

MEMORANDUM

DATE June 11, 2021
TO City Council
FROM The General Plan Team (City of Hollister, PlaceWorks, BAE, Kimley-Horn, and Todd Bressi)
SUBJECT Executive Summary of the General Plan Subcommittee Policy Recommendations

This document presents policy recommendations from the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) and Planning Commission for the General Plan Update. The Planning Commission's suggested edits are shown in strikethrough and underline. For additional background information about these topics please refer to the memorandum titled "General Plan Subcommittee and Planning Commission Policy Recommendations."

1. Parks and Recreation

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policies be developed to address parks and recreation:

- Increase the standard for parkland provision by new developments from 4 acres of park space per 1,000 persons to 5 acres of park space per 1,000 persons.
- Require that any private parks and open space that is counted toward the City's park and open space requirement be publicly accessible.
- Prioritize the implementation of the recommendations from the 2018 Draft Hollister Parks Master Plan to complete the suggested improvements,
- Develop a Trail Master Plan which should include a gap-analysis study of existing parks, trails, and open spaces in Hollister to help ensure future improvements prioritize access and equity.

2. New School Funding

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policies be developed to address new school funding:

- Grant additional density, more flexible setbacks and building heights, and/or reduced parking requirements for projects that voluntarily provide additional school funding.
- Require the preparation of a Specific Plan, [Financing Plan or other similar document as a pre-condition for annexation or redesignation of land for new urban use. The plan shall identify means to ensure adequate funding to support construction of all needed public facilities, including water, sewer, storm drainage, roads, sidewalks,](#)

~~[parks, and public schools](#) that includes adequate voluntary developer funding as a pre-condition for development in new development areas. This would ensure that the City and other public agencies could collect needed funds even if it exceeds what is already exacted.~~

3. Farmland Mitigation

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policies be developed to support agricultural mitigation:

- Require two acres of agricultural land be preserved for each acre of farmland converted (2:1 ratio).
- Establish the City as the agricultural mitigation enforcement agency, but assign management responsibilities to a conservation organization.
- Require agricultural mitigation for land classified as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

4. Sensitive Habitats

Recommendation(s)

At the March 23, 2021 GPAC Meeting, the GPAC recommended pursuing a policy option that would “Prohibit development within all designated Critical Habitat areas and within a buffer area around such areas.” However, after the March 23 GPAC meeting, the United States Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) Service submitted a letter with recommendations about how to protect critical habitat in the Hollister vicinity (see Attachment 3). The General Plan team recommends the Planning Commission and City Council consider the USFWS recommendations in place of the policy options originally presented to the GPAC:

- Require a qualified biologist evaluate the potential for protected biological resources for proposed projects on sites that may support these species.
- Avoid development in areas with high quality habitat. High quality habitat includes sites with known species occupants, presence of breeding habitat, larger area of suitable habitat, and the absence of nearby development.

5. Heritage Trees

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policies be developed to support heritage trees:

- Add a new policy to generally protect and preserve heritage trees.
- Specify the requirements for removal, pruning, and trimming of heritage trees.
- Identify heritage tree protection measures during construction.

- Define heritage trees as those trees, exclusive of eucalyptus, with a trunk circumference of 60 inches measured at 24 inches above ground level.

6. Economic Development

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policies be developed to support general economic development to retain existing businesses and increase business expansion and attraction:

- Ensure economic development is a critical function and focus of City staff under the guidance of the City Manager and other executive positions. This includes implementing economic development programs, assisting with business attraction and retention, and initiating other economic development strategies.
- Improve the collaboration between the City and local and regional stakeholder organizations.
- Collaborate with local and regional education institutions to increase the skills and expertise of the local workforce.
- Improve the collaboration between existing industrial users and City staff to ensure existing needs are being met and potential expansion efforts are supported.
- Maintain a database of available commercial and industrial land and prioritize sites based on evaluation of site characteristics and suitability to accommodate future development. Target high-priority sites for City-led efforts that can help to make them shovel ready for development.
- Upgrade City infrastructure in specific areas of Hollister (e.g., roads, sewer, water, broadband internet, etc.) to support business expansion and attraction to Hollister.
- Ensure that economic development policies and procedures are responsive and resilient to the needs created by natural disasters and pandemics.
- Periodically evaluate the City's economic development performance and update/adjust policies and actions accordingly.

7. Retail Leakage

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policies be developed to address retail leakage:

- Actively market existing vacant retail land and spaces to potential retail businesses and other active uses.
- Create a summary of the demographic and economic characteristics required by retailers and food service businesses to locate within Hollister (i.e., population densities, projected housing growth, household incomes, etc.) and include strategies

to make Hollister a more appealing location for these business types. Use this summary and strategies to help attract potential retailers that would best serve Hollister’s demographic and economic conditions.

- Encourage proposed projects in the Downtown to incorporate experiential retail and entertainment opportunities to bolster Downtown as a regional destination that is the cultural and social center of the community.
- Reduce the number of inactive storefronts within Downtown to improve the pedestrian environment by requiring proposed projects to include ground-floor uses, such as retail businesses or lobbies, to activate the street front.
- Create a City-funded program to improve the condition of existing downtown buildings (e.g., façade improvements, infrastructure upgrades, etc.).
- Prioritize mixed use development and the rehabilitation and redevelopment of existing retail and mixed-use buildings within the West Gateway District.
- Prioritize Downtown infrastructure upgrades to support rehabilitation and redevelopment of retail and mixed-use buildings within the downtown.
- Study the feasibility of constructing an additional Downtown parking structure to accommodate future mixed-use development.
- Conduct a study to identify strategies to improve the utilization of existing Downtown parking.

8. Job Creation

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policies be developed to address job creation:

- Identify and market the city to potential businesses interested in locating in Hollister (e.g., formalize marketing materials, attend conferences, etc.).
- Improve the collaboration between the City and existing Hollister businesses to better understand business needs (e.g., conduct a business survey, direct outreach to businesses, attend stakeholder organization meetings, etc.).

9. Tourism

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policies be developed to address tourism:

- Identify and address any gaps in the existing tourism market in San Benito County (e.g., regional sporting events, additional outdoor amenities, etc.).

- Create a unique brand and identity for the City of Hollister as a tourism and visitor destination.
- Incentivize regional agricultural-related producers (e.g., fresh food, wine producers, etc.) to open brick-and-mortar retail establishments in Hollister through outreach, permit streamlining, financial assistance, and other incentives.
- To attract visitor and tourism spending, use improved signage directed at travelers on Highways 25 and 156 as well as other investments and policies to highlight Hollister destinations, with a focus on Downtown.
- Increase the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) rate as a mechanism to raise revenues that can be directed specifically to tourism marketing, promotion, and programming (e.g., special events that attract visitors).
- Continue to collaborate with local tourism-oriented entities to increase visitor attraction.
- Continue to implement strategies to attract more hotel developments by updating and marketing the existing hotel incentive policy¹ and assessing whether existing zoning designations restrict hotel uses.
- Support the development of campgrounds and RV parks within the Planning Area.

10. Industrial Uses

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policies be developed to support industrial uses:

- Identify existing gaps within Hollister’s current industrial sector on an ongoing basis and work to attract industrial companies in these categories.
- Enhance and strengthen existing business clusters, such as manufacturing, construction, and agriculture.
- Create a cohesive plan or plans for the industrial and business parks throughout Hollister to improve the overall appearance and reputation of these job centers.
- Ensure a transparent and streamlined process for approving and permitting industrial development and building occupancy in the City.

¹ See the existing Hollister Hotel Incentive Program (HIP) at: <http://hollister.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/City-of-Hollister-Hotel-Incentive-Program-Res-2017-223-09-05-2017.pdf>.

11. Airport

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policies be developed to support the airport:

- Recruit potential aviation-related companies to locate on or near the airport property.
- Incentivize additional development of industrial and aviation-related uses on the airport property by undertaking infrastructure upgrades, streamlining the permitting process, or offering financial incentives through reduced impact fees or other mechanisms.
- Allocate City and other public funds to support additional upgrades and investments in airport facilities, such as adding fueling stations or constructing support buildings and additional hangars.
- Market the Hollister Airport as an amenity to existing and future businesses.

12. Complete Streets and Safe Routes to School

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policies be developed to support complete streets and safe routes to school:

- Support Infrastructure upgrades to improve the safety, convenience, and comfort of bicyclists, pedestrians, including students walking or biking to school by encouraging roadway improvements such as mid-block crosswalks, buffers between the sidewalks and major roadways, protected bike routes, timely pavement maintenance, adequate pedestrian crossing times, and installing bicycle parking.
- Promote transit-friendly street design by encouraging features such as bus stop shelters, streetlighting, and wayfinding.
- Promote wellness and safety education in local schools.
- Work with the local school districts to improve bicycle, pedestrian, and traffic flow around school sites.

13. Level of Service

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC made the following recommendation in regard to LOS:

- Maintain LOS C in most parts of the city with the following exception:
 - Establish LOS D at the following Downtown intersections:
 - 4th Street and Monterey Street

- 4th Street and San Benito Street
 - 4th Street and Sally Street
 - South Street and San Benito Street
- For all other Downtown intersections, do not apply an LOS standard. Figure 1 shows the area where this policy would apply.

Figure 1 Downtown Level of Service Policy Boundary

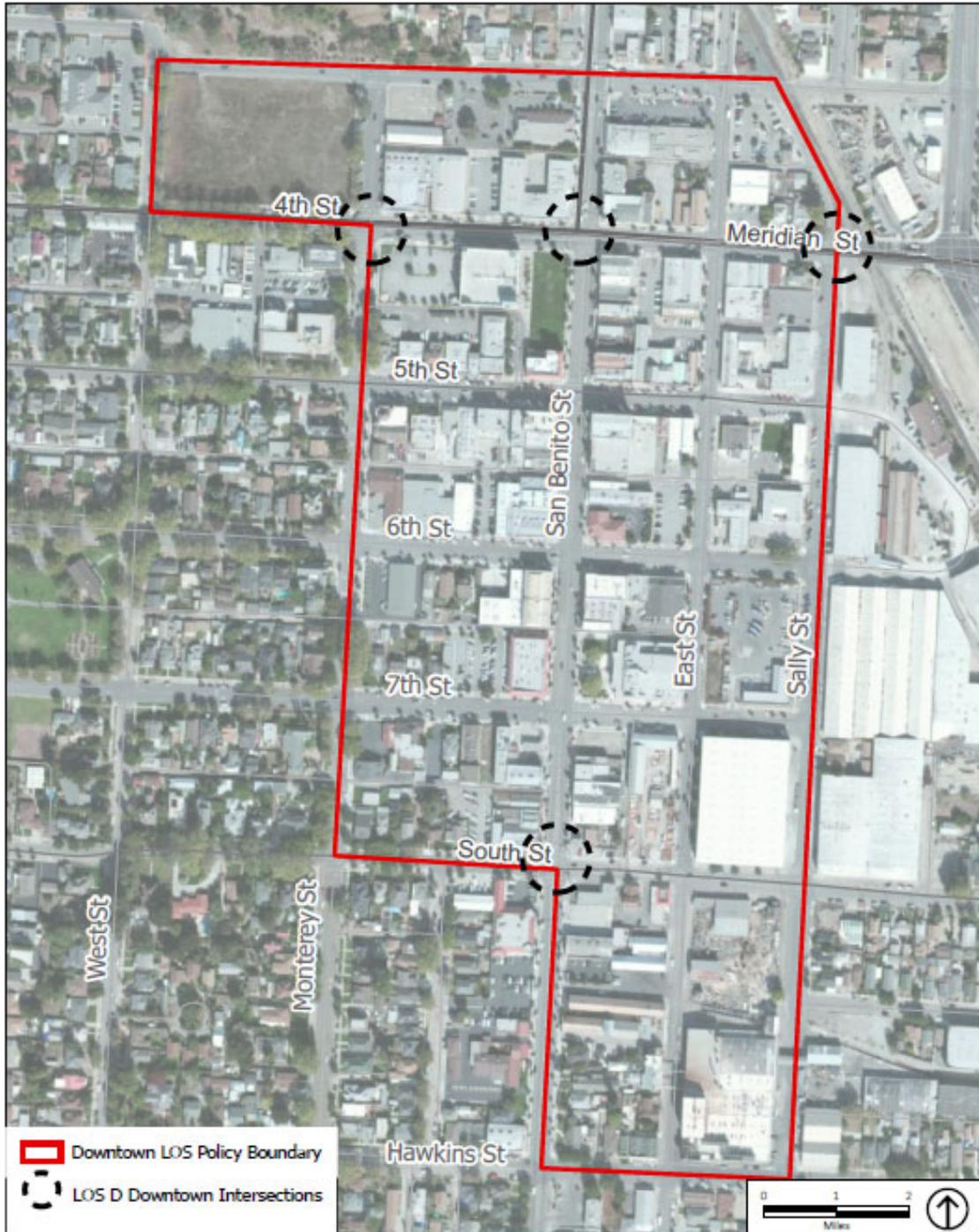
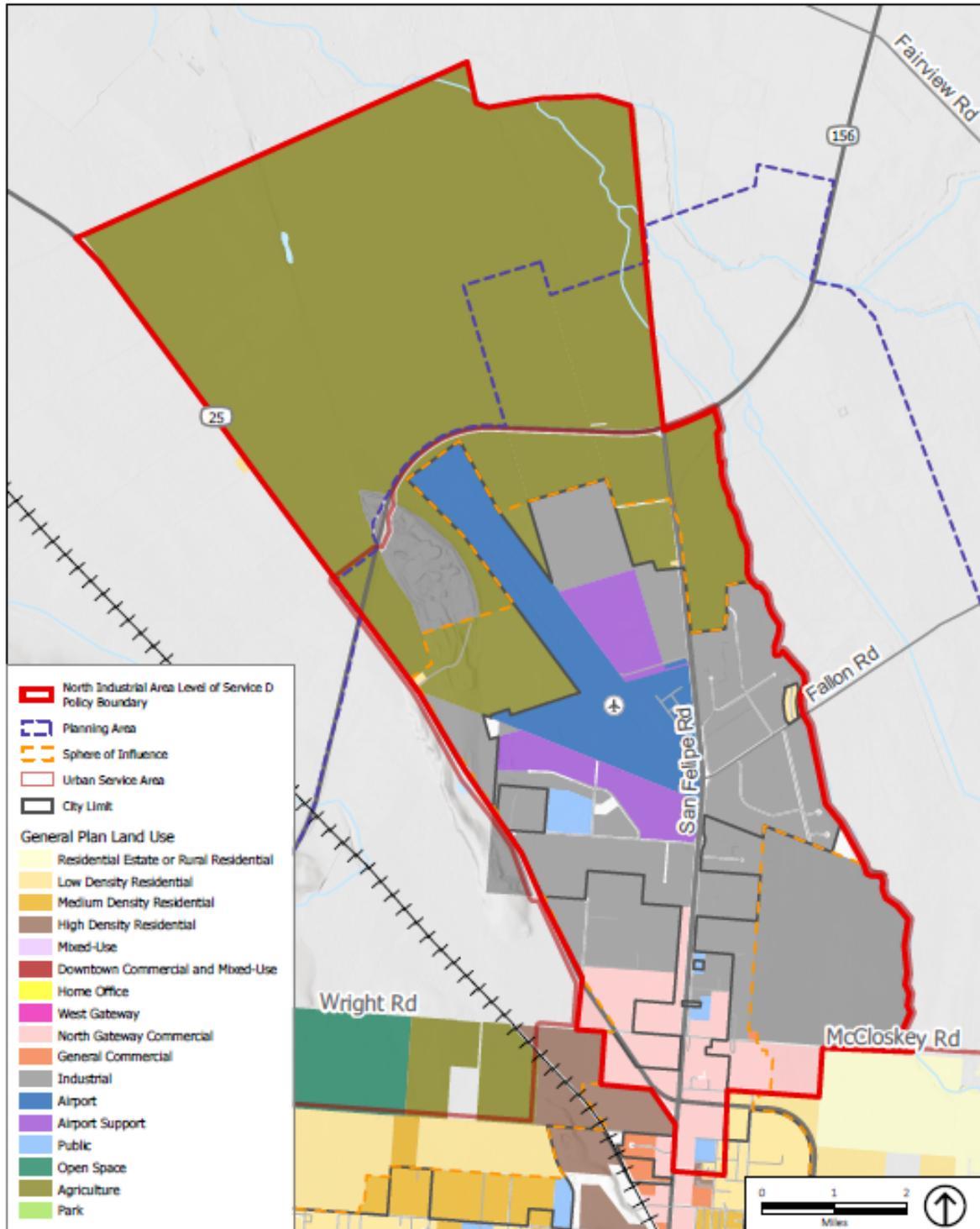


Figure 2 Industrial Area Level of Service Policy Boundary



Source: ESRI, 2020; PlaceWorks, 2020; San Benito County, 2020; USGS, 2019

14. Roundabouts

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policy be developed to support roundabouts:

- Encourage the use of roundabouts at existing intersections with capacity, efficiency, or safety problems as feasible.

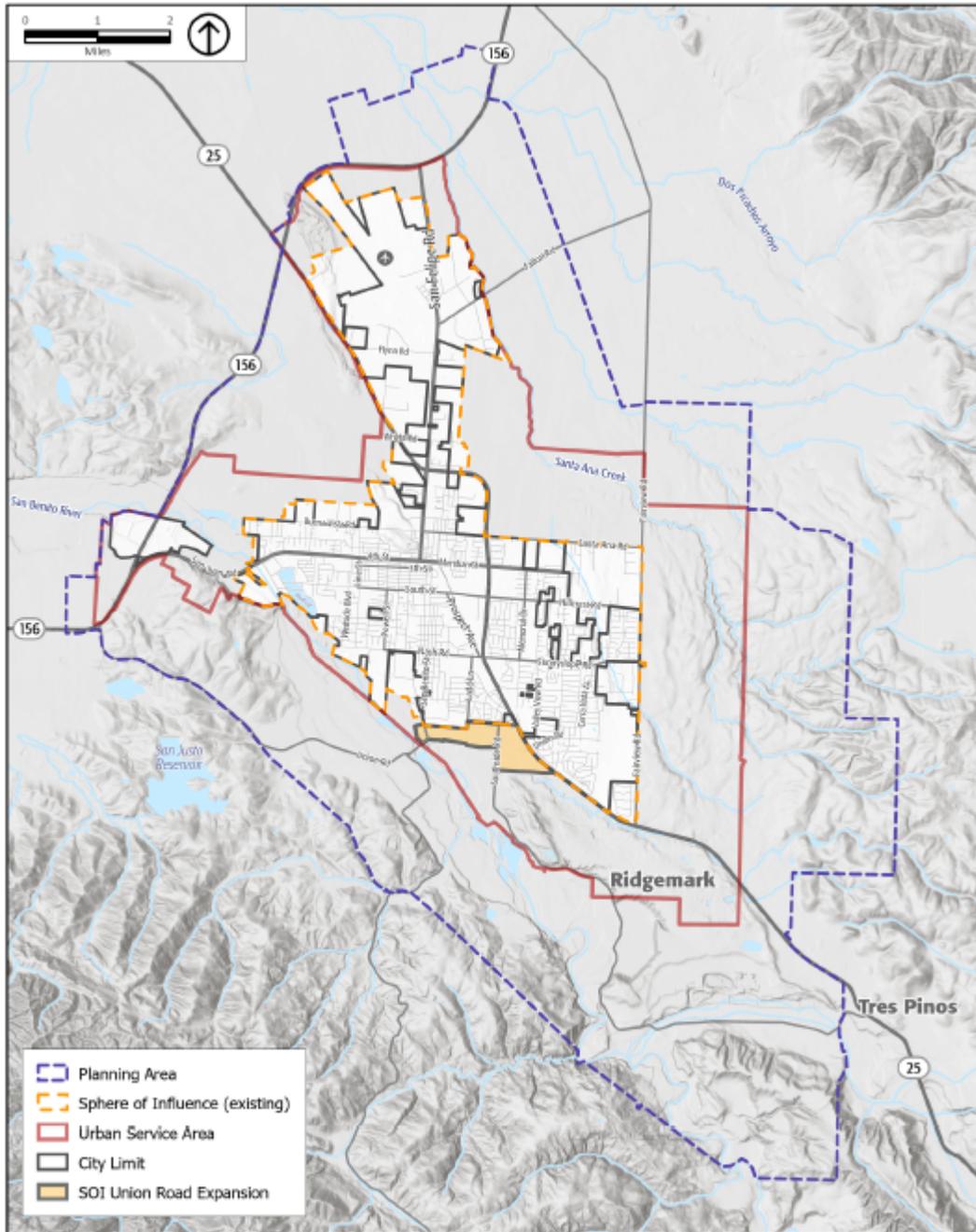
15. Growth Management

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policies be developed to manage growth and wastewater service in Hollister:

- Expand the SOI by roughly 190 acres in the Union Road Special Planning Area as shown in Figure 3.
- Require that wastewater treatment service and other City services only be extended to lands within the City Limits or areas of the SOI that are anticipated to be annexed by the City to be consistent with Government Code Section 56133(b) regarding the provision of services outside the City Limits but inside the SOI.
- Do not renew the 2016 MOU with SSCWD once the MOU expires.

Figure 3 GPAC Recommended Sphere of Influence



Source: ESRI, 2020; PlaceWorks, 2020; San Benito County, 2020; USGS, 2019

16. Special Planning Areas

GPAC Recommendation(s)

Buena Vista Road/North Gateway Special Planning Area

Figure 4 shows the GPAC recommendation for the Buena Vista Road/North Gateway Special Planning Area. The GPAC recommended that most of the existing General Plan Land Use designations within the City Limits be maintained with the following exceptions:

- Change the High Density Residential designation along the railroad corridor to Low Density Residential.
- Change parcels near the intersection of San Felipe Road and Highway 25 and near the intersection of Santa Ana Road and San Felipe Road from North Gateway Commercial to High Density Residential.

For parcels outside the City Limits, but within the SOI the GPAC made the following recommendation:

- Change some parcels along Buena Vista Road from Medium Density Residential to High Density Residential.

For parcels outside the SOI, the GPAC recommended that all parcels be designated as Agriculture.

Meridian Road Extension Special Planning Area

Figure 5 shows the GPAC recommendation for the Meridian Road Extension Special Planning Area which is entirely within the Sphere of Influence.

The GPAC made the following recommendations:

- To reflect the existing rural character of the area, designate additional parcels currently designated as Low Density Residential and Mixed Use to Residential Estate.
- Plan for the extension of Meridian Street₂ which would require a vehicular bridge crossing over an existing creek. Also₂ plan for the extension of Prater Street to Hillcrest Road. To maintain the rural character of this area and limit traffic speeds by adding a traffic [calming measures](#) at Prater Street and Meridian Street. [Traffic calming measures could include a traffic circle, narrowed right-of-way, or an offset configuration of the two Meridian Street segments at Prater Street](#)~~circle.~~

Union Road Special Planning Area

Figure 6 shows the GPAC recommendation for the Union Road Special Planning Area. This Special Planning Area is entirely outside the City Limits and Sphere of Influence. The GPAC recommendation includes:

- Require the creation of a Specific Plan for proposed projects within the Union Road Special Planning Area.
- Establish a policy to preserve elements of the existing orchards in the Union Road Special Planning Area [such as retaining a small group of trees as part of a proposed project's landscaping.](#)

- Change the area west of Southside Road and north of Union Road to Medium Density Residential from Low Density Residential. Maintain the Public designation of the Ladd Lane Elementary School.
- Change the area north of Union Road and east of Southside Road from Low Density Residential and Mixed Use to High Density Residential.
- Designate the area south of Union Road and east of Southside Road as Mixed Use.
- Designate the area south of Union Road and west of Southside Road as Agriculture. Note that this area does not currently have an existing General Plan Land Use designation.
- Expand the SOI to include the parcels with an urban land use designation.

Figure 4 Buena Vista Special Planning Area GPAC Recommendation

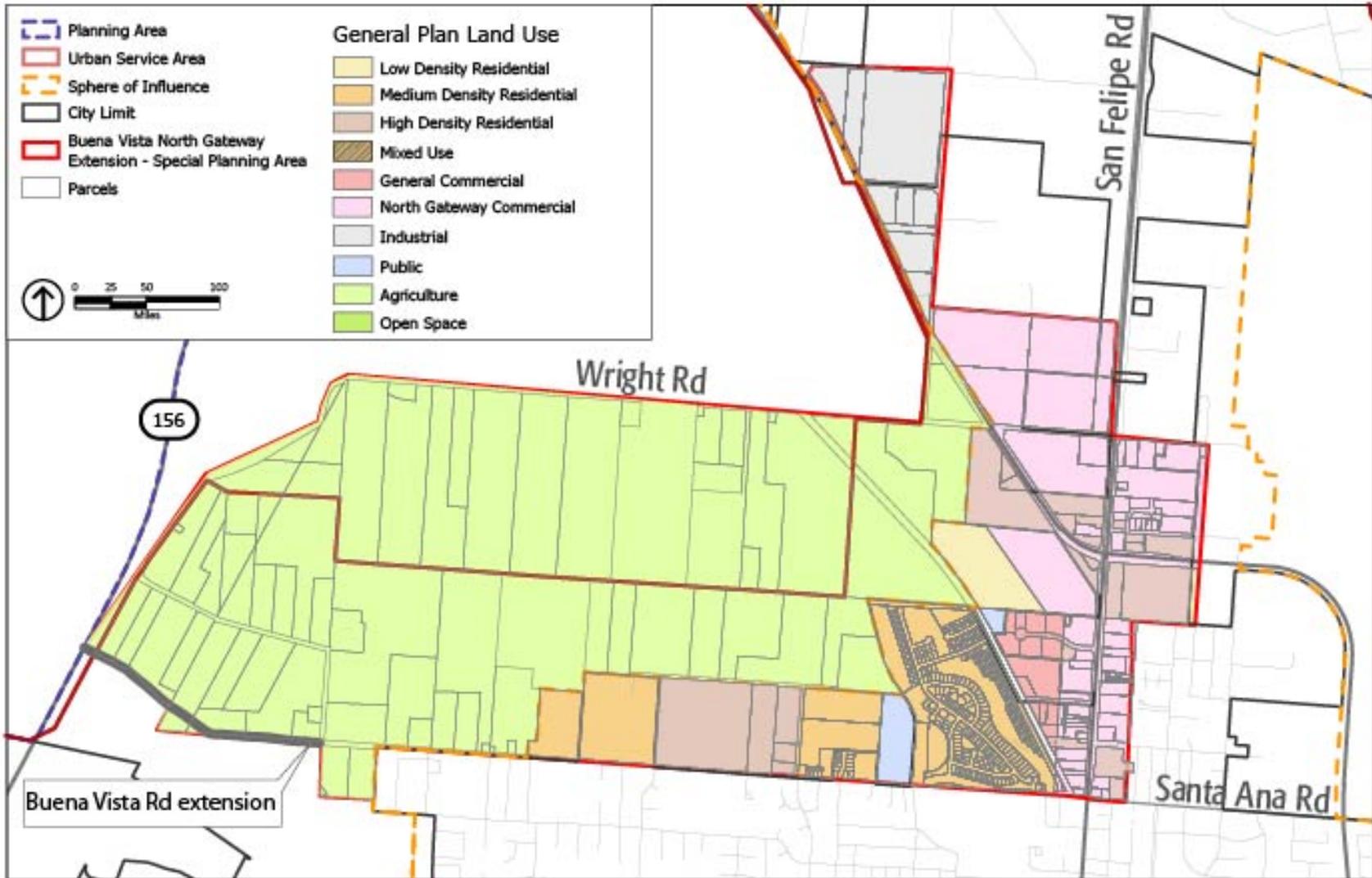


Figure 5 Meridian Road Special Planning Area GPAC Recommendation

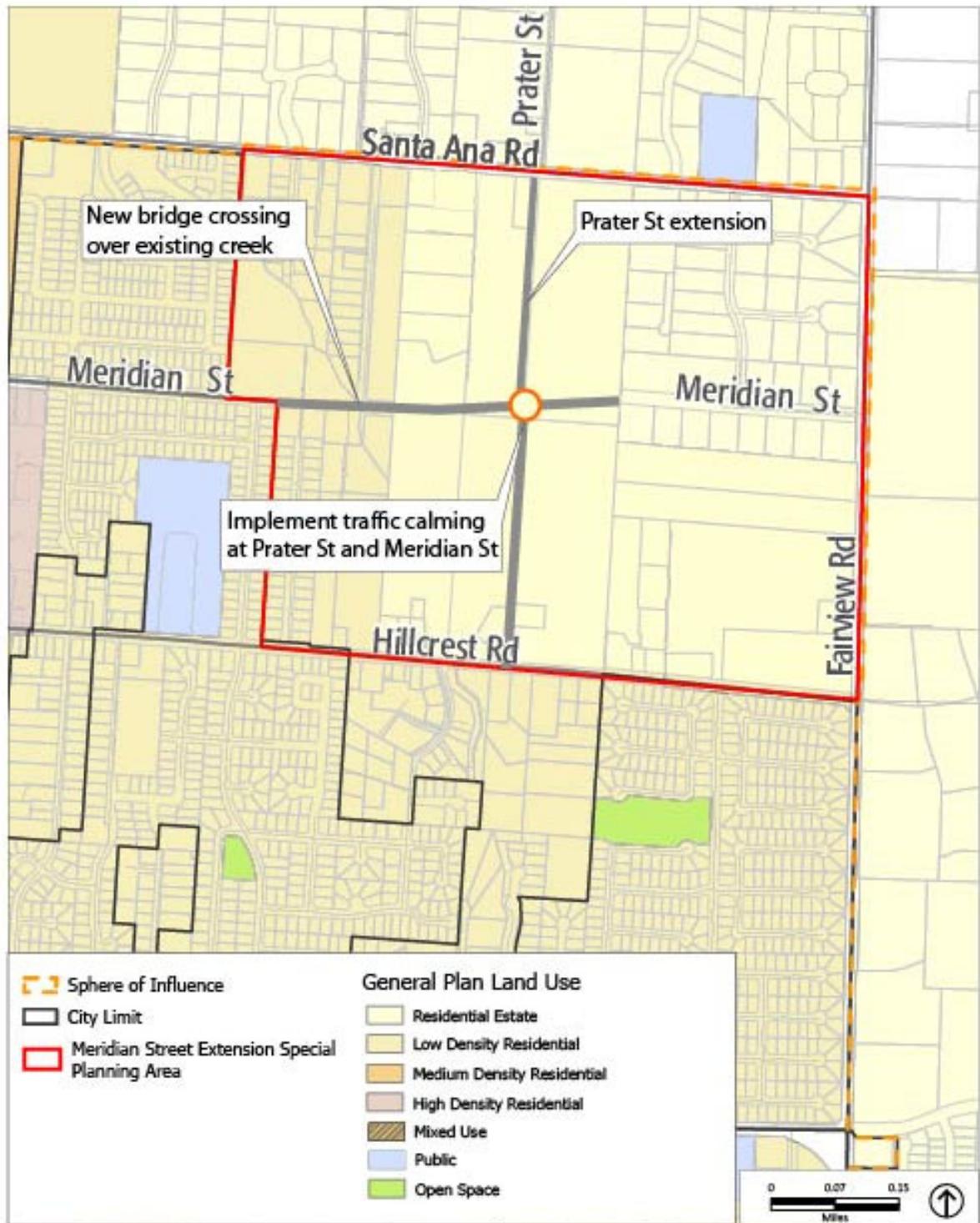
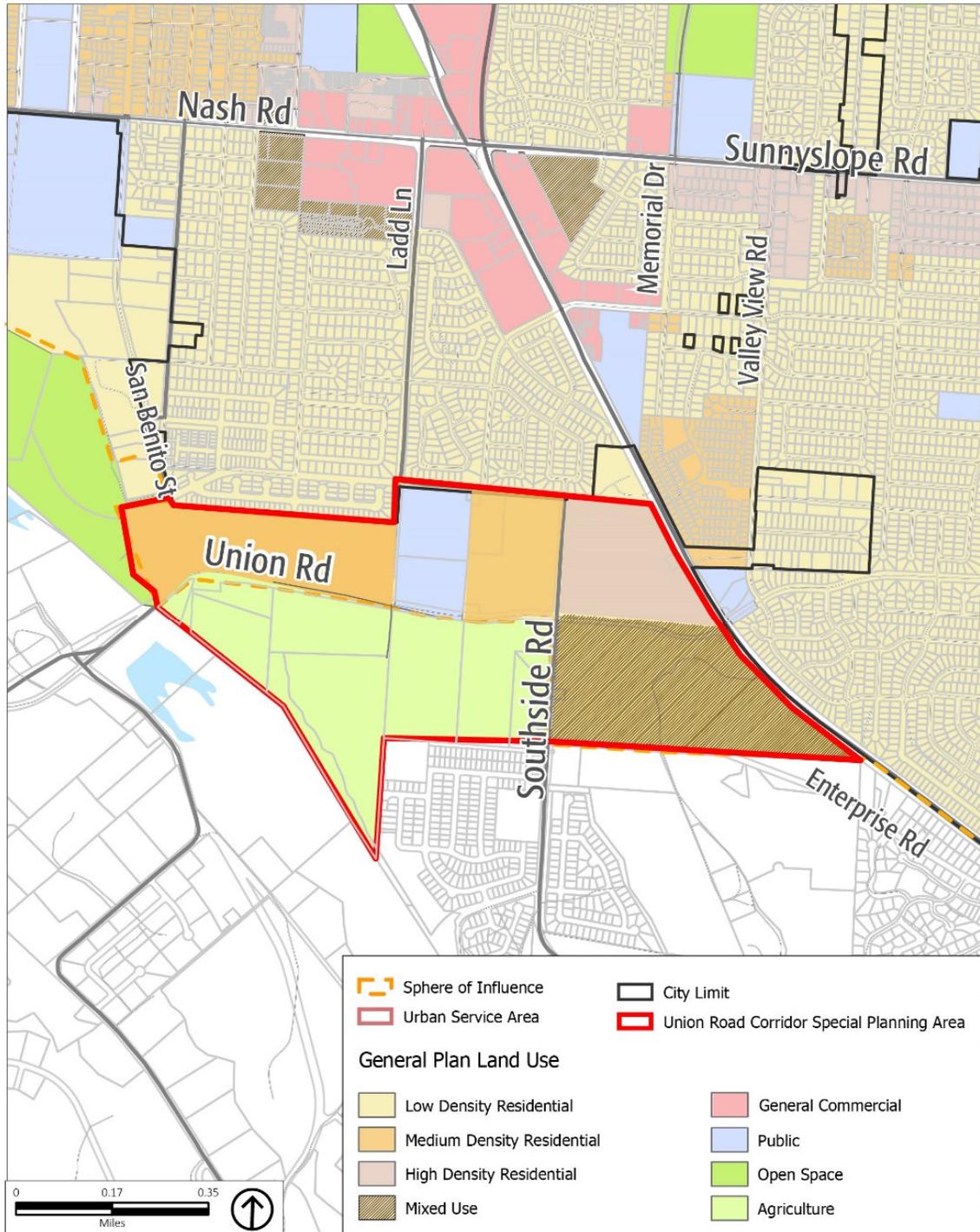


Figure 6 Union Road Special Planning Area GPAC Recommendation



17. Residential Land Use Designations

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policy recommendations:

- Base the residential density limits on gross acreage and maintain the existing residential density ranges.
- Create a new residential designation that specifies a minimum density of 20 du/ac. The GPAC recommended that these sites be spread throughout the city. Figure 7 shows the potential HDR sites. These sites are all vacant or underutilized parcels without proposed or planned development projects.²
- Increase the maximum density of the High Density Residential designation from 45 du/ac to 65 du/ac.
- Increase the maximum residential density in the Downtown from 35 du/ac to 125 du/ac.

18. Inclusionary Housing

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended establishing an inclusionary housing program that would apply to single-family and multi-family projects with the following parameters:

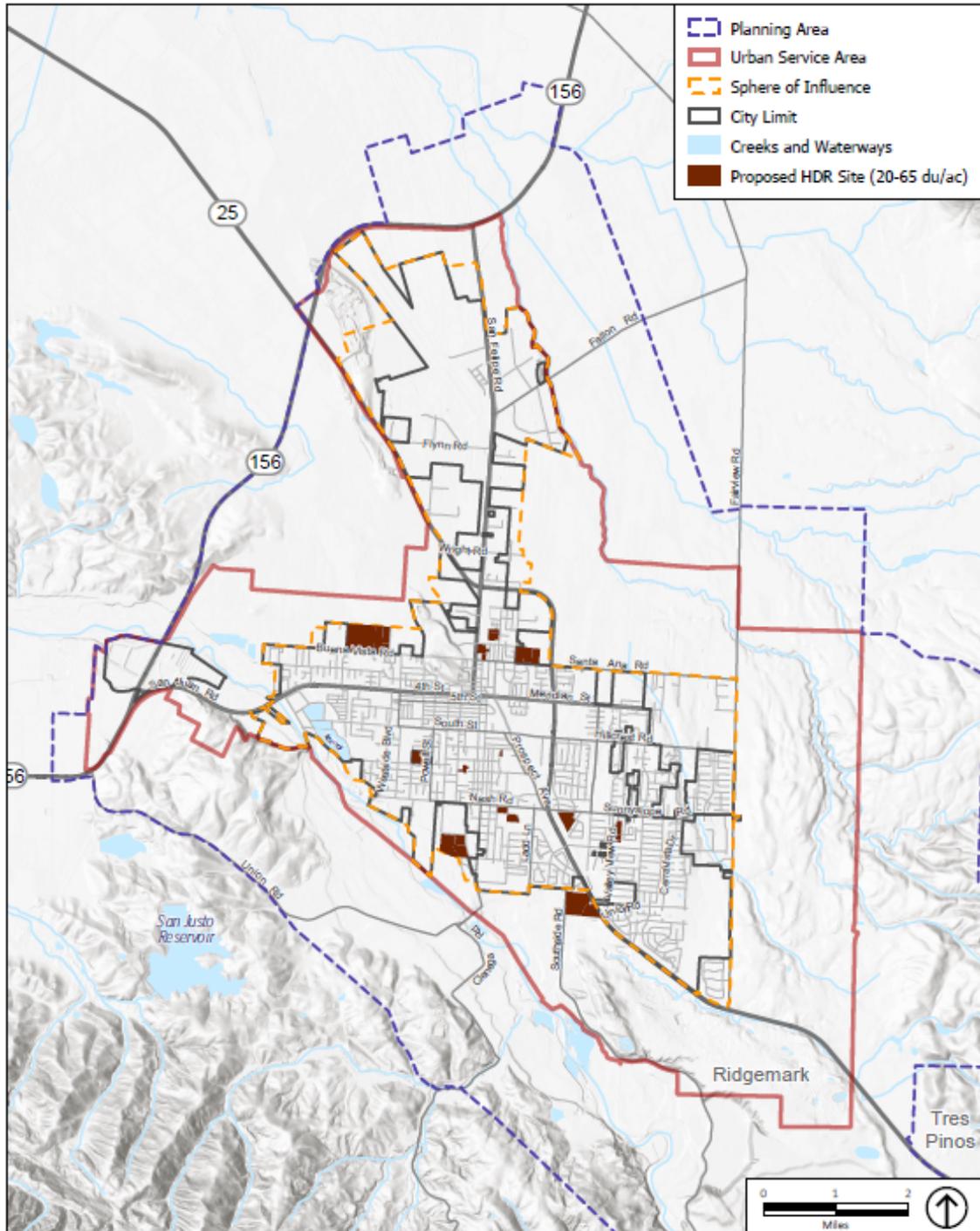
- Require 20 percent of the units be affordable for moderate, low- and very low-incomes. Note State law allows jurisdictions to establish a 15 percent affordable requirement by right. Should the Council confirm an inclusionary housing program with a target above 15 percent, the City would need undertake a feasibility study to determine the program will not be an impediment for housing production.
- Do not allow alternative compliance to the inclusionary housing program for “for sale” projects such as payment of an in-lieu housing fee, land dedication, or allowing the off-site construction of affordable units.

As part of this discussion, the GPAC also recommended the following policy for new single family subdivisions:

- Require single-family subdivisions of 40 units or greater to include 10 percent of the units as multi-family family buildings of four units or more.

² Note that the GPAC had originally requested the area bounded by State Route 25, Santa Ana Road, and North Chappell Road and some vacant parcels along Santa Ana Road be considered for High Density Residential uses. However, there are pending development applications for these parcels, so City staff does not recommend including these parcels as part of the High Density Residential sites inventory since they would not be eligible for the Housing Element sites inventory.

Figure 7 Proposed High Density Residential Sites with a Minimum Density of 20 du/ac



Source: ESRI, 2020; PlaceWorks, 2020; San Benito County, 2020; USGS, 2019

19. Historic and Cultural Resources

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policies be developed to support tribal and cultural resources:

- Form a historic resources commission whose function would be to evaluate the proposed demolition or alteration of historic buildings or cultural resources to minimize development impact.
- Establish incentives for property owners to preserve historic and cultural resources, such as expediting the permitting process, waiving or reducing City development fees, reducing parking requirements, and/or encouraging the adaptive reuse of historic buildings.
- Support the development of a comprehensive inventory of cultural and historic resources.
- Educate the public about Hollister’s historic and cultural resources.
- Encourage interpretive signage and education for known tribal and cultural resource sites.

20. Coordination with Local Tribes

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policies be developed for the General Plan Update:

- Acknowledge the importance of TCRs (as distinct from listed archeological or historic sites).
- State the City’s intention to take concrete steps to preserve TCRs.
- Support the tribal consultation process, relationship building, and respect for TCRs.
- Require a pre-construction investigation of potential TCRs if they are found on development sites.

21. Environmental Justice

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the General Plan include a standalone Environmental Justice Element and policies that:

- Encourage the development of complete neighborhoods that provide for the basic needs of daily life, such as access to employment, fresh food, transit options, spaces for physical activity, and social connection, and for the health, safety, and mental well-being of residents.

- Promote projects that would improve access to affordable and nutritious food in disadvantaged or underserved communities.
- Reduce exposure to pollutants in disadvantaged or underserved communities by prohibiting the co-location of incompatible land uses (e.g., childcare centers and industrial uses) and restricting truck routes to commercial corridors to the extent feasible.
- Establish a public participation process in City planning projects that targets disadvantaged or underserved communities.
- Prioritize infrastructure improvements and City recreational programs that serve disadvantaged and underserved communities.

22. Arts and Culture

GPAC Recommendation(s)

Through the General Plan Update outreach process, community members expressed interest in focusing and expanding efforts to support the city's creative life. The input received during this process can be summarized in six key goals as recommended by the GPAC:

1. **Leadership:** Cultivate strong, cooperative and diverse and culture arts leadership in government, educational, private and non-profit sectors.
2. **Cultural Environment:** Recognize and support the diverse creative voices and practices of people and organizations in the city to sustain a vibrant and authentic cultural environment.
3. **Arts Every Day:** Support broad access to and participation in the arts for everyone in the city.
4. **Creative Identity:** Develop a distinct identity for Hollister as a regional destination for arts, culture and creative enterprises, within the greater San José region and within the San Benito, Santa Cruz and Monterey County sub-region.
5. **Place:** Pursue physical planning and design strategies that support and give visual presence to the city's creative life, culture and history. Ensure there are adequate facilities for the production, presentation and sale of art in the city.
6. **Arts Ecosystem:** Facilitate the creation, delivery and enjoyment of the arts and encourage the growth of creative industries, through strategic public and private actions; seek linkages to the city's tourism strategies.
7. **Sustainability.** Develop ongoing funding streams for both arts programming and long-term capital investments related to arts and culture.

To improve the capacity to expand and foster Hollister's arts and culture sector, the GPAC recommended the following policies be developed:

- Support Arts and Culture Commission leadership on advising the City Council on priorities for arts and culture planning, programming and investments.

- Provide a City to liaison to arts, culture and creative enterprises and organizations, prioritizing matters such as funding and event coordination.
- Support the creation or designation of a non-profit entity that can serve as a fiscal agent for individual artists and arts organizations that have not formally incorporated but would like to seek grants.
- Ensure that arts and culture leadership is reflective of the city's diversity.
- Support shared-use agreements between arts organizations with a need for space and non-profits, public agencies and private entities with available space.
- Support pipeline to work programs linking secondary school students to creative careers.
- Support the development of a strategic plan for the San Benito Arts Council.

To guide the funding and expansion of arts and cultural programs in Hollister, the GPAC recommended the following policies be developed:

- Explore sustainable public funding streams for arts and culture events, program and activities from ongoing sources.
- Explore funding streams for physical arts and culture investments, including impact fees.
- Incorporate public art into major new private developments, especially Downtown projects and civic / institutional projects elsewhere in the city.
- Incorporate art and culture actions into Downtown revitalization efforts.
- Work collaboratively with arts and culture organizations to obtain arts and culture grants from national funders.

To include the development of arts and cultural plans, facilities and programming, the GPAC recommended the following policies be developed:

- Undertake a placemaking plan that considers both public art and other place activation strategies.
- Examine the need for a community arts center, considering its mission, audience, function, operating entity and funding and determine whether to move forward. [As part of this study, consider the potential for the arts center to include historical displays and exhibits.](#)
- Evaluate the potential for an arts and culture district in Hollister, considering both downtown and a naturally occurring cultural district outside downtown, building consensus on needs, goals and actions.
- Evaluate the need, opportunities and strategies for creating artist living and work space.

- Support the provision of mini-grants for small-scale creative activations, such as activities in public spaces, murals and exhibitions in interior spaces that are open to the general public (such as coffee shops, libraries and recreation centers).
- Establish a yearly arts festival.
- Incorporate public art into city infrastructure and public space projects, including small-scale enhancements of existing infrastructure.

Develop strategies for maintaining public art that the city owns.

The GPAC recommended the following policies be developed to provide the regulatory framework for arts and cultural programming in Hollister:

- Create land-use policies that support destination creative enterprises.
- Explore and resolve permitting, zoning and licensing issues to support the arts, culture and entertainment uses downtown, including indoor and outdoor business spaces, public spaces and vacant spaces.
- Explore and resolve permitting, zoning and licensing issues to support low-impact creative enterprises in neighborhoods.
- Affirm Hollister’s commitment to allowing free expression of murals on private property, while protecting against using murals for advertising.

23. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the General Plan develop the following policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions:

- Become a carbon neutral community before 2045.
- Meet the State’s GHG reduction goals.
- Reduce energy use through use of energy efficient appliances, lighting, and materials in our homes, businesses, and City facilities and use education and incentives to promote and sustain energy conserving design and practices.
- Transition to carbon free energy sources in new and existing development.
- Increase local renewable energy and energy storage facilities.
- Promote sustainable infill and mixed-use development.
- Transition to low or no-carbon transportation, which could include installation electric vehicle charging stations at public and private facilities, expansion of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and conversion to zero emissions fleets and buses.
- Become a zero-waste community by working to reduce and ultimately eliminate single-use materials, like plastic cups, Styrofoam containers, and similar disposable

items, from our landfills, and to support reuse of materials and products, repair and sharing of items, and relying on sustainable materials to build our homes and businesses.

- Reduce water use by encouraging low water landscaping, using greywater, installing water-efficient appliances, and encouraging conservation efforts.

24. Natural Hazards and Climate Change Susceptibility

GPAC Recommendation(s)

The GPAC recommended the following policies be developed to reduce the impacts of natural hazards related to climate change:

- Promote tree planting to help shade and cool the community.
- Establish a network of equitably located Community Resilience Hubs, which are community resource centers to support education and information, tools and resources, pilot projects, and examples of sustainability and resilience. This Hubs can also be cooling centers and places of refuge during extreme events or disasters and centers for resource sharing after emergencies.
- Provide disaster preparedness education opportunities and materials in English and Spanish, and other relevant languages in the community.
- Promote vegetation management and fire-resistant site design on residential properties and businesses.
- Coordinate with local medical providers to ensure that low-cost medical and emergency medical services are available to all residents in the city.
- Encourage existing residences and businesses to transition to drought--resistant plants.
- Advertise water conservation efforts year-round and work to promote the many benefits of reducing water use, which could include cost savings and incentives.