



Conservation and Open Space

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The Conservation and Open Space Element covers mandated elements and addresses the conservation of natural resources and open spaces. Topics include: agricultural soils, biotic resources, sustainability, floodwater management, tribal and archaeological resources, and parks and other recreational resources. The discussion of water supply and demand, which is otherwise a required part of a conservation element¹, is deferred to the Public Facilities Element (Chapter 9) of this *Guadalupe 2042 General Plan*. Much of the material contained in this element come from three CalPoly efforts:

- *City of Guadalupe Volume I: Background Report (2009)*. This background report, prepared by Cal Poly students, is an integral part of the City of Guadalupe community planning effort. It summarizes the existing (2009) conditions of Guadalupe and describes issues relevant to the update of the General Plan. This background report provides substantial information on Guadalupe's circulation system.
- *City of Guadalupe: General Plan Update Background Report (2014)*. This background report, also prepared by Cal Poly students, built on the early Cal Poly work and provides a more recent account of background conditions in Guadalupe. It too contains a section devoted to existing circulation conditions and issues.
- *City of Guadalupe 2040 Draft General Plan (2018)*. This draft general plan was prepared by Cal Poly students and included an extensive public participation effort, which is summarized in the "City of Guadalupe General Plan Update – Community Input Matrix" (published separately). The draft plan provided alternative buildout scenarios and goals, objectives, policies, and implementing measures. The draft plan was never adopted but has been referred back during the development of the *Guadalupe 2042 General Plan*.

¹ The discussion of water in a conservation element must be prepared in coordination with "any countywide water agency and with all district and city agencies, including flood management, water conservation, or groundwater agencies that have developed, served, controlled, managed, or conserved water of any type for any purpose in the county or city for which the plan is prepared," and must include any information on water supply and demand (Gov. Code § 65302(d)(1)).

5.2 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The brief discussion presented below regarding the conservation of Guadalupe’s natural resources was primarily derived from community comments at focus group meetings that were held by the Cal Poly Team during the development of the *City of Guadalupe Volume I: Background Report* (2009) and the *City of Guadalupe: General Plan Update Background Report* (2014). This work was also supplemented by discussions with City staff in early 2021 as part of the update of the *Guadalupe 2042 General Plan*.

In the 2009 process, residents expressed the need to preserve the Ninth Street wetlands complex through public purchase of the land when there is a willing seller. Public access, management and the creation of a wetlands educational facility similar to that located at Oso Flaco Lake was also identified as a conservation goal. Resident input and background research also indicated a need to preserve groundwater and surface water quality within the watershed through proper stormwater planning. Water conservation is a high community priority and conservation education opportunities should be pursued.

In addition to water conservation, residents expressed an interest in pursuing City beautification efforts to plant trees and provide landscaping in public places. Examples to follow included efforts of other local communities to implement volunteer-based beautification programs, such as America in Bloom. City residents were also concerned about addressing sustainability through green-building incentives, use of renewable energy, and water conservation measures.



In the 2014 process, the Cal Poly Team also noted that access to O’Connell Park, which provides most of the active recreation area in the city, was limited due to its location at the western edge of the city. Consequently, access to parks in neighborhoods located on the eastern edge of town had resulted in those residents being underserved. Finally, the Cal Poly Team noted that efforts to increase access to parks, recreation programs, and activities was constrained by inadequate financial resources.

In addition to the Cal Poly work, conversations with City staff as part of the 2021 update process also revealed conflicts between Guadalupe’s urbanized area and neighboring agricultural uses.

5.3 AGRICULTURAL SOILS

Guadalupe is located in the Santa Maria Valley and enjoys a vibrant agricultural economy. The city is surrounded by prime farmland on three sides, and most of the agricultural properties surrounding the community are under Williamson Act contract. Prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics necessary to be economically feasible for sustaining high crop yields. Agricultural landscapes within the City planning area include productive fields located to the east, generally west of Simas Road, as well as cultivation to the south and west. Row crops are the dominant type of agricultural commodity produced in the area and includes broccoli, cauliflower, and squash.



While Guadalupe's economy relies heavily on the agricultural economy, the presence of agricultural lands adjacent to the Guadalupe's urbanized area has, over the years, led to land use conflicts. Crop dusting, pesticide and insecticide spraying, agricultural burning, the generation of odor and dust, and even the traffic generated by farmworkers travelling to and from the fields, have impacted adjacent neighborhoods.

A map illustrating important farmland and Williamson Act parcels is presented in [Figure 5-1, Important Farmland/Williamson Act](#).

5.4 BIOTIC RESOURCES

Biological Setting

Biological resources include plant and animal species, as well as their habitats and ecosystems. The City of Guadalupe's General Plan outlines goals, objectives, and recommendations to protect and enhance the quality of the natural environment, including wildlife and riparian habitat. Protection and conservation of biological resources is undertaken by several federal, state and local agencies, including the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and local non-profit entities such as the Dunes Center. The federal Endangered Species Act serves to protect plant and animal species deemed to be threatened or endangered at the state or federal level and prohibits harm to such species and degradation of their habitat.

No published biological surveys are available that cover the entire City of Guadalupe planning area. Therefore, biological resource information for this section was obtained from

environmental documents pertaining to specific areas of the city, such as the DJ Farms and regional data resources for Santa Barbara County (including the California Natural Diversity Database). Based on a general data review, habitat-types within or directly adjacent to the City Limits were identified at a general level and are shown in [Figure 5-2, Habitat Map](#). It is possible that habitat may be located on specific sites that are not identified on in Figure 5-2.

Special Status Plant Species

Non-native annual grassland, arroyo willow, and cattail marsh habitats in the Ninth Street Wetland Complex (described later in this chapter) are potentially suitable habitat for three special status plant species: La Graciosa thistle (*Cirsium scariosum* var. *loncholepis*), Gambel's water cress (*Nasturtium gambelii*), and black-flowered figwort (*Scrophularia atrata*).² [Figure 5-3, Recorded Observations of Special-Status Species](#), presents a map of California Natural Diversity Database records within one mile of the City limits.

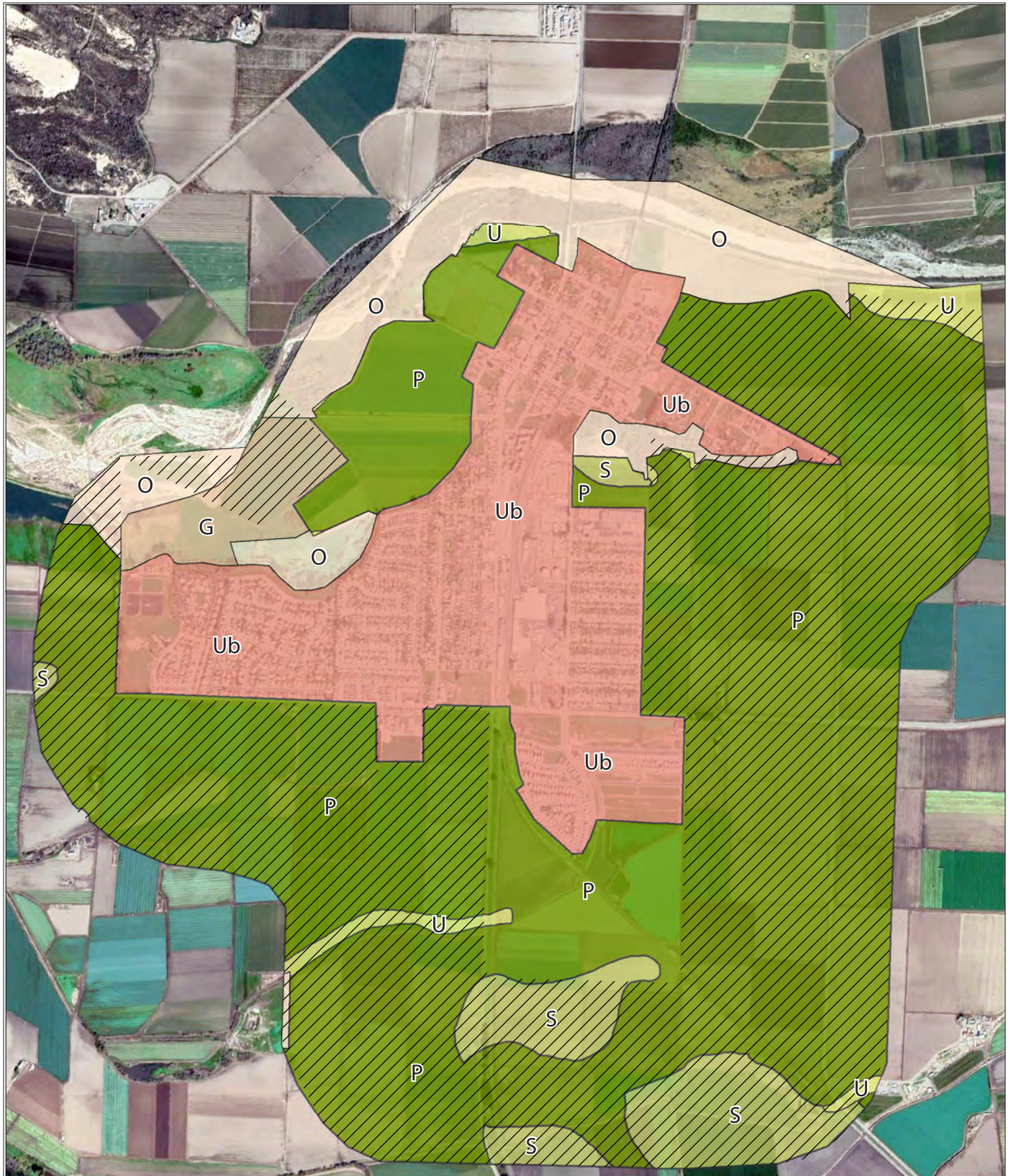
La Graciosa Thistle

La Graciosa thistle is a state threatened, federally endangered, California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) 1B.1 species. This species can be found in mesic, sandy soils within a variety of habitats including cismontane woodland, coastal dunes, coastal scrub, marshes and swamps (brackish), as well as valley and foothill grassland. It is a perennial herb that blooms from May to August and typically occurs at elevations between 15 and 690 feet. The La Graciosa thistle has only been found on the coast of southern San Luis Obispo and northern Santa Barbara counties. Critical habitat for La Graciosa Thistle has been designated, and it occurs approximately 0.5 miles west of the site, but does not occur within the Study Area. The non-native annual grassland and disturbed cattail marsh contains marginal habitat for this species; therefore, the species has a low potential to occur within the Study Area. However, the species is not expected within the disturbance footprint.

Gambel's water cress

Gambel's water cress is a state threatened, federally endangered, California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) 1B.1 species. This species can be found in swamps, freshwater and brackish marshes, and at the margins of lakes and streams, in or just above the water level. It is a perennial rhizomatous herb that blooms from April to October and typically occurs at elevations between 15 to 990 feet. The disturbed cattail marsh is marginal habitat for this species; therefore, the species has a low potential to occur within the Study Area. However, the species is not expected within the disturbance footprint.

² Source: Rincon Consultants, Inc, May 31, 2019. "Biological Resources Assessment within the Escalante Meadows Property formerly known as Guadalupe Ranch Acres, Guadalupe, Santa Barbara County, California"



0 1900 feet

Note: City limit and farmland mapping boundaries are approximate

- Prime Farmland (P)
- Farmland of Statewide Importance (S)
- Unique Farmland (U)
- Grazing Land (G)

- Urban and Built-Up Land (U)
- Other Land (O)
- Agricultural Preserve Williamson Act Parcels

Source: California Department of Conservation 2018, Santa Barbara County Assessor's Office 2021

- Planning Area
- City Limits and Sphere of Influence

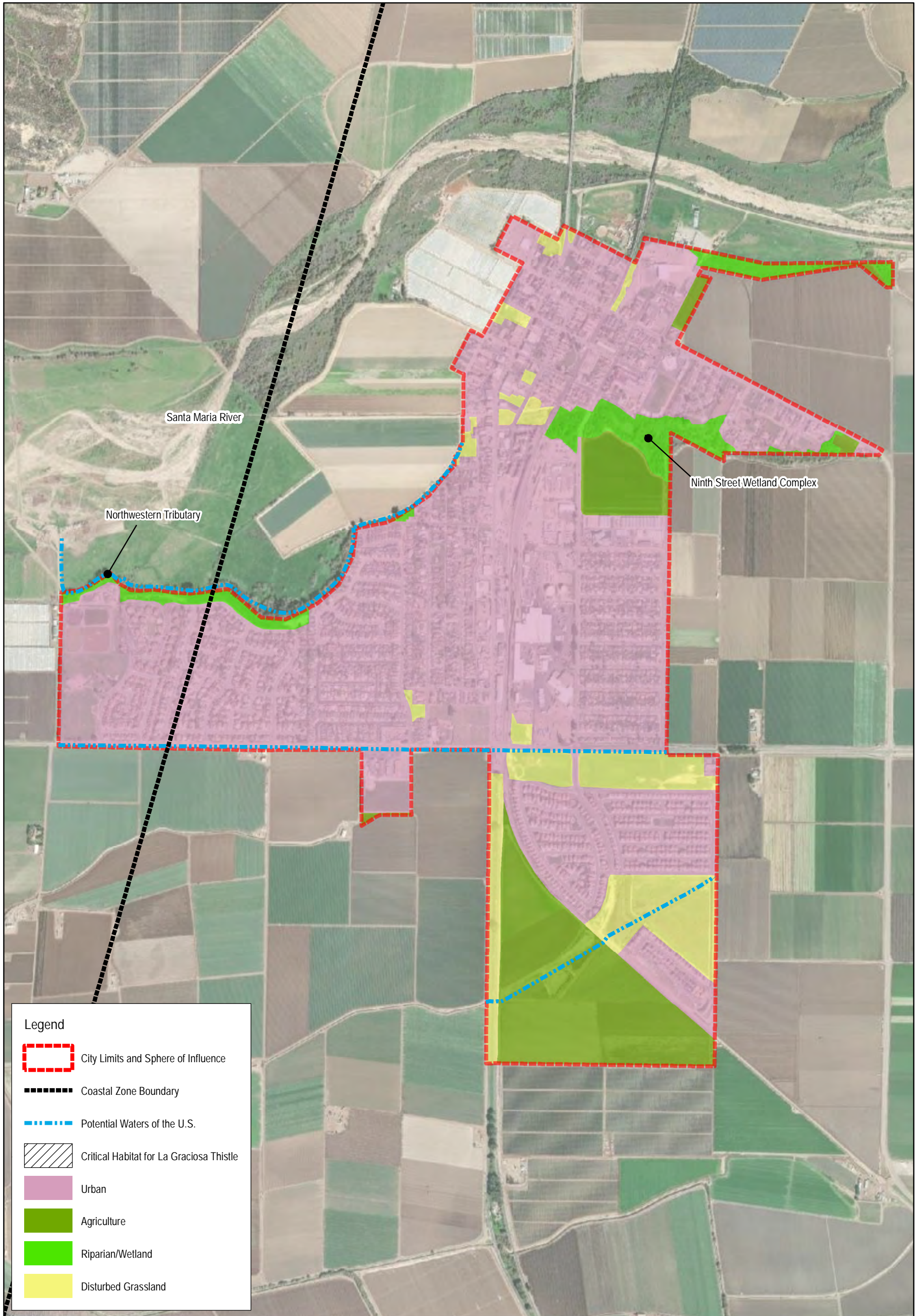
Figure 5-1

Important Farmland/Williamson Act

Guadalupe 2042 General Plan Initial Study



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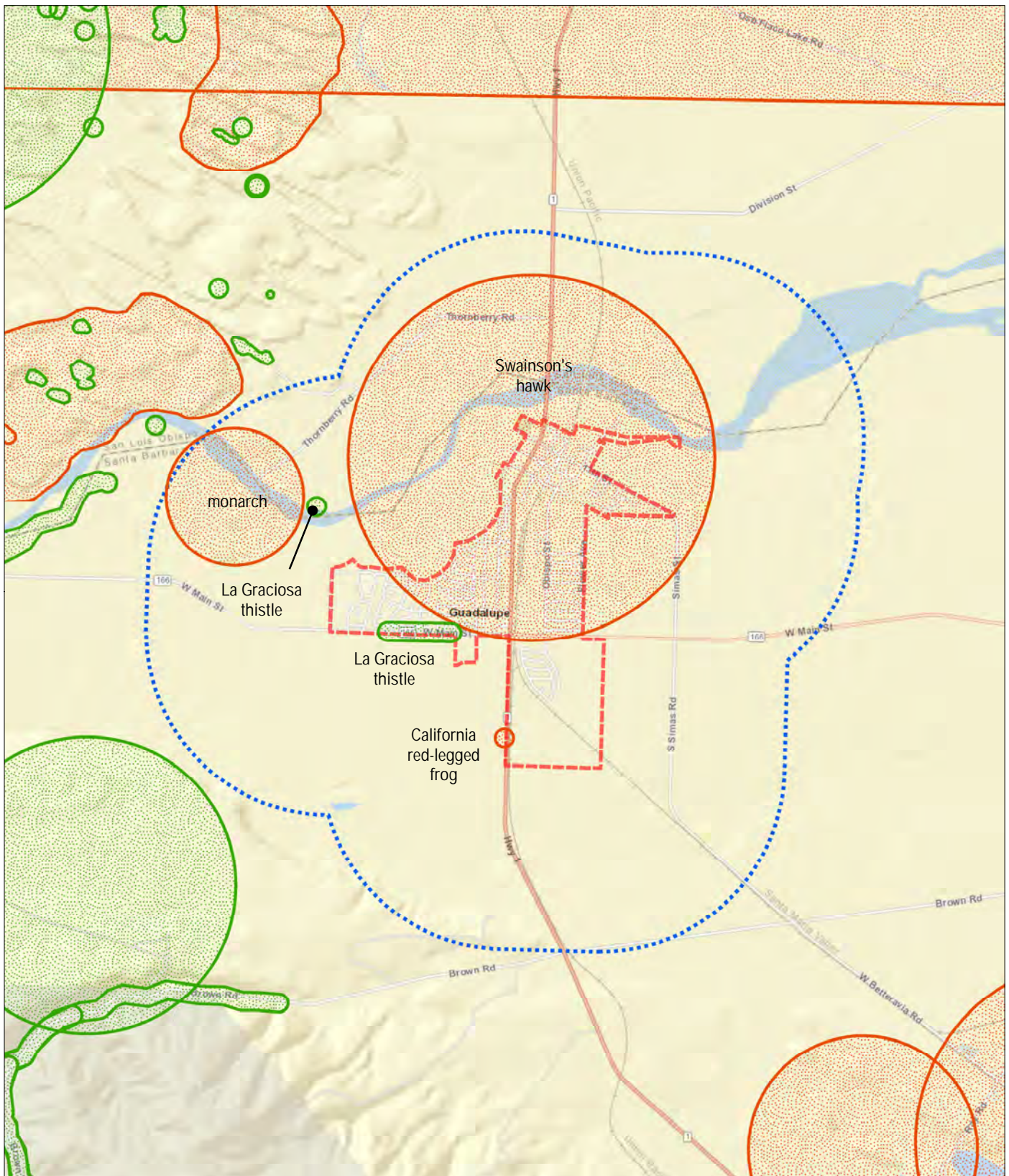
Source: ESRI 2022, Santa Barbara County 2022, EMC Planning Group 2022

Figure 5-2
Habitat Map

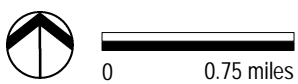


5.0 Conservation and Open Space

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Source: Santa Barbara County GIS 2021, ESRI 2022, CNDDDB 2022



- City Limits and Sphere of Influence
- 1-Mile Buffer
- Special-Status Plants
- Special-Status Wildlife

Figure 5-3



Recorded Observations of Special-Status Species

Guadalupe 2042 General Plan

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Black-flowered Figwort

Black-flowered figwort is a CRPR 1B.2 species that can be found in closed-cone coniferous forest, chaparral, coastal dunes, coastal scrub, and riparian scrub in sand, diatomaceous shales, and soils derived from other parent material. It is a perennial herb that blooms from March to July and typically occurs at elevations between 100 and 7,710 feet. The arroyo willow thicket is marginal habitat for this species; therefore, the species has a low potential to occur within the Study Area. The species is not expected within the disturbance footprint.

Special Status Wildlife Species

The California Natural Diversity Database contains several records for special status wildlife species occurrences within the vicinity of the Study Area; however, only four species have potential to occur within the Study Area. The developed/landscaped lands, non-native annual grassland, arroyo willow thicket, and cattail marsh located within and immediately outside the Study Area have potential to support four special status wildlife species: northern California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra*), California red-legged frog (CRLF; *Rana draytonii*), western spadefoot (*Spea hammondi*), and American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*). Each of these species is discussed in more detail below. Although a Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) California Natural Diversity Database occurrence overlaps the Study Area, this occurrence documents the species to be possibly extirpated from the area. All Swainson's hawk California Natural Diversity Database occurrences east of the California Central Valley along the coast presume the species to be extirpated from the region. Therefore, Swainson's hawk has no potential to occur within the Study Area and is not further discussed.

Northern California Legless Lizard

Northern California legless lizard is considered a Species of Special Concern by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and requires moist, warm, loose soils and adequate cover within beach dune, chaparral, pine and oak woodland, desert scrub, sandy wash, and stream terrace habitats. This species will utilize leaf litter, rocks, cover boards, driftwood, and downed logs for cover and refugia. Legless lizards live mostly underground and burrow in loose sandy soils. The California Natural Diversity Database documented eight occurrences of this species within five miles of the Study Area, with the closest occurrence approximately 2.4 miles to the west. Soils in the arroyo willow thicket and non-native annual grassland outside the developed area are suitable for silvery legless lizard and contain marginal habitat for this species. Therefore, northern California legless lizard has a low potential to occur within the Study Area outside the developed area. The species is not expected within the disturbance footprint.

California Red-Legged Frog

CRLF was formally listed by the USFWS as federally threatened in 1996, and is considered a Species of Special Concern by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. CRLF inhabits quiet pools of streams, marshes, and ponds. All life history stages are most likely to be encountered in and around breeding sites, which include coastal lagoons, marshes, springs, permanent and semi-permanent natural ponds, and ponded and backwater portions of streams, as well as artificial impoundments such as stock ponds, irrigation ponds, and siltation ponds. Eggs are typically deposited in permanent pools, attached to emergent vegetation. This species also utilizes upland habitats such as humid forests, woodlands, grasslands, stream sides, and coastal scrub communities. CRLF breeding season typically occurs during November through April.

The California Natural Diversity Database has documented nine occurrences of this species within five miles of the Study Area, with the closest occurrence approximately 1.8 miles to the south. The non-native annual grassland and arroyo willow thicket outside the developed area within the Study Area are considered suitable upland habitats for juvenile dispersal; however, no suitable breeding habitat is present within the Study Area. Upland habitat may provide suitable juvenile dispersal areas; as such this species is only expected to occur incidentally, if at all. Therefore, California red-legged frog has a low potential to occur within the Study Area outside the developed area. The species is not expected within the disturbance footprint.

Western Spadefoot

Western spadefoot is considered a SSC by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and occurs in lowland habitats such as washes, river floodplains, alluvial fans, playas, and alkali flats (Stebbins, 1985). It can also be found in the foothills and mountains. This species generally inhabits areas with sandy or gravelly soil with open vegetation and short grasses. Vegetation communities where this species may occur include non-native annual grassland and arroyo willow thicket. Western spadefoot requires two distinct habitat components to complete their life cycle, and these habitats may need to be in close proximity (Stebbins, 1985). These components are presence of an aquatic habitat for breeding and a terrestrial habitat for feeding and aestivation. Western spadefoot toads are primarily terrestrial, using upland habitats to feed and aestivate during the non-breeding season.

The California Natural Diversity Database documented one occurrence of this species approximately five miles east of the Study Area. The non-native annual grassland and arroyo willow thicket outside the developed area contains suitable terrestrial habitat for this species; therefore, the western spadefoot has a low potential to occur within the Study Area outside the developed area. The species is not expected within the disturbance footprint.

American Peregrine Falcon

American peregrine falcon is considered a fully protected species by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and occurs near wetlands, lakes, rivers, or other water on cliffs, banks, dunes, mounds, or human-made structures. American Peregrine Falcon nests consist of a scrape or a depression or ledge in an open site. The Study Area does not provide suitable nesting habitat for this species, however this species might occur transiently within the Study Area. American peregrine falcon has a low potential to occur within the Study Area.

Nesting Birds

The CFGC Section 3503 and the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act protect native nongame bird species and their nests. The shrubs and trees within and adjacent to the Study Area provide suitable nesting habitat for a variety of bird species. No active or inactive bird nests were observed within the Study Area during the reconnaissance-level field survey. Nesting birds have a moderate potential to occur within the Study Area.

Summary of Special Status Plant and Wildlife Species

Table 5-1, [Common Plant and Wildlife Species in Guadalupe](#), lists common plant and wildlife species, including sensitive species, that are found in the Guadalupe planning area.

Key Habitat Communities

The preservation of wildlife habitat is essential to maintaining biodiversity of species within the Guadalupe planning area. Plant communities and ecosystems in the region have developed over time in response to influences of a variety of environmental factors, including climate and topography. Clearing of native vegetation on the Santa Maria River valley floor for cultivation and within riparian areas for channel modification and floodwater diversion have served to alter the landscape into its present state. Key habitat communities located in the Guadalupe Area and their characteristics include:

- Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Complex
- Santa Maria River Riparian Woodland
- Ninth Street Wetlands Complex
- Non-Native Grassland

Each of these is discussed in more detail below, but it should be noted that none of these areas, except for the Ninth Street Wetlands Complex, are within the City boundaries.

Table 5-1 Common Plant and Wildlife Species in Guadalupe

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	CA Status
Plants			
<i>Cirsium loncholepis</i>	La Graciosa Thistle	Endangered	Threatened
<i>Nasturtium gambellii</i>	Gambel's water cress	Endangered	Rare
<i>Deinandra increscens ssp. Foliosa</i>	Leafy Tarplant	None	None
<i>Atriplex serenana var. davidsonii</i>	Davidson's Saltscale	None	None
<i>Arctostaphylos rudis</i>	Sand Mesa Manzanita	None	None
<i>Monardello crispa</i>	Crisped-Leaf Monardella	None	None
<i>orabonche parishii ssp. Brachyloba</i>	Short-Lobed Broomrape	None	None
<i>scrophularia atrata</i>	Black-Flowered Figwort	None	None
Animals			
<i>Ambysromo californiense</i>	California Tiger Salamander	Threatened	None
<i>Spea hommondii</i>	Western Spadefoot Toad	None	None
<i>Rana draytonii</i>	California Red-Legged frog	Threatened	None
<i>Gila orcuttii</i>	Arroyo Chub	None	None
<i>Taxidea taxux</i>	American Badger	None	None
<i>Actinemys marmorata pallida</i>	Southwester Pond Turtle	None	None

SOURCE: California Department of Fish and Wildlife, CNNDDB Quick Viewer, 2008

Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Complex

Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Complex is located to the west of Guadalupe and is characterized by coastal strand, sandy beach, coastal scrub, and wetland habitat. The complex includes the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes National Wildlife Refuge (managed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service), which is located north of the Santa Maria River Estuary and the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes Preserve, which is located south of the estuary (owned by Santa Barbara County and managed by the non-profit Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM)). The complex represents a National Natural Landmark and is home to many species of rare plants and animals including La Graciosa Thistle, California Red-Legged Frog, Western Snowy Plover and California Least Tern. Resident and migratory shorebirds utilize this habitat for foraging and nesting. [Figure 5-4, Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Habitat](#), shows an aerial view of the dunes habitat.

Santa Maria River Riparian Woodland

Riparian woodland habitat occurs along the channel of the Santa Maria River, along remnant channel reaches, and along the edges of riparian habitat located in the northern section of the city. Arroyo willow tends to dominate the plant species composition within riparian woodlands; however, the occasional black cottonwood, elderberry and sycamore trees may

be interspersed with willow. Riparian woodland vegetation transitions into herbaceous wetland habitat within the floodplain of the river. [Figure 5-5, Santa Maria River Riparian Woodland](#), shows an aerial view of the Santa Maria River Riparian Woodland.

Figure 5-4 Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Habitat



Source: Google Earth, 2021

Ninth Street Wetlands Complex

Wetland systems are common throughout the Santa Maria River floodplain, particularly west of the City within the Estuary and Dunes Complex. A wetland system exists within the City limits, at the junction of Ninth and Obispo Streets. The wetland area is thickly surrounded by woody vegetation nearly concealing it from view. [Figure 5-6, Ninth Street Wetland Complex](#), shows an aerial view of the Ninth Street Wetland Complex.

Wetland systems are often remnant features of lateral river migration. The Ninth Street wetlands complex is bound by urban development to the north. Perennial species are often present including Rushes, Cattails and floating aquatic plants. Wetland areas serve as important sources of habitat for wildlife, invertebrates, resident, and migratory birds, and provide stormwater detention and natural filtering.

Figure 5-5 Santa Maria River Riparian Woodland



Source: Google Earth, 2021

Figure 5-6 Ninth Street Wetland Complex



Source: Google Earth, 2021

Non-Native Grassland

Non-native grasslands are upland areas characterized by annual, non-native grass species typically found throughout rangelands in California, such as *avena fatua*, *poa* species and other introduced forbs. Cattle grazing is common adjacent to the City in the herbaceous wetland areas along the floodplain of the river and in irrigated pastures west of the City.

Many of the species found within non-native grassland areas tend to be classified as weedy and invasive. Areas throughout the City adjacent to agricultural fields, access roads, levees, or urban development are dominated by invasive annual plants characteristic of disturbed areas.

5.5 SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability encompasses established principles of good planning and advocates a proactive approach to future development. The concept of sustainable communities fuses several different prominent urban planning and design concepts, including new urbanism, the green building movement, and an interest in ecosystem maintenance and restoration. It requires a balancing of environmental, economic and social factors. Ultimately, to be successful, sustainable planning efforts must also result in living environments that people cherish and are able to use and re-use over generations; neighborhoods that use land and energy efficiently, are aesthetically pleasing, safe, provide for people's daily needs and are easy to navigate. Putting this into practice, the *Guadalupe 2042 General Plan* seeks to promote an economically sustainable Guadalupe, improve the environment, and reduce the city's carbon footprint.

While sustainability is a global issue that extends beyond the realm of city planning, local land use planning and resource management affects the economic vitality, natural environment and societal support that can contribute to a community's sustainability. Key factors affecting sustainability include energy use, generation and management of waste, and subsequent greenhouse gas emissions. Since local governments control many of the day-to-day activities that determine the amount of energy used, and waste generated by, their communities, they can potentially affect energy consumption patterns and greatly impact the emissions of global warming pollution.

5.6 FLOODWATER MANAGEMENT

The *General Plan Guidelines* (Governor's Office of Planning and Research, 2017) requires a local jurisdiction's conservation element to identify rivers, creeks, streams, flood corridors, riparian habitats, and land that may accommodate floodwater for purposes of groundwater recharge and stormwater management. The guidelines also require that local jurisdictions coordinate with any countywide water agency and with all district and city agencies, including flood management, water conservation, or groundwater agencies that have developed, served, controlled, managed, or conserved water of any type for any purpose in the county or city for which the plan is prepared.

Water agency coordination on the development of a conservation element must include a discussion and evaluation of available water supply and demand information. Please note that this information is not included in this Conservation and Open Space Element but is instead

contained in the Public Facilities Element (Chapter 8 of the *Guadalupe 2042 General Plan*). The information concerning water supply and demand that is contained in Chapter 8 is hereby incorporated by reference into this Conservation and Open Space Element to satisfy the requirements of Government Code section 65302(d).



The Santa Maria River channel is an important source of aquifer recharge and therefore plays a key role in ensuring that the City of Guadalupe maintains a sustainable groundwater supply into the future. This groundwater also serves adjacent agricultural uses. In addition to providing a sustainable source of groundwater, the Santa Maria River provides open space that

is valuable for its natural habitat, visual effect, and passive recreation potential. [Figure 5-7, Flood Zones](#), shows the Santa Maria River flood zone.

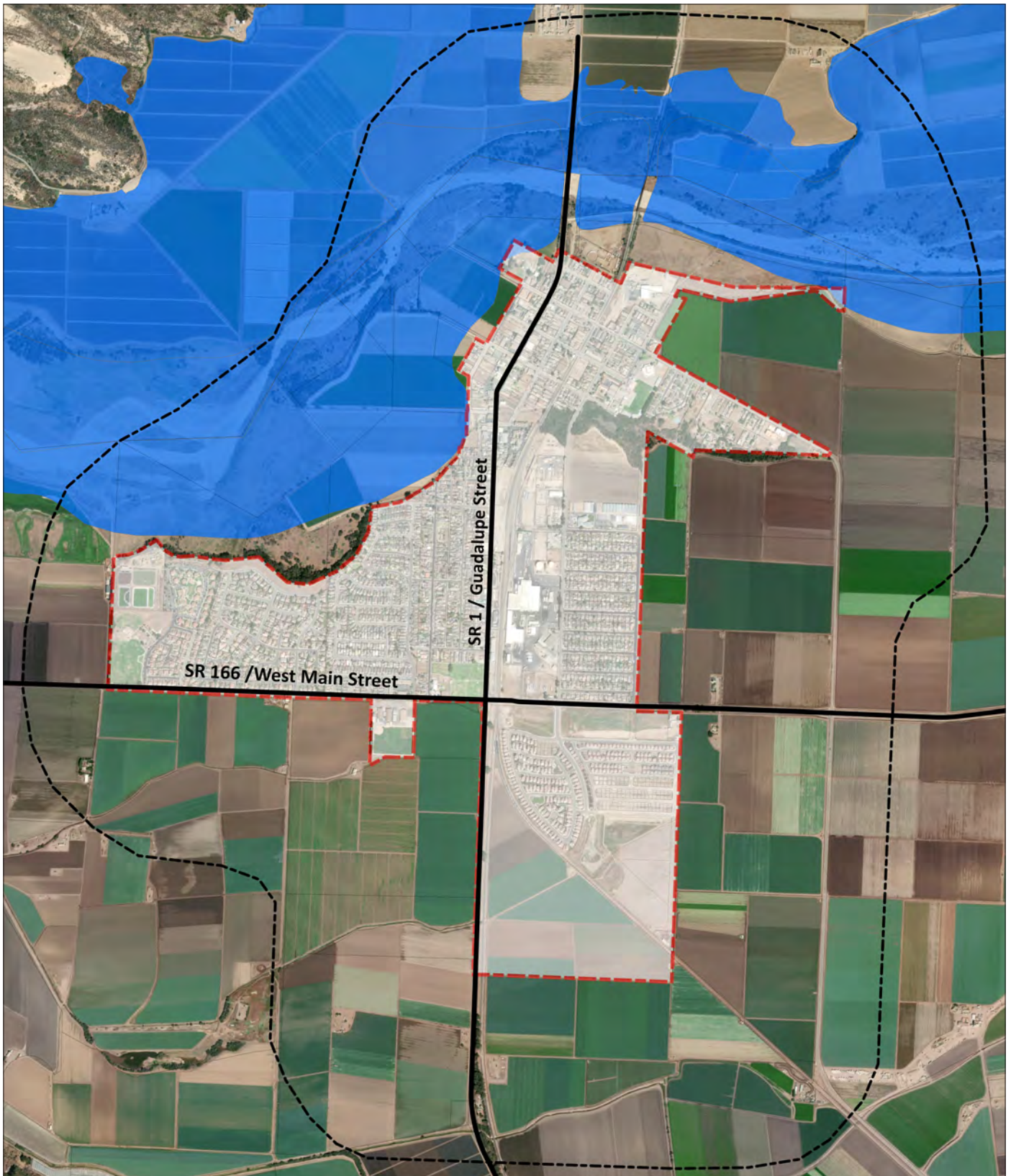
5.7 TRIBAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

There are no known tribal or archaeological sites within the Guadalupe's city limits. There are, however, several tribal sites known to exist within a five-mile radius of the city. Evidence of human habitation of the Central Coast of California dates back some 10,000 years. The Chumash occupied the dunes west of the City, as well as many other areas of the Central Coast until about the mid-1880s. Over 100 Chumash archaeological sites have been



identified from the town of Grover Beach to the north to Mussel Point south and west of the city, with at least 16 shell midden sites used as temporary camps in the dune area. The Chumash were primarily hunters and gatherers, subsisting on fish, shellfish, acorns, seeds, and roots. Chumash archaeological sites in the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Preserve have been recorded on official site record forms by the California Archaeological Site Inventory.

In 1769, Gaspar de Portola led the first Spanish land expedition through San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties, and traveled through the area now known as Guadalupe up to Monterey. He and his troops stopped overnight at a freshwater lake and named it Oso Flaco Lake after shooting a bear described as "oso flaco" (lean bear). Thus, there is a possibility that some unknown archaeological site exists. Because the City of Guadalupe is in a sensitive locale, which includes the possibility of native American burial sites, precautions should be taken whenever construction occurs.



0 1900 feet



City Limits



Flood Zone



Planning Area

Source: City of Guadalupe 2021



Figure 5-7

Flood Zones

Guadalupe 2042 General Plan

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5.8 PARKS AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

Recreational facilities are becoming increasingly important to the residents of Guadalupe. As leisure time increases, more people reach retirement age, schools teach recreation skills as part of their general curriculum, and outdoor activities become a more important part of many people's lives, the City must plan for providing additional land for possible recreational facilities. The terms "parks" and "recreational facilities" are used interchangeably in this chapter.



Provisions for recreational facilities is one of the key municipal services provided to the citizens of Guadalupe. The complete recreation system is made up of various facilities, some of which are not owned by the City. An example is a regional park which services a sub-region and is often times owned in whole or in part by the federal, state, county or other agency. The City has two such facilities, those being the State beach four miles to the west, and LeRoy Park, located at the northwest corner of the City. Existing school facilities and grounds can also provide recreational opportunities. There is one elementary school and one junior high school in the City, which have a variety of buildings and facilities that could be used to the community's advantage to provide recreational space.

There are three distinct age groups which use recreation facilities with various degrees of intensity. Children below the ages of 14 are the most intense users of recreation facilities. Next, retired persons who have more leisure time also use recreation facilities to a large extent. Finally, the use of recreation facilities by people in the age group of from 14 to 65 is more limited than the other two groups. Each of these age groups require different types of recreation areas and different facilities. The younger people require areas for more active play, while the older persons prefer the more passive activities. The middle age group needs facilities which the whole family can use.

Existing Park and Recreation Facilities

Guadalupe has approximately 59 acres of land dedicated to parks and recreational uses. Based on a 2021 population of 8,346 persons, there are approximately 7.04 acres of parkland per 1,000 Guadalupe residents. There are also nearby regional parks and open space areas which include the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park, the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Preserve, Oso Flaco Lake, and County Parks in the nearby City of Santa Maria. Guadalupe's park facilities are classified by size, use, and service area as follows:

Regional Parks

County, state, or federally owned land. These parks can be in close proximity to a city. They include major open space, are open to the public, and provide such services as golf courses which may be operated by a city, county, or private enterprise. The Rancho Guadalupe Dunes Preserve to the west is owned by the County of Santa Barbara and is classified as a regional park.

Community Parks

In general, a community park serves an area which includes one or more secondary schools. This area is a group of neighborhoods forming a recognized section or district of the city. These parks are planned primarily for young people and adults and provide indoor and outdoor facilities to meet a wider range of recreational activities than does the neighborhood recreation center. Jack O'Connell Park and LeRoy Park are classified as community parks. Also, the Guadalupe gymnasium located in the City Hall complex is used on a community-wide basis.

Neighborhood Parks

These parks should be planned and developed to meet the specific needs of the neighborhood to be served. Although participation in a neighborhood park, particularly during the summer months, is primarily by teenagers and school children, the facilities should offer services comparable to the demographic makeup of the entire neighborhood. These parks usually require two to five acres. To be an effective part of the park and recreation system, it is necessary to blend a combination of activity area, passive or active, and landscaping to buffer activities from each other and from the surrounding residences.

Mini/Pocket Parks

The size and location of mini-parks are determined primarily by the availability of vacant land. They average from 1/2 acre to three acres in size and may service any age group depending on neighborhood needs. These parks offer play and quiet game areas, multi-purpose courts, and landscaping. They can also be used to improve underimproved lots that may pose an eyesore or hazard. The DJ Farms specific plan area has been designed with numerous mini/pocket parks that provide neighborhood residents with open space opportunities. A larger neighborhood/community park is planned for the area and will be developed in the coming years as buildout of the specific plan area continues. Over ten pocket parks have been developed in the first two phases of the Pasadera development.

Other Open Space Opportunities

Several other open space opportunities are possible through the use and development of flood plains, common greens, and the beautification of curbside areas in Downtown Guadalupe. For example, with Caltrans permission, Downtown Guadalupe could host sidewalk dining and café areas³ and be furnished with benches to encourage social interaction, and the *Guadalupe Mobility + Revitalization Plan* (2019) contains other beautification ideas for Downtown Guadalupe. Beautification areas can also be designed for unused rights-of-ways, alleyways, and dormant building sites. These areas enhance and beautify the city, making it more attractive to residents and visitors.

Another type of open space is the common area within cluster residential developments. These areas provide relief from the concentrated urban development and supply needed recreation areas for portions of the population. These areas can be coordinated with existing parks and landscaped property to create a network of greenways. Finally, bikeways and walkways can connect the various greenways to provide access throughout the community.

Joint Use of School Properties

School facilities and major public utility easements are additional open space opportunities. Schools often underutilize their properties after school hours and weekends and during the summer, and agreements between the City and the Guadalupe Union School District could allow for joint use during these off times. Shared use of school properties would serve to provide additional recreation areas and make neighborhoods more active year-round.

Future Park Development

The Quimby Act (Subdivision Map Act § 66477) provides a statutory basis for the City of Guadalupe to require the payment of a fee or the dedication of an equivalent area of parkland when new residential subdivisions are proposed. The statute allows a local jurisdiction to require the dedication of land or the payment of fees, or both, to provide three (3) acres of park area per 1,000 persons residing within a new subdivision. This standard can be increased (up to a limit of five (5) acres per thousand persons) if the amount of existing neighborhood and community park area exceeds three (3) acres per thousand persons. As discussed above, Guadalupe current ratio of park space per thousand persons is 7.04 acres per thousand persons. [Figure 5-8, Public Facilities and Parks](#) shows the location of public parks and recreation facilities. [Table 5-2, List of Parks and Recreation Facilities](#), tabulates the number of acres of parks in Guadalupe that are shown in [Figure 5-8](#).

³ Caltrans regulation of sidewalk cafe tables and chairs in state highway rights-of-way was relaxed during Covid-19, but Caltrans may revert to its prior prohibition on such uses after the pandemic is lifted. Nonetheless, it might be possible to obtain an exemption for Guadalupe if a discussion is initiated with the Sacramento office of Caltrans.

Table 5-2 List of Parks and Recreation Facilities

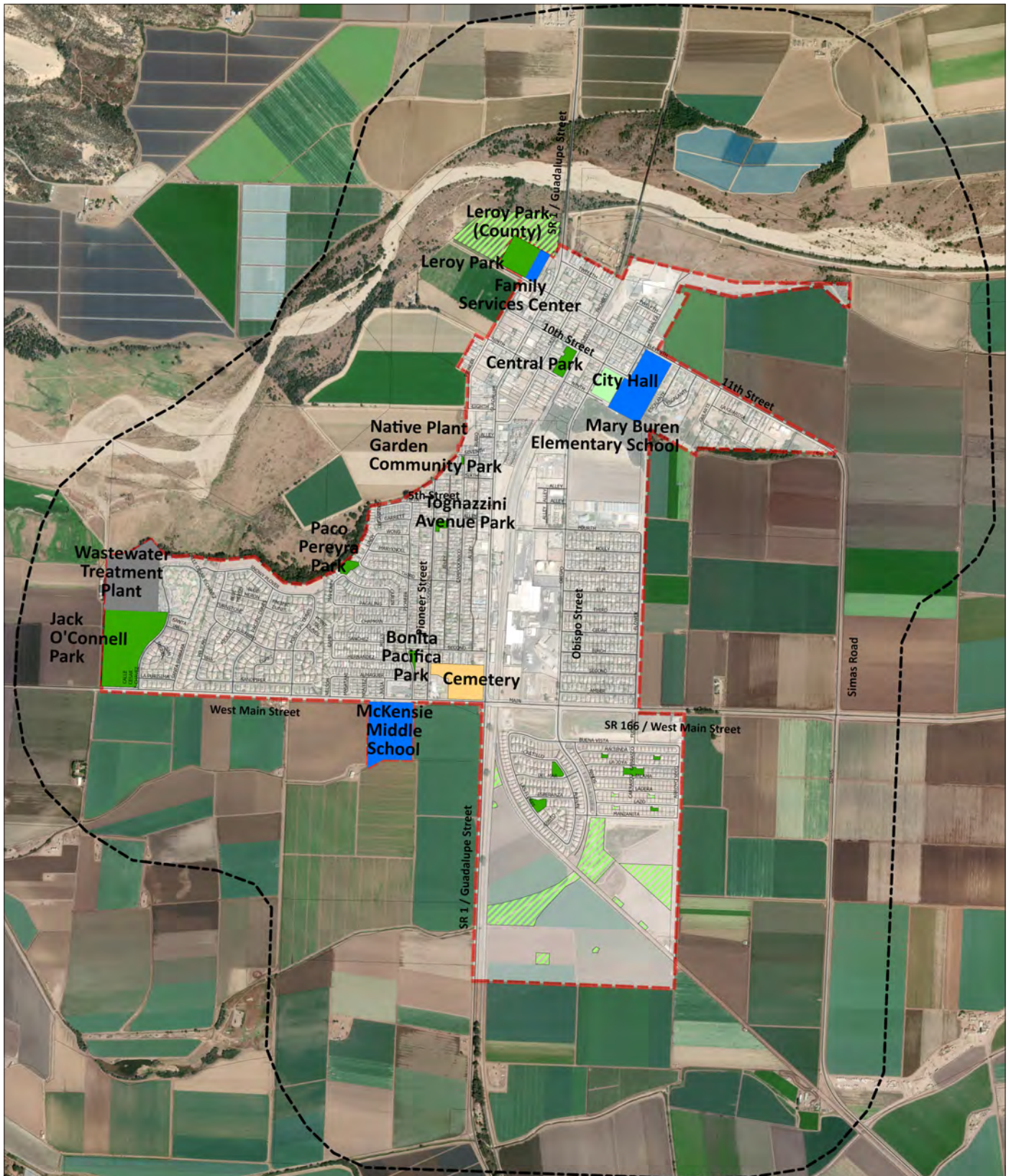
Park	Type	Acres
Leroy Park	Community Park	18.43
Jack O'Connell Park	Community Park	14.47
Central Park	Community Park	1.38
Native Plant Garden Community Park	Pocket Park	0.07
Paco Pereyra Park	Pocket Park	0.71
Tognazzini Avenue Park	Pocket Park	0.43
Bonita Pacifica Park	Pocket Park	0.31
Misc. Other		2.04
Undeveloped (Pasadera)		20.89
Total		58.73

SOURCES: City of Guadalupe; Cal Poly Background Report, 2014

5.9 GOALS, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

Goals

- Goal COS-1** To encourage the maintenance of a strong and robust agricultural land base, and protect prime agricultural lands from premature urban development.
- Goal COS-2** To protect natural habitats and other open space areas to ensure the longevity of native species as the built environment develops and to preserve aesthetic and visual amenities.
- Goal COS-3** To reduce greenhouse gas production and energy use, and increase production and use of renewable energy.
- Goal COS-4** To protect the community from flooding hazards in a manner that creates open space and natural habitat and does not diminish groundwater recharge in the Planning Area.
- Goal COS-5** To protect tribal and archaeological resources that may exist in the city.
- Goal COS-6** To provide recreational facilities adequate to meet the needs of all age groups of the City and to cooperate with Santa Barbara County to procure additional recreational facilities as needed.



- City Limits
- Park
- City Hall
- Cemetery
- School
- Wastewater Treatment
- Park (Undeveloped)

Source: City of Guadalupe 2021

Figure 5-8

Public Facilities and Parks

Guadalupe 2042 General Plan



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Goal COS-7

To maintain and expand projects that promote City beautification and open space for the health and enjoyment, recreational opportunities, and the natural environment of Guadalupe and the Santa Maria Valley.

Policies

Agriculture

Policy COS-1.1

The City will work with Santa Barbara County in support of preserving agricultural lands that do not conflict with urban uses in Guadalupe’s unincorporated area.

Policy COS-1.2

With the exception of DJ Farms, which will continue to build out as planned, the City will direct new residential development to infill locations in Downtown Guadalupe so as to reduce the pressure to urbanize agricultural lands outside of the current (2021) Sphere of Influence.

Policy COS-1.3

The City will work with the County of Santa Barbara to discourage parcelization of resource land adjacent to the city and to encourage the viability of those areas until they are annexed and ready for urban development.

Biotic Resources

Policy COS-1.4

The City will work to protect existing open space and habitat resources, as they are essential to the wellbeing of Guadalupe.

Policy COS-1.5

Where development could occur in areas with potential habitat for special-species occur, such as within the riparian or disturbed grassland areas shown in Figure 5-2, Habitat Map, and Figure 5-3, Recorded Observations of Special-Status Species, or in other locations where such habitat may be present as identified by the Planning Director, an assessment of potential impacts to biological resources shall be conducted by a qualified biologist. If determined necessary by a qualified biologist, focused surveys per applicable regulatory agency protocols shall be conducted to determine if such species could occur. Impacts to special-status species shall be avoided or minimized to the extent possible. If impacts cannot be avoided, measures to mitigate for the loss of individuals and/or habitat shall be implemented.

Policy COS-1.6

Where development could occur in areas with potential nesting bird habitat, such as within the riparian or disturbed grassland areas shown on Figure 5-2, Habitat Map, or in other locations where such habitat may be present as may be identified by the Planning Director, native nesting birds protected by the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the California Fish and Game Code shall be surveyed for and protected, if found. Disturbance activities shall not occur during the nesting season (generally considered February 1 – August 31) until nesting bird surveys have been conducted and no nesting activity is occurring on or adjacent to a project site. If nesting activity is observed, a qualified biologist may recommend an exclusion area be maintained until birds have fledged.

Policy COS-1.7

The City shall protect the ecological, aesthetic, and recreational value of sensitive wetland and riparian habitats associated with aquatic features within and directly adjacent to the city limits. Where development could occur in or within 50 feet of the edge of riparian vegetation or 50 feet from the top of bank of wetland habitats shown on Figure 5-2, Habitat Map, or in other locations where such features may be present as may be identified by the Planning Director, a qualified biologist or restoration ecologist shall be retained to determine the appropriate development setbacks and other protective measures needed to ensure the long-term protection and enhancement of the sensitive community.

Policy COS-1.8

Applicants for projects on sites within 50 feet from the top of bank of potential jurisdictional wetlands or waterways as shown on Figure 5-2, Habitat Map, or in other locations where such features may be present as may be identified by the Planning Director, shall retain a qualified biologist/wetland regulatory specialist to conduct a site investigation and assess whether the wetland or waterway features are jurisdictional, assess potential impacts, and determine whether stream buffers/riparian setbacks are required. If a feature is found to be jurisdictional or potentially jurisdictional, the applicant shall comply with the appropriate permitting processes.

Tribal and Archaeological Resources

- Policy COS-1.9** Development will avoid tribal and archaeological resources whenever possible, and if complete avoidance is not possible, then it will require development to fully mitigate impacts to tribal and archaeological resources.
- Policy COS-1.10** If unknown subsurface historical resources, including potential tribal cultural resources, are discovered during grading, excavation, trenching or other disturbance of the existing ground surface of a project site, all work shall be halted within at least 50 meters (165 feet) of the find and the area shall be staked off immediately. The City shall be notified immediately and a qualified professional archaeologist shall be retained to evaluate the find and report to the City. If the find is determined to be significant, recommendations provided by the archaeologist to mitigate potential impacts on archaeological resources and tribal cultural resources shall be required as conditions of project approval. Individual projects shall follow CEQA and other applicable State laws for mitigating impacts on cultural and tribal cultural resources.
- Policy COS-1.11** All archaeological resources and cultural resources of Native American origin, and all tribal cultural resources uncovered and recovered during the development of vacant or underutilized land shall be returned to local Native American tribes after the resources have been examined by a qualified archaeologist.
- Policy COS-1.12** If human remains are found during earth-moving, grading, or construction activities, pursuant to Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, all construction and excavation activity shall cease. If the remains are of Native American descent, actions must be taken to identify and appropriately treat the remains, including the coroner notifying the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours, and notifying a most likely descendent pursuant to Section 5097.98 of the California Public Resources Code.

Geology and Soils

- Policy COS-1.13** In the event that evidence of paleontological resources is uncovered during ground disturbing activities, all work shall stop in the immediate area and the Planning Director shall be

notified. A qualified paleontologist shall be retained to assess the scientific significance of the paleontological resources. If found to be significant, an appropriate data recovery program shall be developed and implemented by the paleontologist.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Policy COS-1.14

Until such time as the City adopts a qualified action plan consistent with mitigation measure GHG-1, individual development projects shall be constructed to use no natural gas and to meet California Green Building Standards Code Tier 2 requirements for electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Where such projects also generate less than 110 vehicle trips per day or produce less than 1,100 metric tons per year of carbon dioxide equivalent, no further action is required. Where such projects do not meet either the daily trip volume or mass emissions criteria, a VMT analysis must be conducted. If the VMT impact is less than significant, no further action is required. If the proposed project cannot meet one or more of the three required best management practices (no natural gas, electric vehicle support infrastructure, and less-than-significant VMT impact), the project applicant shall: 1) identify and implement other GHG reduction measures, with a priority on on-site measures; and/or 2) purchase and retire carbon offsets from a qualified registry that are real, permanent, quantifiable, verifiable, enforceable, and additional. The emission reductions and/or offsets must be equivalent to reductions that would otherwise be realized from the best management practice(s) that cannot be implemented.

Parks and Recreational Resources

Policy COS-1.15

The City will continue to require that public parks be provided at a ratio of four (4) acres per thousand residents, and such park space be developed at a rate that coincides with the growth of the City.

Policy COS-1.16

The City will prioritize the dedication of land for public parks over the payment of fees in lieu of dedication.

Sustainability

Policy COS-1.17

The City will encourage compact development that focuses on infill development in Downtown Guadalupe to achieve higher levels of sustainability and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Programs

Program COS-1.1.1

Within three years of adoption of the *Guadalupe 2042 General Plan*, the Public Works Department will initiate a process with the City Council to develop and adopt a qualified climate action plan that contains:

- Targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
- Enforceable measures to meet the established targets;
- Provisions for monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of the plan;
- A mechanism for periodically revising the plan to maintain or improve its effectiveness; and
- A plan to protect the community from the direct effects of climate change, including but not limited to flooding, the loss of electric power, and excessive heat events.

Program COS-1.1.2

Within three years of adoption of the *Guadalupe 2042 General Plan*, the Finance Department and the Public Works Department will begin a process with the Guadalupe Union School District and other willing partners to provide joint use of school facilities for recreational purposes and to provide increased maintenance and programming, including youth programming, at existing parks. The two departments will also begin a process with Santa Barbara County to improve undeveloped portions of Leroy Park that are located outside of the city limits.

Program COS-1.1.3

On an ongoing basis, the Public Works Department will continue its waste reduction and recycling program to reduce landfill waste and will distribute educational materials within the utility bill statements to educate Guadalupe residents about options for recycling, conserving water, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Program COS-1.1.4

On an ongoing basis, the Building and Planning Department will review its local building code annually to ensure that new development is energy efficient.