



Notice of Preparation

Visión Salinas 2040 General Plan and Climate Action Plan Environmental Impact Report

Date: September 1, 2023

To: State Clearinghouse
State Responsible Agencies
State Trustee Agencies
Other Public Agencies
Interested Organizations and Individuals

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for Visión Salinas 2040 General Plan and Climate Action Plan

Notice is hereby given that the City of Salinas (City) will prepare an EIR for the proposed Visión Salinas 2040 General Plan and Climate Action Plan (proposed project). Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15206, the proposed project is considered a project of statewide, regional, or areawide significance. The City, acting as the Lead Agency, will prepare an EIR to address the potential environmental impacts associated with the project at a programmatic level, consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15168. The program-level EIR will evaluate the environmental impacts associated with the broad policies of the proposed Visión Salinas 2040 General Plan and the likely type and amount of development allowed within the General Plan horizon of 2040, as well as the potential impacts associated with the proposed Climate Action Plan. An evaluation of project alternatives that could reduce significant impacts will be included in the EIR. The proposed project, its location, and potential environmental effects are described below, and additional information on the proposed project is available at <https://www.visionsalinas.org/>

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, the City is requesting comments and guidance on the scope and content of the EIR from interested public agencies, organizations and individuals. With respect to the views of Responsible and Trustee Agencies¹ as to significant environmental issues, the City needs to know the reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures that are germane to each agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Responsible agencies may need to use the EIR prepared by the City when considering permitting or other approvals for potential future development projects.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be received no later than the close of the 30-day Notice of Preparation (NOP) review period on Monday, October 2, 2023. If you submit comments on the scope of the EIR, you will automatically be added to the City's distribution list for future notices and information about the environmental review process for the proposed project. If you do not wish to submit comments on the scope of the EIR, but would like to be added to the City's mailing list, you can submit your contact information, including email address with a request to be added to the mailing list.

¹ "Responsible Agencies" include all public agencies other than the Lead Agency that have discretionary approval power over the project.

"Trustee Agencies" are State agencies having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project which are held in trust for the people of the State of California. Trustee Agencies include the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the State Lands Commission, the State Department of Parks and Recreation, and the University of California.

Lead Agency Contact:

Jonathan Moore, Senior Planner
Community Development Department, City of Salinas
jonathanm@ci.salinas.ca.us

Written Comments:

Please submit written comments by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, October 2, 2023

- Email: jonathanm@ci.salinas.ca.us (subject line: "Visión Salinas EIR")
- Regular Mail: Community Development Department, City of Salinas, 65 West Alisal Street, Suite 201, Salinas CA 93901.
Attn: Jonathan Moore

Public Scoping Meeting:

The City will hold public workshops and meetings throughout the planning process, as well as meetings of the General Plan Steering Committee, Planning Commission, and City Council, to inform the public and interested agencies about the proposed project and solicit feedback on the contents of the proposed Visión Salinas 2040 General Plan and Climate Action Plan.

The City will hold a scoping meeting to solicit public comment on the environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR. The scoping meeting will be held as part of the Visión Salinas 2040 General Plan Steering Committee meeting on Wednesday, September 27, 2023, at 6:00 pm. The meeting will be held in the Community Room at 312 E Alisal Street, Salinas CA, 93901.

Project Location:

The City of Salinas is located approximately 105 miles south of San Francisco in Monterey County. The City of Salinas is located at the beginning of the Salinas Valley, and is bounded by Prunedale to the north, the Gabilan mountain range to the east, the Santa Lucia mountain range to the south, and Monterey Bay to the west. U.S. Highway 101 (Highway 101), State Route (SR) 183, and SR 68 run through the city. Highway 101 is the north-south route connecting the Salinas Valley and Monterey County to the south to San Francisco Bay Area to the north. SR 183 runs in an east-west direction, connecting Castroville and Highway 1 to the Salinas Valley. SR 68 runs in a south-north direction and connects the areas of Monterey and Carmel to Salinas. The City is surrounded by unincorporated rural and agricultural land. Nearby cities/communities include the city of Watsonville located to the north, the community of Speckles located to the south, and the city of Marina located to the west. Within Salinas there is the Salinas Municipal Airport; the next closest airport is Marina Municipal Airport, located approximately 9 miles to the west. Figure 1, *Local and Regional Vicinity Map*, shows the regional setting of the city of Salinas and the existing and proposed sphere of influence, which will be evaluated in the EIR.

Project Description:

General Plan Update

The City of Salinas is preparing a comprehensive update to its existing General Plan. The update is expected to be completed in 2024 and will guide the City's development and conservation through 2040. To guide the General Plan update, three different themes were recognized as pillars that would work together to achieve Salinas's vision. The three pillars: Built Environment, Environmental and Sustainability, and Socioeconomic Systems.

State law requires that the General Plan contains eight elements: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Open Space, Noise, Safety, Conservation, and Environmental Justice. The content of these elements is outlined in State law. The proposed Visión Salinas 2040 General Plan will include all State-required elements and optional elements including Arts, Culture and Youth. The proposed General Plan will group these elements under the three different pillars that were previously identified, as shown below in Table 1, *Pillars and Elements of the General Plan*. General Plan Housing Elements are required to be updated every eight years to fulfill the Regional Housing Needs Allocation and comply with State law. To meet the State deadline, Salinas' Housing Element is being updated through a separate process.

Table 1 Pillars and Elements of the General Plan

Pillars	Built Environment	Environment and Sustainability	Socioeconomic Systems
Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Use and Infrastructure • Community Design • Housing * • Circulation • Noise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation & Open Space • Environmental Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Environmental Justice • Economic Development • Public Safety • Arts, Culture and Youth

Notes: bold = State-mandated element; * The Housing Element is being updated through a separate process.

The overall purpose of the proposed Visión Salinas 2040 General Plan is to create a policy framework that articulates a vision for the long-term physical form and development of Salinas, while preserving and enhancing the quality of life for Salinas residents. The key components of the proposed project will include broad community goals for the future of Salinas and specific policies and implementing actions that will help meet the goals. The proposed Visión Salinas 2040 General Plan will add new and expanded policy topics to address the current requirements of State law, modernize the City's policy framework, and address land use mapping issues and inconsistencies.

As part of the proposed Visión Salinas 2040 General Plan, the City is considering future amendments to its sphere of influence to include the following four Economic Opportunity Area (EOA) Target Areas identified in the City's current Economic Development Element (EDE):

- EOA B Target Area, located to the southeast of the city, south of Abbott Street
- EOA K Target Area, located to the northwest of the city, east of Highway 101
- EOA L2 Target Area, located to the west of the city, to the north of Boronda and to the west of Highway 101
- EOA N Target Area, located to the south of the city, east of SR 68 to the south of East Blanco Road

As part of the planning process for the proposed Visión Salinas 2040 General Plan, the City has prepared a land use map using place types intended to replace the City's current General Plan land use map. Draft place types are mapped in Figure 2, *Draft Place Types*.

Climate Action Plan

The City of Salinas is also preparing a Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in ways that invest in equity while supporting adaptation to climate change impacts and other community priorities. The Climate Action Plan identifies Salinas' current and projected future levels of GHG, assesses how these emission levels compare to State and local GHG reduction targets, identifies strategies to reduce GHG emissions, and demonstrates quantitatively how these strategies allow the City to meet or exceed its reduction targets. The Climate Action Plan also includes information to assist the City and its community partners in implementing the GHG reduction strategies.

Potential Areas of Environmental Effect:

The EIR will describe the reasonably foreseeable and potentially significant adverse effects of the proposed project (both direct and indirect). The EIR also will evaluate potential cumulative impacts of the project in conjunction with other related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects. The City anticipates that the proposed project could result in potentially significant environmental impacts in the following topic areas, which will be further evaluated in the EIR.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aesthetics • Air Quality • Biological Resources • Cultural Resources • Energy • Forestry Resources • Geology and Soils • Greenhouse Gas Emissions • Hazards and Hazardous Materials • Hydrology and Water Quality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Use and Planning • Noise • Parks and Recreation • Population and Housing • Public Services • Transportation • Tribal Cultural Resources • Utilities and Service Systems • Wildfire • Cumulative Effects • Growth-Inducing Effects |
|--|--|

The City has determined that the proposed project would have no impact on the following environmental topics, due to existing conditions of the city and surrounding area. These issues will therefore not be analyzed in the EIR.

- **Zoning for forest land.** Based on Salinas zoning map, there are no lands within the EIR Study Area containing land that can support forestland, timberland, or Timberland Production Zone.² Consequently, there would be no impacts with regard to zoning for forestry resources and this issue will not be discussed in the EIR.
- **Minerals resources.** The California Department of Conservation, Geological Survey classifies lands into Aggregate and Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs) based on guidelines adopted by the California State Mining and Geology Board, as mandated by the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1974.³ These MRZs identify whether known or inferred significant mineral resources are present in areas. The study area does not contain areas for mineral resources where there is adequate information indicating significant mineral deposits or the high likelihood of significant mineral deposits present.^{4, 5} Therefore, there would be no impact with regard to the loss of a valuable mineral resource and this issue will not be discussed in the EIR.

When the Draft EIR is completed, it will be available for review at the following location: <https://www.visionsalinas.org/>

The City will issue a Notice of Availability of a Draft EIR at that time to inform the public and interested agencies, groups, and individuals of how to access the Draft EIR and provide comments.

Figures:

Local and Regional Vicinity Map
Draft Place Types



Jonathan Moore, Community Development Department,
Senior Planner

08/29/2023

Date

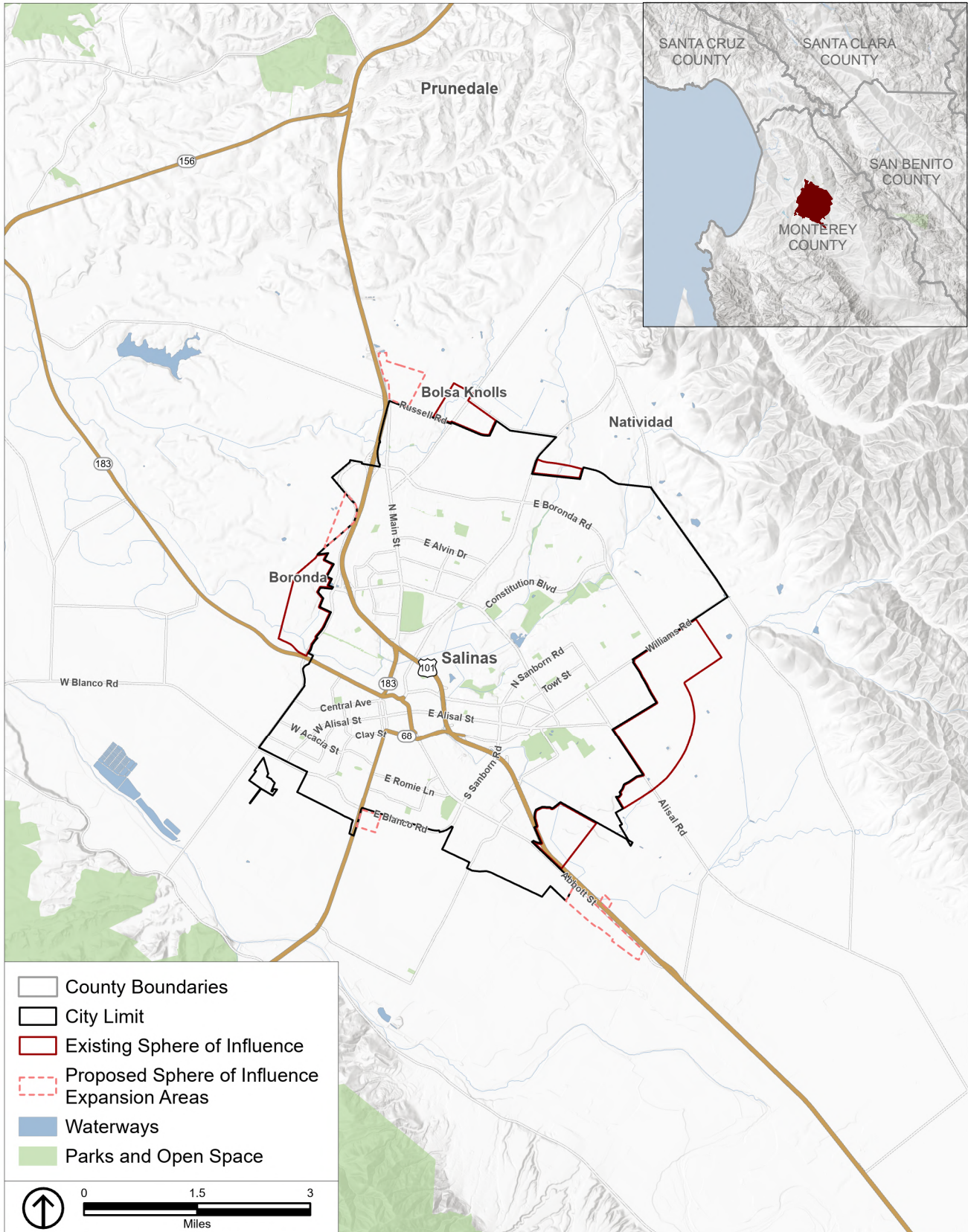
² City of Salinas, Official Zoning Map City of Salinas, <https://www.cityofsalinas.org/files/sharedassets/city/community-development/documents/salinaszoningmap.pdf>, accessed August 7, 2023.

³ Public Resources Code, Division 2, Geology, Mines and Mining, Chapter 9, Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975, Article 4, State Policy for the Reclamation of Mined Lands, Section 2762(a)(1).

⁴ California Department of Conservation, 2016, Mines Online, <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/mol/Index.html>, accessed August 7, 2023.

⁵ Monterey County, 2004, Monterey County General Plan Update EIR, Exhibit 4.5.1 Mineral Resources. <https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showpublisheddocument/43876/636386647688400000>, accessed August 7, 2023.

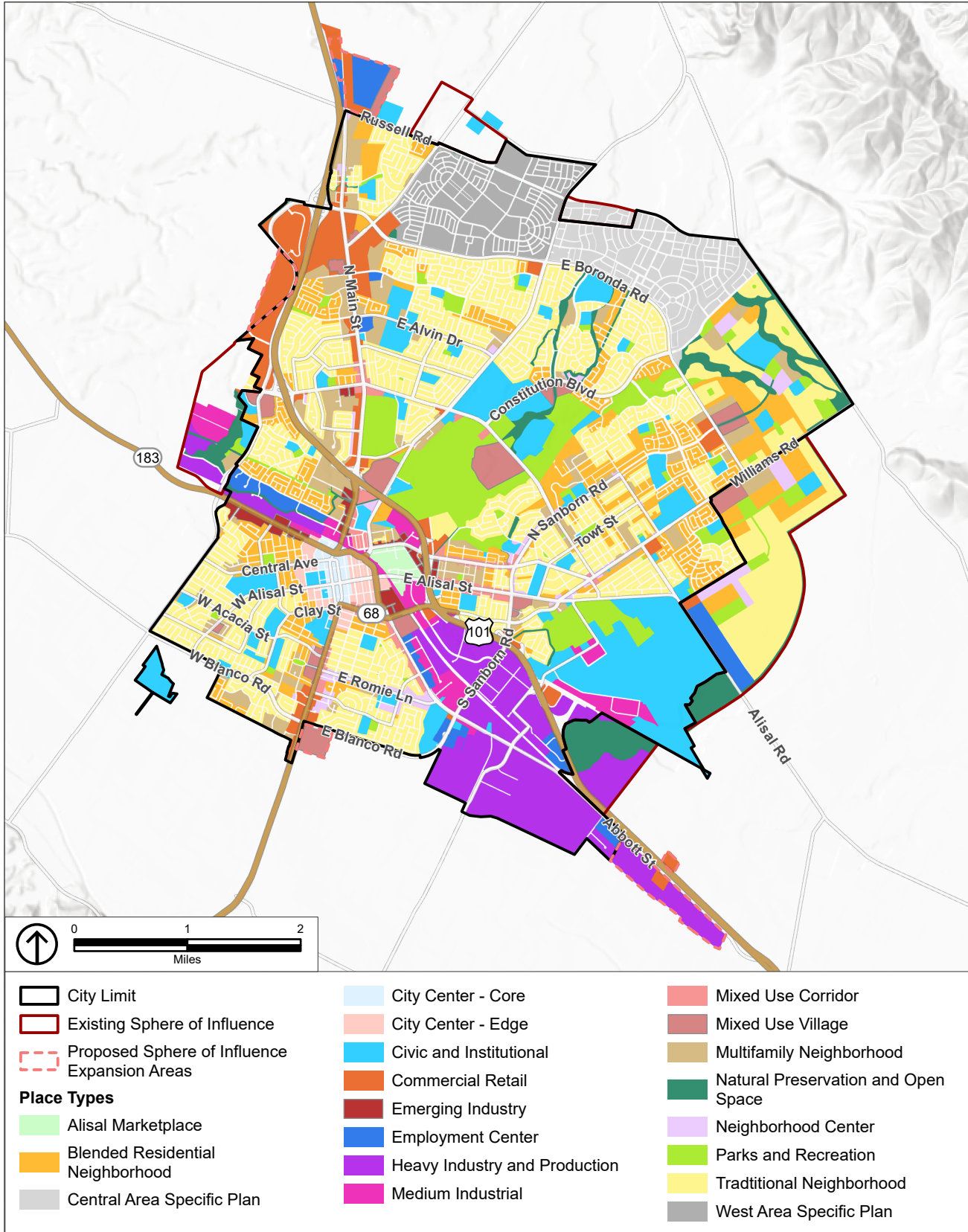
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Source: City of Salinas, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2023.

Figure 1
Local and Regional Vicinity Map

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Source: City of Salinas, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2023.

Figure 2
Draft Place Types