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Land Use

The Land Use Element establishes goals, policies, and programs to strategically accommodate future growth and change while preserving and enhancing the qualities that make Solvang a desirable place to live and work. The Element also contains the Land Use Diagram, a map of land uses within the planning area, and a description of the land use designations.



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Land Use Diagram and Designations

The 2040 General Plan designates land uses defining the type of development planned to occur throughout the city through the planning horizon year of 2040 (approximately 20 years). Development projections for the General Plan were determined by analyzing vacant and underutilized parcels within the city and the realistic level of development potential based on what is allowed under the applicable land use designation factoring for known physical constraints and/or regulatory requirements.

The core of the Land Use Element is the land use diagram and description of land use designations that classify and distinguish the various land uses in the City. Corresponding levels of intensity, density, and allowable uses are defined in this section, as required by Government Code Section 65302(a).

Important Note

It is common for the Land Use Diagram to be updated over time. Please check with the Solvang Planning Department to ensure you have the current version.

Planning Boundaries

The following planning boundaries are included as part of the 2040 Solvang General Plan:

- **City Boundary.** The city boundary is the jurisdictional limits of the city (incorporated area). The city boundary includes the area over which the City exercises land use authority and provides public facilities and services. State law requires jurisdictions to adopt a General Plan that, at a minimum, addresses physical development within this boundary.
- **Urban Growth Boundary.** Cities use urban growth boundaries (UGBs) to establish where they intend to encourage and discourage land development through public infrastructure investments, land-use regulations, land acquisitions, and other actions. Solvang adopted its UGB in June 2020. The UGB is the same boundary as the Solvang city boundary.
- **Sphere of Influence.** A sphere of influence (SOI) is the potential ultimate boundary and service area of the city, as adopted by a Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). An SOI typically includes both incorporated and unincorporated areas within which the City will have primary responsibility for the provision of public facilities and services.
- **Planning Area.** A General Plan, pursuant to State law, must address all areas within a jurisdiction's Planning Area. The Planning Area



encompasses all incorporated and unincorporated territory that bears a relationship to the long-term physical planning of the city.

Land Use Diagram

Figure LU-1, the General Plan Land Use Diagram, shows the distribution of the land use designations allowed within the City's Planning Area. There are a total of 15 different land use designations that depict the types of land uses that will be allowed within the Planning Area.

The Land Use Diagram is intended to be more general than the Zoning Map. While the Land Use Diagram guides zoning, it is not the same as the City's Zoning Map. Each land use designation has corresponding compatible zoning districts. Whereas the land use designations are intentionally broad, the zoning designations are more detailed and provide specific development standards, including permitted and conditional uses, building heights, setbacks, lot coverage, parking, landscaping, and architectural review requirements.

Land Use Designations

Table 2-1 describes the land use designations along with their corresponding density/intensity standards:

- **Designation.** This provides the name of each land use designation and the acronym used when referring to the designation.
- **Color.** Each land use designation has an assigned color used in the Land Use Diagram (Figure LU-1).
- **Description.** This describes the purpose and application of each land use designation. The City's Zoning regulations provide further detail about uses allowed and permitted in zoning districts that implement the land use designations.
- **Density/Intensity Standards.** This describes development density or intensity. Designations allowing residential uses include a minimum and maximum density, expressed as dwelling units per acre (du/ac).

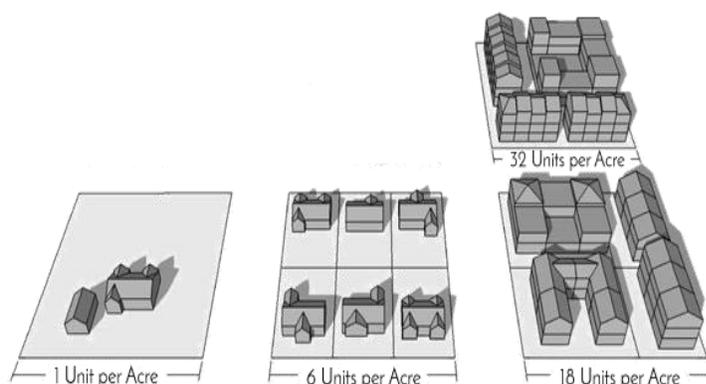
Non-residential uses include a maximum building intensity standard, expressed as Floor Area Ratio (FAR). Most non-residential land use designations also allow residential uses and include density standards as well.

Residential Density

Residential development is categorized by allowed density (minimum and maximum) measured in dwelling units growth per acre (du/ac). Accessory dwelling units are not included. Residential density is calculated by dividing the number of dwelling units on a site (excluding accessory dwelling units) by the gross acreage of the site. The image to the right shows prototypical examples of different residential densities for one-acre properties.

State planning law requires general plans to include standards for measuring population density. **Population**

density is determined by multiplying the maximum number of dwelling units allowed in a given land use designation by the average number of persons per household (as determined by the California Department of Finance).





Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

Standards of building intensity for nonresidential uses such as office, commercial, industrial, and institutional development can be defined in terms of floor area ratio (FAR). FAR is an indicator of how much building space is permitted on a given site. The ratio is typically determined by dividing the total floor area of the structure by the area of the site. In the case of mixed-use developments that include residential uses, density standards are applied to the residential component while FAR standards are applied to the nonresidential component. A site includes all contiguous parcels that will share parking or access.

While FAR provides for overall development intensity, it does not specify the form or character of the building. Different interpretations of the same FAR can result in buildings of different character. To address aesthetic standards and infrastructure needs and encourage similar interpretations of allowed FARs, other City regulations such as zoning height limits, building setbacks, lot coverage, or open space requirements guide the form of buildings with a given FAR.

Figure LU-1: Land Use Diagram

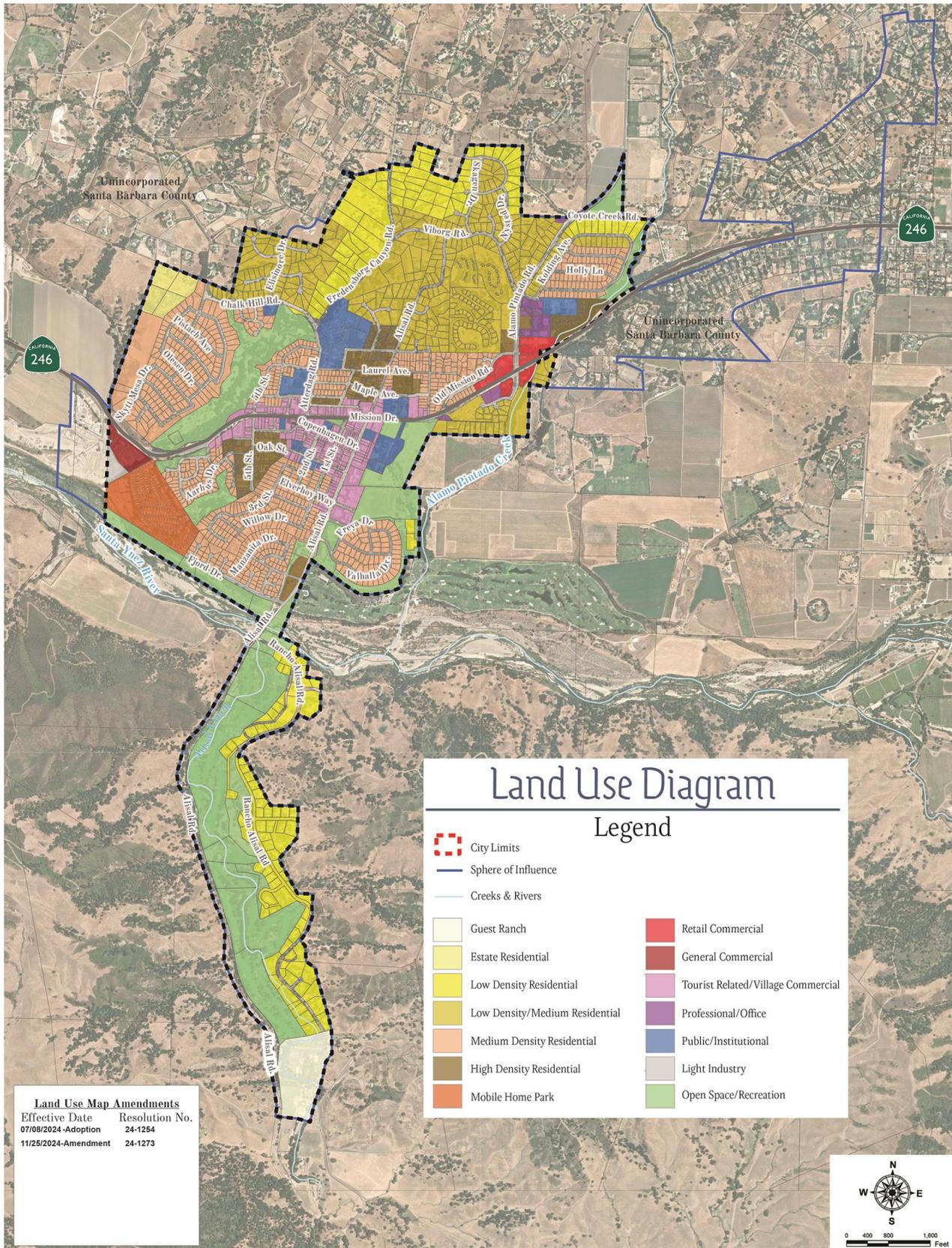




Table 2-1: Land Use Designations

Guest Ranch (GR)

This designation is established to recognize the approximately 30 acres of the Alisal Guest Ranch located which is a working agriculture ranch. Allowed uses include guest lodging, employee housing, restaurants, and recreation and entertainment.

Density/Intensity Range

- Density: Up to 10 du/ac
- Intensity: Up to 15,000 square feet per acre (0.34 FAR)
- Corresponding Zoning: AT

Estate Residential (ER)

This designation allows for low-density, large lot single-family residential development. This designation is characterized by estate ranchettes with detached single-family residences.

Density/Intensity Range

- Density: 0- 1.0 du/ 3 ac
- Intensity: N/A
- Corresponding Zoning: ER-3

Low Density Residential (LDR)

This designation allows for single-family residential development. This designation is characterized by detached single-family residences on large parcels.

Density/Intensity Range

- Density: 0 - 1.0 du/ac
- Intensity: N/A
- Corresponding Zoning: ER-1

Low/Medium Density Residential (LMDR)

This designation allows for single-family residential development. This designation is characterized by detached single-family residences on large parcels.

Density/Intensity Range

- Density: 0 - 2.0 du/ac
- Intensity: N/A
- Corresponding Zoning: R-1

Medium Density Residential (MDR)

This designation allows for single- and multifamily residential development. This designation is characterized by detached single-family and/or medium-density, multi-family residences on smaller parcels.

Density/Intensity Range

- Density: 3.0 to 7.0 du/ac
- Intensity: N/A
- Corresponding Zoning: R-2,PR

High Density Residential (HDR)

This designation allows for multifamily residential development. This designation is characterized by, duplexes, triplexes, row houses, apartments, and/or condominiums. These properties could have increased density based on State Law.

Density/Intensity Range

- Density: 8.0 to 20.0 du/ac
- Intensity: N/A
- Corresponding Zoning: R-3

Mobile Home Park (MHR)

This designation allows for the development of mobile home parks.

Density/Intensity Range

- Density: 0.0 to 8.0 du/ac
- Intensity: N/A
- Corresponding Zoning: MHR

Light Industry (LI)

This designation allows for a range of light industrial land uses. This designation is characterized by light manufacturing, research and development facilities, warehouses, and processing facilities.

Density/Intensity Range

- Density: N/A
- Intensity: 0.23 FAR
- Corresponding Zoning: LI



Open Space/Recreation (OSPR)

This designation allows for public parks, indoor and outdoor recreation and entertainment uses, and open space.

Density/Intensity Range

- Density: N/A
- Intensity: N/A
- Corresponding Zoning: OS,P

Tourist Commercial (TC)

The Tourism Commercial designation allows for a mix of commercial establishments, residential, professional office, hotels, hospitality uses, visitor-serving uses, and entertainment venues. This designation provides for a variety of uses with an emphasis on visitors-serving within the Danish theme downtown area. The ground floor shall remain a non-residential use for all vertical mixed-use developments.

Density/Intensity Range

- Density: Up to 20.0 du/ac
- Intensity: 0.65 to 3.0 FAR
- Corresponding Zoning: VMU

Retail Commercial (RC)

This designation allows for commercial establishments intended to serve the everyday needs of Solvang residents. This designation is characterized by specialty shops, grocery stores, personal service establishments, and residential mixed-use development. Residential is permitted in this designation only in a vertical mixed-use format. For vertical mixed-use developments, the ground floor shall remain a non-residential use.

Density/Intensity Range

- Density: 0.0 to 20.0 du/ac
- Intensity: 0.65 FAR
- Corresponding Zoning: CR

General Commercial (GC)

This designation allows for large scale commercial establishments and is characterized by wholesale, heavy commercial uses, and residential mixed-use development. Residential is permitted in this designation only in a vertical mixed-use format. For vertical mixed-use developments, the ground floor shall remain a non-residential use.

Density/Intensity Range

- Density: Up to 20.0 du/ac
- Intensity: 0.65 FAR
- Corresponding Zoning: CH

Public/Institutional (PI)

This designation allows for a variety of public and quasi-public uses, and is characterized by schools, places of assembly, hospitals, and public utility facilities.

Density/Intensity Range

- Density: N/A
- Intensity: N/A
- Corresponding Zoning: PI

Professional/Office (PO)

This designation allows for a range of office uses and is characterized by medical centers, general office uses, and residential mixed-use development. Residential is permitted in this designation only in a vertical mixed-use format. The ground floor shall remain a non-residential use for all vertical mixed-use developments.

Density/Intensity Range

- Density: Up to 20.0 du/ac
- Intensity: 0.65 FAR
- Corresponding Zoning: PO



Goals and Policies

Balanced Land Use Mix

This General Plan emphasizes a balanced mix of land uses and infill development within the city limits and does not conflict with land uses that are rural and agricultural beyond the city's Urban Growth Boundary. New development will occur where existing roads, water, and sewer are in place and in a manner that minimizes the impact of development on existing infrastructure and services. The General Plan focuses on city-centered growth and provides the policy framework to guide future development toward land uses that support walking, biking, and transit ridership. This approach is intended to maintain Solvang's small-town atmosphere and encourage sustainable land use patterns, while increasing opportunities to grow the local economy.

Goal LU-1:

To promote high-quality development of a well-balanced and functional mix of land uses that preserves and enhances Solvang's community character and tourism.

Policies

- LU-1.1:** **Compact Urban Form.** The City shall maintain a compact urban form.

- LU-1.2:** **Infill Development.** The City shall support and promote infill development that is compact, mixed-use, and pedestrian-friendly.

- LU-1.3:** **Residential Land Use.** Although most of the city is built out, the City shall designate a full range of residential land uses that provide for a variety of housing types, locations, and densities, including accessory dwelling units.

- LU-1.4:** **Commercial Land Use.** The City shall designate a mix of commercial uses, including retail, general, and tourist commercial, to promote both the tourist economy and the needs of residents of Solvang and the Santa Ynez valley.

- LU-1.5:** **Village Area.** The City shall continue to encourage a mix of uses in close proximity to each other in the Village Area (including both the Village Core and Mission Design Districts), including governmental services and facilities, cultural and recreational

activities, a broad range of retail activities, business offices, entertainment, transit services, and housing.

- LU-1.6:** **Mixed-use.** The City shall encourage mixed-use developments with a residential component to further enhance the range of housing opportunities provided to residents.
- LU-1.7:** **Industrial Land Use.** The City shall encourage the development of more industrial uses in the M-1 zone to expand the City's job base, including light industrial facilities, research and development parks, and heavy equipment maintenance yards.
- LU-1.8:** **Support Existing Industrial Development.** The City shall support maintaining and expanding existing industrial uses within the Urban Growth Boundary area, including changes that require a popular vote, if necessary.
- LU-1.9:** **Open Space and Recreational Land Use.** The City shall maintain and correctly designate an adequate amount of open space and recreational land uses to meet the needs of the entire community, consistent with City park standards.
- LU-1.10:** **Public and Institutional Land Use.** The City shall designate institutional land uses to meet the social, economic, cultural, spiritual, and educational needs of the community.



Residential

Residential neighborhoods will continue to be the predominant development pattern in Solvang. The magnitude of change anticipated for these areas is substantially less than what is anticipated for other areas of the city. Changes proposed in residential neighborhoods are more subtle, focusing on how to enhance the quality of these areas by improving characteristics such as connectivity, pedestrian safety, neighborhood character, and housing choice.

The General Plan encourages higher density residential uses to locate in areas with good transit access and close to shopping and service areas. When properly designed, this can encourage more walking, biking, and transit use, and provides a larger customer base for nearby businesses.

Goal LU-2:

To provide a variety of housing types that offer choices for Solvang residents and create complete, livable neighborhoods.

- LU-2.1:** **Regional Housing Needs Fair Share.** The City shall provide an adequate amount of appropriately zoned land to accommodate new housing units to meet the City's fair share regional housing needs allocations.

- LU-2.2:** **Existing Neighborhoods.** The City shall attempt to maintain and enhance the quality of existing residential neighborhoods, ensuring adequate public facilities such as parks, streets, water supply, wastewater, and drainage while implementing required State Housing Laws

- LU-2.3:** **Neighborhood Infill.** The City shall allow infill development .as required by State Law include ADU's, JADU and density bonus.

- LU-2.4:** **High-density Residential Development.** The City shall encourage new high-density residential development located in areas close to services and transit with appropriate site planning, and comply with objective design standards, and landscape criteria.

Commercial

Commercial uses are intended to provide areas for retail sales and services demanded by residents and visitors. These locations are for commerce, employment, entertainment, culture, and appropriately sited residential uses.

Pedestrian-oriented activities are encouraged with public spaces and uses that draw a variety of people and offer a welcome setting. Commercial uses shall be designed to operate in harmony with adjacent neighborhoods and uses through the siting of buildings, transitions in scale, and appropriate land use mix.

Goal LU-3:

To ensure that existing and proposed commercial development is consistent with the overall character of the city.

- LU-3.1: New Commercial Development.** The City shall ensure that new commercial development is appropriately located and is consistent with the Community Design Element of the General Plan.
- LU-3.2: High-quality Building Design.** The City shall require distinctive and high-quality commercial building design, construction, and site planning that respects the character of Solvang and does not allow the use of “franchise architecture”.
- LU-3.3: Commercial Amenities and Impact Mitigation.** The City shall require new or expanded commercial or office areas to include provisions for adequate off-street parking, pathways connecting building entries to the public sidewalk, bicycle parking, mitigation of traffic impacts, adherence to architectural and low-water landscaping standards, and mitigation of land use conflicts with adjacent residential uses.



Village Area

The Village Area is the heart of Solvang and plays a key role for the city. A mixture of recreational, dining, arts and entertainment, retail, commercial uses, and residential area make up the Village Area. The Village Area is comprised of two design districts including the Village Core Design District and Mission Design District. Both districts combined create unique gathering spaces that reinforce the organic and diverse built environment in Solvang. The vision for the Village Core Design District within the Village Area is to preserve and enhance Solvang as the “Danish Capital of America” and ensure that it is an economically vibrant, pedestrian-oriented, locally owned and operated premier destination. The vision for the Mission Design District within the Village Area is to connect the early settlement of the Santa Ynez Valley and construction of the Mission Santa Inés through consistent architectural design. For additional policies relating to both design districts, see the Community Design Element in the General Plan.

The Village Area also serves the community as a local gathering place where people socialize and engage. Policies in this section aim to preserve the historic Danish character of the Village, while supporting new development, including mixed-use, residential, and commercial projects. Additionally, this section guides development for infrastructure and amenities needed for the growth of the Village Area while attracting and retaining business.

Goal LU-4:

To protect, promote, and enhance the Village Area and the Village Core and Mission Design Districts. It is Solvang’s principal tourist attraction and the essential component of the City’s identity.

- LU-4.1:** **Tourist-Related Land Uses.** The City shall assure that the Village Area is the primary focus of tourist related land uses.

- LU-4.2:** **Village Area Mixed-use Development.** The City shall encourage a mix of uses and mixed-use developments that integrate housing and commercial uses in the Village Area.

- LU-4.3:** **Safe Pedestrian Environment.** The City shall encourage and/or undertake design improvements in the Village Area to create a safe, convenient, and pleasant pedestrian environment.

- LU-4.4:** **New Pedestrian Facilities.** The City shall require new development in the Village Area to include pedestrian-oriented amenities such as, but not limited to, lighting, wider sidewalks,

clearly marked pedestrian crossings, seating areas, landscaping, signage, and shaded areas.

- LU-4.5: Pedestrian Facility Design.** The City shall design and manage City roadway and pedestrian facilities to minimize conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists, and encourage Caltrans to do the same on State highway facilities.

Mixed-use

Mixed-use development blends residential and non-residential uses vertically within a single building within a larger development. The intention of mixing uses is to create vibrant and economically vital places for residents to gather, socialize, work, shop, and recreate close to where they live. This development pattern should create walkable centers of activity.

Goal LU-5:

To encourage mixed-use development projects that create vibrant, walkable districts.

- LU-5.1: Compatibility with Adjacent Uses.** The City shall require new mixed-use development to be compatible with adjacent land uses, through site and architectural design techniques that establish buffers between uses and minimize negative impacts.
- LU-5.2: Mixed-use Design.** The City shall require new mixed-use development to minimize the number of access driveways, and provide pedestrian friendly access.
- LU-5.3: Pedestrian Orientation.** The City shall require new mixed-use development to include amenities that create a comfortable environment for walking, sitting, and socializing.

Industrial

Industrial district provides for manufacturing, research and development, flex space, industry incubators, and similar uses that range from to manufacturing and other industrial areas. The Light Industry designation supports “clean” industries including agricultural related industries that take advantage of the education and skills of the local and regional population. Industrial land use policies promote improvements in site planning to create places with attractive architecture and landscaping, and make employment areas accessible to vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit.



Goal LU-6:

To encourage, facilitate, and support the development of new employment and industrial uses.

- LU-6.1:** **Attract Industrial Uses.** The City shall encourage and support new development of industrial uses that provide jobs for city residents, increase the tax base, and are designed and operated in a way that is compatible with surrounding uses.
- LU-6.2:** **Industrial Design Standards.** The City shall ensure that new industrial development contributes to the overall attractiveness of the community through appropriate site design, architectural design, and landscaping. And particularly at gateways to the city.
- LU-6.3:** **Industrial Area Screening.** The City shall require industrial development to screen loading and open storage areas so that they are not visible from public roadways.

Public and Institutional Uses

Like many other cities, Solvang includes a variety of public and institutional land uses that are both widely distributed throughout the city and reflective of the community's rich history. Old Mission Santa Ines, other churches, the Veteran's Memorial Building, City Hall, the schools, the library, the fire station, and other community serving institutions are all essential to the quality of life of residents. (Parks and recreational facilities are fully addressed in the Public Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure Element.)

Goal LU-7:

To ensure and preserve adequate space throughout the city for public and institutional uses.

- LU-7.1: Institutional Land Use Designation.** The City shall allow the development of publicly owned facilities, schools, churches, hospitals and medical centers, cemeteries, and retirement care facilities and convalescent homes where appropriate.
- LU-7.2: Solvang Veteran's Memorial Building.** The City shall preserve and maintain the Solvang Veteran's Memorial Building and encourage its use for appropriate community events.
- LU-7.3: City Hall.** The City shall provide conveniently located public facilities to support local government and city services with appropriate public access and participation.
- LU-7.4: Library.** The City shall support a conveniently located public library facility with appropriate services, public access and participation.
- LU-7.5: Senior Serving and Retirement Care Facilities.** The City shall support senior serving and retirement care facilities.
- LU-7.6: Mission Santa Ines.** The City shall support religious, cultural, educational, community oriented, and agricultural uses at Mission Santa Ines that are compatible with existing land uses.



Urban Growth Boundary

In early 2020 the Solvang City Council adopted, the Urban Growth Boundary Initiative (UGB) which sunsets in 2040. The UGB has several objectives, including promoting long-term planning stability, protecting agricultural land and open space surrounding the city, and ensuring maintenance of a greenbelt separating Solvang from other communities in the Santa Ynez Valley. The UGB also encourages infill development within the UGB and avoids sprawl. The City will not approve any development beyond the UGB, without a vote of the citizens, apart from certain exceptions described in the UGB (public schools, facilities, and services).

Goal LU-8:

To preserve the City's identity as separate and unique from surrounding areas.

LU-8.1: Community Separators. The City shall work with Santa Barbara County and the City of Buellton to protect the agricultural areas surrounding the city boundaries and Sphere of Influence to serve as "greenbelt" open space to separate communities in the Santa Ynez Valley.

LU-8.1: Open Space Designations. The City shall designate riparian and publicly owned lands along the Santa Ynez River, Alisal Creek, Adobe Creek, Alamo Pintado Creek, and other appropriate locations as open space.

LU-8.2: Compact Development Pattern. The City shall maintain a compact development pattern by promoting infill development that minimizes urban sprawl and is compact, mixed-use, and pedestrian friendly.

General Plan Use and Maintenance

The Solvang 2045 General Plan is designed to be a living document that reflects the City's needs and desires, which will evolve over time. The effectiveness of the General Plan ultimately depends on how the City implements and maintains the General Plan over its lifetime. This section is designed to ensure that the City provides for regular review and updating of this General Plan to ensure that it reflects the community's needs and aspirations, as well as consistency with changes in State law.

Goal LU-9:

To promote the effective use and implementation of the General Plan Land Use Diagram.

LU-9.1: Land Use Diagram. The City shall maintain and implement a Land Use Diagram describing the types of allowed land uses by geographic location and the density of allowed uses within each designation.

LU-9.2: Zoning Designations. The City shall ensure that zoning designations and maps are consistent with the Land Use Diagram (Figure LU-1) In addition, the City shall ensure that amendments to the General Plan land use designations, Land Use Diagram or General Plan text are consistent with the Guiding Principles, and relevant goals and policies.

Goal LU-10:

To provide a clear framework for the ongoing administration, maintenance, and implementation of this General Plan consistent with State law.

LU-10.1: General Plan Review. The City shall conduct a technical review of the General Plan every eight years and revise and update as necessary to assure compliance with State law and responsiveness to current City needs, including a jobs/housing balance and adequate municipal revenues to maintain adequate level of public services.

LU-10.2: Implementation Program Monitoring. The City shall maintain and annually review the General Plan Implementation Programs. As part of this process, the City shall update the prioritization of



programs based on applicability, relevance, timing of initiation, and availability of funding.

LU-10.3: **Eight Year Review of the Housing Element Update.** The City shall, as directed by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), update and implement a Housing Element every eight years that provides policy and programs to encourage the provision of safe, well-designed, accessible, sanitary, and affordable residential areas where people of all ages can live, work, and play. This includes an equitable distribution of parks and public facilities to all residential areas consistent with legal requirements.