

CHAPTER 3

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

3.1 PHYSICAL SETTING AND EXISTING USES

The City of Soledad is located in north/central Monterey County, along US 101 approximately 25 miles south of Salinas (refer to Figure 2-1). It is situated in the center of the Salinas Valley, a fertile agricultural region of statewide and even nationwide importance. The Santa Lucia Mountains and Los Padres National Forest lie to the west and the Gabilan Mountains and Pinnacles National Monument to the east.

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan project area encompasses all of Downtown Soledad and comprises nearly 200 acres. The plan area extends generally from US 101 on the west, to San Vicente Road to the north, North Street to the East, and Nestles Road on the south (refer to Figure 2-2). The plan area includes the northern and southern “gateways” to the City, generally located east of the US 101 on- and off-ramp intersections at the north and south end of town (Front Street exit on the north and State Route 146 on the south).

3.1.1 Sub-Areas

The proposed Specific Plan divides the plan area into five separate sub-areas: the Downtown Core, the Monterey Street area, Vosti Park, the South Gateway, and the Railroad District (refer to Figure 2-3, Illustrative Plan).

3.1.1.1 Downtown Core

Front Street is the historic main commercial corridor of the City and runs lengthwise through the Downtown Core of the City. The UPRR runs parallel to Front Street on the west, and US 101 runs parallel beyond that. Front Street is developed with commercial buildings primarily on the eastern side, while the western side (adjacent to the railroad) remains largely undeveloped. Many of the buildings along Front Street are historically significant and provide an example of the City’s small town commercial architecture.

3.1.1.2 Monterey Street

The Monterey Street area includes Monterey Street, which runs parallel one block east of Front Street, as well as the half blocks on either side of Monterey Street between West Street and Oak Street (refer to Figure 2-3). This sub-area is predominantly dominated by single family residences. Many of the residences are listed on the Soledad Historical Resources Inventory. There are also some limited commercial uses on Monterey Street and the side streets between Oak and Benito Streets, including services, professional offices and retail uses to serve the neighborhood. Monterey Street supports parallel parking on both sides, a designated bicycle lane in both directions, and considerable pedestrian activity.

3.1.1.3 Vosti Park

The Vosti Park sub-area is located at the southeast end of the Downtown Core, and includes 6.4-acre Vosti Park and the surrounding areas. Vosti Park is located east of the US 101/Front Street off-ramp undercrossing of the railroad tracks. It contains a lighted baseball field, barbeque grills, picnic tables, a playground, soccer field, sand volleyball court, and the landmark Soledad water tower. The surrounding areas include a mix of uses, including single-

and multi-family residential units to the northeast and southeast, and warehouse-style structures to the northwest between Front Street and Monterey Street.

3.1.1.4 South Gateway

The South Gateway area lies at the south end of the Downtown Core, between the railroad tracks and US 101. Front Street connects the US 101 off-ramp to the downtown area via a railroad underpass. Existing uses are predominantly of a highway rest stop character, including motels, fast food restaurants and large parking areas, but the area also includes the mobile home and RV residential area between US 101 and the railroad tracks north of Front Street. There are several large vacant parcels and underutilized parcels in the area.

3.1.1.5 Railroad District

The Railroad District is a narrow track of land consisting of predominantly undeveloped parcels owned by UPRR lying between the railroad tracks and US 101. The sub-area is approximately 300 feet wide and has limited accessibility due to the highway and railroad tracks on either side.

3.2 SURROUNDING LAND USES

The City of Soledad is surrounded on all sides by intensive agricultural uses in the fertile Salinas Valley. The Salinas River and Arroyo Seco River both flow northwest through the Salinas Valley approximately 0.75 mile west of Soledad, with the Arroyo Seco converging into the Salinas River at the southwest corner of the City. The wastewater treatment plant lies adjacent to the City, approximately 0.5 mile west of US 101. A large Dole processing plant is approximately 1.5 miles northwest of the City, and Salinas Valley State Prison is located approximately 3 miles northwest of the City. State Route 146 runs southwest from Pinnacles National Monument and the Gabilan Range and traverses existing streets through the center of town before joining with Front Street at the south end of the Downtown Core.

Within the city limits, the plan area is bounded on the west by US 101, on the north by industrial, agricultural and residential uses at the edge of town, on the east by additional residential areas, community parks and schools continuing beyond the historic Monterey Street neighborhoods, and on the south by additional residential and industrial uses south of the Vosti Park and South Gateway sub-areas.

3.3 CONSISTENCY WITH LAND USE PLANS AND POLICIES

3.3.1 Overview

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines § 15125(d) states, “The EIR shall discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed project and applicable general plans, specific plans, and regional plans.” While CEQA requires a discussion of consistency with public plans, inconsistency does not necessarily lead to a significant impact. Inconsistency with public plans creates significant impacts under CEQA only when an adverse physical effect would result from the inconsistency.

This section provides general information on the plans and policies applicable to the proposed project as listed below. It is the responsibility of the City of Soledad, as lead CEQA decision maker, to make the final determination regarding consistency issues. The following plans and policies are relevant to the proposed project and discussed in the further sections:

- City of Soledad General Plan (2005)
 - Land Use Element
 - Economic Development Element
 - Housing Element (Updated 2009)
 - Circulation Element
 - Parks and Recreation Element
 - Public Services and Facilities Element
 - Conservation and Open Space Element
 - Safety Element
 - Noise Element
- Economic Development Strategy (2011)
- Community Design Guidelines and Standards (2010)
- Coast Daylight Implementation Plan (2000)

3.3.2 Overview of Relevant Land Use Plans

3.3.2.1 City of Soledad General Plan (2005)

The General Plan provides long-term growth and development needs of the City and is intended to guide land use decisions for the next 20 to 50 years. The long-term plan of the General Plan shows future urban development proceeding generally north between US 101 and the Gabilan Range foothills and east between the existing city limits and Camphora-Gloria Road.

Land Use Element

The Land Use Element, in conjunction with other elements of the General Plan, determines the location, rate and timing of new growth and development in the City. It 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. It includes the Land Use Diagram, which assigns a land use designation for all property within the City, both public and private, as well as properties within the City's sphere of influence (refer to Figure 3-1, below). The Planning Commission interprets the Diagram to make decisions regarding the use of a particular parcel.

Economic Development Element

Economic Development refers to the 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. The Economic Development Element sets forth policies to encourage commercial and industrial growth, in concert with the Land Use Element. It sets forth three broad components of economic development strategies: (1) "locality" development, or efforts to make the community more conducive to economic growth; (2) business development, efforts to improve business opportunities and the business climate; and (3) labor force enhancements, or programs to increase the skills of the local work force and to better match those skills with desirable employers. The Element recognizes economic development opportunities that exist because of the City's proximity to Pinnacles National Monument, the Monterey Peninsula, and the Salinas Valley wine grape and winery industry.

Housing Element

State law is more specific about the content of housing elements than any other elements of a general plan. It is also the only element subject to review and certification by the state. The Housing Element is required by state law to include the following:

- Information about the existing housing stock, including the amount, type, cost, tenure, and condition of housing units
- An analysis of potential constraints or barriers to housing production, including both governmental and non-governmental
- Information about energy conservation opportunities in new construction and housing rehabilitation
- Information about existing subsidized housing and the possible risk of it being lost due to conversion to market-rate units
- Specific goals, objectives, policies, and implementation measures, including targets for housing unit production based on a fair share allocation of growth demands.

The Soledad Housing Element was last updated in 2009. The City's fair share allocation of housing demand was estimated to be approximately 897 units per year (Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) 2008); the Housing Element sets forth goals, policies and programs intended to guide growth to meet that demand.

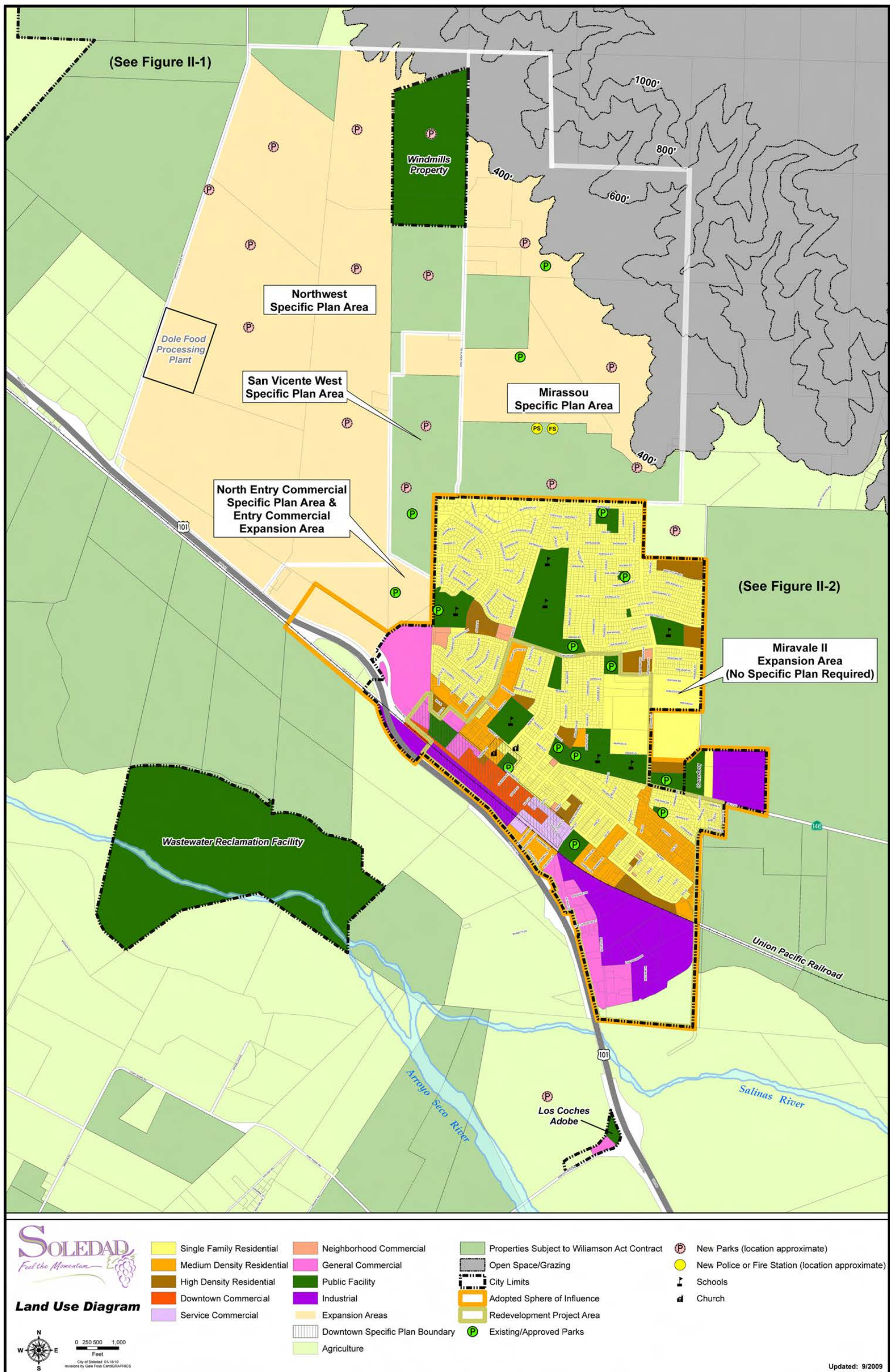
Circulation Element

The Circulation Element provides goals and policies aimed at meeting the transportation needs of the City, including the provision and maintenance of transportation infrastructure. It identifies specific roadway deficiencies, as well as improvements necessary to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of service on the system through buildout of the City. The Element recognizes that buildout of the City as planned for in the General Plan and Specific Plans would significantly increase the volume of traffic on City roads and require substantial improvements to the City's circulation system. It also analyzes and includes policies for encouraging and strengthening the City's bicycle, pedestrian, public transit, and parking systems.

Parks and Recreation Element

The Parks and Recreation Element recognizes the importance of parks and recreational facilities for the health, enjoyment and quality of life of Soledad residents and visitors. The Parks and Recreation Element envisions neighborhood parks and recreational facilities within easy walking distance of every resident, a regional open space area with trails in the foothills of the Gabilan Range, a bike trail along the Salinas River, and thriving recreation programs throughout the community. The Element provides programs to meet these recreational goals.

Figure 3-1. Land Use Diagram



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Public Services and Facilities Element

Soledad is a full service city and provides water supply, wastewater collection and treatment, solid waste collection, stormwater drainage, and police and fire protection within the City. The Public Services and Facilities Element establishes goals, policies and programs to ensure that the provision of public services and facilities keeps pace with new development within the City, and that present infrastructure inadequacies are remedied.

Conservation and Open Space Element

The Conservation and Open Space Element 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. Almost all of the soil in the Soledad area is considered Prime, or very well suited for agricultural production, and is considered a resource of local, regional, and even national significance. The Conservation and Open Space Element protects agricultural lands that are not needed for urban development. The agricultural and undeveloped lands in and around the City also contribute to a diverse range of resident and migrant wildlife species. The Element includes policies for the protection of biological resources, including wildlife, riparian communities, and native grasslands. The Element further provides policies for air quality, energy production and conservation, and for the protection of archaeological, cultural and historical resources.

Safety Element

The Safety Element identifies potential natural and human-made hazards and provides policies, programs and standards to protect people and property from such hazards, including flooding, fire, geologic hazards, and seismic hazards. The Element also provides goals and programs for efficient emergency preparedness.

Noise Element

The Noise Element provides policies, programs and standards to alleviate the problems associated with excessive noise. It identifies the major sources of noise (i.e., US 101 and the UPRR), estimates their impacts on the community, and provides various methods to mitigate their impacts, particularly on noise-sensitive uses such as residential areas, schools, churches and playgrounds.

3.3.2.2 Economic Development Strategy (2011)

Local economic development in the City was previously provided almost exclusively through the Soledad Redevelopment Agency (RDA). The City developed the Economic Development Strategy in alignment with the parameters of the Redevelopment Agency's fiscal and staffing constraints. The Economic Development Strategy identifies key issues that have both a direct and indirect impact on Soledad's business community. The Strategy identifies corresponding strategic goals to address each issue, and develops a series of specifically focused actions with an accompanying Action Implementation Plan. Recent actions taken by the state have abolished redevelopment agencies. As the Strategy was so closely aligned with the Soledad RDA, its implementation program is expected to be less aggressive and the future use and development of former RDA-owned properties will be less predictable. Nevertheless, the policies in the Strategy are still applicable to potential projects. Therefore, the proposed project has been analyzed for consistency with the Strategy.

3.3.2.3 Community Design Guidelines and Standards (2010)

Approved on October 6, 2011, the Community Design Guidelines and Standards set the stage for the community's vision that will drive the physical form of the City. The Guidelines promotes structures, urban spaces and landscapes that are enjoyable to view, experience and reside in or by. Soledad's design anchor is its historic downtown, reminiscent of "Main Street" America, and the community vision set out in the Guidelines originates from a desire to create a compact pedestrian-oriented environment consistent with traditional California pre-1950 towns. The Guidelines are the primary basis for design review by City staff, the Architectural Review Committee, the Planning Commission, and the City Council and help ensure that future development projects will incorporate the quality and character desired by Soledad residents.

The Guidelines describe the desired character of Soledad as including indigenous architectural styles rather than foreign, traditional rather than modern, rustic rather than polished, human-scaled rather than monumentally-scaled, and animated and ornamented front facades that face the public realm rather than blank walls. The design and architectural standards set forth in the proposed Specific Plan are generally consistent with these ideals, and include standards to support the small town-scale through the design of appealing and pedestrian-oriented buildings and spaces. The proposed project is considered to be consistent with this plan.

3.3.2.4 Coast Daylight Implementation Plan

The Coast Daylight Implementation Plan is the result of an effort by the Coast Rail Coordinating Council to increase passenger service on the Coast Route. The railroad route between San Francisco and Los Angeles is currently serviced by the Coast Starlight and Surfliner trains. However, only the Coast Starlight operates through Soledad; the Surfliner service does not operate north of San Luis Obispo. The Plan sets forth the purpose, vision and operating plan for an additional service train, the Coast Daylight, to run from San Luis Obispo to San Francisco, and states that a stop at Soledad is planned for the future, based on future growth and additional factors.

The proposed Specific Plan includes policies for encouraging long-term development of an intermodal transit station to accommodate railway and bus services consistent with this Plan. For example, Action 22.4 sets forth a plan to "pursue and design a multi-modal transit center to accommodate passenger rail, local bus service and vehicular drop off". The Implementation Plan does not include specific goals, policies, or implementation measures; however, the proposed project site is under City ownership and it complements and is considered to be consistent with the Plan.

3.3.3 Consistency Analysis

Table 3-1 presents a summary of the consistency evaluation between the proposed Specific Plan (project) and the applicable plans and policies listed above. Additional consistency analysis with local plans and policies is provided in the individual environmental analysis sections of the EIR. For example, Section 4.6, Water Resources, includes an assessment of the project's consistency with the Urban Water Management Plan. To the extent that the proposed project may be inconsistent with portions of these documents, remedies such as project revisions, special conditions of approval, variance, or plan amendments may be required. All adverse physical effects resulting from any inconsistency are discussed in the appropriate environmental analysis sections of the EIR (refer to Chapter 5).

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
General Plan – Land Use Element (2005)		
<p>Goal 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.</p>	<p>A primary goal of the project is to bring growth to the City's historic Front street corridor by encouraging commercial and entertainment uses that will draw locals and visitors. A public economic forum was held in October 2011, and the community-driven economic goals for building a stronger downtown were utilized in developing the proposed Specific Plan.</p>	Consistent
<p>Goal 2. To manage the growth of the town so that adequate facilities and services can be provided in pace with development.</p>	<p>Pursuant to state law, the project included a review of public services and facilities within the City and the adequacy of such facilities to accommodate growth that would be expected to result from the project. Under current infrastructure improvement plans and impact fees generated from development, most of the City's infrastructure would remain adequate to meet potential buildout without further investment. The Specific Plan and EIR (See Section 4.3, Hydrology and Water Quality and Section 4.6, Water Resources) include measures to ensure any necessary improvements are identified prior to development, and that improvements occur in advance of, or concurrent with, new development.</p>	Consistent
<p>Goal 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.</p>	<p>A primary goal of the project is to bring growth to the City's historic Front street corridor by encouraging commercial and entertainment uses that will draw locals and visitors. A public economic forum was held in October 2011, and the community-driven economic goals for building a stronger downtown were utilized in developing the proposed Specific Plan.</p>	Consistent
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>Pursuant to state law, the project included a review of public services and facilities within the City and the adequacy of such facilities to accommodate growth that would be expected to result from the project. Under current infrastructure improvement plans and impact fees generated from development, most of the City's infrastructure would remain adequate to meet potential buildout without further investment. The Specific Plan and EIR (See Section 4.3, Hydrology and Water Quality and Section 4.6, Water Resources) include measures to ensure any necessary</p>	Consistent

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
	improvements are identified prior to development, and that improvements occur in advance of, or concurrent with, new development.	
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan proposes many design, landscaping and architectural guidelines that would enhance the visual character of the Plan Area, including continuous streetscapes with compatible buildings, preservation/enhancement of historic details, shade trees and pedestrian- and viewer-friendly plazas and outdoor spaces.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy L-18. The infill of existing lots shall be encouraged.</p>	<p>The project proposes infill development within the downtown area consistent with this policy.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>Urban services, parks and public transit are all available in the downtown area. The project proposes higher-density infill housing, particularly in the Monterey Street (a collector street) and Vosti Park areas. Flexible live/work uses that are compatible with the neighborhood environment are also proposed in proximity to these public services.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The project provides for commercial development in the South Gateway sub-area, surrounding the US 101 off-ramp/Front Street/Nestles Road intersection, but proposes to focus such development on highway-serving uses or big box retail. The project also encourages limited commercial development within residential areas to serve surrounding neighborhoods.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>A project goal is to boost economic vitality of the historic downtown and surrounding areas, and the project plans for substantial commercial growth in the South Gateway area and on the west side of Front Street consistent with this policy.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy L-23. In general, new retail commercial development should provide a wider range of shopping opportunities for the community.</p>	<p>The project seeks to transform Front Street into the commercial, entertainment, and cultural center of the City by restoring historic buildings, enhancing the streetscape, and bringing new energy and pedestrian activity to the area through various development projects, including a movie theater, station plaza and train depot, and government center. The infill development proposed in the</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
	Specific Plan would create a more continuous pattern of active shopfront business and some residential frontages on cross streets, which will encourage more pedestrian activity and help stimulate and support economic activity and a sense of community within the downtown.	
Policy L-24. New commercial development shall be designed to encourage safe and efficient pedestrian circulation within and between commercial sites and nearby residential neighborhoods.	The project seeks to transform Front Street into the commercial, entertainment, and cultural center of the City by restoring historic buildings, enhancing the streetscape, and bringing new energy and pedestrian activity to the area through various development projects, including a movie theater, hotel, station plaza and train depot, and government center. The infill development proposed in the Specific Plan would create a more continuous pattern of active shopfront business and some residential frontages on cross streets, which will encourage more pedestrian activity and help stimulate and support economic activity and a sense of community within the downtown. Multi-family development planned for the Vosti Park area would also be suited to pedestrian circulation with commercial uses in the South Gateway and Front Street areas.	Consistent
Policy L-25. New commercial development shall be designed to minimize the visibility of parking areas from public roadways.	The proposed Specific Plan recognizes the benefits of parking placement in the rear of buildings, utilizes a shared system of on- and off-street parking in strategically located public parking spaces, and provides that parking areas shall not be accessed from the main street unless no alleys or side streets are available in the commercial Front Street and Gateway areas. Allowed parking court frontages are enclosed by a low wall or hedge near the property line for visual compatibility with the adjacent streetscape. Block and street standards in the proposed Specific Plan provide for vehicular/service access to blocks through alleys to maintain a pedestrian-oriented streetscape.	Consistent
Policy 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.	The project proposes to restore historic buildings, enhance the streetscape, and bring new energy and pedestrian activity to the area through various development projects, including a hotel on Front Street. The proposed infill development would create a more continuous pattern of active shopfront business and some residential frontages on cross streets, which will encourage more	Consistent

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
	pedestrian activity and help stimulate and support economic activity and a sense of community within the downtown.	
<p>Policy L-27. Residences shall be allowed in conjunction with compatible commercial development on land designated Downtown Commercial.</p>	<p>The project discontinues the “Downtown Commercial” designation; however, it is consistent with the intent of this policy in that it allows various live/work uses within the downtown area, particularly in the Vosti Park and Monterey Street areas. These mixed uses will include professional offices and service uses that are compatible with the neighborhood environment.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy L-28. Offices and medical facilities may be located in areas designated for office development and within the Downtown.</p>	<p>Offices and medical facilities are permitted uses in the Downtown Core and Downtown Edge areas.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy L-30. The Downtown shall be developed in accordance with the design standards contained in the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Improvement Plan.</p>	<p>The project updates the 1996 Downtown Specific Plan and Front Street Improvement Plan to account for changed circumstances and goals of the community. It is intended to guide development in accordance with the design standards established through public outreach and economic and circulation analyses.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan has been created with each of these goals in mind. It seeks to transform Front Street into the commercial, entertainment, cultural, and civic center of the City by restoring historic buildings, enhancing the streetscape, and bringing new energy and pedestrian activity to the area through various development projects, including a movie theater, hotel, station plaza and train depot, and government center. The infill development proposed in the Specific Plan would create a more continuous pattern of active shopfront business and some residential frontages on cross streets, which will encourage more pedestrian activity and help stimulate and support economic activity and a sense of community within the downtown. The proposed Specific Plan also provides for improved pedestrian and bicycle access throughout the plan area and urban open spaces to support community gathering space for pedestrians and civic events.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy L-32. The City shall designate adequate, appropriately located lands for the development of City and County facilities</p>	<p>The project proposes development of various civic or governmental buildings and offices in the Plan Area, and allows</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
and offices, schools, medical facilities, water facilities, and public safety facilities.	for medical facilities and schools in various zones.	
Policy 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.	The project proposes the location of a government center in the Downtown Core area and various civic buildings in the Vosti Park area; it does not propose relocation of the post office.	Consistent
Policy 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.	The project proposes mixed-use spaces and more heavily integrated compatible uses, such as live-work areas and interconnected public plazas and parks with surrounding mixed-use residential and commercial areas. The proposed Specific Plan also proposes the use of shared parking facilities to better manage parking demands and more strategically utilize property in the downtown area.	Consistent
Policy L-39. The City and Redevelopment Agency shall promote the expansion of light industrial and business park development in the Los Coches industrial park.	The project plans for the relocation of light industrial uses in the Vosti Park area, to be replaced with civic, residential and community center uses. The industrial uses would be suited to the Los Coches industrial park area.	Consistent
Policy L-42. The City shall use <i>Community Design Guidelines</i> as a decision-making tool to ensure that new development incorporates the qualities and character desired by Soledad residents.	The proposed Specific Plan was developed consistent with the Community Design Guidelines. The drafting process also included a public outreach program to gather input from Soledad residents on the vision and desired character of the downtown area.	Consistent
Policy 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.	The architectural style standards were developed to maintain the small town character of Soledad, to apply the styles established in the vision program and to achieve compatibility with adjacent and surrounding properties. It creates specific standards to be used as a tool in design review, including sign control standards, height standards that would protect hillside views from incongruous infill development, and standards for the undergrounding of utilities (or placement in alleys) to the extent possible.	Consistent
Policy 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:	There are no ridgelines or steep slopes in the downtown area; the project would not result in development in those areas. The project incorporates screening elements to screen service,	Consistent

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Avoids locating structures along ridgelines and steep slopes. b. Incorporates design and screening measures to minimize the visibility of structures and graded areas. c. Maintains the character and visual quality of the area. 	<p>storage and trash areas, as well as to provide privacy at the back of lots and alongside streets. Designed frontages are utilized to create viewer- and pedestrian-friendly aspects at the front of lots; therefore, no additional screening is necessary. The architectural style standards were developed to maintain the small town character of Soledad, to apply the styles established in the vision program and to achieve compatibility with adjacent and surrounding properties.</p>	
<p>Policy L-47. The City may, where appropriate, require new development to provide pedestrian amenities along public sidewalks, such as seating and ‘pocket parks’.</p>	<p>The project includes standards for streetscape enhancements to improve the pedestrian experience, including use of additional and larger shade trees, improvements of medians and the lighting scheme to improve safety and visibility, and the addition of more benches, decorative planning areas, and public art in the “street tree zone” within sidewalks. The project would also enhance and add facilities to Vosti Park and provide for enhanced pedestrian and bicycle access and integration of the park into the downtown area. Building, frontage, sign, architectural style, and block and street standards in the proposed Specific Plan are all intended to maintain or generate walkable blocks and pedestrian-oriented streets.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan includes architectural design, signage and landscaping standards specifically tailored to the “Gateway” zone, the areas near and surrounding the Front Street exit off US 101, and the Downtown Edge, including the north end of Front Street that leads to the US 101 connection.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>New residential development in the plan area would be subject to standards consistent with the vision program and compatible with adjacent and surrounding properties. The proposed Specific Plan allows for a maximum of 2.5 story residential structures, landscaped unfenced front setbacks visually continuous within the block, streetscapes that include generous sidewalks (12 inch sidewalks on Monterey Street and all typical residential streets), and adequate on- and off-street parking.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
<p>Policy L-50. Multifamily development shall include usable open space for each dwelling and shall be designed to be integrated with the surrounding neighborhood.</p>	<p>The project proposes multi-family buildings with some shared open spaces through front, rear, and side setbacks, and/or shared courtyards. Additional standards have been developed to ensure neighborhood identity and compatibility. However, the project predominantly relies on public parks and a high quality public realm within the Plan Area to address open space for multi-family developments.</p>	<p>Potentially Inconsistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>Standards for light shielding have been incorporated into the proposed project to ensure light sources are not visible from public ways and to reduce off-site glare.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Standards in the proposed project require all renovations of historically significant structures to be consistent with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and associated Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings. In all refurbished buildings, original design elements and architectural details would be restored based on the original building design or incorporated as design features in the new design, depending on the extent of usable details that are present.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Program 2.5. The City will use redevelopment and other funding mechanisms to help revitalize the Downtown and other portions of the City.</p>	<p>The proposed project is the result of this effort, and is designed to revitalize the downtown area, historic Monterey Street neighborhoods, City gateways, Vosti Park, and railroad district. Although redevelopment funding is currently unavailable, other funding mechanisms will be used to achieve stated goals.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Program 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.</p>	<p>The proposed project is the result of this effort and sets forth design guidelines and a development code for utilization by the City as a decision-making tool for all development proposed within the plan area. The design styles and guidelines were created based on a public outreach process intended to gauge</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
	the quality and character of the downtown and surrounding areas desired by Soledad residents.	
<p>Program 2.11. The Downtown Specific Plan shall be revised to incorporate a Transit village Development Plan in accordance with Government Code Section 65460.</p>	<p>The proposed project revises the 1996 Downtown Specific Plan. However, while the proposed Specific Plan allows and plans for a station plaza and train depot on the west side of Front Street, it does not incorporate a Transit Village Development Plan as described in Government Code § 65460. The project does not prevent the incorporation of such a plan in the future.</p>	<p>Potentially Inconsistent</p>
<p>General Plan – Economic Development Element (2005)</p>		
<p>Goal 1. To improve the City’s overall economy and fiscal condition.</p>	<p>The goals of the proposed Specific Plan are to create a vibrant hub for commercial activity, entertainment and hospitality, and to create a revitalized, mixed-use downtown area that will spur renewed interest and investment in Soledad. Development standards have been designed to effectuate these purposes.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Goal 2. To ensure that new development does not impose a substantial financial burden to the City.</p>	<p>The goals of the proposed Specific Plan are to create a vibrant hub for commercial activity, entertainment and hospitality, and to create a revitalized, mixed-use downtown area that will spur renewed interest and investment in Soledad. Development standards have been designed to effectuate these purposes. The project further includes a required finding for Minor Use Permits and Conditional Use Permits, that the development would not be detrimental to the general welfare of the City (§ 1.54).</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Goal 3. To provide good local jobs for Soledad residents.</p>	<p>The goals of the proposed Specific Plan are to create a vibrant hub for commercial activity, entertainment and hospitality, and to create a revitalized, mixed-use downtown area that will spur renewed interest and investment in Soledad. Development standards have been designed to effectuate these purposes, which would provide more and better job options in the City.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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:</p>	<p>The goals of the proposed Specific Plan are to create a vibrant hub for commercial activity, entertainment and hospitality, and to create a revitalized, mixed-use downtown area that will spur renewed interest and investment in Soledad. Development</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	standards have been designed to effectuate these purposes. The revitalization of downtown would promote Soledad businesses and provide additional business opportunities.	
<p>Policy 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.</p>	The goals of the proposed Specific Plan are to create a vibrant hub for commercial activity, entertainment and hospitality, and to create a revitalized, mixed-use downtown area that will spur renewed interest and investment in Soledad. Development standards have been designed to effectuate these purposes. The revitalization of downtown would promote Soledad businesses and provide additional business opportunities.	Consistent
<p>Policy 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.</p>	The goals of the proposed Specific Plan are to create a vibrant hub for commercial activity, entertainment and hospitality, and to create a revitalized, mixed-use downtown area that will spur renewed interest and investment in Soledad. Development standards have been designed to effectuate these purposes. The revitalization of downtown would promote tourism opportunities within the City.	Consistent
<p>Policy 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 to recruit a small to midsize movie theater.</p>	The project proposes development of several downtown attractions, including a movie theater, community center, park enhancements, government center, multi-family and senior housing projects, a station plaza and train depot, and/or community college facilities. The proposed Specific Plan was developed in coordination with the business community through various public outreach programs.	Consistent
<p>Policy 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.</p>	The proposed Specific Plan includes many detailed standards for creating an attractive, pedestrian-friendly streetscape system in the plan area. Building, frontage, sign, architectural design, and block and street standards are all designed to maintain and	Consistent

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
	improve the City's streetscapes. The Plan also proposes park enhancements at Vosti Park, including a permanent soccer field, shaded pathways, tree groves, and improved walkable connectivity to a nearby community center and residences.	
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The uses proposed in the Specific Plan, including a hotel, government center, and potentially community college, would spur growth in Soledad, and would create transient occupancy taxes and higher-paying job opportunities.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>General Plan – Housing Element (2009)</p>		
<p>Policy 1.2. The City of Soledad shall ensure adequate vacant land suitably zoned and prepared for residential development and/or redevelopment is available to continue to meet the City's housing need as identified by AMBAG, both within the existing city boundaries and in newly annexed areas proposed for development.</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan allows for a mix of single family and multi-family residential uses in various zones, including mixed-use residential, commercial and/or light industrial uses.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 1.3. In determining appropriate locations and zoning land for future housing, including market-rate housing as well as price-restricted affordable housing, the City will encourage proposed projects that are accessible to employment centers and services, including child care, public transit, schools, and local commercial uses, as well as in terms of meeting its housing needs allocation.</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan provides for higher-density residential infill, as well as multi-family housing, adjacent to important public and community areas such as Vosti Park, public transit, commercial uses and employment centers in the downtown area. It also improves integration and connectivity of these services to surrounding residential areas.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 2.1. The City of Soledad shall require new residential subdivisions and development in its Expansion or Specific Plan areas to provide for an integrated mix of housing types and affordability levels that closely approximate the City's 2007-2012 "fair share" housing allocation as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 39% of units affordable to households of lower income (very low- and low-income) • 19% of units affordable to households with moderate incomes, • 42% of units affordable to households with above moderate incomes. 	<p>The project includes guidelines for a mixture of residential building types for single- and multi-family housing throughout the plan area. It also proposes a senior housing development and various flexible mixed-use residential developments.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
The City will achieve its housing allocation by requiring that a range of housing choices be provided to accommodate varied household needs (e.g., families, seniors).		
Policy 4.1. To the extent permitted by available funding, the City of Soledad will continue to assist qualified income households whose housing units are in need of rehabilitation.	The proposed Specific Plan includes standards that directly support the rehabilitation of existing housing as well as the development of new housing that is compatible with neighboring properties.	Consistent
Policy 5.1. The City of Soledad shall ensure that City site improvement standards, development review procedures, and development fees do not unreasonably constrain the development, conservation, and rehabilitation of housing.	The project creates standards and processes that would streamline the development review procedure in the plan area. Proposed Specific Plan standards support the rehabilitation of existing housing and development of new housing that is compatible and congruous with the neighboring properties.	Consistent
General Plan – Circulation Element (2005)		
Goal 1. To provide a safe and efficient circulation network to meet the present and future needs of the City.	<p>The proposed Specific Plan includes a Mobility and Infrastructure analysis, the results of which were utilized to establish the street and block standards. Recommendations were made for enhancing downtown access, providing rail property access, improving bicycle facilities, utilizing roundabouts as a way to accommodate the “five-legged” US 101/Front Street/Nestles Road intersection, and improving transit services and parking utilization rates. Standards were designed to ensure the safety of motorists and pedestrians in light of the intensified pedestrian and cycling uses.</p> <p>The traffic report prepared for the proposed Specific Plan found that all studied intersections currently operate at acceptable levels of service (LOS). However, several “all-way-stop-controlled” intersections along Front Street would degrade to unacceptable LOS at buildout under the General Plan. The report recommended installation of traffic signals at these intersections to achieve acceptable LOS for year 2030 volumes. The need for signalization of individual intersections would be analyzed in the context of each individual development project proposed, and the Specific Plan does not include any standards</p>	Consistent

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
	that would deter or inhibit their installation.	
<p>Goal 2. To encourage the use of alternative forms of transportation other than the automobile.</p>	<p>A major component of the proposed Specific Plan is to create a more walkable, pedestrian-oriented downtown, and to better connect surrounding residential areas to the downtown. Each of the standards included in the proposed project were designed to improve the streetscape and pedestrian experience. Shared on- and off-street parking in strategically located public parking area is proposed to encourage walking within the downtown area.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Goal 3. To create a pedestrian friendly, walkable community.</p>	<p>A major component of the proposed Specific Plan is to create a more walkable, pedestrian-oriented downtown, and to better connect surrounding residential areas to the downtown to encourage pedestrian and bike activity. Each of the standards included in the proposed project were designed to improve the streetscape and pedestrian experience. Shared on- and off-street parking in strategically located public parking area is proposed to encourage walking within the downtown area.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The traffic study prepared for the project found that several all-way-stop-controlled intersections along Front Street would degrade to unacceptable LOS at buildout. The report recommends signalization of these intersections to achieve acceptable LOS, and the proposed Specific Plan would allow these improvements. Specific analysis of a development’s contribution to traffic at any of the intersections and the need for signalization would be determined at the time of development proposal. Cumulative development would potentially degrade levels of service at several intersections within the Plan Area to LOS F. Mitigation has been recommended to achieve LOS C or better at all but the Front Street/Nestles Road/US 101 intersections if the proposed roundabout is utilized. Growth projections used in the cumulative scenario are higher than what is not expected, and traffic engineers indicate that the roundabout can be designed to meet an acceptable LOS.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy C-2. Streets shall be dedicated, widened, extended and constructed in accordance with City standards. Dedication and improvements of rights-of-way shall not be required in existing</p>	<p>The project includes block and street standards for development and improvement of streets, consistent with this policy.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
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.		
Policy 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.	The project proposes “complete streets” in the downtown area modeled after those currently existing along Front Street, including travel lanes, on-street parking, bike lanes and generous sidewalks. Residential areas would be subject to front setback standards to provide separation from the street, and the wide sidewalks are considered suitable separation for commercial downtown areas, as the more continuous pattern of active shopfront businesses would enhance the streetscape and increase foot traffic. The traffic report prepared for the project found that existing streets would be sufficient to handle expected growth with the signalization of a few currently stop-controlled intersections.	Consistent
Policy C-4. On arterial roadways, intersection spacing shall be maximized. New driveways along collector and arterial roadways shall be minimized or prohibited completely.	The project proposes rear and side driveway entrances consistent with this section.	Consistent
Policy 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.	The project would better connect residential neighborhoods to the downtown area and important public facilities such as parks and community centers. It does not propose any changes to the existing standard street grid pattern, and proposes utilization of the same logical pattern in expansion areas adjacent to the railroad tracks.	Consistent
Policy 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 nonresidential traffic (especially truck traffic) is confined to nonresidential areas.	The project proposes additional commercial and retail development in the South Gateway area and Downtown Core area, on the west side of Front Street. Access to these areas would be primarily provided by US 101 on- and off-ramps, Front Street, and Main Street and East Street (existing arterial streets	Consistent

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
	that extend through residential areas east of downtown). The project would not encourage additional use of or rerouting of traffic onto residential streets.	
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>Only one private at-grade crossing of the railroad tracks currently exists at the southwest end of Main Street. The project discusses alternative access options should this area be developed, including a pedestrian overpass, a grade-separated vehicular crossing, and an improved at-grade crossing. However, the proposed Specific Plan recognizes that improved at-grade crossings are rarely approved by the California Public Utilities Commission and does not present this as a likely feasible option.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>Existing plus Project conditions would degrade the Level of Service at the East Street/Monterey Street intersection to LOS F. Measures for signalization of this intersection have been included to improve the Level of Service to LOS C or better under Existing plus Project and Cumulative conditions. All other studied intersections would continue to operate at acceptable levels. New development will be required to implement necessary improvements to maintain acceptable traffic levels.</p> <p>Cumulative development would potentially degrade levels of service at several intersections within the Plan Area to LOS F. Mitigation has been recommended to achieve LOS C or better at all but the Front Street/Nestles Road/US 101 intersections if the proposed roundabout is utilized. Growth projections used in the cumulative scenario are higher than what is not expected, and traffic engineers indicate that the roundabout can be designed to meet an acceptable LOS.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy C-9. New local streets shall be developed consistent with the goals, policies and programs of the Land Use Element of the General Plan.</p>	<p>The project and its proposed circulation policies are consistent with the Land Use Element, as discussed above.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan incorporates standards for development of bike lanes, generous sidewalks and shared parking facilities to encourage walking within the downtown.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
incorporated into new development, and shall be encouraged in existing development.		
Policy C-11. The City will continue to support the policies and programs of the Monterey County Congestion Management Plan.	The project includes substantial traffic calming measures through proposed enhancements and expansion of pedestrian and bicycle facilities and additional public transit, consistent with this policy.	Consistent
Policy C-15. New development shall continue the existing street pattern, where logical.	The proposed Specific Plan recommends continuation of the downtown street and block structure to establish an ideal street layout for future development in the potential expansion area west of the railroad tracks.	Consistent
Policy C-16. Roundabouts will be considered as an alternative to traditional intersection controls.	The proposed Specific Plan analyzes the potential use of roundabouts at the US 101 off-ramp/Front Street/Nestles Road intersection as a viable alternative to traditional traffic controls.	Consistent
Policy 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.	The proposed Specific Plan proposes a shared parking system, where non-residential uses in the downtown area share strategically placed public parking areas to encourage walking within the downtown. Analysis of existing parking shows more than sufficient parking is available and standards have been developed to ensure parking (either shared or not) is provided for all new uses.	Consistent
Policy 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.	The proposed Specific Plan does not provide separate or distinct parking or storage for recreational vehicles or boats. Currently, the area south of Downtown Soledad caters to US 101 traffic and includes large open parking areas to accommodate these types of vehicles. The proposed Specific Plan includes policies that would concentrate key projects in the downtown area, rather than at the north or south ends of the City adjacent to the highway on- and off-ramps. The downtown area provides more limited parking options for large vehicles, RVs, or vehicles pulling trailers.	Potentially Inconsistent
Policy 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	The proposed Specific Plan includes standards for bicycle lanes on all typical residential streets, as well as specifically South Main Street, Monterey Street, and Dixie Street. The proposed Plan also recommends provision of short-term bicycle parking racks within the public right-of-way and at the proposed intermodal	Consistent

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
areawide bicycle system.	station, and long-term bicycle storage for tenants and residences.	
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The City has provided Class II on-street bike lanes in the downtown area. A dense network of bike lanes covers nearly every block, and generally only those streets that are unusually narrow or contain angled parking currently lack bike lanes. The proposed Specific Plan includes standards for bicycle lanes on all typical residential streets, as well as specifically South Main Street, Monterey Street, and Dixie Street. The proposed Plan also recommends provision of short-term bicycle parking racks within the public right-of-way and at the proposed intermodal station, and long-term bicycle storage for tenants and residences.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan provides for improved bike facilities and connectivity between the downtown area and adjacent residential areas to encourage increased bicycle usage as an everyday form of transportation. It recommends the conversion of angled parking spaces to “back-in” angled parking, which would improve visibility and safety for cyclists.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy C-23. Bike lanes and paths shall be established when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<p>The project includes standards for bike lanes and paths on almost every street within the Plan Area, as well as numerous policies for improving the bike network and recreational bicycling opportunities.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy C-24. Stop signs shall be minimized along Class I bicycle paths so long as safety for bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists is maintained.</p>	<p>The project recommends replacement of stop signs with signalized intersections to account for increased traffic congestion associated with projected growth under the Plan. It also discusses and includes provisions for bicyclist and pedestrian safety, consistent with this policy.</p>	<p>Consistent.</p>
<p>Policy C-25. New development shall provide bike lanes and paths, secure bicycle storage and parking facilities.</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan provides for improved bike facilities and connectivity between the downtown area and adjacent residential areas to encourage increased bicycle usage as an everyday form of transportation. The proposed Plan also recommends provision of short-term bicycle parking racks within</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
	the public right-of-way and at the proposed intermodal station, and long-term bicycle storage for tenants and residences.	
Policy C-26. The City shall encourage that bike racks be installed on regional transit vehicles.	While the proposed Specific Plan does not directly require that bike racks be installed on regional transit facilities, the project proposes additional bus services and design of the project area to encourage walkable/bike-able neighborhoods. The project does not include any policies that would deter installation of bike racks on regional transit vehicles, and encourages uses that would create increased demand/interest in these amenities.	Consistent
Policy 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.	The proposed Specific Plan provides for improved pedestrian facilities and connectivity between downtown and the city gateways and adjacent residential areas to encourage increased pedestrian usage. The proposed Specific Plan incorporates standards for generous sidewalks, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, and shared parking facilities to encourage walking within the downtown. The sidewalk system proposed for the plan area could easily be extended to include pedestrian trails in the surrounding open space areas.	Consistent
Policy 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.	The proposed Specific Plan incorporates numerous standards for sidewalks and pedestrian paths; all such paths would be consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and are consistent with applicable local plans as described herein.	Consistent
Policy C-29. Pedestrian crossings at heavily traveled intersections shall be made as safe as possible, utilizing neckdowns/bulbouts where feasible. Crossing controls shall be installed when traffic levels warrant.	The proposed Specific Plan included a Mobility study to determine traffic issues in the plan area, and based on the results of that study, drafted Block and Street standards that would support a network of walkable, pedestrian-oriented streets.	Consistent
Policy 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.	The project proposes improved public transit facilities, an improved system of bike lanes, and development of an intermodal station serviced by the train or Amtrak buses if Soledad is not selected as a train station site.	Consistent
Policy C-33. The City will work with the appropriate agencies to establish a train station in Soledad.	The project is consistent with the Coast Daylight Implementation Plan, and directs the City to pursue and design a multi-modal transit center to accommodate passenger rail, local bus service	Consistent

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
	and vehicular drop off.	
<p>Policy C-34. The City may reduce required parking for projects that employ transit demand management strategies that reduce vehicle trips to the site.</p>	<p>The project proposes utilization of a “shared parking” approach, where properties can generate building area and land use activity while grouping parking facilities throughout the plan area. Individual businesses may choose to either provide parking on their individual building site or to share the available parking spaces within the “park once” boundaries. If they choose to utilize shared parking, more of the individual parcel would be available as building area.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy C-38. Truck circulation routes shall be as described by Figure V-3.</p>	<p>Figure V-3 shows truck routes along Front Street and State Route 146. The proposed Specific Plan includes standards for a pedestrian-oriented Front Street, and truck traffic may degrade the walkable quality of the downtown area through noise and fumes. However, the proposed Specific Plan recognizes that a by-pass of truck traffic could also inhibit economic growth in the downtown area and recommends that the proposed State Route 146 by-pass project be designed to include downtown access, particularly to the railroad properties.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>General Plan – Parks and Recreation Element (2005)</p>		
<p>Goal 1. Provide a high quality public park system containing adequate park acreage and varied recreational facilities that are accessible to all Soledad residents.</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan proposes various improvements to Vosti Park, including a permanent soccer field, additional shade trees, and a shaded path meandering around the park and providing access to adjacent residences. The plan also proposed urban public space as a recreational component to the downtown pedestrian environment, through utilization of enhanced streetscapes and visually stimulating buildings and sidewalks. However, the plan also proposes long-term conversion of Cesar Chaves Park to new commercial development on the west side of Front Street. However, a survey of park usage indicated that the park is underutilized and predominantly serves as visual open space.</p>	<p>Potentially Inconsistent</p>
<p>Goal 2. Work toward achieving a ratio of five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan allows growth by as much as 464 additional dwelling units and a potential population increase of</p>	<p>Potentially Inconsistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
	<p>1,828 people. The project would convert 0.61-acres of existing park area to commercial uses and does not provide for any traditional park acreage within the plan area. However, it does provide significant improvements to Vosti Park and would create extensive urban spaces that would serve urban recreational uses (i.e., walking and biking) with visually interesting streetscapes and interconnected neighborhoods.</p>	
<p>Goal 6. Encourage the use of reclaimed water for landscape irrigation.</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan allows the use of reclaimed water for landscape irrigation, and the City is actively pursuing funding to complete the infrastructure required to provide recycled water to existing residential, agricultural, and recreational uses. The recycled water will be encouraged for outdoor water uses within new developments.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy PR-1. The City will acquire future park and recreation land and facilities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<p>The proposed Specific Plan provides for significant improvements to existing Vosti Park, adds significant recreational opportunities in the urban setting, through development of visually-stimulating and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, and recognizes the potential for recreational activities along the Salinas River and in the foothills east of the City. All development undertaken in the plan area would be subject to applicable park impact fees, and the plan requires private or shared front, side and rear setbacks for open space or recreational uses. When appropriate, the City could require future residential subdivisions to dedicate park land consistent with this policy.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
<p>Policy PR-10. The City should provide a pedestrian network within the City Limits. The system should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<p>The proposed Specific Plan provides for an expansive network of pedestrian and bicycle pathways and facilities, including through the development of pedestrian-oriented streetscapes, the provision of bike lanes on almost all streets within the plan area, improved connectivity between residential areas and the downtown area, improvements to Vosti Park and development of residential and civic uses surrounding the park to provide a recreational community gathering place.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>Improvements proposed in the Vosti Park sub-area are intended to create a seamless extension of the Front Street and Monterey Street environments. A reconfigured block structure would provide direct pedestrian access to Vosti park from Front Street and a view corridor from downtown to the community center and park entrance. The project proposes to integrate the multi-family housing and civic uses surrounding the park to reinforce its function as a key public gathering space for the downtown area and the City as a whole.</p>	<p>Potentially Inconsistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan includes measures for adding to and enhancing the Vosti Park area. However, the vision program set forth in the Specific Plan creates mixed-use, integrated live/work/play areas. It includes measures intended to integrate residential uses with commercial, retail and recreational uses within the plan area and to provide for a walkable, bike-able downtown area. Standards set forth in the Plan are designed to minimize conflicts between development and existing facilities. The Plan also includes standards for property setbacks and limited screening and fencing, if these are deemed appropriate or necessary.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy PR-25. New development shall not adversely impact adjacent park, recreation or open space lands.</p>	<p>The development envisioned by the proposed Specific Plan would be designed to integrate seamlessly into a pedestrian-friendly, walkable work/live/play space. It would enhance and expand adjacent park and recreational uses, extending them to urban open areas in the downtown area characterized by generous sidewalks and visually appealing streetscapes.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The project proposes various improvements to Vosti Park and the addition of extensive urban public spaces to serve as recreational gathering places. All new development would contribute to the pedestrian-friendly outdoor environment and be subject to applicable in lieu fees.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Program 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.</p>	<p>The project proposes various improvements to Vosti Park and the addition of extensive urban public spaces to serve as recreational gathering places. All new development would contribute to the pedestrian-friendly outdoor environment and be subject to applicable in lieu fees.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>General Plan – Public Services and Facilities (2005)</p>		
<p>Goal 1. To provide the level of public services desired by the residents at an equitable cost.</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan would guide infill development within the downtown and adjacent areas. The entire plan area is currently serviced by existing public services and facilities, which have sufficient capacity to serve the infill growth that would result from the project. No new facilities would be required, other than routine maintenance, and current infrastructure improvement plans and impact fees generated through the planned development would be adequate to meet potential build out in the plan area.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Goal 2. To ensure the provision of public services keeps pace with new development.</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan would guide infill development within the downtown and adjacent areas. The entire plan area is currently serviced by existing public services and facilities, which have sufficient capacity to serve the infill growth that would result from the project. No new facilities would be required, other than routine maintenance, and current infrastructure improvement plans and impact fees generated through the planned development would be adequate to meet potential build out in the plan area.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
<p>Policy 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<p>The proposed Specific Plan included an analysis of and potential impacts to infrastructure, including wastewater, drinking water, stormwater drainage, solid waste disposal, and energy. All infrastructure systems were found to be sufficient to accommodate planned infill growth in the area, and development in lieu fees are expected to be sufficient to fund necessary improvements/maintenance needs. Development projects within the plan area would be subject to additional development review processes at the time they are proposed.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>All development within the plan area would be subject to standard development in lieu fees, which, along with existing facilities, have been determined to be adequate to meet build out under the plan.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy S-8. The City shall promote the efficient use of water and reduced water demand by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<p>The plan requires automatic irrigation for all landscaped areas and setbacks but does not specifically include water conservation policies. However, the City is actively pursuing funding to complete the infrastructure required to provide recycled water to existing residential, agricultural, and recreational uses. Measures have been included in the EIR to encourage water conservation and the use of recycled water will be encouraged for outdoor water uses within new development.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy S-9. The City will explore the potential for use of reclaimed water for landscape irrigation or other appropriate use.</p>	<p>The plan requires automatic irrigation for all landscaped areas and setbacks but does not specifically include water conservation policies. However, the City is actively pursuing funding to complete the infrastructure required to provide recycled water to existing residential, agricultural, and recreational uses. Measures have been included in the EIR to encourage water conservation and the use of recycled water will be encouraged for outdoor water uses within new development.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The 2010 Urban Water Implementation Plan does not indicate that the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin is at risk of overdraft or that the proposed project would result in increased water demand that would exceed groundwater supplies.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The proposed project does not include any drainage or runoff policies or standards. However, the Plan Area is comprised of the Downtown Soledad area, which is largely developed and has existing stormwater infrastructure. The project could result in additional developed areas and increased runoff; however, existing infrastructure is expected to be sufficient to accommodate the additional growth, and the EIR includes mitigation measures to reduce the potential for stormwater runoff.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The proposed project does not include any drainage or runoff policies or standards. However, the Plan Area is comprised of the Downtown Soledad area, which is largely developed and has existing stormwater infrastructure. The project could result in additional developed areas and increased runoff; however, the existing infrastructure is expected to be sufficient to accommodate the additional growth, and the EIR includes mitigation measures to reduce the potential for stormwater runoff.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The proposed project does not include any drainage or runoff policies or standards. However, the Plan Area is comprised of the Downtown Soledad area, which is largely developed and has existing stormwater infrastructure. The project could result in additional developed areas and increased runoff; however, the existing infrastructure is expected to be sufficient to accommodate the additional growth, and the EIR includes mitigation measures to reduce the potential for stormwater runoff.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The proposed project does not include any drainage or runoff policies or standards. However, the Plan Area is comprised of the Downtown Soledad area, which is largely developed and has existing stormwater infrastructure. The project could result in additional developed areas and increased runoff; however, the existing infrastructure is expected to be sufficient to</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
	accommodate the additional growth, and the EIR includes mitigation measures to reduce the potential for stormwater runoff.	
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The infill development proposed by the project would utilize existing storm drainage systems. The proposed Specific Plan does not contain drainage standards; however, nothing has been set forth in the plan that would conflict with or be inconsistent with this policy. The General Plan standards would apply equally to development within the plan area and the City review process would ensure consistency with this policy. All responsible agencies, including the RWQCB, Monterey County Environmental Health, and Monterey County Water Resources Department have been included in the review process for the proposed Specific Plan.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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.</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan does not contain drainage standards; however, nothing has been set forth in the plan that would conflict with or be inconsistent with this policy. The General Plan standards would apply equally to development within the plan area and the City review process would ensure consistency with this policy.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy S-29. The City shall strive to achieve and maintain a ratio of a minimum of 1 police officer per 1,000 residents.</p>	<p>The non-inmate population of Soledad is 15,595 (2010 Census) and the police department currently employs 13 sworn patrol officers, for a ratio of approximately 1 officer for every 1,200 residents. The minimum goal of 1:1000 is currently not being met, and the proposed Specific Plan would increase the non-inmate population, further degrading the ratio.</p> <p>Buildout under the proposed Specific Plan would result in the addition of 464 additional dwelling units, or a population increase of approximately 1982 people (464 x 4.27 average persons per household [2010 Census]). Two additional police officers would be needed to accommodate the additional population at the desired ratio. Development within the plan area would be subject to standard development fees, which would generate an estimated \$1,250,000 for capital improvements in the police department as well as increased activity and sales tax, which could be used to provide additional officers.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
Policy S-30. The City shall strive to achieve and maintain emergency response time to a maximum of 5 minutes for police emergencies.	The project proposes infill development within the downtown and surrounding areas. Traffic generated at buildout is not expected to exceed capacity of the existing street system, except for signalization of several stop-controlled intersections. The project is not expected to cause any delay in police response times and standard development fees would be generated to improve/maintain police protection services.	Consistent
Policy 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.	All development within the plan area would be subject to standard development fees. Based on anticipated growth in the plan area, an estimated \$1,250,000 would be generated for police protection facilities.	Consistent
Policy S-33. The City shall consider public safety issues in all aspects of commercial and residential project design, including crime prevention through design.	The project proposes several design standards that would improve safety, particularly improved lighting plans and street designs to address bike and pedestrian safety.	Consistent
Policy 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.	The project proposes infill development within the downtown and surrounding areas. Traffic generated at buildout is not expected to exceed capacity of the existing street system, except for signalization of several stop-controlled intersections. The project is not expected to cause any delay in fire response times and standard development fees would be generated to improve/maintain fire protection services.	Consistent
Policy 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 S35 and S36.	All development within the plan area would be subject to standard development fees. Based on anticipated growth in the plan area, an estimated \$840,000 would be generated for the fire department.	Consistent
Policy 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.	All development under the proposed Specific Plan would go through the City's standard development review procedure and would be subject to and consistent with the Uniform Fire Code and other City standards and ordinances.	Consistent
Program 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.	All development within the plan area would be subject to standard development fees. Existing infrastructure and estimated development fees are generally expected to be sufficient to offset	Consistent

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
	the cost of public services and facilities improvements.	
General Plan – Conservation and Open Space Element (2005)		
<p>Goal 1. To protect the City’s natural, cultural, visual and historical resources.</p>	<p>The proposed project would improve the visual character of the downtown and surrounding areas through architectural design of buildings and open spaces. The plan area includes infill areas within the City’s footprint, and would not result in degradation of any natural spaces. Rather, it proposes the creation of extensive urban public spaces to serve as visually-pleasing gathering spaces for residents. The proposed project includes standards to preserve historically significant and potentially historically significant properties, as well as items in the implementation plan for continued rehabilitation loan and grant programs to maintain existing historic homes.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Goal 7. To preserve historic resources within and surrounding the City.</p>	<p>The proposed project includes standards to preserve historically significant and potentially historically significant properties, as well as items in the implementation plan for continued rehabilitation loan and grant programs to maintain existing historic homes. The proposed Specific Plan includes standards for development that is compatible with the existing historic resources within the City, including policies to preserve, emphasize and maintain historic and architectural resources.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy C/OS-7. The City shall require new public and private development to protect scenic resources by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<p>The plan area is limited to areas within the city limits and would not generate development along ridgelines or steep slopes. The proposed Specific Plan includes standards for landscaping to provide visual interest, open outdoor spaces, and screening when necessary. The proposed infill development would not result in significant land alterations as the plan area is largely developed or consists of relatively flat, vacant lots.</p> <p>Roads and parking facilities have been designed to improve the visual character of the plan area and would create an efficient transportation and parking system. The Plan includes standards that utilities be placed underground or in alleys in the plan area. Building and architectural design standards would ensure compatibility with surrounding structures’ scale and character, as</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
<p>scenic resource being protected;</p> <p>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 gradient contours that blend with the natural contours on site or look like contours that would naturally occur;</p> <p>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</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>well as the natural landscape. Building heights would be generally consistent with those currently existing, although the downtown could be developed with some taller buildings. These buildings would be compatible with surrounding uses, designed to be visually appealing, and consistent with the City's historic downtown areas.</p>	
<p>Policy C/OS-12. The City shall require developers to use native and compatible nonnative species, especially drought-tolerant species, to the extent possible in fulfilling landscaping requirements imposed as conditions of project approvals or project mitigations.</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan does not specifically designate the species to be used in landscaped areas, other than to require that they be compatible with the design styles proposed. The project does not include any standards that would inhibit the use of native and drought-tolerant species. The EIR includes measures for the use of drought-tolerant species, consistent with this policy (See Section 4.6, Water Resources).</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Policy 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</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan includes numerous policies and standards for improving and enhancing alternative transportation systems, including the bicycle network, public transit, pedestrian-oriented streets, and rail and/or Amtrak bus services.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
to, measures to reduce dependence on the automobile and encourage the use of alternate modes of transportation such as buses, bicycles and walking.		
Policy 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.	The proposed Specific Plan includes numerous policies and standards for improving and enhancing alternative transportation systems, including the bicycle network, public transit, pedestrian-oriented streets, and rail and/or Amtrak bus services.	Consistent
Policy 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.	The vision program set forth in the proposed Specific Plan includes the addition of street trees in every sub-area to increase shade, block winds, and provide visual interest.	Consistent
Policy C/OS 21. Landscaping plans for new development incorporate water conservation methods and shall employ native varieties of plants that are drought tolerant.	The proposed Specific Plan does not specifically require water conservation methods in new development or designate the species to be used in landscaped areas, other than to require that they be compatible with the design styles proposed. The project does not include any standards that would inhibit the use of conservation methods or native and drought-tolerant species. The EIR includes measures for water conservation consistent with this policy (See Section 4.6, Water Resources).	Consistent
Program 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.	The project has undergone CEQA review. The Air Quality analysis identifies potential air quality and greenhouse gas impacts that would result from the proposed project, and recommends measures for minimizing those effects consistent with the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District's 2008 Air Quality Management Plan.	Consistent
Program 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.	The City completed a Historical Resources Inventory in 2010, which identifies historically significant and potentially historically significant sites. The proposed project identified these historically significant sites and sets forth standards for preservation and/or restoration of these properties, such as renovations in compliance with the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and associated Guidelines for preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings,	Consistent

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
	preservation of all historic building detailing, preservation and restoration of original storefronts, and consistency of additions to the original structure.	
General Plan – Safety Element (2005)		
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.	The proposed Specific Plan would result in infill development in largely developed downtown and residential areas of the City. These areas are not at substantial risk of fire, flooding, earthquake or other natural or human-made hazards. All development would be consistent with the current building code.	Consistent
Policy 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.	The plan area does not lie within the 100-year flood zone. However, natural and man-made drainages serving the City have experienced flooding in previous years, and the downtown area flooded in a 1995 event involving overflow of the Bryant Canyon Channel. The City undertook a program of flood control and storm drainage measures to prevent future flood events, and the Monterey County Water Resources Agency has been included in the development review process of the project.	Consistent
Policy HZ-9. New development shall provide fire flow, emergency access and hydrants consistent with Fire Department requirements.	All development would be consistent with Fire Department requirements.	Consistent
Policy 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.	The project proposes several design standards that would improve safety, particularly improved lighting plans and street designs to address bike and pedestrian safety.	Consistent
General Plan – Noise Element (2005)		
Goal 1. To preserve the quiet rural setting of the City and protect citizens from exposure to excessive levels of noise.	The proposed Specific Plan would result in increased development, traffic and permanent noise sources within the plan area. However, the project proposes development in keeping with the existing historic, small town character and all development would be infill development adjacent to US 101, the railroad, and several busy City streets. The noise environment is not expected to change significantly as a result of the proposed	Consistent

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
	development and these transportation facilities would continue to be the largest noise sources within the plan area.	
<p>Policy 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 X1, 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 X1.</p>	<p>The 2005 General Plan EIR analyzed noise effects on buildout estimates in excess of what would be allowed under the proposed Specific Plan and found that no significant impacts would result after mitigation. Existing mitigation set forth in the 2005 General Plan is sufficient to cover the development proposed in the Specific Plan.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p><i>Economic Development Strategy (2010)</i></p>		
<p>Goal 1. Improve financial performance of existing businesses.</p>	<p>A goal of the proposed Specific Plan is to create a vibrant hub for commercial activity and entertainment in the City's downtown area. This would stimulate economic growth in new and existing businesses.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Goal 2. Plan and market for retail, entertainment, and dining variety.</p>	<p>The proposed Specific Plan includes standards for a vibrant range of land use activities, including retail, restaurants, entertainment, grocery, bakery/deli, office personal services, lodging, transit station, and residential.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Goal 3. Increase city-wide commercial building occupancy and downtown activity.</p>	<p>A goal of the proposed Specific Plan is to create a vibrant hub for commercial activity and entertainment in the City's downtown area and in the south gateway area. This would stimulate economic growth in new and existing businesses.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Goal 4. Facilitate infill development with public improvements that communicate investment and stability.</p>	<p>The project is intended to guide development within the downtown and surrounding areas in a manner that will increase economic vitality, tourism, and a sense of community.</p>	<p>Consistent</p>
<p>Goal 5. Improve local business synergy.</p>	<p>A goal of the proposed Specific Plan is to create a vibrant hub for commercial activity and entertainment in the City's downtown area. Standards have been designed to integrate the downtown with surrounding neighborhoods and create a compatible, visually-stimulating area of high pedestrian activity. The plan would integrate the Vosti Park area and adjacent residential and civic uses into a central community gathering place and provide</p>	<p>Consistent</p>

Table 3-1. Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

Goals, Policies, Programs and Standards	Proposed Action	Determination
	connectivity to the downtown area.	
Goal 6. Increase value of commercial properties and taxable sales.	A goal of the proposed Specific Plan is to create a vibrant hub for commercial activity and entertainment in the City's downtown area and in the south gateway area. This would stimulate economic growth in new and existing businesses and generate increased sales tax. Streetscape improvements and improved economic vitality would increase the value of property within the plan area.	Consistent

3.4 CUMULATIVE ANALYSIS

3.4.1 CEQA Requirements

CEQA, in § 15355 of the CEQA Guidelines, defines “cumulative impacts” as two or more individual effects that, when considered together, are considerable or would compound or increase the significance of other environmental impacts. Cumulative impacts are the changes in the environment that result from the incremental impact of development of the proposed project when considered in light of other related past, present, or reasonably foreseeable and probable future projects.

According to § 15130 of the CEQA Guidelines, cumulative impacts shall be discussed when the project’s incremental effect is cumulatively considerable as defined in § 15065. The discussion of cumulative impacts needs to reflect the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence, but the discussion does not need to provide the same level of detail as provided for impacts attributed to the project analyzed in the EIR.

It is important to accurately define the cumulative scenario for meaningful analysis. According to the CEQA Guidelines, the following approaches may be taken alone or in combination to produce the cumulative scenario:

- The List Approach - A list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency.
- Existing Plans – A summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document, or in a prior environmental document that has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or areawide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact. Any such planning document shall be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the Lead Agency.

The cumulative scenario may differ among the various topics covered in an EIR. For example, the cumulative scenario for water supplies may consist of projected development within a particular water purveyor’s service area, or within the groundwater basin, while the cumulative scenario for biological resources may include total projected development affecting a certain habitat area.

3.4.2 Cumulative Development Scenario

The proposed project is a long-range Specific Plan covering a large portion of the City of Soledad. The long buildout horizon and programmatic nature of the document affect the definition of the cumulative scenario. In general, the appropriate cumulative scenario would be the buildout of the 2005 General Plan. The changes proposed for the area should be viewed in light of buildout of the City at large. A list approach is not considered appropriate; the proposed project may comprise the focus of development activities in the City for the foreseeable future. However, the General Plan buildout scenario also has limitations. The 2005 General Plan projected significant growth for the City based on housing development and population growth trends at the time. Ensuing slowdowns in the housing market and the wider economy have significantly reduced activity in the City and the state and nation as a whole. Relying only on the General Plan buildout figures would artificially inflate cumulative impacts beyond what is considered “reasonably foreseeable.” The cumulative scenario is

therefore defined for each topic, based on factors outlined in each topical section. In some cases, such as water supply, the cumulative scenario consists of the low range of the 2005 General Plan growth projections, as used in the most recent Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP).

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