near Highway 101.

- E-4 The City shall coordinate with the Chamber of Commerce to promote tourism. The City will consider using a portion of the Transient Occupancy Tax and Redevelopment monies for that purpose.
- E-5 The City shall investigate the feasibility of adding new attractions to the community such as, but not limited to, new cultural facilities, special events or special educational facilities. All such efforts shall be coordinated with the business community. One priority is a to recruit a small to mid-size movie theater.
- E-6 The City and its Redevelopment Agency shall continue to upgrade the image of Soledad through the Downtown Specific Plan and the provision of incremental improvements to the streetscapes and park system.
- E-7 The City shall consider incentives for new development that provide a substantial fiscal benefit to the community, such as retail sales taxes, transient occupancy taxes or higher-paying jobs.
- E-8 The City shall require fiscal impact assessments for newly proposed specific plans. The City will use those assessments to explicitly consider likely net fiscal impacts in the plan evaluation and to develop conditions of approval that mitigate adverse fiscal impacts, if deemed necessary.
- E-9 The City shall accommodate and encourage higher-end residential development in appropriate locations, such as the areas within newly annexed areas that are designated for specific plans.
- E-10 The City shall periodically review its demographic profile to highlight special subgroups whose spending preferences create opportunities for targeted business development. The City will respect the ethnicity of its residents in its land use and economic development efforts and the impact these efforts may have on its residents.
- E-11 The City shall explore ways to assist the school district and other regional educational institutions in providing effective adult education and training to improve the skill levels of the City's residents.

Programs

- 3.1 The City will establish and maintain a program to monitor the fiscal status of the City as it relates to the implementation of the General Plan.

Responsible Agency/Department: City Manager/Finance Department/
 Community Development Department
 Timeframe: Ongoing
 Funding: General fund
 Monitoring: Community Development Department

- 3.2 The City will establish an economic development program to help achieve the economic development policies described in the Economic Development element.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department,
Redevelopment Agency, Economic
Development Director
Timeframe: Ongoing
Funding: General fund, grants,
Monitoring: Economic Development Director

- 3.3 The City will establish guidelines for the preparation of fiscal impact analyses.

Responsible Agency/Department: City Manager/Finance Department/
Community Development
Department/Economic Development
Director
Timeframe:
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Economic Development Director

- 3.4 The City will pursue a “skill-building” and an English language program in conjunction with Hartnell Community College and advertise this program to prospective businesses as a means of improving the image of Soledad's workforce.

Responsible Agency/Department: Economic Development Director
Timeframe:
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Economic Development Director



I. HOUSING

A Vision Of The Future

All of Soledad's residents have sound, affordable housing. Residential neighborhoods are attractive, well maintained and pedestrian-friendly. There is sufficient choice in the variety of housing so that the diverse housing needs of all the City's residents are met.

INTRODUCTION

State law is more specific about the content of housing elements than any other portion of the general plan. The Housing Element is also the only element that is actually subject to review and "certification" by the state.

The Housing Element is required by State law to include all of the following information:

- ❑ Information about the existing housing stock, covering such items as the amount, type, cost, tenure, and structural conditions of the units.
- ❑ An analysis of potential barriers to housing production including both governmental and non-governmental constraints.
- ❑ Information about energy conservation opportunities in housing rehabilitation and new construction.
- ❑ Information about existing subsidized housing and the possibility of its being lost due to conversion to market-rate units.
- ❑ Specific goals, measurable objectives, policies and implementation measures. Objectives must include targets for housing unit production, based on a "fair share allocation".

The Soledad Housing Element was last updated in 2003 (*City of Soledad Housing Element, A Chapter of the Soledad General plan, March, 2003*). The data and analysis required by State law for Housing Elements, including detailed demographic, income and other information is provided in the *City of Soledad Housing Element*, which is published separately. In addition, Chapter 2 of the General Plan Background Report provides additional supporting information regarding housing in Soledad.

HOUSING ISSUES

- ❑ *Soledad needs to continue to make efforts to achieve its regional allocation of housing for all income groups.*

As described above, changes to State law require that each city and county take steps to produce its share of housing to meet the region's housing needs. Table IV-1 describes Soledad's regional fair share by income category.

- ❑ *A priority of the Housing Element will be the preservation and rehabilitation of existing housing for low income households.*

The analysis contained in the 2003 Housing Element Update suggests that rental housing stock in Soledad can be considered "affordable" by regional standards. Therefore, a priority of the Housing Element will be to preserve and rehabilitate existing housing first, and to allow existing housing to be demolished only in circumstances where it cannot feasibly be preserved.

- ' *There is a substantial need for rental housing for households with moderate and above moderate incomes.*

The Fair Share allocation and previous construction trends indicate that a substantial amount of the housing for low and very low incomes is provided by the marketplace in Soledad. The income category with the greatest projected housing need is for households with 'above moderate' incomes, or over 120% of the County median.

- ' *Housing for households with special needs, such as seniors, farmworkers, large families and households headed by single females, will need to be addressed by the General Plan.*

Soledad has a large number of seniors and families headed by single females. There is also a high degree of overcrowding, due to the presence of large families in smaller rental units. The special needs of these groups should be addressed by the Housing Element.

FAIR SHARE ALLOCATION: OVERALL PRODUCTION OBJECTIVE

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) estimates the statewide need for housing, which is then broken down into regions. Within each region, the area council of governments (in Soledad's case, the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments) prepares a more specific regional distribution of the needs to the local counties and cities. This so-called "fair share allocation" is a specific number of units in different price ranges assigned to each local jurisdiction.

In 1990, AMBAG calculated that the City of Soledad should accommodate 1,192 new housing units by 1996 to achieve an overall housing inventory of 2,807 units. This

represents about 200 units per year. Of this total allocation, about 20 percent (about 247 units) were needed for households with low, or very low incomes.

In January, 2000 the City was estimated to have about 2,669 units which is short of the overall target set by AMBAG. Still, the City has made considerable progress toward achieving its share of market rate (for moderate and above moderate incomes) housing which constituted the largest portion of the City's fair share requirement in 1996.

In 2000 AMBAG assigned a Fair Share Housing Allocation to Soledad of 1,283 units between 2000 and 2007. These estimates were further refined to include the 527 residential building permits issued between January, 2000 and November 2002 to arrive at an adjusted housing need of 799 units. Since 525 permits were for units affordable to 'above moderate' incomes, the remaining housing need by 2007 is as shown on Table IV-1.

**Table IV-1
Adjusted City of Soledad
Fair Share Housing Allocation By Income Category 2000-2007**

	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	Total
AMBAG Allocation	263	234	304	482	1,283
Building Permits Issued From January 2000 to August 2002	0	0	2	525	527
Balance of Need	263	234	302	0	799

Source: AMBAG and City of Soledad

Based on past housing construction levels, the objective for lower income housing seems achievable. Between 1995 and 1999, about 615 building permits for residential construction were issued, or about 123 units per year. This total includes 100 units of multi-family rental dwellings, or about 40 percent of the projected housing needs for low and very low income households. The balance of 515 units constructed are affordable to households of moderate or high incomes, meaning that about 24 percent of the future allocation for this income group has been constructed. The remainder needed for each income group will be achieved through development of the land uses designated by this General Plan and adopted specific plans.

HOUSING GOALS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goals

1. To provide an adequate supply of sound, affordable housing in a safe and satisfying environment for all residents of the City of Soledad, consistent with the housing allocation adopted by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments.

2. To promote community character, livability, affordability and housing choice, by requiring an integrated mix of housing types in new residential areas.
3. To promote the needs of persons who have special needs not readily addressed without community leadership, including the homeless, large families, senior citizens, and single parents.
4. To encourage the maintenance, improvement, and rehabilitation of the city's existing housing stock and residential neighborhoods, with special attention on conserving existing affordable housing.
5. To maintain balance in land use regulation so as to refrain from unnecessary governmental constraints on the production of affordable housing and to create incentive for the production of affordable housing.
6. To promote the maintenance and improvement of energy efficiency in the city's existing and new housing stock.
7. To ensure equal housing opportunities for all persons regardless of age, race, sex, religion, national origin or other barriers that prevent choice in housing.

Policies

Adequate Sites and New Construction

- H- 1 The City of Soledad shall promote the expansion of its LAFCO Sphere of Influence and annexation of additional land consistent with its General Plan Land Use Element to accommodate long-term demand for residential development.
- H- 2 The City of Soledad shall ensure adequate vacant land suitably zoned for residential development and/or redevelopment is available to meet the city's housing need as identified by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments.
- H- 3 The City of Soledad shall require new residential areas to contain a mix of housing types targeted to very low, low, moderate, and above moderate households in approximately the proportion that each of these income categories represent in the AMBAG Fair Share Housing Allocation.
- H- 4 The City shall promote the development of affordable housing by maintaining an active grant writing program aimed at securing funds for affordable housing projects.

Special Needs

- H- 5 The City shall provide incentives to housing developers that provide housing opportunities for large families in new residential development areas.
- H- 6 The City shall require housing developers to offer an optional design to homebuyers whose household has one or more disabled person.

- H- 7 The City shall support the redevelopment of dilapidated residential and commercial property for farmworker housing, transitional housing, and other special need populations.

Rehabilitation of Affordable Housing

- H- 8 The City of Soledad shall coordinate with the Soledad Housing Authority and non-profit housing developers to rehabilitate housing units that are identified as needing rehabilitation in the 2002 Housing Conditions Survey (Laurin Associates, Inc., 2002).

Removal of Development Constraints

- H- 9 The City of Soledad shall ensure that city site improvement standards, development review procedures, and development fees do not unreasonably constraint the development, conservation, and rehabilitation of housing.
- H- 10 The City of Soledad shall ensure the availability of adequate public facilities for the expected housing need of the city.

Energy Conservation

- H- 11 The City of Soledad shall support and initiate, where feasible, public and private energy conservation programs which will reduce the energy needs of housing in Soledad and so increase housing affordability.

Equal Access

- H- 12 The City of Soledad shall support efforts to eliminate housing discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, age, marital status, off-spring, or handicap.

Programs

Adequate Sites and New Construction

- 4- 1 The City shall actively seek amendment of its LAFCO Sphere of Influence and annexation of land identified in the General Plan Land Use Element as necessary to maintain an adequate number of sites upon which housing for all income categories can be developed.

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning Department
Timeframe: Ongoing
Funding: General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policy H-1

- 4- 2 The City shall require that specific plans developed for areas annexed after July 1, 2003 and project plans for the Miravale II project area prescribe the proportion of very low, low, and moderate-income housing to be built in the area. At a minimum, 15 percent of the housing in a specific plan area and in the Miravale II project area must be affordable to very low-income households, 14 percent must be affordable to low-income households, and 25 percent must be affordable to moderate-income households. In all specific plan areas and the Miravale II project area, development must be organized

into functioning neighborhoods that contain very low, low, and moderate-income housing that is fully integrated with market-rate single family housing.

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning Department
Timeframe: June 2003
Funding: General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policies H-2 and H-3

- 4- 3 The City shall require each subdivision approved within a specific plan area or the Miravale II project area to be bound by a development agreement with the City of Soledad that prescribes the proportion of very low, low, and moderate-income housing to be built in the project, the location of these units within the subdivision, and the qualifying incomes of families to which the sale and re-sale of the units shall be limited. These parameters shall be consistent with the specific plan adopted for the area being developed.

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning Department
Timeframe: June 2003
Funding: General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policies H-2 and H-3

- 4- 4 In drafting development agreements per Program 4.3, the City shall link housing affordability to housing type and development density to ensure design for all income categories. For very-low and low-income categories, new development areas shall achieve a minimum density of 18 dwelling units per net acre, and housing types shall be limited to multi-family, housing above commercial use, and single-room occupancy (SRO) units. For the moderate-income category, new development shall achieve a minimum density of 12 dwelling units per net acre, and housing types shall be limited to small-lot single family dwellings, attached single family dwellings, townhouse condominium, detached second units, and multi-family dwellings.

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning Department
Timeframe: June 2003
Funding: General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policies H-2 and H-3

- 4- 5 The City may, at its sole discretion, waive all or part of the requirements of Program 4.4 where the developer can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the City that alternative densities and housing types will result in a development plan that is consistent with the applicable specific plan or Miravale II development plan per Program 4.2, is consistent with the applicable development agreement per Program 4.3, and is superior in design to what would otherwise be required.

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning Department
Timeframe: June 2003
Funding: General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policies H-2 and H-3

- 4- 6 In drafting development agreements per Program 4.3, the City of Soledad shall ensure that all affordable housing prescribed for a development area by

a specific plan or the Miravale II development plan will be constructed concurrently with any above moderate-income housing being constructed in the area.

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning Department
Timeframe: June 2003
Funding: General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policies H-2 and H-3

- 4- 7 The City shall actively assist qualified developers in preparation of applications for State and Federal housing grants and loans as they become available and in finding appropriate land suitable for affordable housing development.

Responsible Department: Planning Department
Timeframe: Ongoing
Funding: General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policy H-4

- 4- 8 The City shall adopt an ordinance giving priority for new sewer hook-ups to development projects that include price-restricted housing affordable to lower and moderate-income households when it determines that a sewer capacity shortfall is anticipated in the near term.

Responsible Agency/Department: City Manager, Public Works
Timeframe: June 2003
Funding: General Fund
Corresponding Policies: H-10

Special Needs

- 4- 9 The City shall amend Chapter 17.39, Density Bonus, of the Soledad Zoning Ordinance to require the City to grant a requested density bonus to housing projects in which at least 20 percent of units are four-bedroom units. The thresholds for determining the exact size of the density increase shall be determined during drafting of the ordinance.

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning Department
Timeframe: By July 2004
Funding: General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policy H-5

- 4- 10 In drafting development agreements per Program 4.1, the City of Soledad shall require developers to offer an optional design to homebuyers whose household has one or more disabled person.

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning Department
Timeframe: Concurrent with development agreement
Funding: General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policy H-6

- 4- 11 The City of Soledad shall at its discretion use Community Development Block Grant Funds to assist in the retrofit of housing units to allow use by qualifying very low and low-income residents whose household has one or more disabled person.

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning Department
Timeframe: Upon award to CDBG rehabilitation funds
Funding: CDBG Technical Assistance/General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policy H-6

- 4- 12 The City of Soledad shall amend its Zoning Ordinance to allow the development of Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Hotels, Boarding Houses, and other forms of second story residential use, in the C-1 Zoning District as conditional uses to help meet the housing needs of migrant farm workers. The city should also provide development standards for SRO facilities, identify potential sites suitable for SRO development, and investigate possible funding sources for such development.

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning Department
Time Frame: By July 2004, ongoing
Funding: CDBG Funds, FmHA Funds, and RDA Set-Aside Funds
Corresponding Policies: Policy H-7

Rehabilitation of Affordable Housing

- 4- 13 The City, in coordination with the Soledad Housing Authority or other non-profit groups, shall apply annually for CDBG rehabilitation funds.

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning Department
Timeframe: Annually
Funding: CDBG Technical Assistance/General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policy H-8

- 4- 14 The City shall include information on its webpage for developers and low-income households which details the programs available to both parties for assistance in the development and rehabilitation of low income housing.

Responsible Department: Planning Department
Timeframe: By July 2004, ongoing
Funding: General fund, Redevelopment Agency
Corresponding Policies: Policy H-8

Removal of Development Constraints

- 4- 15 The City shall revise Section 17.14.020 of the Soledad Zoning Ordinance (R-3 District) to delete reference to "single-family dwellings" as a permitted use and to establish a minimum density per acre.

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning Department
Timeframe: By July 2004
Funding: General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policy H-9

- 4- 16 The City of Soledad shall amend its multi-family residential zoning districts to permit multi-family development that conforms to the base density of the districts, by right (i.e. no use permit required). In the case of the R-3 District, densities up to a maximum of 22 dwelling units per acre shall be allowed without a conditional use permit. The City shall also ensure that any new zoning created by a specific plan for multi-family development permits multi-family development of any size by right.

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning Department
Timeframe: By July 2004
Funding: General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policy H-9

- 4- 17 The City shall amend its second unit provisions contained in the residential zoning districts and Section 17.38.260, Second Residential Units, of the Soledad Zoning Ordinance to make them consistent with new state law (AB1866 2002) that governs processing of permits for second housing units. The revised sections shall make approval of second units a ministerial act.

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning Department
Timeframe: By July 2004
Funding: General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policy H-9

- 4- 18 The City shall amend the Soledad Zoning Ordinance to allow processing of housing retrofits that accommodate disabled persons, without discretionary review (i.e., ministerial action only).

Responsible Agency/Department: Planning Department
Timeframe: By July 2004
Funding: General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policy H-9

- 4- 19 The City of Soledad, through the development of a Capital Improvement Program, shall continue to require that sufficient water and wastewater treatment resources are available or under development to meet the expected needs of residential development in Soledad.

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works Department

Time Frame: Ongoing
Funding: Development Impact Fees
Corresponding Policies: Policy H-10

Energy Conservation

- 4- 20 The City shall amend its subdivision ordinance to implement provisions of the Subdivision Map Act related to subdivision orientation for solar access. The City shall also amend its public improvement standards to require the planting of large-canopy deciduous trees in new subdivisions in formations that will create shade for streets and homes during hot summer months. The City shall seek ways to subsidize the cost of such landscaping.

Responsible agency/department: Planning Department, Public Works Department, City Manager
Timeframe: July 2004
Funding: General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policy H-11

- 4- 21 The City shall encourage existing residents to participate in energy efficiency retrofit programs offered by the California Energy Commission, the California Public Utilities Commission, Pacific Gas and Electric, and The U.S. Department of Energy.

Responsible agency/department: City Manager, Planning Department
Timeframe: Ongoing
Funding: General Fund/utility companies
Corresponding Policies: Policy H-11

Equal Access

- 4- 22 The City will disseminate information in Spanish and English from the Housing Authority and Department of Equal Housing and Employment regarding fair housing laws. Information will be distributed to bus operators, the Soledad Public Library, local social service offices, and community and senior centers in Soledad.

Responsible Agency/Department: City Manager
Timeframe: Ongoing
Funding: General Fund
Corresponding Policies: Policy H-12

- 4- 23 The City will refer persons experiencing discrimination in housing to California Rural Legal Assistance.

Responsible Agency/Department: All City Departments that receive complaints
Timeframe: Ongoing

Funding:
Corresponding Policies:

General Fund
Policy H-12

Quantified Objectives

Table IV-2 presents Soledad's quantified objectives for the period January 1, 2000 through January 1, 2007. These objectives represent a reasonable expectation for the construction of new housing units and the rehabilitation of existing housing units based on the policies and programs set forth in this General Plan Housing Element, the General Plan Land Use Element, and general market conditions.

**Table IV-2
Quantified Housing Objectives – 2000 to 2007**

Item	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	Total
Fair Share Allocation ¹	263	234	304	482	1,283
Residential Permits Issued from January, 2000 to October, 2002	0	0	2	525	527
New Construction Objectives	177 ²	240 ³	50 ⁴	254 ⁵	721 ⁶
Rehabilitation	35	35	0	0	70

Notes:

1. The planning period for the Housing Element is January 1, 2000 through January 1, 2007.
2. 102 of these units would be built by the Soledad Housing Authority through the redevelopment of existing properties; 50 of these units are already approved and to be built by CHISPA; and 25 of these units would come through the redevelopment of a dilapidated farm labor camp (lot no. 1 in the list of vacant sites).
3. 50 of these units are already approved and to be built by CHISPA; the remaining 190 units would be part of the Miravale I project.
4. 46 of these units are already approved and to be built by CHISPA.
5. This is the difference between total expected growth (at 4.9 percent annually) and the combined growth expected in very-low, low, and moderate-income categories.
6. This represents a 4.9 percent annual average growth rate for a five-year period (through 2007).



CIRCULATION

A Vision Of The Future

The circulation system in Soledad operates safely and efficiently for pedestrians, bicycles and motor vehicles, and provides logical connections among residential neighborhoods, the downtown, shopping areas, employment centers and parks and recreation facilities. The train makes regular stops at Soledad's new train station, bringing visitors and commuters to the downtown. Walking and biking are preferred to automobiles for trips within the community.

INTRODUCTION

The Circulation Element provides goals and policies aimed at meeting the transportation needs of the City, including the provision and maintenance of transportation infrastructure. The Circulation Element identifies specific roadway deficiencies, as well as improvements necessary to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of service (LOS) on the transportation system through buildout of the City. Major goals and policies of the Element include:

- ' Annual review of the roadway system to identify problems or deficiencies;
- ' Establishment of truck routes;
- ' Preparation of a five-year capital improvement program, including improvements to Gabilan Drive, and the Moranda Road/Front Street intersection;
- ' Coordination with Caltrans and Southern Pacific Railroad for improvements;
- ' Uniform development of streets, improved LOS;
- ' Support alternate transportation, including public transit, bicycles, and pedestrians;

Chapter 4. of the General Plan Background Report provides a more detailed discussion of the regulatory framework, existing traffic conditions and other information to support the policies and programs of the Circulation Element.

CIRCULATION ISSUES

- ' *Buildout of the General Plan and Specific Plans will significantly increase the volume of traffic in the City and require substantial improvements to the City's circulation system.*

To achieve and maintain a desirable level of service on City streets and intersections through buildout of the General Plan, the capacity of a number of streets and intersections will need to be significantly increased.



- ' *The freeway interchanges need to be re-configured to provide more efficient access to Soledad and more efficient access to properties at the interchanges.*

Soledad is served by two interchanges with US Highway 101 at the north and south entrances to the City. In addition to providing vehicular access from the freeway, the lands surrounding the interchanges create ideal opportunities for highway oriented retail and industrial development. Consequently, the 1993 General Plan designates lands surrounding the interchanges for commercial and industrial development. The interchanges were constructed years ago when Soledad was a small (2,800 residents) service center for the surrounding agricultural operations. Consequently, the interchanges were not designed to efficiently accommodate traffic

volumes associated with the types of urban development anticipated by the 1993 General Plan.

For example, southbound traffic using the northerly interchange must travel under the overpass and make a sharp left turn to reach the land designated for commercial development at the northerly terminus of Moranda Road. The overpass configuration creates an isolated piece of commercial land (Bragga Islet) between Front Street and the freeway. The southerly interchange is not designed to provide efficient access to adjoining and surrounding commercial and industrial properties.



- ' *Truck traffic originating from mining operations east of the City travel through residential neighborhoods causing safety and noise concerns.*

Truck traffic through the downtown has been a continuing problem, especially from trucks serving the gravel operations east of the City on Metz Road. Because of their greater weight and size, loaded

trucks have much less maneuverability and much longer stopping distance which can pose a hazard to school children as they pass by San Vicente and Gabilan

Schools when children are present. A truck route that diverts these trips around the downtown to the freeway should be considered.

- ' *The City has a number of at-grade railroad crossings serving properties west of the railroad right-of-way.*

The 1993 Circulation Element identifies the need for two at-grade railroad crossings to access the property west of the tracks and designated for commercial development. It is unclear whether two crossings will be needed or that such crossings can be designed to provide an adequate margin of safety.

- ' *Truck access to industrial areas east of the Los Coches Industrial Park needs to be provided.*

The Land Use Diagram (Figure II-9) designates additional land for additional industrial development east of the Los Coches Industrial Park and south of Gabilan Drive and east of Bryant Canyon Road. For this industrial land to be viable, an additional truck access route will need to be provided to the southern freeway interchange and to avoid additional truck traffic through residential neighborhoods.

REGIONAL SETTING AND TRAVEL PATTERNS

Soledad is located in the southern Salinas Valley along Highway 101, one of the three main north-south traffic arteries serving central California. Highway 101 connects the Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay metropolitan areas following a mostly coastal route that travels inland through the Salinas Valley. Access to Soledad is provided by two interchanges which serve as the principal north and south entrances to the City.

Most employed persons in Soledad work out of town, following a daily commute pattern that sees traffic leaving town in the morning to travel north on Highway 101 to jobs at the Soledad State Prison, the City of Salinas, the Monterey Peninsula and the southern Bay Area. Seasonal variation in traffic is most pronounced during the summer and fall as a result of vacationers and seasonal farm workers.

STREETS AND HIGHWAYS SERVING SOLEDAD

The local street pattern is illustrated by Figure V-1 which shows a mostly grid system of streets serving the older portions of town east of Front Street and the freeway right-of-way, and more curvilinear streets within newer residential neighborhoods constructed over the past ten years.

The following street classification scheme is used in Soledad:

Principal arterials consist of freeways, expressways or other principal roads that connect major population centers and other points of traffic generation. Access to principal arterials is strictly controlled; they are not intended for local trips. Highway 101 is the principal arterial serving the City, connecting Soledad with destinations to the north and south in the Salinas Valley.

Arterials carry traffic between principal arterials and between population centers, or they may carry large volumes of traffic within urban areas. They are not intended to provide primary access to residences and are best used for controlled access to areas of retail and service commercial uses, industrial facilities and major community facilities. Examples of arterials in Soledad include Front Street, Metz Road (Highway 146), and East Street.

Collector roads enable traffic to move to and from local roads, arterial roads and activity centers. They are principal roads serving residential areas and carry relatively high volumes of traffic. Residential driveway access from collector roads should be limited according to traffic volumes, parcel sizes and sight distances.

Local roads are used primarily for access to adjacent properties.

Table V-1 summarizes the City's existing road standards and capacity criteria.

**Table V-1
Existing Roadway Standards and Capacities**

Street Type	Curb to Curb Width (in feet)	Total Right of Way Width (in feet)	Estimated Capacity in Vehicles per Day
Divided Four Lane (Principal Arterial)	32 (width of two lanes)	100	30000
Arterial	64	84	24000
Collector	40	60	12000
Local	34	54	2400

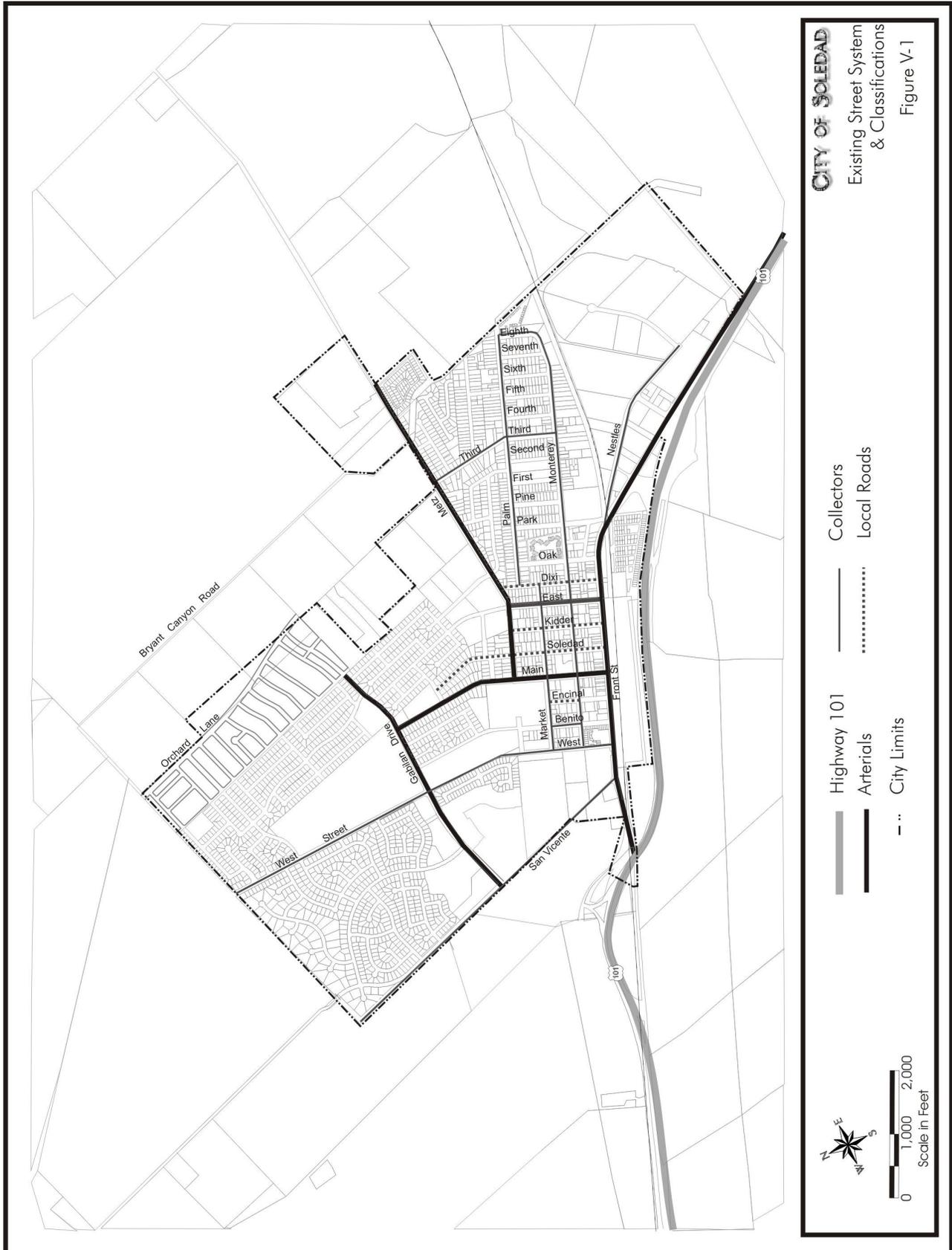
Source: Soledad General Plan Circulation Element, 1993.

Table V-2 provides a description of the major roadways serving the City.

**Table V-2
Existing Roadway Classifications in Soledad**

Roadways and Classifications	Location/Description
PRINCIPLE ARTERIALS	
US Highway 101	Divided, four-lane freeway which runs north-south along the coastal portion of California. Highway 101 runs adjacent to Soledad in an north-south direction.
ARTERIALS	
Metz Road	Otherwise known as Highway 146 and is operated and maintained by Caltrans. Metz is a two-lane roadway which runs east to Pinnacles National Monument and south to King City. Metz Road/Highway 146 is a State designated scenic highway.
Front Street	Two-lane arterial which runs from Fourth Street to Moranda Road, paralleling Highway 101. Front Street is actually the old alignment of Highway 101.
East Street	Sized as a collector but functions as a two-lane arterial. East Street is operated by Caltrans because it is a portion of Highway 146.
North Street	Runs from Main east to the East Street/Andalucia Drive-Metz Road/East Street intersection.
Main Street	Runs from Front Street to Gabilan Drive three blocks west of East Street/Andalucia Drive.
Gabilan Drive	A four-lane arterial which extends from Orchard Lane to San Vicente Street. Gabilan is proposed for expansion through to Highway 101 at the northerly interchange.
COLLECTORS (all two lanes)	
Market Street	West Street to Dixi.
Entrada Drive	East of West Street
San Vicente Road	Runs parallel and west of West Street from Front Street to Vista Soledad.
West Street	Runs north from Front Street to the La Cuesta Views Subdivision.
Third Street	Runs from Monterey Street north to Metz Road.
Palm Street	Dixi Street to eastern boundary of the City at Eighth Street.
Nestle Road	Front Street to Los Coches Drive and serves the industrial sector.
Monterey Street	West Street to Eighth Street.
Benito Street	A local road which functions as a residential collector from Front Street north to Gabilan Drive.
Andalucia Drive	North from the East Street/Andalucia-Metz Road/North Street intersection to Gabilan Drive.
Oak Street	Front Street north to Palm Avenue. It is the primary access to the central business district for eastern residences.
LOCAL ROADS	Numerous local roads serve individual homes in residential areas of the city.

Figure V-1: Existing Street System



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

The flat topography, relatively low traffic volumes and compact form of the City make bicycle riding a viable alternative to the use of automobiles in Soledad. For these reasons, bicycle circulation should be encouraged as a non-polluting transportation mode for local trips, exercise and recreation.

Bikeways are classified as follows (see also Appendix D):

Class I Bike Paths may be either:

- < Joint-use facilities designed for shared pedestrian and bicycle use, completely separated from vehicles, or
- < A joint-use facility in conjunction with a Class II Bike Lane where a portion of the bikeway is separated from vehicles.

Class II, Bike Lanes are restricted from vehicle or pedestrian use, except for parking and pedestrian crossings.

A *Class III, Bike Route* is any other bikeway shared with moving vehicles and/or pedestrians.

Class II bikeways exist throughout the City. Class II bikeways provide a striped lane (with a minimum width of 1.5 meters) for one-way bike travel within the paved area of a street or highway. Class II bike lanes are within an exclusive right-of-way designated for use by bicycles only, except that cross traffic is permitted for driveway access. They include a 6-inch solid white stripe separating the bike lane from the traffic lane.

Pedestrian circulation is also an important component of the transportation network. Providing logical connections between residential neighborhoods and neighborhood-serving shopping centers helps reduce traffic and improve air quality. Pedestrian trails may be used to connect open space/recreational areas with residential neighborhoods, motels and the downtown.

It may be appropriate to consider ceasing the use of portions of Bryant Canyon Road for vehicular access and to utilize Orchard Lane as the primary arterial road in the area. This could reduce development and maintenance costs and enable the use of Bryant Canyon Road right of way as a pedestrian trail.

TRUCK ROUTES

Truck routes are designed to provide access to areas of the City that utilize truck service (principally commercial and industrial areas) and to provide through-truck traffic with efficient routes which avoid residential areas and congested streets as much as possible. Trucks making local deliveries are allowed to divert from these routes to businesses. Streets used for truck routes are designed to support the weight of the heavier vehicles and have intersections with sufficient room for turning movements. Figure V-2 depicts the existing and proposed truck routes within the City of Soledad.

PARKING

Parking is an important component of urban development that affects land use and development patterns, as well as travel behavior. Parking should be provided to meet the needs of commercial and other types of businesses, while providing safe access for pedestrians and bicyclists. However, parking lots should not dominate new development or detract from the character of commercial districts, which may view parking as a critical marketing tool.

The *Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan* provides for parking in lots owned or operated by the City to serve surrounding commercial businesses. Consolidating parking in publicly-owned lots will enable full development of downtown commercial properties, without disrupting the pedestrian character of the area.

Providing parking standards in the zoning ordinance that meet the realistic needs of development is the best way to ensure the provision of adequate parking in Soledad.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Soledad is currently not served by regularly scheduled intra-city public transit. However, the Monterey-Salinas Transit system provides regularly scheduled service between King City and Salinas with a stop in Soledad. In addition taxi service is provided on-demand within the City. Greyhound Bus Lines provides inter-city transportation to locations north and south; the bus stops in Soledad four times per day.

AIRPORTS

The closest commercial aviation airports to Soledad are located in Monterey and the City of San Jose.

TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT

Transportation demand management (TDM) refers to strategies aimed primarily at reducing the overall generation of motor vehicle trips. Such strategies encourage

carpooling, transit ridership, bicycling or the use of other modes of travel to stem the increase in motor vehicle use, with corresponding improvements to traffic flow and air quality. In addition to helping to alleviate congestion and improve air quality, the use of TDM strategies is often a cost-effective alternative to expensive roadway improvements that may be needed to accommodate new development.

Transportation Demand Management strategies are traditionally applied at the trip destination, such as the workplace or shopping center, rather than the trip origin. With the exception of prison employees, such measures may have limited value until the City attracts larger employers and/or creates job centers. However, other techniques may be employed to reduce or slow traffic, such as the installation of 'traffic calming' devices such as speed tables, roundabouts, road humps and pocket parks. Neckdowns/bulb-outs should be considered at all intersections to provide traffic calming effects on all residential streets and at mid-block with controlled crossings where blocks are long between intersections.

CIRCULATION DIAGRAM

Figure V-2 is the Circulation Diagram for the City of Soledad. The map describes improvements to the circulation system necessary to meet the present and future needs of the City in support of the land uses described in the Land Use Element. The Circulation Diagram assigns the roadway classifications described above to the streets and highways serving the City.

Appendix C provides typical cross sections for each roadway classification. These road sections should not be considered strict standards that must be followed for the design of each roadway type. Rather, these should be considered guidelines which may vary depending on local conditions. The design of new roadways will be determined by the City.

Figure V-2: Circulation Diagram

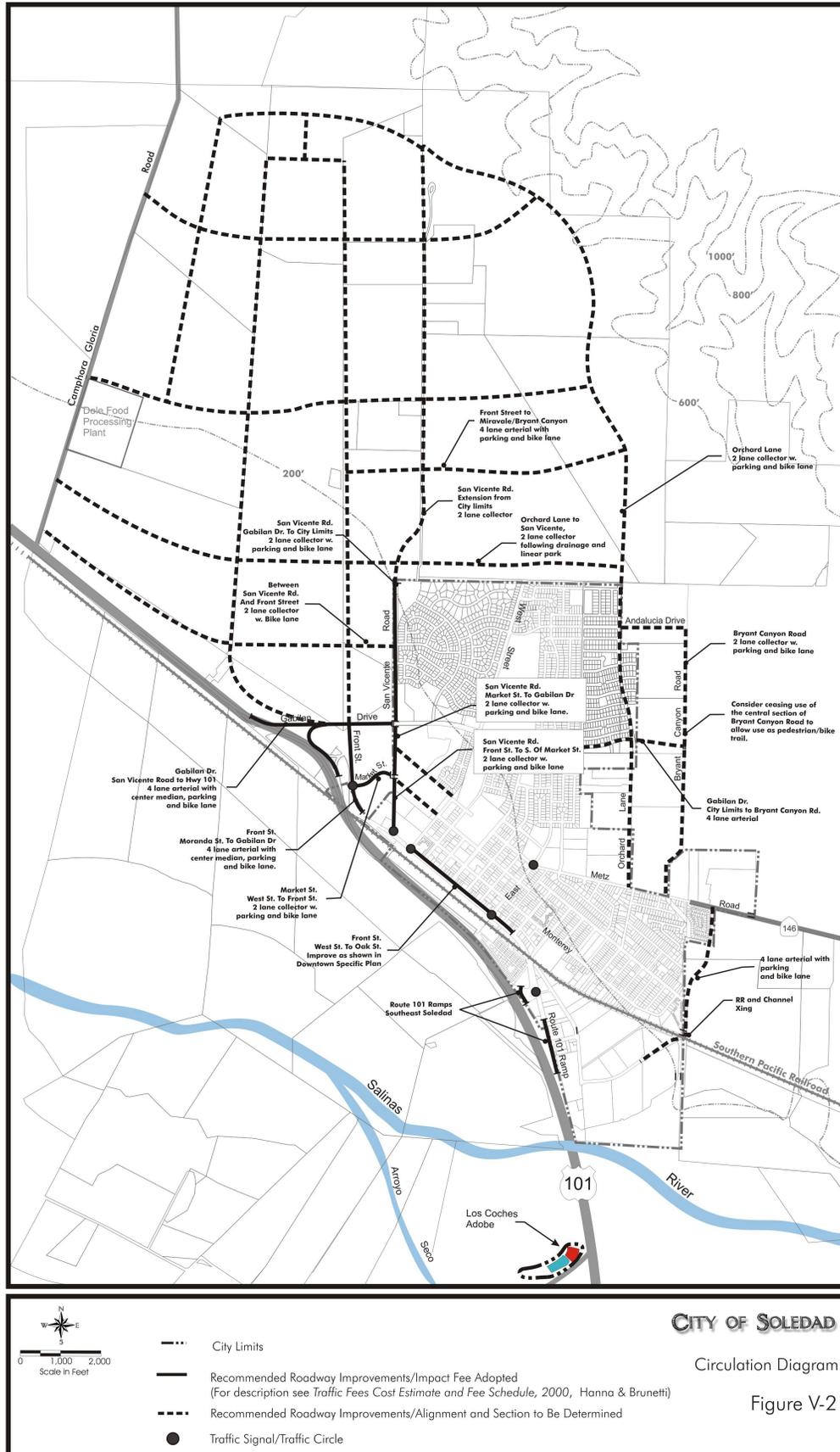
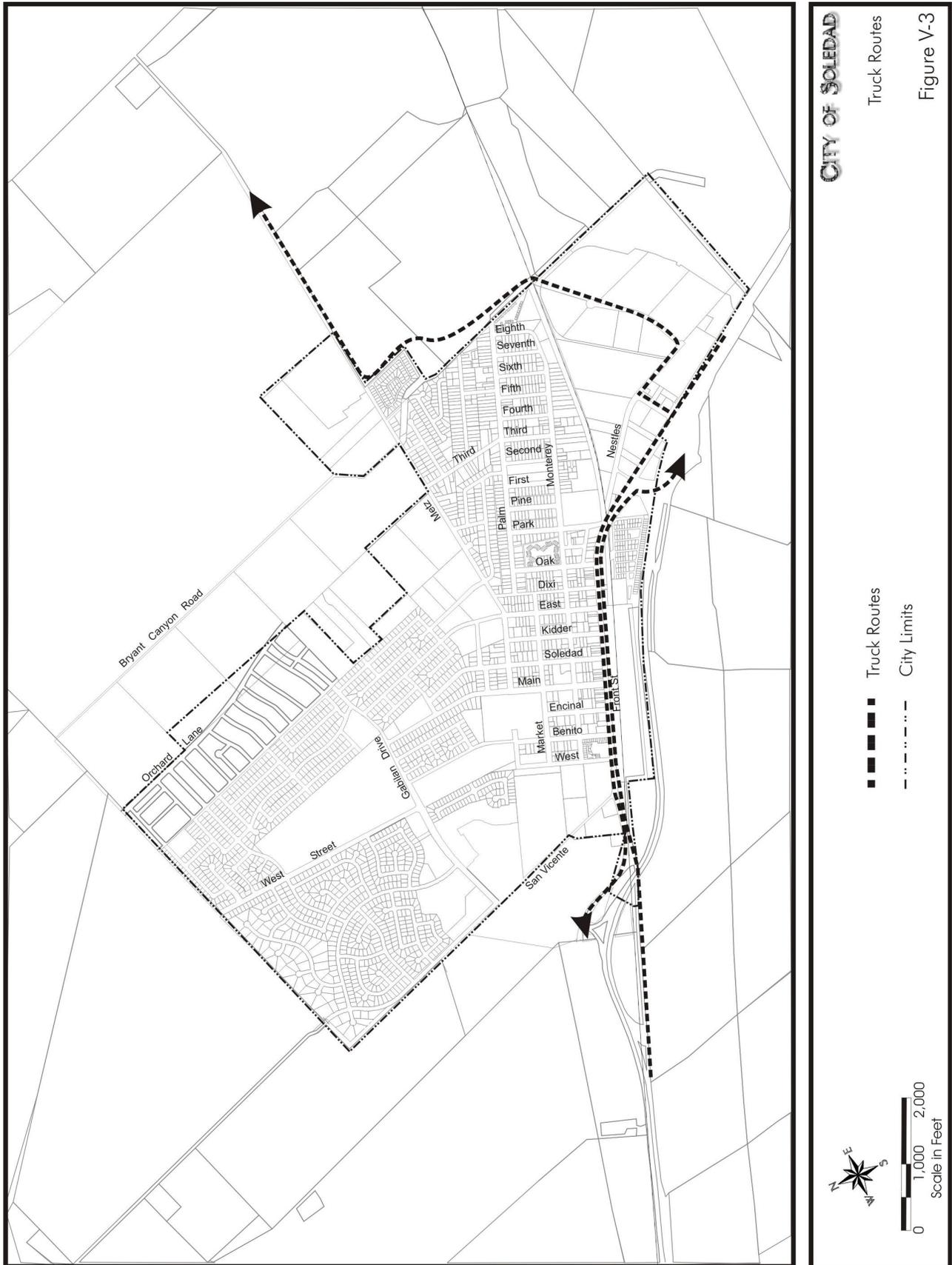


Figure V-3: Truck Routes



CIRCULATION GOALS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goals

1. To provide a safe and efficient circulation network to meet the present and future needs of the City.
2. To encourage the use of alternate forms of transportation other than the automobile.
3. To create a pedestrian friendly, walkable community.

Policies

Traffic Management

- C-1 Level of Service "D" or better shall generally be maintained on all streets and intersections. Lower levels of service may be accepted during peak times or as a temporary condition, if improvements to address the problem are programmed to be developed. To identify potential impacts of new development on traffic service levels, the City shall require the preparation of traffic impact analyses generally at the sole expense of the developer for developments determined to be large enough to have potentially significant traffic impacts.
- C-2 Streets shall be dedicated, widened, extended and constructed in accordance with City standards. Dedication and improvements of full rights-of-way shall not be required in existing developed areas where the City determines such improvements are infeasible or undesirable. New development shall be responsible for improving a minimum one-half street along the outer-boundaries of each subdivision along subdivision property where street extensions are identified. Other deviations from these standards shall be permitted upon a determination by the City Engineer that safe and adequate public access and circulation are preserved by such deviations.
- C-3 The City shall require that roadway rights-of-way be wide enough to accommodate the travel lanes needed to carry long-range forecasted traffic volumes, as well as any planned bikeways and required drainage, utilities, landscaping, and suitable separations.
- C-4 On arterial roadways, intersection spacing shall be maximized. New driveways along collector and arterial roadways shall be minimized or prohibited completely.
- C-5 The street system in residential neighborhoods shall provide safe and logical connections to the existing street pattern, and connectivity to the range of complementary land uses within neighborhoods (housing, schools, parks, neighborhood shopping, etc.). The use of multiple collector streets shall be favored over the use of arterials in new residential subdivisions.

- C-6 The City shall not approve new commercial or industrial development that encourages customers, employees or deliveries to use residential streets. The circulation system shall be designed so that non-residential traffic (especially truck traffic) is confined to non-residential areas.

- C-7 Development on commercial land west of the railroad tracks shall be chosen to minimize the volume of traffic utilizing at-grade vehicular railroad crossings.

- C-8 The City shall manage the street network so that the standards presented in policies C-1 and C-12. are not exceeded. The City will require new development to mitigate the traffic impacts it causes, or the City will limit development along streets where congestion levels are unacceptable.
- C-9 New local streets shall be developed consistent with the goals, policies and programs of the Land Use Element of the General Plan.
- C-10 Facilities that promote the use of alternate modes of transportation, including bicycle lanes, pedestrian and hiking trails, park-and-ride lots and facilities for public transit shall be incorporated into new development, and shall be encouraged in existing development.
- C-11 The City will continue to support the policies and programs of the Monterey County Congestion Management Plan.
- C-12 The following standards apply to the streets shown on Figure V-2. These standards may be interpreted with flexibility where necessary to achieve the overall objectives of the policies of the General Plan.

**Table V-3
Roadway Standards**

Type of Street	Land Use Served	Example
Local Residential	Adjoining residential uses.	Regina Street Granada Street
Residential Collector	Sub-city residential areas.	Andalucia Drive
Commercial Collector	Sub-city commercial and industrial areas.	Monterey Street
Arterials	City wide and regional land uses.	Front Street Metz Road East Street
Freeway	Regional and State lands.	Highway 101

- C-13 The City shall ensure through a combination of traffic impact fees and other funding mechanisms that new development pays its fair share of the costs of circulation improvements required by such development.
- C-14 The City shall prohibit the development of private streets in new residential projects, unless approved on a project specific basis where circumstances support such a use and the streets are privately maintained.

- C-15 New development shall continue the existing street pattern, where logical.
- C-16 Roundabouts will be considered as an alternative to traditional intersection controls.

Parking

- C-17 The City shall require the provision of adequate off-street parking in conjunction with all new development. Parking shall be located convenient to new development and shall be easily accessible from the street. The adequacy and appropriateness of parking requirements in the Zoning Ordinance shall be periodically evaluated.
- C-18 Parking and storage for recreational vehicles and boats should be provided so that required off-street parking is available for passenger vehicles. However, RV and boat parking spaces shall not be developed in residential areas.
- C-19 On-street truck parking shall be prohibited where such parking restricts adequate sight distances or otherwise poses a potentially hazardous situation.

Bicycle Circulation

- C-20 The City shall establish a safe and convenient network of identified bicycle routes connecting residential areas by the shortest possible routes with recreation, shopping, employment areas and schools. The City shall cooperate with surrounding jurisdictions in designing and implementing an area-wide bicycle system.
- C-21 Bicycle routes shall emphasize paths separate from vehicle traffic to the maximum extent feasible, but shall also include bicycle lanes within public streets.
- C-22 Bike lanes and paths shall be designed and maintained to improve bicycling safety, and convenience, and encourage people to use bicycles to commute to work or school.
- C-23 Bike lanes and paths shall be established when:
 - a. The street section is re-paved, re-striped, or changes are made to its cross-sectional design.
 - b. The street section is being changed as part of a development project.
 - c. The construction of bike lanes or paths is called for by the City's Capital Improvement Plan.
- C-24 Stop signs shall be minimized along Class I bicycle paths so long as safety for bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists is maintained.
- C-25 New development shall provide bike lanes and paths, secure bicycle storage and parking facilities.

C-26 The City shall encourage that bike racks be installed on regional transit vehicles.

Pedestrian Circulation

- C-27 The City shall complete a continuous network of sidewalks and separated pedestrian paths connecting housing areas with major activity centers and with trails leading into City and county open space areas.
- C-28 New commercial development and development in Specific Plan areas shall provide sidewalks and pedestrian paths consistent with applicable State, federal and local plans, programs and standards.
- C-29 Pedestrian crossings at heavily traveled intersections shall be made as safe as possible, utilizing neckdowns/bulb-outs where feasible. Crossing controls shall be installed when traffic levels warrant.
- C-30 The City will consider ceasing the use of portions of Bryant Canyon Road for vehicular access and to utilize Orchard Lane as the primary arterial road in the eastern portion of the City. This could reduce development and maintenance costs and enable the use of Bryant Canyon Road right of way as a pedestrian trail.

Transit

- C-31 The City shall work with transit providers to plan and implement additional transit services within and to the City that are timely, cost-effective, and responsive to growth patterns and existing and future demand.
- C-32 The City shall consider the transit needs of senior, disabled, minority, low-income, and transit-dependent persons in making decisions regarding transit services and in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- C-33 The City will work with the appropriate agencies to establish a train station in Soledad.

Transportation Demand Management

- C-34 The City may reduce required parking for projects that employ transit demand management strategies that reduce vehicle trips to the site.
- C-35 The City shall support region-wide and local programs to reduce the number of vehicle trips associated with employment, school attendance and shopping.
- C-36 Public transit to surrounding communities shall be improved.
- C-37 A ridesharing program shall be established in Soledad to encourage carpooling for trips to other communities.
- C-38 Truck circulation routes shall be as described by Figure V-3.

Programs

- 5.1 The City shall prepare roadway design standards for new and existing streets, roads and roundabouts in Soledad. Such standards should include right-of-way width, roadway section design, and dedication requirements for new development to accommodate traffic levels expected at buildout of the General Plan. The roadway design standards should be interpreted with flexibility so that the roadways provided are no wider than required to maintain safe and efficient circulation and access.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department,
Public Works Department

Timeframe:

Funding: Developer fees, General Fund, ISTEAs monies and other sources

Monitoring: Community Development Department, Public Works Department

- 5.2 The City will prepare a Capital Improvement Plan and associated funding mechanisms for circulation improvements consistent with this Element.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department,
Public Works Department

Timeframe:

Funding: CDBG

Monitoring: Community Development Department, Public Works Department

- 5.3 The City shall work with Monterey County, AMBAG and other jurisdictions to implement the Monterey County Congestion Management Plan, and to monitor and update the level of service standards as appropriate.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department,
Public Works Department, Monterey County, AMBAG, Caltrans

Timeframe: Ongoing

Funding: General Fund

Monitoring: Community Development Department, Public Works Department

- 5.4 The city shall implement the trip reduction measures contained in the Air Quality Management Plan.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department, Public Works Department, APCD
 Timeframe: Ongoing
 Funding: Developer fees, General Fund
 Monitoring: Community Development Department, Public Works Department, APCD

- 5.5 The City shall work with AMBAG, Caltrans, Monterey County and other agencies to develop and implement regional ridesharing programs and facilities.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department, Public Works Department
 Timeframe: Ongoing
 Funding: General Fund, ISTEA monies and other sources
 Monitoring: Community Development Department, Public Works Department

- 5.6 The City shall work with transit planning agencies and transit providers in assessing transit demand and the adequacy of existing services.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department, Public Works Department
 Timeframe: Ongoing
 Funding: General Fund and other sources
 Monitoring: Community Development Department, Public Works Department

- 5.7 The City shall work with the regional public transit authority, AMBAG and other interested parties to improve public transit between Soledad and surrounding communities.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department, AMBAG, Transit Authority
 Timeframe: Ongoing
 Funding: Ridership fees, State Highway funds
 Monitoring: Community Development Department

5.8 The City will work with AMBAG, the APCD and other interested parties to establish a rideshare program for Soledad.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department, AMBAG, APCD, Transit Authority
 Timeframe:
 Funding: Ridership fees, State Highway funds
 Monitoring: Community Development Department

5.9 The City may use park in-lieu fees among other sources for designing and installing walking/bicycle paths around the City.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department, Public Works Department
 Timeframe: Ongoing
 Funding: Park in-lieu fees, General Fund, grant programs
 Monitoring: Community Development Department, Public Works

5.10 To maintain the standards described in policy C-12, the City shall:

- a. Institute programs that encourage the use of alternate forms of transportation.
- b. Make changes within existing roadways to improve safety and traffic flow, including:
 - < Selectively removing on-street parking.
 - < Restriping a street including the addition of bike lanes.
 - < Synchronizing traffic signals.
 - < Installing turn pockets at intersections.
 - < Constructing center turn lanes or median islands.
 - < Provide neckdowns/bulb-outs at intersections and where appropriate
- c. Consider the selective widening of streets to improve safety and efficiency.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department, Public Works Department
 Timeframe: Ongoing
 Funding: Developer fees, other sources.
 Monitoring: Planning and Public Works Departments

- 5.11 The City will adopt traffic mitigation fees to be charged to new development to help provide roadway improvements necessitated by such development.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department, Public Works Department

Timeframe:

Funding: Developer fees

Monitoring: Community Development Department, Public Works Department

- 5.12 The City shall work with APCD to reduce mobile source emissions from new development. The City shall require new commercial and industrial development to (as applicable):

- a. Submit detailed plans for an APCD approved trip reduction plan. Such a plan shall include targets for an increase in average vehicle ridership for employees, and incentives for carpooling, transit ridership for employees, and incentives for carpooling, transit ridership, and bicycling.
- b. Provide worker/customer transit incentives. Such incentives may include reduced work hours to coincide with transit schedules, employer-provided bus passes, and direct monetary compensation for transit ridership.
- c. Accommodate local shuttle and regional transit systems.
- d. Provide transit shelters.
- e. Provide secure storage lockers for bicycles at a ratio of one locker per ten employees.
- f. Install energy-efficient heating and cooling systems.
- g. Install energy-efficient lighting and signage.
- h. Establish a park-and-ride lot consisting of twenty spaces, consistent with the requirements of Caltrans.
- i. Include landscaping in parking lots which incorporates canopy trees to shade parked cars and reduce fuel evaporation from parked cars.
- j. Provide showers for employees.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department, APCD

Timeframe:

Funding: Permit and subdivision fees

Monitoring: Community Development Department

- 5.13 The City shall prepare and adopt criteria for the preparation of traffic impact analyses. Such criteria shall include, but not be limited to, development size thresholds above which such analyses will be required, a discussion of the scope of such analyses, preferred methodology, and mitigation measures to be included.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department, Public Works Department

Timeframe:

Funding: General Fund

Monitoring: Planning and Public Works Departments

- 5.14 The City shall request Caltrans to implement improvements to the freeway interchanges to achieve a greater degree of efficiency and safety.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department, Public Works Department
 Timeframe:
 Funding: General Fund
 Monitoring: Planning and Public Works Departments

- 5.15 The City will implement the roadway and intersection improvements shown on Figure V-2 (Circulation Diagram) as well as those listed on the following table which are currently (2004) funded by traffic impact fees:

**Table V-4
 Roadway Improvements Funded By
 Traffic Impact Fees**

Roadway	Segment to Be Improved
Front Street	Moranda Road to Gabilan Drive West Street to Oak Street
Gabilan Drive	City Limits to Bryant Canyon Road San Vicente Road to Highway 101 Ramp and freeway ramps Metz Road to Railroad Crossing Railroad Crossing to Channel Crossing Channel Crossing Structure Channel Crossing to Nestles Road Railroad Crossing Structure
Market Street	West Street to Front Street
San Vicente Road	Front Street to Market Street Market Street to Gabilan Drive Gabilan Drive to the City Limits
South Soledad HWY 101 Interchange	Re-configure ramps and signalize ramps, or similar improvements

Source: Traffic Fee Study, 1999, Hanna and Brunetti
 In general, improvement consist of realignments or extensions of existing roadways to improve traffic flows.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department, Public Works Department
 Timeframe:
 Funding: Development impact fees
 Monitoring: Planning and Public Works Departments

- 5.15 The City will work with the Southern Pacific Railroad to establish a train stop in Soledad.

Responsible Agency/Department: Administration, Community Development Department, Public Works Department

Timeframe:

Funding: General Fund

Monitoring: Planning and Public Works Departments

- 5.16 The City shall consider establishing a downtown parking assessment district to fund parking improvements in the Downtown.

Responsible Agency/Department: Administration, Community Development Department, Public Works Department

Timeframe:

Funding: General Fund

Monitoring: Planning and Public Works Departments

- 5.17 The City will consider adopting a regional traffic impact fee consistent with the recommendations of the Transportation Agency of Monterey County.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department, Public Works Department

Timeframe:

Funding: General Fund

Monitoring: Planning and Public Works Departments



VI. PARKS AND RECREATION

A Vision Of The Future

Neighborhood parks and recreation facilities are provided within easy walking distance of every Soledad resident. A regional open space/park has been established with hiking trails in the foothills of the Gabilan Range east of town. The City's pedestrian circulation system provides ready access to a regional trail/bicycle system established along the Salinas River. Recreation programs for residents of all ages and abilities are thriving throughout the community.

INTRODUCTION

Parks and recreation are essential components of a community. Just as a community must plan for its commercial and residential land uses, it must also plan for its parks and recreation facilities. Parks provide amenities such as active and passive recreation areas, a visual contrast to the surrounding developed environment, and an area for relaxation and enjoyment for all age groups.

Studies have shown that a community's economy is strengthened if it contains high-quality parks and recreation. Besides providing amenities for the enjoyment of the local citizenry, parks improve a community's image which often translates directly into increased revenues from tourism and an improved climate for businesses and employers. Communities containing well-developed and attractive park and recreation facilities are generally considered to have a higher quality of life than communities that do not.¹

PARKS AND RECREATION ISSUES

- ' *New and expanded parks and recreation facilities and programs will be needed to meet the needs of Soledad residents anticipated by the General Plan.*

In order to achieve and maintain the desired parks-to-population ratio of at least 5 acres per 1,000 residents, new and expanded parks and recreational facilities will need to be provided. Specific plans prepared for the development of large undeveloped areas should incorporate parks and open space amenities.

¹ State of California, Department of Parks and Recreation, *California Outdoor Recreation Plan - 1988*, Sacramento, California, November 1988.

- *Additional organized recreation programs, and especially programs to meet the needs of youths and seniors, are needed.*

Organized recreation programs in Soledad are provided by the YMCA, the Mission Soledad Recreation District, and by the schools in addition to private, non-profit organizations, such as Little League. However, these programs are intensively used and additional facilities and programs will be needed to keep pace with the growing population.

EXISTING PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Soledad currently has approximately 27 acres of land dedicated to open space and recreational uses. These consist of public parks and recreational facilities, including a little league field and indoor swimming pool. Based on an estimated January 2004 population of 13,000 there are approximately 2.0 acres of parkland per 1,000 Soledad residents. Nearby regional parks and open space areas include Mission Nuestra Senora de la Soledad, Pinnacles National Monument and the Arroyo Seco area. Figure VI-1 shows the public parks and recreation facilities in Soledad.

SOLEDAD'S PARKLAND NEEDS

A desired ratio of parkland to population is one acre per 200-250 residents, or 4 to 5 acres per 1000 residents. To achieve the a ratio of 4 acres per 1000 residents for a total (prison and non-prison) at buildout, an additional 260 acres of developed parkland will be needed.

Types of Parks

The following are descriptions of the various types of parks that may be developed in Soledad, or developed near the City in cooperation with other jurisdictions.

Linear Park. A linear park is often developed along natural or human-made corridors, such as creeks, drainage facilities or roads. The size of a linear park may vary, but should be of sufficient width to protect sensitive resources and to accommodate a pedestrian and/or bicycle trail. Facilities provided with linear parks are usually limited to seating, picnic tables, and in some instances, a tot-lot and par course. (See Figure VI-2)

Pocket Park Or Mini-Park. A pocket park is a small facility designed to serve a limited population or group (such as seniors or small children) within about a one-quarter mile radius. Such parks are typically between 0.25 to 2 acres in size and provide limited amenities that may include play equipment, seating, picnic areas, and landscaping.

Neighborhood Park. Neighborhood parks serve primarily one neighborhood and provide active and passive facilities for all age groups. Such parks may range in size of 2 to 15 acres and generally provide open turf areas, picnic areas, play equipment, multi-use game courts, drinking fountains, restrooms, parking and landscaping. Neighborhood parks serve an area within one-quarter to one-half mile of the site.

Community Parks. A community park serves multiple neighborhoods or an entire community. These parks are usually developed on large sites (15 to 30 acres) and provide a wide range of facilities and activities such as larger play areas for children, picnic areas, play fields and courts (tennis, basketball, baseball, etc.), and open turf areas, as well as parking, lighting, landscaping and restrooms.

Regional Parks. Regional parks serve multiple communities and provide larger facilities and amenities on sites ranging in size from 100 to 200 acres. Regional parks may provide large open areas, group picnic facilities, trails, campgrounds, sports fields, a golf course, courts for tennis and volleyball, and other amenities such as parking, landscaping and restrooms. The communities served by a regional park should be within one hour driving distance, and may be subject to user fees. The Draft Monterey County General Plan proposes to locate a regional park near Soledad between the existing city limits and the Los Coches Adobe near the confluence of the Salinas River and Arroyo Seco.

RECREATION

Recreation consists of leisure or sport activities performed for entertainment or personal satisfaction. Within a community, recreation may be provided by public and private entities. Health clubs, dance studios, skating rinks, bowling alleys and local theaters are all examples of private recreation. Indoor and outdoor recreation provided on public parkland, at a community center, or a municipal golf course are all examples of public recreation. Public recreation facilities are either located on public land or available to the public through a government sponsored joint use agreement.

Figure VI-1: Existing and Proposed Parks and Trails

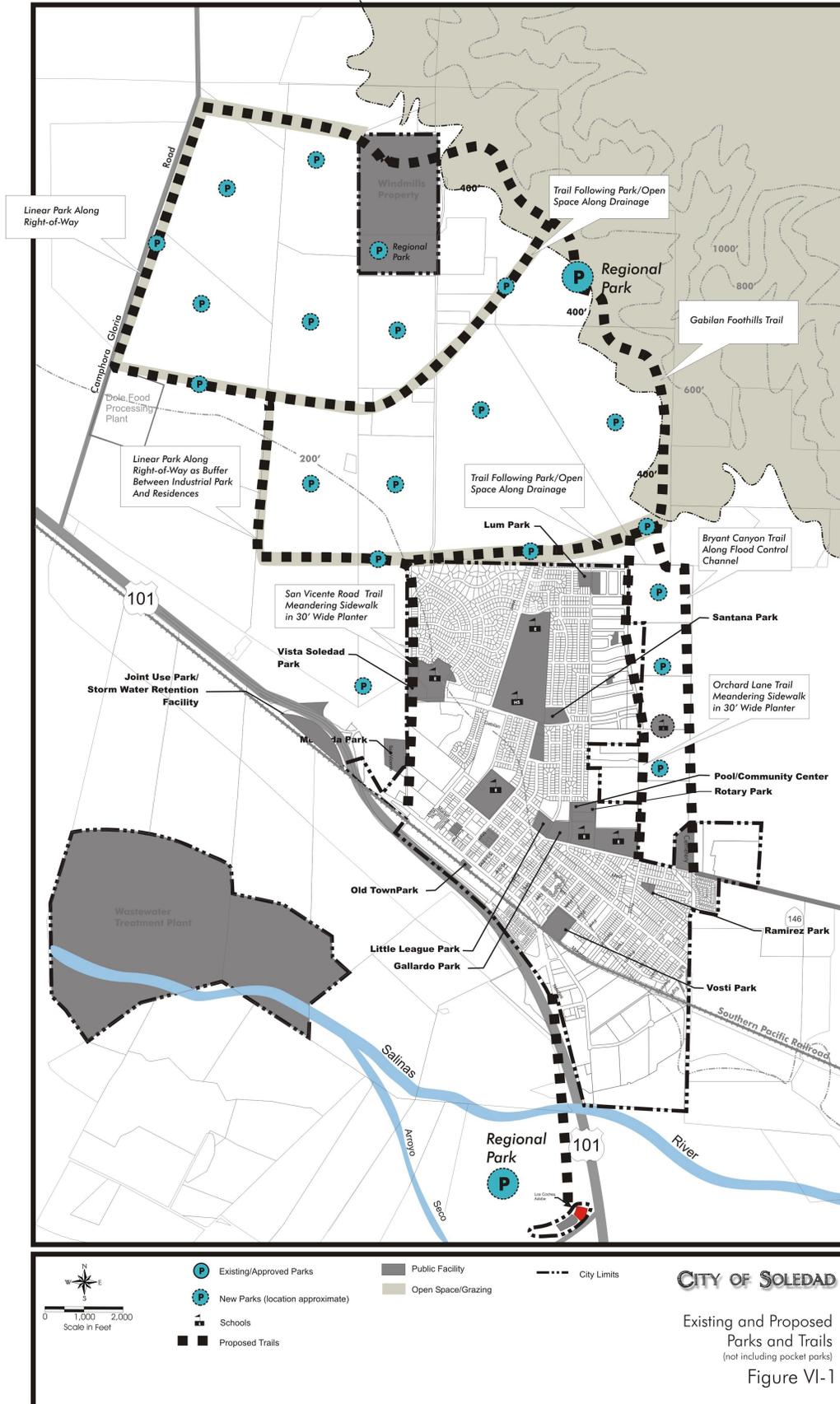
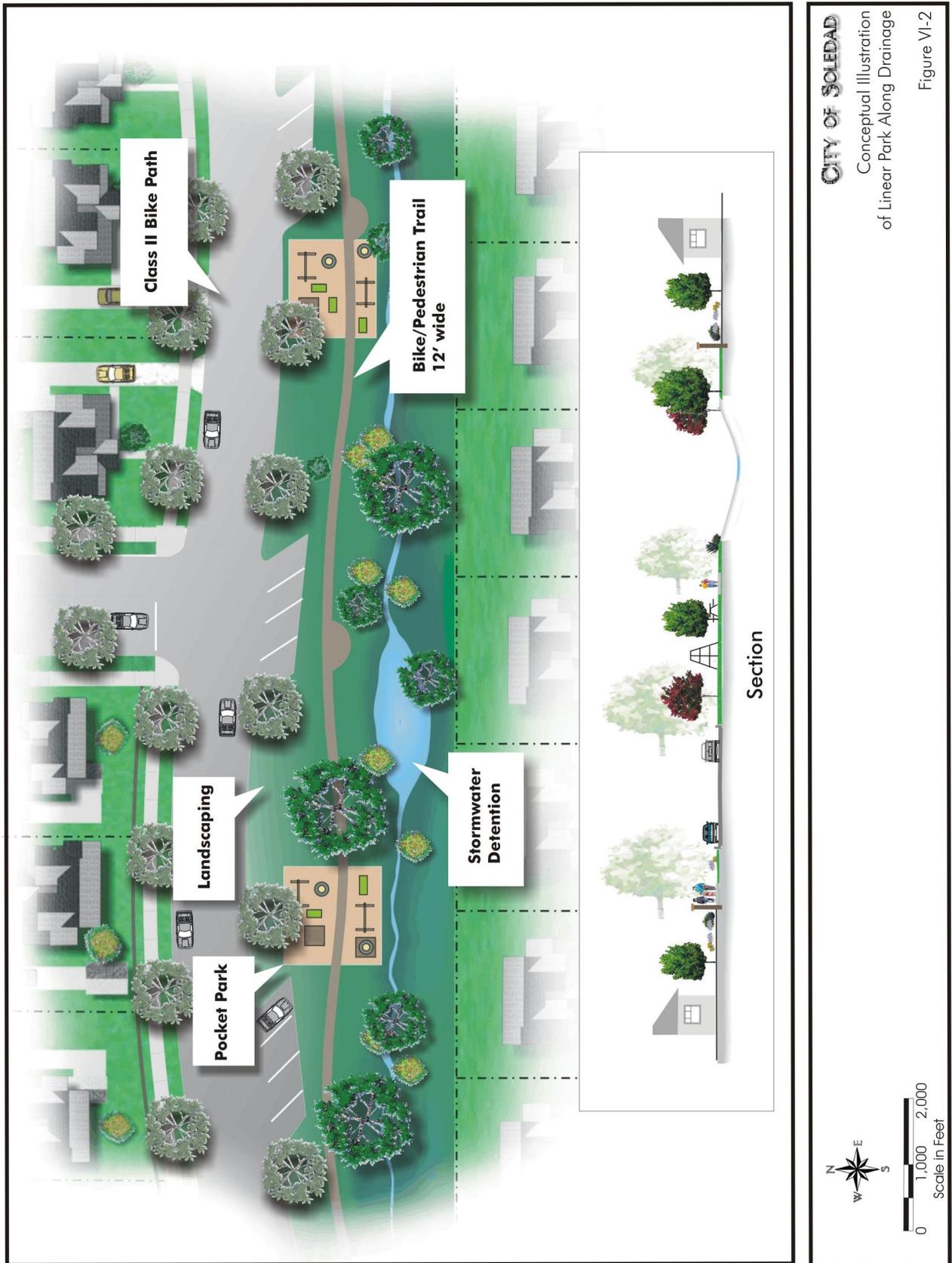


Figure VI-2: Linear Park Along Natural and Constructed Drainages



PARKS AND RECREATION GOALS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goals

1. Provide a high quality public park system containing adequate park acreage and varied recreational facilities that are accessible to all Soledad residents.
2. Work toward achieving a ratio of five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.
3. Provide adequate indoor and outdoor recreation facilities for existing and future populations.
4. Provide recreational programs and facilities for all age groups, incomes, and physical abilities.
5. Provide maintenance assessment districts to fund park and facility landscape maintenance, including street public landscaping.
6. Encourage the use of reclaimed water for landscape irrigation.

Policies

Parks

- PR-1. The City will acquire future park and recreation land and facilities by:
- a. Requiring park dedications from future residential subdivisions at the rate of three acres per 1,000 population anticipated in the project;
 - b. Requiring payment of a park impact fee, or requiring the dedication of land and improvements in-lieu of fees, from all new development;
 - c. Cooperating with Monterey County to acquire land for a new regional park in the Soledad planning area;
 - d. Acquiring parkland near existing or potential public park or recreation sites, or near quasi- public or private sites that have a good opportunity for a joint use agreement. Acquired parkland should be contiguous to proposed or existing park and recreation facilities or provide a logical connection.
 - e. Pursuing joint use agreements with public and private schools, other public government agencies, private park and recreation providers, and institutions with potential parkland to make existing or proposed park and recreation facilities available to the community on an extended basis.
- PR-2. The City will pursue the development of parks, open space and trails in areas subject to natural or human caused hazards such as natural or developed flood channels, hillsides and sensitive resource areas.

PR-3 The City will support the development of a regional park within its planning area. One potential location is south of the City in the vicinity of the confluence of the Salinas River and Arroyo Seco near the Los Coches Adobe. Such a location would also afford opportunities for preservation of the adobe through its incorporation into the park. Another potential regional park location lies within the foothills of the Gabilan Range where the General Plan designates areas of open space and trails.

Recreation

PR-4. The City will work with the YMCA, the Soledad Mission Recreation District, the Soledad Unified School District, Monterey County and other agencies (public and private) to expand Soledad's recreation facilities and programs. The City should provide youth, adult and senior programs for City residents, with special emphasis on youth programs.

PR-5. The City will encourage the development of private recreation facilities, including a Boys and Girl's Club or similar youth oriented facility.

PR-6. The City will strive to develop a balanced recreation program that provides activities for all age groups.

PR-7. The City will pursue joint use agreements to augment its park and recreation facilities and programs.

PR-8. The City will develop a program for the participation of private enterprise in the development and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities.

PR-9. As recreation facilities become available, the City will develop a community recreation program. The recreation program shall include youth/teen, adult and senior programs. Generally programs for which there is a large demand should be provided; however, the more specialized a recreation program, the more financially self-supporting it should become.

Trails

PR-10. The City should provide a pedestrian network within the City Limits. The system should:

- a. Accommodate pedestrians and bicycles.
- b. Connect residential neighborhoods with: 1) Soledad's downtown, 2) schools, 3) City park and recreation facilities, and 4) regional trails.

PR-11. The City will work with other Salinas Valley communities, the Association of Governments, the Soledad Union School District, and Monterey County to provide regional trail connections throughout the Salinas Valley.

Acquisition and Development

PR-12. The City will:

- a. Provide parkland that can accommodate needed recreation.
- b. Adequately plan for park and recreation acquisitions/dedications. Some land may be acquired and left undeveloped (as open space) or leased to a private agency for an interim period until park or recreation funds become available.
- c. Accept park and/or recreation donations or dedications (in fee or easement) if said action will provide viable park and/or recreation resources. Donations and dedications should be consistent with the guidelines in Table VI-1.
- d. Acquire park and/or recreation lands or facilities (including trails) when money and resources (such as land) are available. City acquisitions should be consistent with the guidelines in Table VI-1. Trail corridors may also be obtained 1) when negotiating new or improved public works easements (such as road, sewer or water easements), and 2) with new public or private development.
- e. Generally obtain fee ownership for land: 1) that may require or have frequent public access to the site or through the site, 2) for which buying the development rights is almost as expensive as obtaining the land in fee, 3) which contains sensitive habitat requiring monitoring and enforcement, or 4) on which enforcing an easement will be difficult or costly.
- f. Obtain an easement or development rights: 1) for lands on which continuation of the underlying private use is compatible with its designation in this General Plan and direct management by the City is not required, 2) to protect viewsheds or scenic resources that involve little or no public access, or 3) where the cost of development rights is substantially less than fee ownership.

SOLEDAD GENERAL PLAN VI. PARKS AND RECREATION

**Table VI-1
Guidelines for Donations, Dedications and Acquisitions
(For a Facility, Fee Ownership, or Easement)**

A Donation, Dedication or Acquisition Should Have Value In Most of the Following Categories to be Accepted:	A Donation or Dedication Should NOT Be Accepted If:	Acquisitions	
		Should Have High Priority If: ¹	Should NOT be Pursued if:
<p>The facility or property:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would provide valuable community recreation. • Is adjacent to land already protected as park, recreation or open space, or the property is close to land that is likely to be protected in the future, thus forming or potentially forming a large area of park, recreation and/or open space lands or facilities. • Has notable community attributes that should be preserved as part of the City's park and recreation system, such as important scenic, resource and/or historical attributes. • Has good value as a park site. The site is adequately located to serve the population intended, has sufficient usable acreage available for park development (either now or likely in the future), and more than 50% of the site is: available for recreation, free of public safety concerns, environmental hazards, and significant environmental impacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development, redevelopment and/or management of the property or facility will be very costly in relation to the benefits received or the financial capabilities of the City. • Management or maintenance would be unusually difficult. • Public health and safety concerns make reasonable development on the property unlikely. • The facility or land has only minimal opportunities for public use or recreation. In the case of a land dedication, park fees may be more appropriate. • The property or facility contains hazards which will be costly or difficult to rectify (such as toxic wastes, a floodplain that is eroding, etc.). 	<p>The site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is currently being proposed for development; proposed development is inconsistent with this General Plan and negotiations are not likely to result in a consistent project. • Has timely or attractive purchase considerations or conditions, and/or acquisition now would maximize the effectiveness of future City acquisition expenditures. • Represents one of the last sections providing trail, habitat, park or recreation linkage; • Will contribute meaningful community or neighborhood park or recreation. For example, feasible larger park or recreation projects should not be foregone for development of small, inconsequential projects (e.g., a mini-park should not be provided in a neighborhood which needs a neighborhood park and has or likely will have land available). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site or a reasonable portion of the site or resource can be obtained in a timely manner as a condition of city, county, or State development approvals or agreements. • The site's values are primarily scenic, but the property cannot be readily viewed by the general public. • Adjacent properties are being developed in a way that is likely to significantly diminish the park, recreation or conservation values of the property in question. • Management of the property or facility will be very costly or management of an easement would be unusually difficult to enforce (such as multiple owners, fencing restrictions, or other considerations). • The site cannot be acquired with reasonable effort in relation to its value or purpose. One property may be more valuable; however, all time and effort should not be expended on that site if other properties may be more easily obtained. • The site is developed with facilities or structures that would not be consistent with this plan's definition of park and recreation. • Public health and safety concerns would make reasonable development on the property unlikely.^c

1. Assuming funds are available.
2. Facilities are not required to be available in the gift catalogue for city acquisition.
3. The parcel should be large enough to contribute to Soledad's park and recreation program. The City should not acquire numerous small parcels sporadically located which contain hazards and have no other value.

- PR-13 The City shall prepare (or cause to be prepared) a park plan for each City park or individual recreation site prior to development. Plans should be general enough to allow some alterations over the life of the plan. Park plans shall comply with applicable provisions of the City Zoning Ordinance, and shall generally include:
- a. A site plan. The site plan shall depict the entire project site, neighboring properties, the size of the parcel(s) comprising the site and proposed structures/facilities, topographic contours, and any structures/facilities that will be removed. Facilities depicted on the plan shall include recreation as well as support facilities, such as parking, restrooms, signs, and staging areas.
 - b. A grading plan. The grading plan shall show existing topography and proposed grades, and the amount of cut and fill required for project completion.
 - c. Building elevations. Drawings should be provided that illustrate what the proposed facilities and structures will look like once developed. Details, such as building height, colors and construction materials of facilities/structures, should be indicated. North, south, east and west elevations of facilities/structures shall be provided. The design of such structures shall comply with all applicable provisions of the City Zoning Ordinance and Community Design Guidelines.
 - d. A landscape and irrigation plan. This plan shall indicate proposed landscaping, existing landscaping that will remain, plants to be removed, and proposed irrigation. Landscape plans shall emphasize native vegetation. In or adjacent to natural areas use of native vegetation shall be encouraged and invasive non-natives shall be discouraged. Water conservation and limited maintenance shall be emphasized.
 - e. A written statement addressing education or cultural facilities the site will provide, future maintenance responsibilities, public safety, nuisance issues, facility aesthetics, and resource protection.
- PR-14 Parks shall be designed to accommodate various age groups and abilities. An individual park or recreation facility does not need to be accessible to all age groups or abilities; however, Soledad's overall park and recreation system shall meet the special needs of the City's population.
- PR-15 Parks shall include adequate support facilities such as parking and restrooms.
- PR-16 Parks shall be designed to be compatible with the neighborhoods in which they are located, and shall provide security and privacy to adjoining properties. Where necessary, buffers shall be provided between park and recreation lands and adjacent development to provide privacy and a physical separation between uses.²

² Buffers may include setbacks, landscaping, fencing, and/or dramatic breaks or changes in topography.

Management

- PR-17 The City will promote community involvement in park and recreation facilities and programs by:
- a. Periodically using surveys and other methods to evaluate City parks and recreation lands, programs, and facilities. Surveys should ascertain the degree of facility/program use, public preferences, and needed changes.
 - b. Involving the community in park and recreation planning, development, and maintenance. Workshops may be conducted at the planning stage to gain community input regarding needed facilities and community concerns. Special needs groups (such as teens) will also be included in the planning and design phase of projects.
- PR-18 At the design stage, park and recreation design competitions may be used to heighten community involvement and interests in parks.
- PR-19 'Adopt-a-park' and 'park-watch' programs may be used to gain community involvement and to provide needed maintenance and security.
- PR-20 The community will be made aware of park and recreation projects and resources by way of public notices, newsletters or other means. For example, a newsletter can be used to record park and recreation accomplishments, needs, upcoming projects, and to thank persons or organizations for their help. Encouraging community events in local parks can augment community appreciation of existing facilities.
- PR-21. A current record of all park, recreation and open space holdings (by fee and easement) shall be kept by the City and shall be available for public information.
- PR-22 The City will protect parkland and individual recreation sites by designating public park and recreation areas in the City's General Plan and on zoning maps.
- PR-23 Public or private development adjacent to existing or proposed park and recreation sites shall be required to locate such development consistent with this Element unless there is no practicable alternative.
- PR-24. New development shall be required to add to proposed or existing park and recreation projects where legally feasible. Public or private development shall provide, as appropriate and legally feasible: 1) a buffer between proposed development and existing park, recreation and/or open space parcels to minimize conflicts between development and existing facilities; and 2) gates, fences, or other deterrents when such facilities are deemed necessary to discourage prohibited or non-compatible uses from entering park, recreation or open space lands.
- PR-25. New development shall not adversely impact adjacent park, recreation or open space lands.

- PR-26 The construction of new public or private roads through City park and recreation areas shall be discouraged. In general, public or private roads shall avoid going through existing or proposed park and recreation parcels unless the road's construction would provide needed access to park and/or recreation facilities presently under served.
- PR-27. The expansion of adjacent private property uses onto park and recreation lands shall be prohibited unless such an encroachment benefits the public and is consistent with the designation of the land as parks or recreation. All encroachments must be approved by the City Council.
- PR-28. The City will manage park and recreation facilities and programs by working to develop a stable funding source(s) for park and recreation activities. Maintenance assessment districts shall be formed to provide funding.
- PR-29. The City will allow the following uses and areas on public parkland, subject to an approved or amended park plan:³
- a. Active public recreation. Active recreation includes activities or facilities typical of urban parks, including play fields (such as soccer or softball), a swimming pool, tennis courts, picnic areas (group and individual), golf courses and golf-related facilities, basketball courts, a skateboard park, community centers, and similar facilities.
 - b. Passive public recreation. Passive recreation includes low-intensity activities such as bird watching, nature photography, nature study, and similar uses. Within a passive area of a park, facilities may include trails (paved or dirt), individual picnic tables, benches, viewing platforms, interpretive areas, and similar uses depending on the sensitivity of the resource area.
 - c. Open space areas. An open space area is land or water which remains in a predominantly natural or undeveloped state. Such lands protect and preserve the community's natural and historical resources, define the urban boundary, and provide visual and physical relief from urban development. Open space may consist of small portions of a parcel or large tracts of land. Such lands may include creeks, marshes, watershed, and floodplains; scenic resources; plant and animal habitat; cultural resources; passive recreation areas and dual uses such as storm water retention facilities constructed to enhance maximum use and aesthetics.
 - d. Landscaped areas, including turf for play, as a buffer between adjacent uses, and for aesthetic quality.
 - e. Public art and education programs (including interpretive displays).
 - f. Community gardens, botanic gardens, or nurseries.⁴

³ An individual park may contain more than one of these uses or a combination of these uses.

⁴ Only public nurseries are allowed that are used for restocking parks, open space and other public areas.

- g. Nature study, resource conservation and/or restoration.
 - h. Park accessory facilities (such as parking lots, access roads, storage sheds for park or recreation equipment or facilities, and restrooms). Unrelated public facilities such as water wells, storage tanks and similar facilities may be located in public parks only when useable park area is not diminished and where found to be aesthetically compatible. Dual use facilities such as storm water retention shall be allowed if the construction complements park uses and minimizes impacts during high park use periods.
 - i. Area for private vendors, concessions, and/or community events. The park system may include small areas for private vendors (such as a hot dog stand, popcorn stand, etc.) and areas for community events such as farmers market, festivals, etc.). In general, each park shall have a limited number of private vendors and community events it may sponsor at any one time. Private vendors, concessionaires, and community organizations should pay a fee for use of park facilities/lands.
 - j. Other public, private or quasi public recreation facility located on public parkland through a joint use agreement.
 - k. Similar uses to those enumerated above which the City Council determines are appropriate and beneficial public uses within a park.
- PR-30 The City shall support the establishment of a County regional park within the Soledad Planning Area as a means of providing passive recreation with hiking and equestrian trails. Sites suitable for such a facility include the foothills of the Gabilan Range or the Los Coches Adobe property.

Funding

- PR-31 The City will use an array of funding mechanisms to finance park and recreation facilities and programs. These sources may change over time as park and recreation needs change.
- PR-32 The City will pursue the following financing options as a first priority:
- a. Acquire parkland through subdivisions and through the collection of park and recreation impact fees.
 - b. Private donations of lands, funds and equipment. This may be accomplished by providing information to landowners regarding the general tax advantages of donating land or facilities to nonprofit organizations and agencies, and the market value of conservation easements. Community organizations will be encouraged to help finance projects through maintenance or monetary donations.
 - c. Federal, State and local grants. Grants, when available, shall help finance park, recreation and/or open space land or facility acquisitions, development, and maintenance.

- d. Joint use agreements and joint ventures. The City will work with Monterey County, the State, land trusts, local school districts, community organizations, and private individuals to augment the City's options for park and recreation acquisition, development and maintenance.

- PR-33 New development shall be required where legally feasible to provide its fair share of public park and recreation opportunities. New development within the City shall be required to provide park and recreation lands or facilities consistent with this Element. Conditions placed on new development shall be reasonable and consistent with the nature and extent of such development plans. The City shall require the dedication and improvement of park land even in circumstances where the total cost to improve such parkland exceeds the value of the corresponding development impact fee.
- PR-34. The City may charge fees for certain City park and recreation programs. Where allowed by law, fees shall differentiate between residents and non-residents, with non-residents paying a slightly larger fee. A portion of park maintenance costs shall be provided through park fees. For example, some maintenance costs can be provided through fees for group picnic areas, sport field uses, rent of community center rooms for private functions such as weddings.
- PR-35 The City should establish a goal of funding at least 80% of its recreation programs through program fees.
- PR-36 The City shall encourage fundraising events to help pay for parks and recreation facilities and programs.
- PR-37 The City will pursue other long-term financing sources when such sources will provide viable park and recreation opportunities to Soledad residents at a reasonable cost.
- PR-38 The City will work independently or jointly with another agency (such as a land trust) to create a park and recreation non-profit foundation. Establishing such a non-profit will enable the City to jointly file grant applications under a 501(c) tax status and allow persons to donate land or facilities to a non-profit agency.
- PR-39 The City will require the establishment of maintenance assessment districts to fund park and roadway landscaping maintenance. Users from areas outside of special benefit areas shall be required to pay user fees while those paying assessments shall not be required to pay such fees.

Programs

- 6.1 The City will pursue joint use agreements to augment Soledad's park and recreation facilities and programs.

Responsible Agency/Department: Administration, Parks Department
 Timeframe: Ongoing
 Funding: General fund
 Monitoring: Parks Department

- 6.2 The City will work with other Salinas Valley communities, the Association of Governments, the Soledad Union School District, and Monterey County to provide regional trail connections throughout the Salinas Valley.

Responsible Agency/Department: Administration, Parks Department

Timeframe: Ongoing

Funding: General fund

Monitoring: Parks Department

- 6.3 'Adopt-a-park' and 'park-watch' programs may be used to gain community involvement and to provide needed maintenance and security.

Responsible Agency/Department: Administration, Parks Department
Timeframe: Ongoing
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Parks Department

- 6.4 New development shall be required where legally feasible to provide their fair share of public park and recreation opportunities. New development within the City shall be required to provide park and recreation lands or facilities consistent with this Element.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department
Timeframe: Ongoing
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Parks Department

- 6.5 Park development plans shall be prepared for all new parks consistent with the requirements of this Element.

Responsible Agency/Department: Parks Department
Timeframe: Ongoing
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Parks Department

- 6.6 The City shall periodically review its parkland in lieu fees to insure the fee covers the actual cost of land and improvements.

Responsible Agency/Department: Parks Department
Timeframe: Ongoing
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Parks Department

- 6.7 The City shall require developers to request the establishment of maintenance assessment districts for the funding of park maintenance.

Responsible Agency/Department: Parks Department
Timeframe: Ongoing
Funding: Private development
Monitoring: Parks Department

VII. PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

A Vision Of The Future

The City provides the range of public services that Soledad residents expect at an equitable cost. Thanks to the City's far-sightedness, the financing scheme implemented in 2002 has led to the timely expansion of infrastructure capacity to serve new development, with new development paying its fair share.

INTRODUCTION

As the City continues to grow in accordance with the General Plan, services will need to be increased to accommodate the additional population. The *Public Services and Facilities Element* establishes goals, policies and programs to insure that the provision of public services and facilities keeps pace with new development, and that present infrastructure inadequacies are remedied. This element also identifies public facilities desired by the residents of Soledad, and discusses strategies to help pay for needed improvements over the time frame of the Plan.

The City of Soledad is a full service city and provides water supply, wastewater collection and treatment and solid waste collection, police protection, and fire protection. The locations of all major city facilities are shown on Figure VII-1.

Information regarding the City's public services, including water supply; wastewater collection and treatment; storm drainage and flooding; police and fire protection; solid waste, schools; health care; and others, is provided in Chapter 6. of the *General Plan Background Report*.

PUBLIC SERVICES ISSUES

- ' *Water, sewer service and storm drainage capacity will need to be expanded to accommodate buildout of the General Plan.*

Buildout of the General Plan will require a substantial increase in water supply, expansion of wastewater treatment capacity, and the extension of infrastructure to areas presently not served. The wastewater treatment plant is nearing capacity and in need of expansion, a condition exacerbated by seasonal wastewater flows from water intensive agricultural and/or industrial operations and existing storm water flows which reduce percolation capacity during the winter.

Water supply systems, namely municipal water wells, are taxed during the dry season with some existing wells exhibiting evidence of reduced production. Water storage facilities could also be taxed beyond current storage capacity due to a combination of reduced sources, higher water use and fire fighting demand.

Better street lighting, road maintenance, storm drainage, curbs, gutters and crosswalks are needed in the older parts of town. Sidewalks and handicap access ramps have been added.

- ' *To accommodate significant development of agricultural processing facilities, a separate wastewater system or pre-treatment system may be needed.*

The processing of agricultural products is often water- and wastewater-intensive, which can reduce treatment plant capacity during peak operations. To accommodate additional agricultural processing businesses, as well as the continued development of the other land uses recommended by the General Plan, a separate treatment or pre-treatment system for agricultural processing may be needed.

- ' *Funding is necessary for public services improvements and desirable new facilities.*

New development is expected to pay its fair share for the cost of providing additional services. However, the cost of upgrading, expanding and maintaining public facilities that serve existing residents must be borne by the existing residents. Moreover, funding must be provided for the ongoing cost of maintenance and repair. Current Public Works department staffing and equipment is inadequate to properly maintain existing infrastructure.

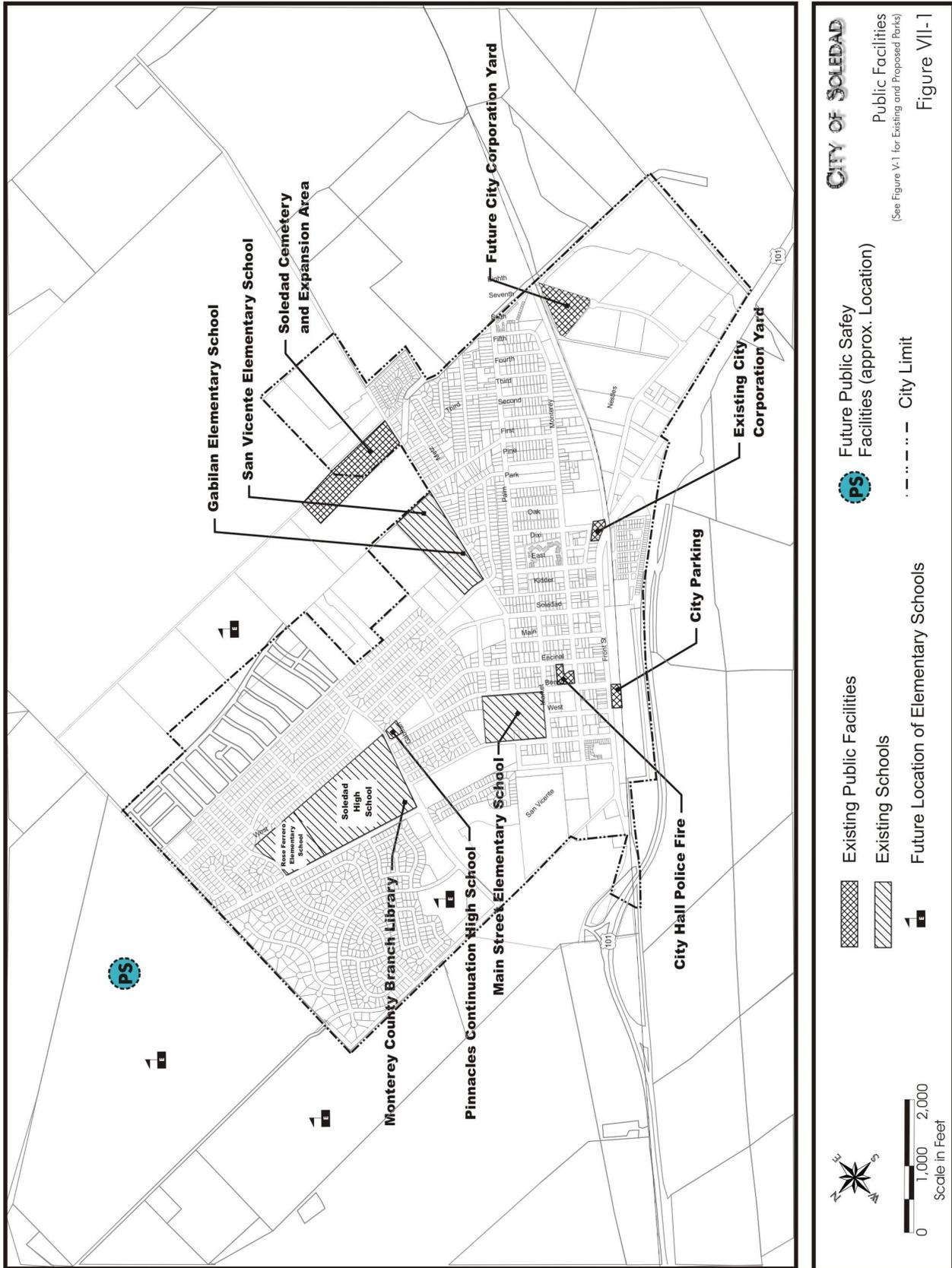
- ' *Police and Fire Department officials have expressed concern about emergency response times not within preferred standards (less than 5 minutes) in the north end of town. This concern will grow as the city expands to the north farther away from existing facilities.*

Policies of the General Plan need to address the timely improvement of police and fire protection services.

- ' *Some schools in Soledad are at or over maximum capacity due to a growing population and a lack of facilities.*

Although a number of new schools have been constructed over the past five years (such as the new High School, and the Rose Ferrero and Frank Ledesma Elementary Schools), the funding and construction of school facilities must occur concurrently or in advance of new residential development.

Figure VII-1: Public Facilities



PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES GOALS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goals

1. To provide the level of public services desired by the residents at an equitable cost.
2. To ensure the provision of public services keeps pace with new development.
3. To ensure increased maintenance funding/staffing/equipment requirements resulting from new development are adequately provided for by new development.

Policies

Services and Facilities

- S-1 The City shall ensure through the development review process that adequate public facilities and services are available to serve new development. New development shall not be allowed until adequate public services and facilities to serve such development are provided. Where existing facilities are inadequate, new development may only be approved when the following conditions are met:
- a. The developer and/or City can demonstrate that all necessary public facilities will be adequately financed and installed in time (through fees or other means); and
 - b. The facilities improvements are consistent with applicable facility plans approved by the City or other agencies in which the City is a participant.
- S-2 The City shall plan for the expansion of needed water and sewer infrastructure including, but not limited to, the expansion of water production, storage and distribution facilities, the expansion of wastewater collection and treatment capacity, and storm drainage facility expansion.
- S-3 Public facilities, such as wells, pumps, tanks, and yards shall be located and designed so that noise, light, odors, and appearances do not adversely affect nearby land uses.

Funding

- S-4 Where new development requires the construction of new public facilities, the new development shall pay its fair share of the construction. Where necessary, the City shall require the dedication of land within newly developing areas for public facilities.
- S-5 The City shall require that new development pay its fair share of the cost of all existing facilities it uses based on the demand for these facilities attributable

to the new development; exceptions may be made when new development provides alternative sources of funding or equipment to offset any shortfall in revenues.

- S-6 When adopting, amending and imposing fees and developer exactions, the City shall consider the effects of such fees and exactions on project economics and the City's development goals.
- S-7 User fees will be charged to recover the costs of City-provided services, except when administration of such fees makes them not cost effective, or when fees are waived or reduced to explicitly promote some other public benefit, or other long-term sources of funding have been established.

Water

- S-8 The City shall promote the efficient use of water and reduced water demand by:
 - a. Requiring water-conserving design and equipment in new construction;
 - b. Encouraging water-conserving landscaping and other conservation measures;
 - c. Encouraging the retrofitting of existing fixtures with water-conserving fixtures;
- S-9 The City will explore the potential for use of reclaimed water for landscape irrigation or other appropriate use.
- S-10 The City will manage the increase in water demand from new development to help insure groundwater resources are not overdrafted. The City will work with Monterey County and public and private water entities to plan for the efficient, long term management of groundwater resources.
- S-11 Gravity flow for sewer and water service shall be employed wherever feasible.

Drainage

- S-12 The City shall encourage the use of natural drainage systems where feasible to preserve and enhance natural features.
- S-13 The City shall support efforts to acquire land or obtain easements for drainage and other public uses of flood channels where it is desirable to maintain channels in a natural state.
- S-14 The City shall strive to improve the quality of urban stormwater runoff and quality of groundwater recharge through the use of appropriate mitigation measures including, but not limited to, infiltration/sedimentation basins, oil/grit separators, and other management practices, including storm water retention.
- S-15 The City shall require new development to adequately mitigate increases in stormwater peak flows and/or volume. Mitigation measures shall take into

consideration impacts on adjoining properties and impacts on groundwater recharge related to existing and proposed water wells.

- S-16 The City shall encourage project designs that minimize drainage concentrations and impervious coverage and maintain, to the extent feasible, natural site drainage conditions. Drainage onto adjacent properties shall be restricted to pre-project levels minus any runoff from the area to be developed.

- S-17 The City shall require projects to allocate land as necessary for the purpose of retaining flows and/or for the incorporation of mitigation measures for water quality and supply impacts related to urban runoff.

- S-18 The City shall coordinate mitigation measures with responsible agencies (including California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Monterey County Environmental Health Department, and Monterey County Water Resources Department) for the control of storm drains, the monitoring of discharges and the implementation of measures to control pollutant loads in urban storm water runoff.
- S-19 Engineered drainage plans shall be required for all development projects. Engineered drainage plans shall incorporate a collection and treatment system for stormwater runoff consistent with applicable federal and State laws.

Schools

- S-20 The City will work cooperatively with the Soledad Unified School District to monitor housing, population and school enrollment trends and in planning for future school facility needs. The City shall assist the District in locating new school sites.
- S-21 The siting of new schools shall be coordinated with the City's Circulation Element to ensure that traffic conflicts are avoided, the safety of students is addressed and roadway function is not reduced, including provisions for off street student drop-off/pick up.
- S-22 The City will work closely with the school district to secure adequate funding for new school facilities, and where legally feasible, shall provide a mechanism which requires development projects to mitigate the cost of providing school facilities needed to serve such development, consistent with relevant provisions of State law.
- S-23 The City, to the extent feasible, shall ensure that new school facilities are constructed and operating prior to the occupation of residences which the schools are intended to serve.
- S-24 The City shall support legislation to finance the construction of new schools and shall support the modification of State laws and regulations to improve the funding of new school sites and facilities provided such support is not in conflict with City policies and does not expose the City to liability.
- S-25 The City and school district shall work together in using existing school facilities for non-school-related and child-care activities.

Solid Waste

- S-26 The City shall promote maximum use of solid waste source reduction, recycling, composting and environmentally-safe transformation of wastes.
- S-27 The City shall require that all new development complies with applicable provisions of the Monterey County Integrated Waste Management Plan.

Hazardous Waste

- S-28 The City, to the extent feasible, will enforce the applicable provisions of the Monterey County Hazardous Waste Management Plan and all other applicable State, federal and local regulations dealing with the use, storage, disposal and transportation of hazardous materials.

Police Protection

- S-29 The City shall strive to achieve and maintain a ratio of a minimum of 1 police officer per 1,000 residents.
- S-30 The City shall strive to achieve and maintain emergency response time to a maximum of 5 minutes for police emergencies.
- S-31 Within the City's overall budgetary constraints, the City shall work to provide police facilities (including substation space, patrol and other vehicles, necessary equipment, and support personnel) to maintain the standards identified in Policies S-29 and S-30, and to develop programs to discourage substance abuse and crime among the City's youth.
- S-32 The City shall require new development to pay its fair share of providing or funding facilities that, at a minimum, achieve and maintain the above police protection standards.
- S-33 The City shall consider public safety issues in all aspects of commercial and residential project design, including crime prevention through design.
- S-34 The City shall continue to encourage the Neighborhood Watch program.

Fire Protection

- S-35 The City shall strive to achieve and maintain an Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rating of 4 or better.
- S-36 The City shall strive to achieve and maintain an emergency response time of 5 minutes or less for fire emergencies over 90% of the City.
- S-37 The City shall require new development to pay its fair share of providing or funding facilities that, at a minimum, achieve and maintain the fire protection standards identified in Policies S-35 and S-36.
- S-38 The City shall ensure that all proposed developments are reviewed for compliance with fire safety standards per the Uniform Fire Code and other City standards and ordinances.
- S-39 New non-residential development and non-residential additions of over 100 square feet of habitable space shall provide fire sprinklers in accordance with City standards, and as determined by the Fire Marshal. New residential development shall be provided with fire sprinklers unless the developer provides studies that prove the standard identified in Policy S-35 is not negatively affected.

Library Services

- S-40 The City will support efforts to expand library services within Soledad.

Programs

- 7.1 The City will work with to develop master plans for sewer, water service, and storm drainage.

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works Department
 Timeframe:
 Funding: General fund, developer fees
 Monitoring: Public Works Department

- 7.2 The city will adopt, and update in accordance with state law, a capital improvement program for water, wastewater, drainage, fire, police and other facilities. Such CIP shall indicate capital projects, estimated costs, time frames, responsible agencies or departments, and possible funding sources.

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works Department
 Timeframe:
 Funding: General fund, developer fees, CDBG
 Monitoring: Public Works Department

- 7.3 The City shall require that capital improvement plans, or area facility plans, are prepared in conjunction with new specific plans.

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works Department, Community Development Department
 Timeframe: 2002 and ongoing
 Funding: General fund, developer fees
 Monitoring: Public Works Department

- 7.4 The City shall maintain, and update as necessary, police and fire protection service standards to help ensure that adequate service levels are maintained.

Responsible Agency/Department: Administration, Police
 Timeframe: Ongoing
 Funding: General fund
 Monitoring: Administration

- 7.5 The City will adopt development impact fees to generally offset the cost of needed public facilities and services generated by new development and shall update such fees on an annual basis.

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works Department
 Timeframe:
 Funding: General fund, developer fees
 Monitoring: Public Works Department

- 7.6 The City will work with the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority to expand solid waste disposal capacity.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department
Timeframe:
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Community Development Department

- 7.7 The City shall continue to maintain and implement the Source Reduction and Recycling Program.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department
Timeframe:
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Community Development Department

- 7.8 The City shall require all new development to establish benefit assessment districts to fund maintenance of storm drains and appurtenances, street lights and other components which result in an increase in City staffing, equipment or funding requirements.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department
Timeframe:
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Community Development Department

- 7.9 The City shall require all new development to provide a plan for services which outlines increased demands on public services and methods for mitigating the increased demand.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department
Timeframe:
Funding: Private Development
Monitoring: Community Development Department

NATURAL RESOURCES

The area surrounding Soledad possesses diverse natural resources that include rich agricultural soils and scenic hillsides and vistas. These natural and human-made resources help shape the City's identity and play an important role in the quality of life. The General Plan must provide guidance for the protection and conservation of these valuable resources.



VIII. CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE

A Vision Of The Future

The City of Soledad is an attractive small city well separated from neighboring communities by open space and agricultural areas. The most productive agricultural land surrounding the City has been permanently preserved. The City's support of efforts by conservation organizations have helped protect and preserve sensitive resources along the Salinas River and elsewhere in the region. The Los Coches adobe has been fully restored and the adjoining land developed as a visitor-serving attraction. Development in the eastern portion of the City has protected views of the hills and views from the hills across the Salinas Valley.

INTRODUCTION

The Conservation and Open Space Elements are combined into one element that provides policies and programs to protect and preserve the natural resources in and around Soledad, including agricultural lands, hillsides and scenic areas, and undeveloped natural areas.

Chapter 5. of the *General Plan Background Report* provides an overview of natural, cultural and open space resources that occur within the City's planning area.

CONSERVATION/OPEN SPACE ISSUES

- ' *The soil in and around Soledad is considered "Prime Agricultural Land" with very few exceptions. This is a resource of local, regional and even national importance. As the City expands outward, it is essential that agricultural land not needed for urban development is protected.*

The higher quality agricultural soils are located closer to the Valley floor along the floodplain of the Salinas River; higher elevations possess less productive soils. Although these areas may still have productive soils when compared to other areas of California, slope and the availability of irrigation water may limit agricultural productivity. Regardless, land within the City's planning area not required for urban development should be preserved for continuing agricultural operations.

- ' *Continued development of the City will contribute to the incremental area-wide deterioration of air quality.*

The increase in population and the level of additional development anticipated by the General Plan will increase the volume of vehicle traffic on local roads, with a corresponding increase in emissions. The increase in emissions associated with buildout of the General Plan could hinder efforts to achieve federal and State air quality standards.

- ' *Development of the undisturbed (un-farmed) areas within and surrounding Soledad could result in the incremental loss of valuable habitat for native plants and animals.*

Portions of the City's planning area, especially along the Salinas River and areas to the east within the foothills of the Gabilan range, may contain habitat for special status plant and animal species. As the City contemplates outward expansion, these resources should be identified and preserved, where feasible. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to, preparing site-specific analyses of proposed development sites and limiting development in areas where other mitigation would not be feasible.

- ' *New development could uncover or damage previously undiscovered artifacts of cultural and/or historical importance.*

Native peoples were known to inhabit the Soledad area. Although the only archaeological site identified within the City is at the Los Coches Adobe, previously unknown sites could be discovered during construction activities as the City continues to develop in accordance with the General Plan.

- ' *Views from the City and within the City are a valuable resource that should be preserved.*

The eastern portion of the City lies on the upper slopes of the Salinas Valley and affords panoramic views of the Valley floor and the Coast Ranges to the west. As the City expands onto less productive agricultural soils to the east, it is important to take advantage of, and preserve, views afforded from these areas.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Monterey County is one of the primary agricultural regions in the State of California. Over 1.3 million acres (approximately 62% of the total land in the county) are used for various agricultural purposes, of which over 225,000 acres (17 %) are assessed some level of importance for their agricultural productivity. The total value of agricultural products produced in Monterey County in 1999 was nearly \$2.5 billion; the total value has been increasing steadily in real dollars (accounting for inflation) since 1989. Head lettuce is the number one cash crop, with gross production totaling over \$359 million (M) in 1998, and \$423M in 1999.

Monterey County is also experiencing growth in its cities and residential communities, which places pressure on agricultural lands. In recent years, agricultural land in desirable areas has been converted to residential and other non-agricultural uses. To help illustrate this trend, data from the State Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) for the years 1992-1996 are compared on Table VIII-1 for the conversion of prime agricultural land to developed land.

Table VIII-1
Change in the Acreage of Prime Agricultural Land
 Monterey County 1992-2000
 Source: California Department of Conservation

Category	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000
Total Prime Acreage	175,362	174,681	173,328	170,766	174,151
Total Net Change	--	-681	-1,353	-2,554	3,385
Acreage Converted to Development	--	-769	-3,178	-1,176	-544
Acreage of Prime Land Added	--	88	1,825	3,283	2,841

Table VIII-1 shows that, although the total acreage of prime agricultural land in Monterey County may be declining overall, the loss is at least partially mitigated by the conversion of non-prime lands to prime. The additional prime land is attributable to a number of factors, such as:

- ' The application of irrigation to lands previously not irrigated or farmed;
- ' The conversion of grazing land to wine grape vineyards;
- ' The re-classification of soils previously thought to be of lesser suitability.

Of the three factors listed above, growth in prime agricultural lands in Monterey County is primarily attributable to the proliferation of wine grapes. The acreage devoted to wine grapes has grown steadily during the 1990s and is projected to continue as the market for premium wines continues to expand. The acreage devoted to wine grapes has risen steadily from 36,000 acres in 1997 to 41,400 acres in 1999; grapes are now the fifth most valuable crop harvested in Monterey County. Approximately 99 percent of the gains in prime farmland in 1996 were attributable to vineyard development.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Views of the surrounding vineyards and the Valley floor are impressive from the foothills of the Gabilan Range and the higher elevations within the developed city. The higher vantage points afford nearly unobstructed panoramas of the Salinas Valley and the Sierra de Salinas Range to the west.

When approaching the City from either the north or south on Highway 101, the most prominent view of the City is the commercial businesses along the east side of Front Street which form a nearly solid facade when viewed from the west. The freeway interchanges serving the City are important visual gateways that provide visitors with their first impressions of the form and character of the community.

AIR QUALITY

The City of Soledad is located within the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB), which includes Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito Counties. Federal, State, and regional authorities regulate air quality in the NCCAB. The EPA is involved in local air quality planning through the Federal Clean Air Act (CAA). At the State level, the Lewis-Presley Air Quality Management Act and the California Clean Air Act of 1988 set air quality planning and regulatory responsibilities for the NCCAB. California Air Resources Board (ARB) is charged with the responsibility for coordinating efforts to attain and maintain ambient air quality standards and conducting research into the causes of, and solutions to, air pollution problems.

Monterey Bay Region 2000 Air Quality Management Plan

The most recent Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) was adopted by the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD) in 2000 to satisfy the requirements of the Clean Air Act as described above. The NCCB does not meet the State Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone or inhalable particulate matter (PM₁₀). The health based State ozone standard is exceeded when ozone levels exceed 0.09 parts per million during a one hour period. From 1997 to 2000 the State ozone standard was exceeded on 21 days for a total of 40 hours. Air monitoring data for 2000 show that the District meets the criteria for a nonattainment-transitional area having had less than three exceedances of the State ozone standard at any one air monitoring station. While the classification of nonattainment/transitional is by operation of law, the Air Resources Board does not recognize the designation until it has validated the data.

The California Clean Air Act of 1988 required preparation of a 1991 plan showing how the State ozone standard would be met with subsequent updates every three years. The 2000 is the third update to the 1991 Air Quality Management Plan for the Monterey Bay Region (AQMP). Attainment of the PM₁₀ standard is addressed in the "1998 Report on Attainment of the California Particulate Matter Standards in the Monterey Bay Region."

The 2000 AQMP includes:

- ' Current air quality data and analysis of air quality trends
- ' Revised emission inventory and emission forecasts
- ' Description of the District's photochemical modeling results
- ' Updated analysis of emission reductions needed to meet and maintain the State ozone standard

- ' Discussion of potential air quality impacts of the energy crisis
- ' Recommended adoption of three control measures

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Although native vegetation on the valley floor has been substantially altered, the extent of agricultural fields and the presence of large tracts of undeveloped land in and around the City of Soledad contribute to a diverse assemblage of resident and migrant wildlife species. Habitat types of particular importance to wildlife include any native grasslands and any vegetated areas along the Salinas River and the foothills of the Gabilan Range east of the City. Depending on the crop type and management practices, the agricultural fields can provide important foraging opportunities for some species of wildlife. Remnant native trees and areas of dense landscaping in urbanized areas can also support a variety of wildlife species.

Riparian communities and native grassland that occur within the City's planning area are considered to have a high inventory priority with the California Natural Diversity Database. These communities have been designated as sensitive due to rarity and continuing loss as a result of development, flood control improvements, and other factors.

ENERGY PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION

Deregulation of the utilities industry in 1996 has resulted in a dysfunctional energy market and rising wholesale energy prices in California. On January 17, 2001, Governor Davis proclaimed a State of Emergency in California due to an electrical energy shortage. The State is attempting to stabilize the utilities industry by allowing increased production and encouraging conservation. The state offers a wide variety of rebates and incentives to help businesses, agricultural users and consumers reduce their electricity use. At the local level, energy conservation and efficiency can be encouraged in new and existing structures through design, insulation, and weatherization.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES

Chapter 5. of the *General Plan Background Report* provides an overview of the major periods of history in the central Salinas Valley and the settlement of Soledad.

Native American archaeological sites in the Salinas Valley tend to be situated at the base of hills and on the valley floor near sources of water. The only source of constant flowing water is the Salinas River. Consequently, there is low potential for identifying Native American cultural resources within most areas of the City's sphere of influence.

An archival search of maps, records and literature on file at the Northwestern Information Center of California Archaeological Site Inventory was conducted and given the file number 98-423 in 1999 for the Miravale Partnership-Hambey Property Environmental Impact Report. A search of State records was conducted to ascertain if any archaeological sites or surveys existed within one-half mile of the project site and if any cultural resources were listed on inventories. The search findings revealed there was no recorded Native American or historic cultural resources listed with the Historic Resources Information System.

CONSERVATION/OPEN SPACE GOALS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goals

1. To protect the City's natural, cultural, visual and historical resources.
2. To provide open space and rural lands that meet the needs of present and future City populations.
3. To protect resources (such as valuable agricultural lands), and be sensitive to the factors which allow these resources to remain viable.
5. To provide for passive recreation on areas kept open (such as along the river) where such low intensity uses will not damage the resources that are being protected.

6. To provide continuing community education that underscores the value of the area's cultural, scenic, and natural resources.
7. To preserve historic resources within and surrounding the City.
8. To promote the efficient use of energy resources.

Policies

Agricultural Resources

- C/OS-1 The City shall discourage "leapfrog" development and development in peninsulas extending into agricultural lands to avoid adverse effects on agricultural operations.
- C/OS-2 The City shall retain the agricultural land use designation on lands within its planning area until the land is needed for urban development.
- C/OS-3 The City shall ensure that new development and public infrastructure projects do not encourage expansion of urban uses outside the general plan area into areas designated *Agriculture* by the Monterey County General Plan.
- C/OS-4 The City shall support the agricultural economy by encouraging the location of agricultural support industries in the City, establishing and promoting marketing of local farm products, and providing its regional fair share of adequate housing to meet the needs of agricultural labor.
- C/OS-5 The City shall require a right-to-farm condition to all future subdivision maps adjacent to farmlands.
- C/OS-6 The City shall require development within or adjacent to designated agricultural areas to minimize conflicts with adjacent agricultural uses.

Scenic Resources

- C/OS-7 The City shall require new public and private development to protect scenic resources by:
- a. Prohibiting structures along ridgelines, steep slopes (above the 400 foot elevation contour), or in other highly visible locations unless no practical alternative is available, or such a location is necessary to protect public health and safety;
 - b. Utilizing natural landforms and vegetation for screening structures, access roads, building foundations, and cut and fill slopes;
 - c. Requiring landscaping which provides a landscape transition between developed areas and adjacent open space or undeveloped areas; and is compatible with the scenic resource being protected;
 - d. Incorporating sound Soil Conservation Service practices and minimizing land alterations. Land alterations shall be minimized by: keeping cuts and fills to a minimum; limiting grading to the smallest

practical area of land; limiting land exposure to the shortest practical amount of time; replanting graded areas to insure establishment of plant cover before the next rainy season; and creating grading contours that blend with the natural contours on site or look like contours that would naturally occur;

- e. Designing roads, parking, and utilities to minimize visual impacts. If possible, utilities shall be underground. Roadways and parking shall fit the natural terrain; and
- f. Designing projects to fit the site's scale and character. Structures shall be designed and located so: they do not silhouette against ridgelines, or hilltops; roof lines and vertical architectural features blend with and do not detract from the natural background or ridge outline; residential density and massing is decreased with increased elevation where it would mar the scenic quality of the scenic resource; they fit the natural terrain, and they utilize building materials, colors, and textures that blend with the natural landscape and avoid the creation of high-contrast situations.

Hillside Protection

- C/OS-8 The City shall require public or private development to:
- a. The City shall designate hillside areas above the 400 foot elevation contour as *Open Space/Grazing, Public Facility* (parkland) or *Agriculture*.
 - b. Locate primary structures, accessory structures, paving, and grading at the base of a hill (generally that are below the 400 foot contour or 15 percent slope) unless: (1) no practicable alternative is available, (2) the location on a greater slope or at a greater elevation provides more aesthetic quality, or (3) the location is necessary to protect public health and safety.
 - c. Utilize design, construction, and maintenance techniques that: (1) preserve and enhance the hillsides; (2) ensure that development near or on portions of a hill do not cause, or make worse natural hazards (such as erosion, sedimentation, fire, or water quality concerns); (3) include erosion and sediment control practices including temporary vegetation sufficient to stabilize disturbed areas; (4) minimize risk to life and property from slope failure, landslides, and flooding; (5) maintain the character and visual quality of the adjacent hillside.
 - d. Incorporate recreation and public access on or near hillsides consistent with this Element.
- C/OS-9 The City shall support the preservation and enhancement of natural land forms, natural vegetation, and natural resources to the maximum extent feasible.

Plant, Animal and Related Habitat Protection

- C/OS-10 The City shall support State and federal laws and policies to preserve populations of rare, threatened, and endangered species by ensuring

development does not adversely affect such species in a significant way or by fully mitigating adverse effects.

C/OS-11 The City shall require that significant natural, open space, and cultural resources be identified in advance of development and incorporated into site-specific development project design to the extent feasible.

C/OS-12 The City shall require developers to use native and compatible non-native species, especially drought-tolerant species, to the extent possible in fulfilling landscaping requirements imposed as conditions of project approvals or project mitigations.

Air Quality

C/OS-13 The City will encourage the improvement of air quality in Soledad and in the region by implementing the measures described in the Monterey County Air Quality Management Plan. Such measures include, but are not limited to, measures to reduce dependence on the automobile and encourage the use of alternate modes of transportation such as buses, bicycles and walking.

C/OS-14 The City shall, to the extent feasible, separate sensitive land uses from significant sources of air pollution.

C/OS-15 The City shall submit development proposals to the APCD for review and comment in compliance with CEQA prior to consideration by the decision-making body.

C/OS-16 The City shall promote and encourage the use of alternate modes of transportation by incorporating public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes in City transportation planning and by requiring new development to provide adequate pedestrian and bikeway facilities.

Tree Preservation/Landscaping

C/OS-17 When considering the approval of activities that result in the removal of mature trees, the following factors shall be considered:

- a. The size, age, health and species of tree(s) to be removed.
- b. Whether or not the removal of the tree(s) is necessary for the reasonable development and use of the site.
- c. Whether the tree(s) to be removed is (are) a native or introduced species.

C/OS-18 The City shall institute and promote a vigorous program of tree planting in new development areas and in older portions of the City to increase the number and density of tree cover.

C/OS-19 When mature trees are removed to accommodate new development, they shall be replaced at a ratio of at least two new trees for every one tree removed, or such additional number and size

of trees as considered appropriate by the reviewing body at the time of approval of such development.

- C/OS-20 The City will continue to trim and maintain trees within public drainage channels to insure continued vigor and to protect public health and safety. The City will encourage the continued maintenance of trees on private property and, where necessary, may require trees to be trimmed or other maintenance when necessary to protect the public health and safety.
- C/OS-21 Landscaping plans for new development incorporate water conservation methods and shall employ native varieties of plants that are drought tolerant.
- C/OS-22 Where necessary the City shall employ the services of a qualified landscape architect and/or arborist in managing the City's tree resources.

Archaeological and Cultural Resources

- C/OS-23 If development of a site uncovers cultural resources, the recommendations of Appendix K of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code Section 15000 et seq.) shall be followed for identification, documentation, and preservation of the resource.

- C/OS-24 The City shall document and record data or information relevant to prehistoric and historic cultural resources which may be impacted by proposed development. The accumulation of such data shall act as a tool to assist decision-makers in determinations of the potential development effects to prehistoric and historical resources located within the City.

Mineral Resources

- C/OS-25 Approval by Monterey County of new or expanded mining operations near Soledad shall ensure that no adverse visual impacts result, no additional truck traffic is routed through the City of Highway 146 and that air quality and flood control issues are resolved.

- C/OS-26 The City and County shall discourage urban uses adjacent to State-designated regional resource deposits if such uses would be incompatible with mining operations, or would restrict future extraction of significant mineral resources.

Programs

- 8.1 Consistent with APCD standards, the City shall require new development to utilize the Best Available Control Technology (BACT) for all new emission sources. Implementation of these control technologies shall be applied through the review of new development projects and through the Air Pollution Control District's permitting and environmental review process.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department,
 APCD
 Timeframe: Ongoing
 Funding: Permit and subdivision application fees
 Monitoring: Community Development Department,
 APCD

- 8.2 The City should ensure that APCD, in preparation of its required updates to the AQMP, use revised population and vehicle trip data consistent with this General Plan.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department,
 APCD
 Timeframe:

Funding:
Monitoring:

General fund, developer fees
Community Development Department

8.3 To reduce air quality impacts associated with construction activities, the City shall revise its zoning and/or grading ordinance to require the following conditions for project approval:

- a. Water the site and the equipment in the morning and afternoon.
- b. Spread soil binders on the site, unpaved roads and parking areas.
- c. Re-establish ground-cover on the construction site.
- d. Wash trucks leaving the site.
- e. Properly tune and maintain all equipment.
- f. Use low-sulfur fuel for equipment.
- g. Provide rideshare and transit incentives to construction workers.
- h. Configure construction parking to minimize conflicts with street traffic.
- i. Minimize obstruction of through-traffic lanes.
- j. Schedule operations affecting major roadways for off-peak hours.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department
 Timeframe:
 Funding: General fund
 Monitoring: Community Development Department

8.4 The City shall utilize the CEQA process to identify, avoid and/or reduce the potentially significant adverse air quality impacts of new development.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department,
 AQMD
 Timeframe: Ongoing
 Funding: General fund, developer fees
 Monitoring: Community Development Department

8.5 The city shall amend the zoning ordinance to include the following or similar language:

The demolition or remodel of buildings considered to be of historic, cultural or architectural significance shall not occur unless the following findings can be made:

Remodel or Alteration

The proposed remodel or alteration does not adversely affect the historic, cultural or architectural significance of the building or site.

Demolition

The demolition of the building does not adversely affect the historic, cultural or architectural character of the City of Soledad, or the building presents a clear hazard to occupants or to the public, which can not be feasibly corrected through restoration.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department
 Timeframe:
 Funding: General fund

Monitoring:

Community Development Department

8.6 The City, in cooperation with other water purveyors and water management agencies and landowners, shall participate in efforts to provide for comprehensive groundwater management to ensure the long-term maintenance and protection of groundwater resources within and surrounding Soledad.

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works Department, Community Development Department, Monterey County Environmental Health Department, Monterey County Water Resources Agency, Water Quality Control Board, State Department of Water Resources

Timeframe:

Funding: General fund, developer fees, District user fees

Monitoring: Community Development Department

8.7 The City shall work toward the public acquisition as open space of areas with significant ecological resources where such resources cannot be effectively preserved through the regulatory process. Public protection may take the form of fee acquisition and/or open space easements and may be carried out in cooperation with other local, State and federal agencies, and private entities.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department

Timeframe: Ongoing

Funding: General fund, developer fees

Monitoring: Community Development Department

8.8 The City shall develop and adopt an ordinance requiring the dedication of open space lands, or the payment of open space mitigation fees, to provide and maintain open space. The ordinance shall further define geographic areas of benefit.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department

Timeframe:

Funding: General fund, developer fees

Monitoring: Community Development Department

8.9 The City shall undertake a survey and documentation of potentially historic buildings and structures with the City of Soledad and the Planning Commission and shall establish policies for the preservation and restoration of such buildings and structures.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department

Timeframe:

Funding: General fund

Monitoring:

Community Development Department

HAZARDS

This chapter of the General Plan identifies areas subject to natural or human-made hazards, and establishes goals, policies and programs to protect people and property from their effects. Another hazard-related issue relates to noise and the exposure of people to excessive amounts of noise. Noise can be considered a health hazard that can also have profound effects on the quality of life in suburban communities.

As Soledad continues to grow in accordance with the General Plan, these hazards must be addressed so that the health and safety of present and future residents is protected.



IX. SAFETY

A Vision Of The Future

City residents and their property are protected from natural and human-caused hazards, including floods, fire, geologic and seismic events. Emergency response providers (police, fire and ambulance) are staffed and equipped to maintain the desired response time to all portions of the City. Health care is provided in Soledad.

INTRODUCTION

The *Safety Element* identifies potential natural and human-made hazards and provides policies, programs and standards to protect people and property from such hazards. Chapters 5. And 6. of the *General Plan Background Report* provides a more detailed discussion of geologic, fire, flooding and other hazards that affect the Soledad planning area.

SAFETY ISSUES

- ' *Drainage facilities serving Soledad will require expansion to accommodate additional development.*

Runoff generated from new development will necessitate improvements to the drainage system serving Soledad. In addition, the drainage system must be properly maintained to eliminate obstructions that could worsen flooding.

- ' *Efforts to minimize the effects of seismic hazards should be incorporated into the design of new development and should be incorporated into existing development to the extent feasible.*

Earthquakes can neither be predicted nor avoided. However, prudent steps can be taken to help minimize their effects in a seismically-active area such as Soledad. The City should continue its efforts to minimize this risk in new development by enforcing the provisions of the Uniform Building Code.

- ' *New development must be protected from major fire hazards.*
-

New development in the outlying areas of the City could be exposed to the threat of wildland fires originating in the surrounding hillsides. Such development should incorporate measures to help protect structures and residents.

FLOOD HAZARDS

Regional flood hazards are described in terms of the 100-year flood event, and are mapped for most of California by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The 100-year flood zone for Soledad is shown in Figure IX-2. The limits of the flood zone generally correspond to areas of the Salinas River however, flooding in the City of Soledad is not limited to the River. Areas of the community affected by flooding include many of the downtown streets which received overflow from the Bryant Canyon Channel in the March 1995 flood (see Figure IX-1). Other areas that flooded in this storm include the Gabilan and San Vicente elementary schools and portions of subdivisions adjacent to the Mirrisou property where water overflowed drainage ditches and onto lots.

SEISMIC HAZARDS

The City of Soledad is located in a seismically active region. The alluvial Salinas Valley is bordered both to the east and west by active or potentially active fault zones. Faults are caused by movement of the earth's crust, which forces bedrock units located on opposite sides of a fault line to slide past each other. These lines are not discretely defined, so movement of the ground surface can occur throughout a fairly wide area that overlies a fault zone. An active fault is defined as a fault that has a historic seismic record (activity in the last 100 years) or displaces Holocene (11,000 years and younger) deposits. Faults that exhibit signs of geologically recent movement (active within the past 11,000 years) are considered the most likely to experience movement in the near future. Therefore, active faults are generally thought to have the greatest fault rupture potential. Most agencies, however, will consider potentially active faults (active within the past two million years) as being capable of generating future earthquakes. Faults classified as inactive are not considered to present a significant fault rupture hazard or seismic source.

Structural damage associated with earthquake hazards can be minimized with proper foundation engineering based on an analysis of the soils on a given building site, thereby limiting the damage to habitable structures in areas most likely to have these occurrences. The land use designations and policies of the General Plan respond to the need to protect existing and future development from seismic hazards.

FIRE HAZARD

The City maintains a professionally staffed, full service fire department supplemented by a strong volunteer program. The fire department is located adjacent to City Hall. The Mission Soledad Rural Fire Protection District provides contract fire protection services to the City. Additionally, the City has a mutual aid agreement with the California Division of Forestry (CDF) for fire protection service. The undeveloped hillsides east of the City are susceptible to occasional brush fires as fuel accumulates over time. Additionally, structural fires may occur within the City.

Figure IX-1: Areas Prone to Localized Flooding

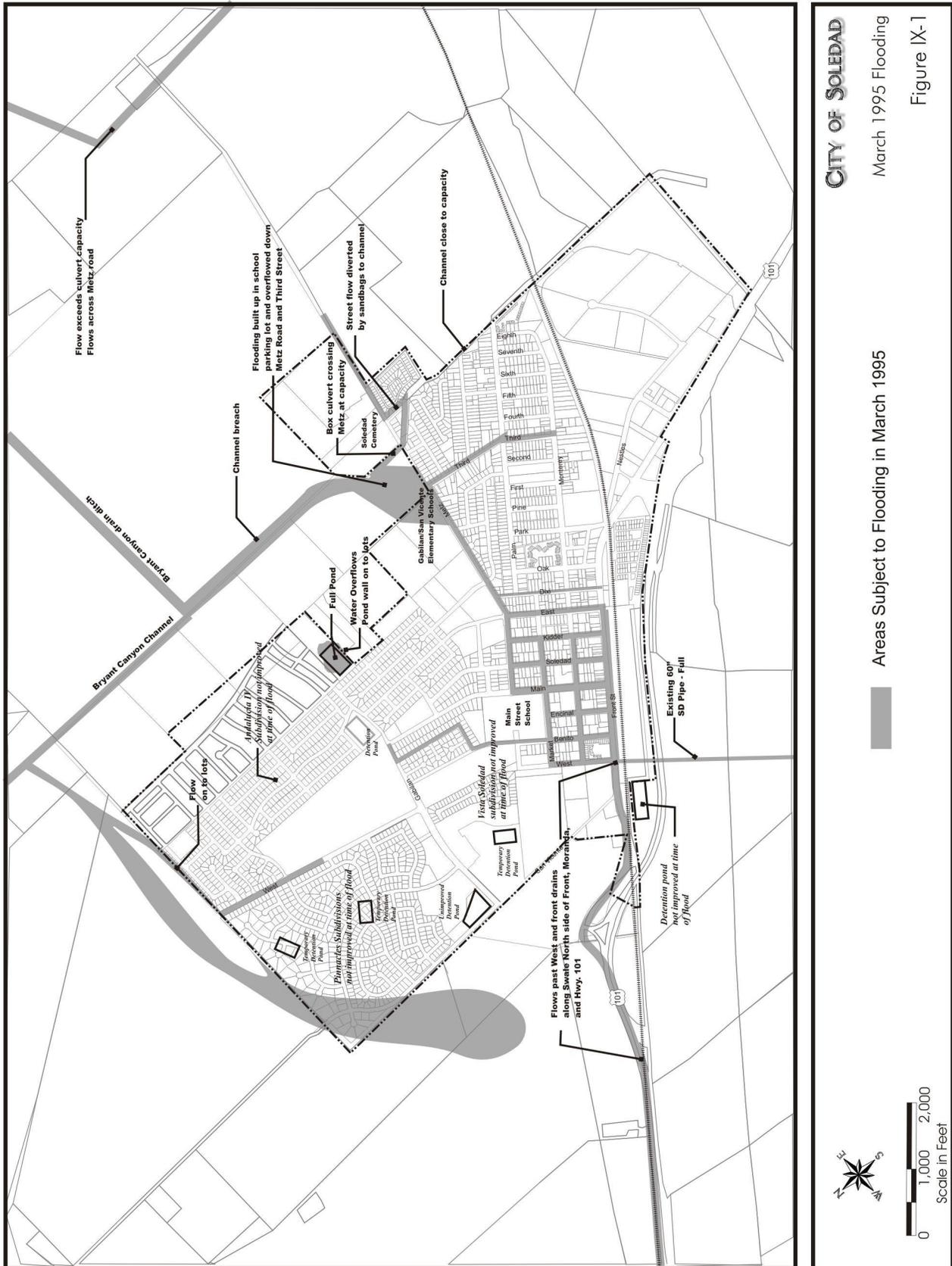
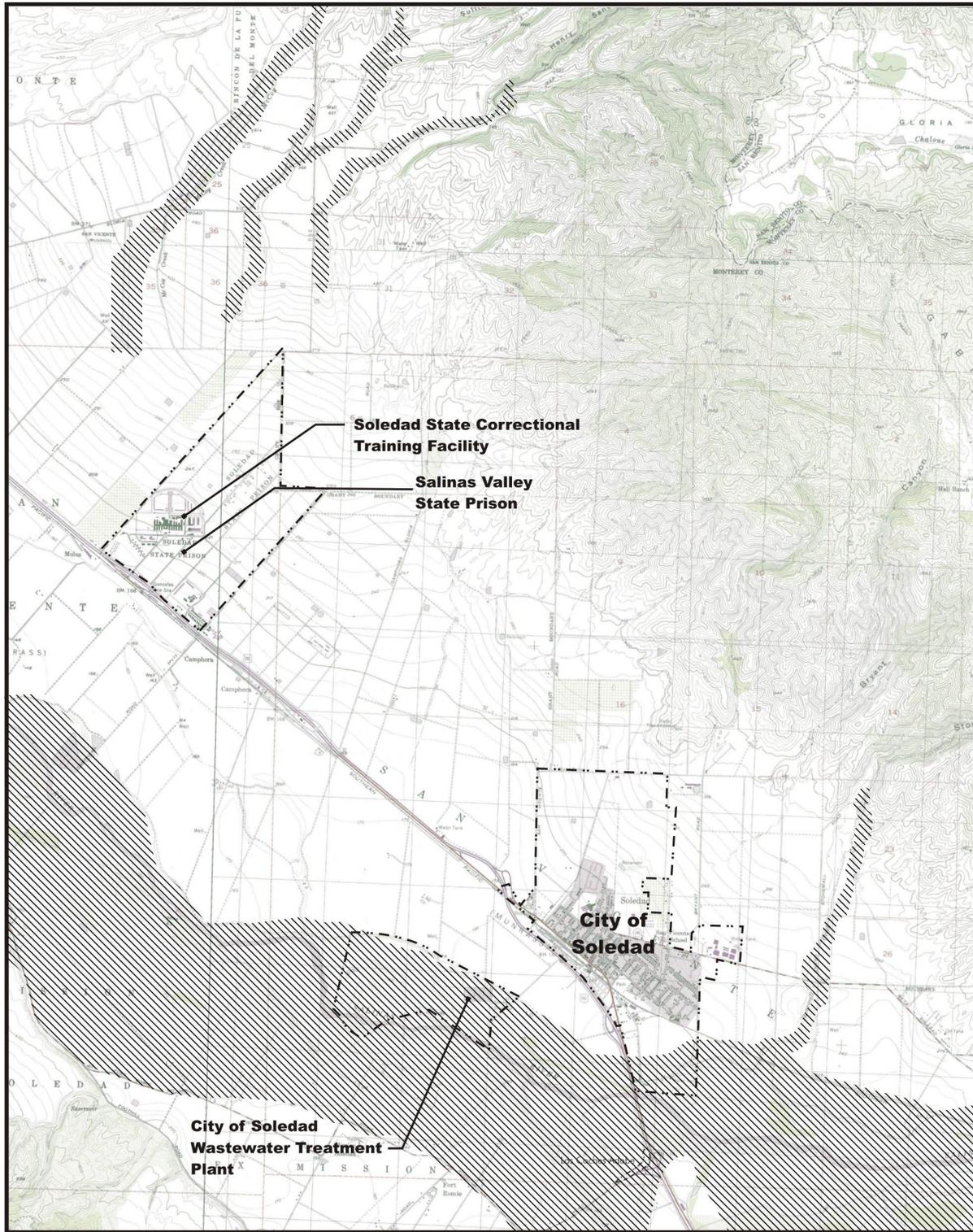


Figure IX-2: 100 Year Flood Plain

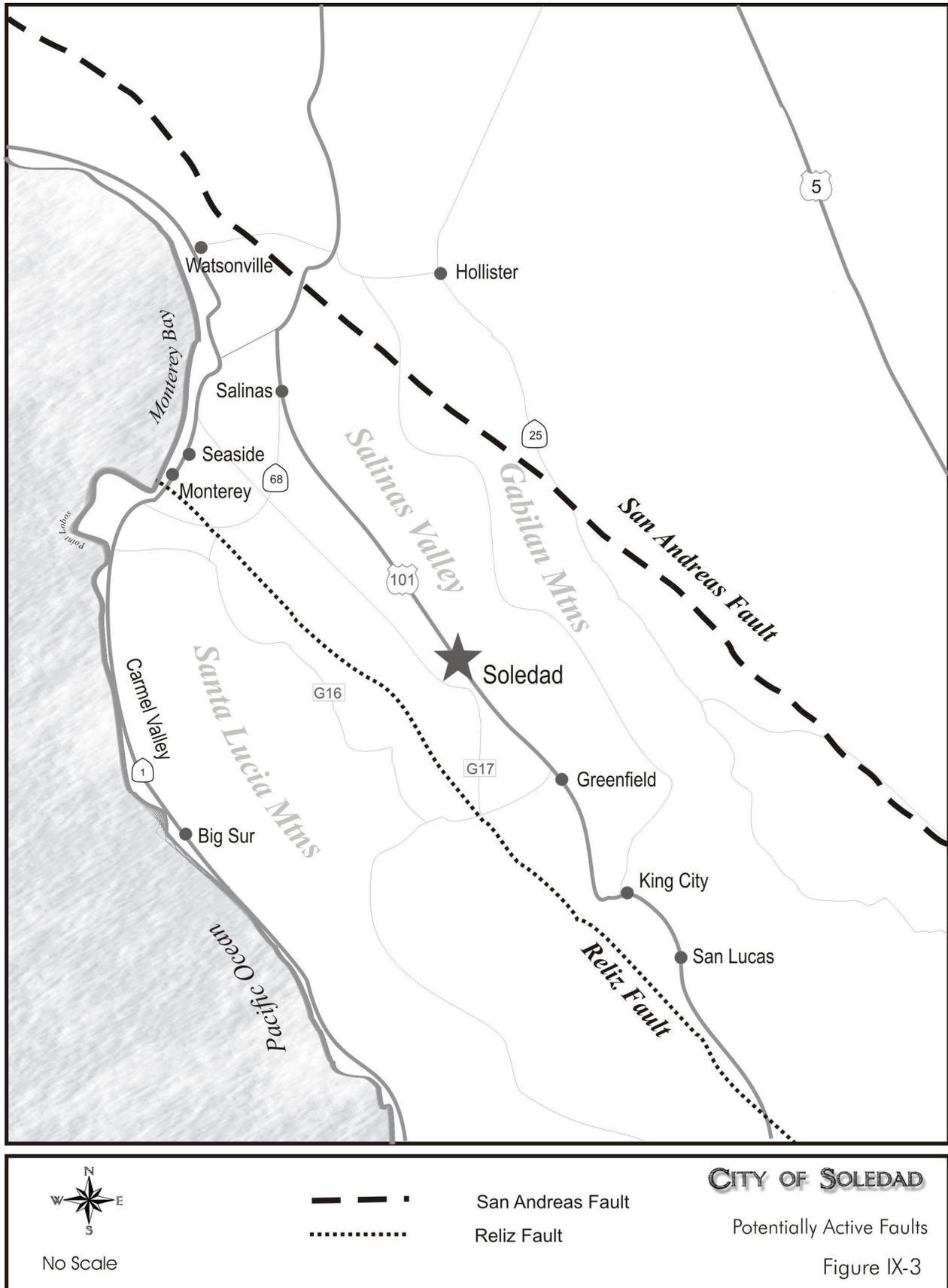


 **CITY OF SOLEDAD**
100 Year Flood Plain
Figure IX-2

 Areas Subject to Flooding During 100 Year Storm
Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency

** Approximate locations only. Please contact planning department for more accurate FEMA maps.*

Figure IX-3: Location of Major Faults



SAFETY GOALS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goal

1. To protect the lives and property of the residents of Soledad from unnecessary risk due to fire, flooding, earthquakes, and other natural and human-made hazards.

Policies

Flood Hazards

- HZ-1 The City shall promote flood control measures that maintain the drainage courses in their natural conditions within the 100-year floodplain.
- HZ-2 The City shall prohibit the construction of facilities essential for emergencies and large public assembly in the 100-year floodplain, unless the structure and access to the structure are free from flood inundation.
- HZ-3 The City shall require flood control structures, facilities, and improvements to be designed to conserve resources, incorporate and preserve scenic values, and to incorporate opportunities for recreation, where appropriate.
- HZ-4 The City shall manage flood prone areas consistent with the requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Monterey County Water Resources Agency.

Seismic Safety

- HZ-5 All new development shall satisfy the applicable requirements of the Uniform Building Code.
- HZ-6 The City shall require the preparation of a soils engineering and geologic-seismic analysis prior to permitting development in areas prone to geologic or seismic hazards (ie, groundshaking, landslides, liquefaction, expansive soils).
- HZ-7 The City shall limit development in areas of steep or unstable slopes to minimize hazards by landslides or liquefaction.
- HZ-8 In landslide hazard areas, the City shall prohibit alteration of land in a manner that could increase the hazard, including concentration of water through drainage or irrigation systems; removal of vegetative cover; and steepening of slopes and undercutting the bases of slopes.

Emergency Preparedness

- HZ-9 New development shall provide fire flow, emergency access and hydrants consistent with Fire Department requirements.

HZ-10 The City will continue to participate in the State Emergency Preparedness Program.

HZ-11 The City shall maintain mutual aid agreements with Monterey County and other jurisdictions for assistance in emergencies.

HZ-12 The City will encourage site planning which helps reduce crime potential through appropriate lighting, access, ease of surveillance, and other features such as alarms and security systems as may be required by the police department.

Programs

9.1 The City will continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department
Timeframe:
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Community Development Department

9.2 The City will continue to enforce the Uniform Building Code which address seismic safety in building location, design and construction.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department
Timeframe: Ongoing
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Community Development Department

9.3 The City shall continue to maintain flood hazard maps and other relevant data relating to potential flood hazards, and shall revise and update such information as new information becomes available.

Responsible Agency/Department: Building Department
Timeframe:
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Community Development Department

9.4 The City shall work with Mission Soledad Rural Fire Protection District to periodically evaluate fire protection services to determine if resources are being effectively and efficiently used.

Responsible Agency/Department: Administration/Fire District
Timeframe: Ongoing
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Administration

- 9.5 The City shall adopt and maintain agreements with other local, state and federal agencies to ensure coordinated disaster response.

Responsible Agency/Department: Administration
Timeframe:
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Administration

- 9.6 The City shall conduct an evaluation of City-owned safety and emergency management facilities and utility systems for susceptibility to damage from flood inundation, fire hazard, or seismic hazards, and shall analyze the extent of acceptable risk of the effects of such fire, flooding or groundshaking.

Responsible Agency/Department: Building Department, Public Works,
Administration
Timeframe:
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Community Development Department

- 9.7 The City will review and update the Subdivision Ordinance to reflect the policies of the General Plan.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department,
Engineering Department
Timeframe:
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Community Development Department,
Engineering Department



A Vision Of The Future

Residential neighborhoods are quiet and peaceful consistent with the City's small town character. Residents are protected from excessive noise caused by increased vehicular traffic, railroad noise and noise from the 101 freeway.

INTRODUCTION

Noise has become an important factor in the planning process because an overall increase in noise levels from increased urban development, the spread of noise-producing activities into formerly quiet areas, and greater awareness of impacts of noise on human health. The *Noise Element* provides policies, programs and standards to alleviate the problems associated with excessive noise. The *Noise Element* identifies the major sources of noise, estimates their impacts on the community, and provides various methods to mitigate its impact.

All of the elements of the General Plan are related and interdependent. The *Noise Element* is most closely related to the Land Use, Circulation and Housing Elements by identifying noise-sensitive land uses, including residential neighborhoods, schools, churches, hospitals and playgrounds, and recommending standards that will lessen noise impacts on these land uses. The *Noise Element* estimates noise levels from new and existing roadways so that standards can be developed to mitigate these impacts. Lastly, the *Noise Element* recommends standards for the design of new housing to mitigate noise levels in high noise impact areas.

Chapter 7. of the *General Plan Background Report* provides an overview of how noise is measured and the regulatory and environmental strategies applicable to noise management.

NOISE ISSUES

- ' *Noise levels are likely to increase due to urban development and increased traffic.*

The principal sources of noise in Soledad are streets and highways. The growth in traffic volumes on streets and highways and rail traffic, and the resulting increase in noise levels, can be at least partially mitigated by locating new sensitive land

uses away from these noise sources, and by requiring the incorporation of sound mitigation in new development.

- ' *New or expanded industrial development could result in noise levels considered excessive by nearby sensitive land uses.*

Soledad has a substantial amount of undeveloped industrial land that could be developed during the timeframe of the General Plan. Industrial uses are more likely to involve noise-generating activities that could be considered a nuisance by surrounding sensitive land uses, such as residential neighborhoods.

THE EXISTING NOISE ENVIRONMENT IN SOLEDAD

The major noise source in Soledad, as in most other communities, is traffic. Other noise generators such as railroads, aircraft, farming activities, quarry activities, and industrial and food packaging facilities can contribute to local ambient noise levels.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY STANDARDS

Some land uses are more tolerant of noise than others. For example, schools, hospitals, churches, and residences are more sensitive to noise intrusion than commercial or industrial activities. For this reason, land use compatibility with the noise environment is an important consideration in the planning and design of new developments. As ambient noise levels affect the perceived amenity or livability of a development, so too can the mismanagement of noise impacts or impair the economic health and growth potential of a community by reducing the area's desirability as a place to live, shop and work.

State Guidelines and Standards

Section 1092 of Title 25, Chapter 1, Subchapter 1, Article 4, of the California Administrative Code includes noise insulation standards which detail specific requirements for new multi-family structures (hotels, motels, apartments, condos, and other attached dwellings) located within the 60 CNEL contour adjacent to roads, railroads, rapid transit lines, airports or industrial areas.⁵ An acoustic analysis is required showing that these multi-family units have been designed to limit interior noise levels with doors and windows closed to 45 CNEL in any habitable room. Title 21 of the California Administration Code (Subchapter 6, Article 2, Section 5014) also specifies that multi-family attached units incorporate noise reduction features sufficient to assure that interior noise levels in all habitable rooms do not exceed 45 CNEL.

Section 65302 (f) of the Government Code specifies that it is the responsibility of the local agency preparing the general plan to specify the manner in which the noise element will be integrated into the zoning plan and tied to the Land Use

⁵ An exception is made for railroads where there are no nighttime (10 PM to 7 AM) operations and where daytime (7 AM to 10 PM) operations do not exceed four per day.

Element, Circulation Element, and the local Noise Ordinance. The *Noise Element*, once adopted, also becomes the guideline for determining compliance with the State noise insulation standards discussed above.

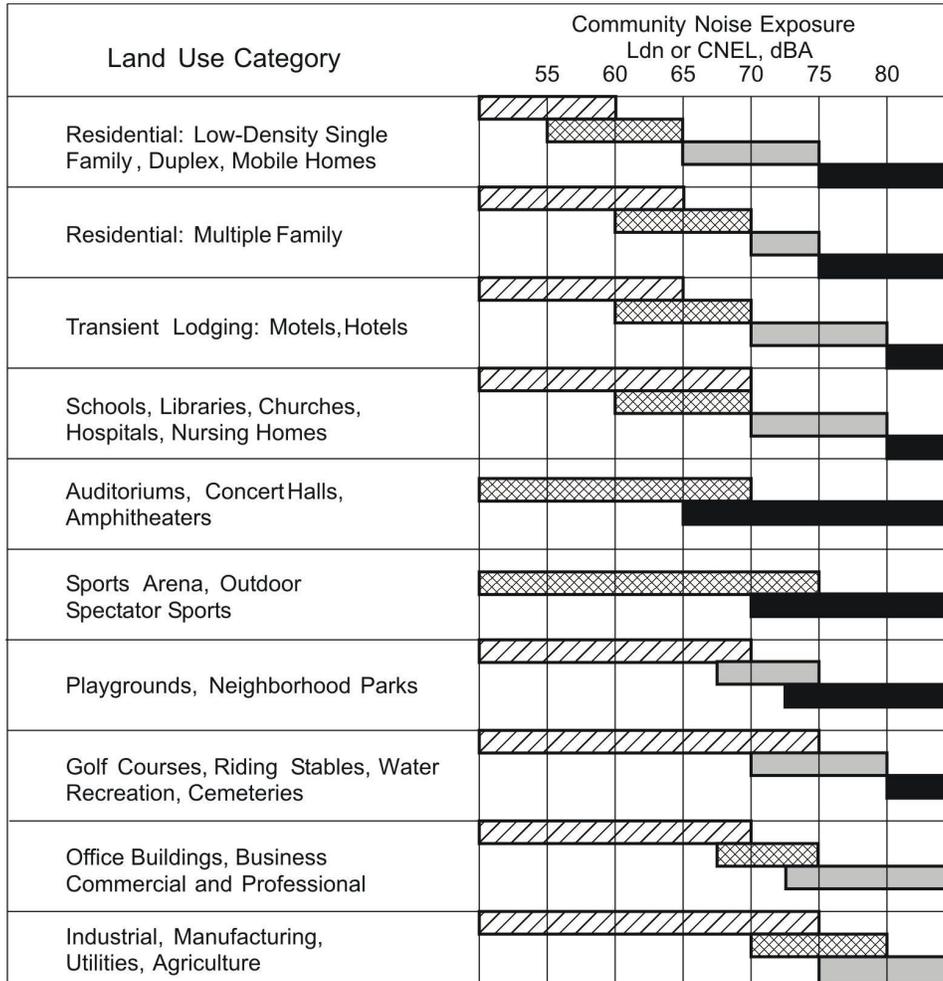
The Office of Noise Control, established by the California Noise Control Act of 1973, has developed criteria and guidelines for local agencies for use in setting standards for human exposure to noise and preparing noise elements. The noise standards developed by the Office of Noise Control and intended as guidelines for municipal noise elements are summarized in Figure X-1. Standards for interior noise levels are provided by Table X-1.

Each locality, in developing a noise element, must make a determination regarding how much noise is too much. A community's sensitivity to noise may be taken into account by starting with the general guidelines and then applying adjustment factors which allow acceptability standards to be set which 1) reflect the desires of the community and its assessment of the relative importance of noise pollution and 2) are below the known levels of health impairment.

Local Policies and Standards

Policies and implementation programs outlined in the Noise Element focus on establishing noise projections for proper planning and reducing the noise impacts at sensitive receptor locations. They include: 1) identifying noise sources and determining noise exposure levels; 2) adopting acceptable levels of noise for land use categories; 3) adopting a comprehensive noise ordinance; 4) promoting effective enforcement of existing federal and state noise standards; 5) requiring proper acoustical site planning and acoustical construction; and 6) evaluating noise analyses which have been required for new development projects.

Figure X-1: Land Use Compatibility Standards for Noise



INTERPRETATION



NORMALLY ACCEPTABLE

Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional



CONDITIONALLY ACCEPTABLE

New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and



NORMALLY UNACCEPTABLE

New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and



CLEARLY UNACCEPTABLE

New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

Adapted from: Office of Planning and Research, State of California General Plan Guidelines, Appendix A: Guidelines for the Preparation and Content of the Noise Element of the General Plan, 1990.

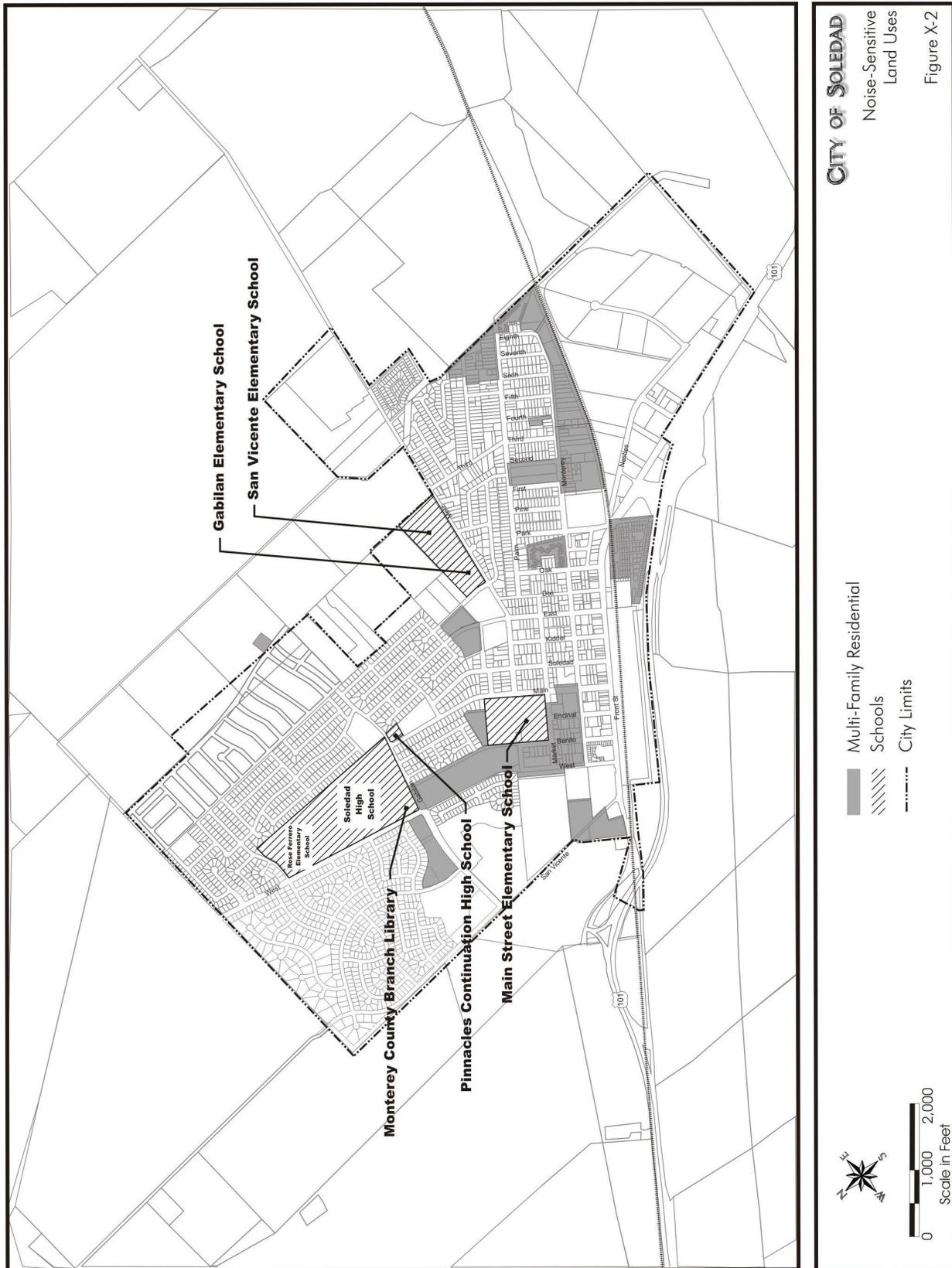
**Table X-1
Interior and Exterior Noise Standards**

Land Use Categories		Energy Average CNEL	
Categories	Uses	Interior ¹	Exterior ²
Residential	Single Family, Duplex, Multi Family	45 ³	65
	Mobile Home	---	65 ⁴
Commercial, Industrial and Institutional	Motel, Hotel, Transient Lodging	45	65 ⁵
	Commercial Retail, Bank, Restaurant	55	---
	Office Building, Research and Development, Professional Office, Government Office	50	---
	Amphitheater, Concert Hall, Auditorium, Meeting Hall	45	---
	Gymnasium	50	---
	Sports Club	55	---
	Manufacturing, Warehousing, Wholesale, Utilities	65	---
	Movie Theaters	45	---
Institutional	Hospitals, Schools	45	65
	Church, Library	45	---
Open Space	Parks	---	65

Notes:

1. Indoor environment excluding bathrooms, closets and corridors.
2. Outdoor environment limited to private yards of single family residences, multi-family private patio or balcony served by a means of exit from inside, mobile home parks, hospital patio, park picnic area, school playground, hotel/motel recreation area.
3. Noise level requirements with closed windows. Mechanical ventilation system or other means of natural ventilation shall be provided per Chapter 12 Section 1205 of the Uniform Building Code.
4. Exterior noise level should be such that interior level will not exceed 45 CNEL.
5. Except areas affected by aircraft noise.

Figure X-2: Receptors Sensitive to Noise



NOISE GOALS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goal

1. To preserve the quiet rural setting of the City and protect citizens from exposure to excessive levels of noise.

Policies

- N-1 The City shall not allow development of new noise-sensitive land uses where existing or ambient noise levels exceed those shown on Figure X-1, as measured immediately within the property line of the new development, unless effective noise mitigation measures have been incorporated into the development design to achieve the standards set by Figure X-1.
- N-2 Where non-residential land uses are likely to generate noise levels exceeding those shown on Figure X-1 on adjacent or nearby existing or planned noise-sensitive uses, the City shall require preparation of an acoustical analysis as part of the environmental review process so that noise mitigation may be included in the project design.
- N-3 New residential development shall comply with State Noise Insulation Standards.
- N-4 New commercial and industrial development shall incorporate design elements to minimize the noise impact when residential neighborhoods are nearby.
- N-5 Where noise mitigation measures are required to achieve the standards described in Figure X-2, the emphasis of such measures shall be placed on site planning and project design. The use of noise barriers shall be considered as a means of achieving the noise standards only after all other practical design-related mitigation measures have been integrated into the project.

Programs

- 10.1 The City will enforce the standards contained in the Noise Element through the development review process and other means.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department,
Building Department

Timeframe: Ongoing

Funding: General fund

Monitoring: Community Development Department

- 10.2 The City will adopt development guidelines and setback requirements as part of the zoning ordinance that include design standards for sound mitigation.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department
Timeframe:
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Community Development Department

IMPLEMENTATION



XI. IMPLEMENTING THE GENERAL PLAN

The process of implementing or carrying out the goals, policies and programs contained in the Soledad General Plan will require the completion of a series of steps. The implementation process will begin with the formal adoption of the plan itself by the City Council after completion and certification of an environmental impact report (EIR) and the recommendation of the Planning Commission. The EIR will identify the environmental consequences that will likely result if further land use and development occurs in Soledad as envisioned by the General Plan. The next step will be for the City to initiate amendments to its zoning ordinance and zoning map to incorporate the changes outlined in the plan.

At the conclusion of this process, the plan will be carried out through the review and approval of specific plans for the major new growth areas and through residential subdivisions and commercial or industrial development in accordance with the goals, policies and programs of the plan. The establishment of new public services, facilities, and infrastructure as recommended by the plan are also important in realizing the goals of the plan. Table XI-1 summarizes the important steps toward implementation.

The plan also identifies a number of desirable objectives to be achieved in the next five years and the next ten years. These objectives are summarized in Table X-1 and include [to be decided by City Council]. These objectives represent measurable milestones by which the success of the plan can be periodically evaluated. Following Table X-1 is an implementation timeline for each program, including the responsible department/agency.

INTERPRETING THE GENERAL PLAN

The entire text of this document and the Land Use Diagram (Figure II-9), Circulation Diagram (Figure V-2) and other maps which accompany it constitute the Soledad General Plan. Rezoning of parcels to a higher intensity of use consistent with the land use designation on the Land Use Diagram will require that an appropriate application be filed with the City Community Development Department. This will ensure that the proposal can be reviewed and appropriately conditioned so as to carry out the overall purposes and intent of this plan, and to preserve, protect and perpetuate the existing scale, design and small town character of Soledad.

The wide range and complexity of subject matter covered by the General Plan is certain to generate questions of interpretation. As questions arise, the City Community Development Department can interpret the Plan and/or refer the matter to the Planning Commission. Interpretations made by the Planning Commission may be appealed to the City Council.

The word "general" is key to understanding the nature of the plan's policies and programs. It implies overall agreement on major issues without a straight-jacket of inflexibility; it implies variation and encourages innovation while working toward the achievement of common goals; and it implies the need for adjustment of policies and proposals as changing conditions may dictate. While not inflexible, neither is the plan to be viewed as totally malleable so as to accommodate whatever position or policy may be sought through interpretation.

A properly administered general plan demands that the rule of "reasonableness" be applied to permit flexibility, variation and adjustment as long as the integrity of basic policies and proposals is maintained.

ACHIEVING ZONING CONSISTENCY WITH THE GENERAL PLAN

State law requires the City's zoning ordinance and zone map be consistent with the policies and programs of the General Plan. In order to fulfill these requirements and give the town the types of zoning districts and procedural regulations needed, a high priority of the City after adoption of the plan will be to revise its zone map and any amendments to the ordinance necessary to fully carry out the provisions of the General Plan.

AMENDMENT OF THE CITY'S SPHERE OF INFLUENCE AND ANNEXATIONS TO THE CITY

The vision for the future of Soledad embodied in this General Plan will require amendments to the City's sphere of influence. The sphere will necessarily correspond to portions of the Land Use Diagram where services and facilities may be provided in a timely manner, consistent with the provisions of State law. Expansion of the sphere of influence requires approval of the Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo).

Accordingly, the land within the existing City limits is not sufficient to accommodate development to meet the needs of the City during the time-frame of the General Plan. Therefore, annexations to the City will be necessary in the future to achieve the overall intent of this plan. When evaluating the appropriateness of future annexations to the City, the following criteria should be considered:

1. The costs and capability of providing adequate public facilities and the levels of government services required.
2. The effects on adjacent areas, social and economic interests, and the governmental structure of the City.
3. Conformity with LAFCO policies which seek efficient patterns of urban development, including those that favor guiding urbanization away from existing sensitive resource areas and encourage the development of existing vacant lands within the existing urban area before allowing development outside the current boundaries.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND ANNUAL REPORT

The State Planning and Zoning Law (effective January 1, 1985), requires a systematic approach to General Plan implementation. Section 65400 of the Government Code requires the Community Development Department to investigate and recommend to the City Council

"...reasonable and practical means for implementing the General Plan or elements of the General Plan, so that it will serve as an effective guide for orderly growth and development, preservation and conservation of open space land and natural resources, and the efficient expenditure of public funds relating to the subjects addressed in the General Plan."

State law also requires the City Council to receive an annual report on the status of the General Plan and progress toward its implementation. This requirement seeks to avoid the often fragmented and incomplete attention to plan implementation that has characterized the actions of some cities and counties. The most common implementation practices have been to respond to requests for plan amendments and zoning applications, to prepare a capital improvement program, and to undertake special projects as desired. To assist in the ongoing monitoring of the plan's implementation, Table X-1 sets forth a series of objectives by which the success of the plan can be assessed.

AMENDMENTS AND UPDATES

State law allows the General Plan to be amended four times per calendar year. Individual amendments may be initiated by the public, as for a specific development project, or by staff, the Planning Commission or City Council. The Planning Commission must review and make a recommendation to the City Council on all proposed changes to the General Plan. The City Council must decide all General Plan amendments, which are also subject to compliance with the relevant provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

To respond to change and to continue to adequately address the needs of the residents of Soledad, a comprehensive revision or update of the General Plan may be needed from time to time. Although State law does not set a specific time frame for such a comprehensive update (except for the Housing Element, which must be updated at least every five years), the objectives of the Plan should be reviewed annually to determine the progress toward achievement of the goals described therein.

IMPLEMENTATION GOALS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goal

1. To provide for the ongoing administration and implementation of the General Plan.

Policies

- I-1 The City shall periodically review and update the General Plan when necessary to meet the changing needs of the community.

- I-2. In accordance with State law, the General Plan shall be amended no more than four times per calendar year. Each amendment may include more than one change to the Plan.
- I-3 The City shall review and amend as necessary the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance and other applicable development regulations to ensure continued consistency with the General Plan.
- I-4 The City will endeavor to fund City government staffing and programs at levels sufficient o carry out the goals, policies and programs of the General Plan.

Programs

- 11.1 The Planning Commission shall review the General Plan annually and report to the City Council on actions undertaken to carry out the implementation programs of the Plan. The Commission's report shall include, as the Commission deems appropriate, recommendations for amendments to the General Plan. This review shall also be used to satisfy the requirements of Public Resources Code Section 21081.6 (CEQA) that requires a mitigation monitoring program.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department,
Police Department Building Department
Timeframe: Ongoing
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Community Development Department

- 11.2 The City shall review and amend as necessary the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance and other applicable development regulations to ensure continued consistency with the General Plan.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development Department,
Code Enforcement Department
Timeframe: Ongoing
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Community Development Department

- 11.3 The City will endeavor to fund City government staffing and programs at levels sufficient to carry out the goals, policies and programs of the General Plan.

Responsible Agency/Department: Administration
Timeframe: Ongoing
Funding: General fund
Monitoring: Community Development Department

**Table XI-1
Summary Implementation Schedule/5-year and
10 Year Objectives**

Program	Time Frame			
	Within 1 Year	Within 5 Years	Within 10 Years	Ongoing
Sphere of influence amendment	T			
Revisions to Zoning Ordinance consistent with revised land use plan	T			
Subdivision Ordinance amendments consistent with general plan policies	T			
Housing Element update	T			
Annexation of Section 16		T		
Annexation of north commercial area (Braga)	T			
Wastewater treatment plant expansion		T		
Water well system expansion				T
Revised road standards	T			
Public Facilities Master Plan	T			
Capital Improvements Program	T			

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A
BACKGROUND AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING REPORT

{Printed as a separate Document}

APPENDIX B

STANDARDS FOR SPECIFIC PLANS

The Land Use Diagram (Figure II-9) designates land within the City's sphere of influence and outside the current City limits as *Expansion Area/Specific Plan Required*. The Expansion Areas are further divided into sub-areas where a specific plan will be required prior to annexation and development. The Land Use Element provides general descriptions and development goals for each specific plan area and conceptual illustrations for how these areas might be developed to achieve the City's overall land use objectives.

Each specific plan shall be prepared in accordance with the provisions of Government Code Section 65451, and shall address the following:

1. *The distribution, location, extent and the uses of land, including open space, within the area covered by the plan.*
2. *The proposed distribution, location, extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the plan.*
3. *Standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, where applicable.*
4. *A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures to carry out 1., 2. and 3., above.*

In addition to the requirements described above, all specific plans shall be planned and designed to carry out the objectives, standards and design principles described below. The intent of these principles is to guide the preparation of specific plans to create neighborhoods that are pedestrian friendly, have a distinct identity and provide convenient access to services and adjoining neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Design and Land Use

1. New residential projects should be designed to integrate with existing neighborhoods. Subdivisions in City expansion areas should be designed so that individual, separately developed projects work together to create true neighborhoods with a sense of identity, instead of disjointed or isolated enclaves.
2. Higher-density residential uses and appropriate support services should be concentrated along segments of the transportation system with good road connections to the remainder of the City.
3. The ground floor of each non-residential structure shall be limited to pedestrian-oriented uses. These may include walk-in uses such as restaurants, retail stores,

health/fitness facilities, personal services, community service organizations, and similar uses. To encourage visual continuity and pedestrian activity, at least 60 percent of the total street frontage ground floor length of any new or reconstructed building shall be differentiated architecturally by recessed windows and entries, display windows, offset surfaces, differentiated piers and columns, offset planes, textured materials, awnings, and compatibility landscaping or other details, or other displays which are of interest to pedestrians.

4. Concentrations of medium- and high-density residential uses and higher intensities of non-residential uses should be provided within one-quarter mile of transit stops and/or neighborhood serving commercial centers. Multi-family development shall be integrated with surrounding single family residential development in form, scale and architectural character and should be considered for construction concurrently or in advance of single family residential products.
5. Specific plans should support the development of integrated mixed-use areas by mixing residential, neighborhood retail, open space, and public uses while making it possible to travel by transit, bicycle, or foot, as well as by automobile. One way to achieve this objective is through the design of 'neo-traditional' neighborhoods as illustrated by Figure A-1.
6. Adequate buffers should be provided between residential and incompatible non-residential land uses.
7. Specific plans should incorporate design elements, building forms, colors and materials that recall traditional patterns as described in the Community Design Guidelines as they may be adopted by the City Council.
8. Residential developments that appear as continuous walled-off areas, disconnected and isolated from the rest of the community shall be discouraged where alternate scenarios are feasible. While walls and fences may be useful for security, sound attenuation and privacy, these objectives can often be met by creative design that controls the height and length of walls, develops breaks and variations in relief, and uses landscaping, along with natural topographical changes, for screening.
9. Specific plans should provide a range of residential housing types affordable to the widest range of income groups, consistent with the goals, policies and programs of the Housing Element of the General Plan.
10. Specific plan areas should be planned where feasible to help to achieve a jobs/housing balance within the City.

11. Specific plans shall be designed to address all of the following land use standards:

Table B-1
Land Use Standards for Specific Plans

Land Use	Standard
Low density residential ¹	1-6 du/gross acre
Medium density residential ¹	7- 12 du/gross acre, minimum of 10% of all housing products
Multi-family residential ¹	12-20 du/gross acre, minimum 15% of all housing products
Neighborhood commercial	Max. 1 acre per 500 dwelling units
Open space ²	Min. 10% of gross area of project site
Park sites	5 acres/1000 projected residents of project
School sites	As determined by the City Council in conjunction with the Soledad Union School District.
Public facilities (roads, drainage, sewer, water,others)	As determined by the City Council in conjunction with the applicable service provider.

Notes:

1. Includes specialized housing such as rest homes, senior housing, etc.
2. May include buffers between urban development and incompatible land uses.

Streets and Circulation

12. New public streets and sidewalks should be aligned with, and be connected to those of adjacent developments to interconnect the community and simplify traffic circulation patterns.
13. The use of multiple collector streets shall be favored over the development of arterial streets in new neighborhoods.
14. Blocks should generally not be more than 520 feet long, except along non-access frontages.
15. Subdivision design should emphasize pedestrian connectivity within each project, and to adjacent neighborhoods, and nearby schools and parks. All streets and walkways should be designed to provide safe and pleasant conditions for pedestrians. Streets within neighborhoods should be no wider than needed to accommodate parking and two low-speed travel lanes. Sidewalks in residential neighborhoods should be separated from curbs by parkway strips of at least four feet in width; and the parkways should be planted with canopy street trees.
16. The use of cul-de-sac streets should be minimized wherever possible. Where the use of cul-de-sacs is unavoidable, the end of each cul-de-sac should be provided a pedestrian walkway between private parcels to provide linkages

- to adjacent cul-de-sacs, streets, and/or parks, schools, or open space areas provided that public safety, security and vandalism issues are adequately addressed.
17. Specific plans should provide a bicycle path and pedestrian walkway network to link public facilities, housing, and neighborhood-serving commercial centers.
 18. Specific plans shall be designed to accommodate public transit.
 19. Roundabouts, neckdowns/bulbouts and other traffic calming strategies shall be employed as an alternative to conventional intersection controls, where feasible.

Parks, Open Space and Natural Features

20. New subdivisions adjacent to planned or existing parks or other public open spaces, or the landscaped grounds of schools or other public facilities should maximize visibility and pedestrian access to these areas. Where these facilities are not already planned, the subdivision should be designed to provide usable public open spaces in the form of parks, linear bicycle and pedestrian trails, squares, and greens, as appropriate.
21. Parks and open space shall be provided as required by the standards contained in the Parks and Recreation Element. Specific plans shall incorporate the widest range of park types (mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, or regional parks) as provided in the Parks and Recreation Element. Linear parks shall be provided adjacent to drainage areas or sensitive habitat areas and shall incorporate pedestrian, bicycle and/or equestrian trails as provided in the standards of the Parks and Recreation Element.
22. Natural amenities (such as views, mature trees, rock outcrops, and similar features) should be preserved and incorporated into proposed development to the greatest extent feasible. The clustering of units in hillside areas is encouraged as a means of achieving this goal.
23. Public access and visibility to drainage features, and the separation of residences and other uses from such features should be provided through the use of single-loaded frontage roads in combination with multi-use trails. Pedestrian access to and along creeks and other drainage features may need to be restricted to flatter areas (e.g. beyond top of bank, natural benches) where grading needs and erosion potential are minimal, and where sensitive environmental resources require protection.

Public Services

24. Specific plans shall be designed and constructed to provide all public infrastructure, facilities, and services needed to serve both initial and buildout populations of the plan area, including, but not limited to: adequate sewer, water and storm drain capacity, distribution and collection systems; public

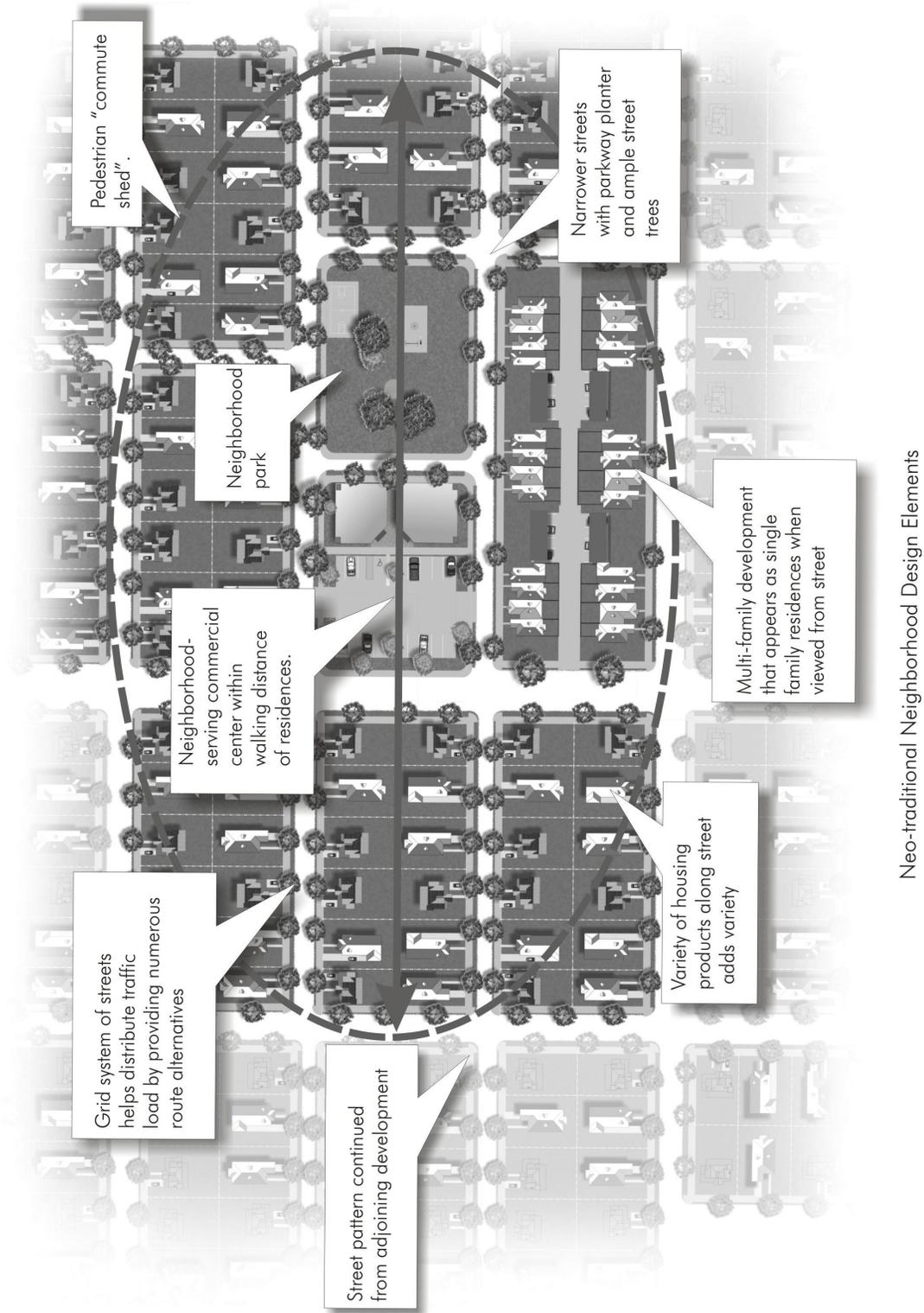
- utilities; police and fire protection and emergency services and sub-stations; schools; and public transportation.
25. Specific plans for new expansion areas shall include a fiscal impact analysis that documents the cost of providing and maintaining public services to the project.

Specific Plan Contents

26. Specific plans shall generally include the following information (not necessarily in the order presented):
- I. **Introduction.** The introduction should briefly describe the objectives to be achieved by the project, the timeframe for its implementation, and how it meets the purpose and intent of the Soledad General Plan.
 - II. **Overview of Existing Conditions.** This chapter should discuss the existing environmental setting (topography, drainage, biological resources, etc.), as well as infrastructure (water, sewer, drainage, etc.) serving the project site.
 - III. **Development Plan.** This chapter should describe how the project will be developed, subdivided, etc., to meet the objectives described in the introduction. The development plan need not be precise, but should include the following:
 - a. Land use plan. The proposed land use and zoning designations should be described in detail, along with the development standards and allowable land uses intended for each. The land use plan should be quantitative and include the total acreage and numbers of dwelling units for each phase of the project.
 - b. A preliminary subdivision design showing proposed lotting pattern, lot sizes, streets, etc.
 - c. A preliminary grading and drainage plan.
 - d. A preliminary landscaping plan
 - e. A preliminary infrastructure and services plan that describes how all required public services will be provided, including a discussion of the size, location, timing and maintenance funding of the extension of various services and facilities for each phase of the project. Financing mechanisms, where applicable, should be described.
 - f. Illustrated design guidelines for each type of land use proposed. The guidelines should address (where applicable) site design, architecture, parking lots and driveways, landscaping, signage (as appropriate) and streets and street furniture.

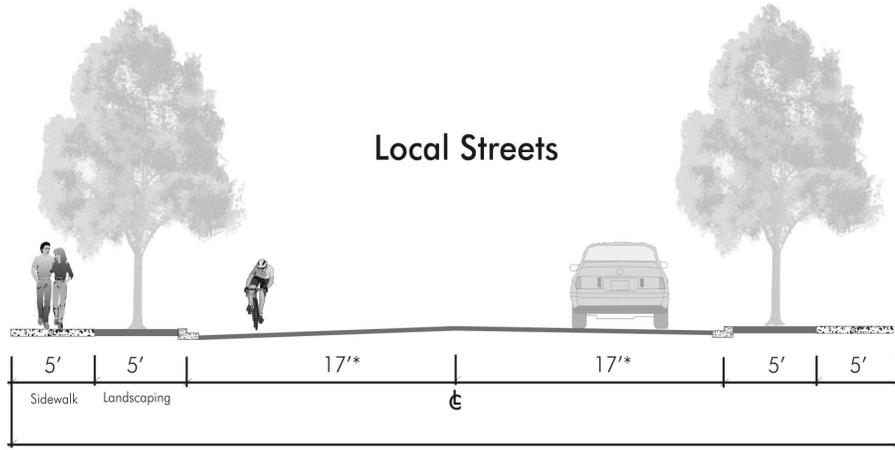
IV. Bibliography and Sources

Figure A-1: Neo-traditional Neighborhood



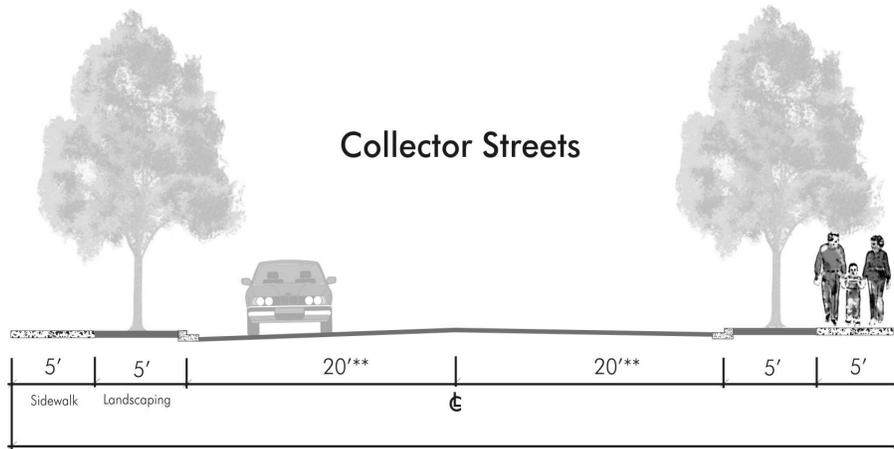
APPENDIX C

Local Streets



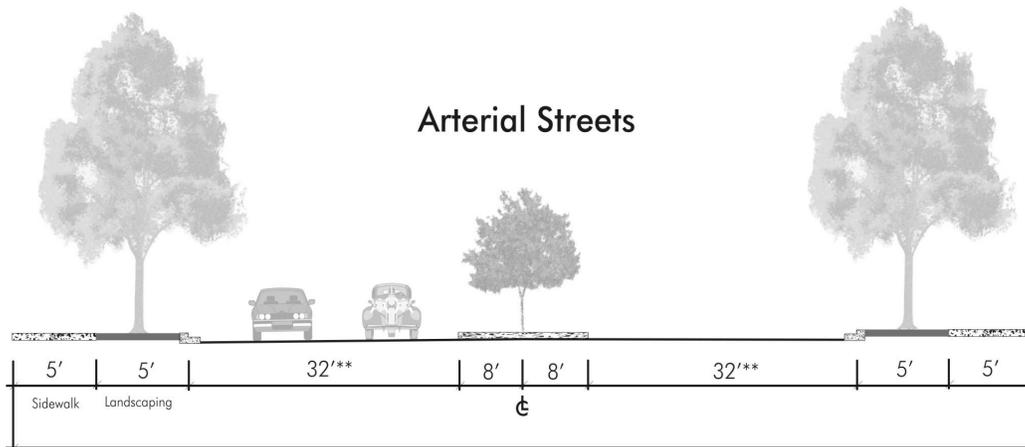
* Without bike lane 54'

Collector Streets



** Add 5 feet if bike lane is provided 60'

Arterial Streets



** Add 5 feet if bike lane is provided 100'

APPENDIX D

BIKE SYSTEM STANDARDS AND DEFINITIONS

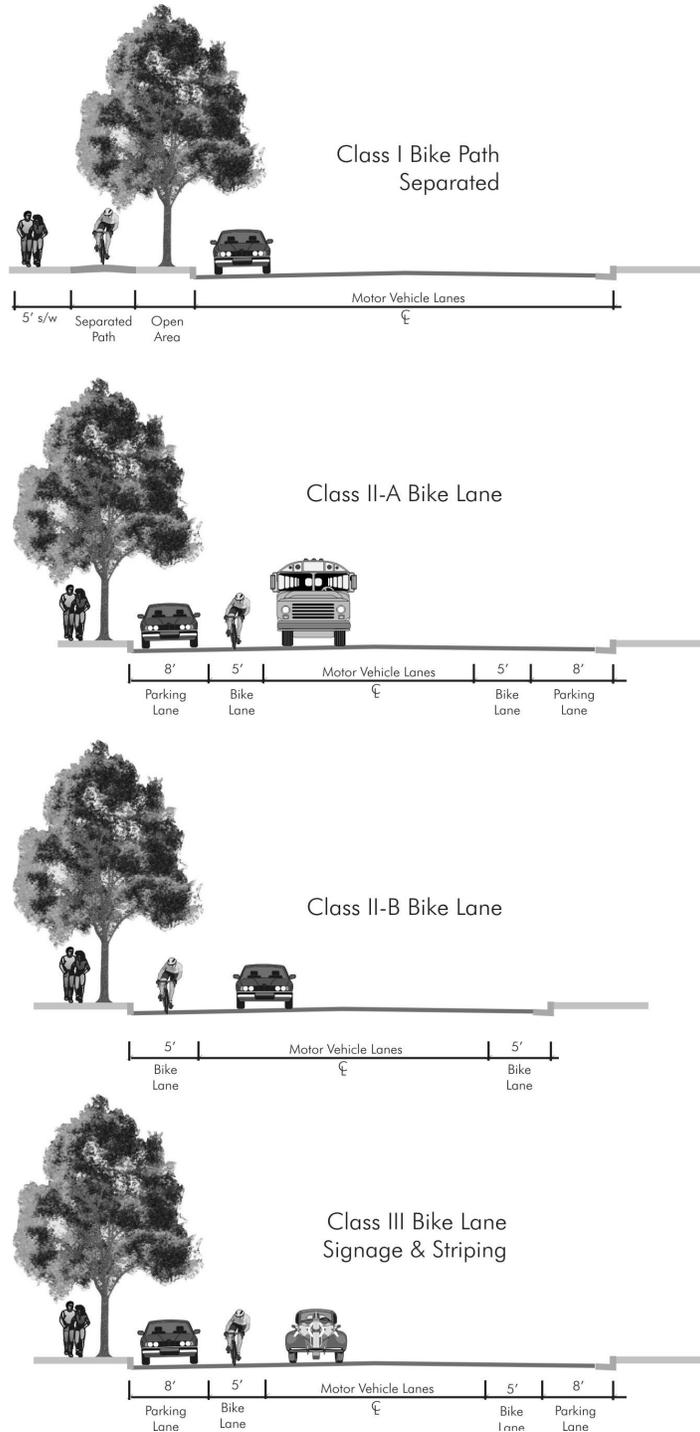


Figure D-1: Bikeway Classifications

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