

San Pablo Avenue

Specific Plan



Adopted
SEPTEMBER 2011

PREPARED BY
DYETT & BHATIA
Urban and Regional Planners

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1

Context and Vision



San Pablo Avenue is home to San Pablo's City Hall, Fire and Police stations and multiple community services.



The Avenue's character is diverse and provides a sense of identity for the City.

San Pablo Avenue is a regional thoroughfare that extends through the City of San Pablo and much of the East Bay Area. The character of the Avenue, quality of its environment, and the role that it plays vary from one community to another. In the City of San Pablo, the Avenue is the City's primary arterial, and is home to the City's major public facilities and community destinations. Most importantly, the Avenue is the primary route for the majority of transit lines that pass through the city. Because of its prominence within San Pablo, the character and design of San Pablo Avenue play an important role in shaping the community's perception of the city. Improving the quality of development and establishing design standards will help redefine this corridor as a major local and regional destination for residents, workers, students, and visitors.

The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan provides a vision and policies for how the Avenue can become a vibrant, accessible, and sustainable mixed-use corridor. This chapter presents the context, purpose, vision, and guiding principles of the Plan. Subsequent chapters provide an illustrated vision of the revitalized corridor, and a complete set of policies that will help achieve this vision.

1.1 OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

San Pablo Avenue, which passes through the center of the city in the north-south direction, is a major East Bay thoroughfare connecting several communities, as shown in Figure 1-1. It extends from downtown Oakland in the south to the Carquinez Bridge in the north, paralleling Interstate 80 (I-80), with the stretch between Richmond and Oakland designated as State Highway 123. The corridor carries local traffic, regional traffic and a number of bus routes. For part of its length, the Avenue runs alongside the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) track. The character and intensity of the Avenue vary among its many municipalities. However, its wide range of land uses and its centrality to circulation within western Alameda and Contra Costa counties establish its potential to become a vibrant mixed-use corridor that exemplifies the future of development in the East Bay.

Project Background

In November of 2007, the San Pablo Avenue corridor was designated by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission Agency (MTC) and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) as a regional FOCUS Priority Development Area. This program encourages smart growth principles along routes of regional significance. In July of 2009, the City of San Pablo initiated the process to develop a Specific Plan for its segment of San Pablo Avenue. The Specific Plan builds on recent efforts by the City to improve San Pablo Avenue, including streetscape improvements, public art, and new development. However, in spite of these improvements, San Pablo Avenue still has many vacant and underutilized parcels. While the City's General Plan calls for mixed-use buildings along the Avenue that include both commercial and residential uses, existing development and building standards have made development along the Avenue challenging. The policies and standards established by the Specific Plan will help facilitate new development and improvements along the corridor.

Purpose of the Specific Plan

The broad objective of the Plan is to foster revitalization of San Pablo Avenue into a pedestrian- and transit-oriented boulevard, with amenities that draw residents from the entire city and surrounding region. It establishes the area as a key regional and community destination that is both active and accessible, with mixed-use higher-intensity development that will bolster transit ridership and promote vital street life. The Plan also provides a framework for development on major opportunity sites, and helps integrate new development with key activity centers like Contra Costa College, City Hall, Doctors Medical Center, and the San Pablo Lytton Casino. It seeks to strengthen economic activity in the city, facilitate access to the Avenue and its various destinations through public transit, and enhance existing neighborhoods along and near San Pablo Avenue.

Specific Plan Preparation

California Government Code (Section 65450) states that planning agencies may prepare specific plans for the systematic implementation of the general plan for all or part of the area covered by the general plan. "A specific plan shall include a text and a diagram or diagrams which specify all of the following in detail:

- The distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land, including open space, within the area covered by the plan.

Figure 1-1: Regional Location

- Open Space
- Urbanized Land
- San Pablo Ave Specific Plan
- San Pablo City Limits
- BART
- Railroad
- Interstate Highway

SOURCE: City of San Pablo, 2009; Contra Costa County, 2009; Dyett & Bhatia, 2009.

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MILES



- The proposed distribution, location, and extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the plan and needed to support the land uses described in the plan.
- Standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, where applicable.
- A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures necessary to carry out paragraphs (1), (2), and (3)."

The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan is consistent with these requirements of State law.

1.2 RELATIONSHIP TO THE GENERAL PLAN AND OTHER PLANS

The Specific Plan is being carried out in tandem with the City's General Plan Update. While the General Plan Update addresses issues relevant to the entire city, the Specific Plan addresses the San Pablo Avenue corridor in greater detail, from land use to street design and character of the Avenue. This Plan is consistent with the policies of the General Plan and helps to implement its key components. In particular, this critical spine in the city will support the General Plan's economic development vision, including employment generating uses and smaller scale neighborhood commercial centers, as well as facilitate a more pedestrian and bicycle-friendly community, with mixed-use neighborhoods and improved pedestrian and bicycle access to parks, schools and neighborhood retail. Some of the General Plan policies that will be implemented by this Specific Plan include:

- LU-I-35: Initiate planning, rezoning and marketing of the City Hall site, consistent with the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, if the City Hall moves to an alternative location.
- LU-I-39: Use the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan to guide future development in the Circle-S site focus area.
- LU-I-40: Use design guidelines established by the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan for development review in the San Pablo Avenue corridor.

Additionally, the proposed buildout of the Specific Plan Planning Area is included as part of the total General Plan buildout; thus, policies for provision of services and environmental impacts reflect the overall policy direction of

the General Plan, while providing greater detail where necessary to achieve the more specific goals of this Plan.

In addition to the General Plan, the Specific Plan is consistent with the 23rd Street Specific Plan, published in 2007. The 23rd Street Specific Plan provides guidance and policies for the 23rd Street corridor within San Pablo, a major commercial corridor between San Pablo Avenue and the City boundary to the south. While only a small portion of the 23rd Street Specific Plan's Planning Area overlaps with this Plan's Planning Area, the vision it articulates is in many ways shared by this Plan's vision. Specifically, it envisions an economically viable and healthy corridor with a neighborhood and community scale and focus, and a safe and pedestrian-friendly street environment. It sees opportunities for revitalization, infill development, and well-designed parking along the corridor. The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan adds to this overall vision with land uses that will attract visitors from the region as well as the local community, with an emphasis on transit and pedestrian access throughout.

1.3 PLANNING AREA AND CONTEXT

Located approximately one mile from San Pablo Bay, the City of San Pablo is surrounded by the City of Richmond and the unincorporated communities of North Richmond and El Sobrante. San Pablo Avenue runs through the middle of the city, and I-80 abuts the Planning Area to the east. The closest BART stations are El Cerrito Del Norte, located approximately 1.8 miles to the south along San Pablo Avenue, and Richmond, located about 2.1 miles to the southwest along 23rd Street. Hilltop Mall is located just northeast of the Planning Area and Contra Costa College, a community college with 8,700 students, borders the Planning Area to the east. While there is a limited amount of open space in the City of San Pablo, two regional parks are nearby—Wildcat Canyon to the southeast and Point Pinole to the north.

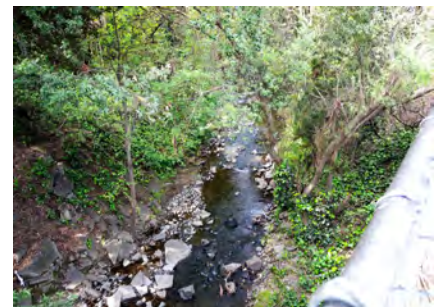
Planning Area

Figure 1-2 details the Specific Plan Planning Area, which totals 261 acres, or 0.41 square miles. The Planning Area occupies approximately 15 percent of the total area of the city. Within the city, San Pablo Avenue extends for two linear miles. At its north end, the Planning Area includes an additional one-quarter linear mile of San Pablo Avenue that is not included in the City limits. Because this unincorporated portion of the corridor is adjacent to City land, it is included in the Planning Area. This brings the total length of the corridor to 2.25 linear miles.

Within the City of San Pablo, the Planning Area is a major transit destination, with ten bus lines passing through. Three creeks—Rheem Creek, San Pablo

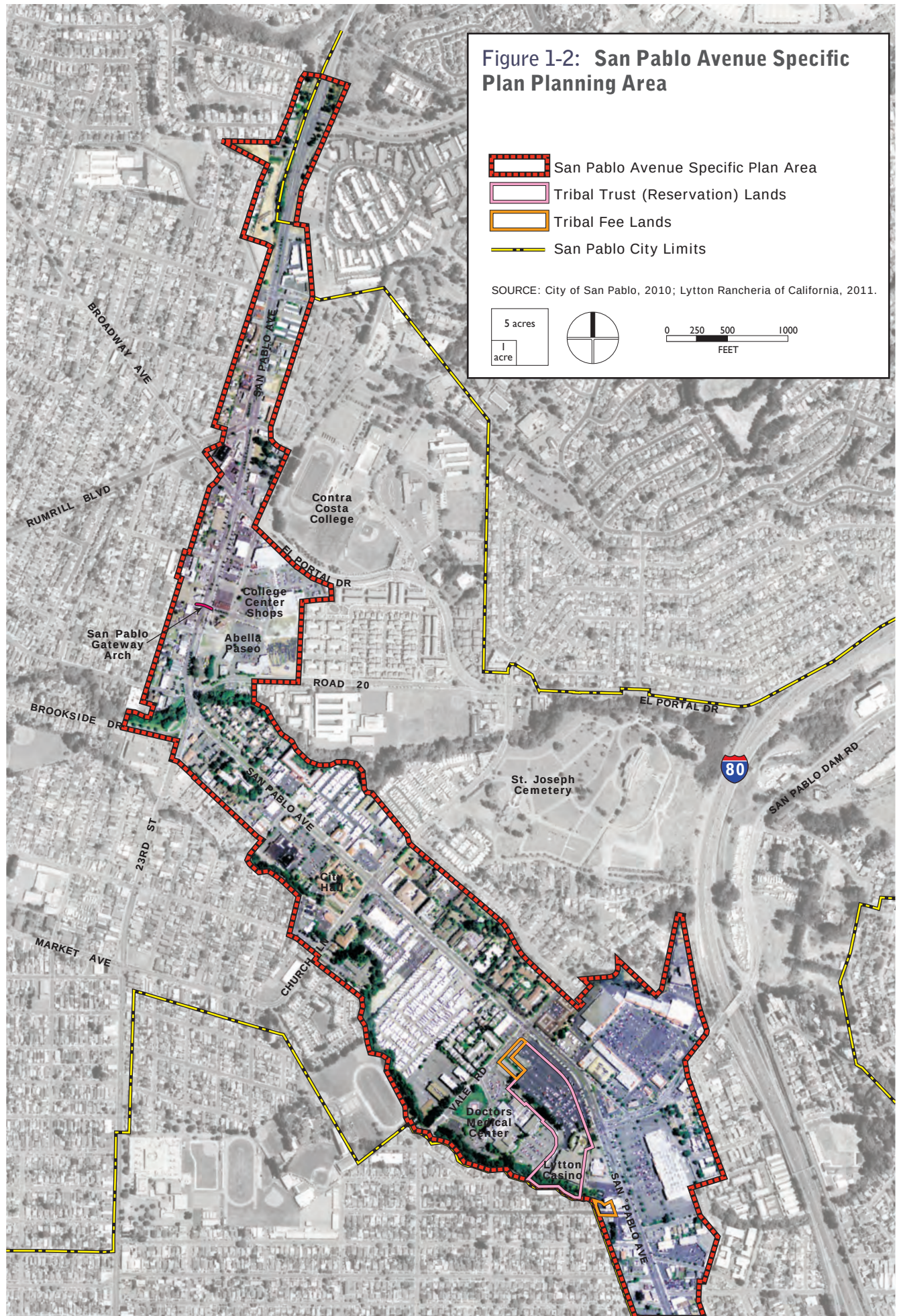


Eight bus lines serve the San Pablo Avenue corridor in the city.



San Pablo Creek bisects the Planning Area near Road 20 and Brookside Drive.

Figure 1-2: San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Planning Area



Creek, and Wildcat Creek—cross the Planning Area in the east-west direction, and a number of recent and planned development projects are located within and near the Planning Area. As noted on Figure 1-2, the Planning Area includes several major destinations, including City Hall, Doctors Medical Center, and San Pablo Lytton Casino. The San Pablo Lytton Casino is located on 11 acres of tribal lands of the Lytton Rancheria of California. These lands fall under tribal government authority; they are included in the Planning Area as a significant land use and source of economic activity.

Population, Housing, and Employment Trends

The San Pablo Avenue Planning Area is home to approximately 4,000 of the 32,200 residents currently residing in the City of San Pablo. The Planning Area and citywide population is ethnically diverse, with over half (52.6 percent) of the population being of Latino origin, and the remainder a mix of White, Asian, Black, and “other”, including persons belonging to two or more races (28.2, 16.9, 15.3, and 39.6 percent, respectively).¹ The population in the city is also relatively young with a median age of 31 years, as compared to that of 38 years for all of Contra Costa County. This age distribution suggests there will be need for family housing and related amenities and services as the population expands.

Over the next 20 years, the proposed General Plan expects that the city’s population will increase to 34,950 people at buildout, representing an increase of 8.5 percent and an annual growth rate of 0.4 percent over the 20-year plan horizon.² New development is expected to add an additional 990 housing units and 2,600 jobs, resulting in a total of 11,500 housing units and 8,500 jobs in the city. The proposed General Plan anticipates that much of this growth will occur in the Planning Area, in the form of mixed-use and commercial development. This new development would be in addition to the existing 1,360 residential units and approximately 4,100 jobs in the Planning Area. This intensification of both residents and workers in the Planning Area will bring new activity and opportunity for improved amenities and infrastructure along the corridor, including streetscape improvements, transit, and public facilities—all of which are an important focus of this Specific Plan.

1 U.S. Census and Claritas Inc. Research Site Reports, 2007

2 The population projection of 34,950 in 2030 is higher than the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) 2007 projection of 32,600 and lower than the same projection based on 2009 data of 36,700 in 2030. The projection was calculated based on recent development trends, regional growth forecasts, and assumptions for future growth, including a 3.1-persons-per-household and 1.5-persons-per-secondary-unit occupancy of projected households in 2030.



Workshop participants weighed in on plan alternatives and streetscape priorities at the second workshop.



An open house on the Preferred Plan was held in November 2010.

1.4 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PLAN PROCESS

The Specific Plan process began in July 2009. The planning process evolved from visioning to defining implementation measures through a combination of analytics and community input. During each phase of the process, San Pablo community members—residents, workers, students, business owners, and landowners—were asked for input and ideas. Forums for this input included three public workshops; stakeholder meetings and interviews; and the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC), which met monthly to discuss both the General Plan Update and the Specific Plan. The planning team prepared memoranda following each community outreach activity to summarize priorities, concerns, and feedback, and to inform subsequent stages of the planning effort.

Complementing community outreach activities were analyses of site and market conditions. Documents leading to the Specific Plan included:

- *Existing Conditions Report, September 2009.* This presented maps and analysis of existing conditions, including land uses, zoning, community facilities, land ownership, constraints, and opportunity areas.
- *Alternatives Workbook, November 2009.* Land use alternatives were analyzed and presented in this workbook, including possible concepts for major opportunity sites in the Planning Area.
- *Market Study Report, May 2010.* This analyzed the market potential of housing, retail, office, and entertainment uses in the Planning Area.
- *Preferred Plan, July 2010.* Feedback from community members and decision-makers on these studies and reports informed the preparation of the Preferred Plan, which introduced the preferred land use and circulation policy direction, as well as the guiding principles articulated in the next section. Following review by the Planning Commission, the Preferred Plan became the land use and policy framework for this Specific Plan.

1.5 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following Guiding Principles emerged from community and decision-maker input throughout the planning process. Taken together, these ideas establish an overall vision for the corridor that is reflected in the land use pattern, policies, and implementation measures of this Specific Plan.

1. **Walkability and a High-Intensity Mix of Uses.** Development along this major transportation corridor must have a synergistic mix of uses. The Plan locates higher density residential neighborhoods adjacent to neighborhood-serving retail, employment centers, and amenities such as the Contra Costa College. Retail, restaurants and entertainment uses are grouped to create walkable destinations. The Plan encourages service uses like supermarkets, pharmacies, laundries, and community centers. In several areas along the corridor, vertical mixes of uses is encouraged or required in an effort to create self-supporting districts.
2. **Destinations and Amenities for All Ages.** Activities that serve as city-wide and regional draws will be critical to the future of the corridor. Shopping, dining, theaters, event venues and other attractions will bring the community together, encourage visitors, and establish needed activity nodes along the corridor. The success of the San Pablo Lytton Casino, the ample acreage of opportunity sites near the Casino, and the dearth of existing entertainment uses all suggest that an entertainment district near the Casino would enliven the corridor. This district, established as an “overlay” in the Plan, would help to create jobs, destinations for families, and a recognizable and marketable image for the city.
3. **A Variety of Housing Options.** A variety of housing options are needed to attract new residents to the San Pablo Avenue corridor, provide options for the ageing San Pablo population, and house the anticipated growth in enrollment at Contra Costa College and workers at establishments such as the Doctors Medical Center. The Specific Plan allows for a variety of housing options for all potential residents, including families, students, and professionals. Planned residential uses vary in density and in proximity to commercial uses. The Plan includes policies to ensure that density does not compromise livability.
4. **Community Facilities and Open Space.** Community-oriented facilities are an essential component of new development along the corridor. The Plan provides a new community plaza along San Pablo Avenue as part of redevelopment of the former Circle-S site. Additionally, one major public open space along the improved Wildcat Creek and a number of smaller and more programmed open spaces (e.g. pocket parks, trails, exercise stations, and playgrounds) are integrated into the corridor. Candidate uses for additional community facilities include a cultural center, a community

theater, sports fields and courts, a community swimming pool, trade schools, senior centers, bilingual service centers, and preschools. While it may not be physically feasible to include all of these amenities, key opportunity areas will have designations that accommodate these types of uses. In a high-density infill setting, well-designed public open spaces are also essential—not just to residents, but to pedestrians between destinations.

5. **Improved Accessibility.** The corridor is well-served by bus lines, but increasing ridership will be achieved only through improvements to complementary modes of travel, such as walking and biking. The Plan necessitates that future development and street improvements be more conscious of the pedestrian and bicycle experience and employ universal design throughout. The Plan includes policies to ensure that parking is hidden from view from the public right-of-way, and façades improved in a style that projects a consistent image along the corridor. Within the right-of-way, the pedestrian realm is designed to create more comfortable and inviting paths that diminish perceived walking distances, and continuous, convenient, and safe bicycle routes are established

1.6 PLAN ORGANIZATION

Following this introduction, the Plan is organized into seven additional chapters. Each chapter is divided into several sections that address specific topics. Where applicable, Guiding Policies and Implementing Policies for each topic are presented at the end of each section. In addition to these policies, the land use classifications and the Land Use Diagram (Chapter 2) also represent adopted policy.

Italicized text accompanying some policies explains policies in further detail or refers to other parts of the Plan where the same topic is covered that should be referred to for a complete understanding. Text in italics included with the policies does not represent adopted direction.

The content and purpose of the seven remaining chapters in this Plan are described below:

- *Chapter 2: Land Use* presents key features of the Planning Area, the Land Use Diagram and classifications, density and intensity standards, and potential new development at Plan buildout.
- *Chapter 3: Access, Circulation, and Parking* addresses pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, automobile circulation, transit and transportation demand management measures, and parking strategies.

- *Chapter 4: Urban Design and Building Development Standards* provides guidance for the development of the built environment in the Planning Area, from streetscape improvements and wayfinding, to detailed development standards and building design guidelines. In addition, the chapter presents illustrative concepts for the five Plan Focus Areas.
- *Chapter 5: Utilities and Public Services* includes direction for public utilities and services to ensure all development in the Planning Area is accommodated by adequate city infrastructure and services.
- *Chapter 6: Community Facilities* describes the planned park facilities within the Planning Area, and addresses demand for school and community facilities related to new development.
- *Chapter 7: Affordable Housing* addresses the need for affordable housing, especially close to transit, and explains the City's efforts in promoting affordable housing development in the Planning Area. It also addresses the Plan's relationship to the City of San Pablo Housing Element.
- *Chapter 8: Environmental Resources and Safety* addresses key environmental issues that will potentially have an impact on the design and location of new development, including hydrology and flooding, geology and seismicity, biological resources, and noise.
- *Chapter 9: Implementation and Phasing* outlines measures for consistency with the General Plan and Municipal Code, phasing, implementation mechanisms, and financing strategies for infrastructure and public improvements.



San Pablo Avenue, looking south from Towne Center near Vale Road.



I-80

SAN PABLO DAM ROAD

LYTTON CASINO

DOCTORS MEDICAL CENTER

WILLOW ROAD

CHURCH LANE

DOVER AVENUE

VAN NESS STREET

STANDARD AVENUE

ROAD 20

**Overview of San Pablo Avenue,
Looking South from San Pablo Creek**

Conceptual Buildings

-  Residential Use
-  Commercial Use
-  Parking

Existing Buildings

-  Existing Buildings

2

Land Use



Much of the residential development directly on the Avenue is medium and high density.



San Pablo Avenue has a diverse array of residential, commercial, and public uses, as well as activity centers that serve as local and regional draws.



Existing commercial uses include many aging commercial strip centers.

The Specific Plan seeks to ensure that uses along San Pablo Avenue enhance livability of adjacent neighborhoods; promote transit, walking, and bicycling; and further the corridor's overall character and identity. In keeping with the community's vision of developing a vibrant corridor, most land use designations allow a mix of uses, which will provide flexibility as implementation occurs.

This chapter describes the Planning Area's existing land use pattern and approved development projects, and outlines development opportunity sites. It describes the five major "focus areas" that have the greatest opportunities for development and illustrates what buildout of opportunity areas might look like, in terms of their scale and character. Guiding and implementation policies heighten the effectiveness of the proposed land use framework by providing clear direction and steps for development and the provision of services and amenities.

2.1 EXISTING LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

This section provides a context for the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan with a summary of the existing land use patterns within the Planning Area. For a more detailed evaluation of existing conditions, including a breakdown of land ownership and an analysis of opportunities and constraints, refer to the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Existing Conditions Report, September 2009.

Existing Pattern

A range of land uses are currently represented within the 261-acre Planning Area. Existing land uses (as of 2010) are shown in Figure 2-1, and the breakdown of uses is shown in Figure 2-2. As these figures demonstrate, of all developable land in the Planning Area (totaling 215 acres, not including rights-of-way), the majority is commercial; regional, neighborhood, and service commercial establishments comprise just over 35 percent of the total developable land. These uses are primarily located north of Road 20 and near the San Pablo Dam Road intersection—two areas that are well established as major commercial centers. Residential uses comprise another 29 percent of developable land area, two-thirds of which is medium and high density, or over 13 dwelling units per acre.



Doctors Medical Center is the largest employer in the city.



Lytton Casino is a popular destination located at the south end of the corridor.

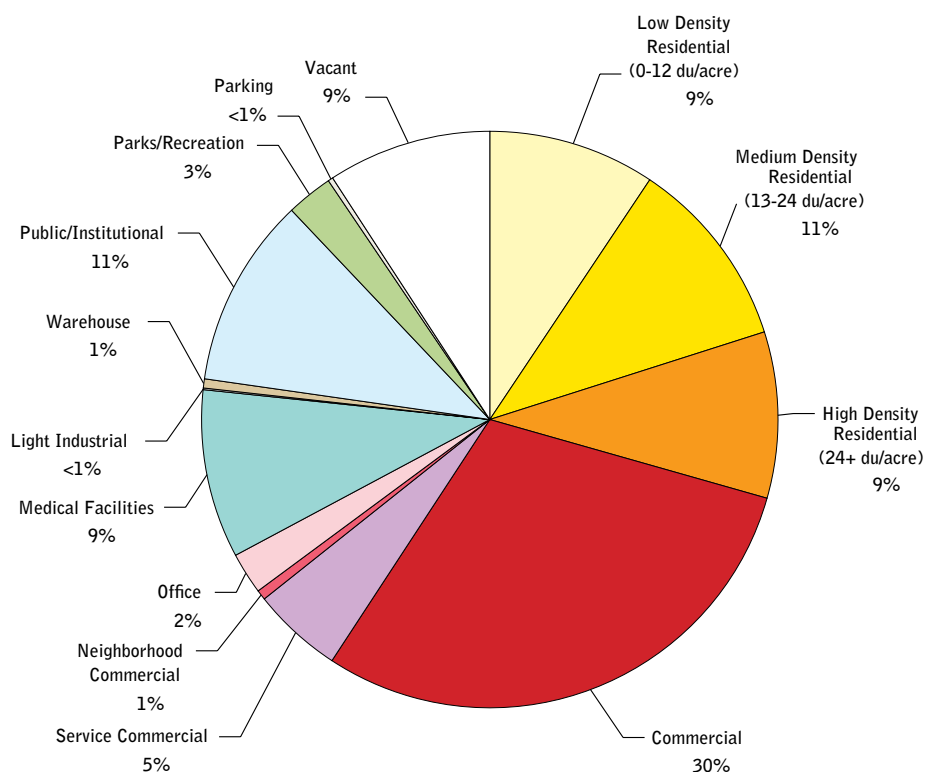


Contra Costa College is located just to the east of the Planning Area.

Major institutional uses within the Planning Area include City Hall, Doctors Medical Center, and the San Pablo Lytton Casino. Institutional uses represent 11 percent of developable land area, and serve as key destinations for residents and visitors. Office uses, which represent another 11 percent of developable land area, are primarily medical offices clustered around Doctors Medical Center at the south end of the corridor. Other office buildings are scattered along the corridor. Vacant land accounts for 9 percent of developable land, primarily comprising the Circle-S site. The land uses least represented are parks (3%), parking (below 1%), and warehouse and light industrial (both below 1%).

New and Proposed Development Projects

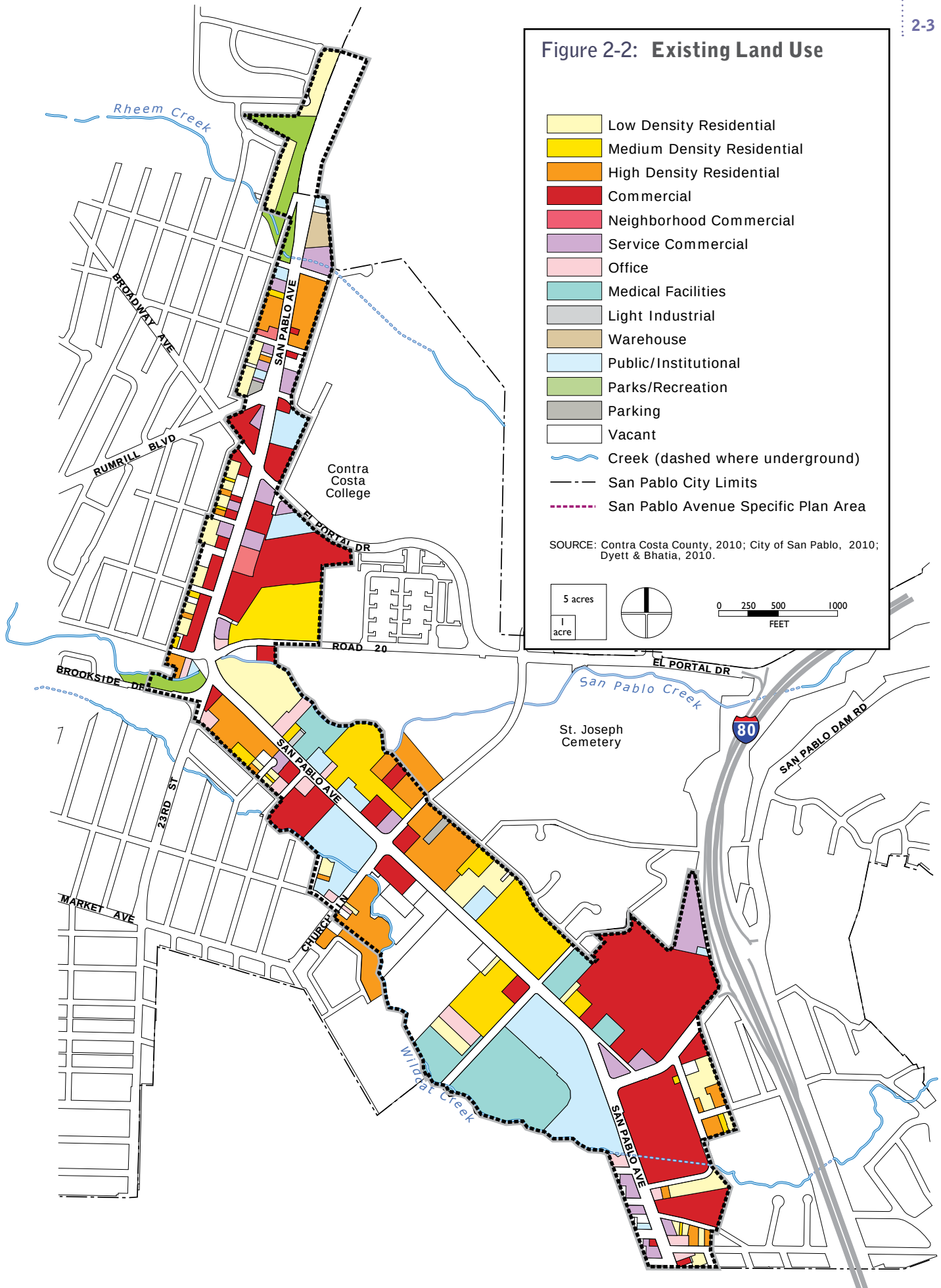
Figure 2-1: Existing Land Use Distribution



Source: City of San Pablo, 2009; Contra Costa County, 2009; Dyett & Bhatia, 2009.

The Planning Area includes several development projects that have recently been constructed. There are also several projects currently under construction, or which have been approved for construction in the near future. All are located within the area bound by San Pablo Avenue, Road 20, and El Portal Drive, and the study area boundary. These projects include:

Figure 2-2: Existing Land Use





Abella Paseo townhouses near Road 20.



College Center Shops at El Portal Drive.



- **Abella Paseo.** The Abella Paseo townhomes, part of the Signature Property development company's larger Abella project, are currently under construction along Road 20 at the eastern edge of the Planning Area. This project includes about 100 two- and three-bedroom townhome-style condominiums with attached private garages.
- **College Center Shops.** This site, with frontage on San Pablo Avenue and El Portal Drive, includes a series of new retail spaces and two existing retail spaces. It is also owned by Signature Properties. The project retains Sukie's, the existing restaurant located along El Portal Drive, and the San Pablo Supermarket. New development on the College Center Shops site includes:
 - 20,500-square-feet of retail spaces adjacent to the existing supermarket on its west side; and
 - A new 10,600-square-foot commercial building along San Pablo Avenue just north of the San Pablo Gateway Arch.
- **College Center Commercial Building.** A new 14,820-square-foot commercial building has been approved for the site along San Pablo Avenue just south of the Gateway Arch.

2.2 DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY SITES AND FOCUS AREAS

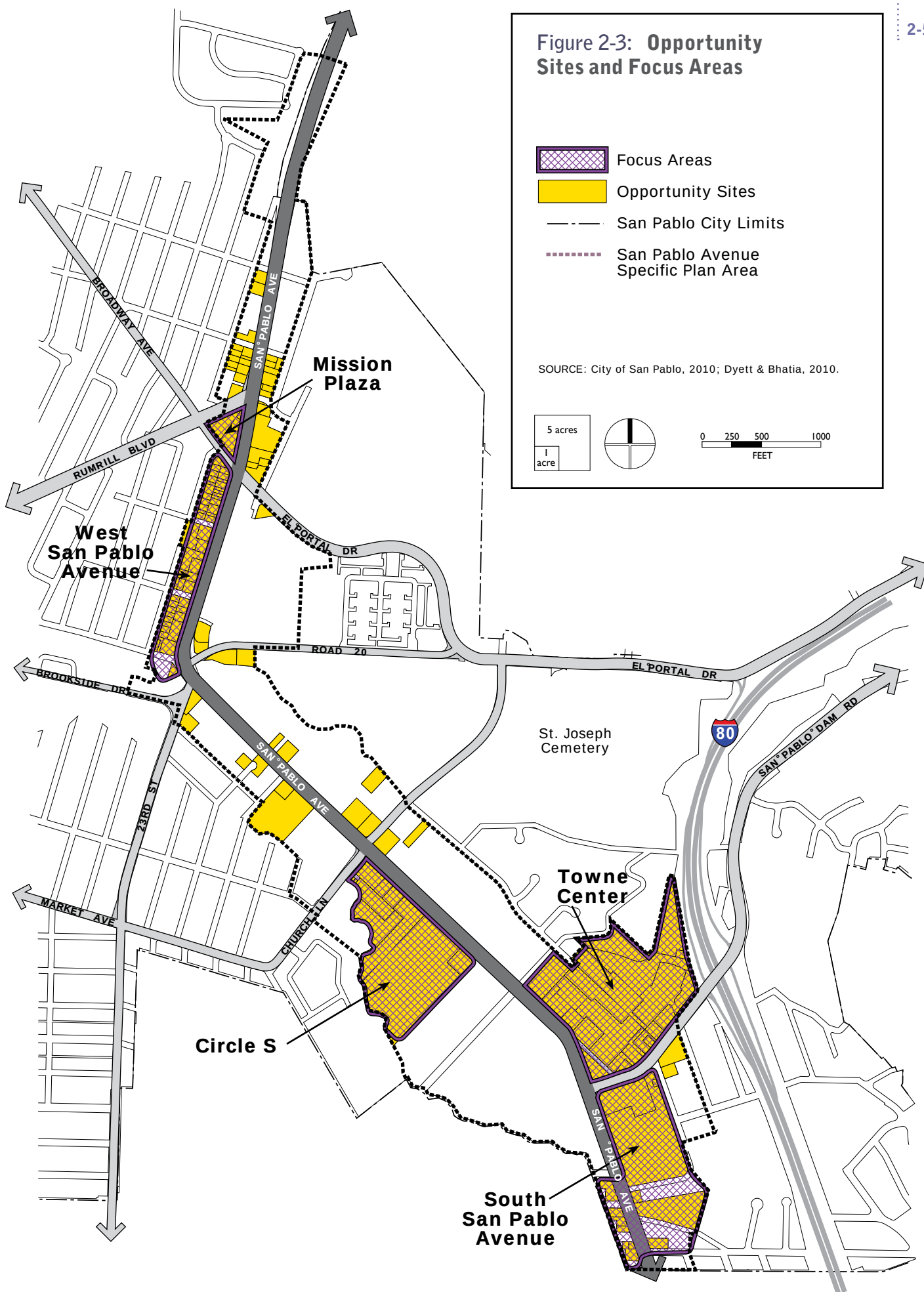
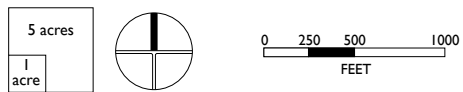
Within the Planning Area, 86.1 acres, or 40 percent of the 215 developable acres, are considered to be opportunity sites. These sites are defined as vacant or underutilized parcels that have the potential to undergo a land use or intensity change over a near- to long-term horizon. Underutilized land was identified using data from the County Assessor's office: where the ratio of improvement (structure) value to land value is less than one, the land was considered underutilized. (The ratio is calculated by dividing the value of improvements by land use value—for example, a structure worth \$100,000 on land that is worth \$200,000 would have a ratio of 0.5, equally 100,000/200,000. If the ratio is less than one, then the site is considered underutilized.) This information was then further refined through review of aerial photography, field reconnaissance, City staff review, and research into individual parcels. Opportunity sites are highlighted on Figure 2-3.

Figure 2-3 also highlights five "focus areas". These five areas, described below, contain the majority of the opportunity sites within the Planning Area, and are therefore the locations where most new development is likely to occur.

Figure 2-3: Opportunity Sites and Focus Areas

-  Focus Areas
-  Opportunity Sites
-  San Pablo City Limits
-  San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Area

SOURCE: City of San Pablo, 2010; Dyett & Bhatia, 2010.





Existing Circle-S site, looking north.



Mission Plaza is located at a busy crossroads, a short walk from Contra Costa College.



Uses along West San Pablo Avenue are mostly small-scale.



Towne Center is a major shopping destination along the corridor.



South San Pablo Avenue is comprised of both large and smaller-scale development.

Circle-S

This 18-acre site, owned by the San Pablo Redevelopment Agency, is a major opportunity for the City of San Pablo. Located adjacent to Wildcat Creek and along the busiest stretch of San Pablo Avenue, this site presents an opportunity to capitalize on the proximity of City Hall, the San Pablo Lytton Casino, and nearby medical offices to establish a major mixed-use residential and commercial node in the heart of the corridor. It also presents an opportunity to integrate a large park or community open space into the development and along the corridor.

Mission Plaza

This 1.56-acre triangular-shaped block, located at the junction of San Pablo Avenue, Broadway Avenue, and Rumrill Boulevard, is highly visible and accessible, and is located just one block from Contra Costa College and the new College Center Shops development. About half of the block is owned by the San Pablo Redevelopment Agency.

West San Pablo Avenue

This corridor is located along the west side of San Pablo Avenue across from the new College Center Shops development. With pedestrian improvements planned at the intersection with Brookside Drive, and given the proximity of Davis Park, Contra Costa College, new commercial and residential development, the San Pablo Gateway Arch, and existing small-scale unique businesses on the west side of the Avenue, this area represents an opportunity to capitalize on existing uses and amenities. Development along this portion of the corridor could be oriented toward 22nd Street (to the west) as well as to San Pablo Avenue.

Towne Center

The existing Towne Center shopping area is a 22.5-acre development at the intersection of San Pablo Avenue and San Pablo Dam Road. Located just off of I-80 between the Casino and a hotel, this area has high visibility and freeway accessibility.

South San Pablo Avenue

This 18.5-acre area offers a cluster of several small opportunity sites and two large ones (the existing Big Lots/Food Maxx regional shopping center, and Dias Plaza). Located just south of San Pablo Dam Road and the I-80 ramps, and just north of the city's border with Richmond, this intersection is a highly visible and well-trafficked gateway to the city.

2.3 LAND USE FRAMEWORK

The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan envisions a diversity of uses and environments to establish an attractive, well-defined identity for the San Pablo Avenue corridor. Multiple mixed-use districts are proposed, which will build on key community services and regional destinations like Contra Costa College, Doctors Medical Center, and the Lytton Casino, to create a vibrant corridor with a diverse mix of residential, employment, service, and entertainment uses. In the northern and central portions of the Planning Area, the proposed mixed residential and commercial centers will attract a range of residents and connect to services and transit. To the south, mixed-use development will maximize entertainment and regionally-oriented retail and eating/drinking opportunities, to create synergies with the Casino and the medical center.

Land Use Diagram

The Land Use Diagram (Figure 2-4) designates land uses for the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Planning Area. Land uses are organized into four categories: Residential, Mixed Use, Commercial, and Public. Table 2-1 shows the acreage in each land use category under the Land Use Diagram, broken down by opportunity and non-opportunity sites. Figure 2-5 shows the breakdown of uses by designation.

TABLE 2-1 SPECIFIC PLAN BUILDOUT				
	AREA (IN ACRES)			
	OPPORTUNITY SITES	OTHER SITES	TOTAL	PERCENT OF TOTAL ¹
Residential				
Low Density Residential	–	4.2	4.2	2%
Medium Density Residential	0.6	23.3	23.9	11%
High Density Residential	5.7	31.4	37.1	17%
Mixed Use				
Mixed Use Center North	2.7	–	2.7	1%
Mixed Use Center South	16.1	–	16.1	8%
Commercial Mixed Use	12.6	5.1	17.7	8%
Residential Mixed Use	9.6	3.2	12.8	6%
Commercial				
Neighborhood Commercial	0.3	17.3	17.6	8%
Regional Commercial	24.2	2.5	26.7	12%
Entertainment District	10.1	12.0	22.1	10%
Public				
Public Institutional	–	24.1	24.1	11%
Parks/Recreation	4.2	5.6	9.8	5%
TOTAL	86.1	128.7	214.8	100%

1 Percents are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Figure 2-4: Land Use Diagram

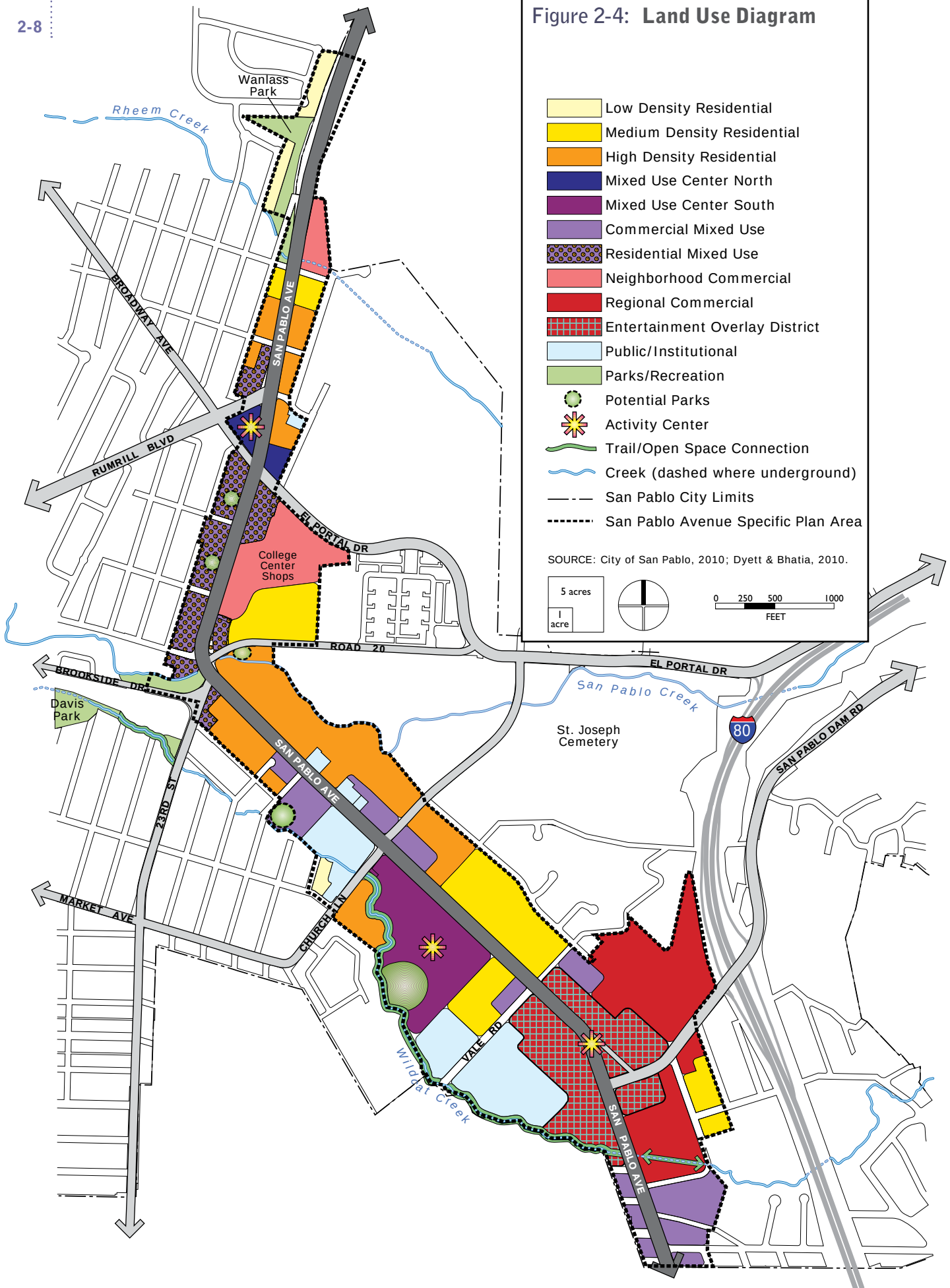
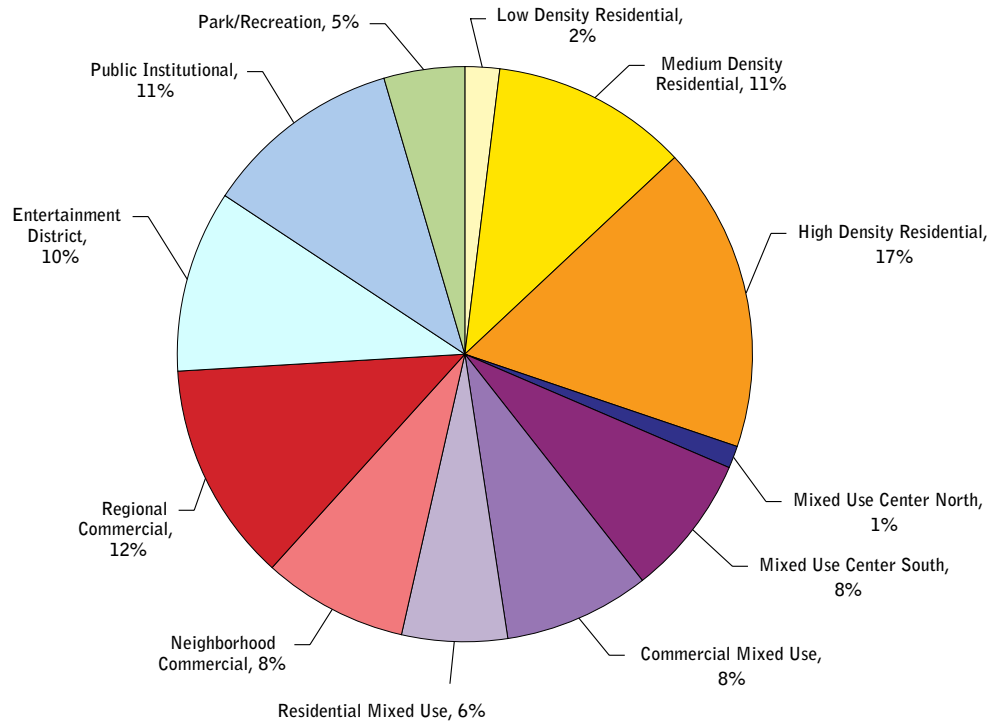


Figure 2-5: New Land Use Distribution



Land Use Classifications

The Land Use Diagram includes the following land uses classifications, organized into four categories: Residential, Mixed Use, Commercial, and Public. Intensity and density ranges are described for each designation. Intensity is described by Floor Area Ratio (FAR), or the permitted ratio of gross floor area to site area. Density is defined as the number of housing units per gross acre. Following each description are images that reflect the intended scale and character of the proposed classification.

Residential

Low Density Residential. This designation is intended for single-family detached residential development of up to 12 units per gross acre, accommodating existing development in the northern-most end of the Planning Area, adjacent to Wanlass Park. New development within this classification is not expected. The minimum lot size is 5,000 square feet (6,000 square feet for a corner lot).

Medium Density Residential. This designation is intended for a mix of housing types, with density ranging from 12.1 to 24 units per gross acre. Housing types may include single-family attached or multifamily dwellings. Medium Density Residential development will remain primarily along the central portion of the corridor. This designation is also applied to serve as a transition to higher-intensity or commercial development (for example, south of Wanlass Park).

Medium Density Residential

Townhouses and low-rise multifamily.



Madison Place, San Mateo
13.5 du/acre



The Landings Rivermark, Santa Clara
16 du/acre



Whisman Station, Mountain View
22 du/acre

High Density Residential. This designation is intended for multifamily buildings and townhomes between 24.1 and 60 units per gross acre. The higher densities of this designation may provide more affordable rental and ownership housing opportunities, while its location near active commercial centers may provide more lifestyle options. Developments in this classification would typically stand two to four stories high. Common open space and shared amenities are required within High Density Residential developments.

High Density Residential

Multifamily stacked apartments or condominiums with structured parking.



City Walk Townhomes, Hayward
28 du/acre



South Park, San Francisco
40 du/acre



Courtyards at 65th, Emeryville
68 du/acre

Mixed Use

Mixed Use Center North. The Mixed Use Center North designation aims to establish an active destination that caters to a student population and allows high-intensity mixed-use development at or near the 1.6-acre Mission Plaza site, adjacent to Contra Costa College. Stores, restaurants/café or other active uses are required on the ground floor to promote an active pedestrian environment. (See Chapter 4: Urban Design and Building Development Standards for a detailed description of the desired active pedestrian environment.) Typical heights are expected to be four stories, with portions of buildings reaching 60 feet. The maximum FAR (for residential and non-residential uses combined) is 2.5; no separate residential maximum density is specified, to enable maximum use of FAR by smaller housing units geared to students. The minimum required commercial FAR is 0.3.

Mixed Use Center South. The Mixed Use Center South designation is limited to the former Circle-S site. Similar to Mixed Use Center North, this designation describes a new high-intensity mixed-use destination in an area with high growth potential. The Mixed Use Center South designation aims to establish a major new activity center and new citywide and regional destination for the City of San Pablo. Uses may include commercial, office (including medical offices), residential, institutional, and hotel. Typical heights are expected to reach three to five stories, with a maximum height of 60 feet. The maximum FAR is 2.5 and the maximum residential density allowed is 60 units per gross acre (included within the FAR limit).

Mixed Use Center

Large-scale mixed-use development. Mix of uses may include commercial, office, residential, institutional and hotel. Retail or other active uses are required on the ground floor to promote an active pedestrian environment.



Fruitvale Transit Station, Oakland
10.5 du/acre +
1.6 FAR (commercial)



Santana Row, San Jose
29 du/acre +
0.5 FAR (commercial)



Downtown Walnut Creek
(commercial-only)

Commercial Mixed Use. This is a mixed-use designation that includes office, retail, commercial, residential, and public uses. Active uses are required for frontage along San Pablo Avenue, and residential uses are allowed only when the commercial FAR is 0.5 or greater. This designation applies primarily to the gateway area at the southern end of the corridor, and near the intersection with Church Lane in the central portion of the corridor. Typical height is expected to be two to three stories, with a maximum allowable height of 40 feet. The maximum FAR is 1.5 and the maximum density is 50 units per gross acre.

Commercial Mixed Use

Mix of uses with a focus on commercial. Uses include retail, office, institutional, and hotel. Residential uses are not permitted.



Portland, OR
0.4 FAR



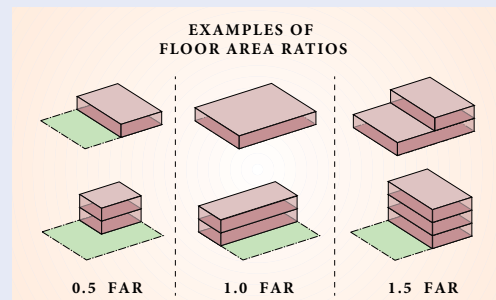
Bay Meadows, San Mateo
0.95 FAR



Burlingame
1.1 FAR

FLOOR AREA RATIO

FAR expresses the ratio of building square footage to land square footage. For example, a FAR of 2.0 means that for every square foot of land, a developer may build two square feet of building. However, this example does not necessitate a two-story building that covers the entire lot. This FAR illustration describes different ways that a building can be constructed while meeting the FAR requirement. Within each set of examples, the building square footages and FAR values are equal, but the building footprints and heights change. (Note that this illustration does not account for additional setback and lot coverage requirements, described in the Zoning Ordinance.)



Residential Mixed Use. The Residential Mixed Use designation applies primarily to the northern segment of the San Pablo Avenue corridor, north of Road 20. Located near Contra Costa College and recent commercial development, this area is characterized by small parcels and high pedestrian traffic. This designation is intended for a variety of residential and non-residential uses on infill sites and promotes pedestrian activity in a mixed-use environment. Residential Mixed Use development that fronts onto San Pablo Avenue must have active commercial uses at the ground floor; elsewhere, residential uses are permitted on the ground floor. Non-residential uses may include administrative, financial, business, professional, medical, dental, and public uses. The typical height is expected to be two to three stories, with a maximum allowable height of 40 feet. The maximum FAR is 1.5 and the maximum residential density (included within the overall FAR limits) is 50 units per gross acre.

Residential Mixed Use

Includes retail, office, hotel, and residential. Emphasis on active ground-floor uses; residential uses must be above the ground level or set back from the street.



Bay Meadows, San Mateo
15 du/acre +
0.38 FAR (commercial)



The Lofts, Davis
25 du/acre +
0.5 FAR (commercial)



3rd and C, Davis
29 du/acre +
0.5 FAR (commercial)

Commercial

Neighborhood Commercial. This designation is intended for small-scale commercial uses that primarily provide convenience, personal services and social services such as retail and specialty shops, eating and drinking establishments, and commercial recreation. It is limited to the recent College Center Shops development and future Walgreens development between San Pablo Avenue, Road 20, and El Portal Drive. Residential uses are not permitted. The maximum height is 30 feet and the maximum permitted FAR is 1.0.

Neighborhood Commercial

A range of commercial uses with an emphasis on small-scale commercial. Uses include supermarkets and shops, personal services uses, small office and professional services, and restaurants.



Hayward
0.42 FAR



Montclair Village, Oakland
0.50 FAR



Rockridge, Oakland
College Avenue

Regional Commercial. This designation is intended for large-scale commercial development that serves local and regional needs. Located near the intersection of San Pablo Avenue and San Pablo Dam Road, it is easily accessible by freeways and regional roadways. It is intended to include a range of goods and services such as retail, eating and drinking establishments, hotels and motels. Residential uses are not permitted. The maximum height is 30 feet, and the maximum permitted FAR is 0.75.

Regional Commercial

A range of commercial uses with an emphasis on regional-serving uses. Small office and professional services permitted.



Bay Meadows, San Mateo



Tanforan, San Bruno
0.55 FAR

Public

Public/Institutional. This designation is intended for uses that serve a public purpose, including schools, City administrative offices, corporation yards, and public facilities such as hospital and medical centers, police stations, and fire stations.

Park/Recreation. This designation is intended for neighborhood, community, and regional parks, and recreational facilities that serve the outdoor recreational needs of the community.

Entertainment District Overlay

This overlay district allows for intensification of an underlying commercial or mixed-use designation. The entertainment district is easily accessed by freeways and regional roadways, and serves community and regional retail needs with a focus on entertainment and recreation uses. This includes nightlife venues, various types of theaters, arcades/game rooms, and eating and drinking establishments. This designation allows for a maximum height of 60 feet and an additional FAR of 0.6, for entertainment uses only, above the base district's maximum FAR.

Entertainment District Mix of active entertainment uses. May include commercial recreation, retail and services, restaurants and hotels.	 On Broadway, Redwood City 2.0 FAR	 Bay Street, Emeryville 0.65 FAR	 Downtown Walnut Creek
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Land Use Standards

Land use regulations for the proposed land use designations of the Specific Plan are prescribed in Table 2-2. The regulations for each designation are established by symbols as follows:

- R designates classes of uses permitted by right;
- A designates classes of uses that require an administrative review;
- U designates classes of uses permitted with a use permit; and
- designates classes of uses that are prohibited.

In cases where a specific land use or activity is not defined, the City Planner shall assign the land use or activity to a classification that is substantially similar in character. Use classifications or sub-classifications not listed in the table or not found to be substantially similar to the uses in Table 2-2 are prohibited.

TABLE 2-2 LAND USE STANDARDS BY CLASSIFICATION

PERMITTED USES	RESIDENTIAL (MEDIUM AND HIGH DENSITY)	RESIDENTIAL MIXED USE	MIXED USE CENTER (NORTH AND SOUTH)	COMMERCIAL MIXED USE	COMMERCIAL (NEIGHBORHOOD AND REGIONAL)
RESIDENTIAL USE CLASSES					
Day Care	<i>See sub-classifications below</i>				
Small Family	R	—	—	—	—
Large Family	—	U	—	—	U
Dwellings	<i>See sub-classifications below</i>				
Single-Family Attached	R	R (1)	—	—	—
Two-Family (Duplexes)	U	—	—	—	—
Multiple Family	R	R (1)	R (1)	R (1)(2)	—
Residential Care Facilities	R	U	—	—	—
NON-RESIDENTIAL USE CLASSES					
Alcoholic Beverage Sales	—	U (3)	U (3)	U (3)	U (3)
Animal Care	—	A	A	A	A
Artist Studios	A (4)	R	R	R	R
Automotive	<i>See sub-classifications below</i>				
General Repair	—	—	—	—	—
Limited Repair	—	—	—	—	—
New Car Sales	—	—	—	—	—
Parking	—	A	A	A	A
Parts Sales	—	—	—	—	U (5)
Service Stations	—	—	—	—	—
Used Car Sales	—	—	—	—	—
Washing	—	—	—	—	—
Banks and Financial Institutions	<i>See sub-classifications below</i>				
Banks and Credit Unions	—	R (6)	R (6)	R (6)	R (6)
Check Cashing Businesses	—	U (3)	U (3)	U (3)	U (3)
Building Materials	—	—	—	—	U
Business and Professional Services	—	R	R	R	R
Community and Religious Assembly	U	U	U	U	U
Community Care Facilities	U	U	U	U	U
Dance and Fitness Studios	—	A (3)	A (3)	A (3)	A (3)
Day Care Centers	R (7)	R (7)	U	U	U
Farmers Markets	R	R	R	R	R
Food and Beverage Sales	<i>See sub-classifications below</i>				
Convenience	—	—	U (3)	U (3)	U (3)
General	—	R	R	R	R
Hospitals and Clinics	U	U	U	U	U
Live Entertainment	—	—	—	U	R (8)
Live-Work Units	A	R	R	R	U
Lodging	<i>See sub-classifications below</i>				
Bed and Breakfast	R	—	—	—	—
Hotels and Motels	—	—	A	A	R (9)
Mobile Vending	—	—	—	—	—
Nightclub	—	—	U	U	U

TABLE 2-2 LAND USE STANDARDS BY CLASSIFICATION

PERMITTED USES	RESIDENTIAL (MEDIUM AND HIGH DENSITY)	RESIDENTIAL MIXED USE	MIXED USE CENTER (NORTH AND SOUTH)	COMMERCIAL MIXED USE	COMMERCIAL (NEIGHBORHOOD AND REGIONAL)
Offices	—	R	R	R	R
Personal Services	R	R	R	R	R
Public Services	U	R	R	R	R
Recreation	<i>See sub-classifications below</i>				
<i>Amusements</i>	—	—	—	—	R (8)
<i>Indoor</i>	—	—	U	U	R (8)
<i>Major Arcades</i>	—	—	—	—	R (9)
<i>Minor Arcades</i>	—	—	—	R	R
<i>Outdoor Passive and Parks and Playgrounds</i>	U	R	R	R	R
Restaurants	<i>See sub-classifications below</i>				
<i>Coffee Shops/Cafes</i>	R (4)(10)	R (6)	R (6)	R (11)	R (11)
<i>Fast Service</i>	—	U (6)	U (6)	U (6)	U (6)
<i>Full Service</i>	—	R (6)	R (6)	R (6)	R (6)
<i>General</i>	—	R (6)	R (6)	R (6)	R (6)
<i>Outdoor Dining</i>	—	A	A	A	A
Retail Sales	<i>See sub-classifications below</i>				
<i>General</i>	A	R	R	R	R
<i>Local</i>	A	R	R	R	R
<i>Regional</i>	A	R	R	R	R (9)
Schools	<i>See sub-classifications below</i>				
<i>Public or Private</i>	—	—	—	—	U
<i>Vocational Schools</i>	—	—	U	U	U
Utilities	<i>See sub-classifications below</i>				
<i>Major</i>	U	—	—	U	U
<i>Minor</i>	U	U	U	U	R
Warehousing and Storage	<i>See sub-classifications below</i>				
<i>Enclosed</i>	—	—	—	—	U (5)
<i>Outdoors</i>	—	—	—	—	—

Limitations:

1. Residential use types not permitted on the ground floor along San Pablo Avenue except in the Mixed Use Center South District where residential use types are permitted on the ground floor with a use permit.
2. Allowed if minimum FAR of 0.5 is met.
3. See Chapter 17.30 Supplemental Regulations in Zoning Ordinance for additional use regulations.
4. Limited to 1,500 square feet of sales area, or 0.10 FAR. Must be integrated into residential building at ground floor and front on to San Pablo Avenue.
5. Use not permitted in Neighborhood Commercial and Entertainment Overlay District.
6. Drive-through facilities are not allowed.
7. Permitted as accessory to residential development.
8. Permitted by-right in the Entertainment Overlay District only. All other areas require a use permit.
9. Use permit required for Neighborhood Commercial designation.
10. Use permit required for Medium Density Residential designation.
11. Drive-through facilities require administrative review. Driveway entrances to drive-through facilities may not be located directly on San Pablo Avenue.

Source: Dyett & Bhatia, 2010.

Density and Intensity Standards

Table 2-3 summarizes the density and intensity standards for each land use designation. For mixed-use classifications, the FAR includes both residential and non-residential uses. Maximum intensities shown in Table 2-3 may not be attainable on all sites, as development regulations (e.g. building height limits or development standards) or site conditions may reduce development potential. On all sites throughout the Planning Area, intensities can be averaged over multiple contiguous parcels for an individual project to accommodate areas of high-intensity development, open space, and other amenities.

TABLE 2-3 SAN PABLO AVENUE SPECIFIC PLAN LAND USE DENSITY AND INTENSITY STANDARDS

LAND USE CLASSIFICATION	FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR; INCLUDES ALL USES— NON-RESIDENTIAL AND RESIDENTIAL)		DENSITY (UNITS PER GROSS ACRE)
	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	RANGE OR MAXIMUM
Low Density Residential	—	—	up to 12
Medium Density Residential	—	—	12.1 – 24
High Density Residential	—	—	24.1 – 60
Mixed Use Center North	0.30 ²	2.5	—
Mixed Use Center South	— ²	2.5	up to 60 ¹
Commercial Mixed Use	0.40 ²	1.5	up to 50 ^{1,4}
Residential Mixed Use	— ⁵	1.5	up to 50 ¹
Neighborhood Commercial	0.30	1.0	—
Regional Commercial	0.30	0.75	—
Entertainment District Overlay		0.6 above base district maximum ³	—
Public Institutional	—	—	—
Park/Recreation	—	—	—

1 Included within the FAR limit.

2 The frontage of a site along San Pablo Avenue is required to be devoted to active uses. Residential is not permitted at the ground level along San Pablo Avenue.

3 Additional FAR available for entertainment uses only.

4 Residential uses only allowed when commercial FAR is 0.5 or greater.

5 While no minimum FAR is specified, development along San Pablo Avenue must have active uses on the ground floor.

Source: Dyett & Bhatia, 2010.

2.4 DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The Specific Plan presents a realistic plan for development. It is rooted in the vision expressed by community members and feasible opportunities determined through rigorous land use and market analysis. However, actual resulting development will be determined by a number of factors, including market conditions, land availability, and the distribution of opportunity areas within the Planning Area. This section describes the results of a market study prepared for the Planning Area and the overall development potential that could result from the Specific Plan. The assumptions and methodology for calculating the buildout are also described in this section.

Summary of Market Findings

As part of the planning process for the Specific Plan, a market demand study was prepared in order to determine the potential of four types of transit-oriented uses along the corridor: housing, retail, office, and entertainment uses. This study influenced the land use designations and density and intensity ranges described in this chapter. A brief summary of the market study results are presented in Table 2-4 below.

TABLE 2-4 SUMMARY OF MARKET DEMAND FINDINGS		
LAND USE	DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL DEMAND (2030)
Residential	High-density: townhomes, rental apartments, and multi-family housing geared toward students	900 to 1,200 units
Retail	Local-serving: restaurants, bookstores, personal services; and regional-serving (e.g. international-themed shopping center)	190,000 to 333,000 sf
Office	Professional and small office (20-40% attributable to medical offices)	up to 122,000 sf
Entertainment	Includes Indian gaming (and related amenities: restaurants, hotel, theater), arts center, and sports complex	varies

Source: San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Market Study May 2010.

Methodology and Assumptions

The methodology and assumptions used to develop the projected population, housing, and employment for the Specific Plan are consistent with those established by the proposed General Plan. The assumptions developed for the Specific Plan include the proportion of residential and non-residential mix in mixed-use areas; densities of residential districts; intensities of non-residential districts (FARs); and employment multipliers (i.e. square feet per job). These assumptions are presented in Table 2-5 and Table 2-6.

TABLE 2-5 RESIDENTIAL ASSUMPTIONS FOR POPULATION AND HOUSING

LAND USE CATEGORY	RESIDENTIAL MIX	HOUSING DENSITY (DU/AC)
Low Density Residential	100%	8.0
Medium Density Residential	100%	18.0
High Density Residential	100%	30.0
Mixed Use Center North	70%	60.0
Mixed Used Center South	20%	32.0
Commercial Mixed Use	50%	20.0
Residential Mixed Use	65%	14.0
Note: Average household size assumed to be 3.1 persons per household. Secondary Unit average size assumed to be 1.5 persons per household.		

Source: Dyett & Bhatia, 2010.

TABLE 2-6 NON-RESIDENTIAL ASSUMPTIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT

LAND USE CATEGORY	NON-RESIDENTIAL MIX	BUILDING INTENSITY (FAR)	EMPLOYMENT INTENSITY ¹ (SQ FT PER JOB)
Mixed Use Center North	30%	0.50	400
Mixed Used Center South	80%	0.70	400
Commercial Mixed Use	50%	0.50	400
Residential Mixed Use	35%	0.20	345
Neighborhood Commercial	100%	0.32	430
Regional Commercial	100%	0.32	510
Entertainment District Overlay	100%	0.60	600
Industrial Mixed Use	100%	0.40	500
1 This factor is used to calculate the number of jobs a certain type of land use will accommodate. For example, the Industrial Mixed Use land use is expected to create 1 job per 500 square feet of floor area.			

Source: Dyett & Bhatia, 2010.

The term “buildout” refers to the hypothetical situation where all development anticipated by the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan has occurred. Although the Specific Plan assumes a 20-year horizon and anticipates buildout to occur in 2030, the actual timeline and buildout scenario will likely vary. Additionally, the designation of a site for a certain use does not necessarily mean that the site will be developed with that permitted use; property owner interest and market conditions will affect what is ultimately developed.

In addition to the assumptions listed above, the Specific Plan also establishes assumptions for realistic development potential of various focus areas in the Planning Area. These focus areas include Circle-S, Mission Plaza, West San Pablo Avenue, Towne Center, and South San Pablo Avenue. Sites within these focus areas are assumed to achieve a development of 100 percent by 2030; other sites identified as opportunity sites within the Planning Area are assumed to develop at 50 percent by 2030. This differentiation in development potential reflects the fact that not all sites in the Planning Area will change or develop fully within the next 20 years.

Net Development Potential

Table 2-7 shows a detailed breakdown of the potential residential units, non-residential development and jobs that could result from buildout of the Specific Plan. This table summarizes the net total buildout within the Planning Area (the sum of existing development and net new development). This total represents development that could be expected in 2030 if the Specific Plan is implemented according to the Land Use Diagram and land use classifications described in this chapter.

TABLE 2-7 SAN PABLO AVENUE POTENTIAL BUILDOUT SUMMARY									
	EXISTING	FOCUS AREAS					NEW DEVELOPMENT		TOTAL
		CIRCLE-S	MISSION PLAZA	WEST SAN PABLO AVENUE	TOWNE CENTER	SOUTH SAN PABLO AVENUE	OTHER AREAS	TOTAL NEW	
Residential (units)	1,360	129	94	62	31	95	328	739	2,100
Estimated Population	4,000	379	276	182	91	279	965	2,172	6,173
Non-Residential (square feet)	1,600,000	459,000	12,000	19,800	181,500	106,000	36,700	815,000	2,415,000
Estimated Jobs	4,090	938	41	97	312	238	364	1,990	6,080

Source: Dyett & Bhatia, 2010.



Uses along the Avenue should include a mix of residential, commercial, and entertainment-oriented development.

2.5 POLICIES

For detailed policies for Focus Areas, see Chapter 4: Urban Design and Building Development Standards.

GUIDING POLICIES

- 2-G-1** Promote development of San Pablo Avenue as an attractive boulevard, lined with a diverse array of uses that promote vibrant street life, and maintain eyes on the street at all times.
- 2-G-2** Locate higher intensity nodes, which include community and regional-oriented stores and amenities, in areas that are adjacent to major employment or education centers, and where opportunities are present.
- 2-G-3** Promote pedestrian- and transit-friendly development that enhances the public realm.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 2-I-1** Establish mixed-use, transit-supportive nodes of development near the intersections of San Pablo Avenue and the following streets: Rumrill Boulevard, El Portal Drive, Church Lane, and San Pablo Dam Road.
- 2-I-2** Promote a diverse range of housing types within each development to accommodate a variety of household types. Locate building types that specifically serve individuals with disabilities or seniors close to accessible pathways to transit and public services.
- 2-I-3** Provide housing for all income levels and household types, with emphasis on affordable housing for students, seniors, and low-income families.
- 2-I-4** Develop housing, and particularly affordable housing by complying with the policies of the San Pablo Housing Element.
- 2-I-5** Ensure that ample community gathering spaces, open spaces, and recreational facilities are part of any mixed-use development or master planned area.
- 2-I-6** Ensure that all development meets minimum FAR requirements, as specified in Table 2-2.

-
- 2-I-7** Encourage pedestrian-friendly retail anchors to locate at major intersections and gateways within commercial and mixed-use areas, in an effort to enhance the image recognition of the corridor and maximize foot traffic.
-
- 2-I-8** Require that redevelopment of the former Yard Birds site (south side of San Pablo Avenue just north of City Hall) provide a minimum of 0.35 acres of park or open space adjacent to the creek.
-
- 2-I-9** Require residential development within the Mixed Use Center North to cater to students of the College, creating affordable housing by design.
-
- 2-I-10** Require non-residential development within the Mixed Use Center North to accommodate a student population. This may include small groceries, cafés, and restaurants.
-
- 2-I-11** Develop the Mixed Use Center South area (Circle-S site) with commercial destinations that serve as a citywide and regional destination, and cater to families—for example, family-friendly restaurants, shopping, and entertainment options.
-
- 2-I-12** Allow commercial uses to occupy the Public/Institutional area on the north side of Vale Road if medical office facilities vacate.
-
- 2-I-13** Promote development of an entertainment district in the area around the San Pablo Dam Road/San Pablo Avenue intersection, as shown on the Land Use Diagram. The entertainment district would include theaters and nightclubs, video/arcade games, restaurants, and serve a range of population, including families. Allow an additional FAR of 0.6 beyond the base FAR for entertainments uses for developments within the designated area on the Land Use Diagram that provide these uses.
-
- 2-I-14** Encourage both day and nighttime uses within all major activity centers along the corridor, particularly within the Entertainment Overlay District.
-
- 2-I-15** Do not permit new auto-oriented establishments like service and repair uses and only limited drive-through establishments in the Planning Area.
-
- 2-I-16** Encourage structured or underground, or tuck-under parking in new development, to maximize occupied uses and open space at the ground level. Discourage new or expanded surface parking lots.
-



Encourage pedestrian-friendly mixed-use and commercial centers.



Retail uses should be family-friendly and cater to a diverse population.

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3

Access, Circulation, and Parking

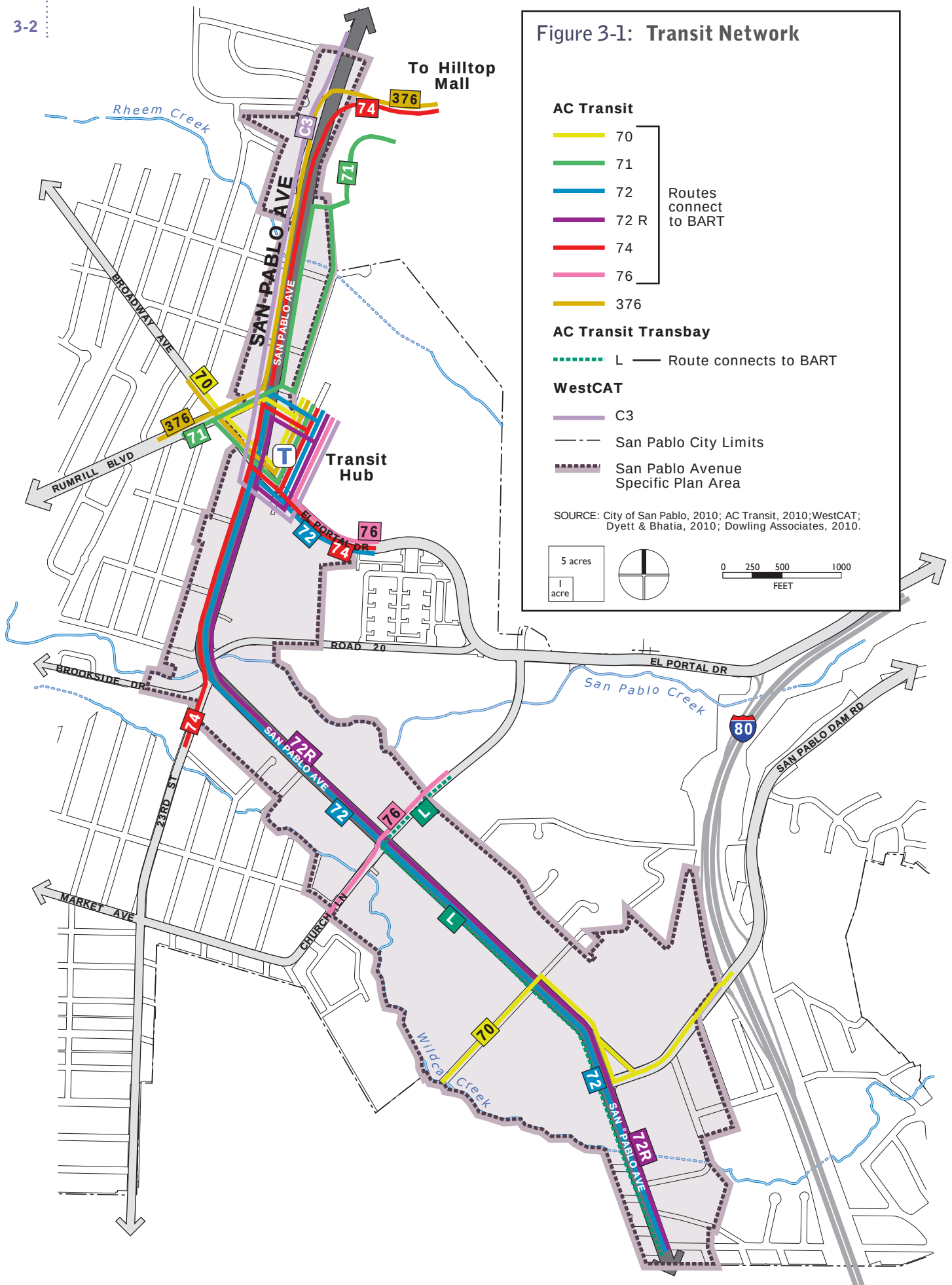
The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan seeks to establish a cohesive and accessible high-intensity corridor where intensified uses are supported by a balanced circulation system, integrating transit, pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular modes. The Plan maximizes connectivity for all modes so that people can move around easily, on foot if desired, with a clear, well-defined circulation network. Safe and frequent connections from local and regional origin points are emphasized, particularly for transit and pedestrians. This chapter presents strategies for improving connectivity for multiple modes of travel throughout the Specific Plan Planning Area, as well as encouraging alternatives to single-occupancy vehicular travel. Specific topics include access to transit, pedestrian and bicycle circulation and access, automobile circulation and connectivity, parking demand and management, and transportation demand management.

3.1 TRANSIT

The Specific Plan Planning Area has extensive bus transit opportunities along the corridor with both regional and local bus service. Bus service is provided by the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit) and Western Contra Costa County Transit (WestCAT). The majority of bus routes through the Planning Area are provided by AC Transit, as shown in Figure 3-1. These lines run along San Pablo Avenue between Robert H Miller Drive to the north and into the City of Richmond to the south. These routes include AC Transit Transbay Line L, which stops at the southern end of the Avenue, and AC Transit Line 72R, which provides a “rapid bus” service from Contra Costa College to Oakland Jack London Square with 12-minute headways, traffic signal priority, and state-of-the-art buses with low floors for easy entrance and exit. Most of the lines running through the Planning Area connect to BART as well, including lines 70, 71, 74, and 76, which serve the Richmond BART Station, and Lines 71, 72, 72R, 76 and L, which serve the El Cerrito Del Norte BART Station.

With multiple bus lines stopping between Rumrill Boulevard and El Portal Drive, an informal transit hub exists next to Contra Costa College off of San Pablo Avenue. Three transit stops are located in the area: one on Mission Bell Drive, another on Rumrill Boulevard, and the third on San Pablo Avenue. In addition, AC Transit has a bus terminal located at the Contra Costa College campus on Campus Drive near the Student Association Building and the

Figure 3-1: Transit Network



Vocational Building. This terminal is a timed transfer stop where schedules are organized so that passengers can transfer from bus-to-bus without long delays. As new development occurs along this portion of San Pablo Avenue, and in particular, close to the San Pablo Avenue transit hub, it will emerge as a key transit destination for surrounding development.

Access To Transit

San Pablo Avenue Transit Hub

Pedestrians typically access the three bus stops that comprise the San Pablo Avenue transit hub via El Portal Drive and San Pablo Avenue, and through private pathways and cut-throughs in nearby development and Contra Costa College. In particular, there are no direct formal pathways from San Pablo Avenue to the existing stop location on Mission Bell Drive. Additionally, the transit hub area lacks wayfinding signage and visibility to the stops, as well as any shelters or structures to clearly identify stop locations. The Specific Plan places emphasis on consolidating and formalizing the San Pablo Avenue transit hub as a station, with clear wayfinding, pedestrian amenities including shelters and seating, and next-bus notification to facilitate transit use.



Ensuring safe pedestrian access to transit is a key principle of the Specific Plan.

Transit Stop Location and Identification

Aside from improvements to existing facilities and bus stop locations, it is equally important to ensure that as new development occurs, transit is highly accessible by foot and bicycle. This is especially true for new high-density residential and mixed-use development. This may entail making changes to existing bus stop locations or establishing new stops in locations that serve the greatest number of potential transit riders. The Specific Plan places particular emphasis on establishing connections to low-income, senior, and housing for the disabled, as these populations will be in greatest need of close, accessible transit, among other public services.

GUIDING POLICIES

- 3-G-1** Establish the San Pablo Avenue transit hub as a major transit destination, with improved pedestrian and streetscape facilities, safety measures, and visibility.
- 3-G-2** Improve the quality, visibility, and safety of transit stops along the San Pablo Avenue corridor.
- 3-G-3** With new construction, ensure access to transit is provided for seniors, families with children, and persons with disabilities throughout the Planning Area.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 3-I-1** Work with AC Transit and West CAT to establish a station of consolidated bus stops that best serves Contra Costa College and existing and planned high-density residential development. This may be located at College Lane, El Portal Drive, or along San Pablo Avenue. Formalize the Transit Hub by consolidating stops to one location, installing shelters, signage with system information and next-bus updates, bus pull-out areas, and expanded pedestrian furnishings and pedestrian-scaled lighting for visibility and security.
- 3-I-2** Coordinate with AC Transit and West CAT to implement bus service modifications to improve service and increase accessibility to transit for new higher-intensity development in the Planning Area.
- 3-I-3** Identify direct paths to bus stops for pedestrians and bicyclists, and identify opportunities for implementation—either new connections through redevelopment or improvements to existing development.
- 3-I-4** Work with Contra Costa College to develop and improve connections to the proposed Transit Hub near the college, by designating paths and improving signage.
- 3-I-5** Provide wayfinding signage to indicate pathways to and location of major bus stops.
- 3-I-6** Improve the pedestrian crosswalks at El Portal Drive and Rumrill Boulevard to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities and provide greater connectivity near high density mixed-use development, such as the potential student housing at Mission Plaza.
- 3-I-7** Provide signalized pedestrian crosswalks at mid-block crossings and countdown signals at wide crosswalks or near bus stop locations.
- 3-I-8** Improve streetscape design to establish greater pedestrian comfort and access to transit stations. See Chapter 4, Section 4.2: Streetscape Design for specific measures.
- 3-I-9** Provide bus shelters, seating, lighting, trash receptacles, signage and kiosks, lighting, and enhanced landscaping (for shade and aesthetics) at all bus stops.
- 3-I-10** Employ technologies such as “next-bus” to provide real-time system updates to increase user convenience at all bus stops.

3-I-11 Allow advertisements on bus shelters in cooperation with transit providers, as a means of cost recovery.

3.2 PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLISTS

The Specific Plan prioritizes pedestrian and bicycle accessibility to major public destinations such as transit and activity centers throughout the Planning Area. These connections are reinforced by a clear, safe, and well-defined circulation system, ensuring that all members of the community can navigate the Planning Area. The following section presents the pedestrian and bicycle networks, as well as specific measures to improve pedestrian accessibility and implement standards for individuals with disabilities. Specific measures related to pedestrian and bicycle access to transit are discussed in Section 3.1: Transit; while elements that relate to accessibility through design—including streetscape improvements, wayfinding, visibility and safety, and building design that maximizes physical accessibility—are discussed in Chapter 4: Urban Design and Building Development Standards.

Pedestrian Network

Key characteristics of a complete pedestrian network are efficiency, safety, multiple routes, few barriers, and clear, comfortable pedestrian pathways and street crossings. The pedestrian network includes sidewalks, pedestrian-only streets, and off-street pathways through development or in natural, park, and campus-like settings. Within the Planning Area, the pedestrian network is comprised of sidewalks along San Pablo Avenue and cross-streets, the Wildcat Creek Trail, and connections through existing development, such as the College Center Shops development. Sidewalks exist along the majority of the Avenue except north of Rivers Street. However, many stretches of sidewalk are narrow, interrupted by driveways, and lacking adequate curb cuts. Additionally, there are few mid-block pedestrian connections along the Avenue, thus hampering overall pedestrian mobility.

The proposed General Plan identifies “Pedestrian Priority Zones” in which streetscape improvements are of particular importance for pedestrian movement. These zones are defined as areas on which high volumes of pedestrian traffic are encouraged and accommodated along the sidewalk. The majority of the street frontage along the San Pablo Avenue corridor falls within a Pedestrian Priority Zone as shown in Figure 3-2. The design of pedestrian crossings within these zones is prioritized, and, in some locations, well-protected mid-block crosswalks may be appropriate to create more direct walking routes and slow vehicle speeds.

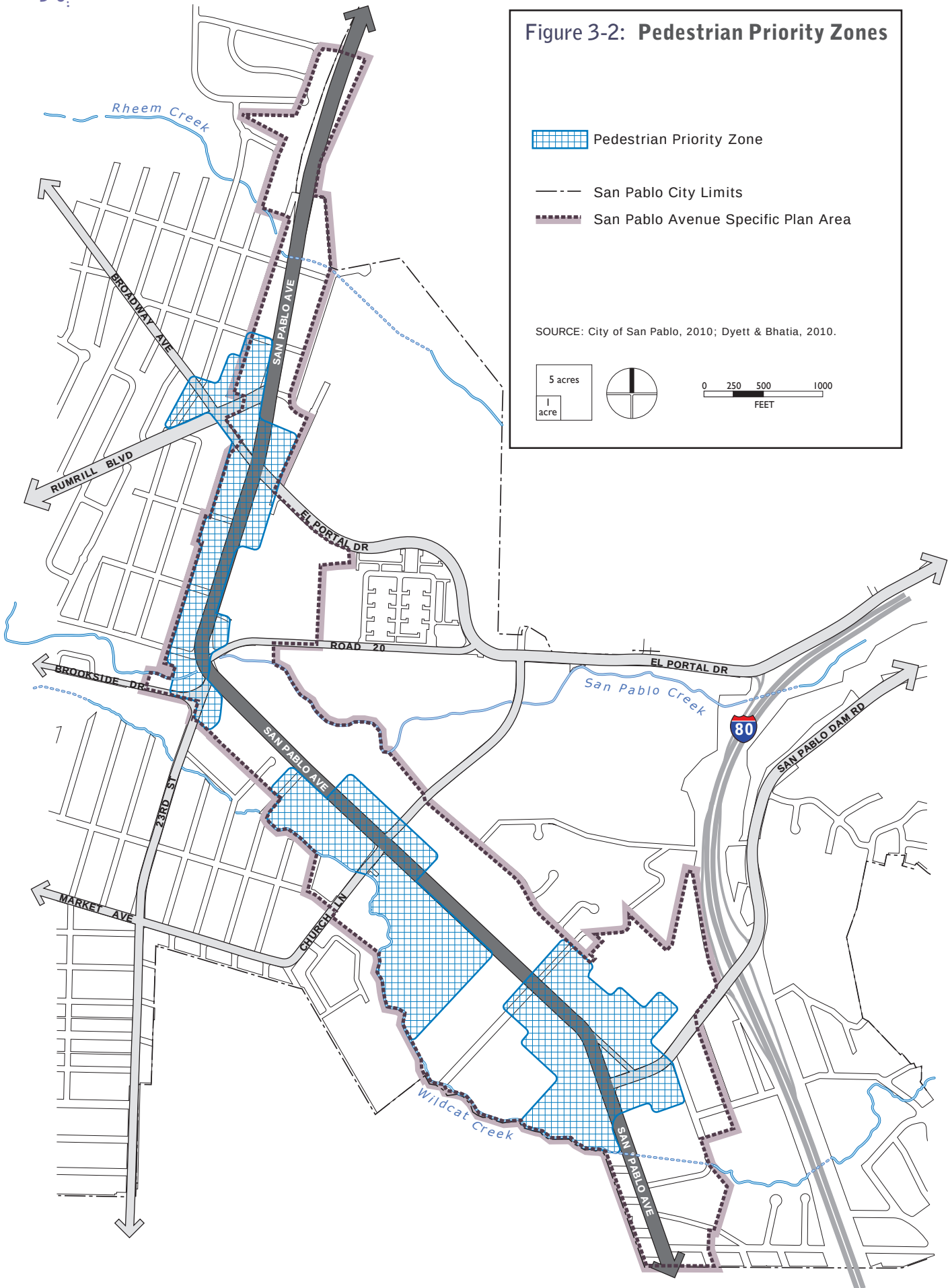


Special pavement at crosswalks helps to better define the pedestrian realm.



Although a car-oriented street, the Avenue is well-trafficked by pedestrians.

Figure 3-2: Pedestrian Priority Zones



In addition to the improvements outlined by the Pedestrian Priority Zones, the Specific Plan promotes establishing a fine-grain street grid with wide sidewalks in mixed-use centers that will improve pedestrian connectivity in the Planning Area. The Plan also ensures that pedestrian connections are provided within and through all new development, but in particular to transit stops and major public services and destinations. Additionally, the Specific Plan emphasizes improved crosswalks along the San Pablo Avenue corridor to provide greater east-west connectivity, as well as connecting trails along creeks and through development.

Bicycle Network

In addition to pedestrian connectivity, bicycle connectivity is also an important component of the Specific Plan. The San Pablo General Plan includes a comprehensive bikeways map, shown in Figure 3-3: Bicycle Network, which incorporates Class I bike trails, Class II bike lanes, and Class III shared bike routes—several of which are new—throughout the Planning Area. This bicycle network will provide direct routes to major destinations within and adjacent to the Planning Area as well as connections to bus stops and surrounding neighborhoods. The proposed bicycle network includes Class II bike lanes along the entire length of San Pablo Avenue as well as additional Class II lanes at critical nodes within the circulation network, including at Mission Plaza, 23rd Street, Church Lane, and San Pablo Dam Road. Additionally, the Plan emphasizes signage, safety, and provision of bicycle amenities, including storage and bicycle parking.

Pedestrian Accessibility

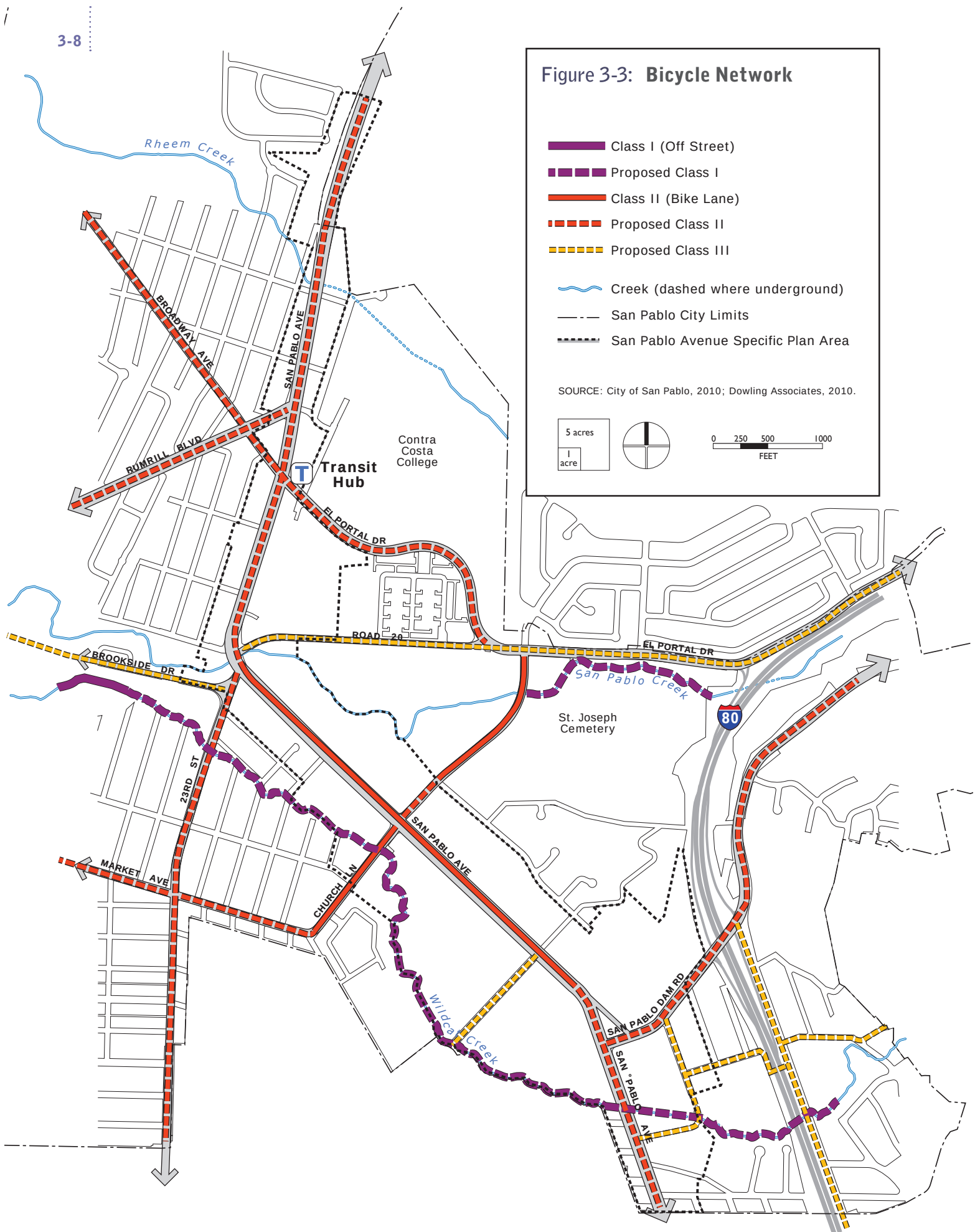
Pedestrian accessibility relates to the level of ease and comfort for pedestrians as they navigate an area. A high level of accessibility and ease of travel to key destinations and public services provides a framework for long-term sustainability. This is particularly important for communities that are more likely to be transit-dependent, such as those with seniors, low-income families, and students, where walking access to necessities like transit stops, neighborhood retail, schools, and social services is essential. Figure 3-4 demonstrates the primary public destinations, activity centers, and transit stops within the Planning Area, as they relate to proposed high-intensity residential areas and Pedestrian Priority Zones.

Ensuring that all pedestrians, including seniors, parents with children, and those with disabilities, can easily traverse the Planning Area is an essential component of the Specific Plan framework for accessibility. While the Planning Area is relatively flat with very few vertical elements beyond a sidewalk curb to navigate, there are several larger impediments. The San Pablo Avenue corridor



Bicycle lanes exist along only a portion of the Avenue; additionally, bicyclists have expressed their concern for safety.

Figure 3-3: Bicycle Network



and Road 20 act as physical barriers within the Planning Area, with wide rights of way, and few pedestrian refuge islands. Smaller elements like driveways, steep or absent curb cuts, and discontinuous sidewalks also impact accessibility. Likewise, lack of visibility at key crossings and basic wayfinding signage further detract from ease of travel within the Planning Area. The Specific Plan proposes improvements to the pedestrian environment, from meeting accessibility design standards, discussed below, to developing wayfinding and streetscape measures that maximize accessibility, as described in Chapter 4: Urban Design and Building Development Standards.

American Disability Act

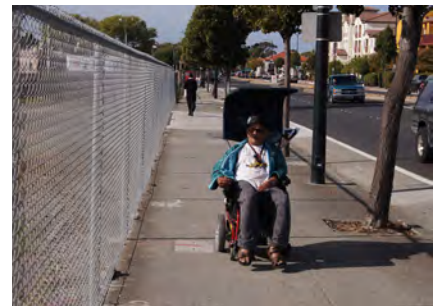
In 1990, the Federal Government enacted the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA required all public agencies to adopt a Transition Plan identifying physical obstacles limiting access to programs, services, and activities by persons with disabilities. The City of San Pablo updated its city-wide transition plan in 2009, which highlighted areas of particular concern on San Pablo Avenue near City Hall, San Pablo Avenue north of Rivers Street, and San Pablo Dam Road between San Pablo Avenue and I-80. Specific projects were identified to improve these areas, including:

- San Pablo Avenue Overlay (between 23rd Street and San Pablo Dam Road), which included installing ADA compliant driveways and curb ramps, and new tree grates along the sidewalk—and is currently underway;
- ADA upgrades to municipal buildings including City Hall, to be completed by 2010; and
- San Pablo Avenue sidewalk construction between Rivers Street and Lancaster Street, to be completed by 2014.

Additionally, the I-80 Integrated Corridor Mobility Project, which involves upgrades of traffic signals to include audible and vibrotactile countdown pedestrian signals along San Pablo Dam Road between San Pablo Ave and I-80, will also provide improved accessibility for individuals with disabilities within the Planning Area. These projects will improve the overall accessibility of San Pablo Avenue; new construction, improvements, and transit facilities within the Planning Area will continue to comply with the requirements of the ADA.

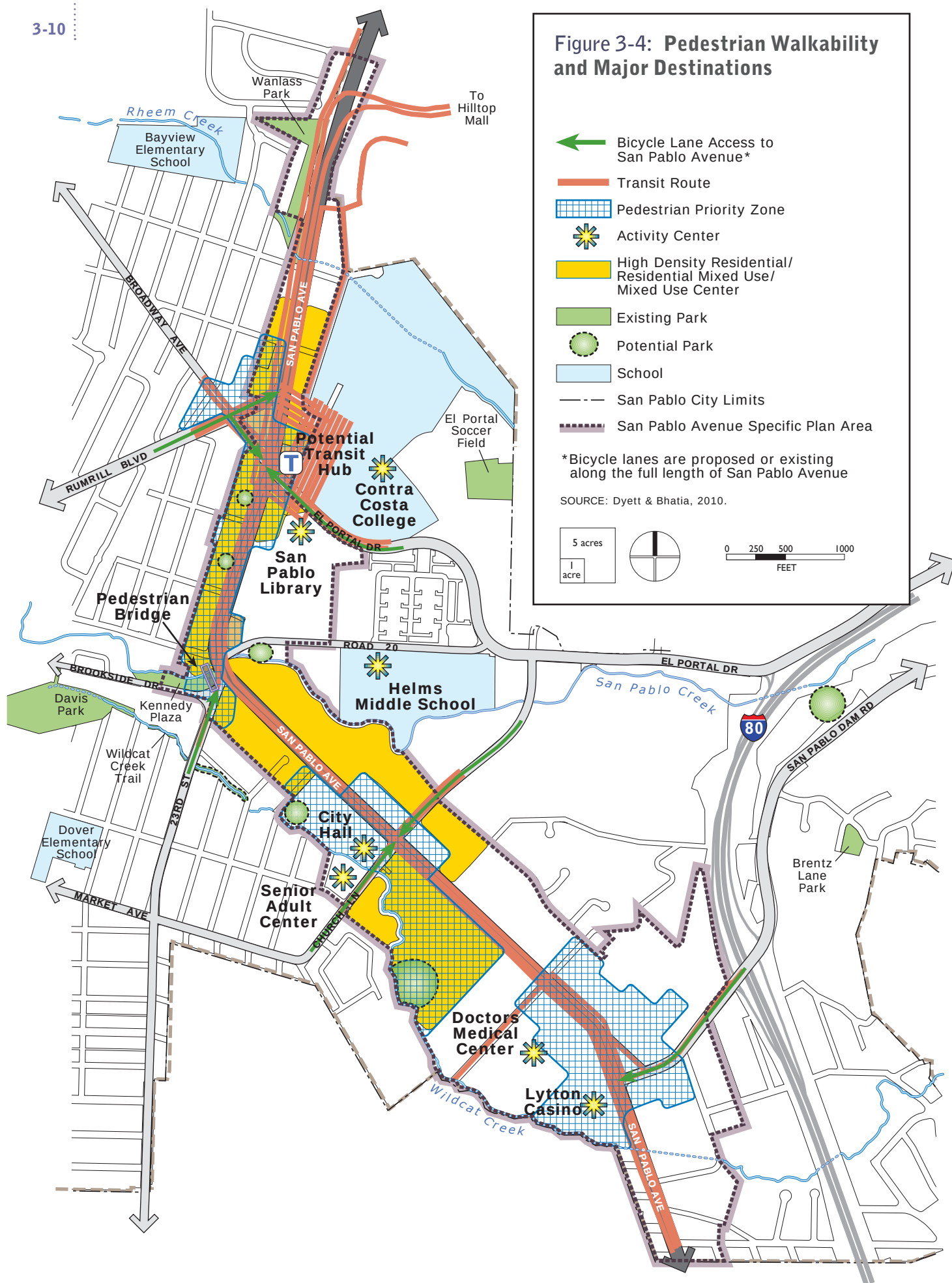
Universal Design

In addition to following ADA design standards, it is critical to create an integrated system for accessibility. “Universal design,” a holistic approach to accessibility in environmental design, is central to the Specific Plan. Employing universal design measures will ensure that all persons can easily move between



Ensuring safe access for all ages and abilities is key to establishing a sustainable, transit-oriented corridor.

Figure 3-4: Pedestrian Walkability and Major Destinations



the various activity centers within the Planning Area, and that accessible routes flow seamlessly between residences, transit stops, and key destinations. The Specific Plan also outlines best practices for designing user-friendly building environments for individuals with disabilities (see Chapter 4). As best practices of universal design continue to develop, the most current and appropriate standards and practices will be employed.

GUIDING POLICIES

- 3-G-4** Provide continuous pedestrian sidewalks and safe bike travel routes throughout the Planning Area and within development projects.
- 3-G-5** Improve pedestrian and bicycle amenities throughout the Planning Area to encourage walking and bicycle trips along the corridor.
- 3-G-6** Ensure that private development integrates pedestrian and bicycle connections to transit, open space, and key destinations.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

Pedestrian Network

- 3-I-12** Create internal streets within new mixed-use developments that maximize safe and efficient pedestrian circulation by incorporating design elements such as wider landscaped sidewalks, reduced vehicular speed limits, pedestrian-oriented lighting, bulb-outs, curb extensions at intersections, high visibility crosswalks, and on-street parking to buffer pedestrians from moving vehicles.
- 3-I-13** Provide mid-block connections through new developments that accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians, or all modes, to facilitate access to transit stops and major public destinations.
- 3-I-14** Consider connections and extensions to future bike and walking trails in anticipation of future amenities and improvements at Wildcat, San Pablo, and Rheem creeks, and potential park sites.
- 3-I-15** Enhance pedestrian connections and amenities and prioritize pedestrian access and circulation in Pedestrian Priority Zones.

Refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.2: Streetscape Design for specific policy direction for pedestrian improvements.



Line pedestrian connections with active uses, articulated building massing, and changes in detail and materials.



Ensure that bicycle parking is well-lit, sheltered, and convenient to key destinations and transit.

Bicycle Network

3-I-16 Provide signage that clearly and explicitly indicates connections to local and regional bicycle facilities.

3-I-17 Provide secure short- and long-term bicycle parking at transit stops.

Bicycle parking should be safe and secure, and protected from inclement weather where possible.

3-I-18 Encourage provision of bike racks and locking systems in all multi-family residential developments, multi-tenant retail and office developments, and government and institutional uses.

3-I-19 Incorporate a one-foot buffer, distinguished through color or paving, between the bicycle lane and the adjacent travel lane along the length of San Pablo Avenue, to enhance visibility and safety for bicyclists.

3-I-20 Maintain bike lanes along San Pablo Avenue, including pavement condition as well as clearing of debris.

Accessibility and Universal Design

3-I-21 Ensure that alleyways and other circulation routes internal to blocks are ADA-compliant and have visible entries from a street.

3-I-22 Within the public right-of-way, construct or reconstruct curb cuts with tactile domes to meet the latest ADA guidelines.

3-I-23 Maintain a minimum clear pedestrian pathway width on sidewalks to meet ADA guidelines.

3-I-24 Re-time traffic signals to allow adequate time for pedestrians to cross, specifically in Pedestrian Priority Zones.

3.3 AUTOMOBILES

A well-defined roadway network provides the framework for connectivity and circulation within an area. In order to achieve the vision of the San Pablo Avenue corridor as a regional and community-oriented destination, it is essential that street connections are well-developed from I-80, as well as within mixed-use areas where fine-grain street grids will support active, walkable districts. This section presents the roadway network and proposed improvements in the Planning Area. Streetscape design for streets within the network is addressed in Chapter 4: Urban Design and Building Development Standards.

Roadway Network

The roadway network within the Specific Plan Planning Area, shown in Figure 3-5: Roadway Network, is primarily defined by the San Pablo Avenue corridor. As established in the San Pablo General Plan, San Pablo Avenue is classified as an Auto Arterial north of Rivers Street, and a Mixed Use Boulevard for the rest of the corridor (between Rivers Street and the City limits to the south). As an Auto Arterial, the northern segment of San Pablo Avenue serves regional vehicular traffic, including automobiles and trucks. Auto Arterials prioritize vehicular travel over other modes. For the rest of the corridor, the Mixed Use Boulevard designation indicates that transit and pedestrians have priority, but all modes are accommodated. These roadways provide access to retail, commercial, and high-intensity residential land uses while also serving as a regional route.

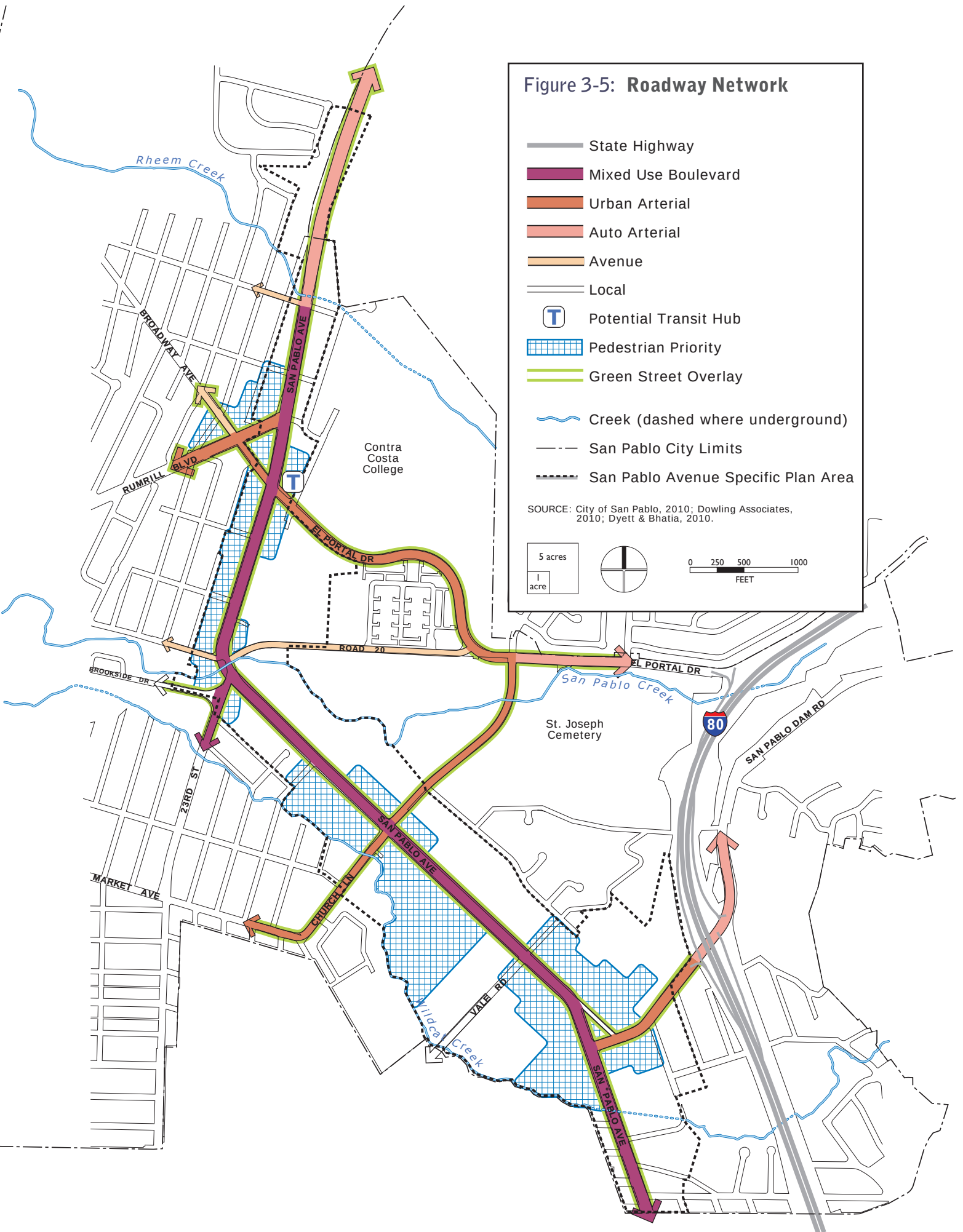
In addition to establishing roadway typologies, the General Plan promotes a multi-modal approach to circulation and access and considers the street as a “Complete Street.” Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe, attractive, and comfortable access and travel for all users, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, children, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and transit users. On San Pablo Avenue, this Complete Streets approach includes crossing islands in appropriate mid-block locations, bus bulb-outs or bus lanes, audible pedestrian signals, sidewalk bulb-outs, center medians, street trees, planter strips and ground cover. The Complete Streets concept is meant to act as a guide for developing specific streetscape improvements along mixed-use boulevards like San Pablo Avenue.

Specific improvements to the roadway network that pertain to the Planning Area include the San Pablo Avenue Sidewalk Construction project; the San Pablo Avenue Bridge Sidewalk Elevation project; the San Pablo Avenue Overlay project; and the Wildcat Creek Trail. These improvements, which will enhance and restore sidewalks and replace curbs, gutters, medians and trees, will provide safer and better access to and within the Planning Area. This is particularly important for new destinations along the Avenue, including the Circle-S and Entertainment District Focus Areas, which will require both easy



The Specific Plan changes the road classification for San Pablo Avenue from an Auto Arterial to Mixed Use Boulevard for much of the Planning Area.

Figure 3-5: Roadway Network



transit and vehicular access, and the San Pablo Avenue North area across from the College Center Shops development.

In addition to the vehicular street classifications, several portions of the San Pablo Avenue corridor are identified as a “Pedestrian Priority Zone,” as described in the previous section. These zones underscore the mixed-use nature of the proposed land uses and the need for a fine-grained street grid to facilitate internal pedestrian and vehicular movement. The Specific Plan Focus Areas are all located within the Pedestrian Priority Zones—these areas in particular provide an opportunity to create smaller, more intimate street grids in mixed-use developments. Many of the opportunity sites identified in the Focus Areas, such as Circle-S and the Towne Center, are large-block parcels with no internal circulation. Redevelopment of these sites into mixed-use centers will necessitate greater internal connections to help support the mix of uses, provide access to parking, and connect to surrounding development. The Specific Plan illustrates potential street grids for these larger Focus Area sites and emphasizes key connections within and to the new development (see Chapter 4, Section 4.1: Illustrative Plans for Key Sites).

Roadway Conditions

Level of service (LOS) is used as a measure of driving conditions on the roadway network. Typically, LOS has applied to vehicular traffic and is a measure of the motorists’ and passengers’ perceptions of traffic conditions. In Contra Costa County, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority’s LOS methodology¹ is used to calculate the LOS at signalized intersections. The auto LOS for the Specific Plan Planning Area was calculated as part of the concurrent San Pablo General Plan Update. As shown in Table 3-1, the signalized intersections within the Planning Area currently operate at LOS C or better during the AM and PM peak hours (LOS A refers to free flowing traffic; LOS F represents heavy traffic). With the projected increase in regional traffic over time and traffic from the development proposed as part of the General Plan—which includes development proposed as part of the Specific Plan—the traffic volumes increase; however, traffic will continue to flow smoothly at all intersections except at the intersection of San Pablo Avenue and San Pablo Dam Road during the PM peak hour, where it may decline to LOS F. The LOS F condition exceeds the City’s and County’s standard for both roadways (LOS E).

While the San Pablo Avenue/San Pablo Dam Road intersection is a critical vehicular intersection in the Planning Area, particularly with the intensification of the surrounding area as an entertainment district, auto LOS is only



While traffic will increase along the entire corridor, only the San Pablo Avenue and San Pablo Dam Road intersection will result in an LOS F during the PM peak hour.

¹ The CCTALOS methodology applies a modified Circular 212 analysis method. The signalized intersection LOS is determined based on the critical volume-to-capacity ratio (V/C) and assigned a LOS grade.

one measure of the roadway conditions. As a measure of the overall roadway condition, the Circulation Element of the General Plan proposes a multi-modal level of service (MMLOS) analysis. MMLOS expands upon the traditional auto-oriented measures to cover all modes on urban streets and is similarly based on a six letter-grade system (A-F). These grades indicate user perception of the quality of service provided by the street, where A refers to a high quality of service for a specific mode, and F refers to poor service, based on a variety of factors. Table 3-2 describes the MMLOS indicators by mode. The General Plan recommends developing bicycle and pedestrian LOS standards for corridors such as San Pablo Avenue. A Bicycle LOS “C” standard is the recommended goal for San Pablo Avenue since it is a high-volume bicycle commute corridor. On San Pablo Avenue with the proposed Class II bike lane, maintenance of pavement conditions would be required to maintain an acceptable Bicycle LOS. Since San Pablo Avenue will also be a high-volume pedestrian corridor, the recommended goal for Pedestrian LOS is “C”, although conditions will vary depending on streetscape design along the Avenue.

TABLE 3-1 VEHICLE LEVEL OF SERVICE SUMMARY

	SIGNALIZED INTERSECTION	TRAFFIC CONTROL	PEAK HOUR	EXISTING		GENERAL PLAN (2030)	
				LOS ¹	V/C ²	LOS ¹	V/C ²
1	San Pablo Av/Robert Miller Dr	Signal	AM	A	0.32	A	0.43
			PM	A	0.47	A	0.51
2	San Pablo Av/Rivers St	Signal	AM	A	0.52	B	0.63
			PM	A	0.58	B	0.65
3	San Pablo Av/Rumrill Blvd	Signal	AM	A	0.44	A	0.60
			PM	B	0.63	C	0.80
4	San Pablo Av/El Portal Dr-Broadway Av	Signal	AM	A	0.54	B	0.61
			PM	A	0.58	C	0.77
6	San Pablo Av/Rd 20	Signal	AM	A	0.54	B	0.62
			PM	B	0.65	D	0.81
7	San Pablo Av/Church Ln	Signal	AM	C	0.76	D	0.88
			PM	A	0.58	C	0.77
8	San Pablo Av/Vale Rd	Signal	AM	A	0.45	B	0.63
			PM	A	0.43	C	0.73
9	San Pablo Av/San Pablo Dam Rd	Signal	AM	A	0.49	B	0.66
			PM	B	0.63	F	1.03
10	San Pablo Av/Rheem Av	Signal	AM	A	0.46	B	0.62
			PM	A	0.40	A	0.58
14	Rumrill Blvd/Broadway Av	Signal	AM	A	0.52	C	0.78
			PM	A	0.54	C	0.73

1 LOS - Level of service - calculated using CCTALOS methodology and based on volume-to-capacity (v/c) ratio.

2 V/C - critical volume-to-capacity ratio.

Shaded and bold items signify Significant Impacts.

Source: Dowling Associates, 2010.

TABLE 3-2 DEFINITION OF MULTI-MODAL LEVEL OF SERVICE INDICATORS

LOS	TRANSIT	BICYCLE	PEDESTRIAN	AUTOMOBILES
A	Good walk access to bus stops, frequent service, good bus stop amenities.	Few driveway and cross street conflicts, good pavement condition, ample width of outside lane, including parking and bike lanes.	Low traffic volumes, wide buffer separating sidewalk from traffic, numerous street trees, and high parking occupancy.	Little or no traffic delay
B				Short traffic delays
C				Average traffic delays
D				Long traffic delays
E				Vert long traffic delays
F	Poor walk access to bus stops, infrequent service, poor schedule adherence, no bus stop amenities.	Poor pavement condition, narrow width of outside lane, frequent driveways and cross streets.	High traffic volumes, limited buffer separating sidewalk from traffic, few street trees, low parking occupancy.	Extreme delays; potentially affecting other traffic movements in the intersection.

Source: Dowling Associates, 2010; CCTA, Technical Procedures, July 2006.

GUIDING POLICIES

3-G-7 Maximize connectivity in the Planning Area through creation of finer street grid patterns in new development.

3-G-8 Provide sufficient capacity on the Planning Area roadway network to efficiently and safely serve local traffic needs.

3-G-9 Support roadway improvement efforts to establish San Pablo Avenue as a Complete Street. Balance the needs of cars with those of pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

3-I-25 Ensure that new developments provide fine grain street grids, creating shorter blocks and more route options that emphasize pedestrian connectivity to and from San Pablo Avenue, transit, and key destinations.

Circle-S Site

3-I-26 Establish a street grid that covers the entire site and allows visual access into the development from San Pablo Avenue. The grid should organize all development within the site, provide a direct connection to Church Lane to the north, and provide a potential connection through to Vale Road to the south and potentially to the Casino.

3-I-27 Establish a central pedestrian-oriented street that provides a direct link from San Pablo Avenue to improved open space along Wildcat Creek.

Towne Center

3-I-28 As part of any redevelopment of Towne Center, establish a street grid for the site that provides access points to San Pablo Dam Road, San Pablo Avenue, and Willow Road.

3-I-29 Establish a pedestrian-only axis that leads directly from the Casino through the site in order to create a single, cohesive entertainment district.

Mission Plaza

3-I-30 Provide vehicular access to off-street parking from San Pablo Avenue via a new pedestrian-oriented roadway through the site.

3.4 PARKING

The provision and management of parking have a direct impact on the function and role of development. Provision of on-street parking within a pedestrian-oriented district, for example, provides opportunity for quick turnover and easy access to ground floor retail uses. Structured parking that serves multiple developments can reduce the number of overall parking spaces provided between developments and land area devoted to surface parking. These parking approaches have an effect on overall walkability and pedestrian orientation as well as development feasibility, by reducing costs for additional parking provision. As residential, commercial, and transit activity intensifies in the Planning Area, it will be important to manage the demand for increased parking in a manner that benefits a range of users, contributing to an overall complete community that accommodates cars, people, and transit.

The Specific Plan seeks to establish a comprehensive approach to parking management based on analysis of future parking demand throughout the Planning Area. Policies and improvements seek to balance the provision of adequate parking with innovative strategies to provide flexibility for mixed-use development and reduced parking requirements to promote transit.

Based on field observations, the existing parking supply along San Pablo Avenue in the Planning Area provides sufficient parking to meet the current parking needs, since most of the larger shopping centers have on-site parking. Along San Pablo Avenue, on-street parking is limited primarily to the northern portion. However, the Specific Plan designates on-street parking along the west side of the central portion of the corridor. (For more detail on street design, see Chapter 4: Urban Design and Building Development Standards.) With the proposed mix of higher-intensity land uses and street design improvements, the character in this central area will change, with more activity oriented towards the street and a greater demand for on-street parking.

Existing Parking Standards

Minimum off-street parking and loading requirements for residential and non-residential uses are specified in the City's Municipal Code. For multifamily dwelling units, the Code (as of 2010) requires two spaces for each unit. For commercial uses, the off-street parking requirement is regulated by the type and square footage of use and makes no distinction based on zoning district. For mixed-use developments along San Pablo Avenue, the Municipal Code stipulates that the number of off-street parking spaces required shall be the sum of the total of the various individual uses. However, the Municipal Code does allow for shared parking arrangements through a request accompanied by a parking study and contract between the parties. Reductions in parking requirements, subject to approval of a use permit, are stipulated for senior and multi-family housing located within 1,000 feet of a transit stop as well as other unique uses.

Projected Demand

According to existing standards in the Code, the Specific Plan Land Use Diagram with a net buildout total of 739 dwelling units would require 1,478 off-street parking spaces for residential uses alone as per current standards. Based on the net buildout of commercial land uses and general assumptions on development types within mixed-use commercial designations, the Planning Area could require just over 2,600 off-street parking spaces for commercial use, not accounting for shared parking arrangements or reductions in parking requirements. With potential sharing, demand could drop by about 15 percent, and change in the Municipal Code standards would reduce the needed parking further.



Currently, street parking along San Pablo Avenue is underutilized (top). Similarly, large surface parking lots serving commercial centers may also have an oversupply of parking (bottom).

Parking Management

Numerous opportunities will be available to reduce the amount of parking supplied in the Planning Area. Reductions in the amount of parking provided within the Planning Area will be dependent on factors such as transit access, size and mix of land uses with complementary parking patterns, physical location of the complementary uses, cooperation between land owners/developers for shared parking arrangements and facilities, and the phasing and implementation of developments. The Specific Plan proposes a range of parking management strategies to achieve overall reduction in parking in the Planning Area, including reduced parking requirements, shared parking arrangements for mixed-use or compatible single-use developments, and shared parking facilities that are either privately or publicly operated. This section describes each of these strategies in more detail and provides recommendations and guidance for future development.

Reduced Parking Requirements

Reduced parking requirements support transit and increased densities by minimizing the amount of parking associated with new development. As part of the Specific Plan, most new development will be located in close proximity to a transit stop and will include a combination of uses, particularly within the Focus Areas. While the existing Municipal Code allows for reductions in off-street parking spaces for these conditions, it would require administrative review (possibly as part of the site planning process) on a case-by-case basis. The Specific Plan provides flexibility for higher-intensity mixed-use development and reduced parking requirements to promote transit and reduce parking demand. Table 3-3 outlines a range of recommended standards for new development within the Planning Area, by land use type.

TABLE 3-3 PROPOSED OFF-STREET PARKING STANDARDS

USE TYPE	RECOMMENDED STANDARD
Residential – Multifamily	
<i>Studio and less than 500 sq ft</i>	1 space per unit
<i>One-bedroom or 500 to 800 sq ft</i>	1.5 spaces per unit
<i>Two-bedroom or 801 to 1,100 sq ft</i>	1.8 spaces per unit
<i>Three or more bedrooms and 1,101 sq ft or larger</i>	2 plus an additional .5 space for each additional sleeping room over 3
Offices – Business and Professional	1 space per 350 sf
Offices – Medical and Dental	1 space per 250 sf
Restaurant – Fast Service, General	1 space per 100 sf of public area
Restaurant – Outdoor Dining	1 space per 200 sf of public area, indoors and outdoors
Retail Sales – General	1 space per 400 to 666 sf
Retail Sales – Local	1 space per 400 to 666 sf
Retail Sales – Regional	1 space per 400 to 666 sf
Note: The Municipal Code shall be consulted for detailed parking requirements.	

Sources: Dyett & Bhatia; Metropolitan Transportation Commission. *Reforming Parking Policies to Support Smart Growth, Toolbox/Handbook: Parking Best Practices & Strategies For Supporting Transit Oriented Development In the San Francisco Bay Area, Representative Parking Requirements*, p. 47.

Shared Parking

Shared parking is based on the concept that the same parking space is used by two or more different land uses at different times of the day or week; for example, some spaces could serve office uses during the week, and retail in the evening and weekend. Shared parking arrangements typically involve either single-owner mixed-use developments or multiple landowners within a district or area. The greatest shared parking possibility probably lies with the Circle-S site, especially between office and medical uses, and retail. By working cooperatively to develop a larger shared parking pool, overall development cost savings could be achieved by reducing parking costs. Within the Planning Area, proposed entertainment, hotel, and recreation uses are more likely to see reductions due to shared parking since their peak parking demand tends to vary from that of office and retail uses. Additionally, since there may be some large areas of single-use development, such as in the entertainment district, arrangements should be made for all users to share parking with other developments where their peak parking demands occur at different times of the day.

The extent and level of supply reduction due to shared parking would need to be determined as specific development proposals move forward. Once the mix of uses and size of a project is defined, a shared parking analysis should be conducted to determine the peak demand of the project. Using the shared parking approach described by the Urban Land Institute,² the analysis should take into account the peak parking periods during the day (weekday and weekend) and the peak parking for year (particularly for retail uses). Depending upon the size and mix of uses, shared parking may result in reductions ranging from 5 percent to 40 percent when compared to the parking requirement calculated for each use individually.

Parking Facilities

Additional measures to manage parking in the Planning Area efficiently could include provision of public off-street parking facilities distributed along the corridor. City-owned parking facilities would streamline parking management along the corridor and allow for collection of in-lieu parking fees, which would provide incentive for redevelopment of small parcels with limited parking options. In addition, off-street parking, particularly in areas with smaller parcels and individual driveways, would result in fewer driveways (reducing the number of curb cuts) and improved accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Finally, as future development occurs along the San Pablo Avenue corridor and parking demand increases, a comprehensive parking occupancy survey of both on-street and off-street parking in the Planning Area and evaluation of potential parking strategies may be appropriate.

² Urban Land Institute. Shared Parking, Second Edition, 2006.

GUIDING POLICIES

- 3-G-10** Promote redevelopment of higher intensity uses along the San Pablo Avenue corridor by establishing parking requirements that reflect a balanced approach between different transportation modes and providing opportunities for shared parking.
-
- 3-G-11** Avoid excessive supplies of parking that would discourage transit ridership and pedestrian or bicycle trips.
-
- 3-G-12** In areas designated for mixed-use development, locate and design parking structures to accommodate the needs of all uses to maximize shared parking arrangements between the uses to the extent possible.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 3-I-31** Establish in the Municipal Code parking standards for the Specific Plan area that reflect its designated role as a vital, transit- and pedestrian-oriented district, with commensurate reductions in off-street parking requirements.

This could be accomplished by establishing parking requirements specific to the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan area, or through reductions by Planning Area. Refer to Table 3-3 for specific recommendations by land use type.

- 3-I-32** Build in the Municipal Code methodology for determining parking reduction for mixed-use developments and shared uses. Allow reductions without need for a conditional use or a special permit.

One approach would be to apply the methodology described in Urban Land Institute's (ULI) Shared Parking to determine the parking reduction for shared parking in mixed-use developments proposed as part of the Specific Plan. This analysis would account for size of development and mix of uses. The ULI methodology could also be applied to redevelopment of adjacent properties with specified mix of uses and would reduce the need to conduct parking studies on a project by project basis.

- 3-I-33** Explore opportunities for shared parking for both existing and new uses.

A shared parking structure between the San Pablo Lytton Casino and Moose Lodge could provide additional parking for both uses—which if located at the edge of the street along San Pablo Avenue, would also provide an improved street edge and physical presence.

3-I-34 Allow credit for on-street parking spaces directly adjacent to a property for visitors or retail uses, where appropriate. This should be on a one-to-one basis.

3-I-35 Build in the Municipal Code requirements for the amount and location of bicycle parking for larger developments.

3-I-36 Establish a methodology for determining parking reductions for new development. This may include a detailed analysis of where shared parking between developments is feasible, such as between Doctors Medical Center, San Pablo Lytton Casino, and proximate shopping.

3-I-37 As development occurs within the Planning Area, review the parking requirements and consider additional parking management strategies as part of the approval process, including:

- Establishing parking maximums (rather than minimums) to encourage transit use and promote more efficient use of land by not allowing for an oversupply of parking. For example, Portland, Oregon allows a maximum of 0.7 spaces per 1,000 square feet of office and 1.0 space per 1,000 square feet of net building area for retail in the central business district.
- Unbundling the cost of parking from residential units and office leases. This strategy would enable users to opt out of parking and may encourage alternate modes of travel, such as transit, bicycling, or walking.
- Implementing a paid parking program or time-limited parking once parking demand increases as development occurs along the corridor.

3-I-38 Ensure that parking spaces near the San Pablo Avenue transit hub and major transit stops are made available for car-sharing providers.

3-I-39 Ensure that larger parking facilities provide spaces for charging stations for electric vehicles and preferential parking for carpooling, and vanpooling, as appropriate.

3-I-40 Ensure that designated parking spaces are provided for residential units in parking facilities that accommodate mixed-use residential and non-residential development.

-
- 3-I-41** Explore the use of mechanical parking lifts to minimize the use of land for parking.
-
- 3-I-42** Require as a condition of approval for new development that all non-residential parking be made available to the public when not needed for primary use and shared with other uses when possible.
-
- 3-I-43** Establish a Residential Parking Permit Program if there is an issue with spillover parking into residential neighborhoods.
-
- 3-I-44** Consider provision of public off-street parking facilities, potentially as part of a parking district, along the San Pablo Avenue corridor to serve smaller businesses and encourage redevelopment of smaller parcels.
-
- 3-I-45** Allow for an in-lieu parking fee to fund a parking structure. This may be most effective where the parcel sizes are small and on-site parking is not feasible.
-

3.5 TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT

In addition to multi-modal connections to transit, broader strategies are required to reduce the use of the single-occupant vehicle and to encourage alternative modes of travel. Transportation Demand Management (TDM) seeks to provide alternatives to single-occupancy vehicular transportation, reducing the number of vehicles using the roadway network at a given time and reducing the overall parking demand. TDM programs can be especially effective in intensified, mixed-use districts such as those proposed along the San Pablo Avenue corridor.

The Planning Area will have extensive bus transit opportunities along the corridor with both regional and local bus service, as shown in Figure 3-1. In addition, a local shuttle service, such as the Emeryville Emery-Go-Round and Downtown Oakland's Broadway Shuttle, will connect local riders to key area destinations. By locating transit stops close to higher-intensity mixed-use centers and providing a shuttle network along the corridor and to the nearby Richmond and El Cerrito BART stations, transit will become more accessible and more convenient, thus encouraging greater usage and decreasing parking demand. If a formal TDM program is implemented in the Planning Area, which may include carpool or vanpool programs initiated by employers, further reductions may be attained in the overall parking demand.

GUIDING POLICIES

3-G-13 Encourage use of Transportation Demand Management strategies to minimize traffic contributions from new and existing development.

3-G-14 Promote public and privately-run alternative modes of transit, such as shuttles, along the San Pablo Avenue corridor.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

3-I-46 Encourage and support carpooling and vanpooling by providing preferential parking at employment sites for carpools and vanpools.

3-I-47 Explore the feasibility of shuttles. This could include:

- As part of a comprehensive transportation demand management strategy, employer-based shuttles that provide service to and from the Richmond and El Cerrito Del Norte BART stations for new large developments. At a minimum, employer shuttles should operate during the morning and evening peak periods. Shuttle schedules should be timed to facilitate transfer from northbound BART trains in the morning and southbound BART trains in the evening.
- A shuttle program to serve San Pablo Avenue that links Mission Plaza to South San Pablo Avenue as well as Contra Costa College, College Center, City Hall, Circle-S, the Casino, and Doctors Medical Center. This could be similar to the free shuttle in Oakland along Broadway that connects portions of Downtown Oakland and is funded by contributions from recent developments and a grant from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.
- A shuttle that runs between commercial centers located in neighboring cities, including Pinole, El Cerrito, and Richmond (to the Hilltop Mall, for example).

3-I-48 Work with the West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee TDM Program Manager to promote the ridesharing and Guaranteed Ride Home Program provided through 511 Contra Costa, the comprehensive transportation demand management program for Contra Costa County.

3-I-49 Work with Contra Costa College to develop transportation demand management strategies to reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips to the campus, through use of improved bus and shuttle services, as well as improved pedestrian and bicycle connectivity from nearby student housing.

3-I-50 As development occurs within the Planning Area, require transportation demand management strategies as part of the approval process, including:

- Provisions for transit passes
- Carsharing
- Parking cash out

3-I-51 Provide incentives to existing employers and/or developers to develop transportation demand management programs, such as reduced parking requirements.

3-I-52 Draft and adopt a Commuter Benefit Ordinance to allow employers and workers citywide to tap into an existing federal program to pay for transit passes and vanpool. This would be similar to ordinances in cities of Richmond, San Francisco, and Berkeley.

4

Urban Design and Building Development Standards

Urban design—the quality and character of the public realm—is a critical component of how a place is used and experienced. Along San Pablo Avenue, the public realm is defined by the streetscape, buildings, and the spaces in between, all of which contribute to the Avenue’s identity as an important community and regional corridor. This chapter provides policies and illustrative concepts for the five Focus Areas in the Planning Area, which will serve as a guide for development of new mixed-use foci along the San Pablo Avenue corridor. It also outlines the Plan’s strategies for enhancing the public realm through quality streetscape design, specific development standards, and building design guidelines to further reinforce and shape the identity of the San Pablo Avenue corridor.

4.1 ILLUSTRATIVE PLANS FOR KEY SITES

The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan identifies five key opportunity sites within the Planning Area. These five sites, all of which fall within the five Focus Areas outlined in Chapter 2, represent major opportunities for reuse and intensified, mixed-use development. For each site, urban design concepts are presented and complemented by associated guiding policies, which describe the vision for each area. Illustrative site plans relate the site to the surrounding context and location and provide greater detail of potential development. Schematic diagrams of the sites illustrate how proposed developments might look and feel. The illustrations are figurative and do not dictate a prescribed site plan or design. Rather, they represent one of many possible interpretations of design guidelines and building design standards presented in Section 4.3: Development Standards and Building Design Guidelines.

Circle-S

At approximately 18 acres (inclusive of the planned medical clinic), Circle-S is one of the largest sites and represents a key development possibility. Formerly a mobile home park, this site is now vacant and is owned by the City's Redevelopment Agency, presenting a tremendous opportunity. For this site, the Specific Plan envisions a scale and quality of development that is urban and walkable: where streets form a grid, buildings line the streets, quality public spaces are provided between the building and the curb, and plazas and open spaces are provided at strategic locations. Consistent with the Bicycle System diagram (Figure 3-1), a multi-use trail runs along Wildcat Creek for the length of the site.

The focus of the area is the creation of a mixed-use neighborhood with a well-defined public realm. As illustrated in Figure 4-1—which shows a potential layout for the site and is not a prescribed site plan—a central axis could be established between San Pablo Avenue and Wildcat Creek with a plaza at one end along the Avenue, a large community park at the other end along the creek, and a mixed-use “main street” type environment extending between. Residential uses are located toward the rear of the site, overlooking the “main street,” the creekway and the new community park. Walkability and the pedestrian experience are emphasized through building scale and massing, with a public realm activated by ground floor retail uses, ample fenestration and entries, awnings, and well-articulated building massing. Development in this area could be oriented along a new through street that extends from San Pablo Ave to Vale Road through the Circle-S site if access can be achieved in the future to Vale Road from the site.



Existing view of Circle-S site, looking north along San Pablo Avenue.



Circle-S site (right), in a surrounding context along San Pablo Avenue.

The Circle-S site includes a recent (2010) development proposal for a 52,000-square-foot medical office building and 340-space parking garage located on a two-acre portion of the site. The proposed site plan for this development is shown in Figure 4-2.



Conceptual illustration of Circle-S site within surrounding context.



Existing Circle-S site.



Conceptual view of Circle-S public plaza and surrounding development, looking from San Pablo Avenue toward Wildcat Creek.

Figure 4-1: Circle-S Potential Site Plan



Figure 4-2: Proposed Medical Center Site Plan on Circle-S Site



GUIDING POLICIES

- 4-G-1** Develop the Circle-S site with a vital mix of synergistic retail, eating/drinking establishments, office, institutional, and residential uses, and as a citywide and regional destination.
- 4-G-2** Ensure that streets and open spaces form the framework for development, with the public realm designed to be accessible from the surroundings, and designed to enhance pedestrian movement.
- 4-G-3** Encourage a mix of uses that is compatible with and caters to the needs of the community and region.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 4-I-1** Develop a street grid that provides direct connections to Church Lane and San Pablo Avenue, and ensures easy pedestrian movement through the site. Block lengths should generally be between 150 and 300 feet.
- 4-I-2** Provide a community gathering space at least $\frac{1}{4}$ -acre in size and community open space along San Pablo Creek. Develop a “main street” with active commercial uses at the ground level linking the two.
- 4-I-3** Ensure that the community gathering space is surrounded by active uses. Program the community gathering space with activities and events (e.g. farmers’ market, music performances, etc.) to keep the area bustling.
- 4-I-4** Ensure that development on the site includes a large open turf area as well as at least one programmed area such as a small amphitheater, a garden, or a public art plaza.
- 4-I-5** Provide direct and visible connections between San Pablo Avenue and the central community gathering space.
- 4-I-6** Line San Pablo Avenue, the new “main street” and any other principal street frontages with commercial uses.
- 4-I-7** Incorporate a parking structure within the site that can be accessed directly from San Pablo Avenue and can be used by office, medical, and retail uses on the site and in conjunction with adjacent uses, if desired. Ensure that the ground level of the parking structure is occupied with active pedestrian-oriented uses.



Outdoor active uses, including dining and other pedestrian amenities should be located next to the open space and plazas.



Existing view of Mission Plaza.

4-I-8 Maintain buildings of generally three to four stories, with lower heights in certain portions of the site, and reaching five or six stories in selected locations, stepped away from the project's edges.

4-I-9 Encourage restaurants to provide outdoor dining along public plazas, open spaces, and Wildcat Creek.

4-I-10 Ensure that monument signage does not interfere with traffic visibility along the Avenue.

Mission Plaza

At 1.6 acres, Mission Plaza is the smallest of the key opportunity sites. However, it is located strategically at visible crossroads and adjacent to Contra Costa College, and can be efficiently developed to serve the student population with appropriate housing types and commercial services. Currently, half of the triangular block is owned by the San Pablo Redevelopment Agency and half is privately owned. For this reason, development options for the site are limited. In a potential site plan (illustrated in Figure 4-3) the site is lined with active commercial uses along San Pablo Avenue. Residential uses are located both above the commercial development and at the rear of the block along Rumrill Boulevard. Shared surface parking is located in the interior of the block. At the north end of the site, two adjacent commercial spaces straddle the property line, and a through street provides both access to the surface parking lot and additional street frontage for the commercial spaces.

Due to this site's proximity to the college, the residential units are designed to accommodate students. As shown in the illustration, units are small (about 600 square feet per unit) and the parking requirements are reduced. Additionally, the commercial frontage along San Pablo Avenue and the small mid-block plaza are intended to cater to the student population. Streetscape improvements and landscaping are particularly important along this block to foster a comfortable environment for students as well as other residents and employees in the area.



Conceptual illustration of Mission Plaza site in surrounding context.



View of existing Mission Plaza site.



Conceptual view of Mission Plaza, looking north from El Portal Drive.

Figure 4-3: Mission Plaza Potential Site Plan





Mission Plaza should have a fine-grain scale with service and eating establishments that cater to a student population.

GUIDING POLICIES

- 4-G-4** Develop the Mission Plaza sites with ground floor commercial uses designed to capitalize on the student population, and residential uses above.
- 4-G-5** Explore public-private partnership to enable both public- and privately-owned portions of the site to be developed cohesively and efficiently.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 4-I-11** Ensure that the San Pablo Avenue frontage of the block is lined with commercial spaces.
- 4-I-12** Capitalize on the block's narrow corners to maximize visibility of commercial spaces.
- 4-I-13** Design parking in a way that minimizes street frontage and visibility from the street. Entrances to parking should be located away from San Pablo Avenue.
- 4-I-14** If the site is developed as student housing or in partnership with Contra Costa College, establish a shared parking agreement with the college to accommodate student vehicles.
- 4-I-15** Incorporate small landscaped plazas that are visible and accessible from San Pablo Avenue to heighten the comfort and safety of the block, and accommodate outdoor seating.

Towne Center

The existing 22.5-acre site Towne Center shopping center site is one of the largest contiguous opportunity sites in the Planning Area. The shopping center is currently vital; however, the large area and great visibility and access from I-80 offer potential for better visibility of commercial uses, more spaces with street frontage, and more efficient connectivity to both San Pablo Dam Road and San Pablo Avenue. Together, these features can help establish a safe, efficient, and attractive experience for pedestrians, while also promoting access to local businesses. Looking ahead, there are opportunities to capitalize on proximity to the Casino, which attracts a large visitor population, by focusing on apparel, restaurants, and other establishments that will allow visitors to linger. There are also opportunities to develop eating establishments for workers and visitors at the Doctors Medical Center and surrounding medical offices. The Specific Plan envisions large blocks for the areas that accommodate major retail spaces, while minimizing the visibility of parking from the major thoroughfares. Figure 4-4 shows a through street extending from San Pablo Dam Road to Willow Road at the northwest of the site, as well as two more vehicular roads that extend from a major roadway to the interior of the site.

Most critically, this concept plan shows a pedestrian-only pathway that extends directly from the crosswalk in front of the Casino through to a new hotel development at the back of the site. This pathway serves as the primary axis for the Entertainment Overlay District: the route begins at San Pablo Avenue; introduces needed foot traffic to large commercial spaces; passes by open spaces and surface parking; and passes within 100 feet of the site's structured parking facility. Landscaping and street plantings establish a pedestrian-scale and character that match its significance as the central spine for the site's pedestrian activity. Structured parking is located along San Pablo Dam Road, and at the back of the site near Willow Road to provide vehicle access while minimizing curb cuts.



Existing views of Towne Center site.



Towne Center development should occupy the street edge and provide a pleasant, active pedestrian environment.



Conceptual illustration of Towne Center (top), Big Lots/Food Maxx (middle) and Diaz Plaza (bottom) sites within surrounding context.

Figure 4-4: Towne Center Potential Site Plan



GUIDING POLICY

- 4-G-6** Support continued operation of the Towne Center. At such time as the site is expanded or reused, seek development of regional retail and a high-intensity entertainment hub at this prominent site at the corner of San Pablo Avenue and San Pablo Dam Road, with heightened accessibility and walkability throughout the site.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 4-I-16** To the extent possible, locate commercial uses at the street edge along San Pablo Dam Road and San Pablo Avenue.
-
- 4-I-17** Establish vehicular through roads on the site, connecting Willow Road to San Pablo Avenue and San Pablo Dam Road.
-
- 4-I-18** Locate the most active retail and commercial uses, and uses that complement the Casino, toward the front of the site along Evens Avenue to create a contiguous and recognizable entertainment district.
-
- 4-I-19** Locate the tallest buildings toward the front of the site along Evens Avenue to establish a strong street frontage and gateway to the city.
-
- 4-I-20** Locate surface parking and parking structures toward the back of the site to minimize their visibility from the major thoroughfares.
-
- 4-I-21** Where parking structures front onto principal streets and pedestrian connections, line structures with active uses at the ground level.
-
- 4-I-22** Maintain consistent streetscape and street tree schemes on pedestrian paths and vehicular roads throughout the site.
-
- 4-I-23** Promote location of entertainment uses at the site in the portion designated with Entertainment Overlay.
-
- 4-I-24** Encourage development of the RV/mobile home site off of San Pablo Avenue and Grace Lane to provide an expanded and improved presence of the Towne Center site along San Pablo Avenue.

Big Lots/Food Maxx

Located within the South San Pablo Avenue Focus Area, this 10.9-acre site is the location of the existing Big Lots and Food Maxx commercial centers. As shown in Figure 4-5, the Specific Plan envisions re-orienting the existing development by placing buildings at the street edge and parking in the rear. Access to surface parking is provided from San Pablo Avenue, but visibility from the Avenue is limited to encourage a more consistent street wall. Furthermore, this concept plan proposes “daylighting” Wildcat Creek across the site’s width, to create an enhanced pedestrian walkway through new commercial development and a new community amenity. This concept establishes a clear commercial street character for this important gateway location. Furthermore, it will reduce the perceived width of San Pablo Avenue and allow for an attractive building-to-street relationship with pedestrian amenities and gateway features.

GUIDING POLICY

- 4-G-7** Allow continued operation of the establishments at the Big Lots/Food Maxx site. Promote intensification of existing uses. At such time when the site is redeveloped, promote regional commercial uses and an active street frontage along San Pablo Avenue, with heightened pedestrian accessibility and parking located in the rear of the block

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 4-I-25** Locate commercial uses at the street edge along San Pablo Dam Road and San Pablo Avenue. Corners should be emphasized though height and/or distinct architectural features.
- 4-I-26** Locate surface parking to minimize visibility from San Pablo Dam Road and San Pablo Avenue.
- 4-I-27** Establish landscaped pedestrian walkways alongside or through commercial development.
- 4-I-28** If feasible, move the undergrounded creek above ground across all or part of the block as an added landscape feature.
- 4-I-29** Encourage freeway oriented signage to improve regional visibility of the site.



Existing view of Big Lots/Food Maxx site.



Development at Big Lots/Food Maxx site should emphasize the corner at Kirk Lane and San Pablo Avenue.



Daylighting Wildcat Creek would provide a focal point for new development.

Figure 4-5: Big Lots/Food Maxx Potential Site Plan



Dias Plaza

This 2.8-acre wedge-shaped site, located in the South San Pablo Avenue Focus Area, provides opportunities to expand mixed-use development. The Specific Plan calls for this site to be designated as Commercial Mixed Use, which allows for residential as well as commercial uses (with minimum commercial uses as established in Chapter 2). Therefore, the concept plan shown in Figure 4-6 includes commercial uses along the San Pablo Avenue street frontage, as well as a separate development with commercial uses at the ground floor and residential units above on the remainder of the site.

Similar to the concept plan for the Big Lots/Food Maxx site, the Specific Plan calls for bringing commercial development to the front of the site, and providing access to parking off side streets—in this case, Montoya Avenue. A landscaping and signage scheme will draw traffic down Montoya Avenue to the east end of the site to parking and ground-floor retail, with residential units and common open space above.

GUIDING POLICY

- 4-G-8** At the Dias Plaza site, promote commercial development along San Pablo Avenue and mixed-use development at the rear of the site.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 4-I-30** Locate a commercial space along the block's street frontage on San Pablo Avenue.
- 4-I-31** Provide pedestrian and vehicle access from Montoya Avenue to prevent curb cuts along San Pablo Avenue.



Dias Plaza includes an Auto Zone and Smart & Final with surface parking.

Figure 4-6: Dias Plaza Potential Site Plan



4.2 STREETScape DESIGN

Streetscape design affects the physical and perceived comfort and safety of the public realm. The streetscape—the elements within a right-of-way, including trees, sidewalks, streetlights, and crosswalks—is the most critical part of the urban environment for pedestrians. It influences the identity of an area and defines the pedestrian experience along a street. This section establishes a comprehensive streetscape scheme for the Planning Area that reflects the various environments along San Pablo Avenue. This scheme is composed of: the Streetscape Plan, which addresses the entire right-of-way; the Building to Street Relationship, which focuses on the interface between the right-of-way and buildings fronting onto it; and Wayfinding and Visibility, which provides additional design details that enhance access and comfort of the street environment.

As its base, the Specific Plan's streetscape scheme draws on the "Pedestrian Priority Zones" and "Complete Streets" policies established by the San Pablo General Plan. Chapter 5 of the General Plan identifies "Pedestrian Priority Zones" in which streetscape improvements are of particular importance. These zones are also discussed in Chapter 3 of this Specific Plan and indicated on Figure 3-3. They are defined as areas on which high volumes of pedestrian traffic are encouraged and accommodated along the sidewalk. The majority of the street frontage along the San Pablo Avenue corridor falls within a Pedestrian Priority Zone. The design of pedestrian crossings within these zones is prioritized, and, in some locations, well-protected mid-block crosswalks may be appropriate to create more direct walking routes and slow vehicle speeds.

The San Pablo General Plan also emphasizes the concept of "Complete Streets," as described in Chapter 3 of this Plan. The Complete Streets concept is meant to act as a guide for developing specific streetscape improvements along mixed-use boulevards like San Pablo Avenue.

Streetscape Plan

The San Pablo Avenue Streetscape Plan focuses foremost on the streetscape priorities that were specified by the community at public workshops. Community input emphasized improvements to pedestrian comfort and safety, including transit-supportive amenities like bus shelters, benches, planter boxes, pedestrian refuges at mid-points of wide crosswalks, and improved street lighting. Additional items the community wanted to see included trash receptacles, security cameras, enhanced landscaping, and the undergrounding of electrical lines.

Equally important to pedestrian comfort is accessibility and ease of movement along the San Pablo Avenue corridor. The Specific Plan calls for minimizing curb cuts and consolidating driveways into development, as well as traffic calming

measures such as curb extensions, painted crosswalks, widened sidewalks, and street furniture in Pedestrian Priority Zones. The quality and safety of street crossings are especially important in ensuring accessibility and comfort in navigating the corridor, particularly as existing curb-to-curb widths range between 90 and 100 feet. Depending on the location along the corridor, various measures may be incorporated to improve pedestrian access and comfort.

The streetscape plan illustrates roadway and public realm improvements for three segments of San Pablo Avenue: San Pablo Avenue North (between Rivers Street and Brookside Drive); San Pablo Avenue Central (between Brookside Drive and San Pablo Dam Road); and San Pablo Avenue South (south of San Pablo Dam Road). The Streetscape Concept, Figure 4-7, highlights these three segments of San Pablo Avenue, and further identifies the areas near activity centers where signature streetscape and landscape improvements are most critical. The street sections and plans that follow, figures 4-8 through 4-13, illustrate specific streetscape and landscape improvements.



Existing central San Pablo Avenue streetscape (top). Conceptual view of San Pablo Avenue streetscape at Circle-S site (at left of image, bottom).

As shown in Figure 5-1 of the General Plan's Circulation Element, these three segments of roadway are all classified as Mixed Use Boulevards; however, as each section supports a unique urban environment, each has a unique streetscape plan. These illustrations are therefore consistent with the general typology presented in the General Plan, but offer additional specificity by location. They are, however, conceptual only, as right-of-way width and desired sidewalk width varies slightly within each segment of San Pablo Avenue. Cross sections for more specific segments of San Pablo Avenue may therefore be required before implementation.



Figure 4-7: Streetscape Concept

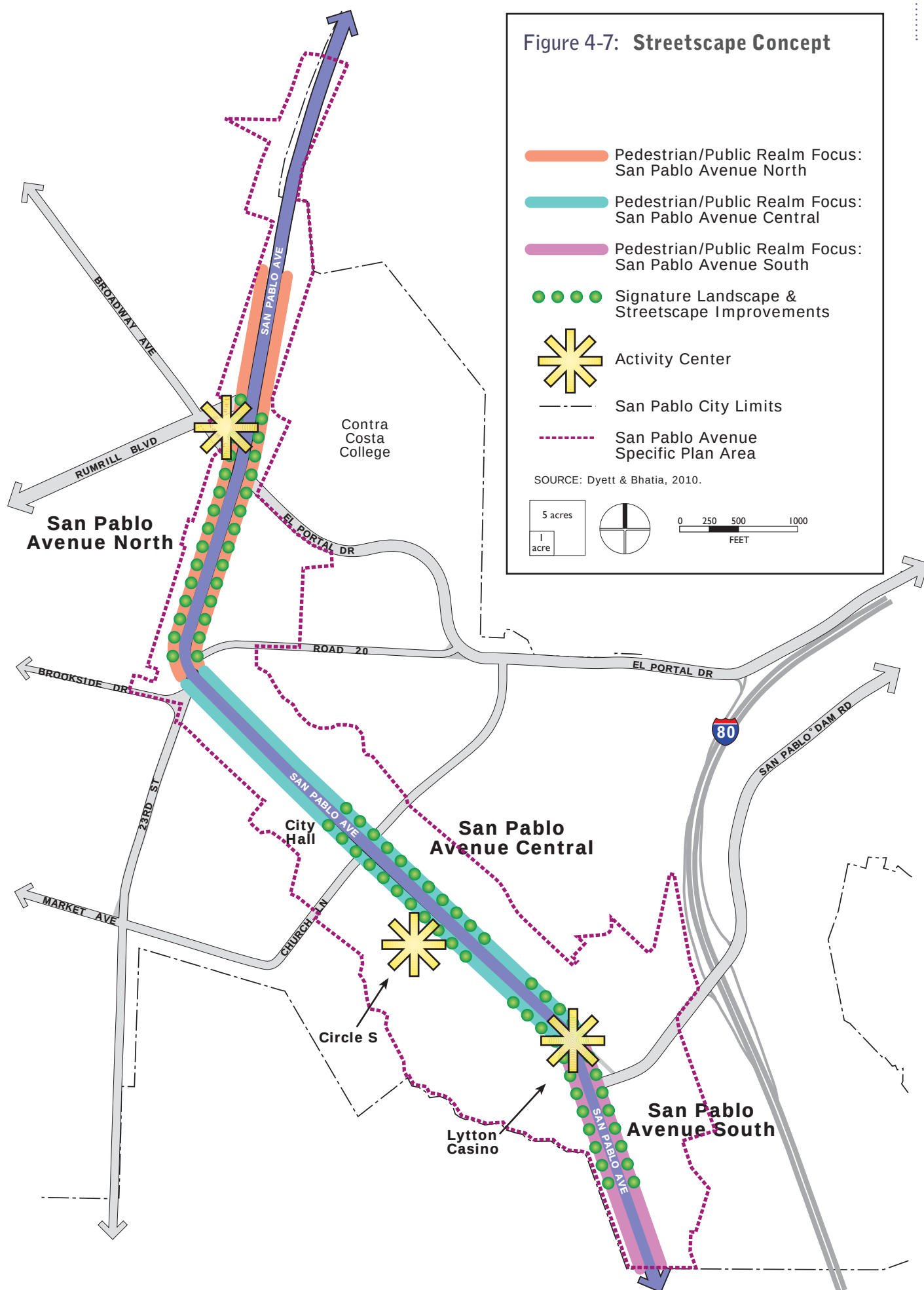
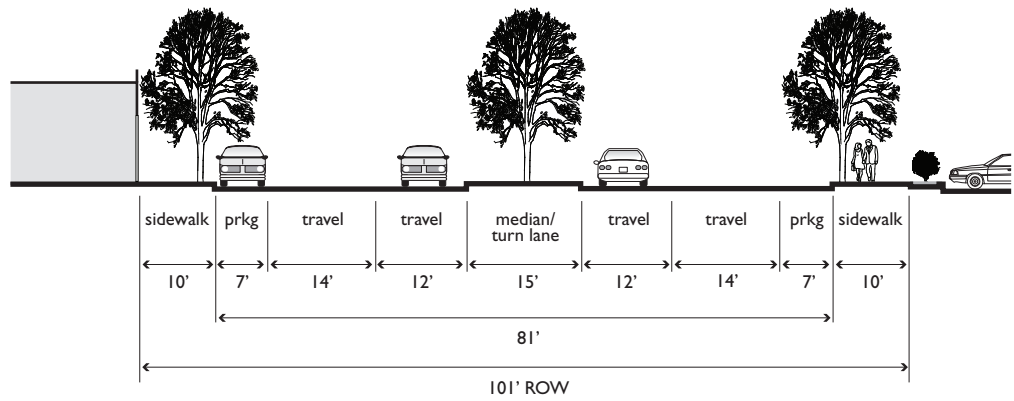


Figure 4-8: **San Pablo**
North – Section and Plan

San Pablo Avenue North - Existing Street Design



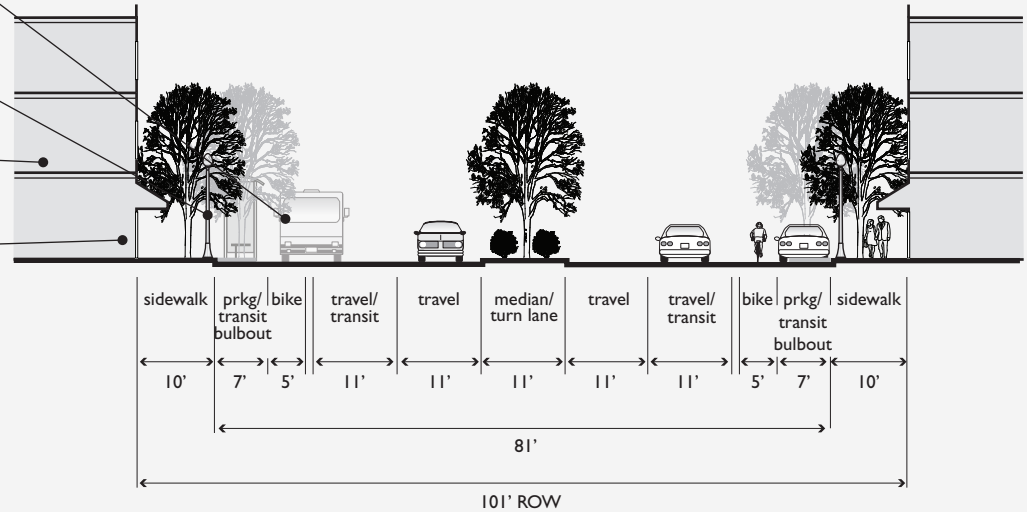
San Pablo Avenue North - Proposed Street Design

Five-foot continuous
bike lanes with one-foot
buffer

Pedestrian-scale lighting in
a classic or historic style

Two- to four-story buildings
with no building setback

Pedestrian-scale facade
articulation at the ground
level



Paths that lead to parking
behind buildings

Tree planters in the parallel
parking lane, spaced every
three stalls

Specialty paving to
distinguish parking lane

Small plazas that are visible
and accessible from the
right-of-way

Bus bulbout and bus shelter

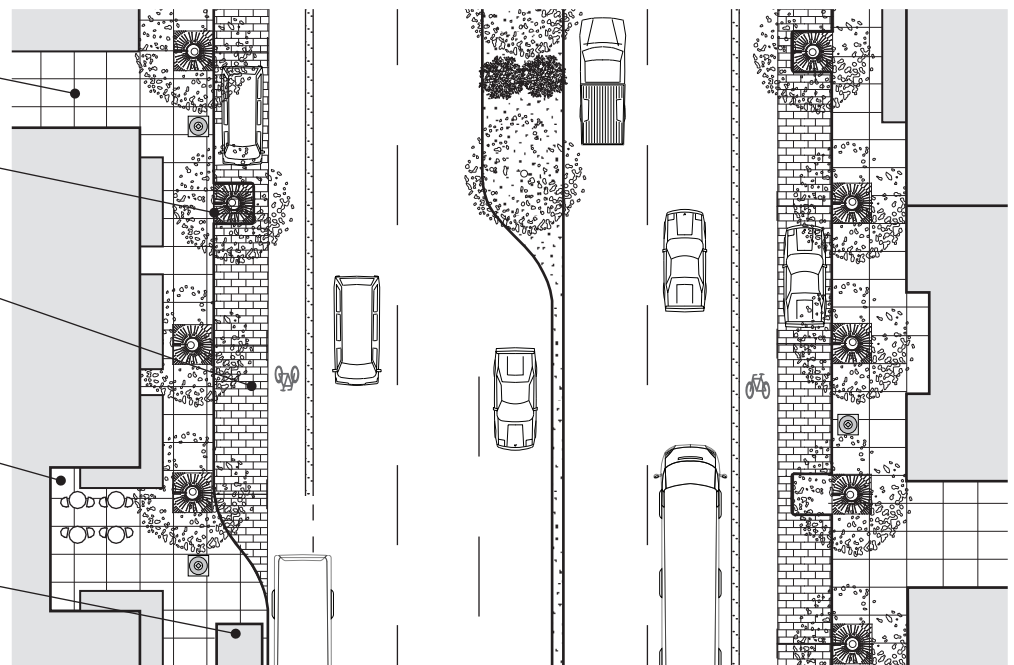


Figure 4-9: San Pablo North – Perspective



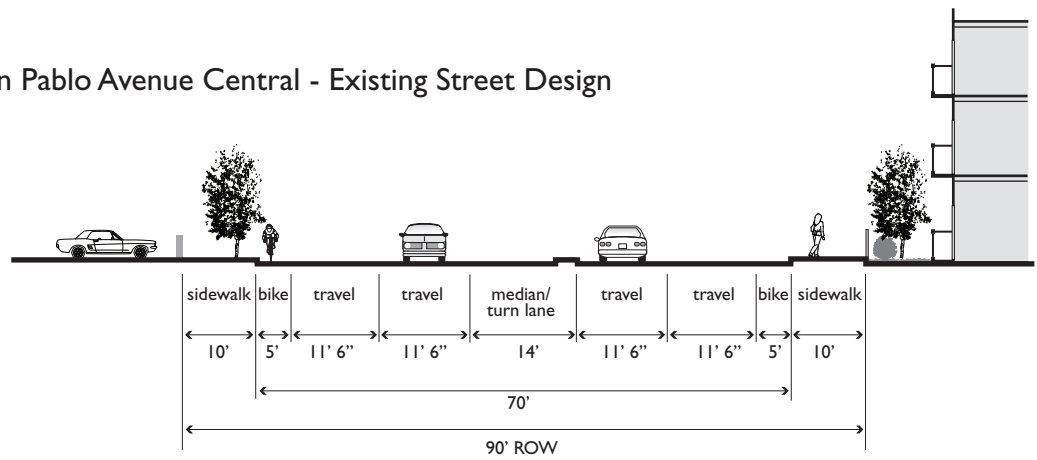
Streetscape improvements like the San Pablo Avenue Gateway Arch add to the area's accessibility, but inconsistent median and sidewalk plantings and the lack of bike lanes detract (left). Deep building setbacks, inconsistent landscaping, and parking located in the front setback detract from the streetscape (middle). Blank walls and long crosswalks make the area uncomfortable for pedestrians (right).



The Specific Plan emphasizes establishing a consistent street edge with buildings and active uses along the sidewalks, a cohesive landscape design scheme with a planted median and wide sidewalks.

Figure 4-10: San Pablo Central – Section and Plan

San Pablo Avenue Central - Existing Street Design



San Pablo Avenue Central - Proposed Street Design

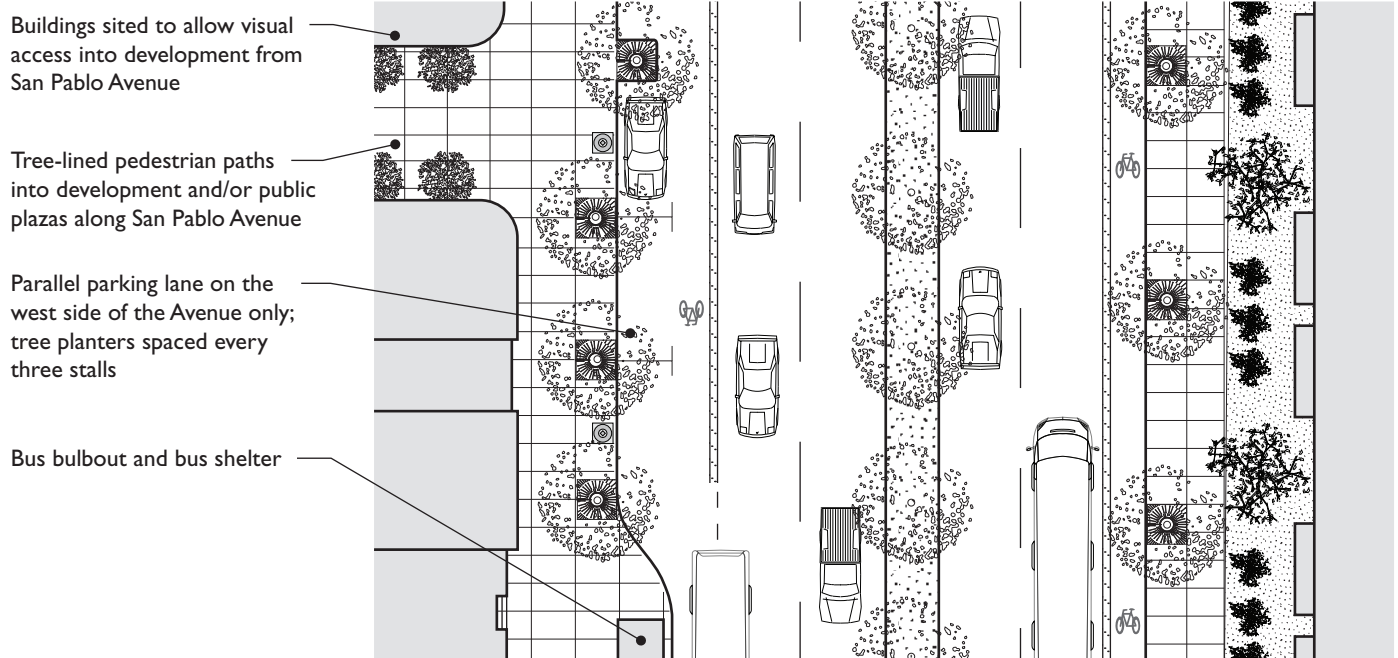
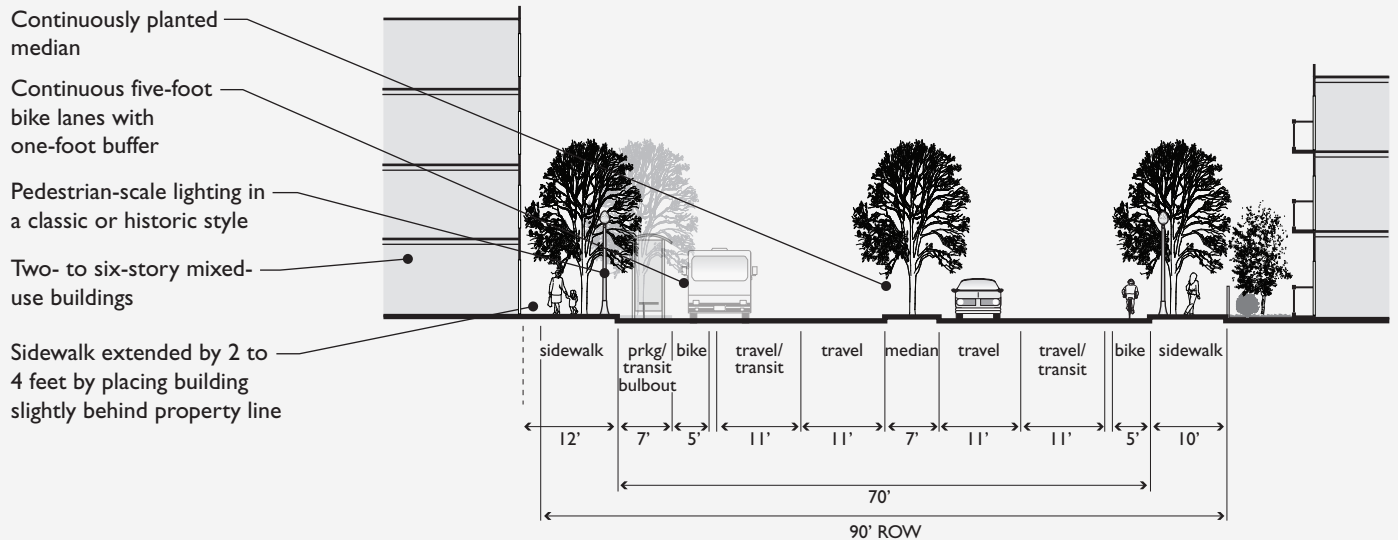


Figure 4-11: San Pablo Central – Perspective



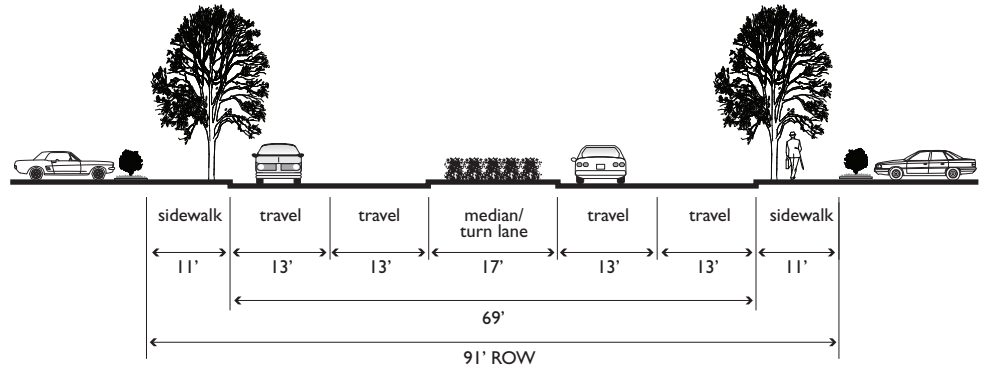
Five lanes of traffic, no street parking, and an unplanted median widen the perceived right-of-way (left). Narrow sidewalks and small street trees create an uncomfortable pedestrian environment (middle). Low-intensity development with parking in the front and wide side setbacks establishes a weak corner at the intersection of Church Lane (right).



The Specific Plan emphasizes wider sidewalks with shade-providing street trees, bicycle lanes, and a planted median. As encouraged along the entire corridor, development is brought to the street edge.

San Pablo Avenue South - Existing Street Design

Figure 4-12: San Pablo South – Section and Plan



San Pablo Avenue South - Proposed Street Design

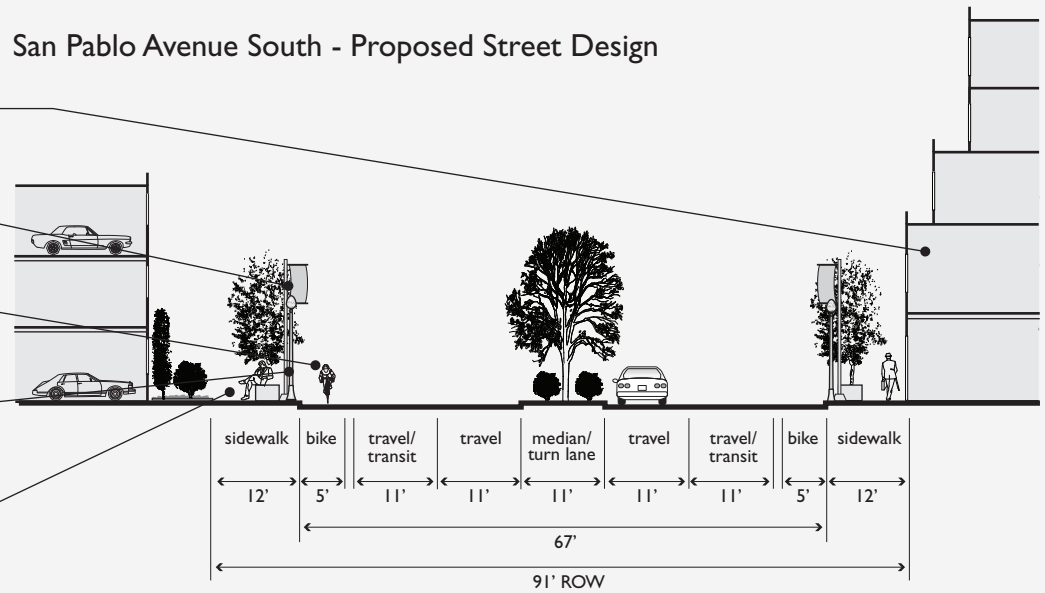
Two- to four-story buildings
(up to six stories along the
Avenue)

Gateway features such as
banners or public art

Five-foot continuous bike
lanes with one-foot buffer

Pedestrian-scale lighting in
a classic or historic style

Raised planter boxes that
also serve as benches



Landscape buffers between
the street and surface or
structured parking

Five-foot continuous bike
lanes with one-foot buffer

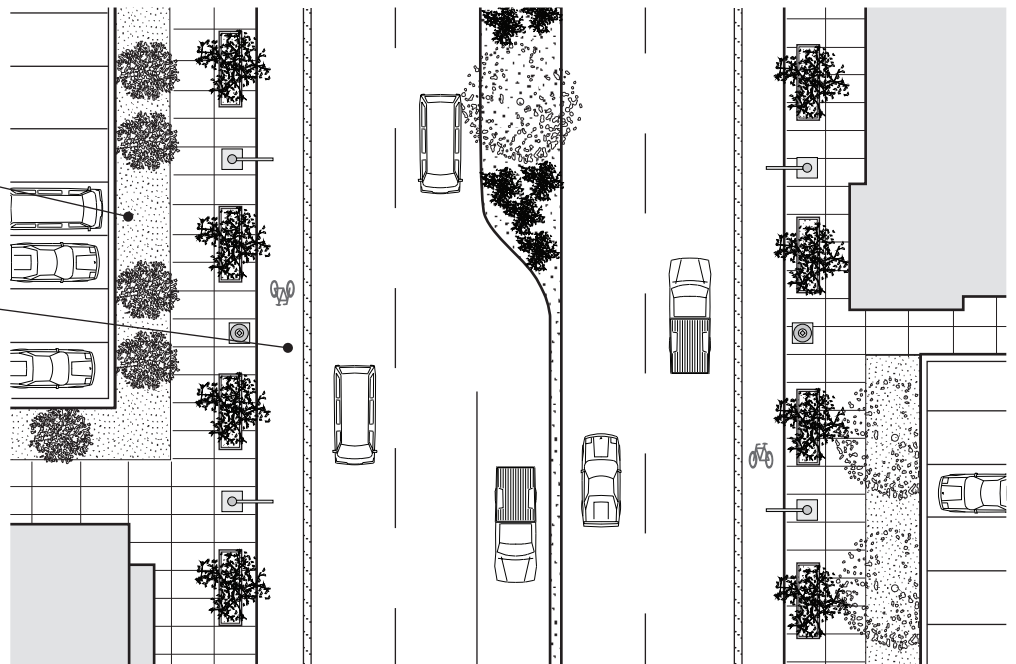


Figure 4-13: San Pablo South – Perspective



Signage and lighting in this area is a hodge-podge. A consistent streetscape scheme would help establish an attractive gateway (left). Drive aisles are currently located between the street and most existing development (middle). Street parking, sidewalk furniture, and improved crosswalks would help establish this area as a regional destination (right).



The Specific Plan establishes a streetscape scheme that includes street trees, planted median, and enhanced pedestrian amenities and signage. Buildings line the street edge with active and engaging frontage.

GUIDING POLICIES

- 4-G-9** Develop a memorable streetscape identity for the San Pablo Avenue corridor as a “boulevard” with consistent streetscape elements throughout its extent in San Pablo, with distinguishing elements at major activity centers and focus areas.
-
- 4-G-10** Foster a walkable, accessible, and safe street environment that connects people to transit, housing, employment, and major destinations in the Planning Area.
-
- 4-G-11** Design the streetscape at the pedestrian scale with wide sidewalks, bike lanes, and amenities for pedestrians and cyclists such as bike racks, comfortable street furnishings, sufficient and attractive lighting, and street trees for shading and aesthetics.
-
- 4-G-12** Improve the visual character and quality of the San Pablo Avenue corridor and highlight gateways onto the corridor.

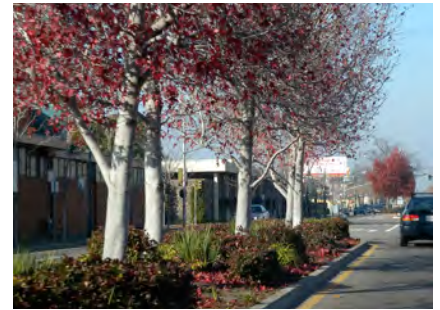
IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 4-I-32** Ensure that sidewalks are continuous on all streets throughout the Planning Area.
-
- 4-I-33** Where possible, provide curb bulb-outs at street corners and mid-block crossings to calm traffic and heighten pedestrian visibility and comfort.
-
- 4-I-34** Provide greater pedestrian safety by utilizing street medians for pedestrian refuge across wide street crossings.
-
- 4-I-35** Design new streets in the Planning Area—internal to mixed-use developments—to be pedestrian-oriented and scaled, rather than wide and automobile oriented.
-
- 4-I-36** Support local utility providers in the undergrounding of utilities. Work with PG&E and other public agencies to underground existing overhead utility lines.

San Pablo Avenue

4-I-37 Create a clear identity for San Pablo Avenue by developing a comprehensive master streetscape plan that:

- Provides consistent tree planting pattern that knits the corridor together, with particular focus at Pedestrian Priority Zones.
- Provides wide sidewalks, pedestrian-scaled lighting, shade, planters, and benches.
- Maintains on-street parking where existing, and adds on-street parking on the west side in San Pablo Avenue Central area (along Circle-S site), to enhance easy access to stores and services.
- Visually highlights crosswalks with a change in paving material or striping, signage, and/or signalization.
- Provides landscaped medians that alternate as turn lanes where the width of the street permits and provide pedestrian refuge at mid-block crossings.
- Emphasizes gateways with public art, special signage, banners, and landscaping.
- Highlights access to 23rd Street with special wayfinding, landscaping, and enhanced crosswalks to visually connect the two areas.

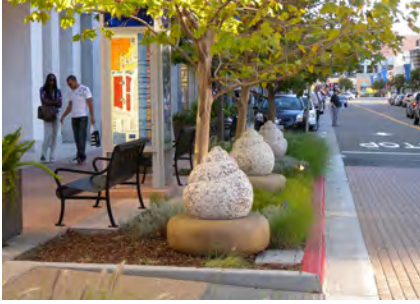


4-I-37. Highlighted crosswalks and planted medians will improve pedestrian safety along the Avenue.

4-I-38 Undertake improvements of each segment of San Pablo Avenue in accordance with the diagrams:

- Figure 4-7 for San Pablo Avenue North (between Rivers Street and Brookside Drive);
- Figure 4-9 for San Pablo Avenue Central (between Brookside Drive and San Pablo Dam Road); and
- Figure 4-11 for San Pablo Avenue South (south of San Pablo Dam Road).

These diagrams are consistent with some of the recent streetscape improvements undertaken by the City, maintaining the existing curb-line and sidewalk tree planting line throughout most of the corridor.



4-I-39. Highlight the parking aisle through special paving and landscaped planters.



4-I-39. Highlight the parking aisle through special paving and landscaped planters.



4-I-42. Provide ample sidewalks in pedestrian Priority zones as well as special paving and amenities.

4-I-39 Design parking aisles along San Pablo Avenue with special features that reduce the perceived width of the street:

- Install specialty paving to distinguish the parking aisle from the travel lanes.
- Incorporate tree planters in the parking aisles, spaced every three stalls.

4-I-40 On road segments with an on-street parking aisle, provide seven-foot wide bus bulb-outs at transit stops within the parking aisle. This will ease the re-merging of buses into traffic and allow space for bus shelters and other amenities;

4-I-41 Employ the use of rain gardens in planting areas and curb extensions to provide retention basins and improved stormwater management along San Pablo Avenue.

4-I-42 Ensure that streetscape improvements consistent with the Specific Plan's goals are part of any development approval.

Pedestrian Priority Zones

4-I-43 Require sidewalks to be a minimum eight feet wide throughout Pedestrian Priority Zones, as shown in Figure 3-2. In some locations, this may entail setting new development further back from the property line.

4-I-44 Require sidewalks to be equipped with ample pedestrian amenities. Amenities should serve to highlight and enhance transit stops.

4-I-45 Prioritize crosswalk improvements within Pedestrian Priority Zones.

Building-to-Street Relationship

As new and infill development occurs along the San Pablo Avenue corridor, it will be important to establish a well-defined public realm that provides a separate, comfortable environment for pedestrians. This will be accomplished not only through streetscape improvements but also through quality site planning and a carefully designed interplay between the built environment and the street. Elements like alcoves and plazas, awnings, windows, entries, and building massing all shape and define the public realm and are thus key elements of the building-to-street relationship. The design of the building-to-street relationship also affects the ease of navigation, the availability of shade, the space for walking or outdoor seating, and pedestrians' overall sense of place. Additionally, strategically locating building types that serve persons with disabilities close to pathways to transit and key public destinations is essential to ensuring accessibility for all community members. Many of these elements are described in more detail in Section 4.3: Development Standards and Building Design Guidelines.

GUIDING POLICIES

- 4-G-13** Encourage a building-to-street relationship that establishes a pedestrian-oriented environment along San Pablo Avenue and within all mixed-use developments.
-
- 4-G-14** Design building facades at a pedestrian scale to heighten pedestrian comfort and access, and to create an active and inviting public realm.
-
- 4-G-15** Accommodate community members of all ages and ability in design of the public realm, through design elements such as providing minimal level changes and at-grade or ramped entries.

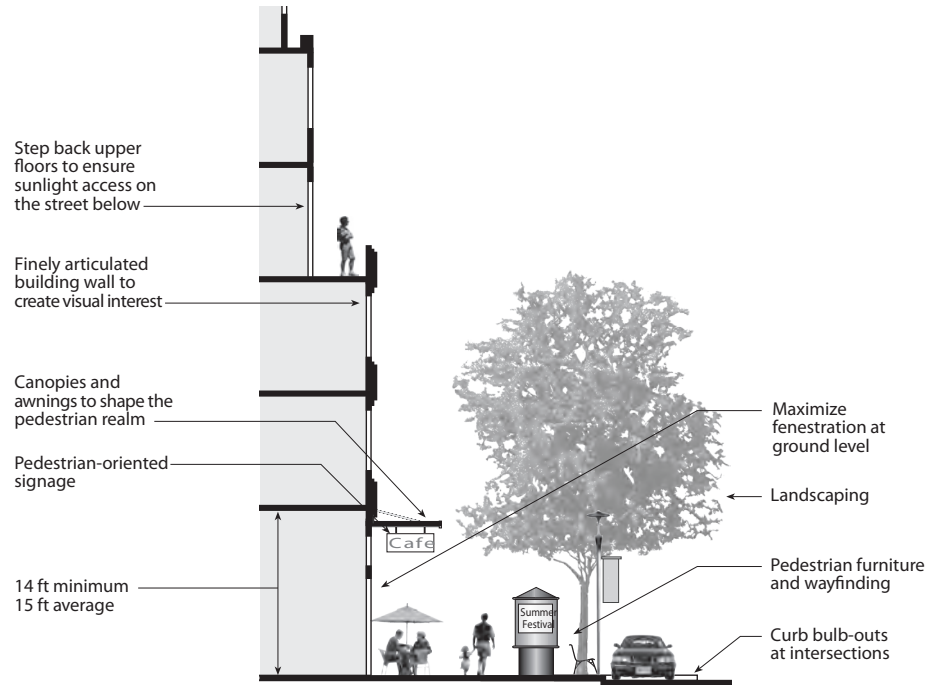
IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 4-I-46** Maintain a consistent street frontage along the length of San Pablo Avenue, with development brought to the property line and parking located at the side or rear of parcels (see Table 4-1 for specific development standards). Sidewalks, street trees, and pedestrian amenities are to be consistent and included within the right-of-way.



4-I-45. Bring buildings to the street edge with active frontage to engage the pedestrian realm.

- 4-I-47** Within Pedestrian Priority Zones, require building facades to provide ample entries, fenestration, alcoves, architectural articulation, awnings/canopies, and other pedestrian amenities. Entrances should be signified with architectural detailing and signage.



4-I-47. Ensure that outdoor uses maintain adequate space on the sidewalks for circulation and other pedestrian amenities.

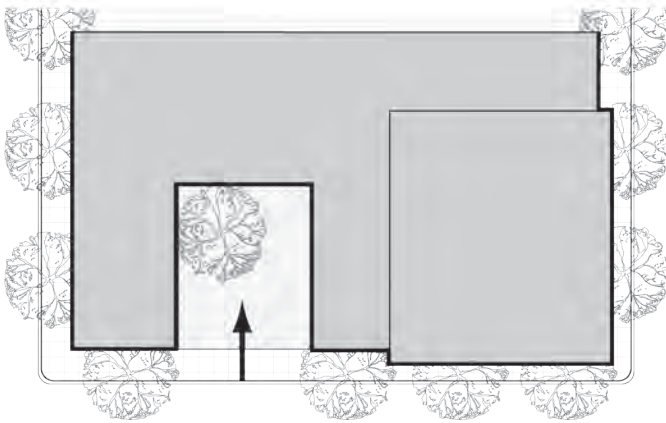
- 4-I-48** Within Pedestrian Priority Zones, allow dining establishments to provide outdoor seating within the right-of-way provided minimum sidewalk width is maintained.

- 4-I-49** Provide wide sidewalks for areas that allow outdoor seating and uses. Ensure that these areas are buffered from the street edge through landscaping or low physical barriers such as bollards or planters.

- 4-I-50** For buildings with street frontage on San Pablo Avenue, ensure that the primary entrance is on San Pablo Avenue, visible from the right-of-way, and at-grade or accessible by ramps. Secondary entrances may be located on side streets or may be internal to master-planned developments on large parcels.

4-I-51 In master-planned developments, site buildings to allow visual access into the development from San Pablo Avenue. The general program and internal circulation should be discernable from the principal corridor.

4-I-52 Where appropriate, incorporate small plazas that are visible and accessible from the right-of-way along commercial building front-ages in Pedestrian Priority Zones. Locate open space and public plaza entrances and pathways at the street level and ensure that the grade differential between open space and the sidewalk does not exceed two (2) feet.



4-I-53 Within the Entertainment Overlay District, provide banners and raised planter boxes between the building and street to emphasize the pedestrian nature of the area and identify it as a gateway to the corridor.

4-I-54 In mixed-use areas with high-density residential development, provide clearly-marked at-grade or ramped pathways from shared entrances to the right-of-way to improve visibility of entrances and reduce curb cuts.

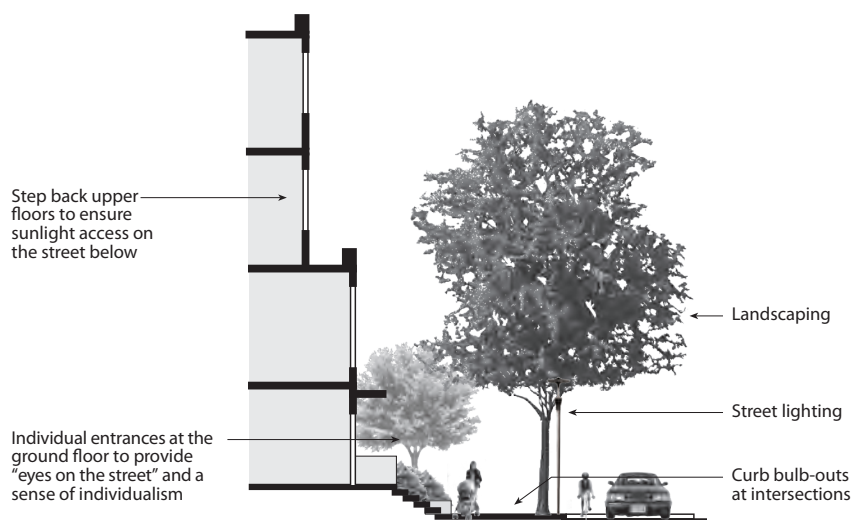
4-I-55 For residential uses, orient development so that the primary entrance faces San Pablo Avenue or onto the highest-trafficked street frontage. Common entrances must be at grade or accessible from the sidewalk and parking areas via ramps.

4-I-56 Require development within the Residential Mixed Use area to be oriented to 22nd Street as well as to San Pablo Avenue.



4-I-56. Landscaping should provide a buffer between the street and development while entrances activate the sidewalk edge.

4-I-57 Where residential buildings front onto San Pablo Avenue, provide landscaped setbacks with low attractive hedges, flowering shrubs, and trees planted in the same configuration as the street trees to create a pedestrian colonnade along the sidewalk.



Wayfinding, Visibility and Safety

The quality of the pedestrian experience is heavily influenced by a person's understanding of and comfort with the circulation system and public realm. Aspects of environmental design such as wayfinding and visibility facilitate access to key destinations by providing direction and a sense of safety and comfort. These concepts received consistent support from the community throughout the planning process: community members emphasized the need for signage and wayfinding along the corridor, particularly in relation to transit and neighborhood services, as well as ample pedestrian-scaled lighting.

Wayfinding

Wayfinding elements consist of directional signage as well as physical markers such as specific streetscape elements, landmarks and landscaping. Providing signage and cohesive wayfinding elements throughout a community contributes to an overall sense of ownership and comfort for residents and visitors. It facilitates access to key destinations by providing an understanding of place and location, and also provides direction to services such as transit and public uses.

Visibility

Visibility is an essential element of accessibility and placemaking. This includes easy identification of key destinations and transit stations, lighting along roads and public spaces, and signs that are designed so as not to obscure destinations and access points. Visibility is also essential for the safe interactions of motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists: visibility measures allow pedestrians to safely see oncoming traffic, particularly at mid-block crossings, and also for motorists and bicyclists to be aware of pedestrian crossings. Lastly, security cameras at select public spaces and transit stops can provide an added level of safety for pedestrian comfort.

GUIDING POLICIES

4-G-16 Ensure that residents, workers, and visitors can easily navigate the San Pablo Avenue corridor and Planning Area with clear and highly visible wayfinding and other signage.

4-G-17 Design public spaces and streetscapes to maximize visibility and safety for pedestrians.



4-I-57. Gateways, signage, and public art should create identity along San Pablo Avenue.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 4-I-58** Develop a wayfinding and signage scheme that is consistent along the San Pablo Avenue corridor. Use public art and street elements such as banners and street furniture to reinforce the street's identity.
-
- 4-I-59** Maximize lighting for safety, especially along connections between transit facilities, in public plazas, pedestrian-oriented destinations, parking areas, and other major public destinations.
-
- 4-I-60** Locate wayfinding elements such as kiosks and directional signage at key public destinations, including the library, City Hall, and entrances to the College, to help orient visitors.
-
- 4-I-61** Provide signage that specifically announces the San Pablo Avenue transit hub and directs people to appropriate pathways and transit stops.
-
- 4-I-62** Consider placement of security cameras in areas that may have limited visibility from major rights-of-way, such as transit stops located near the college off of Mission Bell Drive.
-
- 4-I-63** Identify gateways with signage and public art to help orient and greet visitors.

4.3 DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

This section describes the overall scale and design character of buildings within the Planning Area. Elements such as block length, building massing, placement of entries and windows, and lighting can either invite or deter pedestrians, ultimately affecting overall accessibility and preference for an area. Long, uninterrupted stretches of walls without doors, windows, or articulation can alienate and discourage pedestrians from accessing an area. Building facades with limited shading during the day and lighting during the night can affect overall pedestrian comfort and safety, as can the quality and availability of open spaces and parking. Furthermore, building design must accommodate persons with disabilities by providing entrances to living spaces and key services at the ground level. The standards and guidelines presented in this section provide the framework for a pleasant, appealing built environment that will attract residents, workers, and visitors alike to the San Pablo Avenue corridor.

Development Standards

Development standards for the San Pablo Specific Plan Planning Area are presented below in Table 4-1. Compliance with these standards is required of all new development. The design guidelines and accompanying diagrams that follow are recommendations that will guide development project review and the preparation of master planned developments.

TABLE 4-1 DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS BY LAND USE

	RESIDENTIAL (MEDIUM- AND HIGH- DENSITY)	RESIDENTIAL MIXED USE	MIXED USE CENTER (NORTH AND SOUTH)	COMMERCIAL MIXED USE	COMMERCIAL (NEIGHBORHOOD AND REGIONAL)
SITE DESIGN					
Block Length	Maximum 400’ as measured along front property line				
Mid Block Pathways	Minimum width 30’ from building face to building face				
Maximum Lot Coverage	70% for medium density; 75% for high density	90%			
Minimum Building Frontage	A minimum 70% of building frontage shall be maintained along the required front setback for all parcels with a minimum 50’ frontage width				
Front Setback	5-10’ on San Pablo Avenue, Arterials or Avenues; and 15’ minimum on Local roads	0-5’ for commercial and mixed uses; 5-10’ for residential			
Sideyard, Street Facing	5’ min.	None; 10’ minimum when abutting a conforming residential use			
Side Yard, Interior Street or Alleyway	0’, 10’ minimum where parcel abuts a conforming residential use	None; 10’ minimum when abutting a conforming residential use			
Rear Setback	15’ minimum	None; 10’ minimum when abutting a conforming residential use			
Setbacks Adjacent to Creeks	Minimum 30’ setback from top of bank				
Deviation from Building Setback	A maximum of 5% of a building façade may deviate from the required setback line to accommodate entryways or alleys				
BUILDING DESIGN					
Maximum Building Height to Roof Peak (Refer to SPMC Section 17.04.05.AA for Height of Buildings Measurement.)	35’ for medium density; 45’ for high density	40’	60’	40’	30’; 60’ within the Entertainment Overlay District
Maximum Stories	3 for medium density; 4 for high density	3	4; 6 in selected locations, set back at least 100 feet from any property line	3	2; 5 within the Entertainment Overlay District
Tower Dimension and Separation	n/a	n/a	The portion of a building above 45’ from finish grade shall not exceed 125’ in length and must be separated from adjacent buildings by 30’	n/a	The portion of a building above 45’ from finish grade shall not exceed 125’ in length and must be separated from adjacent buildings by 30’
Building Stepback	n/a	Minimum 5’ for portions above 20’			
Projections into Required Yards	Porches, stairs, balconies, bay windows, and awnings may project up to 6’ into required setbacks				
Ground Floor Floor-to-Ceiling Height	12’ min.	12’ min. for residential, 15’ min. for office, and 18’ min. for retail			15’ min. for office, 18’ min. for retail

TABLE 4-1 DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS BY LAND USE

	RESIDENTIAL (MEDIUM- AND HIGH- DENSITY)	RESIDENTIAL MIXED USE	MIXED USE CENTER (NORTH AND SOUTH)	COMMERCIAL MIXED USE	COMMERCIAL (NEIGHBORHOOD AND REGIONAL)
Ground Floor Finish Floor Elevation Relative to Adjacent Public Sidewalk	3’ max. above adjacent public sidewalk or public ROW	2’ max. above adjacent sidewalk or public ROW			
Maximum Overhang	5’ into right of way at a minimum height of 8’				
Building Entry Frequency	Minimum one entry every 50’		Minimum one entry every 75’		
Building Entry Depth	n/a	Incorporate a recess or projection of a minimum 40 square feet, with a minimum depth of 5’ for residential, hotel, and office entries			
Blank Wall	Limited to 30% of linear frontage or 20’, whichever is less				Limited to 30% of linear frontage or 20’, whichever is less. For buildings over 25,000 square feet, maximum 50’; anything over 30’ must be visually reduced by landscape treatment, mural, public art, or clerestory windows
Façade Articulation Depth	Minimum 4”	Minimum 6”			
Windows and Doors	n/a	For commercial, minimum 70% of ground floor wall area between 2’ and 8’ above sidewalk shall be of clear, transparent, and non-reflective glass			
Depth for Ground Floor Commercial Space	Minimum 25’ depth, if commercial use is permitted	75’ typical; 60’ minimum. Maximum 2 small tenant spaces with minimum 25’ depth permitted			
Screening of Utilities	Utilities shall be screened so as not to impact the attractiveness and safety of the pedestrian realm. They should be located away from primary pedestrian areas to the side or rear of buildings, on rooftops, or in the interior of the building or parking garage				
Folding Security Gates	Must be 70% transparent and located interior of doors and windows				
OPEN SPACE					
Open Space Required	See SPMC Section 17.10.070 for area requirements for private open space, common open space, and publicly accessible open space				
Minimum Dimension	Minimum 20’ dimension in any direction for common open space and publicly accessible open space				
Shade	For common open space and publicly accessible open space, a maximum of 50% of open space shall not be cast in shadow by adjacent buildings as measured on summer and winter solstice				
Accessibility	Entrances to common space and publicly accessible open space shall be visible and accessible from the right of way				
Grade Separation at Entrance	Grade separation is prohibited between the entrance of publicly accessible open space and the adjacent sidewalk or alleyway				
Trees	Minimum 1 tree with minimum 4-inch diameter per 1,000 square feet of open space				

TABLE 4-1 DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS BY LAND USE

	RESIDENTIAL (MEDIUM- AND HIGH- DENSITY)	RESIDENTIAL MIXED USE	MIXED USE CENTER (NORTH AND SOUTH)	COMMERCIAL MIXED USE	COMMERCIAL (NEIGHBORHOOD AND REGIONAL)
Fences and Walls	See SPMC Section 17.30.060 and Table 30.A of the same section				
PARKING					
Required Stalls	Per Chapter 3, Table 3-3 for required number of off-street stalls by use				
Location	Structured parking must be located so that it is not visible from major streets (like San Pablo Avenue or San Pablo Dam Road), and surface parking shall be located behind buildings, whenever feasible, away from the major streets				
Curb Cuts for Parking Access	Maximum one curb cut per street frontage; max. two curb cuts for street frontages longer than 300'. Exceptions may be allowed with Administrative Approval				
Encased/Wrapped Structured Parking	A minimum 70% must be wrapped with habitable space along residential and retail streets				
Surface Parking Landscaping and Trees	For 0-20 stalls, minimum 10% of total parking area shall be landscaped; for 20+ stalls, 15% of total parking area shall be landscaped. Landscaped areas shall be located along the perimeter of the area to soften edges next to sidewalk, and shall be distributed throughout to maximize shade				
Bicycle Parking	1 space per 4 housing units, exempting those with private garages. On-street guest racks equivalent to 5% of parking requirement	1 space per 5 non-residential building occupants; and 1 space per 15 residential building occupants			
LIGHTING					
Height	Maximum height of 12' for pedestrian-oriented down-lighting along sidewalks and pathways				
Brightness	Exterior lighting shall be limited to 0.5 foot candles maximum, and shall not oscillate or flash				
SPMC: San Pablo Municipal Code					

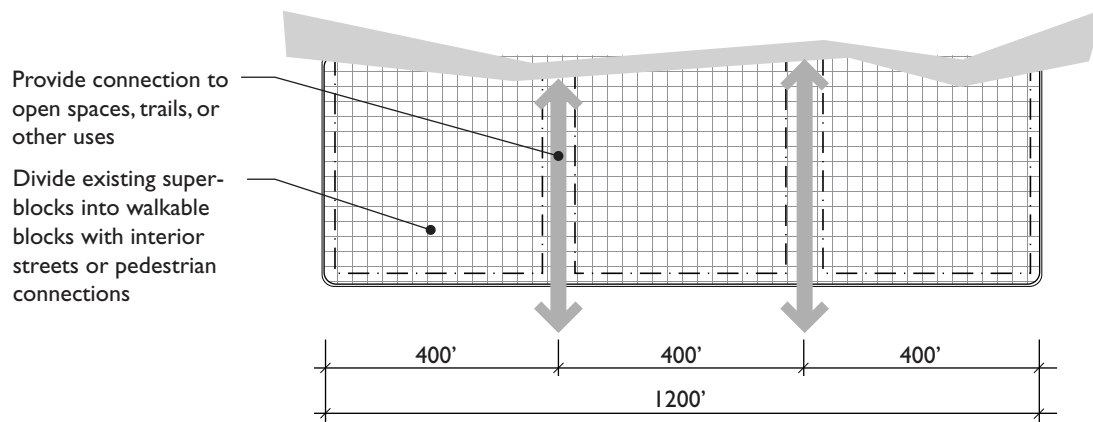
Design Guidelines

The following design guidelines are intended to serve as recommendations to guide development projects and the design review process. They elaborate on the standards presented in Table 4-1, as well as the streetscape design concepts discussed in Section 4-1. In this section, design concepts are introduced followed by specific guidelines and accompanying diagrams and images.

Block Size

Block size affects the way we perceive the scale of developments and length of travel. Blocks that are ideal for walking are generally no more than 300 feet in length, which equals about a 1.5-minute walk per block. Shorter blocks and mid-block crossings allow pedestrians to have greater choice in how to navigate a place, with more options to change paths and cross streets. The existing block length along San Pablo Avenue is considered medium to long, ranging from 500 feet in length to over 900 feet. To achieve more walkable blocks within the Planning Area, future developments can incorporate new interior streets and/or mid-block crossings.

- DG-1** Create new interior streets to divide long blocks along San Pablo Avenue and within potential development sites like Circle-S and Towne Center into 200- to 400-foot block lengths (with some blocks potentially even smaller in portions of the Circle-S site).





DG-2 & DG-3. Mid block crossings should be well-lit and provide visibility to destinations on either end.

DG-2 Provide mid-block crossings where feasible to allow pedestrian connections, employ building separations with pedestrian promenades, mid-block curb bulb-outs, and/or internal semi-public pathways.

DG-3 Establish new pedestrian connections through development from San Pablo Avenue to amenities such as transit stops, schools, creeks, and open spaces.

Building Height, Massing, and Articulation

Building height, massing, and articulation guidelines introduce a scale of development appropriate to the desired character of the Avenue, and add visual interest and details to new buildings. The following strategies will help prevent construction of large, boxy, blank buildings that compromise the pedestrian experience, and will encourage variation in building form to achieve a varied and engaging pedestrian environment.

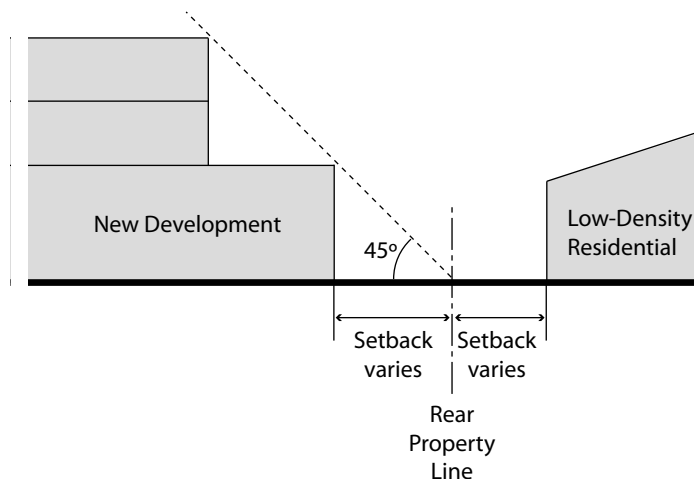
DG-4 Provide vertical and horizontal articulation in building mass through stepbacks at upper levels, recessions and projections, changes in materials and transparency, and variations in height.

DG-5 Ensure smooth transitions in building height. Tall buildings should step down adjacent to existing low-density residential development.

Step back building massing of multi-story buildings adjacent to single family residences.



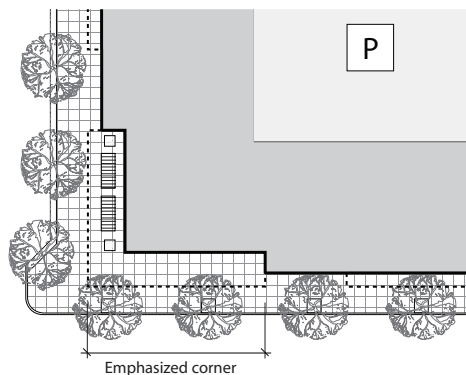
DG-4. Buildings should be articulated to provide visual variety.



DG-6 Require adjacent buildings and buildings within master planned developments to exhibit variation in roof heights and forms.

DG-7 Emphasize and highlight architectural features at block corners through changes in height, massing, or materials, or by introducing public plazas and grand entries.

Main entries into the Circle-S site should have distinctive corner massing that highlights and accentuates visibility into the site.

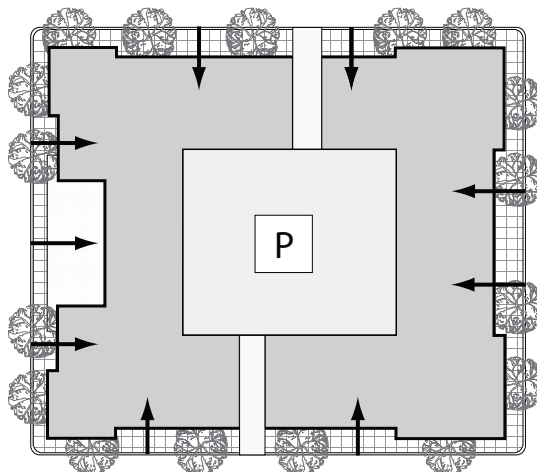


DG-6. Buildings at key corners along San Pablo Avenue should be emphasized through massing and design.

Building Orientation, Entries, and Facades

Building orientation and the design of entries and façades are integral to how we access and use buildings. Windows, doors, awnings and entry plazas are the key elements that define a building's orientation and determine its approachability. The placement and design of such elements greatly affect how we experience and identify with the built environment.

DG-8 Orient tenant spaces and windows toward the primary street to engage pedestrian interest and to maximize safety by encouraging 'eyes on the street'.



DG-8. Building façade and entries should be oriented to the street. (Parking above building, left; and wrapped with active uses, right.)



DG-9. Awnings and canopies should demarcate entrances and active pedestrian frontages.



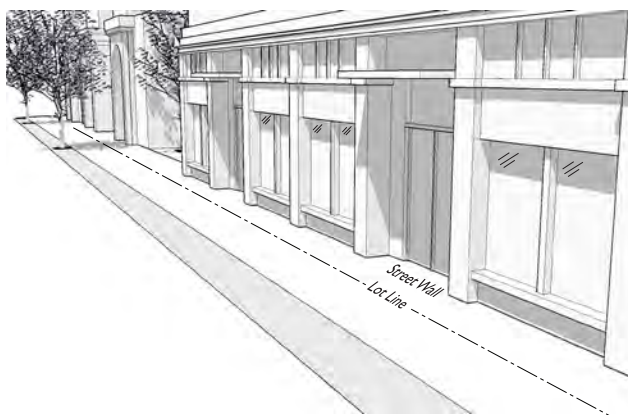
DG-12. Changes in building materials, signage, and window mullions can contribute to a greater pedestrian scale at the ground level.

DG-9 Use awnings, canopies, and overhangs to provide shelter and shade over the main entrances and along the sidewalk at pedestrian-oriented retail streets. Awnings should be made of durable, high quality materials.

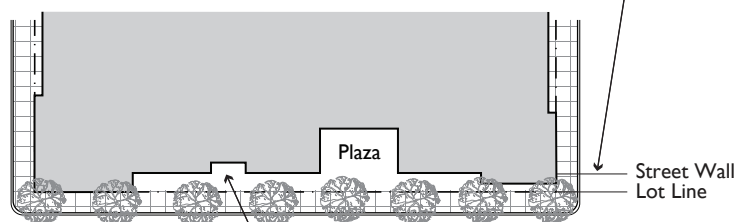
DG-10 All public primary entrances should be visible and physically accessible from the adjacent public street. Landscaping, overhangs, and canopies should not obstruct views or access to entrances, but should frame and clearly define entrances.

DG-11 As much as possible, establish a continuous and uniform street wall with minimal or no setback along San Pablo Avenue within Mixed Use and Commercial districts. This will help create a pedestrian-oriented commercial identity along the Avenue.

DG-12 Provide pedestrian-scaled façade articulation such as vertical elements at bays, horizontal banding, and storefront design at the ground level to enhance approachability and pedestrian comfort.



Street wall shall be located within 5' for non-residential development and 5' - 10' for residential development.



Maximum 15% of building facade can step back from the street wall for entries, alcoves, and other features.

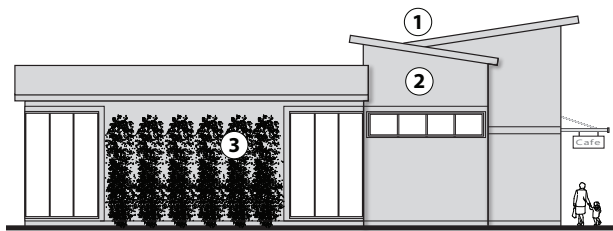
DG-13 Require street-facing facades of residential development to incorporate recognizable front doors, windows, stoops, front porches, dormers, bay windows, and/or balconies.

DG-14 Ensure unified and harmonious building façades by integrating all architectural elements, including signs, balconies, building entrances, and lighting. Windows should have regular patterns and be coherent in shape and proportion.

DG-15 Reduce the impact of blank walls by providing special landscape treatment, murals or other public art, or unique building design elements.



DG-13. Stoops and entryways provide visual and physical activity along the street.



- ① Variation in height and massing at blank wall
- ② Clerestory windows at blank wall
- ③ Landscape treatment or public art/mural at blank wall

Open Space

Open space provides spatial and psychological relief within an urban built environment. Several types of open spaces (private individual, private common, and publicly accessible open spaces) serve to meet varying open space needs. Private individual open spaces provide intimate outdoor space directly accessible from residential units; common open space provides shared space with neighbors; and publicly accessible open space allows large communal gathering spaces for residents, workers, and visitors alike.



Public Open Space



Private Common Open Space



Private Individual Open Space

DG-16 Design open spaces as integral elements to the development, not as left over space.

DG-17 To maximize sun exposure, locate open space to the east, west, or south of development while protecting users from predominant wind (often westerly) with buildings or landscaping.

DG-18 Where private open space is located adjacent to private common open space, place a vertical separation between the two with low walls, landscaping, such as hedges, or fencing.

DG-19 Design private common open spaces to maximize sunlight while providing wind protection and shading. Ensure safety and visibility by designing at least a portion of units to overlook the common open space and allowing security cameras to monitor common spaces, if appropriate.

DG-20 Install roof terraces as an efficient way to maximize use of the site as well as sunlight on private common space. Green roofs can fulfill private common open space requirements as long as they are usable and accessible to all units.

DG-21 Where community rooms are planned, locate them adjacent to either the private common open space or public open space.

DG-22 Limit hardscape to a maximum of 50% of required private common open space. Encourage the use of pervious materials to assist in storm-water management.



DG-16. Discourage location of open space in left over spaces.



DG-16. Open spaces should be integrated into development.



DG-19. Pavilions, trellises, and landscaping can help provide shade for open space.



DG-23. Open spaces, whether private or public, should provide a variety of amenities and recreational options.

DG-23 Provide walkways, patios, swimming pools, barbeque areas, play-grounds, seating areas, recreational facilities, turf, or other common open spaces as appropriate to enhance the outdoor environment of residential and mixed-use developments.

DG-24 Design publicly accessible open space that is physically and visually accessible from the street. Orient open space to the street; frame or mark the entrances to open space with architectural or landscape elements; and/or provide signage.

DG-25 Encourage sustainable landscape design with the use of hardy, native, low-water consumption, drought-tolerant planting, as well as storm-water management systems. Utilize bioswales and rain gardens in street medians or landscape buffers. Employ moisture-sensitive irrigation systems.

DG-26 Refer to “Bay-Friendly Landscaping Guidelines” published by Stop-waste.org for a list of landscape materials that are appropriate for the climate and Contra Costa’s Clean Water Program for stormwater management best practices.

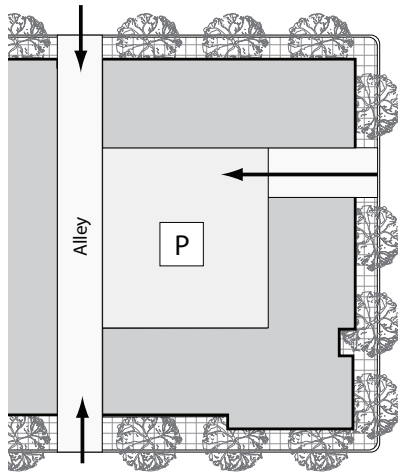
DG-27 Locate publicly accessible open space near the center of activity nodes or buildings and along pedestrian connections to encourage a variety of spillover activities and facilitate pedestrian access.

Parking Design

Parking is a key component of development in the Planning Area. It requires accessible pathways to and from destinations, transit, and building entrances. The design of parking—whether surface or structured—directly impacts the built environment, both physically at the development scale, as well as visually at the pedestrian scale. Considerations for high quality design of parking throughout the Planning Area should be integrated into all new development.

DG-28 Locate parking behind buildings, below grade, or encapsulated within buildings to reduce visual impact.

Parking behind buildings
Single access from street or back alley
to reduce curb cuts



DG-28. Garage entrances should not disrupt the pedestrian realm.

DG-29 Minimize curb cuts in pedestrian-oriented mixed-use and retail areas to expand pedestrian space, ensure pedestrian safety, and increase the supply of on-street parking. Encourage side street entrances to parking and loading areas, and sharing of driveways between adjacent new developments.

DG-30 Where a vehicular entrance to parking is located on a side or secondary street, provide sidewalks or separate entries for pedestrians that connect to the main pedestrian street.



DG-31. Parking structures should be integrated into development.

DG-31 In the design of parking structures, emulate the proportion and rhythm of windows, doors, and building articulation in adjacent or adjoining buildings to integrate and complement the overall design of the development.

DG-32 Do not orient parking structures to face onto San Pablo Avenue. Where this is the only solution feasible, ensure that the ground level of the structure is lined with active uses, such as stores and restaurants, and parking at the upper levels is stepped up from the street and screened.

DG-33 To enhance the appearance of parking structures, consider using living walls or landscaping, and high-quality and multi-layered facades, such as glass, perforated metal, or decorative screens, as façade treatments.



DG-33. Garage facades should use materials and colors that are consistent with adjacent development design.

DG-34 Design clearly-marked, separated, and accessible pedestrian walkways in surface parking areas to reduce conflicts between pedestrians and motorists.

DG-35 Utilize permeable ground materials to reduce runoff from surface parking areas, pathways, and driveways.

DG-36 Locate short- and long-term bicycle parking near building entrances and exits, and ensure that it is secured and weather protected.

Lighting

Lighting is a key element in creating a comfortable and safe built environment. Through proper lighting, activity nodes come to life, important architectural features are highlighted, and safety is enhanced.

DG-37 Ensure that all exterior lighting is shielded from surrounding use and directed downward except where safety and security purposes require otherwise.

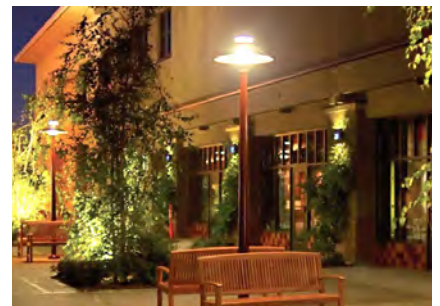
DG-38 Provide pedestrian-scaled lighting in mixed-use and residential areas as well as along pedestrian connections to open space, parking, and transit.

DG-39 Provide pedestrian-scaled lighting to illuminate all entrances, alcoves, other important building features, and any changes in grade level along exterior pathways.

DG-40 Provide continuous pedestrian-scale lighting in a classic or historic style.



DG-34. Pedestrian connections through parking lots should be attractive and well-lit.



DG-38 & DG-39. Key entrances, public spaces and pedestrian connections should be well-lit with pedestrian-scaled lighting.

Sustainable Design

The following standards and guidelines ensure that sustainability concepts are incorporated into development throughout the Planning Area to create an overall character and urban design scheme that promotes livability and sustainability. Where feasible, all buildings and site areas will incorporate appropriate design and construction practices consistent with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards and the Alameda County Residential Green Building Guidelines.

Materials

DG-41 Incorporate the adaptive reuse of existing materials, façades, and buildings. Use sustainable surface materials for paving, such as reclaimed pavers, locally-produced materials, or concrete and asphalt with fly ash content.

DG-42 Utilize materials which have low embodied energy, are rapidly renewable, locally available, and do not give off harmful vapors.

Low Water Consumption

DG-43 Install water saving appliances and systems such as gray water systems, moisture-sensitive irrigation rainwater cisterns, low-flow toilets and faucets.

DG-44 Use water-pervious materials for parking areas, driveways and pathways to the extent such that they reduce runoff and do not cause damage to public streets or other infrastructure.

DG-45 Manage stormwater on-site through green roofs and/or rooftop gardens or water catchment systems to be used for irrigation.

Energy

DG-46 Use energy-efficient and low emission heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, if mechanical systems are necessary.

DG-47 Provide operable windows that allow natural ventilation and potentially eliminate the need for mechanical ventilation.

Waste

DG-48 Divert waste from landfills by promoting reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting of materials during construction and through building materials selection.

DG-49 All development is subject to Alameda County's StopWaste.Org waste diversion, recycling, and composting standards, as adopted by City Council.

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Utilities and Public Services

Availability and provision of adequate public utilities and services is an essential element of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan. This chapter describes the infrastructure needed to efficiently integrate new development with the services already provided by the City of San Pablo. It describes necessary improvements to public utilities and services, and establishes policies to help implement these improvements. Topics addressed include water, wastewater, stormwater, electricity and natural gas, and waste collection, as well as services for police and fire protection.

5.1 UTILITIES

The quality and availability of essential public utilities like water and waste management have a significant effect on the quality of life and sustainability of a community. This section outlines the infrastructure and utility needs for the Planning Area, including water, wastewater, electricity and natural gas and solid waste collection. Except for storm drain infrastructure, all utilities are administered by independent agencies. As such, Plan policies focus on cooperative planning efforts with these agencies, with the goal of ensuring that public utilities have the capacity to meet growth demands under the Specific Plan.



The Mokelumne River is EBMUD's primary water source.

Water

Water supply to the Planning Area is provided by the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), which derives its water source from the Mokelumne River in the Sierra Nevada. This water is transmitted via aqueduct to storage and treatment facilities throughout EBMUD's service area, and is then distributed to customers. EBMUD operates five terminal reservoirs within East Bay: Briones, Chabot, Lafayette, Upper San Leandro, and San Pablo.¹ The San Pablo Reservoir is located in a valley north of Orinda, south of El Sobrante and Richmond, and east of the Berkeley Hills.

The total capacity of the EBMUD water supply system is constrained by the inherent dependence on seasonal rainfall and collected snowpack in the Sierra

¹ EBMUD Urban Water Management Plan 2005.

Nevada watershed. On an average annual basis, approximately 90 percent of the water used by EBMUD comes from this source. The secondary source of water is the runoff from local watersheds at EBMUD's terminal reservoirs in the East Bay. According to EBMUD's 2009 Annual Report, the total average water production was 181 million gallons per day (mgd). San Pablo's estimated share of the total, calculated using proportionate share of the total population, is only 4.2 mgd or about 2.3 percent of the total.

Water Quality

EBMUD water supply quality consistently surpasses the standards set by the California Department of Health Services and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This is because its primary water source is the Mokelumne River which flows from the remote Sierra Nevada region and requires only minimal treatment to meet health standards.

Projected Demand

The demand for water by East Bay communities is expected to increase over the next 20 years. According to EBMUD's 2005 Urban Water Management Plan, EBMUD required approximately 258 mgd of water to supply all its service areas in 2010. After taking into account conservation and other water recycling programs that each city is expected to adopt on its own, EBMUD still required 225 mgd of water to meet demand (see Table 5-1). By 2030, this demand is expected to increase by three percent to 232 mgd.

TABLE 5-1 PROJECTED WATER DEMAND AND SUPPLY IN EBMUD SERVICE AREA¹

	2010	2020	2030
POPULATION			
EBMUD Service Area Population	1,380,000	1,475,000	1,598,000
San Pablo Population	32,200	33,580	34,950
<i>Specific Plan Area Population</i>	<i>4,000</i>	<i>5,090</i>	<i>6,170</i>
San Pablo population as a percent of EBMUD Service Area	2.3%	2.3%	2.2%
Specific Plan Area population as a percent of EBMUD Service Area	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%
DEMAND			
Total EBMUD Water Demand (mgd)	258	277	281
Adjustment for Conservation (mgd)	-21	-35	-35
Adjustment for Recycled Water (mgd)	-12	-14	-14
EBMUD Planning Demand	225	228	232
San Pablo's Planning Demand ² (mgd)	5.3	5.3	5.4
<i>Specific Plan Area's Planning Demand² (mgd)</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>0.9</i>

1 EBMUD service areas include both incorporated and unincorporated areas in Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

2 San Pablo-specific water demand data were not available from EBMUD. Therefore, San Pablo existing and future water demand was estimated to be proportionate to the city's share of total service area population. E.g. In 2010, San Pablo's population is 2.3 percent of the service area total, so water demand is also estimated to be 2.3 percent of the total demand. Water demand for the Specific Plan Area was estimated similarly.

Source: East Bay Municipal Utilities District, Urban Water Management Plan 2005; Dyett & Bhatia, 2010.

EBMUD has no problem meeting water demand in a normal, non-drought year. However, in a one-year drought, EBMUD expects a demand-to-supply shortfall of five percent. The expected shortfall becomes greater the longer the drought lasts. As a consequence, the water supply is insufficient to meet customer needs even if aggressive water conservation and recycled water programs are put in place in a multi-year drought scenario.

To improve water supply reliability in future droughts, EBMUD is adopting a multi-pronged approach to reduce water demand, increase water storage capacity, and find alternative sources of water supply. Some ongoing programs include the Seawater Desalination Research and Groundwater Banking Program.

Water Conservation

Water conservation and recycling measures are critical elements of EBMUD's water management plan. The agency takes a rigorous approach to water conservation, and expects to conserve and recycle about 49 mgd of water per day by 2030; equivalent to a 17 percent reduction of the daily demand. EBMUD promotes water conservation through education and outreach as well as offering water conservation programs that help residential and business customers save money and increase efficiency. While the City of San Pablo does not offer financial incentives as EBMUD does, it promotes water conservation through other means, including city policies in the proposed General Plan requiring new and remodeled homes to install high-efficiency toilets, and promoting the use of drought-resistant plants in city parks and gardens. The City also regularly publishes water conservation and recycling information in its newsletters to promote the use of water recycling systems and remind residents of EBMUD rebate and grant programs.

Storm Drainage

In San Pablo, storm water runoff is discharged through a combination of natural and man-made structures including creeks and drains. Falling rain in the Planning Area is generally directed to storm drains located along San Pablo Avenue, Broadway Avenue, and El Portal Drive, as well as San Pablo and Wildcat creeks. Of these drainage features, the creeks are most prone to flooding because of their shallow bed and high water table. The City cannot control the creek flow or capacity because portions of the creeks are located on private property. To prevent flooding, the City encourages homeowners along the creeks to help keep them clear of obstructions and to purchase flood insurance as a precaution.



San Pablo Creek runs through the middle of the City, part of which abuts single-family homes, where flooding is an issue.

The City of San Pablo participates in the Contra Costa Clean Water Program, which implements the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) countywide. The NPDES's purpose is to efficiently utilize available assessment funding to reduce pollution of the storm water and effectively maintain public storm drain facilities through inspection and enforcement activities and outreach to owners of industrial uses. Under the NPDES permit issued by the Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region, the City requires new development to treat storm water runoff using methods such as infiltration prior to discharge to the city storm drain system and creeks.

Wastewater

Wastewater treatment and disposal services in the Planning Area are provided by the West County Wastewater District (WCWD). The WCWD has a service area of 16.9 square miles which includes the City of San Pablo. The wastewater treatment plant located in North Richmond has a capacity of 12.5 mgd. The sewer lines in the city are generally made from vitrified clay pipe and some ductile iron. Most of the collection system infrastructure is more than 30 years old, with some of the oldest pipelines progressively being replaced or rehabilitated. The WCWD has an industrial pre-treatment program and monitors all industrial discharges. The treated effluent from the plant is pumped to a dechlorination facility at Point Richmond where it is combined with the City of Richmond's Municipal Sewer District effluent. The combined effluent is discharged in a deep water outfall into San Francisco Bay at Point Richmond. Currently, approximately 3.5 mgd of the WCWD effluent is recycled by EBMUD for reuse at the Chevron Refinery and 0.7 mgd is recycled for irrigation at the Richmond Country Club Golf Course.

As shown in Table 5-2, the average influent flow between September 2009 and August 2010 was about 9.4 mgd, but some months approached plant capacity and one month exceeded capacity. According to WCWD's District Engineer, there are no current or anticipated problems with treatment quality or standards, and infrastructure is generally sufficient to meet existing demands. However, because the infrastructure is designed based on current zoning classifications (which allow lower densities than what is anticipated for 2030), larger pipes will be required in the future. The WCWD is constantly updating its facilities and has been upsizing pipelines for peak storm events throughout the city as recommended in its 2001 Capacity Analysis Study and by 2006 flow monitoring efforts. All pipelines deficient for peak design storms will be upsized by 2012. In addition, the WCWD will likely conduct its first Wastewater Master Plan in 2011 and 2012, which will identify many six- and eight-inch diameter pipes that will need to be replaced with 10-inch diameter pipes.

TABLE 5-2 WASTEWATER FLOWS IN WEST COUNTY WASTEWATER DISTRICT

MONTH	INFLUENT FLOW	
	AVERAGE (MGD)	TOTAL (MILLION GALLONS)
September 2009	7.0	224.4
October 2009	8.0	260.0
November 2009	8.0	248.0
December 2009	9.0	273.0
January 2010	13.0	403.0
February 2010	11.9	333.3
March 2010	11.0	342.0
April 2010	10.6	318.4
May 2010	9.1	282.0
June 2010	8.5	254.3
July 2010	8.1	250.8
August 2010	8.1	251.0
AVERAGE	9.4	286.7
mgd= million gallons per day		
<i>Source: West County Wastewater District, 2010.</i>		

Electricity and Natural Gas

Pacific Gas & Electric currently provides gas and electric services to San Pablo homes and businesses. The utility company obtains its energy supplies from power plants and natural gas fields in northern California and delivers electricity through high voltage transmission lines. Electrical power is delivered to homes via various distribution feeders located throughout the city.

The availability of electricity and gas services is not expected to become an issue during the Specific Plan planning horizon since all homes are located within urban infill areas close to existing development.

Solid Waste Collection and Diversion

Solid waste disposal for the City of San Pablo is managed by the West Contra Costa Integrated Waste Management Authority (West County WMA). The West County WMA, which had a service population of 203,624 in September 2010, is the regional waste management authority and is mandated by State law to implement provisions of the Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 for West Contra Costa County.

Solid waste collection and recycling services is provided by Richmond Sanitary Services, an affiliate of Republic Services, Inc. The company owns and operates a 21-acre site in Richmond including the West Contra Costa County

Sanitary Landfill, the Golden Bear Transfer Station, a household hazardous waste facility, and an integrated resource-recovery facility. Prior to 2007, the majority of the city's solid waste was taken to the West Contra Costa County Sanitary Landfill in Richmond. The facility was capped for final closure in 2009 but material sorting and recovery operations as well as recycling activities continue to be carried out on-site. Currently, 90 percent of West County's waste is brought to the Keller Canyon Landfill at Pittsburg; the other 10 percent is brought to a transfer station in Richmond before being redirected by trailer to Potrero Hills Landfill in Solano County. The Keller Canyon facility has a maximum capacity of 75 million cubic yards and has about 20 years of additional capacity.² The Potrero Hills facility has a maximum capacity of 21 million cubic yards and has an additional eight to ten years of permitted capacity.³ Permit applications to expand the Potrero Hills facility are pending. If approved, the landfill's capacity would be quadrupled.

While landfill capacity is not an issue, the service agreements between the West County WMA and Republic Services for solid waste disposal, recycling processing, and composting are due to expire on December 31, 2013. In August 2010, the Authority began strategic planning sessions to determine its plans after 2013.

The West County WMA currently estimates that it has capacity to accommodate growth over the next 20 to 25 years. A review or study of capacity is required only when the agency estimates that capacity is sufficient for 15 years. For this reason, the agency does not foresee any problems related to meeting the solid waste disposal, diversion, or hazardous waste needs of the population projected by the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan.

Recycling and Hazardous Wastes

Recycling and material sorting are carried out at the Richmond facility prior to sale and shipment to manufacturers. Richmond Sanitary Services currently offers a comingled program and alternates between collecting recyclable waste (blue cart) and green waste (green cart) every week from San Pablo homes. Meanwhile, non-recyclable garbage (brown cart) is collected every week. The household hazardous waste facility at 101 Pittsburg Avenue in Richmond, accepts a variety of hazardous and universal waste products such as paints, solvents, fuels, cleaners, and pesticides. There is no door-to-door hazardous waste collection service in San Pablo but residents and non-profits may drop off their household hazardous waste at no cost. A mobile collection service is available for disabled residents and senior citizens by appointment.

² The expected closure date for Keller Canyon Landfill is 31 December, 2030, according to CalRecycle.

³ The expected closure date for Potrero Hills Landfill is 1 January, 2011, according to CalRecycle. However, Potrero Hills has additional capacity beyond this date, the future expansion of this facility is the subject of litigation.

Solid Waste Diversion

Solid waste diversion is the process of diverting waste from landfills through reuse, recycling, and composting. The State of California requires that all jurisdictions meet a 50 percent waste reduction mandate as established by the Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989. As shown in Table 5-3, the West County WMA had a residential per capita disposal rate of 3.6 pounds per day (PPD) and an employment per capita disposal rate of 14.4 PPD in 2009, which met the maximum targets set for that year (5.4 and 22.1 mgd respectively).

TABLE 5-3 WEST CONTRA COSTA INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY DIVERSION RATES

YEAR	POPULATION DISPOSAL (PPD) ¹		EMPLOYMENT DISPOSAL (PPD)	
	TARGET	ANNUAL	TARGET	ANNUAL
2007	5.4	4.8	22.1	18.5
2008	5.4	4.4	22.1	16.9
2009	5.4	3.6	22.1	14.4

Note: In 2007, California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) introduced a new system of measuring diversion rates, using a per capita disposal threshold equivalent to the 50 percent diversion requirement. The new threshold is one of several "factors" in determining a jurisdiction's compliance with State law, and allows CalRecycle and local jurisdictions to set their primary focus on successful implementation of diversion programs.

1 PPD = Pound per person per day.

Source: California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, 2010.

GUIDING POLICY

- 5-G-1** Continue the successful provision, maintenance and operation of infrastructure and public utilities to maintain the quality of life and sustainability of the San Pablo Avenue corridor.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 5-I-1** Maintain successful cooperation with independent agencies to continue adequate utility service throughout the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Planning Area.

- 5-I-2** Promote efficient use and conservation of water in the design of new residential and commercial development. This includes the installation of water meters and low-flow showerheads, faucets and toilets.

- 5-I-3** Promote efficient use of and conservation of water in the design of new streetscape and landscaped areas. This includes the installation of drought-resistant plant palettes.

Use the California Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (Division 2, Title 23, California Code of Regulations Chapter 2.7, Sections 490-495) during project review to ensure irrigation plans achieve all feasible water savings.

- 5-I-4** Promote efficient use of and conservation of water in the design of new streetscape and landscaped areas. This includes the installation of drought-resistant plant palettes.

- 5-I-5** Design creek-side open space improvements to prevent flooding within the public right-of-way and near open space amenities.

- 5-I-6** Require all new private development located along above-ground creeks to prevent flooding with ample setbacks.

- 5-I-7** Expand the wastewater collection system such that it is adequate to serve the projected development along the San Pablo Avenue corridor. Coordinate with the West County Wastewater District to update the collection system and Wastewater Master Plan to ensure that adequate conveyance capacity is available.

- 5-I-8** Require all new development to participate in all recycling and hazardous waste reduction and solid waste diversion programs in effect at the time of issuance of building permits.

5.2 PUBLIC SERVICES

Public services in the Planning Area, including police and fire protection, contribute to creating a safe, livable environment within the San Pablo Avenue corridor. The proposed increase in population and development intensity in the Planning Area will likely increase the demand for these services. This section provides policies for ensuring that these services remain available and continue to benefit existing and new development in the Planning Area.

Police Services

Police services within the Planning Area are provided by the City of San Pablo Police Department. The Police Department operates out of one 15,000-square-foot police facility located in the Planning Area at 13880 San Pablo Avenue. The Department is a full-service community-based law enforcement agency, with three divisions (Patrol, Investigations, and Support Services) managed by the Chief of Police. The Department has five patrol teams, 53 sworn officers, 22 support staff, and more than seventy specialized assignments and/or programs.

The current level of service is 1.6 officers to 1,000 residents, which is lower than the national average of 2.5 officers per 1,000⁴ residents. No new stations will be required to service the additional residents projected by the Specific Plan. To maintain the existing ratio of officers to residents, five or six additional officers will be required.

The Department does not have a response time mandate, but according to records, 90 percent of priority-one calls are handled within 11 minutes, priority-two calls within 16 minutes, and priority-three calls within 16 minutes. Calls held over 30 minutes must be approved by the watch commander. With the growth projected by the Specific Plan, the Department foresees an increase in calls for service, traffic, crime prevention, youth services, and other related police activity.



The Police Station is located in the heart of the Planning Area.

Fire Protection Services

Fire Safety Services in the Planning Area are provided by the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District. The District currently operates one fire station (Station #70) within the Planning Area located at 13928 San Pablo Avenue.

The San Pablo Fire Station is actively manned 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with two engine companies. Fire dispatch is handled through the Contra Costa County Regional Communications Center. The Fire Protection District provides fire-fighting services, lift and elevator rescue services, and medical



Fire services in the Planning Area are partly met by Fire Station #70 off San Pablo Avenue.

4 U.S. 2003 Bureau of Justice Law Enforcement and Management Administrative Statistics.

response. Additionally, the District enforces fire-safety regulations by notifying property owners to cut vegetation that constitutes a fire hazard.

The Fire Protection District establishes no staffing or service ratios for the San Pablo Fire Station, but in general, it aims to provide one fire station for a population of 26,000. Currently, the District has an Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating of 3, on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being the highest. District policy establishes a six-minute response goal from dispatch to arrival for fire service in the region.

The District has a mutual aid agreement with the Richmond Fire Department to ensure quick and adequate response to any fire emergency. Three Richmond stations, numbers 62, 66, and 68, are located within a mile of the Planning Area boundary.

GUIDING POLICY

- 5-G-2** Maintain a safe and livable environment in the Planning Area by ensuring that building design and site planning adequately address public safety considerations.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 5-I-9** Coordinate with the San Pablo Police Department on project site design to increase public safety.

Refer to Chapter 4: Wayfinding and Visibility policies for additional guidance on lighting and design for safety.

- 5-I-10** Work with the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District to ensure that new development projects in the Planning Area have adequate emergency access.

- 5-I-11** Ensure that fire flow capacity is adequate for new development and that necessary improvements, such as fire access roadways and fire hydrants, are installed and in service prior to building construction.

6

Community Facilities



Both Kennedy Plaza (top) and Wildcat Creek Trail (bottom) are within the Planning Area.

Adequate public facilities and recreation amenities are essential components of a livable sustainable community. Parks and open spaces, schools, and community facilities are vital to foster the continued health and well-being of residents and workers within the Planning Area. It is essential that these facilities are accessible, safe to use, and well-designed to accommodate all community members, regardless of age, income, or physical ability. This chapter describes existing facilities that will be accessed by the community within the Planning Area, as well as planned improvements and new facilities.

6.1 PARKS AND RECREATION

The Planning Area includes several park facilities within its boundaries and is also within walking distance of almost all of the park and recreation facilities within the city. These facilities serve existing residents and workers and will continue to be an important public amenity for new populations as the Specific Plan builds out. However, additional parks and recreation facilities will need to be developed as the Planning Area intensifies. This section provides an overview of the existing and proposed new park and recreation facilities.

Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities

The City of San Pablo maintains seven community and neighborhood parks, with 22 acres of park space distributed throughout the city. Additionally, the City has a joint-use agreement with the West Contra Costa School District and Contra Costa College, which allows use of recreation facilities during non-school hours. The City also operates several community centers that provide recreation, education, child care, and social services.

Most of the city's parks and recreation facilities are accessible by foot from the Planning Area, within a ten-minute, or half-mile walk. A ten-minute or shorter walk represents the distance that most people will consider walking, and is thus considered an accessible distance to park facilities. Facilities within the Planning Area include Kennedy Plaza and portions of Wanlass Park and Wildcat Trail, as shown in Figure 6-1: Parks and Public Facilities.

Park Demand

The Specific Plan emphasizes the provision of community facilities that are accessible and provide a diverse range of activities for residents, workers, and visitors. Currently, the City of San Pablo has a ratio of 0.7 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which is markedly below the goal of three acres per 1,000 residents established in the City's General Plan.

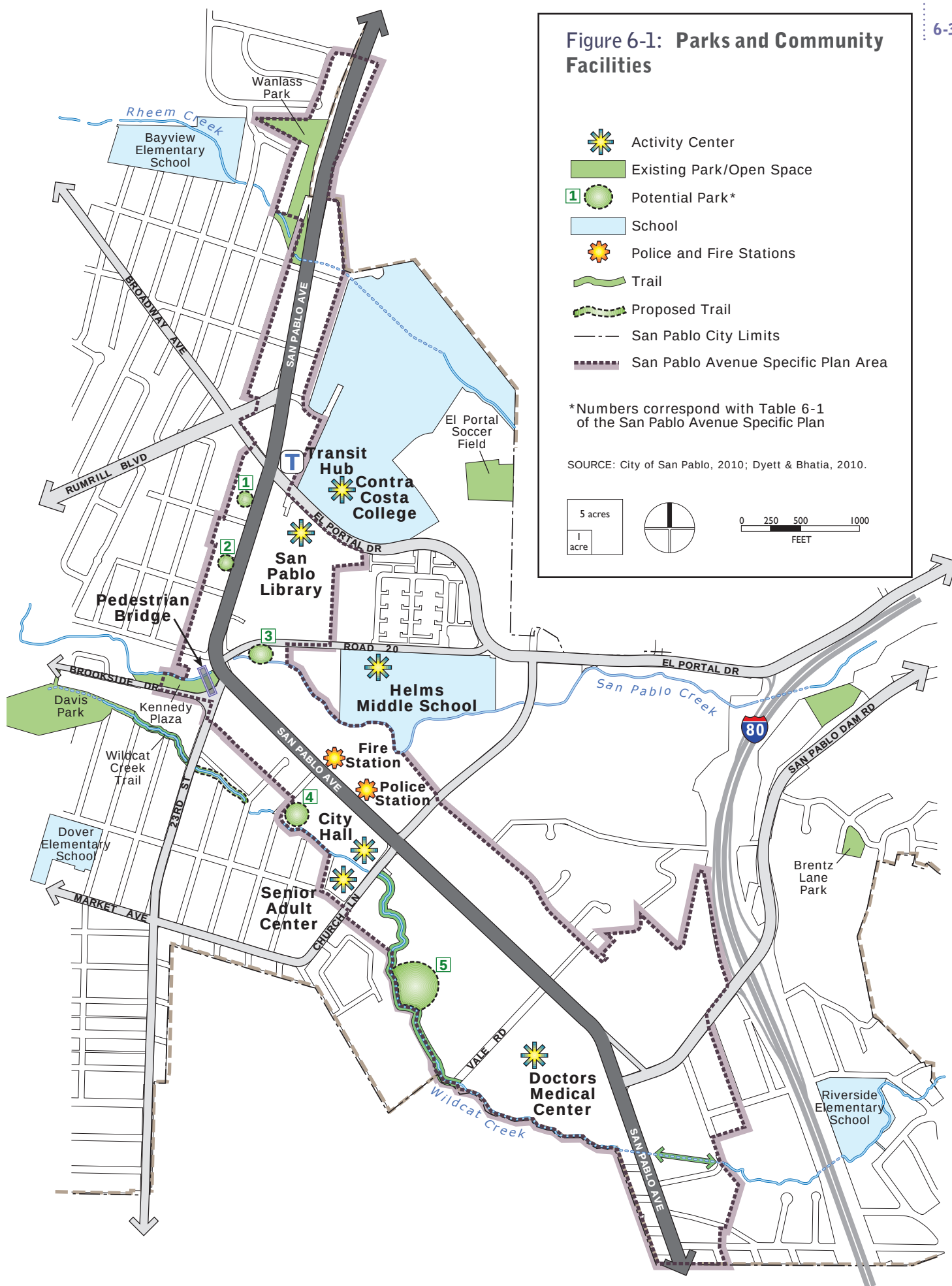
The General Plan proposes seven new parks (totaling 24.4 acres) in the city to meet the needs of future residents as well as help fill the existing park acreage deficit. Several of these new parks are proposed within the Planning Area, which will serve existing and new development. The new facilities are distributed within the northern and central portions of the Planning Area and total 4.2 acres, as shown in Table 6-1. It is expected that residents will utilize these facilities as well as those throughout the rest of the city, which is planned to achieve an overall citywide ratio of 1.3 acres of park land per 1,000 residents at buildout.

TABLE 6-1 PROPOSED PARKS IN THE PLANNING AREA

POTENTIAL PARK SITE	PARK TYPE	ACRES ³
1	Neighborhood Park ¹	0.1
2	Neighborhood Park	0.3
3	Neighborhood Park	0.5
4	Neighborhood Park	0.4
5	Community Park ²	3.0
TOTAL PARKS IN PLANNING AREA		4.2
1 A neighborhood park is typically less than 1.5 acres in size and provides basic recreation facilities for one or more neighborhoods. The service area typically ranges less than half a mile. 2 A community park is typically larger than 1.5 acres in size and is intended to serve the recreation needs of the entire city. 3 Acreages are rounded to the nearest tenth and as a result do not add up directly to 4.2.		

In addition to the new public facilities, Design Guidelines provided in Chapter 4 seek to supplement public open space with common open space—such as courtyards, roof decks, and terraces—in residential projects. Furthermore, maintaining direct, pleasant, and safe access to existing and planned parks that surround the Planning Area is an important aspect of the Specific Plan.

Figure 6-1: Parks and Community Facilities



GUIDING POLICIES

Refer to Chapter 4: Urban Design and Building Development Standards for guidelines and standards applicable to parks design.

6-G-1 Provide a diverse range of recreational opportunities within a ten-minute walk of all residents in the Planning Area.

6-G-2 Connect to local and regional bikeways and trail networks to the greatest extent possible.

6-G-3 Make new park spaces and recreation facilities sources of community pride and demonstrations of character through design, public art, and community-based activities.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

6-I-1 Create parks and recreation facilities in accordance with the Specific Plan Land Use Diagram (Figure 2-4) as development occurs and park land is dedicated.

6-I-2 Encourage provision of park land as part of new development rather than payment of impact or in-lieu fees.

If a greater amount of land is required by the Municipal Code than can be accommodated within the Planning Area, in-lieu fees may be used to enhance other City parks with greater recreational amenities. Parks created or improved with in-lieu fees should be located as close to the Planning Area as possible.

6-I-3 Size and distribute parks in order to maximize accessibility and match the needs identified for both the Planning Area and the city as a whole. In particular, strive to create multiple smaller parks rather than a single large park, placing them within walking distance of housing and along major bikeways and trails where possible, and providing street visibility and access on several sides.

6-I-4 Ensure that parks and public spaces in the Planning Area offer a diverse range of amenities and activities, such as: picnic areas; places to walk dogs; children's play areas; sports fields; urban plazas with landscaping, paving, benches, and trees; a community center with City recreation programs and classes; and staging areas along trail networks where people can access bike and pedestrian trails.

-
- 6-I-5** Incorporate art and San Pablo Avenue streetscape design elements into park design, such as banners, street tree alignments, signage, and lighting design to reflect a consistent community character.
-
- 6-I-6** Develop a program of community activities to activate park spaces and establish parks as community gathering spaces and activity centers.
-
- 6-I-7** Encourage private common open space as part of all large new residential developments with standards established by the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan.
-

6.2 SCHOOLS

The Planning Area lies within the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD), which is responsible for providing elementary, middle, and high school education in West Contra Costa County. There are no schools located within the Planning Area; however, there are several within a ten-minute walk, including Helms Middle School, Bayview Elementary School, and Dover Elementary School. Students living within the Planning Area may attend these or other nearby schools in the school district.

Projected Enrollment

Buildout of the City of San Pablo General Plan is expected to result in 940 net new households and associated population of 2,750. Based on student generation rates provided by the WCCUSD, the new population would result in approximately 340 additional students.¹ Buildout of the Specific Plan represents a large portion of the General Plan calculation—approximately 700 new households with a population of 2,170 are expected within the Planning Area. This new population will result in approximately 250 new students.

As shown in Table 6-2, the projected student enrollment at buildout of the General Plan is expected to be 6,670 students in 2030, which includes the projected new students within the Specific Plan Planning Area. The total capacity of schools that serve the City of San Pablo student population is 7,560; which indicates that there will be significant remaining capacity in the school district facilities. Since all of the schools that serve San Pablo students will remain under capacity at buildout of the Specific Plan, demand for new school facilities is not anticipated.

¹ All projected households in the Specific Plan Planning Area are multifamily, which has the following student generation rates as provided by the West Contra Costa Unified School District in 2008: Elementary School (K-6) of 0.18; Middle School (7-8) of 0.08; and High School (9-12) of 0.09.

TABLE 6–2 BUILDOUT STUDENT POPULATION AND SCHOOL DEMAND

TYPE	CURRENT STUDENTS (2010)	ADDITIONAL STUDENTS AT SPECIFIC PLAN BUILDOUT ¹	ADDITIONAL STUDENTS AT GENERAL PLAN BUILDOUT ²	TOTAL STUDENTS PROJECTED AT BUILDOUT (2030)	CURRENT CAPACITY	PERCENT REMAINING CAPACITY
Elementary School (K-6)	3,375	130	175	3,550	4,251	16%
Middle School (7-8)	951	60	75	1,026	1,141	10%
High School (9-12)	2,000	60	93	2,093	2,168	3%
TOTAL	6,326	250	344	6,670	7,560	12%

1 Projected student population for the Specific Plan is included in the “Additional Students at General Plan Buildout.”

2 Includes students generated by the Specific Plan.

Source: West Contra Costa Unified School District, 2010; Dyett & Bhatia, 2010.

GUIDING POLICY

- 6-G-4** Promote adequate and accessible school facilities for the Planning Area population.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 6-I-8** Promote provision of a range of school services including vocational, charter, and extracurricular activities to serve new residents in the Planning Area and throughout the city, consistent with General Plan policy direction for Schools and Community Facilities.
- 6-I-9** Work with project proponents of residential and mixed-use developments to create and/or improve safe routes to nearby schools, consistent with the General Plan’s Safe Routes to Schools policy (HEA-I-3).

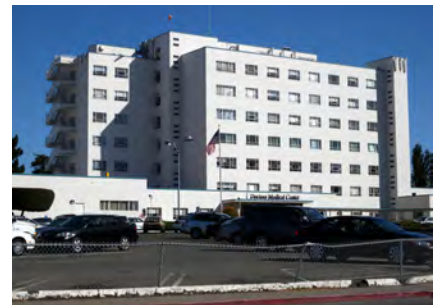
6.3 OTHER FACILITIES

Community facilities in the Planning Area other than parks, recreation centers, and schools include public and private institutions that support the civic and social needs of the population. These facilities include civic and cultural facilities as well as community centers and medical facilities. They provide a wide range of activities and services, including educational programs, community activities, and special events, as well as much needed services for youth, persons with disabilities, and senior adults. Key facilities within and adjacent to the Planning Area are:

- *City Hall*, located at 13831 San Pablo Avenue, which houses City administrative and public buildings. City Hall is also home to the Maple Hall Community Center, which hosts a range of public and private community events from cooking classes for low-income families to weddings and dance receptions.
- *Senior Adult Center*, located just west of City Hall, is a full service community center that offers recreational and educational activities, social services, and a daily congregate meal program. The Senior Adult Center also offers rides for seniors (City of San Pablo residents only) to local grocery stores and doctor appointments for a minimal fee.
- *Blume House and Alvarado Adobe*, also located adjacent to City Hall at Alvarado Square, are registered historic landmarks that are open to the public as museums.
- *Doctors Medical Center*, located off of Vale Road near San Pablo Avenue, is a non-profit community hospital that provides medical services, medical training, and community education on health issues. The hospital is owned and operated by West Contra Costa Healthcare District and is the largest employer in the City of San Pablo.
- *San Pablo Library*, located at 2300 El Portal Drive near San Pablo Avenue, provides a range of programs and classes, hosts community events, and offers over 35,000 books and other materials.
- *College Center*, also located at 2300 El Portal Drive, is run by East Bay Works, a non-profit organization that assists job seekers and employers with job searches, education, and training assistance.
- *Contra Costa College*, located near El Portal Drive and Mission Bell Drive, is a regional community college. The College offers a range of classes and recreation activities, including access to the Joe Gomes Soccer Field.

In addition to existing community facilities in the Planning Area vicinity, a new community center will be constructed in concert with reconstruction efforts for the Helms Middle School on Road 20. This facility will expand the recreational and social service offerings within walking distance of the Planning Area. A county medical clinic is also under consideration for a portion of the Circle-S site.

The Specific Plan also encourages creation of cultural and civic facilities within a mixed-use context. As new mixed-use districts are established in the Planning Area, there will be opportunity to integrate a civic presence with small community centers, education facilities, and entertainment and cultural venues that could build on and help sustain activity in these areas. These include a new community plaza at the Circle-S site, which will provide a forum for events such as farmers' market, music performances, and children's



Alvarado Adobe, San Pablo Library, and Doctors Medical Center are all located along the Avenue.



Conceptual image of Circle-S Public Plaza.

waterplay. Additionally, locating civic uses in close proximity to residential uses, neighborhood services, retail, and transit, will help maximize accessibility and long-term sustainability for the San Pablo Avenue corridor.

GUIDING POLICIES

- 6-G-5** Enhance visibility and connectivity to existing and new community facilities within and around the Planning Area.
- 6-G-6** Provide a broad range of recreation opportunities and social services in and around the Planning Area, including recreation and community centers, daycare, youth centers, and senior and transitional services.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 6-I-10** Establish clear pedestrian connections and wayfinding signage to key community facilities, as described in Chapter 4: Urban Design and Building Development Standards, to connect new and existing neighborhoods to community services and amenities.
- 6-I-11** Encourage the location of cultural and community facilities in mixed-use buildings in retail and entertainment areas as well as in proximity to existing historic and cultural amenities.

7

Affordable Housing Strategy

San Pablo is a small city, with a population of approximately 31,000 residents. As compared with the rest of the county, income levels in the city are significantly lower. According to the 2000 Census, while the county's median household income was \$63,675, San Pablo's median household income was \$37,184—only 58 percent of the county's. Therefore, it is important that San Pablo contain housing that is affordable to its residents. As the San Pablo Avenue Planning Area contains numerous housing opportunity sites, the Plan's creation and implementation represents an excellent opportunity for the City to take steps to meet this critical need.

The MTC/ABAG Station Area Planning Manual identifies “Create Opportunities for Affordable and Accessible Living” as one of the main goals for station area planning under its grant program. The “TOD Plan Checklist” under this topic includes the following list:

- *Set affordable housing goals.* Plans should set goals for the level of affordable housing provision in the station area, whether achieved through inclusionary requirements or other policies and financing mechanisms (including targeting existing programs to the Study Area).
- *Consider appropriate inclusionary housing requirements.* Plans should analyze whether higher inclusionary housing requirements can be supported in station areas. More affordable housing will promote transit ridership and social equity goals, and also help corridors achieve the housing unit threshold
- *Provide a range of housing options.* A range of housing choices should ideally be made available within the station area, including new housing that can accommodate families as well as senior housing and ordinances allowing and encouraging secondary units.
- *Minimize displacement of existing residents.* Policies to minimize displacement of existing lower-income residents should be analyzed and adopted where appropriate and feasible.
- *Accessibility/visitability policies.* Accessibility policies should go beyond the scope of ADA and state law requirements and ensure that a portion of development is fully accessible for residents with disabilities and “visitable” by visitors with disabilities.

The text that follows provides background information about housing needs in the city, as well as specific strategies to preserve, promote, and create affordable housing in San Pablo using the Checklist as a guide.

7.1 RECENT EFFORTS AND NEEDS IDENTIFICATION

Primary Needs Identified in the Housing Element

The City of San Pablo submitted a Housing Element update for the period 2007-2014 to the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in April 2010. The City received comments from HCD in June 2010, and resubmitted the document to HCD in November 2010. The Housing Element assesses the housing needs of the city's general population as well as special groups such as the elderly, homeless, and disabled; identifies sites for future housing to accommodate a jurisdiction's share of regional housing needs; and provides policies and programs that the City will undertake in order to promote affordable housing development and preservation.

While the Housing Element Update applies to the city as a whole, its findings and programs are applicable to the San Pablo Avenue Corridor and can be expected to help facilitate housing development in the Planning Area in the coming years. Key findings from the Housing Element needs assessment are presented here.

General Demographic and Housing Trends

Table 7-1 shows the current percent of city and county residents by income category. In 2007, within San Pablo, there were 2,511 extremely low-income households, 1,680 very low-income households, and 2,391 low-income households—these made up 27, 18, and 26 percent, respectively of the households in the city. Moderate-income households comprised 13 percent of the city's households and only 16 percent of households were above moderate-income. In comparison, the County had a lower proportion of extremely low- to low-income residents and a higher proportion of above moderate-income residents than the city.

Other notable demographic trends in the city include:

- The Latino population has become the most sizable community in San Pablo, representing more than half of the resident population.
- In 2007, the city had one of the lowest median household incomes (\$42,910) and one of the highest unemployment rates in Contra Costa County (9.9%).¹ According to the California Employment Development

¹ Table 2.2-1 in the Housing Element (2007 data)

TABLE 7-1 HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME GROUP IN 2007 (EXISTING)

INCOME GROUP	INCOME CRITERIA ¹	SAN PABLO	CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
Extremely low	Less than \$22,931	2,511	47,463
		27%	13%
Very low	\$22,932 – \$38,218	1,680	40,681
		18%	11%
Low	\$38,219 – \$61,149	2,391	56,902
		26%	16%
Moderate	\$61,150 – \$91,723	1,161	68,847
		13%	19%
Above Moderate	Over \$91,724	1,479	152,536
		16%	42%
TOTAL	–	9,222	366,428
		100%	100%

1 The 2007 Contra Costa County Median Income is \$76,440

2 Income ranges from available data sources do not correspond exactly to the income categories. The numbers in the table were derived through interpolating the data.

Source: Census Bureau American Community Survey 2007, Claritas Inc. Site Reports 2007.

Department (EDD), in July 2010, the city still had one of the highest unemployment rates in the county, but the rate rose to 22.6 percent.²

- The average sale price for a single-family home in the city was \$228,324 in September 2008. The average sale price of a multifamily unit in September 2008 was \$204,057. The median price for a home (either single- or multifamily) in December 2008 was 160,500; this is down from \$491,300 in December 2006.³
- The median gross rent in San Pablo, at about \$1,250 per month, is comparable to that in the county as a whole. There are more renters than owners in San Pablo, and a larger percentage of them (45%) spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing.
- Land costs in San Pablo (surveyed in February 2009) varied widely from an average of \$21 per square foot for single-family zoned land to \$40 per square foot on average for multifamily zoned land.⁴ These costs compare to

2 California Employment Development Department, 2010. <http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/?pageid=133>

3 National Association of Realtors, September 9, 2008; California Association of Realtors, 2009.

4 ZipRealty.com and Loop.Net. Both accessed on 24 February 2009.

other jurisdictions in the county, with land in San Pablo being, on average, less expensive than many other county cities.

Special Housing Needs

- In 2000, a total of 5,437 San Pablo residents (or almost 18% of the population) had some sort of disability, according to the Census.
- The number of female-headed households has increased, but the number living below the poverty line has decreased. Between 2000 and 2007 the number of female-headed households went up from 1,723 to 1,824, though the percentage in poverty decreased from 31 percent to 29 percent during that time.
- The number of large households (with five or more people) was 2,233 in 2000, or 25 percent of total households in the city. The incidence of overcrowding was 27 percent of all dwelling units in 2000 at 2,453 units.
- The number of seniors living in owner-occupied housing was 64 percent (967 households) in 2000.
- The 80-unit elderly and disabled affordable (deed restricted) El Portal Gardens development is located on San Pablo Avenue in the Planning Area. While this development is currently not at-risk of market rate conversion, analysis in the Housing Element shows that if these units were at-risk of conversion, it would save the City about \$77,000 per unit to acquire and rehabilitate the 80-unit development in lieu of replacing all 80 units given the high construction and financing costs.

Key Findings from the Market Study (Residential)

As part of the Specific Plan process, a market study was completed in May 2010⁵ that analyzed the real estate market potential for a variety of land uses planned for the San Pablo Avenue Corridor: residential, retail, office, and entertainment. The residential market analysis focused on calculating the demand for market-rate housing, but also includes an estimation of the demand for affordable housing in the Study Area. The conclusions pertaining to residential development from the market study are listed below.

- Prospective buyers and renters in the Study Area will include many first-time homebuyers; young and multigenerational families; students and others affiliated with Contra Costa College, the Doctors Medical Center, and the San Pablo Lytton Casino; and the elderly.
- In the short term (through 2015) there is demand in the Study Area for 390 units, or 65 units per year of market-rate housing from income-qualified households, which equates to absorption levels of three to four units per

⁵ City of San Pablo, 2010. *San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan: Market Study*.

month across the entire Study Area. Approximately 60 percent of demand is for ownership housing; 40 percent is for rental housing.

- Based on current residential demand projections and the Association of Bay Area Governments' (ABAG) most recent population projections, the Study Area would see demand for between 900 and 1,300 total new market-rate residential units by 2030.
- Based upon San Pablo residents' income levels, there is notable market demand for affordable housing in addition to demand for market-rate housing in the Study Area. Some demand for affordable housing will be satisfied by turnover of existing subsidized units in the Study Area, of which there are currently approximately 430. But overall, demand for new affordable housing in the Study Area of all types (existing and new construction; rental and ownership) is likely to be around 18-25 units annually in the short term (through 2015). Strategies for providing affordable housing can help the Study Area serve the needs of as wide of an array of households as possible.
- Supportable product types include ownership townhomes, rental apartment units, and multifamily housing geared towards students.

Housing Sites in the San Pablo Avenue Planning Area

The Specific Plan assumes a buildout of 65.1 acres of residential land and 49.3 acres of land designated as mixed use. Most land use classifications permit residential uses, at varying densities. Of the land designated specifically for residential development, 58 percent of the acreage is High Density, 36 percent is Medium Density, and 6 percent is Low Density.

The Specific Plan provides for the following net housing buildout by area by 2030, as shown in Table 7-2.

	CIRCLE-S	MISSION PLAZA	SOUTH SAN PABLO AVENUE	TOWNE CENTER	WEST SAN PABLO AVENUE	OTHER AREAS	TOTAL PLANNING AREA
Low Density				-1	-19	-2	-22
Medium Density			-1	-10	-6	137	120
High Density					-15	83	68
MU Center North		94				35	129
MU Center South	129						129
Commerical MU			96	42		57	195
Residential MU					102	18	120
TOTAL DWELLING UNITS	129	94	95	31	62	328	739

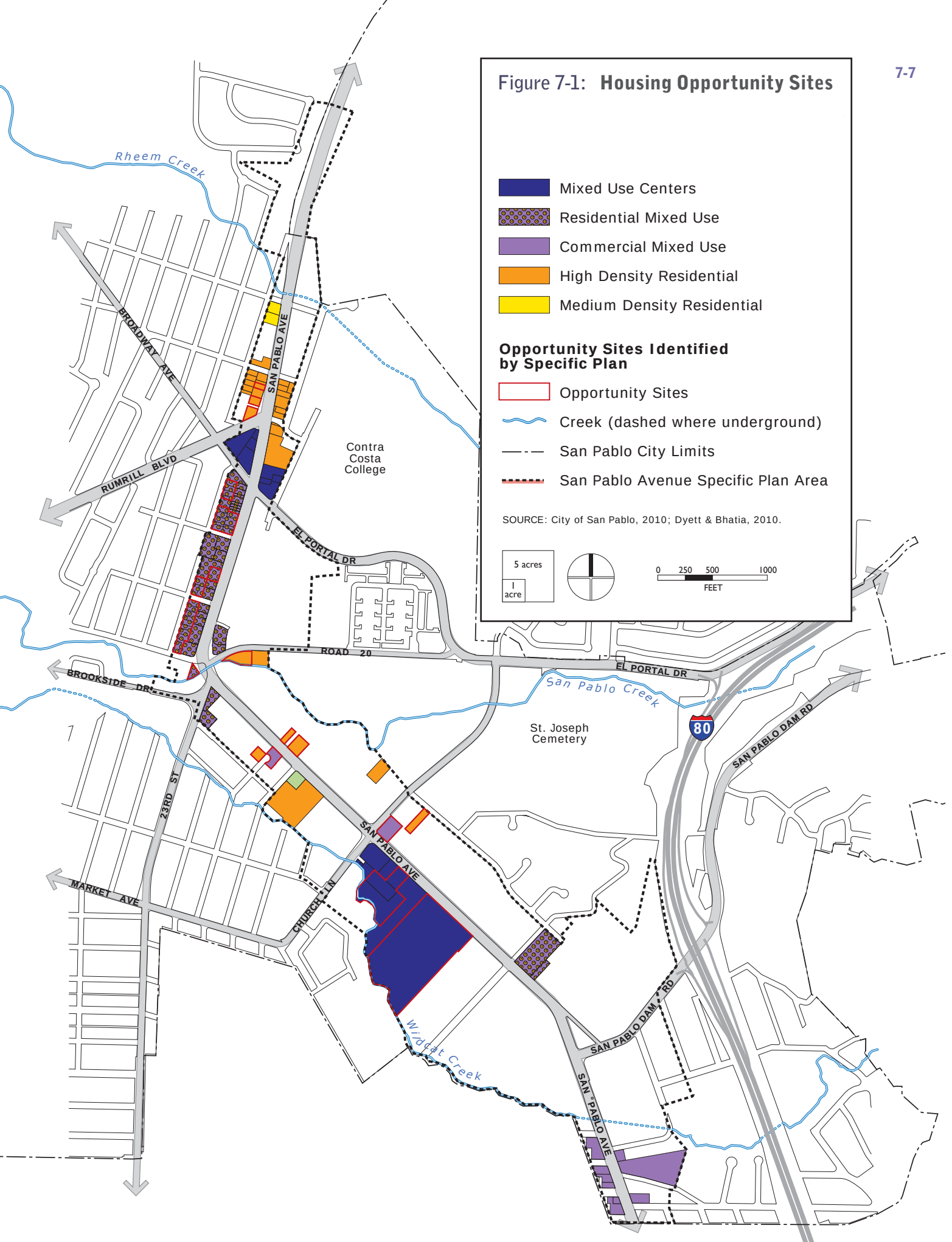
The 739 housing units expected to buildout under the Specific Plan are broken down by income level as follows (Table 7-3).

TABLE 7-3 SPECIFIC PLAN HOUSING POTENTIAL BY INCOME LEVEL								
GENERAL PLAN LAND USE	MUCN	MUCS	HDR	CMU	MDR	RMU	LDR	TOTAL
Average Density (du/acre)	60	32	30	20	18	14	8	–
Very Low-Income (30-50% AMI)	19	19	10	–	–	–	–	48
Low-Income (50-80% AMI)								
Moderate-Income (80-120% AMI)	110	110	58	195	120	120	-22	691
Above Moderate Income (Above 120% AMI)								
TOTAL	129	129	68	195	120	120	-22	739
Notes: MUCN - Mixed Used Center North, HDR - High Density Residential, CMU23 - Commercial Mixed Use, MUCS- Mixed Used Center South, LDR - Low Density Residential.								

According to State law, sites that allow at least 30 units per acre (San Pablo’s “default density”) can be reasonably expected to produce affordable units. Using this rationale, all units under Mixed Use Center North, Mixed Use Center South, and High Density Residential (a total of 326 units) could conceivably develop as affordable to very low- and low-income households according to the Specific Plan. However, the Housing Element conservatively contends that only 15 percent of the housing units on sites zoned at least 30 units per acre will yield affordable units; this methodology yields 48 affordable units (See Table 7-3).

In general, the sites identified for housing by the Specific Plan overlap with those identified in the Housing Element. However, the Housing Element identifies an additional 47 potential housing units within the Planning Area due to different parameters for identification of opportunity sites than those used by the Specific Plan. These parameters are defined in the Housing Element and include a range of factors including site size, location, current and adjacent site uses, and ownership. Opportunity sites for housing identified by the Specific Plan, as well as those identified by the Housing Element within the Planning Area, are shown in Figure 7-I.

Figure 7-1: Housing Opportunity Sites



7.2 STRATEGIES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROVISION

Affordable Housing Goals

In addition to identifying the appropriate zoning of land to meet the City's affordable housing needs, the Housing Element also lays out a set of programmatic actions that the City will engage in to further spur and facilitate affordable housing development and other housing goals. Many of these goals are listed at the end of this chapter.

Type of Units Likely to be Produced

While the Housing Element does not spell out numbers of different kinds of units that the city in general, or Planning Area in particular could accommodate, much of the housing potential in the city, especially in the Planning Area, is in mixed-use areas due to the new General Plan land use designations. Mixed-use development is likely to include affordable apartments and condominiums. Also, see "Providing a Range of Housing Options," on page 7-9.

At-Risk Housing Units

There are no affordable units in the Planning Area "at-risk" of conversion to market rate during the next 10 years (a standard established by the Department of Housing and Community Development). The 80-unit El Portal Gardens, which houses disabled or elderly residents, just renewed its contract with HUD and there are no Redevelopment Agency units whose contracts are set to expire.

Funding Available to Preserve or Create New Affordable Housing

Table 7-4 shows the amount of funds that are available under each program which have not been legally obligated for other purposes and therefore could be used to preserve at-risk, assisted housing units or fund new affordable projects. Funds depicted are estimates based on the average funding received for projects in the City from 2004-2009; it is not certain exactly how much money will be available in the future.

TABLE 7-4 FINANCING RESOURCES EXPECTED (\$): JANUARY 1, 2007 TO JUNE 30, 2014

	2010	2011	2013	2014 ¹	TOTAL
HOME Funds ²	220,000	220,000	220,000	220,000	1,760,000
CDBG Funds ³	294,000	294,000	294,000	294,000	2,352,000
SHP Funds ⁴	262,000	262,000	262,000	262,000	2,096,000
20% Housing Set Aside Funds	128,739	13,540	321,693	154,6571	618,629

1 A projection for 2014 is not available at this time. Therefore, this number represents an average of the three previous years.

2 San Pablo is not eligible for State HOME funds. The federal HOME funds are administered through the Contra Costa Consortium and the funds are not annually allocated to the City. They are allocated to projects as they come forward. Therefore, while about \$220,000 was allocated to projects in San Pablo on an annual basis between 2004-09, it is not at all certain that this level of funding will continue, however it is used as the basis of projections in this table. The City could easily receive more or less HOME funds depending on if viable projects present themselves.

3 CDBG funds shown for housing-related activities only. Furthermore, like HOME funds, it is impossible to accurately project future CDBG funding. However, judging from CDBG funds that were allocated for projects in San Pablo in 2004-09, about \$294,000 may be allocated annually.

4 Like HOME and CDBG funds the \$262,000 annual allocation of SHP funds indicated in this table is only an estimation based on past funding from 2004-09. Future funding will likely vary.

Source: Contra Costa County, 2009 and City of San Pablo, 2009.

Inclusionary Housing Requirements

In some cases, housing around transit stations or along major transit corridors is capable of supporting higher inclusionary housing requirements than other areas of a city. Not only are transit areas appropriate locations for affordable housing, but inclusionary housing requirements also increase the total number of units in proximity to transit, boosting ridership.

San Pablo currently does not have an inclusionary housing ordinance. However, a new program in the most recent Housing Element will study the possibility in 2011:

Program H-2.1.6: Explore the feasibility of establishing an Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, consistent with recent case law, to require the development of units affordable to lower income households in all new housing developments, with the possible option of an in-lieu fee payment for developers that cannot provide units on-site.

At the time that the City studies the inclusionary housing ordinance possibility (within the next calendar year), it would be appropriate to consider a higher required level for the Planning Area. Given the *Palmer/Sixth Street Properties v. City of Los Angeles* (2009) decision, cities that currently have inclusionary housing ordinances or those, like San Pablo, that are considering developing them, must be mindful of the implications of the decision; namely, that inclusionary housing ordinances should generally not apply to rental housing and that clear linkages to a public purpose must be established.

Providing a Range of Housing Options

The San Pablo Avenue corridor, stretching approximately two miles through the city, changes character and land uses along its length. The southern portion hosts large community retailers and the Lytton Casino, a regional attraction; further north are City offices, high and medium density residential areas, and local businesses.

The Specific Plan preserves this diverse array of land uses and allows for more mixed-use development to take place on key opportunity sites. The nature of the land uses designated for the San Pablo Avenue corridor allow for a wide range of housing options, suitable to meet the needs of the City's diverse population. Table 7-5 shows the acreage of land uses that allow residential development in the Planning Area.

However, the City must go beyond merely designating land uses in order to ensure that housing—especially on opportunity sites—is actually constructed. The City of San Pablo has an advantage in this regard because it owns the Circle-S site, which is a key catalyst property for the implementation of the plan. A primary strategy will be for the City to issue an RFQ for the Circle-S site, specifying the type of housing and non-residential development that the City wishes to see on the property, and solicit proposals from developers that meet the City's criteria for the site's preferred development program.

TABLE 7-5 LAND USES PERMITTING RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT BY ACRE

	PROPOSED LAND USE – OPPORTUNITY SITES	PROPOSED LAND USE – NON-OPPORTUNITY SITES	TOTAL AT PLAN BUILDOUT	PERCENT OF TOTAL RESIDENTIAL BUILDOUT
RESIDENTIAL				
Low Density Residential	–	4.2	4.2	4%
Medium Density Residential	0.6	23.3	23.9	21%
High Density Residential	5.7	31.4	37.1	32%
MIXED USE				
Mixed Use Center North	2.7	–	2.7	2%
Mixed Use Center South	16.1	–	16.1	14%
Commercial Mixed Use	12.6	5.1	17.7	15%
Residential Mixed Use	9.6	3.2	12.8	11%
TOTAL	47.3	67.2	114.5	100
Note: Percents are rounded to the nearest whole number.				
Source: Dyett & Bhatia, 2010.				

It is important that the Circle-S site's development move forward after the Specific Plan's adoption so that it may act as a high-visibility catalyst project for the corridor. The City has not yet finalized a preferred development program, but anticipates that development will occur in two phases. Approximately 100 housing units would be developed in Phase 1, and the remainder (approximately 30) would be built subsequently. The development of 100 units in the early stages of plan implementation, on a site controlled by the City, represents an excellent opportunity to ensure that affordable housing will be provided along the corridor in the near term. Refer to Chapter 4: Urban Design and Building Development Standards for schematic site plans and phasing of the Circle-S site.

On sites that are not owned by the City of San Pablo, the City can still take steps to promote residential development, particularly that which includes units affordable to all income levels. The Housing Element includes numerous policies and programs to that end, including:

Program H-1.1.1: Continue to provide low-interest loans to extremely low- to moderate-income owner-occupied and rental property owners to bring units up to current building code standards, modify buildings for improved mobility of disabled and elderly persons, demolish irreparable secondary buildings, expand units to alleviate overcrowding, identify and remove lead paint hazards, and allow for general property improvements.

In addition, inform residents about the availability of low-interest loans by distributing this information via the City newsletter to every household in San Pablo. All newsletters will be sent out in the major languages that are representative of the City's population.

Under this program, the City will provide low interest rehabilitation loans from such programs as CDBG, California Housing Rehabilitation Program, and through bank financing to assist San Pablo residents in rehabilitating their homes. City involvement could include:

- Review of pro forma analysis;
- Provision of available demographic or other background data necessary to complete applications;
- Review and comment upon draft application;
- Letters of support as appropriate;
- City Council actions in support of the application; and

- Willingness to monitor compliance with provisions of the loan within the limitation of existing work load.

Program H-I.1.2: Continue to provide low-interest deferred loans, payable upon sale or transfer of property, to extremely low- to moderate-income senior households. Provide low-interest deferred loans, payable in five years or sale/transfer of property (whichever comes first) to non-senior extremely low- and moderate-income households.

In addition, inform residents about the availability of deferred interest rehabilitation loans by distributing this information via the City newsletter to every household in San Pablo.

The purpose of these loans are to bring units up to current code standards, modify buildings for improved mobility of disabled and elderly persons, demolish irreparable secondary buildings, expand units to alleviate overcrowding, identify and remove lead paint hazards, and rehabilitate for general property improvements.

Under this program, the City will provide deferred rehabilitation loans from such programs as CDBG to assist San Pablo residents in rehabilitating their homes. City involvement could include:

- Review of pro forma analysis;
- Provision of available demographic or other background data necessary to complete applications;
- Review and comment upon draft application;
- Letters of support as appropriate;
- City Council actions in support of the application; and
- Willingness to monitor compliance with provisions of the loan within the limitation of existing work load.

Program H-1.1.3: Continue to provide free technical assistance and counseling to approved loan applicant homeowners interested in developing plans and specifications for rehabilitation. Assist in monitoring construction. Provide technical assistance to homeowners on the following issues:

- Interpreting code requirements;
- Architectural consultation regarding structural work essential to the conservation program;
- Instructions on how to solicit bids in order to get the best terms;
- Guidance in letting and enforcing contracts; and
- Referral to consumer protection services whenever appropriate.

Program H-1.6.1: Update the Zoning Ordinance to provide standards for the Mixed Use Center, Residential Mixed Use, and Commercial Mixed Use land use designations in the 2030 General Plan. In the interim, before the Zoning Ordinance is updated, the City will in practice enforce the new General Plan land uses and densities rather than the old zoning designations.

The 2030 General Plan has new land use designations to encourage higher density residential development in San Pablo, particularly along San Pablo Avenue and 23rd Street.

Program H-1.6.2: Update the Zoning Ordinance to reduce parking standards for the following housing types, where appropriate, to reflect actual need:

- Group Housing; and
- Multifamily housing along San Pablo Avenue.

San Pablo Avenue is well-served by transit, as such, flexibility in parking standards may be a development incentive to multifamily developments.

Program H-2.1.4: Promote mixed commercial/residential development in the City's Mixed Use Center, Commercial Mixed Use, and Residential Mixed Use General Plan land use areas through the following actions:

- Offer fast track permitting, waive applicable permit fees, and expedite design review and environmental review when possible;
- Provide incentives for mixed-use projects through the street and façade improvements program successfully used for the 23rd Street project; and
- Work on a Geographic Information System (GIS) database that will link to the City's website so that developers can view sites located in the mixed use areas, obtain information from the City on development potential, and contact the City with inquiries on specific sites.

Developers proposing mixed-use projects may be eligible for a variance for parking on a case-by-case basis. The Redevelopment Agency (RDA) actively seeks developers interested in constructing mixed-use projects.

Program H-2.1.8: Provide by right reductions from the standard parking requirements for new residential projects that are located on San Pablo Avenue and have frequent transit service.

Program H-2.4.1: Facilitate the development of student housing at the Mixed Use Center North site near Contra Costa College through density bonuses and priority permit processing.

While these Housing Element programs were developed for the city as a whole, in reality, they are mostly applicable to sites along the San Pablo Avenue corridor, as that is where most housing opportunity sites are located. Additionally, the City recognizes that promoting housing near transit helps provide needed accessibility and mobility options for current and future residents and benefits the transit agencies serving the area as well by increasing ridership. Programs such as H-1.6.2 and H-2.1.8 recognize this connection and aim to explicitly facilitate housing development in conjunction with transit service.

Accessibility and Visitability Policies

As populations in San Pablo and elsewhere age, accessibility and visitability will be increasingly important. The recent Housing Element Update contains Program H-3.1.1, which is continued from the previous Housing Element as well as three new programs: H-3.2.5, H-3.2.6, and H-3.2.7.

Program H-3.1.1: Continue to work with Housing Rights, Inc. (HRI) to minimize and resolve conflicts and disputes between landlords and tenants, and eliminate all forms of housing discrimination by disseminating tenant/landlord conflict resolution information in the annual mailing about residential programs, and documenting residents' concerns at City Hall before forwarding them to HRI. Additionally, implement a tracking system to record the number of referrals to HRI under this program each year.

Program H-3.2.5: Create and adopt a Reasonable Accommodations Ordinance to provide persons with disabilities reasonable accommodation to rules, procedures and standards to ensure equal access to housing opportunities.

This ordinance will establish a clear and streamlined procedure to request a reasonable accommodation. Additionally, it will establish the decision-making authority, standards for which modifications and exceptions may be considered, and conditions for approval.

Program H-3.2.6: Enforce State handicapped, accessibility, and adaptability standards and expand housing opportunities for persons with disabilities, through the following actions:

- Require all housing developments designated for seniors to be handicapped accessible.
- Require all first-floor units of multifamily developments to be handicapped accessible and be equipped with accessible parking spaces, sidewalks, entrances, and other items in accordance with ADA guidelines.
- Encourage qualified residents to apply for low-interest rehabilitation loans (Program H-1.1.1) or deferred loans (Program H-1.1.2) for purposes of improving accessibility.
- Provide information to the public to raise awareness on accessibility issues through the City newsletter and website.

Program H-3.2.7: Revise Residential Care Facility provisions by:

- Creating a definition for facilities with seven or more residents; and
- Developing standards that apply to all residential care facilities to eliminate the possibility that standards will be imposed on an ad-hoc basis.

8

Environment, Health, and Safety

Ensuring a high level of environmental quality in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Planning Area is integral to maintaining and enhancing community health, safety, and quality of life. The purpose of this chapter is to establish goals and policies which, in combination with General Plan policies and other local, State, and federal regulations, mitigate the potential negative effects of natural and man-made environmental hazards that threaten public health and safety, as well as the ecological systems in San Pablo and surrounding region. Specifically, this chapter addresses water quality and flooding, habitats and wildlife, noise environment, hazardous materials, and toxic air contaminants. These issues are summarized graphically in Figure 8-1: Environmental Constraints. Policies are designed to augment and reinforce those of the General Plan.



View of San Pablo Reservoir



San Pablo Bay looking east

8.1 WATER QUALITY AND FLOODING

The protection of regional water resources and quality in the Planning Area is an important local responsibility because of the numerous beneficial uses of the hydrologic system. These beneficial uses regionally and locally include municipal, domestic, agricultural, and industrial water supplies; ground water recharge; navigation; recreation; fishing; habitat for warm and cold freshwater biota, wildlife, and rare and endangered species; and fish migration, spawning, and harvesting. This section provides an overview of water resources, water quality issues, and flooding risk in the Planning Area.

Hydrology of the San Pablo Avenue Corridor

The San Francisco Bay Area is divided into seven broad watershed basins based upon topography and drainage patterns. The City of San Pablo lies within the San Pablo Basin planning region.¹ Within this planning region, the Planning Area lies primarily within the San Pablo Creek and Wildcat Creek watersheds but also includes a small portion of the Rheem Creek watershed. These watersheds connect the Planning Area to the San Pablo and San Francisco bays, and thus are part of an ecosystem of unparalleled importance in California. Water bodies in and near the Planning Area for which beneficial uses have been established include San Pablo Creek, Wildcat Creek, San Pablo Reservoir, Briones Reservoir, and San Pablo Bay.

¹ San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), 2007.

Water Quality Issues

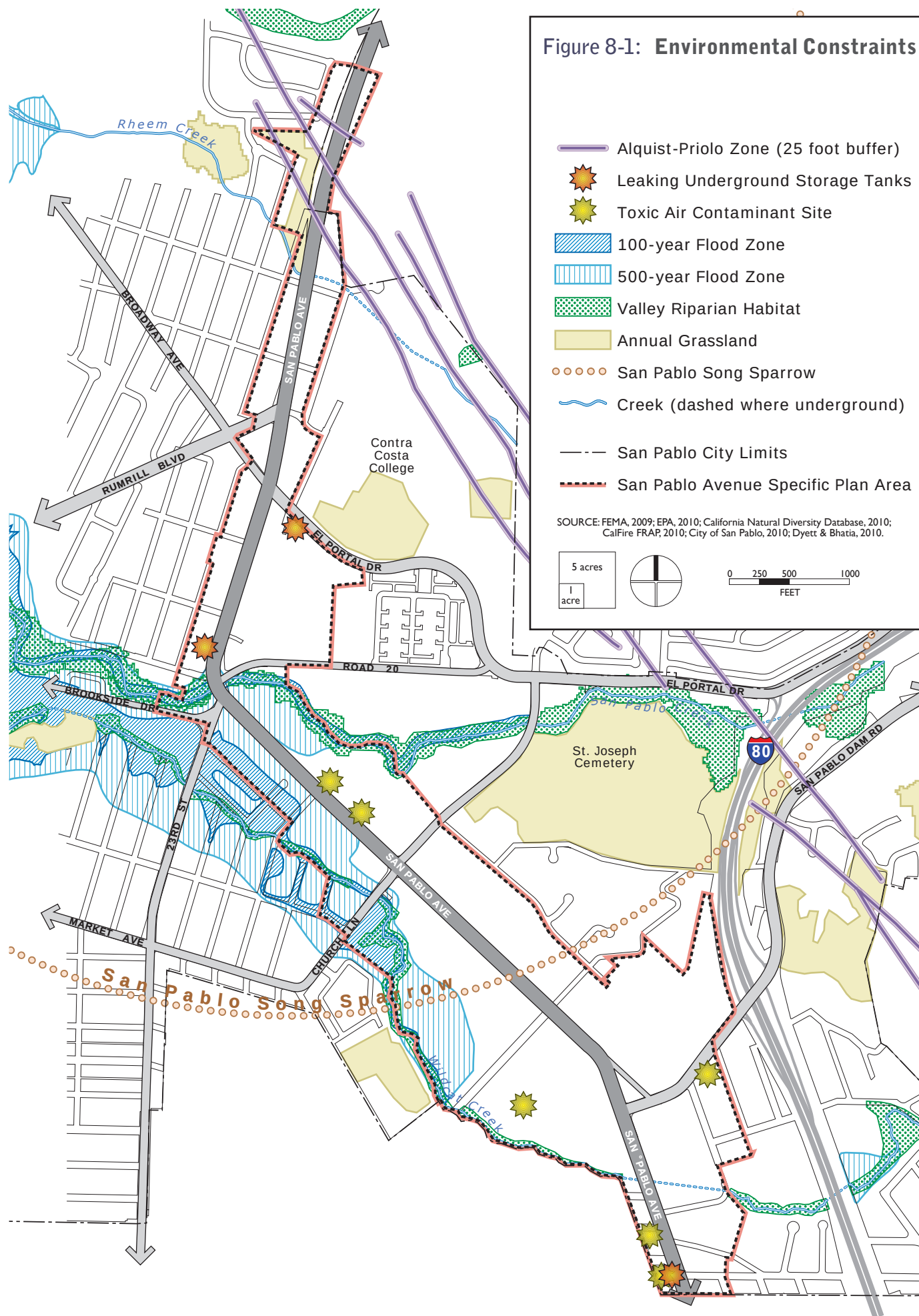
With urban development, a wide variety of nutrients and toxic substances are introduced into surface waters. Pollutants contained in urban runoff include street litter, sediment, oil and grease, oxygen-demanding substances, pathogenic microorganisms, metals, and pesticides. Nutrient waste in the form of sewage, agricultural fertilizers, and manure lead to reduced dissolved oxygen in surface waters and limit the capacity of water to support aquatic organisms. Toxic substances, such as industrial wastes, automobile fluids and metals, insecticides and herbicides, can poison wildlife and become concentrated in the food chain and local water supply. In the Planning Area, San Pablo and Wildcat creeks are designated by the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board as impaired water bodies under the Clean Water Act Section 303(d). Impaired waters are those that do not meet water quality standards, even after pollution control technology for point sources of pollution have been implemented. The CWA requires the development of action plans, known as Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL), to improve water quality in water bodies designated as impaired. The pollutant identified as causing impairment in the San Pablo and Wildcat creeks is diazinon, related to urban runoff and storm sewers. RWQCB staff is developing TMDL projects to address impaired waters throughout the region. One TMDL may address multiple listings such as diazinon/pesticide toxicity which would address more than 30 impaired creeks or creek segments in urban areas. San Pablo Reservoir has also been listed as an impaired water body for mercury from atmospheric deposition.²

Flood-Risk Areas

Flood-prone areas in San Pablo are generally located in topographically low areas and in areas close to creeks. Flood zone mapping done by the Federal Emergency Management Authority (FEMA) indicates that the city is most prone to flooding where San Pablo and Wildcat creeks cross the city boundary on the west; however within the Planning Area, there are a few very small flood-prone areas in the vicinity of where San Pablo Creek meets San Pablo Avenue, and further along Wildcat Creek to the southeast. These areas are mapped in Figure 8-1.

² San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), 2007.

Figure 8-1: Environmental Constraints



Low Impact Development

Low Impact Development (LID) technologies and designs mimic natural watershed processes by replicating pre-urban development hydrologic conditions on-site. LID usually directs storm water runoff to natural vegetated systems—such as landscaped planters, swales and gardens—that reduce, filter or slow the runoff before it makes its way into the storm drainage system. The proposed redevelopment in the Planning Area will employ low impact development techniques in order to capture and treat stormwater runoff at its source. On-site treatment reduces the amount of pollutants picked up in comparison to stormwater that drains to a central collection site. LID can be incorporated into public realm streetscape and natural or common open spaces in the community. They can be designed as drainage courses within landscaped greenways and buffers, drainage swales in roadway or parking medians or planter strips, planter boxes and vegetated curb extensions, or even as demonstration rain or infiltration gardens to enhance civic and recreational quality of the Planning Area.

GUIDING POLICIES

- 8-G-1** Use development in the San Pablo Avenue corridor to improve local hydrology and water quality.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 8-I-1** Require development in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Planning Area to include low impact development features to reduce stormwater pollutant loads and increase on-site infiltration, consistent with General Plan policy PCSU-I-34. Features should be drawn from the Bay Area Stormwater Management Agency's "Start at the Source Design Guidance Manual for Stormwater Quality Protection." Ensure the update of zoning stormwater management standards pursuant to General Plan policy PCSU-I-34 includes provisions for stronger stormwater management on sites within 300 feet of creeks in the Planning Area, with an emphasis on maintaining or restoring the natural character of the water feature.
- 8-I-2** In accordance with the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Land Use Diagram, and General Plan policy OSC-I-10, ensure that redevelopment plans are designed to restore natural ecological systems wherever possible, including such techniques as "daylighting" Wildcat Creek immediately east of San Pablo Avenue in accordance with the Specific Plan Land Use Diagram, and integrating natural features and processes in the public experience throughout the Planning Area. These design efforts up front will improve both the ecological and aesthetic values of local hydrological resources.

8.2 HABITATS AND WILDLIFE

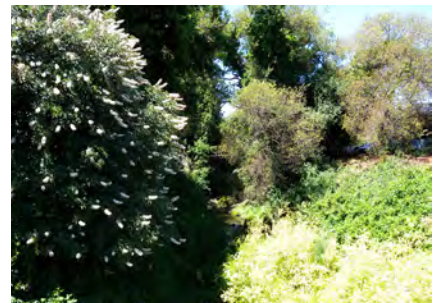
The habitat setting in the Planning Area is extremely limited due to the urban, built-up nature of the corridor. Nonetheless, important natural “corridors” in the form of San Pablo and Wildcat creeks cross through the Planning Area in transition from the hilly inland area of Contra Costa County westward to the Bay. These natural corridors provide important ecological services as described in this and the previous section. In addition to ensuring local water quality as described above, the Specific Plan can protect and enhance these corridors as habitat for wildlife.

Vegetation and Habitat

Although most of the Planning Area contains what is known as “urban/disturbed” habitat areas, valley/foothill riparian habitat has been identified along San Pablo and Wildcat creeks within the Planning Area. This habitat consists of woody vegetation within the active and historical floodplains of gently-sloping reaches of streams and rivers. The valley/foothill riparian habitat has four vegetative layers: canopy, sub-canopy, shrub, and groundcover. Deciduous trees dominate the canopy and sub-canopy, including black cottonwood, California sycamore, valley oak, white alder, box elder, and Oregon ash. The shrub layer includes willows, toyon, California blackberry, poison oak, and dogwood. The ground cover species include sedges, rushes, grasses, and a variety of herbs. A wide range of wildlife species can be found in this habitat type because of its diverse ecological composition, however, the limited extent of the habitat in the Planning Area also limits its usefulness to wildlife. The multiple vegetative layers provide niches for different birds, reptiles, and mammals; and the hydrologic variety provides potential habitat for different fish, amphibians, and reptiles.

Special-Status Wildlife

The California Natural Diversity Database has one record of a special-status species occurring in the Planning Area, the San Pablo song sparrow. It is not federally or state-listed, but it is considered to be a California Species of Special Concern. Although the species itself is widespread and common, the San Pablo subspecies is endemic to California and confined to the tidal marshes of San Pablo Bay. It is currently threatened by habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, and predation. Other special-status species that may be present in the Planning Area include the monarch butterfly, Bridges coast range shoulderband, and Loma Prieta hoita, which are most likely to be found within forested riparian areas that occur along the creeks, and the California red-legged frog and western pond turtle which may be found within the creeks themselves. While none of these species have recorded occurrences in the Planning Area, some have recorded upstream populations with the potential for migration downstream.



Vegetation along San Pablo Creek



San Pablo Song Sparrow

GUIDING POLICIES

- 8-G-2** Strive for development in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Planning Area that protects and improves the quality of habitat areas, particularly along San Pablo and Wildcat creeks.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 8-I-3** Promote the development of new parks in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Planning Area in accordance with the Land Use Diagram that provide both human and habitat services and which are contiguous with, and expand, existing Valley/foothill riparian habitat.
- 8-I-4** Prohibit siting of new hazardous materials handlers, such as gas stations, within 150 feet of any creeks within the Planning Area. This distance may be amended upon completion of the Creek Improvement Program described in General Plan policy OSC-I-10, but does not supersede the requirements for evaluation of biological resources within 300 feet of creeks pursuant to General Plan policy OSC-I-4.

8.3 NOISE ENVIRONMENT

Noise is defined as unwanted sound. The effects of noise on humans may range from mild annoyance and interference with activities to hearing loss and stress-related health problems. Noise can also disturb animals and deteriorate the quality of local wildlife habitat. Some land uses, such as habitats and schools are more sensitive to noise than others. While San Pablo is an urban community with existing exposure to typical urban noise such as from traffic, this section of the Specific Plan provides a description of the existing and anticipated future noise environments, and policies to reduce the negative effects of noise on population within and nearby the Planning Area.

Existing Noise Environment

The dominant and consistent source of noise in the Planning Area is on-road vehicular traffic from San Pablo Avenue. Along major streets (such as San Pablo Avenue) and I-80, the sound of traffic is more intense because traffic volumes and speeds are higher, and trucks make up a greater share of the traffic than in residential areas. Additionally, noise levels are also elevated at intersections with 23rd Street, San Pablo Dam Road, Road 20, El Portal Drive, and the Church Lane.

Several factors control how traffic noise levels affect nearby sensitive land uses. These include roadway elevation compared to grade; structures or terrain intervening between the roadway and the sensitive receptors; and the distance between the roadway and receptors. The source of the loudest traffic noise in the vicinity of the Planning Area—I-80—already has sound walls along its extent through the City of San Pablo, substantially reducing the noise impact to the community and the nearest portions of the Planning Area in the southeast. Traffic noise can nonetheless be a significant environmental concern where buffers (e.g., buildings, structures, landscaping, etc.) are inadequate or where the distance from roadway to sensitive uses is relatively small. Noise levels along arterial roadways currently range from 60 to 80 dB CNEL at a distance of 100 feet from the roadway centerlines. Figure 8-2 depicts noise contours reflecting the existing noise condition in the Planning Area. These contours do not account for attenuation by existing buildings or sound walls.

Future Noise Environment

The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan proposes to increase densities and intensities along the San Pablo Avenue corridor, which will result in more residents and jobs. Traffic volumes on the major arterial roadways in the city—such as San Pablo Avenue, San Pablo Dam Road, El Portal Drive, Rumrill Boulevard, Road 20, and Church Lane—are expected to increase. Noise from I-80 is also expected to increase, largely as a result of region-wide growth and development. Noise levels along arterial roadways will continue to range from 60 to 80 dB CNEL at a distance of 100 feet from the roadway centerlines. Proposed new residential development on opportunity sites within the Planning Area, combined with growth in traffic on the roadways, is expected to result in only a marginal increase (about 9 acres, or less than 3 percent of the Planning Area) in new noise exposure beyond the “normally acceptable” range. (Refer to the San Pablo 2030 General Plan for a table of noise standards applicable citywide.) Project-level studies and project design mitigations would be expected to fully address these noise effects. The anticipated future noise environment in the Planning Area is depicted in Figure 8-3 in the form of noise contours. Like the existing noise contours, these future noise contours do not account for attenuation by buildings or other structures.

It may be expected that new residents and businesses choosing to locate along the city’s primary corridors would expect a louder noise environment than if they were to locate in less dense residential and commercial areas. However, through the General Plan and the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, the City is working to ensure maximum attenuation of noise effects along these primary corridors. This effort is particularly important to existing residents who desire new development to be compatible with existing neighborhood character.

Figure 8-2: Existing Noise Contours

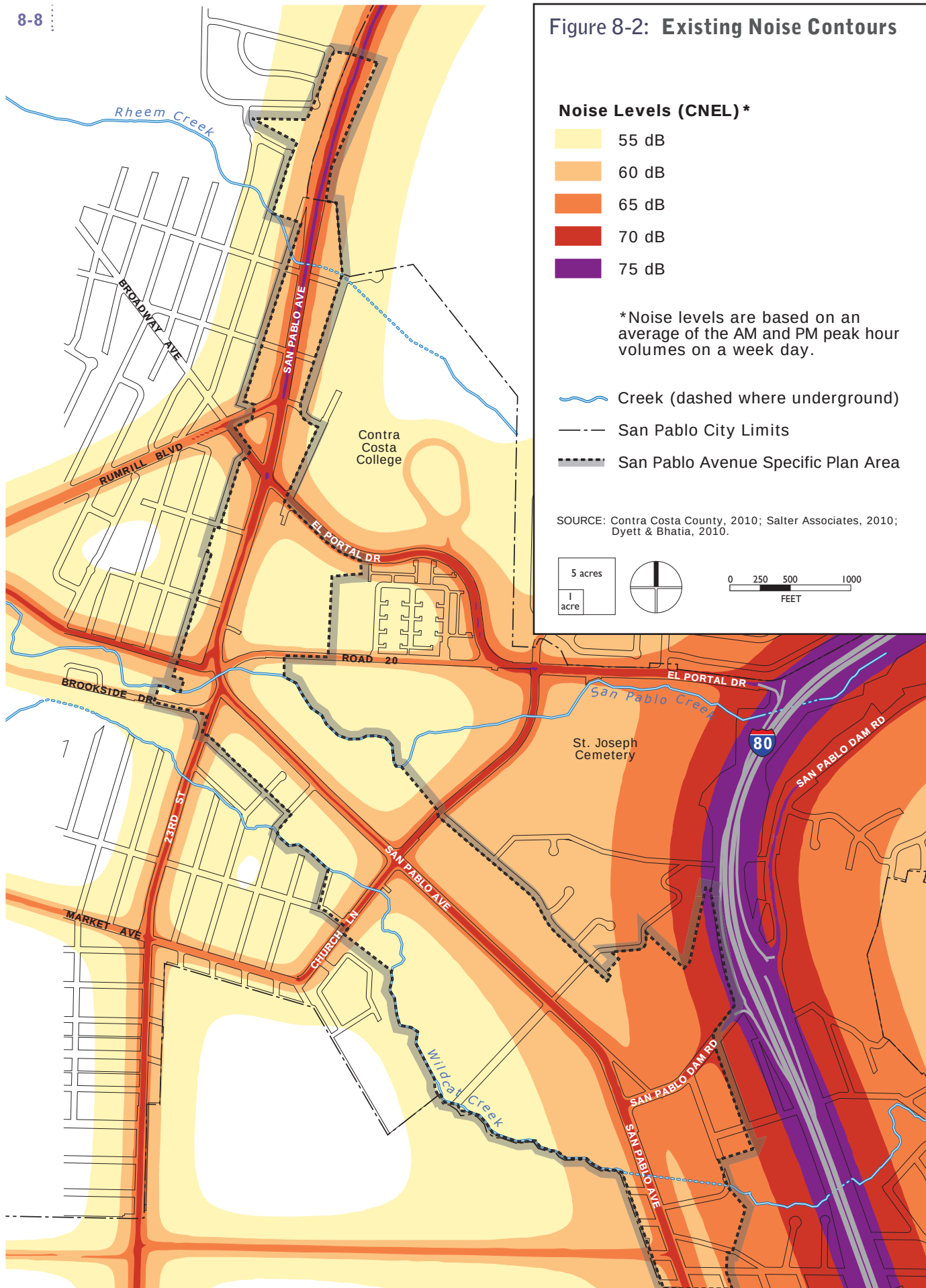
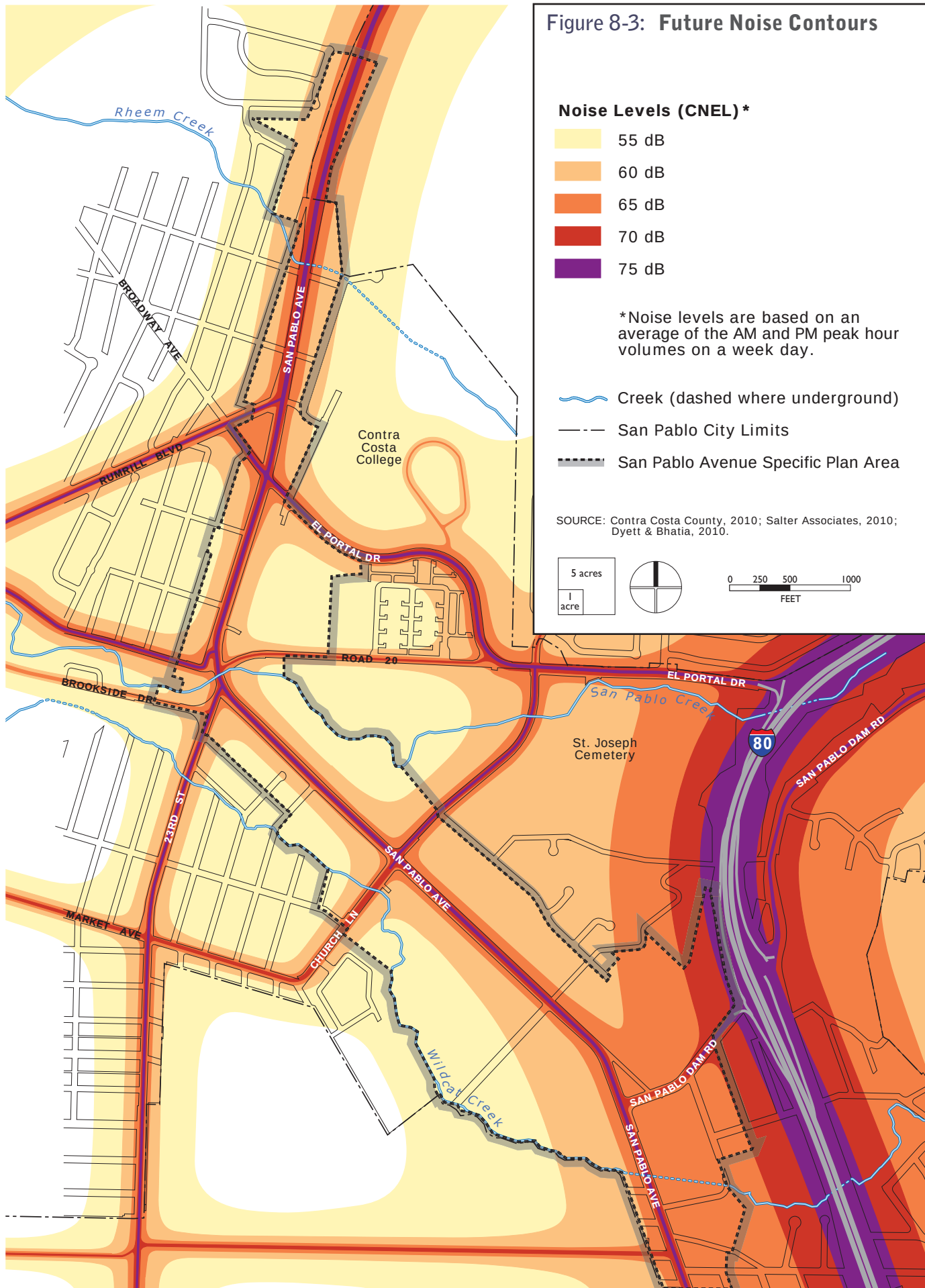


Figure 8-3: Future Noise Contours



The following policies are designed to reduce the potential negative effects of development under the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan to the local noise environment by augmenting and reinforcing the policy provisions in the General Plan.

GUIDING POLICIES

- 8-G-3** Maintain a healthy noise environment in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Planning Area while accommodating the increased intensities and mix of uses intended to characterize the San Pablo Avenue corridor in the future.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 8-I-5** Use Figure 8-3 and General Plan policies and noise standards contained in the Safety and Noise Element to ascertain need for acoustical analysis for noise-sensitive land uses, including residential uses and mixed-use projects containing residential uses. Ensure that adequate noise attenuation methods are incorporated in new development prior to the issuance of building permits.
- 8-I-6** For parcels where redevelopment in the San Pablo Avenue corridor will occur adjacent to existing low density residential development, place careful consideration for noise compatibility in project design, including location and orientation of driveways and parking areas, location of loading areas, location and shielding of noise-producing HVAC equipment, landscape planting buffers, and other design considerations.

8.4 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND AIR TOXICS

Urban infill and redevelopment plans such as the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan often have to wrest with public health risks associated with hazardous materials and toxic air contaminants which are result of past activity. Soil, water, and air contamination is often the result of long-term storage of hazardous materials, as well as ongoing processes specific to certain industries. In the Planning Area, most risk associated with hazardous materials and toxic air contaminant exposure is the result of the operation of gasoline stations. This risk and exposure is described in the following section, along with policies designed to reduce the risk associated with buildout of the Specific Plan.

Hazardous Materials

Hazardous materials are substances with physical or chemical properties that pose an existing or potential future hazard to human health or the environment when improperly handled, disposed, or otherwise managed. Hazardous materials and wastes are extensively regulated by federal, State, regional, and local regulations. Opportunity sites in the Planning Area sometimes face challenges associated with previous urban uses on the sites, some of which have resulted in contamination that must be cleaned up before new uses can be developed.

Contaminated Sites in the Planning Area

Within the Planning Area there are three sites with open hazardous materials cases, all of which involve leaking underground storage tanks from existing or former gasoline stations. These cases are described briefly below based on data provided by the State Water Resources Control Board GeoTracker database. More detailed descriptions of these sites and remediation activities may be found in the environmental impact report associated with this document.

Arco #2030 (2550 Mission Bell Drive)

This property, a former gas station, is located at the corner of Mission Bell Drive and El Portal Drive. In 1988, soil and groundwater samples identified subsurface fuel hydrocarbons at this site, believed to be associated with leaking underground gasoline storage tanks (LUSTs) and a waste oil UST. Later in 1988, three gasoline USTs and a waste oil UST were replaced, but excavation activities did not remove all contaminated soil. Additional investigation activities and facility upgrades have been conducted through 2007, including further soil and storage tank removals.

DWB Partners Property (14205 San Pablo Avenue)

This property is located on the northwest corner of San Pablo Avenue and Road 20 in a mixed commercial and residential area. A check cashing business and coin-operated laundry are present on the site. A leak of diesel and gasoline from USTs at this site was discovered in 2004. Subsequent to the discovery, the site has been the subject of soil and groundwater investigations. An enforcement action from the Regional Water Quality Control Board was issued in January 2010 requiring additional investigation work to further delineate contamination at the site. A final technical report detailing the additional work was submitted to the RWQCB in 2010.

World Oil #24 (13013 San Pablo Avenue)

This site is an active Arco retail gasoline service station. Investigation results indicate that soil and groundwater beneath the site have been impacted by fuel leaks from past station operations. According to reports to the State Water Resources Control Board, the groundwater plume (contaminated groundwater area) associated with this site is neither stabilized nor decreasing despite remediation efforts to-date. (This does not necessarily mean that the groundwater contamination is increasing, but rather that data from monitoring wells suggest the migration pattern continues to change.)

Development Constraints Due to Hazardous Materials

As a result of hazardous materials investigations and remediation activities, the contaminated sites within the Planning Area may be subject to use restrictions or warrant additional attention and clean up in case future use change is contemplated. The Arco site is located in the Neighborhood Commercial land use designation for the Specific Plan, adjacent to Residential Mixed Use; the DWB Partners site is located in Residential Mixed Use, and the World Oil site is located in Commercial Mixed Use. In some cases, groundwater contamination may extend beyond the boundaries of the original business site, exposing adjacent parcels to the contamination. Project-specific investigations will be necessary for projects on or adjacent to these sites to ensure that potential health risks are fully addressed.

Toxic Air Contaminants

Another challenge for new development is providing adequate buffers between sensitive receptors and existing and potential sources of toxic air contaminants (TACs), such as dry cleaners using perchloroethylene, gas stations, autobody shops, film processing services, and others. TACs are air pollutants that may cause or increase mortality or serious illness, or that may pose a present or potential hazard to human health. These are typically linked to short-term (acute) or long-term (chronic and/or carcinogenic) adverse human health effects.

Sources of TACs in the Planning Area

There are both stationary and mobile sources of TACs in the Planning Area. Mobile sources—cars and trucks—are dealt with primarily through extensive General Plan and Specific Plan policies that promote mixed uses, alternative modes of transportation, and reduced number and length of vehicle trips through various transportation demand management measures. This section therefore focuses on stationary sources so that projects proposed pursuant to this Specific Plan may be fully consistent with Air District requirements and best practice associated with reducing the health risks of air toxics.

Table 8-1 lists existing TAC sources in the Planning Area. These are also mapped on Figure 8-1.

TABLE 8-1 EXISTING STATIONARY SOURCES OF TACS IN THE PLANNING AREA		
FACILITY NAME	SOURCE TYPE	ADDRESS
San Pablo Chevron	Gas dispensing facility	13065 San Pablo Ave
San Pablo Police Department	Gas dispensing facility	13880 San Pablo Ave
Hertz Equipment Rental	Gas dispensing facility	2400 San Pablo Dam Rd
Contra Costa County Fire Station #70	Gas dispensing facility	13928 San Pablo Ave
World Oil Marketing Company #24	Gas dispensing facility	13013 San Pablo Ave
Doctors Medical Center-San Pablo	Heating hot water boiler	2000 Vale Rd
San Pablo Police Department	Emergency generator	13880 San Pablo Ave
<i>Source: Bay Area Air Quality Management District, 2009.</i>		

Development Constraints Due to TACs

Similar to parcels with hazardous materials contamination, sites adjacent to existing TAC sources must undergo more scrutiny in terms of proposed new land uses to ensure that sensitive receptors are not exposed to potential health risks.

GUIDING POLICIES

- 8-G-4** Ensure that infill and redevelopment in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan corridor minimize exposure to hazardous materials and toxic air contaminants.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

- 8-I-7** Require remediation and cleanup of any contaminated sites in the Specific Plan Planning Area to levels required for the proposed new land use, where hazardous materials have impacted soil, surface water, or groundwater. Remediation and cleanup will be in compliance with federal and State standards. Documentation of the site investigation and cleanup will be provided to City staff during development project review.
- 8-I-8** Require new residential projects within the Specific Plan Planning Area, and other potential projects in the area which may also be categorized as sensitive receptors (such as nursing home facilities, retirement living facilities, school or daycare facilities), to be located an adequate distance from existing and potential sources of TACs and odors, in accordance with the BAAQMD's Air Quality and Land Use

Handbook (2005) recommendations, or the latest resource the air district has available. Existing stationary TAC sources in the Planning Area are mapped in Figure 8-1; however, project proponents are expected to check BAAQMD databases for the latest data on stationary TAC sources.

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- 8-I-9** Require proponents of projects within 100 feet of existing hazardous materials case sites or TAC sources (as mapped on Figure 8-1) to investigate use compatibility at the location in question (some kinds of uses might be at lower risk than others), as well as potential feasible design-related risk mitigation measures. Project proponents must provide evidence to the City of consultation with the BAAQMD and the RWQCB in making refinements to project designs to reduce applicable hazardous materials and/or toxic air contaminant risk.

9

Implementation

9.1 GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING CONSISTENCY

General Plan

The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan was prepared concurrently with the City's General Plan update. As a result, the Specific Plan land use framework and buildout are reflected in the General Plan. The Specific Plan is consistent with the General Plan and helps to implement its goals and policies: establishing guidelines and standards to create a walkable corridor; describing community facilities and open space needs as a result of new residential and employment growth; providing concepts design to facilitate redevelopment of vacant and underutilized sites; improving public safety through design and activity; and providing a funding strategy to ensure that these improvements can be made.

Specifically, the Plan details development potential and policy direction to implement the following four General Plan land use policies, which cite the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan:

- LU-I-36: Initiate planning, rezoning and marketing of the City Hall site, consistent with the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, if the City Hall moves to an alternative location.
- LU-I-39: Develop a distinct design theme with defined design standards and guidelines for each of the special planning areas to foster an identifiable image for each area.

This will be done with specific plans for San Pablo Avenue and 23rd Street and with design guidelines for other areas.

- LU-I-40: Use the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan to guide future development in the Circle-S site focus area.

The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, which is being prepared concurrently with this General Plan Update, will provide more detailed guidance for development of this site.

- LU-I-41: Use design guidelines established by the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan for development review in the San Pablo Avenue corridor.

The San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan will include design guidelines for the Mixed Use Centers, the Entertainment District, Residential Mixed Use, Commercial Mixed Use, and other new uses.

San Pablo Avenue is one of the city's major corridors and employment centers. Therefore, many of the General Plan's economic development initiatives, including coordination of marketing activities, partnerships with Contra Costa College, and involvement with the Employment Development Roundtable, will be implemented within the Planning Area. The Specific Plan further supports these endeavors by strengthening local and regional commercial development opportunities and providing a cohesive streetscape design program.

Zoning Ordinance

While the General Plan establishes a policy framework, the Zoning Ordinance prescribes standards, rules, and procedures for development. The Zoning Ordinance translates plan policies into specific use regulations, development standards, and performance criteria that govern development on individual properties. The City will need to establish regulations for new land use districts, use and development standards to conform to General Plan policies, and density and intensity limits, consistent with the Plan's land use classifications and development standards included in Chapter 4. The City will bring both the Zoning Ordinance and the Zoning Map into conformance with the General Plan, and as a result, this Specific Plan. Changes required to the Zoning Ordinance are outlined in:

- Table 2-2: Land Use Standards by Designation;
- Table 2-1: San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Land Use Density and Intensity Standards;
- Table 3-3: Proposed Off-Street Parking Standards; and
- Table 4-1: Development Standards by Land Use.

Alternatively, the City could incorporate standards and guidelines of the Specific Plan by reference in the Zoning Code. Until such time as the Zoning Ordinance is updated by adding a reference or the required changes described above, development would be in accordance with the land use designations and development regulations outlined in the Specific Plan. Other rules and procedures as established in the Zoning Ordinance would also apply.

9.2 IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES

Implementation of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan will require action by several different departments within the City, including Redevelopment/Economic Development, Engineering, Planning, Recreation, Fire, and Police. Ultimately, much of the look and feel of the Planning Area will be determined by the architecture, landscaping, layout, and maintenance of individual developments, as prescribed by the design standards and guidelines articulated in Chapter 4. However, the City must take the lead in coordinating the needed areawide actions that will enable complete implementation of the Plan and its vision. Table 9-1 lays out the actions, responsible parties, and estimated timeframes needed to ensure the Plan's implementation.

TABLE 9-1 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN		
ACTION	CITY DEPARTMENT OR PUBLIC AGENCY RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME
PLANNING AND ZONING REGULATIONS		
Amend Zoning Map and Ordinance to conform to the land uses, parking standards, and development standards established in the General Plan and the Specific Plan.	Planning	2011-2012
Issue an RFP for the City-owned Circle-S property. The RFP should include the development program and framework outlined in the Specific Plan.	Planning	2011-2012
UTILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES		
Coordinate with WCWD to update and expand the wastewater collection system conveyance and capacity as needed, per the Wastewater Master Plan.	Engineering	2011-2030
Acquire additional emergency response equipment and provide fire flow capacity needed to serve new development	Fire	Ongoing, as development progresses
Add police staff and equipment as needed to serve new development	Police	Ongoing, as development progresses
STREETS AND TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS		
Construct roadway improvements per figures 4-7, 4-9, and 4-11, to successfully establish San Pablo Avenue as a Complete Street, from Rivers Street to the southern boundary of the Planning Area. This includes specific street improvements including bike lanes on San Pablo Avenue north of El Portal Drive and south of Vale Road; street parking and transit curb bulb-out areas; expanded planted medians, and re-striping of travel lanes; and coordinating with AC Transit to determine locations for bus bulb-outs.	Engineering; AC Transit	2011-2015
STREETSCAPE AND PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS		
Complete the projects identified in the City's ADA Transition Plan Update of 2009, including installation of continuous pedestrian sidewalks and ADA compliant driveways and curb ramps.	Engineering	2011-2015
Construct pedestrian streetscape improvements per figures 4-7, 4-9, and 4-11. This includes installing street trees, planters, signage, lighting, gateway features, and other pedestrian amenities within the right-of-way. Efforts should be focused on Pedestrian Priority Zones, as identified in Figure 3-3: Accessibility.	Engineering, with input from Planning	2011-2015
Improve pedestrian crosswalks with signals and paving and/or striping throughout the Planning Area. Efforts must be focused on Mixed Use Centers and the Entertainment Overlay District.	Engineering, with input from Planning	2011-2015

TABLE 9-1 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

ACTION	CITY DEPARTMENT OR PUBLIC AGENCY RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME
BICYCLE LANES AND TRAILS		
Install bicycle lanes and colored or striped one-foot buffers per figures 4-7, 4-9, and 4-11.	Engineering	2011-2015, concurrent with street improvements
Install creek-side open space improvements concurrent with new development on the Circle-S site.	Redevelopment/ Economic Development; Engineering	As development occurs
TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS		
Work with AC Transit and WestCAT to modify service as needed to accommodate new population in the area.	Engineering; AC Transit; WestCAT	2011-2015
Work with AC Transit and WestCAT to update the locations of and amenities at bus stops.	Engineering; AC Transit; WestCAT	2011-2015
Work with AC Transit and WestCAT to formalize a transit hub near Mission plaza.	Engineering; AC Transit; WestCAT	2011-2015
PARKING AND TDM		
Conduct a follow-up study with Contra Costa College to develop TDM and Parking Management Strategies that will improve transit and pedestrian access to the college.	Planning; Engineering; Contra Costa College	2011-2015
Explore potential shuttle programs to link the San Pablo Avenue corridor with the Richmond and El Cerrito Del Norte BART stations.	Planning; Engineering	2011-2015
Work with the WCCTAC TDM Program Manager to promote the ridesharing and Guaranteed Ride Home Program provided through 511 Contra Costa.	Planning; Engineering; WCCTAC	2011-2015
Draft and adopt a Commuter Benefit Ordinance to allow employers and workers to tap into an existing federal program to pay for transit passes and vanpool.	Planning; Engineering	2011-2015
Establish a paid or time-limited parking program along the corridor as demand increases.	Planning; Engineering	As development occurs
Establish a residential parking permit program as needed to address spillover parking into residential neighborhoods.	Planning; Engineering	As development occurs
PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES		
Establish a design process for parks and public spaces that involves the community in determining the facilities, programming, and design parameters.	Recreation; Planning; Engineering	2011-2015
Incorporate the construction of a new community park into the redevelopment of the Circle-S site and other City-owned sites. Carry out park construction to ensure that parks are available to new residents when projects are completed.	Redevelopment; Recreation; Engineering	As development occurs
COMMUNITY FACILITIES		
Ensure a broad range of social services in and around the Planning Area, including cultural and community centers, daycare, youth centers, senior centers, and transitional services.	Planning; Recreation	As development occurs
<i>Source: Dyett and Bhatia, 2010.</i>		

9.3 FINANCING STRATEGIES

This section evaluates potential approaches to funding capital costs. There are a variety of mechanisms public agencies can use to collect funds for capital improvements. Selection of the appropriate mechanism depends on the nature of the improvement. For example, development impact fees place the burden on developers (and ultimately the occupant of the home or business being constructed), whereas assessment districts place the financial responsibility on existing and new property owners, and funding through the Capital Projects Program budget shares the burden citywide. The City must determine who benefits from the improvement to determine appropriate funding streams. Capital improvements and the various approaches that could be used for funding are identified in the text below and in Table 9-1.

Capital Projects Program

The Capital Projects Program (CPP) is a discretionary infrastructure funding plan for the city. It includes a list of public works projects that the City intends to design and construct in coming years. As a capital plan, it represents one-time expenditures, as opposed to ongoing funding for operations expenses. The City Council reviews and adjusts the program in each budget year to reflect changes in priority, funding availability and need, and the general economy. With input from other departments, the Finance Department and City Manager prepare and update the program. The Public Works Department has the lead role in carrying out the capital improvements.

Municipal Impact Fees

The City of San Pablo already collects impact fees to cover the cost of processing development requests, and for providing public facilities and services to new developments. These funds are levied for sewer, storm drain, parks, and transportation. West Contra Costa School District also collects a developer fee for school construction. Additional fees could be collected for a variety of services, including water hookups or general plan preparation.

Developer Contributions

Developer contributions are payments made in addition to normal impact fees as part of the development approval process for specific projects; these most often apply to larger developments with significant associated impacts. Contributions fund infrastructure and improvements such as: dedications of right-of-way for streets and utilities; and provision of open space, parks or landscape improvements. Where developers provide parks as part of their developments, they could be exempted from park impact fees at the discretion of the City.

Special Assessment Districts

Individuals and businesses can cooperate to create special assessment districts in which they tax themselves (outside the limitations of Proposition 13) or collect fees in order to fund specific benefits, such as landscaping, infrastructure improvements, and parking facilities.

Community Facilities District

Under the Mello-Roos law, passed in 1982 in response to Proposition 13, local cities, counties, and school districts may create community facilities districts (CFD) to finance the construction of needed community infrastructure. The CFD is empowered to levy additional property taxes on land located inside the district, thus creating a dependable revenue stream that can be used in issuing bonds to pay for new infrastructure. For example, Oak Park Assessment District, located in the vicinity of Princeton Plaza, was created in 1989 to fund maintenance for hillside landslide repairs such as surface improvements, subdrains, horizontal drains and the storm drainage collection system.

Landscape and Lighting District

Permitted by the Landscape and Lighting Act of 1972, local governments may form a Landscape and Lighting District to finance elements such as the landscaping and lighting public areas (e.g. parks and plazas). The City enacted a Street Lighting and Landscape Assessment District in 1982. Approved uses for the funds include maintenance of public lighting facilities, landscaping, or park facilities. The boundaries of the district are the city's boundaries, so every private parcel is assessed (in proportion to the estimated benefit from the improvements). A public hearing is conducted each year in front of the San Pablo City Council, which confirms the assessment. After the hearing, the assessments are forwarded to the County for inclusion on the property tax bills for collection.

Business Improvement District

Business or property owners within a defined geographic area may agree to assess themselves annual fees, as part of a Business Improvement District (BID). The BID may then fund activities and programs to enhance the business environment; these may include marketing and promotion, security, streetscape improvements, and special events. Once established, the annual BID fees are mandatory for business/properties located within the BID. Generally, this mechanism is most frequently used in existing commercial retail districts and is not used to fund infrastructure due both to the limited revenue base and the short-term nature of the BID structure, which makes issuance of debt infeasible.

Infrastructure Finance District

Infrastructure Finance Districts (IFD) are financing entities created in order to fund regional public facilities and infrastructure. IFDs can divert property tax increment revenues for 30 years to finance highways, transit, water systems, sewer projects, flood control, child care facilities, libraries, parks, and solid waste facilities. IFDs may not be used to pay for maintenance, repairs, operating costs, and services. Although this is a tax increment financing tool, there is no blight test necessary; moreover, an IFD may not be part of a redevelopment project area. However, IFDs can be challenging to create, since they require 2/3 approval by the voters to form and issue bonds.

Parking District and In-Lieu Fee

Local governments may form a special district to finance parking-related activities, including acquisition of land for parking facilities, construction of parking lots and garages, funding of operating costs, and issuance of bonds to fund similar activities. The majority of affected property owners must vote in favor of the district formation. A possible approach to funding is imposition of an in-lieu fee, whereby developers pay the fee (e.g. a uniform fee per space) instead of providing on-site parking, thereby reducing the cost of development and potentially increasing the efficient use of development sites.

Redevelopment and Tax Increment Financing

Established in 1969, the San Pablo Redevelopment Agency (RDA) implements economic development strategies to remove blight by improving the appearance and availability of the overall housing stock and promoting economic development of retail, industrial, and commercial areas. The RDA derives its revenue primarily through tax increment funds. This tool allows the RDA to issue bonds against the future property tax revenue expected to be generated, in order to finance public investment within the redevelopment area. The Redevelopment Agency obtains the additional “increment” of property tax growth following the inception of the redevelopment area, which typically increases as the public improvements are put in place and initial investments are made from the public and private sectors. Redevelopment funds may be used to pay for affordable housing, parks, schools, utility upgrades, and other public facilities. The RDA has also been funding graffiti abatement and small business assistance programs.

The San Pablo RDA has two project areas—the Tenth Township Project Area and the Legacy Project Area—both of which encompass the Planning Area. The Tenth Township Project Area includes most of the Planning Area, with the exception of several parcels to the north east of Lake Street and San Pablo Avenue. The Legacy Project Area encompasses the entire Planning Area. The Tenth Township Project Area encompasses 72 percent of the City’s land area (1,196 acres) and will expire between July 2013 and December 2033. The Legacy Project Area, which encompasses 1,542 acres, will permit continued redevelopment initiatives after 2033 up until March 2042.

The RDA’s most recent Five-Year Implementation Plan (2010-2014) includes several major development projects and improvements for the San Pablo Avenue corridor in particular. Several of these improvements are discussed in this Plan and include:

- Redevelopment of the Hill & Sketchley property adjacent to San Pablo Towne Center, including 10,000 square feet of commercial space and an additional 10,000 square feet of office space above.
- Redevelopment of the Mission Plaza site to include up to 20,000 square feet of ground-floor retail and 80 housing units dedicated to student housing serving Contra Costa College and other nearby institutions.
- Redevelopment of the Circle-S site to include a mix of housing, retail, entertainment, and open space. The West County Health Center is proposed for a two-acre portion of the site, and will include approximately 50,000 square feet of medical office space.
- San Pablo Avenue Rehabilitation, including new street trees, reconstructed sidewalks and curb cuts.
- Construction of and improvements to Wanlass Park and Wildcat Creek Trail/Trailhead.

The tax increment revenue expected for both the Tenth Township and Legacy project areas for the 2010-2014 planning period is approximately \$44,006,633, with total revenue from additional sale of land, rental income and other grants and funds totaling \$115,323,586.

Grants and Loans

Federal

Community Development Block Grant

Some or all of the cities' annual allotment of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the federal government could be capitalized into a Section 108 loan, to increase the immediate ability to fund improvements. The U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development's Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program provides communities with a source of financing for economic development, housing rehabilitation, public facilities, and large-scale physical development projects. CDBG funds may be challenging to use for public improvements, since the grants are competitive and the City often has competing priorities for these funds.

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act—A Legacy for Users

This measure, also known as SAFETEA-LU, provides a variety of funding options for smaller, neighborhood-based projects relating to streetscape improvements and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Programs include the Surface Transportation Program; Congestion Management Air Quality funds; Transportation Enhancements; State Transportation Improvement Program/Regional Transportation Improvement Program; and the Bicycle Transportation Account, which is available to cities and counties with Caltrans-approved bicycle plans. SAFETEA-LU was extended through December 2010 and will likely be reauthorized in a similar capacity thereafter.

State

California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank (CIEDB)

The California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank provides low-cost financing to public agencies for a wide variety of infrastructure projects. Infrastructure State Revolving Fund Program funding is available in amounts ranging from \$250,000 to \$10 million, with loan terms of up to 30 years. Interest rates are set on a monthly basis. Relevant eligible project categories include city streets, drainage, flood control, and environmental mitigation, educational facilities, parks and recreational facilities, public transit, sewage collection and treatment, solid waste collection and disposal, water treatment and distribution, public safety facilities, and power and communications facilities.

Infrastructure Bonds

Statewide bonds approved by the voters can provide valuable funds for local governments to make improvements to roads, housing, and public facilities. In recent years, several bond measures have been approved, with monies distributed to local governments. Two in particular provided matching funds for projects in or adjacent to the Planning Area.

- In 2006, voters approved Proposition 1B, which allocated \$20 billion to a variety of transportation-related projects. The City of San Pablo used an allocation of nearly \$500,000 toward recent improvements on San Pablo Avenue, between San Pablo Dam Road and 23rd Street.¹
- The Kindergarten-University Public Education Facilities Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 1D) provided \$7.3 billion for the construction of new schools, modernization of existing schools, and creation of new charter, joint-use, and small high school facilities. WCCUSD was allocated over \$3.8 million for the modernization of Helms Junior High.²

The City should continue to monitor and pursue State financing opportunities.

Regional

Contra Costa County Measure J – 2004

This initiative, approved by County voters in 2004, provides for the continuation of the County's half-cent transportation sales tax for 25 more years. In addition, Measure J includes revisions to the County's existing Growth Management Program to encourage the provision of more housing in some communities. It includes a requirement that any new Urban Limit Line must be established by mutual agreement by both the County and cities. It also includes a "Transportation for Livable Communities" component, to encourage more transit-oriented, pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly communities, and more affordable housing. The measure provided \$12 million toward the cost of I-80/San Pablo Dam Road interchange improvements.

¹ State of California. Strategic Growth Plan. Bond Accountability. Proposition 1B - Local Streets and Roads. Accessed August 30, 2010. <<http://www.bondaccountability.dot.ca.gov/bondacc/MainMenu-Action.do?%3E&page=localstreet>>

² State of California. Strategic Growth Plan. Bond Accountability. Proposition 1D. Accessed August 30, 2010. <<http://www.bondaccountability.opsc.dgs.ca.gov/bondac/proposition/proposition1D.asp>>

TABLE 9-2 INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING SOURCES AND STRATEGIES

		SUMMARY OF POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES					
PROJECT COMPONENTS	LEAD ENTITY(IES)	CAPITAL PROJECTS PROGRAM	MUNICIPAL IMPACT FEES	DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS	SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS DISTRICTS	REDEVELOPMENT TAX INCREMENT	OTHER GRANTS & LOANS
Streets and Traffic Improvements, including Bicycle Lanes and Trails	City of San Pablo	✓			✓	✓	✓
Transit Improvements	AC Transit/City of San Pablo				✓	✓	✓
Streetscape and Pedestrian Improvements	City of San Pablo/ Developer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Utilities and Public Services	City of San Pablo		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parks, Public Spaces and Recreation Facilities	City of San Pablo/ Developer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parking and TDM	City of San Pablo		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Community Facilities	City of San Pablo	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

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