

EL CAMINO REAL/DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN

Draft Plan Review – Meeting 5: Review/Wrap-Up
Planning Commission
Monday, August 22, 2011

Meeting Overview

- Brief overview presentation
- Receive public comment
- Opportunity for Planning Commission technical or clarification questions
- Review and finalize preliminary Planning Commission recommendations on the Draft Specific Plan

El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan

- Multi-year process to establish a clear long-term plan for the El Camino Real corridor and Downtown.
- Specific Plan process preceded by an initial visioning exercise to define broad goals
- Extensive community engagement and documentation of process on project web page (www.menlopark.org/specificplan)



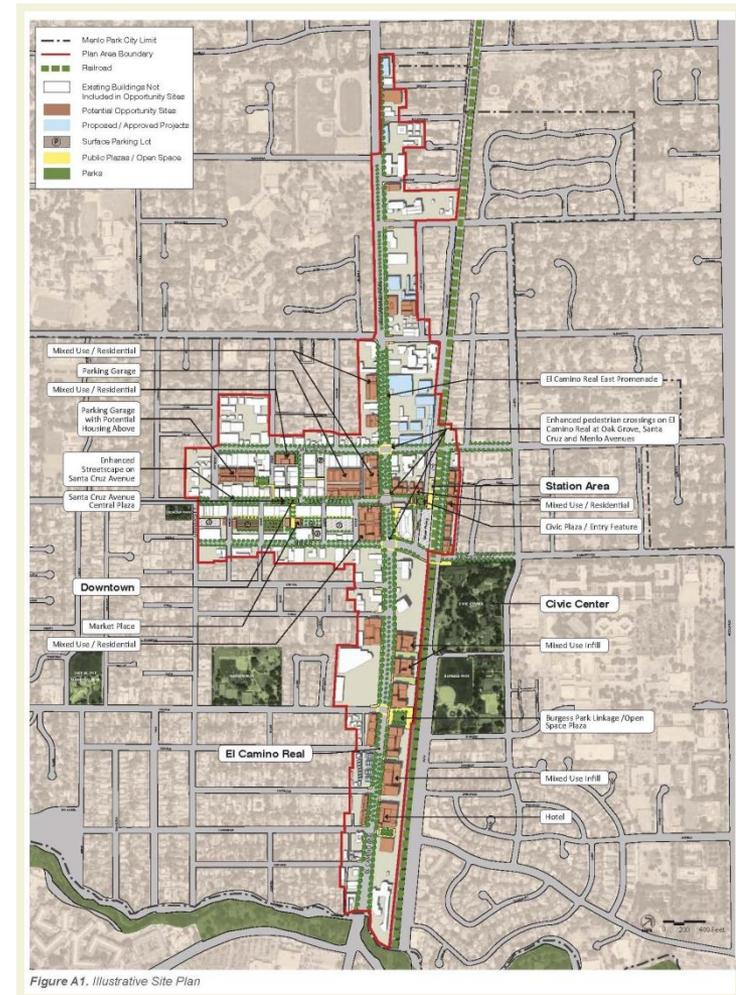
El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan

What is the Specific Plan?

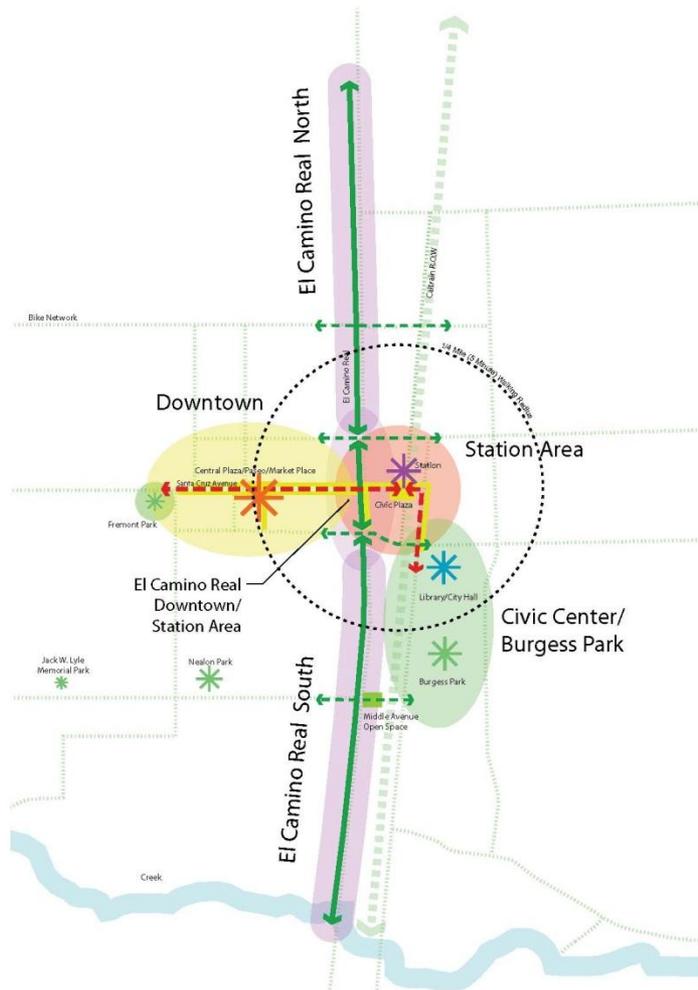
- A clear and action-oriented plan for the next 20 to 30 years
- A detailed framework for public space improvements
- A strong foundation for private development
- Currently, a *draft* document

What is it not?

- An individual private development project
- A final decision on every public improvement



Geographic Areas



Planning Commission review of Draft Specific Plan divided by geographic zone:

- Station Area (July 21)
- Downtown (July 28)
- El Camino Real (August 4)

Tentative recommendations to be reviewed comprehensively and finalized on August 22

Preliminary Recommendations

- Planning Commission recommendations included as Attachment A
 - Typo on A4 – “Building Height” recommendation should reference ECR NE and ECR NE-R zoning districts (*not ECR NE-L*)
- Commission should review all recommendations to make sure wording addresses Commission’s intent
- Commission may consider augmenting with additional recommendations, in particular for topics that may span different geographical areas

Fiscal Impact Analysis (FIA)

- Specific Plan projected to generate \$2.17 million of new General Fund net revenue (\$3.9 total revenues minus \$1.7 total expenses).
- The majority of revenues (60%) would come from transient occupancy (hotel) tax.
- Operations and maintenance expenses for the proposed parking garages would be significant. Additional user fees and/or highly efficient designs could reduce these expenses, if implemented.
- Timing of the hotel and garage elements would affect overall performance for the plan area. Most scenarios would be positive, although a scenario where no hotels were developed and both garages were built (with no changes to parking fees) would generate a deficit.

Fiscal Impact Analysis (FIA)

- Menlo Park Fire Protection District: costs should be covered by a combination of property tax increases and a pending Fire Services development impact fee (no net fiscal impact).
- Elementary and secondary school districts: using Draft EIR assumptions (which found that new Specific Plan student growth would happen concurrently with partly reduced student generation from existing housing stock through 2019), FIA projects annual surpluses to both school districts.
- All other districts see surpluses of varying degrees, with the exception of the San Mateo County Office of Education, which would see an annual fiscal deficit of approximately \$13,800.

Discussion Framework

Planning Commission may consider the Specific Plan within the context of the Vision Plan Goals (Attachment E):

1. Vision Plan Area Character: Maintain a **village character** unique to Menlo Park.
2. East-West Connectivity: Provide greater **east-west, town-wide connectivity**.
3. El Camino Real Circulation: **Improve circulation and streetscape conditions** on El Camino Real.
4. Neighborhood Context: Ensure that El Camino Real **development is sensitive** to and compatible with adjacent neighborhoods.
5. Vacant and Underutilized Parcels on El Camino Real: **Revitalize underutilized parcels** and buildings.
6. Train Station Area: **Activate the train station** area.
7. Santa Cruz Avenue Pedestrian Character: Protect and **enhance pedestrian amenities on Santa Cruz Avenue**.
8. Downtown Vibrancy: Expand shopping, dining and neighborhood services to **ensure a vibrant downtown**.
9. Housing: **Provide residential opportunities** in the Vision Plan Area.
10. Open Space: **Provide plaza and park spaces**.
11. Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation: Provide an integrated, safe and well-designed **pedestrian and bicycle network**.
12. Parking: **Develop parking strategies** and facilities that meet the commercial and residential needs of the community.

Discussion Framework

Planning Commission may also consider the Specific Plan Guiding Principles (Attachment F):

- Enhance Public Space
- Generate Vibrancy
- Sustain Menlo Park's Village Character
- Enhance Connectivity
- Promote Healthy Living and Sustainability

Commission should keep in mind “interrelationships”- how changes to one element can affect another.

Next Steps

- Meeting Process
 - Public Comment
 - Technical or clarification questions of staff and the primary consultant
 - Planning Commission review and finalization of preliminary recommendations
- Next Steps
 - City Council Review (August 22, additional September meeting(s) to be scheduled)
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