

3 *PROJECT DESCRIPTION*

This chapter describes the overall location and character of the Plan Area, the land use changes proposed in the Specific Plan, potential new roadways and other infrastructure, and the regulatory actions that must follow adoption of the Specific Plan. For greater detail and clarification, please refer to the Specific Plan.

A. Regional and Local Location

East Palo Alto is located in the southeast portion of the San Francisco Peninsula, approximately 30 miles southeast of San Francisco and 18 miles northwest of San Jose. U.S. Highway 101 crosses through southeast East Palo Alto. The city is bordered at the south by Palo Alto and at the west and north by Menlo Park. The San Francisco Bay forms the city's eastern boundary. Figure 3-1 shows the regional location of East Palo Alto.

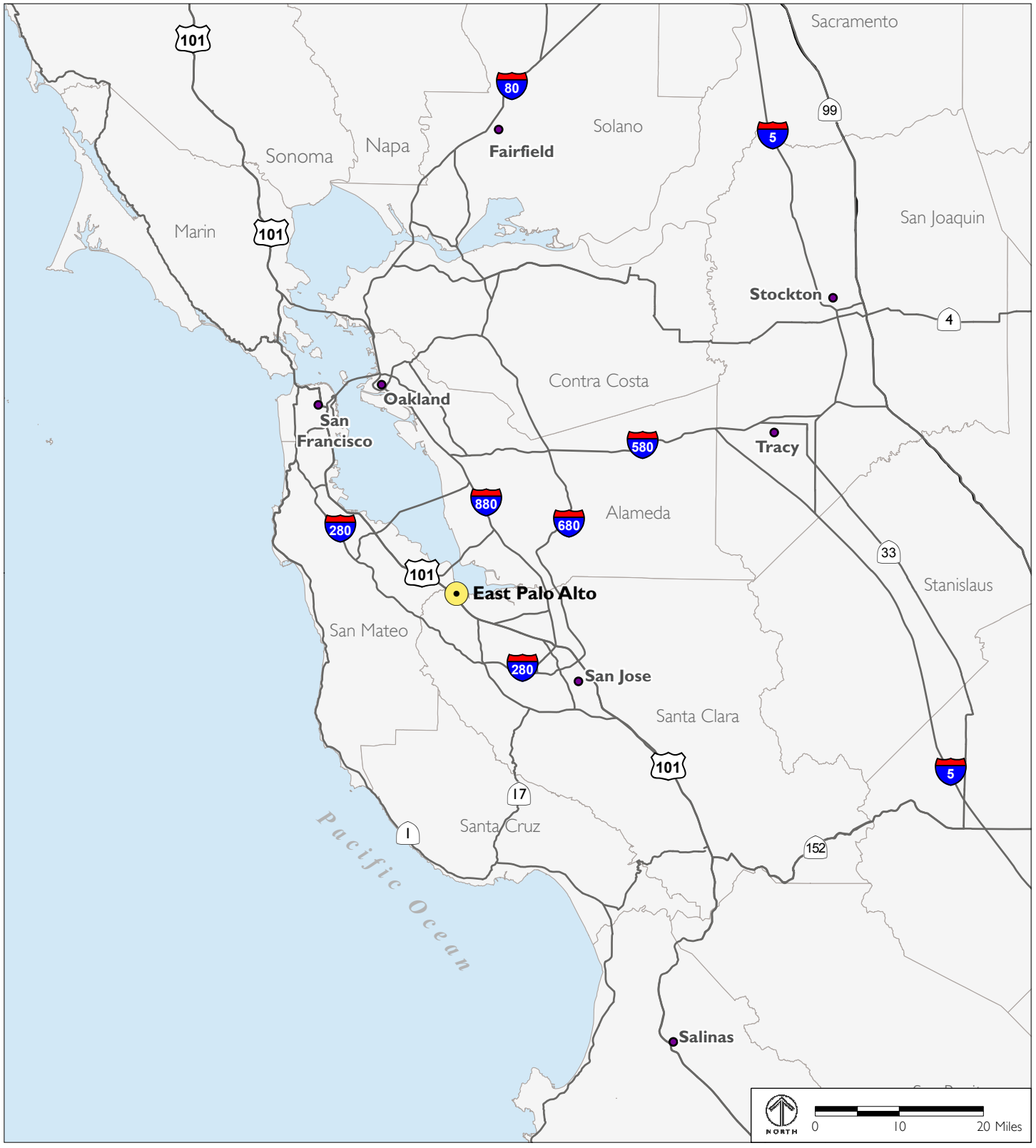
The Specific Plan Area is located in the northeast portion of the city, west of San Francisco Bay. A portion of the Plan Area shares a boundary with the East Palo Alto City limits. Figure 3-2 shows how the Plan Area fits within the city.

B. Plan Area

The Plan Area encompasses approximately 350 acres. It is generally bounded at the west by University Avenue; at the north by a rail line that crosses the Bay on a drawbridge;¹ and at the south by Weeks Street. To the east are tidal wetlands in the Ravenswood Open Space Preserve, owned and managed by the Midpeninsula Open Space District and in the City of Menlo Park; and to the southeast are wetlands that are part of the Palo Alto Baylands Nature Preserve, owned by the City of Palo Alto, and managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as part of the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National

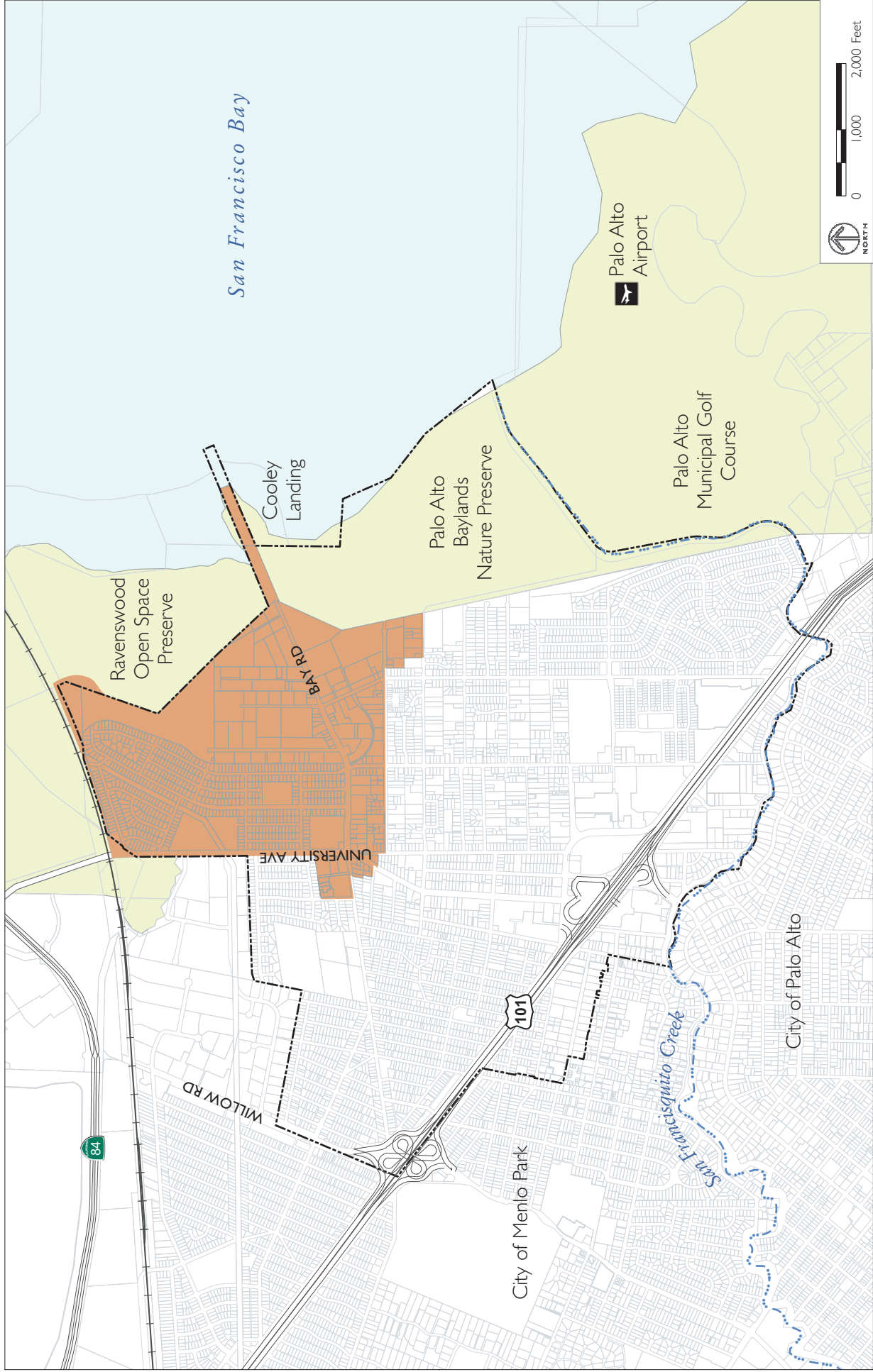
¹ Passenger service on this rail line, known as "Dumbarton Rail," is currently being studied in a separate project.

CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO
RAVENSWOOD/4 CORNERS TOD SPECIFIC PLAN EIR



Source: The Planning Center | DC&E, 2009.

FIGURE 3-1
REGIONAL LOCATION



Source: City of East Palo Alto, 2009.

- City Limits
- Plan Area
- Baylands
- Railroad

FIGURE 3-2
LOCAL CONTEXT

Wildlife Refuge. In addition to University Avenue, which is an important transit corridor within the city as well as the region, the Plan Area includes Bay Road, a major east-west corridor in East Palo Alto.

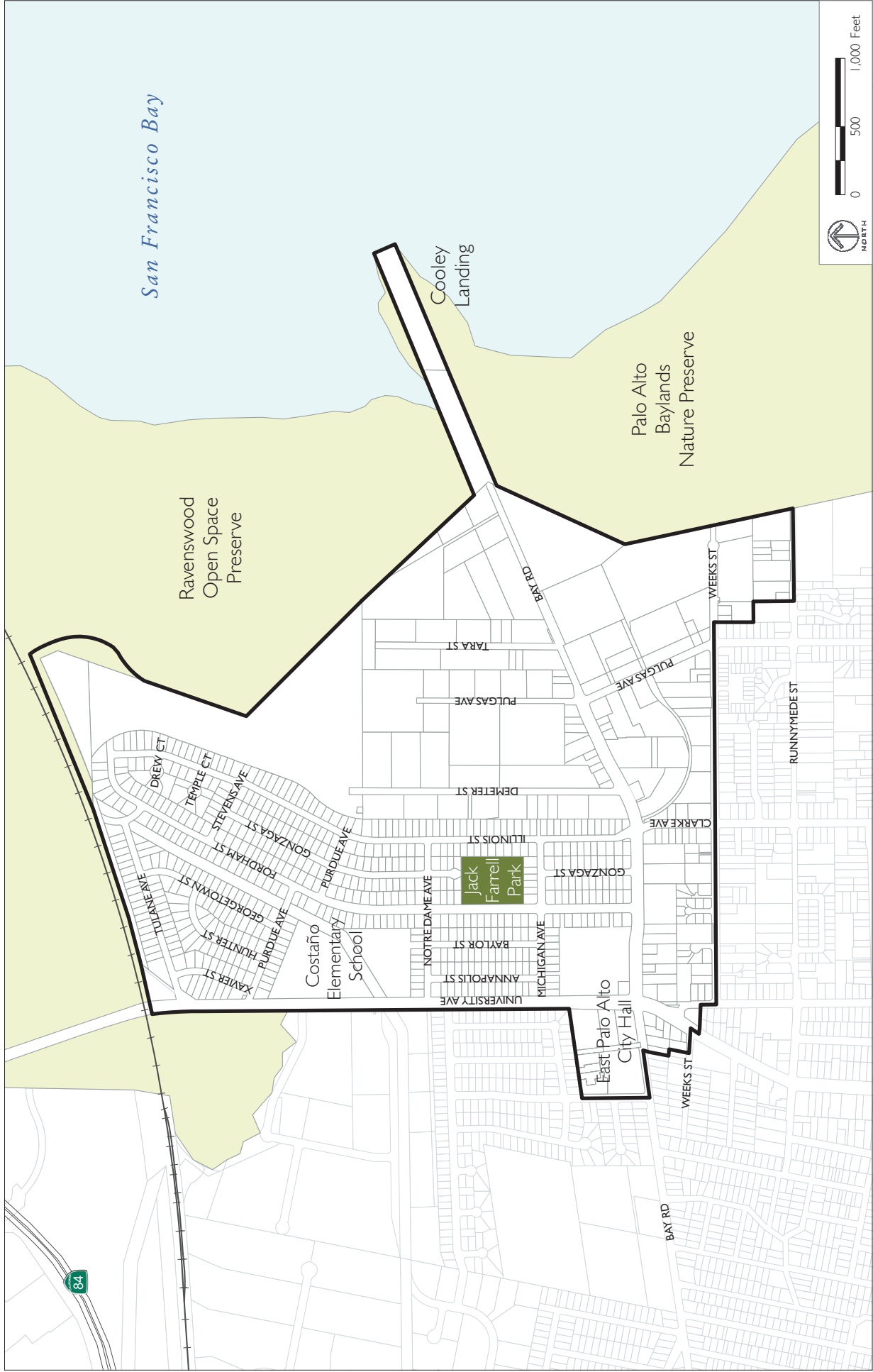
Some small parts of the Plan Area are located outside of the general boundaries described above. At the southeast boundary, a small area south of Weeks Street is included, because it is part of the City's Redevelopment Area. Similarly, the southwest boundary extends to include blocks west of University Avenue in the 4 Corners Area, to include all parcels within the Ravenswood Redevelopment Area. Figure 3-3 shows the Plan Area boundary. The Plan Area boundary includes the connection to Cooley Landing but does not include the other lands that will become the park.

C. Purpose of the Specific Plan

The Specific Plan is intended to serve as the primary document and reference guide for future development and redevelopment of Ravenswood and 4 Corners. The Specific Plan provides the community and decision-makers with clear documentation of the vision for the Plan Area. Furthermore, it provides a clear policy and regulatory framework for the review of future development projects and public improvements. The Specific Plan also provides guidance on design, potential public investments, and implementation.

D. Specific Plan Objectives

The City of East Palo Alto conducted a community-driven planning process to develop a vision for future land uses in the Plan Area. This process involved members of the community, business owners, advocacy groups, and other stakeholders. Based on feedback received during this process, a Specific Plan was developed to accomplish the following objectives:



Source: City of East Palo Alto, 2009.





-  Plan Area
-  Park
-  Baylands
-  Railroad

FIGURE 3-3
PLAN AREA

1. Enhance 4 Corners and Bay Road with new development and streetscape improvements that will enliven the street, create a “downtown” feeling for pedestrians, and improve safety by providing “eyes on the street.”
2. Transform Ravenswood into a thriving employment center that provides a variety of new jobs.
3. Encourage new development in Ravenswood by promoting new research and development (R&D) uses as part of a broader mix of uses.
4. Capitalize on the commercial potential of offices with Bay views by encouraging the development of tall office buildings close to the Bay.
5. Provide strong regional connectivity to the Ravenswood employment centers through an improved road system.
6. Create better public spaces in Ravenswood through streetscape improvements and by providing new plazas and parks.
7. Facilitate non-auto linkages through a network of off-street pedestrian and bicycle facilities, an improved sidewalk network, and connections to existing and planned public transportation.
8. Strengthen and enhance the University Village neighborhood by providing public improvements, promoting homeowner investment, and establishing the SFPUC right-of-way as a public park.
9. Seek to provide new community facilities, including a community center where people can gather for special events; a new school; an expanded health clinic and public library; and a recreation center that would provide a safe and welcoming place for the city’s youth.
10. Facilitate the cleanup of contaminated sites by providing new development opportunities in those locations.

E. Ravenswood/4 Corners TOD Specific Plan

This section summarizes the key components and recommendations of the Specific Plan.

The Specific Plan would permit a mix of office, retail, industrial, R&D, single-family and multi-family residential, civic/community, and open space uses within the Plan Area. Table 3-1 shows development estimates for future buildout of the Plan Area. Figure 3-4 shows the proposed land use map for the Specific Plan Area, which would be used to amend the General Plan. Figure 3-4 also shows annotations identifying potential civic/community uses, as well as potential parks and plazas that are envisioned in the Specific Plan and analyzed in this EIR.

It is assumed that this development would occur through 2035, which is considered the Plan Horizon. The timeframe and the rate of development within the Plan Area is subject to variation based on market demands, the regional economy, and other socioeconomic factors.

1. Key Community-Generated Design Goals

The community engagement process undertaken for this Specific Plan yielded three major design goals.

- ◆ *Preservation and enhancement of public views.* This is addressed by the Specific Plan's custom development standards and guide for which public views are most critical to preserve.
- ◆ *Improving circulation north of Bay Road in the Ravenswood area.* Specifically, a new east-west street that would link Demeter Street, Pulgas Avenue, and Tara Road was requested.
- ◆ *Bay Road as the activity spine and "heart" of East Palo Alto.* The Specific Plan is focused on achieving a walkable environment on Bay Road through use regulations and development standards.

2. Proposed Land Uses

This section describes the land uses proposed in the Specific Plan, shown on Figure 3-4 and described in Table 3-1.

a. Mixed Use (Bay Road/4 Corners)

Bay Road is envisioned as an active and vibrant spine that serves as a focal point for Ravenswood and 4 Corners, as well as for East Palo Alto as a whole.

TABLE 3-1 **NET DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL**

Land Use Type	Dwelling Units (du) or Square Feet (sf)		Density (du/Acre) or FAR	Population or Employees^e
Residential (du)				
Residential ^a	19		25	73
Mixed-Use Residential ^b	572			
Swenson Property Mixed-Use Residential	244	816	40-60	2,693
Total Residents				2,766
Office (sf)				
Office	1,046,910		1.5	3,490
Mixed-Use Upper-Floor Office ^b	202,990	221,590	1.0	633
Mixed-Use Ground-Floor Office ^d	18,600		-	
Retail (sf)				
Mixed-Use Ground-Floor Retail ^b	92,400	112,400	-	314
Swenson Property Ground-Floor Retail ^b	20,000			
Industrial/Flex (sf)				
R&D/Industrial	267,967		0.5	414
Light Industrial	83,853		0.5	
Civic/Community^e	61,000			
Total Employees				4,851

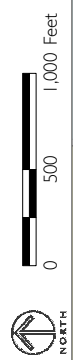
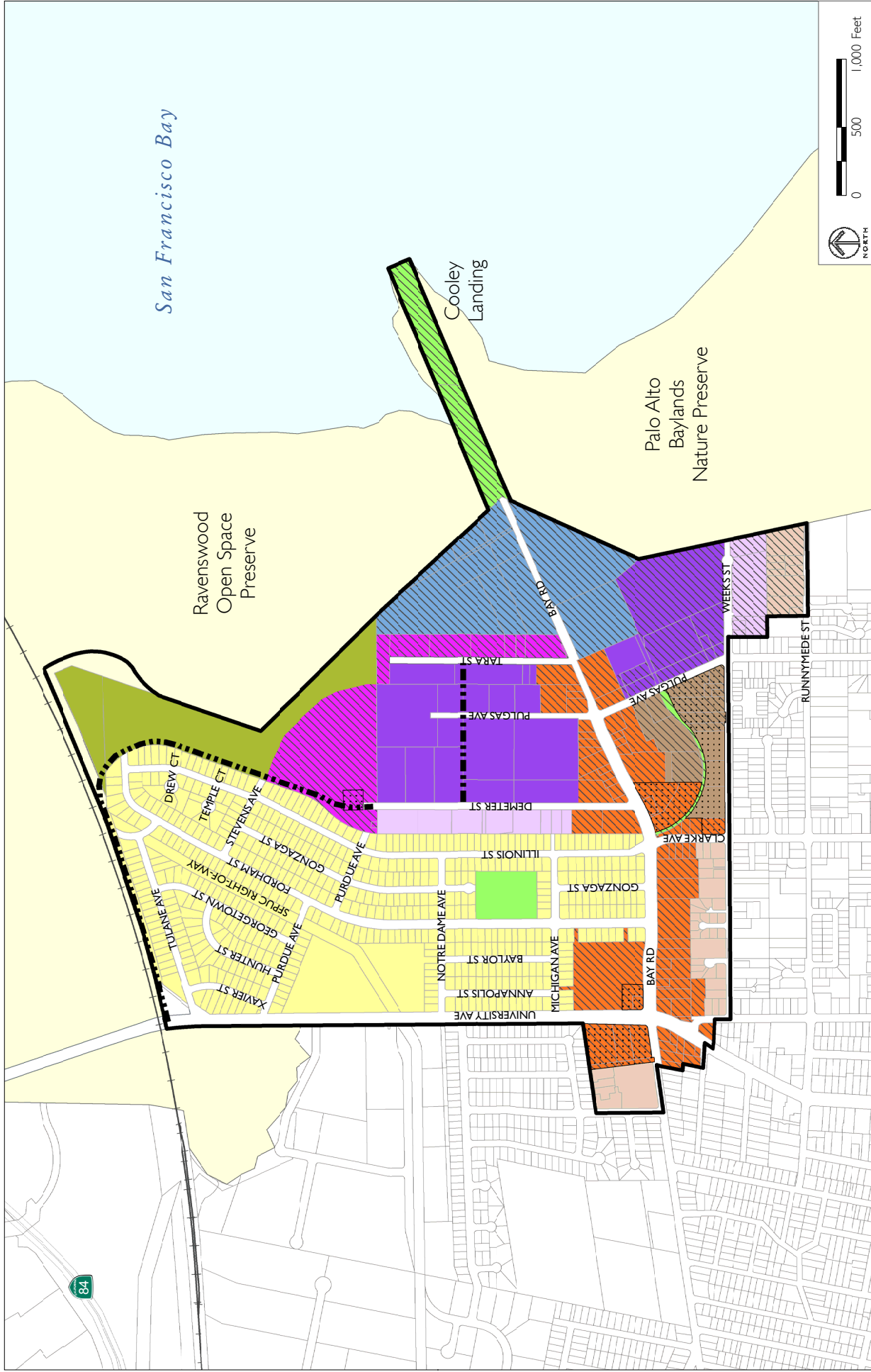
^a The 19 residential units are small-lot single-family or attached townhomes.

^b Upper floor space in the mixed-use category is assigned as Residential (75 percent) and Office (25 percent).

^c Ground floor space in the mixed-use category is assigned as Retail (88 percent) and Office (12 percent).

^d These forecasts assume 3.9 people per household for Residential; 3.3 people per household for both types of Mixed-Use Residential; 300 square feet per employee for Office; 350 square feet per employee for both types of Mixed-Use Office; 350 square feet per employee for Mixed-Use Ground-Floor Retail; 400 square feet per employee for Swenson Property Ground-Floor Retail; and 850 square feet per employee for both types of Industrial.

^e Employment figures are not included in this table, but were taken into account in the traffic analysis detailed in Chapter 4-14 of this EIR.



Source: City of East Palo Alto, 2009.

- Project Area
- Civic Use Envisioned
- Change in Designation
- Proposed Vehicle Connection
- Mixed-Use
- Office
- R&D/Industrial
- Light Industrial
- Industrial/Office Flex
- High Density Residential
- Medium/High Density Residential
- Low/Medium Density Residential
- Community Open Space Conservation
- Resource Management

FIGURE 3-4

SPECIFIC PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

It will become a mixed-use area to ensure an active pedestrian environment along Bay Road. Mixed uses will generally consist of upper-floor residential dwellings or offices with ground-floor active uses that will be mostly retail storefronts, although some ground-floor office uses will be allowed. Housing in this area will help provide activity into the nighttime hours and create increased safety by ensuring “eyes on the street” along Bay Road, and increased support for local retail uses. Allowable housing density will be 40 to 60 dwelling units per acre, and office uses will have a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 1.0.

b. Office

Office uses are planned for the easternmost areas of the Plan Area along the Bay, as well as at the northern edge of Ravenswood. The offices would take advantage of views of the San Francisco Bay and recreational opportunities provided by the Bay Trail. It is anticipated that this office development will offer a large number of jobs to both local residents and people from around the region, helping to bring new tax dollars and spending to East Palo Alto. Allowable density for these office uses will be 1.5 FAR.

c. R&D/Industrial

R&D and industrial uses are planned for the central portions of Ravenswood both north and south of Bay Road. The Specific Plan assumes that many of the existing industrial uses in this area will remain, but also that R&D and other new industrial uses would likely develop in these areas. (The term “R&D” refers to facilities for scientific or technical research, often including space for small-scale manufacturing of prototypes or finished products.) This would result in a mix of uses ranging from the heavier manufacturing, storage, and trucking uses that exist today, to new development of R&D uses including biotechnical research facilities, light manufacturing and supporting professional offices. Standards in the Specific Plan regulate noise and air quality to prevent impacts on nearby residential uses. Allowable density for these R&D/Industrial uses will be 0.5 FAR.

d. Light Industrial

Buffers of light industrial uses would be located along Demeter Street between the University Village residential neighborhood and more intensive general industrial uses in Ravenswood; and along Weeks Street to separate residential uses from general industrial uses to the north. While the Specific Plan's development standards address potential conflicts with residential uses for all industrial areas, the light industrial designation provides even tighter restrictions in these buffer areas. For example, heavy manufacturing uses are never allowed in this designation. Allowable density for these Light Industrial uses will be 0.5 FAR.

e. Industrial/Office Flex

Properties on the east side of Tara Street, and north of the terminus of Demeter Street would be allowed to develop with either office use or general industrial use. This designation allows for flexibility as these two areas are redeveloped in the future. In particular, the overlay along Tara Street allows these parcels to be incorporated within new office development to the east if desired.²

f. Residential

Figure 3-4 shows multi-family residential in several locations south of Bay Road. These locations relate to and extend the existing residential neighborhoods south of the Plan Area. The allowable density for multi-family residential will be 25 units per acre.

g. Civic/Community Uses

The Specific Plan envisions a variety of civic and community uses within the Plan Area. Civic/Community uses include both community space for special events or recreation, but may uses also include non-profits, health clinics, and social services, and other uses of this nature. Civic/Community uses could potentially be located at several different locations within the Plan Area in

² A 50/50 split between office and industrial as assumed for the sake of the traffic analysis.

areas that are currently specified as mixed use. Civic/Community uses will be developed through developer dedications, impact fees, and leveraging outside sources of funding. For the sake of analysis in this EIR, the following are assumed:

- ◆ An enhanced Civic Center with an expanded library would be located at the northwest corner of the 4 Corners area, either as an addition to or as a replacement of the existing County building on that site.
- ◆ The large parcel at the northeast corner of the Bay Road/University Avenue intersection would also include one important civic use such as a community center.
- ◆ East of Clarke Avenue and south of Bay Road, an existing health clinic expanded.
- ◆ Near the termini of Purdue Avenue and Demeter Street, a recreation center would be located within a new park.

However, it should also be noted that civic/community uses will not have a unique land use and zoning designation in the Specific Plan or in the General Plan, but would be allowed in mixed-use designations and zoning districts.

h. Existing Uses to be Retained

Several parts of the Plan Area would remain relatively unchanged in the future, accommodating only minor additions or maintenance replacements. These include:

- ◆ The University Village single-family residential neighborhood, located east of University Avenue and north of Bay Road and designated Low/Medium Density Residential.
- ◆ The Medium/High Density Residential properties in two locations: west of City Hall and north of Bay Road; and along Weeks Street between University Avenue and Clarke Avenue.
- ◆ The northeast corner of the Plan Area, shown in the Land Use Concept as Resource Management, is designated by East Palo Alto's General Plan as such, and the Specific Plan retains this designation.

For all properties in the Plan Area, Section 6829 of the City's Zoning Ordinance will govern the continued existence of non-conforming uses that do not match the underlying General Plan designation.

3. Parks and Open Spaces

The Specific Plan denotes four types of public open spaces: public plazas, neighborhood parks, community parks and open space. As with civic uses discussed above, the exact location and details of parks and open spaces remain flexible in the Specific Plan, but the EIR assumes amenities below.

Upon buildout, including existing development as well as proposed development under the Specific Plan, there would be approximately 33.5 acres of parks and trails within the Plan Area by 2035 (including 4.5 miles of new sidewalks and trails contributing to an overall proposed open space network) at a ratio of greater than 3.0 acres of park space per 1,000 people. It should be noted that it is assumed that approximately 7 acres of the anticipated parks and open space would be provided in conjunction with new private development.

a. Plazas

It is assumed that a number of plazas will be built in the Plan Area, both as publicly accessible open space in private development and as public improvements. Figure 3-4 shows a public plaza as part as new development at the northeast corner of University and Bay Road, and a public plaza is also shown at the intersection of Pulgas Avenue and Bay Road.

b. Parks

Upon buildout of the Plan Area, this EIR assumes that there would be three neighborhood parks primarily serving the community itself, and two community parks drawing users from the broader area. The neighborhood parks are:

- ◆ The existing Jack Farrell Park.
- ◆ A new 2.33-acre park on San Francisco Public Utilities Commission land in the University Village neighborhood.

- ◆ A new 0.85-acre park off of Weeks Street next to the Palo Alto Baylands Nature Preserve.

These neighborhood parks could include a variety of open fields, exercise areas, educational opportunities, playgrounds, and other similar features.

The community parks are:

- ◆ A new 3.5-acre park as part of new development at the termini of Demeter Street and Purdue Avenue.
- ◆ A set of two parks, totaling 2.79 acres, across from each other on Bay Road, marking the entry to Cooley Landing, a significant community park being planned by the City as a separate project. At the time of project approval, the General Plan and zoning designation of this land would be amended and rezoned from Resource Management to Community Open Space.³

c. Open Spaces next to Tidal Marsh

This EIR assumes that open spaces and trails will circle the Specific Plan Area's eastern edge. This type of public amenity will need to be developed with the participation of both City and regional agencies as well as private developers.

4. Building Form and Development Standards

The Specific Plan includes development standards that are used to regulate form of new buildings and development in the Plan Area, and to ensure that all new development supports the vision contained in the Specific Plan.

a. Mixed Use (Bay Road/4 Corners)

Where mixed-use development is designated by the Specific Plan, buildings will contain ground-floor active uses with residential or office uses above.

³ City of East Palo Alto, 2010. *Cooley Landing Park Initial Study*. Available online at: http://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/cooley/pdf/Cooley_Landing_Initial_Study.pdf.

Ground-floor active uses are defined as retail or office space with a minimum transparency, or percentage of the building's frontage devoted to windows, to create pedestrian interest. Depending on the size and configuration of parcels, horizontal mixed use may also be appropriate. Horizontal mixed-use is defined by multiple uses being developed next to each other, but not above one another, on a single parcel.

The maximum height for this building type is 5 stories (60 feet)⁴ for residential uses or 4 stories (50 feet) for office uses, except at the intersection of Bay Road and University Avenue, where the maximum height increases to 6 stories (70 feet) for residential uses or 5 stories (60 feet) for office uses. All buildings along Bay Road will step back a minimum of 10 feet above the fourth floor. The minimum height for mixed-use designations is 2 stories (30 feet).

b. Office

In areas designated for office uses, the maximum height will be 8 stories (85 feet). View corridors described by the Specific Plan require special upper floor setbacks for office development in order to preserve views. These view corridors will ensure that views eastward to ridges across the Bay are preserved from key locations. In addition to preserving existing views from Bay Road and Purdue, the Specific Plan proposes to add an additional public viewshed along a new east-west road that would connect Demeter Street, Pulgas Avenue, and Tara Road.

c. R&D/Industrial)

R&D and industrial buildings are anticipated to develop in the inner portions of Ravenswood. These buildings will be allowed up to a maximum height of 4 stories (50 feet). Where industrial buffer uses are designated, the maximum height will be 3 stories (40 feet). Because of rapid change in needs, it is difficult to predict the exact nature of development in these areas. Therefore, the Specific Plan is intended to be flexible regarding the precise type of develop-

⁴ The number of feet stated for each maximum height is an estimate, based on likely floor-to-floor heights of buildings. While the Specific Plan regulates floor-to-floor heights in feet, it regulates the overall height of buildings in stories.

ment that will occur, while still addressing issues such as compatibility with adjacent uses.

d. Light Industrial

In several locations adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods, and industrial are anticipated, creating a transition between Ravenswood's R&D/industrial uses and existing single-family homes. These buildings have a maximum height of 3 stories (40 feet), with heights limited to 2 stories (30 feet) adjacent to residential parcels.

e. Industrial/Office Flex

Some parts of the Plan Area can develop either with R&D/industrial uses or with office uses, depending on the future preferences of property owners. Development in these locations can follow either the Office or General Industrial standards, but it must be set back from adjacent residential areas.

f. High Density Residential

In portions of the Plan Area, residential dwellings are allowed up to a height of 5 stories (50 feet), accommodating more intensive apartment and condominium development.

g. Medium/High Density Residential

Closer to existing residential neighborhoods, residential dwellings are allowed up to a height of 3 stories (30 feet), creating a height transition from intensively developed parts of the Plan Area to nearby homes.

h. Civic/Community Facilities

New public facilities, such as performing arts centers, recreation centers, administration buildings, libraries, and other facilities, may potentially be built during implementation of the Specific Plan and are analyzed in this EIR. Some of these could be incorporated into larger mixed-use buildings, while others may be free standing. The Specific Plan contains guidelines to ensure that civic/community facilities are architecturally distinctive. However, standards such as height, location and parking are set by the development standards for the underlying land use designation.

i. Parking Standards

The Specific Plan sets minimum parking standards that are intended to be “right-sized,” providing an adequate but not excessive amount of parking. Shared parking is encouraged by the Specific Plan to reduce parking requirements for individual projects. Parking standards provide incentives for multiple uses and multiple developments to share parking. Public parking on streets immediately fronting projects is allowed to count towards office, retail and residential visitor parking requirements in the Plan Area.

j. Bird-Safe Building Standards

The tidal marshes provide resting sites for several species of migratory birds. As the Plan could involve the construction of tall office buildings on the Bay edge, it contains policies to reduce the risk of bird strikes. These require that large glass surfaces are broken up by techniques such as netting, or stenciling, so that they are more visible to birds.

5. Circulation Network

Circulation improvements are needed to accommodate new development in the Plan Area. These improvements are shown on Figure 3-4. More information is also provided in Section 5e below along with other infrastructure changes.

a. Vehicular Street Circulation Improvements

The Specific Plan identifies needed improvements to the vehicle circulation network, including new streets in the Plan Area.

- ◆ **Loop Road.** A new loop road to the north and east of University Village will connect University Avenue to Ravenswood to help alleviate traffic congestion on Bay Road and at the Bay Road/University Avenue intersection. A new loop road will improve access to the parcels in the eastern portions of Ravenswood for new offices and R&D/industrial uses. It is also anticipated that if a new transit station is to be located at the northwest corner of the Plan Area (as described below), this new loop road would provide direct access to employment locations from the transit station. For the sake of this analysis, it is assumed that the loop

road would have a buffer of roughly 20 feet from adjacent residential uses, and that it would be at grade or only minimally elevated above grade.

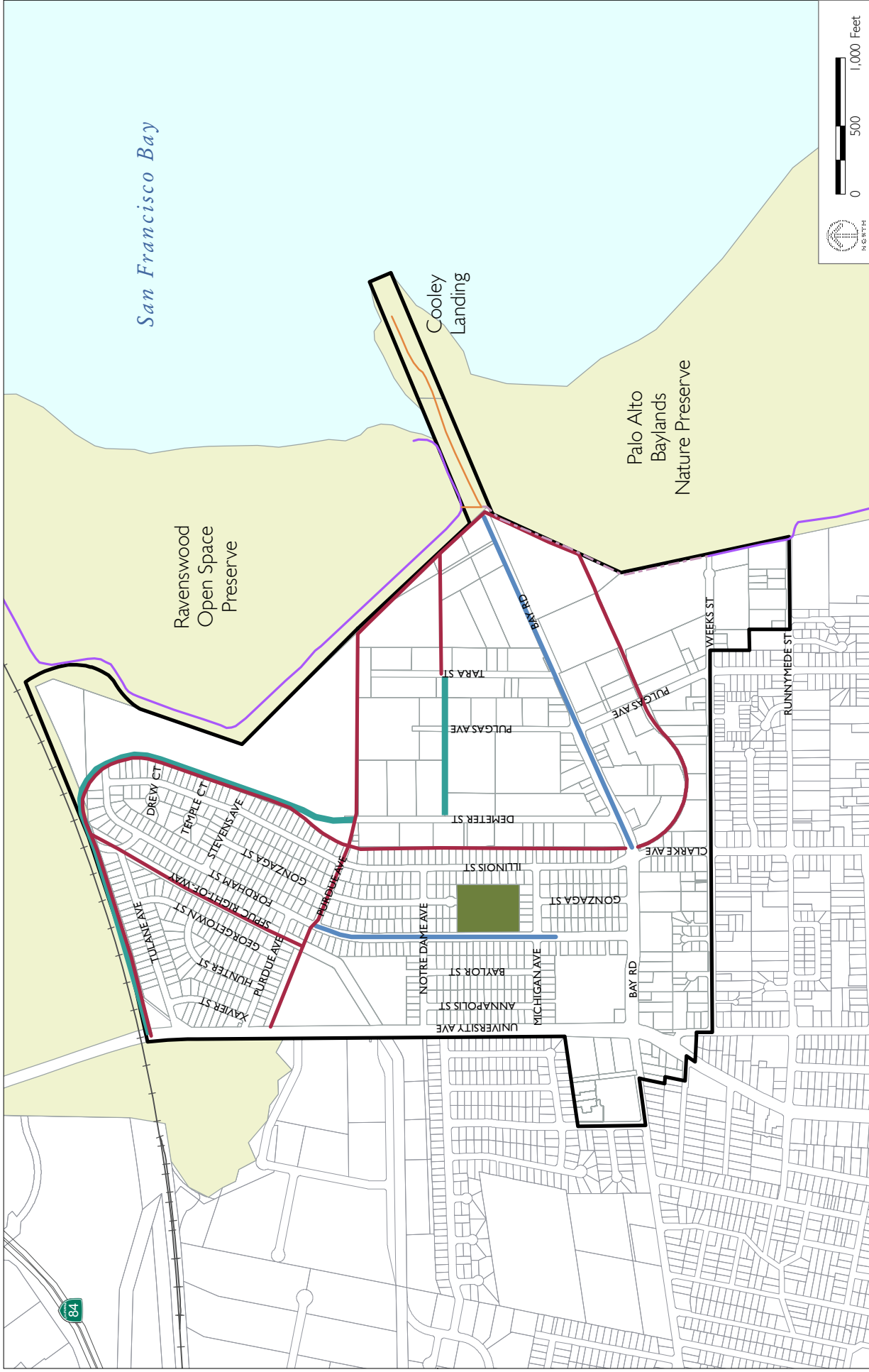
- ◆ **Ravenswood Connector.** Currently circulation into the industrial area of Ravenswood north of Bay Road is limited to north-south streets: Demeter Street, Pulgas Avenue and Tara Street. The Specific Plan identifies one new east-west street in this area running directly east-west and connecting Pulgas Avenue to Tara Street, in order to create a grid circulation pattern and reduce vehicle trips on Bay Road.
- ◆ **Intersection Improvements.** The circulation chapter of the Specific Plan, and Section 4.14, Transportation/Traffic of the Draft EIR, identify needed intersection improvements, such as new traffic signals and additional left turn lanes, at key locations. However, as noted in the Plan and Draft EIR, there is no funding mechanism in place to provide these improvements. In addition, some of them are outside the jurisdiction of the City of East Palo Alto and could not necessarily be implemented.
- ◆ **Other Roadway Improvements.** The following streets would be rebuilt or built under the Specific Plan:
 - Demeter Street from Purdue Avenue to Bay Road.
 - Pulgas Avenue north of Bay Road from the new east-west connector road, and south of Bay Road to Weeks Street.
 - Tara Road from 100 feet south of the wetlands to Bay Road.
 - Weeks Street from Clarke Avenue to its current termination, approximately 100 feet from the wetlands.
 - Bay Road from its intersection with Clarke Avenue to its termination next to the wetlands. The street would also be widened within a broadened 100-foot right-of-way.
 - A new east-west connector road would run from Demeter Street to Tara Street.

- ◆ **Bay Road Phase II and Phase III Improvements.** The Bay Road Phase I improvements have already been constructed from University Avenue to Illinois Avenue. Phase II and Phase III improvements will be installed from Illinois Avenue to the Bay Trail as well. These improvements are shown in blue along Bay Road on Figure 3-5.
- ◆ **Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program.** A TDM program can reduce the number of single-occupant vehicle trips associated with a new development by encouraging employees to use alternative methods of transportation. The Specific Plan has a policy to require large employers in the Plan Area to participate in a TDM program, which will focus on vehicle trip reductions through encouraging use of transit, carpooling and shuttles as well as bicycling and walking.

b. Pedestrian Improvements

Figure 3-5 shows a cohesive system of pedestrian/bicycle connections and trails linking activity nodes, employment, housing, parks, and open spaces together. Both new connections and improvements to existing connections are shown.

- ◆ **Rail Spur Pedestrian/Bicycle Connection.** A multi-use pedestrian trail connection on unused railroad right-of-way would connect Clarke Avenue and Pulgas Avenue, and then on to the Bay Trail to the east. This pedestrian connection would mesh with new and existing development that surrounds it. Currently, the section between Pulgas Avenue and the Bay Trail is under construction.
- ◆ **Loop Road/Bay Trail Connection.** The northern portion of the proposed loop road, located north of and parallel to Tulane Avenue, will also include a multi-use pedestrian/bicycle trail to connect eastward to the Bay Trail. This will support regional goals for open space access.
- ◆ **Purdue Avenue Pedestrian Connection.** Figure 3-5 depicts a pedestrian/bicycle trail created alongside Purdue Avenue under the high-voltage electrical lines. It would extend west to University Avenue next to the Costaño Elementary School property and east to the Bay Trail on a new right-of-way along the north edge of Ravenswood.



Source: City of East Palo Alto, 2009 and The Planning Center | DC&E, 2011.

- Plan Area
- Park
- Baylands
- Railroad
- Proposed Vehicle Connection
- Proposed Pedestrian/Bicycle Connection
- Existing Bay Trail
- Unimproved Bay Trail
- Proposed Streetscape Improvement
- Other Existing Trail

FIGURE 3-5

PROPOSED CIRCULATION IMPROVEMENTS

c. Bicycle Improvements

The Specific Plan recognizes the opportunity for bicycle transportation to encourage bicycle use and improve transportation in the Plan Area. In particular, it shows new pedestrian routes as described above that would also provide multi-use paths for bicyclists. Where intersection improvements are proposed, the Specific Plan recommends that installed improvements include bicycle safety mechanisms, such as American with Disabilities Act (ADA) curbs, bicycle detection loops, or other similar features. The Specific Plan also proposes new standards for bicycle parking associated with new development, and also encourages new bicycle parking within public rights-of-way.

d. Transit Improvements

- ◆ **Rail Station.** Dumbarton Rail commuter rail service is currently being planned for the rail line that passes north of the Plan Area in a separate project. Although the Specific Plan calls for the City to pursue an “East Palo Alto” Dumbarton Rail station, which would be located adjacent to the Plan Area in the City of Menlo Park, at this point it would be highly speculative to assume that East Palo Alto will be successful at attracting a station. It is also unclear whether funding will be available to complete the Dumbarton Rail system by 2035. For these reasons, although this EIR includes the concept of future passenger service on this rail line as a project considered in the cumulative impact analysis, it does not include analysis of a station at any particular location.
- ◆ **Shuttle Service.** If a Dumbarton Rail station is developed, the Specific Plan envisions shuttle service to transport employees from the station to their places of employment within Ravenswood. Because the exact nature of the shuttle service is not known and would depend on future agreements between private businesses, this EIR does not analyze the potential shuttle service.
- ◆ **Other Transit Improvements.** It is envisioned that new bus routes, such as a bus-rapid transit route on University Avenue, or changes to existing routes may be implemented as development in the Plan Area occurs. Due to the speculative nature of these improvements and changes,

they are considered part of the Specific Plan and not analyzed in this EIR.

6. Infrastructure Improvements

Considerable utility infrastructure upgrades are needed for most of the Plan Area to accommodate new development. This was documented in an October 2008 Draft Engineering Plan (DEPLAN) for the Ravenswood Business District by Wilsey Ham Engineers.⁵ Although the DEPLAN predates the Specific Plan, Wilsey Ham has reviewed the Specific Plan's development projections and verified that the DEPLAN's engineering calculations are still valid.⁶

The southern part of the Specific Plan Area generally slopes south, and the gravity-driven drainage for water, wastewater, and storm water pipes flows south for most of the area that would be developed under the Plan. There is a divide in the drainage system along a line running approximately east-west at the southern margin of the 391 Demeter Street property.⁷ North of this divide, gravity-driven flows are northwards.

The following sections summarize the new infrastructure needed. A fuller description is provided in Section 4.15, Utilities and Service Systems.

a. Water Supply System

New components of the system would be as follows:

- ◆ An additional connection to the SFPUC Hetch Hetchy water delivery system through a pipe in the SFPUC right-of-way at Purdue Avenue.

⁵ Wilsey Ham, 2008. *Draft Engineering Plan (DEPLAN) for the Ravenswood Business District (RBD)*. October 31. See also Appendix H of that document. *Basis of Design*.

⁶ Email from Sean Charpentier to DC&E, January 27, 2011.

⁷ The 391 Demeter Street property has a triangular-shaped portion, which would be designated as Industrial/Office Flex under the Plan and an area with wetlands that would be designated as Resource Management. The triangular shaped portion has also been referred to as the "Stanford Fill" area.

The 12-inch pipe would then run east-southeast along Purdue Avenue and south along Demeter Street.

- ◆ New 12-inch pipes along Demeter Street, Pulgas Avenue, Tara Street, Bay Road, Weeks Street, and the new east-west connector road. The pipe system would extend east-west for a short distance south of 391 Demeter Street. The water would be pressurized throughout this system.
- ◆ A 1.8-million-gallon storage tank at the end of Tara Street for fire suppression and emergency supply.

b. Sanitary Sewer System

New components of the system would be as follows:

- ◆ New sanitary sewer pipes east of Illinois Street and north of Bay Road will connect in a gravity system to the main trunk line on Bay Road, which will have its lowest point at the intersection of Pulgas Avenue. The main line will run south on Pulgas Avenue to the intersection of Weeks Street, where it will turn east to connect with the existing sewer line that runs south along the levee, down to O'Connor Street and east at the Friendship Bridge, towards the Palo Alto Sanitary Sewer Plant.⁸
- ◆ Replacement of the existing 18-inch pipe in the levee at Weeks Street with a 21-inch pipe. This may not be necessary for several decades until sufficient development has occurred to warrant it. The timing of this replacement would be up to the East Palo Alto Sanitary District.

Note that 391 Demeter Street and the northernmost part of the industrial area are served by the West Bay Sanitation District (WBSD). There is an existing WBSD pumping station on the property. No upgrades are included in the DEPLAN, and therefore in the Specific Plan, for 391 Demeter Street. A system would be needed if the property were to be developed

⁸ The existing sewer pipe system also connects on Bay Road, but it has its lowest point at the intersection of Tara and Bay Roads, from where it runs south, parallel to the PG&E western property line to connect to the sewer line running along the levee.

c. Storm Water System

The southern portion of the Specific Plan Area is currently served by the Runnymede storm drain system. An additional new Ravenswood system would be built and would join the Runnymede system at the point of discharge into the existing surface channel at the end of Runnymede Street.

The Ravenswood storm water system would be designed to provide flood protection as a consequence of storm drain back-up in most of the Specific Plan area for which redevelopment is proposed. The system would be designed to cope with largest storm that could realistically be expected once every 25 years (the 25-year storm).

The following storm water upgrades would be included as part of the Specific Plan:

- ◆ A new storm drain pipe along Bay Road (up to approximately 600 feet west of the edge of the Specific Plan boundary), and along the southernmost parts of Demeter Street, Pulgas Avenue north of Bay Road, and portions of Weeks Street. The force main would run along Pulgas Avenue south of Bay Road and connect to two box culverts along Runnymede Street.
- ◆ A new storm drain force main along Demeter Street (up to approximately 300 feet south of Purdue Avenue); Pulgas Avenue (south of the east-west connector road); Tara Street (mostly south of the connector road); and the easternmost portions of Bay Road.
- ◆ Dredging, grading, and culverting of the stormwater channel from the end of Runnymede Street to the detention basin on O'Connor Street next to the levee to take 100-year flows. A berm would be built along the west side of the length of the detention channel to restrict the main channel overflows and allow water to back up from the pumping station and be held in the channel. The pond would also be dredged.^{9,10}

⁹ Enlarging the retention basin is considered a viable substitute to costly upgrades of the pump station and lift station.

Note that no upgrades are planned for the northern portion of the Specific Plan Area north of the terminations of the storm drain force mains on Pulgas Avenue and Tara Street south of the east-west connector road.

d. Other Utilities

Some of the buried conduits would be placed in joint trenches carrying electrical power, cable TV, phone, fiber optic, and gas lines.¹¹

e. Circulation Improvements

Improvements to the circulation network are described above in Section E.4.a.

f. Phasing

Phase I would include buildout of Bay Road from University Avenue to Tara Street. In order to build out the complete utilities and roadway improvements of Bay Road, the utility lines must first be constructed in Bay Road and south of Bay Road on Pulgas Avenue, Weeks Street, and Runnymede Street, and the dredging of the new 2,100-foot channel to the detention pond at the O'Conner Pump Station must also be completed. Additionally, all of the utilities downstream of Bay Road need to be installed for the Bay Road drainage and wastewater system to maintain positive flow to the existing downstream connections. Since trenching will be taking place for the gravity utilities, the remaining utilities will be installed during this phase so that the roadway can be reconstructed after all of the utilities are in place. The timing and order of the remaining phases has not yet been determined, as it will depend upon the timing of future development in the Plan Area.

¹⁰ Memo from Wilsey Ham to Sean Charpentier, City of East Palo Alto, dated October 30, 2008. Re: RBD Storm Drain Study: Re-routed to the channel and the O'Connor Pump Station.

¹¹ Original DEPLAN maps showed several overhead high voltage lines that would be undergrounded. These have since been removed from the DEPLAN and,

7. Grading and Trenching

As much of the current area lies within the 100-year flood plain, grading would be required to bring structures above the level of the flood plain, or engineered so that they are not significantly affected by hydrostatic forces. This grading would occur on a project level as part of private development.¹² However, streets will not generally be graded to above the flood plain level, and storm drains and sanitary sewers may be installed below this level.

Trenches dug in the area are likely to reveal soil and groundwater contamination that requires remediation and offsite treatment and disposal.

8. School and Health Clinic Expansions

Development under the Plan could generate an expanded student-age population that could result in the need for a new school. The Specific Plan does not identify a location for a school nor the type of school and responsible district.

An expansion of the Ravenswood Health Center at 1798 Bay Road is also anticipated. It would be part of the private development anticipated in the Plan.

F. General Plan Amendments

The Specific Plan will require a number of General Plan Amendments to ensure consistency between the Specific Plan and the City's General Plan. The analysis in this EIR reflects these amendments, which the City will adopt as

therefore, the Specific Plan. If these are undergrounded it would be the responsibility of the private developer who would need CEQA clearance for this activity.

¹² The DEPLAN maps show areas that would need to be filled to raise them above the current FEMA-designated 100-year flood area by adding fill for each private development. As indicated by Wilsey Ham, some of these areas are within the 100-foot setback from the probable line of San Francisco Bay Area Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) jurisdiction, based on potential wetlands.

required by State law. Changes to General Plan land use designations are shown in Figure 3-4. As shown, the Specific Plan re-designates properties using existing designations already identified in the General Plan, with the exception of four new designations, R&D/Industrial, Light Industrial, Mixed Use and Industrial/Office Flex. These four designations are described as follows:

- ◆ **R&D/Industrial.** As shown on Figure 3-4, the R&D/Industrial designation is proposed to be applied to several properties north and south of Bay Road within the Ravenswood area. The R&D/Industrial designation provides for a variety of light industrial, R&D, and manufacturing uses that are non-polluting and which can co-exist with surrounding land uses, and which do not in their maintenance, assembly, manufacturing or operations create smoke, gas, dust, sound, vibrations, soot, or glare to any degree which might be obnoxious or offensive to persons residing or conducting business in the City. Allowable uses include wholesale businesses, light manufacturing and processing, R&D uses, offices, warehousing and storage, distribution and sales, high technology production, retail sales, and related uses. Other uses that are determined to be compatible with the primary uses may also be allowed. The expected intensity of development is a FAR of 0.5:1 and the maximum intensity of development is a FAR of 2.0:1.
- ◆ **Light Industrial.** As shown on Figure 3-4, the Light Industrial designation is proposed along Demeter Street and Weeks Street, to serve as a transition between R&D/Industrial land and residential areas. This designation will allow R&D uses, professional and business offices, industrial sales and service offices and other uses providing a transition between residential and general/heavy industrial uses.
- ◆ **Mixed Use.** As shown in Figure 3-4, the Mixed Use land use designation is proposed to be applied to properties at the intersection of University Avenue and Bay Road, as well as other properties that front onto Bay Road. This designation provides for multi-story vertical mixed-use development, although horizontal mixed use may also be appropriate at certain locations. In this designation, active uses such as retail are re-

quired on the ground floor, with residential units on upper floors. To a more limited extent, upper-floor office uses are permitted above retail. Ground-floor offices and community facilities may also be appropriate in certain circumstances. In all cases, this designation is intended to provide for new development that will contribute to an active and pedestrian-oriented Bay Road.

- ◆ **Industrial/Office Flex.** The Industrial/Office Flex land use designation is proposed to be applied along the east side of Tara Street and on the large parcel at the current northern terminus of Demeter Street. This designation provides for a flexible zone that encourages either professional offices or high-quality R&D or light industrial uses. Some limited commercial service activities may also be appropriate within this designation, provided that they offer support for office or R&D/industrial uses.

Additional General Plan amendments include the following:

- ◆ Update to bike map
- ◆ Revisions to the General Plan Roadway Map
- ◆ Revisions to the Rail Transit Concepts Map

G. Zoning Amendments

This section describes amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance that are necessary to implement the vision outlined in the Specific Plan.

The Specific Plan contains a chapter identifying development standards for new projects within the Plan Area. The development standards in the Specific Plan will modify the allowable uses and development standards in the existing Zoning Ordinance. To implement these modified standards, the City will adopt a Zoning Ordinance Amendment incorporating the land use and development regulations and guidelines included in the Specific Plan. For those provisions not covered in the Specific Plan, the requirements in the City's existing Zoning Ordinance will apply. Where conflicts exist, the provisions in the Specific Plan will apply.

H. Consultation Requirements

California Senate Bill 18 (2004) mandates that Cities contact and consult with California Native American tribes in preparation of Specific Plans. Tribal consultation has been undertaken for the Specific Plan.

As development occurs, consultation with the San Francisco Bay Area Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) will be required. BCDC's jurisdiction on San Francisco Bay includes all sloughs, marshlands between mean high tide and five feet above mean sea level, tidelands, submerged lands, and land within 100 feet of the Bay shoreline. The precise boundary is determined by BCDC on request. Projects approved by BCDC must be consistent with their master planning document, the Bay Plan.

Consultation would be required with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for excavation in wetland areas.

I. Required Permits and Approvals

The following permits and approvals are required for Specific Plan adoption. Additional permits and approvals would be necessary at a later date for specific projects under the Specific Plan.

- ◆ Approval of the Water Supply Assessment (WSA) by the City Council.
- ◆ Certification of the EIR by the East Palo Alto City Council.
- ◆ Adoption of the Specific Plan by the East Palo Alto City Council.
- ◆ Adoption of a series of General Plan amendments to ensure required consistency between the East Palo Alto General Plan and the Specific Plan.
- ◆ Adoption of a Zoning Ordinance Amendment incorporating the land use and development regulations and guidelines included in the Specific Plan.

CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO
RAVENSWOOD/4 CORNERS TOD SPECIFIC PLAN
DRAFT EIR
PROJECT DESCRIPTION