

3. Project Description

This chapter of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) describes the proposed Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 (General Plan 2040 or proposed General Plan) and proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) update, hereinafter referred to together as “proposed project.” This project description has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).¹ The proposed project includes potential new development associated with implementation of General Plan 2040 and implementation of the proposed CAP update. The potential buildout under General Plan 2040 is discussed in Section 3.6, *2040 Development Projections*, of this chapter.

This Draft EIR has been completed in accordance with CEQA, which requires that State and local public agencies analyze proposed projects to determine potential impacts on the environment and disclose any such impacts.² The City is the lead agency for the environmental review of the proposed project. Chapter 4, *Environmental Analysis*, of this Draft EIR provides a programmatic analysis of the environmental impacts associated with projected development under the proposed project by 2040. Program-level environmental review documents are appropriate when a project consists of a series of actions related to the issuance of rules, regulations, and other planning criteria.³ The proposed project that is the subject of this EIR consists of long-term plans that will be implemented as policy documents guiding future development activities and City actions. Because this is a program-level EIR, this document does not evaluate the impacts of specific, individual development projects that may be allowed under General Plan 2040. Future projects may require separate environmental review.

This chapter provides a detailed description of the proposed project, including the location, setting, and characteristics of the EIR Study Area, which is described in Section 3.3, *EIR Study Area*, as well as the project objectives, the principal project components, and required permits and approvals.

3.1 BACKGROUND

Every city and county in California is required to have an adopted comprehensive long-range general plan for the physical development of the county or city and, in some cases, land outside the city or county boundaries.⁴ It is the community’s overarching policy document that defines a vision for future change and sets the “ground rules” for locating and designing new projects, supporting the local economy, conserving resources, improving public services and safety, and fostering community health. The General Plan, which includes a vision, guiding principles, goals, policies, and actions, functions as the City’s primary land use regulatory tool. It is San Mateo’s constitution for future change and must be used

¹ CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.

² CEQA Guidelines Section 15002(a).

³ CEQA Guidelines Section 15168.

⁴ California Government Code Section 65300.

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as the basis for all planning-related decisions made by City staff, the Planning Commission, and the City Council.

Pursuant to State law, a general plan must contain eight mandated elements: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, environmental justice, and safety; organized in any way that best suits the city or county. Typically, general plans cover a time frame or forecast of 15 to 20 years.

The existing San Mateo General Plan 2030 (General Plan 2030) was adopted in 2010 and included a horizon year of 2030. Four elements of the General Plan 2030 (land use, circulation, urban design, and housing) were amended in 2020. Accordingly, a comprehensive update is necessary to respond to and reflect the community's aspirations, address changes in State planning law, and extend the planning horizon to 2040. As described in greater detail in Section 3.5.1.2, *General Plan 2040 Outline*, General Plan 2040 includes the elements required by State law,⁵ as follows: 1) Land Use; 2) Circulation; 3) Housing; 4) Community Design and Historic Resources; 5) Conservation, Open Space and Recreation; 6) Public Services and Facilities; 7) Safety; and 8) Noise.

General Plan Housing Elements are required to be updated every eight years to fulfill the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and comply with State law. To meet the State deadline, San Mateo's Housing Element was most recently updated in January 2023 through a separate process. The Housing Element was prepared consistent with existing General Plan 2030 land use designations and policies and was covered under a CEQA Exemption. The Housing Element is not part of the proposed project analyzed in this EIR.

All plans, including precise plans, specific plans, master plans, and zoning in the city must be consistent with the General Plan. Similarly, all land-use development approvals and environmental decisions made by the City Council must be consistent with the General Plan. The General Plan itself, however, does not approve or entitle any development project. Property owners have control over when they wish to propose a project, and final development approval decisions are made on a project-by-project basis by City staff, the Planning Commission, other City boards and commissions as appropriate, and/or the City Council. Accordingly, this Draft EIR only addresses what the City foresees at this time. Future projects that exceed the proposed buildout or boundaries addressed in this Draft EIR will be subject to additional environmental review, as required pursuant to CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines.

3.2 LOCATION AND SETTING

The city of San Mateo is in the eastern part of central San Mateo County. It is generally bounded by the San Francisco Bay to the north; Burlingame to the northwest; Hillsborough to the west; unincorporated county land to the southwest; Belmont to the south; and Foster City to the east. See Figure 3-1, *Regional and Vicinity Map*. The city is accessed by US Highway 101 and State Route 92 (SR-92) as well as three

⁵ Pursuant to State law, a general plan must contain mandatory elements, but has complete autonomy for how they format and organize the elements. Mandatory topics include: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, safety, and environmental justice.

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Caltrain transit stations. Interstate 280 (I-280) also provides regional access to the community and is located just west of the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI). San Mateo is the largest city in San Mateo County and includes a range of urban and suburban land uses, including a variety of residential neighborhoods, an historic downtown, parks, and commercial and office areas. San Mateo's built-out environment is largely consistent with the built-out environments of adjacent communities.

3.2.1 CITY LIMITS

San Mateo City Limits enclose an area of approximately 15.46 square miles, of which 3.40 square miles consist of the Bay Waters, and the remaining 12.06 square miles consist of land. The City has primary authority over land use and other governmental actions within this area. Certain unincorporated areas outside of the City Limits may still have a San Mateo mailing address and may share certain services with the City. This includes unincorporated areas such as the Peninsula Golf and Country Club and the San Mateo Highlands neighborhoods, which are not within San Mateo's City Limits, but are within San Mateo's SOI.

3.2.2 SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

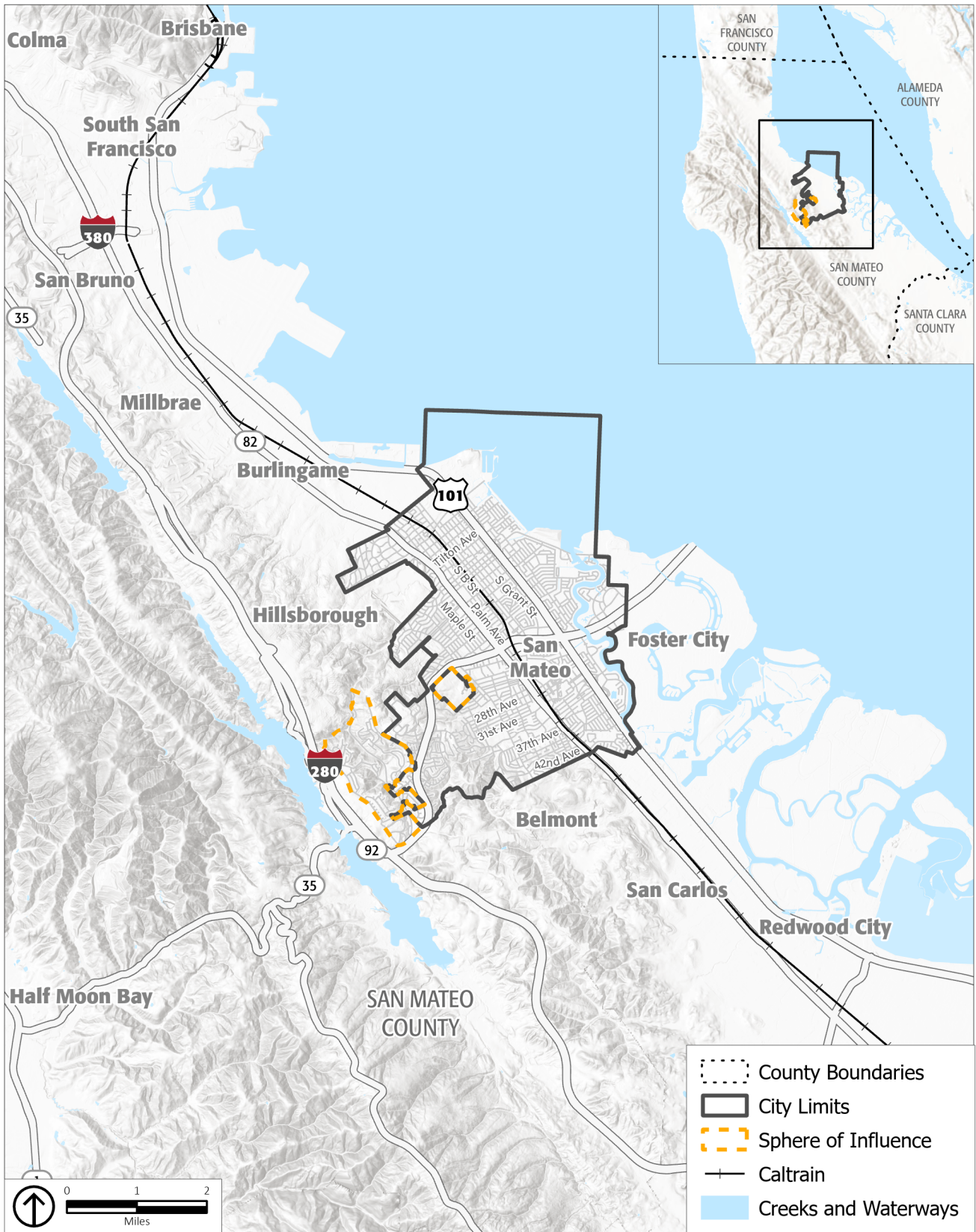
The SOI is a boundary that identifies land that the City may potentially annex in the future, and for which urban services, if available, could be provided upon annexation. Under State law, the SOI is established by the San Mateo County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) with input from the City. The purpose of the SOI is to identify areas where urban development could be accommodated in the future in an orderly and efficient manner. The San Mateo SOI is approximately 1.58 square miles in size, including both land and water.

Unincorporated areas adjacent to the San Mateo City Limits fall under the planning, land use, and regulatory jurisdiction of San Mateo County. While the City does not have jurisdiction over land within the SOI, designating a SOI sets precedence for ensuring that the City is able to comment on development proposed for lands within the SOI prior to annexation and to begin considering future development of the area. The City does not propose to annex any areas within the SOI as part of the proposed project. Any future annexations that may occur within the 2040 planning horizon would be analyzed under separate environmental review.

3.3 EIR STUDY AREA

The State of California encourages cities to look beyond their borders when undertaking the sort of comprehensive planning required for a general plan. The City only has jurisdiction over land that is within the City Limits. However, the City maintains a role in land use decisions in its SOI. Therefore, the EIR Study Area consists of all land within the City of San Mateo's City Limits and SOI. These areas are described below and shown on Figure 3-2, *EIR Study Area*. See Chapter 4, *Environmental Analysis*, for a description of the cumulative impact scope for this EIR, which may include lands within the Study Area and beyond, depending on the environmental topic being analyzed.

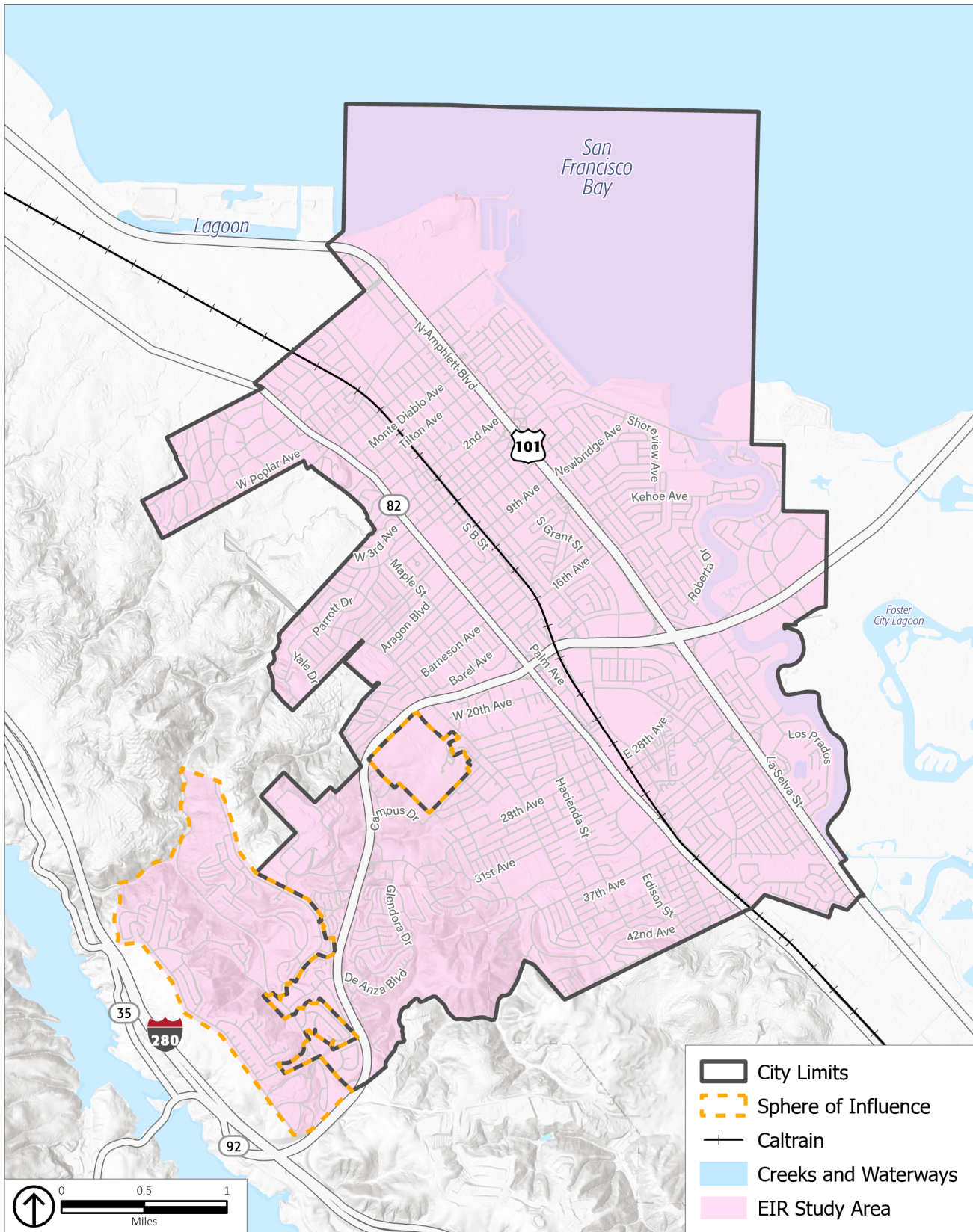
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Source: City of San Mateo, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2023.

Figure 3-1
Regional and Vicinity Map

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

Figure 3-2
EIR Study Area

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3.4 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The primary purposes of the proposed project are to plan for the growth and conservation of San Mateo over a 20-year time horizon and to:

- Identify the location and allowed density and intensity of San Mateo's land uses including housing, businesses, industry, open space, schools, civic buildings, etc.
- Plan for future circulation and infrastructure improvements.
- Identify sufficient residential land to meet the current and future housing needs for people at all income levels.
- Protect natural resources, such as water, air, trees, and hillsides, and preserve and improve open spaces, including open space for recreation, for habitat, or for public health and safety.
- Protect residents from harmful or disruptive levels of noise.
- Keep the community safe from natural and human-caused hazards, such as earthquakes, landslides, floods, and wildfires, including increased risks from climate change.
- Improve the safety and quality of life for residents of neighborhoods that face a combination of both higher-than-average pollution exposure and social and economic challenges such as low incomes, language barriers, or housing instability (Equity Priority Areas).

3.5 PROJECT COMPONENTS

The proposed project updates the General Plan 2030 goals, policies, and programs (actions) to reflect current conditions, issues, resources, and community perspectives. For example, changes are needed to address the evolving state of the city and region and to cover global issues such as climate change and emerging transportation technologies. The update also incorporates regional forecasts for 2040 that extend the planning horizon forward by 10 years.

3.5.1 GENERAL PLAN 2040

3.5.1.1 PLANNING PROCESS

The City maintains a website for the proposed project at www.strivesanmateo.org. The website offers opportunities for the public to weigh in on key issues and download information about the project and will continue to be available throughout the environmental review and project approval process. City staff also solicited input from other public agencies, such as the County of San Mateo, local school districts, the San Mateo County Transportation Authority, and cities adjacent to San Mateo.

The public outreach and participation process for the proposed General Plan 2040 started in September 2018. Throughout the process, the City shared information and sought community input at each decision point. Community input was gathered at community workshops on the proposed General Plan 2040, booths at community events, online activities, presentations to community organizations, and pop-up

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events at local businesses, churches, parent group meetings, food distribution centers, and bus stops. Throughout the General Plan 2040 process, the City Council emphasized extensive community outreach to engage all residents, with a focus on inclusive outreach programs to ensure engagement from non-English speakers as well as those fluent in English, renters as well as homeowners, residents under the age of 44, low-income households, and underrepresented neighborhoods including North Shoreview, Shoreview, North Central, and East of US Highway 101. City staff held pop-up events and workshops in the underrepresented neighborhoods and saw an increase in participation from these targeted groups.

The City Council also appointed a seven-member General Plan Subcommittee (GPS) to serve as a sounding board for City staff on draft policies and programs. The GPS was responsible for reviewing and commenting on draft materials and serving as a liaison to the community through various in-person, virtual, and hybrid meetings from 2018 to 2023.

The land use alternatives explored different possible growth scenarios for how to accommodate future housing, jobs, commercial and retail establishments, and parks and open space. The process to create the land use alternatives and to ultimately select a preferred land use scenario took almost three years and was shaped by community input at every significant step of the process. In general, each step of the alternatives process included a similar series of meetings: first, community workshop(s), outreach events, and online engagement; then GPS meeting(s), followed by Planning Commission meeting(s); and lastly City Council direction.

A summary of the steps to create the land use alternatives, and ultimately a preferred land use scenario included:

- **Choosing Study Areas.** During the summer and fall of 2019, San Mateo community members were asked to provide input at workshops, meetings, and online to help identify areas of the city that have the most potential for change over the next 20 years (“General Plan Land Use Study Areas”). The ten General Plan Land Use Study Areas selected by the community had the following characteristics: are near transit; contain aging shopping centers; or are areas where people have expressed interest in considering redevelopment of the property through the General Plan Update process. Study Area boundaries are mapped in Figure 3-3, *Study Area Boundaries*.
- **Creating a range of alternatives for each Study Area.** In the winter of 2019, community members shared their ideas on the different types and range of development that should occur in each Study Area. Using public feedback gathered in-person and online, and GPS, Planning Commission, and City Council provided input on the range of alternatives, and the General Plan team (City staff and project consultants) prepared three draft land use and transportation alternatives. These draft alternatives considered different locations and intensities of development that could occur over the next 20 years for each Study Area.
- **Evaluating and comparing alternatives.** On August 16, 2021, the City Council provided direction on the three land use and circulation alternatives to evaluate. The General Plan team then began evaluating the alternatives to compare their differing outcomes against a set of metrics.
- **Selection of a preferred scenario for further study.** On January 14, 2022, the City published the Alternatives Evaluation Report on www.StriveSanMateo.org and began the community engagement process to choose a preferred scenario for land use and circulation based on the relative benefits,

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trade-offs, potential impacts and desired mix of growth and development of each alternative. Following GPS and Planning Commission meetings, on April 18, 2022, the City Council provided final direction on the preferred land use and circulation scenario, which was created by mixing and matching different combinations of housing and commercial development in each Study Area.

3.5.1.2 GENERAL PLAN 2040 OUTLINE

The proposed General Plan 2040, like the existing General Plan 2030, addresses the eight mandatory elements (denoted with an asterisk [*] in the list below) and five optional elements. Multiple elements can be combined into one chapter, such as the mandatory open space and conservation elements in Chapter 5, *Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation*. Environmental justice policies as well as sustainability policies and community engagement policies are incorporated throughout the proposed General Plan 2040. The proposed outline for the General Plan 2040 includes 12 chapters (8 of which are “elements”):

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 1. Introduction | 7. Public Services and Facilities Element |
| 2. Land Use Element* | 8. Safety Element* |
| 3. Circulation Element* | 9. Noise Element* |
| 4. Housing Element* (<i>prepared separately</i>) | 10. Appendices |
| 5. Community Design and Historic Resources Element | 11. Glossary |
| 6. Conservation, Open Space and Recreation Element* | 12. Acknowledgements |

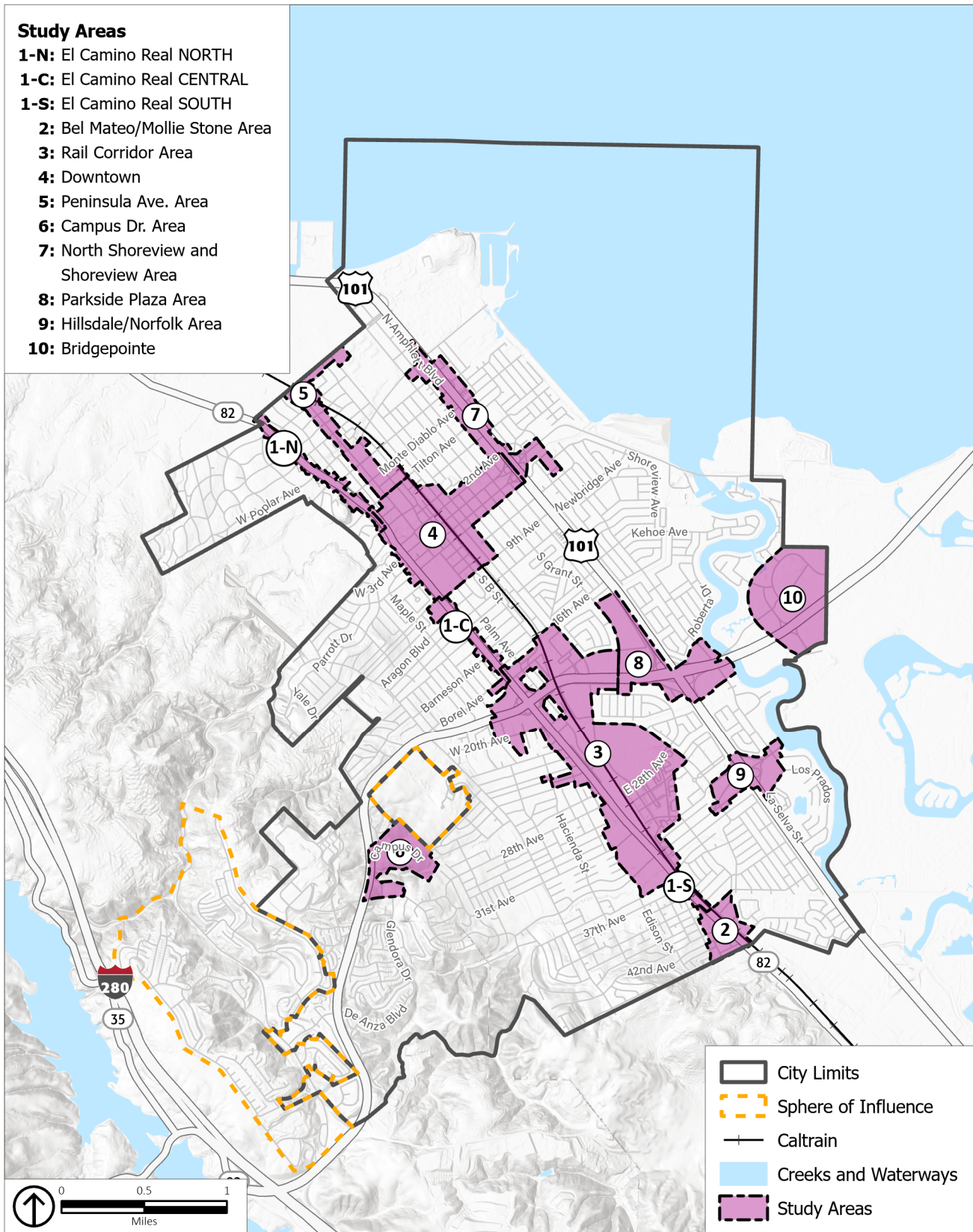
3.5.1.3 GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

Each element of the proposed General Plan 2040 contains background information and a series of goals, policies, and actions. The following provides a description of goals, policies, and actions and explains the relationship between them:

- A *goal* is a description of what San Mateo wants to achieve—the end state.
- A *policy* is a specific or general statement of principle, positions, or approaches on a particular issue or subject that guides decision-making by City staff, commissions, and/or the City Council. Use of verbs like “require” or “prohibit” (or “must” or “shall”) indicate mandatory requirements, and verbs like “support” or “discourage” (or “should” or “may”) indicate case-by-case flexibility, although parameters can be set for such statements.
- An *action* (also known as a program) is a procedure or activity by the City to achieve or implement a specific policy and/or goal. Actions may be day-to-day activities of City staff, or larger one-time initiatives. Actions may also require cooperation with other agencies not under the City’s control.

In addition to requirements of State laws, the goals, policies, and actions in the proposed General Plan 2040 are influenced by community input, best practices, and emerging issues (e.g., environmental justice, sea level rise, autonomous vehicles, and green infrastructure).

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

Figure 3-3
Study Area Boundaries

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3.5.1.4 GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

This section describes the changes to the existing General Plan land use categories that are proposed as part of the General Plan 2040. Collectively, these changes may influence the types and intensities of land uses permitted on different sites in the city.

The proposed General Plan 2040 proposes a number of changes to the land use designations from the existing General Plan land use map. This section describes the major changes, however, it is provided for informational purposes only. This EIR does not evaluate the changes in the General Plan relative to the existing General Plan, but rather evaluates the impacts of the proposed General Plan relative to existing conditions, as required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2, Consideration and Discussion of Significant Environmental Impacts. The proposed General Plan 2040 includes the following new and revised land use designations:

- **Residential Very Low.** Previously called the Single-Family Residential designation, this designation allows very low density residential dwellings, such as detached single-family homes, detached townhouses and duplexes, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) at an allowed density of up to 9 dwelling units per acre (du/acre) and an allowed height of 1 to 3 stories. This designation previously allowed residential dwellings at a density of up to 9 dwelling units per acre.
- **Residential Low I.** Previously called the Low Density Multi-Family Residential designation, this designation allows low density residential dwellings, such as townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes, condominiums, and apartments at an allowed density of 9 to 19 dwelling units per acre and an allowed height of 1 to 3 stories. This designation previously allowed low density attached residential dwellings at a density of 9 to 17 dwelling units per acre.
- **Residential Low II.** Previously called the Medium Density Multi-Family Residential designation, this designation allows lower density attached residential dwellings, such as townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes, condominiums, and apartments at an allowed density of 20 to 35 dwelling units per acre and an allowed height of 2 to 4 stories. This designation previously allowed low density attached residential dwellings at a density of 18 to 35 dwelling units per acre.
- **Residential Medium I.** Previously called the High Density Multi-Family Residential designation, this designation is a transition between areas designated with a Residential Low and Residential High and allows multi-family dwellings, such as townhomes, condominiums, and apartments at an allowed density of 36 to 50 dwelling units per acre and allowed height of 3 to 5 stories.
- **Residential Medium II.** This is a new designation. This designation allows medium density multi-family residential dwellings, such as condominiums and apartments, near mixed-use, office, and/or commercial areas. This designation is applied along major streets such as El Camino Real and as a transition between areas designated with a Residential Low and Residential High at an allowed density of 51 to 99 dwelling units per acre and an allowed height of 4 to 6 stories. This designation previously allowed residential uses at a density of 36 to 50 dwelling units per acre.
- **Residential High I.** This is a new designation. This designation allows higher density multi-family residential dwellings, such as condominiums and apartments, near Downtown and Caltrain stations, and along major streets such as El Camino Real, at an allowed density of 100 to 125 dwelling units per acre and an allowed height of 5 to 8 stories.

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- **Residential High II.** This is a new designation. This designation allows higher density multi-family residential dwellings, such as condominiums and apartments, near Downtown and Caltrain stations, and along major streets such as El Camino Real, with an allowed density of 100 to 200 dwelling units per acre and an allowed height of 6 to 10 stories.
- **Mixed-Use Low.** Previously called the Mixed-Use Incentive designation, this designation allows a mix of commercial, office, and/or residential uses integrated within the same site or the same building. It is intended to allow a mix of uses that encourages people to live, work, play, and shop in close proximity. The allowed density in the Mixed-Use Low designation ranges from 10 to 35 dwelling units per acre with an allowed height of 2 to 4 stories. The maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for nonresidential uses in the Mixed-Use Low designation is 2.0 FAR.
- **Mixed-Use Medium I.** Previously called the Mixed-Use Incentive designation, this designation allows a mix of commercial, office, and/or residential uses integrated within the same site or the same building. It is intended to allow a mix of uses that encourages people to live, work, play, and shop in close proximity. The allowed density in the Mixed-Use Medium I designation ranges from 36 to 50 dwelling units per acre with an allowed height of 3 to 5 stories. The maximum FAR for nonresidential uses in the Mixed-Use Low Medium designation is 3.0 FAR. Previously, the Mixed-Use Incentive designation had a FAR of 1.0 to 3.0.
- **Mixed-Use Medium II.** Previously called the Mixed-Use Incentive designation, this designation allows a mix of commercial, office, and/or residential uses integrated within the same site or the same building. It is intended to allow a mix of uses near other mixed-use, commercial, or residential areas, and within Downtown. The allowed density in the Mixed-Use Medium II designation ranges from 51 to 99 dwelling units per acre with an allowed height of 4 to 6 stories. This designation will also have a maximum 4.0 FAR for nonresidential uses. Previously, the Mixed-Use Incentive designation had a FAR of 1.0 to 3.0.
- **Mixed-Use High I.** This is a new designation. This designation allows high density mixed-use buildings that provide a mix of commercial, office, and/or residential uses integrated within the same site or building. It is intended to allow a mix of uses near major streets, Caltrain stations, shopping centers, and within Downtown. The allowed density in the Mixed-Use High I designation ranges from 100 to 130 dwelling units per acre with an allowed height of 5 to 8 stories. The maximum FAR for nonresidential uses in Mixed-Use High I areas is 4.5.
- **Mixed-Use High II.** This is a new designation. This designation allows high density mixed-use buildings that provide a mix of commercial, office, and/or residential uses integrated within the same site or building. It is intended to allow a mix of uses near major streets, Caltrain stations, and shopping centers, and within Downtown. The allowed density in the Mixed-Use High II designation ranges from 100 to 200 dwelling units per acre with an allowed height of 6 to 10 stories. The maximum FAR for nonresidential uses in the Mixed-Use High II designation is 5.0.
- **Office Low.** Previously called the Executive Office designation, this designation is intended for low density office uses, such as medical, administrative, or professional offices. Supportive uses including personal services, restaurants, health clubs, residential, day care, and limited retail sales are permitted. Research facilities that support the development of new products and may include professional uses, manufacturing, laboratories, and/or maker's spaces in the same building or site may be permitted depending on the type and intensity of the use. The maximum FAR for non-

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residential uses in this designation is 1.0 with an allowed height of 1 to 2 stories. The allowed density for residential uses is 10 to 35 dwelling units per acre. Previously, the Executive Office designation had a FAR of 0.62 to 1.0.

- **Office Medium.** Previously called the Executive Office designation, this designation is intended for medium density office uses, such as medical, administrative, or professional offices. Supportive uses including personal services, restaurants, health clubs, residential, day care, and limited retail sales are permitted. Research facilities that support the development of new products and may include professional uses, manufacturing, laboratories, and/or maker's spaces in the same building or site may be permitted depending on the type and intensity of the use. The maximum FAR for non-residential uses in this designation is 2.0 with an allowed height of 2 to 4 stories. The allowed density for residential uses is 36 to 50 dwelling units per acre. Previously, the Executive Office designation had a FAR of 0.62 to 1.0.
- **Office High.** This is a new designation. This designation is intended for high density office uses, such as medical, administrative, or professional offices, and for research and science facilities that support the development of new products and may include professional uses, manufacturing, laboratories, and/or maker's spaces in the same building or site. Supportive uses including personal services, restaurants, health clubs, residential, day care, and limited retail sales are permitted. The maximum FAR for non-residential uses in this designation is 3.0 with an allowed height of 3 to 5 stories. The allowed density for residential uses is 51 to 130 dwelling units per acre.
- **Quasi-Public.** This is a new designation. This designation is intended for facilities owned and/or operated by quasi-public agencies and organizations, such as schools and faith based organization facilities. Examples of these facilities include St. Matthew Catholic Church and the Nueva School. Ancillary residential uses, with a focus on affordable housing, may also be allowed when aligned with the organization's mission or to provide employee housing. The allowed height is 1 to 3 stories for uses in this designation and the density for residential uses is up to 20 dwelling units per acre.

In addition to the changes listed above, the proposed General Plan 2040 would carry forward the same land use designations from the existing General Plan 2030 as follows:

- **Neighborhood Commercial.** This designation is intended for a mix of neighborhood-serving commercial uses that include small-scale small retail stores and other commercial uses that serve the immediate neighborhood, such as grocery stores and pharmacies. Typical uses include supermarkets, bakeries, drugstores, restaurants, delicatessens, barber shops, hair salons, laundromats, hardware stores, dry cleaners, small offices, and other personal services. Residential may also be allowed. The maximum FAR for nonresidential uses in this designation is 1.0 with an allowed height of 1 to 3 stories. The allowable density for residential uses is 9 to 19 density units per acre.
- **Service Commercial.** This designation is intended for a wide range of service commercial and light industrial facilities that provide city-wide and regional services including auto repair services, building material yards, overnight boarding of animals, and industrial uses with light manufacturing, warehousing, and/or distribution facilities. These uses do not necessarily benefit from being in high volume pedestrian areas such as shopping centers or Downtown and can instead be found along South Amphlett Avenue, south of Indian Avenue and north of 2nd Avenue, in addition to other

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locations around the city. The maximum FAR for this designation is 1.0 with an allowed height of 1 to 3 stories.

- **Regional Commercial.** This designation is intended for large-scale commercial developments that serve residents and visitors from the surrounding region, such as the Hillsdale Mall and Bridgepointe Shopping Center. Examples of this land use include shopping centers, large-format retail, auto sales, and travel-related services, such as hotels, gas stations, and restaurants. These centers rely on larger trade areas. Residential may also be allowed. The maximum FAR for nonresidential uses in this designation is 1.5 with an allowed height of 1 to 3 stories. The allowable density for residential uses is up to 50 density units per acre.
- **Public Facilities.** This designation is intended for facilities owned and/or operated by the City or other governmental agencies, such as City Hall, San Mateo County’s Event Center, public school sites and the public parking garages in Downtown. There is no maximum FAR for uses in this designation.
- **Parks and Open Space.** This designation is intended for public parks, City-owned conservation lands and private open space or recreation facilities. Parks and open space areas can be found throughout the city and are important to preserve because they provide community members with access to nature, encourage healthy lifestyles, and support a mixture of active and passive recreation opportunities. There is no maximum FAR in this designation.
- **Utilities.** This designation is intended for facilities owned and/or operated by public utilities to serve the public with electricity, gas, water and communications. Examples of uses in this designation include electricity substations, water tank sites, and the sewer treatment plant. There is no maximum FAR for uses in this designation.

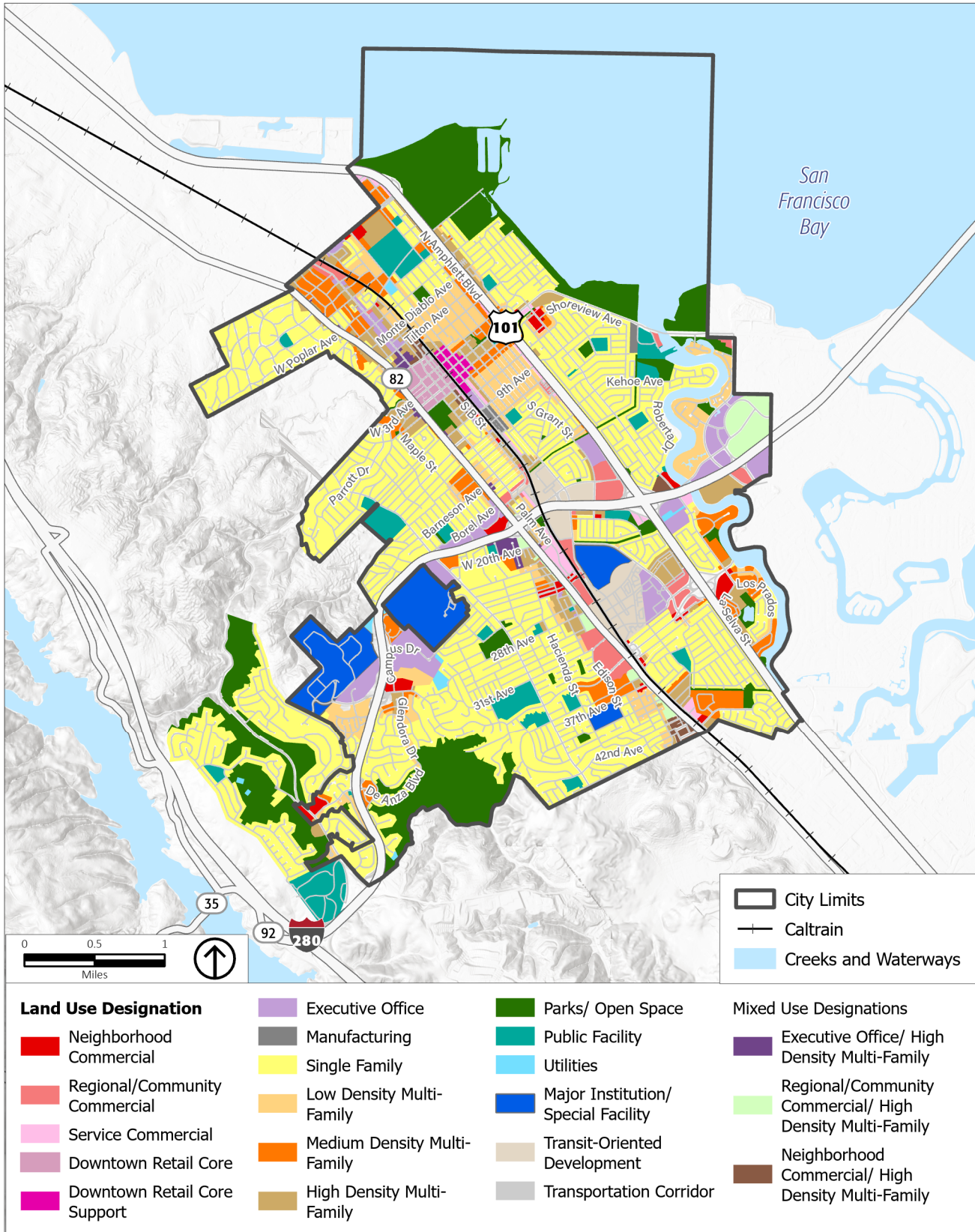
The land use designations that are being retired and will not be part of the proposed General Plan 2040 land use designations include:

- Single-Family Residential designation
- Low Density Multi-Family Residential designation
- Medium Density Multi-Family Residential designation
- High Density Multi-Family Residential designation
- Mixed-Use Incentive designation
- Executive Office designation

3.5.1.5 GENERAL PLAN 2040 LAND USE MAP

The General Plan land use map demonstrates the location of each land use designation, which is a required component of general plans. The existing General Plan 2030 land use map shown in Figure 3-4, *Current General Plan Land Use Map*, has been used since 2010 to illustrate the proposed distribution, location, and extent of housing, businesses, industries, open space, recreation, education, and public buildings within the horizon of each general plan. The General Plan land use map reflects a combination of existing conditions and different or more intense uses in locations where change is desired in the next 20 years. The proposed General Plan 2040 land use map is shown on Figure 3-5, *Proposed General Plan 2040 Land Use Map*.

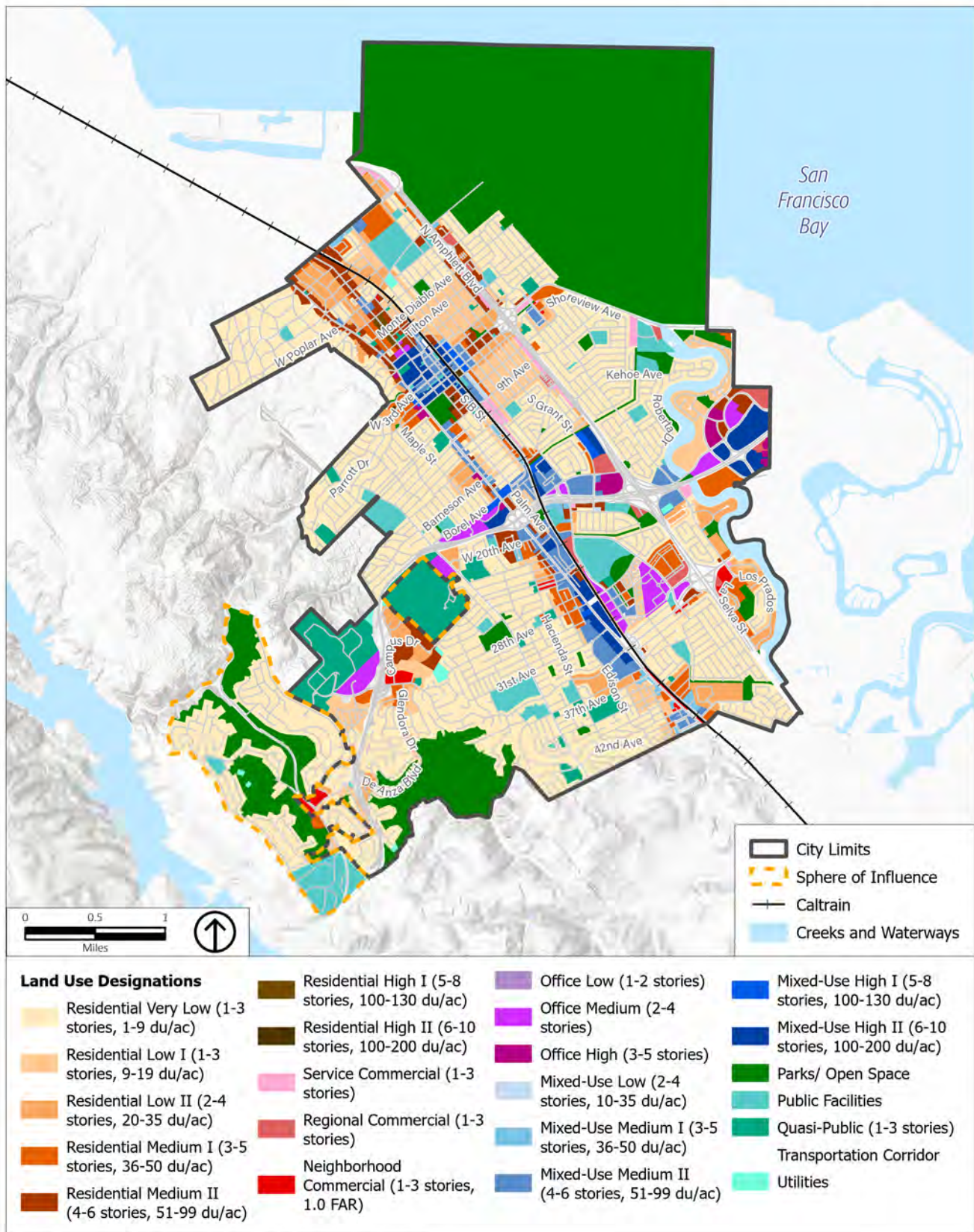
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Source: City of San Mateo, 2018; PlaceWorks, 2022.

Figure 3-4
Current General Plan Land Use Map

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

Figure 3-5
Proposed General Plan 2040 Land Use Map

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The City's General Plan land use map is integrated with the City's zoning map, which shows the parcel-specific delineation of the zoning districts throughout the city and depicts permitted and conditionally permitted uses. A parcel's zoning district stems directly from its General Plan land use designation, with the zoning district acting to implement the General Plan by refining the specific uses and development standards for that parcel. Updates to the zoning map to ensure consistency with the proposed General Plan 2040 Land Use Map will follow the adoption of General Plan 2040 through a separate process. Changes to the City's Zoning Code or zoning map are not part of the proposed project covered in this EIR.

3.5.1.6 TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Implementation of General Plan 2040 could involve physical improvements to carry out the following transportation and infrastructure actions:

- Implementation of the Complete Streets Plan to improve the circulation network for all users and abilities and the Bicycle Master Plan to create and maintain a fully connected, safe, and logical bikeway network.
- Implementation of a Vision Zero Plan to reduce speeding, collisions, and collision severity.
- Implementation of an El Camino Real Plan for higher capacity and higher frequency transit along El Camino, potentially including Bus Rapid Transit and other modes of alternative transportation.
- Implementation of a Transit-Oriented Development Access Plan to build priority projects.
- Implementation of "safe routes for seniors" and "safe routes to schools" improvements, prioritized in disadvantaged communities.
- Shuttle services as part of new developments, to fulfill transportation demand management (TDM) requirements, as well as continued support for public shuttle programs.
- Pedestrian improvements to improve comfort, safety, and connectivity, and collaboration with San Mateo County to develop trails.
- Implementation of an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan to maintain accessible streets and sidewalks.
- Transition of B Street between 1st Street and 3rd Street into a pedestrian mall.
- Freeway overcrossings and undercrossings to facilitate connectivity across major barriers.
- Coordination with the Town of Hillsborough, the County of San Mateo, and the State regarding pedestrian and bicycle access to San Francisco Water District lands via Crystal Springs Road.
- Grade crossing improvements and/or separation for at-grade rail crossings.
- Implementation of the Transit Orientated Development Pedestrian Access Plan to improve transit access, safety, and experience.
- Installation of public bicycle parking facilities.
- Implementation of an updated Downtown Area Plan to support and strengthen Downtown San Mateo as a vibrant and active district.

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- Implementation of an updated Hillsdale Station Action Plan to improve circulation and access to the Station, and increase park and open space areas.
- Implementation of a Bridgepointe Area Plan to guide redevelopment of the Bridgepointe Shopping Center into a mixed-use neighborhood with new parks and recreational facilities, community gathering places, and ample facilities to support safe transit, biking, and walking access.
- Preparation and implementation of a specific plan or master plan for the Bel Mateo area to guide redevelopment of the area into a mixed-use neighborhood with ample facilities to support biking and walking, as well as publicly accessible park and open space areas.
- Preparation and implementation of a North Central Plan to make the neighborhood's streets safer and improve circulation.
- Streetscape and safety improvements to improve routes to parks, schools, recreation facilities, and other destinations through sidewalk, lighting, landscaping, and roadway improvements.
- Upgrades to critical facilities and public infrastructure in areas vulnerable to climate change hazards, such as the wastewater treatment plant.
- Implementation of a facilities improvement plan to address deficiencies in community centers and recreation spaces.
- Installation of new street trees to expand the urban tree canopy.
- Potential development of regional recreational and sports complexes, in collaboration with neighboring cities.
- Implementation of the Recreation Facilities Master Plan, prioritizing the highest priority improvements.
- Potential distribution of recycled water, in collaboration with California Water Service and/or Estero Municipal Improvement District.
- Implementation of the City's Green Infrastructure Plan.
- Support for improved access to and availability of state-of-the-art telecommunication systems, in coordination with service providers.
- Undergrounding of electrical and communication transmission and distribution lines in residential areas and along commercial frontages.
- Support for the expansion of electric vehicle charging stations and clean fuel stations.
- Potential installation of on-site power generation and storage on City facilities.
- Improvements to critical infrastructure to allow continued functioning in the event of a power outage.
- Improvements to City assets and infrastructure for seismic stability.

Some of the improvements above would occur through the continuation of existing City programs and procedures, such as the City's Capital Improvement Program and ongoing street maintenance services, while others would involve the development of new programs to study, design, and fund future

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improvement projects. As indicated above, many of these improvements would occur only after separate planning processes, after which specific improvements would be implemented consistent with those planning documents. In addition, many of the improvements called for in General Plan 2040 would be implemented by other agencies or entities, such as neighboring cities, the County of San Mateo, transit agencies, neighborhood organizations, service providers, and private developers. This program-level analysis of General Plan 2040 does not evaluate project-level impacts of future specific improvement projects that may be proposed in the future to implement General Plan 2040 and other City planning documents. All future construction projects that qualify as a “project” under CEQA are subject to compliance with CEQA, which may require additional, project-specific environmental analysis for entitlement. Therefore, though subsequent environmental review may tier off the program-level review in this EIR, this EIR is not intended to provide project-level environmental review of specific future construction projects.

3.5.2 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The City’s existing CAP was adopted in April 2020. It provides a strategic pathway to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through 2050 and beyond, with reduction target commitments for 2020, 2030, and 2050 based on Assembly Bill (AB) 32, Senate Bill 32, and Executive Order S-03-05, respectively. The CAP serves as a qualified GHG reduction strategy consistent with CEQA Guidelines 15183.5(b). Strategies in the CAP fall into the following general categories:

- Building electrification
- Renewable energy
- Energy efficiency
- Municipal energy efficiency and electrification
- Off-road equipment
- Clean transportation fuels
- Sustainable transportation
- Solid waste
- Waste and wastewater

The CAP includes forecasts of GHG emissions that rely on estimates of vehicles miles traveled (VMT) modeled by the Association of Bay Area Governments/Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the City’s growth assumptions at the time of CAP preparation, which are consistent with the assumptions in the 2030 General Plan. Maintaining consistency between the CAP and 2030 General Plan has been a goal of the City’s with each update of the CAP.

The proposed General Plan 2040 is expected to allow higher levels of population, jobs, households, and VMT compared to the CAP adopted in 2020. In addition, since the City’s adoption of the CAP in 2020, the State of California has accelerated its actions and commitments to reduce statewide GHG emissions. In September 2022, the Governor signed AB 1279 into law, codifying the State’s commitment to be carbon neutral by 2045. As part of this commitment to carbon neutrality, AB 1279 directs a minimum statewide reduction of GHGs to at least 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045. As a result of this recently adopted target, the City’s CAP may not be consistent with the State’s 2045 target. Additionally, the California Air Resources Board adopted the new version of the Climate Change Scoping Plan on December 15, 2022,

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and the Scoping Plan further details the role of local governments in the achievement of the statewide GHG reduction targets.

The proposed CAP update is a technical update to the CAP to provide consistency between the City's CAP and the proposed General Plan. Under the CAP update, the CAP will continue to serve as the City's qualified GHG reduction strategy, as it has since 2015. As a qualified GHG reduction strategy, it is important for the CAP to be consistent with the proposed General Plan and State reduction targets. The approach for this technical update is consistent with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) guidance available. The proposed CAP update includes:

- Revisions to previous inventory years including the 2005 baseline.
- An updated GHG emissions inventory for the year of 2019.
- A revised forecast year of 2030, consistent with the CAP adopted in 2020.
- A new forecast year of 2040, consistent with the buildout year for the proposed General Plan development projections evaluated in this EIR.
- A new forecast for 2045, consistent with the State's new GHG reduction goal per AB 1279.
- Updated GHG reduction targets and reduction measure quantification to align with the updated forecast years.

In total, the CAP update projects that San Mateo will reduce its GHG emissions to 311,990 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO_{2e}) (45 percent below 1990 levels) by 2030, 162,530 MTCO_{2e} by 2040 (71 percent below 1990 levels), and 80,550 MTCO_{2e} (86 percent below 1990 levels) by 2045. These reductions allow San Mateo to meet its GHG reduction targets of 40 percent below 1990 levels (339,880 MTCO_{2e}) by 2030, and 85 percent below 1990 levels (84,970 MTCO_{2e}) by 2045.

The proposed CAP update does not include any substantive updates to the strategies in the CAP. The CAP strategies would not result in changes to land use under the proposed General Plan.

3.6 2040 DEVELOPMENT PROJECTIONS

This EIR analyzes the potential for growth between 2019 and 2040, which represents an approximate 20-year buildout horizon. Under Section 15064(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, "In evaluating the significance of the environmental effect of a project, the lead agency shall consider direct physical changes in the environment which may be caused by the project and reasonably foreseeable indirect physical changes in the environment which may be caused by the project." The projections represent the City's estimation of "reasonably foreseeable" development that could occur over the next 20 years under the General Plan and are used as the basis for the EIR's environmental assessment. See Chapter 4, *Environmental Analysis*, of this Draft EIR, for a description of environmental analysis scenarios for this EIR.

The projections do not presume that every parcel is developed to the maximum level allowed under the General Plan. Based on historical development patterns, it is unlikely that the maximum theoretical buildout allowed under the proposed General Plan 2040 would occur because not every parcel that is allowed to develop will develop within that timeframe, and not every parcel that develops will be built out to the maximum allowed under the proposed General Plan 2040. Therefore, the maximum theoretical buildout is not a reasonably foreseeable outcome of the adoption of the proposed General

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Plan 2040. Instead, this EIR analyzes a conservative, but reasonably foreseeable, amount of growth based on regional demographic and economic forecasts and the probable share of regional growth that would be captured by San Mateo given the proposed policies and land use regulations in General Plan 2040. Horizon year (2040) projections within the EIR Study Area are shown in Table 3-1, *Proposed 2040 Buildout Projections in the EIR Study Area*.

TABLE 3-1 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN 2040 BUILDOUT PROJECTIONS IN THE EIR STUDY AREA

Category	Existing Conditions (2019)	Projected Net Change by Area (2019-2040)		Total Net Change (2019-2040)	Total Buildout (2040)
		City	Unincorporated		
Households	41,060	20,070	10	20,080	61,140
Housing Units	43,770	21,400	10	21,410	65,180
Total Population	108,020	51,990	30	52,020	160,040
Jobs	62,440	16,530	390	16,920	79,360

Source: PlaceWorks, 2022.

As shown in Table 3-1, the City expects approximately 16,920 net new jobs in the EIR Study Area by 2040, which correlates to approximately 4,325,000 square feet of net new non-residential development. The buildout projections in Table 3-1 include growth associated with current development projects, development of the sites in the City’s 2023-2031 Housing Element Sites Inventory, and development of ADUs and units under Senate Bill 9 as allowed under State housing law.⁶ Specific development projects known at the time of preparation of the buildout numbers are listed in Appendix B, *Projects Included in Buildout Projections*, of this Draft EIR, and account for 6,132 units, or 29 percent of the 21,410 housing units in Table 3-1. The City has identified sites to accommodate an additional 2,020 units to meet the City’s Regional Housing Needs Allocation of 7,015 units by January 2031.

Development within the city would largely be focused within the ten General Plan Land Use Study Areas. Of the 21,410 new housing units projected to be built by 2040, approximately 19,700 (92 percent) are expected to be located within the General Plan Land Use Study Areas, and of the 16,920 new jobs, approximately 15,020 (89 percent) are expected to be in the General Plan Land Use Study Areas. While the ten General Plan Land Use Study Areas are the locations where the most growth is projected to occur, changes would still occur outside of these areas, as the General Plan would continue to allow for growth outside of the General Plan Land Use Study Areas based on allowed densities, regulations, and State law.

3.7 INTENDED USES OF THIS EIR

This Draft EIR is intended to review potential environmental impacts associated with the adoption and implementation of the proposed project and determine corresponding mitigation measures, as necessary. This Draft EIR is a program-level EIR and does not evaluate the impacts of specific, individual

⁶ Senate Bill 9 (Chapter 162, Statutes of 2021) requires ministerial approval for housing developments with no more than two primary units in a single-family zone, and the subdivision of parcels in a single-family zone into two parcels.

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developments that may be allowed in the future under the proposed project. Each future project will conduct additional environmental review, as required by CEQA, to secure any necessary discretionary development permits. As part of this process, subsequent projects will be reviewed by the City for consistency with the General Plan and this Draft EIR.

Projects successive to this Draft EIR include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Approval and funding of major public projects and capital improvements.
- Issuance of permits and other approvals necessary for implementation of the proposed project.
- Property rezoning consistent with the proposed General Plan 2040.
- Development plan approvals, such as tentative maps, variances, conditional use permits, planned developments, and other land use permits.
- Permit issuances and other approvals necessary for public and private development projects.
- Development agreement processes and approvals.

The 2040 population and employment forecasts in this Draft EIR will serve as parameters for environmental analysis for future development projects within San Mateo. In the event that proposed development in the city would exceed the buildout projections used in this Draft EIR, the City would require environmental review for any subsequent development to address growth impacts that would occur as a result of development exceeding the General Plan projections and related Draft EIR assumptions. This does not preclude the City, as lead agency, from determining that an EIR would be required for any development under the relevant provisions of CEQA (e.g., Section 21166 and related guidelines).

3.8 REQUIRED PERMITS AND APPROVALS

The proposed project would require adoption by the San Mateo City Council. The Planning Commission and other decision-making bodies will review the proposed project and make recommendations to the City Council. While other agencies may be consulted during the General Plan 2040 process, their approval is not required for General Plan 2040 adoption. However, subsequent development under the General Plan 2040 may require approval of State, federal, responsible, and trustee agencies that may rely on the programmatic EIR for decisions in their areas of permitting.

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