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Puente del Monte Annexation Supplemental EIR Notice of Preparation

PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

The Puente del Monte annexation area (project site) is located on approximately 540 acres within the City of Gonzales' Sphere of Influence (SOI) in Monterey County, immediately east of the existing City of Gonzales (City) limits. [Figure 1, Location Map](#), presents the regional location of the project site.

Surrounding Land Uses

The project site is generally bounded by Gloria Road to the south, Iverson Road on the east, active farmland within unincorporated Monterey County (County) to the north and northeast and Highway 101 on the west. A cemetery and farm equipment retailer are located across Highway 101. As noted on the City's 2010 General Plan Land Use Map, an agricultural preserve is located along the south edge of the project site across Gloria Road. In addition, two home sites are adjacent to the project across Gloria Road to the southeast as well as a home site located across Iverson Road at the far northeast of the site. [Figure 2, Aerial Photograph](#), presents the project site boundary and surrounding land uses.

Existing Site Conditions

The project site, which is currently in agricultural use, is situated on a gradual slope that dips west towards Highway 101. Ancillary features include water storage ponds, canals, and unpaved access roads. Three homes are located on the site, one along Gloria Road, one at the far western edge of the project site at the intersection of Gloria and Tavernetti Road, and one in the approximate center of the site.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The project site is one of several locations the City identified as a future development area in the Gonzales 2010 General Plan (General Plan). According to the General Plan, AMBAG projections at that time showed "Gonzales growing to 23,418 people in the year 2035, an increase of about 14,393 over the current 2009 population of 9,025 persons." To meet this demand, the City set aside "approximately 1,500 acres of additional land for residential growth, or enough land to accommodate a total City population of about 38,000." The project

site was included in the area the City set aside for growth. The project site was already within the City's Urban Growth Boundary when the General Plan was adopted, but outside of the SOI.

In May 2014, Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) approved the City's request to expand the SOI to include the project site as well as other properties within the SOI. When LAFCO approved the City's request to expand the SOI to include the project site, it acknowledged the need to annex property within the new SOI to meet the City's demand for housing.

The proposed project is the first annexation since the SOI was expanded in 2014. There has been no new single-family residential construction in the City since 2006 and the most recent habitable units constructed are the Fanoie Vista Apartments built in 2009, resulting in a net increase of 25 apartment units.

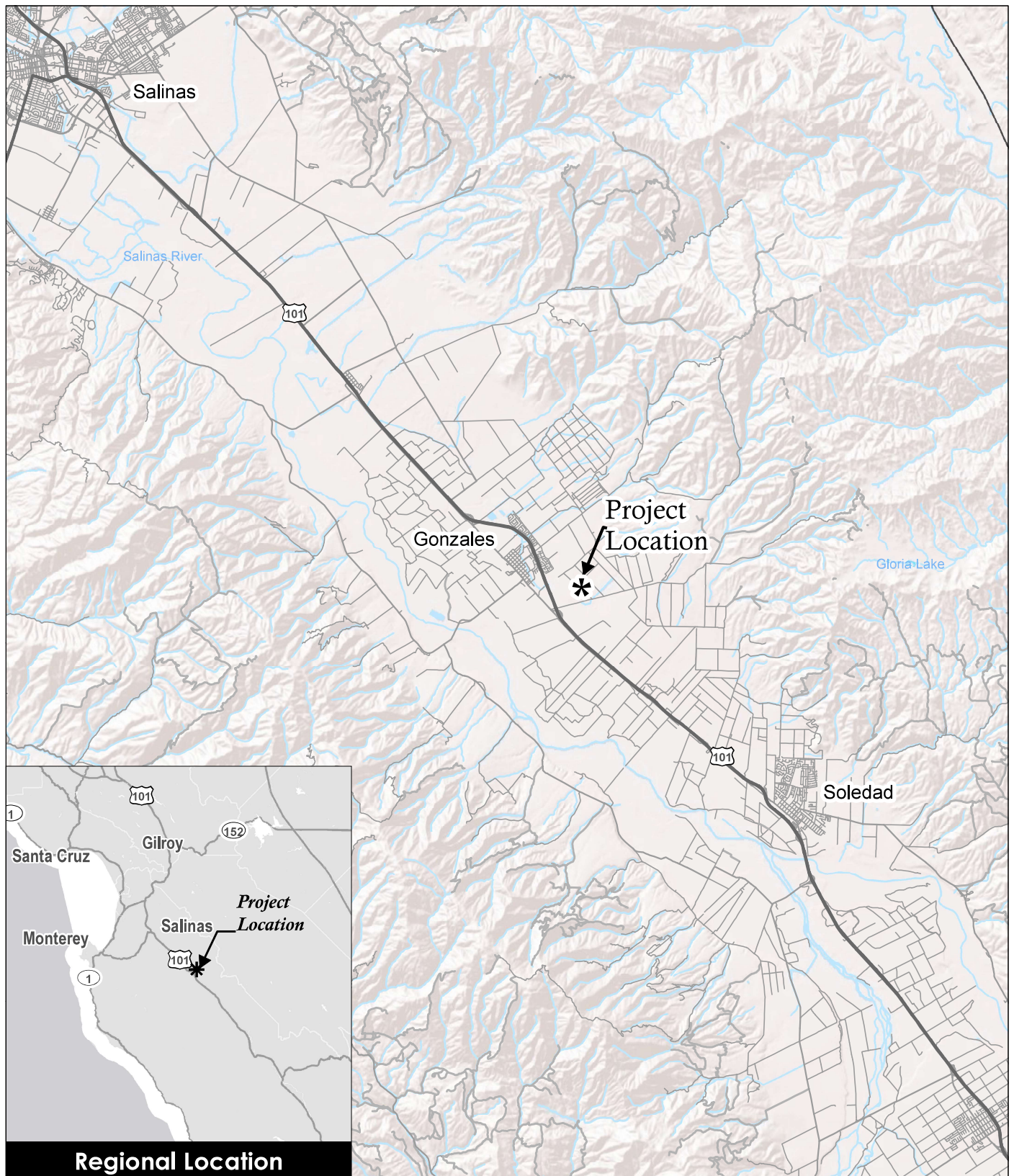
PROPOSED PROJECT

Jackson Family Investments (applicant) has submitted an application to the City requesting annexation and pre-zoning approvals for the project site. Annexation requires approval from both the City Council and Monterey County LAFCO. An EIR for the project must be certified before the City Council and LAFCO can take action to approve the annexation.

The proposed annexation and pre-zoning actions are intended to facilitate future development of the project site with a master-planned urban community. Such future development would be the subject of a separate future application package, with entitlement requests anticipated to include a specific plan and tentative maps(s). For purposes of evaluating the potential impacts of the current proposed annexation and pre-zoning requests, the applicant has prepared a conceptual land use plan for the site. It is on this land use plan and the proposed uses and development intensities that the impacts of the annexation and pre-zoning will be evaluated. The future entitlement requests will be subject to a separate, future CEQA process. It is assumed that CEQA documentation for the future entitlement requests will be tiered from the EIR being prepared for the current annexation and pre-zoning actions.

Conceptual Future Land Use Scenario

The conceptual plan for the project site includes mixed-use development and residential, light industrial, and commercial uses. The proposed residential portion includes approximately 2,623 dwelling units and is divided into two neighborhoods: A West Neighborhood and an East Neighborhood. The proposed project includes traditional detached single-family and attached high density multi-family residential uses, as well as recreational uses within the parks and open space areas designed to meet the needs of future Gonzales residents. The circulation network emphasizes north/south arterial roads in an effort to lessen the number of vehicles that would otherwise utilize Highway 101 to get to another local destination.

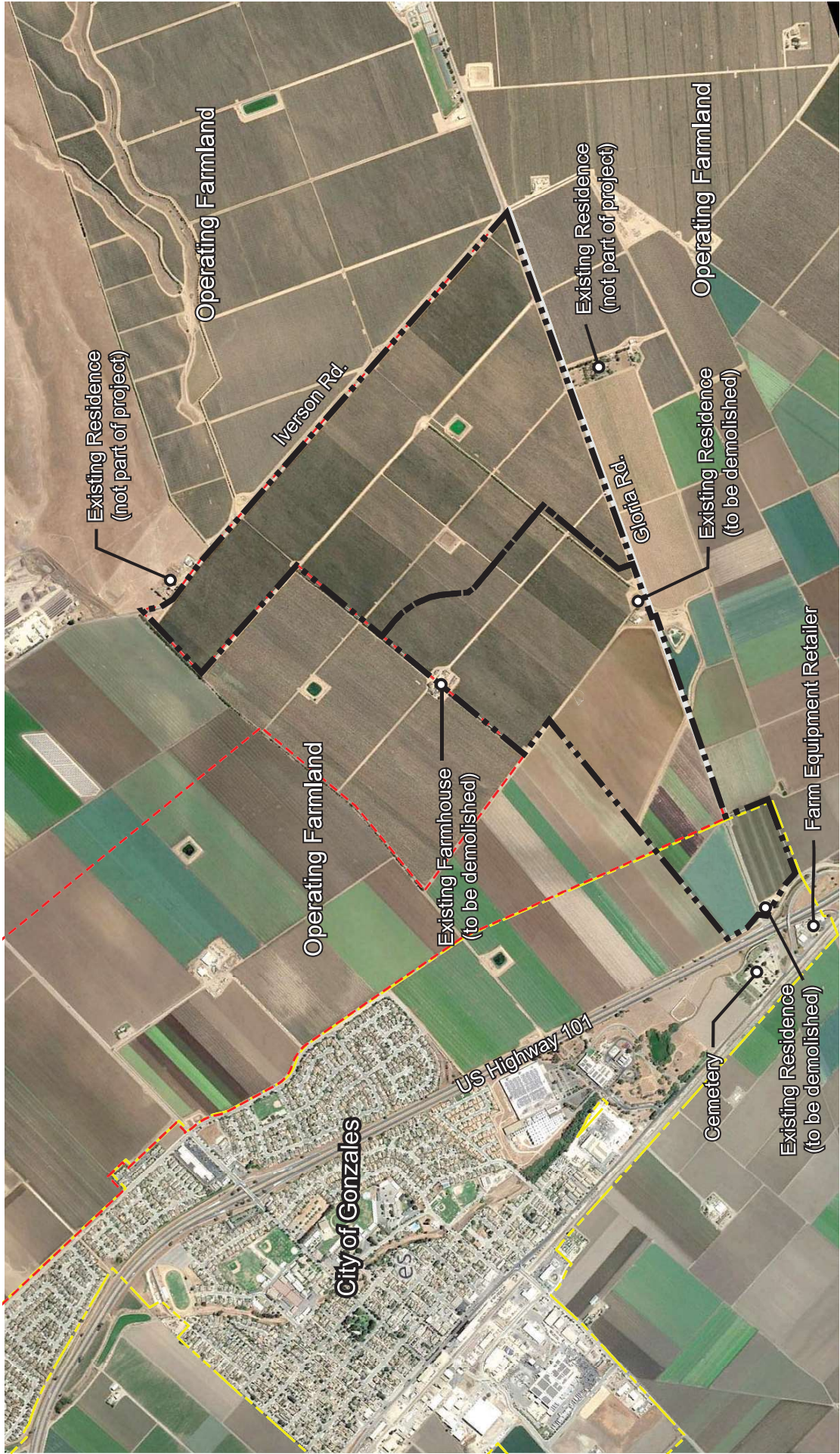


Source: Esri 2015

Figure 1
Location Map



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0 1800 feet

Source: Google Earth 2018

Figure 2
Aerial Photograph

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There are two proposed roads that would access Gloria Road; one at Herold Parkway and another at Street B. These intersections would utilize proper traffic control techniques depending on the volume of traffic. Intersections within the conceptual Puente del Monte circulation network will be supported by stop signs, traffic signals and roundabouts. When appropriate, corner bulb-outs and other traffic slowing mechanisms will be utilized. Other non-vehicular circulation methods will include bike lanes (on and of street), sidewalks and other appropriate pathways.

The City acknowledges recent state legislation which requires ministerial approval of accessory dwelling units. It is considered speculative to estimate the number of accessory dwellings that may ultimately be constructed within the site. Individual future lot owners would make their own decisions about whether or not to apply for accessory dwelling unit approvals from the City.

Figure 3, [Puente del Monte Conceptual Land Use Plan](#), presents the locations, relative sizes, and configurations of the proposed residential, educational, commercial, and recreational land uses for both the West and East Neighborhood areas, along with their associated points of access, general circulation pattern, and the overall open space system.

Using the California Department of Finance persons per household rate of 4.02 for Gonzales, the proposed 2,623 residential units would translate to a population of about 10,544. Based on the types and acreages of non-residential, employment generating uses proposed (6 acres of Mixed Use, 43 acres of Highway Commercial, and 21 acres of Light Industrial), it is projected that the project could add up to a maximum of approximately 2,643 employees.

APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The City has determined that a supplemental EIR (SEIR) to the General Plan EIR should be prepared to assess the potential impacts of the proposed project. Though the current actions for which the SEIR will evaluate impacts are limited to annexation and pre-zoning, the SEIR will be prepared within a sufficient level of detail that it is not only supplemental to the General Plan EIR, but can also be used to tier CEQA documentation for future project-specific entitlement requests. For many environmental issue areas addressed in this SEIR, including transportation, this will require detailed analysis that goes beyond the level of detail commonly included in a SEIR. Additional CEQA documentation for future individual project approvals would be required if any of the conditions presented in CEQA Guidelines section 15162, Subsequent EIRs and Negative Declarations, are identified in the CEQA documentation for future individual projects.

The SEIR will update the environmental setting and utilize project-specific information to determine if there are changed circumstances that lead to identification of significant impacts that were not identified in the General Plan EIR. The analysis will, in part, determine if the

impacts and mitigation measures already identified in the General Plan EIR adequately address project-specific impacts. If conditions identified in CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 occur (e.g. new or more severe significant impacts than previously analyzed), mitigation measures will be developed or modified to address them.

The SEIR will evaluate in detail environmental topics for which there is potential that the General Plan EIR analysis of impacts and mitigation measures could be insufficient to address effects of the proposed project. For purposes of the proposed project, the following environmental impacts appear to have been adequately addressed in the General Plan EIR and will not likely be evaluated in detail in the SEIR:

- Agricultural Resources;
- Aesthetics;
- Geology and Soils; and
- Mineral Resources.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Environmental topics that will be evaluated in detail in the SEIR are summarized below along with specific analysis considerations for each topic.

Air Quality

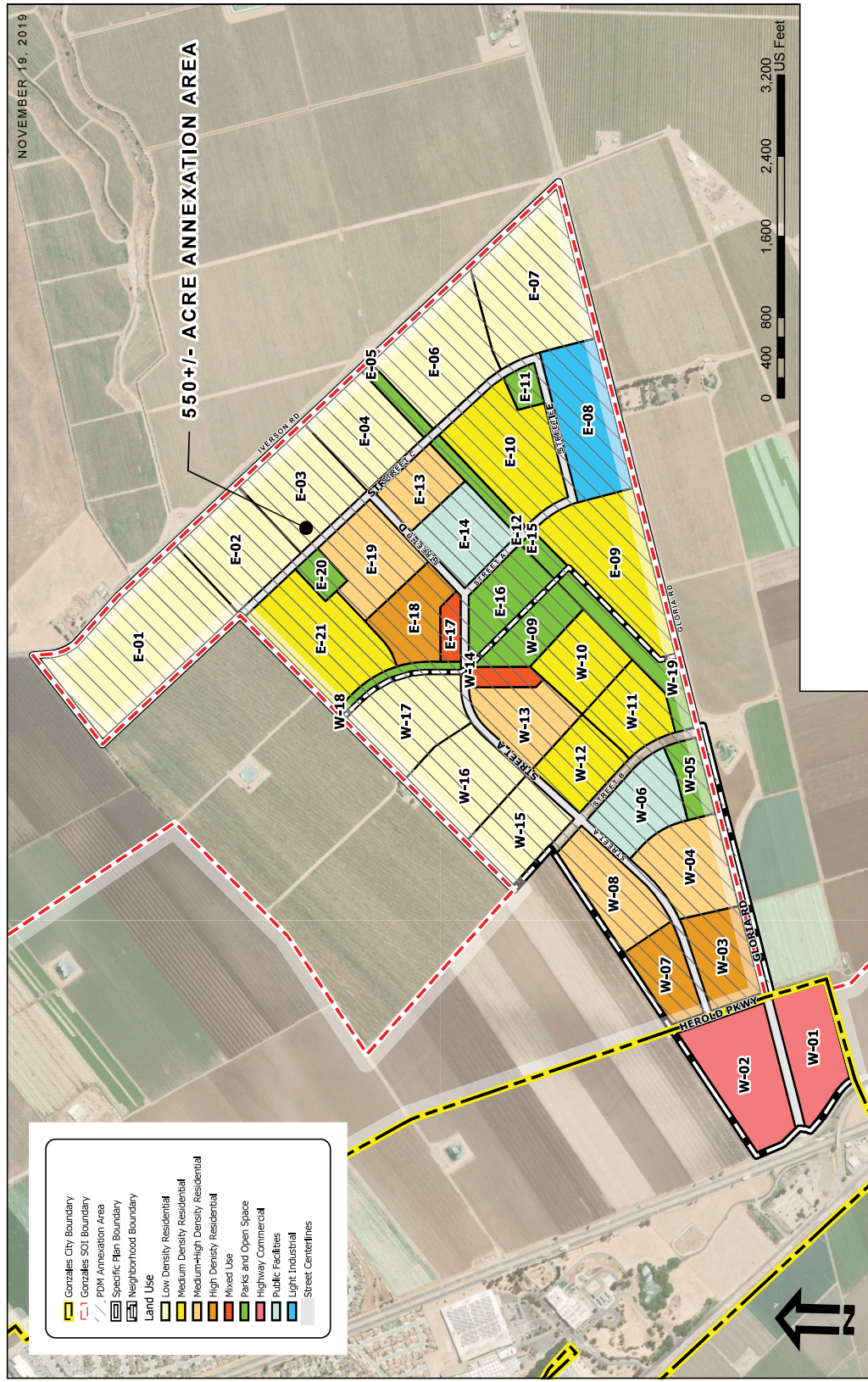
This analysis will be updated primarily to document changes in regulations that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was prepared and determine whether those changes create potential for the proposed project to result in significant impacts not previously identified in the General Plan EIR.

Biological Resources

Site-specific biological resources analyses will be reviewed to determine whether significant impacts may occur that were not identified in the General Plan EIR. Mitigation for those impacts, if any, will be identified. This analysis will also address changes in regulations and mitigation guidance identified by resource agencies.

Cultural and Tribal Resources

This analysis will document the findings in the applicant's cultural resources report and historic resources evaluation, to identify if impacts would occur that are not identified and mitigated in the General Plan EIR. This section will also describe tribal consultation conducted by the City, as may be required.



Source: Jackson Family Investments 2019

Figure 3

Puente del Monte Conceptual Land Use Plan

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Energy

This analysis will be updated to reflect current practice in evaluating energy impacts in light of recent CEQA case law and heightened attention to energy use in relation to greenhouse gas effects; issues that were not as pertinent when the General Plan EIR was prepared.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions

This analysis will be updated to reflect current practice in evaluating GHG impacts, particularly in light of the substantial evolution of state legislation and regulations pertaining to climate change since the General Plan EIR was prepared.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

This analysis will be updated to reflect considerations specific to the conceptual land use types being proposed in order to determine if impacts identified in the General Plan EIR would remain less than significant.

Hydrology and Water Quality

This analysis will be updated to document regulatory changes and changes in the environment that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was prepared. The analysis will make reference to the City's *Conceptual Drainage Master Plan -Proposed Developments within Sphere of Influence, City of Gonzales*.

Noise

A noise analysis will be prepared to update information in the General Plan EIR to ensure that impacts and mitigations associated with future development of the project site with the conceptual land use plan land uses are adequately addressed in the General Plan EIR.

Transportation and Traffic

A vehicle miles traveled analysis will be conducted to evaluate baseline vehicle miles traveled, year 2030 vehicle miles traveled under the General Plan, and the change in vehicle miles traveled, if any, that would occur from future development of the project site. The General Plan EIR does not address vehicle miles traveled impacts given that SB 743, which requires this analysis, was only recently enacted.

Public Services

This section of the EIR will include updated information about the need for new public facilities (police, fire schools, parks) and whether the analysis of impacts in the General Plan EIR adequately addresses the changed conditions.

Water Demand and Sewer Generation

This analysis will update the analysis in the General Plan EIR utilizing the *City of Gonzales Existing City Plus Sphere of Influence Water Master Plan* and the *City of Gonzales Existing City plus Sphere of Influence Wastewater Master Plan*, as well as a SB610 water supply assessment to be prepared as an input to this SEIR.