G.

IMPLEMENTATION

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G.1 OVERVIEW

The Menlo Park El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan establishes a framework for the implementation of land use regulations and public improvements outlined in the Specific Plan.

This chapter contains five major components.

- G.2 Key Actions to Enable the Specific Plan
- G.3 Key Actions to Implement the Specific Plan
- G.4 Financing Methods for Public Improvements
- G.5 Phasing of Public Improvements
- G.6 Utility Improvements

G.2 KEY ACTIONS TO ENABLE THE SPECIFIC PLAN

The Specific Plan addresses the key actions necessary to enable the Specific Plan, which includes:

- Relationship to the Menlo Park General Plan; and
- General Plan and Zoning Ordinance Amendments.

Overall, the Specific Plan refines the City's General Plan policy direction for the plan area. It carries out the Specific Plan's vision through new land use designations and zoning districts specifically aimed at the variety of physical environments and range of outcomes identified in the Specific Plan. Therefore, the Specific Plan replaces sections of the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance and provides standards and guidelines for the plan area, unless specifically identified otherwise in this document.

Relationship to the Menlo Park General Plan

Per Government Code Section 65451, a specific plan must include a statement of the relationship of the specific plan to the general plan. Menlo Park's current General Plan elements have been adopted at various times. The Land Use and Circulation Elements were adopted in 1994; the Housing Element in 1992; the Noise Element in 1978; the Seismic Safety and Safety Element in 1976; and the Open Space and Conservation Element in 1973. Work on a revised Housing Element commenced in 2008, although a portion of the work is on hold, pending completion of this Specific Plan. Many of the goals and policies in the General Plan documents remain relevant, although others may not reflect physical and economic changes and desired futures within the plan area.

Table G1 describes the relationship of selected General Plan goals and policies to the Specific Plan. Only policies that relate to the Specific Plan area are included, although other goals and policies could be considered by some to have relevance to the Specific Plan. The Seismic Safety and Safety Element is not included at all, as its goals and policies are either more broad reaching or project specific, and therefore do not have direct relevance to the Specific Plan (in addition, the Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report will include seismic impact discussion and analysis). All private development and public improvements envisioned in the Specific Plan would adhere to all City standards related to seismic safety issues. As described in more detail below, the adoption of the Specific Plan would coincide with a General Plan amendment that would effectively replace the existing General Plan goals, policies, and other components for these geographic areas; however, the Table G1 analysis provides a connection between the existing General Plan and the Specific Plan.

General Plan and Zoning Ordinance Amendments

The Specific Plan includes within it a comprehensive set of General Plan-type components (e.g., goals, policies, land use designations, and circulation plans). As such, the General Plan will be amended to include the Specific Plan as part of the General Plan itself, governing the plan area. The Specific Plan also includes Zoning Ordinance-type elements (e.g., detailed development regulations), and as such preempts the Zoning Ordinance, unless otherwise specified. The General Plan Land Use Diagram and Zoning Map will be updated to reflect that the Specific Plan provides the unified set of regulations for the plan area.

Detailed General Plan and Zoning Ordinance Amendments will be presented concurrent with review of the Final Specific Plan.

City of Menlo Park General Plan Goals and Policies		Specific Plan Relationship with Policies
SECTION I: LAND USE POLICIES (1994)		
Residential		
Goal I-A	**To maintain and improve the character and stability of Menlo Park's existing residential neighborhoods while providing for the development of a variety of housing types. The preservation of open space shall be encouraged.**	
I-A-1	New construction in existing neighborhoods shall be designed to emphasize the preservation and improvements of the stability and character of the individual neighborhood.	The Specific Plan area does not include existing residential neighborhoods (although some residential uses exist in the plan area) and, as such, this policy is not directly relevant. However, the Specific Plan includes standards and guidelines for building design to ensure that new infill development will be sensitive to adjacent residential uses.
I-A-2	New residential developments shall be designed to be compatible with Menlo Park's residential character.	The Specific Plan area does not include existing residential neighborhoods (although some residential uses exist in the plan area) and, as such, this policy is not directly relevant. However, the Specific Plan includes standards and guidelines for building design to ensure that new infill development will be sensitive to adjacent residential uses.
I-A-3	Quality design and usable open space shall be encouraged in the design of all new residential developments.	The Specific Plan includes standards and guidelines to encourage quality design in infill development. Additionally, architectural review will be required for new development to ensure consistency with the standards and guidelines. The standards include specific requirements for open space in residential developments.
I-A-4	Residential uses may be combined with commercial uses in a mixed use project, if the project is designed to avoid conflicts between the uses, such as traffic, parking, noise, dust and odors.	The Specific Plan allows for mixed use commercial and residential development that will be subject to architectural review to ensure design features that help address compatibility issues.
I-A-5	Development of housing, including housing for smaller households, is encouraged in commercially-zoned areas in and near Downtown. (Downtown is defined as the area bounded by Alma Street, Ravenswood Avenue/Menlo Avenue, University Drive and Oak Grove Avenue.) Provisions for adequate off-street parking must be assured.	The Specific Plan encourages housing development along El Camino Real and in the station and downtown areas through increased allowable development intensities. It requires adequate off-street parking.
I-A-6	Development of residential uses on the north side of Oak Grove Avenue and on the south side of Menlo Avenue adjacent to the Downtown commercial area is encouraged.	The Specific Plan allows for housing development in these areas.
I-A-8	Residential developments of ten or more units shall comply with the requirements of the City's Below-Market Rate (BMR) Housing Program.	The City's Below Market Rate (BMR) Housing Program, which now requires development of five or more units to participate in the BMR program, will continue to apply to the Specific Plan.

Table G1. *El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan/City of Menlo Park General Plan Consistency Analysis*

City of Menlo Park General Plan Goals and Policies		Specific Plan Relationship with Policies
SECTION I: LAND USE POLICIES (1994)		
I-A-9	Residential developments subject to requirements of the BMR Housing Program may be permitted to increase the total density, number of units and floor area of residential projects up to a maximum of 15 percent above that otherwise permitted by the applicable zoning.	The Specific Plan assumes all relevant City policies apply to improvements within the plan area. Nothing in the Specific Plan contradicts this City policy.
I-A-10	All utilities installed in conjunction with new residential development shall be placed underground.	The Specific Plan provides for guidelines to this effect.
Commercial		
Goal I-B	**To strengthen Downtown as a vital and competitive shopping area while encouraging the preservation and enhancement of Downtown's historic atmosphere and character.**	
I-B-1	The Downtown shall include a complementary mix of stores and services in a quality design, adding natural amenities into the development pattern.	The Specific Plan allows for a complementary mix of stores and services, coupled with design standards and guidelines which help ensure quality design. It adds significant new public space and landscape downtown.
I-B-2	Parking which is sufficient to serve the retail needs of the Downtown area and which is attractively designed to encourage retail patronage shall be provided.	The Specific Plan provides for a variety of parking facilities, including surface parking lots, on-street parking and parking garages to provide adequate parking to meet the needs of visitors and employees. Design guidelines and standards will ensure attractive designs for any new parking facilities.
I-B-3	New development shall not reduce the number of existing parking spaces in the Assessment District, on P-zoned parcels, or on private property where parking is provided in lieu of Assessment District participation.	The Specific Plan increases the number of parking spaces in the Assessment District with up to two new parking garages on downtown parking plazas. Existing P-zoned parcels would be required to continue to serve as parking, unless spaces are available in the public parking facilities and the property owner pays an in-lieu fee.
I-B-4	Uses and activities shall be encouraged which will strengthen and complement the relationship between the Transportation Center and the Downtown area and nearby El Camino Real corridor.	The Specific Plan proposes new public space improvements and sidewalk extensions that enhance connections between downtown and the station area. It encourages Santa Cruz Avenue "main street" retail uses to extend from El Camino Real to the Caltrain Station.
I-B-5	New development with offices as the sole use that is located outside of the boundary of the Downtown area along the south side of Menlo Avenue and the north side of Oak Grove Avenue shall not create a traffic impact that would exceed that of a housing project on the same site.	The Specific Plan requires that new office uses, either in isolation or as part of a mixed-use project, have a maximum FAR that is one-third to one-half of the overall maximum FAR, which should reduce traffic impacts in comparison to a housing project. Overall traffic impacts are being studied in more detail in the EIR.

Table G1 (continued)

City of Menlo Park General Plan Goals and Policies		Specific Plan Relationship with Policies
SECTION I: LAND USE POLICIES (1994)		
Goal I-C	**To encourage creativity in development of the El Camino Real Corridor**	
I-C-1	New and upgraded retail development shall be encouraged along El Camino Real near Downtown, especially stores that will complement the retailing mix of Downtown. Adequate parking must be provided and the density, location, and site design must not aggravate traffic at congested intersections. The livability of adjacent residential areas east and west of El Camino Real and north and south of Downtown must be protected.	The Specific Plan encourages development along El Camino real that incorporates ground floor uses, including retail, that activates the street and provides for adequate on-site parking. The Specific Plan design guidelines also require setbacks and other massing limitations that protect residential neighborhoods.
I-C-2	Small-scale offices shall be allowed along most of El Camino Real in a balanced pattern with residential or retail development.	The Specific Plan encourages a mix of appropriate uses, including offices. The Specific Plan also requires that new office uses, either in isolation or as part of a mixed-use project, have a maximum FAR that is one-third to one-half of the overall maximum FAR, which will additionally encourage a mixture of uses.
Goal I-E	**To promote the development and retention of commercial uses which provide significant revenue to the City and/or goods and services needed by the community and which have low environmental and traffic impacts.**	
I-E-1	All proposed commercial development shall be evaluated for its fiscal impact on the City as well as its potential to provide goods or services needed by the community.	The Specific Plan's land use designations and development intensities are based on community input, market analysis and fiscal impact analysis.
I-E-2	Hotel uses may be considered at suitable locations within the commercial and industrial zoning districts of the City.	The Specific Plan permits hotel uses in the plan area.
I-E-3	Retention and expansion of auto dealerships in the city shall be encouraged. Development of new auto dealerships or combined dealerships in an auto center shall be encouraged at suitable locations in the city.	The Specific Plan allows for auto dealerships along El Camino Real.
I-E-4	Any new or expanded office use must include provisions for adequate off-street parking, mitigating traffic impacts, and developing effective alternatives to auto commuting, must adhere to acceptable architectural standards, and must protect adjacent residential uses from adverse impacts.	The Specific Plan standards and guidelines call for adequate on site-parking and proposes ways to encourage transit use, such as through Transportation Demand Management programs. Additionally, the standards and guidelines address building design with particular attention to compatibility with adjacent residential neighborhoods.
I-E-5	The City shall consider attaching performance standards to projects requiring conditional use permits.	The Specific Plan establishes certain uses as subject to use permit review, at which point performance standards may be considered.

Table G1 (continued)

City of Menlo Park General Plan Goals and Policies		Specific Plan Relationship with Policies
SECTION I: LAND USE POLICIES (1994)		
Open Space		
Goal I-G	**To promote the preservation of open-space lands for recreation, protection of natural resources, the production of managed resources, protection of health and safety, and/or the enhancement of scenic qualities.**	
I-G-1	The City shall develop and maintain a parks and recreation system that provides areas and facilities conveniently located and properly designed to serve the recreation needs of all Menlo Park residents.	The Specific Plan proposes expansive new public space improvements, particularly in the downtown and station areas. Such improvements include widened sidewalks, plazas, paseo, and pocket parks.
I-G-2	The community should contain an ample supply of specialized open space in the form of squares, greens, and parks whose frequent use is encouraged through placement and design.	The Specific Plan proposes expansive new public space improvements, particularly in the downtown and station areas. Such improvements include widened sidewalks, plazas, paseo, and pocket parks.
I-G-3	Public spaces should be designed to encourage the attention and presence of people at all hours of the day and appropriate hours of the night.	Among many public space improvements, the Specific Plan proposes widened sidewalks along Santa Cruz Avenue in downtown and a paseo on Chestnut Street, affording ample space for outdoor dining and gathering. Downtown will continue to emphasize active retail and restaurant uses that interact with public spaces.
I-G-4	Dedication of land, or payment of fees in lieu thereof, for park and recreation purposes shall be required of all new residential development	The Specific Plan assumes all relevant City policies apply to improvements within the plan area. Nothing in the Specific Plan contradicts this City policy.
I-G-10	Extensive landscaping should be included in public and private development, including greater landscaping in large parking areas. Where appropriate, the City shall encourage placement of a portion of the required parking in landscape reserve until such time as the parking is needed. Plant material selection and landscape and irrigation design shall adhere to the City's Water Efficient Landscaping Ordinance.	The Specific Plan calls for the incorporation of sustainable practices in construction and operation of public and private realm improvements.
I-G-11	Well-designed pedestrian facilities should be included in areas of intensive pedestrian activity	The Specific Plan proposes expansive new public space improvements, particularly in the downtown and stations areas. Such improvements include widened sidewalks, crosswalk improvements, bike/pedestrian tunnel, and paseo.

Table G1 (continued)

City of Menlo Park General Plan Goals and Policies		Specific Plan Relationship with Policies
SECTION I: LAND USE POLICIES (1994)		
Public and Quasi-Public Facilities and Services		
Goal I-H	**To promote the development and maintenance of adequate public and quasi-public facilities and services to meet the needs of Menlo Park's residents, businesses, workers, and visitors.**	
I-H-1	The community design should help conserve resources and minimize waste.	The Specific Plan calls for the incorporation of sustainable practices in construction and operation of public and private realm improvements.
I-H-2	The use of water-conserving plumbing fixtures in all new public and private development shall be required.	The Specific Plan calls for the incorporation of sustainable practices in construction and operation of public and private realm improvements.
I-H-3	Plant material selection and landscape and irrigation design for City parks and other public facilities and in private developments shall adhere to the City's Water Efficient Landscaping Ordinance	The Specific Plan calls for the incorporation of sustainable practices in construction and operation of public and private realm improvements.
I-H-7	The use of reclaimed water for landscaping and any other feasible uses shall be encouraged.	The Specific Plan calls for the incorporation of sustainable practices in construction and operation of public and private realm improvements.
I-H-11	Buildings, objects, and sites of historic and/or cultural significance should be preserved.	The Draft EIR will provide additional analysis on this topic, and future project-specific proposals will conduct additional analysis as needed.
I-H-12	Street orientation, placement of buildings, and use of shading should contribute to the energy efficiency of the community.	The Specific Plan calls for the incorporation of sustainable practices in construction and operation of public and private realm improvements.
Annexation and Intergovernmental Coordination		
Goal I-I	**To promote the orderly development of Menlo Park and its surrounding area.**	
I-I-2	The regional land use planning structure should be integrated within a larger transportation network built around transit rather than freeways and the City shall influence transit development so that it coordinates with Menlo Park's land use planning structure.	The Specific Plan concentrates development, through increased allowable development intensities, at the station area in support of transit use.

Table G1 (continued)

City of Menlo Park General Plan Goals and Policies		Specific Plan Relationship with Policies
SECTION II: CIRCULATION AND TRANSPORTATION POLICIES (1994)		
Roadway Network		
Goal II-A	**To maintain a circulation system using the Roadway Classification System that will provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout Menlo Park for residential and commercial purposes.**	
II-A-1	Level of Services D (40 seconds average stopped delay per vehicle) or better shall be maintained at all City-controlled signalized intersections during peak hours, except at the intersection of Ravenswood Avenue and Middlefield Road and at intersections along Willow Road from Middlefield Road to US 101.	The Draft EIR will include a traffic impact analysis conducted to all City standards.
II-A-2	The City should attempt to achieve and maintain average travel speeds of 14 miles per hour (Level of Service D) or better on El Camino Real and other arterial roadways controlled by the State and 46 miles per hour (Level of Service D) or better on US 101. The City shall work with Caltrans to achieve and maintain average travel speeds and intersection levels of service consistent with standards established by the San Mateo County Congestion Management Plan.	The Draft EIR will include a traffic impact analysis conducted to all City standards.
II-A-3	The City shall work with Caltrans to ensure that average stopped delay on local approaches to State-controlled signalized intersections does not exceed Level of Service E (60 seconds per vehicle).	The Draft EIR will include a traffic impact analysis conducted to all City standards.
II-A-4	New development shall be restricted or required to implement mitigation measures in order to maintain the levels of service and travel speeds specified in Policies II-A-1 through II-A-3.	The Draft EIR will include a traffic impact analysis conducted to all City standards.
II-A-8	New development shall be reviewed for its potential to generate significant traffic volumes on local streets in residential areas and shall be required to mitigate potential significant traffic problems.	The Draft EIR will include a traffic impact analysis conducted to all City standards.
II-A-9	The City shall establish, as a priority, the protection of local streets in residential areas from excessive speeding and excessive volumes of through traffic. For the purposes of this policy, “through traffic” shall mean traffic having neither an origin nor destination within the relevant neighborhood. Adequate capacity on arterial streets should be provided to encourage, to the extent possible, their use for Menlo Park residential traffic.	The Draft EIR will include a traffic impact analysis conducted to all City standards.

Table G1 (continued)

City of Menlo Park General Plan Goals and Policies		Specific Plan Relationship with Policies
SECTION II: CIRCULATION AND TRANSPORTATION POLICIES (1994)		
II-A-12	The City shall endeavor to provide for the safe, efficient, and equitable use of streets by pedestrians and bicyclist through good roadway design, maintenance, and effective traffic law enforcement.	The Specific Plan proposes pedestrian and bicycle enhancements, including widened sidewalks, sidewalk extensions, increased bike lanes and bike parking facilities.
II-A-19	It shall be the intent of the City to design traffic improvement projects to preserve and improve the aesthetics of the city.	The Specific Plan proposes streetscape improvements on El Camino Real and Santa Cruz Avenue to preserve and improve the aesthetics of the city, and to improve circulation for pedestrians and bicyclists.
Public Transit		
Goal II-B	**To promote the use of public transit.**	
II-B-1	The City shall consider transit modes in the design of transportation improvement and the review and approval of development projects.	The Specific Plan proposes transit pull-outs and drop-offs in the Station area.
II-B-2	As many activities as possible should be located within easy walking distance of transit stops, and transit stops should be convenient and close to as many activities as possible.	The Specific Plan proposes increased intensities of development, including housing, retail and commercial uses, in the station and downtown areas. It proposes enhanced public improvements, including sidewalks, and accommodates increased bus service and access to the Caltrain station.
II-B-3	The City shall promote improved public transit service and increased transit leadership, especially to office and industrial areas and schools.	The Specific Plan supports transit service through increased intensities, improved sidewalks and connections, enhanced drop-offs, and a Transportation Demand Management proposal.
II-B-4	The capacity and attractiveness of the commuter railroad service should be increased, and rights-of-ways for future transit service should be protected.	The Specific Plan supports and protects the rights-of-way for future transit service, accommodating High Speed Rail service as appropriate.
Transportation Demand Management		
Goal II-C	**To promote the use of alternatives to the single occupant automobile.**	
II-C-1	The City shall work with all Menlo Park employers to encourage employees to use alternatives to the single occupant automobile in their commute to work.	The Specific Plan proposes a Transportation Demand Management program that encourages employees to use alternative modes of transit.
II-C-2	The City shall provide information to existing and new Menlo Park employers to assist their employees in identifying potential carpools, transit alternatives and other commute alternatives.	The Specific Plan proposes a Transportation Demand Management program that encourages employees to use alternative modes of transit.
Bicycles		
II-D	**To promote the safe use of bicycles as a commute alternative and for recreation.**	
II-D-2	The City shall, within available funding, work to complete a system of bikeways within Menlo Park.	The Specific Plan supports and enhances the bikeway system in Menlo Park.

Table G1 (continued)

City of Menlo Park General Plan Goals and Policies		Specific Plan Relationship with Policies
SECTION II: CIRCULATION AND TRANSPORTATION POLICIES (1994)		
II-D-3	The design of streets within Menlo Park shall consider the impact of street cross section, intersection geometrics and traffic control devices on bicyclists.	The Specific Plan supports and enhances the bikeway system in Menlo Park, including street cross sections which accommodates bikes.
II-D-4	The City shall require new commercial and industrial development to provide secure bicycle storage facilities on-site.	The Specific Plan provides for standards and guidelines for on-site bicycle storage facilities.
Pedestrians		
Goal II-E	**To promote walking as a commute alternative and for short trips.**	
II-E-1	The City shall require all new development to incorporate safe and attractive pedestrian facilities on-site.	The Specific Plan focuses pedestrian improvements along public streets, requiring new development to provide such improvements, particularly along El Camino Real.
II-E-2	The City shall endeavor to maintain safe sidewalks and walk-ways where existing within the public right-of-way.	The Specific Plan proposes improved sidewalks along El Camino Real and Santa Cruz Avenue, as well as other enhanced pathways and crosswalks.
II-E-4	The City shall incorporate appropriate pedestrian facilities, traffic control, and street lighting within street improvement projects to maintain or improve pedestrian safety.	The Specific Plan proposes enhanced pedestrian amenities and streetscape improvements, particularly along El Camino Real and Santa Cruz Avenue.
II-E-5	The City shall support full pedestrian access across all legs of an intersection at all signalized intersections which are City-controlled and at the signalized intersections along El Camino Real.	The Specific Plan proposes enhanced pedestrian crossings, including sidewalk extensions, along El Camino Real at many signalized intersections and along Santa Cruz Avenue.
Parking		
Goal II-F	**To provide adequate parking in the Downtown area, especially for retail customers and CalTrain patrons.**	
II-F-1	Adequate off-street parking should be required for all new development in the Downtown Area.	The Specific Plan requires on-site parking, or accommodates parking in public parking plazas, for all new development in the downtown area.
II-F-2	Short-term retail customer parking shall be first priority for the allocation of parking spaces in Downtown parking plazas. Long-term employee parking shall be located in such a manner that it does not create a shortage of customer parking adjacent to retail shops.	The Specific Plan proposes ways to more efficiently use parking spaces on downtown parking plazas, giving priority to short-term retail customers while accommodating long-term employee parking.
SECTION III: HOUSING ELEMENT POLICIES (1992)		
Goal III-A	**To promote the development of a balanced range of housing types and densities for all economic segments and all geographic areas of the community.**	
III.A.4	The City will promote the development of housing on appropriate City-owned land.	The Specific Plan proposes infill housing on downtown parking plazas, provided downtown retail and commercial parking needs are met.

Table G1 (continued)

City of Menlo Park General Plan Goals and Policies		Specific Plan Relationship with Policies
SECTION III: HOUSING ELEMENT POLICIES (1992)		
III.A.5	The City will promote development of mixed medium or high-density residential and commercial projects in the Central Business District and along El Camino Real as a means of providing more housing on job sites to help offset the impact of new employment on the regional housing market.	The Specific Plan, through increased allowable densities and other incentives, encourages higher density housing in the plan area, particularly in the station area and downtown.
III.A.6	The City will explore the feasibility of using air rights in parking plazas in the Central Business District as a means of creating more housing opportunities in the city. The use of air rights in parking plazas must not result in the loss of parking and should increase the supply of parking beyond that needed for any new housing created.	The Specific Plan proposes infill housing on downtown parking plazas while accommodating parking demand from uses downtown.
III.A.8	The City will continue to require residential developers to contribute to the provision of below market rate housing opportunities in the city.	The City's Below Market Rate (BMR) Housing Program will continue to apply to the Specific Plan.
III.A.9	The City will continue to require developers of employment-generating commercial and industrial developments to contribute to the provision of below market rate housing opportunities in the city.	The City's Below Market Rate (BMR) Housing Program will continue to apply to the Specific Plan.
III.A.10	The City will increase the supply of land available for residential development by redesigning and rezoning targeted residential and non-residential parcels for multi-family residential use, particularly near public transit and major transportation corridors in the city.	The Specific Plan, through increased allowable densities and other incentives, encourages higher density housing in the plan area, particularly in the station area and downtown. It allows for housing throughout the entire plan area.
III.A.11	The City will promote the distribution of new, higher-density residential developments throughout the city, taking into consideration compatibility with surrounding existing residential uses, particularly near public transit and major transportation corridors in the city.	The Specific Plan, through increased allowable densities and other incentives, encourages higher density housing in the plan area, particularly in the station area and downtown. Design guidelines and standards, such as for upper-story setbacks, will provide protections to neighboring residential properties.
III.D.1	The City will continue to promote energy conservation in the design of all new residential structures and will promote incorporation of energy conservation and weatherization features in existing homes.	The Specific Plan includes policies which encourage sustainable practices in construction and operation of buildings.
III.D.2	To the extent practical, the City will require that the design of all new residential development takes advantage of solar access.	The Specific Plan includes policies which encourage sustainable practices in construction and operation of buildings.

Table G1 (continued)

City of Menlo Park General Plan Goals and Policies		Specific Plan Relationship with Policies
OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION POLICIES (1973)		
Goals		
1	**To develop a parks and recreation system which provides area, facilities, and improvements conveniently located and properly designed to serve the recreation needs of all residents of Menlo Park.**	
2	**To encourage the enhancement of boulevards, plazas, and other urban open spaces in residential, commercial, and industrial neighborhoods.**	
8	**To preserve historic buildings, objects, and sites of historic and cultural significance.**	
12	**To enhance and preserve air quality in accord with regional standards.**	
Policies		
1	Provide open space lands for a variety of recreation opportunities. Make improvements, construct facilities, and maintain programs which encourage a maximum of resident participation.	The Specific Plan proposes increased public spaces, including widened sidewalks, pocket parks and plazas, that accommodate a variety of public gathering opportunities.
2	Include landscaping and plazas on public and private lands and well-designed pedestrian facilitates in area of intensive pedestrian activity. Require greater landscaping in extensive parking areas.	The Specific Plan proposes increased public spaces, including widened sidewalks, pocket parks and plazas, with enhanced landscaping, particularly in the downtown area. It provides for guidelines relating to extensive parking areas.
3	Require dedication of improved land, or payment of fee in lieu of, for park and recreation land for all residential uses involving five or more dwelling units.	The Specific Plan assumes all relevant City policies apply to improvements within the plan area. Nothing in the Specific Plan contradicts this City policy.
4	Develop hiking and biking paths consistent with the recommendations of the proposed bikeway system.	The Specific Plan provides bicycle enhancements consistent with the City's latest bicycle plan.
12	Provide a program of incentives and rewards to encourage provision of additional open space.	The Specific Plan requires open space breaks within new development, particularly along portions of El Camino Real north and south of downtown.
NOISE ELEMENT POLICIES (1978)		
--	Consider the compatibility of proposed land uses with the noise environment when preparing or revising community and/or specific plans.	Noise impacts are under study in the Draft EIR, and all appropriate mitigations will be considered if potentially significant impacts are projected.

Table G1 (continued)

G.3 KEY ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE SPECIFIC PLAN

The Specific Plan addresses the key actions necessary to implement the Specific Plan, which includes:

- Administration, Processing and Review of Applications;
- Nonconforming Structures and Uses; and
- Maximum Allowable Development.

Administration, Processing and Review of Applications

The Specific Plan retains the existing Zoning Ordinance procedures for administration, processing, and review of applications, in particular the Architectural Control and Use Permit approval processes.

Architectural Control

The Architectural Control procedures as codified in Zoning Ordinance Section 16.68.020 would apply to all new construction and additions of more than 100 square feet, as well as exterior modifications (regardless of whether square footage is affected) that would not be in conformance with a previous design approval. The four standard Architectural Control findings would be supplemented by an additional finding:

> (5) That the development broadly conforms to relevant Specific Plan guidelines.

The Planning Commission would continue to make Architectural Control actions, which would be effective unless appealed to the City Council under the procedures outlined in Zoning Ordinance Chapter 16.86.

Use Permit

The Use Permit procedures as codified in Zoning Ordinance Chapter 16.82, Section I and IV would apply to some but not all uses, as outlined in Table E1 “Land Use Designations and Allowable Uses”. The Use Permit requirements would apply to new construction as well as changes of use for the particular conditional uses listed in Table E1. For new construction of conditional uses, Architectural Control and Use Permit requests would be reviewed and acted upon concurrently. The Planning Commission would continue to make Use Permit actions, which would be effective unless appealed to the City Council under the procedures outlined in Zoning Ordinance Chapter 16.86.

Administrative Permit

The Administrative Permit procedures as codified in Zoning Ordinance Chapter 16.82, Section VII would apply to certain uses, as outlined in Table E1 “Land Use Designations and Allowable Uses”. The Community Development Director would continue to make Administrative Permit actions, unless appealed to the Planning Commission. Administrative Permits are effectively limited to changes of use in existing buildings. If an administrative use is proposed concurrent with new construction, the Administrative Permit should be considered and acted upon by the Planning Commission concurrent with Architectural Control.

Variances

The Variance procedures as codified in Zoning Ordinance Chapter 16.82, Section VI would continue to apply to requests to waive or modify certain standards (“shall” statements). Variances are not required for guidelines (“should” statements). Broadly speaking, variances are meant to reflect unusual hardships, and they are generally expected to be relatively uncommon actions in the City as a whole as well as specifically within the plan area. However, in order to reflect that the Specific Plan standards were the creation of an extensive outreach and engagement process intended in part to reduce project-specific exception requests of all kinds, the four standard Variance findings would be supplemented by an additional finding:

> (5) That the conditions upon which the requested variance is based is an unusual factor that was not anticipated or discussed in detail during the Specific Plan process.

Currently, variances are not permitted for uses, or to permit relief in excess of 50 percent of any requirement. These requirements would continue to hold for the plan area, and would be supplemented by an additional prohibition against variances for intensity (FAR) and density (dwelling units per acre) standards as established by the Specific Plan.

The Planning Commission would continue to make Variance actions, which would be effective unless appealed to the City Council under the procedures outlined in Zoning Ordinance Chapter 16.86.

Conditional Development Permits and Planned Development Permits

Conditional Development Permits (CDP) and Planned Development Permits (P-D) would no longer be permitted in the plan area.

Public Benefit Bonus Negotiated Agreement

As described in more detail in Chapter E, density and intensity standards have both Base and Public Benefit Bonus categories. In order to achieve the Public Benefit Bonus intensity, an applicant would need to propose public benefit(s) for the City’s consideration. If deemed appropriate, the benefit(s) would be memorialized through a development agreement or alternative approval process as determined by the City. Specifically for development agreements, the process as outlined in Resolution No. 4159 (Regulations Establishing Procedures and Requirements for Development Agreements) or any successor resolution would be followed.

Nonconforming Uses and Structures

It is not the intent of the Specific Plan to render any existing building or land use to a legal but nonconforming status. Additionally, the Specific Plan may serve to bring some buildings and land uses into conformance that were previously deemed legal but nonconforming. However, it is possible that some existing buildings and land uses may be impacted by the changes included in the Specific Plan. To protect existing buildings and land uses, the amendments to the Zoning Ordinance necessary for implementation of the Specific Plan will include language to provide protections for existing buildings and land uses.

Maximum Allowable Development

The Specific Plan establishes the maximum allowable development under the Specific Plan's associated Environmental Impact Report (EIR), as follows:

- Residential Uses: 680 Units; and
- Non-Residential Uses, including retail, office and hotel: 474,000 Square Feet.

The Specific Plan divides the maximum allowable development between residential and non-residential uses as shown, recognizing the particular impacts from residential development (e.g. on schools and parks) while otherwise allowing market forces to determine the final combination of development types over time, all within the confines of the EIR.

The Planning Division shall at all times maintain a publicly available record of:

- The total amount of allowable residential units and non-residential square footage under the Specific Plan, as summarized above;
- The total number of residential units and non-residential square footage for which entitlement has been granted;
- The total number of residential units and non-residential square footage removed due to building demolition; and
- The total allowable number of residential units and non-residential square footage remaining available.

The Specific Plan recommends that the Planning Division provide the Planning Commission and City Council with yearly informational updates of this record. After the granting of entitlement to 80% or more of the allowable residential units or non-residential square footage total, City Council should consider whether any actions are appropriate, such as amending the Specific Plan and/or conducting additional program-level environmental review. Absent other action by the City, development above the maximum thresholds could be permitted subject to project-level environmental review and approval.

Near-Term Review of Specific Plan

The Specific Plan constitutes a significant and complex revision of the existing regulations, and there may be aspects of the plan that do not function precisely as intended when applied to actual future development proposals and public improvement projects. In order to address such issues comprehensively, the Specific Plan recommends that the City conduct a comprehensive audit of the Specific Plan after an interval of two to four years, with any modifications that are needed to be presented for Planning Commission review and City Council action. Minor technical modifications would generally be anticipated to fall within the current Program EIR analysis, although larger changes could require additional review.

G.4 FINANCING METHODS FOR PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

This section provides an overview of funding and financing alternatives for public space and facility improvements included in the Menlo Park El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan. Figure G1 identifies proposed improvements. Table G2 shows potential funding sources and financing alternatives and the potential participating parties for the improvements. The approval of the Specific Plan would not bind the City to specific financing methods and phasing decisions, which would be future individual actions of the City Council.

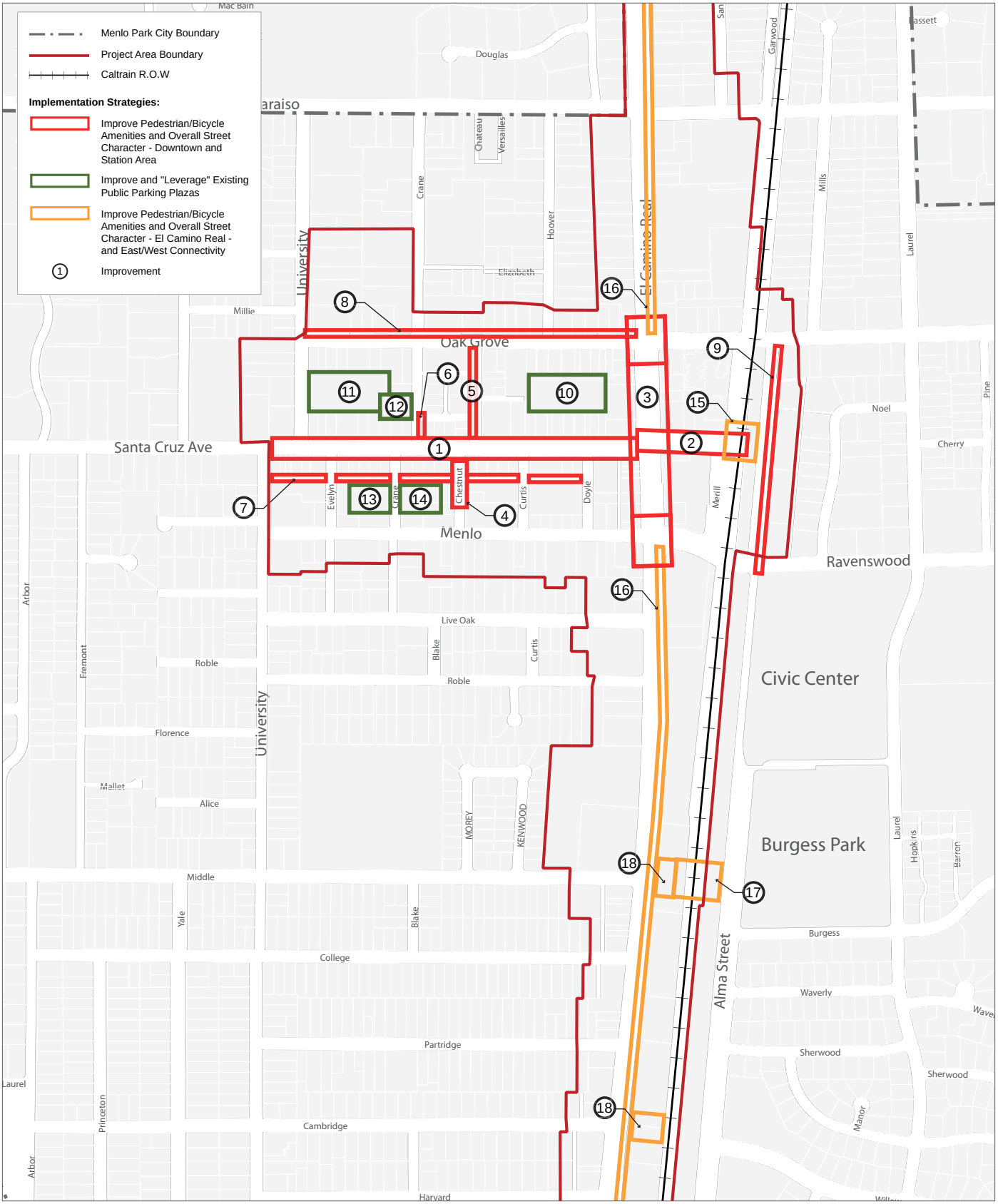

Figure G1. Proposed Public Improvements

Potential Funding Sources, Financing Alternatives and Participating Parties				
#	Location	Improvement	Potential Funding Source	Potential Participants
Improve Pedestrian/Bicycle Amenities and Overall Street Character - Downtown and Station Area				
1	Santa Cruz Avenue (University Drive to El Camino Real)	Streetscape improvements; new sidewalks, trees, curb and gutter, furnishings, landscape; central plaza	LLD, BID, Public Amenity Fund	City, Property Owners
2	Santa Cruz Avenue (El Camino Real to train station)	Streetscape improvements; new sidewalks, trees, curb and gutter, furnishings; civic plaza with new surface, furnishings	LLD, BID, Public Amenity Fund	City, Property Owners
3	El Camino Real (Oak Grove Avenue to Menlo Avenue/ Ravenswood Avenue)	Streetscape improvements; widened sidewalks, sidewalk extension/bulb-outs at intersections, trees, curb and gutter, furnishings	LLD, BID, Public Amenity Fund	City, Property Owners
4	Chestnut Street South	Street conversion to paseo	LLD, BID, Public Amenity Fund	City, Property Owners
5	Chestnut Street North (Santa Cruz Avenue to Oak Grove Avenue)	Widened sidewalk - one side	LLD, BID, Public Amenity Fund	City, Property Owners
6	Crane Street North (Santa Cruz Avenue to alley)	Widened sidewalk - one side	LLD, BID, Public Amenity Fund	City, Property Owners
7	Rear of Santa Cruz Avenue Buildings (south side from University Drive to Doyle Street)	Pedestrian linkage; new sidewalk, furnishings	LLD, BID, Public Amenity Fund	City, Property Owners
8	Oak Grove (El Camino Real to University Drive)	Street restriping to add bike lane and remove parking lane (north side)	LLD, BID, Public Amenity Fund	City, Property Owners
9	Alma Street (Oak Grove Avenue to Ravenswood Avenue)	Streetscape improvements; new sidewalks, trees, curb and gutter, furnishings - one side; small plaza at Civic Center	LLD, BID, Public Amenity Fund, Property Owners that Redevelop Adjacent Property	City, Property Owners
Improve and "Leverage" Existing Downtown Public Parking Plazas				
10	Parking Plaza 1	Parking garage	Impact Fees, Parking Benefit District, other parking revenues	City, Property Owners
11	Parking Plaza 3	Parking garage	Impact Fees, Parking Benefit District, other parking revenues	City, Property Owners
12	Parking Plaza 3	Pocket park; new surface, amenities, furnishings, landscape	LLD, BID, Residential Recreation Subdivision In-Lieu Fee, Public Amenity Fund	City, Property Owners
13	Parking Plaza 5	Flex space improvements; new surface, amenities, furnishings, landscape	LLD, BID, Public Amenity Fund	City, Property Owners
14	Parking Plaza 6	Flex space improvements; new surface, amenities, furnishings, landscape	LLD, BID, Public Amenity Fund	City, Property Owners
Improve Pedestrian/Bicycle Amenities and Overall Street Character - El Camino Real - and East/West Connectivity				
15	Railroad tracks at train station	Bike/pedestrian crossing at railroad tracks connecting Santa Cruz Avenue with Alma Street, either underground or surface, depending on the final configuration for high speed rail; amenities, landscape	City, State, Federal	City, State
16	El Camino Real (north of Oak Grove Avenue and south of Menlo Avenue/Ravenswood Avenue)	Widened sidewalks; Sidewalk extensions/bulb-outs; street trees; median improvements; furnishings - curbs remains except at bulb-outs	City, State, Federal, Property Owners that Redevelop Adjacent Property	City, State, Property Owners
17	Railroad tracks at Middle Avenue (Stanford property)	Bike/pedestrian under railroad tracks connecting El Camino Real with Alma Street, either underground or surface, depending on the final configuration for high speed rail; amenities, landscape	City, State, Federal, Property Owner that Redevelops Adjacent Property	City, State, Property Owner
18	El Camino Real/Stanford Property (at Middle Avenue and Cambridge Street)	Publicly accessible open space; amenities, landscape	Property Owner that Redevelops Adjacent Property	Property Owner

Note: LLD = Lighting and Landscaping District, BID = Business Improvement District

Table G2. *Potential Funding Sources, Financing Alternatives, and Participating Parties*

Overview of Funding and Financing Alternatives

The Specific Plan proposes several potential funding and financing alternatives for public improvements.

The first step in deciding how to finance identified public improvement projects is to determine whether the appropriate funding strategy is pay-as-you-go or debt financing (See Table G3).

- In the pay-as-you-go approach, the improvement would only be made once a sufficient amount of revenue is collected to fund the improvement. For example, the City currently collects development impact fees that are used to make improvements to infrastructure such as recreation, transportation and other public facilities. Under a pay-as-you-go approach, improvement projects would not be undertaken until adequate fee or other revenues were collected.
- Under the debt financing approach, the money for an improvement is borrowed now through a financing method such as issuing bonds; the improvement is made now, and is paid for over time by revenue collected (such as taxes or fees).

Potential Funding Sources

This section describes potential funding sources and financing mechanisms for the public improvements included in the Specific Plan. One funding source, the City General Fund, is the primary source of funding for most essential City services such as police. As a result, it is unlikely that the General Fund will be a significant source of funding for infrastructure projects that have major funding needs. Therefore, the City will need to determine how to gather the additional revenue needed to pay for the implementation steps identified in this plan.

The following funding sources are discussed in detail in this section:

- Benefit Assessment Districts;
- Development Impact and In-lieu Parking Fees;
- Parking Fees;
- Grants;
- Developer Contributions, Public Benefits and Public Amenity Fund;
- Sale or Lease of Publicly-Owned Properties;
- General Capital Improvement Project (CIP) Fund; and
- Shuttle Funding.

Funding Strategy		
	Pros	**Cons**
Pay-as-you-go	Very little financial risk to City	Improvement takes a long time to implement, could be less effective
Debt Financing	Improvement made immediately, could be more effective as a result	Added costs for issuance of debt, including interest; Some risk that revenue will not be sufficient to pay off debt within time limit

Table G3. *Potential Funding Strategies*

Benefit Assessment Districts

Benefit Assessment Districts are most commonly established to finance the construction of public capital improvements and, where authorized, the operations and maintenance of certain public facilities. Benefit Assessment Districts are formed in two different ways: (1) Property owners petition the appropriate public agency to form a district and provide a needed public improvement; or (2) A public agency foresees the need for an improvement and approaches the affected property owners with an assessment district proposal.

Benefit Assessment Districts allow for the imposition of annual benefit assessments on property owners commensurate with the annual costs of an identified special benefit to that property. There are a number of different types of Benefit Assessment Districts authorized by California State law. Some are limited to provision of public facilities (often using debt financing secured by a lien on property within the district) and some allow funding of operations and maintenance. Lighting and Landscaping Districts (LLDs) are an example of one commonly used Benefit Assessment District.

Benefit Assessment Districts have certain requirements that could limit their applicability to the Menlo Park El Camino Real and Downtown Specific Plan.

- Benefit assessments can only fund facilities or services that provide a special benefit to a distinct group of property owners. Special benefits must be in addition to any general benefits accruing to all properties in a jurisdiction. An increase in property value alone does not qualify as a special benefit.
- Property owners must approve a benefit assessment by petition or majority vote. This constraint means that assessments are often easier to impose on new development projects as a condition of approval, rather than more broadly on existing property owners.
- Property owners can repeal an existing benefit assessment using an initiative process unless the assessment is funding repayment of debt.

Benefit assessments are often imposed as a condition of approval for large development projects, similar to land dedication requirements and development impact fees. The key difference is that benefit assessments allow for an ongoing revenue stream and therefore make them more suitable to fund ongoing costs. Unlike one-time fees paid by the developer, the funding burden falls more directly on future property owners.

Because existing property owners and businesses will benefit from the improvements as well as future property owners, some type of assessment may be an appropriate funding source.

The following subsections describe several types of benefit assessment districts.

Business Improvement Districts (BID)

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are a type of assessment district in which business owners choose to be assessed a fee, which is collected on their behalf by the City, for use in promoting and improving the business area.

A Business Improvement District provides a business area with the resources to develop marketing campaigns, increase lobbying efforts, secure additional funding and enhance public improvement and beautification projects in partnership with the City. Activities, programs and improvements range from farmers' markets to business promotions to installing street lighting and removing graffiti. By pooling private resources, business owners in BIDs collectively pay for activities which they could not afford on an individual basis. Further, since a BID fee is a benefit assessment and not a tax, BIDs can consistently enact programs and activities without relying on public funding.

Property and Business Improvement Districts

Property and Business Improvement Districts (PBIDs) (Streets and Highways Code section 36600) provide for an assessment on owners of commercial property within a defined geographic area. The proceeds from this assessment are used to provide services that provide a specific benefit to those properties in the district.

The improvements, which may be financed by the PBID, are enumerated under the Parking and Business and Improvement Area Law of 1989, and include:

- Closing, opening, widening or narrowing existing streets;
- Rehabilitation or removal of existing structures and facilities or equipment;
- Marketing and economic development; and
- Security, sanitation, graffiti removal, street cleaning, and other municipal services.

Streets and Highways Code 36610 defines acceptable "improvements" as "the acquisition, construction, installation, or maintenance of any tangible property with an estimated useful life of five years or more….". Therefore, the use of the PBID does not appear to be limited to specific types of infrastructure, although it is commonly used to finance street and lighting improvements. The formation of a PBID is initiated by a petition signed by the property and business owners who will pay more than 50 percent of the proposed assessment. It therefore requires significant public support within the benefiting area.

Lighting and Landscape Assessment District (LLD)

The Landscaping and Lighting Act of 1972 (Streets and Highway Code section 22500) enables assessments to be imposed in order to finance:

- Acquisition of land for parks, recreation, and open space;
- Installation or construction of planting and landscaping, street lighting facilities, ornamental structures, and park and recreational improvements (including playground equipment, restrooms and lighting); and
- Maintenance and servicing any of the above.

Maintenance Assessment District

Maintenance Assessment Districts (MADs) are authorized in the "Landscape and Lighting Act of 1972." MADs usually fund:

- Maintenance services, construction and installation;
- Open space and mini-parks;
- Street medians and street lighting;
- Security; and
- Flood control and drainage.

Parking Benefit District

The Parking District Law of 1943 (Streets and Highways Code section 31500) authorizes a city or county to finance the following acts:

- Acquisition of land for parking facilities (including the power of eminent domain);
- Improvement and construction of parking lots and facilities;
- Issuance of bonds; and
- Employee salaries.

The formation of a Parking Benefit District would enable the collection of parking fees and management of the supply of parking in the Specific Plan Area. A Parking Benefit District could also contribute towards funding expanded shuttle service connecting downtown to other destinations.

Development Impact and In Lieu Parking Fees

Development impact fees are a one-time charge to new development imposed under the Mitigation Fee Act. These fees are charged to new development to mitigate impacts resulting from the development activity, and cannot be used to fund existing deficiencies. This means that new development can only pay for part of the improvement cost for projects that benefit existing and new development and the City must find another funding source to cover the costs for the improvements that benefit existing development.

Impact fees must be adopted based on findings of reasonable relationships between the development paying the fee, the need for the fee, and the use of fee revenues. The City of Menlo Park has development impact fees for below market rate housing, recreation, traffic, and construction-related road impacts. The City could consider imposing additional impact fees for parking to fund net new parking spaces within the Specific Plan area. The City should also explore using existing recreation in-lieu fees for construction of park-related improvements in the plan area, such as the Santa Cruz Avenue central plaza and downtown pocket parks.

The City can allow for credits and reimbursements for capital projects funded by an impact fee that are constructed privately by developers and dedicated to the City. Depending on the specific implementation guidelines of the fee program, a development project could choose to dedicate land or make certain improvements and receive a credit against the impact fee due. A “credit” is the amount counted against the developer’s fee obligation. A “reimbursement” is the amount that exceeds the developer’s fee obligation.

Similar to development impact fees, in-lieu fees may be used to fund the construction of public capital improvements. The City could allow businesses to pay an annual fee per space in the parking structures rather than requiring businesses to provide off-street parking, or require payment of a one-time fee upon redevelopment of property based upon the capital cost of the parking that is offset (approximately $32,500 to $37,500, in 2011 dollars).

Parking Fees

On-going parking structure fees and/or parking meter revenues can fund capital or operating costs of the proposed improvements. This is the most direct method of funding the construction, operation, and maintenance of parking structures. Depending on the cost of the particular structure, parking fees could only cover operation and maintenance.

Grants

Various State and regional grant programs distribute grant funds for public improvement projects. Because grant programs are typically competitive, grant funds are an unpredictable funding source. Grants often are only given to projects that have received their discretionary approvals, which would broadly be the case for the Specific Plan’s public improvements. However, some grants require that projects have detailed construction documents, which would not be the case, unless certain projects are prioritized in advance by the City.

Developer Contributions, Public Benefits and Public Amenity Fund

In addition to the funding sources outlined above for public improvements, there is the potential for developer contributions to help pay for desired public benefits in the Specific Plan area, in exchange for a density bonus.

Explained in more detail in Chapter E, Section E.3.1 “Intensity”, the Specific Plan establishes an individual developer negotiation approach for the sharing of financial benefits from increased development above the base intensity. An intensity bonus above the base intensity, achieved through a negotiation, could be considered for senior housing, additional residential units, hotel, Platinum LEED certified buildings, and preservation of historic resources as outlined in Section E.3.1. In addition, the City could negotiate other non-specific contributions from developers, to be made to a “public amenity fund”. Such a fund could be used to finance public improvements, such as widened sidewalks.

The extent to which a new project can contribute to the provision of these types of amenities and services in exchange for intensity bonuses depends on a number of factors, including the cost of land, construction costs, lot size and configuration, environmental remediation costs, onsite demolition costs, etc. All of these factors will vary from project to project, and therefore the amount of public benefits that can be provided by any developer is unpredictable, and will have to be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

The Specific Plan recommends that:

- The City should establish a “public amenity fund.” Such a fund could be used to finance a defined set of public improvements. The City should identify the improvements and negotiate a contribution from developers. The revenues collected from negotiations can be pooled and should be designated for use on the defined set of public improvements.

Sale or Lease of Publicly-Owned Properties

The Specific Plan permits the private use of current parking plaza properties, subject to availability of replacement parking (i.e., in a parking garage elsewhere) and developer interest. Revenues from such sales or leases could be used to fund public improvements. As noted previously, non-public use (in particular, leases) of these facilities could require approval of a majority of the property owners of the parcels in the former parking assessment district that originally acquired and improved the parking plazas.

General Capital Improvement Project (CIP) Fund

As previously noted, it is unlikely that the City's General Fund will be a significant source of funding for major infrastructure projects identified in the Specific Plan. Although the City's General CIP (Capital Improvement Projects) Fund also has a significant fund balance, the fund is designated for other capital improvements delineated in the 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan. Funded solely by an annual transfer from the General Fund in an amount adequate to maintain the City's current infrastructure at its current level of condition, the General CIP Fund balance consists of budgetary savings from past capital projects and monies intended for future CIP projects. Together, the General Fund and the General CIP Fund provide prudent levels of reserves to secure continued municipal services/ operations and maintenance of the City's infrastructure through all types of economic cycles.

To the extent that some of the public improvement projects in this plan require replacement or improvement of current City infrastructure, the General CIP Fund could be considered as an initial funding source. Projects for consideration would need to be included in the 5-year CIP Fund, and balanced with other capital needs of the City to secure appropriate funding and/or personnel resources. Weighed against the need to continue to meet outstanding maintenance obligations, reliance on this necessarily limited source of funding poses some risk. For example, other uses of these funds could be of higher priority in any given budget cycle, or completion of the project may be stalled due to the failure to generate additional (separate) funding for the project. If considered a legitimate use of the City's capital reserves, an increase of the annual General Fund transfer may need to be included in future operating budgets.

A loan from the General Fund may be considered for Specific Plan public improvements that lack immediate funding, but are projects with which the City Council wishes to proceed. The source of the loan repayment would need to be secured prior to the loan approval.

Shuttle Funding

In addition to public funding sources, there is a current annual shuttle fee of 10.5 cents per square foot assessed on new development to help fund the shuttle program. This fee program should be periodically evaluated to determine if it is sufficient to supplement the public funding and, if not, adjustments should be considered. Another potential funding mechanism could be a Parking Benefit District (as described in the parking section) and/or a Transportation Improvement District.

G.5 PHASING OF PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

The Specific Plan proposes making significant public space improvements in the downtown area in the short term (i.e. within 5 years), to maximize the benefits from such improvements on community life and downtown vibrancy. It also recognizes that there is limited excess parking capacity on existing parking plazas, as summarized in Chapter F "Circulation". Table G4 summarizes the number of spaces displaced by public space and other improvements, excluding the two proposed parking garages.

The Specific Plan recommends the City make the following improvements in the short-term:

- Streetscape improvements on Santa Cruz Avenue, between University Drive and El Camino Real, including sidewalk widening, new street furnishings and a central plaza (48 parking spaces affected); and
- Street conversion of Chestnut Street, south of Santa Cruz Avenue, to a pedestrian paseo (11 parking spaces affected).

The above actions would affect a relatively modest number of parking spaces (59 total affected), with demand able to be absorbed in the existing parking plazas, based on recent capacity studies.

The Specific Plan also recommends the City construct a parking garage on parking plaza 3 in the short term. Such a parking garage, with 650 spaces, would increase parking in that location by 438 spaces. This would allow for additional public space improvements, plus new private development using the shared parking facilities. This all-garage recommendation represents Option B for this plaza site, although Option A (partial garage with residential units above) can also be considered.

The timing and sequencing of the above projects and other public improvements should be subject to further study prior to approval of any construction, with the overall intent of limiting potential impacts on nearby businesses and other uses. For example, there likely should not be multiple major projects occurring in close proximity at the same time (for example, the reconstruction of the sidewalk in front of a property as well as the construction of a parking garage at the rear), as this could significantly affect business operations. Fiscal and or convenience impacts related to construction should be minimized through programs that help promote local businesses and ease operational challenges.

The Specific Plan generally recommends that public improvements be constructed in permanent form. However, some other cities, in particular San Francisco, have recently had initial success with temporary pocket park and sidewalk extension improvements. These trial installations have been relatively affordable due to the fact that basic infrastructure (e.g., curbs) is retained and enhanced with surplus equipment. In addition, the trials appear to have helped positively affect public opinion, by showing how such improvements function. The City could consider proposing certain improvements, such as the Santa Cruz Avenue central plaza, in temporary trial form.

Improvement and Public Parking Spaces Displaced		
Location	**Improvement**	**Parking Spaces Displaced (excluding parking garages)**
Improve Pedestrian/Bicycle Amenities and Overall Street Character		
Santa Cruz Avenue (University Drive to El Camino Real)	Streetscape improvements; new sidewalks, trees, curb and gutter, furnishings, landscape; central plaza	48
Chestnut Street South	Street conversion to paseo	11
Chestnut Street North (Santa Cruz Ave. to Oak Grove Ave.)	Widened sidewalk - one side	11
Rear of Santa Cruz Ave. Buildings (south side from University Dr. to Doyle St.) on parking plazas 4, 5, 7 and 8	Pedestrian linkage; new sidewalk, furnishings	50
Oak Grove (El Camino Real to University Dr.)	Street restriping to add bike lane and remove parking lane (north side)	35
	Parking Spaces Displaced - Total	**155**
Improve and "Leverage" Existing Public Parking Plazas		
Parking Plaza 2	Mixed-Use residential, pocket park	95
Parking Plaza 3 (along Crane St.)	Pocket Park	25
Parking Plaza 4 (along Evelyn St.)	Residential	12
Parking Plaza 5 (along Evelyn St.)	Residential	26
Parking Plaza 6 (along Chestnut St.)	Market Place	32
Parking Plaza 7 (along Chestnut St.)	Market Place	28
	Parking Spaces Displaced - Total	**218**
	Parking Spaces Displaced - Grand Total	**373**

Note: This table excludes parking displaced and gained by the construction of proposed parking garages on Parking Plazas 1 and 3. See Table F2 in Chapter F for a complete summary of existing and future downtown parking supply.

Table G4. *Public Space Improvements and Public Parking Spaces Displaced*

G.6 UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Existing and proposed infrastructure improvements support the proposed public and private improvements described in the Specific Plan. This section establishes recommendations for the orderly upgrading and construction of utilities, taking into account the long-term development scenario for the plan area. It addresses storm drainage, sanitary sewer conveyance and treatment and water supply and delivery infrastructure that serve the plan area. The Specific Plan EIR will discuss utility topics in greater detail.

The following agencies and companies own, operate and maintain utilities that serve the Specific Plan area:

- Storm Drainage: City of Menlo Park Department of Public Works and Caltrans (for storm drains in El Camino Real);
- Sanitary Sewer Conveyance: West Bay Sanitary District;
- Wastewater Treatment: South Bayside System Authority (SBSA); and
- Potable Water Supply and Conveyance: California Water Service Company (Cal Water).

Storm Drainage

The City of Menlo Park City-Wide Storm Drainage Study, published May 2003, documents the existing storm-water drainage system and drainage deficiencies within the City and prioritizes recommendations for system repairs and additions that would reduce storm drain problems in the City. In general, the existing lines in the plan area do not convey the ten-year storm flow per the City's design policies.

Figure G2 depicts high priority projects for storm drain upgrades in the plan area and environs per the drainage study. Such upgrades include replacing existing storm drains with larger facilities and augmenting existing lines with new parallel facilities to lower the expected water level that would occur during a storm event. Within the plan area, Caltrans has jurisdiction over proposed improvements on El Camino Real, as shown.

Because the plan area is already nearly fully developed (paved), storm water run-off flow rates are not expected to increase with the improvements outlined in the Specific Plan. Newer, higher density projects in the area are expected to include more landscaped areas, including green roofs, than the existing conditions, which would potentially serve to decrease storm drainage runoff.

The Specific Plan recommends:

- The City should implement the proposed improvements of the May 2003 City of Menlo Park City-Wide Storm Drainage Study.
- The City should consider allowing for a variance for developers from design requirements regarding off-site storm-water freeboard (i.e. storm-water would be contained within the underground conveyance system) within the Specific Plan area, relative to the ten-year storm. Proposed projects in the Specific Plan area should be required to limit storm-water runoff to current conditions or less.
- The City should implement green roof measures and other sustainable practices to decrease storm drainage run-off (see Chapter E "Land Use + Building Character").

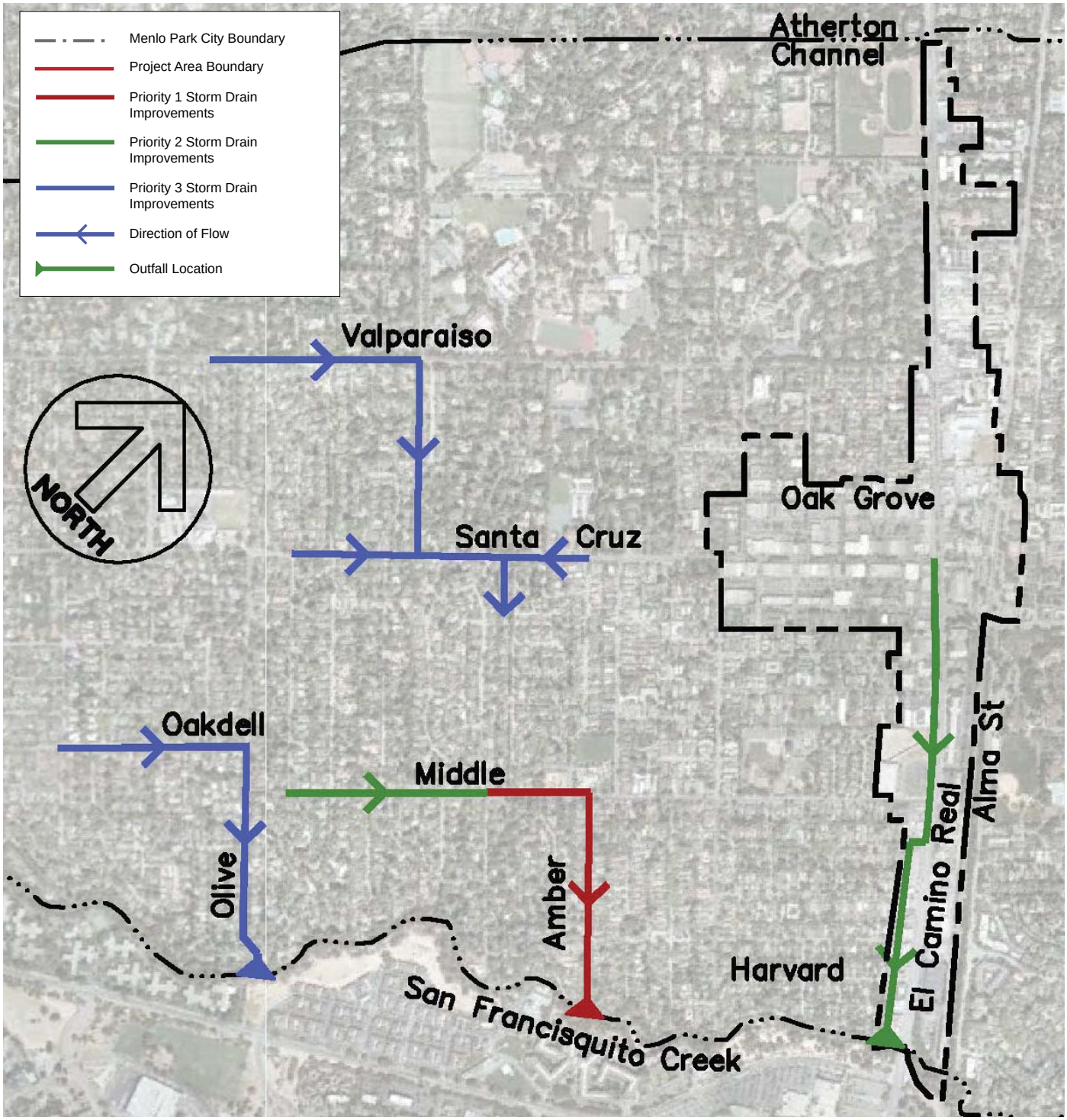

Figure G2. *Storm Drainage*

Sanitary Sewer

The West Bay Sanitary District (WBSD) owns and maintains sewer facilities in the Specific Plan area. The South Bayside System Authority (SBSA) owns and maintains the main line and wastewater treatment plant that serves the plan area. Figure G3 depicts the sanitary sewer system in the plan area.

Sanitary sewer conveyance lines in the Specific Plan area are currently operating within their designed capacity with no known flow restrictions. No upgrades to the existing system are planned. SBSA's sewage treatment plant is currently treating approximately 20 Million Gallons per Day (MGD) of sewage in dry weather and has capacity for 29 MGD. Anticipated wastewater generation increases from the Specific Plan area are not expected to be limited by current or future capacity at the treatment plant. The Specific Plan's build-out program, if achieved, would generate roughly a 1.5% increase over current treatment rates at the SBSA.

The Specific Plan recommends:

- Sewer upgrades should occur in conjunction with the proposed streetscape improvements, as appropriate, to meet size and separation requirements with other utilities and to accommodate each development as they come on-line. Irrespective of the ability for existing local sewer infrastructure to meet future capacity needs, local lines may need to be replaced in conjunction with the streetscape improvements to mitigate existing inflow and infiltration issues within the Specific Plan area.

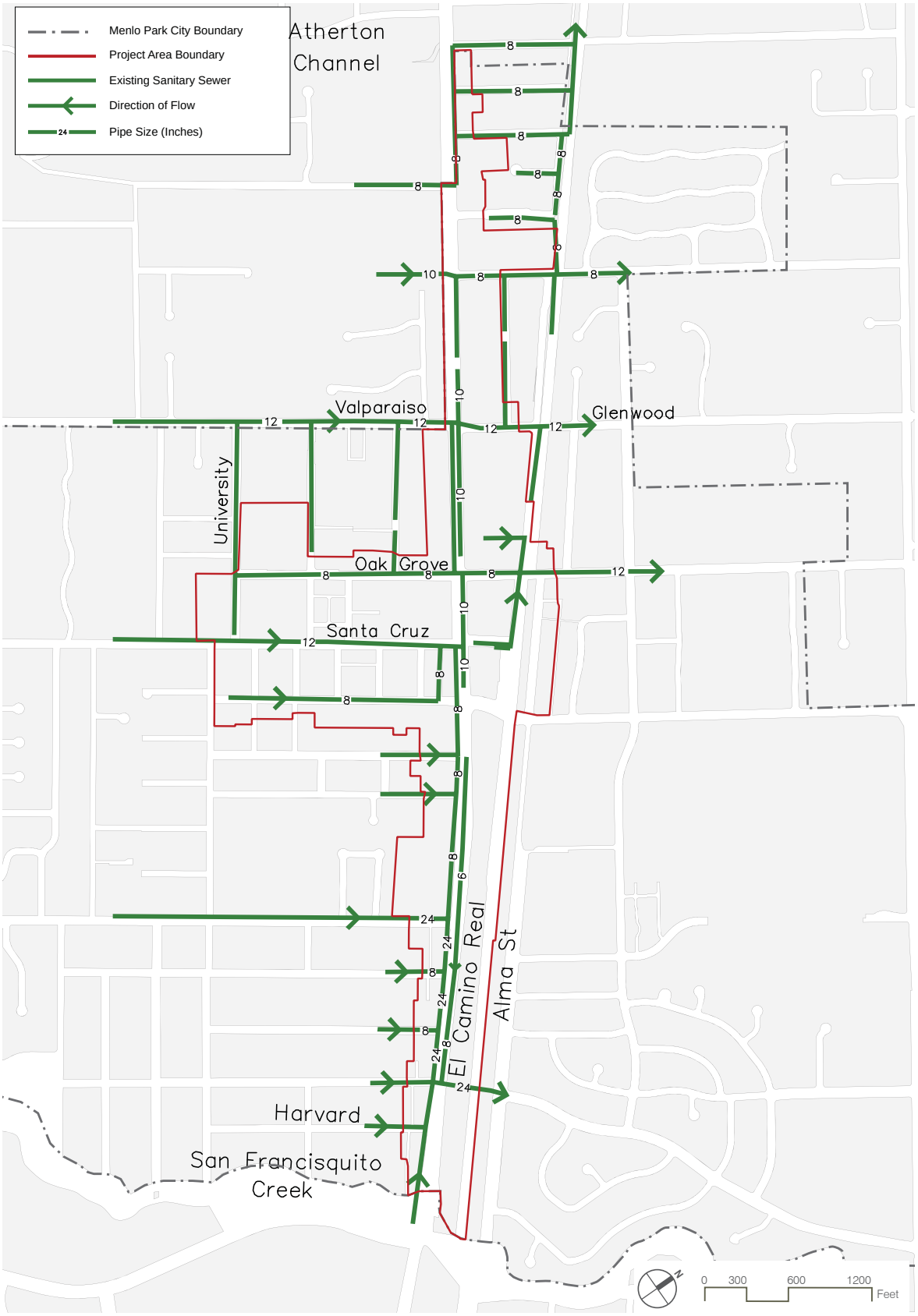

Figure G3. *Sanitary Sewer*

Water Supply and Delivery

The California Water Service Company's (Cal Water) Bear Gulch District supplies water for the Specific Plan area. Cal Water also maintains water conveyance facilities in the area.

As is the case with most communities on the Peninsula, there are potential issues associated with long term water supply. It is expected that water demand in the Bear Gulch District will exceed the Supply Assurance amount in Cal Water's contract with the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, from which the City of Menlo Park receives approximately 90% of its water supply, by the year 2030. The *Water Supply and Facilities Master Plan for Bear Gulch District* outlines the issues and potential strategies for addressing this issue. The Specific Plan's build-out program, if achieved, would result in an additional water demand equal to roughly 2% of current demand in the Bear Gulch District. This additional demand would account for approximately 20% of Cal Water's estimated increase in water usage for the Bear Gulch District by 2025. As noted earlier, utility impacts will be discussed in greater detail in the Draft EIR.

With respect to water delivery, the water conveyance system may be a constraint for implementing the Specific Plan, because most of the distribution mains in the area consist of 6-inch diameter pipe. Upgrades or upsizing of portions of the distribution system may be required for developments that increase water use or fire flow requirements from the existing condition. Figure G4 depicts the existing and potential improvements to the water conveyance system.

The Specific Plan recommends:

- The City should coordinate with Cal Water to prepare a water system master plan for replacement of water lines within the Specific Plan area to meet water use or fire code requirements for proposed new development.
- Water upgrades should occur in conjunction with the proposed streetscape improvements to meet size and separation requirements with other utilities.

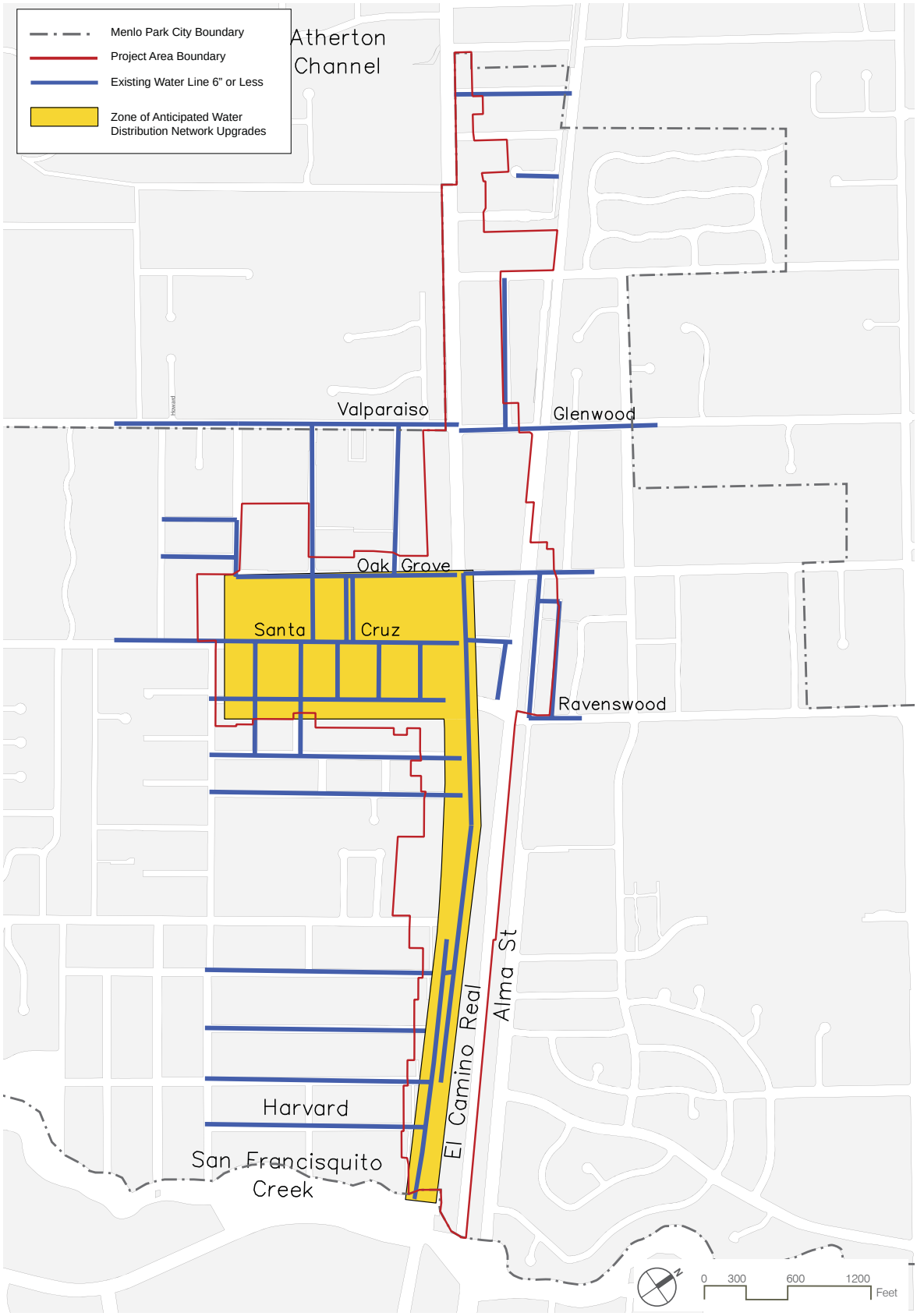

Figure G4. *Water Supply and Delivery*