

EXISTING CONDITIONS ATLAS

San Carlos 2040

City of San Carlos

Community Development Department

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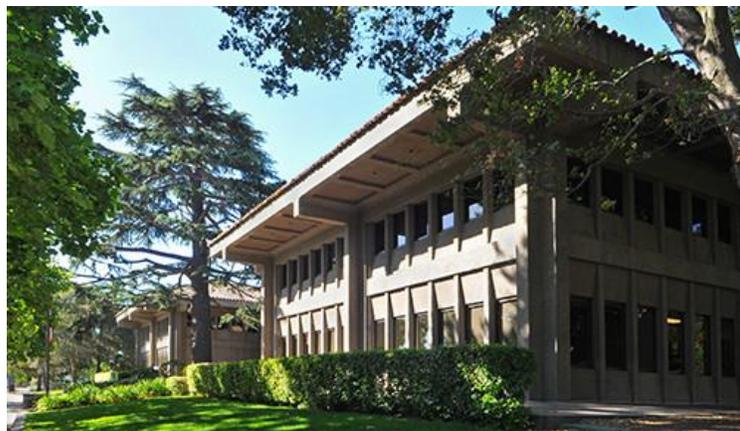
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1. INTRODUCTION

This Existing Conditions Atlas, prepared for the City of San Carlos' Focused General Plan Update, provides a snapshot in time of San Carlos and adjacent unincorporated San Mateo County sphere of influence areas. In a concise and graphic format that includes maps, tables, graphs, and photographs, the Atlas explores land use, public services, natural hazards and constraints, and potential disadvantaged neighborhoods. The information presented will form a foundation for development of the General Plan Housing Element and Environmental Safety Element.

Context

The City of San Carlos is located on the San Francisco Peninsula, between Belmont and Redwood City, and about halfway between San Francisco and San Jose. San Carlos' city limit extends to the City of Belmont to the northwest, the San Francisco Bay to the northeast, the City of Redwood City to the southeast, and unincorporated San Mateo County to the southwest (Figure 1).



*San Carlos City Hall located on Elm Street
Source: cityofsancarlos.org*

Freeways and highways offer regional access to San Carlos, including the Bayshore Freeway (US 101) on the east and Junipero Serra Freeway (I 280) to the west. A regional artery, El Camino Real (SR 82) traverses San Carlos in a northwest-southeast direction. A subregional arterial through San Carlos is Alameda de la Pulgas.



San Carlos Caltrain Station
Source: cityofsancarlos.org

Public transportation services include local and regional routes provided by the San Mateo Transit District and CalTrain’s commuter rail. Local service is available to parts of San Carlos along San Carlos Avenue as well as the Industrial east side of San Carlos.

Commuter service is available via express routes along the Bayshore Freeway and provides service to San Francisco and other cities within San Mateo County. San Carlos is serviced by three SamTrans bus lines and Caltrain’s commuter rail, which provides service to other regional transit services such as BART, as well as connecting to the regional hubs of San Francisco and San Jose. The San Carlos Caltrain stop is located at the intersection of El Camino Real and San Carlos Avenue.

Planning Area

The City of San Carlos encompasses approximately eight square miles, nearly all of which are developed with urban land uses. San Carlos’ sphere of influence includes three areas of unincorporated San Mateo County:

- Devonshire Area, which includes two non-adjacent areas: Devonshire Canyon (a County island) and a nearby 17-acre area adjacent to Club Drive, Cranfield Avenue, and the City of Belmont
- Palomar Park, a neighborhood south of the San Carlos city limit
- Pulgas Ridge (formally known as the Hassler Area), consisting of Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve and several San Mateo County institutional facilities¹

State law defines a sphere of influence as the probable physical boundary and service area of a local agency, as determined by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). All properties within the corporate City limits and the

¹ <http://www.cityofsancarlos.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=1105>

sphere of influence area is called the Planning Area² (Figure 2). While the City has no formal authority within its sphere, it is empowered by the State to consider areas that bear relation to the City’s future. This planning approach provides cities with a means of shaping the future of areas they could eventually annex.

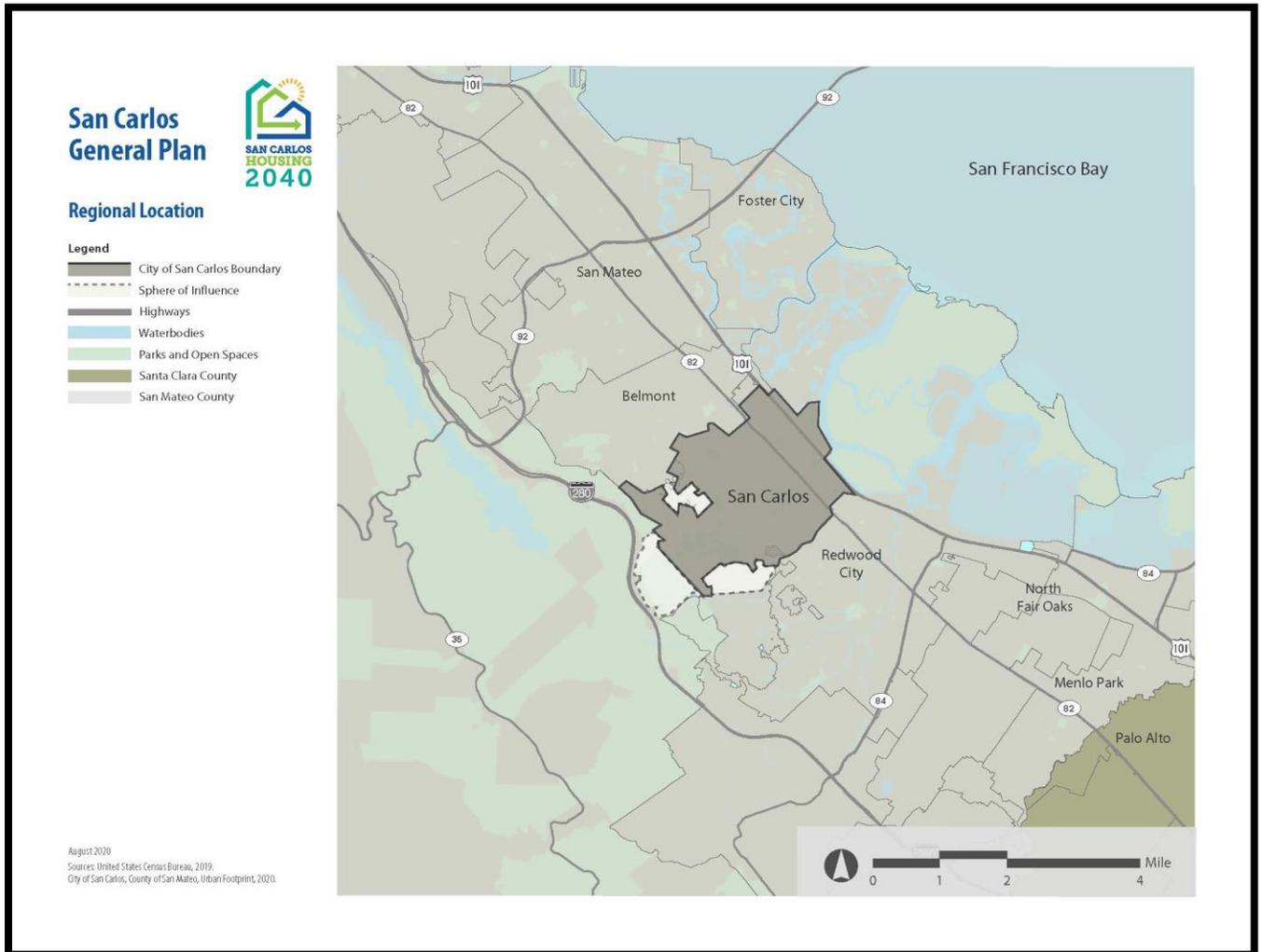


Figure 1: Regional Location

² The adopted General Plan identifies some San Carlos neighborhoods as Planning Areas as they are anticipated to be the areas with the most potential to change. The use of the term Planning Area for the Focused General Plan’s Existing Conditions Atlas means all areas within San Carlos and its Sphere of Influence.

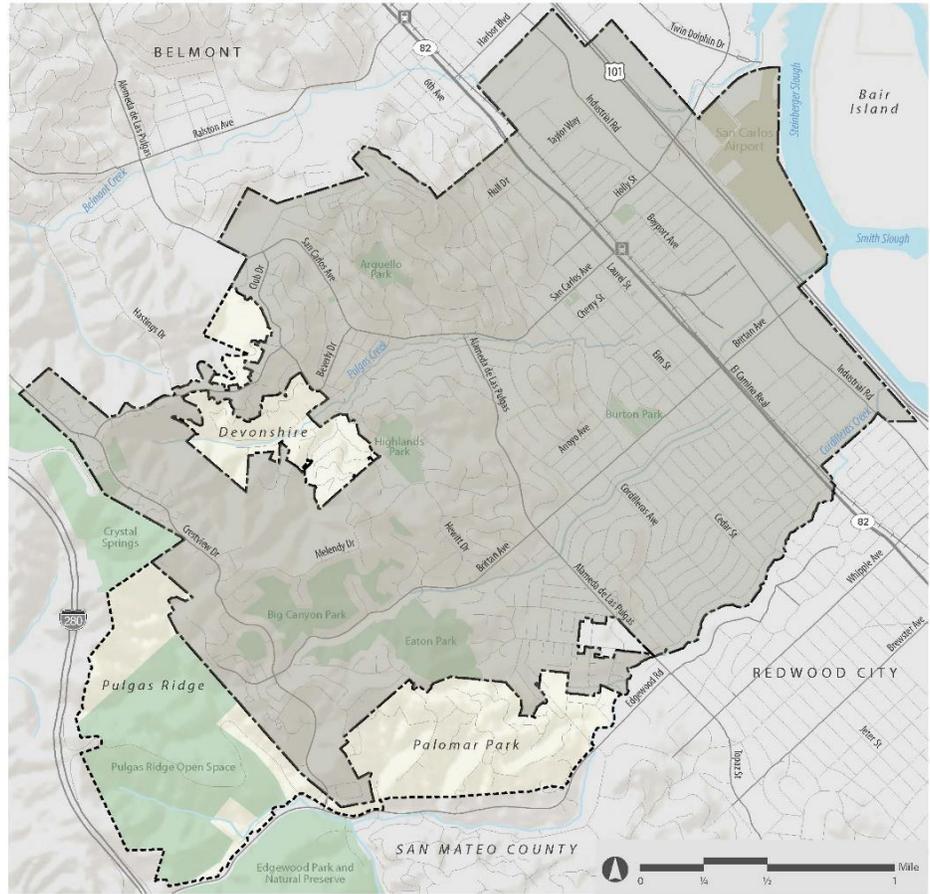
San Carlos General Plan



Planning Area

Legend

- City of San Carlos Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Major Streets
- Streets
- Caltrain Railroad and Stations
- Surrounding Jurisdictions
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Waterbodies
- San Carlos Airport



August 2020
 Sources: United States Census Bureau, 2019;
 City of San Carlos, County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint, 2020.

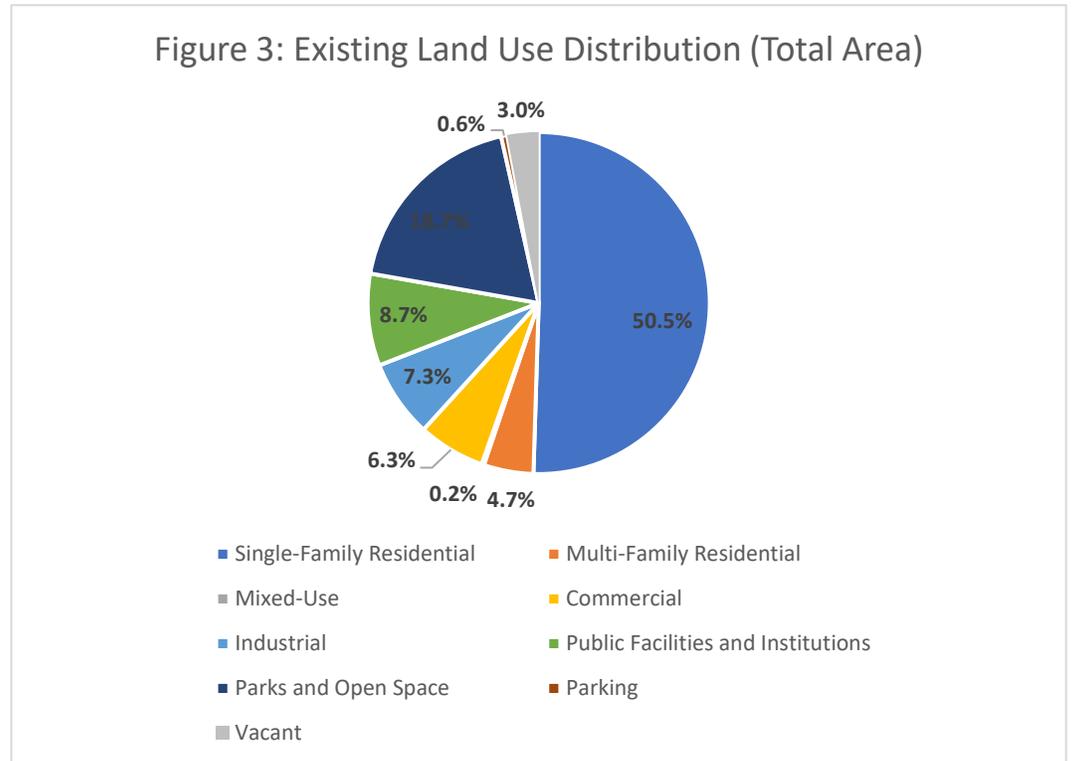
Figure 2: Planning Area

2. LAND USE

Land use and planning policy documents and plans provide a starting point for understanding past planning efforts that have and continue to shape San Carlos. Planning policy documents include the General Plan (adopted 2009), and Zoning Ordinance (originally adopted in 2011 and last amended in 2019).

Existing Land Use

San Carlos' Planning Area consists of 10,348 parcels encompassing 3,570 gross acres. The Planning Area includes the City's 2,805 gross acres and the 765 sphere of influence gross acres. As illustrated in Figure 3 and Table 1, gross residential land uses



Source: United States Census Bureau, 2019. City of San Carlos. County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint 2020

represent the predominant existing land use in San Carlos (1,970 gross acres), which account for more than half (55 percent) of the total land area. Single-family residential uses—generally consisting of one house per lot—make up over 50 percent of the residential category. Multi-family residential uses make up less than five percent of residential uses. Mixed – Use land uses total 8 acres (less than one percent). Commercial and light industrial land uses total 488 acres (14 percent). Public Facilities and Institutions makes up 311 gross acres (9 percent). Park and open space uses encompass 668 gross acres (19 percent). Parking uses total 20 acres or less than one percent, while vacant land makes up 106 acres and 3 percent of the Planning Area.

Table 1: Land Use Distribution by Gross Acres (2020)

Existing Land Use	San Carlos (City)		Sphere of Influence (SOI)		Planning Area Total	
	Acres	% of City Land Uses	Acres	% of SOI Land Uses	Acres	% of All Land Uses
Residential	1,717.8	61.2%	252.5	33.0%	1,970.3	55.2%
Single-Family	1,553.2	55.4%	249.4	32.6%	1,802.6	50.5%
Multi-Family	164.6	5.9%	3.1	0.4%	167.7	4.7%
Mixed-Use	8.0	0.3%	-	-	8.0	0.2%
Commercial	212.3	7.6%	13.8	1.8%	226.1	6.3%
Retail	95.5	3.4%	13.8	1.8%	109.3	3.1%
Office/Commercial	116.8	4.2%	-	-	116.8	3.3%
Industrial	261.5	9.3%	-	-	261.5	7.3%
Industrial	162.8	5.8%	-	-	162.8	4.6%
Warehousing	98.7	3.5%	-	-	98.7	2.8%
Public Facilities and Institutions	251.2	9.0%	59.4	7.8%	310.6	8.7%
Civic	2.9	0.1%	20.9	2.7%	23.8	0.7%
Institutional	12.2	0.4%	-	-	12.2	0.3%
Schools/Education Facilities	66.7	2.4%	15.4	2.0%	82.1	2.3%
Transportation/Utilities	169.3	6.0%	23.1	3.0%	192.5	5.4%
Parks and Open Space	306.7	10.9%	360.8	47.1%	667.5	18.7%
Parks/Recreation	164.6	5.9%	357.4	46.7%	522.0	14.6%
Open Space/Natural Resources	142.0	5.1%	3.4	0.4%	145.4	4.1%
Agriculture	0.1	0.004%	-	-	0.1	0.003%
Parking	19.9	0.7%	0.5	0.1%	20.4	0.6%
Vacant	27.9	1.0%	77.8	10.2%	105.7	3.0%
TOTAL	2,805.3	100%	764.7	100%	3,570.01	100%

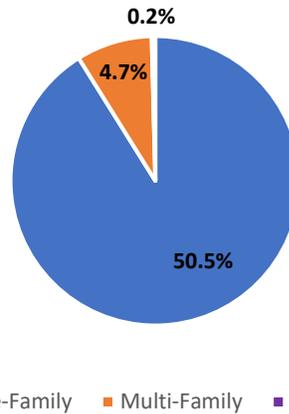
Residential Uses³

Residential uses comprise the largest land use category, 55 percent of the Planning Area or 1,978 gross acres).

Residential uses are comprised of single-family, multi-family, and mixed use. Single-

family use is generally considered of one house per lot. Single family residential use is over 50 percent of the entire planning area. Single-family use is located throughout San Carlos including east of El Camino. Multi-family use is generally considered of more than one housing unit on a lot. Multi-family use can include stacked flats and townhomes. Like single-family use, multi-family uses are found throughout the Planning Area. Mixed-use combines residential use either vertically or horizontally with a nonresidential use, typically a commercial use. Mixed-use primarily occurs along El Camino Real. When comparing the amount of land dedicated to single-family residential uses versus multi-family residential uses, single-family use is more predominate. Specifically, over 90 percent of all residential land use is single-family land use.

Figure 4: Residential Uses (Percent of All Land Use Gross Acres)



Source: United States Census Bureau, 2019. City of San Carlos. County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint 2020

³ The San Carlos Zoning Ordinance Chapter 18.04 defines allowed residential density as follows:

- Single Family Low Density development ranges from three units per net acre
- Single Family Residential Density allows for residential densities up to six units per net acre
- Multi Family Low Density Residential allows for residential densities up to twenty units per net acre
- Multi Family Medium Density Residential allows for residential development at up to fifty nine units per net acre

Residential Densities

Low residential density (defined as up to twenty units per net acre, in accordance with the San Carlos Zoning Ordinance) and medium residential density (up to 59 units per net acre) uses are concentrated in the east-central portion of San Carlos



Single Family Home in San Carlos

between San Carlos Avenue, Cherry Street, and Laurel Street west of El Camino Real and US 101. It is important to note that low residential density can occur in the following housing types or building forms --stand-alone or one housing unit on a lot, duplexes, triplexes, stacked flats, townhouses, and rowhouses.

Of the single-family residential zoning districts, the most predominant is the RS-6 Single Family Zoning District located throughout San Carlos and west of US 101.

Medium density residential development allows for densities of up to 59 units per acre and accommodates stacked flats, townhomes, and rowhouses developed at a scale and form appropriate to neighborhood context and adjacent single-family residential uses. Medium density residential development is concentrated in the Downtown area and Laurel Street and the El Camino Real corridor. Medium density housing is also found along the southern edge of the Devonshire area and along San Carlos' western boundary.

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are another residential form found in San Carlos. San Carlos allows ADUs to be established on any lot in any zoning district where a primary single-unit dwelling has been previously established or is proposed to be established in conjunction with construction of a second unit. Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs) are a subset of ADUs. JADUs are contained entirely within an existing or proposed single-family residence. Recent State law (2019) allows ADUs to be built in multi-family districts under specified conditions. As of

November 2020, San Carlos has 179 permitted ADUs, 11 of which were issued Building Permits after January 2020.

Mixed-Use Districts

Mixed-use development combines two or more types of land use into a building or set of buildings that are physically and functionally integrated and mutually supporting. This can be a combination of residential, commercial, office, institutional, or other land uses.⁴ Mixed-use development accommodating 50 or more units per acre occurs along the eastern



Mixed Use Development in San Carlos

portion of El Camino Real corridor east of San Carlos Avenue, with the highest allowed density occurring in the Mixed Use – San Carlos Avenue zoning district (Figure 5). Mixed-use districts account for less than one percent of the total land use in San Carlos.

Other Land Uses

Other land uses include light and heavy industrial, general commercial, landmark commercial, neighborhood retail, airport, planned development, parks, and open space.

Commercial development covers six percent, or 226 gross acres of all land uses in the Planning Area. Office commercial uses containing business, professional, and medical services make up 117 gross acres or three percent. Industrial uses comprise 262 gross acres or seven percent of total land area. Industrial uses include large manufacturing businesses, biotechnical and biomedical firms, and light and heavy industrial uses. Industrial uses are predominately located east of US 101 and between US 101 and El Camino Real. San Carlos Airport is located at the City's eastern edge on land owned by San Mateo County.

⁴ <https://sunnyvale.ca.gov/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=23800>

Parks and open space, including City parks, comprise 19 percent of the Planning Area’s gross acreage.

Vacant Land Uses

Little vacant land exists within San Carlos; as of 2020, only 1.1 gross acres or three percent of the Planning Area is vacant. Vacant land is defined as having no building structures constructed on the land. Vacant land does not include parks nor open space, which is “vacant” or open by design. Vacant land can occur in each of the General Plan and Zoning designated areas.

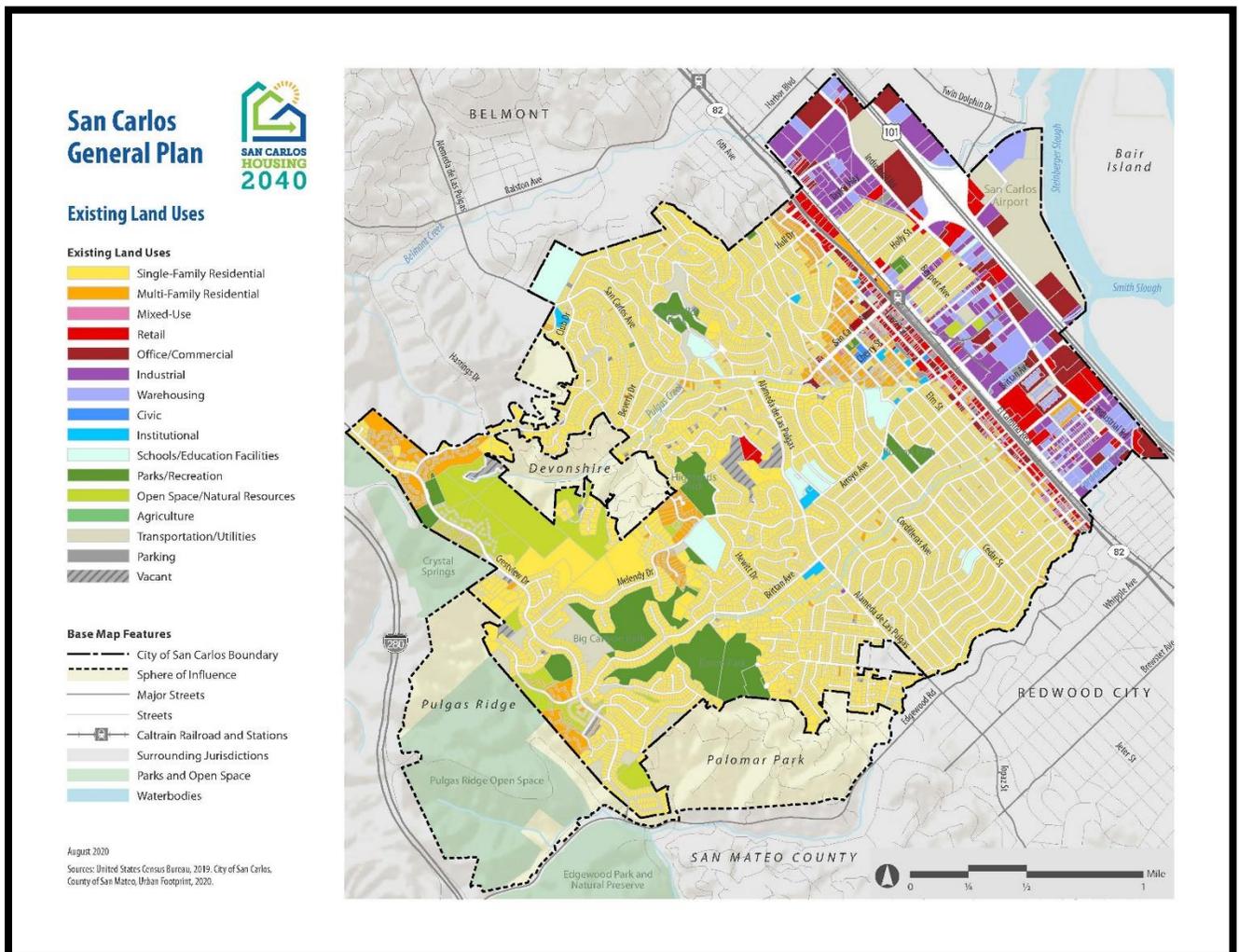


Figure 5: Existing Land use

Regulatory Plans

General Plan

The San Carlos 2030 General Plan is the City's blueprint for development. It articulates the community's vision and guides growth, change, and development over a 20 to 25-year period through a set of goals, policies, and actions. The general plan guides all planning efforts, both City initiated and developer proposed. A general plan also establishes the "ground rules" for maintaining and enhancing multimodal transportation, conserving resources, expanding public services, and improving community amenities. The San Carlos General Plan has seven elements: Land Use (which includes a Land Use Map depicting land use designations for all properties in San Carlos), Housing, Circulation and Scenic Highways, Environmental Management, Parks and Recreation, Community Safety and Services, and Noise.

Zoning

Commonly referred to as the Zoning Ordinance, this code, or tool, provides specific development standards such as densities, building heights, setbacks, parking requirements, etc. It is located under Title 18 (Zoning) of the San Carlos Municipal Code and identifies which uses are allowed within each zoning district and provides specific development requirements/standards for new development. The zoning map, shown in Figure 7, identifies each parcel's zoning designation.

State Law and Requirements

California Government Code Sections 65580-65589 Housing Elements

Unlike the other General Plan elements, the Housing Element requires periodic updating and is subject to detailed statutory requirements and mandatory review by the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). According to State law, the Housing Element must:

- Provide goals, policies, quantified objectives, and scheduled programs to preserve, improve, and develop housing
- Identify and analyze existing and projected housing needs for all economic segments of the community

- Identify adequate sites that are/will be zoned and available for housing during the Housing Element planning period — between 2023 and 2031 — to meet the City’s share of regional housing needs at all income levels
- Undergo HCD review of the Draft Housing Element and certification of the City’s adopted Housing Element in compliance with state law

State law establishes detailed content requirements for Housing Elements and establishes a regional “fair share” approach to distributing housing throughout all communities in the Bay Area, inclusive to people of all incomes. The law recognizes that in order for the private sector and non-profit housing sponsors to address housing demand and build housing, local governments must adopt land use plans and zoning regulations that provide opportunities for—and do not unduly constrain—housing development.

The Housing Element must provide clear policies and direction for making decisions related to zoning, subdivision approval, and capital improvements (sewer, water, storm drainage, gas, electricity, etc.) that relate to housing needs.

California Government Code Section 65302 and Other Pertinent State Laws Relating to General Plans

An update to the Safety Element (i.e. environmental safety) will be prepared concurrent with the Housing Element update as required by California law (65302(g) and as updated by Senate Bills 1241, 379, and 1035. State law requires that the Safety Element address wildfire and climate adaptation and resiliency strategies. Safety Elements are required to be reviewed by CalFire (State Department of Forestry and Fire Protection).

Considerations

- Very little land is available for new development; three percent of the Planning Area is vacant. As such, most new housing development will need to occur as privately initiated redevelopment of currently developed properties. The redevelopment could include a change of land use and/or densification/intensification.
- The San Carlos Planning Area, including the sphere of influence, totals 3,570 gross acres.

- Residential use represents the predominate use within the Planning Area with 55 percent of the land occupied by homes, of which most are single-unit detached homes. In total, over 90 percent of all residential land use in San Carlos is single family residential.
- Low and medium residential density uses are concentrated in the east-central part of the City, between San Carlos Avenue, Cherry Street, and Laurel Street. Housing types or building forms occurring in the low residential density areas include stand-alone/one unit on a lot, duplexes, triplexes, stacked flats, townhomes, and rowhouses. Housing types or building forms occurring in the medium residential areas include stacked flats, townhomes, and rowhouses.
- Mixed-use development occurs along the eastern portion of El Camino Real corridor below San Carlos Avenue; an expansion of a mixed-use designation may provide additional housing development opportunities.
- The remaining 45 percent of the Planning Area consists of light and heavy industrial businesses, general commercial uses, landmark commercial, neighborhood retail, airport, parks, public facilities, and open space.
- Siting of new residential development must consider impacts from hazards, as required by State law.

San Carlos General Plan



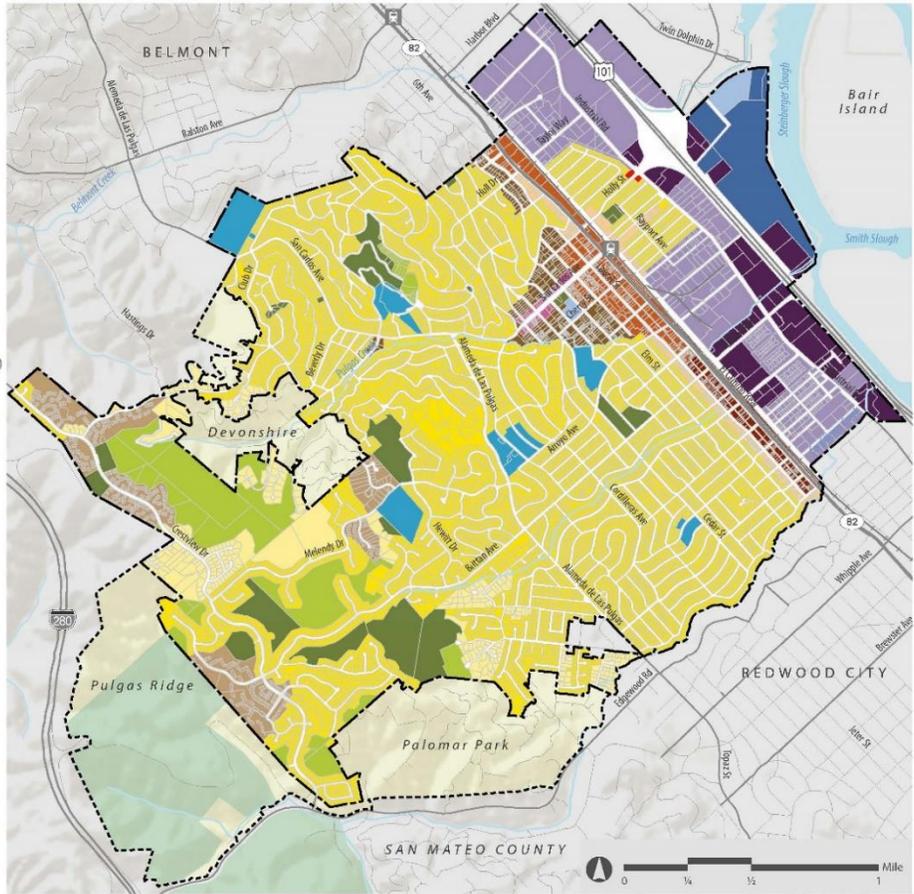
Existing General Plan

Existing General Plan Designations

- Single-Family, Low Density (3 DUs/Ac)
- Single-Family (6 DUs/Ac)
- Multi-Family, Low Density (10-20 DUs/Ac)
- Multi-Family, Medium Density (21-59 DUs/Ac)
- Mixed Use, Low Density (10-20 DUs/Ac)
- Mixed Use, Medium Density (21-50 DUs/Ac)
- Mixed Use, Medium High Density (21-59 DUs/Ac)
- Neighborhood Retail/Mixed Use (21-50 DUs/Ac)
- Neighborhood Retail
- Planned Industrial
- General Commercial - Industrial
- Public
- Park
- Open Space
- Open Space - Schools
- Airport

Base Map Features

- City of San Carlos Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Major Streets
- Streets
- Caltrain Railroad and Stations
- Surrounding Jurisdictions
- Parks and Open Space
- Waterbodies



August 2020
Sources: United States Census Bureau, 2019; City of San Carlos, County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint, 2020.

Figure 6: General Plan Land Use Plan

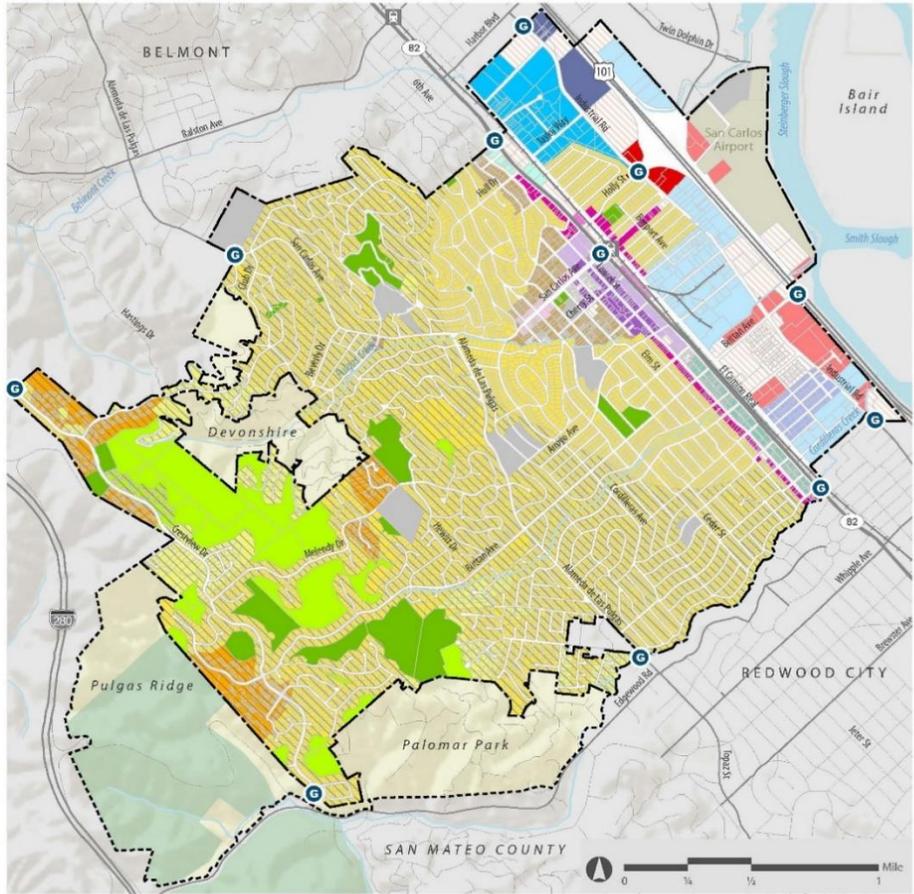
San Carlos General Plan



Zoning

Existing Zoning Designations

- RS-3: Single-Family, Low Density
- RS-6: Single-Family
- RM-20: Multi-Family, Low Density
- RM-59: Multi-Family, Medium Density
- MU-NB: Mixed Use North Boulevard
- MU-SB: Mixed Use South Boulevard
- MU-D: Mixed Use Downtown
- MU-DC: Mixed Use Downtown Core
- MU-N: Neighborhood Mixed Use
- MU-SA: Mixed Use Station Area
- MU-SC: Mixed Use San Carlos Ave
- IL: Light Industrial
- IH: Heavy Industrial
- IA: Industrial Arts
- IP: Industrial Professional
- GC: General Commercial/Industrial
- LC: Landmark Commercial
- NR: Neighborhood Retail
- PD: Planned Development
- A: Airport
- P: Public
- PK: Park
- OS: Open Space
- Neighborhood Hub Overlay
- Gateway Overlay District



August 2020
Sources: United States Census Bureau, 2019; City of San Carlos, County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint, 2020.

Figure 7: Zoning Map

3. DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Potential Development Opportunity Sites

As required by Housing Element law, a land inventory must identify specific sites suitable for residential development over the course of an eight-year planning period, which for San Carlos is 2023-2031. This Atlas takes the first steps in identifying areas or parcels that have high potential for future residential development, as determined through the land inventory analysis; the identified parcels will be refined throughout the Housing Element process.

Development potential is determined using a series of factors including parcel size, building-to-land value ratio, proximity to employment centers, access to services, environmental constraints, existing land use, and underutilized development potential based on existing zoning standards.

According to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), land suitable for residential development includes all the following:

- Vacant sites zoned for residential development
- Vacant sites not zoned specifically for residential development but where residential development is allowed under certain circumstances
- Developed sites zoned for residential development and capable of being redeveloped at a higher density or with greater intensity
- Sites not zoned for residential development but that could be rezoned for residential use and subsequently redeveloped (via Housing Element program actions)

As discussed above, little vacant land exists within San Carlos. Of the vacant sites, 33 sites are zoned single-family, one site is zoned multi-family, and one site is zoned mixed-use. Five are zoned for nonresidential uses and four sites are in planned development zones (Figure 8).

Optimal Parcel and Building Size

While parcel sizes vary throughout San Carlos and most parcels may be developed with residential uses, State law indicates that for a site to be considered as most appropriate for multi-family residential use, it should be between 0.5 and 10 acres in size regardless of the land use designation. For the Focused General Plan's Housing Element analysis, parcels sized between 0.5 – 1.0 acres were

assigned a site suitability score of 3, the highest score; all other sites receive a score of 0, as shown in Figure 9. Parcels assigned a score of 3 are scattered throughout San Carlos, including along its western edge, in the Devonshire area, and east El Camino Real. It is important to note, no vacant sites in Residential or Mixed-Use zones were assigned a score of 3.

Building-to-Land Value Ratio

Building-to-land value ratios report the assessed improvement value of a structure compared to the land value of the parcel upon which it sits. Generally, parcels that have not been improved over the past 10 to 20 years or parcels that have small structures compared to parcel size have a lower building-to-land value ratio. As such, building-to-land value ratios help identify specific parcels that are the most susceptible to development change due to a generally low value of existing improvements.

Building-to-land value ratios vary throughout San Carlos (Figure 10). Note, the higher the building-to-land value ratio, the lower the score. This indicates that the higher ratio parcels are less likely to redevelop during the Housing Element planning period based on the building-to-land value ratio. Like the parcel size analysis, parcels were assigned a building-to-land value score for the purpose of analysis. Parcels assigned the highest scores (3; and therefore, the most likely to redevelop) have a building-to-land value ratio 0.5 or less. Parcels with a score of 3 are located throughout San Carlos, with the greatest concentration of parcels located in the east side.

Proximity to Employment Centers and Access to Services

Residential areas located closer to a higher concentration of jobs, goods, and services can be considered better positioned for redevelopment because residents can go to work, shop, and spend leisure time with minimal driving. As such, parcels located less than 500 feet from employment centers are assigned a score of 3 for analysis purposes, while parcels located more than 1,500 feet are given a score of 0. Higher scoring parcels, regardless of land use designation, are generally located in San Carlos' Eastside, along San Carlos in Downtown San Carlos, and in the City's northern edge, as shown in Figure 11.

Per California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTAC) guidelines for rating access to services, locations with access to bus stops, Caltrain stops, grocery and healthy

food stores, shopping centers, parks, schools, police stations, fire stations, hospitals, urgent care facilities, and post offices results in higher scores for access to services. Locations near Downtown San Carlos and along El Camino Real have high access to services and thus, receive the highest CTAC scores (Figure 12).

Considerations

- The parcel assessments and scores need to be considered holistically to determine the sites most appropriate for housing development. Some sites might be assigned a high score in one category and a low score in another. Also, some sites might score high based on the analysis scale, but San Carlos' public policy may establish a different set of priorities for its land.
- Finding future housing sites may prove to be difficult because of:
 - Exceptionally limited vacant land
 - Creating suitable residential parcels located in areas best served may require lot consolidation and reuse of under-performing⁵ land uses

⁵ For this Existing Conditions analysis, under-performing land uses refers to those developments that do not occupy the full build out potential of a parcel.

San Carlos General Plan



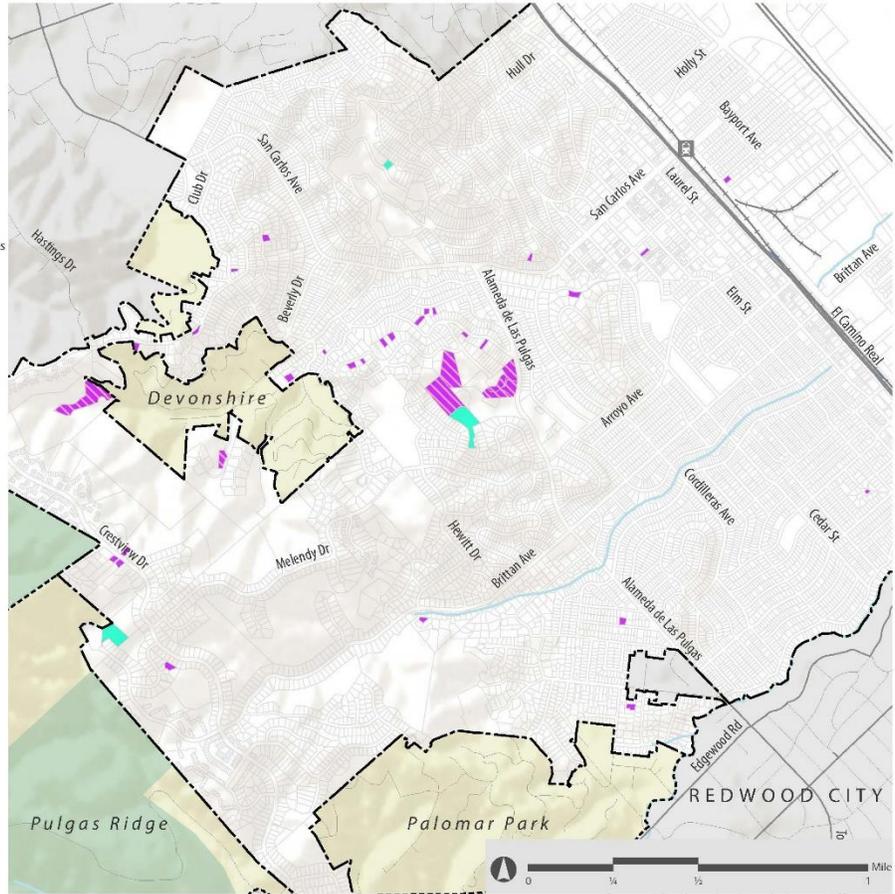
Vacant Sites Inventory

Vacant Sites by Zones

- Residential/Mixed-Use Zones (35 sites)
- Res./MU Zones between 0.5 and 10 Acres
- Nonresidential Zones (5 sites)
- Planned Development Zones (4 sites)

Base Map Features

- City of San Carlos Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Major Streets
- Streets
- Caltrain Railroad and Stations
- Surrounding Jurisdictions
- Parks and Open Space
- Waterbodies



September 2020
 Sources: United States Census Bureau, 2019; City of San Carlos, County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint, Google Maps, 2020.

Figure 8: Vacant Sites Inventory

San Carlos General Plan



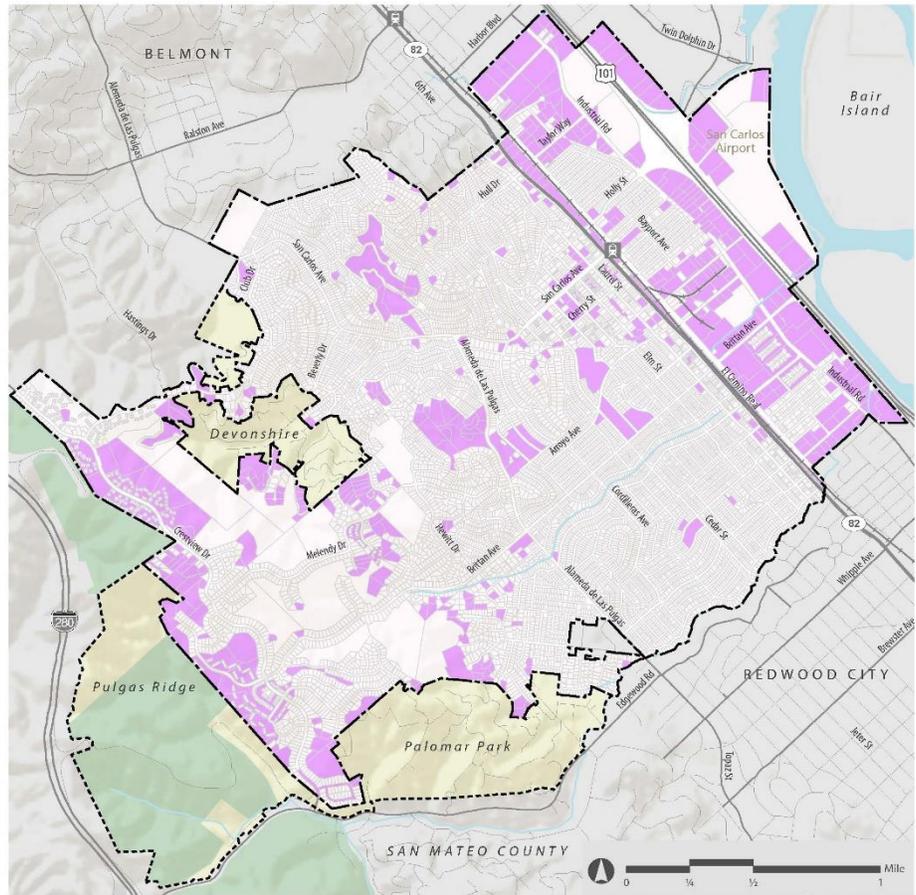
Site Suitability

Site Size Suitability Scores

- 0 (Under 0.5 Acres or Over 10 Acres)
- 3 (Between 0.5 Acres and 10 Acres)

Base Map Features

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- Waterbodies



September 2020
 Sources: United States Census Bureau, 2019; City of San Carlos, County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint; Google Maps, 2020.

Figure 9: Site Suitability

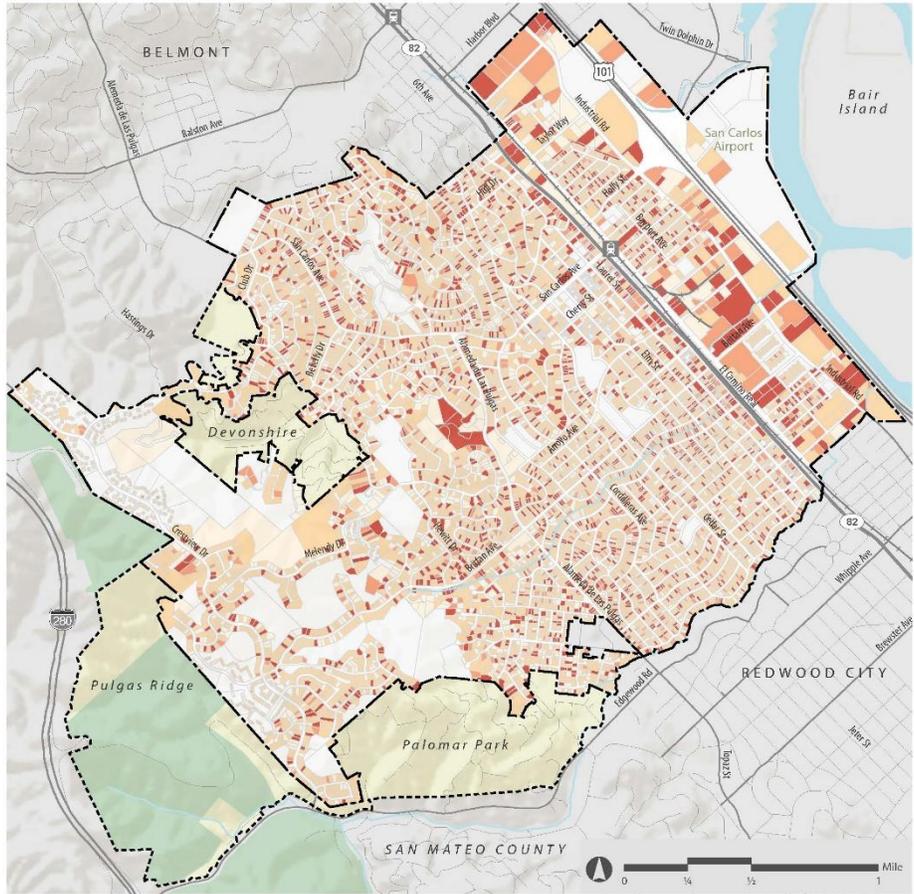
San Carlos General Plan



Building Suitability

- Building/Land Value Ratio (B/L Ratio) Scores**
- 0 (B/L Ratio \geq 3.0)
 - 1 (B/L Ratio $<$ 3.0 and B/L Ratio \geq 1.0)
 - 2 (B/L Ratio $<$ 1.0 and B/L Ratio \geq 0.5)
 - 3 (B/L Ratio $<$ 0.5)
 - No Data

- Base Map Features**
- City of San Carlos Boundary
 - Sphere of Influence
 - Major Streets
 - Streets
 - Caltrain Railroad and Stations
 - Surrounding Jurisdictions
 - Parks and Open Space
 - Waterbodies



September 2020
 Sources: United States Census Bureau, 2019; City of San Carlos, County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint, Google Maps, 2020.

Figure 10: Building-to-Land Value Ratio

San Carlos General Plan



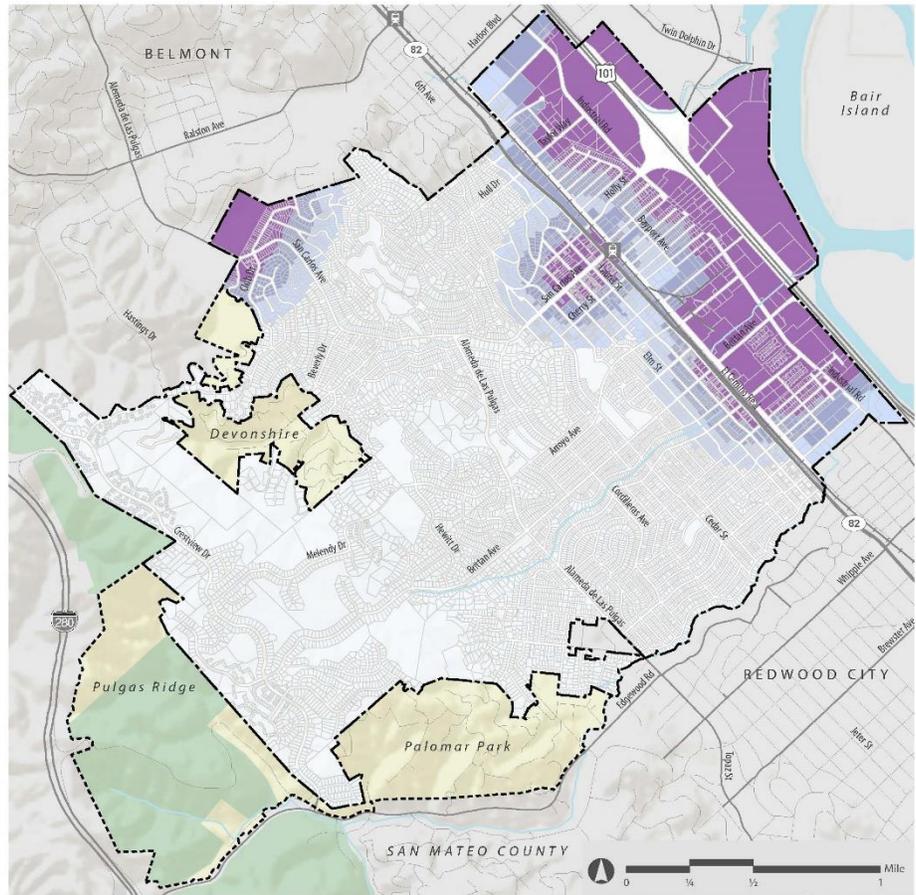
Proximity to Employment Centers

Distances to Employment Center Scores

- 0 (Distance \geq 1,500 ft)
- 1 (Distance $<$ 1,500 ft and \geq 1,000 ft)
- 2 (Distance $<$ 1,000 ft and \geq 500 ft)
- 3 (Distance $<$ 500 ft)

Base Map Features

- City of San Carlos Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Major Streets
- Streets
- Caltrain Railroad and Stations
- Surrounding Jurisdictions
- Parks and Open Space
- Waterbodies



September 2020
Sources: United States Census Bureau, 2019; City of San Carlos, County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint, Google Maps, 2020.

Figure 11: Proximity to Employment Centers

**San Carlos
General Plan**



CTCAC Composite Scoring

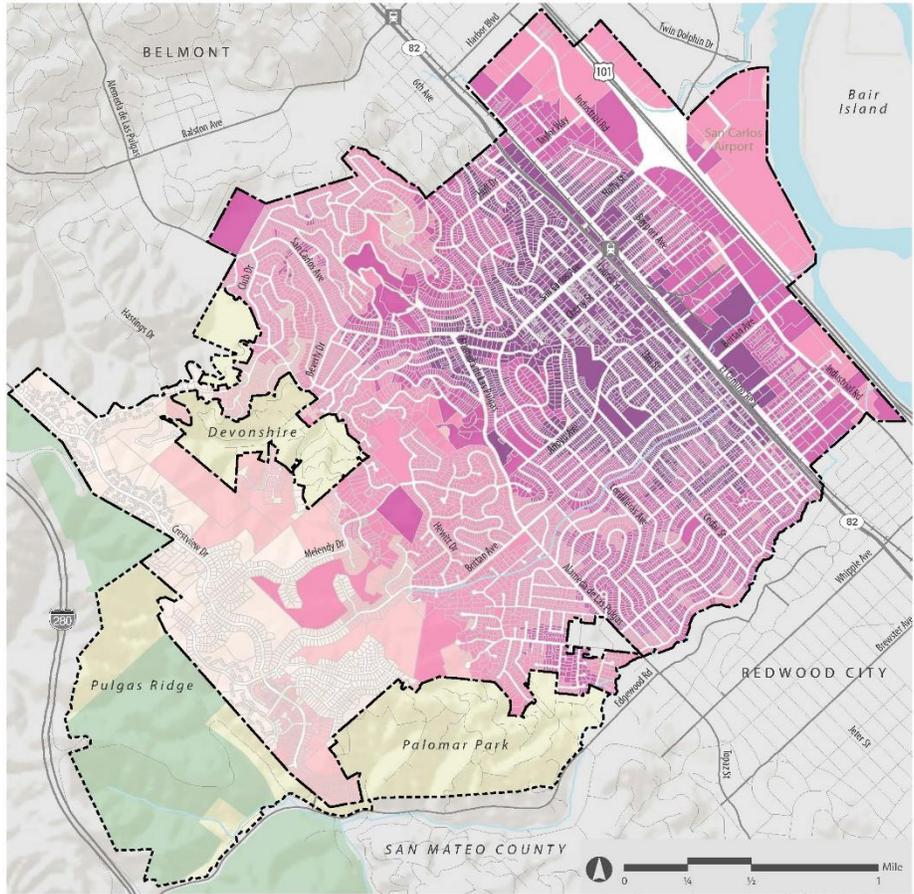
Access to Services Suitability Scores

- 8 - 12 (Limited Access to Services)
- 13 - 17
- 18 - 22
- 23 - 26
- 27 - 31 (Good Access to Services)

Per California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTCAC) guidelines, access to services includes bus stops, Caltrain stops, grocery and healthy food stores, shopping centers, parks, schools, police stations, fire stations, hospitals, urgent care facilities, and post offices.

Base Map Features

- City of San Carlos Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Major Streets
- Streets
- Caltrain Railroad and Stations
- Surrounding Jurisdictions
- Parks and Open Space
- Waterbodies



September 2020
Sources: United States Census Bureau, 2019; City of San Carlos, County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint, Google Maps, 2020.

Figure 12: Access to Services

4. DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Population and Employment Trends

Housing needs are influenced by population and employment trends. This section provides a summary of changes to the population size, age, and racial/ethnic composition, as well as current employment conditions of the City of San Carlos.

Current Population and Population Growth

Between 2010 and 2020, as reported by the California Department of Finance, the population of San Carlos grew approximately six percent, from 28,406 to 30,145 residents. Compared with the County of San Mateo, which experienced a 7.6 percent increase from 2010 to 2020, San Carlos’ growth rate was less. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) growth forecasts predict a steady increase in population through 2030. From 2020 to 2030, ABAG estimates that the City’s population will grow by 12.5 percent, while countywide population is expected to increase by 10.4 percent; however, both are forecasted to grow less from 2030 to 2040 than the previous decade (Table 2).⁶

Table 2: Population and Projected Growth

Area	2010	2020	2030	2040	% Change 2010-2020	% Change 2020-2030	% Change 2030-2040
San Carlos	28,406	30,145	33,915	35,250	5.8%	7.8%	3.9%
San Mateo County	718,451	773,244	853,260	916,590	7.1%	10.4%	7.4%

Source: CA Department of Finance E-5 Population and Housing Estimates, ABAG Growth Forecasts (Plan Bay Area Projections 2040)

In addition to population projections, several other demographic characteristics and trends inform housing needs. Among these characteristics are age composition, racial and ethnic composition, and employment.

⁶ The California Department of Finance’s growth data may include a reduced vacancy rate, increase in household size, or occupancy of new housing units.

Table 3: Age, Race and Ethnicity, and Employment by Industry

Demographic Profile	2010	2018
Age		
0-19	7,070 (25%)	7,754 (26%)
20-44	8,462 (30%)	8,522 (28%)
45-64	8,827 (31%)	9,146 (30%)
65+	4,047 (14%)	4,658 (16%)
Median Age	42.6	42.2
Race/Ethnicity		
White (non-Hispanic)	21,830 (73%)	22,612 (75%)
Hispanic	3,283 (11%)	2,579 (9%)
Black	394 (1.3%)	205 (0.7%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	4,378 (15%)	4,992 (17%)
Other	1,234 (4%)	466 (1.5%)
Employment by Industry		
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	2,852 (20%)	3,344 (21%)
Retail trade	1,282 (9%)	1,001 (6%)
Manufacturing	1,657 (12%)	1,785 (11%)
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	3,019 (21%)	3,837 (24%)
Construction	593 (4%)	672 (4%)
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	709 (5%)	716 (4%)
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	1,192 (8%)	1,725 (11%)
Other services, except public administration	577 (4%)	510 (3%)
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	286 (2%)	554 (3%)
Public Administration	589 (4%)	493 (3%)
Wholesale Trade	482 (3%)	303 (2%)
Information	883 (6%)	1,174 (7%)
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0 (0%)	15 (0.1%)

Source: US Census Bureau 2010, 2018 5-Year Estimates

Age

Population age distribution serves as an important indicator of housing needs because housing needs and preferences change as individuals or households grow older. Young families tend to focus more on cost and the ability to become first-time homebuyers. Table 2 shows the age distribution of San Carlos residents. In 2018, the 45-64 age group constituted the largest age group at approximately 30 percent, followed by the 20-44 age group at 28 percent. Compared with 2010, persons between 45-64 age continued to be the largest age group at 31 percent followed by persons between 20-44 at 30 percent maintaining its position as the second largest age group. The median age in the city is 42.2 years. Compared with the County (39.6 years) and the State (36.3 years), San Carlos's population is older. Since the age group 20-44 is the second largest at 28 percent, the need for larger units, at a range of income levels young families grow is likely to increase.

Race and Ethnicity

Table 3 also shows the racial/ethnic distribution of population in San Carlos. White (75 percent) and Asian/ Pacific Islander (17 percent) residents make up most of the City's population. Compared with the County of San Mateo, San Carlos has a higher percentage of White residents (75 percent compared to the County's 51 percent) and lower percentage of Asian/Pacific Islander residents (16 percent compared to 30 percent). Since 2010, the percentage of White residents and Asian/Pacific Islander residents have both increased by two percentage points, while Black and Hispanic residents have decreased (0.6 and two percent, respectively).

Employment

Residents in San Carlos are primarily employed in professional, scientific, management, and administrative and waste management services (24 percent), and educational services, health care and social assistance (21 percent). The average salary for professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services jobs is \$126,060 a year while those in and educational services, and health care and social assistance make, on average, \$66,359. A large salary gap between the two major industries occurs in San Carlos. Employment characteristics (ex. job location and employers) are important as they have a direct relationship with income. In San Carlos, the industries in which most residents work have high median earning potential.

According to the 2017 Economic Census prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau, most (92 percent) employed residents work outside of San Carlos. In addition to the estimated 985 residents who live and work in San Carlos, over 13,000 workers commute into San Carlos for their jobs. Major employers in San Carlos are outlined in Table 4.

Table 4: Top 10 Employers in San Carlos

Employer	Number of Employees
Palo Alto Medical Foundation	500
Natera Inc.	405
Pacific Gas & Electric Co.	284
Recology San Mateo County	240
Novartis Pharmaceuticals	230
Oportun Inc.	219
Delta Star Inc.	216
The Home Depot #0628	212
Check Point Software Tech Inc.	208
SC Transit Village, Inc.	202

Source: City of San Carlos Comprehensive Annual Financial Report July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

1 Note: The number of employees may include San Carlos residents as well as other jurisdictions’ residents.

Household Characteristics

San Carlos household characteristics are summarized in Table 5. According to Census estimates, the number of households in San Carlos increased by 319 between 2010 and 2018. At the same time, the population has increased by an estimated 1,700 people, indicating an overall increase in household size.

Housing tenure refers to the occupancy of a housing unit—whether the unit is owner-occupied or renter-occupied. Housing tenure is influenced by demographic factors (e.g., household income, composition, and age of the householder), as well as housing cost. Nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of San Carlos households own their homes.

Income

The median household income for San Carlos (\$169,694 in 2018) is higher than the county of San Mateo median household income (\$113,776). In San Carlos, on average, owner households have a significantly higher median income (\$208,250) than renter households (\$91,250), a trend that is also reflected in San Mateo County, where owner median income is \$140,665 and renter median income is \$84,298.

The Census estimates that in San Carlos, three percent of residents live in poverty. The poverty threshold is set by the U.S. government to indicate the least amount of income a person or family needs to meet their basic needs. Poverty thresholds are established based on family size and are updated annually in relation to the Consumer Price Index, but do not vary geographically. In San Carlos, certain populations are much more likely to be living in poverty. For example, 24 percent of Black/African American residents, seven percent of Hispanic residents, and 11 percent of residents with less than a high school degree are living in poverty. The proportion of people living in poverty in San Carlos is lower than the county of San Mateo at large, where nearly six percent of residents live in poverty.

Because poverty thresholds do not differ based on geographic differences, a better measure to understand income disparities can be to identify various percentages compared to the median income for a particular area. For housing planning and funding purposes, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) uses five income categories to evaluate housing need based on the Area Median Income (AMI) for the county:

- Extremely Low-Income Households earn 0-30 percent of AMI
- Very Low-Income Households earn 30-50 percent of AMI
- Low-Income Households earn 50-80 percent of AMI
- Moderate-Income Households earn 80-100 percent of AMI (HCD uses 120%)
- Above Moderate-Income Households earn over 100 percent of AMI (HCD uses 120%+)

The number and percentage of residents within each of these categories is listed in Table 5. Nearly half (45 percent) of renter households are in the lower income categories (0-80 percent AMI); 20 percent of owners are lower income.

Table 5: Owner and Renter Household Characteristic

Household Characteristic	Owner Households	Renter Households	All Households
Number of Households ¹	8,148 (72%)	3,179 (28%)	11,327
Median Household Income ¹	\$208,250	\$91,250	\$169,640
Household Income Categories ²			
Extremely Low Income (0-30% AMI)	500 (6%)	400 (12%)	900 (8%)
Very Low Income (30-50% AMI)	470 (6%)	425 (13%)	895 (8%)
Low Income (50-80% AMI)	610 (8%)	650 (20%)	1,260 (11%)
Moderate Income (80-100% AMI)	505 (6%)	395 (12%)	900 (8%)
Above Moderate Income (100%+ AMI)	6030 (74%)	1,380 (42%)	7,410 (65%)
Total number of projected Extremely Low-Income Households (RHNA) ²	N/A	N/A	325
Overpayment			
All Households Overpaying for Housing ²	1,940 (24%)	1,225 (38%)	3,165 (28%)
Lower Income Households Overpaying for Housing ²	970 (61%)	1,080 (73%)	2,050 (67%)

Note 1 Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2018 5-Year Estimates

Note 2 Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Tables 2013-2017

Housing Overpayment

State and federal standards specify that households spending more than 30 percent of gross annual income on housing experience a housing cost burden. Housing cost burdens occur when housing costs increase faster than household income. When a household spends more than 30 percent of its income on housing costs, it has less disposable income for other necessities such as health care, childcare, and food. In the event of unexpected circumstances such as loss of employment or health problems, lower-income households with a housing cost burden are more likely to become homeless or double up with other households. In San Carlos, 28 percent of households are overpaying for housing. The situation is much starker for lower income households, where 67 percent are overpaying for housing. Almost three-quarters (73 percent) of lower income renters are

overpaying for housing, and 61 percent of lower income owners are overpaying for housing.

Housing Stock Characteristics

Housing Stock

In 2020, the Department of Finance reported 12,385 housing units in the San Carlos. According to the City’s building permit records, between 2010 and 2019, the local housing stock has increased by 550 units. Most of the City’s housing stock is made up of single-family attached and detached homes (72 percent) with the remaining 28 percent multi-family. Census data indicates that less than one percent of owner units and 3 percent of rental units are vacant.

San Carlos was developed as a community of single-family dwelling units and has primarily remained as such. Single-family structures make up 72 percent of the City’s housing stock, with multi-family comprising 28 percent and mobile homes representing less than one percent.

Table 6: Owner and Renter Housing Characteristic

Housing Characteristic	Owner Households	Renter Households	All Housing Units/ Households
Total Housing units	N/A	N/A	12,385
Single-Family Detached			8,394 (68%)
Single-Family Attached			540 (4%)
Multi-Family Units			3,419 (28%)
Mobile Home			32 (.26%)
Median Household Size			2.57
Total Households	69%	27%	
Vacancy Rate	0.2%	3.1%	516 (4%)
Overcrowded Units	86	142	228
Units Needing Replacement/Rehabilitation	N/A	N/A	2
Housing Cost	\$1,970,500	\$2,182	N/A

Sources: 2020 CA Department of Finance E-5 Population and Housing Estimates, US Census Bureau 2018 5-Year Estimates, CoreLogic August 2020

Overcrowding

In response to a mismatch between household income and housing costs in a community, some households may not be able to buy or rent housing that provides a reasonable level of privacy and space. According to both California and federal standards, a housing unit is considered overcrowded if it is occupied by more than one person per room (excluding kitchens, bathrooms, and halls). In San Carlos, two percent of occupied housing units are overcrowded. Overcrowding is more prevalent in rental units.

Housing Condition

The condition of housing stock can be an indicator of potential rehabilitation needs. Based upon observations and experiences of the San Carlos Building Official, the City estimates that in 2020, fewer than two housing units are in severe need of replacement or substantial rehabilitation due to housing conditions.

Housing Cost

The cost of housing in a community is directly correlated to the number of housing problems and affordability issues. High housing costs can price low-income families out of the market, cause extreme cost burdens, or force households into overcrowded or substandard conditions. The San Carlos median home price in August 2020, based on information provided by CoreLogic, was \$1,970,500. This was 15.9 percent higher than the median price in August 2019. The August 2020 median home price was \$503,000 higher than in San Mateo County at large.

More than a quarter (28 percent) of San Carlos households are renters. There are limited sources that provide median or average rents for a specific geography. The Census estimates the average rent between 2013 and 2018 in San Carlos was \$2,182 per month with most (26 percent) paying between \$2,000 and \$2,499 in rent. These estimates appear significantly lower than current (2020) searches through search engines such as Zillow, Trulia, Zumper, etc. Rentjungle.com provides a median rent by month for jurisdiction and reported an average rent of \$2,738 in August 2020 (\$2,402 for one-bedroom units and \$3,143 for two-bedroom units) in San Carlos. Reported average rents during the Home For All/Welcome Home San Carlos engagement process were higher; with an average

\$3,730 for a one-bedroom unit and \$4,635 for a two-bedroom unit. Table 6 shows the HUD-determined fair market rents for San Mateo County. HUD uses fair market rents⁷ to determine payment standard amounts for the Housing Choice Voucher program.

Table 7: Fair Market Rents in San Mateo County

Year	Efficiency	One-Bedroom	Two-Bedroom	Three-Bedroom	Four-Bedroom
FY 2020 FMR	\$2,197	\$2,720	\$3,339	\$4,365	\$4,657

Source: FY2020 Fair Market Rents. U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Special Housing Needs

Housing Element law requires local governments to include an analysis of housing needs for residents in specific special needs groups and to identify resources available to address these needs. The chart below outlines various special housing needs categories. Please note that an individual can belong to more than one of the categories below.

Table 8: Special Housing Needs Groups Within San Carlos

Special Needs Category	Count	Percent
Persons with Disabilities	1,988 persons	7% of residents
Persons with Developmental Disabilities ¹	123 persons	0.4% of residents
Elderly (65+ years)	4,658 persons 2,773 households	15% of residents 24% of households
Large Households (5+ members)	697 households	6% of households
Farmworkers	15 persons	0.1% of labor force
Female Headed Households	906 households	8% of households
People Experiencing Homelessness	30 persons	0.001%

Note 1: Reflects the consumer count by ZIP Code (94070) as reported by the California Department of Development Services

Source: US Census Bureau 2018 5-Year Estimates, California Department of Developmental Services (DDS)

⁷ Fair market rent is the monthly rent a particular property type is likely to receive. Fair market rents are established by HUD and based on the property's size, type, and location.

Persons with Disabilities including Persons with Developmental Disabilities

Disabled residents face housing access and safety challenges. Disabled people, in most cases, are of limited incomes and often receive Social Security income only. As such, most of their monthly income is often devoted to housing costs. In addition, disabled persons may face difficulty finding accessible housing (housing that is made accessible to people with disabilities through the positioning of appliances and fixtures, the heights of installations and cabinets, layout of unit to facilitate wheelchair movement, etc.) because of the limited number of such units.

There are 1,988 residents with disabilities in San Carlos, representing seven percent of total residents. Many residents with disabilities are 75 years and older (41 percent). A total of 689 people with disabilities live in poverty, representing 78 percent of those living in poverty and 2.3 percent of the total resident population.

The State Department of Developmental Services (DDS) currently provides community-based services to persons with developmental disabilities and their families through a statewide system of 21 regional centers. The Golden Gate Regional Center (GGRC) serves residents in San Carlos. The center is a private, non-profit community agency that contracts with local service providers to offer a wide range of services to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. In San Carlos (as represented by ZIP Code 94070), 123 persons are reported as consumers of the services provided at the local Regional Center. Of these, 70 clients are above the age of 18 (57 percent) and 53 clients are between the age of 0 and 17 (43 percent).

Elderly (65+ years)

Many senior-headed households have special housing needs due to their relatively low incomes, disabilities or limitations, and dependency needs. Specifically, many people aged 65 years and older live alone and may have difficulty maintaining their homes, are usually retired and living on a limited income, are more likely to have high health care costs, and are more likely to rely on public transportation (especially those with disabilities). The limited income of many elderly persons often makes it difficult for them to find affordable housing.

There are 4,658 elderly residents in San Carlos, representing 16 percent of the population. Nearly one-quarter (24 percent) of San Carlos households are headed by elderly residents (2,773 households). Four percent of seniors (194 elderly residents) live in poverty. In San Carlos, 878 people of all ages live in poverty (three percent of the total population).

Large Households (5+ members)

Large households, defined by HCD as households containing five or more persons, have special housing needs due to the limited availability of adequately sized, affordable housing units. Larger units can be very expensive; as such, large households are often forced to reside in smaller, less expensive units or double-up with other families or extended family to save on housing costs, both of which may result in unit overcrowding.

In San Carlos, six percent of all households (697) are large households. The majority (86 percent) of these households own their homes (600 households), while 14 percent are renters. An estimated 1.5 percent of families live in poverty; however, none of these families are large families.

Farmworkers

Due to the high cost of housing and low wages, a significant number of migrant farm workers have difficulty finding affordable, safe, and sanitary housing. In San Carlos, 15 residents work in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining occupations, and can be assumed to be farmworkers. This represents only 0.09 percent of the workforce. Maps from the State of California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program show no farmland in San Carlos. Due to the low number of agricultural workers in San Carlos, the housing needs of migrant and/or farm worker housing need can be met through general affordable housing programs.

Female Headed Households

Single-parent, female-headed households require special consideration and assistance because of the greater need for childcare, health care, and other services and are identified as a special needs group by State Housing Element law. In general, female-headed households with children tend to have lower incomes and a greater need for affordable housing and accessible childcare and other supportive services. The relatively low incomes earned by female-headed

households, combined with the increased need for supportive services, can severely limit housing options.

In San Carlos, 906 female-headed households represent eight percent of total households. Of these, 58 percent own their home and 42 percent rent. A greater proportion of female-headed households are renters compared to San Carlos as a whole (42 percent and 28 percent, respectively).

Of all households living in poverty, 0.8 percent (67 households) are female-headed households.

People Experiencing Homelessness

Population estimates for people experiencing homelessness can be difficult to quantify. Census information is often unreliable due to the difficulty of efficiently counting a population without permanent residences. Given this impediment, a point-in-time count is conducted throughout many jurisdictions in the country during the last week in January each year. In 2019, 30 unsheltered individuals were identified in San Carlos during the point-in-time count, which is 3.3 percent of the total number of unsheltered individuals in San Mateo County. In 2017, 28 unsheltered individuals were counted in San Carlos. According to HUD, because recreational vehicles (RVs) are “ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation,” HUD does not believe that all persons sleeping in RVs should be included in the Point In Time (PIT) count. However, it is important to acknowledge that RV occupants have risen in San Carlos in the past five years.

There are no homeless shelters in the San Carlos; however, there are shelters and resources in cities nearby. The closest resources are in Redwood City, about three miles away. LifeMoves Redwood Family House is an organization that works to return people to stable housing and provides shelter in the interim. Redwood City also has two shelters, Daybreak Shelter (transitional housing for homeless teens) and LifeMoves Maple Street Shelter.

Energy Conservation Opportunities

Energy-related housing costs can directly impact housing affordability. While California Building Code standards contain mandatory energy efficiency requirements for new development, the City and utility providers are also important resources to encourage and facilitate energy conservation and to help

residents minimize energy-related expenses. Policies addressing climate change and energy conservation are integrated into the San Carlos General Plan, including ACTION EM-3.1: Implement Climate Action Plan measures to require tree planting. The City is in the process of developing a new Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Plan (“CMAP”) that will set greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets for 2030 and 2050 and identify strategies to meet the new targets and adapt to the impacts of climate change. At this time, the City is considering requiring new construction and 50 percent home rebuilds be all-electric. The purpose of this effort is to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions and the City is seeking feedback from the community on this topic through an online survey. Studies show that building all-electric is the most cost effective option for new residential buildings and if adopted, the requirement would not adversely impact the cost of newly constructed homes.

San Carlos residents have access to resources that support energy efficiency and renewable energy. The Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BAYREN) provides free energy evaluations that connect owners with qualified contractors and rebates for energy upgrades. The HomeIntel program is a part of PG&E; this program provides customers with plans to reduce wasted energy in their homes. The Property Assessed Clean Energy Financing (PACE) program allows residents to borrow loans for energy upgrades, which are then paid back through property taxes. There are also three programs to help residents utilize solar energy: Bay Area SunShares, LetsGoSolar, and PG&E Solar Education Opportunities.

San Mateo County and all 20 of its cities and towns formed Peninsula Clean Energy, a community-controlled, not-for-profit, joint powers agency. Peninsula Clean Energy serves all of San Mateo County with cleaner energy at low rates. Residents may enroll in a program drawing 50 percent of electricity from renewables, or for an additional fee, 100 percent of electricity from renewables.

[At-Risk Housing Analysis](#)

State housing law requires an inventory and analysis of government-assisted dwelling units eligible for conversion from lower income housing to market rate housing during the next ten years. Reasons for this conversion may include expiration of subsidies, mortgage pre-payments or pay-offs, and concurrent expiration of affordability restrictions.

Based on City records and information from the California Housing Partnership Corporation, in the next 10 years (2021-2031), no assisted housing developments in San Carlos are at risk of losing affordability.

Pursuant to Government Code Section 65863.11, the State maintains a list of “Entities Interested in Participating in California's First Right of Refusal Program” 2023-2031. This list includes various entities working in San Mateo County and several entities interested in properties located in any county. If a development becomes at risk of conversion to market-rate housing, the City will maintain contact with local organizations and housing providers who may have an interest in acquiring at-risk units and will assist other organizations in applying for funding to acquire at-risk units so they are not converted to market rate housing and remain affordable.

Projected Housing Need (RHNA)

Housing Element law requires a quantification of each jurisdiction’s share of the regional housing need as established in the plan prepared by the jurisdiction’s council of governments. HCD, in conjunction with ABAG, determines a projected housing need for the Bay Area, including the counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma. This share, known as the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), is 441,176 new housing units for the 2023-2031 planning period throughout the ABAG region. ABAG, in turn, will allocate this share among its constituent jurisdictions, distributing to each a RHNA divided into income levels. The City of San Carlos has an estimated RHNA of 2,390 housing units to accommodate in the housing element period. The approximate income distribution is as shown in Table 9.

Table 9: San Carlos Regional Housing Needs Allocation 2022-2030

Income Group	% of County AMI	Number of Units Allocated	Percent of Total Allocation
Very Low ¹	0-50%	650	27%
Low	>50-80%	370	15%
Moderate	>80-120%	380	16%
Above Moderate	120%+	990	41%
Total	---	2,390	

Note: Pursuant to AB 2634, local jurisdictions are also required to project the housing needs of extremely low-income households (0-30% AMI). In estimating the number of extremely low-income households, a jurisdiction can use 50% of the very low-income allocation or apportion the very low-income figure based on Census data. Therefore, the City's very low-income RHNA of 650 units can be split into 325 extremely low-income and 325 very low-income units.

5. PUBLIC SERVICES

Public Services and Facilities

Many San Carlos public services and facilities are provided through partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions and agencies. These public services and facilities contribute to local residents' high quality of life.

City Facilities and Service

City Hall and City Library

San Carlos City Hall is located at Elm Street and San Carlos Avenue.

San Carlos Library is part of the San Mateo County Library network. Originally established by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors in 1912 as a County Free Public Library, the San Mateo County Library Joint Powers Authority (JPA) was established in 1999⁸. The library offers materials in English, Spanish, Russian, and Chinese. The ADA compliant library is adjacent to City Hall.

Fire Department

San Carlos fire service is provided under contract with the City of Redwood City Fire Department. It provides fire protection, hazardous materials response, disaster preparedness, and emergency medical response. Two fire stations (one located on Laurel Street and one located on Alameda de las Pulgas) allow for service within all areas of the City's two-mile radius. A third San Mateo County Fire Station in the unincorporated sphere of influence area is located on Edgewood Road, in the Pulgas Ridge Reserve. The northwestern most point of San



Top. Fire Station 13

Bottom. Fire Station 16

Source: cityofsancarlos.org

⁸ <https://smcl.org/about-us/>

San Carlos adjacent to the Devonshire Area is beyond the one or two-mile driving distance fire service area of all fire stations. (Figure 13). The number and location of fire and police stations in a community is usually based on the distance between stations, the population served, and the hazards at particular locations. As such, the one or two mile service area generally corresponds to the response time of first responders in the event of a fire hazard ranging from a ten minute or less response time for those portions of the community outside of the two mile service area, a five minute or less response time for portions of the community within the two mile service area, and three minute or less response time for those portions of the community within a one mile driving distance from the closest fire station.

Law Enforcement

San Carlos law enforcement services are provided under contract with the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office, located at 600 Elm Street. The Sheriff Department has over 800 sworn and civilian personnel who provide various law enforcement services to San Mateo County, including contract law enforcement services for San Carlos. Like with Fire Service Areas, the portion of San Carlos north and west of the Devonshire Area is located beyond the one or two-mile driving distance to Sheriff station area (Figure 14).

Schools and Educational Facilities

The San Carlos Planning Area is served by three elementary school districts: Belmont- Redwood Shores, San Carlos, and Redwood City. Most San Carlos residents are served by the San Carlos School District (SCSD). School district boundaries and public schools are shown in Figure 15. SCSD is a preschool through 8th grade district with seven schools, including four elementary schools, two 4th-5th grade upper elementary schools, two 6th-8th grade middle schools, and one K-8 charter school⁹. San Carlos public high school students are anticipated to attend Sequoia High School and Redwood High School located in Redwood City and Carlmont High School located in Belmont.

In addition to public schools, two K-8 private schools are in San Carlos: St. Charles Church School and Arbor Bay School.

⁹ <https://www.scsdk8.org/apps/pages/Schools>

Considerations

- San Carlos residents and businesses receive public services from the City of San Carlos and through contracts with adjacent jurisdictions or San Mateo County. Service provision meets current standards. However, the north and west portions of the Devonshire area are located outside of both the fire and Sheriff one- to two-mile service areas.
- The San Carlos Planning Area is served by three K-8 school districts and two private schools. Public high schools serving residents of San Carlos are located in Redwood City and Belmont. New residential development may need to account for school capacity.
- Public services will need to be evaluated as additional housing is provided throughout San Carlos.

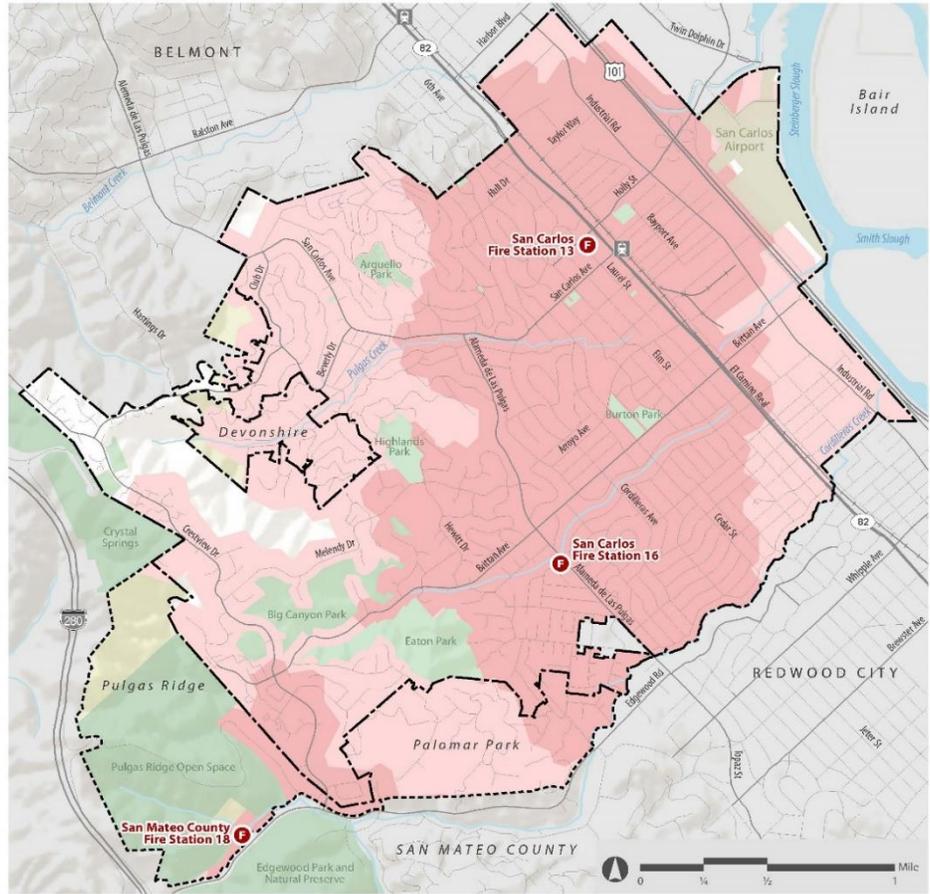
San Carlos General Plan



Fire Station Service Areas

- Fire Service Areas**
- Within One-Mile Driving Distance
 - Within Two-Mile Driving Distance
 - F Fire Station

- Base Map Features**
- City of San Carlos Boundary
 - Sphere of Influence
 - Major Streets
 - Streets
 - Caltrain Railroad and Stations
 - Surrounding Jurisdictions
 - Parks and Open Space
 - Waterbodies
 - San Carlos Airport



August 2020
 Sources: United States Census Bureau, 2019.
 City of San Carlos, County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint, 2020.

Figure 13: Fire Station Service Area

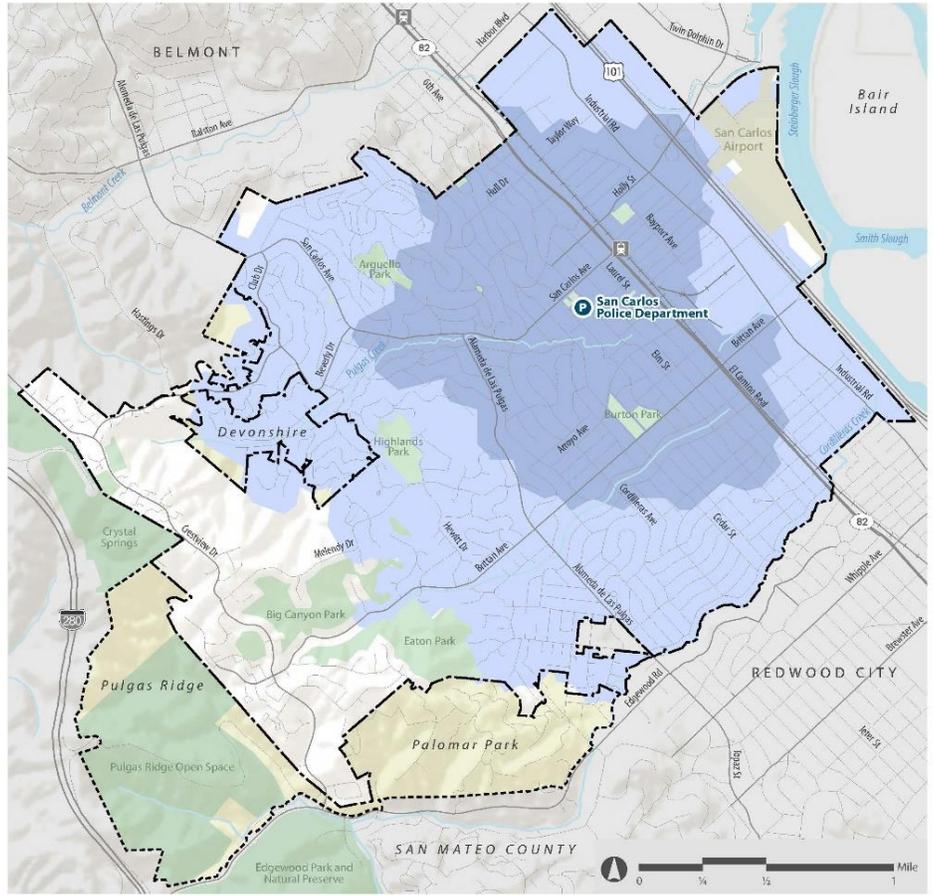
San Carlos General Plan



Police Station Service Areas

- Police Service Areas**
- Within One-Mile Driving Distance
 - Within Two-Mile Driving Distance
 - P Police Station

- Base Map Features**
- City of San Carlos Boundary
 - Sphere of Influence
 - Major Streets
 - Streets
 - P Caltrain Railroad and Stations
 - Surrounding Jurisdictions
 - Parks and Open Space
 - Waterbodies
 - San Carlos Airport



August 2020
 Sources: United States Census Bureau, 2019.
 City of San Carlos, County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint, 2020.

Figure 14: Sheriff Station Service Area

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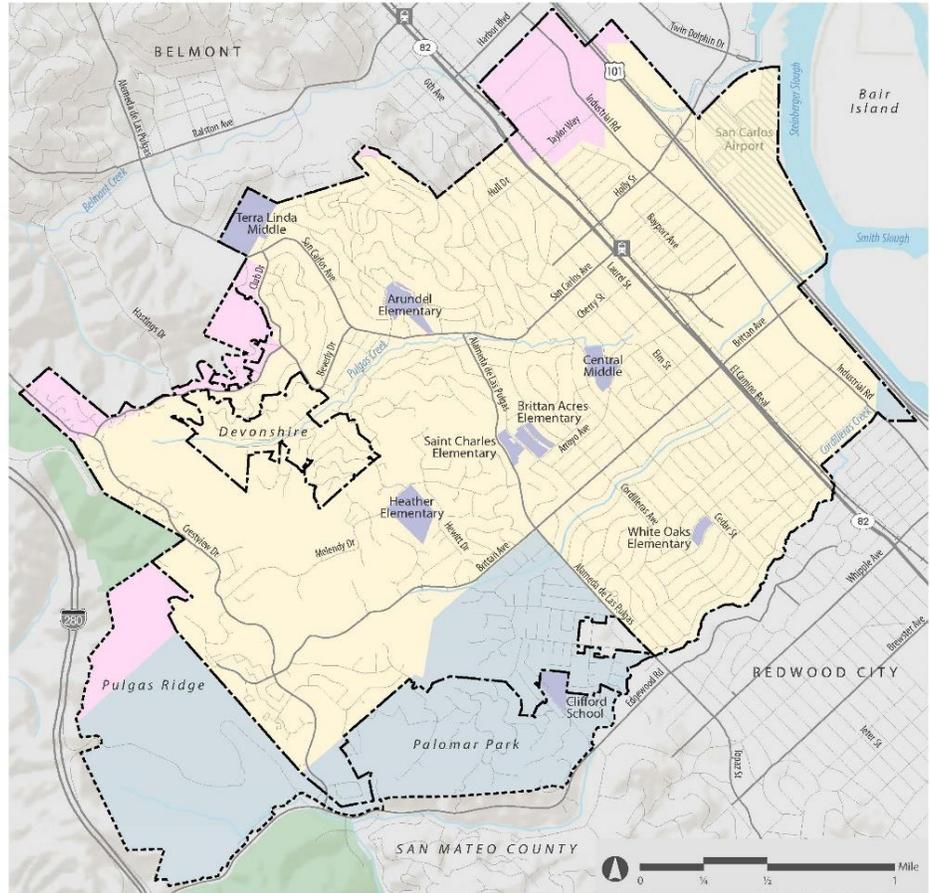
Elementary School Districts

Elementary School Districts

- Belmont-Redwood Shores
- Redwood City
- San Carlos
- Schools (K-8)

Base Map Features

- City of San Carlos Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Major Streets
- Streets
- F Caltrain Railroad and Stations
- Surrounding Jurisdictions
- Parks and Open Space
- Waterbodies
- San Carlos Airport



August 2020
 Sources: FEMA, 2016; United States Census Bureau, 2019; City of San Carlos; County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint, 2020.

Figure 15: Elementary School District Boundaries

6. HAZARDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

Topography and Terrain

San Carlos has varied topography that ranges from sea level to elevations up to 900 feet above sea level¹⁰. The Planning Area’s easternmost area has low elevations and is almost completely developed. West of Alameda De Las Pulgas and abutting Devonshire, the Planning Area increases in elevation where it ends at the Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve, which extends from 320 to 900 feet above sea level.



San Francisco Bay from the San Carlos hills

Wildfire Hazards

The Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve and Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve frame the City’s picturesque backdrop and provide a view of the San Francisco Bay. However, these open spaces also create an urban wildfire hazard risk. In addition to the urban fire potential, wildfires in the hills are an ever-present concern—especially when fueled by shrub overgrowth and high temperatures.

All of San Carlos’ foothill neighborhoods west of Alameda de las Pulgas are designated “Very High Fire Hazard Severity” (VHFS) Zones by San Mateo County (Figure 16). Additionally, residential development in the foothill neighborhoods, including the Devonshire Area, are considered at risk to wildfire hazards (Figure 17). Along with at risk residential development, these areas include parks, schools (Heather Elementary) and California Water Services’ tanks (located at the Los Vientos Way/Crestview Drive intersection). Additionally, the Bayview Villa, an assisted living community, is in the Devonshire Area. New development within the Hillside Overlay Districts and the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) are subject to specific development and construction standards to address the risks of fire, including Fire Agency review and fire-resistant landscaping and building material

¹⁰ <http://www.cityofsancarlos.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=1105>

standards. The Redwood City Fire Department provides firefighting services to the State-designated Local Responsibility Area (LRA) and State Responsibility Areas located within San Carlos and reviews area development plans.

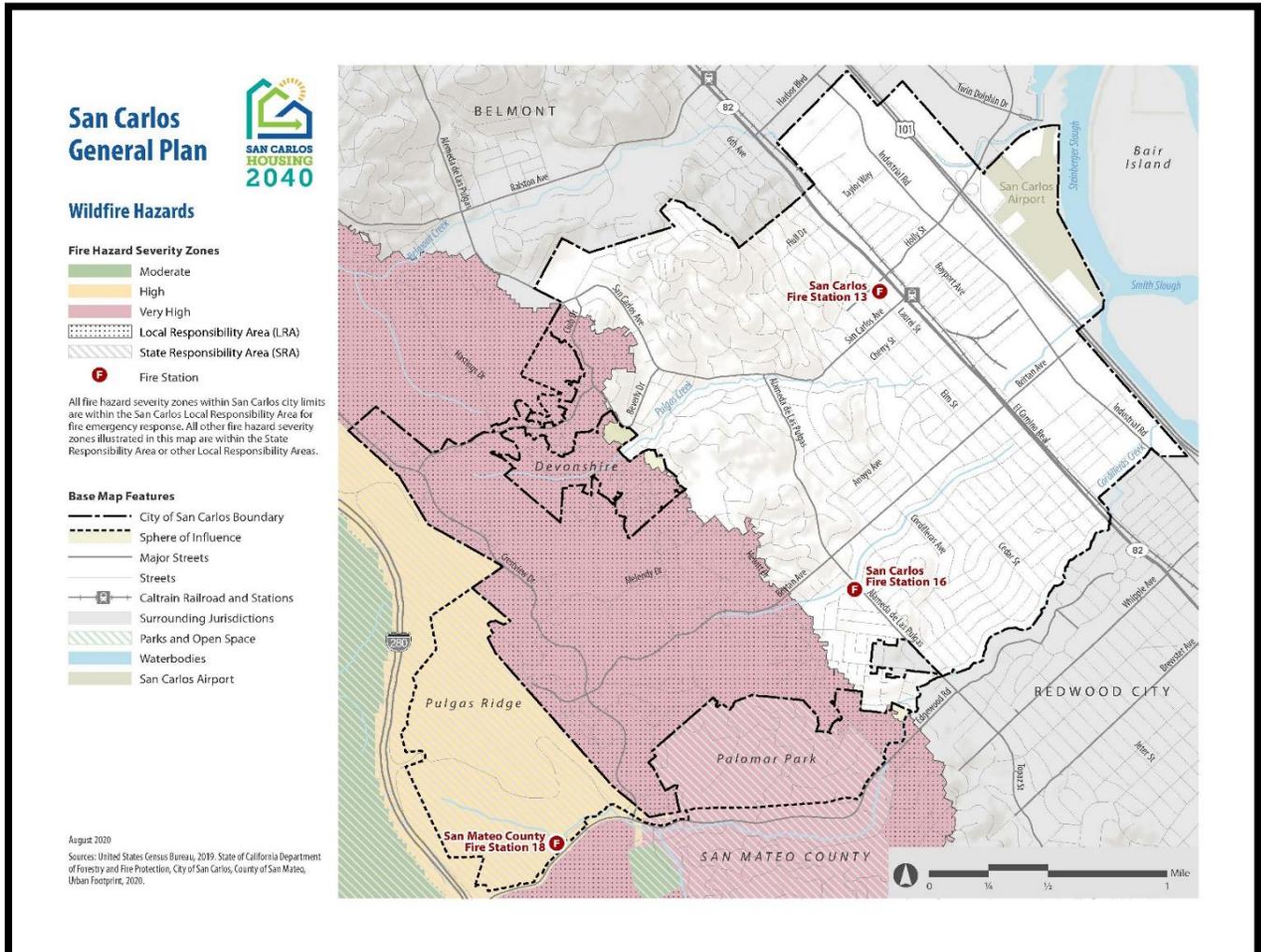


Figure 16: Wildfire Hazards

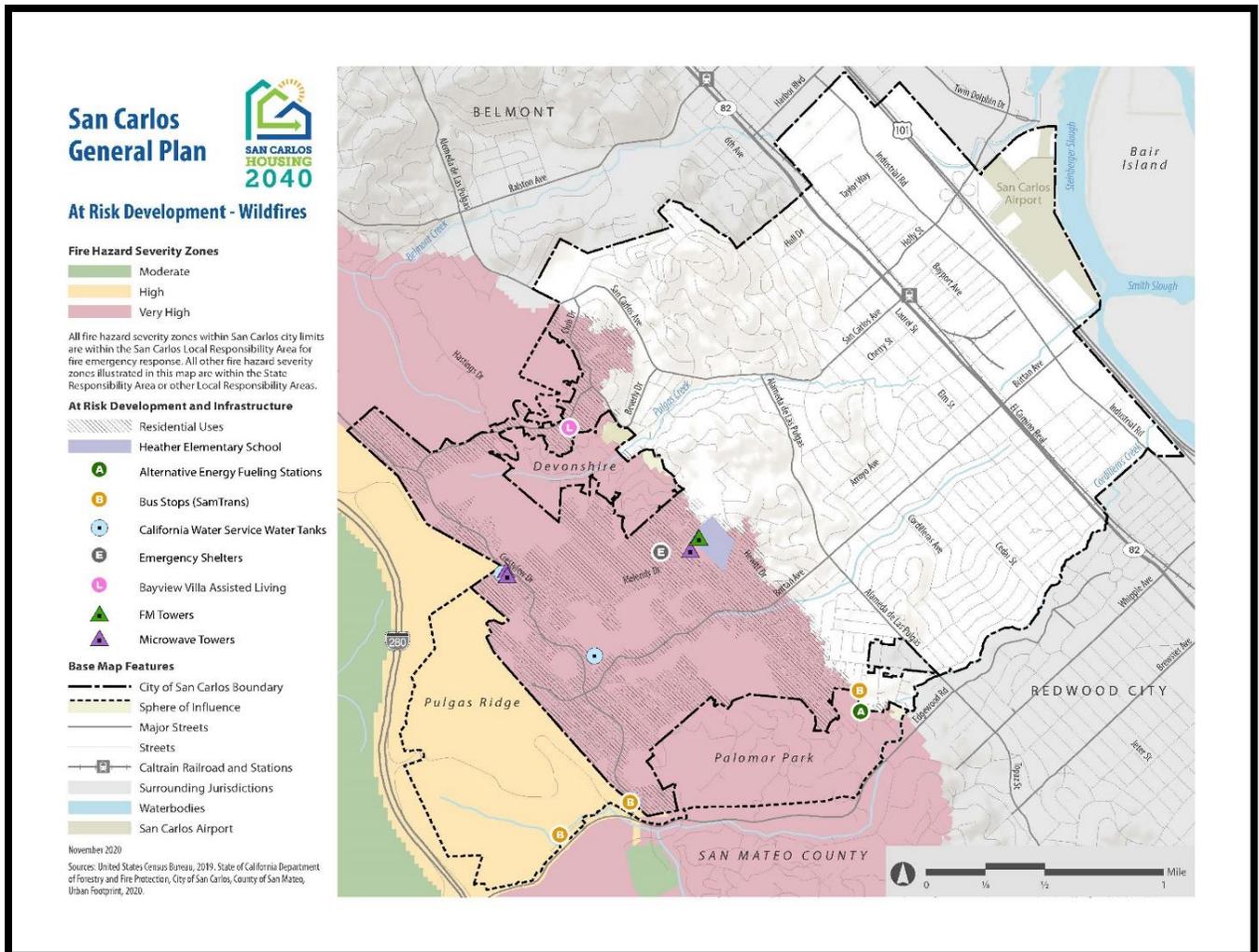


Figure 17: At Risk Development - Wildfire Hazards

Geologic Hazards

The Bay Area is a very active seismic region. The April 1906 earthquake on the San Andreas Fault, estimated at about Moment Magnitude¹ (Mw) 7.9 (M8.3 on the Richter scale), was likely the largest seismic event impacting in San Carlos.¹¹ Also occurring on the San Andreas Fault, the 7.1 Magnitude Loma Prieta Earthquake in October 1989 was the largest seismic event in recent memory.

¹¹ <http://www.cityofsancarlos.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=1105>

Faults

The San Francisco Bay area is well known for its seismicity.

Specifically, the San Andreas Fault and the associated Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone runs immediately west of San Carlos; however, no Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones are located in San Carlos. In addition to the San Andres fault, principal active faults in the area include the San Gregorio, Hayward, Calaveras, and

Greenville faults, all of which are located east of San Carlos and the San Francisco Peninsula. Figure 18 shows the San Andreas Fault zone relative to the San Carlos Planning Area.

Liquefaction and Landslides

Liquefaction

Liquefaction and landslides represent two seismically induced hazards. Earthquake-induced landslides (slope failure) are secondary earthquake hazards, which occur because of ground shaking.

Soil liquefaction is a seismically induced form of ground failure, which has been a major cause of earthquake damage throughout California. Liquefaction occurs when ground shaking causes wet granular soils to change from a solid state to a liquid state, destabilizing the ability of the soil to support structures. Liquefaction potential within the San Carlos Planning Area ranges from very low to very high, as shown in Figure 19. Areas with high and very high liquefaction potential are

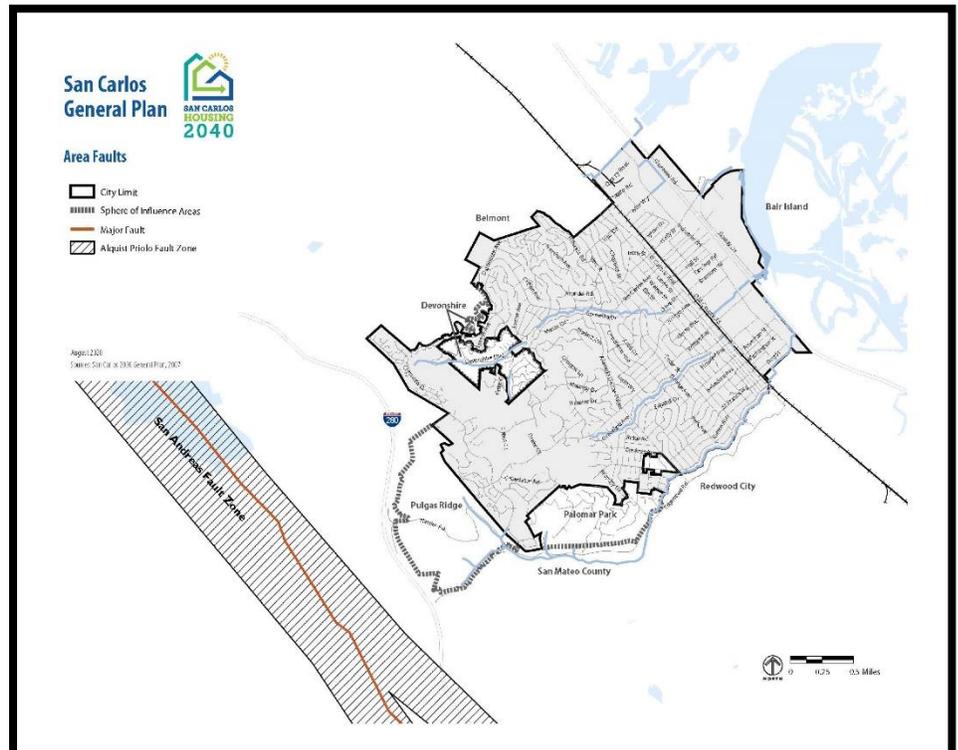


Figure 18: San Andreas Fault Zone Near San Carlos

generally located within the mapped 100- or 500-year flood plain along the creeks in San Carlos and adjacent to the Bay. Specifically, high and very high liquefaction zones in San Carlos occur along Pulgas Creek and Cordilleras Creek, east of El Camino Real and US 101, and within the San Carlos Airport area.

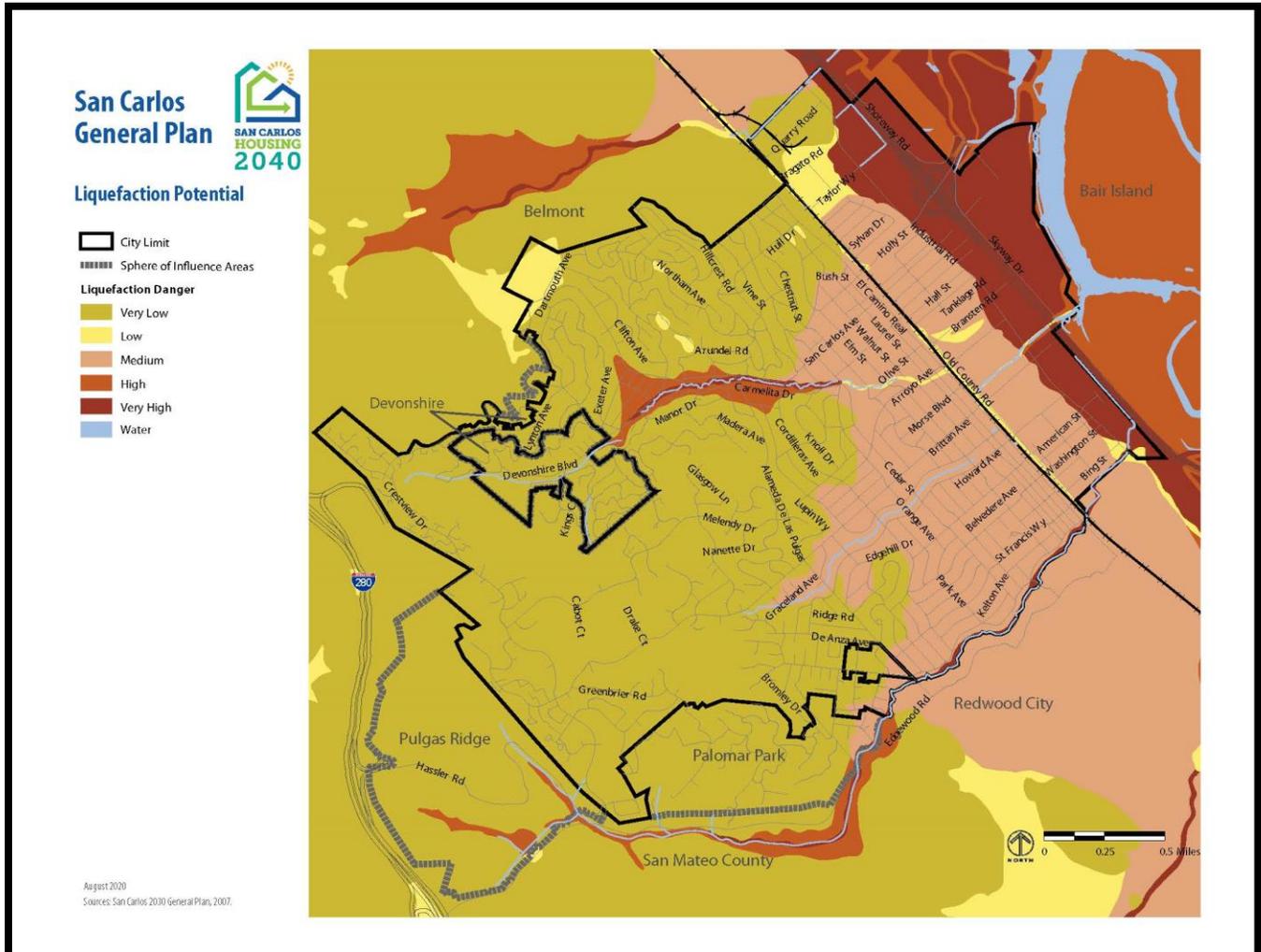


Figure 19: Liquefaction Potential

Landslides

Landslides are downward and outward movements of slope-forming materials such as rock, soil, and/or artificial fill. The general characteristics that influence landslide hazards include slope material, slope steepness, water content, vegetation coverage, and proximity to areas of erosion or man-made cuts. In San Carlos, landslides occur on some of the upper hilly slopes, more commonly in San Carlos' western area.

The City has adopted stringent grading and building codes and slope landscaping requirements to address these issues. Specifically, soils studies and remediation for any problem are required prior to issuance of a permit.

Flooding Hazards

The Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA) identifies multiple areas in San Carlos within the 100-year and 500-year floodplains; they are primarily within the Eastside industrial/commercial areas between US 101 and El Camino Real, as shown in Figure 20. In addition, the 100-year flood zone is generally located along Pulgas Creek and Brittan Creek paralleling Brittan Avenue, in areas along the southwestern portion of El Camino Real, and along Industrial Road.

Historically, San Carlos has experienced periodic flooding associated with Pulgas, Cordilleras, and Brittan Creeks. Flooding is also known to occur along Industrial Road. Flooding has been caused by storm drain inlet blockages from leaves and debris, stormwater volumes greater than storm drain pipelines' capacity, and backwater and overtopping from creeks¹².

Figures 21 through Figure 23 identify buildings, structures, and infrastructure that may be at risk due to flooding and sea level rise, most of which are in the 100- and 500-year floodplains. Both residential and nonresidential uses are in the 100-year floodplain, while nonresidential uses—including a medical facility—are located within the 500-year flood zone. Additionally, San Carlos Fire Station 16 is located within the floodplain area along Cordilleras Creek. At-risk infrastructure includes a transmission line that runs parallel to US 101, multiple microwave towers, multiple alternative fueling stations, and an electrical substation facility in the

¹² https://www.smdailyjournal.com/news/local/san-carlos-tackles-flooding/article_33b22dc1-c2a7-5408-818e-85f3206c9f5b.html

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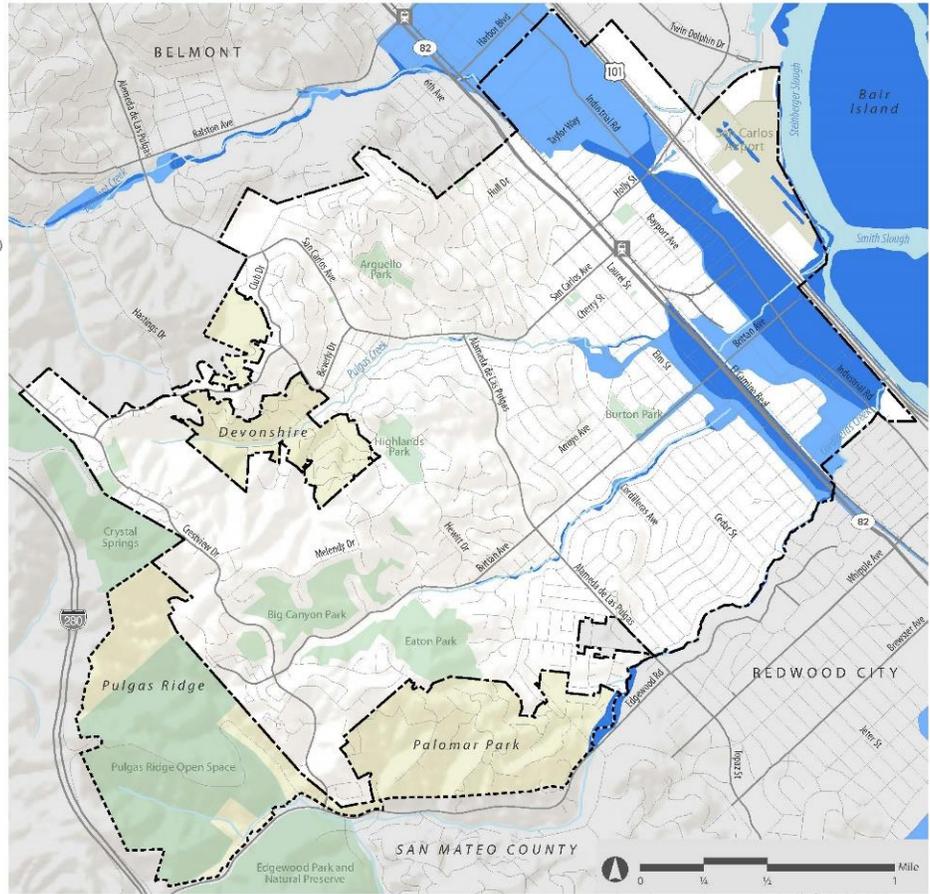
FEMA Flood Zones

FEMA Flood Zones

- 1% Annual Chance (100-year flood)
- 0.2% Annual Chance (500-year flood)

Base Map Features

- City of San Carlos Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Major Streets
- Streets
- Caltrain Railroad and Stations
- Surrounding Jurisdictions
- Parks and Open Space
- Waterbodies
- San Carlos Airport



August 2020
Sources: FEMA, 2016; United States Census Bureau, 2019; NOAA; City of San Carlos; County of San Mateo; Urban Footprint, 2020.

Figure 20: FEMA Flood Zones

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At Risk Buildings and Facilities

- Risks**
- 1% Annual Chance (100-year flood)
 - 0.2% Annual Chance (500-year flood)
 - 24" Sea Level Rise +5-year Storm

- Buildings and Facilities**
- Library
 - City Hall
 - Medical Facility
 - Sheriff Station
 - Fire Station
 - Emergency Shelter
 - Commercial Centers
 - Residential Uses

- Base Map Features**
- City of San Carlos Boundary
 - Sphere of Influence
 - Major Streets
 - Streets
 - Caltrain Railroad and Stations
 - Surrounding Jurisdictions
 - Parks and Open Space
 - Waterbodies
 - San Carlos Airport

August 2020
 Sources: FEMA, 2016; United States Census Bureau, 2019; NOAA, City of San Carlos, California Energy Commission, California Department of Transportation, Homebased Infrastructure Foundation Level Data (HIFLD); County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint, 2020.

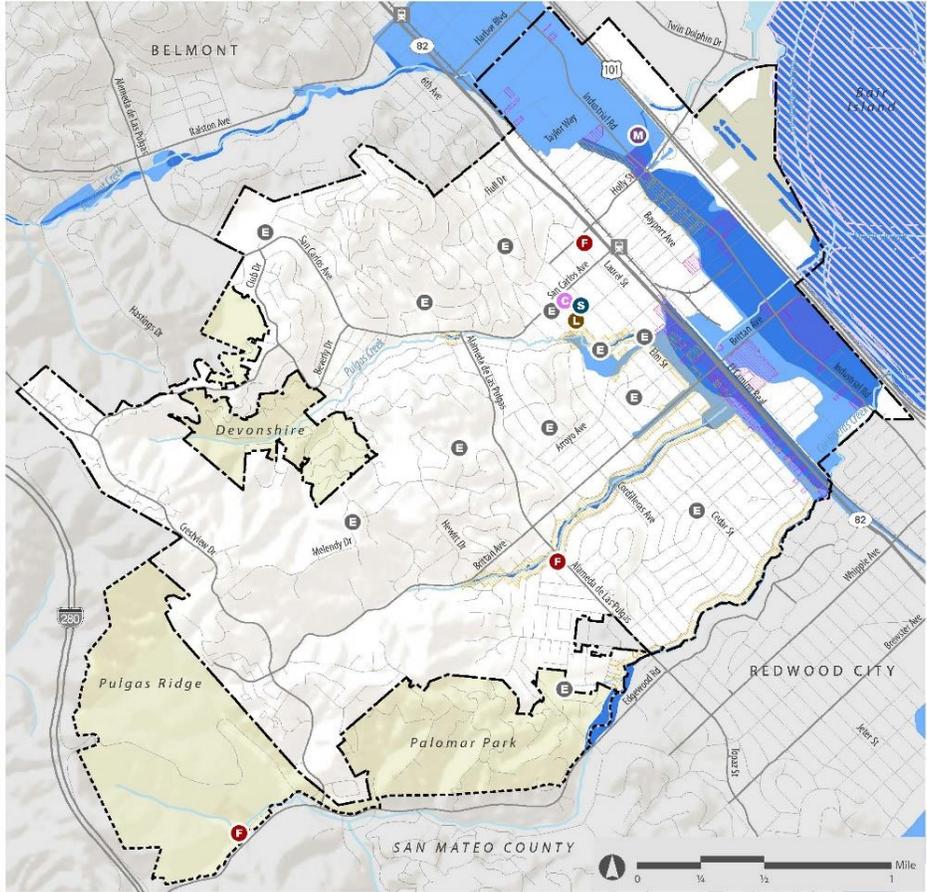


Figure 21: Flooding – At-Risk Buildings and Facilities

San Carlos General Plan



At Risk Infrastructure

Risks

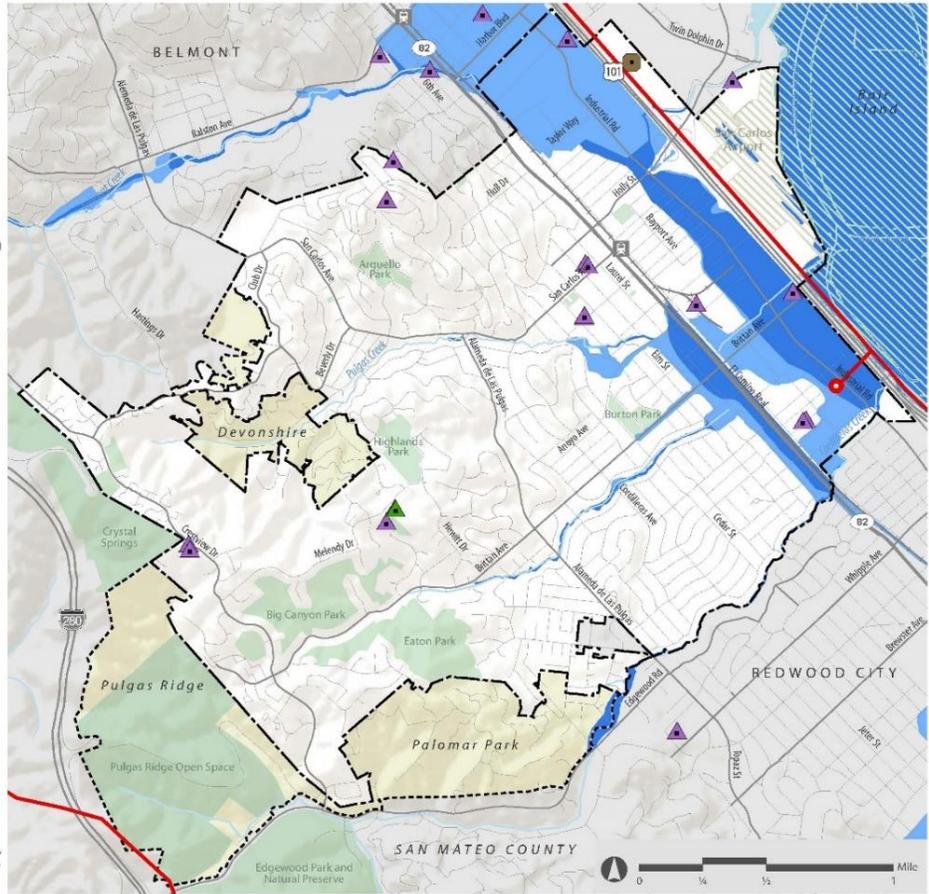
- 1% Annual Chance (100-year flood)
- 0.2% Annual Chance (500-year flood)
- 24" Sea Level Rise +5-year Storm

Infrastructure

- FM Tower
- Microwave Tower
- Solid Waste Facility
- Electrical Substation
- Transmission Line

Base Map Features

- City of San Carlos Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Major Streets
- Streets
- Caltrain Railroad and Stations
- Surrounding Jurisdictions
- Parks and Open Space
- Waterbodies
- San Carlos Airport



August 2020
 Sources: FEMA, 2016. United States Census Bureau, 2019. NOAA, City of San Carlos, California Energy Commission, California Department of Transportation, Homebond Infrastructure Foundation Level Data (HIFLD), County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint, 2020.

Figure 22: Flooding – At-Risk Infrastructure

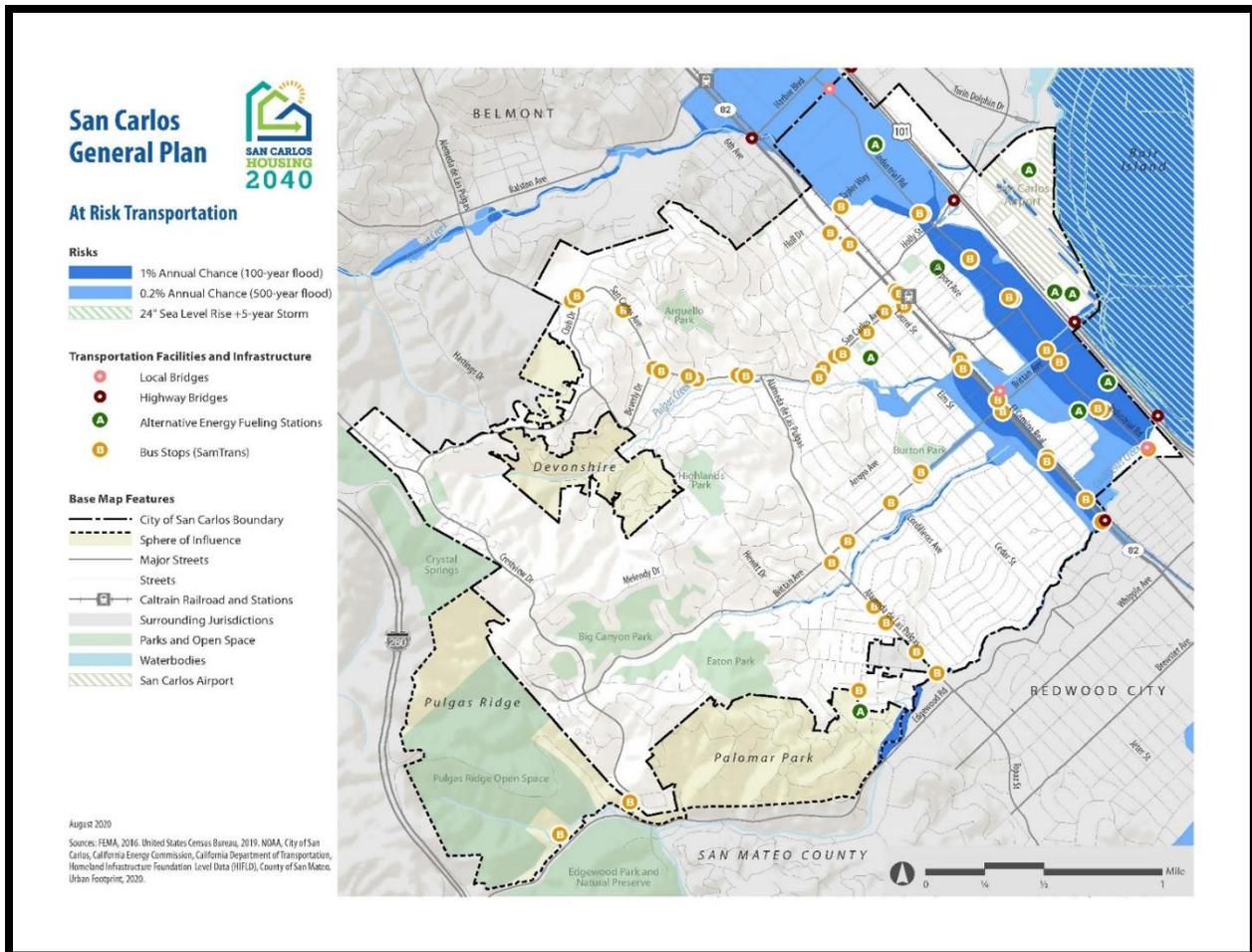


Figure 23: Flooding – At-Risk Transportation Infrastructure

area east of El Camino Real. All SamTrans bus stops located along Industrial Road are at risk to flood and sea level rise hazards, in addition to three alternative fueling stations located within the sea level rise impact zone of San Carlos Airport. Local streets and highway bridges east of El Camino Real that connect to US 101 are within the 100- and 500-year floodplains and are at risk to flooding and sea level rise.

Hazardous Materials

Hazardous materials are regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA defines hazardous materials as chemicals that can cause harm to people, plants, or animals when released into the environment¹³. Hazardous

¹³ U.S. EPA, Hazardous Waste: <https://www.epa.gov/hw/learn-basics-hazardous-waste#hwid>

materials are used in many everyday activities from painting a house to manufacturing products. The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) regulates the management of municipal and industrial waste to ensure the safe handling and disposal of hazardous materials. Facilities that transport, generate, or treat hazardous waste must report their activities to the California and U.S. Environmental Protection Agencies and comply with waste management standards.

Hazardous Waste

Many common service facilities produce hazardous waste such as gasoline stations and dry cleaners. Hazardous materials may be present in the soils and groundwater in the Industrial East portions of San Carlos and along El Camino Real. The EPA's Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) Program manages a database of facilities that emit toxic chemicals known to be harmful to human health and tracks hazardous waste transporters. The Toxic Release Inventory identified 15 industrial facilities contributing to the release of hazardous waste within a five mile radius of San Carlos¹⁴. However, four TRI sites are located within the Planning Area itself (Figure 24). As a result, the neighborhoods in east San Carlos may be exposed to more pollution and hazardous materials than other parts of the Planning Area.

Climate Change Adaptation

The San Carlos Environmental Safety Element is being updated concurrently with the Housing Element. Pursuant to SB 379, the Environmental Safety Element is being updated to address wildfire hazard and climate adaptation and resiliency strategies.

In 2020, the City began the process of updating its 2009 Climate Action Plan, rebranding it as a Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Plan (CMAP). The CMAP identifies strategies the City will pursue to address climate change through to 2050, focusing on threats of sea level rise, extreme heat, drought, flooding, and wildfire. This effort will be integrated into the Environmental Safety Element.

¹⁴ <https://edap.epa.gov/public/extensions/TRISearchPlus/TRISearchPlus.html#map>

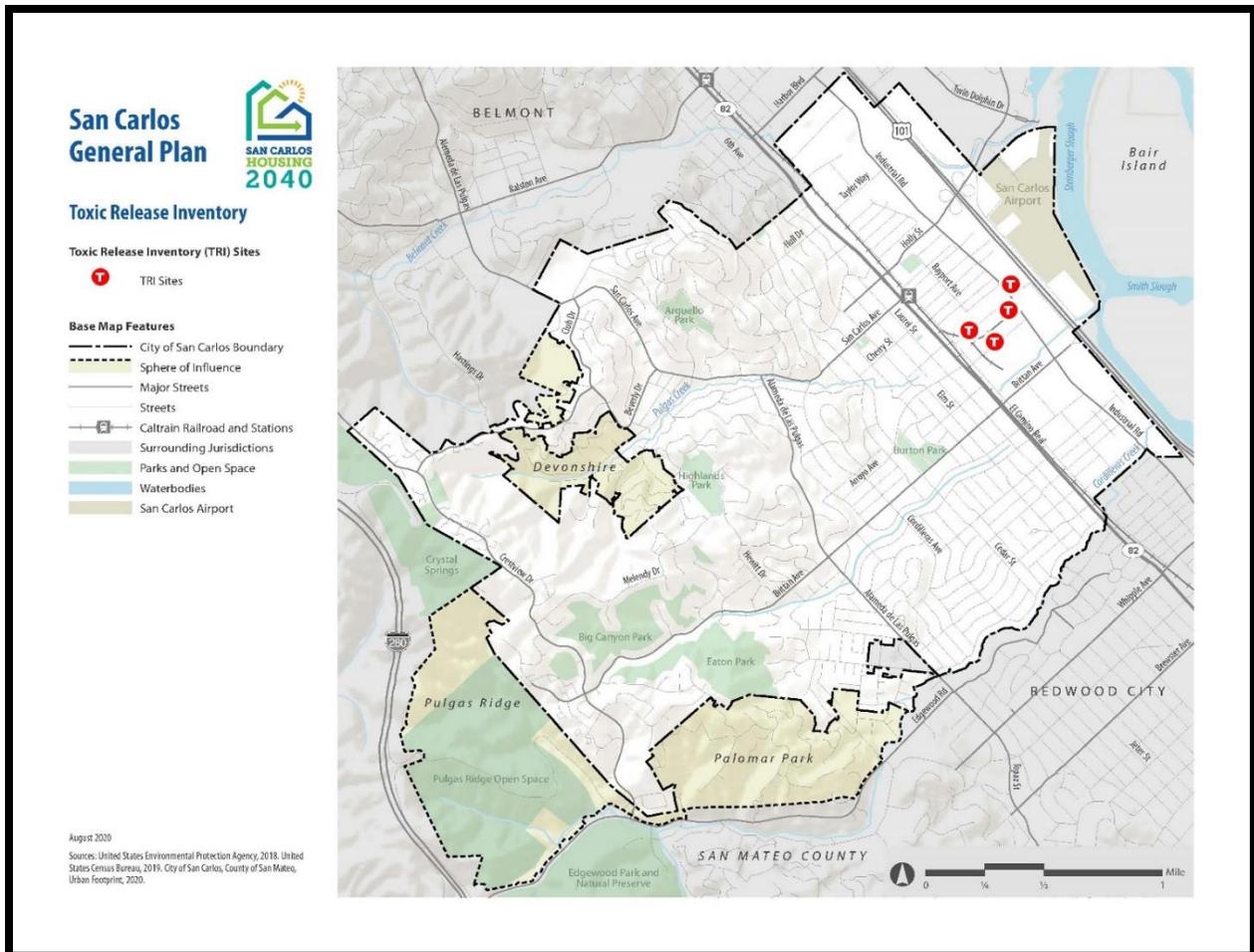


Figure 24: Toxic Release Inventory Sites

Sea Level Rise

San Carlos' adjacency to the San Francisco Bay makes it vulnerable to sea level rise. Accelerating sea level rise can threaten low-lying coastal habitats and ecosystem services they provide for human communities and can impact human communities as whole. In urban areas like San Carlos, sea level rise will impact critical infrastructure and facilities, such as the San Carlos Airport, and those portions of the community living in East San Carlos.

Figure 25 shows three scenario modeling results that range from one foot of sea level rise to nine feet of sea level rise. The map indicates possible significant flooding, erosion, and water damage impacts to the built environment, including infrastructure. Under all scenarios, San Carlos Airport will be inundated by rising Bay waters.

San Carlos General Plan



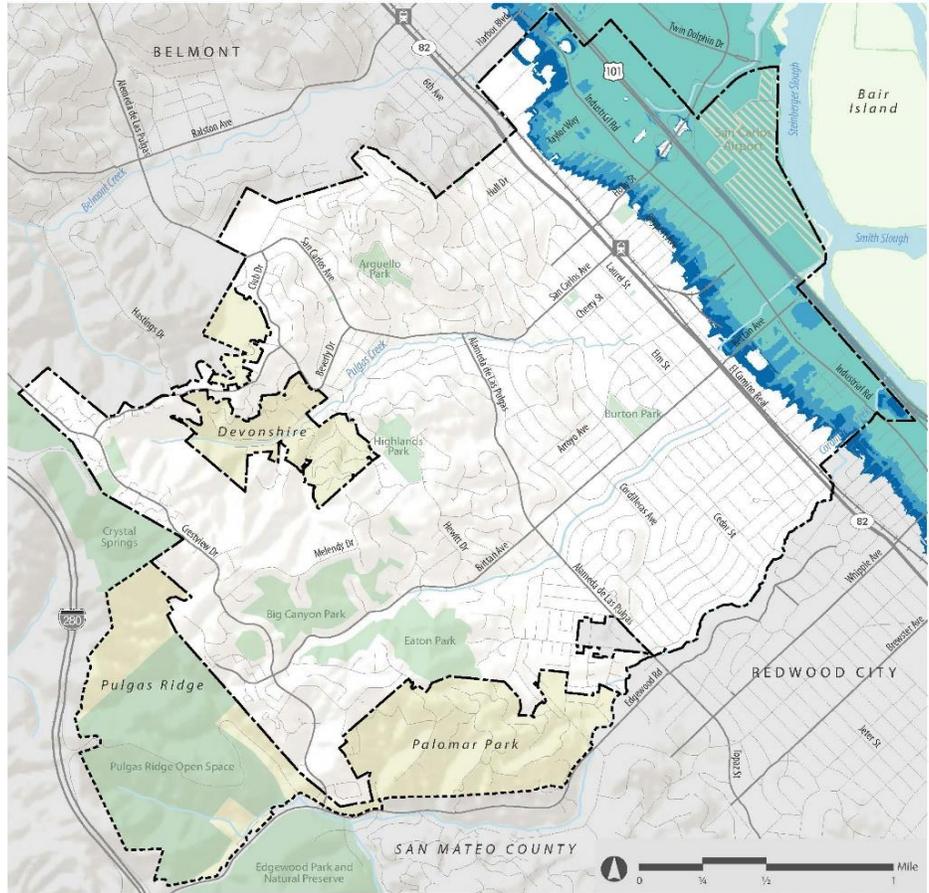
Sea Level Rise

Sea Level Rise Scenarios

- 1 foot (Low-End Scenario)
- 3 feet
- 5 feet (Mid-Level Scenario)
- 7 feet
- 9 feet (High-End Scenario)

Base Map Features

- City of San Carlos Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Major Streets
- Streets
- Caltrain Railroad and Stations
- Surrounding Jurisdictions
- Parks and Open Space
- Waterbodies
- San Carlos Airport



August 2020
 Sources: United States Census Bureau, 2019. NOAA, City of San Carlos, County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint, 2020.

Figure 25: Sea Level Rise Impact Zones

Considerations

- Foothill neighborhoods in San Carlos west of Alameda de las Pulgas are designated “Very High Fire Hazard Severity” (VHFS) Zones by San Mateo County.
- San Carlos is close to the San Andreas Fault, located approximately one mile west.
- Many San Carlos commercial and industrial uses east of El Camino Real are in liquefaction zones.
- Multiple San Carlos commercial and industrial areas and some residential uses are located within the 100-year and 500-year floodplains of the San Francisco Bay and local creeks.
- Under all sea level rise scenarios, the areas east of El Camino Real will be impacted by sea level rise and San Carlos Airport will be inundated.
- New development should consider impacts to critical infrastructure from wildfire, flooding, and sea level rise.
- The City adopted stringent grading and building codes and slope landscaping requirements to address issues related to all the hazards discussed in this section; however, these requirements are anticipated to require regular review and possible updates as environmental changes occur and as new materials, methods, and strategies are developed.

7. DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

San Carlos residents, as well as many Californians, are burdened by exposure to a varying level of environmental problems and sources of pollution. Some residents are more vulnerable to the effects of pollution than others. Exposure can often affect communities without strong advocacy to protect their health. These are called “disadvantaged communities.” The environmental justice movement has begun to advocate for historically ignored persons. California law defines environmental justice to mean “the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.”¹⁵

As a first step to assuring the recovery of disadvantaged communities and the pursuit of environmental justice, the State of California is working to identify the areas facing multiple pollution burdens so that programs and funding can be tailored and targeted toward improving the environmental and economic health of impacted communities. The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment developed a screening tool to identify disproportionately burdened communities. This tool is called the California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool or CalEnviroScreen.

In addition to environmental factors (pollutant exposure, groundwater threats, toxic sites, and hazardous materials exposure) and sensitive receptors (elderly, children, persons with asthma, and low birth weight infants), CalEnviroScreen takes into consideration socioeconomic factors. People can be simultaneously exposed to multiple contaminants from multiple sources and have multiple stressors based on their health status as well as living conditions. Thus, the resulting cumulative health risk is also often influenced by factors such as socioeconomic status of the people living in a community.

Figure 26 applies the CalEnviroScreen methodology to San Carlos.¹⁶ San Carlos’ census blocks/tracts score from 1st to 70th percentile, where the lower the number means the fewer contaminant sources and stressors. Foothill areas score lower while areas between El Camino Real and/or near IS 101 score higher. Higher

¹⁵ California Senate Bill 115 (Chapter 690, Statutes of 1999)

¹⁶ California Health Hazard Assessment, Public Health Alliance of Southern California, 2017. CalEnviroScreen 2018. United States Census Bureau, 2019. City of San Carlos, County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint, 2020.

scoring areas tend to be more burdened by pollution from multiple sources and may have populations vulnerable to its effects, considering their socioeconomic characteristics and underlying health status. San Carlos' higher scoring areas may be impacted by air and other pollutants from highways, the Airport, and industrial uses.

Pursuant to SB535, "Disadvantaged Communities" are those that score above the 75th percentile. As of Fall 2020, San Carlos does not have any census tracts scoring above the 75th percentile; therefore, San Carlos does not have any areas that qualify as "Disadvantaged Communities".

Considerations

- San Carlos does not have any census tracts scoring above the 75th percentile qualifying as a Disadvantaged Community.
- The highest scoring areas, falling between 45th and 74th percentile area, are located east of El Camino Real near the San Carlos Airport.
- The vast majority of the Planning Area falls within the 1st to 14th percentile.

San Carlos General Plan



CalEnviroScreen 3.0 Results and Disadvantaged Communities

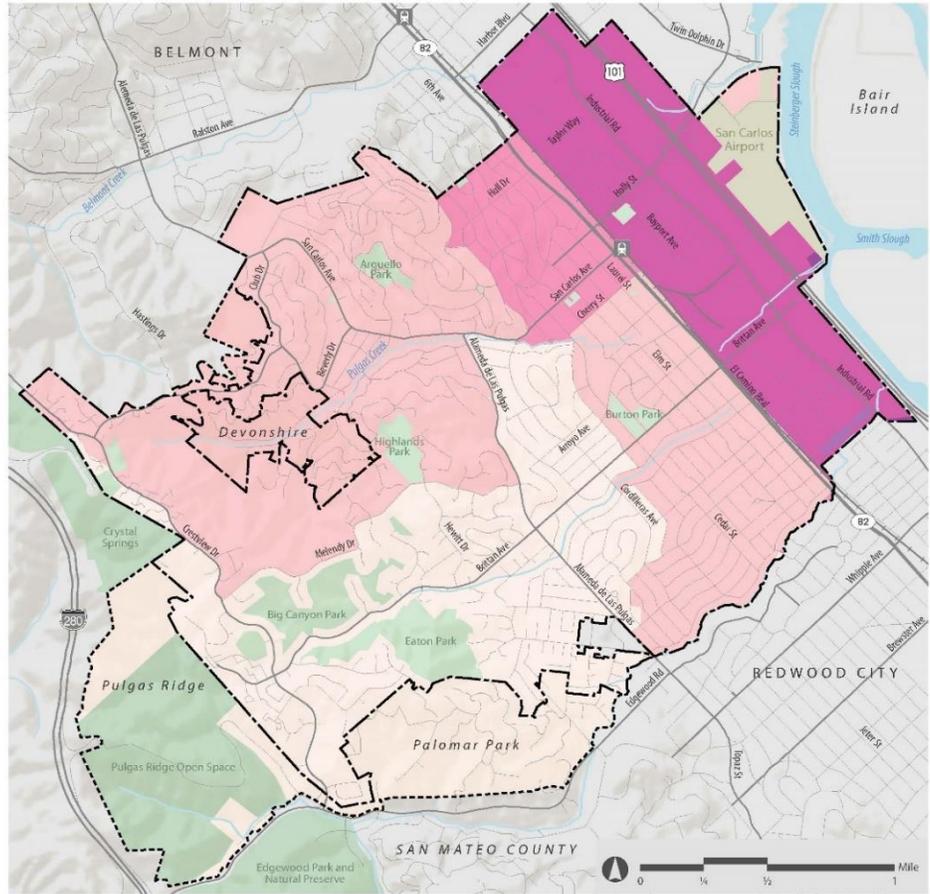
CalEnviroScreen 3.0 Results

- 1 - 4%
- 5 - 14%
- 15 - 24%
- 25 - 44%
- 45 - 70%

Disadvantaged Communities score above the 75th percentile pursuant to SB 535.

Base Map Features

- City of San Carlos Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Major Streets
- Streets
- Caltrain Railroad and Stations
- Surrounding Jurisdictions
- Parks and Open Space
- Waterbodies
- San Carlos Airport



August 2020

Sources: California Health Hazard Assessment, Public Health Alliance of Southern California, 2017; CalEnviroScreen 3.0, 2018; United States Census Bureau, 2019; City of San Carlos, County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint, 2020.

Figure 26: Disadvantaged Communities

CITATIONS

- 1 <http://www.cityofsancarlos.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=1105>
- 2 <https://sunnyvale.ca.gov/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=23800>
- 3 <https://smcl.org/about-us/>
- 4 <https://www.scsdk8.org/apps/pages/Schools>
- 5 <http://www.cityofsancarlos.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=1105>
- 6 <http://www.cityofsancarlos.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=1105>
- 7 https://www.smdailyjournal.com/news/local/san-carlos-tackles-flooding/article_33b22dc1-c2a7-5408-818e-85f3206c9f5b.html
- 8 U.S. EPA, Hazardous Waste: <https://www.epa.gov/hw/learn-basics-hazardous-waste#hwid>
- 9 <https://edap.epa.gov/public/extensions/TRISearchPlus/TRISearchPlus.html#map>
- 10 <https://www.cityofsancarlos.org/home/showdocument?id=378>
- 11 California Senate Bill 115 (Chapter 690, Statutes of 1999)
- 12 California Health Hazard Assessment, Public Health Alliance of Southern California, 2017. CalEnviroScreen 2018. United States Census Bureau, 2019. City of San Carlos, County of San Mateo, Urban Footprint, 2020.