

Agricultural Conservation Mitigation Program (REF220044)



Community Meeting South County
July 18, 2022 – Greenfield City Council Chambers

Presentation Overview



Policy Framework



What is Agricultural Conservation Mitigation?



Process & Timeline



Engagement & Input



Discussion

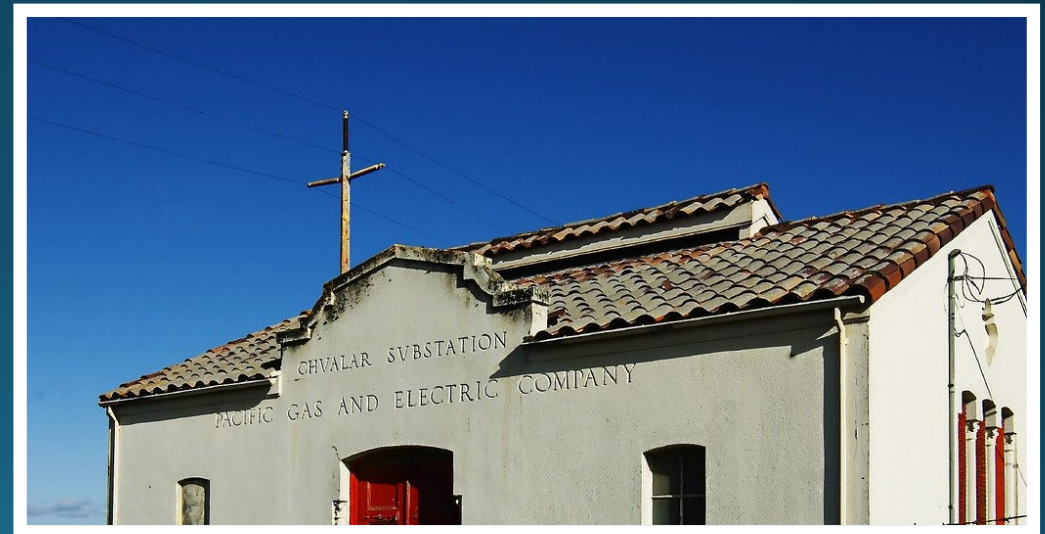
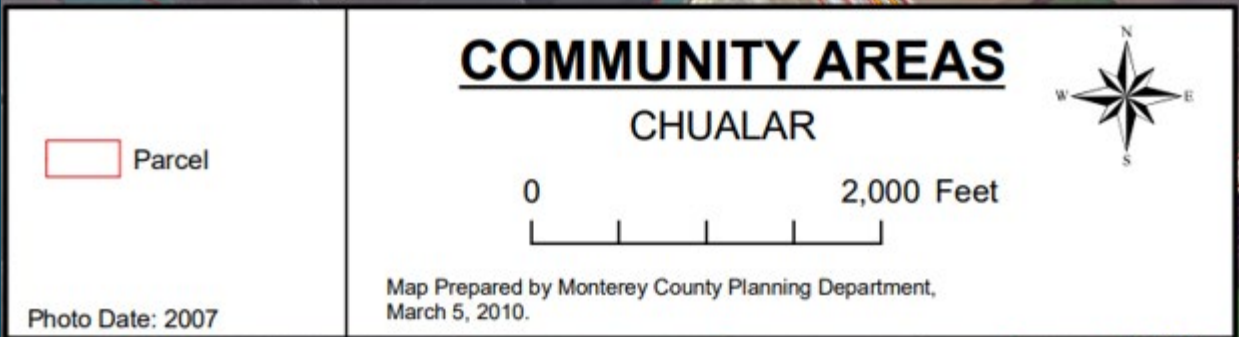
Policy Framework

- 2010 General Plan: Policies that address existing and future land use for the large rural areas that are predominantly for agricultural purposes and for diversity of unincorporate communities
- Land Use Element: Creates a general framework that encourages growth within or near developed/developing areas in order to reduce impacts to agricultural production, natural resources, or public services
- Community Areas & Rural Centers



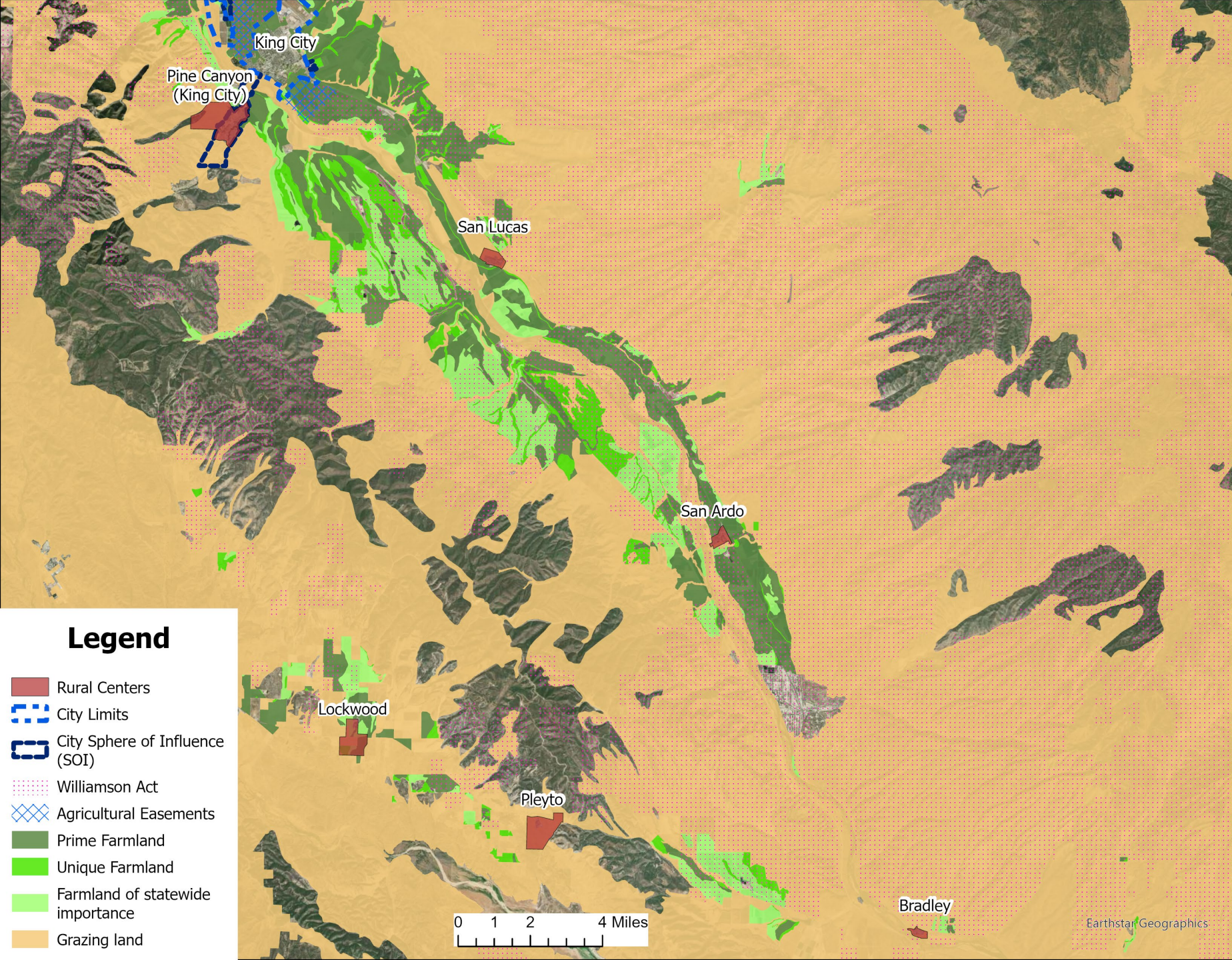
Chualar Community Area

The County shall establish and emphasize Community Areas as the preferred location and the priority for additional development in the County.



Rural Centers – South County

- Rural Centers in South County are Pine Canyon, San Lucas, San Ardo, Lockwood, Pleyto, and Bradley.
- Rural Centers are a secondary planning priority for the County.



Legend

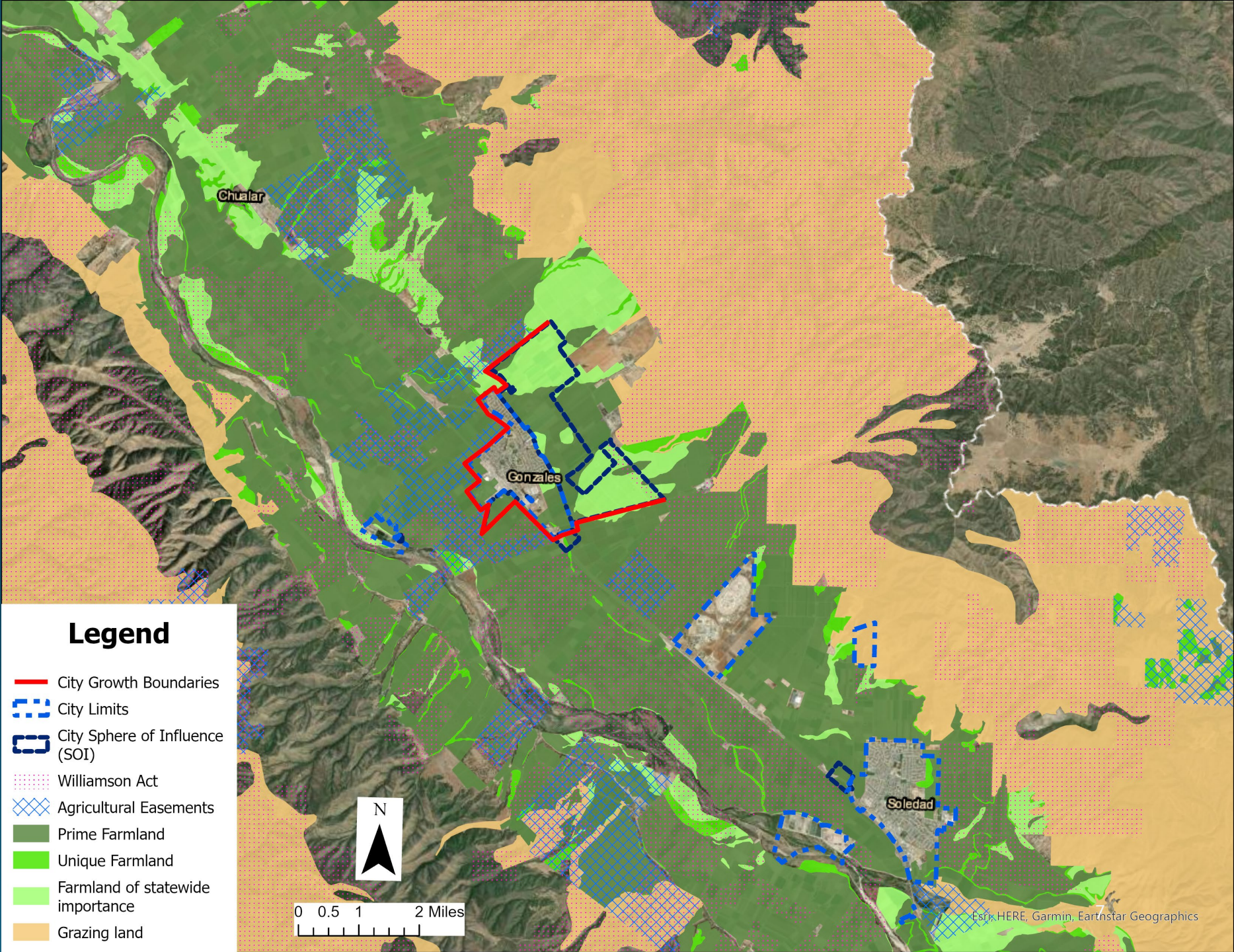
- Rural Centers
- City Limits
- City Sphere of Influence (SOI)
- Williamson Act
- Agricultural Easements
- Prime Farmland
- Unique Farmland
- Farmland of statewide importance
- Grazing land

Policy Framework

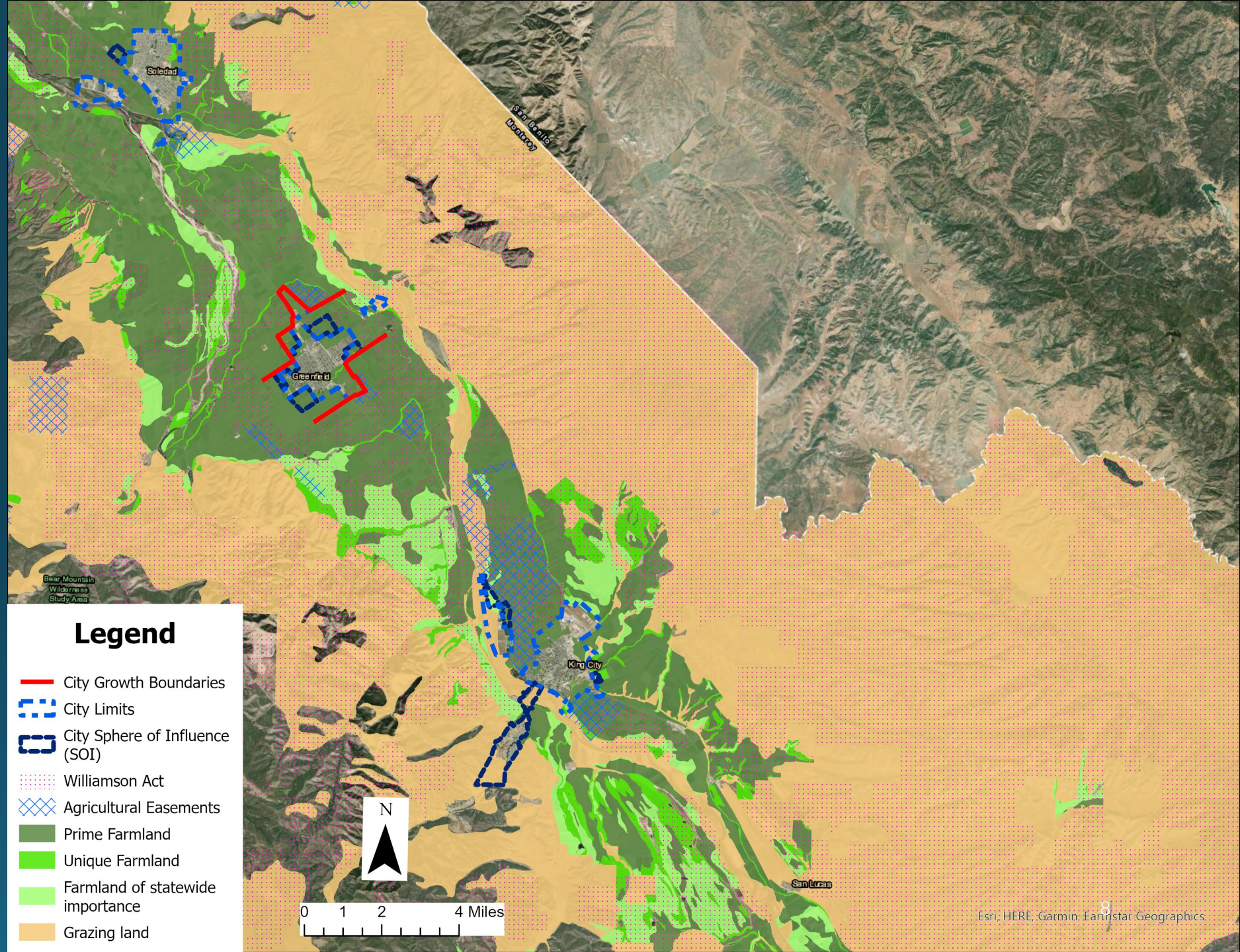
- 2010 General Plan: Preserve, protect, and enhance farmland in order to maintain the productivity and viability of the County's agricultural industry.
- Agricultural Element: Promote the long-term protection, conservation and enhancement of productive and potentially productive agricultural lands.
- Agricultural Conservation Mitigation Program: Mitigate loss of farmland to development



Protected Agricultural Lands – Salinas Valley (Chualar to Soledad)



Protected Agricultural Lands – Salinas Valley (Soledad to King City)



What does mitigation look like?

- Purchase of Permanent Agricultural Conservation Easement
- Payment of In-Lieu Fees
- Other Mitigation Tools
 - Conservation of Soil at Development Sites
 - Improve or Create Farmland via Preservation of Prime Soils



Policy Process

**Staff Research
and Analysis**

**Community
Meetings &
Workshops**

**Drafting
Policies**

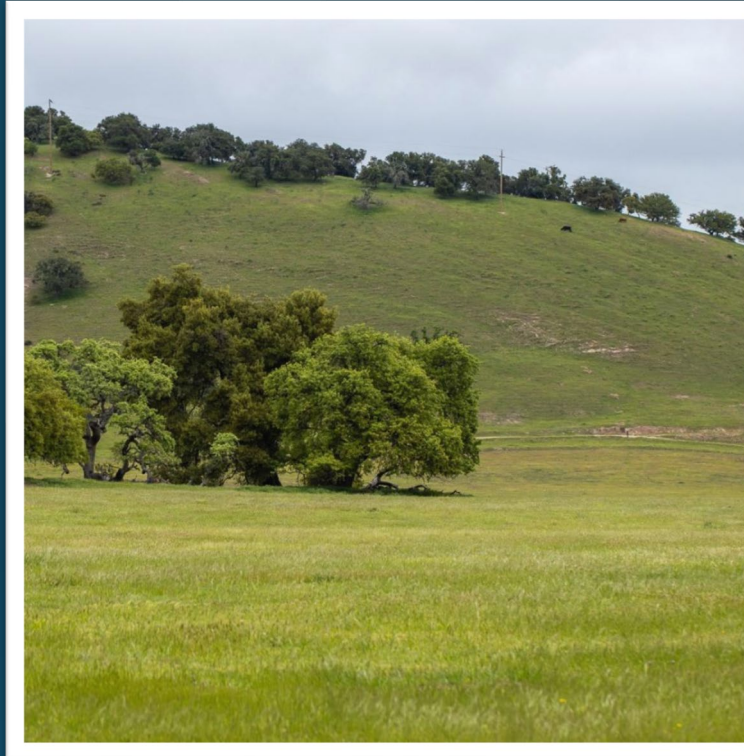
**Environmental
Analysis**

**Public
Hearings**

Final Approval

Timeline

- Meetings & Workshops
 - Summer 2022
- Environmental Analysis & Public Comment
 - Late Summer/Fall 2022
- Final Draft Policies and CEQA Public Hearings
 - End of 2022



Policy Input

- Agricultural Conservation Mitigation Program Purpose (Draft)
- Meaningful Measure or “Value” of Loss of Agricultural Land
- Eligibility Criteria of Mitigation Receiving Site
- Exceptions or Special Considerations
- Others

Join the Discussion

To follow the policy development, provide comment and feedback:

Sign In today – include your email & check the box

Or email - hcdcomments@co.monterey.ca.us

Questions?

Contact Melanie Beretti, AICP, Principal Planner

Phone | 831-755-5285 Email | berettim@co.monterey.ca.us

Program Purpose & Goals (Draft)

Purpose

- Provide clear and consistent policies to mitigate the loss of agricultural land due to development or conversion to non-agricultural uses

Goals

- Promote the long-term protection, conservation, and enhancement of productive and potentially productive agricultural lands
- Ensure the commercial viability of Monterey County's agricultural industry
- Support growth management policies that encourage growth in or near developed or developing areas and away from valuable agricultural land

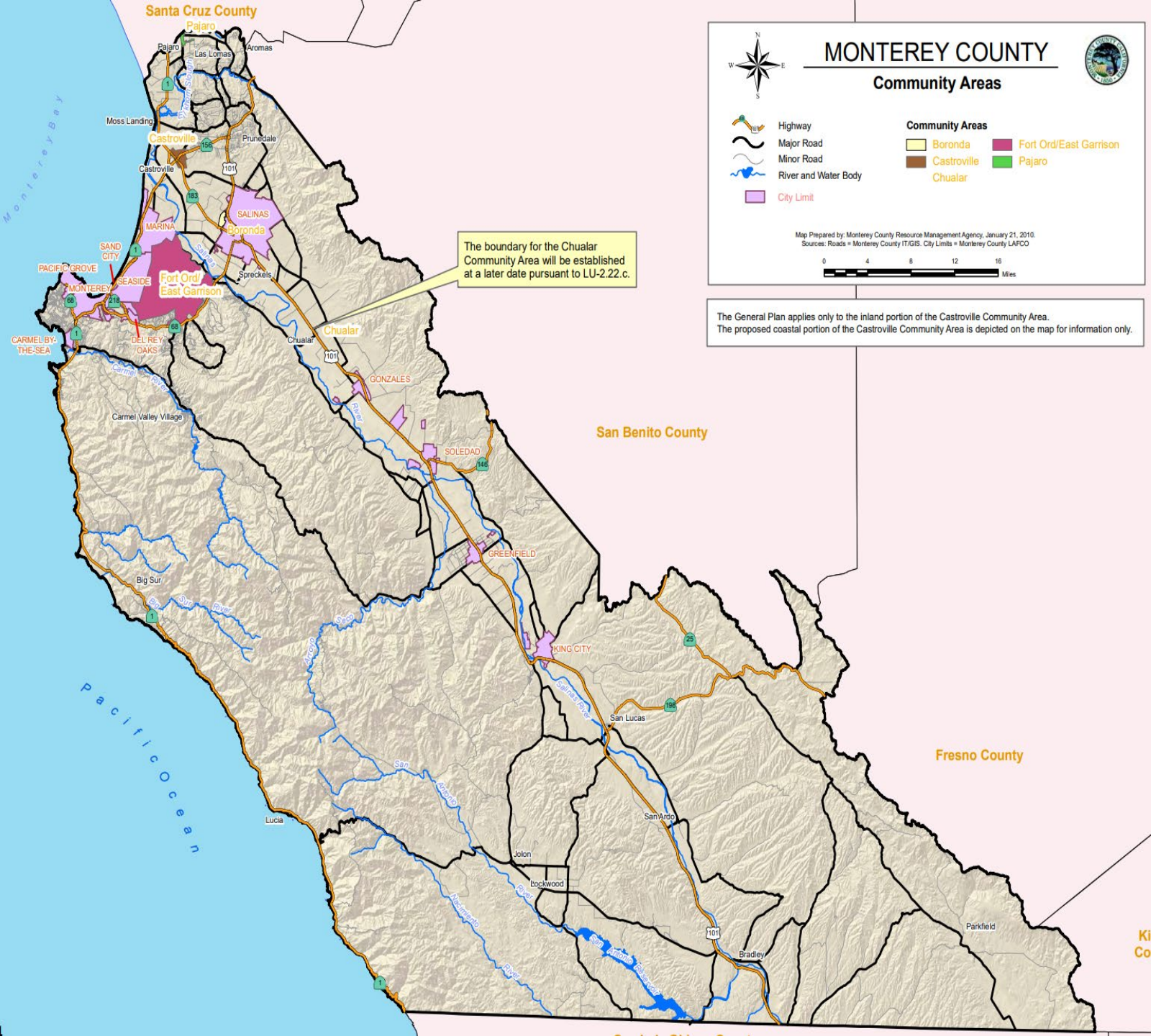
Policy Input

- Meaningful Measure or “Value” of Loss of Agricultural Land
- Eligibility Criteria of Mitigation Receiving Site
 - Fair Market Appraised Value
 - Easement diminution value as agricultural conservation
 - Important Farmland
 - (Prime; Statewide Importance; Unique; Locally Important; Grazing/Rangeland)
 - Clear definition of “Prime” farmland
 - Location
 - Relative to the farmland being converted
 - Specific Planning Areas
 - Quality & Character
 - Water source and quality

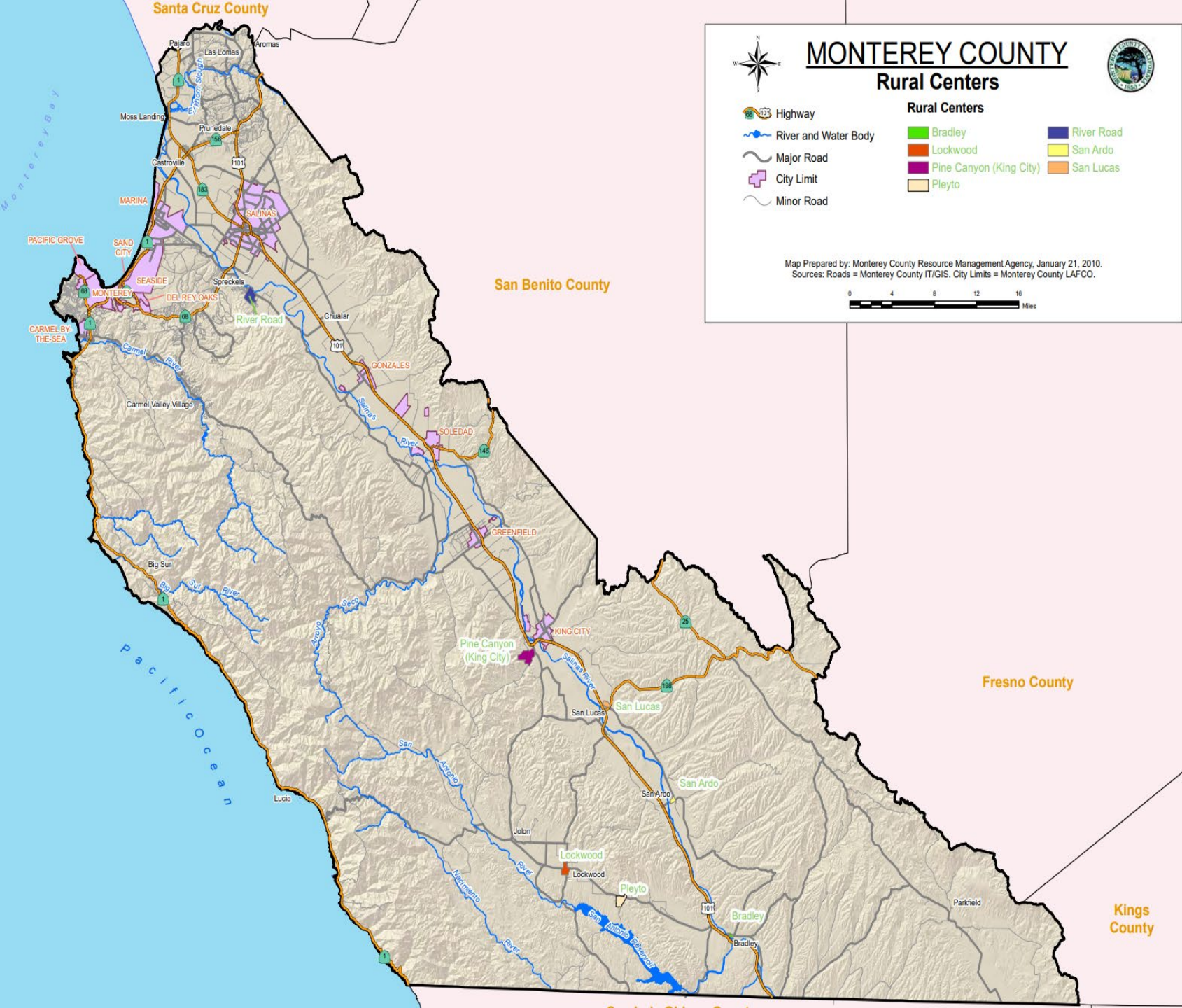
Policy Input

- Exceptions or Special Considerations
 - Required by AG-1.12
 - Acreage within project/annexation utilized for inclusionary housing
 - Community Plan or Rural Center Plan that includes a mitigation program
 - Thresholds for Requiring Easement (“good faith”) versus In-Lieu Fees versus Other
 - Farmland minimum to require easement first = 40 acres? 20 acres?
 - Farmland to only require in-lieu fee, not easement = where between 5 – 40 acres?
 - Others

County-wide Community Areas



- The County shall emphasize Community Areas as the preferred location and the priority for additional development in the County.
- New development in the unincorporated area shall be actively supported as the County's primary planning priority.



County-wide Rural Centers

- Are existing areas containing concentrations of development within the County.
- New development other than within Community Areas shall be encouraged to be located within Rural Centers.