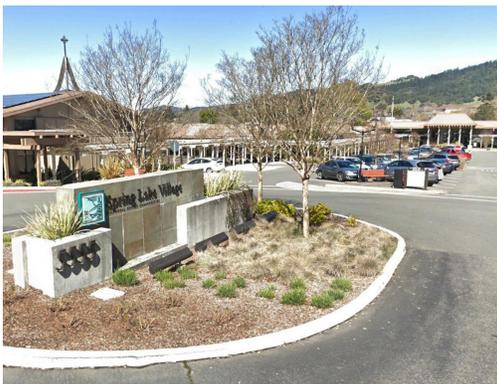


CHAPTER 2

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER

IN THIS CHAPTER

Current Land Uses | Urban Design and Character | Historic and Cultural Resources
Affordable Housing | Environmental Justice and Equity | Santa Rosa General Plan 2035
Zoning Districts | Specific Plans



2.1 LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER FINDINGS

Current Land Uses

1. The City of Santa Rosa is relatively built out with well-established residential neighborhoods at lower densities than the greater San Francisco Bay Area. Low density, primarily single-family, residential is the predominant land use in the city. Single-family residential uses cover 52 percent of the city's 41 square miles.
2. Commercial uses are generally located in the heart of Santa Rosa and along US Highway 101 (Highway 101), with 15 unique commercial districts in addition to Downtown Santa Rosa, which operates as a mixed-use district. Over half of all commercial in the city is strip retail. Industrial uses are generally situated in the northern and southern outskirts of Santa Rosa, often near Highway 101, and occupy only about 3 percent of the city's land area (718 acres).
3. Santa Rosa has two Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART) stations, which provide regional connections throughout the North Bay, and the Charles M. Schulz–Sonoma County Airport is approximately seven miles northwest of Downtown Santa Rosa. The General Plan Update can guide changes to the multimodal transit network to support these regional connections.

Urban Design and Character

4. Major gateways into Santa Rosa lie along Highway 101, Highway 12, and county roads that transition into urban corridors when they reach city limits. On the western, southern, and eastern edges of the city, these gateways demarcate the change from rural/agricultural lands to a more urban environment with sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and street trees.
5. Major corridors in the city are typically four-lane roadways that are fronted by commercial and civic uses, which are set back from the street with parking. Most of these roadways have bicycle lanes and full sidewalks; however, there are gaps in these facilities in less dense parts of the city and in unincorporated islands.

Historical and Cultural Resources

6. Santa Rosa has more than 20 State-designated landmarks, one federally recognized historic resource (Luther Burbank property), and eight designated historic preservation districts, established to officially recognize individual properties and whole neighborhoods as key components of the city's heritage. The General Plan Update will provide an opportunity to examine and support preservation of these important resources.

Current General Plan and Zoning

7. Santa Rosa's current General Plan Growth Management Element paces residential development. The General Plan Update will provide the opportunity to ensure that future development occurs at a rate appropriate for the city.
8. Pursuant to California law, the city's Housing Element, last updated in 2014, accommodates the construction of new dwelling units. More than 1,913 units have been constructed through 2019, including approximately 15 percent allocated to very-low-income and 25 percent to low-income households. Although new housing is being provided for all income levels, including to replace homes lost in the 2017 Tubbs fire, the City is expected to receive an increased requirement from the State in the next Housing Element, which is included in the General Plan Update.
9. The City of Santa Rosa Zoning Ordinance is the primary regulatory mechanism used to implement the General Plan. The zoning ordinance establishes 20 zoning districts and six combining zone districts. The zoning ordinance is expected to need to be amended to reflect changes initiated by the General Plan Update.

Environmental Justice and Equity

10. Areas in northwestern Santa Rosa, Downtown Station Area, and southwestern Santa Rosa are designated by CalEnviroScreen 3.0 as disadvantaged communities (DACs) that are currently facing environmental justice issues, such as living in housing that is near unhealthy uses (warehouses, industrial sites, freeways, waste management facilities), having limited or no access to high-quality and well-maintained public services and amenities (schools, parks, libraries, community centers), having limited access to fresh and healthy food, or having limited decision-making power. The geographic distribution of DACs is generally consistent with the city's distribution of non-White residents, and the life expectancy at birth.
11. Fifteen percent of residents feel they speak English "less than very well" and are considered "linguistically isolated." Of those, 80 percent are Spanish speakers, 13.5 percent speak Asian or Pacific Island languages, 5 percent speak Indo-European languages, and the remaining 1.5 percent speak other languages.

Other City Policies and Programs

12. The city's current Climate Action Plan establishes a baseline of greenhouse gas emissions and sets strategies to reduce emissions to 1990 levels by 25 percent by 2015 and 80 percent by 2050, a prior State directive. The General Plan Update offers an opportunity to modify development procedures to meet new emission reduction goals set by the State over the past few years.

13. Santa Rosa has 5 of the 12 "Priority Development Areas" (PDAs) in Sonoma County: the Roseland Area PDA is designated a "transit neighborhood;" the Sebastopol Road Corridor is designated a "mixed use corridor;" the Downtown Station Area PDA, which encompasses the Downtown SMART station, is designated a "city center;" the North Santa Rosa Station PDA around the North Santa Rosa SMART station is designated a "suburban center;" and the Mendocino Avenue/Santa Rosa Avenue PDA stretches the length of the city along Mendocino Avenue south to Santa Rosa Avenue as a "mixed-use corridor." The General Plan Update provides an opportunity to define appropriate preservation or change in these key areas, recognized regionally as important places to support a wide range of community activities.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the baseline (2020) context for land use planning in Santa Rosa and provides a snapshot of the community character that makes Santa Rosa such a special place, including its historical and cultural resources, urban form, and public amenities. It provides a comprehensive overview of how land is currently used and regulated in Santa Rosa and its immediate surroundings. This chapter also identifies opportunities and potential challenges related to the long-term growth and development of the city, and it analyzes the development potential of Santa Rosa under existing City plans, policies, and regulations. **Figure 2-1** shows that the Santa Rosa city limit corresponds very closely to the “Planning Area,” the area to be considered in the General Plan Update process; “Sphere of Influence” that includes of areas outside of the city limits that City plans and policies may impact; and “Urban Growth Boundary,” where the City expects to provide services, such as water supply and wastewater collection and treatment.

This chapter is organized into the following sections:

- Land Use and Community Character Findings (Section 2.1)
- Introduction (Section 2.2)
- Regulatory Setting (Section 2.3)
- Current Land Uses (Section 2.4)
- Urban Design and Character (Section 2.5)
- Historic and Cultural Resources (Section 2.6)
- Affordable Housing (Section 2.7)
- Environmental Justice and Equity (Section 2.8)
- Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 (Section 2.9)
- Zoning Districts (Section 2.10)
- Specific Plans (Section 2.11)
- Sources (Section 2.12)

Planning Boundaries

The city limits, Sphere of Influence (SOI), Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), and Planning Area are the political and geographic boundaries that influence the long-term growth and development of Santa Rosa.

City of Santa Rosa City Limits

Santa Rosa is the regional hub of Sonoma County, situated about 45 miles north of San Francisco. The city limits encompass 41.1 square miles, 90 percent of which (19,415 acres) is developable. The remaining 10 percent is open space and parks.

Sphere of Influence

A city's SOI is the adjacent unincorporated area that receives services from the city or may in the future. As noted in the Regulatory Setting (see Section 2.3), the Sonoma County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) identifies unincorporated neighborhoods just south of the city limits as within Santa Rosa's SOI. The City typically makes land use and planning decisions based on the Urban Growth Boundary, discussed below, rather than the SOI.

Urban Growth Boundary

In 1990, Santa Rosa voters approved a five-year UGB, followed by a two-decade UGB measure in 1996 and an extension in 2010 to ensure that the current UGB will not be significantly changed until at least 2035. The UGB, as shown in **Figure 2-1**, covers about 45.5 square miles and encompasses all incorporated city land plus some unincorporated land expected to be annexed to receive City services at some point in the future.

Planning Area

Under State law, a general plan must address all areas within the jurisdiction's Planning Area. The Planning Area for the General Plan Update defines where the City has an interest in land use and includes all the land within the incorporated city, SOI, and UGB as of 2020. The City's Planning Area extends beyond the UGB on all sides and includes the Charles M. Schulz-Sonoma County Airport to the northwest and Trione-Annadel State Park to the southeast. **Figure 2-1** shows the boundaries of the Santa Rosa Planning Area, which covers about 49.3 square miles.

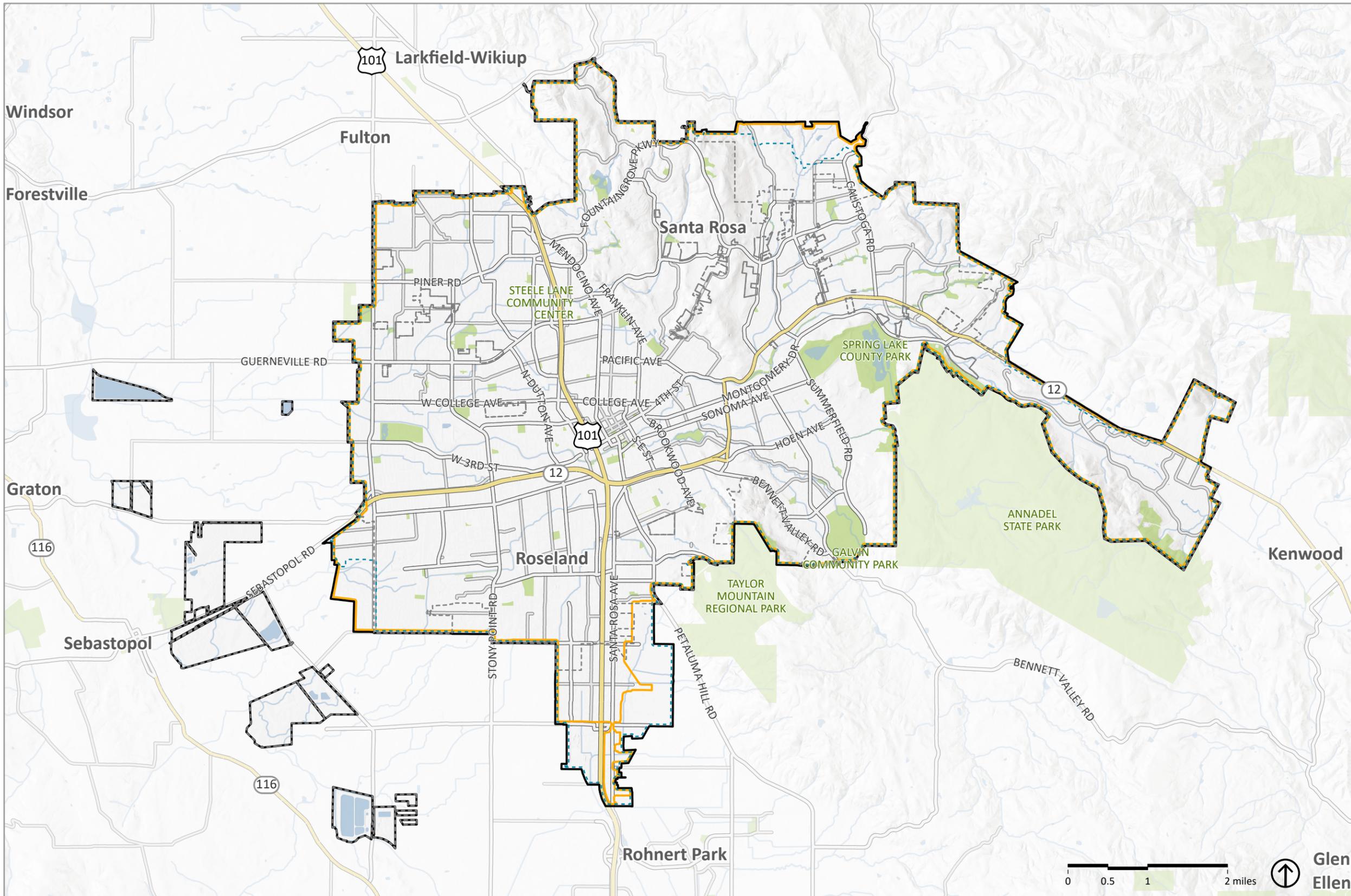


Figure 2-1
Base Map

- Planning Area
- City Limit
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Sphere of Influence



Plan Our Future Together



2.3 REGULATORY SETTING

Federal

Several Federal statutes affect land use and development in Santa Rosa.

Federal Aviation Administration

The Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) guides the establishment of height, safety, and noise standards for properties close to airports. A portion of the Santa Rosa Planning Area lies within the impact area of the Charles M. Schulz-Sonoma County Airport and is subject to FAA standards. The Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan for Sonoma County was adopted in 2001. California Government Code, Section 65302.3, requires local governments to update their general plans, specific plans, and land use regulations to be consistent with the airport land use plan. Proposed new and amended general plans, specific plans, land use ordinances, regulations, and facility master plans must be submitted to the airport land use commission for review.

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) was enacted to prevent unnecessary harm to historic properties (16 U.S.C. Sections 470 et seq.). It includes regulations that apply specifically to federal land-holding agencies, but also includes regulations (Section 106) that pertain to all projects funded, permitted, or approved by any federal agency that has the potential to affect cultural resources. Provisions of the NHPA establish a National Register of Historic Places (the National Register is maintained by the National Park Service), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, State Historic Preservation Offices, and federal grants-in-aid programs.

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was established to ensure that the potential impacts of a proposed federal action are subject to an environmental review process, which includes how alternatives will impact the human and natural environment (16 U.S.C. Sections 4331 to 4335). These assessments must be made available to the public. Section 102, Title I, requires agencies to incorporate environmental considerations into their planning and decision-making through a systematic approach. Specifically, all agencies must prepare detailed statements assessing the environmental impact of and alternatives to major actions that significantly affect the environment. Both NEPA and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) encourage a joint federal and State review when a project requires both federal and State approvals.

State

This section describes the State regulatory framework related to land use and community character in the Santa Rosa Planning Area.

General Plan Law

California Government Code, Section 65300, regulates the substantive and topical requirements of general plans. State law requires each city and county to adopt a general plan “for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning.” The California Supreme Court has called the general plan the “constitution for future development.” It expresses the community’s development goals and embodies public policy for the distribution of future land uses, both public and private.

Since the general plan affects the welfare of current and future generations, State law requires that it take a long-term perspective (typically 15 to 25 years). The general plan projects conditions and needs into the future and establishes long-term policy for day-to-day decision-making.

State law requires General Plans to address seven mandatory elements (or topics): land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. Additionally, because of the passage of Senate Bill 1000 (described below), jurisdictions with populations designated as disadvantaged communities must also address environmental justice in their general plans. Jurisdictions may also adopt additional elements that cover topics outside the seven mandated elements (such as economic development or historic preservation). In addition to including mandatory elements, a General Plan must be internally consistent. As described by State law, internal consistency holds that no policy conflicts can exist, either textual or diagrammatic, between the components of an otherwise complete and adequate General Plan. Different policies must be balanced and reconciled within the plan.

General Plan Guidelines

Section 65301 of the California Government Code requires a general plan to address the geographic territory of the local jurisdiction and any other territory outside its boundaries that bears relation to the planning of the jurisdiction. The jurisdiction may utilize judgment in determining what areas outside of its boundaries to include in the planning area. The State of California General Plan Guidelines states that the planning area for a city should include (at minimum) all land within the city limits and all land within the city’s sphere of influence.

Santa Rosa’s sphere of influence includes the unincorporated residential neighborhood south of Bennett Valley Road in east Santa Rosa, the residential neighborhood of Rincon Valley generally located northeast of the city, the industrial area buffering Highway 101 south of the city, the urban-rural interface southwest of Santa Rosa, and a few islands of unincorporated land sprinkled throughout the city. However, most of these neighborhoods are included within Santa Rosa’s Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and rely upon city services and infrastructure.

Senate Bill 1000

The California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) defines Environmental Justice as “the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” The State of California recognizes that environmental justice disparities are a threat to overall quality of life across all communities and has developed various policies, including Senate Bill (SB) 1000, to identify and address these environmental justice disparities. SB 1000 was passed in 2016 and serves three important purposes: reducing harmful pollutants and associated health risks in identified disadvantaged communities, promoting equitable access to health-inducing benefits, and promoting transparency and public engagement.

Through SB 1000, the State mandates that jurisdictions concurrently updating two or more elements of their General Plan must identify “disadvantaged communities,” engage stakeholders in these communities, and adopt either an Environmental Justice (EJ) element or integrate EJ policies throughout the General Plan to reduce unique and compounded health risks and pollution burdens. The final EJ element or EJ integrated policies must address at least the five following health and environmental justice outcomes: reduction of existing and future pollution exposure to all neighborhoods, including improvement of air quality; promotion of public facilities and infrastructure; promotion of access to healthy and fresh food; promotion of safe and sanitary homes; and promotion of opportunities for increased physical activity.

Identification of Disadvantaged Communities

The Governor’s Office of Planning and Research provides guidance for implementing SB 1000 at the local level. Additionally, the Office of the Attorney General provides monitoring and compliance review of SB 1000. These State agencies recommend two methods for the identification of disadvantaged communities (DACs): identifying low-income census tracts or block-groups, or identifying DACs using CalEnviroScreen3.0, a more comprehensive index that combines twenty different indicators of environmental justice (listed in Section 2.8).

The tool is currently in its third iteration (CES 3.0) and the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) has produced publicly available maps, data tables, and reports that show the statewide distribution of CES 3.0 scores. All information is available through the CalEnviroScreen webpage on the OEHHA website. Based on SB 1000, all census tracts with CES 3.0 scores that are in the percentile range of 75 to 100 are to be identified as disadvantaged communities.

Specific Plan Law

California Government Code, Section 65451, regulates the substantive and topical requirements of specific plans. A specific plan is a tool for the systematic implementation of the general plan, similar to zoning regulations, and establishes a link between implementing policies of the general plan and individual development proposals. A specific plan differs from zoning in that it applies to a defined geographic area and has tailored development regulations. A specific plan may be as general as setting forth broad policy concepts, or as detailed as providing direction on every facet of development, from the type, location, and intensity of uses to the design and capacity of infrastructure.

Housing Element Law

The State has established detailed legal requirements for the General Plan housing element beyond Section 65300. California Government Code Section Article 10.6 requires each city and county to prepare and maintain a current housing element as part of the community's general plan in order to attain a statewide goal of providing "decent housing and a suitable living environment for every California family." Under State law, housing elements must be updated every eight years and reviewed by the California Department of Housing and Community Development.

2017 Housing Package

In 2017, the State passed a "Housing Package" of 15 bills to remove government barriers to housing production across the state. Some of those bills address land use planning decisions and streamline local development review:

- **Assembly Bill (AB) 1397.** Requires cities to remove sites from their inventory of land identified for residential development that have been included in the past two housing element cycles and have yet to undergo development. The lack of development on these sites signals to the State that the site may have nongovernmental constraints to housing production, such as high land costs or topographic constraints. Therefore, housing element site inventories are limited to vacant sites that have realistic and demonstrated potential to meet the city's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).
- **Senate Bill (SB) 35.** Establishes streamlining procedures for affordable housing and mixed-use projects under certain conditions. When a jurisdiction has met its RHNA goal for above-moderate-income housing, developments must feature 50 percent below-market-rate units to qualify for streamlining. If a jurisdiction has not satisfied its RHNA goal for above-moderate-income housing, at least 10 percent of the units must be below market rate to qualify for streamlining. A qualifying project must also: be on land zoned for residential or mixed uses, not be located in an ecologically sensitive area, be multifamily, and pay union wages to construction workers.
- **AB 73.** Encourages local governments to create housing sustainability districts with specified minimum amounts of lower income housing at the plan and project levels. Housing projects that meet the affordability and other requirements of the sustainability district and pay prevailing wage (in the case of private projects), are entitled to ministerial approval. In addition, AB 73 requires preparation of an EIR for a sustainability district to pre-exempt housing projects subject to environmental review.
- **SB 166.** Prohibits a jurisdiction from diverting from its State-approved site inventory to permit projects that will lead to an inability to meet its RHNA. This essentially prohibits any downzoning of all residential parcels in the city.

- **AB 1505.** Authorizes local cities and counties to enact inclusionary rental housing programs.
- **SB 540.** Allows identification of Workforce Housing Opportunity Zones in a specific plan. This allows cities to augment public engagement, streamline permitting, and perform preemptive environmental reviews, thereby allowing ministerial approval of housing projects.

Local Agency Formation Commission

LAFCoS are independent regulatory commissions created to control the boundaries of cities and most special districts. The legislative backing for LAFCoS was administered through a complicated series of statutory laws. Initially, the three enabling acts were the Knox-Nisbet Act, the Municipal Organization Act, and the District Reorganization Act. These acts were subsequently streamlined into the Cortese-Knox Local Government Reorganization Act of 1985 (see below).

LAFCoS have a range of duties, but fundamentally exist as regulatory bodies to control city and special district boundaries and use their planning powers to influence land use. LAFCoS are restricted to making indirect land use decisions, primarily to approve or deny changes in local governmental boundaries. LAFCoS are also responsible for conducting special studies to review ways to reorganize, simplify, and streamline governmental structure and for preparing a sphere of influence for each city and special district in each county.

Cortese Knox Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 establishes a LAFCo in each county in California and authorizes these commissions to review, approve, or deny proposals for boundary changes and incorporations for cities, counties, and special districts. The LAFCo establishes a “sphere of influence” (SOI) for cities within their jurisdiction that describes the city's probable future physical boundaries and service area. The Santa Rosa SOI is regulated by the Sonoma County LAFCo. The Santa Rosa SOI is shown on **Figure 2-1**.

California Environmental Quality Act

The State legislature established the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to set a framework for maintaining “a quality environment for the people of the state now and in the future.” CEQA consists of both the statutory regulations in Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq. and the CEQA Guidelines in California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000 et seq. Though the primary purpose of environmental review under CEQA is public disclosure, Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines requires lead agencies to determine whether proposed projects that require discretionary government approval clearly identify ways to avoid or reduce environmental damage through feasible mitigation or project alternatives.

California State Scenic Highways Program

California's Scenic Highway Program was created by the State legislature in 1963. Its purpose is to protect and enhance the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors through special conservation treatment. The State laws governing the Scenic Highways Program are found in the Streets and Highways Code, Sections 260 through 263.

When a city or county nominates an eligible scenic highway for official designation, it must identify and define the scenic corridor of the highway. Scenic corridors consist of land that is visible from the highway right of way and is comprised primarily of scenic and natural features. Topography, vegetation, viewing distance, and/or jurisdictional lines determine the corridor boundaries. The city or county must also adopt ordinances, zoning and/or planning policies to preserve the scenic quality of the corridor or document such regulations that already exist in various portions of local codes. These ordinances and/or policies make up the Corridor Protection Program. The status of a proposed State scenic highway changes from “eligible” to “officially designated” when the local governing body applies to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for scenic highway approval, adopts a Corridor Protection Program, and receives notification that the highway has been officially designated a Scenic Highway.

California State Lands Commission

The California State Lands Commission has authority over all State-owned and sovereign lands, including tidelands, submerged lands, beds of navigable rivers, streams, lakes, bay, estuaries, inlets, and straits. The Commission administers surface leasing and other activities on these lands. The State owns several properties within Santa Rosa.

California Register of Historical Resources

On September 27, 1992, AB 2881 was signed into law amending the Public Resources Code as it affects historical resources. This legislation, which became effective on January 1, 1993, also created the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). Under CRHR, a historical resource may be determined significant under one or more of the following four criteria: it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States; it is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history; it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values; or it has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

Integrity is the authenticity of a historic resource's physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance. All resources nominated for listing on the CRHR must have integrity. Resources, therefore, must retain enough of their historic character or appearance to be recognizable as historic resources and to convey the reasons for their significance. Integrity is evaluated with regard to the retention of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. It must also be judged with reference to the particular criteria under which a resource is proposed for eligibility. Alterations over time to a resource or historical changes in its use may themselves have historic, cultural, or architectural significance.

It is possible that historical resources may not retain sufficient integrity to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register, but they may still be eligible for listing in the California Register. A resource that has lost its historical character or appearance may still have sufficient integrity for the California Register if it maintains the potential to yield significant scientific or historic information or specific data.

Senate Bill 18

SB 18 requires cities and counties to conduct consultations with Native American tribes before local officials adopt or amend their general plans (Chapter 905, amends California Civil Code Section 815.3, “Traditional Tribal Cultural Places”). These consultations are for preserving or mitigating impacts to Native American historic, cultural, and sacred sites, features, and objects in a city or county. A tribe has 90 days from the date of contact to request a consultation unless the tribe agrees to a shorter time frame. SB 18 also added a new topic that must be addressed in the open space element—open space land for the protection of Native American historic, cultural, or sacred sites, features, or objects.

County and Regional

Plans, policies, and regulations of other agencies affect growth and development in the Santa Rosa General Planning Area. Understanding the roles and responsibilities of these federal, State, and regional agencies is vital for effective interjurisdictional coordination.

Plan Bay Area and Sustainable Communities Strategy

Plan Bay Area is an integrated long-range transportation and land-use/housing plan for the San Francisco Bay Area, prepared by MTC and ABAG. It includes the Bay Area’s Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which MTC updates every four years, and ABAG’s demographic and economic forecast, updated every two years.

Plan Bay Area 2040 was adopted in 2017. It includes a Sustainable Communities Strategy, which provides for the coordination of land use, housing, and transportation. The goal of the Sustainable Communities Strategy is to reduce GHG emissions for cars and light-duty trucks in the nine-county region.

Plan Bay Area was prepared in response to the California Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (SB 375), which requires each of the state’s metropolitan areas to reduce GHG emissions from cars and light trucks. To meet the goals of SB 375, more future development is planned to be walkable and bikeable and close to public transit, jobs, schools, shopping, parks, recreation, and other amenities. To this end, Plan Bay Area directs the majority of the regional housing growth to local PDAs, including five PDAs in the Santa Rosa Planning Area. An updated RTP, Plan Bay Area 2050, is currently under development with a vision to ensure by the year 2050 that the Bay Area is affordable, connected, diverse, healthy, and vibrant for all. Plan Bay Area is scheduled for adoption in fall 2021.

Sonoma County Airport Land Use Plan

The Sonoma County Airport Land Use Plan is the Airport Land Use Commission’s (ALUC) official land use policy in the airport influence areas for all airports in the county. The plan includes descriptions of the referral area boundaries, noise compatibility standards, safety compatibility standards, airspace protection standards, and other land use policies for the six public use airports in the county. ALUC decisions and recommendations on general plans, zoning, and other local projects in the airport influence areas are based on this adopted plan.

The Charles M. Schulz–Sonoma County Airport, approximately seven miles northwest of the city, is guided by the Sonoma County Airport Land Use Plan and the Sonoma County Transportation Element, and operation is addressed by Sonoma County. The City of Santa Rosa regulates the type of development permitted on a small portion of land within both the city limits and the noise shed of the airport runways, shown on **Figure 2-2**.

Sonoma County Comprehensive Transportation Plan

The Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) updated the 2040 Sonoma County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (SCTP) in 2016. The SCTP is a 25-year plan that serves as the vision for transportation in Sonoma County to support resident well-being through an adequate transportation network. The goals of the SCTP include maintain the system, relieve congestion, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, plan for safety and health, and promote economic vitality. These goals are met through transportation projects and programs across a variety of travel modes and dispersed throughout cities and the County. In the 2040 SCTP, 249 projects are proposed, which include both infrastructure improvement projects and system maintenance projects. The SCTA is currently updating the SCTP to ensure the plan is relevant, useful, and representative of the community’s current transportation needs through 2050. The update will be released in the summer of 2021.

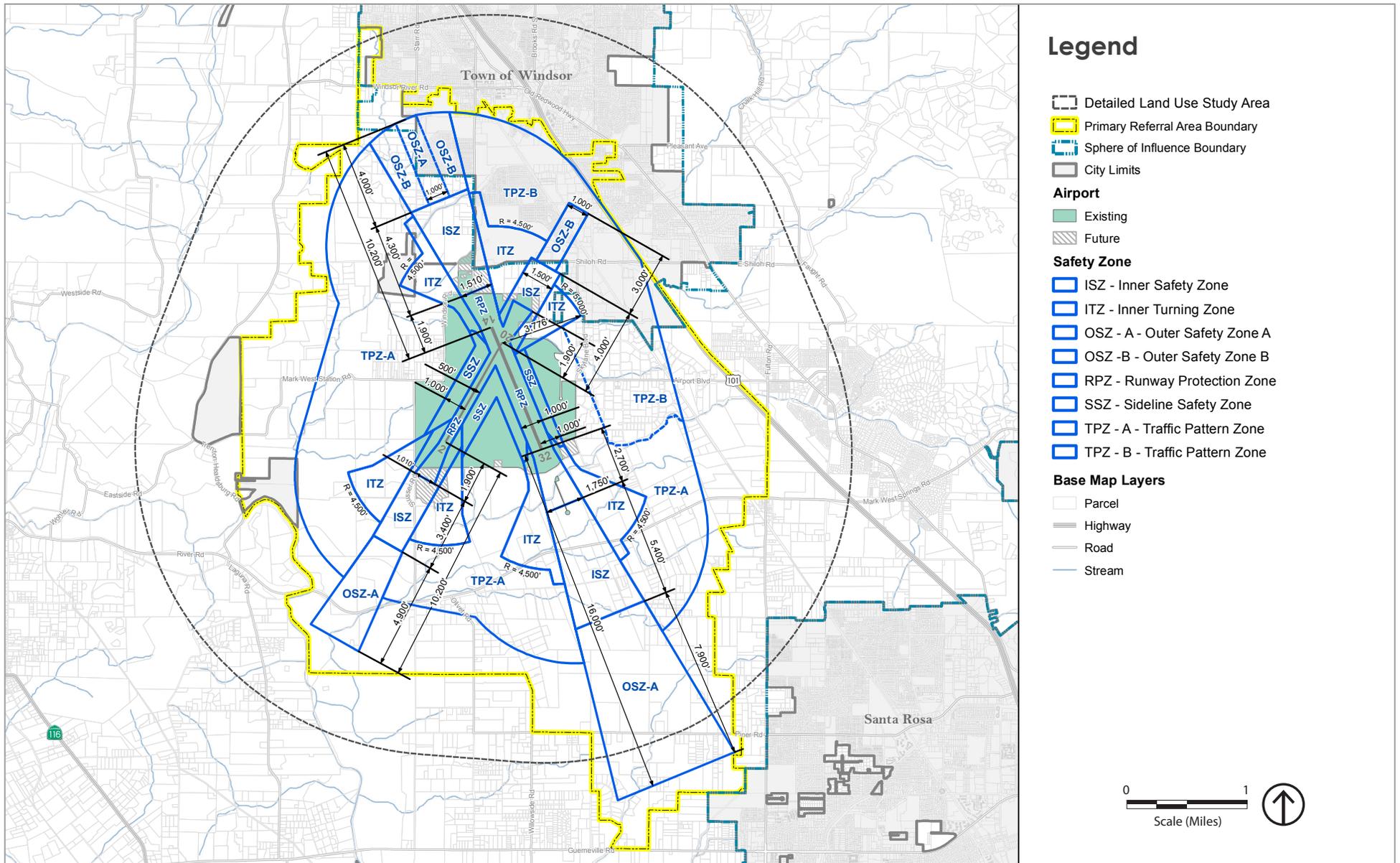


Figure 2-2
 County Airport Safety Zones

Local

This section describes the local regulatory framework related to land use and community character in the Santa Rosa Planning Area.

City of Santa Rosa General Plan 2035

The existing Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 goals, policies, and programs relevant to the city's land use and community character are primarily in the Land Use and Livability Element, Urban Design Element, and Historic Preservation Element. In addition, Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 recognizes three specific plan areas in highly visible locations that characterize Santa Rosa. The three plans guide additional development, redevelopment, and property improvements. The existing General Plan has policies for circulation and parking, site organization, public facilities, and landscaping and streetscape elements to complement each specific plan area.

As part of the proposed project, some Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 goals, policies, and programs will be amended or substantially changed, and some new policies will be added. A list of applicable goals is provided in **Table 2-1**. Additional detail about the General Plan is provided in Section 2.9.

Table 2-1: Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 Relevant Land Use and Community Character Goals	
Goal No.	Goal
LUL-A	Foster a compact rather than a scattered development pattern to reduce travel, energy, land, and materials consumption while promoting greenhouse gas emission reductions citywide.
LUL-C	Maintain downtown as the major regional office, financial, civic, and cultural center in the North Bay, and a vital mixed-use center.
LUL-D	Foster compact, vibrant, and continuous retail at the core of downtown.
LUL-F	Maintain a diversity of neighborhoods and varied housing stock to satisfy a wide range of needs.
LUL-G	Promote mixed use sites and centers.
LUL-H	Foster development of the South Santa Rosa Avenue area – from Bellevue Avenue to just north of Todd Road – with a mix of retail and residential uses, and with development character that is hospitable to pedestrians and bicyclists.
LUL-I	Maintain vibrant, convenient, and attractive commercial centers.
LUL-J	Maintain the economic vitality of business parks and offices, and Santa Rosa's role as a regional employment center.
LUL-K	Protect industrial land supply and ensure compatibility between industrial development and surrounding neighborhoods.

Table 2-1: Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 Relevant Land Use and Community Character Goals	
Goal No.	Goal
LUL-O	Provide recreational and cultural facilities for visitors and residents of the (Downtown Station) specific plan area.
LUL-P	Enhance the Sixth/Seventh Street corridor in the northern downtown area.
LUL-R	Establish rational patterns of population densities, transportation, and services.
LUL-V	Establish a land use pattern and residential environment which promotes efficient, harmonious relationships between different activities and reinforces the identity of the southeast area.
LUL-W	Encourage pedestrian activity at the community shopping center and neighborhood center and establish the neighborhood center as a visual focal point and center of social activity for local residents (in the southeast area).
LUL-X	Create an active, mixed use community shopping center at the Roseland Village Shopping Center site on Sebastopol Road near Dutton Avenue and develop the Sebastopol Road area – from Stony Point Road to Dutton Avenue – with a mix of neighborhood uses, focusing on commercial activity and neighborhood services for the Roseland area.
LUL-Y	Create a pedestrian friendly streetscape with a distinctive ambiance on Sebastopol Road from Stony Point Road to Olive Street.
LUL-Z	Provide for a comprehensive mix of transit-supportive land uses (in the North Santa Rosa Station Area).
LUL-BB	Enhance quality of life in the project area by providing parks, trails, and recreational and cultural opportunities (in the North Santa Rosa Station Area).
LUL-DD	Create active, pleasant streetscapes and public spaces (in the North Santa Rosa Station Area).
LUL-GG	Support a vibrant commercial corridor along Sebastopol Road with a mix of uses and activities that celebrate the area's uniqueness.
LUL-KK	Maintain the rural quality of Burbank Avenue.
LUL-MM	Provide new social and cultural services and amenities to meet the needs of the Roseland Area/Sebastopol Road Specific Plan area and the larger community.
LUL-OO	Develop the Southeast Greenway to support a walkable, livable neighborhood, promote economic vitality, and encourage social equity.
LUL-PP	Design uses on the Southeast Greenway to maximize the Greenway's safety, accessibility, and respect for adjacent neighborhoods

Table 2-1: Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 Relevant Land Use and Community Character Goals	
Goal No.	Goal
UD-A	Preserve and enhance Santa Rosa’s scenic character, including its natural waterways, hillsides, and distinctive districts
UD-B	Preserve and strengthen downtown as a vital and attractive place
UD-C	Enhance and strengthen the visual quality of major entry routes into the city, as well as major corridors that link neighborhoods with downtown.
UD-D	Avoid strip patterns of commercial development. Improve the appearance and functioning of existing commercial strip corridors, such as Santa Rosa Avenue and Sebastopol Road.
UD-F	Maintain and enhance the diverse character of Santa Rosa’s neighborhoods. Promote the creation of neighborhoods – not subdivisions – in areas of new development
UD-G	Design residential neighborhoods to be safe, human-scaled, and livable by addressing compact development, multi-modal connectivity and reducing energy use.
UD-H	Design hillside development to be sensitive to existing terrain, views, and significant natural landforms or features.
UD-I	Respect natural features in the design and construction of hillside development.
T-G	Identify, preserve, and enhance scenic roads throughout Santa Rosa in both rural and developed areas
T-J	Provide attractive and safe streets for pedestrians and bicyclists.
YF-A	Create an environment where children can grow and develop in secure and supportive families and neighborhoods.
EV-C	Promote new retail and higher density uses along the city’s regional/arterial corridors.
HP-B	Preserve Santa Rosa’s historic structures and neighborhoods.
Source: Santa Rosa General Plan 2035, 2009.	

City of Santa Rosa Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances

The Santa Rosa Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances (municipal code titles 19 and 20, respectively) are the primary tools used to regulate development in the city. They establish how properties can be used, developed, and subdivided and they set permitting processes for discretionary project review. The zoning ordinance divides the city into zoning districts that roughly correlate with the Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 land use categories (see discussion in Section 2.4).

City of Santa Rosa Historic Preservation Ordinance

The city council adopted the Historic Resource Preservation Ordinance in 1988 (municipal code title 17.22). The ordinance created the city's Cultural Heritage Board as a mechanism to identify, protect, enhance, perpetuate, and use sites, structures, and features with special historical, archaeological, cultural, or architectural value. Santa Rosa's ongoing support of preservation planning is intended to:

- Safeguard the city's heritage as embodied and reflected in such resources;
- Encourage public knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the city's past;
- Foster civic and neighborhood pride and a sense of identity based on the recognition and use of cultural resources;
- Promote the use and enjoyment of cultural resources beneficial to the education and welfare of the people of the city;
- Preserve diverse and harmonious architectural styles and design preferences reflecting phases of the city's history and encourage complementary, contemporary design and construction;
- Protect or enhance property values and strengthen the economy of the city and the financial stability of its inhabitants;
- Protect and enhance the city's attraction to tourists and visitors, thereby stimulating business and industry;
- Identify as early as possible and resolve possible conflicts between the preservation of cultural resources and alternative land uses;
- Integrate the preservation of cultural resources and the extraction of relevant data from such resources into public and private land management and development processes;
- Conserve valuable material and energy resources by the ongoing use and maintenance of the existing built environment; and
- Foster and encourage the preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of structures, areas, and neighborhoods and thereby prevent future urban blight.

City of Santa Rosa Growth Management Ordinance

The City of Santa Rosa adopted a growth management ordinance to implement the Growth Management Element of the Santa Rosa General Plan in 1992. This ordinance, still in effect, limits the number of residential units that can be approved each year. Upon City approval, a project receives an “allotment” that can later be used to receive a building permit. Because of carryovers from previous years allowed by the ordinance, the building permits issued in any one year can be higher than the maximum allotment. The existing Growth Management Element stipulates that the allotments carry through 2035. If all projected allotments were used, a 2035 population of approximately 237,000 residents within the UGB would result.

Density Bonus

State Density Bonus Law, which provides a 35 percent density bonus maximum to eligible projects, applies city-wide to eligible projects. In addition, City law includes provisions for a Supplemental Density Bonus of up to 65 percent above the State density bonus maximum, or a combined 100 percent above the allowed General Plan residential density. The Supplemental Density Bonus is available for eligible projects located within the North Station Specific Plan and Downtown Station Specific Plan areas. Eligible projects include low- and very low-income projects, senior housing, moderate-income home ownership projects, and student housing projects, among others.

Housing Action Plan

To address the ongoing unmet local housing needs and to implement the Housing Element, the City prepared the Housing Action Plan (HAP) in 2016. The HAP has five program areas, listed below, with specific action items for each to support housing for all affordability levels. The program areas are:

- Increase inclusionary affordable housing.
- Achieve “Affordability by design” in market-rate projects.
- Assemble and offer public land for housing development.
- Improve development readiness.
- Increase affordable housing investment and partnerships.

Housing Allocation Plan

The City’s Inclusionary Housing Ordinance was first adopted by the City Council in 1992 as the Housing Allocation Plan and codified in Chapter 21-02 of the Santa Rosa City Code. The Inclusionary Housing Ordinance centers on ensuring there is an adequate supply of housing within the city for below market rate housing. Additionally, the plan looks at the compatibility of future housing development with the General Plan Housing Element and provides various incentives to increase housing production that is affordable to lower-income households.

Housing First Strategy

Established by the City Council in 2017, the strategy is a targeted effort to address homelessness and housing in the city. One of the primary goals is to connect people to community services to facilitate the transition of individuals and families that are experiencing homelessness into permanent housing as quickly as possible. The strategy defines a framework to reach Functional Zero, a condition in which the supply of housing and services is equal to or greater than the demand of individuals experiencing homelessness, utilizing the Federal and State Housing First model.

Homeless Outreach Services Team (HOST)

HOST is a public-private partnership directed at working closely with unsheltered persons to connect them with housing and community services in collaboration with the Police Department's Downtown Enforcement Team (DET) and other service providers such as Social Advocates for Youth. A local non-profit organization, Catholic Charities, operates the program with funding from the City. Part of HOST is the Clean Start Program, which funds mobile trailers providing clean showers and bathrooms for homeless persons. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the trailer is stationed at a Community Center, which is a designated Safe Social Distance Site.

Homeless Encampment Assistance Program

This is a pilot program that addresses the health, safety, and shelter needs of persons living in encampments with a multi-disciplinary team of representatives from various City departments and HOST.

Economic Sustainability Strategy

The City first adopted the Economic Sustainability Strategy (ESS) in 2008 in response to the then-fresh recession to focus on initiatives that create jobs and grow spending, resulting in short-term economic changes and long-term economic sustainability. ESS strategies target business attraction, existing business retention and expansion, entrepreneurial image and attraction, and infrastructure improvements to grow spending in the visitor, downtown, retail, and arts and culture sectors. The ESS is reviewed and updated every two years to remain effective and adapt to the changing economic climate.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

The City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan is a long-term planning document that establishes the City's vision for promoting walking and bicycling throughout the city. The plan creates a comprehensive network to provide access to transit, schools, and commercial centers, including the Downtown. The plan underwent an update in 2018 from the previous plan, adopted in 2010. The 2018 Plan helps the City provide Complete Streets, neighborhood-scale retail and services, schools, and recreational facilities connected by pedestrian and bicycle paths, and transportation management programs.

Though the city has a large network of existing sidewalks, it is fragmented in places. The plan aims to fully complete the network of on-street bikeways, off-street shared-use paths, and bicycle parking, and it proposes investments to build a high-quality citywide network for bicycling and walking. The plan establishes policies that support the following goals:

- Increase access and comfort.
- Maintain and expand the bicycle and pedestrian network.
- Support a culture of walking and biking.

Santa Rosa Free Ride Program

The Santa Rosa Free Ride Program is a trip reduction incentive program that employers within the city limits can sign-up for in order for their employees to receive incentives when they walk, ride their bicycle, carpool, or ride public transit to work. The program is managed and operated under the City of Santa Rosa Transit Division through a grant from the Transportation Fund for Clean Air. Incentives include discounted bus passes and a gift card drawing for registered participants. The program also includes an Emergency Ride Home component that will reimburse participants for the cost of travel home due to a qualifying emergency.

Street Smarts Program

This is a public education campaign that aims to change driver, pedestrian, and bicyclist behavior to encourage sharing of roads and multimodal safety. The program provides tips, safety videos, and training for drivers, walkers, and cyclists.

Sebastopol Road Urban Vision and Corridor Plan

The Sebastopol Road Urban Vision Plan, adopted in 2007 after intensive community outreach, envisions development along the stretch of Sebastopol Road between Dutton Avenue and Stony Point Road in the Roseland community. The plan establishes guidelines for land use concepts, urban design criteria, streetscape elements, and a neighborhood center concept for Roseland Village Shopping Center and Dutton Plaza. It rearranges land uses to stimulate economic revitalization with additional opportunities for commercial and residential uses; provides more green spaces; facilitates pleasant and safer pedestrian connectivity; aims to decongest traffic with new alternative routes; and provides public spaces for socializing and a large community gathering space for special events.

Advancement Project's Comprehensive Violence Reduction Strategy

Informing the City's Community Safety Scorecard, this strategy provides a framework for communities working to improve safety in high-violence communities. The strategy uses an asset-based public health approach to violence reduction by linking community development, cultural transformation, multi-jurisdictional coordination, and accountability. The scorecard establishes seventeen different community safety indicators to guide and influence decisions intended to maintain and improve community safety at the neighborhood level. This results in a set of findings and recommendations to be implemented by identified departments, agencies, and organizations working collaboratively.

Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership

This is a public-private partnership that works to create safe neighborhoods through youth development programs and community-based partnerships. The program's goal is to intervene in the lives of youth to provide positive socialization opportunities and seeks commitments to ensure that organizations and stakeholders accept responsibility and accountability for the safety, health, and welfare of youth, families, and the community.

Smoking Regulations, Chapter 9-20

In July 2015, the City Council approved and adopted laws regarding smoking in Santa Rosa. This was then codified in the City Code under Chapter 9-20. The regulations prohibit smoking in unenclosed non-residential areas, City-owned public properties and facilities, and multi-family residences.

Climate Action Plans

The City of Santa Rosa has adopted two Climate Action Plans (CAPs) to implement actions that protect the environment and reduce GHG emissions.

- **The Community-wide Climate Action Plan (CCAP)** guides GHG reduction policies and activities at the community level. The plan includes an inventory of activities that generate GHG emissions and identifies reduction measures.
- **The Municipal Climate Action Plan (MCAP)** specifically looks at GHG emissions generated from municipal facilities and operations.

The CAPs are a nonbinding guide the City can use to reduce GHG emissions. They serve as an important step toward meeting the requirements mandated by AB 32, California's Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, which mandates that emissions be reduced to 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2020 and 80 percent below 2005 levels by 2050. The CAPs identify a baseline of emissions, set achievable targets as stipulated by AB 32 and local reduction targets, and recommend measures to reduce emissions, increase sustainability, and improve quality of life.

Citywide Creek Master Plan

The Citywide Creek Master Plan, originally adopted in 2007 and updated in 2013, presents creek-related policies and recommendations for improvements along over 100 miles of creeks that flow through Santa Rosa. The watersheds addressed in the plan include Santa Rosa Creek, Oakmont Creek, Matanzas Creek, Piner Creek, Paulin Creek, Southern Santa Rosa Creeks, and Todd Creek.

The plan recommends habitat preservation, enhancement, and restoration projects and watershed area-specific improvements to the creekside trail system. The Citywide Creek Master Plan aims to achieve the following benefits:

- Local creeks and riparian corridors are preserved, enhanced, and restored as habitat for fish, birds, mammals, and other wildlife.

- The ability of waterways to carry stormwater runoff and surface drainage is protected and improved to alleviate flood risk.
- The economic value of areas adjacent to creeks is enhanced.
- The urban environment is enhanced with natural and open space features.
- Trail corridors and other recreational opportunities are provided along some waterways.
- Educational opportunities are provided along some waterways.
- Aesthetic qualities of creeks are enhanced.
- Water quality of creeks is protected and enhanced.
- Private property rights are respected.
- Public health and safety are protected.
- Cultural and archeological resources are protected.

Design Guidelines

The City Design Guidelines, adopted by in 2002, are the implementation tool for the Urban Design Element. They supplement and enhance design concepts that promote “superior design” by exhibiting thoughtful relationships in the natural and built environment with respect to architecture, landscaping, placemaking and livability, and sustainability. The guidelines provide a clear set of design policies to project sponsors such as developers, property owners, architects, designers, and public agencies and establish criteria for project review. The Design Guidelines apply to all projects that require design review, including most new buildings, subdivisions, infill development, and public improvements.

The guidelines represent the city’s design and development pattern preferences and facilitate the city’s transition to prioritize infill development and increased development in the urban core. The guidelines are organized into four sections:

- Neighborhood Design. Focuses on neighborhood-scale design issues.
- Core Area. Identifies key components to support a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented Downtown and ways to encourage development.
- Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Outside the Core Area. Provides goals, site planning guidelines, and building design guidelines for single-family residential, multifamily residential, retail centers and commercial districts, and business and light industrial parks and buildings.
- Special Design Considerations. Addresses considerations, including streetscape, historic factors, hillside development, and infill projects.

2.4 CURRENT LAND USES

Introduction

This section describes how properties within the Santa Rosa Planning Area are currently being used. Geographic Information System (GIS) databases from the City of Santa Rosa and Sonoma County, combined with field checks, inform the land use data presented below.

Current Land Use

Table 2-2 shows the distribution of existing development across six land use categories: Office, Industrial, Retail, Single Family Residential, and Multi-family Residential. The table also shows the remaining development capacity under the current General Plan and the full buildout potential, the sum of existing development, and remaining capacity. **Figure 2-3** shows the planning area's current land uses as a percentage of overall uses. The existing land use of a property does not carry any regulatory significance and may not be consistent with the current General Plan designation or zoning. In some cases, existing land uses were established prior to adoption of the current Santa Rosa General Plan and zoning map. The current General Plan land use map is shown in **Figure 2-4**. Refer to the General Plan Land Use Designations section for definitions of land use.

Out of all the urban land uses in Santa Rosa, single-family residential occupies the most land area, covering 52 percent (about 11,204 acres). Low-density residential land uses are dominant throughout the city interior, extending into very low density residential and country residential on the outskirts. Public facilities are dispersed throughout the city—City Hall and the Police Station are in the Downtown, and the fire stations, schools, churches, and library locations are sprinkled throughout the city, primarily in low-density residential neighborhoods (as shown in **Figure 2-4**). Multifamily residential land uses—including medium-, medium-high, and mobile home park residential—cover 12 percent (about 2,502 acres) of the city. Multi-family uses are typically located along major corridors and adjacent to commercial areas, often in the southern half of the city.

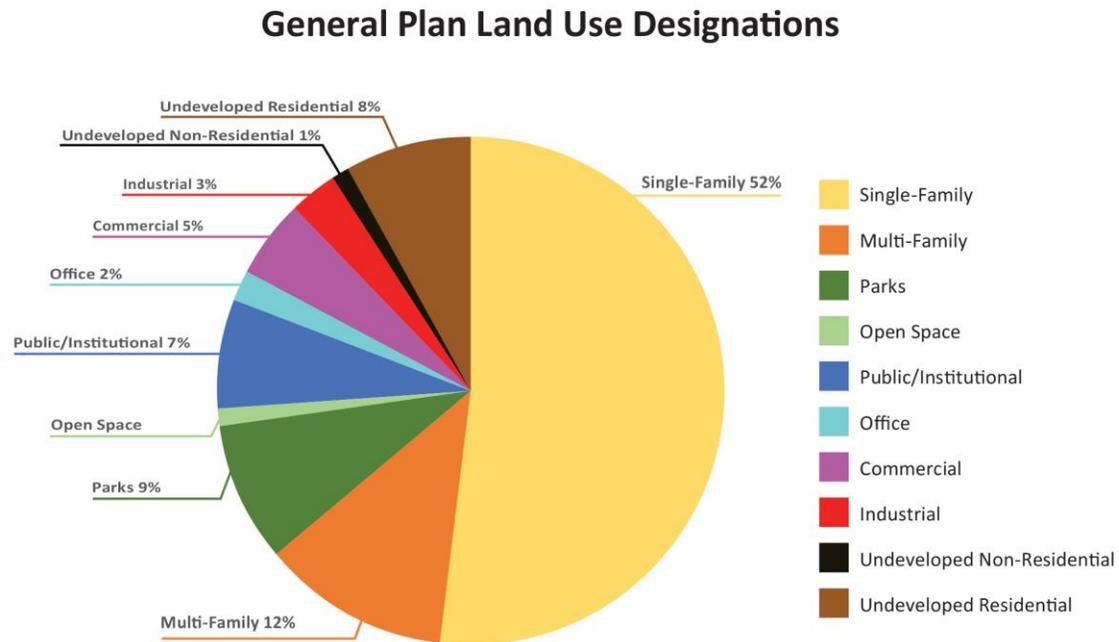
Land Use Type	Total Acres	% of Total
Single-Family Residential	11,204	52%
Multi-family Residential	2,502	12%
Parks	1,830	9%
Open Space	209	1%
Public/Institutional	1,546	7%
Office	344	2%
Commercial	1,094	5%
Industrial	718	3%

Land Use Type	Total Acres	% of Total
Undeveloped Non-residential	308	1%
Undeveloped Residential	1,699	8%
Total	21,454	100%
Source: Santa Rosa General Plan 2035, 2009.		

About 5 percent of the city's land use is commercial space, and the majority of commercial is strip retail. Downtown Santa Rosa has substantial commercial space and operates as a mixed-use district. Along Highway 101, commercial uses predominate, featuring hotels, offices, and destination restaurants.

Industrial and office uses cover 5 percent of the community (about 1,062 acres). Industrial uses are scattered in peripheral locations of the city. Uses permitted in industrial-zoned areas include auto repair, general warehousing, manufacturing and assembly, home improvement retail, freight or bus terminals, research-oriented industrial, and accessory offices, in addition to services with large space needs, such as health clubs. Office zones provide sites for administrative, financial, business, professional, medical, and public offices. Over half of all office sites are in the Downtown or Santa Rosa Junior College area.

Schools cover almost 4 percent of the land area in Santa Rosa (included in Public/Institutional in Table 2-2). The city is also home to two Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART) stations, which are major transit assets in the community. The city also benefits from its regional proximity to San Francisco International Airport (SFO) and Oakland International Airport.

Figure 2-3. General Plan Land Use Designations

Parks and recreation facilities, including neighborhood, community, citywide, and special purpose parks and facilities as well as public plazas, gathering places, and open space areas, make up 10 percent of the city (about 2,039 acres). The Southeast Greenway, designated as parks and recreation in a General Plan amendment and rezoning in 2019, is a continuous linear space located in southeast Santa Rosa that provides opportunities for recreation, and is proposed to include a linear multiuse path. Other facilities include the Prince Memorial Greenway, Finley Community Center and Aquatic Center, the Ridgeway Swim Center at Santa Rosa High School, the Bennett Valley Golf Course, the Fairgrounds Golf Course, the Steele Lane Community Center, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Trail.

Santa Rosa contains 15 distinct commercial districts: Downtown, Roseland, Value Center, Wine District, Coddington, Coffey & Piner, North Cleveland, Home Depot, Junior College, Montgomery Village, Farmers Lane Plaza, Santa Rosa Avenue Auto Row, and Santa Rosa Avenue Retail. Downtown is the heart of the city and the hub for retail, dining, entertainment, culture, service, financial, and government in Santa Rosa and the greater region. The Downtown includes the Santa Rosa Arts District and three unique shopping districts—Courthouse Square, Railroad Square, and Santa Rosa Plaza Shopping Mall. Roseland, southwest of Downtown, is home to a variety of Latinx-owned stores and personal services; the Wine District, north of Downtown, is an urban wine village offering wine tastings, entertainment, food, and wine retail. The Junior College district, home to Santa Rosa Junior College and Santa Rosa High School, features restaurants, cafes, and youth-oriented shopping. Santa Rosa Avenue Auto Row caters to auto sales and service options near the intersection of Highway 101 and SR 12. The other districts offer a mix of warehousing, home and garden, clothing, and food options to meet the regional community's diverse needs.

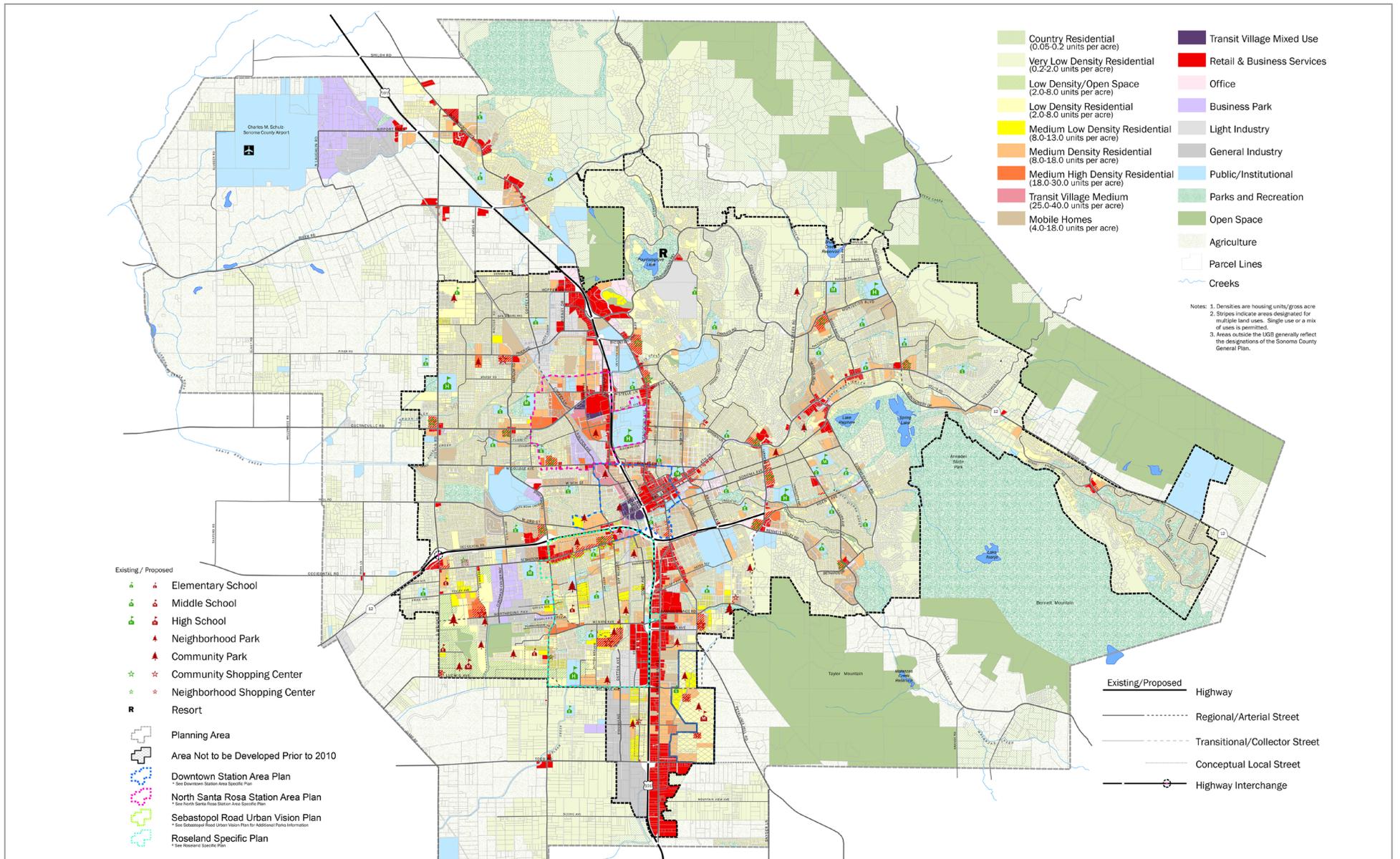


Figure 2-4
General 2035 Plan Land Use Designations

2017 Tubbs Fire Impacts

The Tubbs Fire inflicted approximately \$1.2 billion in damages to Santa Rosa when it swept through the northern portion of the city in October 2017. Residential neighborhoods, including Coffey Park, Fountaingrove, and Hidden Valley took the most damage from the fire, and about 5 percent of the city's housing stock was destroyed. Very-low- and low-density residential land uses were hardest hit by the fire, but it also destroyed sizable areas of medium-density residential land uses, commercial land uses, industrial land uses, and schools in north Santa Rosa. Approximately 26 nonresidential parcels, excluding public or government parcels, were destroyed in the fire, including the Hilton Sonoma Wine Country, the Fountaingrove Inn, the Kmart store, and multiple restaurants and wineries.

2.5 URBAN DESIGN AND CHARACTER

Introduction

Santa Rosa was founded in 1833 and named after Saint Rose of Lima, Peru. By the 1850s, a Wells Fargo post and general store were established in what is now downtown. In the mid-1850s, several prominent locals, including Julio Carrillo, laid out the grid street pattern for Santa Rosa with a public square in the center, a pattern which largely remains today, despite changes to the central square, now called Old Courthouse Square.

In 1867, Sonoma County recognized Santa Rosa as an incorporated city, and in 1868 the State of California officially confirmed the incorporation, making it officially the third incorporated city in Sonoma County, after Petaluma, incorporated in 1858, and Healdsburg, incorporated in 1867.

According to the US Census, in 1870 Santa Rosa was the eighth largest city in California, and the county seat of one of the most populous counties in the state. Growth and development after that was generally steady but not rapid. The city continued to grow when other early population centers declined or stagnated, but by 1900 it was being overtaken by many other newer population centers in the San Francisco Bay Area and Southern California. The 1906 San Francisco earthquake had a major impact on Santa Rosa and essentially destroyed the entire downtown. However, the city's population did not change much as a result.

Santa Rosa grew substantially following World War II because it was the location for Naval Auxiliary Landing Field Santa Rosa, the remnants of which are now in southwest Santa Rosa. The city was a convenient location for San Francisco travelers bound for the Russian River, and its population increased by two-thirds between 1950 and 1970, an average of 1,000 new residents a year over the 20-year period. Some of the increase was from immigration and some from annexation of portions of the surrounding area.

In the 21 years following 1970, Santa Rosa grew by about 3,000 residents a year—triple the average growth during the previous 20 years. Most of this growth was in new suburban neighborhoods to the north, west, and south of downtown, with additional suburban and rural growth along the hillsides and valleys to the northeast and east. In the 1990s, the city council expanded the city's UGB to include all the land then planned for future annexation and declared it would be Santa Rosa's "ultimate" boundary. At the first five-year update of the plan, in 1996, the city council extended the planning period by ten years, renaming it Vision 2020 (updated to Santa Rosa 2020, and then again to Santa Rosa 2030 Vision), and added more land and population.

In October 2017, 5 percent of Santa Rosa's homes were destroyed in the Tubbs Fire, a 45,000-acre wildfire that claimed the lives of at least 19 people in Sonoma County. The fire burned strongly for more than seven days, bringing the largest aerial fire attack in history to Sonoma County skies. In the aftermath of the fire was a rapid rebuilding process for neighborhoods such as Coffey Park and Cobblestone and an increased desire by the community for more-fire-resistant and resilient neighborhood design and growth policies.

The following section describes the urban form and character of Santa Rosa today. This begins with a summary of the major gateways and corridors into and through the city, and a general analysis of the pedestrian and streetscape environment. This is followed by a summary of the urban form for each major area of the city and its distinguishing characteristics.

Gateways and Corridors

Santa Rosa has evolved over the past 150 years from the Downtown outwards and is connected to the greater region through a series of major highways and roadway corridors. These are visually strengthened to announce entry into Santa Rosa. Most edges of the city quickly transition into agricultural or open space, further supporting a sense of entrance into the urban environment. Major corridors connecting various parts of the city to downtown are also emphasized to clarify the structure of the city and to provide a more pleasing visual experience while moving through the community. **Figure 2-5** identifies the location of the major gateways and corridors in Santa Rosa, and the following is a summary of the existing character of each major corridor.

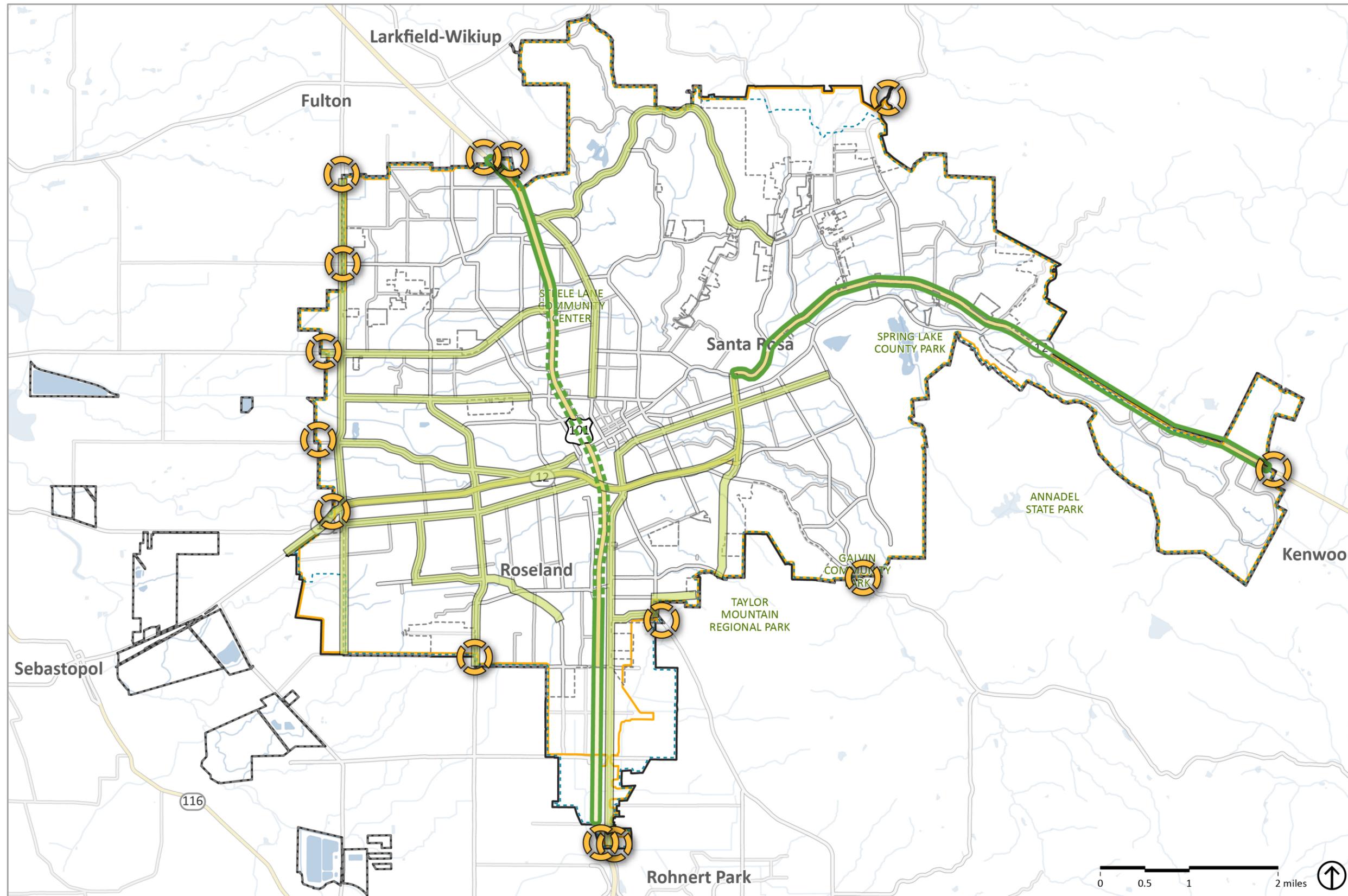
- **US Route 101 (Highway 101)** is a major north-south highway that runs from Mexico to the Canadian border. It is a six-lane controlled freeway through Santa Rosa, carrying local and regional traffic throughout the northern Bay Area. City entries are at the northern (Old Redwood Highway) and southern (Santa Rosa Avenue interchange) edges of the UGB. The freeway is designed principally to move large volumes of vehicles through the city and often poses a physical barrier that separates neighborhoods.
- **California State Route 12 (Highway 12)** is an east-west highway that runs through Santa Rosa. Highway 12 is also known as Sonoma Highway (a regional/arterial street) east of Farmers Lane. City entries are at the UGB on the east (Pythian Road) and west (Fulton Road). It is a controlled, four-lane freeway from Fulton Road to Farmers Lane. The freeway was originally intended to extend through the Spring Lake Area, but the extension was never completed. Instead it runs along Farmers Lane until it connects with 4th Street, and 4th Street transitions into Sonoma Highway heading east as a four-lane

uncontrolled highway until it reaches the UGB. Through the west and central part of Santa Rosa, the highway is a controlled freeway that is designed principally to move large volumes of vehicles through the city and often poses a physical barrier that separates neighborhoods.

- **Mendocino Avenue, Old Redwood Highway, Fulton Road, and Calistoga Road** are regional/arterial streets that carry traffic from the northern edge of the UGB into the city. Gateways into the city are at the UGB, generally north of Hopper Avenue for Old Redwood Highway and Fulton Road. Mendocino Avenue, Old Redwood Highway, and Fulton Road are characterized by four-lane roads, with bicycle lanes and full sidewalks in most areas. Calistoga Road has two travel lanes, center left-turn lanes, and Class II bike lanes and sidewalks south of Badger Road. Few areas have landscaped medians, but most areas have street trees at the back of sidewalks. They connect residential neighborhoods to commercial centers and nodes.
- **Guerneville Road, Piner Road, Hall Road, and West Third Street** are regional/arterial streets that carry regional traffic into Santa Rosa from the west. Gateways into the city are at the UGB, which is generally located at Fulton Road. These roads are characterized by two- to four-lane roads, with bicycle lanes and full sidewalks in most areas. Few areas have landscaped medians, but most areas have street trees at the back of sidewalks. They connect residential neighborhoods to commercial centers and nodes.
- **Santa Rosa Avenue, Stony Point Road, Petaluma Hill Road, and Sebastopol Road** are regional/arterial streets that mark the southern entries into Santa Rosa. Gateways into the city are at the UGB near Highway 101 (for Santa Rosa Avenue), Bellevue Avenue (for Stony Point Road), Yolanda Avenue (for Petaluma Hill Road), and South Wright Road (for Sebastopol Road). These roads are characterized by two - to five-lane roads, with bicycle lanes and full sidewalks in most areas. Many areas have landscaped medians and street trees behind the sidewalks. They connect residential neighborhoods to commercial centers and nodes. These streets also connect some of the largest regional commercial and employment centers in the south part of the city.

Bennett Valley Road is a rural regional/arterial street that carries traffic between Taylor and Bennett Mountains into Santa Rosa from the southeast. The gateway into the city is at the UGB near Galvin Community Park. The road is characterized as a windy, rural, two-lane road that meanders through ranchettes and hills as it enters Santa Rosa. The road does not have bicycle lanes and has gaps in pedestrian facilities.

Figure 2-5
Santa Rosa Gateways



- Legend**
- Planning Area
 - City Limit
 - Urban Growth Boundary
 - Sphere of Influence
- Existing Conditions: Urban Form**
- Gateway / City Entry
 - Landscape Buffer
 - Landscaping with Views of Downtown
 - Regional / Arterial Streets with Planted Medians



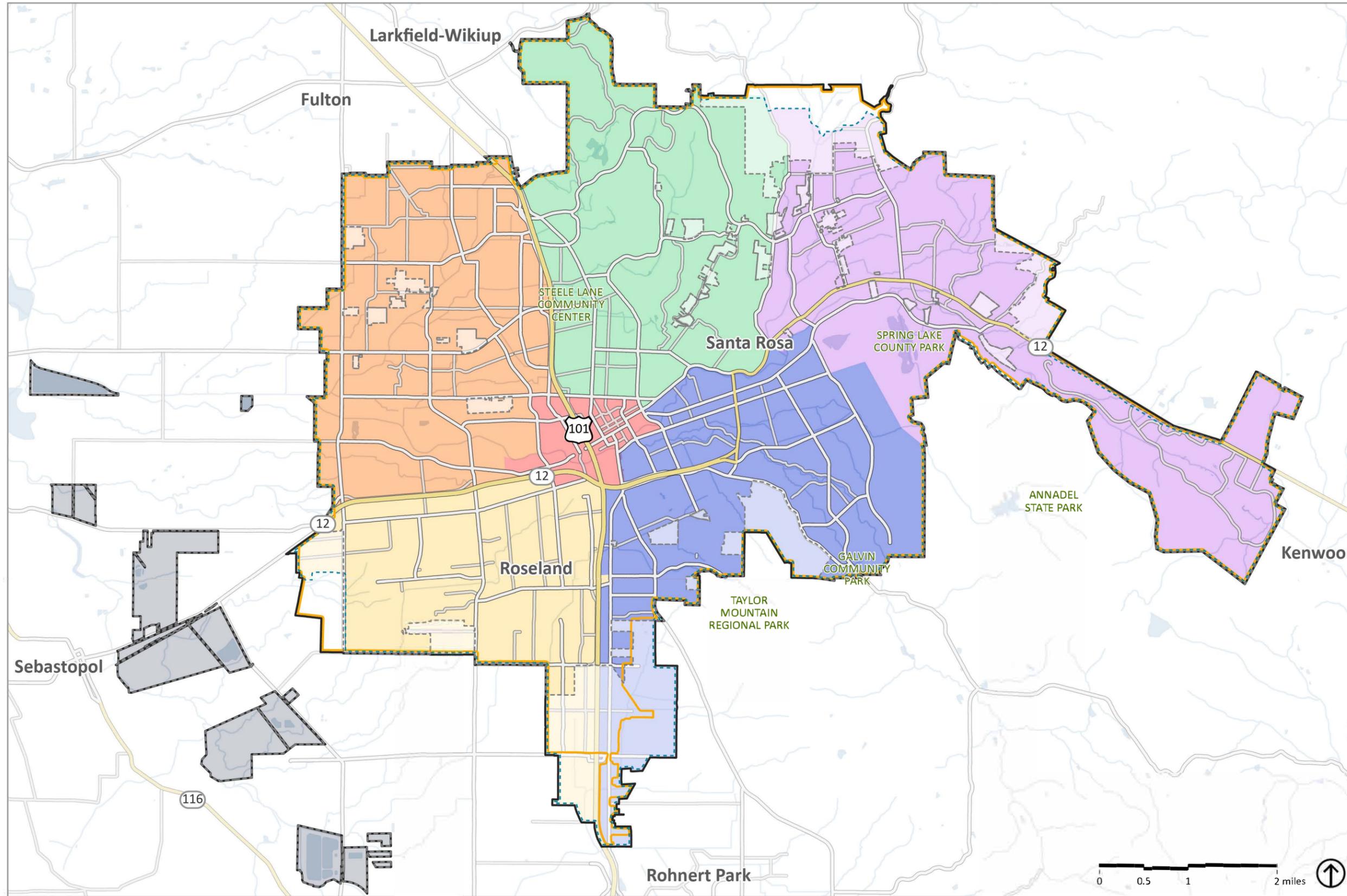
Areas and Neighborhoods

The physical form of Santa Rosa's neighborhoods has been heavily influenced by the city's growth pattern over the past century and a half. Santa Rosa began with the establishment of the downtown area, orienting itself around the Santa Rosa and Matanzas Creeks and establishing itself as a commerce center for the surrounding agricultural and timber region. The city developed from this central core through a series of commercial corridors and suburban neighborhoods.

Over time Santa Rosa has grown and evolved into a diverse metropolitan community that serves as the commercial, economic, civic, cultural, and educational center of the northern Bay Area region. Today, the city has over 40 unique neighborhoods and commercial districts. The following is a summary of the urban form characteristics and unique community character elements for each of the city's seven major mapped areas (as shown on **Figure 2-6**):

- Downtown Station Area
- Northwestern Santa Rosa
- Southwestern Santa Rosa
- Southeastern Santa Rosa
- Northeastern Santa Rosa
- Eastern Santa Rosa
- Western lands

Figure 2-6
**Santa Rosa
 Areas**



- Legend**
- Planning Area
 - City Limit
 - Urban Growth Boundary
 - Sphere of Influence
-
- Downtown/Station Area
 - Northwestern Santa Rosa
 - Southwestern Santa Rosa
 - Southeastern Santa Rosa
 - Northeastern Santa Rosa
 - Eastern Santa Rosa
 - Western Lands



Downtown Station Area

The Downtown Station Area covers approximately 720 acres surrounding the Downtown Station SMART site in the heart of the city. The Downtown Station Area is bounded by College Avenue on the north, Sebastopol Road and State Route 12 on the south, Brookwood Avenue on the east, and Dutton Avenue/Imwalle Gardens on the west. It includes the neighborhoods of Cherry Street Historic District, Historic Railroad Square, Julliard Park, Lincoln Manor, St. Rose, West End, and a small portion of Roseland.

Originally inhabited by the Southern Pomo Tribe, the site of what would later be the city of Santa Rosa was settled by the Carrillo family in the 1830s. In the later nineteenth century, the town flourished as an agricultural trading center, and the advent of rail service established Railroad Square as another commercial center. The two cores were bordered by several residential districts that now constitute Downtown Santa Rosa's historic preservation districts.

The structure of Downtown Santa Rosa was shaped significantly by the earthquakes in 1906 and 1969, the decentralization of commercial services due to auto-oriented development, construction of US, and development of the Santa Rosa Plaza mall during urban renewal. In addition to changing the character and connectivity of downtown neighborhoods, these events often resulted in the elimination of potential historic structures.

The Downtown Station Area is characterized by the following elements:

- **Grid Street Network.** Downtown has a walkable, gridded street network that is organized around the central Old Courthouse Square plaza. Historic civic and commercial buildings front most streets with little or no building setback. This dense and compact development pattern provides an ideal pedestrian environment, with wide sidewalks, ample street trees, and pedestrian bulb-outs at many intersections.
- **Commercial and Entertainment Uses.** Commercial uses are primarily concentrated in the core of the Downtown Station Area around Courthouse Square, Railroad Square, the Santa Rosa Plaza Mall, and east of E Street as well as corridors like Santa Rosa Avenue and College Avenue. These areas have a mix of bars, restaurants, retail stores, and hotels. Most of the buildings are between two and five stories, and a few midcentury buildings reach up to 10 stories.
- **Highway 101 and Santa Rosa Plaza Mall.** Highway 101 bisects the area in a north-south direction, with the central business district Courthouse Square to the east and the historic commercial core around Railroad Square to the west. Industrial development generally flanks the railroad track, which further divides the Downtown Station Area in a north-south direction, separating residential areas on either side of the tracks. The Santa Rosa Plaza Mall also creates a physical barrier that further separates Railroad Square and Downtown.
- **Commercial Corridors.** There are a range of auto-oriented commercial uses that are dispersed along major corridors leading away from Downtown, including Santa Rosa Avenue, 3rd Street, 4th Street, and Mendocino Avenue.

- **Pre–World War II Housing.** A variety of traditional prewar housing types surround the Downtown core, such as one-story bungalows, Victorians, larger two-story stately houses, and midcentury to modern apartments.
- **City and County Civic Centers.** Major civic and institutional uses include Santa Rosa City Hall, the US Postal Service, the federal government buildings, Santa Rosa Middle School, Saint Rose Catholic Church, the Museum of Sonoma County, the Sonoma County Library, and the Santa Rosa Police Department.
- **Creek Corridors and Open Space.** Downtown includes many public gathering spaces, parks, and recreational amenities, including Courthouse Square plaza, Juilliard Park, Prince Memorial Greenway, and the Santa Rosa Creek Trail, as well as neighborhood parks like Luther Burbank Home and Gardens, Fremont Park, and Olive Park.



Downtown Outdoor Dining Area



Old Courthouse Square



Santa Rosa Plaza Mall



Six 1 Five Mixed-Use Project



Pre-War Bungalow Homes



Prince Memorial Greenway Trail

Northwestern Santa Rosa

Northwestern Santa Rosa is bounded by the city limits on the north, Highway 12 on the south, Highway 101 on the east, and Fulton Road/city limits on the west. It includes the neighborhoods of Apple Valley, Coffey Park, Copperfield, Lincoln Manor, Northwest Santa Rosa, Olivet, Piner, and Vintage Oaks. This area includes several major commercial, entertainment, and civic uses, including Coddington Mall, Santa Rosa Business Park, Charles M. Schulz Museum, Redwood Empire Ice Arena, and Jennings Park. The area also includes numerous well-established single-family and multifamily residential neighborhoods, a thriving industrial area, and numerous retail establishments that border Highway 101. Santa Rosa, Piner, and Paulin Creeks traverse the area.

Northwestern Santa Rosa is characterized by:

- **Suburban Development Pattern.** Most of this area was developed in a suburban pattern, with larger curvilinear arterial streets connecting individual neighborhoods and subdivisions. Schools and parks are evenly dispersed throughout this area and near most major development areas.
- **Coddington Mall.** Originally built over 50 years ago, this is one of two malls in Santa Rosa and underwent a significant remodeling in 2017. Upgrades to the complex included façade improvements, new retail and restaurant establishments (including Whole Foods and Target) and improved internal circulation for vehicles and pedestrians.
- **Industrial Area in the North.** The northern part of the area includes a large industrial park along Piner Street and fronting Highway 101. This area includes a range of predominantly one-story buildings accessed through wider streets that allow easy truck access. The various industrial and commercial uses include large parking lots and paved outdoor areas used for storage.
- **West Steele Lane Cultural and Recreational Node.** A small recreation and cultural center is emerging along West Steele Lane that includes the Charles M. Schulz Museum, Children’s Museum, and the Redwood Empire Ice Arena.
- **Major Recreation and Civic Centers.** The Finley Aquatic Center consists of a large training pool and an L-shaped instructional pool. Finley Community Center is adjacent to the aquatic center and includes a range of meeting rooms and event spaces. In addition, the area also includes A Place to Play—a major sports facility and park that features six soccer fields, two baseball fields, restrooms, concession stand, playground, dog park, and lake for wildlife.
- **North Santa Rosa Station Area.** This neighborhood includes a diverse mix of single- and multifamily residential neighborhoods, retail establishments, and offices, much of which were developed in the 1970s and 1980s. It also has a late-1970s-era business park and established industrial businesses along the rail line. There are several vacant properties in the area, including a large area of unincorporated county land along Guerneville Road. Another large vacant area is at the southeast corner of Range and Jennings Avenues.

- **Apartments and Mobile Home Parks.** A large amount of multifamily housing and mobile homes are in the southern part of this area adjacent to Highway 12. Most of these communities are focused around one or two entrances and include interior circulation. They also tend to be located along major roadways (such as 3rd Street) and do not have strong pedestrian or bicycle connections.
- **Creeks and Parkways.** Santa Rosa Creek, Piner Creek, and Paulin Creek all run through northwestern Santa Rosa. Several of these creeks are part of a citywide and regional pedestrian trail and open space network. The creeks provide an opportunity to connect various neighborhoods along Class I (separated) pathways.
- **Rural and Semirural Areas.** The area has a strong rural/urban interface along its eastern edge. Once you move past the city limits and UGB, the urban form quickly transitions to larger ranchettes, cluster developments, and farmland.



Office Park on Stony Point Road



Recent Improvements to Coddington Mall



Larger Format Commercial on Piner Rd



Rebuilt Portion of the Coffey Park Neighborhood



Residential Neighborhood on Gamay St



Semirural Unicorproated Island

Southwestern Santa Rosa

Southwestern Santa Rosa is bounded by Highway 12 on the north, Ludwig Avenue/city limits on the south, Highway 101 on the east, and South Wright Road/city limits on the west. It includes the neighborhoods of Bellevue, Corby Olive, Roseland, Southwest Area, Southwest Redevelopment Area, and Wright. Sebastopol Road is a major mixed-use and commercial corridor in this area and includes a range of uses; many are set back from the street and have large parking areas in the front. The Roseland neighborhood is a vibrant, multicultural neighborhood recently annexed into the city, included in this area. Colgan and Roseland Creeks traverse the area.

Southwestern Santa Rosa is characterized by:

- **Sebastopol Road Corridor.** Sebastopol Road serves as the main commercial arterial for the Roseland community and southwestern Santa Rosa. While historically lacking in pedestrian and bicycle amenities, the roadway is within the Roseland Redevelopment area. Recently, major portions have been improved by County redevelopment efforts in coordination with the City. The corridor continues to be improved to make it a more pedestrian-friendly and attractive destination for the Roseland community.
- **Suburban Single-Family Homes.** Most of this area includes established residential neighborhoods with a focus on commercial uses along Sebastopol Road and on industrial and auto-related uses near Highway 101. The area is mostly developed, though a few large vacant parcels afford unique opportunities for transit-supportive development.
- **Industrial Areas.** The southern portion of this area includes a major light industrial and employment center adjacent to Highway 101 with some of the largest industrial and manufacturing uses in the city, including production facilities for major food and beverage companies. Most of these uses are on wide streets for easy truck access and include larger parking and paved outdoor storage areas.
- **Former Airport.** Formerly home to the Santa Rosa Airpark and Coddington Airport, the now redeveloped site is situated west of Highway 101, bounded by Hopper Ave, Piner Creek, and Piner Road. Airway Drive bisects this area and pays homage to the history of this area. Today, the site is home to regional-serving commercial and light industrial uses and features a mix of large and small buildings and ample parking. Additionally, a hotel and a mobile home park are in the southeast corner of the site.
- **Southwest Community Park.** Located on Hearn Avenue, this park is a major recreation destination and includes a range of active and passive uses, supporting adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- **Unincorporated Islands.** This area includes several large unincorporated islands that lack sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and other streetscape features. These islands include a range of homes, from small multifamily infill projects to large homes on larger lots.
- **Rural and Semirural Areas.** The area has a strong rural/urban interface along its eastern and southern edges. Once you move past the city limits and UGB, the urban form quickly transitions to larger ranchettes, cluster developments, and farmland.



Commercial Uses on Sebastopol Rd



Car Dealerships on Coby Ave (fronting US 101)



Employment Uses on Northpoint Parkway



Residential Part of Roseland



Crossroads Apartments on Liana Dr



Casa Del Sol Apartments



Newer Residential in the Airfield Neighborhood



Rural Character on Concord Ave

Southeastern Santa Rosa

Southern Santa Rosa is bounded by Highway 12 on the north, the city limits/UGB on the south, Summerfield Road on the east, and Highway 101 on the west. It includes the neighborhoods of Bennett Valley, Burbank Gardens, Cooper, Earle Street, Fairway View Estates, Gordon, Memorial Hospital, Montgomery Village, South A Street, and South Park. Fronting Highway 101 in this area are some of the largest regional commercial, industrial, and storage uses in the city.

Southern Santa Rosa is characterized by:

- **Suburban Development Pattern.** Most of this area was developed in a suburban pattern, with larger curvilinear arterial streets connecting individual neighborhoods and subdivisions. These neighborhoods typically include single family homes; however, several include denser multifamily housing and condominiums. Schools and parks are dispersed throughout this area and in each major development.
- **Sonoma County Fairgrounds.** The sprawling Sonoma County Fairgrounds complex covers a vast swath of land south of Highway 12, which serves as its northern boundary. Much of this land consists of the racetrack, facility, and parking, with large-footprint buildings making up the event center and other activity halls on the site. The relatively low ratio of buildings to area and large setbacks allows for sweeping vistas. Other notable features of the Fairgrounds are an RV park and horse stables on the south side of the site. The Fairgrounds are bounded on the south, west, and east by single-family neighborhoods.
- **Older Commercial Corridors.** Within the context of Southern Santa Rosa, older commercial development is mostly along the Santa Rosa Avenue and Petaluma Hill Road corridors. These developments, characterized mostly by single-story tilt up commercial and office parks, are not centralized in one location along the corridor but in pockets along Santa Rosa Avenue. (Newer development in the past 10 to 20 years may have replaced many of the existing older commercial buildings.) Existing structures on older commercial corridor sites can have shallow setbacks from Santa Rosa Avenue, though many have a larger setback to accommodate parking between the building frontage and the right-of-way. Larger and deeper lots may have two or more buildings with parking occupying the central part of the lot.
- **Newer Regional Commercial Corridors.** Newer regional commercial corridors in this area are along Santa Rosa Avenue (like the older commercial developments). There are several such sites along the corridor, but the most prominent is the commercial center anchored by Costco. This site, bounded on the south by Kawana Springs Road, features large expanses of parking lots in the center of the site, with buildings generally sited along the periphery. Larger buildings are toward rear of the site, and smaller buildings are sited along the frontages. Ample spacing between buildings along the frontages allow for views into the site, presumably to provide visibility for signage. Generally, there is little to no demarcation for pedestrian facilities on-site.
- **Montgomery Village, Farmers Lane, and Sonoma Avenue.** This outdoor shopping center includes several streets with both chain and local stores. It includes a more pedestrian-oriented street design with wide sidewalks and street trees.

- **Automobile Sales and Storage Facilities.** Automobile service shops, dealerships, rental agencies, and other similar businesses are located along the Santa Rosa Avenue corridor. These sites mainly have a development pattern exhibiting small building footprints with ample parking to support the auto uses. Many sites have deeper setbacks and have limited landscaping or frontage treatments.



Regional Commercial Uses on Santa Rosa Ave



Commercial Uses on Santa Rosa Ave



Vehicle Dealerships on Santa Rosa Ave



Montgomery Village



Sonoma County Fairgrounds



Suburban Residential on Jadeite Way



Compact Suburban Residential on Topaz Way



Townhomes on Lakeview Dr

Northeastern Santa Rosa

Northern Santa Rosa is bounded by the city limits on the north, College Avenue/4th Street on the south, Brush Creek Road/Wallace Road on the east, and Highway 101 on the west. It includes the neighborhoods of Alta Vista, Aston Avenue, Cobblestone, Lomita Heights, Junior College, Mark West, North Junior College, Riebli-Wallace, SOS, West Junior College, and portions of Scenic Brush Creek. This area includes the Mendocino Avenue Corridor, one of the city's most heavily traveled arterials, that runs parallel to Highway 101 and serves as the primary access to Santa Rosa Junior College.

Northern Santa Rosa is characterized by:

- **Mendocino Avenue.** Mendocino Avenue is lined by a variety of commercial uses and academic uses (Santa Rosa Junior College and Santa Rosa High School) and is an important route for public transit and cycling throughout the city. The existing street layout is characterized by four travel lanes throughout the corridor with available left-turn pockets, bike lanes, and parking lanes.
- **Santa Rosa Junior College.** The SRJC campus complex covers major portions of northern Santa Rosa. SRJC is the largest educational institution in the city, and the campus features teaching facilities and lecture halls, sports complexes, parking areas, student spaces, and a network of interconnected pedestrian paths. The site is well landscaped with trees and green spaces. On-site parking facilities include single-story lots and a parking structure, both of which are capped with solar panels. Uses adjacent to SRJC include Santa Rosa High School, single-family residential neighborhoods, and strip mall commercial. The campus is bounded on the west by Highway 101 and on the east by Mendocino Ave.
- **Kaiser Permanente Medical Campus.** The Kaiser Permanente Santa Rosa Medical Center and Offices is a large complex in a wedge-shaped area between Mendocino Avenue, Bicentennial Way, and US. The complex is characterized by centrally sited structures the house medical facilities and offices and an ER unit. Parking lots and a parking structure are along the peripheries of the site. Large driveways and drop off/pickup zones are prominent to allow vehicular flow and accommodate emergency vehicles. Adjacent to the medical campus are strip-mall commercial, hotel, medical and health offices, and residential uses.
- **Prewar Housing.** A variety of traditional prewar housing types surround the downtown core, such as one-story bungalows, Victorians, larger two-story stately houses, and midcentury to modern apartments.
- **Hillside Neighborhoods.** The area includes several neighborhoods built along the hillside. These neighborhoods have curvilinear streets that reflect the topography, and many do not have sidewalks or bicycle facilities. Many of these neighborhoods are heavily wooded, and several were hit hard by the Tubbs Fire and are in the process of being rebuilt.



Mendocino Marketplace



Kaiser Medical Campus



Santa Rosa Junior College



Multifamily Housing on North Street



College Avenue



Bungalow Housing in Junior College



Rebuilt Homes in Fountain Gove



Semirural Character of Alta Vista

Eastern Santa Rosa

Eastern Santa Rosa is bounded by the city limits on the north, south, and east, and Summerfield Road/Mission Boulevard on the west. It includes the neighborhoods of Middle Rincon, Oakmont Village, St. Francis, Skyhawk, Stonegate, and a portion of Scenic Brush. The area includes a range of suburban and more rural neighborhoods, including several hillside neighborhoods.

- **Suburban Development Pattern.** Most of this area was developed in a suburban pattern, with larger curvilinear arterial streets connecting individual neighborhoods and subdivisions. These neighborhoods typically consist of single-family homes, but several have denser multifamily housing and condominiums. Schools and parks are dispersed throughout this area and in each major development.
- **Spring Lake Regional Park.** The center of this area includes a major regional park that features camping, fishing, picnic areas with barbecues, and picnic areas. Trails are available for walking, hiking, bicycling, and horseback riding. The park includes a 3-acre swimming lagoon and a 72-acre lake.
- **Valley Character.** The area is unique in Santa Rosa because it is largely in the Sonoma Valley, which gives a unique feeling of being closer to and integrated with nature and the surrounding rural/agricultural environment. Most streets are oriented to accessing Highway 12 since it is the main through-street for the area.
- **Spring Lake Village.** Spring Lake Village is a large, senior-oriented community just north of Spring Lake Regional Park. It includes a range of spiritual, social, commercial, and residential uses organized in a suburban, walkable layout.
- **Hillside Neighborhoods.** Several neighborhoods in this area were built along the hillsides. These neighborhoods have curvilinear streets that reflect the topography, and many do not have sidewalks or bicycle facilities.
- **Urban and Rural Interface.** The area has a strong rural/urban interface along its eastern and southern edges. Once you move past the city limits and UGB, the more suburban/urban form quickly transitions to larger ranchettes, cluster developments, and vineyards. The southern edge near Trione-Annadel State Park quickly transitions into an open space and natural setting.



St. Francis Shopping Center and Highway 12



Spring Lake Village



Oliver's Market on Montecito Blvd



Calistoga Road



Creek Crossing on Francis Rd



Suburban Residential in Oakmont Village



Rural Area on Highway 24

Western Lands

To the west of the main city are a series of about 10 annexed “islands” that primarily serve as areas for wastewater utility infrastructure or environmental mitigation. Most of these areas are owned and operated by the Santa Rosa Regional Water Reuse System, which operates the Laguna Treatment Plant, Water Reuse Operations, and Biosolids Distribution System and serves approximately 230,000 residents in Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, Cotati, Sebastopol, and parts of unincorporated Sonoma County. Though these lands are not connected to or contiguous with the main area of the city, they are incorporated and part of the city of Santa Rosa.



Spray Fields (east of the city and south of Highway 12)

2.6 HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

The history of Santa Rosa and the cultural and historical resources present or potentially present in the city are an important component of local character. Significant cultural resources include structures that may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or the CRHR, or otherwise identified in the City of Santa Rosa's Preservation Districts and inventory of Landmark properties.

Early Settlement

Santa Rosa was a site of Native American habitation beginning approximately 7,000 years ago, and Santa Rosa contains approximately 190 recorded Native American resources.¹

The Santa Rosa Basin, encompassing the Santa Rosa Planning Area, contains six major drainages: Santa Rosa, Matanzas, Piner, Rincon, Austin, and Brush Creeks. These creeks may hold prehistoric resources because Native American archeological sites tend to be located near waterways as well as along ridge tops, mid-slope terraces, alluvial flats, the base of hills, and near vegetation ecotones.² Trione-Annadel State Park, in the southeast corner of the Santa Rosa Planning Area, was an important obsidian source for Native American tools. Resources may include chert or obsidian flakes, projectile points, mortars, pestles, dark friable soil containing shell and bone dietary debris, heat-affected rock, or human burials.

Remnants of Native American civilization have been discovered along Santa Rosa Creek and its tributaries, in the adjacent alluvial valleys and surrounding plains, in the hills, in the Trione-Annadel State Park area, in the Laguna de Santa Rosa, and in the Windsor area. The remains of entire settlements, including three former villages, were found in northern Santa Rosa. Given the environmental setting, the archaeologically rich nature of the Santa Rosa area, and the amount of unsurveyed land (at least half of the Planning Area has not been surveyed for archaeological resources), there is a high potential for finding additional Native American sites in Santa Rosa.

Santa Rosa was first settled by nonnatives in 1837 when Dona Maria Carrillo's adobe and ranch were established about a mile from what is now Downtown Santa Rosa. In 1841, Ms. Carrillo was given a grant for the surrounding land to establish the ranch, which served as a boarding house, store, hotel, and post office until purchased by Feodor Hahman, Berthold Hoen, and William Hartman in the 1850s. The ranch was merged with an adjacent 70-acre property, and the three men built their homes and stores in what became today's Downtown Santa Rosa.

¹ Based on a 2001 review of records and literature on file with the California Historical Resources Information System.

² Vegetation ecotones are transition areas between different plant communities.

In 1854, the public voted to move the county seat to Santa Rosa, and over 100 buildings were built in the city within three years. Most commercial development was focused along Fourth Street, C Street, or near Courthouse Square. The Southern Pacific Railroad reached the city a decade later, inciting population growth, economic development, and cultural achievement that propelled Santa Rosa's role as a shipping, trading, and processing center for agriculture.

The 1906 San Francisco Earthquake sent Santa Rosa into a period of economic downturn. Though the town reconstructed most decimated buildings, the Great Depression two decades later further stymied growth and economic development. The city began full recovery during World War II, with wartime workers flocking to the Bay Area. The large population growth was supported by new subdivisions, freeways, and infrastructure. Highway 101 was constructed in 1949, permanently cutting the city in two.

The Urban Renewal Agency of Santa Rosa published the Redevelopment Plan, Santa Rosa Center Project in 1960. A Marketability Study for Santa Rosa Center and a subsequent Santa Rosa Urban Renewal Plan were developed in the early 1970s, initiating development of the 25-acre Santa Rosa Plaza shopping center, the Santa Rosa Civic Center, and the preserved Empire Building in the 1980s.

Historical Resources Inventory

Historical resources include sites, structures, districts, landmarks, or other physical evidence of past human activity generally greater than 50 years old. Santa Rosa has a rich architectural heritage spanning many periods—Mexican Period adobes, 19th-century Gothic structures, Greek Revival and Italianate houses, turn of the century Stick/Eastlake homes, early 20th century Craftsman and California bungalows, 1920s Spanish Revival houses, and 1930s art deco buildings.

The city's eclectic styles and periods are represented by numerous well-preserved structures that form part of the city's character and identity. Some of the more notable historic resources are the Luther Burbank Home and Gardens, Rosenberg Department Store, Flamingo Resort Sign Tower, DeTurk Round Barn, Church of the One Tree, Carrillo Adobe, Fountaingrove Winery, Fountaingrove Round Barn, and Santa Rosa Rural Cemetery.

Recognizing the value of Santa Rosa's historic resources, the city council adopted a preservation ordinance in 1988 and created the Cultural Heritage Board to:

- Undertake and update historic inventories or surveys,
- Recommend designation of landmarks and preservation districts,
- Review proposed alterations to historic buildings, and
- Promote public awareness of preservation issues.

Under the board’s supervision, inventories were prepared to document historical buildings and neighborhoods. The Cultural Heritage Survey is not just a survey but a summary of the city’s past that documents the architectural style of each structure and notes historical facts by neighborhood. Especially significant structures have been designated as Landmarks, and sites with a specific historical, archaeological, cultural, or architectural value have been designated Preservation Districts, as have historic neighborhoods. Such districts officially recognize that whole neighborhoods are key components of the city’s heritage. Santa Rosa has 21 Landmarks and 8 designated historic Preservation Districts, including Burbank Gardens, Cherry Street, McDonald, Olive Park, Railroad Square, Ridgway, Street Rose, and West End.

2.7 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The City of Santa Rosa’s 2014-2023 Housing Element plans for 1,712 very-low- and low-income-restricted housing units in the city to augment the existing affordable housing units available.

The Santa Rosa Housing Authority operates the Santa Rosa Housing Trust and the Rental Housing Assistance program on behalf of the City. The Housing Trust partners with nonprofit organizations and private entities to create affordable housing through new construction, rehabilitation, preservation, and conversion. The Rental Housing Assistance program administers Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, Project-Based Vouchers, and HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing, which all provide housing assistance payments to Santa Rosa households. Tenant-based vouchers comprise nearly three quarters of all vouchers. The Housing Authority also maintains a mapped inventory of affordable housing, including multifamily, elderly, and special needs rental units and mobile home parks in Santa Rosa. For the 2020-2021 fiscal year, the Housing Authority has an annual budget of \$44.5 million—83 percent comes from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the remaining revenue is from State and local funds.

The City works to incentivize the development of affordable housing projects through such policies as the City’s Supplemental Density Bonus, which, combined with the State Density Bonus, allows for up to 100 percent above the allowed General Plan residential density for eligible affordable housing projects.

2.8 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of planning and environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

Environmental justice is achieved when every person can reach their optimal social, physical, and mental well-being at all stages of life, regardless of where they live or their racial and ethnic background. This section provides an analysis of Santa Rosa’s environmental justice indicators to help inform opportunities for the General Plan Update process to support the development of strategies to achieve a more equitable and environmentally just future.

What is Environmental Justice?

People of color and lower income households often have limited access to the health-promoting benefits of healthy communities, and instead experience a greater share of health-harming burdens. This is a social and economic dynamic referred to as environmental justice and can look like:

- Only having the option to rent or buy homes that are sited next to incompatible or unhealthy uses, like warehouses, industrial sites, freeways, or waste management facilities.
- Being unable to access high-quality and well-maintained public services or amenities, such as schools, parks, libraries, or community centers because the quality of these public amenities is often determined by the property values of homes—and property values of homes near incompatible uses are often lower than in areas without these incompatibility issues.
- Not being considered in or not having decision-making power during the review of projects and proposals that can often lead to even higher concentrations of health-harming burdens in your neighborhood.

Race and Ethnicity

Communities of color bear a disproportionate burden of environmental hazards. The race and ethnicity of Santa Rosa's residents are important to understand when evaluating environmental justice in the city which is enriched by a racially and ethnically diverse population. Based on U.S. Census data from the 2018 5-year American Community Survey, in Santa Rosa, 54.7 percent of the population identifies as White alone (not Hispanic or Latinx), 32.8 percent identify as Hispanic or Latinx, 5.4 percent identify as Asian alone, 2.0 percent identify as Black alone, 1.2 percent identify as Native American or Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and 3.2 percent identify as more than one race or "other". In total, people of color make up 46.3 percent of the city's population. Comparatively, state-wide 37.5 percent of the population identifies as White alone (not Hispanic or Latinx), 38.9 percent identify as Hispanic or Latinx, 14.1 percent identify as Asian alone, 5.5 percent identify as Black alone, 0.8 percent identify as Native American or Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and 3.2 percent identify as more than one race or "other". In total, people of color make up 62.5 percent of the state's population. **Figure 2-7** shows the distribution of city's non-White population, predominantly concentrated in northwestern Santa Rosa, Downtown Station Area, southwestern Santa Rosa, and the areas of southern Santa Rosa south of State Route Highway 12 (Highway 12), while the area northeast of the Highway 12-Highway 101 interchange is majority White.

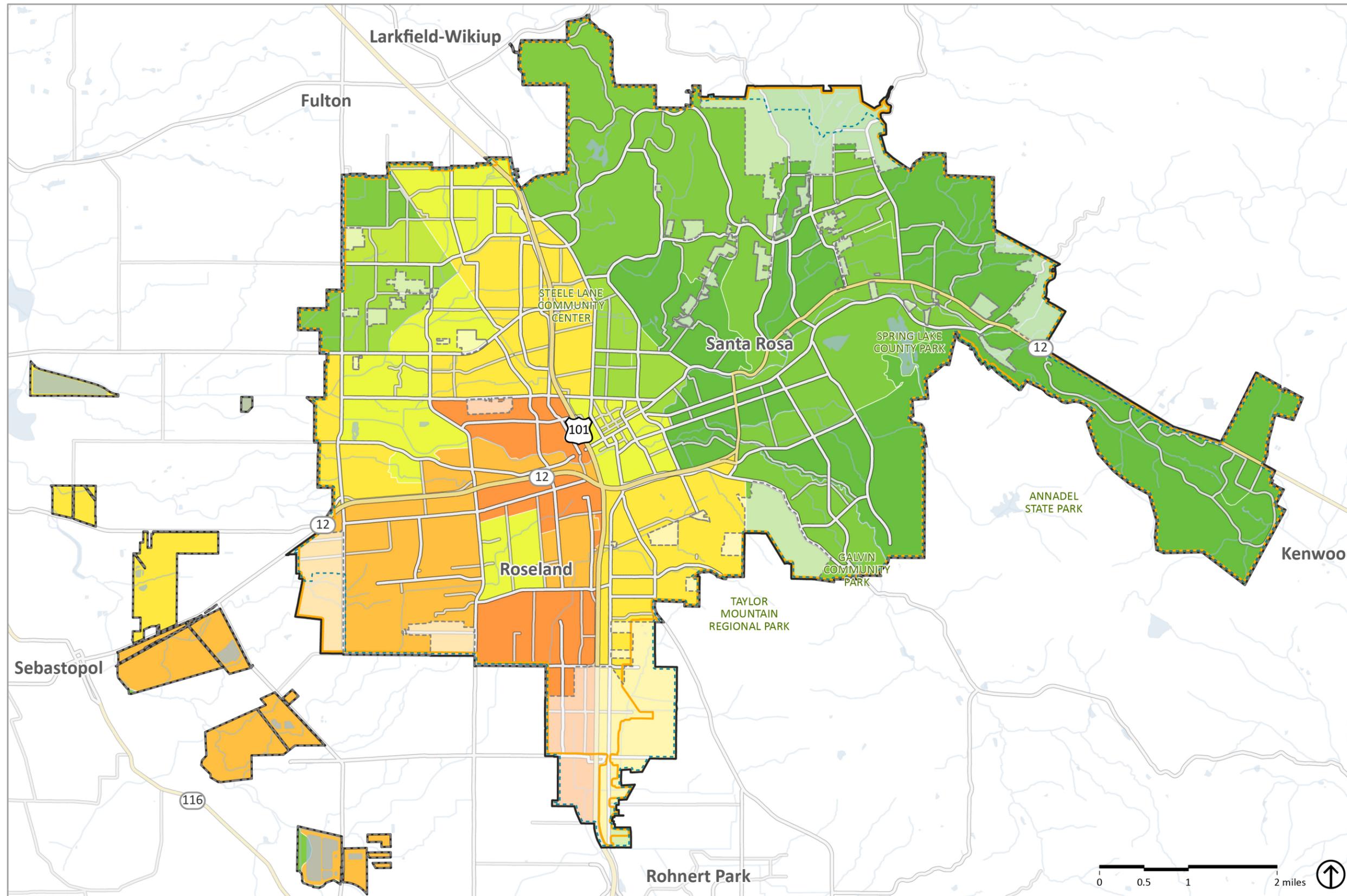
Figure 2-7. Santa Rosa Nonwhite Population

Disadvantaged Communities Assessment

The State recommends two methods for identifying disadvantaged communities (DACs): simply identifying low-income census tracts or using the California Communities Environmental Health Screening (CalEnviroScreen) Tool. CalEnviroScreen identifies California communities by census tract that are disproportionately burdened by, and vulnerable to, multiple sources of pollution by evaluating 20 indicators of environmental justice in the following four areas:

- **Exposure Indicators**, including current contaminants residents are exposed to such as diesel particulate matter, drinking water contaminants, and toxic releases from facilities
- **Environmental Effect Indicators**, which are potential risk factors for exposure, such as hazardous waste generating facilities and solid waste facilities.
- **Sensitive Population Indicators**, which are people especially vulnerable to exposure to environmental hazards, including people with asthma and cardiovascular disease.
- **Socioeconomic Indicators**, including factors such as educational attainment, income, and linguistic isolation, which may indicate a greater vulnerability to environmental hazards.

Figure 2-8
 Santa Rosa
 CalEnviroScreen



Legend

- Planning Area
- City Limit
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Sphere of Influence

**CalEnviroScreen 3.0
 Results
 (June 2018 Update)**

- 90-100%
- 80-89%
- 70-79%
- 60-69%
- 50-59%
- 40-49%
- 30-39%
- 20-29%
- 10-19%
- 0-9%



Figure 2-8 shows the results of CalEnviroScreen version 3.0 in Santa Rosa and identifies multiple census tracts that score within the 70th to 79th percentile for exposure to pollution and vulnerability to its effects, distinguishing these as DACs. The DACs are concentrated in southwestern Santa Rosa and the Downtown Station Area, particularly along Highway 101. The census tracts with the highest percentile scores for CalEnviroScreen roughly correlate with the distribution of the city’s non-White population, shown in **Figure 2-7**. The DACs also generally align with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission’s designated “communities of concern,” shown in **Figure 2-9**, defined as census tract areas with a concentration of both minority and low-income residents. A community of concern can also be an area with a concentration of low-income residents and any three or more of six vulnerability indicators: persons with limited English proficiency, zero-vehicle households, seniors 75 years and over, persons with one or more disability, single-parent families, and/or renters paying more than 50 percent of their household income on housing. The communities of concern designations are referenced in other chapters of the Existing Conditions Report to support analyses of equity and opportunity in relation to specific community amenities and services, such as parks and transportation.

The following sections summarize findings from evaluating environmental justice indicators in the four categories considered by CalEnviroScreen indicators, focusing on those CalEnviroScreen indicators for which any Santa Rosa census tracts score above the 70th percentile, meaning that it performs worse than 70 percent or more of census tracts statewide. In addition to the CalEnviroScreen indicators, this section includes analysis of some related indicators from additional sources, such as the US Census Bureau, which provide city-level data. Findings are discussed in the geographic scope of the areas and neighborhoods defined in Section 2.5 and shown in **Figure 2-6**: Downtown Station Area, northwestern Santa Rosa, southwestern Santa Rosa, southern Santa Rosa, northern Santa Rosa, eastern Santa Rosa, and western lands.

Exposure Indicators

Contaminants in air and water can cause significant health issues including asthma, cancer, and birth defects; poorer communities in California are exposed to contaminants in air and water more often than their wealthier counterparts. The following subsections describe CalEnviroScreen rankings for Air and Water Quality. Note that the CalEnviroScreen score is a ranked measure of comparison among all census tracts in California. It is not a measure of compliance with public health standards.

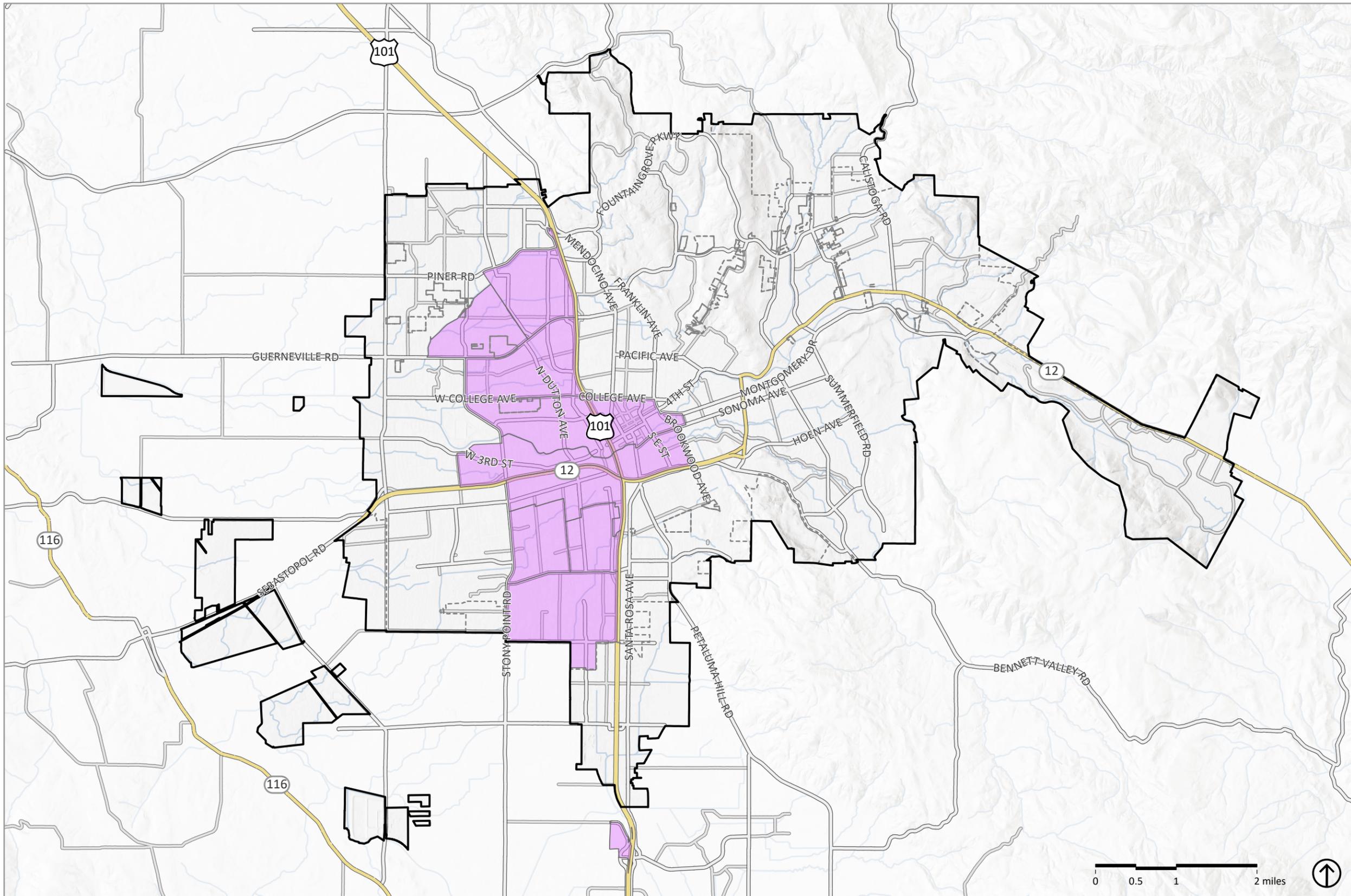


Figure 2-9
**Communities
of Concern**

- Communities of Concern Class
- High
 - Higher
 - Highest
 - Planning Area
 - City Limit

Air Quality

Five census tracts in the Downtown Station Area and southern Santa Rosa west of Highway 101 score between the 80th and 85th percentiles for diesel particulate matter concentrations (typically the result of exhaust from motor vehicles like trucks and buses). Tracts in northwestern and southwestern Santa Rosa along the west side of Highway 101 score between the 70th and 80th percentiles. These results are roughly consistent with CalEnviroScreen Traffic Density data, which shows tracts along the length of Highway 101 in the 70th to 100th percentiles. Interestingly, while traffic densities appear to run along the entire length of Highway 101, Diesel PM concentrations appear to cluster more tightly around the Highway 12-Highway 101 interchange.

Water Quality

Santa Rosa's drinking water comes from the Russian River and is rigorously tested for quality. The CalEnviroScreen water quality ranking provides an average score for each census tract and shows that census tracts located entirely within the city limits have very clean drinking water relative to all California census tracts. There are a few census tracts that lie partially within the city limits that score above the 80th percentile for drinking water contaminants; however, these scores are likely not reflective of the water consumed by households or businesses in these tracts and are instead skewed by water for agricultural or industrial uses outside the city.

Environmental Effect Indicators

In addition to current contaminants in air and water, CalEnviroScreen evaluates the threat of potential contaminants from hazards present in the city, like waste collection and treatment facilities or leaking underground storage tanks.

Groundwater Quality

As with most cities, the primary threats to groundwater quality in and around Santa Rosa are potentially leaking underground gasoline storage tanks; disposed chemicals from dry cleaners; and gasoline, oil, and chemical runoff from industrial sites. According to CalEnviroScreen, there are 57 underground storage tanks (UST) at gas stations potentially in need of replacement or removal, plus 17 dry cleaning operations, the airport, and dozens of industrial sites and dairy operations that may need preventative measures to protect groundwater quality. There are three sites in the city designated by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control as "active" and therefore require environmental remediation to address soil contamination from past uses. Because of the UST and remediation sites, each of the planning areas in Santa Rosa has census tracts that rank above the 70th percentile for proximity to groundwater threats; however, while these threats could impact groundwater, they are very unlikely to affect drinking water quality.

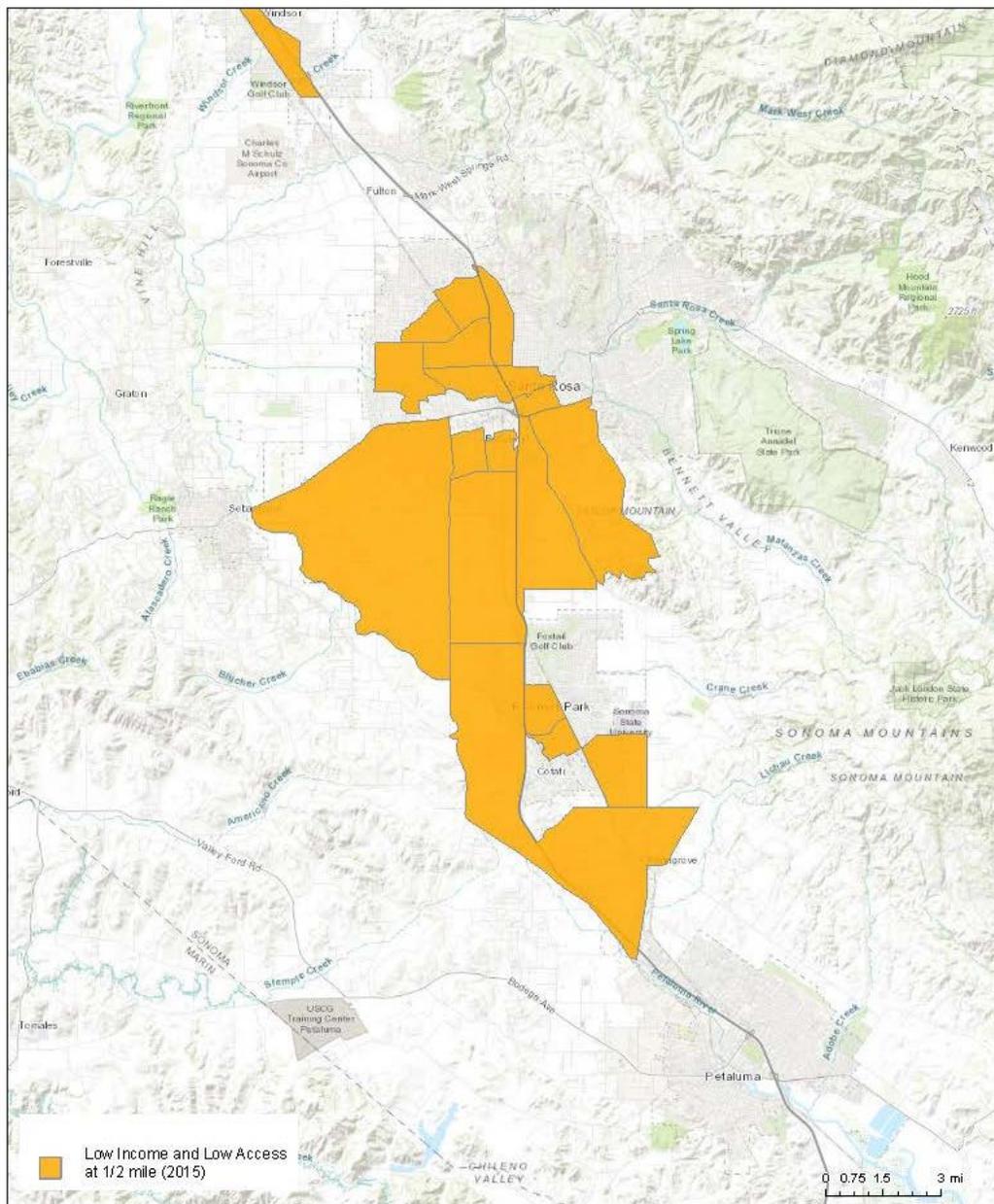
Hazardous Waste Facilities

Hazardous waste facilities are also distributed across the city in significant concentrations, particularly in southern, southwestern, and northeastern Santa Rosa areas. Census tracts in these areas score between the 80th to 100th percentile in terms of proximity to sites that generate hazardous waste.

Solid waste facilities also appear to be significant in almost all areas of the city except for eastern Santa Rosa. The highest-scoring census tract in Santa Rosa for proximity to solid waste sites is in the southern part of the city, scoring in the 91st percentile. Other tracts of the city west of Highway 101 generally score between the 50th and 85th percentiles.

Food Access (non-CalEnviroScreen)

In addition to the environmental factors focused on exposure to hazards assessed by CalEnviroScreen, proximal access to food, or lack thereof, has significant environmental justice implications. The US Department of Agriculture maps access of low-income populations to supermarkets, recognizing that low-income populations may be more transit-dependent and therefore source their foods from a smaller radius. **Figure 2-10** shows that many Santa Rosa census tracts are both low income and have low access to supermarkets within one half-mile of their residence. These areas are primarily in the Downtown Station Area, southwestern Santa Rosa, and southern Santa Rosa, consistent with the distribution of higher percentile CalEnviroScreen scores.

Figure 2-10. Food Access Atlas of Low Income and Low Supermarket Access at Half-Mile

Sensitive Population Indicators

People with asthma and/or cardiovascular disease can be especially vulnerable to exposure to pollutants, which are also risk factors for developing these diseases. Asthma rates in southwestern Santa Rosa, particularly along High 101, are the highest in the city; census tracts in this area are between the 75th and 81st percentiles for asthma rates. Cardiovascular disease is prevalent in southwestern Santa Rosa and in the Downtown Station Area, with census tracts in these areas performing in the 81st and 75th percentiles, respectively.

Socioeconomic Indicators

Educational attainment directly correlates to a person's ability to access higher paying jobs. CalEnviroScreen's educational attainment indicator is based on the number of adults with less than a high school education. The Downtown Station Area, southwestern Santa Rosa, the tracts of both northern and southern Santa Rosa near Highway 101 are the city's lowest performing for educational attainment. In particular, in the census tracts southwest of the Highway 12-Highway 101 interchange, as much as 49 percent of adults have less than a high school education, scoring in the 93rd percentile of the state for educational attainment.

City-wide data on the educational attainment of residents by race from US Census shows that White, not Hispanic or Latinx, adults have the highest educational attainment of all ethnic/demographic groups, followed closely by Asian adults, with 40 percent and 39 percent, respectively, having a Bachelor's degree or higher. Twenty nine percent of Black/African American adults have a Bachelor's degree or higher. Hispanic or Latinx adults have among the lowest levels of educational attainment with only 11.7 percent having a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Language and English literacy skills facilitate the flow of information, including information about health needs and emergency situations, in addition to impacting employment opportunities. Approximately 32 percent of Santa Rosa residents speak a language other than English, compared to roughly 44.1 percent of all California residents. The most commonly spoken languages in Santa Rosa, other than English, are Spanish, Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Tagalog, Arabic, and other Indo-European languages. Of residents that speak a language other than English, 46.3 percent—approximately 15 percent of all residents—feel they speak English “less than very well” and are considered “linguistically isolated”. Of those, 80 percent are Spanish speakers, 13.5 percent speak Asian or Pacific Island languages, 5 percent speak Indo-European languages, and the remaining 1.5 percent speak “other” languages. Linguistic isolation is concentrated in southwestern Santa Rosa and the Downtown Station Area. The highest rates of linguistic isolation are in the census tracts in these areas immediately southwest of the Highway 12-Highway 101 interchange.

Income and poverty strongly influence the quality of a person's living and working conditions and access to healthy foods and medical care. Members of lower income communities are more likely to be exposed to pollution and to suffer from health effects as a result of that exposure than residents of wealthier communities. The city's distribution of people living below twice the federal poverty level is largely consistent with the cumulative CalEnviroScreen score and is generally concentrated around the Highway 12-Highway 101 interchange. The census tract with the highest level of poverty (85th percentile in the state with 61 percent of residents living below twice the federal poverty level) is in northwestern Santa Rosa. City-wide, 11.5 percent of residents live below the federal poverty level, compared to 14.3 percent statewide. Of Santa Rosa's residents living in poverty, 81.4 percent are people of color, though people of color make up only 46.3 percent of the city's total population.

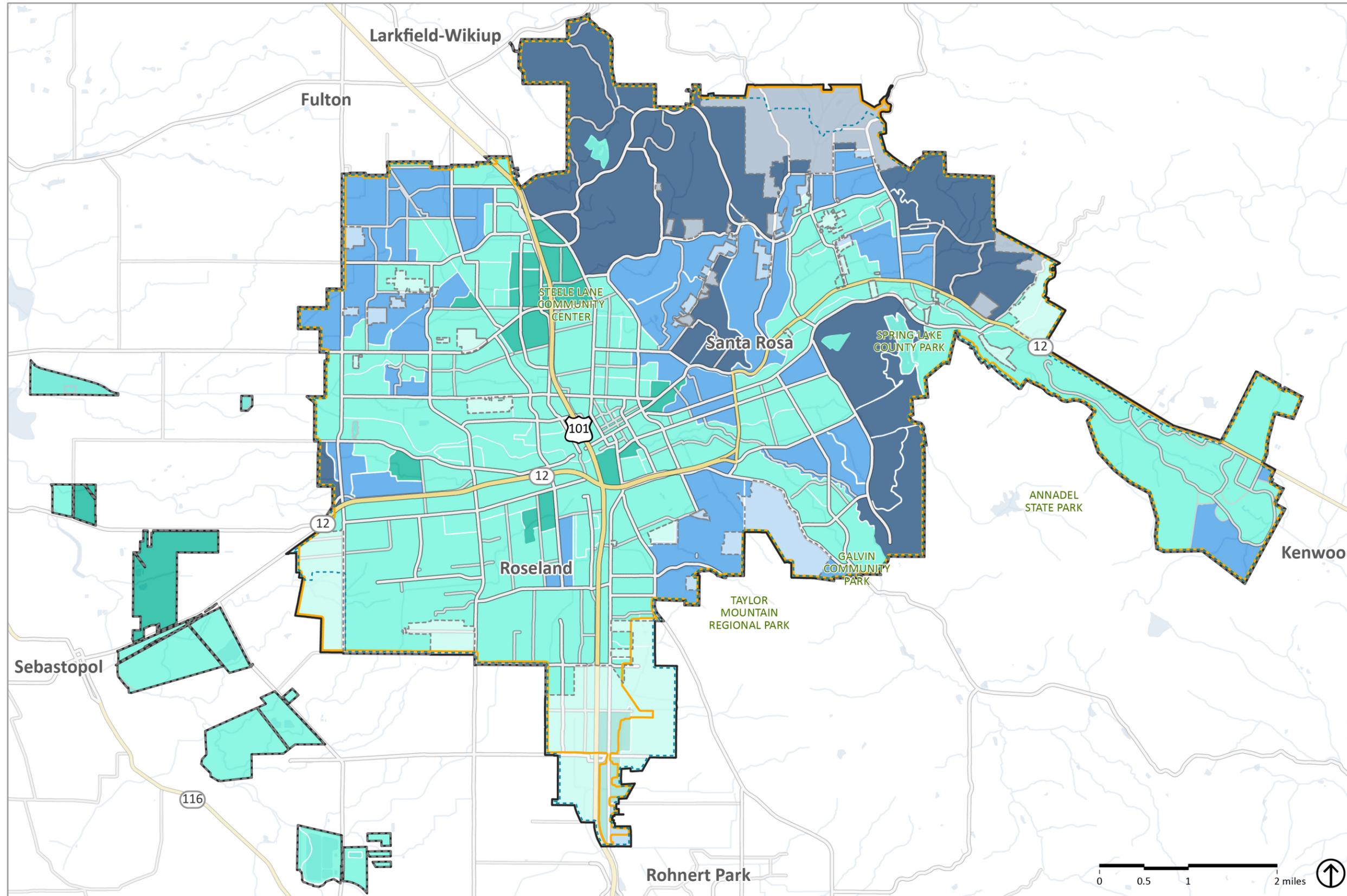
Similarly, the median income of White households (as of 2018) was approximately \$75,478—\$14,853 greater than median incomes of Hispanic/Latinx household (\$60,625) and \$23,587 greater than median incomes of Black/African American households (\$51,891). The community areas with the lowest incomes, as shown in **Figure 2-11**, generally align with the disadvantaged communities and priority neighborhoods shown in **Figure 2-8**.

In addition to impacting a household's income unemployment may result in having no health insurance or medical care and the stress from long-term unemployment can lead to chronic illnesses, such as heart disease. As of 2015, unemployment in the city was highest in census tracts in northwest Santa Rosa, Downtown Station Area, southwest Santa Rosa, and southern Santa Rosa, particularly those along Highways 12 and 101, with the census tract on the southwestern border of the Highway 12-Highway 101 interchange experiencing the highest level of unemployment (18 percent of adults—the 92nd percentile for the state). People of color typically experience greater levels of unemployment with 7.0 percent of Hispanic and Latinxs unemployed, and 8.9 percent of Black/African Americans unemployed, compared to 5.2 percent of Whites.

Current conditions related to unemployment are changing rapidly due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. While unemployment in the Santa Rosa Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) had steadily decreased from 2010 (11.5 percent), following the last recession, to February 2020 (2.8 percent), it rapidly increased following the onset of the pandemic reaching a recent peak of 14.5 percent in April 2020; on average, unemployment levels in Santa Rosa have been 1.6 percent lower than statewide levels over the last 10 years. While the current distribution of unemployment levels across census tracts and race and ethnic groups is not known, it is likely that the CalEnviroScreen designated disadvantaged communities have been disproportionately impacted by the effects of the pandemic, as has been observed of disadvantaged communities and people of color in other communities across the U.S.

The final socioeconomic factor considered by CalEnviroScreen is housing cost burdened. The statewide housing crisis has resulted in higher housing costs in California than the rest of the country, costs are especially high in the Bay Area. CalEnviroScreen assesses the housing cost burden (those paying greater than 50 percent of their income for housing costs) of low-income populations. There are two primary concentrations of housing burdened census tracts, one north of Santa Rosa Creek along both the north and south sides of Highway 101, primarily in northwestern and northern Santa Rosa with a lesser amount in Downtown Santa Rosa; and another south of Highway 12, also along Highway 101. The highest levels of housing cost burden range from 24 to 28 percent of the census tracts' population being cost burden, which score in the 74th and 83rd percentiles of the state.

Figure 2-11
 Santa Rosa
 Median Income



Legend

- Planning Area
- City Limit
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Sphere of Influence

Median Household Income (est. 2020)

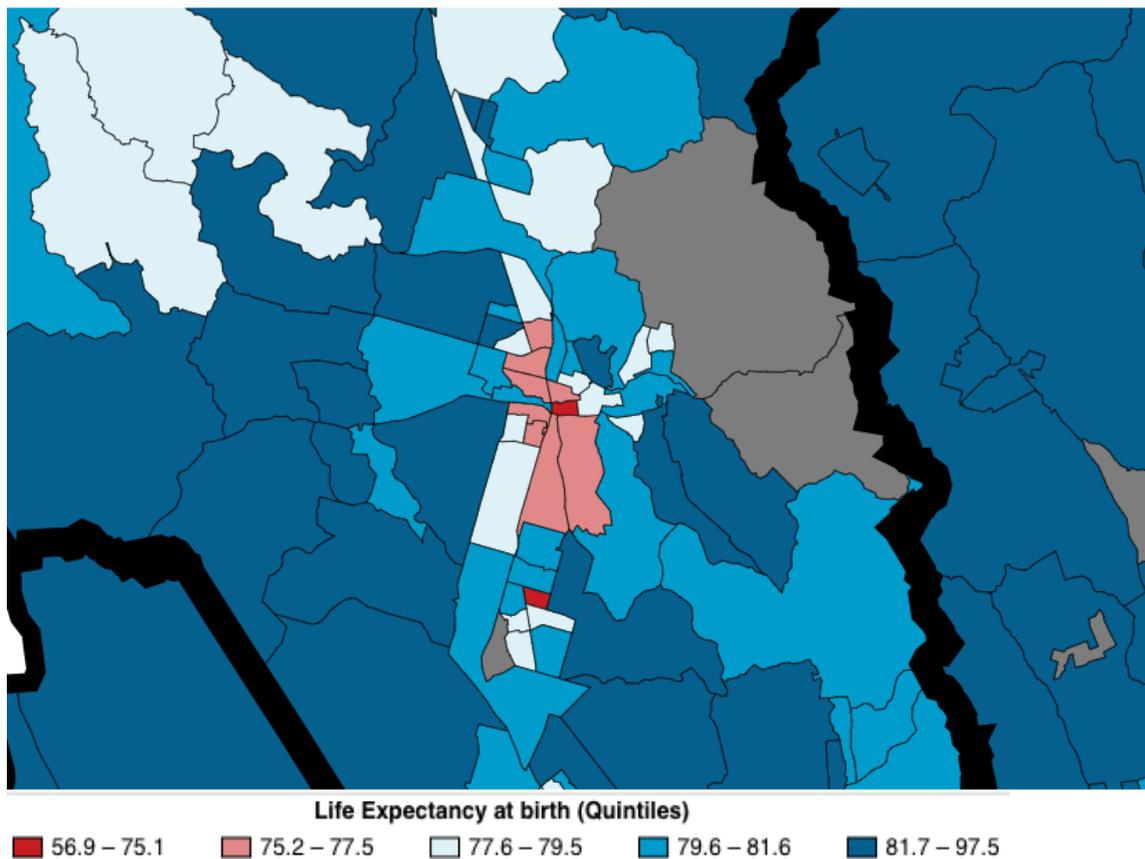
- \$0 - 12,400
- \$12,400 - 48,600
- \$48,600 - 84,800
- \$84,800 - 121,000
- \$121,000 - 200,100

Source: ESRI, US Census

Outlook for Disadvantaged Communities

Environmentally unjust conditions have serious implications for a person’s health outcomes. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Santa Rosa performs slightly worse than the state average in terms of life expectancy at birth—79 years compared to 81 years. Within the city, there is significant variation of life expectancy depending on where a resident lives; as shown in **Figure 2-12**, life expectancy scores are generally consistent with the CalEnviroScreen assessment of disadvantaged communities. Residents in the portion of the Downtown Station Area northeast of the Highway 12-Highway 101 interchange have the lowest life expectancy of all city residents (73 years). Residents in southern Santa Rosa along the east side of Highway 101 and in northwestern Santa Rosa along Highway 101 have life expectancies ranging from 76 to 77 years. While residents in the best performing areas of the city have life expectancies as high as 85 years.

Figure 2-12. Life Expectancy at Birth



2.9 SANTA ROSA GENERAL PLAN 2035

General Plan Elements

The Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 identifies land use, transportation, environmental, economic, and social goals and policies related to land use and development. The General Plan provides a framework for decision-making regarding land use and informs residents, developers, decision-makers, and others of the ground rules that guide development in Santa Rosa. The current General Plan was adopted by the city council on November 3, 2009. The current Housing Element was adopted on July 29, 2014 and addresses housing needs from 2015 to 2023. The Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 includes the following 12 Elements:

- Land Use and Livability
- Urban Design
- Housing
- Transportation
- Public Services and Facilities
- Open Space and Conservation
- Growth Management
- Youth and Family
- Economic Vitality
- Historic Preservation
- Noise and Safety
- Arts and Culture

Originally, the Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 was intended to guide the City through 2035. In part due to changing circumstances in Santa Rosa, including recent wildfire events, the City decided to update the General Plan on an accelerated schedule. The updated General Plan will be the long range, comprehensive, land use, circulation, and implementation plan for development in the Planning Area through 2050.

Land Use and Livability

The Land Use and Livability Element constitutes the framework for the Santa Rosa General Plan 2035, providing goals and policies to guide land use development patterns and development intensities. The Land Use and Livability Element focuses on residential, mixed-use sites and centers, parks, commercial, office, industrial, and public/institutional uses. It defines general

relationships between various uses of land and desired growth patterns. The 2009 Land Use and Livability Element established goals to:

- Foster a compact rather than a scattered development pattern in order to reduce travel, energy, land, and materials consumption while promoting GHG emission reductions citywide.
- Promote planning as a positive, cooperative community function.
- Maintain Downtown as the major regional office, financial, civic, and cultural center in the North Bay, and a vital mixed-use center.
- Foster compact, vibrant, and continuous retail at the core of Downtown.
- Promote livable neighborhoods by requiring compliance with green building programs to ensure that new construction meets high standards of energy efficiency and sustainable material use. Ensure that everyday shopping, park and recreation facilities, and schools are within easy walking distance of most residents.
- Maintain a diversity of neighborhoods and varied housing stock to satisfy a wide range of needs.
- Promote mixed-use sites and centers.
- Foster development of the South Santa Rosa Avenue area—from Bellevue Avenue to just north of Todd Road—with a mix of retail and residential uses and with a development character that is hospitable to pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Maintain vibrant, convenient, and attractive commercial centers.
- Maintain the economic vitality of business parks and offices, and Santa Rosa’s role as a regional employment center.
- Protect industrial land supply and ensure compatibility between industrial development and surrounding neighborhoods.
- Ensure land uses promote use of transit in the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan area.
- Ensure new development and streetscape projects provide pedestrian and bicycle circulation improvements in the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan area.
- Provide specific land use guidance in the areas of the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan, Northern Downtown Pedestrian Linkages Study, Southwest Area Plan, Southeast Area Plan, Sebastopol Road Urban Vision and Corridor Plan, North Santa Rosa Station Area Specific Plan, Roseland Area/Sebastopol Road Specific Plan, and the Southeast Greenway.

Urban Design

The Urban Design Element identifies the visual quality and character of Santa Rosa's built environment that makes it a special place as well as ways of making the city more comfortable and usable for residents. The major topics addressed by this element include Downtown, major city entries, neighborhood design, and hillside development. The policies in this element seek to:

- Preserve and enhance Santa Rosa's scenic character, including its natural waterways, hillsides, and distinctive districts.
- Preserve and strengthen Downtown as a vital and attractive place.
- Enhance and strengthen the visual quality of major entry routes into the city and major corridors that link neighborhoods with Downtown.
- Avoid strip patterns of commercial development. Improve the appearance and functioning of existing commercial strip corridors, such as Santa Rosa Avenue and Sebastopol Road.
- Create a framework of public spaces at the neighborhood, city, and regional scale.
- Maintain and enhance the diverse character of Santa Rosa's neighborhoods. Promote the creation of neighborhoods—not subdivisions—in areas of new development.
- Design residential neighborhoods to be safe, human-scaled, and livable by addressing compact development and multimodal connectivity and reducing energy use.
- Design hillside development to be sensitive to existing terrain, views, and significant natural landforms or features.
- Respect natural features in the design and construction of hillside development.

Housing

The State of California requires each city and county to develop a comprehensive Housing Element to adequately address existing and projected housing needs by providing opportunities for housing development for all income levels. The City's Housing Element, adopted in 2014 and effective through 2023, contains data on housing stock, affordability, and housing needs, as well as a strategy to address community objectives. As described above, the Housing Element also plans for affordable housing and housing for vulnerable populations. The next Housing Element update will be adopted by December 2022 to plan for housing needs through 2030.

At the halfway point of the current RHNA cycle in 2019, the city had constructed 62.5 percent of the housing units required through 2023. However, most of these units were for above-moderate-income households and therefore do not meet the housing affordability goals set by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. Approximately 15 percent of very-low-income housing units, 25 percent of low-income units, 23 percent of moderate-income units, and 55 percent of above-moderate-income units were constructed through 2019. ABAG is currently preparing the 6th RHNA per State requirements, which will allocate housing

units that each jurisdiction must plan for through 2030. The City anticipates receiving an allocation of housing units associated with regular growth as well as additional units needed to reconstruct those lost in the Tubbs Fire.

Transportation

The Transportation Element discusses and analyzes the movement of people and goods through and around the city. It recognizes the issues and opportunities associated with the presence of Highway 12, Highway 101, and the SMART. The Element's roadway classification system reflects a great concern for providing equity among all modes of transportation, particularly pedestrians and bicyclists, and the importance of the streetscape to the character and quality of the public realm that leads to Complete Streets. Several roads in Santa Rosa have unique scenic qualities due to their natural setting and historical and cultural features, and the Element aims to enhance those aesthetic values. This Element establishes goals to:

- Provide a safe and sustainable transportation system.
- Provide a safe, efficient, free-flowing circulation system.
- Reduce traffic volumes and speeds in neighborhoods.
- Maintain acceptable motor vehicle traffic flows.
- Complete needed transportation investments in a timely manner.
- Develop a viable solution for regional through-traffic on north-south and east-west corridors.
- Identify, preserve, and enhance scenic roads throughout Santa Rosa in both rural and developed areas.
- Expand the existing transit network to reduce GHG emissions and to provide convenient and efficient public transportation to workplaces, shopping, SMART stations, and other destinations.
- Support implementation of rail service along the Northwest Pacific Railroad.
- Provide attractive and safe streets for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Develop a safe, convenient, and continuous network of pedestrian sidewalks and pathways that link neighborhoods with schools, parks, shopping areas, and employment centers.
- Develop a citywide system of designated bikeways that serves both experienced and casual bicyclists and that maximizes bicycle use for commuting, recreation, and local transport.

- Continue the availability of air transportation services.
- Provide a continuous pedestrian, bicycle, and nonmotorized transportation connection from Spring Lake Regional Park to Farmers Lane and link to Downtown Santa Rosa, surrounding neighborhoods and schools, and the regional trail system.

Public Services and Facilities

The Public Services and Facilities Element plans for a variety of public service needs, including fire protection, police services, parks and recreation, public schools, sewer and solid waste, water supply and conservation, and stormwater management. The current General Plan anticipated future demand on these services and called for plans to expand and improve in order to:

- Provide recreational facilities and parks for all sectors of the community.
- Ensure adequate funding for recreation and parks improvements and maintenance.
- Provide superior educational opportunities for children and all members of the community.
- Provide library facilities necessary to meet the needs of the community.
- Provide fire and police services that ensure the safety of the community.
- Ensure that an adequate supply of water is available to serve existing and future needs of the city.
- Ensure that adequate sewer capacity is available to serve existing and future needs of the city.
- Meet the city's solid waste disposal needs, while maximizing opportunities for waste reduction and recycling.
- Manage, maintain, and improve stormwater drainage and capacity.
- Provide natural open space, educational and cultural opportunities, and active and passive recreation for residents and visitors in the Southeast Greenway.
- Ensure that the Southeast Greenway's natural open space is continuous from Spring Lake Regional Park to Hoen Avenue (except in existing street crossings) and is as wide as possible but not less than 125 feet wide. The only exception is the "pinch point" east of Summerfield Road where the right-of-way narrows to approximately 68 feet in width.
- Accommodate public infrastructure on the Southeast Greenway site.
- Plan collaboratively for the Southeast Greenway's improvements to ensure an effective Greenway that meets the needs of the city, public agencies, and the citizens of Santa Rosa.

Open Space and Conservation

The Open Space and Conservation Element established an action plan for the long-range preservation of open space lands and natural resource conservation efforts. It was designed to preserve important open spaces and agricultural lands—from small parcels to areas of regional significance, biological resources and habitat, air quality, and energy. The Element aims to:

- Maximize the benefits of open space.
- Conserve the city's open spaces and significant natural features.
- Conserve agricultural soils.
- Conserve wetlands, vernal pools, wildlife ecosystems, rare plant habitats, and waterways.
- Ensure local creeks and riparian corridors are preserved, enhanced, and restored as habitat for fish, birds, mammals, and other wildlife.
- Construct trail corridors and other recreational opportunities along local waterways.
- Provide educational opportunities along the waterways in the city.
- Conserve significant vegetation and trees and plant new trees.
- Conserve water and maintain water quality.
- Take appropriate actions to help Santa Rosa and the larger Bay Area achieve and maintain all ambient air quality standards.
- Reduce energy use in existing and new commercial, industrial, and public structures.
- Encourage the development of nontraditional and distributed sources of electrical generation.
- Reduce GHG emissions.

Growth Management

The Growth Management Element was appended to the Santa Rosa General Plan as a separate, optional element in 1991, in response to record growth in the mid-1980s and concern for the City's ability to provide adequate services. The purpose of the Growth Management Element is to balance new development by:

- Preventing urban sprawl by focusing growth within the Urban Growth Boundary.
- Programming infrastructure improvements to keep pace with new residential growth and ensure that such growth incorporates affordable housing provisions and is balanced with conservative resources.

Youth and Family

The Youth and Family Element acknowledges that the large proportions of Santa Rosa's population under 19 years old and over 65 years old need high quality services and facilities that are accessible to the city's families and their children. The Element affirms that the health, safety, welfare, and development of youth and families are high priorities for the City, providing direction for youth-oriented programs, childcare, and senior services. The goals intend to:

- Create an environment where children can grow and develop in secure and supportive families and neighborhoods.
- Expand childcare services to meet the existing and future needs of Santa Rosa.
- Maintain the high-quality mix of recreation programs, classes, and current maintenance standards for city parks and recreational facilities.
- Develop an outreach program to encourage teen participation in organized activities.
- Establish and continue to pursue programs, mechanisms, and liaison activities that increase the provision of modern senior citizen services in the community, in accordance with local and State codes.

Economic Vitality

Considering that the Bay Area's economy has flourished due to diverse economic opportunities, an emphasis on economic development in Santa Rosa is critical to maintain the positive business climate through actions such as business retention, attraction, and expansion. The Economic Vitality Element provides goals and policies to promote sustainable economic development and stability and to maximize economic opportunities with a diverse employment base and variety of goods and services offered. The goals are to:

- Maintain a positive business climate in the community.
- Facilitate the retention and expansion of existing businesses and provide sufficient land for business expansion and attraction of new employers that use the area's existing labor pool.
- Promote new retail and higher density uses along the city's regional/arterial corridors.
- Maintain the economic vitality of the Downtown, business parks, offices, and industrial areas.
- Use economic incentives cost-effectively and ensure that incentives also result in substantial benefits to the city.

Historic Preservation

Historic preservation efforts seek to preserve Native American heritage and Euroamerican resources, enforced via the historic and cultural preservation ordinance adopted in 1988. The Historic Preservation Element establishes goals and policies for identifying and preserving significant prehistoric and historic resources, including buildings, neighborhoods of historic architectural significance, places of special historic or archaeological interest, and other features that have special value to the community. The city's eclectic collection of buildings is preserved in designated historic Preservation Districts. This element establishes policies to:

- Protect Native American heritage.
- Preserve Santa Rosa's historic restructures and neighborhoods.
- Increase public participation in the historic preservation process.
- As part of the development of the Old Naval Air Station, create opportunities for the development and placement of a Historic Air Museum and Nature Center.

Noise and Safety

The Santa Rosa Noise and Safety Element addresses the environmental and man-made hazards affecting Santa Rosa—noise generation, flooding, hazardous materials, and wildfires—which sits in the Coast Ranges geomorphic province. The Noise and Safety Element also plans for geology and seismicity. The goals of this element are to:

- Prepare for disasters.
- Maintain an acceptable community noise level to protect the health and comfort of people living, working, and/or visiting in Santa Rosa, while maintaining a visually appealing community.
- Prohibit development in high-risk geologic and seismic hazard areas.
- Minimize hazards associated with storm flooding.
- Provide protection of public and private properties from dam inundation.
- Minimize dangers from hazardous materials.
- Minimize the potential for wildland fires.
- Prepare for climate changes.

Arts and Culture

The Arts and Culture Element is a product of the high value the Santa Rosa community places on art and culture, recognizing that public art and centralized cultural facilities enhance the city's identity, pride, and image. With over 150 art-related organizations in the city, the Element provides for public art displays, facilities to house art production, and performance and other art programs. The goals intend to:

- Develop places for art activities to take place.
- Establish strategic planning and programs for expansion of the arts community in Santa Rosa.
- Develop a funding strategy to ensure adequate funding to support the arts and culture programs.

General Plan Land Use Designations

The Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 establishes land use designations for all properties, which are defined in the order of increasing intensity. Lower intensity uses are often allowed in higher-intensity districts of the same general land use designation.

- **Parks and Recreation:** Neighborhood, community, and citywide parks, and special purpose parks and facilities, including recreation complexes, golf courses, and creek ways.
- **Residential – County:** Allows for 0.05 to 0.2 residential units per gross acre.
- **Residential – Very Low-Density:** Allows for 0.2 to 2.0 units per gross acre.
- **Residential – Low-Density/Open Space:** Allows for 2.0 to 8.0 units per gross acre, assumed at 80 percent of each site due to wetlands constraints.
- **Residential – Low-Density:** Allows for 2.0 to 8.0 units per gross acre.
- **Residential – Medium Low-Density:** Allows for 8.0 to 13.0 units per gross acre, intended for attached single-family residential development.
- **Residential – Medium-Density:** Allows for 8.0 to 13.0 units per gross acre, permits a range of housing types intended for specific areas where higher density is appropriate.
- **Residential – Medium High-Density:** Allows for 18.0 to 30.0 units per gross acre.
- **Mobile Home Parks:** Allows for 4.0 to 18.0 mobile home units per gross acre.
- **Transit Village Medium:** Accommodates mixed-use development within a half mile of transit with housing densities ranging from 25.0 to 40.0 units per gross acre.

- **Transit Village Mixed Use:** Accommodates a mix of higher-intensity residential, office, and commercial uses within one quarter mile of transit with housing densities of at least 40.0 units per gross acre.
- **Commercial:**
 - ***Community Shopping Center:** Accommodates retail services and enterprises offering convenience goods, typically anchored by a large grocery store, in a residential development.*
 - ***Neighborhood Shopping Center:** Accommodates a small complex of retail and service enterprises to satisfy the day-to-day needs of local neighborhoods and workplaces.*
 - ***Retail and Business Services:** Accommodates retail and service enterprises, offices, and restaurants as regional centers within a larger complex, serving as a destination center.*
- **Office:** Accommodates administrative, financial, business, professional, medical, and public offices.
- **Business Park:** Provides planned, campus-like centers for businesses that do not generate nuisances.
- **Industrial – Light Industry:** Accommodates land uses such as light industrial, warehousing, and heavy commercial.
- **Industrial – General Industry:** Provides areas for manufacturing and distribution activities with potential for nuisances, thereby discouraging retail and service commercial uses.
- **Public/Institutional:** Accommodates governmental or semipublic facilities within development clusters. Uses would include hospitals, utility facilities, and government office centers.

2.10 ZONING DISTRICTS

Introduction

This section describes the zoning regulations that implement the Santa Rosa General Plan 2035.

Existing Conditions

Zoning is the primary tool to implement a community's general plan. The general plan sets the policy direction, and the zoning ordinance gives detailed development and use standards for each parcel of land; divides the community into zoning districts; and specifies the uses that are permitted, conditionally permitted, and prohibited within each district.

The City of Santa Rosa Zoning Ordinance promotes the public health, safety, and welfare of residents and preserves and enhances the aesthetic quality of the city. The zoning ordinance was amended substantially in 2004 and has undergone piecemeal updates since that time. In addition, the City has adopted specific plans, which regulate the use and development of properties within defined areas of the city; some establish new zoning categories.

Zoning Ordinance

The City of Santa Rosa Zoning Ordinance (Title 20 of the municipal code) establishes 20 zoning districts. Each has development standards designed to protect the community and to implement Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 policies. These standards also preserve the character and integrity of existing neighborhoods. Within a typical district, regulations discuss land use, lot size and coverage, yards, and building heights. The zoning districts established are:

- Rural Residential (RR)
- Single-Family Residential (R-1)
- Medium Density Multi-Family Residential (R-2)
- Multi-Family Residential (R-3)
- Transit Village-Residential (TV-R)
- Mobile Home Park (MH)
- Office Commercial (CO)
- Neighborhood Commercial (CN)
- General Commercial (CG)
- Motor Vehicle Sales (CV)
- Downtown Commercial (CD)
- Community Shopping Center (CSC)
- Transit Village-Mixed (TV-M)
- Business Park (BP)
- Light Industrial (IL)
- General Industrial (IG)
- Open Space – Conservation (OSC)
- Open Space – Recreation (OSR)

- Planned Development (PD)
- Public/Institutional (PI)

The City has adopted three specific plans, shown in **Figure 2-6** and discussed in Section 2.11, that establish unique zoning and development regulations for special, defined areas of the city—the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan, the North Santa Rosa Station Area Specific Plan, and the Roseland Area/Sebastopol Road Specific Plan.

In addition to the zoning districts, the zoning ordinance establishes combined, or overlay, districts that apply additional regulations and design standards to certain properties. The combining districts provide development guidance beyond the primary zoning district guidance when important issues of site, environment, safety, compatibility, or design require particular attention. The overlay districts are:

- Gateway (-G)
- Historic (-H)
- Scenic Road (-SR)
- Station Area (-SA)
- Limited Light Industrial (-LLI)
- Senior Housing (-SH)

Following the Tubbs and Nuns Fires of October 2017, the City instituted the Resilient City Development Measures, intended to address housing and economic development needs within the City. The provisions of the Resilient City Development Measures are effective until May 2021, unless amended by City Council action, and provide for simplification of and/or reduced fees for the design review, approval, appeals, and entitlement extension processes of some projects.

2.11 SPECIFIC PLANS

There are three specific plans in Santa Rosa, shown in **Figure 2-13**, the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan, the North Santa Rosa Station Area Specific Plan, and the Roseland Area/Sebastopol Road Specific Plan.

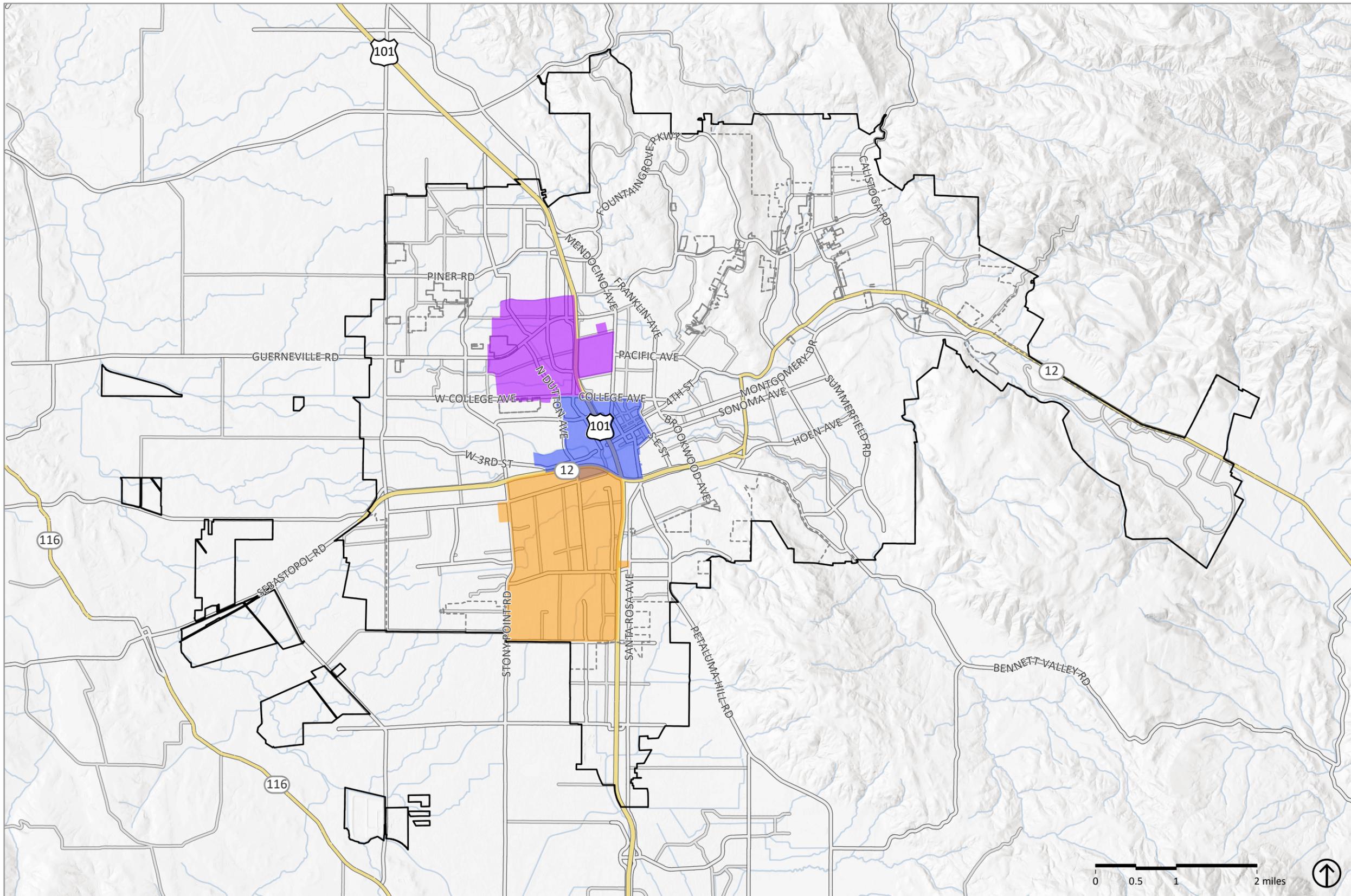


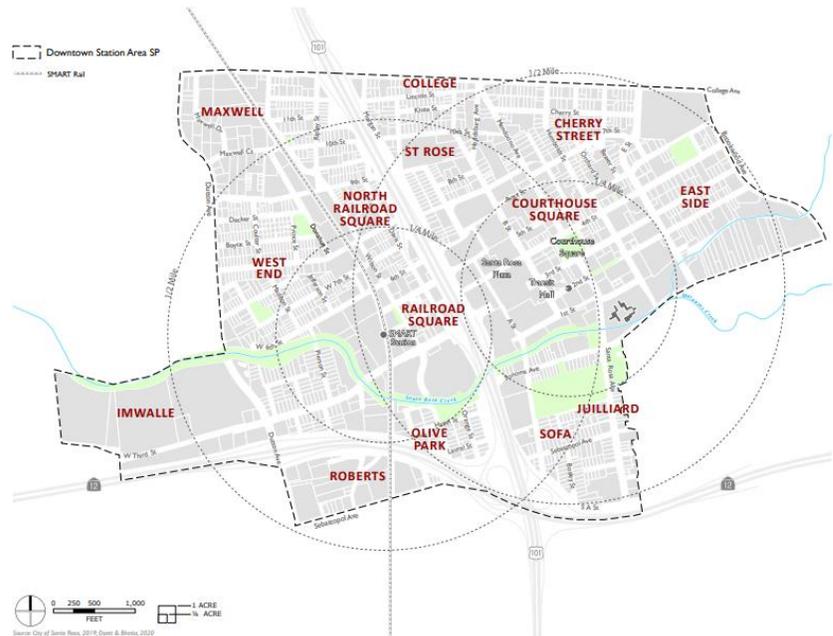
Figure 2-13
**Existing Specific
 Plan Areas**

- Downtown Station Area Specific Plan
- North Santa Rosa Station Area Specific Plan
- Roseland Area/Sebastopol Road Specific Plan
- Planning Area
- City Limit

Downtown Station Area Specific Plan

The adopted 2007 Downtown Station Area Specific Plan guides the growth and character of future transit-supportive development in the Downtown SMART station. The plan intensifies uses within walking distance, with complementary investments in infrastructure and other public improvements. The plan vision is to enhance the distinct identity and character, encourage a diverse mix of uses, incorporate transit-oriented development, and create additional pedestrian-friendly connections. It establishes regulations for land use, development standards, densities, infrastructure improvements, implementation measures, and incentives to promote a diverse mix of uses. The land use designations of the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan establish seven subareas with unique characteristics that supplement the City's zoning code and design guidelines. An update to the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan is currently underway. The Plan Area is shown in **Figure 2-14**.

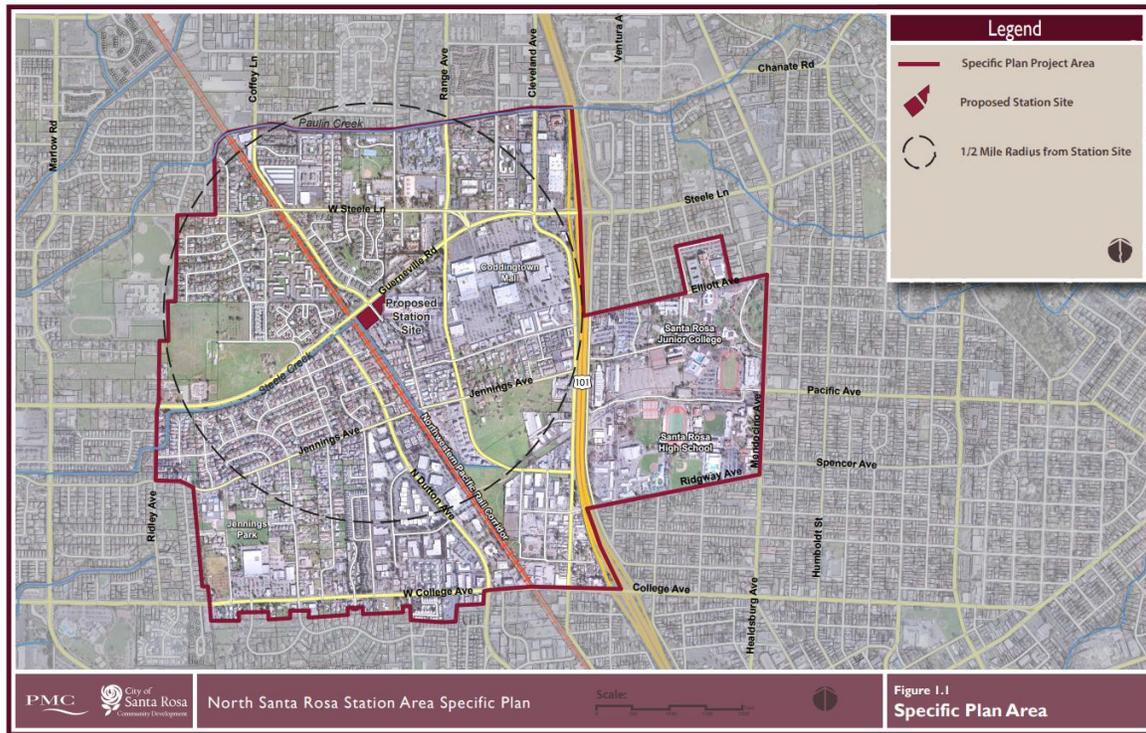
Figure 2-14. Downtown Station Area Specific Plan Planning Area



North Santa Rosa Station Area Specific Plan

The North Santa Rosa Station Area Specific Plan, shown in **Figure 2-15**, supports rail service transit at the North Santa Rosa SMART station by improving pedestrian, bicycle, auto, and transit connections, increasing residential density, promoting economic development, and enhancing aesthetics and quality of life within a half mile of the station. The plan, developed in 2011, provides development standards, design guidelines, and urban design policies to guide private development and public investment in the plan area.

The plan envisions creating an identity and sense of community within the Station Area, enhancing multimodal connections, providing safe, outdoor community spaces, incorporating a variety of activities and mix of uses ranging from residential to industrial, encouraging economic development, and promoting sustainability principles. The plan also preserves existing affordable housing and provides more affordable units. In addition, it proposes improvements to the Specific Plan area infrastructure and community services to ensure adequate capacity for development.

Figure 2-15. North Santa Rosa Station Area Planning Area

The Specific Plan's Circulation Plan goals aim to:

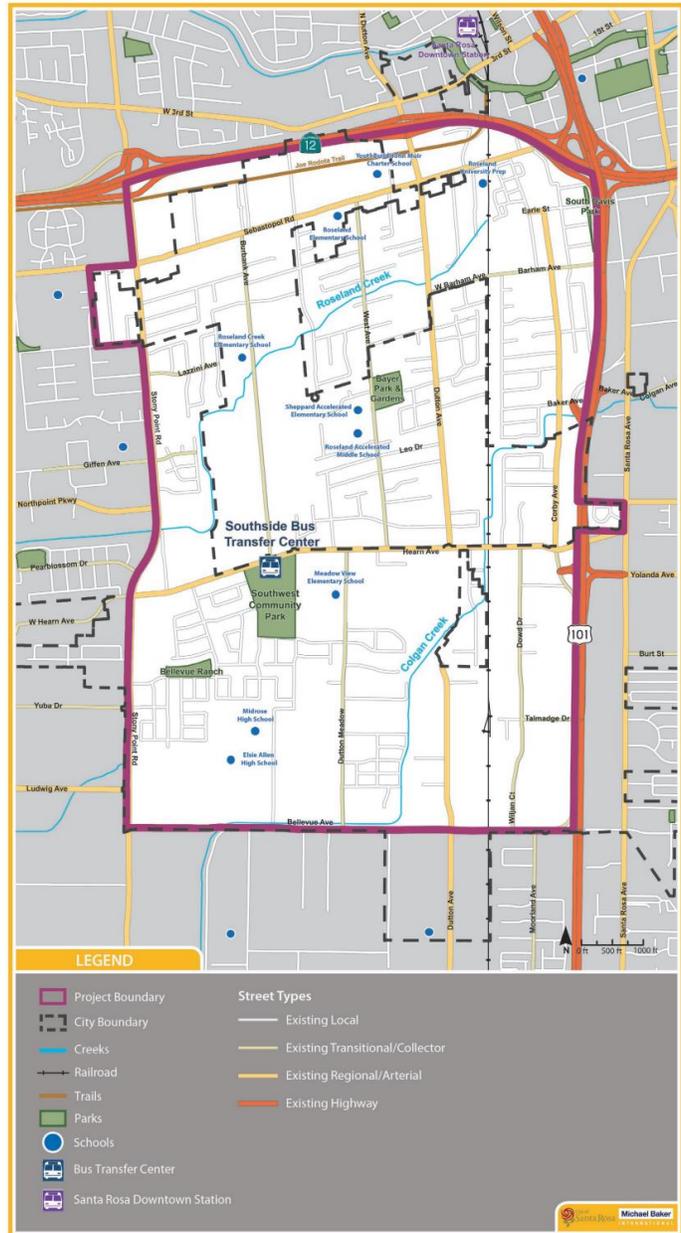
- Provide multimodal access to the SMART station.
- Provide parking appropriate to transit-oriented development.
- Provide multimodal connections throughout the project area.
- Integrate the Coddington Mall property into the adjacent multimodal transportation network.
- Complete specific roadway improvements in the project area to enhance safety and comfort for pedestrians and bicycles.
- Improve intersections to remove obstacles to multimodal traffic flow.
- Establish a network of multiuse paths for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the project area.
- Expand transit use throughout the project area and provide a seamless connection to the SMART station.

Roseland Area/Sebastopol Road Specific Plan

Adopted in 2016, the Roseland Area/Sebastopol Road Specific Plan, shown in **Figure 2-16**, supports a unified, vital, and livable Roseland community with a focus on healthy and equitable development. The area is designated as a Priority Development Area by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. The plan aims to improve connectivity, concentrate areas of activity, and enhance the physical environment. It provides opportunities for streamlined CEQA review, because the plan’s EIR facilitates environmental review for future projects in the plan area.

The land use plan supports a compact, mixed-use, and pedestrian-friendly environment with a primary concentration of activity along Sebastopol Road and a secondary concentration of activity near Hearn Avenue. It includes strategies to promote affordable housing and prevent displacement. The circulation chapter identifies roadway, path, sidewalk, and bikeway improvements to support accessibility in the plan area. In addition to roadway improvements, the plan addresses infrastructure improvements needed to support new development and enhance safety.

Figure 2-16. Roseland Area/Sebastopol Road Specific Plan Planning Area



2.12 SOURCES

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