



# Soledad-Mission Recreation District Board of Directors Job Description

## Soledad-Mission Recreation and Park District

### Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members

As a Board Member for a special district, you are committing to represent the best interests of your community, ensure the delivery of essential local services and infrastructure, and faithfully serve the public good while upholding the law. You are expected to attend regular meetings, special meetings as needed, review materials prior to the meetings, sign and approve warrants, and act as an advocate of the District in approved and mutually accepted actions and messaging.

### The Specific Responsibilities of the Board

1. Setting the Direction for the District;
  - a. Setting vision, mission statement, and strategic plan;
2. Establishing and supporting the policies and structure of the district;
  - a. Specifying the manner in which the district's business is conducted
  - b. Develop, maintain, revise, and enforce the district's policies.
  - c. Review and adopt biennial Conflict of Interest Code and Policy
  - d. To Complete Annual AB 1234 Ethics Trainings and Sexual Harassment Training for Appointed or elected officials.
3. Overseeing the financial resources necessary to fund the district;
  - a. Ensure sound fiscal policy exists and that prices and controls are in place for accountability to their constituents.
  - b. Approve an annual budget and request and approve periodic reports on the fiscal status of the District.
  - c. Establish and financial reserve policy and capital improvement plan.
  - d. Review and accept biennial independent audits
4. Guiding employee relations policy, including the hiring and supervising of the Executive Director who, in turn, operates the district and hires/manages its staff;
  - a. Support and assess the performance of the Executive Director.
  - b. Approve Personnel Policies
  - c. Establish a salary structure and benefits packages
  - d. Approve Job Descriptions and Organizational structure and
  - e. Communicate with the Executive Director; and
5. Serving as community leaders who communicate effectively on behalf of the district.
  - a. The Board may designate individual members to represent the board to other organizations or to participate in ceremonial events, as per established guidelines

*The Soledad-Mission Recreation District strives to enrich our community through the provision of facilities & programs that enhance positive, wholesome, and healthy recreation.*

SPECIAL DISTRICT

# Board Member Handbook

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elected or appointed  
to a special district  
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Printing made possible by the California Special Districts Alliance, a partnership between CSDA, the CSDA Finance Corporation, and the Special District Risk Management Authority (SDRMA).

## What do You Need to Know as a Special District Board Member?

You have been elected or appointed to a special district board by your community. This is a tremendous honor that comes with much responsibility. The mission of the California Special Districts Association (CSDA) is to provide you and your district with the resources necessary to best meet this responsibility. This handbook will serve as a fundamental guide in this endeavor.

Your special district may refer to its board members as trustees, directors, commissioners, or another similar term. For simplicity and readability, this handbook

will use the term “board member” as a universal term for all special districts. The handbook will focus on the commitments, responsibilities, and resources that are relevant to all board members of every type of special district.

As a board member for a special district, you have committed to represent the best interests of your community, ensure the delivery of essential local services and infrastructure, and faithfully serve the public good while upholding the law. This is a high calling that depends upon mutual trust, support, and collaboration with your fellow board members, your district’s professional staff, and the network of special district leaders you will develop through CSDA.



### First steps board members should take after election or appointment include:

- Meet with the district’s general manager and legal counsel
- Ask the general manager and/or finance officer for an overview of the most recently approved budget and audit
- Take a tour of the district facilities
- Read your district’s enabling act found in California’s statutory codes
- Review your district’s most recent municipal services review (MSR) published by the local agency formation commission (LAFCO)
- Register for board member training at [csda.net](http://csda.net)

## About Special Districts

As a special district board member, you will often be asked, “What is a special district?” People sometimes do not realize how many of their essential services are provided by special districts, and they often do not understand what a special district is, how it functions, or even why it exists. Here are few answers to some frequently asked questions you’ll encounter as a board member.

### What is a “special district”?

An independent special district is a local form of government that is created, funded, and overseen by a community’s residents to provide a new or enhanced level of service and infrastructure to a community. Like counties and cities, special districts are an independent form of local government. Special districts are not school districts, community college districts, joint powers authorities, assessment districts, community facilities districts, “Mello-Roos” districts, or improvement districts.

### Why are special districts formed?

Special districts are formed when a community decides a specific type of service is needed and the community wants the service to be maintained with local control. The first special district in California, the Turlock Irrigation District, was established in 1887. Local farmers needed a way to access the local water supply and the Wright Act was passed by the Legislature to provide the legal foundation for water districts, and many other special districts.

The Legislature continued to develop new types of special districts as tools to help local residents come together to solve community problems and needs. Ultimately, special districts are formed by the community for the community. Special districts empower residents to find local solutions to fit the unique needs of their community.

### What types of special districts exist?

There are many types of special districts that can be established to fit the specific needs of a community. Some district types include:

- Airport
- Cemetery
- Community Services
- Fire Protection
- Harbor and Port
- Healthcare
- Irrigation
- Library
- Mosquito and Pest Abatement
- Recreation and Park
- Resource Conservation
- Sanitation
- Transit
- Utility
- Veterans Memorial
- Water

### How many special districts are there?

There are just over 2,000 independent special districts throughout California. They vary in size and some may serve a community of hundreds of thousands while others serve only a few hundred. Special districts are created to fit the size of the community they serve.

### How are special districts governed?

Independent special districts are governed by a board of directors that is elected by the community or appointed to fixed terms by one or more other locally elected governing bodies. Board members are responsible for setting the policies that ensure special districts continue to function and serve the community. It is also important to distinguish independent special districts from dependent special districts. Unlike independent special districts, dependent districts are indirectly governed by other government entities, such as city councils or county boards of supervisors. This is because dependent special district board members include ex-officio members from another legislative body or board members who are appointed to non-fixed terms. Ex-officio board members serve on the special district board only by virtue of their participation on another board. Board members appointed to non-fixed terms serve at the pleasure of another governing body. In other words, they may be replaced at any time and are not entitled to a full four-year term.



To expand your knowledge further, visit [csda.net](http://csda.net) to find the *About Special Districts Guide* and the *Special District Formation Guide* to learn more about special districts and how they are formed.





Special districts and their board members are subject to a number of laws established to ensure special districts remain transparent and accountable to their communities. These laws are discussed in greater detail later in this handbook under the chapter, *Accountability and Transparency*.

### How are special districts funded?

Special districts utilize many different funding sources to establish and maintain their services and overall infrastructure. Some districts receive enterprise revenues that are collected as fees for services such as water, sewer, or electricity. Special districts can also receive non-enterprise revenues that include one percent ad valorem property tax, parcel taxes, or benefit assessments that are approved by the community. Frequently, special districts will receive a combination of enterprise and non-enterprise revenues in order to best meet the needs of their community.

### What makes special districts so “special”?

As a board member who dedicates time and effort to your local special district, you understand and know from firsthand experience what makes special districts so special. It’s the connection to the community, the focused specialized service, and the commitment of local residents such as yourself that distinguishes special districts from other forms of government.

To raise awareness and understanding of special districts, CSDA established the Districts Make the Difference public outreach campaign. Resources are available at [DistrictsMakeTheDifference.org](http://DistrictsMakeTheDifference.org) to explain special districts and include:

- Videos
- Fact sheets
- Infographics
- Posters
- Brochures



## Good Governance

Special district boards are the voice of the community. Every elected or appointed public official needs to care about governance—it is the essence of what boards do. Governance is taking the wishes, needs, and desires of the community and transforming them into policies that govern the district.

The success of your district, and special districts as a form of government, depends largely upon how well you do your job as a board member. If the board does not respond to the needs of the community and govern its district effectively, it will erode the public trust, jeopardize public support of district services, and may even threaten the existence of the district itself.

### Effective Governance Model

The good news is that a lot of work has been done on effective governance. Based upon a model developed by the California School Boards Association and adapted by CSDA for special districts, there are three critical dimensions that interact to determine how a board operates and its effectiveness as an organization:

1. The board as an organizational entity;
2. Individuals who together make up the board; and
3. Specific jobs the board must perform.

These are the core components of effective special district governance: a competency-based group of individual citizens coming together as an effective team to accomplish the specific responsibilities that only governing boards can do on behalf of their community.

#### *The Board as an Organizational Entity*

Any board, public or private, nonprofit or corporate, exists as an organizational entity, with its own unique organizational culture, norms, values, and operating style. There are attributes or characteristics that are consistently present in boards that operate in a highly effective way.

Effective boards become known as effective because they operate in an organizational environment of trust, honesty, and openness. These boards exhibit, as a team, the following characteristics:

- Recognize all board members as equally legitimate—no matter how different or difficult an individual may be.
- Strive to maintain a “no secrets, no surprises” operating norm.
- Acknowledge that conflicts and differences are inevitable, not necessarily “bad”, and must be faced and analyzed.
- Immediately turn to solutions rather than playing the “gotcha” game.
- Treat all staff with dignity and respect.
- Treat all community members with dignity and respect, even in the face of criticism and opposition.
- Exhibit creative thinking, know how to handle failure as well as success, encourage risk taking, and create a climate of support for excellence.
- Accept collective responsibility for the conduct, behavior, and effectiveness of the board.

#### *Individuals Who Together Make up the Board*

While boards develop unique organizational cultures, they are, after all, composed of individuals. These individuals and their values, skills, and knowledge shape how boards operate at any given time. Individuals also determine whether the board will sustain effective behavior as a group expectation.

Not everyone who serves on a special district board becomes an effective board member or leader. Those who do become effective board members also become highly valued community leaders. When an entire board is composed of truly effective board members, rather than individuals, the board becomes highly effective.

So, how are highly valued community leaders different than individuals who just serve on boards? They think about governance differently by understanding the fundamental role

# *Governance is taking the wishes, needs, and desires of the community and transforming them into policies that govern the district.*



The most effective board members maintain the following priorities:

- Serve the public
- Support the staff as they carry out direction
- Respect fellow board members
- Seek consensus



of effective governance and the citizen leader. Effective board members exhibit the following characteristics:

- Recognize that the board, not the individual board member, governs the special district—the authority of any one board member rests only with the board as a whole.
- Heed caution when someone attempts to impose their own agenda on the district rather than working to build support for an institutional agenda.
- Appreciate that how a board member governs is as important as what a board member does—that manners make a huge difference.
- Establish trust and treat everyone with the same respect with which the board member expects others to treat them.
- Respect the diversity of perspectives and styles.
- Operate in a transparent fashion, while always keeping confidential information confidential.

## *Specific Jobs the Board Must Perform*

We know that effective boards have strong competency-based cultures and that individual effective board members have strong governance skills, but the next question is: “To do what?” The third dimension of a board addresses the governing body’s specific responsibilities. Special district boards have certain duties that no one else in the organization or the community can perform.

In the next chapter, *Primary Roles and Responsibilities*, we will explore these duties, but first we must acknowledge one of the biggest challenges to special districts—how board members can learn and demonstrate competency.

## **Training and Development**

We all have room to learn the governance skills required to be an effective special district leader. To do so, we must establish a culture of participation in our special district community. Just as we expect our staff to be involved in their profession, to learn and develop new skills, so too must we as effective board members learn to hone our governance skills.

We must lead by example and encourage our colleagues to branch out and learn the skills of governance. We must establish a culture of continuing education in the special district community. This includes both required trainings and recommended trainings.

## *Required Trainings*

Every special district board member is required by law to complete ethics training and sexual harassment prevention training at least once every two years.

Ethics training is mandated by Government Code Section 53235 et. seq., which is popularly referred to by its enacting legislation, AB 1234 (Salinas) of 2005. Special district board members must receive the required two-hour training within



one year of their first day of service, and then every two years thereafter. A board member who serves more than one agency shall satisfy the requirements once every two years, regardless of how many boards they serve on.

All ethics trainings must cover laws related to conflicts of interest, gifts, reimbursements, government transparency, and fair processes, including but not limited to incompatible offices and competitive bidding practices.

Sexual harassment prevention training is mandated by Government Code 53237 et. seq., which was enacted by AB 1661 (McCarty) of 2016. Special district board members must receive the required two-hour training within the first six months of taking office, and then at least once every two years thereafter.

All sexual harassment prevention trainings must include practical guidance regarding the federal and state statutory provisions concerning the prohibition against, and the prevention and correction of, sexual harassment and the remedies available to victims. The training includes practical examples aimed at instructing the board member in the prevention of sexual harassment, discrimination, and retaliation.

CSDA offers various forms of online and in-person ethics and sexual harassment prevention training opportunities. You can register online at [csda.net](http://csda.net).

### *Recommended Trainings*

It is recommended that every newly elected or appointed special district board member attend CSDA's workshops that introduce the topic of governance. CSDA strives to offer these opportunities in various locations throughout the state annually.

As a longer-term goal, during your first term in office it is also recommended you obtain the Recognition in Special District Governance certificate from the Special District Leadership Foundation (SDLF). This recognition was designed to honor special district board members and is comprised of two distinct parts: the completion of the Special District Leadership Academy and 10 hours of continuing education.

The Special District Leadership Academy consists of four courses: Governance Foundations, Setting Direction/Community Leadership, Board's Role in Human Resources, and Board's Role in Finance and Fiscal Accountability. The four courses are unique from any other courses on special district governance in that they are curriculum that has been created by special districts and agreed upon as what governing officials of special districts should know. SDLF has endorsed the Academy as the core special district governance training in California.

*SDLF is a 501(c)(3) organization formed to provide recognition and certification opportunities to special district officials and employees to enhance service to the public. It is dedicated to excellence in local government. You can learn more about SDLF at [sdlf.org](http://sdlf.org).*



*Learn more  
about CSDA's  
professional  
development  
offerings at  
[csda.net](http://csda.net).*

VISIT [CSDA.NET](http://CSDA.NET) FOR DATES AND LOCATIONS

# ACHIEVING DISTRICT GOALS... TOGETHER.

*A Comprehensive Governance Leadership Conference for Elected and Appointed Directors/Trustees.*

## SDLA

Special District  
Leadership Academy Conference



SDRMA

presented by  
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## Primary Roles and Responsibilities

One of the first and most important distinctions to make in your work as a board member is the difference between your responsibilities and those of the general manager and staff. Clearly understanding and respecting these roles, and how they interact, is critical to the long-term success and sustainability of your special district.

### Role of a Board Member

One of the most significant responsibilities as a board member is to understand that the board is a team and you need to work together as such. Understanding the dynamics of the group, as well as the individual perspectives and opinions of your fellow board members, is crucial to the success of the team, the district, and community you represent. This united approach will help to strengthen the district and provide the grounds for maintaining a clear vision of the future, a unity of purpose, and a cohesive board.

The specific responsibilities of the board are clustered into five areas:

1. Setting the direction for the district;
2. Establishing and supporting the policies and structure of the district;
3. Overseeing the financial resources necessary to fund the district;
4. Guiding employee relations policy, including the hiring and supervising of the general manager who, in turn, operates the district and hires/manages its staff; and
5. Serving as community leaders who communicate effectively on behalf of the district.

### Setting Direction

The board establishes the special district's mission and vision. In building a mission statement, the board must clearly understand the purpose of the district and answer the question of "why?" Why does the district exist? It will also be helpful for the board to identify core values that guide the district in its mission.

When developing a vision statement, the board must answer the question of "what?" What would the district look like should it accomplish its mission to the fullest extent? Doing so requires agreement on the board as to what the future of the district should look like.

With a mission and vision as its foundation, the board sets direction through the district's strategic plan, which may guide the development of more specific objectives for implementation by the general manager and staff. In developing a strategic plan, the board will evaluate the present, anticipate the future, and prioritize goals that must be accomplished to achieve the vision. Strategic plans should be reviewed periodically and adjusted appropriately.

### *Establishing Policies*

Policies are written statements specifying the manner in which the district's business is conducted. The board's job is to develop, maintain, revise, and enforce the district's policies. These policies provide needed direction for the general manager and staff, and for the constituents of the district.

One may view a special district's enabling act in California statute as the framework or "constitution" the district must operate under as a "subdivision of the state." However, independent special districts are not state entities, nor are they entities of a city or county. They are independent local governments, which are separate legal entities similar to other municipalities. Board-approved policies, resolutions, and ordinances are the tools by which boards direct the district in achieving its mission and securing its vision within the boundaries of its enabling act.

Board policies should guide district governance, such as board meetings, agendas, and minutes, board conduct, and rules of order. Policies should also be adopted

concerning district finances, personnel, communications, and other key functions.

While policies are approved by the board and may be requested by the board, they are typically drafted and recommended by staff. Sometimes this is done with review and direction of a board subcommittee.

### *Overseeing Finances*

Boards ensure sound fiscal policy exists and that practices and controls are in place so that the district, board, general manager, and staff have direct accountability to their constituents. Furthermore, the board will approve an annual budget and request and approve periodic reports on the fiscal status of the district.

Commensurate with the board's role in financial oversight and fiduciary responsibilities, it should establish a financial reserve policy and capital improvement plan (CIP). It will also approve contracts of certain size and scope according to State law and board policy. To ensure adequate funding to provide quality services and infrastructure to its community, the board must impose sufficient rates, fees, and taxes.

### *Guiding Employee Relations*

The board's charge is to support and assess the performance of the general manager, approve personnel policies, establish salary structure and benefits packages, approve memorandums of understanding (MOUs) negotiated with labor, approve job descriptions and organizational structure, and establish a

strong communications link between the board and general manager.

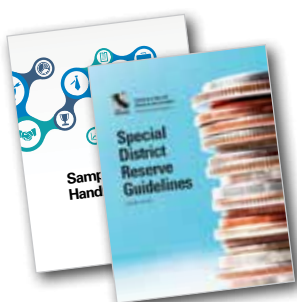
One of the most important decisions a board will ever make is the hiring of a general manager. Other than a district's general counsel and some rare additional exceptions for large special districts, the general manager is the only individual the board hires and supervises.

The general manager is responsible for hiring and supervising all other staff, sometimes through senior or mid-level managers in larger districts. Empowering the general manager to successfully carry out this key duty is critical to the success of the district. This should include a fair and constructive annual general manager evaluation process.

### *Serving as Community Leaders*

A district and its board are linked in the eyes of the public and often seen as one and the same. Therefore, the conduct of board members reflects upon the district and the community it serves. This holds true during board meetings and formal district events, as well as during other interactions with community, the media, businesses, and other levels of government. Even the personal lives and behaviors of a board member can impact the perception and effectiveness of the district.

In your role as a board member, your board may designate you to formally represent your board to other organizations or participate in ceremonial events. Boards will often establish policies to guide such situations. It is



To expand your knowledge further, visit [csda.net](http://csda.net) to find CSDA's *Sample Policy Handbook* and *Special District Reserve Guidelines* to learn more.



important to distinguish when you are speaking on behalf of the board and when you are speaking as an individual. However, as a public official, you should recognize that people will often construe your speech and actions as representative of your district, its staff, and your fellow board members regardless of the manner, time, and place in which they occur. This reality should lead board members to be thoughtful, intentional, and unified, not to be silent or absent.

It is a mistake for a special district to attempt to “fly under the radar.” Transparency is essential to democracy, and scrutiny is inevitable in government. This will be covered more in the next chapter, *Accountability and Transparency*, but here it is important to note that board members play a key role in a special district’s public outreach and engagement efforts. If a special district and its leaders are not telling the story of the district, somebody else will.

### Role of the General Manager and Staff

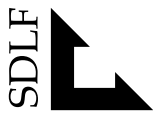
The general manager is the executive staff officer of the district and for the board. This individual administers the district, providing day-to-day leadership, and maintains exclusive management and control of the operations and works of the district within State law and the policies of the board. In some districts, this position may be referred to as the district administrator, chief executive officer, executive director, district director, or another title. For the purposes of this handbook, it will be referred to as general manager.

Overarching best practices for a general manager include:

1. Developing and delivering reports to keep the board of directors and public well-informed of district operations and the status of district goals;
2. Providing recommendations on actions requiring board approval, including policies, resolutions, ordinances, and other matters;
3. Maintaining and advancing the operations of the district and implementing those policies, strategies, and directives approved by the board; and
4. Playing an active role in moving the district forward in serving its mission, carrying out its strategic plan, and attaining its vision.

As noted previously, the general manager has authority over and directs all employees, including hiring, supervision, evaluations, promotions, disciplinary actions, and terminations. All directives for staff should be given by the general manager or designated supervisor within the district. Authority may be delegated to other staff or consultants at the general manager’s discretion.

The general manager should dutifully and faithfully carry into effect the lawfully expressed policies of the board, including planning the short, medium, and long-term work program for the district, facilitating constructive and harmonious board relations, preparing and managing the district budget, conducting studies, and delivering written and oral presentations.



Visit [sdlf.org](http://sdlf.org) to download the **SDLF High Performing District Checklist** to provide special districts with best practices related to the areas of finance and human resources.



#### Best practices that make the best board members:

- Do your homework: Read all board packets and materials in advance of meetings.
- Don’t play “gotcha”: Share questions with the general manager in advance of the board meeting.
- Listen first, speak second: Prioritize understanding the perspectives of others.
- Build an expertise: Find an important issue that other board members are not already invested in and become a leader, such as on LAFCO, environmental sustainability, etc.
- Stick to principles, not positions: Develop strong and well-considered principles, rather than digging heels into one position of a false dichotomy.
- Oppose the action, not the implementation: When necessary, vote “No” on a board agenda item, but don’t undermine or obstruct the successful implementation of board-approved decisions. Support and respect the actions of the board as a whole.





## Accountability and Transparency

The residents of the district, as voters, owners, constituents, and customers of the district, possess the ultimate responsibility for its oversight and direction. The board is elected or appointed to serve as the voice of these residents. There are a host of legal requirements designed to ensure special districts remain accountable and transparent to its residents.

While special district boards must meet all mandated State laws, they should strive to exceed these requirements and set an example to other governments and organizations.

### Legal Requirements

Significant mandates have been placed upon special districts by the State Legislature, which often exceed the standards for the State and some other local agencies. These legal requirements include, but are not limited to:

- Website Maintenance
- Open and Public Meetings under the Ralph M. Brown Act
- Public Records under the California Public Records Act
- Regular Financial Audits
- Finances and Compensation Posted Online
- Ethics Training for Board Members
- Conflict of Interest Compliance under the Political Reform Act

### Websites

Beginning January 1, 2020 every special district must maintain a website, per Government Code Section 53087.8. All special district websites must display district contact information, agendas, state-mandated financial transaction and compensation reports, and a report of the district's enterprise systems. An exemption is available for special districts that pass an annual resolution detailing evidence of a hardship.

### Open and Public Meetings

Per the Ralph M. Brown Act (Brown Act), special district board meetings must be accessible to the public. To facilitate access and participation, special districts must post their regular meeting agendas at least 72 hours in advance in a publicly accessible location and on their website. The board may only act on issues included in the agenda and the public must be permitted to address the board. The Brown Act includes myriad provisions and exceptions and has been the subject of significant litigation. It is recommended that board members read the Brown Act, found at Government Code Section 54950 et. seq., in its entirety and consult district legal counsel as necessary.

### Public Records

As required by the California Public Records Act (CPRA), found in Government Code 6250 et. seq., special district records are subject to public review and scrutiny. The public may request copies of records in the possession of a special district, including records on a board member's personal device or account that are related to district business. Districts may charge a reasonable fee for the cost of printing and paper, but the district may not charge for staff time in producing such copies. As with the Brown Act, the CPRA includes numerous provisions and exceptions and is shaped by countless lawsuits. It is recommended special districts consult legal counsel as necessary in response to specific public records act requests.

### Financial Audits

Government Code Section 26909 mandates regular audits of special districts by the county auditor-controller or a certified public accountant. The audit must be filed with the state controller and county auditor-controller.

### Online Financial and Compensation Reports

Since 1949, special districts have been required to submit a financial transaction report to the state controller. In 2014, legislation additionally required completion of a compensation report and required that both the compensation report and financial transaction reports be posted or linked to

a conspicuous place on each special district’s website. The state controller now provides all of this information in an open data format at [www.bythenumbers.ca.gov](http://www.bythenumbers.ca.gov) and [www.publicpay.ca.gov](http://www.publicpay.ca.gov).

### *Ethics Training*

In 2005, the State enacted AB 1234 (Salinas) mandating special district board members complete at least two hours of training in general ethics principles and ethics laws every two years. Board members have an obligation to conduct business in an ethical manner and make decisions that are in the best interests of their constituents. Building and maintaining the public’s trust requires you to avoid any situation where your self-interest may come first.

### *Conflict of Interest Compliance*

Passed by voters via Proposition 9 in 1974, the Political Reform Act (PRA) is designed to ensure elections are fair and government officials serve all citizens equally. The PRA generally governs political campaign spending and contributions, as well as a variety of ethics rules, including conflicts of interest. It prohibits a special district official from making, participating in making, or influencing a decision in which the official knows or has reason to know the decision will have a material financial effect on the official’s economic interests, with limited exceptions.

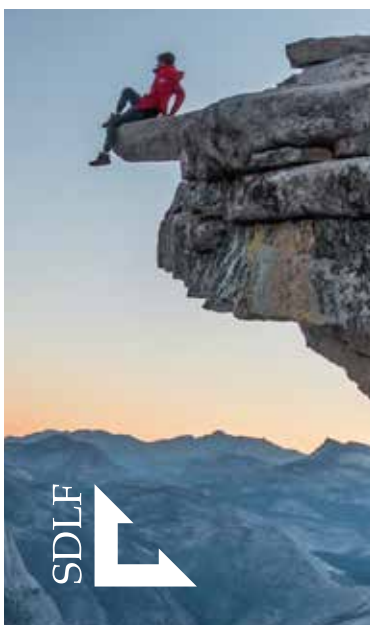
### **Third Party Oversight, Review, and Regulation**

In addition to the legal requirements adhered to by special districts, there are a number of entities and programs, which provide varying levels of oversight, review, or regulation:

- Local Agency Formation Commission
- County Auditor-Controller
- County Civil Grand Jury
- County District Attorney and State Attorney General
- State Controller
- State Auditor
- State Treasurer
- State Fair Political Practices Commission
- Other State Regulators

### **Best Practices**

Many special districts go beyond State mandated legal requirements to promote accountability and transparency. To facilitate and recognize best practices among special districts, the Special District Leadership Foundation (SDLF) has established a District Transparency Certificate of Excellence as well as other programs and scholarships. Visit [sdlf.org](http://sdlf.org) to review the programs and download an application.



*Learn more  
about **SDLF**  
Programs &  
Scholarships  
at [sdlf.org](http://sdlf.org).*





## **Legislative Advocacy, Media Outreach, and Public Engagement**

The decisions you make and the actions you take as a board member directly impact your community and the services they receive. It is equally true that districts are affected when board members do not make crucial decisions or fail to take action.

As a board member, you are an advocate for your district and your community. You will have to balance a number of responsibilities throughout your term. However, there are several simple yet influential ways you can take action as a board member.

## Engage with the Capitol

Extensive travel to Sacramento is not necessary to effectively engage with the Capitol. Likely the most important way board members can partake in advocacy efforts is to submit letters of support or opposition when CSDA sends out a “Call-to-Action.”

Throughout the legislative session, CSDA closely analyzes and tracks any bill that may impact special districts. When an especially important bill arises, CSDA will issue a “Call-to-Action” and request letters so the Capitol hears the voice of special districts. Make sure your district’s voice is heard and work with others at your district to write support and opposition letters on behalf of your district.

Meeting with your legislators is another valuable way of advocating for your district and engaging with the Capitol. There are times throughout the year when legislators leave the Capitol and return to their legislative districts. During these legislative recesses, do your best to schedule a meeting with your legislator and their staff. Just as you represent your community as a special district board member, your legislator represents you, your special district, and your community. Make sure your legislator knows what issues are important to your district and how your district is impacted by legislation. The more legislators know about the special districts they represent, the more educated they will be when creating legislation that affects all special districts.

Once you’ve met with your legislators, let CSDA know which legislators you have a relationship with so that CSDA can coordinate grassroots activities on key votes in the State Legislature. Do this by completing the Grassroots Mobilization Survey at [csda.net/take-action](http://csda.net/take-action).

## Engage with the Media

During your term as a special district board member, you will likely have to interact with the media. Do not be intimidated by the idea of communicating with the press. It is vital that you help inform the media’s narrative regarding your district. You do not want the only media mentions for your district to be one-sided or unfairly skewed against your district. The only way to ensure your district has a voice in what the media covers is for your district to be proactive. Be sure that any media outreach you undertake is in line with your board policies and/or protocols. Every special district should have a media protocol that determines who should serve as a spokesperson for the district under different circumstances. It is important to work as a team and support a clear and consistent message from your district.

Press releases should be utilized as a way to inform the press of particularly significant events. A few opportunities to send out press releases include when your district receives an award, after new board members are elected, or after a major project is successfully completed. Encourage your district to send out timely press releases in accordance with your board policy. You should also be looking for the best opportunities for your district to interact with the media. Not everything will be compelling to the media, but the media cannot acknowledge your district’s positive achievements if they are not informed. Media advisories are another way to engage with the media. If your district is hosting an event, encourage the general manager or district staff to send out an invitation to local reporters. Sometimes allowing the media to see for themselves helps garner positive press for your district. Also, inviting the media to your district allows you and other district representatives to build a working relationship with the



Throughout the year, CSDA maintains multiple resources to ensure you can stay up to date on the latest legislative issues impacting special districts. Explore the following resources:

- **Advocacy News:** Provides real-time notifications or daily summaries of legislative updates directly to your inbox. Join Advocacy News at [csda.net/advocate/advocacy-blog](http://csda.net/advocate/advocacy-blog).
- **Take Action Page:** Lists the most pressing legislative issues and provides background information and next steps for your district. Visit the Take Action page at [csda.net/advocate/take-action](http://csda.net/advocate/take-action).
- **Legislative Roundup:** Biannual webinar, free to CSDA members, connecting members with CSDA’s lobbyists for a live update and Q and A on the latest events in Sacramento.

reporters in your community. You want to serve as a resource to the media so when reporters have questions, they reach out for your district's perspective.

You may also want to suggest your district's media policy and/or protocol includes standard talking points for district representatives to reference when working with the media. Maintaining consistent messaging with the media will lend a level of credibility and reliability that the media will remember when writing about your district. As the media's understanding of your district grows, you should notice more accurate and informed press attention for your district.

### Engage with Your Community

Special districts provide essential services to millions of Californians. Yet, many people have not heard of special districts or do not understand what a special district truly is. Polling shows that as soon as people understand the services provided and maintained by special districts, their perceived value of special districts rises exponentially. As a board member, you can help the public understand your district and its important role in your community.

#### Social Media

There are numerous ways to interact and connect with the community you serve. In today's world, most community members are on some form of social media. Although social media can be time consuming for you and district staff, it is worthwhile. A district policy or protocol should guide who is responsible for posting on behalf of the district. Typically, this is assigned to a member of the staff and board members may engage by liking and/or sharing district posts from their personal accounts.

Social media can provide an instant connection with your community. Instead of forcing local residents to go looking for information, you can make important information immediately available on social media.

Engaging on social media does not require continuous posts to all platforms throughout the day. Instead, post to social media when you have something you need and want to share with the

public. Post about any community events where your district will be represented. Share a quick fact or update about your district that may interest your community.

Even if you do not frequently post to social media, monitor your accounts to see if people make comments, have questions, or provide suggestions. You may choose not to respond to comments on social media but at least you are aware of what your community is saying. People may voice something on social media that they would not ordinarily say in person or in a more formal setting. At times, people may post negative comments but with social media, engagement is ultimately the goal. Social media starts an ongoing conversation with your community.

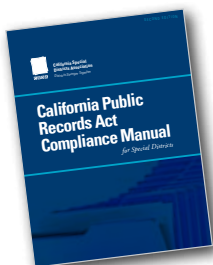
#### Community Events

Another effective way to engage with your community is with community events. As a board member, you can encourage your district to host an event where the public is invited to your district. Holding tours during the summer to demonstrate how your district functions or hosting a holiday party as a way for the community to celebrate together are just a few event ideas.

If you are a board member at a smaller district or a district type that does not easily lend itself to visits, collaborate with other districts and businesses in your community. Reach out to other special districts in your area to discuss a possible "district day" where representatives from multiple districts gather together and answer questions about their respective districts. Hosting a booth at the local career fairs or sponsoring a local event are other valuable ways of building a connection with the community you serve.

#### Join the Public Outreach Campaign

CSDA launched the Districts Make the Difference public outreach campaign to raise awareness and understanding for special districts. Encourage your district to participate in the campaign. Add a link to the [DistrictsMakeTheDifference.org](http://DistrictsMakeTheDifference.org) on your district's website so people can utilize the campaign resources and learn about the different types of special districts and how they are governed. Raising awareness for special districts helps local residents understand the value of special districts and the significant role they play in the community.



**CSDA's *California Public Records Act Compliance Manual* is a general summary of the CPRA as it applies to special districts. For more information on this manual visit [csda.net](http://csda.net).**



## Responses to Tough Questions

As with all forms of government, special districts sometimes face tough questions. Special district board members should be aware of these questions and be prepared to respond to them.

*Why are some special districts funded by property taxes, while others are funded by fees or a combination of fees and taxes?*

Special district funding is primarily determined by the residents who receive district services and pay for those services. Special districts may receive two types of revenue: enterprise revenue and non-enterprise revenue. Some districts rely exclusively on one type, but most receive a combination of the two.

Enterprise revenue is derived by fees for service. Common forms of enterprise revenue include property-related fees, governed under Proposition 218, such as water, sewer,

or trash rates. However, enterprise revenue may also include smaller charges like registration fees for a soccer league or yoga class. Facility rentals, cemetery interment fees, and medical billing are also forms of enterprise revenues.

Non-enterprise revenue is derived from taxes and assessments paid as a condition of owning property that benefits from the services and infrastructure provided by a special district. The most common form of non-enterprise revenue is the one percent ad valorem local property tax, which is distributed through the county auditor-controller's office. This is dictated by Proposition 13 and is usually what someone is referring to when they mention the "property tax." Non-enterprise revenue may also include special taxes, benefit assessment districts, community facilities districts (also known as CFDs or Mello-Roos districts), and similar funding mechanisms.

It is important to note that most residents have approved at least some level of both enterprise and non-enterprise revenue for their special district. This provides the district



with a diverse and sustainable revenue portfolio that can better withstand economic shifts and secure the highest credit ratings for infrastructure investment. It also ensures that everyone who benefits from a district contributes to the cost of the district. For example, water and sewer services benefit a property's value regardless of whether that property's owner currently uses those services.

*Can special districts tax residents without their consent?*

No. Proposition 13 limited ad valorem property taxes to one percent of property value for every homeowner. Many special districts, along with cities, counties, and schools, receive a share of this revenue. If a district requires additional revenue it must obtain the approval of its voters or property owners as appropriate.

While cities and counties may impose general taxes with majority voter approval, all special district taxes are considered "special taxes" and require a two-thirds vote. A general obligation bond that raises property taxes temporarily to pay-off the bond must also receive two-thirds voter approval. Certain assessments may be approved with a majority of those who benefit from the service and property related fees must go through what's known as a majority protest proceeding in accordance with Proposition 218.

*Why do we have community facilities districts, Mello-Roos districts, and special districts all funding our services?*

Community facilities districts (CFDs) and Mello-Roos districts are just two names for the same thing, but neither are a special district with a board that provides a service. CFDs or Mello Roos districts are funding mechanisms that may be established by a special district, city, county, or school district to help fund services and public works for that area. CFDs or Mello-Roos districts are typically approved by property owners in developing areas where there are fewer than 12 residents. In cases where there are 12 or more residents, they must be approved by voters.

*Why do special districts have such large reserves?*

Special districts need adequate reserves to ensure they can respond to their community's needs in the event of emergencies or disasters, like flooding, earthquakes, wildfires, or even droughts. Prudent reserves are often needed to accumulate the capital to pay for large infrastructure projects, or to secure financing. In addition, reserves provide a safety cushion to stabilize rates and maintain adequate services during economic downturns.

It should be noted that some reports of special district reserve levels have misinterpreted data within the state controller's Financial Transaction Report in a manner that confused districts' fixed assets with cash on hand. CSDA has worked with the state controller's office to ensure this report is presented in the most clear and consistent manner possible to avoid such errors in the future.

CSDA has also developed the Special District Reserve Guidelines, a comprehensive guide for accumulation and management of special district reserves. The report lays out policy procedures and high standards for special districts to follow in handling their fiduciary responsibilities.

*Don't special districts have board members who are heavily compensated?*

Board member compensation is set in statute by the State Legislature. Some special districts have statutory authority to adjust compensation, within strict limits, via a vote of the board during a properly noticed open and public meeting. Unlike city council members and county supervisors, special district board members are not eligible for the California Public Employees' Retirement System (SB 53 of 1993).

While every type of special district must comply with its own statutory parameters, most special district board members receive about \$100 per meeting. It is important to note that the work of a board member does not begin when a meeting commences and end when it adjourns. Board members typically review lengthy meeting packets, study issues thoroughly, and may be in communication with constituents or district staff throughout the month.

Every special district is unique and the demands and qualifications necessary to well-serve different special districts will vary.

*Aren't special districts fragmented government?*

Special districts provide real-world solutions to meet the needs of residents that otherwise would not be met. In fact, their name and their strength is derived from the way they specialize in a service. Special districts are passionate about providing a service people need. They are not easily distracted from their mission, and they develop an expertise at providing a service in the most efficient, effective, and sustainable manner possible.

While special districts may dot many local landscapes, each one is unique to the needs of its community. Special districts arguably offer the closest, or “most local,” level of service to their community. Residents will likely notice a difference in access and responsiveness when attending a recreation and park district meeting to discuss a playground as opposed to what they may receive on such a specific topic at a general-purpose government meeting. The same could be said in relation to library districts, harbor districts, mosquito abatement districts, water districts, and so on.

Similarly, special districts offer residents a meaningful opportunity to engage with their government and serve their community. The barriers associated with running for Congress, the State Legislature, and even county or city governing bodies are often staggering, with campaigns sometimes costing hundreds of thousands or millions of dollars. And the politics are sometimes highly partisan. Raising that level of campaign money and investing that number of hours away from family and paid employment is out of the reach of most Californians. While serving on a special district board is a significant undertaking, it is far more accessible to the average person.

*Do special district services overlap with cities and counties?*

No. local agency formation commissions (LAFCOs) oversee the formation, dissolution, and boundaries of special districts and cities. There are 58 LAFCOs, one per county. They ensure that special districts and cities don’t overlap in a way that provides redundant services. LAFCOs also conduct regular municipal services reviews (MSR) on special districts to help ensure they are providing efficient and effective services.

*There are just over 2,000 independent special districts compared to 977 school districts, 482 cities and 58 counties.*

*Why so many and why can’t they be consolidated to save taxpayers money?*

What really matters is the quality of services and how well a special district responds to the residents it serves. Consolidation may work in some cases, but it doesn’t work in all cases. Bigger bureaucracies that are further removed from voters are not always more efficient. Even where consolidation may make sense in concept, it may not be economically feasible due to lack of proximity to neighboring infrastructure, such as water or sewer pipes.



An inherent bias for or against consolidation doesn’t improve services. Rather, a thoughtful, case-by-case approach, that includes stakeholders and an objective analysis, will promote the best local government options for each community. Ultimately, the residents who receive and pay for the services should have the final say.

It is also important to keep in mind that there are not 2,000 special districts providing the same service throughout the state. For instance, there are about 346 fire protection districts, 47 mosquito abatement and vector control districts, 95 recreation and park districts, 10 airport districts, and so on.

*Who are special districts accountable to?*

Special districts are accountable to the residents who elect their boards, approve their funding sources, and use their services. This offers a community local control.

If residents need something or want to see something changed, they may go to their special district and petition their board. When authority is pulled away from local government bodies and centralized further from residents, the community’s ability to influence its government and hold it accountable may become more challenging.

Numerous state laws help residents hold special districts accountable, such as the Ralph M. Brown Act, the California Public Records Act, the Political Reform Act, and more. Additionally, a number of other bodies facilitate oversight and reporting requirements, including the LAFCO, county auditor-controller, county district attorney, state attorney general, and state controller’s office.



## Quick Reference for Laws Affecting Special Districts

As subdivisions of the State of California, special districts are governed by state law. Every fall, after the legislative session concludes, CSDA runs a “New Laws” series. At the beginning of each year, CSDA provides its members with a New Laws report, which includes hundreds of enacted bills and court rulings.

CSDA’s publication, *Laws Governing Special Districts*, is a member resource that provides a thorough overview of the most significant long-standing laws affecting the governance of all types of special districts. This resource includes a spreadsheet outlining the enabling act for each type of special district. Following are excerpts of some of the most frequently referenced laws affecting all special districts.



See what’s included in the *Laws Governing Special Districts Guide* at [csda.net](http://csda.net).

## Resources for You and Your Special District

Since 1969, CSDA has been providing special districts with representation at the Capitol, professional development opportunities, and a host of programs and resources designed to help them better serve their communities.

### Advocacy and Public Affairs

CSDA is the only association representing the interests of California’s independent special districts, of all types and sizes and from all corners of the state. Our legislative staff reviews and monitors every bill introduced for its potential impact on special districts. Bills requiring action are quickly brought to the attention of the Legislative Committee and Board of Directors to adopt a position on each issue and lobby accordingly.

Our six District NetWorks help special districts connect and take action on issues of concern, locally or statewide. A CSDA Public Affairs Field Coordinator works with leaders in each Network, providing valuable legislative updates, facilitating communications, and coordinating regional events. Local chapters of CSDA provide more opportunities for collaboration and information sharing.

### Professional Development

CSDA offers many unique educational opportunities for special district board members and staff. These range from extensive governance training to specialized conferences and regional workshops.

- Special District Leadership Academy (SDLA)
- Special District Board Secretary/Clerk Conference
- General Manager Leadership Summit
- Annual Conference and Exhibitor Showcase
- Workshops in Ethics, Harassment Prevention, and more

In addition, CSDA webinars, offered live and on-demand, provide affordable and convenient access to education in a wide variety of topics. Find a complete list of trainings at [csda.net](http://csda.net).

*Visit [csda.net](http://csda.net) for online resources available for members, including tools and information crucial to any special district's operational effectiveness.*



**CSDA is committed to providing solutions to special district needs. That includes discounts and programs especially designed to save districts time and money.**

**A complete listing of Value Added Benefits is available at [csda.net](http://csda.net).**

## Online Resources

At [csda.net](http://csda.net), members have access to tools and information crucial to any special district's operational effectiveness. Below are a few highlights of what you can find once you've logged in.

### *CSDA Communities*

Our online forum gives CSDA members a fast and easy way to share relevant information and get answers to questions from those most qualified to answer – your peers. Search for and connect with other members through the Member Directory, or find service and product providers through the Buyers Guide.

### *Knowledge Base*

The Knowledge Base is your online go-to for answers to many questions about local governance and policies related to special districts. The Frequently Asked Questions section contains answers to the inquiries we hear most often from special districts. The Sample Document Library is a collection of useful examples contributed by other special districts.

Also included in the Knowledge Base is an array of downloadable publications and reference materials on topics such as:

- Ballot Measure Guidelines
- Brown Act Compliance
- California Public Records Act
- Parliamentary Procedure
- Reserve Guidelines
- And many more

## California Special Districts Alliance



California Special Districts Association  
*Districts Stronger Together*



Special District Risk Management Authority



CSDA Finance Corporation

**California Special Districts Alliance** is a collaborative partnership between CSDA, the CSDA Finance Corporation and the Special District Risk Management Authority (SDRMA). Our three organizations work together to provide the best in resources and education for your special district.

CSDA Finance Corporation has facilitated nearly \$1 billion in financing for capital improvements, land acquisitions, and equipment purchases. Learn more at [csdafinance.net](http://csdafinance.net).

Special District Risk Management Authority provides full-service risk management programs, including Workers' Compensation, Property/Liability, and Health Coverages. Learn more at [sdrma.org](http://sdrma.org).





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# LAFCO *of Monterey County*

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION OF MONTEREY COUNTY

## 2024 Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Study:

- Soledad Community Health Care District
- Soledad-Mission Recreation District
- Soledad Cemetery District



Adopted by the Commission on June 24, 2024

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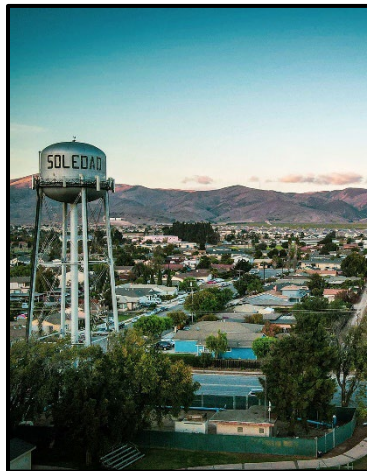
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# Executive Summary

This Executive Summary begins with an **Introduction and Background**, followed by **Key Findings**, **Recommended LAFCO Actions**, and **Regulatory Framework** sections.

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## Introduction and Background

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### Study's Scope

This study provides information about the operations, services, and spheres of influence<sup>1</sup> of the:

- Soledad Community Health Care District,
- Soledad-Mission Recreation District, and
- Soledad Cemetery District.

This study meets LAFCO's requirements, under state law, for conducting periodic service reviews and sphere of influence studies. The study also addresses the Cemetery District's critical lack of compliance with state laws and best practices for administering public agencies.

The study does not include the City of Soledad (for which LAFCO completed an MSR/SOI study in December 2022) or the Mission Soledad Rural Fire Protection District, which was included in LAFCO's 2020 countywide study of all special districts that provide fire protection and emergency medical services.<sup>2</sup> Both of these approved studies are available under the Studies & Maps tab on LAFCO's web site.

### District Formation

The three districts in this study were formed in either 1926 or 1937 (Cemetery), 1948 (Health Care), and 1962 (Recreation), pre-dating the statewide advent of LAFCOs in 1963, but occurring after the City of Soledad's incorporation in 1921.

### City-Centered Independent Special Districts

Along with the neighboring Greenfield area about nine miles to the south, Soledad is one of the two primary examples in Monterey County of an incorporated city overlaid by independent special districts that serve the city plus the outlying rural unincorporated area. This arrangement does exist in other areas of Monterey County; for example, the Gonzales and King City areas both have cemetery districts, and the Gonzales community also has a rural fire protection district that surrounds the city. But Soledad and Greenfield have the most overlying special districts (Soledad has recreation, cemetery, and health care districts that overlie the city. Greenfield has overlying recreation, cemetery, and memorial districts).

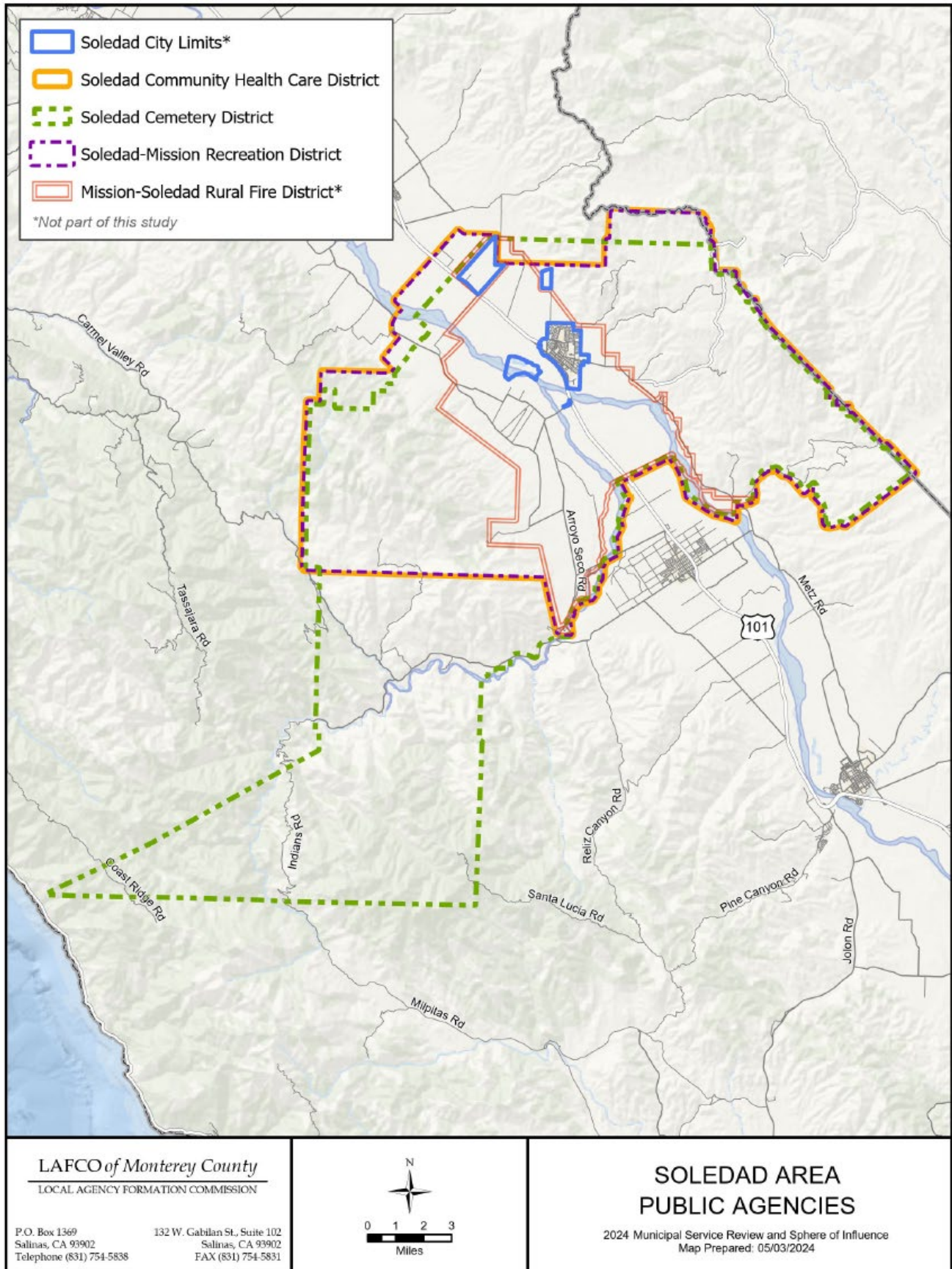
This study's recommended actions include encouraging the Recreation and Cemetery Districts to consider funding a feasibility study – in coordination with the City of Soledad – to evaluate potential future City-District integration options. One possibility would be for the City to administer and operate district services, by contract, on behalf of these two districts in the future. This recommendation echoes the recommendations in LAFCO's approved, December 2023 municipal service review and sphere of influence study for the City of Greenfield and the Greenfield Recreation, Cemetery, and Memorial Districts.

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<sup>1</sup> A Sphere of Influence is defined by LAFCO of Monterey County as “A plan for the probable physical boundaries and service area of a local agency, as determined by LAFCO ([California Government Code] section 56076). The area around a local agency eligible for annexation and extension of urban service within a twenty-year period.”

<sup>2</sup> Operationally, the Fire Protection District is a function of the City of Soledad. The City contracts with Cal Fire to receive fire protection and emergency medical services. The City extends these services to the unincorporated area outside the city, within the Fire District's boundaries, in exchange for receiving most of the District's annual revenues.

# Soledad-Area Public Agencies





## Soledad-Area Special District Facilities





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## Introduction and Background (continued)

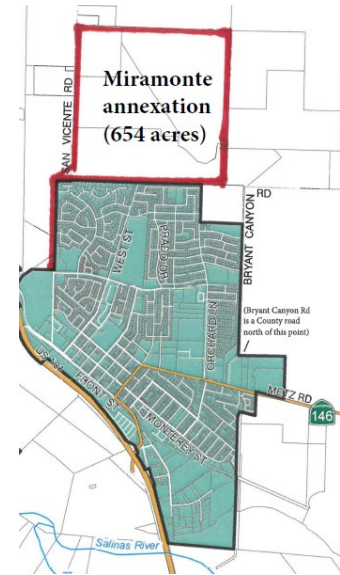
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### Scale of Budgets and Operations

Although the three district boundaries are similar, the Health Care District is much larger of an organization than the other two districts in terms of budget and operations. The Health Care District's approximately \$16.3 million in annual revenues and expenditures are about 20 times higher than those of the Recreation District and on the order of 100 times higher than for the Cemetery District.

### Soledad: A High-Growth Community

Regional growth projections identify higher-than-average growth in the Soledad area through 2045. The great majority of this growth will likely occur within the City of Soledad, not in the unincorporated area, given that the County has not designated the rural area for growth and development. In 2022, LAFCO approved the Miramonte annexation to the City of Soledad, which is anticipated to increase the number of housing units in the city by about 58%. However, buildout of this project is an incremental and long-term process that may take 20 to 40 years or more.



### Population Served

Each of these three districts in this study has essentially the same population within district boundaries, consisting of a total of about 25,400 people as described below:

- About 24,200 people within the Soledad city limits, representing about 95% of the in-district population. This figure includes approximately 16,400 in “main” Soledad and an incarcerated population of about 7,800 in the Soledad correctional facilities; and
- About 1,200 people in the unincorporated rural area surrounding the City of Soledad (about 5% of the overall total)

The correctional facilities are an outlying “island” of the city and are included in the city’s population count. However, the incarcerated population has little, if any, contact with the facilities and services of the three districts in this study. In this regard, the in-district population that is able to be served by the three districts is, in effect, closer to 17,600 (16,400 in main Soledad + 1,200 in the unincorporated county). This population is about the same size as Greenfield to the south, and about double the size of Gonzales to the north.

As Soledad-area future growth takes place mostly within city limits, the current in-district City-County population breakdown (about 95% city, 5% county) will continue to skew more toward the city.

The districts can and do serve additional people who reside outside district boundaries in the larger South County community. This particularly true for the Health Care District, as discussed further in this study.

### A Range of Governance Models

The three districts serve the same in-district population, but with different systems for determining how board members are selected to represent the populace. The Health Care District’s board is directly elected. As provided by state law, the Cemetery District’s board is appointed by the County board of supervisors, even though in this instance most of the in-district population are city residents. The Recreation District is a hybrid model, appointed partly by the City and partly by the County.

### Existing Boundaries and Spheres of Influence

Boundaries of the districts are similar to each other, except that the Cemetery District extends much further into a mostly uninhabited area to the southwest. The Districts are large in geographic scope, covering about 177 square miles each (276 sq mi for the Cemetery District), of which only about three square miles are in



“main” Soledad. However, each district’s facilities and services are located in a compact area of central Soledad, within the city limits.

None of the Districts currently has a sphere of influence designated beyond the jurisdictional boundaries. All three districts in this study are a type of service provider where people generally visit a specific district-owned facility to receive services – as opposed to the district exclusively providing its services to a fixed geographic area (as would be typical for a fire protection or wastewater district, for example). It is noteworthy that the Health Care District has expressed a strong commitment to using – and expanding – its mobile clinic service to directly extend District health services out into the local communities where the needs exist. But, for the most part, people come to these three district’s facilities for services, and the services are available to all – not exclusively the in-district population, although the districts may charge lower in-district fees.

Even in this more fluid context, District boundaries remain relevant, in that they delineate the area in which District residents are eligible to vote for – and serve as – district board members. Boundaries also establish the area in which a portion of the 1% annual property tax goes to fund part of special districts’ annual budgets, as well as the area in which an agency may propose a parcel tax, bond measure, or similar revenue enhancements. LAFCO’s sphere of influence designations indicate areas where cities and special districts may intend to expand their agency boundaries within an approximately 20-year time horizon.

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## Key Findings

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The following key findings highlight the study’s most significant observations and conclusions.

1. **The Soledad Community Health Care District and the Soledad-Mission Recreation District are effectively delivering services and carrying out their purposes. In contrast, the Soledad Cemetery District is not being managed in an effective, transparent, or legally compliant manner.**

The Health Care and Recreation Districts are professionally managed by full-time staff, and are reliably delivering high-quality services to the community. However, the Cemetery District has demonstrated deficiencies in meeting its fiduciary, legal, and administrative duties.

2. **The Soledad-area agencies within this study generally appear to be financially stable.**

Each of the districts is financially solvent and appears to have positive earnings in the current fiscal year. However, the districts have experienced challenges with maintaining positive income in some recent prior years, and some future challenges remain – including Medi-Cal related debt service which will end in the coming fiscal years when all open settlements are closed (Health Care District) and needs for reinvestment in the district’s physical facilities (Recreation District).

For the Cemetery District, a key problem is that no recent financial statements or prior-year audits are available. Budgets need to be adopted and financial audits need to be completed to verify the revenue received and how these public funds are being managed. However, the district does not appear to be experiencing financial hardship. Property tax revenues are providing a reliable and consistent income stream.

3. **Future Soledad-area growth and development will increase demands for district services.**

Buildout of the Miramonte annexation, and other development projects, is an incremental and long-term process that may take 20 to 40 years or more, but will steadily increase the demand for services provided by the districts in this study. The districts are mostly going to be “on their own,” financially speaking, to adapt and respond to the increasing service demands. Property tax revenues will increase with community growth and development. However, the three districts currently have no impact fees such as those the nearby cities have established, and which can range from about \$25,000 to \$35,000 for a single-family house.

4. **(Recreation and Cemetery Districts): Opportunities exist for increased integration with the City of Soledad or another agency.**

More than 90% of the Recreation District's in-district residents are City of Soledad residents. In 2021, the City established its own Parks and Recreation Department for the first time. The City and the District have explored different possibilities for integrating the two agencies' operations and programs, and have taken some small steps in this direction. Potential opportunities exist to more substantially integrate the two agencies. In addition, the Cemetery District has a critical need for administrative and financial oversight services, which could be provided by the City or by another public cemetery district.

Currently, three separate public agencies – the City of Soledad and the Recreation and Cemetery Districts – all own and operate park-like or recreation-oriented spaces in the Soledad community. This local government framework of a city plus two single-purpose districts results in some redundancies in administration and operations. Under a potential city-district integrated service model, a special district remains in existence as a means of collecting revenues to fund services to the unincorporated area outside the city, but the City provides the actual services to the district, by contract. The arrangement would remain in effect for as long as both the City and the district wish to continue with the contract. An arrangement of this type is a natural progression from an older multi-agency services arrangement to a more efficient city-centered approach to delivering municipal-type services.

This study recommends that the Soledad Recreation and Cemetery districts coordinate with the City of Soledad to explore potential city-district integration options. This effort could include the two districts co-funding a feasibility study to evaluate, in coordination with the City, options. Alternatively, the two districts could coordinate independently with the city. (The Recreation District and the City have already established a committee that has met since 2020 to explore possible integration options, although the committee has been inactive recently. The Cemetery District has a more immediate and pressing need for administrative and financial oversight).

This recommendation does not extend to the Health Care District. The Health Care District's facilities and services are not a municipal-type service traditionally provided by a city government, and the District is functioning capably as an independent and self-sufficient agency.

5. **The Health Care District is proposing a sphere of influence amendment to reflect the larger South Monterey County community that the District serves.**

The Health Care District is requesting that LAFCO expand the District's sphere of influence to include Chualar, Gonzales, Greenfield, King City, San Lucas, San Ardo, Parkfield, Cholame, and other South Monterey County communities within County Supervisorial District 3. The main reasons for the requested expansion are to have the District's sphere reflect the population that the District serves, and to express the District's desire to be a supportive and prominent asset in the larger South County community. Staff has reviewed the requested sphere expansion and recommends approval.

Representatives of the Recreation and Cemetery Districts believe the currently designated sphere for those agencies is adequate and appropriate. Out-of-district services appear to occur on a more limited basis for these two districts.

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## Recommended LAFCO Actions

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Based on the analysis and in this study, the Executive Officer recommends adoption of a resolution to:

1. Find that, pursuant to Section 15306 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the service review and sphere of influence study is categorically exempt, in that the study consists of basic data collection, research, management, and resource evaluation activities that will not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource, and pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3), because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that this study may have a significant effect on the environment;
2. Adopt the recommended determinations within the 2024 Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Study for Soledad Community Health Care District, Soledad Recreation District, and Soledad Cemetery District;
3. For the **Soledad Community Health Care District**:
  - a) Determine the District's proposed approximately 2,100-square-mile sphere of influence amendment to be exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, and approve the sphere amendment, and
  - b) Encourage the District to explore the possibility of establishing its own development impact fees, and to coordinate with the City of Soledad on the possibility of Health Care District participation in City-led development agreements, or any future citywide revenue enhancement measures, to partly offset the impacts of future City growth on the District's facilities and services.
4. For the **Soledad-Mission Recreation District**:
  - a) Reaffirm a coterminous sphere of influence (i.e., no sphere of influence beyond the District's existing jurisdictional boundary), and
  - b) Encourage the District to
    - Continue to explore potential partnership opportunities with the City of Soledad for program offerings or shared services such as administrative and financial oversight, and
    - Explore the possibility of establishing its own development impact fees, and to coordinate with the City of Soledad on the possibility of Recreation District participation in City-led development agreements or future citywide revenue enhancement measures, to partly offset the impacts of future City growth on District facilities and services, and
    - Consider working with the Soledad Cemetery District to co-fund a feasibility study, in coordination with the City of Soledad, to evaluate potential City-District integration options for improving delivery of municipal services to the overall Soledad community, including the surrounding unincorporated area.
5. For the **Soledad Cemetery District**:
  - a) Reaffirm a coterminous sphere of influence (i.e., no sphere of influence beyond the District's existing jurisdictional boundary),
  - b) Authorize the Executive Officer to proceed with a range of corrective measures to address the Cemetery District's non-compliance with state legal requirements and best practices, as detailed at the conclusion of this study's chapter for the Cemetery District,
  - c) Encourage the District to coordinate with the City of Soledad to return to holding monthly Cemetery board meetings at City Hall; consider working with the Soledad-Mission Recreation District to co-fund a feasibility study – in coordination with the City of Soledad – to evaluate potential City-District integration options; and take additional steps as outlined in this study's chapter for the Cemetery District, and
  - d) Encourage the County Board of Supervisors to consider terminating the District's board of trustees, and appointing itself as the District's board of trustees, pursuant to the process laid out in Health & Safety Code Section 9026) if the District has not substantially met State legal requirements and addressed community concerns regarding cemetery operations within approximately 6 to 12 months of this study's adoption.

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## Regulatory Framework

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This section briefly outlines basic requirements of state law, recommended best practices, and regulatory oversight roles that are applicable to public agencies in California. The Soledad Community Health Care District and the Soledad-Mission Recreation District are generally complying with legal requirements and implementing some of the recommended best practices. The Soledad Cemetery District is currently not in compliance with legal requirements and should take immediate corrective actions as discussed in this report.

### Requirements of State Law

The State Legislature has passed various laws establishing fundamental legal requirements for special districts. Many of these State laws also apply to counties and cities. To summarize, special districts must generally:

- Adopt annual budgets,
- Complete financial audits,
- Submit annual financial and compensation reports to the California State Controller's Office,
- Maintain a website,
- Hold open and public meetings in keeping with the Brown Act,
- Implement ethics training and harassment prevention training for board members,
- File annual Form 700 (Statement of Economic Interest) by board members and key staff, and adopt a conflict-of-interest code, and
- Adopt bylaws (rules for conducting district meetings/proceedings).

### Best Practices

Along with State legal requirements, local public agencies also implement best practices to promote public trust and confidence and minimize the risk of mistakes or missteps. The Special District Leadership Foundation's High Performing District checklist identifies recommended best practices in the areas of Finance and Human Resources. Some key examples include:

- **Finance:** Establish and periodically review sound fiscal and internal control policies and procedures; periodically review revenue and expenses for compliance with the adopted annual budget; approve capital improvement plans and periodically review revenue and expenses for compliance with the plans; and use a competitive process for awarding contracts
- **Human Resources:** Adopt policies and procedures establishing the processes for hiring and firing, including background checks and evaluating the performance of, and adjusting the compensation of, the general manager; review policies and procedures on an annual basis to ensure compliance with new laws.

### Regulatory Oversight

LAFCOs provide oversight of cities and special districts through conducting required periodic municipal service reviews and sphere of influence studies such as the current study. These studies of local government agencies have the goal of improving efficiency and reducing costs of providing municipal services.

Common regulatory tools for LAFCO have been to inform local agencies of their state legal requirements and provide educational resources to encourage compliance. However, when non-compliance persists, involvement of other oversight agencies may become necessary. Some of the other agencies providing oversight of local government agencies include the County Auditor-Controller, the Civil Grand Jury, and District Attorney, as well as the State Controller's Office and the Fair Political Practices Commission.



## District Profiles

## Soledad-Mission Recreation District

<b>Formation Date</b>	September 11, 1962
<b>Legal Authority</b>	Public Resources Code, Section 5780-5780.9
<b>Board of Directors</b>	Five members, with four-year terms: Typically, three City of Soledad residents and two from the District’s unincorporated area
<b>District Area</b>	Approximately 177 square miles
<b>Sphere of Influence</b>	Same as district boundaries
<b>In-District Population</b>	Estimated 25,400 – includes approximately 16,400 in “main” Soledad, 7,800 inmates in the Soledad correctional facilities (not served by the District), and 1,200 in the unincorporated rural area
<b>Annual Revenues</b>	\$862,825 (Fiscal Year 2023-2024 – projected)
<b>Employees</b>	Two full-time and approximately 25 to 35 part-time/seasonal
<b>Facilities</b>	Indoor pool and two-acre outdoor park
<b>Address</b>	570 Walker Dr. Soledad CA 93960
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.soledadrec.org">www.soledadrec.org</a>
<b>Meetings</b>	Fourth Tuesdays of each month, 6:00 PM, at The Windmill restaurant (1167 Front St, Soledad)

### District Overview

#### Introduction

The Soledad-Mission Recreation District was created by special election in 1962 to provide recreational facilities and programming to Soledad and the surrounding unincorporated area. The District owns and operates an indoor pool facility at 570 North Walker Drive, within the City of Soledad. The building contains a 25-meter pool, a wading pool, and locker rooms. A two-acre park, located behind the District’s building, is open to the public and has a gravel track, benches, and picnic tables. The District’s building and park are located just east of downtown Soledad. The City Parks and Recreation Department’s Community Center is adjacent, and Gabilan Elementary School and two City parks are also nearby.

#### Facilities and Services

The District’s centerpiece has long been the aquatic facility. Completed in 1972, it is the only publicly available indoor swimming pool in the Salinas Valley south of the City of Salinas. The District also currently offers, and/or has previously offered, group activity programs such as girls’ softball league, adult and youth art classes, martial arts, summer day camp, movies in the park, tennis, volleyball, and more.

From March 2020 to June 2021, the District’s pool and related programs were closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and shelter-in-place orders. As pandemic restriction eased in summer 2021, the District experienced a strong usership surge. However, after this initial resurgence, attendance numbers have tapered off to pre-pandemic levels. District management has suggested that one reason for the continuing decline is that local area residents are struggling with higher living costs and the effects of inflation.



For the current fiscal year to date (as of March 31, 2024, i.e., end of the third quarter) the District has logged 4,101 individual paid admissions for unstructured pool programs, 998 sessions of group swimming lessons, 525 student enrollments in after-school art programs, and various other visit counts. The District's facilities and programs are open to all. However, most participation is from Soledad-area residents. In Fiscal Year 2022-2023, the District reported non-resident fee surcharges of \$1,850 (less than 1% of total income from recreational swim and instructor-led programs). District management informally estimates that most of the pool facility's out-of-district users are from Greenfield and King City.

In the last several years, the board of directors has renewed its focus on developing a strategic approach to ensure the District's long-term viability. In 2021, the District convened a task force to obtain community ideas and perspectives. The task force's recommendations focused on improving the aquatic facility and exploring ways to enhance and expand services.

The District's pool facility is over 50 years old. The board has expressed a strong interest in both comprehensively rehabilitating the facility's systems and equipment to be more energy- and water-efficient, and in expanding the building to meet the needs of a growing community with a large youth population. In 2022, an architectural firm prepared two development concepts for consideration. The District currently estimates the full cost of this reinvestment project to be at least \$10 million to \$15 million, depending on the scope of the options eventually selected.

In October 2023, State Senator Anna Caballero was instrumental in securing a \$400,000 legislative earmark to help fund pool improvements and maintenance. In early 2024, the District issued a request for proposals (RFP) seeking a strategic planning consultant to explore and evaluate financing options – such as a bond measure or a proposed parcel tax – to fund facility improvements and enhance the District's services. The District had previously hired a consulting firm to prepare an economic analysis of the District's operations and financial trends but discontinued that effort in 2022.

#### Governance and Staffing

The District is governed by a five-member board of directors. Traditionally, the County Board of Supervisors appoints two District board members from unincorporated areas of the District. Three board members are Soledad residents who are appointed by the Soledad City Council. In the past, some City appointments to the District's board have also involved an approval action by the County Board of Supervisors; however, this has not been a consistent practice and does not appear to be required by state law. Board member recruitment and retention have sometimes been difficult in recent years. Currently, only three board members – two City and one County – are actively seated. Two board member seats (one each from the City and County) are vacant.

In 2023, Board member turnover and vacancies raised questions about whether the District board's traditional 3-2 composition is required by law or if it could be changed to 4-1, i.e., four City-resident board members and one County member. State law for recreation districts (Public Resources Code, Section 5780+) does not appear to include numerical provisions on this specific matter, and the District does not currently have bylaws to provide guidance on this item. However, the District is currently working with a legal firm to begin developing District bylaws. When adopted, the bylaws could include provisions clarifying this matter in the future.

The District has two full-time staff: a longtime general manager and a facilities manager. Other staffing is provided by up to 35 part-time seasonal employees mainly employed as lifeguards.

#### Potential for Increased Integration with the City of Soledad's Programs

In November 2020, voters in the City of Soledad approved Measure S, authorizing an additional sales tax of 0.5% and thereby generating an estimated \$900,000 per year, or possibly more, for recreation and related programs.<sup>4</sup> The tax went into effect in April 2021. Passage of Measure S provided funding for the City to

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<sup>4</sup> Per the November 2020 ballot language, Measure S would generate an estimated \$900,000 for “youth recreation programs and facilities, arts and science programs, senior programs and services, animal welfare programs and

establish its own Parks and Recreation Department. The City discontinued its previous contract with South County YMCA and now directly operates its own programs out of the City-owned community center located next door to the Recreation District's pool facility. The City's community center contains basketball courts and a workout room, among other amenities.

The incorporated area (city) of Soledad is fully within the Soledad-Mission Recreation District's boundaries. Residents of the "main" city, excluding the prisons, are about 65% of the in-District population. The two prison facilities, which are within city limits, represent another approximately 30%. Only about 5% of the in-District population lives in the rural unincorporated area outside the city. Thus, the City's and the District overlap and serve mostly the same population within their boundaries (in addition to people who live outside either agency).

The new city department with recreation services and programs is essentially co-located with the Recreation District, an independent special district that provides its own services and programs. The physical proximity is an opportunity for these two agencies to complement each other and provide a fuller range of offerings. However, the existence of an overlapping municipal parks department and recreation district also naturally raises the question of whether City-District integration, in some form, is feasible and possibly more efficient than the current arrangement.

There is a range of possible scenarios for integrating the City's and District's recreation programs. For example, the two agencies could coordinate on program offerings and schedules and offer a shared pass granting access to both facilities (as the City and District already do). Moving toward more integration, the two agencies could share administrative oversight – for example, one individual could serve as the director for both agencies.



The City and District could also consider entering into an agreement by which the District would completely turn its operations over to the City. In this scenario, the City could operate the District's

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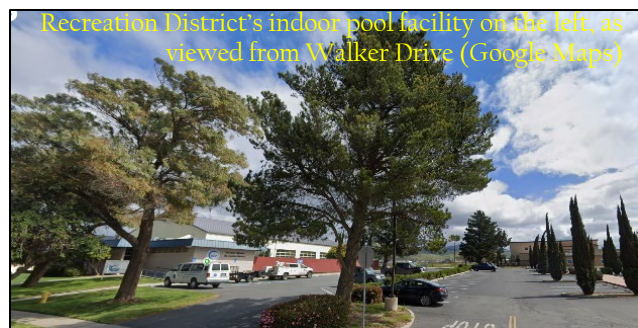
services, daycare and other general City services." Other online sources estimate annual Measure S revenues to vary from \$950,000 to upward of \$1 million. As a sales tax enhancement, actual Measure S revenues will naturally fluctuate from year to year.



facilities on the District's behalf, in exchange for the District providing all or most of its annual revenues to the City. The District would continue to exist and maintain a board of directors, but its main function would be to collect property tax revenues from both the incorporated and unincorporated area and pass these funds through to the City. This arrangement would be similar to a model that has already long existed in Soledad, whereby the City provides fire and emergency medical services by contract to the outlying unincorporated area within the Mission-Soledad Rural Fire District, and the Fire District turns its annual revenues over to the City. A similar City-District model for fire and emergency medical services has also been in place successfully in Greenfield since 2018.

In January 2021, the City Council and the Recreation District's board held a joint meeting session to begin exploring potential City-District integration scenarios. Representatives of both agencies also met with LAFCO staff in 2021 to review organizational options for City-District integration. The two agencies formed a committee that held several meetings through summer 2022. However, to date, the City and the District generally continue to operate independently of each other. As part of this study, District representatives clearly expressed their perception that the City should more actively engage and collaborate with the District.

Some of the challenges for more substantively integrating City and District recreation services may include the relative newness of the city's department (approximately three years in existence) and the need for costly reinvestments at the District's aquatic facility. City personnel who reviewed a draft of this study also expressed potential concerns about impacts to City staffing levels and responsibility for auditing District finances in the event of a City-District integration. However, while this study was being prepared, management of both District and City expressed interest in reconvening their committee – dormant since 2022 – to continue exploring expanding City-District partnerships. It should also be noted that the City of Soledad underwent a change in leadership (new city manager) in May 2023.



The Recreation District also partners with the Soledad Unified School District for high school swim team and other programs. In 2023, diving blocks for swim team use were installed at the indoor pool. In addition to meeting a community need, the partnership between the Recreation and School Districts provides an important revenue source for the Recreation District as outlined below in the Financial Summary section.

### Compliance with State Legal Requirements and Best Practices

The District is generally compliant – or is actively working toward compliance – with key requirements of state law and best practices. The District prepares and approves an annual budget and files the required Financial Transaction Reports with the State Controller's Office. The District is currently three years behind in completing annual audits. The most recent completed audit was for FY 2019-20. The District is working with their auditor to ensure completion of audits for the fiscal years ending in 2021, 2022, and 2023. As of this study's completion in mid-June 2024, District management stated that the auditor's work is anticipated to be complete by the end of the month.

Board meetings are open and accessible and are publicly noticed in accordance with the Brown Act. District Board members receive the State-required ethics training and sexual harassment prevention training at least every two years. Board members and applicable staff submit Form 700 Statements of Economic Interests as required by the State.

The District maintains a website, [www.soledadrec.org](http://www.soledadrec.org). The website provides useful information such as the District's hours of operation, programs, contact information, finances, governance, and board meetings. As of this writing, some of the information about board vacancies and meetings is out of date. However, District staff is aware of the issue and is in the process of switching to a different web hosting service to improve the site and make the necessary updates.

The District does not currently have adopted bylaws or written policies and procedures for board governance. However, development of bylaws is in progress, in consultation with the District's legal counsel. State law for recreation and park districts does not specifically require adoption of bylaws. However, adoption of bylaws can significantly help guide and structure a district's governance in matters such as the City-County board member composition issue discussed in the Governance and Staffing section, above. The District maintains written employee policy manuals. District management is working on comprehensively updating the existing staff policy manual, in consultation with a human resources consulting firm, to stay current with evolving laws and regulations.

### Financial Summary

The District's most recent available audit (Fiscal Year 2019-2020) indicated a net position of \$452,340 as of June 30, 2020, including a total general fund balance of \$193,144. The general fund was up from \$171,333 at the end of Fiscal Year 2018-2019.

Fiscal Year	Beginning-of-year net position*	Total revenues	Total expenses	Change in net position	End-of-year net position
2019-2020 (audited)	434,996	519,547	502,203	+17,344	452,340
2020-2021 (actual)	452,340	444,664	400,931	+43,733	Not yet established by audits; \$726,063 as of 3/31/2024, per the District's most recent quarterly balance sheet
2021-2022 (actual)	Not yet established by audits	789,879	836,766	-46,887	
2022-2023 (actual)		791,037	765,418	+25,619	
2023-2024 (budgeted)		862,825	843,190	+19,635	

\* Total assets minus total liabilities; this metric includes the District's real property (land and buildings).

The District is currently three years behind in completing annual audits. However, the District has an existing contractual relationship with an accounting firm, which is working on completing the prior-year audits as discussed above.

The most recent unaudited quarterly balance sheet – as of the third quarter, ending March 31, 2024 – showed total current assets (i.e., cash and other high-liquidity assets) of \$341,401, current liabilities of \$56,675, and a net position (reflecting all assets, net of liabilities) of \$726,063.

The current adopted (FY 2023-24) budget anticipates revenues of \$862,825 and expenses of \$843,190, resulting in a projected modest net gain of about \$20,000 for the fiscal year. Based on not-yet-audited data, the District also achieved a net gain of about \$25,000 in Fiscal Year 2022-2023. However, that year's income also included about \$52,000 in COVID-19 relief funding. District management states that actual revenues in the current fiscal year are tracking somewhat below the budget's projections, but so are some District expenditure categories, particularly for hourly employee costs and utilities.

The District's finances appear to have improved substantially since LAFCO's previous (2015) municipal service review and sphere of influence study, when the District had only \$91,310 in general fund assets as of the end of FY 2013-14 (down 45% from the prior year, FY 2012-13). At that time, the District was in severe financial distress and was quickly depleting its funds due to several factors, including reduced property taxes in the wake of the recession, escalating costs, and debt service on a loan for necessary pool repairs.

Stabilizing the District's finances appears to have been made possible through a combination of increasing annual property tax revenues (up from about \$345,000 in 2019 to \$448,000 in 2024)<sup>5</sup>, higher revenues from swimming and other programs (also up about 50% in the last five years), and managing costs. An existing partnership MOU with the Soledad Unified School District has also provided revenue diversification and growth. Notably, the Recreation District's current fiscal year budget includes \$191,000 in transfers from the School District for high school swim team, summer swim programming, and summer school (up from \$32,000 five years ago). Expenses – mostly salaries, wages, and other staffing costs – have increased (up about 25% between 2019 and 2024), but have gone up at a lesser rate than the District's revenue growth.

Although the financial situation is markedly improved from 2015, the District continues to operate on a relatively tight margin. The District is covering its operating costs in the current fiscal year and in three of the four prior years (FY 2021-2022 ended with a net loss of about \$47,000). However, as outlined above, the indoor aquatic facility is an aging building in need of costly reinvestment, and current revenue sources provide very little ability to set aside any funds to build reserves for capital needs. The District does not currently have its own development impact fees – similar to fees imposed by cities, counties, and school districts – that would apply to future construction within district boundaries.

District management identified that soaring insurance costs pose an ongoing challenge, with workers compensation insurance and liability insurance having risen approximately 50% and 154%, respectively, between 2018 and 2023. The dramatic rise in liability insurance appears to stem not from issues specific to the Soledad Recreation District but, rather, from significant natural disaster-related losses across both the “pooled” insurance group and the nation at large.

### **Boundaries and Sphere of Influence**

The District's boundaries include approximately 177 square miles of lands centered on the City of Soledad. No sphere of influence is designated beyond existing district boundaries. The Greenfield Public Recreation District lies adjacent to part of the southern boundary. No other recreation districts are in the nearby area. The City of Gonzales, about two miles to the north of the District's boundaries, provides additional recreation programs and services. Except for low-density housing along Arroyo Seco Road, most lands near the District's boundaries, including in San Benito County, are mainly used for agriculture. District representatives believe the current boundaries and sphere of influence are appropriate. LAFCO staff concurs that there are no nearby areas that warrant addition to the District's boundaries or sphere.

### **Recommended LAFCO Actions**

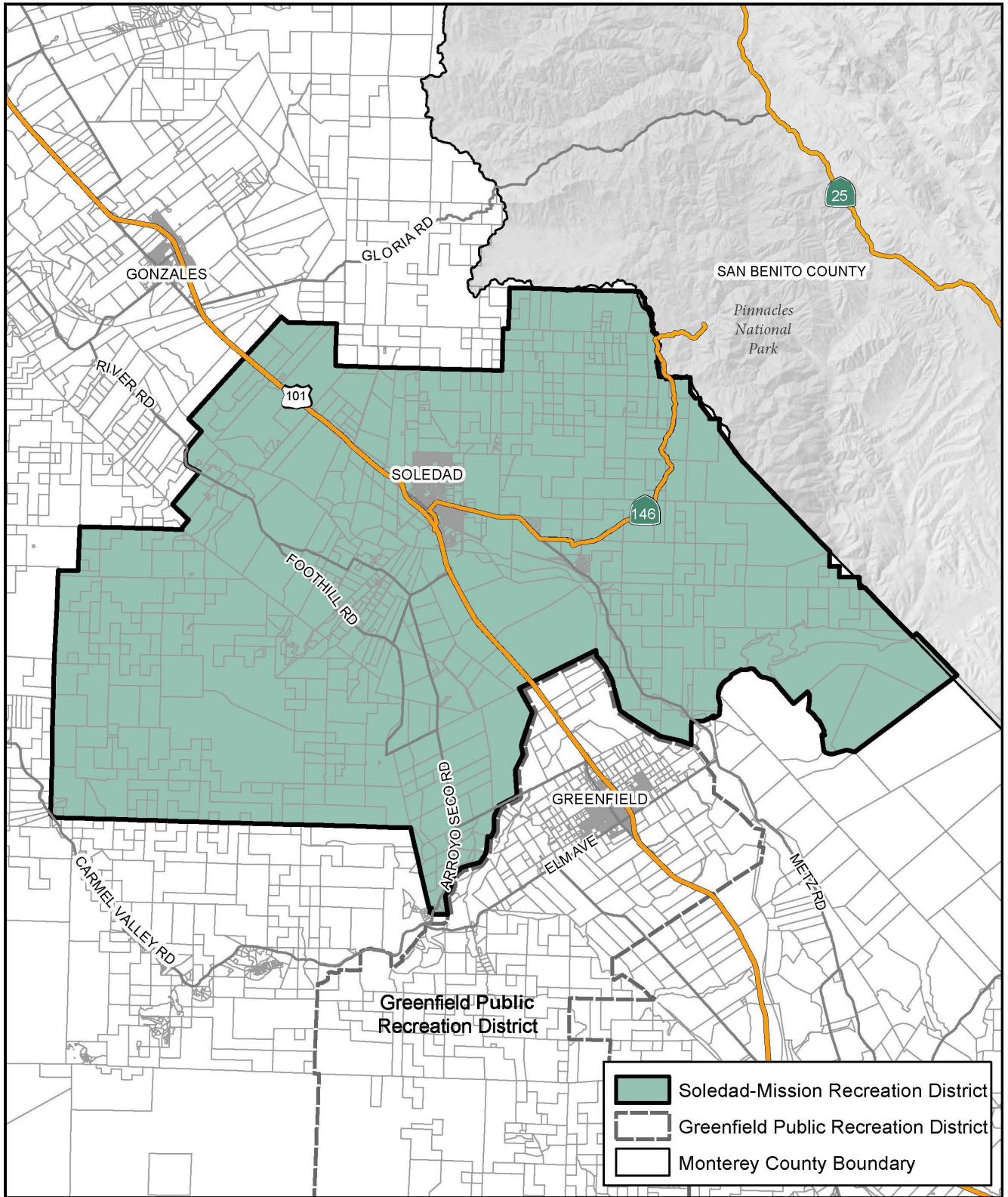
Based on the information and analysis in this study, the LAFCO Executive Officer recommends that the Commission:

1. Reaffirm a coterminous sphere of influence (i.e., no sphere of influence beyond the District's existing jurisdictional boundary), and
2. Encourage the District to:
  - Continue to explore potential partnership opportunities with the City of Soledad for program offerings or shared services such as administrative and financial oversight,
  - Explore the possibility of establishing its own development impact fees, and to coordinate with the City of Soledad on the possibility of Recreation District participation in City-led development agreements or future citywide revenue enhancement measures, to partly offset the impacts of future City growth on District facilities and services, and
  - Consider working with the Soledad Cemetery District to co-fund a feasibility study, in coordination with the City of Soledad, to evaluate potential City-District integration options for improving delivery of municipal services to the overall Soledad community, including the surrounding unincorporated area.

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<sup>5</sup> Property taxes represent about 55% of the District's projected revenues in the current year, which is roughly consistent with prior years. LAFCO's previous (2015) MSR stated: “Within a given fiscal year's budget, property taxes typically provide a little over half the District's revenues. Most of the remainder comes from swim-related and other recreational programs such as water aerobics and softball. About 10% is generated by fundraisers, concession sales, and other miscellaneous sources.”



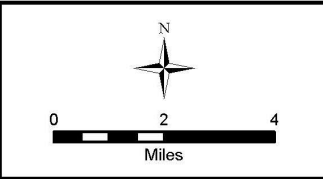


- Soledad-Mission Recreation District
- Greenfield Public Recreation District
- Monterey County Boundary

**LAFCO of Monterey County**  
 LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

P.O. Box 1369  
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 Telephone (831) 754-5838

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RECREATION AND PARKS DISTRICT

**SOLEDAD MISSION RECREATION DISTRICT**

Sphere of Influence is Coterminus with District Boundaries  
 Map Prepared: 9/1/2015, Sphere affirmed 12/07/2015