

# Part 4

## Opportunities and Constraints Analysis

The opportunities and constraints are viewed through the lens of High Quality Transit Areas and the principles of transit-oriented communities.

**Mobility**

**Land Use & Redevelopment**

**Urban Design**



# Constraints

# MOBILITY

**Physical Barrier:** The Santa Clara River, adjacent hills to the Metrolink Station, and the railroad are all major physical barriers that isolate the site from nearby residential neighborhoods and commercial districts.

**Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety:** These intersections cause hazardous traffic congestion for bicyclists and pedestrians with increased risk of vehicle collisions. These intersections also have poor visibility for pedestrians and bicyclists due to high vehicular speeds.

**Superblock:** Blocks that are over 300 feet long in at least one dimension are not pedestrian friendly, as it often takes much longer for one to reach their destination on-foot.

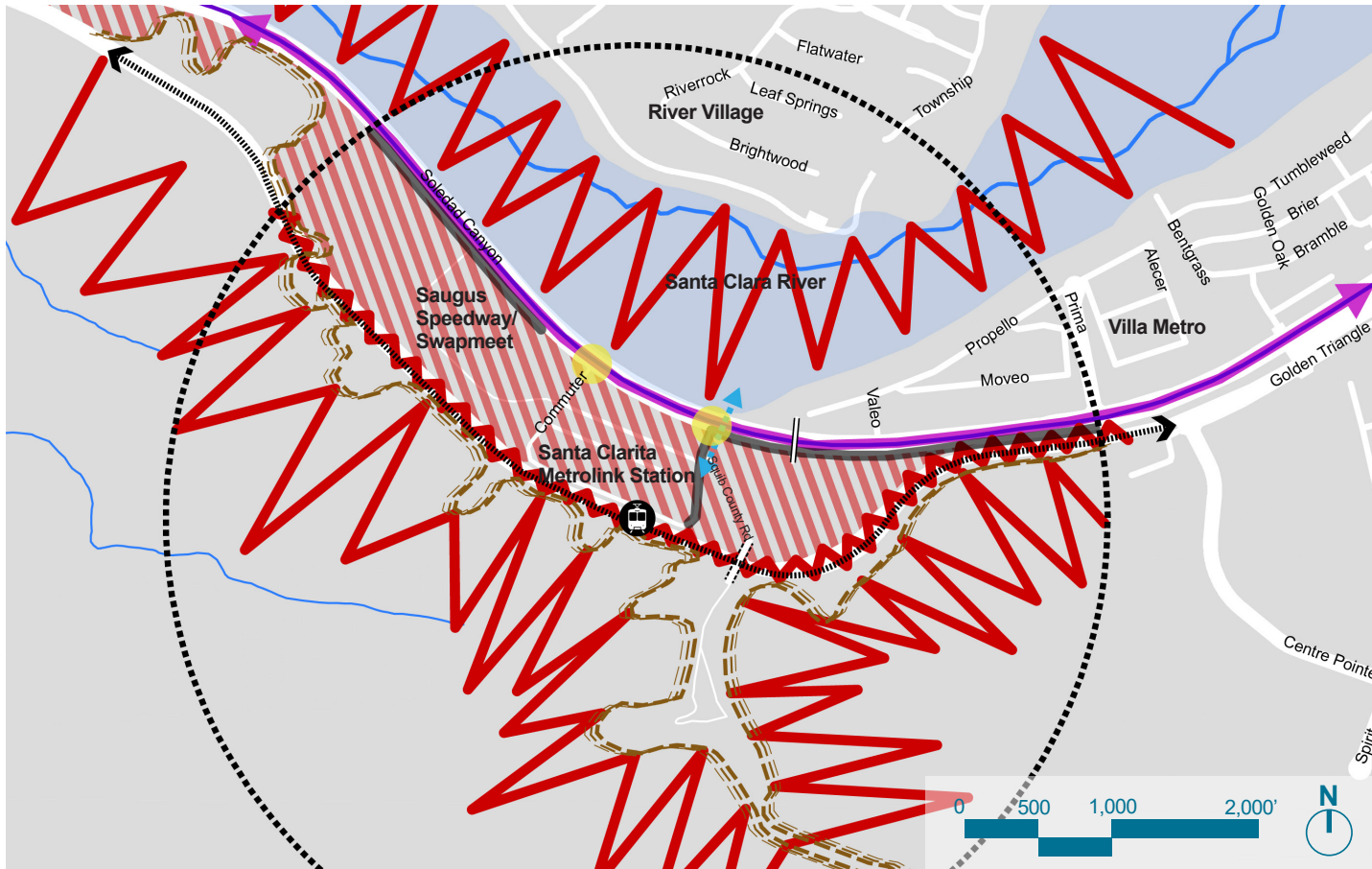
**Sidewalk Gaps:** Inconsistent sidewalks prevent pedestrians from reaching their destination on foot.

**High Traffic-Volume Corridors:** Soledad Canyon Road is unpleasant for pedestrians and bicycles to travel along and acts as a barrier to cross (physical and psychological) as priority has been given to vehicles over other modes.

**Limited Connectivity Across Rail Corridor:** An underpass exists but is not for public use

**Limited Connectivity Across Soledad Canyon Road:** There is no pedestrian crossing at Squib County Road where a multi-use path connects to the residential development directly across from the Metrolink Station.

**Existing Hillside Topography:** The natural topography of the area considerably limits the potential for vehicle, pedestrian, or bicycle connections south of the site.



# Opportunities

# MOBILITY

**Street Grid:** Though there is an absence of street grid with limited hierarchy of street types (arterial to local) and alternative routes to destinations, there is an opportunity to provide a perpendicular visual guide to the rail corridor and the Metrolink Station.

**Connected Bicycle Network:** These bicycle facilities were identified in the Santa Clarita Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (2014). Class I Bike Paths exist along Soledad Canyon Rd and Santa Clara River Trail. A Class IV Protected Bike Lane exists on Commuter Way. There is potential to have protected/buffered bicycle facilities along the south side of Soledad Canyon Road.

**Multi-Modal Connectivity:** Multiple locations for multi-modal connections perpendicular to the rail corridor, establishing a street grid for future development.

**Metrolink Line:** The Antelope Valley Line connects the site to several activity centers.

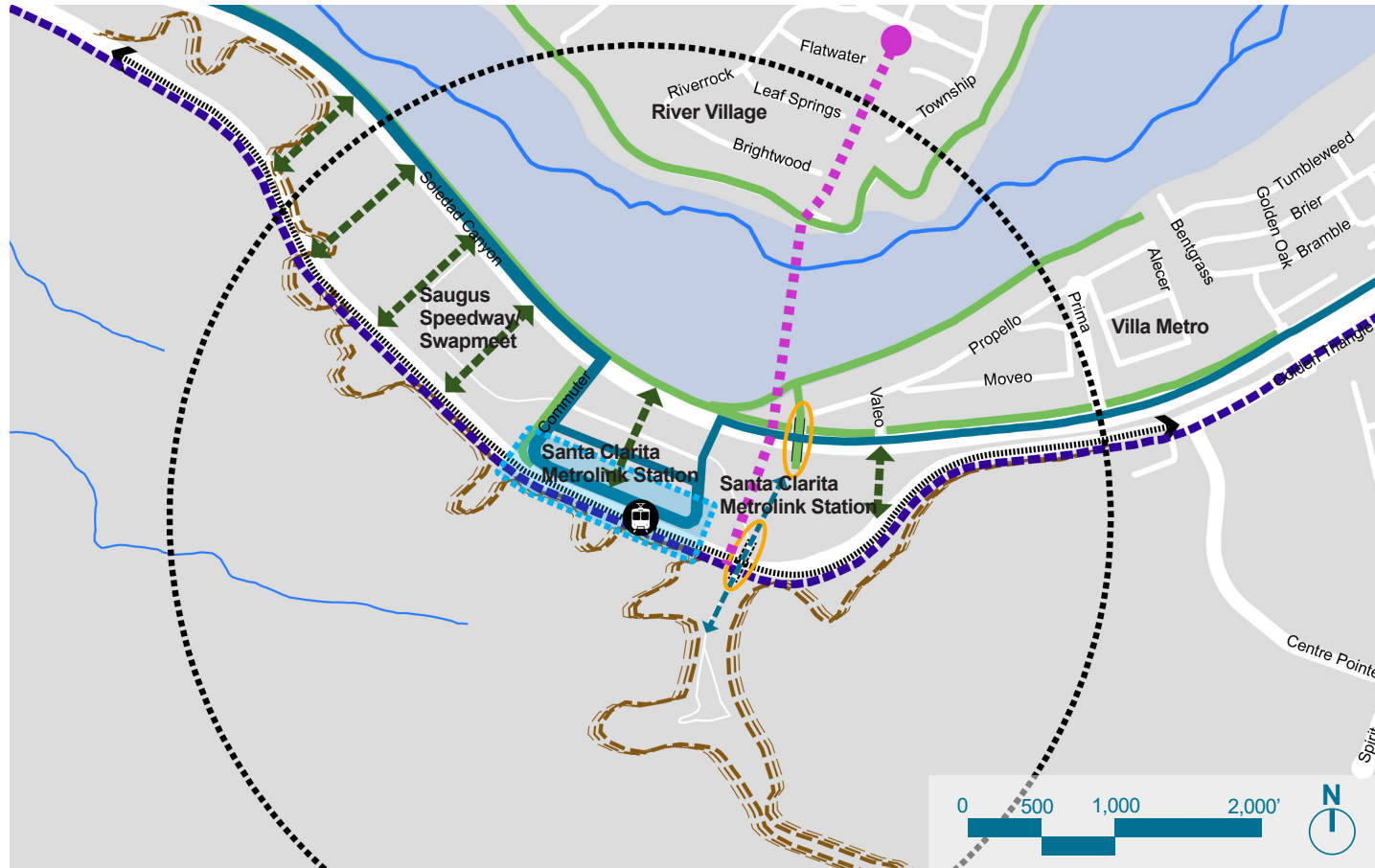
**Transit Priority Corridors:** Soledad Canyon Road has the potential for transit amenities (bus shelter) and priority (bus-only lanes) that raises the convenience and dignity of public transit over personal vehicle travel modes.

**Transit Connectivity / Integration:** Site for the potential development of a mobility hub at Metrolink Station (joint development opportunity).

**Rail Corridor Crossings:** Location of crossings connecting to land south of the rail line.

**Pedestrian Bridges:** These bridges allow pedestrians to safely cross the railroad and Soledad Canyon Road without interfering with traffic.

**Santa Clarita Parkway Extension:** An extension of Santa Clarita Parkway has been proposed to cross the Santa Clara river and connect to the Pilot Project Area.

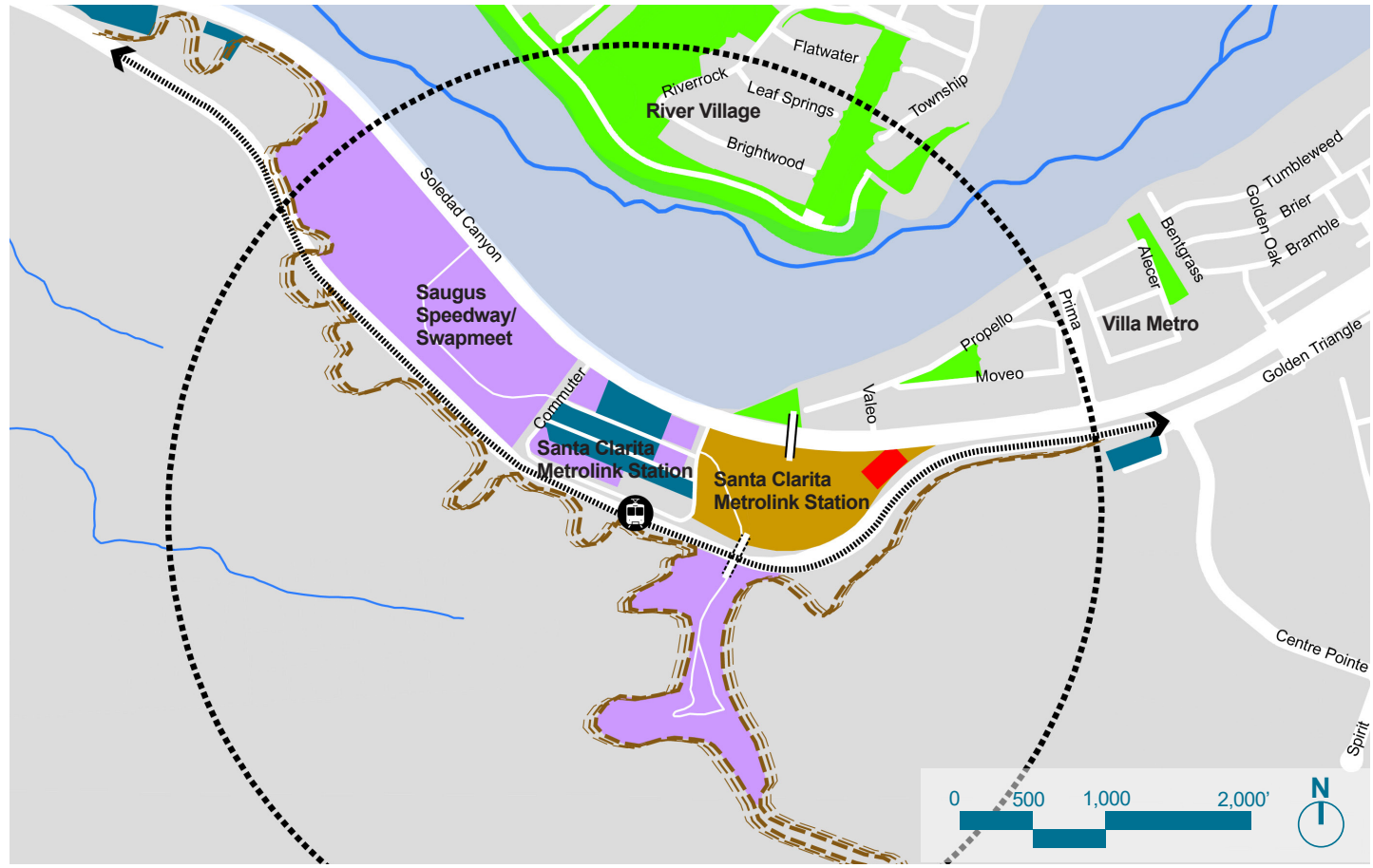


# Constraints

# LAND USE

- Underutilized Industrial and Transportation Uses:** The surface parking lot is an inefficient method of providing the necessary parking spaces for the Metrolink station and future developments as it reduces the amount of land available for redevelopment.
- Utilities:** This site is an unidentified maintenance facility. There is potential for the layout to be changed to could allow for more flexibility in design improvements.
- Vacant Land:** Large parcels primarily made up of the Saugus Speedway/Swapmeet site in the Pilot Project Area, land at the Metrolink Station site adjacent to the surface parking lots, and land south of the rail corridor connected via an existing underpass. Vacant land reduces economic value of surrounding properties. The site remains relatively free of permanent structures and fails to attract visitors outside of Swapmeet operation days (twice a week).

- Non-complementary Uses:** The Whittaker-Bermite Site's active environmental remediation limits future development.
- Existing Hillside Topography:** The natural topography of the area restricts the scope of the Pilot Project Area and considerably limits the potential for future development. Developing on not level land can require costly terrain adjustments.



# Opportunities

# LAND USE

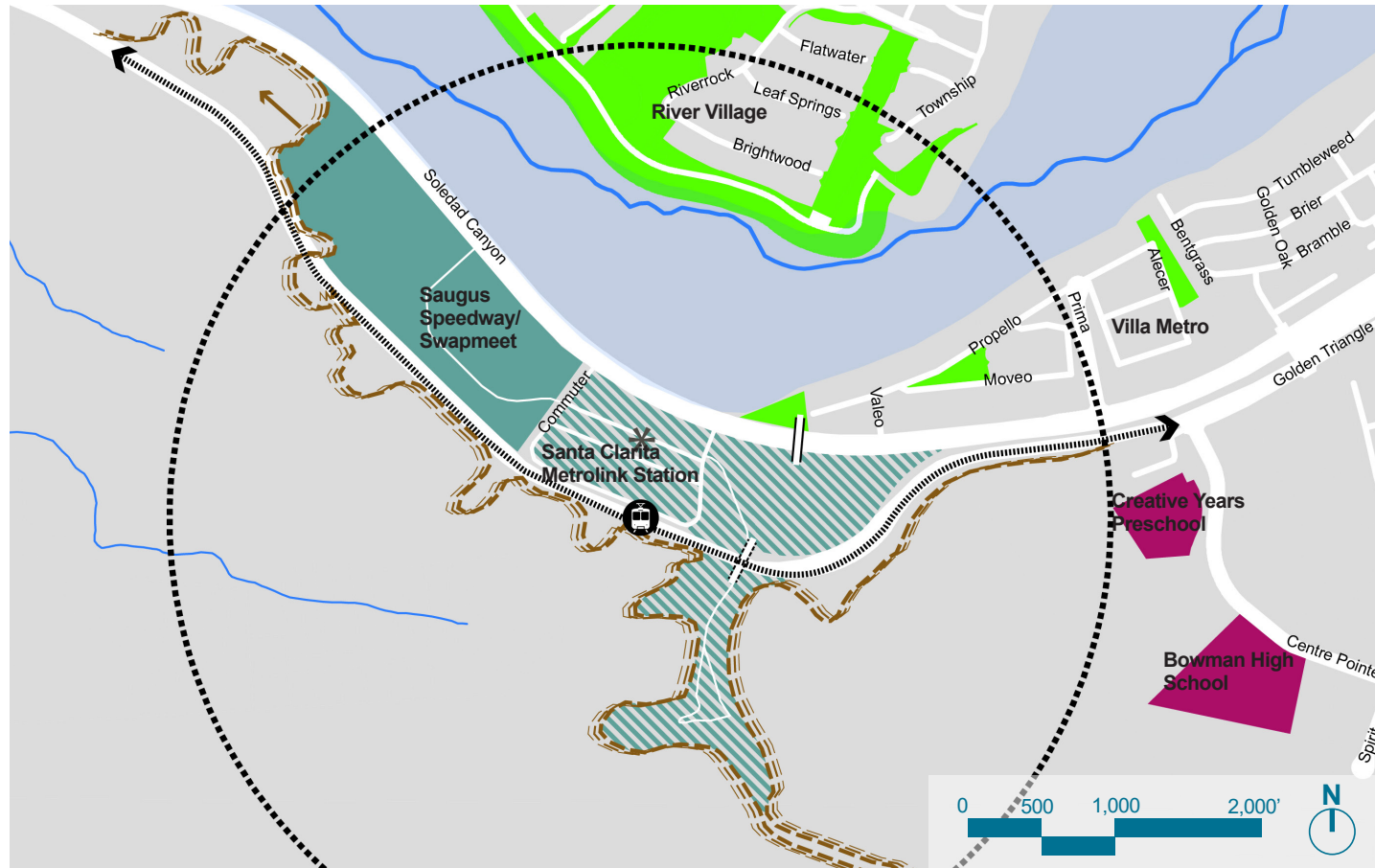
**\* Major Redevelopment Opportunities (asterisk indicates Catalytic Projects):** The Saugus Speedway Site is considered a major redevelopment opportunity because it is a large, relatively flat vacant parcel under one ownership which should aid redevelopment proposals. Development opportunities should plan for establishing the street grid through properties where applicable.

**Secondary Redevelopment Opportunities:** The area east of the Saugus Speedway, including the Metrolink Site, is considered a secondary site because of complex parcel ownership and potential environmental contamination.

**Park / Open Space:** Existing parks provide neighborhood anchors and could be elevated in importance and use.

**Community Institutions:** Churches, schools, local shops and markets, and other organizations that increase the social capital of the neighborhood. Preserving existing neighborhood-serving uses will benefit the community.

**Existing Hillside Topography**



# Opportunities

# LAND USE

## Commercial & Residential

- Mixed-Use Retail & Commercial Office
- Rowhouses
- Multi-family



## Soledad Canyon Rd:

- Multi Modal
- Redevelopment Opportunities
- Picturesque Natural Topography



## Community Institutions:

- Civic Center
- Metrolink Station



# Constraints

# URBAN DESIGN

**Reduction of the Urban Fabric:** There are no continuous street facades and consistent walkable urban fabric. The vacant and underutilized land including the vehicle-oriented Soledad Canyon Rd detracts from the attractiveness, and potential of the Pilot Project Area to be more pedestrian and bicycle friendly.

**Superblock:** These blocks have dimensions longer than 300' in at least one direction and lack the regular visual relief of facades that could create a more appealing urban design.

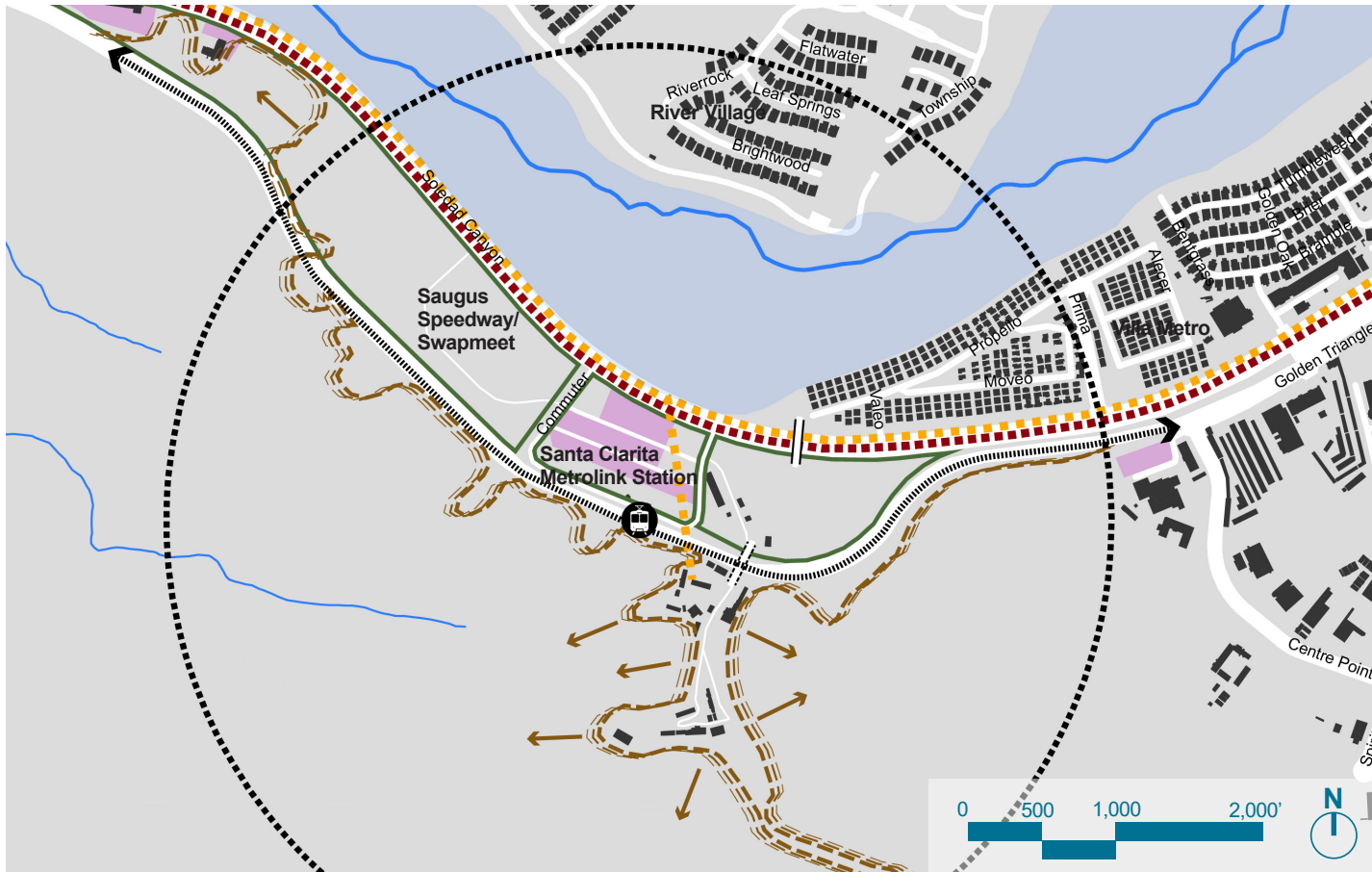
**Power Lines:** Power lines detract from the aesthetic of the site and limit the spatial orientation of new development unless replaced with costly underground utilities.

**Surface Parking:** The largest concentration of surface parking is located at the Metrolink Station. There is also surface parking on the privately owned Saugus Speedway Site which may be utilized primarily for the swapmeet on Tuesdays, Saturdays and Sundays.

**Existing Building Figure - Ground:** Strongest consistency of urban form occurs in the primarily single family residential developments of River Village and Villa Metro to the north and east of the Metrolink Station. There is no consistency of urban fabric along Soledad Canyon Rd adjacent to the Metrolink Station with the Santa Clara River to the north and the Saugus Speedway Site to south. There may be historic structures south of the rail corridor connected via an existing underpass but it is unclear whether they are contributing in any significant way.

**Corridor Constraint:** Corridors identified as barriers to potential adjacent walkable environments of the Metrolink Station due to an over-saturation of vehicular capacity diminishing the pedestrian realm.

**Existing Hillside Topography:** The uneven terrain limits development potential.



# Opportunities

# URBAN DESIGN

- Redevelopment Opportunities:** Opportunities for development on individual properties and redevelopment on public and private surface parking lots such as the Metrolink Station surface lots. The Saugus Speedway/Swapmeet site, and private sites east and south of the Metrolink Station will also complement future TOD potential of the Metrolink Station area.
- Greening / Environmental Benefits:** There is potential to add street trees and bioswales in the street tree gaps along Commuter Way and Squib County Rd. New streets would also benefit from new street trees.
- Open Space / Parks:** Open space as catalysts for creating neighborhood centers

- Vista Terminus:** Points where streets end and shifts in the street grid provide opportunities for visual nodes such as architecturally significant / taller buildings, landmarks and/or open space. These vista terminus can indicate edges of or entrances into the Pilot Project Area to foster a more defined sense of place.
- Soledad Canyon Road:** Traffic calming to enhance walkability/pedestrian realm could improve connections to the local trail along the river.
- Existing Hillside Topography:** The area's natural topography could inspire creative approaches to new pedestrian connections, site and building design, and open space amenities.

