

MEMORANDUM

DATE October 18, 2024
TO City of Hollister Planning Commission
FROM David Early and Carey Stone, PlaceWorks
SUBJECT Overview of Draft General Plan, Draft Climate Action Plan, Draft Agricultural Preservation Program, and Draft Environmental Impact Report

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an overview of the Draft General Plan, Draft Climate Action Plan (CAP), Draft Agricultural Preservation Program, and Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for consideration at the October 24, 2024 Planning Commission Study Session meeting. The draft documents are available for review at: <https://hollister2040.org/>

This memorandum includes the following components:

- » Overview of the process to create the draft plans.
- » Summary of the Revised General Plan.
- » Summary of the Revised CAP.
- » Summary of the Revised Agricultural Preservation Program.
- » Overview of community engagement process.
- » Summary of community input on the Revised Draft Plans.
- » Overview of the Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report.
- » Next Steps.

UPDATE ON DRAFT GENERAL PLAN PROCESS

As a brief reminder, the process to update the General Plan included the phases discussed below:

- » **Existing Conditions:** Researching and documenting baseline environmental conditions in Hollister and preparing a series of reports available on <https://hollister2040.org/documents-past-meeting-materials/>.
- » **Vision and Guiding Principles:** Establishing a communitywide vision and supporting guiding principles. The General Plan Vision describes the future of Hollister as the community would like it to be in 2040. The Vision and Guiding Principles guided the development of the goals, policies, and actions and land use changes.
- » **Policy Development:** Developing policy options for key issues identified through input given at the General Plan visioning workshops held in Summer 2020 and the three GPAC meetings held in Fall 2020. On June 22, 2021, the City Council provided final policy direction for the following topics:
 - Parks
 - New School Funding
 - Farmland Mitigation
 - Sensitive Habitats
 - Heritage Trees
 - Economic Development

- Retail Leakage
 - Job Creation
 - Industrial Uses
 - Tourism
 - Airport
 - Complete Streets and Safe Routes to School
 - Level of Service
 - Roundabouts
 - Growth Management
 - Special Planning Areas
 - Residential Land Use Designations
 - Inclusionary Housing
 - Historic and Cultural Resources
 - Coordination with Local Tribes
 - Environmental Justice
 - Arts and Culture
 - Climate Change, Sustainability, and Natural Hazards
- » **Draft General Plan:** On April 4, 2023, the City published the Draft General Plan, Draft CAP, and Draft Agricultural Preservation Program for public review and comment. The Draft General Plan carries forward the majority of the existing General Plan goals, policies and actions along with the policy direction developed through the prior phases and City staff recommended updates all informed by feedback collected during community participation processes.
- » **September 11, 2023 City Council Direction** On September 11, 2023, the City Council directed staff to revise the Draft General Plan to:
- Expand the Sphere of Influence.
 - Include a total of five Specific Plan areas.
 - Update the North Gateway Commercial designation to allow residential uses.
 - Add an action in the Arts Element to prepare a study for a potential public art fee.
 - Make targeted land use changes to sites on Buena Vista Road, Chappell Road/Santa Ana Road, Glenmore Drive, and in the Meridian Road Special Planning Area.
 - Update the agricultural land preservation requirement from preserving two acres of ag land for every acre disturbed to a 1:1 ratio.
- » **Revised General Plan.** The City published the Revised General Plan on July 3, 2024 that incorporated Council direction from the September 11, 2023 meeting.
- » **Public Review and Adoption:** Public review and Council consideration of final documents, including the General Plan, and the certification of the Environmental Impact Report are the remaining tasks of the General Plan update. This phase includes approximately five months of public review of the Revised Draft General Plan and a 45-day public review period of the Revised Draft General Plan, Revised Draft CAP, and Revised Draft Agricultural Preservation Program, and Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). In addition, a series of City Council and Planning Commission hearings will be held to consider certification and adoption of the Final EIR and Revised Draft Plans. See “Next Steps” below for more detail.

SUMMARY OF THE REVISED GENERAL PLAN

The Revised General Plan includes an introductory chapter and vision chapter, as well as an individual chapter for each of the 10 General Plan elements that establish goals, policies, and actions for implementing the General Plan. The 10 elements include the eight-mandated topics required by California Government Code Section 65302 as well as two additional topics of particular interest to Hollister. The Revised General Plan includes the following elements:

- **Land Use and Community Design Element.** This element establishes the type, location, density and intensity of development activity in Hollister. It describes the goals and policies that will guide Hollister’s future growth patterns and development standards.
- **Circulation Element.** This element describes the services, facilities, and capital improvements needed to facilitate vehicle, pedestrian, transit, bicycle, and emergency circulation.
- **Community Services and Facilities Element.** This element describes the community facilities that are necessary in the provision of Hollister’s essential public services.
- **Economic Development Element.** This is a new element as part of this update to the General Plan and establishes policy guidance to support and maintain an economically viable community.
- **Natural Resources and Conservation Element.** This element outlines City policy for the preservation of natural resources and provision of outdoor recreation opportunities.
- **Health and Safety Element.** This element covers two of the 8 State-mandated elements: safety and noise. The safety section of this element identifies and assesses hazards in the community and establishes the goals, policies, and actions necessary to ensure community safety and protection from noise.
- **Open Space and Agriculture Element.** This element outlines City policy for the preservation of open space and agricultural areas.
- **Housing Element.** This element identifies the housing needs of the city for all income levels and strategies and policies for providing housing to meet those needs. Since the Housing Element is updated more frequently than the other elements, as required by State law, it exists as its own document outside of the proposed 2040 General Plan and is therefore not part of the proposed project. The current Housing Element addresses housing needs in Hollister for the 2015 to 2023 housing cycle and is currently being updated by the City through a separate process.
- **Arts and Culture Element.** This is a new element as part of this update to the General Plan and outlines City policy for creating a lively arts scene that encourages self-expression and ensures the representation of Hollister’s arts and cultural communities.
- **Environmental Justice Element.** This is a new element as part of this update to the General Plan and identifies impacted communities and sets policy direction to minimize effects of environmental

hazards on these communities, with an emphasis on pollution exposure, food access, and safe and sanitary homes.

Proposed Sphere of Influence Change

The Hollister Sphere of Influence (SOI) is defined and determined by San Benito County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), although the City can propose the area that it would like its SOI to include. Per the direction of the City Council, the City is proposing changes to the currently approved SOI as shown on Figure 1.

The current SOI is roughly 1,817 acres or about 2.8 square miles. The proposed SOI expansion would add about 2,423 acres (about 3.8 square miles) to increase the SOI to approximately 4,240 acres and 6.6 square miles. The proposed SOI would extend further west, south, and east of the existing SOI, but would remain contiguous with the existing SOI border in the northernmost part of the city. On the west side, the proposed SOI would expand northward to Wright Road and westward to SR 156, reaching close to Union Road. The southern portion of the proposed SOI would expand past Union Road to Enterprise Road. The proposed SOI would also expand along Mansfield Road in the east and along SR 25 to Best Road in the southeast. Most of the expansion areas would have a Specific Plan land use designation, and development in these expansion areas would be subject to specific guidelines for development, including the creation of a Specific Plan for proposed projects within each Specific Plan area.

Proposed Land Use Changes

The Revised General Plan land use map, as shown in Figure 2, carries forward the majority of existing designations. However, the land use map does propose targeted changes. A summary of the major land use changes as directed by the City Council include:

- Designate sufficient land as High Density Residential to utilize the Government Code section 65583.2, subdivision (c)(3)(B) default density standard provision which allows jurisdictions to identify Housing Element sites for lower income households without additional analysis such as market demand, financial feasibility, or information based on development project experience within a zone or zones that provide housing for lower-income households. The California Department of Housing and Community Development, also referred to as HCD classifies Hollister as Metropolitan jurisdiction which requires a default density standard of a minimum of 30 dwelling units/acre.¹ Note that the City of Hollister is not required to use the 30 du/ac default density standard. However, using the default density standard does make the process to identify the Housing Element sites inventory easier and less cumbersome.

Also, subsequent to the June 22, 2021 Council direction, HCD released a memorandum on March 21, 2022 that changed Hollister's classification from a Suburban jurisdiction to a

¹ <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/community-development/housing-element/housing-element-memos/docs/defaultdensity2020censusupdate.pdf>

Metropolitan jurisdiction. When Hollister was classified as a Suburban jurisdiction, the default density standard was 20 du/ac. As a Metropolitan jurisdiction, Hollister's default density standard is 30 du/ac. Since Council direction was to apply the default density standard, City staff suggests the High Density Residential minimum density be 30 du/ac.

- Apply Medium Density Residential and High Density Residential in the Meridian Street Extension Special Planning Area. Also apply the General Commercial designation in this area to improve access to commercial services on the east side of the city.
- Apply a Specific Plan designation, as shown on Figure 3, to several areas outside the City Limits but within the proposed Sphere of Influence Expansion:
 - Buena Vista Specific Plan Area
 - Southwest Specific Plan Area
 - Union Road Specific Plan Area
 - East Side A Specific Plan Area
 - East Side B Specific Plan Area
- For areas outside the SOI, the City Council directed staff to apply the Agricultural designation. For already urbanized areas outside the SOI, the City Council directed staff to apply the land use designation that matched the existing use.

In addition, the Draft General Plan proposes residential density changes as summarized in Table 1. A summary of these changes includes:

- As discussed, the Revised General Plan increases the High Density Residential designation minimum density as directed by the City Council to meet the HCD default density standard. City staff also suggests this same minimum density be applied to the Mixed-Use, Downtown Mixed Use, and West Gateway Commercial and Mixed Use designations for the same reason.
- As directed by the City Council, the Revised General Plan increases the upper range of the Downtown Mixed Use density to 125 du/ac because the small parcels in the Downtown limit what can actually be built. Raising the maximum residential density to 125 du/ac per acre could potentially encourage developers to add residential components to their mixed-use projects.
- To better align with the High Density Residential density range, the Revised General Plan changes the Low Density Residential and Medium Density Residential designation density ranges as shown in Table 1.
- The Revised General Plan also modifies the Medium Density Residential designation to preclude single family residential uses as an allowed use to increase the diversity of housing options in Hollister.
- As directed by the City Council, the Revised General Plan allows residential uses in the North Gateway Commercial designation with a density range of 30 to 65 du/ac.

- As directed by the City Council, the Revised General Plan measures all densities based on gross acres instead of net acres.

TABLE 1 SUMMARY OF GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATION UPDATES

Land Use Designation	Existing GPLU Density	Draft GPLU Density
Residential Estate	1 du/5 ac	0.2 to 1 du /ac
Low Density Residential	1 to 8 du/ac	6 to 10 du/ac
Medium Density Residential	8 to 12 du/ac	11 to 29 du/ac
High Density Residential	12 to 35 du/ac	30 to 65 du/ac
Mixed-Use Commercial and Residential	25 to 40 du/ac	30 to 65 du/ac
Downtown Commercial and Mixed-Use	25 to 45 du/ac	30 to 125 du/ac
West Gateway Commercial and Mixed-Use	20 to 35 du/ac	30 to 65 du/ac
North Gateway Commercial	n/a	30 to 65 du/ac
Home Office	8 to 12 du/ac	11 to 29 du/ac
Specific Plan	n/a	n/a

SUMMARY OF THE REVISED CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

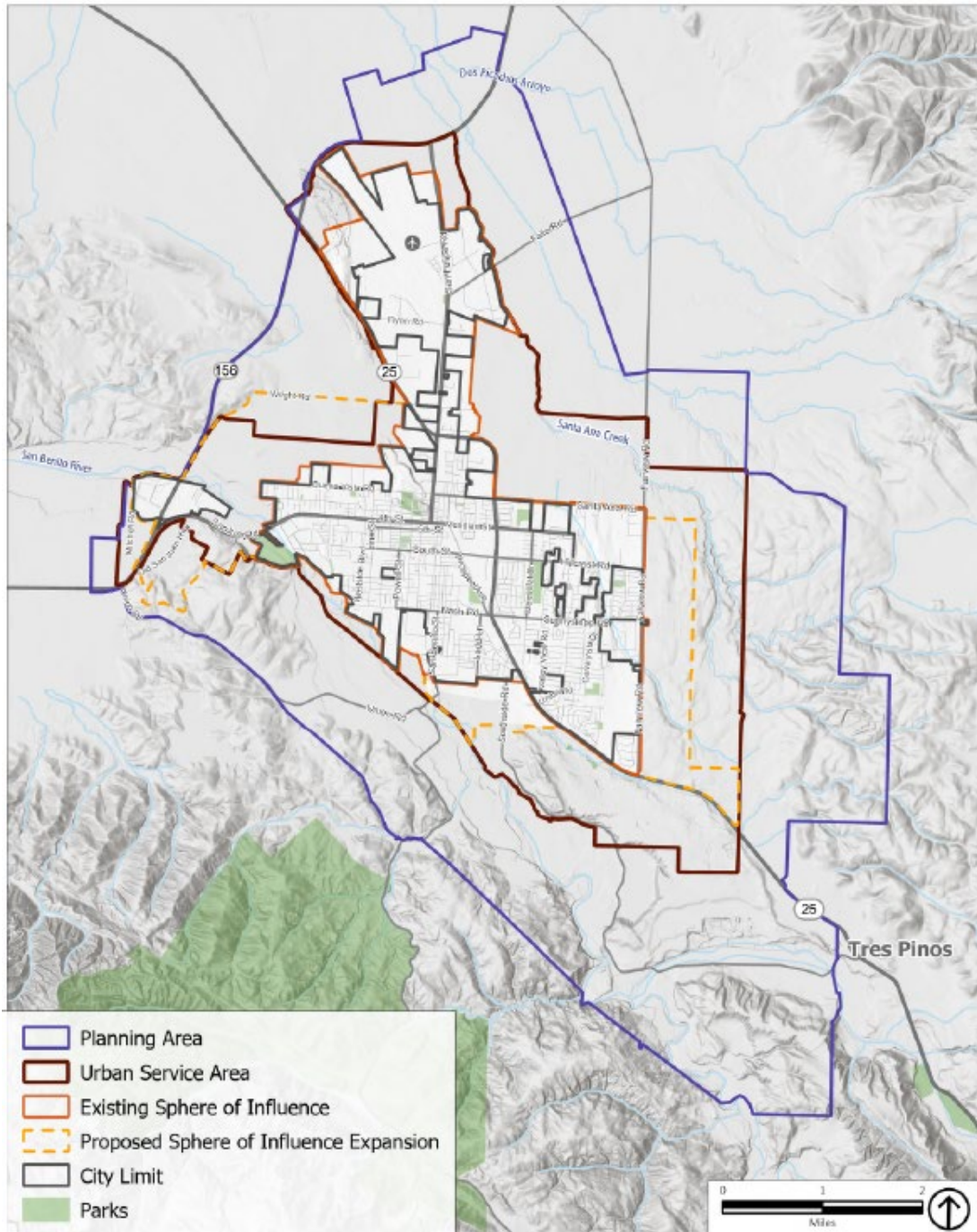
The Revised Climate Action Plan (CAP) is a strategic plan that assesses and reduces Hollister’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, consistent with State targets and directions. It identifies Hollister’s current and projected future sources of GHG emissions, including electricity and natural gas use, vehicle travel, solid waste generation, and other activities. The CAP also includes a discussion of how climate change may affect Hollister by increasing the frequency and severity of flooding, drought, extreme heat, regional wildfires, and other natural hazards.

Like the previous draft CAP, the Revised CAP contains a comprehensive set of strategies that reduces these emissions 85 percent below 1990 levels by the year 2045. Key strategies in the CAP include:

- Encouraging community members to replace natural gas appliances with electric models.
- Reducing vehicle travel through improved access to local and regional transit systems.
- Increasing Hollister’s electric vehicle adoption rate.
- Transitioning away from diesel-powered construction and landscaping equipment.
- Decreasing the amount of waste sent to landfills.

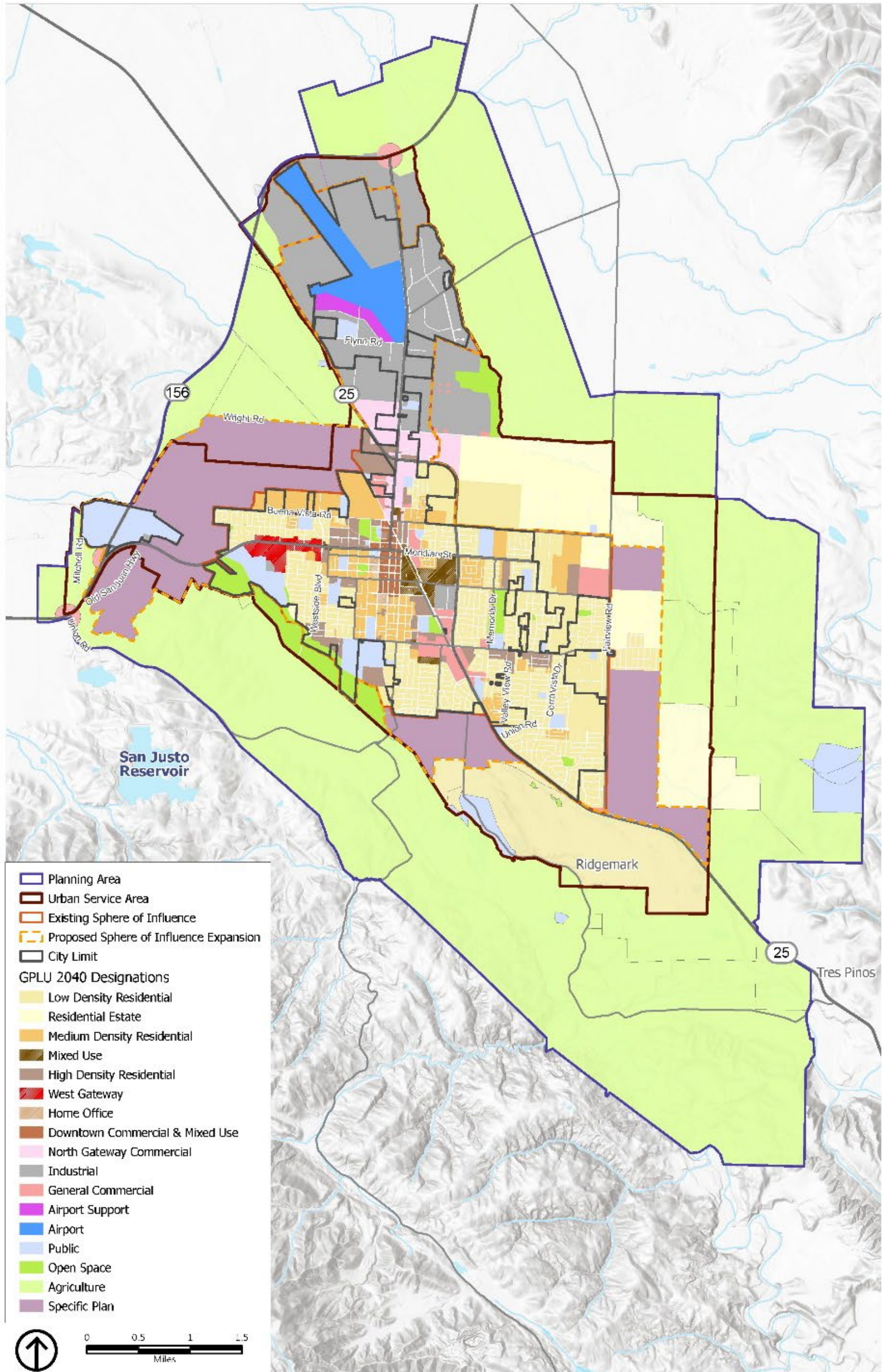
When the General Plan was revised over the past year, the CAP was revised to reflect the new allowed land use pattern and quantities of development.

FIGURE 1 EXISTING AND PROPOSED SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

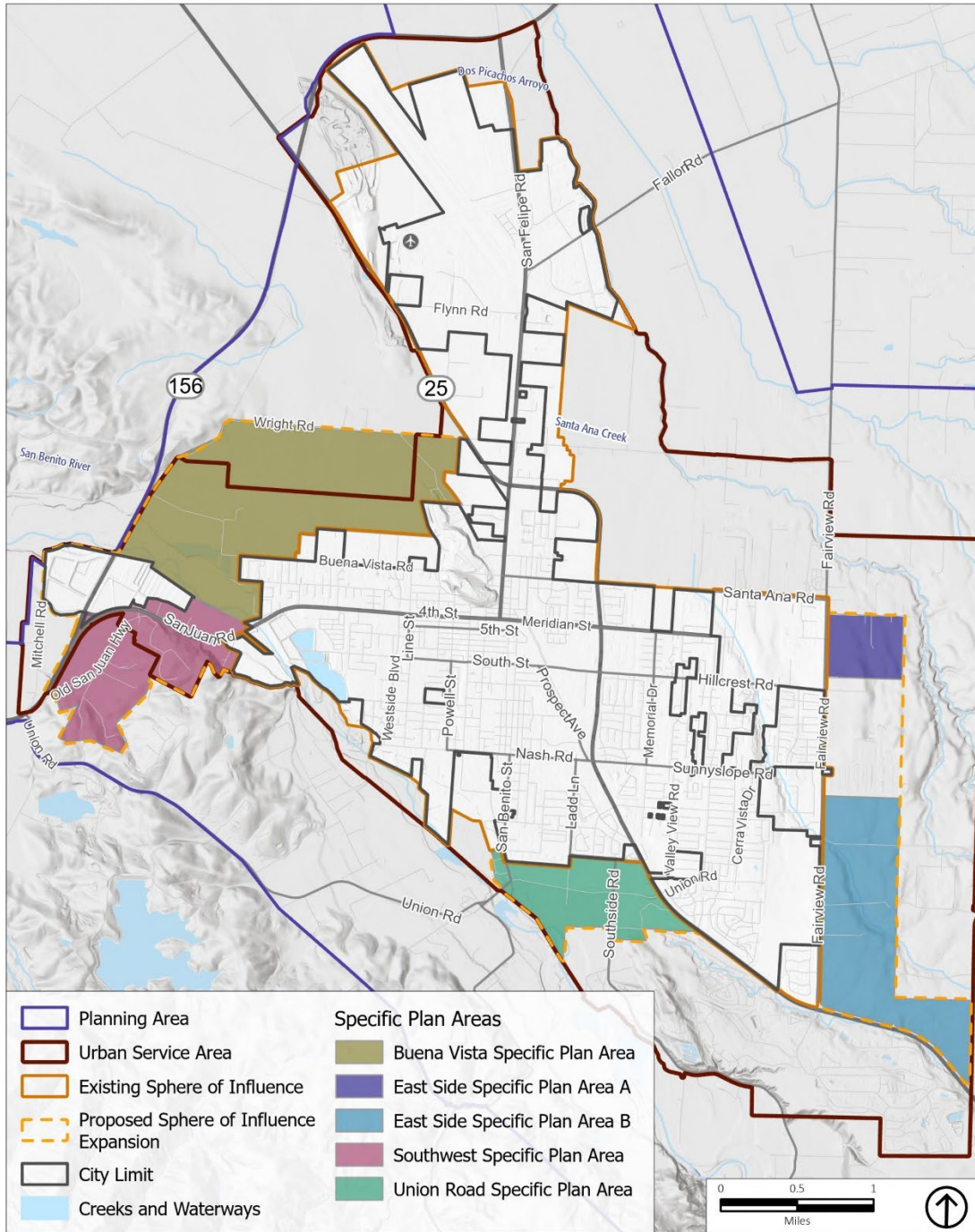


Source: ESRI, 2020; PlaceWorks, 2023; San Benito County, 2020; USGS, 2019

FIGURE 2 DRAFT GENERAL PLAN LAND USE MAP



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

FIGURE 3 GENERAL PLAN SPECIFIC PLAN AREAS


Source: ESRI, 2020; PlaceWorks, 2023; San Benito County, 2020

REVISED AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM

The Revised Agricultural Land Preservation Program (ALPP) proposes a new addition to the Hollister Municipal Code (HMC) Title 17, *Zoning*. The proposed addition would be adopted and codified as new HMC Chapter 17.13, *Agricultural Lands Preservation Program*. The purpose of the proposed Agricultural Lands Preservation Program is to ensure the benefits of agricultural activities are maintained by requiring that activities that convert existing agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses (i.e., urban uses) directly address that loss through a program that funds agricultural conservation easements. As directed by the City Council at the September 11, 2023 meeting, the Agricultural Preservation Program was updated to require the permanent preservation of one acre, instead of two acres, of agricultural land for every one acre of land that is converted to a non-agricultural use within the City Limits. The land that would be permanently preserved must occur within the Hollister Planning Area.

The ALPP applies to agricultural land within the City Limits that is proposed for conversion to a non-agricultural use and has one or more of the following qualities:

- Classified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Local Importance per the State of California.
- Class I or Class II soils (US Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service classification).
- Rangelands that support at least one animal per acre (US Department of Agriculture classification).
- Orchards or vegetable farms which produce a minimum annual return of \$200/acre.

OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The Draft General Plan, Draft CAP, and Draft Agricultural Preservation Program were developed through a public process, consisting of issue exploration, visioning, and policy development as described above. A General Plan Advisory Committee provided overall direction, with the assistance of citizen representatives who worked closely with the consultant team and City staff to guide the public process for updating the plan.

Table 2 summarizes the outreach events and Table 3 summarizes the meetings undertaken through May 2023. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which began in early 2020, the City collected community input primarily through virtual workshops and online activities. Although most of the workshops were virtual, they still allowed for dialogue and small group participation so community members could share ideas and hear feedback from their neighbors. Note that the original scope of work included a total of 22 meetings and events (excluding the adoption hearings) and the project team will have completed 30 meetings once the Council reviews the Revised Plans on November 19, 2024.

The public input received from the workshops, online activities, survey, and General Plan Advisory Committee meetings helped inform the development of the Draft Plans. The Revised Plans will be

reviewed in public discussion and finalized based on Council direction which will be provided on November 19, 2024.

The City is also collecting public comments via email and in writing. Attachment 1 includes the public comments received through October 15, 2024.

TABLE 2 **SUMMARY OF OUTREACH EVENTS**

#	Meeting Date	Topic	# of Participants
Workshops			
1	Saturday, June 27, 2020	Visioning Workshop	12
2	Tuesday, June 30, 2020	Visioning Workshop	18
3	Wednesday, July 8, 2020	Visioning Workshop	15
4	Thursday, July 9, 2020	Visioning Workshop	20
5	Tuesday, March 9, 2021	Policy Options Workshop	16
6	Wednesday, March 10, 2021	Policy Options Workshop	20
7	Thursday, May 6, 2021	Spanish Language Workshop	45
8	Wednesday, May 17, 2023	Draft General Plan, Draft CAP, and Draft Agricultural Preservation Program- Farmers Market Pop-up	71
9	Thursday, May 18, 2023	Draft General Plan and CAP - Virtual Workshop	15
10	Tuesday, July 16, 2024	Revised Draft EIR Public Meeting	5
Online Activities			
1	Summer 2020	Visioning Online Engagement	47
2	Spring 2021	Policy Options Online Engagement	8

Source: PlaceWorks, 2024.

TABLE 3 SUMMARY OF MEETINGS

#	Meeting Date	Topic
GPAC Meetings		
1	Thursday, June 4, 2020	General Plan Kick-off
2	Tuesday, October 6, 2020	Visioning
3	Tuesday, November 17, 2020	Existing Conditions
4	Tuesday, March 23, 2021	Policy Options
5	Tuesday, March 30, 2021	Policy Options
6	Tuesday, April 6, 2021	Policy Options
7	Tuesday, April 13, 2021	Policy Options
8	Tuesday, April 27, 2021	Policy Options
Planning Commission Meetings		
1	Thursday, April 22, 2021	EIR Scoping Meeting
2	Monday, May 24, 2021	Draft Vision Statement and Policy Options
3	Thursday, August 10, 2023	Draft General Plan, Draft CAP, Draft Agricultural Preservation Program, and Draft EIR
4	Thursday, October 23, 2024	Revised General Plan, CAP, Agricultural Preservation Program and FEIR
City Council Meetings		
1	Monday, April 6, 2020	GPAC Formation
2	Monday, March 1, 2021	Project Update
3	Tuesday, June 22, 2021	Draft Vision Statement and Policy Options
4	Tuesday, January 18, 2022	Project Update
5	Monday, September 11, 2023	Draft General Plan, Draft CAP, Draft Agricultural Preservation Program, and Draft EIR

Source: PlaceWorks, 2024.

COMMUNITY INPUT ON THE REVISED PLANS

This section includes a summary of the community feedback collected on the revised Draft Plans from July 3, 2024 through October 11, 2024 via the July 16, 2024 Revised Draft EIR public hearing and emails sent to City staff:

- » Revised Draft General Plan 2040
 - General comment letter – did not request specific changes.
 - Change designation at the northwest corner of Hillcrest and Fairview Roads to mixed-use instead of Commercial.
 - Staff response: *The Planning Commission and City Council felt it was important to provide commercial services to this side of the city as the east side of town grows.*

- Concern that a Specific Plan designation delays the ability of the property owner to develop their parcel(s) and increases the development costs.
 - Staff response: *The Planning Commission and City Council previously concluded that Specific Plans should be required so as to ensure well-coordinated, high-quality development in new growth areas.*
- Policy LU-1.5 is against State law. Gov. Code Section 66454 permits any applicant to file a tentative map for property that is adjacent to the City.
 - Staff response: *Recommend revising this policy as follows: Policy LU-1.5 The City shall not ~~accept~~ approve an application for any projects (subdivision, grading, development, etc.) for any land that has not been annexed into the City Limits.*
- Policy LU-1.6 Policy LU-1.7 may be against State law. By requiring applicants for annexation of properties adjacent to the City to do so only when other properties are included is against the intent of Gov. Code Section 66454, which does not include such a condition.
 - Policy LU-1.6: Coordinated Annexation Requests. Encourage coordinated annexation of contiguous properties.
 - Policy LU-1.7 Ensure the orderly development of large areas of land proposed for annexation through Specific Plans. Require a Specific Plan for annexation requests that are over 20 acres in size or include nonresidential uses regardless of size. This requirement covers, but is not limited to, the five Specific Plan Areas called out in Section 3.4 [of the General Plan].
 - Staff response: *Although Section 66454 does not specifically require coordinated annexation of contiguous properties, nothing in State law prohibits the City from encouraging such coordination or from requiring Specific Plan preparation as a condition for annexation.*
- Part of Policy LU-1.9 is too vague and very dependent on how “irregular” is to be interpreted.
 - Policy LU-1.9 Prohibit any annexations of land that are not contiguous to City Limits. Annexation of land that would result in formation of a County “island” or irregular city boundary shall not be permitted.
 - Staff response: *Many General Plan policies include language that will require interpretation by City staff and officials as they are implemented.*
- Action LU-1.1 is not necessary until the parcels currently within the SOI are annexed.
 - Action LU-1.1 Work with the San Benito County Local Agency Formation Commission to amend the Sphere of Influence as proposed in this General Plan.

- Staff response: *The City's SOI must be expanded before the City can make annexation requests, so this action is necessary to allow for General Plan implementation.*
- Infeasible to designate densities up to 60 units per acre in the Hillcrest area; should remain at 8 to 10 units/acre.
 - Staff response: *The Planning Commission and City Council have previously reviewed this site, and found that a high-density designation is appropriate due to the location of this site next to a proposed shopping center and in order to meet the City's housing needs.*
- » Agricultural Land Preservation Program
 - Extend the boundary of the Agricultural Land Preservation Program from the Hollister Planning Area to the San Benito County boundary.
 - Staff Response: *The City Council has previously considered this request and elected to maintain the boundary at the edge of the Hollister Planning Area so as to preserve and enhance agricultural uses in close proximity to the city.*

No comments have been received regarding the Revised Draft Climate Action Plan.

OVERVIEW OF THE REVISED DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

As required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the City has prepared a new Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to address the environmental effects associated with adoption and implementation of the Revised Draft General Plan. Because of the long-term planning horizon of the proposed project and the permitting, planning, and development actions that are related both geographically and as logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions for implementation, the revised Draft EIR was prepared as a program EIR, pursuant to Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines.

The CEQA environmental review process for the project as a whole started on April 9, 2021, with issuance of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an EIR. A 30-day public comment period for the NOP ended on May 10, 2021. A virtual public scoping meeting was held on April 22, 2021, to accept public input on environmental topics to be analyzed in the EIR and approaches to the impact analyses. During this time, the City received comment letters from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Native American Heritage Commission, and San Benito High School District. Issues of particular concern to agencies during the environmental review process included:

- Potential impacts to biological resources.
- Tribal consultation and compliance with Assembly Bill 52 and Senate Bill 18.
- Cumulative impact on the capacity to serve future students at San Benito High School.

The Notice of Availability (NOA) for the previous Draft EIR was issued on May 17, 2023, for a 45-day public review and comment period that ended on June 30, 2023. After preparation of the 2023 Draft EIR, but prior to its certification, the City made modifications to the project and created a revised Draft EIR to the revised project. The Revised Draft EIR and a new NOA were issued on July 3, 2024, for a 45-day public review and comment period that ended on August 16, 2024.

Both the 2023 Draft EIR and the 2024 Revised Draft EIR were distributed to local, regional, and State agencies, and the general public was advised of the availability of the Draft EIR each time it was published. The 2023 Draft EIR and the 2024 Revised Draft EIR were made available for review to interested parties on the project website at www.hollister2040.org.

The EIR evaluation included a detailed analysis of impacts in eighteen (18) environmental topics, analyzing the Draft General Plan 2040, and alternatives to the General Plan 2040, including a No Project Alternative. The EIR discloses the environmental impacts expected to result from implementation of the General Plan 2040 including the effects of potential future buildout during both construction and operational phases. Impacts under the following environmental topics were determined to be less than significant with implementation of the General Plan goals, policies, and actions.

- Aesthetics
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services and Recreation
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

The Revised Draft EIR identified the following impacts, which can be mitigated by General Plan policies and actions, but which would not be able to be mitigated to a less-than-significant level and would therefore remain significant and unavoidable at the program level. The identification of these significant and unavoidable impacts does not preclude the finding of less-than-significant impacts at the project level for future development over the General Plan buildout horizon.

- **Impact AG-1:** Implementation of the proposed project would result in the conversion of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland land (together referred to as “qualified Farmland”) to nonagricultural land uses.
- **Impact AG-2:** Implementation of the proposed project would result in the loss of agricultural land under the Williamson Act.
- **Impact AG-4:** The proposed project, in combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects, could result in a significant cumulative impact with respect to the conversion of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland land (together referred to as “qualified Farmland”) under CEQA and Williamson Act properties to nonagricultural uses.

- **Impact AIR-1:** Implementation of the proposed project would result in the generation of substantial operational (long-term) criteria air pollutant emissions that would exceed Monterey Bay Air Resources District's (MBARD's) regional significance threshold for Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), and carbon monoxide (CO) and would; therefore, not be considered consistent with the existing Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP).
- **Impact AIR-2a:** Operation of development projects that could occur from implementation of the project would generate emissions that would exceed Monterey Bay Air Resources District's (MBARD's) regional significance thresholds for Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), and carbon monoxide (CO).
- **Impact AIR-2b:** Construction activities that could occur over the buildout horizon of the proposed 2040 General Plan would generate substantial short-term criteria air pollutant emissions that would exceed Monterey Bay Air Resources District's (MBARD's) regional significance thresholds and cumulative contribute to the nonattainment designations of the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB).
- **Impact AIR-3a:** Implementation of the proposed project could expose air quality sensitive receptors to substantial toxic air contaminant concentrations from non-permitted sources during operation.
- **Impact AIR-3b:** Construction activities associated with potential future development could expose nearby air quality sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations of toxic air contaminants during construction.
- **Impact AIR-5:** The emissions that could occur over the buildout horizon of the proposed 2040 General Plan could generate a substantial increase in emissions that exceeds the Monterey Bay Air Resources District's (MBARD's) significance thresholds and cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment designations and health risk in the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB).
- **Impact NOI-1.1:** Construction activities associated with potential future development under the proposed 2040 General Plan could expose sensitive receptors in close proximity to a construction site to excessive noise from construction equipment.
- **Impact NOI-1.2:** Operational vehicle traffic noise increases would exceed the City's significance thresholds with implementation of the proposed project.
- **Impact NOI-4:** Implementation of the proposed 2040 General Plan could contribute to an increase in cumulative construction noise and operational vehicle noise.
- **Impact TRANS-2:** Implementation of the proposed 2040 General Plan would result in a significant vehicle miles traveled (VMT) impact for VMT per Capita (Residential) and Retail VMT over 50,000 square feet, due to forecasted land use growth through 2040, based on a comparison of the VMT rate increment for VMT to the corresponding average baseline rates for the San Benito County region.

- **Impact TRANS-5:** Implementation of the proposed 2040 General Plan would cumulatively contribute to regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

Where possible, mitigating General Plan 2040 policies and actions were identified to avoid or minimize each of these significant environmental effects. In addition, the City committed to implementing measures in order to reduce the direct and indirect impacts that will result from Draft General Plan 2040 activities.

A total of 21 comment letters were received on the original and Revised Draft EIRs combined, 10 of which were from public agencies. The City and PlaceWorks have issued a proposed Final EIR that responds to all of these comments (on both Draft EIRs) and makes necessary changes to the text of the Revised Draft EIR to address these comments.

NEXT STEPS

Publishing the Revised Draft Plans and Revised Draft EIR was an important milestone for the Hollister General Plan Update project. The remaining key milestones of the General Plan Update include:

- » October 24, 2024 -- Planning Commission considers Final General Plan, CAP, Agricultural Preservation Program and EIR for recommendation to the City Council.
- » November 19, 2024 – City Council considers Final General Plan, CAP, Agricultural Preservation Program and EIR for adoption.

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