



NOTICE

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A
DRAFT PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
FOR THE EL CAMINO REAL SPECIFIC PLAN (CEQ2019-01069 & PLN2019-13798)**

May 7, 2019

TO: State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and Other Interested Agencies; Interested Parties and Organizations

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report for the El Camino Real Specific Plan and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting

LEAD AGENCY: City of Santa Clara
Community Development Department, Planning Division
1500 Warburton Avenue
Santa Clara, California 95050

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Santa Clara, California 95050
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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the City of Santa Clara (lead agency) will prepare a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the proposed El Camino Real Specific Plan (ECR Plan). This Notice of Preparation (NOP) is being distributed to applicable responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and interested parties as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Interested agencies are requested to comment on the project's scope and on the content of the descriptions of the significant environmental issues and reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures to be explored in the Draft Program EIR. The project location and description are summarized below.

A 30-DAY NOP REVIEW PERIOD: The City solicits comments regarding the scope and content of the Draft Program EIR from all interested parties requesting notice, responsible agencies, agencies with jurisdiction by law, trustee agencies, and involved agencies. In accordance with the time limits established by CEQA, the NOP public review period will begin on May 7, 2019, and end on June 6, 2019. Please send your written/typed comments (including name, telephone number, and contact information) by 5:00 p.m. on June 6, 2019 to:

Email: Lxavier@SantaClaraCA.gov
Mail: City of Santa Clara – Community Development Dept.
Attn: Lesley Xavier, Principal Planner
1500 Warburton Avenue
Santa Clara, California 95050

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING: The City will hold a Scoping Meeting to: 1) inform the public and interested agencies about the proposed project; and 2) solicit public comment on the scope of the environmental issues to be addressed in the Program EIR as well as the range of practicable alternatives to be evaluated. The date, time and place of the meeting are as follows:

May 23, 2019
5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Central Park Library (Margie Edinger Room)
2635 Homestead Road
Santa Clara, California 95051

PROJECT RELATED DOCUMENTS: Project related documents, including this NOP, can be found on the project webpage:

<http://santaclaraca.gov/government/departments/community-development/planning-division/specific-plans/el-camino-real-precise-plan>

PROJECT LOCATION: Santa Clara is in northwest Santa Clara County in an area commonly referred to as the South Bay or Silicon Valley. Santa Clara is surrounded by Sunnyvale to the west, San José to the south and east, and the San Francisco Bay to the north. Regional access to Santa Clara is via Interstate 280 to the south and US Highway 101 to the north. The El Camino Real (ECR) Specific Plan project area is comprised of approximately 316 acres of properties that are located immediately adjacent to the segment of the El Camino Real between Lafayette Street on the east and the City limits on the west. The project location is shown in Figure 1.

PROJECT BACKGROUND: Development along El Camino Real is currently comprised of a mix of small- scale auto-oriented commercial uses and services, mid- to large-scale strip mall developments, and multi-family residential buildings. The City of Santa Clara 2010-2035 General Plan, adopted November 2010, envisions transforming the El Camino Real corridor from a series of automobile-oriented strip malls to a tree-lined, pedestrian- and transit-oriented corridor with a mix of residential and retail uses. The City of Santa Clara, with support from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), has been provided grant funding to develop a Specific Plan for El Camino Real within Santa Clara. The Specific Plan will provide guidance for the transformation of land uses along the El Camino Real corridor and support a multimodal transportation facility, consistent with the General Plan vision.

After kicking off the Specific Plan development process, the City assembled a Community Advisory Committee in January 2018 to guide the process, and land use and transportation alternatives for the corridor were developed. The City began hosting a series of pop up events in September 2017 to engage the community and gather input on the vision for the future of the El Camino Real. Additionally, the City began hosting community workshops in 2018. The workshops included a presentation of the Specific Plan process, followed by an opportunity for participants to provide input and comments on the Specific Plan. Three workshops have been held to date, the last occurring in December 2018. The City identified a Preferred Land Use Alternative in early 2019, and studies have begun to assess and refine the details of the proposed land use mix.

PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS: The ECR Specific Plan (project) will build on two supporting plans: 1) the Grand Boulevard Initiative - a regional, multi-jurisdictional effort to transform El Camino into a multi-

modal corridor; and 2) the City's 2015-2035 General Plan, which envisions El Camino Real as a tree-lined, pedestrian and transit-oriented corridor with a mix of residential and retail uses.

The purpose of the project is to provide an overall vision and guidance to transform the project area into a vibrant mixed-use corridor with improved streetscapes and safer environments for walking, bicycling, and other modes of transportation, while preserving the quality of life of adjacent neighborhoods and existing assets to the community. The project will refine and implement the General Plan vision of the El Camino Real corridor. The project will address specific plan topics such as land use, transportation, and infrastructure. It will include development policies, goals, and design standards for the El Camino Real corridor. The project would also include recommendations for conceptual modifications to the roadway and streetscape enhancements to enable safer and a greater number of multi-modal transportation options along the generally east-west stretch of El Camino Real through Santa Clara.

The Preferred Land Use Alternative selected by the City to be studied could include up to 6,200 residential units beyond the 2,073 that were allocated under the General Plan and of which some of those residential units have been constructed in the project area. Additionally, the Preferred Land Use Alternative would reduce the commercial space which currently exists in the project area by 315,000 square feet. As shown in Figure 2, a land use concept that includes "Regional Commercial Mixed Use," "Community Mixed Use," "Medium Density Residential," and "Public/Quasi-Public" land uses along the corridor has been developed. Commercial use would be required in the "Regional Commercial Mixed Use" designation and ground-floor retail would be required in certain other areas along the corridor. Building heights would be between 3 to 6 stories in height, depending on the land use designation. The environmental analysis (described in greater detail below) will, however, help inform the land use plan that is developed for the final Specific Plan.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: The Draft Program EIR will evaluate potential environmental impacts of the project. The Draft Program EIR will also propose mitigation to avoid and/or reduce impacts deemed potentially significant, identify reasonable alternatives, and compare the environmental impacts of the alternatives to the project's impacts.

The Program EIR is intended to be a program-level document that will analyze the broad environmental effects of the project. No specific development projects are being considered. Rather, the analysis will focus on the reasonably foreseeable direct and indirect physical environmental effects that could result from implementation of the land use and policies envisioned for the El Camino Real corridor in the ECR Plan.

In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(a), the City did not prepare an Initial Study, but advises that the EIR will evaluate potentially significant environmental effects related to the following environmental resources:

Aesthetics: This section will analyze potential impacts due to changes in building mass, height, and lighting, as well changes to roadway width and circulation envisioned in the project.

Air Quality: An air quality analysis will be prepared in accordance with CEQA and Bay Area Air Quality Management District requirements. A discussion of the project's contribution to regional air quality impacts will be included.

Biological Resources: The project area is developed and generally does not provide suitable habitat for special-status species. This section will, however, discuss impacts to migratory birds associated with

street trees along El Camino Real. This section will also address consistency with the City's Tree Preservation Ordinance.

Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources: The Draft Program EIR will evaluate the potential for the project to impact historic buildings, based on a review of the California Register of Historical Resources and the City's list of historic properties. Additionally, the Draft Program EIR will examine potential impacts on tribal cultural resources, compliant with Assembly Bill 52, and other potential subsurface cultural resources.

Energy: Future development envisioned in the ECR Plan would consume energy. The Draft Program EIR will examine whether energy use would be wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary, or would conflict with an applicable plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

Geology and Soils: This section will analyze potential geological and seismic impacts from project construction and operation.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions/Climate Change: Future development envisioned in the ECR Plan would generate greenhouse gas emissions as a result of construction and operational activities. This section of the Program EIR will evaluate whether emissions would conflict with emissions reduction goals and plans.

Hazards and Hazardous Emissions: This section will analyze the potential for hazardous materials contamination within and near the project area. The analysis will focus on the potential for these materials to be released during construction of the development envisioned in the ECR Plan.

Hydrology and Water Quality: This section will analyze the potential water quality impacts of redevelopment activities in the project area envisioned in the ECR Plan. This section will also address impacts related to special flood hazard zones and inundation.

Land Use and Planning: The Draft Program EIR will analyze whether the project would conflict with applicable City policy documents and regional planning policies such that environmental impacts would result. This section will also evaluate whether the project would divide established communities.

Noise: This section will analyze short-term impacts due to potential construction noise on sensitive residential receptors adjacent to the El Camino Real corridor and long-term noise exposure from operational traffic and development envisioned in the ECR Plan.

Population and Housing: This section will analyze the potential for future development envisioned in the ECR Plan would displace existing people or housing, and whether implementation of the ECR Plan would lead to unplanned population growth.

Public Services: The ECR Plan envisions thousands of new residential units in the El Camino Real Corridor. Future residents would increase the demand for public services, including fire, police protection, parks, and libraries. Potential impacts will be evaluated in this section of the Draft Program EIR.

Recreation: This section will analyze potential impacts to parks and recreational facilities resulting from the population growth that would be facilitated by the residential development envisioned in the ECR Plan.

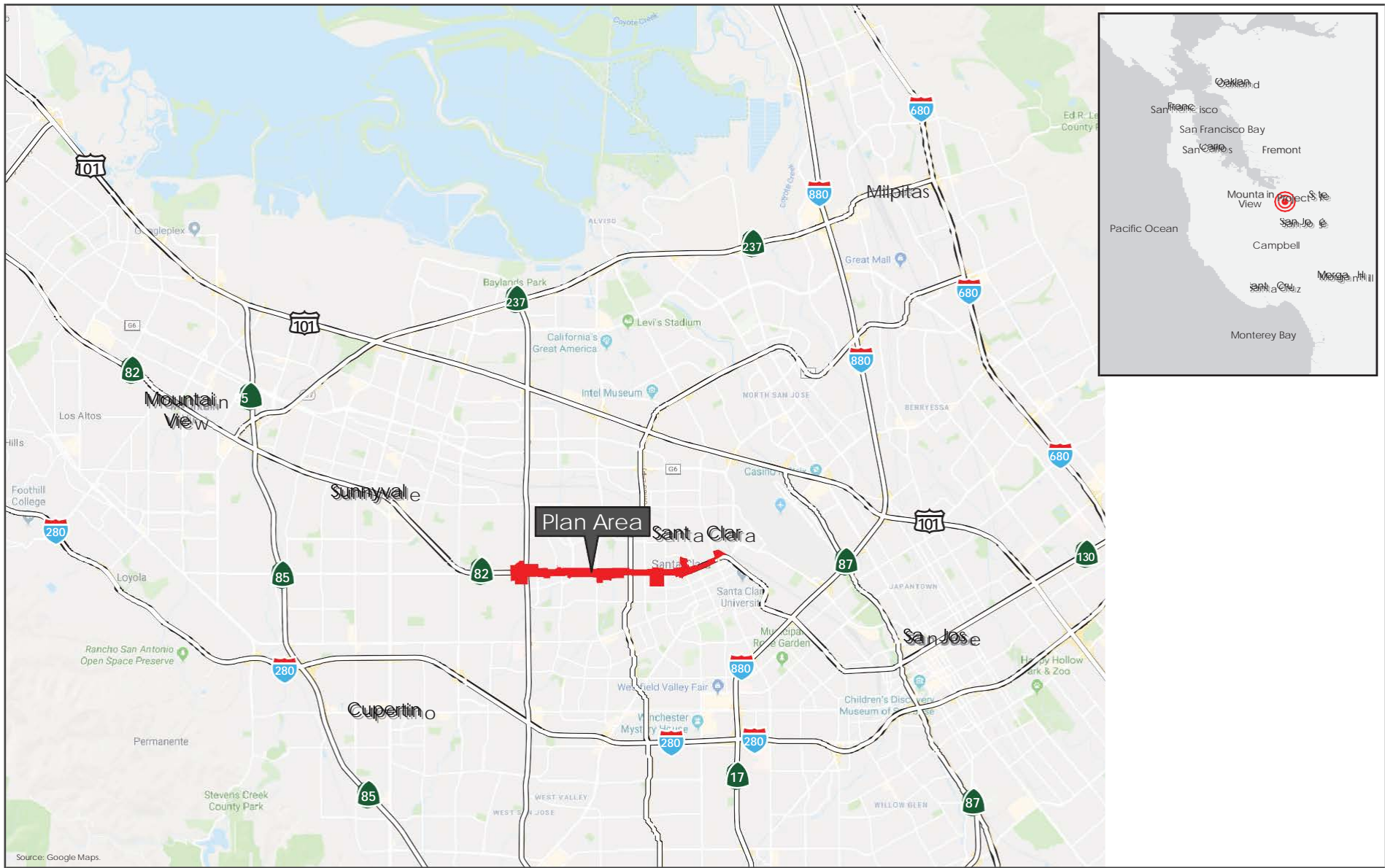
Transportation: The project would alter vehicle movement and circulation in the El Camino Real Corridor and enhance transit and active transportation modes. This section of the Draft Program EIR will evaluate the potential impacts on both level of service and vehicle miles travelled, as well as impacts to transit and active transportation.

Utilities and Service Systems: The ECR Plan envisions thousands of new residential units in the El Camino Real Corridor. Future residents would increase the demand for utilities, including water and sanitary sewer services, and solid waste disposal. This section will evaluate the potential impacts to utility capacity.

The Draft Program EIR will also discuss the cumulative impacts of the project in combination with other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects in the vicinity. The Draft Program EIR will address alternatives to the project that would reduce or avoid identified significant impacts. Based on initial review and existing conditions within the project area, the following environmental resources would not require additional analysis, as no impacts would occur:

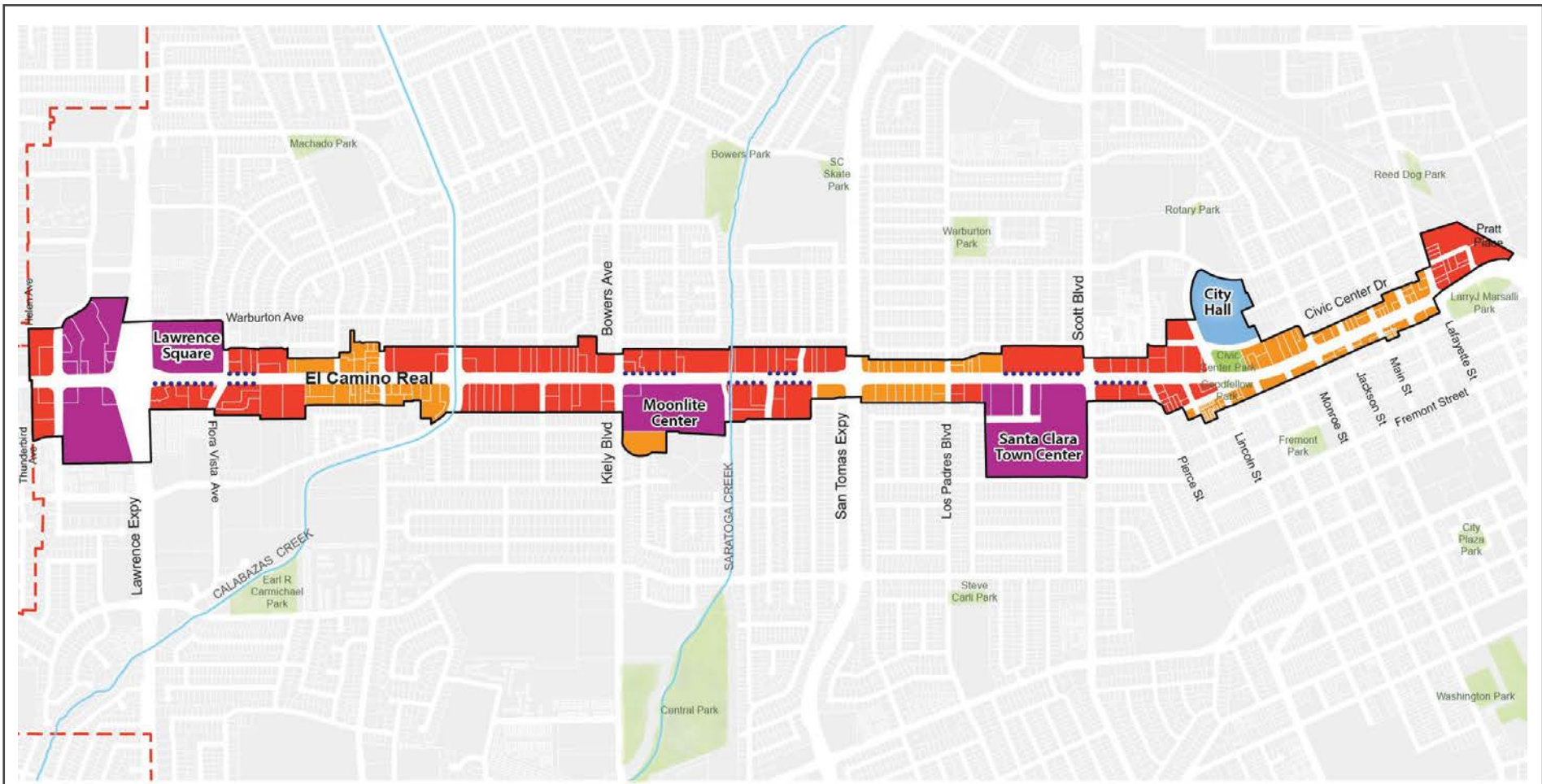
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Mineral Resources
- Wildfire

PURPOSE OF THIS NOTICE: In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, the City has prepared this NOP to inform agencies and interested parties that a Program EIR will be prepared for the above- referenced project. The purpose of a NOP is to provide sufficient information about the project to allow agencies and interested parties the opportunity to provide a meaningful response related to the scope and content of the EIR, including mitigation measures that should be considered and alternatives that should be addressed.

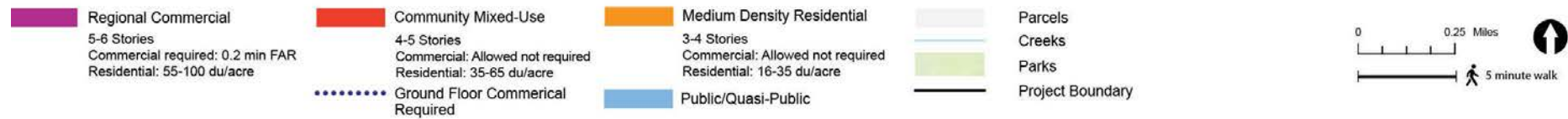


ECR PLAN AREA VICINITY MAP

FIGURE 1



Legend



PREFERRED LAND USE ALTERNATIVE

FIGURE 2