8. HEALTH AND SAFETY ELEMENT

8

This Health and Safety Element provides an overview of health and safety conditions in Hollister today and focuses on policies and actions for the City of Hollister to implement to improve community safety and mitigate natural and human-caused hazards. This section presents goals, policies, and actions for the following topics:

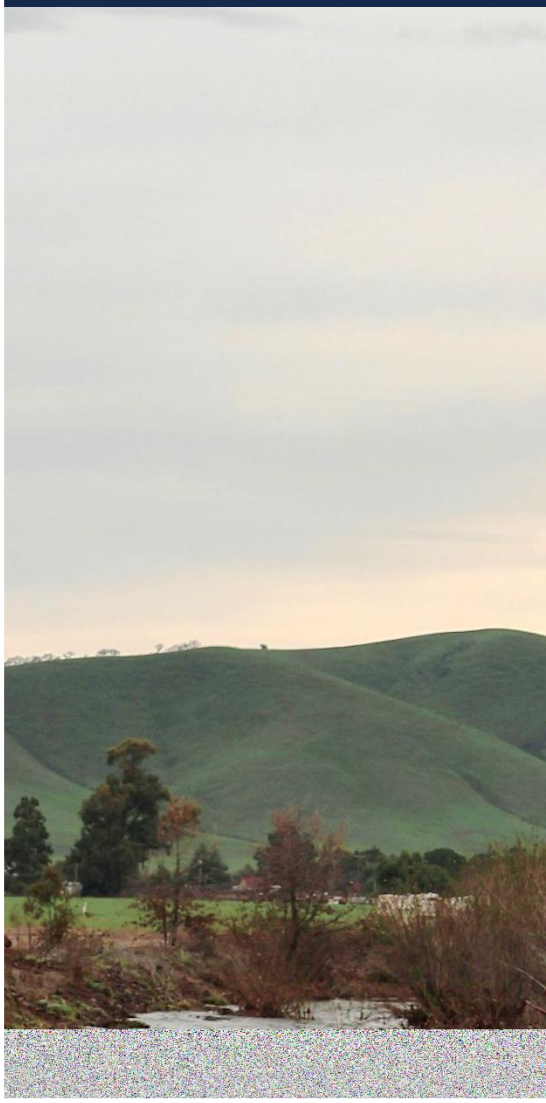


Photo by Jaquelyn Scimeca

This section of the General Plan covers two of the eight State-mandated General Plan elements: Safety and Noise. The purpose of this Health and Safety Element is to identify and evaluate natural and human-caused hazards that could affect the City of Hollister's residents, businesses, and services. The Health and Safety Element establishes a framework that anticipates these hazards and prepares the community to mitigate exposure to these risks.

Safety issues have been required to be addressed as part of local general plans since 1971. The San Fernando earthquake of February 1971, which claimed 64 lives and resulted in over $500 million in property damage, and the devastating wildland fires in September and October 1970, were largely responsible for prompting the Legislature to pass this requirement.

California Government Code Section 65302(g) requires Safety Elements to address the following:

- Protect the community from risks associated with a variety of hazards, including seismic activity, landslides, flooding, and wildfire, as required by the California Government Code Section 65302(g)(1).
- Map and assess the risk associated with flood hazards, develop policies to minimize the flood risk to new development and essential public facilities, and establish effective working relationships among agencies with flood protection responsibilities, as required by California Government Code Section 65302(g)(2).
- Map and assess the risk associated with wildfire hazards, develop policies to reduce the wildfire risk to new land uses and essential facilities, ensure there is adequate road and water infrastructure to respond to wildfire emergencies, and establish cooperative relationships between wildfire protection agencies, as required by California Government Code Section 65302(g)(3).
- Assess the risks associated with climate change on local assets, populations, and resources. Note existing and planned development in at-risk areas and identify agencies responsible for providing public health and safety and environmental protection. Develop goals, policies, and objectives to reduce the risks associated with climate change impacts, including locating new public facilities outside of at-risk areas, providing adequate infrastructure in at-risk areas, and supporting natural infrastructure for climate adaptation, as required by California Government Code Section 65302(g)(4).
- Identify residential developments in any hazard area identified that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes, as required by California Government Code Section 65302(g)(5).
- Identify evacuation routes and assess the capacity, safety, and viability of those routes and emergency shelters under a range of emergency scenarios, as required by California Government Code Section 65302.15(a).

The Health and Safety Element can meet some of the requirements of the California government through incorporation of the San Benito County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP). The MJHMP identifies and profiles hazard conditions, analyzes risk to people and facilities, and develops mitigation actions to reduce or eliminate hazard risks in Hollister. The City prepared a Jurisdictional Annex to the MJHMP in accordance with the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

guidance. The mitigation actions in the MJHMP include both short-term and long-term strategies, and involve planning, policy changes, programs, projects, and other activities. The MJHMP and Health and Safety Element address similar issues, but the Health and Safety Element provides a higher-level framework and set of policies, while the MJHMP focuses on more specific mitigation, often short-term actions. The MJHMP, as its name implies, focuses on mitigation-related actions, while the Health and Safety Element also includes policies related to emergency response, recovery, and preparation activities. The current MJHMP, certified by FEMA, is incorporated into this Health and Safety Element by reference, as permitted by California Government Code Section 65302.6. The current MJHMP and the Hollister Jurisdictional Annex can be found on the County of San Benito's website at https://www.sanbenitocountyca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/10834/638181251398570000.

Various health and safety hazards are to be considered in planning the location, design, intensity, density, and type of land uses in and surrounding the city. Long-term costs to the City, such as maintenance, liability exposure, and emergency services, are greater where high hazards exist or are projected to worsen.

Information on health and safety issues contained in this element has been coordinated with the other elements of the City's General Plan, particularly Land Use and Community Design, Natural Resources and Conservation, and Open Space and Agriculture.

Noise issues are most closely associated with the Land Use and Community Design and Circulation Elements of the Hollister General Plan. Specific concerns addressed are: (1) establishment of noise-compatible land uses, (2) regulation of new development to limit noise impacts on noise-sensitive uses, (3) minimization of traffic noise, (4) enforcement of noise standards to protect the existing quality of life, and (5) insulation of residences exposed to excessive levels of noise.

8.1 HEALTH AND SAFETY CONDITIONS IN HOLLISTER TODAY

This section describes existing conditions related to health and safety issues in Hollister today. It provides the background information to support the goals, policies, and actions later in this element.

8.1.1 Climate Change Impacts

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperature, precipitation patterns, and other atmospheric conditions that occur over extended periods, typically spanning decades or longer. As global temperatures continue to rise, California communities like Hollister are experiencing significant changes in weather patterns, including

increased frequency and intensity of extreme events, prolonged drought conditions, and long-term environmental shifts that affect public health, safety, infrastructure, and the local economy.

In Hollister, average temperatures, including both daytime highs and nighttime lows, are projected to increase through the remainder of the century. This is likely to lead to more frequent and severe extreme heat days, when temperatures rise to dangerous levels. While overall annual precipitation may not change dramatically, the timing and intensity of rainfall are changing, with more precipitation falling during fewer, more intense storms and greater year-to-year variability. These changes are increasing the risk of both flooding during extreme weather events and water scarcity during extended dry periods. These shifting climate conditions create additional hazardous conditions and cascading effects throughout the community, as discussed further in Section 8.1.2, *Vulnerability Assessment Results*, and hazards sections that follow.

8.1.2 Vulnerability Assessment Results

Under California law, the Safety Element is required to include a vulnerability assessment that looks at how people, buildings, infrastructure, and other key community assets may be affected by climate change. The City conducted a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment in the fall of 2021 to analyze Hollister's susceptibility to climate-related hazards. The City of Hollister's vulnerability assessment, prepared in accordance with the most recent available guidance in the *California Adaptation Planning Guide*, assesses how seven different climate-related hazards (agriculture and ecosystem pests and diseases, drought, extreme heat and warm nights, flooding, human health hazards, severe storms, and wildfire and smoke) may affect 59 different population groups and community assets. Each population or asset received a score of low, medium, or high for each climate-related hazard. The City assessed 286 different pairings for vulnerability, 99 of which scored as highly vulnerable. The Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment indicates that Hollister's populations and assets are most vulnerable to wildfire and smoke, severe storms, and extreme heat and warm nights.

Populations in Hollister tend to be vulnerable to extreme heat, flooding, human health hazards, severe storms, and wildfire smoke, which directly affect health outcomes. The most vulnerable communities include people experiencing homelessness, seniors, persons with chronic health conditions or access and functional needs, outdoor workers, households in poverty, immigrant communities, and low-resourced people of color.

Citywide, energy delivery is vulnerable to multiple hazards, including severe storms, such as high winds that could disrupt energy service due to public safety power shutoff (PSPS) events. These conditions can damage communication infrastructure, decreasing network capacity. There may be a higher demand for communication services during severe weather, potentially putting stress on the network and increasing the risk of service interruptions. Furthermore, electricity delivery services are subject to harm during extreme heat events. Extreme heat can lead to power outages by causing mechanical failure of grid equipment, heat damage to power lines, and by creating a high demand for electricity to power air conditioners, all of which place stress on the network. This is likely to lead to greater service disruptions. Other highly vulnerable buildings and infrastructure include bridges, homes, and major roads, which can be damaged or become unusable due to flooding events.

The agriculture industry, which the City and surrounding areas depend on for economic activity, is highly vulnerable to all hazards. Crops, vineyards, and livestock can be harmed or strained by extreme heat and drought conditions, which can prevent agricultural operations from effectively controlling agricultural pests and diseases. These conditions may also make it more difficult for the agriculture industry to recover from flooding, severe storms, and wildfire events. Outdoor workers in this industry can face negative health outcomes due to human health hazards and smoke from wildfires, further harming the agriculture economy.

The Health and Safety Element includes goals, policies, and actions to increase community resilience and help lower vulnerability, particularly for the populations and assets that scored as highly vulnerable in the Vulnerability Assessment. A full list of the Vulnerability Assessment results can be found in **Appendix A** of this General Plan.

8.1.3 Seismic and Geologic Hazards

Seismic and geologic hazards are risks caused by the movement of different parts of the Earth's crust, or surface. Seismic hazards include earthquakes and hazardous events caused by them. Geologic hazards are other hazards involving land movements that are not linked to seismic activity and are capable of inflicting harm on people or property.

8.1.3.1 Seismic Hazards

Seismic activity occurs along boundaries in the Earth's crust, called faults. Pressure along the faults build over time and is ultimately released, resulting in ground shaking that we refer to as an earthquake. Earthquakes can also trigger other hazards, including surface rupture (cracks in the ground surface), liquefaction (causing loose soil to lose its strength), landslides, subsidence (sinking of the ground surface), and seiches (the oscillation of water in an enclosed body of water, typically due to ground shaking).

Earthquakes and other seismic hazards often damage or destroy property and public infrastructure, including utility lines, and cause falling objects or structures, which pose a risk of injury or death.

While Hollister is at risk from many natural and human-caused hazards, the event with the greatest potential for loss of life or property and economic damage is an earthquake. This is true for most of California, since damaging earthquakes affect widespread areas and trigger many secondary effects that can overwhelm the ability of local jurisdictions to respond. In Hollister, earthquake effects include ground shaking, fault rupture, liquefaction, subsidence, and seiches. Earthquakes can also cause human-caused hazards such as urban fires, dam failures, and toxic chemical releases.

Earthquake risk is very high in northern San Benito County, including the City of Hollister, due to the presence of several active faults in the region, including the San Andreas Fault, Tres Pinos Fault, Calaveras Fault, Quien Sabe Fault, and Sargent Fault. These faults are all capable of producing earthquakes in the magnitude 5.5 to 8+ range. However, the four active faults that could potentially cause serious damage to the city are the San Andreas Fault, Calaveras Fault, Quien Sabe Fault, and Sargent Fault. A major earthquake along any of these four faults could result in substantial casualties and damage resulting from collapsed buildings, damaged roads and bridges, fires, flooding, and other threats to life and property.

Historically, several earthquakes have affected the City of Hollister, including the following:

- 1906 San Francisco Earthquake approximately 84 miles to the north with a magnitude of 7.9 moment magnitude (Mw).
- 1927 Lompoc Earthquake approximately 160 miles to the south with a magnitude of 7.3 Mw.
- 1929 Santa Barbara Earthquake approximately 190 miles to the south with a magnitude of 6.8 Mw.
- 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake approximately 30 miles to the northwest with a magnitude of 6.9 Mw.
- 2003 San Simeon Earthquake approximately 85 miles to the southwest with a magnitude of 6.6 Mw.

Most loss of life and injuries from earthquakes are due to damage and collapse of buildings and structures. Building codes for new construction have generally been made more stringent following damaging earthquakes. However, in Hollister, structures built prior to the enactment of these improved building codes have generally not been upgraded to current standards and are vulnerable during an earthquake. Comprehensive hazard mitigation programs that include the identification and mapping of hazards, prudent planning and enforcement of building codes, and expedient retrofitting and rehabilitation of weak structures can significantly reduce the scope of an earthquake disaster. Given Hollister's large inventory of historic buildings, structural collapse of unreinforced buildings poses a significant threat to the community.

Earthquake shaking at a particular site is a function of both distance to the fault and site geology. Hollister has a high potential for ground failure, including liquefaction due to the close proximity of the San Benito River, Pacheco Creek, and Santa Ana Creek. The City could suffer ground shaking strong enough to cause severe structural damage from several faults that run directly through the city. Most of these events have been attributed to the San Andreas and Sargent Faults, located within two miles of the city boundaries to the west and north, respectively. The Calaveras Fault, a branch of the San Andreas Fault Zone, experiences fault creep of approximately seven millimeters per year. Fault creep is when faults continuously move, instead of only moving during a major earthquake. In Hollister, this has caused cracks and the offset of infrastructure and buildings, such as sidewalks, walls, streets, and alleys. Figure HS-1 shows fault lines in and surrounding the city.

In the event of an earthquake, the location of the epicenter, as well as the time of day and season of the year, would have a profound effect on the number of deaths, injuries, and property damage. There are a number of small-scale earthquakes that happen weekly, but larger-scale or catastrophic shaking is less likely. Property and human life in Hollister are at risk from a significant earthquake causing catastrophic damage and strains on response and recovery resources.

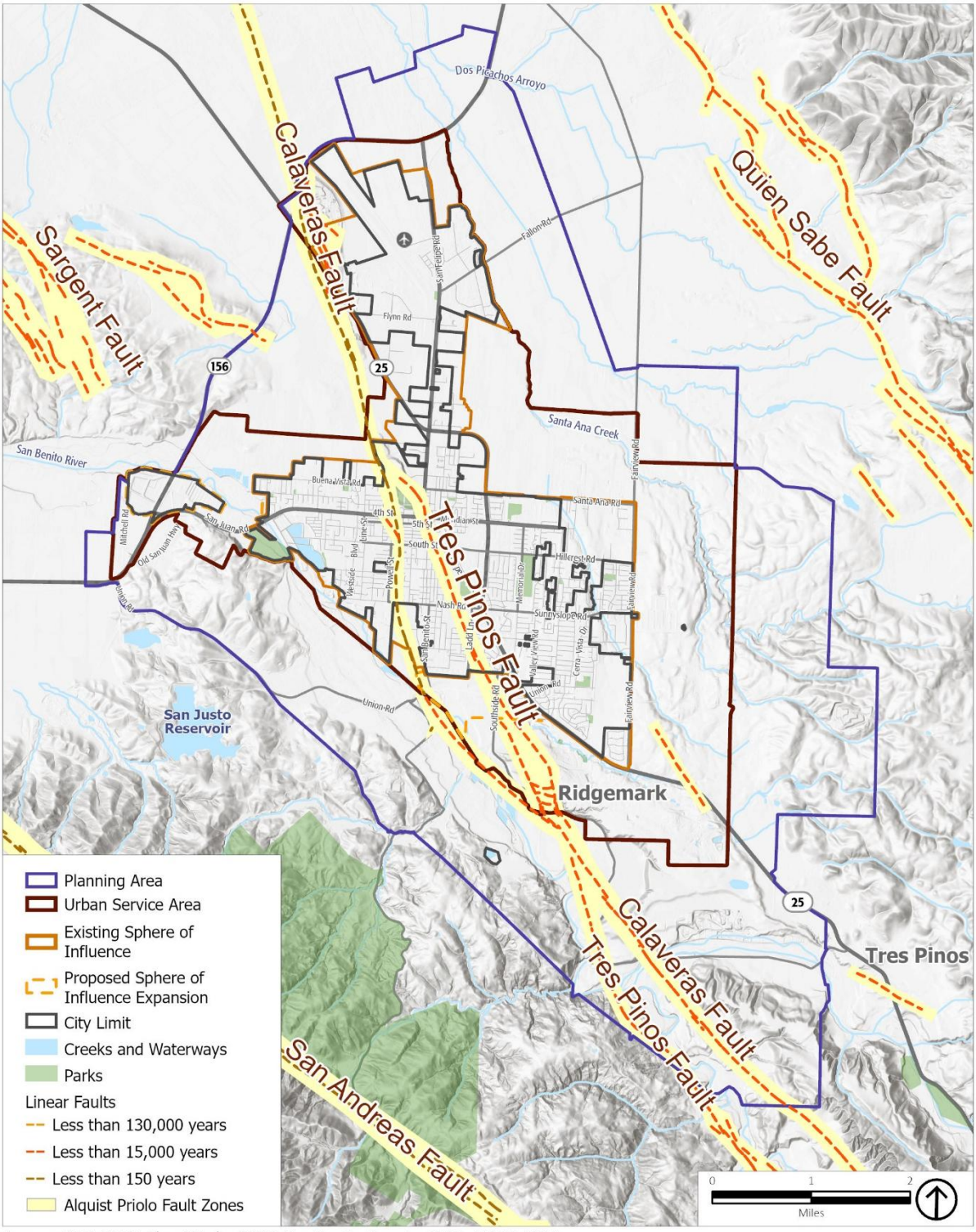
Portions of the city are susceptible to liquefaction, which is a potentially destructive secondary effect of strong seismic shaking. Liquefaction occurs primarily in saturated, loose, fine- to medium-grained soils in areas where the groundwater table is within approximately 50 feet of the surface. Shaking causes the soils to lose strength and behave as liquid. Excess water pressure is vented upward through fissures and soil cracks and can result in a water-soil slurry flowing onto the ground surface. This subsurface process can lead to near-surface or surface ground failure that can result in property damage and structural failure. Figure HS-2 shows liquefaction susceptibility

in and surrounding the city. The areas most susceptible to liquefaction include areas along the San Benito River and the northern portion of Hollister.

Liquefaction-related effects include loss of bearing strength, ground oscillations, lateral spreading, and flow failures or slumping. Site-specific geotechnical studies are the only practical and reliable way of determining the specific liquefaction potential of a site; however, a determination of general risk potential can be provided based on soil type and depth of groundwater. In most cases, proper design and construction of subgrade soils and building foundations provides a mechanism to mitigate the risk of seismic hazards to an acceptable level in conformance with the California Building Code. The designation of areas having a liquefaction potential is only intended as notification to seek further site-specific information and analysis of this potential hazard as part of future site development. It should not be solely relied on without site-specific information and analysis for design or decision-making purposes.

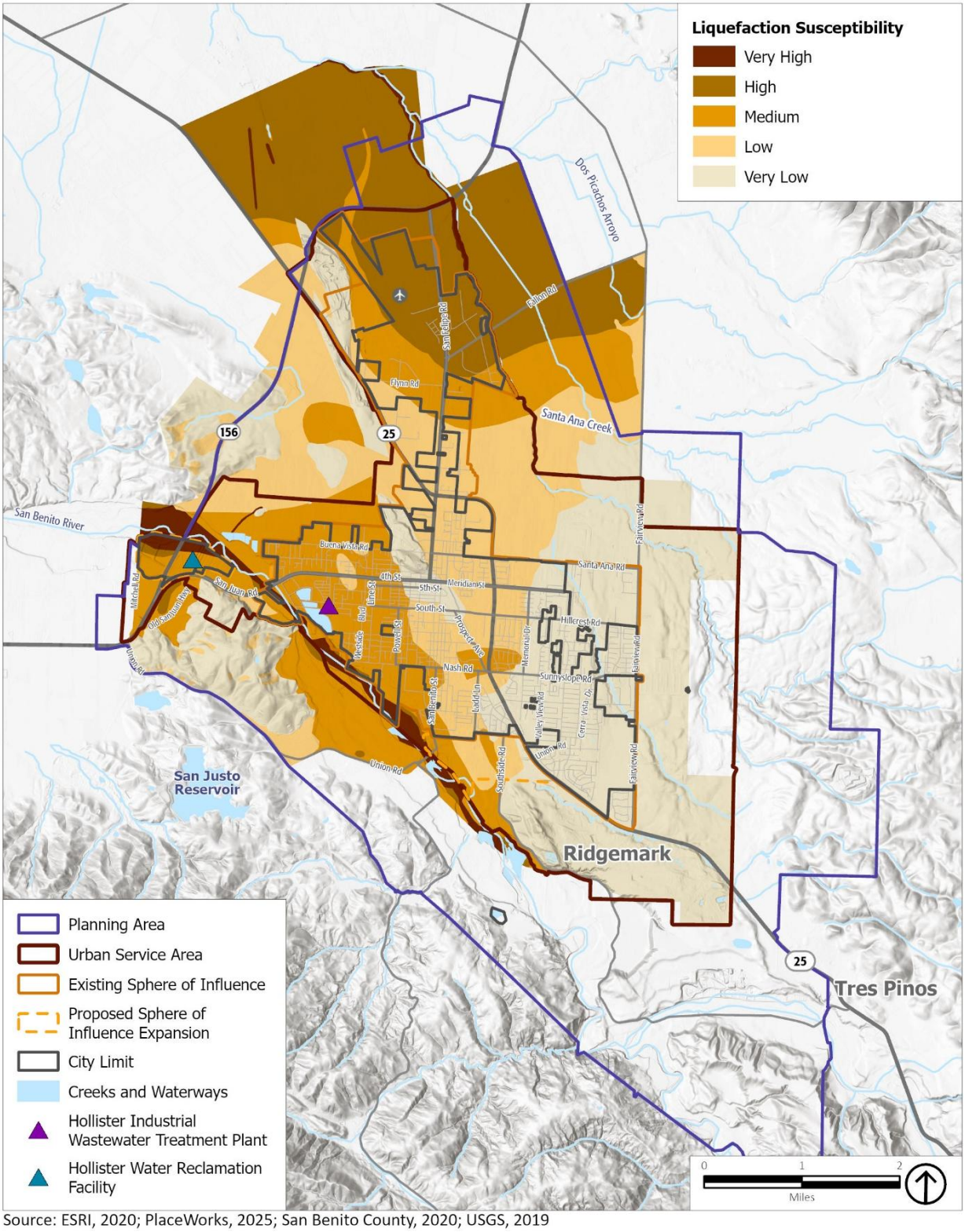
Seismic seiches are waves that can occur in a body of water as a result of seismic shaking. A seiche has been known to occur in storage tanks and reservoirs near a fault. In extreme cases, such waves can rupture a water tank or damage dams holding back reservoirs. Hollister has a wastewater treatment facility in its City Limits that could be damaged and/or shutdown during a seiche event, although this is considered unlikely. A seiche may also occur at the nearby San Justo Reservoir.

Figure HS-1 Fault Lines



Source: ESRI, 2020; PlaceWorks, 2025; San Benito County, 2020; USGS, 2019

Figure HS-2 Liquefaction Susceptibility



Source: ESRI, 2020; PlaceWorks, 2025; San Benito County, 2020; USGS, 2019

8.1.3.2 GEOLOGIC HAZARDS

Photo by Jaquelyn Scimeca

Geologic hazards, such as landslides and subsidence, depend on the geologic composition of the area. Landslides may occur in sloped areas in the southwest and southeast portion of the Planning Area, especially areas on hillsides, and usually in areas of loose and fragmented soil. Landslides and mudflows occur continuously on all slopes; some processes act very slowly, while others occur very suddenly, often with disastrous results. They often occur as a consequence of seismic activity or heavy rainfall, either of which may cause slopes to lose structural integrity and slide. There are predictable relationships between local geology and landslides and mudflows. Slope stability depends on many factors and interrelationships, including rock type, pore water pressure, slope steepness, and natural or human-made undercutting. Due to the level or nearly level terrain within the City Limits, there are few areas in Hollister vulnerable to earthquake-induced landslides. These areas are concentrated in the southeast and southwest portions of the Planning Area.

Subsidence refers to the sudden sinking or gradual downward settling and compaction of soil and other surface material with little or no horizontal motion. It may be caused by a variety of human and natural activities, including groundwater pumping, sinkholes, or drainage and decomposition of organic soils. Most of the early documented cases of subsidence affected only agricultural land or open space. As urban areas have expanded, so too have the impacts of subsidence on structures for human occupancy. Although there is no data currently available documenting the precise areas where subsidence could occur, it is most likely to occur over the North San Benito Groundwater Basin.

8.1.3.3 CLIMATE CHANGE AND SEISMIC AND GEOLOGIC HAZARDS

There is no evidence of a link between climate change and seismic activity, so climate change is not expected to change the frequency or intensity of hazards associated with seismic activity. However, drought conditions and heavier reliance on groundwater can increase subsidence surrounding the city. An increase in heavy precipitation events due to climate change could lead to an increase in moisture-induced landslides.

8.1.4 FLOOD HAZARDS

Flooding is the rising and overflowing of a body of water onto normally dry land. Floods are among the costliest natural disasters in terms of human hardship and economic loss nationwide, causing substantial damage to structures, landscapes, and utilities, as well as life-safety issues. Flooding can be extremely dangerous, and even six inches of moving water can knock a person over given a strong current. Other hazards created by flooding include ground saturation that leads to instability or collapse of buildings and infrastructure; standing water that can damage foundations

and electrical circuits; as well as erosion, sedimentation, degradation of water quality, losses of environmental resources, and certain health hazards.

In the past 18 years, there have been four notable flood events in Hollister. The following list summarizes these events:

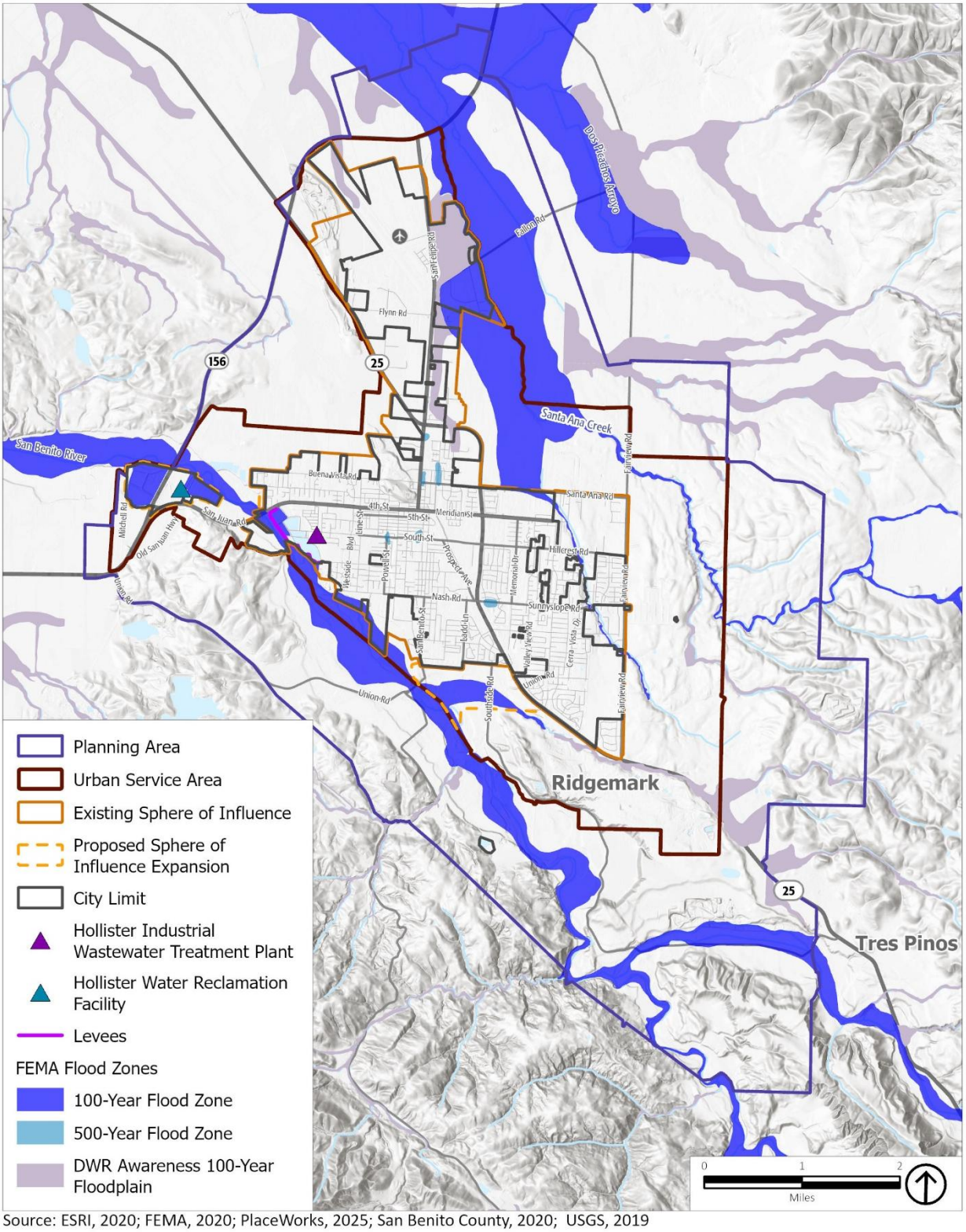
- **2004:** A storm event brought 4 inches of rain to San Benito County and winds up to 10 miles per hour, causing flooding along East and Second Streets.
- **2010:** A storm overwhelmed the storm drain system, flooding San Benito Street near Nash Road.
- **2014:** A large storm brought 3.8 inches of rain to San Benito County, causing flooding, mudslides, and knocking over trees. Landslides and flooding caused Southside School to close along Southside Road.
- **2017:** A storm brought 2.37 inches of rain over a week-long period, causing flooding along Pacheco Creek. Approximately 59 people evacuated from their homes and a state of emergency was declared in San Benito County.

As shown in Figure HS-3, several areas in and surrounding Hollister are in the 100-year and 500-year floodplain, which have an elevated risk of flooding. A 100-year flood zone has a 1-percent chance of experiencing a major flood in any given year and a 500-year flood zone has a 0.2-percent chance of flooding in any given year. Few areas in the City Limits are in a flood zone; however, areas adjacent to the San Benito River, Pacheco Creek, and Santa Ana Creek are in the 100-year flood zone. During heavy rainfall events, the city is subject to flooding of the airport, commercial areas, agricultural areas, and few residential areas.

Agencies responsible for flood control in Hollister include FEMA, the Federal Insurance Administration (FIA), and the Department of Water Resources (DWR).

- **FEMA:** FEMA manages the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), providing insurance to the public in communities that participate in the program. FEMA is the main federal government agency contact during natural disasters and publishes the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), which identify the extent of flood potential in flood-prone communities based on a 100-year flood (or base flood) event.
- **FIA:** FIA is the primary agency that delineates potential flood hazard areas and floodways through the FIRMs and the Flood Boundary and Floodway Map. Flood insurance is required of all homeowners who have federally subsidized loans.

Figure HS-3 Flood Zones



Source: ESRI, 2020; FEMA, 2020; PlaceWorks, 2025; San Benito County, 2020; USGS, 2019

- **DWR:** DWR is responsible for managing and protecting California's water. DWR works with other agencies to benefit the state's people, and to protect, restore, and enhance the natural and human environments. DWR also works to prevent and respond to floods, droughts, and catastrophic events that would threaten public safety, water resources and management systems, the environment, and property.

The design standards for flood protection are established by FEMA, which the City has adopted in the Hollister Municipal Code. FEMA standards regulate development in designated floodways and the 100-year floodplains, which are considered areas that have a 1-in-100 chance of flooding in any given year. The City will support efforts to minimize public and private losses due to flood conditions.

8.1.4.1 Climate Change and Flooding

Although climate change may not change average precipitation levels significantly, scientists expect that it will cause more years with extreme precipitation events. This means that more years are likely to see intense storm systems that drop precipitation over a short enough period that overwhelms storm drain systems and flood protection infrastructure. Many of these storms are more likely to occur in the form of atmospheric rivers, which are channels of moist air high in the atmosphere.

Because of this, floods are expected to occur more often in Hollister and climate change may expand the parts of the city that are considered prone to flood. Floods are expected to occur more frequently because of climate change, affecting what the community understands as a "normal" flood. For example, what is currently considered a 100-year flood, or a flood that has a 1-percent chance of occurring annually, may occur with greater frequency (such as a 2- or 5-percent chance each year). There are some indirect effects of climate change that may also increase flooding in the city. Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and severity of droughts that cause soil to dry out and compact. When precipitation does return, more water runs off the surface than is absorbed into the ground, which can increase flooding.

While the risk and associated short- and long-term impacts of climate change are uncertain, experts in this field tend to agree that among the most significant impacts include those resulting from increased heat and precipitation events that cause increased frequency and magnitude of flooding. Increases in damaging flood events will cause greater property damage, public health and safety concerns, displacement, and loss of life. Displacement of residents can include both temporary and long-term displacement, increase in home and renters' insurance rates, or restriction of insurance coverage in vulnerable areas.

8.1.5 Wildland and Urban Fire Hazards

Photo by David Mirrione

Wildfires burn in many types of vegetation—forest, woodland, scrub (including chaparral and sage scrub), and grassland. The Planning Area is in the Hollister Valley, a largely flat region abutting the Diablo and Gabilan Ranges to the west and southwest, respectively. Vegetation, wind, temperature, humidity, and slope are all factors that affect how these fires spread. Although the topography of the Planning Area is relatively flat, the neighboring foothills, rangelands, and generally dry vegetation conditions pose a threat of wildfire.

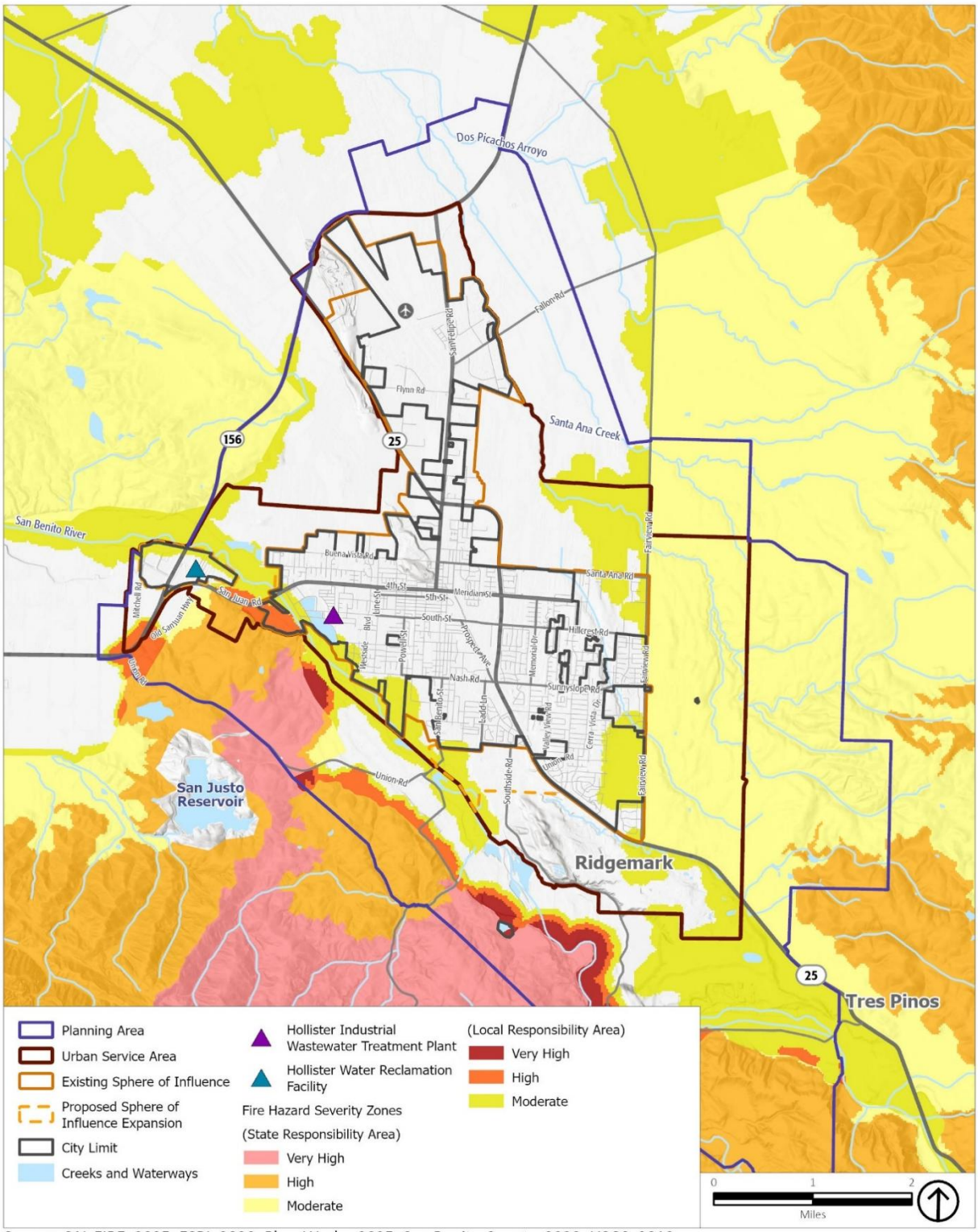
As shown in Figure HS-4, while most of the City of Hollister is not in a fire hazard severity zone, approximately 11 acres of a drainage basin, south of the developed areas of Hollister, has been designated as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) by CAL FIRE, and officially adopted by the City. Another 439 acres of the city, mostly along the southwestern border and in the neighborhood east of Calistoga Drive, has been designated as a Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Additionally, the Planning Area contains land in the State Responsibility Area, designated as Moderate, High, and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. The General Plan Land Use Element identifies the land uses in the Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

According to CAL FIRE data, there have been 175 wildfires in San Benito County since records began in 1931, including 71 since 2000. While historic wildfires have not burned through the City Limits, the 1981 Herbert Fire burned through a small portion of the Sphere of Influence. Most recently, the 2020 Coyote Fire burned 1,500 acres, approximately 20 miles southeast of Hollister. These fires created indirect effects, such as poor air quality from smoke and ash, which caused illnesses for vulnerable populations, including outdoor workers, seniors, people with chronic health conditions, and children. Maps and data on areas burned in past fires are available from CAL FIRE's Fire Resource Assessment Program at www.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/fire-resource-assessment-program/fire-perimeters.

Additional recent wildfires in other regions of California that have affected air quality in Hollister include the following:

- 2018 Camp Fire in Butte County
- 2020 CZU Lighting Complex in Santa Cruz County
- 2020 SCU Lighting Complex in Santa Clara County
- 2021 Dixie Fire in Plumas National Forest, Lassen National Forest, Lassen Volcanic National Park

Figure HS-4 Fire Hazard Severity Zones



Source: CAL FIRE, 2025; ESRI, 2020; PlaceWorks, 2025; San Benito County, 2020; USGS, 2019

The primary risk in the City of Hollister has historically been from urban fires, which occur in built-up environments, destroying buildings and other human-made structures. These disasters are often due to faulty wiring or mechanical equipment, combustible construction materials, or the absence of fire alarms and fire sprinkler systems. Structural fires are largely from human accidents, although deliberate fires (arson) may be a cause of some events. Drier weather is expected to lead to an increase in wildfires in Hollister, in the surrounding area, and across San Benito County. Even if wildfires do not occur in Hollister itself, more frequent and intense wildfires across the region may increase severe smoke days in Hollister, creating a significant health risk for residents and visitors. Older buildings that lack modern fire safety features may face greater risk of damage from fires. To minimize fire damage and loss, the City's Fire and Building Codes, based on the California Fire and Building Codes, set standards for building and construction. It requires the provision of adequate water supply for firefighting, fire-retardant construction, and minimum street widths, among other things.

8.1.6 Emergency Preparedness and Emergency Operations

8.1.6.1 Emergency Management

The Hollister Fire Department and Hollister Police Department conduct emergency preparedness and response activities in Hollister. The City is prepared to meet emergency situations, such as fire, medical, or hazardous events.

The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) provides a centralized focus of emergency management in the event of a major emergency or disaster in the city. The EOC operations are directed by the County of San Benito, Hollister Police and Fire Departments, emergency management staff (City department heads), and representatives from organizations who are assigned emergency responsibilities (Red Cross, schools, hospitals, etc.). The EOC is equipped with essential administrative supplies to sustain operations for an extended period. In addition, all necessary forms, i.e., communications message forms, separate journals for each emergency service, shelter registration cards, volunteer registration forms, emergency requisition forms, and damage assessment survey sheets for all possible contingencies are stocked in the EOC.

The City of Hollister uses Nixle, a mass notification system, to notify the community and distribute emergency information and instructions before, during, and after a disaster. The San Benito County Office of Emergency Services also uses CodeRed to alert residents of emergency events in both San Benito and Santa Cruz Counties. This system alerts about disasters, major emergencies, and other urgent information via text messages, email, phone, landline, and other means of communication.

Other emergency alert systems include the Emergency Alert Systems (EAS) and the Emergency Digital Information System (EDIS). The EAS is a national public warning system commonly used by state and local authorities to deliver important emergency information, such as weather and AMBER alerts, to affected communities. EAS participants – radio and television broadcasters, cable systems, satellite radio and television providers, and wireline video providers. FEMA, the Federal Communications System, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) National Weather Service work collaboratively to maintain the EAS and Wireless Emergency Alerts, which are the two main components of the national public warning system and enable authorities at all levels of government to send urgent emergency information to the public. The EDIS is a wireless emergency and disaster information service operated by the State of California Governor's Office of Emergency Services and is an enhancement to the EAS. These systems are available in multiple languages.

8.1.6.2 Emergency Evacuation

With advanced warning, evacuation can be effective in reducing injury and loss of life during a catastrophic event. Figure HS-5 shows residential parcels with evacuation constraints as required by California Government Code Section 65302(g)(5), also known as Senate Bill 99. All parcels with an evacuation constraint are in at least one hazard-prone area and do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes. The lack of multiple emergency access points limits roadway access for these properties, which may create difficulties if there is a need to evacuate.

Figure HS-6 shows the evacuation routes throughout the city. Primary emergency access and evacuation routes include State Route (SR-) 25, SR-156, and SR-156B, which generally intersect the city from north to south; Buena Vista Road, Santa Ana Road, Meridian Street, Sunnyslope Road, Nash Road, and Union Road (east-west roadways); and San Benito Street, Westside Boulevard, and Fairview Road (north-south roadways). All evacuation routes in Hollister face a potential disruption from a flood, wildfire, or earthquake event, which may block roadways, damage the roadway surface, or collapse bridges and overpasses. In the event of widespread disruption to local evacuation routes, remaining evacuation routes may become congested, slowing down evacuation of the community or specific neighborhoods. This issue may be compounded since evacuation routes for Hollister will also likely serve as evacuation routes for surrounding communities, such as Tres Pinos and San Juan Bautista, so potential disruptions may have regional effects.

The City assessed emergency evacuation roadway capabilities and travel times, consistent with California Government Code Section 65302.15, also known as Assembly Bill 747, which requires the General Plan to identify evacuation routes and their capacity, safety, and viability under a range of emergency scenarios. The evacuation study is included as **Appendix B** of this General Plan.

The evacuation study modeled evacuations from two representative scenarios: flooding along the San Benito River affecting the southwest portion of Hollister, and an earthquake along the Calaveras Fault affecting a north-south corridor through most of the city. These scenarios were chosen to represent high likelihood emergencies that may stress different parts of the road system.

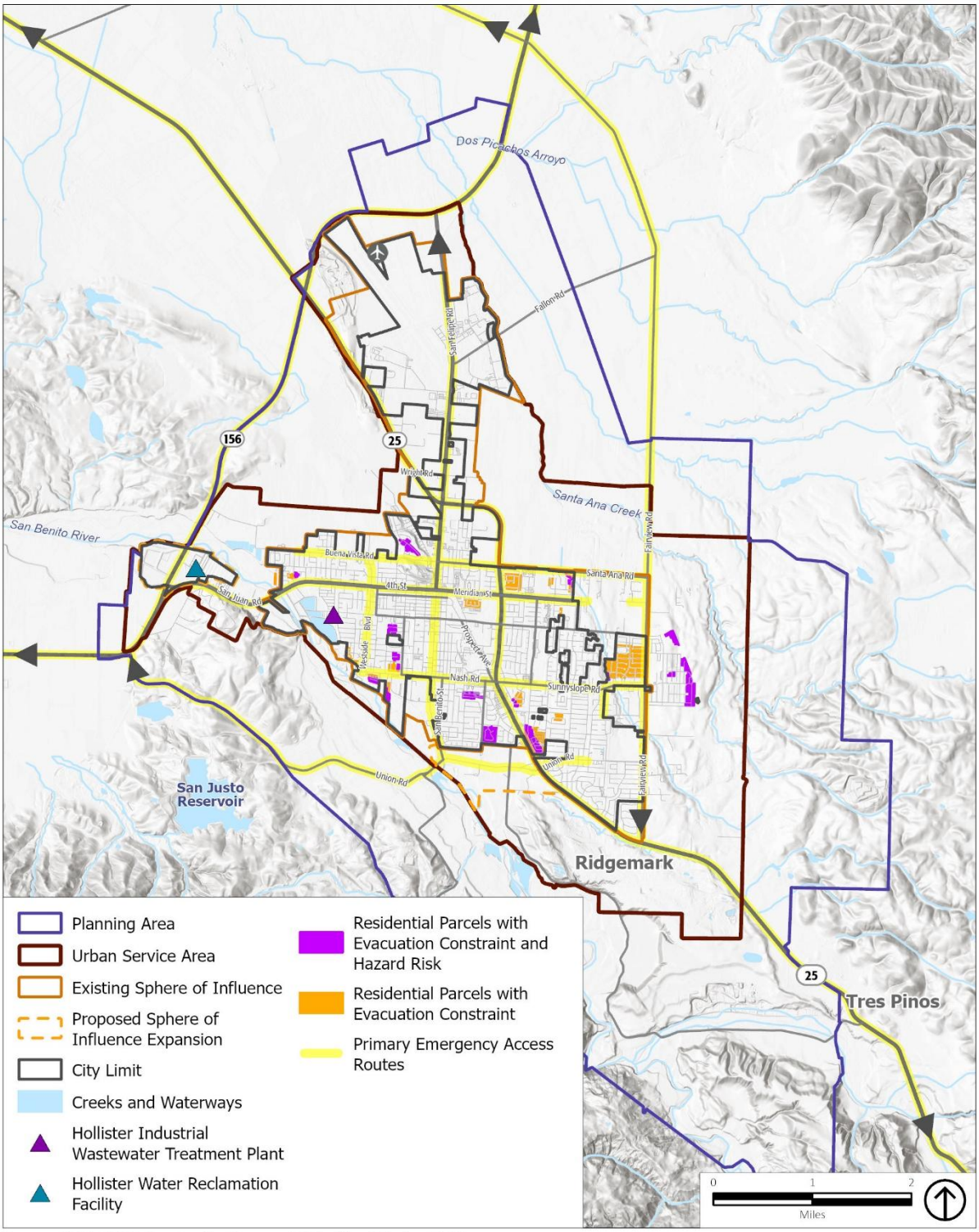
For the flooding scenario, the study found that evacuations would primarily impact San Benito Street from Nash Road to Union Road, with travel time increases ranging from less than 1 minute to approximately 26 minutes depending on origin and destination. For the earthquake scenario, which would affect a much larger area including downtown Hollister, the study identified more widespread congestion on evacuation routes, including SR-25, SR-156, SR-156B, and other major routes, with travel time increases ranging from less than 1 minute to approximately 107 minutes (over an hour and a half) along particular roadways. These are general estimates that would be affected by numerous factors in an actual emergency, including the specific nature and location of the hazard, time of day, and evacuation strategies employed.

The study identified several categories of recommendations to improve evacuation effectiveness, including roadway management strategies such as exploring contraflow operations and traffic signal adjustments; enhanced communication systems and public alerts; assistance for vulnerable populations, including those with limited mobility, non-English speakers, and people without vehicles; expanded public education on evacuation procedures; and resource management coordination with neighboring jurisdictions and private-sector entities. This Safety Element incorporates many of these recommendations into the goals and policies in Section 8.2.5.

8.1.6.3 Fire Protection

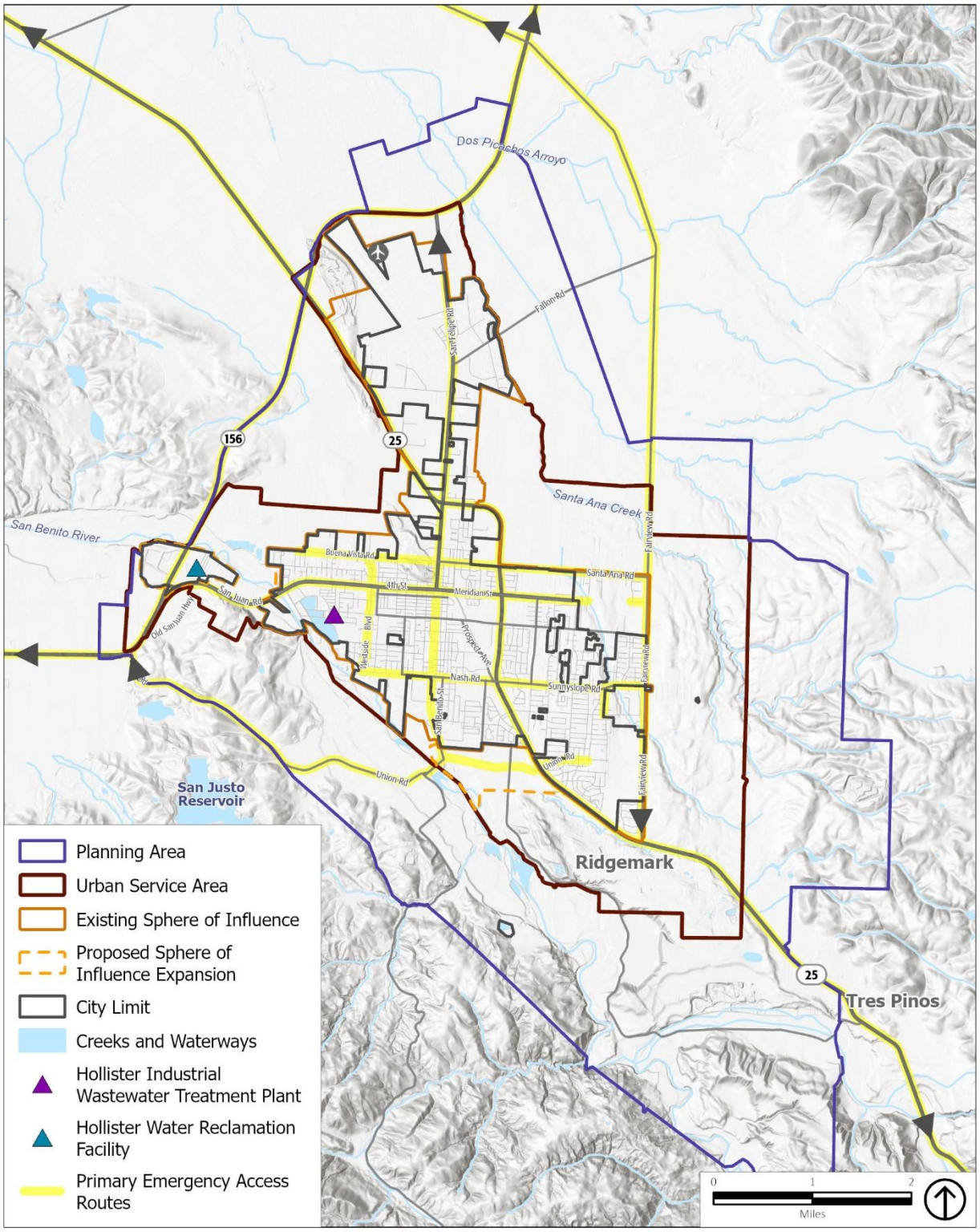
Fire protection in the Hollister Planning Area is provided by the Hollister Fire Department (HFD). HFD provides fire protection, emergency medical services, rescue, and fire prevention services in City Limits, as well as providing services to the City of San Juan Bautista. All of the Planning Area is covered by HFD's service area, and there are no parts of the Planning Area that lack fire protection services. HFD contracts with the County of San Benito to provide firefighting services to the unincorporated areas of the county.

Figure HS-5 Evacuation-Constrained Areas



Source: ESRI, 2022; San Benito County, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2025

Figure HS-6 Evacuation Routes



Source: ESRI, 2022; San Benito County, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2025

HFD has two automatic-aid agreements with the South Santa Clara County Fire District and Aromas Tri-County Fire District. South Santa Clara County Fire District contracts with the Santa Clara County Fire Department, while the Aromas Tri-County Fire District contracts with CAL FIRE for service. Both automatic-aid agreements encompass reciprocal responses with each agency. Agencies in California must provide mutual-aid assistance to each other when requested and available.

In addition, the HFD and CAL FIRE San Benito-Monterey Unit (BEU), which services the State Responsibility Areas in San Benito and Monterey Counties, have an established Annual Operating Plan that delegates operation responsibilities, relationships, and expectations at the field unit level. CAL FIRE BEU does not operate year-round, and typically operates from late spring to late fall during wildfire season, so the Annual Operating Plan clearly designates both agencies' service responsibilities and fire operations in San Benito County. During operation, CAL FIRE BEU has responsibility for the State Responsibility Areas for wildland fires, and HFD has responsibility for the Local Response Area. State Responsibility Areas are areas where the State is financially responsible for wildland fire protection and prevention, although HFD responds to non-wildland fires in this area and at minimum sends a representative to respond to wildland fires. In San Benito County, the State Responsibility Areas include lands owned or regulated by State agencies and most of the unincorporated area. Alternatively, Local Responsibility Areas include lands where local agencies are responsible for fire protection and prevention, including land in incorporated cities such as Hollister. When CAL FIRE BEU is not in operation, HFD assumes full responsibility of fire protection services in San Benito County.

8.1.7 Extreme Heat Hazards

Extreme heat affects public health, infrastructure, and the environment, and poses an increasingly serious threat to residents of Hollister.

Warmer temperatures are projected to cause an increase in extreme heat events in Hollister. The number of extreme heat days, defined in Hollister as a day when the high temperature is at least 96.6 degrees Fahrenheit (°F), is expected to rise from a historical annual average of 4 days per year, to an annual average of 14 days per year by midcentury, and to an average of 24 days per year by the end of the century. In addition to the increases in extreme heat events, Hollister is expected to see an increase in the average daily high temperatures.

Extreme heat poses a significant human health risk, especially to those with sensitive or compromised immune systems, persons living in mobile homes, low-resourced people of color, persons with chronic health conditions, and seniors. Some buildings and infrastructure systems may be damaged by very high temperatures, constraining

their ability to meet community needs. Additionally, higher temperatures increase demand for air conditioning, straining the electrical grid and potentially causing power outages during peak demand periods.

8.1.8 Other Hazards

Changes to the global climate system are expected to affect future occurrences of natural hazards in and around Hollister. Many hazards are projected to become more frequent and intense in coming years and decades, and in some cases, these changes have already begun. According to California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment,[1] Hollister can expect to experience various changes to climate-related hazard events.

- **Agricultural Pests and Diseases.** Agricultural pests and diseases can affect crop plants, vineyards, and livestock throughout and surrounding Hollister. These pests and diseases, such as the Asian citrus psyllid, European pine shoot moth, Japanese beetle, melon fruit fly, Mexican fruit fly, European corn borer, and glassy-winged sharpshooter, can slow the growth of plants and animals, damage them so that their products are less appealing and harder to sell, or even kill them. Though there are treatment options for many agricultural pests and diseases, some have no cure. Many pests and organisms that carry diseases are most active during warmer months, so the threat of infection or infestation is higher during that time of year. Projection trends show temperatures getting warmer earlier in the year and remaining warmer until later in the year due to increases in air temperature, which creates a wider activity window for pests and diseases.
- **Drought.** A drought occurs when conditions are drier than normal for an extended period. Although a regular occurrence in California, climate change will lead to more frequent and severe droughts. Water supplies in Hollister rely heavily on water from the Central Valley Project, which obtains water from the snowpack in the Sierra Nevada. Snowpack levels in the Sierra Nevada dropped by 25 percent during the 2011 to 2016 drought, and average springtime snowpack is expected to drop 64 percent by 2100. In the 2021 water-year (October 1, 2020, to September 30, 2021), the snowpack in the Northern Sierra was 70 percent of the average, and the precipitation was less than 50 percent of the annual average, making it the third-driest water year on record. During drought conditions, water stored in the Central Valley Project's primary

[1] Thorne, James H., Joseph Wraithwall, Guido Franco. 2018. "California's Changing Climate 2018." *California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment*, California Natural Resources Agency. https://climateassessment.ca.gov/.

reservoirs could decrease due to lack of rainfall and reduction in snowpack due to higher temperatures.

- **Infectious Diseases:** Climate change can increase the rates of infection for various diseases because many of the animals that carry diseases are more active during warmer weather. There are a number of diseases that are linked to climate change and can be harmful to the health of Hollister community members, such as hantavirus pulmonary syndrome, Lyme disease, and West Nile fever. Many of these diseases are carried by animals, such as mice and rats, ticks, and mosquitoes, which are usually seen as pests even if they do not cause infections. Warmer temperatures earlier in the spring and later in the autumn can cause these animals to be active for longer periods, increasing the time that these diseases can be transmitted.
- **Severe Weather Events:** Severe weather events, such as windstorms, hail, and lightning, may become more frequent and intense due to climate change. Climate change is expected to cause an increase in intense rainfall, which is usually associated with strong storm systems. In San Benito County, most severe weather is linked to high winds. The types of dangers posed by severe weather vary widely and include injuries or deaths, damage to buildings and structures, fallen trees, roads blocked by debris, and fires sparked by lightning.

8.1.9 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Some businesses and activities in the city involve the transport, storage, or use of toxic or hazardous chemicals, which are carefully regulated by State and federal agencies. Hazardous materials that pose a potential threat to human health include paint solvents, refrigerants, gasoline, pesticides, and household cleaning products, which can be transported on SR-25 and local roadways. The City seeks to protect citizens as much as possible from hazardous materials by reducing the potential for incidence or damage in the event of accidents or spills and ensuring that the appropriate agencies are adequately prepared to deal with a hazardous material emergency.

Hazardous materials and waste in Hollister are managed by the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA), a local administrative agency in the San Benito County Health and Human Services Agency. The CUPA consolidates, coordinates, and makes consistent the regulatory activities of several hazardous materials and hazardous waste programs, including Hazardous Materials Unit Programs and the California Accidental Release Program. The San Benito County Resource Management Agency provides hazardous waste disposal programs for Hollister and the greater county region.

If a hazardous material spill poses an imminent public health threat, the City will support local regulating agencies in notifying the public. The transport of hazardous materials/wastes and explosives through the city is regulated by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). SR-25 is open to vehicles carrying hazardous materials/wastes. Transporters of hazardous waste are required to be certified by the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) and manifests are required to track the hazardous waste during transport. The danger of hazardous materials/waste spills during transport does exist and will potentially increase as transportation of these materials increase on SR-25. The HFD and San Benito County Fire Department are responsible for hazardous materials accidents at all locations in the city.

8.1.10 Noise

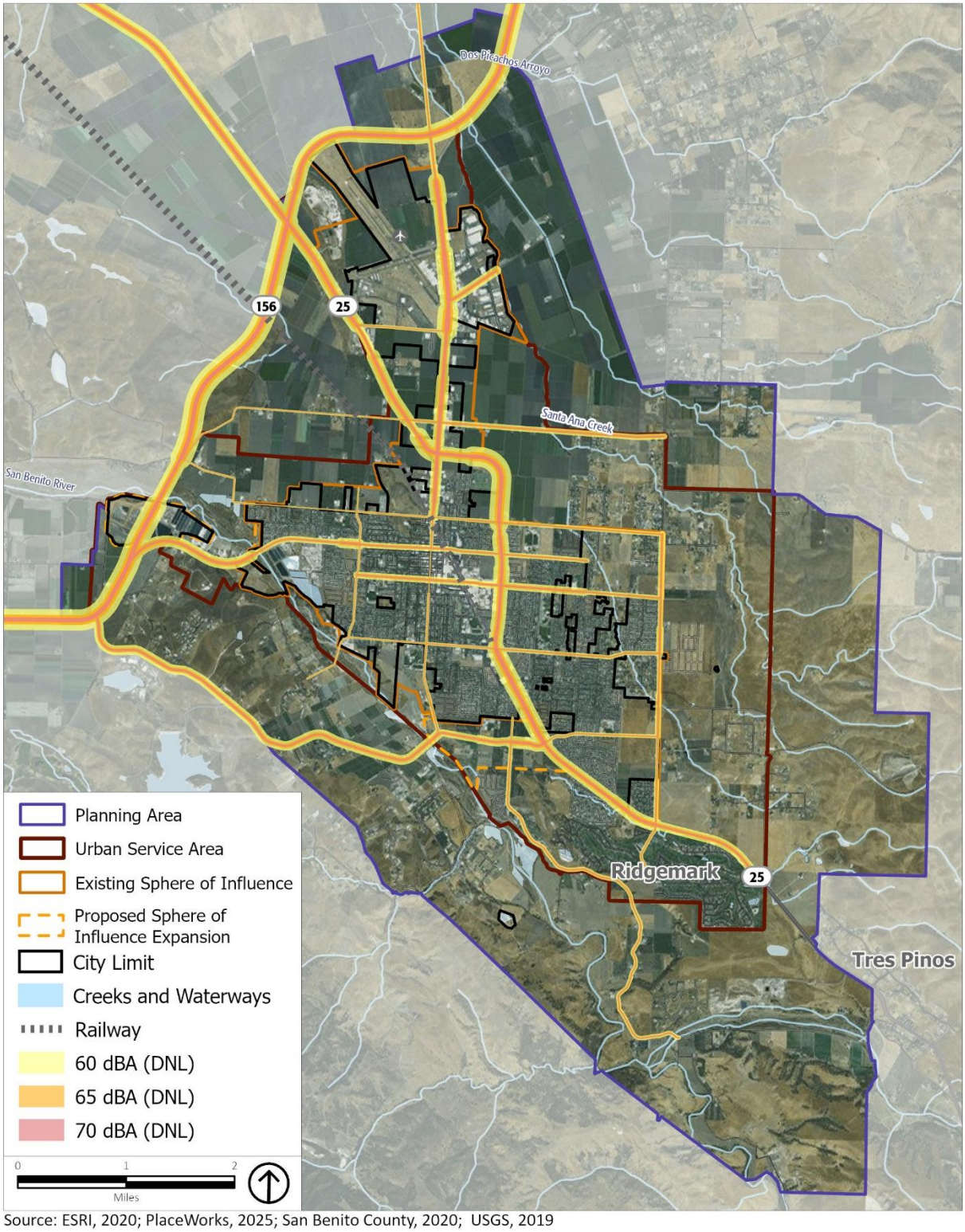
A Noise Element has been required as part of local General Plans since 1971. The State Legislature adopted the California Noise Control Act of 1973, which defined the following findings and policy:

1. Excessive noise is a serious hazard to the public health and welfare.
2. Exposure to certain levels of noise can result in physiological, psychological, and economic damage.
3. There is a continuous and increasing bombardment of noise in urban, suburban, and rural areas.
4. Government has, by and large, not taken the steps necessary to provide for the control, abatement, and prevention of unwanted and hazardous noise.
5. It is the policy of the State to provide an environment for all Californians free from noise that jeopardizes their health or welfare.

To implement this policy, Section 65302(f) of the California Government Code requires each city to have a Noise Element as part of its General Plan. The Government Code states that the Noise Element should be prepared according to guidelines established by the State Department of Health Services, Office of Noise Control.

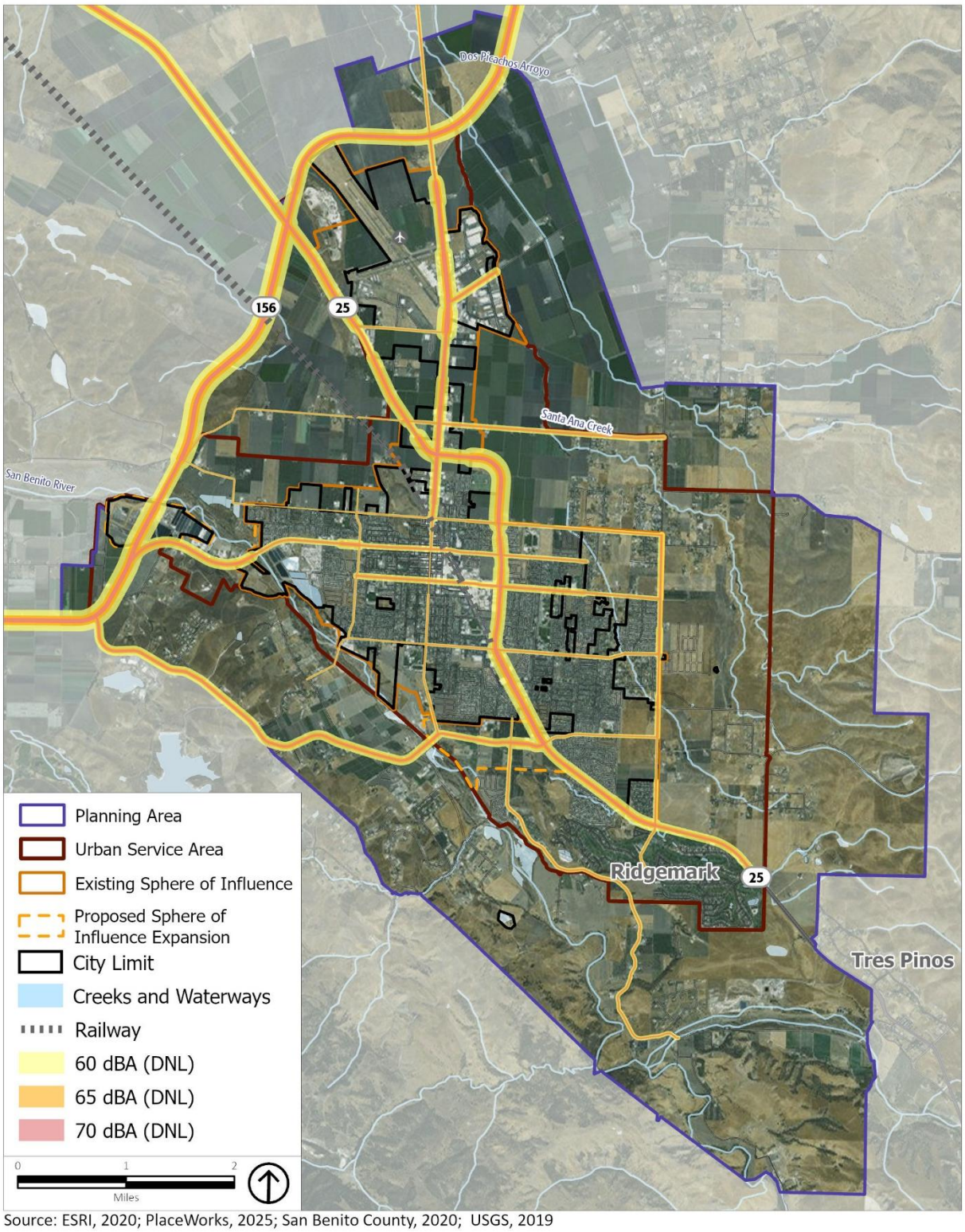
Primary noise sources in the Hollister Sphere of Influence include traffic from surrounding highways, major roadways, residential streets, Hollister Municipal Airport, local railroad activity, and outdoor recreational uses, as shown in Figure HS-7 and Figure HS-9. Some of these land uses and transportation activities can produce noise levels that may disturb sensitive receptors in close proximity. Homes, schools, hospitals, and individuals living near railroad crossings may be vulnerable to the noise. While on-road vehicles represent the most prominent source of noise in Hollister, as shown in Figure HS-7 and Figure HS-8, commercial and retail areas with truck loading docks can also be a significant noise source.

Figure HS-7 Existing Transportation Noise Contours



Source: ESRI, 2020; PlaceWorks, 2025; San Benito County, 2020; USGS, 2019

Figure HS-8 2040 Transportation Noise Contours



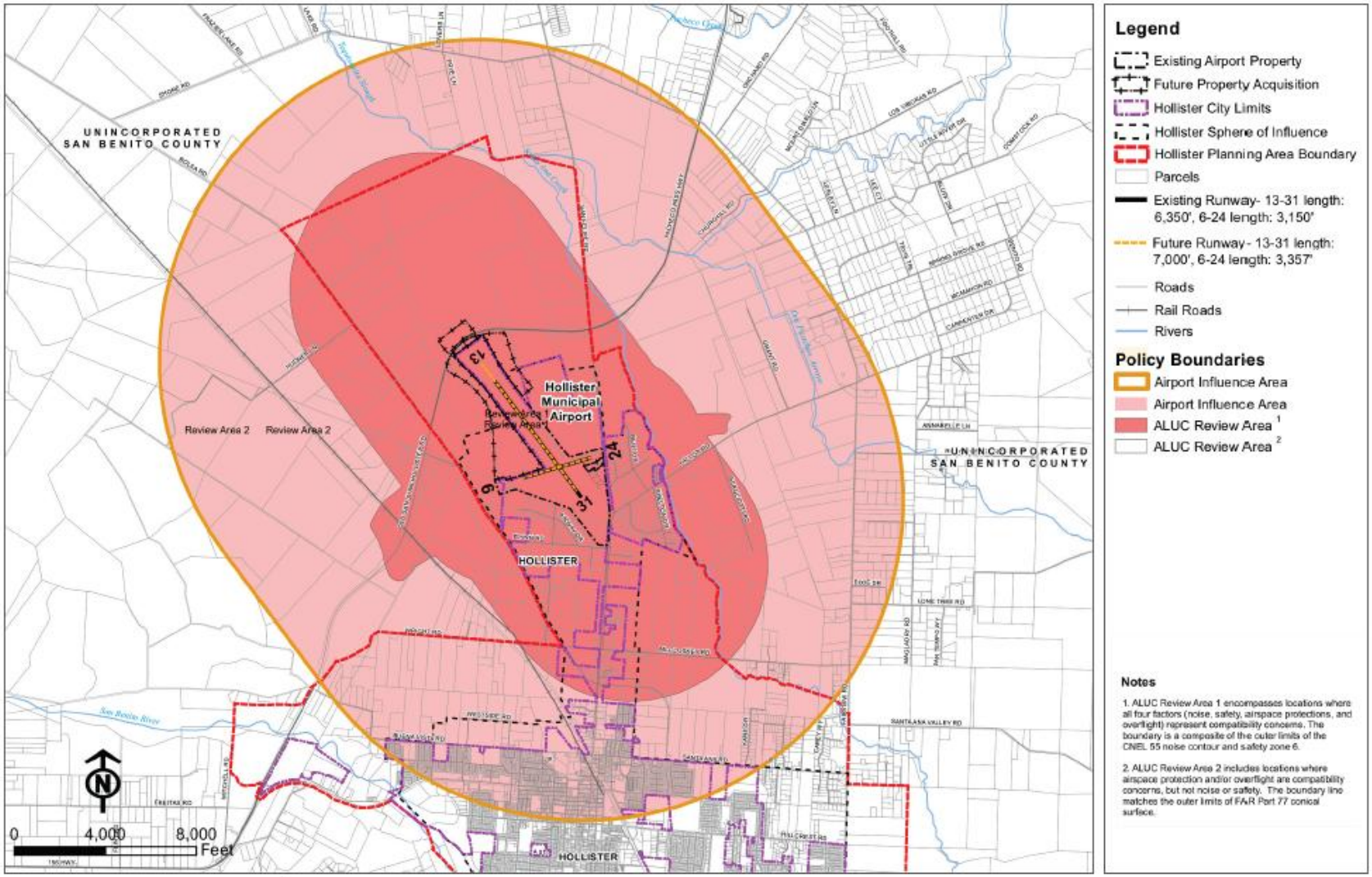
Source: ESRI, 2020; PlaceWorks, 2025; San Benito County, 2020; USGS, 2019

8.1.11 Airport Hazards

A portion of Hollister and its Sphere of Influence extends into the Airport Influence Area (AIA) of the Hollister Municipal Airport (HMA), as shown on Figure HS-9. The airport is operated by the City of Hollister, and is used for general aviation, which includes all aviation activities other than commercial passenger flights, commuter/air taxi, and military uses. General aviation activity typically includes single-engine and small twin-engine aircrafts holding six or fewer people.

The AIA includes all areas surrounding the airport that are affected by noise, height, and safety considerations. All development projects in the AIA must be reviewed by the San Benito County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) to ensure consistency with the Hollister Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP). The ALUCP establishes height restrictions for structures in the portion of the Hollister City Limits and Sphere of Influence that extends into the AIA.

Figure HS-9 Airport Influence Areas



Source: San Benito County Airport Land Use Commission,
Hollister Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, June 21, 2012, page 2-51.

8.2 HEALTH AND SAFETY ELEMENT GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

The following section provides goals, policies, and actions relating to health and safety.

8.2.1 Overall Hazard Planning

GOAL HS-1 Protect community health and safety from natural and human-caused hazards.

Policies

Policy HS-1.1 **Location of Future Development.** Permit development only in areas where potential danger to the health, safety, and welfare of the community can be adequately mitigated. This includes prohibiting development that would be subject to severe flood damage or geological hazard because of its location and/or design and that cannot be mitigated to safe levels.

Development shall also be prohibited where emergency services, including fire protection, cannot be provided.

Policy HS-1.2 **Safety Considerations in Development Review.** Require project applicants to prepare appropriate studies to assess identified hazards and ensure that impacts are adequately mitigated prior to project approval.

Policy HS-1.3 **Coordination with the County of San Benito and Other Agencies on Safety Matters.** Cooperate with the County of San Benito and other government agencies in all matters related to safety, hazardous waste management, and emergency planning.

Policy HS-1.4 **Airport Safety.** Avoid residential dwellings in the Aircraft Flight Zones and establish compatible land use zones around the airport consistent with the Hollister Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

Policy HS-1.5 **Undergrounding Utilities.** Require the undergrounding of utility lines in existing and new development, where feasible.

Policy HS-1.6 Climate Change Collaboration. Collaborate with local governments and special districts in San Benito County and the Central Coast Climate Collaborative to develop and implement regional climate change adaptation and resilience initiatives.

Policy HS-1.7 Hazard Data. Use the reported data and findings of applicable local, regional, or State documents or plans pertaining to climate-related hazards that could impact the City of Hollister, including the California Climate Change Assessment, the California Adaptation Planning Guide, and the Safeguarding California Plan, in the development review, capital improvement program, and decision-making processes.

Policy HS-1.8 Homelessness. Support regional efforts to ensure that persons experiencing homelessness in the Hollister Planning Area have access to temporary and/or emergency housing, food, and other essential living materials to keep them safe during hazard events.

Policy HS-1.9 Weatherization. Ensure that lower-income households have access to information about low-cost programs (e.g., subsidies for the National Flood Insurance Program, air-conditioning, low-cost weatherization) to protect their homes and well-being from climate change hazards, including flooding, extreme heat, and severe wind.

Policy HS-1.10 Resilience Hubs. Develop equitably located Community Resilience Hubs throughout Hollister, outside of any areas of elevated hazard risk to the greatest extent possible, that can serve as shelters and resource centers during and after hazard events (e.g., flood inundation, wildfire and wildfire smoke, extreme heat days). Such facilities should be in easily accessible locations and available to all community members, as needed. Resilience hubs consist of well-used, existing community-serving facilities that are upgraded to provide local communities with shelter and water.

Actions

Action HS-1.1 **Geologic, Flooding, Fire, and Other Hazard Mapping.** Upon each update of the Safety Element, update hazard maps for use in development review. Use this mapping data to inform decisions about existing risk and future land uses throughout the city.

Action HS-1.2 **Development Review for Compatibility with the Hollister Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.** Review all development proposals in the Airport Influence Area to verify that the proposed development would not conflict with the land use guidelines established in the Hollister Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan or subsequent updates.

Action HS-1.3 **Coordination with Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E).** Coordinate with PG&E to prepare and implement a program to underground existing electrical transmission lines throughout the city.

Action HS-1.4 **Undergrounding Utilities in New Development.** Review and amend the Hollister Municipal Code to include undergrounding utility requirements for new development to underground electric utilities.

8.2.2 Seismic and Geologic Hazards

GOAL HS-2 Protect the community from seismic and geologic hazards.

Policies

Policy HS-2.1 **Seismic Hazards.** Ensure existing and new structures are designed to protect people and property from seismic hazards. Review all development proposals for compliance with the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act and the Uniform Building Code as a way to reduce the risk of exposure to seismic hazards for those who will be living and working in the Hollister Planning Area.

Policy HS-2.2 Geotechnical and Geologic Review. Require all geologic hazards to be adequately addressed and mitigated prior to the issuance of certificate of occupancy through project development. Development proposed in areas of potential geological hazards shall not be endangered by, nor contribute to, the hazardous conditions on the site or on adjoining properties.

Policy HS-2.3 Engineering Tests for Geologic Conditions. Require engineering tests prior to issuance of building permits for those development projects that may be exposed to impacts associated with expansive soils, so that building foundation footings, utility lines, roadways, and sidewalks can be designed to accept the estimated degree of soil contraction, expansion, and settlement, according to the standards of the Uniform Building Code.

Policy HS-2.4 High-Occupancy Structures. High-occupancy structures (such as schools, hospitals, office buildings, and multifamily housing) or critical emergency facilities (such as fire and police stations, emergency relief storage facilities, and water storage tanks) should not be located in an active fault's "zone of potential surface deformation." In addition, high-occupancy structures should be designed or redesigned to protect human life to the highest degree possible during the "maximum probable event" of seismic activity. Existing and new high-occupancy structures should also have emergency plans approved by the City.

Policy HS-2.5 Design of Safe Structures and Utilities. Require new roads, bridges, and utility lines be constructed to accommodate possible fault movement and withstand the expected ground motion induced during an earthquake.

ACTIONS

Action HS-2.1 Building Code Updates. Regularly adopt updates to the Building Code and other essential codes as necessary to address earthquake, fire, and other hazards and support programs for the identification, abatement, or mitigation of existing hazardous structures.

Action HS-2.2 **Unreinforced Masonry Building Improvements.** Continue to implement actions to address safety issues related to Unreinforced Masonry Buildings and other buildings as conditions are discovered.

8.2.3 Flood Hazards

GOAL HS-3 Protect the community from flood hazards.

Policies

Policy HS-3.1 **Flood Hazards.** Review all development proposals to verify that either no portion of the proposed development lies in the 100-year floodplain or that the applicant has taken adequate measures to eliminate the risk of flood damage in a 100-year storm consistent with the City of Hollister Flood Damage Prevention Regulations as amended from time to time.

Policy HS-3.2 **Floodplain Uses.** Encourage developers to dedicate identified lands in floodplains that are unsuitable for development to the City for use as parks or for preservation as open space, consistent with the City of Hollister Parks and Recreation Master Plan or other infrastructure plan developed for a given area. Development of these identified lands as community recreation amenities should be economically feasible to build and maintain.

Policy HS-3.3 **Flood Control Coordination.** Coordinate with the San Benito County Water District and other State agencies to maintain flood-control infrastructure to minimize flood damage.

Actions

Action HS-3.1 **Flood Control Requirements in New Development.** Update and apply flood control requirements to regulate construction in flood zones.

Action HS-3.2 **Areas of Poor Drainage.** Identify areas of poor drainage and install new or upgrade existing drainage systems to accommodate drainage needs. Use natural infrastructure to the extent feasible.

Action HS-3.3 Floodplain Use Assessment. Identify those areas with natural hazards that are unsuitable for development, but which may be suitable for public recreational uses.

8.2.4 Wildland and Urban Fire Hazards

GOAL HS-4 Maintain adequate fire and life safety protection from wildland and urban fires.

Policies

Policy HS-4.1 Development in Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Coordinate between the Building and Fire Departments to ensure that new development in High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones is in full compliance with all applicable sections of the Building Code and meets or exceeds the standards in Title 14 State Responsibility Area Fire Safe Regulations and Fire Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structures Regulations.

Policy HS-4.2 Firefighting Infrastructure. Ensure adequate firefighting infrastructure, including water and fire-flow capacity, visible street signage meeting California Fire Safe Regulations standards, roads and building clearance for firefighting vehicles, adequate road widths, and clear and legible street signage are available throughout the community.

Policy HS-4.3 Fire Protection Master Plan. Ensure that all new development will be adequately designed to minimize risks to life and property through the implementation of the Fire Protection Master Plan.

Policy HS-4.4 Fire Safety Requirements. Require new development to be protected from fire hazards through the provision of peak load water supply systems capable of providing the flow required for fire suppression, the design of roads with adequate widths and turning radii, and adequate separation between buildings, prior to project approval. Coordinate with the Hollister Fire Department and water service providers to ensure the ongoing maintenance and long-term integrity of water supply and associated infrastructure for fire suppression purposes.

Policy HS-4.5 Facilities Planning. Place all new public facilities outside of identified fire hazard risk areas as feasible. Appropriately retrofit or, if necessary, relocate existing public facilities outside of identified fire hazard areas.

Policy HS-4.6 Land Use Management for Fire Risks. Maintain all City-owned public lands to clear them of fuel loads, establish appropriately placed fire breaks, and educate all property owners in the city on proper landscape maintenance and fire-scaping standards to reduce the risk of fire hazards.

Policy HS-4.7 Retrofitting of Existing Buildings. Encourage the retrofitting of older buildings and properties to meet current fire safety standards in coordination with proposed major remodeling or additions.

Policy HS-4.8 Mutual-Aid Agreements. Maintain inter-jurisdictional cooperation and coordination, including automatic-aid agreements with fire protection/suppression agencies in San Benito County.

Policy HS-4.9 Defensible Space and Fuel Modification. Minimize future development in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ). Require property owners of any future development in Very High FHSZ to create and maintain defensible space around structures, consistent with Public Resources Code Section 4291 and Government Code Section 51182, including the 100-foot defensible space requirement. Ensure long-term maintenance of fuel modification areas through property owner education and code enforcement.

Policy HS-4.10 Fire Protection Plans. Require fire protection plans for any new development proposed in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones that include risk analysis, fire response capabilities, fire safety requirements, mitigation measures, wildfire education, and evacuation planning.

Policy HS-4.11 Post-Fire Re-evaluation. Following large wildfires, re-evaluate development standards to meet current safety standards and ensure consistency with State requirements.

ACTIONS

Action HS-4.1 Requirements for Development in High Fire Hazard Areas. Require project-level development in the High and Very High Fire Hazard Zone in the Planning Area to occur in accordance with the California Building Standards Code and adopt local ordinances that meet or exceed the minimum statewide standards in Title 14 State Responsibility Area Fire Safe Regulations and Fire Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structures Regulations to provide needed safeguards and facilities to control the spread of fire in any fire hazardous area. Provisions shall include, but are not limited to, the following: (a) require spark arresters for any chimney; (b) prohibit open-flame devices; (c) clear brush or vegetative growth 100 feet from structures; and (d) clear brush 10 feet from roadways; (e) ensure adequate road access for emergency vehicles; (f) provide water supply and fire flow capacity for fire suppression; and (g) provide visible street signage.

Action HS-4.2 Tree Trimming. Trim all public trees and other vegetation in Hollister on a regular basis to clear them of any loose branches or debris that could serve as fuel in a fire event.

Action HS-4.3 Pilot Clean Air Center Program. Implement the State's Wildfire Smoke Clean Air Centers for Vulnerable Populations Incentive Pilot Program and apply for grants to retrofit ventilation systems at certain public buildings to provide refuge for residents during periods of unhealthy air quality caused by excessive smoke from wildfires.

Action HS-4.4 Fire Safety Education. Develop new and expand existing public fire safety education programs (including disaster preparedness, defensible space requirements, evacuation routes, and wildfire prevention) and continue to be proactive in public safety education.

8.2.5 Emergency Preparedness and Emergency Operations

GOAL HS-5 Minimize potential damage to life, environment, and property through timely, well-prepared, and well-coordinated emergency preparedness response plans and programs.

Policies

Policy HS-5.1 **Emergency Planning Document Coordination.** Integrate the City's safety and emergency management documents, including this Health and Safety Element, the San Benito County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, and other related documents.

Policy HS-5.2 **San Benito County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.** Incorporate the current San Benito County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan into this Safety Element by reference, as permitted by California Government Code Section 65302.6 to ensure that emergency response and evacuation routes are accessible throughout the city.

Policy HS-5.3 **Emergency Infrastructure and Equipment.** Ensure the emergency operations center maintains a full functional state of readiness.

Policy HS-5.4 **Neighborhood Disaster Preparedness.** Locate volunteer centers for emergency coordination in neighborhoods with potential for being isolated due to road closures or Public Safety Power Shutoff events.

Policy HS-5.5 **Local Utility Cooperation.** Work with local utility operators to identify if and when a Public Safety Power Shutoff event may be necessary to reduce hazard risks in Hollister and/or the surrounding area and provide due notice and resources to residents in the city to help them prepare.

Policy HS-5.6 **Disaster Recovery.** Ensure that the City government continues to operate during and after hazard events and is able to provide resources and guidance to people and institutions in Hollister to aid them in recovery and reconstruction following the end of the hazard event.

Policy HS-5.7 Access for Emergency Vehicles and Evacuations. Provide adequate access for emergency vehicles and equipment and evacuating community members, including providing a second means of ingress and egress to all development.

Policy HS-5.8 Emergency Management Coordination. Coordinate and share experience and strategies with State, regional, and private sector emergency management agencies on disaster preparedness and disaster response procedures. Cooperate with emergency management partners to assess and project future emergency service needs, and to conduct joint preparedness and training activities.

Policy HS-5.9 Emergency Alerts. Continue to work with the County of San Benito to participate in providing alerts about potential, developing, and ongoing emergency situations through extensive early-warning and notification systems that convey information to all residents, in multiple languages and formats, to ensure it is widely accessible.

Policy HS-5.10 Communication Systems. Ensure that communication systems used by emergency responders and key City staff have sufficient redundancy and resiliency to meet City needs during and after a hazard event.

Policy HS-5.11 Energy Backups. As feasible, install solar energy and battery backup systems at critical public and private facilities to ensure continuation of services if the power grid is disrupted.

Policy HS-5.12 Public Information on Safety and Emergency Preparedness Issues. Support public education programs for the public and City staff in emergency preparedness and disaster response in cooperation with the County of San Benito.

Policy HS-5.13 Evacuation Route Capacity and Resilience. Coordinate with Caltrans, San Benito County, and neighboring jurisdictions to maintain the capacity and enhance resilience of designated evacuation routes to support effective emergency evacuations through ongoing maintenance and evaluation of appropriate

infrastructure improvements. These improvements may include implementing traffic management strategies during evacuations, installing signal battery backups at critical intersections along evacuation routes, adding secondary access routes to evacuation-constrained areas without physical or environmental constraints, and considering the use of contra-flow operations on major evacuation routes to increase capacity.

Policy HS-5.14 Evacuation Assistance for Vulnerable Populations. Support and coordinate evacuation assistance programs for vulnerable populations. Work with San Benito County, neighboring jurisdictions, transit and paratransit providers, medical facilities, and community-based organizations to identify the locations of and provide accessible communication and transit services to vulnerable populations.

Actions

Action HS-5.1 Regular Updates. Update the Health and Safety Element and any other documents as necessary with each Housing Element update, or every eight years, whichever comes first.

Action HS-5.2 Resilient Power Systems. Explore the feasibility of microgrids and portable batteries to provide localized energy supplies to neighborhood blocks to reduce reliance on regional power infrastructure in case of a hazard-caused power outage.

Action HS-5.3 Emergency Evacuation Routes. Conduct comprehensive education and outreach in conjunction with the County of San Benito, through multiple formats and media, on evacuation procedures, including evacuation routes, evacuation order types, evacuation maps, available transportation options, advance preparation measures, and evacuation shelters and support services.

Action HS-5.4 County Emergency Plan Update. Coordinate with the County of San Benito to prepare a Hollister Emergency Operations Plan as an annex to the County's Emergency Operations Plan and coordinate updates no less than every five years.

Action HS-5.5 Periodic Emergency Preparedness Exercises. Participate with the County of San Benito in disaster preparedness planning and exercises. Continue providing emergency preparedness trainings to maintain and expand existing Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs).

Action HS-5.6 Emergency Centers. Collaborate with property owners of privately owned community gathering places (e.g., meeting houses, lodges, faith-based buildings, community centers) to evaluate which of these facilities could become cooling centers, resilience hubs, or emergency shelters that provide safe places for residents during hazard events or emergency conditions. Cooling centers and emergency shelters shall remain operational both during and after the hazard event, as needed.

Action HS-5.7 Emergency Operations Center. Maintain the local government's emergency operations center in a full functional state of readiness.

Action HS-5.8 Back-up Emergency Operations Center. Designate a back-up Emergency Operations Center with communications redundancies.

Action HS-5.9 Emergency Infrastructure. Ensure that traffic lights at major intersections continue to function in the event of localized power outage. Repair any damaged sets of infrastructure or equipment as needed to continue City operations.

Action HS-5.10 Disaster Preparedness Training and Planning. Continue to provide essential emergency public services during natural catastrophes and build the capacity of resilience hubs and community-based organizations. Undertake disaster preparedness training and planning in cooperation with other public agencies and appropriate public-interest organizations, ensuring that all training is provided in English, Spanish, and other relevant languages in the community and at accessible locations.

Action HS-5.11 Hazard Awareness. Publicize disaster plans and promote resident awareness and caution regarding hazards, including soil instability, earthquakes, flooding, and fire.

Action HS-5.12 Funding Energy Backups. Seek grants and other funding sources for the installation of backup energy systems at critical facilities.

Action HS-5.13 Emergency Communication Infrastructure. Work with Caltrans and San Benito County to install and maintain emergency communication infrastructure along evacuation routes.

Action HS-5.14 Evacuation Resource Coordination. Work with San Benito County, neighboring jurisdictions, and private-sector entities (including utility companies, towing services, and ambulance operators) to identify resource gaps and establish agreements for mutual support during evacuation events.

8.2.6 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

GOAL HS-6 Protect the community's health, safety, and welfare relating to the use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials.

POLICIES

Policy HS-6.1 Hazardous Waste Management. Support measures to responsibly manage hazardous waste to protect public health, safety, and the environment, and support State and federal safety legislation to strengthen requirements for hazardous materials transport.

Policy HS-6.2 Hazardous Materials Storage and Disposal. Require proper storage and disposal of hazardous materials to prevent leakage, potential explosions, fires, or the escape of harmful gases, and to prevent individually innocuous materials from combining to form hazardous substances, especially at the time of disposal. Provide the public, industry, agriculture, and local government with the available information needed to enable them to take rational and cost-effective actions to minimize, recycle, treat, dispose of, or otherwise manage hazardous wastes in the Hollister Planning Area.

Policy HS-6.3 Potential Hazardous Soils Conditions. Evaluate new development prior to development approvals on sites that may contain hazardous materials.

Policy HS-6.4 **Clean-up of Sites with Hazardous Soils.** Require clean-up of sites in Hollister that are contaminated with hazardous substances be cleaned through decontamination of soils and filtration of groundwater.

ACTIONS

Action HS-6.1 **San Benito County on Hazardous Waste Management Planning Coordination.** Cooperate with the County of San Benito in implementation of the Hazardous Waste Management Plan.

Action HS-6.2 **Travel Routes for Hazardous Materials.** Establish, in coordination with the County of San Benito and other government agencies, designated travel routes through Hollister for vehicles transporting hazardous materials, in accordance with State and federal regulations.

8.2.7 EXTREME HEAT

GOAL HS-7 Protect the community from extreme heat hazards.

POLICIES

Policy HS-7.1 **Public Transit Coordination.** Coordinate with San Benito County Express to improve heat resilience at transit stops through shading structures, heat-mitigating materials, and other cooling strategies to protect transit users from extreme heat.

Policy HS-7.2 **Community Shading and Heat Mitigation.** Increase shading and incorporate heat-mitigating materials on pedestrian walkways, public spaces, and other community gathering areas throughout the city, prioritizing areas with high pedestrian activity and vulnerable populations.

Policy HS-7.3 **Outdoor Workers.** Look for opportunities to ensure that employers and workers in outdoor industries have the training and resources to be adequately protected from environmental hazards, including extreme heat, poor air quality, and diseases.

Policy HS-7.4 **Drought-Tolerant Native Landscaping.** Promote and expand the use of drought-tolerant green infrastructure, including native vegetation, street trees, and landscaped areas, as part of cooling strategies in public and private spaces.

Policy HS-7.5 **Tree Planting.** Promote tree planting and preserve existing tree canopy to increase the tree canopy cover and help shade and cool the community.

8.2.8 Other Hazards

GOAL HS-8 Develop a resilient community with the ability to adapt to climate change hazards.

Policies

Policy HS-8.1 **Water Agencies.** Coordinate with the Sunnyslope County Water District and San Benito County Water District to prepare for a reduced, long-term water supply resulting from more frequent and severe drought events. Implement extensive water conservation measures to ensure sustainable water supply.

Policy HS-8.2 **Sustainability Features.** Encourage new developments and existing property owners to incorporate sustainable, energy-efficient, and environmentally regenerative features into their facilities, landscapes, and structures to reduce energy demands and improve on-site resilience. Support financing efforts to increase community access to these features.

Policy HS-8.3 **Natural Infrastructure.** Use and protect natural resources and infrastructure to absorb the impacts of climate-related hazards and associated natural hazards, as feasible.

Policy HS-8.4 **Vector-Borne Diseases.** Work with healthcare providers to support free or reduced-cost vaccinations for vector-borne diseases that are widely available for Hollister residents.

Policy HS-8.5 **Medical Providers.** Coordinate with local medical providers and the San Benito County Public Health Services to prepare for disasters and health emergencies and minimize disruptions to medical services and reduce impacts to medical facilities in Hollister.

Actions

Action HS-8.1 **Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment.** Update the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment with new climate projections and data from Cal-Adapt and the California Climate Change Assessment during each update to the Health and Safety Element.

8.2.9 Noise

GOAL HS-9 Achieve noise levels consistent with acceptable standards and reduce or eliminate objectionable noise sources.

Policies

Policy HS-9.1 **Protect Noise Sensitive Areas from Unacceptable Traffic Noise Levels.** Protect the noise environment in existing residential areas by requiring mitigation measures be identified prior to project approval for the operational phase of projects under the following circumstances: (a) the project would cause the day-night average sound level (Ldn) to increase 5 dB(A) where ambient noise is below 60 dB(A); (b) the project would cause the Ldn to increase 3 dB(A) where ambient noise is between 60 dB(A) and 70 dB(A); or (c) the project would cause the Ldn to increase 1.5 dB(A) where ambient noise is 70 dB(A) or greater.

Policy HS-9.2 **Noise Source Control.** Work with property owners to control noise at its source, maintaining existing noise levels and ensuring that noise levels do not exceed acceptable noise standards as established in the Hollister Noise Ordinance.

Policy HS-9.3 **Construction Noise.** Regulate construction activity to reduce noise as established in the Hollister Noise Ordinance.

Policy HS-9.4 **Vehicle Noise.** Strive to reduce traffic noise levels, especially as they impact residential areas, and continue enforcement of vehicle noise standards through noise readings and enforcement actions. In particular, strive to minimize truck traffic in residential areas and ensure enforcement of Vehicle Code provisions that prohibit alteration of vehicular exhaust systems in a way that increases noise emissions.

Policy HS-9.5 Site Planning and Design. Require attention to site planning and design techniques other than sound walls to reduce noise impacts, including: (a) installing earth berms; (b) increasing the distance between the noise source and the receiver; (c) using non-sensitive structures, such as parking lots, utility areas, and garages to shield noise-sensitive areas; (d) orienting buildings to shield outdoor spaces from the noise source; and (e) minimizing the noise at its source.

Policy HS-9.6 Airport Noise. Review all proposed development in the Airport Influence Area to ensure that it will be compatible with operations at the Hollister Municipal Airport and applicable noise standards and regulations.

Policy HS-9.7 Techniques to Reduce Traffic Noise. Use roadway design, traffic signalization, and other traffic planning techniques (such as limiting truck traffic in residential areas and installing rubberized asphalt) to reduce noise caused by speed or acceleration of vehicles. Work with the State to address noise impacts from highway traffic.

Policy HS-9.8 Noise Standards Enforcement. Administer the noise policies identified in the Health and Safety Element and comply with State requirements for certain other noise-control programs through specific local enforcement programs.

Actions

Action HS-9.1 Review New Development for Potential Noise Impacts. Require review of all development proposals prior to project approval to verify that the proposed development would not increase noise beyond the City's established thresholds and that it would not generate noise that would be incompatible with existing uses in the vicinity of the proposed development.

Action HS-9.2 Periodic Noise Monitoring. Amend the Noise Ordinance to require periodic monitoring of residential noise generators. The Noise Ordinance shall identify who is responsible for the noise monitoring and require property owners to develop noise reduction and abatement measures that can be applied to limit noise, phasing in appropriate mitigation measures.

Action HS-9.3 Public Awareness and Education about Noise Issues. Provide publicity regarding the Noise Ordinance, encouraging residents to be aware of noise issues and to do their part towards creating a quiet ambience in Hollister's neighborhoods.

Action HS-9.4 Noise Complaint Enforcement. Develop capabilities to compile data as part of the Code Enforcement/police records on noise-related complaints.

Action HS-9.5 Traffic Noise Mitigation. Continue to enforce City Ordinances, which restrict through truck traffic to approved truck routes only and prohibit the parking and maintenance of trucks in residential districts.

Action HS-9.6 Periodic Updates to Noise Ordinance. Require the Noise Ordinance to incorporate the noise-related policies presented in the Hollister General Plan and to develop a procedure for handling noise complaints.

Action HS-9.7 Staff Training on Noise Enforcement. Train Police, Public Works, and Development Services Department personnel as needed in the use of noise measurement equipment to enforce the Noise Ordinance and vehicular noise standards, and to monitor noise levels throughout the city.

Action HS-9.8 Noise and Vibration Thresholds. Require the adoption of the noise and vibration thresholds applied in the General Plan Environmental Impact Report into the Noise Ordinance. For noise thresholds, this shall include the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) criteria for acceptable levels of construction noise as well as Construction Equipment Noise Emission Levels based on a distance of 50 feet between the equipment and noise receptor.

For vibration thresholds, this shall include FTA criteria for acceptable levels of groundborne vibration during operation of commercial or industrial uses and groundborne vibration for various types of construction equipment. If vibration levels exceed the FTA limits for construction, alternative methods/equipment shall be used.

Action HS-9.9 **Construction Best Management Practices.** Require the adoption of the construction best management practices outlined in the General Plan Environmental Impact Report to be incorporated into the Noise Ordinance to minimize construction noise to the extent feasible.

8.2.10 Airport Hazards

GOAL HS-10 Protect the public's health and safety and ensure compatible land uses with Hollister Municipal Airport operations.

Policy HS-10.1 **Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.** Work closely with appropriate agencies, including the San Benito County Airport Land Use Commission, to ensure compatibility of land uses with airport facilities and operations.

Policy HS-10.2 **Airspace Protection.** Limit building heights for airspace protection in accordance with Federal Aviation Regulations Part 77.