

# EL CAMINO REAL/DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN

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Draft Plan Review – Meeting 3: Downtown  
Planning Commission  
Thursday, July 28, 2011

# Meeting Overview

- Provide an overview of Downtown aspects of plan
  - Public Improvements
  - Private Improvements
- Receive public comment
  - July 11 meeting intended as the primary comment opportunity (comments summarized in July 21 staff report Attachment A), but additional input welcomed
- Opportunity for Planning Commission technical or clarification questions
- Provide tentative recommendations for Downtown

# 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](http://www.menlopark.org/specificplan))



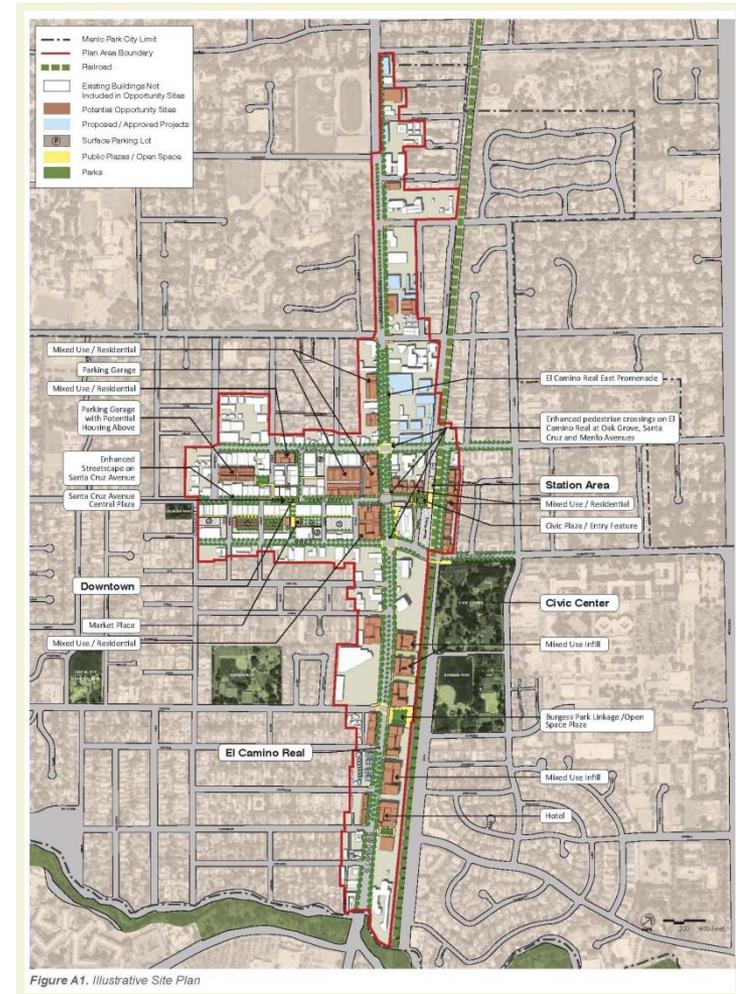
# El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan

## What is the Specific Plan?

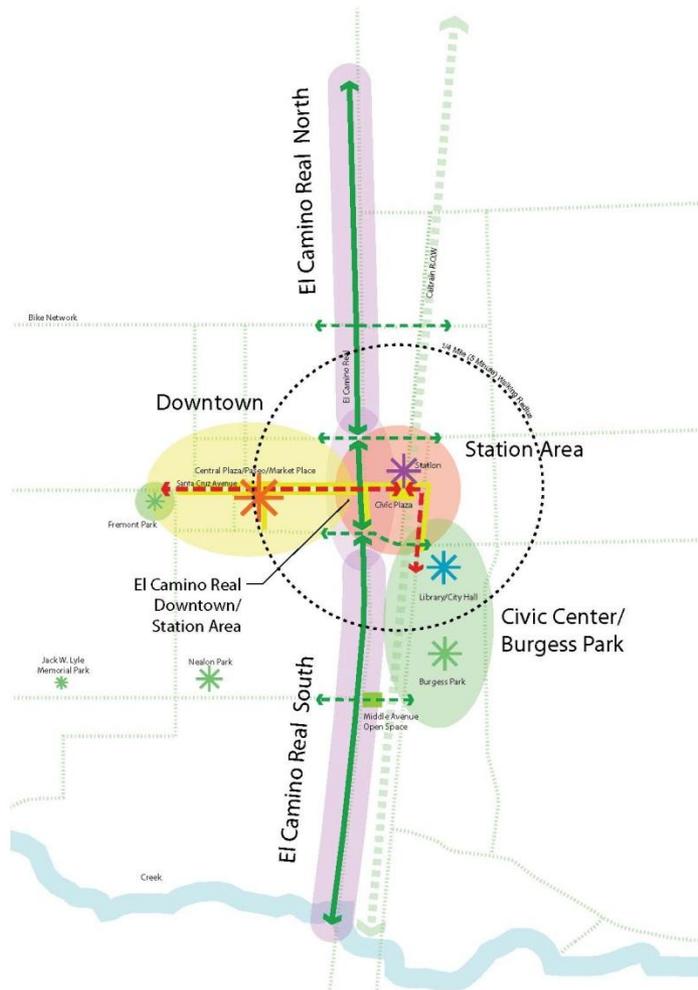
- A clear and action-oriented plan for the next 20 to 30 years
- A detailed framework for public space improvements
- A strong foundation for private development
- Currently, a *draft* document

## What is it not?

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



# Geographic Areas



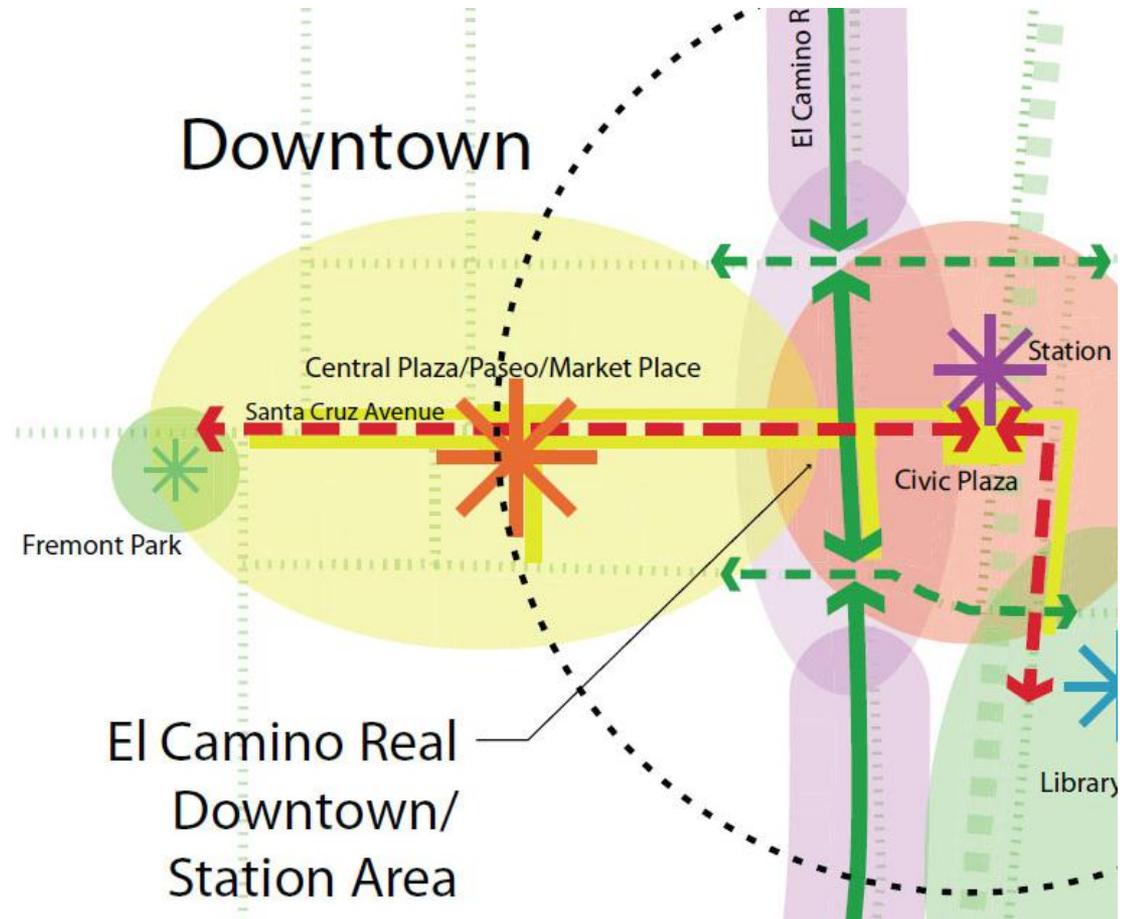
Planning Commission review of Draft Specific Plan divided by geographic zone:

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

Tentative recommendations for individual zones to be reviewed comprehensively and finalized at end of August 4 meeting or on August 22

# Downtown

- Historic core of Menlo Park
- Located in close proximity to El Camino Real and the Station Area
- Always part of plan, from initial visioning process



# Downtown



*Illustrative rendering of one potential development scenario- all graphics conceptual*

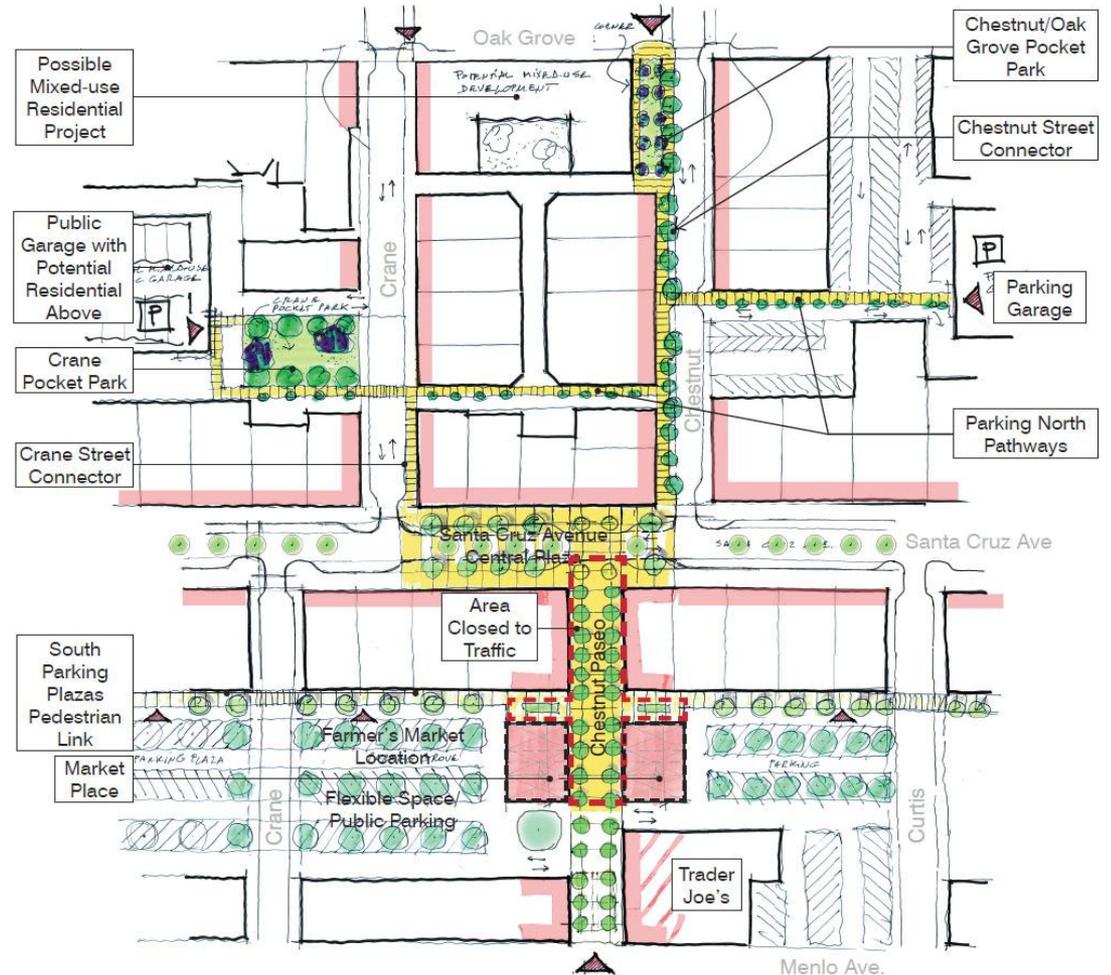
# Downtown



*Illustrative rendering of one potential development scenario- all graphics conceptual*

# Downtown: Public Improvements

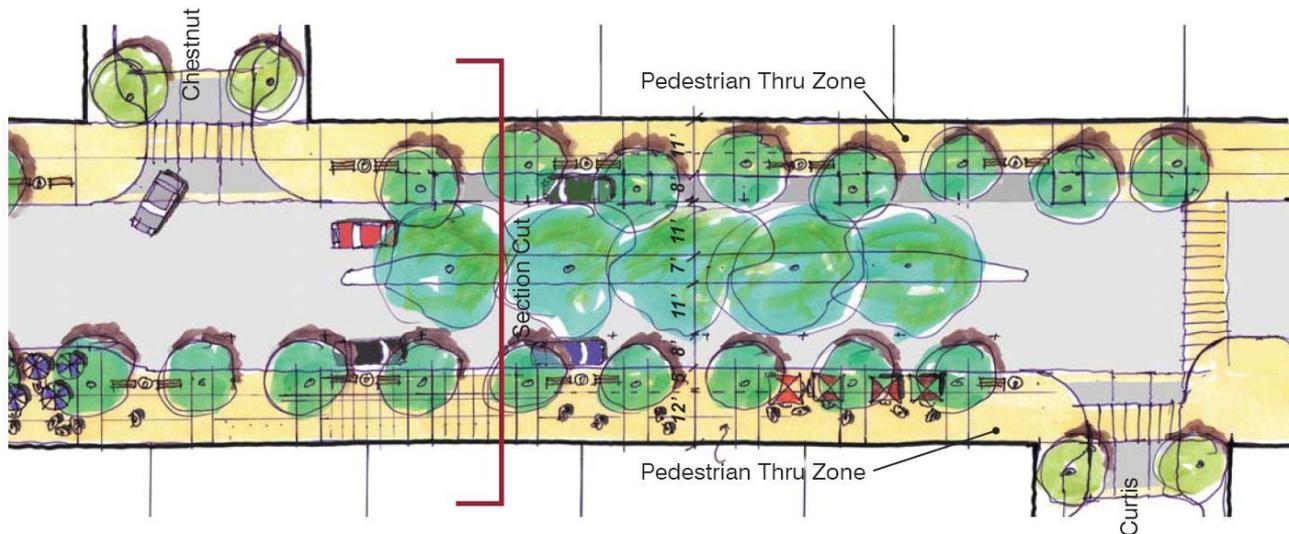
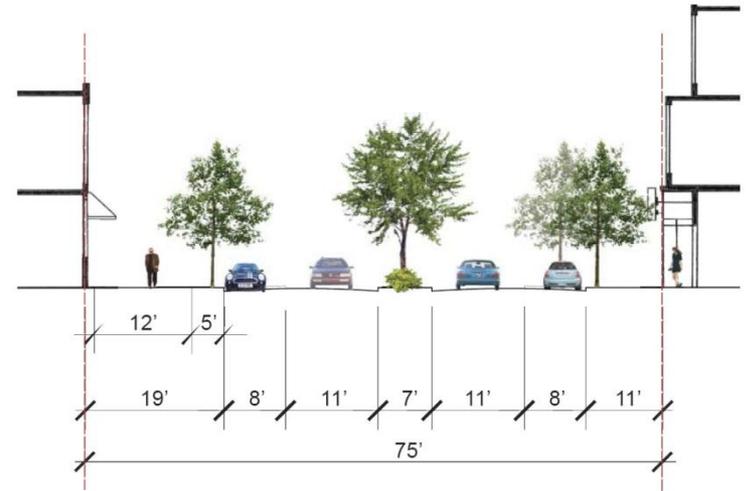
- Santa Cruz Avenue Sidewalks
- Santa Cruz Avenue Central Plaza
- Chestnut Paseo
- Market Place
- Other Improvements



# Downtown: Public Improvements

## Santa Cruz Avenue Sidewalks

- Sidewalks widened by changing angled parking to parallel and narrowing travel lanes
- Median trees retained
- New trees added within parking lane



# Downtown: Public Improvements

## Santa Cruz Avenue Sidewalks

- Additional width to provide outdoor dining and other social space
- Generally update furnishings and style



Current



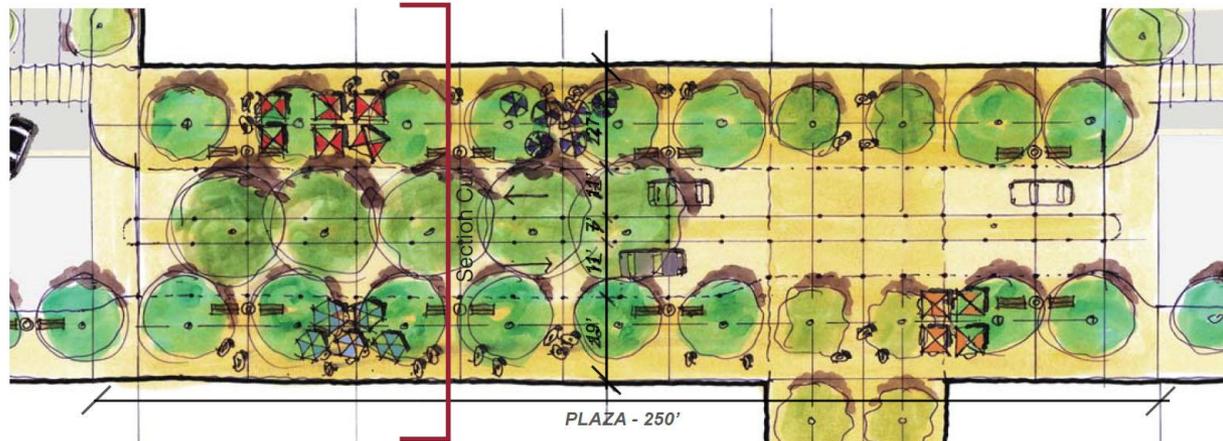
Proposed

# Downtown: Public Improvements



## Santa Cruz Avenue Central Plaza

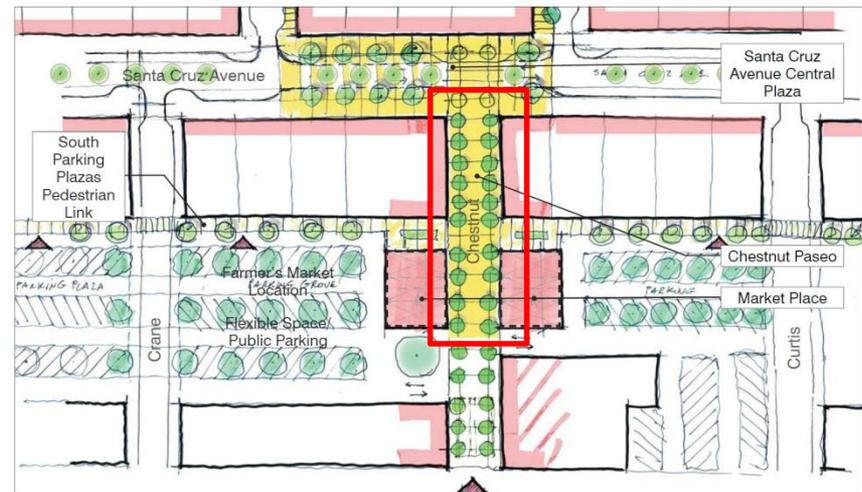
- Between Crane/Chestnut (north legs)
- Auto travel lanes and median trees retained
- On-street parking removed
- Sidewalks widened to maximum extent
- Raised/enhanced pavement
- Potential closures for special events



# Downtown: Public Improvements

## Chestnut Paseo

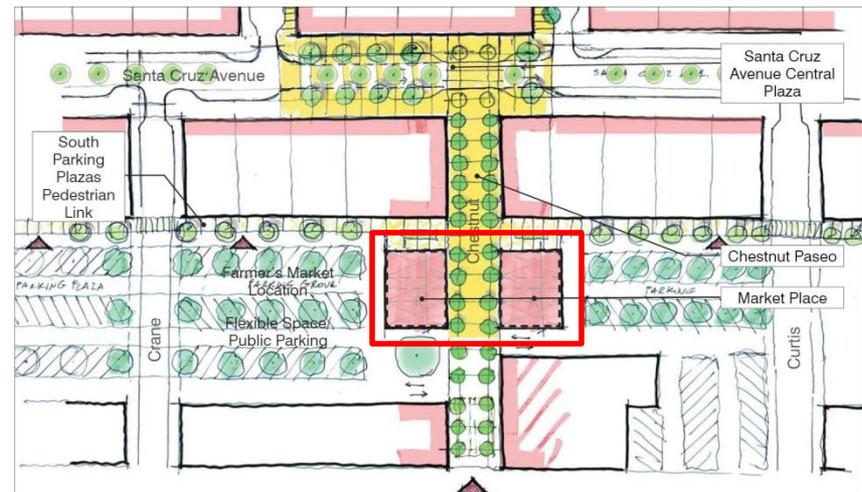
- Pedestrian-only street along northern half of block, linked to Central Plaza
- Emergency vehicle access preserved
- Auto access to Plazas 6 and 7 from southern half of street
- Linked with market place concept



# Downtown: Public Improvements

## Market Place

- Broad concept, to be refined in future
- Options include: plaza, open pavilions, small enclosed buildings with vendor spaces
- Compliment (not compete with) Farmer's Market and other markets
- Preserve heritage oak
- Linked with paseo



# Downtown: Public Improvements



## Other Public Improvements

- South Parking Plazas Pedestrian Link
- Flex Space/Parking Area
- Pocket Parks
- Other Street/Alley Improvements



# Downtown: Public Improvements



- **El Camino Real crossings** at Oak Grove, Santa Cruz, and Ravenswood/Middle Avenues improved with high-visibility crosswalks, median islands, etc.
- **Class III bicycle routes** (shared auto/bike lanes) on Menlo Avenue, University Drive, Crane Street



- **Class II bicycle lanes** (one on each side of street) on Oak Grove Ave (would require removal of parking on one side of street and re-striping of auto lanes)

# Downtown: Public Improvements

## Parking

- Up to two garages
- Locations on Plazas 1 and 3 (largest and most cost-effective sites)
- Would offset parking spaces relocated for public improvements (plaza, sidewalks, etc.) and potentially provide parking for private developments
- Would also allow more use of extended time limits and provide central locations for all-day employee/owner parking
- Plaza 3 option for parking-housing mixed-use



# Downtown: Public Improvements

Existing and Future Downtown Parking Supply				
Parking Location	Existing Supply <sup>1</sup>	Specific Plan Change	Change in Spaces	Future Supply
<b>Parking Plazas</b>				
Parking Plaza 1	249	Added Parking Garage <sup>2</sup>	446	695 <sup>4</sup>
Parking Plaza 2	95	Development Site and Pocket Park	-95	0
Parking Plaza 3	212	Added Parking Garage <sup>3</sup> and Pocket Park	158/438 <sup>5</sup>	370/650 <sup>5</sup>
Parking Plaza 4	105	Pedestrian Link, Development Site	-31	74
Parking Plaza 5	150	Pedestrian Link, Development Site	-42	108
Parking Plaza 6	136	Market Place	-32	104
Parking Plaza 7	94	Pedestrian Link, Market Place	-36	58
Parking Plaza 8	145	Pedestrian Link	-7	138
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,186</b>		<b>361/641</b>	<b>1,547/1,827</b>
<b>On-Street Spaces</b>				
Santa Cruz Avenue	116	Sidewalk Widening	-48	68
Chestnut Street North	26	Sidewalk Widening	-11	15
Chestnut Street South	17	Chestnut Paseo	-11	6
Oak Grove Avenue	80	Added Bike Lanes	-35	45
Other Streets	170	No Change	0	170
<b>Total</b>	<b>409</b>		<b>-105</b>	<b>304</b>
<b>Downtown Core Area Total</b>	<b>1,595</b>		<b>256/536</b>	<b>1,851/2,131</b>

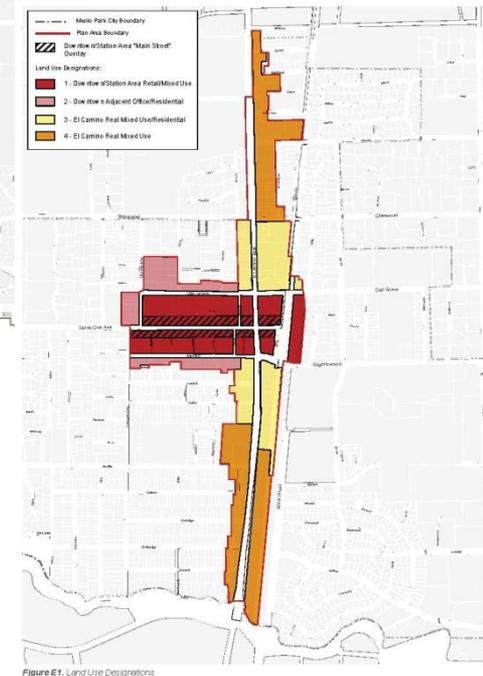
## Parking

- Total downtown parking supply estimated to increase by between 256 and 536 spaces (net increases of 16 and 34 percent over current on- and off-street supply)
- Design guidelines to ensure attractive parking structures
- Setbacks from private property to preserve service/emergency access



# Downtown: Private Improvements

- New base development standards established to achieve inherent public benefits (redevelop underutilized properties, improve downtown activity, etc.)
- Public Benefit Bonus standards added to achieve extra benefits
- Scale of development reviewed through iterative community workshop process
- Much more detail and specificity than what current ordinances provide



# Downtown: Private Improvements



## Land Uses (highlights- see Table E1 for full details)

- Downtown/Station Area Retail/Mixed Use:
  - Permitted: Retail, Restaurants, Personal Services (limited size per business), Office (limited size per parcel), Residential, Hotels
- Downtown/Station Area Main Street Overlay (Santa Cruz Avenue):
  - Primarily retail and restaurants on ground floor
  - Office (limited size per parcel), personal services, and residential allowed only on upper floors
- Downtown Adjacent Office/Residential
  - Non-retail support uses

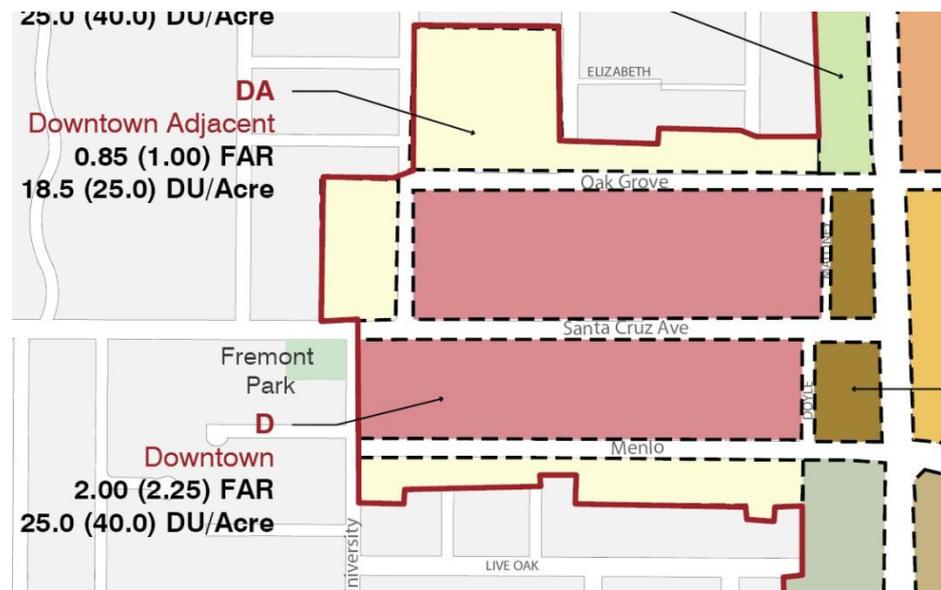
Allowable Uses	El Camino Real Mixed Use	El Camino Real Street Use/Residential	University/El Camino Real	Downtown/Station Area Main Street Overlay	Downtown Adjacent Office/Residential
<b>Commercial</b>					
Adult Business Establishments	C	C	-	-	-
Animal Sales & Services	-	-	-	-	-
Animal Boarding	C	C	C	-	-
Animal Clinics and Hospitals	C	C	C	-	-
Animal Retail Sales and Service	P	P	P	LC (less than 5,000 SF)	-
Automobile/Vehicle Sales and Service	-	-	-	-	-
Automobile/Vehicle Sales & Leasing	P	P	P	-	-
Cas, Saloons and Light Vehicle Service	C	C	-	-	-
Banks and Financial Institutions	P	P	LC (less than 6,000 SF)	-	LC (less than 6,000 SF)
Business Services	P	P	LC (less than 5,000 SF)	-	LC (less than 5,000 SF)
<b>Commercial Recreation</b>					
Small-Scale	P	C	C	-	-
Cinemas	C	P	P	-	-
<b>Eating &amp; Drinking Establishments</b>					
Restaurants, Full Service	P	P	P	P	-
Restaurants, Limited Service	P	P	LC (less than 3,000 SF)	LC (less than 3,000 SF)	-
Restaurants, Full-Limited Service with Alcohol and/or Outdoor Seating	A	A	A	A	-
Restaurants, Full-Limited Service with Live Entertainment	C	C	C	C	-
Restaurants, Take-Out Only	P	P	LC (less than 3,000 SF)	-	-
Bars and Lounges	-	C	C	C	-
Funeral & Mortuary Services	C	C	-	-	-
Hotels and Motels	P	P	P	C	C
Offices, Business and Professional	L (no greater than one-half the base or public benefit bonus F&B)	L (no greater than one-half the base or public benefit bonus F&B)	L (no greater than one-half the base or public benefit bonus F&B)	L (no greater than one-half the base or public benefit bonus F&B)	L (no greater than one-half the base or public benefit bonus F&B)
Offices, Medical and Dental	L (no greater than one-half the base or public benefit bonus F&B)	L (no greater than one-half the base or public benefit bonus F&B)	L (no greater than one-half the base or public benefit bonus F&B)	L (no greater than one-half the base or public benefit bonus F&B)	L (no greater than one-half the base or public benefit bonus F&B)

Table E1. Land Use Designations and Allowable Uses

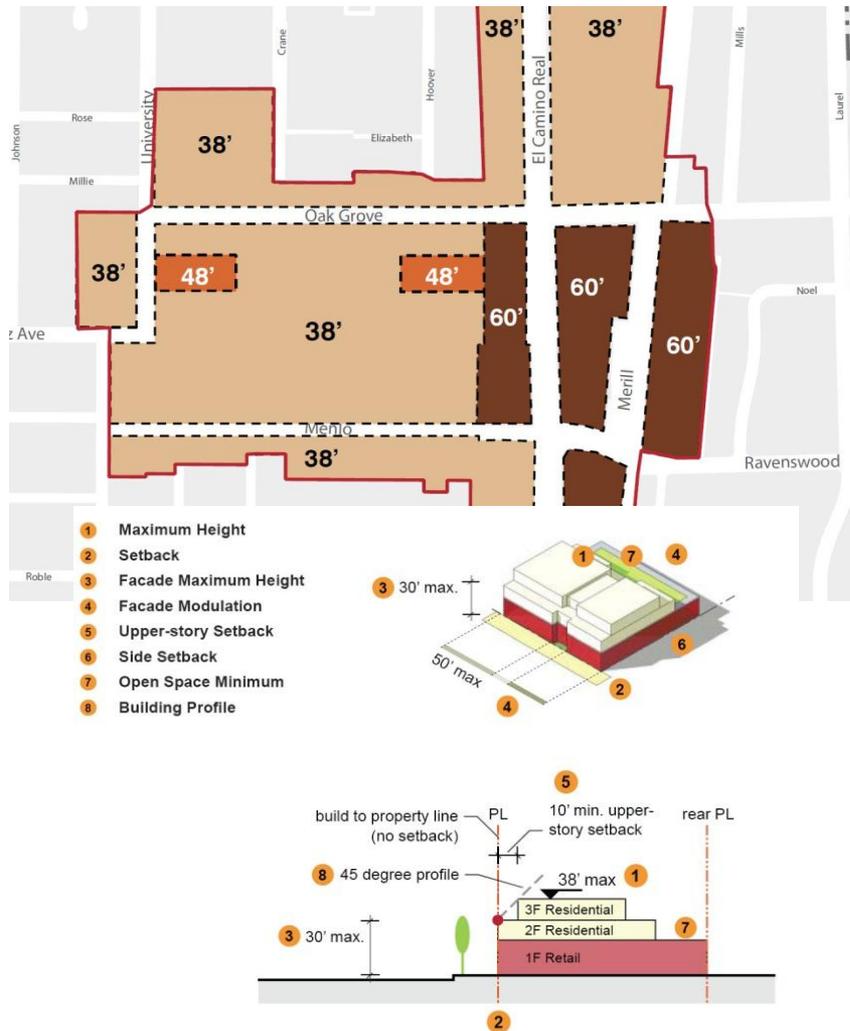
# Downtown: Private Improvements

## Zoning Districts

- D (Downtown)
  - FAR: 2.00 (base) – 2.25 (public benefit bonus)
  - Dwelling units per acre: 25 (base) – 40 (public benefit bonus)
- DA (Downtown Adjacent)
  - FAR: 0.85 (base) – 1.00 (public benefit bonus)
  - Dwelling units per acre: 18.5 (base) – 25 (public benefit bonus)



# Downtown: Private Improvements



## Height

- 30' façade height at building edge, with 45-degree step-back above (10' minimum), in order to limit perception of mass
- 38' overall height (2 to 3 stories)
- 48' permitted on Plazas 1 and 3 for parking structures (including parking-housing option on #3)

# Downtown: Private Improvements

## Setbacks

- For Downtown core, setback set at zero feet, to match historic context
- Side streets vary, depending on what is necessary to provide an 11' sidewalk:
  - Oak Grove Avenue 10'-20'
  - Menlo Avenue and University Drive set at 5'-20'
- Façade modulation requirements would prevent monolithic building types



- Plan Area Boundary
- No Setback
- 5 Foot Setback
- 5 - 20 Foot Setback
- 7 - 12 Foot Setback
- 10 - 20 Foot Setback

# Downtown: Private Improvements

## Plan-wide Regulations and Guidelines

- Sustainability (including LEED Silver certification)
- Active ground-floor uses
- Retail frontage
- Parking/service access

MENLO PARK EL CAMINO REAL AND DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN (DRAFT)

### **E.3.5 Building Ground Floor, Entry and Retail Frontage Treatment**

A building's ground floor is the portion of the building most experienced by the pedestrian. Its treatment can affect the overall experience and feeling of safety of the passerby. Well designed ground floor treatments, building entries and retail frontage help ensure a pleasant and safe pedestrian experience and help create a successful retail environment and an appropriate transition between buildings and sidewalks and other public places. The careful design of these features, either in isolated locations or along a shopping street such as Santa Cruz Avenue, is an essential component to overall building design.

The Specific Plan encourages use of the following guidelines in order to maximize the strategies that lead to a vibrant and welcoming street and successful retail environment.

#### **Guidelines**

##### **Ground Floor Treatment**

**E.3.5.01** Buildings should orient ground-floor retail uses, entries and direct-access residential units to the street.

**E.3.5.02** Buildings should activate the street by providing visually interesting and active uses, such as retail and personal service uses, in ground floors that face the street. If office and residential uses are provided, they should be enhanced with landscaping and interesting building design and materials. Blank walls at ground floor are discouraged and should be minimized.

**E.3.5.03** For buildings where ground floor retail, commercial or residential use are not desired or viable, other project-related uses, such as a community room, fitness center, daycare facility or sales center, should be located at the ground floor to activate the street.



*Well designed ground floor treatment and retail frontage ensuring a pleasant and safe pedestrian experience (Vancouver, Canada)*



*Guideline E.3.5.01. Ground-floor uses and entries oriented to the street (Portland, Oregon)*



*Guideline E.3.5.02. Active uses at ground-floor (San Francisco, California)*

# Downtown: Private Improvements

Minimum Parking Rates						
Land Use	Existing City Requirements		Industry Sources		Local Sources	Specific Plan Rates <sup>6</sup>
	Zoning Ordinance <sup>1</sup>	Use Based Guidelines <sup>2</sup>	ITE <sup>3</sup>	ULI <sup>4</sup>	MTC <sup>5</sup>	Future Supply
Multi-Family Dwelling	2.0	-	1.68	1.85 / 1.85 <sup>5</sup>	1.0 - 1.5	1.85
General Office (per 1,000 sf gfa)	6	3.3	3.27	3.8 / 0.38 <sup>5</sup>	2.0 - 3.0	3.8
Medical Office (per 1,000 sf gfa)	6	5	4.06	4.5 / 4.5 <sup>5</sup>	-	4.5
Retail and Personal Service (per 1,000 sf gfa)	6	5	3.05 / 3.42 <sup>7</sup>	3.6 / 4.0 <sup>5</sup>	1.5 - 2.5	4.0
Supermarket (per 1,000 sf gfa)	6	-	5.01 / 5.46 <sup>5</sup>	-	-	5.5
Restaurants (per 1,000 sf gfa/gla)	6	6	-	-	3.0 - 5.0	6
Quality High Turnover With Lounge	-	-	17.7 / 19.78 <sup>7</sup> 11.6 / 15.53 <sup>7</sup> 15.3 / 18.75 <sup>7</sup>	18.0 / 20.0 <sup>7</sup> 10.5 / 15.0 <sup>7</sup>	-	-
Hotel (per room)	-	1.1	1.05	1.25 / 1.18 <sup>7</sup>	-	1.25



## Parking

- New rates established by use
- Option for shared parking reductions
- DA developments: required to provide all parking on-site
- D developments: parking for first 1.00 FAR provided in plazas; parking for second 1.00 FAR may be provided on-site, or within public facilities (if capacity is available and in-lieu fee is paid) *[note: some D properties currently have P-zoned parcels for which unique rules would continue to apply]*

# Discussion Framework

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

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 D):

- 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
  - Tentative recommendations for Downtown
- Next Steps
  - Downtown (July 28)
  - El Camino Real (August 4)
  - Comprehensive Review and Finalization (August 4 or 22)
  - City Council Review (August/September)
- <http://www.menlopark.org/specificplan>
- [throgers@menlopark.org](mailto:throgers@menlopark.org)