3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR; DEIR) describes the proposed City of Pinole General Plan Update (project). A general description of the project's technical and environmental characteristics is provided. This section also describes the objectives of the project, as well as the approvals and entitlements necessary to implement it.

For a description of the background, purpose, intended use, and type of environmental impact Report (EIR), as well as a list of agencies that are expected to use the EIR in their decision-making or permitting process, the reader is referred to Section 1.0, Introduction, of this DEIR. This project description has been prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15124.

3.2 REGIONAL AND LOCAL SETTING

PROJECT LOCATION

The City of Pinole (City) is located in the San Francisco Bay Area, on the shores of San Pablo Bay in western Contra Costa County (see **Figure 3.0-1**). Contra Costa County (County) is bordered by Alameda County and San Joaquin County on the south and east, respectively. On the north, the county is bordered by the Carquinez Strait and Suisun Bay with Solano and Sacramento counties located beyond. On the west, the county is bordered by the San Pablo and San Francisco bays with Marin and San Francisco counties located beyond. Surrounding communities include the unincorporated areas of Bayview, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, Montara Bay, Rancho Road, and El Sobrante and the cities of San Pablo, Richmond, and Hercules.

Regional access to and from the area is provided by Interstate 80 (I-80) which bisects the city limits and connects Pinole with the metropolitan areas of San Francisco and Oakland to the west and south and Sacramento to the east. Additionally, the city is linked to central Contra Costa County and the cities of Martinez, Concord, and Pleasant Hill by State Route 4 (SR 4), which begins just north of the city limits and connects with Interstate 680 (I-680).

The city currently occupies approximately 11.6 square miles, or 7,438 acres including 3,490 acres of land, and 3,948 acres of water within San Pablo Bay. The existing General Plan Land Use Map shows the current Sphere of Influence (SOI) to contain an additional 1.7 square miles, or 1,105 acres. The SOI boundary is set by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) as a representation of the likely ultimate extent of the city limits and service area limits. The City of Pinole SOI includes two areas beyond the existing city limits, as follows:

- Lands just beyond the southwestern city limits near the City of San Pablo and bordered to the south by Richmond Parkway; and
- Lands just south of the city limits near the unincorporated area of El Sobrante.

The General Plan Update (GPU) Planning Area boundary includes the area within the city limits as well as the existing SOI. The GPU Planning Area encompasses a total of approximately 13.3 (11.6 square miles in the city + 1.7 square miles in the SOI = 13.3) square miles, or 8, 543 acres (3,490 acres of land + 3,948 acres of water within the city limits + 1,105 acres within the SOI = 8,543 acres). The reader is referred to **Table 3.0-1** and **Figure 3.0-2**. The scope (planning horizon) of the General Plan was identified as 20 years, with adoption expected in 2010.

PROJECT SETTING

Within the city limits there are few large undeveloped parcels that are not classified as open space or in some form of preserve.

Similar to other cities in the western portion of Contra Costa County, Pinole serves as a bedroom community to larger employment centers in Oakland and the San Francisco Bay Area. Pinole also provides regional shopping opportunities via several large shopping centers. As of January 2009, the City's population was estimated at 19,383 persons (DOF, 2009).[1]

As described above, the Planning Area is crossed by I-80. Two rail lines pass through the area; Amtrak provides service to and from the city on the Richmond-to-Stockton line. There are no air-related facilities in the GPU Planning Area. The nearest airport to the City of Pinole is Buchanan Field Airport located on Sally Ride Drive in Concord, which is approximately 17 miles east of the GPU Planning Area.

The GPU Planning Area is characterized by gently rolling hills and steep hillsides on the north and south. Much of the historic native vegetation in the area has been converted to urban and suburban uses, including parks and some open space within Duncan Canyon. Nonetheless, riparian and wetland habitats persist within the GPU Planning Area. While Pinole Creek bisects the GPU Planning Area, flood control projects have significantly altered the fluvial geometry of Pinole Creek by straightening the channel between Interstate 80 and San Pablo Bay. The Pinole Creek Watershed has been the subject of extensive study resulting in the publication of the Pinole Creek Watershed Vision Plan in 2004 by the Urban Creeks Council in partnership with the City of Pinole Redevelopment Agency (Urban Creeks Council, 2004).

Existing Land Use Designations

A summary of existing General Plan (1995) land use designations in the GPU Planning Area and in the existing city limits are provided in **Table 3.0-1** and shown in **Figure 3.0-3**.

The existing land use pattern is a mix of residential neighborhoods and commercial centers, combined with parks and open spaces. The city also includes regional shopping centers along I-80, a historic city center, and residential neighborhoods characterized by detached, single-family residences and multi-family residential units, and upslope single-family homes built on steep terrain. The city also includes open space areas include the Pinole Valley Park, Fernandez Park, and Wilson Point East Bay Regional Park, among other unimproved open space areas and community and neighborhood parks.

[1] While the Department of Finance has released the 2010 population estimate, the analysis in this EIR was based on the Notice of Preparation issued in 2009.

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Figure 3.0-1
Regional Location Map

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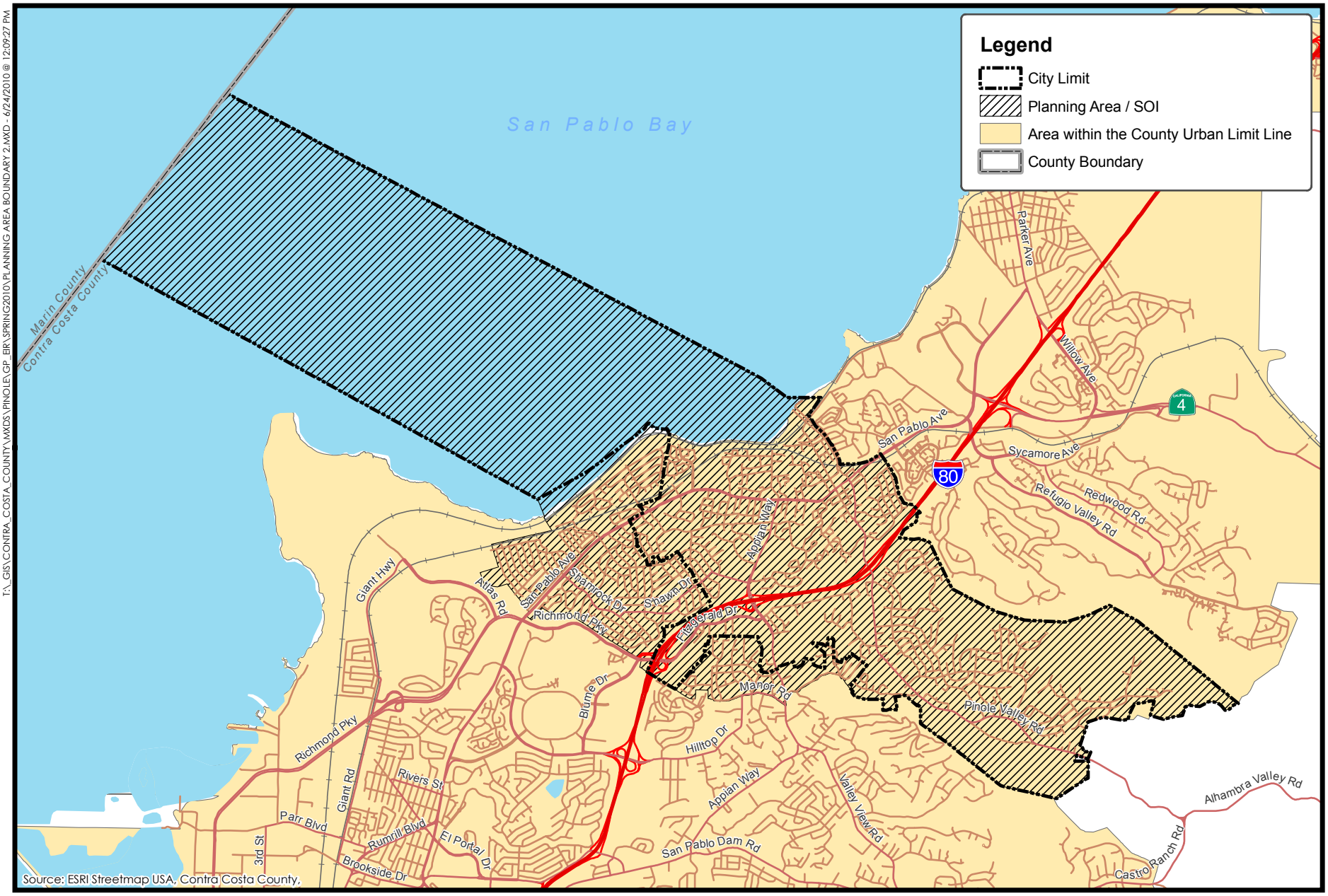

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Figure 3.0-2
Planning Area

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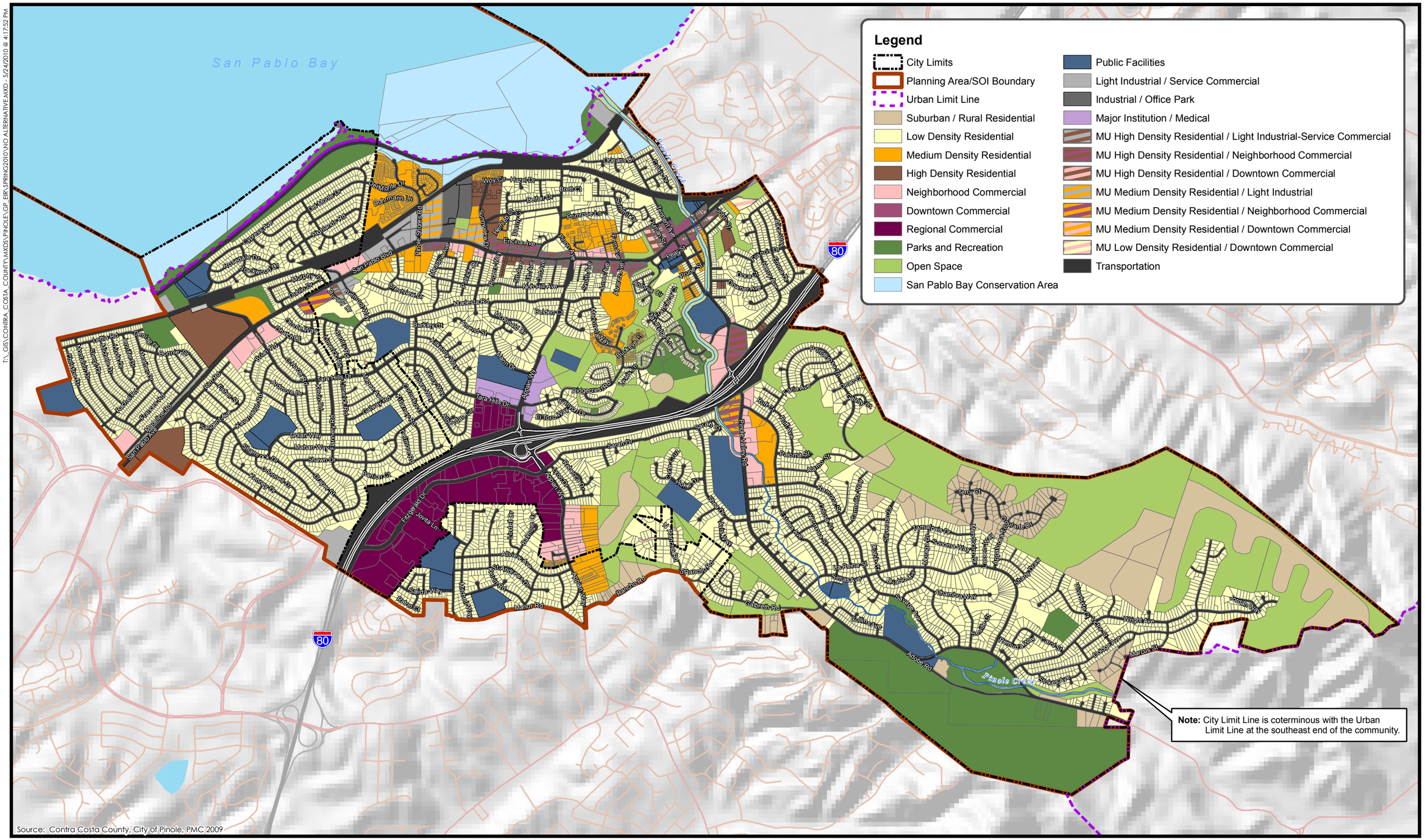

Figure 3.0-3
Existing Land Use Map

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TABLE 3.0-1
EXISTING LAND USES BY DESIGNATION WITHIN PLANNING AREA

General Plan Land Uses by Designation	City Only	Sphere of Influence[1]	Total Planning Area[1]	% of Total
Downtown Commercial (DC)	6	0	6	0.1
Neighborhood Commercial (NC)	49	14	63	0.7
Regional Commercial (RC)	129	0	129	1.5
Industrial Office Park (I-OP)	14	0	14	0.2
Light Industrial Service Commercial (LISC)	14	11	25	0.3
Major Institution/Medical (MI-M)	18	0	18	0.1
High Density Residential (HDR)	18	44	62	0.7
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	127	21	148	1.7
Low Density Residential (LDR)	1,091	602	1,693	19.8
Suburban/Rural Residential (SRR)	252	9	261	3.1
Mixed Use High Density Residential/Downtown Commercial (MU-HDR-DC)	7	0	7	0.1
Mixed Use High Density Residential/Light Industrial-Service Commercial (MU-HDR-LISC)	1	0	1	0.0
Mixed Use High Density Residential/Neighborhood Commercial (MU-HDR-NC)	23	0	23	0.3
Mixed Use Low Density Residential/Downtown Commercial (MU-LDR-DC)	2	0	2	0.0
Mixed Use Medium Density Residential/Light Industrial (MU-MDR-LI)	13	0	13	0.2
Mixed Use Medium Density Residential/Neighborhood Commercial (MU-MDR-NC)	9	2	11	0.1
Public Facilities (PF)	93	65	158	1.9
Open Space (OS)	624	9	633	7.4
Parks and Recreation (PR)	277	52	329	3.9
San Pablo Bay Conservation Area (SPBCA)	222	77	299	3.5
Open Water (San Pablo Bay)	3,948	0	3,948	46.2
Transportation Right-of-Way	501	195	696	8.2
Total	**7,438**	**1,101**	**8,539**	**100.0**

1 Differences in totals due to rounding.
Source: City of Pinole General Plan 2009

Downtown Commercial

The Downtown Commercial land use designation supports a wide range of retail, service, restaurant and office uses with higher-density residential uses located above the ground floor.

Parking needs are met through the use of public parking lots or structures. This designation applies to Old Town. Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR): 1.5. Maximum Building Height: 40 feet.

Neighborhood Commercial

The Neighborhood Commercial land use designation is reserved for small neighborhood convenience shopping centers whose primary focus is to provide convenient sources of everyday needs such as supermarkets, bakeries, drugstores, dry cleaners, real estate offices, other professional offices, and personal services. This designation applies to Pinole Valley Shopping Center, Del Monte Shopping Center, Nob Hill Center, Depot Center, Tara Hills Shopping Center, and at convenient locations along San Pablo Avenue and Pinole Valley Road. Maximum FAR: .30. Maximum Building Height: 30 feet.

Regional Commercial

The Regional Commercial land use designation is intended for large regional shopping centers and districts oriented toward the West County market area. Uses may include large retailers, such as furniture, appliance, auto and hardware stores, department stores, toy stores, offices, hotels, and restaurants. This designation applies to Pinole Vista and the Appian 80 shopping centers. Maximum FAR: .40. Maximum Building Height: 50 feet.

Light Industrial/Service Commercial

The Light Industrial/Service Commercial land use designation is intended for areas which provide citywide services and industrial-related activities. Uses include automobile and truck repair, auto sales, building materials, contractor's storage yards, wholesaling, warehousing, light manufacturing, and research and development industries. A limited amount of general office use and residential may be permitted as an accessory use in conjunction with the primary use. Maximum FAR: 1.0. Maximum Building Height: 50 feet.

Major Institution/Medical

The Major Institution/Medical land use designation includes private and public institutional community services and medical offices in association with Doctors Hospital, congregate care facilities, sanitariums, and pet hospitals. This designation allows other services and retail associated with institutional or medical uses. Maximum FAR: 1.0. Maximum Building Height: 75 feet.

High Density Residential

The High Density Residential land use designation provides for higher-density multi-family areas, typically up to three stories, usually located near transportation corridors, major stints, and commercial areas.

Medium Density Residential

The Medium Density Residential land use designation is intended for attached units, typically two to three stories, which include on-site usable open space. The land use would include town homes, apartments, condominium developments, and planned unit developments.

Low Density Residential

The Low Density Residential land use designation provides for single-family development that is typical most residential areas of the city. This is the single largest residential category. One dwelling unit per parcel, with the potential for a secondary dwelling unit with an approved Use Permit (identified as an adopted Housing Element program). Other uses which are potentially compatible with single-family neighborhoods but require Use Permits include, but are not limited to, religious facilities, day care and group care facilities, schools, cemeteries, and home occupations subject to compliance with City standards.

Residential – Suburban/Rural Density

The Suburban/Rural Residential land use designation includes sites characterized by steep slopes which have geologic and seismic constraints and which have community visual significance or have been identified as having very limited development potential through prior development approvals. This designation is typical of sensitive hillside areas in the GPU Planning Area, with clustering of development to be consistent with surrounding uses and to protect natural resources.

Mixed Use

The Mixed Use land use designation is intended for areas where either commercial or residential uses are appropriate. Commercial uses include Service Commercial/Light Industrial and Neighborhood Commercial. Residential uses include Medium and High Density Residential. Commercial uses can be combined with residential uses if the residential use is located either above the ground floor or on a separate portion of the site. Maximum FAR: Per the Commercial and Industrial land use category. Maximum Building Height: 50 feet.

Public Facilities

The Public Facilities land use designation is reserved for uses which are public serving in nature, including religious institutions, City offices, publicly owned recreation facilities, fire and police facilities, and County buildings. For schools, letters will be used on the map to designate grade levels as either (E) elementary or (S) secondary. This designation also includes facilities owned and/or operated by public utilities to serve the public with electricity, gas, water, and communications.

Open Space

The Open Space land use designation is reserved for open lands which are vacant of structures and improvements and which are primarily maintained in their natural condition. In some cases, maintained pathways that enhance access to the open space areas are considered compatible with this designation.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation land use designation includes public parks, City-owned conservation lands, and private open space or recreation facilities. This designation is intended for improved open space lands whose primary purpose is recreation and includes all local and regional parks. Wherever possible, school sites are to be combined with public park and recreation facilities.

San Pablo Bay Conservation Area

The San Pablo Bay Conservation Area land use designation is reserved for the portion of the GPU Planning Area that extends into San Pablo Bay and the land immediately adjacent to the bay. This is primarily an open space designation. Very limited commercial development that is directly related to, and enhances the public use of, the waterfront may also be allowed. Appropriate commercial uses include restaurants, marine-related retail, offices, and marina berths. Maximum FAR: .25. Maximum Building Height: 30 feet.

Transportation Right-of-Way

The Transportation Right-of-Way land use designation is designated public or private right-of-way for transportation use. The designation includes Caltrans right-of-way, railroad corridors which provide transportation (portions of the railroad corridor not required for transportation purposes may be considered for other uses), and other mass transit right-of-way (such as for BART).

In addition, though not included as a separate land use designation in the current General Plan, the City of Pinole also contains three primary transportation corridors each with its unique mix of land uses: Appian Way, Pinole Valley Road, and San Pablo Avenue. The existing land uses in these corridors are described in more detail below:

Appian Way

Located on the western side of Pinole, Appian Way is four lane roadway and one of the City's two main north-south arterials. The northern end of Appian Way, at the intersection with San Pablo Avenue, contains a mix of residential, retail, and office uses, reflective of the mixed-use character of San Pablo Avenue. Traveling south, this land use pattern quickly gives way to single family residential development as well as an area of steep, undeveloped hillsides, where the topography requires deep setbacks and prevents intensive development. Near the intersection with Tara Hills Drive, the recently-closed Doctors Hospital occupies a large and prominent site along the eastern edge of the Appian Way corridor and looks across Appian Way to a school site and small medical office complex. Just north of I-80, Appian 80, an aging Safeway-anchored neighborhood shopping center, is the largest retail development along the northern section of the Corridor. South of I-80 and adjacent to Appian Way, much of Pinole's region-serving retail is concentrated along Fitzgerald Drive in the Pinole Vista shopping centers. Otherwise, the remaining southern stretch of the Corridor, continuing to Dalessi Drive, includes a somewhat disjointed mix of uses, which include professional offices, a motel, a self-storage site, a retirement home, single-family homes, and small businesses operating from converted single-family residences (City of Pinole, 2009).

Pinole Valley Road

Located on the eastern edge of the City, Pinole Valley Road is the City's other main north-south arterial. South of I-80 is the Pinole Valley Shopping Center and north of the I-80 Kaiser Permanente has constructed a 60,000 square foot medical office building on a five acres site adjacent to the freeway. Although there are some vacant sites on Pinole Valley Road, the corridor is largely built out and geographically constrained. Much of the southern portion of the Pinole Valley Road corridor is dedicated to retail and office uses, as well as a high school. Medical and other office uses are found just north of the freeway, while single-family residences and an elementary school dominate the northern-most portion of the Pinole Valley Road corridor (City of Pinole, 2009).

San Pablo Avenue

San Pablo Avenue is a 14-mile major arterial street connecting seven cities from northwestern Contra Costa County to southwestern Alameda County. Located at the eastern edge of Pinole along San Pablo Avenue is Old Town, which contains many historic commercial and residential buildings and a mix of office space, specialty retail, cafes and restaurants. West of Old Town is an eclectic mix of multi-family residential, small office and retail complexes, building materials sales, auto repair services, public storage, and light industrial uses. At the intersection of Sunnyview and San Pablo Avenue, the Sunnyview Plaza contains a variety of light industrial and service commercial uses. The Del Monte Shopping Center, located between Pinole Shores Road and Del Monte Drive, is a 44,000 square-foot neighborhood shopping center that is the corridor's largest retail center. Farther west on San Pablo Avenue, businesses include several auto-related service shops, and two fully occupied 1970's-era retail strip centers. Recent development activity on this section of the San Pablo Avenue corridor includes the construction of Phase I of the Pinole Shore Business Park, containing industrial/flex condominiums totaling roughly 60,000 square feet. (City of Pinole, 2009).

Between1995 and 2009, the City has undertaken a number of General Plan Amendments for:

- 2.69 acres from Low and Medium Density Residential to Mixed Use Medium Density Residential/Downtown Commercial in 1996;
- 1.18 acres from High Density Residential to Mixed Use Medium Density Residential/Downtown Commercial in 1997;
- 0-68 acres from Low Density Residential to Medium Density Residential in 1998;
- 1.52 acres from Mixed Use Neighborhood Commercial & High Density Residential to Mixed Use - Light Industrial/Service Commercial & Medium Density Residential in 2000;
- 0-55 acres from Neighborhood Commercial to Mixed Use - Neighborhood Commercial and High Density Residential; and 2.05 acres from Parks and Recreation to Public Facilities, in 2001;
- 0.59 acres from Open Space to Low Density Residential in 2002;
- 0.29 acres from Neighborhood Commercial to Mixed Use Neighborhood Commercial & High Density Residential in 2004;
- 15.75 acres from Medium Density Residential Light Industrial/Service Commercial to Industrial/Office Park in 2005; and,
- 0.21 acres from Neighborhood Commercial to Infill Development in 2009.

Similarly, the City has undertaken a number of re-zones between 1995 and 2009.

- 3.33 acres of PD-Planned Development was rezoned to R-1 Single Family Residential; and 2.11 acres of PD-Planned Development was rezoned to R-I Single Family Residential in 1995;
- 2.69 acres of R-4 General Apartment, R-3 Neighborhood Apartment, C-2 Central Business Commercial, C-1 Cottage Industry, R-1 Single Family Residential, PD-Planned

Development was rezoned to R-4 General Apartment, C-2 Central Business Commercial, C-1 Cottage Industry, R-1 Single Family Residential, OS-Open Space; and a certain acreage was rezoned from R-3 Neighborhood Apartment, C-2 Central Business Commercial, C-3 General Commercial, R-1 Single Family Residential, PD-Planned Development to R-4 General Apartment, C-2 Central Business Commercial, C-1 Cottage Industry, R-1 Single Family Residential, OS-Open Space, in 1996;

- 0.66 acres was rezoned from C-1 Neighborhood Commercial to MU-Mixed Use in 1998;

- 0.11 acres was rezoned from C-2 Central Business to MU-Mixed Use; 0/20 acres was rezoned from C-3 General Commercial to MU-Mixed Use; 57.39 acres was rezoned from R-4 General Apartment to PD-Planned Development; 0.11 acres was rezoned from R-4 General Apartment to MU-Mixed Use; and 0.85 acres was rezoned from R-1 Single Family Residential to R-2 Two Family Residential and R-4 General Apartment, in 1999;

- 0.56 acres was rezoned from C-2 Central Business to MU-Mixed Use; and 1.52 acres was rezoned from C-3 General Commercial to PD-Planned Development in 2000;

- 2.59 acres was rezoned to PD-Planned Development and R-1 Single Family Residential; and 0.23 acres was rezoned from C-1 Neighborhood Business to MU-Mixed Use Neighborhood Commercial/High Density Residential (16-25 units per acre) in 2001;

- 2.05 acres was rezoned from OS-Open Space to PR-Parks and Recreation; and 2.54 acres of R-3 Neighborhood Apartment was rezoned to PD-Planned Development in 2002;

- 6.25 acres was rezoned from PD-Planned Development to C-3 General Commercial; and 0-56 acres was rezoned from C-1 Neighborhood Business and R-3 Neighborhood Apartments to PD-Planned Development; and 0.61 acres was rezoned from C-3 General Commercial to PD-Planned Development in 2003;

- 2.5 acres was rezoned to R-1 Single Family Residential; and 0.19 acres was rezoned from C-1 Neighborhood Business to MU-Mixed Use; and 0.07 acres was rezoned from C-2 Central Business to MU-Mixed Use; and 0.29 acres was rezoned from C-1 Neighborhood Business to MU-Mixed Use; and 0.80 acres was rezoned from R-1 Single Family Residential to R-4 General Apartment in 2004;

- 0.10 acres was rezoned from M-2 General Industrial to MU-Mixed Use; and 0.18 acres was rezoned from C-1 Neighborhood Business to MU-Mixed Use; and 0.42 acres was rezoned from C-2 Central Business to R-1 Single Family Residential; and 0.20 acres was rezoned from C-2 Central Business to MU-Mixed Use; and 0.23 acres was rezoned from C-2 Central Business to MU-Mixed Use; and 15.75 acres was rezoned from M-1 Light Industrial, M-2 General Industrial, R-4 General Apartment to PD-Planned Development Light Industrial/Office in 2005;

- 0.28 acres was rezoned from MU-Mixed Use to PD-Planned Development in 2008; and,

- 0.21 acres was rezoned from C-3 General Commercial to PD-Infill Development in 2009.

Existing Zoning Districts

The City's Zoning Code establishes zoning districts based on the General Plan land use designations listed in **Table 3.0-1** above. These zoning districts are summarized in **Table 3.0-2**.

TABLE 3.0-2
EXISTING ZONING DISTRICTS WITHIN THE CITY OF PINOLE

Zoning District	Description	General Plan Land Use Designation	Minimum Lot Size
General Districts			
S/R	Suburban/rural residence district	Single-family residential in hill area terrain	65,000 square feet
R-1	Single-family residence district	Single-family residential in developed area	6,000 square feet for interior lots; 7,500 square feet for corner lots
R-2	Two-family residence district	Two-family residential in developed area	6,000 square feet
R-3	Neighborhood apartment district, three-family and four-family	Three- and four-family dwellings	6,000 square feet
R-4	General apartment district	Group dwellings and apartments	6,000 square feet for each permitted use
PF	Public facilities district	Public, quasi-public and institutional uses	6,000 square feet
C-1	Neighborhood business district	Shopping and service facilities in proximity to residential areas	Minimum 5,000 square feet
C-2	Central business district	General business facilities for public service and convenience	5,000 square feet
C-3	General commercial district	General commercial facilities for public service and convenience	No regulations
SC	Service commercial district	Centralized areas with general commercial facilities near industrial concentrations	No regulations
PA	Professional and administrative district	Medical, dental, professional and administrative offices	6,000 square feet
M-1	Light industrial district	Light industrial uses	No regulations
M-2	General industrial district	General industrial uses	No regulations
M-L	Limited industrial district	Business, professional, research and technical manufacturing uses which have unusual requirements for space, light and air	10,000 square feet
OS	Open space district	Open space lands	No minimum required
PR	Parks and recreation district	Public parks and recreation facilities	No regulation
SPC	San Pablo Bay conservation district	Area extending into and land adjacent to San Pablo Bay	No regulation
PD	Planned development district	Development with variations in siting, mixed land use mixed housing types and integrated design techniques, which complement surrounding uses.	As per the development proposal

Zoning District	Description	General Plan Land Use Designation	Minimum Lot Size
Combining Districts			
A	Special agricultural district	N/A	N/A
B	Special building site district	N/A	N/A
CD	Special civic center district	N/A	N/A
F	Special highway frontage district	N/A	N/A
FP	Special floodplain district	N/A	N/A
H	Special height district	N/A	N/A
HP	Special historic preservation district	N/A	N/A
HP-L	Special historic preservation district	N/A	N/A
MU	Special mixed use district	N/A	(a)For residential uses located to adjacent residential, 6,000 square feet. (b) For commercial and mixed uses, minimum 5,000 square feet
OTP	Special old town parking	N/A	N/A

3.3 COMPONENTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed project is adoption and implementation of an updated General Plan, updated Zoning Code, and Three Corridors Specific Plan by the City of Pinole.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The overall vision for the General Plan is to "Build a City" that is a vibrant destination location in the region and intentionally seeks change in land use for profound improvement in the city. It also expresses a vision for the future where sustainable development and land use practices provide for the needs of existing residents and businesses while preserving choices for future generations. The following is the General Plan Vision Statement presented to the General Plan Steering Committee in October 2008.

> A sustainable community where the citizens act as stewards for the environment, the economy, and the social equality of the community. Preserving Pinole's historic past, while maintaining a healthy economy for all members of the community now and in the future.

The objectives of the proposed project, which also serve as the goals of the proposed General Plan Land Use Element, are as follows:

- Preserve and enhance the natural resource, high-quality residential neighborhoods and commercial areas, and small-town (semi-rural) character of Pinole.

- Assure the City takes an active leadership role coordinating planning with neighboring jurisdictions and other public agencies.
- Preserve historic resources and ensure high-quality site planning and design.
- Preserve and strengthen the identity and quality of life of Pinole's residential neighborhood.
- Assure any development of environmentally sensitive sites protects important natural resources and recognizes hazard constraints.
- Protect and enhance the natural resources of the San Pablo Bay waterfront for the enjoyment of Pinole residents.
- Balance housing and employment opportunities to reduce trips in and out of the region and encourage commercial development which maintains and enhances the quality of the city's commercial areas, provides services for residents and broadens the tax base of the community to provide needed revenues for public services.
- Concentrate commercial development and mixed-use activity areas within the three main transportation corridors so as to provide needed services and tax revenues while enhancing the overall character of the community.

Each element of the General Plan addresses more than one of these objectives and establishes goals and policies in the proposed General Plan.

To Implement the General Plan, the City proposes to adopt a Specific Plan that will be used as a regulatory and economic development tool to guide development along all three corridors and take advantage of underutilized properties and other community assets. The Specific Plan establishes a vision for the San Pablo Avenue, Appian Way, and Pinole Valley Road corridors and identifies urban design tools, development standards and administrative practices that would be used to accomplish the vision. Similarly, the City proposes to adopt a Zoning Code to set forth and coordinate City regulations governing the development and use of land in accordance with the City of Pinole General Plan.

General Plan Elements

State law requires that general plans address seven elements: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. These elements can be individual chapters, or combined as appropriate. In addition, each element includes a matrix that identifies which policies and action items are being carried over from the current, or 1995 General Plan, and which policies and action items are being added under the proposed General Plan Update.

The proposed General Plan contains the following elements:

Proposed General Plan Element Title	Government Code Section and Topic	Required
Land Use and Economic Development	65302(a) Land Use	Yes
Circulation	65302(b) Circulation	Yes
Housing	65302(c) Housing	Yes
Natural Resources and Open Space	65302(d) Conservation	Yes

Proposed General Plan Element Title	Government Code Section and Topic	Required
	65302(e) Open Space	
Health and Safety	65302(f) Noise 65302(g) Safety	Yes
Community Services and Facilities	N/A – optional element	No
Growth Management	N/A – optional element but required in Contra Costa County per Measure J	No
Sustainability	N/A – optional element	No
Community Character	N/A – optional element	No

Following is a brief description of the intent of each General Plan element. A more detailed analysis of each element is included as applicable in the subsequent EIR chapters.

Land Use and Economic Development (Required Element)

The Land Use and Economic Development Element provides the central framework for the General Plan and serves as a compass to guide planners, the general public, and decision makers on the desired pattern of development in the city. The element describes both existing and future land use activity, the latter of which is designed to achieve the City's long-range goals for physical development. The element provides land use designations for all of the land within the GPU Planning Area based on the expected type of development. While some of the land use designations are individual, others encourage a mix of land use types (e.g. commercial and residential) and allow an increase in densities to support infill or redevelopment. The land use designations also specify maximum density and intensity of development that can occur.

Proposed General Plan Land Use Map

Figure 3.0-4 shows the proposed General Plan Land Use Map. The Land Use Map shows the General Plan Planning Area/SOI that extends outside the current city limits. The Planning Area represents the area which the City envisions may ultimately be included in the incorporated city limits. Outside the city limits, this General Plan is purely advisory. The planning horizon of the General Plan was identified as 20 years, with adoption expected in 2010. The land use designation map (**Figure 3.0-4**) sets forth a range of land use classifications, including varying residential densities, commercial, office, industrial, parks, and open space designations. The land use map is intended to work in concert with a series of guiding and implementation policies contained in each specific element. **Table 3.0-3** below summarizes Year 2030 (proposed project) land uses by the total acreage of each land use type.

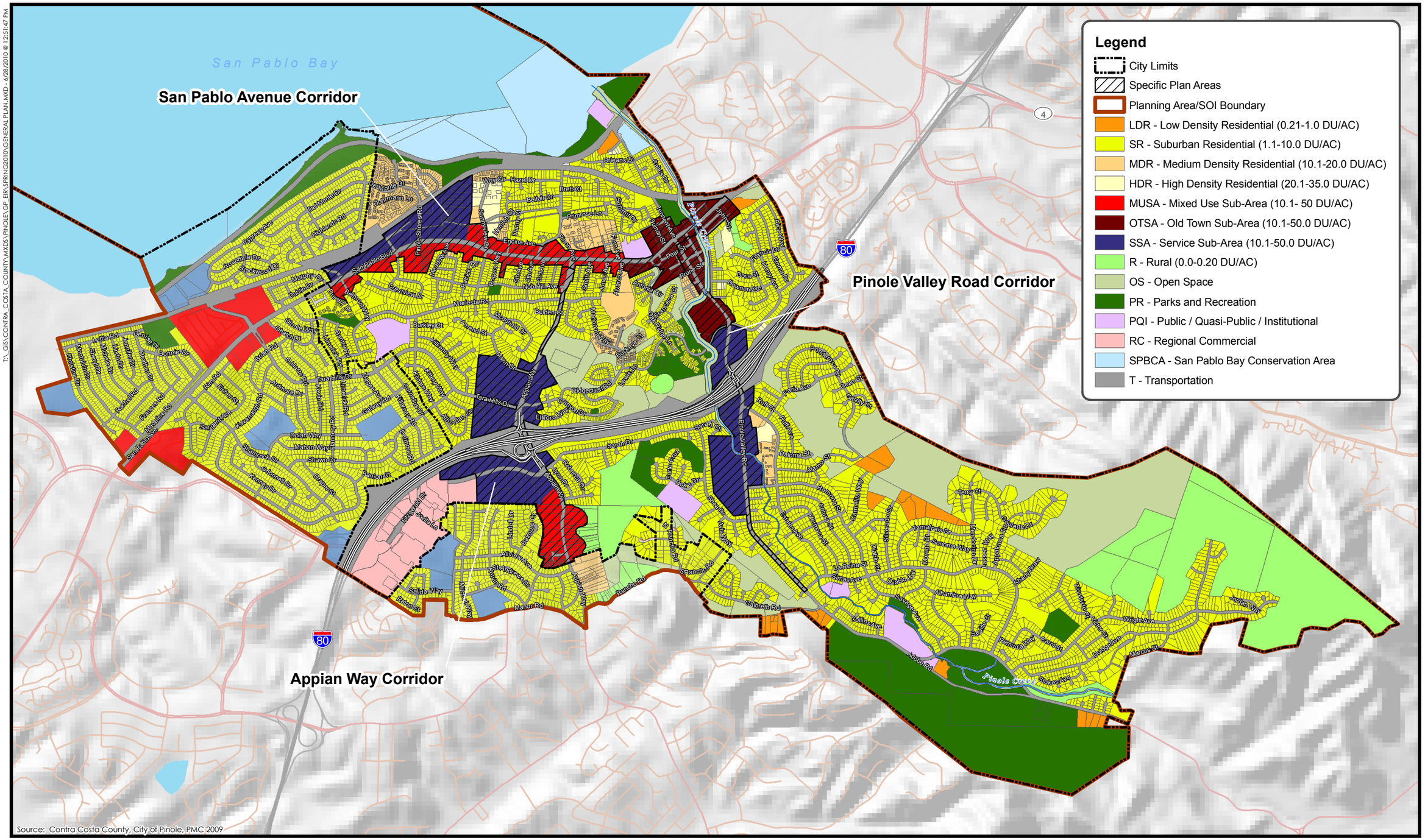

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Figure 3.0-4
Proposed General Plan Land Use Map

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TABLE 3.0-3
PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN YEAR 2030 LAND USES

Land Use Designation	City Only	Sphere of Influence[1]	Planning Area Total[1]
Regional Commercial	71	0	71
High Density Residential	19	0	19
Medium Density Residential	97	12	109
Low Density Residential	22	0	22
Suburban Residential	1,161	602	1,763
Rural	314	9	323
Public/Quasi-Public/Institutional	46	80	126
Parks and Recreation	294	37	331
Open Space	382	10	392
San Pablo Bay Conservation Area	158	0	158
Old Town Sub-Area	52	0	52
Service Area Sub-Area	179	0	179
Mixed Use Sub-Area	74	71	145
Transportation	594	232	826
Open Water (San Pablo Bay)	3,975	50	4,025
Total	**7,438**	**1,101**	**8,539**

1 Differences in totals due to rounding.
Source: City of Pinole General Plan 2009

Proposed General Plan Land Use Categories

Regional Commercial

Intended for large regional shopping centers serving the West County market area. Uses may include large retailers such as furniture, appliance, auto and hardware stores, department stores, toy stores, offices, hotels and restaurants. This designation would apply to areas along Interstate 80 that are not within the Three Corridors Specific Plan Area described below. An example is the Pinole Vista Shopping Center. Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR): 0.40.

Low Density Residential (0.21 to 1 unit per acre)

Includes sites located adjacent to open space areas or near environmental resources where a development transition from suburban to rural land use is desirable. This designation is typical of sites where larger lot sizes are appropriate to ensure flexible siting and design to maintain scenic and environmental resources.

Suburban Residential (1.1 to 10 units per acre)

Provides for single-family development that is typical of most residential areas of the city. This is the single largest residential category. One dwelling unit per parcel, with the potential for a secondary dwelling unit. Other uses which may be considered potentially compatible with

single-family neighborhoods include, but are not limited to, religious facilities, daycare and group care facilities, schools, cemeteries and home occupations subject to compliance with City standards.

Medium Density Residential (10.1 to 20 units per acre)

Intended for attached dwelling units, typically two or three stories, which include on-site usable open space. Medium Density Residential land use would include town homes, apartments, condominiums and planned unit developments.

High Density Residential (20.1 to 35 units per acre)

Provides for higher-density multi-family areas, typically two or three stories, usually located near transit corridors or arterial roadways and located in close proximity to commercial services.

Rural (0.0 to 0.20 units per acre)

Includes sites where development shall be clustered to preserve at least 90% of the property in a natural condition and predominantly free of development in order to protect visual and environmental resources. This designation is typical for sites that are characterized by steep slopes, contain environmental resources, have visual significance in the community, are integral to riparian systems, or which have been identified as having limited development potential due to service delivery constraints. These parcels also create opportunities for urban agriculture uses, including agricultural parks and specialty crop farming. Other uses, such as telecommunications facilities, solar collectors, and wind energy conversion systems, may be considered provided they are designed to preserve the natural landscape. These areas help preserve remaining natural landscapes. In certain areas of the city, they can also provide open space buffers between Pinole and neighboring communities, serve as fire breaks, provide connections between neighborhoods and recreational areas, and may provide an educational resource.

Public/Quasi-Public/Institutional

Reserved for uses which are public-serving in nature, including religious institutions, City and other government offices, publicly owned recreation facilities, and fire and police facilities. For schools, letters will be used on the map to designate grade levels as (ES) elementary, (MS) middle school or (HS) high school. This designation also includes facilities owned and/or operated by public utilities to serve the public with electricity, gas, water and communications.

Parks and Recreation

Includes public parks, City-owned conservation lands, and private open space or recreation facilities. This designation is intended for improved open space lands whose primary purpose is recreation and includes all local and regional parks. Wherever possible, school sites shall be combined with public park and recreation facilities.

Open Space

Reserved for public and private undeveloped lands which are vacant of structures and improvements and which are primarily maintained in their natural condition and designated as open space. In some cases, maintained pathways or access routes, which enhance access to the open space areas, may be considered suitable for this designation.

San Pablo Bay Conservation Area

Reserved for the portion of the Pinole Planning Area that extends into San Pablo Bay and the land immediately adjacent to San Pablo Bay. This is primarily an open space designation with a few other possible uses such as for expansion of the Pinole-Hercules Water Pollution Control Plant, railroad corridors, passenger rail stations, recreation facilities such as the Bay Trail, or flood protection improvements. In addition, very limited commercial development which is directly related to, and enhances the public use of, the waterfront may also be allowed. Appropriate commercial uses may include limited food establishments, marine-related recreational uses, marine-related retail, offices and marina berths. City uses such as water pollution control, corporation yard and parks are also allowed uses. Maximum FAR: 0.25.

Transportation

Designated transportation corridors that accommodate movement of goods and services through the city, regional trips and transit service. The designation includes Caltrans rights-of-way, railroad corridors which provide transportation (portions of the railroad corridor not required for transportation purposes may be considered for other uses), San Pablo Avenue, Appian Way, portions of Pinole Valley Road, and other mass transit rights-of-way.

Community Services and Facilities (Optional Element)

The Community Services and Facilities Element is an optional Element and is included in this General Plan to address important issues related to how new development will affect the City's ability to provide community services and facilities. This Element concerns the public infrastructure and facilities. While this Element also addressed operational and programmatic issues are considered, it is primarily concerned with the provision of capital facilities.

Circulation (Required Element)

This Element includes policies and actions addressing a broad range of topics related to infrastructure, and the physical systems of roads, trails, walkways, etc., that access to the land uses within the GPU Planning Area. Key to this element is the map that illustrates the existing and proposed circulation network. The reader is referred to the Circulation Element in the proposed General Plan for further details on this Element and the map of the existing and proposed circulation network. The Circulation Map identifies roadways (existing and proposed) by their classification type: state highway, arterial (major and minor), and collector. The Circulation Element contains specific goals and policies pertaining to the classification system. Modifications proposed to the main corridors addressed in the Specific Plan are included for: San Pablo Avenue, Pinole Valley Road, and Appian Way.

Housing Element (Required Element)

The Housing Element is the only Element that must be updated approximately every five years and is also subject to review and certification by the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development. Certification by the state is important to enable the city to receive some state grants. The housing element was prepared and is scheduled to be adopted separately by the City of Pinole in July 2010, and it is not included as part of this proposed General Plan Update process, and therefore not analyzed in this DEIR. The housing element covers a period that began on January 1, 2007 and ends on June 30, 2014.

Natural Resources and Open Space Element (Required Elements of Conservation and Open Space)

This Element addresses resource conservation, including enhancement of the environment through protection of resources, preservation of biological resources, and water and energy conservation. This Element also identifies the need to protect and preserve existing open space and natural recreational areas, as well as the need to maintain those areas and create additional areas for the enjoyment of residents and the protection of the environment. This element also addresses resource issues such as water supply and quality, soils, biology, air, visual impacts and energy.

Health and Safety Element (Required Element of Safety, plus additional topic of Health)

This Element includes goals, policies, and actions intended to minimize the potential risk of death, injuries, property damage, and economic hardship and social displacement resulting from fires, floods, earthquakes, landslides, and other hazards. Additionally, this Element addresses safety and hazards related to groundwater contamination, noise, air quality, water quality, the potential release of hazardous materials into the community, and general issues related to healthcare, police and fire protection services.

Growth Management Element (Locally Required Element)

The purpose of the Growth Management Element of the Pinole General Plan is to establish policies and level of service standards for growth management and traffic, and performance standards for fire, police, parks, sanitary facilities, water and flood control in order to ensure generally that public facilities are provided consistent with the adopted standards for roadways, response time objectives for fire and police, acreage requirements of recreational land uses (at one acre per 1,000 persons), and policies related to water use, wastewater disposal, and flood control. In addition, the Growth Management Element meets all the requirements of Measure J, a Growth Management Program approved by the Contra Costa County voters in 2004, and effective April 1, 2009.

Sustainability Element (Optional Element)

This element establishes policies and action items that promote sustainability for the environment and the local economy and help establish equity for all people. The Sustainability Element also addresses the emission of greenhouse gases resulting from General Plan implementation and its impact on climate change.

Community Character Element (Optional Element)

The Community Character Element of the General Plan is best defined as an element that will preserve and enhance, and strengthen Pinole's feel of "sense of place" and unique identity. This element intends to incorporate that feel in existing facilities, buildings and features as well as in new growth and development in Pinole; influence the future physical form of the community by guiding the quality and character of future development; and protect the existing natural and built environment that define the City of Pinole's character.

THREE CORRIDORS SPECIFIC PLAN

Three roadway corridors are proposed for revitalization in the Specific Plan for San Pablo Avenue, Pinole Valley Road, and Appian Way (see **Figures 3.0-5** through **3.0-8**).

Land uses within these three Corridors are described in the Specific Plan, with specific policies and directives established for each corridor.

- **San Pablo Avenue** – The Specific Plan establishes seven land use districts for this area. These districts will facilitate San Pablo Avenue's transformation from its current land use configuration to the one described by the Specific Plan's vision of a narrowed, pedestrian-oriented corridor.

- **Pinole Valley Road** – The Specific Plan establishes five land use districts for this project area. The Specific Plan establishes policies that seek to focus commercial activities in combination with office and residential uses to make Pinole Valley Road into a pedestrian-oriented corridor.

- **Appian Way** – The Specific Plan established five land use districts for this project area. The Plan seeks to focus commercial, office, and residential uses to make Appian Way into a regional service and commercial corridor. The Specific Plan also establishes policies to give preference to replacing vacated and underutilized commercial areas with new office professional and commercial developments and increasing the density of a few existing residential areas along the corridor.

Proposed land uses within each of the Specific Plan corridors are summarized in **Table 3.0-4** below.

TABLE 3.0-4
PROPOSED SPECIFIC PLAN YEAR 2030 LAND USES

Specific Plan Area	Land Use Designation	Acres	Percentage of Specific Plan Area
San Pablo Avenue Corridor	Commercial Mixed Use	39.2	34.0
	Office Industrial Mixed Use	35.4	30.7
	Public/Quasi-Public/Institutional	3.9	3.4
	Very High Density Residential	6.2	5.4
	Medium Density Residential	13.5	11.7
	Residential Mixed Use	15.9	13.8
	Open Space	1.2	1.0
San Pablo Avenue Corridor Sub-Total		*115.3*	*100.0*
Pinole Valley Road Corridor	Commercial Mixed Use	19.4	24.8
	Office Professional Mixed Use	11.3	14.5
	Public/Quasi-Public/Institutional	35.6	45.5
	High Density Residential	1.7	2.2
	Medium Density Residential	6.8	8.7
	Open Space	3.4	4.3
Pinole Valley Road Corridor Sub-Total		*78.2*	*100.0*
Appian Way Corridor	Commercial Mixed Use	70.8	63.7
	Office Professional Mixed Use	8.4	7.6

Specific Plan Area	Land Use Designation	Acres	Percentage of Specific Plan Area
	Public/Quasi-Public/Institutional	11.5	10.3
	High Density Residential	1.9	1.7
	Residential Mixed Use	18.6	16.7
Appian Way Corridor Sub-Total		*111.2*	*100.0*
Specific Plan Total		***304.9***	***100.0***

CITY OF PINOLE ZONING CODE UPDATE

The proposed project also updates the City's Zoning Code (Title 17 of the City's Municipal Code) (see **Figure 3.0-9**). Key issues addressed in the update include:

- Administration and Permit Procedures: streamline/simplify permit procedures, permit extensions, review administrative use permit procedures, local agency applicability
- Land Use Districts and Corresponding Uses and Standards: update allowed uses, simplify allowed use tables, eliminate unused/underutilized districts, clarify purpose, add mixed use districts from specific plans
- General Site Planning and Development Regulations: parking regulations, sign regulations
- Special Use Regulations: accessory buildings/structures
- Definitions: add new definitions, amend existing definitions
- Legal Issues: consistency with state and federal law, add required uses to certain zoning districts, density bonus provisions

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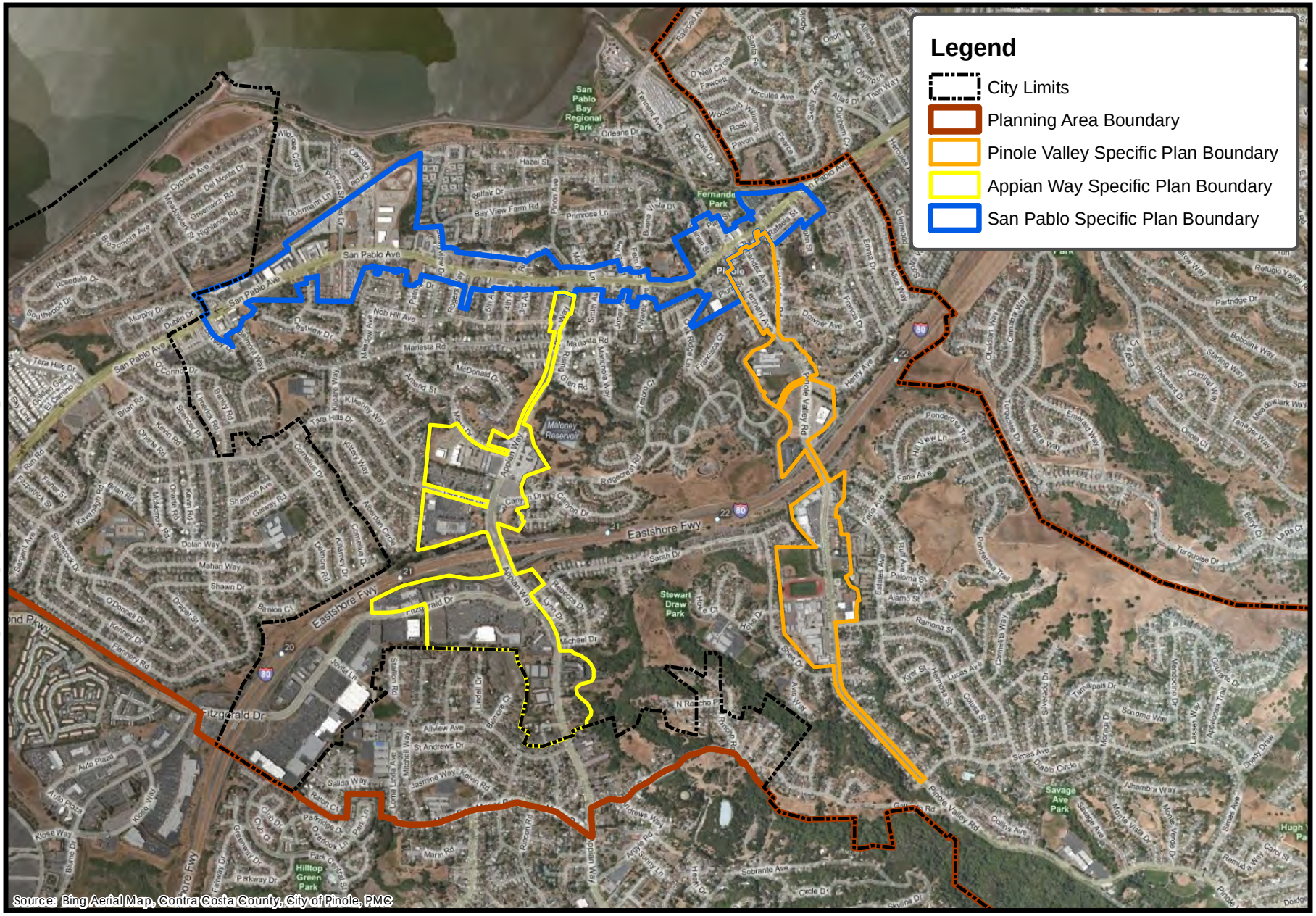

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Figure 3.0-5
Proposed Specific Plan Area Boundaries

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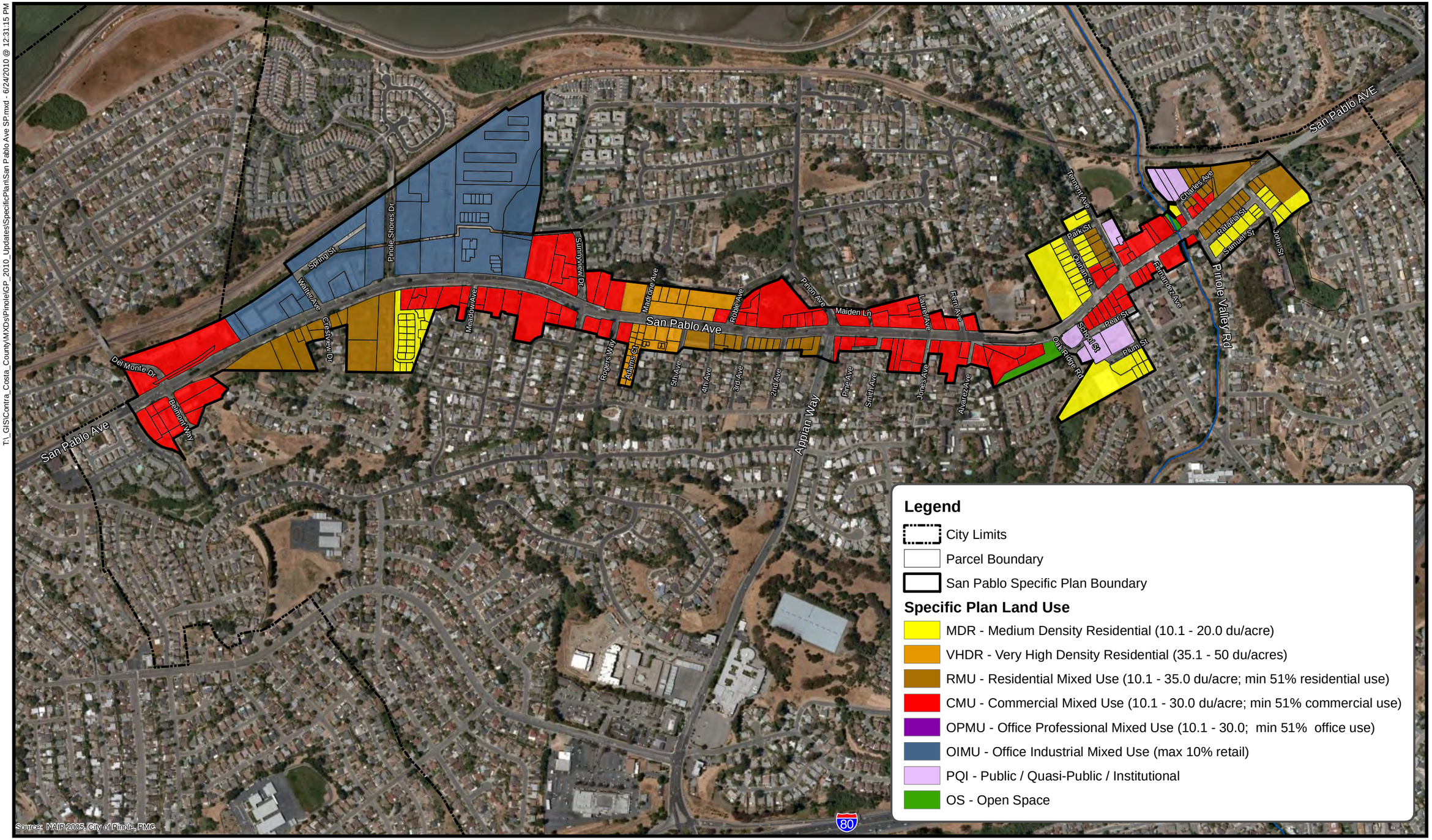

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Figure 3.0-6
Proposed Specific Plan Land Uses – San Pablo Avenue Corridor

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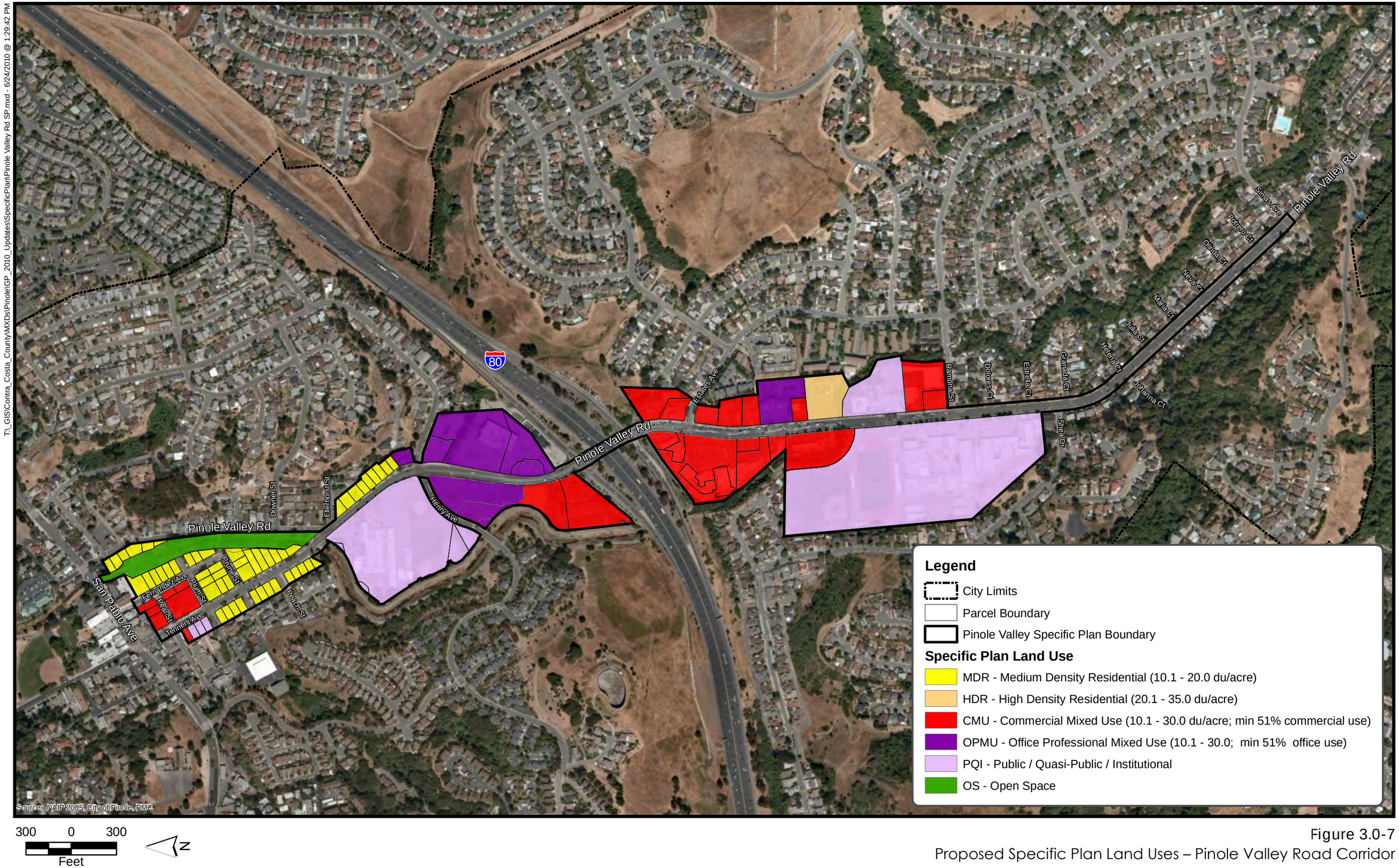

Figure 3.0-7
Proposed Specific Plan Land Uses – Pinole Valley Road Corridor

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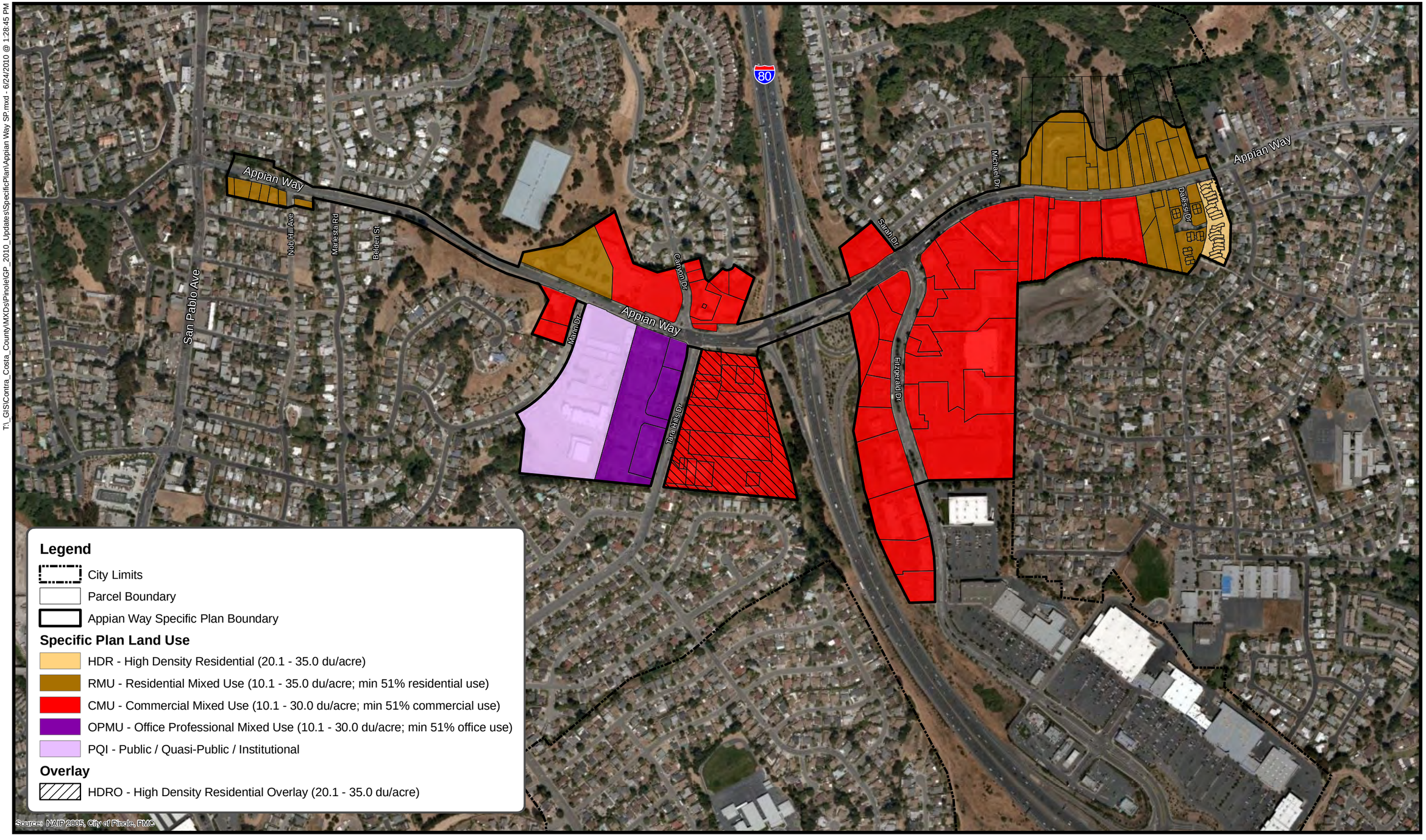

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Figure 3.0-8
Proposed Specific Plan Land Uses – Appian Way Corridor

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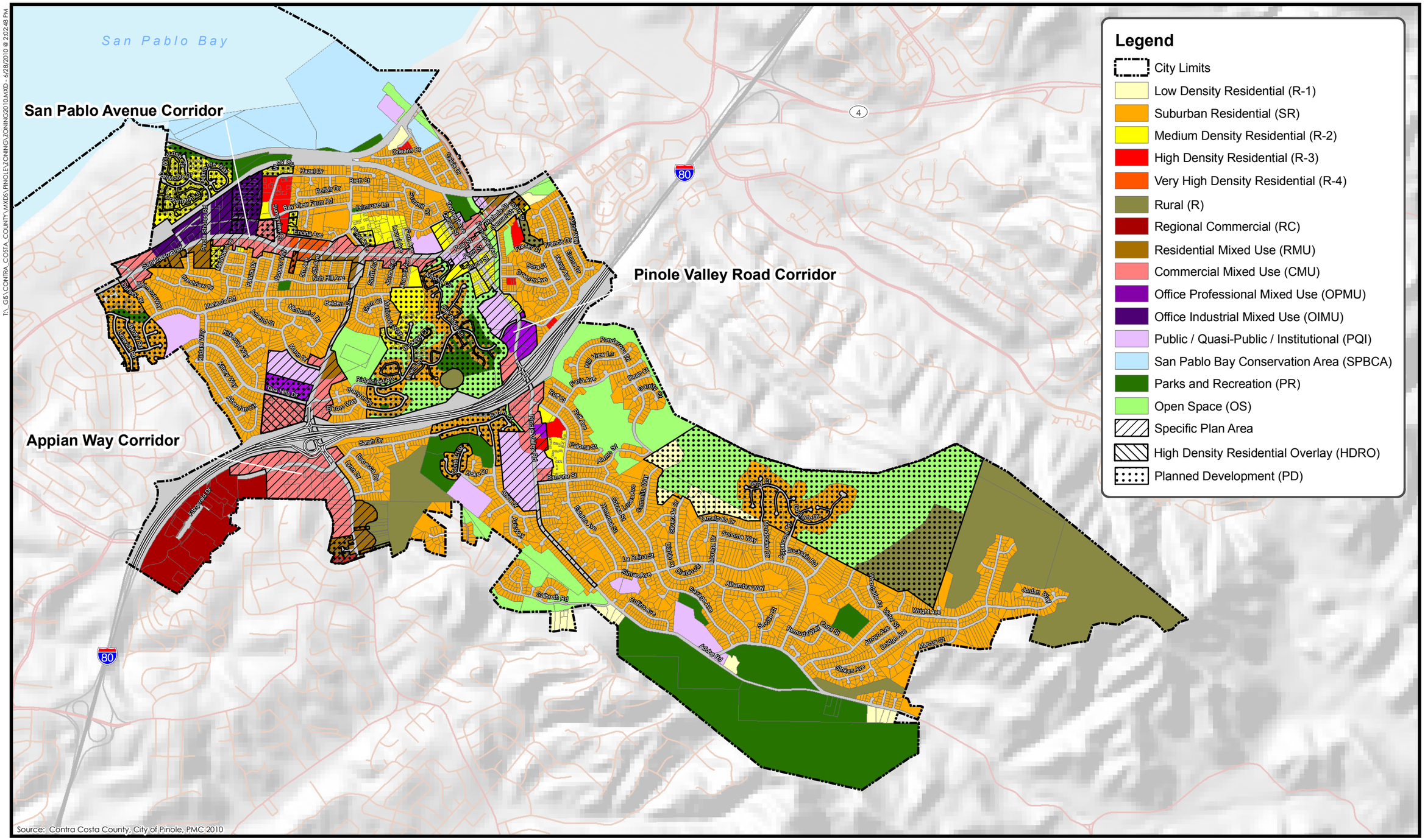

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Figure 3.0-9
Proposed Zoning Map
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3.4 INTENDED USES OF THE EIR AND APPROVAL PROCESS

This EIR provides a programmatic environmental review of implementation of the General Plan Update, Three Corridors Specific Plan, and Zoning Code Update. Subsequent activities falling under the General Plan will use this EIR to focus the environmental review of the subsequent activity and as the basis in determining whether the later activity may have any significant effects, pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.

The City of Pinole General Plan, Three Corridors Specific Plan, and Zoning Code will be presented to the City of Pinole Steering Committee for review, comment, and recommendations. The City of Pinole City Council, as the City's legislative body, is the approving authority for the City of Pinole General Plan and related documents. In order to approve the General Plan, the City Council would have to take the following actions:

- Certification of the City of Pinole General Plan, Three Corridors Specific Plan, and Zoning Code EIR
- Adoption of required findings for the above actions, including required findings under the State CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15090, 15091, and 15093
- Adoption of the City of Pinole General Plan

Following adoption of the General Plan and its project components, and certification of the EIR by the City Council, all subsequent activities and development within the city will be guided by the goals and policies in the updated General Plan. The City Council is anticipated to conduct the following subsequent activities to implement the General Plan:

- Adoption of the Three Corridors Specific Plan.
- Adoption of the proposed amendments to the City of Pinole Zoning Code.
- The City will consider adopting financing programs or fee programs for public infrastructure.
- The City will consider further analyzing and planning for public infrastructure such as roadway improvements, construction of parks, trails, infrastructure improvements (e.g., water distribution and treatment facilities, wastewater facilities, and other public improvements), other capital improvements, and natural resource preservation and/or restoration.
- The City may conduct or consider further focused planning studies, including the preparation of a Downtown Master Plan and a set of citywide Design Guidelines.
- The City would consider approval of various private development entitlement requests (e.g., specific plans, master plans, tentative subdivision maps, design review, use permits) that are consistent with the General Plan and its Land Use Map.

OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCY APPROVALS

Additional subsequent approvals and permits that may be required from local, regional, state and federal agencies in the processing of subsequent development permits include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Contra County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) approval of future requests to annex land into the city. LAFCo must also approve the formation, reorganization, incorporation, or consolidation of special districts that provide services in the city or the Planning Area.

- Bay Area Air Quality Management District approval of dust control plans and other permits for subsequent projects.

- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) approval of improvements and/or funding for future improvements associated with state highway facilities.

- Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA)

- San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC)

- Extension of service and/or expansion of infrastructure facilities by the City or other providers, including:

  - Contra Costa County Fire Protection District
  - California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire)
  - Pinole City Police Department
  - Water purveyors (East Bay Municipal Utility District)
  - Richmond Sanitary Service
  - West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD)
  - Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E)
  - California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)
  - Telephone, cable, and Internet services (AT&T, Comcast, etc.)
  - City of Pinole Recreation Department
  - East Bay Regional Park District

- California Department of Fish and Game approval of future streambed alternation agreements, pursuant to the Fish and Game Code. Approval of any future potential take of state-listed wildlife and plant species covered under the California Endangered Species Act.

- San Francisco Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board (SFBRWQCB) and State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) review and/or approval of any activity impacting Planning Area water features, pursuant to the Clean Water Act and RWQCB standards.

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) approvals of any future wetland fill activities, pursuant to the federal Clean Water Act.

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) approvals involving any future potential take of federally listed wildlife and plant species and their habitats covered under the federal Endangered Species Act.

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) concurrence with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act permit.

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