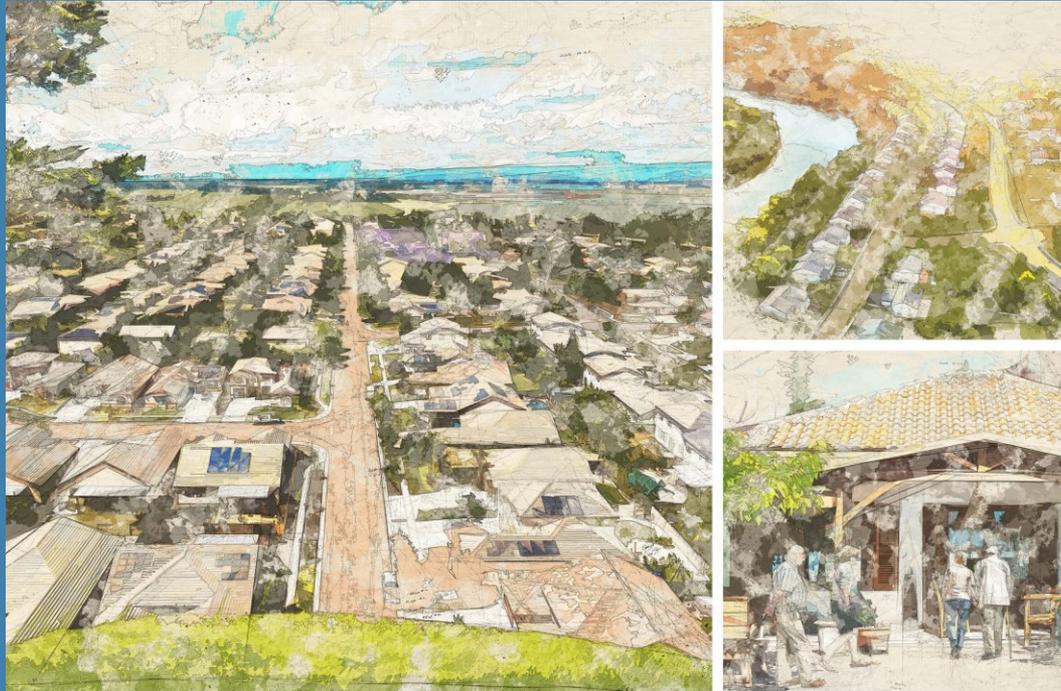


Joint Meeting of the City of Riverbank Planning Commission and City Council

River Walk Specific Plan and EIR



Riverbank Community Center
(3600 Sante Fe Street, Riverbank, CA 95367)



July 9, 2025

De Novo Planning Group



Purpose of Today's Presentation



- Provide Information
- Overview of the Specific Plan
 - Summary of Environmental Analysis
- Today's presentation is NOT a hearing

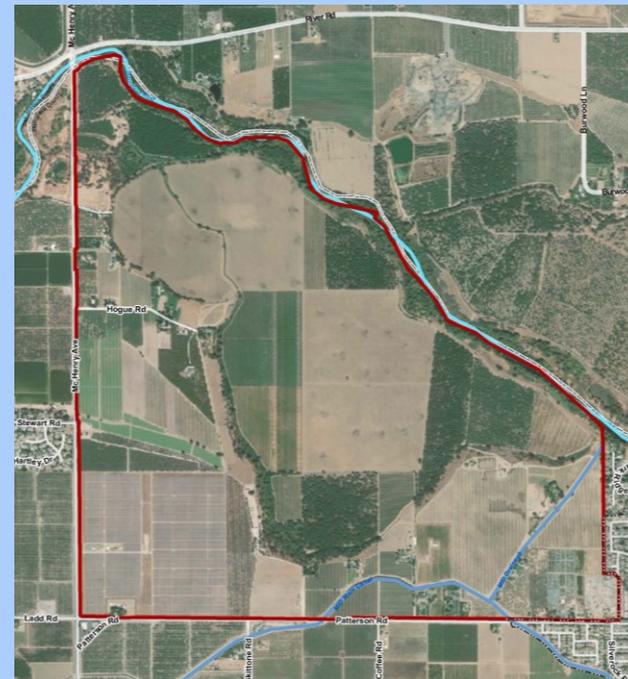
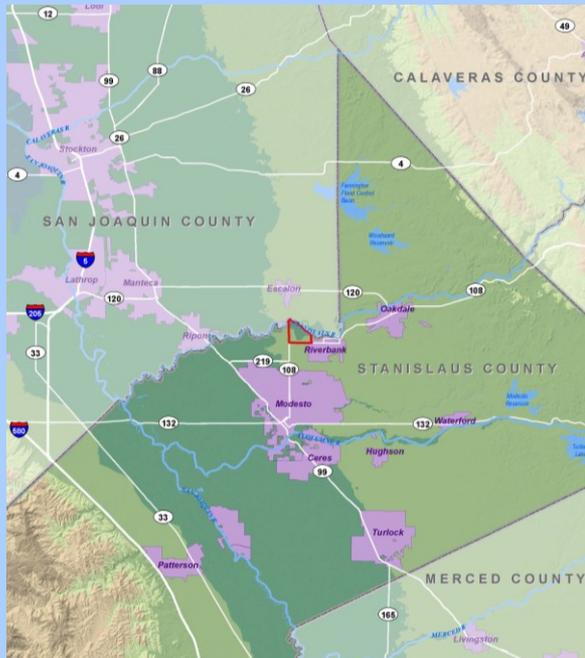


Project Location



Location:

- North of Patterson Rd/SR 108, east of McHenry Ave, approximately two miles northwest of downtown Riverbank.
- Within the City of Riverbank General Plan Planning Area
- Outside the city limits and sphere of influence (SOI).



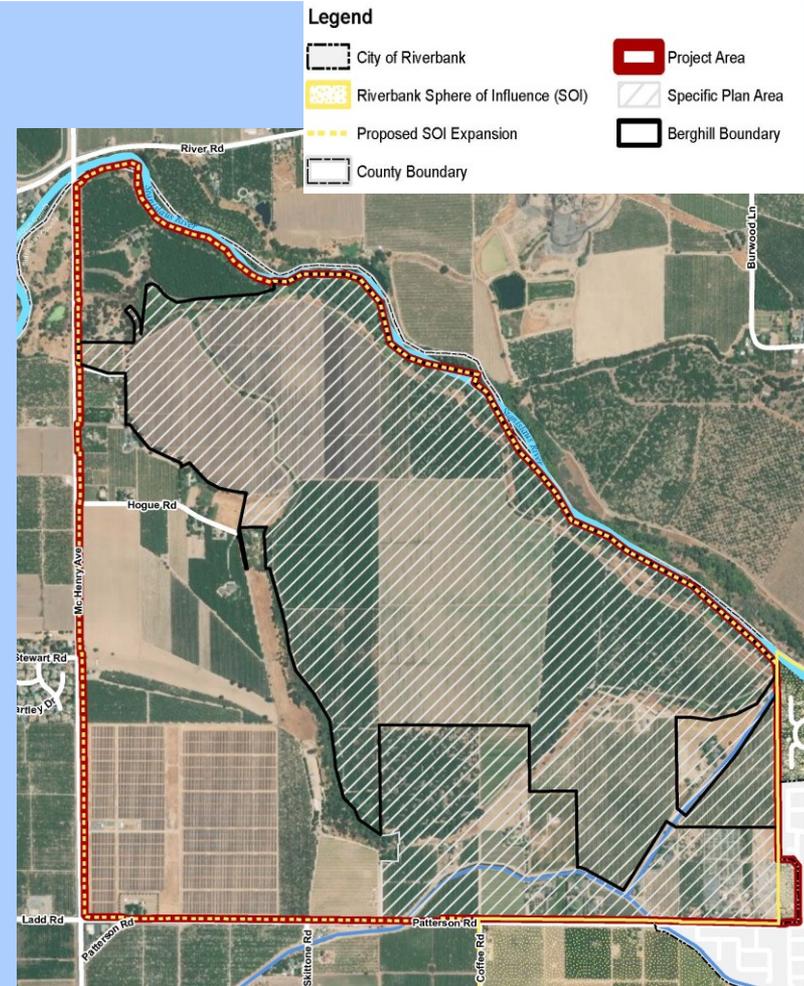
Project Boundaries



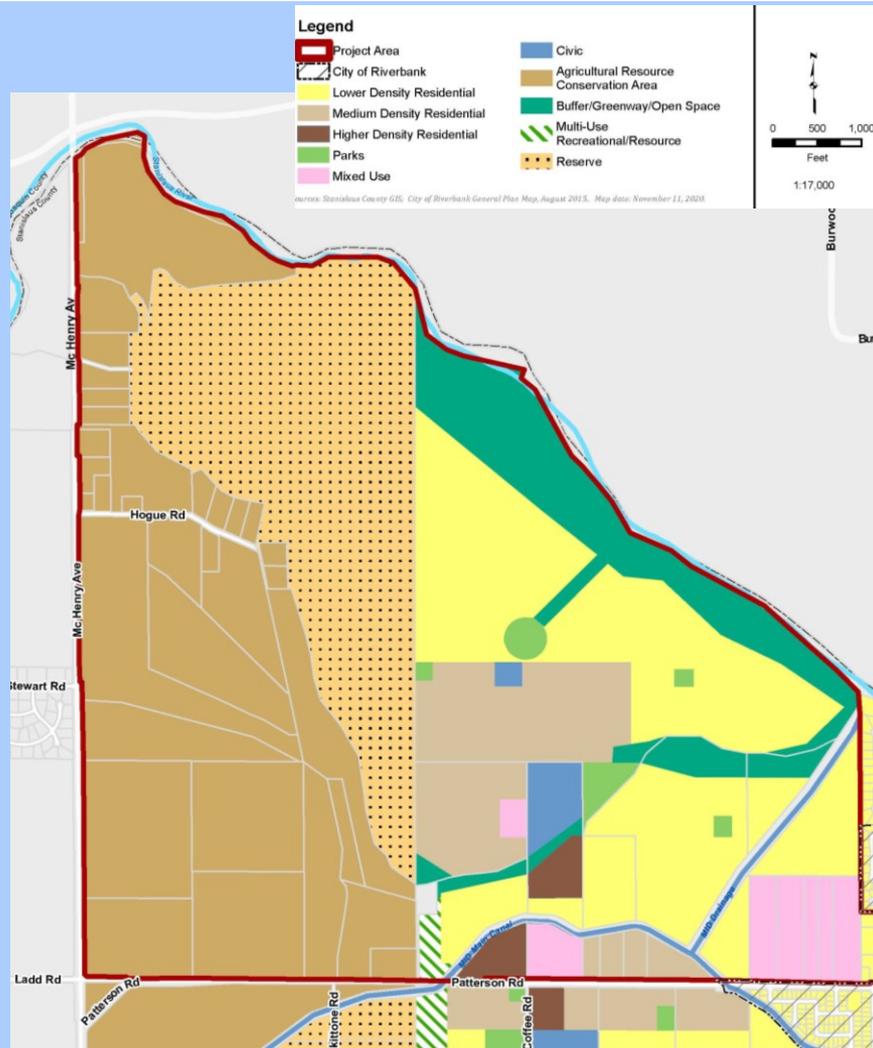
Location:

- Project Area/SOI Expansion Area – Sphere of Influence Amendment and encompasses the entire Project area.
- Specific Plan Area - River Walk Specific Plan.
- Berghill Boundary – Areas within the Specific Plan Area that are controlled by the project applicant.
- Active Adult Community – Area within the Berghill Boundary that is located in the lower elevation of the Specific Plan Area. This is an age-restricted development.

PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY	ACRES (GIS)
Specific Plan Area	997 acres
Overall Project Area	1,522 acres



Existing General Plan



Existing City Land Use Designations:

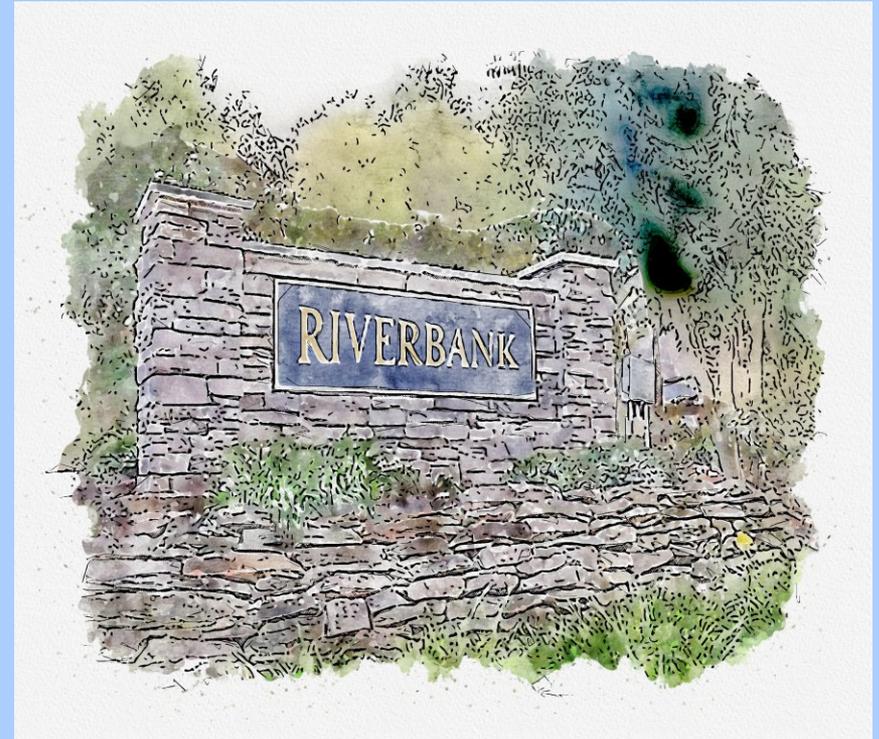
LAND USE	ACREAGE
Agricultural Resource Conservation Area	520.81
Buffer/Greenway/Open Space	129.44
Canal	20.63
Civic	15.79
Higher Density Residential (16+ units/Acre)	17.25
Lower Density Residential (0-8 units/Acre)	319.25
Medium Density Residential (8-16 units/Acre)	117.00
Mixed Use	51.44
Multi-Use Recreational/Resource	5.29
Parks	14.79
Reserve	305.29
Rights of Way	4.44
Total	1,521.41

Project Entitlements Requested



Project Entitlements:

- Sphere of Influence Amendment
- Municipal Services Review Update/Amendment
- General Plan Amendment
- Pre-zoning
- Annexation
- Specific Plan
- Neighborhood Electric Vehicle Plan
- Vesting Tentative Maps
- Development Agreement
- Future: Final Maps, Improvement Plans, Grading Plans, Building Permits, Conditional Use Permits, Site Plan/Design Review.



SOI Amendment and Annexation

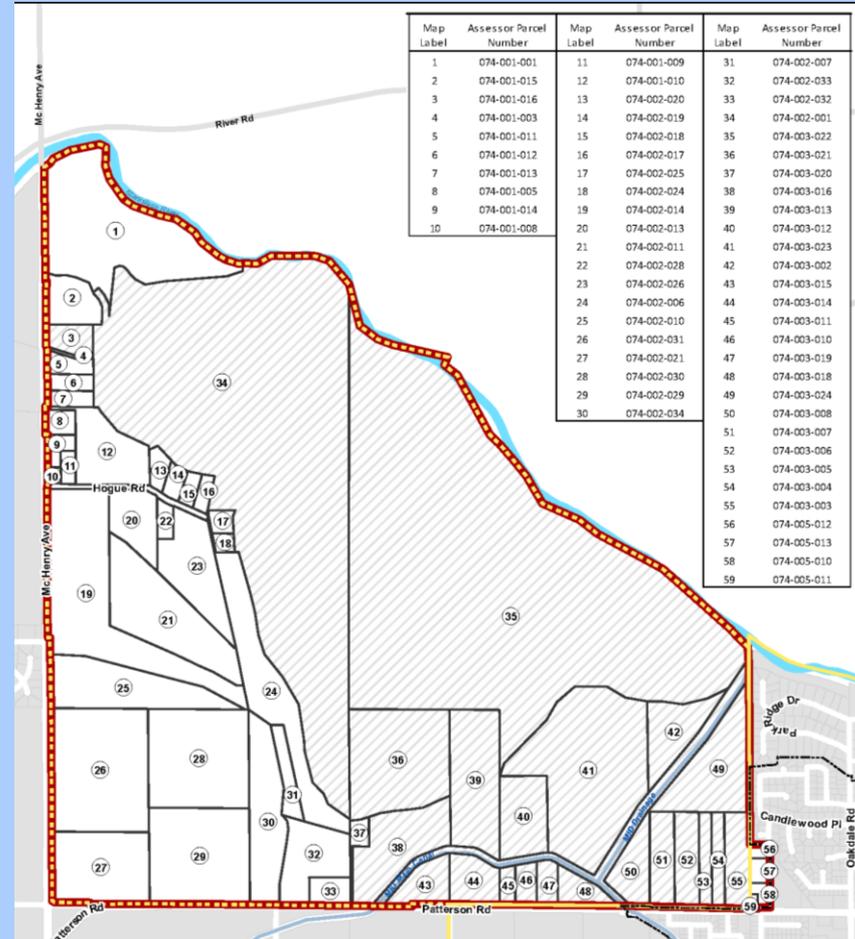


Annexation:

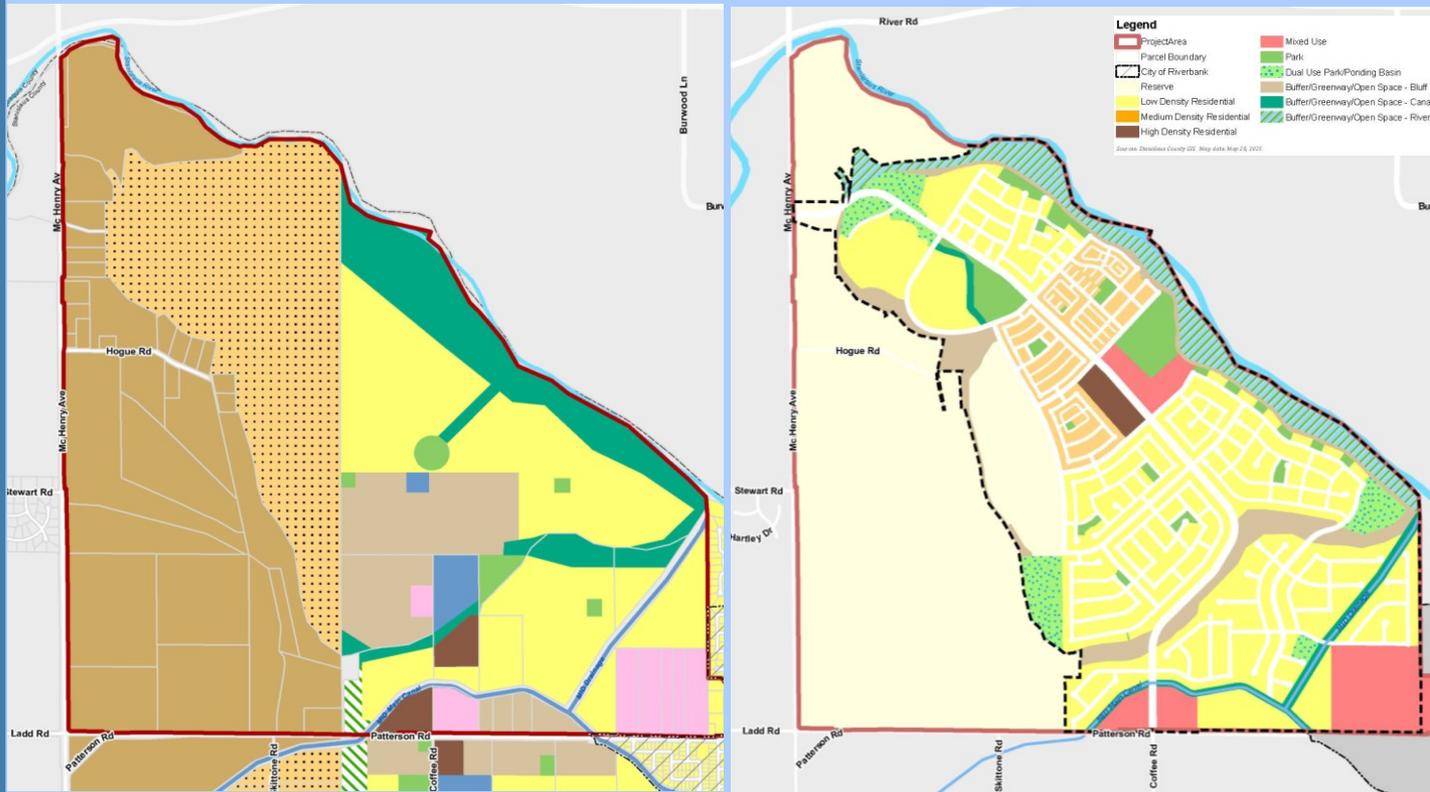
- SOI Expansion Area – 1,522 acres covering the Project Area.
- Annexation – Approximately 997 acres covering the Specific Plan Area, and 4.38 acres (4 parcels located at the southeast Project Area).
- Approximately 520 acres to remain outside city limits under a Reserve Designation but included in the SOI

Legend

	Project Area		Parcels within the Project Area
	Specific Plan Area		Other Stanislaus County Parcels
	City of Riverbank		
	Riverbank Sphere of Influence (SOI)		
	Proposed SOI Expansion		

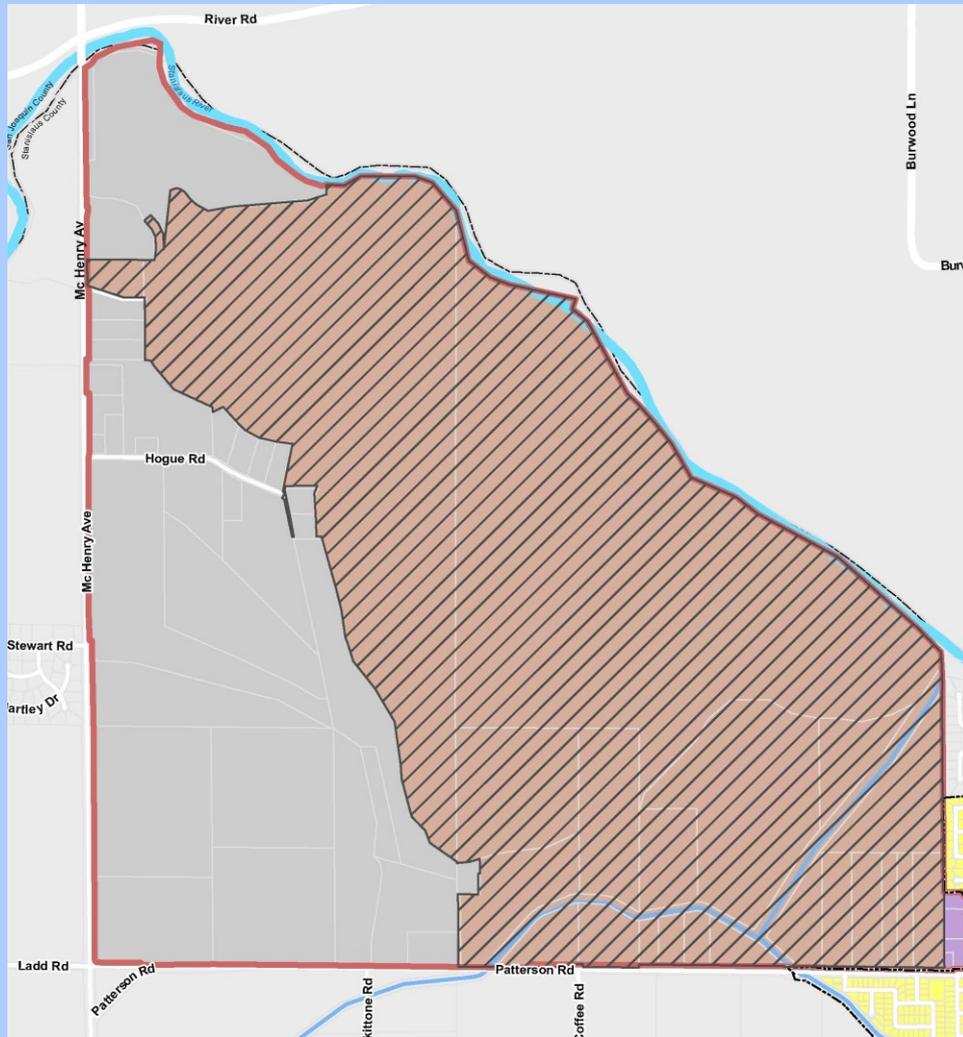


General Plan Amendment



PROPOSED LAND USE	GIS ACRES
BGOS - Bluff	68.53
BGOS - Canal	23.34
BGOS - River Park	69.77
Dual Use Park/Ponding Basin	41.01
HDR	10.02
LDR	467.18
MDR	78.70
Mixed Use	67.71
Park	43.34
Reserve	583.43
Rights of Way	63.37
Total	1,521.41

Pre-zoning



Legend

Project Area	Proposed Zoning Designation
Specific Plan Area	Mixed Use (CX-1)
City of Riverbank	Single Family Residential (R-1)
	Specific Plan Area
	Unassigned

Prezone:

- Specific Plan Zone - 997 acres covering the Specific Plan Area.
- Mixed-Use (CX-1) Zone – 4.38 acres (4 parcels) located at the southeast Project Area.
- Approximately 520 acres to remain outside city limits with unassigned zoning.

Specific Plan – Chapters



Chapters

- Chapter 1 – Introduction
- Chapter 2 – Existing Conditions
- Chapter 3 – River Walk Vision
- Chapter 4 – Land Use and Development Standards
- Chapter 5 – Circulation and Mobility
- Chapter 6 – Infrastructure, Parks, & Public Services
- Chapter 7 – Design Guidelines
- Chapter 8 – A Community Aging Together
- Chapter 9 – Implementation and Administration



Project Objectives



Project Objectives

- Goal 1: Develop a mix of residential housing products to accommodate a variety of desires in the market.
- Goal 2: Prioritize the age-restricted development as a vibrant community with diverse housing types and densities allowing residents to age-in-place.
- Goal 3: Develop a community core area that serves as a central community gathering place for social interaction, recreation, retail, services, and living space.
- Goal 4: Promote health and wellness through extensive pedestrian and bicycle trails, outdoor recreation areas, and opportunities for social interaction.
- Goal 5: Respect the natural resources (i.e., Stanislaus River), terrain, and character of land by designing a residential community that highlights the scenic views of the Plan Area.
- Goal 6: Achieve a safe and efficient circulation system for all users and modes of transportation.
- Goal 7: Highlight village identity while promoting community amenities.



Specific Plan – Amenities



Clubhouse



Neighborhood Electric Vehicles



River Walk



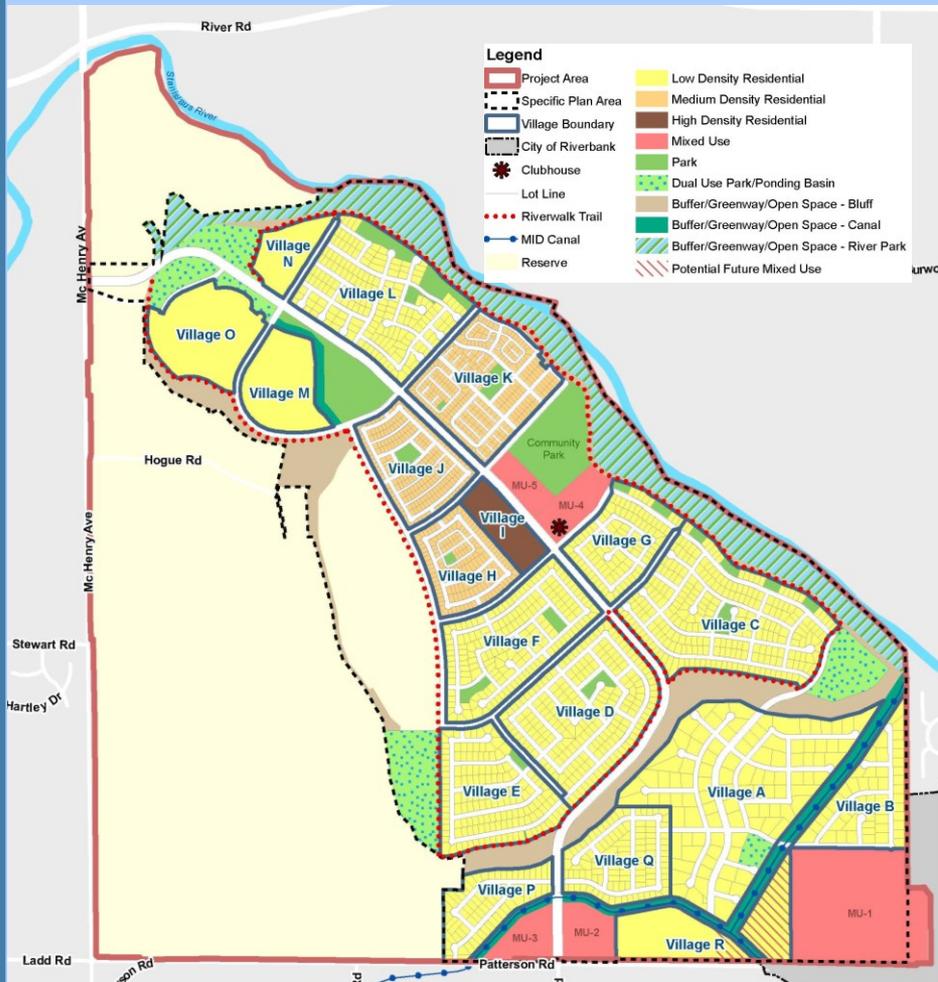
Community Core



Parks and Open Space

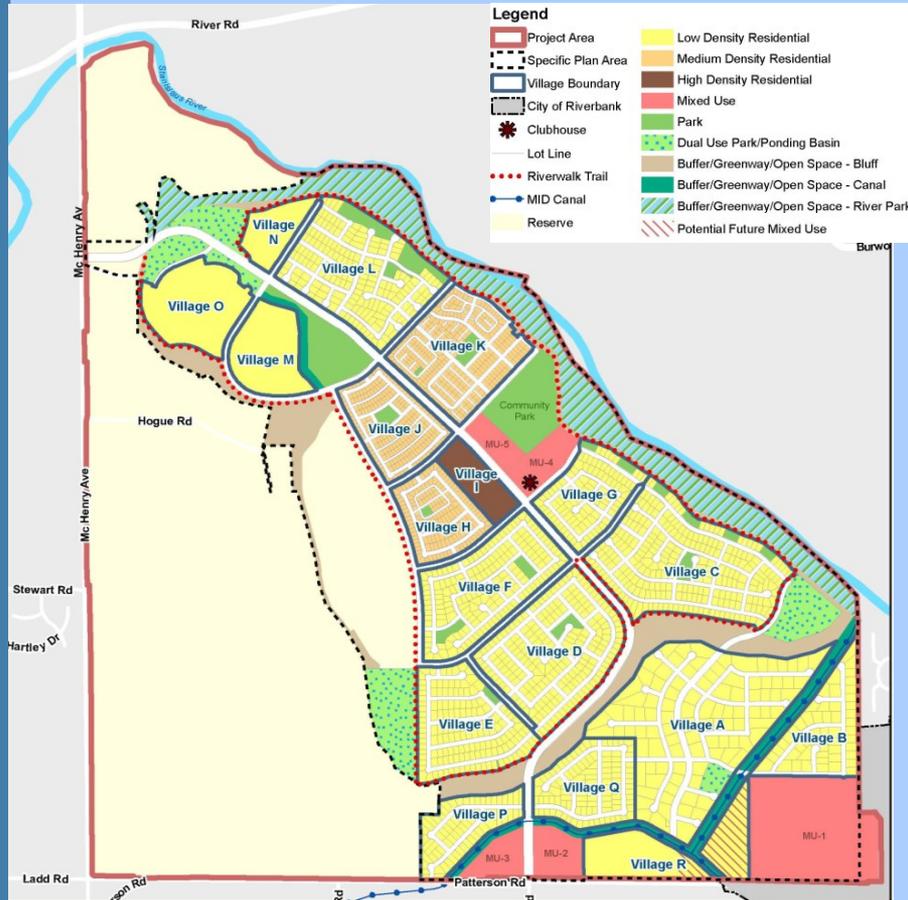


Specific Plan – Land Use Summary



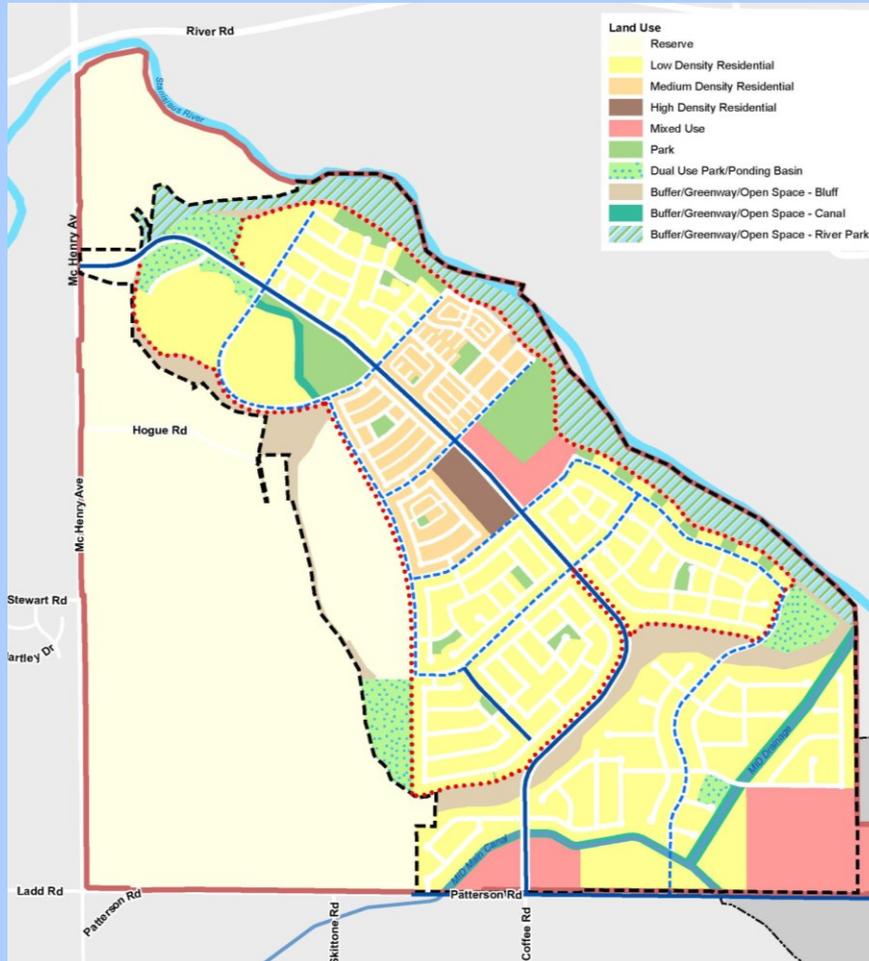
MAP SYMBOL	ACREAGE	DENSITY RANGE	ESTIMATED UNIT OR SF RANGE
LDR – Low Density Residential	467.18	0 – 8 du/ac	1,550
MDR – Medium Density Residential	78.70	8 – 16 du/ac	702
HDR – High Density Residential	10.02	16 + du/ac	180
MU – Mixed-Use (outside of community core)	54.35	16 + du/ac 0.25 FAR	0 – 250 du 231,000-591,000 sf
MU – Mixed-Use (inside of community core)	5.35	16 + du/ac 0.50 FAR	0 – 100 du 110,000-220,000 sf
MU – Mixed-Use (Clubhouse)	8.01	0.50 FAR	20,000 sf
Park	43.34	N/A	N/A
B/G/OS - Bluff	68.53	N/A	N/A
B/G/OS - Canal	23.34	N/A	N/A
B/G/OS - River Park	69.77	N/A	N/A
Park - Ponding Basin	41.01	N/A	N/A
Reserve	64.21	N/A	N/A
ROW	63.37	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	997.18	--	2,432 – 2,682 du 341,000 – 836,000 sf

Specific Plan – Village Summary



VILLAGE	LAND USE	AGE RESTRICTED	LOT COUNT
A	Low Density Residential	No	101
B	Low Density Residential	No	42
C	Low Density Residential	Yes	254
D	Low Density Residential	Yes	207
E	Low Density Residential	Yes	148
F	Low Density Residential	Yes	173
G	Low Density Residential	Yes	97
H	Medium Density Residential	Yes	157
I	High Density Residential	Yes	180
J	Medium Density Residential	Yes	227
K	Medium Density Residential	Yes	318
L	Low Density Residential	Yes	176
M	Low Density Residential	Yes	48
N	Low Density Residential	Yes	29
O	Low Density Residential	Yes	70
P	Low Density Residential	No	67
Q	Low Density Residential	No	108
R	Low Density Residential	No	30
Total	--	--	2,432

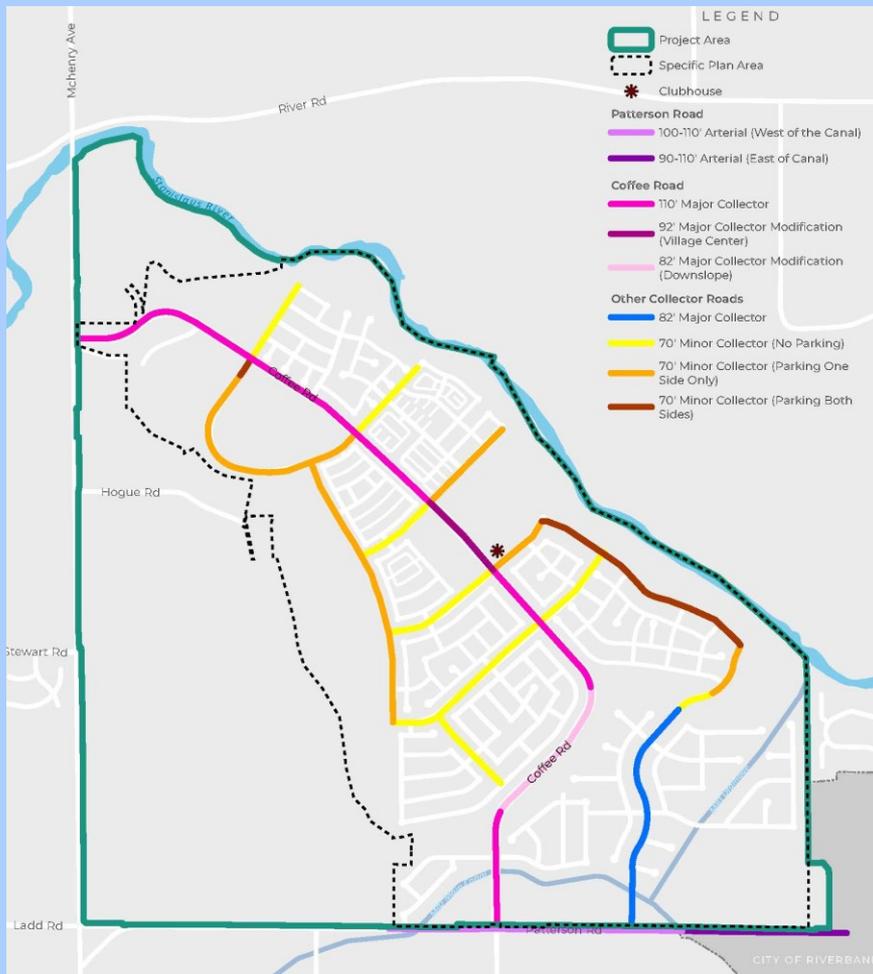
Specific Plan – Circulation



- Existing Transportation Network
- Proposed Circulation Network
- Neighborhood Electric Vehicles Plan
- Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit Circulation



Specific Plan – Roadways



Internal Specific Plan Roadways

- Arterial roadways: Four travel lanes, sidewalks on both sides of the street, bike lanes and landscape strips.
- Collector roadways: Two to four travel lanes, sidewalks on both sides of the street, bike lanes where applicable and landscape strips.
- Local Residential Streets: Two travel lanes, sidewalk and landscape strips on both sides.

Adjacent Offsite Arterial Roadways

- McHenry Avenue
- Patterson Road

Specific Plan – NEV Plan



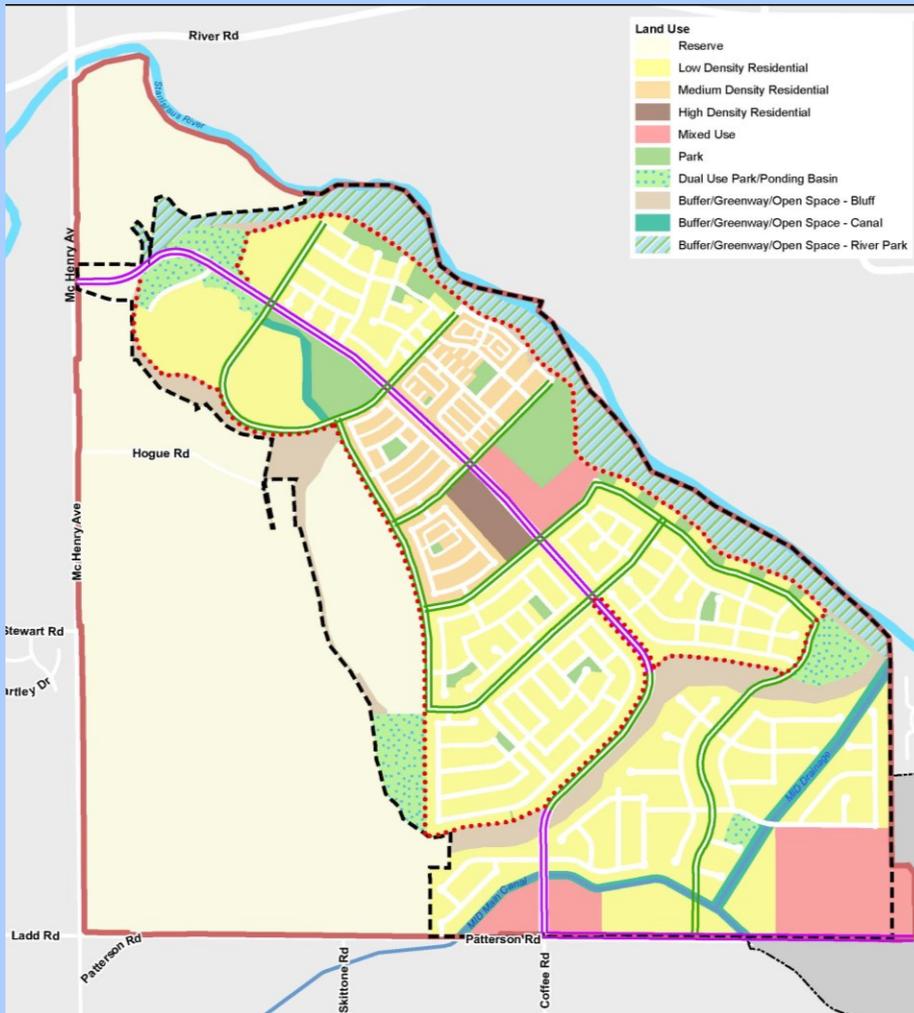
- Neighborhood Electric Vehicles (NEVs) are Low Speed Electric Vehicle (LSEV) that are less than three thousand pounds and designed to be operated at not more than 35 mph
- “NEV lanes” or “NEV routes” are for NEV travel including roadways designated by signs or permanent markings which are shared with pedestrians, bicyclists, and other motorists in the portion of the River Walk Specific Plan Area designated for active adult living.



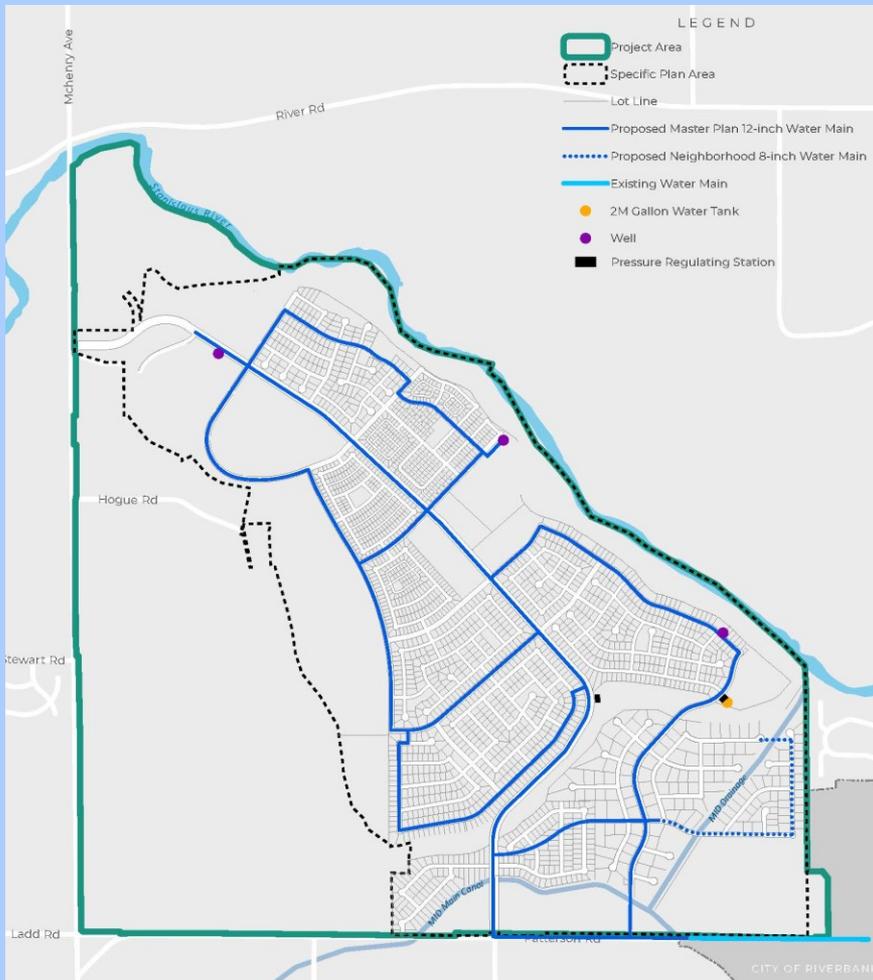
- Class I NEV lanes provide a right-of-way separated from a roadway and for the exclusive use of NEVs, and/or shared use with bicyclists, and pedestrians. (River Walk Trail, and Class I bike paths).
- Class II NEV lanes provide a restricted right-of-way on a roadway designated by striping and signage for the exclusive or semi-exclusive use of NEVs, with through travel by motor vehicles or pedestrians prohibited. (Coffee Road within the active adult area).
- Class III NEV lanes are lanes on streets with speed limits of forty-five miles per hour or less and are shared with pedestrians, bicyclists, and other motorists. (Local Residential Streets, Minor Collectors, and portions of Major Collectors-Coffee Road in the Community Core).



Specific Plan – Bike/Ped

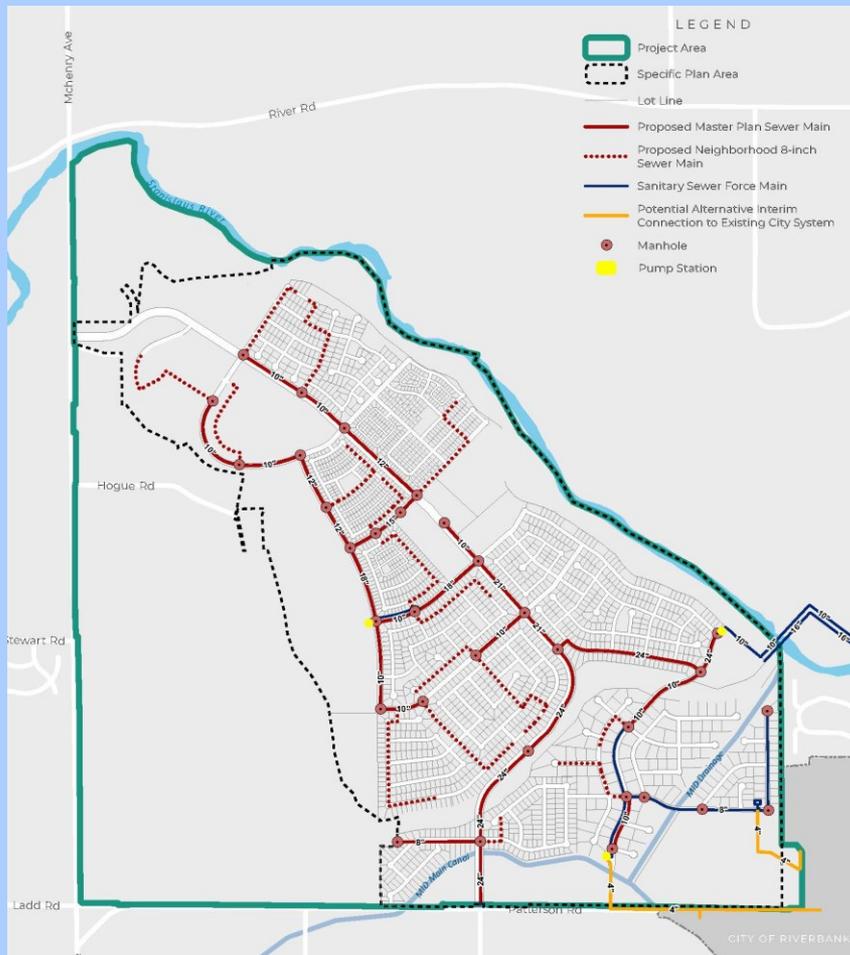


Specific Plan – Water



- Master Plan includes 12" main lines
- Neighborhoods includes 8" main lines
- 2 million gallon water tank
- 3 Wells
- Pressure Regulating Station
- Existing agricultural irrigation to remain

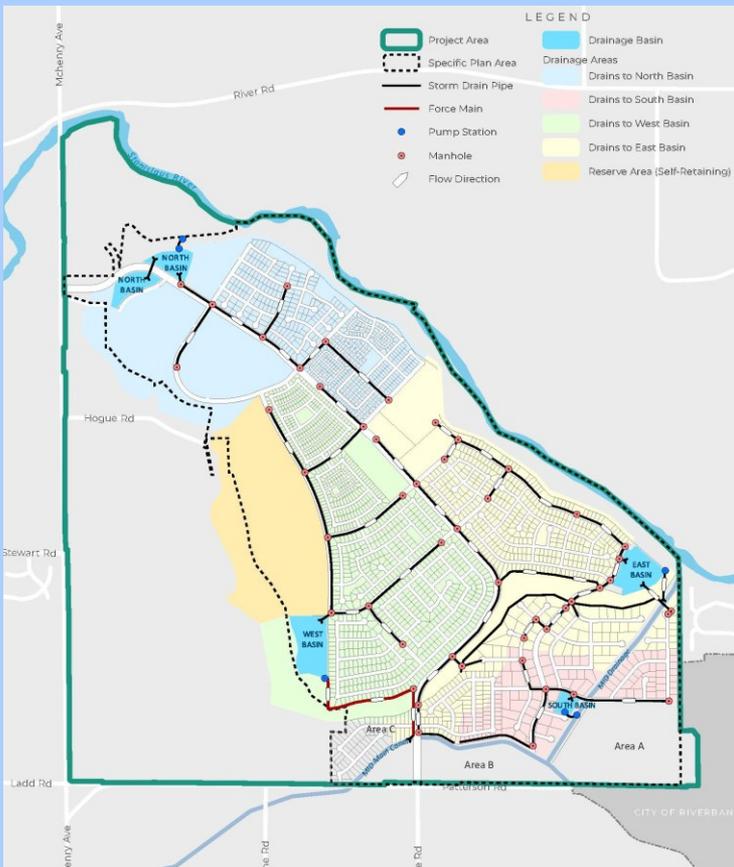
Specific Plan – Sewer



- Three pump stations (Northeast, South, and West Pump Station).
- Gravity flow system - 24", 18", 15", 12", 10", and 8" sewer mains
- Gravity sewer mains convey wastewater to one of three pump stations, ultimate discharge flows to the Northeast Pump Station.
- Offsite sewer line (1.4 miles to the WWTP): 10" force main, and a 16" force main.



Specific Plan – Drainage



- **North Basin:** 214-acre watershed with two connected basins totaling 6.2 acres/24.9 ac-ft capacity. Two alternatives: 1) Infiltration trench (French Drains approx. 4,850 LF, 6'Wx8'D), or 2) Pump Station discharge to the Stanislaus River at a flow of 2,365 GPM.
- **West Basin:** 226-acre watershed with 7.3-acre basin/28.5 ac-ft capacity. Pump Station discharge to the MID Main Canal at a flow of 2,583 GPM.
- **East Basin:** 231-acre watershed with 5.8-acre basin/25.8 ac-ft capacity. Pump Station discharge to the MID Spenker Drain at a flow of 2,335 GPM.
- **South Basin:** 68-acre watershed with 1.2-acre basin/6.3 ac-ft capacity. Pump Station discharge to the MID Spenker Drain at a flow of 573 GPM.

Environmental Review Process



NOP Public Process



- Circulated NOP on June 4, 2021
 - SCH, State Agencies, Local Agencies, Citizens
- Scoping meeting was held on June 17, 2021
- Concerns raised in response to the NOP were considered during preparation of the Draft EIR.



NOP – Areas of Concern



The following concerns were raised during NOP/Scoping Process:

- Loss of productive farmland and productive agricultural soils
- Development within a floodplain
- Protection and preservation of potential tribal cultural resources
- Increased traffic on local and regional roadways, and site access
- Increased operational noise
- Provision of utilities and public services, including construction of infrastructure
- Removal of on-site vegetation and species habitat
- Source of water for the proposed Project and potential effects related to groundwater recharge
- Elevated sources of greenhouse gas emissions
- Expansion of City's SOI
- Potential growth inducing impacts
- Potential health-related impacts resulting from criteria pollutant emissions and greenhouse gas emissions
- Potential hazardous release of hazardous materials during construction and operation
- Potential hazards associated with residual chemicals from farming



DEIR - Topics Addressed in EIR



The following environmental topics were analyzed in the Draft EIR:

- Aesthetics and Visual Resources
- Agricultural Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Tribal Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas/Climate/ Energy
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use/Population/Housing
- Noise
- Public Services and Recreation
- Transportation and Circulation
- Utilities



DEIR - Alternatives



The following alternatives were analyzed in the Draft EIR:

- **No Project (No Build) Alternative:** Development of the Plan Area would not occur, and the Plan Area would remain in its current existing condition.
- **Increased Density Alternative:** The proposed Project would be developed with the same amenities as described in the Project Description, but the density of the residential uses would be increased, and the total development footprint would be equal to the proposed Specific Plan.
- **Lower Density Alternative:** The proposed Project would be developed in such a way to promote larger lot sizes and to reduce the overall footprint of the developed areas.
- **No Reserve Alternative:** The proposed Project would be developed with the same amenities as described in the Project Description, but the Reserve Area located outside the Specific Plan Area would be removed from the Project Area.

DEIR – Mitigation



Forty-three Mitigation Measures were created to reduce “Potential Impacts” related to the following topics:

- Agricultural Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology/Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Noise
- Public Facilities
- Transportation and Circulation
- Utilities



DEIR – SU Impacts



Significant and Unavoidable Impacts were identified for the following topics:

Project Impacts

- Aesthetic and Visual Resources
- Agricultural Resources
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions/Climate Change
- Noise
- Public Facilities (construction of new parks/recreational facilities)
- Transportation and Circulation (VMT)
- Utilities (construction of new utilities)

Cumulative Impacts

- Aesthetic and Visual Resources
- Agricultural Resources
- Air Quality*
- Biological Resources*
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions/Climate Change
- Noise
- Public Facilities (construction of new parks/recreational facilities)
- Transportation and Circulation (VMT)
- Utilities (construction of new utilities)



DEIR – Public Review



- 1-31-2024 - 45-day public review period began
- 2-27-2024 - Public Presentation to City Council
- 3-14-2024 - City extended public review and posted notice and DEIR in Spanish
- 5-16-2024 – Public review closed (total 106 days)



Final EIR (FEIR)



- Eighty comment letters received.
- Formal and detailed Written Response to each individual letter
- Master Responses prepared to respond to topics common among letters
- Revisions and Errata edits prepared to enhance, amplify, or correct text from the DEIR
- Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program prepared
- FEIR consists of two volumes totaling approximately 1,900 pages



FEIR – Common Topics of Concern



Topics that were common to several comment letters:

- LAFCo Policies Regarding Agricultural Lands
- LAFCo SOI Expansion
- LAFCo Islands
- Type of EIR
- Reserve Designation
- Williamson Act
- Agricultural Resources
- Vacant Lands
- Groundwater Sustainability Plan
- Water Demand/Recharge
- Biological Resources Mitigation



Topics of Concern – Reserve



Reserve Designation - What it means

- Designates land within the City’s sphere of influence (SOI), but not annexed or slated for development under the current Project.
- Serves as an overlay requiring additional review, infrastructure analysis, public hearings, and CEQA compliance before any future development.
- The General Plan explicitly states this area “does not necessarily imply urban development, but rather could be areas to preserve in natural open space or for agricultural use” (General Plan, p. Land-11).
- Establishing the Reserve is a planning exercise, not a guarantee of growth.
- Any environmental impact due to development is speculative—uncertain in scope, location, and timing.

Summary

- Reserve and No-Reserve alternatives analyzed, neither assume development in the Reserve area.
- Any future development in the Reserve would require environmental review and City approvals.
- Legal precedent: CEQA does not require analysis of speculative future impacts when project details are undefined. Analysis only required for reasonably foreseeable impacts, not speculative impacts.



Topics of Concern – Ag Conversion



Ag Conversion- Data and Calculations

- Conversion of 854.29 acres of Important Farmland:
 - 661.33 acres of Prime Farmland,
 - 165.80 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and
 - 27.16 acres of Unique Farmland
- MM 3.2-1: Permanent protection of off-site farmland on a 1:1 basis (acres preserved per acre converted), following the City's Sustainable Agricultural Strategy.
- MM 3.2-2: Participation in Stanislaus LAFCo's Agricultural Preservation Policy (as of March 27, 2019), also aligned with the Sustainable Agricultural Strategy.

Summary

- Impact – significant and unavoidable
- Mitigation – 1:1 off-site conservation easements + LAFCo policy participation
- Legal precedent: Courts have explicitly recognized 1:1 easement ratios as legally sufficient mitigation, and that easement mitigation does not eliminate the original significant loss; the impact remains “significant and unavoidable”



Topics of Concern – Water Supply



Groundwater Consumption- Data and Calculations

Scenario	Existing Condition	Post-Development	Difference	% Change
Water Use (2007 Master Plan) ²	2,146 afy ¹	2,294 afy ⁶	+148 afy	7% increase
Water Use (2020 UWMP) ³	2,146 afy	1,657 afy – total site ⁵	-489 afy	23% reduction
State Water Objectives (Current) ⁴	2,146 afy	1,285 afy ⁵	-861 afy	40% reduction

¹ 997 acres, 910 irrigated by groundwater wells, 87 ac irrigated by MID canal or unirrigated.

² The 2003-2007 baseline consumption was 218 gpcd. The 2015 UWMP identified a target of 165 gpcd.

³ 2020 UWMP per capita rate was captured as “actual rate” of 157 gpcd.

⁴ Current State Water Objectives target demand rate of 99 gpcd for residential uses (adopted 2024).

⁵ Post Development calculations include 205 afy for the cherry orchard.

⁶ Excluded the 205 afy pre-development demand for the cherry orchard.

Summary

- Reduction of Water Use of at least 23%, with possible additional reductions up to 40% in future years based on State Water Objectives.
- Total water supply available in 2045 (15,944af) satisfies water demand under Normal, Single Dry, and Multiple Dry Year Scenarios



Topics of Concern – Groundwater



Groundwater Context and Conditions

- Modesto Subbasin & Aquifer Setting
 - Project within the central/western Principal Aquifer of the 245,253-acre Modesto Subbasin.
 - Eastern regions exhibit ~40 ft decline (2000–2018) due to agricultural pumping; western regions—including River Walk vicinity—are stable
- Modesto Subbasin's sustainable yield set at 266,000 afy, with urban pumping capped at 60,000 afy.

Summary

- River Walk's demand (~1,657 afy) represents only 2.8% of urban usage and ~0.6% of total yield. (demand under State Objectives reduced to 1,285 afy)
- Total water pumping from the site is 23% less than existing pumping for ag use, and will approach 40% less if State Objectives are met.
- Reduced groundwater extraction from the site supports the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (July 2024).



Topics of Concern – Biological



Biological Context and Conditions

- Biological Assessment
 - Field Surveys, Literature Review, Records Searches
 - Upland Habitat: Agricultural Use, Riparian Area, Bluff Area
 - Aquatic Habitat: Agricultural ditches, Stanislaus River, Riparian Area
- Key Mitigation Measures
 - Species covered: Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle, bumble bees, pond turtles, garter snakes, burrowing owls, Swainson's hawks, bats, and aquatic resources.
 - Compliance with regulatory standards (e.g., Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act) ensures effective mitigation.
 - Compensatory mitigation includes habitat preservation and management (e.g., conservation easements).
 - Precon Surveys (e.g., nesting birds, VELB, bats, verify conditions over long-term buildout 15-20 years to address changing site conditions)
- Legal Support
 - Oakland Heritage Alliance (2011): Regulatory compliance is valid mitigation.
 - Save Panoche Valley (2013): Preconstruction surveys upheld as effective.

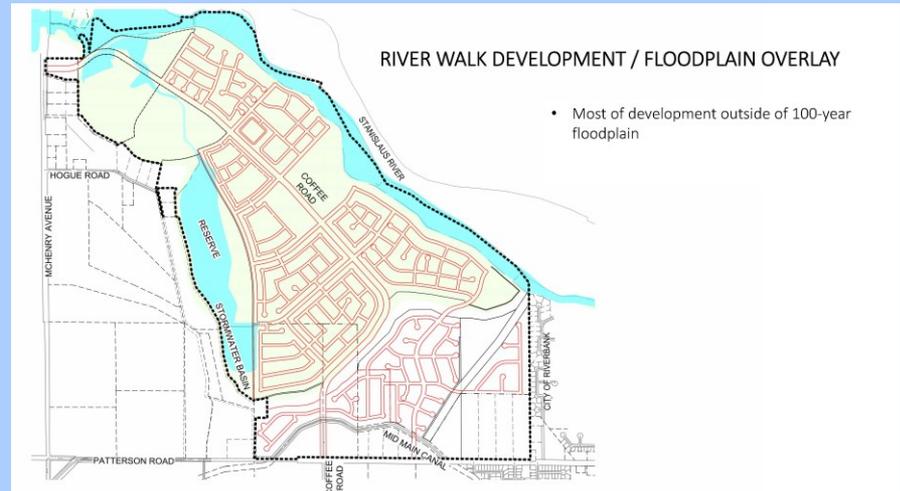
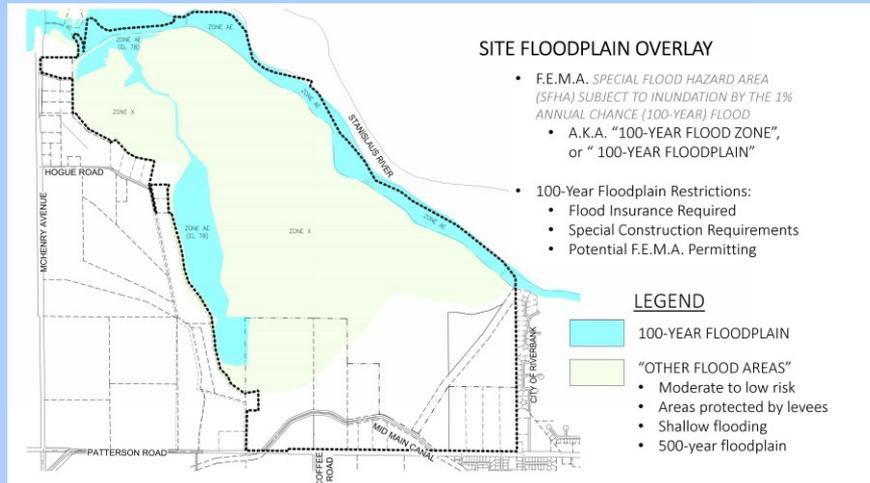


Topics of Concern – Flooding (100 and 500 year)



Flooding Context and Conditions

- Flood Zones
 - Zone X (levee-protected 1% flood): 745 ac - High-ground areas shielded by levees (10 ft freeboard at Berghill levee)
 - 100-Year Flood Zone: 194 ac - Low-lying areas near river and agricultural ditches
 - 500-Year Flood Zone: 582 ac - Extended floodplain covering broader zones

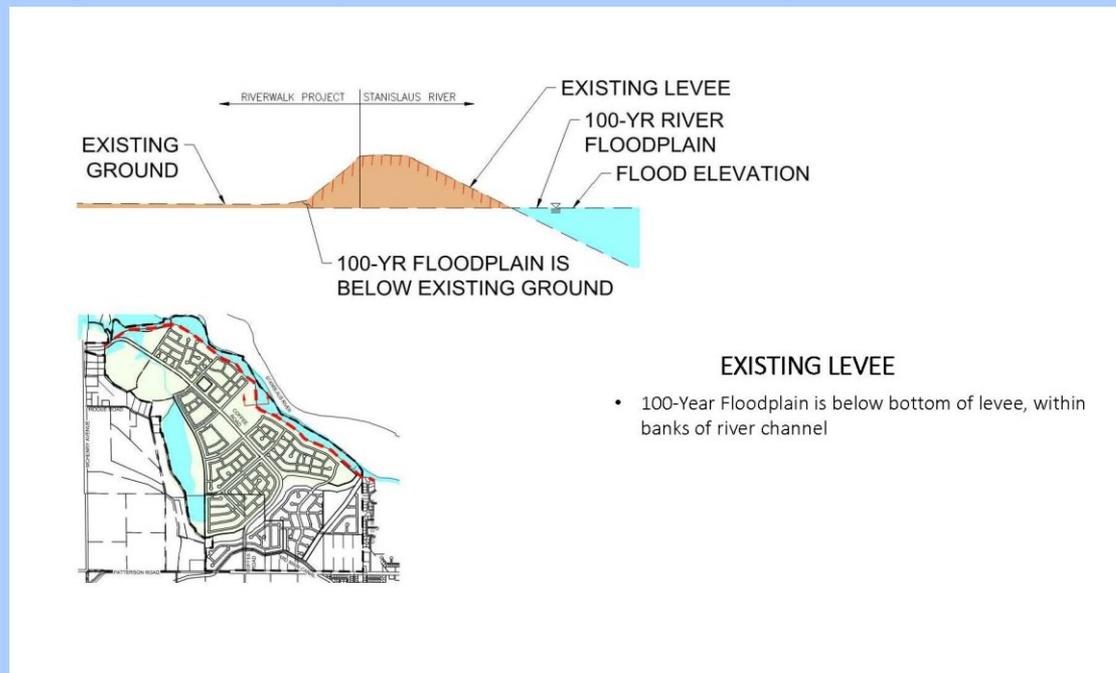


Topics of Concern – Flooding (100 and 500 year)



Flooding Context and Conditions

- Berghill Levee Protection
 - Protected by 10 ft freeboard levee owned by Wendt Ranch Reclamation District.
 - FEMA designates Zone X, parts in the 100- and 500-year zones.

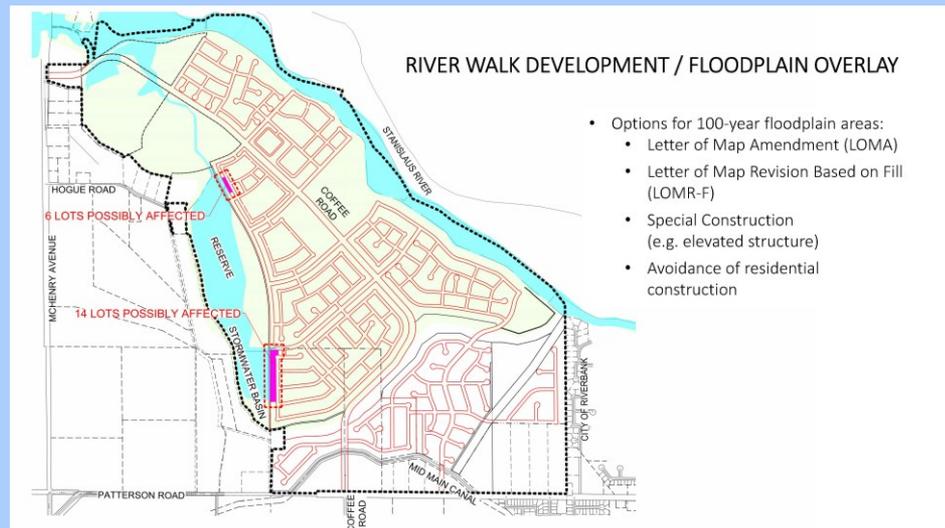


Topics of Concern – Flooding (100 and 500 year)



Flooding Context and Conditions

- Key Mitigation Measures
 - Municipal Code requires lowest floor of housing required to be elevated to or above the 100-year flood elevation (151.30-B).
 - Regulations for building in a 100-year established/uniformly applied regulations.
 - City standard (Policy SAFE-1.6), impose conditions on a development agreement, map, permit, or entitlement to protect from 100-year floods.



Topics of Concern – Flooding (200 year)



SB 5 and 200-year Flooding

- SB 5 Overview (2007, amended 2012) - Mandates 200-year (0.5% annual chance) flood protection as the minimum standard for urban and urbanizing areas
 - DWR “Best Available Maps” (BAM) does not show site in the 200-year flood zone
- Project-Level Compliance Path
 - Must grade building pads to be at or above the 100-year flood elevation.
 - Must grade building pads to be not greater than 3 ft below the 200-year flood elevation.
 - Compliance with these standards is consistent with SB 5.



DEIR and FEIR



- DEIR consists of two volumes totaling approximately 2,643 pages
- FEIR consists of two volumes totaling approximately 1,900 pages
- Over 4,500 pages of DEIR/FEIR text prepared and circulated
- Informational documentation of environmental impacts/conclusions
 - Significant and Unavoidable Impacts
 - Impact reduced to insignificant levels with Mitigation
 - Impacts insignificant
- Evaluation of Alternatives



What to expect if approved

- Property owners would be required to prepare and obtain City approvals for:
 - Improvement Plans
 - Grading Plans
 - Final Maps
 - Building Plans/Permits
 - Conditional Use Permits
 - Site Plan/Design Review
- City staff would review for compliance with mitigation, conditions of approval, and City standards/ordinances
- Buildout expected to be 10 to 20 years



Next Steps

- Planning Commission and City Council Hearings
 - Hearings to Certify the EIR
 - Hearings to Consider the Entitlement Requests
 - Sphere of Influence Amendment
 - Municipal Services Review Update/Amendment
 - General Plan Amendment
 - Pre-zoning
 - Annexation
 - Specific Plan
 - Neighborhood Electric Vehicle Plan
 - Vesting Tentative Maps
 - Development Agreement
- LAFCo Hearings
 - MSR Update/Amendment
 - Hearings to Consider SOI Expansion
 - Hearings to Consider Annexation

