

## Measure Y and the Draft General Plan 2040

### What is Measure Y?

Measure Y is a ballot measure that San Mateo voters passed in November 2020. It retained existing height and density limits on new development that were originally adopted under Measure P and has a sunset date of 2030. Overall, Measure Y sets height limits around the City of up to 55 feet (five stories), density limits that allow up to 50 units per acre, and floor area ratio maximums of up to 3.0. It also allows for heights of up to 75 feet on specified locations when certain criteria are met.

### What is the relationship between the Draft General Plan 2040 and Measure Y?

The Draft General Plan 2040 covers a wide range of topics and the majority of the content is separate from, and not determined by, the height and density limits in Measure Y. For example, the Draft General Plan 2040 addresses traffic congestion, neighborhood parks, climate change, public safety, and City services. None of these topics are regulated by Measure Y. Both the Draft General Plan 2040 and Measure Y cover allowable heights and densities of new development. For that specific topic, in areas where the Draft General Plan 2040 exceeds the limits set by Measure Y, the Measure Y limits would continue to be applied until the measure sunsets or voters provide different direction.

### Is the Draft General Plan 2040 Land Use Map consistent with Measure Y?

The Draft General Plan 2040 is consistent with Measure Y height and density limits in San Mateo's lower density residential neighborhoods. Some of the land use designations in the Preferred Land Use Scenario approved by the City Council in 2022 include building heights and densities that exceed the limits set by Measure Y. Therefore, the Draft General Plan 2040 does not integrate Measure Y text into individual land use designations. The land use designations that allow heights and densities in excess of Measure Y limits are only in the ten Draft General Plan 2040 study areas, as shown in Figure 1, which are primarily downtown, in proximity to Caltrain stations and along major roadways. The study areas are being considered for increased heights and densities because they included one more of the following qualities:

- ▶ Are near transit.
- ▶ Provide convenient access to jobs, services, and amenities.
- ▶ Include aging or vacant buildings.
- ▶ Property owners have expressed interest in considering redevelopment of the property.
- ▶ Do not include low density residential neighborhoods with R1 and R2 zoning designations.

Any components of the Draft General Plan 2040 that are inconsistent with Measure Y will require voter approval before they can take effect.

## Where does the Draft General Plan 2040 conflict with Measure Y?

To better understand how the proposed land use designations align with Measure Y, Figure 2 shows which land use designations exceed the Measure Y limits. The designations that exceed Measure Y limits include Residential Medium II, High I and High II; and Mixed-Use Medium II, High I and High II. Table 1 outlines the height and density ranges associated with each of these designations. These land use designations are only proposed within the ten General Plan 2040 Study Areas and are generally located in proximity to a Caltrain station, along the El Camino Real corridor or in the Bridgepointe shopping center area. There is one site designated as Residential High II that falls outside of the study areas; however this designation is proposed because the site contains an existing 10-story residential building.

**Table 1. Land Uses with Heights/Densities that Exceed Measure Y**

LAND USE INTENSITY	HEIGHT RANGE	DENSITY RANGE
Medium II	4 to 6 stories	51 to 99 units per acre
High I	5 to 8 stories	100 to 130 units per acre
High II	6 - 10 stories	100 to 200 units per acre

## Why does the Draft General Plan 2040 propose higher heights and densities than what is allowed under Measure Y?

The Draft General Plan 2040 is planning for a 20-year time period and is required by State law to plan for sufficient growth to meet current and future housing needs. The State of California assigns all jurisdictions a Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) that requires cities and counties to identify housing sites for a specified number of units. Although the scale of future housing allocations is unknown, the City can rely upon regional growth projections, past allocations, and other forecasting tools to estimate likely future allocations. If the State's next Housing Cycle RHNA is in the same proportion to the number of homes that the City needs to

plan for between 2023-2031 (6th Housing Cycle), it could call for 8,000+ new units, which means the City will likely need to plan for at least 15,000 new housing units over the next 20 years. By planning for sufficient housing capacity in the ten General Plan 2040 study areas that are most suitable and appropriate for growth and change, the City will be well positioned to meet future housing requirements within its adopted General Plan 2040 without the need for future rezonings, and will concentrate taller, denser development in the core of the city.

---

## **How does the City propose to align the Draft General Plan 2040 and Measure Y?**

To address the heights and densities in the Draft General Plan 2040 that exceed the limits set by Measure Y, the City Council will need to place a ballot measure before voters that would update Measure Y to allow for the proposed heights and density within the ten General Plan 2040 study areas.

In order for City Council to place a measure on the ballot for voters to consider changes to Measure Y to make it consistent with the adopted General Plan 2040, the City will need to certify the General Plan 2040 Environmental Impact Report (EIR), adopt the General Plan 2040, and submit a resolution and ballot measure to the San Mateo County Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder.

In terms of timing, the target is to have a final version of the General Plan 2040 and final EIR ready for City Council adoption by the beginning of 2024. This would allow for the City Council to review and adopt a resolution and ballot language in winter/spring of 2024 and place the measure on the ballot in November of 2024. Since there will be a period between General Plan 2040 adoption and a subsequent election to consider an updated ballot measure, or if the updated ballot measure is not successful, General Plan Policy LU 1.9 "Voter Approved Growth Limits"<sup>1</sup> policy would allow for all portions of the General Plan 2040 that are aligned with Measure Y to take effect. For the portions of the General Plan 2040 that conflict with Measure Y, this policy specifies that the General Plan 2040 will abide by all applicable provisions of the measure until it is updated by the voters or sunsets in 2030.

---

## **What happens if voters do not approve the changes to Measure Y?**

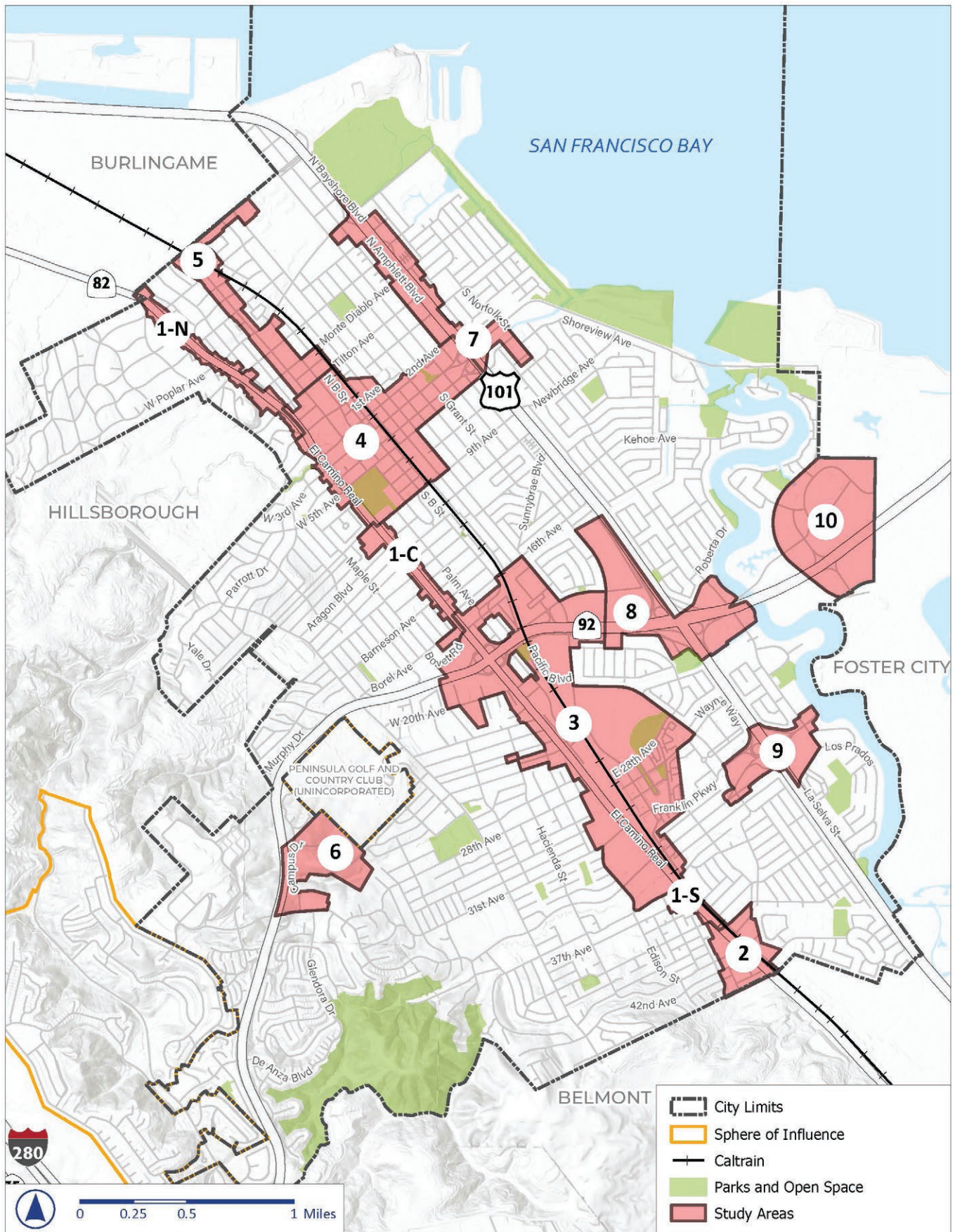
If voters do not approve the proposed changes to Measure Y, the City will need to explore other options to meet state requirements for housing production, which would likely include increasing densities throughout the city, inclusive of residential neighborhoods, within Measure Y limits, to accommodate the City's future housing requirements.

---

<sup>1</sup> General Plan Policy LU 1.9 Voter Approved Growth Limits policy is as follows: "As required by law, for the duration that Measure Y is in effect, any inconsistency between the measure and other provisions of the General Plan's Land Use Element shall default to the provisions specified in Measure Y."



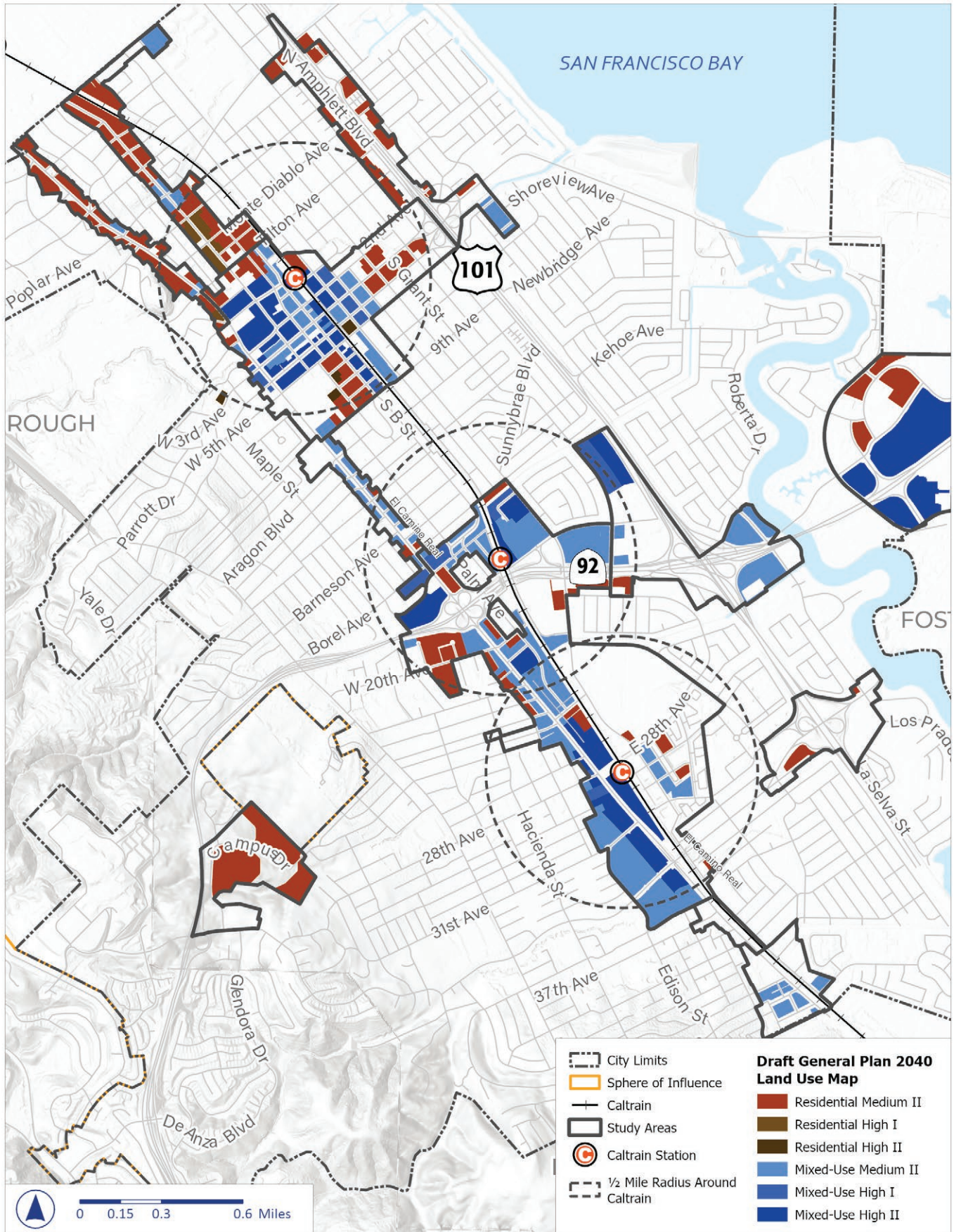
**Figure 1. General Plan 2040 Study Areas**



Source: City of San Mateo; 2022, ESRI, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023



**Figure 2. General Plan 2040 Land Use Designations that exceed Measure Y**



Source: ESRI, 2022; City of San Mateo, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2023